Administration

Incident Reporting

Purpose

In order to properly document services provided by our Department, formal written reports are required each time we provide service. The collection of fire data is imperative to support the overall planning and management functions of a modern fire department. Incident reports must be factual, legible and complete in content. The Pennsauken Fire Department utilizes a standardized form developed to follow the guidelines of the National Fire Incident Reporting System.

Scope

Department Wide

References
1. National Fire Incident Reporting System Handbook, USFA.
2. Firehouse Software Version 7.3.15 Administrative Reference, Visionary Systems.
3. Fire Incident Report Instruction Manual, Battalion Chief Richard M. Cornforth

Definitions
1. **Call for service:** A call for service shall be classified as a request either internal or external to provide emergency or non-emergency service. Formal dispatches, radio reports, walk-ins or telephone alarms are all calls for service. A county fire radio incident number will be requested for each call for service.
2. **Entry:** Data entry into the station desktop computer.
3. **Supplemental Narrative:** A narrative report used to document conditions present and actions of personnel for future reference and documentation. This form will be completed for all incidents using the approved department format.

Procedure

A. General Requirements

1. Fire incident reports must be written every time members answer calls for service. If not formally dispatched, request an incident number to be generated via the F-5 radio frequency and announce the location and nature of the assignment.

2. Handwritten fire incidents reports shall be completed immediately after all incidents.

   a. Minor incidents: The first Company Officer to arrive at an incident will retain all incident report writing responsibility.

   b. Major Incidents: The first Company Officer to arrive at an incident will retain all report writing responsibility along with the Incident Commander.

3. The lead Fire Investigator/Inspector and the Incident Commander and/or Company Officer will work together to share information to ensure the timely filing of reports. Information sharing shall occur prior to leaving the scene to afford the Incident Commander all data necessary to complete the incident report.

4. A supplemental narrative is used to effectively document resource or labor intensive incidents. Officers may be requested to complete company or single unit narratives relative to their company's observations and actions. This request can be made by the Incident Commander and should be limited to those units that can provide critical data for documentation and information for the departments report and post incident analysis.

B. Data Entry

1. **Fire Incident Reports**

   Incident Location: The location of the incident will dictate which station will be required to enter the full form field and report writing responsibility. The complete form field is located under the "Incident" toolbar button.

   Additional Resources: This entry is required for any response within Pennsauken Township when resources are not from the first due district. Each station providing resources shall complete this form located under the "File, Dispatch/Remote Station" section.

   Mutual/Automatic Aid: This entry is required for all responses that occur outside the jurisdictional boundaries of Pennsauken Township or when mutual resources are received. Each station shall enter the full form field located under the "Incident" toolbar button and complete the Mutual/Automatic Aid information.

B. Data Entry-Continued

2. The electronic entry of all incident data for minor incidents shall be completed by the designated station personnel within three to five (3-5) days of the date of the incident.
3. The electronic entry of all incident data for major incidents shall be completed by the designated station personnel within five to seven (5-7) days of the date of the incident.
4. **Civilian Casualty Form:** The Fire Inspector assigned to the incident will complete all civilian casualty reports relative to the incident. Data entry will be completed by the Fire Inspector assigned to the incident.
5. **Fire Service Casualty Form:** The Incident Commander and Fire Official will complete all fire service casualty reports. Data entry will be completed by the Fire Official.

C. Report Writing Basics

1. The basic purpose of a fire incident report is to record the facts. Incident documentation reports identify the incident and the actions of the department personnel in mitigating the incident.
2. Reports should be accurate, objective, clear, complete and concise.
3. Keep notes during incidents to ensure all details are accounted for.
4. Utilize the following guide to assist you in completing the handwritten incident report-Who, What, Why, When, Where, How, How Many:
   a. Who was involved?
   b. What happened?
   c. Why did you do what you did or why something happened?
   d. Where did it happen?
   e. Where the event transpired?
   f. How it occurred (if you know)?
   g. How many (structures, victims, vehicles, etc.)?
5. Prepare before you write in the narrative sections. Prepare documentation in chronological order. This allows the reader to understand the writer's account of the incident more clearly. Proofread all documentation after it is prepared. (Does it read well, and does it say what you want it to say?).

D. Quality Assurance

1. The System Administrator will generate a monthly activity report sampling those incidents entered into the reporting system. These reports will be reviewed, authorized and forwarded to the Division of Fire Safety.
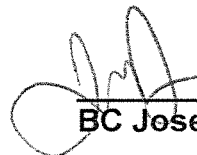
D. Quality Assurance-Continued

2. Those reports that are not in accordance with our guidelines and/or accepted reporting practices will be retained for correction.
3. The System Administrator will forward an internal message through the department database to the member entering the data to make the required corrections.

C. Requests for Fire Incident Reports

1. All requests for Fire Incident reports will be made to the Fire Official in writing. A $15.00 service fee will be required for all report requests.
2. The Fire Official shall maintain a file of all Incident Report requests.
3. Handwritten or hard copy station Fire Incident Reports are not to be released to the public or outside parties.

Effective Date: September 1, 2009

Chief Benjamin D. Patti

BC Joseph V. Palumbo, Sr.