



# ATFD Responding

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Chief John Bothwell

**McKinley Fire Co.**  
Chief Chris Bors

**Weldon Fire Co.**  
Chief Bud Gerhard

**Edge Hill Fire Co.**  
Chief Charlie Rohrer

**Roslyn Fire Co.**  
Chief Dale Jonas

## Abington Township Fire Department—Another Year of Growth

The year 2007 was another year of growth for the Abington Township Fire Department (ATFD). During the year, 27,938 firefighters responded to 1,765 incidents. Public education activities by the fire companies resulted in contact with several thousand citizens, including students at all levels, day care attendees and staff, and our neighbors. Outreach programs, station tours, and open-house-type events are no longer limited to Fire Prevention Week. Smoke detector programs in local neighborhoods were very well received.

As has been the case since the department first embarked on accreditation, training has been a major newsmaker for the department. At the top of the list for 2007 training achievements, Training Coordinator Larry Siefken presided over the first major addition to the ATFD's fire training facility in two decades.

In recent years, the training officers for the five fire companies and Siefken identified areas of training in need of enhancement. One area in particular was the burn building the ATFD uses to train new recruits and which each fire company has access to on a weekly basis to drill on the various skills required to extinguish a fire.

The training committee commenced a structural engineering review of the drill tower. The repair work identified in the engineering report has been completed including painting all



Construction continues on the new one-story addition to the ATFD's fire training facility.

the exposed structural steel within the building.

The most notable enhancement, however, is the construction of a new one-story addition to the burn building. The existing one-story structure was demolished and a new concrete foundation poured. The new building arrived on a flatbed truck in components and has been assembled. The finishing touches to the building are underway, and all department members will be invited to attend an orientation session on the

enhancements made to the facility.

Completion can't come too soon as the department has enough new members for a Firefighter I national certification program—the third year in a row the department has run such a program. The ATFD's recruitment efforts are working.

In addition to the Firefighter I program, the training committee coordinated a trench rescue refresher course, two fire pump courses, an emergency vehicle operators course, and weekly company-level drills.



*"We will strive to invigorate and fortify the spirit of volunteerism in the Abington Township Fire Department by allowing each of our five fire companies to maintain its individual identity that complements our organizational goal of continuous self improvement."*

During 2007, the department also continued to expand how it uses Firehouse Software to include training and administrative activities, personnel records, inventory, and the department-wide preventive maintenance program.

Establishing a preventive maintenance program was a 2007 goal and the ATFD is proud to report it achieved it. The program provided each fire company in the ATFD with documentation that annual preventive maintenance was performed on various pieces of equipment. It worked so well that the program is expected to be expanded for 2008.

The system is in place, and during 2008 it will be expanded to include more categories. The commitment of fire company

representatives to forward reimbursable expenses to the township resulted in the program becoming a success. The program not only provides relief to each company, but also documents that each company is servicing its equipment annually and that the services are provided by qualified agencies, which in turn guarantees that each company's fire apparatus and equipment are ready when a citizen is in need of assistance.

As impressive as the department's achievements are, there are still several objectives to meet prior to becoming an accredited fire department. To that end, the department annually sets high but achievable goals. The ATFD achieved each of its goals for 2007 (see sidebar).

**The goals for the ATFD during 2008 are:**

1. Finalize Capital Improvement Project—Addition to the Fire Training Tower.
2. Complete a Risk Assessment of Target Institutions.
3. Develop a Credible Standard of Response Coverage Plan.
4. Establish and Manage a Common Independent Auditor Project.
5. Pilot a Mobile Data Computer Initiative for Our Fire Apparatus.
6. Begin the Strategic Planning Process for the Abington Township Fire Department.

**ATFD 2007 Goals**

**DONE**—Analyze NFIRS incident reporting data.

**DONE**—Establish and maintain a preventive maintenance program record keeping system.

**DONE**—Fire Training: Continue our 2006/2007 Capital Improvement Project to add an additional one-story burn building to our existing fire training tower.

**DONE**—Establish a process to enter fire training records into the Firehouse Software program.

**DONE**—To ensure diligence in our pursuit of external funding sources, continue our grant writing incentive program.



*Officers from the ATFD's five fire companies stand with representatives from Abington Senior High School's Service Learning program with their 2007 Recruitment and Retention Award presented by the Firemen's Association of the State of Pennsylvania.*

**Fast Facts**

- **There were only 7 days during 2007 with no calls for fire service.**
- **There were 20 days of 10 or more calls for fire service.**
- **The highest call count for a single day during 2007 was 21.**
- **There were 198 occurrences of overlapping incidents (ATFD companies handled two or more incidents at one time).**
- **The ATFD brings nationally recognized training to its members. Through an agreement with the Bucks County Fire Academy, the ATFD Fire Training Facility is used to train ATFD members to nationally recognized standards, easing the time requirements for today's training standards.**

**2007 Annual Response Statistics**

**Total Number of Incidents: .....1,765**

**Total Fire Training Hours: ..... 7,831**

**Total Number of Volunteer Firefighters Responding to Incidents: ..... 27,938**

**Total Administrative Activity Hours: .....9,014**

**Total Incident Hours in Service for all Firefighters Responding:..... 14,585**

**Total Hours of Community Service for the Year 2007: .....31,430**