



## **Westhampton Fire Department**

48 Stage Road, Westhampton, Ma, 01027

Telephone: (413) 529-7181

Fire Chief: Christopher W. Norris

Deputy Chiefs: Steve Holt, Lee Douchkoff, John Bridgman

**August 13, 2012**

### **2007 Annual Fire Department Report**

The Westhampton Fire Department had another successful year in 2007 providing emergency services to the community. The Department responded to one-hundred and forty-two calls for service this year. These calls for service were for fire suppression, emergency medical services, hazardous materials response, motor vehicle accidents, utility wires down, residential fire alarm activations, and many more. In addition, over two-hundred and fifty inspections and permits were completed and issued throughout the year. These inspections and permits can range from smoke detector and carbon monoxide inspections, installation of oil burners and propane tanks, and issuing burning permits and fireworks display permits.

The Fire Department consists of twenty-nine volunteers who are all cross-trained in fire rescue and at a minimum level of emergency medical first response, some of whom are Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics. Three new members joined the ranks of the Department this past year to bolster the roster to the current number. The new members, Alan Loud, Ben Snape, and Don Long, all have significant experience and knowledge to contribute to the Department helping to provide the needed emergency services to the Town.

All Departments members continue to dedicate themselves to a higher level of knowledge and proficiency. This past year was the first time the Westhampton Fire Department has ever sent anyone to the National Fire Academy in Maryland for training. Captain Mike Diggins, and Firefighters Christopher Brooks, Scott Tirrell, and Dave Antosz all attend classes at the Academy in September. All volunteer personnel train, at a minimum, twice a month for four hours in addition to annual first responder training, hazmat training, and training in the National Incident Management System (NIMS). NIMS training is a Federal requirement for all first responder organizations to participate in order to maintain eligibility for any Federal or State grants.

The department's fleet of apparatus consists of two engines, one water tanker, one brush truck, one rescue truck, and one utility vehicle. All vehicles are checked regularly on a weekly basis to ensure a state of operational readiness and reliability. The Town's Highway Department has been a tremendous asset to the Fire Department, completing all routine maintenance and upkeep of the vehicles. The Fire Department also completed pump testing on each of the Engines this year. The purpose of this test is to demonstrate that the pump/engine combination is capable of meeting the performance requirements of the apparatus design.

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Department personnel continue care for and maintain the Public Safety Complex and make improvements to help prolong the life of the building. This year, a new oil burner was installed by Firefighter Scott Vachula to replace one that was over thirty years old. This oil burner, which is much more efficient, was instrumental in keeping the costs of heating the building down with the prices of oil this past year. Deputy Chief Steve Holt continues to care for and provide the landscaping for the building along with many of volunteer Firefighters spending countless hours helping to maintain the building.

The upcoming year will pose many challenges for the Department that will need the support of the Town. State and Federal mandates, increasing training requirements, and the ever changing technology continues to challenge the time demands placed on all of the volunteers of the Department. Retention of current personnel and recruitment of new personnel will continue to be a priority for the Department. The Federal grant received by the Department last year helped to obtain equipment and supplies to improve the operational capabilities for emergency responses; however, it brought the Department to a level of where it should have been. Efforts need to be continued to improve the health and safety of these volunteers and provide them with the equipment and supplies needed to respond to and mitigate any emergencies within the community.

The members of the Westhampton Fire Department continue to do much more than respond to emergencies. Throughout the years, they continue to clean residents chimneys each fall, hang the flags on the utility poles in the center of town when needed, get involved in community sponsored events such as the Halloween parade, fill residences swimming pools, and put up house numbers for residences to help emergency responders find the proper location and increase response times. The Westhampton Fire Department is one of the few volunteer departments left in the region, and all of the members are very dedicated and proud to serve the residents and community.

We would all like thank the residences for your continued support throughout the year in helping to make our job easier. We strive to improve our knowledge and services to help make Westhampton a safer community to live. Through our members values of professionalism, honesty, integrity, compassion, and dedication we will continue to meet the needs of the residences and remain “Committed to the Community”. Have a great year and stay safe.

*Christopher W. Norris*  
*Fire Chief*

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