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Cambridge Fire Department

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The Cambridge Fire Department is one of the most highly recognized and trained departments not only in Mass., but also in the United States. Through great leadership, and support of the city and its community, they have been classified an ISO Class 1 Fire Department, 1 of only 54 departments in the country and 1 of 3 in New England to be rated ISO Class 1. ISO evaluates municipal fire-protection efforts in communities throughout the United States. A community's investment in fire mitigation is a proven and reliable predictor of future fire losses. Insurance companies use this rating when determining fair premiums for fire insurance, generally offering lower premiums in communities with better protection. What does this mean for the businesses and residents of the city of Cambridge, lower premium costs.

Cambridge is the 5th most densely populated residential urban area in the United States. The fire department has the responsibility to protect these homes, comprised mostly of multi-storied wood framed construction, as well as 4 miles of subway, one of the deepest subway tubes in the United States, over 100 high-rise buildings, large university buildings, 3,600 laboratories within the universities, industrial and manufacturing buildings, and 80 private research facilities. With such responsibility for the safety of the city, the Cambridge Fire Department's staff has arguably the most intense training in the state. This training not only gives the departments staff the tools and training to extinguish fires, but better enables them to educate the businesses and residents on fire prevention, safety, and public awareness, the departments main goals.

The department consists of 2 line divisions and 4 staff divisions made up of 276 highly skilled and trained men and women and 8 civilian members. The line companies, including 8 engines, 4 ladder companies, 2 paramedic squads, 1 rescue truck, 2 boats, and 2 de-containment trailers, operate out of 8 strategically placed fire houses around the city. For support, there are several staff divisions that offer support to these brave men and women working the street. The staff units include the fire prevention division, training division, technical services division, fire investigation unit, and administrative services, including the business and finance section. Combined, the Cambridge Fire Department is the 3rd largest fire department in the commonwealth.

The department is under the control of fire chief Gerald Reardon, one of the most well respected and highly skilled fire chiefs in the country. His 31 years on the force and 8 plus years as fire chief provide excellent leadership for his staff and the city's businesses and residents.

Reardon was born and raised in Cambridge, which gives him a certain pride in becoming the fire chief later on in life. As a young man, Reardon would take apart electronics in order to see how they operated, before he would put them back together. His first job was at a Radio Shack, where he would fix the broken electronic devices brought in by customers. Little did he know that his background in building and fixing electronics would serve the city he loves, businesses and

residents in one of the most important capacities, in the years to come? Besides his many duties as fire chief, Reardon is the system engineer for the city's radio communication between departments (public works, fire, police, hospitals, and university police). His hands on experience make him invaluable, in his ability to do his job, and protect and serve the city. Reardon commends the city managers office as well as the city council for their continued support of the fire department. He said, "The city services are the best in the state, bar none, and that's a tribute to the city manager and his staff, and the continued support of the city council." With technology changing rapidly, the city has appropriated \$6-7 million in communication upgrades. This is vitally important for these individual entities to be able to communicate directly with one another, not only during emergencies, but also during large events such as the nationally televised, annual 4th of July concert and fireworks along the Charles River.

Reardon also represents the city in other important capacities on a local, state, regional and national level dealing with safety and security. He is the Jurisdictional Point of Contact (JPOC) in Cambridge for the Metro-Boston Homeland Security Region (MBHSR). The MBHSR is dedicated to preparing and training for, responding to, and recovering from a chemical, biological, nuclear, radiological, and explosive WMD incident. The MBHSR Plan outlines the region's security goals, objectives, projects and tasks for the coming fiscal year, and is updated as necessary. Reardon is also the chairman of Boston urban area of the program UASI (Urban Area Security Initiative CIS Communications Interoperability Subcommittee). The program was designed to provide financial assistance to address the unique planning, equipment, training, and exercise needs of large urban areas, and to assist them in building an enhanced and sustainable capacity to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from acts of terrorism. The program also provides funding to mass transit systems for the protection of critical infrastructure and emergency preparedness activities. He also chairman of Mass.MetroFire, an association of 34 metropolitan Boston fire departments.

that provides coordination of mutual aid response to improve the effectiveness of fire services. These fire departments, with the support and approval of their local governments, were formed in 1976, expanded in 1980, and incorporated in 2003. Reardon also is chairman of the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security (EOPSS). The EOPSS is committed to keeping the people of Mass. informed about critical homeland security, emergency management, personal safety, and criminal justice issues.

Chief Reardon has dedicated his professional career to the safety and well being of the residents and businesses of the city, the state, and the United States. He is a model fire chief for fire departments across the country.