

# **The Obion County Fire Department**

***A Presentation Regarding The Establishment  
And Implementation of a County-Wide Fire Department***

***Presented to the Study Committee Comprised of  
The Honorable Benny McGuire, County Mayor  
Commissioner Danny Jowers  
Commissioner Jimmy Seals  
Commissioner Cloney Taylor  
And the Fire Chiefs of Obion County***

***March 18, 2008***

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# *Section 1*

*Overview of  
Current Fire Service  
In Obion County*

## Obion County Fire Department

### Overview:

Fire service is without question a basic life/property saving emergency service. It is no less important than law enforcement, rescue, and emergency medical services. No other emergency agency responds solely on a subscription basis, ability to pay basis or under the threat of *not responding if you don't pay your bill*. Counties will be called upon to provide higher levels of fire protection services and must begin to plan for these issues prior to the occurrence of a crisis or catastrophe.

On January 19, 1987, the Obion County Commission passed a resolution establishing an Obion County Fire Department, but no action was taken to implement the resolution. Therefore, Obion County has a county fire department on paper, but is unmanned, unfunded and not operational.

Currently there are 8 municipal departments in Obion County which are providing fire protection for *most* of Obion County's rural areas. These departments are

- Hornbeak Fire Department
- Kenton Fire Department
- Obion Fire Department
- Rives Fire Department
- Samburg Fire Department
- South Fulton Fire Department
- Troy Fire Department
- Union City Fire Department

In addition, the Obion County Rescue Squad responds to rural grass and vehicle fires in designated areas. There are currently areas of Obion County which rely on fire departments from outside Obion County for their fire protection (Ridgely Fire Department from Lake County, Trimble Fire Department from Dyer County, and Sidonia Fire Department from Weakley County), and there is approximately 15 square miles of southwestern Obion County which has no fire protection.

Three (3) of the municipal departments are offering services on a subscription basis, and five (5) municipal departments are offering services on an *as needed basis* without subscription or ability to pay for response. The municipal fire departments which utilize a subscription service are not bound to and do not respond to fires on rural properties which do not have a subscription for fire service. The only rural property owners guaranteed to receive fire protection services are those who choose to pay for it. If they choose not to purchase an annual subscription and require fire protection services, they fall on the mercy of a municipal department who provide services on an as needed basis. When such occurs, the responding fire department normally provides those services without compensation.

According to survey information, over 75% of all municipal fire department's structure calls are **rural**. All fire departments in Obion County charge a \$500.00 fee per call in rural areas, but collections are, less than 50% and the fire departments have no way of legally collecting the charge. Therefore, the service was provided at the expense of the municipal tax payer.

Because there is no operational county fire department, Obion County has missed the opportunity to actively pursue receipt of FEMA Assistance to Firefighters Grants (AFG) and Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), which could amount to hundreds of thousands of dollars of funding. By taking the steps to make the county fire department operational, Obion County could apply for these grants to provide much needed equipment and funding for the existing fire departments and equip additional fire departments when the need arises.

Even though most municipal fire departments in Obion County have benefited from AFG and CDBG grants to upgrade apparatus and equipment, each department must have operating funds to continue operations. Each individual municipality currently furnishes operating funds for their fire departments without assistance from the county or state. Federal, state and local mandates for training, apparatus, equipment and personnel are costing each fire department more money each year, and fire departments desperately need additional operating funds to stay caught up with these mandates.

Grant funds alone won't fund the annual operating budget of a fire department. Annual appropriations from local sources are needed for additional operational funds to ensure our municipal fire departments remain organized in a manner to meet the current and future challenges of rural Obion County.

United States Fire Administration (USFA) surveys indicate the following:

- Over 70% of all fire personnel in the U.S. are volunteer.
- 21% of volunteer fire departments have 4 or fewer personnel respond to a mid-day structure fire
- Personnel lack formal training in structural firefighting
- Personnel lack state certification in structural firefighting
- Many volunteer fire departments do not have enough portable radios or pagers
- Many volunteer fire departments are not properly equipped with Self-contained Breathing Apparatus or personal protective equipment.

Some of the obstacles encountered by small, volunteer fire departments because of limited funding are:

- Recruitment of fire department members
- Retention of fire department members
- Operating funds necessary to maintaining NFPA /ISO/OSHA requirements
- Equipment purchase without grant funds
- Apparatus purchase without grant funds
- Meeting training requirements for firefighters

**Purpose:**

To formally establish a county-wide fire department which will provide quality fire protection and emergency response to all areas of Obion County in a timely manner with no subscription fees or requirements for response.

**Scope of Project:**

- Utilize apparatus, personnel, fire stations and equipment of existing 8 municipal fire departments to provide countywide fire protection.

- Future addition of two (2) additional stations and equipment to reduce response times and improve coverage areas.
- Provide annual funding for each municipal fire department from Obion County to help fund rural fire protection.

**Benefits:**

- Fire Protection/emergency response to all areas of Obion County
- Lower ISO rating for rural areas of Obion County that would mean lower homeowner insurance premiums.
- By utilizing existing fire department resources, Obion County would save approximately \$5,000,000.00 in initial equipment investment in the establishment of a county-wide fire department.
- Establishment of county-wide fire protection fits in with Obion County growth plan for prospective businesses and homeowners.
- Multiple fire departments responding to structure fires under the automatic aid/mutual aid agreement would greatly increase firefighter safety and capabilities.
- Gives municipal fire departments the ability to be more self-reliant instead of relying on State and Federal grants, which are not guaranteed.

**Explanation of the countywide fire protection plan**

Our common goal is to provide fire protection to all areas of Obion County without discrimination from lack of insurance, lack of subscription, ability to pay, or the decision that it's outside of a fire department's designated area of operation. A major portion of Obion County has been furnished rural fire protection free of charge for decades.

Statistics indicate that the majority of all fire calls are rural in nature and are responded to by municipal fire departments. These departments are solely funded by the tax dollars belonging to each individual town or city. It is becoming more difficult to convince municipal leaders that the municipal fire departments responding to calls outside the municipal boundaries and for which no compensation is guaranteed is *"just the right thing to do"*.

The plan being presented would utilize the existing municipal fire departments in Obion County, which have much needed apparatus, equipment and personnel in place. If these departments are utilized effectively, Obion County will have no need to duplicate the existing departments for rural fire coverage alone. However, two additional departments may be needed in some of the more remote areas of the county (north central and south western Obion County) in the future.

Fire Protection is only one of the benefits of a county-wide fire plan. Emergency response to all hazards, insurance savings for homeowners, establishment of county-wide training for firefighters, and staying caught up with the growth of the county are much needed.

In return for fire service provided by municipal fire departments, the county would fund an annual budget for rural fire protection that would not replace each town's existing fire department budget. The county-funded portion would be in addition to each department's municipal funding.

The county-wide fire protection funds that come into each town will not be just a blank check. Each town will be required to prepare a budget for the next year's expenditures and submit that budget to the county fire chief. The budget will then be reviewed by a peer group of all the municipal fire chiefs and a committee of county commissioners. Each town will have minimum requirements to meet in order to continue to receive funding from the county.

The Obion County Rescue Squad is also a vital component of emergency services in Obion County. Their agency provides much needed services that fire departments do not provide. Land searches, water searches, vehicle extrication, medical first responders, brush/wildland fires, and traffic control are functions that would take away from firefighting roles. Because of their continuing role in emergency services, it is the recommendation of the peer group of the municipal fire chiefs that the agency should be included in the county-wide fire protection funding formula. It is not the intent or desire of the municipal fire departments operating as a countywide fire department to take on roles or responsibilities of the OCRS. The OCRS provides fire departments with rehab, traffic control and medical first responders at every rural structure fire and upon request at any time. Fire departments need every available firefighter to be performing firefighting functions, not the functions of the Rescue Squad.

**Conclusion:**

Obion County is a very progressive county. We continue to recruit new industry such as the Ethanol Plant and Cates Landing River Port Project. We're building new roads and new schools and making improvements in health care, law enforcement and tourism. The implementation of a Regional Airport, the construction of the I-69 corridor through Obion County and improvements to our local infrastructure reflect the commitment of our county commissioner and municipal officials.

However, the one very important area that has been overlooked in all the planning efforts of this county is fire protection/emergency response, and this critical need must be addressed. Fire departments don't just put out fires; they are the leading agency in all disasters, whether natural or manmade. In February 2008 deadly tornadoes raced through West Tennessee resulting in several deaths and millions of dollars in damage. Fire departments are the first ones out and the last ones in when a disaster happens. Obion County was only 51 air miles north of the Madison county tornado outbreak. Fire service is an essential service that needs to be included in current and future plans for Obion County.

# *Section 2*

*Obion County*

*Municipal Fire Department*

*Statistics*

## ***Municipal Fire Departments Statistics***

- Obion County is currently served by eight (8) municipal fire departments:
  - Hornbeak Fire Department
  - Kenton Fire Department
  - Obion Fire Department
  - Rives Fire Department
  - Samburg Fire Department
  - South Fulton Fire Department
  - Troy Fire Department
  - Union City Fire Department
- Three (3) departments use subscription response:
  - Kenton Fire Department
  - South Fulton Fire Department
  - Union City Fire Department
- Five (5) departments respond on an “as needed” basis not taking ability to pay into consideration:
  - Hornbeak Fire Department
  - Obion Fire Department
  - Rives Fire Department
  - Samburg Fire Department
  - Troy Fire Department
- Each fire department has a designated primary coverage area to which they respond.
- Obion County has small portions to which departments outside of Obion County respond:
  - Ridgely Fire Department from Lake County in Southwestern Obion County. Ridgely Fire Department operates on a subscription basis.
  - Trimble Fire Department from Dyer County in the Trimble area.
  - Sidonia Fire Department from Weakley County in Southeastern Obion County.
- Approximately 15 square miles of Obion County presently have no fire protection for rural structure fires.

### **Response Type**

All municipal fire departments charge \$500.00 to the property owners or their insurance company when dispatched to a fire. Most departments collect less than **50%** of these charges.

<i>Subscription response</i>	<i>Annual Fee Amt</i>	<i>Respond w/o Contract</i>
Union City F.D.	\$ 75.00	No
Kenton F.D.	\$ 50.00	Maybe
South Fulton F.D.	\$ 75.00	No

### **Non-Subscription Response (will respond to rural calls without ability to pay)**

Hornbeak F.D.  
 Obion F.D.  
 Rives F.D.  
 Samburg F.D.  
 Troy F.D.

### **Personnel**

One hundred eighty-six (186) municipal firefighters are located in Obion County. There are forty-two (42) career firefighters (Union City Fire Department) and an additional one hundred forty-four (144) volunteer firefighters

	<u>Qty</u>	<u>FF1</u>	<u>FF2</u>	<u>Other</u>
Hornbeak	18	3	0	0
Kenton	20	15	0	0
Obion	20	2	0	1
Rives	18	2	1	0
Samburg	23	2	0	0
S. Fulton	17	5	0	0
Troy	28	3	1	1
Union City	42	4	29	11
Total---->	186	36	31	13

### **Call Volume**

Two hundred forty-five (245) rural fire calls were responded to in Obion County in a 12-month period (2006).

	<u>Rural</u>	<u>In-Town</u>	
Hornbeak	27	1	
Kenton	45	3	
Obion	15	120	includes medical
Rives	51	2	
Samburg	30	4	
S. Fulton	23	30	
Troy	25	31	
Union City	29	1178	includes medical
Total---->	245	1369	

### **Response Statistics**

- Average miles driven from fire station to fire scene for municipal fire departments was **5.07 miles** per rural fire call
- Average time from fire station to fire scene for municipal fire departments was **11.14 minutes** per rural fire call
- Each fire department has an area of operation that they respond to and most of Obion County is covered, but not all areas.
- Obion County is broken down into Grid Map Sections. Each grid represents one square mile area of the county. Fire Departments utilize the grid map to help determine our area of responsibility and for finding addresses in rural settings
- All municipal fire departments participate in Automatic Aid. This is a term used when a fire department is dispatched to a rural fire and the two (2) closest fire departments are dispatched “automatically” by 911 to deliver fire department tankers to aid the initial fire department.
- All municipal fire departments participate in Mutual Aid. This is an agreement between all municipalities in the State of Tennessee for requesting fire department personnel and equipment to a neighboring city, county or state. This has to be requested by the senior fire official / incident commander.

**Apparatus, Equipment and Fire Stations**

Current inventory of apparatus (fire engines, tankers, ladders, etc.):

<b><u>Dept Name</u></b>	<b><u>Engines</u></b>	<b><u>Tankers</u></b>	<b><u>Service</u></b>	<b><u>Brush</u></b>	<b><u>Ladders</u></b>	<b><u>Other</u></b>	<b><u>Non Pump Cert</u></b>
Hornbeak	2	1	0	0	0	0	1
Kenton	2	1	1	0	0	0	
Obion	4	0	0	0	0	0	2
Rives	1	1	0	0	0	0	
Samburg	2	1	0	0	0	0	1
South Fulton	2	1	1	1	0	0	0
Troy	3	1	0	0	0	0	1
Union City	4	1	1	1	1	1	1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>

The plan for county-wide fire protection envisions each municipal department to have a minimum of:

- One (1) NFPA compliant, ISO compliant, pump certified **ENGINE** per fire department that can be used for countywide rural fires.
- One (1) NFPA compliant, ISO compliant **TANKER** per fire department that can be used for countywide rural fires.

Future plans call for each municipal fire department to have a minimum of:

- One (1) **SERVICE TRUCK**
- One (1) **BRUSH TRUCK**

New apparatus (engines and tankers) are approximately \$250,000.00 each, equipped for service. There is currently **\$6,750,000.00** worth of apparatus (20 engines + 7 tankers = 27 x \$ 250,000.00) housed in the existing municipal fire departments.

Current inventory of special equipment ;

<b><u>Dept Name</u></b>	<b><u>Portable Generator</u></b>	<b><u>Warning Siren</u></b>	<b><u>Equip Air Fill</u></b>	<b><u>Haz-Mat</u></b>	<b><u>Foam</u></b>	<b><u>PPV</u></b>	<b><u>Portable Pump</u></b>	<b><u>Vent.Saw</u></b>	<b><u>Community Medical Supplies</u></b>
Hornbeak	y	y	y		y	y	y	y	
Kenton	y	y	y			y		y	
Obion	y	y			y	y		y	
Rives	y			y	y	y	y	y	
Samburg	y	y			y	y			
South Fulton	y	y	y		y	y		y	
Troy	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	
Union City	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	

Current inventory of Fire Stations

<b><u>Dept Name</u></b>	<b><u>Qty</u></b>	<b><u>Needs Replacing</u></b>	<b><u>Needs Renovating</u></b>	<b><u>Need Additional</u></b>	<b><u>Year Built</u></b>
Hornbeak	1	Yes		No	1971
Kenton	1	No		Yes	1972
Obion	1	Yes		No	1900
Rives	1	No		Yes	1996
Samburg	1	No		Yes	1994
South Fulton	1	No		No	2003
Troy	1	No		No	1996
Union City	3	No		Yes	1970,xx,xx
<b>Totals</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>2</b>		<b>4</b>	<b>1971</b>

## Current inventory of communications equipment

- Municipal fire departments in Obion County utilize three (3) different radio frequency bands for dispatch and communication.
- Six (6) use VHF, one (1) uses UHF, and one (1) uses 800mhz
- All fire departments have a countywide 800mhz radio system to be used in large scale operations or disasters.
- All municipal fire departments (except Kenton Fire Department) and the Obion County Rescue Squad are dispatched by Obion County Emergency Communications District (911). Kenton Fire Department is dispatched by Gibson County 911 by a prior arrangement.

Fire Dept Name	Do you plan to change your				Ample Comm	Needs replacing	Batt or Gen Backup	
	VHF	UHF	800mhz	other				
Hornbeak F.D.	1				0	1	0	1
Kenton F.D.	1				0	0	1	0
Obion F.D.	1					1	0	1
Rives F.D.			1		0	0	1	1
Samburg F.D.		1				0	1	1
South Fulton F.D.	1				0	0	1	1
Troy F.D.	1					1	0	1
Union City F.D.	1				0	1	0	1
<b>TOTALS-----&gt;</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>

List other frequencies and communications you have access to at your department 1=yes

Fire Dept Name	VHF		UHF		800		HAM	SAT	CELL	PAGER
	MOB	HAND	MOB	HAND	MOB	HAND	RADIO	PHONE	PHONE	
Hornbeak F.D.	3	12	0	2	2	2	0	0	0	15
Kenton F.D.	4	20	0	0	3	2	0	0	0	20
Obion F.D.	4	20	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	0
Rives F.D.	6	0	2	4	4	20	7	0	0	0
Samburg F.D.	0	0	3	16	0	0	0	0	0	0
South Fulton F.D.	5	20	0	0	5	5	0	0	0	2
Troy F.D.	12	18	3	0	4	3	0	0	0	43
Union City F.D.	10	10	0	0	10	10	0	1	7	42
<b>TOTALS-----&gt;</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>122</b>

# *Section 3*

*Obion County*

*Statistics*

**Obion County Population and Housing Statistics**

The following information was gathered from the 2000 U.S. Census tables

Area	Total	
	Households	Population
Obion County total	13182	32450
Union City	5013	10876
Hornbeak	205	435
Troy	576	1273
Samburg	161	260
Obion	528	1134
Rives	150	331
Woodland Mills	122	296
Kenton	616	1306
South Fulton	1199	2517
Totals "in town"-->	8570	18428
Totals "out of town"	4612	14022

**Electric Meter Count (Gibson Electric M.C. only)**

Gibson Electric -- Obion County Meter Counts  
As of April 25, 2007

Location:	-----# of Meters-----
Obion County	10,756
Hornbeak	263
Kenton	359
Obion	652
Rives	184
Samburg	226
South Fulton	-
Troy	760
Union City	4
Woodland Mills	194
 In-Town Total	 2,642
 Out-of-Town Total	 8,114

**Total Land Area**

- Obion County has approximately 545 square miles of land area

**Total Water Area**

- Obion County has approximately 10.4 square miles of water area

**Population Density**

- 59 persons per square mile
- 2.4 persons per household average

**Property Values (Obion County Total)**

- The table below was copied from the Tennessee Comptroller of the Treasury web site. (2007)

**2007 ASSESSMENT SUMMARY**

<b>CO: 066 OBION</b>	<b>CITY:</b>	<b>SCH DIST:</b>
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LAND VALUE APPRAISED	\$381,469,000
IMPROVEMENT VALUE APPRAISED	\$964,531,100
TANGIBLE PERSONAL PROPERTY	\$118,354,224
INTANGIBLE PERSONAL PROPERTY	\$0
<b>TOTAL VALUE APPRAISED</b>	<b>\$1,464,354,324</b>

TOTAL PARCELS	20857
TAXABLE PARCELS	19928
EXEMPT PARCELS	929
<b>TOTAL ASSESSED VALUE</b>	<b>\$408,086,657</b>

**LOCAL REAL PROPERTY ASSESSED**

PUB UTIL	@ 55%	\$160,050	PAR	2
COMMERCIAL	@ 40%	\$92,770,720	PAR	1398
INDUSTRIAL	@ 40%	\$13,580,360	PAR	12
RESIDENTIAL	@ 25%	\$196,514,275	PAR	13743
HOME BELT	@ 25%	\$0	PAR	0
FARM	@ 25%	\$9,421,725	PAR	343
AGRICULTURAL	@ 25%	\$64,021,850	PAR	3171
OPEN SPACE	@ 25%	\$0	PAR	0
FOREST	@ 25%	\$0	PAR	0
MINERAL	@ 40%	\$0	PAR	0

**TANGIBLE PERSONAL PROPERTY ASSESSED**

PUB UTIL	@ 55%	\$0	PAR	0
COMMERCIAL	@ 30%	\$20,799,137	PAR	1235
INDUSTRIAL	@ 30%	\$10,818,540	PAR	24
RESIDENTIAL	@ 5%	\$0	PAR	0
FARM	@ 5%	\$0	PAR	0

**INTANGIBLE PERSONAL PROPERTY ASSESSED**

COMMERCIAL	@ 30%	\$0	PAR	0
INDUSTRIAL	@ 30%	\$0	PAR	0

**THE TOTAL DIFFERENCE IN MARKET AND USE APPRAISALS FOR AGRICULTURAL, OPEN SPACE, AND FOREST LAND EQUALS ASSESSED VALUE OF \$39,000,575**

**Comparison between “in town” and “rural” property dollars**

The table below breaks out the improved and real property values for “in town” versus “rural” areas. All data was gathered from the Tennessee Comptroller of the Treasury web site (2007).

2007 Tennessee Comptroller of the Treasury Information

Location	Improved Value Appraised	Tangible Personal Property	Total Property Value
Hornbeak	\$9,941,100.00	\$453,057.00	\$10,394,157.00
Kenton	\$18,244,000.00	\$12,949,476.00	\$31,193,476.00
Obion	\$22,254,200.00	\$1,617,488.00	\$23,871,688.00
Rives	\$4,437,000.00	\$87,153.00	\$4,524,153.00
Samburg	no data figures		
South Fulton	\$58,306,000.00	\$2,444,488.00	\$60,750,488.00
Troy	\$31,798,400.00	\$7,019,383.00	\$38,817,783.00
Union City	\$372,169,800.00	\$52,714,077.00	\$424,883,877.00
Woodland Mills	no data figures		
	\$517,150,500.00	\$77,285,122.00	\$594,435,622.00
Obion Co Total	\$964,531,100.00	\$118,354,224.00	\$1,082,885,324.00
Rural Totals	\$447,380,600.00	\$41,069,102.00	<b>\$488,449,702.00</b>

- Data does not include Samburg or Woodland figures because they don't have a city property tax.

**County Assets, Infrastructure and Private Industry in Rural Obion Co.**

County and Other Assets (outside municipal limits)

The following assets are located in rural or out of town areas of protection

<b><u>Name</u></b>	<b><u>Distance from F.D.</u></b>	<b><u>Dollar Value</u></b>
Everett Stewart Regional Airport	5 miles from U.C.F.D.	
Ridgemont Elementary	2 miles from Rives F.D.	
Lake Road Elementary	2.5 miles from U.C.F.D.	
Obion County Nursing Home	5 miles from U.C.F.D.	
Ethanol Plant - Obion	3 miles from Obion F.D.	
Goodyear Tire and Rubber	1 mi from UCFD	
Barker Bros Waste	4 miles from Troy FD	
Landfill	6 mi from TFD & UCFD	
Williams Sausage	8 miles from UCFD	
Griffin Industries	2 miles from UCFD	
Marathon - Midland Pipeline	runs entire county north south	
Trunkline - LC Util pipeline	runs from mid county to LC line	
Southern Machinery Repair	4 miles from UCFD	
TexGas gas transmission station	? Miles from Kenton FD	
Life of Riley Nursing Home-Dixie	12 mi from HVFD	
Allens Industrial Waste Landfill	11 mi from HVFD	
Ford Construction - Hwy 21w	3 miles from Troy F.D.	
Reelfoot Lake State Parks	3.5 miles from S'burg FD	
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Buildings	6.5 miles from S'burg FD	
Federal Aviation Radar Tower	3 miles from S'burg FD	
Rural Water Districts		
CN Railroad	28 miles of track in OC	
Hwy 51	30 miles thru middle of OC	
Hwy 45 W		
I-69 corridor		
State Watershed system		

**Fire Department / Emergency Mgt / Rescue Squad spending comparisons between neighboring counties**

## County Comparisons ~ Fire / EMA funding

Fire / EMA funding comparisons of neighboring counties in West Tn

Dollar figures from Tn Comptrollers Office ~ County Audits 2006/2007

County Name	Year	Fire Dept Funding	EMA / Civil Def.	Rescue Squad	Other EMA	TOTALS
OBION	2006	\$0.00	\$6,000.00	\$6,000.00	\$0.00	\$12,000.00
LAKE	2007	\$0.00	\$45,217.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$45,217.00
WEAKLEY	2006	\$19,500.00	\$207,495.00	\$5,500.00	\$5,461.00	\$237,956.00
DYER	2006	\$143,482.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$127,429.00	\$270,911.00
GIBSON	2007	\$122,987.00	\$126,023.00	\$0.00	\$72,489.00	\$321,499.00
HENRY	2006	\$430,343.00	\$0.00	\$4,800.00	\$216,386.00	\$651,529.00
CROCKETT	2007	\$52,939.00	\$129,845.00	\$7,000.00	\$9,918.00	\$199,702.00
CARROLL	2006	\$176,876.00	\$227,173.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$404,049.00
HAYWOOD	2007	\$295,595.00	\$46,784.00	\$6,500.00	\$0.00	\$348,879.00
LAUDERDALE	2007	\$25,179.00	\$302,511.00	\$5,000.00	\$56,160.00	\$388,850.00
		\$1,266,901.00	\$1,091,048.00	\$34,800.00	\$487,843.00	\$2,880,592.00
	AVG->	\$158,362.63	\$136,381.00	\$5,800.00	\$81,307.17	\$288,059.20

Cnty Avg \$ Spent

Some figures may include major purchases within each year.

# *Section 4*

*Funding Solution*

*For Obion County*

*Countywide Fire Protection*

Possible Funding Solutions for Implementing Countywide F.D.

1. Add a monthly fee to each light meter, residential and commercial, in rural areas of Obion County.
2. Add a monthly fee to each light meter, residential and commercial, for the municipal and rural areas (all meters in county).
3. Increase Property taxes to generate necessary funds needed to operate
4. Enact a countywide subscription fee or fire tax to be billed by Obion County, collected by Obion County and disbursed to Municipal Fire Departments
5. Appropriate Funds from existing county funds without increasing taxes or attaching a fee to electric meters

**Example #1 ~ Electric Meters**

This scenario would add an amount each mo to each electric meter

Gibson Electric -- Obion County Meter Counts  
As of April 25, 2007

Location:	-----# of Meters-----	Last Data Received <sup>1</sup>	Change	%age Change
Obion County	10,756	10,171	585	5.80%
Hornbeak	263			
Kenton	359			
Obion	652			
Rives	184			
Samburg	226			
South Fulton				
Troy	760			
Union City	4			
Woodland Mills	194			
In-Town Total	2,642	2,585	57	2.20%
Out-of-Town Total	8,114	7,586	528	7.00%

<sup>1</sup> Last date received was approx. 4 years ago

**Out of town meters only**

meter count	mo fee added	monthly revenue	annual revenue
8308	\$3.00	\$24,924.00	\$299,088.00
8308	\$5.00	\$41,540.00	\$498,480.00

8308 \$6.00 \$49,848.00 \$598,176.00  
 inc Woodland meters

**Example #2 ~ All Electric Meters in Obion County**

**All meters in county(with exception of U.C.E.S. meters or from out of county)**

meter count	mo fee added	monthly revenue	annual revenue
10756	\$2.00	\$21,512.00	\$258,144.00
10756	\$3.00	\$32,268.00	\$387,216.00
10756	\$4.00	\$43,024.00	\$516,288.00
10756	\$5.00	\$53,780.00	\$645,360.00

**Union City Electric System (UCES) Meters (within U.C. municipal limits)**

6300

**All meters in county (including all municipalities with UCES meters)**

meter count	mo fee added	monthly revenue	annual revenue
17056	\$2.00	\$34,112.00	\$409,344.00
17056	\$3.00	\$51,168.00	\$614,016.00
17056	\$4.00	\$68,224.00	\$818,688.00
17056	\$5.00	\$85,280.00	\$1,023,360.00

- Examples #1 & #2 are somewhat inflation proof. As the numbers of meters increase in the county, so would the revenue. Any increase in amount per month would have to be approved by the county commission
- Example #1 & #2 would spread the cost of the protection more evenly. Renters would also pay their share of the cost, not just the property owner.

**Example # 3 ~ Increase in property taxes or enact "fire tax"**

This scenario would add an amount to the county property tax  
 Records indicate that every .01 cent increase nets approx \$42,000 in revenue

**.13 cent increase would equal-----> \$546,000.00**

- Example #3 would be the most inflation proof. As property values and or property taxes increased, or so would the amount of money being generated
- Example #3 would place more of the cost on the property owner

**Example # 4 ~ Countywide subscription service**

This scenario would charge every structure in the "county", not in municipal boundaries,  
 a subscription fee annually.

The county would be responsible for charging and collecting this fee and disbursing the funds to each F.D. as specified in the plan.

The following figures are from the U.S. Census (2000)

Area	Total Households	Population
Obion County total	13182	32450
Union City	5013	10876
Hornbeak	205	435
Troy	576	1273
Samburg	161	260
Obion	528	1134
Rives	150	331
Woodland Mills	122	296
Kenton	616	1306
South Fulton	1199	2517
Totals "in town"-->	8570	18428
Totals "out of town"	4612	14022
add Woodland	122	296
Revised Totals	4734	14318

\$550,000.00 divided by 4734 equals **\$116.18** per household (not inc comm)

**Commercial and Other Structures Outside Municipal Limits ???**

- Example #4 is the least favorable method. Collection would still be an issue and the fire departments would have no recourse if a rural resident refused to pay the subscription.

**Example #5 ~ Appropriate money needed from current county funds**

This scenario would simply pay the necessary funding for a county F.D. from existing funds without raising taxes, adding to electric meters or charging a subscription fee.

**\$550,000.00 annual budget**

# *Section 5*

## *Disbursement of Funds*

# Example for Disbursement of Funds to Fire Departments

## ***Disbursements of Funds***

Example of Disbursement for funds collected

Minimum target amount necessary for county plan would be \$ 550,000.00 annually

Funding Agency or Department	Dollar Amount	
County Fire Chief & Admin	\$50,000.00	salary, vehicle, office, and expense
Union City ( 3 stations full time)	\$120,000.00	U.C. has three stations
Hornbeak FD	\$36,000.00	
Troy FD	\$36,000.00	
Samburg FD	\$36,000.00	
Obion FD	\$36,000.00	
Rives FD	\$36,000.00	
Kenton FD	\$36,000.00	
South Fulton FD	\$60,000.00	
Reserved for future stations- (2)	\$72,000.00	allow funds to increase till needed
Obion County Rescue Squad	\$36,000.00	
Total	<b>\$554,000.00</b>	

In return for being paid the following amount each department would drop all subscriptions fees and would respond on an as needed basis to all fires in Obion County rural areas.  
Each department would also have certain requirements to meet in order to continue funding from the county.

### **Minimum Requirement Standards**

Personnel	20 members
Station Facilities	
Apparatus	2 eng + 1 tanker
Training (in house monthly)	Hours in house training per month (4 hrs vol & 20 hrs career)
Training (Tn Comm F.F. Stds)	25% FF1 min in 5 years (within each individual dept)
Equipment	NFPA / ISO minimum in 5 years
Response	90% all dispatched calls unless committed or out of service
Budgeting	submit annual budget to county fire chief
Mutual Aid Participation	must participate in automatic aid / mutual aid
Accountability	accountable for all fire calls and runs and actions
Standardized Record Keeping	report all calls on standardized form and NFIRS or TFIRS reporting
Pump, Hose, Plug Testing	annual pump, hose and plug testing reports to county chief
County Emerg Mgt Training	participate in county emergency management training exercises

Failure to meet minimum requirements would place a department on probation and would be given a reasonable time frame to correct problems.  
Failure to meet requirements after probation could result in withholding of annual funding.

# *Section 6*

*Resolution Establishing  
Countywide Fire Department  
for Obion County  
January 19, 1987*



# *Section 7*

## *Exhibits*

**Tennessee Code Annotated**  
**Chapter 17**  
**County-wide Fire Departments**

Sec.

5-17-101. Formation.

5-17-102. Powers and duties.

5-17-103. **County fire** chief.

5-17-104. Budget.

5-17-105. **Fire** tax districts.

5-17-106. **Fire** tax — Levy.

5-17-107. **Fire** tax — Inclusion in property tax.

5-17-108. Service supplementary.

**5-17-101. Formation. —**

(a) The county legislative body or other governing body of any county is authorized to form a new agency to be known as the county-wide fire department for the purpose of providing fire protection services to all of the county.

(b) The powers and duties of the county-wide fire department may be delegated by the county legislative body or other governing body to an existing agency.

(c) (1) The governing body of any county that now has or may hereafter have a metropolitan form of government as defined by § 7-1-101, is authorized to form a new agency to be known as the county-wide fire department, or to extend fire protection services of an existing agency or department to all or any part thereof of the general services district outside the urban services district in the manner and to the extent prescribed in this section.

(2) In counties governed by metropolitan government, the powers and duties of the agency or department affording fire protection outside the urban services district shall be vested in that agency in which the charter of the metropolitan government vests the responsibility for

protection against fire of life and property within the urban services district.

**(d)** A fire department established pursuant to this chapter may be funded through one (1) of the following methods:

**(1)** As authorized by §§ 5-17-105 — 5-17-107, the county legislative body may establish one (1) or more fire tax districts and levy an annual fire tax upon the property in each district for the purpose of funding the activities of the fire department within that district;

**(2)** As an alternative to fire tax districts, the county legislative body is hereby authorized to allocate revenue from the general fund of the county to fund fire protection services to be provided to the unincorporated portions of the county. Any such revenues allocated for fire protection services shall be generated by situs-based taxes collected in unincorporated areas of the county or shall originate from other revenue sources that have already been shared with municipalities;

**(3)** Nothing in this section shall be construed as limiting the ability of local governments to provide for fire protection services through an interlocal agreement as authorized by title 12, chapter 9, or any other provision of the Tennessee Code;

**(4)** Nothing in this subsection (d) shall prohibit nor be construed to prohibit a local government from accepting donations or charitable contributions to fund the activities of the fire department, regardless of the method of funding selected by a local government under the provisions of this section.

**(e)** Any county choosing to create a county-wide fire district as authorized by this section, may, with the approval of the local legislative body, mandate that all interlocal agreements and contracts with providers for services permitted under this section contain performance based criteria designed to ensure timely response and effective services, the exact methodology of which is to be determined by local ordinance.

[Acts 1965, ch. 138, § 1; 1968, ch. 611, § 1; 1973, ch. 211, § 1; impl. am. Acts 1978, ch. 934, §§ 7, 36; T.C.A., § 5-1701; Acts 1999, ch. 125, § 1; 2007, ch. 145, § 1.]

**5-17-102. Powers and duties. —**

**(a)** With the specific exceptions relating to metropolitan governments provided for in this section, the county-wide fire department is empowered to do all things necessary to provide coordinated fire protection to all areas of the county, including, but not limited to:

**(1)** Sue and be sued;

**(2)** Take or acquire real or personal property of every kind, or any interest therein, within the county, by grant, purchase, gift, devise or lease, and hold, manage, occupy, dispose of, convey and encumber the same and create a leasehold interest in the same for the benefit of the county;

**(3)** Exercise the right of eminent domain, but only with the consent of the county legislative body or other governing body;

**(4)** Establish, equip, operate and maintain a county-wide fire department and establish and enforce regulations including, but not limited to, those for the administration, operation and maintenance thereof;

**(5)** Appoint and employ necessary employees and define their qualifications, duties and responsibilities, and provide for payment in reasonable sums for such duties;

**(6)** Employ counsel;

**(7)** Enter into and perform all necessary contracts, including, but not limited to:

**(A)** Contracts for the supply of water where necessary for fire protection;

**(B)** Contract to have existing fire departments and others provide fire protection services in any area of the county, including, but not limited to:

**(i)** Contracts with incorporated towns and utility districts to provide such service within or without their corporate limits;

**(ii)** Contracts to provide fire protection services for any city, town, district, or any part thereof within the county;

**(C)** Contracts to provide and be provided training and maintenance;

**(D)** Contracts to provide and be provided all special service functions, such as arson investigation, inspection, and emergency ambulance and rescue services;

**(8)** Provide and maintain all special service functions necessary for the prevention of fires, including the investigation of the cause of fires and the enforcement of regulations to prevent harmful fires and smoke;

**(9)** Provide and maintain an emergency ambulance, first aid and rescue service;

**(10)** Make regulations, in order to prevent harmful fires and smoke, that shall have the force of law when approved by the county legislative body or other governing body;

**(11)** Give aid anywhere in the county in the event of fire, flood or other disaster;

**(12)** Assist local and volunteer fire departments whenever necessary. Such assistance includes, but is not limited to, financial aid and shall be upon such terms as agreed to by both parties;

(13) Provide training and maintenance services for the benefit of any fire department;

(14) Set up a central communications network connecting all fire and emergency units in the county;

(15) Train, equip, maintain, and provide for the payment of volunteers at the discretion of the county-wide fire department;

(16) Recommend the boundaries of fire tax district or districts to the county legislative body or other governing body, in those counties that have chosen to fund fire departments through fire tax districts, in order to have the fire taxes more nearly reflect the cost of services to be rendered in each area of the county, and recommend the amount to be spent in each such district;

(17) Make reasonable charges for any services rendered that are not included in the fire tax of the district; and

(18) With the approval of the county legislative body or other governing body, make written agreements for allocation and conveyance of any or all public functions, rights, duties, property, assets and liabilities of the county-wide fire department to any annexing municipality that justice or reason may require in the circumstances.

(b) In those counties that now have or may hereafter have a metropolitan form of government, the powers described in subdivisions (a)(1)-(3), (5), (6) and (9) shall not be vested in the county-wide fire department, but shall be vested in the metropolitan government, to be exercised in the manner provided by its charter.

[Acts 1965, ch. 138, § 2; 1968, ch. 611, §§ 2, 3; impl. am. Acts 1978, ch. 934, §§ 7, 36; T.C.A., § 5-1702; Acts 1999, ch. 125, § 2.]

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**5-17-103. County fire chief. —**

(a) The county-wide fire department shall be headed by an official to be known as the county fire chief, in whom shall be vested all the powers of the agency and the right to delegate those powers to such persons as the fire chief may see fit.

(b) While responding to, operating at, or returning from an emergency site, the fire chief, or any member serving in the capacity of fire officer in charge, shall have all authority granted to municipal fire departments by the provisions of § 6-21-703.

(c) The county fire chief shall be appointed by the county mayor, subject to confirmation by the county legislative body or other governing body.

(d) In counties governed by a metropolitan government as defined by § 7-1-101, the provisions of this section shall not be effective, and the management and control of the agency or department shall be vested in the person in whom the charter of the metropolitan government vests the management and control of the agency that has the responsibility for the protection against fire of life and property within the urban services district.

(e) In any county having a population of not less than eight hundred thousand (800,000), according to the 2000 federal census or any subsequent federal census, the county fire chief shall be appointed by the county mayor, subject to confirmation by the county legislative body. The county mayor and legislative body shall ensure that the views and opinions of all participating governmental entities are given full consideration in the selection of the fire chief, with the exact methodology to be determined by local ordinance.

[Acts 1965, ch. 138, § 3; 1968, ch. 611, § 4; 1978, ch. 674, § 1; impl. am. Acts 1978, ch. 934, §§ 7, 36; T.C.A., § 5-1703; Acts 1999, ch. 125, § 4; 2003, ch. 90, § 2; 2007, ch. 39, § 1.]

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**5-17-104. Budget. —**

(a) The county-wide fire department shall prepare an annual budget of anticipated receipts and

expenditures, and it shall be submitted to the county legislative body or other governing body of the county.

(b) In those counties that have established fire tax districts, the county-wide fire department shall determine what share of the total annual expense of the county-wide fire department must be allocated to each fire tax district.

(c) In those counties having a metropolitan government, the budget for the county-wide fire department shall be prepared, submitted and adopted in the manner provided therefor in the charter of the metropolitan government.

[Acts 1965, ch. 138, § 4; 1968, ch. 611, § 5; impl. am. Acts 1978, ch. 934, §§ 7, 36; T.C.A., § 5-1704; Acts 1999, ch. 125, § 3.]

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**5-17-105. Fire tax districts. —**

(a) (1) The boundaries of fire tax districts shall be determined by the county legislative body or other governing body, and shall become fixed by resolution of the county legislative body or other governing body thirty (30) days or more after notice of the determination of the boundaries of a district has been given to the property owners of the district.

(2) Such notice shall be given by mailing a description of the boundaries of the district to all of the property owners of record within the district, at their last known address.

(b) The boundaries of any district may be altered at any time by means of the same procedure by which the district was created.

(c) In the case of county-wide fire districts as authorized by § 5-17-101, the fire tax district shall comprise the entire county outside of any and all incorporated municipalities within the county, but each and every such incorporated municipality within the county may elect to contract with the county for inclusion in such fire tax district as authorized by § 5-17-108.

(d) In those counties having eight (8) or more incorporated municipalities that levy a property tax and four (4) or more special school districts, the fire tax district shall comprise the entire county, including each and every incorporated municipality.

[Acts 1965, ch. 138, § 5; 1978, ch. 674, § 4; impl. am. Acts 1978, ch. 934, §§ 7, 36; T.C.A., § 5-1705; Acts 1996, ch. 836, § 1.]

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**5-17-106. Fire tax — Levy. —**

(a) The county legislative body or other governing body shall levy an annual fire tax upon the property owners of each district. The county legislative body of any county having a population of not less than eighty thousand (80,000) nor more than eighty-three thousand (83,000) according to the 1990 federal census or any subsequent federal census, that after April 8, 1992 establishes a fire tax district, may levy an annual fire tax upon the property owners of each district. If a tax is levied, the provisions of subsection (b) shall apply to such fire tax.

(b) The fire tax of each fire tax district shall be set at a rate sufficient to pay that district's share of the total budget of the county-wide fire department.

[Acts 1965, ch. 138, § 6; impl. am. Acts 1978, ch. 934, §§ 7, 36; T.C.A., § 5-1706; Acts 1992, ch. 649, § 1.]

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**5-17-107. Fire tax — Inclusion in property tax. —**

(a) The fire tax shall be assessed in the same manner as the county property tax and collected as an addition thereto.

(b) The fire tax shall in all ways be treated as a part of the county property tax.

[Acts 1965, ch. 138, § 7; T.C.A., § 5-1707.]

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**5-17-108. Service supplementary. —**

Nothing in this chapter shall be construed to limit in any way the fire departments of any municipality or utility district providing fire service, but merely authorizes such county fire protection service to contract with municipalities or utility districts in order to coordinate fire service county-wide.

[Acts 1965, ch. 138, § 8; T.C.A., § 5-1708.]