

VIRTUA FIRE & RESCUE DEPARTMENT PROFILE

Virtua Fire & Rescue employs 78 highly dedicated, skilled, and capable individuals. Members of the department are divided into line, staff, and support. The department is organized around the typical management structure with 63 personnel on the line delivering emergency response services, fire prevention, and public education. Supervised by the Fire Marshal, the department's fire prevention division is staffed with four fire inspectors who are responsible for technical inspections, code compliance, and fire investigations.

Oversight and management of the department is organized around the fire chief and five functional divisions. The functions of administration, fire prevention, operations, planning, and training are managed by staff battalion chiefs who, in addition to staff functions, respond to greater alarm emergencies. Three operations battalion chiefs (on 53 hour rotating schedules) manage the daily activity of the fire stations and respond to emergencies as required.

The department provides emergency response, fire prevention, and public education services to a 52 square mile area and a resident population base of 75,000.

Virtua Fire & Rescue delivers emergency response services from four fire stations each staffed with a four-person engine company. The main station located at 350 South Main Street in Virtua also houses, in addition to an engine company, a ladder truck staffed 24/7 with four firefighters. In 2002, a public safety levy was passed that allowed a fourth firefighter to be added to all of Virtua's Fire & Rescue staffed apparatus. The fire chief commissioned a labor/management taskforce charged with reviewing all of the department's tactics and task performances to take advantage of the increased staffing within the parameters of NFPA 1500 and the Occupation Health and Safety Administration requirements for 2-in/2-out. The result was the creation of two-two person teams for each company. The company officer carries personnel accountability tags for his crew capable of splitting a four-person company into Team A and Team B while maintaining crew accountability and the department's mandated requirements for working within a "buddy system" while in IDLH (Immediate Danger to Life and Health) atmospheres.

Current Fire Stations:

- Station 1: 350 S. Main St.
- Station 2: 1448 N.W. Dufur Ave
- Station 3: 8307 S.W. Abiqua Blvd
- Station 4: 1203 S.E. College Ave

Virtua Fire & Rescue takes pride in ensuring that each engine responding to an emergency is staffed and equipped to deliver advanced life support (ALS), in addition all firefighters are minimally trained and certified as Emergency Medical Technician Basic.

The emergency response environment is composed of many variables. The response area includes the typical urban/city setting, agricultural farmland and rural wildland which spans a mix of grasslands, hardwood, and conifer forests. Residential homes exist and are routinely constructed in the wildland urban settings. In addition to this, the response area is composed of high density apartment complexes, several multiple story buildings reaching as high as 10 stories, high density retirement centers, two large regional shopping malls, several strip malls, an International Airport with light retail, commercial and industrial business, several country club golf courses, restaurants, and a state university.

Virtua Fire & Rescue is a participant in the Abiqua County Mutual Aid Agreement, which heavily emphasizes a regional closest force response. This ensures the citizens of Virtua that in the event of an emergency, the closest fire units, regardless of jurisdiction will be dispatched. Virtua Fire & Rescue is also a participant in the Abiqua County Regional Dispatch Center (ACRD), which assures emergency 911 calls are efficiently processed regardless of jurisdiction.

Virtua Fire & Rescue dispatches three engines, a truck company, and battalion chief to all first alarm fires within the city. The first company officer on scene will act as the incident commander for all first alarm fires, and the battalion chief will act as backup and coach. If the incident is deemed greater than what the first alarm resources can handle, additional alarms duplicating the first alarm resources (3 engines, truck, and chief officer) will be dispatched. The ACRD automatically moves up fire resources throughout the county to balance remaining fire resources based on pre-agreed criteria.