



Municipal Technical Advisory Service
INSTITUTE *for* PUBLIC SERVICE

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Accreditation and ISO Rating

Dear Reader:

The following document was created from the MTAS website ([mtas.tennessee.edu](https://www.mtas.tennessee.edu)). This website is maintained daily by MTAS staff and seeks to represent the most current information regarding issues relative to Tennessee municipal government.

We hope this information will be useful to you; reference to it will assist you with many of the questions that will arise in your tenure with municipal government. However, the *Tennessee Code Annotated* and other relevant laws or regulations should always be consulted before any action is taken based upon the contents of this document.

Please feel free to contact us if you have questions or comments regarding this information or any other MTAS website material.

Sincerely,

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Accreditation and ISO Rating

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Inevitably, the question will arise about whether accreditation will help lower the community's ISO rating. Data collected by Dennis Gage of ISO seems to indicate that it will. CFAI provides the following information:

The Insurance Services Office, Inc. (ISO) is the agency that collects data and analyzes the capability of community fire suppression services. This evaluation is based on criteria such as fire alarms (how well the department receives alarms and dispatches its resources), the number of engine companies (their distribution, etc.), and water supply (whether the community has a sufficient water supply, etc.). Essentially, ISO is classifying a community's ability to fight fire.

The CFAI, on the other hand, provides a comprehensive system of fire and emergency service evaluation that can help local governments determine their risks and fire safety needs, evaluate the performance of the organizations involved, and provide a method for continuous improvement.

This presents a correlation between the ISO community assessment and the CFI self-assessment. In fact, ISO conducted research to determine if the self-assessment helped improve the ISO rating. According to a report released by Dennis Gage of ISO in May 2006, there were 1,114 accredited agencies although ISO has established a classification on only 92 of these agencies. The remaining are military installations or are found in a state where there is an independent rating bureau. Of the 92 accredited agencies with an ISO classification, the following is a breakdown by classification:

Classification	Number in Class	Percent of Total
1	84	31.1%
2	84	31.1%
3	23	11.7%
4	9	3.3%
Not Reported	7	2.7%
Department of Defense	63	24.3%
Total	270	100%

Note that if you want to improve your ISO classification to a class five or better, accreditation is a good opportunity to do so. Conversations with ISO representatives indicate that it is possible that future versions of the ISO Fire Suppression Rating Schedule will provide some level of credit for accreditation.

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