

Frequently Asked Questions

Peotone Fire Protection District Intergovernmental Agreement with Manhattan Fire Protection District

Manhattan Fire Protection District (MFPD) and Peotone Fire Protection District (PFPD) have signed an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) that will take effect on September 1, 2020. The purpose of this page is to provide the public with information relating to our agreement, as well as explain how this agreement impacts MFPD and PFPD residents.

What is an Intergovernmental Agreement?

An Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) is an agreement or contract between two or more governmental bodies. The authority for an IGA is found in the statutes of the State of Illinois as well as the Illinois Constitution. In the case of MFPD and PFPD, this agreement pertains to Fire District administrative staff and administrative staff functions. This IGA does not raise taxes for residents and both districts maintain ownership over their own assets. In this IGA, the Fire Chief and Administrative staff are shared in order to reduce costs, increase efficiencies and increase the level of service.

The Fire service uses IGA's in many different aspects of our service provisions; dispatch, mutual aid, emergency response, auto-aid, fleet maintenance, impact fees, 911 services, alarm monitoring, other equipment and resource sharing. This IGA will be limited to 13 months in length, in which the first 30 days will involve sharing of information and turnover from the current Peotone Fire Administration. This IGA, at the end of its term, will provide information for the evaluation of longer-term options. This IGA does NOT bind any further actions outside of the 13-month term. The Manhattan Fire Protection District and Peotone Fire Protection District Board of Trustees and Administrative staff intend to spend the next year planning, identifying efficiencies, and evaluating possible service enhancements to our residents. Under the terms of this agreement, either party may end the agreement with a ninety-day (90) notice to the other entity at any time. In this IGA, there is no commitment by either party to go any further towards merger/consolidation.

The Peotone / Manhattan IGA provides the sharing of administrative staff, including the Fire Chief, for both Fire Districts. This means that both districts would maintain their own employees, budgets, tax rates, fire apparatus, elected officials and maintain local control of all decisions.

Have other Fire Service sharing efforts been successful?

Many fire protection agencies in the Chicagoland area have recently entered into IGAs in order to provide a higher quality of service to the residents of their jurisdictions. Recent successful examples include:

- Lisle Woodridge / Darien Woodridge
- Bensenville / Addison

- West Suburban Fire Rescue Alliance
- Itasca / Wood Dale

These fire service providers increased their level of service without raising taxes and these sharing efforts resulted in an increase in overall service enhancements while controlling the tax burden.

Can Peotone and Manhattan work well together?

Peotone and Manhattan are similar in population, geographic size and demographics. They are also rich in tradition with a long history of working together for the betterment of their residents and a long history of successful collaboration. Peotone and Manhattan already respond to many of each other's calls through mutual and automatic aid agreements. The IGA will not disrupt the current personality and level of emergency response services. This agreement will result in better utilization of financial resources and enhanced services to the residents of each Fire District.

How will this benefit the Manhattan Fire Protection District?

The sharing of administrative services allows organizational alignment, increased purchasing power, increased financial savings, the shared evaluation of needs for future fire apparatus, and efficiencies gained by sharing "reserve" ambulance and fire apparatus. All current levels of service will be maintained, however, with an eye on tax burden control. This effort also can better qualify us for future grant opportunities related to tax control efforts.

This IGA increases our income, maintains our current levels of service and provides for an organizational evaluation, identifying similarities and identifying efficiencies gained through cooperation.

This IGA aligns with the State of Illinois' efforts to control taxes by reducing the number of local government units within the State. Please reference; "Illinois Property Tax Relief Begins by Culling Nearly 7000 Local Government Units" (<https://www.illinoispolicy.org/illinois-property-tax-relief-begins-by-culling-nearly-7000-local-government-units/>).

How will this benefit the Peotone Fire Protection District?

The sharing of administrative services allows organizational alignment, increased purchasing power, increased financial savings, the shared evaluation of needs for future fire apparatus, and efficiencies gained by sharing "reserve" ambulance and fire apparatus. All current levels of service will be maintained, however, with an eye on tax burden control. This effort also can better qualify us for future grant opportunities related to tax control efforts.

This IGA decreases District expenditures, maintains current levels of service, provides needed administrative depth. This IGA also provides for an organizational evaluation, by identifying similarities and efficiencies gained through cooperation.

This provides a short-term solution to changes in administrative staffing at Peotone FPD.

This IGA aligns with the State of Illinois' efforts to control taxes by reducing the number of local government units within the State. Please reference; "Illinois Property Tax Relief Begins by Culling Nearly 7000 Local Government Units" (<https://www.illinoispolicy.org/illinois-property-tax-relief-begins-by-culling-nearly-7000-local-government-units/>).

Will this agreement interfere with Fire and EMS calls for service?

The IGA will not interfere with emergency calls. Both entities will continue to respond to calls in their Fire District service area. All current automatic and mutual aid agreements that are already in place will continue as normal. The agreement will provide additional depth of responding Command level officers.

Will the Fire District's be sharing firefighters/paramedics?

The IGA will not involve the sharing of fire and emergency medical personnel other than automatic and mutual aid agreements already in place that have proven successful for many years.

Why did the two districts enter into an IGA to share services?

Manhattan and Peotone Fire districts are progressive organizations that are rich in history and tradition. The Districts realize that they must continue to evolve and adapt to the ever-changing Fire and EMS services. Our Firefighter Paramedics respond to all hazards including Fires, EMS call, Hazardous Materials, Technical rescues, Active Shooter Events and now Health Pandemics. The two Fire Districts have entered into a 13-month agreement to investigate similarities and identify potential gained efficiencies to enhance the services to our residents.

Why not replace the Peotone Fire Chief?

The retiring Fire Chief has dedicated over 30 years to the Peotone Fire Protection District and has accomplished many good things for the department and the community. Due to the Fire District's current staffing model (part time), the replacement of the Fire Chief may be a lengthy process.

The Peotone Board of Trustees has investigated the hiring of an interim Fire Chief until one could be identified or hiring a contracted Fire Chief through the Illinois Fire Chief Association contract service on a month by month arrangement. After careful evaluation, it was determined that sharing administrative services with the Manhattan Fire Protection District was the best option for Peotone Fire Protection District.

What does the IGA include?

- The sharing of Administrative Staff (short-term)
- 24/7 Chief Officer support for both Fire Districts

- Command Officer depth with 3 command level Chiefs with over 80 years of combined experience
- The evaluation of both Districts' similarities and opportunities (long-term)

Is a ladder truck important to the success of the Fire District?

The continued evaluation of the community risk model has resulted in identification of the following.

- Negative financial impact of ownership
- Long term maintenance burden
- The complex training of part-time personnel
- The cost of replacing a million-dollar fire apparatus
- The frequency of its use within the Peotone Fire Protection District

How does the ladder truck affect our ISO RATING?

ISO is an organization that evaluates the staffing, resources and processes within the fire service and applies it to a commonly used schedule identifying insurance risk for Fire insurance companies and their agents. This schedule has an effect on the homeowner's fire insurance rate.

The ISO rating is determined by evaluating three areas; Dispatching, Fire Department, and the Municipal Water System.

Fire Department is only 40% of the evaluation, as Emergency 911 Dispatch and the Municipal Water System maintenance and effectiveness are managed by other agencies outside the control of the fire districts.

The Peotone Fire Protection District continues to identify ways to improve their ISO rating, while maintaining a high level of service to their residents. Below is a matrix of ISO ratings of neighboring communities

Peotone Fire Protection District is currently an ISO Class 4 in the Village Limits

Manhattan Fire Protection District is currently an ISO Class 2 in the Village Limits

Beecher Fire Protection District is currently an ISO Class 4 in the Village Limits

Monee Fire Protection District is currently an ISO Class 4 in the Village Limits

Frankfort Fire Protection District is currently an ISO Class 3 in the Village Limits

Manteno Fire Protection District is currently an ISO Class 3 in the Village Limits

Effective staffing, training and operational modeling provides a great impact on a Fire District's ISO rating. The biggest factor in the Fire Department rating is manpower/personnel. The

number of trained personnel responding weighs significantly more than the fire apparatus and equipment factors that ISO evaluates.

Peotone Fire Protection District recently had a Standard of Cover / Community Risk Assessment done. A copy of the document may be requested via email: wschrei@sbcglobal.net

For more information on ISO, please visit: <https://www.isomitigation.com/ppc/fsrs/>

Effects of the Peotone / Manhattan IGA

Effect on Taxes: This IGA does not raise taxes. The tax rates for both districts, although similar, will remain separate and will be unaffected by this IGA. Referendums are required anytime tax rates change.

Retention of Assets and Reserve Funds: Both Fire Districts retain full ownership and control over their stations, apparatus, equipment, reserve funds, and other assets. They collect and levy taxes separately, maintain individual Board of Trustees, and have the authority to terminate the IGA if they decide to do so.

24/7 Emergency Response Support: A goal of the IGA is to establish emergency response oversight and command level support 24/7.

Administrative Staff Support: Both agencies will have administrative level staff available, similar to the current staffing models. Both Fire Districts will enjoy the efficiencies of sharing administrative staff;

- personnel development
- fleet and facility management
- community outreach
- financial security

All of these efficiencies, while providing the Board of Trustees and the communities a standardized reporting and evaluation model.