

# 2019 Annual Report



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## MISSION STATEMENT

Danville Fire Department strives to protect life, property, and environment through prevention, mitigation, response, recovery, education, and communication in order to promote the entire community's health, safety, and well-being



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## Message From The Chief

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It is with great pride and humility that I write the opening greeting of the Danville Fire Department's 2019 Annual Report. I assumed the role as Danville's Fire Chief on January 6, 2020 and cannot take any credit for the hard work that the dedicated men and women of the Danville Fire Department have done this past year that continues to make this department the great organization that it is. Although the credit is not mine, it is my distinct pleasure to share this annual report as a snapshot and review of our recent accomplishments.

As an Internationally Accredited department that holds an Insurance Services Office (ISO) Class 1 rating, we are constantly striving to improve our delivery of service. The accreditation process is a never ending endeavor to continue to become "better." This year marks a milestone in our history as we were re-evaluated by our fire service peers from all over the country for the first time since becoming accredited in 2015. We received a "strong" endorsement to become re-accredited and became accredited again when we went before the Accreditation Commission. Assistant Chief Duffer, our Accreditation Manager, took the lead on this project and I believe he would echo the sentiment that that this award was possible due to the hard work of every member of this department.

As a point of reference as to how fortunate and unique the City of Danville is, in 2017, there were an estimated 5,100 professional fire departments in the United States. Recent numbers indicate there are only 270 agencies in North America that are accredited through the Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI) and only 87 agencies that are both accredited and have an ISO-1 rating. Danville is among a truly elite group!

In 2019, the fire department responded to 8,613 calls for service. This is a 2.5% increase to our call volume in 2018. With an average of 24 calls per day, the department responded to 210 calls over the total for the previous year. Over the past 5 years, call volume has risen 8.8% with an average rise of 2.16% each year. The Emergency Communication Center (ECC) answered 98,040 incoming emergency and non-emergency calls for service, resulting in 79,287 service entries into our Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system.

With recent changes in the retirement system for our firefighters, the Danville Fire Department was faced with the challenge of unplanned attrition. However, our staffing has now stabilized. At first glance, we appear to be a very young workforce, but a quick comparison with the most recent National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) studies indicates we are right in line with the national averages. Our youngest firefighter is 19 years old and our oldest is 64 with an average age of 40. 23% of our firefighters are younger than 30, 29% are between 30 and 39, and 32% are between 40 and 49, and 26% are older than 50. What these numbers indicate is a bright future, poised to have a slow and manageable turnover, allowing for a healthy balance of education and experience.

On behalf of the Danville Fire Department and Emergency Communications Center, we are grateful for the opportunity to serve this great community and consider it an honor. We pledge to continue to provide you with the best professional life saving services possible.

Yours in Service,

Chief David Coffey

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## OUR VISION

**Our vision** is to be recognized as an Internationally Accredited Fire Department and to be known for excellence in timely, courteous, effective service delivery to our community.

**Our workforce** is honest, reliable, and dedicated to the highest ethical standards. We work hard to maintain a good reputation and to inspire public trust and confidence. We respect one another and the diverse community we serve. Our team will remain safe, skilled, and successful with comprehensive training and development opportunities.

**Our physical resources** are managed responsibly and effectively. We explore new, more efficient technologies to improve the quality and scope of our programs and operational services. We strive for ongoing improvement and carefully plan our facility and equipment maintenance and replacement.

**Our leadership and workforce** will hold one another accountable for fulfilling our mission, living our organizational values, and reaching our goals. All employees will value a professional atmosphere where cooperation is expected and involvement in decision making encouraged. We will build strong relationships and collaborate with local, regional, and state partners and support agencies.

**Our community** will know we care. We will proactively identify and analyze our community's evolving risks and needs to determine the best strategies for such dynamic demands. We will improve emergency preparedness and expand our response capabilities. We will keep each other and the public well informed with complete, consistent, accurate, frequent, and clear communications.

**Our vision** is to honor our community's trust, to continuously improve as an organization, to perform with integrity, and to consistently meet or exceed the expectations of our members and the community we serve.

## OUR VALUES

### Customer and Community Focus

We value timely and exceptional service to the public, to our team, and to the city organization. We serve all in a caring, courteous, respectful, compassionate, and reliable manner. We work hard every day to improve the community's health, safety, and well-being.

### Peak Performance

We value effective and efficient service at the individual and team level. We support each other in being capable, knowledgeable, skilled, responsible, and accountable. We foster success and improvement.

### Integrity and Transparency

We value the trust and confidence of the public and of our team. We are committed to serving with honesty, trustworthiness, honor, loyalty, and ethical behavior. We strive to keep each other and the public well informed with frequent and accurate communication.

### Diversity and Inclusiveness

We value respect for diversity of people and belief. We give equal treatment to all in our team, our city organization, and our community. We do not tolerate discrimination.

### Safety and Valor

We value life. We take every precaution to prevent harm while facing threat, danger, and discomfort with courage and bravery. We treat each other as family, and we view the community as an extension of our family.



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## Agency History

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Danville instituted the community's first paid (professional) fire department on January 1, 1884. Records indicate the first apparatus inventory consisted of one Button fire engine, two Ainsleys, one hose reel, and four horses. Prior to 1884, services were provided by two private fire companies. The annexation of Neapolis in 1896 prompted construction of a headquarters on Patton Street, where the Municipal Building stands today, as well as a second station just north of the Main Street Bridge which came to be known as the North Main Station. Of historical note, the "Wreck of Old 97" occurred on September 27, 1903. The southbound Southern Railway passenger train No. 97 derailed and plunged into a ravine below the Stillhouse Trestle, killing eleven persons according to some accounts. In 1924, a Seagrave ladder truck was added to the department's inventory, equipped with solid rubber tires, a tiller, and a 75-foot hand-operated ladder. This replaced the hook and ladder, the last piece of horse-drawn equipment in the city. 1926 saw the Patton Street station relocated to a new building on Bridge Street. This served as the fire headquarters until the construction of the new station on Lynn Street in 2014. A third "West End" station, designed for horse-drawn apparatus, was also constructed in the early 1900s less than one block off Main Street. A two-way radio communication system was installed in 1950, which allowed the Station One telephone switchboard to centrally receive fire calls and dispatch suppression services. The chiefs' vehicles had two-way radios installed, but radios were not required in the engines. A 1951 annexation required an additional station to serve the Schoolfield community around Dan River Mills. Station Four was initially located at the West Main Street and Augusta Avenue intersection and was rented from the textile company. The same annexation prompted construction of a north-side station on Third Avenue. Station Five opened in 1957 and came to serve as the agency's training center with a five story training tower and drafting pit. In 1971, the station on North Main Street was relocated to its current home on Piney Forest Road to provide better response to the western portions of the city. In the summer of 1978, Station Three was relocated to Industrial Avenue near the intersection of South Main Street. Danville's annexation of approximately 27 square miles of Pittsylvania County in January 1988 more than doubled the department's area of responsibility. As a result, Station Four was relocated to its current home on West Main Street, plans were made to add two stations, and six engine companies were added. August 1990 saw completion of Station Seven on Airport Drive, adjacent to the city's regional airport and within sight of US Highway 58. Around this time, OSHA's endorsement of the Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response (HAZWOPER) Standard prompted the state of Virginia to establish, fund, and train 12 regional Hazardous Material Response Teams. This resulted in an agreement with the Virginia Department of Emergency Management and ultimately the creation of a Regional Level III Response Team, which became operational in December 1990. Station Six was opened in August 1991 on the corner of Westover Drive and Beech Avenue to service the north and west end of the city. Beginning in 1997, the department began training personnel to the Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) level of certification. City Council authorized formation of a Fire Marshal's Office in 1998. This led to the creation of a Fire Prevention and Education Bureau and sworn officers with legal authority to investigate fires and enforce city fire code. In 2000, Danville Fire Department (DFD) teamed up with Pittsylvania County Firefighter's Association and applied for a grant from the Virginia Department of Fire Programs. The award served as the primary funding for a burn building, which is now the centerpiece of the area's Regional Training Center at 658 Stinson Drive.

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Michael Jefferson, Assistant Chief of Operations



**David Coffey, Fire Chief**



Tim Duffer, Assistant Chief of Technical and Support Services



Shelby Irving,  
Fire Marshal



Jon Yeaman,  
Battalion Chief of Training and Safety



Brian Alderson, Battalion  
Chief A Shift



Chris Key,  
Battalion Chief B Shift



Dean Fowler,  
Battalion Chief C Shift



Promotions in the DFD



Tim Duffer - Assistant Chief  
1/1/2019



Jon Yeaman - Battalion Chief  
4/1/2019



Lee Barker - Captain  
1/1/2019



Brian Gregory - Captain  
1/1/2019



James Satterfield - Captain  
1/1/2019



Jason Curtis - Captain  
2/1/2019



Rick Carter - Captain  
5/1/2019



Dave Gunnell - Captain  
5/1/2019



Alan Harless - Captain  
7/1/2019

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## Promotions in the DFD



Thomas Collins - Lieutenant  
2/1/2019



Patrick Haymore - Lieutenant  
2/1/2019



Eric Minter - Lieutenant  
5/1/2019



Daryl Reaves - Lieutenant  
7/1/2019



Brandon Collins - Engineer  
1/1/2019



Daniel Giles - Engineer  
1/1/2019



Jay Farrar - Engineer  
1/1/2019



Josh Stowe - Engineer  
1/1/2019



Jimmy Adkins - Engineer  
2/1/2019

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## Recognitions

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### Promotions in the DFD



Hunter Brown - Engineer  
2/1/2019



Ronnie Willis - Engineer  
2/1/2019



Jacob Coles - Engineer  
5/1/2019



James Yeatts - Engineer  
5/1/2019



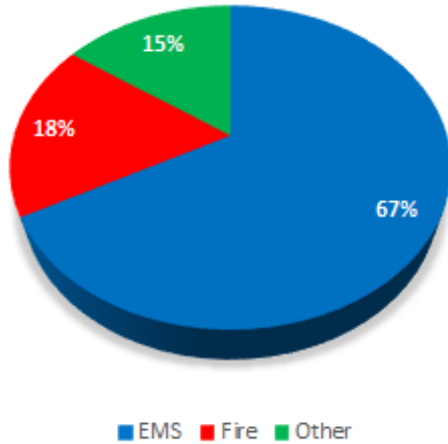
Neil Bailey - Engineer  
7/1/2019



David Worsham - Engineer  
9/1/2019

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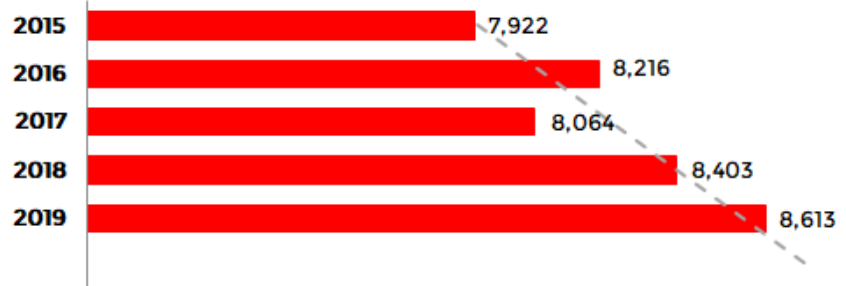
## 2019 Snapshot



### DFD RECORD FOR MOST CALLS



**8,613 Calls for Service**



**98,040 Calls Processed by  
Communications Center**



**35 Working Fires**



**5,779 EMS Calls**



**154 Smoke Alarm Installs**

**1,196 Fire Prevention  
Inspections**





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## Operations Division Summary

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Assistant Chief Mike Jefferson

What an amazing and productive year. I would first like to thank everyone that went the extra mile to ensure the Danville Fire Department had another successful year. The Operation Division would have had a difficult time keeping up without the help of everyone. This year we not only experienced an increased call volume, but also had 15 new hires making this the largest recruit academy year since the annexation in 1987 for the DFD. 2019 also saw the retirement of nine firefighters, two to resign, as well as various promotions of 25 firefighters. A new 107-foot Pierce Enforcer ladder truck was placed in service adding the benefit of longer reach and increased mobility to Danville's firefighting fleet of apparatus.



Two additional apparatus were ordered in 2019 to update the department's aging fleet. A 2100 gallon Pierce water tender was ordered to replace a 1987 KME Tender and a Pierce Enforcer engine that will replace a 1998 E-One Engine. Both apparatus are scheduled to be completed in April 2020 and delivered in May.

Station 5 on Third Ave. received a new face lift with the addition of the new signage designed by the firefighters stationed there. The station has been upgraded with a new roof, HVAC systems, and ceiling tiles in the downstairs living areas.



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## Technical and Support Services Summary

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Assistant Chief Tim Duffer

### Emergency Management

2019 was a recovery year from the tropical storms in late 2018. Most of the year was spent on recovery efforts and looking at mitigation projects to prevent further damage to the city locations and infrastructure. This was a team approach with the Department of Public Works and the Utility Department. During 2019 we had one straight-line wind event in the Westover area that destroyed one home and damaged multiple dwellings. We also had several strong summer storms that damaged homes. Severe storms continue to be Danville's highest threat, along with flash flooding. Emergency Management also started using a new program to alert the public. With Civic Ready, the department is better able to get the warning out. We hope to expand this program in 2020. Emergency Management is also working on adding a function to the technical rescue team. The state added swift water rescue to the regional response plan and Danville is seeking to be a part of this program. We hope that in 2020 Danville will become part of this regional approach. This will be a benefit to the city and the areas around Danville and will function much like the Regional Haz-Mat team. Based on the past events and flash flooding being a high risk for the city, this will be a valuable asset to the area. Emergency Management is also working on improving how we move shelter supplies. The current system uses trailers. In the past this worked, but with decreased staffing across the city finding people to move trailers during high call volumes has become a challenge. To solve this, we have placed a metal container at the main shelter to store all of the supplies. This will allow Red Cross and Social Services Faster access to the supplies. The box has been placed at the shelter location and will be completed in 2020.





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## Technical and Support Services Summary

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### Accreditation

Danville Fire Department has completed five years as an accredited agency. During that time, we have learned a lot about the department and how we need to use data and lessons learned to improve the department. One of the lessons learned was that we need to educate the department better on why we need accreditation. Most of 2019 was focused on reviewing the documentation required to apply again for accreditation. During the next five years, we plan to focus on the recommendations from the site visit and to give more education to the department on the value of this process. Training will also include the public. With a new focus on Community Risk Reduction, the department will look to the public for support in programs that both meet the needs of the stakeholders and will reduce risk to the community as a whole.



### Regional Haz-Mat Team

The City of Danville Regional Haz-Mat team has been active in 2019, with new members attending training and multiple calls within the city limits of Danville. We also made improvements to the main team trailer with computer upgrades and better internet ability to support the team in rural locations. The team also received a grant from Virginia Department of Emergency Management to purchase a new meter that can detect narcotics and explosive items. This was an item that each state team was required to obtain. Chief Neal also retired in 2019, and we thank him for his service and leadership over the past 30 years. Chief Duffer will take over as the team coordinator with Captain Smotherman, Captain Curtis, and Captain Gunnell as team leaders.



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## Training Division Summary

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### Battalion Chief Jon Yeaman

The Training Division started the year under the leadership of Battalion Chief Barry Neal. Chief Neal was instrumental in jump starting the second largest Recruit Academy class in the history of the Danville Fire Department with 15 recruits. However, Chief Neal decided to retire at the start of the academy on March 1st, 2019. A change in leadership took place with the promotion of Battalion Chief Jonathan Yeaman on April 1st, 2019. Chief Yeaman oversaw the recruit academy through its completion at the end of May 2019. In addition to the promotion of Chief Yeaman, there were several other promotions within the Training Division. Lieutenants Curtis, Gunnell, Satterfield, and Harless were promoted to Captain. To replace the newly promoted Captains, Engineers Haymore, P.T. Collins, Minter, and Reaves were promoted to Lieutenant.

The Training Division produced three department wide trainings throughout the rest of the year starting in August of 2019. These classes included a refresher training in Swift Water Rescue, a cutting edge Active Shooter / Stop the Bleed program, and ended with a class combining firefighter rescue techniques, EMS competency based skills, and SCBA fit testing. In addition to these in-house training courses, the Training Division worked with Pittsylvania County Fire and Rescue to host the first annual Rescue Week. This Rescue Week was a seven day action packed week of training that included four different technical rescue classes taught by the Virginia Department of Fire Programs. These classes included: Confined Space Level I, Confined Space Level II, Rope Rescue Level II, and Surface Water Rescue. Rescue Week was a huge success across the entire state and it is planned to be a recurring event in years to come.

The Training Division also worked to improve upon our training facilities as well as expand upon the services we provide. Our department was awarded a Repairs Grant by the Virginia Department of Fire Programs for \$43,311 that will be utilized to make necessary repairs to our training facility located on Stinson Drive. These repairs should be completed within the 2020 calendar year. We have also began to remodel our old training facility on Gypsum Road. This remodeling project has included a new metal roof, flooring and walls installed upstairs, window and exterior door installed upstairs, sheeting and insulation fabric installed, and the building has also been painted. In addition, a utility pole has been installed and the approval granted to make a power connection. This will allow us to have power at the facility for the first time ever. Remodeling will continue in 2020 with the installation of vinyl siding and soffit to protect the building from the elements. Finally, in the aspect of expanding our services, we have added a bus to our fleet. The repurposed school bus will be turned into a mobile SCBA training maze. This will allow us to move the bus to different stations and train with them at their station without taking crews out of their respective response areas.

The Training Division plans to keep moving forward in the year 2020 with the development of new training courses, as well as continuing to build upon our training facilities and mobile equipment.

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## Community Risk Reduction Division Summary

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### Fire Marshal Shelby Irving

The Fire Marshal's Office completed its goals for 2019. All FMO personnel completed the required training to sustain their level of certification by the Virginia Fire Marshals Academy.

#### **Investigations**

There were 11 arson cases investigated in 2019 with three submitted to the Commonwealth for prosecution, (Copper, Construction Material, and Hazardous Waste). Additionally, there were eight misdemeanors cited by the Fire Marshal's Office during investigations. The FMO will continually summarize and evaluate its bi-annual appraisal, year-end reports and continue to attend educational training to assist in the effectiveness of fire investigations. The FMO has plans to send Inspector Thornton to the Virginia Fire Marshal Academy in 2020 to receive his 1033 certification for fire investigator.

#### **Prevention**

The position of Community Risk Reduction Manager was added to the Fire Marshal's Office in 2019. The FMO conducted 35 plan reviews during the year of 2019, with most occurring in the downtown and industrial park areas. New Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code books were ordered in 2019. A new plan is in place to organize inspections between the Inspectors to ensure that all mandatory inspections are conducted.

#### **Public Education**

The Fire Marshal's Office continues to offer quality programs to meet the needs of the residents of Danville. These programs are geared towards safety and educational programs. The DFD will continue to include programs that address trends that the department responds to that are unusual in nature. The Pub Ed Committee met three times in 2019 to discuss projects and ideas for the department. The major project was the Fill the Fire Truck raising more than \$3,200 for school supplies. The department also participated in the Halloween Monster Mash and Christmas light show. During Fire Prevention Week (Month), the department conducted 46 programs with 3,625 in attendance.

For the second year in a row, the DFD was a recipient of the "Town Gown" Smoke and C/O alarm grant receiving 100 combination smoke and carbon monoxide alarms. This grant is awarded to only 25 departments in the country. Energizer provided the department with 456 9V batteries to maintain installed alarms. Eden NC fire department donated 1200 coloring books for Fire Prevention Week.

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## Community Risk Reduction Division Summary

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### Community Risk Reduction

Community Risk Reduction was added to the FMO in the latter part of 2019. The Fire Marshal was appointed as the manager of the CRR division. Plans are in the process for training in the CRR area to identify and prioritize local risk to reduce their occurrence and impact. This division will help the community find out what their risks are and develop a plan to reduce the risk viewed as high priority. This also includes conducting Community Risk Assessment (CRA), developing a CRR plan, implementing the plan and evaluating the plan.



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## Emergency Communications Division

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### Communications Manager Michael Gobble

During 2019, the Emergency Communications Center (ECC) processed 43,790 9-1-1 calls, 54,250 incoming administrative calls, and 36,006 administrative outgoing calls. 79,287 Communications Event Reports were created for calls for service.

The ECC received a \$3,000 grant from Virginia Information Technologies Agency (VITA) for the PSAP Education Program to be used for 9-1-1 and GIS education training opportunities through July 2020.

9-1-1 Manager Michael Gobble completed the Chamber of Commerce's Leadership Southside Program in May 2019. Leadership Southside is a program geared towards developing participant's leadership skills while strengthening their roles as individuals, professionals, and community members.

Danville-Pittsylvania County Critical Incident Stress Management Team members Kasey White, Brian Cochran, and Heather Eakin have been instrumental in assisting our own department as well as surrounding agencies with debriefings as needed. The entire CISM team participated in 25 "one-on-ones" and one debriefing. The dispatch-only portion of the team had four "one-on-ones" and one debriefing.

ECC members participated in the Ballou Park Community Light Show, Shop with a Cop, National Night Out, and several Community Engagement Walks.

All four Emergency Communications Telecommunicator Supervisors completed ICS 300 – Intermediate ICS for Expanding Incidents in November 2019.

The Entry Level Dispatch School lesson plans for Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) were revamped and the first class was taught in October 2019 using the new curriculum. Darlene Foster was instrumental in creating new lesson plans and PowerPoints along with surrounding agencies to put together this new class.

During 2019, CivicReady was implemented to keep citizens and staff informed of Weather Alerts, Community Events, and special announcements. All staff were trained on this new system and it has been a success. We also implemented AirMethods – this online software is used to summons helicopters in an emergency and reduces response times for the aircraft's arrival to the patient.

The ECC plans to keep moving forward in 2020 with additional training opportunities becoming available for Telecommunicators.

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# 2019 Annual Report



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