



West Rutland Fire Department

P.O. Box 206
West Rutland, VT 05777

2019 – 2020 Annual Report of the Fire Chief

This year brought about a great deal of change for the West Rutland Fire Department. Over the past year, we have been working with our officers, members, Town Manager, and Selectboard to reorganize the fire department. This involved revising our administrative standard operating guidelines and restructuring our officer ranks. This effort was necessary to ensure that we can provide the high-quality service that you have come to expect from us well into the future. I would like to thank everyone who was involved in this effort for their support.

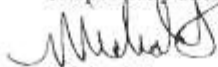
At the end of 2019, Joseph Skaza retired from the position of Fire Chief after serving in the position for 28 years. Under his leadership, the department was able to secure a modern and reliable fleet of fire apparatus and firefighting equipment, upgrade our existing fire station into a modern facility that will serve us well into the future, and maintain a well-trained and highly effective group of firefighters. Over his years as Chief, he saw the department change from one that was only called upon in the event of a fire to one that is now the town's primary responder to fires, rescues, and hazardous materials incidents. Joe expanded our capabilities as the demands for more services increased in an efficient and capable manner. We recognize him for his dedication and commitment to our fire department and are pleased that after 47 years of continuous service, he will continue to serve on the department and support us in different ways.

We started 2020 with a new slate of officers in our department with the following positions being appointed: Michael Skaza, Chief; Tom Lacz, Assistant Chief; Jeffrey Wos, Captain; Andrew FitzGerald, Lieutenant; and Lori Lyons, Clerk. Our officers look forward to working closely with our members, community, and mutual aid partners. Our department is currently served by 17 very dedicated members who spend hundreds of hours each year responding to emergency calls, training, performing equipment and building maintenance, and performing public education within our community. This year we recognized Andrew FitzGerald for completing five years of service on the department. Altogether, our members hold over 300 years of service to the fire department.

In addition to responding to emergencies, we provided fire prevention safety education to West Rutland School's kindergarten through third grade classes during Fire Prevention Week. We also hosted several community group tours at the fire station and provided stand-by service at public events such as the West Rutland School Pep Rally, Town Block Party, and the Town Christmas Tree Lighting.

Our department remains strong through our membership. Any West Rutland resident who is interested in serving our community as a firefighter can obtain more information by contacting the fire chief. Applicants must be at least 18 years of age, have a willingness to serve their community, be a resident of the Town of West Rutland, and be a citizen in good standing.

Respectfully submitted,


Michael Skaza
Chief