

FOREST WARDEN

The Stow Fire Department responded to many brush fires and investigations of outdoor smoke calls in the year 2011.

The Town Forest and other conservation lands were patrolled regularly for down trees and limbs that block the fire roads. Brush cutting was also performed where required to keep the roads open for fire apparatus.

The open burning season was once again very busy for the Fire Department. 450 burning permits were issued from January 15 until April 30, 2011. Those who wish to burn brush must be sure to come to the Stow Fire Station to obtain a burning permit. For the day you wish to burn, you call the Fire Department before you begin burning (after 9:00am). The number to call is 897-4537. 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.

One goal for next year is to automate the process for residents. This will allow people to register online for a burning permit and to check daily to see if burning is allowed. 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

The Fire Department is the point of contact for the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC). The LEPC is comprised of a number of many 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 emergencies, such as 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 sooner if an emergency arises. Our meetings take place at our primary shelter, which is the Hale School.