

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Norfolk's demand for emergency services exceeded 1,600 calls this past year for a record response involving 1,661 runs. This unprecedented increase has more than doubled since 1990 (1990 764 runs).

Regrettably 2010 marked the third year where tragedy shook Norfolk as a 5th alarm explosion/fire took place at the Village at River's Edge condominium complex. A construction worker was trapped within the burning debris of the basement for over an hour and half as firefighters using an excavator, power saws, hand tools and bare hands completed a successful rescue effort. Tragically, the worker succumbed to injuries incurred during the explosion/fire. A second trapped worker had been rescued by Norfolk Police Sgt. Tim Heinz assisted by a construction worker. Three other workers, the occupant of the adjoining condominium and two firefighters would be injured at this emergency. The day witnessed Norfolk respond to this emergency as a total community effort; Department of Public Works (DPW) employees pulled hoselines, a retired fire chief operated Engine 2, a townspeople came to the scene and provided first aid, Town Administrator Jack Hathaway also pitched in helping coordinate support services.

Three medical helicopters transported the most critically injured. Twenty one engine companies would respond supported by 2 ladder companies, 13 ambulances, staffed by 112 firefighters and supervised 11 chief fire officers. Covering the Norfolk station for other emergencies was an engine company from Taunton. Assets from the Department of Fire Services, command and rehab trucks; State Fire Marshal; many local Police Departments; Building Commissioner with the Electrical Inspector and utility companies would also assist at the scene.

Fire investigation conducted by the Norfolk Police and Fire Departments, in concert with the Department of Fire Services, Division of Fire Safety and State Fire Marshal resulted in the determination that the odorant for the propane had been subject to a chemical phenomena where the steel propane tank absorbs the propane's odorant. The

investigation also revealed that propane being sold in the Northeast was inadequately odorized, resulting with the LPG industry closing over 60 distribution plants from Connecticut to northern New England. Rendering the River's Edge community safe, the Fire Department provided nearly three weeks of Fire Detail coverage as LPG tanks and piping were inspected for safety.

Provisional Firefighter/Paramedic Patrick Rockett would be recognized for his efforts during the rescue by the Metropolitan Boston Emergency Medical Services Council as the EMS FIRST RESPONDER OF THE YEAR during a ceremony on October 28th. FF/P Rockett worked under fire conditions, forced to remove his breathing apparatus given building debris, to aid the trapped worker. FF/P Rockett accepted this award on behalf of all who served that day. Norfolk would recognize all responders and civilians who helped with a PROCLAMATION presented at the Fall Town Meeting. A lasting image from this scene was Firefighter/Paramedic Dave Russo involved in treating all patients who were flown by medical helicopter to Boston area hospitals.

Ending the year, the Department finds a third of the career staff off-duty: three members off duty for extended on-the-job related injuries, another due to a non job related injury. These injured members have greatly decreased the hours of minimum and adequate coverage increasing the level of acceptable risk assumed by the community given the lack of funding due to the economy. One incident has occurred where the lack of adequate staffing impacted the emergency response's outcome. To aid in staffing shifts Firefighter/Paramedic Patrick Rockett continues as a Provisional member, along with Firefighter/Paramedic Thomas Nicholas who was added in December. Call staff are included in the covering of shifts in an attempt to balance safety and cost.

Advanced Life Support (ALS) can once again present 195 patients, who after receiving in-the-field ALS had positive outcomes after arrival at a medical facility. These patients ranged from chest pains, difficulty breathing to stroke, diabetic

emergency and airway management. Firefighter/paramedics accounted for the revival of a patient in cardiac arrest, who unfortunately later succumbed at the hospital. After six years Norfolk's ALS can attest to 859 patients whose medical outcomes were enhanced by the firefighter/paramedics.

Also ALS added Pediatric Emergency Assessment, Recognition & Stabilization (PEARS) training for paramedics and EMTs to enhance emergency medical care for pediatric patients. This training was delivered by the American Education Group, through the Windham (Ct.) Hospital Paramedic Program.

Fall Town Meeting support unanimously approved the Department's replacement of Rescue 2, a 1998 International ambulance. Conscious to the severe budget situation, the Department will replace this ambulance with a smaller Ford F450 to be delivered by Greenwood Emergency Vehicles in the spring of 2011.

Capt. Peter Petrushki, Lt./Paramedic Mike Findlen, Firefighter/Paramedics David Russo Jamie Masterson and Mark Amiot completed the Rope Technical Rescue certification, as Norfolk hosted Heavy Rescue, Inc. for the third year of specialized training. Heavy Rescue, Inc. also conducted technical training for rescue air bag lifting systems. Given this training FF/P Russo was appointed by the Norfolk County Fire Chiefs as Norfolk's representative on the county Technical Rescue Team. Several Norfolk firefighters also participated in "live fire" training in Wrentham and at the Barnstable Fire Academy. Due to fiscal constraints all Departmental training ceased in July.

Inspections performed by the Department remained steady reflecting a hopeful and stabilizing economy as reflected in the 406 conducted. Included in this total were 109 Permits issued for residential re-sale documenting operational smoke and carbon monoxide detectors; 54 commercial buildings; and 52 Permits for new fire alarms installed in buildings. The remaining inspections included Permits for LPG storage, new oil burner installations, oil tank

removals/installations, performing fire drills, plan reviews for construction and tank/transfer truck inspections. Provisions under the Massachusetts General Laws require these inspections be performed by the Department.

The Public Safety Building Committee presently remains inactive since the defeat of last year's funding vote for a new facility. Firefighters respect the wishes of the community, but are steadfast in the belief that resolution of this situation can be achieved. This past year the Facilities Department replaced the station's roof top AC unit after the unit failed leaving dispatchers to work with fans and open doors; garage doors were repaired in the apparatus bays and exterior doors replaced.

Great weather accompanied by record friends and families bolstered another successful Annual Open House. The day concluded with a simulated rescue of injured patients from a "motor vehicle crash". Continuing a long standing tradition, firefighters also participated in the annual Lions Club Halloween Haunted Train Ride dressed in scary garb. Also a large gathering was served by uniformed past and present firefighters at the Senior Dinner, with Santa delivering gifts to our guests. Keeping with tradition, firefighters provided the restored antique Ford Model T fire engine to transport Santa during the annual Santa Parade. The Executive Office of Public Safety continued to fund the Student Awareness of Fire Education (S.A.F.E.) efforts in the schools and fire prevention activities during the year were extended to community groups and within the schools, along with installing infant car seats (49 installed during the year).

Even with a slow economy Norfolk's generosity continues to support the Department's community efforts through the annual fund drive letter. Programs such as the Senior Holiday Dinner, Haunted Train Ride participation, KPSrHS student scholarship and Fire Station Open House are entirely funded through this effort.

Analysis of the 1,661 incidents to which the Department responded continue to present the majority of the emergency calls are for

emergency medical assistance, such as difficulty breathing, cardiac conditions or trauma from accidents, representing over 50% of this call volume. The year in review follows:

Major Fire/Incident Review – 2010

1-6 – 258 Dedham Street, Eagle Brook Saloon: laundry bag fire extinguished by employees prior to Fire Department arrival preventing a serious fire. Wrentham provided a mutual aid engine company.

1-14 – Mutual Aid to Franklin, working fire, 213 Chestnut Street: Engine 2 assisted at scene. Moments prior to this dispatch, the on-duty staff assisted with the delivery of a baby.

1-19 – Rockwood Road: multiple vehicle accident closed Route 115 during the morning commute time. Two rescues, engine and squad responded with firefighter/paramedics evaluating several patients.

1-20 – Mutual Aid to Wrentham, KPSrHS: Ladder 1 responded to check roof top heating units for smoke.

1-20 – Lake Populatic: reported possible drowning bringing mutual aid from Franklin and Medway. Responding units determined incident to be unfounded after an exhaustive search, which included the assistance of the FOX TV news helicopter.

1-25 – Pondville Corrections: heating unit fire in attic extinguished by Department of Corrections staff prior to Fire Department arrival. Firefighters remained on scene for an hour checking for fire extension and removing smoke. Response was one of 17 incidents during the day, most for downed wires and trees during high winds.

2-4 – Mutual Aid to Wrentham, working fire, 1143 South Street, junkyard fire: Engine 2 and Ladder 1 responded, assisting with fire extinguishment.

2-16 – Town Wide storm impact with 16 calls for emergency service, 10 of which involved motor vehicle accidents due to icy

roads, fortunately only one accident required ambulance transport to a medical facility.

3-15, 16 & 17 – Town Wide heavy rains contributed to 42 emergency calls, 22 for flooding conditions within residences. Recalled fire staff were on-duty for 12 hours handling these emergencies.

3-25 – Mutual Aid to Franklin, working fire, 5 Fisher Street, Clark, Cutler Firm: Engine 2 assisted at scene.

3-29 – Mutual Aid to Wrentham, truck fire next to commercial building, 303 Shear Street: Engine 2 assisted at scene.

3-29 & 30 – Town Wide heavy rains: Fire Department responded to 55 emergency calls, 47 involving flooding of homes using 15 hours of service with recalled staff. Two incidents involved minor fires caused by the flooding.

4-15 – Boardman Street, Permit fire out-of-control due to wind: Reported by the Sharon Fire Tower, Squad 1 and Engine 2 extinguished a large area of woodland burning behind the residence.

4-28 – 1 Dean Street, Norfolk Arena, building fire: employee found building full of smoke on arrival. Fire damage confined to ceiling mounted light fixture. Franklin Fire provided an engine company and large exhaust fan to assist removing smoke from the building. Fire units were on scene for nearly two hours removing smoke.

5-25 – North Street, woods fire: Squad 1, Engine 2 and Tank 1 were assisted by Wrentham Fire and worked for nearly two hours to control the fire.

6-1 – Mutual Aid to Wrentham, 2nd alarm, 306 Shears Street, Mike's Deli: Engine 2 worked on the second floor and attic extinguishing a lightning caused fire.

6-20 – Town Wide, storm: Fire Department responds to 14 emergency calls, including 2 homes struck by lightning, 2 homes with trees through the roof and numerous power lines or trees down in the roadway.

6-27 – Mutual Aid to Foxboro, I-95, jet fuel tanker rollover: Engine 2 initially provided station coverage, and then called to I-95 to assist. Engine 2's crew remained in Foxboro for nearly 8 hours. Norfolk personnel covering the station responded to 9 additional calls, 8 of which required ALS.

7-5 – Populatic Lake, possible drowning reported: person fell out of boat, found out of the water upon Fire Department arrival. Marine 1 used to retrieve boat. Medway Fire provided mutual aid. Patient transported to medical facility by Rescue 1.

7-6 – Mutual Aid to Franklin, brush fire, Old Populatic Road: Squads 1 & 4 responded with Tank 1 to assist in extinguishing a woods fire.

7-27 – Mutual Aid to Franklin, working fire, 26 Meadow Lark Road, fire in residence: Engine 2 responded assisting at the scene.

7-30 – 28 Wildwood Road, 5 + alarm fire and explosion with fatality.

8-2 – 28 Wildwood Road, State Department of Fire Services (DFS) HAZMAT staff assisted State Fire Marshal withdraw LPG samples from the explosion/fire site. Tank 1 was staffed by a fire detail assisting at scene.

8-3 – 118 Grey Birch, LPG tank leaking: Engine 2 deployed hoselines for protection as LPG firm pumped off liquid propane to repair a leaking underground tank. Wrentham provided an engine company on scene and Millis Fire covered the Norfolk station.

8-5 – Mutual Aid to Franklin, 2nd alarm, 1000 Chestnut Street, storage facility fire: Engine 2 laid a supply line providing water to the Franklin Tower Ladder. Norfolk's firefighters were assigned to the rear of the building for extinguishment.

8-17 – Mirror Lake, marine rescue: Marine 1 used to transport patient from Lake to the ambulance. Wrentham provided mutual aid.

8-26 – Mutual Aid to Franklin, 2nd alarm fire, 125 East Central Street, fire in 2 ½ story

residence: E2 worked second floor, rescued pets.

9-15 – 22 Stop River Road, MEDFLIGHT: E1 responded to set up landing zone for MEDFLIGHT at Freeman/Centennial School for a worker who fell down stairs with serious injury.

9-16 – Mutual Aid to Wrentham, North Street, WDC Waste Water Treatment Plant, electrical fire: E2 responded and assisted at scene.

9-19 – Mutual Aid to Norwood, 2nd alarm, 40 Lennox Street, fire in apartment building: Engine 2 covered the Norwood station with Chief Bushnell assisting at the fire scene as a Sector Officer.

10-9 – Mutual Aid to Wrentham, 90 Taunton Street, Maples Nursing Home, electrical fire: Engine 2 assisted at scene

10-13 – Mutual Aid to Wrentham, Route 1A at Interstate 495, tanker rollover accident: Engine 2 assisted at scene.

10-23 – Pine Street, near Foxboro Town Line, truck fire: Engine 1 & 2 responded to a fully involved truck fire involving gasoline. Foxboro provided mutual aid.

11-2 – Mutual Aid to Wrentham, KPSrHS, set up landing zone for MEDFLIGHT: Engine 2 set up landing zone.

11-9 – Mutual Aid to Sharon, 3rd alarm, 348 North Main Street, barn fire: Ladder 1 responded and assisted at scene.

11-11 – Mutual Aid to Wrentham, Ewalt Building WDC, smoke in the building: Engine 2 responded and assisted at scene.

11-18 – 106 Seekonk Street, working barn fire: Engines 1 & 2, Ladder 1 and Rescue 1 worked with police to quickly limit damage to the barn with farm animals being saved. Engine 2 stretched a supply line across Seekonk Street. Franklin and Millis sent engine companies to the fire while Wrentham and Foxboro covered the Norfolk station.

11-30 – 28 Medway Branch, Senior Center, LPG leak reported: Engines 1 & 2, Ladder 1, Rescue 2 and Tank 1 responded. Incident found to be odor from an empty propane tank. Franklin provided mutual aid.

12-16 – Mutual Aid to Franklin, working fire, 118 Main Street, Franklin Public Library: Engine 2 assisted at scene.

12-23 – Mutual Aid to Millis, van fire on Town Line: Engine 2 used foam to extinguish fire, supported by Engine 1 and a Millis engine company.

12-27 – Mutual Aid to Franklin, working fire, 4 Donny Drive, residential building fire: Engine 2 assisted at scene.

The Fire Department wishes Remo “Butch” Vito, Department of Public Works Director the best in his retirement. Butch has been a true friend and advocate for the Department setting a posture of mutual cooperation between both Departments. His presence will leave a void in the overall Emergency Management team. Thanking those who work closely with the Department represents an impressive list of Department Heads and Town employees. The list includes Police Chief Charles “Chuck” Stone, Lt. Jon Carroll and the staff of the Norfolk Police Department: Paul Vito and the DPW Vehicle Maintenance staff; Building and Facilities Department team; and the dispatchers staffing the Public Safety Communications Center, who without their professional attention to detail, our mission would be compromised. The Department’s most heartfelt thanks remains imbedded with the Norfolk community who continue to provide kind words of encouragement and support for the firefighter/paramedics. Again, thank you!

Respectfully submitted,
Coleman C. Bushnell
Fire Chief

FIRE DEPARTMENT STAFFING

FIRE CHIEF

Coleman C. Bushnell, EMT, full time

DEPUTY CHIEF

Stephen A. Wood

CAPTAIN

Peter J. Petruchik, EMT, full time

LIEUTENANTS

David C. Holmes, EMT

John F. Kelley, EMT, full time

Mark R. Kantzer, EMT, full time

Michael P. Findlen, Paramedic, full time

FIREFIGHTERS

Mark Amiot, Paramedic, full time

Darren Bycoff, EMT

Richard F. Clancy Jr., Paramedic, full time

Mark W. Haigh, Paramedic

Charlotte Giovanella, Paramedic, full time

Stephen R. Hamlin, EMT, full time

David W. Johnston

Douglas E. Johnston III, Paramedic, full time

Jamie Masterson, Paramedic, full time

Thomas Nicholas, Paramedic, ***provisional***

Patrick Rockett, Paramedic, ***provisional***

David Russo, Jr., Paramedic, full time

Richard E. Yunker, Paramedic, full time

John C. Zajac, EMT