2011 Fire Department Annual Report

Prepared By: Scott A. LaVielle, Fire Chief

Overview

2010 was once again a restricted budget year. The department's priority was to maintain daily operations and services with limited staffing resources. One firefighter vacancy, shift adjustments, injuries and an incessant cold and flu season combined with limited staffing levels created overtime challenges for the department and its budget. Maintaining minimum staffing consumed 57% of the overtime budget with sick leave and injury as the most common causes. Emergency calls for service contributed 26% to the overtime.

Total calls for service of 2697 were down about 300 calls from the previous year. Multiple and continuous back-to-back calls continue to challenge the department in the provision of essential services with limited staffing.

The department received two grants in 2010. The first was a \$5000 grant from the Fireman's Fund Insurance through the participation of the local Denny's restaurant for a thermal imaging camera. The other was a \$152,000 FEMA Assistance to Firefighter's grant for a vehicle exhaust system for both stations and an air compressor system for station 1 to fill Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) bottles. Both systems will be installed in 2011.

Emergency Medical Services

The department had 2018 medical responses which totaled 75% of the total calls for service. This was the same level as 2009. The department transported 65% of the time with 80% of the responses were dispatched as Advanced Life Support. The percentage breakdowns for medical responses were as follows: NE quadrant -25%, SE quadrant -18%, NW quadrant -17%, WSU campus -15%, SW quadrant -10%, Pullman Regional Hospital transports -6%, Palouse -5%, and WCFD 12-4%.

Fire Suppression

The department responded to 679 fire calls for service which was down from the previous year. Of the 679 calls, 88 involved smoke and/or fire conditions for an estimated fire loss of \$636,175. Eighty-one calls were to hazardous conditions and 510 calls resulted in non-emergent fire situations (e.g., false fire alarms, system malfunctions, accidental/unintentional activations, malicious alarms or good intent and service calls). The percentage breakdowns for fire responses were as follows: NE quadrant - 44%, WSU campus - 26%, SE quadrant - 15%, NW quadrant - 11%, and SW quadrant - 4 %.

Fire Prevention

In 2011 the Prevention Office activities increased slightly with only 15 site plans and 19 building plan reviews for the year. There were 267 general business inspections and 25 installation inspections consisting of 9 automatic fire sprinkler systems, 10 fire alarm systems and 6 kitchen hood systems for the year. Fire permits dropped slightly to 28 and generated \$2,555 in total revenue for the year.

Public Education

The department conducted 21 First Aid/CPR and 10 basic CPR classes in 2010. The use of an automatic electronic defibrillator (AED) was also taught in several of these classes improving the skill level of 213 citizens. The department continued to provide public education through tours at the fire station, fire extinguisher classes, fire alarm drills and safety talks at the sororities and fraternities and the residence halls at Washington State University. The department participated in the community activities of National Emergency Medical Services Week, 4th of July Celebration, Lentil Festival, Fire Prevention Week, Holiday tree lighting, and the Parks and Recreation annual Egg Hunt and the Halloween party.

Training

During the year the training division progressed in numerous areas that include firefighter safety, officer development, as well as fire investigation. Numerous department members benefited from courses held across the state, many of which were delivered by the National Fire Academy. The department was fortunate to be able to find and attract these courses, many of were at minimal or zero cost.

The department also hosted courses on Wind Driven Structure Fires and High Rise Tactics that not only



Recruit class 2011-01 at the state fire academy

benefited our local community, but also attracted firefighters from across the region and the state. And another AHA Instructor was added to the department's roster which will greatly aid in the delivery of required materials.

The department also trained the newest members of our Reserve Firefighter class. Each member in the upper right photo was put through numerous hours of classroom and challenging training ground drills that spanned 7 months. And in the Fall of 2011 the next class of recruit's were welcomed into the department starting with their Emergency Medical Responder (EMR) course which lasts for 3 months. At the completion of their EMR class, they then immediately began their firefighter training. This EMR course is taught in house by department personnel and is led by FF/PM Andrew Chiavaras.

Along with the above fire courses that brought numerous local departments together, there were



also coordinated training events involving some of our mutual aid partners. From high rise firefighting drills to water shuttle operations to aircraft crash landings, many of the surrounding communities are safe because of these coordinated efforts.

All of the department's men and women deserve a round of applause for their continuous efforts to improve their skills and keep our great community as safe as it can possibly be!

Confined Space Rescue Training in December. Outside Temperature = **24**°