

# Introduction to the Croton Falls Volunteer Fire Department

January, 2025



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# Department Profile



# Department Profile

- Founded in 1892, the Croton Falls Volunteer Fire Department has over 50 volunteer firefighters who operate from two firehouses and respond to over 700 fire, rescue and emergency medical calls in an average year.
- All members of the Department are unpaid volunteers who dedicate their time and talent to the public.
- In addition to emergency calls, firefighters regularly train to sharpen and expand their skills, serve on committees and participate in community events.
- The Department has a close relationship with the [Croton Falls Fire District](#), which is a political subdivision. Led by five publicly-elected officials on the Board of Fire Commissioners, the District collects taxes from property owners for the funding to provide fire protection. The District owns and maintains the buildings and equipment used by the Department to provide fire protection.
- Firefighters work closely with the [North Salem Volunteer Ambulance Corps](#), [Westchester EMS](#) as well as state, county and local police agencies; additionally we provide and receive mutual aid from area fire departments.
- Additional information is available via our website: [crotonfallsfire.com](http://crotonfallsfire.com)

# Scope of Emergency Services

- The Department provides a range of emergency services on a 24/7/365 basis.
- Fires, including structure fires, vehicle fires, brush fires and appliance fires, are the best-known emergencies the Department responds to, but fires are a relatively low percentage of our responses.
- Emergency medical calls are about half of our responses. Many of our firefighters are trained as Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) and provide initial care to a patient before transferring care to a paramedic or another EMT for treatment and transport to a hospital by another agency.
- Many of our emergency responses are for residential and commercial fire alarms or carbon monoxide alarms, vehicle accidents, hazardous conditions caused by storms and the occasional animal rescue.



# Community Engagement

- Firefighters dedicate many hours to support our community's activities and events throughout the year.
- During Fire Prevention Week every October firefighters visit schools and day care centers in town to educate students and staff about fire prevention and safety.
- Special events on the Department's calendar include a remembrance ceremony on September 11<sup>th</sup> and our annual Candy Cane Run before Christmas.
- Often we have a presence at events hosted by other community agencies including an annual library fair, a strawberry festival, school events and parades hosted by some of our neighboring fire departments.



# Department Mission, Vision and Values



# Department Mission and Vision

## Our Mission

To provide the highest level of fire protection, fire prevention, rescue and emergency medical services to the residents, businesses and visitors of our fire district.

## Our Vision

We see ourselves as a unified team of professionals which:

- Provides a high level of compassionate and caring fire and emergency medical service to our fire district, community and visitors at an affordable cost.
- Respects and admires our fellow members for the challenges they face in volunteering.
- Appreciates our members for their dedication, recognizes them for their contributions and rewards them for their achievements.
- Develops our younger members to be future leaders of our department and community and recognizes our youth as the community's most valuable resource and asset.
- Takes a community leadership role and promotes goodwill professionally and socially.
- Passes along our historic values and traditions while embracing the new with the old.
- Provides a high level of education for the public on fire safety and disaster awareness.
- Puts the tragedies and emergencies of our community as a priority in our own busy lives.
- Respects the privacy and confidentiality of the people we serve.
- Continually monitors our operations, administration and service delivery, recognizing our limitations, and swiftly implementing effective change when necessary.



# Department Values

## Our Values

- **Honesty:** We are committed to do the right thing, tell the truth and follow through on what we say we will do.
- **Respect:** We strive to show the highest level of care and respect for our members and our community including individual values and valuables.
- **Communication:** We welcome the input and concerns of our members and community and we recognize the need for dispersing important information throughout our department and community.
- **Excellence:** We take pride in what we do and we strive to do it to the very best of our ability in an effort to preserve the integrity of the investment our community has made.
- **Reliability:** We are committed to being on call 24/7 and fully trained for any emergency that our community or visitors face.
- **Foresight:** We seek to plan effectively for the future of the state, county and town as we build and grow with consideration for the taxpayer, the environment and the needs of our department members.
- **Dedication:** We are committed to our jobs, our community and our visitors. We strive for the highest level of emergency service care for those we serve.
- **Education:** We recognize the ongoing need to maintain our professional standards in fire and emergency medical service training. We also recognize the need to educate the community on fire prevention issues.
- **Camaraderie:** We strive to bring people together in an effort to build rapport and create a stronger community to serve our common causes.
- **Individuality:** We embrace and respect our individual differences and the unique perspective and contribution each person brings to the table whether in our department or community.

# Expectations and Benefits



# Expectations

- As a member of the Department, you will be required to:
  - Respond to emergencies based on your availability
  - Participate in drills, work details and special events based on your availability
  - Enroll in training courses to acquire at least the minimum level of training to begin operating as an effective firefighter; optimally you will continue to take training courses periodically to hone your skills and develop new capabilities
  - Assist with the upkeep and maintenance of apparatus and equipment
  - Attend monthly department meetings
- We will find a role for you that aligns with your talent, expertise, interests and availability.



# Benefits and Rewards

In return for your service to the community as a volunteer firefighter, you can expect to:

- Make a difference and provide a critical service by helping fellow residents in times of great need
- Become more involved with your community
- Develop new skills and capabilities you might not know you had
- Have access to the fitness center at the Croton Falls firehouse and workouts led by a professional fitness trainer at no cost
- Receive apparel and other items with the Department's logo at no cost
- Enjoy dinner before each monthly meeting and at other events during the year
- Be eligible to save on your town property tax bill and claim a Volunteer Firefighter/Ambulance Worker Tax Exemption on your New York State taxes
- Be respected and thanked for your dedication and sacrifices to serve the community
- Create new friendships, have fun and enjoy the camaraderie of other volunteer firefighters



# Joining the Department



# Requirements to Join the Department

Aside from an interest in firefighting and a willingness to help people, a candidate must meet the following requirements to join the Department:

- Live or work in the Croton Falls Fire District or the North Salem Central School District
- Be at least 16 years of age
- Pass a medical exam and background check
- Exhibit the following traits:
  - Good work ethic
  - Strong devotion
  - Motivation to learn and serve
  - Excellent teamwork



**APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP**  
Answer all questions completely, truthfully and in ink.

Type of Membership: Interior\_\_\_ Exterior \_\_\_ Fire Police \_\_\_ Administrative \_\_\_

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# Process for New Members

As with many organizations dependent on members, the Department uses a defined process when a candidate is interested in joining:

- The candidate completes an application and submits it to a Department member.
- The Department's Membership Committee reviews the application for completeness and notifies the Department's recording secretary who files a record of the application.
- The candidate meets with Department representatives for an interview that covers topics including the candidate's interest in joining the Department, steps of the membership process, expectations and requirements of new members, probationary period and the Department's operations, activities and structure.
- The recording secretary announces the new member to the membership at the next Department meeting. No vote of the membership application is to be held at this time.
- After one week, the Membership Committee recommends to the Board of Directors to accept or reject the applicant as a Probationary Member.
- The recording secretary submits the name and qualifications of the candidate to the District's secretary for approval by the Board of Fire Commissioners. Approval is not granted at this time.
- The District secretary initiates background and arson checks, and advises the District, Chief and Membership Committee of the results.
- District approval is granted upon the successful return of all background checks and verifications as well as a completed physical, presentation of a valid driver's license and SCBA fit test (if applicable). Designation of an ADD insurance beneficiary with the District should occur; the Department's recording secretary or the District's secretary can help.
- The candidate is now an active-probationary member of the Department and may participate in functions and activities.
- The Membership Committee provides the probationary member with a copy of the Department's bylaws and the District's policies. The probationary member signs a form acknowledging his/her understanding of the Department's Code of Ethics.
- The probationary period runs from 6-36 months and is affected by several factors. When decided by the Chief, the probationary member appears at the Department's next monthly meeting and the membership votes to accept or reject the probationary member.

# Key Activities When Joining

- Before a candidate can be approved by the District and begin activities with the Department, some prerequisites must be completed.
  - Background check to ensure no record of an arson conviction or a conviction requiring registration as a sex offender; the background check is handled by the District secretary.
  - Medical exam by a District-approved physician or by another physician that satisfies District requirements; the candidate will schedule the medical exam with a physician.
  - Airpack mask fit test to ensure a proper fit to the face can be achieved (unless the candidate will operate exterior only); the candidate will schedule a fit test with a District-approved vendor.
- The Department maintains a website ([crotonfallsfire.com](http://crotonfallsfire.com)) that has information for the public as well as a restricted members-only section where additional information is posted.
  - Probationary members should request access to the restricted section of the website via the [Access Application webpage](#).





# More Key Activities When Joining

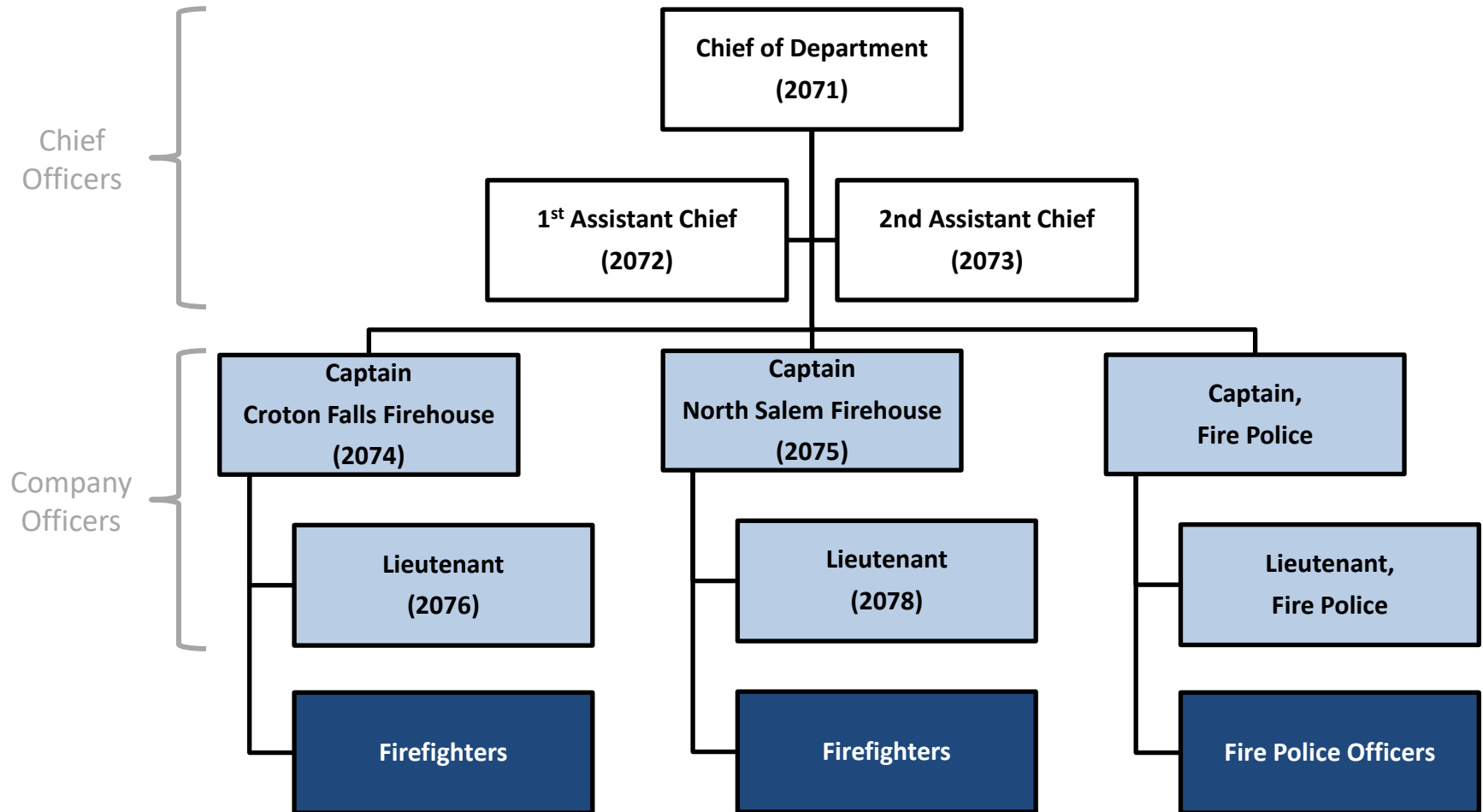
- A review of emergency communications methods will help new probationary members understand dispatches, messages and their responsibilities.
  - A chief officer will ensure a pager is issued and instructions on its use provided.
  - A chief officer also will create a profile for the new probationary member in two supplemental communications tools used by the Department:
    - [IamResponding](#) is a smart phone app used by members to receive information about emergencies and show they're responding to an incident when dispatched.
    - [CallingPost](#) is an automated service that delivers voice messages to enrolled phone numbers.
  - Guidance on responding to a firehouse for an emergency also will be provided along with a reminder on New York State vehicle and traffic laws.
- Personal protective equipment (PPE) and a dress uniform will be issued to new probationary members after approval from the District.
  - PPE, also known as turnout gear, includes a helmet, hood, coat, gloves, pants, boots and accountability tags.
  - A chief officer or the captain of a new probationary member's firehouse will ensure turnout gear and a uniform are issued.
  - Typically, a new uniform is not an immediate need as the new probationary member should focus on other activities to understand the Department's operations, activities and organization.
- To enroll in required firefighting training developed by New York State, a user account in the [NYS LMS](#) must be created by the new probationary member.
  - A chief officer or the captain of a new probationary member's firehouse will explain the training to be completed during probation.

# Organization



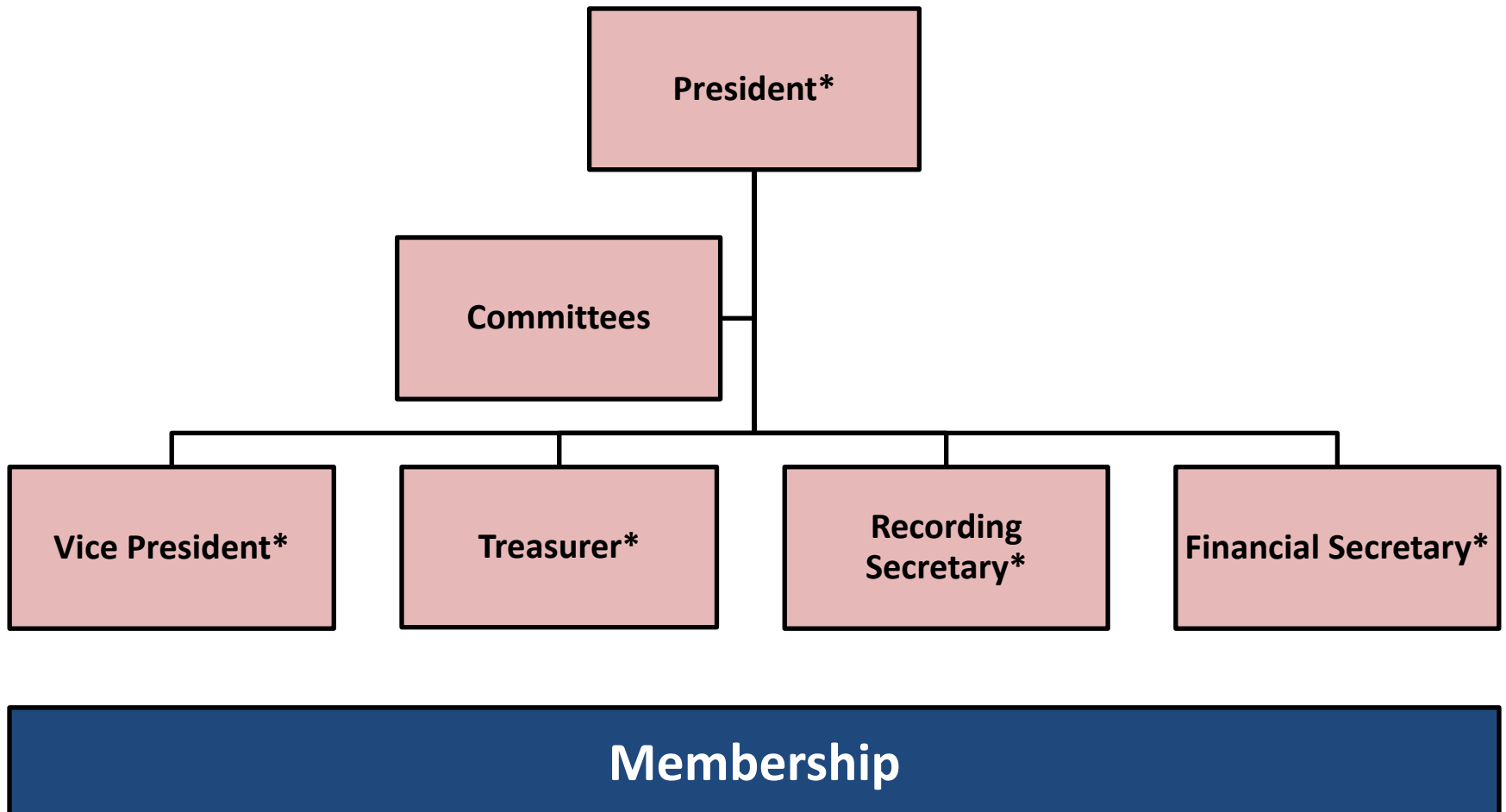
# Department Organization - Operations

The line officers are responsible for the firematic operations of the Department, which includes emergency responses, training, planning, fire prevention and equipment maintenance.



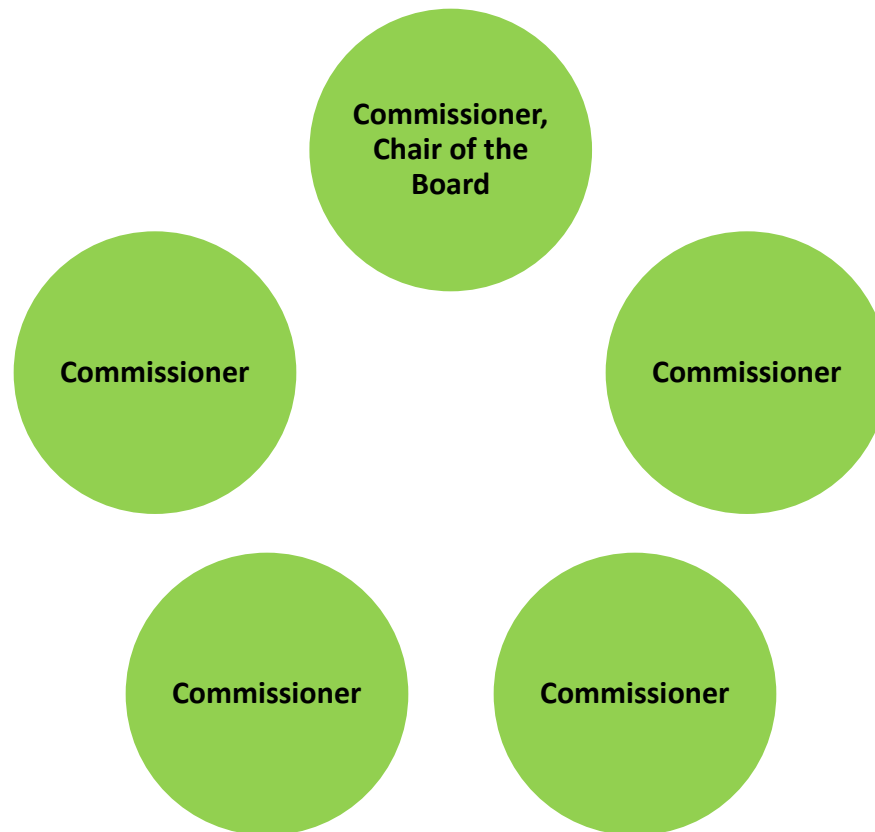
# Department Organization - Administration

The Board of Directors (a.k.a., the Executive Committee\*) is responsible for the administrative management of the Department, which includes membership, bylaws, finances and well-being.



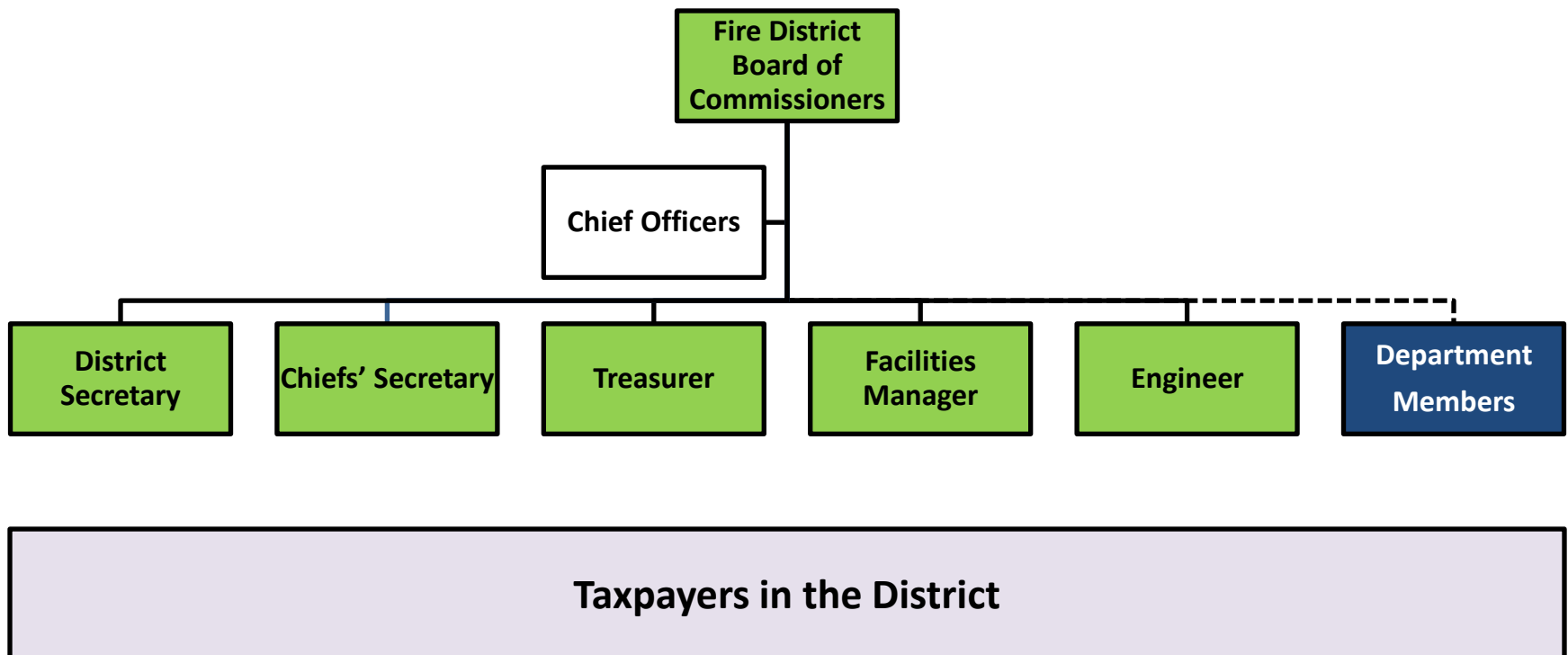
# District Board of Fire Commissioners

The [Croton Falls Fire District](#) Board of Fire Commissioners (a.k.a., the District) manages the business and equipment of the District. The District has the authority to tax property owners in the District in order to provide the funding necessary to provide fire protection to the District.



# Fire Department & Fire District Relationship

The Croton Falls Volunteer Fire Department and the Croton Falls Fire District are two separate entities. The District provides the funding and equipment for fire protection and the Department provides the firefighters who use the equipment to provide services to residents of the District.



# Training and Meetings



# Training and Meetings

- The Department hosts a training drill, work detail or a meeting every Monday night starting at 7:00 p.m.
- The Department and other emergency services agencies we work with provide all the necessary training, free of charge, throughout a firefighter's service.
- Formal courses covering initial and ongoing firefighter training are taught at local fire training centers by fire instructors certified by Westchester County, Putnam County and/or New York State. Formal training courses are augmented by in-house training led by our Department's officers and senior firefighters.
- A probationary firefighter must complete minimum training requirements set by the Department in order for the Chief to recommend an end to his/her probationary period. Failure to complete the minimum training requirements during probation will lead to dismissal from the Department.
- Additional training opportunities in-house and with other emergency service agencies are available based on a firefighter's interest and availability.
  - Optional training is available for firefighters who want to be an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) and handle more responsibilities and patient interaction during medical-related incidents.
  - Optional in-house training to drive District apparatus is available for firefighters after a member has developed a firm understanding of Department operations and as approved by a chief officer. Driver training is led by company officers and other firefighters who are qualified to drive apparatus.



# Communications



# Communications

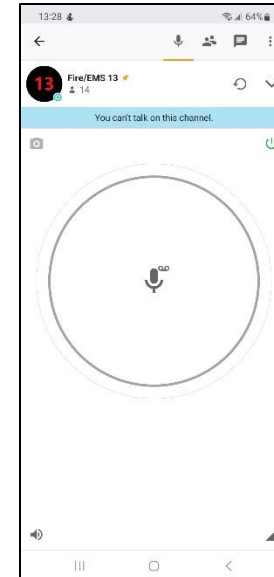
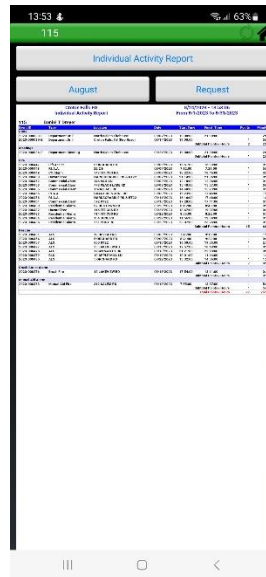
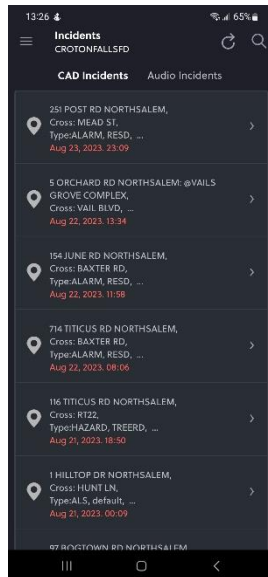
- The Communications Division of [Westchester County's Department of Emergency Services](#) (a.k.a., 60 Control) dispatches firefighters to fire, rescue and EMS emergencies upon receipt of a call to 911.
- Firefighters are alerted to an emergency via a pager that broadcasts the address and nature of the incident; the District issues a pager to each firefighter.
- Additionally, members can opt to receive text messages about emergencies on their personal mobile device.
- To communicate during emergencies, drills and details, members use mobile radios installed on our apparatus as well as hand-held radios.
- The Department maintains a website ([crotonfallsfire.com](http://crotonfallsfire.com)) that has information for the public as well as a restricted members-only section where additional information is posted.



# Apps Available for Use

Several smart phone apps are used by members to keep abreast of incidents and Department activities.

- [IamResponding](#): provides information about incidents; is used by members to indicate a response to an emergency and is used by Department leaders to send messages to all members.
- [FRS MRS](#): generates a report with details of a member's response to incidents and participation in Department activities.
- [Zello](#): rebroadcasts radio messages between 60 Control and responding apparatus so members arrive at a firehouse or an incident with updated information.



# First-Due Response Area



# First-Due Response Area

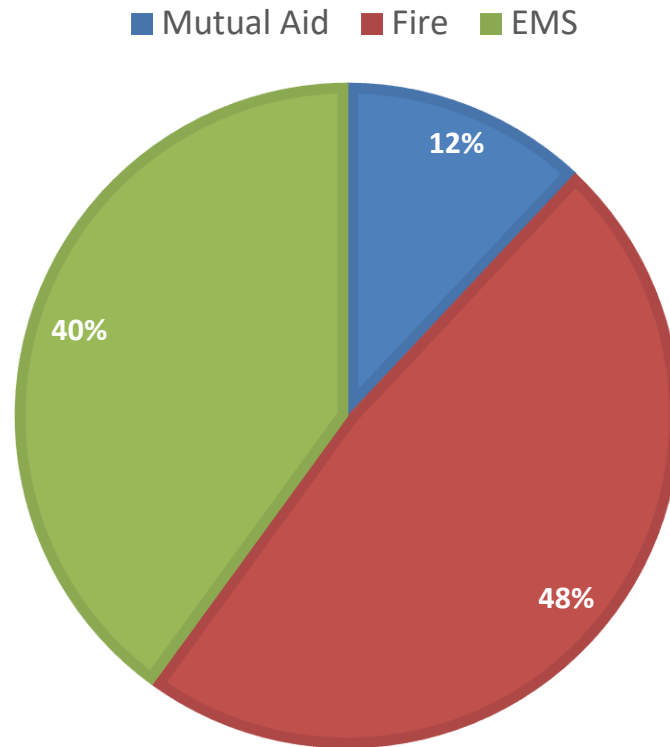
- Our primary response area includes the Town of North Salem in Westchester County and portions of the towns of Carmel and Southeast in Putnam County.
- Our district is one of the largest fire districts in Westchester County at ~25 square miles. Approximately 5,000 residents live in our district, which has a mix of residential, agricultural and business properties along with several bodies of water.
- Included in our district are:
  - Three schools and several child care operations
  - Two nursing/rehabilitation homes
  - Two reservoirs of the New York City watershed and several lakes, rivers and streams
  - Two apple orchards
  - One county park and several town parks
  - One interstate highway
  - One commuter train line with two train stations
  - More than 50 horse and alpaca farms with barns, stables and riding rings
  - Over 1,200 acres of open space and miles of bridle trails and walking trails



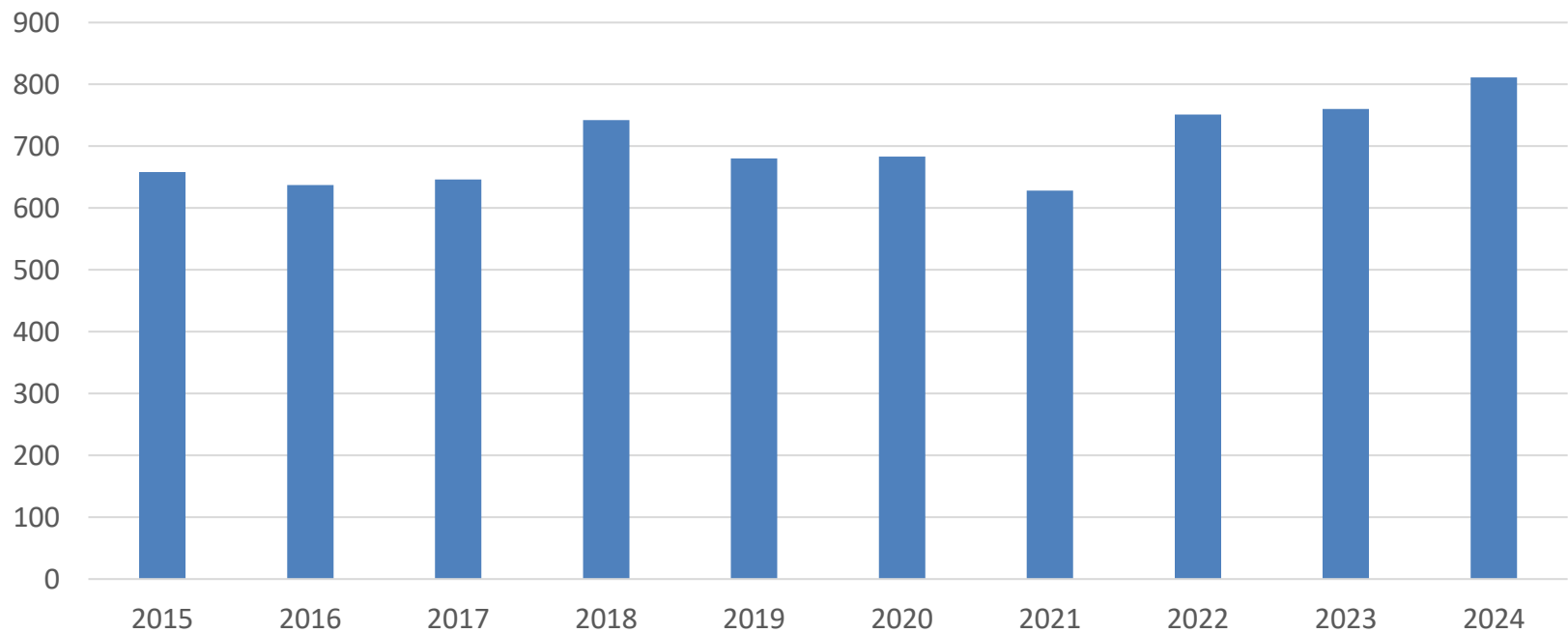
# First-Due Response Area



# Types of Incidents - 2024



# Annual Call Volume





# Firehouses



# Croton Falls Firehouse

- 1 Sun Valley Drive  
North Salem, NY
- Purchased in 2014;  
refurbished in 2015
- Assigned units:
  - Engine 147
  - Engine 148
  - Marine 28
  - Mini-Attack 17
  - Rescue 28
  - Tanker 88
  - Utility 48



# North Salem Firehouse

- 301 Titicus Road  
North Salem, NY
- Built in 1970; expanded in 2006
- Assigned units:
  - Engine 149
  - Ladder 67
  - Marine 64
  - Mini-Attack 16
  - Tanker 8
  - Utility 28
  - “Grandma”



# Apparatus



# Car 2071

- 2020 Chevy Tahoe
- Assigned to the Chief of Department
- Carries chief's turnout gear, SCBA, EMS gear, AED and assorted equipment
- Primary use is incident command





## Car 2072

- 2022 Chevy Silverado 1500
- Assigned to the 1<sup>st</sup> Assistant Chief
- Carries chief's turnout gear, SCBA, EMS gear, AED and assorted equipment
- Primary use is incident command



# Car 2073

- 2018 Chevy Tahoe
- Assigned to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Assistant Chief
- Carries chief's turnout gear, SCBA, EMS gear, AED and assorted equipment
- Primary use is incident command



# Engine 147

- 1994 Simon Duplex chassis
- Body by Gowans Knight
- 1,500 GPM pump; 750 gallon tank; 2,000' 5" hose; engine company tools
- Assigned to the Croton Falls firehouse





# Engine 148

- 2004 Spartan chassis; refurbished in 2022
- Body by Gowans Knight
- 1,500 GPM pump; 1,000 gallon tank; 1,500' 5" hose; engine company tools; combi extrication tool; light tower
- Assigned to the Croton Falls firehouse



# Engine 149

- 2000 Spartan chassis
- Body by Gowans Knight
- 1,500 GPM pump; 1,000 gallon tank; 1,500' 5" hose; engine company tools; eDraulic extrication tools
- Assigned to the North Salem firehouse



# Ladder 67

- 2005 Seagrave chassis
- 1,500 GPM pump; 500 gallon tank; 500' 5" hose; 75' aerial with 500# load; truck company tools
- Assigned to the North Salem firehouse



## Marine 28

- Achilles 10' inflatable boat with a 9.9 HP motor
- Water rescue and ice rescue equipment
- Boat, motor and equipment are stored in a “boat box” that is typically brought to a scene by MA-17 or U-48
- Assigned to the Croton Falls firehouse





# Marine 64

- 2018 Achilles 10' inflatable boat with a 15 HP motor
- Water rescue and ice rescue equipment
- Boat, motor and equipment are maintained on a trailer that is typically brought to a scene by U-28
- Assigned to the North Salem firehouse



# Mini-Attack 16

- 2011 Polaris Ranger
- 65 GPM pump; 70 gallon tank; brush fire equipment; EMS equipment; Stokes basket
- Assigned to the North Salem firehouse



# Mini-Attack 17

- 2012 Ford F-550 chassis
- Body by Gowans Knight
- 350 GPM pump; 225 gallon tank; 8 gallon foam tank; brush fire tools; EMS equipment
- Assigned to the Croton Falls firehouse



# Rescue 28

- 2013 Spartan chassis
- Body by Gowans Knight
- Hydraulic extrication tools; rescue company tools; EMS equipment; cascade system; light tower
- Assigned to the Croton Falls firehouse





# Tanker 8

- 2019 Spartan chassis
- Body by Gowans Knight
- 1,500 GPM pump; 2,750 gallon tank; 1,500' 5" hose; portable pond; engine company tools
- Assigned to the North Salem firehouse



# Tanker 88

- 2017 Spartan chassis
- Body by Gowans Knight
- 1,500 GPM pump; 2,750 gallon tank; 1,500' 5" hose; portable pond; engine company tools
- Assigned to the Croton Falls firehouse



# Utility 28

- 2017 Ford F-350 chassis
- Body by Burquip
- EMS equipment; haz-mat equipment; traffic control equipment; dewatering equipment; hand tools
- Assigned to the North Salem firehouse





# Utility 48

- 2016 Chevy Tahoe
- EMS equipment; hand tools
- Assigned to the Croton Falls firehouse



# Grandma

- 1939 Ward LaFrance; restored in 2009
- Served the Department between 1939-1968; now used as a ceremonial engine for parades and special details
- 500 GPM pump; 300 gallon tank; 500' 3" hose; engine company tools
- Maintained at the North Salem firehouse

