

2006 Tamworth Fire Department Annual Report

The Tamworth Fire Department responded to 227 “911” calls in 2006. That makes it another record year and represents an 8 percent increase over 2005. Your Fire Department volunteers put in 2554 hours responding to calls. Add that to the time spent in training, at meetings, and fundraising, and you can see the tremendous dedication it takes to be a volunteer firefighter.

As your full-time Chief I performed 108 fire and life safety inspections in 2006. These inspections are designed to protect the public by ensuring that buildings meet the minimum safety standards as set forth by the State of New Hampshire. Let me say that again. We enforce the MINIMUM safety standards. Sometimes I have to make decisions that are not very popular, but bear in mind that they are always in the interest of safety.

2006 saw us plagued with vehicle problems. We continued to battle with Rosenbauer over problems with the engine purchased in 2005. We had to threaten legal action against them before they finally corrected the problems with the vehicle. Now it is running well and performing up to our expectations. Our 2000 engine suffered a catastrophic pump failure costing over \$8000.00 to repair and putting the truck out of service for more than two weeks. The 1976 engine stationed in Wonalancet failed inspection and would have cost us more to repair than the vehicle was worth. After some searching we purchased a used engine from a department in Vermont and placed it in service for about half what the repair to the 1976 would have cost. We hope it will serve us until 2011 when we anticipate purchase of the next new engine.

The Tamworth Fire Department received an Assistance to Firefighters grant from FEMA in the amount of \$96,579.00 to replace our outdated air packs. The federal share of the grant was \$91,751.00 with the remainder being paid by the Tamworth Fireman’s Club. The new packs improve our firefighter’s safety and ability to perform in the most demanding and dangerous of environments. Through this grant, the Town of Tamworth received nearly \$100,000 in equipment without spending a single local tax dollar.

The Fire Department, New Hampshire Forests and Lands, and The Chocorua Ski and Beach Association have been working together to improve the safety of the residents of Ski and Beach. Wildland Fire is a serious threat to the residents of Tamworth, especially those that live in the Pine Barrens. Ski and Beach has taken this to heart and is actively pursuing measures to make themselves safer. This project has put them on track to be New Hampshire’s first “Firewise” community. While nothing can guarantee your safety in a wildland fire, being “Firewise” reduces the risk to your property and improves your chances of escaping a wildland fire safely.

Tamworth Fire now has a website. Special thanks go out to Dana Littlefield for designing our site and getting it running. We post information for both our volunteers and for the public. You can go there to get general information on the department, minutes of the

Firewards meetings, and special messages to promote your safety. Our site is www.tamworthfd.org.

A special note on illegal burning... New Hampshire has very strict outdoor burning regulations. They are designed to protect the public, the forest, and the air. We have no choice but to act in cases of illegal burning. It is not a “no victim” crime. Based on 2006 budget figures, we spent about \$13,500 of your money extinguishing illegal fires. While some of this money is reimbursed by the State and some is recovered from those that lit the fires, the best answer is for people to follow the rules and not burn things they are not supposed to. The permit is called a brush permit for a reason. If its not brush, don’t burn it. Keep in mind that a permit is required unless there is snow covering the ground vegetation for a 100 foot radius from the edge of the brush pile. For more information on outdoor burning, please visit our web site.

Again this year, I would like to thank you all for your continued support. Our mission is all about your safety. Without the support of our volunteers, their families, and all the business owners and residents of Tamworth, we would not be able to fulfill that mission.

Respectfully,

Stephen Solomon, Chief
Tamworth Fire Department

Tamworth Fire Department Statistics

Motor Vehicle Accidents	45
Tree on Wires/ Wires Down	37
Fire Alarm Activations	33
Good Intent Calls	22
Illegal Burning	21
Brush/ Wildland Fires	11
Building Fires	8
Hazardous Materials Spills	8
Severe Weather Responses	8
Other Fires	7
Wilderness/ Technical Rescues	7
Vehicle Fires	6
Cover Assignments	6
Assist the Public	5
Carbon Monoxide Incidents	3
Total Emergency Responses	227