

South Lane County Fire & Rescue

233 Harrison Avenue
Cottage Grove, OR 97424

Phone: 541-942-4493

Fax: 541-942-3367

ISO Rating and Homeowner's Insurance Rates

August 20, 2024

I am writing this letter to clarify some information regarding ISO and the District's ISO rating compared to the recent increases in the cost of homeowner's insurance around the District. The first thing to point out is the District's ISO rating has not changed since our classification to Class 2 and Class 4/10. We had a rating review in 2022 and have provided both of the explanatory letters on our website.

I have checked around the State with other fire chiefs and consulted with our ISO representatives regarding the dramatic increases in premiums. There are three main reasons for the increases having nothing to do with the service levels provided by our District.

1. The 2020 Labor Day Fire Storm led to huge losses for the insurers in Oregon. While we had no fires in our District, Lane County suffered major impacts. Insurance companies are profit driven corporations and will seek to make up for those losses.
2. Many underwriters for insurance carriers have stopped servicing high risk areas in the Northwest. This has led to many carriers pulling out of the market. The remaining carriers have increased coverage costs as a result.
3. Property values have risen significantly across the State due to a lack of available and newer housing. The premiums factor value, risk and loss experience across the market. The higher the insured value the more the loss would be, leading to higher premiums.

This is very unfortunate and costly for property and business owners around the State and the Northwest in general. The situation is out of our control. As I stated above, our ISO rating has remained unchanged since 2016.

I hope this explanation helps clear up the confusion around these costs and the relation to our ISO rating.

Sincerely,

John Wooten

John Wooten
Fire Chief

"We protect life, property and the environment through quality service"