

2011

City of Findlay

# **FINDLAY FIRE DEPARTMENT**



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**FINDLAY FIRE DEPARTMENT**  
**2011 ANNUAL REPORT**  
Thomas R. Lonyo, Chief

**RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Findlay Fire Department provides response to a variety of emergency situations including fires and explosions, rescues and medical calls, hazardous conditions (electrical, chemical, structural, etc.) and requests for special services.

A pro-active approach to reducing losses to life and property due to fire is the primary responsibility of Fire Prevention Bureau, which focuses on public fire safety education, code enforcement and arson investigation.

The Department's primary coverage area is defined by the Findlay City limits. Fire protection is also extended to facilities outside the City limits by private contract and through mutual aid agreements with neighboring fire departments. Findlay Fire Department maintains a Class 3 Public Protection Classification as provided by the Insurance Services Office.

**ORGANIZATION**

Authorized staffing for the Fire Department consists of 74 full time professional firefighters, 20 part time firefighters and a non-uniformed administrative assistant. These personnel staff four stations located throughout the City.

Emergency response duties are assigned to sixty-nine of these firefighters, divided into 3 shifts of 23, with each shift covering a 24-hour period. Individual firefighters are organized into 4- to 7-man companies, supervised by a Captain. Each shift has four Captains reporting to a shift commander, or Battalion Chief. Shift personnel currently work an average of 50.4 hours per week and belong to the Local 381 Chapter of the International Association of Firefighters.

The remaining four Department personnel, the Fire Chief, the Administrative Assistant, and two Fire Inspectors, handle administrative duties, training, record keeping, and Fire Prevention activities.

For more information, visit our website: <http://www.ci.findlay.oh.us/?id=70>

**PERSONNEL/SAFER GRANT**

The Department began the year with a staffing level of 64 sworn full time personnel. An unexpected resignation and the retirement of David Copus left the department with a staffing level of 62 firefighters in January. The department was awarded the Department of Homeland Security SAFER grant in May of 2011. The Staffing Adequate Fire and Emergency Responders grant will provide the City with over \$929,000.00 in federal funds to hire and retain six additional firefighters.

In 2011, the department hired firefighters Evan Jackson, Nicholas Scoles, Phillip Hindall, Matthew Morgan, Richard VanAtta, Rory Ferguson and Devin VanGorder. Six of these positions have been filled with money made available through the SAFER grant. Personnel were trained at the Ohio Fire Academy and were on the line working with their assigned battalion by fall of 2011.

Although the department was successful in securing funds to hire and increase the departments manpower; multiple injuries and long term illnesses hampered the daily staffing of the fire department. At times throughout 2011, the department was operating with only 58 sworn personnel available for duty until the new hires were trained and returned from the Ohio Fire Academy. This placed an unusual strain on the department's overtime budget in 2011.

The SAFER grant awarded in May of 2011 has a performance period of twenty four months. During this time, the department must employ a minimum of 66 full time firefighters. Not meeting this requirement would require the City to return any encumbered federal funds.

Findlay City Council also changed the Codified Ordinance in 2011 and allowed for the hiring of up to 20 part time firefighters. In December of 2011, the department conducted an entrance examination for the position. A list has been compiled and discussions with the new City administration will take place in January 2012 regarding the funding and hiring of any part time firefighters.

## TRAINING

Emergency activities require expertise in areas such as fire suppression, medical care, equipment operation, technical rescue and chemical hazards, as well as a working knowledge of legal issues and governmental regulations. On the non-emergency side, the Fire Prevention Bureau conducts fire safety education, building plan review, code enforcement and arson investigation. All these areas require specific and continuing training, often mandated by State and Federal agencies.

Federal requirements including the Department of Homeland Security involve at least 24 hours of initial training. Once the initial training has been completed, firefighters must have at least 4 hours annually of continuing education. Federal requirements also mandate that new hire firefighters must complete a 144 hours of specialized training over a three year period.

		
<p>2011 Aerial Ops at BVH – Extending to Roof</p>	<p>2011 Aerial Ops at BVH - Search and Rescue for Victims</p>	<p>2011 Aerial Operations at BVH – Victim Rescue from Roof top</p>

The Ohio Department of Public Safety requires that firefighters complete 54 hours of continuing education in fire related topics. Firefighters are also required to complete 40 hours of EMS training every three years in order to maintain State certification. Fire inspectors must secure an additional 30 hours of training in the related field.

To meet the requirements of the Insurance Services Office (ISO), the department must have a combination of 14 single/multiple company drills of at least 3 hours each and two night drills of 3 hours each. Each member of the Department must also complete 3 hours of hazardous material training and 20 hours per month of monthly in-service training.

Each new recruit is also required to complete 40 hours of emergency driver / operator course and at least four, three hour training sessions on safe driving. FFD Officers are also required to complete 12 hours of officer training. In addition, ISO requires that each commercial structure is entered by FFD personnel and a pre-plan inspection completed twice annually.



In 2011, the department conducted an in-house course on school bus extrication which coincided with an EMS Mass Casualty course. School buses were provided by Findlay City Schools and local tow companies. These multiple drills allowed firefighters to gain experience and knowledge as it relates to school buses and train on the departments newly acquired heavy rescue extrication tools.

### **EQUIPMENT PURCHASES**

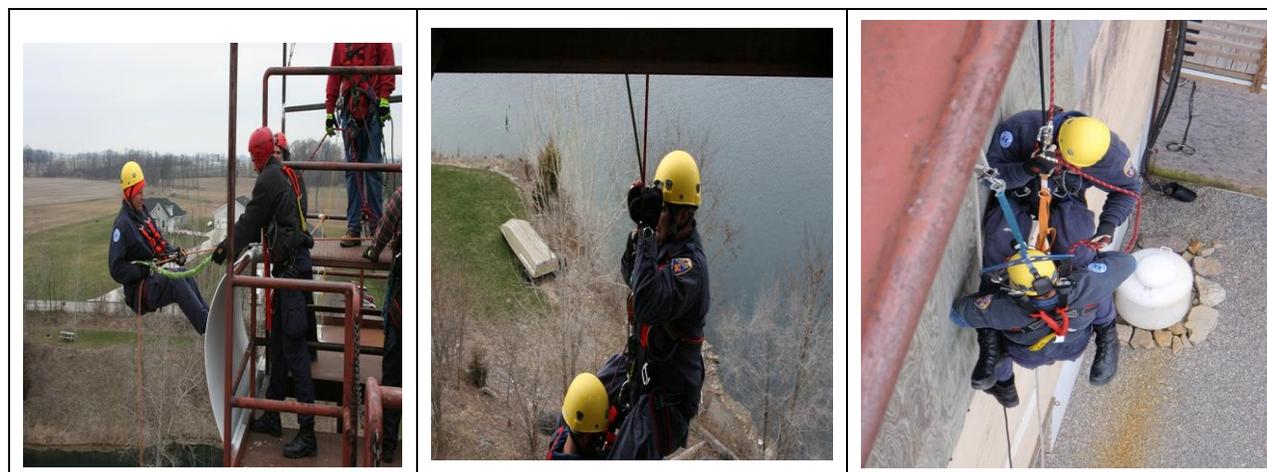
As in recent years, the department's purchase of equipment was again limited in 2011. The department's major purchases included a new set of heavy rescue extrication equipment. The new equipment was purchased with funding provided by Hancock County EMA and the City of Findlay Capital Improvement Fund. The purchase of this equipment increases the department's ability to cut through "new" age steel used in the automobile manufacturing process. The newer equipment also performs at a much quicker speed than the department's older extrication equipment.

		
<p>Rescue Cutter</p>	<p>Rescue Post Cutter</p>	<p>Rescue Spreader</p>

The department also replaced all station computers which averaged approximately seven years in age. The Computer Services Department recommends computer replacement approximately every five years.

### TECHNICAL RESCUE TEAM (TRT)

The Technical Rescue Team is a team of seven dedicated members who have sought out training in technical disciplines such as high angle rope rescue, trench rescue, confined space rescue, commercial vehicle rescue, swift water rescue technician and structural collapse. These events are low frequency in nature but are very high risk to responders and victims. The department has adopted to train a select team of individuals versus attempting to train an entire department to level of skill needed to safely respond to the low frequency emergencies.



### TACTICAL EMS (TEMS)

The department collaborated with the Findlay Police Department in 2010 and established the Tactical EMS (TEMS) team. TEMS members assist the Findlay PD's Emergency Response Team during high risk police operations. TEMS members have received training at Owens Community College's Center for Disaster Preparedness and train monthly with the ERT unit.

Five FFD members are assigned to the TEMS detail and are outfitted with personal protective equipment, tactical uniforms and equipment and medical supply kits. TEMS members do not carry weapons and are perimeter support team members to the ERT.

## **FIRE PREVENTION BUREAU**

Two firefighters, certified through the State of Ohio as Fire Safety Inspectors, make up the Findlay Fire Prevention Bureau. The public has come to view the Fire Prevention Bureau as its fire protection and safety experts.

While all perform fire safety inspections within the City, each inspector focuses on a specific facet of the operation. The three specialty areas are fire investigation, code enforcement and public fire safety education. The Department's two inspectors work closely with other agencies and with the public in carrying out their assigned duties.

Fire Inspector Matt Pickett assumes the duties of lead Fire Investigator for the Department. In addition Inspector Pickett focuses his efforts on code enforcement. Inspector Eric Habegger primary tasks are reviewing commercial plans, life safety education, and code enforcement.

Inspector Pickett as well as the Findlay Police Department convicted three individuals in 2011 of the crime of arson. Most notably was an arsonist who destroyed two Tiffin Ave. restaurants in 2011.

## **PUBLIC RELATIONS**

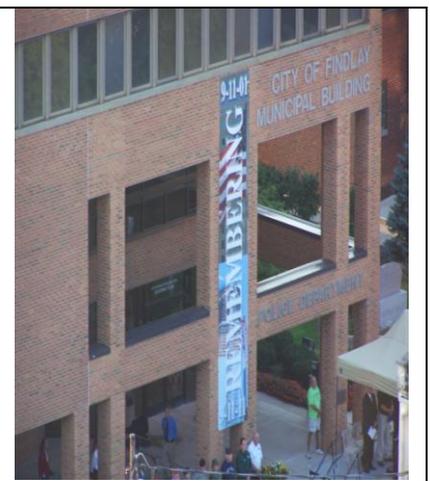
The department continues to promote positive public relations with the residents of not only Findlay, but Hancock County as well. The department participated in numerous events such as parades, public safety sponsored events, the 9-11 Ten Year Anniversary Remembrance, National First Night Out at Riverside Park, the Flag City Balloon Fest, and other various public gatherings.



911 Tribute – Ladder Salute



911 Tribute – Mounted Unit



911 Tribute – Municipal Bldg. Banner

Additionally in 2011, IAFF Local 381 continued the long standing tradition of funding and providing free smoke detectors to the residents of Findlay as well as handing out teddy bears to children who unfortunately had to spend Christmas Eve in the Blanchard Valley Hospital. Local 381 also continued to provide the Annual Retiree's Dinner which was well attended by former members of the department. The Local also participated in the Muscular Dystrophy Association's Annual Fill-the-Boot campaign.

In 2011, members of the fire department volunteered to establish a Boy Scouts of America Explorer Post. The program continues to grow and has experienced a high participation rate. Fire Station #4 also serves as a Child Safety Seat Inspection site for the Findlay City Health Department on a regular basis.

The Wal-Mart Foundation provided the department a \$1,500.00 grant to purchase and distribute Carbon Monoxide Detectors to needy families in the community. With the grant a total of 66 carbon monoxide detectors were purchased and delivered to the Hancock County Community Action Commission for distribution to families in need. This is the second year in a row the department has been able to provide this service.

## **FACILITIES**

Fire Department operations are conducted out of four fire stations located within the City limits:

Station 1, 720 South Main Street, serves as Department Headquarters, as well as housing an engine and a ladder company, a rescue truck, and the Battalion Chief's vehicle. Station 1 provides first due response for the area south of Howard Street and west of the CSX Railroad. Station 1 was built in 1958.

Station 2, 2610 North Main Street, was built in 1976. It houses an engine company and is first due in the area north of Howard Street and West of Crystal Avenue. Engine 2 is housed at this station in addition to a pick-up, hazmat trailer and a deuce and half.

Station 3, 1001 Tiffin Avenue, was located at the eastern edge of the City when constructed in 1958. Since then, the station sits in approximately the geographical center of the City. The station houses an engine company and the Department's water rescue equipment. It provides back-up to the other three response districts as well as primary coverage to the area east of the CSX Railroad, north of Blanchard Avenue, south of Crystal Avenue, and west of the Findlay Village Mall.

Station 4, 7047 County Road 236, is the newest station, built in 1997. The facility houses an engine company, a ladder company, a reserve engine; the Department's apparatus repair shop, and training facilities. Station 4 provides primary coverage for the rapidly growing eastern edge of the City.

## **APPARATUS**

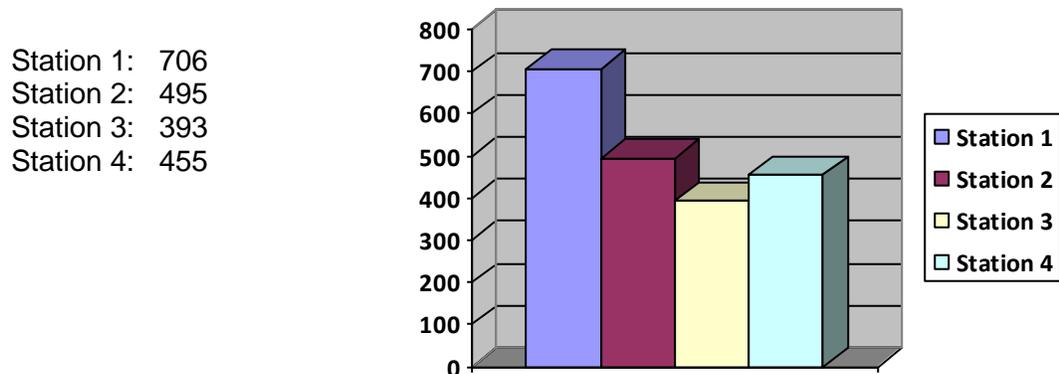
The compliment of firefighting apparatus and other vehicles assigned to the Fire Department consists of four 1500 gallon per minute pumping engines, one 2000 gallon per minute engine with a 75ft elevated ladder, one 1500 gallon per minute aerial truck with an 85 ft. platform, a 2000 gallon per minute 100 foot aerial, a rescue truck, a hazardous materials trailer, two water rescue units, 3 utility pick-up trucks, and 5 staff cars.

The department's fleet of vehicles is relatively new and in good shape. On the horizon the department must begin looking ahead to the replacement of Engine 1. The vehicle is the department's oldest front line engine and is showing signs of wear. The vehicle was out of service for several days in 2011 while the fleet mechanic traced electrical shorts which are showing signs of heavy corrosion and wear. The vehicle has quickly moved up on the replacement priority list and grant funding is being sought for its replacement.

## INCIDENT PROFILE

Call volume amounted to 2049 calls in 2011, an increase of 206 calls. The amount of total fire loss experienced in the City of Findlay in 2011, totaled \$4,635,120.00.

One of the four fire stations is assigned primary responsibility, depending upon location, for each emergency call. Below are listed the primary responses made by each of the four stations:



Several large fires occurred in 2011 including the Wendy's and Burger King Restaurants on Tiffin Ave, the g2 Revolution fire on Stanford Parkway and an apartment complex fire located at 2220 Crystal Ave. These fires combined accounted for approximately \$ 3,800,000.00 in damage to property and contents.

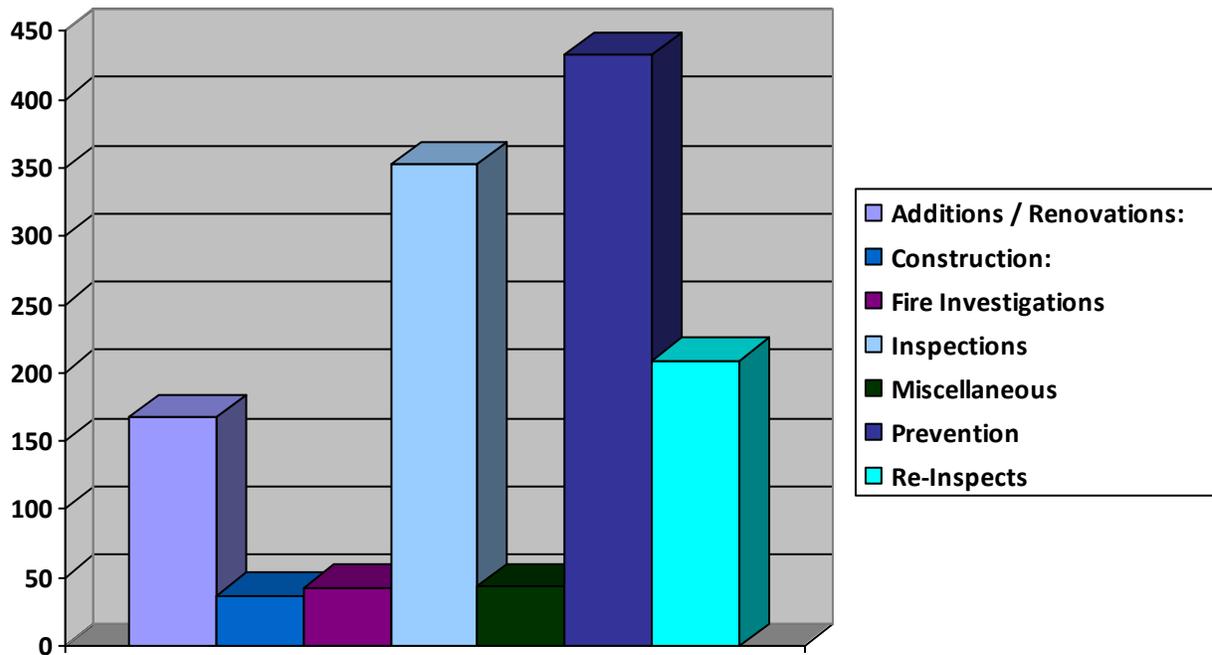
The following information details the general categories of emergency calls and their percentages in relation to the total number of calls handled in 2011.

Number of Calls	Type of Calls	Percentage
59	Structure Fires	2.88
24	Vehicle Fires	1.17
29	Miscellaneous Fires	1.42
293	False Alarms	14.30
1339	Rescue / EMS Calls	65.35
148	Hazardous Condition (Spills, leaks, explosions, electrical)	7.22
157	Good Intent Calls	7.66
<b>2049</b>	<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>100%</b>

The Findlay Fire Department Fire Prevention Bureau received new reporting software in late 2010. The Bureau was able to complete one full year of its use in 2011 and will now be able to categorize and track inspection activity much more thoroughly. A comprehensive breakdown of significant activities of the Findlay Fire Department Fire Prevention Bureau for 2011 is summarized below:

### Findlay Fire Prevention 2011 Summary of Activities

<b>Additions &amp; Renovations:</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>Inspections (cont.)</b>	
<i>Code Interpretations</i>	53	<i>Institutional</i>	2
<i>Inspections</i>	55	<i>Mercantile</i>	7
<i>Plan Reviews</i>	23	<i>Pre-Fire Plan</i>	2
<i>System Acceptance Tests</i>	36	<i>Residential</i>	62
		<i>Adoption / Foster Care</i>	27
<b>Construction</b>	<b>37</b>	<i>Utility Mobile Food Vendors</i>	72
<i>Code Interpretations</i>	7	<i>Utility Outbuildings</i>	12
<i>Inspections</i>	8		
<i>Plan Reviews</i>	12	<b>Miscellaneous</b>	<b>44</b>
<i>System Acceptance Tests</i>	10	<i>Meetings Attended</i>	24
		<i>School / Seminars Attended</i>	20
<b>Fire Investigations</b>	<b>43</b>		
<i>Accidental</i>	21	<b>Prevention</b>	<b>433</b>
<i>Undetermined</i>	8	<i>Code Interpretations</i>	92
<i>Incendiary</i>	13	<i>Complaints</i>	58
<i>Natural</i>	0	<i>Knox Box Consults/Maint.</i>	89
<i>Non-Fire</i>	1	<i>Other</i>	27
		<i>Fire Plan Updates</i>	51
<b>Inspections</b>	<b>353</b>	<i>Property Research</i>	28
<i>Assembly</i>	32	<i>Safety Presentations</i>	88
<i>Business</i>	86		
<i>Education – K-12</i>	32	<b>Re-Inspects</b>	<b>209</b>
<i>Education – Pre-School</i>	18		
<i>Hazardous</i>	1		



## OUTLOOK

Much of 2012 will again center on the economy, both locally and nationally. The State of Ohio Performance Audit will be completed in the first quarter of 2012 and the department will review the city administration the results and recommendations. Additionally, the department will continue to search for additional efficiencies within the department's budget.

The department will review and update Standard Operating Procedures. One priority of the department will be to update the incident accountability system and "May Day" procedures. The department has opted to select two Fire Training Coordinator(s) to identify needed training and assist in the coordinating efforts to provide instruction to the department with limited funding.

One resignation and two retirements will occur in 2012 and the department must plan to replace these positions. The Assistant Chief position is a priority of the department and will be submitted with the permanent operating budget. The position is promoted per the collective bargaining agreement and Civil Service Rules.