

Cuyahoga Falls Fire Department



Annual Report

2016

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Introduction

“2015 was the busiest year the Fire Department has seen in its 178 years. After a decade of averaging 7,766 calls per year, 2015 showed 8,377 calls for service, an increase of 7.3%. Not a new type of call, nor heavily increased in a given area, but increased across all call types.”

The above paragraph began the 2015 Annual Report. 2016 was strikingly similar with 8,375 calls for service. Another busy year for the fire service in Cuyahoga Falls.

The Mission Statement of the Fire Department is as follows:

The mission of the Cuyahoga Falls Fire Department is to provide the highest quality professional emergency service, fire prevention and life safety education to our community. We resolve to do this within a framework of empathy, compassion and dedication to the citizens we serve, as well as each other.

The Department promises to provide the absolute best service possible to our citizens. And we will continue to so will empathy, compassion, and dedication!



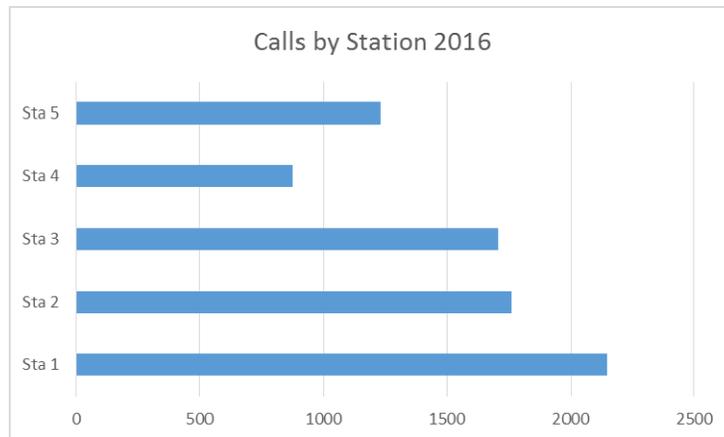
The Department

The Fire Department has provided continuous service to the citizens of Cuyahoga Falls since 1837, and the Village of Silver Lake since 2008.

With an average response time of 4 minutes and 27 seconds to all calls and 4 minutes and 15 seconds to all emergency calls. The Cuyahoga Falls Fire Department is 60% better than the national average of 10 minutes. Response time improved in 2015 over 2014, as call volume increased, and improved further in 2016.

Responding quickly is only part of the service; taking care of the citizen is the greater responsibility. Our customer service philosophy is simple; be nice! The well-being of a patient is as vital to their recovery as being treated medically or rescued from a threatening situation. Our quick response, combined with well-trained medical and fire skills and great customer service utilizing modern state of art, evidence based medicine, has made the difference between life and death for many members of this community.

Station 1 remains the busiest in the City of Cuyahoga Falls for nearly a decade. The 2016 district response numbers are reflected below.



The Cuyahoga Falls Fire Department maintains mutual aid agreements with surrounding communities and an automatic aid agreement with Akron. In 2016, The Cuyahoga Falls Fire Department delivered mutual/automatic aid 70 times, while receiving mutual/automatic aid 38 times. This is down 19% from 2015, when CFFD gave M/A 83 times and received aid 47 times. Mutual and automatic aid continues our efforts to improve service through regional cooperation and sharing of resources. This valuable asset is priceless in providing resources, not needed daily, for the unusually busy moments or large events.

A metric reviewed is the number of calls that occur simultaneously. In Cuyahoga Falls that number was 49% for 4122 calls in 2016. This number has been 45% in 2014, and 50% in 2015.

Totals by Station and Month

	<u>Jan</u>	<u>Feb</u>	<u>Mar</u>	<u>Apr</u>	<u>May</u>	<u>Jun</u>	<u>Jul</u>	<u>Aug</u>	<u>Sep</u>	<u>Oct</u>	<u>Nov</u>	<u>Dec</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Station 1	196	204	214	211	204	183	199	189	190	197	180	185	2352	28.07
Station 2	150	127	143	146	171	162	170	148	159	148	146	164	1834	21.89
Station 3	131	125	135	136	137	137	133	149	141	174	148	129	1675	19.99
Station 4	63	68	85	68	85	96	103	109	83	76	90	79	1005	11.99
Station 5	112	113	122	109	140	118	142	140	121	125	100	114	1456	17.38
By Month	657	640	702	673	741	703	751	742	700	722	670	676	8375	

The Department received a new fire engine, located at Station 1 with the first “center mounted pump” to help keep operators out of harm’s way while working on Route 8.



A new ambulance was purchased and located at the busiest Station (#1) with a hydraulic cot and power load system. This system is working well to reduce injuries to paramedics while loading and unloading patients.



The exhaust capture system is now closer to complete across the City, reducing the harmful products of diesel and gasoline combustion in the Stations.



Honor Guard

Another fine presence that Cuyahoga Falls Fire Department has in the community is the Honor Guard, which stands ready to honor retirees and the fallen. In 2016, the Honor Guard marched in the Memorial Day Parade.

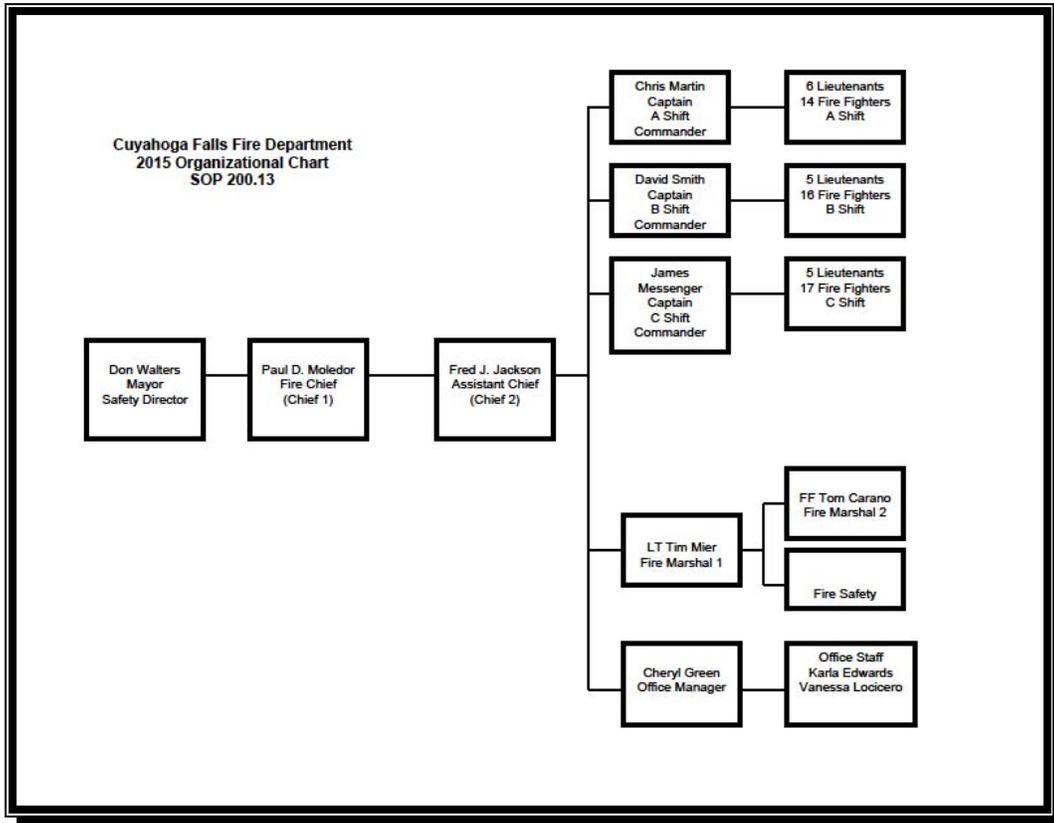


The Honor Guard Stood and provided for the posting of the American Flag at Immaculate Heart of Mary for the funeral of retired Chief of Police Lou Dirker. The Honor Guard stood for our retired member Fire Fighter Robert Hinkle. The Honor Guard also stood for Fire Fighter Jack Hurley of Valley View Fire Department and mechanic to Cuyahoga Falls Fire Department through Finley Fire.



Organization

The Fire Department is organized as below.



Members Fire Fighter Turley, Captain Messenger, and Captain Smith retired in 2016 with a total of 91 years of service to the City of Cuyahoga Falls.

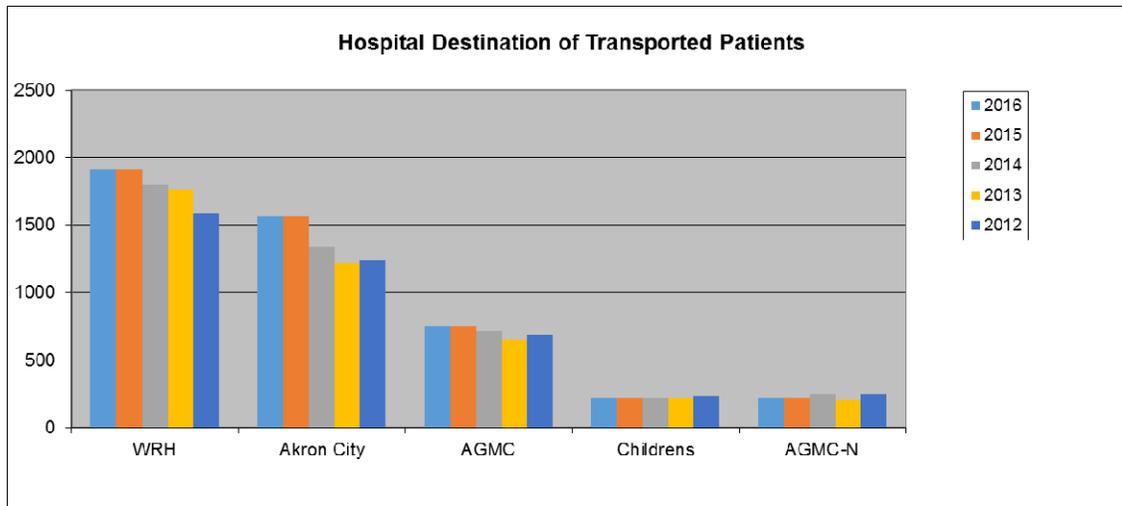
Seven new firefighters were hired, three Fire Fighters were promoted to Lieutenant, and two Lieutenants were promoted to Captain.

The Department conducted four upper level National Incident Management System courses for personnel.

Emergency Medical Service

One of the major functions of the Cuyahoga Falls Fire Department is to provide Emergency Medical Service. In 2016, **6,174 EMS incidents accounted for 74% of the total incidents**. The aspects of EMS are multi-faceted; in-the-field triage, the administration of medication and/or medical treatments, and emergency transportation to a local hospital when the symptoms indicate. As a result of EMS incidents, **4,581 patients were transported to various facilities in 2016**. More than \$1.4 million of revenue was generated by ambulance billing for the City.

Patients were transported to their hospital of choice as listed below.



Under the medical direction of Dr. Michael Beeson, the Cuyahoga Falls Fire Department operates from an aggressive, standing order driven protocol, based heavily on the discretion and judgment of paramedics on the scene. To prepare our medics, Dr. Beeson and his staff provide monthly continuing medical education, including a review of EMS calls and a lecture series.

Fire Department members are provided specialty training to include Advanced Cardiac Life Support, use of interosseous drills, intubation clinics, and other topics as needed. All paramedics also participate in an innovative, on-line CME training known as 24/7. Topics provide medics with curriculum tied to the monthly CME lectures and include a written test for each topic. The Fire Department, along with Dr. Beeson, assists the police department in meeting medical direction for the City Jail.

The past four years, Western Reserve Hospital conducted regular monthly training to assist our paramedics in providing the best possible pre-hospital care. In addition to in-house training, WRH provided topic experts in various areas of medicine.

For the second year, the Department paramedics continued training on the skills necessary to address the tragic situations created by an active shooter in a public place. This training was conducted in conjunction with our Police Department.

Electronic Charting

Paramedics began Pre-Hospital Electronic Charting in January of 2016. This program is the beginning of full integration of patient data from time of 911 call to handoff at the hospital, and greatly enhances information used to assist persons in their time of need.

A newer Paramedic protocol with the newest available medications was completed, trained to, and implemented. This protocol was created with Dr. Michael Beeson, Akron General Medical Center, and the Cleveland Clinic. This is now embedded in the electronic charting system, increasing efficiency and helping to deliver the highest level of care.

EMS Detail

Cancelled	98
DOA without Transport	85
Invalid Assist	128
No Patient Found	843
Patient Refused Treatment	500
Standby Only	7
Transported	4581
Treated and Released	848

Transported	2513
Non-Transported	4581

Medical Patient	5076
Trauma Patient	1075

ALS Level Care	2570
ALS II Level Care	62
BLS Level Care	2316





Fire Service

Another major function of the Department is to provide fire/rescue-related services. Engines and/or ladder trucks reside at all five stations, prepared with equipment to provide the best level of service to our citizens. Every incident presents a different challenge for a fire fighter. The Cuyahoga Falls Fire Department continues to train in various venues to ensure members maintain necessary skills. For example, community geography is studied, Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus methods reviewed, and ladder evolutions are conducted. Firefighter safety and fire command topics are trained regularly. Every month, training is posted with a specific reading assignment and drills to be conducted. Specific incidents are reviewed to learn from the experiences, and specialized training is conducted in rope rescue, confined space, trench, collapse, Hazardous Materials, and water rescue tactics. In all, the training conducted by the Fire

Department exceeds the State requirements and all members maintain firefighting and paramedic certifications.

In 2016, the Cuyahoga Falls Fire Department responded to \$7,358,305 worth of property involved in fire, of that 84.3% was saved, for a value of \$6,203,212 of property and businesses saved from the ravages of fire.



Fire Prevention and Education

Fire losses continue to remain low across all occupancies. The community involvement of firefighters and fire prevention members has served as a mechanism for keeping fire losses low in our community.

Fire Prevention still remains the most effective method for reducing fires across the United States and also remains the most effective way of reducing firefighter injuries and deaths. This is supported by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST).

Continued openings at Portage Crossings brought involvement from fire prevention members. They were involved in plan review, the installation, testing and final inspections for fire protection equipment, and they established relationships with the many new business owners now operating in our city. As development around the City continues, so does our involvement with creating a proactive participation with that development.

Blossom Music Center remains a considerable focus of the Fire Prevention Bureau. Every year the Fire Marshal meets with the senior staff of Blossom to review and discuss the coming year's events. The Fire Marshal and staff deal with live performances involving fireworks and pyrotechnical effects. To ensure public safety, many hours of preparation are required for a successful event. The preparation includes review of the types of devices to be used in a performance. If during review and testing it is determined that the pyrotechnic effect may pose a risk to the public, it is removed from the show.

The roles of fire prevention are varied and unique to our City, and members continue to expand their knowledge to stay current on the issue facing public safety. We will continue to work at using prevention as an effective tool for a safe community.

Fire companies were responsible for **1715 commercial inspections during 2016**. The fire companies perform these inspections for several reasons. Most importantly, company inspections allow the firefighters to be familiar with the building layout, increasing their survivability in a fire and their ability to rescue those in need. Additionally, inspections reduce the potential for fire, and limit the fire growth and development by removing unsafe practices and hazards. The company inspection program also allows us to place emphasis on targeting areas in need of additional support to help the business owners maintain a safe, valuable business.

These companies also installed over 120 smoke detectors in homes across the City and Silver Lake.



Community Events

The Fire Department continues to support life safety initiatives by providing the Safety Town Program, with the assistance and support of other City Departments, businesses, and citizens. This program teaches 200 in-bound kindergarten students many safety lessons they will carry through life.





In 2016, the Fire Department, with tremendous partnering from other City Departments, private business, citizens, and Western Reserve Hospital, conducted the fourth annual First Responders Appreciation Day. This event was created to recognize the many men and women in uniform for the service they provide both domestic and foreign. The event drew over 5,000 persons to a family-friendly, fun event on the mall.

Special Operations Teams

The City of Cuyahoga Falls has many special hazards that require the specific and specially trained response of the Special Operations Teams. These hazards include industrial confined spaces and chemicals, cliffs in the Gorge Park, construction trenches, various impoundments, and the swift waters of the Cuyahoga River. The members of the Cuyahoga Falls Fire Department Special Operations Teams responded to various calls in 2016. These responses include: searches for lost persons, rescue of persons from stalled elevators, rescue of persons from swift or icy waters, investigation of Hazardous Materials incidents, and SWAT Medical events.

Swiftwater training and continuing education was conducted to safely provide care for persons in peril in the river.

In addition to the responses within the City, Cuyahoga Falls Fire Department members also participated with the Summit County Special Operations Team.

Special Operations Calls by Type 2016

Search for person on land	15
Search for person in water	1
Extricate from a vehicle	2
Rescue from stalled elevator	7
Rope Rescue	2
Swift Water Rescue	3
Haz-Mat Investigations	25

Grants

The Cuyahoga Falls Fire Department actively researches grant opportunities. In the past 10 years, more than \$1 million has been awarded to the Fire Department by various private organizations and governmental agencies. Grants are utilized to purchase state-of-the-art equipment and supplies.

The Fire Department administration worked throughout the year to complete all required information for a disaster recovery grant from the State of Ohio with tremendous help from all other City Departments. This helped cover most of the cost for over \$1 million of uninsured loss from the flooding in May 2014.





Silver Lake

Since 2008, the Cuyahoga Falls Fire Department has been delivering Fire/EMS /Rescue service to the Village of Silver Lake, and installing smoke detectors upon request. The Village of Silver Lake contracts with the City of Cuyahoga Falls for this service.

211 Silver Lake Calls in 2016

- 6 Fire/Explosion, Overheat
- 139 EMS
- 8 Good Intent
- 19 False Alarms
- 12 Hazardous Condition
- 27 Miscellaneous Service Calls



Conclusion

In 2016, the Cuyahoga Falls Fire Department provided the highest quality of professional emergency service to our community. This was done within a framework of empathy, compassion and dedication to the citizens we serve. The Fire Department promises to continue to review and renew every aspect of its service to deliver only the best to our community, while keeping it safe in 2017.

