

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Belleville Fire Department Dowses Students with Fire Safety Education throughout October

Belleville, Ill. – October 23, 2019 – Throughout the month of October, the Belleville Fire Department has been busy visiting schools throughout the City presenting its Survival Education Program, which highlights fire prevention, safety, and a real-life fire simulation, where students get to put into practice the information they’ve learned in their classrooms throughout the month.

“We work closely with each school within the City to provide them materials and literature that they use in their classroom throughout October,” said Fire Chief Tom Pour. “Then, when we come out and present to the students, they have time to interact with us, ask questions, and participate in a simulated fire exercise.”

According to Pour, he revamped the fire safety curriculum two years ago to make it more interactive for the children, which he says leaves a stronger impression on them and helps them retain the information better.

“When the kids do the simulation in the fire safety house, you can see their instincts kick in and they get to put into practice all that they’ve been learning, which leaves a lasting impression on them,” said Pour.

During the simulation, which is conducted in the mobile fire safety house, students sit in a room to discuss a fire safety plan, a safe meeting location, and other aspects of leaving a home safely when it’s on fire. Then, a smoke detector sounds, and simulated smoke is pumped into the room, whereupon the children then practice their evacuation plan.

“At first I was scared [when the alarm went off], but then I remembered I had to get low to the ground, feel if the door was hot, and then meet the rest of the group at our meeting spot,” said one first grade student at Westhaven Elementary School.

According to Mayor Mark Eckert, the City of Belleville makes a concerted effort to educate the public on fire safety issues and provides extensive training to its 60 firefighters to ensure the City remains a safe place to live.

In fact, the City of Belleville currently has an Insurance Services Office (ISO) rating of 2, which is one of the lowest ratings awarded to the communities in Southern Illinois.

The City of Belleville, Illinois, incorporated in 1814, is the St. Clair County seat and the largest city in southern Illinois. With a current population of 44,478 (2010), Belleville is home to the longest contiguous main street in the United States, excellent education and healthcare organizations, and thriving businesses and neighborhoods, including three National Historic Districts. Mayor Mark Eckert runs the municipal government along with elected officials including City Clerk Jennifer Gain Meyer, Treasurer Dean Hardt, and 16 aldermen representing eight city wards. The vision for the City of Belleville is one where all sectors of the community work together to help the city grow and prosper and to become a model for other communities to follow.

“Our good rating reflects our extensive training, aggressive building plan review, and building inspection programs,” said Eckert. “Only two percent of the fire departments in the United States receive a Class 2 ISO rating or better, and that’s because our guys are out there every day working hard to make Belleville a safe place to be.”

The Insurance Services Office, Inc. (ISO) is the leading supplier of statistical, actuarial, and underwriting information for and about the property/casualty insurance industry. The ISO fire insurance ratings for a community are the foundation on which most insurers build their coverage programs. The ratings are based on many factors, including the quality of the fire department, the water supply and hydrant locations, the city communication systems, the building codes, and the building inspection programs. The ISO ratings range from 1 to 10, with 1 being perfect. Since the ISO fire ratings are used by property insurance companies to set insurance premium rates, the lower the ISO fire rating, the lower the insurance premium.

To learn more about the City of Belleville, visit www.belleville.net.

Cutline: The Belleville Fire Department recently visited Westhaven Elementary School, where students experienced a simulated house fire and put into practice all the fire safety information they’ve been learning throughout the month of October.

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