



City of Perth Amboy Fire Department



*Annual Report
For the Year
2010*



The year 2010 saw the Perth Amboy Fire Department continue to strive to maintain a reputation throughout Middlesex County as one of the most progressive fire and emergency services agencies in the area. The services that the department continue to provide, especially in the difficult economic times, where more and more municipal agencies are being required to reduce their capabilities; is a testament to the viability and adaptability of all the department members, Career and Volunteer.

The Fire Department saw the retirement of three members of the department during 2010. Battalion Chief Frank Schumera retired on January 1st. Battalion Chief Schumera, who was hired in the Career Division of the department in 1984, was assigned as the Shift Commander of Group #2 at his retirement. Also retiring on July 1st after 25 years of service were Firefighters James Rivers and Aaron Zolnowski. At the time of their retirement, both members were assigned to Group #4 serving as operators of Ladder #2 and Engine #2 respectively.

The department continues to develop relationships with various agencies not only within the emergency services field, but the community as well. The department began the year by hosting more than 100 volunteers from the Central Jersey chapter of Hope Worldwide on Martin Luther King's Birthday.

After meeting at Fire Headquarters, the participants embarked on a door-to-door canvassing throughout the city to distribute fire prevention literature in an effort to raise local awareness of fire hazards and basic fire prevention. This event was one of many conducted nation-wide as part of the MLK-Day of Service.



Hope Worldwide Volunteers gather at Fire Headquarters to Kick Off Day of Service

After 4 months of planning and preparation, the department - in conjunction with the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, hosted a full scale emergency response exercise on October 3rd involving 15 public and private emergency organizations from New Jersey and New York. The exercise, which simulated a large scale mass casualty accident on the Outerbridge Crossing; provided the ability for various emergency response departments to work together in a coordinated effort to command the incident, extricate and rescue victims and extinguish a simulated fire.



Emergency Response Representatives at one of several Port Authority Exercise Planning Meetings

Some of the practices of the exercise were put into place weeks later during a major motor vehicle accident and fire on Route 440 just west of the bridge.

The following is a review of the operations of the Perth Amboy Fire Department during the year 2010:

The Career Division has continued their high level of service and commitment to the department during 2010. After an extensive review of the structure and operations of the department by the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs – Office of Local Government Services, the city was presented with a summary report on the organizational structure of the Perth Amboy Fire Department in April. Acting on one of the recommendations of the summary, the department promoted Abraham Pitre to Captain and Firefighters Sammy Arroyo and Edward Mullen to Lieutenant during a June 11th promotional ceremony at City Hall. These promotions, which reduced overtime within the department, filled vacancies that had been created due to previous retirements. Captain Pitre is currently serving as the Shift Commander for Group #2, with Lieutenant Mullen serving as his Shift Lieutenant. Lieutenant Arroyo continues to head the department's Training Division.



Newly Promoted Officers Captain Pitre, Lieutenants Arroyo and Mullen with Chief Volk after June 11th Promotion Ceremony

Four members of the Career Division were recognized by the Municipal Council for valor and heroism at two separate incidents during the year. Firefighter John DeNardo and Firefighter Eric Wilhelm were recognized for their actions after a motor vehicle crashed in front of their fire apparatus on Smith Street. Upon gaining access and securing the still locked and running vehicle, they found the driver of the vehicle in full cardiac arrest. Both members removed the driver and initiated emergency medical procedures including CPR. Their actions enabled the victim to be transported to the medical center and admitted to the Intensive Care Unit. Additionally, Lieutenant Edward Mullen and Firefighter Eric Kayser were recognized along with Raritan Bay Medical Center EMT's Gary Batista and Matt Redding for physically extricating an unconscious victim from a motor vehicle crash on Route 440 seconds before the car was engulfed in flames from flaming diesel fuel from a tractor trailer that was fully involved in fire as a result of the same accident.



Council President Balut and Chief Volk present Resolutions to Lt. Mullen, FF Kayser and EMT's Batista and Redding

Throughout the year the department continues to foster successful partnerships with various local industries including, Chevron, Gerdeau-Ameri-Steel, Hess Oil, Kinder Morgan, Morton Salt & VS Galvanizing. One of the goals that the department was able to achieve in 2010 was to get all members of the Career Division to the same level of advanced rescue training, especially in the area of confined space rescue. Previously, only select members of the Special Operations unit were fully trained to the operational level in advanced rescue disciplines. With the decline of available manpower through attrition over the past several years, it has become more efficient to move away from a select set of members being able to provide technical rescue services and including the entire department.

Since the department is one on the only established confined space resource readily available in Middlesex County, there have been several industries that have requested the services of the department should the need arise. The department has been able to provide these services to the Hercules Company, Gerdau-Ameri-Steel, Ashland Aqualon Functional Ingredients and the AES Red Oak Company all located in Sayreville at no cost for the past five years. Due to economic constraints, these industries were informed that the department would no longer be able to provide the services at no charge. As a result, all four industries agreed to begin contracting the department for confined space rescue services beginning in July. The result of these agreements has led to revenue of \$40,000 to cover the cost of training and equipment to enable the department to provide this round the clock service.

Through a continued Inter-Local Service Agreement between the City of Perth Amboy and Middlesex County, which partners the department with the Middlesex County Health Department and Hazardous Materials Unit, the department continues to serve as the main back-up agency to the Middlesex County Hazardous Materials Unit for Mass Decontamination response. The need to support the County unit is critical to the emergency response capabilities throughout not only Middlesex County, but also the entire northern New Jersey region; especially in the event of any type of Chemical Biological, Radioactive, Nuclear or Explosive terrorist incident. This also allows the department to have these services immediately available to our citizens, an advantage over most other municipalities in the County.

The department's Marine Unit continues to provide the only year-round water based fire & rescue services available in the immediate area. Marine 5 has made several water based rescues from vessels in distress in the area waterways and provided initial search and rescue services at various incidents during the year. Members continue with on-going operational training and maintenance on Marine 5 to maintain its year round ready to respond status. Even with the unit out of service for major engine repairs from July through September – the busiest time for response requests, Marine 5 still made a total of 22 emergency responses during 2010 to a variety of water based emergencies. The unit has been utilized by municipalities from New York City to New Brunswick for a variety of assignments ranging from stranded vessels to marine fires, hazardous materials incidents and persons in the water.

With the operation of Marine 5 within the waterways comprising the Lower Port of New York, the Department of Homeland Security has provided the department with advanced radiological monitoring equipment to enable the detection of any type of radioactive material that might pass through our vicinity. With the issuance of this advanced monitoring equipment, all department members received 8 hours of advanced Radiological Screening training from the Department of Homeland Security's Domestic Nuclear Detection Office.



Marine 5 Crew searching Raritan Bay for a Drowning Victim.

Marine 5 has also been requested to assist or stand by at various events along the local waterways over the past several years including:

- ❖ *Macy's 4th of July Celebrations*
- ❖ *New Brunswick/Highland Park Fireworks Display*
- ❖ *Red Bull Air Race*
- ❖ *Woodbridge Fire Works Display*
- ❖ *Carteret Fireworks Display*
- ❖ *Perth Amboy Memorial Day Ceremony*
- ❖ *Carteret Memorial Day Ceremony*
- ❖ *Lawrence Harbor Waterfront Festival*



The members of the **Volunteer Fire Division** continue to be an active participant in department operations. The members continue to develop into a cohesive; well trained and disciplined member of the local emergency response system. A total of six new members were accepted into membership in August. The new members have all successfully completed the Firefighter I program at the Middlesex County Fire Academy. Their addition to the ranks of the Volunteer Division brings the total number of Certified Volunteer Division members to 34, the highest total in more than five years.



Chief Volk and Lt. Massopust at Council Presentation

Volunteer Division Lieutenant Anton Massopust was also recognized by the Municipal Council at their November 22nd meeting for performing life-saving CPR while attending a dinner at the Ukrainian Assumption Church. Relying on his skills as an EMT and CPR Instructor, Lt. Massopust was able to begin CPR immediately on a dinner guest who went into cardiac arrest. Due to Lt. Massopust's quick actions, the victim was able to be transported to Raritan Bay Medical Center where he was released fully recovered less than a week later.



Career and Volunteer Members receive pre-training briefing at the Middlesex County Fire Academy

The Volunteer Division has continued to maintain their training participation as well as day to day department activities. Members completed a total of 1,506 man-hours of training through the monthly drill program. During March and April, the department conducted its annual live burn training at the Middlesex County Fire Academy.

While in previous years a separate training day was scheduled for members of the Volunteer Division, this year in an effort to enhance the working relationship between the Career and Volunteer Divisions, the Volunteer members were integrated into the training with the Career Division shifts.

Members have also been actively participating in the In-Station duty program. This program allows members to spend 4 hours blocks of “on duty” time in the firehouse to respond with the initial response apparatus to alarms, providing for additional manpower initially at an emergency incident. The In-Station Duty Program also serves to maintain a cohesive working relationship between members of the Career and Volunteer Divisions. Members averaged more than 50 hours of in-station duty hours per month during 2010.

Department Training: One of the most significant areas of improvement in the fire department during 2010 was in the area training. With Lt. Sammy Arroyo assuming the position of Training Officer in October 2009, the department saw a dramatic increase in both In-Service and outside agency training during the year. A total of 4,885 hours of in-house training was completed by members of the department (6,257 Career/1,506 Volunteer) in annual required training topics including Hazardous Materials, Right-to-Know, Bloodborne Pathogens, Self Contained Breathing Apparatus/Fit Testing. In addition a wide variety of firematic topics were covered including:

- * CPR
- * Water Supply & Hose Line Advancement
- * Ventilation
- * Search & Rescue
- * Thermal Imaging Camera Operations
- * Personal Escape Systems
- * Water Rescue
- * Foam Operations
- * Incident Command
- * National Incident Management System



The department was able to receive certification from the NJ Division of Fire Safety as an Eligible Training Organization during 2010. This certification enables the department to provide Division of Fire Safety recognized courses and training programs, and issue DFS certification upon completion. It also allowed the department to host DFS examinations for Fire Officer and Firefighter II certifications during the year.

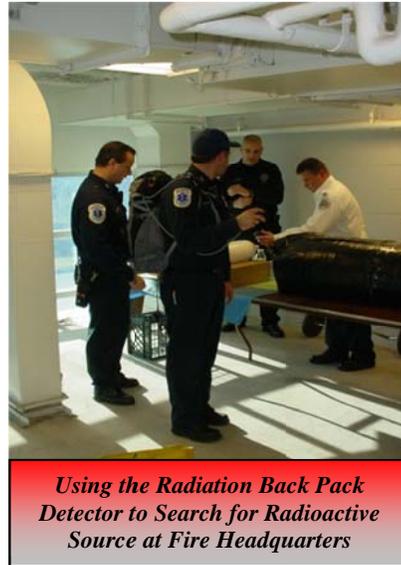


A variety of outside agencies were brought in to provide specific training to all members during the year including:

- * Elizabethtown Gas – *Gas Emergencies*
- * FDNY Firefighter Eugene Stokowski – *FDNY Black Sunday Safety Lecture*
- * Public Service Electric – *Emergency Operations dealing with Solar Panels*
- * Firefighters Equipment Company – *SCBA Field Maintenance Certification*
- * Air Gas Technologies – *Breathing Air Compressor Operations*
- * Roadway Rescue – *Vehicle Extrication*
- * DHS - Domestic Nuclear Detection Office - *Primary Radiological Screening*



Members with FDNY Firefighter Stokowski after his "Black Sunday" Lecture at YMCA Auditorium



Using the Radiation Back Pack Detector to Search for Radioactive Source at Fire Headquarters

Department members continue to take advantage of various training opportunities offered through outside agencies. Members completed a total of 51 courses of instruction offered by 17 outside agencies throughout the country. Members completed a total of 1,372 hours of training offered through outside training agencies. In many cases, members are able to bring the education back to share with other members of the department through in-service training.

The department also continues to maintain a good working relationship with various local industries throughout the city. Members once again spent a week of training at the Chevron facility. In addition, industrial site training was conducted at Stolthaven Terminals, Morton Salt, US Foods, Ashland Corporation, Next Era Energy. This annual training allows members to not only interact with staff of the facility, but also provides valuable information to department members in case of an actual emergency incident within the facility.



Confined Space Training at Morton Salt

With department Instructors being certified in various topics, training was provided to members of various municipal agencies including Police Department, 9-1-1 Dispatchers, Office of Recreation as well as the Perth Amboy Board of Education and Perth Amboy Housing Authority.

Courses provided during 2010 included:

- ❖ Incident Command Training
- ❖ National Incident Management System I-700
- ❖ Basic First Aid Medical Training
- ❖ C.P.R.
- ❖ Fire & EMS Dispatch Training
- ❖ Fire Extinguisher Training



National Fire Incident Reporting Data: The department responded to a total of 2,355 incidents in 2010, an average of more than 6 responses per day.

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 2010 the department responded to a total of 233 fires, the highest number of fire responses since 247 fire responses in 2003. In addition, 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. The total number of building fires responded to in 2010 increased to 51. This also represents the highest number of building fires since 2003 (56 total).

With two major snow events in February, a hurricane force storm in March a September tornado and a record setting blizzard on December 26th, 2010 produced the widest variety of weather related events within the City of Perth Amboy in recent memory. The department responded to a wide variety of calls for severe weather and natural disaster calls including Wind, Tornado, Hurricane and even two Earthquake Assessment calls.



The department also continues to see an increase in the amount of service orientated type calls for assistance to the public, ranging from lock outs and residents trapped in elevators to flooded basements and animal rescues. The department responded to 1,597 calls for non-fire assistance by members of the public.

Public Fire Education: Through Fire House tours and school visits, the department was again able to provide fire prevention safety education to more than 6,500 children within the city. Department members conducted more than 40 Fire House tours and school visits during the course of the year.

The department has also been represented at Career Day programs that were conducted at McGinnis, Shull, Peterson, Wilentz, Ceres and Flynn Schools as well as the High School during the course of the year.

During 2010 the department expanded on a carbon monoxide detector installation program that was developed several years ago in conjunction with the Department of Aging, to include smoke detectors for any residence that was without one. With smoke detectors that were provided through the NJ Division of Fire Safety and the assistance of the Office of Public Information, the department has installed almost 100 smoke detectors



Mayor Diaz tries on a Turn Out Coat while Councilman Petrick and Maria Garcia look on

in residences throughout the city that were previously without this basic life-saving device. The department intends to expand this program in 2011 with the hopes of insuring that every residence within the city is equipped with an adequate number of working smoke detectors.

In an effort to give a better understanding for the job functions that must be performed by emergency service personnel, sometimes under extreme conditions, members of the Administration, Municipal Council and general public were invited to attend one of the live fire training days at the Middlesex County Fire Academy in April. The training was attended by Mayor Diaz, members of the Council as well as several members of the general public. All in attendance left with a better appreciation of the

operation of the department as well as the equipment required to safely accomplish the mission.

One of the biggest community programs that the department continues to participate in is the Community Emergency Response Training program that is conducted through the municipal Office of Emergency Management. Perth Amboy was one of the first communities in Middlesex County to provide this nationally recognized specialized emergency response training to members of the community. A total of 18 members of the community participated in the seventh 9 week program that covered such topics as first aid, search and rescue, fire suppression and utility control. This class brings to almost 100 community members who have successfully completed this program since its inception. Upon completion of the training, members are prepared to be utilized at large scale emergencies and natural disasters to provide initial emergency service while emergency responders may be committed to various other emergency calls.



CERT Team Class Member learns how to operate a Fire Extinguisher during Fire Practical Class

The department has also provides required annual update training to members of the previous CERT Classes.

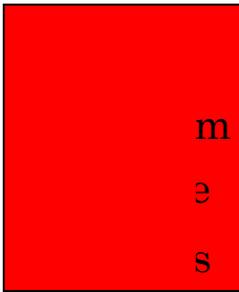
The largest challenge of the Fire Department – like all municipal departments, during not only 2011 but moving forward into the future is the need to address the ability to adequately operate on a daily basis with limited, if not shrinking financial resources. The Fire Department continues to maintain fiscal responsibility in day-to-day operations, as well as continuously searching for additional funding resources. Some of the funding sources and strategies include the following:

- ❖ Federal Grants. During the past year, the department has submitted several federal grant requests totaling more than \$2 Million for personnel as well as various equipment needs.
- ❖ Local Industry. Historically local industries within the city have provided the department with various advanced rescue equipment. These equipment donations have enabled the department to provide various levels of technical rescue without placing a burden on the overall department budget. The department continues to foster a close working relationship with our industrial neighbors and is hopeful for the continued assistance they provide.
- ❖ Neighboring Industries. As previously mentioned, with the department being one of the only emergency response agencies in Middlesex County to provide immediate technical rescue response, the department has begun to contract our rescue services to industries outside of the municipal borders. Currently the department receives \$40,000 annually for this work. The department is hopeful in expanding this service in the future.
- ❖ Continued Member Cooperation. The members of the department continuously go above and beyond when dealing with building and equipment maintenance and repair. During the past year alone, work performed by members of the department conservatively saved more than \$15,000. This continued cooperation and pride in the department will enable the scarce financial resources to continue to be spent on items that are absolutely necessities.

Any alternative funding ability that can be obtained outside of the local property taxation, in addition to continued fiscal responsibility will assist in overcoming the financial obstacles that lie ahead for the department during the upcoming year and beyond.

During the year 2011, the department will continue to strive to maintain its reputation as being one of the most progressive fire and rescue agencies in the state. Living up to the mission of the department of *Striving to become a strong and cohesive, well-supervised and trained combination fire department that will be able to meet the challenges of the new millennium by providing fire suppression, medical and rescue services, promote public awareness and fire prevention activities to decrease the perils of fire; as well as responding to other emergencies to best protect the community.*
Always vigilant – planning for the future.

Department Mission Statement



Fires:

Fires:	2009	2010
Building Fire	21	51
Multiple Alarm Fires	13	14
Fires in Non Structures	2	4
Cooking Fire	65	59
Fuel Burner/Boiler Malfunction	10	16
Chimney/Flue Fire	0	1
Passenger Vehicle Fire	19	16
Road/Freight or Transport Fire	0	4
Off Road/Heavy Equipment Fire	0	2
Water Vehicle Fire	2	1
Mulch	3	16
Brush/Brush Grass Mixture Fire	13	19
Outside Rubbish, Trash or Waste Fire	27	32
Dumpster/Outside Trash Receptacle Fire	8	6
Outside Storage Fire	1	1
Outside Equipment Fire	3	6
TOTAL FIRES:	196	233

Overpressure Rupture Explosion:

Overpressure Rupture, Explosion	1	1
Overpressure/Steam Boiler	0	3
Excessive Heat/Scorching/No Explosion	0	3
TOTAL OVERPRESSURE:	1	5

Rescue & EMS Incidents	2009	2010
Medical Assist EMS Crew	16	59
EMS/First Responder Calls	3,014	428
Motor Vehicle Accident	51	123
Motor Vehicle/Pedestrian	23	29
Motor Vehicle Accident No Injury	5	13
Lock In	10	6
Search for Person in Water	1	1
Search for Person on Land	0	1
Extrication	9	16
Extrication from Machinery	0	1
Removal of Victims from Stalled Elevator	18	16
Water/Ice Related Rescue	6	3
Watercraft Rescue	19	5
<u>Rescue/EMS Standby</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
TOTAL RESCUE/EMS	3,174	702

Service Calls:

Person in Distress	0	15
Lock-Out	38	32
Water Problems	11	2
Water/Steam Leak	32	27
Smoke/Odor Removal	17	23
Animal Rescue	7	2
Public Assistance	20	26
Assist Police or Other Government Agency	39	69
Assist invalid	3	2
Defective Elevator (No Occupants)	6	7
<u>Cover Assignment/Standby</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>13</u>
TOTAL SERVICE CALLS	198	203

<u>Hazardous Condition:</u>	2009	2010
Hazardous Condition – Unfounded	19	34
Combustible Gas Condition	4	3
Gasoline/Flammable Liquid Spill	13	20
Gas Leak (Natural Gas or LPG)	41	42
Oil or other Combustible Liquid Spill	15	23
Chemical Spill/Leak	2	5
Carbon Monoxide Incident	30	26
Electrical Wiring/Equipment Problem	38	34
Heat From Short Circuit (Wiring)	8	21
Overheated Motor	8	4
Light Ballast	1	1
Downed Power Line	37	167
Arcing Electrical Equipment	26	31
Building Collapse	2	21
Accident/Potential Accident	0	1
Aircraft Stand-By	0	2
Vehicle Accident – General Clean Up	1	1
<u>Hazardous Condition – Other</u>	<u>58</u>	<u>19</u>
TOTAL HAZARDOUS CONDITION	305	455

Good Intent Calls:

Dispatched/Cancelled En route	25	80
No Incident Found Upon Arrival	15	37
Steam other gas mistaken for Smoke	16	8
Smoke Scare, Odor of Smoke	52	53
Smoke from Barbecue	5	3
HazMat Investigation/No HazMat Found	5	12
Good Intent – Other	27	4
Vicinity Alarm	0	3
Authorized Controlled Burning	0	1
<u>EMS Call Injured Transported by Non-FD Unit</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>3</u>
TOTAL GOOD INTENT CALLS	146	204

<u>False Alarm/Malfunction:</u>	2009	2010
Malicious False Alarm	21	15
Malicious False Alarm Central Station	13	32
Malicious False Alarm Local Alarm System	2	4
Bomb Scare – No Bomb	1	1
System Malfunction	34	85
Sprinkler Activation Due to malfunction	6	6
Smoke Detector Malfunction	98	112
Heat Detector Malfunction	6	8
CO Detector Malfunction	14	26
CO Detector Activation, No CO Readings	16	24
Unintentional Alarm Transmission	25	4
Sprinkler Activation – No Fire	5	10
Smoke Detector Activation – No Fire	100	104
Detector Activation – No Fire	20	20
Extinguishing System Activation	2	3
<u>Alarm System Activation – No Fire</u>	<u>96</u>	<u>66</u>
TOTAL FALSE ALARM	541	520

Severe Weather & Natural Disaster:

Earthquake Assessment	0	2
Flood Assessment	0	3
Lightning Strike (no Fire)	3	0
<u>Wind/Tornado/Hurricane Assessment</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>28</u>
TOTAL SEVERE WEATHER	3	33

TOTAL INCIDENT RESPONSES 2010: 2,355 - NO EMS Service Delivery

TOTAL INCIDENT RESPONSES 2009:

4,562

Includes EMS Service delivery

01/01/2009-08/31/2009

TOTAL INCIDENT RESPONSE 2008:

5,760

Includes EMS Service Delivery

01/01/2008 – 12/31/2008

