

PUBLIC SAFETY

Division of Fire

Description

The Division of Fire exists to promote and sustain a superior quality of life in Henrico County through the provision of emergency-related services. The Division pledges to deliver professional, cost-effective services in a personal, responsive, and innovative manner that will always serve the public's interest. The Division further pledges to develop and maintain a highly effective and competent workforce through education, mentorship, and leadership.

The Division continues to operate in two major sections, Administration and Operations. The Administration section is comprised of the Executive Staff, Accreditation, Business Management, Technology Support, Personnel and Recruitment, Resource Management, the Fire Marshal's Office, and the Office of Emergency Management. The Operations section comprises all fire, rescue, and emergency medical services personnel in the County's twenty fire stations. Additionally, the Division's Training section falls under the Operations section.

The mission of the Division of Fire has evolved to include an all hazards department with a focus on the protection of life, property, and with a proactive approach to community preparedness. In addition to being the providers of fire protection in the County,

the Division has become the primary provider of Emergency Medical Services. Additionally, the Division of Fire has the regional hazardous materials team and the Division provides technical rescue, ground search, and water rescue.

Objectives

- To minimize the occurrence of fires and other hazards through a strong fire prevention program, through the encouragement of smoke detectors in all occupancies and continued support of the use of fire sprinkler systems.
- To minimize all forms of loss due to fire caused by natural and/or man-made disasters by aggressive property conservation measures and practices.
- To ensure strong, effective, and insightful leadership through all areas of the organization. Strong command leadership shall be demonstrated during all emergencies to ensure effective operations and the best possible outcome for citizens.

Annual Fiscal Plan

| Description | FY09 Actual | FY10 Original | FY11 Approved | Change 10 to 11 |
|-----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Personnel | \$ 42,202,139 | \$ 43,026,798 | \$ 42,623,184 | (0.9%) |
| Operation | 4,725,491 | 5,051,165 | 4,576,569 | (9.4%) |
| Capital | 2,078,410 | 2,117,950 | 2,116,300 | (0.1%) |
| Total | <u>\$ 49,006,040</u> | <u>\$ 50,195,913</u> | <u>\$ 49,316,053</u> | <u>(1.8%)</u> |
| Personnel Complement* | 540 | 540 | 539 | (1) |

*One vacant non-sworn administrative position was eliminated from the complement.

Performance Measures

| | FY09 | FY10 | FY11 | Change 10 to 11 |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|----------------------------|
| Workload Measures | | | | |
| Total Calls for Service | 36,931 | 37,453 | 37,975 | 522 |
| Total EMS and Rescue Calls for Service | 27,293 | 28,314 | 29,336 | 1,022 |
| Fire Incidents | 1,025 | 959 | 893 | (66) |
| Fires per 1,000 Population | 3 | 3 | 3 | 0 |

- To ensure customers receive the highest level of service and protection by supplying the Division's employees with quality training, equipment, and educational opportunities.
- To work cooperatively with other agencies and organizations (public/private) to ensure the effective operation of the Division of Fire.
- To continually enhance the level of emergency medical service delivery by maintaining a constant awareness of changes in the field and through the utilization of a strong quality improvement process.
- To support the Division's partners in the Volunteer Rescue Squads in recruitment as well as training.
- To implement technology in all aspects of the operation in an effort to aid in administrative decision making, emergency resource deployment, and training.

or 9.4 percent from the previous approved budget. This portion of the budget reflects the County-wide adjustment in travel, tuition, technology replacement, automotive/motor pool, and telecommunications. The combined impact of these adjustments reduced the operating component by \$261,334. In addition, funding of \$99,779 was removed from various accounts in order to meet the operating budget adjustment. It is important to note that funding of \$171,000 was eliminated from the budget to reflect current gasoline expenditures for the Division. Although this component experienced an overall decrease, funding of \$57,517 is included for additional operating costs associated with the rebuild of Fire Station #8 and the renovation and expansion of Fire Station #12.

The capital component is forecasted to decrease by \$1,650 or 0.1 percent from the previous approved budget. It is important to note that there are several significant items that are currently forecasted within the existing capital budget of \$2,116,300. The apparatus replacement plan is currently forecasted at a cost of \$1,500,000 and includes the acquisition of two engines and the re-chassis of two ambulances. The apparatus replacement program was initiated in FY1997-98 at a cost of \$1,275,000 as a means of ensuring the Division maintains a planned and consistent replacement schedule for costly fire apparatus.

Budget Highlights

The Division of Fire's budget for FY2010-11 is \$49,316,053, representing a net decrease of \$879,860 or 1.8 percent from the previous approved budget. The personnel component decreased by a net difference of \$403,614 or 0.9 percent from the previous approved fiscal year as a result of the elimination of one vacant non-sworn administrative position from the complement as well as budgeted vacancy savings. These adjustments were offset by the rising costs associated with VRS, VRS life insurance, and health care expenditures.

Operating expenditures also played a role as well in the overall decrease. The operating component is forecasted to decrease by a net difference of \$474,596

In an effort to enhance the delivery of EMS services within the County, the Division of Fire contracted with a vendor to re-chassis two of the older fire medic ambulances. The process involves removing the patient compartment from the existing chassis, renovating and upgrading as needed, and reinstalling it on a new truck chassis. The cost to re-chassis and upgrade a single fire medic unit is nearly half the cost of purchasing a new fire medic unit, allowing for two units to be renovated for the cost of one new unit. Life expectancy for a re-chassis of a fire medic unit is about five to seven years, the same as a new unit.

Fire (cont'd)

The Division of Fire is in the final year of an upgrade to the Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA). The three-year implementation process has given the Division of Fire state of the art and national standard compliant air-packs that will provide the highest level of protection for firefighters, which translates to improved service delivery for the County's citizens. Funding of \$330,000 is included in the capital component to purchase the remaining 84 air packs. In total, this program will upgrade a total of 237 SCBA units.

The capital component also includes the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Equipment Enhancement Program that was created in FY2004-05 at an annual cost of \$96,000, which will allow for the annual replacement of EMS equipment to maintain Division and OSHA minimum equipment standards. Currently, the Division has a total of 67 defibrillators.

Outside of these replacement plans, funding of \$115,500 is provided for various types of firefighter equipment. Also, funding of \$74,800 is included as a part of the ongoing plan to refurbish the fire stations as well as the maintenance and refurbishment of the Division's Administrative offices.

In FY2010-11, the Division of Fire will focus on expanding the quality of existing programs as well as continuing to provide a consistently high level of service to the citizens of the County. Examples of these programs include enhancing firefighter safety, streamlining training delivery, and a continued priority towards community services.

The Division of Fire recently implemented a Planning Section within its Administrative Branch. The mission and direction of the Planning Section is two-fold with the first being the assessment of short-term and long-term organizational efficiency and the recommendation of measures for improved effectiveness. The second focus of the Planning Section is the forecast, assessment, and implementation of technological innovations to further improve organizational efficiency and enhance service delivery to the citizens of Henrico County.

The Office of Emergency Management (OEM) has been involved in many activities throughout calendar year 2009. This included six EOC (Emergency Operations Center) activations for planned (NASCAR and the 2009 Presidential Inauguration) and unplanned

(brush fires, snow, and other weather-related incidents) events, coordination and oversight of ten Homeland Security mandated Incident Command System courses, revisions of the County Emergency Operations Plan, participation in and providing support to several County Emergency Support Function planning groups, and active participation in the Central Virginia Urban Area Security Initiative which includes filling leadership roles for the region's Evacuation & Sheltering subcommittee and coordinating courses to meet the goals and objectives of the subcommittee. Henrico OEM also participated in several regional and state tabletop exercises and training events to strengthen communications and cooperation between local and state partners.

Enhancing community preparedness continues to be a priority for the Office of Emergency Management. This includes development of emergency action plan templates for businesses and licensed care facilities in the County and the development of "shopping lists" to help citizens assemble their own disaster preparedness kits at home and at work. OEM continually shares information with public partners through numerous outreach campaigns such as "Be Ready Henrico!", hurricane preparedness week, winter preparedness month, and "Resolve to be Prepared in 2010".

Adding to the more than 450 citizens and business members who have completed Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training since 2002 are twenty County employees who completed one of the four CERT classes that were offered in 2009. OEM continues to enhance the Citizen Corps Program efforts by expanding the existing Fire Corps program to include the Fire Explorer post and the establishment of an amateur radio cadre, providing ongoing training to Citizen Corps volunteers across the County to augment shelter staff during disasters, and actively participating with the Central Virginia Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster Agency.

The Division will continue the commitment to maintain its national accreditation status, first received in FY1998-99, reaccredited in FY2002-03, and reaccredited for the second time in FY2007-08. The Division of Fire was the first internationally accredited fire service organization in the State of Virginia and the ninth in the world. It is important to note that as of 2009, there are only 133 fire service organizations in North America that are currently accredited.

Fire (cont'd)

Firefighter safety and health continues to be a top priority of the Division. Proper equipment and apparatus is vital to the safety of the firefighter and the FY2010-11 budget continues to allocate resources to ensure a systematic replacement approach. Funding of \$225,000 is included within the existing budget for replacement turnout gear for firefighters as part of the on-going replacement plan as well as additional equipment (i.e. SCBA cylinders, air pack replacement, personal masks, etc.) to provide the Division's personnel with the best available personal protective equipment.

Streamlining and enhancing training has been a continued goal of the Division. In FY1999-00, the Division was able to accomplish Self Certification in cooperation with the Commonwealth of Virginia Department of Fire Programs. The Division recertified in the fall of 2007 under that agreement and with pro-board certification. The ability to plan, develop, and deliver training programs under the guidance of self certification gives the Division greater flexibility and creativity in the training section. Since FY2004-05, the Division of Fire's Training section has conducted over ten Recruit Academies, putting over 160 new employees through an eighteen to twenty week Basic Firefighter Recruit Academy.

The Division continues to provide specialized services to the citizens of Henrico. These services include, but are not limited to the following: the Hazardous Incident Team; Search and Rescue Team; Technical Rescue Team; the Emergency Medical Services Program; Emergency Preparedness Enhancement Program; the Fire Recovery Program; Fire Corps; Citizen's Fire Academy; CERT (Community Emergency Response Team); Fire Prevention Associate Program; and the Fourth Grade Fire Education Program. All of these programs allow the Division to meet its mission, goals, and objectives.

The Division is also continuing the allocation of \$200 for each fire station to provide innovative community outreach programs through its Building Bridges with the Community Program. Examples of the program include open houses, community and public education programs, school picnics, and

safety demonstrations. The firefighters assist in the visible house numbering system and are actively involved in community fairs.

The Division continues the joint Emergency Medical Services (EMS) response effort with the volunteer rescue squads. In FY2010-11, \$218,625 of General Fund support will provide medical supplies, gasoline, and insurance premium payments for the three volunteer rescue squads located in the County.

The Division continues the specialty repair shops by assigning firefighters to these shops in addition to their normal duties. The shops repair and maintain equipment at a lower cost and with less down time than if the County had to purchase these services from an outside vendor. There are twenty-eight of these specialty shops and examples include the Hose and Nozzle shop, Ladder shop, SCBA shop, Oxygen shop, Hurst Tool shop, and Small Engine shop. In FY2009-10, the CPAP (Constant Positive Airway Pressure) shop was established to maintain the Division's CPAP devices.

In FY2010-11, the Division will continue its efforts with the Henrico Marine Patrol, which is a joint effort between the Divisions of Police and Fire. The primary goal is to provide emergency services and law enforcement to the marine community, which falls within the jurisdiction of the County. The Marine Patrol utilizes a C-Hawk vessel for year round response and several inflatable boats for shallow and white water response. There are no full time dedicated Marine Patrol personnel and response is accomplished by utilizing on-duty fire and police personnel or by implementing a call back of the Search/Rescue Dive team.

The Division expects to continue to face a number of challenges over the coming years. Some of these challenges include a growing population; additional EMS calls for service as the population continues to age; turnover of personnel due to many reaching retirement age; and the building of Urban Mixed Use developments. The Division continues to plan for these challenges and will meet the increasing service demands presented by these challenges.