

# Onota Twp. Fire & Rescue

## Report on Department

### Year ending 2020



### **Mission**

It is the Mission of the Onota Township Fire & Rescue Department: To protect and preserve life, property, and the environment through emergency planning and response by providing a team of professional, trained responders dedicated to the safety and education of the community in a compassionate and ethical manner.

### **Status of Department**

Onota Township covers 96 square miles of rural residential area with a population about 350 year round. This number increases to over 400 during the summer months and is on a general up tick each year as more people move to the township. These residence deserve and are expecting the best possible emergency services we can provide.

In the past two years Onota Fire & Rescue has responded to 26 calls for assistance. These calls have ranged from medical calls to grass/brush fires, motor vehicle accidents, vehicle fires, and gas/odor investigations. This is down from our early average.

Currently the department is manned by six certified firefighters, and one scene support member. Three members also trained EMT's. With this roster we provide 24/7/365 all hazard emergency response. Onota Fire & Rescue still responds from one station located on the Onota-Sand Ik road. Built in the 1980's when the department was formed, and added onto in 1991 this building has served the department well, but has been badly out grown. It houses our two current fire apparatus; 2001 Pierce Engine, 1997 Chevy Kodiak tanker. In October of this year we decommission our 1988 rescue truck for mechanical and safety reasons. Currently the department is looking at using either a utility pickup or obtaining a different vehicle from the Michigan DNR, if one can be found that will meet the department needs, as a temporary medical response vehicle. Because of the inadequate station we are limited to a vehicle that is no greater than 18 feet in over all length. This means any light rescue truck will not fit. A vary limited number of utility trucks meet the minimum 18 foot maximum length, and none provide adequate storage for all of the rescue equipment that the department has to serve our wonderful citizens, meaning that a actual rescue truck must be purchased as soon as a adequate station is built. In the past three years the Rescue truck has responded to more incidents than our Tanker. This number would be higher if adequate space in the station allowed the truck to be pulled without moving our Engine.

In the past two years the department has responded to three vehicle/equipment fires and a few small wildland incidents that our Engine and Tanker where unable to reach because they where deep in the woods and down logging roads. This makes it clear that a "wet rescue" (a rescue truck that carries the equivalent of wildland skid unit) with 4 wheel drive is a needed addition to the department. However, because a station that is too small this type of truck will not fit, so a new building must be built. Onota Fire & Rescue is working to put together a comity consisting of three or four citizens, not also township board members, and fire department personal so that the best location and design can be achieved in full cooperation with the citizens we protect. A few of the short falls of our current building are; there is vary little room even walk around the tucks when parked in side; no good or safe way exists to wash them in winter, which is a must to prolong their life and reduce costs to the township residence for maintenance, compartment doors can not be opened all they way which hinders our

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ability to perform readiness checks on equipment. The building is also barley deep enough for the trucks to fit, this has resulted in the ladders being repeatedly backed into the rear wall if the truck is not perfectly strait or if the stop chocks for the wheels move back (which happens from normal use) even a few inches. This has not only resulted in damage to the building but also the trucks themselves with bent brackets that makes it impossible to properly secure the ladders. There is no storage or office space for administrative work which results in much of this being done at our homes, which is far from ideal and makes the work more difficult without adequate work space. We need our residence to show their support for this, please attend all township meetings and make your support known.

The department has a four bottle cascade system for filling our SCBA bottles after fires and training, however, because of our stations limited space it was installed next to the Engine. This means that to safely use it the Engine should not be in the station. There is also no space to work on equipment that requires preventative maintenance or repair. This could include, but is not limited to cleaning and sharpening our chain saw and axes, maintenance on our portable power equipment such as, hydraulic pump and portable pump.

There is also vary limited space for training and no equipment to support classroom learning. This makes it vary difficult to be compliant with MIOSHA Part 74, firefighter training minimum let alone training for specialized incidents like water rescue or vehicle extrication. All of our firefighters also have and maintain current CPR training provided by the American Heart Association.

Onota Fire & Rescue is looking at replacing our aging rescue truck in the upcoming year. The current truck is not capable of safely driving the speed limit, is costing the township large sums of money for maintenance every couple of months, and no longer holds all of the equipment that must be on it.

## Non Fire Risk Assessment

The frequency and probabilities of each non-fire risk have been identified during our risk analysis.

<b>Onota Township Fire &amp; Rescue</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Probability</b>
Hazardous Materials Releases	Rare	Possible
Emergency Medical Services	All the time	Probable
Weapons of Mass Destruction	Rare	Unlikely
Confined Space Rescue	Rare	Unlikely
Water Rescue	Occasionally	Possible
Swift Water Rescue	Rare	Unlikely
High Angle Rescue	Rare	Unlikely
Ice Rescue	Rare	Possible
Extreme Weather Rescue	Rare	Possible

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Automobile Extrication	Fairly Often	Probable
Trench Rescue Operations	Rare	Unlikely
Natural Disaster Recovery	Rare	Possible
Railroad Emergency	N/A	N/A
Structural Collapse	Rare	Possible
ATV/UTV Rescue	Rare	Probable

### Standard of coverage

The Onota Township Fire & Rescue Department is a progressive fire and rescue department. The first arriving company on scene shall be able to provide safe aggressive fire attack or initiate a specialized rescue evolution.

### Response Time

For the 2020 year, (January 1 to December 31) Onota Township Fire & Rescue responded to nine total dispatch requests with an average response time of 10 minutes from time of page to units on scene. These included fire, EMS and rescue responses.

The Average response time for Onota Township Fire & Rescue over the last five years is seven minutes and 28 seconds. However, the response times vary greatly between incidents over those five years. This is due to the large area covered. Higher response times are also incurred when we have to respond to the far edges of our township, east end along M-28 and down some of the back roads from Deerton. Response times for Mutual aid responses were not calculated.

### Fires/Motor Vehicle Accidents

In the last two years OTFR also responded to 13 fires within the township. These ranged from vehicle fires to grass/brush fires. Numerous requests for motor vehicle accidents were also made to the OTRF Department. We are very pleased and great full to the Shelby-Heart Area Fire Department from down state, just south of Lundington, for donating a complete set of Rescue 42 stabilizing struts. This donation means that we are better prepared to respond to not only vehicle accidents, but also to structural collapse because these struts maybe used for both emergencies.

The department still lacks a modern set of extrication tools, (commonly known as the jaws of life) this means that we are not cut and extricate persons from modern vehicles because our old equipment simply can not cut through it.

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**Staffing Levels**

Staffing levels will determine the number of personnel available at an emergency scene. The position requirements, training specialties and experience level are considered when determining which personnel are assigned to accomplish tasks at an emergency. We have determined that the following types of emergencies require a minimum amount of personnel to ensure a safe and effective outcome.

This year (2020) has been challenging in new ways with COVID-19. While our over all EMS call numbers are down this year each of our EMT's must still take special precautions on each EMS call to keep our selves safe. This means we may take a little more time to enter a house or business once we arrive because we are making sure we hare putting masks on, eye protection, gloves and when necessary gowns to protect us. We are grateful to the county and the state of Michigan for providing us with the needed supplies to keep our members safe during this pandemic. Other then these changes in personal protective equipment that our members must wear on each EMS call our ability to provide service to our residence has not changed.

**Structural Response**

<u>FUNCTION</u>	<u>MINIMUM PERSONNEL REQUIRED</u>
Incident Management	1
Providing Uninterrupted Water Supply	1
Hand Lines	
Attack Line	2
Back-up Line	2
Support Personnel for Each hand line	*
Search and Rescue	2
Ventilation	2
Rapid Intervention Team	2
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Total Staffing	12

Note: Support personnel is considered available on scene personal who can rotate into positions to relieve members and maintain good rehab.

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This is the minimum required personal for a structure fire. This means that on all confirmed structure fires mutual aid is required.

For non structure fire incidents the number of personal is considerably less and could possibly be handled by our members alone based on how many respond.

#### **Miscellaneous/ Technical Rescue Situations**

The Onota Township Fire & Rescue Department will provide trained personal during non-fire rescue situations. Examples of rescues include, extrication, water rescue and search and rescue. These situations are extremely specialized in nature, and staffing will be provided in accordance with nationally recognized standards, and are outlined in the Onota Fire & Rescue Standard Operating Guidelines.

To accomplish this and to meet state and NFPA standards for training the Onota Township Fire & Rescue Department will be increasing its training and widening its knowledge base. These specialized rescue situations also require specialized equipment that the department currently does not have. It also requires work space to train on and for storage when not in use. All of these needs can not currently be meet with our present fire station and its location.

#### **Emergency Medical Service**

In the year of 2020 Onota Township Fire & Rescue responded to about 3 requests for EMS within the township. OTFR has renewed its EMS License for 2021 so that we can continue to provide the best possible care to our township residence.

#### **Grants**

Grants are currently being pursued to purchase modern extrication tools capable of cutting the boron steel found in today's cars and trucks. We are also perusing a grant to replace our old obsolete breathing apparatus, commonly called SCBA. In the past two years our current breathing apparatus has had increasing maintenance issues and no longer meet NFPA standards or the departments needs.

#### **Conclusion**

As you can see the department is a bit under staffed, while staffing is not ideal, we can manage any incident with in the Township with mutual aid. Considering that all fire departments rely on mutual aid and have staffing shortages this does not make OTFR unique. When it comes to the specialized rescue incidents there is a lack of equipment and training. In the up coming year we will continue improve the departments readiness through training and upgraded/new equipment. With an Instructor 1 within the department the training will be fairly

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ease to accomplish with minimum cost to the department. The equipment, while it will be the largest expense, is critical to the success of the department. With out equipment, training really does not mean much. Out station is the last and biggest hurdle to improving the departments ability to respond to and mitigate emergencies in the Township. Our current station is just not adequate no matter how you look at it. It barely holds all our apparatus and leaves no room for training, equipment repairs or maintenance. It also is vary inefficient to heat as both bay doors no longer seal against the floor because the floor is sinking! This is also creating gaps between the foundation and the walls leading to structural compromise and eventually failure. A new station, located on M-28 with a building built to serve the departments growing needs is essential for the future of the Township and its residence.

Report prepared by  
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