



Goshen Fire Department  
2008  
Activity Report

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### **Message from the Chief**

On behalf of us at the Goshen Fire Department, it is my pleasure to submit our 2008 year-end report. Our goal at GFD is to always promote and enhance the health and safety of the citizens we serve. Our staff at GFD and the team effort involved in supplying all of our services takes a tremendous amount of dedication; often community service comes before our staff's personal needs and comfort. Because of this level of commitment to community service, our team continues to be our greatest asset. This report cannot capture every individual's effort, but I do hope that it will provide you with an overview of your fire department's activities for 2008.

Accomplishments of note are:

In 2008, through the combined efforts of Goshen Fire, Elkhart Emergency Physicians, Goshen Health Systems and Midwest Cardiology, we began transmitting 12 lead electrocardiograms (EKG) from the field to the emergency room. Transmitting 12 lead EKG's from the field provides our citizenry access to the most current solutions available for the treatment of a heart attack. Working with all of the involved agencies demonstrates your fire department's commitment to professional service and excellence in the health care we provide to our community.

We have begun a multi-year process of increasing our knowledge and skills in technical rescue. These future sessions will involve training in rope rescue, swift water rescue, confined space rescue, vehicle/machinery rescue, trench rescue and building collapse rescue.

A new ambulance was placed into service at the College Avenue Station in February 2008 and both Rescue #1 and Engine # 4 were refurbished this year. I continue

to be very proud of our labor-management relationship at GFD. In 2008, we received a grant for updating our personal protective equipment (PPE) from the federal "Assistance to Firefighters Grant." Because of this grant and with the leadership of Asst. Chief Jim Ramer and Local 1443 President Jeremy Mast, we began a quartermaster system to provide new PPE for our staff on a timed basis. The timed replacement of PPE for our staff will ensure continuity of up to date gear and the funds necessary for such a costly task

Battalion Chief Scott McDowell was awarded the Lawrence W. Tuck Fire Investigator of the Year by the Indiana Chapter of the International Association of Fire Investigators at their conference in August. Lieutenant Steffen Schrock was appointed our new Fire Training Coordinator and is providing outstanding leadership in his new role. Privates Phil Schrock, Courtney Snyder and Tim Christner graduated from Paramedic School and are beginning a new chapter in their careers at GFD.

Goals for 2009 are continued property development for a new Central Station, enhanced use of our mobile data terminals in our fire trucks and ambulances for scene management, continued development of our mass casualty capabilities and a new personnel accountability system for emergency scene use. Property tax changes in Indiana, which will result in lower city revenues, will present one of our most significant challenges in 2009.

In summary, I believe that with our dedicated staff, your fire department has met and exceeded the challenges of 2008. Credit for this report should go to our division heads Paramedic Chief Castetter, Inspector Alheim, Lieutenant Schrock, Lieutenant Mike Bontrager and especially, Asst. Chief Jim Ramer who coordinates all of the reporting

groups. He has done an outstanding job of bringing our productivity into focus for you to review. In meeting these new challenges, we will persistently and professionally work at all phases of care and protection for the citizens of Goshen with **PRIDE, HONOR and INTEGRITY.**

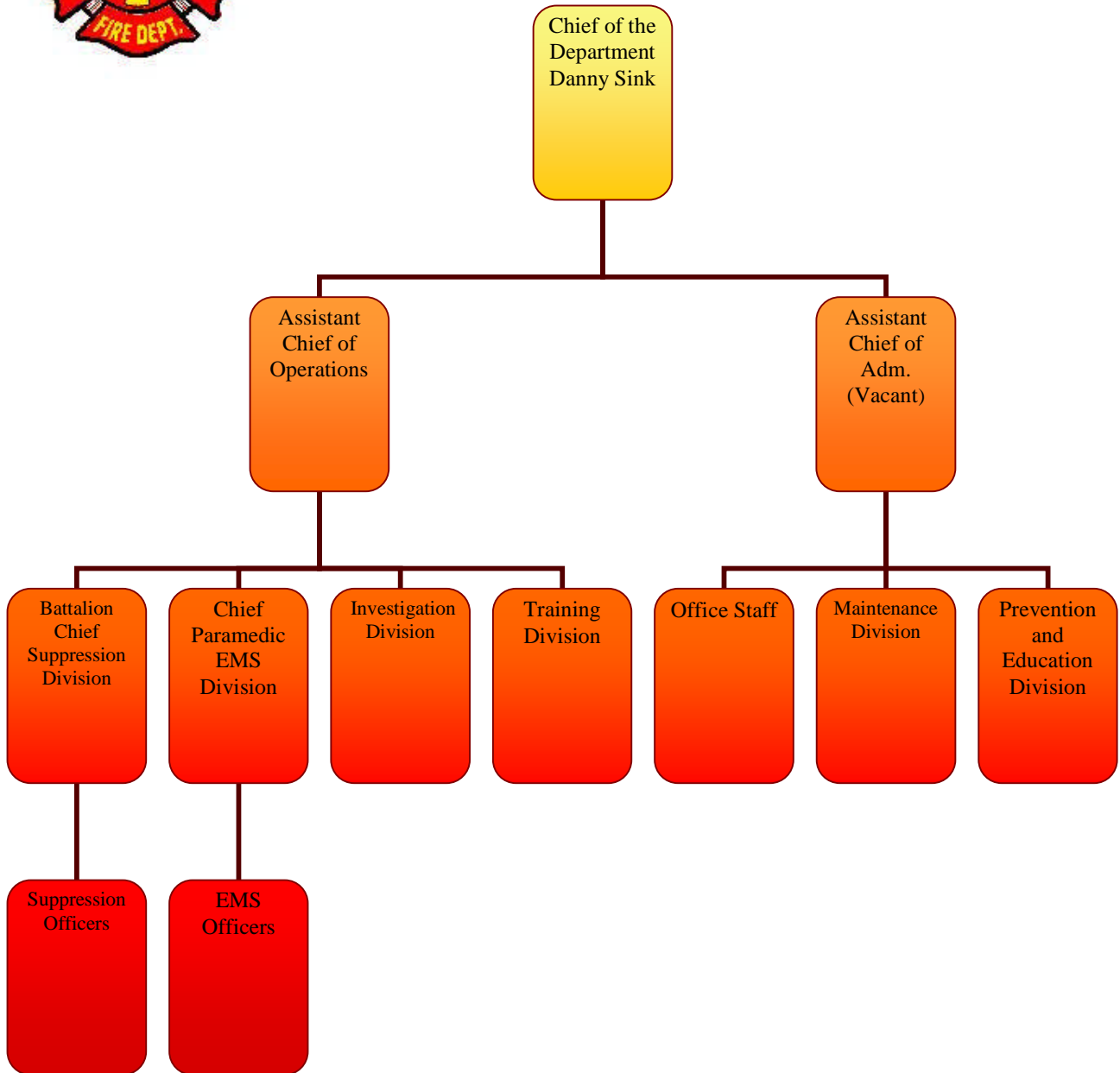
Danny Sink  
Chief of the Department

## Goshen Fire Department Mission Statement

*Our mission is to provide a positive workplace with continual training and adequate equipment so that we may give our customers the very best service possible. The importance of our service; fire suppression, rescue, prevention and investigation, paramedic ambulance service, and public education: compels us to perform our duties in a sincere, skillful, dedicated and professional manner.*



# Goshen Fire Department Organization Chart





**Overview:**

The Goshen Fire Department responded to 3,485 calls in 2008, a -5.7% decrease from 2007. This included 2,934 EMS patient contacts, a reduction of -12.8 % from 2007. In 2008, 709 fire related calls were received, a -5.1% decrease from the previous year. Average response time for the first arriving unit on emergency calls in the city was 4:09 minutes, a 3.5% improvement from 2007.

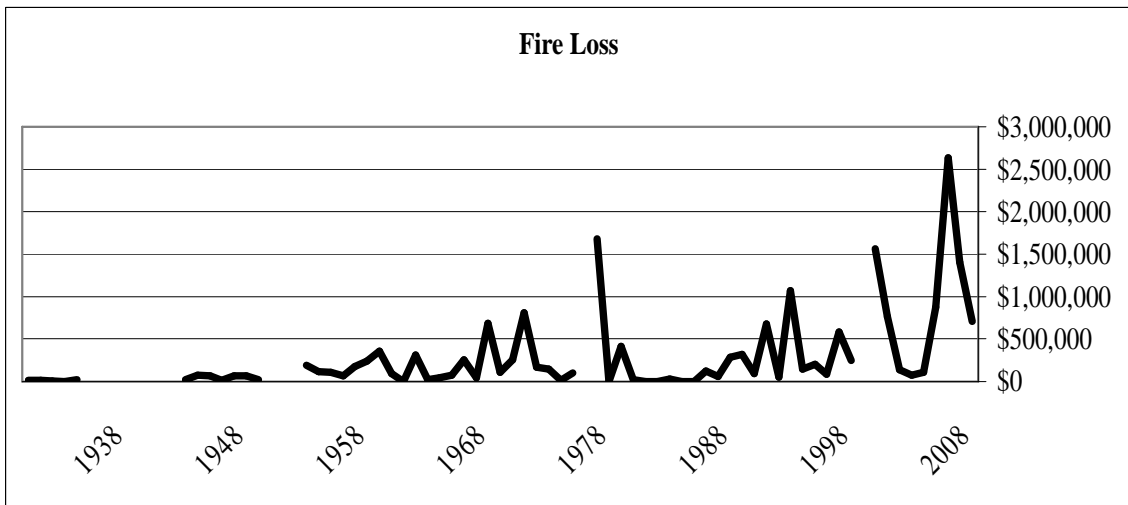
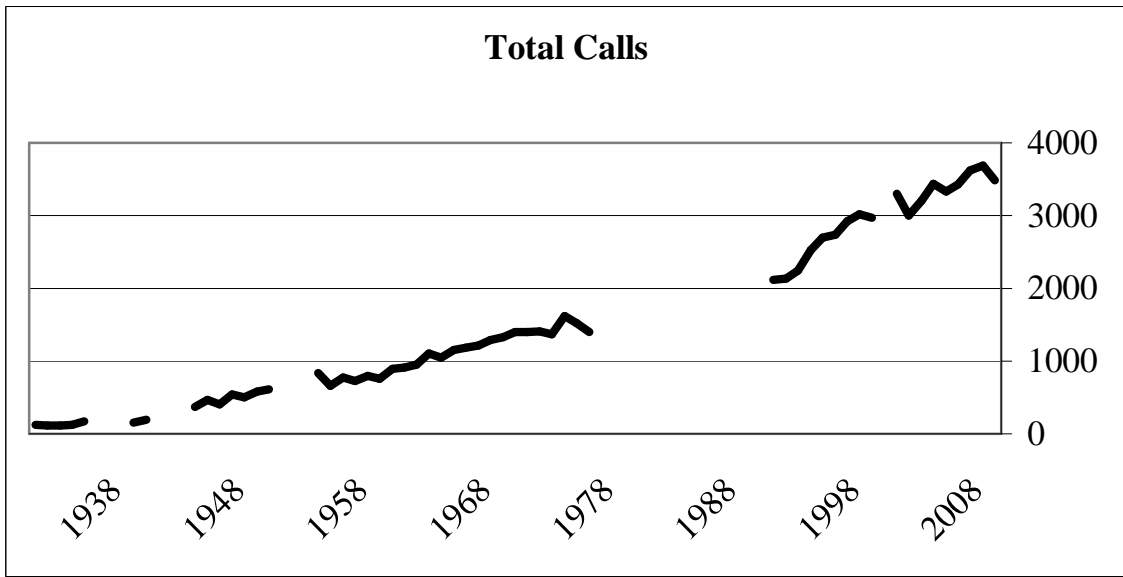
Fire losses in 2008 were significantly reduced from 2007. The annual dollar loss from investigated fires was estimated at \$704,000, down 45% from 2007. The percent of property value saved in structures fires during 2008 was 94% compared to 85% in 2006 and 95% in 2007.

The following charts show requests for services and dollar loss dating back to 1930.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Data missing from several years



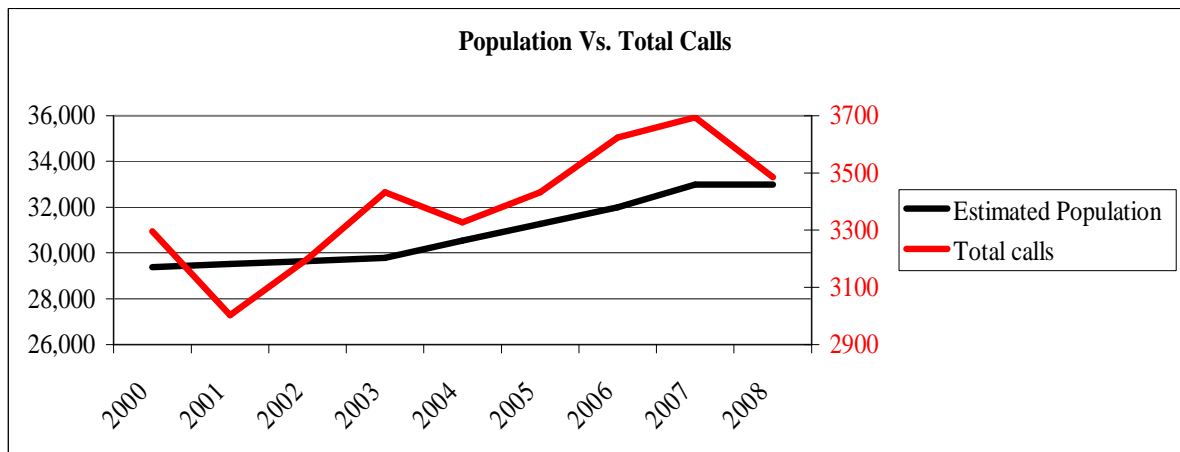


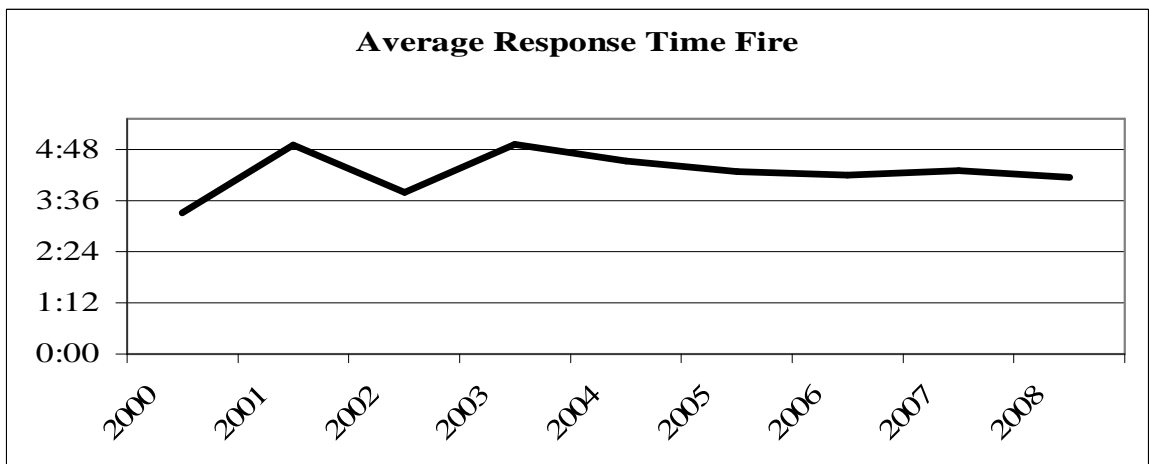
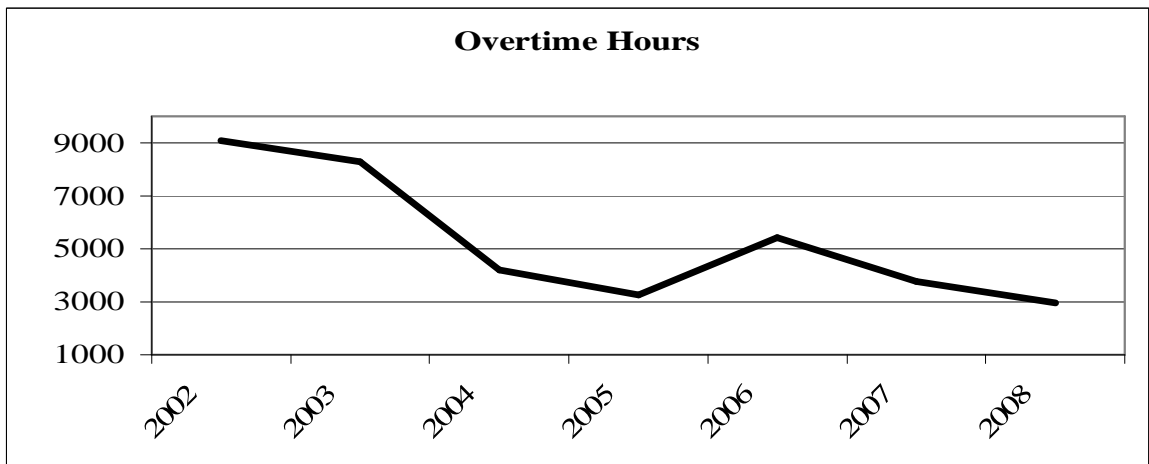
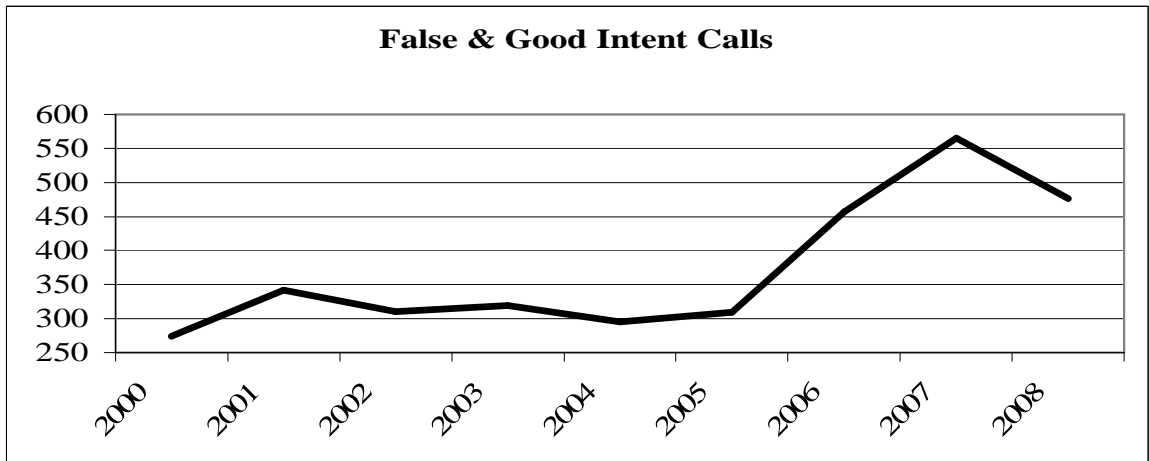
## Operations

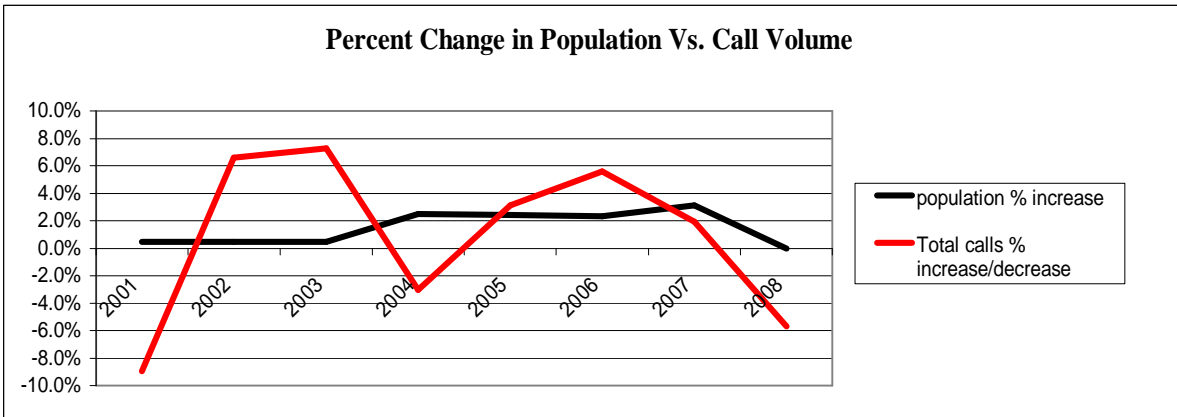
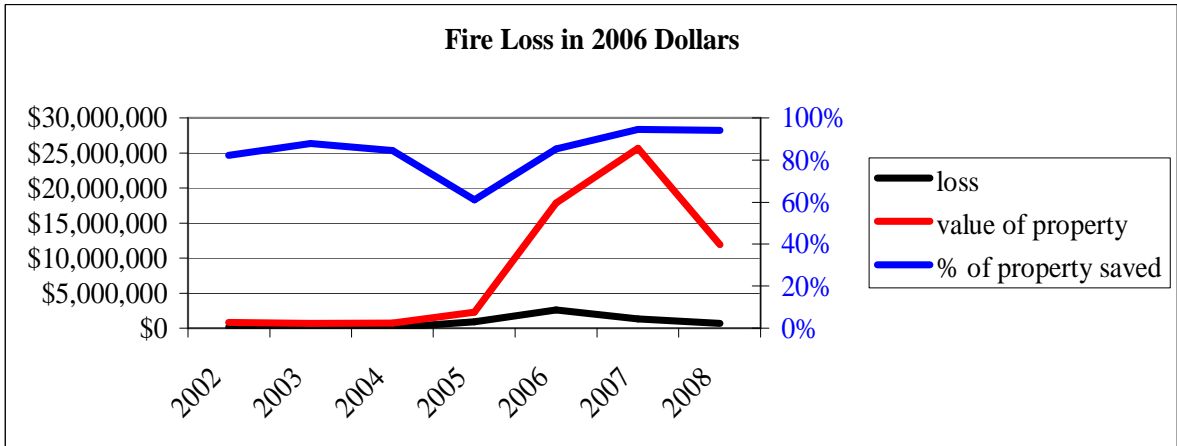
➤ **Suppression** – Assistant Chief of Operations James Ramer

The table below shows the types of calls for service, overtime hours, average response times, estimated fire loss/property value (in 2006 dollars), percent of property saved and average calls per day.

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Estimated Pop.	29,383	29,517	29,651	29,787	30,528	31,269	32,000	33,000	33,000
Total calls	3,297	3,002	3,200	3,433	3,328	3,432	3,624	3,694	3,485
EMS Patients	n/a	2,518	2,931	2,912	2,992	3,391	3,453	3,366	2,934
EMS assists	1,252	1,155	1,292	1,253	1,325	1,434	1,668	1,662	1,645
Fire/Haz Conditions	252	244	254	265	257	307	238	208	214
Vehicle fires	30	19	34	30	33	21	28	19	19
False Calls	274	342	310	319	295	309	457	565	476
Overtime Hours	n/a	n/a	9,073	8,271	4,200	3,246	5,419	3,769	2,965
Avg. response time	3:19	4:54	3:48	4:55	4:32	4:17	4:12	4:18	4:09
loss	\$1,833,544	\$872,150	\$152,858	\$81,811	\$116,657	\$899,968	\$2,636,058	\$1,349,580	\$668,120
value of property	\$3,568,964	\$2,488,031	\$863,455	\$678,102	\$750,046	\$2,300,293	\$17,841,045	\$25,691,950	\$11,313,520
% of property saved	49%	65%	82%	88%	84%	61%	85%	95%	94%
Calls/Day	9.0	8.2	8.8	9.4	9.1	9.4	9.9	10.1	9.5







➤ **Emergency Medical Services** - *Chief Paramedic Kit Castetter*



**A-Shift ceremoniously pushes in new Medic 3 to begin its service**

The EMS Division accomplished numerous goals in the 2008 calendar year. Our 12-lead electrocardiogram acquisition, interpretation, and transmission capabilities are now fully functional. Quicker “door to wire” times are being achieved with our ability to rapidly identify, triage, treat, and transport patients experiencing a heart attack. Our newest ambulance was ceremoniously put into service early in 2008 with a new “last alarm” process being utilized to retire the ambulance going out of service. Mobile Data Terminals (MDT’s) are now installed in all ambulances and are equipped with state of the art mapping and dispatch software that has facilitated responding to calls and improved patient care practices.

Electronic submission of EMS reports to our billing company, Accumed Billing, in November of 2008 completed the first and most difficult phase of our paperless reporting efforts. The second phase will allow our patient care quality assurance processes to be completed without the need to print reports. The third phase will allow us to electronically capture patient signatures on refusals/insurance cards and attach them to the patient care record. Integration of fire and EMS reporting software was a goal that was not realized this past year due to many complex technological and financial challenges. Benchmarking system performance led to the development of Excel spreadsheets to track and trend our “Road Safety” driving scores, intubations/certifications, skill sheets, and various other data points. Equipment purchases for the management of mass casualty incidents were also completed this year.

Training sessions were improved this year through diversification of our training process. Outside speakers, reorganization/reworking of skills teaching, variation of teaching sites, and improved lecture sessions helped to accomplish this goal. We will continue our efforts to improve in 2009 through scenario-based teaching session, the use of “hands on” training techniques, video taping training sessions, and the development of computer based education competencies.

Fire department representation on Goshen General Hospital’s EMS protocol committee has given our department a voice in treatment and care options for the patients we encounter. A new format is being developed that will streamline our protocols by allowing one set to be applied to all provider levels. A protocol review will be completed monthly to track and identify our strengths and deficiencies as related to our assessment and treatment of patients. Expanded continuing education options such as pre-hospital

trauma life support (PHTLS), PHTLS for basic EMT's and an NRP course for paramedics are also being explored.

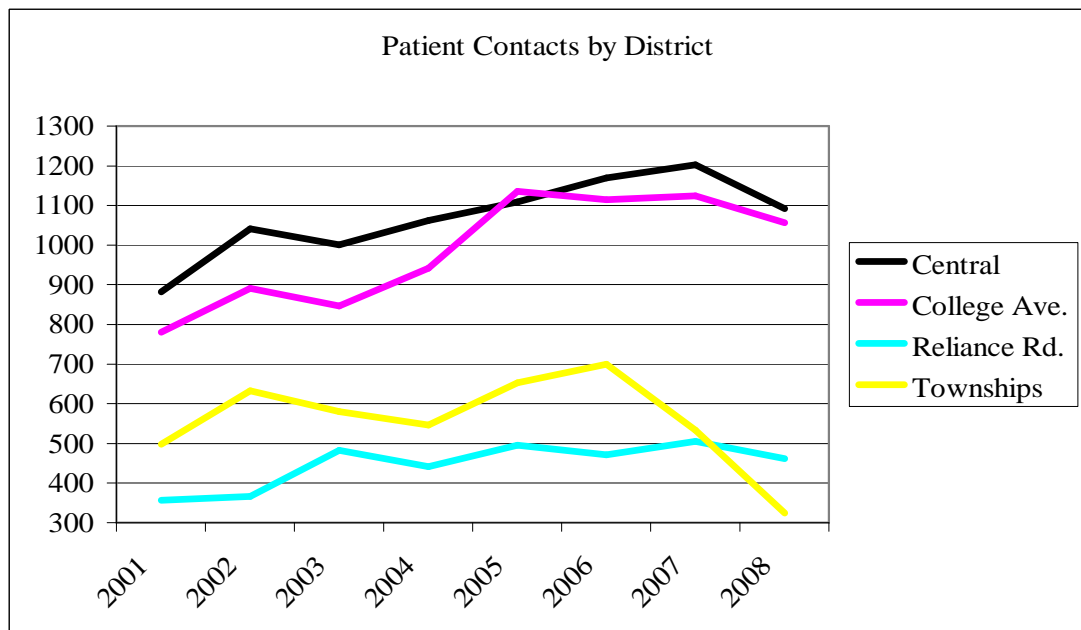
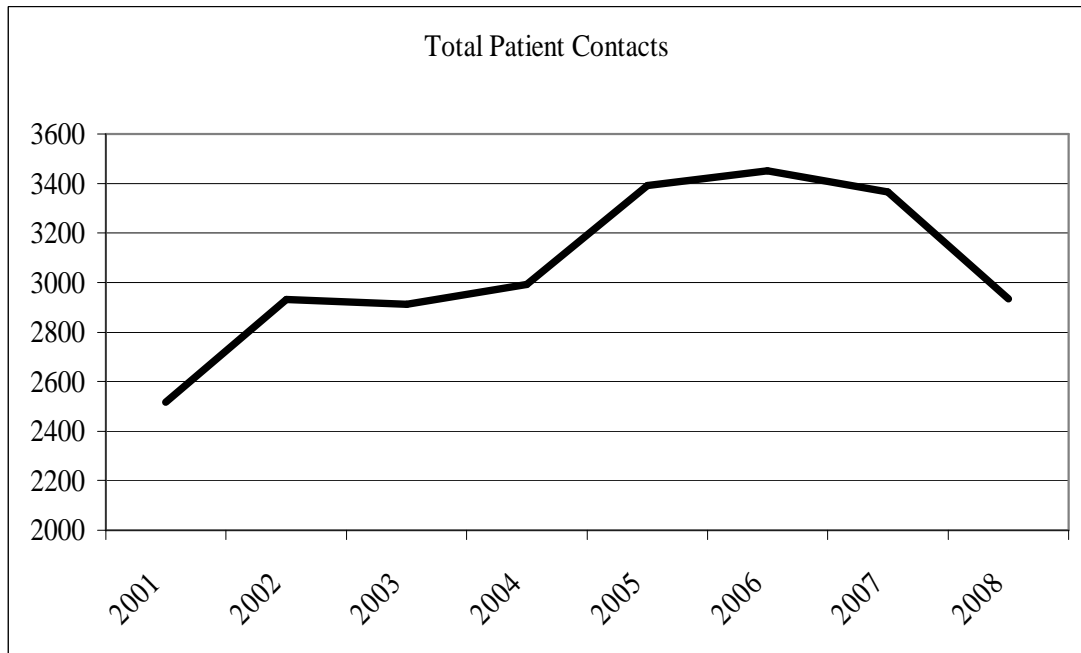
Leadership development and improving communication processes will remain an important and ongoing process for the EMS division. EMS officer attendance in the Ambulance Service Managers Course will be occurring again in 2009 and we hope to have all of our officers completed by 2011. EMS meeting minutes are reviewed with the shifts and the use of department e-mail will also improve communications for all.

2009 will be another challenging and hopefully, rewarding year for Goshen Fire Departments EMS division. We will work at attaining our goals in 2009 and look forward to reporting their completion at years end.

In 2008, the department had 2,934 patient contacts which were -12.8% less than 2007. The table below shows total patient contacts and contacts per station for 2001 - 2008.

	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>
<b>Central</b>	882	1,041	1,001	1,062	1,109	1,169	1,202	1,092
<b>College Ave.</b>	780	890	847	941	1,135	1,114	1,124	1,056
<b>Reliance Rd.</b>	357	367	483	442	495	471	505	462
<b>Townships</b>	499	633	581	547	652	699	534	324
<b>Total Patient Contacts</b>	2,518	2,931	2,912	2,992	3,391	3,453	3,366	2,934

The graphs represent the data from the table.





➤ **Training** – *Lieutenant Steffen Schrock, Fire Training Coordinator*



In 2008, Goshen Fire Department performed more than 9,100 hours of training and it was a year of change for the Goshen Fire Department Training Division. In June 2008, a new department fire training coordinator was chosen and shortly thereafter new shift training instructors were named for A and C shifts. With these changes, the groundwork for a productive future was established.

Since June of 2008, the training division has been preparing to educate the department in the disciplines of technical rescue. Personnel were trained and certified to the level of technical rescue awareness, laying the foundation for various other rescue disciplines. For the first time, the department was able to send four personnel to the Indiana River Rescue School in South Bend to receive training and certification to the water rescue operations level. The training division also initiated an SCBA air management program. This program will educate our personnel on understanding and

improving their limits while wearing a SCBA and breathing bottled air. Continued development of the air management program is also a goal for 2009. We plan on meeting this goal by constructing a SCBA confidence course which will challenge personnel to improve their SCBA skills.

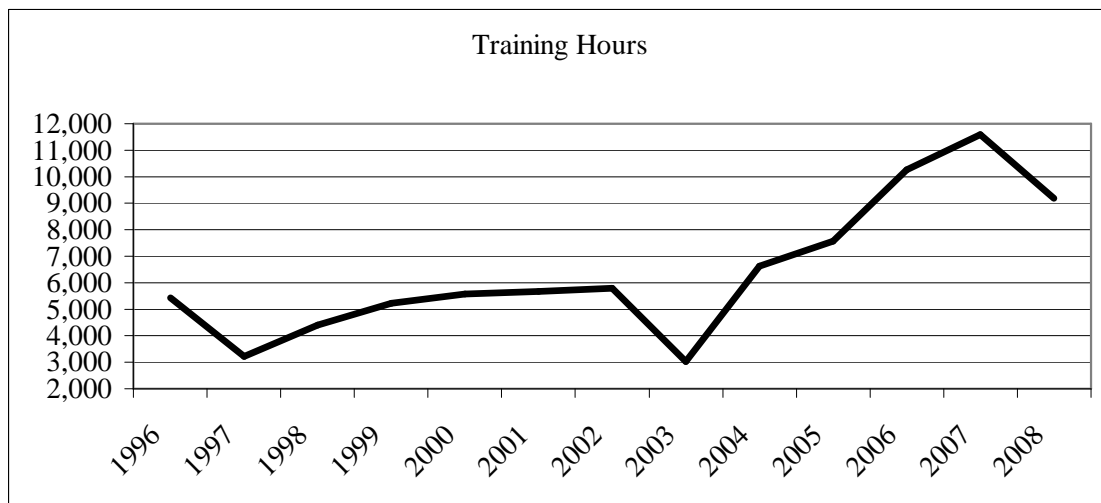
The foundations laid in the closing months of 2008 will be the basis of training for 2009. The training scheduled will be well balanced but the focus will be on technical rescue. The goal of the Training Division is to, in the next two years, train personnel in the operation and technician levels in rope rescue, water rescue and confined space rescue.

In conjunction with the EMS Division, a greater focus will be placed on scenario based training. We believe that this is important for a department of our size, especially in regards to a technical rescue incident where Fire, Rescue and EMS operations will all be needed.

Additionally, three more goals have been set for the Training Division in 2009. The first goal will be a re-emphasis on pre-planning businesses and other high risk locations. The second goal will be a new focus on night time trainings. In recent history, we have not had outdoor night-time trainings. Within the next twelve months, the implementation of night-time trainings will provide a new perspective for personnel at Goshen Fire Department. Also, important in 2009 will be our third goal, company drills. This aspect of our training program is new but imperative. When done properly, company drills help build communication skills, teamwork, and leadership within the work group. Finally, another aspect that the Training Division will focus on is networking with

outside agencies. This will enable us to provide better training which in turn will translate into a better service for our community.

The Training Division will strive to be forward-thinking. In order to provide up-to-date training and information, we will remain open minded. We look forward to having a safe and exciting year.



➤ **Investigation** - *Assistant Chief of Operations James Ramer*



In 2008, the division investigated 43 fires, a -6.5% decrease from 2007, and recorded 225 hours for an average of more than 5 hours per investigation. Of these 43 investigations, 13 were determined to be arson. This translates to 39 arsons per 100,000 population and compares favorably to 2006 reports from Elkhart at 68/100k and 2007 South Bend at 101/100k.

In the past year, investigator James Ramer completed certification as a Certified Fire Investigator, CFI® and Craig Hursey as a certified fire and explosion investigator (CFEI). This brings the division's total CFEI's to two and CFI's to two with all investigators now being nationally certified. This fulfills a long term goal of the division which will now concentrate on certifying all investigators to the CFI level.

➤ **Inspections** – *Fire Inspector John Alheim*



As with past years, I have been extremely busy with inspections and re-inspections. I have not inspected all of the businesses in the City of Goshen but it is my goal to finish in 2009. Chief Dan Sink has instructed me to finish all commercial buildings in 2009 and once done, re-inspect the restaurants in the city.

The fire inspector was made a civilian position in April and is currently working with the Building Department, this arrangement works well for both departments. The common goal of our departments are to work with building and Life safety codes to coordinate inspections and plan reviews for a safer city.

The prevention division's priority is to prevent a tragedy from fire and most businesses inspected in 2008 have been cooperative in correcting fire code violations. As fire inspector for the City of Goshen my main objective is to make this community safer, free from preventable fires and accidents.

**Priorities For 2009:**

1. Annual inspections of all restaurants.
2. Continuing education to enhance my knowledge of Life safety codes.
3. Work with customers to educate and help bring them into code compliance.

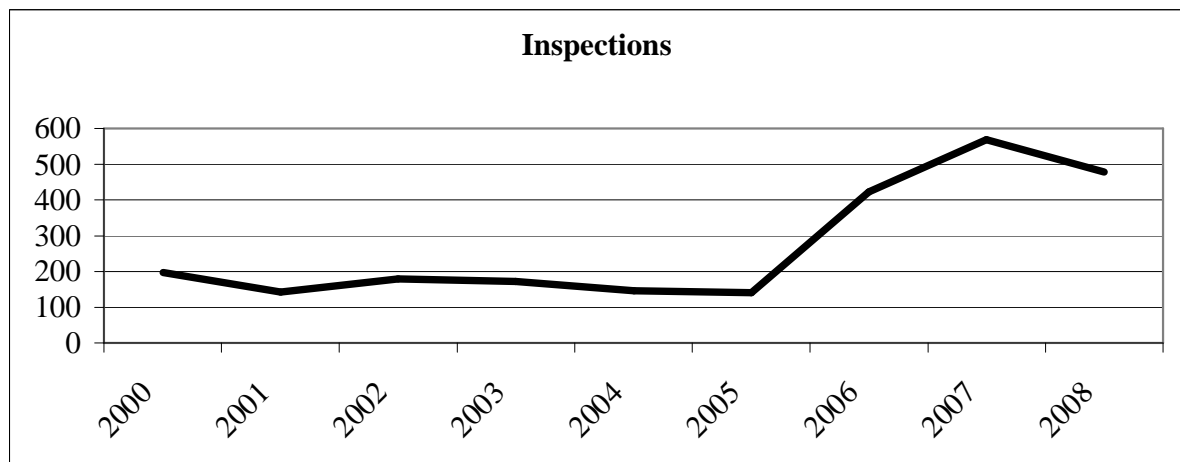
**Inspections for 2008**

479 inspections/re-inspections were conducted for the year. (April through December)

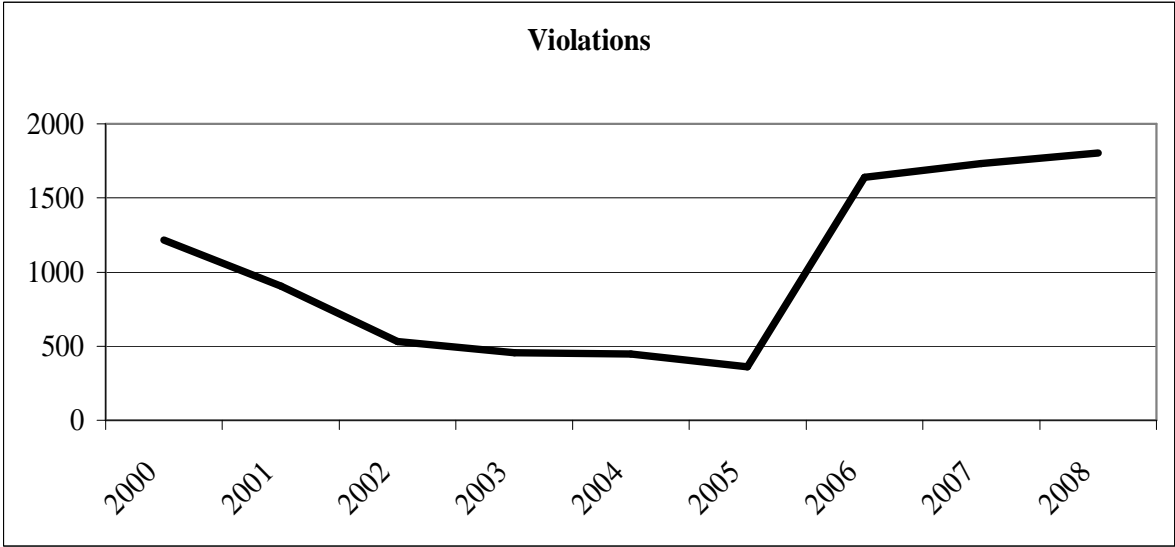
**Violations/Complaints**

1,805 violations and 18 complaints were identified and corrected.

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
<b>Inspections</b>	196	142	179	173	146	141	423 <sup>2</sup>	569 <sup>2</sup>	479 <sup>2</sup>
<b>Violations</b>	1214	904	531	455	447	360	1640	1731	1805
<b>Violations per inspection</b>	6.2	6.4	3.0	2.6	3.1	2.6	3.9	3	3.7
<b>Average inspections per month</b>	16.3	11.8	14.9	14.4	12.2	11.8	35.3	47.4	53.2



<sup>2</sup> 2006-2008 inspection totals includes re-inspections, previous years do not.





➤ **Fire Prevention/Education** - Lt. Mike Bontrager



2008 brought exciting changes to the Fire Prevention/Public Education Bureau and the programs offered in the area elementary schools.

The “Exit Drills in the Home” or EDITH program, traditionally offered in the 1<sup>st</sup> grade, was in its first transition year as we look to move it to the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade level. This transition will take 3 years to complete and consisted of a scaled back version of EDITH to first grade this year. Next year will be the unveiling of a new first grade program with teaching that will feature a puppet presentation that we hope will be more age appropriate and finally, the 3<sup>rd</sup> year we will offer the complete EDITH program to 3<sup>rd</sup> graders and have the 1<sup>st</sup> grade program in place as well. This will expand our impact in the local schools to all 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 4<sup>th</sup> grade classrooms in the city.

We held an Open House in January in conjunction with the First Friday’s Ice Carving Festival, which was well attended. This was an excellent opportunity for the public to observe the fire department and the services we provide in addition to being a



great forum to answer questions. We also continue to provide station tours throughout the year.

Fundraising efforts were a mixed bag with the bureau being notified the \$7,000 grant we requested for a portable LP fire extinguisher training system was denied. Area businesses and service clubs however, have continued to be an ongoing support to our education efforts for which we are grateful. We will continue to pursue other funding means for this system as we believe it will be a useful tool to train the community.

The Kids Safety day at the Elkhart County Fair was again a very successful event with hundreds of kids taking part in the Safety Scavenger Hunt with most of those completing it. In all, it is an excellent venue to disseminate fire safety literature to the children and their parents.

Lastly, the committee has been working to consolidate all public education/fire prevention materials and props in one location. College Avenue station was chosen for that location and a room has been designated for that purpose. This will be helpful in organizing materials to increase efficiency in ordering and rotating stock.

➤ **Promotions/Retirements/Appointments**

As of December 31, 2008, the department is short staffed two for its budget with 51 sworn personnel and 2 civilian.

**Promotions**

Scott McDowell	Battalion Chief	Jan 1
Bruce Nethercutt	Captain	Jan 1
Steffen Schrock	Lieutenant	Jan 1
Travis Peak	Sergeant	Jan 1
Mike Happer	Sergeant	Jan 1
Matt Whitford	Sergeant	Feb 2
Dan Bontrager	Private	Feb 15
Brad Showalter	Private	April 9
Jerod Erb	Private	June 6
Courtney Snyder	Private	Aug 3



**Retirements**

None

**Resignations**

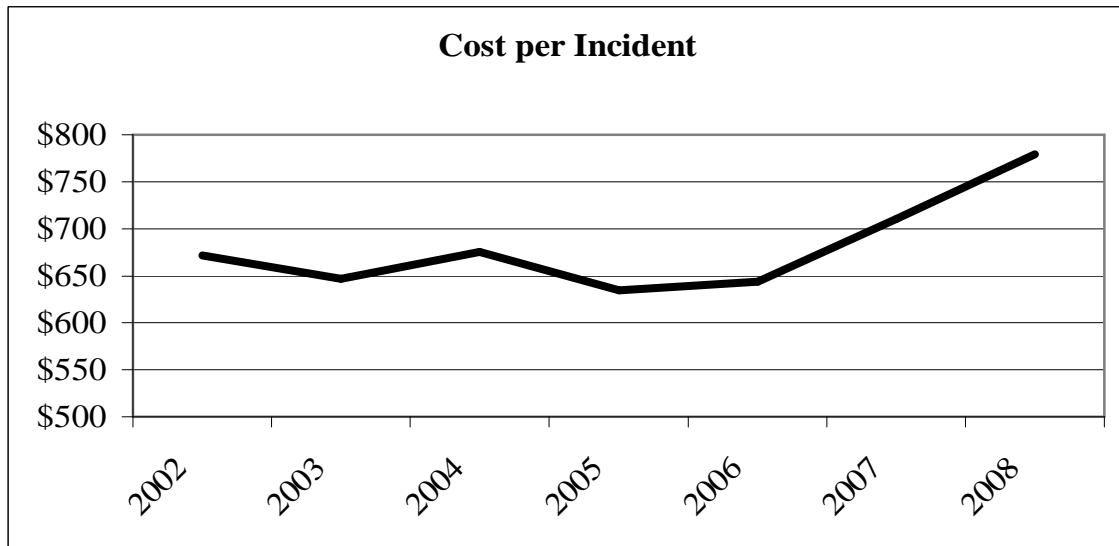
Scott McCrindle	Fire Training Coordinator	May 31
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**Appointments**

John Alheim	Fire Inspector	April 1
Steffen Schrock	Fire Training Coordinator	June 1
Anthony Powell	Fire Training Instructor	Aug 22
Jeremy Johnson	Fire Training Instructor	Aug 22

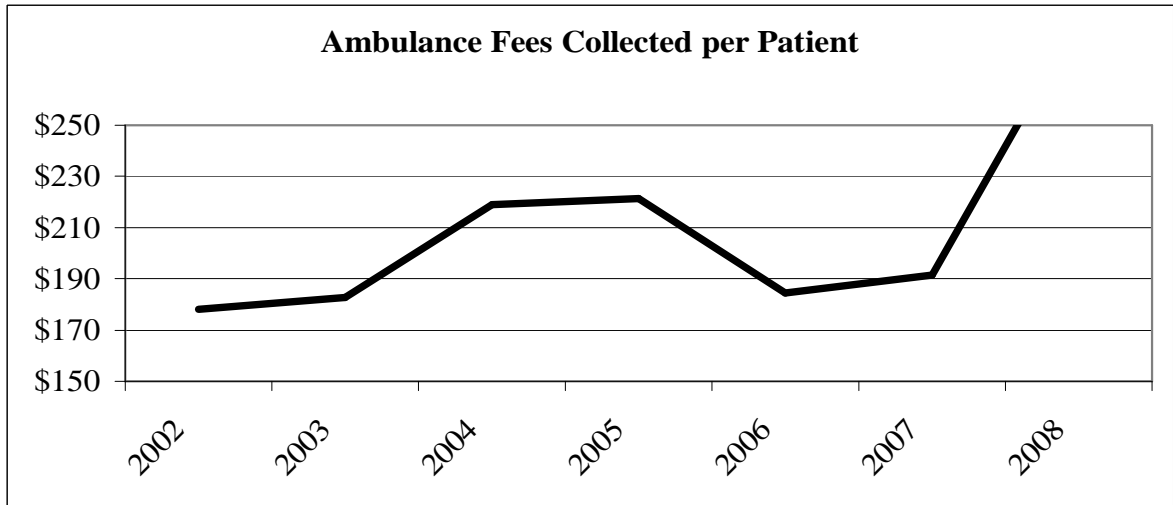
➤ **Budget**

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
<b>Budget</b>	\$2,672,775	\$2,752,957	\$2,902,037	\$2,927,922	\$2,970,900	\$3,269,420	\$3,390,929
<b>Ambulance Fees Collected</b>	\$522,199	\$532,506	\$655,067	\$750,689	\$636,978	\$644,215 <sup>3</sup>	\$672,944 <sup>4</sup>
<b>Fire Budget (minus) Amb. fees</b>	\$2,150,576	\$2,220,451	\$2,246,970	\$2,177,233	\$2,333,922	\$2,625,146	\$2,717,985
<b>Ambulance Fees Collected per patient contact</b>	\$178	\$183	\$219	\$221	\$184	\$191	\$292
<b>Cost per incident</b>	\$672	\$647	\$675	\$634	\$644	\$711	\$779



<sup>3</sup> Revised from 2007 estimate of \$644,270

<sup>4</sup> Estimated



➤ **Summary**

This report conveys the activities of the department for 2008. Additional data may be available upon request.

*Dan Sink*  
*Chief of the Department*