April 06, 2010

News Release

For Immediate Release

Burn Building Ribbon Cutting April 8

The Springfield Fire Department will host a ribbon cutting for the “burn building” in northwest Springfield, which has been renovated with volunteer donations of labor, equipment and materials to provide several more years of use for fire training.

The event will take place at 1:15 p.m., Thursday, April 8, 2010, at the site (directions below).

Immediately following the ribbon cutting, fire crews will conduct a training exercise in which the building will fill with heat and smoke to simulate those conditions in an actual fire situation.

The Fire Department will host a thank-you lunch for the volunteers, donors, staff and members of City Council at noon Thursday at Fire Station #5, 2750 W. Kearney St. Metropolitan Grill owner Pat Duran will donate the lunch; Duran also is one of the contributors to the project with a $5,000 cash donation to purchase materials.

Other donors and volunteers include: Conco Quarries; Hartman Construction; Hunter Chase & Associates; Journagan Construction; Laborers’ Local 663; and Regional Ready Mix. The donations included about 64 hours of labor, more than 12 yards of concrete, 60 tons of base rock, and equipment and tools. The City Public Works staff also assisted by preparing the site for the volunteer crews.

With the re-opening of the burn building, the Fire Department will be able to use this facility until it is eventually replaced at a new police-fire training center. It also will be available for other fire departments in the area, particularly Willard and Republic, which have mutual-aid agreements with Springfield.

The burn building had fallen into disrepair in recent years because of the wear and tear created by the heavy vehicles, volume of water used and repeated exposure to heat, smoke and fire. The Fire Department had moved its training to an alternate facility in Taney County because it didn’t want to invest tax dollars into rehabbing a facility that was planned for replacement with a taller structure.

But the lack of a local burn building was raised as an issue in the 10-year review of the City’s ISO rating, which gauges the department’s ability to suppress structural fires. Zone 4 City Councilman Scott Bailes conceived the volunteer effort to rehab the building as one of the steps to maintain the current ISO 2 rating.

Directions to the burn building: North on Kansas Expressway to Norton Road (Norton Road is the east/west street at Lowe’s North). Take a right at Norton Road and then an immediate left at Kansas Avenue/Farm Road 143. Continue north and take a right at Farm Road 147. Continue on Farm Road 147 and take a right on Farmer Avenue (road splits in front of the Fulbright Water Treatment Plant). Continue on Farmer until you reach the Burn Building.

For more information, contact: Assistant Fire Chief Randy Villines; 864-1527; or Mike Brothers, Special Projects Coordinator, 864-1119.