

The Whitefish Fire Department provides service to the City, the WFSA, parts of the FFSA, and ambulance up into the Olney Fire District. There are a lot of questions and rumors and anybody who'd like can contact Fire Chief Joe Page at jpage@cityofwhitefish.org his cell is 406-253-3473. Joe can also come speak to your homeowners / neighborhood associations or join a zoom call with everybody. Having the conversation is key.

WHITEFISH FIRE DEPARTMENT: RUMORS

Q. Does Whitefish Fire Department pad their call numbers by sending multiple vehicles to an incident?

NO, each time the fire department is dispatched to an incident it is counted as one (1) CALL for service. The decision on how many vehicles respond to an incident lies with the Fire Chief based on the information received with efficient operations and safety in mind.

Q. Did the Whitefish Fire Department or the City of Whitefish receive any additional funds when the Whitefish Fire Service Area raised their fees 60% from \$90 to \$144 per residential structure?

NO, the Whitefish Fire Department continued to provide fire services to the WFSA per the existing contract.

Q. Now that the WFSA collects \$144 per residential structure will they be able to pay the City's proposed rate increase without having to raise rates or dip into their reserves?

YES, the amount the City is proposing does not exceed the amount the WFSA collects from their property owners, even in the later years of the proposed contract.

Q. Did the Whitefish Fire Service Area donate fire apparatus to the City?

The WFSA did purchase a used fire boat in 2012 that is docked at the Lodge in Whitefish Lake during the summer months. This boat is primarily used for rescue situations. Whitefish Lake has public access and most of the frontage properties are in the WFSA and not City residents. This boat is for the common good with our shared mission.

In the early days of the Whitefish Fire Service Area they contracted for services with the Whitefish Volunteer Fire Department and the payment went into the Whitefish Volunteer Fire Department's Rural Fire Fund. This fund was controlled by the Whitefish Firefighter's Association. It was this Association that saved and purchased the 1995 Fire Engine and the 1997 Fire Engine and Rescue Truck, not the WFSA.

It wasn't until the 2006 contract that the payments from the WFSA went to the City.

In the 2010 contract between the WFSA and the City in addition to the annual payment for fire services was a onetime \$300,000 payment into the fire department's capital fund called for an additional \$33,537 annual payment to that capital fund for the length of the contract.

In 2014 / 2015 the Whitefish Fire Department did receive a new fire engine and water tender. The 1995 and 1997 trucks are still in service today. NFPA's recommendation is that front line apparatus (1st & 2nd Due) should be no more than 15-years old and any apparatus over 25-years old should be retired from service. Here is the Fire Chief's plan for fire engine replacement and the Whitefish Fire Department's current status:

RESPONSE POSITION	PLANNED AGE	CURRENT FLEET	AGE AS OF 2020
1 st DUE	1 to 8 years	2014 Rosenbauer	7 years old
2 nd DUE	9 to 16 years	1997 Spartan	23 years old
RESERVE	17 to 24 years	1995 Spartan	25 years old

As you can see without additional funding the fire department has been unable to maintain their vehicle replacement program.

Q. Are Whitefish Firefighters the highest paid in the State of Montana?

NO, an IAFF study in 2017 had Whitefish as 7th amongst the 9 departments studied.

**MONTANA FIREFIGHTER COMPENSATION COMPARISON
1-YEAR OF SERVICE**

(from an IAFF study in 2017)

Department	Total Yearly Compensation	Hours Worked	Cost per Hr
Butte FD	\$61,254	1,950	\$31.41
Billings FD	\$57,305	2,141	\$26.77
Great Falls FD	\$50,896	1,969	\$25.85
Missoula FD	\$49,887	1,976	\$25.25
Missoula-Rural FD	\$57,581	2,422	\$23.77
Helena FD	\$50,156	2,175	\$23.06
Whitefish FD	\$55,921	2,426	\$23.05
Bozeman FD	\$56,244	2,499	\$22.51
Kalispell FD	\$46,992	2,163	\$21.73

This is not an apples to apples comparison as each department works a different schedule resulting in a different number of hours worked with different benefit packages. Whitefish Firefighters work more hours per week than most other fire departments.

Q. I'm a City property owner and I see on my tax bill that I paid 24 mills against my property's taxable value for fire, is that correct?

No, you paid more. City taxpayers voted to add 24-mills to the fire department budget when the City hired more firefighters to provide 24-hour coverage. The fire department is an all-hazard response organization and provides Fire, Wildland, Hazmat, Rescue, and ALS Ambulance service.

Also contributing the fire department’s budget is a sizeable general fund transfer. Here is the fire department’s revenue for FY18, FY19, and FY20’s budget

REVENUE WHITEFISH FIRE DEPT FIRE & AMBULANCE	Actual FY18	Actual FY19	Budget FY20
CITY TAXPAYER 24-MILL	595,622	603,728	649,052
CITY TAXPAYER GENERAL FUND	729,525	700,380	853,092
CITY FIRE PREVENTION FEES	91,551	151,075	125,000
CITY BURN PERMIT FEES	200	100	100
	<u>1,416,898</u>	<u>1,455,283</u>	<u>1,627,244</u>
WFSA FEE FOR FIRE SERVICE	285,603	290,995	296,495
WFSA FIRE PREVENTION	-	-	-
WFSA BURN PERMITS	-	-	-
	<u>285,603</u>	<u>290,995</u>	<u>296,495</u>
COUNTY AMBULANCE ASSESSMENT	48,045	52,448	53,000
AMBULANCE BILLING	1,450,074	1,641,620	1,563,185
RESCUE CARE PROGRAM	43,792	22,925	23,000
	<u>1,541,911</u>	<u>1,716,993</u>	<u>1,639,185</u>
LOAN PROCEED	175,000	-	-
MISC. INCOME (EMS & WILDFIRE)	139,448	35,548	20,000
	<u>314,448</u>	<u>35,548</u>	<u>20,000</u>
TOTAL REVENUE WHITEFISH FIRE DEPT	<u>3,558,860</u>	<u>3,498,819</u>	<u>3,582,924</u>

Q. If the WFSA does not continue its contract with the City Fire Department will the Whitefish Fire Department respond mutual aid into the WFSA?

Yes, The Whitefish Fire Department has signed the County wide mutual aid agreement and when requested will respond when resources are available to assist not replace the proposed new volunteer WFSA’s fire department.

Q. Does the Whitefish Fire Department have volunteer firefighters?

Yes, The Whitefish Fire Department has volunteer firefighters, not as many as we’d like.

Q When the City of Whitefish becomes a Class-1 City (population over 10,000) can they have volunteer firefighters?

Correct, a Class-1 City in Montana cannot have volunteer firefighters. Whitefish would have to reach a population of 10,000 people to become a Class-1 City.

Q. Does the Whitefish Fire Department staff the fire station on Whitefish Stage and Hodgson Road?

No, we do not staff the south fire station with career staff, the hope has always been that volunteers living in the area would respond to that station. We do have an in-service engine in that station should someone be driving by, but no volunteers live close. We staff our five career Firefighter/Paramedics at our main station, they respond to each call received along with the volunteers we do have. Depending on the call they respond with different apparatus. The firefighters bump between the ambulance, the fire engine, the tender, the rescue, or the brush truck depending on the call. Being down at the south station could extremely lengthen response time if they didn't have the appropriate apparatus with them. The south station is on the southern border of our response area and would lengthen response time to the majority of our calls plus those calls to the north and west.

Q. Do Whitefish Volunteers have to be certified to the same level as the career firefighters?

NO, All of Whitefish Fire Department's fifteen (15) career firefighters have obtained and maintain the following training:

Structural Firefighter I & II per NFPA 1001

Hazmat Awareness & Operations Levels per NFPA 472

Wildland Firefighter Type 2 per NWCG as a minimum

Incident Command per FEMA IC-100, 200, 700 and 800

Montana EMS License: (14) fourteen Paramedics (1) one Advanced EMT w/

- CPR
- Advanced Cardiac Life Support
- Pediatric Cardiac Life Support
- Pre-Hospital Trauma Life Support

Technical Rescue: extrication, rope, ice, water, and confined space.

All of the Shift Commanders (Captains) and their backups hold:

Fire Officer -1 per NPFA 1021

Incident Command per FEMA IC-300

Our volunteers can choose to fill one or more of these specific roles depending on their availability. Each role has specific training and participation criteria.

Ambulance Driver

EMS Provider

Exterior Firefighter (non SCBA)

Interior Firefighter

Driver/Operator

WHITEFISH FIRE DEPARTMENT: WFSA & CITY

Q. What has the Whitefish Fire Department done to improve service in the WFSA?

Operationally our procedures are the same within and outside the City.

Staffing: The Whitefish Fire Department continues to recruit and train volunteer firefighters unfortunately the volunteers we're seeing do not live within response time to either fire station forcing them to volunteer by spending time working side by side with the career staff at Station-21 in the City. The Whitefish Fire Department did not choose to underutilize Station-22 the lack of a local volunteer response leaves Engine 233 sitting in the south station.

Apparatus: The Whitefish Fire Department in their last two major purchases obtained a 2015 Water Tender primarily for use in the non-hydrated areas mostly in the rural areas. The 2014 Engine was built on a 4-wheel drive chassis primarily to aid in our winter response out in the rural areas. The fire department also maintains two brush trucks for initial response to wildland fires in the urban interface.

Training: In addition to maintaining their primary medical and fire certifications many Whitefish Firefighters have recently completed the BNSF's Crude by Rail training along with Amtrak and other BNSF hazmat trainings. The rail line is not in the City rather part of the WFSA.

All of the Whitefish Fire Department Company Officers and their backups have completed Fire Officer Training and received IFSAC and ProBoard accreditation.

In the FY21 Fire Department budget is money for a study to look at the current and future needs of the fire department to service the City & WFSA and help develop a plan moving forward.

Q. How many calls for service does Whitefish Fire Department answer in a year?

2019	CITY	WFSA	MUTUAL-AID	TOTAL
Interfacility Transports	286	0	0	286
AMBULANCE	810	217	40	1067
FIRE - RESCUE	263	164	20	447
				<u>1800</u>

2018	CITY	WFSA	MUTUAL-AID	TOTAL
Interfacility Transports	239	0	0	239
AMBULANCE	800	165	47	1012
FIRE - RESCUE	302	202	44	548
				<u>1799</u>

2017	CITY	WFSA	MUTUAL-AID	TOTAL
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Interfacility Transports	345	0	0	345
AMBULANCE	711	169	52	932
FIRE - RESCUE	254	189	52	495
				<hr/>
				1772
				<hr/> <hr/>

WHITEFISH FIRE DEPARTMENT: AMBULANCE SERVICES

Q. If the WFSA does not sign a new contract with the City for fire services, will the City still provide ambulance service?

YES, Whitefish Fire Department provides ALS (Advanced Life Support) ambulance service to an area bigger than the City of Whitefish, the Whitefish Fire Service Area, the Olney Fire District, and portions of the Flathead Fire Service Area combined as part of an agreement with the Flathead Emergency Medical Services.

There are a number of concerns should this split occur. Without additional responders arriving with the Whitefish ambulance the two paramedics and their patients will be at greater risk. Besides having the additional hands lifting and carrying patients there are numerous medical interventions where more than just two providers are essential. Operating on the roadway during motor vehicle accidents without a blocking vehicle is a huge safety concern.

The City's Fire Chief will be doing a risk assessment and adjusting operational procedures over the next year should they lose a timely fire response to assist their ambulance crew.

Q. Why does Whitefish respond with an engine to ambulance calls?

Safety and patient care. Most days there are four career Firefighter/Paramedics on duty in Whitefish. Typically, with two assigned to the ambulance and two to the engine. The engine crew will respond to help lift and carry both the equipment and the patient providing a safer more rapid transport to the hospital. Additionally, during medical emergencies like cardiac arrest, the new standard, called pit-crew-CPR, requires as many as four to six emergency medical responders working the patient.

Q. What is Pit Crew CPR?

Pit Crew CPR is a team approach to providing care for a patient in cardiac arrest. Rescuers fill the following roles:

- Start chest compressions
- Place and operate the AED

- Establish the airway and provides rescue breathing
- IV and drug interventions
- Assist with chest compressions
- Documentation

Q. Does the WFSA pay for ambulance service?

NO, the Whitefish Fire Department provides ambulance service as part of Flathead EMS. Currently the Whitefish ambulance covers an area larger than the City of Whitefish, the Whitefish Fire Service Area portions of the Flathead Fire Service Area and now the Olney Fire District combined.

As part of Flathead EMS the Whitefish fire Department receive a small stipend for readiness, essentially having an ambulance available in the county system, a per call portion of funds collected through a small EMS levy, and then patient billing. Unfortunately, Medicare and Medicaid only pay a fraction of the costs of running an ambulance.

**WHITEFISH FIRE DEPARTMENT:
OPERATIONS - STANDARDS**

Q. How is the response to a 911-call determined?

When a person calls 911 the dispatcher at the County 911-Center will determine what the emergency is, and the location. The dispatcher will then use the predetermined response plans created by each responsible jurisdiction.

As an example, the Whitefish Fire Department will send an ambulance and an engine to most medical calls to ensure safe efficient operations. The risk to the health and safety of our responders and the patient is reduced when an adequate number of resources arrive quickly and together.

Q. What are the fire services that the WFSA is contracting for with the City of Whitefish?

The agreement is that the Whitefish Fire Department will respond into the WFSA when the need arises and a call for service is received. The Whitefish Fire Department will respond with their trained firefighters and equipment to fire and rescue incidents including but not limited to structure fires, property fires, hazardous materials response, wildland fire initial attack, wildland fire structure protection, various rescue situations including vehicle accidents, water/ice rescue and confined space rescue. The agreement is for the availability and readiness to respond 24-7-365.

Q. What are the performance standards for a fire department?

Two different organizations set performance standards for fire departments: the NFPA and ISO, and of course OSHA set safety laws to protect firefighters.

NFPA 1720 a standard for Volunteer and Combination Fire Departments calls for the following staffing and response times to a reported structure fire:

DEMAND ZONE	PEOPLE PER SQUARE MI	MINIMUM STAFF	RESPONSE TIME
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Urban Area	> 1,000 ppl	15 Firefighters	9-minutes
Suburban Area	500 - 1,000 ppl	10 Firefighters	10-minutes
Rural Area	< 500 ppl	6 Firefighters	14-minutes
Remote Area	travel > 8 miles	4 Firefighters	dependent on distance

ISO's Fire Suppression Rating Schedule calls for a fire department's response to a reported structure fire to include:

- Six (6) Firefighters responding, two (2) may be automatic aid **
- An engine per NFPA 1901 with a least a 750-gpm at 150-psi pump
- Capable of delivering 250-gpm or more within 5-minutes of arrival
- Capable of sustaining 250-gpm for 2-hours

** Automatic Aid fire stations per ISO must be within 5-road miles of our boundaries.

OSHA 29 CFR 1910.156 is set by statute, standards and regulations for Fire Brigades.

Q. Who is the NFPA?

The NFPA, National Fire Prevention Association, is a self-funded nonprofit organization that amongst other things sets fire industry consensus codes and standards. While not law, many of the NFPA safety standards fall under OSHA's "general duty clause" and as such in many situations have the force of law.

Q. What is ISO?

ISO is the Insurance Services Office, a private company that rates fire departments for the insurance industry. While not every insurance company uses the department's ISO rating, they all use similar factors when assessing risk when determining insurance rates.

<https://www.verisk.com/insurance/about/faq/the-public-protection-classification-ppc-program/>

ISO uses a number of factors to determine a department's Public Protection Classification (PPC) with a Class-1 rating being superior and a Class-10 indicating the area's fire protection doesn't meet their minimum criteria.

Any property beyond five road miles from a fire station receives a Class-10 rating which is why the discussing of satellite fire stations is so important.

The four factors used to calculate a department's ISO Class are:

- Emergency Communications – the 911 system
- Fire Department – responding firefighters, their training, and equipment / apparatus
- Water Supply – hydrant systems, cisterns, hauled water
- Community Risk Reduction – Fire codes, prevention, public education

Insurance carriers use this information to assess whether to provide coverage quotes and at what price per property owners.

Q. What is the difference between Mutual-Aid and Automatic-Aid?

Mutual-Aid is help received by a neighboring department when requested, typically after the home department arrives on scene and sizes up the situation, then they call for help.

Automatic-Aid is help from a neighboring department dispatched based on the reported incident at the same time as the home department. ISO doesn't recognize auto-aid partners whose fire stations are beyond 5-road miles of our boundary. This 5-mile criteria is the distance that the insurance companies use and why more satellite fire stations are necessary to improve insurance access and economics for residents across the area.

As an example, for a reported structure fire Whitefish has Big Mountain FD, West Valley FD, Columbia Falls FD and Evergreen FD dispatched at the same time we are. Once Whitefish gets on scene and determines they don't need the help they can cancel incoming resources.

Q. How do I find out who I'm paying for fire protection and what is my home's taxable value is?

To find out what your homes Market Value, Taxable Value and what you pay for fire protection simple go to: <http://landpublic.flathead.mt.gov/lipublic/> and search for your property by either your name or address.

Don't let people confuse you with Listing Price, Asking Price, Sale Price, Assessed Value, and Market Value just look at your Tax Bill for your Taxable Value. Your Taxes and Levies are calculated off your Taxable Value. If you are in a Fire Service Area you pay a fixed fee. The Whitefish Fire Service Area's fee is \$144 per residential structure, the Flathead Fire Service Area's fee is \$90 per residential structure.

WHITEFISH FIRE DEPARTMENT: TYPES OF FIRE ORGANIZATIONS

Q. What is the difference between a Fire Service Area, a Rural Fire District, and a Municipal Fire Department?

Montana Code Annotated, Title 7 Local Government, Chapter 33 Fire Protection, defines each of these organizational models for fire protection. The basic difference is the funding model. Fire Service Areas collect a fixed fee per residential structure, Fire Districts levy a mill rate against each property's taxable value, and Municipal Fire Departments are funded as part of the City's budget.

There is a new proposed model called a Fire Authority where a Fire District and a Municipal Fire Department can merge.

Q. Was there talked that Fire Service Areas should become Districts?

Yes, the intent was scarcely populated areas would form fire service areas and contract for fire protection with nearby rural fire districts or municipalities. Once there was enough taxable value, the fire service areas would form their own rural fire district which still could contract for services. As you can see from the chart below the Whitefish Fire Service Area has more taxable value than any other fire district in Flathead County.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

**TAXABLE
VALUE FY19**

CITY OF KALISPELL	\$48,698,439.00
CITY OF WHITEFISH	\$39,066,006.00
WHITEFISH FIRE SERVICE AREA	\$23,743,342.00
BIGFORK FIRE (just Flathead)	\$19,467,859.00
SOMERS FIRE	\$19,370,054.00
EVERGREEN FIRE DISTRICT	\$18,821,006.00
FLATHEAD FIRE SERVICE AREA	\$17,703,328.00
WEST VALLEY FIRE	\$14,805,899.00
CRESTON FIRE	\$14,380,064.00
COLUMBIA FALLS RURAL FIRE	\$13,801,472.00
SMITH VALLEY FIRE	\$10,443,317.00
CITY OF COLUMBIA FALLS	\$8,124,055.00
BADROCK FIRE	\$7,439,377.00
MARION FIRE	\$5,775,900.00
BIG MOUNTAIN FIRE	\$5,266,811.00
SOUTH KALISPELL FIRE	\$5,088,744.00
CORAM-WEST GLACIER FIRE	\$3,857,934.00
FERNDAL FIRE (just Flathead)	\$2,863,307.00
HUNGRY HORSE FIRE	\$1,136,517.00
BLANKENSHIP FIRE	\$903,678.00
MARTIN CITY FIRE	\$822,829.00
OLNEY FIRE	\$325,480.00

On August 8, 2017

- Deputy County Attorney Tara Fugina explained to the County Commissioners that fire service areas do not have their own infrastructure and capital assets and are reliant on districts or municipalities to respond.
- Commissioner Holmquist remarked that fire service areas lack the tax base to support the needed infrastructure.
- Commissioner Krueger remarked that the County has been moving to reduce fire service areas.

The question remains why has the WFSA not moved to a Rural Fire District?

From a paper prepared by Harold Blattie, Executive Director, Montana Association of Counties on Fire Protection in Montana for the Montana Legislature in 2012.

- 1- "Fire Districts are chosen as the method to provide fire protection in many areas because residents want a higher level of service and are willing to have property taxes assessed against their property to have that service. Because of increased availability of funding through property taxes residents also have a higher expectation of services provided. Some fire districts have firefighting capabilities that are comparable to many municipal fire departments."

- 2- “Fire Service Areas are in some cases the preferred method of providing fire protection where wildfire structural protection is desired, but the area may not be of a sufficient size to warrant the creation of a fire district. Fire Service Areas provide a means to provide funding through assessments on structures to be used to contract with a recognized fire protection agency, most often a municipality for structural protection. Recognizing that urban sprawl has created larger tracts of property as home sites, authority to collect a fee assessment on a per acre basis, limited to \$250 per owner, in addition to the fee on structures, was recently authorized by the legislature.”

Q. What is a Fire Authority?

A Fire Authority is a new fire service organization model used in other States, like Washington, where fire districts and municipal fire departments merge. This legislation is being presented in the upcoming session and is something the City of Whitefish and the Whitefish Fire Service Area should consider. In FY21 this bill did not pass so it will be at least two more years before it will come up again.

However, a Class-2 City may contract with a Rural Fire District for service. If during that contract the city becomes a Class-1 City, they could continue to have their fire protection provided by the Rural Fire District.

A few options that need to be investigated.

WHITEFISH FIRE DEPARTMENT: LONG RANGE PLANS

Q. What is the City's long-range plan?

The City established a Fire Department Planning Task Force last year. They explored Chief Page's SWOT Analysis (Strengths – Weaknesses – Opportunities – Threats) along with his preliminary plans and decided to have a consultant help with a long-range strategic plan. The funds for this plan are in the Fire Department's FY21 budget. The City hopefully will be contracting with a firm in March of 2021. While the Fire Department's budget will fund the study with City funds they will be looking at the whole service area which includes the WFSA, parts of the FFSA, and EMS into the Olney Fire District.

Q. Does the WFSA's have a long-range plan?

Chief Page presented his SWOT Analysis and plans to the WFSA Board a few years ago. The WFSA did raise their fee for \$90 to \$144 and started building their capital reserves. No known plans.

Q. What is the Fire Chief's satellite fire station plan?

The discussion around satellite fire stations revolves around bringing as many properties as we can within five road miles of a fire station to improve the property's ISO rating, <https://www.isomitigation.com/ppc/program-works/>. Properties beyond five road miles receive an ISO score of 10, essentially no fire protection. Hopefully with satellite fire stations we can also have an

improved response time to an emergency using either: volunteers living close to the station, volunteers staying at the station, resident volunteers living at the station, or career firefighters assigned to the station.

To meet ISO's requirements for a fire station the building must be a heated building with at least one fire engine/tender meeting NFPA 1901 standards that carries at least 750 gallons of water with a pump capable of 250-gpm at 150-psi.

There are a few different fire station configurations to consider. A basic station should start with two apparatus bays for a 3000-gallon tender and an engine. The engine size would be based on the need in each the different areas. A Type-1 is a larger engine typically for structural fires, a Type-3 in an Interface Engine a cross between structural fire & wildland fire. Adding a third bay with an ambulance is an option to consider especially for a station staffed with resident or career firefighters.

A study done by Carnegie Mellon University demonstrated the financial feasibility based on possible homeowner's insurance rates vs. infrastructure cost over a 20-year period. Further detailed investigation and community involvement is needed.

Q. What is the Fire Chief's staffing plan?

Staffing is Chief Page's biggest concern. Asking the Firefighters to do more with less is a huge risk. We do not consistently meet the NFPA's performance standards for the number of firefighters on scene at a report structure fire within the allotted time. Often the City is left unstaffed when running simultaneous ambulance calls. This is not a volunteer vs. career issue, it's a firefighter issue.

VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS

We continued to accept volunteer applications all the time. Volunteers do not have to meet all the requirements that our career staff does, but they can. Volunteer information and applications are on the fire department website.

While we're still looking for volunteers who live or work within response time to our fire stations, today's volunteers tend to live further away and rather than responding to the station when a call for service is received they sign up to staff the station working side by side with the career staff. Many have their medical training and looking to obtain their fire training, maintain their medical skills while they look for a job.

The lack of Volunteer Firefighters is a national problem, not unique to Whitefish. However, as a retirement / tourist town with an affordable housing problem I fear our pool of potential volunteers is even worse. This doesn't mean we will stop looking.

CAREER FIREFIGHTERS

Career Firefighter/Paramedics are expensive. When you add salaries, benefits, firefighting gear and uniforms, etc. we're at about \$110,000 a year per firefighter. To add one firefighter on shift 24/7/365 you need more than three.

RESIDENT VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

I can't find volunteer firefighters – I can't afford more career firefighters.

Why not try a Resident Program that has been successful all over the country?

The idea is you find young people who are looking for a career in the fire service. You offer them a free place to live (dorm style) help them with their college tuition (EMT or Paramedic) in exchange for on-

duty time at the fire station. Bring in 6-students, put them through a firefighter-1 academy in July & August. Then when school starts, two are assigned to each of our three shifts (A, B, and C). On their shift's days, if not in school, they train with the career staff, maintain their station and apparatus, and respond to calls. On their not shift days they can respond live any volunteer.

Adding the 6-bedrooms should not be done at every satellite fire station but maybe one or two. There was some talk of adding the bedrooms at the current south station as a test run since, we have the property already. If we did that my idea was to add a training room too seeing as this station has our training tower.

While there is an investment in building the bedrooms for a resident program if the program doesn't work we'll eventually need the bedrooms for additional career staff.