

	<h1>Newton Safety Complex</h1>	<p><b>Newton Safety Complex Building Committee</b></p>
		<p>Volume I, Issue I 6 February 2007</p>

## Safety Complex Committee Notes

The information contained in this newsletter highlights the existing conditions that are concerns for the Police, Fire and Emergency Management organizations. In the course of the Safety Complex Committee's feasibility study other important and often disturbing information came to light. I will highlight some of those findings for you here.

- The water supply for the Central Fire Station is controlled by the rental property on the other side of Rt. 108. Even though the station has a generator it is of no help in a power outage because the pump is not on Town Property.
- The Central Fire Station was cited by the State Fire Marshal for code violations. Several emergency repairs were made and the threat of closure was avoided but several safety issues still exist.
- The Police Department is forced to store important material in an outside structure. This shed has not been effective in preventing environmental damage, mold, and rodent infestation.
- National Fire Safety Standards for equipment clearances, protective clothing storage and cleaning, general accessibility, and ventilation are impossible to achieve with the current facilities.
- Some grant money and equipment upgrades are unavailable because our facilities are not adequate or do not meet minimal requirements for such aid.

On the positive side of our investigation we found that our community is fortunate to have a strong body of volunteers and professionals that serve us very well. The target for response time on the national level is six minutes and few cities are able to come close to that goal. Quite often the response is twenty to thirty minutes, or more! Newton Fire and Police take justifiable pride in the fact that a twelve minute response is considered too slow. There have also been some very creative solutions produced to address current shortcomings. While these efforts are laudable they must not be considered true corrections. It is imperative that we, as a community, take steps to update and upgrade our public safety services so that we can be assured that we and following generations will be as safe and secure as possible.

Please take a few minutes to review the following specifics of the deficits of the current facilities.

Thank you,

Robert Bartlett, Chairman



## Status of Safety Services Facilities

### Fire Station Shortcomings



Central station - built 1957



Newton Junction Station - built 1954

Not owned by town

#### Equipment Bays

Currently: Seven single bays in two stations. One station is not owned by the town. Door openings **do not** meet the minimum recommended size of 12 ft. x 14 ft. Space around vehicles does not allow safe movement around equipment or for access to storage areas on trucks or in station.

Needed: **Five double bays in a central station. Current standards call for bay width of 15 ft. with doors of 12 ft. x 14 ft. high.**

#### Exhaust System

Currently: There is no exhaust system in either building.

Needed: **Ventilation of the apparatus bays requires the removal of both exhaust fumes and combustible vapors as quickly as possible.**

#### Hose Tower

Currently: There is no hose tower.

Needed: **A means to clean and dry or thaw frozen lengths of hose after use.**

#### Dispatch Room

Currently: Very small Dispatch room.

Needed: **Space for computer equip, radio equip, desk and file storage.**

*Trucks have gotten bigger over the years.*

*Note; The Rescue Truck will not fit if there is snow or ice on the ramp.*

*Yes, EI does fit into that bay!*



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### Police Station Shortcomings

#### Garage Bays

Currently: There are no garage bays.

Needed: **Garage bays are needed for: 1) Sally port for unloading arrests in a secure area for both prisoner and officer safety; 2) Storage and maintenance of OHRVs, department bicycle, and cruiser maintenance; 3) Forensic Seizures – vehicles used in crimes that need to be forensically processed.**

#### I. Impound Yard

Currently: There is no impound yard.

Needed: **An impound yard is needed to: 1) hold vehicles that have been used in other crimes including fatal and serious personal injury accidents; 2) hold other impounded property including bicycles, etc.**

#### III. Training Room/Conference Room

Currently: There is no Training Room or Conference Room.

Needed: **An area is needed for departmental trainings and monthly department meetings. The general office area does not allow seating for everyone and is not conducive to meetings or training sessions.**



Police Station

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## Fire Station Shortcomings (Cont.)

(Continued from page 2)

### Day Room

Currently: One room with limited headroom (approx. 6'-6") used for training and meetings. Small kitchen area in one corner.

Needed: A room for people to wait in while on standby or to gather informally.

### Training/Meeting Room For At Least 50 People

Currently: See Day Room above.

Needed: Classroom/conference room with 16 sq. ft. per person to allow for practical hands-on training with various types of equipment.

### Hose Storage

Currently: Hose is stored wherever space can be found to build racks. Often intrudes into space that could be used for safe passage around trucks.

Needed: Safe and secure storage areas that allow easy access to hose.

### Kitchen

Currently: See Day Room above.

Needed: A defined food prep area with storage areas and up to date facilities sufficient to serve at least 20 to 30 people.

### Men's Bathroom & Shower

Currently: One common bathroom – hand sink, no shower.

Needed: Multiple toilet facilities/code with lavatories and at least two showers.

### Women's Bathroom & Shower

Currently: See Above

Needed: See Above

### Laundry Room

Currently: Gear is sometimes taken to Plaistow or Haverhill to be cleaned. No facilities exist in Newton to handle turnout gear.

Needed: Facilities to clean gear in a timely fashion and dry soaked gear. This is to conform to hazmat requirements as well as to protect personnel and gear.

### Turnout Gear Room & Storage

Currently: Gear is stored around the station on the walls.

Needed: Space to store individuals gear and equipment in a neat and secure fashion. This space should allow for room to put on gear quickly without risk from moving apparatus and still be close to equipment to allow for rapid response to calls.

### EMS Storage

Currently: Limited space available. Limited security.

Needed: Dedicated space with easy access and full security.

### Chief's Office

Currently: Small office

Needed: Office space to accommodate desk, storage files. etc. and room to meet with two or three people in private.

### Officers' Room

Currently: No dedicated space.

Needed: Space with desk and room for two or more private file systems.



The stairway to the second floor Day Room and offices is steep, narrow and hazardous. The Emergency Management Room and Dispatch Office are not handicapped accessible.



Hose storage is a major problem



Single "Unisex" Bathroom



If the HazMat trailer is moved inside it blocks the door to the bathroom.

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## Fire Station Shortcomings (cont.)

(Continued from page 3)

### General Storage Room

Currently: Small space, filled beyond capacity.

Needed: Space for general storage that allows for safe passage and organized storage.

### Boiler Room

Currently: Small cramped room.

Needed: Room that meets code requirements.

### Emergency Management Room (See page 6)

Currently: Small space partitioned out of regular office space.

Needed: Dedicated space with sufficient room for several people to work.

### Future Sleeping Quarters

Currently: None

Needed: Space for sleeping quarters for future full time crews.

## Police Station Shortcomings (cont.)

(Continued from page 2)

### IV. Booking Room

Currently: The current prisoner booking room is not a secure room. It gives unruly and combative prisoners access to the administrative area and potentially to the rest of the PD. The room is not physically conducive to officer safety and does not flow with proper and correct prisoner handling methods.

Needed: A secure booking area is needed to process detainees.

### V. Administrative Area

Currently: The current administrative area does not flow with walk-in traffic. The Clerk/Secretary has to leave her work station (radios, telephone and computer) in order to handle walk-in traffic.

Needed: The administrative area should allow the Clerk/Secretary to greet visitors and handle walk-in traffic from her work station.

### VI. Foyer/Lobby

Currently: The current foyer/lobby is very small. There is also not enough room for forms and literature.

Needed: A large lobby area is needed so that multiple visitors are able to sit comfortably. The lobby should also provide an area for visitors to fill out forms.

### VII. Break Room/Kitchen

Currently: There is no kitchen and no separate area for employees to eat lunch.

Needed: A separate room is needed with a sink and a table and chairs for employees to eat lunch.

### VIII. Restrooms

Currently: There is one generic restroom for everyone.

Needed: Separate men's and lady's restrooms are needed.



*This space often must serve as Training/Conference Room, Booking Room, and Administrative Area. It is not adequate for any of these purposes.*



*Foyer/Lobby is cramped and has limited space to fill out forms.*

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## Police Station Shortcomings (cont.)

(Continued from page 4)

### IX. Parking Lot

Currently: The current parking lot is too small.

**Needed:** A larger area is needed for employee and visitor parking. This area should also be well lit at night and provide a secure area for employee parking.

### X. Storage Areas

Currently: There is one storage closet in the building. This closet is approximately 8'6" x 5'6" in size and is full. Because this is the only storage closet, office supplies and miscellaneous equipment are stored throughout the building in random areas.

**Needed:** Additional space is needed to organize and store uniforms, equipment, firearms and ammunition, office and computer supplies.

### XI. Officer's Report Room

Currently: The current officer's room is 14' x 12' and is extremely cramped. It is the administrative area for 4 full-time and 12 part-time officers and also the animal control officer. It also houses all the department forms, employee bulletin boards, roll call information, and is the main area for information exchange and interviews.

**Needed:** Additional office space is needed to provide workstations for officers to write reports and conduct private interviews.

### XII. Records

Currently: Department records are stored in file cabinets in a hallway that leads to the main entrance and exit for department employees. Because of these file cabinets, this hallway is left with a clearance space of 2'7" in width. Archived records which must be kept in perpetuity by NH statute are kept in a storage trailer that leaks and has had several files eaten and otherwise destroyed by rodents or other vermin.

**Needed:** A clean and dry storage area that is easily accessible is essential for proper record retention.

### XIII. Locker Room

Currently: There is one small locker room that does not have enough lockers for all sworn personnel. There is one shower stall, currently being used for storage.

**Needed:** A larger locker room is needed to provide room for additional lockers, a seating area, and a separate area for female officers.

### XIV. Interview Room

Currently: There is no Interview Room.

**Needed:** An Interview Room is needed for private conversations ranging from domestic and assault issues to criminal investigations.

### XV. Supervisors Office

Currently: There is no Supervisors Office.

**Needed:** A Supervisors Office is needed so that supervisors can conduct performance appraisals and have personal conversations with their subordinates.

### XVI. Detectives Office

Currently: There is no Detectives Office.

**Needed:** A Detectives Office is needed to provide a private room to handle confidential and case sensitive investigations.

### XVII. Crime Scene Evidence Processing Room

Currently: There is an Evidence Storage Room only.

**Needed:** A Crime Scene Evidence Processing Room is needed to process prints, castings, photographs, etc.



Report Room is also much too small for the work that must be performed.



Department records files currently reduce the hallway space to just over two and one half feet.



Locker Room



Shower also serves as storage area.

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## Police Station Shortcomings (cont.)

(Continued from page 5)

### XVIII. Exercise/Training Area

Currently: There is no Exercise/Training Area.

**Needed:** The state of NH has an ongoing requirement for police officers to pass a physical fitness test. An exercise room and physical training room would help officers to stay in compliance with the state.

### XIX. Building Size

Currently: The building that houses the Newton Police Department is overcrowded, cramped and just too small. The IACP recommends 300 – 350 square feet for each full time employee. Currently there are 7 full-time employees and 11 part-time employees which means a minimum recommendation of 2,100 square feet. The existing building is 1,296 square feet which means the existing building is 504 square feet short, or the equivalent of 4 10x12 rooms.

The FBI recommends 1 officer for every 500 residents. The Newton Police Department currently employs 1 officer for every 1,000 residents.

**Needed:** The minimum recommended square footage (300) times the number of recommended officers (10) means a proposed 3,000 square foot building. This proposed square footage is in accordance with today's standards and does not take into consideration any anticipated town growth.

## Emergency Management Office (EMO) Shortcomings

1. Does not meet current ADA Standards.  
Handicapped applicants have been refused membership as "Liabilities".
2. Sanitary facilities are sub standard.
3. When there is a power failure, there is no water to the building.
4. There are no accommodations to staff EMO for long term events. Adequate staffing must be maintained for uninterrupted coverage during emergencies.
5. There is no storage for equipment and supplies.
6. The EMO is stolen space from the fire department. During an emergency, firefighters must be "kicked out" of their own space and displaced to the downstairs, undersized apparatus bay.
7. There is no ventilation system within the building. Currently when the diesel apparatus is started up, it creates a critical level of carbon monoxide. This deadly elevated level of CO requires evacuation of the EMO until a safe level of CO is reached. This CO level far exceeds the "safe workplace maximum established by OSHA.
8. Upgrading deficiencies is extremely cost prohibitive. Any modification to the current facility would require mandated upgrades to all utilities and all current building code requirements would have to be met.

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