

TILTON-NORTHFIELD FIRE & EMS

2019 Fire Chief's Report

2019 was again a very busy year for Tilton-Northfield Fire & EMS. For the first time, our call volume reached 2,000 calls per year. In 2019 TNFD responded to 2000 incidents. Of those incidents 1,375 were Emergency Medical Services (EMS) in nature. EMS calls comprised 69% of our call volume for 2019.

After District meeting last year, the Commissioners voted to appoint a new committee to evaluate solutions for a new fire station or stations. The committee has been meeting on the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month. Much work has been done, but much work remains as well. There are many factors that must be evaluated, among them are response times, location of incidents, availability of land, storage requirements for equipment, support space needs, personnel space needs, and the costs associated with all of the above. A report and recommendation from the Fire Station Committee will be issued for the 2021 District Meeting.

The District Meeting last year approved the purchase of a new command vehicle. A 2019 Ford Expedition was purchased through the New Hampshire State Bid. The vehicle was delivered in July and was upfitted with radios, emergency lighting and graphics in September.

The Department continues to do repairs, modifications, and maintenance of the two fire stations. At Park Street, a new sign island was installed as well as the renovation of the memorial space. This was done with all volunteer labor by Department and community members. The pavement at Park Street was fully replaced and the interior of Park Street was repainted with labor provided by the Department of Corrections. At Center Street modifications were made to the building to make the building more compliant with the Life Safety Code. This included adding sprinklers in some areas and removing windows some areas.

The incidence of some types of cancer in firefighters is 2.5 times greater than that of the general public. This is due to the exposure the firefighters receive during fires and other hazardous incidents. In an effort to help reduce the risk of cancer and other diseases to our staff, new gear washers and dryers were added to both stations. This equipment will decontaminate their protective ensemble in a safe and timely manner.

As many people may already know, the Fire District has leased a small portion of the Park Street Property to a Wireless Edge, a communications tower company. The location for the tower is at the left rear of the property adjacent to the wooded area as you look at it from Park Street. Wireless Edge signed a contract with AT&T last year. The permitting process for the tower will take place this year. Once the permitting process is complete the communication tower will be constructed. The primary purpose of the tower is to provide an excellent location for some of the fire department communication antennas. This tower can also be used for other municipal communication purposes such as PD or DPW. TNFD will collect rent from Wireless Edge once the tower is constructed.

Nick Baker has completed his paramedic training and is now a Firefighter Paramedic assigned to Shift A. Firefighter Zack Mellett is currently in paramedic school. He should finish his training sometime in 2020. Zack should get his New Hampshire paramedic provider license by early 2021.

The Call Company enrollment has slowly declined over the past year. We currently only have 11 active Call Members as of this writing. The decline in Call Company is a challenge not only here at TNFD, but it is also a challenge nationwide. This is due to many factors, one of which is a generational change in the

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increasing importance of personal and family time over community involvement. We are always looking for a few good people to apply for a position on our Call Company.

I want to thank the community and all of the community organizations who have helped the Department throughout the year. I also want to thank all the employees, both career and call, who have provided excellent service to our District. The services provided within our District could not happen without the dedicated and professional work of our employees.

Finally, I want to let everyone know that if there is ever a question or comment about the Department, or if you would like a tour of our facilities, my door is always open. Please contact me so that we can discuss your concerns. It is our goal to provide a professional service with customer satisfaction and safety held in the highest regard.

Michael W. Sitar, Jr., MPA, CFO, EFO
Fire Chief
Tilton-Northfield Fire & EMS