


SARA'S BACK

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Lourdine Osborne
editor

just the facts

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City to question recent fire survey rating

Hoopeston fire officials have questions about the result of a recent fire rating survey, and they plan to meet with a representative of the surveying agency to get some answers.

The Insurance Services Office, part of Commercial Risk Services, surveyed the Hoopeston fire department last June. That survey resulted in the city's insurance rating improving from a seven to a six.

However, the itemized survey report shows the survey group may have misinterpreted some information.

Alderman Drew Allen, head of the city's fire committee, said at Tuesday night's city council meeting that city and fire officials will meet with Paul Boecker of the ISO to discuss the survey results. That meeting is scheduled for 7 p.m. Monday. "We don't feel we got all the credit we deserve," he said.

Questions concerning firefighting equipment and departmental preparedness will be discussed, said fire chief Chuck Fenwick.

Boecker will also be asked to give recommendations for the department to get a better rating. "I'd like to see us get to a five," Fenwick said, adding Boecker's suggestions during the June survey have already been carried out.

The improvement from seven to six meant some home and business owners saw reductions in premiums for fire insurance. Attaining a five rating could lower premiums even more, Fenwick said.

Surveys are routinely done every 15 years, or when requested by fire departments

In other action, the council:

- approved spending \$56,461 for a 1993 ambulance from Wheeled Coach, based in Orlando, Fla.
- spent \$2,468.43 for a new furnace at the McFerren Park shed.
- learned a new dog catcher will be hired in April, replacing Don Rhodes, who is retiring. The new employee will also have janitorial duties, said alderman Odell Crabtree, police committee chairman.

Monday morning car fire still under investigation

A car fire Monday morning is being declared arson.

The fire, at 5:36 a.m. Monday, was in the back seat of a car owned by Rhonda Longfellow.


According to fire chief Chuck Fenwick, the fire did not start by mechanical or natural causes. "Technically, it is an arson," he said. "Some way, shape or form, the back seat was ignited."

The car was in a garage at 709 S. Market. The garage and attached house were not damaged.

The investigation may take some time, Fenwick said. "It could be a day or two, or a week." One person still must be questioned.

Arrests may be pending in the case, Fenwick said.

More *Just the Facts* on the other side

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