

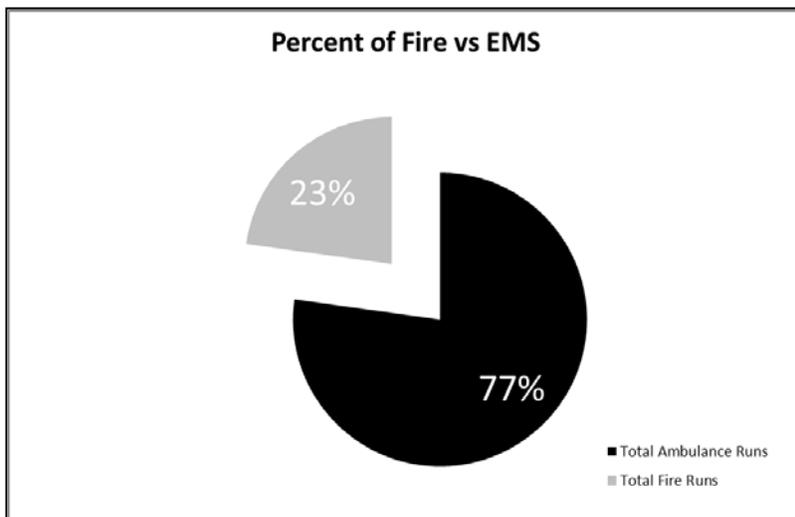
Fire Department

Dale E. Freeman, Chief

The Mishawaka Fire Department has been serving the City since 1904. The primary responsibilities of the Fire Department are fire suppression, fire prevention, fire investigation, emergency medical, hazardous materials, education, water rescue and confined space rescue. On any given day a minimum of 29 firefighters will be protecting Mishawaka, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.



The total run volume for the Fire Department, including fire and EMS, was 6,271. This was an increase of 26 over 2011. This averages 522 runs per month or roughly 17 runs per day. Medical runs have a minimum of one hour turnaround time and are about 80% of the total call volume. There were a total of 4,877 EMS runs in 2012.



The Department also responded to 13 commercial fires, 33 residential fires, 5 garage fires, and 10 apartment complex fires. Total fire losses were estimated at \$2,282,725 for the year.

The single biggest news for the year was the dedication of the new Fire Station #4 located at 3000 East Harrison Road. The station also houses the administrative offices for the entire Fire Department. The dedication ceremony for the 14,500 sq. ft. facility took place on Sunday, January 13, 2013. The station and offices were built at a cost of 3.7 million dollars. In addition to the fire station and offices, the building



also houses a state-of-the-art community room to be used for various events.

During 2012 The Fire Department changed its entire structure with the implementation of a three-platoon system. This new system replaces the antiquated two platoon-structure. This change will result in greater efficiency for the Department.

Divisions

Emergency Medical Services (EMS)

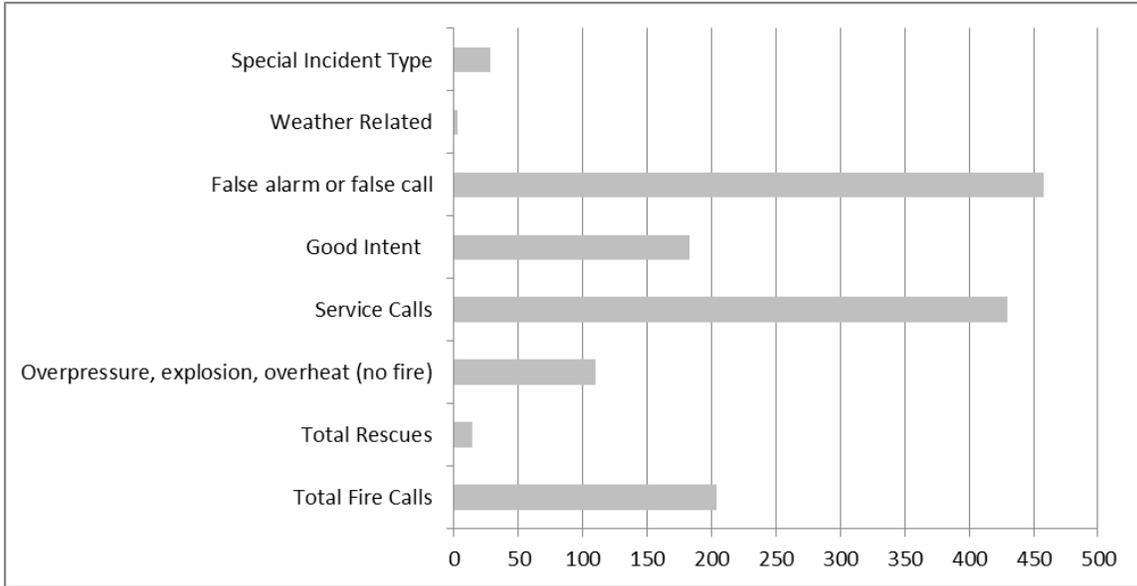
This past year was a busy for the EMS Division. With both increasing calls for service, and acuity of illness, our EMS providers have answered the call to duty each and every time. Revenues increased from \$1,112,829 in 2011 to \$1,218,283 in 2012.



The City took delivery of its newest addition to the ambulance fleet. The ambulance is a 2012 Horton Heavy Duty chassis. At a purchase price of \$250,000 the new rig should serve the City well for many years. The City is also going out for bids in the near future for another ambulance. With the increased call volumes, and a

third ambulance in service daily, we constantly need to upgrade our fleet. Early in 2013

the ambulances will relocate to various fire stations to be able to respond more quickly to calls. Successful contract negotiations between the City administration and Mishawaka Professional Firefighters Union Local #360 have resulted in an increase in manpower. Now there is the ability to have a minimum of three ambulances in service every day. Occasionally, a fourth ambulance is available to serve our citizen's needs.



The Department has budgeted for replacement of all its cardiac monitors and defibrillation equipment over the next two years. We have six units which need to be replaced at a cost of \$35,000 per unit.

Fire Prevention Bureau

The Mishawaka Fire Prevention Bureau, under the leadership of Chief Jim Schuster, is responsible for inspecting buildings, new and old, to ensure the safe occupancy of the people who work in and visit them. In 2012, the Fire Prevention Bureau performed over 1,680 fire inspections of buildings in the City. In addition, the Bureau works closely with the Mishawaka Building Department by reviewing all design drawings for new construction within the City to make sure all fire and building codes are met. Final inspections and testing of safety features are completed before a final certificate of occupancy is given.



Fire Investigators from the Bureau were called out 25 times in 2012 to investigate fires as compared to 27 times in 2011. These fires ranged from vehicle fires to house fires to large commercial buildings. All fire scenes are fully documented and photographed, and a written report is completed on the cause and origin. Any fire that is considered suspicious in nature will be jointly investigated with the Mishawaka Police Department Detective Division. All Fire Investigators are on call twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, and 365 days a year.

The Mishawaka Fire Department Prevention Bureau has always had a strong commitment to educating the citizens, employees, students, and visitors within our city. Throughout 2012, we trained many businesses in hands-on operation of fire extinguishers. Extinguishing a live fire in a controlled environment helps people learn how and when to use fire extinguishers properly and effectively.

During Fire Prevention Month in October, we brought our “Fire Safety Obstacle Course” to Walt Disney and Emmons elementary schools, allowing 857 students to take part. This program was initiated 11 years ago through the combined efforts of P.E. teacher Steve Govorko and fire department Captain Ralph Smith. The Fire Safety Obstacle Course combines physical fitness and fire safety messages.

Twelve different stations are set up, each having a different fire safety theme including the following:

- A blindfolded hose-crawl
- Over-and-under obstacles
- Connecting hoses on fire hydrants
- Climbing ropes
- Ladders
- Window escape
- Coordination drills



In addition, a fire safety talk is given prior to each session. This program has been a great success and we plan to continue it for many years. For the sixth year in a row this program also took place at Elm Road School in partnership with the Penn Township Fire Department. With our assistance, Penn Fire was able to offer this class to another 450 students. For the first time we were also able to expand the program to Horizon Elementary School with 575 students and Prairie Vista Elementary School with 483 students with the aid of Clay Fire Territory. In 2012 we were able to offer the course to 5 elementary schools for a total of 102 classes and 2,365 students. We hope to be able to continue to expand this valuable learning program in 2013. During the year, many seminars were given to businesses on topics such as evacuation drills, fire safety plans,

fire extinguishers, emergency planning and preparedness, smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, fire suppression systems, and fire alarm systems.

We continue to partner with businesses in Mishawaka to promote fire safety, prevention, and education. We were very fortunate again in 2012, to receive a \$1,200 donation from Lowes of Mishawaka. This money was used to purchase smoke detectors and extra batteries, carbon monoxide detectors, fire extinguishers, and fire escape safety ladders. The Mishawaka Fire Department continues to offer these items free of charge to the elderly or for those who may not otherwise be able to afford them.

Public Education

This year was another successful year for public education programs conducted by Firefighters Lieutenant Brian Linson II and Derron Hess. The Survive Alive house located at Emmons School hosted 65 groups, educating 1,649 people. Little Red tours thrilled 309 people in 12 classes. School assemblies and tours reached another 39 groups totaling 399 people. In 2012 the Department spent 301 hours on public education, instructing 3,727 people.



Child Passenger Safety Certification

In 2011, eleven firefighters became certified as car seat technicians. In May 2012 the Mishawaka Fire Department had another four firefighters become certified as car seat technicians. We now have fifteen car seat technicians on staff throughout the City.

A \$2,000 grant, received in 2011 through Kid Safe of Indiana, was used to fund the purchase of car seats and equipment to set up a permanent car seat fitting-station. This program is totally funded by grants and donations. During 2012, the Mishawaka Fire Department established one permanent fitting station, and two satellite fitting stations. The permanent fitting station is at Douglas Road Station #3, with Union Street Station and Station #2 being the two satellite stations.

In 2012, the Mishawaka Fire Department checked or installed 114 seats for the general public. The citizens who have used our services have not only been from the City of Mishawaka, but have

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come from as far away as southern Michigan. The Mishawaka Fire Department has been involved in approximately 7 different car seat clinics in St. Joseph, Marshall, and Elkhart counties including one held at the Douglas Road fire station.

As we look forward to 2013, the Fire Department is looking to add more car seat technicians, another fitting station, and have additional car seat clinics. To have a car seat checked, anyone can call the Fire Department Administration Office or go to the City website. On the City website there is information about car seat safety. You can fill out a form on the site and submit it to the Fire Department to make an appointment electronically.

The Mishawaka Fire Department feels that this is a great public relations tool along with providing a vital service to the citizens, not only in the City of Mishawaka, but throughout the area. This is just another tool for being involved in our community and providing public safety services to them.

Recruitment

In an attempt to recruit and qualify only the best candidates for the Mishawaka Fire Department, a decision was made to purchase the required testing supplies for the Candidate Physical Ability Test (C-PAT). This is a nationally standardized test developed by the International Fire Chiefs and the International Association of Firefighters Union. The test ensures fairness and is recognized as the most valid test for recruits.

Training

Training has become one of the most important parts of our daily operations. Our personnel must train like their life depends on it, because it does. To deliver top quality service it takes years of training and experience to master our profession. Firefighters are required to conduct firefighting, vehicle extrication, water rescue, hazardous materials response, EMS calls, and a host of other duties that are too numerous to mention. If someone calls for us, no matter what for, we will show up. Customer service is a very important part of our job.

In the past year we have put all of our Suppression Officers through a 50-hour online, and twenty-four hour hands-on class in strategy and tactics. This class will help our officers make the safest decisions in the field.

In the last 18 months the Fire Department has hired 21 new Firefighters and, in the process we have lost approximately 20% of our seniority. For the Training Division this has put a tremendous amount of pressure preparing our new recruits not only to be safe, but also to be the best at serving our community.

Training for our officers starts with a 50-hour online class and a 24-hour hands on simulation for incident command. This course helps keep our firefighters safer at all types of incidents. The Blue Card course helps our officers with communication,

accountability, confidence, and the ability to make sound decisions. We continue to work with Lisa Greco from Bethel College for this training of our officers and Executive Board. This ongoing process gives us insight into our Department, helping day-to-day operations, identifying personnel and professional problems, and planning for the future. Training in the fire service continues to be a very important part of our profession. Technology is ever-changing, from building construction, new vehicles, patient care, and even the way we fight fires. In the last year our firefighters spent an average of 185 hours training per person. We are well on our way to reaching our goal of 200 training hours per person annually. Education is the key to our safety and ability to deliver world class service.

New Equipment

In addition to the new ambulance and defibrillators for the EMS division, the Department will soon be taking bids to replace all of its Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBAs). The current units are roughly 12 years old and are nearing the end of their life cycle. Parts availability has become an issue as the manufactures will no longer support the units and O.S.H.A. standards have become more stringent.

Giving Back

Charity Bass Fishing Tournament

Mishawaka Firefighters sponsor an annual bass fishing tournament held at Maggie's Marina. This year's tournament was the 19th and 35 teams consisting of 70 anglers raised \$500.00 for charity. Larry Regina has run the tournament since its inception and deserves the majority of the credit for its success. Many other firefighters help in the staging, parking, etc. for the tournament.

Needy Family Project

In its 30th year the firefighters continued to serve the needs of those less fortunate. Thanks to their generous support we were able to help 12 families and 30 children.

In addition to the contributions we had additional help from area Kroger and Meijer stores. The manager of Kroger's, Georgia, gave us substantial discounts at the register as well as an additional gift card at purchase time. Also, thanks go to Rick Zieff from Meijer who was a huge help in making the program a success. With the overall savings on groceries, plus a late donation, we were able to help the less fortunate. A special thanks to Battalion Chief James Cocquyt, Captain Bryon Woodward, and Driver/Operator Jeffrey Regina for their coordination efforts, but truly a group effort.

Fill the Boot Campaign

Captain David Ray and his fellow firefighters collected \$4,893 for the Jerry Lewis Labor Day telethon. A total of 46 firefighters took donations over the Labor Day weekend at four different locations. The donations will allow us to send local children to Camp Potawatomi.

Habitat for Humanity

Several dozen members of the Fire Department were able to participate again in the “Habitat for Humanity” house built in Mishawaka. This year’s build was a home on Dodge Avenue. The 100+ degree day made it a challenge for the firefighters who took part but a good time was had doing a worthwhile project. We look forward in the future to continued participation in the Habitat program, helping those who help themselves.

Local #360 Fundraising

Members of the Mishawaka Professional Firefighters Local #360 conducted two very important fundraising events. The first was the annual Pink T-Shirt fundraiser. \$600.00 was given to United Health Services to pay for women’s mammograms. The program helps women who otherwise could not afford this very valuable screening tool. The second was the firefighters golf outing. Thanks to their hard work the firefighters were able to give two \$1,000.00 college scholarships to students. Hats off to Local #360 and their members for giving back to the community they serve so well.