



CITY OF PERTH AMBOY FIRE DEPARTMENT



Annual Report For the Year 2016





2016 was a year of growth and progress for the Perth Amboy Fire Department. Some of the highlights for the year were; The PAFD was awarded over \$1 million dollars in federal funds with a SAFER award. 13 new career firefighters were added to the ranks of the department; with one of the hires making history as the first female career firefighter. A new tower ladder was custom built and put in service to protect the city. Millions of dollars in taxpayer property was saved through the hard work of the fire department that responded to over 2,000 incidents. AED's were installed in all city buildings and over a 100 city employees were trained in CPR by fire personnel. The department's fire officers have been trained in fire and arson investigation and now actively investigate all fires and explosions with minimal assistance from outside agencies. The department remains ready and staffed for any emergency 24/7 365 days a year.

Federal Grants:

In 2016, the department was awarded a SAFER Grant (Staffing for Adequate Emergency Response) for \$1,096,000.00 from FEMA in the third round. This grant was awarded in July and provided funding for the department to hire 8 additional career firefighters to bring shift staffing to NFPA compliance. The 8 recruits were hired on October 3rd and upon the completion of basic training brought each shift to 15 career firefighters. This marks the third consecutive year that the department was awarded federal grant funding. In 2014 the department was awarded \$477,520.00 in FEMA funding with a SAFER to hire 4 career firefighters and in 2015 the department was awarded a \$192,725.00 Port Security Grant that funded the department's Marine Division. Always looking for ways to ease the cost to tax payers, the department applied for a 2017 Assistance to Firefighters Grant for the funding of SCBA (self-contained breathing apparatus) and also plans to apply for a 2017 Port Security Grant to fund a dive rescue and recovery team, along with additional underwater rescue and recovery support equipment.



Truck 2 – 2016 Pierce Mid-Mount Tower Ladder

Career Division:

The career division of the fire department is now made up of 63 members including the fire chief, 5 battalion chiefs, 5 captains and 52 firefighters. 13 career firefighters were hired in 2016. On September 30, 2016, Firefighter Robert Murawski retired from the department after 25 years of service. He began his fire service career as a volunteer firefighter and completed his career serving as the motor pump operator of Engine Company 2 on Battalion 3. Additionally, Firefighter Robert Bunten was promoted to Captain in January filling a Shift Captain vacancy. Captain Carlos Gonzalez was appointed to administration in January as the Training Officer.

In March, the New Jersey Entry Level Firefighter list was released and immediately certified. Five veterans were hired and began their career on July 5, 2016. These included Arielle Bonilla, Robert Velazquez, Melvin Inoa, Lully Gonzalez and Jordian Aquino. All 5 firefighters finished their basic training on December 2, 2016. A highlight of the ceremony was that it was historic for the department. Although the department has had several female members in the volunteer division throughout the years; Arielle Bonilla is the first career female firefighter in the long and proud history of Perth Amboy Fire Department.



Swearing in Ceremony – August 29, 2016

In July, with the awarding of a SAFER grant, additional 8 firefighters were able to be hired. Starting their career on October 3, 2016 were firefighters: Patrick McGhee, Michael Martini, Dylan Zera-Krushinski, John Fazio, Kurt Gregory, Michael Borrero, Paul Cannamela Jr., and Michael Gregory. Firefighters McGhee, Martini, Zera-Krushinski, K. Gregory and M. Gregory were previously volunteer firefighters within then department. All 8 firefighters finished their basic training on December 16, 2016 and were sworn in on December 29, 2016.



Morris County Fire Academy Graduation – December 18, 2016

Several members of the department were recognized for their actions above and beyond the call of duty in 2016. On August 13, 2016, Captain Raymond Estrada, Firefighter Kenneth Febles and Firefighter Thomas Macri rescued a civilian via ground ladder from an apartment fire at 820 Harned St. On November 9, 2016, Firefighter Michael Perez, Firefighter Gregory Church and Firefighter Feroz Khan assisted EMS in reviving an individual that was in cardiac arrest with an AED. On November 30, 2016, Firefighter Davis Vazquez, while off duty, prevented an individual from jumping from the Route 9 Bridge. All three individuals are most certainly alive today due to their acts.



Vacant structure fire at 47 Broad Street on the Night of March 14, 2016

Fire Investigation

In June 2016, Fire Officers completed the 80 hour arson and fire investigation course run by the New Jersey Chapter of the International Association of Arson Investigators. The fire department now investigates all fires in accordance with the New Jersey Uniform Fire Code. The department also works closely with the Middlesex County Fire Marshal's Office for large loss fires or fires that are suspected arson. Since the inception of the fire investigation program the department has assisted the Middlesex County Fire Marshal's office with all fires; one such fire was labeled suspicious resulting in an arrest.



Vacant structure fire at 669 Charles Street on the Night of October 10, 2016

Special Operations and Marine Division:

The Special Operations Division continues to train monthly in the fields of water rescue, ice rescue, confined space rescue, high angle rope rescue, motor vehicle extrication, trench rescue and building collapse rescue. One member of the team, Firefighter Eric Lewis was appointed to the Middlesex County Urban Search and Rescue team, where hundreds of hours of additional training will be received.

The Marine Division is part of the New Jersey Regional Fireboat Task Force. This task force is made up of 12 New Jersey Fire Departments that have marine assets including: Perth Amboy, Newark, Jersey City, North Hudson, Kearny, Carteret, Linden, Elizabeth, Secaucus, Bayonne, Hoboken, and Edgewater. The Task Force is supported by the FDNY and United States Coast Guard as well. The main purpose of this Task Force is to have an organized marine response to all incidents within the Port of New York and New Jersey, which begins in Perth Amboy. The Marine Division is currently planning for 2017 as the boat is currently out of the water for repairs. In February, Marine 5 operators are scheduled for training at the NYPD boat operator simulation training center in Brooklyn, NY. All of the operators of Marine 5 will receive a standard 16 hour course that was set up for all 12 departments that make up the New Jersey Regional Fireboat Task Force.



Special Operations Training at City DPW on December 21, 2016

Juvenile Firesetter Intervention:

In 2016, the Juvenile Fire setter Intervention Program was rebuilt with 10 members of the department completing specialist I training. Additionally 2 members completed the specialist level II training, which is a management level course so the coordinators of the program ensure it follows all applicable laws. Each of the 4 shifts has members trained so that in the event of an issue, the problem can be immediately addressed. The program exists to prevent youth fire tragedy through education, intervention, and mental health support. By forming unique partnerships and offering support to agencies dedicated to providing intervention services to fire involved youth, such as the Middlesex County Fire-setter Intervention Program, Social Services, Prosecutors Office, Police and as well as the Board of Education. An emphasis on following up with troubled youth and ensuring fire prevention education is followed has been priority this year. A continued effort will ensure the message of the program is brought to all levels of educators throughout Perth Amboy.

Volunteer Division:

The volunteer division currently has 16 active certified volunteer firefighters and 7 fire police officers. 5 of the 13 career firefighters hired in 2016 came from the volunteer division. In 2016 the Volunteer Division completed 3,730 hours of participation. They respond as an additional crew to all working fires. Additionally they can gain additional experience through the in-station duty program. This program allows members to spend 4 hour blocks of “on duty” time in the firehouse to respond with the initial responding apparatus to alarms, providing for additional manpower on emergency incident. The In-Station Duty Program also serves to foster a cohesive working relationship between members of the Career and Volunteer Divisions.

Training Division:

The training division, under the command of Captain Gonzalez, oversaw over 5,000 hours of training in 2016. Each of the 13 new career firefighters received over 400 hours each of basic training which totals 5,200 hours alone. Additionally over 3,000 hours of shift training was completed throughout the year. Special operations completed over 500 hours in technical rescue training and the marine division completed over 500 hours of marine water based training. The volunteer division completed 240 hours of training in 2016.

In 2016, the department upgraded all of the CPR training equipment in order to provide state of the art training. The new mannequins purchased provide feedback to show real-time if the students are performing adequate CPR. Additionally in 2016, Semi-automatic External Defibrillators (AEDs) were installed in all city buildings in order to provide the best chances of survival in the event of an emergency cardiac event to both the residents and employees in City buildings. Along with the purchase of the AEDs the fire department trained over one hundred city employees how to use the AEDs as well as training them CPR. The public should feel safe

that in the event of an emergency in a City building its employees will be able to assist and provide care.

Industry:

In addition to all of the residential and commercial properties throughout the City of Perth Amboy, there are 3 major petroleum terminals. The department completes annual training at these facilities and is in process of specifying additional apparatus in order to handle emergencies at these terminals. These apparatus include a 4,000 gallon foam tender and a quick attack truck. With these two apparatus, the PAFD could immediately attack a fire involving flammable liquids without having to wait for mutual aid departments that have these specialty apparatus from around the state. Additional industrial training included sending 4 members to TEEX foam firefighting school in Texas in December where the most realistic industrial firefighting skills can be learned.



National Fire Incident Reporting Data:

The fire department responded to a total of 2,125 incidents in 2016, an average of 6 responses per day. This is consistent with the previous five years. Utilizing data and definitions compiled by the National Fire Incident Reporting System, a department response to a “Fire” incident includes any response generated by the fire department to an open flame in need of extinguishment.

In 2016, the department responded to 159 fires. In addition, a “Building Fire” is classified as any fire within a building with the exception of confined fires involving cooking with no extension from the cooking container, a fire confined to a chimney or flue, incinerator or trash compactor or fuel/oil burner with no flame extension outside of the heating unit.

Along with handling emergencies in the City of Perth Amboy the department also responded to multi-alarm fires in surrounding municipalities including: Carteret, Woodbridge, Keasbey, Iselin and Sayreville.

Below are the incident statistics from 2016:

Total Fires	159
100 Fire, Other	5
111 Building fire	28
112 Fires in structure other than in a building	1
113 Cooking fire, confined to container	31
114 Chimney or flue fire, confined to chimney or flue	1
118 Trash or rubbish fire, contained	5
1181 Dryer Fire contained	3
131 Passenger vehicle fire	19
138 Off-road vehicle or heavy equipment fire	1
140 Natural vegetation fire, Other	1
141 Forest, woods or wildland fire	1
142 Brush or brush-and-grass mixture fire	12
142M Mulch Fire	25
150 Outside rubbish fire, Other	3
151 Outside rubbish, trash or waste fire	15
154 Dumpster or other outside trash receptacle fire	4
160 Special outside fire, Other	2
161 Outside storage fire	1
162 Outside equipment fire	1

Overpressure Rupture, Explosion, Overheat(no fire) 2

200 Overpressure rupture, explosion, overheat other	1
251 Excessive heat, scorch burns with no ignition	1

Rescue & Emergency Medical Service Incident 635

300 Rescue, EMS incident, other	5
311 Medical assist, assist EMS crew	106
320 Emergency medical service, other	1
321 EMS call, excluding vehicle accident with injury	217
322 Motor vehicle accident with injuries	176
323 Motor vehicle/pedestrian accident (MV Ped)	42
324 Motor Vehicle Accident with no injuries	36
331 Lock-in	10
342 Search for person in water	5
350 Extrication, rescue, Other	1
351 Extrication of victim(s) from building/structure	1
352 Extrication of victim(s) from vehicle	7
353 Removal of victim(s) from stalled elevator	15
360 Water & ice-related rescue, other	4
361 Swimming/recreational water areas rescue	1
363 Swift water rescue	3
365 Watercraft rescue	4
381 Rescue or EMS standby	1

Hazardous Condition (No Fire) 447

400 Hazardous condition, Other	18
4002 Hazardous Condition Reported-Unfounded Problem	3
410 Combustible/flammable gas/liquid condition, other	4
411 Gasoline or other flammable liquid spill	13
412 Gas leak (natural gas or LPG)	98
413 Oil or other combustible liquid spill	15
420 Toxic condition, Other	1
421 Chemical hazard (no spill or leak)	2
422 Chemical spill or leak	6
424 Carbon monoxide incident	40
440 Electrical wiring/equipment problem, Other	9
441 Heat from short circuit (wiring), defective/worn	5
442 Overheated motor	2
443 Breakdown of light ballast	1
444 Power line down	183
445 Arcing, shorted electrical equipment	29

461 Building or structure weakened or collapsed	10
462 Aircraft standby	4
463 Vehicle accident, general cleanup	3
480 Attempted burning, illegal action, Other	1

Service Call 219

500 Service Call, other	8
511 Lock-out	18
520 Water problem, Other	1
521 Water evacuation 1	1
522 Water or steam leak	50
531 Smoke or odor removal	13
540 Animal problem, Other	1
542 Animal rescue	5
550 Public service assistance, Other	2
551 Assist police or other governmental agency	54
552 Police matter	1
553 Public service	10
555 Defective elevator, no occupants	40
561 Unauthorized burning	4
571 Cover assignment, standby, moveup	11

Good Intent Call 164

600 Good intent call, Other	10
611 Dispatched & cancelled en route	64
621 Wrong location	1
622 No Incident found on arrival at dispatch address	10
631 Authorized controlled burning	2
650 Steam, Other gas mistaken for smoke, Other	3
651 Smoke scare, odor of smoke	45
652 Steam, vapor, fog or dust thought to be smoke	10
653 Smoke from barbecue, tar kettle	2
671 HazMat release investigation w/no HazMat	17

False Alarm & False Call 487

700 False alarm or false call, Other	14
710 Malicious, mischievous false call, Other	10
711 Municipal alarm system, malicious false alarm	2
712 Direct tie to FD, malicious false alarm	1
713 Telephone, malicious false alarm	4
714 Central station, malicious false alarm	12

715 Local alarm system, malicious false alarm	4
730 System malfunction, Other	4
731 Sprinkler activation due to malfunction	4
732 Extinguishing system activation due to malfunction	1
733 Smoke detector activation due to malfunction	86
734 Heat detector activation due to malfunction	2
735 Alarm system sounded due to malfunction	76
736 CO detector activation due to malfunction	18
740 Unintentional transmission of alarm, Other	7
741 Sprinkler activation, no fire	8
743 Smoke detector activation, no fire - unintentional	123
744 Detector activation, no fire - unintentional	21
745 Alarm system activation, no fire - unintentional	74
746 Carbon monoxide detector activation, no CO	16

Severe Weather & Natural Disaster 3

812 Flood assessment	2
813 Wind storm, tornado/hurricane assessment	1

Special Incident Type 10

900 Special type of incident, Other	1
9001 Training Evolution	2
911 Citizen complaint	7

Public Outreach and Fire Education:

The PAFD has maintained a partnership with the Red Cross in a public smoke detector installation campaign. The program as provided free smoke detectors to families that may not have been able to purchase a detector with members of the Fire Department installing them as well.

The Fire Department partners with organizations both in the public and private sectors. Some of our public sector partnerships are with our own police and recreation departments. We have assisted in National night out celebrations; walk your child to school, family fun day and Basketball against Alcohol and Drugs. We strongly believe forming long lasting bonds with the community which was emphasized in the first annual “Bravest vs Breakers” seniors billiard tournament; where the firefighters made bonds with seniors at the same time having fun with them.



In the private sector we have assisted organizations that are trying to make a positive impact in Perth Amboy side of things. Some of these events are now becoming yearly community events that both the residents and the department alike both look forward to it. The Jewish Renaissance Foundation's "Trick or Trunk" is a hit year after year and seems to be getting bigger and bigger. Another annual project is Shoprite's "Bag for Hunger" campaign that raises money for food banks located in the community. Members of the department show some muscle by assisting and bagging groceries to raise awareness of the food bank and raise money.



One fire handled this past year involved the resuscitation of numerous cats that were rescued from a burning house. Although several cats perished in the fire the Fire Department was able to save 30 cats utilizing some pet oxygen masks. The story got out and four more masks were purchased by citizens. A group of grade school children have also collected pennies in order to buy additional units. At this time they have collected enough to purchase 10 more units.

Two events that the fire department created were once again successful. Beep ball once again help raised funds to assist the blind community and was able to purchase over 200 canes for the blind and visually impaired community in impoverished countries. The summertime reading program that was developed with “Health 4 Youths” with help from the Library and the Recreation Dept. was kicked off at the Harbortown community center. The program which focus was developed to give the youth activities in the summer was received well



On October 5, 2016, the department held its annual fire prevention open house. Every year hundreds of residents have an open invitation to the firehouse to learn about the fire department and fire safety and to meet the members of the fire department. Sparky the Fire Dog was present to hand out fire safety hands outs, members taught children about stop, drop and roll and also how to get out in the event of a fire, the special operations division conducted a vehicle extrication demonstration and the Middlesex County Fire Marshall's Office brought the fire safety trailer and completed a sprinkler demonstration.



Fire Safety Trailer Demonstration at the annual Open House

Year after year the Perth Amboy Fire Department corner stone of education program in Perth Amboy elementary schools. With the yearly fire prevention school visits the firefighters make contact with the kids and make impressions that the children will always remember. Thousands of children meet and talk to the firefighters year after year being inspired and learning. This interaction with the kids provides a positive experience that the children remember for years to come, as is evident as they approach firefighters throughout the year advising them that *"I saw you at my school"*. Programs were conducted at Peterson, Wilentz, Ceres and Flynn Schools as well as the High School during the course of the year.



Sparky the Fire Dog at the annual Open House



PERTH AMBOY FIRE DEPARTMENT



"Always vigilant · planning for the future."