

**2014** ANNUAL REPORT  
FORSYTHCOUNTY Fire Department



*Service through Tradition, Excellence, and Integrity*

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The Forsyth County Fire Department Annual Report, now in its tenth year, is prepared jointly by the Forsyth County Fire Department and Forsyth County Department of Communications.





**Brenda Green**  
 Division Chief  
 Fire Administration

**Kevin Wallace**  
 Division Chief  
 Field Operations

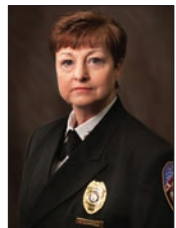
**Danny D. Bowman**  
 Chief of Department and  
 Director, Emergency Management Agency

**Jason Shivers**  
 Division Chief  
 Technical Services

**Barry Head**  
 Division Chief  
 Fire Marshal's Office



**Danny D. Bowman, Chief of Department and Director, Emergency Management Agency (EMA)** is responsible for all aspects of fire and rescue operations for Forsyth County, oversees all EMA operations, and directs and advises on homeland security issues. Bowman joined the Forsyth County Fire Department as division chief in 2001, and was promoted to assistant fire chief and EMA director in 2002. He has served as chief of department since July 2003. Starting his career as a firefighter for the Atlanta Fire Department in 1968, Bowman worked his way up the ranks, eventually serving in the chief administrator capacity for the newly formed Fulton County Fire Department and later as the deputy fire chief, interim fire chief and battalion chief for Fulton County. He is active in the community and fire services industry, previously holding the position of president for both the Georgia Association of Fire Chiefs and the Metropolitan Atlanta Area Fire Chiefs Association. He also served on the Thompson Group, a Washington, D.C. advisory panel for the Fair Labor and Standards Act.



**Brenda Green, Division Chief of Fire Administration**, oversees the day-to-day operations of the Fire Administration Division to include payroll, reporting, statistics, maintenance of personnel records, supervision of administrative staff and public assistance. Green joined the department in 1995, serving for 18 years as an administrative specialist; administrative specialist, senior; and administrative assistant, senior. Green also served in the Forsyth County Tax Commissioner's Office prior to joining the department. She is a board member of the Benefit Fund which provides assistance to families of fallen firefighters.



**Kevin Wallace, Division Chief of Field Operations**, oversees the field operations including all fire stations, suppression personnel, and special operations sections. Since joining Forsyth County in 1987, he has held the titles of firefighter; Sheriff's deputy; fire lieutenant; fire inspector; fire investigator; deputy fire marshal; and fire marshal. Wallace has also served with the Georgia State Fire Marshal's Office and the Fulton County Fire Department and is past president of the Georgia Fire Investigator's Association.



**Jason Shivers, Division Chief of Technical Services**, manages the Technical Services Division including the duties and personnel of the emergency medical services, motor maintenance, training, and quartermaster sections. He also serves as the department spokesperson and acts as a liaison with the county's Department of Communications. Shivers has the honor of holding a seat on the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1901, 1906, 1911, and 1912 committees governing national fire apparatus standards and also serves as the department's primary point-of-contact for new apparatus design and specifications. Since joining the department in 1998, he has held the positions of firefighter/ EMT; fire lieutenant; and inspector general.



**Barry Head, Division Chief, Fire Marshal's Office**, manages and oversees the Fire Marshal's Office to include fire code enforcement, plan review and fire investigations. The Fire Marshal's Office also oversees the department's public safety education efforts. Since first joining Forsyth County in 1986 as a volunteer firefighter, Head has held the titles of firefighter; fire inspector; fire investigator; lieutenant; captain; and battalion chief. He also served previously in the positions of deputy sheriff; corporal; and sergeant for the Forsyth County Sheriff's Office.

**GOALS**

**PREVENT** incidents from occurring through code enforcement, public education and fire prevention activities.

**MITIGATE** hazards by handling all service requests in a professional manner.

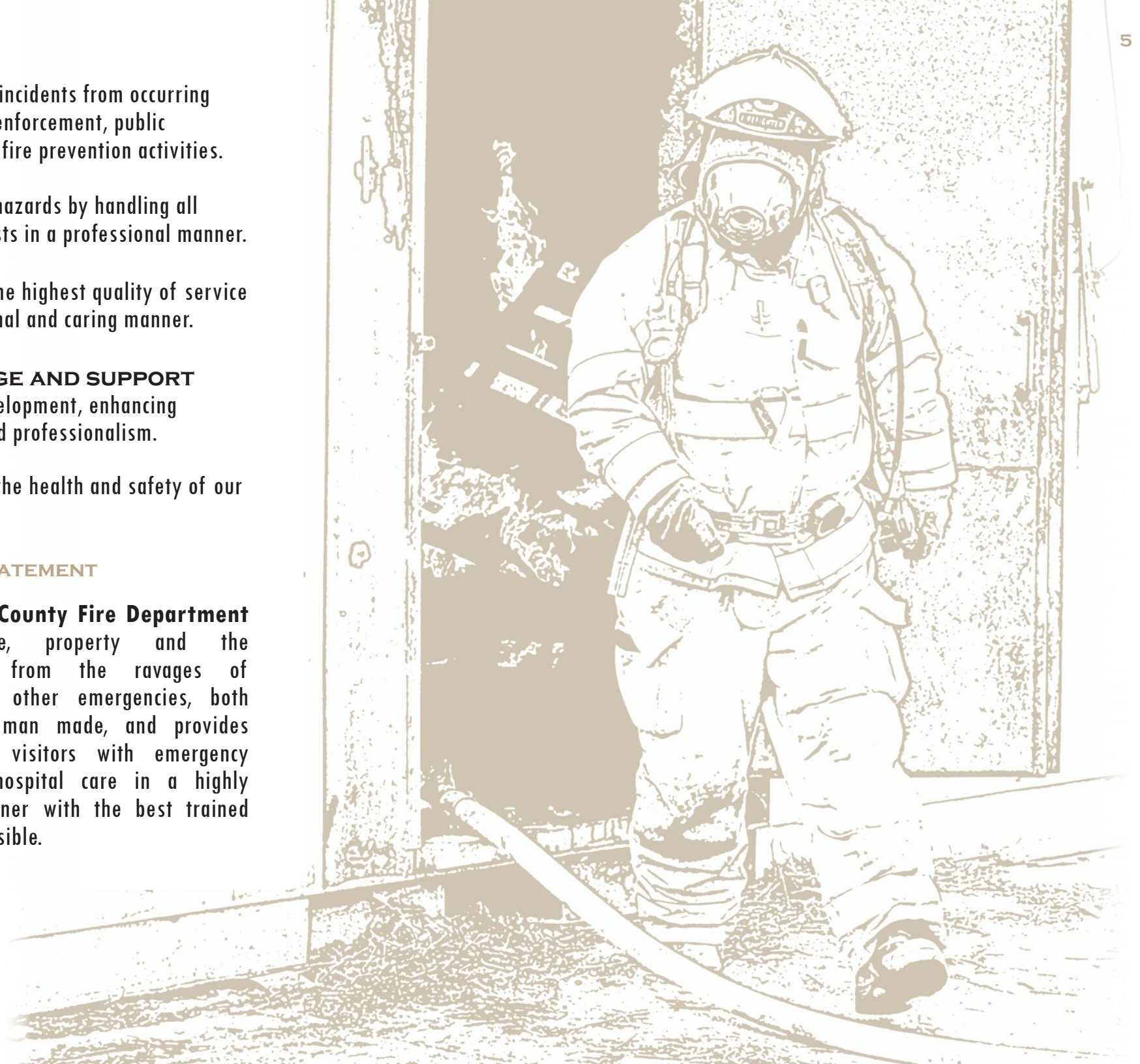
**PROVIDE** the highest quality of service in a professional and caring manner.

**ENCOURAGE AND SUPPORT** employee development, enhancing proficiency and professionalism.

**PROMOTE** the health and safety of our employees.

**MISSION STATEMENT**

The **Forsyth County Fire Department** protects life, property and the environment from the ravages of fire and all other emergencies, both natural and man made, and provides citizens and visitors with emergency medical pre-hospital care in a highly effective manner with the best trained personnel possible.





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*“I pledge to every citizen that the dollars derived from the fire millage rate will be expended in a prudent, conservative manner.”*

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I am proud to present to you the tenth anniversary edition of the Forsyth County Fire Department Annual Report. This document is meant to give you a window into 1) the activities of your fire department over the past calendar year; 2) the future trends we anticipate in Cumming and Forsyth County; and 3) the manner in which your 1.975 mill fire tax is expended.

One of the statistics you will find in this report is that the Forsyth County Fire Department responded to 12,799 calls in 2014; nearly double that of 10 short years ago. This number of emergency calls required 15,338 apparatus responses. On or before the 2020 census, our best estimates are that this emergency call volume will double again. To maintain our current six minute, 42 second average emergency response time we will have to anticipate capital improvements needed (fire stations, fire trucks, firefighting personnel, etc.) and population trends in our response area. (Our goal is an average response time of five minutes.) To accomplish this, the annual fire department budget must be monitored carefully on a daily basis in an effort to provide top-of-the-line professional fire and emergency services required and expected by our citizens and visitors.

So as to maintain our current level of services we strive to build one fire station and purchase one fire engine per year. Our station houses are constructed in such a manner as to have a life expectancy of 50 years, and our fire trucks 15 to 20 years. This is done in an effort to continue to provide quality, timely emergency services, and never exceed the approved budget. The Forsyth County Board of Commissioners and the County Manager have always given their full support to these goals and objectives.

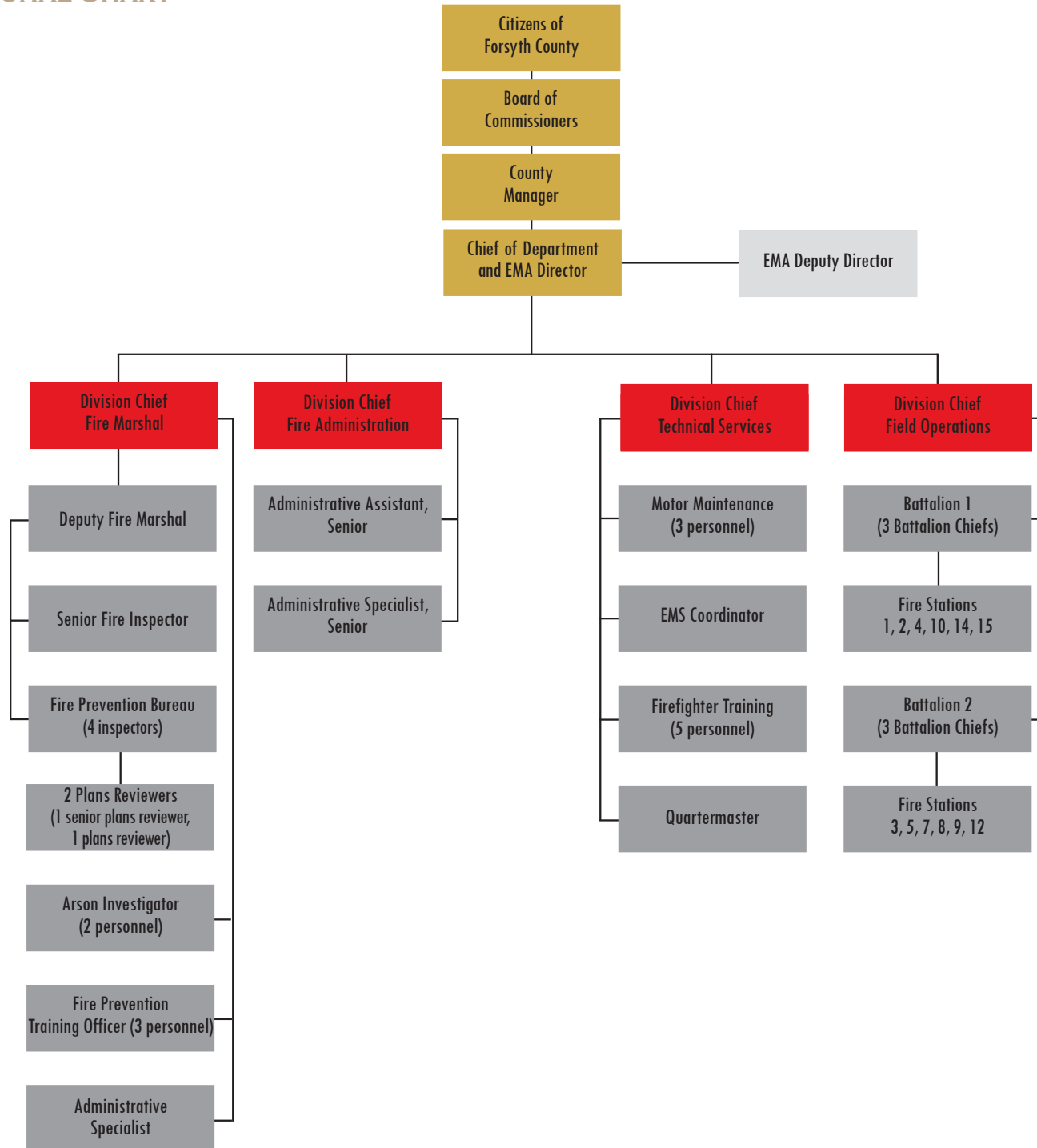
Some of the major projects accomplished in 2014 are:

- Identifying the land upon which to construct new (replacement) Fire Station 8 in the Highway 306 (north) corridor and pursuing purchase of the same
- Identifying the land upon which to construct new Fire Station 6 in the Highway 141 (Peachtree Parkway) corridor and pursuing purchase of the same
- Took delivery of three new pumpers
- Graduation and station assignment of 17 new firefighters
- 2,000+ children provided holiday gifts by way of the “Aerial’s House” toy collection

With an eye on world events which may affect our modest budget, not the least of which is the cost per gallon of diesel fuel, I pledge to every citizen that the dollars derived from the fire millage rate will be expended in a prudent, conservative manner. The Forsyth County Fire Department will be ever mindful that the protection of your family’s lives and property is our profession, and our passion. As fire chief I sincerely thank you for your trust and support.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Danny D. Bowman". The signature is fluid and cursive.

**Danny D. Bowman**  
Chief of Department  
Director, Emergency Management Agency



Now an established and growing Fire Department, the Forsyth County Fire Department began in 1972 as the Forsyth County Fire Protection Committee, created in response to a residential fire claiming the life of a county resident.

Led by Fire Chief John C. Moore, the county's volunteer Fire Department was incorporated in 1973.

The International Association of Fire Chiefs published in 1983 that Forsyth County, Georgia, with 336 volunteer firefighters on the roles, was the nation's largest volunteer Fire Department.

The volunteer Fire Department served the county until 1998, when the time came to establish a modern fire department and to hire 30 full-time, career firefighters.

Since those first 30 full-time, career firefighters joined Forsyth County, the Fire Department has grown tremendously. The Forsyth County Fire Department consisted of 135 full-time field suppression firefighter positions in addition to a variety of administrative and support personnel in 2014.



**HISTORICAL SPOTLIGHT:  
THE ORIGINAL FIRE STATION 7**

The building of the original Fire Station 7 on what is today Ga. 9 began 40 years ago on February 21, 1974 when the Forsyth County Fire Department was comprised of volunteer firefighters. Residents from the Silver City and Oak Grove communities helped construct the building. In two months, money had been received to pour a concrete floor and install two overhead doors to complete the station.

Source: Forsyth County Fire Department Research Library



**1972**

Forsyth County Fire Protection Committee is created.

First training session is called for volunteer firefighters.

**1973**

Volunteer Fire Department is incorporated and led by Fire Chief John C. "Jake" Moore.

**1983**

International Association of Fire Chiefs publishes that Forsyth County, Georgia is the nation's largest volunteer fire department.

**1990**

Norris Bennett is named Forsyth County's second fire chief.

**1998**

Forsyth County hires its first 30 full-time, career firefighters.

**2003**

Danny D. Bowman is named Forsyth County's third and current fire chief.

**2006**

Fire Department moves into its current headquarters and Fire Station 12 at Forsyth County's Public Safety Complex.

**2007**

For the first time in its history, the Fire Department exceeds 10,000 responses in a single year.

**2009**

Insurance Services Office notifies Forsyth County it has received a fire insurance reclassification from 6/9 to 5, resulting in reductions in fire insurance premiums.

**2012**

Forsyth County Fire Department commemorates its 40th anniversary.

**2013**

In his tenth year as chief of department, Danny D. Bowman receives a Governor's Public Safety Award for "contribution to profession."

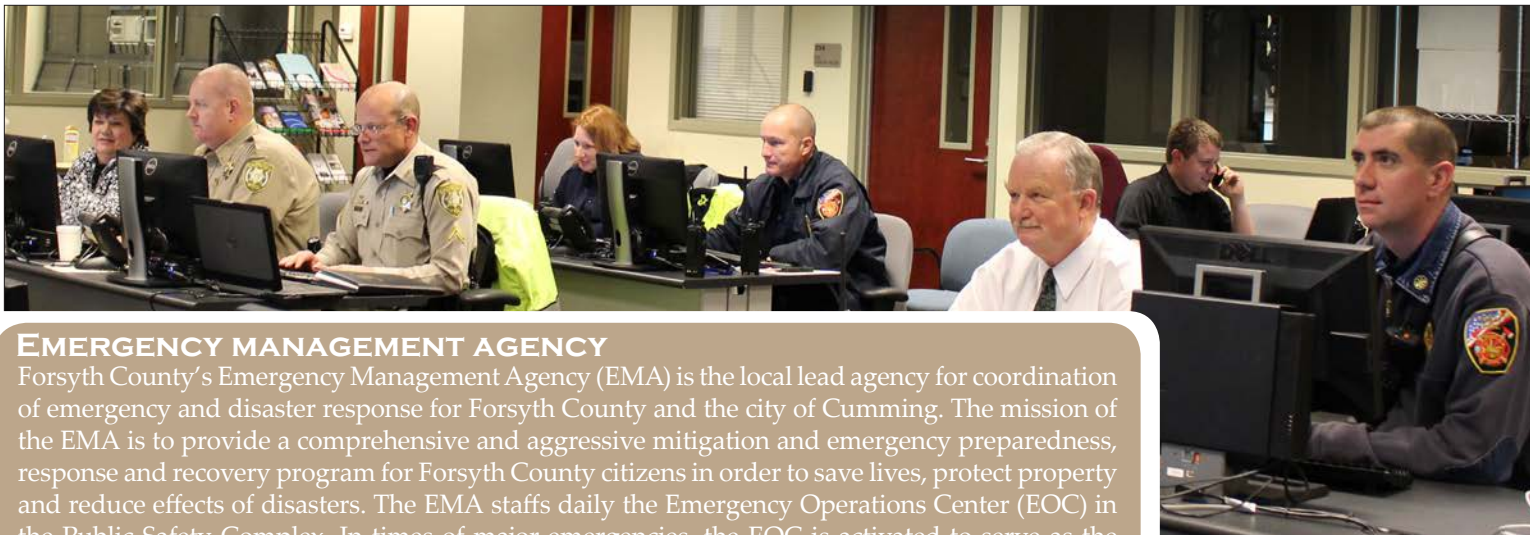


**FIRE ADMINISTRATION**

The Fire Administration Division is supervised by the division chief of fire administration and manages the daily activities of the Fire Department Headquarters including human resources management, budget control and information technology.

**2014 Fire Administration Numbers**

- 1 division chief
- 2 administrative staff



**EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY**

Forsyth County's Emergency Management Agency (EMA) is the local lead agency for coordination of emergency and disaster response for Forsyth County and the city of Cumming. The mission of the EMA is to provide a comprehensive and aggressive mitigation and emergency preparedness, response and recovery program for Forsyth County citizens in order to save lives, protect property and reduce effects of disasters. The EMA staffs daily the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) in the Public Safety Complex. In times of major emergencies, the EOC is activated to serve as the central operations location for critical public safety agencies of Forsyth County.

**Service through Tradition, Excellence, and Integrity**

## FIELD OPERATIONS

The Field Operations Division is supervised by the division chief of field operations and manages all suppression activities and emergency response provided by the department's two battalions and 12 companies.



### **Suppression**

This division is the backbone of the Fire Department. All administration functions of the department ultimately are conducted to support the Suppression Division. This division contains field personnel working in fire stations and responding to the constant requests for assistance from the citizenry. Field personnel are supervised by lieutenants, and lieutenants are supervised by battalion chiefs. Each shift is assigned two battalion chiefs. These officers maintain field personnel records, field payroll and clock times, and command fire scenes and major rescues. All field personnel work on the traditional 24/48-hour schedule. They report to their workstation by 7 a.m. and are in-service working for the citizens for 24 hours. At the end of their shift, they are relieved at 7 a.m. the following morning by the next oncoming shift. Their days off begin and continue for 48 hours. At the end of 48 hours, they return for the next 24-hour shift.

### **Hazardous Materials Unit**

This unit is Forsyth County's first line of defense to the potential ravages of hazardous materials. The unit responds from Fire Station 2 and operates with a full complement of hazardous materials response tools and equipment. These include a fully equipped hazardous materials truck and a decontamination trailer. Fire personnel at Station 2 are registered as hazardous materials technicians and can respond to and mitigate most any hazardous materials incident.

### **Wildland/Urban Interface Unit**

This unit responds out of Fire Station 5 and is responsible for combating wildland and brush fires and incidents where wildland meets urban housing. The unit responds with a specially designed brush truck and has two other brush trucks available in the county for response as needed.

### **Swift Water Rescue Unit**

This unit responds out of Fire Station 15 and is responsible for rescues involving victims trapped in swiftly moving waters. Primary responses of this unit involve the Chattahoochee River south of Buford Dam and fishermen or boaters stranded in the quickly rising waters. This unit responds with a shallow water running swift water rescue boat.

**2014 Field Operations Numbers**

- 1 division chief
- 6 battalion chiefs
- 135 full-time firefighters
- 10 volunteer firefighters

**FIELD OPERATIONS**



**Dive Unit**  
 This unit responds out of Fire Station 15 and is responsible for rescue and recovery involving deep water. The personnel are highly trained in safely searching for and recovering victims of drownings, and they routinely assist law enforcement in the recovery of vehicles from Lake Lanier and surrounding bodies of water. The unit responds with a fully equipped dive van.

**Technical Rescue Unit**  
 This unit responds to highly specialized and detailed rescues involving any number of incidents. The personnel respond out of Fire Station 12 with a heavy rescue vehicle and a technical rescue truck and trailer combination unit. The unit responds to and rescues victims from building collapses, trench collapses, high-angle incidents, confined spaces and many other unusual and dangerous situations.

**Honor Guard**  
 This unit is responsible for honoring fallen public safety professionals and military veterans. Training and services provided are done on a voluntary basis by members of the Fire Department. The Honor Guard responds to many service requests for funerals, flag presentations and parades each year. It is also selected annually to participate in the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation Memorial Weekend at the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, Maryland.

**C.A.R.S. (Children Are Riding Safely)**  
 This unit is the division of the Fire Department that is tasked with providing the public the proper training and expertise to ensure that the children of the community are properly protected while in motor vehicles. The members of this division voluntarily attain the designation of Child Safety Seat Technician and offer free car seat inspections and installation instruction.

**Special Events Unit**  
 This unit is a specially trained and equipped team designed for large crowds and events where there is very little room for vehicle access. The bicycle unit participates in parades and high attendance events at the Cumming Fairgrounds and can be used for response along the Big Creek Greenway. The primary mission is to arrive quickly on the scene of a medical emergency and render aid well before a fire apparatus or ambulance can make access to the patient. The unit consists of six specially designed bicycles each equipped with Basic Life Support medical gear.

**FIRE MARSHAL**

The Fire Marshal’s Office is supervised by the division chief, fire marshal and manages the fire code enforcement, plans review and fire investigations missions of the department.

**Fire Marshal’s Office**

This division contains personnel for building plan review, fire code inspectors and fire investigators. This division plays an integral role in the construction of new buildings and ensuring those structures are built to meet or exceed current fire codes. This division also investigates any fire that is suspicious in nature, unlawfully set or of which the cause cannot be immediately determined.

- 2014 Fire Marshal Numbers**
- 1 division chief, fire marshal
  - 1 deputy fire marshal
  - 1 senior fire inspector
  - 4 fire inspectors
  - 1 senior plans reviewer
  - 1 plans reviewer
  - 2 arson investigators
  - 3 fire prevention training officers
  - 1 administrative specialist



**Public Safety Education**

This division works to educate the public about fire prevention and the dangers of fire, as well as the many services offered to the community by the Fire Department. This division works routinely in local schools and offers fire safety education to any interested party. Additionally, this division installs smoke alarms for elderly and needy citizens and operates the department’s Fire Safety House.

The Forsyth County Fire Department participated in a number of special events during 2014 in an effort to better educate the community and to help prevent fires before they occur. The Junior Fire Academy was a free opportunity for local youth to learn more about the Forsyth County Fire Department and fire and life safety. The fourth annual Forsyth County Fire Safety Poster Contest took place in early 2014 with the winners being recognized in May (see page 26 for details). The Trunk or Treat event continued in 2014 in an effort to educate youth and their parents on the importance of Halloween safety.

Educating community members about fire prevention and the dangers of fire is an important initiative of the Forsyth County Fire Department. In 2014, the Fire Department once again reached thousands of people through its various education programs.

- 22,900+** Adults and children reached with a structured fire safety presentation
- 7,400+** Adults and children reached through safety day programs and the Trunk or Treat event
- 590+** Child safety seat inspections conducted to ensure proper installation
- 450+** Fire safety events
- 930+** Adults trained in the proper use of a fire extinguisher
- 445+** Smoke alarms or batteries in smoke alarms replaced, provided free of charge to senior citizens and residents in need
- 84** School visits
- 14** Events attended by the Fire Safety House, a trailer designed to aid in teaching children what to do in case of a fire in their home

**2014** Technical Services Numbers

- 1 division chief
- 1 EMS coordinator
- 3 motor maintenance staff
- 1 quartermaster
- 2 full-time training staff
- 2 part-time training staff

**TECHNICAL SERVICES**

The Technical Services Division is supervised by the division chief of technical services and manages the emergency medical services, motor maintenance, quartermaster and training missions of the department.

**Emergency Medical Services Coordinator**

This office contains one captain overseeing all medical training and emergency medical services quality control and acting as the department liaison with the county emergency medical transport contractor. The coordinator ensures all Fire Department Basic Life Support (BLS) and Advanced Life Support (ALS) functions follow procedures and maintain state of Georgia requirements. Additionally, the coordinator is designated as the official ambulance service contract administrator for any provider doing business with Forsyth County.



**Motor Maintenance**

Motor Maintenance serves as the critical link keeping the department operable. It consists of three service technicians who ensure all department vehicles are maintained and repaired properly and efficiently. The technicians work out of a four-bay maintenance facility with full automotive and heavy duty truck repair capabilities. They perform all preventative maintenance and overhauling of department equipment including emergency apparatus, staff vehicles and small tools and equipment, and have the ability to perform in-house metal fabrication.

**Quartermaster**

This office is held by one captain serving as the Fire Department supply officer. He ensures the field is supplied with tools and uniforms, and he maintains the stock of supplies for all fire stations and the Fire Department Headquarters. Additionally, the quartermaster acts as the primary point-of-contact for the fire chief on Fire Department facility needs.



**Training**

This division trains personnel in all matters of field suppression and rescue functions. This division consists of two full-time officers and two part-time employees. This division maintains training records and ensures appropriate personnel are up-to-date with technology, methodology and receiving the required number of training hours for their level of expertise.

**STATION 3**



**STATION 7**



**STATION 12**



**STATION 8**



**STATION 4**



**STATION 9**



**STATION 1**



**STATION 5**



**STATION 14**



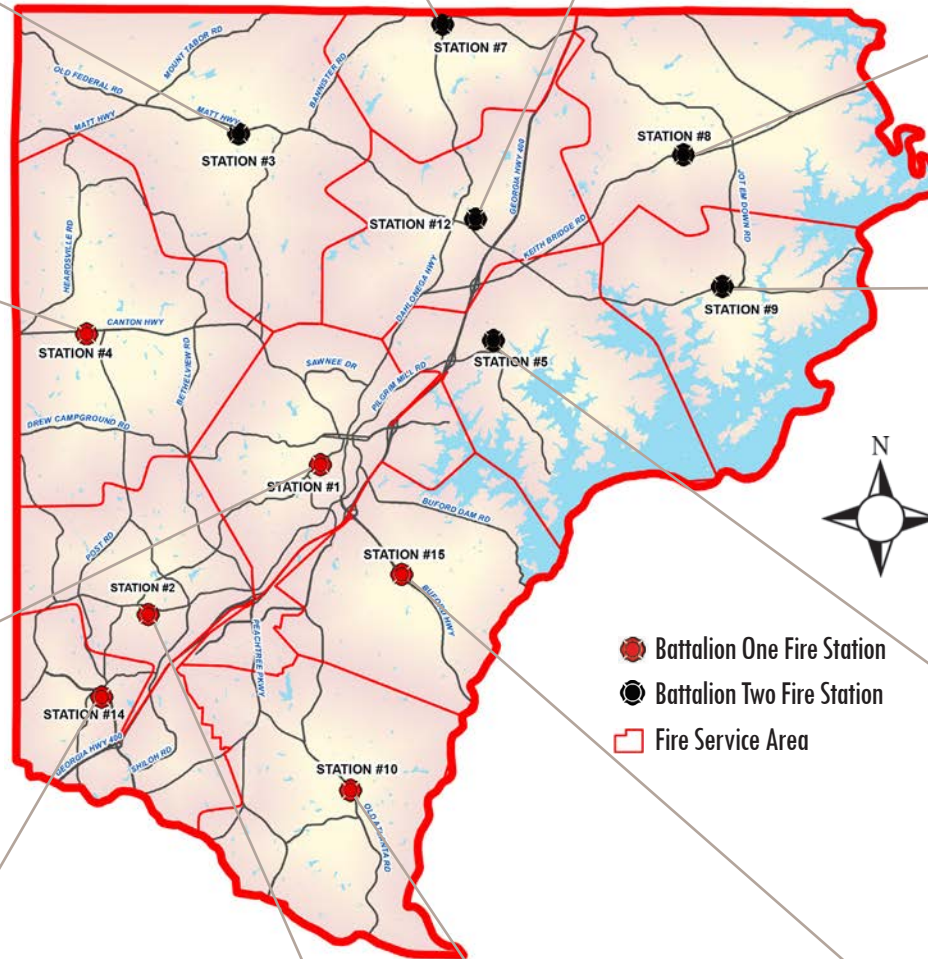
**STATION 2**



**STATION 10**



**STATION 15**



## BATTALION ONE

### STATION 1



- Located on 2.41 acres in downtown Cumming at 234 Castleberry Industrial Drive
- Four double bays
- Opened in 2007
- 24-hour coverage with a minimum of five firefighters
- Houses the Office of the First Battalion, Engine 1, Truck 1 and Med 1
- Constructed using a combination of SPLOST V funds, Impact Fees and General Fund reserves

### STATION 2



- Located on 3.04 acres at 4055 Carolene Way
- Four double bays
- Opened in 2007
- 24-hour coverage with a minimum of three firefighters
- Houses Engine 2, Med 2, Haz-Mat 2 and the Forsyth County Fire Department Hazardous Materials Decontamination Unit
- Constructed using a combination of SPLOST V funds and Impact Fees
- Home of the Forsyth County Fire Department Hazardous Materials Unit

### STATION 4



- Located on 3.32 acres at 3910 Evans Road
- Two double bays
- Opened in 2012
- 24-hour coverage with a minimum of three firefighters
- Houses Engine 4 and Light/Air 4
- Constructed using a combination of SPLOST VI funds and Impact Fees

### STATION 10



- Located on 1.5 acres at 3680 Old Atlanta Road
- Two double bays
- Constructed in 1999, and expected to last through 2020
- 24-hour coverage with a minimum of three firefighters
- Houses Engine 10, Med 10 and Brush Truck 10

### STATION 14



- Located on 1 acre at 800 McFarland Parkway
- Two double bays
- Constructed in 1994, and expected to last through 2019
- 24-hour coverage with a minimum of five firefighters
- Houses Engine 14 and Truck 14
- Received new concrete apron and parking area in 2009
- Received new heating and air conditioning systems, a new septic system and a new bay drainage system in 2011

### STATION 15



- Located on 1 acre at 1525 Buford Highway
- Two double bays
- Constructed in 1999, and expected to last through 2018
- 24-hour coverage with a minimum of three firefighters
- Houses Engine 15, Rescue 15 and the Forsyth County Fire Department Dive and Swift Water Rescue Units' equipment
- Home of the Forsyth County Fire Department Dive Unit and Swift Water Rescue Unit
- Received new concrete apron and parking area in 2009

### BATTALION TWO

### STATION 3



- Located on 3 acres at 6495 Wallace Tatum Road
- Two double bays
- Opened in 2013
- 24-hour coverage with a minimum of three firefighters
- Houses Engine 3, Brush Truck 3 and Med 3
- Constructed using a combination of SPLOST VI funds and Impact Fees

### STATION 5



- Located at 2720 Holtzclaw Road
- Located on 2 acres, of which 1.25 acres are owned by Forsyth County and 0.75 acres is leased from the Forsyth County Board of Education
- Two double bays
- Opened in 2005
- 24-hour coverage with a minimum of three firefighters
- Houses Engine 5, Tanker 5 and Brush Truck 5
- Home of the Forsyth County Fire Department Wildland/Urban Interface Unit



## BATTALION TWO

### STATION 7



- Located at 6320 Dahlonega Highway
- Two double bays
- Opened in 2011
- 24-hour coverage with a minimum of three firefighters
- Houses Engine 7 and Tanker 7
- Constructed using a combination of SPLOST V funds and Impact Fees

### STATION 8



- Located on 0.25 acres at 6015 Keith Bridge Road
- Two single bays
- Constructed by volunteers in 1984, and has far exceeded its life expectancy
- 24-hour coverage with a minimum of three firefighters
- Houses Engine 8
- Plans are to build a new four double-bay Station 8 using a combination of SPLOST funds and Impact Fees; the location will be adjacent to current Station 8 on land purchased in 2014

### STATION 9



- Located on 1 acre at 7385 Browns Bridge Road
- Two double bays
- Constructed by volunteers in 1989, and expected to last through 2017
- 24-hour coverage with a minimum of three firefighters
- Houses Engine 9, Tanker 9 and Med 9
- Current station not designed for 24-hour occupancy

### STATION 12



- Located at 3530 Settingdown Road as part of the Public Safety Complex
- Four double bays
- Opened in 2006
- 24-hour coverage with a minimum of three firefighters
- Houses the Office of the Second Battalion, Engine 12, Rescue 12, Med 12 and the Forsyth County Fire Department Technical Rescue Vehicle
- Home of the Forsyth County Fire Department Technical Rescue Unit

### FIRE HEADQUARTERS



- Located in the Public Safety Complex at 3520 Settingdown Road
- Houses the Office of the Fire Chief, the Fire Marshal's Office, and the divisions of Fire Administration, Field Operations and Technical Services

### TRAINING FACILITY

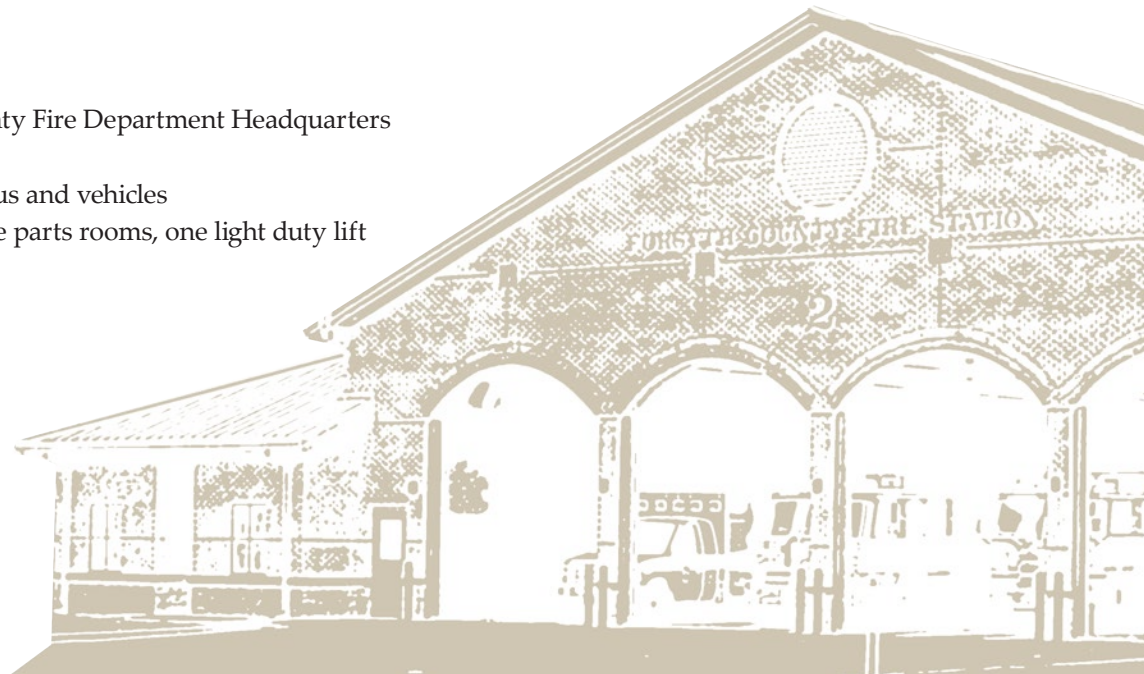


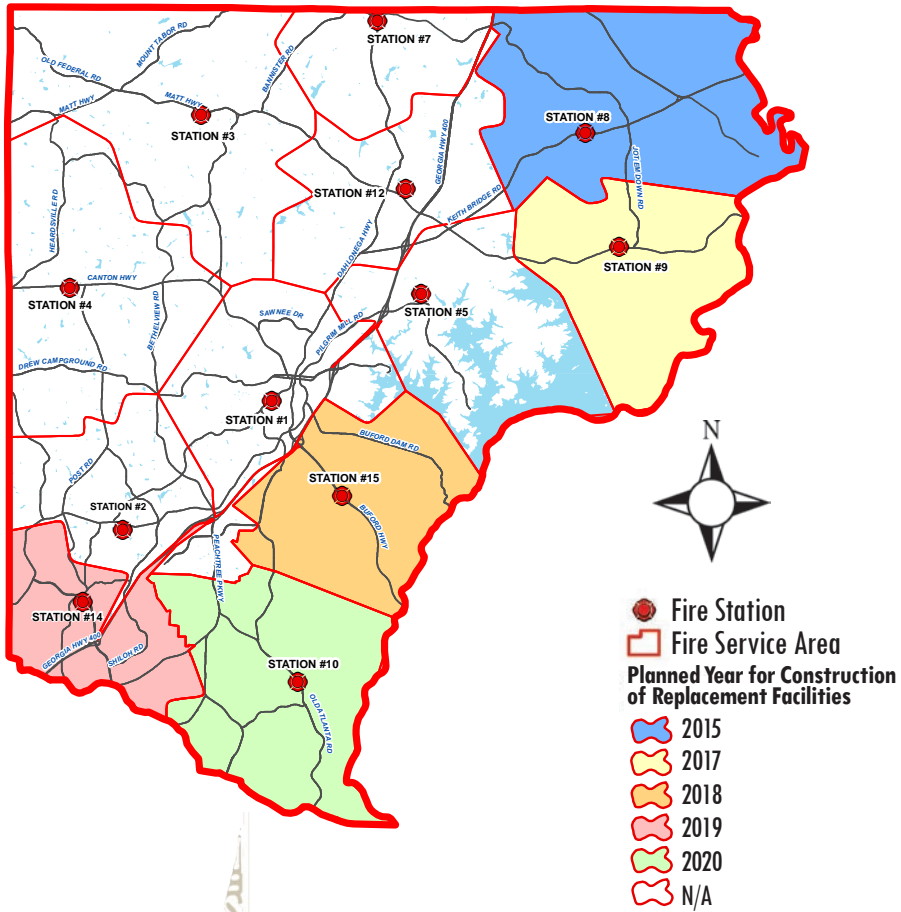
- Located adjacent to the Forsyth County Fire Department Headquarters
- Constructed in phases since the mid-1990s
- Utilized for a variety of fire training programs including fire suppression training, high angle rescue, rope rescue, search and rescue, confined space rescue and roof simulation

### MOTOR MAINTENANCE FACILITY

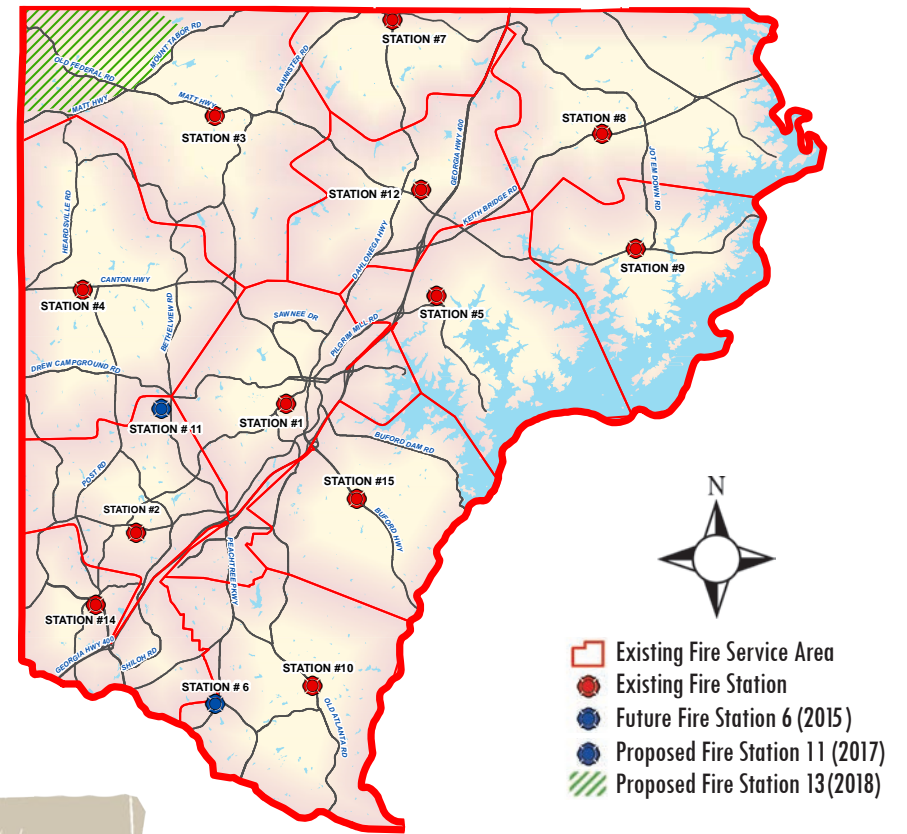


- Located adjacent to the Forsyth County Fire Department Headquarters
- Constructed in the mid-1990s
- Services all Fire Department apparatus and vehicles
- Includes a pump testing facility, three parts rooms, one light duty lift and six heavy truck lifts





ADDITIONAL FACILITIES PLANNED AND PROPOSED



**Preparation**

When the Forsyth County Fire Department is training for operations involving hazardous materials, all trainees are required to be inside the hazmat suit for about 35 minutes comprised of 30 minutes inside the "hot zone" and five minutes during decontamination.



**Box light**

Smoke causes low visibility, making lights a necessity for firefighters. The box light's high intensity LED lights assist firefighters in locating one another and improve safety.

**Other common tools of the trade**

During operations involving hazardous materials, firefighters are required to carry tools to a variety of situations and emergencies. Below is a sampling of tools commonly utilized while on the job.

- Two-way radios
- SCBA (air packs)
- Sampling materials
- HazMat ID 360 (spectrometer used to identify materials)
- Gas monitors/PID
- Flashlights
- Search camera
- Booms and pads (for containing leaks)
- Plug and patch kits (for stopping leaks)

**TOOLS OF THE TRADE**

**Hazmat suit**

A hazardous materials (hazmat) suit is an impermeable whole-body garment worn as protection against hazardous materials. These suits are combined with self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) to ensure the firefighter is provided with filtered, dehumidified, compressed atmospheric air. The hazmat suit can protect against chemical agents through the use of materials like teflon, heavy PVC or rubber. Working in a hazmat suit can be strenuous. As a result, use of the hazmat suit is usually limited to short durations.

**Area RAE**

The Area RAE is a crucial component in hazmat operations. The Area RAE is a wireless multi-gas monitor controlled and read by a laptop computer that can be located up to two miles away. The Area RAE is able to detect CO (Carbon Monoxide), O2 (Oxygen), H2S (Hydrogen Sulfide) and LEL (Combustible).



**A look at the apparatus employed by the Forsyth County Fire Department**

**Engines**



Engines are the basic response unit and the backbone of the department, responding to all incidents. They perform suppression functions, medical response and motor vehicle accident response and extrication duties.

- Twelve staffed engines are in service currently with four reserve units, which go in service when a unit undergoes maintenance.

**Trucks**



These aerial apparatus, sometimes referred to as ladder trucks, are front line units. Two staffed trucks are in service currently.

- Truck 1 is a 2004 Pierce tiller-drawn 100-foot heavy duty ladder with a built-in waterway.
- Truck 14 is a 2012 Pierce tiller-drawn 100-foot heavy duty ladder with a built-in waterway.

**Tankers**



Tankers are used to transport water to scenes that do not have positive water supplies.

- Three 3,000-gallon tankers were put in service in 2007.

**Heavy Rescue**



This unit is used for technical rescue response, heavy extrication and industrial rescues and is equipped with a light mast for nighttime operations.

- One staffed heavy rescue vehicle, a 1994 International, is in service at Fire Station 12.

## SPECIALTY APPARATUS

### Hazardous Materials Truck and Decontamination Unit

Apparatus of the Hazardous Materials Unit respond to any hazardous material incident or scare in Forsyth County.

- One decontamination unit is housed at Fire Station 2 and was purchased using grant funds in 2005.
- In 2009, the Hazardous Materials Unit received a refurbished apparatus redesigned by Fire Department Motor Maintenance. It was converted from an engine to become the primary vehicle, replacing an old truck and trailer vehicle.

### Brush Trucks

Brush trucks are capable of reaching remote areas and areas not easily accessible by fire engines and trucks. They are highly effective vehicles that are smaller and more maneuverable, allowing them to negotiate narrow pathways, off-road trails and golf cart paths. They are equipped with foam capabilities that, in wildland fires, suppress better than water alone.

- Three brush trucks were specially designed and put in service in 2005, one each housed at Fire Stations 3, 5 and 10. While the three units can work in concert on large fires, they are strategically distributed throughout the county to ensure proper coverage of all areas.

### Wildland ATV

The smaller, highly maneuverable wildland ATV assists brush trucks in fighting wildland fires. The ATV's firefighting capabilities can be replaced with a medical response skid unit, enabling it to perform emergency medical transport in off-road environments.

- One wildland ATV, purchased in 2005, is housed at the Fire Station 3 and has a 60-gallon capacity tank with a 60-gallon per minute pump.

### ATV

The versatile ATV assists in responding to medical emergencies or small fires during events in and around the Cumming Fairgrounds, Sawnee Mountain and other locations. This ATV performs these missions well on recreational trails and in crowded, compact environments.

- One ATV, put in service in 2011, is housed at Fire Station 1.

### Swift Water Rescue Boat

The Forsyth County Fire Department was honored in 2010 to receive \$20,000 toward the purchase of a swift water rescue boat, which allows for effective operations in shallow and quickly moving waters.

- The swift water rescue boat is stationed at Fire Station 15, which is home to the Swift Water Rescue Unit.

### Dive Van

The dive van is utilized by the Dive Unit for all dive rescue and recovery operations.

- One dive van is housed at Fire Station 15 and was put in service in 2006.

### Technical Rescue Vehicle

The Technical Rescue Unit's primary vehicle is a truck and trailer combination unit containing the tools and equipment necessary to perform extremely dangerous and complicated rescues and recoveries. This rescue vehicle responds to manufacturing, construction and storm-related incidents resulting in injury and will be on-site of any disastrous occurrence where life is or could be at stake. It is capable of supporting high-angle, confined space, trench collapse and structural collapse operations as well as accomplishing the urban search and rescue mission of the department. The truck portion of the unit is detachable and used to transport personnel and supplies into areas requiring off-road capability. This need is common on construction sites and during utility right-of-way construction.

- This unit is in service at Fire Station 12.

### Special Events Unit Bicycles

The bicycles of the Special Events Unit are specially designed for emergency medical response. They are ruggedized tools designed for the demanding rigors of public safety and require operators who are specially trained for this unit's mission.

### Mini Ambulance

The gas-powered mini-ambulance is specifically designed as a lightweight vehicle for emergency medical response along the Big Creek Greenway and within the Fowler Park complex.

- One mini ambulance, put in service in 2012, is housed at Fire Station 2.



The Forsyth County Fire Department 2014 budget was \$17,783,149. The Fire Department’s primary funding source is the Fire Department millage rate. Additionally, funds from both Impact Fees and the Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) provide the department funding for special projects and capital purchases.



**Millage Rate**

The Fire Department is funded by a separate property tax, or millage rate, rather than through the use of Forsyth County’s General Fund resources. The Fire Department’s 2014 millage rate was 1.975. Forsyth County’s millage rates continue to be among the lowest in the metro Atlanta area.

FORSYTH COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT MILLAGE RATE				
2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
1.975	1.975	1.975	1.975	1.975

**Impact Fees**

The Fire Department also receives funding from the county’s Impact Fee program. Impact Fees are a charge on development to pay for the construction or expansion of capital improvements that are necessitated by and benefit the development. Forsyth County’s Impact Fee program began in January 2004 and, as of December 31, 2014, has collected \$8,627,095.25 for the Fire Department. These funds can only be used to construct capital facilities such as fire stations or to purchase capital firefighting equipment.

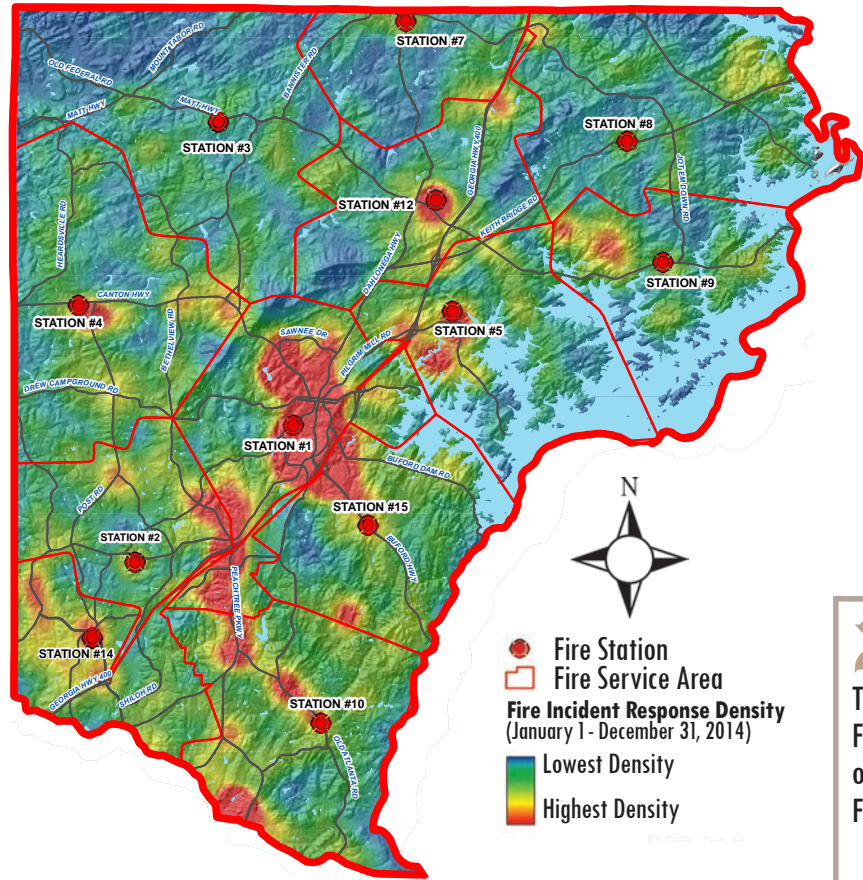
**SPLOST**

Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) is a one-percent county sales tax used to fund capital projects such as buildings and other public facilities. The current SPLOST program, SPLOST VII, was approved by Forsyth County voters in November 2011 and went into effect July 1, 2013. The SPLOST VII program anticipates \$3.9 million in funding for scheduled fire apparatus replacement.



STATISTICAL PAGE

FIRE INCIDENT HOT SPOTS

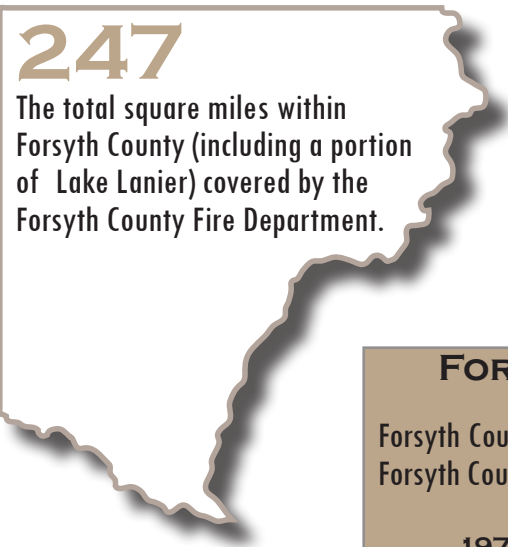


**32**

The number of events attended by the Forsyth County Fire Department Honor Guard in 2014. The Honor Guard responds to requests for funerals, flag presentations and parades throughout the year.

**110**

The total weight (in pounds) of a firefighter's protective gear and equipment. When the gear becomes wet, the total weight can be much more. It is therefore imperative a firefighter remains in top physical condition.



**FORSYTH COUNTY POPULATION THROUGH THE YEARS**

Forsyth County has experienced phenomenal growth since the Forsyth County Fire Protection Committee was created in 1972.

CENSUS TOTALS*	
1970: 16,928	2010: 175,511
1980: 27,958	2012: 187,928
1990: 44,083	2013: 195,405
2000: 98,407	2014: 204,302

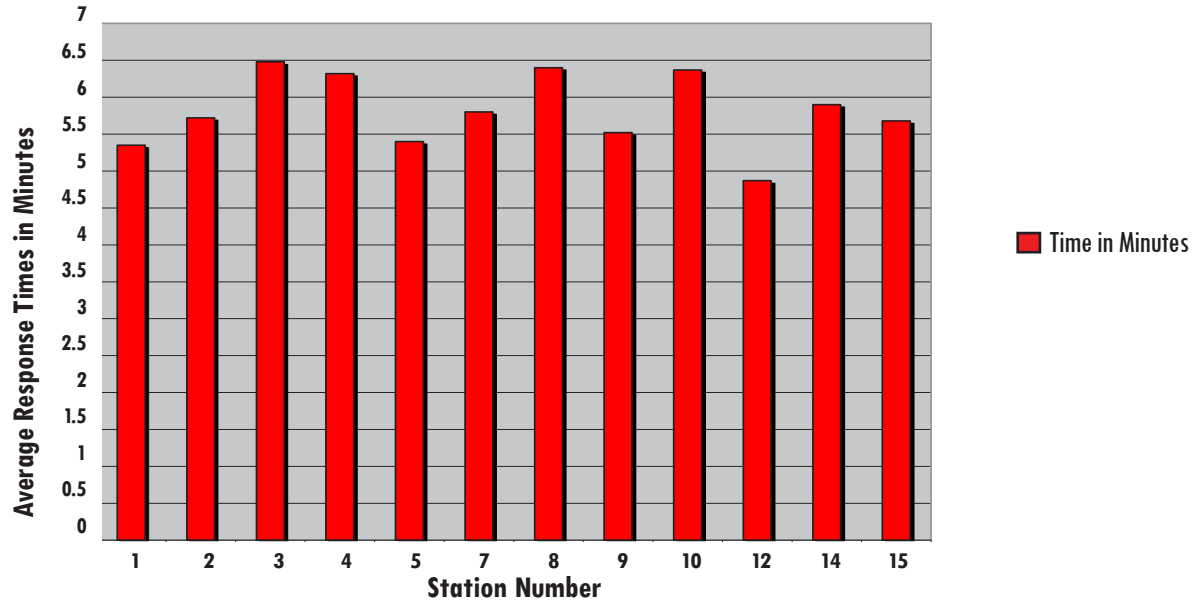
\*Source: U.S. Census Bureau

**560**

The number of hours of training before a recruit graduates to become a probationary firefighter. Throughout their careers, firefighters must continually train to maintain the highest level of preparedness.



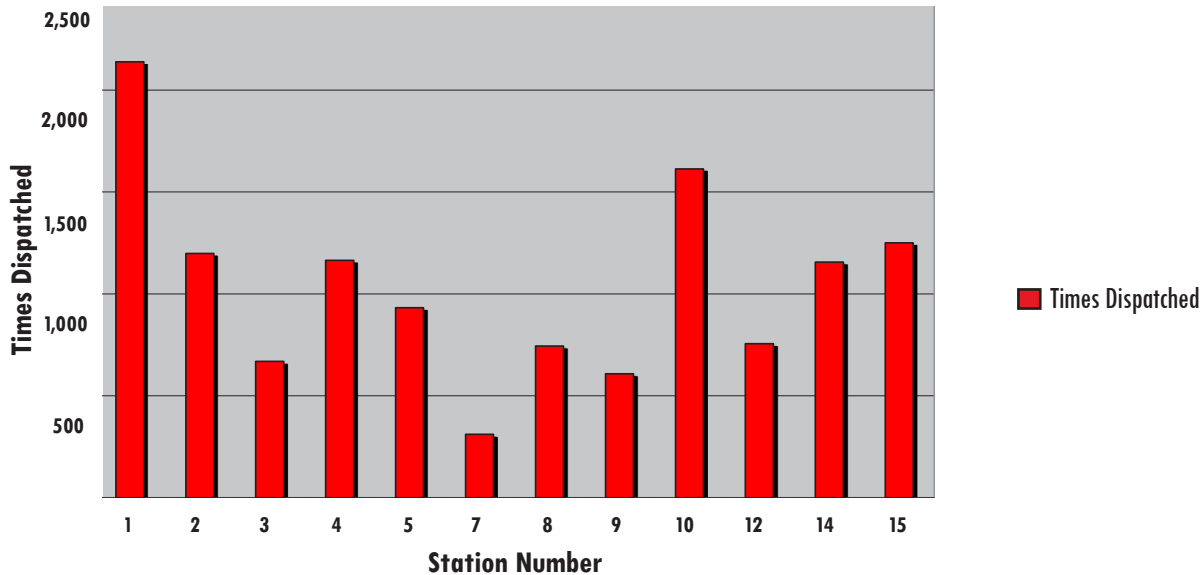
AVERAGE RESPONSE TIMES BY STATION IN 2014



The Forsyth County Fire Department’s 2014 average response time for on-scene arrival was six minutes and 42 seconds.\* Fire station response times vary as a result of travel distances and other factors. In 2015, the department will continue to evaluate response times and seek ways to improve service to the community.

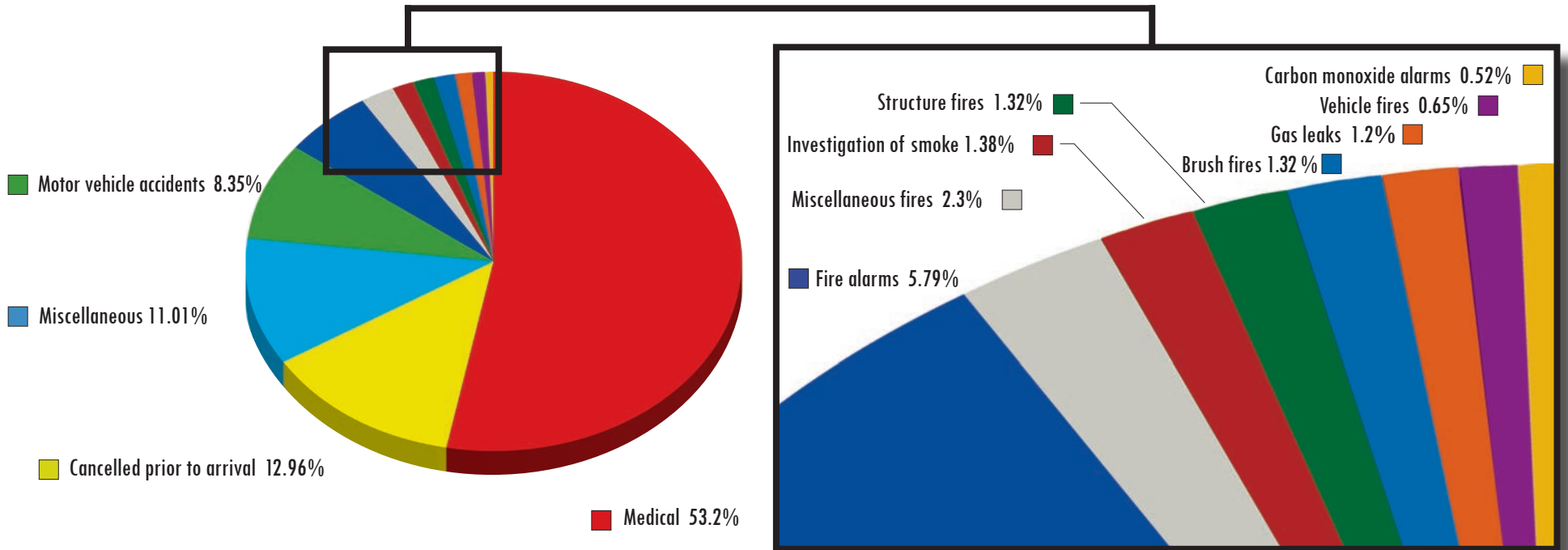
\*Source: Forsyth County Fire Department Research Library

NUMBER OF TIMES DISPATCHED BY STATION IN 2014

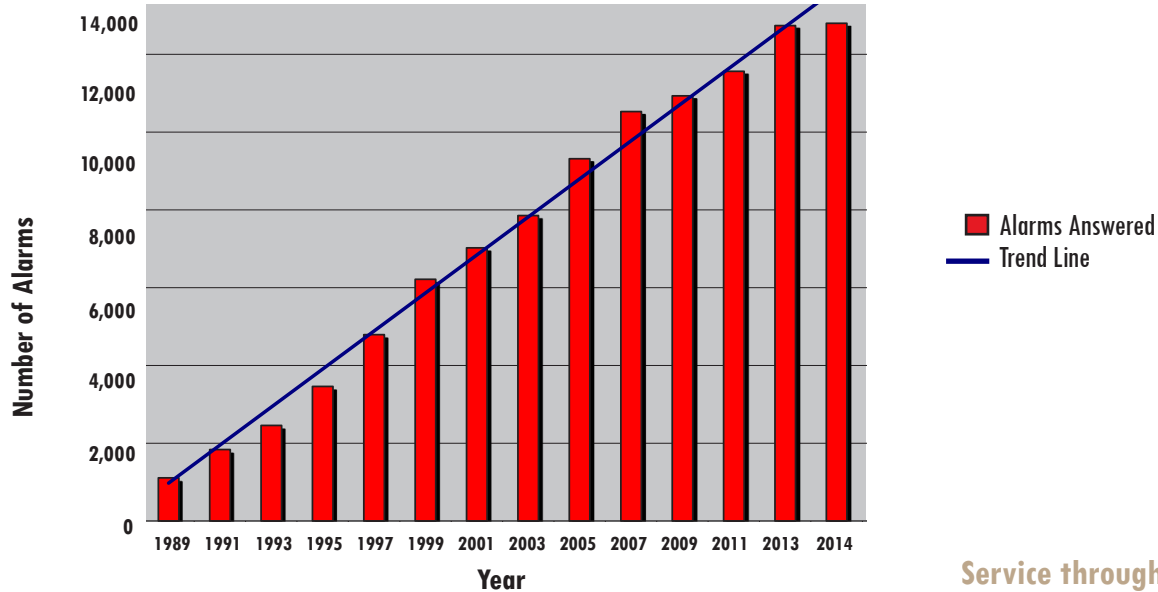




RESPONSES BY INCIDENT TYPE IN 2014



ALARMS ANSWERED BY YEAR



In 2014, the Fire Department responded to 12,799 incidents. The total number of Fire Department emergency apparatus movements (a movement is any time an apparatus is dispatched from a station) was 15,338. As is evident, the demand for the county's emergency fire services has grown steadily over the years and this pattern of growth is expected to continue.



### Department Personnel Participate in Senior Services' Prom

Members of the Forsyth County Fire Department and Forsyth County Sheriff's Office participated in a "Senior Prom" event in February at the Sexton Hall Enrichment Center. The event was hosted by Forsyth County Senior Services and coordinated by Girl Scout Sarah Bock.

### Department Graduates Recruit Class

The Forsyth County Fire Department graduated its first of two recruit classes in 2014 in a ceremony held April 18 at the Forsyth County Central Park Recreation Center. The members of the 2014 Recruit Class #1 were Jarred Andrews, John Crump, Justin Rogers, Miguel Salazar and John Underwood, III.

The journey of the five graduating recruits began in the fall of 2013, when the department began the application process for the class. The recruits braved 14 weeks of comprehensive firefighter instruction and drills including training on truck and engine company operations, structural fire control, firefighting foam operations, fire hose testing, reading smoke, interior search and rescue, mayday self-rescue, vehicle extrication, hazardous materials awareness and operations, flammable and combustible liquids fire control, combustible/non-combustible building construction, pressurized container fire control, Rapid Intervention Crew operations, public utilities gas/electric safety, and terrorism awareness. Each recruit completed more than 560 hours of certified fire training preparing them to be Forsyth County firefighters.

### Fire Safety Poster Contest Held for Fourth Year

The Forsyth County Fire Department held its fourth Fire Safety Poster Contest by inviting all local third grade students to display their artistic talents while promoting a commitment to fire safety. The three winners were: Diego Martinez, a student at Brookwood Elementary School; Aubrey Chester, a student at Sawnee Elementary School; and Akshur Raghuram, a student at Brookwood Elementary School. The three runners up were: Gibson McGee, a student at Whitlow Elementary School; Makayla Peacock, a student at Matt Elementary School; and Lainey Bayush, a student at Matt Elementary School. The six students had the honor of having their artwork displayed in county buildings and were recognized during the May 1 meeting of the Forsyth County Board of Commissioners.

### Annual Boot Drive Fundraiser Raises More Than \$22,000

The generosity of the community was once again overwhelming as the Forsyth County Fire Department's 2014 Boot Drive generated more than \$22,000 to support the Georgia Firefighters Burn Foundation and local fire safety and burn prevention programs. The event was held on three consecutive Saturdays in May and was part of the "Give Burns the Boot"® boot drive. The Forsyth County Fire Department received 10 percent of the funds raised for use toward fire safety and burn prevention programs in the community.



## 2014 YEAR IN REVIEW

### Memorial Day Ceremony Held in Cumming

The Forsyth County Fire Department Honor Guard participated in the May 26 Memorial Day Ceremony on Veterans Memorial Boulevard in Cumming.

### Fourth Annual Junior Fire Academy Held

In June, the Forsyth County Fire Department hosted the fourth annual Junior Fire Academy for local youth. The programs provided attendees the opportunity to experience the different aspects of being a career firefighter. The Junior Fire Academy was held at the Fire Department Headquarters on Settingdown Road.

### Department Participates in Safety Town

The Forsyth County Fire Department participated in the instruction of 240 young children in important safety tips during several Safety Town camps hosted by Forsyth County Parks and Recreation in June and July. Safety Town teaches children about safety awareness and preventive safety measures.

### Participation in Fire/EMS Safety Week

The Forsyth County Fire Department participated in the 2014 Fire/EMS Safety, Health and Survival Week (Safety Week) during the week of June 15. Safety Week is an event sponsored by the International Association of Fire Chiefs and the International Association of Fire Fighters. The annual event aims to improve firefighter safety and health to give all a better chance of survival in emergencies and in the long-term. Fire departments across the U.S. and Canada took time during the week to go over the messages and resources to help achieve that goal.

### Independence Day Parade

The Forsyth County Fire Department once again took part in the city of Cumming's annual Independence Day parade.

### Fire Department Puts Three New Engines in Service

In August, the Fire Department welcomed into its fleet three new Pierce fire engines. Engines are the basic response unit and the backbone of the department, responding to all incidents. Engines perform suppression functions, medical response, and motor vehicle accident response and extrication duties. The new engines are housed at Fire Station 1 on Castleberry Industrial Drive in downtown Cumming; Fire Station 10 on Old Atlanta Road in south Forsyth County; and Fire Station 12 on Settingdown Road in north Forsyth County.

Funding for the new engines came from the Fire Department budget and the department's reserve funds. The new units replaced aging engines which are now a part of the department's reserve fleet. Reserve apparatus are temporarily called into service while front-line units undergo any required maintenance.





### **Fire Department Hosts Inaugural Session of Citizens' Fire Academy**

In September, the Forsyth County Fire Department invited citizens interested in learning more about Forsyth County's fire and emergency services to sign up for a free 10-week Citizens' Fire Academy. Participants in the new program learned about the variety of services offered by the Fire Department, learned about fire and firefighting equipment, and interacted with first responders, gaining an inside look into the profession of firefighters.

### **Fire Department Remembers 13th Anniversary of September 11**

The Forsyth County Fire Department held a brief ceremony remembering and honoring those lost on September 11, 2001. The ceremony was held at the Forsyth County Public Safety Complex.

### **Honor Guard Invited to National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Weekend**

The Forsyth County Fire Department Honor Guard was once again invited to play a critical role during the 33rd Annual National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Weekend October 11-12 at the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, Maryland. The Honor Guard members served in a variety of capacities, including serving as family escorts and logistics officers. The annual event pays tribute to fallen firefighters from throughout the United States.

### **Department Takes Part in Halloween Safety Event**

Personnel from the Forsyth County Fire Department, 911 Center and Forsyth County Sheriff's Office joined together October 25 for the Trunk or Treat event at Forsyth County's Coal Mountain Park in an effort to promote a safe Halloween season and fire safety.

### **Honor Guard Participates in Veterans Day Ceremony**

The Forsyth County Fire Department Honor Guard participated in the Veterans Day Ceremony held in downtown Cumming on November 9.

### **Fire Department Conducts First Smoke Alarm Blitz**

In November, Fire Department personnel teamed up with Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) members to conduct a smoke alarm blitz in a local community. The smoke alarm blitz offered residents an opportunity to have a member of the Fire Department review the smoke alarms in their homes. For residents who were interested in participating, Fire Department personnel checked to ensure there were at least two working smoke alarms in each home. If alarms were not installed or not working properly, they installed battery-operated alarms free of charge.

### **Fire Department Receives Grant for Devices for Hearing Impaired**

Grant funding enabled the Forsyth County Fire Department to provide important safety devices to hearing impaired residents. The 2014 Chesney Fallen Firefighters Memorial Grant Award of \$3,000 funded the purchase of smoke alarms and fire alarms/clocks with bed shakers, all specially designed for the hearing impaired.



## Fire Department Lines Up for Christmas Parade

Fire Department personnel and apparatus took part in the annual Cumming Christmas Parade, held December 6 on Market Place Boulevard.

## Department Presents Awards to Personnel

In a ceremony held Friday, December 12, the Forsyth County Fire Department presented a number of awards to personnel. Family, friends and Fire Department staff attended the ceremony, which was held in the auditorium at North Forsyth High School. The Fire Department presented 39 Life Saved and 16 Unit Citation awards to Fire Department personnel in recognition of outstanding actions over the past several years. Three personnel received the Medal of Honor for a rescue from a burning home in December 2013. Tracy Boone, the person rescued from that fire, presented the awards to the recipients after addressing the crowd.

## Department Promotes Personnel, Graduates EMT and Recruit Classes

During the December 12 ceremony, the Forsyth County Fire Department promoted personnel to a variety of positions, graduated its first ever in-house EMT class and also graduated its second recruit class of 2014.

In the promotional portion of the event, Fire Lieutenant Shane Milford was formally promoted to the rank of captain, volunteer coordinator, and Firefighter/EMT Christopher Black was promoted to the rank of fire lieutenant.

During the event, the Fire Department graduated its first emergency medical technician (EMT) class. The six-month class was the first offered by the department, and provided current personnel the opportunity to earn their EMT certification. The EMT graduates were: John Allen, Scott Chadwick, Glen Everett, Matthew Harris, Kevin Lindsey, Clint Lively, Scott Madsen, Brandon Nash, Wyatt Nix, Darrell Phillips, Scott Sibenaller, Timothy Smallwood, Christopher Warren and Benjamin Wilson.

In the graduation portion of the ceremony, 11 recruits were officially welcomed as Forsyth County firefighters. The graduates were: Patrick Allingham, Casey Cannon, Hanna Coleman, Anthony Harris, Terron Harris, Dustin Jurceka, Alexander Lofton, Ruben Ponce, Tyler Scott, Grant Shumate and Randall Wright.

## Aerial's House

The Fire Department's annual Aerial's House toy collection brightened the holidays for more than 2,000 local children in need. Generous donations from the community helped make Christmas possible for children who may otherwise not have received any gifts. Aerial's House also resulted in the donation of 120 pounds of canned and dry food.



The American fire service is steeped in traditions, many of which date back hundreds of years. Below are descriptions of just several of these traditions which are carried on by the Forsyth County Fire Department, even today.

### The Maltese Cross

The Maltese Cross is a symbol of protection, signifying that the firefighter wearing it is willing to lay down his or her life for you, just as the crusaders sacrificed their lives for their fellow man many years ago. When a courageous band of crusaders known as the Knights of St. John fought the Saracens for possession of the holy land, they encountered a new weapon unknown to European warriors. It was a simple but horrible device of war that wrought excruciating pain and agonizing death upon the brave fighters for the cross. That weapon was fire. As the crusaders advanced on the walls of the city, they were struck by glass bombs containing naphtha. When they became saturated with the highly flammable liquid, the Saracens hurled a flaming torch into their midst. Hundreds of knights were burned alive; others risked their lives to save their brothers-in-arms from dying painful, fiery deaths. Thus, these men became the first firefighters. Their heroic efforts were recognized by fellow crusaders who awarded



each a badge of honor – a cross similar to the one firefighters wear today. As the Knights of St. John lived close to four centuries on an island in the Mediterranean Sea named Malta, the cross came to be referred to as the Maltese Cross. Today it continues to serve as a firefighter's badge of honor.

Like virtually every other fire department in the United States, the Forsyth County Fire Department has, from our earliest existence, incorporated the Maltese Cross into our department identifications. Currently, the heart of our department patch is the Maltese Cross with the tools of our trade and the year of establishment inlaid over it. This same patch with the Maltese Cross adorns the doors of all of our fire apparatus so as to allow for easy recognition of the equipment by the public and giving us the traditional link to those brave crusaders with whom we proudly share our lineage.

### Red Fire Engines

The true history behind why fire engines are red is actually somewhat of a mystery. Several stories exist and the reality may be that the tradition of red fire engines is based on a piece of many of them. Some say the early volunteer fire companies might have chosen red so as to distinguish them from competing companies. Other theories suggest that red was once a very expensive color to produce in paint so communities chose red to show their pride in their fire equipment by spending as much money to adorn them as they could. Still other possibilities indicate red was chosen because it was believed to attract more attention and make the early fire engines more visible when responding to alarms. Regardless, red has become known as the color that traditionally adorns the equipment of the American fire service.

While other colors are oftentimes seen in America's fire houses, Forsyth County, being a department that takes deep pride in our traditional roots, has always chosen to retain the expected color of red. However, one will note that our fire apparatus fleet is actually two-tone with our fire engines and ladder trucks being painted white over red. This provides for the traditional red paint that is easily recognizable during the day while also incorporating a white more visible during conditions of low light.



### Bagpipes

Irish and Scottish roots run deep in the American fire service and thus the common sight of bagpipes at a fire service event. As early northeastern American cities began to convert from volunteer to paid fire departments in the 19th century, the job of firefighter was oftentimes seen as a lowly one. Because of its lack of prestige and its low pay, the job of firefighter tended to attract unskilled immigrant labor, most often that of those from Ireland and Scotland. Within a few short generations of the job becoming a family affair, the American fire service had taken on a distinctly Irish and Scottish flair. Accordingly, the bagpipes as a common instrument and one that by its nature produces a mournful song, became a common sight at funerals and parades of firefighters. That tradition has only grown, to today be synonymous with the American fire service.



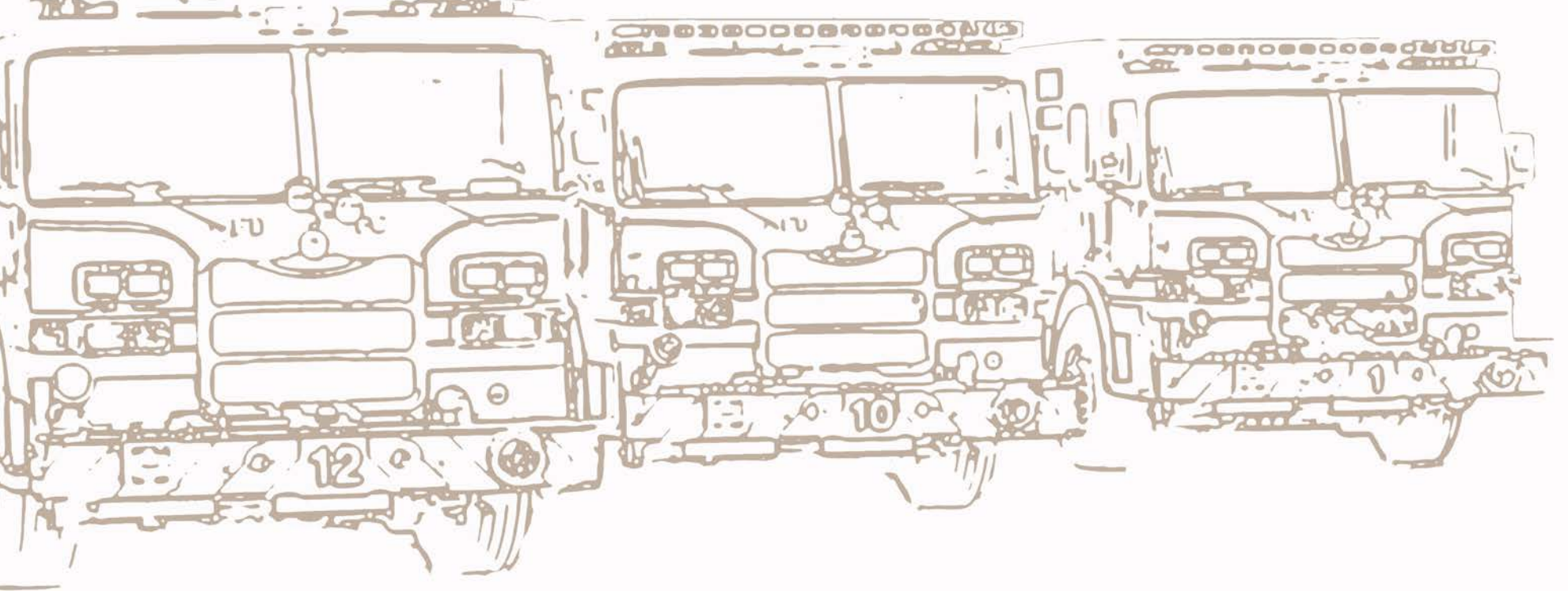
Bagpipes seemingly play to the very depths of a firefighter's soul tugging at the strings that provide our family lineage to the men who laid the foundation of the American fire service. From joyous celebrations and parades to memorials and somber funeral processions, the haunting sound of bagpipes are frequently heard at events involving the Forsyth County Fire Department. By far the most commonly requested component of a funeral, bagpipes are almost guaranteed to play the last song as a local firefighter is laid to rest.



The original Forsyth County Fire Department patch was adopted more than 30 years ago and served the Fire Department until being decommissioned in the summer of 2004. With the naming of Danny D. Bowman as fire chief in July 2003, a committee was designated to explore and design a new patch for the department. The work of the committee resulted in the current patch design.

Several symbolic elements exist in the current patch. The American flag in the upper left corner represents the patriotism and the pride of Forsyth County firefighters in being dedicated public servants. The black field in the lower half of the patch represents mourning and remembering the loss of fellow public safety professionals. The department has experienced three line-of-duty deaths since its inception. Additionally, the Maltese Cross incorporates the tools and symbols of the modern Forsyth County Fire Department and the services provided.





**“WE LOVE THIS JOB, WE ALL DO. WHAT A BLESSING IT IS!  
IT’S A DIFFICULT, DIFFICULT JOB, BUT GOD CALLS YOU TO DO  
IT AND INDEED, HE GIVES YOU A LOVE FOR IT  
SO THAT A DIFFICULT JOB WILL BE WELL DONE.”**

**– *FDNY CHAPLAIN FATHER MYCHAL JUDGE*  
SEPTEMBER 10, 2001**



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