

PURVIS Systems Lets Fire Department Prove One Size *Doesn't* Fit All

Customized Solutions from PURVIS Systems End the Paper Chase for Albion Fire Department (R.I.)

The Organization:

Albion Fire Department

As a call fire department in the Town of Lincoln, RI, the Albion Fire Department is presented with challenges unique to an urban area. The Department is a combination fire department staffed by four full time firefighters and 26 call fighters. They operate out of a single fire station, and provide fire protection services as well as inspection, prevention and public education programs to approximately 5,750 residents in a 5.5 square mile area. Included in their first due response area is an interstate highway, three state highways and a freight railroad. The Department also protects the town's junior and senior high schools.

The Challenge:

Having been overdue for an upgrade to its administrative technology, Albion Fire Department recognized that it needed assistance modernizing its station's data system. The Department's most immediate need was for a system that enabled it to abandon its traditional paper-based reporting procedures and leave behind its practice of sorting papers and digging through file boxes. Such an update would let firefighters, administrators and inspectors perform their daily tasks efficiently, whether on or off-site, without wasting man-hours writing and filing detailed reports. Albion was certain that a transition from paper-based reporting to an electronic data management system would enable the department's personnel to concentrate on the most critical aspects of their jobs: protecting citizens and educating the community on fire prevention.

Unfortunately, most information technology system providers that presented solutions to Albion were only capable of delivering 'cookie-cutter' applications to which the department would need to adapt its own standard practices. With many of its personnel lacking significant technical expertise and training, adopting these solutions would likely cost the Department more in time and resources than the new system would be worth.

Rather than adapt to meet its service providers capabilities, Albion sought a customizable solution that could be tailored to its needs but maintain its traditional reporting structure. In addition, the ideal solution needed to be intuitive for firefighters who are used to certain terminology and procedures, with a minimal amount of training necessary and readily-available customer service provided.

The hunt for that ideal ultimately led to PURVIS Systems..

The Solution:

After an exhaustive search, the Albion Fire Department selected PURVIS Systems because of PURVIS' ability to fit its products to create precise, unique services as required by different departments.

Over a period of 2-3 months, PURVIS Systems was able to introduce, install and maintain a fully customized catalog of software on behalf of Albion.

The Department acquired PURVIS FD Manager, a modular management system that provides pre-fire plan information and tracks vehicle and equipment maintenance records, street inventories, hydrant inventory and maintenance, and more. An easy-to-learn, easy-to-use software package, FD Manager consists of a series of worksheets, databases and calendars that allow the user to insert and quickly access pertinent and supplementary information. These forms and databases are used to automatically generate standard reports, track activity, and manage personnel information.

For Albion, three other software reporting programs were installed that enable inspectors to work quickly and efficiently off-site, remotely creating and filing inspection sheets, inspection records, and violation letters in addition to tracking inspection histories and exporting data directly to the Fire Marshall's office.

Within two days of thorough training, the entire department was up-to-speed on the new technology. Throughout the installation, and once Albion began utilizing the system, PURVIS remained extremely attentive to the department's needs and receptive to all ideas and suggestions for changes and upgrades.

The Result:

Albion realized the results of their system upgrade without delay. Member's of the community and other clients individually acknowledged the Department's increased efficiency and swiftness, and inspections that used to take two or three visits now only required one. Inspectors had doubled productivity but maintained their rigorous standards, making both the Department and the Albion community feel more secure in the quality of its inspections. Data and files are now retrieved in a matter of minutes, enabling personnel to spend significantly less time on administrative tasks and more time honing skills in fire fighting and prevention.

As the Department settled into its first months of utilizing PURVIS FD Manager, it also learned to recognize and appreciate the responsive and helpful personnel working at PURVIS on its behalf. At one early point, a technical glitch forced each of the department servers down. PURVIS System's IT Department was called, and within the course of a single hour every server was remotely repaired and running without a single loss of data. As a standard practice, cell phone numbers and direct lines were provided to bypass any need for switchboards and guarantee instant emergency response.