

Borough of Chatham

Annual Report

2007

Bureau of Fire Safety

Walter Nugent III – Fire Official

To: Robert Falzarano, Administrator

From: Walter Nugent III
Fire Official

Date: February 7, 2008

Re: **Annual Report Bureau of Fire Safety 2007**

Fire Investigations

Three fire investigations were conducted at the following locations.

1-9-07	44 Weston Ave	Two Family Residence
3-2-07	234 Washington Ave	One Family Residence
11-18-07	53 Tallmadge Ave	One Family Residence

Penalty Account

There were no penalties issued in 2007. The current balance in the penalty account is \$3,834.00

Building Department Coverage

Coverage is provided to the building department as needed during Bill Jankowski's absence to conduct Fire Sub-Code inspections of new construction. Some of the inspections are time sensitive and can not wait until his return.

Business Registrations

Fees collected totaled \$13,005.00. This process as recommended by the State Division of Fire Safety has enabled us to obtain and maintain current information of all building owners and business owners in the Borough in addition to offset costs of the operation of the Bureau of Fire Safety.

Emergency Preplan Information

Building preplan information is being maintained in the Emergency Software Products software program. Information will be utilized to assist the fire department during an emergency. Utility controls has been identified, sprinkler connection and control information has been obtained. Any special hazards identified are also noted in the emergency preplan. Information is verified and updated during each fire inspection.

Revenue

Life Hazard Use Registration Fees from State	\$14,851.85
Local Non-Life Hazard Use Registrations	\$13,005.00
Permits	\$ <u>336.00</u>
Total	<u>\$28,192.85</u>

Fire Safety Inspections

Enclosed please find Fire Safety Inspection Log dated December 31, 2007. There were a total of 219 new inspections conducted, 71 being Life Hazard Use inspection and 148 being Non-Life Hazard Use. There were 221 re-inspections conducted. This brings the total number of inspections to 629.

Inspection Summary for 2007

Life Hazard	71
Non-Life Hazard	148
Re-Inspections	221
Certificated Issued	189

Special Projects

- Developed and distributed to all employees the Emergency Action Plan for the Borough Hall. The plan includes fire evacuation procedures, fire extinguisher procedures and instructions for other emergencies.
- I offered a fire safety presentation to all borough hall employees. Subjects included fire extinguisher training and an explanation of the Emergency Action Plan.
- Job descriptions were prepared for all Building Department and Fire Safety Bureau staff. Job descriptions were submitted to Administration.
- I conducted a fire safety program to the custodial staff of the School District of the Chathams. This was conducted during a staff in-service day. Benefits of the program were to have staff identify and correct fire safety hazards when they were identified and not waiting until after the annual fire safety inspection.
- Attended a one day class given by Insurance Services Office, Inc. (ISO). ISO is an independent company that rates a town's ability to suppress fires. The scale used is on a scale of 1 – 10, one being the highest rating. There is a combination of three things that make up the rating, water supply 40% (fire hydrant locations and pressures), communications 10% (dispatch center, currently CPD) and the local fire department 50% (equipment, membership, training records). There is only one municipality in the state of NJ with a rating of one. The current rating of the Borough of Chatham is a four. Although this is considered to be an above average rating when compared to other municipalities in the state, I believe that if revisited the rating can rise to a three. The advantage of this is that since most insurance companies use this as a guide when setting fire insurance rates, fire insurance premiums of property and business owners in the Borough would go down. I am in the process awaiting responses from specific departments pertaining to each rating category to determine the cost benefit of possible improvements.

Final Comments

I am looking forward to providing a level of service to all business owners and building owners that they are used to receiving in Chatham Borough. In the field of fire prevention it is almost impossible to document a specific day that a fire was prevented. It is much more obvious to identify those fires that did occur. Fortunately, in 2007 there were no fires in commercial properties. Every year that inspections are conducted occupants level of fire awareness is raised. I believe that business owners and occupants are doing a better job of preventing fires in their occupancies. I am able to notice this be the types of questions I receive between each inspection. A conscious effort is made during each inspection to educate building occupants as to why certain conditions should not exist. I have noticed that this helps to gain compliance quicker and it also reduces the chance of hazard reoccurring.