

## **Chilmark Fire Department Town Report 2005**

To The Board of Selectmen and the Citizens of Chilmark:

The Chilmark Fire Department would like to thank the community for your outstanding support to our department. Your continued financial support for further equipment, building plans, and training means a lot to our volunteers. Many members in our department are constantly striving to increase their skills by becoming First Responders, EMTs, HAZMAT specialists, and, Search and Rescuers. This is in addition to the arduous training of being a knowledgeable firefighter, taught in the latest techniques and equipment. The Chilmark Fire Department Volunteers devote numerous hours, outside of their everyday lives, to training and continuing education in firefighting and rescue. Your support of them and their hard work is truly appreciated.

Currently, the Chilmark Fire Department is waiting on bids for a new brushbreaker that we desperately need. Our current brushbreaker, so vital in gaining access to brush or forest fires, is 36 years old with failing parts that are increasingly difficult and more expensive to replace. With the town's continued support, we hope to have, in the nearest future possible, land to build a new station. The completion of this project is critical to the survival of a well-functioning fire department. The current building is completely inadequate to meet the current standards of today's firefighting capabilities. Our current station, located on a busy intersection, has numerous substandard issues: including health and building code inadequacies. Our apparatus simply cannot safely operate in a building that was built in the 1950s. A proper station requires necessary safety systems for apparatus, and training facilities for vehicular extrication, pump orientation, and hose/nozzle and appliance applications. We simply have to continue with the planned improvements to meet the needs for the town. It is our fervent hope that active support from the town for a new, updated Public Safety Building will make the long-standing plan a reality.

This year, in a continued effort to update public safety and educate the townspeople, the Chilmark Fire Department would ask that all roads and properties be clearly marked with homeowner name, house number, and/or road name. This is integral to fast response times for emergency personnel coming to assist during emergencies. In addition, access to homes needs to be unimpeded by overhanging trees and branches, shrubbery, and/or other roadside obstacles. Please appropriately maintain private roads and property access in order to allow emergency vehicles adequate passage.

Homes that burn fossil fuels now will need to have carbon monoxide detector(s) installed. These new devices, in addition to standard smoke detectors that all homes should have in place, should be checked regularly for proper function: batteries checked, alarm devices tested, proper cleaning and maintenance conducted.

With the demands of life increasing for everyone, we have, over the recent years, seen a drop in our volunteer membership. Families move away, and for those that stay, the cost of living is so great that it prohibits any free time for volunteering to community service. This has been a problem across the island, throughout many agencies that rely on volunteer involvement. This trend in involvement is a worry to this department and may very well be a threat to our volunteer status in the future. If you, or anyone you know is interested in becoming a volunteer firefighter, please give the Chilmark Fire Department a call.

In closing we invite you to stop by either of the two stations in town any Sunday morning around 10 a.m. to take a look around or ask any questions.

**Fire Department Responses for the Calendar Year 2005**

Alarm Activations	56	Motor Vehicle Accidents	11
Kitchen Fires	1	Pole Fires	5
Brush Fires	3	Structure Fires	2
Chimney Fires	2	False Alarms	5
Electrical Fires	2	Search/Rescues	4
Fuel/Oil Spill	2	Car Fires/Fluids	4
Furnace Malfunctions	3	Gas Leaks	3
Illegal Burns	2	Airport Alerts	2
Medical Transport	2	Burn Permits Issued	162
Lightning Strike House	1		

**Inspection Tally for the Calendar Year 2005**

Oil Burner	9
Oil Tank	17
Smoke Detector	58
Gas Tank	81
Oil Tank Removal	6

**Chilmark Fire Department Roster:**

David Norton, Chief	Sloan Hart, Admin. Assist.
Timothy Carroll, Assistant Chief	Martina Mastromonaco
Keith Emin, Captain	Danny Mayhew
William Parry, Safety Officer	Tony Palmer
Simon Bollin, Lieutenant	Jill Placzek
Russell Fenty, Lieutenant	Donald Poole
Scott McDowell, Lieutenant	Don Sexton
Taurus Biskis	William Smith, Jr.
Gary Coates, Jr.	George Szilassy
Carl Crocker	Richard Vincent
Robert Coutinho	<b>New Members</b>
Sean Duarte	Ian Fein
Robert Flanders	George Hearn
Judd Fuller	Christian Soulagnet
Steve Gallas	

Respectfully submitted,  
David Norton, Fire Chief