

CHAPTER THREE

PUBLIC SAFETY

Reports of the Fire, EMS,
Police & Inspectional Services



**ATHOL FIRE DEPARTMENT
ANNUAL REPORT
FISCAL YEAR 2014-2015**



To: The Honorable Board of Selectpersons and the Citizens of Athol

Once again the Athol Fire Department has had a very busy year. Medical responses again as in years past were the major workload for members of the department. The 20th anniversary of the Athol Fire Ambulance operations is fast approaching. There have been many changes over the years in patient care and that has come with a price. With that said, the Fire Department is still operating with a budget as in the 1990's factoring in ambulance revenues.

On February 2, 2015 Fire Chief Thomas Lozier retired after 30 plus years of dedicated service to the Town of Athol. A well deserved retirement party was held in his honor in the month of May with well over 200 people in attendance. The members of the Athol Fire Department wish him and his wife a long and healthy retirement.

In March of the same year John Duguay who was Deputy Fire Chief at the time was appointed to the position Fire Chief by Town Manager Shaun Suhoski. At this time I would like to thank Shaun for giving me the opportunity to reach every firefighters dream of making it to the rank of Chief. I have and will continue to do my very best to keep the members of this community safe as well as all the members of the Fire Department who work along side of me.

In April of the same year as well, Jeffrey Parker was appointed to the position of Deputy Fire Chief. Previously he was assigned to shift 4 as the duty Captain. Deputy Parker has 20 years of service with the Town of Athol and am looking forward to working with him as we move forward.

In January a new Firefighter/EMT was hired through a lateral transfer from Greenfield Fire Department, his name is Adam Mitchell.

Also Firefighter/Paramedic Chad Erali was appointed to the position of Provisional Captain.

In November of 2014 Elizabeth Berquist was hired to fill the part time position of Administrative Assistant. Liz is a very energetic individual and is doing an outstanding job and has proven to be an enormous asset to the department.

As mentioned, you can see there have been many personnel changes in a short period of time and I have to say things have been going quite well to date.

One of the biggest challenges for the Fire Department is the Civil Service process. It is extremely difficult to appoint new hires or to make any promotions all the while costing the Town of Athol thousands of dollars along the way. The Town of Athol does not benefit from this process at all.

I am pleased to inform you the Athol Fire Department received \$4423.00 for Student Awareness of Fire Education (S.A.F.E) and \$2795.00 for Senior Safe. Twenty years ago, the fire service advocated to the legislature for the creation of the S.A.F.E program. Since that time the average annual child fire deaths have been reduced by 72%. Last year, the S.A.F.E. program was expanded to offer funds to local communities in support of senior fire prevention training. Seniors are the most vulnerable of populations at risk of fire related deaths. It is our hope that with this opportunity we can recreate the success with our older population that we have had with children. I would like to thank Firefighter Jamal Hamilton who is our S.A.F.E and Senior Safe Educator for doing an outstanding job applying for and closing out these much needed grants as well as working with the children and seniors in our community. I would also like to thank the members of the fire department for assisting in this endeavor.

Last winter proved to be a challenging year with storm after storm and the need to keep all of the towns fire hydrants clear. This could not have been done without the assistance of the Massachusetts Army National Guard who sent us four outstanding individuals with equipment and vehicles. The Town of Petersham offered help as well and sent two members of the Petersham Fire Department to assist. I would like to thank these two agencies for their much needed assistance through this difficult time as well as all the citizens who took responsibility for clearing fire hydrants near their homes.

Through an Emergency Management Performance Grant the Athol Fire Department was able to secure enough grant money to replace all the existing interior lighting with new LED technology bulbs which will be a significant savings for the town.

FIRE VEHICLE STATISTICS

Vehicle	Make	Year	Mileage
Engine 1 Comment:	Maxim	1976	38324
	Reserve Pumper	Not front line apparatus	
Engine 2 Comment:	Central	2006	6107
	Excellent Condition		

Engine 3 Comment:	Central Body Deteriorating	1998	33789
Engine 4 Comment:	KME Excellent Condition	2012	11761
Ladder 1 Comment:	E-One Excellent Condition	2006	8042
Brush 2 Comment:	Farrah Poor Condition	1970	10781
Command Comment:	Ford Excellent Condition	2011	27592
R-2 Utility Comment:	Ford Good Condition	2005	67314
R-3 Utility Comment:	Ford Fair Condition	2002	91629
Fire Alarm Comment:	Ford Fair Condition	1980	19071
Ambulance 1 Comments:	Ford Out of Service	2003	
Ambulance 2 Comment:	Ford Fair Condition. Mechanical Issues	2008	142201
Ambulance 3 Comment:	Ford Good Condition	2010	78325

**FIRE DEPARTMENT CALLS FOR SERVICE
FISCAL YEAR 2014-2015**

Fire Calls	915
Medical Calls	1609
Smoke Detector Inspections	172
Oil Burner Inspections	60
Oil Tank Inspections	17
Propane Tank Inspections	40

Oil Tank Removals	8
Fire Reports	21
Fuel Dispensers	12
General Permits	17
School Inspections	20
School Fire Drills	20
Nursing Home Inspections	4
Assisted Living Inspections	4
Clinic Inspections	4
Hospital Inspections	4
Hospital Fire Drills	4
Class II License Inspections	7
Multi-Unit Apartment Inspections	53
Alcohol License Renewals	10

Total Calls for Service	3001

There were 451 open burning permits issued for the 2015 burning season.

The Athol Fire Department wishes to thank the Town Manager, Board of Selectpersons, all Department Heads and staff for all their assistance throughout the year. Most importantly the citizens of the Town of Athol for all their support .



Athol Police Department

Fiscal Year 2015 Annual Report

The staff at the police department is dedicated to our mission of preventing and reducing crime in the community, and providing the services that increase the quality of life for all of Athol's residence.

As this is the last annual report that I will be submitting as your Chief of Police, I would like to thank each and every member of the Athol Police Department for all their efforts and support that they have provided to me over the years. Each member of the department should be commended for the dedication and devotion to duty that they have shown throughout these past difficult years. Their performance during these trying times has been exceptional. I see great potential, not only for the Town as a whole, but for the police department specifically.

I would also like to thank all of the other town department, committees, officers, agents, and elected officials for there continue support of my efforts as Chief of Police, as well as the efforts of all the members of the police department.

Finally, I would like to thank the residents and taxpayers of the Town of Athol for their continued support of the police department.

Sincerely,

Timothy C. Anderson
Chief of Police

Calls for Service

Total Calls for Service **12,362**

Crime Statistics FY 2015

Total Offenses Reported	1368
Criminal Homicide	0
Manslaughter	0
Kidnapping/Abduction	0
Rape	4

Robbery	3
Aggravated Assault	48
Simple Assault	75
Intimidation	14
Arson	0
Burglary / B&E	116
Larceny – Theft (no vehicles)	113
Shoplifting	25
Motor Vehicle Theft Total	4
Counterfeiting/Forgery	13
Fraud	2
Vandalism	98
Drug/Narcotics Violation	16
Weapons Law Violation	8
Disorderly Conduct	14
OUI	20
Liquor Law Violation	1
Town Bylaw Violation	206
All Other Violations	588

Total Arrests **177**

Juvenile Arrests 5

Persons Summoned to Court **246**

Persons Held in Protective Custody **30**

Traffic Statistics

FY 2015

M/V Citations **313**

Civil	59
Warning	165
Arrest	33
Criminal	56

Parking Tickets **346**

M/V Accidents **438**

Over \$1000	216
Under \$1000	222

Annual Report of
Athol Animal Control

July 2014 – June 2015

To The Honorable Board of Selectmen
Calls to Animal Control Facility

Athol – 1315

Orange -390

Royalston – 90

Animals Picked up

Athol - 200

Returned to owner – 50

Euthanized- 8

Adopted – 47

Died - 2

Transferred – 78

Orange - 57

Returned to owner – 18

Euthanized- 3

Adopted – 5

Died - 1

Transferred – 30

Royalston – 45

Returned to owner – 13

Euthanized- 0

Adopted – 4

Died - 0

Transferred – 28

Respectfully Submitted:

Jennifer Arsenault



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Athol Board of Health; FY 2015 Annual Report

To: The Honorable Board of Selectman and the Citizens of Athol

A wide range of responsibilities are mandated under state law and regulation to protect the health and safety of the community each and every day.

- ❖ *Protection of the food supply:* Our office conducted seventy three (73) inspections to ensure public food safety at restaurants, school cafeterias, church kitchens, farmer's market and food concession stands. The Board issued permits to sixty nine (69) food service , residential kitchens and food retail operations,
- ❖ *Protection of the water supply:* Enforcement of the Title 5 Septic Code: The health agent reviewed thirty (30) Title 5 reports , observed eleven(11) perc tests, reviewed and issued fourteen (14) Disposal Septic Construction Permits, and conducted thirty-five (35) septic system inspections. The office obtained funding from MA Department of Environmental Protection to provide low-interest loans to residents with failed septic systems. The Board issued permits to ten (10) septic system installers, ten (10) septage haulers and issued eight (8) well permits. The office issued eight (8) beaver removal permits and applied for a MA Fisheries and Wildlife permit to addle Canadian Geese eggs; measures to reduce nuisance wildlife posing health threats to Athol's open water.
- ❖ *Enforcement of state sanitary and lead poisoning regulations and Codes:* Fifty-eight (58) trash complaints and two (2) incidents of illegal dumping were investigated. The office conducted twenty-one (21) pre-rental housing, two (2) routine lodging inspections, thirty-nine (39) sanitary code inspections for housing complaints and thirty-three (33) follow-ups to ensure compliance. The Health Agent is a member of the Vacant and Abandoned Building Committee and works closely with the Attorney General's Receivership program to help mitigate the impact of foreclosures and combat its negative impact on neighborhoods. There were seventy nine (79) inspections and follow-up inspections of vacant buildings and receivership properties.
- ❖ *Enforcement of no-smoking and nuisance laws.* The Board issued seventeen (17) tobacco permits to local businesses; one method to help prevent the sale of tobacco products to minors. The Board passed additional smoking regulations on September 16, 2016 prohibiting smoking at municipal athletic fields and beaches, public transportation waiting areas, hotels, motels and B&B rooms and sets a no smoking buffer zone 40 feet from municipal doors. Electronic cigarettes are now prohibited in work places. The Board issued nineteen (19) permits to refuse haulers
- ❖ *Inspection of pools, beaches, camps, mobile home parks, tanning salons:* The Board licensed two (2) tanning salon, three (3) public and semi-public swimming pool, two (2) mobile home parks and one (1) recreational camp permits. This resulted in two (2) tanning salon, three (3) pool and one (1) camp inspections.

- ❖ *Participation in hazardous waste collection Day:* Residents are able to drop off hazardous materials free of charge at this yearly fall event funded by the Health Department.
- ❖ *Disease prevention and health promotion:* The Montachusett Public Health Network (MPHN) Nurse investigated eleven (11) communicable diseases reporting results the MA Division of Communicable Disease Control. The Board contracts Athol Hospital to provide public health nursing services; which included nine (9) flu clinics for Athol and surrounding communities. Four hundred and forty two (442) flu vaccinations were administered. Nine (9) animal bites were reported to the animal inspector for follow up on rabies prevention. Please ‘like’ Athol Board of Health on Facebook where announcements and health and safety issues are posted.
- ❖ *Participation in emergency preparedness mandated by the federal government:* The Health Department participates in the Region 2 Public Health Emergency Preparedness Coalition consisting of seventy four (74) cities and towns in Worcester County. The satellite phone, provided by the Coalition, is tested monthly. It would be used in time of a wide scale emergency when communications are also affected
- ❖ *Public Health Regionalization:* The Athol Health Department is a member of the Montachusett Public Health Network (MPHN); the inter-municipal agreement was signed September 2013. Eleven (11) towns are participating; Athol, Clinton, Fitchburg, Gardner, Leominster, Phillipston, Princeton, Royalston, Sterling, Templeton, and Westminster. Regionalization is one way to increase the capacity of the Health Departments in each town. MPHNN provides infectious disease follow-up and beach testing services at a lower fee. We continue to be a part of the Opioid Abuse Prevention Collaborative (MOAPC); a network grant received from the Department of Public Health to develop a regional response to opioid misuse and abuse. An additional grant was awarded to the network (SAPC) - Substance Abuse Prevention Collaborative to continue this work and to address underage drinking.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah V. Karan, R.S.;	Health Agent
Board of Health Members:	Joan Hamlett; Chair
	Earle Baldwin; Vice Chair
	Norma Purple

To the Honorable Board of Selectmen & the Citizens of the Town of Athol:

The building department is operated on a budget that is generated from the fees brought in and typically it pays for itself. After a few years of decline in building fees, there has been a steady increase in the last year. In FY15 the building department collected \$62,619.00 in permit fees , an increase of 25% over last year, with 12 municipal permit fees waived (totaling \$9,310.00). The operating budget was \$106,023.40. The number of building permits that were approved totaled 381, an increase of 24% over last year, with a total valuation of \$40,978,380. (Includes Elementary School, HVAC for Elementary School, Phase 5 of Senior Center, Rework of Sprinkler System Senior Center, & Solar for Library)

Building Permits Issues FY2015	
Single Family Homes	6
Multi-Family Homes	0
Commercial, including Municipal	2
Additions	4
Garages/Carports	6
Decks/Porches	8
Pools	5
Wood/Pellet Stoves	41
Sheds	1
Demo	16
Other, including roofs, siding, & signs	244
Foundation Only	1
Solar Panels	47
Vacant & Abandoned Property	59
CMR 780 sec. 110 Inspections	45
On Site Inspections	404

Plumbing Permits 79
 Gas Permits 33

Total Plumbing & Gas Fees: \$13,950.

Respectfully submitted,

Brianna Skowyra
 Inspector of Buildings

WIRE INSPECTOR

Annual Report

July 1,2011-June 30,2012

To the Honorable Board of Selectmen

The following is a report of the activities of the Wire Inspection Department for the fiscal year 2015

MONTH	NUMBER OF PERMITS	FEES COLLECTED
July	25	\$2,260.00
August	24	\$2,705.00
September	33	\$2,815.00
October	26	\$2,080.00
November	15	\$1,755.00
December	20	\$2,580.00
January	18	\$24,878.00
February	20	\$2,325.00
March	21	\$3,130.00
April	23	\$2,080.00
May	23	\$2,900.00
June	42	\$4,535.00
Totals	290	\$54,043.00

Respectfully Submitted,

Gary E. Terroy
Wire Inspector