



Emergency Reporting Case Study:

How an Arkansas Fire Department Lowered Their ISO Rating Using ER Software

CASE STUDY / Beaver Lake Fire Department



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The Agency: Beaver Lake Fire Department



Rogers, Arkansas

Established - 1881
Population - 66,430*
Area - 38.15 mi²
Elevation - 1,368'

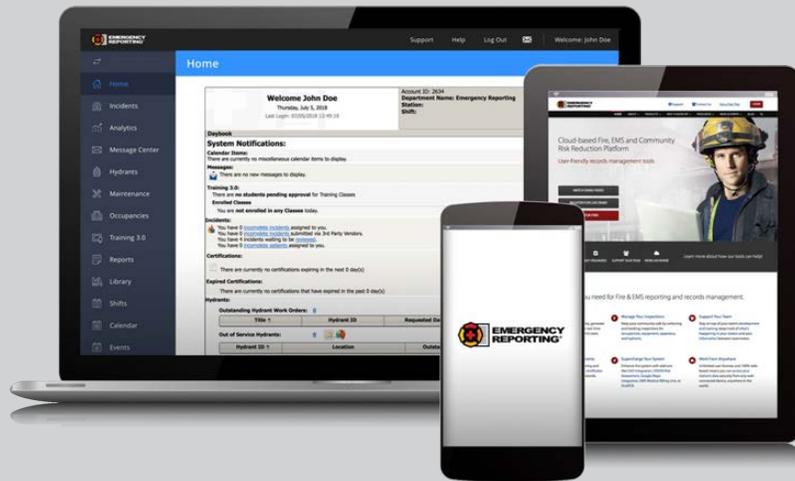


*Rogers, Arkansas population according to 2017 U.S. Census.

Beaver Lake Fire Department (BLFD) in Rogers, Ark. is a combination department serving a population of approximately 7,000 people and responding to over 650 calls each year. The department has two fire stations and 22 personnel with an annual operations budget of around \$660,000.

BLFD's Fire Chief, John Whisenant, is a 15-year veteran of the fire service. He joined the department in 2008 and served as a volunteer for many years before being selected as the interim Fire Chief in 2014 and subsequently hired in 2015 as the fourth full-time Fire Chief of BLFD.

According to its website, beaverlakefiredept.com, the mission of BLFD is "to preserve life and property by maintaining a corps of professional, properly trained and fully equipped personnel capable of providing fire suppression, rescue, emergency medical services, and fire prevention/education to those in need."



Out with the Old, in with the New

BLFD used FIREHOUSE Software for many years before switching to Emergency Reporting in 2016. According to Fire Chief John Whisenant, they switched because of their former provider's "antiquated user interface, lack of customer support, and software issues that led to our department being six months behind on NFIRS reports."

Fortunately, there have been many benefits in ditching their old RMS and signing up with ER, including increased ease of use and cost efficiency, as well as a dramatic improvement in their ISO rating.



Beaver Lake Fire Department Fire Chief,
John Whisenant

Here's what Chief Whisenant had to say about the top benefits they've experienced by switching to ER.

1.

On Ease of Use

"ER is extremely easy to use on both desktop and mobile devices. The user tabs on the main login screen make it easy to navigate to the appropriate task. Setting up the back of the house information so the department's needs are being met is simple, and the support staff quickly respond to questions and issues."

2.

On Efficiency

"ER has drastically reduced the amount of time our personnel are spending inputting various data into the system. An NFIRS report takes mere minutes to complete compared to our old RMS."

3.

On Cost Savings

"We were part of our county system on our old RMS; however, due to the aforementioned issues, they decided not to continue service with that vendor and told each county department they would have to purchase their own systems. After researching, we not only found ER to be far and away better suited for our needs, but the cost was around \$3,000 less than a more basic RMS package from another vendor."

Improved Record Keeping = Improved ISO Rating

Another major unexpected benefit of switching to ER was the fact that using the system helped BLFD prepare for their ISO audit and significantly lower their Public Protection Classification (PPC) rating. A lower PPC not only results in lower insurance premiums, it also reduces the fire risk to people and property.

“Beaver Lake Fire Department had a struggling paper records-keeping system which, as shown through a review of our 2007 ISO audit, negatively impacted our overall ISO score,” Chief Whisenant said. “Once we implemented ER, it was clear that we were going to vastly improve our records management. Moving our paper records over to digital and utilizing various features within ER, we began a two-year long process of improved record keeping.”

So what specific aspects of ER helped BLFD improve their ISO rating? To name a few key ones, Chief Whisenant explained: “Reports specially tailored to ISO in the training module helped us adjust our training schedules to better align with ISO standards. Having the ability to upload our hydrants into ER and track our activity with our hydrants gave us a tool we previously did not have. Integrating our CAD helped to better track apparatus details which helped to prepare for our deployment study during ISO. Having ER helped me to prepare concise documents needed when ISO came knocking.”

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Beaver Lake Fire Department

When the ISO Came Knocking, BLFD Was Ready

In just over a year of implementing ER, BLFD had a visit from ISO. Chief Whisenant turned to their ER RMS to prepare. "I pulled various data points from ER reports and was able to quickly pull requested data I had not prepared ahead of the ISO visit," he said. Using ER paid off; the department was able to lower their ISO rating from a class six to a class four, and they're looking to lower it again at the next audit.

"While the men and women of Beaver Lake Fire Department put in the effort, without ER I do not believe we would have been successful in moving our department from a class six to a class four," Chief Whisenant said. "Since receiving our improved ISO audit documents, I have utilized ER to prepare for another rerate where we intend to improve to a class three ISO rating."

If he had to pick one module that most helped their ISO rating, Chief Whisenant says it would have to be the training module. "Having come on to the Beaver

Lake Fire Department just months after our 2007 audit, I knew first-hand we were conducting training, but in reviewing the ISO documents, our training points were terrible. We gained nearly five points in the training category as a direct result of the ER training module."

According to Chief Whisenant, the benefits of ER can help many other fire departments like it did for his. "ER is user-friendly and in utilizing the various modules and reports, you too can successfully improve your ISO rating," he said.



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About Emergency Reporting

Emergency Reporting (ER) offers a powerful, cloud-based records management software (RMS) solution to Fire/EMS agencies worldwide. Founded in 2003, ER empowers first responders with secure, easy-to-use station management tools that offer one-report filing of NFIRS and NEMSIS data. ER's affordable SaaS solution allows Fire/EMS departments to run their entire operations efficiently and effectively, enhancing both firefighter and citizen safety. ER is proud to support more than 454,000 first responders at thousands of civilian Fire/Rescue and EMS agencies and DoD/military installations, as well as large entities with self-contained Fire/EMS services such as NASA, nuclear power plants, hospitals, and oil refineries.

Information

To learn more about how to use ER data for your next ISO Public Protection Survey, watch the video here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X_KP_rze9ek

For more information about Emergency Reporting software, visit: www.emergencyreporting.com

Register for a live ER demo webinar at:

<https://explore.emergencyreporting.com/webinar-schedule/>

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