



4 Rock County Fire Departments Introduce New Partnership

Jan. 20, 2020 – Four Rock County fire departments are announcing a partnership that will allow the departments to respond to every day emergencies more quickly.

Using automatic vehicle locator technology (AVL), which utilizes GPS, to dispatch the closest available emergency services vehicle, the departments will now be supporting each other's communities regardless of municipal boundaries. The City of Beloit, Town of Beloit, City of Janesville and Milton (city and town) fire departments are the first four departments to use the technology in Rock County.

This technology is being used for daily operations, such as medical calls, car accidents, car fires, and fire alarms. The new initiative will result in faster calls for service as the closest available unit will be able to respond. For example, if a Town of Beloit ambulance is returning from Mercy Hospital in Janesville and is blocks away from an individual experiencing cardiac arrest while a Janesville ambulance is farther away, the Town of Beloit ambulance would immediately respond to the emergency.

All four fire departments will continue to evaluate the AVL program to ensure that all communities are benefiting from these changes. The departments are also looking to collaborate with other fire departments in Rock County and northern Illinois to expand the use of this technology.

"When our residents experience an emergency, they need the fastest response possible. By working together, we are able to more effectively render aid regardless of boundaries," said City of Beloit Interim Fire Chief Dan Pease.

"The greatest challenge we face is getting the proper resources to the people that need them. This system allows these resources to respond regardless of the name on the vehicle. It's what is best for all communities," said Town of Beloit Fire Chief/Administrator Gene Wright.

"Regardless of whose response area the call is located within, we must send the closest fire engine or ambulance to provide rapid patient care and deliver aggressive firefighting forces to the citizens who need help. Together we are making sure boundary lines do not delay a call for help," said City of Janesville and Milton Fire Chief Ernie Rhodes.

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