

# CITY OF MOUNTAIN BROOK

## Fire Department



Fiscal Year 2009  
Annual Report

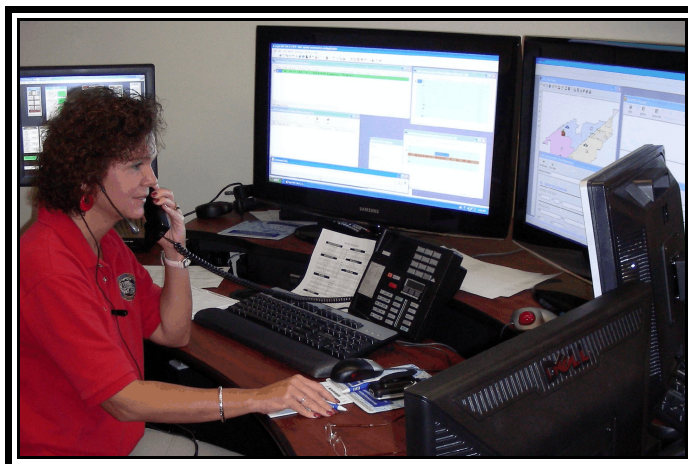
To the Mayor, City Council, City Manager,  
and the Citizens of the City of Mountain Brook:

As always the fire department's annual report is opened with a heart-felt thank you to the city administration for continued support. The mission of the fire department could not be accomplished at the quality level expected without the financial commitment and personal support of our City Administration.

**Annual Improvement Plan:** Again this calendar year, each supervisor in our department was charged with identifying an area that he/she wanted to improve and to work with subordinates to develop a goal(s) that would achieve the improvement. Supporting and measurable objectives were developed as well, and action steps were listed. Each supervisor is reporting on his/her progress quarterly at our monthly staff meetings. The enthusiasm, ownership, and results have been quite remarkable, therefore some of the improvement goals will probably be incorporated into department-wide operations.

### **Response Time Reduction**

**Initiatives:** In the business of delivering fire and emergency medical services, time is our enemy. Response time reductions can equate to less property loss from fire and certainly improve the outcomes of patients experiencing a medical emergency. The department is always looking for opportunities to reduce response times without increasing response liability and risk to our personnel and the general public. The new Computer-Aided-Dispatch software that has been installed has offered the department



Public Safety Dispatcher Tina Daniels using the new CAD Software from New World Systems.

an opportunity to possibly reduce response times by as much as fifteen (15) seconds on average. The time reductions will be possible through a "pre-alerting" process where fire units will get a "heads up" notice that they are about to be dispatched. While the dispatchers are completing the information necessary with the caller before they dispatch, department personnel are made aware through technology that an emergency response is coming and are already on the apparatus when the emergency is dispatched over the radio. This reduction in "reaction time" will make individual differences, and we should see quantitative results over a statistical period. We are excited about these new opportunities.

**Child Passenger Seat Program:** Over 90% of child passenger seats are installed incorrectly in automobiles, therefore placing children at risk during a motor vehicle accident. Recognizing that prevention is key, the department has trained thirty-five (35) personnel to be certified Child Passenger Seat Technicians. Residents who wish to have a child passenger seat installed in their automobile by trained technicians can call the fire department administrative offices and schedule an appointment for installation at one of our three fire stations. Six hundred ninety (612) child passenger seats have been installed during the fiscal year. This is a decrease over FY08 by seventy eight (78) installations. The feedback from our customers has been very positive regarding this program.

**Health and Fitness:** Firefighter health and fitness is a key component in the provision of emergency services. The department's wellness/fitness program has completed its seventh full year. The mandatory program is designed to give medical feedback to personnel through annual physicals and to improve overall fitness through regular physical training. All personnel take part in one hour's physical training at YMCA (Sports First) each shift. The overall goals of the program are to enhance the firefighter's ability to perform the job under stressful situations, to reduce strains/sprains and other injuries therefore reducing medical costs (work comp.), and to enhance the firefighters overall life, health and longevity. The department has seen an overall drop in the number of on-the-job injuries from strains and sprains since the program has been in place. Employee feedback regarding the program has been very positive. Additionally, annual evaluations are scheduled to give each employee feedback on fitness, health status and progress.

**Fire Prevention/Public Education:** The Mountain Brook Fire Department is a fire prevention department that also provides fire suppression. The strategic intent of this statement is to highlight the fact that the department places a high value on proactivity via fire prevention involvement. The department's Fire Marshal interacted significantly with architects and contractors this fiscal year during building plan review sessions. Plans review represents the department's efforts at reducing risk by eliminating fire code and life safety problems before they are built into the building. Additionally, the department conducted 878 commercial fire inspections during the fiscal year (66 more than in FY08). The public's safety was enhanced by finding and correcting fire code violations during these inspections.

Standard policy is to maintain a current database of pre-incident plans for all commercial and public buildings (schools and churches) within the City. These plans were updated during the year and will prove invaluable when a fire or other emergency strikes one of these buildings and emergency information such as utilities shutoff locations, construction features, chemical hazards, schematic drawings,



Suzan Doidge, Exec. Director Chamber of Commerce and David Cohen, Fire Marshal, review artwork for Fire Prevention Week Contest

and emergency contact phone numbers are needed. There are currently over 400 plans available for use by fire department personnel. A new feature regarding the pre-incident plans was added this fiscal year. They were made available to our units via the mobile computers that are on each responding apparatus. Now paper copies of the plans do not have to be made after each update and placed on each apparatus. The plans additionally have been shared with the Police Department for use during emergencies that they may encounter.

The department has partnered with the school system over the last nine years to sponsor a program called Risk Watch. Risk Watch is an educational program that teaches children to essentially be their own risk managers in preventing death and injuries. The nationally recognized program has been well received and the feedback from both students and teachers has been very encouraging. Just as fire safety education helps prevent fires, Risk Watch helps prevent childhood injuries in a proactive manner.

**Response Analysis:** The department made a total of 3,332 responses to emergencies during the fiscal year. This represents an increase over last fiscal year of 151 responses. There were 64 actual fires which were suppressed during the year (an increase of 13 fires over last fiscal year), 993 emergency medical responses (increase of 82 over last year), 633 patients transported to area hospitals (increase of 30 over last year), 322 alarm malfunctions (increase of 47 over last year), and 321 miscellaneous responses (assist occupant, good intent, hazardous condition, etc.). Additionally, there were 900 secondary responses made with other responding department emergency apparatus. It should be noted that all emergency responses are reported as type of situation found at the scene, not as type of situation dispatched.

Rapid intervention is the primary factor in delivering adequate emergency services. Fire suppression efforts and emergency pre-hospital care requires quick action to reduce the loss of life and property. The average response time for both of these response categories is four minutes and fifty five seconds (4:55). This response time affords department personnel a good opportunity to provide for a positive outcome for our citizens at the emergency scene.

**Property at Risk Versus Fire Loss Ratio:** The simple reporting of fire loss (dollar amount affixed to property lost to fire) in a given period does not give a comprehensive or holistic view. The fire loss as it relates to the total property at risk from fire gives a much more quantifiable perspective. The total dollar value at risk with respect to actual fires (structures and automobiles) during the fiscal year was \$ 15,462,603. The total losses from fire during this same period was \$1,868,432 (increase of \$ 472,416 over last year). Based on this reasoning, the department had a favorable impact upon the property at risk where a fire response occurred by a value of 91.37% (8.63% fire loss).

**Emergency Medical Services:** With respect to service delivery by the fire department, nearly half of all responses (46%) are to deliver emergency pre-hospital care. Nine hundred and ninety three (993) medical incidents were responded to where 1,019 citizen/customers received treatment. Six hundred thirty three (633) of these patients were transported to a medical facility of choice by the department's medical transport units. The rapid response by trained paramedics coupled with quick fire department ambulance service has proven to be an efficient and effective delivery system.

The fee structure for the provision of the emergency medical transport service has generated \$250,182 this fiscal year. This is an increase of \$12,434 over FY08. The amount meets our goal of offsetting the cost of providing the service.

**Continuing Education/Training:**

Formal education and professional training are two of the core values of our organization. During the fiscal year department personnel participated in 16,893 man-hours of in-service training. This level of training exceeds the 20 hours per person, per month requirement from the Insurance Services Office (ISO) which helps the department maintain its class three fire insurance rating. The department also supported numerous personnel through the provision of professional training opportunities at the Alabama Fire College and National Fire Academy. Classes such as Trench Rescue, Structural Collapse Rescue, Confined Space Rescue, Fire Instructor II, Fire Officer II, Fire Officer III, Weapons of Mass Destruction, Interpersonal Dynamics, Fire Department Emergency Medical Services Management, and Emergency Response to Biological Terrorism were attended by department personnel. Additionally, numerous personnel are working toward Associate Fire Science degrees and BS degrees in Public Safety Administration.

The formal education received by our personnel will prove to be of great benefit to the department in the coming years.

**Department's Most Pressing Need:** Without a doubt the department's most pressing need is to replace Fire Station One and the Administrative Offices. The existing building is of 1940's vintage and does not meet the current needs of the department. Working with architects Bill Williams and Hank Long has been an exciting and productive process. Department members are excited as well about the planning efforts that will not only address the fire department's needs but those of other city departments as well. These planning efforts will form the basis for serving our community for the next fifty years.

In closing this annual report we would truly be remiss if we did not mention the outstanding work done by the fine men and women that comprise our department. It is through their caring spirit and customer service oriented work ethic that our mission is being met each and every day.



Training class for operation of the new ladder truck put in service on July 7th.

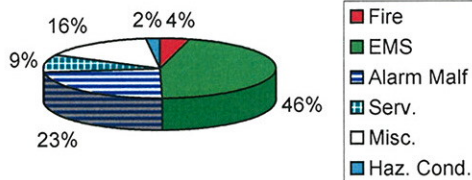


# MOUNTAIN BROOK FIRE DEPARTMENT

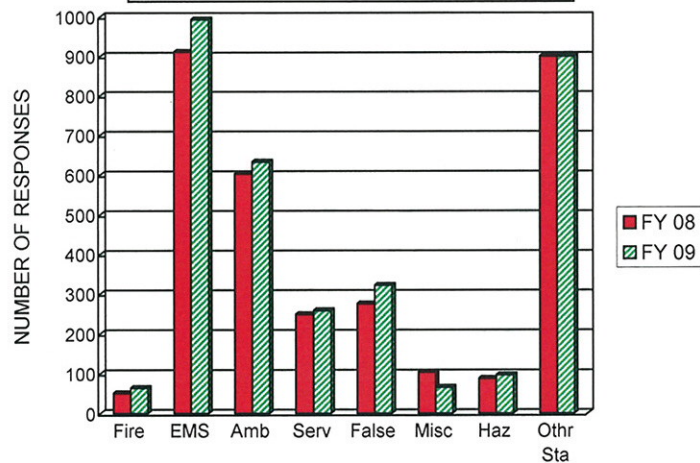
## Fiscal Year 2009 Annual Summary Report

RESPONSES BY TYPE:	FISCAL YEAR 2008	FISCAL YEAR 2009	DISPOSITION
Fires	51	64	13
Over Pressure/Rupture	4	2	(2)
Emergency Medical	911	993	82
Hazardous Condition	88	97	9
Service Call	249	258	9
Good Intent Call	80	53	(27)
False Calls	275	322	47
Others	20	10	(10)
Calls Answered with other Stations	900	900	0
Medical Transports	603	633	30
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>3181</b>	<b>3332</b>	<b>151</b>
<b>EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES:</b>			
Total Number of Patients Treated	923	1019	96
Total Number of Patients Transported by Fire Dept.	603	633	30
Tot. # of Patients Transported by Privt. Veh./Other	15	28	13
Total Number of Patients Billed for Transport	603	633	30
Total User Fees Collected	\$237,748	\$250,182	\$12,434
<b>FIRE LOSSES:</b>			
Estimated Value of Buildings, Contents, Vehicles	\$40,387,001	\$15,462,603	(\$24,924,398)
Estimated Loss for Buildings, Contents, Vehicles	\$1,396,016	\$1,868,432	\$472,416
Loss as a Percent of Value	3.46%	12.08%	8.63%
<b>MISCELLANEOUS:</b>			
Man Hours Drills and Training	16,388	16,893	505
Number of Commercial Inspections	812	878	66
School Fire Drills	147	153	6
Dept. Avg. Response Time in Min./Sec.	04:50	04:55	5
Medical Transport Avg. Response Time in Min./Sec.	07:22	07:33	11
Blood Pressure Screening Program	2320	2099	(221)
Child Passenger Seat Installations	690	612	(78)

**RESPONSES BY TYPE:**  
Fiscal Year 2009



**RESPONSE COMPARISON BY TYPE:**  
FY 08 and FY 09



Signed:

*Robert Engel*

Fire Chief

"Quality Service for a Quality City"