

# 2009 Annual Report

## Merrimack Fire Department

Submitted by Michael Currier  
Chief of the Department

---

**FIRE PROTECTION / EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE / TECHNICAL RESCUE /  
HAZARDOUS MATERIALS / SUPPORT SERVICES**

---

### A Message from the Fire Chief

On behalf of the men and women of the Merrimack Fire Department, it is my pleasure to provide you the Merrimack Fire Department 2009 Annual Report. This year due to cost savings, the report has been abridged containing only general information. If you would like to read the full version of this report, please proceed to the Fire Department web site (<http://www.merrimacknh.gov/fire>) under Reports/Newsletters and download the complete document. Contained in this document, you will gain knowledge about emergency personnel, facilities, equipment, and programs that serve you our residents and customers. I am sure that once you examine this document, you will agree that Merrimack Fire Rescue is an exceedingly educated, skilled and a professional organization, providing quality customer oriented service based on the department's mission, core values of respect, trust, and support.

Your Fire Department is a leader in innovation by going further with reductions from this economic environment and its effective approaches to firefighting, fire prevention and emergency medical services. All of us in the Department can take pride that our work is helping set the standard for the modern fire-rescue service.

First and foremost, we at the Merrimack Fire Department take pride in the fact that our skills and training, our courage, determination and professionalism are serving and protecting the community of Merrimack. Our mission said simply is public safety and customer service. This community puts its trust in us as emergency first responders, as emergency managers and expects that when we answer a "911" call we are prepared, professional and able to perform as a team in order to prevent harm, preserve life, and protect property. It is a tribute to everyone in the Department that day-in and day-out, we meet that challenge and that we do so under conditions that can be difficult and dangerous. Continuing to meet that challenge will take a commitment from all of us in the Department to never rest on our laurels and to be willing to do what is often the hardest thing of all: **change**. We must be diligent in working to bring new knowledge and competencies to bear on old problems. We must focus not only on where the problems are, but also on where the solutions can be found. Change is a series of steps, within a continuous evolution. As we make changes and move forward all of a sudden, after steps that might not feel like much movement, you find a that new paradigm emerges a new way of doing things is suddenly the way things are being done. Over the past few years, in the Merrimack Fire Department, we have worked hard to stay true to our fundamental mission while discarding old beliefs that no longer serve us well. This, then, is the Merrimack Fire Department of 2009: Inspired by history, but not bound by it knowing that we are poised for the future.

The management staff of the department consisting of a Fire Chief, an Assistant Fire Chief and a Deputy Fire Chief who must use our managerial and professional skills to ensure that the best personnel possible staff this Department. Emergency planning is done and ensures that we create an environment in which people are respected for who they are, for what they do and for their skillful thinking. We must encourage teamwork and instill discipline. We must keep in mind the big picture: every action of this department is a display of our commitment to internal and external customer service and as leaders; we are responsible for making sure that all the parts work together to create an organization capable of serving the public and meeting the public's expectation.

We must continue to learn together and to value compassion, honesty, integrity, and teamwork on the job. We must keep those values in balance with the traditional focus in the Fire (Emergency) Service, which is raw strength and courage. We must continue to respect, understand and trust one another in order to do our jobs better, to protect the public better and to make this department better. Every firefighter/EMT/ must have confidence in the men and women working beside him or her. As an organization, we must give the grass roots workforce in the field the tools and the support they need to work together comfortably and effectively.

Looking ahead to the coming year and into the future with the economic climate what it is, we in the Fire Department can do so with the knowledge that we have a history of success and with the confidence that we have the ability and the will to build a future that is as bright as the past has been proud.

## **DEPARTMENT STATEMENTS**

### **Mission**

As members of Merrimack Fire Rescue, we will provide the highest standard of emergency care and loyal service to our community, help others, show you care, and go home safe through CUSTOMER SERVICE.

**C**ontinuous fire prevention education for the community  
**U**nderstanding and compassion to all we encounter  
**S**afety in everything we do  
**T**raining to the highest degree practical  
**O**utstanding commitment to service  
**M**aintaining our equipment for any emergency  
**E**ver-Ready supporting all calls for assistance  
**R**especting all individuals and treating them as our customer

**S**uppression and support services  
**E**mergency medical and rescue services  
**R**apid response  
**V**igilant pursuit of our vision  
**I**ntegrity in all we do  
**C**ompassion and caring for our citizens and visitors  
**E**thics, education, and excellence in everything we do

## **Vision**

Through a combination of team-orientation, compassion, educated and dedicated professionals, in conjunction with state-of-the-art technology and equipment, Merrimack Fire Rescue strives to be an organization to which others will benchmark their efforts.

We will provide quality, customer-oriented service, provided in a safe, caring, professional, and consistent manner.

## **Values**

### **For the Department:**

We strive for excellence through knowledge, motivation, and education.

### **For the Community:**

We provide an outstanding service through teamwork, confidence, and performance.

### **For Ourselves:**

We maintain honesty and loyalty through effective communication and mutual respect.

## **Human Dignity**

We commit to treat human life in a manner that most people would desire and consider acceptable. Respect, dignity, honesty, compassion, understanding, and trust are fundamental to the strength of Merrimack Fire Rescue.

## **DEPARTMENT SLOGAN**

**Striving for Excellence, Exceeding Expectations, Customer Service**

Included in the slogan are the Latin words

**Salus Populi Suprema Lex**

“The Safety of the People is the Supreme Law”

---

## **MERRIMACK FIRE DEPARTMENT EMERGENCY PERSONNEL**

---

The Merrimack Fire Department is divided into the following groups and divisions

### **Career Personnel**

#### **Administration**

Michael Currier, Chief of the Department  
David Parenti, Assistant Chief, Support Services  
Anthony Stowers, Deputy Fire Chief, Operations  
Cathy Nadeau, Office Manager, Administrative Assistant, Receptionist, Payroll,  
Accounts Payable, Human Resources Documentation

#### **Fire Prevention/Inspection and Investigation**

John Manuele, Code Enforcement, Inspection, Fire Investigation  
Leo LeBlanc, Fire Inspector (Part Time 24 hours per week)

#### **Career Fire Rescue and Emergency Medical Services**

On-Duty 24 hours every day

Career firefighter/Emergency Medical Technicians/Paramedics work 24-hour shifts, totaling 42 hours each week (straight time). These shifts provide emergency personnel coverage 24 hours each day 365 days each year at the Souhegan River Station #1 and the Thornton's Ferry Station #2, with a goal of reaching all emergencies within 5 minutes or less 90 percent of the time. There are only nine emergency personnel assigned to the 24 hour shift depending on vacations and personnel time where coverage will drop to eight. These emergency personnel operating 5 engines, 3 ambulances, 1 ladder, 2 rescues, 3 forestry units, and 2 boats. The career personnel start the initial desired apparatus to the emergency scene when a call for help is received. The volunteer (On-Call Personnel) and off duty career personnel return to the stations to deploy the additional supporting apparatus providing further personnel support to the original emergency and/or standing by at the stations in anticipation of for a second and/or third emergency call for assistance.

#### **Shift A**

##### **Station 1 Souhegan River**

##### **Engine 1**

Driver Mark Akerstrom,  
Firefighter/EMT Mark Bickford,  
Captain Rich Pierson

##### **Ambulance 1**

Firefighter/Paramedic John Chisholm

##### **Cross-manning Ambulance 2, Rescue 1, Forestry 1, Ladder 1**

Firefighter/Paramedic Jeremy Penerian,  
Firefighter/Paramedic Robert Panit

##### **Station 2 Thornton's Ferry**

#### **Shift B**

##### **Station 1 Souhegan River**

##### **Engine 1**

Driver Bruce Cornelius,  
Firefighter/EMT Shawn Kimball,  
Captain Shawn Allison

##### **Ambulance 1**

Firefighter/Paramedic William Pelrine

##### **Cross-manning Ambulance 2, Rescue 1, Forestry 1, Ladder 1**

Firefighter/Paramedic John  
Demyanovich, Firefighter/EMT Daniel  
Newman

**Engine 2**

Thomas Ryan Firefighter/EMT-B,  
Shawn Farrell Firefighter/EMT-B, Lt  
Brian Dubreuil

**Station 2 Thornton's Ferry****Engine 2**

Driver Thomas Dalton,  
Firefighter/EMT Brennan McCarthy, Lt  
Richard Barrows

**Shift C****Station 1 Souhegan River****Engine 1**

Driver Norman Carr Jr.,  
Firefighter/EMT Richard Ducharme,  
Captain Scott Simpson

**Ambulance 1**

Firefighter/Paramedic Scott Bannister

**Cross-manning Ambulance 2, Rescue 1,****Forestry 1, Ladder 1**

Firefighter/Paramedic Shawn Brechtel,  
Firefighter/EMT Michael Kiernan

**Station 2 Thornton's Ferry****Engine 2**

Driver David Joki, Firefighter/EMT  
Phillip Comeau, Lt Mathew Duke

**Shift D****Station 1 Souhegan River****Engine 1**

Driver Marc Bechard, Firefighter/EMT  
Kip Caron, Captain Brian Borneman

**Ambulance 1**

Firefighter/Paramedic Kevin Chambers

**Cross-manning Ambulance 2, Rescue 1,****Forestry 1, Ladder 1**

Firefighter/Paramedic Paul Kelly,  
Firefighter/EMT Keith Hines

**Station 2 Thornton's Ferry****Engine 2**

Driver David Trepaney,  
Firefighter/EMT Richard Gagne, Lt  
Jason Marsella

**Part Time Per-diem Ambulance Attendants**

Michelle Othot EMT-I  
Gordon Othot EMT-P  
Rob Basha EMT-I  
John O'Neil EMT-B

Krystle Pelletier EMT-I / RN  
Christine Bell EMT-B  
Mark Quinno EMT-I  
Craig Masi EMT-B

A Per-diem Ambulance Attendant will work Monday through Friday covering a seven-hour first shift and a seven-hour second shift. Saturday and Sunday are covered by one ten hour shift each day. This coverage is considered necessary to provide ambulance attendant coverage during higher response demands at times when volunteers are not available maximizing emergency medical needs to the community.

**On-Call/Emergency Personnel**

Fire, Rescue & Emergency Medical Services (EMS)

The on-call personnel are part of the Operations Division and are citizens of Merrimack who want to give back and help their community. The on-call personnel are trained to the same standards as the career personnel but respond to emergencies from their home rather than a rapid response from the fire station. This results in the career personnel arriving on the scene first and the On-Call personnel due to their delay in response supporting the response actions. The on-call personnel are paid per hour per call. Documentation has shown that due to other outside employment responsibilities, most volunteers are not available to assist career personnel until after 7:00 pm

evening and usually do not respond after 3:00 am so they can meet their commitments of their primary occupation.

**Administration (On-Call)**

Manny Marcel (Support Only)  
Joseph Comer (Support Only)

**Lieutenant (On-Call)**

Chris Wyman (Call Fire Lieutenant)  
Wayne Perkins (Call Fire Lieutenant)  
Paul Mondoux (EMS Lieutenant)

**Call Firefighter**

Roland Blanchette Firefighter  
Michael Comer Firefighter  
James Bailey Firefighter  
Joe Hebert Firefighter/EMT-B  
Aaron McAneney Firefighter  
Matt Manuele Firefighter/EMT-B  
Eric Bell Firefighter  
Shawn Sullivan Firefighter/EMT-B  
Matt Whelan Firefighter  
Ryan Bourque Firefighter  
Bryan Sparks Probationary  
Nathan Schofield Probationary

**On-Call EMS**

Thomas Arnold EMT-B  
Timothy Dutton EMT-B  
James Elkins EMT-B  
John O'Neil EMT-B  
Gene Kuczewski EMT-B  
Mark Leo EMT-B  
Christine Bell EMT-B  
Craig Masi EMT-B

---

## **DIVISIONS WITHIN THE FIRE DEPARTMENT STRUCTURE**

---

### **OPERATIONS DIVISION**

The Operations Division is under the direct supervision of Deputy Chief Anthony Stowers. This division is responsible for responding to all emergency requests for assistance, Equipment Maintenance, Emergency Pre-Planning, State of New Hampshire Fire and Incident Reporting, Special Teams, Grants, Fire Suppression and Training for fire, rescue and emergency medical.

#### **FIRE RESCUE STAFFING AND COVERAGE**

The Merrimack Fire Department currently operates out of three Fire Stations located throughout the town with a staffing of nine personnel, but this staffing can be reduced to eight due to sick or vacation time which are on duty each day. Station One (Souhegan River Station) located on 432 Daniel Webster Highway is staffed with One Captain, two Paramedics and three Firefighter/EMT's. Station Two (Thornton's Ferry Station,) located on 196 Naticook Road is staffed with one Lieutenant, and two Firefighter/EMT's. These two stations are staffed twenty-four hours a day, 365 days each year. Station Three (Reed's Ferry) is not manned but is covered mainly by the Call Division who are trained firefighter/EMT's that respond from their homes to the fire station when available to staff the emergency apparatus at that station and then respond to the scene of the emergency. There are five Engines of which two engines are staffed 24 hours each day, one ladder; one rescue three ambulances that are cross staffed by the 2 firefighter/EMT's depending on the

need and incident type and command staff vehicles in service every day to serve the citizens and visitors to the Town of Merrimack.

In 2009, the Merrimack Fire Department answered 6942 call for service and emergency response actions. The largest single type of emergency incident points directly to emergency medical calls, which is rapidly approaching 70 percent.

### **Training for Fire and Emergency Medical**

Training and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Division under the supervision of Deputy Chief Anthony Stowers is responsible for coordinating activities for fire and EMS training standards, firefighter and EMS skills assessment, firefighter and medical personnel certification, Special Operations (Hazardous Materials and Technical Rescue) and policy implementation on how the department responds to calls for service. The Training Division also works directly with the Merrimack Police Dispatch Center to help train new dispatchers in how the Merrimack Fire Department “does its job” making their dispatch position more effective.

The Training Division liaisons with various local organizations, surrounding community fire departments and regional entities to assure clear communications between the Merrimack Fire Department and its internal and external customers.

### **Hazardous Materials (HazMat) Program**

This program provides hazardous materials emergency response capabilities within Merrimack as well as with the Souhegan Valley Mutual Aid Hazardous Materials Response Team (SMART). The “SMART” operates and maintains equipment provided to each town in the mutual aid agreement area, and responds to incidents involving hazardous materials when requested. This type of incident is usually beyond the capabilities of a single fire department where specialized trained personnel are needed. Merrimack Fire Department has 32 Hazardous Materials Technicians (career firefighter/EMT’s) available to respond to emergencies involving hydrocarbon and/or chemical releases up to and including level “B” incidents. Any level “A” incident would necessitate the activation of the regional “SMART” organization for additional resources.

### **Technical Rescue Program**

The Technical Rescue Program encompasses firefighters within the Department who have attended specialized training programs on special rescue techniques. The program consists of Rope Rescue, Swift Water Rescue, Ice Rescue, Confined Space Rescue, Trench Rescue, and Structural Collapse. All of the necessary equipment needed to perform these rescues is carried on Rescue 1, which makes the vehicle a valuable tool in the community.

## **SUPPORT SERVICES**

The Support Services Division is under the supervision of Assistant Chief David Parenti. This division oversees all computer incident reporting to the State of New Hampshire, Office of the Fire Marshal, Grants, Fire Prevention, Information Technologies (Computer Systems), Building Construction, Fire Codes, GIS System, Street Naming and Numbering.

### **Office of the Fire Marshal**

The Office of the Fire Marshal is under the direction of the Assistant Fire Chief consists of one fulltime Administrative Officer, Captain John Manuele and one part time Fire Inspector, Lieutenant Leo LeBlanc. The Office of the Fire Marshal is responsible for the following:

- ☐ Fire and Arson Investigations
- ☐ Buildings Construction and Site Plan Reviews
- ☐ Bureau of Fire Prevention
  - ☐ Industrial, Manufacturing and Place of Assembly Inspection
  - ☐ Life Safety Inspection
  - ☐ Fire Prevention Education
  - ☐ Fire Safety Education
  - ☐ Juvenile Firesetter Intervention Program
- ☐ New Construction and Renovation Plan Reviews for:
  - ☐ Initial Building Site Plan Review
  - ☐ Sprinkler Systems
  - ☐ Fire Alarm Systems
  - ☐ Fire Prevention Codes, Ordinances and Regulations
  - ☐ Life Safety Codes, Ordinances and Regulations
- ☐ Final Inspection for Certificate of Occupancy
- ☐ Oil Burner and Propane System Inspections
- ☐ Above and Under Ground Hazardous Materials Storage Tanks
- ☐ Blasting requirements and Permitting
- ☐ Fireworks Permits and Inspection

### **Fire Prevention**

The fire prevention staff consists of Captain John Manuele, and Fire Inspector Leo LeBlanc. This group of dedicated individuals logged over 925 inspections in existing businesses, schools, institutions, annual inspections on businesses, hotels, and apartments in our jurisdiction. The inspections are generated through new construction, remodels, and tenant improvements of single-family residence to large commercial properties. They are broken into the major categories of sprinkler and standpipe inspections; state regulated inspections, which encompass Child Day Care Facilities, Foster Homes, and Adult Care Facilities. They also include fire alarm system inspections and tests, fire sprinkler flow tests, flammable liquid storage areas (HazMat), code enforcement/complaints, and fire department required inspections, which include emergency vehicle access, access gates, and keys to access locked facilities, and finally property owner lists are reviewed which will enable a contact person and number in the event of an emergency. During



these inspections, 432 violations were found and 327 of these violations were corrected within 30 days.

There were over 925 fire and life safety inspections performed to ensure that the businesses in our community are safe and ready to serve their customers.

As with any inspections, the key elements evaluated by the fire prevention staff include adequate exits, functioning fire alarm systems, the presence and maintenance of fire extinguishers, the proper protection of cooking hoods and duct ventilation systems in restaurants, appropriately used electrical outlets, and the general care and maintenance of the premises to help prevent the spread of fire if one should occur.

The number one priority of the fire department is to protect life and our prevention staff is a key component of this priority by helping to prevent incidents before they start.

### **Public Education**

Fire safety education continued to be a large part of the Department's activity during the year. The Department participated in appearances and programs, which have a positive effect on children and adults. Some of the special events include the school DUI assembly, interacting with the Merrimack High School Senior Class, Reeds Ferry Elementary School Fun Day water slide, the Police Department Open House, Fire Department Open House, Rib Fest at Anheuser Busch and Safety Day at St Gobain and Home Depot delivering important fire safety messages to all involved.

This year due to cost savings, the report has been abridged containing only general information. If you would like to read the full version of this report, please proceed to the Fire Department web site (<http://www.merrimacknh.gov/fire>) under Reports/Newsletters and download the complete document.

**2008 Annual Report**  
**Merrimack Fire Department**  
**Merrimack Fire Rescue**  
Submitted by Michael Currier  
Fire Chief

---

**EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT / TERRORISM / BIOLOGICAL HAZARDS /  
RADIOLOGICAL / WEATHER EVENTS**

---

**EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT**

**Mission Statement**

To strengthen the Town of Merrimack's ability to readily, effectively and efficiently prepare for, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all types of natural or man-made emergencies and disasters through coordinating resources of local, state, and federal agencies.

**The Role of Emergency Management**

Emergency Management is a coordinated effort between governmental agencies and non-governmental organizations to prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters. The foundation for emergency management programs begins at the federal level. Homeland Security, State and Federal Emergency Management create the framework for the development and administration of disaster preparedness and response programs at the federal, state, and local level. The legislation clearly indicates that emergency management is a shared responsibility of federal, state and local governments; however, history has proved that stronger local emergency management programs result in a better educated and more prepared and cooperative population in regards to disasters.

The Fire Department provides critical coordination and administration for the Town's Emergency Management Program and the Emergency Operations Center (EOC). The Emergency Management Director (Fire Chief) is responsible for ensuring that the Town's Emergency Management Plan is current and that the Town's staff is prepared to respond to disasters that may occur. The emphasis during 2008 was on preparedness. Much of this was accomplished through policy, plan, and training program reviews. A key component in preparedness is planning and providing key concepts to the emergency operations plan and needed education for Merrimack to be prepared.

The Emergency Management Program has identified ten specific functions to accomplish the mission and to satisfy state and federal law. These functions are:

- ☐ Develop evaluate and updated the emergency plan
- ☐ Develop and conduct training and education programs for government officials, responders, and the public
- ☐ Develop and coordinate disaster exercises
- ☐ Implement the National Incident Management System by activating the Emergency Operation Center, Incident Command Post(s), and coordinating the deployment of resources and provided multiple discussion based exercises to test the preparedness of emergency operations center staff

- ☐ Provide warning and emergency public information to government officials and the general public
- ☐ Prepare and coordinate the public assistance process following federally declared disasters
- ☐ Provide training and coordination for search and rescue missions
- ☐ Provide coordination and liaison between local governments and the state and federal agencies
- ☐ Develop and serve as Administrative Point of Contact and fiscal agent for citizen corps program
- ☐ Administer the Local Emergency Planning Committee for chemical preparedness
- ☐ Provided representation with the Merrimack Public Schools on Advisory Committees

## **CONCLUSION**

The members of the Merrimack Fire Department are dedicated to serving our residents and are proud of our profession. We had another challenging year. We have increased the complexity of our training programs, acquired new emergency apparatus, and improved the process of training and orientation for probationary On Call firefighters and EMS personnel. Our staff participated in meetings at the state, and local levels to apply for grant funding for current and future programs.

As we look forward to the upcoming year, we anticipate the purchase and replacement of a fire engine and ambulance to meet the needs of our community.

As we look into the future, the planning process will continue for the upgrade or the replacement of Thornton's Ferry Fire Station 2 at 196 Naticook Road to Continental Boulevard, major maintenance and upgrades to Reed's Ferry Fire Station 3 and future planning for a needed Fire Station in the northwest section of town. This will include pursuit of federal grant funding to meet the growing needs of our changing community. Career development and education for new employees is always a priority. We will continue to prepare our officers and firefighters for advancement in our organization. This is necessary to maintain consistent operations during transitional times.

We also understand that the economic environment is not as good as it has been in the past. We understand that there are wants and need in this environment and we will continue to be budget aware and reduce spending as much as possible while providing the needed emergency response and care to the citizens of this community.

The most important issue to communicate to our residents is that the men and women of the Merrimack Fire Department stand ready to protect our community from threats to life, property, and the environment.

I am proud of the accomplishments of the Department. It takes tremendous teamwork from not only the members of the Department, but others who contribute to our ability to provide a high quality of service.

This year due to cost savings, the report has been abridged containing only general information. If you would like to read the full version of this report, please proceed to the Fire Department web site (<http://www.merrimacknh.gov/fire>) under Reports/Newsletters and download the complete document.