

TOWN OF AMHERST
Central Fire Alarm Office
500 John James Audubon Parkway
Amherst, New York 14228-1131
716-689-1230 Fax 716-689-1229
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January 6, 2010

2009 ANNUAL REPORT

The Town of Amherst Central Fire Alarm Office dispatches fire, rescue and emergency medical units for 16 volunteer fire companies covering 150 square miles in the Towns of Amherst, Clarence, Newstead and Villages of Akron and Williamsville. The fire dispatchers handled approximately 71918 incoming and outgoing telephone calls and processed 20690 requests for various services.

In Year 2009 14408 Emergency Alarms were dispatched representing 14700 individual fire company responses. This is a decrease of 274 alarms from 2008 and a decrease of 223 in individual fire company responses from 2008. Total Fires of 1161 were up from 1094; False Alarms of 56 were down from 59; EMS Calls of 8826 were down from 9307; Motor Vehicle Accidents of 831 were up from 822; Miscellaneous Alarms of 3826 were up from 3641. Included in the 2009 total alarms are 4342 alarms dispatched directly to Twin City Ambulance Service. Following Advanced Emergency Medical Dispatch protocols, it was determined that volunteer fire company's assistance was not necessary at these alarms. In addition the Fire Dispatchers received and recorded 360 fire alarm system tests.

The slight downturn in the number of alarms and requests for services provide by the Central Fire Alarm Office can be attributed to the fact that emergency calls to Rapids Fire Company in Niagara County are no longer recorded as they were in the past. This change in procedure was undertaken as part of a continuing effort to maximize the efficiency of the entire operation.

FLIGHT 3407

On Thursday, February 12, 2009 an airplane crashed into the house at 6038 Long Street in Clarence Center destroying the house and leaving 49 souls in the airplane and 1 person in the house dead. Two family members successfully escaped from the home before the fire consumed the house. Fire Dispatcher Richard M. Meldrum with 15 years of dispatching service and Timothy S. Oliver with 3 months of dispatching service took the initial calls and dispatching duties. Dispatchers David Humbert and Stephen W. Matisz were called in to assist with this incident. The entire incident was handled in a professional manor consistent with all of the dispatchers on a day to day basis.

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Looking over the Annual Operations Report breakdown of alarms per company you will see that a considerable amount of mutual aid given and mutual aid received occurred in 2009 including mutual aid standby assistance to the Gowanda Fire Department during their flooding emergency. Our volunteer fire companies stand ready to provide mutual aid assistance to their adjoining fire companies as well as neighboring fire companies in Western New York.

With the cooperation of Amherst Chief of Police John C. Askey a new Logging Recorder System was purchased and made operational serving both Police and Fire Communications telephone and radio systems. Additionally replacement radio consoles were installed in the Amherst Police Communications Center that function off of the Central Fire Alarm Office Motorola Gold Elite Radio Control System. This completed two of three major goals of equipment sharing between our communications centers. Work continues on the replacement of the Enhanced 9-1-1 telephone system through the County of Erie Central Police Services.

Work continues on the Central Fire Alarm Office digital fire alarm system. The alarm system receives fire alarm signals from numerous school and municipal buildings throughout the Town and when a fire alarm sounds the signal rings into the Central Fire Alarm Office allowing the dispatchers to immediately dispatch the Fire Department. This cost effective and very efficient system is expected to be rolled out to even more schools and municipal buildings over the next few years. Fire Dispatchers play a pivotal and cost saving role in maintaining this system and have been instrumental in designing, implementing and maintaining the alarm system minimizing the need for costly outside contractors.

The Amherst Fire Chiefs Association and the Clarence/Newstead Fire Chiefs Association joined forces and submitted a FEMA Grant request to upgrade their mobile and portable fire radio equipment along with their fire fighter radio paging equipment. Swormville Fire Company was the lead agency and the grant was awarded to the combined Fire Chiefs Associations. With the cooperation of the Erie County Fire Radio Shop the mobile and portable radios were programmed and installed in the fire company apparatus. The purchase of the mobile and portable radios provided the necessary configuration to comply with the Federal Communications Commission mandate to narrow band our operating radio frequencies by 2013.

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Fire Dispatchers also play an important role in maintaining the computerized “data link” that exists between the Central Fire Alarm Office and Twin City Ambulance. Twin City is the contract ambulance service providing advanced life support services to the towns served by the Central Fire Alarm Office. Realizing that every second counts when it comes to getting emergency help to those in need, the “data-link” provides for the instant transmission of important information between the two agencies (call location, type of emergency, vehicle movement and vehicle locations).

Twin City Ambulance purchased and installed an automatic vehicle location system that tracks the location of their units in real time. In a collaborative and cooperative effort with Twin City equipment will soon be installed in the Central Fire Alarm Office that will allow the fire dispatchers to monitor all of Twin City vehicle movements. This will allow the fire dispatchers working with the Twin City dispatchers to ensure the closest available ambulance is sent to an emergency. Additionally the cooperative effort will provide for monitoring the staging of Twin City units.

Throughout the year, Fire Dispatchers meet with various emergency service providers, not only within the three towns and two villages served by the Central Fire Alarm Office, but also with County and sometimes State officials as well. Every possible effort is put into providing residents with quality, professional and progressive fire and rescue service communications and support.

Raymond F. Braun,
Senior Fire Dispatcher

Town of Amherst - Central Fire Alarm Office

Annual 2009 Operations Report

Fire Company	County, Town or Village	Structure Fires	Motor Veh Fires	Misc Fires	Total Fires	False Alarms	EMS Calls	Motor Veh Accidents	Misc Calls	Total Alarms
Swormville	Alden	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Swormville	Amherst	4	1	12	17	0	167	27	63	274
Swormville	Buffalo	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Swormville	Clarence	3	1	7	11	0	63	21	24	119
Swormville	Newstead	2	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	3
Swormville	Niagara	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Total	All	9	2	20	31	0	231	48	89	399
Contract Amb.	Amh/Cla	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	17
Williamsville	Amherst	3	1	22	26	0	158	26	93	303
Williamsville	Cheektowaga	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Williamsville	Clarence	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Williamsville	Gowanda	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
Williamsville	Tonawanda	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Williamsville	Williamsville	2	0	9	11	2	208	29	93	343
Total	All	6	1	31	38	2	366	55	190	651
Contract Amb.	Amh/Wmv	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	306
Twin City	Akron	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	5
Twin City	Amherst	0	0	0	0	0	3208	4	559	3771
Twin City	Clarence	0	0	0	0	0	341	0	60	401
Twin City	Genesee	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Twin City	Newstead	0	0	0	0	0	10	0	1	11
Twin City	Tonawanda	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Twin City	Williamsville	0	0	0	0	0	121	0	31	152
Total	All	0	0	0	0	0	3687	4	651	4342

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Total Alarms to	Akron	4	2	17	23	0	227	6	95	351
Total Alarms to	Alden	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	11
Total Alarms to	Amherst	48	28	834	910	47	6637	597	2897	11088
Total Alarms to	Buffalo	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Total Alarms to	Cheektowaga	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	30	31
Total Alarms to	Clarence	48	18	83	149	6	1297	161	456	2069
Total Alarms to	Genesee	1	0	0	1	0	5	1	32	39
Total Alarms to	Gowanda	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	10
Total Alarms to	Kenmore	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Total Alarms to	Lancaster	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	18	21
Total Alarms to	Newstead	23	5	24	52	1	303	32	114	502
Total Alarms to	Niagara	1	0	3	4	0	25	3	13	45
Total Alarms to	Tonawanda	0	0	7	7	0	1	0	19	27
Total Alarms to	Williamsville	5	0	9	14	2	329	29	130	504
Total	All	130	54	977	1161	56	8826	831	3826	14700

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Senior Fire Dispatcher