

Some of the street hydrants are spaced farther apart than is specified in the Municipal Corporations Act, and quite a number of hydrant-indicators are missing. A new battery is required for the motor fire-engine.

TIMARU.

Inspection, 2nd April, 1925. At the inspection muster there were present two officers and eighteen firemen. The inspection drills were carried out in a thoroughly efficient manner, and the station and equipment were in good order. There was an average attendance at the forty-four general fire calls of 80·6 per cent. of the membership—a good average.

I again, for reasons fully set out in previous reports, impressed upon the Board the expediency of purchasing one or other of the sections of land adjoining the central fire-station; also, I pointed out to the Board that the time had arrived for the appointment of a permanent Superintendent of the Timaru Brigade, in view of the steady growth of the town during recent years, involving more time and closer attention to the brigade work than a partially paid officer can be expected to give.

WAIHI.

Inspection, 19th November, 1924. Two officers and ten firemen were in attendance at the inspection muster. During the course of the inspection drills a good attempt was made in the carrying-out of the recently standardized squad drill, and with a little persevering practice the brigade should soon become efficient in the system.

The serviceable stock of hose was dangerously low—an order was at once placed for a further supply; also, a hose-repairing outfit was required.

With a strength of fifteen all told, the attendance at the forty-two fire calls averaged 60·5 per cent. of the membership—a low average, possibly due, in some measure at least, to the large number of false alarms. A constant repetition of false alarms, particularly when nearly entirely preventable, as in this case, tends to discourage the most willing of brigades. Out of the forty-two fire calls twenty-one proved to be false alarms. Out of that number five are set down as malicious, and the remaining sixteen as due to line faults, and so preventable. The present installation of alarms has been very unsatisfactory for some years past. Recommendations have been made in that connection, and the Board would be well advised to replace the defective installation by a more up-to-date and reliable system.

WAITARA.

Inspection, 24th October, 1924. At the inspection muster there were present two officers and ten firemen—a satisfactory attendance. Instruction was given in the recently standardized drills, and upon the occasion of my next inspection I expect to see the brigade has reached a reasonable degree of efficiency therein.

It is necessary the Board should make stringent conditions in regard to the taking of the motor hose-tender anywhere outside the borough boundaries, and also that proper precautions are taken when the motor is so absent.

WANGANUI.

Inspection, 13th and 14th October, 1924. At the inspection musters there were present—at the central station, two officers and twenty firemen; at Castlecliff station, one officer and eleven firemen. The various inspection drills were carried out in a satisfactory manner, and the stations with their equipment were in good order.

A new 35 h.p. 300 g.p.m. motor pumping-machine has been acquired, and housed at Castlecliff, where a site has been purchased, and a new district fire-station is now in course of erection; also, three new street fire-alarm circuits, having twenty-three call-boxes fixed thereon, have been installed.

WESTPORT.

The first inspection of this brigade was made on the 10th December, 1924, when at the inspection muster there were present two officers and thirteen firemen. During the carrying-out of the inspection drills the necessity of more drill and instruction was apparent.

Brigade personnel consists of nineteen members all told, the majority unusually youthful, but apparently active, willing, and of good physique.

Fire-station: In view of the limited area of the present site, the condition and other circumstances of the present building, as also of the growth and future trend of the town, the Board would be well advised to consider the purchase of another site and erection of a new station thereon.

Water-supply: The station pressure is adequate, but the reticulation requires attention. In places, including the main streets, some of the street fire-hydrants are spaced over 500 ft. apart—200 ft. more than is required by the Municipal Corporations Act; also, the hydrant-indicators require attention.

Street fire-alarms: Seven out of the eight box instruments are unsuitable, unreliable, and in a very dirty and neglected condition. They should be replaced with more efficient movements; also, a readjustment of their positions and an extra box is required.

Minor equipment: The men's uniforms—such as there are—are in a more or less dilapidated condition, and require prompt attention; also, the brigade should be provided with a hand-pump, another hand chemical extinguisher, and a hose-repairing outfit.

There was an average attendance at the eight fire calls of 74 per cent. of the membership—a fair average.