

FREDERICK COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES

CURRENT CONDITIONS

The Frederick County Fire and Rescue Department was established in 1990 to provide support and guidance for the eleven volunteer fire and rescue companies that provide fire suppression and emergency medical services to the citizens of Frederick County. Each of the volunteer fire and rescue companies provide fire suppression and Emergency Medical transport services, nine provide advanced life support (ALS) emergency medical service, and two provide basic life support emergency medical service.

Most of the apparatus operated by the volunteer fire and rescue companies are owned by and have been purchased through the fund raising efforts of each individual company. In addition, the County owns and operates two ALS first response vehicles, which are stationed at Company 16, Gainesboro Volunteer Fire and Rescue Company and Company 18, Greenwood Volunteer Fire and Rescue Company. In 2007, the Training Division acquired a used pumper from Fairfax City to be used for training volunteer and career personnel. The pumper has been fully equipped and been used by the volunteer fire and rescue companies when they have apparatus out of service.

Staffing of the fire and rescue stations is accomplished by a combination of volunteers from each community and is supplemented by career fire and rescue personnel employed by Frederick County. The volunteers provide 24 hour a day, seven day a-week coverage in all of the fire and rescue stations. The career fire and rescue personnel staff ten of the eleven stations, three stations with daytime staffing only five days a week and the remaining seven with a combination of daytime staffing of two persons providing 24 hour coverage seven days a week.

The Fire and Rescue Department office is divided into four divisions. These divisions are Operations, Training, Life Safety and Emergency Management. The office is headed by a full-time Chief who is employed by the County. The Chief is responsible for the supervision of all of the Departments operations. This includes the supervision of all career personnel, coordinating the service delivery of the volunteer fire and rescue companies, overseeing emergency services planning, providing volunteer and career training programs, disaster and hazardous material coordination, and managing Department resources.

PUBLIC FACILITIES

FUTURE FOCUS

As residential and commercial developments continue to locate and expand in Frederick County, there will be an increased need for fire and rescue stations to provide services to protect the citizens and transient population. The ultimate goal of the fire and rescue system is to provide the most efficient fire and rescue services countywide. Responses include, but are not limited to, emergency medical services, fire suppression, hazardous materials, swift water rescue, technical rescues, and natural disasters. Timely responses by emergency services personnel and equipment enable resuscitation efforts to begin in the critical minutes immediately following a cardiac related incident and also minimize fire related deaths.

Future challenges for the Fire and Rescue Department include meeting training and certification requirements, increasing emergency medical service capabilities, improving radio communications, developing additional fire and rescue stations to meet future growth within the county and keeping up with the staffing needs to continue to provide quality timely service to the citizens.

Planning for future fire and rescue station locations and equipment needs must be accomplished by developing a five year strategic plan. This plan will identify future fire and rescue station sites and equipment needs based on projected service demands and response times. The plan will encourage the dedication of sites for new fire and rescue stations within the identified areas during the rezoning process.

A response study was conducted in 1999 and concluded the need for five additional fire and rescue stations. These stations are to cover the areas of:

- *Green Springs / White Hall*
- *Route 522 South / Route 277 East*
- *Middle Road / Cedar Creek Grade*
- *Apple Pie Ridge / Route 522*
- *Route 7 / Redbud Road*

The study indicated that in many areas a ten minute total response time was not being met. Redistribution of current Volunteer apparatus to these stations can enhance response performance. Non-residential areas such as retail, office, and industrial areas require increased fire protection because specialized equipment is necessary to ensure safety for these land uses. Other land uses identified as target hazards continue to grow. These include land uses such as schools, nursing homes, daycare centers, and industrial facilities. These land uses have a higher risk of injury due to the specific demographics of person utilizing these facilities.

PUBLIC FACILITIES

In using the mentioned criteria above, the proposed development of Crosspointe Center near the Route 37 South area at Tasker Road presents an opportunity to expand services. This development is expected to have over 1,500 residential units with commercial properties as well. The impact will be tremendous on existing services and a new fire and rescue station is needed to cope with these needs and increase the service delivery in existing areas around this development.

Existing road conditions, primarily those with gravel or dirt surfaces and horizontal and vertical curvatures, located outside of the county's Urban Development Area (UDA) create longer response times. The greatest factor contributing to the need for new fire and rescue stations is the rapid population growth and increases in dwelling units within the County.

The development of new fire and rescue stations could provide an opportunity to extend satellite services provided by other County Departments and agencies. Allocation of space could be created within new fire and rescue stations for community services provided by the Sheriff's Office, the Treasurer's Office, the Voter Registrar's Office, and the Commission of the Revenue's Office. Also, in support of Neighborhood Design, it is encouraged that the location of future facilities be located within the UDA, near Neighborhood Villages and Urban Centers or in Rural Community Centers.

Another project to be considered is the replacement of aging fire and rescue training facilities currently being used by Winchester, Frederick County, Shenandoah County, Warren County, and several businesses with fire brigades and emergency responders. Constructing a Regional Public Safety Training Center potentially consisting of an administrative building, burn building, training tower, vehicle driving range, shooting range and numerous other facilities and props outside of the City of Winchester would incorporate fire, rescue, law enforcement, industrial and educational institutions located in Clarke County, Frederick County, Shenandoah County, Warren County, Winchester, State Agencies, Federal Agencies and potentially jurisdictions within the State of West Virginia.

COMMUNITY BENEFITS

Over the years, the County Fire and Rescue Companies have provided much more than fire and rescue services. The Stations or "fire halls," as commonly referred to, evolved out of necessity. They have become the social hub for the community in which they serve. Small groups of forward thinking citizens, realizing the need for fire and rescue services, chartered many of the companies. As the community has changed, the fire companies have adapted. In many cases, the firehouse has always been the community meeting place. Many of the companies hold fundraisers such as bingo, dinners, and yard parties to support their needs and the civic commitment.

PUBLIC FACILITIES

Civic organizations, homeowners associations, and businesses utilize the social halls for meetings, training, and seasonal gatherings. The community firehouse is viewed as a “safe haven” during any large emergency incident, natural or manmade. The companies offer important community information and training classes of various topics, including proper child safety seat installation to first aid and C.P.R. instruction. The potential for community outreach is endless. Community based service delivery is more economical and convenient to the citizens and business partners of the county.

Primarily the companies are self supporting through fundraising, donations, and contributions from the County government. Satellite services provide social character in common demographical areas in the community.

POLICIES / IMPLEMENTATION

POLICY: WHEN PLANNING NEW FACILITIES, CONSIDER SITE LOCATION, SITE SUITABILITY, BUILDING DESIGN, AND CONSTRUCTION TIMING.

IMPLEMENTATION:

- Co-locate fire and rescue stations with other County facilities and agencies for maximum efficiency.
- Locate fire and rescue stations with easy access to a major arterial or at an intersection of two major arteries to gain both east-west and north-south access.
- Encourage sites to be large enough to accommodate equipment storage and facilitate maneuverability, allowing equipment to either pull-through or be backed into garage bays without hindering traffic flows in the public right-of-way.
- Locate fire and rescue stations on sites of between two and five acres to allow for future expansion. Sites may be smaller when developed as part of a Neighborhood Design in an Urban Center or Neighborhood Village.
- Select and design sites to minimize the adverse impact of sirens and other noise on residential areas.

PUBLIC FACILITIES

POLICY: INVESTIGATE THE NEED FOR A REGIONAL PUBLIC SAFETY TRAINING CENTER AS THE DEMANDS FOR PUBLIC SAFETY RELATED TRAINING INCREASE AND EXISTING FACILITIES AGE.

IMPLEMENTATION:

- Co-locate a regional public safety training center with other County agencies, outside municipal agencies, and private entities to maximum the efficiency of the facility.
- Locate a regional public safety training center with easy access for participants and general population while maintaining capabilities for municipal services.
- Encourage sites to be large enough to accommodate all of the buildings, facilities, and props as well as facilitate maneuverability in a safe manner. A site between 60-80 acres should be planned for to allow for future expansion.

POLICY: ACHIEVE STAFFING OF THE FIRE AND RESCUE COMPANIES THROUGH VOLUNTEERS FROM EACH OF THE COMPANIES SUPPLEMENTED BY AUTHORIZED AND CERTIFIED UNIFORM OPERATIONAL FULL TIME CAREER FIRE AND RESCUE STAFF AND PART-TIME STAFF WHO PROVIDE SUPPORT IN THE FIRE AND RESCUE STATIONS.

IMPLEMENTATION:

- Propose staffing increases over an eight (8) year period using the National Volunteer Fire Council's "On-line Calculator" at a 45% reduced rate.
- Stations located in the Western portions of the County could be reduced between 55% and 82% from the NVFC Calculator based on lower call volumes, slower growth in their respective response areas and volunteer participation on emergency responses in the respective companies.
- Allow Volunteer Companies to achieve their requested additional staffing over a manageable period without a significant burden to the County. It also allows those stations that have an increase in volunteer participation to forfeit their staffing request and allow another Station to receive their request earlier.

PUBLIC FACILITIES

POLICY: TO PROVIDE THE CITIZENS AND VISITORS OF FREDERICK COUNTY WITH THE BEST CUSTOMER SERVICE AVAILABLE IN EMERGENCY RESPONSE, TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES SHOULD BE PROVIDED TO BOTH VOLUNTEER AND CAREER PERSONNEL. AN INCREASE IN EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE CAPABILITIES IS ALSO NEEDED.

IMPLEMENTATION:

- Provide opportunities for Volunteer and Career personnel to attend Advanced Life Support training classes.
- Increase station staffing to provide more Emergency Medical Service Providers.
- Provide incentives to volunteer/career personnel for performing at a higher certification level.
- Continue to work with the Frederick County Public Schools EMT program.
- Continue to work with the Lord Fairfax Community College EMT-Enhanced and EMT-Intermediate Programs.
- Assist the Lord Fairfax Community College with the implementation of an EMT-Paramedic Program.

POLICY: UPDATE AND CONSTRUCT COMMUNICATIONS INFRA-STRUCTURE AS DEFICIENT COVERAGE AREAS IN THE SYSTEM ARE IDENTIFIED AS FUTURE CALL VOLUME INCREASES.

IMPLEMENTATION:

- Replace mobile, portable, and base transmitters with narrow band compliant equipment. Non-compliant older equipment shall be taken out of service.
- Convert the primary transmitters to a satellite receiver voting comparator system. Convert primary communications channel and the county wide channel to a repeater configuration.
- Add additional transmitter sites to increase specific zone coverage problems and countywide unit to unit coverage.
- Install UHF interoperability equipment and updated antennas at the site to enable inter-connection with adjacent counties.
- Install simulcast transmission capabilities at select transmitter sites.

PUBLIC FACILITIES

COMMUNITY PARTNERS AND STAKEHOLDERS

- Frederick County Fire and Rescue Department
- Volunteer Fire and Rescue Companies:
 - *Company 11 – Stephens City Fire and Rescue Company*
 - *Company 12 – Middletown Fire and Rescue Company*
 - *Company 13 – Clear Brook Fire and Rescue Company*
 - *Company 14 – Gore Fire and Rescue Company*
 - *Company 15 – Round Hill Community Fire and Rescue Company*
 - *Company 16 – Gainesboro Fire and Rescue Company*
 - *Company 17 – Star Tannery Fire and Rescue Company*
 - *Company 18 – Greenwood Fire and Rescue Company*
 - *Company 19 – North Mountain Fire and Rescue Company*
 - *Company 20 – Reynolds Store Fire and Rescue Company*
 - *Company 21 – Millwood Station Fire and Rescue Company*
- Frederick County Sheriff's Office
- Frederick County Treasurer's Office
- Frederick County Commissioner of Revenue's Office

SUPPORTING MATERIALS AND RESOURCES

- National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1720, Standard for Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations by Volunteer Fire Departments.
- Frederick County Capital Improvements Plan 2009-2010.
- Government Service Learning Project 1999.
- Frederick County Fire and Rescue Proposed Fiscal 2008-2009 Budget.
- Federal Communications Commission Second Report and Order, February 20, 1997
- Federal Communications Commission Third Report and Order, March 22, 2007

PUBLIC FACILITIES
