

Fire Department Representative for Riverwoods

Here at the Lincolnshire-Riverwoods Fire Protection District we understand the need to have a familiar face available when you have a question or concern. In an effort to address this need, Chief Kruger has assigned three members of his management team to act as liaisons with the Villages we protect. My name is Rob Ugaste, I am an Assistant Chief, and I will be the Fire District representative for the Village of Riverwoods.

Starting April 17th I will begin attending the Board of Trustee meetings in an effort to provide the Village of Riverwoods (leaders, business owners, and residents) with a consistent and knowledgeable fire department contact person. I can also be reached at the Fire Department by calling 847-634-2512.

What's a Fire District?

Fire districts were originally created by residents who needed fire protection and wanted to share the cost of funding the services. The district concept typically results in a larger and more diverse fire department than a smaller individual community could afford on its own. Because village boundaries have changed over the years the fire district boundaries don't always match those of the Villages they were created to protect. In Northern Illinois alone there are 64 Fire Districts including; the Long Grove FPD, the Deerfield - Bannockburn FPD, and the Countryside FPD locally.

Fast Facts

In 1941 the Lincolnshire-Riverwoods Fire Protection District (originally known as Vernon FPD) was created as a volunteer organization. The District owned one fire engine and was notified of calls by a siren mounted on the roof of the old fire station. The department continued to function on a volunteer basis for 30 years until a tragic accident resulted in a dramatic change. A fire engine rolled over on Weiland Road while responding to a call for help and an Assistant Chief died that day. This tragedy caused our Trustees to make the decision that it was time to move in the direction of a full time – career oriented fire department.

The following year (1972) our first full time Chief was hired and the next year the first career firefighters were brought on board. In 1974 our first Paramedics graduated and our services were expanded to include emergency medicine. In 1994 our headquarters moved to its present location in the Lincolnshire Corporate Center and in 1997 our name was changed to Lincolnshire-Riverwoods to better reflect the communities we serve.

Keeping Promises

Our headquarters station in Lincolnshire (Station 51) protected the entire District until 2001 when Station 52 opened in Riverwoods. As expected our average response times to the Riverwoods area were dramatically reduced. A cooperative agreement with the Deerfield Bannockburn Fire Protection District was then created to allow our Station 52 to respond to all areas of the Village. In the near future we will break ground on our 3rd station in Vernon Hills which will complete our 1998 Referendum promise to reduce response times to both the south and north extremes of our District.

Today, the Lincolnshire-Riverwoods Fire Protection District protects a 16 square miles area (from Lake Cook Road on the south to Route 60 on the north) which includes the majority of the Villages of Riverwoods, Lincolnshire, and the southern corporate - residential areas of Vernon Hills. Our Fire District population of 16,000 grows to approximately 60,000 on weekdays due to corporate centers and schools and last year we responded to over 2700 emergencies (including 66 structure fires and 1448 ambulance calls).

Chief Kruger oversees a staff of 42 Firefighters (37 are state certified Paramedics) 2 civilian Fire Inspectors and 2 civilian Administrative Assistants. Our daytime staff is comprised of the Chief, 2 Deputy Chiefs, a Training Officer, and a full time Fire Prevention Bureau while our Firefighters are split into three 24 hour shifts (13 per shift). We also have a Public Education Division and our own Maintenance Division.

We are members of the Lake and McHenry County Specialized Response Teams and have personnel trained as rescue technicians in High Angle, Below Grade, Trench Collapse, Confined Space, Dive, and Hazardous Materials. We are also members of the Combined Area Fire Training group (Wheeling FD, Buffalo Grove FD, and Long Grove FPD) which allows us to utilize the training facility on Deerfield Parkway. Our apparatus include 3 Fire Engines, a 100' Aerial Ladder, a Heavy Rescue Squad, 3 Paramedic Ambulances and 2 Command Cars.

Paramedics Who Really Care

Our most recent EMS equipment upgrade to 12 Lead EKG Defibrillators (from the traditional 2 or 3 lead) provides our Paramedics with a hospital quality EKG recording that can be interpreted in the field. The resulting information is then used to determine what area of the heart is damaged, what medications will work best, and allows the Emergency Room Physician earlier insight as to whether a Cath Lab is needed.

Our Paramedics are supervised by the Northwest Community EMS System which is well known as a leader in the emergency medical services field. We currently transport to Highland Park, Condell, and Lake Forest Hospitals and unless your condition is life threatening we give you the choice. In the near future we are looking into adding Glenbrook Hospital as an option.

Closing Thoughts

The Lincolnshire-Riverwoods Fire Protection District stands ready to serve and protect. Whether we are dealing with the massive Dean Witter Headquarters complex, one of the largest high schools in the state (Stevenson High School), or someone's home and loved ones, we are on duty 24 hours a day.