

# Chief's Message

As Fire Chief of the Albany Fire Department, it is my honor to present the Albany Fire Department's Report to the Community. In our response to emergencies and our provision of health, safety and emergency services to the community, the department continues to exemplify the excellence and professionalism Albany has come to expect.



Although you probably know us as the "fire department," this by no means reflects the many ways our department serves the community every day. The Albany Fire Department not only responds to fires, but also provides the necessary training to respond to a multitude of emergencies. We also provide emergency medical services including transport, hazardous material response, and technical rescues for vehicle accidents and water rescue. Thanks in great part to the success of our Fire Prevention program, emergency medical calls now account for a majority of our workload.

As we move forward into 2017 and beyond, we continue to emphasize training and best practices in everything we do to keep Albany safe. I would like to thank the Mayor, the City Council and the City Manager for their support throughout some tough years, and for their support and vision for AFD's continued growth and change.

The future of the Albany Fire Department looks tremendous. It is my honor to be a part of this department and its long, rich history and connection to the community. For all of our firefighters and paramedics, the work we do is much more than a job: it's a way of life, and we are all proud to serve you.

Sincerely,

Chief Lance Calkins

emergency medical services, public education and emergency preparedness.

# Vision

To be a professional and compassionate emergency service provider that exceeds our community's high expectations.

Introduction A Shift



## Albany firefighters wear many hats.



With just one station and 18 firefighters — three shifts, each a team of six — serving Albany and providing mutual aid to surrounding communities, every firefighter functions in multiple roles.



Albany firefighters describe themselves as being "like a Swiss Army Knife," able to bring the required skill and specialized equipment to the emergency at hand.



Fighting fires is only one part of the job. An emphasis on prevention through education and improved safety standards has resulted in fewer local fires.



Today, 70 percent of calls to the Albany Fire Department are for medical emergencies.



All of Albany's response vehicles are equipped with Advanced Life Support. Albany firefighters are ready to respond at a moment's notice with medical skills and specialized equipment that can make a difference between life and death. Many of them are instructors in emergency medicine.



A small city department means that the 18 firefighters also take on the roles of instructor, technician, community outreach and education, IT support, grant writer, meal planning, cooking and clean up, clerical tasks, equipment and facilities maintenance and cleaning.



Thanks to a focus on prevention, education, awareness and improved safety standards, fires like the one shown in this historical Albany Fire Department photo are much less frequent in Albany.





John Weitzel
Captain, Paramedic
Apparatus Maintenance Committee

member; hill/landfill vegetation management

Hired: 6/20/94



James Berry Lieutenant, Paramedic

Dispatch liaison, stormwater runoff, self-contained breathing apparatus, personal protective equipment, fire recovery

Hired: 7/30/01



Eric Agee Engineer, Paramedic

Communications Committee member, Apparatus Maintenance Committee member, driver training, pump testing

Hired: 1/29/99



Michael Raab Engineer, Paramedic

Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) instructor, Apparatus Maintenance Committee member Hired: 8/21/06



Gavin Aubert Firefighter, Paramedic

Paramedic preceptor, CPR and first-aid instructor, rescue swimmer Hired: 6/1/00



Keith Stone Firefighter, Paramedic

CPR and first-aid instructor, Small Tools Maintenance Committee member, rescue swimmer

Hired: 5/20/13

A basic level EMT must complete 120 to 150 hours of training in emergency care and basic life support.

A paramedic must take the course required for an EMT, and then build on this information with

1,200 to 1,800 hours of additional training in a two-year course.

B Shift C Shift



Dustyn Wiggins Captain, EMT

Budget management, computer & phone systems, OES, Station Maintenance Committee member, electronic patient care report specialist

Hired: 6/23/86



Tim Smyser Lieutenant, Paramedic

Water rescue officer, grantwriter, infection control officer, Emergency Operations Center (EOC) manager, water supply management

Hired: 2/28/05



William Dennehy Engineer, Paramedic

Rehab supplies, fire prevention Hired: 12/20/91



Desmond Smyth Engineer, Paramedic

President, Albany Firefighters' Association, Apparatus Maintenance Committee member, advanced cardiac life support instructor, AFD web site manager, rescue swimmer Hired: 6/2/06



Tom Osuna Firefighter, Paramedic

Prehospital trauma life support instructor, CPR & first-aid instructor, paramedic preceptor, station supplies Hired: 10/12/10



James Murphy Firefighter, Paramedic

CPR and first-aid instructor, infection control

Hired: 7/21/14



We are entrusted to care for our community members' loved ones and property.

We do not take this trust for granted.



James Boito Captain, Paramedic

Emergency medical services coordinator, grant writer, records request

Hired: 5/21/96



Erik Ortenblad Lieutenant, Paramedic

Fire and emergency medical services training officer, electronic patient care report specialist

Hired: 9/30/02



Brett Schlueter Engineer, Paramedic

Gas detectors, thermal imaging, rescue systems, tools, self-contained breathing apparatus

Hired: 7/30/01



James Sanders Engineer, Paramedic

Apparatus Maintenance Committee member, public education liaison, rescue swimmer

Hired: 10/30/06



Jonathan Dong Firefighter, Paramedic

Prehospital trauma life support instructor, CPR & first-aid instructor, paramedic preceptor, EMS supplies Hired: 8/20/12



Paul Nadarisay Firefighter, Paramedic

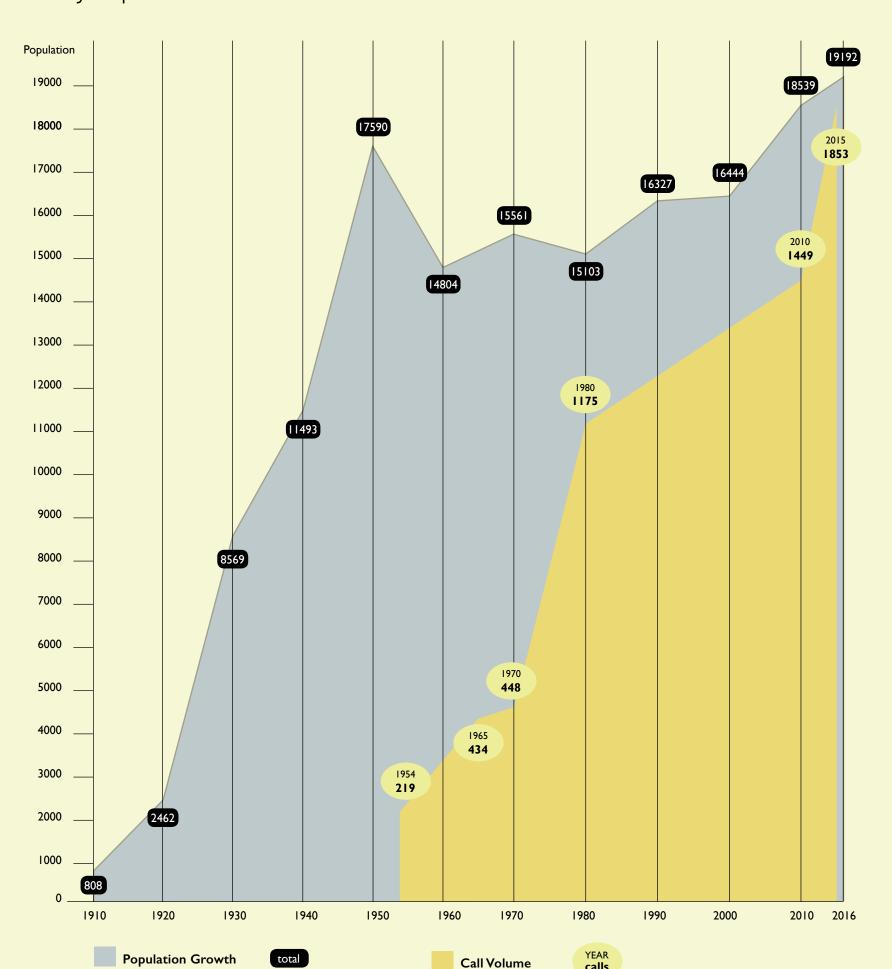
Public education director, CPR & first-aid instructor

7

Hired: 1/22/13

Staff grantwriters have brought \$1,242,492 worth of equipment and resources to Albany since 2005.

# Albany Population and Call Volume



## Leaps and Bounds

The blue graph shows the **population growth** in Albany, California from 1910 to 2016.

The yellow graph shows *call volume* to the Albany Fire Department for the years indicated.\*

- Call volume from 1954 (the first year records are available) to 2015 has increased by 750 percent.
- From 2010 to 2015 Albany firefighters responded to an increase of 28 percent in call volume, with no increase in staff.
- \*This graph shows years for which records are available. The "y" axis for the population and the call volumes do not correspond the call volume is placed on the population graph just for yearly growth comparison.

## Albany Is in Top 5% for ISO Safety Ranking

Insurance Services Office (ISO) collects information on municipal fire protection efforts in communities throughout the United States. ISO analyzes relevant data, evaluates the performance of municipal fire suppression capabilities, and assigns a ranking, one element used to determine fire insurance premiums for residential and commercial properties. Albany's ranking is among the top 5% nationally, for safety.







# Some Dates in History



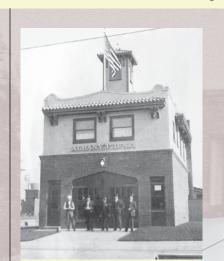
The Albany Fire Department was formed on December 20, 1909 as a volunteer organization.



Volunteer firefighters pose with equipment at July Fourth parade in Albany, 1913.



Ambulance comes into service 1932.



In 1914 a new fire station was built at 801 San Pablo Avenue.



In 1915 a motorized piece of equipment took the place of the old hand-drawn equipment, a fire alarm box system was added, and a paid firefighter was hired for full-time duty. Before long, the department added four more paid men and purchased more motorized equipment..

In 1935, full Civil Service status for personnel was achieved and the volunteer system was abandoned.

> On April 14, 1964 the citizens of Albany voted in a \$670,000 bond issue to update all city buildings by new construction.



Ground breaking for the new structures was, March 17, 1965.



Dedication ceremonies were held in January 1966, and the Fire Department structure was occupied on February 3, 1966.

Richard McSheehy, Albany's fırst Fire Marshall, won a national award for his Fire Prevention efforts in 1970.

> The transporting paramedic ambulance came into use in 1989.

Albany firefighter staff grantwriters have brought \$1,242,492 worth of equipment and resources to Albany since **2005**.

> In 2016, computer aided dispatch was installed in rigs.



Grants received: \$1,242,492

Written by Captain Boito 2005 Wildland fire equipment

2008 Aerial apparatus

2012 Regional SCBA grant

Written by Lieutenant Smyser

From the Office of Traffic and Safety

2014 Regional vehicle extrication and stabilization equipment

2007 Communications equipment

\$10,277

\$105,275

\$500,000

\$152,002

\$135,938

\$339,000

2012 Ambulance

Firefighter Stone is "pinned" by Chief Calkins, marking end of successful mandatory one-year probationary period.

In **2003**, paramedic engines were introduced.

> Open Water Rescue team was established in 2015.



First Congregational Church fire in Berkeley, September 2016. 2190 standby with emergency medical services.

1909 1920 1930 1940 1950 1960 1970 1980 1990 2000 2010 2016

Operations

## **ACCOUNTABILITY**

We maintain an optimum state of readiness through preparation and training because lives depend on it.











**Albany firefighters train on water rescue equipment** (from left) Rescue swimmers don personal protective equipment as other firefighters remove rescue equipment from the engine. Firefighters quickly fill rescue boards with air from tanks on the engine.

The Department provides a wide variety of services to an ever-expanding and diverse population. Operations include fire prevention, fire suppression, arson investigation, response to vehicle accidents, downed power lines and gas leaks, hazardous materials mitigation, paramedic services, urban search

and rescue, open water rescue, and public education.

# **Emergency Operations**

The Albany Fire Department coordinates the Emergency Operations Plan for the City of Albany, and coordinates with Alameda County and the California Office of Emergency Services for additional resources.



Fighting a fire on San Pablo Avenue in Albany.

regional disaster impacting Albany. Our ongoing CERT program trains neighborhood Block Captains to assist during emergencies. Recently, we have developed Albany's Emergency Operating Plan, developed high-risk annexes for care and shelter during earthquakes, established emergency

The Emergency Operations Center (strategically

located between the police and fire departments)

is the core location for internal operational, planning

and logistical activities in the event of a localized or

shelter agreements with the Red Cross and Albany Unified School District, and conducted emergency shelter volunteer training.



Albany firefighters use a specialized cutter to rescue a man trapped in car after an accident.



# Open Water Rescue Team

Lt. Smyser (left, center photo) and Engineer Sanders stand by the engine with their rescue boards, evaluate the Bay's conditions

The mission of the Albany Fire Department Open Water Rescue Team is to provide emergency services on the San Francisco Bay, with a primary focus on the Albany shoreline. These emergency services include but are not limited to search and rescue and advanced life support. The department works continually to develop and grow relationships with the United States Coast Guard and neighboring fire agencies in order to create a unified and coordinated response.

The Albany Fire Department uses two 11-foot rescue boards, which are operated by California State Fire Marshal-certified Open Water Rescue Swimmers working in conjunction with a shorebased team. Neighboring agencies have pledged to respond with motorized boats if needed to assist in effecting a rescue or waterbased fire suppression.



and begin water rescue training on the Bay.

(top) Albany and Berkeley Fire Departments team up in response to a multi-car accident on Solano Avenue.

(middle) Albany firefighters rescue a driver from a severely crushed vehicle.

(bottom) Albany firefighters clean up the accident site.

Photos courtesy Albany Patch citizen journalists

# Stormwater Inspections

Stormwater inspections are monitored by fire department personnel in Albany (this job is usually done by Public Works or at the county level). Only rainwater can go down a storm drain. It is the responsibility of the business owner to see that the drains near their business are free from the following:

- I. Runoff from outdoor process/manufacturing areas
- 2. Runoff from outdoor material storage
- 3. Runoff from outdoor waste storage/disposal areas
- 4. Runoff from outdoor vehicle and heavy equipment storage, maintenance areas

# **Emergency Medical Services**



Albany's state-of-the-art ambulance supports and enhances the advanced medical emergency skill set of the department's first responders, including accurate diagnosis of heart attacks ahead of hospital arrival. The ambulance features a specialized gurney capable of lifting 700 pounds. A broad range of emergency medications and advanced life support equipment makes life-saving a reality.



Albany's firetrucks are stocked with specialized lifesaving equipment for use in medical emergencies.



This innovative video laryngoscope increases accuracy and decreases the time it takes to secure the patient's airway.

# Prevention

## Preventing fires, accidents and injuries from ever occurring is one of the biggest priorities.

A dhering to best practices in fire prevention, building code enforcement and public education helps to make this goal a reality.

The Fire Prevention Bureau heads up a company inspection program, yearly weed abatement program, and photoelectric smoke alarm compliance program and works with the other city departments in reviewing plans for fire code requirements.

Businesses and apartment buildings receive an annual inspection.

The best fire is the fire that never happened!

## CERT: Get Involved with Albany's Community Emergency Response Team

Albany's citizens are a vital component of the safety and fire prevention team:

- Working smoke alarms alert you to home fires.
- Up-to-date fire extinguishers in your home help you put out small fires before they have a chance to spread.
- Neighborhood **Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT)** trains you to be prepared: know what to do to help yourself, your family, and your neighbors in case of earthquakes, fire, and other large emergencies.

ERT classes, provided by the City of Albany and the Albany Fire Department, prepare Albany neighborhoods to work together on a block-by-block basis. Just one CERT-trained person per block can help educate neighbors in disaster preparedness and organize their block or apartment building into a CERT team.

CERT operates on the premise that anything you do is a step in the right direction. Step one is to take a CERT class. Classes, offered twice a year, consist of eight weekly three-hour sessions. Please contact Eng. Michael Raab or Lt. Tim Smyser at (510) 528-5770 ext. #5 for more information. Get started organizing your neighborhood today.













### INTEGRITY

We are a reliable organization that can be trusted to "do the right thing."

# Automatic Aid and Mutual Aid

hen an emergency overwhelms local fire and EMS services, the Incident Commander puts in an order for more resources. The City of Albany has an Automatic Aid Agreement (fire units requested off initial dispatch) with the city of Berkeley Fire Department and mutual aid with surrounding Contra Costa cities. Automatic Aid reduces time for resources to arrive on scene.

These networking agreements may be utilized on a fire, freeway accident response, water rescue, or hazardous materials call.

For large wildland fires or other events outside the city, the Alameda County Regional Emergency Communications Center coordinates with the California Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) to move fire resources to emergencies.

The Albany Fire department is part of the Type I (large fire engines) and Type 6 (4x4 brush truck) strike teams. A strike team is a grouping of five similar vehicles staffed with either three personnel (Type 6) or four personnel (Type I) and a supervisor.

When on-duty personnel are deployed, three to four off-duty personnel are required to report immediately to the fire station. Strike Team deployment may last one to two weeks. Albany crews have been sent throughout California to assist neighboring communities.

In extenuating circumstances, crews have been requested on the federal level through FEMA for a national response.



# Out of County Mutual Aid

Mutual Aid events in California involving the Albany Fire Department include:

**Soberenes Fire** July–September 2016, Monterey County

Deer Fire July 2015, Kern County

Valley Fire September 2015, Lake County

**NPA Lightning Fire** August 2015, Del Norte and Humboldt Counties

Sky Fire June 18, 2015, Madera County

Eiler Fire July-August 2014, Redding, Shasta County

**Monticello Fire** July 2014, Monticello Dam, Lake Berryessa, Monterey County

**Basilone Fire** May 2014, San Diego County

McCabe Fire November 2013, Sonoma County

Salmon River July 31, 2013, Sawyers Bar, Siskiyou County

## Crestmore Fire – San Bruno pipeline explosion

September 9, 2010, San Mateo County

Mutual aid responded from all over the Bay Area, including the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection who sent 25 fire engines, four airtankers, two air attack planes, and one helicopter.

**49 Fire** September 2, 2009, Highway 49, Placer County

Lockheed Fire August 2009, Santa Cruz County

Freeway Fire November 2008, Riverside County

Sesnon Fire October 2008,, Los Angeles County

East Basin Fire July 2008, Los Padres National Forest

Telegraph Fire July 2008, Mariposa County

**Indians Fire** June-July 2008, Ventana Wilderness

**Humboldt Fire** June 2008, Butte County

Slide Fire October 22, 2007, San Bernardino County

**Buckweed Fire** October 21, 2007, Los Angeles County

**Zaca Fires 1 and 2** July 4 and September 12, 2007, Santa Barbara County

**Cedar Fire** October 2003 (A dozen simultaneous wildfires in October 2003), San Diego County

### Oakland Hills Fire

October 19, 1991, Oakland

### Loma Prieta Earthquake

October 17, 1989, San Francisco Bay Area

Albany Fire Department assisted in rescuing people trapped in the collapse of I-880 freeway.

## Hurricane Katrina, Mississippi, 2005

n 2005, Captain Dustyn Wiggins and Engineer Jim Boito were part of 1,000 two-person teams of career firefighters called to Mississippi by FEMA to get emergency assistance to the flood victims. In the chaos and confusion of those first days and weeks, their job quickly evolved beyond its original scope. "By nature," says Capt. Wiggins, "our job as firefighters is to solve problems. We saw things that needed to be done, and we did them."

"Food, water, clothing, and shelter were the main things," he explains. "People were left sitting on their property without homes, no electricity, food rotting in refrigerators, and no information about where to go for help or how to get there. We spent our time that first month just meeting basic needs. We found ways to get in to neighborhoods and started doing what we could to help people, even uniting families that had been separated in the disaster."

Engineer Boito and Captain Wiggins ended up spending two months in Mississippi, heading a team of 350 firefighters spread over six counties. "I'll never forget how it affected me personally," Wiggins says, "seeing people who had lost everything and were asking where I was from and if I missed my family. I just said, don't worry about me. Even in our off time we were still working with people and doing whatever we could to help."

# Valley Fire Middletown, Lake County September 12, 2015



In convoy with trucks from five other area fire departments, AFD arrives after dark, into the center of a city that was burning. The fire moved fast.







"Houses were burning all around us, and we were just picking out ones we could save. We couldn't hook up to hydrants, and our engine has 750 gallons of tank water — on the larger side, but it's all we've got. We just hit the hot spots, trying to do all we could to conserve our water." Next morning, up and working 36 hours straight, firefighters were putting out still-smoldering fires.



Base Camp for out of area fire departments — four Albany firefighters stayed for 14 days, continuing to fight the huge area fire.

Home owners evacuated, so animal organizations and firefighters were tasked with checking and feeding pets.

76,067 acres burned

1,955 structures destroyed





### TEAMWORK

Teamwork is the basis of our success. Teamwork allows us to achieve our objectives effectively.

# Typical Day (there is no typical day)

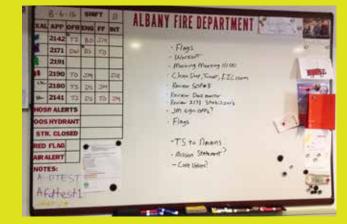
# Plan for Day's Shift

Raise flags

Check out emergency equipment and vehicles

Meeting

Clean shop, turnout room and infection control



Install smoke alarms for elderly resident

Review SOP #3, (for emergency response preparation)

Review deck-mounted monitor

Review aerial ladder stabilities

Probationary firefighter task book sign-offs

Lower flag

"We always have a daily schedule, but there's no normal day."

# What Actually Happened

Raise flags

Check out emergency equipment and vehicles

Meeting

Clean shop, turnout room and infection control

Medical emergency Target parking lot, patient transported to Kaiser Oakland

Medical emergency cardiac arrest San Pablo Avenue, patient transported to Highland Hospital

Some shift members called out to form strike team for wildland fire in Monterey county

Cook and eat lunch

Preceptor works with paramedic intern

2 members of Open Water Rescue Team called to Albany Bulb

Install smoke alarms for elderly resident

Review SOP #3, (for emergency response preparation)

Review deck-mounted monitor

Review aerial ladder stabilizers

Probationary firefighter task book sign-offs

On-site training tests, Albany Hill: driving and parking on hill, proper parking for hose/hydrant alignment, knowledge testing

Lower flag

Car fire highway 80

Mutual aid to Berkeley FD, accident Ashby & MLK

# Community

Albany Fire Department staff are active members of the community — participating in events throughout the year including the huge annual **Solano Stroll** street fair and parade, the Memorial Park **Fourth of July** celebration and the biannual **Dinner with Albany**.

Every year in October, during **Fire Prevention Week**, the Albany Fire Department makes safety presentations to all of the elementary schools in Albany. As a finale, the AFD staff hosts a **Pancake Breakfast**, inviting the entire community to join them for safety demonstrations and breakfast. Donations made at this event sponsor organizations within the Albany community and the Alisa Ann Ruch Burn Foundation.

Firefighters install smoke alarms for Albany seniors, sell low-cost bike helmets for children, and offer sandbags to Albany residents in advance of rainy weather.

Albany Fire Department participates with other regional departments in an annual **Toys for Tots** toy collection program that has provided holiday cheer for disadvantaged children in the area for over 20 years.

The Albany Fire Department partners with the American Safety and Health Institute (ASHI) to offer **CPR & first aid courses** to the residential and workplace community.

## **Community Emergency Response**

Team — CERT is comprised of community volunteers who are learning emergency response skills in the case of a major event/disaster. Taught by the Albany Fire Department, CERT courses teach practical skills to put out a small fire, perform disaster medicine, conduct a light search and rescue, and most importantly, to make smart decisions.



Over 800 people attended last year's Pancake Breakfast & Open House.

# Apparatus Specifications

### 2142 Engine

2009 Pierce Quantum

GVW 49.800 pounds

Length 32 feet 8 inches; height 10 feet 10 inches

750-gallon water tank

F-500 hydrocarbon encapsulator, 50 gallon

Pump capacity 1,500 gpm

Advanced Life Support

### 2171 Quint Truck with Ladder

2009 Pierce Impel

GVW 53,800 pounds

Length 36 feet, 11½ inches; height 11 feet 9 inches

500-gallon water tank

F-500 hydrocarbon encapsulator, 5 gallon

Pump capacity 1,500 gpm

Advanced Life Support

### 2180 Four Wheel Drive Engine

(used for wildland interface)

2004 Ford F-350

6.0 LV8

210-gallon water tank

F-500 hydrocarbon encapsulator, 10 gallon

Basic Life Support

### 2|4| (Reserve Engine)

1997 Pierce Saber

Length 28 feet 1 inch; height 10 feet 7 inches

500-gallon water tank

F-500 hydrocarbon encapsulator, 40 gallon

Pump capacity 1,251 gpm

Advanced Life Support

#### 2190 Ambulance

2013 International Terrastar

Advanced Life Support

### 2191 (Reserve Ambulance)

2006 Ford E-350

Advanced Life Support

F-500 Hydrocarbon Encapsulator is a biodegradable, fire extinguishing foam, that separates the fuel from the fire..

### COMPASSION

We are a people-orientated service organization focused on helping those in need.

# Ever Wondered...

## Why you sometimes see firetrucks in the grocery store parking lot?

Working 48-hour shifts with no support staff means that between calls, firefighters not only cook their own meals but shop for groceries — always ready to jump back in the truck or ambulance and respond to an emergency call.

# Why you almost always see both an ambulance and a firetruck at medical emergencies?

It's often not known how critical a patient is until firefighters arrive on the scene. With just two paramedics per vehicle, additional trained personnel can prove vital: helping to carry incapacitated or critically ill patients up or down stairs, and lifting them onto the gurney and into the ambulance while paramedics take vitals and administer life-saving actions.

# What it takes to become a firefighter/paramedic with the City of Albany?

Applicants are required to have their paramedic's license with a minimum of one to two years on a 911 transport unit. This means that they have first trained as an EMT (six months), had a minimum one year of EMT experience, and then two years of paramedic training plus one or two years of hands-on experience.

On the fire side, they've completed a state-approved Firefighter One academy, completed a number of fire science classes up to and including a two-year degree in fire technology, and many also have bachelors or advanced degrees in other fields.

Before being hired, prospective firefighters are tested on fire technology, emergency medicine, physical fitness, and mechanical aptitude, and are also put through a rigorous psychological evaluation and a background check.



Firefighters participating in Albany High's annual Career Day.



