

# TODAY'S FIRE SERVICE

*WHO WE ARE, WHAT WE DO, AND WHY WE DO IT*



PREPARED FOR YOU BY FIRE CHIEF ANTHONY STOWERS  
AND YOUR FRIENDS AT THE  
MAYNARD FIRE DEPARTMENT

The fire service, as we know it today, traces its origins back to the early Roman Empire. Created under the rule of Augustus Caesar, the *Corps of Vigiles* was created in 6 B.C. This Corps of Vigiles, translated as the “watch service”, was first created to combat a growing fire problem in Rome during that time period. Although there were no insurance companies, victims of fire were compensated for their losses by donations from the community. In some cases the donations received by victims outweighed what their property was worth before being destroyed by fire. This created a situation where the first arson-for-profit scenarios in a civilized society arose. The Corps was comprised of over 7,000 men who were chosen from the *Familia Publica*, or Band of Slaves.

The roots of the formal and structured American Fire Service can be traced back to 1648 when Fire Wards were appointed in the city of New Amsterdam, now known as New York City. The first fire company was the Union Fire Company in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, founded by Benjamin Franklin. Citizens during this time period were strongly encouraged to participate in both fire prevention and fire suppression activities. In fact, citizens were required to own 2 leather buckets and respond to fires within the community when notified by the sounding of church bells. Persons not responding were subject to a fine of up to ten dollars. Warning systems evolved to where the first municipal telegraph system was placed in service in the City of Boston in the 1850's. This system is basically the same system we have in place today with the red boxes on buildings and utility poles. When the “hook” is pulled, it transmits a telegraph signal to a collection point.

Locally, the Maynard Fire Department was first organized in 1890 after a special town meeting was held. By March of that year a Hose Company comprised of 15 men was organized. The first “Hose and Ladder Wagons” were delivered in May and August of 1890, and a new fire station was occupied by January of 1891 on Nason Street. In 1903 Tony Collins was appointed as the permanent driver of the hose wagon that was then being pulled by a single horse, with the ladder wagon being pulled by a pair of horses.

Maynard's first motorized fire engine was delivered in 1914 and the first motorized ladder in 1924. On October 4, 1955, the current fire station was dedicated as a combination Fire and Police Station. In 1968 George Whalen was appointed as the first permanent fire chief for the Town of Maynard.

The Maynard Fire Department has certainly evolved from the early days when all we did was respond to fires. Today's mission still involves fire suppression, but also fire prevention, emergency medical response, technical rescue, confined space, hazardous materials response, vehicle rescue and building inspection services. In addition to the emergencies your Maynard Fire Department personnel respond to, firefighters are also responsible for preparing for emergency response. This involves vehicle maintenance, equipment up-keep, pre-fire planning and training. In fact, our current personnel typically spend thousands of hours annually in training classes both on-site and at sessions presented off-site.

Being a member of the Maynard Fire Department, whether it is as a career or on-call firefighter, means that firefighters have chosen to be part of a large family dedicated to service and sacrifice for the community. Being a member of emergency services will be one of the most fulfilling and challenging time periods of a person's life. Emergency responders are exposed to some of the most horrific and disturbing aspects of our society. They are exposed to death, the destructive forces of fire, Mother Nature, and man gone awry. There are times when emergency responders may feel frustrated, anxious, isolated from their families, and emotionally drained. Emergency responders often miss meals, family events, such as birthdays and graduations, and frequently spend holidays in a fire house, ambulance or other fire apparatus.

The responsibilities of the emergency responders while doing their jobs are not all gloom and doom however. While emergency responders frequently see the public at their worst and/or most vulnerable, they also get to see their co-workers at their very best, as they are saving lives, protecting property, and generally going above and beyond to make sure the public is safe from harm. In short they get to help people and work with people helping people.

Today's Fire Service is the last resort for some because firefighters are called upon when nobody else can help. Firefighters can see in themselves the good Samaritans. The term good Samaritan can be traced back to the very early days of the fire service, and it is based on the story of a citizen of Samira, who stopped to help a stranger even at a personal cost to himself as others passed by the man in need. This willingness to help those in need is what firefighters do daily. They sacrifice their time that could be spent with family they miss holidays with loved ones, and they pass up restful nights of sleep in hopes of making someone else's life a little better. Although sacrifices are made, firefighters have found that the worst circumstances can sometimes lead to the most rewarding situations. The simple act of helping someone who has had a water leak or assisting someone up off the floor may seem like a nuisance to some, but it means the world to the person being helped. Today's firefighters, or more accurately, emergency responders are essentially in the people business. They are here to respond to any and all types of emergencies, even emergencies that a few years ago were not something typically seen in the Northeast. In the last dozen years we have seen deadly tornados, destructive ice storms, debilitating floods, and even an earthquake, albeit a minor one, in New England. At every one of these incidents, firefighters were on the front lines saving property, rescuing people, and giving them the helping hand that others couldn't provide.

The fire service has always vowed to educate the public and elected representatives of the public relative to what we really do and why we do it. Unfortunately that often doesn't happen unless we are questioned about some specific event, meeting, or budget item. This manual is an attempt to provide our citizens for whom we are responsible, reliable information about why the fire service exists and why it is more important now more than ever to maintain and support a well-staffed and motivated fire department.

## Today's Mission

In rudimentary terms the mission of today's fire service is the same as it has been since the inception of the fire service itself, i.e., to protect lives and property. Along the way we added to this mission by understanding the importance of protecting the environment from permanent damage. As the world has evolved and has become more complex, so has the role of firefighters. Today our basic mission remains to protect life and property, as well the environment, but the conditions under which we do that have changed. Today's firefighters are prepared for the following tasks:

- **Fire suppression** – Fire suppression can be in a traditional building such as a home, but it can also be a special occupancy such as an auto parts store, chemical storage facility, supermarket, or warehouse. This also involves fighting fires in wild-land situations all the while protecting structures, fighting fuel and chemical spills, while protecting the environment from contamination. Perhaps the biggest difference in fire suppression needs in the past quarter of a century has been automobile fires and lightweight construction. Today's automobiles contain on average, 900 pounds of plastics, this makes for very hot, smoky, and toxic fires. Today's building construction components can also create hotter fires and cause structures to collapse in as little as 15 minutes.
- **Emergency medical service** - In the early days of the fire service, medical treatment was not something firefighters were even aware of even though part of their primary mission involved saving lives. It has only been in the last 40 or so years that the fire service has embraced the role of emergency caregivers and in the last 25 years where we have seen a fundamental shift in emergency medical response falling predominantly into the hands of the nation's fire service. Almost all of today's firefighters are trained as emergency medical technicians. This means that they are trained in emergency life saving techniques and a strong understanding of the anatomy and physiology of the human body. There are 2 more levels of medical training above that of **emergency medical technician**. They are: intermediate and paramedic. **Intermediate** level allows firefighters to administer certain drugs intravenously. **Paramedic** is the highest level of medical

training for field operations paramedics. Firefighter/paramedics have advanced training in anatomy and physiology, pharmacology and have the ability to administer all types of lifesaving medications and techniques. All three levels of medical training are critical parts of an overall emergency medical services system in that patients can be stabilized for transport to a medical facility increasing the survivability rates for those requiring care. As our population increases and ages, this becomes more and more important to the mission of the fire service in protecting its citizens.

- **Rescue** - Today's firefighters are trained in a variety of technical rescue techniques. Firefighters are trained to execute rescue from heights where they may be required to rappel over the side of a cliff or steep embankment using ropes and pulleys to bring their victims to safety. Rescues from motor vehicle accidents have increased in recent years and firefighters work hard to keep up with the latest techniques to overcome hardened steel and other features in modern automobiles. There are times when firefighters are called upon to extricate a victim who has become entangled in machinery or been involved in a cave-in during trench operations. Some firefighters are also trained in confined space rescue techniques where victims may be trapped in tanks, pipes, underground vaults or machinery.
- **Specialty** - a major part of the fire service mission expanded on September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001. This was the largest coordinated attack on first responders in our history and added to the list of items today's firefighters face when rolling up on the scene of an incident. Firefighters work continuously to have a current understanding of terrorism and ways to handle the aftermath of an attack.
- **Hazardous Materials** - As part of commitment to protecting the environment, today's firefighters are trained in containment and control techniques and some have completed advanced training in immediate hazard mitigation and are known as hazardous materials technicians.
- **Fire prevention/public education** - As part of our mission to save lives, firefighters nationwide have made a commitment to preventing fires a priority. In the early 1970's, then President Nixon accepted a report he commissioned

entitled “America Burning”. This report documented the problems the country was having with the enormous cost being incurred by building fires nationwide. It also went into depth about the even greater cost of 6,000 plus lives being lost to the perils of fire. The report emphasized that a fundamental shift in the fire service must take place to include *preventing* fires from occurring as a way to save lives. The education and enforcement programs that have since been introduced, have drastically cut the incidence of fires substantially and in so doing, the number of fire fatalities. While the fire service has made significant strides in the reduction of building fires and more importantly the reduction of fire fatalities, there is still much work to be done and this continues to be a top priority. As we strive to prevent fires, our greatest weapon remains education of the public as a whole. Fire prevention month, originally just a week in October, has created a platform for educating the nation’s school children from an early age and that continues right up and to our senior citizen population, only now it is looked at as a year-round priority.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

**What does the typical day of a firefighter look like?** Firefighters here in Maynard work a 24-hour shift. The schedule runs from 8:00 AM to the following 8:00 AM. Typically firefighters begin arriving at the fire station between 7:00 AM and 7:30 AM. Once they get here, they relieve another firefighter. For example, a firefighter coming in that is scheduled to work as the driver of Engine 1 will come in, get a briefing from the current driver on the status of the truck. The briefing may involve what equipment is out of service or used the shift before, how much fuel is left in the truck, or any mechanical issues noted during the previous shift. The oncoming firefighter then ensures his personal equipment is in good working order and ready to go. Once the entire crew is on duty the shift typically has a meeting to outline the goals for the day, any special events, and assignments are given out at this time. Each oncoming firefighter is responsible for checking a particular piece of fire apparatus or equipment. This process takes a considerable amount of time each morning as there are many pieces of equipment and functions to inspect, test, and clear to ensure it is in good working order.

It may sound redundant to have this procedure repeated each day, but it is necessary to ensure all equipment is up to speed, and that everyone is familiar with how it works. After the truck and equipment checks have been completed daily cleaning duties are done. The kitchen, bathrooms, offices, and common areas are cleaned and the floors vacuumed and washed as necessary. The next phase of the day may be inspections of a building in the community, conducting a pre-fire plan, testing part of the municipal fire alarm system, conducting a training session, giving a fire prevention or public education presentation at a school or other venue. During this entire time the crews may need to respond to emergency calls for any type of emergency imaginable. Once a call is completed a written report is generated for the state and national reporting agencies, and if the response is to a medical emergency, two reports are generated. There are times when special projects need to be completed throughout the workday such as hose testing, ladder, or SCBA (Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus) maintenance or vehicle maintenance. Each captain and some of the firefighters are responsible for different areas of ancillary duties. This is necessary because we don't have the full time staff available to conduct some of these ancillary duties such as training, fire prevention, public education, communications, emergency medical training/planning etc.

**Why do you wear such heavy coats and pants?** The gear that firefighters wear is designed to protect them from heat. Many people think it is fire-proof. It is not - and it will and does burn. Temperatures in a room that is on fire can quickly reach 1200° F. The gear is designed to protect firefighters from the heat created not only when things burn, but the steam generated when water is applied. This is also why we tell people to stay low and crawl when escaping a fire in their home or elsewhere. The temperature difference between the floor of a building and the air space only 2 feet above it can be as much as 200° F!

**Is that an oxygen mask that you wear in a fire?** Actually the masks that we wear, Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA), give us compressed air. The air that we breathe every day contains about 21% oxygen. The air in our tanks is the same. Our masks give us a positive flow of air in our masks; this means that the pressure inside of our mask is a little bit higher than that of the atmosphere. It's kind of like walking into a

sealed building and getting that little blast of air. Our masks deliver this positive pressure to keep contaminants such as hydrogen cyanide, carbon monoxide, vinyl chloride and other toxic gases typically found in burning structures from entering our lungs. If we were to use oxygen in our masks, it could actually make the fire more intense.

**How much does all your gear and mask weigh?** A firefighter wearing all of the protective gear, including coat, pants, boots, gloves, hood, helmet, and SCBA has about an extra 55-60 pounds in addition to their own weight, and any other equipment they may be carrying. This makes it harder to climb stairs and ladders, but it necessary to keep firefighters from getting hurt.

**How much training does it take to be a firefighter?** This is a difficult question to answer because training never really stops. To meet the minimum requirements of a firefighter in Maynard, firefighters go through a 500 plus hour firefighting class and an emergency medical technician class that is about 180 hours. There are multiple classes that firefighters take to enhance their skills to become certified in other areas. For example, the specialty topics discussed earlier require more time in specialized training to become certified in those areas. Many of today's firefighters come to us with a college degree already in hand. That may be a 2-year associates degree or a 4-year bachelor, or in some cases, a master's degree. Once firefighters get on board, their education never really stops and if we totaled up all the hours of training and education it would be in the 1000's.

**What are the differences between an Engine and a Truck?** In the fire service a truck is a term used typically for an aerial ladder truck, or an aerial tower truck. An engine is what responds on most fire calls and basically converts to a giant pump once on the scene of a fire. One could consider it the original "transformer". Engines respond on any and all types of emergencies such as fires of all types, car accidents, hazardous materials spills, carbon monoxide alarms and even emergency medical calls.

**How heavy are the fire hoses you use in a fire?** Fire hoses are hard to hold on to because of the pressure that builds up in them from the fire engine. The average garden

hose probably flows about a gallon or so per minute, fire hoses are designed to flow up to 250 gallons per minutes with firefighters directing where the water goes by pointing the nozzle, just like pointing the nozzle of a garden hose at your grass. The more water that is moving through the hose, the more difficult it is to hold onto. This is why it takes more than 1 firefighter to move a hose inside a building to put a fire out. In some cases, it may take 3 or 4 firefighters when you factor in stairs and corners. Firefighters need to move these hoses very quickly to keep from getting hurt.

**What's the first thing you do at a fire?** The first firefighter on the scene will typically be a captain, and it is his/her job to do a quick size-up. This means that they do a quick evaluation to determine what is happening and to see if they may need more people to respond or if they can handle the problem without additional back-up. If they determine they have a fire, then life safety becomes the number 1 priority. They start by conducting a search for potential victims and, if found, they quickly remove them. After victims have been removed, or it is determined there is nobody in the building, then they work on putting the fire out. Sometimes this is done at the same time.

**Why do you cut holes in the roof of a building on fire?** As we discussed earlier, fires get very hot, very quickly. In fact, a fire doubles in size every minute it is left untouched. Unlike television, real fires are almost impossible to see inside of buildings, the atmosphere gets very hot and very brown or black quickly, so much so that you cannot even see your hand in front of your face. This is another reason why firefighters crawl. When we cut holes in the roof, it allows much of the heat, smoke and toxic gases to be released. This is called venting, and once a building has been vented, and the heat, smoke, and toxic gases are lifted up and out, it becomes much easier and quicker to extinguish the fire. Believe it or not, this also limits fire spread and causes less damage to the structure. While it looks like a lot of damage has been created by cutting a big hole in the roof, this actually makes it easier and quicker to repair the building.

**Why do you send an Engine to a medical emergency?** Great question! Medical emergencies are triaged or sorted based on the severity of the emergency. Basically we break them down into 2 distinct categories, basic life support (BLS), and advanced life support (ALS). A basic life support call might be a broken wrist or slight fever, i.e.,

anything not necessarily considered life threatening but still serious. An advanced life support call is anything considered life threatening. Examples would be a suspected heart attack, stroke, a diabetic emergency, or car accident, just to name a few. When we are dispatched to an advanced life support emergency the engine is dispatched to provide extra help, or in some cases, provide initial medical treatment. Engines also respond to some basic life support emergencies, depending on the situation. There may be times when the ambulance is at another emergency and we are relying on a mutual aid ambulance. Our firefighters will respond and render aid until the ambulance arrives for transport. On other occasions, the ambulance crew may need assistance with lifting a patient or removing them from a small space. Since all firefighters here in Maynard are all trained at the EMT level, they essentially are interchangeable at an emergency incident. In fact, they participate in a rotation so that everyone works on the Ambulance on a regular basis. There are many aspects to a good pre-hospital emergency medical system and to accomplish all of these, you need extra sets of trained hands at an emergency. In many cases, an extra firefighter might go to the hospital with the ambulance crew to provide help while they are on the way to the hospital. Extra people might be needed to perform CPR, collect information from family members, and assist with setting up for intravenous insertions, giving medications, and even consoling family members. I have never been to a true advanced life support emergency where extra people were not needed. The marriage between fire and EMS was a natural fit when the transition started years ago because firefighters were already in a service driven industry, and on top of that, were already located in the community. In larger communities, emergency services are spaced out in fire stations to keep response times down.

**What medical training do firefighters have?** First responder training (or in our case, firefighter training for medical emergencies) is broken down into 3 broad categories. These are *Emergency Medical Technician-basic level*, *Emergency Medical Technician-intermediate level* and *Emergency Medical Technician-paramedic level*. The basic level is for responders to triage and treat basic medical emergencies, the intermediate and paramedic levels are more advanced and the higher up a firefighter goes with their

training, the more advanced pre-hospital care they can give to patients. The ability to give lifesaving drugs in the field is a real key in the long-term prognosis of a patient.

**Do firefighters live at the fire station?** The answer to this is yes and no. While firefighters are on-duty, they do live at the fire station. Maynard's Firefighter's work 24-hour shifts, that means they come on-duty at around 7:30 in the morning and work until the next day at about the same time. While they do get to sleep in the fire station at night between calls, it is *not* a restful sleep. Most firefighters spend a majority of their career working on a shift and can attest first hand, that sleep in a firehouse is a tough thing to come by. When firefighters are at the station, it may be during Christmas, Thanksgiving or other holidays, as well as anniversaries, birthday parties, and other family events that we sometimes take for granted.

**What are the components to an up-to-date and modern fire station?** The fire service is arguably the most dynamic profession in the World. Conditions change in a heartbeat and the mission of what firefighters do is ever increasing. An up-to-date fire station is crucial to helping to meet that mission. Some components of a modern fire station include:

- Enough apparatus floor space to fit equipment needed to meet the needs of the community. The space needed varies from truck to truck, but it is recommended that there is sufficient space in between trucks for people to walk through safely and to have sufficient space for turnout gear and vehicle exhaust systems. This means a walk through area of between 8 and 12 feet. There also needs to be sufficient space from floor to ceiling so that apparatus can easily fit into its designated parking area. There should also be sufficient room above a piece of fire apparatus for firefighters to safely stand on top to check equipment, re-pack hose, make necessary repairs etc. ***Currently Maynard's Fire Station does not come close to meeting these criteria. In fact there are instances where bumpers are actually touching in order to get apparatus to fit while still closing the overhead doors. Because of space restrictions we need to store some department vehicles outside in the weather reducing their availability during emergencies. Our aerial ladder was custom built to fit into this***

***existing space. This not only limits the capability of the truck, but also adds to the cost.***

- There should be a secure area for gear storage away from the apparatus floor so that fumes, dirt and cleaning chemicals are not absorbed into the fabric of the protective clothing. Gear should also be segregated from living areas as it does contain residue and contaminants from all previous emergency calls to which it has responded. Firefighter gear can and should be washed periodically and when it becomes extremely soiled, but it is impractical and actually harmful to wash it at the conclusion of *each* emergency response. Therefore, keeping it stored in a secure area where it cannot be further contaminated, or it cannot contaminate anyone or anything else is an important safety and expense issue. ***The current storage of Maynard's protective clothing is in 2 different areas. First, it is on the apparatus floor behind and beside apparatus where it is exposed to diesel fumes and cleaning products that will contribute to a shortened lifespan. Gear is also stored in areas with friable asbestos (clear contaminant). The second location for spare or unassigned gear is in the old holding cells which are also part of the physical fitness area.***
- Firefighters are exposed to all kinds of chemical and biologic agents and a secure area for decontamination should be designated off of the apparatus floor to keep harmful agents away from living areas and food areas. This area should be equipped with facilities to decontaminate not only people, but equipment and clothing. ***While Maynard does have a machine to decontaminate turn-out gear, it has no suitable facilities for cleaning people without bringing them first to the living areas of the fire station. Nor does the department have a place suitable for drying gear without exposing it to the aforementioned hazards.***
- Because of some of the in-house repairs done in fire stations today, each should be equipped with a clean-room for working on equipment such as self-contained breathing apparatus, radios, air monitoring equipment, etc. Conversely, there should be an area to take care of equipment utilizing gas powered engines like saws, generators, extrication power units, and fans. This should also include a

safe and properly ventilated area for the storage of flammable liquids where it will not be absorbed by personal protective equipment or taken into the air system used for living space or to fill self-contained breathing apparatus bottles.

***Currently Maynard has no such set-up, items are stored where they will fit and work is done on the apparatus floor in between trucks or by pulling trucks out onto the apron. Cleaning supplies and flammable liquids are stored together in the same area where radios are kept and friable asbestos exists. The compressor for filling SCBA bottles is in the same area as some of the cleaning products.***

- Today's firefighters carry an additional 55-60 pounds of gear and up to 40 or so pounds of equipment with them when they jump off the truck. The largest contributor to firefighter line of duty deaths remains cardiac arrest. The largest contributors to the 70,000 plus injuries firefighters sustain annually are sprains and strains. For these reasons physical fitness is more important now than ever. A fire station should be capable of housing physical fitness equipment in such a manner that it can be walked around safely where there are no slips, trip, or fall hazards present. The size of this area will vary, but somewhere in the area of 800-1400 square feet would be sufficient. ***One of Maynard's firefighters wrote and was awarded a grant in 2008 for exercise equipment. Currently it is stored in multiple areas and because of space constraints, does not have adequate aisle areas between equipment. Based on the equipment we already own, an area of between 1000' and 1200' feet should be dedicated to a fitness area.***
- In-service training is a huge part of a firefighter's daily activities. Modern fire stations should have a facility large enough to accommodate 30 or so people for training or meeting purposes. This facility should be equipped with adequate areas for writing surfaces and chairs, as well as dry-erase boards, projection screens, PowerPoint monitors and storage of supplies related to training. Such a facility should also be equipped with computer capabilities that allow for common practice training methods that are efficient, and cost-effective, or possibly an alternate emergency operation center. ***Currently the Maynard Fire Department***

***has no such facility and in-service training is conducted in a common room/hallway with a folding table holding a portable projector and a single lap-top. There are no tables or desks for note taking or test taking.***

- Adequate locker-room facilities are needed as part of a modern fire station. There are times when extra firefighters are called in for coverage, or firefighters return from fires or medical calls as well as participation in a fitness program necessitate a facility where multiple personnel can use it at once. Additionally, segregated facilities for males and females should be in place. ***Currently the Maynard Fire Department has two bathrooms off of the fitness area and two bathrooms in the living/office area. These do not currently meet the needs of a modern fire department facility and the bathrooms in the living/office area are not gender specific.***
- The heart of every firehouse is the kitchen. This is where most daily shift meetings take place, coffee breaks are taken, and meals are prepared and eaten. It should be capable of housing several firefighters on and off-duty (meetings and training sessions), and it should be equipped with facilities capable of preparing large amounts of food in the event of firefighter hold-over or other types of events or occasions. Kitchens should also be low maintenance and include space, kitchen tools, and items that allow for adequate food preparation, storage areas, and a non-slip surface on the floor. ***The Maynard Fire Departments current facilities fall well short of these standards. The plumbing is deficient and in some places the walls are stained from roof leaks over the years.***
- Firefighters, while busy a majority of the time during their work day, do in fact spend 24 or more hours in the fire station at a time and a place for relaxation, studying or watching television should be provided. ***The Maynard Fire Department does have an area for this, but it is very small and is in a high traffic area.***
- Today's fire stations are also business offices; interactions are conducted daily with the general public, contractors, homeowners, and vendors. Office spaces sufficient for conducting such business, as well as facilities for private offices, are

needed for organizational efficiency. Consideration also needs to be given to our customers with disabilities. There are times when a consultation may be needed or a set of plans reviewed and firehouses should be able to accommodate people with disabilities. ***Currently the Maynard Fire Department does not comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act, nor does it have space adequate for consultation or plans review with our customers when needed.***

- The location of fire stations is also crucial in that the safety of a community's citizens is paramount. Being able to exit onto a main road with good sightlines is critical to reducing the chances of fire apparatus striking private vehicles or pedestrians. Adequate parking for employees and customers is also a major consideration. And, lastly, a station should be situated so that it has the most effective response to the area it covers in the shortest amount of time possible. ***The current location of the Maynard Fire Department is not ideal in that it has a busy intersection adjacent to it, and has insufficient parking for staff and certainly customers wishing to conduct business.***
- General safety of a fire station is important. Adequate lighting, aisle space and stairwells are necessary. Facilities should be equipped with efficient and properly working heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems. ***Maynard's Fire Station is clearly not meeting these criteria. It has 2 identified roof leaks, and the heating system is unbalanced and not efficient. There is no central air system, and window units are placed throughout the building with portable fans placed strategically around the building to move air. The plumbing is inadequate for the building and the roof is such that a snow blower needs to be brought to the roof to clear it during winter conditions for fear it will not support the snow load. There are multiple areas where asbestos is not only visible, but on 2 occasions since 2010, has been disturbed to the point where a private clean-up company was brought in to take care of the problem.***

**What other things do firefighters do beside respond to emergencies?** Firefighters base their jobs on 3 different priorities; *Responding to emergencies, Preparing to respond to emergencies and everything else.* We have already touched on responding

to emergencies so we will now focus on the other priorities here. First, preparing to respond to emergencies means things like checking the fire apparatus to ensure it is in good working order, checking personal protective equipment and SCBA, checking all the power tools like saws, fans, generators etc. This also includes checking radios and all medical equipment to make sure it is in a constant state of readiness. All of these things are done every single day. Other tasks that fall into the preparing for emergencies category would be training on new equipment, for medical emergencies, refreshing skills, conducting building walk-through's to ensure familiarity when needed, repair broken equipment and more. The *other* category is inspections of smoke and carbon monoxide detectors in residential and commercial occupancies to determine if fire codes are being met, testing and repair of the municipal fire alarm system, training of firefighters, the public education of school children, seniors and civic groups, record-keeping for incident reports, vehicle and equipment maintenance, purchasing, emergency medical service training, reports, station maintenance among many other things. All of these ancillary tasks are performed by on-duty staff. The typical day of a Maynard Firefighter is busy all day performing all of these tasks *and* responding to emergencies.

**What is the make-up of the Maynard Fire Department?** The Maynard Fire Department runs 4 platoons of firefighters. Each platoon is led by a captain who supervises 4 firefighters in the platoon. The captain makes the decisions about who is responsible for what apparatus and what tasks for which each individual is responsible. Each captain is also responsible for different duties or tasks that need to be accomplished such as training, fire prevention, emergency medical services, and fire department communications. Firefighters have also stepped up to assist in other areas such as public education, vehicle maintenance, SCBA maintenance, and different committees needed for various purchases or projects. The administrative group is comprised of the Fire Chief and Administrative Assistant. The roster breaks down as follows:

Fire Chief - Anthony Stowers

Administrative Assistant - Nancy Brooks

**Group 1**

Captain - William Soar

Firefighter - Jim MacGillivray

Firefighter - Craig Desjardins

Firefighter - Adam Nichols

Firefighter - Shawn Boulette

**Group 2**

Captain – Walter Latta

Firefighter - Jeff Boudreau

Firefighter - Patrick Hakey

Firefighter - John King

Firefighter – Sean Layton

**Group 3**

Captain - Peter Morrison

Firefighter - Gerry Byrne

Firefighter - Jack Primiano

Firefighter - Mark Latta

Firefighter - Daniel Gould

**Group 4**

Captain – Sean Kiley

Firefighter - David Hillman

Firefighter - Tim Gray

Firefighter – Mark Tomyl

Firefighter – Angela Lawless

**What types of topics do you cover with public education?** This is dependent upon the audience, but typically with small children the main points we try to get across are not to be afraid of firefighters if they are searching in their homes and not to hide. As the audience gets a little older we talk about things like stop, drop and roll how to crawl under smoke, how to check for heat on their door, how to develop and execute an exit plan with their family or guardian. We teach them to remind the adults in their home to

check their smoke detectors and change their batteries. When the audience is adults we tend to talk about smoke detector placement, carbon monoxide detector placement, electrical safety, medication safety, slip, trip-and-fall hazards among other topics.

**Does the Fire Department look at alternative funding methods in an effort to keep costs down locally?** The short answer is yes, we do. The biggest contributor to grants is a program started in the wake of September 11, 2001 by then President Bush. It is called the Assistance to Firefighters Grant and it has multiple options for funding fire department projects. The areas are Vehicles and Equipment, Fire Prevention and Safety (FP&S) and Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER). Each grant is charged with a different area of funding. Maynard has applied for and received grants under the Vehicles and Equipment program. In fact, the fitness equipment here in the station as well as a Thermal Imaging Camera were purchased with that grant money. We currently have three grant requests in and are waiting to hear if we have been awarded any of them. The first grant is a Fire Prevention and Safety Grant, the second is a request for a new engine and the third is for firefighting equipment and radios. We are also writing a grant right now that we hope to obtain to increase our on-call firefighter group. We will certainly apply for more grants in the future, particularly with expensive items such as fire apparatus and major equipment like self-contained breathing apparatus. It should be noted, however, that this is a very competitive process and the awards are based on a community's need because of financial concerns. Nationwide there are many communities more hard pressed for cash than perhaps we are here. The other major obstacle we have purchasing fire apparatus is that only a small percentage of the overall grant allocation is reserved for apparatus purchases and, again, it is based upon need. There are certainly other grants out there to be considered, and we check those periodically, however, those types of grants are usually for specific areas or items and may not perhaps be what we need.

**When there is only a small fire, why do so many fire engines respond?**

A "Standard Response Plan" policy is utilized on all responses. This system is a pre-designated formula that determines the amount and type of equipment sent to the incident. In Maynard we send Engine 1, Ladder 1, Engine 2, Ambulance 1, as well as

automatic mutual aid if we have a confirmed fire. It is much easier to cancel apparatus that may no longer be needed than it is to request it once you decide it is required.

**Is the Maynard Fire Department affiliated with other organizations?** Yes, the Maynard Fire Department is a member of District 14 here in Massachusetts. District 14 is comprised of fire departments from 22 communities who make up a mutual aid group for all types of incident responses. We are also affiliated with the Fire Chiefs Association of Massachusetts and the International Association of Fire Chiefs. Maynard's firefighters are affiliated with the International Association of Firefighters. By being members in these groups we have fellow fire service professionals to help bounce problems, ideas and solutions off of. In today's tough economic times, re-inventing the wheel is not only impractical, but inefficient. In many cases a problem we encounter has already been handled by someone else who can help give advice.

**Why do we need to recall off-duty firefighters?** Firefighting is very manpower intensive. To properly initiate an attack on a structure fire, national studies recommend 13-15 firefighters to be on scene to do a proper job. Since we only have 5 personnel on duty, we recall all of our available off duty personnel when a call for a building fire is received. In addition, mutual aid may also be utilized.

Personnel are also recalled when we render mutual aid to other communities. In order to provide properly staffed apparatus, 4 of the on-duty firefighters respond immediately when called, just as other communities do for us. This leaves our Station unmanned, so personnel are called back for protection of the town. By calling in all available personnel this provides rapid coverage, plus additional personnel if the crew that responded out-of-town requires additional assistance.

**Why do some fire trucks park down the street from a fire?**

Citizens may see fire apparatus parked down the street from an incident for two primary reasons:

First, in situations when an EMS scene is deemed unsafe due to a potentially violent patient or there are dangerous drugs involved, engines carrying

firefighters may “stage” until members of the police department have secured (made safe) the scene.

Secondly, on fire calls, engine and truck companies may stage until they have been provided an assignment by an “incident commander.” Because firefighters work as a team, it is critical that they communicate where their resources are best used. This cannot take place until a “triage” of the building has been completed to identify the hazards associated with the fire

### **Why does the Fire Department bring the fire engine just for a simple inspection?**

Because we don’t have a full-time fire prevention officer, inspections are done by the duty captain or the duty crew. They take the engine in case they are pulled away for an emergency.

### **Why do you block traffic lanes at auto accidents, sometimes more lanes than one?**

This is done to ensure that emergency responders on the scene, specifically firefighters, paramedics and police officers, are protected from being struck by passing cars. Every year hundreds of emergency responder are struck, injured, or even killed by passing cars at an emergency scene or during a traffic stop or medical response.

### **What should I do when I see or hear an emergency vehicle coming towards me, or behind me when I'm driving?**

When it is safe, you should pull to the right and slow down or preferably come to a complete stop and let the fire apparatus pass by. Care should be taken to ensure that all apparatus responding have passed before you pull back into traffic, many times there will be an engine and an ambulance responding and sometimes a police cruiser.

### **Why is a Maltese Cross the symbol of the fire service?**

According to many sources, we need to go back to 1113 AD.

This is when a special group of knights were founded in Jerusalem by a Benedictine monk. These eleventh century knights, who were serving in a Jerusalem hospital, became known as the Order of Knights Hospitaller and later became the Knights of St. John.

This charitable organization shared the compassion that today's Firefighters demonstrate by caring for the ill with great kindness. Later they assisted the knights of Crusaders in their efforts to win back the Holy Land. As the Knights of St. John and Knights of Crusaders defended the city walls, their fierce opponents who were called the Saracens, staged an aggressive attack and hurled fire bombs containing highly flammable liquids. As the knights banded together they were forced to fight the flames of their attackers. It was during this intense firefight that the courage of our firefighting ancestors was demonstrated. The knights banded together, risked life and limb for their brothers and fought the flames, and saved many fellow knights. The knights were later recognized for their bravery during the epic battle located on the Island of Malta.

### **Common Terms/Definitions**

**Automatic Aid - This** is an agreement between (2) or more organizations, where response to a specific type of incident or geographic area in a neighboring community becomes automatic. This might be because of a department's proximity to a target hazard or target area, or it may be because on staffing issues a community is experiencing.

**NFPA:** The National Fire Protection Agency, they are a non-profit agency created in the 1890's. They are charged with developing consensus standards for the fire service, electrical and, in some cases, chemical and petroleum industries. The NFPA develops standards for almost every type of situation the fire service can encounter. While it is impossible to meet every standard, fire departments nationally strive to meet as many as possible. Most of the standards that the NFPA develops for fire departments revolve around safety and in many cases were developed after an unfortunate tragedy occurred.

**LODD:** This stands for Line of Duty Death. This is when a firefighter dies in the performance of their duties. Although this number has dropped in recent years because of a more pro-active approach by fire departments in part brought on by NFPA standards, around 100 firefighters die annually in the line of duty. More alarming is that about 70,000 injuries occur annually to firefighters around the country.

**CISD:** This stands for Critical Incident Stress Debriefing. Firefighters are at times exposed to horrific events that may have an adverse long-term effect on them. CISD helps firefighters deal with issues that may cause long-term problems. There are times when firefighters spend long periods of time dealing with emergencies that may be occurring all over the area, even when the same issues may be facing their own families. This creates a very stressful atmosphere for firefighters to work in at times and CISD may be needed to help firefighters cope with situations such as this.

**MCI-** Mass casualty incident, by definition this is an incident where medical treatment is needed for (2) or more patients. Realistically, if we get above (3) requiring advanced life support treatment, we would consider that an MCI. An example of how this may come about is a severe motor vehicle accident, natural disaster, terrorist incident, hazardous materials release, or building collapse, to name but a few.

**Mutual Aid:** Mutual aid is established via agreements made between neighboring or area communities to provide help in certain situations when it is requested as opposed to automatic aid which occurs as soon as the alarm is received. Most communities nationwide cannot afford the staffing that may be required for a certain amount of their emergency incidents annually. The most obvious example of this would be responses to structural fires. The NFPA recommends a minimum of thirteen firefighting personnel to be on the scene of a building fire as part of the initial assignment. Even in some communities that can initially send that amount of people to a structural fire, most would still need *mutual aid* help backfilling their stations to handle other calls for service. Other examples may include a serious motor vehicle accident involving multiple cars, an industrial accident such as a confined space rescue, and certainly wild land fires, just to name a few. In Maynard we have agreements with our neighboring communities to

receive and provide mutual aid. Statistics show we give mutual aid about as much as we receive it.

**Run Cards:** This document outlines what is sent to a particular incident and is broken down into alarms. This is where mutual aid is outlined specifically so that each community knows ahead of time what resources they will need or what resources they will be asked to contribute. A typical alarm consists of (2) engines and (1) ladder truck. Sometimes, there may be a special piece of equipment spelled out such as a heavy rescue or water tanker truck. Maynard has just re-vamped their run cards out to (10) alarms for both fire and ambulance responses for Mass Casualty Incidents.

**Box Alarm:** As mentioned previously, a “Box” is the red box mounted on a building or utility pole. This is a telegraph system that when tripped, sends a coded signal directly to the fire station or other central point. Each box is designated by a specific number and when the box comes in, it taps out that number. For example, the box number for the Maynard Town Hall is 1116. This means that we will hear bell tap out this box, and it will do that 4 times. This tells the firefighters that there may be a problem at that location. These boxes are operated by either pulling the hook manually, or when a fire alarm system is tied to it, trips the system. Using the Town Hall example again, if there is a problem in the Town Hall and a smoke detector or the sprinkler system is activated, it will trip the box associated with it and send the correct signal. The Maynard Fire Department also assigns a Box Number when there is a confirmed fire. For example, if we have a fire in a private home with no box assigned to it, upon arrival the captain may say “Strike a box for a working fire”. This is box 44.

### **Summary:**

Clearly, the fire service and the job of a firefighter have evolved over the years. Today’s firefighters are trained to provide the best customer service possible in almost every conceivable situation to its citizenry. There are certainly many components to an efficient fire department and this manual barely scratches the surface of what your fire department does on a daily basis. We certainly hope this has been informative and we

welcome any other questions you may have, or clarification on anything you have seen so far. Thank you for taking the time to read this document and for your continued support of the Maynard Fire Department!

Yours, in safety,

The Maynard Fire Department!