

2014

Ridgewood Fire Department Annual Report



James Van Goor, Chief

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“Every community should have its own plan for fire protection, as “each community has a set of conditions unique to itself, and a system of fire protection that works well for one community cannot be assumed to work equally as well for other communities. To be adequate, the fire protection system must respond to local conditions, especially to changing conditions and community needs” (Bland, 1973).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The 2014 Ridgewood Fire Department Annual Report is made possible through the help and support from the following people;

FORMAT AND LAYOUT:

Patti Herman, Administrative Assistant

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Sr. Fire Prevention Officer/Fire Official John Young
Dolores Tomei, Bureau Administrative Secretary

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Patti Herman, Administrative Assistant

FIRE NARRATIVES:

Patti Herman, Administrative Assistant
John Judge, Lieutenant
Boyd Loving, Village Resident

PICTURES

Boyd Loving, Village Resident
James O'Connell
Bill Tompkins, BTFirephotos.com

DEFINITION OF TERMS

CO - Carbon Monoxide is a colorless, odorless, and tasteless gas that is slightly less dense than air. It is toxic to humans when encountered in concentrations above about 35 parts per million.

Elevated Alarms:

- Second Alarm - Ridgewood Volunteer Firefighters are notified by pager to assist in times of emergency when more firefighters are needed.
- Third Alarm - Ridgewood Volunteer Firefighters and off-duty Specific Professional Firefighters are notified by pager to assist in times of emergency when more firefighters are needed.
- General Alarm - Ridgewood Volunteer Firefighters and all off-duty Professional Firefighters are notified by pager to assist in times of emergency when more firefighters are needed.

Fast Team - Firefighter assist and search team (FAST), also known as a rapid intervention team/crew (RIT/RIC), is a team of two or more firefighters dedicated solely to the search and rescue of other firefighters in distress. FAST shall have no other operational assignment during an incident. Multiple alarm fires may require multiple FAST/RIC teams.

Jaws of Life - Hydraulic rescue tools are used by emergency rescue personnel to assist vehicle extrication of crash victims, as well as other rescues from small spaces. These tools include cutters, spreaders, door busters and rams

PPE - Personal Protective Equipment refers to protective clothing, helmets, goggles, or other garments or equipment designed to protect the wearer's body from injury or infection.

Response Time - The amount of time it takes to get from the firehouse to the location of the emergency.

SCBA - Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus sometimes referred to as a compressed air breathing apparatus or simply breathing apparatus, is a device worn by rescue workers, firefighters, and others to provide breathable air in an "Immediately Dangerous to Life or Health" atmosphere.

T.I.C. - Thermal Imaging Camera is a type of thermographic camera used in firefighting. By rendering infrared radiation as visible light, such cameras allow firefighters to see areas of heat through smoke, darkness, or heat-permeable barriers. Thermal imaging cameras are typically handheld, but may be helmet-mounted. They are constructed using heat- and water-resistant housings, and ruggedized to withstand the hazards of fire ground operations.

Uniform Construction Code - is a complete set of technical standards for construction with a uniform method of administration and enforcement.

Uniform Fire Code - ensure that all areas of the State are protected by a uniform, minimum fire safety code so that the lives and property of the State's citizens are guarded against the hazards presented by fire.

CHIEF'S MESSAGE

Roberta Sonenfeld, Village Manager
Village of Ridgewood

February 26, 2015

Dear Roberta,

On behalf of the members of the Ridgewood Fire Department, I am pleased to present you with the 2014 Annual Report. This report provides a summary of the departments activities from January 1, 2014 through December 31, 2014. In this report, you will learn about the personnel, facilities, equipment, and programs that serve you and our residents. You will learn that our primary mission is to take care of our citizens, some who are having the “worst day of their lives.” You will also learn how we deliver this vital service through Fire Prevention, Public Education, and Emergency response. You will see how the Firefighters are continually focused on improvements, implementing best practices, and developing performance enhancements in all areas of our Department.

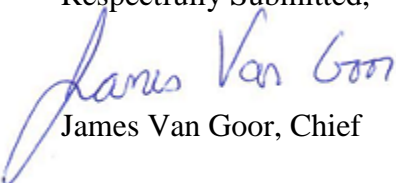
In 2014, there were many changes in Fire Department staffing. There were four retirements, one resignation, and one firefighter passed away. There were also two firefighters promoted to Lieutenant, two Lieutenants promoted to Captain and four new firefighters. Firefighter Tim Bombace was called to active duty in the Army. He is stationed in Bahrain, which is located in the Persian Gulf.

The Fire Department is a proactive organization staffed with 40 professional firefighters, dedicated to the delivery of service to the citizens and visitors of Ridgewood. We proudly deliver this service through two fire stations strategically located throughout the Village.

As our Village copes with budget restraints, the expectation of our citizens to have quality emergency service has not changed. This department will work hard to meet these demands, continually striving to be one of the finest Fire Departments in the country. Every member of the Ridgewood Fire Department endeavors to insure that our budget is fiscally sound, comprised of wise choices and decisions that best provide fire services to the Village. We strive to make our partnership with the Village of Ridgewood stronger and will never take for granted the support we receive from our community.

On behalf of all of the Career and Volunteer Firefighters and the Administrative Staff of the Ridgewood Fire Department, I would like to thank you, the Village Council, and the residents of Ridgewood for their continued support. I want to also thank all the different departments in town for the prompt and professional assistance given to this department. Without their support we would not be able to carry out our mission.

Respectfully Submitted,



James Van Goo, Chief

INTRODUCTION

Organized fire protection began in the Village of Ridgewood in 1897 with the formation of the Protection Hook and Ladder Co. #1. Much has happened since that time and the history of the fire department has gone from the Bucket Brigade to automated master streams.

Today's firefighters are called upon to do much more than put out fires. Our fire department is skilled at handling a variety of emergency situations and is called upon to respond to motor vehicle accidents, hazardous spills, downed wires, and medical emergencies. A number of minor emergencies are handled by the department daily. These include pumping flooded basements for residents, responding to activations of carbon monoxide and smoke detectors, ring removals, resident lock-outs, child lock-ins, and electrical problems. The department also has a Rescue Dive Team to handle ice and water rescues.

During the weekday hours of 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. the fire department responds to a significant number of medical emergencies in conjunction with the Ambulance Corps. Having a fire engine and ambulance respond simultaneously ensures that medical assistance reaches the scene within 3-4 minutes.

The basic organizational structure of the department consists of an administrative component, a fire and emergency response component, and a Fire Prevention component. The administrative component is comprised of a Chief and an Administrative Assistant. The normal work schedule is 35 hours per week with the Chief Officer on call 24 hours per day.

The fire and emergency response component is made up of both Professional and Volunteer Firefighters. The Professional Firefighters are grouped into three Platoons of 13 and provide the primary response to fires and emergencies. Each Platoon is comprised of (1) Captain, (2) Lieutenants, and (10) Firefighters, and maintains a minimum of nine (9) personnel on duty. The Platoons work schedule is based on a 56 hour per week work schedule. The Volunteer personnel are a support group for the department and are called out whenever there are working fires, during the times of storms or multiple responses.

The Fire Prevention component is comprised of (1) Fire Official, (3) Part-Time Fire Inspectors, and (1) Administrative Secretary. The Fire Prevention Bureau is responsible for inspections under the Uniform Construction Code and the Uniform Fire Code. All Fire Prevention activities and Public Fire Safety Education programs are scheduled through the Fire Prevention Bureau.

Fire Department members are expected to perform all of the duties associated with responding to fires and emergencies. Such duties include incident management, personnel accountability, establishing a water supply, hose deployment, forcible entry, search and rescue, ladder placement, ventilation, salvage and overhaul, and any other activities required to safely complete an operation.

To ensure the safety of personnel and the highest level of service to the community, a training schedule has been established to ensure that all components of fire suppression and emergency operations are covered in a comprehensive manner.

MISSION/VISION STATEMENT

Mission Statement

The Ridgewood Fire Department protects the lives and property of all Village residents and visitors. The department is entrusted to the prevention and suppression of fire, emergency medical calls, disasters, public safety, education and enforcement.

Vision Statement

The Ridgewood Fire Department will be a progressive, modern department that will maintain high levels of service ensure responsible use of the resources, and focus on the professional development and training of all personnel.

The Ridgewood Fire Department serves the community by performing the following essential services;

Fire suppression – Building, Cooking, Vehicle, Brush...
Water Calls / Floods/ broken pipes/ basement pump outs
Lock out / Lock-in (house & car)
Storm Emergencies / Wires down / Tree limb removal
First Responder/ EMT
Confined Space Rescue
Dive Team / Swift Water Rescue
Hazardous Material Response
Vehicle Extrication
Auto-accidents / Spill Cleanups / Battery disconnects
Building Collapse/Entrapments
Electrical Emergencies
Chemical Spills / Leaks
Carbon Monoxide
Elevator Rescue
Utility Emergencies:
Gas Leaks (Natural Gas or LPG)
Rope Rescue / Rappelling
Fire Prevention Services:
 Building inspections, code
 Enforcement, plan review, public
 Fire safety education

THE VILLAGE OF RIDGEWOOD

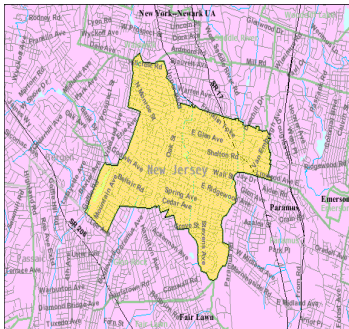
MAYOR AND COUNCIL 2014

Mayor Paul Aronsohn

Deputy Mayor Albert Pucciarelli Councilman Michael Sedon
Councilwoman Susan Knudsen Councilwoman Gwenn Hauck

To Ridgewood's outstanding Mayor and Council, I extend my thanks and gratitude along with that of all our personnel for your support and valued service. I know firsthand of the long hours and hard work you put in, to make Ridgewood a great place to live and work. Our congratulations and welcome to Councilwoman Susan Knudsen and Councilman Michael Sedon, we look forward to working with you in the coming years. We also want to say thank you to Thomas Riche and Bernadette Walsh as you leave office. We know you will continue to support Ridgewood in other ways.

The Village Of Ridgewood



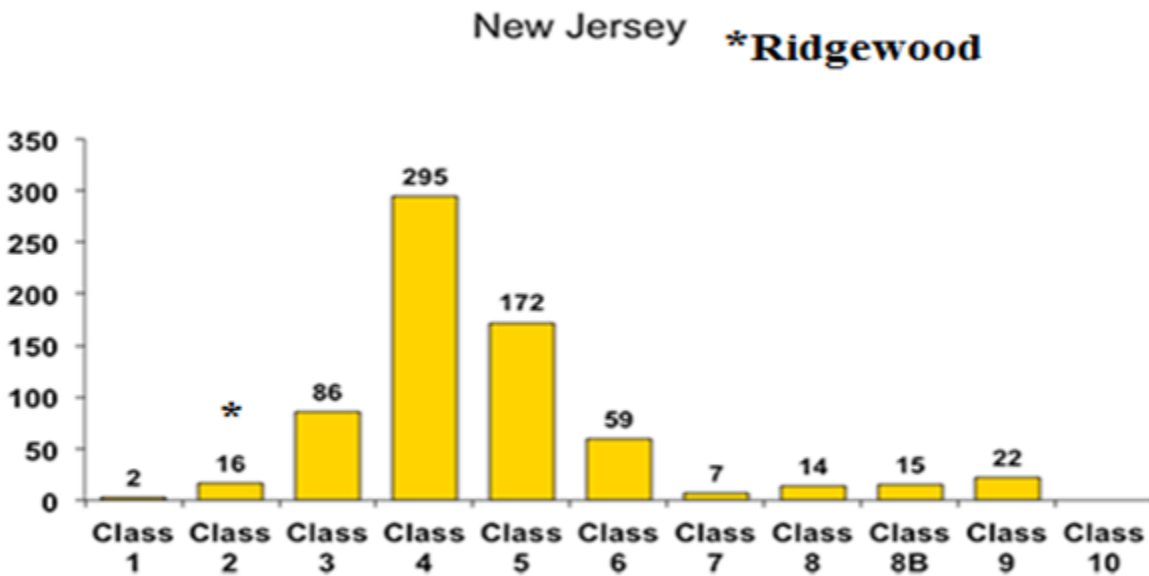
The Village of Ridgewood is located in Bergen County, New Jersey. It is primarily a residential community with a thriving business district. The district contains over 1,100 businesses including one major lumberyard, three major grocery chain stores, thirty-five restaurants, a four-screen movie theater, twenty houses of worship, twenty-five schools, a large natural pool, and a YMCA/YWCA facility. In addition to the almost 9,000 single-family homes, the community has sixty-eight apartment complexes with over 1,090 apartments, a regional medical center that has 451 beds, two nursing homes, and two senior citizens apartment complexes. We have a population density of 4,308 residents per square mile, and an overall population of 24,936, within a 5.79 square mile land area. The population density is significantly higher than the Bergen County average of 3,775.

PUBLIC PROTECTION CLASSIFICATION

The Ridgewood Fire Department is proud to announce that in 2012 they have earned the Village a higher Public Protection Classification (PPC). **Ridgewood was upgraded to a Class 2 Public Protection Classification (PPC) from a Class 3.** Insurance Service Organization (ISO) assigns a Public Protection Classification (PPC) from 1 to 10, with 1 being the highest and 10 being the lowest rating. By classifying communities' ability to suppress fires; Insurance Service Organization (ISO) helps the communities evaluate their public fire-protection services. The program provides an objective standard that helps fire departments in planning and budgeting for facilities, equipment, and training.

Insurance Service Organization (ISO) collects information on municipal fire-protection in communities throughout the United States. The information is used by insurance companies to establish fair premiums on fire insurance for homeowners and commercial properties. ISO evaluated 47,242 communities countrywide, only 592 are rated as class 2 and 61 received a class 1. Out of 688 communities in New Jersey only 16 communities received a class 2 and 2 communities received a class 1 rating. This accomplishment has placed the Ridgewood Fire Department as one of the top eighteen (18) Fire Departments in New Jersey.

A community's investment in fire protection is a proven and reliable predictor of future fire losses. Statistical data on insurance losses proves that there is relationship between excellent fire protection and low fire losses. Not only does a lower classification lower the insurance rate for homeowners and businesses, it also justifies the investment that the Village has put into fire protection. Having a class 2 fire department should give the residents a feeling of security and a greater peace of mind.



<http://www.isomitigation.com/ppc/1000/graphs/NJ.html>

5-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

A 5-year strategic plan was developed in 2014 to provide the Ridgewood Fire Department with valuable information concerning goal development, and the positive and negative aspects of the overall organization. One component of the process included evaluating the past and present culture, programs, and services of the department. The initial part of the strategic planning was spent identifying the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT). Particular attention was given to the current conditions, growth of the community, and demand for services.

The focus was on customer service, continuous improvement, and the safety and welfare of our residents and employees. The Ridgewood Fire Department's Strategic Plan provides a realistic approach that will effectively guide our department for the next five years. The department's goal is to provide emergency and non-emergency services in an effective, fiscally responsible, and compassionate manner. This document serves as a planning tool to direct the current and future activities of the Fire Department in an effort to provide the best possible service to the community for the next five years.

The programs and goals for the next 5-years are;

- 1-Expand on the current programs/classes to support professional development, leadership training, Firefighting and EMT
- 2-Expand on and improve our emergency medical calls, first responder
- 3-Improve radio communication and equipment
- 4-Fire prevention inspection/pre-fire plans
- 5-Create programs to improve customer service, customer survey
- 6-Create and improve on Fire Prevention education and outreach programs to children, seniors and the disabled
- 7-Develop a health and wellness program for the personnel

The Ridgewood Fire Department must proactively respond to changes. Today's fire departments are called on to respond to a much wider range of services. The department staff must continually assess the needs of the organization and their ability to continue to improve the level of service. Strategic planning is another tool that will aid the department in accomplishing future goals. The strategic plan is never finished, it will need to be evaluated and update on a regular basis. Strategic goals will need to be updated to identify accomplishments and to recognize change within the fire department. When evaluating progress towards accomplishing the goals, timelines may need to be adjusted to reflect changes in the department's needs, environment, and resources.

FIRE STATIONS: HISTORY AND LOCATION

Fire Headquarters:

Fire Headquarters is located at 201 E. Glen Avenue. This facility has been operational since June 1, 1992 and serves as quarters for the officers and firefighters of Engine Company No. 35, Ladder Company No. 36, and Rescue Company No. 42. The building also houses the Administrative Offices, the Fire Prevention Bureau.

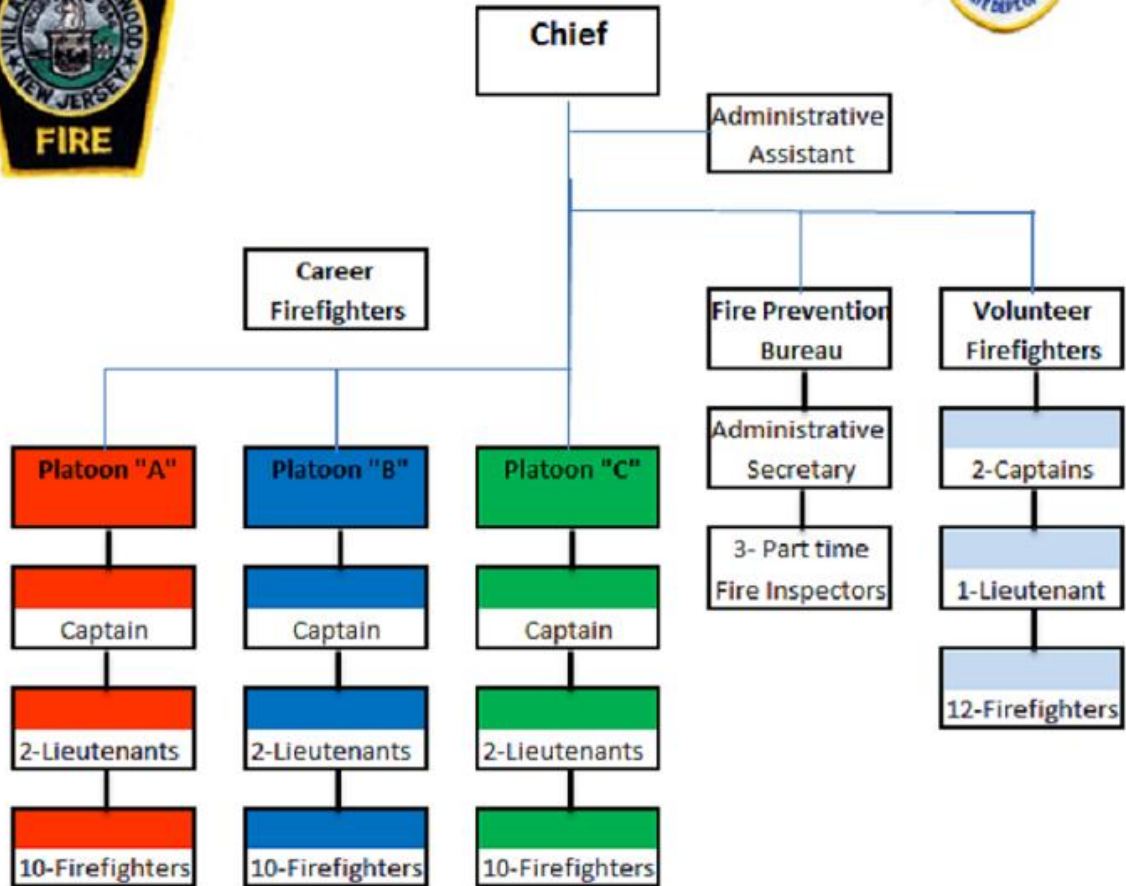


Engine Company 31:

In response to residents' concerns after serious fires in the mid 1940's, and to better serve the West side of town, Engine Company No. 31 was established in 1947. Located at 311 West Glen Avenue, the structure is a renovated bar n, which houses an apparatus room, offices, and living quarters for firefighters. There is one Engine Company with a three person crew on duty 24 hours a day. This fire station has served the Village for over 60 years.



ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



CAREER PERSONNEL

Administration:

Chief James Van Goor

Administrative Assistant Patti Herman

Fire Officers:

Captain Greg Hillerman
Captain Chris DuFlocq
Captain Scott Schmidt
Lt. Brendan Corcoran
Lt. Harvey Weber
Lt. Michael Kakolewski
Lt. Joseph Koonce
Lt. Justin O'Connor
Lt. John Judge

Firefighters:

FF. John Baughman
FF. Matthew Bombace
FF. Tim Bombace
FF. Paul Brennan
FF. Greg Corcoran
FF. Scott Cornell
FF. Chris Eidschun
FF. Joseph Ferraro
FF. Michael Ferraro
FF. Jason Jacoby
FF. James Kakolewski
FF. Jason Kane
FF. Vincent Krug
FF. Michael McLaughlin
FF. Matthew Musicant
FF. Justin O'Connor
FF. Brian Peacock
FF. Matthew Ramge
FF. Thomas Shortway
FF. David Skoblar
FF. Daniel Steen
FF. Chris Wolfstirn
FF/Fire Official John Young
FF. Jordan Zales
FF. Kurt Harba

Retirements:

Firefighter Rich Shortway- January 1, 2014
Firefighter Russ Gebhard- January 1, 2014
Captain Paul Monton - February 1, 2014
Captain John Albano - December 1, 2014

Deceased

Firefighter Steve Missel- July 6, 2014

Resigned:

Firefighter Kevin Reilly - July 22, 2014

Promotions:

Captain Scott Schmidt- February 24, 2014
Lt. John Judge - February 24, 2014
Captain Greg Hillerman-December 10, 2014
Lt. Justin O'Connor- December 10, 2014

Appointments:

Prob. FF. Tim Bombace- February 3, 2014
Prob. FF. Brian Kelly- February 3, 2014
Prob. FF. Dan Kostro- February 3, 2014
Prob. FF. Dave Kelly- March 17, 2014

**“Mark Cassidy Firefighter of the Year”
award was presented to Lt. John Judge**

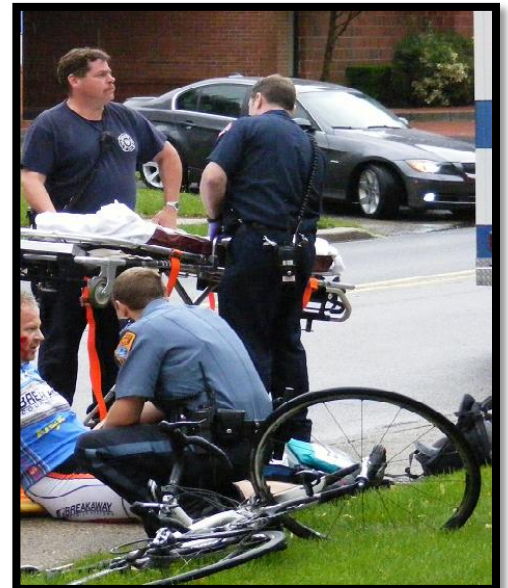


Starting in 2010, the “Firefighter of the Year” Award is being dedicated in Memory of FF. Mark Cassidy

IN MEMORIAM

STEVEN L. MISSEL

Senior Firefighter Steven Missel, a Firefighter for 18 years, passed away on July 6, 2014, at the young age of 44. Steve was an outstanding Firefighter who was exceptionally well liked by all of the members of this department. The outpouring of support from the Village Council, Village Manager, and the community helped us cope during this tragic time. We sincerely appreciate everyone's participation and condolences as we laid our brother to rest.



VOLUNTEER PERSONNEL

Fire Officers:

Administrative Capt. Richard Scalione
Capt. Chris Raimondi
Lt. Robert Peacock

Firefighters:

FF. David Azzopardi
FF. Joseph Carey
FF. Doug Christopher
FF. Jeffrey Creegan
FF. Trevor Fetkowitz
FF. Dane Knudsen
FF. Dennis Johnson
FF. Anthony Monton
FF. Kyle Monton
FF. John Spinello
FF. Henry Van Wageningen



PERSONNEL TRAINING

Career Personnel

The Members of the Career Department conducted training in 2014 covering the following subjects:

Blood Borne Pathogens	Personal Protective Equipment	Building Construction
Personnel Accountability	Structural Firefighting	Winter Operations
CPR Re-certification	Building Collapse & Safety	Right to Know
Trench Rescue	First Aid	Pre-Fire Planning
Vehicle Firefighting	Engine Company Operations	Ropes & Knots
Driver Training	Rescue Tools	Brush Firefighting
Extrication – Motor Vehicle	Sprinklers & Standpipes	Forcible Entry
Search & Rescue	Portable Fire Extinguishers	Ground Ladders
Aerial Ladder Operations	F.A.S.T. Operations & Equipment	Master Streams
Radio Communications	Advancing Hand Lines	Computer
Ventilation	Report Writing	Self Contained Breathing
Engines & Pumps	Elevator Rescue	Tools & Equipment
Confined Space Rescue	Use, Care & Maintenance of Equip.	Fire Behavior
Operation of Gas Meters	Salvage & Overhaul	Thermal Imaging Camera
Cause & Origin	Water Rescue	Air Tools & Rescue Air Bags
Natural Gas Emergencies	Incident Command System	Decontamination

Volunteer Personnel

The Members of the Volunteer Department conducted training in 2014 covering the following subjects:

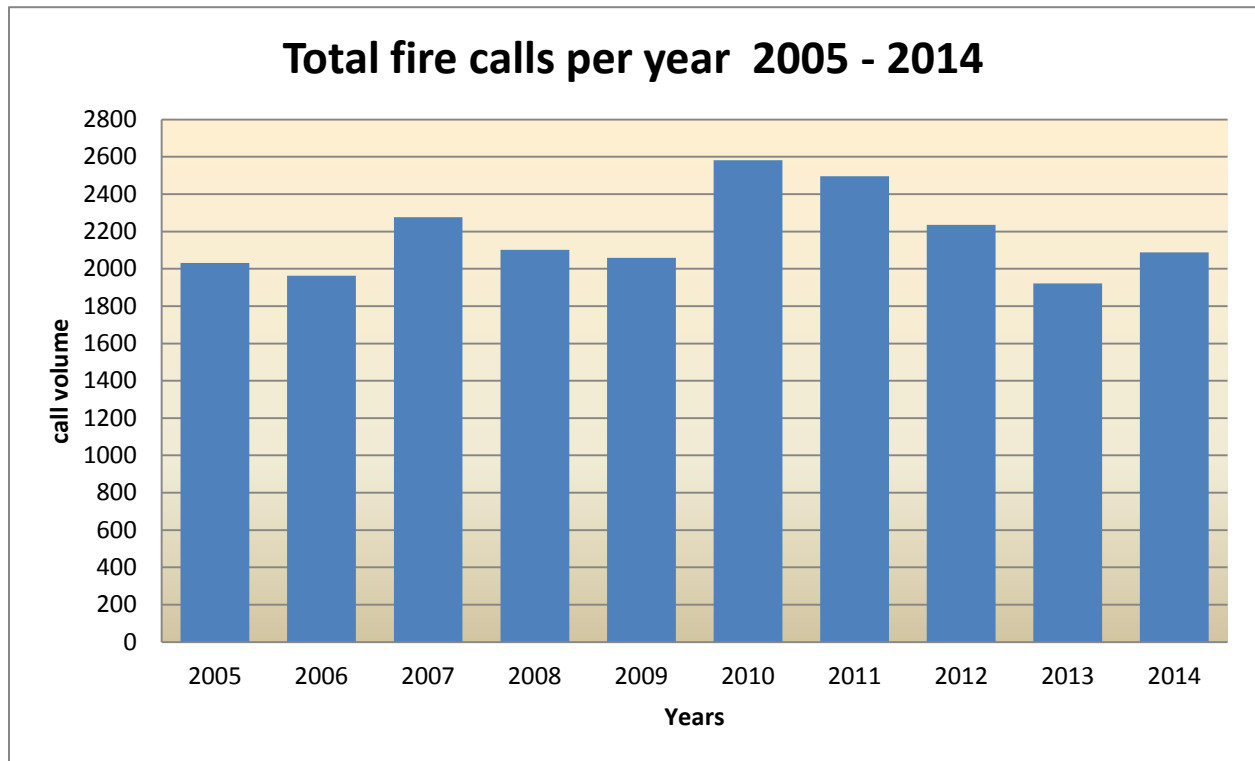
Blood Borne Pathogens	Fire Behavior	Building Construction
Structural Firefighting	Portable Fire Extinguishers	Right to Know
Search & Rescue	Ropes & Knots	Mass Decontamination
Personal Protective Equip.	Natural Gas Emergencies	Confined Space Rescue
Rescue Tools	Personnel Accountability – Safety	Self Contained Breathing
Building Collapse & Safety	Forcible Entry	Pump Operations
Ground Ladders	4" & 5" Hose Operations	Master Streams
Ventilation	Advancing Hand Lines	Driver Training

FIRE CALL VOLUME MONTH/YEAR

Due to increased fire prevention activity and community education, our accidental / malfunction of alarm responses has decreased by 25% since 2011.

RESPONSES BY MONTH - 2014

JANUARY	196
FEBRUARY	163
MARCH	154
APRIL	163
MAY	174
JUNE	186
JULY	179
AUGUST	170
SEPTEMBER	160
OCTOBER	201
NOVEMBER	180
DECEMBER	162
TOTAL ALARMS	2,088



HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2014 SIGNIFICANT INCIDENTS

Carbon Monoxide Emergency, Response Time 3:06

February 19, 2014

Received call for a smell of gasoline in a residence. Engine 31's firefighters checked the house and found elevated readings of Carbon Monoxide. There was a light haze on the first floor and a heavy smoke condition in the basement. The elevated CO and smoke condition was caused by a snow blower running in the attached garage. The firefighters proceeded to ventilate the home while wearing SCBA. An Ambulance was called to assess a person that was in the home at the time for CO poisoning. The patient was taken to Valley Hospital for observation. The home was well ventilated with fire department fans and checked with two multi-gas meters.

Extrication with "Jaws of Life", Response Time 3:00

March 1, 2014

Ridgewood firefighters needed the "Jaws of Life" to free the female driver of an Acura TL after she was pinned in her car following a late night, two-vehicle crash at the intersection of Linwood and Walthery Avenues. After being removed from her vehicle, the driver was transported by ambulance to Hackensack University Medical Center with what were described by police on the scene as non life threatening injuries. A black Audi involved in the crash sustained very heavy front end damage, but its driver refused medical aid, as did two other vehicle occupants.

Carbon Monoxide, Incident Response time 2:08

March 4, 2014

Fire Department personnel were dispatched for fire alarm activation. Car 38 investigated and found that the alarm was set-off by workers in the basement. The workers were using a gas powered saw, which caused elevated levels of CO throughout the house. Engine Company 35 members entered the home with multi-gas meters and had CO readings in the basement and first floor. The firefighters proceeded to ventilate the home while wearing PPE and SCBA. An Ambulance was called to assess a person that was in the home at the time for CO poisoning. The home was well ventilated with fire department fans and was checked with two multi-gas meters.

Barn Fire, Response Time 1:00

March 22, 2014



Fire Department personnel were dispatched for a fire in the rear of a house. Upon arrival Car 38 requested a general alarm. A barn in the rear of the residence was gutted by a fire that was reported by a passerby at approximately 6:45 PM on Saturday. The owners of the property were not home at the time firefighters arrived and found the barn totally engulfed in flames. No injuries were reported and the cause of the fire is still under investigation

Oven Fire, Response Time 1:15

April 9, 2014

Received call for an oven fire in a residence. Firefighters entered the home into the kitchen area and found a moderate smoke condition approximately five (5) feet from the floor. A general alarm was activated and a fast team was requested from Waldwick. A small fire was contained to the oven and members extinguished the fire using a CO2 extinguisher. The oven was pulled away from the wall and the area was checked for any fire extension using the Thermal Imaging Camera (T.I.C.). No fire extension was found and the gas and electric was shut-off to the stove. A quick response was credited for saving the house from further damage.

Residential Structure Fire, Response Time 3:01

April 14, 2014

Smoke was found coming from the exterior of the house at ground level next to the steps to the front door. The rest of the house was checked and smoke was noted in the basement. Rescue 42 and Tower 36's firefighters pulled off the shingles and broke through the plywood on the front of the house and exposed the area of flame. After extinguishment, Rescue 42 and Tower 36's firefighters performed overhaul removing siding to check for further extension. Engine 35's firefighters worked in the basement clearing the area in the closet opposite the outside fire wall checking for fire extension; the residence was ventilated with fire department fans. It was determined that the homeowner was soldering a pipe against the house in the morning and then went to work. A quick response was credited for saving the house from further damage.

Kitchen Fire, Response Time 1:25

April 28, 2014

A fire that originated in the kitchen of a home destroyed a microwave oven, stove, adjacent cabinet, and filled the entire house with smoke. A general alarm was activated and a fast team was requested from Waldwick. The homeowner and her child had safely evacuated the structure prior to arrival of fire department personnel. Ridgewood firefighters quickly extinguished the fire and the residence was ventilated with fire department fans. It was determined that the fire started in the stove when the homeowner turned the oven on, not realizing that someone had put a plastic dish drying rack in the oven. A quick response was credited for saving the house from further damage.

Hazmat Incident with small explosion, Response Time 4:15

May 28, 2014

Received call for a possible explosion and smoke coming from residence. Upon arrival and investigation found the homeowner had mixed 2 chemicals together causing a large explosion in his garage. Firefighters wearing full PPE and SCBA entered the garage and found a shattered 5 gal bucket with a small amount of a white liquid in it sitting on what was remaining of a plastic sink. The homeowner mixed pool shocking chemical and granulated chlorine with hot water. The reaction of these two chemicals caused the large explosion. Firefighters used speedi-dry to absorb liquid that was on ground to assist in the clean-up of the area, and the residence was ventilated with fire department fans. All other pool chemicals were removed outside of the garage. Bergen county hazmat used meters to determine any further chemical exposure in the garage.

Residential Structure Fire, Response Time 2:40

June 7, 2014

Received report of a structure fire; Car 38, Engine 35 & 31, Rescue 42 and Tower 36 responded. While responding the police confirmed that there was a fire on the outside of the house. Car 38 requested a third alarm and a fast team from Waldwick. Engine 31's firefighters entered the residence finding fire in the attic space above the rear bedroom. Car 30 requested a general alarm and one engine company from Glen Rock. The fire was held in that area until a hole was cut in the roof. Once the hole was cut, the remainder of the ceiling was pulled and the fire was fully extinguished. During extinguishment, firefighters laddered the building in multiple areas outside and utilities were shut off. The house was ventilated with fire department fans and a tarp was placed on the roof over the hole. It was determined that the fire started on the outside of the house and extended in the attic from hot ashes that were placed on the side of the house. A quick response was credited for saving the house from further damage.

Dumpster Fire Next to Residence, Response Time 4:10

August 8, 2014

Received a call for a dumpster fire, Car 38 and Engine 31 responded. En route, central dispatch advised the dumpster was close to the residence, Engine 35, Rescue 42 & Tower 36 were dispatched. Car 38 reported a confirmed dumpster fire next to the residence and that the dumpster was full of construction debris from a kitchen renovation. A second alarm was transmitted by Car 38 because all units were busy with this dumpster fire as well as a second call for a reported structure fire. Fire was fully extinguished; then overhaul began and the dumpster was completely checked with a T.I.C. for any further smoldering. Fire still under investigation.

Dryer & Basement Fire, Response Time 2:03

September 30, 2014

Received a call for smoke and odor of burning in the basement of a residence, Car 38, Engine 35 & 31, Rescue 42 and Tower 36 responded. Car 38 assumed command and found smoke coming from the laundry room. Eng 31 firefighters further investigated and found a working dryer fire. Eng 31 firefighters used 2 water cans and T.I.C. to locate and extinguish the fire. Eng 31 firefighters were able to remove the burning clothes from the unit. Eng 35 crew checked the basement for extension while Tower 36 and Rescue 42 personal set up fans to assist in the ventilation of the home. A quick response was credited for saving the house from further damage.

Residential Structure, Response Time 2:35

September 17, 2014



Received call for fire in the wall at a residence and found evacuated residence with light smoke issuing from the right side exterior wall above the masonry staircase landing. The homeowner stated that he had been using a torch to install an iron metal gate on top of the landing. His wife then noticed a light smoke haze inside the home. Firefighters removed the exterior trim, siding and sheathing and used pressurized water extinguisher to extinguish fire in the wall. Areas of dry wall in the kitchen and basement ceiling were also removed to extinguish the fire in the walls. A quick response was credited for saving the house from further damage.

Vehicle Rollover with Extrication, Response Time 2:40

September 30, 2014

Received call for a reported vehicle rollover with an occupant entrapment at the intersection of South Maple Avenue and Dayton Street. Car 38, Engine 35, Engine 31, Rescue 42, & Tower 36 responding. Nissan Rogue was found on its side with the driver trapped inside. A second vehicle, a Ford Edge was involved in the accident and off to the side of the road. The driver of the Ford Edge self-extricated and was sitting on the curb. Firefighters stabilized the vehicle and removed the front windshield. The patient was extricated through that opening and placed on a long board. Patient was transported to Valley Hospital.

Pedestrian vs. Bus, Response Time 1:50

October 6, 2014

A NJ Transit bus struck a male pedestrian crossing Oak Street at the intersection of Franklin Avenue in Ridgewood. The victim was pinned under the driver's side of the bus and remained there until freed by Ridgewood firefighters. Firefighters used air bags designed to lift heavy objects to raise the bus off the victim. The victim was conscious and alert as he was being placed on an ambulance stretcher. He was transported to Hackensack University Medical Center; injuries were reported to his leg and ankle. Ridgewood PD, EMS, FD, and Emergency Services personnel responded.

Residential Structure Fire, Response Time 3:00

November 28, 2014

Received call reporting a basement fire at a residence on South Pleasant Avenue. Upon arrival Car 38 requested a general alarm, fast team from Waldwick and an engine from Glen Rock. First arriving units observed smoke coming from a second story window and the back door. All occupants of the home evacuated the home prior to arrival of the fire department. The fire was contained to the basement but there was smoke damage throughout the home.

Residential Structure Fire, Response Time 3:15

November 28, 2014

Received call for a kitchen fire in a second floor residence. Upon arrival, Car 38 requested a general alarm, fast team from Waldwick, and an engine from Glen Rock. The fire started in clothes dryer and spread to clothing left on top of the unit. No injuries were reported. The fire was contained to one room, however smoke and water damage impacted the first floor below and attic above.

Shed Fire Close to Residence – exposures burning upon arrival, trees & melted siding Response Time 2:00

November 28, 2014

Received call for a reported fire on Theyken Place; Car 38, Engine 35, Engine 31, Rescue 42, & Tower 36 responded. While en route, a heavy volume of black smoke could be seen from Rt. 17. A second alarm was requested by Car 38. Car 38 reported a confirmed fully involved shed in the rear of the property. Homeowner stated he placed ash from the fireplace outside next to the shed approximately 15 hours earlier.



EMERGENCY RESPONSE COMPARISON 2012-2014

FIRES (100 CODE)	2012	2013	2014
STRUCTURE FIRES (111-123A)	39	33	40
VEHICLE FIRES (131-138)	3	4	2
TREES, BRUSH & GRASS FIRES (140-143)	15	6	17
REFUSE FIRES (150-155)	8	8	4
<u>SPECIAL OUTSIDE FIRE (160-173)</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>8</u>
TOTAL CODE 100	67	50	71
OVERPRESSURE, RUPTURE, EXPLOSION - NO FIRE (200 CODE)			
STEAM, AIR & GAS RUPTURES (200-251)	13	7	12
TOTAL CODE 200	13	7	12
RESCUE & EMERGENCY SERVICES (300 CODE)			
EMT CALLS (321D)	843	792	817
EMT MUTUAL AID CALLS (321M)	3	0	1
SEARCH, RESCUE, EXTRICATION (322-381)	12	24	52
TOTAL CODE 300	855	816	870
HAZARDOUS CONDITIONS (CODE 400)			
COMBUSTIBLE SPILLS & LEAKS (400-413)	62	60	75
CHEMICAL HAZARD/Carbon Monoxide (420-431)	51	47	34
ELECTRICAL WIRING/EQUIPMENT (440-445A)	219	121	168
VEHICLE ACCIDENT/STRUCTURE COLLAPSE (451-482)	45	24	29
TOTAL CODE 400	377	252	306
SERVICE CALLS (500 CODE)			
SERVICE CALL PERSON IN DISTRESS (500-512)	53	68	61
WATER PROBLEM (520-522)	37	45	71
SMOKE REMOVAL/INVESTIGATION (531-531A)	184	147	118
OTHER ASSISTANCE (540-571)	46	44	80
TOTAL CODE 500	320	304	330
GOOD INTENT CALL (600 CODE)			
GOOD INTENT CALL (600-641)	44	48	28
SMOKE SCARE/INVESTIGATION (650-661)	7	15	28
HAZMAT RELEASE INVESTIGATION (671-672)	10	7	3
TOTAL CODE 600	61	70	59
ALARM ACTIVATIONS (700 CODE)			
MALICIOUS CALL (700-729)	17	12	14
MALFUNCTION OF ALARM (730-736)	192	190	220
ACTIVATION - NO EMERGENCY (740-746)	280	216	195
TOTAL CODE 700	489	418	429

EMERGENCY RESPONSE COMPARISON (2012 - 2014) CON'T

	2012	2013	2014
SEVERE WEATHER & NATURAL DISASTER (800 CODE)			
WIND STORM, LIGHTNING STRIKES (800-815)	47	4	11
TOTAL CODE 800	47	4	11
SPECIAL INCIDENT TYPE (900 CODE)			
SPECIAL TYPE (900-911)	4	0	1
TOTAL CODE 900	4	0	1
2012 TOTAL INCIDENTS	2236		
2013 TOTAL INCIDENTS		1921	
2014 TOTAL INCIDENTS			2088

ALL OF THE ABOVE STATISTICS ARE FROM THE NATIONAL FIRE INCIDENT REPORTING SYSTEM (NFIRS).





EMERGENCY MEDICAL TECHNICIAN (EMT)

For many years Ridgewood had ample volunteer coverage of the Ambulance Corps.; however, the Village is not immune to the problem of volunteer staffing during daytime hours. In 1986, Ridgewood addressed this problem by allocating Fire Department resources to make sure that Village residents are provided with the best emergency medical service available. Monday through Saturday, from 6:00 am until 7:00 pm, the Fire Department works in conjunction with the Ridgewood Ambulance Corps. to respond to emergency medical calls. The Ridgewood Fire Department responded to eight hundred and seventy (870) ambulance calls in 2014.

When an emergency medical call is received, Fire Department EMT's are given the call location and the nature of the problem. Depending on the location, the nearest fire engine company is dispatched from either Fire Headquarters or the West Glen Avenue Firehouse. At least one Fire Department EMT is always on duty at each location. The Ambulance Corp. EMT responds with the ambulance from their quarters, located on Douglas Place, to the call. Both fire engine companies carry a three-man crew and provide "First Responder" capabilities upon arriving at the scene quickly. Engine Company #35 and Engine Company #31 are both equipped with EMT Bags, oxygen units, and a defibrillator.

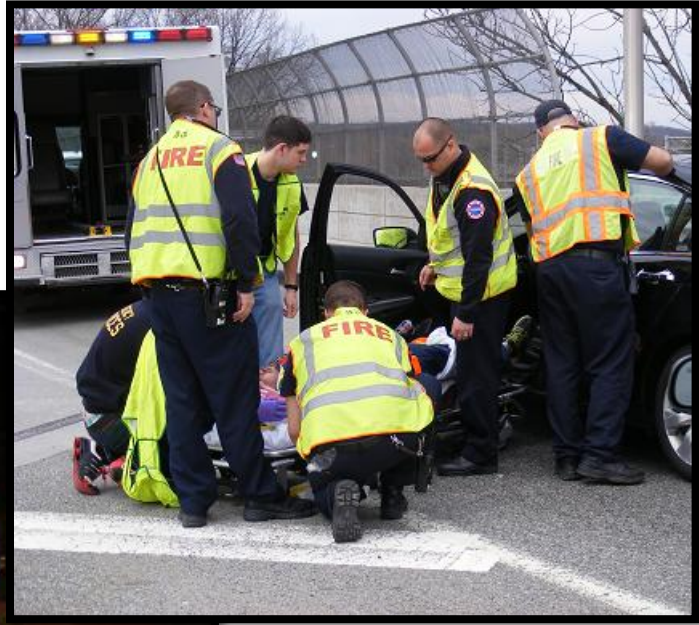
The system ensures two EMT's arrive on the scene quickly and additional manpower is available to handle the emergency. While two EMT's are required to staff the ambulance, many calls require additional help with lifting, securing equipment, and providing other assistance. One of the biggest advantages of having extra personnel is that you have the support you need to move and carry the patient, especially when flights of stairs are involved. An example would be a patient requiring Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR). CPR requires at minimum, both EMT's to work on the patient, leaving no one available to move the patient and/or drive the ambulance

There are twenty-three Firefighters and five Lieutenants that have completed the extensive Emergency Medical Technician training course and have become certified. In addition, one FF/EMT and one Lieutenant are trained Paramedics.

Fire Department Firefighter/EMT

Captain Scott Schmidt
Lieutenant/Paramedic Harvey Weber
Lieutenant/Paramedic John Judge
Lieutenant/EMT Justin O'Connor
Firefighter/EMT John Baughman
Firefighter/EMT Matthew Bombace
Firefighter/EMT Paul Brennan
Firefighter/EMT Gregory Corcoran
Firefighter/EMT Scott Cornell
Firefighter/EMT Matthew Ramge
Firefighter/EMT Thomas Shortway

Firefighter/EMT Jason Jacoby
Firefighter/EMT Jason Kane
Firefighter/EMT Michael McLaughlin
Firefighter/EMT Matthew Musicant
Firefighter/EMT Jordan Zales
Firefighter/EMT Chris Eidschun
Firefighter/EMT Kurt Harba
Firefighter/EMT James Kakolewski
Firefighter/EMT Brian Peacock
Firefighter/EMT Dan Steen
Firefighter/EMT Chris Wolfstirn
Firefighter/EMT John Young



SWIFT WATER/ RESCUE DIVE TEAM

The Ridgewood Fire Department proudly staffs a special swift water rescue team during and after extreme rainfall events. These teams are staffed by specially trained fire fighters equipped with wet suits, personal flotation devices, helmets, and specially designed water rescue devices, the Department's Swift Water Rescue personnel have the ability to create land-based water rescue systems, as well as to perform water-based contact rescues, in order to save victims trapped in the many natural and man-made waterways in the Village of Ridgewood.

The Ridgewood Fire Department Dive Team has sixteen Certified Scuba Divers and sufficient equipment to facilitate a water rescue when needed. Whenever the lifeguards at Graydon Pool receive a call of someone missing or a possible drowning, the fire department is summoned. The Dive Team conducts combined drills with Graydon Pool Lifeguard Staff and Ridgewood Emergency Services. While the Dive Team is dispatched primarily to Graydon Pool, there are several large ponds located in Ridgewood where the Dive Team may be needed.

The following personnel are certified by the Professional Association of Diving Instructors:

Lieutenant Brendan Corcoran
Lieutenant Mike Kakolewski
Lieutenant Joseph Koonce
Lieutenant Harvey Weber
Lieutenant Justin O'Connor
SFFE/EMT Matt Ränge
Firefighter/EMT Matt Bombace
Firefighter/EMT Greg Corcoran
Fire Official John Young

Firefighter/EMT Joseph Ferraro
Firefighter/EMT Kurt Harba
Firefighter/EMT John Judge
Firefighter/EMT Jim Kakolewski
SFFE/EMT Michael McLaughlin
Firefighter/EMT Matthew Musicant
Firefighter/EMT Chris Wolfstirn



Front row: Greg Corcoran, Susanne Warfield (divemaster), and Matt Bombace. Back row: Mike Kakolewski, Matt Ränge, Chris Wolfstirn, Tony Petrak (instructor), Jim Kakolewski, Kurt Harba, Brendan Corcoran, and Geoff Morris (divemaster).

FIRE PREVENTION BUREAU

Fire Prevention Bureau

Firefighter/Fire Official John Young is Director of the Fire Prevention Bureau. John joined the Fire Department in December of 2002 as a Firefighter and was assigned to the Bureau in July of 2005. Due to budget cuts in 2010, FF/Fire Official John Young was re-assigned back to a shift, but remains in charge. Three part-time inspectors were hired to conduct fire inspections along with five Firefighters who are fire inspectors and perform fire inspections while on duty.

The following part time personnel are assigned to the Fire Prevention Bureau:

Fire Official Jack Wolfstirn

Fire Official Kevin McGuire

Fire Inspector David Yaden

Fire Prevention Administrative Secretary: Dolores Tomei

There are 36 Fire Inspection Districts in the Village that include Valley Hospital and Nursing Homes, all Village Owned Buildings, Public and Private Schools, Day Care Centers, Multi-Family Dwellings, and all Commercial Buildings. In 2014 there were 151 Life Hazard Uses, and 1,031 periodic Fire Safety Inspections conducted. A total of 456 occupancies were re-inspected for the 601 violations issued. At times, these inspections are shared with the on-duty shifts and double as a building familiarization drills for all Firefighters.

Fire Investigations

Under the N.J. Uniform Fire Code 5:71-3.3, the local Fire Official is required to “investigate, or cause to be investigated, every reported fire or explosion occurring within the jurisdiction that involves the loss of life or serious injury or causes destruction or damage to property.” Sr. Fire Inspector John Young is trained in fire cause and origin investigation.

Open House

In October 2014, a very successful Open House was held at Fire Headquarters supporting Fire Prevention Week. Demonstrations on cooking safety, repelling, fire extinguishers, exit drills, and stop, drop, and roll were all well attended. There were tours of the Fire House and Fire Department apparatus were on display. A car fire was simulated and extinguished by firefighters and a demonstration on how the jaws of life are used at a motor vehicle accident.

Public Education

The Fire Prevention Bureau is very involved in Public Fire Safety Education. In 2014, there were 15 School Visitations, 9 Visitations to Fire Headquarters, and 6 Special Programs, reaching over 4208 children and 150 adults. Also, the Fire Department conducted fire drills at all the Public Schools, Church Sunday Schools, and various locations as requested for 5,256 children and adults.



Annual Report of the Fire Prevention Bureau 2014

FIRE PREVENTION INSPECTIONS (COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS & DWELLINGS)

General Business	945
Gas Station and Auto Repair Shops	9
Restaurants	59
Retail Food Stores	5
Lumber Yards	1
Multi Family Buildings	54
Institutional Buildings	18
Public and/or Private Schools	40
Church and/or Sunday School Buildings	34
Municipal-Owned Buildings	29
Life Hazard Use - Annual	156
Life Hazard Use - Quarterly	24
Fire Prevention NE/INL	138
Smoke Detector Certification Inspections	623

UNIFORM CONSTRUCTION CODE (HEAT PRODUCING APPLIANCE INSPECTIONS)

Fireplace/Chimneys	36
Furnace Installation - Gas	83
Furnace Installation - Oil	7
Other Gas Appliances	273
Oil Tank Installations	3
Fuel Tank Installations	3
Fuel Pump Installations	0
Abandonment of Underground Tanks	2
Removal of Underground Tanks	187
Removal of Interior/Above Ground Fuel Oil Tanks	30
Chimney Liner Installation	72
Other	5

UNIFORM CONSTRUCTION CODE (CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY INSPECTIONS)

Fire Sub-Code Permits Issued	769
U.C.C. NE/INL	13
C.C.O. Permits Issued.....	28
C.C.O. Inspections of Commercial Occupancies	35
Progress Inspections	0
Fire Sub-Code Related Duties	242
Blueprints Checked	377
Review of Site Plan Locations	8
Smoke Detector - Placement/Installations	206

NOTICES ISSUED FOR VIOLATIONS

Fire Sub-Code Violations	173
Fire Prevention Bureau Violations	601
Re-Inspections to Assure Correction	456
Summons Issued	13
Letters Sent	299
Municipal Court Appearances.....	0
Construction Board of Appeals Appearances	0
Fire Prevention Permits Issued	47
Fire Prevention Permit Inspections	47
Fire Prevention Penalties Issued	77

FIRE PREVENTION ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE

S/D Certification Fees (Ordinance #3026)	\$35,850.00
Inspection Fees Local	\$76,280.00
Fire Prevention Permit Fees	\$ 924.00
Fire Prevention Penalties	\$ 6,405.00
Life Hazard Use Inspection Fees (State)	\$23,453.25
Fire Sub-Code Fees (Building Department)	\$75,472.00
Alarm Panel Registration Fees	\$41,879.50
Alarm Panel Registration Fines	\$ 0.00
C.C.O. Fees.....	\$ 1,400.00
Miscellaneous Fees	\$ 0.00

JOINT INSPECTIONS WITH OTHER DEPARTMENTS, CONTRACTORS, OWNERS, TENANTS, AND OTHER AGENCIES:

With Building Department	6
With Other Village Departments	1
With Fire Department or Signal Bureau Personnel	1
With Board of Education Personnel	25
With Valley Hospital Personnel	12
With Other Governmental Agencies	0
With Contractors	0

NOTIFICATION TO OTHER DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES OF CODE VIOLATIONS:

To Building Department	7
To Other Village Departments	0
To State Agencies	0

**CONFERENCES WITH OTHER DEPARTMENTS, CONTRACTORS, OWNERS,
TENANTS AND OTHER AGENCIES:**

With Building Department	211
With Other Village Departments	2
With Fire Department or Signal Bureau Personnel	0
With Board of Education Personnel	0
With Valley Hospital Personnel	0

COMPLAINTS INVESTIGATED:

Hazardous Condition	18
Blocking Exit Ways	5
Improper Trash Storage and/or Collection	0
Re-Inspections to Assure Corrections	22
Other	0

MISCELLANEOUS:

Fire Safety Education/Training Program	2
Preparation and Maintenance of Reports/Inspection Schedules	241
Respond to Fire Incidents	1
Investigate Fire Incidents	1
Valley Hospital Fire Drills Attended	0
Meetings and Schools Attended	2
Check for Safety at Public Affairs	10

ADOPT A HYDRANT PROGRAM

In 2013, The Ridgewood Fire Department began a program called “Adopt A Hydrant”. The purpose of this program is to encourage Village residents to keep the fire hydrants in their neighborhood clear of snow and debris.

Most people think little about the fire hydrants throughout the Village, other than it’s a good place to walk the dog to. Actually, fire hydrants are a very important device, it is the Fire Department’s only water source and is necessary to help them save lives and protect property.

When a fire is reported, the Fire Department looks at a map to find the closest hydrant to the fire before responding. When they get there, they must be able to find the hydrant very quickly and every second counts. When things block their view, (i.e. cars, trucks, dumpsters, construction equipment, garbage cans, etc.), it could take minutes to find them and once found, may not be able to be used if blocked.

In winter months, snow covered hydrants is a very serious problem. During high snowfall winters, the fire hydrants could be covered by as much as 4’ of snow. This would make them impossible to find. Even a moderate snow can completely cover them, as they are located on the curb line where snow plows pile up the snow. When the hydrant is needed in an emergency, if not cleared and easily located, it could make the difference between life and death.

Although we have had quite a few adoptions, we are still looking for residents and civic groups to adopt a hydrant in their neighborhood.



APPARATUS

Car # 30:

2012 Chief's Ford Escape

Car #40:

2003 Ford Explorer

Eng. # 31:

2012 1250 gpm Pierce Saber

Eng. # 32:

1989 1250 gpm Pierce Pumper

Eng. # 33:

1994 1250 gpm Pierce Pumper

Eng. # 35:

2003 1250 gpm Pierce Pumper

Tower # 36:

2012 Pierce Mid-Mount Platform ladder

Eng. # 37:

2000 1250 gpm Pierce Pumper

Car #38:

2006 Captain's Ford Expedition

Car #39:

1998 GM Yukon Fire Prevention

Car #41:

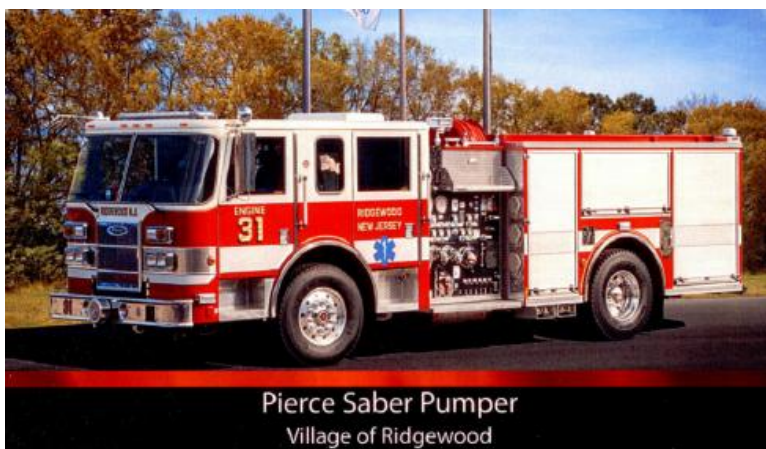
1999 GMC Yukon Fire Prevention

Rescue #42:

1998 International E-ONE

Car #43:

2014 Ford F250/Plow



The Ridgewood Fire Department was awarded a grant in the amount of \$350,000.00. The grant paid 90% of the purchase price for a new fire engine to replace our current 1982 fire engine. The new Engine 31 was put in service in early 2013.

LETTERS OF COMMENDATION

Hello!

A few months ago, a group of you came to our home to help our 2 year old daughter who was locked in the bathroom! You

were all so kind and so helpful. We thank you so very much.

Wishing you and your families a wonderful Easter. Enjoy the cookies!

-The Lanzisera Family

7/14/14

Dear Chief Van Boon-

Many thanks for the certificate
for our Eagle Scouts for Troop 5's
Court of Honor last Monday night.
We appreciate your support.

Warmly,

Sarina Braf

Dr. and Mrs. Stephen Hurst
739 Parsons Road
Ridgewood, NJ 07450

October 12, 2014

Fire Chief, James Van Goor
131 N. Maple Ave.
Ridgewood, NJ 07450

Dear Chief Van Goor,

I am writing to commend the wonderful service of the Ridgewood Fire and Police Departments that my family received on Thursday, October 10, 2014.

Lt. Kakolewski, Firefighter Steen, Firefighter Peacock, and Officer D'Amico arrived just minutes after I placed the call to the central dispatch with a report that my carbon monoxide alarm was sounding. They were careful to fully investigate every area of my home (inside and out), and to inspect my carbon monoxide monitor to evaluate for any potential danger. They went so far as to even counsel me with regard to how to proceed with my home security service in order to remediate the situation.

The professionalism, respectfulness, and utter kindness of these gentlemen was overwhelming. I am proud to be a resident in a village that is guarded by their tremendous talent, compassion and bravery.

Thank you.
Sincerely,

Clare Hurst



30 Prospect Avenue
Hackensack, New Jersey 07601
Tel 551-996-5500 • Fax 201-488-1444
www.tcfkid.org

July 23, 2014

Ridgewood Fire Department
201 East Glen Ave.
Ridgewood, NJ 07450

Dear Members of the Firefighter's Face-off,

We are greatly honored that you chose Tomorrows Children's Fund (TCF), as your charity of choice for the *Fairway Shopping Night*. The event turned out to be amazing. We were able to reconnect with many of our past patients and their families, and other friends of TCF, when they came by to support us. It was wonderful to meet some of the firefighters who won the Face-off. Your support of the programs and services we have established is so very deeply appreciated. This was an incredible opportunity for us to get to meet people in the community, we are so grateful to all of you...our supporters.

It continues to be our vision to create a warm, healthy and loving environment for our young patients to receive treatment and support as they fight these dread diseases. We are well on our way, as our assistance continues to expand to meet the increasing needs of our patients and their families. Our work could not continue without the dedication and support of caring friends like you, who join hands with us in our mission.

The Tomorrows Children's Fund is proud of its accomplishments – goals that we have met because of people like you. You have helped to provide a beacon of hope for the future to all of the young patient and their families who enter the doors of Tomorrows Children's Fund.

A special thank you and congratulations to the winners of the *Fairway Firefighters Face-off*: Tom Shortway, Mike McLaughlin, Joe Ferraro, Kurt Harba, Mike Kakolewski, and Jim Kakolewski

Sincerely,



Lynn Hoffman
Executive Director

DDN IMUS - WFAN Pediatric Center for Tomorrows Children • Hackensack University Medical Center

David Jurist
Co-President

John V. Bivona
Co-President

Donald A. Caminiti
Vice President

Kendal Garvin
Secretary

Lynn Hoffman
Treasurer/Executive Director

Letter to the Editor: Ridgewood family offers gratitude for support

JANUARY 2, 2015 LAST UPDATED: FRIDAY, JANUARY 2, 2015, 12:31 AM

THE RIDGEWOOD NEWS

Family offers gratitude for help

To the Editor:

My family and I would like to offer our most heartfelt gratitude for the support that has been shown to us during these difficult days since our house fire on the day after Thanksgiving. Living in Ridgewood for over 20 years, we have always known our community to be extremely special and we now know just how blessed we are to be counted among you.

In the bleary-eyed days after our fire, my family was deeply touched by people dropping off gift cards, bags of bedding, clothing and necessities, hugging us, crying with us, and offering anything to help ease our losses. These were not empty gestures, the concern and the tears in their eyes helped us realize we were not alone and had the support of an entire community – whether close friends, I taught their child, or we see each other in the supermarket. My family knows now, more than ever, what an exceptional community we have and how lucky we are to be among such gracious and caring people.

We know we are incredibly blessed to have been shown such kindness and concern. Whether people cooked and delivered a meal, brought much-needed clothing, donated a gift card, treated our dog to a toy she lost, or just hugged me and cried with me on our dear friends' porch, please know that none of us will ever forget what was done to help ease our transition through this turmoil. We will continue to pay this kindness forward and continue to support community members in need, in the ways that have bolstered us, whether it was through RHS Cares, Benjamin Franklin Home & School Association, Ridgewood Veterinary Hospital, BF staff (where I am lucky enough to work!), Ridgewood Lacrosse Association (which replaced equipment for my son so that he could play that weekend!) or through an individual gesture.

Lastly, we feel a strong need to thank the Ridgewood Fire Department. We always knew we lived in a top-notch town with services second to none. However, that day, each member of the RFD with whom we came into contact, paid or volunteer, were ROCK STARS. Each had their own job, and upon arriving at our scene, they assessed and flew into action. It wasn't just their skill in fighting the fire that made its mark, but their interpersonal skills and human touch in every interaction with us will leave us forever changed. Though it was an extremely chaotic time, the actions and support of Captain Albano (it was his last day on the job, we were told), the newly sworn-in Capt. Greg Hillerman, Lt. Justin O'Connor and Jeff Creegan deeply touched my family and all who witnessed their heroics and compassion. Lt. John Judge later drew on his personal connections with my family to soothe my daughter through her grief of the loss of our cherished cats. GREAT guys, HUGE hearts.

Thank you. We love you all.

The Imbruglia family

Ridgewood

Dear Gentlemen of FMBA #45,

February 19, 2014

It was a great privilege working with all of you during the 2014 Fire & Ice Festival. While I understand that the experience required sacrifice and hard work - it did not surprise me that the men of the Ridgewood Fire Department led the Village to such an impressive conclusion. Fire & Ice 2014 was arguably the best event Ridgewood experienced in over a decade, and I believe, was the envy of the County. Thanks to you, over 1500 residents remember special moments together, having fun at Graydon Park, during an otherwise remarkably trying Winter.

I would like to take this opportunity to state that all of my experiences with the Ridgewood Fire Department throughout my 2 year tenure on the Village Council have given me one hundred percent confidence in your leadership, discipline, decorum, and true care for the citizens of Ridgewood. You are an exemplary organization.

It is a pleasure to work with, and for, all of you.

With Gratitude,



Councilwoman,
Gwenn Hauck