



# **ZIONSVILLE**

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## **Fire Department**

November 16, 2006

Brian Cope  
Fire Chief  
Boone County Fire Department, Worth Township  
PO Box 28  
Whitestown, IN 46075

Chief Cope,

In May of this year you and I discussed the level of training your firefighters were required to have and complete prior to responding on your fire apparatus. In this exchange of communication you stated you would have at least 2 firefighters trained to the State Mandatory Training level, which is short of industry and local standard of Firefighter I and II certification.

You concluded stating "We are Volunteer Fire Department still" and "This is the best I can do for you till we finish up are FF I&II class in August." Since our communication your departments' responses to 911 incidents have raised questions with numerous persons in the emergency service field.

On several occasion your department has not responded a fire apparatus to 911 fire related calls. Recently a fire in a farm building in Union Township, you responded your fire engine by yourself with no other fire personnel aboard. The Zionsville Fire Department was called to assist on this response.

Two week ago we were called to assist on a possible residence fire in Union Township; the call for assistant came after waiting ten minutes for the Boone County Fire Department to respond a fire engine, which never happened.

This past week there was a fire in Union Township where you department had three (3) firefighters, Zionsville Fire Department was called and provided 7 pieces of apparatus, and 16 firefighters.

**P.O. Box 459 • Zionsville, Indiana 46077**

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**Phone: 317.873.5358 • Email:**

**• Fax: 317.733.3022**



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## **Fire Department**

Neighboring fire departments frequently help each other on large fires, or when we have multiple runs simultaneously. The uses of Mutual Aid Agreements have historically been used to assist one another during these infrequent incidents. However I see the Zionsville Fire Department and other neighboring fire departments providing the basic services, which Boone County Fire Department is contracted and/or suppose to provide.

The Zionsville Fire Department has always and will always assist when possible. However I have serious professional and personal concerns for the firefighter's safety when we respond to assist Boone County Fire Department. There have been several incidents similar to ones listed above that are well document on radio recordings at the Boone County 911 Center, of no or limited response to the most basic of 911 calls.

Recently the Zionsville Fire Department responded one such call to a report of a Chimney fire where no fire engine ever responded from Boone County Fire Department, on this incident the residents and neighbors began to question Zionsville Fire Department crews as to why it took them so long and "what happened, did you get lost?" The facts around this incident are this: Zionsville Fire Department was not called until 10 minutes passed and there was no fire apparatus response from Boone County Fire, once we were dispatched, Zionsville Fire Department responded and were on-scene within 8 minutes- (note the address was 7 miles away). From dispatch to first on-scene fire unit (ZFD) was nearly 20 minutes, Zionsville fire crews drove straight there, the Zionsville Fire Department can not continue to field these type complaints for service, when they are not our responsibility.

All fire departments struggle for funding to achieve safe operating levels, however I can not continue to send resources out side our service area to provide the basic service you are suppose to be providing. Therefore I am requesting that you and I schedule a meet AS SOON AS POSSIBLE so we may discuss this issue. I would like to know what your plans are to provide the basic services, and how the Zionsville Fire Department may be able to assist you.

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## **Fire Department**

Faithfully Serving

James C. VanGorder  
Fire Chief

CC: Executive Board Zionsville Fire Territory  
Rob Guest, Worth Township Trustee  
Jeff Kaiser, Worth Township Board  
Jackie Carr, Union Township Trustee  
Marc Applegate, Union Township Board  
Candice Ulmer, Union Township Trustee Elect

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