

**Section 9-3-17**

**Certification of fire departments of political subdivisions as "volunteer fire department."**

(a) The term "volunteer fire department" shall apply to and be used to define an organized group of area residents who meet the following requirements for personnel, training and equipment:

(1) The group shall be organized and incorporated under the laws of the State of Alabama as a nonprofit organization or as an authority of a legal subdivision. All persons who are members of said group shall be known as "volunteer fire fighters," and shall have been qualified as such by participating in organized fire protection and suppression training programs. All fire fighters must attend regularly scheduled meetings, drill, and training classes within the department and same shall be documented and kept on file at the department location for one year.

(2) A "volunteer fire department" shall have no less than 80 percent unsalaried membership.

(3) Each volunteer fire department shall have as a minimum of fire fighting apparatus the following:

a. One tanker truck capable of carrying and pumping no less than 500 gallons of water with adequate nozzle pressure to suppress wildfire, structural fire and other fires.

b. Motorized apparatus shall be equipped with the following minimum required equipment:

1. One booster reel with 150 feet of 3/4 or one inch rubber hose with suitable nozzle attached; or

2. 150 feet of pre-connected 1 1/2 inch fire hose with suitable fog/stream nozzle attached.

c. In areas where a sufficient number of fire hydrants are provided, the tanker shall also carry 200 feet of 2 1/2 inch fire hose together with a 2 1/2 to 1 1/2 inch wye connector for use with smaller hose and other equipment.

d. One 24 foot extension ladder with a 12 foot roof ladder.

e. Hand tools - spanner wrenches, axes, pike pole, bolt cutter, flashlights, a first aid kit and one each pressure water and a chemical fire extinguisher.

(4) An alerting system must be set up and maintained, which will be capable of alerting the greatest number of fire fighters in the shortest possible time.

(5) Communications between the tanker and other units, including the base station are to be installed at the earliest possible time; however, the use of citizen band radio equipment is not recommended.

(6) Housing for motorized equipment shall be provided at the department location of such type and size as to provide virtually freezeproof conditions for vehicles. A training room should also be provided at the earliest possible time.

(b) All of the aforementioned items shall consummately define a "volunteer fire department," for purposes of legal recognition, but are not to be construed as standards set for any insurance classification by insurance services office or any other local, state or other agency.

(c) The Alabama Forestry Commission may assist any fire department needing additional equipment to meet the standards for certification.

(d) The Alabama Forestry Commission shall be the state agency delegated as certifying authority under this section and shall certify all departments which are cooperators with that commission.

(e) All noncooperating departments which request certification shall be reviewed by the Alabama Association of Volunteer Fire Departments and a recommendation for certification shall be made by the association to the Alabama Forestry Commission.

(f) The provisions of this section shall supersede and take precedence over any local law or municipal ordinance in conflict herewith. All laws or parts of laws in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.

*(Acts 1980, No. 80-393, p. 549, §§ 1-8.)*