

Fire & Rescue Department

As the Interim Fire Chief of the Sherborn Fire & Rescue Department, I am honored to provide our 2019 annual report. 2019 was the 2nd busiest year on record for the Department. We responded to 575 emergency calls, which was 10 less calls than 2018, but still 58 more than 2017. The Department completed 210 fire inspections, issued 553 permits, and provided fire prevention education to over 300 people in 2019.

Sherborn Fire & Rescue Department 2019 Statistics:

Total calls for emergency services	575
Total Fire responses	260
Total EMS responses	210
Total Fire & EMS responses	105
Fire/Explosion	23
Hazardous Conditions	86
Service Calls	41
Investigations	99
Inspections	210
Permits	553
Fire Education Contacts	300+

The Department continues to work hand in hand with surrounding communities as well as with Fire District 14, of which 26 towns, including Sherborn, are members of. District 14 offers us the capability to ensure the response of a Dive Team, Technical Rescue, Communications, Fire Investigation or Incident Management Team if we need it. Some notable mutual aid incidents that we responded to this year include a response for a motor vehicle accident with entrapment in Natick on March 20th and a structure fire response for a 2-alarm fire in Ashland on April 5th. The most significant mutual aid response we had this year was for an 8-alarm fire in downtown Natick on July 22nd. Sherborn Engine 4 responded on the 3rd alarm and operated with Firefighters from all over for nearly 14 hours. To close out the year, the Department made the long response to Concord with Engine 3 on December 27th for a 4-alarm fire. Sherborn was requested due to our water supply capabilities.

The Department continues to be a primarily on-call agency. The Fire Chief, an Administrative Assistant/EMT, and a grant funded Fire Captain are the only fulltime employees working for the Department. The remaining department staff consists of per diem & on-call Emergency Medical Technicians and on-call fire officers and firefighters. Staffing continues to be a challenge given the demographics of the community. The staffing challenges for our on-call Department are not unique to Sherborn, as there is currently a nationwide shortage of on-call or volunteer Firefighters. With the foundation of full-time staff during the day while many of our on-call members are at their full-time places of employment, and with per-diem staff for EMS, we continue to use cost-effective methods to adequately staff our emergency responses.

We are always looking for help! We invite any resident who is interested to be a Firefighter or EMT to contact us at (508)653-3270 or e-mail me directly at zward@sherbornfire.com.

We continue to offer the Student Awareness of Fire Education (SAFE) program to our elementary school children and other residents. This program is 100% grant funded through the Department of Fire Services. The Department began offering home safety inspections this year, free of charge. These inspections can help residents determine unsafe situations in and around their homes.

We continue to aggressively pursue grants. We received the following grants this past year: Sherborn Business Association grant, Emergency Management Planning grant, DCR Volunteer Fire Assistance grant, SAFE grant, Senior SAFE grant, and we benefited from the first full year of our SAFER grant, which funds our full-time Fire Captain. The Department also pursued an Assistance to Firefighters grant to replace our portable radios. The Department was fortunate enough to receive donations of equipment from the Sherborn Fire & Rescue Association (SFRA) which included a power tool set and new tables and chairs for our training room. We thank the SFRA for their continued support!

The department took delivery of two new vehicles this year. Sherborn Engine 2 and Engine 6 were voted to be replaced in May of 2018. The new Engine 2 is a 2019 Rosenbauer Commander. It has a primary role of water supply, and it responds to one of our dry hydrants to supply fire personnel with water. The new Engine 6 is a 2019 Rosenbauer Timberwolf that has a primary role of fighting brush or wildland fires and is set up for the Department to quickly extinguish fires that may be rapidly approaching homes. These vehicles replaced a 29-year-old water supply engine and a 33-year-old forestry unit. We thank the residents of the Town of Sherborn for your support in acquiring these vehicles, which will serve Sherborn well for many years to come.

The Department experienced several notable personnel changes this year. Fire Chief Erron Kinney resigned to become the Norfolk Fire Chief in November. Chief Kinney served with distinction and was instrumental in continuing, and building upon, the success of the organization. He is certainly missed. Firefighter Stuart "Skip" Smith retired after 30 years of service to Sherborn. FF Smith was a reliable team player who spent most of his time here assigned to Quint 1. Thank you for your service, Skip! Assistant EMS Coordinator Andrew Campbell stepped down due to time constraints. He continues to serve as our quality assurance manager for our EMS service. Firefighter/EMT Ari Winograd was appointed to fill the spot of Assistant EMS Coordinator. We are looking forward to working with both Andrew and Ari in their new roles going forward. We were able to hire and train several new members: FF/EMT Ellen Heffron, FF/EMT Matt Collins, Firefighter Peter Rovick, Firefighter Kyle McPherson, Firefighter Mark Rampino, Firefighter Chris Storey, EMT Jillian Reynolds, EMT Ed Coughlin, and EMT Oliver Thompson. Several members reached significant years-of-service milestones in 2019:

- Firefighter David Brown – 35 years
- Deputy Chief Neil McPherson – 30 years
- Lieutenant Jack Tyler – 25 years
- Firefighter Dan Wolf – 20 years
- Firefighter Sean Killeen – 15 years

Thank you all for your continued dedication to the Department!

Sherborn Firefighters and EMTs are constantly training to meet the needs of the community. Training is held 3-4 times per month for both fire & EMS topics. EMTs are required to have 40 hours of continuing education every two years, and now that municipalities fall under OSHA, Firefighters have approximately 20 hours of mandatory training per year in areas such as respiratory protection, HAZMAT, and other topics. Structural Firefighters are required to achieve Firefighter I/II certification, which includes attending a five-month course that is held on weeknights and weekends at the Mass. Fire Academy in Stow. In 2019, we had two Firefighters, Zachary Krauzyk and Daniel Myers complete this training. Due to the dedication of our staff, we have several more enrolled for this extensive training in 2020.

The Department could not complete its mission without the support of the Towns leadership. We would like to thank the Select Board, Advisory Committee and Capital Budget Committee for their continued support. We would like to thank Town Administrator David Williams, Assistant Town Administrator Diane Moores and Jeanne Guthrie for their continued support and their commitment to assisting us as we transition through leaders this year. We would especially like to thank Police Chief Richard Thompson and the members of the Sherborn Police Department. Our jobs require us to work hand in hand with each other, and we do that very well due to the supreme professionalism of our Police. We would also especially like to thank Director Killeen and the members of the DPW. The DPW is very supportive of this Department in many areas, but most certainly in the maintenance of our vehicles and our two fire stations. Finally, we thank Warren Donnelly. Warren worked for Sherborn for over 40 years and performed an immense amount of work on our fleet of vehicles, in addition to being a 40-year-Firefighter in Sherborn. Thank you, Warren!

I would like to thank all of the members of this department for their commitment and dedication. Sherborn Fire Department personnel make great sacrifices and consistently provide all hazards mitigating emergency services to the community.

Call us if you need us. We'll be here for you.

Respectfully submitted,

Zachary J. Ward
Interim Fire Chief