



For Immediate Release
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HFD Moves Up in ISO Ratings

Harrisonburg, VA – The Harrisonburg Fire Department (HFD) was recently notified by the Insurance Services Office (ISO) of a change in their Public Protection Classification, which turned out to be a step up in the ISO nationwide rating system.

Although a written survey is completed every year, the ISO comes in person to Harrisonburg just about every ten years for a formal evaluation. The last time the department had the in-person evaluation was in 1999.

The visit from the ISO representative was a surprise but that did not alarm the staff with HFD. They began preparing for this evaluation long before it actually happened.

After the most recent evaluation, the city's ISO rating for HFD went from a Class 3 to a Class 2, on a scale of one to ten with one being the best rating.

"This is a phenomenal rating and we were very pleased with the results," said Fire Chief Larry Shifflett.

In addition to evaluating HFD, ISO also evaluates the city on its emergency communications and water system, which are both critical components to the fire department operations. Detailed training records, the needed water flow from fire hydrants, staffing, equipment, deployment analysis, continuing education for fire personnel, inspections, standard operating procedures, etc. are some of the areas that are scrutinized and examined during the evaluation.

Chief Shifflett went on to explain, "In this line of work, we must always be prepared for the next unknown situation. We have extensive plans and training in place so our personnel are ready to handle the next call for service and it was no different when we were going through the ISO evaluation. We were prepared."

Of the 48,000 fire departments in the United States that are rated, only 750 are a Class 2 and 60 are a Class 1. None of the Class 1 departments are located in Virginia.

Insurance companies use ISO ratings as a factor in developing their fire insurance rates.

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