

2021

Ridgewood Fire Department Annual Report



John T. Judge, Chief

Fire Headquarters
201 E Glen Avenue

The 2021 Annual Report is dedicated in Loving Memory of

Dolores “D” Tomei

Fire Prevention Administrative Assistant
1990 – 2021

In recognition of her 31 years of dedicated service as office manager in the Ridgewood Fire Prevention Bureau. She will always be remembered for her steadfast loyalty and support of the Ridgewood Fire Department family.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chief's Message	1
The Village of Ridgewood	2
Introduction	3
Mission/Vision Statement	4
Fire Stations	5
Apparatus	6
Public Protection Classification	7
Organizational Chart	8
Career Personnel	9
Volunteer Personnel	10
NJ FMBA Valor Awards	11
Training	12
Emergency Medical Response	13
Emergency Medical Technician (EMT)	14
Swift Water / Rescue Dive Team	15
Department Photos	16
Emergency Responses - 2021	17
Highlights of 2021 Significant Incidents	19
Fire Prevention Bureau	23
Community Outreach	27
Adopt-A-Hydrant Program	28
Definition of Terms	29
Acknowledgments	30

“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).

CHIEF'S MESSAGE

It is my pleasure to share the 2021 Ridgewood Fire Department Annual Report.

After over 35 years of dedicated service to the Ridgewood Fire Department and the Village of Ridgewood, Chief James Van Goor retired on December 31, 2021. As the new Chief of the Ridgewood Fire Department, I could not be more proud to serve the community where I grew up, and now lead an incredible team of dedicated men and women.

The Ridgewood Fire Department is staffed with forty-five professional firefighters, six volunteer firefighters, and two civilians, all dedicated to the delivery of service. Eighty-five percent of our department members are dual-certified as both a firefighter and Emergency Medical Technician (EMT). While this not only provides a cost-savings to the Village, it ensures medically trained personnel are available wherever the firefighters are; whether this is on emergency calls, fire inspections, or pre-planning in the Central Business District.

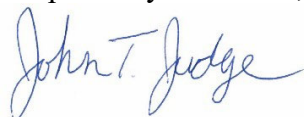
Our Village of Ridgewood Fire Department provides its citizens, businesses, and community with a full range of services including, but not limited to, fire suppression and fire prevention as well as fire safety education. As first responders, we answer all requests for service, which can include anything from hazardous materials and swift water rescue to emergency medical needs; a more complete list of services can be found on page four.

The Fire Department marked its 124th year in 2021 and the services we provide will continue to adapt and respond to the challenges found within our community. This past year, Hurricane Ida caused unprecedented damage and brought heavy flooding conditions into many areas of the Village. Moving forward, we need to anticipate and increase preparation for the storms that are occurring more frequently. Additionally, the Village now has four new large, residential buildings as well as a parking garage; all of which bring potential risks and concerns. We have adapted policies, equipment, and tactics to meet these new demands.

On behalf of all the Firefighters, Fire Prevention Bureau, and Administrative Staff of the Ridgewood Fire Department, I would like to thank the Village Manager, the Village Council, and the residents for their continued support. Furthermore, I want to thank all of the various departments in the Village with whom we often interact for their prompt and professional assistance. Without this, we would not be able to carry out our mission to its fullest.

While the information in this Annual Report focuses on the Fire Department's programs and accomplishments, the people we serve are at the core of our mission.

Respectfully submitted,



John T. Judge
Chief of Department

THE VILLAGE OF RIDGEWOOD

MAYOR AND COUNCIL

Mayor Susan Knudsen

Deputy Mayor Michael Sedon

Councilmember Pamela Perron

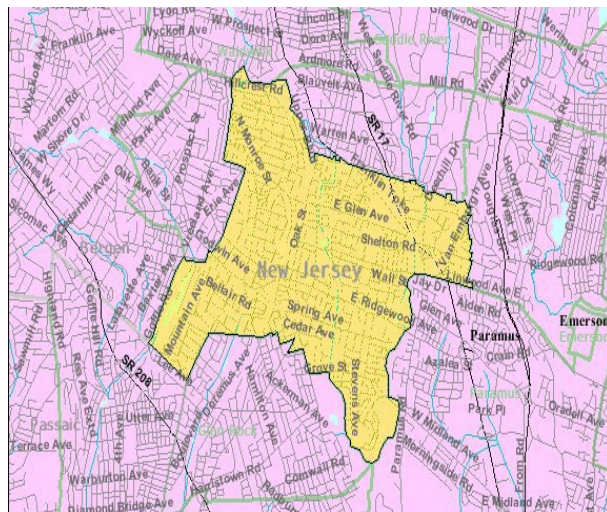
Councilmember Lorraine Reynolds

Councilmember Bernadette Walsh

Councilmember Paul Vagianos



To Ridgewood's 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. We also want to thank recently retired Councilmember Walsh for your service while in office and welcome Councilmember Vagianos.



25,979 POPULATION (2020 Census)

94.7 ROAD MILES

5.8 SQ. MILES LAND AREA

4,479 RESIDENTS PER SQ. MILE- DENSITY

7,430 RESIDENTIAL STRUCTURES

320 COMMERCIAL STRUCTURES

29 APARTMENT BUILDINGS

2 FIRE STATIONS

INTRODUCTION

Organized fire protection began in the Village of Ridgewood in 1897 with the formation of the Protection Hook and Ladder Co. #1 with apparatus pulled by horse teams. Our last two horses, Joe & Dan, who passed in the 1930s, are buried on the West side of town. The history of the fire department has gone from the horses and the Bucket Brigade to modern fire engines and ladder trucks.

Today's firefighters now respond to a myriad of events aside from fire calls. The Ridgewood Fire Department is skilled at handling a variety of emergency situations including motor vehicle accidents, hazardous spills, downed wires, confined space rescues, and medical emergencies to name a few. The department regularly handles a number of routine emergencies as well, such as pumping flooded basements for residents, responding to activations of carbon monoxide and smoke detectors, ring removals, residential lockouts, child lock-ins, and electrical emergencies. The department also has a Rescue Dive Team to handle ice and water rescues.

Monday through Friday from 6:00 am to 7:00 pm, the fire department responds to all medical emergencies. Additionally, the department provides first responder service to all advanced life support calls and back-up ambulance service 24/7. Having a fire engine and ambulance respond simultaneously ensures that medical assistance reaches the scene within minutes.

The basic organizational structure of the department consists of three components: administrative, fire prevention, and fire and emergency response. The administrative component is comprised of the Chief and the Administrative Assistant, Patti A. Walsh. The administrative office is open Monday through Friday 8:30am – 4:30pm with the Chief Officer on call 24/7/365.

The Fire Prevention component is comprised of the Fire Official Lt. John Young, Fire Inspector Lt. Vincent Krug, and Bureau Administrative Assistant, Marisol Romero. The Fire Prevention Bureau is responsible for inspections under the Uniform Construction Code and the Uniform Fire Code. The Fire Prevention Bureau schedules all Fire Prevention activities and Public Fire Safety Education programs.

The fire and emergency response component is comprised of both professional and volunteer firefighters. The professional firefighters consist of three platoons of 14 and provide the primary response to fires and emergencies 24/7. When fully staffed, each platoon is comprised of (1) Captain, (2) Lieutenants, and (11) Firefighters. The platoon's shift schedule is based on a 56 hour per week work schedule. The volunteer personnel are support staff for the department and are requested whenever there are working fires, during the times of storms or for multipleresponses.

Fire Department members are expected to perform all the duties associated with responding to fires and emergencies, while being guided by three principles: Life Safety, Property Conservation & Incident Stabilization. Such duties include incident management, search and rescue, personnel accountability, establishing a water supply, hose deployment, forcible entry, 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 and continuous manner.

MISSION / VISION STATEMENT

Mission Statement

The Ridgewood Fire Department protects the lives and property of all Village residents, businesses and visitors. The department is committed 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 ensuring 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, Vehicle, Brush, Electrical, etc.

Vehicle Extrication

Dive Team / Swift Water Rescue / Ice Rescue

Building Collapse/Entrapments

Elevator Rescues

Carbon Monoxide Incidents

Hazardous Material Response

Auto-Accidents / Spill Cleanups / Battery Disconnects

Electrical Emergencies / Chemical Spills / Leaks

Water Calls / Floods / Broken pipes / Basement pump outs

Lock-out / Lock-in (Vehicle, Residential & Commercial)

Storm Emergencies / Wires down / Tree Limb Removal

First Responder / EMT

Confined Space Rescue

Utility Emergencies

Gas Leaks (Natural Gas or LPG)

Rope Rescue / High and Low Angle

Ring Removals

Aircraft Standby

Active Shooter Team

Fire Prevention Services:

Building inspections

Code enforcement

Plan review

Public fire safety education



FIRE STATIONS

Fire Headquarters

Fire Headquarters is located at 201 E. Glen Avenue. This facility has been operational since June 1, 1992. It serves as quarters for the officers and firefighters of Engine Company No. 35, Tower Ladder No. 36, Rescue Company No. 42, Ambulance 11 as well as the reserve apparatus. The building also houses the Administrative Offices and 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 barn, which houses an apparatus room, offices, and living quarters for firefighters. A crew of three firefighters are on duty 24 hours a day. This fire station has served the Village for over 70 years.



APPARATUS

Unit #	Year/Make	
Car 30	2018 Chevy Tahoe	Chief of Department
Car 38	2018 Chevy Tahoe	Tour Commander
Engine 31	2020 Pierce Saber	1500 GPM Pumper
Engine 35	2017 Pierce Saber	1500 GPM Pumper
Tower Ladder 36	2012 Pierce Arrow XT	95' Platform
Rescue 42	2019 Ferrara Cinder	Rescue Truck
Engine 37	2013 Pierce Saber	1500 GPM Pumper (Reserve/Recall)
Engine 33	2003 Pierce Saber	1250 GPM Pumper (Reserve/Recall)
Ambulance 11	2003 International	PL Custom Ambulance
Car 39	2015 Chevy Tahoe	Tour Commander (Reserve/Recall)
Car 40	2017 Chevy Tahoe	Fire Prevention Bureau
Car 41	2010 Ford Escape	Fire Prevention Bureau
Car 43	2014 Ford F-250	Utility Truck



PUBLIC PROTECTION CLASSIFICATION

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.

The Ridgewood Fire Department is proud to announce that in 2012 it earned a Class 2 Public Protection Classification (PPC). During the next examination in 2018, the Ridgewood Fire Department maintained this rating.

ISO collects information on municipal fire-protection in communities throughout the United States. Insurance companies use the information to establish fair premiums on fire insurance for homeowners and commercial properties. Based on figures from our 2018 classification, ISO evaluated 39,378 communities countrywide; only 1,772 are rated as Class 2 and 393 received a Class 1. Out of 673 communities in New Jersey, only 26 communities received a Class 2, and two communities received a Class 1 rating. This accomplishment has placed the Ridgewood Fire Department as one of the top 28 Fire Departments in New Jersey.

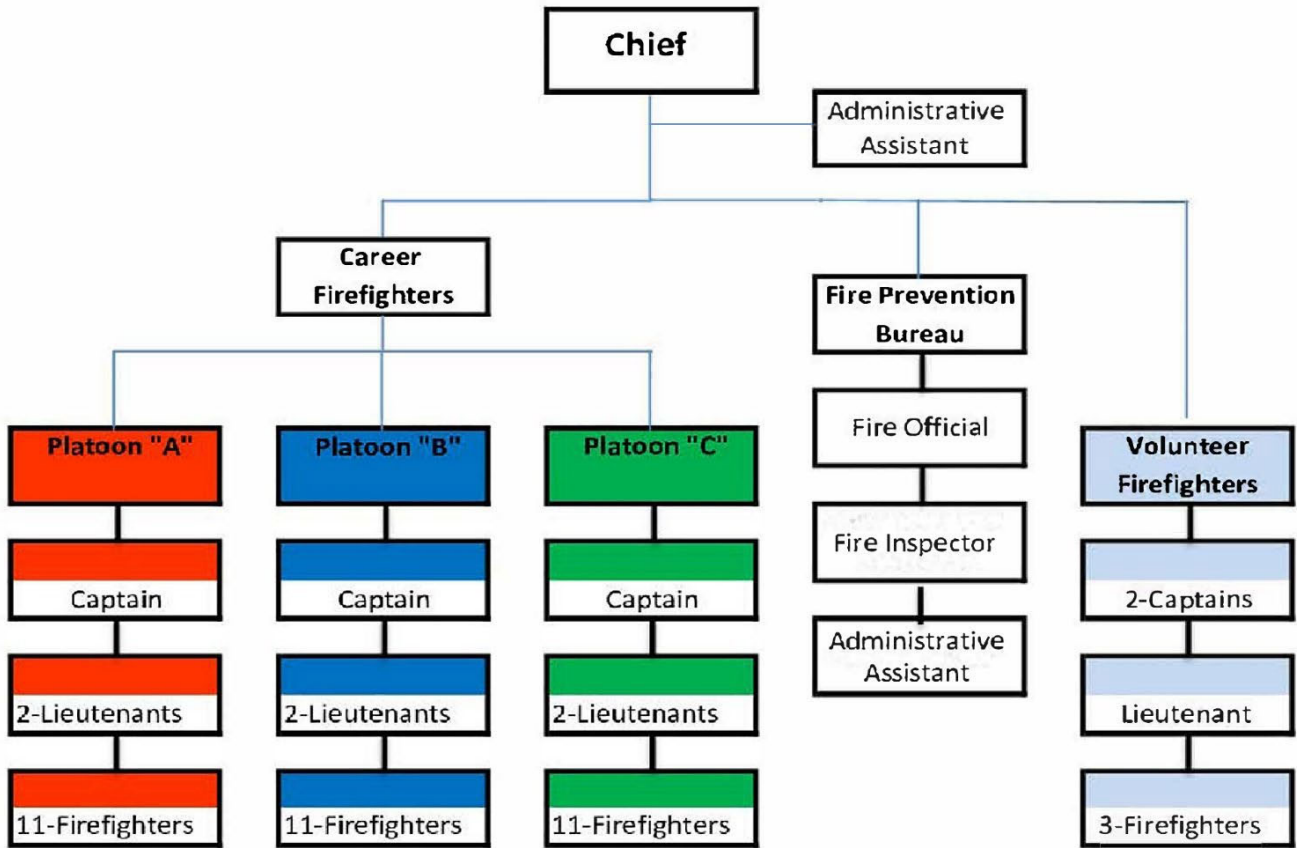
A community's investment in fire protection is a proven and reliable predictor of future fire losses. Statistical data on insurance losses proves that there is a relationship between excellent fire protection and low fire losses. Not only does a lower classification reduce the insurance rate for homeowners 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.

Here are some general guidelines to help you understand the benefits of improved PPC ratings for residents and businesses:

- PPC may affect the underwriting and pricing for a variety of personal and commercial insurance coverages, including homeowners, mobile home, fine arts floaters, and commercial property (including business interruption).
- Assuming all other factors are equal, the price of property insurance in a community with a good PPC is lower than in a community with a poor PPC.



ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



CAREER PERSONNEL

Administration:

Chief James Van Goor
Administrative Assistant Patti Walsh

Captains

Captain Brendan Corcoran
Captain John Judge
Captain Scott Schmidt

Lieutenants

Lt. Joseph Ferraro
Lt. Michael Kakolewski
Lt. Jason Kane
Lt. Justin O'Connor
Lt. Matt Ramge
Lt. Jordan Zales

Fire Prevention

Lt./Fire Official John Young
Lt./Fire Inspector Vincent Krug
Admin. Assistant Dolores Tomei
Admin. Assistant Marisol Romero

Appointments

Probationary FF Kevin Monton
Probationary FF Steven Scanapico

Retirements

Chief James Van Goor

Senior Firefighter Engineers

FF. Matthew Bombace
FF. Paul Brennan
FF. Scott Cornell
FF. Michael Ferraro
FF. Jason Jacoby
FF. Michael McLaughlin
FF. Matthew Musicant
FF. Thomas Shortway
FF. Daniel Steen

Firefighters

FF. Mark Barone
FF. Thomas Benintende
FF. Tim Bombace
FF. Greg Corcoran
FF. Anthony Dinice
FF. Chris Eidschun
FF. Trevor Fetkowitz
FF. Kurt Harba
FF. James Kakolewski
FF. Brian Kelly
FF. Dave Kelly
FF. Dane Knudsen
FF. Dan Kostro
FF. Oscar Martinez
FF. Christopher Mead
FF. Chad Miller
FF. Brian Peacock
FF. Michael Rohrman
FF. Ryan Romero
FF. Shelby Taylor
FF. Henry VanWageningen
FF. Chris Wolfstirn

VOLUNTEER PERSONNEL

Volunteer Fire Officers

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

Volunteer Firefighters

FF. David Azzopardi
FF. Jeffrey Creegan
FF. Dennis Johnson



NJ FMBA VALOR AWARDS

On August 21, 2021, the New Jersey Firefighters Mutual Benevolent Association (FMBA) hosted their annual valor awards dinner. Being presented with a valor award is a high honor as each award is given to only one member or group in the entire state for each category.

Group Effort Medical Award

The Group Effort Medical Award was presented to FF Matthew Bombace and FF Mark Barone. These two firefighters saved the life of a 72-year-old male who was bleeding uncontrollably from a dialysis graft in his left, upper thigh; the patient was confused with a systolic blood pressure in the 80s and had already lost a significant amount of blood before arrival of fire department personnel. It was estimated around 1.0-1.5 liters of blood was pooling on the floor; approximately 20-30% of the patient's entire blood volume.

The Firefighter EMTs immediately upon their arrival, seeing the dire situation at hand, applied a tourniquet to this individual's leg (as well as a pressure dressing), thus saving his life.

The paramedics commended the firefighters for their actions; there was copious amounts of blood on the linens and pooling on the floor and the patient ended up with a blood pressure of 80/40 and admitted to the ICU. The patient is alive and well today.



2021 Special Recognition Award

In 2020, the Ridgewood Fire Department awarded the Life Saving Award to Firefighter Michael McLaughlin, Firefighter Timothy Bombace, and Firefighter Michael Rohrman for their actions in pulling a trapped occupant from a third floor window during a fire in blackout conditions; the victim survived with no permanent injuries. At the valor awards, the NJ FMBA recognized these firefighters presenting them with the 2021 Special Recognition Award for their actions.

TRAINING

To always be ready and to provide superior service, firefighters must be highly trained. The men and women of the Ridgewood Fire Department train rigorously every day to prepare them for the unexpected. This training ensures that every incident is handled by an extremely capable and professional crew of firefighters.

Annually, the Ridgewood Department documents over 40,000 hours of training. This training begins their first year at the Bergen County Fire Academy. The classes they attend include Firefighter I & II, Emergency Medical Technician, Hazardous Materials Operations, Confined Space Operations, Apparatus and Pump Operations, and Driver Training.

To keep the Firefighters as prepared as possible, a yearly training schedule is created. This schedule guarantees that the firefighters keep up to date on new training and technologies. The firefighters are required to progress with the changing times as well as keep their time-honored skills sharp.

Our yearly training schedule includes:

Active Shooter Response	Confined Space Operations	Decontamination
Blood borne Pathogens	Personal Protective Equipment	Building Construction
Personnel Accountability	Structural Firefighting	Officer Development
CPR Re-certification	Building Collapse & Safety	Right to Know
Trench Rescue	EMT Continuing Education	Pre-Fire Planning
Vehicle Firefighting	Engine Company Operations	Ropes & Knots
Driver Training	Rescue Tools	Wildland Firefighting
Vehicle Extrication	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	Information Technology
Ventilation	Report Writing	Air Tools & Rescue Air Bags
Pump Operation	Elevator Rescue	Tools & Equipment
Confined Space Rescue	Equipment Maintenance	Fire Behavior
Operation of Gas Meters	Salvage & Overhaul	Thermal Imaging Camera
Fire Cause & Origin	Water Rescue	SCBA Confidence Training
Natural Gas Emergencies	Incident Command System	

"In the heat of the battle you don't remember very much. You don't think very fast. You act by instinct, which is really training. So, you've got to be trained for battle so that you will react exactly the way you did in training". - Admiral Arleigh Burke, USN

EMERGENCY MEDICAL RESPONSE

For many years, Ridgewood had ample volunteer personnel for ambulance staffing. However, the Village is not immune to the problem of volunteer staffing. 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 Friday, from 6:00 am until 7:00 pm, the Fire Department responds with an engine company and a fire department staffed ambulance to all emergency medical calls, with additional responses to all advanced life support calls 24/7. In addition, Ambulance 11 is stationed at Fire Headquarters to respond to additional calls as needed 24 hours a day.

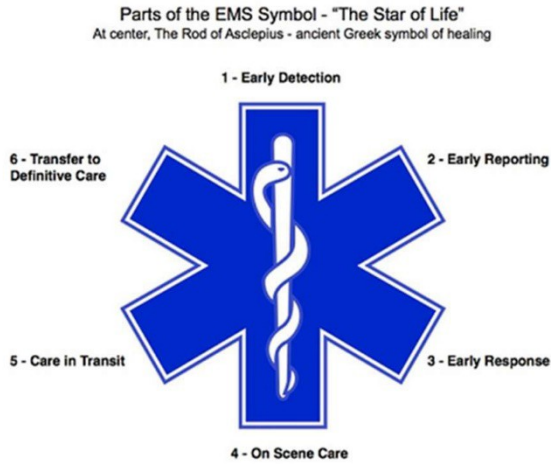
When an emergency medical call is received, Fire Department EMT's are given the location and the nature of the emergency. Based upon the location, the nearest engine company is dispatched from either Fire Headquarters or the West Glen Avenue Firehouse as well as the Fire Department staffed ambulance; Fire Department EMT's are always on duty at each station. Both engine companies carry three firefighter/EMT's and provide basic life support. Engine Company #35 and Engine Company #31 are fully equipped with medical equipment, automatic external defibrillators, suction devices and medication to treat a variety of conditions including anaphylaxis, overdoses and diabetic emergencies.

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.

In addition to these medical calls, an engine company also responds on all medical alarms in the Village. This ensures medical care is available should the alarm activation indicate a true medical event. Other medical responses also include serving as a backup for lift assist requests in the Village. While the Ridgewood Police are requested for all lift assists, this system ensures response to all residents and visitors in case the officers are unavailable due to other requests for service.



EMERGENCY MEDICAL TECHNICIAN (EMT)



There are twenty-eight Firefighters, six Lieutenants, two Captains, and the Chief that have completed the extensive Emergency Medical Technician training course and have become certified. In addition, one Captain is a trained Paramedic.

Chief James Van Goor
Lieutenant John Young

Platoon A

Captain Schmidt
Lieutenant Kakolewski

Firefighter Barone
Firefighter Benintende
Firefighter M. Bombace
Firefighter Corcoran
Firefighter Cornell
Firefighter Fetkowitz
Firefighter Kostro
Firefighter Miller
Firefighter Romero

Platoon B

Captain Judge
Lieutenant Ferraro
Lieutenant Kane

Firefighter Brennan
Firefighter T. Bombace
Firefighter Knudsen
Firefighter Harba
Firefighter B. Kelly
Firefighter Martinez
Firefighter Musicant
Firefighter Rohrman
Firefighter Taylor
Firefighter Wolfstirn

Platoon C

Captain Corcoran
Lieutenant O'Connor
Lieutenant Zales

Firefighter Dinice
Firefighter Eidschun
Firefighter Jacoby
Firefighter J. Kakolewski
Firefighter D. Kelly
Firefighter Mead
Firefighter Peacock
Firefighter Shortway
Firefighter VanWageningen

SWIFT WATER / RESCUE DIVE TEAM

The Ridgewood Fire Department proudly operates a swift water rescue team during and after extreme rainfall events. Specially trained fire fighters equipped with wet suits, personal flotation devices, helmets, and specifically designed water rescue devices staff these teams. 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 throughout the Village of Ridgewood.

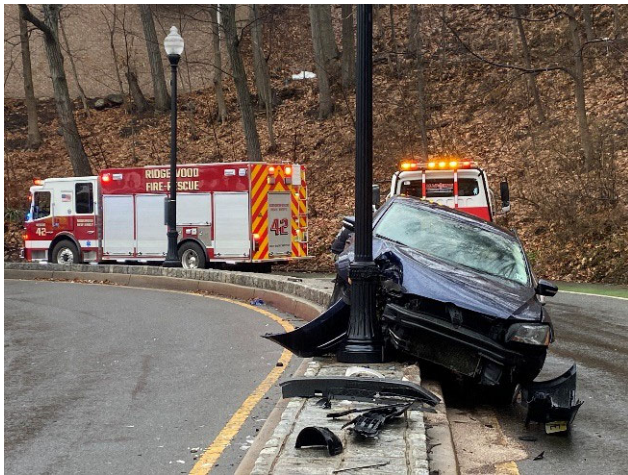
The Ridgewood Fire Department Dive Team has 16 Certified Scuba Divers and the necessary equipment to facilitate a water rescue when needed. Whenever the lifeguards at Graydon Pool receive an alarm of someone missing or a possible drowning, the fire department is summoned. The Dive Team conducts combined drills with Graydon Pool Lifeguard Staff and Ridgewood Emergency Services. While the Dive Team is primarily dispatched to Graydon Pool, there are several large ponds located in Ridgewood where their specialized skills may be needed.

The Professional Association of Diving Instructors certifies the following personnel:

Captain Brendan Corcoran	SFFE Matthew Musicant
Captain John Judge	SFFE Matthew Bombace
Lieutenant Joseph Ferraro	Firefighter Greg Corcoran
Lieutenant Michael Kakolewski	Firefighter Kurt Harba
Lieutenant Justin O'Connor	Firefighter Jim Kakolewski
Lieutenant / Fire Official John Young	Firefighter Brian Kelly
Lieutenant Matthew Ramge	Firefighter Dane Knudsen
SFFE Michael McLaughlin	Firefighter Ryan Romero



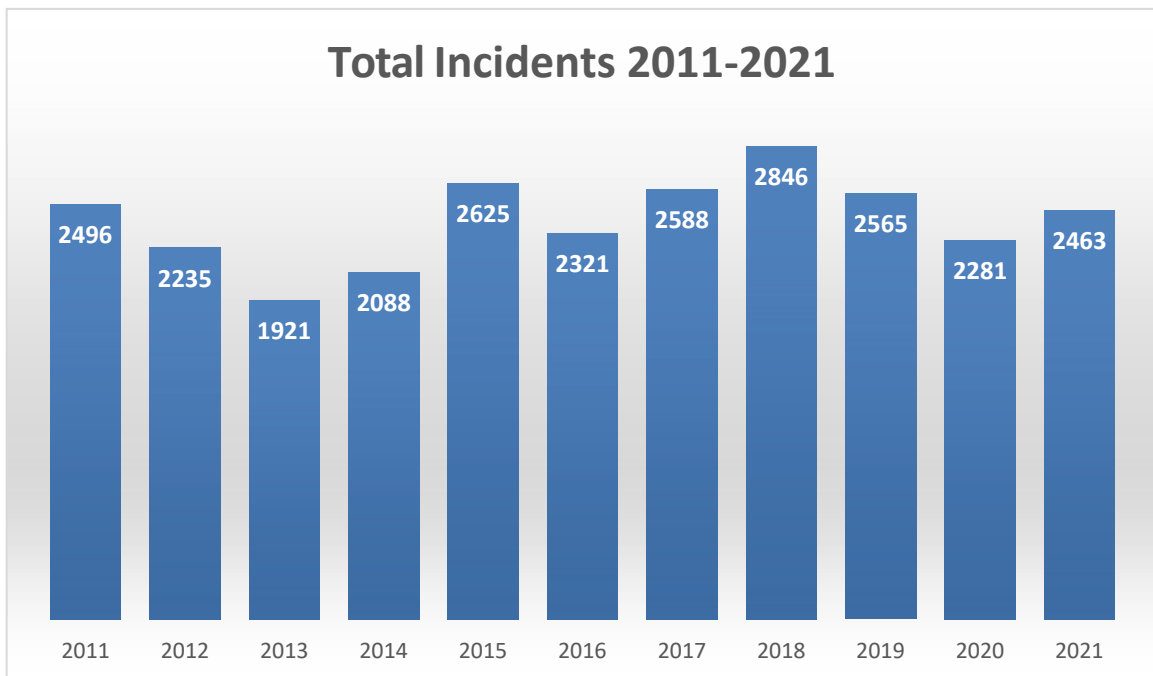
DEPARTMENT PHOTOS



EMERGENCY RESPONSES - 2021

Fires	
Structure Fires	22
Vehicle Fires	3
Trees, Brush, Grass Fires	15
Refuse Fires	3
Outside Fires	<u>1</u>
Total	44
Overpressure, Rupture, Explosion	
Steam, Air & Gas Ruptures	<u>4</u>
Total	4
Rescue & Emergency Medical Services	
EMT Calls, Medical Alarms, Lift Assists	1,007
Search, Rescue & Extrication	<u>87</u>
Total	1,094
Hazardous Conditions	
Combustible Spills & Leaks	100
Chemical Hazards/Carbon Monoxide	32
Electrical Equipment/Wiring	185
Biological Hazards	2
Vehicle Accidents/ Structure Collapse	<u>29</u>
Total	348
Service Calls	
Person in Distress	66
Water Problem	58
Smoke Investigation/Removal	79
Other Assistance Call	<u>122</u>
Total	325
Good Intent Calls	
Good Intent Call	84
Smoke Scare/Investigation	15
Hazardous Materials Investigation	<u>4</u>
Total	103

Alarm Activations	
Malicious Alarm	11
Malfunction of Alarm	199
General Activation	<u>261</u>
Total	471
Severe Weather/ Natural Disaster	
Wind Storm, Lighting Strikes	<u>74</u>
Total	74
TOTAL INCIDENTS	2,463



HIGHLIGHTS OF 2021 SIGNIFICANT INCIDENTS

Fatal Residential Fire

Fire Department personnel responded to a report of smoke in a residential area. After a brief investigation, firefighters found a significant working fire in the rear of a single family home. Upon discovery of the fire, a full assignment was dispatched along with extra alarms. A water source was secured and hand lines were stretched to extinguish the fire. A primary search was conducted, but was hampered by the advanced fire conditions and hoarding conditions within the home. A secondary search discovered a victim on the first floor who succumbed due to smoke inhalation.

MVA – Extrication – Car into House

Responded to a report of a motor vehicle accident in the area of Rt. 17 South and Linwood Ave. Central dispatch advised that the car was into the house on the Paramus side of Linwood Avenue. Arriving first on scene finding a patient entrapped, Fire personnel used a chain saw to remove the tree to be able to open the car door. Patient access was gained for EMS members to do an assessment. Command was transferred to Paramus Fire Department upon their arrival.

Narcan Save

Engine 35 personnel responded to the Ridgewood Park and Ride for an unresponsive male on a double decker bus. After assessing the patient, it was determined that he overdosed on a narcotic. Narcan was administered and he was removed from the second level of the bus. His breathing and circulation was monitored as he became responsive.

Chemical Spill

Responded to a reported chemical spill. Upon arrival, an investigation found that a substantial amount of Nitric Acid had spilled on multiple containers of Hydrochloric Acid; heat generation was occurring creating Chlorine Gas. A neutralizing and absorption powder was applied to the liquids and then enclosed in a spill containment container; the container was then placed in the lab's vent hood. The vent was found to not be operational so air samples were monitored. Bergen County Hazmat arrived to ensure proper tactics. The manager was instructed to call their disposal company to pick up the container. Before turning the building back over, air samples were taken with clear readings.

Elevator Rescues

The Fire Department responded to multiple calls for elevator rescues throughout the year. Fire personnel follow the same process when addressing these calls; first utilizing the fire recall key. If that does not work, the power is cycled and lastly, the power is shut down and the doors are manually opened. In 2021, the fire department rescued 25 people trapped in stalled elevators.

Central Business District Fire

Received report for the outside of a building on fire in the Central Business District. Upon arrival, visible fire was found in the alley between Pearl Restaurant and the Parking Garage. Engine 35 personnel stretched a hose line and extinguished the fire while other crews entered the restaurant to search for extension and ventilate. Utilizing a thermal imaging camera a pocket of fire was found in the wall of the restaurant. The wall was opened up and the fire was extinguished that was running the walls. The fire was determined to be caused by the errant discarding of cigarette into the rubbish area of the businesses.

September 1st Storm Ida

Storm Ida, which occurred on September 1, 2021, caused flooding and damage creating approximately 120 calls needing Ridgewood Fire Department response. These included power lines /cable lines down, flooded roadways, flooded vehicle rescues, water in homes, foundation collapses, trees into houses, and numerous other requests.

Vehicle Entrapment

Responded to a report of a Motor Vehicle Accident (MVA) with an entrapment. Upon arrival found an extensive accident scene with a driver trapped in his vehicle. The vehicle came to rest after hitting a parked truck, splitting the diesel tank open, through a security fence and gate, with the gate imbedded through the windshield and cab of the vehicle. The driver was extricated from the vehicle and the vehicle was secured. Speedy dry was spread to contain the diesel fuel.

Water Calls

The Fire Department responds to multiple water calls on a regular basis; the cause is always something different. Some examples include a pipe in the ceiling of the first floor separated, which leaked water from the first floor into the basement. Another call had the resident's basement flooded; the cause was ground water and the sump pumps not working. The last call was a leaking valve to a toilet on a first floor, which flooded the basement. In all cases, fire personnel secure affected utilities and remove as much water as possible to assist with restoration.

Entrapped Worker

Upon arrival, found a worker stuck in a steel fence rail. Rescue tools were used to spread the needed steel allowing more room for the individual to be removed. He was removed without further injury.

Garage Fire

Responded to a report of a structure fire in a residence. Upon arrival, it was determined to be a working fire in a detached garage. Due to the storage potential in a garage, careful and quick action was needed. Just the month before, there was a propane tank explosion at another garage fire within the Village. Working units stretched a fire attack hand line to the side garage door and made entry to extinguish the fire. The utilities to the garage were shut down. The area was overhauled and continually checked for any residual hot spots utilizing the thermal imaging camera. The garage was then ventilated and a fire investigation was conducted. Once the scene was secured and deemed safe, the property was turned back over to the homeowner.

Truck vs. Building

Upon arrival, found a garbage truck struck a balcony on a building causing structural damage to the building as the balcony was hanging from the building. Personnel secured the area, and removed the damaged portion of the building as to eliminate any other hazards. The building department was requested to arrange repairs.

Pub / Shed Fire

Responded to a call of a possible structure fire in the area of West Saddle River Road and Kenwood Road. Car 38 arrived on scene and established command of an outside pub/shed fire approximately 60ft away from the home. Engine 35 personnel established a supply line from a hydrant and stretched a 300ft pre-connected 1 ¾" fire attack hand line to the shed that was on fire. Fire personnel extinguished the fire and ground around the shed. Overhaul was performed and a thermal imaging camera was used to check for hot spots; power was secured. An investigation found an unknown cause of the fire.

Residential Lockout with a Medical Emergency

Responded to a West side residence for a reported residential lockout with a medical emergency. The caller was still on the line with 911 stating he was in bed in need of medical assistance. Engine 31 crew was able to gain access through a second floor window using a ground ladder. Engine 31 EMTs immediately started providing patient care while the rest of the crew found a key to open the front door. Firefighter EMTs transported the patient to the hospital for further assessment.

Mutual Aid Midland Park Structure Fire

Ridgewood Fire Department responded mutual aid to Midland Park for a structure fire. On scene, Engine 31 personnel completed all orders from their command including checking for fire extension and shutting down utilities. Once the fire was under control, Engine 31 returned to the Village.

Mutual Aid Ho-Ho-Kus

Ho-Ho-Kus Fire Department requested mutual aid for fire in an industrial and storage complex; Engine 35 and Car 38 responded. Upon arrival, Car 38 coordinated with command and directed Engine 35 personnel to secure the utilities to the area and then assist with overhauling the fire area. Following assistance in firefighting duties as well as helping to return Ho-Ho-Kus apparatus to service, crews were released to return to the Village.

Mutual Aid to Glen Rock

Responded mutual aid to Glen Rock for a sizeable brush fire. Upon arrival, the Engine 35 crew was instructed to stretch their hose lines to extinguish said fire.

Water Rescue at Graydon Pool

Received request for assistance for a medical emergency at Graydon Pool where a child suffered a spinal injury with signs of neurological damage. While en route, dispatch updated that the child was still in the water and being tended to by the lifeguards working. Engine 35 arrived and confirmed that the patient was still in the water. Fire personnel entered the water with a backboard and assisted the lifeguards with packaging and removal of the injured child to a waiting stretcher. Patient was transferred over to waiting BLS crew.

Tree into home with Significant Structural Damage

Responded to a tree into a home during a strong windstorm. Upon arrival, a large oak tree was found on top of the home causing significant structural damage to the roof system and exterior walls. Fire personnel removed the loose tree limbs where possible and then tarped the roof and walls to protect the home from water damage. The property was turned over to the homeowners who had to remain out of the home until it was structurally secured.

Ring Removal

Just in the month of May, the firefighters removed nine rings. This can be accomplished as easy as soap and a rubber band or as difficult as a power tool to cut the ring off. One particular incident was a request from Valley Hospital Emergency Room for which they had a patient with two stuck rings and were unable to remove them. Fire personnel responded and removed the rings with a dremel tool without causing any further injury to the patient.

Motor Vehicle Accident with Extrication:

Ridgewood Fire was requested for assistance at a MVA at Hillcrest and Fairmount. Upon arrival, an injured party was found trapped in the vehicle. Fire personnel stabilized the patient and vehicle, and then utilized hydraulic rescue tools off Rescue 42 to successfully remove the occupant. Once removed, the patient was assessed and transported to Hackensack UMC Trauma center for evaluation and treatment.

Hazardous Material Spill

Responded to a call of a hazardous material spill. Fire personnel found a brown sludge on the roadway as well as a parking lot in the rear of the location. Further investigation found a waste oil disposal company had just emptied oil storage drums from a restaurant in the area. The roads were shut down and fire personnel began stopping the spill from spreading any further. The Health Department, Code Enforcement, and Engineering were also requested. Speedy dry was utilized on the spill after speaking with all departments and the street sweeper removed the combined speedy dry and spill material.

Vehicle Entrapment

Responded to a motor vehicle accident. Upon arrival, found a large SUV with the driver pinned between the door and a tree on a steep embankment. Rescue 42's winch was used to secure the vehicle while hydraulic tools, along with hand tools and cribbing, were used to extricate the person. Medical treatment was denied and Rescue 42 assisted the tow truck in recovering the vehicle from the embankment.

Hazardous Material Release at School Auditorium

Responded to a call of a hazardous material release causing a haze in the BF Middle School Auditorium. The students were locked down in classrooms with doors closed and windows open to shelter in place. It was determined by staff that there was a Freon leak from a damaged A/C unit on the roof. Freon detectors were used and the space was ventilated to evacuate all materials. School maintenance staff secured the leak on the roof pending repairs. After it was determined that the area was safe, the students were allowed to return to their normal schedule.

Carbon Dioxide Condition

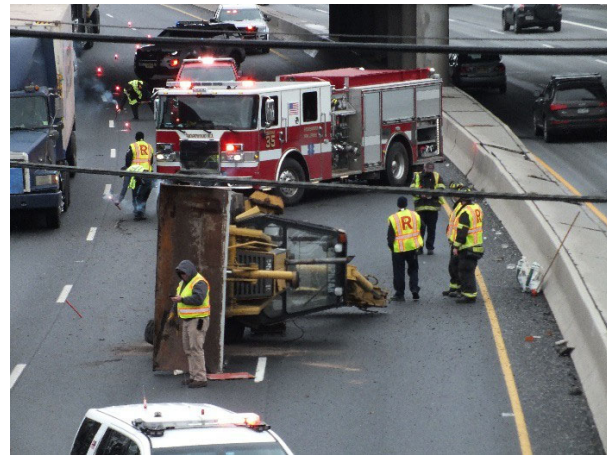
Responded to a West side business for a reported carbon monoxide detector activation. Upon arrival, found the premises evacuated and front door open for ventilation. Upon investigation, it was found this was not a carbon monoxide activation, but instead a carbon dioxide alarm.

Carbon dioxide alarms are becoming more prominent due to the dangers of bulk carbon dioxide tanks. In 2011, McDonalds had a series of significant incidents across the country due to carbon dioxide leaks, killing multiple people and sickening FFs.

At this West side business, it was discovered that the carbonization system used for the soda fountain was leaking gas into the room setting off the alarm. The valves for the system were secured in the off position inside the room and outside on the exterior tank containing the gas. As soon as the gas was shut down, the levels continued to drop to a safe level with proper ventilation provided. The store employee was evaluated by the ambulance crew and was taken to Valley Hospital.

Carbon Monoxide Incidents

The Ridgewood Fire Department responds to numerous carbon monoxide incidents throughout the year at both residential and commercial properties. Causes range from a malfunctioning boiler or water heater to generators and cars running close to windows or in garages to contractors working with gas-powered tools. Investigation is always conducted with Full gear and SCBA along with multiple gas meters. The source is located and shut down or removed if possible; PSE&G is requested as needed. The firefighters also provide ventilation to ensure the carbon monoxide levels are brought down to the safe permitted levels.



FIRE PREVENTION BUREAU



The Bureau's goal is to ensure the education of all residents and visitors within the Village of Ridgewood of the most current fire prevention and life safety practices.

Lieutenant John Young serves as the Fire Official for Ridgewood and is the Director of the Bureau. Assisting him is Lieutenant Vincent Krug who also serves as a Fire Inspector. Both Lieutenants are also assigned as Fire Investigators to the Bergen County Prosecutor's Office- Arson Task Force.

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.”**

In addition, we also conduct:

- Annual inspections of all commercial properties and businesses to ensure fire code compliance.
- Certification of smoke detectors, carbon monoxide alarms and portable fire extinguishers before the resale or re-occupancy of 1 and 2 family homes.
- Fire Safety Complaint Investigations.
- Fire Safety inspections throughout the 36 Village Districts that includes Valley Hospital, nursing homes, all Village-owned buildings, public and private schools, day care centers, multi-family dwellings, and all commercial buildings.
- Plan review of projects during the zoning/planning phases.
- Public Fire Safety Education – With COVID restrictions and precautions in place, we were able to visit 8 pre-schools, 2 elementary schools, and 1 private special education school in 2021.
- Process Open Public Records Act (OPRA) Requests relating to Fire Incidents and Fire-Sub Code Permits.

In 2021, there were 158 inspections of life hazard uses, and 1,080 inspections of non-life hazard uses conducted. A total of 631 occupancies were re-inspected. On-duty shifts also conduct inspections which additionally functions as building familiarization drills for all firefighters.

FIRE PREVENTION INSPECTIONS
(COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS & DWELLINGS)

General Business	994
Gas Station and Auto Repair Shops	12
Restaurants	78
Retail Food Stores	2
Lumber Yards	1
Multi Family Buildings	55
Institutional Buildings	25
Public and/or Private Schools	23
Church and/or Sunday School Buildings	22
Municipal-Owned Buildings	31
Life Hazard Use – Annual	107
Life Hazard Use – Quarterly	11
Fire Prevention NE/INL	54
Smoke Detector Certification Inspections	676

UNIFORM CONSTRUCTION CODE
(HEAT PRODUCING APPLIANCE INSPECTIONS)

Fireplace/Chimneys	10
Furnace Installation – Gas	14
Other Gas Appliances	56
Oil Tank Installations	7
Removal of Underground Tanks	81
Removal of Interior/Above Ground Fuel Oil Tanks	33
Chimney Liner Installation	36
Other	4

UNIFORM CONSTRUCTION CODE
(CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY INSPECTIONS)

Fire Sub-Code Permits Issued	367
U.C.C. NE/INL	8
C.C.O. Permits Issued	28
C.C.O. Inspections of Commercial Occupancies	23
Progress Inspections	2
Fire Sub-Code Related	239
Blueprints Checked	114
Review of Site Plan Locations	6
Smoke Detector - Placement/Installations	132

NOTICES ISSUED FOR VIOLATIONS

Fire Sub-Code	55
Fire Prevention Bureau Violations	942
Re-Inspections to Assure Correction	536
Summons Issued	4
Letters Sent	72
Municipal Court Appearances	1
Fire Prevention Permits Issued	17
Fire Prevention Permit Inspections	25
Fire Prevention Penalties Issued	25

FIRE PREVENTION ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE

S/D Certification Fees (Ordinance #3288)	\$48,100
Inspection Fees Local	\$104,609.00
Fire Prevention Permit Fees	\$1,024.00
Fire Prevention Penalties	\$2,765.00
Life Hazard Use Inspection Fees (State)	\$25,347.73
Fire Sub-Code Fees (Building Department)	\$40,807.00
Fire Alarm Registration Fees	\$42,763.69
C.C.O. Fees	\$1,150.00

JOINT INSPECTIONS WITH OTHER DEPARTMENTS,

CONTRACTORS, OWNERS, TENANTS, AND OTHER AGENCIES:

With Building Department	14
With Fire Department or Signal Bureau Personnel	1

**NOTIFICATION TO OTHER DEPARTMENTS AND
AGENCIES OF CODE VIOLATIONS:**

To Building Department	9
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CONFERENCES WITH OTHER DEPARTMENTS,

CONTRACTORS, OWNERS, TENANTS AND OTHER AGENCIES:

With Building Department	180
With Fire Department or Signal Bureau Personnel	1

COMPLAINTS INVESTIGATED:

Hazardous Condition	26
Improper Trash Storage and/or Collection	1
Re-Inspections to Assure Corrections	25

MISCELLANEOUS:

Fire Safety Education/Training Program	11
Prep. And Maintenance of Reports/Inspection Schedules	236
Respond to Fire Incidents	3
Investigate Fire Incidents	2
Check for Safety at Public Affairs	2
OPRA Requests Completed	90



COMMUNITY OUTREACH

As part of our Mission Statement to provide fire prevention and public safety education to residents and businesses, the Fire Department actively attends and/or hosts events throughout the year in the community, some examples include:

Firehouse Tours

Camps

Fire Station Open House

Junior Police Academy

Downtown for the Holidays

Michael Feeney's Best Day Ever

We have requests for firehouse tours throughout the year. Requested tours come from day cares, schools, Boy and Girl Scout troops and families wanting to know more about the Ridgewood Fire Department.

Firefighters discuss general fire safety basics including checking smoke alarms, changing smoke alarm batteries, and creating an escape plan. The children's favorite part is sitting in the trucks and learning about the tools. The firefighters are always willing to give their time for these important opportunities to help spread the message about fire prevention and safety to reduce fires and other emergencies in our community.



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 maintain the fire hydrants in their neighborhood clear of snow and debris.

Fire hydrants are an especially important device. It is the Fire Department’s only continuous water source and essential to save lives and protect property.

When a fire is reported, Fire Personnel assess a map to identify the closest hydrant to the fire before responding. When the Fire Department arrives, they must be able to locate the hydrant swiftly as every second counts. When articles block their view, (i.e. cars, trucks, dumpsters, construction equipment, garbage cans, etc.), it could take minutes to locate the hydrant and once found, direct access could be blocked.

In winter months, snow covered hydrants are a serious concern. During heavy snowstorms, as much as 4 feet of snow can cover fire hydrants. This will make them impossible to locate. Even a moderate snowfall can completely cover them, as they are located on the curb line where snowplows pile up the snow. When the hydrant is needed in an emergency, if it is not located and accessible, it can mean the difference between life and death.

After a snowstorm, the on-duty firefighters spend many days shoveling out hydrants throughout the Village.

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



DEFINITION OF SELECT TECHNICAL TERMS

CO - Carbon Monoxide is a colorless, odorless, and tasteless gas that is slightly less dense than air. Depending on length of exposure, symptoms can begin with levels as low as nine (9) parts per million.

CPR - Cardiopulmonary resuscitation is an emergency procedure that combines chest compressions with artificial ventilation to restore spontaneous blood circulation and breathing in a person who is in cardiac arrest.

Elevated Alarms- During times of increased call volume, working fires, or when an incident occurs that commits all on-duty personnel, an elevated alarm may be transmitted by the tour commander or the Fire Chief. This is sent through the CAD system at Central Dispatch, with redundant back-ups at Fire Headquarters.

Platoon Recall - When requested, this will summon the volunteer firefighters and the platoon of career firefighters that went off-duty that morning

Department Recall – All off-duty firefighters are summoned to report for duty.

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.

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, and rams.

Narcan - Naloxone is an opioid reversal medication. It is used to treat opioid drug overdoses. The most common is heroin.

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 arrive, from units dispatched to the location of the emergency.

SCBA - Self-Contained 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.

Stokes Basket - A stretcher designed to be used where there are obstacles to movement or other hazards.

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.

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

Uniform Fire Code - Ensures 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.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The 2021 Ridgewood Fire Department Annual Report is made possible through the help and support from the following people:

John T. Judge, Chief

Patti Walsh, Administrative Assistant

Marisol Romero, Bureau Administrative Assistant

John Young, Lieutenant/Fire Official

Scott Schmidt, Captain

Brendan Corcoran, Captain

Boyd Loving, Village Resident (Photos)