



**CITY OF DANBURY**  
**FIRE DEPARTMENT**  
**19 NEW STREET**  
**DANBURY, CONNECTICUT 06810**

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**Fire Chief**

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**FIRE CHIEF'S MONTHLY REPORT**

I hereby submit my report as Fire Chief of the Danbury Fire Department, which covers the period of 21 August through 21 September and details activities of the Department.

The following is but one of over 200 calls the department responded to during hurricane Irene. On 28 August during the Sunday onslaught of the hurricane, an incident involving transmission wires (# 5656) occurred at the intersection of Middle River Rd. and Killian Dr. A tree limb struck wires and broke them loose. Downed primaries had ignited the asphalt and caused grass and brush to burn. E25 waited for CL&P arrival to de-energize the wires before they were able to extinguish the road and brush fires. This incident fairly represents the challenges faced by fire, EMS and utility crews during the storm. A significant electrical hazard was present. There was an approximate 4 hour wait for utility service for confirmation of de-energizing of the wires. E25 was assisted by volunteer E14 and volunteer fire police throughout the incident. The fire was eventually extinguished but the road remained impassable, marked with scene tape and barricades for a considerable time following incident resolution. Thankfully, no injuries were reported.

Throughout the storm the department, volunteers and career responded to 203 incidents. Our records indicate 48 calls for wires down were reported and responded to by fire units. Most frequently, these resulted in road closures and barricades and scene tape demarking the hazard zones. Despite these measures, many drivers ignored the warnings and drove through at their peril. Drivers were rescued from their

vehicles after having stalled in deep water. Our boat was dispatched to Main Street for the first time as a result on one such incident.

In preparation for the storm, the department hired several members to bolster our on duty crews. This was done as a precaution to have extra staffing on hand to meet the threat. These firefighters proved valuable throughout the storm and immediate aftermath. They provided valuable service to the city by assisting in cutting tree limbs and allowing access for emergency response, assisting trapped citizens, evaluating flooding situations and establishing road blocks and safety zones around downed wires.

In addition to increasing our response staffing, the 9-1-1 PSAP center was also addressed. Two additional dispatchers and supervisor Pat Sniffin were brought in to manage the communications during the storm. This was to prove absolutely essential in responding to the demands on the resources of the department.

One of the key factors that impacts our response to storms is the assistance given to citizens with flooding in their homes. This assistance comes from the Volunteer Fire Companies of the department. Because of the potential threat of the storm, our response plan included holding all volunteer response to flooding until after the most severe weather had passed. During the storm a Volunteer Firefighter, Dave Storoni of Engine 12 was posted at headquarters. His position was to assist our dispatchers in tracking and prioritizing the requests for assistance. He remained at headquarters and his presence and the work performed is a model that we will use to address future such events.

Water problems, mostly in the form of flooding in basements and homes were reported throughout the city. Many basements routinely flood while others flooded for the first time. 103 reports of flooding in buildings were reported from 27 to 29 August. An additional 33 were called into the PSAP in the next days. Over the several days from Sunday evening through Thursday, Volunteer Fire Companies responded to each of these 136 situations as they were prioritized to assist the citizens.

The storm brought out the strengths of our combination department here in Danbury. Volunteer Fire Police, Volunteer response crews and career members worked throughout the city in hazardous conditions to accomplish our mission. Command, control and execution of responses were properly applied and we were successful in remediating all situations.

The department has recently experienced the retirements of two members. Firefighter Pete Radlet retired in August. On 29 September,

Assistant Chief Bob Keenan retired. Please join with us in wishing a long and healthy retirement to both of these members.

There are three upcoming recognition dinners for these and one other member. These dinners will be held at Anthonys' Lake Club on Christopher Columbus Boulevard. The dinner dates are as follows:

Lt. Ken Stilson, 31 years of service, 2 November, 2011

Assistant Chief Bob Keenan, 38 Years of service, 29 November 2011

Firefighter Peter Radlet, 26 years of service, 5 December 2011

To purchase tickets for these dinners (\$55), please contact firefighter Sean Delohery at 203-770-9032 or Lt. Mike Tyskiewicz at 203-994-8423

### **PUBLIC EDUCATION/PREVENTION/PUBLIC RELATIONS**

Many members of the department participated in a charity softball game against the Danbury Police. The game was in support of Danbury High School freshman sports. It was a great game to watch and was supported by on and off duty personnel and families.

Lieutenants Lori Arconti, Jamie Schiller, Rob Forbes and Firefighters Sean McGowan, John Kennedy, Joe Stabile and Ray Guard participated with the Honor Guard for the Walk of Honor, The Main Street ceremony and the Ives Center Commemoration of the anniversary of the 9/11 attacks. The Fire Department Honor Guard participates in these events on their own time. They represent the Danbury Professional Firefighters in these and like events throughout the year.

All companies participated in public showings and demos of equipment for the Taste of Danbury and Danbury Hyundai Safety Day on 9/10/11.

Many department members attended the Friends of Local Heroes Luncheon at FD HQ's on 9/16/11. This annual event is sponsored by a group of private citizens who provide a luncheon for all local Fire, Police and Emergency Medical personnel. This organization has sponsored this event each year since 2002. We thank the Friends of Local Heroes for their continued support.

While on Franklin Street at an ambulance call E22 with LT. Singer, FF's Cabral and Vitolo assisted a young boy across a busy street to get safely to an ice cream truck as his mother remained with an infant. The child had only foreign currency coins, so FF. Cabral gave the child the money for ice cream.) Thank you FF Cabral for special customer service! The diversity of our city is truly an ever changing mosaic.

## **SUPPRESSION/RESPONSE ACTIVITIES OF NOTE**

On 24 August, the department dispatched our state Region 5 Haz Mat response vehicle and three technicians to assist the Naugatuck Fire Department. The response was for an unknown substance. Lt Corbett and firefighters Tim Smith and Pat Heron were able to successfully identify the product and safely mitigate the incident.

On 14 September an incident occurred at the intersection of Hospital Ave. and Tamarack Ave. This was a natural gas leak. During excavation for sewer work, the operator snagged a fitting on a low pressure gas line, leaving a ½” hole in the pipe. There were areas uphill of the leak, near the parking garage construction and the Hospital’s main entrance where the strong odor indicating gas was a concern. E23 metered into the break area. Due to the low pressure, only transient traces (approx. 4%) were found. FF Heering stopped the leak with a plastic plug while awaiting the arrival of YankeeGas. Following their arrival all units returned to service with no injuries reported.

A regional training session in Westport was conducted on 21 September. Volunteer companies Engine 5 and Tanker 12 participated. These exercises are necessary to ensure local preparedness and response capabilities. Dennis Ring of Engine 12 is the Fairfield County coordinator for this training. This is the latest in an ongoing effort to increase our mutual aid response efforts.

### **Command and Staff Activities**

- IAFC Conference
- Danbury Chamber of Commerce
- Meeting with Union Executive Board
- Monthly staff meeting
- Quarterly Staff meeting.
- Mayor’s Leadership meeting
- State Career Chiefs
- City Council Meeting
- Volunteer Council Meeting
- Contract Negotiations
- FCI Community Relations Board
- Cabinet Meeting
- Meeting with U.N.I.T.
- Police promotional swearing in

### **Donations**

I would like to thank Mary-McConnell Meachen of Boehringer-Ingelheim for her assistance in our recent training program. She secured a classroom facility and support services for the day. The Region 5 training committee provided funding for this one day training in HAZ MAT response. The class, HazMat IQ has been widely accepted as one of the best training programs for response personnel and is greatly appreciated.

## **Emergency Medical/ Haz-Mat - Rey Rodriguez**

The Topic for this months' EMS Wednesday is the OSHA mandated Blood borne Pathogens review. Blood borne pathogens include all infectious and communicable diseases which are a great concern to our First Responders. While there are risks inherent to emergency medical service responders, these risks can be minimized by the use of methods that will reduce the risk of exposure and contraction of these diseases. The purpose of the training is to educate personnel in the types of communicable /infectious diseases, the modes through which they are transmitted and methods and practices that will reduce the risk of exposure.

## **Communications/911 - Patrick Sniffin**

August 22 to September 20, 2011

Weather was the major player during this reporting period. With the ground fully saturated from recent rains, the potential was high for increased damage to the region. The effects of Hurricane/Tropical Storm Irene impacted the Danbury region beginning on August 27.

Call volume within the 911 Center closely followed the path and timing of the storm. The overnight of August 27/28 brought wind driven rains and spot street flooding. One family in the King St district was evacuated to the War Memorial shelter after a large tree fell on their home. As day break came call volume picked up as people awoke to limited power and many roads impassable due to fallen wires and trees.

Dispatch strategy was to track as closely as possible those situations that needed an immediate response due to life safety concerns and to list those problems that could wait until the rains and winds subsided. This was successfully large due to the fact that the warnings posted were followed and most people did not put themselves in harms' way. Shortly after 1:00 PM on Sunday August 28<sup>th</sup>, crews began the responses to deal with flooding and assessment of roadways, wires and other electrical situations.

911 and Administrative phone calls increased dramatically during the day. During the 24 hour period of the storm 1317 911 calls were received and 854 calls to the 7-digit emergency line were handled. Additional dispatchers worked seamlessly with a representative of the volunteer departments to track the availability of Fire Police and Volunteer units.

All volunteer companies provided a higher level of assistance during this period with Mill Plan (Eng 12) handling an especially high number of calls. Fire Police that responded were also a source of great help.

On September 8<sup>th</sup> the city was again hit with substantial rains that caused basement and street flooding that in many cases exceeded the water from TS Irene.

During the 24 hour period of Irene and the 6 hour period of September 8<sup>th</sup> the department processed the following calls related to the weather;

<b>Call Type</b>	<b>Number</b>
Hazard Investigations	73
Rescue	3
Elevator Entrapments (Stalled)	8
Water Problems	209
Water Pump Outs	4
Wires Down	79

### **Training - Mark Omasta**

#### Volunteer Division

Volunteer Fire Fighter Gabriel Ripley from Miry Brook Engine 13 passed all of the State of CT exams and is now Certified at the Fire Fighter 1 level. Multiple volunteer companies participated in a regional tanker Shuttle training drill in Westport on Sept. 21. Third quarter training is in progress. All Volunteer companies are drilling on various evolutions including water supply, relay pumping, drafting and hose work.

#### Career Division

##### Driver/Operators

FF Roger Bohan successfully completed his training and now meets the qualifications as an Aerial Operator/ Driver.

##### Hazardous Materials

Region 5 brought the Haz Mat IQ class to Danbury, Waterbury and Torrington over three days in September. All of our Officers and many Haz Mat team members attended this very informative 8 hour instructional seminar. Participants agreed this course gave them the confidence to safely handle Haz Mat incidents.

##### Fire School

The facility is the location for Danbury Volunteer quarterly training and continues to be utilized by our neighboring departments for various training activities.

##### Hydrant Testing

Hydrant testing continues through October. Records show over 1,400 hydrants tested to date.

##### Naugatuck Valley Community College- Associate in Fire Technology and Administration

Sean Wanat, Nick Velotti and Mark Omasta completed the program and received the above degree.

##### Airport Fire Fighters

Our 14 ARFF (Airport Rescue Fire Fighters) will travel to Westover AFB on Sept. 22 to conduct the required annual live burns at their Aircraft Training burn facility.

#### Training hours

10, 967 training man hours have been logged from January 1 through Sept. 15

#### Meetings/ events for the T.O.:

- August 17- Wedding for FF James Croswell
- August 24- new email orientation at City Hall
- August 25- Leadership Danbury at the Danbury PD- FCI-and Superior Court
- August 30- Staff meeting at City Hall
- Sept 7- Ct Fire Instructors meeting at the Academy
- Sept. 15- Haz Mat IQ class at Boehringer-Ingelheim
- Sept. 16- Friends of Local Heroes luncheon

#### **Apparatus/Equipment - Joe Cavo**

Some of the Departments' 4 Gas meters were calibrated this month. E-21's meter is still out of service with a battery issue; Engine 24's meter has the same issue. Both our dealer and the BioSystems' factory are in an area of Connecticut that was severely impacted by Tropical Storm Irene. A parts delivery is expected this week. The 09FX "Special Response" has been our star of the month. The software issue with the computer that controls the emergency lights and sirens has been repaired. Whelen is now looking into firmware issues with the light bar. Hopefully with the help of the technicians from Whelen, these issues should be resolved shortly. Fit testing for the Volunteer contingent is proceeding as planned. E-6 was fit tested this month and E-7, E-8, and E-9 are scheduled this week. Our 2 retired engines are on a surplus auction online that is being arranged by purchasing. The pump-shift unit on E-22 has failed and has been replaced under warranty. We are happy to report that there were no failures of apparatus or equipment during Tropical Storm Irene or the subsequent recovery.

#### Other repairs completed:

- Remove and replace the alternator in the 01CT.
- Repaired E-22 chain saw.
- Repaired E-24's meter base.
- Replaced battery in 99PS1.
- Replaced the Officers side seat belt in E-22.
- Repaired Gator.
- Replaced brake lines in 95CT.

#### **Community Risk Reduction Office of the Fire Marshal - James Johnson**

This months' Fire Prevention consisted of several programs targeted for elderly citizens. We also did programs for Old Navy and the Elks; both events were well attended by young and old citizens.

We also completed 45 hours of continuing education for annual Fire Marshal Certification. DFM's Russell, Osborne and Perry attended a three day PATC class on Fire Pattern Recognition.

Our office investigated several fires; thankfully there were no injuries reported. We continue to find illegal occupancies thru UNIT inspections. We performed 1 inspection for unsafe occupancy (basement/attic) the situation has been resolved. The displaced persons were assisted with housing by the Red Cross.

October is Fire Prevention Month, we estimate with our schools visits we will see about 8000 students. This does not include the High Schools. Meetings were held with this office marking the progress of apartments on Woodland Rd., and the Hospital.

### Department Statistical Reports

Inspections	Amount
Apartments	206
Business	25
Day Care	7
Education	8
Fuel Trucks	5
Hazmat (Tank Install)	0
Health Care	1
Hotel (Rooms)	80
Industrial	2
Liquor	34
Merchantile	31
Misc.	26
Place of Assembly	34
Res. Board & Care	2
Rooming House	1
Service Stations	0
Special Structure	3
Storage	2
TOTAL	467

Topics	Amount
Abatement/Reports (Hrs.)	48.5
Blasting Permits	2
Burn Permits	0
Complaints	27
Cont. Ed. Hours	45
Fatal Fires	0
Fire Investigation	6
Fire Safety Prgms.	6
Meetings (Hrs)	30
Office Duty (Hrs.)	166

Orders of  
Abatement  
Plan Review (hrs.)  
Tickets Issued

62

1

4

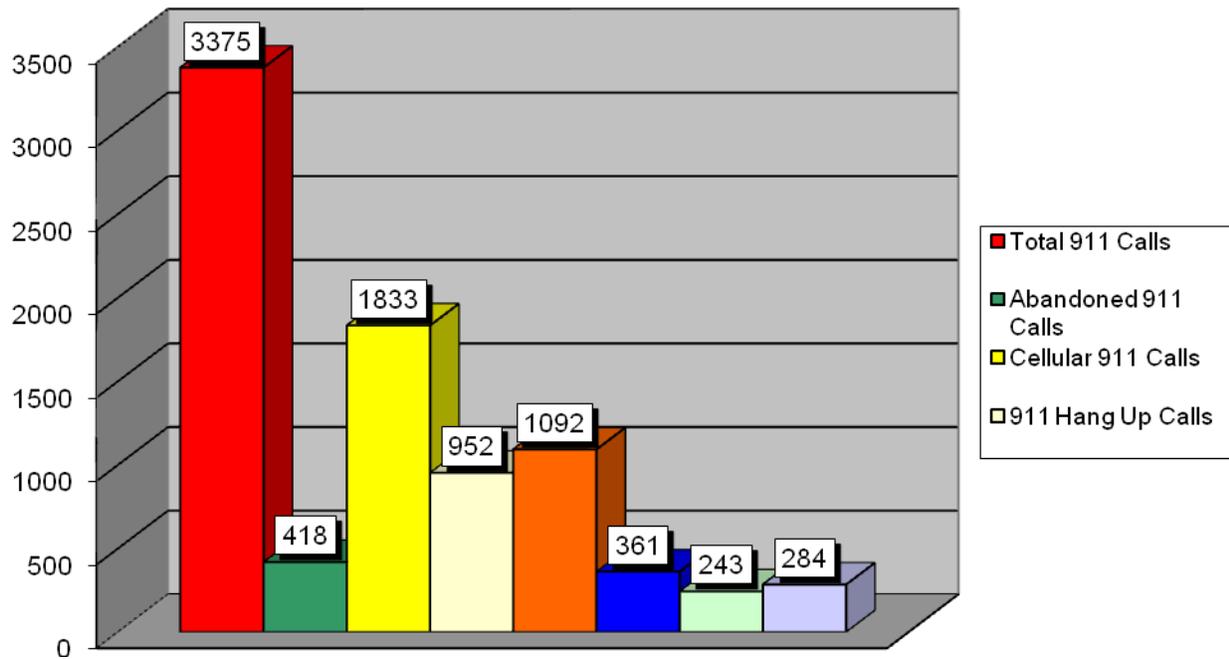
TOTAL HRS. 351.5

<b>Monthly Breakdown NFIRS Ver 5.0 Coding</b>	
Fires (100-173)	12
Overpressure Rupture - No Fire (200-251)	2
Rescue/EMS (300-381)	412
Hazardous Condition (400-482)	106
Service Call (500-571)	147
Good Intent Calls (600-671)	94
False Alarm/False Calls (700-746)	107
Severe Weather/Natural Disaster (800-815)	23
Special Incident Type (900-911)	1
No Report/Incomplete	123
Total Fire Responses	1027
<b>E911 Statistics</b>	
Total 911 Calls	3375
Abandoned 911 Calls	418
Cellular 911 Calls	1833
911 Hang Up Calls	952
Admin Calls Received	1092
Police Calls via 911	361
Fire Calls via 911 (CAD 28)	243
EMS Calls via 911 (CAD 29)	284
Daily Average	120.54
<b>Dispatch Incident Statistics</b>	
Total Fire Responses	1027
Total EMS Responses	766
Unknown Transport Status	2
ALS Patient (CAD 60)	302
BLS Patient (CAD 61)	318
No Patient (CAD 62)	132
EMS Mutual Aide Requests (CAD 80)	2
EMS Calls Passed to Backup (CAD 81)	10

**\*\* NOTE \*\***

Multiple 911 Calls received for Fire And  
EMS  
Incidents are attached to Fire Incident  
Reports

## 911 Center Activity August 22 to September 20, 2011



## Fire Response Breakdown August 22 to September 20, 2011

