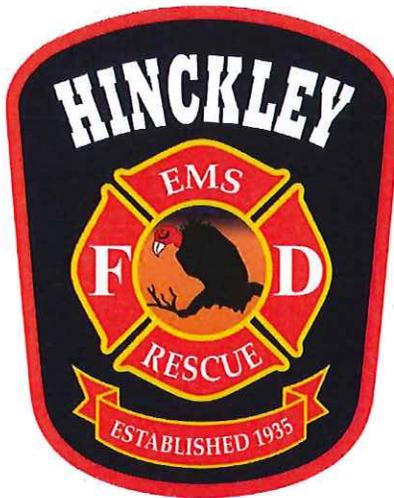


Hinckley Township Fire Department



2015 Annual Report

Submitted: March 7, 2015

Timothy Potts, Chief

INTRODUCTION

Hinckley Fire Department faced a challenging year in 2015 in a number of areas. Emergency responses totaled 644 just seven less than the previous year. Weather conditions throughout the winter months were difficult with temperatures residing below zero for nearly four weeks straight. As warmer weather developed so did the precipitation with April and May being some of the wettest periods of the year. As fall approached, the region was solidly entrenched in drought conditions that resulted in several large vegetation fires.

Throughout the year, the Department was fortunate enough to have the assistance of the Hinckley Police Department on nearly every emergency. Their willingness to provide traffic control, assist with the transporting of a patient or handling a hose line is sincerely appreciated.

The Hinckley Service Department undertook additional duties on both the new station project and some of the other functions the Department was involved in. Live burn training required a dump truck and front end loader, and the crews from the Service Department were always willing to assist.

There were significant changes in the Department throughout the year which will be presented within this report. The support received from the Board of Trustees, Fiscal Officer and other Township employees is greatly appreciated.

PERSONNEL

The Department undertook several major projects as it related to staffing in 2015 that will have a significant impact on the operations and funding opportunities in the coming years. The successes achieved during the past twelve months are to be shared by all staff members. Their continued dedication to the community and this Department is extraordinary.

A professional may be defined by salary or appearance but within the fire service, it is best evaluated by the knowledge and skills in the performance of their duties. Hinckley Fire Department employees attended over 260 educational presentations in house and at other venues resulting in the accumulation of 3,071 hours of instruction. These hours are solely that consisted of formal educational opportunities that staff members participated in. Countertop discussions, impromptu equipment training and other sessions that were not a part of classroom presentations were incessant. Some took advantage of as many of these programs as possible while others met only the minimum requirements.

The State Fire Marshall offered full reimbursement of the tuition costs for anyone interested in obtaining a Firefighter I certification. Hinckley partnered with Cuyahoga Community College Public Safety Academy to hold this intensive program over three months. Six of the employees successfully completed the programming that provided them with this nationally recognized level of certification.

Lydia Wochna also attended the State Fire Academy* to take the Fire and Life Safety Educator Level I and II programs that allowed her to obtain national certification as well. The Level III program is not yet offered in this area but Lydia will attend this training as soon as it becomes available.

Staffing Certifications

EMT Basic	1
VFF - EMT Basic	3
VFF - EMT Advanced	1
FF I	1
FF I - EMT Basic	9
FF I - EMT Advanced	2
FF I - Paramedic	3
FF II - Basic	4
FF II - Paramedic	10
FF II	1
Total Personnel	35

The Department has completely changed in its level of certifications which will continue to have an effect when grant funding is being sought. Federal grant programs do not provide funding to agencies whose personnel are not certified to a nationally recognized standard.

As discussed in last year's report, the Department has initiated staffing on a regular basis. Historical data has shown that approximately 65% of emergency requests occur during the day with the peak time being between 1000 hours and 1800 hours. The staffing also provides for daily maintenance of equipment, apparatus and facilities; the extension of services to the residents including residential lock box, smoke detectors and extinguisher installation as well as on duty training. Additional hours of staffing over and above the scheduled day shifts occurred frequently in the winter months when brutal weather conditions made response to night time emergencies difficult. During these times, additional personnel stay on call so in the event of an emergency, assistance can be enroute within a short window of time.

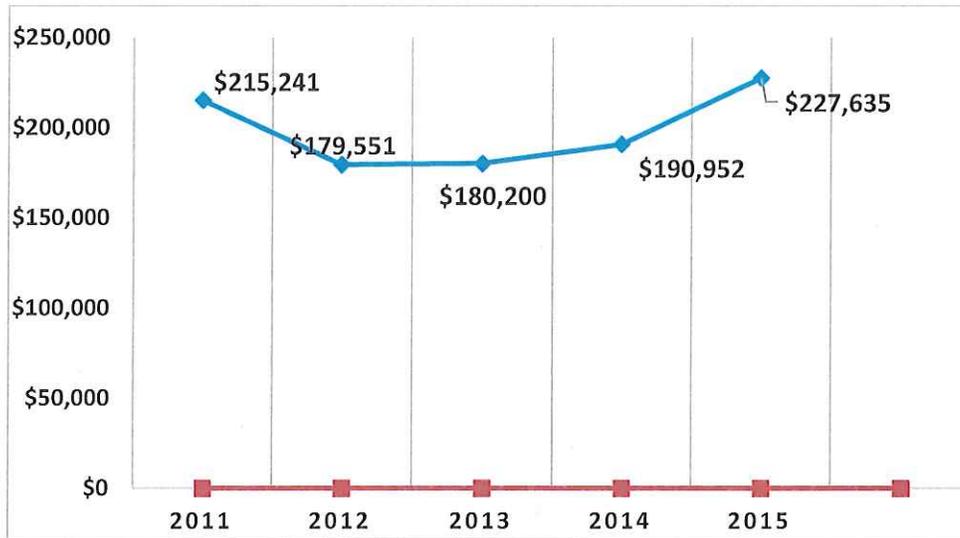
Live fire training opportunities are difficult to achieve given the restrictions imposed by EPA and the requirements of NFPA. The preparation of an acquired structure is time consuming and costly. Fortunately, the staff is always interested in this type of training and willing to put in the necessary hours to prepare the structure to meet the regulations. This year, an acquired structure on Ridge Road provided weeks of training on fire suppression, ventilation and search and rescue techniques which culminated in two days of very intense firefighting.



Live Fire Training involving coordinated attack evolutions.

The personnel costs this year were significantly higher than in previous years due in part to the new day time staffing but also as a result of the many hours of time the employees put in towards the new station, attending the certification programs, inclement weather situations and live fire training opportunities. These costs should stabilize as the projects reach completion.

Five Year Payroll Comparison



FIRE EDUCATION

Fire Prevention program was active at Hinckley Elementary School in grades K, 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5. Lessons were presented not only about fire safety but other safety topics as well.

In January, the lesson was Pond and Ice Safety. Children grades 3, 4 & 5 were taught the importance of never going out on or following pets on to untested ice, never going on the ice without adult supervision, and the importance of having a cell phone available to call 911 for any ice related emergency. Emphasis was made that children should never try to rescue a person or pet when an ice emergency occurs but should call 911 instead.

The February lesson for grades 3, 4 & 5 taught children how to manage a cooking fire and the importance of never putting water on a grease fire. Fire extinguishers were reviewed as was the importance of having one in the kitchen.

In March, grades K, 1 & 2 had a review of water safety since many of the children would be going swimming during their spring break. The Disney video "Safety Smart In the Water" featuring Pumbaa and Timon from the "Lion King" was used to highlight knowing how deep the water is before diving in, wearing a life jacket if you are not a strong swimmer, looking before leaping into the water and not running on wet pool area surfaces.

The Child Safety Trailer was used in the month of April to teach children in grades K thru 4 about tornados and the importance of preparing for severe storms. Discussions with children helped them to understand the difference between a safe place for fire, a safe place for severe weather, and how to prepare their safe place for storms.

May's lesson involved a special reading project. All of the students in the school read or were read the book "The World According to Humphrey". Lydia participated in discussions with the students covering such topics as responsibility for pets, the difficulty in training an animal because they do not speak our language, accepting people and animals for who they are, and the importance of accepting change even when it is difficult.

Safety Town was in June and Kodak was used to teach the children to Stop, Drop and Roll, crawling under the smoke, and going to your meeting place as soon as a smoke detector begins to make noise. The importance of never touching matches was emphasized with the children also.

Using the Disney video "Donald's Fire Safety Hits" in September, Donald Duck, as the featured character, helped to emphasize the importance of working smoke detectors in the home, having and practicing an escape plan, never playing with matches, crawling under the smoke, and having a meeting place in case of a fire in their home. The pneumonic EDITH was used to reiterate the importance of exit drills in the home.

Leadership is the character trait that is being emphasized this year at Hinckley Elementary School. In September, Lydia participated in a panel discussion presented to the entire school that explained how leadership is present in daily life. The panel also included Martha Catherwood, as well as community members in leadership positions.

Escaping from smoky dwellings was the focus of the October lesson. Using the Safety Trailer once more, the children were able to see what it looks like when smoke is at the top of a room. They also learned the importance of crawling under the smoke, how to check a door before opening it during a fire, and how to escape out of a window as an alternate exit route and getting to their meeting place.

Children heard the sounds of a smoke detector and were taught the importance of getting out of a house that is on fire and not going back in to save toys or pets.

The 1st graders came to the fire station in October for both a fire safety review and a tour of the station. The students were introduced to the trucks and equipment used by the department as well.

In November, with the anticipation of colder weather, grades K, 1 & 2 had a review of never putting things near or over space heaters. The Disney video "Safety Smart at Home" taught the children the song "3 Feet From The Heat". Each child was measured with a yardstick to show them that the span of their arms out stretched was at least 3 feet. A "Magic Measure" used by Lydia allows the children to judge things that are a safe distance from heaters and fireplaces. Never placing things against or over lamps, keeping stairways and escape routes clear and never cooking without adult supervision was covered as well as the relevance of never leaving candles unattended.

Anticipation of the coming cold weather gave Lydia the chance to give the 3rd, 4th, and 5th graders about pond and ice safety in December.

In addition to teaching classes, Lydia attended a Juvenile Fire Setters Conference and a meeting in November with Fire Prevention Educators from various counties in Ohio. Both events were held in Columbus.

The Fire Safety Programs were part of the Safety Services Day at Medina Meadows, and presented safety information and the Safety Trailer at The Party In the Park in Hinckley.

We are very pleased that Lydia was successful in completing the curriculum and associated projects for the Fire and Life Safety Educator II certification at the Ohio Fire Academy in April. The Department assisted with the community project that involved taking the Safety Trailer and safety vehicles into the neighborhoods and teaching fire safety and the importance of home exit drills to both children and their parents. As part of this project, older children and parents were able to view a comparison of the rate of combustion in homes with modern construction and furnishings as compared with homes from 30 years ago.

Another new aspect of the program was the expansion to include home schooled children and their mothers into the Fire Prevention Program. It is exciting to know that this previously unserved population is now receiving the same safety education that students at Hinckley Elementary school.

The goal for 2016 is to present a Babysitters class to children from ages 12 thru 16 to better prepare them to be responsible child care providers.

FIREFIGHTER LYDIA'S K-9 CREW



**LITTLE
KURT**



Jpeg



KODAK



Canon

ALL HAZARDS TEAM

Hinckley continues to participate in the Medina County All Hazards Team with the other 19 communities within Medina County. This regional collaboration provides 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.

The Medina County Fire Chief's Association, in conjunction with the Medina County EMA continues to push for an agreement, either in the form of a Council of Governments or Memorandum of Understanding that would be the guiding document providing structure, governance and financial responsibility for this critical service. Unfortunately, we are still waiting after five months for a decision by the Attorney General and the Medina County Prosecutor as to the most appropriate means to accomplish these administrative functions. The All Hazards Team and the MCFCA worked throughout 2015 to develop procedures for developing budgets, purchasing equipment and administration of the team. The new Medina County All Hazards Team Bylaws are now a functioning document that continues to be reviewed for improvements but has certainly addressed the concerns expressed by the EMA and governing board.

During the flooding that occurred in May 2014, departments across Medina County were called upon to undertake rescues in rapidly moving water that were poorly equipped and trained to perform. Recognizing that this could have had serious consequences, the MCFCA along with the All Hazards Team governing board pursued the idea of developing a water rescue team. Late in the fiscal year, approval was received to purchase basic safety and rescue equipment, and a team leader was selected. Chuck Steiger, an Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Watercraft employee and instructor is now conducting training for the team and developing operational procedures that will provide the needed resources in the future.

Although the training hours were up this year, the number of callouts were down in all disciplines. Given the other training and Department requirements, we appreciate the efforts of Hinckley Fire Department's team members in attending the weekend training sessions in order to maintain their skills.

Training Report per Team Member

PERSONNEL	ROPE TRAINING	TRENCH TRAINING	CONFINED SPACE	TEAM TRAINING	CALL OUTS
Lt. Grossenbaugh	7	4	8	0	0
FF Dave Vance	38.75		4	0	0
FF. Josh Theaker, FIU				94	2
Totals	45.75	4	12	94	

INSPECTIONS

Josh Erskine, FF/Paramedic from Brunswick City took over the main duties in Fire Inspection beginning in mid - April. Elliot Scerenszi continued to assist with some of the inspections and maintenance of the facility matrix he developed last year.

The commitment and professional approach Josh has brought to the inspection process continues to receive compliments from many of the commercial building owners and occupants. When inspections were completed in the past, compliance concerns were often not resolved so that when another annual inspection was completed issues were again cited along with additional compliance concerns.

In 2015, Josh completed inspections of all buildings within the Township, promptly advising the owner(s)/occupant(s) of issues that needed to be corrected and then followed up within a specified time period to insure these issues had been resolved without creating a financial or operational hardship on the building owner.

2015 Inspections

Type of Inspection	Inspections Completed
General and Code Compliance	193
Fire Protection	14
Sprinkler Systems	4
Consultations	10
Day Care License Inspection	2
Total	223

A relationship with the Medina County Building Department has been established to address long standing issues of occupancy within the Township. In order to properly apply the code to a particular business, the inspector must first know what the building occupancy classification is. This classification is set by the Building Official. Unfortunately, as is the case in many rural areas, Certificates of Occupancy were not issued at the time the tenant or owner moved in. Months of discussion with the County and Township officials have helped resolve some of these concerns so the appropriate code issues could be addressed.

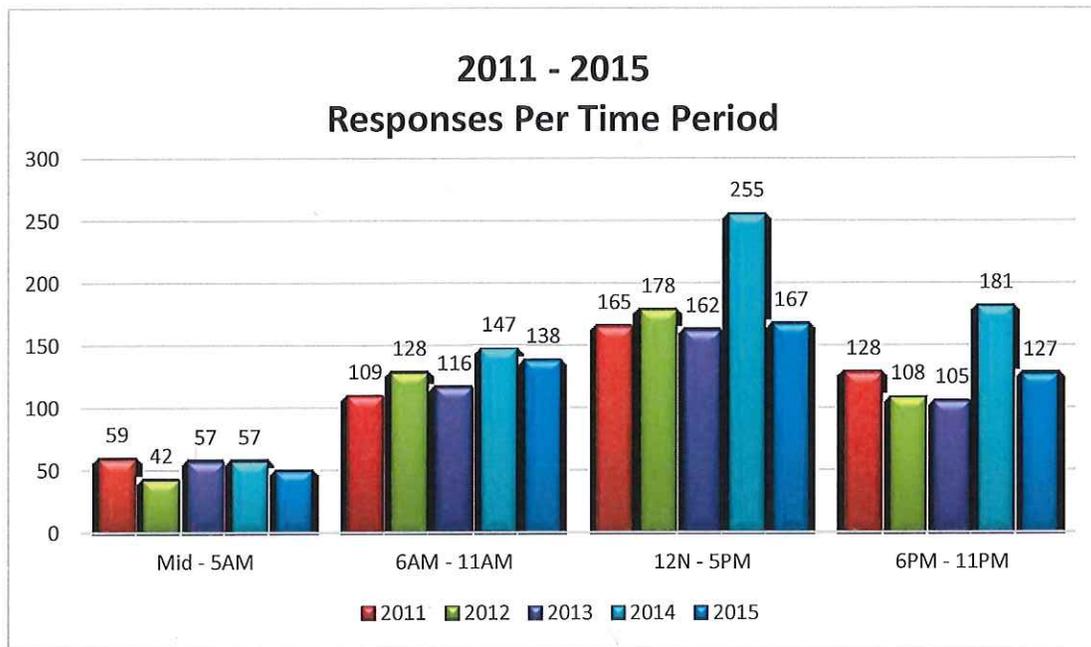
Trustee Catherwood, along with the Suzanne Peterlin included recommended amendments to the commercial zoning application that now requires a set of commercial plans to be provided to the Fire Department for review and commentary. Once again, the developing relationship with the Medina Building Department indicated that a request for prints through their office often created a delay in the application process. The cooperative efforts of the Building Department and Zoning Department have resulted in an appropriate change in the process that will facilitate plan reviews.

Hinckley, Brunswick City and Brunswick Hills personnel, agreed that all Knox Box unit keys be identical so that in the event of a mutual aid call to any of the above departments are able to handle an incident, so they are not impaired in gaining access to the facility. Hinckley had only eight (8) lock box units that needed to be re-keyed so that cost was picked up by the Township. Josh has worked hard to include additional businesses in the Knox Box program as well.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

Hinckley Fire Department took a very large step forward this year to address the growing expectations of the community in the delivery of services. Residents and businesses assume that when an emergency occurs, Fire and EMS personnel will respond quickly to stabilize the incident or provide immediate emergency care to the critically ill or injured. As part of our goal to meet these expectations, the Department, with the approval of the Board of Trustees, initiated a station fill schedule that provides a minimum of two (2) employees per shift from 1000 hours until 1800 hours. The Chief and Administrative Assistant are on station each day beginning at 0800 hours which then allows for coverage for a total of ten hours of the day.

The decision to staff during the day was based upon the historical data mentioned in paragraph 2 on page 4. Station staffing, equipment and personnel response plans and a cooperative mutual aid plan with our neighboring communities have allowed the Department to lower the response times for both Fire and EMS calls from an average of 11:07 minutes in 2011 to 9:11 minutes during 2015. The Department anticipates that increasing staffing hours beginning at 0700 hours until 2300 hours would improve response time even further accounting for over 90% of all emergency requests received.



Demographics from the data obtained through patient assessments indicate that the average age of patients treated and/or transported by EMS is 57 years old with the majority of calls occurring in the age group over 65 years old. This year, EMS personnel attended to a high number of trauma patients, general medical problems and cardio-pulmonary emergencies.

2015 EMS RUNS BY PROVIDER IMPRESSION

Purpose of Call	Total Responses
Abdominal Pain	24
Airway Obstruction	1
Allergic Reaction	4
Altered Level of Consciousness	22
Behavioral/Psychiatric Disorder	19
Cardiac Arrest	4
Cardiac Rhythm Disturbance	6
Chest Pain/Discomfort	26
Diabetic Symptoms/Hypoglycemia	13
Electrocution	1
Hyperthermia	1
Hypothermia	1
Hypovolemia	1
Inhalation Injury	1
Obvious Death	9
General Medical	149
Poisoning	9
Respiratory Distress	19
Seizure	9
Smoke Inhalation	2
Stings/Venomous Bites	1
Stroke/CVA	14
Syncope/Fainting	12
Traumatic Injury	93
Non-Traumatic Bleeding	9
Rescue/Other	16
Total Patient Contacts	466

One event in the early summer highlighted the professionalism and dedication of those who respond daily to requests for EMS. A young man on a skateboard fell in the Hinckley Reservation and suffered a serious closed head injury. Hinckley paramedics and firefighters responded quickly, did a thorough trauma assessment and implemented the most appropriate interventions. Despite their extraordinary efforts, the prognosis for a full recovery was marginal. The young man walked into the evening training session several months later, unassisted and without any physical or neurological deficits. The combined care of HFD personnel, HPD Officers, Metro LifeFlight team, and hospital staff, provided this patient with every chance needed to overcome the odds and now live a full life.



Hinckley Safety Forces and Metro Life Flight recognized for their outstanding service.

Cleveland Clinic is now serving as Medical Direction for Hinckley Fire Department for the second year. Rick Moskalski, FF/CCPM serves as the EMS Facilitator for the Department as well as being a member of the staff. Rick is always available to members of the Department should a concern or questions arise that needs clarification. Additionally, he spends many hours above those mandated by his position, assisting employees with skills proficiency or tutoring them through an advanced educational program.

The new Cleveland Clinic Emergency Room located in Brunswick has been beneficial to the community in several important aspects. Transport times to a skilled definitive care facility have been greatly reduced providing emergent care to those who are ill or injured in less time than ever before. Additionally, the close proximity to the community allows the crew to return to service and be available for another response in a shorter period of time. Finally, the shorter transport times reduced insurance costs for the patient and fuel costs for the Department.

2015 TRANSPORTS BY FINAL DESTINATION

Destination	Number
No Transport/Rescue/Other	149
Parma Community Hospital	14
Southwest General - Main Campus	57
University Hospital/Rainbow Children's	1
Southwest Brunswick	38
Cleveland Clinic Brunswick	154
Medina Hospital - Cleveland Clinic	48
Akron General	2
Akron Children's	1
Kaiser	1
Summa Lake Medina	1
Total	466

FIRE EMERGENCIES

Losses from fire totaled just over \$153,600 in 2015. A residential fire accounted for half of this figure with the remaining losses involving damages from vehicle fires as well as several outbuildings that were severely damaged.

Fire Department personnel met with Metro Parks personnel in the spring to discuss concerns of the potential fire load in areas of the park. One specific concern was the area on the east end of the lake extending up towards State Road and West Drive. A fire in this area would be difficult to contain and could easily jump across either road if wind driven. Taking the information developed, the Department is now beginning to pre-plan this area so that the appropriate fire resources can be dispatched for a growing incident.

Before the pre-plan could be completed, a fire occurred at Buzzard's Roost consuming almost five (5) acres of vegetation. High winds from the north and west pushed the fire in a southeasterly direction that if not contained would enter the tall pine trees creating just the type of incident the department is concerned with. Mutual aid from Granger, Brunswick City and Brunswick Hills worked for 30 minutes to bring the incident under control and another hour to extinguish all hot spots.



Large brush fire at Buzzard's Roost in the Metro Parks area

National Fire Protection Standard 1710/1720 outlines response and staffing requirements for both volunteer and career departments. Adequate staffing for a residential fire requires a response of sixteen personnel in order to cover all vital positions. This is rarely achievable by most suburban departments and certainly difficult for semi-rural operations. In an attempt to achieve substantial compliance, the Department continues to work with neighboring communities in establishing guidelines for automatic aid and the use of the Mutual aid Box Alarm System (MABAS). This coordination improves the level of safety for the firefighters and improves the performance of the fire suppression forces.

The improvement in record keeping has been one of the factors in the Department's success in receiving funding. Lt. Barrett reviews all incident reports prior to final submission under the National Incident Fire Reporting System (NIFRS). The Firehouse Software program is now centrally based and resides on one computer networked to the various work stations. The Department is considering a possible change to new reporting software or transferring to a cloud based program through the existing software provider.

2015 FIRE INCIDENTS PER NFPA CATEGORY

Category	Number of Incidents
Structure Fires	22
Vehicle Fires	9
Vegetation/Rubbish Fires	15
Equipment Fires	2
Over pressurization/Explosion/Rupture	5
MVA/Extrication	11
Water/Ice Rescue	1
Medical Assist	8
Rescues	2
Hazardous Condition	3
Gas Leaks	8
Carbon Monoxide	7
Electrical Incidents	5
Service Calls	26
Smoke Detector Activation – No Fire	7
False Alarm or False Call	14
Severe Weather	2
Special Incident Type	5
Total Calls	152

APPARATUS AND EQUIPMENT

Maintaining the Department's fleet of vehicles has been very costly over the past four years as many serious issues were discovered. A plan was developed to have all of the apparatus undergo a ODOT Schedule B preventive maintenance program each year with a Schedule A plan conducted in the fifth year. This level of service has allowed EVT trained personnel to thoroughly evaluate the performance capabilities of the trucks and attend to needed repairs as soon as they have been identified.

Valve replacement still account for a large part of the annual repair costs. Operational practices including the testing of fire hose off of the trucks resulted in the pump valves being overheated. Training and daily maintenance checks have helped identify problems early. In 2016, the Department hopes to have all drain valves on Engine 31 and Engine 31-2 replaced.

The pneumatic light towers located on both engines were serviced in 2015. According to the technicians, the continuing road shock to the light mast has caused multiple fractures which will eventually cause the light fixtures to fall out. Maintenance issues has led to the pneumatic seals leaking and will require each unit to be fully disassembled for repairs. Instead of having the units renovated, the Department is considering removing the light towers and installing telescoping LED lights that can be plugged into a generator supplied outlet.

Squad 37 has had paint issues since being acquired. A full repaint was done in the late part of 2013 and another repair paint job was done in 2014, both covered by the manufacturer's warranty. The problem has redeveloped and McCoy Miller has been contacted. Their sales representative and field service manager have inspected the vehicle and will schedule a full paint of the patient module in early 2016.

Squad 37 – 2 is now sixteen (16) years of age and has reached the end of service life for this type of vehicle. Extensive fluid leaks, the turbo charger not working properly and transmission leaks are estimated to cost in excess of \$12,000. Instead, the vehicle should be replaced in 2016.

EMERGENCY VEHICLE SERVICE AND COST, 2015

Vehicle	Reason	Cost
Engine 31-2	Remove and replace pipe on fire pump	\$722.84
	Diagnose transmission problem	\$475.70
	Light mast repair	\$507.50
	Replace damaged Auto Eject cover	\$36.18
	Annual preventive maintenance, pump test and valve repair	\$3,561.99
	Repair fan clutch and replace turbo	\$3,013.79
	Replace light tower switch	\$97.74
	Total Engine 31-2	\$8,415.74
Engine 31	Repair heater valve	\$381.93
	Repair flat tire – Emergency repair	\$297.75
	Annual preventive maintenance, pump test and valve repair	\$2,258.66
	Repair and replace brake chamber spring, back up light, u-joint fitting and tailpipe hangar	\$542.54
	Repair mirror	\$79.00
	Remove and replace warning light	\$111.94
	Install replacement oil dipstick	\$27.17
	Total Engine 31	\$3,698.99
Tender 32	Seat Belt extenders	\$32.97
	Replace air horn mounts	\$28.07
	Replace fan clutch hub	\$1,076.74
	Annual preventive maintenance and pump test	\$1,124.96
Total Tender 32	\$2,262.74	
Squad 37	Remove and replace siren drivers	\$475.04
	DEF fluid	\$80.94
	Recall service and oil change	\$96.84
	Preventive maintenance	\$278.23
	Replace front tires	\$542.24
	Repair air ride	\$539.43
	Remove and replace wiper blades	\$32.18
	Replace batteries	\$236.13
Total Squad 37	\$2,281.03	
Squad 37 – 2	Replace air horn mounts	\$28.07
	Replace air horn mounts	\$40.00
	Replace front and rear brakes	\$800.00
Total Squad 37-2	\$868.07	
Utility 34	Oil change	\$37.36
	Install carriage bolts in bed	\$26.24
	Replace tires and balance	\$826.40
	Oil change	\$32.95
	Install new battery	\$111.99
Total Utility 34	\$1,034.94	
Total Vehicle Repairs		\$18,561.51

Self - Contained Breathing Apparatus - Lt. Carl Kuhn

The Department inventory for self - contained breathing apparatus is now down to sixteen (16) units. The devices have mixed compliance to existing NFPA required configurations based upon the year of purchase. Ten (10) of the devices were purchased in 2007 through an AFG grant and are configured to the 2007 Standards. All of the remaining units owned by the Department were in service long before that, some dating back through multiple NFPA Standard changes. Two of these units are used as spares so that when a device is sent in for service, we do not fall short of the needed units

Each SCBA unit requires that two (2) bottles are available as a primary and backup. Per NFPA, the bottles have a service life of fifteen (15) years before they must be removed from service. As a result, Lt. Kuhn has incrementally reduced the number of bottles each year in compliance with the code. This year, we will have to take another nine (8) bottles out of service due to age reducing our inventory to just twenty (20), far below the required two bottles per breathing device. The remaining bottles will not reached their end of life until 2022.

All of the SCBA devices are tested on an annual basis and repairs are made whenever a problem develops but the disparity in the function of the units is a concern. Units in production after 2007 are required to have a heads up air indicator (HUD) so that the firefighter can easily determine the remaining air in their pack. Six units do not have this feature. Since the Department only requested ten SCBA replacements in 2007, an AFG grant request in the future would only allow the Department to request six (6) new packs, but there is not guarantee that this application would be funded.

The intent of the Department is to begin a transition from 30 minute, high pressure bottles to 45 minute bottles so that we can reduce the number of fills during an emergency. The cost of a new 2016 replacement bottle is \$946.70 each or \$7573.60 total. Lt. Kuhn has sought pricing through several different sources and has secured pricing of new 2013 bottles at a cost of \$575 each or \$4,880 total. A request to fund this project will be given to the Board in 2016.

An Assistance to Firefighters Grant request will be submitted in late 2016 either as a regional application or individually seeking six (6) new air packs, with two 45 minute replacement bottles. If successful, this should allow the Department to achieve compliance to the NFPA requirements as well as upgrade to a higher level of safety with this equipment.

Hydrants and Hoses – Firefighter K. Richter

Nearly all of the hydrants in Hinckley have been tested on an annual basis however this year, with the closing of West Boston for all of the summer, the hydrants located in the developments of Vista Ridge and Wakefield Run were not able to be maintained. In 2016, the Department will complete the maintenance on these plugs before doing the remainder of the Township.

The hydrants recently installed along Boston, Ridge and Mattingly also will require additional time for maintenance this year. Typically new hydrants require additional service by the Fire Department after installation so that they are easily accessed in the event of fire. The location of several of the hydrants in ravines or ditches will also require some markings so they can be easily located.

Hydrant marking devices are needed throughout the Township. The Department is looking at several methods for identifying hydrant locations that are not only visible but cost effective and with minimal recurring costs for maintenance.

Dry hydrants have been tested but there are some areas in the southeast portion of the Township where the hydrants will require some additional work to improve the flow. Some of the dry hydrants in the remainder of the Township are not as crucial to firefighting operations given the changes in the operations of the Department where tactical changes and automatic aid can make a significant difference in the growth of the fire early in the operations.

Hose testing is now performed by a contractor who unloads the hose, completes the test and inspections in accordance with NFPA standards and reloads the hose. This entire process takes just five hours instead of the several evenings or weekends that was usual when completed by the Department.

Hose also has a recommended service life of 15 years but may be replaced earlier or later depending upon factors such as use, environmental effects and external damage caused by other factors. The Department has had to postpone a hose replacement program due other crucial needs and the construction of the new station but the need for new attack lines is great. All 1.75" lines need to be replaced within the next two years. The 2.5" hose lines are in good shape but additional lengths are needed. The remaining 4" supply lines can be incrementally replaced over the next 4 years.

FACILITIES

The Township began to first discuss a new fire station in the early part of 2013. The request for qualifications (RFQ) for an architect resulted in the selection of Perspectus Architecture later that year. The design process and bidding took up all of 2014.

Construction was planned for late 2014 but extreme weather conditions delayed the plans until April. Shortly afterwards, an unnecessary delay in the project occurred when the County plumbing inspector would not allow the project to proceed until a revised drawing was submitted. At the same time, the EPA review of the septic system led to additional changes and a rebid of that portion of the project. Despite all of these obstacles, the project under the supervision of Seitz Builders, took off in early June.

The design is certainly not the traditional mortar and brick of many other suburban fire stations but chose to go with a blend of masonry and wood frame that is entirely covered with a metal, multi-dimensional paneling that gives the building a changing appearance depending upon the lighting. Complementing the exterior finish is the large window assemblies in the front office and dark red doors and supporting columns outside of the apparatus area.



The interior is efficient and provides more than adequate space for the present and future level of services to the community. Key features include a “Safe Room” feature in the front vestibule that will allow anyone who feels threatened by another to seek refuge in this area while at the same time communicating with the Dispatcher while assistance is enroute; a clinic that will provide expanding medical services to the Township as the Community Paramedicine program becomes functional; the classroom that serves the dual role as an Emergency Operations Center should a disaster occur in the community and finally more than adequate administrative offices and crew quarters will allow the Department to plan for the future staffing needs.

Construction costs did not vary much from the original contract price as a result of the few change orders initiated by the Township. There were however multiple change orders necessitated by the EPA requirements imposed after the project was bid. Final pricing for the nearly 9,000 square foot facility will be determined early in 2016 after the project is finalized.



First night in new station



This project would not have become a reality if it was not for the perseverance and financial responsibility of our Fiscal Officer who secured adequate funds over the years so that the construction would not require financing or bond issue before the voters. Working within the budget that was defined at the beginning of the project, the Department reviewed and revised spatial requirements and needs so that there were no additional costs incurred.

There were other individuals who contributed greatly to this project as well. Lt. Dan Landis, Dave Yatsko and his brothers, worked with many of the Department's employees to clear the property of trees that would have added tens of thousands of dollars to the project cost. The Service Department undertook several projects outside of the contract that improved site drainage and finally Martha Catherwood spend many hours as project coordinator for the Township to contain costs, address concerns and facilitate some of the individual projects. Finally, we thank the residents of this community who have supported us over the years and who we hope will take great pride in this new facility.