

PRESS RELEASE

AFFTON FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT RESPONSE TO CRESTWOOD LAWSUIT

The Board of Directors of the Affton Fire Protection District has read the lawsuit filed by the City of Crestwood against the District, the Governor, and the Attorney General. The Directors are disappointed in this unfounded suit, and will defend the District's interest vigorously.

The lawsuit attacks the constitutionality of the statute creating the St. Louis County Boundary Commission. The Commission has been in effect in St. Louis County for over 28 years.

It is this statute that Crestwood itself utilized when it decided that it would be in its own best interest to annex a portion of unincorporated St. Louis County within the territorial limits of Affton Fire Protection District. Crestwood now seeks to find unconstitutional the same law it used to annex property for its benefit in 1997.

The previously unincorporated area annexed by Crestwood has been, and continues to be served by Affton Fire Protection District, which has invested many hundreds of thousands of dollars of taxpayer dollars to protect all its district, including the area annexed by Crestwood.

Affton Fire Protection District has two ambulances to serve the residents of Affton Fire Protection District. The City of Crestwood has no ambulance and must rely upon a for profit ambulance service for its residents who need all important emergency medical service. All of the firefighters at Affton Fire Protection District are also paramedics. That is not the case in Crestwood Fire Department. All the large structures within the Affton Fire Protection District, as well as Crestwood, are protected by Affton Fire Protection District's one million dollar ladder truck since Crestwood Fire Department has chosen not to purchase a ladder truck. Crestwood relies upon Affton's and other district's ladder trucks.

The Affton Fire Protection District serves all of the citizens within the District equally, including those District citizens who are located within the City of Crestwood. The District has faithfully followed the Boundary Commission statute and its procedure to collect funds from the City of Crestwood for many years for its service. Until now, the City of Crestwood had not objected to its twenty year old decision to pay Affton Fire Protection District for its services in the annexed area.

Although the City of Crestwood seeks to undo its own action by this lawsuit, and to find unconstitutional a law that has been upheld as constitutional a number of times in other court cases, Affton Fire Protection District desires to continue its close relationship with the City of Crestwood. The Affton Fire Protection District is often on the same scene as the Crestwood Fire Department and has worked well over the years with Crestwood, and plans to continue to do so. The spirit of cooperation remains. For example, over the recent Memorial Day weekend, Affton Fire Protection District brought its ladder truck to Crestwood to assist Simmons Bank, located in Crestwood, with raising its flag for Memorial Day. This was done as a professional courtesy, even after the District

was advised of a lawsuit. Crestwood Fire Department did not have the capability to perform this task because it does not have a ladder truck.

Unfortunately, some of the statements made by Crestwood representatives in supporting this lawsuit are simply not true. The court case will determine the real facts.

Affton Fire Protection District will, along with the Attorney General's Office, defend the St. Louis Boundary Commission law, which has successfully controlled previously unbridled municipal land grabs in St. Louis County.

Crestwood annexed part of the Affton Fire Protection District agreeing that it would pay Affton Fire Protection District its regular tax rate for that area. Crestwood has now changed its mind. Despite this unfortunate and unwise lawsuit, Affton Fire Protection District's men and women will continue to service all of its residents, property owners and persons who need their assistance within its entire District, including that portion of the District located in the City of Crestwood.