



Clark County Fire District 3

2023 Annual

Report

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING CLARK COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT 3.

Clark County Fire District 3 provides fire and life safety services to 46,000 people in east Clark County, including the City of Battle Ground. Career and volunteer firefighters respond to an average of over 5,000 emergency calls a year – 70% of which are EMS-related. Fire District 3 operates by the core values of professionalism, safety, teamwork, integrity, and community. Fire District 3 operates under a balanced budget and has a long history of passing its financial and accountability audits by the state.

Services are funded under a fire levy paid by the community we serve, fiscal responsibility is paramount in all decision-making.

THE FIRE LEVY ALSO FUNDS OUR EMS PROGRAM, WHICH ACCOUNTS FOR 70% OF OUR CALLS.

Fire districts have two funding options for daily emergency operations. The first is a fire levy capped at \$1.50 per \$1,000 of assessed property value. The other is a levy for emergency medical service (EMS), capped at \$0.50 per \$1,000. Fire District 3 currently provides both fire and EMS through its fire levy, which saves taxpayers money. Fire District 3 does not collect an EMS levy.

The fire levy rate falls as property values rise to limit a fire district to roughly the same amount of revenue per year plus a 1% increase. For example, voters renewed the fire levy at \$1.42 per \$1,000 in 2017. Since that time, it has fallen to \$1.16 per \$1,000. This is called “levy erosion” and impacts the ability to provide service.



WE ARE STRUGGLING TO MAINTAIN THE LEVEL AND QUALITY OF EMERGENCY SERVICES OUR COMMUNITY REQUIRES.

Fire District 3 has the second lowest tax rate in the County. Revenue is not keeping up with the cost of providing service. Costs are increasing almost 6% a year, but fire districts are limited to a 1% revenue increase. Voters turned down a fire levy lid lift in 2023 and that is impacting the services provided. Two of the district's fourteen firefighter/paramedics left the fire district, those positions are now unfunded. Call volumes have increased by more than 25% in the last 6 years. EMS protocols have changed to improve survival rates and additional revenue is needed for the medical equipment and training to meet new protocol requirements.

PATIENT OUTCOME IS THE BOTTOM LINE.

Fire District 3 is asking voters to consider a 34-cent lid lift (from \$1.16 to \$1.50 per \$1,000 of assessed property value) during the August 2024 primary election. The lid lift would fund:

- Twenty-four-hour staffing at all five stations
- Additional paramedic-certified firefighters to improve survival rates in the community.
- The purchase of a new ambulance to be used when transport cannot be delayed
- Fire station improvements that are needed to maintain operational readiness.

The lid lift would last for six years and can never exceed \$1.50 per \$1,000. These projects would cost the owner of a \$500,000 home \$14.17 per month/\$170 a year.

This organization works for you. This proposal has received a significant review from the community, the Board of Commissioners, and staff. It has been determined to be what is best for the safety of the community. If you have questions please call.

Again, thank you.



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FIRE CHIEF SCOTT SORENSON

YOUR FIRE DISTRICT



Clark County Fire District 3 is an all-risk response agency; meaning to the best of it's ability, it will respond to any emergency related situation (fires, rescues, medical emergencies, hazardous materials incidents, natural and manmade disasters, etc.). Clark County Fire District 3 was legally formed in 1947 as authorized by Washington State Statute. Clark County Fire district 3 provides emergency services to 46,000 residents comprised of urban incorporated and rural unincorporated service areas that span 92 square miles and include: Battle Ground, Hockinson, Brush Prairie, Venersborg, Rawson Rd, Heisson, Battle Ground Lake, Crawford, and Lucia Falls.

Fire District 3 is a combination organization comprised of an elected board of three Fire Commissioners, one Fire Chief, Two Division Chiefs, one Administrative Officer, one Administrative Assistant, one Fire Inspector, three Battalion Chiefs, 47 line personnel, and 10 Intern/Volunteer Firefighters. District operations are comprised of three 24-hour shifts (A, B, and C shift) led by a Battalion Chief who oversees assigned suppression/EMS personnel, apparatus, and equipment, that operates from four staffed stations.



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OUR STATEMENTS

Purpose

Protect Lives, Property, and the Environment

Mission

Provide Life Safety and Fire Protection

Vision

Be the Best Fire District in America

Promise

Extraordinary People, Exceptional Service, Embracing the Community

Values

People: Trust in and respect each other.

Safety: Minimize risk in our actions and decisions.

Teamwork: Work together to achieve common goals.

Integrity: Open, honest, and ethical in all actions.

Community: Provide the public the highest level of service.

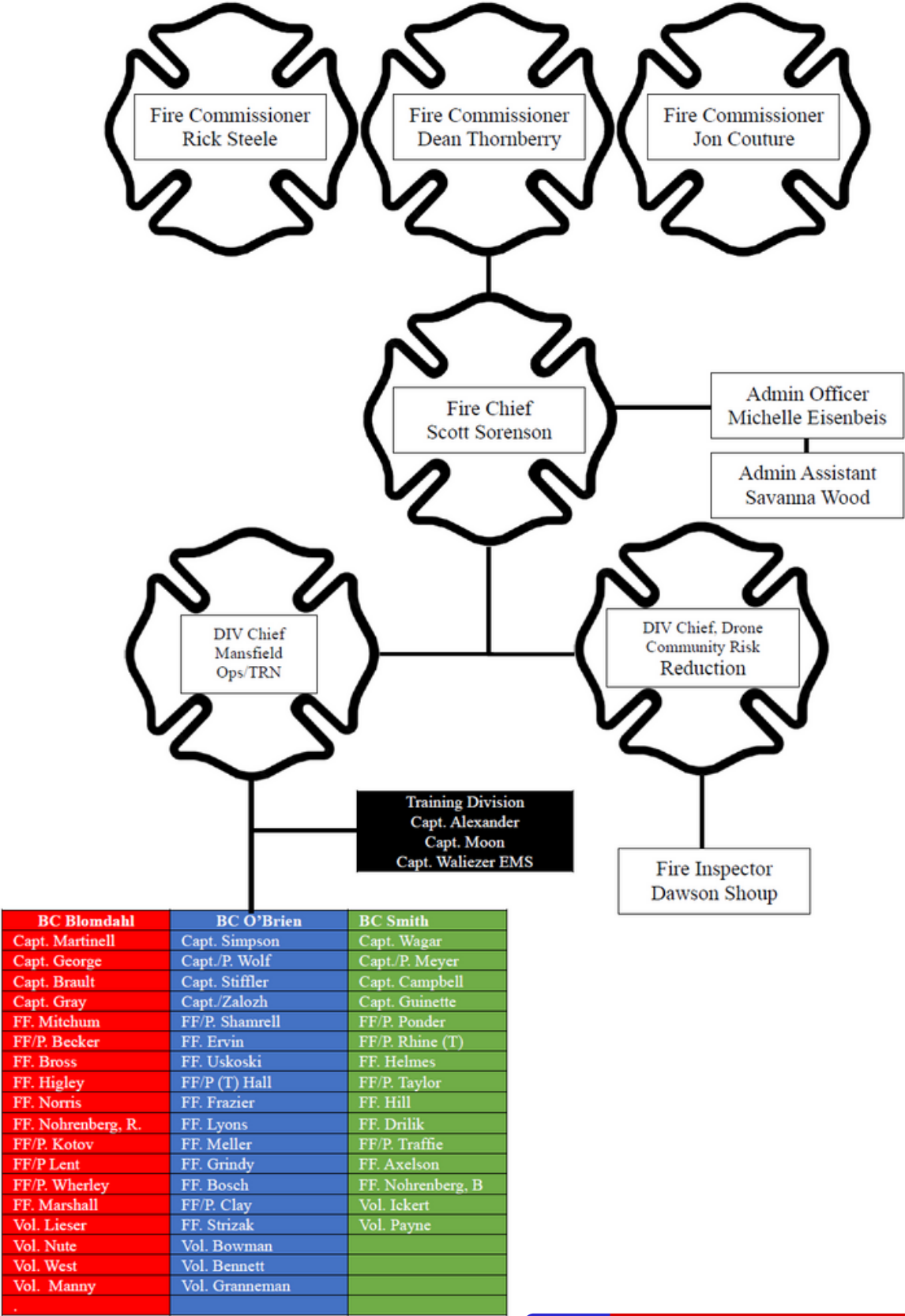
Stewardship: Manage public funds responsibly.

Professionalism: Excellence through planning, service, training, certification, and experience.



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ORGANIZATION



SERVICE AREA

STATION 33
439 CALLS



STATION 32
238 CALLS



STATION 35
3157 CALLS



5,175 TOTAL CALLS
92 SQUARE MILES SERVED
(Including Mutual Aid)

STATION 31
1034 CALLS

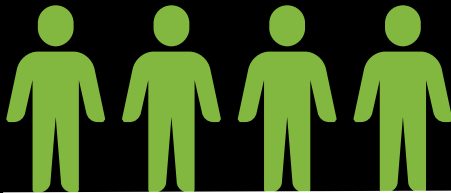


STATION 34
145 CALLS

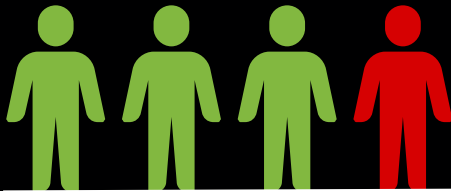


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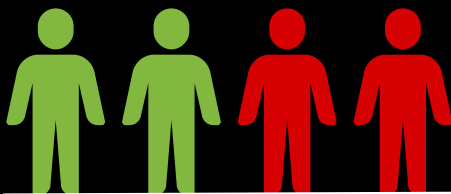
COMPANY STAFFING (Crew Size)



National Standard
4 firefighters per engine



Regional Standard
3 firefighters per engine



Fire District 3 Average
2 firefighters per engine

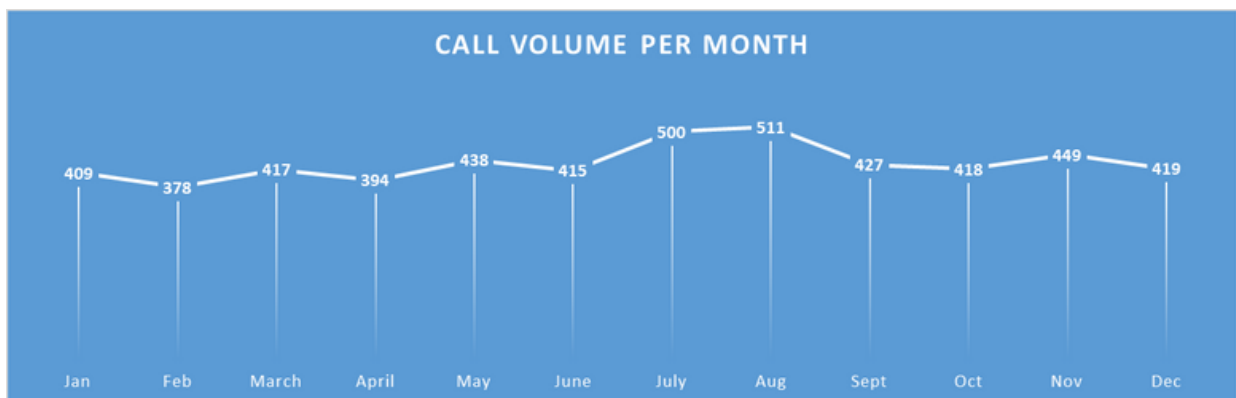


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INCIDENT RESPONSE

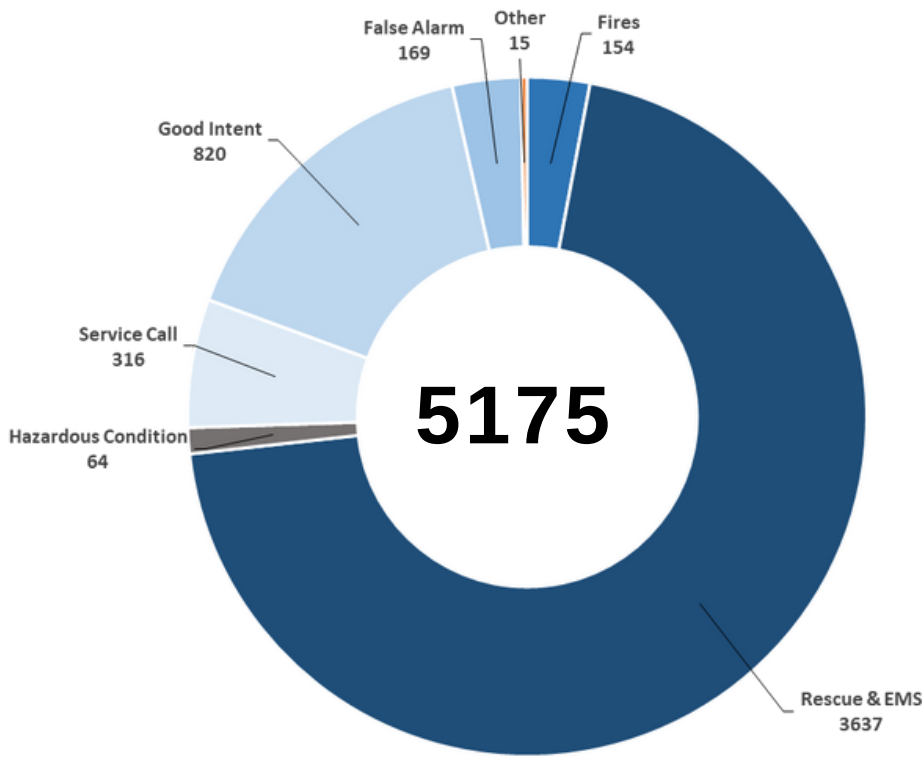


Fire District 3 operates from five strategically placed fire stations located throughout the Fire District that provide service to approximately 46,000 residents. Four of these stations are staffed twenty-four hours a day and provide advanced and basic life support services in addition to fire response. Fire District 3 had a 5% increase in call volume from 2022 (4,917) compared to 2023 (5,175) incidents. The Fire District's call volume increased an average of 4.3% over the last 7 years. This illustrates an increasing demand for services.



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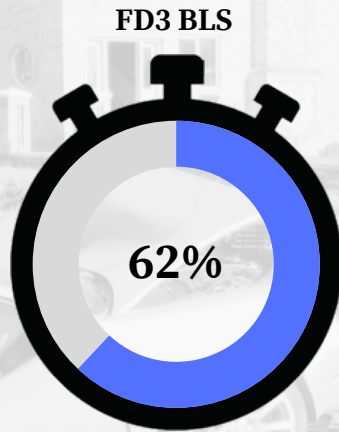
INCIDENTS BY TYPE:



EMERGENT VS. NON-EMERGENT RESPONSES:



STANDARD OF COVER



62%

1st Basic Life Support (BLS) unit arrives in less than 6 minutes - 62% of calls

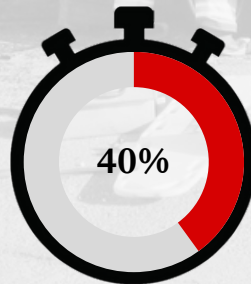
Average for FD3 for 1st unit arrival: 5 min. 49 sec.

Best practice: 90%

3297

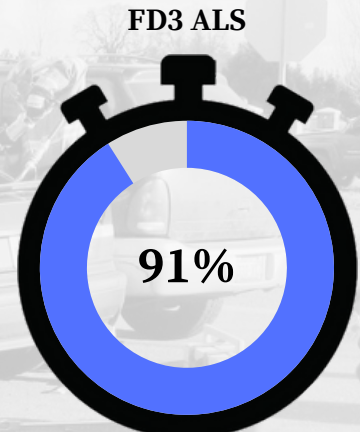
Emergent EMS Incidents

AMR ALS



40%

Advanced Life Support arrives on scene in less than 8 minutes on 40% of incidents utilizing AMR

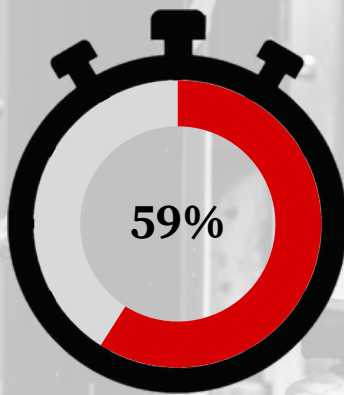


91%

Advanced Life Support (ALS) arrives in less than 8 minutes - 91% of calls with FD3 Paramedic

Average for FD3 ALS unit arrival: 5 min. 56 sec.

Best practice: 90%



59%

1st unit arrives in less than 6 minutes - 59% of calls

FD3 average for 1st unit arrival: 6 min. 06 sec.

Best practice: 90%

61

Structure fires



26%

Full alarm assignment arrives in less than 9 minutes - 26% of calls

FD3 average for full alarm assignment: 9 min. 38 sec.

Best practice: 90%



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TRAINING



Fire District 3 recognizes training as a key component of operational readiness. Training is designed to meet the strategic and tactical needs of the Fire District and community while developing the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities to meet the challenges of emergency response. Training is vetted through multiple external sources that align with Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 296-305 Safety Standards for Fire Fighters, Washington Survey and Ratings Bureau (WSRB), International Fire Service Accreditation Congress (IFSAC) National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), local, state, and federal mandates. Emergency Medical Services training is built around recognized national, state and county requirements that are driven and delivered by the Clark County Medical Program Director (MPD).

EMS training addresses advanced and basic life support. Additional training resources include online learning platforms, company-based hands-on training, multi-company operations, and mutual aid training. Recognizing certifications play a vital role, Fire District 3 has placed a high emphasis on obtaining certifications. Certifications are essential in determining the minimum number of annual training hours needed for personnel. This allows for intermediate and advanced training opportunities. 2023 combined fire and EMS training hours totaled 10,845 hours, equating to approximately 217 formal training hours per firefighter.



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EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES (EMS)



Fire District 3 provides Advanced Life Support (ALS) and Basic Life Support (BLS) services to our community. Our personnel are trained to the highest national, state, and local standards. Fire District 3 employs Firefighter Paramedics and EMTs. Firefighter Paramedics are trained to provide advanced cardiac care, airway support, and medication administration. Our Firefighter EMTs are trained to BLS standards and provide ALS assistance. Utilizing advanced emergency medical equipment, practices, and technologies, coupled with rapid response, provides optimal patient outcomes increasing survivability in critical emergency incidents. In 2023 Fire District 3 was recognized by the Clark County Medical Program Director for cardiac arrest survival rates over a two-month period for multiple code saves.

Recognizing the need for rapid response, Fire District 3 recognizes squads as a critical component of daily operations.

Squads are the primary response apparatus for emergency medical services. Squads are Ford F-450 and F-550 vehicles equipped to handle both ALS and BLS type incidents as well as initial fire suppression. Squad apparatus allow crews to gain access into locations that would otherwise be difficult for a fire engine. Using appropriate apparatus for call types decreases response time and allowing crews to arrive faster on-scene. Ambulance service is provided by American Medical Response (AMR) and are staffed with one paramedic and one EMT. To alleviate increasing demands for EMS service Fire District 3 is researching alternative methods to allow crews to clear non-emergent call types. Various pilot programs have been implemented within Clark County including Nurse Navigation (implemented 2023), BLS Ambulances through AMR (2023), and a Community Assistance Referral and Education Service (CARES) program (still in pilot phase until June 2024).



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COMMUNITY RISK REDUCTION



The mission of the Fire Marshal's Office is to protect lives, property, and the environment through fire prevention.

This is accomplished through existing occupancy inspections, new construction services, public education, code enforcement, and fire investigation.

Existing Occupancy Inspections:

Fire District 3 Inspectors are responsible to inspect, for fire and life safety violations, all commercial buildings and multi-family dwellings within the City of Battle Ground.

Public Education Programs:

Fire prevention and safety is a team effort between our community and our fire prevention team. We offer education programs to teach fire safety and prevention to children, seniors, and local businesses in our community.

Fire Investigation:

Fire District 3 Investigators have extensive training and experience in fire dynamics, evidence collection, and fire pattern analysis. Fire Investigators work with firefighters and law enforcement to determine the origin and cause of fires.

New Construction Services:

Plans all new city site development, building construction, and fire systems are reviewed for code compliance by Certified Fire Plans Examiners.



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COMMUNITY RISK REDUCTION

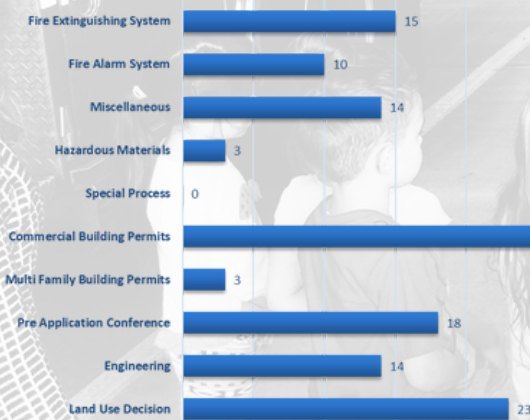
138

Plan Reviews Conducted

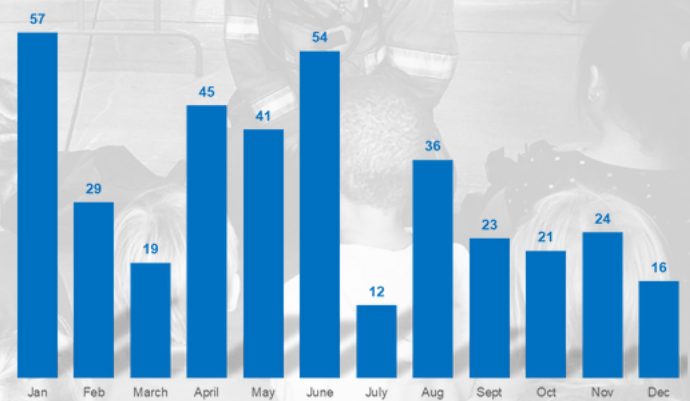
377

Businesses Inspected

Fire Permits Issued - New Development



2023 Existing Occupancy Inspections



15

Fire Investigations

146

Public Education Events

Other Services Provided:

- CPR Training
- School Visits
- Wildfire Risk Assessments
- Smoke Alarm Installation
- Open Houses
- Fire Extinguisher Training
- Station Tours
- Youth Firesetter Intervention



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LOGISTICS



Fire District 3's apparatus and standardization program is committed to limiting costly maintenance, service repairs, and apparatus being out of service. In 2023, two new fire engines were outfitted and placed in-service at Station 31 and Station 33. These new engines replaced two of our oldest engines that are now in reserve status for training and backup. We surplused our previous reserve engines that were purchased in 1992.

Fire District 3's fire engines are on a 20 year replacement cycle per industry standards. After 20 years of service they are moved to reserve status then surplused after 25 years. Newer apparatus translates into having the latest technology and safety features that we can rely on to safely respond to our ever increasing demand for service.

Our apparatus replacement process is part of an ongoing planning process that includes the needs identified in our strategic planning.

Looking forward, we have identified the need to purchase a new Squad, Command Vehicle and Ambulance. These will be replacing existing vehicles close to, or at, the end of their service cycle.

The new ambulance in particular will be replacing our current Medic 31, a 2001 Ford Econoline with over 156,000 miles. The new ambulance will have up-to-date technology and safety features capable of reaching, treating, and transporting patients in an urban interface environment.



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NEW HIRES, PROMOTIONS & RETIREMENTS



Assistant Chief
Barbara Widlund
(Retired 2023)



Firefighter
Ethan Marshall
(Hired 2023)



Division Chief
Jason Mansfield
(Promoted 2023)



Battalion Chief
Andrew Blomdahl
(Promoted 2023)



Training Captain
Rob Moon
(Promoted 2023)



Training Captain
Josh Alexander
(Promoted 2023)



LOOKING AHEAD



In order to ensure we are sufficiently meeting the needs of our growing community, Fire District 3 works under a formal strategic plan that is evaluated and updated regularly.

Our strategic plan has identified the following core needs:

- Additional personnel and updated facilities are required to provide 24-hour staffing at all stations, meet operational safety standards, and reduce response times.
- A new ambulance is necessary to improve patient survival rates.
- Enhanced firefighter/paramedic training shall be required to ensure optimal state of readiness is achieved.
- Additional funding is required to keep up with the growth of our service area and call volume.

We are currently struggling to maintain the level and quality of emergency services that our community requires.

Fire District 3 has the second lowest tax rate in the County. Revenue is not keeping up with the cost to provide service. Costs are increasing almost 6% a year, but we are limited to a 1% revenue increase. Voters turned down a fire levy lid lift in 2023 and that is impacting the service we can provide. Two firefighter/paramedics left our fire district and we cannot afford to fill those positions. EMS protocols have changed to improve survival rates and additional revenue is needed for the medical equipment and training.

Fire District 3 will turn to the voters again in 2024 for consideration of a fire levy lid lift that will be necessary to provide the service the community expects and deserves.



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