

Fact Sheet

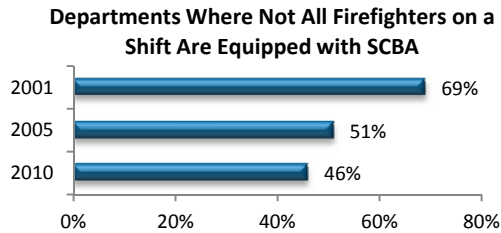
West Virginia Fire Service Needs Assessment

There has been substantial progress in reducing many fire department needs, although more remains to be done.

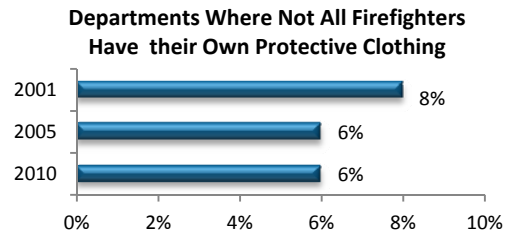
Protective Equipment and Clothing

The 2010 percentage of West Virginia departments **without enough equipment to equip all personnel** (or all personnel on a shift, as appropriate) was:

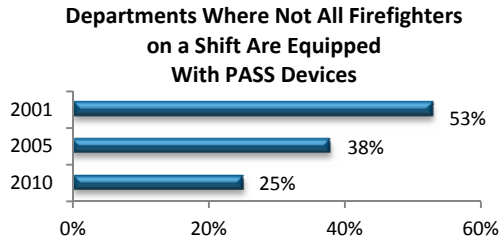
- 46% for **self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA)**, compared to 69% in 2001 and 51% in 2005;



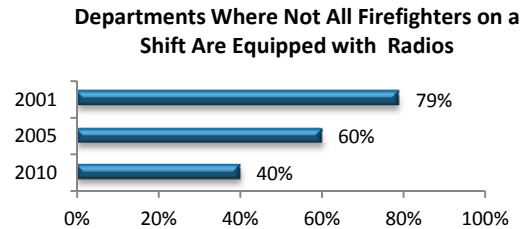
- 6% for **personal protective clothing**, compared to 8% in 2001 and 6% in 2005; and



- 25% for **personal alert safety system devices (PASS)**, compared to 53% in 2001 and 38% in 2005;



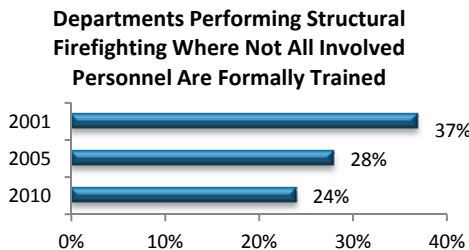
- 40% for **portable radios**, compared to 79% in 2001 and 60% in 2005.



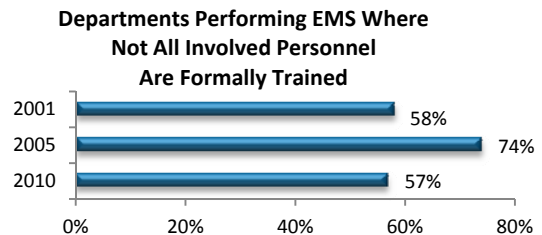
Training

In many fire departments, **not all involved personnel have been formally trained** in their emergency response duties. The 2010 percentage of West Virginia departments in which not all involved personnel have been formally trained was:

- 24% for **structural firefighting**, compared to 37% in 2001 and 28% in 2005; and



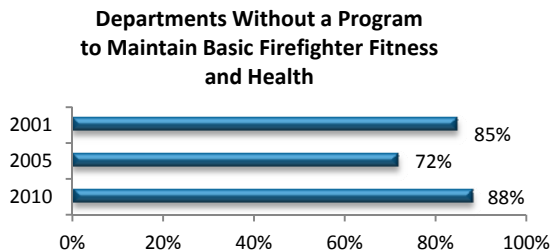
- 57% for **emergency medical service (EMS)**, compared to 58% in 2001 and 74% in 2005.



Fitness and Health

In many fire departments, **there is no program to maintain basic firefighter fitness and health.** The 2010 percentage of West Virginia departments with no such program was:

- 88%, compared to 85% in 2001 and 72% in 2005.



Unusually Challenging Incidents

There has been little or no progress in increasing the ability of fire departments to handle **various unusually challenging incidents** with local trained personnel and specialized equipment alone:

- Provide technical rescue and EMS at a **structural collapse** involving 50 occupants; and
- Provide hazardous material response and EMS at an incident involving **chemical or biological agents** and with 10 injuries.
- **Wildland/urban interface (WUI) fire** affecting 500 acres; and
- Mitigation of a **major developing flood**.

However, there has been progress in the percentage of departments having written agreements for working with others. The 2010 percentage of West Virginia departments with **no** such written agreement was:

- 77% for structural collapse, compared to 59% in 2001 and 61% in 2005;
- 72% for chemical or biological incidents, compared to 59% in 2001 and 78% in 2005;
- 63% for wildland/urban interface fires, compared to 45% in 2001 and 55% in 2005; and
- 65% for developing major flood, compared to 67% in 2001 and 75% in 2005.

Success requires more written agreements, with each participating department knowing its role, providing resources needed to play its role, and helping test the plan in simulations and rehearsals.

Stations and Apparatus

Some stations lack specific features, which are required by current standards but were not required when stations were constructed. Some stations are old enough that a variety of persistent or recurring problems are to be expected and replacement might be better and even cheaper. Some departments are using old fire apparatus.

- 53% of West Virginia fire departments do not have backup power for their fire stations.
- 62% of West Virginia fire departments do not have exhaust emission control for their fire stations.
- 40% of the fire stations in West Virginia are over 40 years old.
- 6% of West Virginia fire department engines and pumpers are at least 30 years old.

Cautions on interpretation

Trends. For some states and most needs assessment survey questions, even large changes from one survey to another will not be statistically significant. Be cautious in interpreting results as trends.

State-to-state comparisons. States where a large share of departments serve small communities will tend to have greater needs according to the measures used here than states where a small share of departments serve small communities. State-to-state comparisons must be viewed with caution, particularly if the states have very different mixes of urban and rural communities.

How rural is West Virginia? The survey for West Virginia was based on the following responses:

- 5 of the 12 departments protecting populations of 25,000 or more;
- 10 of the 38 departments protecting populations of 10,000 to 24,999; and
- 48 of the 392 departments protecting populations of less than 10,000.

Access the full state report, other state reports and the national reports at <http://www.nfpa.org/needsassessment>.