

FIRE DEPARTMENT

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF

This is my twenty sixth year on the Morgantown Fire Department, and my fifth year serving as its Chief. Throughout my tenure, I have learned and experienced many things. Most importantly, I've learned the value of preparation, commitment, and integrity. I'm happy to report that each and every member of the Department has an abundance of these qualities. It is a consequence of their efforts, and on their behalf that I proudly present the Morgantown Fire Department Annual Report for your review.

DEPARTMENTAL OVERVIEW

The Morgantown Fire Department occupies three stations and has administrative offices in the Public Safety Building. Each location provides specific equipment that contributes to the overall departmental mission statement. These locations and corresponding equipment are as follows:

The Staff Offices, located at 300 Spruce Street, house the Fire Chief's Office, the Training Coordinator's Office, the City Fire Marshal's Office, and the Departmental Secretary's Office. The phone number for this location is 284-7480.

Company One Station is located at 228 South High Street. This location houses the Shift Commander's Office, Engine Company One, Ladder Company One, Heavy Rescue One, Engine Company Four, Gator One, River Rescue Two, and Company Six Engine. Additionally, Station One houses the emergency supplies inventory and various other small response vehicles and equipment. The phone number for this location is 291-7475.

Company Two Station is located at 1500 Hillcrest Street in the Sabraton area of the City. This location contains Engine Company Two, Engine Company Five, the Hazardous Materials Response Unit, the Dive/Rescue Response Unit, the Public Education Trailer, and the Department's Fire/Rescue Boat One (The Betty McClain). The phone number for this location is 291-7482.

Company Three Station is located at 3 North Street in the Wiles Hill area of the City. This location houses Engine Company Three. The phone number for this location is 291-7479.

In addition to the vehicles described within the various station locations, the Department also maintains a small fleet of passenger size vehicles. This inventory includes the following: Fire Chief's vehicle, Training Coordinator's vehicle, Fire Marshal's vehicle, two utility truck vehicles, and one code enforcement vehicle.

More important than the location of the facilities are the functions performed at those locations. Even though there are three separate Station Houses, they perform in a well-

orchestrated manner to provide the primary services pertaining to emergency response and mitigation.

STATION ONE

Engine Company One provides fire suppression throughout the City as per Standard Operating Procedures.

Ladder Company One provides elevated rescue, elevated master stream application, ventilation, and other pertinent services throughout the City as per Standard Operating Procedures.

Heavy Rescue One provides vehicular extrication, confined space rescue, general rescue, trench rescue, and fire support throughout the City as per Standard Operation Procedures.

Engine Company Four is a reserve unit for callout personnel during a multiple alarm situation.

Company Six is a multipurpose mini-pumper used for vehicle fires, fires where ingress is limited, rescue operations backup, brush fires, nuisance fires, and other general duties.

River Boat Two provides backup for Fire Boat One responses and for special applications along Deckers Creek, White Park Reservoir, and other small waterways and tributaries within the jurisdiction.

Gator One provides emergency medical responses, brush fire responses, rescue responses, and other general services along the Rail Trail and other remote, inaccessible areas of operation.

STATION TWO

Engine Company Two provides initial fire suppression, emergency rescue, and general emergency response to its primary area of operation and also provides backup responses throughout the City as per Standard Operating Procedures.

Engine Company Five is available for callout personnel on a multiple alarm situation.

The Dive/Rescue response trailer is used anytime a diving operation is warranted.

The Hazardous Materials response trailer is placed into service when a hazardous materials response exceeds the capabilities of Heavy Rescue One.

The Public Education Trailer is routinely placed into service during any special educational event in which the Department is involved.

The “Betty McClain” Fire/Dive/Rescue Boat is stored at this station during the winter months but is available for a response if needed.

STATION THREE

Engine Company Three provides initial fire suppression, emergency rescue, and general emergency response to its primary area and also provides backup responses throughout the City as outlined in the Department’s Standard Operating Procedures.

STAFF OFFICES

The office of the Fire Chief provides financial accountability, sets departmental policy, and outlines the Department’s short and long-term goals and objectives.
 The office of the Training Coordinator provides in-house training to all members and outside training to agencies and homeowners who request such training.
 The office of the Fire Marshal oversees business inspections, housing inspections, plans review services, and public education services as requested or mandated by law.

By far, the Department’s most valuable resource is the workforce. Without their dedication, training, and professionalism all of the other resources would be wasted. The Department’s human resources consist of 45 sworn officers, 1 civilian secretary, and 1 very special volunteer.

The Department is organized into three Battalions with 14 members in each one with a minimum staffing level of 10. The hierarchy is as follows:

FIRE CHIEF Staff Captain (Fire Marshal) Staff Captain (Training Coordinator) Departmental Secretary Toni Polentes (volunteer)		
<u>A CREW</u>	<u>B CREW</u>	<u>C CREW</u>
1 - Captain 2 - Lieutenants 8 - Firefighter FC 3 - Appt. Firefighters	1 - Captain 2 - Lieutenants 7 - Firefighter FC 4 - Appt. Firefighters	1 - Captain 2 - Lieutenants 8 - Firefighter FC 3 - Appt. Firefighters

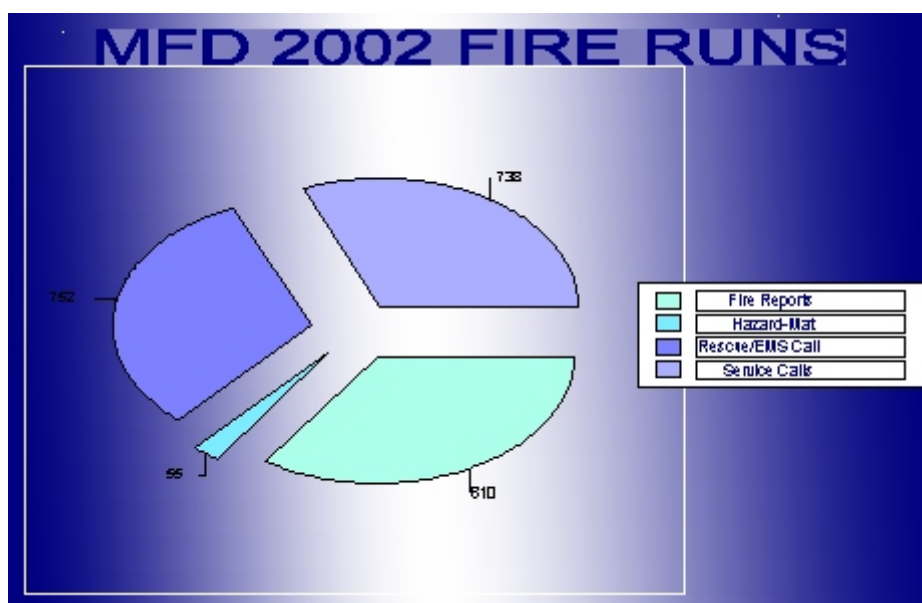
THE YEAR IN REVIEW

2002 has been a busy year for the Morgantown Fire Department! There has never been more accomplished at anytime during its one hundred plus years of existence. The following statistical data is strong testimony to the expertise and dedication of the Fire Fighters of Morgantown.

Emergency Response Data

In 1997, the Morgantown Fire Department was called upon for responses to 1,374 situations requiring emergency services. This year, that figure has increased by 42% for a total of 2,355 emergency calls for service. This total was comprised of:

- 810-Fire
- 55-Hazardous Material Responses
- 752-Medical Emergencies
- 738-General Emergency Service Calls
- SPECIAL NOTE: The principal reason for the increased call since 1997 is additional medical services being offered



These calls reflect an estimated real property dollar loss of \$757,125. When this figure is compared to the assessed value of the property protected by the Morgantown Fire Department, it demonstrates an excellent performance. This loss figure is still however 30% higher than the loss figures reported last year.

Arson Report

Intentionally set fires continue to be a problem in the Morgantown area. These fires include dumpster fires, garbage fires in right-of-ways, furniture fires, and ultimately structure fires. In 2002, the Department responded to 63 such fires with an estimated dollar loss of \$406,200.

Training Data

One of the major factors contributing to the favorable dollar loss relative to property protected is the Department's training program. Each sworn member received an average of 310 hours of training in 2002. This amount of training is equivalent to a forty-hour week with each employee receiving nearly 8 weeks of training per year. The total Departmental training hours for 2002, was 13,951 and covered well over 50 different areas of study. In addition to this training, the Department has one-fourth of its members participating in the State mandated apprenticeship program that requires over six thousand hours of dedicated, structured training. The Department also has six members pursuing college degrees ranging from Master degree programs to Bachelor degree programs to Associate degree programs. Clearly, Morgantown has the best-trained, best-educated Fire Department in the State.

Not only does the Fire Department strive for training excellence within, it also provides training to those who request it in the community. Many of its certified fire instructors, EMT instructors, and Haz-Mat instructors have provided training to 641 citizens as requested. This training included fire extinguisher operations, evacuation techniques, and First Responder Medical training.

Code Enforcement and Inspections

The Fire Department is as aggressive in this area of operation as its resources allow it to be. Through careful planning, strict scheduling, and excellent utilization of available resources the Department has accomplished the following:

- Business Inspections and general inspections = 612
- Assembly Inspections = 181
- Follow-up Inspections = 43
- Life Safety Warnings issued = 23
- Violations found = 275
- Corrections to date = 119
- Fire Lane Warnings issued = 127
- Total citations issued = 11

The Department's Fire Prevention/Public Relations activities have also been very successful. These activities include the following:

- Fire Safety Educational Programs = 2,964 people
- Fire Safety Materials Issued = 272 people
- Stations Tours = 124 people
- Fire Relations Activities and Events = 2,723
- TOTAL PEOPLE PARTICIPATING IN DEPARTMENT PROGRAMS = 6,083

REVISED PROGRAMS

Team Reports

There have been some major revisions to the specialized Teams program. Some of the Teams have been eliminated and incorporated into the general operations of the Department. Other Teams have been developed. The specialized Teams are now:

- Computer Team
- Public Education Team
- Breathing Air Team
- Code Enforcement Team
- Investigation Team
- Dive Team
- Apparatus Maintenance Team
- Training Team

In addition to the Team revisions and additions, there has been a major departmental policy change regarding participation on the Teams. Originally, all members of the Department were required to join two specialized teams. The intent was to integrate involvement by all members. This policy though failed to attract full participation and was deemed ineffective. The departmental policy has now been revised and it no longer requires any Team participation by any member. Instead, it permits those with special interests to pursue those interests on a voluntary basis. Initial feedback indicates that this will make the Teams even more successful and participation is now viewed as a benefit instead of a requirement. If a Team does not get participation, then the services provided by that Team will be incorporated into the regular Fire Department operations and the workload will be shared by all members. The Team will remain in place, however, so that if a roster can ever be filled, then those special activities will once again revert back to a Team responsibility as opposed to being a Departmental function.

Special Projects



There have been two special projects completed this year that superceded all Departmental expectations. The first project was the Norwood Station Addition. This 2,700 square foot masonry addition serves a valuable storage need within the Department and compliments the exterior beauty of the neighborhood. During the construction, several other problems pertaining to the age of the station were corrected. The existing entry ramp was removed and

replaced along with the damaged existing garage door. The back parking lot area and community basketball court were also resurfaced with asphalt left over from the street paving projects. Through the cooperation of the Engineers, Architects, Contractors, Firefighters, City Administration, Neighbors, and other Departments within the City, the end result was phenomenal and will serve the Department and the citizens of Morgantown for many decades to come.



The second special project was the construction and placement of a docking system for the recently acquired Dive/Rescue Boat (Betty McClain). This facility allows the Department to have immediate access to the water without having to transport the boat through town and thereby drastically cut down on initial response times. It also provides a dry docking feature for the boat that will dramatically increase the service life of the vessel. This mini-

marina will be in the water at least 9 months of the year and it will be stored at the Norwood Station Addition the remaining 3 months.

FORECAST FOR NEXT YEAR

In the upcoming year 2003, the Insurance Service Offices will conduct an on-site review of the Department's capabilities. The ISO acts as the report card for Fire Department performances. The scoring range is 1-10 with 1 being perfect and 10 being non-existent. There are many factors considered within the departmental operations and also the dispatching services and water systems are considered. Currently, Morgantown residents enjoy an ISO classification of 3 and this above average rating is reflected in the insurance premiums that they pay.

It has been ten years since the last on-site review by the ISO. A lot has changed in the last ten years. Annexations, structural growth, census escalations, student population growth, non-resident population increases utilizing or providing City services, and a litany of other factors that may affect the current ISO standing. As a consequence, there exists a possibility that the ISO rating may change. It should be noted that this projection is speculative; but, it is based upon sound reasoning and is an issue that should be considered.

CONCLUSION

Overall, it has been a very successful year for the Morgantown Fire Department. No life was lost as a direct result of fire within the jurisdiction and injuries were kept at a minimum. Even though property losses have climbed, those figures are reasonable given the resources of the Department proportionate to the value of property protected.

The Department's workforce is professional, proactive, and aggressive. The support of Council has never been better and is reflected throughout this Annual Report, and is very much appreciated.

The Department is looking forward to another successful year in 2003. By seizing opportunities as they come available and growing the departmental resources proportionate to its mission statement, the Annual Report for 2003 should be as strong and positive as this one has been.