

What's In Your Station?

New York City Fire Department, New York Hazmat 1, Squad 288

A recent trip to Queens finds the Hazardous Materials Unit of the New York City Fire Department. The FDNY operates the most well staffed Fire Departments in the world and maintains one of the most well equipped Hazardous Material units as well. Organized just two years after the Triangle Shirtwaist Fire of 1911, Engine 288 has served the northern Queens with distinction. In 1998 the Engine operation changed to the FDNY Squad unit. In addition to the Squad, this house is home to three additional pieces of equipment and has the ability to handle a just about any type of hazmat situation. The motto of the house is *Fortuna Favet Fortibus*. For those of you who missed that high school Latin it means, Fortune Favors the Strong. It was taken from the O'Flaherty Family Motto, no Irish influence here.

Entering the station through the bay door my attention was immediately turned to a memorial on the wall for the 19 Firefighters from this house that was killed at the World Trade Center at Box 55-8087. The Hazmat and Squad 288 lost more of their members than any other house in the city. There are not words that can express the emotion one feels when standing inside this house looking at the memorial.

Gone by Not Forgotten.



During my visit the Station was manned with 8 firefighters assigned to the Hazmat Unit and 6 firefighters assigned to the Squad. Both Hazmat 1 and Squad 288 operate 2 pieces of equipment. The Hazmat team operates the Pierce unit, pictured above, and the much larger FDNY style Seagrave Heavy Rescue. The Squad operates a Seagrave Rescue Pumper with both traditional Engine and Rescue equipment along with some Hazmat equipment. A large step van is also operated as part of the Squad for hazmat equipment. All firefighters are trained at a minimum to the Technician Level and most have additional advanced specialized training.

Although the FDNY has hazmat equipment on numerous different units in each borough, there is only one designated hazmat unit in the city. Hazmat 1 runs into all of the boroughs and is backed up by other units as needed.

