



Parish of Ascension

OFFICE OF THE PARISH PRESIDENT

TOMMY MARTINEZ
Parish President

Ascension Parish Fire District No. 1 Retains Class 5 Rating

**Contact: Lester Kenyon (225) 450-1138; E-mail: lkenyon@apgov.us
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 4, 2013**

GONZALES – Ascension Parish President Tommy Martinez announced this week Ascension Parish Fire District No. 1 has retained a Class 5 fire rating for residential and commercial properties following an evaluation by state fire insurance officials.

Property Insurance Association of Louisiana (PIAL) stated in a March 4 letter that properties located within the boundaries of Fire District No. 1 East Bank will continue with the Class 5 rating. Fire protection grading is done by PIAL and approved by the state commissioner of insurance.

Fire District No. 1 encompasses all areas of the east bank of Ascension Parish excluding the Town of Sorrento, the City of Gonzales and the northwest Prairieville area.

“The volunteers of Fire District No. 1 continue to deliver outstanding fire and EMS services to the residents of our district,” said district Chairman James LeBlanc. “Since 1997 we have been able to maintain a rating of 5 without parish water and with non-paid firefighters in a rural area. This is a testament of their dedication to the community.”

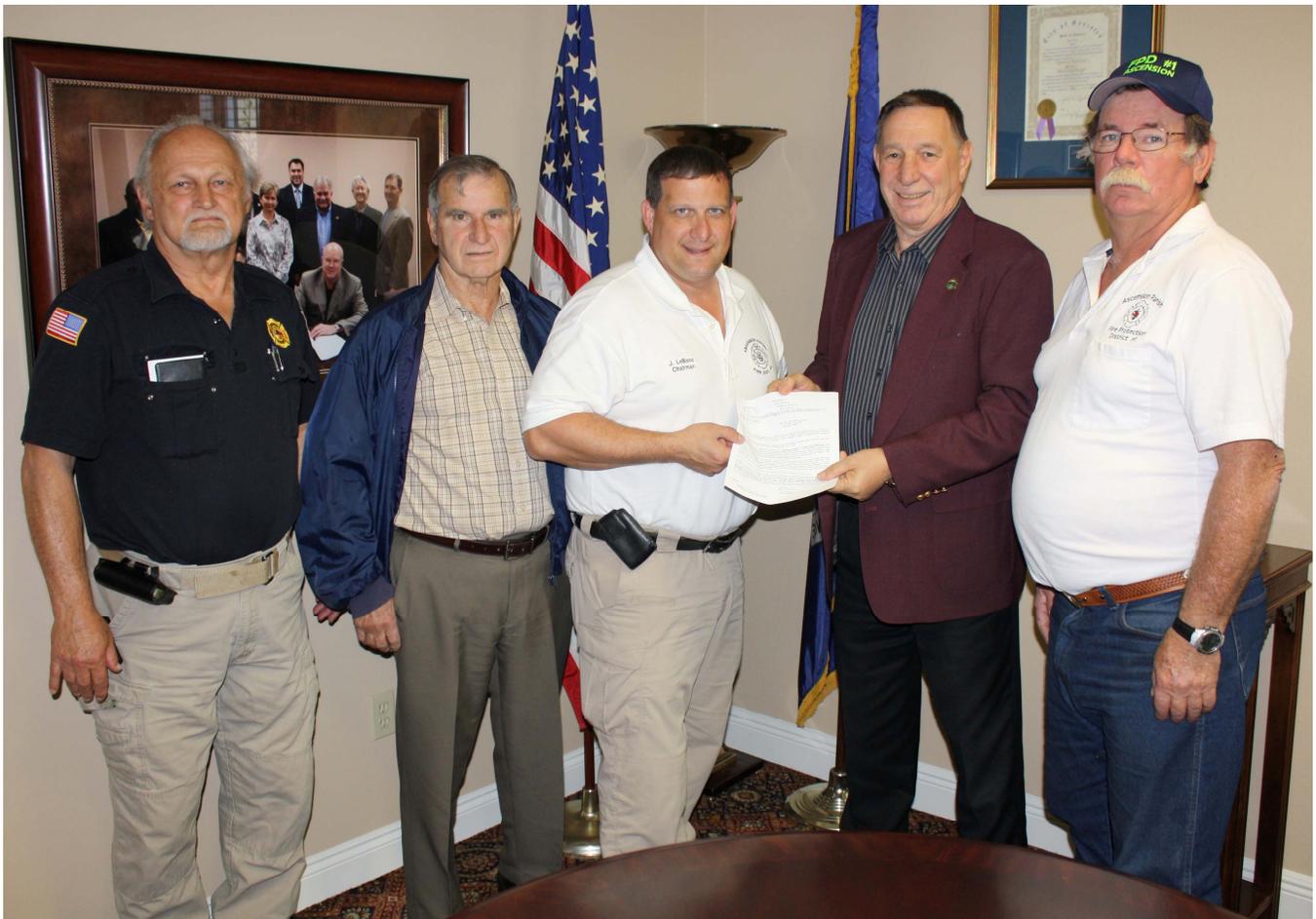
Every five years, PIAL grades fire departments on a basis of 1 to 10 with 1 being the best and 10 representing no recognized fire protection. Fire insurance premiums for homeowners and business owners within the fire departments' coverage area are calculated by the ratings the PIAL assigns to the designated fire departments.

The assessments are based on fire dispatch, firefighter training and equipment, and water delivery.

Eugene Witek, fire service coordinator with Fire District No. 1, said PIAL used a grading scale from 0 to 100. Witek said communications made up ten percent of the assessment while the amount of equipment, amount of firefighter training and responses, along with the number and location of fire stations made up 40 percent.

The remaining 50 percent included water delivery capability, which includes the number of fire hydrants and their locations, along with water shuttle proficiency.

“During the water shuttle portion of the assessment, we were credited with pumping 1,000 gallons of water per minute without hydrants,” Witek said. “Our firefighters really showed a coordinated team effort throughout the ratings process and especially during the water shuttle demonstrations.”



Officials with Ascension Parish Fire District No. 1 are shown with a notification letter from Property Insurance Association of Louisiana that states the district will retain their Class 5 fire rating. From left to right: Fire Services Coordinator Eugene Witek, Commissioner Charles Hebert, Fire District No. 1 Chairman James LeBlanc, Ascension Parish President Tommy Martinez and Fire District No. 1 Vice-Chairman Wayne Hill.