



TOWN OF AMHERST

Central Fire Alarm Office

500 John James Audubon Parkway
Amherst, New York 14228-1131
Office 716-689-1230 Fax 716-689-1229

Thomas A. Merrill
Senior Fire Dispatcher
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January 15, 2026

In 2025, the Town of Amherst Central Fire Alarm Office dispatched a total of 24,943 emergency calls. This reflects an increase of 1,146 calls compared to 2024—an approximate 5% rise in overall call volume. The attached document provides the official breakdown by department or agency.

Of note, there were 49 significant structure fires causing over eight million dollars in damage. There were 354 total fire calls and total fire damage totaled \$9,123,201. Medical services calls increased by 593 totaling 14,888. There were 4,519 miscellaneous public assistance type calls as compared to 4,128 in 2024. Miscellaneous calls are used to categorize a wide variety of public assistance calls such as power lines down, carbon monoxide leaks or gasoline or chemical spills.

Operational Initiatives in 2025

Many initiatives were undertaken within the office in 2025, all directed at maintaining and enhancing the level of service provided by the Central Alarm Office.

Training was a top priority in 2025. With 911 dispatchers now officially recognized as first responders and communication center best practices adopted nationwide, it is more important than ever to ensure our team is trained to meet the current standards. Providing dispatchers with the skills and knowledge they need strengthens their performance in high-pressure situations and serves as a critical safeguard for the communities we serve. Accordingly, in 2025 we implemented enhanced training aligned with current recommendations to ensure all dispatchers remain up to date on emergency protocols and call-processing best practices.

Several dispatchers completed the Association of Public Safety Communications Officials (APCO) Telecommunicator 1 training course. This 40-hour training course provides participants with the foundational knowledge and skills necessary to perform effectively as a public safety dispatcher. In addition, several senior dispatchers completed the APCO Communications Training Officer course, a 24-hour program designed to assist in-house trainers with the skills and knowledge necessary to effectively train and mentor new public safety dispatchers. In 2026, we hope to send additional staff to these types of classes when offered in our region.

In addition, many dispatchers participated in in-house training programs and earned certifications in a variety of other critical areas, including incident command courses (ICS-100, ICS-200, ICS-700, ICS-800), as well as specialized training in hazardous materials response, severe weather emergencies and other topics directly relevant to the operation of an emergency communication center.



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All Alarm Office employees maintain national certifications as Emergency Medical Dispatchers (EMD) and Emergency Fire Dispatchers (EFD). These certifications allow dispatchers to provide immediate, life-saving instructions to callers before emergency units arrive. In 2025, dispatchers successfully guided callers through numerous critical situations, including bleeding control, broken bone management, assisting choking victims, delivering babies, performing CPR, and other emergencies.

To maintain certifications, dispatchers participate in continuing education programs and they must re-certify every two years through the International Academies of Emergency Dispatch. In addition, they are required to maintain CPR certification. The dispatchers also attend local fire department drills and meetings of the Amherst, Clarence, and Newstead Fire Chiefs Associations to remain current on national and local fire service developments. The Central Alarm Office maintains great working relationships with all emergency service providers at the town, county, and state levels to ensure seamless communication, coordinated response and quality, reliable service is provided to all our municipalities.

Additional initiatives were undertaken to improve dispatcher effectiveness and overall service quality:

- **Technology and Procedure Updates:** Streamlined call intake, improved documentation, and enhanced coordination with Fire and EMS units.
- **Regional Collaboration and Exercises:** Participated in multi-agency exercises to strengthen interoperability and prepare for complex emergencies.
- **Quality Assurance Measures:** Conducted regular performance reviews and continuing education to identify improvement areas and reinforce best practices.

Technology and Infrastructure

The Alarm Office continues to operate and maintain an in-house digital fire alarm monitoring system, which receives signals from municipal buildings, fire stations, and schools throughout the dispatch area. Dispatchers maintain this system, reducing reliance on costly outside contractors, and work closely with organizations during school drills and system tests. The software is approaching end-of-life, and efforts are underway to identify a replacement system.

The Alarm Office's dispatch computer system is linked to Twin City Ambulance, our contracted advanced life support (paramedic-level) service provider. This "Data-Link" allows immediate transmission of call details to Twin City, enabling rapid dispatch and real-time tracking of ambulance locations, arrival times, and other critical operational data.



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Radio System Enhancements

There has been an active committee for over a year now working on a complete radio system makeover. The original plan was to have the Town of Amherst partner with Niagara County and establish a trunked radio system that would benefit multiple departments and agencies throughout the jurisdictions and it would piggyback off a current system in place in Niagara County. Erie County has recently become involved and is looking to also install a trunked radio system and has some funding in place, so a cooperative initiative is underway exploring how all the municipalities can work together and build the trunked system.

Staffing and Personnel

For the first time in years, the Alarm Office operated fully staffed. Timothy Fremming was hired in November, filling a vacancy created when a dispatcher retired at the end of 2024.

We also mourned the loss of former dispatcher George John, who served from 1971–1995. Born and raised in England, he survived the London Blitz as a child and later became a long-time member of the Williamsville Fire Department. George is remembered for his professionalism, expertise, and dedication to the community.

Service Area and Call Performance

The Central Fire Alarm Office dispatches fire, rescue, and EMS units for 16 volunteer fire departments across 158 square miles, serving the towns of Amherst, Clarence, and Newstead, and the villages of Akron and Williamsville. Dispatch contracts were renewed with all the municipalities extending the service provided by the Central Alarm Office through 2030.

The dispatchers handle a diverse mix of residential, commercial, educational, agricultural, and industrial properties, all presenting unique challenges. According to the latest census data, over 180,000 residents live within the dispatch area, with thousands more working and passing through daily. Despite rising call volumes, close to 98% of incoming emergency calls were answered in under 10 seconds, and over 99% were answered in under 15 seconds, all well within recommended standards, further reflecting the dedication and professionalism of our dispatch team who are on duty 24/7/365.



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Looking Ahead

The achievements of 2025 demonstrate the critical role of our dispatch center in community safety. Skilled, highly motivated, well-trained dispatchers, updated procedures, and a commitment to continuous improvement ensure Fire and EMS services operate efficiently and effectively.

As call volumes continue to grow, our community residents and first responders can continue to rely on the professional and competent service that has been the hallmark of the Central Fire Alarm Office since its first call was dispatched in 1962.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thomas A. Merrill".

Thomas A. Merrill
Senior Fire Dispatcher

Amherst Central Fire Alarm Office Incident Totals: 2025

			Structure Fires	Motor Vehicle Fires	Misc Fires	Total Fires	False Alarms	EMS Calls	Motor Vehicle Accidents	Misc Calls	Mutual Aid Calls**	Total Alarms
AKRON FIRE COMPANY VILLAGE FD												
	AKR	Akron	1	0	5	6	56	294	6	46		408
	CLA	Clarence	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0
	GEN	Genesee Co	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4		4
	NEW	Newstead	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	19		20
	LAN	Lancaster	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1		2
	NIA	Niagara Co	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2		3
	All		1	0	5	6	56	297	6	72	3	440
AMHERST FIRE CONTROL												
	AKR	Akron	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4		4
	AMH	Amherst	0	0	0	0	56	1	0	193		250
	CHE	Cheektowaga	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	14		14
	CLA	Clarence	0	0	0	0	12	0	0	23		35
	NEW	Newstead	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	17		18
	WMV	Williamsville	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6		6
	GEN	Genesee Co	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1		1
	All		0	0	0	0	68	2	0	258	2	330
CHEEKTOWAGA FIRE CONTROL												
	AMH	Amherst	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0		1
	All		0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0		1
CITY OF TONAWANDA FIRE CONTROL												
	AMH	Amherst	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2		2
	All		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2		2
CLARENCE CENTER FIRE COMPANY CCFPD												
	AKR	Akron	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3		3
	AMH	Amherst	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	10		12
	CLA	Clarence	4	1	4	9	108	229	21	83		450
	LAN	Lancaster	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2		2
	GEN	Genesee Co	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0		1
	NIA	Niagara Co	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1		1
	NEW	Newstead	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	17		18
	All		4	2	4	10	108	232	21	116	10	497

Amherst Central Fire Alarm Office Incident Totals: 2025

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CLARENCE FIRE DISTRICT												
	AKR	Akron	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3		3
	AMH	Amherst	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3		3
	CLA	Clarence	5	0	4	9	108	339	24	85		565
	GEN	Genesee Co	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1		1
	LAN	Lancaster	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2		2
	NEW	Newstead	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	23		23
	WMV	Williamsville	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0
	ALD	Alden	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2		2
	All		5	0	4	9	108	339	24	119	5	604
DAEMEN UNIVERSITY SECURITY												
	AMH	Amherst	0	0	0	0	158	0	0	1		159
	All		0	0	0	0	158	0	0	1		159
EAST AMHERST FIRE DEPARTMENT FPD 13												
	AMH	Amherst	8	1	10	19	193	432	26	119		789
	CLA	Clarence	2	0	1	3	72	196	14	42		327
	GEN	Genesee Co	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1		1
	WMV	Williamsville	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1		1
	All		10	1	11	22	265	628	40	163	1	1119
EGGERTSVILLE HOSE COMPANY FD 6												
	AMH	Amherst	15	2	50	67	255	796	98	236		1452
	CHE	Cheektowaga	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2		2
	WMV	Williamsville	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1		1
	KEN	Kenmore	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0
	All		15	2	50	67	255	796	98	239	1	1456
ELLICOTT CREEK FIRE COMPANY FPD 9												
	AMH	Amherst	13	2	20	35	179	547	67	183		1011
	GRI	Grand Island	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1		1
	TON	Tonawanda	1	1	1	3	19	2	0	6		30
	All		14	3	21	38	198	549	67	190	4	1046
GENESEE COUNTY FIRE CONTROL												
	AKR	Akron	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	4		5
	NEW	Newstead	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3		3
	All		0	0	0	0	0	1	0	7		8

Amherst Central Fire Alarm Office Incident Totals: 2025

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GETZVILLE FIRE COMPANY FPD 11												
	AMH	Amherst	18	5	34	57	377	867	74	312		1687
	CHE	Cheektowaga	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0
	CLA	Clarence	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5		5
	GRI	Grand Island	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1		1
	WMV	Williamsville	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3		3
	All		18	5	34	57	377	867	74	321	1	1697
HARRIS HILL FIRE COMPANY HHFPD												
	AMH	Amherst	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3		3
	CLA	Clarence	7	3	12	22	123	305	39	110		599
	NEW	Newstead	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1		1
	LAN	Lancaster	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	18		20
	All		7	3	12	22	125	305	39	132	9	632
LANCASTER FIRE CONTROL												
	AMH	Amherst	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1		1
	NEW	Newstead	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4		4
	CLA	Clarence	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	7		8
	All		0	0	0	0	0	1	0	12		13
MAIN TRANSIT FIRE DEPARTMENT FPD 14												
	AKR	Akron	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1		1
	AMH	Amherst	9	3	15	27	265	521	70	115		998
	CHE	Cheektowaga	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	14		14
	CLA	Clarence	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	15		17
	LAN	Lancaster	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0
	WMV	Williamsville	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	3		5
	All		9	3	15	27	265	524	71	148	3	1038
NEWSTEAD FIRE COMPANY												
	ALD	Alden	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1		1
	AKR	Akron	0	0	0	0	3	1	0	20		24
	AMH	Amherst	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1		1
	CLA	Clarence	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4		4
	GEN	Genesee Co	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5		5
	NIA	Niagara	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4		4
	LAN	Lancaster	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3		3
	NEW	Newstead	6	5	7	18	67	465	41	108		699

All
Date: 01/13/2026

6 5 7 18 70 466 41 146 4 745

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Amherst Central Fire Alarm Office Incident Totals: 2025

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NIAGARA COUNTY FIRE CONTROL												
	GEN	Genesee Co	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0		1
	AKR	Akron	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1		1
	NEW	Newstead	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9		9
	All		0	1	0	1	0	0	0	10		11
NORTH AMHERST FIRE COMPANY												
	AMH	Amherst	5	0	0	5	11	46	10	28		100
	CLA	Clarence	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0
	NIA	Niagara	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0
	All		5	0	0	5	11	46	10	28	10	110
NORTH BAILEY FIRE COMPANY FPD 18												
	AMH	Amherst	5	2	11	18	116	165	32	116		447
	TON	Tonawanda	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0
	All		5	2	11	18	116	165	32	116		447
RAPIDS FIRE COMPANY												
	CLA	Clarence	0	0	0	0	2	23	2	12		39
	All		0	0	0	0	2	23	2	12		39
SNYDER FIRE DEPARTMENT FD 7												
	AMH	Amherst	11	3	12	26	208	575	104	221		1134
	CHE	Cheektowaga	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9		9
	TON	Tonawanda	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0
	WMV	Williamsville	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	3		7
	All		11	3	12	26	208	578	105	233	11	1161
SWORMVILLE FIRE COMPANY FPD 12												
	AKR	Akron	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2		2
	AMH	Amherst	5	3	5	13	55	194	28	52		342
	CLA	Clarence	1	0	1	2	31	55	16	27		131
	NIA	Niagara	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1		1
	NEW	Newstead	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6		6
	All		6	3	6	15	86	249	44	88	2	484

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TONAWANDA FIRE CONTROL												
	AMH	Amherst	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	13		13
	ALD	Alden	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2		2
	NEW	Newstead	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1		1
	GEN	Genesee Co	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0
	All		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	16		16
TWIN CITY AMBULANCE												
	AKR	Akron	0	0	0	0	0	9	0	2		11
	AMH	Amherst	0	0	0	0	451	6,942	46	1,563		9002
	AMHERST		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0
	CLA	Clarence	0	0	0	0	82	1,150	4	306		1542
	NEW	Newstead	0	0	0	0	0	16	0	0		16
	TON	Tonawanda	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0		1
	WMV	Williamsville	0	0	0	0	16	294	4	81		395
	All		0	0	0	0	549	8411	55	1952	2	10969
UB POLICE												
	AMH	Amherst	0	0	0	0	1145	0	0	11		1156
	All		0	0	0	0	1145	0	0	11		1156
WILLIAMSVILLE FIRE DEPARTMENT FPD 16												
	AMH	Amherst	2	0	7	9	60	192	20	65		346
	AMHERST		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0
	CLA	Clarence	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2		2
	CHE	Cheektowaga	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	19		19
	WMV	Williamsville	5	1	2	8	110	216	21	37		392
	All		7	1	9	17	170	408	41	123	4	763
Complete Total			118	34	201	353	4,340	14,888	771	4,519	72	24,943

Mutual Aid Calls ** = Mutual Aid responses to Addresses Not in Alarm Office CAD