



# Hinckley Township Fire Department



## 2013 Annual Report

Submitted: February 24, 2014

Timothy Potts, Chief

## Introduction

In the emergency services environment, status quo is unacceptable since complacency often results in the inability to perform properly when an incident develops. Fire and Emergency Medical care have undergone broad changes in both concept and application requiring our Firefighters and EMS providers to undertake additional training, apply new techniques and become familiar with new equipment.

The Hinckley Fire Department provides fire protection and emergency medical care on a 24/7/365 basis to a community of 7,656 residents residing in 26.9 square miles. Approximately 9 square miles of this area is part of the Metro Parks recreational area. The challenge the Department faces in the delivery of services requires a greater commitment of time than during any other period.

Information contained in the year-end report will document the Fire Departments response to emergency services request as well as the developing approach to expanding services including inspections, education and community outreach programs to businesses, schools and other facilities in our service area.

The progress and achievements the Department has made in the past twelve months reflect the dedication of the entire staff as well as the support received from the Board of Trustees, Fiscal Officer and all other Township Departments.

*'Having a secure feeling  
in knowing you guys are  
here so quickly gives me  
peace of mind!'*

*Thanks again!*

*KB*

## Personnel

Hinckley Township is now in the midst of a transition period from a rural to suburban community with pressure being placed upon the community for increased services. Residents expect that an advanced care provider will arrive to take care of the loved one when a medical emergency develops. When a fire develops, the rapid response of firefighters and equipment is needed and expected to minimize damage and prevent injury or loss of life.

The Fire Department of 2013 has changed dramatically from that of just a few years ago in response to the expectations of the residents. Staffing presently is at thirty one (31) employees that are classified as part-time, paid – on – call or volunteers responding from home in time of an emergency. The Fire Chief and the Administrative Assistant positions are considered part time with both being in the office five (5) days each week, working far more hours than required by resolution.

*I am working hard to keep JK at home and your Department plays an important role.*

*T.J.G.  
Attorney*

The structure of the Department has been changed from that of two (2) Administrative Captains and two (2) Lieutenants to that of four (4) Lieutenants assigned to manage operational aspects and one (1) assigned to Administration. An emphasis has been place on educating all the Officers in their responsibilities as outlined NFA 1021, *Fire Officer Professional Qualifications*. All of the Lieutenants have now completed the Fire Officer I course and will complete the curriculum for Fire Officer II in 2014. Additionally, all Officers will undertake additional courses that will prepare them to manage escalating incidents and reducing injuries incurred during emergency operations.

Personnel hired prior to 2011 often lacked certification in EMS and/or Fire. In 2013, the Department changed this practice requiring that all new employees have either an advanced provider level in EMS and/or have a nationally recognized level of certification as a Firefighter I or Firefighter II as outlined in NFA 1001, *Standard for Firefighter Professional Qualifications*.

Those individuals presently employed by the Department were provided with an opportunity to participate in a four month long training program that would take them through a Firefighter I transition class.

Partnering with the University of Akron for the didactic and practical sessions, Lt. Grossenbaugh and Chief Potts led the students through each of the required course requirements to prepare them for the certifying examinations and exercises.



***Chief Potts prepares a car fire for candidates in the Firefighter I class***

Cuyahoga Community College assisted the Department at the conclusion of the program with the required live burn exercises. Nearly \$6,000 in preparatory work was invested by the Tri – C staff in preparing the building for the training exercises. Instructors from across the region were brought in to provide their expertise during the actual fires.

Students faced multiple fires and utilized various techniques throughout the two day event including attacking basement fires, ventilation principles, use of ladders, overhaul as well as search and rescue options. Over 40 fires were set during this training and the Hinckley Firefighters exceeded the expectations of the instructors.

On the EMS side, several of the firefighters who had received guidance and encouragement from their Officers decided to go back to school to become Paramedics. Andrew Baxter was the first to complete this training, followed very quickly by Shawn Barrett and now Matt Benigni.

*Lt. Barrett, Firefighter Hec Hixson and Firefighter Tom Flannery make an attack on a ground floor room and contents fire*



Dave Vance is also enrolled in the Advanced Technician program. All of these individuals will complete their course of studies and are expected to obtain their State of Ohio certification in 2014.

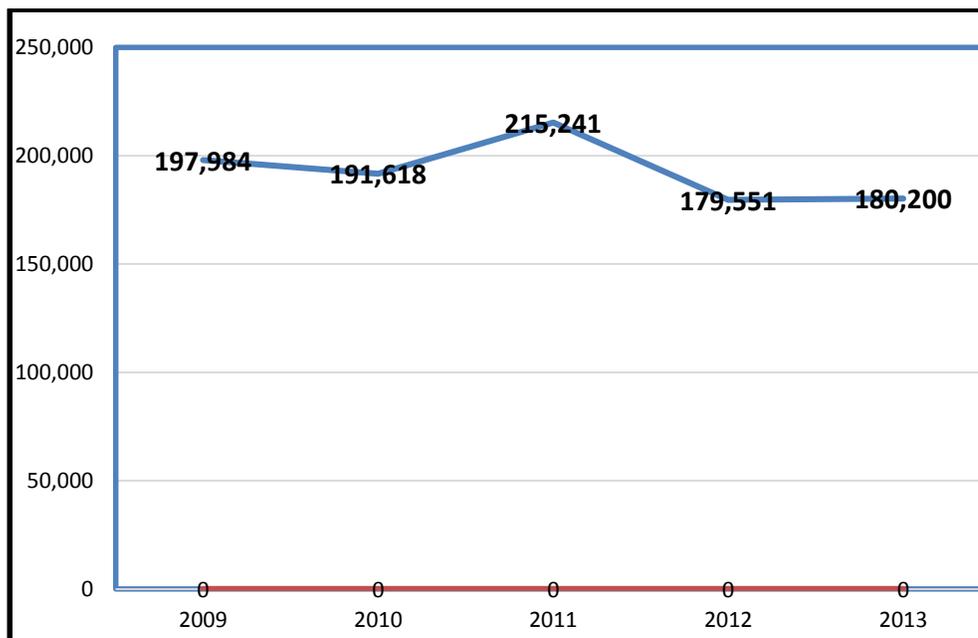
### Staffing Certifications

Certification	2011	2013
Paramedic		2
VFF - EMT Basic	14	5
VFF - EMT Advanced	4	
VF Paramedic		1
FF I		1
FF I - EMT Basic		7
FF I EMT Advanced		2
FF I Paramedic	3	
FF II - Basic	4	4
FF II - Paramedic	8	8
VFF Only	1	
FF II Only	1	
	35	31

The change in provider level not only improves the service available to the community , but it also enhances the ability of the Department to affect insurance ratings, improve grant opportunities, attract employee candidates and improve the firefighter safety..

All of the employees embrace the need for additional training. In 2013, there were 140 classes presented and 2,622 hours logged in Fire, Rescue and EMS training. Many individual hours have not been recorded of a firefighter or EMS provider spending time at the station with others, practicing a skill or reviewing a technique to improve their abilities or the individual who attends a class outside of the Department for which they were not compensated for. This also does not include the hundreds of hours logged by the Paramedic and Advanced EMT students

### Five Year Salary Comparison



The Department has begun to implement several changes designed to improve overall response time to emergencies. The end of 2013 signaled the end of the Engineer positions within the Department with the exception of the Chief Engineer. The intent is to transfer the responsibility for vehicle checks and station maintenance to the entire staff by having them perform these duties while on a designated shift. Personnel should become more familiar with tools and equipment, vehicle operation and Department procedures by being more involved.

The Department staffing began in late October and is being evaluated for efficiency and cost on a monthly basis. In addition to the monies saved by eliminating the Engineers positions, training sessions are now scheduled two days each month with all other individual training being performed on duty.

The Department is facing many of the same problems other departments in Medina County and across the country face with the recruitment and retention of volunteer or part time paid on call employees. The increased training requirements and the time commitment needed to respond to the increasing number of emergencies has become a topic of discussion nationwide.

The Officers of the Department continue to work with the rest of the staff to identify areas where we can consolidate training, facilitate certification requirements with the regional training centers and adjust scheduled programs to lessen the impact on the personal lives of the employees. The number of emergency responses continue to increase in both number and severity which will require the Department leadership to look at transitioning from a paid on call staff to more of a part time paid Department. This will help to broaden the boundaries in searching for new employees as well as modifying operations to retain those who have invested so much into the protection of the community over the years.

*Your Department performs  
a critical function for the  
community and it is  
reassuring to know you are  
there!*

*BK  
Hinckley Resident*

## Fire Education Programs

The Fire Education Program increased the number of presentations and audience in the Hinckley Elementary School in 2013. Classes included Kindergarten and Special Needs on a varied schedule as well as three (3) first grade classes, three (3) second grade classes, two (2) of the third grade classes and three (3) each of the fourth and fifth grade groups.

Andrew Baxter presented the kindergarten classes when his schedule allowed. He focused on the fire safety education that included Stop, Drop and Roll; crawling under the smoke; not saving toys or pets; never hiding in a fire; getting outside as quickly as possible; going to your meeting place; never playing with matches; and calling 911 in an emergency but never as a joke or game.

Special needs classes were scaled back to match the educational needs of the students and includes similar topics presented at their educational level.

Kodak is a big part of the programs presented. Talk to anyone of the children in the Fire Education programs and Kodak is sure to come up. He dresses the part, is very good with the children and enjoys the attention as much as the children enjoy his participation.

Sharon Center was successful in receiving a regional fire prevention grant approximately eight years ago for a Fire Safety Trailer that could be used in the elementary schools of all three communities composing the Highland School District. This very valuable asset was rarely used nor was the introduction of a fire safety programs in the schools considered until 2011. The three Fire Chief's, building on a functional approach to regionalized services, have blended the curriculum of the National Fire Protection Association that is so well presented by Lydia and her team, into a program that is now present in all elementary facilities of the District. The trailer that once sat unused is now so popular, it must now be scheduled well in advance to avoid conflicts. Each year, Hinckley Fire Department personnel present safety information to over 500 school children on a regular basis as well as hundreds more in separate requested programs.

## Fire Education Monthly Activity

Month	Description of activity
<b>January</b>	Pond and Ice Safety including never going out on the ice, not trying to rescue an animal on the ice, calling 911 for help, and viewed videos of ice rescues of animals
<b>February</b>	First and Second grades learned how a firefighter dresses for a fire. Each part of the personal protective equipment was explained to remove and fear. Grades 3, 4 and 5 were taught to map their bedrooms and plan their escape routes.
<b>March</b>	All grades had a lesson on poison prevention. Common household agents were placed in glasses and children were made aware of their similarities to other beverages. The identification game is a hit with the kids as they learn if the glass they chose is a tasty treat or a nasty choice.
<b>April</b>	The school's testing schedule prevents classes from being presented so the month was used to provide a fire education presentation to 200 Cleveland School children visiting Hinckley. The January lesson plan was chosen as the most appropriate program for them
<b>May</b>	Students participated in simulated tornado exercises with storm sounds and lights used to make the training more realistic.
<b>June</b>	June focused on Safety Town to the pre-school children.
<b>September</b>	Grades 2, 3 and 4 had a fire safety review using the video "Be Cool About Fire Safety" that reinforces the basic messages taught in the January class. The safety trailer was used with the first graders.
<b>October</b>	The first graders toured the Hinckley Fire Station. Grades 2, 3, 4 and 5 were in the Child Safety Trailer.
<b>November</b>	Disney once again was called upon to help teach Safety Smart in the Home. Lion King characters taught lessons on smoke detectors, space heaters and escape routes.
<b>December</b>	Christmas brings special concerns so candle safety, fireplace fires and decorations were discussed.

In 2011, the Hinckley Firefighters Community Benefit Fund agreed to provide residential lock boxes for those residents who lived alone and who had a medical condition that may require emergency treatment. The purpose of this program was to allow Fire and Police officers the ability to enter into a residence in response to a request for assistance without having to force entry. The entire program was initially funded through the donations received by the Association.

In January 2013, the family of Ted and Mary Ann Gaj, following the stated wishes of their mother at the time of her death, asked that donations be made to the Hinckley Fire Department in memory of their father, who was a founding member. Over \$4,500 in donations were received. The Department and Association decided to use all of these funds to improve fire safety in the community. The Ted and Mary Ann Gaj Residential Fire Safety Program was set up in tribute to this family's generosity and has now allowed us to provide over 50 lock boxes, dozens of smoke detectors, and stove top extinguishers to our residents. The stove top extinguishers have already prevented two fires and the lock boxes are used on many emergency medical calls or welfare checks.

In the coming months, at least one additional employee will be needed to assist Lydia with presenting programs. This will require not only many training hours at the National and State Fire Academy's but also observation hours to be able to replicate the method of instruction that has been so successful as a result of Lydia's talents. There are available grants being considered to offset the cost of this training and additional equipment so that the impact on finances is lessened.

## Medina County All Hazards Team

One of the best examples of regional collaboration is the Medina County All Hazards Team. This specialized unit provides Medina Fire Departments the needed equipment, personnel and additional resources to mitigate specific hazardous situations. The cost to participate in this cooperative venture pales in comparison to the cost of purchasing the equipment, training each member of the Department and acquiring the needed vehicles to transport these resources to an emergency. Hinckley Fire Department will continue to embrace this concept.

Prior to 2011, the Hinckley Fire Department limited the participation in the Team and planned to handle all major technical rescues or hazardous materials spills independently. The purchase of equipment need to support this approach deprived the Department of the ability to properly maintain apparatus, an inability to purchase needed personal protective equipment or to purchase replacement hydraulic rescue tools that are used far more frequently than any other technical equipment.



*The Trench Team working to extricate a victim during a simulated foundation collapse exercise.*

Since 2011, Lt. Jess Grossenbaugh has been the Department leader both in participation and leadership of the All Hazards Team. Personnel participate in the confined space, trench and hazardous materials response and training programs and there is one employee presently assigned to the Fire Investigation unit. Ryan Colegrove joined the team this year and is quickly becoming a technical expert in several areas

This year, All Hazard Team training is lower than in previous years due to the Department presenting the Firefighter I transition course and the number of employees attending Paramedic school. .

Firefighter Jared Grossenbaugh is our representative to the Fire Investigation unit. He is active in responses to fires and is developing his abilities as an investigator. This position requires years of education and working with other investigators to develop the knowledge to work independently.

	<b>Rope Training</b>	<b>Trench Training</b>	<b>Confine Space Training</b>	<b>Fire Investigation</b>	<b>Total Hours</b>
<b>Lt. Grossenbaugh</b>	4 hours	4 hours	13 hours		<b>21</b>
<b>FF Ryan Colegrove</b>	4 hours	7 hours	7.5 hours		<b>18.5</b>
<b>FF J. Grossenbaugh</b>				20 hours	<b>20</b>
<b>Totals</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>20.5</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>59.5</b>

The sale of Rescue 38 finalized the Departments independent approach to handling technical rescue calls. Most of the equipment on the truck had expired and was too expensive to replace. Other equipment has been placed on vehicles which will allow us to return to the initial responder role in rescues where the focus is on securing the scene, attending to the immediate needs of the victims and prepping the site in support of the All Hazards Team.

The Department is working with Larry Walters from Medina City who is in charge of the rope rescue discipline to prepare ready bags for deployment to rescues in the Metroparks. Future plans call for us to house a trailer or vehicle that will lower response times to the scene. Under the present plan, the Team members respond to Medina City Station 1 to pick up the needed equipment and then respond to the scene. This delay can be significantly shortened with the present planned approach.

A committee of area Chief's has begun to look into the development of a Medina County Council of Governments that could provide oversight and legislative authority to the All Hazards Team. The formation of this team was accomplished with little more than an idea and a handshake. The lack of a formal structure must be addressed in a manner that provides accountability, addresses insurance and liability issues and plans for future growth.

## Fire Inspection Bureau

There was a transition within the Fire Inspection Bureau this year when Eric Boleman decided to retire from Hinckley Fire Department after many years of service to the community. Elliot Szerensci offered to step in to the position of Fire Inspector after he successfully completed the State certification requirements for this position.

In 2011, the inspection program was almost non-existent with the most comprehensive records dating back nearly a decade. Eric is to be credited with compiling an extensive list of emergency contacts for the businesses. Working with Lt. Barrett, a proper filing system was developed and maintained of all inspections, plan reviews and other relevant information pertaining to fire inspections. This information has been entered into the Firehouse Records Management database program allowing all employees to access this data when completing Fire and EMS reports.

The single most important job of the Fire Department is to prevent fires before they start. The only way this can be accomplished is through an active Fire Inspection program that encourages compliance to applicable codes along with a Fire Education Program that embraces standard best practices and teaches individuals to recognize the dangers within their home and take corrective action.

In just a short time, Elliott has developed an inspection matrix based upon the MABAS zones indicating the business name, points of contact, specific inspection requirements and date of last inspection. This allows for a quick assessment of facilities that require an inspection or have been scheduled for equipment testing.

Adding to the list of accomplishments is the work he has invested in obtaining updated Township maps through the Medina County Geographic Information System. The newer maps can be used by Service, Police, Zoning, Administration and the Fire Department. Now that they are completed, additional revisions can be made easily and new maps produced each year.

A total of 95 compliance issues were found during these inspections. Re-inspections were conducted to confirm that these items were corrected.

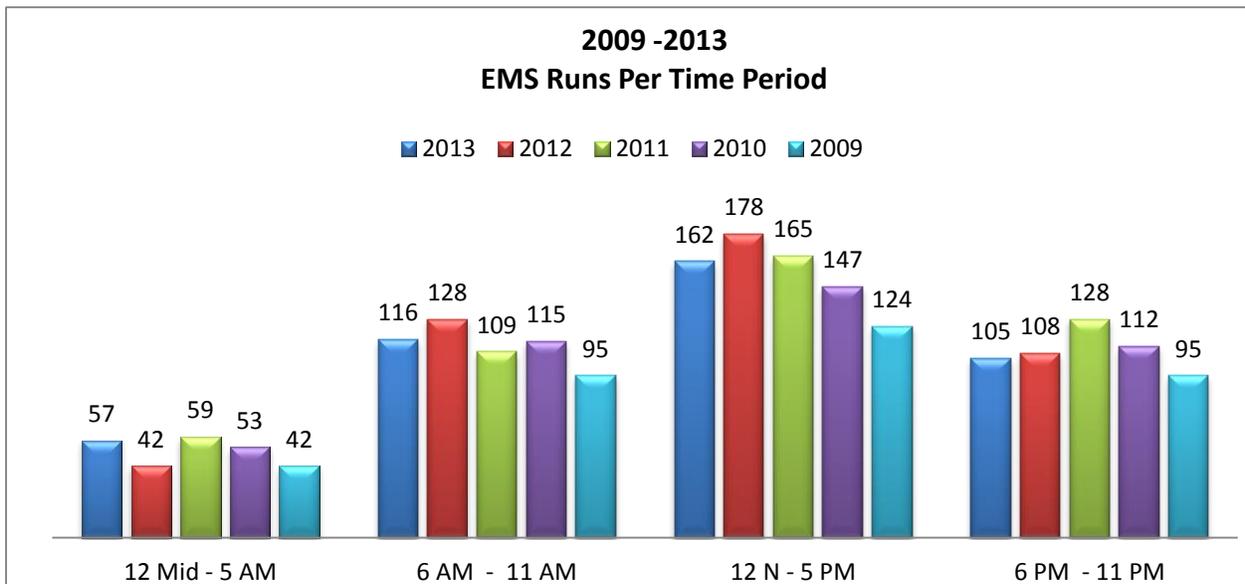
## 2013 Inspections

Type of Inspection	Inspections Completed
General	57
Fire Protection Systems	17
Fire Alarm Systems	2
Sprinkler Systems	2
Consultations	1
Permit	1
General	1
Site Inspections	2
Total	83

## Emergency Medical Services

The pre-hospital providers from the Hinckley Fire Department had 445 patient contacts in 2013 and transported 309 individuals who were either injured or acutely ill. Average response time to requests for emergency medical care continues to be slightly below 9 minutes from arrival at station to on scene time. This does not include the average of 8 minutes from receipt of call to arrival at the station or a total average of 17 minutes.

Department personnel are called upon to respond from their home or office at all hours of the day. Trending these responses will help to determine future staffing needs. Time of day alone however does not determine the acuity of a call, only the frequency of events. Future analysis of the data over several years will help to guide this Department in determining staffing levels in the future.



The Department continues to apply for a State EMS Grant each year that is now being used to purchase items that expands services rather than the past practice of replacing disposable or recurrent items. These funds will also be used to help offset the cost of the Paramedic and Advanced training that some of the employees have undertaken.

Last year's funding of \$4,500 allowed the Department to purchase a Life Pak EKG Monitor with AED capabilities that is now located on one of the Engines. This will provide protection for firefighters during their duties as well as allow the Engine to run as an additional ALS unit. Plans are to add at least one more additional EKG unit to the other Engine in the next few years as well.

### 2013 EMS Runs by Provider Impression

Purpose of Call	Total Responses
Abdominal Pain	27
Allergic Reaction	4
Altered Level of	19
Behavioral/Psychiatric	12
Cardiac Arrest	1
Cardiac Rhythm	6
Chest Pain/Discomfort	30
Diabetic	15
Hyperthermia	2
Hypovolemia/Shock	1
Inhalation Injury	6
Dead on Arrival	6
Medical Illness	136
Poisoning	4
Pregnancy Related	1
Respiratory Distress	24
Respiratory Arrest	1
Seizure	10
Stings/Venomous Bites	3
Stroke/CVA	9
Syncope/Fainting	8
Traumatic Injury	62
Non-Traumatic Bleeding	18
Rescue/Other	40
<b>Total Patient Contacts</b>	<b>445</b>

This past year a long standing relationship with Southwest General Health Center ended as the Department decided to work under the direction of Medina Hospital and the Cleveland Clinic EMS System. This difficult decision was reached after several months of research by the Chief and Officers.

The findings contributing to this decision included an expanded scope of practice for the Basic and Advanced EMT; certification courses such as Advanced and Pediatric Advanced Life Support courses being taught at the station at no cost; and continuing education courses tailored to the needs of the Department. This change also allows the Department to be connected to resources specific to Medina County and individuals with an understanding of the problems encountered in this region.

### 2013 Transports by Final Destination

Destination	Number
No Transport/Rescue/Other	137
Parma Community Hospital	27
Southwest General – Main Campus	136
Cleveland Clinic	1
Medina General Hospital	78
Southwest General – Brunswick	61
Akron Children’s Hospital	1
Akron General	2
Metro Health Medical Center	1
Summa Lake Medina	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>445</b>

*On the two separate rides to the hospital my daughter was well taken care of. Both teams were kind and caring and got us safely to the hospital!*

*HC and MC  
Hinckley Township  
Residents*

## Fire Emergencies

There were a total of 146 fire related incidents in 2013 representing a twenty two percent increase over the previous year. Fire losses exceeded \$158,000 which is better than double the amount in the previous year however the figures are in part due to better understanding of the reporting requirements on the part of the staff.



*F.F. Josh Erksine and Chief Potts conduct a fire extinguisher training class with Department personnel as part of the Firefighter I transition course.*

The Department continues to evaluate the response, tactics and operations used at all fire scenes. Established in 2011, the stated approach to all fire incidents is to overwhelm the fire with resources, possess the building in order to affect rescue, confine and extinguish the fire quickly to limit damage and save lives. This approach is supported in the training programs that have been offered locally and regionally as well as the use of a coordinated response of resources through the Mutual Aid Box Alarm (MABAS) system that will soon be supported by a county wide mutual aid agreement.

The Department has refined the ability to deliver an adequate water supply to an incident in a shorter period of time. According to ISO, the delivery of 4,000 gallons of water within five minutes of the first alarm, has a significant effect on the loss of property. The present response provides nearly 7,500 gallons initially with a fire flow of over 750 gallons per minute that can be sustained in most portions of the Township for the duration of the incident with the exception of the southeast sector due to the limited water sources.

### 2013 Fire Incidents Per NFPA Category

Category	Number of Incidents
Structure Fires	20
Vehicle Fires	2
Vegetation/Rubbish Fires	14
Equipment Fires	2
MVA/Extrication	5
Water/Ice Rescue	1
Rescues	13
Gas Leaks	15
Carbon Monoxide	22
Electrical Incidents	7
Service Calls	9
Smoke Detector Activation – No Fire	11
False Alarm or False Call	16
Severe Weather Related	4
Total Calls	146

## Apparatus and Equipment

In reviewing the operations of the Department, the limited use of Rescue 38 led to the decision to sell this vehicle at a time that would provide the greatest monetary return. In 2011, the decision was made to fully participate with the Medina Regional tactical rescue teams which limited the need for localizing costly rescue equipment. The pump system on the Rescue truck was poorly designed and led to costly repairs.

The truck was sold for \$225,000 to the Rush Volunteer Fire Department in Lawton, Pa. The monies will be allocated towards the purchase of a new rescue squad in 2016 and the refurbishment of Tender 32 in 2014. Further savings will be realized with the reduction in insurance, operational costs and annual maintenance.

The minimal amount of rescue equipment retained was easily absorbed on the other apparatus. Engine 31 is the designated vehicle for motor vehicle accidents so the hydraulic rescue tools and associated equipment were relocated on this truck. Engine 31 -2 and Tender 32 were also equipped with some of the equipment as was Squad 37. The remounting of this equipment is being done by Sensible Products in Richfield and Department personnel.

Numerous repairs that were identified in 2011 and early 2012 that needed to be made to the apparatus continue to absorb a large portion of the annual budget. Engine 31 accounts for the majority of these expenditures with the problems being primarily electrical. This can be attributed to the decision to multi-plex the vehicle at the time of construction. Compounding this situation was the past practice of performing vehicle checks on a monthly basis and not attending to repairs immediately, then scheduling them with various repair facilities instead of one primary vendor.

Repair costs will continue to be tracked and modification to the vehicle inventory will be considered should the costs be excessive. Apparatus must be designed and purchased after careful consideration of the needs of the community. The past practice of just replacing a vehicle with a similar vehicle has severely hindered this Department operationally and financially.

### Emergency Vehicle Service and Cost, 2013

Vehicle	Reason	Cost
<b>Engine 31-2</b>	Replace NST, 4" Cap	\$25.95
	Schedule B Service - Pump Test, Oil Change, lube and Filters	\$891.71
	Repair Exhaust systems	
	Remove and replace fan clutch assembly	
<b>Engine 31</b>	Repairs to electrical panel	\$3,602.64
	Schedule B Service - Pump Test, Oil Change, lube and Filters	\$1,032.35
	Repair four valves	\$1,776.16
	Cabinet work to install rescue tools	\$2,535.00
	Pump repairs	\$1,036.61
	Repair Tank Sensor – Parts only	\$140.00
<b>Tender 32</b>	RH 4" Storz Blind Cap	\$174.00
	Repair bearings and drive shaft	\$322.25
	Schedule B Service - Pump Test, Oil Change, lube and Filters	\$1,754.54
	Including brake repair	
<b>Squad 37</b>	Replace air filter	\$12.77
	Diesel filter fluid	\$46.36
	Tire repair	\$.75
<b>Squad 37 – 2</b>	Replace battery	\$127.50
	Replace rear tires	\$768.26
	Collision damage	\$898.50
	Replace left front tire	\$177.42
<b>Utility 34</b>	Annual service	\$32.95
<b>Total Cost</b>		<b>\$15,355.42</b>

#### **Self - Contained Breathing Apparatus**

Lt. Carl Kuhn is responsible for the inventory of the SCBA's including repairs and maintenance. Typically, the Department contracts with Warren Fire Equipment to perform the NFPA required annual bench test. During this time, needed repairs and upgrades are identified and scheduled for the year.

In 2011, the Department had 27 SCBA units with only 10 of those units meeting current NFPA standards. The decision was made to reduce the inventory to fourteen (14) units and a total of twenty eight bottles to match normal staffing during responses and contain expenses.

The twelve (12) packs taken out of service would have cost far more to upgrade than it would to purchase new units.

NFPA standards also require that bottles be replaced after 15 years of service life. There presently are a total of thirty nine (39) 30 - minute cylinders and four (4) 60 - minute bottles in service. In 2015 and 2016, a total of 19 bottles will be removed from inventory leaving only a total of twenty two (22) cylinders available.

Future plans are based on containing costs while improving firefighter safety. The Department will maintain a total of 28 cylinders but transition to 45 minute high pressure cylinders. Additionally, the Department will need to:

- Upgrade the existing ten (10) units per NFPA guideline
- Purchase fourteen AV3000 replacement face pieces
- Purchase fourteen voice amplifiers.

The Department was fortunate in 2012 to obtain funding through the Assistance to Firefighters Grant program to purchase a breathing air compressor, cascade system, fill station and air monitoring equipment. The \$42,000 purchase would not have been possible without this source of funding. The unit is a state of the art device that is extremely safe to use during the filling of air cylinders with a true Level II protective cabinet.

### **Hydrants and Hoses**

Hinckley now has a total of 364 hydrants between the Medina and Cleveland systems that require annual maintenance and testing. Kim Richter is responsible for the coordination of this program..

Since 2011, Firefighter Richter has created a database in the Firehouse Management System that describes each hydrant, annual maintenance information as well as recording all repairs. Should a hydrant be found out of service during the maintenance and testing, the water department is notified immediately and repairs are usually performed within 7 to 10 days.

The hose records are also maintained by Firefighter Richter with all entries completed after the annual testing. This year there were a total of 6 lengths taken out of service. The Department has not had a scheduled replacement program nor an accurate record keeping of the present inventory of hose and is now facing a critical situation.

Nearly all 2 ½ hose and 1 ¾ lines are in need of immediate replacement. The Department has sought out funding through the Assistance to Firefighter Grant program to replace this hose. In the event this request is not awarded, the Department has developed a contingency plan for replacement.

## Facilities

Discussions with Township officials led to the development of a Request for Qualifications for architectural services to determine the feasibility of a new station on the property in front of the Service Garage. Fourteen architectural firms submitted their information for consideration with a final group of five (5) firms interviewed.

Perspectus Architecture was chosen as the firm that will perform this work. The first phase will focus on site work, geological surveys, analysis of square footage needs, a building layout and cost projections for the project. From this point, the project will continue to be evaluated based upon cost.

During this period, grant options will be researched to help contain the costs associated with this project as well as identifying items that can be purchased in advance of a contract to avoid cost increases prior to letting a contract for the construction.

This is an exciting time period for the Department and the community since it will not only allow the staff to perform their duties in an environment that is safer and more comfortable but it also will provide for a higher level of service to the community. Planned for the new facility are a clinic, increased office space, classroom that will also serve as the Emergency Command Center in the event of a disaster, living quarters and dormitories. The latter is needed as the Department transitions in the future 24/7/365 staffing.

## The Guidance for Success

The National Fallen Firefighters Foundation developed The Sixteen Life Safety Initiatives with the intent of improving the safety of firefighters and their communities. This program is the basis for all grant funding as well as the model by which all Departments are evaluated should a serious injury or death occur.

Hinckley Fire Department continues to assess operations, training and response using these management objectives as guidelines for change.

The Sixteen Life Safety Initiatives listed below are followed by the changes implemented in the Hinckley Fire Department;

1. Define and advocate the need for a cultural change within the fire service relating to safety; incorporating leadership, management, supervision, accountability and personal responsibility.

**Our stated approach to fires is to overwhelm the incident with resources, possess the building quickly when safe to do so, commit to rescues with the needed resources and confine and extinguish the fire to reduce property loss. This can only be accomplished if every person on the Department is well trained, knows their job and has the tools to do their work.**

2. Enhance the personal and organizational accountability for health and safety throughout the fire service.

**Accountability can only be accomplished through education. That is why all personnel are made aware that training in both Fire and EMS is available and it is their responsibility to obtain that training. Annual evaluations and counseling sessions are provided to guide the employee towards improving their abilities.**

3. Focus greater attention on the integration of risk management with incident management at all levels, including strategic, tactical, and planning responsibilities.

**Employees are made aware of the requirements outlined in NFPA 1500 and the Ohio Administrative Code as it pertains to risk versus benefit and the required use of Incident Command during all responses.**

4. All firefighters must be empowered to stop unsafe practices.

**Employees are encouraged to speak out if they feel the situation is unsafe due to their level of training or the development of the incident without fear of repercussions.**

5. Develop and implement national standards for training, qualifications, and certification (including regular recertification) that are equally applicable to all firefighters based on the duties they are expected to perform.

**The focus since 2011 has been to train all employees to a nationally recognized standard in accordance with NFPA 1001, Qualifications for Professional Firefighters. Recognizing that others are limited in their ability to attend these classes or who desire only to provide EMS, the Department is attempting to define individual roles for everyone so that they can continue to serve the community.**

6. Develop and implement national medical and physical fitness standards that are equally applicable to all firefighters, based on the duties they are expected to perform.

**This objective is actively being discussed at the County Chief level so that affordable medical evaluations can be performed on an annual basis and that the findings are used to improve the health of the employees rather than punish.**

**Additionally, equipment is being evaluated and facilities modified to allow employees to conform to reasonable fitness standard that will encourage them to improve their health and lower their risk of cardiovascular disease.**

7. Create a national research agenda and data collection system that relates to the initiatives.

**In 2011, the Department began to fully utilize the National Incident Fire Reporting System and the Emergency Medical Services Incident Reporting System through the Firehouse Management System. Each year the personnel improve their reporting abilities providing a more accurate database of the incident information they are involved in.**

8. Utilize available technology wherever it can produce higher levels of health and safety.

**One of the initial actions in 2011 was to evaluate the existing equipment and apparatus to determine if it was safe and what repairs needed to be made in the short term. During the past 30 months, equipment repairs are attended to with urgency and equipment purchases are made with the intent to improve the safety of the firefighter. Personal protective equipment including helmets, lights, SCBA's and other components are replaced immediately when failure occurs.**

9. Thoroughly investigate all firefighter fatalities, injuries, and near misses.

**We have been fortunate in that there have been only a few, non-critical injuries to our crew however, when an injury does occur or when a medical problem develops with one of our firefighters, immediate medical care is sought and the cause of the injury determined. Should equipment or operational deficiencies be determined to be the cause, corrective action will be initiated.**

10. Grant programs should support the implementation of safe practices and/or mandate safe practices as an eligibility requirement.

**Grant programs such as the State EMS grant and AFG program are now being used to replace equipment that has been determined as unsafe. Other grant programs are being used to fund training programs and achieve higher levels of certification for the staff.**

11. National standards for emergency response policies and procedures should be developed and championed.

**Training programs based upon national standards have been identified and where necessary, the appropriate staff has been enrolled. All officers are now trained to the required NFPA standards. Additionally, employees have been enrolled in NIMS classes when it has been determined they are not in compliance.**

12. National protocols for response to violent incidents should be developed and championed.

**The Department has discussed this situation and is working with other agencies in developing protocols for domestic violence incidents as well as identifying its role in the event of a larger incident such as school shootings.**

13. Firefighters and their families must have access to counseling and psychological support.

**Presently there is a gap in this program since the Medina region does not have an Incident Stress Debriefing team.**

14. Public education must receive more resources and be championed as a critical fire and life safety program.

**On the strength of the programs presented by our Fire Education Specialist and the entire staff, we excel in this area and will continue to find ways to fund and present additional programs to the elementary school children**

15. Advocacy must be strengthened for the enforcement of codes and the installation of home fire sprinklers.

**Although we advocate the need for residential fire sprinklers whenever the opportunity presents itself, the lack of a water system and the inability to pass legislation mandating this type of suppression system limits what can be done.**

**The Department continues to push the residential stove top extinguisher program as well as early detection with two types of smoke detectors until such time as the limiting factors for the home sprinkler program are addressed.**

16. Safety must be a primary consideration in the design of apparatus and equipment.

**All apparatus meets current NFPA standards for safety with the exception of Tender 32 and that will be addressed in 2014.**