

Alsip Fire Department



**Annual Report
For
2015**

First and foremost, I would like to thank Mayor Kitching and the entire board of Trustees for their continued support of the Alsip Fire Department. I believe that all of you share the same vision as I do as what type of service the fire department should provide and how to provide it with the resources we have.

As the Fire Chief, I am charged with leading the Alsip Fire Department in providing; fire protection, EMS, Technical Rescue, Hazardous Materials, fire prevention, public education, fire investigation, water rescue, and anything else that comes our way to all of our residents, businesses, and travelers that come through our town.

The Alsip Fire Department is made up of very dedicated and highly trained personnel to provide the service listed above. We have the state-of-the-art equipment, and great training facilities to maintain our level of competency and proficiency.

We are constantly evaluating ways to improve our service and training by monitoring current trends in the fire service, looking at new equipment, and evaluating our responses.

This report is a summation of the activities, incidents, and accomplishments that the Alsip Fire Department either responded to or participated in in 2015. This report also contains some objectives planned for 2016.

Summary of the year

2015 was a very good year for the fire department. We had another decrease in the amount of personnel who were off due to injury or medical illness. In 2015, the Alsip Fire Department was featured in the March/ April magazine "The Bulletin" This magazine is a publication from the Illinois Firefighter's Association and is distributed throughout the State of Illinois. We were honored to be the featured department in the magazine.

The Alsip Fire Department also received two grants in 2015. One grant was a Department of Homeland Security's Assistance to Firefighter's grant for \$24,000. This was used to purchase two Sim-man manikins. These manikins are life-like training aids to assist with our EMS training program. They provide a realistic body that provides feedback. These manikins allow us to perform evasive procedures and each student is evaluated and provided the feedback on what was done correctly and incorrectly. The fire department also received a grant from FM Global for \$1,360. This grant was used to purchase two I-pads to be used by the fire prevention bureau.



In 2015, the Alsip Fire Department also received a Life Safety Award for our public education programs. The Alsip Fire department was one of only 14 fire departments in the state to receive this award this year. This is a national award.

In 2015 we have made a few changes in the fire stations. First, the domestic water system at fire station 1 was replaced. When the fire station was built in the early 70s, they installed the domestic water supply underground. This presented two problems, one- when a pipe broke underground, it was very costly to repair (between \$9,000 and \$16,000). Secondly the cold water and hot water lines were installed within inches of each other and without any insulation. The station never had true “cold” water. The system was replaced with an overhead system that will be much easier to maintain and repair. Furthermore there is now cold water throughout the station. Both stations had received new carpeting. The carpeting was last replaced in 1999. The front overhead doors at station 1 were replaced. These doors were originally installed in 1998 and since then have had some panels that needed to be repaired due to accidents in which the color difference is noticeable. During the replacing process, the rails, springs and all cables are replaced. The normal life span of these types of doors is typically 10- 12 years depending on use. The front doors may open and close as many as 5000- 7000 times a year. The doors replaced also displayed signs of soot from vehicle exhaust which contains carcinogens. In 2006 a vehicle exhaust was installed to minimize any carcinogens from the vehicle exhausts systems. In 2016, the replacement doors for the rear doors of the station will be budgeted for.

In 2015, replacement windows were placed in the budget. At the time of this writing, the bidding process is being worked on for the windows. The windows at both stations are the original windows and are long overdue of replacement. The current windows are not energy efficient, quite a few of them are inoperable in which parts are no longer available, and several have had their seals leak which allows moisture to get in between the panes of glass.

In 2015, we continued to remain focused on our external customers (residents and businesses) and internal customers (Officers and Firefighters) by evaluating all current programs and making necessary adjustments when necessary.

Fire Prevention

The Fire Prevention Bureau is led by two part-time Fire Prevention Officers in which each have specific duties. This is supplemented by 8 firefighters who perform the annual inspections while off-duty.

In May of 2015, the Fire Prevention Bureau had switched from paper reports to a computer based reporting system using an I-Pad for annual inspections. This was in conjunction with the grant that we received from FM Global. Since the Fire Prevention Bureau was founded in the 70's the reports have all been paper. There are 4 file cabinets of past reports. Each business and apartment building has their own file for inspections. This was a very archaic process. There were quite a few places that were either not inspected or did not know existed because of a lack of a tracking system. We are welcoming the new system. This switch is also a very labor intensive transformation during its inaugural year. Every business' and apartment building's information had to be entered into the database (roughly 1400 inputs). Now the fire inspector can track the current inspection, search the past inspection (beginning in May), insure that the business' fire alarm system, sprinkler system, and any other protective systems are inspected on an annual basis. This was not possible in the past. Additionally, the village ordinance has changed regarding the monitoring of alarms to make it easy for the businesses to transition over when needed. We have been able to add over 150 more businesses to the radio alarm monitoring system plus tracking when any previous outside monitoring company's contract expire so that business can be added to the radio system. We have also discovered a number of businesses who did not possess a village business license because of the information that is required. The I-Pad also allows the inspector to take a picture of the violation. Upon completion of the inspection, the representative signs on the I-Pad and the report is then e-mailed. Any pictures of violations are included in the e-mailed report.

We also brought on an additional 3 inspectors to assist with the annual inspections. (for a total of 8). All three of our firefighters attended the 1st 40 hour module class to conduct inspections and will be hitting the street after an in-service.

Summary of the Fire Prevention Bureau

The following report represents the activities of the Fire Prevention Bureau from January 1 thru December 31, 2015. Note: Annual inspections are still in progress.

Annual Inspections (Commercial and multi-family)- 928

Re-inspections- 355

Plan reviews (new construction, remodeling, fire alarms, sprinkler systems)-1075

Testing (sprinkler systems, fire alarms, water flow, pump tests)- 254

Court tickets/ complaint investigations- 92

Plans for 2016

1. Continue to add all pertinent data to the I-Pads for tracking and reference..

2. Begin to scan all past reports and eliminate all paper reports.
3. Review and update current fire prevention ordinances.
4. Provide additional training to all fire inspectors.

Public Education Programs

The Alsip Fire Department recognizes the importance of solid public education programs. These programs exist to help in the reduction of fires and to promote fire safety, instruct classes for CPR and instruct our businesses worker's how to operate a fire extinguisher. The Public Education Bureau is an extension of the Fire Prevention Bureau. The Public Education Bureau is managed by two coordinators. This is further assisted by several firefighters who assist in delivering the programs.

Some of the Public Education Programs include; the annual Open House, the annual Fire Prevention Week poster contest, where the overall grade winners receive a ride to school on the fire engine (4th year), the fire safety trailer to all 2nd and 4th grade students, the severe weather program for all 3rd and 5th grade students,, "Patches" our robot fire engine to all kindergarten and pre-school children, attending block parties, company picnics, CPR, first-aid, fire extinguisher training, car seat installations/ inspections, and most recently the revamping of the "adopt –a-hydrant" program.



In 2015, the Alsip Fire Department began offering CPR to all businesses at a reduced cost (still covering our expenses). This is to promote how important it is for everyone to know CPR and maybe save a life. We still offer a monthly CPR class for residents.

During the annual Open House in 2015, the Alsip Fire Department introduced its newest fleet of fire apparatus, motorized fire engines for kids to drive. These vehicles were purchased by the Foreign Fire Board of the fire department. They were a huge hit during the Open House and Holiday on Pulaski. These will

continue to draw crowds of children. The open house in 2015 also included a min-confidence course for kids to complete.

At the 2015 Open House a raffle was held for smoke detectors and for one family to have breakfast at the fire station.



The Public Education Bureau also participated in several Chamber of Commerce events, Alsip- Merrionette Park Library, the Street Fair, Home Depot Safety Days, and Holiday on Pulaski.

Several new props were also included in this year's programs which included static photo op displays, a simulated tunnel for smoke conditions for "Get low and Go", and customized plastic helmets for the kids with the Alsip FD logo on them.



Summary of 2015's Public Education Events & Programs

Home Escape classroom presentation- 290 students

Home Escape Practical (safety trailer)- 520 students

Patches Program- 300

CPR- 125

Open House- >400

Poster contest participants- 803
Station tours >100
Block Parties- 15
Car Seat checks/ Installations- 62
Company picnics- 6
Heritage I & II safety talks- >100

Plans for 2016

The Public Education Bureau is planning on the following for 2016;

1. The continuing of promoting CPR for the businesses and residents.
2. Continue the development of a baby sitter's program.
3. Application of a FEMA grant to enhance our programs.
4. Continue to add additional props for enhancement of the programs.



2015 Incident Statistics

In 2015, the Alsip Fire Department responded to 3,206 incidents. It is a small decrease from 2014 (172) which was a rarity. The administration constantly monitors our responses and modifies them as needed to either increase our efficiency or reduce our liability. The majority of our incidents continue to be EMS related (70%) which is normal for the majority of fire departments that provide EMS.

The number of incidents that we respond to still reflect that 8 out of every 10 calls for service are within the village. In 2015, the Alsip Fire Department provided assistance to other departments a total of 359 times, a reduction of 42 responses from 2014. The summary of incidents are as follows;

Fires

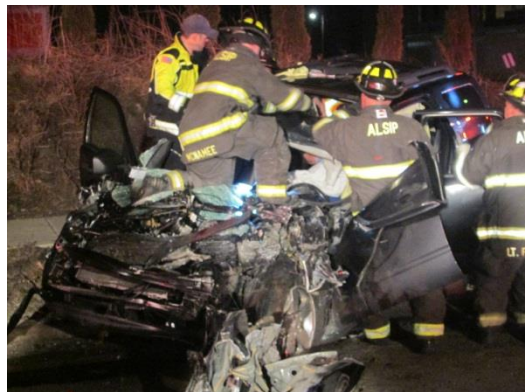
Structure Fires- 11

Vehicle Fires- 12

Other (grass, rubbish, etc.)- 16



Emergency Medical Calls & Rescue (including vehicle accidents)- 2071



Hazardous Condition Calls (including gas leaks, carbon monoxide alarms)- 111

Service calls & good intent calls (cancelled while enroute to responding towns for automatic and mutual-aid responses, citizen assists)- 250

False calls (fire alarms, smoke detector sounding)- 429

Other external customer services and specialty teams

The Alsip Fire Department belongs to the Mutual-Aid Box Alarm System (MABAS). This is the statewide mutual-aid plan for the fire service. It is a clearing house to provide resources for all-hazards including major fires, natural disasters and man-made events (terrorism). The Alsip Fire Department houses several pieces of specialized equipment for these types of incidents which include the Western Shelter Tent system and a light tower/ generator. These assets could be deployed at anytime that they are needed and anywhere in the state of Illinois or possibly adjacent states through mutual-aid.

We have 4 personnel that are members of the Southwest Hazardous Materials Response Team. They are our local hazardous materials response team. All of the team members are specially trained to mitigate hazardous materials. The fire department also houses the local response team's science and command van. This van contains all of the specialty monitoring equipment for a hazardous materials response as well as functioning as a command post for the team. The value of the monitoring equipments alone is over \$500,000.

We have 4 personnel who are part of the Combined Agency Response Team (C.A.R.T.). This is our local technical rescue team. All of the personnel on the team are specially trained to mitigate specialized rescue such as; Confined Space, High Angle, Trench, and Structural Collapse. Alsip houses one of the trailers for the team which consists of specialized tools and equipment to work within the disciplines listed.

We have 4 personnel who are part of the area's Origin and Cause team (Fire investigations). These personnel respond to the surrounding fire departments to assist with fire cause and point of origin.

All specialty team members are required to attend monthly training sessions to remain proficient in their skills and are required to be certified by the Office of the State Fire marshal.

In 2015, the Alsip Fire Department replaced its 2 Genesis gas powered Combi-tools (they can cut and spread) with battery operated Combi-tools. The new tools have the same spreading and cutting capacity of the gas powered tools but work on a 28v Milwaukee battery. This is more beneficial for several reasons including

there is no more power unit or hoses to drag around, no more loud noise from the generator, and the unit is more portable which can be used in close quarters or inside a building without the possibility of carbon monoxide build-up.

Responses to incidents

In 2015, the administration continued to evaluate our responses that were modified in 2013 and 2014. The changes have been proven to be effective and efficient with some minor adjustments. On structure fire responses, our primary goal is firefighter safety. We strive to ensure we have enough personnel on the scene in all aspects from command and control to task level personnel. The Shift Commander program still proves to be a positive change.

Staffing levels

In 2015, we still experienced some injuries, both on-duty and off-duty. There were also 3 retirements, and the addition of 5 personnel (due to 2 new firefighters leaving). Even though we have newer, younger firefighters, there are still quite a few in their mid to late 40s and above which are more susceptible to injury and longer recovery times.

We continue to struggle occasionally when all three ambulances are out and that only leaves 2 personnel to cover the village until an ambulance is available. With the amount of personnel living out of town, the number of call-backs have been dramatically diminishing over the past several years. In 2015, the Firefighter's union and the village agreed to a minimum staff of 8 personnel on duty each day through the labor contract.

Plans for 2016

1. Continue to evaluate our responses within the Village of Alsip and with the towns that we provide automatic-aid and mutual-aid with.

Training

In 2015, the Alsip Fire Department was able to evaluate the efficiency of the "Training Support Team". This team concept has proven to be an invaluable tool to accomplish all of the many needs within the realms of training. Some of the

features of the Training Support Team include; developing and maintaining training schedules, evaluating the training needs of the department, lesson plan development, obtaining off-site locations for training, training tower maintenance, developing and the construction of additional training props, maintaining the current props, arranging building walk thrus and pre-plans, and providing consistent delivery of the training program for the department.

The fire service is driven by training. The fire department is the “One call does all”, all hazards first responders. We must be the masters of all including fighting fires (both structural and non-structural), emergency medical services, hazardous materials, technical rescue (high angle, confined space, trench, structural collapse), vehicle rescue, specialized rescue such as ice and water, disaster management and planning plus anything else that no one wants. Firefighters must have great mechanical aptitude, and are able to make something work out of nothing (improvise) at a moment’s notice. All of the fire apparatus carries specialized equipment that every firefighter and officer must know how to use proficiently. We are required to complete annual training requirements by several agencies including NFPA (National Fire Protection Agency), Illinois Dept. of Labor (IDOL – OSHA equivalent), ISO (Insurance Services Organization), IDPH (Illinois Dept. of Public Health) and the OSFM (Office of the State Fire Marshal.

Breakdown of yearly requirements for ISO;

240 hours annually of firefighter specific training
16 hours for officer training (chiefs and company officers)
Minimum of 4 hours of driver refresher including practical skills
Pre-planning of all commercial buildings or walkthroughs/ visits
12 hours of multi-company drills
8 hours of night training
4 hours of Radiation Awareness

Illinois Dept. of labor requirements;

16 hours of respiratory protection training (SCBA)
Driver’s training along with ISO (Initial 40 hours plus practical driving for each type of vehicle.
Blood borne pathogens review (6-8 hours)
Hazardous materials- 40 hrs. for Operations trained (IDOL & NFPA)
12 hour refresher training each year

Hazardous Materials Technician- 92 hours initially, 24 hours refresher annually (team drills)

Technical Rescue 8 hrs annual refresher- Team members initially +400 hours plus minimum of 24 hours refresher training annually (team drills)

Specials Hazards/ Training;

Lockout/ tagout (4 hours annually)

Vehicle Rescue- 12 -20 hours annually (Not a requirement, but must keep up with skills, knowledge of extrication plus new technology of vehicle construction)

Pump Operator Training- 24- 32 hours annually (not a requirement, but must keep up with skills/ knowledge)

Live fire training- varies for time

Policies, SOGs, administrative rules

Traffic Incident management

National Incident Management (NIMS)- required by federal government

Illinois Dept. of Public Health

All of the Firefighters, Lieutenants, and Chief officers are licensed paramedics. Each person is required to attend a minimum of 3 sessions of continuing education annually through South Cook County EMS System (Ingalls hospital, our resource hospital). Each session is approximately 6 hours. Additionally all paramedics are required to have a total of 100 hours of continuing education every four years.

Training is usually handled at the crew or shift level. However, there are certain times that for consistency or special training, specific and specially trained personnel are brought back to instruct for the department.



In 2014, one area of training that we lacked was realistic EMS training, even though 70% of our responses are EMS calls, but mostly the typical EMS call, not

the unusual type of calls. The goal was to develop a method to accomplish this weakness. In the winter of 2015, the Alsip Fire Department applied for a FEMA Assistance to Firefighters Grant. This was to purchase two Simulation manikins (1 adult and 1 child) for EMS training. In the spring of 2015, the Alsip Fire Department received a \$24,000 grant in the first round for that purpose. The manikins provide a life-like realistic approach EMS training. The manikins provide feedback to determine if the correct protocols were used, the skills were mastered, etc. This EMS training allows our paramedics to become better prepared for future incidents.



In 2015, there was a total of 10,829 hours of training. This equates to an average of 328 hours per Officer/ Firefighter. This is above the recommended average of training for firefighters.

In 2015, the fire department continued in joint training with the Public Works Department and Water Department. This training includes fit testing for respiratory equipment, refresher training for Confined Space Entry and this year an electrical awareness class hosted by Com Ed.





Plans for 2016

1. Continued analysis of the training needs of the department.
2. Development of Acting Officer training program.
3. Continued realistic training through the use of props and actual structures or buildings within the village
4. Continued encouragement of outside training.
5. Continuation of the pre-plan program.

End of the 2015 Annual Fire Department Report

Submitted by Fire Chief Thomas Styczynski