

FOREST WARDEN

The Stow Fire Department responded to many Brush Fires and investigations of outdoor smoke calls in the year 2012.

The open burning season was once again very busy for the Fire Department. 572 burning permits were issued from January 15 until April 30, 2012. This year we were very fortunate to secure a \$5,000 grant to place the burning permits online. Ross Perry was instrumental in securing the grant. The system was installed and rolled out to our residents. Those who wish to burn brush can check online every day to see if burning is allowed. Residents without computer access can visit the station to receive a permit. We allow burning between 10:00 am and 4:00 pm with permission from the Fire Department, depending on staffing and weather conditions. This allows us to have the appropriate personnel available in case your fire gets out of control. Our plan is to roll out additional permit applications in the future.

Many burning days are declined by the Department of Environmental Protection due to atmosphere conditions. The State Forest Warden cancels burning due to unfavorable weather conditions. Extreme conditions are reported as "Red Flag Days" on local weather reports.

I would like to thank the State Forest Fire Division and the Sudbury Fire Tower for all their help in locating and extinguishing some of these fires.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael McLaughlin, Forest Warden

EMERGENCY PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

We are the point of contact for the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC). The LEPC is comprised of a number of cross-functional departments that have demonstrated the ability to professionally manage emergency incidents in Stow. We are extremely fortunate to have such a talented group of volunteers. They have handled everything from desktop exercises to real life emergencies opening and managing emergency shelters. In the beginning, the LEPC met monthly until we were operationally ready. The group now meets on a quarterly basis or more frequently if an emergency arises. Our meetings take place at our primary shelter which is the Hale School.

The Stow Emergency Management Team responded to several recent major weather-related natural disasters. In 2009 we had the Ice Storm, 2010 the March spring floods and the countless winter snow storms in the winter of 2010/2011. Last year we