



CITY OF PERTH AMBOY FIRE DEPARTMENT



Annual Report For the Year 2019





2019 was a very busy year for the Perth Amboy Fire Department. The PAFD responded to 2,201 emergency incidents including 184 fires of which 9 were a multiple alarm fire. The design work for the second fire station has begun and millions of dollars in taxpayer property was saved through the hard work of the fire department. In 2019, over 6,418 hours of training were logged between all members of the department. The Bureau of Fire Prevention was moved under the Fire Department in 2019, which will expand its capabilities to make the City even safer moving forward. The first ever junior fire academy was held in July. The Dive Team became fully operational for emergency response. The Special Operations Team advanced their training to handle all types of technical rescues. The Perth Amboy Fire Department remains ready, staffed, trained and equipped for any emergency 24/7 365 days a year.



Annual Exempts Firefighter Memorial Service

Career Division:

The career division of the fire department is currently made up of 64 members including the fire chief, 6 battalion chiefs, 8 captains and 52 firefighters. While everyone is assigned to fire suppression, members also wear multiple hats and make up the Special Operations Team, the Marine Division, the Dive Team, the Juvenile Fire Setter Intervention Program and the Honor Guard. These contributions to the Department are greatly appreciated as this is what separates us from many other departments in our ability to serve the public and handle any emergency. The department plans to hire replacement hires in 2020, which will ensure NFPA 1710 staffing compliance is maintained.

Two promotional ceremonies were held in 2019. The first was on February 5, 2019 with a promotional ceremony for held for Fire Chief Edward A. Mullen and Captains Daniel Arroyo, Davis Vazquez and Frank Rezes. The second was on October 29, 2019 with a promotional ceremony for Battalion Chief Carlos Gonzalez.

Out of the 2,201 incidents in 2019, there were several deserving of special recognition throughout the year. On October 12, 2019, the fire department responded to an early morning building fire at 364 State Street. Units arrived to find heavy fire conditions in a commercial occupancy on the first floor with two floors of apartments above filled with smoke. Five residents, including a baby, were found trapped by the fire on floors above. Firefighters Philip Sulikowski, Melvin Inoa, Patrick McGhee and Captain Gonzalez successfully rescued those individuals utilizing ground ladders, bringing them to safety. They were also assisted by Captain Eric Kayser and Firefighter James Garrison.

On September 24, 2019, Battalion Chief Zylka noticed a female looking over the railing at the top of the Victory Bridge. He stopped, called for assistance and immediately made contact with the emotionally disturbed female. He sat with her, made conversation and ultimately calmed her down. This prevented her from taking her life tragically. Battalion Chief Scott Bromirski & Sergeant Chris Joy also assisted once they arrived and saved her life.

On August 7, 2019, the fire department was dispatched to the underpass on New Brunswick Ave by Amboy Ave for a vehicle under water. Units arrived to find two males trapped on top of their floating vehicle due to a flash flood. Firefighters John Fazio and Lully Gonzalez quickly donned water rescue suits from the Rescue Truck and were able to swim out to the individuals and carry them back safely without incident.

Fire Prevention:

In 2019, the Bureau of Fire Prevention was moved to the Fire Department. This division of the department is responsible for the Uniform Fire Code Enforcement throughout the City. Life Hazard Inspections, Non-Life Hazard Inspections, Code Compliances, Permits and Complaints are all handled by the Bureau. The Bureau also assists with fire investigations and the juvenile fire setter intervention program. In 2019, 327 Life Hazard Use inspections were completed, 161 Non-Life Hazard Use inspections were completed and 101 Uniform Fire Code Compliances were completed. Several hundred re-inspections were also completed. It is the future goal of the Bureau to complete 6,000 inspections annually with the additional staff to be hired in 2020.

Fire Investigation

The Perth Amboy Fire Department continues to investigate all fires in accordance with the New Jersey Uniform Fire Code. The fire investigation unit is able to assist the property owners and their insurance companies in identifying the area and cause of fires, so that they can rebuild and bring their lives back to normal. All suspicious fires are investigated by the fire investigation unit in conjunction with the Perth Amboy Police Department.



Promotional Ceremony February 5, 2019



Building Fire on October 27, 2019 at 337-347 Madison Avenue

Special Operations:

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. In 2019, the division advanced their training in high angle rescue training to the next level and prepared themselves for any and all emergencies in the technical rescue field by completing 709 hours of training. Additional specialized training in the field of man vs machine, heavy lifting & moving and breaching & breaking were also completed. In 2020, Rescue Company 1 will be placed in service once it is completed. This will have members of Special Operations staffed on it 24/7, providing the team with all of their equipment in service on a frontline apparatus. Not only will this protect the City of Perth Amboy, but it will be able to respond to all of the surrounding communities as the technical rescue unit. The Special Operations Team will also train all new hires in an 80 hour technical rescue class once they complete their fire academy training in 2020.



Members of Special Operations Conducting High Angle Operations off a Large Tower

Marine Division:

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. In 2019, 327 hours of training was conducted by the Marine Division and 13 emergency incidents were handled. While we were not awarded the grant to replace the boat in 2019, we will be applying again in 2020 for a Port Security Grant to replace Marine 5, which will be going on 15 years of continuous services and at the end of its service life.



Marine 5 Flowing Water at the Annual Family Day in August

Juvenile Firesetter Intervention:

The Juvenile Fire setter Intervention Program was currently consists of 10 members of the department that completed 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.

Dive Team:

The Dive Team became fully functional and able to respond to emergencies on October 1, 2019. This Team was funded by the Port Security Grant Program in 2017. In total, 28 members now make up the team. 12 firefighters and 4 police officers are trained to the SCUBA Rescue Certification and 12 firefighters were trained to the dive tender level. Since its inception, the Dive Team has completed 3,248 hours of training in the past three years. Moving forward, it is expected that the Dive Team will be called to any Dive Emergencies throughout the County if needed as there are no other formal teams within the County.



Members of the Dive Team completing monthly training at the Waterfront

Volunteer Division:

The volunteer division currently has 6 active certified volunteer firefighters and 6 fire police officers. In 2019 the Volunteer Division completed 1,883 hours of participation. Within the department, they respond as an additional crew to working fires in Car 9, a dedicated response vehicle that has air packs, radios and hand tools. The Volunteer Division also takes care of the Fire Department’s Museum. There are there every Tuesday night at 6pm to work on the

antique fire truck, maintain & organize the museum and give any tours for the public. The Volunteer Division also greatly helped out with the City's Code Blue throughout the winter. Here members assisted the homeless at the Community Center stay warm on the coldest nights of the year. The volunteer division is where a majority of the career firefighters in the department began their fire service career.



Members of the Department Participated in the 18th Annual 9/11/ Remembrance Ceremony

Training Division:

The training division, under the command of Battalion Chief Gonzalez, oversaw over 6,418 hours of training in 2019. Additionally over 4,141 hours of shift training was completed throughout the year. Special operations completed over 709 hours in technical rescue training and the marine division completed over 327 hours of marine water based training. The dive team completed 1565 hours of training. The volunteer division completed 87 hours of training in 2018.

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 continues to complete annual training at these facilities and is in process of specifying additional apparatus in order to handle emergencies at these terminals. In May 2020, the department will take delivery of a 4,000 gallon foam tender that will be part of our industrial fire response. With this fire, 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 in 2019 included sending 2 members to TEEEX foam firefighting school in Texas in December where the most realistic industrial firefighting skills can be learned. Also, the entire department continues to train with Kinder Morgan’s Carteret Emergency Response Team to be able to utilize them for assistance while responding to industrial emergencies in our city.

National Fire Incident Reporting Data:

The fire department responded to a total of 2,201 incidents in 2018, an average of 6 incidents per day. This was a 6% increase in fire responses from 2018 and the highest amount in recent department history. 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 2019, the department responded to 184 fires, of which 40 were structural fires including 9 that were a multiple alarm fire. 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 34 mutual aid incidents in surrounding municipalities including: Carteret, Keasbey, Woodbridge, Colonia, Fords, Old Bridge, Edison, South Amboy, and Sayreville. In 2019, there was a total of 60 mutual aid responses from other municipalities into the city of Perth Amboy. Listed below is the incident breakdown for 2019:

Total Fires	184
100 Fire, Other	0
111 Building fire	40
112 Fires in structure other than a building	0
113 Cooking fire, confined to container	62
114 Chimney or flue fire, confined	1
116 Fuel burner / Boiler Fire	4
118 Trash or rubbish fire, contained	3
1181 Dryer Fire contained	1
131 Passenger vehicle fire	17
132 Road freight or transport vehicle fire	3
134 Water vehicle fire	0
142 Brush or brush-and-grass mixture fire	11
142M Mulch Fire	11
150 Outside rubbish fire, other	2
151 Outside rubbish, trash or waste fire	15

154 Dumpster or other outside trash receptacle fire	8
160 Special outside fire	0
161 Outside storage fire	2
162 Outside equipment fire	3

Overpressure Rupture, Explosion, Overheat(no fire) 3

211 Overpressure rupture of a steam pipe	0
222 Overpressure rupture of a boiler	0
251 Excessive heat, scorch burns with no ignition	3

Rescue & Emergency Medical Service Incident 727

300 Rescue, EMS, other incident	1
311 Medical assist, assist EMS crew	149
320 Emergency medical service, other	11
321 EMS call, excluding vehicle accident with injury	203
322 Motor vehicle accident with injuries	223
323 Motor vehicle/pedestrian accident (MV Ped)	57
324 Motor Vehicle Accident with no injuries	33
331 Lock-in	9
341 Search for person on land	1
342 Search for person in water	4
350 Extrication, rescue, other	1
351 Extrication of victim(s)	1
352 Extrication of victim(s) from vehicle	8
353 Removal of victim(s) from stalled elevator	14
354 Trench/below-grade rescue	1
356 High Angle Rescue	0
357 Extrication of a victim from machinery	1
363 Swift water rescue	1
364 Surf rescue	0
365 Watercraft rescue	6
381 Rescue or EMS standby	3

Hazardous Condition (No Fire) 411

400 Hazardous condition, other	7
4002 Hazardous Condition Reported-Unfounded Problem	3
410 Combustible/flammable gas/liquid condition	2
411 Gasoline or other flammable liquid spill	16
412 Gas leak (natural gas or LPG)	64
413 Oil or other combustible liquid spill	4

420 Toxic condition, other	0
421 Chemical hazard (no spill or leak)	0
422 Chemical spill or leak	7
424 Carbon monoxide incident	58
440 Electrical wiring/equipment problem, Other	3
441 Heat from short circuit (wiring), defective/worn	8
442 Overheated motor	6
443 Breakdown of light ballast	2
444 Power line down	38
4441 Cable or phone line down	154
445 Arcing, shorted electrical equipment	17
451 Biological Hazard	2
460 Accident, other	2
461 Building or structure weakened or collapsed	10
462 Aircraft standby	3
463 Vehicle Accident general cleanup	5

Service Call 187

500 Service Call, other	2
510 Person in distress, Other	0
511 Lock-out	25
520 Water problem, other	1
521 Water evacuation	2
522 Water or steam leak	57
531 Smoke or odor removal	6
541 Animal problem	1
542 Animal rescue	7
550 Public service assistance, Other	1
551 Assist police or other governmental agency	37
552 Police matter	1
553 Public service	10
554 Assist invalid	2
555 Defective elevator, no occupants	11
561 Unauthorized burning	5
571 Cover assignment, standby, move up	19

Good Intent Call 161

600 Good intent call, Other	3
611 Dispatched & cancelled en route	60
621 Wrong location	1
622 No Incident found on arrival at dispatch address	27

631 Authorized controlled burning	4
632 Prescribed fire	1
650 Steam mistaken for fire, other	3
651 Smoke scare, odor of smoke	27
652 Steam, vapor, fog or dust thought to be smoke	16
653 Smoke from barbecue, tar kettle	2
671 HazMat release investigation w/no HazMat	17

False Alarm & False Call 518

700 False alarm or false call, Other	6
710 Malicious false call, other	4
713 Telephone, malicious false alarm	7
714 Central station, malicious false alarm	15
715 Local alarm system, malicious false alarm	0
721 Bomb scare, no bomb	0
730 System malfunction, Other	4
731 Sprinkler activation due to malfunction	6
733 Smoke detector activation due to malfunction	91
734 Heat detector activation due to malfunction	4
735 Alarm system sounded due to malfunction	105
736 CO detector activation due to malfunction	34
740 Unintentional transmission of alarm, Other	10
741 Sprinkler activation, no fire	2
742 Extinguishing system activation	3
743 Smoke detector activation, no fire - unintentional	76
744 Detector activation, no fire - unintentional	15
745 Alarm system activation, no fire - unintentional	115
746 Carbon monoxide detector activation, no CO	21

Severe Weather & Natural Disaster 7

800 Severe weather or natural disaster, other	3
812 Flood Assessment	4

Special Incident Type 3

900 Special type of incident, Other	1
9001 Training evolution	1
911 Citizen complaint	1

Public Outreach and Fire Education:

The PAFD has maintained a continual partnership with the Red Cross in a public smoke detector installation campaign. In the past three years alone, nearly 1,000 free smoke alarms have been installed throughout the City of Perth Amboy, of which at least one resulted in the lives of multiple families saved, and property preserved. The Red Cross maintains a stock of 10 year maintenance free smoke detectors with the department so we can install them in homes that cannot afford to buy them on their own.

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. Some of the events we have assisted in were the national night out celebration, walk your child to school day, family fun day, the team tsunami swim meet, bring your child to work day, the trunk or treat event at the waterfront and many more. Additionally, the fire department made a visit to every school, and many of the day care facilities to teach about fire safety during our “Fire Prevention Month.”



Members of the Department Educating the Children During Fire Prevention Week

During the second week in July of 2019, the Fire Department held its first ever junior fire academy. There were 9 junior firefighter cadets in this 40 hour program. Funded by donations from several businesses in town, the cadets were all issued uniforms, boots, protective equipment and meals for the entire week. A group of firefighters and fire officers came together to provide the highest level of training, all within a 40 hour class to transform these cadets into firefighters.

All 9 cadets became CPR/AED certified, learned about engine company operations, ladder company operations, search & rescue techniques and all about the Perth Amboy Fire Department. The week ended with an all-out response demonstration where all of the family members witnessed their young adults respond on the engine or ladder, pull hose lines to put out a simulated fire, rescue victims from our training grounds, climb ladders and perform CPR. The class was beyond successful and we look forward to running this every year moving forward.



Annual Read Trunk of Treat Event

On October 11, 2019, 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 rope demonstration and the Middlesex County Fire Marshall's Office brought the fire safety trailer and completed a sprinkler demonstration. Buckeye Partners and Kinder Morgan donated over \$1,500 worth of carbon monoxide alarms and fire extinguishers that were all raffled off to families in attendance.



Fire Extinguisher Demonstration at the 2019 Annual Open House

Outlook for 2020:

In 2019, the Perth Amboy Fire Department continued to maintain the highest level of services to all City Residents as well as any municipality that may call for assistance. In 2019 over 2,200 emergency incidents were handled by the Perth Amboy Fire Department. This number is only going to get busier as the city grows. The department will continue to expand and be ready for any emergency 24/7 with the best staff, equipment, training and apparatus.

The architect has been hired and the initial design work for a new Northside Fire Station is underway. In 2020, the Department plans to acquire the land for the station and also break ground for the construction of the station. This much needed station will put the Department in NFPA 1710 compliance for a 4 minute citywide response time and greatly enhance public safety in the Northeast section of the City.

In 2019 the Fire Department took over the Fire Prevention Bureau. Currently we are in the process of hiring firefighter/fire inspectors to add additional staff to be able to inspect nearly 6,000 occupancies annually, while filling existing vacancies in suppression.

The Foam Tender is set to be delivered by May 2020, which will fill a major gap in our industrial fire protection response and give the capabilities to immediately extinguish flammable liquid fires at the large terminals within the city as well as any roadways that could have an incident. This unit will carry 4,000 gallons of foam and be able to suppress large tank fires.

The new Rescue 1 is set to be delivered in March 2020. This unit will replace two smaller units and will be staffed and in service 24/7 to respond to all emergencies in the city, greatly enhancing our immediate operational capacities at fire and rescue incidents. This unit will carry all of the extrication equipment, rope rescue equipment, confined space rescue equipment, water

& ice rescue equipment and all the technical rescue tools needed to carry out our mission of protecting lives and property.

The Dive Team is fully operational and ready to respond to underwater emergencies. The capabilities will be expanded in 2020 when the next level of training is completed where the dive team will then be able to operate out into the major waterways and able to conduct dive operations from the fireboat.

A Port Security Grant for 2020 is also being planned to replace Marine 5, our 15 year old fireboat. The new boat will have nearly 4 times the water flow capacity as the existing one, providing all waterfront properties and areas of the City with a secondary water source in the event of a large scale emergency.

Fire safety initiatives will continue with our smoke detector hotline and Red Cross Sound the Alarm Events. 732-376-5419 is the number that all city residents can call and the fire department will install, free of charge, smoke detectors for single and two family houses that need them.

In the summer of 2020, the Department plans on running the 2nd Annual Junior Fire Academy, since the first year was such a success. This will be open to teenagers from the ages of 14-17 that are city residents. Information will be available on our social media page @ Perth Amboy Fire Department on Facebook.

We look forward towards keeping all of the people and property of the City of Perth Amboy safe throughout 2020 and promise to be ready whenever and wherever they may be an emergency. Thank you for your continued support.

