Volunteers to Restore Fire's "Burn Building"

A volunteer effort by Springfield business and labor representatives to restore the Fire Department’s “burn building” for training use again is part of an accepted Action Plan to maintain the City’s ISO 2 rating.

The Insurance Services Office notified the City of Springfield recently that it will not lower the City’s ISO 2 rating and accepted the proposed Action Plan for improvements. In about six months, the ISO rating agency will determine if the Action plan steps are either implemented or well underway. If so, the ISO will formally determine that no reclassification is necessary and the City will maintain its ISO 2 rating for the next 10-year period. The ISO’s initial review indicated the City may drop to a “3” rating without additional steps.

One element of the action plan involves restoring the “burn building” training facility in northwest Springfield. Zone 4 City Councilman Scott Bailes convened a group of volunteers to donate labor and materials to improve the site so it can be used again for live fire training. The Fire Department had not planned to invest money into restoring the current site because it is expected to be replaced as part of a future police-fire training facility.

The donors include:

- Conco Companies – Rock
- Regional Ready Mix – Concrete
- Springfield Laborers Union Local 663 – Labor
- Hunter Chase & Associates – Material, equipment, labor
- Metropolitan Grill restaurant - $5,000 financial contribution for burn panels and a thermometer device to measure temperature inside the building.

The Springfield Public Works Department also will assist with site preparation by handling debris clearing and grading work.

The project is expected to be completed by April 30, 2010, weather permitting.

“I want to express our thanks and appreciation to the local businesses and the labor union that stepped up to respond to this challenge we were facing in trying to maintain the ISO 2 rating,” Mayor Jim O’Neal said. “I’m grateful to Councilman Bailes for taking the initiative to pull this effort together. This is a great example of a creative solution that will put the burn building back into use for the near future, while not investing a lot of taxpayer dollars into a facility that is going to eventually be replaced.”
The Insurance Services Office is a national rating agency that conducts assessments every 10 years specifically of a Fire Department’s ability to suppress structure fires. Of more than 1,700 rated Missouri departments, Springfield is among six departments to hold the ISO 2 rating.

Download the Action Plan submitted to the ISO and its letter of response. For more information, contact: Fire Chief David Hall, 864-1530.