

Alton Fire Department ranked as one of best in U.S.

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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A commitment to excellence and hard work is paying off for the Alton Fire Department.

The City of Alton recently announced that the fire department has lowered its Insurance Service Office (ISO) Public Protection Certification (PPC) to a Class 2 rating. The rating required work from the Alton Fire Department, Alton Police Department 911 Dispatch Center, Illinois-American Water Company.

Because of the lowering rating, residential and commercial property owners will likely enjoy lower insurance rates.

For the ISO ratings, a community is graded on evaluation of a fire department's operations, 911 alarm dispatching and water supply. The grades vary from fire department operations at 50 percent, water supply at 40 percent and dispatching at 10 percent.

Bernie Sebold, the Alton Fire Chief, said he couldn't be more proud of his department for their efforts in reaching this goal, which was established several months back.

"We have increased our training regimen to meet the criteria," he said.

The fire chief said keys in reaching the level came from work on fire department training, drills and improved documentation.

Alton Mayor Brant Walker said the employees of the City of Alton are dedicated to the safety of their stakeholders and are excited that this ISO Class 2 grade will likely result in monetary savings for citizens and businesses of Alton through reduced property and insurance premiums. He encouraged businesses and property owners to contact their insurance companies and see if they qualify for a reduced rate.

"This rating places the Alton Fire Department in a rare company as part of only 2 percent of fire departments in the entire United States to receive an ISO rating of 2 percent," he said. "I commend the work of Chief Sebold and congratulate the entire Alton Fire Department for this important designation."

Alton Deputy Fire Chief Mark Harris echoed both Walker and Sebold's praise of the fire department for their exceptional efforts in attaining the top rating.

The fire department members include: Sebold, Deputy Chief Mark Harris, then the following:

Shift No. 1:

Battalion Chief – Tom House

Captain – Kendall Nolle, Brian Evans, Derrick Richardson

Engineers – Ben Shewmaker, Rusty Long, Paul Billeau

Firefighters – Cliff Holshouser and Jake Hartett

Shift No. 2

Battalion Chief – Rob Franke

Captains – Kevin Clouatre, Rick Newman, Jessie Jemison

Engineers – Shelton Williams, Tim Matifes, Tom Davison

Firefighters – Todd Sissom, John Bolling, Matt Preston

Floater – Chris West

Shift No. 3:

Battalion Chief – Brad Sweetman

Captains – Rick Orban, Walter Grabner, Matt Fischer

Engineers – Bob Eichen, Craig Green, Bill Simon

Firefighters – Charles Wellinghoff, John Davis, John Champion

Floater – Don Holliday

Shift No. 4

Battalion Chief – Dave Eichen

Captains – Dan Whiteside, Jeff Knipp, Ron Scott

Engineers – Tom Whitmore, Tom Muffler, Steve Perry

Firefighters – Chris Bradley, Wayne Price, Steven Sowders

Floater – Wayne Harris