

## The Fire Department and Your Homeowner's Insurance

Over 15 years ago, before the formation of our Fire Department, homeowners or fire insurance was quite difficult to obtain for residents of the Greensprings. There were only a handful of companies who would write coverage and the premiums were extremely high.

The first few years of our Fire Department's formation did not show a significant improvement in insurance coverage or premiums. We were lacking the equipment, experience and infrastructure needed to qualify as a recognized agency. This has changed significantly over the last several years.

The Insurance Services Organization (ISO) evaluates and rates community and municipal fire departments according to their ability to fight fires and protect residential and commercial properties. Many insurance companies then use this rating to help establish insurance premiums for their customers. Under this program, a community or municipality can be rated from a 1 to a 10, with a 10 being considered un-protected. In early 2011, the Greensprings Rural Fire District rating was upgraded from an ISO 10 to an ISO 9. As of early 2018 our Fire District has been upgraded again, this time to an ISO 8b.

For a residential property or business property owner on the Greensprings, this *could* make it possible to significantly reduce fire insurance premiums. The likelihood of realizing a savings depends on several factors. The two major factors include being within five road miles of the Fire Station and having an insurance company that utilizes the ISO rating in their underwriting process. Some companies factor in the ISO rating and some do not.

If you are interested in determining whether you can obtain a lower fire insurance premium, the best way to start is by advising your insurance agent that the Community ISO rating has been upgraded to an 8b and ask how this might affect your premium. This would also be a good time to shop around with several different companies to find the best rate. While inquiring, be sure to tell the agent about our new ISO rating. It may not be in their "system" yet. A rating confirmation letter from ISO is available if your agent requests one. Please have them call us at 541-488-0911 for a copy or for any other information.