

Fire Department



BELMONT FIRE DEPARTMENT

Kenneth Erickson, Fire Chief
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P.O. Box 837 – 14 Gilmanton Road
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FIRE DEPARTMENT 2016 ANNUAL REPORT

Your Fire Department's Mission is: To provide fire, emergency medical, and fire prevention services in a caring and compassionate manner. To be prepared to respond to any request for assistance and to ensure that every member of the department returns home safely.

2016 was an interesting year for Belmont Fire Department. Chief David Parenti left the Department in January to take a new job in Massachusetts. We wish him well in his new endeavors and thank him for his service. The Town of Belmont and the City of Laconia entered into an agreement whereby we share the City fire chief and assistant fire chief. This is a one-of-a-kind arrangement in the State. So far, it has worked out well for the Town and Department. A reorganization of the department was completed in July and the position of Deputy Fire Chief was eliminated. Sean McCarty went back into the ranks as a Fire Lieutenant. The position of Fire Captain was created and Mike Newhall was promoted to this spot in December, after completing the promotion process.

Once again, it was a busy year for your fire department. We responded to 1,372 emergency requests for service in 2016. This is a 25% increase in emergency calls since 2010. The members of the Department do a very good job, within the limitations they operate under. As part of the reorganization, automatic mutual aid was increased to enhance the fire departments capabilities. Laconia Fire now responds to a large area along Route 3 and 107 for any high-risk emergency. This improves response time significantly, and provides additional firefighters early into the emergency. The fire department provides emergency medical ambulance service, mostly at the Advanced level. There are only two Paramedics in the career force, and one Paramedic in the Call force.

Calls by category

60% are Emergency Medical Service
19% are for Mutual Aid

13% are Fire Responses
8% are for service calls

Calls by area

39% of all responses are to the Village District
16% are the east side Rte. 107 corridor

26% are lakeside Rte. 3 corridor
19% are to other towns for mutual aid

The number of calls for mutual aid is high; however, it is fairly equitable. We went to Laconia 104 times and Laconia came to Belmont 100 times. The reason for this high number of mutual aid is

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that Belmont has many neighboring towns: Laconia, Gilford, Gilmanton, Canterbury, Tilton, Northfield, and Sanbornton. In addition, Belmont responds to Franklin and Loudon frequently. We do receive payment from Canterbury for first response capability. As a percentage of calls, mutual aid calls have decreased significantly from 26% to 19%.

There were 14 fires that resulted in \$155,000 in property damaged. The firefighters saved \$268,000 in property. The worst fire during the year was on Elaine Drive and resulted in significant damage to a single-family home. Another fire on Ham Drive destroyed a mobile home.

Calls by hours

The time period between 8AM and 3 PM is the busiest with 44% of all calls. 39% occur after 4PM and before midnight. 17% occur after midnight and before 8AM.

Calls by Day of Week

There is no significant change by day-of-week. Thursday, Friday and Saturday are 47% of all calls; Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday are equal at 13% each day. And Wednesday is 14% of all calls. The difference between the busiest and least busy day is 4% or 55 responses throughout the year.

Response Time

Our average response time to calls in Belmont is 6 minutes and 45 seconds. Our 80th percentile is 9 minutes. We respond to 37% of all calls within 4 minutes; 55% within 6 minutes; 74% within 8 minutes and 90% within 10 minutes.

Response Time comparison

Belmont	6:45 minutes	37% within 4 minutes	55% within 6 minutes
Gilford	6:40 minutes	29% within 4 minutes	
Franklin	5:04 minutes	52% within 4 minutes	
Tilton	6:49 minutes	42% within 4 minutes	
Laconia	4:41 minutes	67% within 4 minutes	89% within 6 minutes

Calls by Month

The busiest months (in order) are December, August, July, and April. These months are 21% above average. The least busy months are May, November, October, and March. September, June, January, and February are average at 114 calls per month.

Training is one of the most important components of a fire department. It is second only to responding to emergencies. Last year, there was 1,249 hours of training. This is for the Call Company and Full-time firefighters combined.

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In addition to training and emergency response the firefighters conducted 300 inspections; 1,273 various permits were issued; 48 programs for public safety education were presented; and they maintain the station, fleet of apparatus, and equipment. Each day a piece of apparatus is thoroughly checked and tested for readiness; several thousand feet of fire hose is pressure tested annually; fire hydrants are shoveled clear of snow after every storm; dry hydrants are flushed and tested each year.

Being prepared and well-trained is a critical part of ensuring quality service to the community.

The community is very fortunate to have a group of employees who are so dedicated and committed to providing great service, as we have at the Belmont Fire Department. These men and women provide a great service to the Town on a daily basis. And not just in emergency work. They are continually looking at ways to better serve the community - Old Home Day, Police Night Out, Beach Clean-up, installing child safety seats, Senior Safety Day, School Safety programs, to name a few.

I thank our employees for their hard work and dedication. I thank the Board of Selectmen, Town Administrator, and the entire Town of Belmont for their continued support of the Department.

Respectfully submitted,

Chief Kenneth Erickson

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Report of the Forest Fire Warden



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Report of Forest Fire Warden

Belmont Fire Department issued 1,223 burning permits this past year. There were 22 brush fires in town. The biggest fire burned several acres off of Sargent Lake. That fire required assistance from four other towns. We had 29 responses to complaints pertaining to outside burning.

State Report: Over the past two years, New Hampshire has experienced its busiest fire seasons since 1989. 1,090 acres burned during the 2016 season. The White Mountain National Forest experienced its largest fire since becoming a National Forest, burning 330 acres in the town of Albany in November. Fires falling under state jurisdiction burned 759 acres, with the largest fire of 199 acres occurring in Stoddard. The extremely dry summer led to a busy fall fire season with large fires occurring into mid-November. Drought conditions hampered fire suppression efforts and extended the time needed to extinguish fires. Your local fire departments and the Division of Forests & Lands worked tirelessly throughout the year to protect homes and the forests. The statewide system of 16 fire lookout towers continues to operate on high fire danger days. Our fire lookouts are credited with keeping many fires small due to their quick and accurate spotting capabilities. The towers fire detection efforts were supplemented by the NH Civil Air Patrol when the fire danger was especially high.

Many homes in New Hampshire are located in the wild land urban interface, which is the area where homes and flammable wild land fuels intermix. Several of the fires during the 2016 season threatened structures, and a few structures were burned, a constant reminder that forest fires burn more than just trees. Homeowners should take measures to prevent a wild land fire from spreading to their home. Precautions include keeping your roof and gutters clear of leaves and pine needles, and maintaining adequate green space around your home free of flammable materials. Additional information and homeowner recommendations are available at www.firewise.org. Please help Smokey Bear, your local fire department, and the state's Forest Rangers by being fire wise and fire safe!



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