



The HHFD Response Times

The official newsletter of the Howlett Hill Fire Department

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April 14, 2003



**HHFD salutes our members on active duty in the military:
We recognize your sacrifice and pray for your safe returns home !**



Alan Bealer Heather Bice Dusty Chapin Nate Legnetto

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From the Chief's Office

Chief James Harris

The early April ice storm wreaked havoc on the community of the Howlett Hill Fire District. Broken tree limbs and downed power line alarms began on Friday afternoon. HHFD responded by cutting trees that were blocking roads and re-routing traffic. Around 18:30 a transformer gave way on Howlett Hill Road causing a powerful yet localized fire. Howlett Hill Road was shut down. With power still not turned off, HHFD could only watch and wait. Niagara Mohawk finally turned off the grid. This was a mixed blessing as it put out the source of fire, but left hundreds of households without electricity to run sump pumps. Tree limbs and power lines continued to snap all night. HHFD members were on the road all afternoon, into the evening. When a crew went home at midnight, another crew of volunteers staffed the station all night. Alarms were called in by phone in many cases. Many alarms were "water in the basement" calls. Saturday morning started with a list of addresses. At the height of storm, there were some 48 calls for help that Fire Control never entered into their system, yet HHFD responded. Both engines and the rescue were on the road pumping basements during this state of emergency.

I want to say Thank You to the Friday crews, the Saturday crews, and especially that overnight crew - great job by all.

While some asked "why are we pumping basements", my answer is: This was an emergency, people needed our help, this is what we do. I am the Chief, I make the decisions. We pump when our neighbors need our help. Enough said.

Engine 94 is up and running (see article page 2). This is good for the communities and good for HHFD. We need to sustain our momentum and keep up the energy and staff this engine on Tuesdays. If you can spare a day or half-day, please sign up. Thanks!

A fire of suspicious nature created considerable damage to an abandoned property on Rohe and Cedarvale Roads. The early morning fire on Saturday, April 12th was really going when it was called in at 5:39AM. A great response from HHFD (20 members), plus our neighbors from Onondaga Hill and Marcellus assured no other exposures and contained fire to two rooms. Fire Investigators are calling this suspicious.

We completed all our Fit Testing and almost every active member has completed taking their annual physical. Driver training and SCBA classes are underway.

We'll be switching over from chimney fires to grass fires now as we get warmer days.

Everyone is doing a great job and it shows when it counts.

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An informal newsletter for the Howlett Hill Fire Department members and their families and for the residents of the community we serve. The Times is published six times a year. Copies are available at the Howlett Hill Fire Station, or via email by request to: fvalls@hhfd.org

Frank Valls, Editor

Engine 94 is on the Air

by Frank "Booster" Valls

Tuesday morning, 08:00 hours, their turnout gear is neatly stacked beside each door of the HHFD Engine. The radio crackles: "Fire Control, Howlett Hill Engine 94 Is In Service." Since March 11th, this scenario is repeated as HHFD staffs the Tuesday shift for the County Western Sector. The Engine 94 concept provides a fully staffed Engine Company available to cover all alarms in the following 5 Western sector Fire Districts: Camillus, Howlett Hill, Fairmount, Taunton and Onondaga Hill. The shift begins at 08:00 and ends at 16:00 (4:00PM). The purpose of Engine 94 is to augment the volunteer staffing within the Towns of Onondaga and Camillus five days a week. Staffing of Engine requires a minimum of a four (4) person crew, including an Officer, an EMS person and Air Pack Qualified Fire Fighters.

The response thus far at HHFD has been positive. Engine 94 has been properly staffed each week. A typical day on Engine 94 includes: a team meeting at the start of the shift to orient each other of who is handling which positions on the Engine. A brief check of the Engine and tools to assure all are in good working order is made by the team. A drill (training) will be conducted either by the Officer or by a team member. All team members participate and share experiences. A key drill that has taken place is an orientation of hydrant differences between the Town of Camillus and Town of Onondaga. Reviewing this information ahead of time reduces the potential of time lost determining the proper hydrant connection. The teams have performed some housekeeping maintenance around the station while on duty. Thus far, one of the team members has volunteered to bring in or cook the lunch for the crew. Rumor has it that the team has even feasted on a venison bar-b-que !!

Some of the current team members site personal benefits they've found from staffing Engine 94 include the following:

Barry Peryea cites the "camaraderie of the crew" as a big factor causing him to volunteer for the shift. While, Chuck Planer enjoys the "physical exercise and the lunches" as his favorites. But whatever the reason, Engine 94 is making a positive difference in responses within the Western Sector. Every day, Monday thru Friday, a similar process takes place at one of our neighbor's Fire Station. The Engine 94 concept only works if we properly staff the shift. You can volunteer for any Tuesday, for the whole shift or a half-shift. If we can't maintain a full schedule, then we may resort to calling in mixed crews staffed with volunteers from our neighbors to keep Engine 94 in service. The sign-up roster is posted in the HHFD Radio Room. Sign up for a shift, you'll be glad you made a difference.



Members staff a recent Engine 94 shift:
left to right: FF Mark Edmonds, FF Chuck Planer, FF/EMT Bob Slivinski, Chief Jim Harris, Capt. Mike Gosson.

Additional members who have staffed Engine 94 include:
Capt./Paramedic Paul Doner, FF Barry Peryea, FF Jeff Grosso, FF Casey Mack, FF Rene Dauenhauer

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From the Captains:

**Mike Gosson
Paul Doner**

Training is a key element in running a successful Fire Department. Certain training is mandated by governing bodies and other training provides skills to enable us to perform our jobs **effectively, efficiently and safely.**

We're finishing up on SCBA qualifications and driver qualifications. These are HHFD Certified classes.

EMS training will be our next focus area. This is appropriate at this time given the mix of alarms we run. We need to keep our focus on the importance of these classes and attendance is critical.

The Capt's.

Howlett Hill Fire Department Training Schedule April - May 2003

Date	Course	Location	Time	Comments
Monday, Apr 07, 2003	Post Ice Storm Equipment maintenance	HHFD	19:00	Assure all apparatus and equipment is put back in working order
Monday, Apr 14, 2003	HHFD Business Meeting	HHFD	19:00	
Monday, Apr 21, 2003	Defensive Driving Course	HHFD	19:00	Need good turn-out; Monday & Tuesday
Tuesday, Apr 22, 2003	Defensive Driving Course	HHFD	19:00	Need good turn-out; Monday & Tuesday
Monday, Apr 28, 2003	SCBA Class #3 Restricted operations & obstacles	Town of Onondaga Training Tower	19:00	Subject to availability
Monday, May 5, 2003	SCBA Class #4 Room orientation w/partner & SCBA maze	Town of Onondaga Training Tower	19:00	Subject to availability
Monday, May 12, 2003	HHFD Business Meeting	HHFD	19:00	
Monday, May 19, 2003	SCBA Class #5 Obstacle course w/heat & smoke	Town of Onondaga Training Tower	19:00	Subject to availability
Sat. May 24, 2003	SCBA Class #6 Final Evaluation (4 hours)	Town of Onondaga Training Tower	08:30	Subject to availability
Monday, May 26, 2003	Blood Borne Pathogens	HHFD	19:00	

Auxiliary News

At their March monthly meeting, the Auxiliary voted new officers who were installed at their Installation Meeting on March 20th at Kelley's Restaurant.

The 2003 Officers of HHFD Auxiliary are:

Jan Farrell	President
Shirley Ramsden	Vice President
Mary Santaferra	Treasurer
Peg Dwyer	Secretary

A new member: **Cheryl Nitsch** was installed and is welcomed to the Auxiliary and the HHFD family.



HHFD participates in County Firefighter Bowling Tournament:

A cross section of HHFD members and their families participated in this year's tournament. A great time was had by all. Final tournament results were unavailable at press time. More pictures and news will be posted at a later date.