



Annual Reports

Dear Reader:

The following document was created from the MTAS website ([mtas.tennessee.edu](https://www.mtas.tennessee.edu)). This website is maintained daily by MTAS staff and seeks to represent the most current information regarding issues relative to Tennessee municipal government.

We hope this information will be useful to you; reference to it will assist you with many of the questions that will arise in your tenure with municipal government. However, the *Tennessee Code Annotated* and other relevant laws or regulations should always be consulted before any action is taken based upon the contents of this document.

Please feel free to contact us if you have questions or comments regarding this information or any other MTAS website material.

Sincerely,

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Annual Reports

Reference Number: MTAS-1143

How an Annual Report Will Benefit Your Fire Department

As the Fire Chief or member of your fire department, you know what you do day in and day out, but who else knows that?

A fire department is a valuable community asset providing emergency and non-emergency essential services to residents, businesses and visitors. Regardless of the size of the community, many people will never need the emergency services the fire department provides. This is especially true in a large city, where the percent of people using the emergency services is very small. As an example, consider a city with a population of about 40,000 people where the fire department provides fire, emergency medical, rescue and technical rescue emergency services. The fire department made about 6,000 calls in 2017. Some of those calls were to non-residents, and some were to the same resident on multiple occasions, but for this example, assume that all calls were to residential homes, with one person at each home and all responses were unique (never responded to the same home more than once). In this scenario, the fire department touched 15.0 percent of the population. Those 15.0 percent are aware somewhat of what you do, but what does the other 85.0 percent of the population know, and how do you tell them what you do? You tell them with your annual report.

Technically, an annual report is a comprehensive report on the fire department's activities from the preceding year. The annual report provides information to elected officials, residents, businesses and other interested people about the fire department's activities and accomplishments. The annual report is a way to market your department and to share the department's capabilities without being boastful.

Annual Report Components

Reference Number: MTAS-1144

A fire department annual report can be as simple or as detailed as the department's leadership desires. Small departments may decide to include a list of responses and significant accomplishments, while larger departments may include many more details about the fire department and its performance from the previous year. Remember, this is a major way you communicate with your external customers.

Items that may be part of a fire department annual report include:

- Cover/Title Page
- Introductory letter from the fire chief
- Department Mission statement
- Department Values statement
- Department Vision statement
- Goals and objectives
- Performance measures
- Organizational chart
- Community demographics
- ISO Rating and what the rating means to the community
- Budget
 - Current fiscal year breakdown
 - Previous fiscal year actual
 - Grants applied for and grants received
 - Cost-per-call or other cost-per-unit measure
 - Revenue sources and percent of revenue from each source

- List of accomplishments
- Incident responses from the preceding year
 - Summary of all responses
 - Fires by type, fires by fixed property use, etc.
 - Incidents by time of day, day of week, district, etc.
 - Dollar loss by type of fire, day of week, property type, etc.
 - Value of all property at risk and amount of property saved
 - False alarm analysis
 - Historical trends
 - Rolling five-year analysis of all types of responses
 - Number of personnel responding by type of fire, hours worked, etc.
 - Response time by quarter and overall annual– average and by percentile
 - Response time breakdown by component (ring time, call processing time, turnout time, travel time) by quarter and overall annual
 - List of high dollar saved incidents with a synopsis of the incident.
 - List of high dollar loss incidents with a synopsis of the incident
 - Other data reports as determined by local needs
- Community Risk Reduction activities
 - List of public education programs and number citizens touched.
 - Code enforcement activities
 - Pre-fire planning activities, number of pre-plans, hours invested
 - Fire inspections by inspectors and company personnel
 - Number of fire code violations found and corrected
 - Average number of days to achieve code compliance
 - Fire department attendance at public events
 - Fire department fire protection and EMS standbys at special events
 - Citizen's fire academy program activities
 - CPR, CERT and other community preparedness programs the department is part of
- Fire investigation activities
 - Number of incendiary and suspicious fires
 - Number of arson cases prosecuted
 - Fires by cause
 - Fires by location of origin
 - Number of fires where the cause was determined
- Training activities
 - Total number of training hours for the department and the average for each firefighter
 - Number of training drills
 - Subjects covered and hours of training by subject
 - New recruit training programs
 - Certifications achieved
 - Technical courses completed

- Personnel roster (do not include personal contact information)
 - Rank
 - Position
 - Level of firefighter certification
 - Level of EMS certification
 - Years of service
 - Awards and recognitions
 - Promotions
 - Retirements
- Apparatus roster
 - List by type and age
 - List new acquisitions
 - List annual cost for fuel, maintenance, and repairs
 - Cost per mile or hour to operate
- Facilities (fire stations) roster
 - Address of each station
 - Description of primary response (first-due) area - a map is best
 - List of apparatus assigned to each station
 - List of maintenance and repairs
 - Annual cost to operate the station(s)
- History of the fire department

Use tables, charts and graphs to present numbers and data so it is easy to understand. Compare statistics with different years, for example the number of structure fires, to show trends, especially if the trend shows improvement and is the result of Community Risk Reduction efforts by the fire department.

The department should organize the report in a format that best presents and promotes the department's contributions to the community. One example of a format is to organize the report by major headings.

- **Fire Suppression** – response to all types of fires
- **Emergency Medical Services** – responses providing basic and advanced life support to the ill and injured
- **Special Operations and Rescue Techniques (SORT)** – unique and extraordinary rescue operations, such as confined space rescue, swift water rescue and high angle rescue
- **Hazardous Materials Response (Hazmat)** – control and mitigation of spills of dangerous and hazardous materials, including home or business pesticide spills and spills arising from transportation accidents
- **Community Risk Reduction** – tours, talks, press releases and other activities to promote public awareness of fire safety, including visits to schools, Fire Prevention Week activities, smoke detector programs and fire department displays and promotions at public events
- **Fire Inspections** – commercial fire code compliance inspections, pre-fire planning inspections and activities, sprinkler system installation inspections, plan reviews, fire hydrant flow tests and residential inspections
- **Fire Investigations** – cause and origin investigations of every fire, participation in a county or combined jurisdiction arson task force
- **Other Services** – fire hydrant maintenance, assistance to other city departments, community services (blood pressure checks, health fairs, CPR training, CERT classes, etc.), mutual aid and automatic aid to other fire departments; work with community groups, service on local committees and civic organizations

- **Fire Department Infrastructure** – maintenance and repairs on tools and equipment, technical services such as annual fit testing, refilling of compressed air cylinders and maintain the fire department's inventory

Use pictures throughout the report to highlight fire department personnel at work on fire or emergency scenes and involved in community activities. Be careful when using photos of incident scenes, especially EMS calls, to protect the privacy of patients and victims. Screen the photos carefully as the department should not use photos that show improper fire ground procedures, techniques, or safety violations.

Getting Started

Reference Number: MTAS-1145

You have decided to create your first annual report, so how do you begin. First, review the data that you have available and then decide what you want to include in the annual report. Some departments may use database programs such as Firehouse, Emergency Reporting, or New World, and those programs can produce graphs and charts for inclusion in the report. Smaller departments may not have such a computer database program, but if they report to TFIRS, they can use a free web resource called the Summary Output Reports Tool (SORT) to produce graphs for inclusion in the report (see the resources section for more information). <http://www.nfirs.fema.gov/> [1]

Next, decide on the layout. MTAS has examples of several Tennessee fire department annual reports on Knowledgebase (see the resources section for more information), or search the internet for fire department annual report to find examples. The report's design should include ample use of white space (i.e., do not crowd a page with too much information) and be organized in a logical manner. Include a cover/title page with the fire department logo or a photo showing the fire department in action. For larger reports, include page numbers and a table of contents. Have several people in the department proof the report, and then send the report to someone outside of the fire department. Ask that person to review the report from an outsider's perspective and make changes accordingly. As a final review, have someone with a good command of grammar and punctuation review the report for spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors.

Produce enough hard copies of the report to distribute within the fire department and to elected officials and community leaders. Place a copy in the local library. For the widest distribution, produce an Adobe pdf format copy, and place that on your fire department or city website for download.

Report Summary and Resources

Reference Number: MTAS-1146

A fire department's annual report is an excellent tool for a fire department to use to tell its story to the community and to build community support for its efforts and needs. The report should inform and educate the community about the role the fire department plays in community safety. Department members will take pride in the annual report, knowing that they contributed to the accomplishments of the department and that they helped make a difference in the community.

Resources

Departments reporting to TFIRS can use the free web-based tools available from the United States Fire Administration. Go to <http://nfirs.fema.gov/> [2] and click on the link titled "Web-based tools", then click the link titled "Summary Output Reports Tool" to access your department's data. Registration is required to access the data. For information on this resource, and to get a registration and login, contact TFIRS coordinator, at (615) 532-5753, Monday through Friday, 7:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. CST..

Links:

[1] <http://www.nfirs.fema.gov/>

[2] <http://nfirs.fema.gov/>

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