



College Station Fire Department

By the Numbers:  139 Line Personnel  13 Administrative Staff  6 Stations  53 Square Miles  105,000 Population Served

Problem

Every fall, College Station, Texas, sees an influx of roughly 60,000 Texas A&M students. As the primary emergency services agency in the city, the College Station Fire Department stays busy, answering about 30 or 40 calls a day. Since the majority of the calls are for emergency medical services, College Station trains all line personnel in EMS as well as firefighting.

Greg Rodgers, College Station FD's battalion chief, training & public information officer, manages the department's training process. He handles the annual training budget and oversees two captains who help distribute training. Rodgers is responsible for many other administrative tasks as well, including implementing a new computer-aided dispatch program, conducting promotional testing and helping maintain training materials including policies and procedures.

In the past, Rodgers and the other College Station administrators delivered new policies to staff via email, which often meant policies got overlooked or discarded. Each of College Station's firefighters had access to the department's SOP manual while they were at their station, but while on the job they had to thumb through binders to reference specific policies, wasting valuable time. If they wanted to review a policy from home, they had no way to access them on their internal network.

Distributing policies via email also left College Station administrators with no way to track if every firefighter had read and signed off on the policies. This lack of proof that employees acknowledged and understood policies left College Station open to liability risks and kept them from being able to hold their staff accountable for their performance. As College Station FD prepared to apply for accreditation from the Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CPSE), the administrators realized they needed to be able to prove that every staff member had received and reviewed policies.

"We keep our entire SOP manual and all of our protocols in PowerDMS and we update everything there. It's an awesome tool. You can pull up and edit the document right there and put it back in place. You can hide [the draft] for a while until you're ready to submit it. That's excellent."

Greg Rodgers

**BATTALION CHIEF, TRAINING & PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER
COLLEGE STATION FIRE DEPARTMENT (TX)**

College Station Fire Department

By the Numbers:  139 Line Personnel  13 Administrative Staff  6 Stations  53 Square Miles  105,000 Population Served

Solution

Rodgers and his team now maintain College Station FD's SOP manual and protocols in PowerDMS. Firefighters can do a simple keyword search to quickly reference a policy whether they are in the station, on the scene of an incident, or at home. College Station's administrators also use PowerDMS to keep firefighters current on both old and new policies. They regularly send out reminders and test on older policies, making sure firefighters know how to properly handle every type of incident. This is especially helpful in keeping their firefighters prepared for those rare incidents they may only encounter a few times in their careers.

PowerDMS captures electronic signatures, giving Rodgers proof every staff member read and signed off on policies. The detailed records help administrators ensure firefighters have the information they need, which keeps firefighters safe and reduces liability risks for the department. The records also hold the staff accountable. When a firefighter once claimed he'd never received a promotional test, Rodgers was able to log into PowerDMS and see the timestamp of when the firefighter had read and signed for the test.

Through PowerDMS, Rodgers can easily and efficiently collaborate with his training captains on documents, records, and other resources. Instead of having to call a meeting to work on updates, Rodgers can simply create a workflow, type in his updates and recommendations, and send the documents back to his training captains.


ROI

Rodgers estimates that with PowerDMS, and an online learning management system the department has adopted, College Station FD saves up to \$150,000 per year in administrative costs. This \$150,000 a year is equivalent to the salaries of an additional training person and a part-time administrator. The department has been able to reallocate those funds to purchase job-critical equipment such as air packs and ambulance stretchers.




When it came time for College Station to apply for CPSE accreditation, Rodgers and the other administrators were able to prove they updated and distributed policies on a regular basis, and every service member had read the policies. This helped College Station achieve accreditation on the first try.

Automatically tracking policy sign-offs and testing through PowerDMS also frees up Rodgers and his team to focus on the bigger picture and improve College Station's policies and overall training program.





College Station Fire Department

By the Numbers:  139 Line Personnel  13 Administrative Staff  6 Stations  53 Square Miles  105,000 Population Served




Problem

-  Difficulty tracking policy distribution
-  Little accountability for policy sign-offs
-  No way to access SOPs remotely

Solution

-  Streamlined policy distribution
-  Detailed reports on electronic signature capture
-  Ability to access SOPs from anywhere
-  Simplified collaboration process

ROI

-  \$150,000 saved in admin costs between PowerDMS and LMS
-  Simplified accreditation process
-  Time saved updating and distributing policies