

FIRE/RESCUE DEPARTMENT

The Fire Department provides the Town of Stow with Emergency Fire, Rescue and Emergency Medical Services (EMS). The dedicated individuals of this department work tirelessly, around the clock, responding to a wide range of emergency calls.

2012 was again a very busy year for the Fire Department. Your department responded to 855 combined fire and medical calls. Some of the major calls we answered are as follows: We responded to a two-alarm structure fire on West Acton Road, a fire on North Shore Drive, and a Christmas Day fire on Fairway Drive. We responded to requests fifteen times for mutual aid fire calls, 68 mutual aid ambulance calls and received 32 mutual aid ambulance calls to Stow. The department responded to 82 motor vehicle accidents.

Fire Prevention was once again a major focus for your Fire Department in the year 2012. Under the direction of Captain John Paul Benoit, the Fire Department completed 345 inspections and permits for smoke detectors, wood stoves, oil burners and propane tank installation for all new construction as well as homes being sold. Our department also issued 572 Open Burning Permits.

The Fire Department continues to upgrade our education program for the children of Stow. During Fire Prevention Week the Fire Department, in conjunction with the S.A.F.E. program, visited schools and day care centers to teach the children about general safety. At other times during the year, again working with the S.A.F.E. program, we perform other educational events (such as our annual Fire Prevention Week open house in October) where children and adults learn about fire prevention. The Fire Department members also conduct many tours and safety talks throughout the year. We also participate in a Juvenile Firesetter prevention coalition. This year we again greeted youngsters at the Pompo Picnic and did the same at the Open House for Kids-A-Lot's 25th anniversary at Snow Field.

Training for our emergency personnel continues to be a major focus. As the scope of our job continues to change and broaden, it is essential that your Firefighters and Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT's) be properly trained in all areas of Firefighting and EMS services as well as Hazardous Materials, Confined Space Rescues, Auto Extrication, Firefighter & EMT Safety and Survival, and Water & Ice Rescue. Members of the department conduct training drills monthly and on weekends. We also attend classes offered by the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy and the National Firefighting Academy. Our firefighters conduct an extensive recruit class every year to recruit and train new firefighters. Ongoing EMS training is continuous throughout the year. All of our EMTs must complete a 24-hour recertification class every two years along with 28 hours of continuous education approved by the Massachusetts Office of Emergency Medical Services (OEMS). We recently completed the eight hour EMT practical portion on Sunday, December 3, 2012.

Apparatus and Maintenance

Stow Fire is fortunate to have an excellent mechanic on staff as a full-time firefighter/EMT. Firefighter Greg Vogel holds the position of Department Mechanic. He does an excellent job keeping everything running, saving the Fire Department and the Town of Stow substantial money and minimizing equipment down time. We continue to provide maintenance to all our equipment and current apparatus in-house whenever possible. Greg recently attended classes and passed the complex certification exam to become a Registered Emergency Vehicle Technician (EVT), furthering our commitment to firefighter safety by being certified in the latest fire apparatus repair and safety techniques. Fire apparatus today is very expensive and complex. New fire apparatus today is highly computerized and cost hundreds of thousands of dollars to purchase.

Grants

For the last four years, we have applied for a grant to move the Stow Fire Department over to a new radio frequency. The federal grant will defer the cost from our taxpayers to funding provided by a Homeland Security grant through FEMA. In order to enhance our chances of gaining the funding, we entered into a three-town regional grant application with Boxborough Fire, Littleton Fire and Stow Fire. FEMA places a higher award status to regional grants involving more than one community. The Town was gracious enough to provide us with the 10% grant co-pay last year. We are hopeful that we will receive the grant funding before the end of fiscal 2013.

SCBA Upgrade. We applied for a similar FEMA grant for the last four years for updating our self contained breathing apparatus (SCBAs). The cost of upgrading the equipment to current NFPA standards is \$120,000 with a 5% co-pay (\$6,000). We do anticipate some funding from FEMA for the coming calendar year. The cost to replace all our air packs would be approx. \$180,000.

We are continuing our pursuit for a new fire station. We narrowly missed the vote at the fall 2012 Special Town Meeting, missing the 2/3 approval needed by a few votes. The Stow taxpayers have been very good to us in purchasing the necessary firefighting equipment. Our firefighters are now asking for your support to protect your equipment investment and improve the safety and quality of our work and living conditions. Our current fire station is outdated, overcrowded and, most importantly, not a safe place to work. The building committee has diligently worked for hundreds of hours to right size the new station. The station we are asking for will meet the needs of the Stow Fire Department for many years.

Our goal is to build a highly functional and affordable fire station, a building that incorporates green technology to lower ongoing energy costs, newer building materials for low future maintenance costs, and one that the Stow residents and our neighbors can be proud of.

We welcome people to stop by the station to see us for a tour of our existing building and the current conditions we work in. We would also be happy to give you a walk through

our new station plans and experience what safety features are necessary in modern fire stations today. Thank you to our residents for their continued financial support for a new fire station.

Thanks from the Chief

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the Firefighters and Officers on the Stow Fire Department for their help and support during this past year. Your dedication, commitment and professionalism make a department that we can all be proud of.

I would also like to thank all of the citizens of the Town of Stow, the business community, the Town Administrator, the Board of Selectmen, Building Inspector, Board of Health, Planning Board, Council on Aging and all other town departments for their support of the Fire Department. I would especially like to thank the Police Department, Communications Center and the Highway Department for all your help and support during the year. State Fire Marshal Stephen Coan also deserves special thanks for his continued help and support over this past year.

A special thanks to the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) and the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) for all their ongoing support, especially with emergency shelter operations.

Thank you all! I look forward to another year of progress and teamwork in the Town of Stow.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael McLaughlin, Fire Chief

Fire / Rescue – Full-time Staff

John Paul Benoit, Captain
Barry Evers, Lieutenant
Mark W. Guerin, Lieutenant
Gregory A. Vogel
Judson Swinimer, Firefighter, EMT,
Administrative Assistant

On Call Firefighters/EMTs

Christopher Camelio, Lieutenant
Tim Gray, Lieutenant
Eoin Bohnert
James Byrne
Richard Connelly
Gage Cummings
Charles Dunnigan
Shannon Eichorn
Jeremy Fiorvanti
Carolyn Fisher
Jason Galofaro
Jonathan Gray
James Kissane
Mark Latta
Walter Latta
Christopher Lazuka
Jeremy Lyons
Jonathan Murphy
James Ruggiero
Michael Scimeca
Robert Smart
Susan Siewierski
John Stone
Judson Swinimer
George Taylor
Michael Trioli
Matt Vickory
Keith Villa
Christopher J. Whitley

On Call Firefighters

Barrett Dilling
Paul Dudley
Scott Dwinells
Todd Jakubek
Matt Magazu
Scott Morse, Jr.
George Nunez
Gregg Silverio
Larry Stafford
Ryan Swan
Sean White

Apprentice Firefighters

Armangau Benoit
Erick Benoit
Kevin Benoit
John Bertonassi
Matthew Blood
Andrew Bolton
Michael Cisek
Josh Clement
Kristina Ellis
James Fortin
Ben Latta
Dan Nathan
Matthew Olson
Jack Stafford
Michael Volkert
Chris Whitley

Honorary Firefighters

Steve Landry
Eddie Warren