



INTERNATIONALLY ACCREDITED AGENCY

“Office of the Fire Chief”

2011 State of the Pueblo Fire Department

I would like to begin by recognizing all Pueblo Fire Department members for the world class fire and rescue services that were provided to the City of Pueblo and our community throughout 2010. I would also like to thank City Manager Jerry Pacheco and City Council Members for their commitment to public safety and supporting the efforts of our fire department.



In spite of major economic and operational challenges this past year; we were able to move forward on a number of fronts while accomplishing many long range goals. This includes the opening of new Fire Station 9, construction plans starting for the new Fire Station 4, ordering 2 new fire engines, and hiring 15 new firefighters.

The New Year 2011 will no doubt bring new opportunities and challenges. We continue to deal with the worst financial recession our nation has faced since the Great Depression. As we work through these challenging times, we will continue to operate our department in the safest and most fiscally prudent manner. The department’s 5-Year Strategic Plan and our annual Goals and Objectives document will continue to serve as our guide and compass throughout 2011 and beyond.

Accomplishments in 2010, current activities, and our goals for 2011

In terms of positive financial news, our FEMA Fire Station 4 Stimulus Grant Award of \$2.75 million was the single largest grant award in our department’s history. In addition, we were awarded (2) DOLA Grant awards in the amount of \$550,000 for Fire Stations 4 and 9. Our Grant Award monies for the fire stations totaled over \$3.3 million dollars! Furthermore, over 5,000 fire departments in the United States applied for the Fire Station Stimulus Grant. Only 96 departments were awarded, and the Pueblo Fire Department received the 19th largest grant dollar amount in the United States.

In addition, from 2006 through 2010, the Pueblo Fire Department was awarded nearly \$485,000 in grant funds that allowed us to purchase 800 MHZ radios, fire station generators, and structural fire gear (PPE). Many of our members did an outstanding job contributing to research, grant writing, and hard work in making these much needed grant funds a reality for the fire department. Most recently, we have been awarded \$135,000 which will allow all members to get physical exams. Safety, health, and wellness continue to be a strategic goal.



In 2010, we saw Allegiant Airlines move into Pueblo which upgraded our municipal airport from an Index A to an Index B. This change required us to add an additional firefighter to Engine 10, which now operates with 4 fire department members per shift.

Last year, we hired 15 new firefighter recruits. I am proud to announce that these individuals have successfully completed the recruit academy and doing very well in their one year probationary period. I would like to thank our Training Division and the many members of our department who are assisting our new firefighters.

In 2010 the Pueblo Fire Department responded to over 15,000 incidents. Thankfully, none of these incidents resulted in a major injury to any of our members. This no doubt was the result of our commitment to safety, training, and fire prevention. The fire department made contact with over 15,000 community members through various fire department public education programs. In addition, we conducted over 3,000 fire inspections, approved over 1 million square feet of building plans, and conducted over 30,000 hours of training for our members.

- ✓ **CFAI Accreditation:** In August 2008, the City of Pueblo Fire Department officially received international accreditation status. Completing this intense self-assessment process was a landmark and monumental time for our City and the fire department's 122-year history. I am pleased to announce that in 2010, we passed our 2nd Annual Compliance Report (ACR). Although not nearly as time consuming as original accreditation, completing the ACR is by no means an easy task. This truly validates our maintaining of national standards and best practices. In addition, the Pueblo Fire Department is now a lead agency in the newly formed Colorado Consortium of Accredited Fire Departments. Only 4 fire departments in the State of Colorado (out of approximately 400 departments) have been accredited. In the United States, only 145 fire departments out of approximately 30,000 are accredited. Most importantly, maintaining our accreditation status will ensure we continue our outstanding level of service to the City of Pueblo and community.



Commission on
Fire Accreditation
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- ✓ **Training:** We continue to deliver best practices and state of the art training to our members. Simply put, our training is second to none. This includes hosting nationally recognized speakers/instructors on topics that included firefighter safety, survival, leadership, management, emergency ops, incident command, and tactics/strategy. Ending the year with Chief Billy Goldfedder sharing the national Near Miss program proved to be outstanding training. One of our recent accomplishments has been completing the State Firefighter 1 and 2 certifications along with moving towards completing the State Fire Officer certification program.



Our partnership with Pueblo Community College on workshops, as well as the Fire Science program, has brought the Pueblo Fire Department regional, state, and national recognition. Our 2011 training calendar is committed to delivering high quality training to our members. We must continue to look for better and safer ways to do our job and "Train as if your life depends on it, because it does"!

- ✓ **Fire Prevention, Education, and Investigations-**Tragically, we suffered one civilian fire fatality in 2010 that involved 3 year old Josiah Mendes. We are committing our fire prevention and education efforts throughout 2011 in memory of Josiah Mendes. Our department completed over 3,000 business inspections in 2010. Quarterly classes on various aspects of conducting company inspections will continue. In terms of Property Loss Conservation, last year we responded to fire calls with a total property and content value of \$ 17.9 million dollars. During fire combat operations, we were able to save \$ 16.2 million in property/content which represents savings of over 90% in total value. Our fire loss per capita continues to be less than half of the national average. In terms of education through local media, we will be developing new Public Safety Announcements for 2011. Our fire investigators continue to investigate over 200 working fire incidents every year. Our department now has shift fire investigators that assist our Fire Prevention Bureau.



- ✓ Emergency Medical Services-Medical incidents continue to make up approximately 70% of our response incidents. We continue to work closely with Pueblo County Medical Director Dr. Kevin Weber on various EMS items. Due to financial challenges, our goal of becoming a paramedic level fire department has been placed on hold. One of our daily goals is to maintain an adequate number of ALS (Advanced Life Support) trained personnel. Two years ago, Engine 10 was converted to an ALS unit. This was a major accomplishment to ensure our ten fire station districts are staffed with Advanced Life Support personnel. AMR Ambulance continues to provide excellent service to our City and community.

- ✓ Assessment of our needs- Besides establishing bench marks and tracking goals, the accreditation process identified various needs we have in areas such as staffing and large capital items. In



recent years, we reduced our fire department staffing in fire prevention and fire suppression while at the same time our call volume and prevention demands have increased and nearly doubled. In terms of large capital needs, some of our apparatus and fire stations are aging and are in need of replacement. City revenue funds and the current economic condition have become problematic in terms of meeting

these needs. However, we will continue to explore all necessary avenues to meet current and future staffing and capital items needs.

- ✓ Hazardous Materials and Specialized Rescue Ops- We are extremely fortunate to have a full service department that is capable of handling the extra-ordinary and unique incidents such as a haz mat spill, river rescue, and confined space incident. Many specialized incidents were handled in 2010 that resulted in positive and safe outcomes thanks to this specialized and highly trained group of individuals.

- ✓ Homeland Security and terrorism preparedness- We continue to work very close with City of Pueblo Police Department and Pueblo County Sheriff in training and preparedness. This will be an on-going focus as we best prepare ourselves for this 21st century challenge.



- ✓ Department Communications-Good communications at all levels has been and will continue to be a major focus. The weekly conference between all fire stations and staff assists us in this area. In addition, members have done an outstanding job keeping City Management, Council and other departments updated on various items throughout the year. We will continue to use the chain of command and appropriate communications channels to make formal requests and resolve departmental issues.

- ✓ Fire Management and Local 3 work relations-In 2010, we continued to problem-solve many items using the Labor/Management Initiative (LMI) forum. In addition to our monthly Staff meetings that involves management and labor, LMI creates a positive and collaborative problem-solving methodology. This includes working on current department needs and planning for the future.



The active participation between our Command Staff and IAFF Local 3 E-Board continues to be an invaluable asset in moving our department forward. In January 2011, members from command staff and Local 3 Executives attended the national LMI Conference.



- ✓ Explorer Post 343- This program continues to do an outstanding job and make a significant impact in the lives of our youth throughout the community. In addition, we are looking at starting an Advanced Fire Explorer Program that would cover college costs for a select number of our top explorers.

- ✓ CISD, ACOVA and Fire Chaplain Program- Fire Chaplain Doug Cox, ACOVA, and Critical Incident Stress Debriefing personnel were called upon several times this past year. These individuals did an outstanding job comforting those during critical and tragic times.



- ✓ New Fire Station 4 and 9: Thanks to our Fire Station Design Committee for the outstanding work they have done designing our stations. Thanks and recognition also goes to St. Mary Corwin Hospital and School District 60 for donating the land for fire stations 4 and 9. As previously stated, we were awarded over \$3.3 million dollars in grants funds for these fire stations. In July 2010, Fire Station 9 was completed. Our goal to complete the construction of Fire Station 4 is early 2012.

- ✓ Apparatus, Equipment, and Capital Improvement-We are very thankful and fortunate that in 2010, various station and apparatus items have been upgraded. Budget permitting, we are



looking to continue upgrading each fire station with an emergency generator, thermal imaging camera, and physical abilities equipment. As stated, there are needs in terms of aging apparatus and fire stations. Lastly, we have officially upgraded to a new CAD System and automated dispatch system that has improved overall response times.

- ✓ Home of Heroes-Red, White, and Blue, fund raising campaign-Truck one and Engine 6, along with Squad 1 and Engine 3 are painted red, white, and blue. The new Engines 1 and 8 will be painted with this color scheme. This is an exciting project for our department that carries a positive and symbolic message to the community about Pueblo being “Home of the Heroes”. We are hoping to raise more funds in 2011 to complete the painting of our rigs

- ✓ Mutual Aid, Regionalization, NIMS- We are updating current mutual aid contracts. Staying involved in regional exercises and training will remain constant. An example of this is our participation in MMRS and CSSEP Exercises. The Pueblo Fire Department has established itself as a leader in the South Region of Colorado.



- ✓ Recruitment and Diversity- We continue to work closely with the Human Resource Department on upcoming outreach venues to enhance our abilities to reach future firefighter candidates that encompass a diverse and broad background. One of our strategic goals is to improve diversity while at the same time hiring and maintaining a highly trained and professional workforce.



- ✓ Community Relations- Through previously mentioned programs, we strive to become further integrated and connected with the community.

- ✓ Pueblo Community College- We continue our collaborative approach with PCC. This includes the use of our facilities. PCC has done an outstanding job hosting nationally recognized fire service speakers and maintaining a top-notch fire science program.



Closing comments

Maintaining our accreditation status continues to have a very positive impact on our safety, level of service, and daily operations. We will continue to provide safe and effective leadership, training, equipment, and facilities for our members to ensure the highest level of Fire and Rescue services to the City of Pueblo and our community.

Our members are to be commended for expertly handling daily challenges and emergencies. Our combined skills, professionalism, and dedication are remarkable and make Pueblo one of the safest places to live and do business in terms of fire and rescue services.

I am honored to serve the City of Pueblo and its citizens with such an outstanding group of fire/rescue professionals. We are a world-class fire department and I look forward to accomplishing many great things in 2011. I cannot thank the community enough for the support we receive.

Semper Vigilans

Respectfully submitted,

Christopher P. Riley
Fire Chief