

Duties

The Fire Department has as its primary duty the protection of life and property from fire. A limited fire-protection program includes the inspection of schools, stores, and other public places, and the enforcement of safety codes. Each year the Fire Department disseminates information on fire prevention through the schools during Fire Prevention Week.

Coordinated through Linden, a County Mutual Aid Council is prepared to render additional assistance in case of emergency. The local Fire Department also cooperates with the Fanwood, Watchung, and Plainfield Fire Departments.

Rating

Scotch Plains was the first community in the country to install the RCA Fire Alarm System in 1968. At present there are 50 distinctive red-ball alarm boxes located at strategic points (schools, public buildings, and major street intersections). The alarm boxes, which operate on solar battery units, will function even during a power failure. By pressing the appropriate button, contact is made with Police Headquarters, the Fire Department, or Rescue Squad.

The National Board of Fire Underwriters sets fire insurance rates in the various towns on the basis of approximately one thousand items which they survey in the course of calculating the risks involved. Areas having no protection and no fire-fighting equipment available rate as low as "K". Residential areas where industrial fire-fighting equipment is available can rate as high as "A". Because of the installation of the RCA Fire Alarm System, Scotch Plains was upgraded from a "D" to a "C". A higher rating cannot be given as long as the department is an all-volunteer force.

Civil Defense

The Director of Civil Defense-Disaster Control is appointed each January by the Mayor. The Director is responsible, according to state law, for the planning, activating, coordinating and conducting of disaster control operations within the Township.

A local Emergency Operations Plan is formulated which includes emergency procedures for all departments of local government, schools, industry, and citizens in the event of natural, man-made, or nuclear disasters.

Units of Communication, Mass Feeding, Radiological Monitoring, Shelter Managers, Heavy Rescue and Civil Defense Auxiliary Police Force, comprise the local organization at present.

Headquarters are located in the basement of the Municipal Building. Detailed plans to be implemented in the event of an emergency are available in the Township Clerk's office. Generally, the unit's primary work has been during heavy rains when local flooding is a problem.

HEALTH

"The first wealth is health." — Emerson

The New Jersey Department of Health exercises control over municipal health regulations through a State Sanitary Code which sets minimum standards for local Boards of Health to enforce. Under the Scotch Plains form of government (Faulkner Plan E), the mayor and council perform the traditional duties of the Department of Health. They determine local health policy and enact the local sanitary code in accordance with state law.

Department of Health

A full-time licensed health officer is responsible for carrying out municipal health policy and for enforcing state and local codes. The officer is appointed by the mayor and council yearly for five years at the end of which tenure is granted.

The registrar of vital statistics is responsible to the Department of Health. The Township Clerk has been appointed as the Registrar of Vital Statistics. Records kept include registration of