

FIRE AND INSPECTION DEPARTMENT

Paul Stieler, Fire Chief

The Albert Lea Fire Department is committed to the preservation of life, safety and protection of property for the City of Albert Lea. We continue to encourage the use of improved engineering practices building construction and operation systems that reduce the fire hazards in buildings. We provide fire prevention education and safety training in our schools, hospital, nursing homes, businesses and industries. We continue enforcement of proven building and fire codes. These efforts have resulted in the reduction fires in our community.

COMMUNITY

18,356	Residents
792	Commercial and Industrial Properties
682,110,700	Value of property protected
14	Square Miles
16	Mutual aid with number of departments

FACILITY

Fire and Inspection Department
221 East Clark St
Telephone 507-377-4340

Fire Department Vehicles

#920	1999 Toyne Pumper (Township)
#918	2006 1250 GPM Pierce Rescue/Pumper
#916	1992 Pierce 105 Ft. Aerial Ladder
#917	1995 1250 GPM Pierce Pumper
#093	2001 Ford Pick up

GRANT

In 2006 Mark Roche wrote a grant for equipment. The Albert Lea Fire Department was awarded that grant in the amount of \$43,102 for diesel exhaust filters on the three pumpers and ladder truck.

Staffing

Full-time Fire Response Staff.....17
Paid On Call Response Staff.....17
Full-time shared Clerical Staff.....1

Full-time:

Fire Chief	(1)
Fire Captains	(4)
Firefighters	(12)

Paid On Call:

Fire Chief	(1)
Fire Captains	(2)
Firefighters	(14)

VEHICLES MAINTAINED BY THE FIRE DEPARTMENT

Vehicle Mileage as of 12/31/07

<u>Vehicle</u>	<u>Road Miles</u>	<u>Hours</u>
1	33,089	
918	5,248	538 Hours
916	5,759	1,598 Hours
917	38,349	3,895 Hours
080	65,687	
086	65,373	
093	47,089	
429	81,853	
434	44,474	

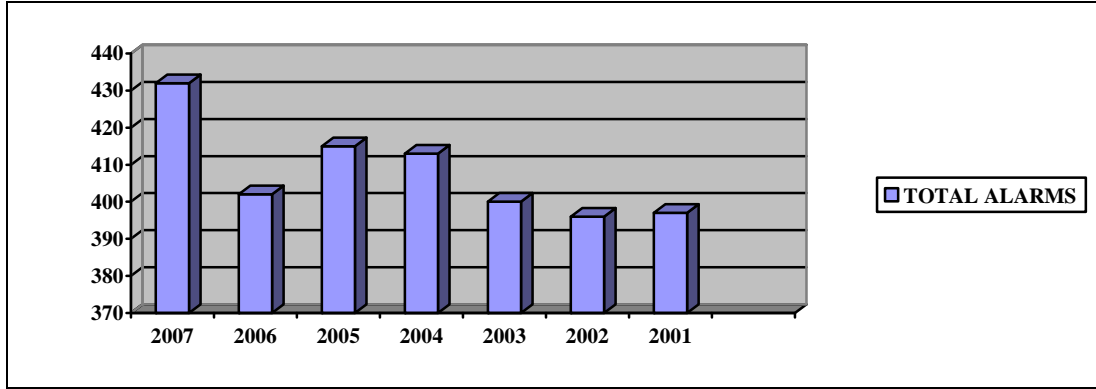
<u>Vehicle</u>	<u>Vehicle Use in 2007 Road Miles</u>	<u>Hours</u>
1	5,766	
918	3,744	426 Hours
916	320	101 Hours
917	450	66 Hours
080	5,051	
086	5,269	
093	6,372	
429	3,668	
434	<u>9,502</u>	

Total vehicle usage in 2007 40,142 miles

Fire & Inspection vehicles required only routine maintenance in 2007.

ALARMS

In 2007 the Albert Lea Fire Department responded to a total of 432 alarms.

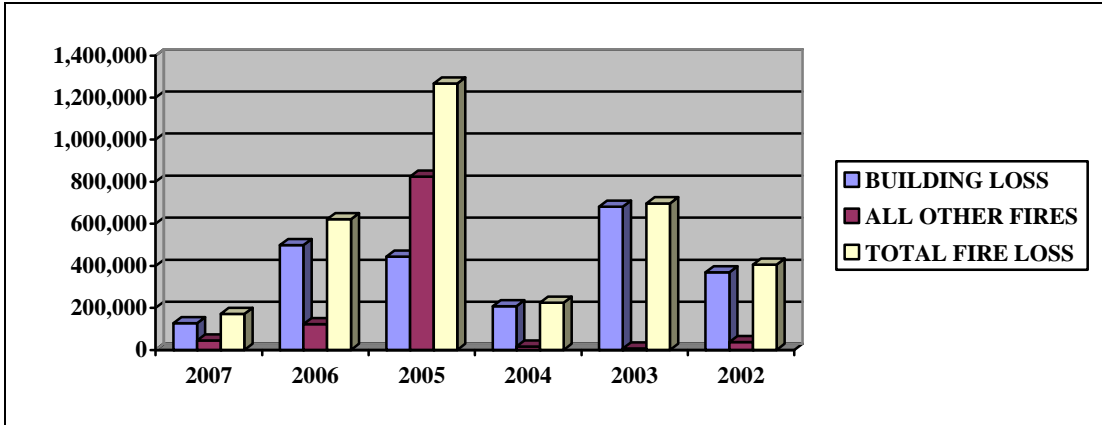


<u>Fire Calls</u>	
Structure	13
Other	32
Total - Fire Calls	45
<u>Other Calls</u>	
Rescue	54
Hazardous Conditions	83
Service Calls	98
Good Intent Calls	45
False Calls	93
Other Calls	14
Total – Other Calls	387
Total – All Calls	432
<u>Mutual Aid</u>	
Rendered	1
Received	0
<u>Average Response Time</u>	4.59
(Calculated on times for the 45 fire calls)	
<u>Overall Average Response Time</u>	4.52

2006 FIRE LOSS

Structure	\$126,582.00
Other	\$44,500.00
Total	\$171,082.00

Average Structure Loss	\$ 9,737.00
Fire Loss/Capita (20,000 population)	\$ 8.55



Fire Injuries

Firefighter	0
Civilian	1

Non Fire Related Injuries

Firefighter	0
Civilian	0

Fire Deaths

Firefighter	0
Civilian	0

Non Fire Related Deaths

Firefighter	0
Civilian	0

FIRE HYDRANT MAINTENANCE:

As of December 31, 2007 we had 1,100 hydrants in service. According to records, no new hydrants were added in 2007.

<u>Work Done</u>	<u>Number of Hydrants</u>
Hydrants checked	1,182
Hydrants painted	270
Hydrants trimmed	0
Hydrants pumped	86
Hydrants flow tested	16
Hydrants thawed	29
Hydrants shoveled	158
Hydrants flagged	0
Hydrant man-hours	351
Hydrants extended	0
Hydrants replaced	3
New hydrants added	0

WARNING SIRENS:

All warning sirens and rotating heads are individually checked at the beginning of each tornado season. The system is tested on the first Wednesday of each month at 1:00 p.m. An additional siren was installed at the Minnesota Highway Department Building which will cover the Tiger Hills Development.

OCCUPATIONAL TRAINING 2007

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>ALFD</u>	<u>ALTFD</u>	<u>Fire Explorer</u>
2000	1400	942	
2001	1636	974	420
2002	2057.5	709	1472
2003	2023	1033	1978.5
2004	1957.5	802	N/A
2005	2855.1	1025	N/A
2006	3208	961	N/A
2007	2865	885	N/A

In 2007 we continued expanding our knowledge base as well as conducted continuing education. With the staffing changes that have occurred this past year we will need to again revisit basics to bring all of our staff up to speed.

As the demands on the department have increased, our ability to maintain our individual shift training hours in house has been reduced. Staff is encouraged to attend outside classes in order to keep current on changes in the industry as well as to supplement our level of training conducted each year. In 2008 we will continue with this system while being aware that with the changes coming to the inspection side of the department we must be prepared to radically change our overall approach to training in order to provide fully trained staff to fulfill the needs of the community in a timely and professional manner.

BLOOD PRESSURE PROGRAM:

The Fire Department has had a total of 50,345 readings made since the start of this program. This program has great benefits, not only for those who use it, but also for the Fire Department in public relations. In 2007, a total of 939 readings were taken. I believe this is a worthwhile program and should be continued in 2008.

REASSURANCE PROGRAM

This program was started as a way for the elderly, who are living on their own, to make contact with someone on a daily basis. We have pertinent information on each registered participant. They will call us on our dedicated phone line daily before 11:00 a.m. If we do not hear from them, we will check on them. This service is to reassure the call-in, their family, and the Fire Department that the participant is alright.

The people on the list had the following activity for 2007:

6	New Participants
11	Removed from List

At the end of the year we ended with a total of 32 people on the program.

This year we did not have a program party, because of the library remodeling project. We have set a date for our 2008 program party, which many are looking forward to. This year we sent out Christmas cards to all our participants, whom greatly enjoyed the gesture. Also, we checked to make sure all of the participants had working smoke/CO detectors in their households.

SMOKE DETECTOR/CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTOR PROGRAM

A donation of \$3,275 from the S.E. Minnesota Association of Realtors allowed for purchase of combination Smoke / Carbon monoxide detectors to be distributed to those without protection in the community. The Fire Department will install the detectors at no cost. This is a great program that has benefited many people.

FIRE EXPLORER PROGRAM

The Fire Explorer Program currently has 12 active explorers and anticipates accepting up to three more this year. We also have full time Firefighters that are very active with the group.

In 2007 the Explorers were active with the Albert Lea Fire Department in a number of areas:

Fairgrounds clean-up	Albert Lea Fire Department Open House
Giving Your Best	Fire Explorers Haunted House
4 th of July Parade	House Burn
Training	

The group is self sufficient financially, raising funds for the year with their annual haunted house.

The Explorers also had their 7th annual haunted house fund raiser which again was quite successful with around 1,300 people attending over three nights.

The Explorers have been and continue to be an asset to the Department and the community. In 2008 we will be involved with a number of joint activities with the Albert Lea Police Department Explorers in an effort to increase the cohesiveness of the two groups as well as the department they work with.

JUVENILE FIRE SETTERS 2007

2007

3 Males

(1) 9 year old

(1) 10 year old

(1) 13 year old

Captain Hanna has dealt with juvenile fire setters and Court Services for the last few years. Of the kids involved in the program none have come back for repeat offenses with fire. Of the youth that have been in trouble with fire that do not receive follow up tend to continue to be involved in activities involving Court Services. Captain Hanna will continue working with Court Services and the youth sentenced to serve. This can be a bit time consuming, but the benefits to the kids and the community far out weigh the cost in time put forth.

PERSONNEL DATA

24 Hour Personnel:

There were 4,301.5 hours of vacation earned and 2,178.25 hours of vacation taken.

There were 2,120 hours of sick leave earned and 1,000.25 hours of sick leave taken.

Only 374 hours of work backs were performed in 2007.

For 2007, an average of 4.50 men were on duty.

There were six personnel changes during 2007; Todd Thelen resigned on 3/2/07 (who was replaced by Brett Young on 2/26/07), Lowell Doppelhammer retired on 6/28/07 (who was replaced by Ed Odendahl on 6/18/07), Brett Young resigned on 8/18/07. Ben Davis started on 8/27/07. Ed Odendahl resigned on 9/14/07 and Kurt Wallace started on 11/11/07.

8 Hour Personnel:

There were 432 hours of vacation earned and 473.5 hours taken.

There were 192 hours of sick leave earned and 64 hours taken.

FIRE DEPARTMENT HOURS

	<u>First Quarter</u>	<u>Second Quarter</u>	<u>Third Quarter</u>	<u>Fourth Quarter</u>	<u>Total</u>
Janitorial:	635	591	608	622	2,456
Vehicles:	483	494	498	522	1,967
Tools & Equipment:	215	267	188	214	884
Records:	228	190	211	200	829
Fire & Clean Up:	332	315	280	269	1,196
CO & Gas Checks:	34	26	13	28	101
Inspection:	288	272	108	116	784
Bldg. Maintenance:	65	11	50	33	159
Talks: (M/H)	15	74	74	167	330
	(groups)	(groups)	(groups)	(groups)	(groups)
	9	74	24	103	210
	(aud.)	(aud.)	(aud.)	(aud.)	(aud.)
	182	1,056	351	2,098	3,687
Other Work (Misc.):	686	802	899	927	3,314
Blood Pressure (M/H):	28	26	35	27	116
B/P Participants:	241	222	276	184	923
Fire Dept. Training:	802	886	658	571	2,917
Flags:	0	19	11	6	36
Physical Training:	173	136	148	177	634
Hydrants:	72	33	80	166	351
Hydrants Flow Test:	14	1	0	1	16
Hydrants Shoveled:	158	0	0	0	158
Hydrants Painted:	0	90	180	0	270
Hydrants Checked:	120	0	0	1,062	1,182
Hydrants Pumped:	0	0	0	86	86
Hydrants Flagged:	0	0	0	0	0
Hydrants Thawed/Frozen:	0	0	0	29	29
Hydrants Trimmed	0	0	0	0	0
Miscellaneous:	0	0	0	0	0
Total M/H	4,780	5,551	4,692	7,608	22,631

FIRE PREVENTION AND INSPECTION

The Fire Prevention Bureau's mission is to improve public safety and reduce property loss through proactive fire safety inspections and quality public fire education.

Each shift has a firefighter assigned to a specific area in the City to enforce and remove unlicensed and inoperable vehicles. The firefighters canvas their areas and take citizen complaints on unlicensed and inoperable vehicles on private properties.

Unlicensed and Inoperable Vehicles Inspection Summary for 2007:

	<u>2007</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2004</u>
Junk Vehicles:	186	166	304	290
Vehicles Towed:	9	9	10	

Each shift also has a Fire Inspector who is also second in charge on their shift. Fire Inspectors inspect commercial, public, industrial buildings apartments and schools. The goal is to make sure these buildings meet the Minnesota State fire codes and to prevent unsafe fire practices.

Fire Inspection Summary for 2007:

	<u>2007</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2004</u>
Number of Initial Inspections:	227	336	210	247
Number of Follow-up Inspections:	350	395	212	340
Violations Cited:	361	720	372	448
Violations Corrected:	432	494	316	417
Fire Inspections				
(Hours):	248.5	404	291.25	505.5
(Days):	94	147	90	128

The following firefighter served on the Fire Prevention and Education Committee in 2007:

<u>Red Shift</u>	Alan Schallock, Bart Berven
<u>Green Shift</u>	Bill Lehman, Jeff Posthumus
<u>Blue Shift</u>	Mark Light, Trevor DeRaad

This committee searches for ways to improve the delivery of the current fire prevention and education programs. They also explore new ways to present the fire prevention message.

Fire Prevention & Education Activities in 2007:

Spring Kindergarten Visits
 1st Grade T-Shirt Program (Local 1041)
 Kids Day at the Fair (Safety House)
 Fall Kindergarten visits
 Poster Contest
 Fire Prevention Week
 Fire Department Open House

The Fire Prevention Committee has another successful year, from all the classrooms visited in the schools to the Fire Department's Open House in October during Fire Prevention Week. The normal displays were set up for the Open House, which included; Sparky Fire Safety House, a display of items including candles and lighters used by children to start fires, thermal imagers, hose and nozzle for kids to shoot water into the lake and all the other fire department equipment. The Open House was a huge success this year.

I.A.F.F. Local 1041's annual first grade fire education "T-Shirt Program" completed its 16th year, in 2007 and has grown in popularity every year. Visits were made to approximately 250 first graders this year to pass out t-shirts and give fire safety information.

The Local 1041 and the Fire Explorers also raised \$1,625 for the Muscular Dystrophy Association during the July 3rd Parade.

2007 Contacts (Fire Prevention Talks)

176	Groups
3,687	People
330	Fire Department Hours

DIVISION OF INSPECTIONS

BUILDING INSPECTION DEPARTMENT

Facility and Equipment	STAFFING
Office	Building Official (1)
221 East Clark St.	Building Inspectors (2)
Telephone 507-377-4340	Clerical (1)

Vehicles

# 80	1997	Dodge Pick-up	#86	1997	Dodge Pick-up
#429	1992	Chevrolet Lumina			
# 1	2002	Ford Explorer			

Jennifer Nelson (clerical staff) along with Teresa Kauffman (Public Information Coordinator) have been working on updating our website to keep contractors and the general public informed of permit fees, monthly building reports and current building information.

Building permits were issued for \$24,359,273.00 in construction work.

Building permits were issued for 14 new single family homes, 2 duplexes and 1 – 23-Unit Senior Housing complex.

The following thirteen permits were issued for new commercial and industrial buildings:

Idle Aire	780 Happy Trails Lane
Elseth Enterprises	100 Richway Dr. W.
Hormel Foods Corp	2410 Y H Hanson Ave.
Larson Manufacturing	1501 Beth Lane
Albert Lea Port Authority	2600 HiTec Ave.
Alamco Wood Products	1410 9 th St .W.
McDonalds	609 Main St. E.
O'Reillys Auto Parts	2002 Main St. E.
Thrivent Office Building	2351 HiTec

A total of \$225,590.34 in fees were collected in 2007. A report of permits issued follows:

	<u>2007</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2005</u>
Total Valuation	\$24,359,273	\$38,743,701	28,199,172
Total Building Permits	458	424	436
Total Plumbing Permits	54	64	75
Total Service Connection Permits	87	109	124
Total Sign Permits	18	32	43
Total Mechanical Permits	161	154	170
Total Mobile Home Permits	0	0	2
Total Buildings Demolished	26	6	6
Total Buildings Moved	0	0	0

Type of Building	2007			2006			2005		
	No.	Units	Value	No.	Units	Value	No.	Units	Value
Dwelling (1-2) Family	16	19	\$3,760,200.00	19	23	\$4,123,800.00	20	24	\$4,476,500.00
Dwelling (Multiple)	1	23	\$1,815,000.00				3	78	\$8,167,313.00
Alt. Add. & Repairs	357		\$2,580,684.00	314		\$2,214,357.00	327		\$5,755,272.00
Commercial (New)	14		\$9,836,537.00	11		\$5,168,696.00	16		\$4,826,000.00
Commercial (Alt. Add.)	63		\$4,299,992.00	67		\$10,037,133.00	56		\$2,349,257.00
Industrial (New)				2		\$75,000.00			
Industrial (Alt. Add.)	2		\$27,750.00				2		\$98,208.00
Public (New)				1		\$250,000.00			
Public (Alt. Add.)	5		\$2,039,110.00	10		\$16,874,715.00	12		\$2,256,622.00

A total of \$882.43 in fees were waived by resolutions in 2007.

MINIMUM HOUSING DEPARTMENT

In 2007, the Inspection Department moved forward in trying to improve the “*quality of life*” in Albert Lea.

The first quarter of the year was spent finishing up on inspection from 2006 and updating the City’s Emergency Operation Plan.

In 2007:

- Neal Lindeman joined us for a second year, to help with the overload of complaints. Neal handled most of the grass complaints, making sure that the City’s contracted grass mower was given the current list of properties that need to be mowed. He also handled the notification and assisted in billing of the property owners, sending out over 160 registered letters of long grass notices.
- In 2007, 77 lots were mowed for a contractor charge of \$3,027 and an administrative assessment fee of \$5,775.
- In 2007, we addressed over 200 junk and rental housing complaints.
- In 2007, 25 citations were issued to appear in court for items ranging from garbage, junk, hazardous material storage to even an unlawful storage of a horse.
- 26 buildings were placarded for condemnation, bringing the total to 35 buildings unfit for habitation. In 2007, two of the buildings being torn down by the owners and one being remodeled and brought up to compliance. At the end of 2007 there were still 33 building placarded with five slated for demolition and six currently being remodeled.

Rental Housing became a “HOT” issue in 2007 after receiving complaints from apartment renters and owners. From community policing neighborhood meetings, quality of life issues came to the top of the list. Working with the Police Department, we formed a committee to address the plight of rental housing in Albert Lea. Committee goals developed for implementation in 2008 will include first, issuing licenses for every rental property in Albert Lea. Second, create a “Crime Free” environment for local renters. Our departments will be supplying both renters and landlords the tools to create better quality of rental properties. Our department will be managing and inspecting rental properties. This will create record keeping issues for administrating the program and tracking licenses.