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NEWS RELEASE

Feb. 11, 2016 – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Dubuque’s Firefighting Rating Upgraded

DUBUQUE, Iowa – The national Insurance Services Office (ISO) has upgraded the City of Dubuque’s fire suppression capabilities rating based on the city’s fire department, emergency communications, water supply, and community risk reduction. As a result, Dubuque received the second-highest rating possible, placing it among the top three percent in the nation.

ISO conducted an evaluation of Dubuque’s fire protection service over the summer of 2015 and recently notified the City that Dubuque’s fire suppression rating has been upgraded from Class 3 to Class 2.

The Class 2 rating is the highest rating achieved among Iowa fire departments. Of the 2,332 Iowa fire departments evaluated, only 13 (0.55 percent) have achieved a Class 2 rating and none have a Class 1 rating. Furthermore, this upgraded rating puts Dubuque among the top three percent of the 48,632 fire departments in the United States evaluated by ISO.

“We’re pleased to receive this reaffirmation of Dubuque’s high-quality fire protection service by an objective evaluator,” said Dubuque Fire Chief Rick Steines. “The rating reflects not only our fire department and emergency dispatchers, but also our water department and the critical infrastructure they maintain and we rely on when we fight a fire.”

The rating provides fire departments with a benchmark and can be used for planning, budgeting, and justifying fire protection improvements. According to ISO, the rating is important to not only fire departments but entire communities.

Residents and business owners in communities whose fire suppression rating improves may get lower insurance prices. ISO says most U.S. insurers use the information as part of their decision-making when deciding what business to write, coverages to offer, and prices to charge for personal or commercial property insurance. Each insurance company independently determines the premiums it charges its policyholders.

ISO is an independent company that serves insurance companies, communities, fire departments, insurance regulators, and others by providing information about risk. ISO collects information about municipal fire suppression efforts, analyzes the relevant data and assigns a grade - a number from 1 to 10. Class 1 represents an exemplary fire suppression program, and Class 10 indicates that the area's fire suppression program does not meet ISO's minimum criteria.

ISO's program evaluates communities according to a uniform set of criteria, incorporating nationally recognized standards developed by the National Fire Protection Association and the American Water Works Association. Specifically, ISO's Fire Suppression Rating Schedule (FSRS) evaluates four primary categories of fire suppression: fire department, emergency communications, water supply, and community risk reduction.

ISO's Public Protection Classification (PPC) survey of Dubuque's structural fire suppression delivery system last summer analyzed:

- **Needed Fire Flows**, which are representative building locations used to determine the theoretical amount of water necessary for fire suppression purposes.
- **Emergency Communications**, including emergency reporting, telecommunicators, and dispatching systems.
- **Fire Department**, including equipment, staffing, training, geographic distribution of fire companies, operational considerations, and community risk reduction.
- **Water Supply**, including inspection and flow testing of hydrants, alternative water supply operations, and a careful evaluation of the amount of available water compared with the amount needed to suppress fires up to 3,500 gallons per minute.

For more information on the rating system, visit <http://www.isomitigation.com/>.

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