

# East Andover Fire Department

By Rene Lefebvre  
East Andover Fire Department Chief

One big advantage to being a more senior fire manager is having a lot of experience doing the job. In other words, I am old and have seen a lot of fire.

It is with that experience and confidence that I responded to a call reporting a large area of smoke on Tucker Mountain. We assembled crews and started into the woods.

*The wind was howling, spreading hot material into dry woods.*

Due to very dry conditions, the state had a spotter airplane flying and was responding to our incident. As we watched the plane circle over the mountain, we were wondering why the area he traveled was so large. Most woods fires we deal with are less than five acres.

The first report from the aircraft was for a fire of more than 20 acres and rapidly spreading. Well, so much for experience; we were now in new territory.

The first crew from Andover had traveled over the mountain and was now in the town of Hill. Command of the incident passed to the Hill chief. We had assembled a second alarm crew of 30 firefighters and several pieces of off-road equipment on the Andover side of the fire. A better way to the fire was found on the Hill side of the mountain,

so crews were redeployed to Hill.

As we arrived at staging, we were told that a helicopter had flown over the area and put the fire at 70 acres. This is the kind of incident that tests the training of each firefighter, whether clearing a fire line or commanding the fire crews.

It was now time to gain control and manage. Incident command was established, crew bosses were given resources, and we all went to work. It was a very busy day. The wind was howling, spreading hot material into dry woods.

My job within incident command was logistics. The number one job of logistics is to provide food and water to the fire crews. Sixty hard-working people can eat a lot of food. With the support of a wonderful team in Andover, a very large cache of food and water made its way to the teams working in the woods. My thanks to our support team in Andover; we are grateful for all you do.

Fire crews came out of the woods by dark. A fire line had been established around the fire, preventing further spread. Crews would spend the next four days containing hotspots and cutting down large trees that were still on fire.

I am not able to illustrate in this short article all the skill and hard work that was required to contain this fire. You realize how serious this situation is when you see paramedics in off-road vehicles carrying medical burn material and defibrillators.

Your fire fighters did a nice job. To the team, thanks – it is an honor to walk among you.

## Road Agent from page 8

tween \$120 and \$150. A carbide cutting edge and cover edge for a big truck can last anywhere from one to two years and cost anywhere from \$1,200 to \$1,500.

Tire chains for the big trucks cost \$500 for a good set, and it takes two to three good sets to make it through a winter. Due to the increases in fuel since 2001, these prices have increased dramatically over the last 12 years. As fuel prices continue to increase, I suspect we will be forced to revisit rates again. Despite all of this, the base rate for equipment has not increased, and we have just given increases to offset costs that the Town has shifted to the subcontractors.

### Equipment Rental

What we rent equipment for is another question I get asked. The short answer is we rent equipment for everything we do. The Town currently owns a grader and a limited number of traffic safety devices (signs and road cones). The fact of the matter is that the Town Fire Warden has more Town-owned tools than the Highway Department.

Currently, if we have trees down, the Town rents a truck to get the workers to the site and to transport tools and debris. The Town rents chainsaws to cut

up the trees, and if we are doing a lot of tree work, the Town may rent a chipper to make the debris more manageable. If the trees are too big to be effectively handled, the Town rents a backhoe to move the logs out of the road.

Basically, if it takes fuel, the Town rents it. The reasons for this are various, but the biggest is that Town-owned equipment has typically received poor maintenance or been stolen. This is because there is no secure location such as a highway garage to store equipment, and we lack tools or space to repair any equipment.

The truth of the matter is that when I hear at the Town Meeting that the Town is spending a quarter of a million dollars a year in equipment rental, I think that this should shock no one in town. However, what most townspeople don't realize is that, unlike other towns our size, we are not spending \$50,000 a year on payments for equipment that we then need to hire operators for. We do not spend the over \$100,000 a year that most towns our size pay for diesel fuel.

We are only paying to insure the grader, versus a whole fleet of equipment. Nor do we pay the cost of repairs on rental equipment when it does break down. As food for thought, one local See Road Agent on page 10

## BOB'S SHOP

Aluminum Storm Windows  
Replacement Windows

Storm Doors  
Aluminum & Solid Core

Porch Enclosures  
Screen or Glass

Patio Enclosures  
with Canvas

Window Repairs  
Screen Repairs

Since 1954  
Elkins • 526-6165 anytime

Do You Have  
**EXTRA EGGS**  
From Your Hens?

Donate them to the  
**ANDOVER**  
**FOOD PANTRY**

Bring them in to the  
basement of the  
Town Hall anytime  
the building is open.

Empty egg cartons needed, too!

## SEUFERT LAW OFFICE

has expanded to become

# SEUFERT, DAVIS & HUNT, PLLC

- Personal Injury
- Civil Litigation
- Family Law
- Workers Compensation
- Divorce
- Bankruptcy
- DWI/ALS
- Commercial Litigation
- Lead Paint Poisoning
- Criminal Defense

Christopher J. Seufert  
Brad C. Davis  
Robert D. Hunt  
Lexie Rojas

facebook www.seufertlaw.com twitter

59 Central Street, Franklin, 934-9837 • Concord, 224-8672

WE'LL GET YOU THROUGH IT®

# C. & C. CARS

427 N. MAIN STREET  
W. FRANKLIN, NH 03235

JOHN D. PERRY, OWNER MARK W. PERRY, MGR

934-6006

- Vehicle Sales
- Auto Repair
- Towing



## SPRING SPECIAL

A/C RECHARGE

**\$125**

For most cars • Expires May 31, 2012



Alignments \$49  
Hourly Labor Rate \$48