

# Fire Department of Mt. Juliet

## Annual Report

2017



*Fire Chief / Fire Marshal Jamie Luffman*

*Deputy Fire Chief Chris Allen*

*Assistant Fire Chief Shawn Donovan*

<https://www.facebook.com/mjfiredepartment/>

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*Be Safe; Be Successful; Be Nice*

*“The man who really counts in the world is the doer, not the mere critic - the man who actually does the work, even if roughly and imperfectly, not the man who only talks or writes about how it ought to be done.”*

*Theodore Roosevelt*

## **About the Department**

The Fire Department of Mt. Juliet (FDMJ) was formed in 2013 to provide fire, rescue, and non-transport medical services to the rapidly growing City of Mt. Juliet. Prior to FDMJ's formation, the Wilson County Emergency Management Agency (WEMA) provided all emergency services within the city. Mt. Juliet had a volunteer fire department in the 1960s and 1970s. That department was eventually absorbed by WEMA in the 1980s. WEMA continues to provide ambulance transport services in Mt. Juliet. FDMJ and WEMA assist each other through automatic and mutual aid agreements.

FDMJ is a combination (career and volunteer) municipal fire department. FDMJ entered service on September 30, 2013, with 1 station, 2 apparatus, 12 paid personnel, and over 30 volunteer personnel. We have grown to 3 stations, 2 staffed and 1 volunteer. FDMJ maintains an ISO Public Protection Class of 5.

FDMJ currently employs 21 full-time shift personnel, including 3 Captains, 3 Lieutenants, and 15 Firefighters, who are assigned to 3 different shifts. We have 7 personnel assigned to each shift and our minimum staffing is 6 personnel. Our full-time personnel staff Squad 103 and Engine 104.

FDMJ has 30 volunteer personnel, including 4 Lieutenants and 26 firefighters. Our volunteer personnel staff Ladder 111 and Tower 114 when available. Our volunteer personnel account for at least 50% of our staffing at structure fires.

FDMJ is led by a full-time Fire Chief / Fire Marshal, a part-time Deputy Fire Chief of Operations, and a part-time Assistant Chief of Training and Volunteer Personnel.

## A Look Inward

For any organization to be credible, it must be willing to look inward and honestly identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT). FDMJ's Senior Staff spent time carefully looking at our department and identified the following:

### **Strengths:**

- Motivated paid and volunteer staff
- Staff members willing to take on extra duties and responsibilities
- Organization isn't hampered or impeded by tradition
- Incredible support from residents and businesses
- Well-funded external training program
- Use of part-time command staff provides a cost effective leadership team
- Department embraces a culture of safety
- State of the art radio equipment
- Emergency Medical Program partnership with WEMA
- Interagency cooperation between FDMJ, WEMA, and the Lebanon Fire Department

### **Weaknesses:**

- No paid staffing for ladder apparatus
- No reserve apparatus
- Frequent overlapping calls, leaving no units in service (718 / 26.89%)
- Inadequate facilities
- Employee compensation below local market
- Existing property tax rate does not fully fund current operations

- Existing property tax rate does not provide revenue to construct, equip or staff a north station
- Ladder 111 is housed in an unheated, wooden outbuilding that was not designed to house fire apparatus

**Opportunities:**

- Incredible grass roots support from residents, business owners and non-profit leaders for increased services
- Department is viewed as a good place to work because it is new
- Members see opportunity for advancement as the department grows to meet demands for service

**Threats:**

- Limited career staffing may delay the response to life threatening emergencies, as FDMJ can only staff 2 engine companies
- Limited career staffing may delay rescues above the first-floor, as FDMJ is not able to guarantee the response of a ladder truck
- Lack of a reserve engine means that FDMJ may not be able to reach all addresses when one of the two front line engines is out of service and FDMJ is forced to use a ladder truck in place of an engine
- Ladder 111 is subject to damage during severe weather
- Call volume will continue to increase as population grows when new residential developments are completed
- Enhanced risk to the occupants existing and planned commercial, multi-family and assisted living developments due to unstaffed ladder trucks.

## Significant Incidents

- **01/07/2017:** A wind-driven fire on a frigid day heavily damaged a residential structure at 416 Parish Place. Icing conditions hampered operations due to frozen hoses, sidewalks and streets.
- **01/28/2017:** A vehicle exited I-40 at a high rate of speed, went airborne, and entered the rear wall of a strip shopping center at 151 Adams Lane, causing the structure to catch fire. The fire was contained to a single occupancy.
- **03/05/2017:** A large brush fire on Old Lebanon Dirt Road extended to several outbuildings before being controlled.
- **03/19/2017:** A fire damaged 1 classroom at Mt. Juliet Elementary School. Seven classrooms suffered water damage.
- **05/04/2017:** A fire destroyed a large structure at 605 Davis Drive. Livestock died after becoming trapped in the structure.
- **05/19/2017:** A fire damaged a manufacturing business at 98 Belinda Parkway.
- **08/13/2017:** A fire damaged a 3<sup>rd</sup> floor apartment in the Lifestyles Community in Providence.
- **08/30/2017:** FDMJ assisted WEMA at a challenging house fire on a very hot, humid day, in an unincorporated area of Mt. Juliet. Responding FDMJ resources included 1 engine, 3 volunteer members, and 2 chief officers.
- **10/16/2017:** A wind-driven fire heavily damaged a residential structure at 3022 Clyde Circle.
- **11/24/2017:** A fire damaged 1 patient room at Mt. Juliet Health Care. Multiple patient rooms were damaged by smoke & water. 3 patients were transported to the hospital, and 1 wing of patients had to be relocated due to smoke and water damage.
- **12/04/2017:** A fire damaged a garage used as a residence at 701 West Division. A 72-year-old male died as a result of the fire and FDMJ firefighters located his body just inside the entrance to the building.
- **12/26/2017:** FDMJ & WEMA personnel saved the life of a one-year-old male who was brought to FDMJ Station 1 in respiratory arrest (not breathing).

## Notable Accomplishments

- Mike Leal was promoted from Lieutenant to Captain and now serves as the C-Shift Commander.
- Bryan Travis was promoted from firefighter to Lieutenant and now serves as the Officer in Charge of Squad 103-A.
- Jeff Adam, Mark Chasteen and Tyler Benefield were hired as fulltime firefighters.
- A brush truck was placed into service using a former Mt. Juliet Public Works vehicle.
- Two new command vehicles were placed into service, greatly enhancing fire ground management capabilities and chief officer coverage.
- Volunteer Fire Station 2, which houses Ladder 111, was moved from the Environmental Science Complex to a structure owned and graciously donated by Green Hill Church.
- FDMJ held our first ever Fire / Rescue Operations 101 event in conjunction with Fire Prevention Month. Vice Mayor / Commissioner James Maness and Commissioner Brian Abston attended and participated in hands on firefighting and vehicle extrication exercises.
- Ten new volunteer firefighters joined the department.
- Numerous paid and volunteer personnel participated in the annual 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb in Nashville. Commissioner Abston attended this event with FDMJ.
- FDMJ provided standby fire and emergency medical services for several large events, including the Great American Solar Eclipse and the annual July 4<sup>th</sup> Fireworks Show.
- Following a competitive bidding process, “Holmatro” brand battery powered cutters, spreaders and a ram, along with Res-Q-Jacks, were purchased, upgrading Engine 104 to Squad status, giving FDMJ two well-equipped rescue pumpers.
- Pre-connected attack lines on Engine 104 and Squad 103 were upgraded to “High Combat” brand fire hose.
- Development of Standard Operating Guidelines and other written policies.
- Operative IQ software was purchased to manage daily apparatus and medical equipment checks

### Incident Statistics

<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>2674</b>
<b>Total Fire Incidents</b>	<b>983</b>
<b>Total Structure Fires</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Total Medical Incidents</b>	<b>1691</b>
<b>Total Incidents - Station 1's Territory</b>	<b>1350</b>
<b>Total Incidents - Station 3's Territory</b>	<b>1323</b>
<b>Pre-Incident Property Value</b>	<b>\$38,371,943.00</b>
<b>Value of Property Saved</b>	<b>\$36,140,128.00</b>
<b>Civilian Fire Related Deaths</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Average Response Time - City Wide</b>	<b>06:45</b>
<b>Total Overlapping Calls</b>	<b>718 / 26.89%</b>
<b>E-104 Total Responses<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>969</b>
<b>S-103 Total Responses</b>	<b>1138</b>
<b>L-111 Total Responses</b>	<b>159</b>
<b>T-114 Total Responses</b>	<b>82</b>
<b>Chief 101 Total Responses</b>	<b>111</b>
<b>Chief 102 Total Responses</b>	<b>80</b>

As one of the fastest growing cities in the United States, Mt. Juliet has seen rapid growth in both residential and commercial occupancies. Rapid growth can be a double-edged sword. Although the city, including the fire department, benefit from increased revenue, emergency services have been taxed by increased demands for service. Call volumes typically increases before additional revenue is received. The chart below lists the top 10 occupancies / complexes / locations measured by FDMJ Calls for Service in 2017.

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Common Place Name</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Calls for Service</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Del Webb Community</b>	<b>Multiple locations</b>	<b>148</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Maristone Nursing Home</b>	<b>140 Providence Trail</b>	<b>88</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Interstate 40</b>	<b>MM 222.8 to MM 230</b>	<b>85</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Providence Market Place</b>	<b>401 S. Mt. Juliet Road</b>	<b>82</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Rutland Place Assisted Living</b>	<b>435 NW Rutland Road</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Mt. Juliet Health Care</b>	<b>2650 N. Mt. Juliet Road</b>	<b>62</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Paddock's Shopping Complex</b>	<b>300 Pleasant Grove</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Under Armour Distribution</b>	<b>13 Athletes Way</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>Stoner Creek Apartments</b>	<b>119 Belinda Parkway</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>Carrick Glen Nursing Home</b>	<b>100 Carrick Court</b>	<b>31</b>

<sup>1</sup> E-104 was out of service several times for extended maintenance.

## Community Risk Reduction Program

Although impossible to measure, the most successful emergency response is the one that never happens. FDMJ places significant emphasis on preventing emergencies from happening through our Community Risk Reduction (CRR) Program. FDMJ's CRR accomplishments would not be possible without the dedicated and tireless efforts of our members. FDMJ A-Shift Firefighter Kenny Hudson heads FDMJ's CRR Program. Kenny started his FDMJ career as a volunteer firefighter and quickly took the initiative to develop a CRR program from scratch. After being hired by FDMJ as a paid firefighter, Kenny was able to devote more time and energy to our CRR program. The accomplishments listed below would not have been possible without Kenny's passion, drive, persistence, and leadership. FDMJ has four certified Child Protective Seat Technicians, including: Kenny Hudson, Mike McCleary, Max Ambriz, and Brandon Robinson. Statistical results from our 2017 CRR Program are below.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Car Seat installations/ inspections</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>Smoke Detector installations</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Fire Station Tours</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Fire Apparatus Demonstrations / Fire Safety Talks / School Visits</b>	<b>64</b>

## Explorer Program

Since January of 2014, FDMJ has sponsored Explorer Post 246. Explorer programs are part of the Boy Scouts of America's Learning for Life Program. FDMJ's explorer program has been an overwhelming success. So far, five FDMJ explorers have become firefighters with FDMJ, and several others are pursuing fire service education and careers. Several paid and volunteer fire officers, firefighters, and one WEMA firefighter, donate their time to serve as Advisors for the Explorer Program.

## Codes Enforcement Program

In Mt. Juliet, the Fire Chief serves as the Fire Code Official, a position commonly referred to as “Fire Marshal”. (Mt. Juliet previously had a separate Fire Code Official, however that position was eliminated by city administration.) In response, Fire Chief Luffman quickly sought training and certification to fulfill the complex and time-consuming duties of Fire Code Official.

By late 2016, Chief Luffman had received training and certification by Tennessee Firefighting Personnel Standards & Education. He obtained the license of Fire Inspector, recognized by both the National Fire Protection Association & National Board on Fire Service Professional Qualifications. In early 2017, Chief Luffman met with the new Mt. Juliet Chief Building Official and began to outline the roles & responsibilities of the Fire Marshal with the Codes Department.

The results of that meeting were as follows:

- Fire Marshal Construction Development Guide was revised.
- Four Executive Summaries were drafted and passed as ordinances.
  - Add Mt. Juliet’s requirements to the adopted TCA Title 68, Chapter 105, Health, Safety, & Environmental Protection for Blasting & Explosives.
  - Required monitored fire alarm systems for all new & renovated construction as they occur, as supported by International Fire Code 2012 adopted by the City of Mt. Juliet.
  - Required monitored fire alarm systems in Subdivision Clubhouse/Commons/Amenity buildings, as supported by IFC 2012.
  - Fee recovery program implemented, allowing FDMJ to bill for some calls.

- Technical Review Meetings required for the purpose of approving emergency vehicle access requirements, fire suppression system plans, and fire alarm system plans.
- Assumed responsibility for all life safety inspections, fire line inspections, fire alarm system plans, blasting/explosives area inspections, commercial burn inspections, residential open burning permits, tent/special event inspections and fire plans/drawings review.

**2017 Accomplishments:**

<b>Codes Enforcement Ordinances Approved</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Fire Inspections Conducted:</b>	<b>236</b>
<b>Burn Permits Issued</b>	<b>437</b>

**Training Program**

FDMJ believes strongly in the value of internal and external training. As a young organization, we are not hampered by “that is how we have always done it”. We strive to develop, hone and maintain our skills at all levels of the organization. Assistant Chief Shawn Donovan, who is employed part time by FDMJ and full-time by the City of Franklin Fire Department, leads our Training Program. Some of the highlights of our Training Program in 2017 include:

- The Tennessee Fire and Codes Academy (TFACA) recognized FDMJ for our high level of participation in TFACA training classes. FDMJ members participated in 1520 hours of training in TFACA courses between July 1, 2016 and June 30, 2017.
- FDMJ hosted a five-day, in-house vehicle extrication class, taught by instructors from the Tennessee Fire and Codes Academy.

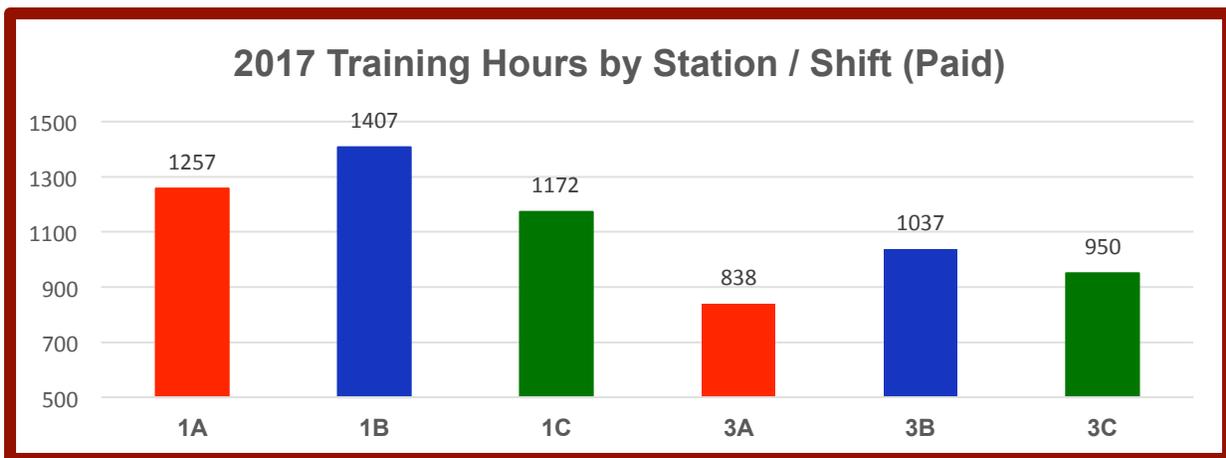
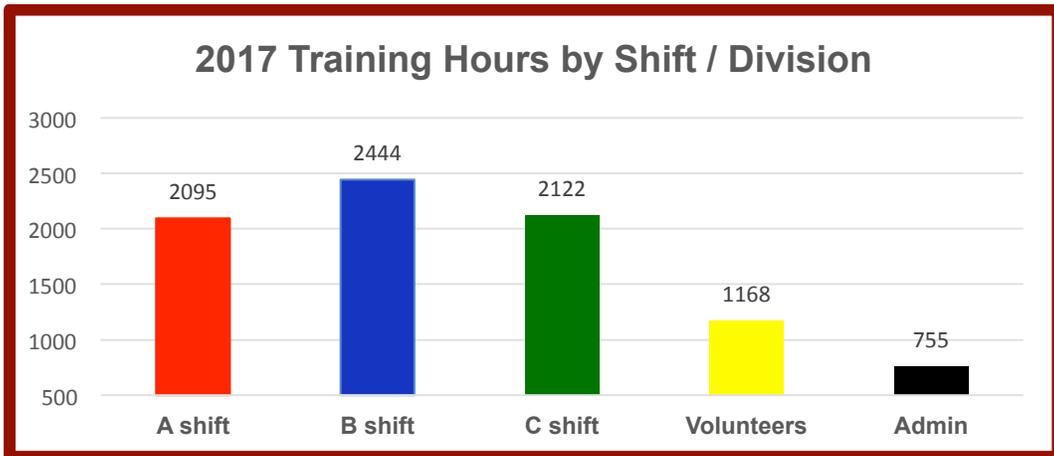
- Numerous FDMJ personnel attended external hands on training events, which included:
  - Firehouse Expo
  - Tennessee River Weekend
  - Brad Hutcherson Memorial Fire School
  - Fire / Rescue International
- To aid with rescues during flash flooding, five FDMJ members attended Swift Water Rescue Training in the Cherokee National Forest,
- FDMJ members earned a total of 42 new Tennessee Commission on Firefighting Certifications, as summarized below:

**Tennessee Commission on Firefighting**

**2017 New Certifications**

Certification	Total
<b>Hazardous Materials Awareness</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Hazardous Materials Operations</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Firefighter I</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Firefighter II</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Pumper Driver/Operator</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Aerial Apparatus Driver/Operator</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Fire Officer I</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Fire Officer II</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Fire Officer III</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Fire Instructor I</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>1403 Live Burn Instructor</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Incident Safety Officer</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Fire Investigator I</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>

FDMJ personnel attended 8584 hours of training in 2017. The charts below summarize some of training accomplishments.



## 2017 Staff Recognition

Each December, FDMJ holds a Christmas Party / Awards Ceremony. Our 2017 event was made possible through generous donations from:

- ProCare Restoration
- Del Webb Neighborhood Watch
- Publix South
- Martin's BBQ
- Rebecca Hassler
- Linn Yeager

This year, we honored the following FDMJ members:

- **Paid Firefighter of the Year**                      FF / EMT-P Andy Hassler
- **Volunteer Firefighter of the Year**              FF / AEMT Derek Hyde
- **Linn Yeager Award**                                  Rehab 23 President Linn Yeager
- **Dylan Adams Award**                                FF / AEMT Max Ambriz
- **Chief's Award**                                        Lt. Drew Noland

In 2017, we awarded one *Crew Award* for lifesaving efforts resulting in a full recovery from a cardiac arrest:

- **06/30/2017:** Lt. Drew Noland, Lt. Bryan Travis, FF. Max Ambriz, Explorer Zach Smith, WEMA FF / Paramedic Tim Owings, WEMA FF / AEMT Nick Davis

In 2017, the City of Mt. Juliet recognized two of our members as Employee's of the Month.

- July Employee of the Month                      FF Max Ambriz
- August Employee of the Month                    FF Caleb Roberts

## Funding Shortfall / Revenue Generation

FDMJ currently addresses its financial needs by diligently managing a Board of Commissioners (BOC) approved annual budget, which allows access to the balance remaining in the Emergency Services Fund (ESF). That fund balance exists because property taxes were collected for several years prior to the formation of the fire department. The ESF balance is decreasing each fiscal year to cover the deficit brought on by growth. The growth is represented by an increased number of service calls, BOC approved expansion from 1 to 2 career stations and the additional personnel needed to successfully address those increases.

FDMJ and City Leaders agree that Mt. Juliet needs a third staffed fire station, located in north Mt. Juliet. Opening an additional fire station will require funding to hire 15 additional shift employees, purchase and equip a fire engine, and construct / furnish a fire station.

In an effort to reduce FDMJ's budget deficit, FDMJ leadership has pursued several initiatives to bring in revenue. In 2017, with approval from the BOC, FDMJ began billing insurance companies for some calls for service, including auto accidents, vehicle fires and structure fires. FDMJ also received income from exempt jurisdiction fees (\$48,827.50). Those fees are only received for structures over 3 stories in height. Finally, FDMJ received several small donations from local businesses. FDMJ did pursue several larger grant opportunities; however, none were awarded. Those efforts will assist with meeting minor financial needs, but they will not solve FDMJ's budget deficit or support current obligations and expenses. Furthermore, fees, donations and grants will not provide the funds necessary to expand operations to a third station.

## **Budget Priorities**

FDMJ's senior staff has identified the following budget priorities for Fiscal-Year 2019, which begins on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018:

- Retain three SAFER Grant funded employees.
- Hire 12 part-time employees to guarantee 24/7/365 staffing of Tower 114.
- Purchase and equip a late model pumper to serve as a dedicated reserve engine.
- Complete critical renovations and repairs to Station 3 so that it can be habitable for at least 10 more years and make it suitable for male and female firefighters.
- Address employee compensation and pay compression so that FDMJ can retain current staff and attract well-qualified candidates as vacancies arise.
- Work with the BOC to identify and implement a long-term sustainable solution to funding the construction, equipping and staffing of the north side fire station.