



2015

Gilford Fire-Rescue Annual Report



Chief Stephen Carrier
Gilford Fire-Rescue
3/1/2016

INTRODUCTION

The information contained within this report represents the activities of the Gilford Fire-Rescue during calendar year 2015.

It was a busy year on many fronts; especially emergency responses to incidents. We responded to 1608 emergency incidents in 2015. This represents an increase of 133 incidents or 9%. We continue to spend thousands of hours training. We conduct hundreds of inspections. We experienced personnel changes and we have maintained our apparatus, our station, and our equipment. We have presented a responsible and reasonable budget and have worked hard to stay within that budget. We provided special detail emergency medical services (EMS) and/or fire coverage for events that drew over 150,000 people to our community. Additionally, we participated in a number of other community events taking place in our Town.

The department maintains a roster of 35 personnel. This number is up slightly due to the hiring of 5 call firefighters. Fourteen are full time employees; 20 are call firefighters and/or emergency medical technicians (EMTs); and, the one civilian employee is our part time Administrative Assistant. Additionally, there are 8 Associate Members affiliated with the department. Associate members function in non-emergency, non-paid roles. The five call firefighters hired during the year are; Leanna Breton, Jordan Stopyra, Dennis Thompson (out of retirement!), Padraic Weller, and Bridgette Eldridge (from our Explorer Post). One full-time firefighter resigned and was replaced by Duncan Phillips.

Our personnel are highly trained and extremely dedicated. Each one has an overwhelming sense of community and is proud to serve the Town of Gilford. They appreciate the support they continue to receive from not only our residents, but our business owners and visitors. They approach their duties with a goal of serving the public, but doing so safely and effectively, delivering the highest level of care and service possible with the resources provided.

This report will summarize a number of functional areas within the department: Emergency Services, Personnel, Budget, Fire Prevention, Administration, Training, EMS, Water Supply, and Vehicle Maintenance.

Gilford Fire-Rescue

SLOGAN:

Community, Safety, Professional Service

VISION STATEMENT:

To be recognized as a team of highly skilled, well-trained firefighters and emergency medical providers, delivering exceptional customer service while ensuring the safety of our community.

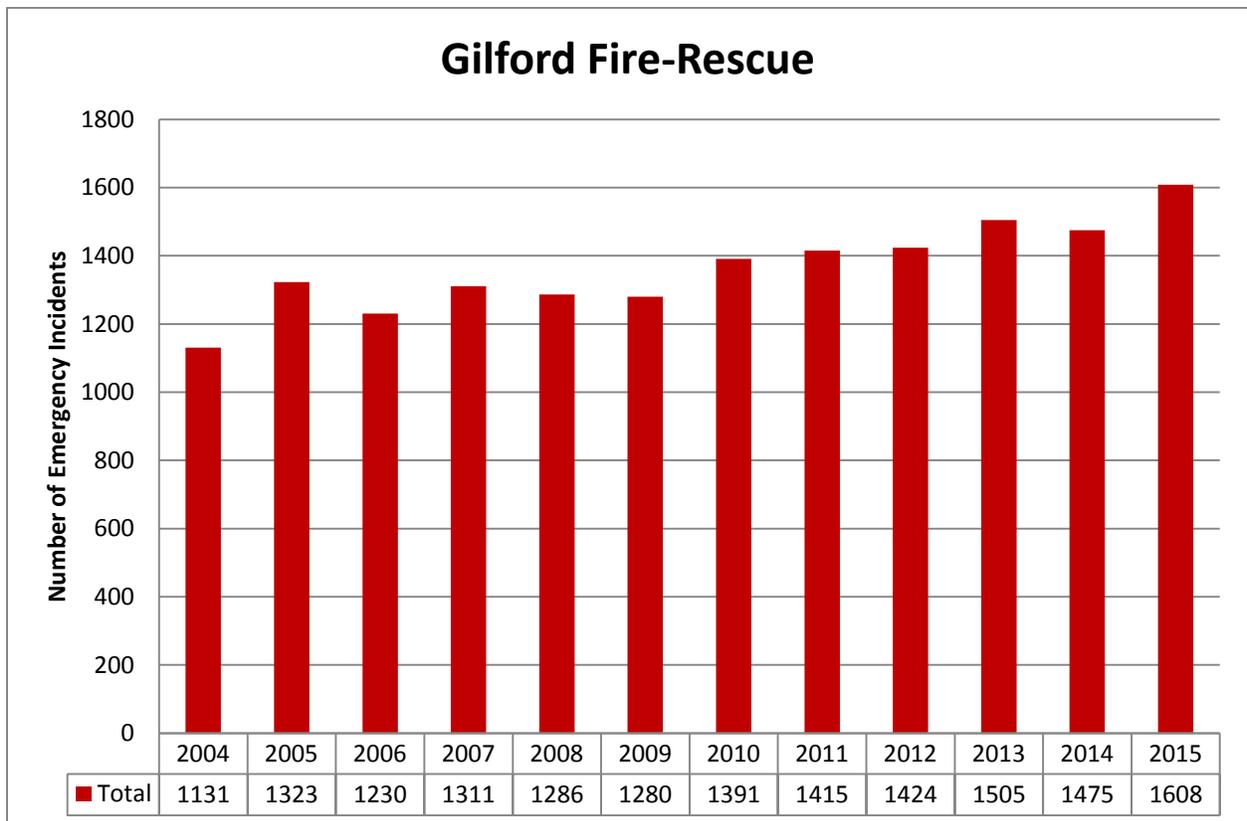
MISSION STATEMENT:

Our mission is to protect life, property, and the environment in our town through an all-hazards approach to fire protection, emergency medical services, community risk reduction, and education.

EMERGENCY SERVICES:

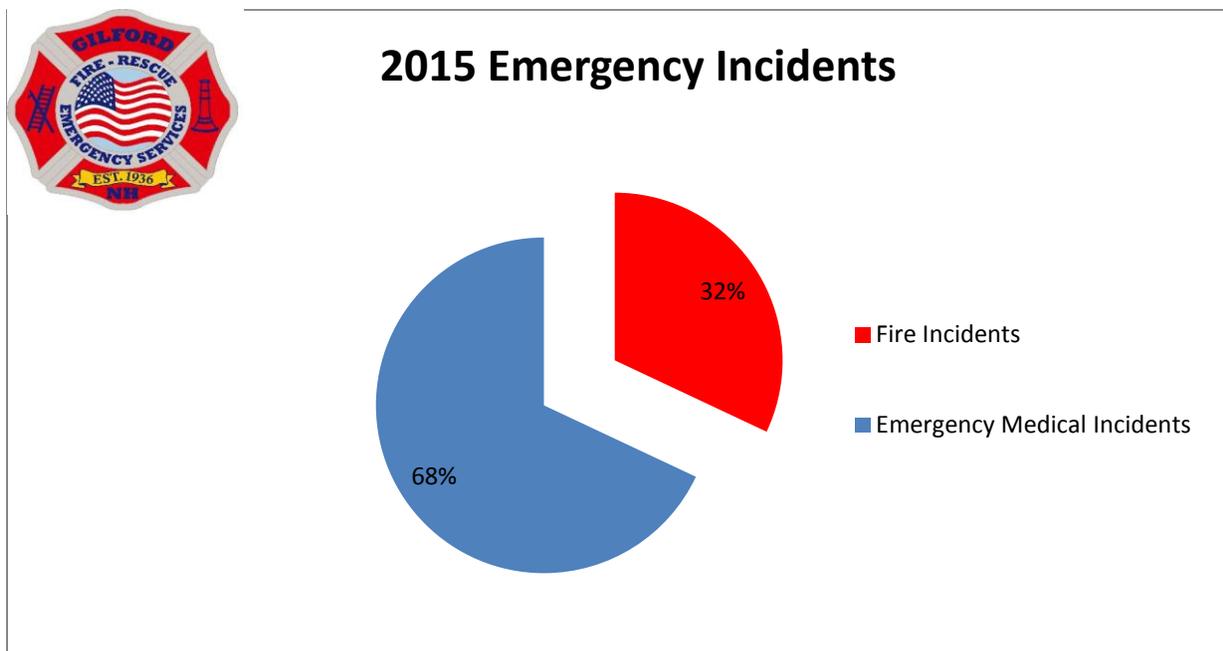
The Gilford Fire-Rescue department responded to 1,608 incidents in 2015. This represents a 9% increase in call volume from 2014. The following table represents a breakdown of all emergency incidents responded to by the department in 2015, including mutual aid:

FIRES		HAZARDS	
Structure	25	Wires	17
Chimney	8	Haz Mat	20
Brush	85	CO	10
Vehicle	8	Misc.	4
Fire Alarms	167	SUB TOTAL	51
Other	129		
SUB TOTAL	422	SERVICE	
		Water	8
MEDICAL		Misc	34
Medical Aid	841	SUB TOTAL	42
MVA	65		
Rescue	22	2015 Total	1608
Other	165		
SUB TOTAL	1093		



With a 9% increase in emergency incident activity in 2015, total incident responses have increased 25.6% since 2009. In fact, emergency incidents have increased by 42.2% since 2004, with no increase in staffing or apparatus.

Quite often we receive questions as to how much and which types of emergency work we do? The chart below indicates the percentage of total incidents broken down between fire and EMS incidents. It is often thought that an even higher percentage (higher than 68%) of our work is EMS. Historically, the percentage of EMS calls we respond to has been in the low 60's. This year, the percentage of EMS calls jumped from 61% to 68%. Thirty two percent of our incidents in 2015 were "fire" incidents. Though, not all were necessarily newsworthy; they none-the-less required a fire response and associated action.



One of the pieces of incident data that we track is the number of "back to back" incidents we respond to. These are incidents that occur while we are already handling an initial incident – incidents subsequent to the first incident. Seventeen percent of our incidents happened at the same time another incident was taking place – 275 times, actually, in 2015. These back-to-back incidents put a greater than normal strain on the department and require an additional response from call firefighters, off-duty firefighters, and/or mutual aid departments. There are a variety of reasons incidents happen at the same time as others; coincidence being one of the reasons. Other reasons include weather events, special events which draw large crowds of spectators or participants, prime vacation/recreation times, and other, initial incidents that last for long periods of time. Many times, subsequent incidents result in longer response times and may result in dependence on mutual aid resources to handle the incident.

Although Fire and EMS service is not “regionalized” in our immediate area, our involvement with Lakes Region Mutual Fire Aid (LRMFA) allows us to share resources with other departments. This system works extremely well during large scale emergencies. Each department has a duty to provide “primary protection” to their community; however, there is not a community in the Lakes Region that can handle a large-scale emergency without calling mutual aid. The chart below shows our mutual aid given and received:

TOWN	GIVEN	RECEIVED
Alton	23	6
Barnstead	1	0
Belmont	7	5
Laconia	72	69
Meredith	2	3
Sanbornton	2	1
Tilton-Northfield	6	5
Canterbury	1	0
Franklin	4	2
Ossipee	2	0
Gilmanton	2	1
TOTAL	122	97

We are constantly challenged by the diversity of our community; the lake, the islands, the mountains, the thousands of seasonal residents and visitors, an aging population, the ski area, our transportation network, the airport, and our commercial base. We work and train hard to be ready for whatever the next challenge may be.

Many of our residents would probably be surprised to know that Gilford is home to 5,111 housing units (2010 US Census, demographic profile). Three thousand, seven hundred and thirty one of those are single family homes. There are 637 multi-unit buildings and 520 mobile homes. During the most recent census, 3,007 homes were occupied and 2,104 were “vacant”, which would take into account seasonal occupancies. Twenty six and a half percent of Gilford’s homes were built in the 80’s. Many of these are condos. Fifty eight percent of all homes are valued between \$200K and \$500K. Some would now be considered “mini-mansions”. Why is this important to understand? What does it all mean? We are a small community that is heavily impacted by seasonal activities. We are a vacation destination. Our population will fluctuate dramatically during peak vacation times. We have more housing units than the following communities: Berlin (5040), Exeter (4552), Franklin (3816), Hudson (3019), Londonderry (4087), Milford (4089), and Somersworth (4970). And we continue to grow. We have many “big town” amenities, such as an airport, Gunstock recreation area, Meadowbrook, Lowe’s, six marinas, a Super WalMart, a Professional Park,

thirteen restaurants, a medical outpatient complex, two supermarkets, three gas stations, and a theater. All of this puts more demand on our department and our personnel. We are a small town fire department facing big town/small city challenges.

Chief Carrier and Deputy Chief Ober further support the concept of mutual aid and regionalization by being active members of the LRMFA Board of Directors, LRMFA Task Force Committee, LRMFA Training and Education Committee, LRMFA Standardization Committee, LRFMA Strategic Planning Committee, and LRMFA Incident Management Assistance Team (IMAT).



Gilford Fire-Rescue operates out of a single fire station at 39 Cherry Valley Road. There is 3 FF/EMTs on-duty, 24 hours, each day. The Administrative staff works Monday through Friday. Call FF/EMTs respond when there is an incident, depending on their availability. The department hosts 2 students from the Lakes Region Community College who live at the fire station while going to school. They function as FF/EMTs when they are not in school, benefiting both the Town and the students. The department also hosts an Explorer program. Five high school students are members and receive training while being exposed to Fire & EMS services.



Motor Vehicle Accident – Into the building – Lakeshore Road

Apparatus consists of 3 Engines, a Tanker, a Heavy Rescue, 2 Ambulances, 2 Forestry units, a Pickup/Plow/Utility truck, and an all-terrain Argo. The initial response to a possible building fire would be the duty shift (3) on one engine, followed by off-duty and

call personnel with additional apparatus. A non-life-threatening medical incident would receive an ambulance with 2 FF/EMTs. A potentially life threatening medical incident would receive the same ambulance plus an engine with the 3rd on-duty FF/EMT. A motor vehicle collision receives the same ambulance with the 3rd FF/EMT responding with the Rescue vehicle. Any of the above responses may necessitate an additional response of personnel and apparatus, depending upon the seriousness, up to, and including mutual aid. Chief Carrier and/or Deputy Chief Ober respond to major emergencies and function in command roles using their command vehicles that are fully equipped with the necessary radio equipment and command boards.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

As mentioned above, the department operates 2 Ambulances, equipped at the Advanced Life Support (ALS) level. All other department apparatus carries medical equipment to varying extents.

Personnel function at various EMT levels within our department: EMT-Basic, EMT-Intermediate, Advanced EMT, and EMT-Paramedic. An EMT-B completes approximately 200 hours of training for his/her certification; an EMT-I and/or AEMT completes 280 – 320 hrs of training; and a Paramedic completes a 1,500 hour course of study. We are currently transitioning our EMTs to meet National Standards. Soon, you may hear some of our medical technicians referred to simply as EMT, instead of EMT-B; or EMT-Advanced (AEMT), instead of EMT-I. This reflects a change in certification levels dictated by the National Registry of EMTs and the State of NH Bureau of EMS. Ten of our EMT-I's have successfully passed the National Registry AEMT Written Test, and 4 others are in the process of testing.

All EMS providers complete continuing education requirements as outlined by the National Registry and State of NH. Many of these hours can be acquired through regular department training, however, refresher courses are required every 2 years for all levels of provider – truly, life-long learning.

A new ambulance was put into service in February of 2015. The old ambulance was sold for \$10,000. The new ambulance was purchased with a combination of Ambulance Fund and Capital Reserve Fund monies. The new ambulance has been a welcome addition to our fleet. Since it has been in service, we have addressed a suspension/ride comfort issue and a minor electrical issue.

We continue to work with our Medical Director and Lakes Region General Healthcare to be able to directly transport a patient to a "Catheterization (Cath) Lab", such as Concord Hospital or Catholic Medical Center if they have suffered a specific type of heart attack referred to as a "STEMI". Time is critical in these events. Proper monitoring equipment with the ability to send field images to the hospital is also critical.

Our goal is to transport these patients to a cath lab within 90 minutes so that they can receive advanced, specialized care for their heart.

We have also begun to be more aggressive in diagnosing stroke patients. This is a collaborative effort between the hospitals, NH Bureau of Emergency Communication (911), and ambulance services. Many times, emergency medical dispatching can identify positive signs of a stroke over the phone. Once EMTs confirm that, the hospital is notified of a “Stroke Alert” so that they can be prepared to efficiently treat the patient and have more positive outcomes.

Forty percent of ambulance revenues are deposited into a Special Account for the purpose of providing ambulance service to the community. The other 60% are deposited into the General Fund of the Town. These Special Account funds are used to buy equipment, disposables, and other supplies, such as oxygen, drugs, and associated hardware, directly related to providing ambulance service to the town. In 2015, the Special Account funds were used to purchase a new ambulance.

Our billing agent historically collects approximately \$250,000 per year for the Town in ambulance transport fees. Through the hard work of our Administrative Assistant, Charlene Boulanger, combined with her medical billing experience we have increased our collection rates. We are excited to see year-end, comparative data, when it becomes available.



Motor Vehicle Accident - Bypass

TRAINING

Training continues to be a priority for the men and women of Gilford Fire-Rescue. In 2015 the members of the department participated in over 2,447 hours of training in an effort to be ready for any emergency they may encounter.

The hours include a variety of certifications and topics that were taught at the local, state and national levels. Our firefighters continuously review our equipment and its operation. They are constantly trained by their officer from the most basic skills to highly technical skills. Our officers continue to hone their fire and EMS tactical skills. The officers also regularly participate in a variety of management and leadership courses, including command and control of incidents, personnel management, and strategy and tactics.

Call Company and Explorer Post members continued to attend regular fire, EMS, and rescue training sessions. From time-to-time, other training sessions may be held on weekend days, or other evenings. Other classes were delivered at no charge as offered by LRGHealthcare or were instructed by members of our staff. Our newest hire, Duncan Phillips is currently attending the Paramedic Associate's Degree Program at NHTI.



Outdoor Furnace/Woodstove Fire – Roberts Road

We continue to transition our EMT-Intermediates to the Advanced-EMT level. This process includes approximately 40 classroom hours and the successful completion

of a National Registry of EMTs computer-based test. Most of our EMT-I's have successfully passed this challenging test. Four more are in the testing process at this time. All must be transitioned prior to 2017 or they will revert back to EMT-Basic level. We expect all of our EMT-I's to make this jump, successfully.

Our Training Facility, located on Kimball Road on the Recycling Center property, offers a great opportunity for a variety of training evolutions, including live fire training. We continue to look for ways to improve the site and the facility to maximize the training benefit that it provides. During the past year we hosted firefighters from Hampton and a number of other training sessions were held at the facility. We are currently discussing the possibility of a managing partnership with Lakes Region Mutual Fire Aid to assist us with marketing, scheduling of training and instructors, and maintenance.

ADMINISTRATION

The Board of Engineers is a 3-member board that is elected and oversees the operation of the fire department. The current board consists of Chairman William Akerley, Donald Spear, and Jack Lyman. The Engineers meet with the Administration at least monthly; usually on the 3rd Tuesday of each month, at the fire station, at 8:15am. These are public meetings and the public is welcome to attend.

Chief Carrier, Deputy Chief Ober, and Administrative Assistant Charlene Boulanger are the department's administrative employees. The Chief and the Deputy Chief are salaried employees who generally work Monday through Friday between the hours of 8am and 5pm. Administrative Assistant Boulanger works a 32 hour work week, which results in Monday and Friday hours of 8am to 4pm, and Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday hours of 8am to 2pm.

Chief Carrier, while overseeing all aspects of the department has more specific responsibilities in the areas of Administration, Budget, Personnel, Training, and Operations. Deputy Chief Ober is responsible for Fire Prevention, EMS, IT, and Vehicle Maintenance. He also delegates and oversees any other staff responsibility that other officers and firefighters may have, such as: Self Contained Breathing Apparatus, Protective Clothing, Water Supply, Fire Equipment, Small Engines, Uniforms, Radios, Forestry, etc. Administrative Assistant Boulanger provides general administrative support to all facets of the department and serves as the department's receptionist.

Chief Carrier and Deputy Chief Ober serve as Emergency Management Director (EMD) and Deputy EMD, respectively. The Chief serves as Forest Fire Warden, while the rest of the full time staff are either Deputy Forest Fire Wardens or Fire Permit issuing agents. Deputy Chief Ober spends the majority of his time conducting inspections, consulting with owners/occupants, and conducting plans review. Duty shift personnel also conduct inspections, as necessary.



Public Education – Wesley Woods

Both the Chief and the Deputy Chief are active in a number of local, State, and National boards and committees. They maintain their fire and EMS certifications and training and regularly respond to emergencies, filling firefighting and EMS roles when necessary. Their first priority at emergencies is to provide command and control of the incident.

Through the State of NH, we continue to offer Burning Permits on-line. There is a cost of \$3/permit that pays for the development and maintenance of the on-line permit process, should you choose to use the system. The Town does not receive any of the permit monies. You will still be able to come to the fire station for your permit, and, there is still NO COST for a hand-written permit. We believe the on-line system may be very beneficial to seasonal residents and others who wish to have the convenience of obtaining a permit when and where they would like. We are still experimenting with the system in an effort to determine how to utilize most effectively it. And, check out our Facebook page!

BUDGET

The department budgeted \$1.72 million for operating costs in 2015. This was an increase from \$1.68 million in 2014. The proposed budget for 2016 shows no increase and is level-funded at \$1.72 million. This is a budget that is still lower than the budget amount in 2010. The major reason for this reduction is the loss of several long-serving

employees to retirement, and their replacements being hired at entry-level pay rates. There has also been very little budgeted for capital expenses in the past 4 years.

The current fire-rescue budget allocates 89.4% of the total budget for personnel costs; wages and benefits. As mentioned, GFR employs 14 full time employees, 1 part time employee, and 28 paid-on-call FF/EMTs. Only 10.6%, or \$180,001, is left to operate the department; maintain the station and apparatus; pay for utilities and fuel; and to buy, service, and maintain fire and EMS equipment.

The department also oversees and expends funds from 3 other, much smaller budget lines: Emergency Management; Forestry; and Fire Protection (Pressurized Fire Hydrants on the Laconia Water Works system and LRMFA Assessment). The LRMFA Assessment is new to the Town Budget, last year. Previously, Belknap County communities were assessed through their county taxes while other communities were billed directly from LRMFA. The LRMFA Board of Directors voted to remove the billing function from the County and bill all Belknap County communities directly. Because of differences in billing, this resulted in a savings to Gilford taxpayers of approximately \$14,000 for the year. LRMFA has begun to address the establishment of a funding mechanism to maintain and replace their highly technical communications infrastructure, as it ages.

Any Special Details which GFR personnel are hired to provide services for are billed and paid under contract with the requesting agency, from special revenue account for that particular purpose. Ambulance revenues are deposited into a similar account at a rate of 40% of the total collected. Those revenues are expended for the purpose of providing ambulance service to the Town; specifically, to purchase the equipment necessary to provide EMS services to the community. The remaining 60% of ambulance revenue is applied to the Town operating budget (\$120,000/year, avg.).

The department has purchased a new Pickup/Plow/Utility truck. This replaced a 2003 model. This is the vehicle we use to plow snow away from all dry hydrants in Town, as well as the fire station parking lots and apron; and the Training Facility.

Our 1977 fire-rescue boat is in need of being upgraded. The department will continue to research designs and configurations of boats that will meet our needs and provide adequate firefighting and EMS coverage to our inhabited islands – the most on the Lake.

We will continue to work to improve our level of efficiency while providing the very best level of service we can with the resources we have been provided.



PERSONNEL

Firefighter/EMT-Paramedic Jason Godin left the department in the summer and FF/AEMT Duncan Phillips was hired to replace him. Duncan has experience with the New London and Tilton-Northfield departments. He is a graduate of Colby Sawyer College and is currently enrolled in the Para-medicine program at NHTI. FF/EMT-I Greg Trombi has successfully passed his probation period.

Five call firefighters hired during the year are; Leanna Breton, Jordan Stopyra, Dennis Thompson (out of retirement!), Padraic Weller, and Bridgette Eldridge (from our Explorer Post).

We would like to thank all of our former department members for their dedicated service to our community and wish them well in their endeavors. We welcome all of our new employees and look forward to serving with them.

**Note: a complete roster of GFR personnel is included at the end of this document.*

FIRE PREVENTION

Deputy Chief Brad Ober conducts the bulk of the department's fire prevention code enforcement, plans review, and inspection duties. Other members of the full time staff also may conduct inspections, as necessary. Collectively the department conducted 812 fire prevention inspections – a negligible decrease of 26 since 2014. Many of those inspections were heating units; central and supplemental devices. All oil, gas, and solid fuel fired appliances must be inspected. Inspections focus on the device and the fuel delivery system, but also take into account general fire safety of the occupants and the building the appliance is being installed in. A number of other inspections were life safety inspections completed in commercial occupancies including Assembly occupancies and general business occupancies. Plans review typically pertains to new construction and/or renovations of existing buildings and is usually followed-up with site visits and inspections as construction progresses.

Working closely with the Planning and Land Use Department, especially with the Building Inspector, Dave Andrade, the department always tries to be represented at Site Study Review meetings. Participation in these meetings allows for review and input during the earliest phases of a particular project. This is not only positive because it identifies projects that may be beginning soon, but it usually makes the construction and code compliance process much smoother.

Each fall, the department takes part in Senior Safety Day, a program established by LRGHealthcare in order to get firefighters and EMTs into senior's homes to check their smoke detectors and further, to identify and/or correct any other safety areas. This year we visited over 40 homes as part of the program. Captain Balcom works closely with the hospital to gather names and addresses in need of our services. Although the program has been successful in Gilford; and, although we had more home visits this year, we still feel the program is under-utilized. Anyone interested in this **FREE** service, or if you know of someone that could benefit from this **FREE** service, please call the fire station or LRGH. It is **FREE!!**

We continue to host a number of tours of the station and apparatus each year for the young students in our community. These tours always include a handful of fire safety messages, along with handouts and trinkets for the children to take home. We feel that this small amount of time is critical for us to have with these very impressionable learners.



Live Burn Training – Hoyt Road

VEHICLE MAINTENANCE

Roger Weeks and the DPW staff have done a great job servicing our vehicles as outlined in our Preventative Maintenance Schedule. We had very few major repair issues in 2015; which was welcomed after a very tough 2014!

WATER SUPPLY

A small portion of Gilford is serviced by the Laconia Water Works (LWW) and there are 28 public, pressurized fire hydrants on the system. One hydrant at the corner of Gilford Avenue and Bedford Avenue was taken out of service this year after being damaged. There is a hydrant directly across the street at the corner of Gilford Avenue and Hounsell Avenue that covers the area very well. We pay a fee to LWW for the maintained availability of fire protection water and hydrants. Additionally, there are 21 private, pressurized hydrants in the Town; 18 of those are on the Laconia water system. The owners of the property these hydrants are on pay a fee directly to LWW.

We currently have over 40 water supply sites, mostly dry hydrants. These locations serve both target hazards (such as businesses, schools, and Town buildings) and more rural areas of Town, that are outside of the Laconia Water Works pressurized hydrant system coverage area. All fire protection water supply locations are considered a valuable resource in the event fire. Some fire situations necessitate using more than one water supply site at a time, therefore keeping them reliable and in service is a top priority.

Maintenance:

Our current water supply maintenance program involves annual hydrant flushing, flow testing, sign installation, weed/brush trimming, painting, repair of damaged hydrants, large project coordination, and underwater diving inspection (10-15 sites a year). In other cases sites are in need of maintenance that Gilford Fire-Rescue is not able to complete (in-house) due to lack of equipment, time, and resources. We have utilized Gilford DPW or private contractors to assist in some hydrant maintenance projects.

The Town has generously approved deposits of \$10,000 into the Water Supply Capital Reserve Account over the last several years. This fund was established to maintain current water supplies and develop future water supply sites, as necessary.

The Easy Street dry hydrant is back in service. We open and close the dam in the spring and the fall to alleviate silt build-up in the brook.

We have begun addressing the Alvah Wilson Pond situation. We have contracted with one of the Town's Engineering firms to begin formulating a plan to put

the brook back into its original path, dredge the pond, and replace 3 dry hydrants with 2. At this time a survey has been completed and a preliminary plan has been formulated. We hope to tackle this project beginning in the summer of 2016. It will be very beneficial to restore this important fire protection water supply.

CLOSING

As you can see, your fire department is deeply committed to your safety. We stay very busy with the resources and personnel that we have available and we provide a high-quality service. We focus on readiness and preparedness, before the emergency; which assures that we will handle all emergencies with the professionalism they expect and deserve.



GILFORD FIRE-RESCUE ROSTER – 2015

Board of Fire Engineers

Engineer William Akerley, Chair
Engineer Donald Spear
Engineer Jack Lyman

Department Personnel

Chief Stephen Carrier, AEMT
Deputy Chief Bradley Ober, EMT-I

Captain Michael Balcom, EMT-P
Captain Richard Andrews, EMT-P
Lieutenant Jeff Madon, AMT
Lieutenant Dom DeCarli, EMT-I
Firefighter Scott Mooney, EMT-I
Firefighter Nick Proulx, EMT-I
Firefighter Nate Hanson, EMT-P
Firefighter Nate Lemay, AEMT

GILFORD FIRE-RESCUE ROSTER – 2015 - Continued

Firefighter Dion DeCarli, AEMT
Firefighter Tim Johnson, AEMT
Firefighter Greg Trombi, AEMT
Firefighter Duncan Phillips, AEMT

Firefighter Martin Barrett, EMT-B
Firefighter William Beaupre, EMT-I
Firefighter Leanna Breton
Firefighter Jay Brown
Firefighter Stephen Chase
Firefighter Adam Cote
Firefighter Scott Davis, AEMT
EMT Sharon Davis, EMT-B
Firefighter Bridgette Eldridge
Firefighter Kyle Griffin, AEMT
Firefighter Kim Hiffler, AEMT
Firefighter Roger Horton
EMT Rae Mello-Andrews, EMT-P
Firefighter Joshua Morrison
Student Firefighter Kevin Patterson
Firefighter Ron Skinner
Firefighter Jordan Stopyra
Firefighter Dennis Thompson
Firefighter Padraic Weller
Firefighter Gary Wilson
Student Firefighter Zach Zins

Administrative Assistant Charlene Boulanger

Associate Members

EMT Susan Brown, EMT-B
Firefighter Jason DeCoff
EMT Sharon Hannafin

Firefighter David Low, EMT-I
Firefighter Patrick McGonagle, EMT-I
Firefighter David Poole
Firefighter James Sanborn

