

WEST BOYLSTON FIRE DEPARTMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2002 – 2003

ACTIVITY

The West Boylston Fire Department responded to 1,160 calls for help this year, an increase of 1 percent from the prior year and 17% since fiscal 1999 – 2000. Total ambulance calls of 745 is an increase of 10% with ALS calls increasing 7% and BLS calls increasing 14%. We had 413 fire calls, down from 462 for a decrease of 11 %.

ORGANIZATION

This was the second full year with two-fulltime firefighter EMT's on board. By setting overlapping shifts we are able to cover the hours of 6 am to 7pm Monday through Friday with at least one person on duty. 54% of our calls occur between the hours of 7 am and 3 pm so this gives us the best coverage with two people. We continue to depend heavily on our call members for all fire calls, for calls for the second ambulance and calls after hours.

The Town voted to change the organization of the Department from Board of Fire Engineers management structure to that of Strong Chief. The Department would like to recognize the last Board of Engineers, which included Alvin (Doc) Barakian, Thomas J. Welsh, Steve Osterberg and Ed Cairns. This change will bring the Department to a more typical organizational structure for a Department our size.

The Department would like to recognize the following members that have left the Department this year: Greg Shepard, Brian Ingram, Keith Lenahan, Paul Osterberg, Scott Patnode and Gordon Reid. We would like to welcome new members: Paul Buono, Bill Damato, Andy Dufresne, Rick McGinn, Adam Mercurio, Jason Scott and our Medical Director, Dr. Andrew Garrett.

The department continues to recruit new members, especially EMTs and paramedics. Anyone interested in becoming an EMT and joining the department should contact Chief Chandler.

OPERATIONS

The Department was successful in receiving two major grants this year, both for around \$20,000. We received a Federal Grant for improving our forest fire capabilities including outfitting our firefighters with proper personal protection equipment (PPE). The State grant was used to purchase firefighter safety equipment including rescue harnesses, pagers, portable radios, SCBA masks and two sets of personal structural firefighting gear.

Also with this grant we purchased an enclosed utility trailer for responding to Hazardous Materials incidents. The trailer was outfitted with Hazardous Material supplies from

Boylston, Sterling and West Boylston and is available on a regional basis. The trailer has been used on a number of occasions and allows us to get all of our supplies on scene quickly.

The Department was also the recipient of a \$5,000 donation from Central Coatings Corporation, which is going to be used to upgrade our training facility on Beaman Street.

The Town voted to have an outside management firm, MMA, conduct a study of the Fire Department. The study was completed and while it gave the Department a good rating it had a number of suggestions for improvement and future growth. (Copies of the study are available from the Fire Chief.) While there were a number of suggestions for the next year, it does not appear that the Town will be able to fund them.

The Town wide planning Committee presented a plan encompassing all of the Town Departments and their respective facility needs. The Committee determined that the Police and Fire Departments both need more space and that a combination of a renovation and additions to the Bruce Shepard Public Safety Building would fulfill the needs of both Departments for the next 10 years. While it was determined that the Public Safety project should be the first one to be started, it does not appear the Town will be able to fund any projects next year.

A ten-year capital equipment plan was developed for the Fire Department based on current needs and the recommendations of the MMA management study. While there will be no capital purchases next year due to financial limitations, in the very near future the Department will be looking to replace a 22 year old pumper/engine and a 9 year old ambulance, as well as other equipment.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

As a result of the September 11, 2001 incident, both the State and Federal governments have placed a tremendous effort and importance on homeland security. As the Emergency Management Manager for the Town I have attended numerous planning and preparation meetings and classes. All emergencies 'happen locally' and the Town of West Boylston needs to be prepared.

This year we have updated our Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan, (CEMP) and are in the process of establishing both a Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) and a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT). The Chief would like to thank Allen Phillips who, as assistant director, has done a tremendous amount of work in developing these teams.

FIREFIGHTERS' ASSOCIATION

The Firefighters' Association along with the Firefighters' Auxiliary sold refreshments for the Band Stand Committee again this year. The Chief would like to thank both organizations for their support of the Department.

The Chief also wishes to express thanks to the Public Safety Dispatchers and to all Town officials, departments and Boards for their support throughout the year. We would also like to recognize the West Boylston Police Officers for their important role in providing initial emergency medical care prior to the arrival of the first EMTs and the ambulance. Their participation is an important part of the Town's emergency medical system.

Lastly, the Chief would like to thank the members of the Department and their families for their continued devotion and commitment to the Town.

Respectively submitted,

Jack Chandler, Chief
West Boylston Fire Department

Members:

Officers:

- Chandler, Jack
- Osterberg, Steve
- O'Connell, Bob
- Cairns, Edward
- Hopewell, Mark
- Barakian, Mark
- Kochanowski, Dean
- Welsh, Tom (Beef)
- Koppetsch, Chris

Firefighters:

- Barakian, Scott
- Burkhardt, Heidi
- Cobb, David
- Donahue, Paul
- Folley, Fred
- Hanna, Matt
- Holt, Scott R.
- Jansen, Frank
- Johnson, Dave
- Miller, Andrew
- Nicholson, Bill
- Phillips, Allen
- Ricardi, Greg
- Shircliff, Matt

Recruit Firefighters:

- Buono, Paul
- Damato, Bill
- Donahue, Jamie
- Dufresne, Andy
- Hoffman, Ira
- McGinn, Rick
- Mercurio, Adam
- Ramstrom, Ed
- Scott, Jason

EMTs

- Benoit, Carol
- Benoit, Don
- Ellbeg, Rick
- Garrett, Andrew
- Grebinar, Kevin
- McNamara, Ed
- Nickerson, Rob
- Ricardi, Karen
- Shircliff, Leigh