



Kathy Dunn – On-Call Firefighter

# What it means to be 'On-Call'

On-Call Firefighters – Ordinary people doing an Extraordinary job

For firefighters, saving lives and protecting communities is all in a day's work. But whilst the majority of firefighters are full-time employees of the Fire and Rescue Service, an additional 30% of our fire crews have jobs elsewhere and are 'On-Call' with their local fire station.

On-Call Firefighters provide emergency cover to over 90% of the UK. There are over 14,000 On-Call Firefighters in England, protecting our small towns and rural communities and they are responsible for operating 60% of all fire engines.

On-Call Firefighters make up an invaluable part of the team, heading to their fire station only when needed in an emergency. They are paid volunteers

who, just like full-time firefighters, are trained to deal with everything from extinguishing burning buildings to providing first aid.

They come from all walks of life and could be full-time parents, office staff, manual workers or any profession you can think of. But whilst On-Call Firefighters are ordinary men and women, they do an extraordinary job for the Fire and Rescue Service and are integral to keeping their local fire station crewed and protecting the local community.

In England at any one time there are more On-Call Firefighters providing emergency cover than their full-time colleagues. The only difference is that they aren't based at a fire station.

**ON-CALL  
FIREFIGHTERS**

Working together to help  
your community





Kathy Dunn – School Caretaker

“ I’ve made lots of good friends and enjoy the team atmosphere ”

**Kathy Dunn**  
School Caretaker and  
On-Call Firefighter

### A FLEXIBLE SYSTEM

On-Call Firefighters carry an alerter. They let the fire station know when they’re available so they can respond immediately to emergency calls at any time. Many have an arrangement with their employer, so they can be On-Call for the Fire and Rescue Service whilst at the same time remaining a valued employee. Others choose to devote only evenings and/or weekends to being On-Call.

Your Fire and Rescue Service will ensure that it’s a system geared to suit both the employers and the employees that they release to be On-Call.

### BEING ‘ON-CALL’

On-Call Firefighters have to live or work within about five minutes of their local fire station in order to respond to call outs quickly. They are called out on average two or three times a week but the commitment varies around the country and between different fire stations.

Their duties can include:

- Responding to emergency calls – they could be tackling a chemical spill one day, or extinguishing a burning building the next.
- Delivering community fire safety information. This could include provision of information to businesses, schools and people more vulnerable to fire, through to engaging with young people to reduce anti-social behaviour and fire-setting.
- Reducing risks and hazards in the community through the identification of health and safety issues.

### JOINING UP

Your community currently needs more On-Call Firefighters. To find out more, log on to [www.communities.gov.uk/oncallfirefighters](http://www.communities.gov.uk/oncallfirefighters)

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