



A message from the Fire Chief

This is the first of what I hope will be at least an annual newsletter to let you know what is happening in the Petersham Fire Department. It also gives us an opportunity to pass along fire safety and prevention tips to all of our citizens. This newsletter also includes rules governing open burning and the procedures to obtain an open burning permit.

Over the past year your fire department has acquired or replaced several pieces of equipment that will allow us to serve you better. A Thermal Imaging Camera was purchased with funding provided by the State Firefighters Safety Grant program and with donations made by the Petersham Grange and the local Firefighters' Association. This provides the department with space age technology that we might not otherwise have been able to avail ourselves of, because of the cost of the equipment. With funding approved at the annual Town Meeting the department has replaced 4 obsolete breathing air packs with new units, purchased an automatic defibrillator, and purchased an additional 1,000 feet of large diameter hose.

During the fall we were able to acquire a replacement rescue vehicle at no cost to the town to replace the truck that had been in service over the past several years. Although this *new* vehicle is only one year newer than what it replaces, it is much more mechanically and structurally sound. We would like to thank the Phillipston Firefighters Association for their generosity in donating this vehicle to us.

In addition to the state grant program mentioned above, we also applied for funding through the Federal Firefighters Safety and Equipment Program. Although we were unsuccessful in obtaining funding through this grant for either of our requests, our proposal did survive through nine of the twelve rounds of request reviews before our application was denied.

The fire department is always interested in recruiting new people to join the department. If you are interested in becoming a member of the department, you can contact me at home, or call and leave a message at the fire station (724-3371). The department holds regular meetings on the first and third Wednesdays of the month. Most training is provided in house, but some additional training may be required outside of regular training meetings.

I would also like to invite any townspeople to visit the fire station and see the equipment that we have available to us. I would be more than happy to give tours at any time.

I hope that you all find this newsletter informative.

Sincerely,
Dana Robinson
Fire Chief

Engine 2

Our newest Engine is a 2000 KME pumper that was put into service in August 2000. It was approved for purchase at the 1999 Town Meeting and cost \$172,500.

It replaced the 1972 Ford that served the town well for nearly 30 years. The new pumper carries 1,000 gallons of water, 1500 feet of large diameter hose, has a pumping capacity of 1,250 gallons per minute, and carries other fire equipment.



Rescue

In December our members put our "new" Rescue Truck into service. It is a 1977 Chevy (converted ambulance) that was given to us by the Phillipston Firefighters Association when their department bought a new vehicle.

It replaces the 1976 Ford Rescue that our firefighters' association had purchased from Barre a number of years ago.



Rescue (retired) Rescue (new)

Defibrillator in Service

Town Meeting voters in June 2001 approved money to buy a Automatic Defibrillator for the Fire Department.

The defibrillator is used when someone's heart stops. The shock from the defibrillator many times can get a heart that is in "fibrillation" to re-start.

There is now a defibrillator in both police cruisers and the Rescue Truck. There are 22 firefighters and police officers that are trained in how to use the new equipment.

By having a unit in the Rescue Truck and in the Police Cars, there is one available at fire scenes for the firefighters, and also one available if both police cars are tied up at another call if a medical emergency happens.



Deputy Chiefs Larry Costa and Bob Laford with the new D-fib unit.

Brush Burning Season

Brush burning season in Massachusetts is from **January 15 to May 1** (weather permitting).

Each day you wish to burn brush, you must call the Burning Permit Number at the dispatch center **(508) 867-1066** to receive permission to burn.

You may only burn brush and forestry debris. The burning laws forbid the burning of trash, lumber, building materials, grass, hay, leaves, and stumps.

All open burning to be conducted :

- With a permit for that day
- On land proximate to the place of generation;
- At a location greater than 75 feet from any building;
- Between 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. and;
- The Permit Holder *MUST BE* present until the fire is out.

Members of the Petersham Fire Department

Fire Chief

Dana Robinson

Assistant Fire Chief

Ron DeJackome

Deputy Fire Chiefs

Larry Costa

Robert Laford

Captains

Larry Robinson

Jon Costa

Firefighters

Tim Clark

Dana Cooley

Odin Forgues

Bob Goodfellow

Gil King, Jr.

Bob Legare

Becky Legare

Shawn Legare

Rich Nicoletti

David Perkins

Jeff Perkins

Kevin Shortis

Curtis Upshaw

Mason Warrington

Peter West

Junior Firefighters

Shawn Clukey

Rich O'Leary

Public Safety Grant

After the tragic fire at the Worcester Cold Storage Building on December 3, 1999, the State Legislature appropriated monies to be used for Public Safety Grants for local fire departments in Massachusetts.

The primary focus of this grant was to offer community fire departments money to purchase safety equipment that may not otherwise be available to the department.

With the grant money and donations from the Petersham Grange, and the Firefighters' Association, the department was able to purchase a **Thermal Imaging Camera**.

This camera allows firefighters to search for people in smoky environments as well as search for fires inside walls and areas where firefighters have not gained access.

The camera is another example of how technologies have improved, and your local fire department has been able to use that technology.

Fire Department Training

Even though Petersham is a small town and has a limited number of emergency calls each year, a fire burns the same and has the same hazards in a small town like Petersham as it does in a large town or city. Our firefighters must have training and develop skills needed to answer a variety of emergency situations just as full time firefighters do in the larger communities. Each year, our department members give countless hours of their time in training to provide Petersham with quality emergency response. Below is a number of training topics that the firefighters will be participating in during 2002.

- Auto Extrication
- Breathing Apparatus
- Building Tours
- CPR and Defibrillator
- Emergency Communications
- Fire Tactics
- First Responder Medical Training
- Hazardous Materials Response
- Ladder Training
- Pumps and Hoselines
- Sprinkler Training
- Vehicle Operation
- Water Rescue

The people of Petersham have always been very supportive of the efforts made by the Fire Department and the members of the department are grateful for this support.

With changes in technology and this support (from the 2001 town meeting) the department was able to begin a program to replace older breathing apparatus. \$10,000 was appropriated and four new breathing units were purchased to replace units that were nearing 30 years old.

The new technology is much lighter weight, easier to use, and will provide the firefighters with modern state-of-the-art equipment.

We hope to continue the replacement program over the next few years to up-date all the breathing apparatus used by the fire department.



Firefighter Becky Legare wearing her fire gear and one of the new breathing units.

Prevent Candle Fires Follow the Candle Circle of Safety

Here are some tips on Candle safety from Massachusetts State Fire Marshal Stephen Coan

Burn candles inside a one foot circle of safety, an area free of anything that could come in contact with the flame and burn.

Use candles in the center of an area one-foot in diameter free of anything that could burn, such as decorations, curtains that could blow around, other items on a table or bureau. Use a sturdy metal, glass or ceramic container.

Stay in the same room with burning candles; never leave them burning unattended.

Most candle fires start when they are left burning unattended. Don't leave a candle burning out of your sight or when you fall asleep at night.

Use candles out of reach of children and pets

Many candle fires are started when pets knock them over, or when children touch or play with them.

Keep all matches and lighters out of reach of children.

Store in a high cabinet, preferably a locked one. You wouldn't leave a loaded gun lying around and a lighter can be just as dangerous in a child's hand.

Teach everyone in the family the rules of safe candle use.

Children, teenagers, grown-ups and older adults should know the rules of safe candle use.

Candle fires have tripled in Massachusetts over the past decade!

Candle use has risen greatly in the past decade, but unfortunately so have candle fires. They have more than tripled in Massachusetts in the past ten years.

Candles have become one of the leading causes of fire deaths in the home in this state.

Several people are killed, usually in their own homes, from candle fires each year.

**PREVENT Candle Fires
Follow the Circle of Safety**



Home First Aid Tips

If you come across someone who has been out in the cold environment, here are some signs & symptoms of frostbite and hypothermia to look for:

Frostbite:

- Areas of skin may look white, waxy, gray, flushed, yellow, or bluish.
- Affected area has a dull ache, tingles, or is numb
- Affected area no longer feels cold to the person- possibly followed by a warm feeling

Hypothermia:

- Reduced and/or shallow breathing
- Severe shivering
- Clumsiness, lack of coordination
- Pupils do not respond to light
- Skin is cold or pale
- Numbness
- Confusion and Drowsiness

First aid for a person with frostbite and/or hypothermia:

Activate 911. If you can't get professional help, shelter the person from the cold and move the person to a warmer place. Remove any constricting jewelry and wet clothing. Heat some water to 104 to 109 degrees, and place the affected area into the water until it looks red or flushed and is no longer cold to the touch. Do not leave affected area in the water longer than this. (If you don't have water, place frostbitten fingers snugly under your armpits or on your stomach.).

Apply dry, sterile dressing to the frostbitten areas. Put dressings between frostbitten fingers or toes. Don't break any blisters because they can get infected. Also, do not rub, massage, or apply dry heat to the area- these actions may cause additional cell damage.

Prevent re-freezing by wrapping the warmed areas. Give warm drinks to the person in order to replace lost fluids. Get the person professional medical attention as soon as possible.

Over all, the best way to prevent frostbite and hypothermia is to be warm. The old adage holds true...an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure!



Winter Weather

Winter time in Massachusetts can mean sub-zero temperatures, snow, high winds and ice to coat the world around us. Keeping safe and warm in cold weather means you must take care of home heating hazards, dress appropriately and preparing for cold weather emergencies.

According to the National Fire Protection Association, four out of seven home fires occur during December, January and February, and about half of these fires are caused by using candles and overloading electrical circuits. As families turn to alternative heating sources out of necessity or to avoid the rising cost of oil and gas, they should take the following precautions:

- Inspect fireplaces and wood stoves - Have your chimney connections and flues inspected by a professional and cleaned if necessary prior to the start of every heating season. Use a sturdy screen when burning fires. Burn only seasoned hardwood.
- Check smoke detectors with a monthly test to make sure that they are working properly and ensure that new batteries are installed annually.
- Be aware of the overuse of electrical outlets - Don't overload your electrical outlets. Limit the use of extension cords, and watch out for cords that may present trip hazards.

As you prepare to venture outside during cold weather, please remember the following:

- Mittens provide more warmth to your hands than gloves.
- Most of your body heat is lost through your head so wear a hat, preferably one that covers your ears.
- Dress in warm layers so you can remove items if you get too warm.
- Recognize the symptoms of hypothermia and frostbite and seek medical attention immediately if you have these symptoms.
- Wear waterproof, insulated boots to help avoid hypothermia or frostbite by keeping your feet warm and dry and to maintain your footing in ice and snow.
- Get out of wet clothes immediately and warm your body temperature with a blanket or warm fluids like hot cider or soup. Avoid drinking caffeine or alcohol if you expect you or someone you are trying to help has hypothermia or frostbite.

Did you know... ??

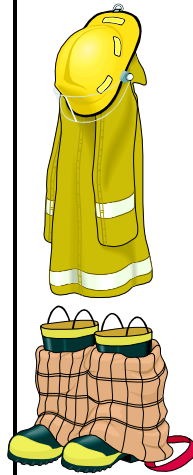
- That fire prevention week (October 6-12, 2002) is celebrated on the anniversary of the great Chicago Fire.
- That the first sprinkler system was invented by a gentleman in Connecticut to protect his piano factory.
- That the town of Orange had one of the first 50 municipal fire alarm systems installed in the country in 1893.
- Can you name all the Fire Chiefs who have served the Town of Petersham since 1918?

(answer upside down at bottom of the page)

Have you ever thought of joining your local fire department?

There are over 30,000 Fire Departments in the United States and many of those departments serve small towns like Petersham. The department members in those towns, just like here at home, are made up of members of the community that are willing to give their time and talents to help their neighbors during their time of need.

Consider what would happen if volunteers who served our area towns no longer volunteered. If you have an interest in seeing what it is like to be a member of the Petersham Fire Department, contact Fire Chief Dana Robinson, or drop by one of the department meetings (normally the first and third Wednesday evenings at the fire station) to see what you could do to help your neighbors.



Visit the PFD web page at
www.redknightsmc.org/PFD

Petersham

Firefighters' Association First Annual Golf Tournament!

August 18, 2001 was the First Annual PFD Golf Tournament. It was an truly an overwhelming success with a full course of teams competing at the Petersham Country Club. The golfers were treated to a roast beef meal cooked by the Fire Chief and his officers after their competition.

Sponsors for the tournament included E. W. Sykes Contractor, Petersham Country Store, Kimball-Cooke Insurance, Petersham Builders, Berry Engineering, Dr. Rapisarda, D. M.D, Harrington Electric, Brookside Equipment, R.C. Plumbing, Tyco Fire & Security, Caouette Woodworking, D & S Liquors, Girardi Distributors, Perkins Farm, Petersham Chiropractic, Petersham Country Club, Petersham Package Store, Petersham Police Association, Leaders Home Centers, Roussel Barber Shop, and Salvadore's Auto.

The winning team was Berry Engineering and was made up of John, Ed, and Rob Berry, and Bob Legare.

The Second annual tournament is already scheduled for **Saturday, June 1, 2002**. If you would like to participate either as a business sponsor or as a player, contact Association President Bob Legare or tournament chairperson Becky Legare.

The fire department association uses monies earned from fund raisers to give several scholarships to local graduates as well as support needs of the fire department and community when they can.

Emergency Response Calls for the Petersham Fire Department in calendar year 2001 totaled 69 separate responses.

Included in those calls were: Alarm Activations, Assist Police, Assist the Occupant, Automobile Accidents, Brush Fires, Car Fires, Chimney Fires, Electrical Fires, Furnace Malfunctions, Hazardous Materials Spills, Medical Emergencies, Mutual Aid to other Towns, Propane (Gas) Problems, Public Assistance, Smoke Investigations, Storm Standby, Structure (House) Fire, Transformer Fires, Unauthorized Outside Fires, and Wires Down.

Fire Chiefs: T. William Dwayne, Arthur Prebble, Arthur Dwayne, George Vonker, Edwin Anderson, Stuart Foster, and Dana Robinson

9 - 1 - 1

Report a Fire Stop a Crime Save a Life

Anytime you have an emergency, 9-1-1 is the number you need. 9-1-1 in Massachusetts normally gives the emergency dispatcher information on where you are calling from — very important information if you cannot tell them where you are.

If you use a cell phone however, those emergency calls either go to the State Police barracks in Framingham or Northampton (depending where you are) and do not give the dispatcher specific information on your location. These dispatchers can still get you the help you need, but you need to spend a few extra seconds with them so they can make sure they have all the information correct!

For non-emergency calls, you can talk to the local dispatcher by calling (978) 724-3232 or you can leave a message at the fire station at (978) 724-3371.

Remember...

9-1-1 is for emergencies!

Look inside this newsletter for information on:

- **Information on Brush Burning Season**
- **Winter-time First Aid Tips**
- **New Equipment at the Fire Dept.**
- **Candle Safety**



Petersham Fire Department
16 East Street
Petersham, MA 01366

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