

2012

City of Findlay

FINDLAY FIRE DEPARTMENT



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FINDLAY FIRE DEPARTMENT
2012 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.

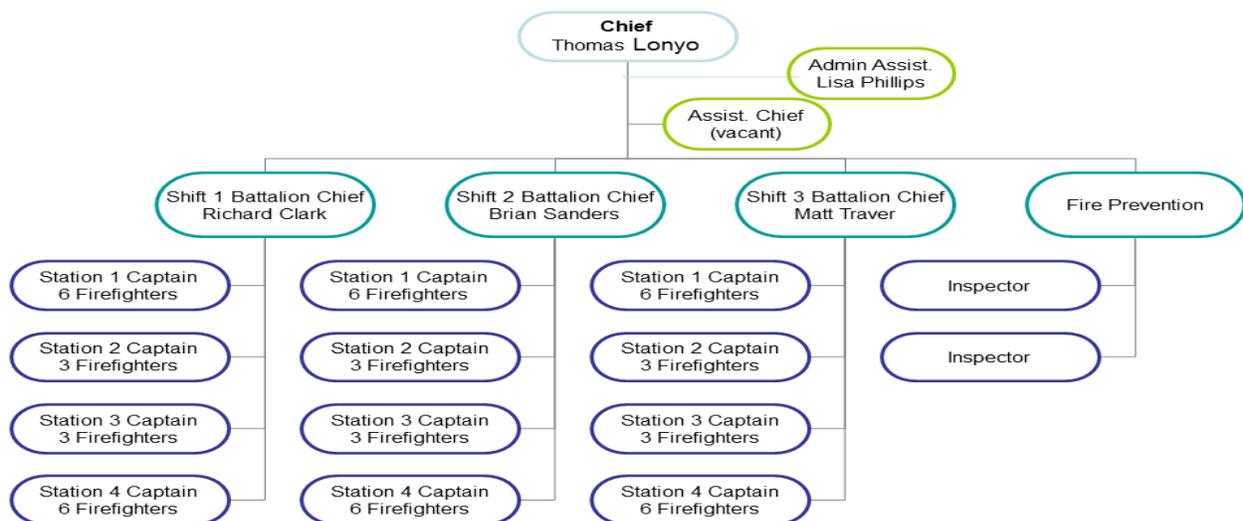
A pro-active approach to reducing losses to life and property due to fire is the primary responsibility of Fire Prevention Bureau, which focuses on public fire safety education, code enforcement and arson investigation.

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: www.ci.findlay.oh.us/Fire/Index.htm

PERSONNEL

The Department began the year with a staffing level of 66 sworn full time personnel. Firefighter Robert T. Hamilton retired in 2012.

In 2012, the department hired firefighters Daniel Dewyre, Richard Gonzalez II and Daniel Smith. All three firefighters attended and successfully graduated from the Ohio Fire Academy with their Firefighter I & II Certification. The hiring of these three individuals, as well as the lack of long term firefighter injuries and illnesses reduced the department's overtime budget from 2011 to 2012 significantly.

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.

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

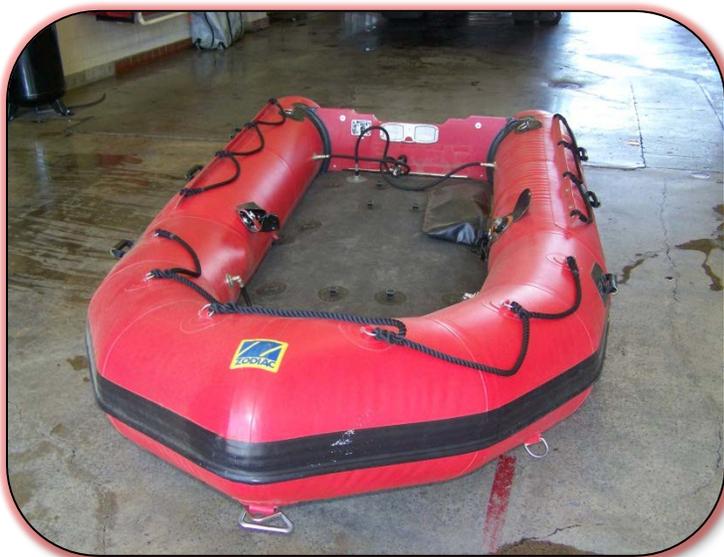
3 hours each. Each member of the Department must also complete 3 hours of hazardous material training and 20 hours per month of monthly in-service training.

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 2012, the department hosted or provided several courses to the membership. These courses included but were no limited to Swift Water Rescue Technician, the National Fire Academy's "First Officer Due", and L.A.C.K. – Leadership, Accountability, Culture and Knowledge, Air Management and fire personnel completed a ladder maze.

EQUIPMENT PURCHASES

As in recent years, the department's purchases of equipment were again limited in 2012 due to lack of available funds. The department applied for several grants and was able to purchase through the Department of Homeland Security's Assistance to Firefighters Grant a new Zodiac inflatable watercraft and two new thermal imaging cameras at a cost of over \$31,000.00.



Additionally, the department purchased through Ohio EMA grant funding a new airbag lift system at a cost of approximately \$14,000.00. The new airbag lift system will assist firefighters in stabilizing vehicles involved in accidents as well as rescues in structural collapses.

TACTICAL EMS (TEMS)

The department continues to collaborate with the Findlay Police Department with the Tactical EMS (TEMS) team. TEMS members assist the Findlay PD's Emergency Response Team during high risk police operations. 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. In 2012, the TEMS was activated four times and provided this valuable assistance.

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 assumed the duties of lead Fire Investigator for the Department. In addition Inspector Pickett focuses his efforts on code enforcement and commercial plan reviews. Inspector Eric Habegger primary tasks are life safety education and code enforcement.

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. The station also houses a utility vehicle and water rescue equipment.

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 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 still faces challenges when it comes to the replacement schedule of fire apparatus. As with all city departments, the department has received very limited capital improvement funds over the past five years. The majority of equipment purchases have been secured through state and federal grants.

The City must plan on the replacement of a 1997 HME engine. This vehicle was taken out of service in late 2012 due to electrical and transmission issues. Over the past 24 months, the department has expended \$30,000.00 in maintenance for this vehicle and another \$15,000.00 is needed to correct the immediate issues. The department will also be facing the replacement of a second 1997 HME engine in 2-3 years.

The city must address the issue of replacing vehicles on a regular basis to eliminate the need to purchase multiple fire apparatus over a short period of time. A more strategic plan of replacement is encouraged and needed as a lack of government funds becomes more evident.

INCIDENT PROFILE

Call volume amounted to 2043 calls in 2012, a decrease of 6 calls from 2011. The amount of total fire loss experienced in the City of Findlay in 2012, totaled \$1,703,844.00.

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:

- Station 1: 737
- Station 2: 502
- Station 3: 403
- Station 4: 401

The largest fire responded to was located 532 South Main Street on February 23, 2012. The historic Argyle building experienced a fire and caused over \$800,000.00 in damage and interrupted a dozen downtown buildings. The impact of this fire was felt for weeks as South Main Street remained closed due the buildings instability. The structure was eventually torn down.



The response of the Findlay Fire Department resulted in only minor injuries and no fatalities at this fire. Multiple commendations and citations were awarded to members of the department for their actions during and after the incident.

The following information details the general categories of emergency calls and their percentages in relation to the total number of calls handled in 2012.

Number of Calls	Type of Calls	Percentage
49	Structure Fires	2.40
17	Vehicle Fires	0.83
54	Miscellaneous Fires	2.64
209	False Alarms	10.23
1345	Rescue / EMS Calls	65.83
124	Hazardous Condition (Spills, leaks, explosions, electrical)	6.07
245	Good Intent Calls	11.99
2043	TOTALS	100%

The Fire Prevention Bureau's comprehensive breakdown of significant activities is summarized below:

**Findlay Fire Prevention
2012 Summary of Activities**

Additions & Renovations:	125	Inspections (cont.)	
<i>Code Interpretations</i>	36	<i>Institutional</i>	1
<i>Inspections</i>	47	<i>Mercantile</i>	17
<i>Plan Reviews</i>	12	<i>Pre-Fire Plan</i>	3
<i>System Acceptance Tests</i>	30	<i>Residential</i>	72
		<i>Adoption / Foster Care</i>	26
		<i>Utility Mobile Food Vendors</i>	55
Construction	95	<i>Utility Outbuildings</i>	15
<i>Code Interpretations</i>	24		
<i>Inspections</i>	26		
<i>Plan Reviews</i>	12	Miscellaneous	49
<i>System Acceptance Tests</i>	33	<i>Meetings Attended</i>	29
		<i>School / Seminars Attended</i>	20
Fire Investigations	42		
<i>Accidental</i>	28	Prevention	402
<i>Undetermined</i>	9	<i>Code Interpretations</i>	97
<i>Incendiary</i>	4	<i>Complaints</i>	76
<i>Natural</i>	0	<i>Knox Box Consults/Maint.</i>	64
<i>Non-Fire</i>	1	<i>Other</i>	15
		<i>Fire Plan Updates</i>	32
		<i>Property Research</i>	23
Inspections	356	<i>Safety Presentations</i>	95
<i>Assembly</i>	33		
<i>Business</i>	91	Re-Inspects	323
<i>Education – K-12</i>	18		
<i>Education – Pre-School</i>	19		
<i>Hazardous</i>	6		

DOWNTOWN FIRE TASK FORCE

Following the Argyle fire the department identified the need to focus more resources on the downtown area. Fire Prevention activities needed to focus on: Code Inspection & Enforcement,

Pre-Incident Planning and Life Safety Education. The department partnered with several business oriented organizations in order to achieve a greater awareness of the benefits of fire prevention.

Captain Jerry Greer and Firefighter Eric Wilkins were assigned to the task force in addition to Inspector Eric Habegger. Captain Greer is focused on providing additional life safety education to downtown businesses, organizations and tenants. Firefighter Wilkins is “triaging” downtown properties with walk through code inspections. Pertinent information regarding the conditions of structures, contents and uses are gathered and passed on to the fire prevention bureau and fire suppression forces. Between September and November of 2012, Wilkin’s efforts resulted in an additional 117,000 square feet of downtown properties being inspected that otherwise would not have been.

COUNTY HAZMAT MATERIAL RESPONSE TEAM

In 2012, Ohio EMA identified the need for a Type III Hazardous Material Response Team in Hancock, County. After consultation with OEMA, city and county officials it was determined that a collaboration of multiple agencies would best be suited to formulate the first of its kind County HazMat Team. Findlay Fire took the lead as the agency which would provide support to the creation of the team.

Findlay Firefighter Troy Stoner was designated as the team liaison and assisted Hancock EMA with the purchase of over \$86,000.00 worth of equipment and supplies. The money was provided through an Ohio EMA to the Hancock County EMA. The HazMat team has been selected and its 24 members will seek the initial HazMat Technician training in spring of 2013. Eight agencies will initially supply team members to the County HazMat team.

The team will be guided by a steering committee consisting of city and county fire representatives. The team will not only respond to Findlay and Hancock County, but will serve as a response team for Ohio Region 1 which consists of eighteen counties in Northwest Ohio.

2013 OUTLOOK

The failure in November of 2012 of the City of Findlay’s quarter percent tax which was implemented in 2010 will leave the Findlay Fire Department facing unprecedented challenges. In May, nineteen full-time firefighters will be laid off due to the reduction of the CIT base and reduction of local government funds from the State of Ohio. Station 4 on County Road 236 will be closed due to lack of personnel.

The department must continue to use technology to identify risks, patterns in emergency occurrences and match the remaining facilities, apparatus, equipment and staff to the actual risks the community faces on routine basis. There is no question that a better system for

delivering EMS can be achieved using a collaborative effort between private and public responders. The city and private agencies have begun discussions which will recognize these efficiencies and identify potential collaborative efforts which will enhance the delivery of EMS services to the community.

