



**EMERGENCY  
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# Emergency Reporting Helps Volunteer Fire Agencies:

Customer Spotlight on Lower Merion Fire Department in Ardmore, PA

CASE STUDY / NOV 2018



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# The Agency: Township of Lower Merion Fire Department



The Lower Merion Fire Department in Ardmore, PA serves Lower Merion Township and Narberth Borough and is comprised of seven volunteer fire companies and a fire prevention/codes enforcement office. Its mission is to provide the highest level of fire protection in order to minimize life and property loss through appropriate regulation, fire prevention services, education, and by utilizing the latest fire suppression techniques.

## Lower Merion Township, PA

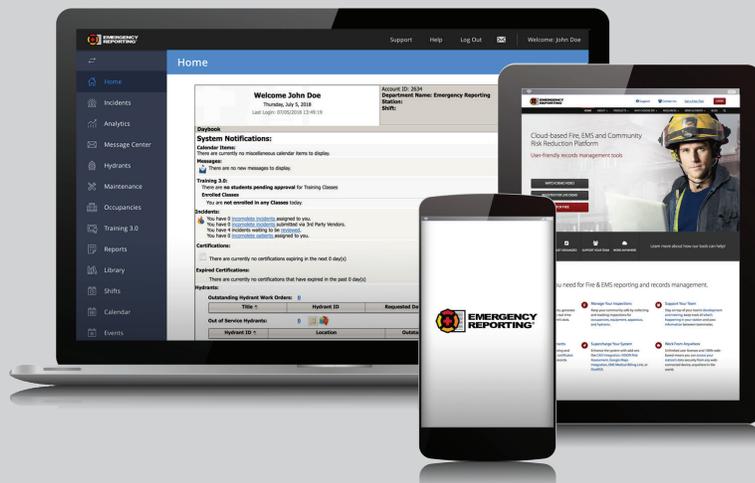
Population - 58,288\*  
Area - 23.83mi<sup>2</sup>  
Elevation - 200'



\*Lower Merion Township population according to 2016 U.S. Census.

The fire department's mission will be accomplished by the effective use of its combination volunteer and career firefighting force, physical assets and in cooperation with other public service agencies.

Lower Merion Fire Department was experiencing what so many other fire departments across the country have experienced: frustration with their RMS software. But what they realized that many departments don't is: You're not stuck with your software. If it's making things harder rather than easier, it often means that it's time to make a change. Lower Merion FD decided to do just that by switching to ER over two years ago.





## The Main Issue:

According to Charles J. McGarvey, Chief Fire Officer and Fire Marshal for the past 13 years at Lower Merion FD, there were many reasons for wanting to switch, but the main kicker was their old software provider's lack of responsiveness when they requested help or fixes. They would repeatedly experience technical issues, causing them to often lose information they submitted during inspections. Chief McGarvey says they submitted many support tickets, but the support staff continued to be unresponsive and the problem remained unresolved.

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## The Benefits of Making the Switch

Once Lower Merion FD switched to ER, their main concerns with their previous system were alleviated. They found that ER is an extremely customer focused company to work with, and that the availability of 24/7 customer support, based in the U.S., made getting started and addressing any questions fast and easy. They participated in some of the many training options that ER offers to get everyone up to speed. They also now enjoy the benefit of one-report filing of NFIRS data – no more double data entry for Lower Merion FD!



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

1.

## **ER Saves Money**

"There was a significant cost savings – we had an over 50 percent savings in switching to ER, and it was a major deciding factor for the switch."

2.

## **ER Increases Efficiency**

"It saves us time, especially when we are out in the field doing life safety inspections. The ability to not lose information when becoming disconnected has been a life-saver and reduced the double entry that was previously taking place."

3.

## **ER is Easy to Learn & Offers Effective Training Opportunities**

"There is always a learning curve with anything you do, but we found ER easy to use and caught on very quickly after the initial training," Chief McGarvey said. "I strongly recommend attending a Regional Training session because that helped us in really learning the deep-down parts of the system and we were able to produce reports that we didn't know existed."

4.

## **ER Provides the Data that Matters**

"Users of the ER system have been able to produce reports for their individual volunteer fire company's needs, which has helped them provide the data they need to their Boards. Also, the reports we were able to use helped us to prepare an annual report that is truly professional and has helped us tell our story to our community."

5.

## **ER Offers Better Data, Leading to Increased Safety**

"Being able to store data regarding the different buildings and things they have stored in them has helped in providing a safer environment for our firefighters."

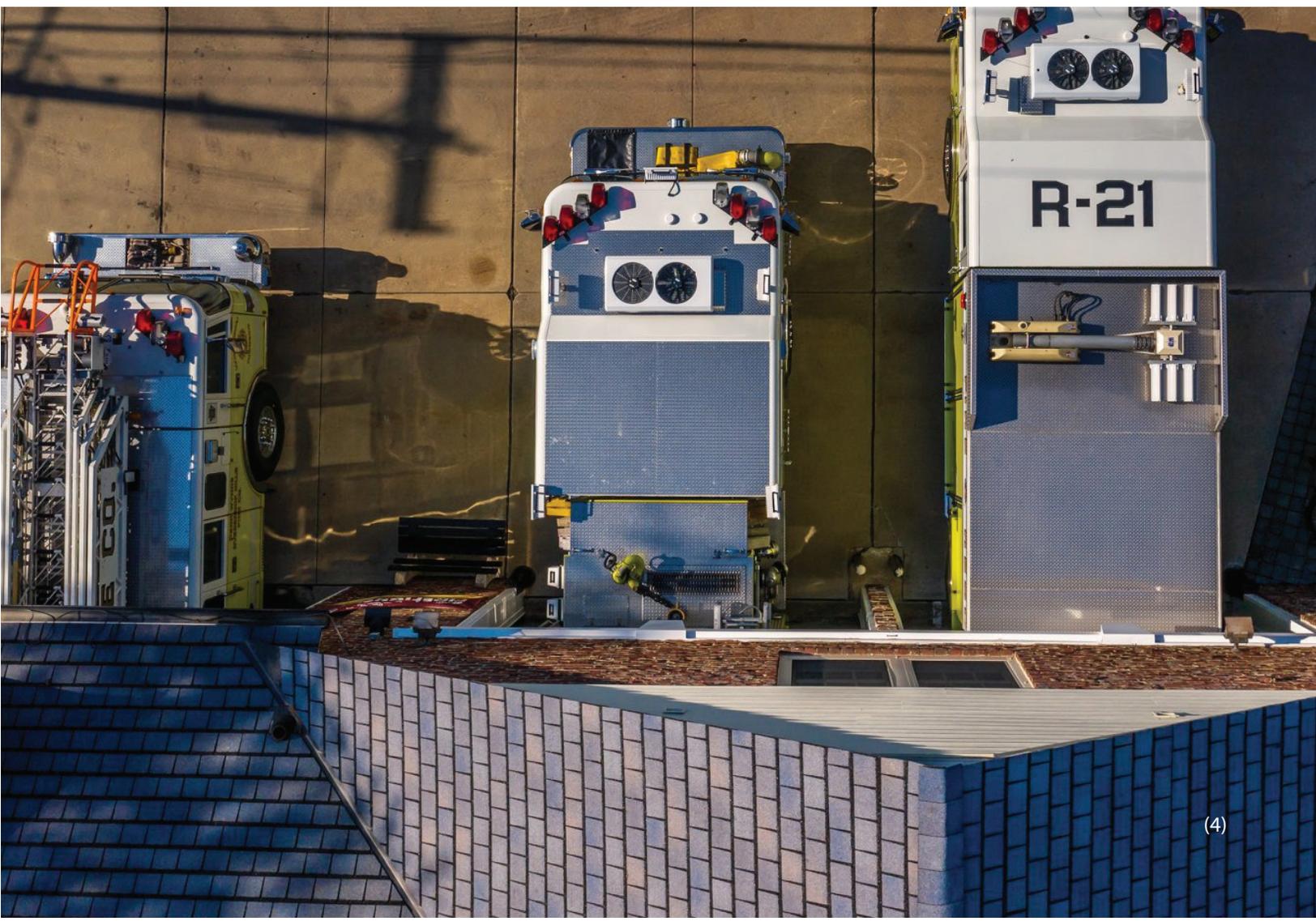
6.

## **ER Helps Agencies Prepare for an ISO Audit**

"We have set up the system to provide us with the necessary information to be able to pull for ISO for future inspections, and this will be a definite time-saver for us."



*Lower Merion Township, PA*





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Lower Merion Fire Department is one of thousands of volunteer and career fire agencies that have chosen to use Emergency Reporting because it's affordable, easy-to-use, and the most trusted solution for their reporting and records management needs. At ER, we admire and support the thousands of volunteer firefighters across the globe who work selflessly to protect their communities, and we're proud to provide our services to over 4,400 volunteer and mostly volunteer departments that use ER.

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