
Mobile Fire Rescue Department

2017-18 Community Risk Reduction Annual Report

Dwayne M Penn Sr. District Chief - August 13, 2018



The mission of your Community Risk Reduction Team is to prevent death, injuries and property loss by promoting a safe living environment by providing a professional approach of Life Safety Education, Code Compliance and Fire Investigation Services.

The Office of Community Risk Reduction's main objective is to prevent death, injury, and property loss from fire by promoting a safe living environment through the professional application of code enforcement, plan review, investigation, education and intervention programs. The Mobile Fire-Rescue Fire Risk Reduction Division has adopted the International Fire Code 2012, and NFPA as a standard of safety. These documents are a guide to a safer community and serve as a cornerstone model for Community Risk Reduction (CRR) programming throughout the City of Mobile. The Fire Prevention Division has a wide range of responsibilities within the City of Mobile. Our focal points are the five E's of prevention: ***Education, Engineering, Enforcement, Economic Incentives and Emergency Response.***

Education intervention programs are offered to every person in the community by the MFRD. However we specifically target the more vulnerable in the community. We strive to thoroughly educate the youngest to the most senior members of our community. Education intervention gives your CRR team an opportunity to reach and team every aspect of the City of Mobile. Education intervention is vital to safety and critical to the success of any CRR program. All our personnel are required to possess varying degrees of specialized training, certification, instruction and continuing education.

Engineering is when your dedicated plans review personnel work with design professionals, contractors, building department, and urban development, reviewing the latest fire protection design that will be most effective and efficient for our most important customer, the Citizens of Mobile. Things such as sprinkler protection, location and number of exits, means of access and egress can all be factored in and considered well before start of construction.

Fenforcement team discovers origin and cause of the fire. Our

personnel can determine where the fire originated and what was used to start the fire. This involves assisting and at times taking the lead with our local police and federal agencies. This requires excellent communication and documentation skills. The origin and cause personnel collect evidence to be processed; interact with property owners, police detectives and our local DA's office to bring about an arrest. This team operates under the Mobile Fire Department's own Originating Reporting Identifier (ORI) number. This ORI number is a unique number assigned to each law enforcement agency. It is a way to identify exactly who made a request and where the response should be returned. In short, it is another way of holding parties responsible and accountable. The unit also participates in the ATF's Bomb Arson Tracking System (BATS). This system allows the team to track suspects across city or state lines. It also allows other agencies to track common trends of any potential arson suspect.

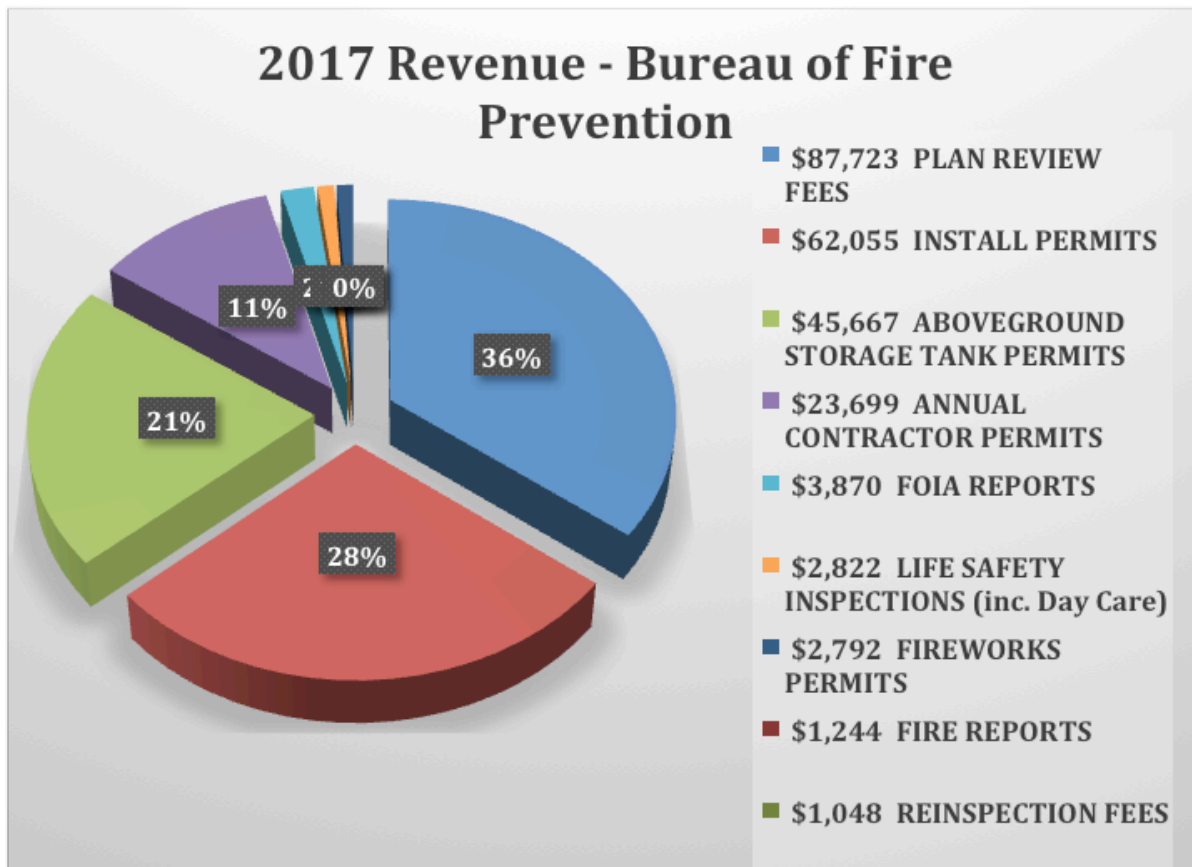
Economic Incentive is how we encourage our local businesses to

enhance the community safety. With safety being the utmost importance, your CRR team recognize that culminating a partnership is critical to success. We are always being creative in continuing the growth of the City of Mobile. Your CRR team continues the conversation with our business owners and how they can play a vital role in being a leading force in safety measures throughout the community. Case in point, your CRR team

2017 Revenue - Bureau of Fire Prevention		
\$ 87,723	PLAN REVIEW FEES	35%
\$ 62,055	INSTALL PERMITS	28%
\$ 45,667	ABOVEGROUND STORAGE TANK PERMITS	21%
\$ 23,699	ANNUAL CONTRACTOR PERMITS	11%
\$ 3,870	FOIA REPORTS	2%
\$ 2,822	LIFE SAFETY INSPECTIONS (inc. Day Care)	1%
\$ 2,792	FIREWORKS PERMITS	1%
\$ 1,244	FIRE REPORTS	>1%
\$ 1,048	REINSPECTION FEES	>1%
\$ 230,920	TOTAL FOR 2017	

diligently work each apartments manager to receive any Tax Credits that may be afforded. The Tax Credits typically are received after several life safety measures are met.

In 2017 the office contributed over \$230,000 to the revenue of the city. While the numbers are still coming in, the 2018 year should be consistent or at a higher rate than last year. Those numbers are significant when considering the staffing ratio. For each and every fire call, your community risk reduction team is considering what could have been done to prevent the incident. Your community risk reduction team operates in a proactive approach to eliminate risk hazards to the community.



Emergency Response is an entity that we are constantly reviewing,

revising and evaluating. The fire trucks leaving the fire station when responding to a fire is the least desired and least effectual way that we

prefer to operate. Each and every fire call, your community risk reduction team is considering what could have been done to prevent the incident.

Your community risk reduction team operates in a proactive approach as opposed to reactive, in that we are review what happened and how the event could have been prevented. This measure is assessed not only local but across



the nation. Best practices are evaluated to consider ways of preventing such incidents from impacting our community. Your team reviews the statistics and data from our 911 call center. Once this is analyzed, measures are devised to impact the area where needs are the greatest. This is so that the team can be the most impactful on the community.

After each residential fire, members of your CRR team make an effort to go out in that particular impacted community to offer smoke alarms and recommend further safety measures.

We feel it is important to be an example and to be “leading, not lagging” in all things including fire prevention. We strive to be virtuous and to serve as a model for other surrounding cities and communities.

District Chief
Dwayne M. Penn Sr.

<u>Education Specialist</u>	<u>Engineering/ Code</u>	<u>Enforcement</u>
Captain D.Y. Smith	Captain Sam Allen	Captain J.H. Odom
Firefighter B. Collins	Captain J.I. May	Inv. J. Hunter
	Captain M. Campbell	
	Captain S. Tucker	
	Inspector T. Sessions	
	Inspector B. Moses	

Office Executive Assistants

Faith Koppersmith III
Mary Jane Price II

Duties of Your Community Risk Reduction Team

Plans Review	Special Events
Permits Issued	Fire Reports Issued
Business Inspections	Knox Box Management
Fire Code Violation/Complaint Investigation	Pyrotechnic Safety
Volunteer Prevention Program	Public Education
FOIA Requests	Juvenile Fire Setter
Above Ground Storage Tank Inspections	Fire Investigation
Food Truck Inspections	
Life Safety Inspections (Adult & Child Daycare Facilities, Nursing Homes etc.)	

Community Risk Reduction

Plans Review

The Fire Code Official for the City of Mobile is responsible and accountable for all fire safety measures, including but not limited to interpretation and enforcement of the provisions of the City of Mobile Fire-Rescue Department. Plans review involves working with design professionals, fire protection system contractors, building department, and urban development. This involves being able to collaborate with other sectors of city government, such as building, mechanical, plumbing and electrical, as well as the general contractors, with the purpose of bringing about an effective, efficient, and comprehensive approach to conducting business for our most important customer, the Citizens of Mobile.



Life Safety

Life Safety Inspections include businesses that have a potential high risk of loss to life and property. These high risk hazards include hospitals, hotels, nursing homes, adult and child daycare facilities, restaurants and assembly places. As an awareness measure, a single inspector is assigned to work with all apartment complex managers. All commercial projects call for a fire system to be installed. Plans for the system are submitted for review and permitting. Through permits and plans review, this office contribution to the city general fund is approximately \$219,300 for 2017 YTD.



These high risk hazards include hotels, nursing homes, facilities, restaurants and assembly places. As an awareness measure, a single inspector is assigned to work with all apartment complex managers. All commercial projects call for a fire system to be installed. Plans for the system are submitted for review and permitting. Through permits and plans review, this office contribution to the city general fund is approximately \$219,300 for 2017 YTD.

Public Education

The Public Education Programs of the Mobile Fire Department benefit our community to be safer by serving people through knowledge and training. Preparedness and prevention are key components to avoiding and preventing the consequences of fire. However, since our department responds to more than just fires, our Public Education efforts have also expanded to more than just fire prevention education. Our programs include a wide range of education designed to identify the behavior that put our citizens and community at risk. Community Risk Reduction is the targeted implementation of education and strategies to reduce risk in the community based on specific areas that put the community and its citizens in danger. To meet these goals, our partnership with the Mobile, Alabama Chapter of the American Red Cross was expanded. We utilize media, newsletters, and door-to-door activity to accomplish our goals by:

1. Providing a free Home Safety Survey, which includes fire education and prevention strategies.
2. Installing free smoke alarms in homes to reduce deaths and injuries.

Methods of getting a free smoke alarm installed

Call: 251-208-5555

Email: Captain D.Y. Smith at dwight.smith@cityofmobile.org

Public Education outreach to the community is accomplished through our public safety messages and by hosting or attending a multitude of public events.



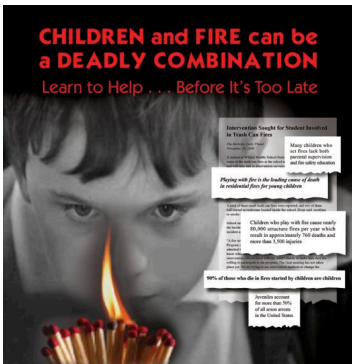
Your CRR team installed over 2,000 smoke alarms for the citizens of Mobile in 2017 in an effort to ensure our citizens are further protected. As a valuable resource for training and education-related matters, your public education support team has an extremely positive impact on the community. In 2017, your public

education program outreach was used to provide fire safety and home hazard education to children and adults.



Juvenile Fire Setter Intervention Program

The goal of The Mobile Fire Department Juvenile Fire Setter Intervention Program is to reduce the frequency and severity of the tragedy and trauma caused by child and youth fire related activities. The Fire Safety Division established this national program locally more than twenty years ago. Currently our team has two members that are Juvenile Fire Setter interventionists: Captain D.Y. Smith and Captain J.Y. Odom.



The Juvenile Fire Setter Intervention program is an educational tool that is not punitive. Juveniles who are identified as being involved with fire related activities are referred to the program. Once referred, a parent/guardian accompanies the juvenile to meet with one or more Juvenile Fire Setter Interventionists. This meeting is to determine the level of risk a juvenile has at being involved with additional fire setting activity. After that risk level is determined, an educational plan is most often implemented. Occasionally,

a juvenile may be referred to a mental health professional based on the level of risk.

The program may not be the solution to all juvenile fire setting tendencies, however, experience with those that have participated in fire setter intervention programs here and throughout the country have shown that incidents of repeat fire setting have been reduced significantly.

Unfortunately, we are unable to make contact with some referrals, and others choose to refuse participation. We know the program has produced positive results that have had a profound impact on our youth.

Fire Investigation

Your fire origin and cause team is comprised of one single fire investigator for each shift and two follow up persons to assist with each case. The fire investigation is tasked with determining where the fire started (area of origin) and what was used to start the fire. There are four cause determinations of a fire:



Accidental- a cause that does not involve an intentional human act to ignite or spread the fire into an area where the fire should not be

Incendiary- intentionally ignited under circumstances in which the person knows that the fire should not be ignited

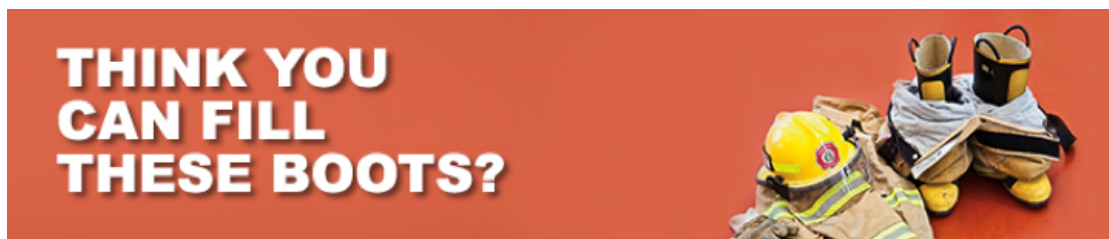
Natural- a cause without any direct human intervention or action such as lightning, earthquake and winds

Undetermined- a fire that the investigator is unable to determine a cause. This is where the cause cannot be proven to an acceptable level of certainty, or where the fire is still under investigation and cause may be determined later if new information or evidence is discovered.

The 2017 year brought us a few statistic to improve upon.

- 323 Total Investigation Responses with a property loss of 5,794,100*
- 121 Arson Related - \$2,640,600.00*
- 22 Civilian Injury*
- 3 Civilian Death*
- 47 Arrest*
- 15 Juvenile Arrest*

Special Events



Special events may be the most unnoticed duty throughout fire prevention. These typically are special assignments from the fire chief or any elected official. One routine event is the assistance of reviewing and removing the blight throughout the city. Inspectors work with other agencies to reduce hazards by mitigating abandoned and dilapidated buildings. Another event is the yearly Mardi Gras inspections. The inspector meets with the president of each organization to explain our expectations for the night of events and what is required. Each and every Mardi Gras float has to go through a pre-inspection. During the pre-inspection the inspectors are looking to make sure the floats have a fire extinguisher on each floor and that each float is safe. They also make sure exit signs are not painted or covered from the view of float riders. This is further examined the night the float is expected to be ridden.



Each ballroom has to be inspected the night of the event. Ballroom decorations and food dishes must be examined to meet code requirements and be fire resistant. Furthermore, all downtown nightlife has to be regulated for occupancy load. Included in special events are recruiting efforts for the MFRD, annual Fire Expo, National Night Out, instructing our citizens in CPR, MDA boot drive and a fire extinguisher class. The special assignments typically come as managing and taking the lead of the Annual Banquet and the Fire Expo. It involves getting several of our internal and external costumers involved.

Knox Box Management

In the year 2000 the City of Mobile adopted the ordinance that allows local businesses to be accessed by fire department personnel. Maintaining the Knox Box key system provides access to commercial businesses. As part of the city ordinance, each building is required to have a Knox Box. This is to prevent damage and to reduce delays of fire crews accessing the building after standard business hours. Out of the 6 states in the southeast region, Mobile is the largest user of this system. In an effort of keeping the integrity and accountability of the key, the fire prevention team is making a push for the new key retention system. Each person has to be held responsible and accountable for his or her issued Knox Box key.



Pyrotechnic Safety

The Office of Fire Prevention oversees and evaluates all of the city's fireworks demonstrations. During this transition each and every technician has to be vetted and a background check has to be done. Their license has to be checked by the local police and at the state level. This must be done at each Bay Bear's stadium fireworks show, New Years, all holidays and any legal fireworks performance in the City of Mobile. The fireworks site has to be evaluated and approved. The night of the show, the fireworks platform or stage has to be inspected as well for stability and to make sure this is done in a safe manner.



Freedom of Information Act Request

The Freedom of Information Act is a requirement we are legally bound to meet and your CRR team makes every effort to be transparent with the community in which we love and serve. The team manages all FOIA requests for the Mobile Fire-Rescue Department. Mobile Fire Department personnel receives FOIA requests for several reasons and from various entities: individuals, management, city officials, potential property buyers and other firms request Environmental Assessment/Fire Code Violation discovery for certain properties. Other miscellaneous requests are also received such as personal file information, media requests, etc. We also receive request from city legal and other agencies. This necessary aspect of open government can be times consuming and at time labor intensive. Timely processing of these requests, generally are five days or less. All document requests must be inspected for sensitive information prior to release; therefore some document requests must be redacted. Due to the sensitive nature, only certain employees can process these requests. A high level of discretion is necessary and must be maintained.

Volunteer Prevention Program

The CRR team has created a VPP program for our business community. The program is simply an acknowledgment of our businesses that have gone beyond the call of duty in raising the bar in the fire prevention climate. Anyone can submit the name of a business that they feel has set a high pace of preventive measures. Once submitted, the CRR prevention team must convene and review this request into the VPP. The staff is only to be sure that business has been faithfully committed to following the city's adopted fire codes and making a significant effort in fire prevention. If approved, the CRR staff will decide if the business will be categorized in a Gold, Silver or Bronze status. The Gold category is exceptional, the Silver category is good, and the Bronze is needs improvements. The categories allow business owners that are not exceptional to have them a path of forward progress to aspire to in fire prevention. Whichever category, the business will receive a certificate of appreciation. The certificate will signify the category of the business. With limited staffing, this can be beneficial and the inspectors can target the true potential hazard and also help foster a relationship of inclusion with our business community. Again, this program is strictly voluntary and not required.



Junior Fire Inspector Program

The Junior Fire Inspector Program is just another way of getting the community involved and bringing about safety in our homes. The junior fire inspector can be of any school age and attend any school in the City of Mobile. The junior inspector will be given some basic guidelines on home inspecting. Once they are familiar with these guidelines, the junior inspector will be given an ID issued by the MFRD. The junior inspector can first inspect their own home and then inspect the neighbor's home. The key to this is not only to expose our youth to the fire service but to also bring about a safer community.



The Mobile Fire Rescue Department consists of a vast number of multi-talented safety specialists and professionals. Each and every member is committed to your safety and well-being. Despite that, hazards and risk are constantly evolving and finding ways to exist in our daily lives. Your CRR team and the entire MFRD are both committed in utilizing every resource that we have available, to not only reduce but to hopefully eliminate each and every incident that could potentially put our community at risk. Providing the Citizens of Mobile with a safer working and living environment is what we are always striving, endeavoring and laboring to accomplish. We are constantly seeking ways to improve, develop and be creative in making the City of Mobile a hazard free place to live, work, and play.



As Always, Yours In Protection
Dwayne M. Penn Sr.