



Why One Oklahoma Fire Department Switched to Emergency Reporting After Years of Using FIREHOUSE Software

A Case Study by



**EMERGENCY
REPORTING®**

The Most Trusted Fire & EMS Records Management Solution



Meet Midwest City Fire Department

The Midwest City Fire Department in Oklahoma has six fire stations that average over 7,000 calls a year, including fire, rescue, and medical. The department used FIREHOUSE Software for over 12 years to manage their reporting and records, but decided several years ago to make the switch to Emergency Reporting when they found that their old software was not meeting their needs.

Now, having experienced the superior benefits of Emergency Reporting's software for the past three years, they're thankful they found a much more robust fire/EMS reporting and records management platform. Keep reading to learn about the top 5 reasons they're happy they made the switch.

1 Cost

According to the Department's Administration Major, David Richardson, their former software provider charged \$500 for each individual mobile device utilizing the system, plus an additional rate for each fire station computer or work station. With six fire stations, these additional charges really added up.

"The cost of FIREHOUSE software may have been similar in pricing, but only if we limited the number of our devices accessing the software, which we didn't want to do," Richardson said. "This also required our city to have to maintain and operate a server to run it."

"Our department didn't want to be limited by the number of devices we could use!"



So Midwest City FD began looking for other options. They asked around and found out about Emergency Reporting from a neighboring department that uses it. One of the major reasons they were drawn to Emergency Reporting was the ability to pay one rate for the cloud-based system, which includes unlimited access on any of their devices, anywhere in the world.



"An inspector can log in on both his/her workstation and iPad without incurring any additional fees, thus making it very efficient for both office work and field work," Richardson said. "Same goes for a fire crew. They can be on-scene and have full access to the entire Emergency Reporting system as if they were in front of a computer."

"Emergency Reporting has allowed us to go 100% mobile OS in our fire trucks, and THAT is where the true savings are. We were able to go from an expensive \$4,000 mobile PC or ruggedized laptop - which was \$24,000 for all six of our fire trucks - to \$700 iPads at a total of \$4,200. That was a huge savings for us."



Efficiency/Productivity



Switching to Emergency Reporting meant significant increases in staff efficiency. "Having the ability to do a fire report or inspection on any device has made us much more efficient, because it means it can be done on scene, in a vehicle, or an office setting - making accessibility very versatile and a key reason why we switched to Emergency Reporting," Richardson said.

Richardson also said the department has become more productive since they started using Emergency Reporting. One specific area that saw an increase was their training. "With this software, our Training Chief can easily create

JPR (Job Performance Requirements) for each month and the company officer teaches or conducts the actual company level training," he said. "This helps develop a consistent curriculum throughout all shifts while also providing everyone a level of expectation throughout the year."



Ease of Use

Sometimes reporting and records management platforms are difficult to learn, confusing, and not very user-friendly; they can make the user feel like they're trying to learn a foreign language. Finding software that's easy to use for everyone in the department was very important to Midwest City FD. "Emergency Reporting is very straightforward and intuitive for all levels of computer experience," Richardson said.

"FIREHOUSE was no doubt more difficult to use. It allowed the user to jump around, thus not necessarily completing the reports in order."

"ER's approach is a no-brainer on completing a report. You hit 'next' and if you fail to input a 'must-have' item it won't be able to be authorized until that item is completed. FIREHOUSE utilized tabs in its interface and the user could select any of the tabs at any point. There wasn't a 'flow' in order. Emergency Reporting takes the guesswork out of 'what is the next step'."

The screenshot shows a web-based interface for emergency reporting. At the top, there are navigation tabs: Home, Open, and Exposures. Below these are icons for Basic, Narrative, Files, and Authorize. The main content area is titled 'Basic Info 1' and displays the following information:

FDID: 55010	Station:	Location: 13501 SE 29TH #150
Incident No: 2017-000720	Incident Date: 02/06/2017	OKLAHOMA COUNTY OK

Below this, there is a 'Next' button and a section titled 'Incident Info' with the following fields:

- FDID: 55010
- State: OK
- Station: [Dropdown menu]
- Shift or Platoon: [Dropdown menu]
- Date: 02/06/2017 (Today | Yesterday)
- Incident Number: 2017 - 000720
- Dispatch Run Number: [Checked] 17-FD-000720

4 Security

Richardson said the department was initially leery of switching to a cloud-based system like Emergency Reporting. But their concern went away once they understood how beneficial it is. When data is stored on individual devices, it can be easily lost, stolen, or corrupted.

“The multiple backup servers and DOD/military compliancy gave us great comfort!”

None of this is a concern with Emergency Reporting, which is entirely cloud-based. No single device or account can jeopardize data. Emergency Reporting even has multiple data centers across the country, keeping customer information safe from natural disasters or other catastrophic events.



Image Credit: thegazette.com

“The multiple backup servers and DOD/military compliancy gave us great comfort,” he said. “And not having to constantly update our servers has now become a huge positive we didn’t realize when shopping for new software!”

5 Safety

The more data and data management tools that a fire crew has access to, the better they are able to perform their jobs – which ultimately means improved safety for emergency responders and civilians alike. Richardson said after using Emergency Reporting for several years, he can think of many ways the software has led to increased safety for his staff and community.

“Having the full feature set of the Emergency Reporting records management suite makes us, by default, more inherently safe,” he said. “For example, using the Daily Roster gives the shift commander a visual representation of the available staff; staffing is then properly assigned each day and no rank should be missed when using this module.”



Richardson cited a few more examples of how Emergency Reporting helps improve Midwest City's safety:

- The Daily Roster allows shift commanders to properly assign staff each day so no rank is missed.
- Using the calendar, everyone knows the events for that day, such as a public education event or training class.
- The library can give map pages or aerial views of apartment complexes and mobile home parks for quicker reference to specific units – which ultimately means quicker response times.
- Using the heat maps, we can better plan and see trends of where needs are in the city based upon overall calls or specific call types.
- Using the custom question function in Incidents we can find issues that we were not aware of such as "Was a working smoke detector installed?" or "If children present, was a car seat installed and used?", etc. Then we can take that information and target groups or create a campaign to address the issues.

Home **Rosters**

Open Roster List Edit Roster Close Roster Print Roster

Green Shift - 1/3/2017

Shift: **C Shift**

Show station logs

Station 1 - Station 1

Apparatus: 203

Name	Position	Activity	Begin	End
Lopez, Anthony - AC	AC	REG	1/3/2017 07:00	1/4/2017 07:00

Apparatus: L1

Name	Position	Activity	Begin	End
Herron, Michael D. - MAJ	CO	REG	1/3/2017 07:00	1/4/2017 07:00
Flint, Chad D. - LT	AO	REG	1/3/2017 07:00	1/4/2017 07:00
Bryant, Caleb C. - FF	FF	REG	1/3/2017 07:00	1/4/2017 07:00
Maslock, Garrett L. - FF	FF	REG	1/3/2017 07:00	1/4/2017 07:00

Station 2 - Station 2

Apparatus: E2

Name	Position	Activity	Begin	End
Adelby, Ryan M. - LT	REG	REG	1/3/2017 07:00	1/4/2017 07:00
Stadovec, Mitchell - FF	REG	REG	1/3/2017 07:00	1/4/2017 07:00
Johnson, Don M. - MAJ	REG	REG	1/3/2017 07:00	1/4/2017 07:00
Lynn, Shelby A. - FF	REG	REG	1/3/2017 07:00	1/4/2017 07:00

Station 3 - Station 3

Apparatus: E3

Name	Position	Activity	Begin	End
Hughes, Jeff D. - FF	REG	REG	1/3/2017 07:00	1/4/2017 07:00
Neek, Jeremy W. - MAJ	VAC	VAC	1/3/2017 07:00	1/3/2017 07:00
Neek, Jeremy W. - MAJ	REG	REG	1/3/2017 18:00	1/4/2017 07:00
Rogers, Kate C. - FF	REG	REG	1/3/2017 07:00	1/4/2017 07:00
Todd, Mike - LT	REG	REG	1/3/2017 07:00	1/4/2017 07:00

Station 4 - Station 4

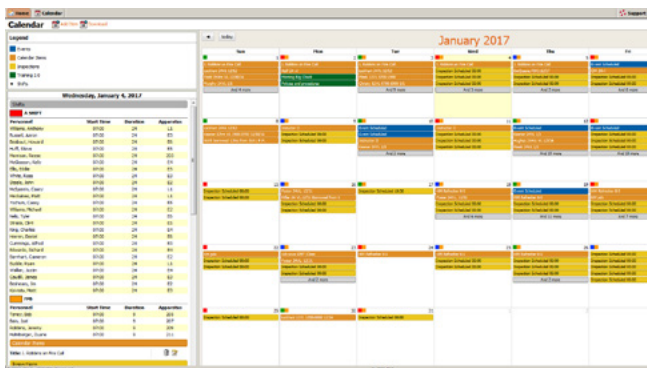
Apparatus: E4

Name	Position	Activity	Begin	End
Christy, Michael B. - LT	VAC	VAC	1/3/2017 07:00	1/4/2017 07:00
Christy, Michael B. - LT	REG	REG	1/3/2017 09:00	1/4/2017 07:00
Huddell, David D. - MAJ	REG	REG	1/3/2017 07:00	1/4/2017 07:00
Spencer, Charles - FF	REG	REG	1/3/2017 07:00	1/4/2017 07:00
Sutton, Clayton M. - FF	REG	REG	1/3/2017 07:00	1/4/2017 07:00

Station 5 - Station 5

Apparatus: E5

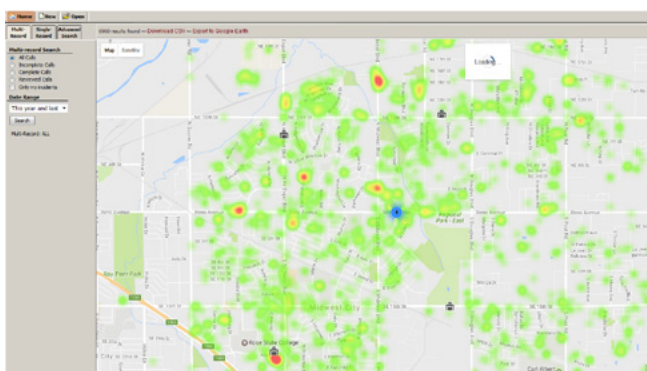
Name	Position	Activity	Begin	End
Cartrell, Todd A. - FF	REG	REG	1/3/2017 07:00	1/4/2017 07:00
Cartrell, Amy Clayton - MAJ	REG	REG	1/3/2017 07:00	1/4/2017 07:00



LIBRARY

10 Categories

Category	ID	Name
Cabin Corner	00542014	Name
Cedar Glen Apartments	00542014	Name
Chestnut Square	00542014	Name
Coach Light Apartments	00542014	Name
Concord Apartments	00542014	Name
East Oaks Village Apts	00542014	Name
Eden Cove - Condo	00542014	Name
Eden Cove - E4B	00542014	Name
Eden Cove - West	00542014	Name
Fairfax Apartments	00542014	Name
Huntington - Condo	00542014	Name
Huntington - East	00542014	Name
Huntington - West	00542014	Name
Legacy Corner - South	00542014	Name
Legacy Corner - South	00542014	Name
Madison Glen	00542014	Name
Woodwood Village - East	00542014	Name
Woodwood Village - West	00542014	Name
Midwest City Depot	00542014	Name



Having used Emergency Reporting for several years now, Midwest City Fire Department is thrilled to have found an exceptional fire/EMS reporting and records management software that meets and even exceeds their expectations.

Whether it's the significant cost savings, improvements in staff efficiency and productivity, the incredible ease of use or the unparalleled safety and security, the benefits of switching from FIRE-HOUSE Software to Emergency Reporting are clear.

Now the crews at the Midwest City Fire Department's six stations can focus their energy on what they do best – reducing risks to lives, property, and the environment from man-made and natural disasters.

Images courtesy of MidwestCity Fire Dept.

If you're interested in learning more about how your department can benefit from making the switch to Emergency Reporting, contact us at <https://explore.emergencyreporting.com/get-a-free-trial/>.