



Performance Audit

**DEPARTMENT of PUBLIC SAFETY  
BUREAU of ADMINISTRATION  
FIRE SUPPLY WAREHOUSE**

Report by the  
Office of City Controller

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### AUDITEE RESPONSE



MICHAEL E. LAMB

CITY CONTROLLER

First Floor City-County Building • 414 Grant Street • Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15219

October 16, 2018

The Honorable William Peduto, Mayor of Pittsburgh  
and Members of Pittsburgh City Council

Dear Mayor Peduto and Members of City Council:

The Office of the City Controller is pleased to present this performance audit of the **Department of Public Safety, Bureau of Administration, Fire Supply Warehouse** conducted pursuant to the Controller's powers under Section 404(b) of the Pittsburgh Home Rule Charter. Our procedures were conducted in accordance with applicable government auditing standards and are limited to our objectives, scope, and methodology sections of this report.

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The fire supply warehouse is located at 2945 Railroad Street in the Strip District. The warehouse serves as a distribution center for the Bureau of Fire's supplies, materials, and equipment needs for all thirty (30) fire stations, fire training academy, and the arson squad facility. The warehouse also houses firefighter's protective clothing/turnout gear laundering operations and serves as a repair shop for all firefighter equipment except for the self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA). The SCBA equipment is stored and serviced at fire station 3.

An estimated \$5 million worth of supplies, materials, and equipment are stored at the fire supply warehouse. In addition, some of the warehouse space is shared with other city public safety bureaus and other government agencies.

This performance audit examines the fire supply warehouse inventory management procedures, the supply order and delivery request process, facility condition and security, the fire gear laundry process, and effective space utilization of the warehouse.

Three (3) city employees staff the fire supply warehouse: two (2) equipment repair specialists and one (1) delivery driver. The warehouse's inventory manager position was eliminated in May of 2016 leaving the warehouse without an inventory or logistics manager for over two years. The personnel at the warehouse do not track inventory; the actual dollar amount of materials and supplies is unknown.

The Bureau of Fire's performance data is generated by FIREHOUSE software system that uses five (5) different modules for reporting data: fire incident reporting, occupancy/inspections,



training, staff scheduling, and equipment and inventory. The equipment and inventory module was purchased in February 2012. The total cost to date for the software is \$22,462 which includes yearly licensing fees. However, a trial run by warehouse staff revealed that this was a very complex system and warehouse staff did not have the knowledge or time to properly implement the inventory system. Therefore, this equipment and inventory system has never been utilized.

The fire supply warehouse has surplus items that could be used by other city departments or sold at public auction for new revenue.

The Bureau of Fire has implemented an electronic ordering software system, instead of using email, as the primary method to request supplies. Firefighters, equipment repair specialists, and the delivery driver have access to this software via iPads. While this audit was conducted, all medical, housekeeping, and office supplies can be ordered through this software system. Future plans will include all inventory items once the actual inventory is known.

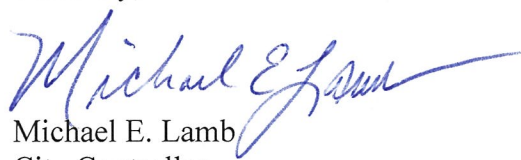
The physical condition of the warehouse building is deteriorating. City officials have proposed selling the building and relocating the supply warehouse to another location. This has limited all funding to the building for upgrades.

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) sets the industry standards on the type, care and maintenance of protective ensembles for firefighting. NFPA recommends laundering turnout gear twice a year for standard maintenance. Pittsburgh's Bureau of Fire's Standard Operating Procedure 404 sets a minimum of once a year maintenance cleaning for turnout gear. Air drying cabinets are the industry standard for drying turnout gear. The City hangs turnout gear in the building's basement to dry because the City does not have any forced air drying cabinets.

Our findings and recommendations are discussed in detail beginning on page four. We believe our recommendations will provide more accountability and improve operation efficiency.

We would like to thank the Department of Public Safety and Bureau of Fire's staff for their cooperation and assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michael E. Lamb". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Michael E. Lamb  
City Controller

## **INTRODUCTION**

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This performance audit of the Department of Public Safety, Bureau of Administration, Fire Supply Warehouse was conducted pursuant to section 404(c) of the Pittsburgh Home Rule Charter. This audit examines the fire supply warehouse inventory management procedures, the supply order and delivery request process, facility condition and security, the fire gear laundry process, and effective space utilization of the warehouse.

A previous audit of the Fire Supply Warehouse was conducted by the City Controller's office in 2010. That audit focused on the accuracy of the actual inventory to the web-based inventory management system and the cost effectiveness of that system.

## **OVERVIEW**

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The fire supply warehouse is located at 2945 Railroad Street in the Strip District neighborhood of Pittsburgh. The warehouse is part of the old General Services warehouse located next to the Department of Public Works Environmental Services Division.

The warehouse serves as a distribution center for the Bureau of Fire's supplies, materials, and equipment needs for all thirty (30) fire stations, fire training academy and the arson squad facility. All fire house supplies, materials, and equipment are received, stored, and delivered from this location including all first responder supplies, traditional firefighting equipment, housekeeping and operating items.

The warehouse also houses firefighter's protective clothing/turnout gear laundering operations and serves as a repair shop for all firefighter equipment except for the self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA). The SCBA equipment is stored and serviced at fire station 3. According to the assistant fire chief of operations, who oversees the warehouse, an estimated \$5 million worth of supplies, materials and equipment are stored at the warehouse.

Additionally, the fire supply warehouse space is shared with other City public safety bureaus and other government agencies. The City's Office of Special Events and the Bureau of Police uses part of the facility to store equipment and supplies and serves as the primary distribution center for the Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security. Temporary storage is provided for the Pennsylvania Urban Search and Rescue Task Force.

## **OBJECTIVES**

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1. To report the status of the City Controller's office 2010 audit recommendations
2. To evaluate the fire supply warehouse inventory management procedures
3. To assess the fire supply warehouse order requests and delivery process
4. To assess the space utilization and security measures at the warehouse
5. To assess the laundering process for fireman's protective/turnout gear
6. To make recommendations for improvement

## **SCOPE**

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The audit scope is the fire supply warehouse operations and procedures for 2017 and current (2018) storage practices; the 2017 and 2018 budgets and organization charts.

## **METHODOLOGY**

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The auditors met with the fire chief and the assistant director of public safety to discuss preliminary audit objectives and get an overview of employee job duties and supply warehouse functions.

The Bureau of Fire's assistant chief of operations, assistant director of public safety, and an equipment repair specialist gave the auditors a tour of the fire supply warehouse. Reviewed were the warehouse's organization, the inventory and kind of supplies kept in storage, how the warehouse space was utilized, and the facility's overall condition and security.

The supply order request process procedure was reviewed along with the restocking process of the inventory. Also toured was the laundry facility located on the basement level of the warehouse; the laundering process of fireman's protective/turnout gear was explained.

The auditors met additionally with two Bureau of Fire assistant chiefs, an equipment repair specialist, and the former warehouse logistics manager to discuss their inventory system. A demonstration was given of how the new electronic ordering software system worked, as well as the unloading of the fire warehouse's delivery truck.

Reviewed were: the 2017 and 2018 Bureau of Administration budgets and organization charts, the 2017 and 2018 Bureau of Fire budgets and organization charts, the job announcement

for a new position of store manager, the job description/duties for the equipment repair specialists and the fire equipment delivery drive, the National Fire Protection Association 1851 code for industry standards on the care and maintenance of protective gear, several industrial manufacturer's websites for washers and dryers, and the Bureau of Fire's Standard Operating Procedure 404 for turnout gear inspection and care.

The 2017 Bureau of Fire email requests were examined for: operational supplies, medical supplies, equipment repairs, and turnout gear cleaning for all 30 firehouses plus the arson squad, training academy, and administration offices located at the warehouse. A test was conducted to determine compliance with the Bureau's policy of requiring signatures' for delivery requests.

The City's OnBase software system was used to determine the total dollar amount of housekeeping/operational supplies ordered from Grainger Industrial Supply.

Interviews were conducted with ESO Solution's Director of Fire Products and a City of Pittsburgh Computer Analyst in order to obtain information about the FIREHOUSE software contract and City computer equipment.

The auditors reviewed the 2016 *City of Pittsburgh Property Control Users Guide*, an asset management and inventory policies and procedures manual for City employees. The guide explains the disposal policies of assets with a purchase cost from \$1,000 to \$5,000 and over \$5,000. It became effective January 1, 2015.

Also reviewed was the Controller's Office 2010 performance audit of the fire warehouse's recommendations. The status of these recommendations is reported.



## **FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

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### **Status of Past Audit Recommendations**

The City Controller's last performance audit in 2010 made 12 recommendations for improvement. The assistant chief of fire operations provided the auditors with an updated status of these recommendations. The 2010 recommendations are italicized and followed by its current status.

*Recommendation #1: Bureau of Fire Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for ordering supplies should be rewritten to conform to what is currently being practiced by the Warehouse personnel.*

**Status:** This project is currently in progress and is projected to be completed by the end of 2018.

*Recommendation #2: Using e-mail as the official method of requesting supplies should be adopted by Bureau of Fire Administration. An e-mail request increases efficiency and ensures that the request is received. E-mail also provides a traceable record of the request.*

**Status:** Using e-mail as the official method of requesting supplies has been implemented and the Bureau of Fire is moving towards an electronic ordering system.

*Recommendation # 3: Different procedures to hold Fire Personnel more accountable for lost, broken or recurring equipment requests are a good practice and should be continued.*

**Status:** The Bureau of Fire strives for accountability throughout the department and is currently working to improve this progress.

*Recommendation #4: Maximum usage lists are essential for operating an effective inventory. They help provide control and accountability and should be expanded to more items if necessary.*

**Status:** Maximum usage lists were implemented for basic supplies and will be expanded to more supplies with the move to an electronic ordering system.

*Recommendation #5: It should be a top priority of the Bureau of Fire to implement a modern and effective inventory management system for all items in the Supply Warehouse. This will give the Logistics Manager the ability to know exactly what is in the warehouse, as well as what equipment has been issued to each fire fighter.*

**Status:** An inventory management system will be in place once technology and staffing issues are resolved.

*Recommendation #6: Shelving in the warehouse should be coded or numbered. Locations of the items should correspond with shelving code or number in the inventory system.*

**Status:** This recommendation will be accomplished alongside the implementation of an inventory management system.

*Recommendation #7: The fire supply warehouse should be organized in a way that all items are easily recognizable and accessible. Serial numbers and /or model information should be easily viewed.*

**Status:** This will be done where feasible for not all items are packaged or stored with this information readily available.

*Recommendation #8: An inventory count of all articles in the warehouse should be conducted at least quarterly and definitely yearly. Fire Administration Management should assign the needed manpower to complete this task. Management should also consider the use of summer interns.*

**Status:** The supply warehouse needs more personnel to accomplish this recommendation.

*Recommendation #9: The Bureau of Fire and the Logistics Manager should work with City Computer Information Systems (CIS) to develop a materials management system in-house or purchase appropriate software with a portable scanner.*

**Status:** The inventory management software has been purchased. The warehouse needs additional personnel to enter and maintain records.

*Recommendation #10: The contract with American Dispatch which expired April 30, 2010 should be extended at current market rates.*

**Status:** The contract with American Dispatch was cancelled in 2015. The Department of Public Safety has expanded operations into the former American Dispatched space.

*Recommendation #11: The unused portion of the warehouse should be cleaned out. Items should be auctioned off, recycled or otherwise disposed of. This would create the space needed for the Bureau of Fire and Homeland Security supplies and allow the self-containing breathing apparatus (SCBA) technicians to move on site and be properly supervised.*

**Status:** This project has been done periodically. More funding is needed to relocate the SCBA repair shop to the warehouse.

*Recommendation #12: The current fire supply distribution procedure is effective and should be continued.*

**Status:** The fire supply distribution procedure continues to be the same.



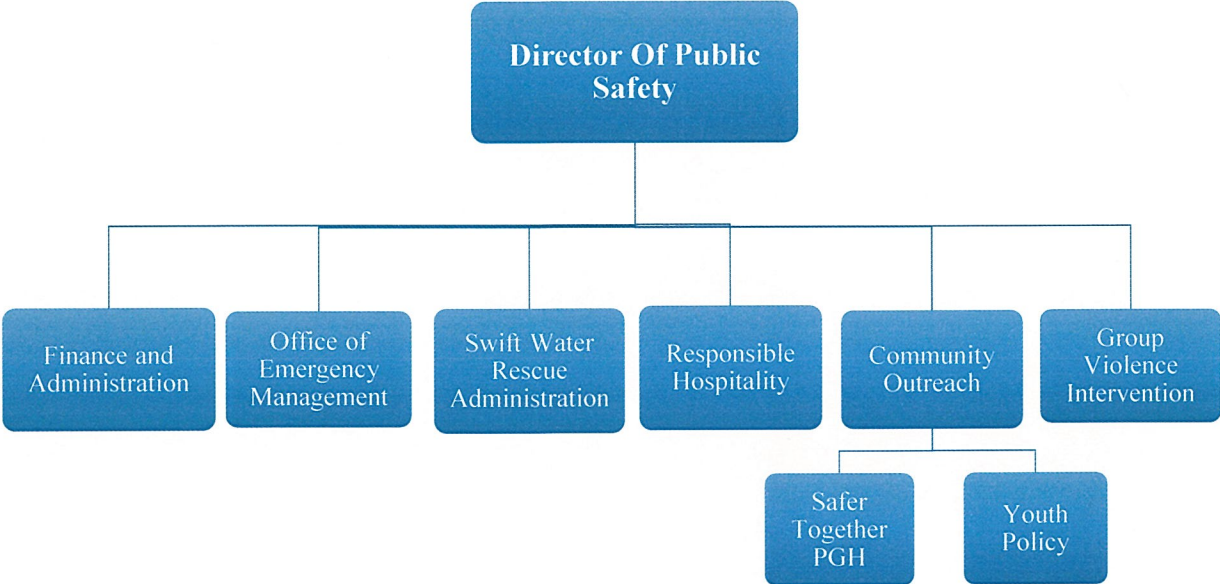
**Department Organizational Structure**

The Fire Supply Warehouse is the responsibility of City’s Department of Public Safety (DPS). DPS has five (5) Bureaus: the Bureau of Administration, Bureau of Emergency Medical Services (EMS), Bureau of Police, Bureau of Fire and the Bureau of Animal Care and Control. In the 2017 City Budget, the auditors found the fire supply warehouse staff budgeted under the Bureau of Administration. According to the Bureau of Fire’s assistant chief of operations, all supplies equipment and materials at the warehouse are paid for under the Bureau of Fire.

Figure 1 shows the Bureau of Administration’s 2017 organizational chart. Figure 2 shows the same Bureau’s organizational chart for 2018.

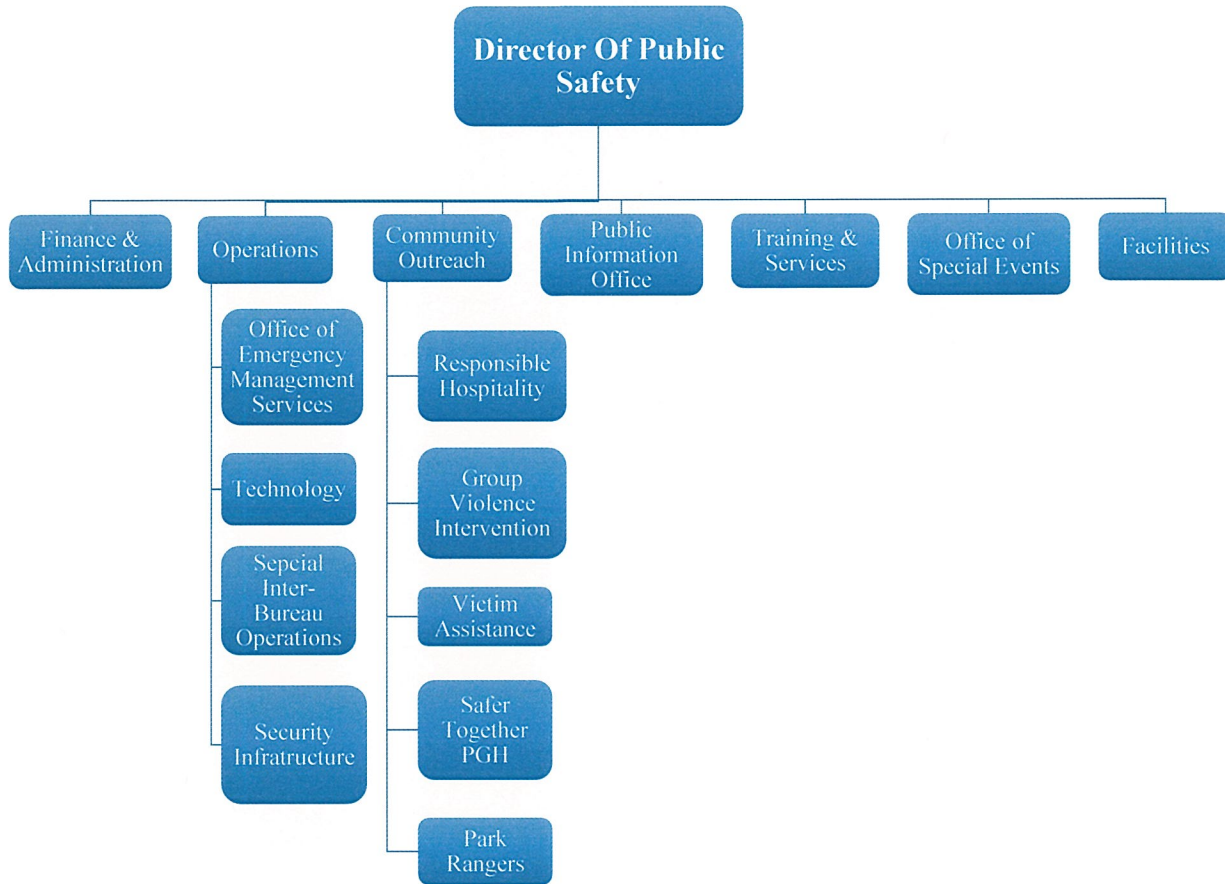
Major organizational changes were made to the Bureau of Administration in 2018. None of the changes include who is responsible for the operation of the fire supply warehouse.

**FIGURE 1: 2017 Organizational Chart\***  
**Department of Public Safety**  
**Bureau of Administration**



\*Source: 2017 Pittsburgh City Budget

**FIGURE 2: 2018 Organizational Chart\***  
**Department of Public Safety**  
**Bureau of Administration**

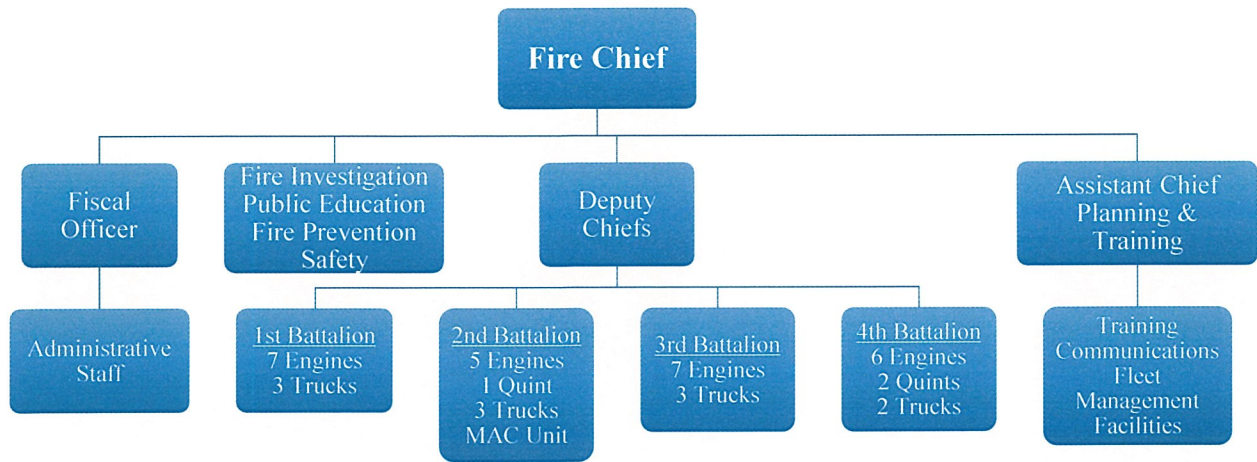


\*Source: 2018 Pittsburgh City Budget

Figure 3 shows the Bureau of Fire’s 2017 organizational chart. Figure 4 shows the Bureau of Fire’s organizational chart for 2018.

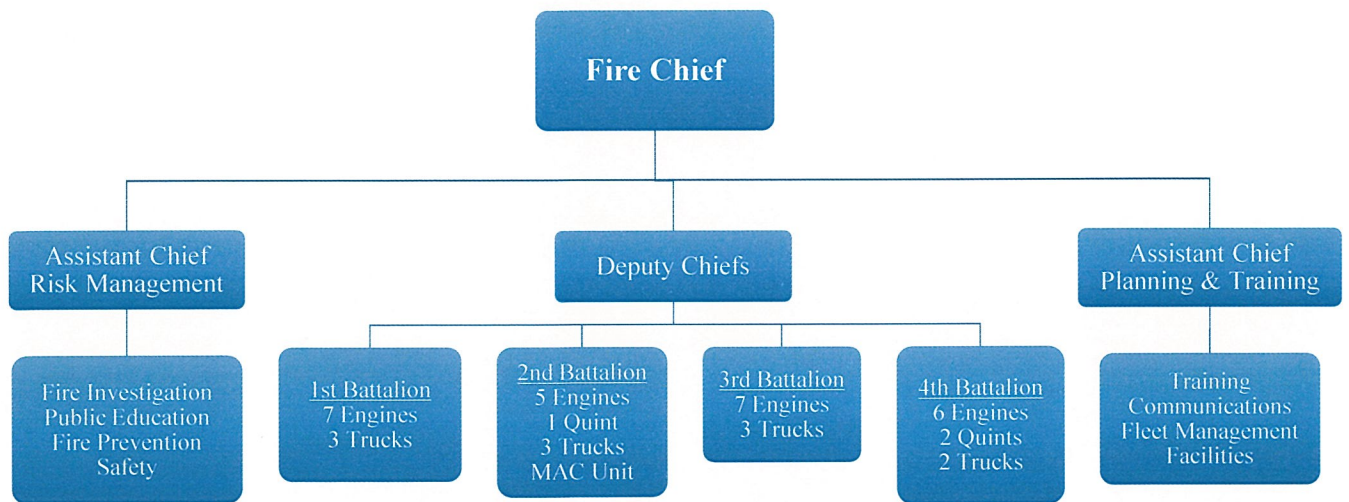
The Bureau of Fire organizational chart remained very similar between 2017 and 2018; the bulk of the chart lists the number of uniformed officers and equipment in each battalion.

**FIGURE 3: 2017 Organizational Chart\***  
**Department of Public Safety**  
**Bureau of Fire**



\*Source: 2017 Pittsburgh City Budget

**FIGURE 4: 2018 Organizational Chart\***  
**Department of Public Safety**  
**Bureau of Fire**



\*Source: 2018 Pittsburgh City Budget

**Finding:** The fire supply warehouse facility is not listed under either the Department of Public Safety’s Bureau of Administration or the Bureau of Fire’s organization charts.

## **RECOMMENDATION NO. 1:**

City administration should update the Department of Public Safety's organizational chart to depict the fire supply warehouse. The warehouse could be listed under either the Bureau of Administration or the Bureau of Fire. It is important to account for its existence somewhere on one of the organization charts.

### **Fire Supply Warehouse Staff**

Currently three (3) city employees staff the fire supply warehouse: two (2) equipment repair specialists (ERS) and one (1) delivery driver. The three staff members fall under the City's Department of Public Safety Bureau of Administration. The warehouse employees report directly to the assistant chief of operations, Bureau of Fire.

The two (2) equipment repair specialists receive all supply requests, perform firefighter equipment repairs, launder all firemen's turnout gear, and help fill orders.

The delivery driver's job is to fill all supply request orders and deliver the items to the proper location. A box truck was used for deliveries in 2017, but was over 10 years old and required costly repairs. The truck broke down in March 2018. A pick-up truck was temporarily leased through First Vehicle for deliveries. Staff at the warehouse told the auditors that a new 2018 Ford transit van is on order and is scheduled to arrive in July 2018.

### **Vacant Warehouse Manager Position**

During the previous performance audit in 2010, the fire supply warehouse had a logistics manager, but that position was eliminated in May 2016. The logistics manager was responsible for overseeing the warehouse inventory and staff including two SCBA technicians stationed at Engine Company 3. These technicians keep and maintain the firefighters breathing equipment needed for fighting fires. The two SCBA technicians are still stationed at Engine Company 3, but now report to the Bureau of Fire's assistant chief.

**Finding:** The fire supply warehouse has not had an inventory or logistics manager for over 2 years.

A new fire supply warehouse manager position was posted on the City's website on 3/26/18 until 4/9/18. The duties are similar to the logistics manger position but the new title is stores manager. As of mid-May 2018, this position has not been filled.

## **RECOMMENDATION NO. 2:**

The administration should make the hiring of a fire supply warehouse stores manager a top priority. A manager needs to be onsite to oversee staff, track and order supplies, materials, equipment, and perform other daily operations.

### **Fire Supply Warehouse Building**

The auditors toured the fire supply warehouse and observed the organization of supplies and equipment, the security measures in place, and the overall conditions of the facility.

The warehouse's floor plan consists of two large rooms on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor where the majority of the supplies and equipment are stored. A room off to the side of the main warehouse is used to store unused equipment, parts and supplies. The total area of the building is 58,500 square feet. An upstairs office area exists where all radios and more valuable supplies are stored. Higher priced items are locked up in a closet along with all doses of Narcan, the drug administered to treat overdoses. Laundering facilities are in the basement of the warehouse.

#### Facility Layout and Usage

One side of the warehouse contains the majority of the Bureau of Fire's inventory and is where all equipment repairs are performed. The Emergency Management Agency (EMA) have two (2) designated aisles for storage within the warehouse. The auditors did not include the organization of their supplies in this audit.

The Bureau of Fire supplies and equipment are stored on 3 tier shelving in an aisle style format similar to a big box retail store. All supplies and equipment that have related usages are grouped together in sections within the aisle. For example, all medical supplies are grouped together, all fire hydrant attachments, fire hoses, etc. This makes finding items easier for warehouse staff to fill requested orders and deliver in a timely fashion.

**Finding:** The supplies and equipment on warehouse shelving are not labeled with name identifiers.

## **RECOMMENDATION NO. 3:**

The administration should direct warehouse personnel to label all supplies and equipment in each aisle and shelf. A supply category heading should be displayed in the front of the aisle as guidance to where all related items would be located. This would help with locating stock as well as restocking items.

The biggest advantage to labeling all stored items is that anyone can find what they need at any time. For example when regular staff goes on vacation or retires, another person could easily step into the position of keeping the fire stations and firefighters in needed supplies.

#### Other Warehouse Uses

Part of the warehouse was previously leased to American Dispatch, a private company that housed and delivered frozen and refrigerated items. Their lease was cancelled in 2015 and the City's Office of Special Events now uses part of the space to store their supplies and equipment. In another section, the Bureau of Fire stores trailers and the Bureau of Police use part of the space as police SWAT training.

**Finding:** The City administration utilizes the space vacated by American Dispatch with other department and bureau needs.

#### Warehouse Operations

Fire supply warehouse personnel distributes requested supplies, materials, and equipment throughout the year for all thirty (30) fire stations as well as the fire training academy, arson squad, and administrative offices, including housekeeping supplies.

An inventory list of all equipment, materials, and supplies stored at the warehouse was requested for the year 2017. The auditors were told by administrative and warehouse personnel that an inventory list is unavailable; they do not keep track of inventory. The total quantity and dollar value of equipment, materials, and supplies currently held at the warehouse are unknown. This is a major deficiency since the assistant chief of operations in the Bureau of Fire estimates that \$5 million worth of supplies, materials, and equipment are stored at the warehouse.

**Finding:** The personnel at the fire supply warehouse do not track inventory; the actual dollar amount of materials and supplies located in the building is unknown.

#### Inventory Management Software System

The Bureau of Fire's performance data is generated by FIREHOUSE software, a proprietary Windows-based application used for records management purposes. FIREHOUSE has 5 software modules used by the Bureau of Fire: fire incident reporting, occupancy/inspections, training, staff scheduling, and equipment and inventory.



According to the assistant chief, The Bureau of Fire purchased the equipment and inventory module of the FIREHOUSE software sometime in 2012. It was to be used at the supply warehouse for inventory management.

The auditors were told that the prior logistics manager and assistant chief conducted a trial run on the FIREHOUSE inventory module in 2012. At that time, the trial run revealed that the inventory module was a very complex system and the logistics manager did not have the knowledge or time to properly implement. **Therefore, this inventory system has never been utilized.** However, used or unused, the City pays to have the FIREHOUSE inventory module available.

All the City's FIREHOUSE software purchases are currently made thru ESO Solutions. The auditors contacted ESO Solutions, to obtain the initial cost of the FIREHOUSE Inventory Module. According to the ESO Solution's Director of Fire Products, the City bought the FIREHOUSE Inventory Module in February 2012; the total year to date cost of the inventory module software is \$22,462.00. This cost includes the initial software purchase cost plus yearly licensing fees paid by the City. In 2018, the City pays a \$2,680.00 licensing fee for the inventory module alone.

**Finding:** The Bureau of Fire paid for an inventory module in 2012 and continues to pay for the yearly user licensing fees without utilizing the system. Over the last seven (7) years, the City has spent \$22,462.00 on the inventory module's initial software costs and licensing fees.

**Finding:** The firehouse supply warehouse does not have the proper personnel to implement and manage the inventory management software system previously purchased.

#### **RECOMMENDATION NO. 4:**

The City administration should make it a top priority of the Bureau of Fire to implement the FIREHOUSE inventory module software system.

Major issues could arise from not using an inventory tracking system. Without tracking, inventory can be over/under ordered. Over ordering stock takes up additional space and is money wasted on equipment that could never be used. Under ordering equipment can result in supply shortages, which can be a problem if an item is needed for an emergency fire. Also, in the event of any catastrophic damage to the facility, the City would not know the total value of the contents in the building for replacement purposes. Tracking can also prevent or catch the theft of supplies.

In the City Controller's 2010 performance audit, it was reported that warehouse personnel were using a web-based computer inventory program to track inventory. The software system only listed high-dollar items such as chainsaws, ladders, thermal imaging cameras, etc.

All supply and equipment quantities had to be manually updated by warehouse personnel. Current warehouse staff were not employed during this time and did not know why this inventory system stopped being used.

**Finding:** City administration stopped using the manual inventory system before a new system was up and running.

### **Additional Storage and Surplus Items**

Additional storage space exists next to the main warehouse that is accessed from a separate entrance located outside and behind the front of the building. This entrance cannot be reached from any other part of the building however, the back door of the main warehouse opens onto a dock that is shared by the additional storage space.

This storage area is where the Department of Public Safety stores unused supplies and equipment such as: old firefighter uniforms, wooden pallets, scrap metal, boxes of decommissioned radios, boat engines, old office chairs and cabinets, other outdated equipment, and Urban Search and Rescue Pennsylvania Task Force supplies. The warehouse and City personnel reuse some of the supplies and equipment. For example, the fire fighter training academy uses the old pallets to stage fires and old uniforms are worn by firefighter trainees.

According to an ERS, some of the items in the additional storage space belong to the 911 emergency call center. There is a 911 training facility located in the building next to the warehouse that is used for training and, in the event that the main 911 call center becomes unfunctional, it can be used as a substitute.

The auditors were also told that at one time an individual from the City came to sort items from this extra storage space and sell them on Govdeals.com; the attempt was unsuccessful.

### **Useable Surplus**

There are also other items in the main warehouse that could be usable. The auditors observed over 20 usable LED computer monitors on the floor. Photo 1 is a picture of these monitors.

A City computer analyst looked at Photo 1 and speculated that it showed older computer monitors initially worth about \$125 to \$150 each. Some of these monitors are still used throughout the City. This is approximately \$2,500 to \$3,000 worth of computer monitors not being utilized.

**Photo 1 - Surplus Computer Monitors**



**Finding:** Usable materials of unknown quantity and cost are in the fire supply warehouse.

Equipment, supplies and items laying around and not being utilized are called surplus items. Some of the surplus could be valuable; all of the items take up physical space. Whatever the condition, any property purchased by the City is considered a City asset and there is a policy for the use, re-use and disposal of surplus.

## Use of City Assets

The City owns many assets: buildings, large and small equipment, furniture, appliances, electrical fixtures, etc. The City's Fixed Asset Manager, in 2015, wrote the *Property Control Users Guide*, an asset management and inventory policies and procedures guide for City employees. This Guide outlines the City's policy on the re-use, recycle, hazardous waste disposal, regular disposal, sale of and theft or loss of City property.

Items are either "property control" or "capital asset". Property control items are inventory with a useful life of two (2) years or more that originally cost between \$1,000 and under \$5,000. Capital asset items have a useful life of two (2) years or more that originally cost over \$5,000.

**Finding:** The fire supply warehouse has surplus property that could be used by other City departments or sold at public auction for revenue.

### **RECOMMENDATION NO. 5:**

When the new position of stores manager is hired, the City administration should implement an internal policy and procedure to allow for the redistribution or sale of surplus property. The store's manager should work with OMB to sell surplus items on Govdeals.com. An internal webpage should be created that lists all surplus items so other departments can look to see what is available for use.

### **Supply Warehouse Written Policies and Procedures**

The auditors requested a copy of a written policies and procedures manual for requesting, ordering and delivering supplies, materials and equipment to the fire stations. The assistant chief of operations in the Bureau of Fire stated that there are still no written policies or procedures, but this was a project they planned to start doing sometime in 2018.

**Finding:** The Bureau of Fire has no written policies or procedures in place for requesting, ordering and delivering supplies, materials and equipment for fire warehouse personnel. This has not been done despite having it recommended in the 2010 performance audit.

## **RECOMMENDATION NO. 6:**

The Bureau of Fire administration should have written policies and procedures for requesting, ordering and delivering supplies, materials, and equipment. These written policies and procedures should include: delivery schedules, ordering procedures, personnel authorized to request and receive supplies, setting maximum limits on orders, high dollar value item requests/authorization, and equipment repair requests.

It should be noted that the Bureau of Fire has written policies and procedures for the laundering and repair of turnout gear.

### **Supplies Order Request Process**

Currently, all firehouse supplies, materials, and equipment requests are sent to the supply warehouse's equipment repair specialist via email. All email requests are sent by the highest-ranking officer on duty at the firehouse, usually the fire captain or lieutenant. The delivery driver will pull materials and supplies per the request, load all orders onto the truck, and make the delivery to the appropriate firehouse.

Once supplies and materials are delivered to the firehouse, it is a Bureau of Fire policy that the firefighter receiving the shipment sign off on the firehouse's email request. This policy was in effect all of 2017 but because of non-compliance an email was distributed re-establishing its importance.

Any employee at the firehouse can sign for a delivery. All signed email requests are then filed back at the warehouse. The delivery driver also keeps a daily written log with a brief description of what was delivered to each firehouse and other Bureau of Fire offices.

**Finding:** It is the delivery driver's responsibility to make sure someone signs the email. A signature means that the items were received.

Often the firefighter that submits the supply request will not be on duty the day of the actual delivery. For this reason, the delivery driver notates on all email requests which shift ordered the supplies.

The Bureau of Fire currently has four different work shifts labeled A, B, C and D. There is a printed schedule where each letter stands for a day of the week that continues to rotate in that order throughout the year. All firefighters on that shift work 24 hours and then they have 72 hours off (3 days), returning on the fourth day which is their regular shift.

This process of marking down the shift on the email ensures that items are delivered as requested. For example, if a firefighter on shift A (Monday) requests supplies that get delivered on shift C (Wednesday), the firefighter on shift C signing the delivery paperwork will know shift A placed the request.

### Delivery Paperwork Signature Test

The ERS organizes all email requests by date and firehouse number. There are 30 fire stations under the care of the fire supply warehouse. However, their numbers are not sequential. In Table 1 there are 30 stations with numbers ranging from 3 to 38.

A test was conducted by the auditors to see how often firefighters at fire stations were adhering to the Bureau of Fire policy of signing off on email requests confirming delivery. The auditors examined all 2017 delivery email request orders filed at the supply warehouse. There were 2,187. Eliminated from the test were emails from the fire training academy, arson squad, and administration offices and any solo requests to pick up turnout gear. The auditors tallied the number of supply request emails for each firehouse as well as the number of signatures found on the paperwork.

Table 1 shows the total number of email supply requests submitted by each firehouse and how many of these were signed by a firefighter upon delivery in 2017. The table is arranged by the percent of emails that were signed; the smallest percentage of emails signed is listed first with the largest percent of emails signed located at the bottom of the table.



**TABLE 1  
2017 EMAIL  
REQUEST ORDER  
DELIVERY SIGNATURES**

<b>Engine Company #</b>	<b># of Delivery Emails</b>	<b># of Signatures</b>	<b>% of Emails Signed</b>
10	43	11	26%
23	119	38	32%
37	78	27	35%
22	87	33	38%
31	67	27	40%
4	105	43	41%
34	54	23	43%
19	20	9	45%
38	72	33	46%
27	101	47	47%
13	113	54	48%
8	83	40	48%
6	56	27	48%
26	142	69	49%
7	68	34	50%
16	26	13	50%
30	83	42	51%
14	55	28	51%
29	39	20	51%
12	48	25	52%
33	57	30	53%
28	74	39	53%
35	73	39	53%
32	96	52	54%
17	96	53	55%
24	129	72	56%
15	57	32	56%
20	60	34	57%
3	44	27	61%
18	42	32	76%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,187</b>	<b>1,053</b>	<b>-</b>

Source: 2017 Fire Supply Warehouse Files

**Finding:** In 2017, a total of 2,187 requests were sent to the supply warehouse, 1,053 or 48% of them were signed by firefighters upon receiving shipment.

**RECOMMENDATION NO. 7:**

The administration at the Bureau of Fire should ensure that the signature requirement policy is enforced at each of the 30 firehouses. If for some reason no one is at the firehouse when the delivery is made, then the driver should mark on the email “delivered, no one to sign”.

**Type of Requested Supplies**

Medical Supplies

As per their union contract all fire fighters are first responders to any 911 call; for this job they need medical supplies. All medical supply requests take priority over any other type of requests. The medical supply quantities are checked and ordered daily because the Bureau of Fire handles between 23,000-25,000 medical calls annually. Examples of high demand medical supplies include Narcan, AED defibrillator pads, and oxygen cylinders.

Delivering Housekeeping Supplies

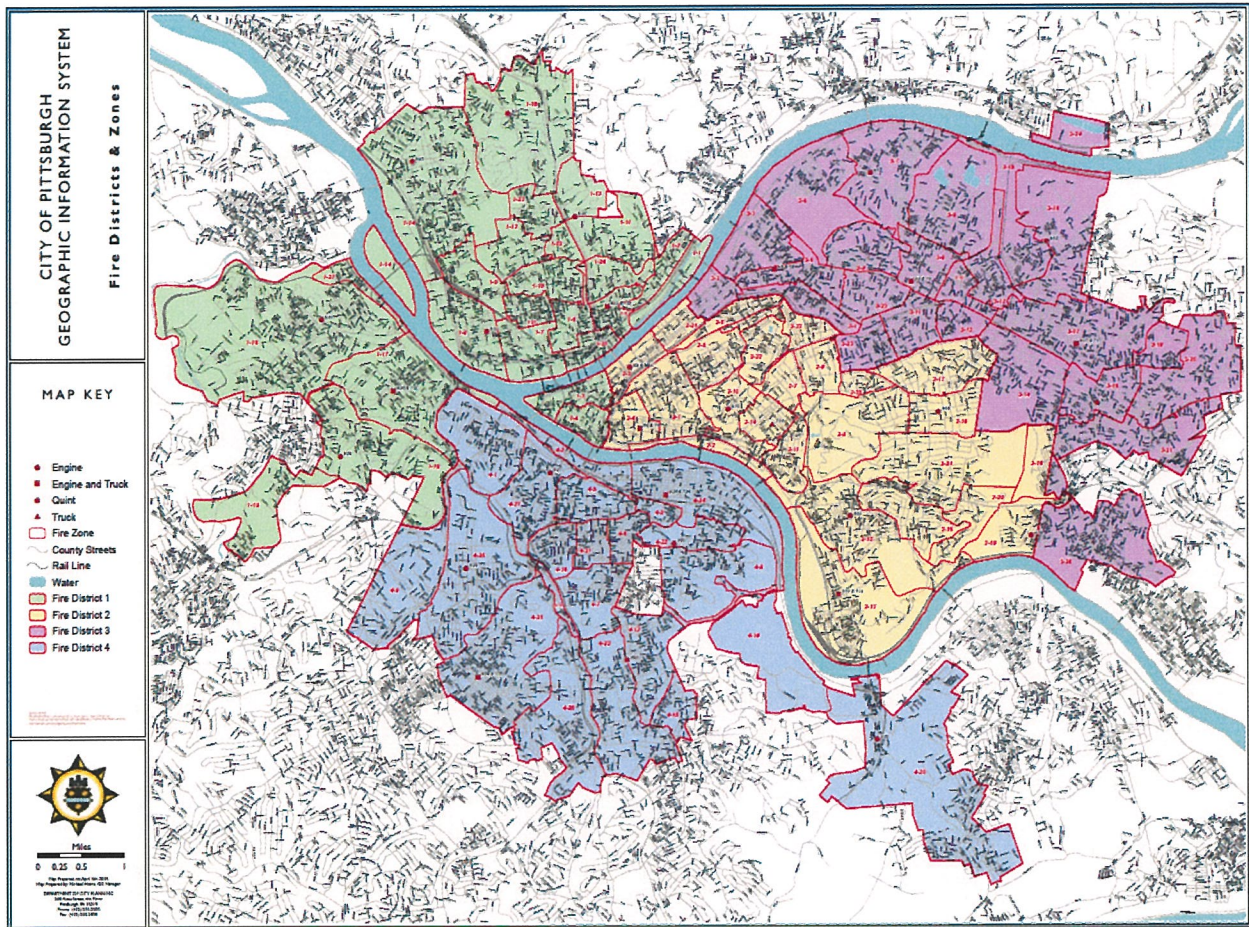
The Bureau of Fire has divided the City into 4 Districts: 1, 2, 3 and 4; each district has a different number of firehouses. Each firehouse receives housekeeping supplies once a month. These items include: toilet paper, paper towels, laundry detergent, hand soap, cleaning product, etc. The maximum quantities of housekeeping supplies delivered to each individual firehouse is based on the size of the staff. Throughout the City there has to be a minimum of 163 firefighters on duty for every 24 hour shift.

Housekeeping supplies are delivered within the week of the request date. Firehouses located in District 1 and District 4 submit housekeeping supply requests to the warehouse on the 1st day of every month. District 1 consist of all firehouses in the north side and west end neighborhoods; District 4 is located in the southern part of the city. District 2 and District 3 submit housekeeping supply requests to the warehouse on the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month. District 2 are firehouses located in the central part of the city and District 3 are firehouses located in the eastern neighborhoods.

This delivery format allows the driver enough time to pull orders, group the firehouse deliveries by districts, and deliver the supplies within 2 weeks for efficiency. The following map shows the Bureau of Fire’s 4 Districts. Each color on the map is a different district.



**FIGURE 5  
FIRE DISTRICTS ZONES**



Source: City Planning

### Emergency Equipment

The fire supply warehouse is open from 8:00am to 4:30pm Monday through Friday. Sometimes fire equipment and medical supplies are needed when the warehouse is closed. Frequently used fire equipment items and medical supplies are stored in a 24/7 locked cage located by the front entrance inside the warehouse. These items represent equipment and medical supplies needed on fire engines and fire trucks. The battalion chiefs have access to this cage via their lock box key. All other types of operating supplies, materials and equipment needed by firefighters are requested on an as-needed basis.

## **Supply Replenishment**

The primary vendor for housekeeping supplies at the fire supply warehouse is Grainger Industrial Supply Inc. They can also provide a variety of other materials and supplies.

Inventory management for all housekeeping and equipment supplied by Grainger are handled onsite. The assistant chief told the auditors that a sales representative from Grainger comes to the warehouse once a week, checks inventory, and refills stock to pre-set levels. Essentially the sales representative from Grainger comes into the building, walks up and down the aisles, determines what is needed and then the order is sent downtown for approval. No one verifies if this is truly what is needed.

**Finding:** The supply warehouse staff currently does not check on the housekeeping supply quantities ordered by Grainger.

The auditors were told by the assistant chief that they currently “do not have the personnel to audit Grainger”. This could lead to problems of over ordering quantities to increase sales by Grainger. If the warehouse implements an inventory management software system, they would no longer need the Grainger salesperson to walk through and make these orders.

The auditors searched the City’s OnBase system for all 2017 Bureau of Fire Grainger invoices. The total housekeeping and equipment supplies ordered from Grainger by the Bureau of Fire in 2017 was \$136,631.54.

### **RECOMMENDATION NO. 8:**

Until an inventory system is used by the fire supply warehouse, the administration should have the warehouse personnel occasionally ‘spot check’ the Grainger sales representative order. This will ensure some type of accountability.

All other supplies and equipment at the warehouse are ordered by the assistant chief of operations or the fiscal officer who are located at 200 Ross Street in downtown Pittsburgh. The equipment repair specialists will walk up and down the aisles daily and visually assess item levels. If the quantities look low they will notify the assistant chief or fiscal officer that an order needs placed. As stated in recommendation No. 2, a manager is needed onsite to verify and physically check inventory levels, reorder supplies and verify delivery packing slips. This would ensure the correct supplies and quantities are ordered.

## New Electronic Ordering Software System

The Bureau of Fire is currently in the process of moving away altogether from using email as the primary method to request supplies. The Department of Innovation and Performance and the Bureau of Fire have worked to identify and implement a new electronic ordering software system (EOSS) for supply requests as of spring 2017. Firefighters, equipment repair specialists, and the delivery driver will have access to this software via iPads.

Using iPads, firefighters will be able to request all supplies and equipment available at the warehouse through EOSS's unique user interface dashboard. Equipment repair specialists will be able to login to the EOSS to receive the supply requests. The EOSS dashboard also has a feature that requires signatures throughout the entire delivery process by using their 4 digit badge code.

As of April 2017 only medical, housekeeping, and office supplies can be ordered through this new electronic ordering software system. Future plans will include all inventory items once the actual inventory is known.

**Finding:** This new electronic ordering system only allows for the ordering of medical, housekeeping, and office supplies.

**Finding:** The new electronic ordering software system is a faster and more efficient ordering process.

### **RECOMMENDATION NO. 9:**

The Department of Innovation and Performance and the Bureau of Fire should continue working together and expand the catalog of supplies available for request in the electronic ordering software system (EOSS). This should include the laundry/repair/replacement of turnout gear and fire equipment repair requests.

### **Physical Warehouse Condition**

The physical condition of the building is deteriorating. The auditors were told that no building repairs have been done to the facility during the current administration. City officials have proposed selling the building and relocating the supply warehouse to another location. This has limited all funding to the location for building upgrades.



Warehouse staff told the auditors there are issues with many mechanical devices. For example, the thermostat cannot be adjusted to control temperatures, toilets are not always running properly, and overhead lighting in the warehouse shuts off at times.

In 2016, the City contracted Massaro CM Services to conduct an overall evaluation of various City-owned facilities. The report entitled *City's Facilities Optimization Plan-Conditional Assessment Report* was issued in early 2017. According to this report, the fire supply warehouse was given an overall building condition score of "fair-poor" with estimated repair costs totaling \$2,495,536. Photos 2, 3, and 4 were taken by the auditors showing the physical condition of the building outside and inside.



In photo 2, one can see there are lights hanging from wires, rusted concrete under the bay windows, peeling and mismatched paint, and cracks in the asphalt.

In photo 3, a close up of a bay door, one can see plywood being used to repair doors and flooring. A broken glass pane has also been removed and repaired with a piece of wood.



**Photo 3 - Interior Bay Door**



Photo 4 shows the wide expanse of the warehouse and the number of bay doors. Some doors are not being used, some doors don't have the paneling repaired, windows are broken, one door isn't shut all the way and all could use a coat of paint.

**Photo 4 - Interior Bay Doors**



**Finding:** The fire supply warehouse is in poor condition and needs structural and mechanical repairs.

## **RECOMMENDATION NO. 10:**

The Department of Public Safety administration, Office of Management and Budget and the Mayor's office need to determine if the fire warehouse facility is going to remain at the current location or will relocate in the near future. An evaluation on whether it is economically feasible to invest money on improvements of the facility or that relocation is more practical must be decided.

If the decision to relocate is determined, this would be an opportune time to implement an accurate inventory count of all supplies, materials and equipment in storage at the warehouse using an inventory management system. Some of the following recommendations will depend on the outcome of the administrative decision to stay or relocate.

### **Warehouse Security**

All warehouse staff and the assistant chiefs in the Bureau of Fire have keys to access the building at any time. All battalion chiefs have access to the 24/7 caged storage area to replenish emergency fire equipment if needed when the warehouse is closed. If the warehouse is going to remain in the strip district, then some improvements need to be made to the facility's poor structural and mechanical conditions along with security measures.

**Finding:** Security at the fire supply warehouse is limited to keyed locks.

#### Security Cameras

There are two outside security cameras, one located on each side of the building by the entrance doors and loading dock areas to detect crime. These cameras are owned by Allegheny County Emergency Services and are fed into the 911 center located in the Point Breeze north section of Pittsburgh (The 911 center will be moving to Moon Township in the next couple of years). There are currently no security cameras installed inside the building to monitor theft at the facility.

**Finding:** The supply warehouse has no security cameras on the inside of the building to detect any type of crime.

## **RECOMMENDATION NO. 11:**

The Bureau of Fire should work with the mayor's office and public safety's technology manager to install security cameras inside the supply warehouse to monitor the facility. An estimated \$5 million worth of supplies and equipment are stored at the supply warehouse. This is a huge investment that needs to be protected.

### **Turnout Gear Cleaning/Laundrying**

Personal protective equipment (PPE) protect firefighters from serious injury or illness resulting from contact with chemical, radiological, physical, electrical, mechanical, or other hazards. PPE consists of a variety of devices such as respirators, turnout gear, blankets, and gas masks. PPE and "turnout gear" are standard industry terms. Turnout gear includes an outer jacket, inner jacket, outer pants, inner pants, boots, hood, suspenders, helmet, and gloves. The only items laundered, are the outer and inner jacket, outer and inner pants, and gloves. The City of Pittsburgh provides each firefighter with two sets of turnout gear throughout employment.

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) sets the industry standards on the type, care, and maintenance of protective ensembles for firefighting. The NFPA 1851 code outlines the laundering and care guidelines for turnout gear. The NFPA recommends laundering turnout gear twice a year for standard maintenance.

Pittsburgh's Bureau of Fire's Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) 404 outlines the department's internal procedure for PPE inspection and care. This includes how and where to request turnout gear pickup and/or repair. SOP 404 also sets a minimum of once a year maintenance cleaning for all uniforms.

**Finding:** City's SOP 404 standards for the laundering and care of turnout gear is less than the National Fire Protection Association.

In the 2017 budget, the City budgeted 656 firefighter positions. With each firefighter having 2 sets of turnout gear, there is a total of 1,312 sets that need washed at least once a year.

One (1) of the equipment repair specialists keeps an excel spreadsheet of every firefighter and the equipment that is assigned to them. Every piece of turnout gear has a firefighter identification number sewn into it. On the spreadsheet, the repair specialist has the type of gear with corresponding number listed with the firefighter's name and their fire station assignment. The purpose of this spreadsheet is to ensure that the cleaned uniform is returned to the firefighter at their assigned location.

**Finding:** The repair specialist do not keep track as to when and how often a firefighter's uniform is cleaned.

The Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) 404 states that “it is the responsibility of the user to inspect his or her gear . . .” and report it to the proper chain of command to get it cleaned. Verifying how often firefighters have their gear cleaned was beyond the scope of the audit.

#### Laundry Pick Up

Requests for laundry pickup are emailed to warehouse staff, formerly the logistics manager, with the expectation of a four day turn around goal. Firefighters line shifts are 24 hours on and 72 hours off. This time goal ensures that the gear will be returned to the firefighter before their next shift. The delivery driver picks up turnout gear when deliveries are made.

Upon receipt, the ERS inspect the turnout gear “to ensure that it is free from any abnormality that might cause question to the protective quality of the gear” (wording from SOP 404). If the gear is in need of repair, a repair request form is submitted to Premier Safety, the vendor that is under contract to fix turnout gear.

#### Attempted Laundering to Delivery Compliance Test

The auditors attempted to measure the timeliness of the laundering to delivery process. The goal is to return turnout gear within 4 days. Driver delivery records were reviewed and compared with turnout gear pickup email requests. The test was unable to be completed because of missing and inaccurate data.

**Finding:** No records are kept to verify that turnout gear is cleaned and returned to a firefighter within the 4 day window.

#### Laundering Turnout Gear

The laundering facility has two commercial washers (1 large, 1 small) with a combined capacity to clean 7 sets of turnout gear per 80 minute cycle. According to the ERS the machines run constantly from 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM. The washers, though currently functional, are over 10 years old.

At capacity, the auditors estimated that 5 loads a day could be run washing 35 turnout gear sets. The auditors were told that in order to get the turnout gear as clean as possible, washer capacities are reduced, sometimes to only 5 sets in total.

The auditors were told that some firefighters don’t like to get the turnout gear washed because they see the dirt and soot on it as a “badge of courage”.

**Finding:** The laundering and care of firefighter turnout gear is an essential component to keeping the firefighters safe while doing their job.

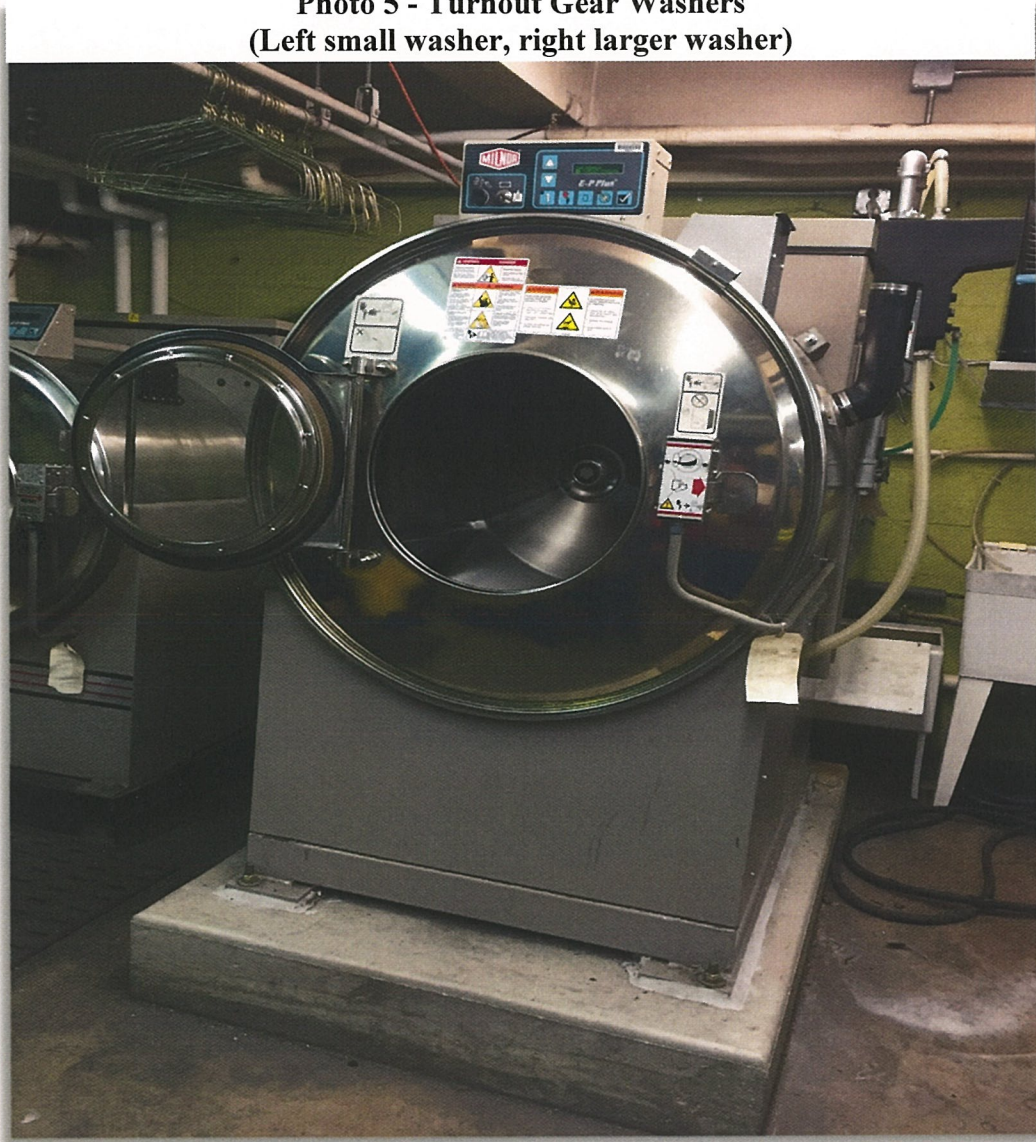


**RECOMMENDATION NO. 12:**

The Bureau of Fire administration should develop some method of tracking when and how often each firefighter gets their gear cleaned and inspected. Clean gear is an important safety issue. Keeping track of how often gear is cleaned may be as easy as adding a column to the already existing spreadsheet being kept by the ERS.

Photo 5 is a picture of the 2 commercial washers that are used to clean the turnout gear. The larger washer is on a concrete slab. Both washers look well cared for.

**Photo 5 - Turnout Gear Washers  
(Left small washer, right larger washer)**





## Drying Turnout Gear

Turnout gear, after being washed, is hung in the building's basement to dry. It takes approximately 24 hours for gear to be fully dry. Gear that is not completely dry can cause steam burns (when the firefighters wear it fighting a fire) or health concerns and weaken gear if it has mildew and/or bacteria in/on it. The auditors found the fire supply warehouse basement damp. To combat these conditions, there are multiple dehumidifiers running while air-drying the turnout gear.

Photo 6 is a picture of turnout gear being air dried in the basement of the fire supply warehouse.

**Photo 6 - Current Turnout Gear Drying Method**



NFPA 1851 code recommends turnout gear be dried with forced ambient air, not by traditional tumble dryers. Tumble dryers can cause damage to the gear which will reduce the gears effectiveness to protect firefighters in the field.

Air drying cabinets are the industry standard for drying turnout gear. These cabinets are designed specifically to quickly and thoroughly dry turnout gear using heated, forced air. A smaller drying cabinet can hold 3-5 full sets of turnout gear taking approximately 1 to 2 hours to dry.

**Finding:** The City does not have any forced air drying cabinets.

Conversations with ERS personnel stated that after a fire, the greatest number of turnout gear needs to be cleaned. It takes longer to dry the gear because more gear is hanging in the basement, so less air is being circulated.

**Finding:** Hanging turnout gear to dry is effective as long as there is room for air to circulate around each set of gear.

**Finding:** Drying cabinets will decrease drying time by 20-22 hours, thus allowing the fire supply warehouse staff to better meet the four day turnaround goal.

The auditors researched that the average cost for a drying cabinet is \$13,000. According to many laundering specialty manufacturers' websites, grants from FEMA are available to cover the full purchase cost of these specialty washing machines and drying cabinets.

### **RECOMMENDATION NO. 13:**

The Bureau of Fire administration should plan for the future replacement of the washers (potentially higher capacity) and consider the purchase of specialized drying cabinets for drying turnout gear. The grant office should explore securing federal grant money to offset the specialized laundry equipment purchase costs.

If the Bureau of Fire administration purchases drying cabinets more time would be available to track how often the turnout gear is laundered.

According to warehouse personnel, the entire inspection, cleaning, and drying process is time consuming leaving less time available for other job duties. No data was available to test this assertion.

Photo 7 is an example of a turnout gear drying cabinet.



**Photo 7 – Example of Turnout Gear Drying Cabinet**



### Other Cities Laundry Facilities

While researching information for this audit, the auditors discovered how the cities of St. Paul, Minnesota and Newark, New Jersey, complete the laundering of turnout gear. Both of these cities have the fire stations equipped with a washer and drying cabinet.

St. Paul, Minnesota and Newark, New Jersey are U.S. cities with comparable population, similar geographical size and number of uniformed firefighters.

There are several advantages to this setup. This makes each fire station and each fire fighter responsible for the care and maintenance of their equipment. It allows supervision as to how often gear is cleaned and would make yearly cleaning easier to track.

Discussions with Public Safety and Bureau of Fire administrators stated that such a setup would be impractical for City of Pittsburgh fire stations. The laundry facility at the fire supply warehouse is manned by individuals trained in the care and cleaning of turnout gear. It would be cost prohibitive to hire such a trained individual at each of the fire stations. Additionally laundering equipment in fire stations could be misused with clothing and incidentals other than turnout gear.

### **Public Safety Payroll Records**

The fire supply warehouse is also the long-term storage area for all of Public Safety's paper payroll files. The records are stored in clearly marked cardboard file boxes. However, the pallets are over stacked and stored on the highest shelves in the warehouse. Payroll records are pulled as needed in regards to pension, legal claims, or litigation demands. The assistant chief told the auditors that it is unknown how far back the dates of the payroll records go.

**Finding:** Public safety personnel records are not stored in a secure manner.

### **RECOMMENDATION NO. 14:**

The fire supply warehouse administrators should ensure all employee payroll records are secured by locking them up in file cabinets or a secured area in the warehouse. The administration should reference the recommendations in the City Controller's 2017 performance audit *Citywide Review of Department and Authority Policies Concerning the Management of Personally Identifiable Information (PII)*.



# CITY OF PITTSBURGH

## Department of Public Safety

William Peduto, Mayor

Wendell D. Hissrich, Director

October 10, 2018

Michael Lamb, Controller  
City County Building  
414 Grant Street  
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

RE: Fire Supply Warehouse Performance Audit

Dear Controller Lamb:

Thank you for sharing the results from your performance audit of the Fire Supply Warehouse and giving Public Safety the opportunity to address the recommendations contained within. As you will see below, almost all of the recommendations have been completed or are in progress.

**RECOMMENDATION NO. 1:** *Agree*

City administration should update the Department of Public Safety's organizational chart to depict the fire supply warehouse. The warehouse could be listed under either the Bureau of Administration or the Bureau of Fire. It is important to account for its existence somewhere on one of the organization charts.

*The warehouse will be added to the Department of Public Safety's organizational chart under the Bureau of Administration.*

**RECOMMENDATION NO. 2:** *Completed*

The administration should make the hiring of a fire supply warehouse stores manager a top priority. A manager needs to be onsite to oversee staff, track and order supplies, materials, equipment, and perform other daily operations.

*The Stores Manager position was filled on June 11, 2018.*

**RECOMMENDATION NO. 3:** *In Progress and Ongoing*

The administration should direct warehouse personnel to label all supplies and equipment in each aisle and shelf. A supply category heading should be displayed in the front of the aisle as guidance to where all related items would be located. This would help with locating stock as well as restocking items.



*The Stores Manager has begun to label all supplies and equipment shelves and aisles. This work will continue until all of the warehouse shelves and aisles have been labeled. The labeling system will be managed continually going forward as new items are added and items no longer used are removed.*

**RECOMMENDATION NO. 4:** *In Progress*

The City administration should make it a top priority of the Bureau of Fire to implement the FIREHOUSE inventory module software system.

*The Bureau of Fire is working with the Department of Innovation and Performance to evaluate the Firehouse inventory module and Cartegraph which the City also already uses in other departments to decide which software system to implement.*

**RECOMMENDATION NO. 5:** *In Progress and Ongoing*

When the new position of stores manager is hired, the City administration should implement an internal policy and procedure to allow for the redistribution or sale of surplus property. The store's manager should work with OMB to sell surplus items on Govdeals.com. An internal webpage should be created that lists all surplus items so other departments can look to see what is available for use.

*The Stores Manager has begun the task of systematically examining all inventory to determine if items are being used currently or if they are surplus property that could be auctioned or disposed of. Working with the Office of Management and Budget's Senior Asset Management Analyst, the Stores Manager has identified numerous items which have been successfully auctioned for over \$1,200. Additional items have been identified and another auction is scheduled.*

**RECOMMENDATION NO. 6:** *Completed*

The Bureau of Fire administration should have written policies and procedures for requesting, ordering and delivering supplies, materials, and equipment. These written policies and procedures should include: delivery schedules, ordering procedures, personnel authorized to request and receive supplies, setting maximum limits on orders, high dollar value item requests/authorization, and equipment repair requests.

*Training bulletin "18-02 – Supply Dashboard" was issued to firefighters regarding the ordering and delivering of supplies using the electronic ordering software system developed with the Department of Innovation and Performance.*

**RECOMMENDATION NO. 7:** *Completed*

The administration at the Bureau of Fire should ensure that the signature requirement policy is enforced at each of the 30 firehouses. If for some reason no one is at the firehouse when the delivery is made, then the driver should mark on the email “delivered, no one to sign”.

*The Supply Truck driver has been issued an iPad connected to the electronic ordering software system. When a delivery is made, the firefighter receiving the delivery must enter his or her employee number into the system on the iPad to record who received the delivery.*

**RECOMMENDATION NO. 8:** *Completed*

Until an inventory system is used by the fire supply warehouse, the administration should have the warehouse personnel occasionally ‘spot check’ the Grainger sales representative order. This will ensure some type of accountability.

*The Stores Manager checks and verifies all Grainger orders received.*

**RECOMMENDATION NO. 9:** *In Progress*

The Department of Innovation and Performance and the Bureau of Fire should continue working together and expand the catalog of supplies available for request in the electronic ordering software system (EOSS). This should include the laundry/repair/replacement of turnout gear and fire equipment repair requests.

*The Bureau of Fire continues working with the Department of Innovation and Performance to expand the catalog of supplies available for request in the electronic ordering software system and will evaluate the feasibility of adding the laundry/repair/replacement of turnout gear.*

**RECOMMENDATION NO. 10:** *Ongoing*

The Department of Public Safety administration, Office of Management and Budget and the Mayor’s office need to determine if the fire warehouse facility is going to remain at the current location or will relocate in the near future. An evaluation on whether it is economically feasible to invest money on improvements of the facility or that relocation is more practical must be decided.

*Public Safety Administration continually evaluates all Public Safety facilities with the Office of Management and Budget and Mayor’s Office for opportunities to improve facilities or relocate when operationally and financially practical.*

**RECOMMENDATION NO. 11:** *Partially Completed*

The Bureau of Fire should work with the mayor’s office and public safety’s technology manager to install security cameras inside the supply warehouse to monitor the facility. An estimated \$5

million worth of supplies and equipment are stored at the supply warehouse. This is a huge investment that needs to be protected.

*Two exterior cameras are fully functional and have been verified to be working and connected to the Allegheny County 911 Center. Public Safety will expand camera coverage to the warehouse interior.*

**RECOMMENDATION NO. 12:** *Completed*

The Bureau of Fire administration should develop some method of tracking when and how often each firefighter gets their gear cleaned and inspected. Clean gear is an important safety issue. Keeping track of how often gear is cleaned may be as easy as adding a column to the already existing spreadsheet being kept by the ERS.

*An Equipment Repair Specialist at the warehouse maintains a spreadsheet that tracks gear cleaning by serial number.*

**RECOMMENDATION NO. 13:** *In Progress*

The Bureau of Fire administration should plan for the future replacement of the washers (potentially higher capacity) and consider the purchase of specialized drying cabinets for drying turnout gear. The grant office should explore securing federal grant money to offset the specialized laundry equipment purchase costs.

*The Department of Public Works has removed a wall in the basement area where turnout gear is air dried. This increase in space has vastly improved airflow to the space which in turn has shortened drying time for turnout gear. Public Safety will work with the grants office to determine if grants are available for purchasing drying cabinets.*

**RECOMMENDATION NO. 14:** *Agree*

The fire supply warehouse administrators should ensure all employee payroll records are secured by locking them up in file cabinets or a secured area in the warehouse. The administration should reference the recommendations in the City Controller’s 2017 performance audit *Citywide Review of Department and Authority Policies Concerning the Management of Personally Identifiable Information (PII)*.

*The records stored in the warehouse do not contain personally identifiable information such as social security number or home address. The files consist of only timesheets which contain information such as name, dates worked and location. The Bureau of Fire agrees that the warehouse is not an ideal location for these files and will investigate other options as space allows.*

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Wendell D. Hissrich". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "W" and a long, sweeping tail.

Wendell D. Hissrich  
Public Safety Director

WDH:al