

2011 Annual Report of the Deer Creek Fire Department



January, 2012

www.deercreekfire.org

In Memoriam



Francis D. Wort – DCFPD Treasurer

June 23rd, 1941 - February 20th, 2011

In early 2011 the Deer Creek Fire Protection District and the Village of Deer Creek suffered an enormous loss with the passing of long time District Treasurer and Village Public Works Director Francis Wort. Prior to his service in Deer Creek, Francis had been a volunteer firefighter with the Northern Tazewell Fire Protection District. Deer Creek Fire Department personnel paid their respects to Francis by posting an honor guard for visitation and funeral services. Francis's service and contributions to Deer Creek will not be forgotten.



There's A Place Just For You

It takes someone with a desire to do something important for the community;
someone with courage and dedication, who isn't afraid of hard work,
and is willing to accept the challenge of a difficult job.

If you're this kind of person, you're needed as a volunteer firefighter.

Contact the Deer Creek Fire Department Today

309-447-6490 www.deercreekfire.org info@deercreekfire.org

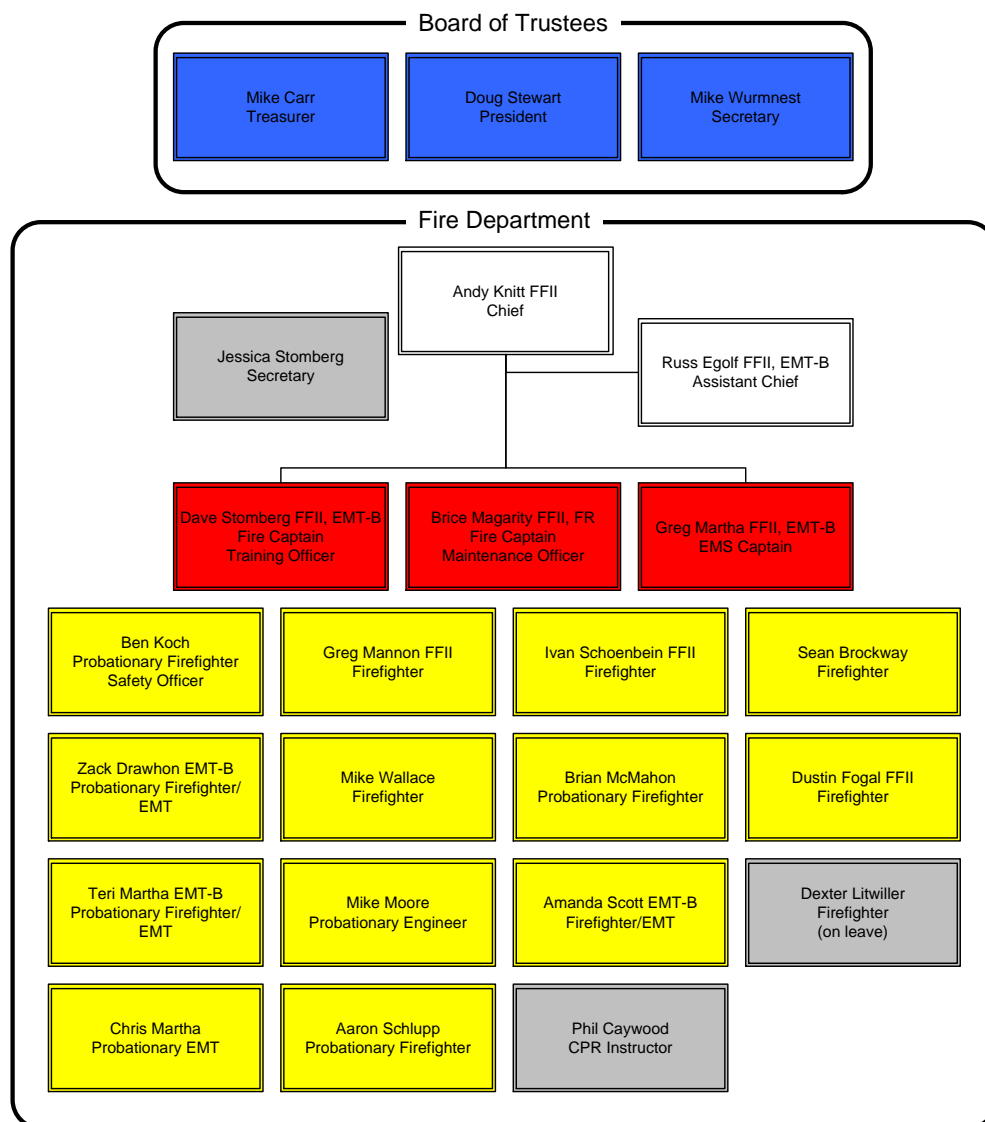
Introduction

The volunteers of the Deer Creek Fire Department continued to work to improve the services provided to the community in 2011. Areas of progress this year included:

- Improvement of the District's ISO rating in both the Village and rural areas
- Increase in the number of firefighters who have achieved Illinois Firefighter 2 certification
- Increase in the number of emergency medical technicians (EMTs) on the department
- Overall increase in the number of department members and average number of responders per call

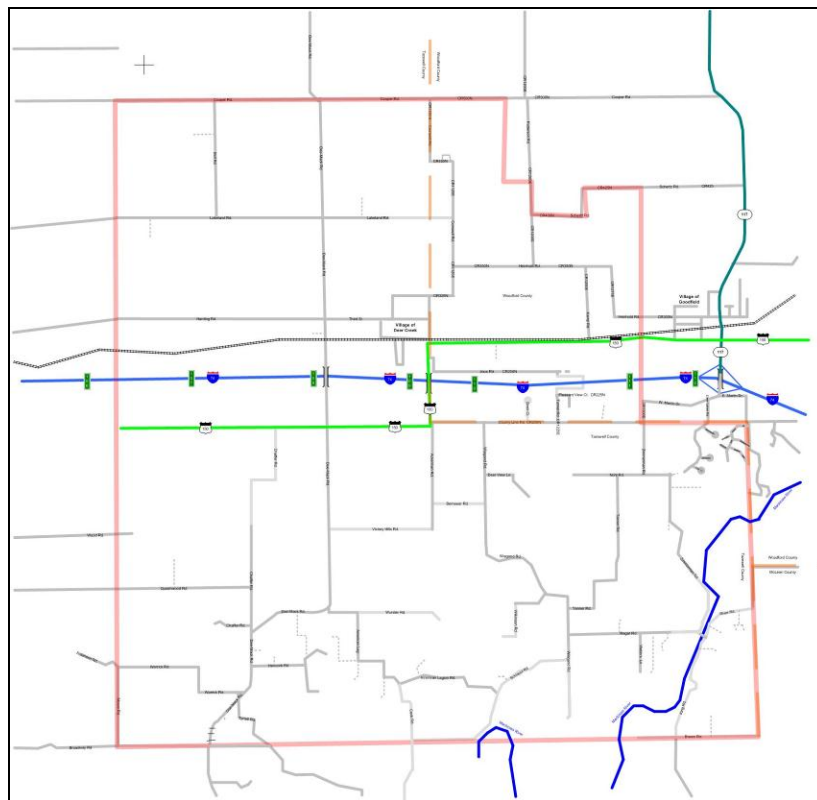
The department continues to work to recruit additional firefighters and will face challenges to keep equipment safe and up to date in the future as state and federal grant programs are reduced or eliminated.

Department Organization



Services Provided

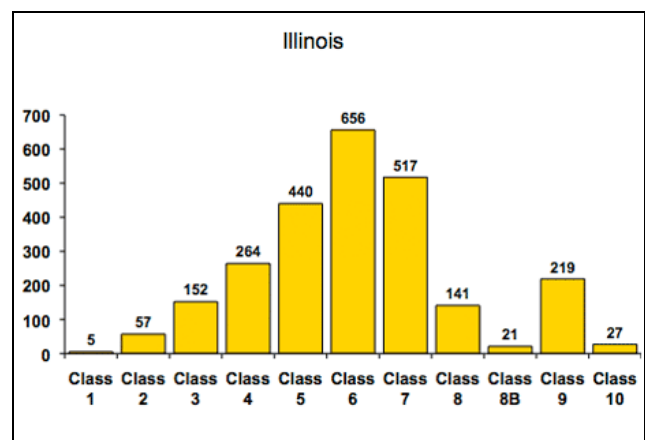
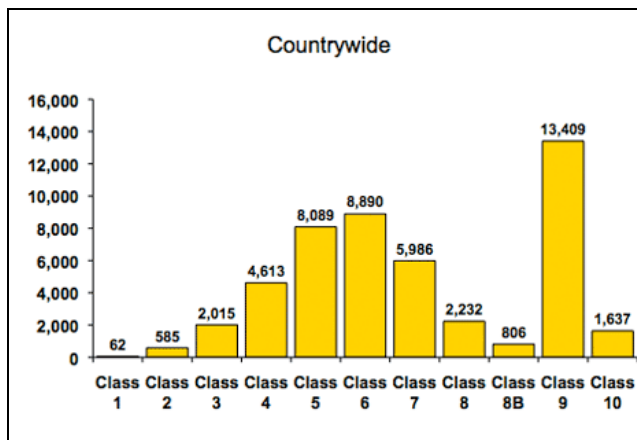
The Deer Creek Fire Department is an all-volunteer fire and EMS department that provides fire suppression, light rescue, and non-transport emergency medical services to the Village of Deer Creek and the 32 surrounding square miles of the Deer Creek Fire Protection District. The population of the District is approximately 1300 people and includes 5.5 miles of Interstate 74, 5.5 miles of railroad track, 6.5 miles of natural gas pipeline, and various agricultural and industrial businesses in both Tazewell and Woodford counties. The department also provides and receives mutual aid from departments throughout the area through membership in the Illinois Mutual Aid Box Alarm System (MABAS). Ambulance service in the District is provided by the Morton Fire Department paramedic units.



Deer Creek Fire Protection District (Border in Red)

ISO Rating

In 2011 the department was evaluated by the Insurance Services Organization (ISO). ISO evaluates the fire protection capability of every community in the country every ten years, and provides their ratings to insurance companies. Insurers may use these ratings when determining property insurance premiums in the community. ISO ratings range from 1 (best) to 10 (does not meet standards). Factors that influence a community's rating include the water system used for fire protection, the emergency communication system (911 system), and the fire department.



Number of Fire Departments Assigned Each ISO Class – Nationwide and in Illinois

After Deer Creek's previous evaluation in 2000, the District was given a classification of 7/9, which meant that Class 7 applied in areas within 1000 feet of a fire hydrant and Class 9 applied in areas more than 1000 feet from a fire hydrant but within 5 road miles of the fire station. Locations more than five miles from a fire station are automatically assigned a Class 10.

Between 2000 and 2011, the department made a number of very significant equipment and apparatus upgrades thanks to funding from state and federal grant and loan programs. These upgrades substantially improved the scoring for the fire department portion of the evaluation. In addition, the new water tower and other water system improvements in the Village since 2000 significantly improved the water supply portion of the evaluation. The 911 system portion of the evaluation was relatively unchanged. Thanks to the improvements to the Village water system and the fire department, we are happy to report that the ISO rating of hydranted areas of the Fire District will improve from a Class 7 to a Class 5 effective February 1st, 2012. These areas include the Village of Deer Creek, the Lakes at Oak Valley subdivision, and the Deer Lakes subdivision.

In areas of the Fire District that are more than 1000 feet from a fire hydrant (but less than five road miles from the fire station), improvements were also made. The lowest score that a department can receive in a non-hydranted rural area is a Class 8b unless that department can demonstrate that it is capable of providing 250 gallons per minute of water to a fire scene uninterrupted for two hours. Because this demonstration had never been done before, the Fire Districts previous rural rating was a Class 9. In 2011 the department decided to provide this demonstration to ISO in an effort to reduce our rural ISO rating. We are the first department in the area that has attempted to reduce our rural ISO score below a Class 8b.

Demonstrating the hauled water capability of a fire department to ISO is a time and labor intensive process. Before ISO will even consider evaluating a department's hauled water capability, firefighters must first demonstrate that they can provide the required 250 gallons per minute for two hours. Drills with other area fire departments that were conducted during the summer of 2010 and 2011 were used to prove to ISO that this could be done.

ISO then requires that the fire department time how long it takes to set up tanker dump and fill sites, and how long it takes to fill and dump each tanker being used in the water shuttle operation. Getting this data meant doing drills with all of our surrounding mutual aid fire departments. We'd like to thank the Congerville, Eureka-Goodfield, Mackinaw, Morton, and Washington Fire Departments for providing their equipment and personnel so that we could get the data we needed for this evaluation.

We are pleased to report that the ISO rating for rural areas of the Fire District will improve from a Class 9 to a Class 6 effective February 1st, 2012. Areas that are more than five road miles from the fire station will continue to receive a rating of Class 10.

What do these ISO rating improvements mean? To the fire department, it's an acknowledgement that positive progress is being made in the level of services provided to the community. To the public, it may mean a reduction in property insurance rates. Not all insurance providers use ISO ratings, and commercial properties are usually impacted more than residential properties by ISO ratings. Nevertheless, it's worth a call to your insurance agent to see what, if any, benefit you may receive from these improved ratings. The fire department would be very interested in knowing whether or not your insurance rates are impacted by these changes. Knowing this information will help us make informed decisions when planning for future ISO evaluations.

Personnel

The Deer Creek Fire Department is staffed by a very dedicated group of volunteers. Members come from all walks of life including welders, equipment operators, engineering and administrative professionals, healthcare workers, and many more. These include newer members who have less than a year's experience and others who have served this district for many years.

In 2011 the department added five members to the roster and lost three. The goal for 2012 will be to recruit at least four additional members to help bring us closer to our goal of twenty active firefighters.

The Department would like to thank the following local employers who are supporting their community by allowing their employees to respond to emergencies from work:

- Central Illinois Truss
- Case New Holland
- Caterpillar, Inc.
- Wurmnest Farms

Emergency Responses

In 2011, the Deer Creek Fire Department responded to eighty-nine requests for assistance, categorized as follows:

	2011
Structure Fires	0
Vehicle Fires	3
Grass/Brush Fires	4
Other Fires	4
EMS	41
EMS Vehicle	16
EMS Other	2
Good Intent	10
Mutual Aid	4
HazMat	0
False Calls	2
Weather Watch	3
Total	89

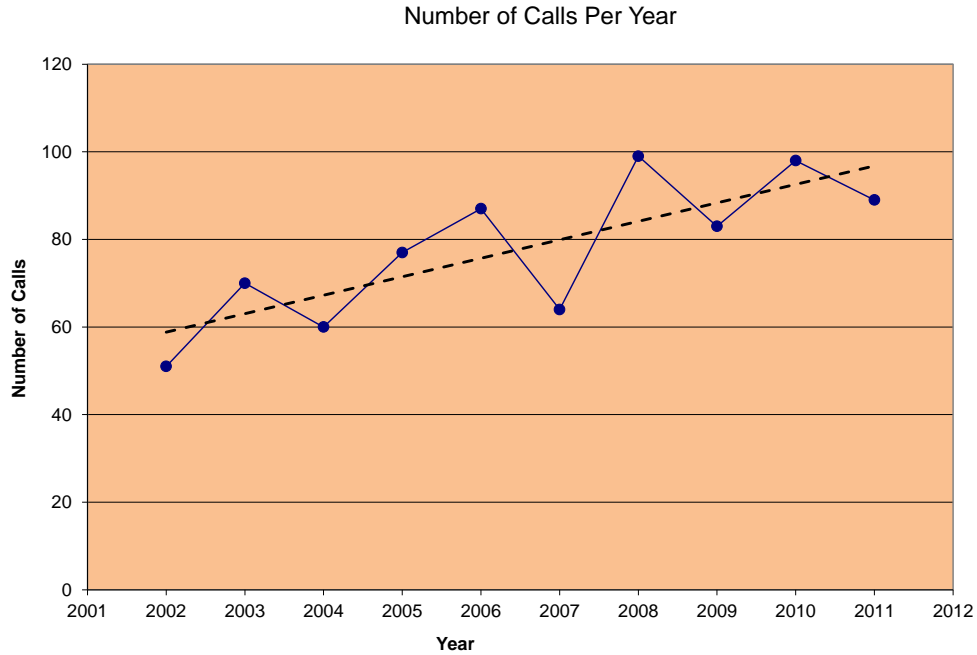
This represents a decrease of nine calls from 2010, largely due to a reduction in severe weather watches. Long term trends continue to show an increase in the number of emergency responses per year.



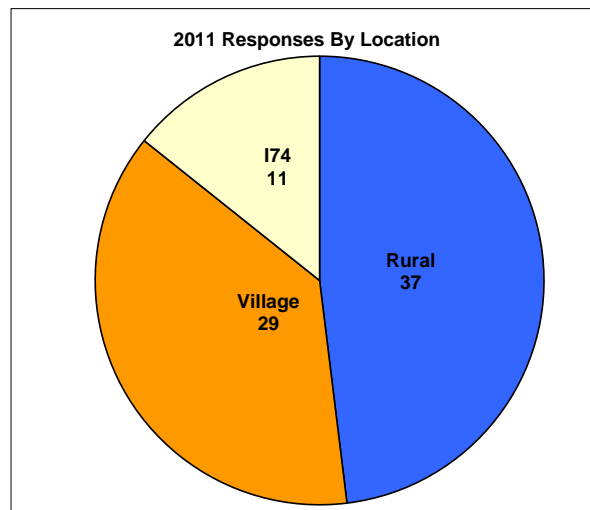
April 2011 Rollover Accident



Vehicle Fire in Deer Creek



Of the 2011 calls, thirty-seven were in rural portions of the District, twenty-nine were in the Village of Deer Creek, eleven were on Interstate 74, and twelve were uncategorized or were in neighboring districts as mutual aid calls.



The 2011 average response times by call location are shown in the table below.

Average Response Times		
Rural	Village	I-74
9.8 min	5.5 min	16.0 min

These response times are calculated from the time that the department is paged by the dispatch center until the time the first unit arrives on scene. This includes the time it takes for department members to respond from home or work to the fire station, but does not include the processing time at the 911 dispatch center before the department is paged.

In 2011 the average number of responders per call was 6.5, which is an improvement over the 2010 figure of 5.5. This average includes both EMS and fire calls. While the improvement in the number of responders is encouraging, it also highlights the need for additional recruitment, as any type of major fire or incident will require much more than seven people to mitigate.

Training

The members of the Deer Creek Fire Department continued to invest a significant amount of their personal free time to drill and train in 2011. In total, department members completed over thirteen hundred person-hours of training in 2011. This includes both in-house department training and outside courses, training events, and fire schools.

Four members received State of Illinois Firefighter II certification this year, and six more are slated to get their certification in 2012. One member received State of Illinois Fire Instructor I certification, and another received Fire Service Vehicle Operator certification.



Rapid Intervention Team Training



Life Flight Training

In addition to regular in-house department training, department members conducted joint training with other area departments on several occasions. In April the department hosted a Rapid Intervention Team training course using the Tazewell County Firefighter's Association smoke trailer. This course teaches firefighters techniques to rescue other downed firefighters in an emergency situation. In July, the department hosted a rural water supply drill at New Castle Bible Church with three other area departments. Also in July, the department hosted a Life Flight training in-service and a heavy extrication demonstration from Joe's Towing service.



Heavy Extrication Demonstration



Rural Water Supply Training

In order to ensure that the department maintains a high standard for training in the future, bylaws were adopted in 2011 to require that all existing and future members become certified to state standards as either firefighters or EMTs.

In addition to providing the skills and knowledge needed to respond to incidents, training is also very important to department membership engagement and retention. Training that is realistic and hands-on keeps volunteer firefighters interested, involved, and active in the department. Because this type of realistic training is so important, the department is currently looking into options for a permanent training building that could be used on a regular basis to provide firefighters with a safe, smoke-filled environment in which to train.

Funding

The Deer Creek Fire Department is funded primarily by a property tax levy administered by the Deer Creek Fire Protection District. Excluding funds from grants, roughly 80-90% of the Department's annual income is generated by the tax levy. The remaining 10-20% comes from donations, memorials, and fundraisers. The Deer Creek Fire Department does not charge for services. In 2011, the following businesses and individuals made donations or memorials to the department:

- Francis Wort Memorial
- Janet Losher Memorial
- Lyle Bridges Memorial
- Deer Creek Coffee Club

The department has had very good success over the last several years in receiving state and federal grant funding to upgrade equipment and vehicles. As these grant programs are reduced or eliminated due to federal and state fiscal concerns, our department must be proactive in planning for the future to ensure that we can maintain safe and reliable equipment for our responders. Work is underway to

develop a long-term plan for equipment replacement so that funding sources can be identified early enough to be effective.

Equipment & Facilities

While there were no “major” equipment or apparatus purchases in 2011, the department made several incremental improvements to equipment and facilities. A rotary rescue saw and chainsaw were purchased to upgrade the department’s ventilation and rescue capabilities and the VHF radios in several trucks were upgraded. A roof ventilation prop was also constructed and used for training activities. For EMS response, a new automatic external defibrillator (AED) was purchased to upgrade the department’s older unit. Several facilities-related projects took place in 2011. A lawnmower was purchased to help maintain the fire station grounds, the fire station bathrooms were partially remodeled to repair a water leak, and the fire station’s radio communications tower grounding system was improved.

Community Involvement

The Deer Creek Fire Department receives strong support from the local community, and tries to be involved in area events whenever possible. In 2011 the department participated in the Dee-Mack High School homecoming events, the Deer Creek Halloween Parade and Fall Festival, and did a demonstration at the Intermediate School in Deer Creek as part of Fire Prevention Week in October. The department also held a “Family Firehouse Day” in June that gave families an opportunity to meet firefighters, see the fire station and equipment, and watch a vehicle extrication demonstration.



Tanker 1 in the Dee-Mack Homecoming Parade



Family Firehouse Day

Another annual event that the department conducts is the Chili Supper. This is a fundraising event for the department, but also allows an opportunity for interaction with the community and a chance to see our neighbors in a non-emergency setting. The 2012 Chili Supper is slated for March 24th.

In addition to these community events, the department works to keep the public informed of ongoing activities by maintaining a website (www.deercreekfire.org) and a page on Facebook.

Looking Ahead

2012 promises to be a year of planning for the future of the department. Plans for replacing our 1984 Engine 2 will be made, along with plans for a department training building and storm shelter for the fire station. We will also continue to make improvements to ensure that our new ISO rating can be maintained during our next evaluation.

Recruitment and training of new firefighters will continue to be a top priority in 2012. The department plans to apply for a grant to start a junior firefighter or Explorer program to boost long-term recruitment efforts, and will continue to actively seek new firefighters and EMTs in the short term.



Can You Fill These Boots?

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