

# Forks Fire Department

## *Prospective New Member Guidebook*



**100 % Volunteer**

Created August 1, 2007  
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*Visit us on the web at [www.forksfd.org](http://www.forksfd.org)*

# *You Can Make A Difference in Your Community!*

*The purpose of this guidebook is to give those persons who have an interest in becoming a volunteer firefighter with the Forks Fire Department an overview of the application process, responsibilities of a firefighter and member benefits. This guidebook will also explain the minimum qualifications and annual training requirements as well as the opportunities for advancement. With this information, the applicant will be able to determine if becoming a firefighter is appropriate for them.*



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Dear Prospective Member:

The men and women of the Forks Hose Company #2 come from all walks of life. They are your neighbors who are there to provide the community with expert professional emergency services 24 hours a day 7 days a week. Whether it's a fire, automobile accident, or a request for EMS, they are always there to help. Whether they are in the middle of dinner, sleeping or spending time with their families they are willing to drop anything to respond.

You will soon find out that belonging to a volunteer fire department brings a tremendous sense of satisfaction and pride. You will have the ability to not only help protect the property of your fellow citizens but also have the ability to save someone's life. There are few opportunities in life that can match the sense of pride that comes from knowing you're making a difference in the lives of others.

You will be provided with all of the tools equipment and training needed to become a firefighter. All you need to bring with you is the desire and commitment to help.

As you read through this guidebook, we hope that you too will see the valuable resources that we provide to the community and decide to join our family.

Thank you for taking the time to pursue the opportunity to join our fire department. If you have any questions please call our Chief's Office at 683-8688.

Sincerely,

*The men and women of the Forks Hose Company #2*

*Proudly serving our Community for over 109 years!*

*Visit us on the web at [www.forksfd.org](http://www.forksfd.org)*

## **Mission Statement**

The mission of the Forks Hose Company #2 is to provide the highest level of emergency medical, fire suppression and rescue services available to those who live, work or visit our community.

## **Organizational Statement**

The Forks Hose Company #2 is located within the Forks Fire District No. 3, in the County of Erie, Town of Cheektowaga and was incorporated on July 25, 1911. The Forks Hose Company #2 exists to preserve life, property, and the environment. Firefighters will respond to fires, EMS calls, Rescue calls, Hazardous Materials Incidents and will participate in any other activities that are deemed to be in the best interest of the citizens of the Forks Fire District #3.

The fire district is governed by a Board of 5 Fire Commissioners who are responsible for several tasks some of which include budgeting of the fire district, purchasing and maintenance of all district equipment, providing insurance coverage for all firefighters and managing the Length of Service Awards Program. The command structure consists of a Chief and three Assistant Chiefs, followed by a Captain, Lieutenant, an EMS officers and a Safety officer.

Membership of the Forks Fire Department is comprised of active and life members. All active firefighters will be classified as either Interior or Exterior. This classification is determined by both the firefighter's level of training and physical status. Exterior firefighters will never enter a hazardous area where an SCBA is required.

The department training program is designed to provide training for all active firefighters to aid them in the discharge of their duties. All new firefighters are required to take a Firefighter-1 and Basic Exterior Firefighting Operations course within their first year before they can be classified as interior firefighters. All firefighters are required to maintain their current level of training. This includes the OSHA mandated 8 hour annual refresher training. Training is conducted at regularly scheduled monthly drills and attendance is mandated according to the fire company By-Laws. Training is also available outside the fire department by other agencies. All line officers will also be required to continue their education above and beyond the requirements of a basic firefighter.

The Incident Command System shall be used at all calls and drills. The incident commander shall manage an incident using the following set of priorities:  
1. Life safety of the emergency responders followed by the public

2. Prevent destruction of property
3. Minimize the effects of an incident on the surrounding environment

The Incident Commander shall request assistance from the appropriate agencies as needed.

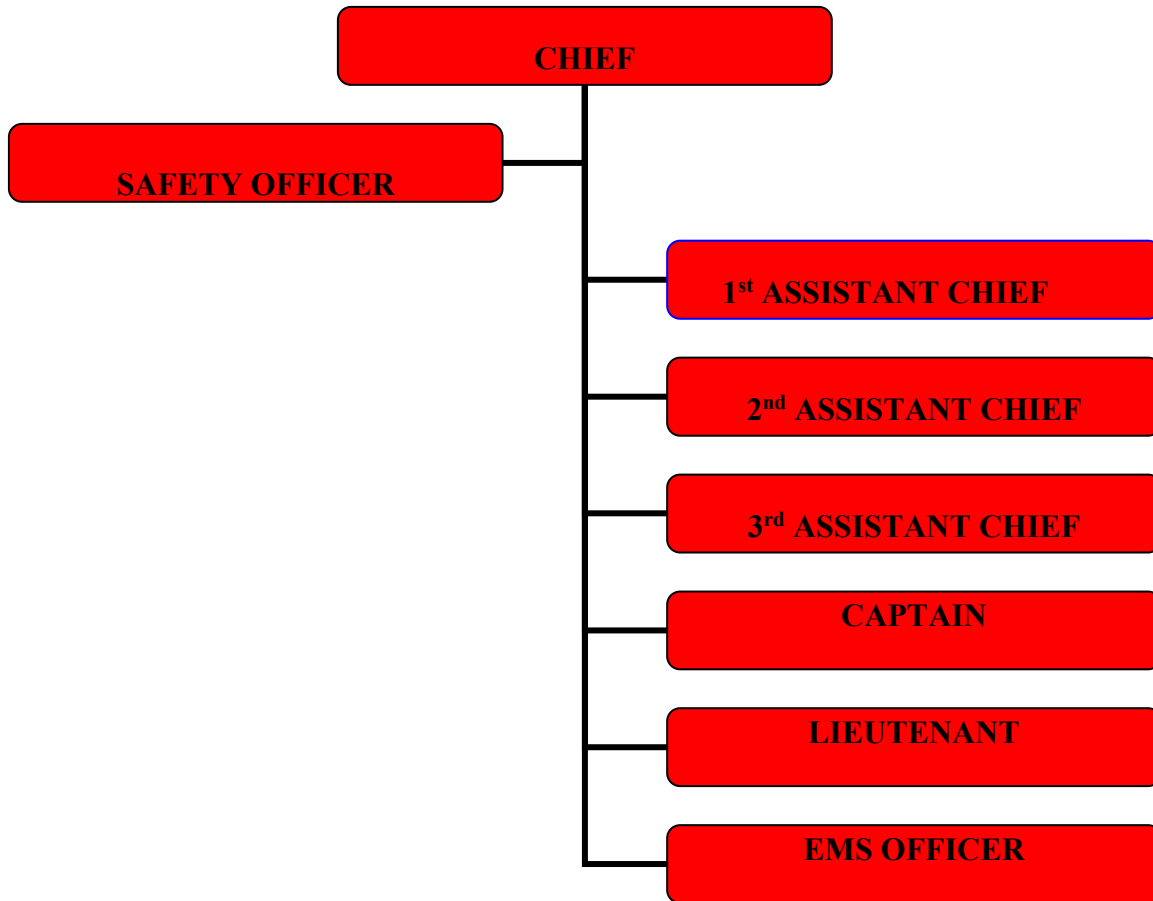
It is the commitment of this department to provide to the best of our ability a safe working environment, prevent accidents illness and fatalities, comply with all applicable laws and regulations, establish safe work habits and establish guidelines to help meet these objectives.

Safety at an emergency scene is a top priority. A fireground accountability system shall be used at all times. Safety officers will immediately stop any activity that could result in an injury to a firefighter. Safety officers will be appointed by the chief and will serve in that capacity until relieved of their responsibilities. If a safety officer is not available at an emergency incident, another qualified firefighter will assume the position for the duration of the incident.

The chief shall establish and maintain a record collection system for keeping such records as injuries, exposures to toxic substances and infectious diseases, membership and training, and any other records deemed as necessary



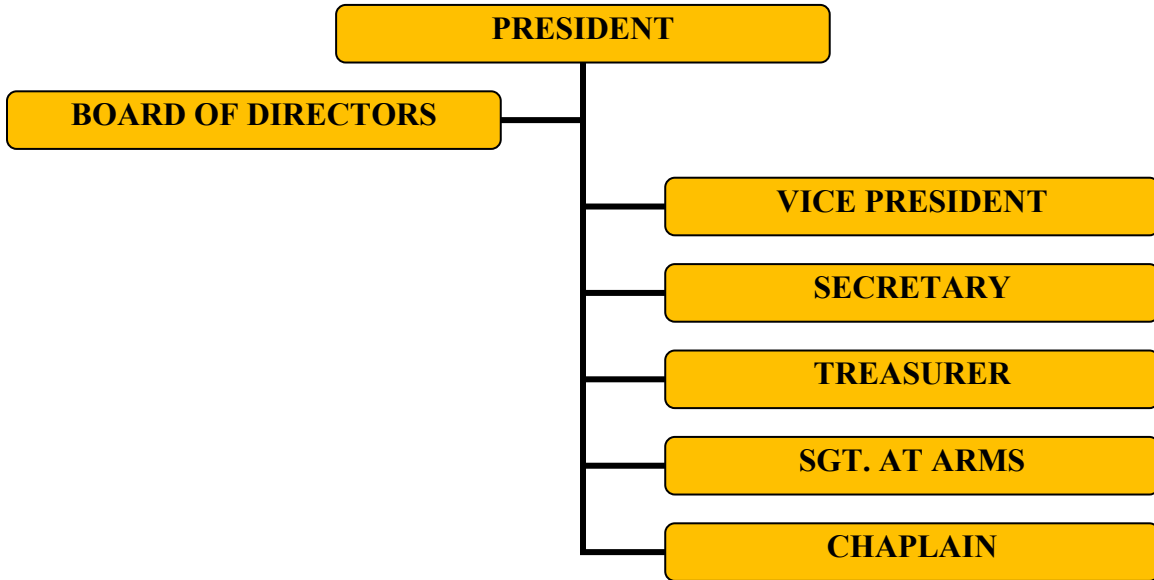
# Organizational Chart for Emergency Scene Operations



At every emergency scene, we follow a strict chain of command. This organizational chart provides a framework for the incident commander to command the operation and account for all of the emergency workers on scene. The following priorities are followed at every emergency scene:

1. Life safety
2. Incident Stabilization
3. Property Conservation

# Organizational Chart for Administration Operations



The administrative side of the fire department manages all of the business of the fire department in regards to social activities and day to day business operations. The fire department holds a department wide meeting on the first Wednesday of every month at 7:00 P.M. The president presides at the meeting and brings members up to date on any new business as well as any ongoing business. All of the company sponsored events as well as the annual fund-drive are managed by the President and his staff.

## Calls for Service

The Forks Fire Department is a 100 % volunteer fire department that responds to between 550 and 600 calls per year. Our main fire station is located at 3330 Broadway at Union Road and our substation is located at the corner of Nagel Drive and South Creek Drive. We do not have scheduled shifts for firefighters. We do not mandate that firefighters be scheduled a shift or to stand by at the fire halls. When a person calls 911, the dispatcher at the 911 center determines what type of emergency service is required and then sends out a page to all of our firefighters with the location and nature of the call.

Once we receive the call on our pagers, we respond to our assigned fire hall and respond to the incident on the appropriate apparatus. The Chief and Assistant Chiefs generally respond to the scene to set up command and to inform the responding units of their assignments.

The Forks Fire Department responds to a variety of types of calls for service. The following is a sample:

- Structure fires
- Vehicle fires
- Hazardous material spills
- EMS requests
- Auto Accidents
- Service calls
- Electrical Emergencies

The Forks Fire Department also responds through mutual aid agreements to neighboring fire districts to provide any needed assistance.

## **The Application Process**

To apply to become an active member of the Forks Fire Department you must meet the following requirements:

- A citizen of the United States of America
- Of good moral character
- Not under eighteen (18) years of age. Anyone under 21 must have written consent from their parent or guardian.
- Not over forty-five (45) years of age unless transferring as a current Active Member of another Fire Company
- You must reside within the boundaries of the Forks Fire District or by reason of your residence in the vicinity of the Forks Fire District or your usual occupation; you will be available to render active service as a volunteer firefighter. The firefighter must get written authorization by his/her employer to respond to alarms.
- You must not have a conviction for an Arson offense or a Sex offense which require a person to register as a sex offender.



If you meet the above requirements you may then complete an application and forward it to the Office of the Chief who will begin the process

- The Chief's Office will then submit an Arson conviction and Sex offense conviction background check to the Erie County Sheriff's Office and a local background investigation form with the application to the Board of Fire Commissioners.
- Once the background checks are completed the prospective member will then be advised to make an appointment for an OSHA physical.
- Once the Fire District receives written notification of the completion of the OSHA physical, the applicant will then be interviewed by the Board of Directors.
- Once the Board of Directors recommends the applicant for membership, the company then formally votes to accept the applicant at a department meeting. A majority vote of the present membership will decide if the applicant is accepted or declined. The name of any person who has been proposed and rejected by the Company will not be resubmitted for membership for six (6) months thereafter.
- Once the member is voted in, the Fire District will then make final approval authorizing the firefighter to become active.
- The applicant is now an official member of the fire department and subject to all rules and By-Laws adopted by the fire department.

## **Requirements of a Forks Firefighter**

There is no previous experience necessary to become a firefighter. All of the training is provided free of charge by the fire district. Once you become a member, you will be expected to attend Firefighter-1 and Basic Exterior Firefighting Operations course and an EMS course within your first year. The following are some additional requirements of firefighters:

- Response to 15% of all alarms on a quarterly basis
- Any member responding to 10-14% of alarms on a quarterly basis will be required to attend one 3 hour stand-by detail each month for the following three consecutive months or they will be subject to bad-standings and possible dismissal

- All Active members who are qualified drivers must attend atleast 1 driver training annually to maintain their qualification as a driver.
- All active members must attend atleast one 3 hour inspection clean-up drill annually.
- Pay Annual Dues (unless Active-Life Member)
- Attendance at Meetings (unless valid excuse)
- One Corporate or Residential Fund Drive and other Mandatory Fundraisers as identified

**Active Firefighters, Interior Qualified** – Must attend 36 hours per calendar year of Firematic and EMS training. The following are mandatory training sessions:

- O.S.H.A. & Bloodborne pathogens = 9 hours
- C.P.R. & A.E.D. annual review = 3 hours
- Fire Attack/ S.C.B.A. = 3 hours
- Haz-Mat = 3 hours
- EMS Review = 3 hours

## **Probationary Firefighters**

All new members voted in by the fire company will be subjected to a Probationary Period for a minimum of one year. During this period, members will be instructed by the Chief how to complete the minimum mandatory training which includes: Firefighter-1 and Basic Exterior Firefighting Operations, EMS course, and American Heart Association Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation or equivalent courses.

\*\*\*\* All courses are subject to availability\*\*\*\*

To successfully complete the Probationary Period, members must:

- Complete the above training courses with a passing score on all exams
- Complete the New Member Checklist with the Chief and/or Training Officer
- Approved off Probation by a 2/3 vote of the “Class 1 – Active” members at a Company Meeting only after a review and recommendation by the Chief.

At the end of the Probation Period, members will then be eligible for issuance of all Forks Fire District #3 uniforms.

## **Member Benefits**

- **Training**

Training in all aspects of emergency services from basic EMS to advanced firefighting, hazardous materials and terrorism. Most courses are certified by the NYS Office of Fire Prevention and Control and the Department of Health. All free!

- **Length of Service Awards Program**

This program offers incentives to earn money towards retirement. You may be eligible to earn up to \$800.00 per month at age 58 after 40 years of active service.

- **Personal Protective Equipment**

As a firefighter you can be sure that you will be issued the top of the line personal protective equipment from head to toe. There is no more important item than firefighter safety.

- **State of the Art Fire Apparatus**

The apparatus you will be riding on is all state of the art with all of the latest tools and equipment onboard available for your use.

- **Supplemental Insurance**

The Forks Fire District affords to each active firefighter a supplemental accidental death and dismemberment insurance policy in the event you are injured in the line of duty. Each member is also covered by workmen's compensation and the VFBL. This affords both the firefighter and their family financial security in the unlikely event that they are injured or killed in the line of duty.

- **Social Events**

Members of the Forks Fire Department enjoy social events such as Firefighters Day in the Park, summer picnics, attending conventions and parades as well as our inspection and installation of officer's dinners.

## **Contact Information**

To obtain more information about becoming a volunteer firefighter we can be contacted at 683-8688 or on the web at [www.forksfd.org](http://www.forksfd.org).

*“We are waiting to hear from you”*

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