

**City of Pleasant Hill
Office of
Emergency Services**

To: Mayor
City Council
City Administrator

Date: February 15th, 2009

From: Reylon Meeks
Fire Chief

Subject: Annual Report 2009

The City of Pleasant Hill continues to improve the equipment and quality of services available to the people we serve. We conduct an annual review of our service and have updated the Strategic Plan for 2009-2014. The objectives will require additional work and sacrifices on behalf of the volunteers and City Council, in order to allow sufficient funding and grant monies to be allocated to sustain operations and make improvements. Objectives and achievements for Year 2007-2008 included;

- New Rescue Boat and Trailer with grant from Prairie Meadows
- New Medical director
- New SCBA – 32 packs – with grant from FEMA
- New SCBA face masks – fit tested to all personnel – with grant from FEMA
- Duty Car – staffed by command personnel every night from 2200-0600
- Compressor upgrade to meet demands of new packs
- Q Sirens for 4370 and 4360 to improve traffic flow and movement
- Digital Camera for documentation of medical and fire scenes
- Thermal Imaging cameras x2 – upgrade for 4370 and 4360
- Trolling motors – one for each boat – used during the floods of 2008
- Standard Operating Guideline's written and implemented
- Station alert put into station to meet increased demand and call for ISO rating
- Safety vests for all staff – federal mandate – grant received from Polk Co. EMA
- Preventative maintenance on all trucks – to keep up with ISO ratings
- Increased officer staff to keep standard for span of control
- Purchased 10 new sets of gear to keep up with growth in numbers of staff
- Miscellaneous tools 1 in 4 – for each truck
- Developed fire ordinances to include private fire hydrants, standards on alarm pull stations, and sprinkler systems in residential properties
- Purchased 4 new life jackets – higher grade to accommodate more weight
- Hired 5 new personnel
- Improved Knox Box Program
- Built infrastructure for building inspections – forms developed
- Applied for and received grant from Prairie Meadows for Mobile Data Terminals for trucks
- Moved from an ISO rating of 5 to 4.

Members advanced their certification levels as follows:

- (6) EMT-B
- (1) Critical care paramedic
- (8) Firefighter 1
- (4) Firefighter II
- (37) Courage to be Safe Program
- (10) attended EMS conference
- (40) attended Hazardous Materials Refresher Course

Pleasant Hill Emergency Services experienced an increase in response volume in Calendar year 2008. Members responded to 892 emergency calls as compared to 732 calls for year 2007. The 22% overall increase in calls for service between 2007 and 2008 are reflected in:

- 0% change in fire responses for a total of 57 or 7%
- 0% change in the number of fire alarms, reported sightings of smoke or fire for a total of 105 or 12%
- 0% change in the number of rescue calls for a total of 106 or 12%
- 3% increase in the number of emergency medical responses (Ambulance response) for a total of 503 or 56%
- 3% decrease in the number of hazardous materials calls for a total of 24 or 1%
- 2% increase in the number of public assist calls for a total of 54 or 6%

Notable responses for 2008:

- CPR in progress x 4
- Fatality on the bypass x 2 separate accidents
- House fire on Pleasant Hill Blvd
- Anhydrous Leak – private residence
- Mercy Clinic – faulty light
- Sleep Inn – multiple alarms – increased ventilation in elevator shaft
- Courtyard Estates – lightning strike with evacuation
- Anhydrous Ammonia Leak – evacuated residences
- SEP High School – bathroom fire
- SEP High School – dryer fire
- Transformer fires x 3

During the fourth quarter of 2008, the fire department staff conducted a planning session and revised the department's strategic plan to identify new goals and objectives and to move our community through the next five years.

Identified 2009-2014 Issues:

We anticipate continuing increases in the number of motor vehicle crashes along the Highway 163 corridor as traffic volume continues to increase. The motor vehicle crashes we currently respond to are more serious, involve multiple vehicles and injuries as a result of speed. The responses requiring mutual aid are usually for a third ambulance.

Increases in the recreational use of bodies of water have led to more water rescue calls, as well as ice rescue calls. The need to mutual aid the Des Moines Fire Department for every water rescue was noted to increase the time for safe response. In order to address the need, a second boat has been purchased. We will need to increase the numbers of personnel qualified to perform water rescue. This will include an added financial strain on the education budget in order to send staff to classes for swift and ice water rescue.

The ability to provide fire suppression in areas which are difficult to access with the size of fire trucks currently in service is virtually impossible. The need for a city pumper which is smaller and more maneuverable is imperative to maintain an appropriate level of service. The fleet of fire trucks is aging, requiring more maintenance at a greater expense on a yearly basis.

The proposed addition to the Mercy Clinic will contribute to an added demand on emergency medical services. We currently respond to the clinic between three and four times a week. The additional clinic space will increase the numbers of individuals being transported to the hospital. The Pleasant Hill Shores is steadily increasing their occupancy, with the expectation of being fully occupied by the end of 2009. The Shores offers assisted living as well as private independent apartments. All individuals living at the Shores are over the age of 65, who utilize emergency medical services at a higher percentage than a younger population. Requests for lift assistance have increased exponentially. More individuals are remaining in their homes, adding to the number of requests for public assistance. New businesses such as Orange Planet continue to require research and plan review to ensure public safety issues are addressed.

We continue to have concerns over the ability to perform general maintenance, complete reports, conduct plan reviews, provide for pre-planning, represent the department at meetings and respond to calls for service. Part time staffs offer the opportunity to complete the ever increasing demands for reports and provide for a rapid response system to calls for service.

We are experiencing membership growth and a lack of sufficient facility space to conduct training activities, especially regional and joint training programs. We are out of space for gear racks as well as equipment, and utilize other space within the city to house some of the trucks and equipment operated by the fire department.

The continued financial problems of the federal, state, county and local governments are contributing to the inability to fund the fire department. While the call volume has increased more than 100% over the past four years, the funding for the fire department

has not increased at the same rate. The fire department has continued to provide the same number of services, increased the call volume by more than 100%, and doubled the number of personnel for less money per call than four years ago.

Immediate Actions:

- The receipts of a second boat will require increased preparedness and training of personnel in water rescue techniques.
- We will continue to pursue the use of mobile data terminals to establish up to date street names, address ranges and hydrant locations.
- We continue inspection of properties holding liquor licenses and continue to identify businesses without a Knox Box improving compliance with the city ordinance.
- We will be involved in preparing the City of Pleasant Hill's Emergency Operation plans with city staff and Polk County Emergency Management. This will include Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plans.
- Continue to conduct Confined Space Rescue Certification Training Courses to continue compliance with the city's insurance requirements and improve personnel safety.

We hope this information provides some background and a better understanding of your Emergency Services operation. If I can be of assistance, or if you would like to discuss your fire, rescue or emergency medical service, please feel free to call.

Reylon Meeks, Fire Chief