



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Fire Training Tower Dedication Ceremony

Four localities join together to dedicate the regional training tower in Roanoke County.

September 11, 2009 (Roanoke County) – The County of Roanoke, City of Roanoke, City of Salem and Town of Vinton dedicated their new Roanoke Valley Regional Fire Training Tower earlier today. The newly constructed state-of-the art structure will allow firefighters from across the Roanoke Valley and beyond to train for a range of fire scenarios including residential, commercial, high rise, confined space and rappelling.

The event was attended by state and local officials along with fire-EMS personnel from the four jurisdictions. The dedication ceremony included a 9/11 remembrance portion as well as a live demonstration with firefighters simulating a fire, rescue and rappelling scenario.

The previous fire training burn building was built over 20 years ago and had reached the end of its useful life. The concrete building itself along with the internal fire boxes would require extensive modifications at a significant cost.

In 2007, the four Roanoke Valley Regional Fire-EMS partners discussed the possibility of a new fire training facility and decided to apply for a Virginia Department of Fire Programs (VDFP) grant that would assist with the cost of constructing a new facility.

The localities received the maximum amount allowed through the VDFP Burn Building Construction Grant Program - a gift of \$430,000 with the requirement the building be completed within 24 months. The supplementary cost needed for the project was divided between the localities through a training center cost sharing agreement. Roanoke Valley firefighters now have a high-tech fire training facility that has a life expectancy of up to 50 years.

The Roanoke Valley Regional Fire Training Tower project was completed in just over one year and was within budget at a cost of \$780,000. The building is fueled by natural gas, which burns clean and reduces our carbon footprint. It has a four-story tower with a two-story residential annex. Additionally, it offers two burn rooms, a standpipe, rappel anchors, a non-toxic smoke system, a moveable maze, a confined space section and an attic.

Sharing costs by working regionally saves each locality a significant amount of money while yielding a technologically advanced training facility to benefit firefighters in the Roanoke Valley and beyond.

Additional History of Roanoke Valley Regional Fire-EMS Training Center

The Roanoke Valley Regional Fire-EMS Training Center was dedicated in September 2000 as a partnership between the County of Roanoke, City of Roanoke, City of Salem and Town of Vinton. Prior to this date, the burn building and other fire training props on this site were owned and operated by Roanoke County Fire & Rescue Department.

The 2000 dedication was the beginning of a valley-wide partnership that brought firefighters together from across four jurisdictions for training on a regular basis. Since then the localities have established a regional hiring process that streamlines the pre-screening testing and allows applicants to complete one process no matter how many jurisdictions they are applying with. Additionally, 12 Regional Fire-EMS Recruit Schools have held at the training center. In 2005, the training center became an accredited EMT-Intermediate training site through the Virginia Department of Health, Office of Emergency Medical Services, one of only three entities in

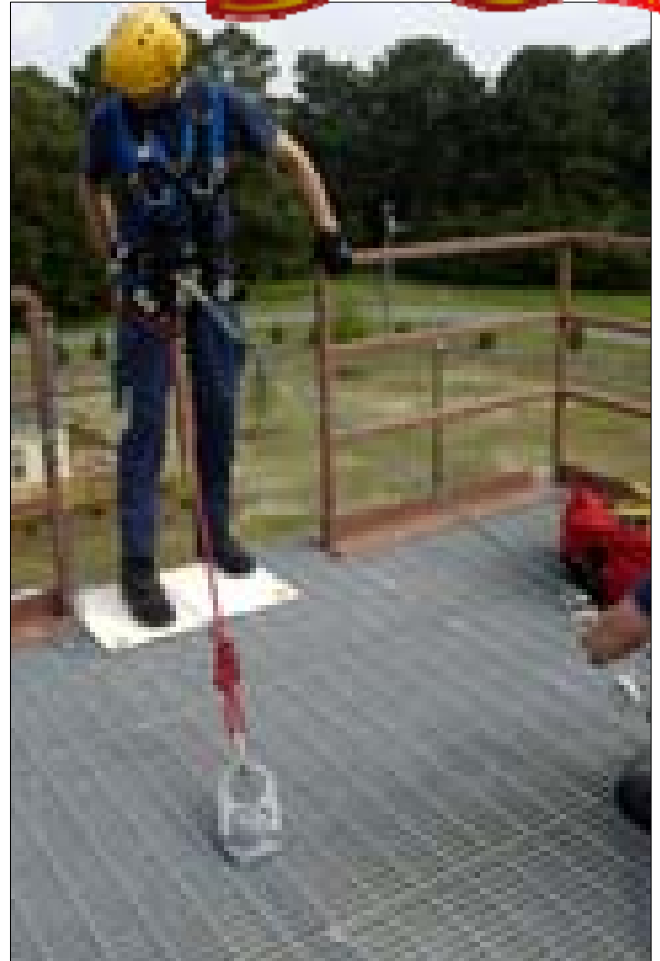
Virginia. Today, the training center has exceeded expectations of projected use being utilized seven days a week for a host of training topics by each of the four jurisdictions and other outside agencies.

At the Roanoke Valley Regional Training Center there are a number of other training simulators that bring firefighters from around the valley and beyond to train on including:

- **Trench Simulator** with underground tunnel system for confined space training,
- **Pump Test Pavilion** for testing of all fire apparatus with water pumps. Site has an underground tank that circulates the water from the truck through the pump to the tank and back to the truck, saving thousands of gallons of water each time it is used,
- **Three train cars** that simulate: train accidents with trapped victims, hazardous material spills and confined space training,
- **MAYDAY- FIREFIGHTER DOWN** mock up that allows personnel to learn how to save their fellow firefighter when they become trapped under debris or have fallen through a collapsed floor,
- **High-Tech Emergency Driving Simulator** that reduces fuel consumption and equipment usage by having personnel train on two separate simulators-one for ambulances and one for fire trucks,
- **Dirty Classroom** for debriefing and evaluating after training scenarios,
- **Former Burn Building** which will be used for search and rescue and other non-burn training.

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RVR Fire Training Tower



Roanoke Valley Regional Fire Training Tower

4 Story Tower
2 Story Residential Annex

- 2 Burn Rooms
- Standpipe
- Rappel Anchors
- Vertical Ladder to Bilco Hatch
- Non-toxic Smoke System
- Movable Maze
- Confined Space
- Attic

