



MORGANTOWN FIRE
DEPARTMENT
ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2006

“REACHING NEW HEIGHTS IN
EXCELLENCE”

Message from Chief Fetty:

It is with the greatest sense of pride and accomplishment that the Morgantown Fire Department Annual Report is presented for the 2006 calendar year. The statistical data contained within this report is a testament to the professionalism and dedication of the firefighters, officers, and civilian staff on the Department.

The Morgantown Fire Department is defined as an emergency response organization. This definition implies that the Department's function is reactionary in nature since the Department responds to incidents that have already taken place. Nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, the Department's proactive initiatives have successfully reduced the overall number of emergency responses over the previous year and have managed to keep the human and property losses well within an acceptable level for a City of this size. This loss containment, as well as a commitment for Departmental excellence by Council and the City Manager, has allowed the City to retain its exemplary ISO rating of 3. This enviable ISO rating is reflected in low fire insurance premium rates for all property owners located within the City boundaries.

As you read and compare this year's annual report with those of the past, you will quickly realize that this has been one of the Department's most successful years in terms of tangible results. These tangible results are easily substantiated through the accompanying quantitative information within the report. As always, the intangible accomplishments of the Department are not so easy to convey or quantify.

It is impossible to place a numeric value on emotions such as respect, gratitude, pride, fear, courage, sacrifice, and relief; yet, therein is the true value of what the Morgantown Fire Department delivers and represents. These intangible accomplishments, although not statistically shown in this report, are of far greater importance than the impersonal data that is.

Current Programs and Services:

The Department is a service oriented organization. In fact, comparative surveys indicate that the services provided by the Morgantown Fire Department far exceed the normal for other fire departments, both professional and volunteer, throughout the State. Although the volume of services provided by the Department is quite impressive, even more impressive is the extent and quality at which those services are rendered.

Services can be divided into two separate categories. The first involves the non-emergency type of services and the second entails the emergency response services. During this year no additional services have been added by the Department; however, there has been considerable improvement within the existing portfolio of services already being rendered.

The routine non-emergency services include the following:

- **Planning Services for commercial and residential occupancies**
- **Inspection services**
- **Construction Plan Review services**
- **Fire Code Compliance**
- **Arson Investigation and Cause/Origin Investigative services.**
- **Public Education Programs**
- **Public Training Programs**
- **Departmental Training Programs**
- **Equipment maintenance and repair**
- **Data Collection, Recordkeeping, and Analysis**
- **Counseling**
- **Physical Fitness Program**
- **Other non-emergency services**

The general emergency services provided by the Department include:

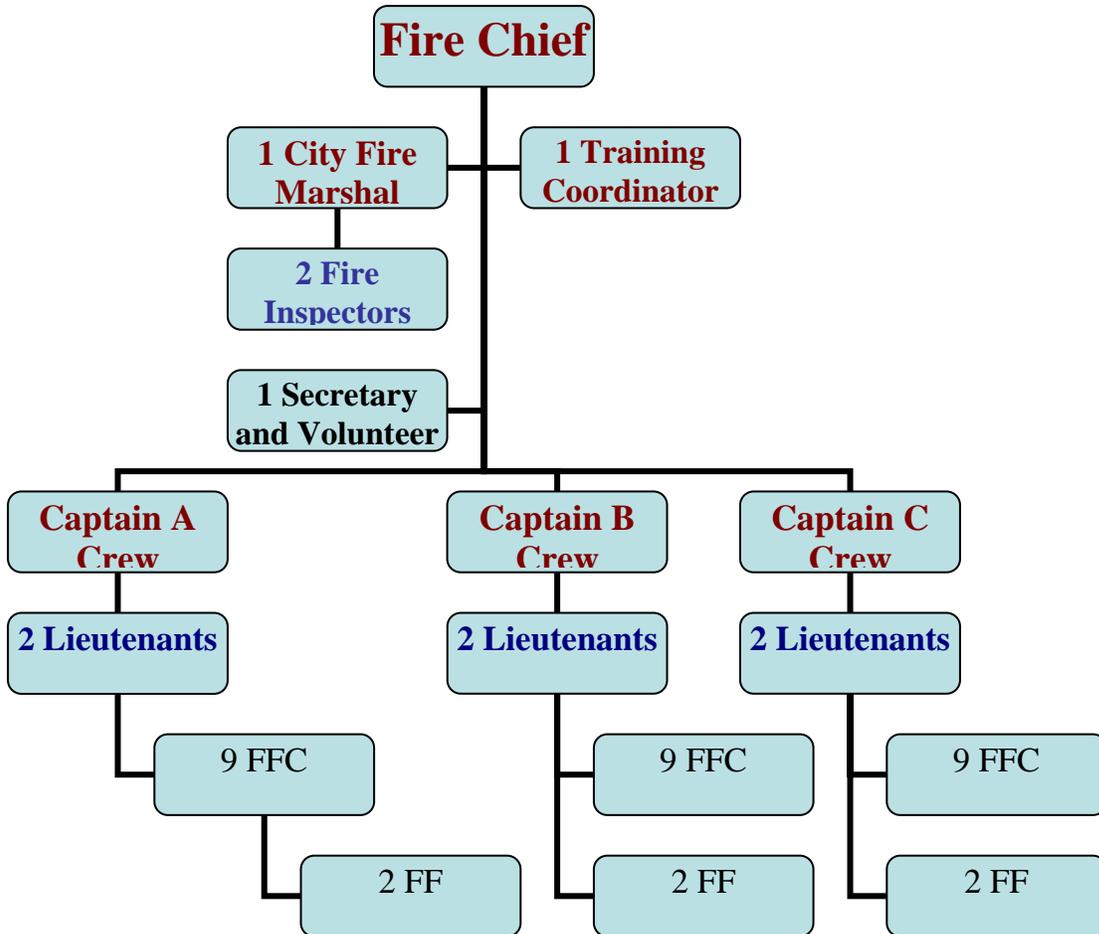
- **Firefighting**
- **Medical First Responder**
- **Confined Space Rescue**
- **Elevated Rescue**
- **High-angle Rescue**
- **Extrication**
- **Hazardous Material Response (Technician Level Trained)**
- **Water Rescue**
- **Underwater Dive Services**
- **Search and Rescue**
- **Mutual Aid Responses with surrounding departments**
- **Scene Stabilization and Security**
- **Natural Disaster Responses**
- **Man-made Disaster Responses**
- **Other Emergency Responses not otherwise classified**

Resources:

The personnel resources on the Department are at forty-seven sworn members, one full-time secretary, and one part-time volunteer office assistant. The Department is comprised of three duty crews each with fourteen personnel, however, it is very rare when a crew operates at full staffing level due to regularly scheduled time off such as vacations and holidays in addition to unscheduled time off such as sick leave and other special leave. A more realistic staffing level for each crew is eleven members with a ten person minimum manning level.

The normal eleven member crew strengths allow the Department to operate three engine companies each with three members on board as well as a ladder company with one member on board and a heavy rescue unit with one member on board. At the minimum staffing level of ten, response priorities must be set by the Shift Commander and either the heavy rescue unit or the ladder company will remain in quarters depending upon the response type.

To better illustrate the manpower breakdown for the Department, the following organizational flow chart is provided:



Almost all of the services provided by the Morgantown Fire Department are rendered on a scene remote from the stations themselves. As such, the Department is very reliant on its vehicle fleet. That fleet is comprised of very specialized apparatus and includes fire engines, aerial truck, heavy rescue unit, specially equipped trailers, water craft, all-terrain vehicle, and several passenger sized vehicles. Specifically, the entire apparatus inventory is shown in the following chart.

STAFF VEHICLES	STATION ONE	STATION TWO
1999 Ford Expedition	2000 Pierce Engine	2000 Pierce Engine
2002 Jeep Cherokee	1988 Pierce Engine 4WD	1977 American LaFrance
2001 Jeep Cherokee	1991 Pierce Minipumper	1926 Seagrave Antique
2006 Jeep Liberty	1996 Pierce Ladder Truck	2002 Ford F350 Pickup
2006 Jeep Liberty	1978 American LaFrance Rescue	2002 Boston Whaler Boat
STATION THREE	WHARF PARKING GARAGE	
1994 Pierce Engine	2001 John Deere Gator	
1994 Chevy 1/2 ton Pickup	1960 Jon Boat	

As shown, the median age of the engines is fifteen years with the oldest being twenty-nine years. The Department’s only ladder truck is now ten years old and the Department’s heavy rescue is now twenty-eight years old. The specialized trailers, as well as the all-terrain vehicle, water craft, and passenger sized vehicles are relatively new and in very good condition with the exception of the 1960 Jon boat.

Even though the equipment carried on these vehicles and the other specialized equipment housed in the stations receive extreme and frequent use, it is all in generally superior condition and is fairly current for the industry.

The Department conducts its operations from six separate physical locations. These facilities serve a variety of purposes and include the following:

- **Public Safety Building** = Administrative Offices including Fire Chief, Training Coordinator, City Fire Marshal, and Secretary.
- **City Hall Building** = City Fire Inspectors and Storage
- **Wharf District Parking Garage** = Supply and water response equipment storage.
- **Station One (Southside)** = Main fire station housing Engine 1, Rescue 1, and Ladder 1.
- **Station Two (Norwood)** = Sub-station housing Engine 2 and specialized trailers
- **Station Three (Wiles Hill)** = Sub-station housing Engine 3

Station Two is in very good condition and a new apparatus storage addition was added to this facility within the last five years. It is well placed and should serve the City for many years to come.

Station One is also fairly well placed in the south end of the City. It is now nearly fifty years old and is need of some substantial repairs to the roof, truck-room floor, and exterior ramp. However, it is expected that this station will serve in its present capacity for many years to come and the capital repair expenditures would be very well founded.

Station Three will be replaced with the new North Side Station during the upcoming year. This new station will allow for some redistribution of assets for the Department and will solve many of the Department's storage and training problems. This initiative will be further discussed in the "Forecast" section of this report.

Year in Review:

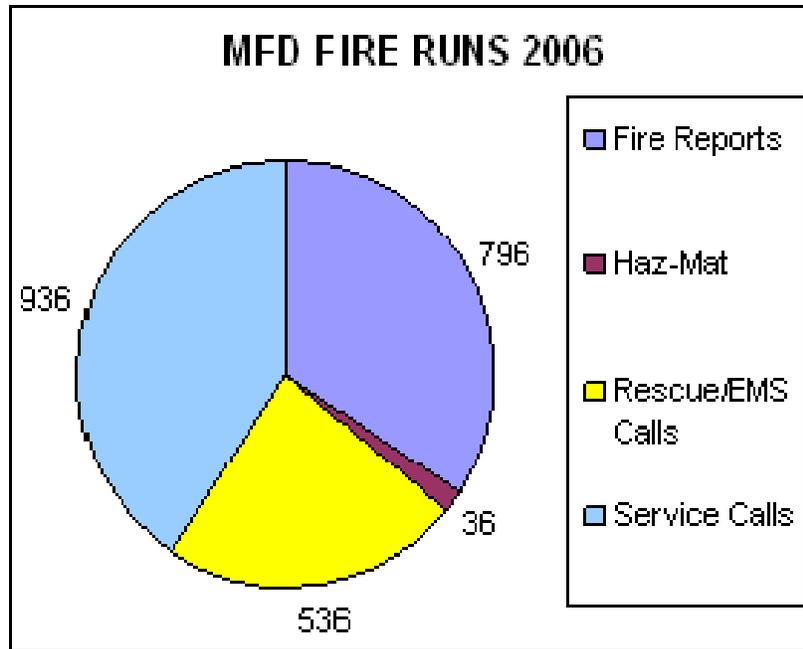
Emergency Responses

The Fire Department responded to **2,304 calls for emergency** service this year. This represents a reduction of 219 emergency calls over the same period last year. This 8.7% reduction is a direct result of the Department's proactive measures to control street fires.

On the other hand, dollar losses, resulting from fires, have increased over the previous year by approximately 220% or an increased fire loss of \$479,700 last year to \$1,052,150 in this year.

More importantly, fires in Morgantown during this year attributed to one civilian death and a continuing murder investigation as well.

Following is a breakdown of emergency call responses by call type:



Non-Emergency Services Provided Training

Morgantown firefighters and staff continue to be the best trained of any in the State. The Department has totaled 11,040 hours of training in 50 separate categories this year. This equates to an average of 235 hours of training per person.

The Department continues to invest heavily in certified training provided by outside agencies. In fact, the Department has provided 22 different certified training courses for selected members of the Department that totaled 1,386 hours.

In addition, the Department has many of its own certified instructors that routinely provide training to other agencies. This year, these instructors provided 33 hours of training for 193 people.

Another one of the Department's younger firefighters has completed the 6,000 hour Apprenticeship Program that is mandated by the WV Dept. of Labor. Consequently, this firefighter has been upgraded from apprentice status to Journeyman status.

Not only do the firefighters receive continuing training hours, but the officer structure does as well. In the last year, there were 38 hours of officer level training provided to the officer ranks at the Morgantown Fire Department.

Once again, in the area of training a new standard has been set. Last year the Department had 10,711 hours of training or an average of 238 hours per person. As previously shown, this year the Department has had 11,040 hours of training for an individual average of 235 hours or an overall training increase of 3%.

Code Enforcement and Public Relations

Last year, Council added two fire inspector positions to the Department. The results of that decision have been nothing short of amazing! Last year, with only one inspector, the Department registered 480 fire inspections and 278 Assembly inspections for a total of 758 inspections. This year, with the two additional inspectors, the Department has increased to 1,828 fire inspections and 1,435 Assembly inspections for a total of **3,263 inspections**. This represents a **430% increase over last year**.

On the surface one might assume that an increase in the number of inspections would indicate an increase in the viability of an inspection program. Although partially true, the real measure of an effective inspection program is the difference between the number of violations identified and the number of corrections made. Here again, the Morgantown Fire Department Inspection Division has been phenomenally successful!

During the course of conducting the 3,263 total inspections, 889 violations of the fire code were uncovered and a subsequent 724 corrections were made as of this writing. Many more corrections are pending, however, the date given by the inspectors for those

corrections has not yet come to pass. Still, even excluding the pending corrections, the **correction rate for fire code violations surpasses 81%**! Generally, all of these corrections were the result of a cordial and coordinated effort between the property owners and the Fire Department inspectors. Sometimes, however, the corrections were made as a result of the 61 misdemeanor citations issued and the 45 court appearances involving the inspectors and the violators. In those cases that went to court, the Fire Department prevailed in over 98% which resulted in \$12,701 worth of fines being levied by the Municipal Court Judge.

The number of plans being reviewed for new construction projects has more than doubled over last year's reporting figures from 68 in 2005 to 114 during this year. Clearly, this year's code enforcement and public education figures are exemplary as the following table shows:

	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	August	Sept	Oct	Total
Inspections	112	99	165	139	241	108	115	293	77	212	162	105	1828
Assembly Insp.	59	80	10	203	166	160	77	0	68	196	176	240	1435
Tot. Inspections	171	179	175	342	407	268	192	293	145	408	338	345	3263
Note: Above totals include business,mercantile,residential,assembly,complaints,parades, fireworks, etc.													
Plan review	7	11	9	7	9	8	8	14	8	13	12	8	114
Citations	0	0	0	13	2	1	5	2	12	16	4	6	61
Corrections	24	28	131	35	36	91	22	63	14	49	39	192	724
Violations	31	57	132	67	102	93	87	136	10	59	72	43	889
Court Appearance	5	4	2	1	0	4	5	0	3	6	8	7	45
Fine amounts	0	461	191	0	0	0	1090	0	330	300	5915	4415	12702
Totals below include number of individuals trained or contacted for the reporting period													
Public Education			24			35	40			44	600	50	793
Extinguisher training										24			24
Public Appearances	1066	12				142					11	1618	2849
Fire Safety Training				52						250		1748	2050
Station tours					76	16		40					132

Upcoming Year:

Next year promises to be the most exciting growth year for the Department since the mid-fifties. It was then that the last new fire station was built in the City. During this year, as a result of a very generous land donation by the County Commission and West Virginia University, the Department has acquired an ideal building site for a new North Side Fire Station. In conjunction, City Council has taken the necessary steps to generate revenues to cover a bond payment for not only a new station but also the additional apparatus to be housed there.

The Department has been working very hard toward making these objectives a reality during the upcoming year. A committee has been formed to develop apparatus specifications and to solicit bids. Another committee has been established to provide assistance to the engineers and architects who will be designing the new station and soliciting bids for its construction. The whole Department is buzzing with anticipation, excitement, and appreciation!

Along with the relocation of the Wiles Hill Station, there is a great deal of logistical challenges to be considered and overcome. The officer staff has already begun studying the new response areas and operating procedures that will be required once the new station is occupied and the old station is closed. Clearly, there is a lot of work to be done, but the enthusiasm of the Department is certainly up to the challenges that lay ahead.

Summary:

In retrospect, the achievements accomplished in 2006 by the Morgantown Fire Department have been astounding given the resources available to the Department. An example of this proficiency is readily apparent with regard to Council's 2005 allocation of two additional fire inspectors on the Department. By comparing last year's inspection data with this year's inspection data, it becomes obvious that the additional resources have been very well-placed.

Similarly, when comparisons are made between the ever increasing value and number of property and lives being protected by the Department with the actual incurred losses outlined in this report, it becomes abundantly clear that the citizens of Morgantown enjoy the benefits of being protected by the best Fire Department in the State. Statistical evidence of this claim is contained throughout this report.

Morgantown can be justifiably proud of the members of this Department as well as the level of services that they consistently provide and the professional level at which they provide them.