



Cottage Grove (Minn.) Fire Dept.

Back when Cottage Grove’s police officer-paramedics were tasked with responding to all medical emergencies, scheduling firefighters was easy.

Chief Rick Redenius could quickly build out his coverage, splitting crews into teams and squads that worked every sixth day. He’d punch the firefighter squads into an Excel spreadsheet and send out copies to the force via e-mail.

In 2013, Cottage Grove shifted primary ambulance services from police to its fire department and Redenius inherited more scheduling responsibilities, along with the Aladtec platform, which had been introduced by then EMS coordinator Wes Halvorsen several years earlier.

Cottage Grove has a unique Public Safety model that runs both police and fire paramedics. All Cottage Grove firefighters -- whether full- or part-time -- must also hold EMT or paramedic certifications. The fire department runs a duty crew of four to six people at one main station, around the clock. The duty crew is responsible for station duties, EMS, and fire calls, as well as public education.

Scheduling full time personnel was a simple task, using the Repeat & Rotation function, but Redenius found efficiencies with Aladtec when it came time to schedule any of 50 part-time paid personnel into two 24-hour shifts for each day.

The bulk of the task takes about 30 minutes every two months, conducted at the start of a Tuesday evening drill, a month before the new schedule will begin. Firefighters’ bids are entered based on seniority. Each submits a desired schedule -- a minimum of 36 hours each month -- and a deputy chief or lieutenant enters them into the Aladtec system. Unfilled slots are tagged with the “sign-up” feature. Those are usually filled within three or four days.

If they choose, Aladtec’s “Availability” feature allows them to streamline the process by automatically assembling monthly schedules based on each firefighter’s available dates, seniority, hours worked and date preferences.

Firefighters appreciate the ability via the web to see their schedules, make trades and



Department Info:

Roster: 13 FT firefighter-paramedics, 50 PT on-call firefighter-paramedics.

Calls: 3,068 (279 fire, 2,789 EMS) in 2017.

Service Area: 36 sq. miles, approx. 36,000 people.. Cottage Grove also provides EMS coverage to some 9,000 residents in the neighboring communities of Gray Cloud, St. Paul Park and Newport.

Apparatus: 4 engines, 1 ladder, 3 ALS ambulances, 2 brush trucks, 2 UTVs, airboat shared with Washington Co. Sheriff’s Dept.

Challenges: Mississippi River frontage (approx. 23 miles) with heavy commercial and recreational boat traffic, 80-train per day freight and passenger rail corridor, industrial aggregate- and chemical manufacturing facilities, Interstate highway.

Special skills: 4 firefighters serve on WashCo dive team.

Aladtec users since 2013

Neighboring agencies also using Aladtec:

Inver Grove Fire & Rescue, Cottage Grove Police, Woodbury Public Safety, Allied Barton Security, Regions Hospital Education, North Memorial Flight Services and Prescott (Wis.) EMS.



request time off via a smartphone or home computer whenever they like, the chief said.

Along with scheduling, Redenius uses Aladtec's Forms section extensively. Among the 20 odd forms are:

- Daily ambulance pre-shift check form
- EMS equipment, and supply work order forms
- "Fix My Truck" forms for EMS and fire
- "Gear Wash" form
- Monthly Safety Audit forms
- SCBA cylinder and pack check forms
- "Sunday OSHA Ambulance Clean" form
- Turnout Gear Inspection form

Redenius finds some functions offered by Aladtec bump up against options found in three other e-platforms crews access via on-board iPads and Toughbooks to complete patient- and fire reports and pre-plan documents but nothing else offers him the scheduling tools and ability to efficiently push out text- and email messages to crew members in a flash.

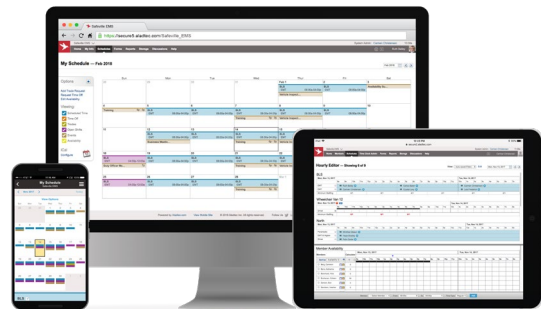
Members also appreciate their ability to schedule shift reminders to themselves.

And Aladtec's Wisconsin-based technical support has been good and help is readily available. "It's nice that you guys are close," said Redenius.



Chief - Rick Redenius

Chief Rick Redenius has been with the Cottage Grove Fire Department for 28 years. He also worked 19 years as a police officer. He moved through the ranks of Engineer, Captain, and Deputy Chief before being promoted to his current full-time position as Cottage Grove is Deputy Director of Public Safety & Fire Chief in 2012.



Aladtec provides online employee scheduling and workforce management software to 2,000-plus organizations, primarily within the Public Safety Sector. Customers count on Aladtec constantly to help save time, improve efficiency and enhance communications. The company is headquartered in River Falls, WI. For information about our affordable platform or to try a free demo, please visit: www.aladtec.com