

# **FIRE EMERGENCY SERVICES**

## **Introduction:**

The City of Newport's fire protection operations are housed at 245 N.W. 10th Street. Constructed in 1981, the station provides ample space for equipment and vehicle storage, training rooms, and dispatch and office space. It is a mixed volunteer/ paid department, with a paid engineer on duty round the clock. All other personnel, whether paid or volunteer, are on 24 hour call.

## **Summary, Existing and Future:**

The Insurance Grading Schedule provides a yardstick for the Insurance Services Office (ISO) in that it classifies municipalities on their fire defenses and physical conditions. The City of Newport is currently rated 4 on the ISO scale of 1-10, "1" being the highest level of protection and "10" being none. To receive a better rating would likely require additional staffing beyond the current level of paid personnel: a chief, a fire prevention officer, and three engineers. Citizens decide the level of safety they wish to fund balanced against the costs of achieving such.

The most significant factor in determining a rating is "fire flow." Required fire flow is the rate of water flow needed for fire fighting to confine a major fire to the buildings within a designated area. The determination of this flow depends upon the type of construction, occupancy, size of buildings, and exposure hazards. Fire flow is periodically tested at various hydrant locations throughout the city. Response requirements are factored by a combination of fire flow, distances of coverage, types of property protected, densities, and equipment. The four engines and one ladder company now at the centrally located station house are adequate to support our ISO service level rating of 4.

The Newport Fire Department also provides protection within the rural fire district, which extends from the city limits to Beverly Beach to the north, Wandamere to the south, and along the Bay Road six miles to the east. Development of the proposed Wolf Tree Resort at the extreme south city limits, or another development of comparable impact in the South Beach area, will necessitate a station in the vicinity of the Newport Municipal Airport. Indeed, the City of Newport has identified the airport as the future site of a station, as well as city-owned property on the north end of town in the vicinity of Highway U.S. 101 and N.W. 60th Street. When these stations are built (as development

densities warrant), there should be at least one person on duty at all times. This will require a crew of four for each sub- station. Construction of a permanent U.S. Coast

Guard Helicopter Station at the airport, expected by 1992, may also trigger the need for a manned station at this location.

Adequate personnel, immediately available, is essential to drive and operate apparatus and to perform the needed fire ground operations to protect life and property. Paid personnel perform the following duties: receive and transmit alarms to the volunteers, respond to fire calls, operate apparatus, maintain equipment, and train volunteers. The average number of personnel responding to fires and emergencies in 1988-89 was 21 per alarm. Typically, a higher level of response is generated by structural fires, while fewer attend motor vehicle accidents (MVAs) or lesser incidents.

Newport has no facility for practical training at the present time. All training other than in the classroom is done on the street, on station grounds, or on site, and regular practice sessions are provided for both paid and volunteer personnel.

Although Newport's population has increased, the number of fire alarms responded to by the department has leveled out over the past several years after peaking in 1983 (Figure 1 on the next page), a peak most certainly the result of the large number of wood stoves installed in the couple of years prior to 1983. Medical calls, where the department routinely responds to MVAs and supports the Lincoln County Ambulance Company on life-threatening calls, have varied from year to year with no strong trending. In the 10 year period from 1979 to 1988, the trend in total calls, regardless of type or origin, showed an average rate of increase of about 7%.

The City of Newport has "mutual aid" agreements with all intergovernmental agencies and departments that border the Newport Rural Fire Protection District to back one another up in emergencies. Also, the city has similar terms with the U.S. Coast Guard, and they provide on-the-water protection for both vessels and shore front structures.

## **Conclusions:**

- 1.) The City of Newport's ISO rating of 4 is a quality rating for communities of our size. To attain a 3 would require significant additional personnel, and the result would not be certain as other factors strongly influence the rating.
- 2.) Volunteers are the key to Newport's present fire fighting system, as well as the reason for its relatively low cost.
- 3.) ISO ratings consider the available water supply a prime factor as much as the efficiency of the fire department.

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**GOALS/POLICIES/IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES**  
**FIRE EMERGENCY SERVICES**

**Goal: To protect life and property from the hazards of fire and toxic spills and to support medical personnel in life-threatening situations, disasters, and other emergencies.**

Policy 1: The City of Newport shall encourage volunteers with financial support (off-setting out-of-pocket costs), appropriate recognition, and training.

Policy 2: Improvements in the adequacy and reliability of the water distribution system shall incorporate ISO rating factors as part of the overall design consideration.

Policy 3: The city shall work cooperatively with private ambulance companies to coordinate response to life-threatening emergencies.

Policy 4: The city shall involve itself fully in its role as a participant in the county-wide disaster plan.

Policy 5: The city shall monitor development levels, programming capital construction of new facilities as needed.

Policy 6: The city shall maintain mutual aid agreements with other governmental departments and agencies adequate to meet all reasonable contingencies.

Implementation Measure 1: Formalize an apparatus replacement program.

Implementation Measure 2: In coordination with the U.S. Coast Guard schedule, build and operate a station at the airport for the protection of the airport, the Coast Guard helicopter facilities, and the South Beach area out to the city limits.

Implementation Measure 3: Acquire a site east of Newport on the Bay Road for the protection of that area.

Implementation Measure 4: Acquire a site of approximately one (1) acre in close proximity to Newport with available water, and construct a 35 foot training building.