



Frontline

Westerville Division of Fire Newsletter

Quarter 1 2015

Station 111
400 W. Main Street

Station 112
727 E. Schrock Road

Station 113
355 N. Spring Road

Emergencies
9-1-1

Non-emergencies
(614) 901-6600

An Overview: Emergency Medical Services

Chest pains. Injuries from a fall. Allergic reaction. Trouble breathing. These are all calls the Westerville Division of Fire receives from emergency dispatch many times a day that require emergency medical response. Emergency Medical Services (EMS) is the most active daily functions of the Westerville Division of Fire, with nearly three of four emergency runs EMS-related.

Equipment

WFD maintains EMS equipment on all front-line vehicles, and all three fire stations have dedicated EMS vehicles. Currently, these include two advanced life-support (ALS) transport vehicles and one basic life-support (BLS) transport vehicle.

ALS transport is designated for patients in a potentially critical condition, with a paramedic assisting in the treatment prior to arrival at the hospital/emergency room. BLS is emergency transport provided by certified Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs).

On average, EMS is on scene within four minutes of the call for help. These response rates are critical; the quicker the intervention, the more likely a successful outcome.

Personnel

Emergency medical service first responders are well trained. Each of WFD's sworn professionals hold EMT credentials through the state of Ohio. The majority are trained to the level of paramedic, which requires additional and continuing education (see below). Within the last 9 years, the Division has adopted a policy that all new full-time personnel hold certification as a paramedic. This helps our community know that qualified health care personnel are assisting in a time of crisis or concern.

Transport

While EMS staff encounters all types of emergency medical conditions and issues, the focus is always on patient care. Depending on the patient's condition and the medical services it requires, transport is typically provided to the local hospital of choice. This is important for patients who may have ongoing or chronic medical conditions and wish to be near their doctor or a familiar medical staff.

Due to Westerville's "Medical Mile" along the Cleveland Ave. corridor, anchored by Mt. Carmel St. Ann's to the south and OhioHealth Westerville Medical Campus to the north, patients have many quality emergency medical choices. Learn more about Westerville's EMS program online at www.westerville.org/fire.



Fire Chief Brian Miller

EMS on our spectrum of services

Picture a firefighter's uniform. Most likely you're thinking of the helmet, reflective lettering and long jacket and pants, known as turn-out gear. But that's just one uniform we wear, and not the one you may see if and when you interact with us. I wanted to start a new feature each quarter, highlighting a different uniform we utilize to serve the community. Although we are known as the "Westerville Division of Fire," we provide a variety of services.

Our Emergency Medical Service (EMS) staff may be among the most common personnel residents may see. The Westerville Division of Fire has been providing EMS services for more than 40 years. EMS calls account for most of our emergency response activities.

Most Westerville firefighters are trained to the level of paramedic (which includes more than a year of schooling and 86 hours of continuing education every three years in addition to being firefighters). As a paramedic, responders can perform lifesaving procedures including defibrillation (restarting a heart) of someone in cardiac arrest. Paramedics can also administer medications, like those to reverse the effects of an allergic reaction. Our paramedics and Emergency Medical Technicians respond to multiple calls a day: everything from minor injuries such as lacerations to people suffering a heart attack or stroke. These professionals are well trained and provide the best level of care utilizing the latest technology and continually updating their training. This is just one uniform your firefighters wear when serving the community.

Funding Facts

In our community, the safety and health of our families and the protection of our property are core values. For 155 years, the Westerville Division of Fire has built a legacy of excellence in service in fire protection and emergency medical services (EMS), serving both Westerville and Blendon Township.

It's a common misconception that WFD is funded through the City's General Fund. In fact, funding for fire and EMS is obtained primarily from property tax. EMS billing accounts for roughly 10% of Division revenues.

Residents of Westerville and Blendon Township currently pay approximately \$342.62 per \$100,000 valuation annually for fire protection.

The Fire Division works diligently to make the most of the funds appropriated for our use. For example, refurbishing of large apparatus (in lieu of purchasing new equipment) allows us to extend the useful life of this expensive equipment years longer than projected.

Property value is a consideration for property insurance rates. Your property benefits from a responsive and innovative fire department. Our service district (16.5 square miles) enjoys a favorable rating by the insurance industry as a result.

All of this is accomplished with our mission in mind, to provide quality, cost-effective services that are responsive to the needs of the community.

For more information on the Westerville Division of Fire, please visit www.westerville.org/fire.

Spring Forward

When you changed your clocks forward on March 8, *did you remember to replace the batteries in your smoke detectors?*

This practice is one of the easiest ways to remember to keep smoke alarms in good working order. Smoke detectors are one of the best household investments you can make for you and your family's safety.

Division NEWS



News and Announcements

The new class schedule from the Fire Prevention Bureau includes two new classes. Register online or at the Westerville Community Center.

Home Safety Solutions for Seniors

Thursday, April 16
Westerville Senior Center
2-3:30 p.m.
Activity #20105-02 (FREE)

Campus Fire Safety

Saturday, April 18
Westerville Community Center
11 a.m. - 12 p.m.
Activity #101051-02 (FREE)



Ryan Lawson (left) was sworn in on March 3 as Lieutenant. Lawson has been with the City of Westerville for 10 years.



Matt Maihle (right) was sworn in as firefighter on the same night. Maihle formerly served in a part-time capacity with WFD.

Equipment Refurbishment Extends Lifespan

The Westerville Division of Fire has refurbished multiple vehicles over the last 12 years to extend their life cycle. Much like the military does with aircraft and armored vehicles, our vehicles are updated and rebuilt to further life expectancy rather than always replacing an aging vehicle with a new, more expensive vehicle. Last year, Ladder 111 was refurbished, extending the service life of the vehicle between seven to eight additional years. Recently, Fire Engine 115 was sent to the original manufacturer, Pierce Manufacturing, for this purpose. Over the next few months, this vehicle will be completely torn down to the frame and rebuilt. The truck will be updated with new lights and paint, as well as a new foam system for extinguishing fires. It will return to Westerville like a brand new vehicle, adding another eight to 10 years to its expected life cycle.



Family Fire Safety: Practice Makes Perfect

Have you had a family discussion about an emergency exit plan from your home in the event of a fire? Tell your family to get out and stay out until firefighters arrive. Need help with the conversation? Contact Fire Prevention at (614) 901-6641.

Follow Us! We're on Twitter.



The Westerville Division of Fire is now on Twitter. Follow [@WestervilleFire](https://twitter.com/WestervilleFire) for the news, information and alerts and interesting facts.

