



Town of
South Windsor

one town, one future

**2005 - 2006
Annual Report**



FIRE DEPARTMENT



The Department responded to 732 incidents between July 1, 2005 and June 30, 2006. These included structure fires, vehicle and outside fires, motor vehicle accidents with injuries or fluid spills, rescue and extrication situations, business and residential fire alarms, carbon monoxide detector activations, and weather related incidents.

Most of these incidents happen one at a time. However, during a severe rain storm in October of 2005 the Department responded to 24 requests for assistance over nine hours.

Four significant fires occurred during the year. In January 2006 a bedroom fire occurred on Summer Hill Drive. The ninety-five year old occupant was alerted by a smoke detector and safely evacuated the home prior to Fire Department arrival. Two days later a house fire was reported on Governors Highway. While direct fire damage was

confined to a small area of the living room significant smoke damage existed throughout the first and second floors. No one was home at the time of the fire. In March 2006 a fire destroyed a garage attached to a condominium on Strawberry Lane. The fire was contained to the garage with only minor damage to the residential areas. An Amato Drive fire damaged a kitchen in April 2006.

The Department is grateful to all those residents who supported the passage of the Fire and Ambulance Facility referendum. Department staff has been working closely with the Public Building Commission in developing final specifications and bid documents prior to construction beginning.

A new fire engine was dedicated and placed in service in May 2005. Engine 6 is located at Station 2 on the corner of Ellington and Beelzebub Road. This piece of apparatus replaces a pumper delivered in 1972.

South Windsor is participating with other fire departments to respond regionally to large scale emergencies. Task Force 57 was formed this past year as part of State disaster planning efforts. South Windsor, the two fire departments in Manchester, Glastonbury and Marlboro are members of this task force. A task force includes three pumpers, an aerial ladder and a heavy rescue unit staffed by a group of firefighters and chief officers. South Windsor contributes a pumper with six firefighters and a chief officer. The task force assembles, responds and operates as a self contained unit for up

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to a twelve hour period of time. The first deployment of Task Force 57 was to the mill fire in Windsor Locks. The task force relieved Windsor Locks firefighters after their first twelve hour operational period.

One of the challenges in a volunteer fire department, although not much different from most businesses, is developing future leaders. The department made two senior management promotions this past year. Brian Peck was promoted from Lieutenant Engine 6 to Captain Administrative Services. Chris Hack was promoted from Lieutenant Squad

5 to Captain Technical Operations. Both new officers are managing major department functions and participate in the decision making process of the Chief's Staff to give them a broad range of leadership experience. Additionally, Firefighter Tom Bengtson was promoted to Lieutenant and assigned as the officer of Engine 4 located at Fire Headquarters. All department officers are promoted based on a competitive examination process including both written exam and oral interview.

Department senior staff members are active in leadership roles regionally and statewide. The Assistant Chief and one of the three Deputy Chiefs teach for the Connecticut Fire Academy and the Hartford County Fire School. The Fire Chief serves as one of three regional coordinators in the State Fire Rescue Disaster Plan. These activities help keep our department on the leading edge of fire service planning and technology. Also this past year the Fire Chief attended the annual conference of the International Association of Fire Chiefs. This conference brings together more than 15,000 fire officers for training and educational sessions. The latest fire fighting and rescue technology is also demonstrated during the conference.

Recognizing those individuals within a volunteer organization is critical to its existence. In September 2005 we recognized Patrick Hankard for his 40 years of service to the department. Currently serving as firefighter, Pat was Deputy Chief for more than 15 years and also was a member of the Board of

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Fire Commissioners. The department is fortunate to have more than 25 members with over 20 years of service.

Seven new members completed 123 hours of training this past year and achieved State Certification as Firefighter I. The department requires that all new members who wish to be designated as interior firefighters become certified with two years.

The Fire Department is staffed by more than 100 residents who volunteer their

time, energy, and enthusiasm to help their fellow citizens. These individuals contributed over 23,000 hours of time to the community. We encourage anyone who is interested in learning more about volunteering, either as a firefighter or in an administrative, support, or fire prevention education capacity, to join us at Fire Headquarters any Tuesday evening.

Philip E. Crombie, Jr.
Fire Chief