



**WESTFIELD VOLUNTEER  
FIRE DEPARTMENT**

**3386 OLD WESTFIELD RD.**

**WESTFIELD, NC 27053**

**(336)351-2576**

**Jonathan Sutphin  
Chief**

**Jordan Smith  
President of the Board**

**Matt Martin  
First Responder Captain**



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Inc.**



# **Westfield Volunteer Fire Department Newsletter**

**Volume 1 Issue 4**

**4th Quarter, 2021**

## **What's Inside**

- **The Changing State of Rural Fire Service**
- **Bonfire Season Safety Tips**
- **Calendar of Events**
- **WVFD Prepares for Light Rescue Capability**

**We are always  
looking for  
new members!**  
  
**Stop by on Sundays or  
contact a member for  
more information!**





## **The New Age of Volunteers**



**As we get older, we tend to hear the phrase “back in the old days” or “when I was growing up” more and more. Those phrases have never been truer than in today’s volunteer fire service. You see, the fire service is similar to any other business, non-profit, or any other type of organization. Change ALWAYS takes place whether we like it or not. As leaders, we have to understand a better future never starts by being complacent, but by adapting to what the present is offering. As officers in the Westfield Volunteer Fire Department, adapting to our current environment has helped us prepare for the future.**

**Thirty to forty years ago in the rural areas of our state, the volunteer fire service was thriving. When our community faced an emergency, farmers were able to leave their fields and help their neighbors in a time of need. Business leaders allowed their workers (volunteer firefighters) to leave work to answer an emergency call. People weren’t as strapped for time as they are now. Teenagers were not pulled in so many directions as they are in today’s society. Many volunteer departments did not have trouble filling a 25 - 30 man roster. Then it seems like overnight, everything changed..... There were not as many farmers around, business leaders needed their employees at work all the time, kids started playing travel ball and video games. For the rural fire departments, all of these items hurt the volunteer service. Don’t get me wrong, these are just a few of the different aspects that have hurt the volunteer service over the years. The WVFD has also felt these burdens over the last 10 plus years. At that time, the leadership of the department started looking into how to overcome these setbacks.**



## From the desk of the Fire Chief, Continued

**Roughly five years ago, the WVFD began a paid staffing program to better serve and protect our citizens during the daytime hours. This program has worked well and the fire department continues to adapt to the needs of this program as they arise. As of now, we have 3 paid staffers that work three days a week. These employees work very hard to ensure that our equipment is ready to respond at any time, our trucks are clean and ready to be used, our building is in good condition, and our pre-plans and water points are all up to date. These team members put in many hours relieving volunteers to be able to use that time to do other productive things for the department (training, community / department projects, community events, etc). We've learned that our paid staffers keep our volunteers from getting burned out from having to do all the behind the scene work at the station. Our paid staffers are paid on a scale of \$10.00 - \$15.00 per hour depending on their training and the certifications they bring to our fire district. When the department has paid staff working, we can guarantee one truck and one firefighter will be responding to any emergency in less than 1 minute after receiving the call. We have found with this staffing program, our volunteers better understand the fire service, they have been able to attend more training and better understand fire tactics, they are participating in more community events, and they are able to do more behind the scene activities to ensure the department is moving forward.**

**The next step in ensuring the Westfield citizens the best possible fire service started at the beginning of 2021. At that time the officers started thinking of ways we can get more volunteer firefighters in our department. Over the years we have brainstormed many different ideas on how to accomplish this. At this time, we started applying for different federal, state, and private grants that help recruit new members to our department. One of the grants we applied for was the SAFER (Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response) grant through the federal government. On September 10th, we received word that we will be getting this grant for \$163,000 over the next 4 years. The SAFER program provides funding directly to fire departments to assist in increasing the number of firefighters to help communities meet standards and attain 24-hour staffing to provide adequate fire protection from fire, and to fulfill traditional missions of fire departments.**



## From the desk of the Fire Chief, Continued

**The objectives of the SAFER program are to assist local fire departments with staffing and deployment capabilities to respond to emergencies and assure that communities have adequate protection from fire and fire-related hazards. The Westfield Volunteer Fire Department will accomplish this by improving staffing and deployment capabilities, so we can more effectively and safely respond to emergencies. A few items that are on the grant include:**

- 1. New SCBA's and Facemasks**
- 2. Incentives for Volunteer firefighters to respond to calls**
- 3. Incentives for Volunteers to attend training**
- 4. New outdoor LED sign to replace the old sign to better keep our community informed**
- 5. Funds to administer the grant**

**Over the years, change has happened to the volunteer fire service and the Westfield Volunteer Fire Department has tried its best to keep up with the needs of its rural fire district at the lowest possible cost to the taxpayer. By accepting this grant, we have begun the process of bringing on new recruits, replacing older equipment, training our volunteers to be ready for what they will experience, and giving incentives for volunteers to run emergency calls. We would like to thank the SAFER program for what they will be providing our community over the next four years and the opportunity they are providing for the Westfield Volunteer Fire Department to grow.**



**WVFD is proud to announce that we will soon be implementing a Light Rescue service. This is another great benefit for our community's safety! We are looking forward to being able to supply the Westfield area with even stronger response capabilities!**



## Safety First

Who loves to sit around a nice bonfire on one of these cool crisp fall nights?? I sure do! Roasting smores and telling ghost stories around the fire is a great fall tradition but be sure to celebrate safely. Always keep pets and children a safe distance away from fires. Keep a bucket of water or garden hose handy in case of accident.

### DO'S

**POSITION THE BONFIRE** well away from houses, garages, sheds, fences, overhead cables, trees and shrubs -15m is usually a safe distance.

Make sure the **BONFIRE IS STABLE** and will not collapse.

Ensure everyone is a **SAFE DISTANCE AWAY** (15m) from the fire and children are supervised at all times.

Keep **BUCKETS OF WATER**, a garden hose or a fire extinguisher nearby in case of an emergency.

**POUR WATER** on the remains of the bonfire before leaving.

**KEEP PETS INDOORS** during bonfire night.

### DONT'S

**DO NOT** burn the following: Tyres, Cylinders, Canisters, Aerosols, Paints, Plastics, Rubber & Foam filled furniture.

**NEVER** use flammable liquids to light a bonfire.

**NEVER** light or store fireworks near a bonfire.

**NEVER** leave a bonfire unattended.





## WVFD Toy Drive

**It's hard to believe the holidays are already upon us! Around here we always look forward to the holidays and our annual toy drive. The toy drive is a long standing tradition here in Westfield and we like to see it grow every year! Starting the week of Thanksgiving we will begin collecting toys and toiletry items for the children in our community. Donations can be made at the Family Dollar in Westfield, or dropped off at the fire station any Sunday**





## **ISO Rating Update**

**Three years ago, the Westfield Volunteer Fire Department worked very hard at lowering its fire insurance rating for all homeowners living within five miles of the department. One of the requirements of the inspection dealt with joint training with neighboring departments. The WVFD is required to participate in at least three training sessions a year with all five of our neighboring departments. Another expectation for one of the training sessions is to ensure we can flow 1250 gallons of water a minute for 1 hour, within 1.5 miles of a water point. Through this training exercise, we were able to flow 71,000 gallons of water in one hour using the equipment listed below. The reason these training sessions are so important is because of two major components of the fire insurance rating process.**

**1 – Neighboring departments must work well with one another and be familiar with each other’s operations and equipment while working an emergency scene. While working with one another on a scene, each department should be able to trust one another when working in dangerous situations.**

**2 – Each department must be able to flow large amounts of water. If a department is in a situation where they must flow thousands of gallons of water to control a fire, they must be prepared and understand what the process will look like.**



## ISO Rating Update

In August, our department arranged training sessions that involved multiple departments utilizing pumpers and tankers to ensure these training requirements were carried out properly. The apparatuses that were used on this exercise were:

- 1. Westfield VFD** – One Engine flowing 1250 GPM's, One Engine stationed at the Ring Road water point filling trucks, Two 1500 gallons tankers moving water from the Old Westfield road water point back to where water was being flowed.
- 2. Bannertown VFD** – One Engine flowing 1250 GPM' through LDH (large diameter hose) to Westfield's engine 400' away.
- 3. Pilot Knob VFD**– One 2800 gallon tanker moving water from the Ring road water point back to where water was being flowed
- 4. Double Creek VFD**– One 2000 gallon tanker moving water from the Ring road water point back to where water was being flowed
- 5. Four-Way VFD (Flat Rock)** – One pump truck stationed at the water point on Old Westfield road filling tankers. One 1500 gallon tanker moving water from the Ring road water point back to where water was being flowed.



## ISO Rating Update

**When a structure fire happens in the Westfield Fire District there will be a minimum of four departments dispatched to the scene (four departments in Surry County and six departments in Stokes County). These departments train together, meet and plan together, and fellowship together. The departments that surround us are not just other fire departments but they are our teammates that work alongside us to solve problems and help in emergency situations. With the amount of water that is coming to the scene from other departments, along with the WVFD's water that we bring to the scene, and the 39 water points in our district, the WVFD can flow large amounts of water when needed. Thank you to the departments that brought equipment and participated in this training.**

**A well trained and equipped fire department not only saves you in emergencies but can save you money on your homeowners insurance as well. For more information on how ISO ratings effect our community please contact your local fire department.**





# October 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10 Business Meeting	11	12 Surry Co. Chiefs Meeting	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21 Monthly Training	22	23
24	25	26 Stokes Co. Association Meeting	27	28	29	30
31						



# November 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14 Business Meeting	15	16 Surry County Chiefs Meeting	17	18 Monthly Training	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30 Stokes Co. Association Meeting				



# December 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12 Business Meeting	13	14 Surry Co. Chiefs Meeting	15	16 Monthly Training	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24 Toy Drive Distribution	25 Christmas
26	27	28 Stokes Co. Association Meeting	29	30	31 New Years Eve	