

Article 82.

Authority and Liability of Firemen.

§ 58-82-1. Authority of firemen; penalty for willful interference with firemen.

Members and employees of county, municipal corporation, fire protection district, sanitary district or privately incorporated fire departments shall have authority to do all acts reasonably necessary to extinguish fires and protect life and property from fire. Any person, including the owner of property which is burning, who shall willfully interfere in any manner with firemen engaged in the performance of their duties shall be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor. (1965, c. 648; 1993, c. 539, s. 476; 1994, Ex. Sess., c. 24, s. 14(c).)

§ 58-82-5. Liability limited.

(a) For the purpose of this section, a "rural fire department" means a bona fide fire department incorporated as a nonprofit corporation which under schedules filed with or approved by the Commissioner of Insurance, is classified as not less than Class "9" in accordance with rating methods, schedules, classifications, underwriting rules, bylaws, or regulations effective or applied with respect to the establishment of rates or premiums used or charged pursuant to Article 36 or Article 40 of this Chapter and which operates fire apparatus of the value of five thousand dollars (\$5,000) or more.

(b) A rural fire department or a fireman who belongs to the department shall not be liable for damages to persons or property alleged to have been sustained and alleged to have occurred by reason of an act or omission, either of the rural fire department or of the fireman at the scene of a reported fire, when that act or omission relates to the suppression of the reported fire or to the direction of traffic or enforcement of traffic laws or ordinances at the scene of or in connection with a fire, accident, or other hazard by the department or the fireman unless it is established that the damage occurred because of gross negligence, wanton conduct or intentional wrongdoing of the rural fire department or the fireman.

(c) Any member of a volunteer fire department or rescue squad who receives no compensation for his services as a fire fighter or emergency medical care provider, who renders first aid or emergency health care treatment at the scene of a fire to a person who is unconscious, ill, or injured as a result of the fire shall not be liable in civil damages for any acts or omissions relating to such services rendered, unless such acts or omissions amount to gross negligence, wanton conduct or intentional wrongdoing. (1983, c. 520, s. 1; 1985, c. 611, s. 1; 1987, c. 146, s. 2.)