

# From the community: Naperville Fire Department Deploys Innovative Rescue Vehicle Program

By **Community Contributor City of Naperville**

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**S**maller, single-staffed vehicles will allow more efficient response to non-emergency calls

NAPERVILLE, Ill. - The Naperville Fire Department today launched the Rescue Vehicle Program, an innovative program aimed at more efficiently delivering appropriate resources to non-emergency calls.

The department's rescue vehicles - Rescue 1 and Rescue 2 - will be housed at Fire Station No. 9 on the City's north side and Fire Station No. 10 on the City's south side. As staffing allows, each rescue vehicle will be staffed by one firefighter or firefighter/paramedic trained to respond to non-emergency calls, such as carbon monoxide calls where no illness is reported, elevator alarms where no one is trapped, malfunctioning fire alarms and open burning complaints.

Naperville Fire Chief Mark Puknaitis said the department responds to an estimated 1,000 non-emergency calls annually.

"Prior to this program, such calls would have resulted in the dispatch of a large engine or ladder truck with three personnel assigned to it," said Chief Puknaitis. "The Rescue Vehicle Program allows us to be much more efficient with staff, gasoline, and other resources while providing the same great service to our residents."

The Rescue Vehicle Program will be evaluated for its ability to reduce maintenance and wear and tear on department vehicles, reduce fuel use, keep fire suppression units available in their districts for emergency calls, and increase public safety by reducing the number of times a suppression unit is put on the street.

In addition to non-emergency calls, these vehicles will also respond to structure fires, automobile extrications and multiple alarm incidents, which will increase staffing on the scene of these manpower-intensive incidents.

"Naperville is a very forward-thinking community, and the deployment of Rescue 1 and Rescue 2 is a perfect example of using non-traditional thinking to improve the efficiency of our department," said Chief Puknaitis. "This program is one of the first of its kind in Illinois, and other departments I've spoken to are really interested to see our progress with this in hopes of replicating the same type of service."

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