

FIRE SERVICES DIVISION



Mission Statement

The Arlington Fire Department will strive for excellence in the performance of duty and service to the community and the customers it serves. The Department is committed to find better ways to protect the lives and property of its citizens from the ravages of fire and other disasters and is dedicated to work together for the betterment of our community.

Ethics and Values

Knowing that firefighters are held to a higher standard of conduct, the firefighters of the Arlington Fire Department will make every effort to uphold those standards that are entrusted to us and to take an active role in maintaining a professional image of the Fire Service through promptness, efficiency, and dedication to duty.

Communicating with the Public

The Department will serve the public with courtesy and respect, providing assistance wherever professional skills and talents are needed and be ever vigilant in promoting awareness of fire hazards and in educating citizens of all ages.

Fire Department Role

The majority of fire department resources – including personnel, equipment, facilities, and support services are committed to fire suppression efforts. The basic function of fire suppression operations is that of extinguishing fires and performing related duties once a fire occurs. This, however, is not the department's only function. The Fire Department also provides pre-hospital emergency medical services (EMS), building inspections on a regular basis for code enforcement and familiarization, public education projects, training, and performs a number of related tasks including annual hose testing and hydrant inspections.

Each autumn annual testing on all fire department hose is done to ensure that there are no defects and during the month of October, all fire hydrants are inspected. These inspections avoid having water freeze in the hydrant during winter months, which would render the hydrant useless in the event of a fire.

The Fire Department responded to 4,310 incidents during the year with over half of them medical related. The total responses for the year 2004 were similar to previous years but the number of medical emergencies continues to rise.

The following list shows some of the types of incidents that were responded to and their totals:

| | |
|--------------------------------|-------|
| Structure Fires- Inside | 50 |
| Working Fires, Multiple Alarms | 12 |
| Structure Fire Investigations | 22 |
| Vehicle Fires | 16 |
| Dumpster/Trash/Brush Fires | 19 |
| Medical Emergencies | 2,330 |
| Victim Extrications | 10 |
| Water/Ice Rescues | 4 |
| Assistance to Public | 280 |
| Hazardous Conditions | 189 |
| Smoke/Carbon Monoxide | |
| Detector Activations | 150 |
| Water Evacuations | 115 |
| Mutual Aid - given | 52 |
| False Alarms | 50 |
| Fire Alarm Malfunctions | 55 |
| Fire Alarm Activations | 50 |

2004 Estimated Structural Fire Loss \$ 567,200

2004 Estimated Vehicle Fire Loss \$ 107,600

The structural fire loss this year, although higher than last years', remains below that of previous years.

The complete renovation of Arlington's fire stations remains the primary goal of the department. Last year the architectural firm, The Carell Group, Inc., designed and estimated the costs to replace the existing Park Circle Fire Station at \$2.3M. This included providing temporary relocation expenses while the new fire station was constructed as well as construction and fit-up costs for this new building.



Three alarm fire at Bartlett Street in February
Arlington firefighters were added by Somerville, Belmont, Lexington and Medford in the control and extinguishment of the blaze in 20 degree temperatures.

The architectural masterpieces of the Headquarters and Highland stations will need complete renovations in the near future. The fire stations should remain a high priority for infrastructure improvements.

This year the Fire Department updated its official website that is linked to the Town of Arlington's home page. This site offers the citizens of Arlington a better understanding of the services provided along with an opportunity to contact staff personnel should the need arise. Included in this site is a profile of the department, its history, fire safety tips, and a photo gallery along with links to other related websites and contacts. Firefighter Robert Morse designed and updates the official department website.

Fire Prevention and Investigation Division

The Division of Fire Prevention and Fire Investigation is dedicated to providing the citizens and visitors to the town of Arlington the safest possible environment in which to live, work and visit. Education, prevention, inspection and detection are all critical areas of expertise that, when combined with a strong code enforcement application, can provide a fire safe community.

For the fourth year in a row, the Arlington Fire Department received the Life Safety Achievement Award from the Residential Fire Safety Institute. This recognition is the direct result of fire prevention and fire safety awareness programs that target at risk groups in our community.



The *SAFE, Student Awareness of Fire Education*, Program was not funded in the fiscal year 2004 state budget. In order to maintain this vitally important program to our elementary age children, the fire department entered into a partnership with the local real estate brokers. With coordination efforts by Steve McKenna from Boves/GMAC Real Estate, Deputy Fire Chief Wayne Springer presented three seminars to over 100 realtors in January to educate them with regard to the successful history of the SAFE program, smoke detector compliance law, carbon monoxide detectors, Juvenile Firesetters Intervention Coalition, home fire escape plans, underground fuel oil storage tank locations, and a video on fire behavior and development in a common residential setting. Along with a very generous personal contribution from Mr. McKenna, the local real estate brokers donated over \$4,000 to the SAFE Program to insure that our children would continue to benefit from this significantly proven program.

Each year the Division targets specific occupancy locations to conduct Fire and Life Safety Inspections. This year the effort was concentrated on multiple residential buildings, churches, and clubs. Over 240 buildings were inspected by the fire fighters during

their tours of duty. The predominate code violation that was reported, was the neglect of the building owner/manager to schedule the annual maintenance and testing of the fire alarm/detection system by a state licensed fire alarm contractor. Early detection and warning is a critical component of any life safety initiative. Without proper maintenance a fire alarm system will fail to function effectively when it is needed to detect and alert occupants of a smoke or fire condition. The division issued written reports to the responsible persons to correct all the deficiencies in their building.

The Fire Investigation Unit, F.I.U., investigated twenty-two fire incidents. Of these, three were determined to be of incendiary origin, that is, intentionally set. These incidents were turned over to the Middlesex District Attorney's Office for possible criminal prosecution. Fire incidents that are suspected as incendiary are investigated in partnership with State Police fire investigators assigned to the State Fire Marshal's Office. This cooperative effort brings experienced investigators to a scene to assist the local officers in determining the cause and origin of the fire. If flammable fluids are suspected, the State Fire Investigators will respond with an accelerant-detecting dog to confirm that suspicion and to collect evidence samples for chemical analysis at the State Crime Lab to determine the type of the flammable material.

According to F.B.I. statistics: arson is the number one crime committed by juveniles; 45% of set fires are caused by children; fire is the leading cause of accidental death in the home for children under the age of five and fire setting is a treatable behavior. The Middlesex District Attorney's Office in collaboration with the Massachusetts Statewide Coalition for Juvenile Firesetters Intervention Program, local Fire and Police Departments, State Fire Marshal's Office, District Courts, Public Schools, Department of Social Services and Housing Authorities, established the Middlesex Juvenile Firesetters Intervention Program throughout the District in 1999.

The Arlington Fire Department has been a member of the Middlesex Coalition since 2000. Since that time the department's five trained interviewers have screened and interviewed over a dozen local youths and their families. The confidential screening report is reviewed by a board of clinicians to determine the risk level of the youth and the most appropriate intervention approach. The family is provided with a home fire safety plan and if deemed appropriate, the youth is entered into the Fire Safety School that is taught by the Arlington firefighters.

Statistics show that left untreated, fire setting has an 81% recidivism probability. When someone such as a parent, family member, friend or schoolteacher becomes aware of a juvenile who is exhibiting fire setting behavior, they should call the *Division of Fire*

Prevention at 781-316-3803, to obtain confidential counseling for the youth.

In a collaborative effort between the fire department and the Germaine Lawrence School, the fire fighters presented the fourth annual ten-week Fire Safety Education Program to the teenage students at the school. This is a unique opportunity for the fire department to be involved proactively in community fire safety education.

The Arlington Fire Department and its fire fighters are committed to providing appropriate, knowledgeable and professional service, on time, every time, to the community that we serve.

Emergency Medical Services (EMS)



The Fire Services Division has been providing pre-hospital emergency medical services to the citizens of Arlington for the past thirty-three years. All firefighters are first responders and all newly hired firefighters are required to become emergency medical technicians (EMT's) as a

condition of employment. Currently there are sixty-five firefighter / EMT's. The Fire/Rescue ambulance responded to 2,330 requests for medical aid in 2004. Captain Kevin Shaw, the department's EMS coordinator is responsible for all re-certification training requirements of the EMT's and first responders.

State wide expanded medical care protocols have been instituted at the local level, which will greatly enhance the delivery of fire-based emergency medical care in the twenty-first century. The department's firefighters and EMT's are committed to providing the most effective, appropriate and professional service to the citizens of Arlington.

All the department's emergency medical technicians are trained to assist patients in administering their own nitroglycerin and prescribed inhalers for asthmatics. The fire department also participates in automatic external defibrillators (AED) training. These devices shock a patient's heart into a normal rhythm during cardiac arrest. All department emergency vehicles are equipped with AED's.

Medical incidents are identified as either basic life support (BLS) – non-life threatening or advanced life support (ALS) defined as life threatening. Based upon information received from a 911 call for medical aid the central telecommunication dispatcher will determine whether the incident requires a BLS or ALS response. Examples of a BLS incident include sprains, minor lacerations, slight fractures and common illnesses. Chest pain/heart attack, cardiac arrest, strokes/brain attacks, respiratory illnesses or distress, seizures, severe allergic reactions, blunt or penetrating traumatic injuries, severe uncontrolled

bleeding and childbirth are all examples of advanced life-support incidents.

Armstrong Ambulance Service provides the paramedics for all ALS responses. The paramedics and non-transport vehicles are based in Arlington.

Training

The Training Division is responsible to promote the uniformed personnel's development of required skills, knowledge, and abilities, to provide "hands on" training, to maintain all department records, to develop training programs for in house training by officers at each station, to provide training to newly promoted officers, to coordinate state level satellite programs, and to test new firefighters equipment and techniques. The goal of the Training Division is to provide the best possible training for the department, regardless of rank, so that each person can operate at their maximum performance level.

On Gray St. and Claremont St. the training division secured the use of buildings, which were marked for demolition. These buildings were used to practice ventilation techniques, rescue, and hose line advancement, as well as, strategic and tactical decision-making processes for the firefighters.

Training was held at the emergency exit for the MBTA Redline subway tail track that terminates in Arlington. Capt. Tierney reviewed communications, power shut down and ventilation procedures with all fire department personnel. Members were also able to familiarize themselves with the hazards that exist in a subway environment.

The Training Officer also works with the EMS coordinator to help maintain each member's first responder certification and help coordinate firefighter's Emergency Medical Technicians certification.

Support Services

A master mechanic and motor equipment repairman make up the Apparatus Motor Division. Their responsibilities include repair and maintenance of all equipment used by the Fire Department. They are additionally responsible for the upkeep and installation of the radio communications equipment in all emergency vehicles including central dispatch and the maintenance of the air-supply equipment for self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) used by the firefighters.

The signal maintenance division was outsourced to the private sector last year. Two vendors handle the town wide fire alarm system, traffic signal maintenance and decorative lighting maintenance. NStar has offered a rebate program to replace all the pedestrian walk/don't walk signals to LED's.

The dispatching of police and fire vehicles is supervised by a Lead Dispatcher who oversees nine combined central dispatchers utilizing the computer-aided dispatch (CAD) system. This past year two new dispatchers became emergency medical dispatch

certified bringing the total to five dispatchers with this certification. The remaining dispatchers will become certified by July.

Auxiliary Fire Personnel/Local Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency

The professional assistance of these dedicated volunteers is greatly appreciated. Joe Marshall, a town meeting member, is in charge of this group. They donated almost 9,000 man-hours of service to the Town in 2004. This breaks down to over 240 hours per member of volunteer service to the Town of Arlington. These 17 active members assisted the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) during storm emergencies and assisting our fire personnel with the use of their lighting plant/generator unit and replenish air supplies to the self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) used by our firefighters. The Explorer Post (youth members aged 14-21) has a current membership of 15 members.

One auxiliary member, Private Will Gates, has been on active duty serving in Iraq for nineteen months. We thank him for his service to our country.

Promotions/Retirements/Appointments

The Fire Services Division remembered all the victims of September 11, 2001 during a Town Day ceremony on the third anniversary of this appalling act of terrorism.

There were no firefighter appointments this past year. Due to budget constraints one firefighter was laid off. Firefighter Paul McPhail was promoted to the rank of Fire Lieutenant. Tanya Bartholomew and Ryon Sullivan were appointed as telecommunications dispatchers to replace a dispatcher who resigned and one who was promoted to lead dispatcher. Retiring from the Department of Fire Services was Lieutenant Joel Seully with thirty-four years of service, seventeen of them on Rescue One.

Chief Richard Maimone retired on December 31, 2004. He served this department honorably and with dignity for over 32 years. His replacement will be appointed in early 2005. Construction and reconstruction of the fire stations will be of primary concern to the new Chief.