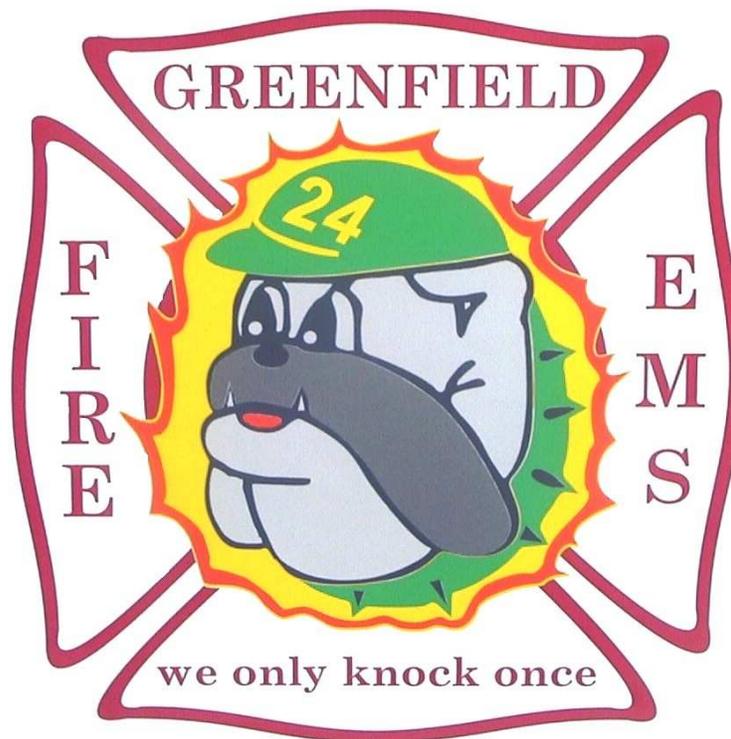


# **Greenfield Township Volunteer Fire Company**

**424 Route 106, Greenfield Township, PA 18407**



## **2009 Annual Report**

**January 15, 2010**



## Greenfield Township Volunteer Fire Company 2009 Annual Report

Greenfield Township Board of Supervisors  
424 Route 106  
Greenfield Township, PA 18407

January 15, 2010

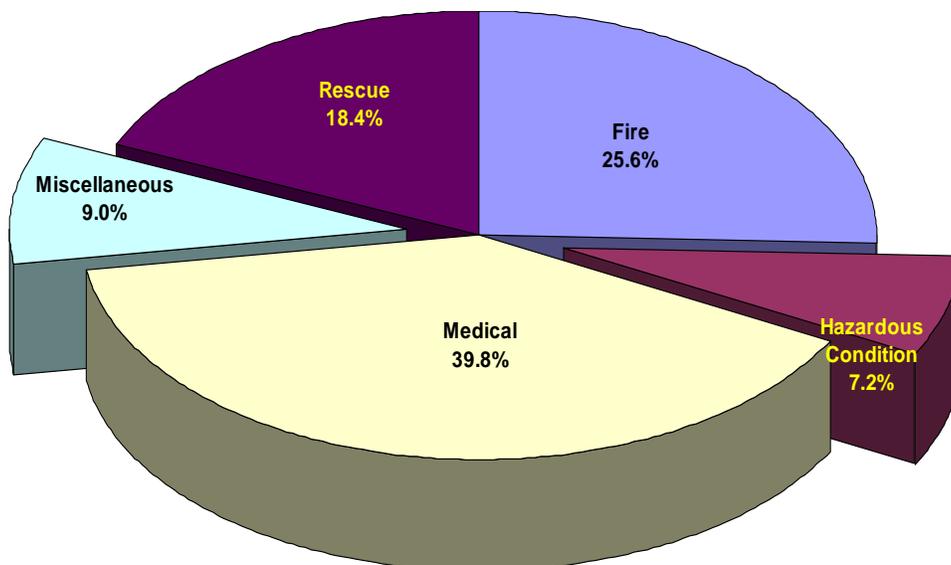
I am pleased to provide you with the following report of the Greenfield Township Volunteer Fire Company activities for the year 2009.

### Response Experience

During 2009, we responded to 332 calls for assistance, which is a decrease from the previous years 364 calls with no significant shift in the call volume by type. This is largely due to a change in how incidents are recorded, with regard to being cancelled by the dispatch center. Those incidents were normally included in the incident tally by nature of the original dispatch, but are now classified as “cancelled in route”. The responses for 2009 are summarized as follows:

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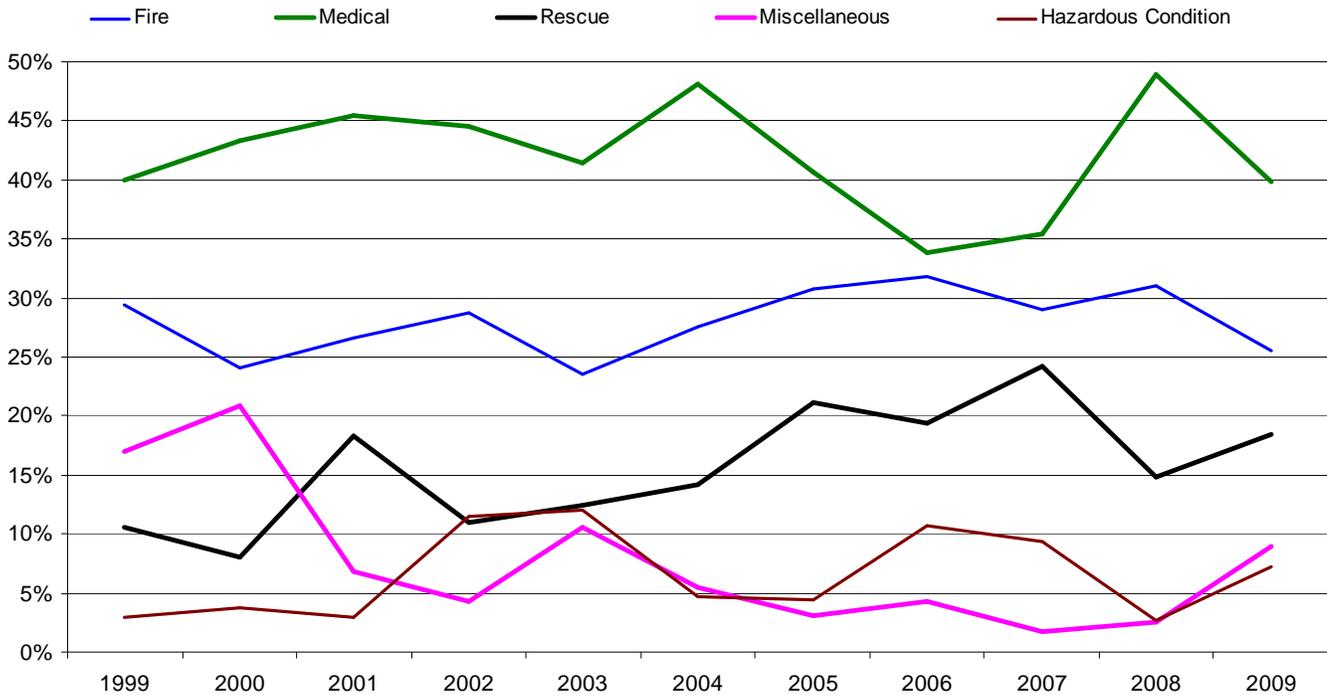
**2009 Incidents by Major Type**





# Greenfield Township Volunteer Fire Company 2009 Annual Report

## 10 year Incident Trend, by Major Category



### **Mutual Aid**

We continue to work closely with surrounding fire departments to share resources and maximize the service provided to the public. By pooling resources, we have been able to maintain a high level of service while minimizing operational expenses. Because of these strong working relationships, 45.2% of our responses are outside of the Township.

#### Out of Township Response Profile\*\*

Community	% Responses	Community	% Responses
Clifford/Lenox Township	25.6%	Fell Township	2.1%
Scott Township	6.0%	Carbondale/Carbondale Township	2.7%
Harford	3.0%	Benton/Fleetville Township	1.2%
Waymart	2.4%	Other*	2.1%

\*represents responses to 8 other communities

\*\*percentage of total responses

While Greenfield Township Volunteer Fire Company does use its resources to support other communities, they in turn support our citizens. With the decline in volunteers over the last decade, communities must join forces, to provide service.

The following is a list (not all-inclusive) of the organizations routinely responding to assist Greenfield in 2009.

Carbondale City Fire Department  
 Clifford Fire Co  
 Community Life Support Paramedics  
 Cottage Hose Co Paramedics  
 Fleetville Fire Company

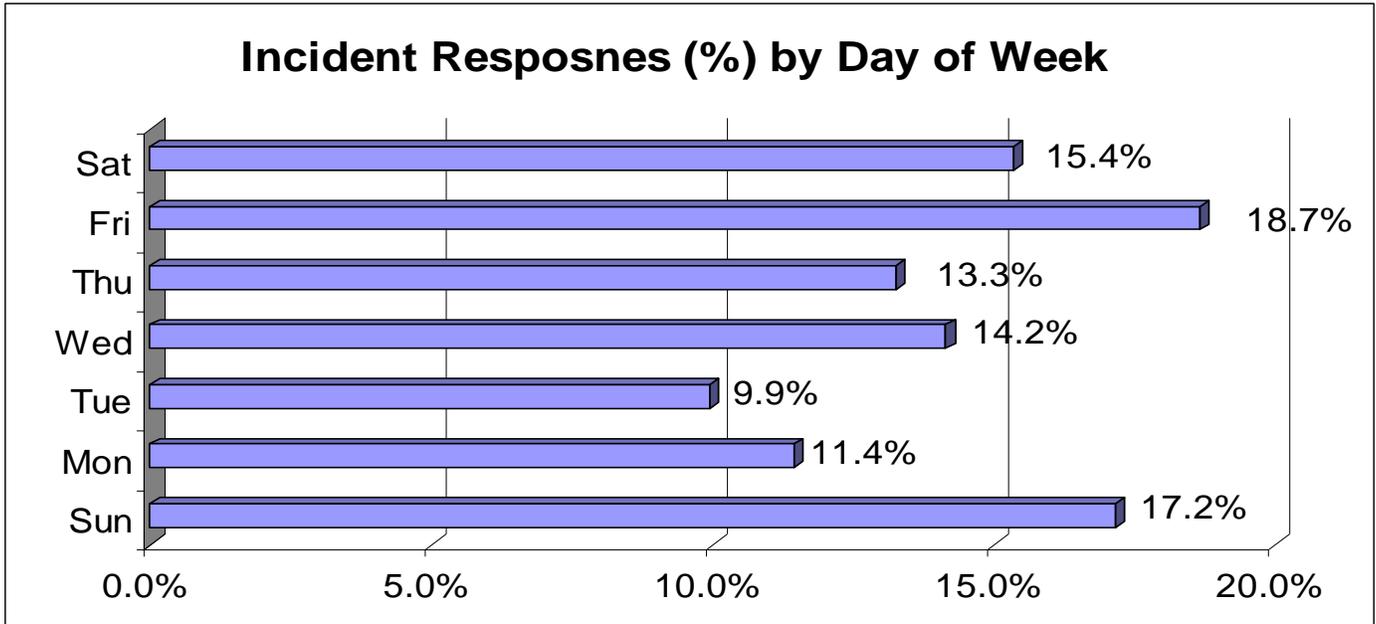
Forest City Fire Department  
 Lack County Emergency Management Agency  
 Wm Walker Hose Co. Mayfield  
 Meredith Hose Company  
 Uniondale Fire Company



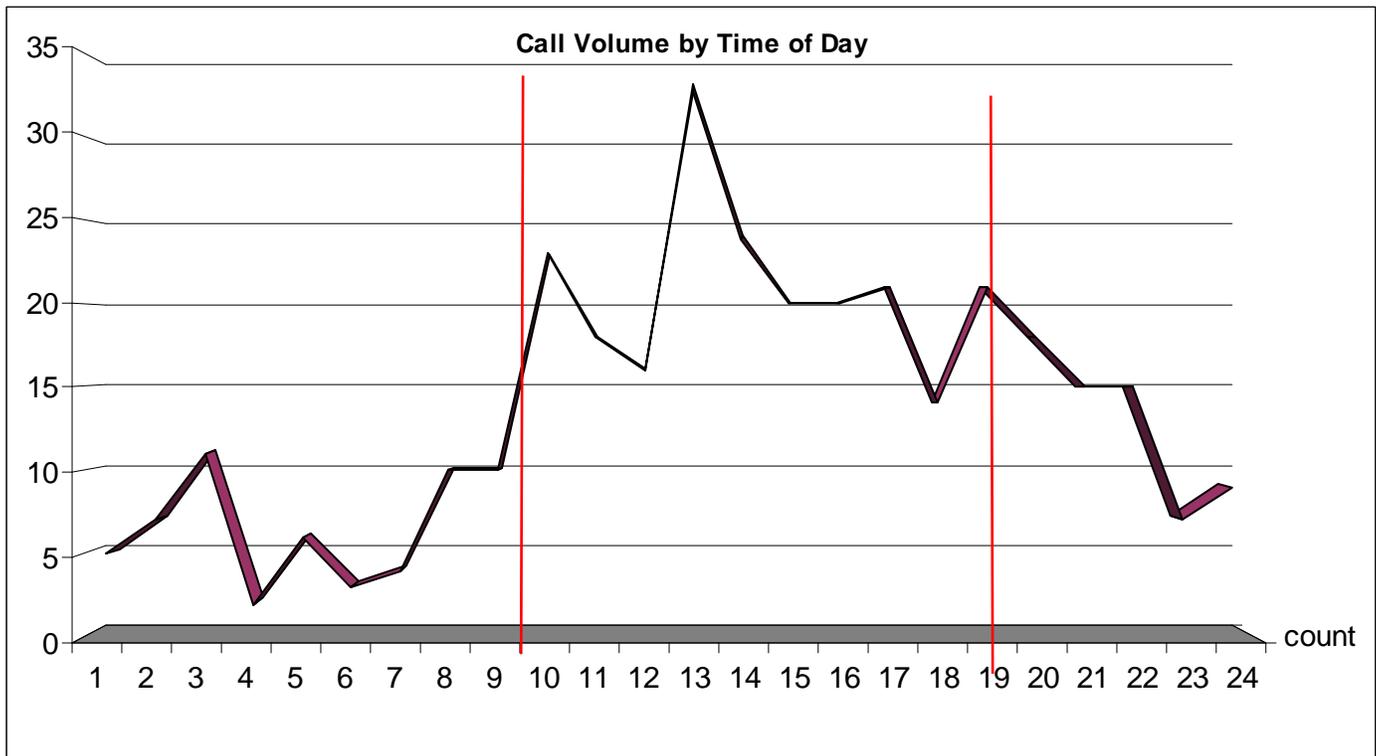
**Greenfield Township Volunteer Fire Company  
2009 Annual Report**

**Call Distribution**

In 2009, Friday had the highest frequency of responses, followed by Sunday and Saturday.



Historically our greatest call volume has occurred during the day light hours (8am through 4pm). However, in 2009, we saw a slight shift of that time span to be 9am until 7pm. This period represents a significant challenge in that the lowest staffing period for the volunteer fire service is the traditional 1<sup>st</sup> shift period (i.e. day light hours).





# Greenfield Township Volunteer Fire Company 2009 Annual Report

## Response Profile

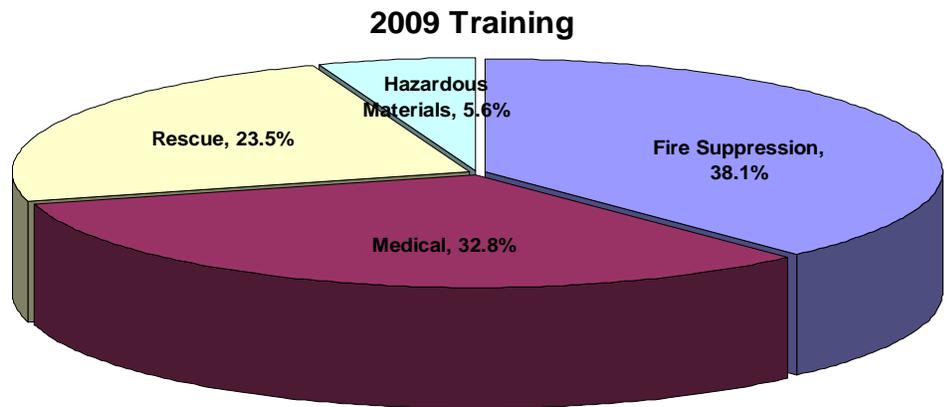
In reviewing occupancy classes of our response volume, we find that:

- 75.0% of the medical emergencies occur in residential buildings.
- 52.8% of the rescue calls occurred on 2 roads: 26.4% on I81 and 26.4% on route 106.
- 35.3% of the fires were in residential buildings.
- 18.8% of the fires occurred outside of buildings (i.e., roads, woods, etc.)
- 80.2% of the false alarms occurred in residential buildings.
  - 33.3% of the false alarm responses were outside of Greenfield Township.

## Training

Our training was focused on sharpening skills in fire suppression, preparing for certification, and hazardous materials response. Our members participated in a wide variety of programs, each designed to enhance the response capabilities of the Township.

**These efforts resulted in membership completing 744 hours of training during 2009.**



## Certifications

Greenfield Township Volunteer Fire Company has long been an advocate of emergency responder certification. We are exceptionally pleased to report that our members collectively achieved certifications in 30 different areas and levels. This is more than any other department in Lackawanna County and includes:

### National Board on Fire Service Professional Qualifications (NBFSPQ)

The NBFSPQ provides recognition and certification of fire fighters and other related emergency responders. Certification shows that the fire fighter has demonstrated proficiency and an ability to do the job in accordance with nationally recognized standards published by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA).

Certification	# of Members*
NFPA 1001, Fire Fighter - Level 1	20
Fire Fighter - Level 2	16
NFPA 1002: Driver/Operator - Pumper	12
Driver/Operator - Tanker	5
NFPA 1006, Rescue Technician - Vehicle and Machinery	12
Rescue Technician - Confined Space	12
Rescue Technician – Trench	1
Rescue Technician – Collapse	1
NFPA 1021: Fire Officer - Level 1	2
Fire Officer - Level 2	2



**Greenfield Township Volunteer Fire Company  
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Fire Officer - Level 3	1
Fire Officer - Level 4	1
NFPA 1041: Fire Service Instructor - Level 1	6
Fire Service Instructor - Level 2	6
Fire Service Instructor - Level 3	1
NFPA 472: Responder to Hazardous Materials Incidents - Awareness	31
Responder to Hazardous Materials Incidents - Operations	21
Responder to Hazardous Materials Incidents - Technician	3
Responder to Hazardous Materials Incidents – Incident Commander	1
NFPA 1031, Fire Inspector - Level 1	1
Fire Inspector - Level 2	1
NFPA1035, NFPA 1035, Public Fire and Life Safety Educator	2
NFPA 1521, Incident Safety Officer	2
Health and Safety Officer	2

**National Fire Protection Association (NFPA)**

The NFPA provides recognition and certification of professionals involved in fire protection and inspection through certification programs. Certification shows that the fire service professional has demonstrated advanced proficiency, knowledge, and skills in the field of fire protection and prevention.

<b>Certification</b>	<b># of Members*</b>
Certified Fire Protection Specialist Board (CFPS)	1
Certified Fire Inspector (CFI)	1

**International Codes Council (ICC)**

The ICC provides recognition and certification of professionals involved in fire protection and inspection through certification programs. Certification shows that the fire service professional has demonstrated advanced proficiency, knowledge, and skills in the field of fire protection and prevention.

<b>Certification</b>	<b># of Members*</b>
Fire Inspector I	1
Fire Inspector II	1

**Pennsylvania Department of Health - Emergency Medical Services**

The Department of Health is the lead agency for emergency medical services (EMS) providing training and certification of emergency medical service providers. Certification shows that the fire service professional has demonstrated proficiency, knowledge, and skills in pre-hospital emergency care.

<b>Certification</b>	<b># of Members*</b>
Emergency Medical Technician (EMT)	16
Basic Vehicle Rescue Technician	10
Emergency Medical Technician - Paramedic (EMT-P)	1

**Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA)**

PEMA is the lead agency for emergency response to the release of radiological materials, providing training and certification of responders. Certification shows that the responder has demonstrated proficiency, knowledge, and skills for responding to radiological incidents.

<b>Certification</b>	<b># of Members*</b>
Radiological Monitor	7
Radiological Monitoring Officer	3

\* Many members hold multiple certifications, thus total do not reflect the total number of active company members.



## Greenfield Township Volunteer Fire Company 2009 Annual Report

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### **100% Certified**

The Greenfield Twp. Volunteer Fire Co. has been recognized by the Office of the State Fire Commissioner, for successfully certifying 100% of its fire fighters to National Professional Qualification Standards. This recognition is part of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania’s Voluntary Fire Fighter Certification Program was created by Act 112 of 1989, and amended by Act 61 of 1995. Commonwealth emergency responders, 18 years of age or older have an opportunity to participate in and be recognized as a certified fire professional at various levels in accordance with nationally recognized and sanctioned professional qualification standards.

Greenfield holds the distinction of being the 1<sup>st</sup> fire company in Pennsylvania to be formally recognized, in September of 2000, for certification of its members. To date Greenfield fire fighters hold certifications in 30 different areas and levels. Elevation to 100% status is extremely challenging for a volunteer fire department, and the officers and member are very proud of the efforts made by the responders to provide this level of service to the public.

### **QRS and Rescue Certifications**

We completed our first year of having Engine 24 certified by the PA Department of Health as a licensed/certified Quick Response Service (QRS) and as a Certified Rescue. As a QRS, the Engine provided medical services 4 times during 2009 and as a rescue responded 6 times. In all, we have found the energy expended to obtain and maintain these certifications has been time well spent.

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## **Equipment**

In 2009, we focused our efforts on improving highway safety for our responders. With funding from the Office of Domestic Preparedness (ODP), we were able to purchase electronic road flares, highway warning signage, and high visibility traffic vest. As previously noted, 26.4% of our rescue related responses are to I-81. In November of 2008, the US Department of Transportation passed a law (23 CFR Part 634) that requires all persons, including fire fighters, law enforcement, wrecker operators, etc., to wear high-visibility vests while operating on federal highways, such as I-81. The focus of this law was to reduce the ever-growing instances of emergency responders being struck on highways while providing services.

Greenfield has taken an aggressive approach to highway safety, by utilizing a series of high visibility warning signs and electronic road flares, to warn drivers well in advance of congested highway incidents. Additionally, every Highway responder was issued a vest to be worn over his or her turnout gear, and every seated vehicle position is provided with a vest.

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## **Apparatus**

### **Response Profile**

Greenfield Township equipment responded to calls for assistance as follows:

<b>Unit</b>	<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>Total Hours</b>	<b>Total Miles</b>
Ambulance 24-9	216	326.3	5,068.7
Car 24	14	15.2	73.5
Engine 24	131	159.6	1,602.5
Tanker 24	55	111.2	715



## Greenfield Township Volunteer Fire Company 2009 Annual Report

This response profile is similar to the response profile for previous years with slight adjustments in individual unit usages.

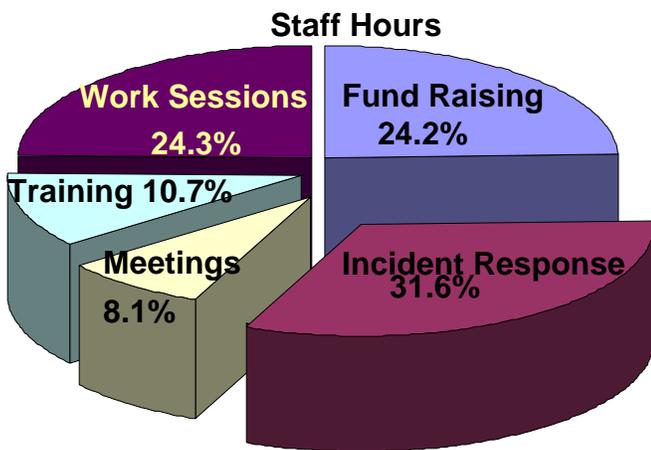
### Fleet Status

Overall, the fleet is sound. The Deacon unit and Chief's car were removed from service in 2009, in an effort to reduce operational cost. The equipment from the Deacon unit was dispersed between the other county response teams and Greenfield. The Equipment we are required to carry has been relocated to Engine 24. The Chief Car was deemed a non-necessity at this time and has been given to the Greenfield Township Police. While we did make use of the vehicle, we feel that the Police have a greater need for it than the fire department does. We are confident, that in the event we need to borrow the vehicle, the Township will be receptive to that.

### Ambulance 24

Our Ambulance is nearing 8 years of age and has been showing signs of wear. The maintenance cost this year were nearly double that of the preceding years. As such, the Officers are investigating the possibly of replacement of the unit, before it becomes excessively costly to run. In looking back, our 5-year plan dictated replacement of this unit last year. We chose at that time to delay any capital expenditures in light of the declining economy. However, if we continue to commit funding for repairs at the current level, we will near the same operating cost as we would with a new unit carrying a vehicle loan. At this time, we have no specific timeline for replacement, but expect a plan will be developed before winter concludes.

## Membership



One of the greatest challenges facing the emergency services is the declining volunteer base. The members donated 6,945.6 hours of their time to provide services to the residents of Greenfield Township during 2009.

**By comparison, no other civic organization gives as many or as difficult hours as the members of our company.**

This is equal to 3.3 full time equivalent employees. Based on the average wage and benefit rate for the fire service these members have saved the community approximately \$184,800.

Currently, the members expend as much time trying to raise operating funds as we do in training. Such a pace will cause the existing membership to burn out and stop responding. Further, the time spent fund raising is a counter incentive to recruitment of young members. Several studies, including *Retention and Recruitment for the Volunteer Emergency Services, Challenges, and Solutions* published by the U.S. Fire Administration, have shown that young people who are asked to train and provide a service to their community are more likely to do so if they are not required to raise money.

The concern of the decline in volunteerism is the subject of the report, *Retention and Recruitment for the Volunteer Emergency Services, Challenges, and Solutions*, published by the U.S. Fire Administration. Greenfield Township is referenced within the body of that report, concerning the decline in the emergency services volunteers and the impact such a decline has on fire fighter safety, as follows:



## Greenfield Township Volunteer Fire Company 2009 Annual Report

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“In 2004, Pennsylvania experienced 17 line-of-duty deaths, the most of any State in the country. At the same time, Pennsylvania has two-thirds fewer firefighters than it did 30 years ago. Many have questioned if the lower number of members have been a cause for some of the deaths. Chief Fred Bales of the Greenfield Township Fire Department has stated that fewer personnel on the fireground can force firefighters to do the work of two or more people in emergency situations. Pennsylvania Fire Commissioner Ed Mann reports that 9 of the 17 deaths were caused by heart attacks. He further commented that it is possible some of those nine were working too hard to make up for a lack of firefighters.”

Several key points were noted in the report including:

- “Although the recruitment and retention challenges continue to grow, some volunteer organizations maintain good membership while others continue to function with reduced numbers. Those organizations that seek solutions and adapt to our changing personnel environment are successful.”
- “The surge in the number of two-income families since the early 1970s has meant that people have very little time to volunteer.”
- “The consensus of fire chiefs from across the country is that the public’s expectations of the fire department are greater today than in years past. The public expects the fire department to provide assistance for emergencies that include fires, fire alarms, carbon monoxide alarms, broken water pipes, natural gas leaks, medical emergencies, vehicle accidents, hazardous materials spills, mysterious odors, structural collapse, extrications, water rescue, and even bomb threats or terrorist incidents.”

Another area that was a focus of the report includes the increase in actual call volumes:

- “During the same time in which the number of volunteers has declined, the volunteer fire service has had to contend with an increase in the volume of emergency calls due to the lack of education on when to call 9-1-1.”
- “The public has not only grown to expect a wider range of services from the fire department, but also has grown to rely more heavily on the fire department.”

The report is available to residents of the United States, at no charge through the USFA Website at <http://www.usfa.dhs.gov/applications/publications>.

### ***Positive news***

During 2009, we were able to re-recruit two former members, who have returned to the department and have completed certification as a Fire Fighter Level 1.

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## **Targeted Goals for 2010**

We have one primary goal for 2010, in addition to providing continued service to the Township and our surrounding communities.

### ***Recruitment***

Recruitment of additional members is a critical concern for the Township. We see that our ability to provide trained firefighters at least 80% of the time is limited to an average of 3 persons during the day light shift (6 am until 6 pm); which is less than the minimum required by NFPA 1720. During our night periods (6 pm until 6 am), our average responding firefighters is slightly higher at 5, but still below the 6 needed for NFPA 1720.

Of the current 38 members, only 22 are responders and of those, 16 are qualified firefighters. The remaining are administrative personal and EMT’s, and similar support staff. Typically volunteers are pro-rated on a 1/3 basis, thus in order to average 1 firefighter per call there should be 3 available (see FSRs staffing



## Greenfield Township Volunteer Fire Company 2009 Annual Report

calculations). Thus, to meet the minimum for NFPA 1720, we would need 18 qualified firefighters or 24 to meet the FSRS. Keeping in mind that this staffing does not allow for additional operations such as ventilation.

This lack of staffing sets the stage for a dangerous scenario, where initial operations put the driver in the position of being the Incident Commander and Safety Officer in addition to running the pump. Two firefighters are deployed into buildings with out the protection of a backup team. Such operations are not only in direct violation of both NFPA 1500 guidelines and in OSHA's 2 in 2 out rule; they are extremely dangerous and will lead to a firefighter death. After several near misses, where fire conditions worsened and placed the crews in peril, Greenfield adopted a stance of non-entry unless a savable life exists or sufficient personal are on scene to provide rapid rescue in the event of a firefighter emergency occurring.

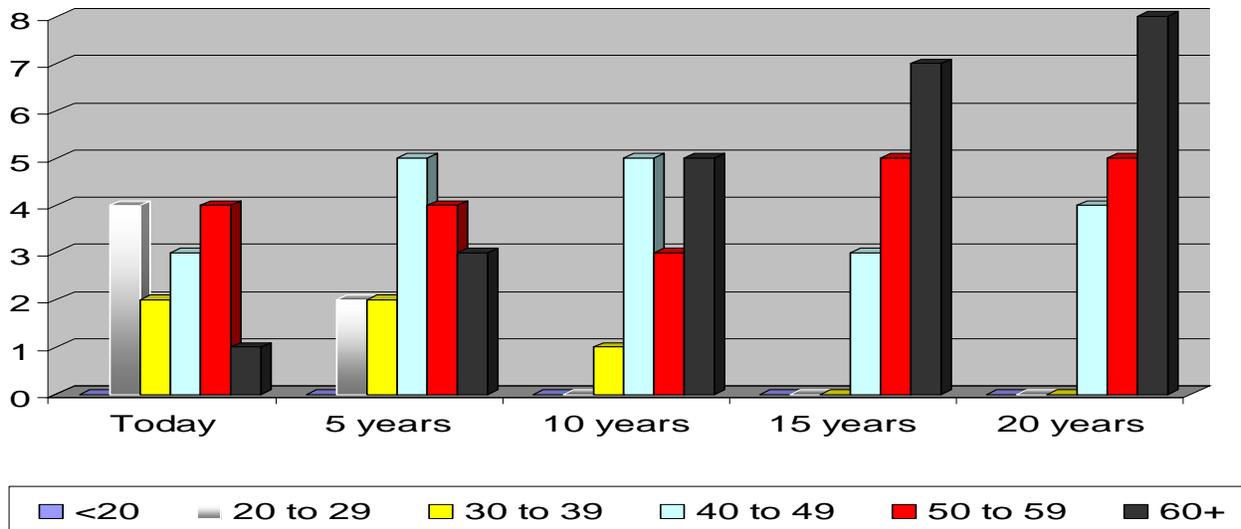
The Greenfield Township Volunteer Fire Company will be using funds from the *Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response Grant (SAFER)* program to assist in enhancing our recruitment and retention efforts, by providing funding to implement a focused campaign, aimed at recruitment of new firefighters', supported by an aggressive recognition program aimed at retention of existing and future members. We are hoping that seed money from that program will allow us to develop and implement a comprehensive retention and recruitment program.

Several elements of the retention program also act as a recruitment incentive, such as the salary protection provisions of an accident and disability policy. Coupled with provision for preventative care such as physicals, we will place a focus on value for time spent and a sense of belonging. As such, we see the retention projects to be focused on the elimination of out of pocket expense for image related items such as uniforms. Further, these image items act as rewards for performance and as a marketing tool to the public.

### Concern to Safety

One of our primary concerns is that the membership is aging at a rate greater than the new people coming in. As you can see by the chart below, the majority of our members are in their 40's and 50's. In very basic terms, this is an age where fire fighters are killed in the line of duty. Putting 40 and 50 year fire fighters into buildings repetitively is dangerous. As we move 5 years out, we that will become an even greater threat.

**Age of Members (interior only)**





## Greenfield Township Volunteer Fire Company 2009 Annual Report

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We need all the support that we can get from the Supervisors to recruit, train, and retain fire fighters in the less than 30 age group. While as an organization we have a need for new members in all age groups, the critical duties of fire fighting dedicate a push for 18-30 year olds.

To support us, we would be very pleased if the Township Supervisors would select a day in 2010 as Fire Department Day, market the same to the community, and present some symbolic token of support to the Department that we can use to expand our media coverage. What, and how to organize such an event, can be discussed at some later date, if the supervisors are so inclined.

### **Training**

Our training focus for 2010 will be at development of the new recruits and national certification for existing members, in support of the recruitment efforts. As always, we will continue to maintain our professional certifications in Hazardous Materials and Emergency Medical Care. We will be placing a significant amount of resources toward mutual aide training programs designed to enhance our interpretability with our supporting fire and ems departments.

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### **Closing**

It has become increasingly more difficult to recruit members and even harder to retain them. We need every citizen to step forward now, and give a little of his or her time.

The members and officers are grateful that we have enjoyed a strong relationship with the Township Supervisors. In closing, I would like to thank you for the support, trust, and encouragement that you have given to the Fire Company.

Respectfully submitted

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Fred M. Bales".

Fred M. Bales, CFPS, CFI  
Chief – Greenfield Township Volunteer Fire Company.