



# CITY OF MOUNTAIN BROOK Fire Department

Fiscal Year 2010  
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.

**Response Time Reduction:** 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 or the general public. The Computer-Aided-Dispatch software has given the department an opportunity to



reduce response times by fifteen (15) seconds on average. The time reductions have been 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 necessary information 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" has made individual differences, and we have seen quantitative results over a statistical period.

**Child Passenger Seat Installation 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-six (36) 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. Five hundred forty-five (545) child passenger seats have been installed during the fiscal year. This is a decrease over

FY09 by sixty-seven (67) 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 eighth 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. In fact, the department had only 52.5 hours of lost time due to on-the-job injuries for last year. 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 506 commercial fire inspections during the fiscal year. 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, and emergency contact phone numbers are needed. There are currently over 400 plans available for use by fire department personnel. These plans are 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 ten (10) 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 3,429 responses to emergencies during the fiscal year. This represents an increase over last fiscal year of 97 responses. There were 61 actual fires which were suppressed during the year (a decrease of 3 fires over last fiscal year), 982 emergency medical responses (decrease of 11 over last year), 642 patients transported to area hospitals (increase of 9 over last year), 400 alarm malfunctions (increase of 78 over last year), and 433 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 forty-two seconds (4:42). 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 \$ 29,608,010. The total loss from fire during this same period was \$1,028,112



(decrease of \$ 840,320 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 96.53% (3.47% 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 eighty-two (982) medical incidents were responded to where 1,004 citizen/customers received treatment. Six hundred forty-two (642) 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 \$288,528 this fiscal year. This is an increase of \$38,346 over FY09. 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 18,007 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.

**Breast Cancer Awareness Initiative:**

Mountain Brook Firefighters Local 1295 partnered with the department during the year to help raise awareness to the devastating effects of breast cancer and to help raise funds for medical research to combat it. Breast cancer awareness pink shirts were sold at each of our three fire stations during breast cancer awareness month. All department members wore a pink shirt for one shift to help bring attention to the need for support. The project proceeds went directly to the American Cancer Society. Pictured in pink from left to right are firefighter Chris Williams, fire medic Johnny Crumpton, fire lieutenant Marc Bell, and fire medic Lee Curry. We appreciate all of the efforts that went in to this initiative.



In closing this annual report, we would be remiss if we did not mention the unwavering commitment to our organization by the outstanding men and women that comprise our department. It is through their efforts that our mission is met each day.