

NORTH BRANFORD FIRE DEPARTMENT

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Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

"ACTIVATION OF FIRE STATION SIRENS"

NORTH BRANFORD, CT. OCTOBER 5, 2017:

During the past several days, members of the North Branford Fire Department have responded to (2) two structure fires that resulted in significant monetary loss to property owners. As part of the NBFD notification process and response, fire station sirens are activated by the 911 dispatcher. This has led to calls into the 911 center, posts on social media and questions by citizens concerning this loud, strange noise.

When a fire is reported to the town's 911 center, the NBFD responds with a predetermined number of apparatus based upon type and location of incident. Assignments are established by the computer-

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aided dispatch system. Members of the NBFD are alerted to every call via tone activated pagers and radios. When units arrive and perform a size up, they often request additional assistance from within our department or mutual aid from surrounding towns. Mutual aid may be used to support our personnel at the emergency incident scene and or provide fire station coverage while we are engaged in tactical operations. If another 911 call is received for a medical emergency or fire, the mutual aid units respond without delay.

One of our many Standard Operating Guidelines (SOG) include procedures for "declaring a working structure fire." When that occurs the dispatcher transmits a radio message announcing that a "working fire exists." This is followed by a text message and then, station sirens are activated. The siren tone for a fire is different compared to the tone heard by many citizens at 6:00 pm every evening. The purpose of using fire station sirens (which dates back to the establishment of the NBFD) is to have redundancy in the notification process. This is also part of the communications protocol related to the Insurance Service Office (ISO) community fire protection rating classification program. These station sirens are also capable of emitting verbal messages to residents in times of large scale events, such as the need to evacuate or take precautions. This capability is controlled by the town's dispatch center.

The 140 men and women of the NBFD stand ever ready to respond to the needs of the community 24/7/365. The NBFD answers nearly 1,900 calls for service a year, 80% of our responses are to render emergency medical care (standard percentage throughout the country). In 2016 NBFD responded to and or received mutual aid 91 times; this was for fire and EMS incidents.

The operations of the NBFD is guided by state and federal laws, regulation and standards. Emergency incident scenes can appear to the average citizen as confusing and loud, with many firefighters performing different tasks. The fire service operates under the concept of "unity of command" with a "manageable span of control" through the implementation of either a "single or unified incident command structure." Remember, the life we save may be yours.

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