



News Release

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Rockford Fire Receives CAAS Accreditation

ROCKFORD, IL – The Rockford Fire Department recently earned a three-year accreditation from the Commission on Accreditation of Ambulance Services (CAAS) for meeting organizational and clinical ambulatory excellence standards.

The accreditation process included a lengthy evaluation of the department's entire emergency medical services and examined more than 100 standards related to organizational policies and procedures, operational and administrative functions, and patient outcomes. Rockford Fire is one of only three organizations in the state to receive this accreditation.

With recognition from CAAS and the Center for Public Safety Excellence, Rockford Fire was the first municipality in the state to receive accreditation for both ambulance and firefighter service. The department is one of less than 10 dually accredited departments in the nation.

"Rockford Fire is committed to continuous process improvement and ensuring citizens of the community receive the highest level of service," said Fire Chief Derek Bergsten. "The self-assessment phase of the process allowed us to compare our practices against the highest standards, while the on-site review looked at all operational aspects of our service. The entire process took a deep dive into how we serve the community and helped improve our efficiency and effectiveness."

Rockford Fire receives more than 28,000 calls annually and operates seven advanced life support ambulances and 223 paramedics who go through a rigorous 450 hours of classroom training and 500 hours of clinical and field internship training before they can become licensed. Some of the instruction includes specialized training in advanced cardiac life support, pediatric advanced life support, pre-hospital trauma life support, and cardio-pulmonary resuscitation.

"Our fire department is not only one of the busiest fire departments in the state; it is also one of the best. This accreditation is really the gold standard in the ambulance industry and shows the high quality of care our team provides every day to the community," says Mayor Tom McNamara.

CAAS is a not-for-profit commission established by the EMS industry to promote and encourage quality in the ambulance industry. CAAS accreditation signifies that an ambulance service provider has met the Gold Standard of Care deemed by the industry to be essential in the delivery of a modern EMS system. CAAS accredited agencies must adhere to strict industry standards that often exceed state and local requirements, and are reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure compliance with the standards. Accreditation increases clinical, operational and safety performance while decreasing risk and liability to the organization.

