South Area Fire & Emergency Response District

ANNUAL REPORT 2022



2022 SAFER ANNUAL REPORT CONTENTS

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INTRODUCTION – JOSH FINKE, FIRE CHIEF

On behalf of the SAFER District, I am happy to submit the 2022 annual report. I would like to first thank the entire district for facing the challenges of the fire service over the past twelve months. Also, to the administrative staff for their continued dedication to making the district run on a daily basis. Our firefighters, EMTs, and Paramedics serve each day to bring a high level of safety and service delivery to the communities that we serve. The district did see a significant change in its leadership roles in 2022, with the appointment of a new fire chief and deputy fire chief early in the year.

During 2022 the district was able to secure several significant grants to obtain equipment that would have otherwise been purchased solely by local tax monies. This will have a significant positive impact on our capital funding moving forward over the next several years. The district continues to have a strong positive working environment with our labor management group which has been very successful in setting multiple policies in the past year.

I am both honored and proud to serve in a leadership role for the fire district and feel that the future of our district has never looked better. I believe that the next several years will come with some great positivity and growth. Please take some time to review the reports developed by fire district leadership, we would be more than happy to address any questions you may have.

Respectfully,

Joshua J Finke

Joshua J. Finke
Fire Chief

PERSONNEL & STAFFING REPORT

ADMINISTRATION

Fire Chief
Joshua Finke



Deputy Fire Chief
Eric Lang



Administrative Assistant
Cher Latimer



EMS Division Chief
Kelly Bremer



Fire Marshal
Marty Christiansen



BLUE SHIFT

Battalion Chief Evan McBain



Captain Chris Klapoetke



Lieutenant Bruce Bartus



Engineer Jason Brandt



Engineer Bob Schultz



FF Stephen Britton



Aux FF Bob Pound



FF Ben Nelson



FF Matt Isakson



FF John Hanson



<u>Not Pictured</u>

FF Paul Rheinschmidt
FF Chris Larsen
FF Stephen Haas

RED SHIFT

Battalion Chief John Lauer



Captain Glynn Novak



Lieutenant Andy Lohman



Engineer Kristy Chula



Engineer Cody Ewan



FF Landon Franck



FF Idongesit Ukpong



FF Kyle Borchardt



FF Cally Gordon



FF Austin Landowski



FF Blake Lepel



<u>Not Pictured</u>

FF Casey Bielen

GREEN SHIFT

Battalion Chief Stephen Genrich



Captain Mark Meyers



Lieutenant Mike Zellner



Engineer Amy Breit



Engineer Ben Riesterer



FF Dan Stanchik



FF Jackie Swatloski



FF Andrea Reede



FF Ryan Haessly



FF Jake Kolb



FF Matt Robinson



FF Noah Flann



Not Pictured

FF Chris Passow
FF Ethan Cordova
FF Zach Ihle

INTER-FACILITY TRANSFER STAFF

EMT Darin Westover



Critical Care Paramedic Tim Stieve



RN Tracy Parlier



Paramedic/Physician
Mignon Rademan



<u>Not Pictured</u>

RN Christina Wimmer
RN Steve Baltzell
RN Rachel Isakson
RN Mindy Diedrich
RN Sherri Esslinger



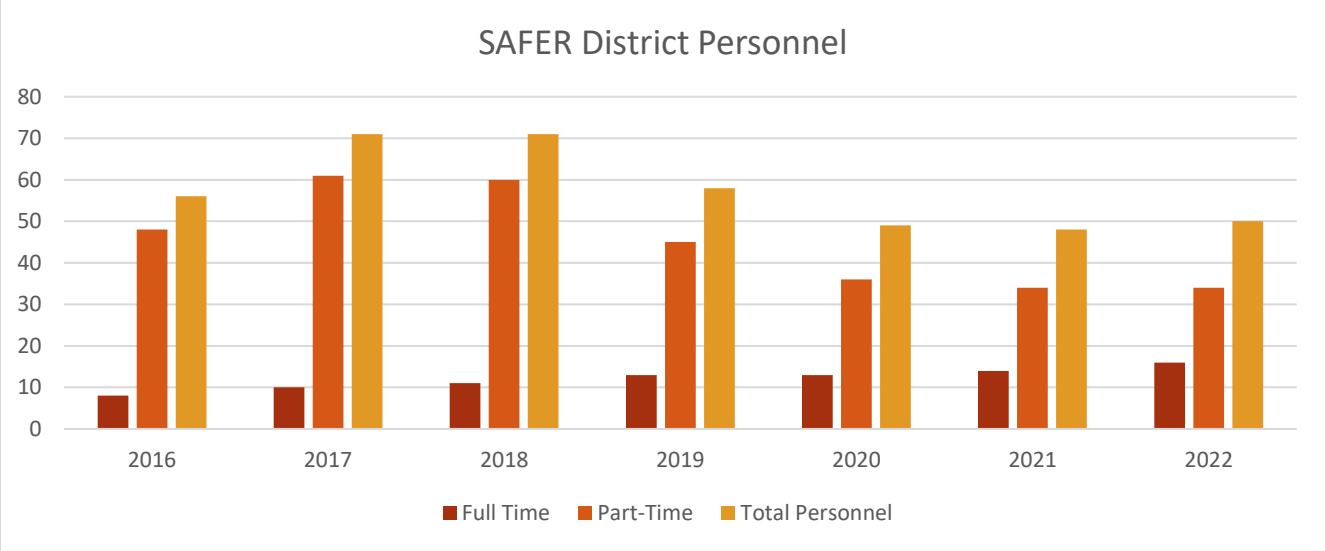
STAFFING REPORT

In 2022 and early 2023 the district lost a total of 11 staff. Of those, 4 were retirements from the fire district, with 2 members who will continue to serve the community through our inter-facility transport services. 1 member was lost to a career fire department (Marshfield) in 2022 with an additional 1 member lost to a career fire department (Wausau) in early 2023. The remaining 3 lost members in 2022 and 2 lost members in early 2023 were due to resignations for a variety of reasons including; moving out of state for college, moving out of state for different opportunities, time commitment, and others.

Staffing shifts in 2022 remained a challenge for district administration. The 2022 staffing model had 7 individuals on duty 24 hours per day working a California style schedule (24-on, 24-off, 24-on, 24-off, 24-on, 96-off) with a minimum of 6 personnel on duty. Of those 6-7 personnel, 4 are career, full-time positions, 2 are non-benefited with full-time hours positions, and 1 is filled by relying on part-time staff availability.

In order to assure staffing of 6 per day, we rely on an ever-shrinking part-time staff and overtime (voluntary and forced) for our full-time and majority-time staff. Additionally, salaried administrative staff work shifts to decrease overtime costs and help with morale. A 2022 staffing analysis showed 256 mandated overtime hours and 301 voluntary overtime hours for officer positions alone, with a budget impact of over $18,000 and an overall overtime impact of nearly $60,000.00. An audit of the first half of 2022, or the first 182 days, showed 24 days missing at least one 24-hour employee and an additional 73 days that the schedule was not full. This equates to the days being fully staffed only 53% of the time as we find it increasingly difficult to cover openings with part-time staff.

NFPA 1720: *Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Volunteer Fire Departments*, states that we should have a minimum of 10 firefighters on fire scenes within 10 minutes, 80% of the time. In order to attempt to meet this standard, we rely on off-duty response and mutual aid. When we look at increased staffing during the day with administration and disregard actual staffing with EMS units out, we only meet this standard about 30% of the time.



Staffing Lost

2022
FF Jenna Madson – Resignation (Marshfield FD)
Fire Chief Matt Savage – Retirement
FF Kathy Fritsch – Retirement
Captain Dan Conrad – Resignation (time)
EMR Deann Meis – Resignation (time)
FF Andrew Tischer – Resignation (college)
Captain Tim Stieve – Retirement to IFT staff
Captain Darin Westover – Retirement to IFT Staff

Early 2023
FF Zach Ihle – Resignation (Wausau FD)
BC John Lauer – Resignation/Retirement
FF Matt Robinson – Resignation (relocated)

Staffing Hired

2022
Captain Chris Klapoetke
FF Blake Lepel
FF Stephen Haas
FF Ethan Cordova
RN Mindy Diedrich
FF Noah Flann
FF John Hanson
RN Sherri Esslinger
Paramedic/MD Mignon Rademan

Early 2023
Captain Glynn Novak
FF Casey Bielen



2022 EMPLOYEE AWARD RECIPIENTS

In 2022 SAFER started an employee recognition program with the creation of three awards that will be nominated by their peers and voted on by the officer group. The three awards are; Firefighter Service Commendation, EMS Service Commendation, and the Leadership Award. The recipients of the two commendations are awarded commendation bars to display on their uniforms and their names on a plaque displayed at station 1 while the recipient of the leadership award is given a glass plaque. The qualifications each award recipient is held to, and the recipients are as follows:

EMS Service Commendation
The EMS Service Commendation Bar is awarded to an individual who is nominated by their peers and chosen by the SAFER District Officers, who consistently characterizes the values of the district while operating as an Emergency Medical Technician or Paramedic during responses, training, and public relations.

Firefighter Service Commendation
The Firefighter Service Commendation Bar is awarded to an individual who is nominated by their peers and chosen by the SAFER District Officers, who consistently characterizes the values of the District while operating as a Firefighter during responses, training, and public relations.

Excellence in Leadership Award
The Excellence in Leadership Award is awarded annually to an individual who is nominated by their peers and chosen by the SAFER District Officers, who shows exemplary leadership skills either on or off of emergency scenes. This award is NOT limited to those in an officer position.

Captain Mark Meyers



Leadership Award



Engineer Kristy Chula



FF Service Commendation



FF Jake Kolb



EMS Service Commendation





EMS DIVISION REPORT – KELLY BREMER, EMS DIVISION CHIEF

In 2022 the SAFER Fire District provided emergency medical services (EMS) to eight different communities, including The Village of Weston, the Town of Rib Mountain, and six contract areas. The district responded to 3393 EMS calls throughout the year. The breakdown of these calls is noted in the tables below. In addition to running 911 and interfacility calls, SAFER also provided standby at events such as State Park Speedway, the 525 track, Balloon Fest, Country Fest, and Rock Fest. In 2022 SAFER averaged a chute time (from time of the page by county dispatch until ambulance en-route to the call) of 72 seconds, beating our District goal of 90 seconds.

SAFER maintains staffing at both locations at a Paramedic level with the ability to staff three ambulances as needed. In 2022 SAFER paramedics were trained in the use of prehospital ultrasound, this new skill will improve care on cardiac arrest calls. Additionally, SAFER upgraded our ventilator for interfacility transports. With funding received in 2022, we were also able to order new cardiac monitors for each ambulance with anticipation of getting these monitors in service in 2023.

2022 challenged the SAFER EMS providers with the continuation of COVID-19. Call volume increased, supply shortages were extensive, and crews had to ensure they were protecting themselves. SAFER EMS providers rose to the challenge and overcame these obstacles.

Respectfully,

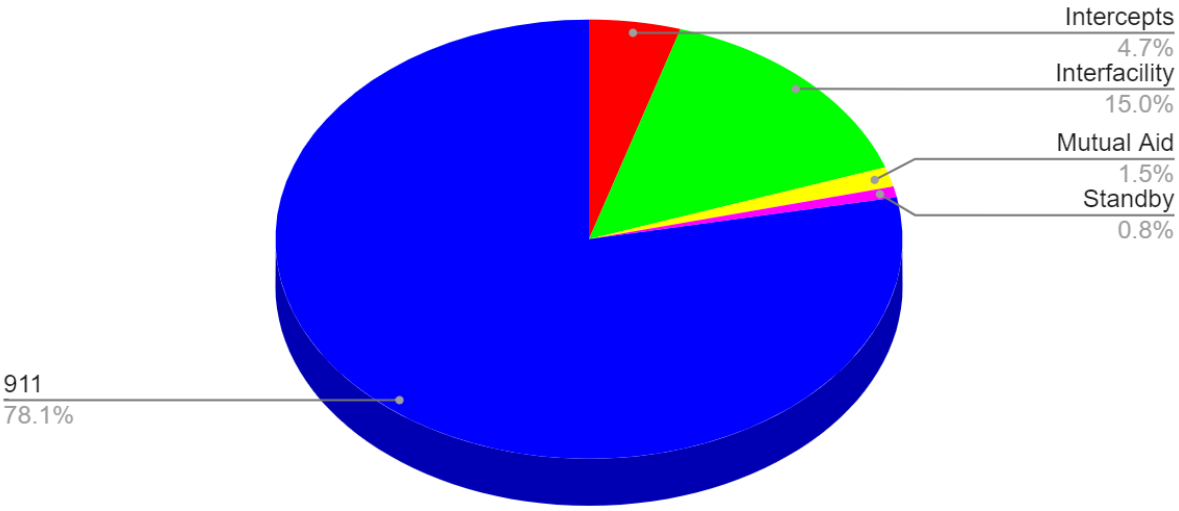
Kelly Bremer

Kelly Bremer
EMS Division Chief

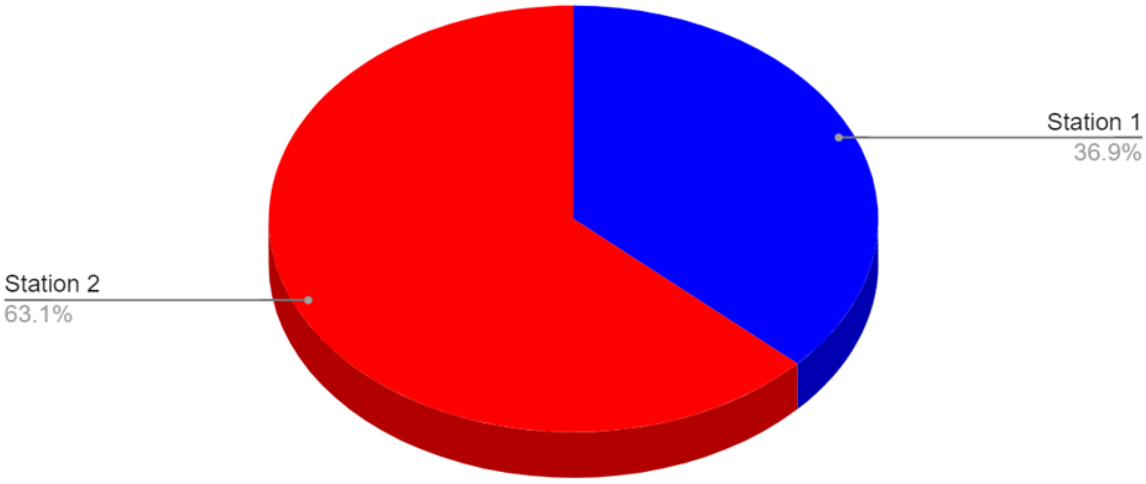


2022 EMS RESPONSE DATA

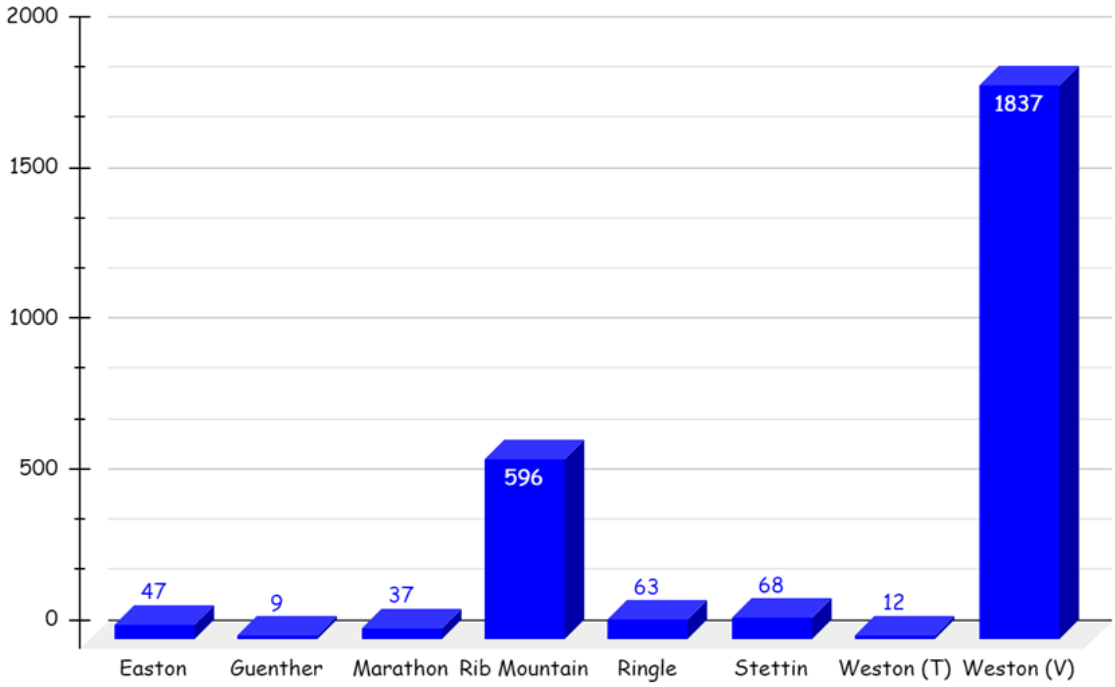
EMS CALLS



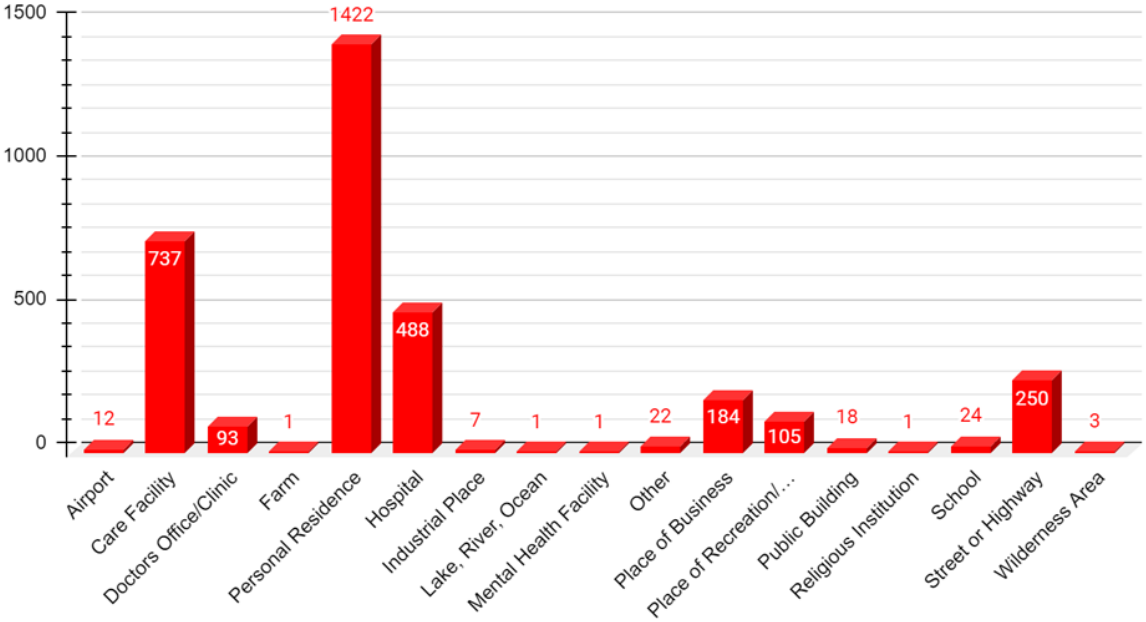
CALLS BY STATION



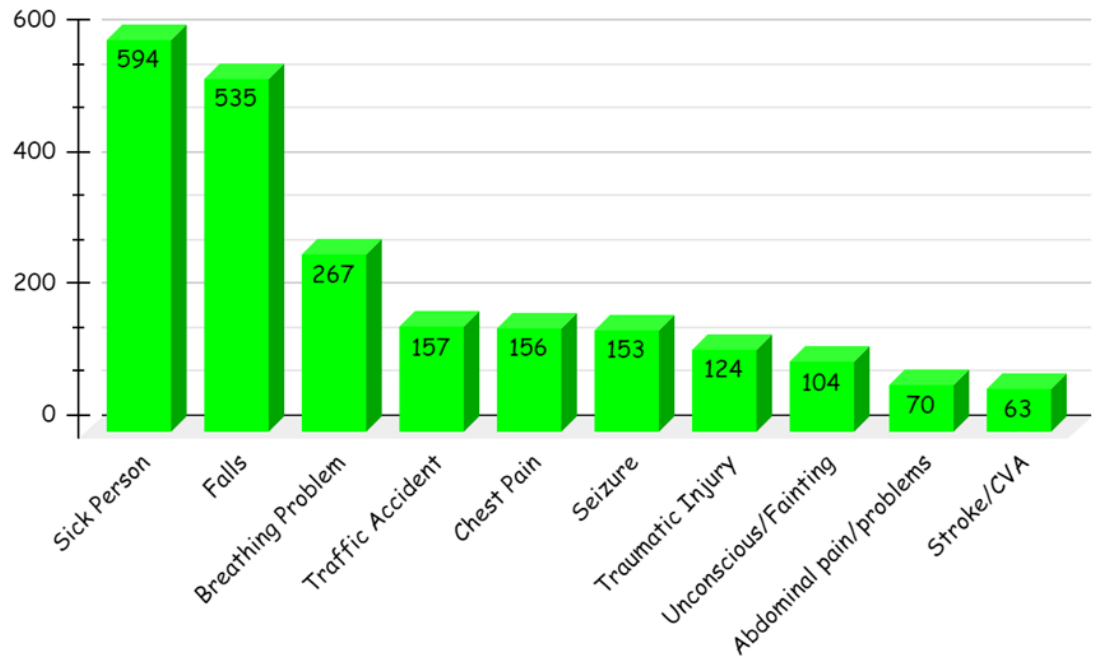
CALLS BY MUNICIPALITY



LOCATION TYPE



Top 10 Dispatch Reasons



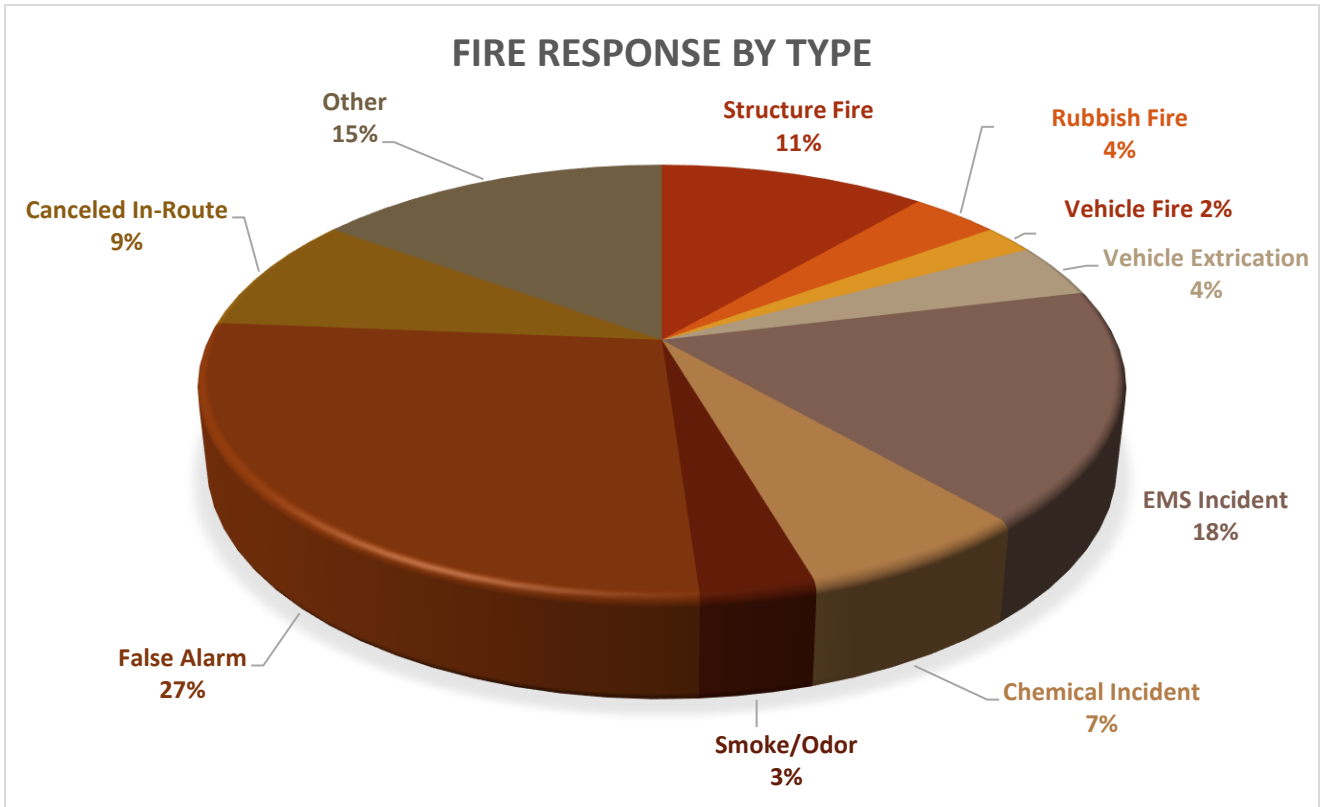




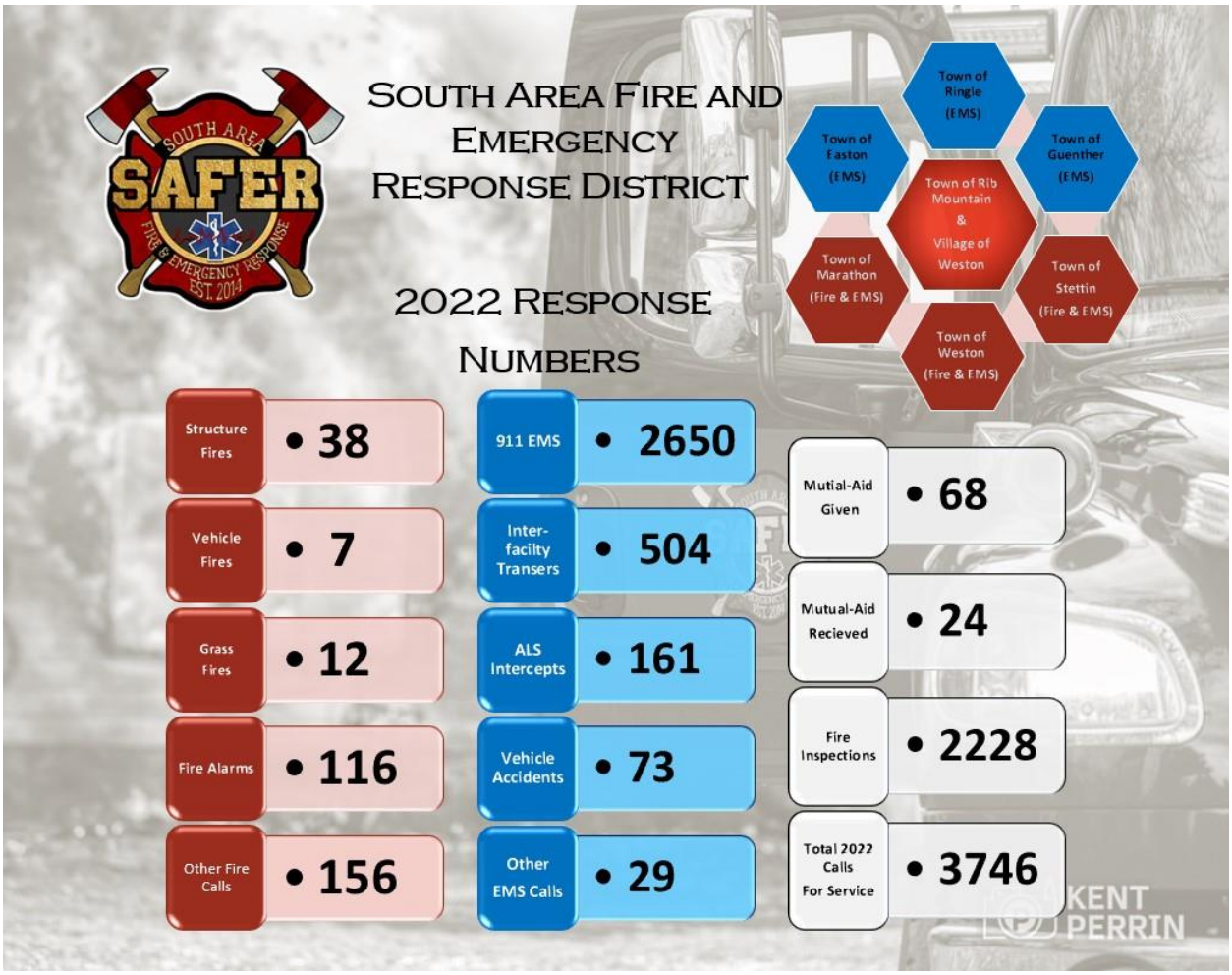


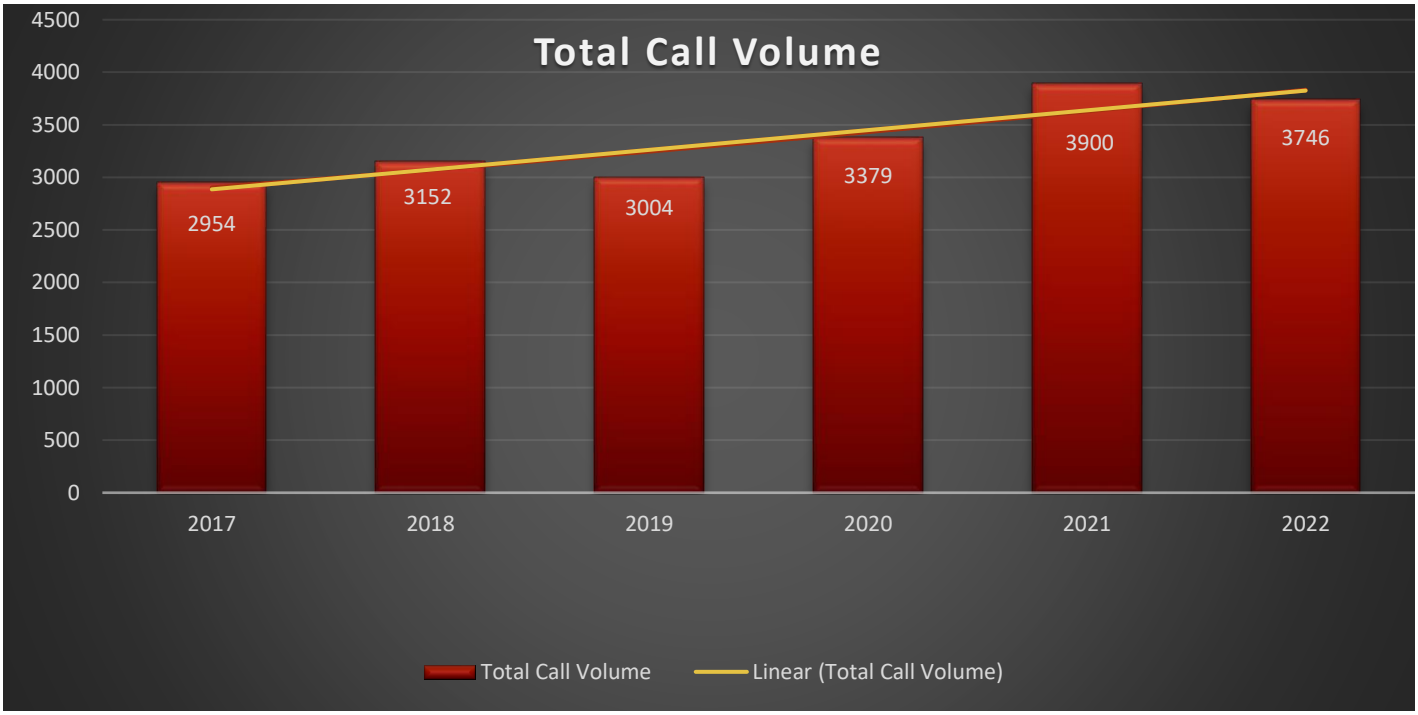
2022 FIRE RESPONSE DATA

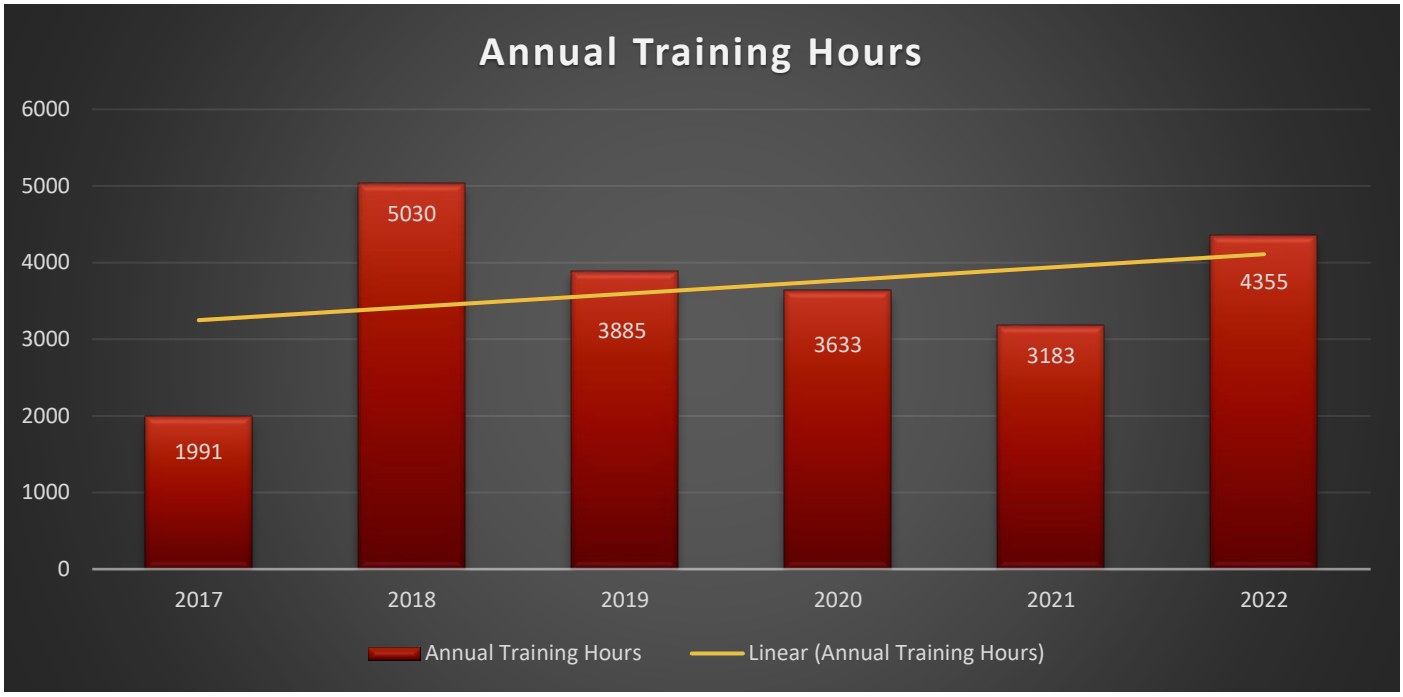




2022 TOTAL ACTIVITY DATA







FIRE INSPECTIONS REPORT – MARTY CHRISTIANSEN, FIRE MARSHALL

In 2022 we only had one occupancy still dealing with Covid 19 lockdowns and restrictions which challenged our ability to do inspections as usual. We sent them the required check list to conduct themselves and allowing them the ability to conduct inspections while taking appropriate precautions in the best interest of the fire inspectors, business, occupants, and/or residents of a facility. The Facility did return the form and was inspected as normal in the second round.

This year we continued using the current inspection software to do fire inspections, as well as pre-plans, for each occupancy in the fire district. We have had some problems getting good inspection feedback numbers out of the software and problems with missing information which we are still working through with the software company. We have also looked at some alternative software we can use that some of our neighboring fire departments are using and comes highly recommended.

Last year I had a part-time inspector that was helping get reinspects completed which helped greatly in getting them done in a timely manner. At the end of the year, he retired and this year we will be trying to utilize the part-time staff to complete these inspections.

Inspections

In 2022 we conducted 72 inspections for new, expanding, or moving occupancies for the Town of Rib Mountain and Village of Weston. Each occupancy required several pre-construction meetings and several site inspections during the buildout process. Sprinkler system testing, alarm testing, kitchen hood suppression systems, and elevators all require a test to be witnessed by the district before going into service and may require multiple trips to accomplish the job. Knox

boxes, FDC connections, and related sprinkler equipment need multiple inspections to make sure they are placed in the correct place before the job gets too far or finished. Rib Mountain had 17 new businesses and Weston had 25, 1 expansion for Rib Mountain, and 5 for Weston. Weston had 6 businesses move within the Village and Rib Mountain had 2. Weston added 4 subdivision/apartment complex developments and Rib Mountain had 1. The Village of Weston finished and moved into the new Municipal Building on Camp Phillips Rd.

The SAFER District now has 1,075 occupancies to inspect; 275 in Rib Mountain, 756 in Weston, 30 in Stettin, 14 in the Town of Marathon, and 1 in the Town of Weston. For a total of 2228 inspections.

Training

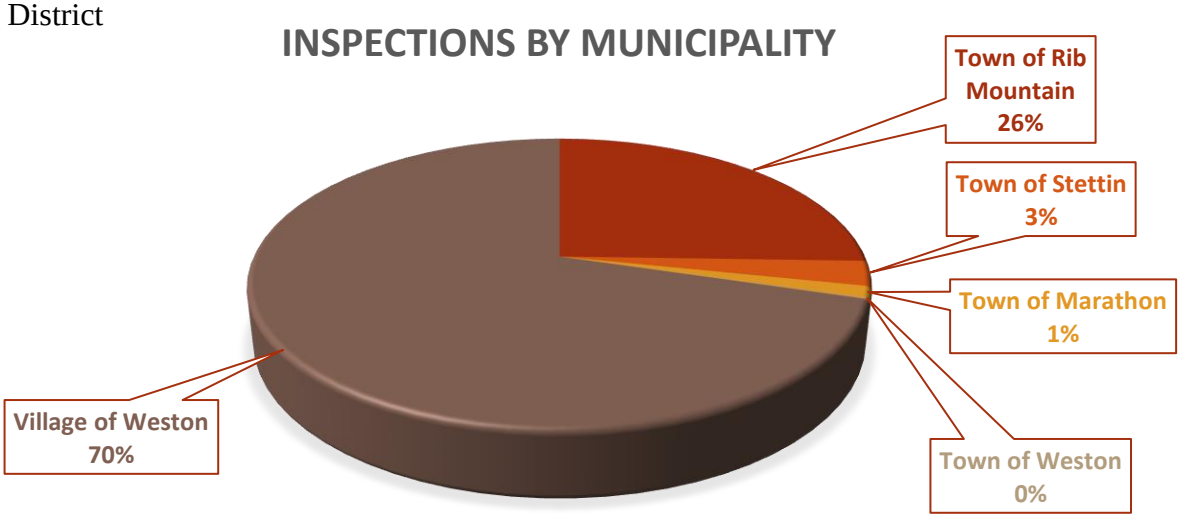
As in past years, we continue with two weeks of company fire inspection training in the spring and fall company inspections of new, unusual, and larger industrial facilities in the district that are conducted with the duty crews. Training on inspection software for fire inspections will continue so reinspections can be completed by shift personnel.

I also continued my involvement in the Area 9 Fire Prevention Group which meets quarterly for inspector training topics and networking. The 2022 Inspectors Conference was held in Green Bay. I attended classes that included; batteries for cars and other electronics (and the fire and disposal problems associated with them), alarm system inspections, and food truck inspections. I also attended the IKECA Commercial Kitchen Exhaust System Cleaning, Maintenance, and Inspection conference featuring educational sessions for inspectors and technicians which included networking and a trade show with industry exhibitors.

Respectfully

Martin Christiansen

Martin Christiansen
Fire Marshal/FF/EMT-I
SAFER District



FIRE/RESCUE DIVISION REPORT – EVAN MCBAIN, BATTALION CHIEF



In May, fire district staff traveled to Terre Haute, IN for initial training, and to take delivery of a custom-made rescue hovercraft. This machine is incredibly unique and unlike any other rescue craft in this part of the state. It is powered by a 65hp two-stroke ultralight aircraft engine. It can effectively travel across land, open or fast-moving water, deep mud, snow, or thin ice and provides a stable and safe platform for performing a victim rescue on any of these surfaces. Driving, or "piloting" the hovercraft cannot be compared to anything else, and because of that, it takes a significant amount of time and practice to become proficient with it. Fire District staff continue to train with the new hovercraft and we have emphasized doing that training in different weather conditions and on various surfaces.



Since the creation of the district in 2014, each station has housed a high-pressure breathing air compressor system, used for refilling breathing air cylinders after they are used at fire scenes or during training. These units are commonly referred to as cascade systems. The cascade system at station 1 was approximately 25 years old and was no longer functional. The cascade system at station 2 was approximately 20 years old and was still functioning, but needed to have the valves inside the compressor head replaced. Early in 2022, the decision was made to consolidate and replace both cascade systems with a single, new cascade system that was installed at station 2 in October. Rescue 12 also contains a mobile air storage system that allows for refilling air bottles while at fire scenes. This system was overhauled and upgraded in 2022, which allows us to carry more capacity at higher pressures and ultimately gives us the ability to refill more SCBA cylinders before having to return to station 2 and refill the system. The new system is capable of refilling an empty breathing air cylinder in approximately 3 minutes and should provide many years of reliable service to the fire district.

Mid-year we were able to replace our entire inventory of life vests which are worn by crews at water rescue incidents. The new life vests are equipped with built-in attachment points to secure the rescuer to a rope or tether and water-activated strobe lights which automatically turn on if a

rescuer unexpectedly falls in the water. Some of the life vests that were replaced were as old as 1986 when the Weston Fire Department was first started.

Early in 2022, the district was able to obtain 8 MSA lunar devices. The lunar device is a handheld wireless thermal imaging camera that is attached to the airpacks on engine 11 and engine 21. All 8 lunar devices are wirelessly linked to each other as well. In the event of a lost or down firefighter, the lunar device will go into alarm mode and send distance and direction information to the other 7 devices, helping to guide other firefighters to the location of the firefighter who needs assistance. Staff continues to do periodic training with these devices to stay proficient at using the search function.



Respectfully,

Evan McBain

Evan McBain
Battalion Chief – Blue Shift

TRAINING DIVISION REPORT – STEPHEN GENRICH, BATTALION CHIEF

My name is Battalion Chief Steve Genrich the new Training officer here at SAFER Fire District. I have been appointed as the new leader of the training division due to the promotion of Battalion Chief Eric Lang to Deputy Chief of the district. I am new to the position of training officer, but I hope to build upon the program and quality of training that we have accomplished throughout Deputy Chief Lang's tenure as the training officer. I am being assisted by Captain Mark Meyers and the rest of the training committee with Captain Meyers being responsible for the district's 6-week probationary training academy. Together we have many years of experience as instructors for Northcentral Technical College and Midstate Technical College. We will put our experience and skills together to make this training program great.

In 2022 we made some slight changes to our training schedule. This included utilizing any available time in the morning for special trainings, such as Hovercraft piloting and rescue, Ventilator management, and Ultrasound training. The time utilized was after daily (vehicle checks, cleaning, and medication checks) were completed. By doing this, it left the normal 13:00 hrs. training time for our regular fire and EMS training.

In 2022 crews were given the opportunity to gain training during daily drills, through organized classes taught by outside instructors, and by sending members to training events. One such class we were able to host at Station 1 was called HAZMAT ACLS. This class taught us how to take

care of critically ill patients at HAZMAT incidents. We have also had many opportunities for our members to go to outside trainings that only help to improve our member's skills. When our members go to these outside trainings they come back with knowledge and skills that they share with our staff on the topics they have learned. "The Art of Reading Smoke" is one of the topics that comes to mind as a training I attended with other members of the district.

During the year we also had 2 live fire trainings. These were conducted at 150518 County Road NN in the Town of Rib Mountain and 8111 Birch Street in the Village of Weston. These live fire trainings are crucial to firefighter training in today's fire service. There is no better fire suppression training than live fire training to give members experience with fire in modern constructed structures.

The remainder of this report gives a breakdown of the training topics and the training hours related to those topics. In 2022 we completed a combined total of approximately 4355 hours of training. Of that, approximately 2984 hours were EMS Training, 1257 hours were Fire/Rescue, and 114 were Officer Development, Leadership, and other topics

I would like to thank you for the opportunity to be the SAFER District Training Officer. It has been a tremendous learning experience for me and I hope that the training committee, Captain Meyers, and I can continue to make improvements and bring new ideas to the training program.

Thank you,

Steve Genrich

Steve Genrich
Battalion Chief – Green Shift
Training Officer



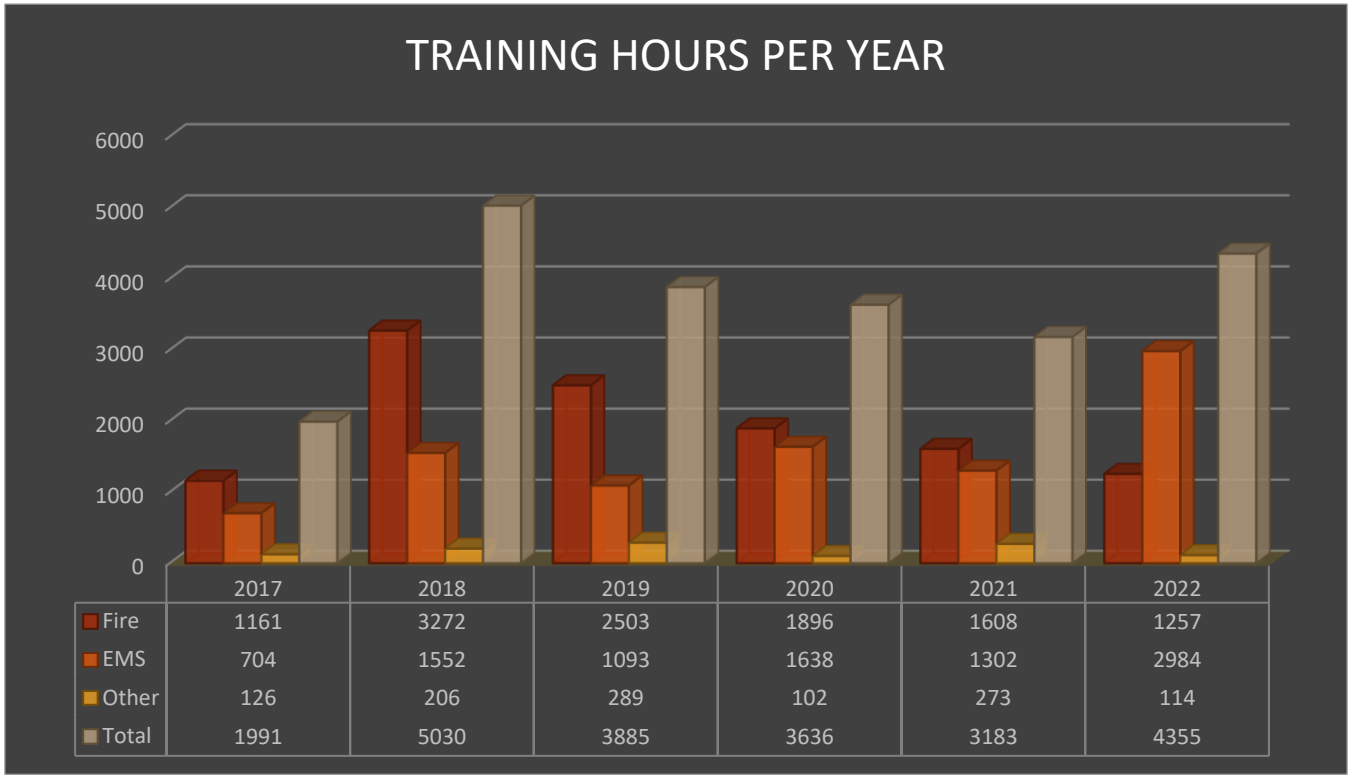


EMS	Hours
Trauma	245
Medications	147.25
Triage	91
EMS Ops	193.75
TEMS	36
AHA Classes	152.5
Yearly Competencies	26.5
Vent	138.5
Medical	152.5
Assessment	914.5
EKG	109
PEDS	131
Cardiac	190.75
OB	60
Documentation	85.5
Airway	24.75
BLS	172
CEVO	28
Specialty	85.75
	2984.25

FIRE	Hours
Command	17
Air Management	14
Engine Ops	74.5
Search and Rescue	119.5
RIT/MAYDAY	48.5
HAZMAT	43
Arson Investigation	6.5
Wildland Firefighting	7
Fire Attack	83.5
Fire Behavior	39
Tech Rescue	205.25
Water Rescue	85.5
Basic FF Skills	227
Aerial Ops	56
Live Fire	108
Fire Academy	42
Ice Rescue	64.5
ICS 400 Class	16
	1256.75

Other	Hours
Yearly Competencies	52
Online Training	6
Orientation	31
Legal	25
	114

2023 Total	Hours
EMS	2984.25
FIRE	1256.75
OTHER	114
	4355



HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT – JOHN LAUER, BATTALION CHIEF

2022 was a year of change including the promotion of Chief and Deputy Chief. With these changes came the placement of Battalion Chief John Lauer into the role of Safety Officer. During the past few months there have been advances in training and public outreach programs all in which focus on safety first. Upon the appointment of the new safety officer the decision was made to focus on duty injuries and delegate other non-injury related incidents to the appropriate disciplines such as vehicle maintenance and EMS and Fire related issues. With that said, 2022 was largely successful in terms of minimal injuries resulting in minimal compensation costs. In total there were 6 reported minor injuries that resulted in minimal loss of work time. All of these injuries have been reported on OSHAs Injury and Illness reporting system.

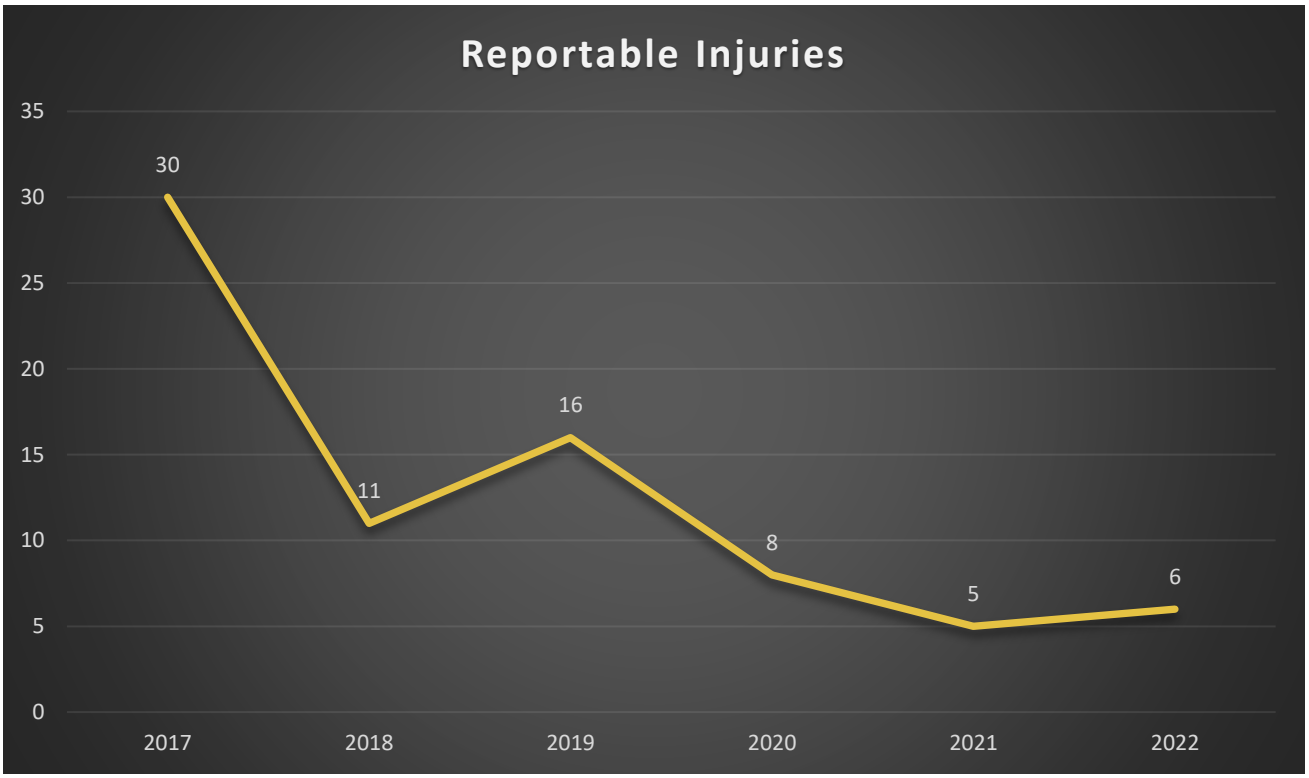
Starting this year SAFER has changed its insurance carrier to United Heartland and all on-the-job injuries will be handled through them as such.

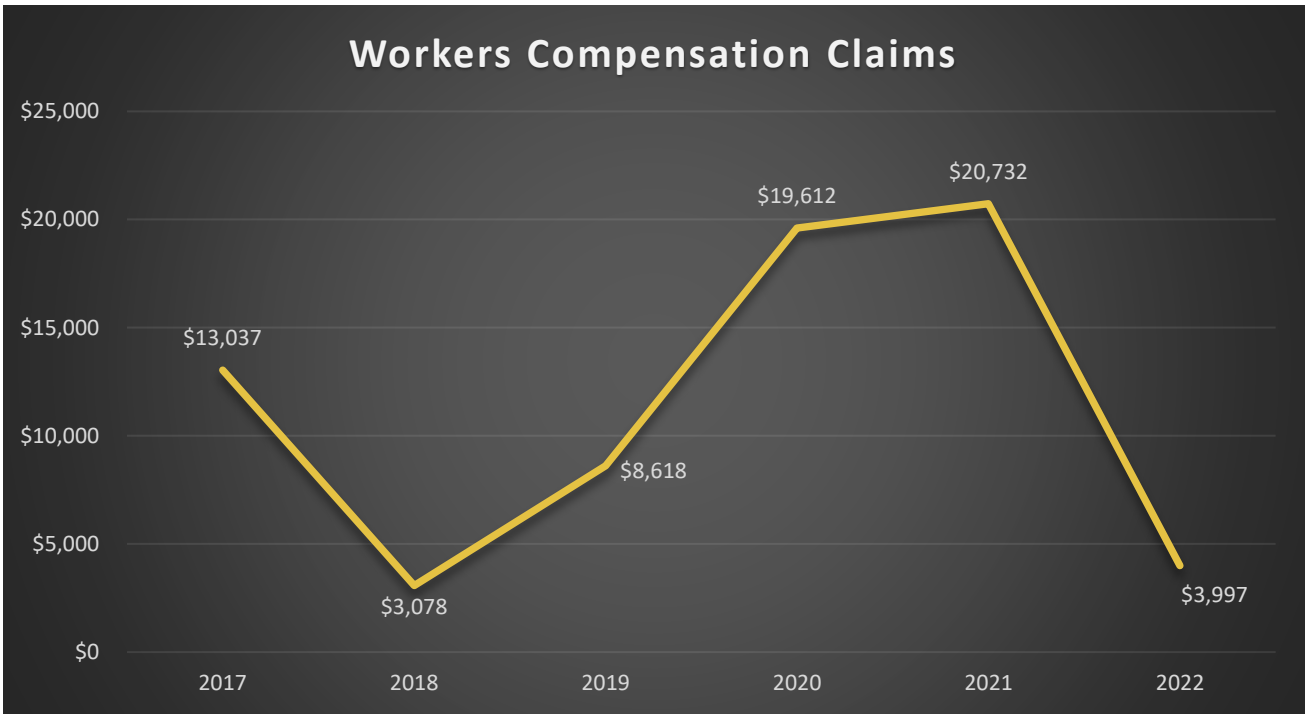
Respectfully

John Lauer

John Lauer
Battalion Chief – Red Shift
Safety Officer




Reportable Injuries
35
30
25
20
15
10
5
0
30
11
16
8
5
6
2017
2018
2019
2020
2021
2022


Workers Compensation Claims
$25,000
$20,000
$15,000
$10,000
$5,000
$0
$13,037
$3,078
$8,618
$19,612
$20,732
$3,997
2017
2018
2019
2020
2021
2022

PUBLIC RELATIONS REPORT – KRISTY CHULA, ENGINEER

2022 was a year of change for SAFER. This year we moved away from generalized fire education and adopted NFPA's Community Risk Reduction guidelines. The National Fire Protection Association defines Community Risk Reduction (CRR) as "programs, actions, and services used by a community which prevents or mitigates the loss of life, property, and resources associated with life safety, fire, and other disasters within a community." With this program, we can evaluate the needs of our community, target high-risk areas, and educate to prevent injury or the loss of life and property. By following NFPA standards for fire and life safety education, we use the same language and age-appropriate material that is used across the country. Using the education tools of NFPA, we have reached every age group with targeted messages. The CRR mentality allowed SAFER to reach and educate more people than in years past. Using the "remember when" program for older adults and the "learn not to burn" age-based approach for kids, SAFER was able to interact with over 4000 citizens.

Our social media still played a big part in getting our messages across. SAFER's social media presence reaches globally and has increased by 77.7% over the last year as we have thousands of people interacting on any given day. Utilizing these tools allows us to get emergency information to our community in real-time. SAFER continues to find new and unique ways to engage our community.



With the COVID restriction lifted, SAFER could hold station tours again. Throughout the year, SAFER conducted 38 station tours. Our biggest group had over 50 kids! These tours allow kids to interact with firefighters in hopes of reducing the fear and anxiety they can experience in an emergency. SAFER partnered with South Mountain and Rib Mountain Elementary to teach water safety while having a splash pad.



In 2022 we partnered with some amazing groups and brought awareness to some great causes. SAFER worked with Wausau Fire to raise $14617 for North Central Wisconsin Muscular Dystrophy Association. We also partnered with GiGi's Playhouse for their annual glow run and back-to-school tailgate helping them spread acceptance for down syndrome. With the help of the National Fire Safety Council, we raised enough money to purchase a new Sparky mascot. Everest Metro Police Department was a valuable resource allowing SAFER to partner with them for their annual bike rodeo and Halloween party. SAFER also worked closely with D.C. Everest School District, the Boy Scouts, and the Girl Scouts.

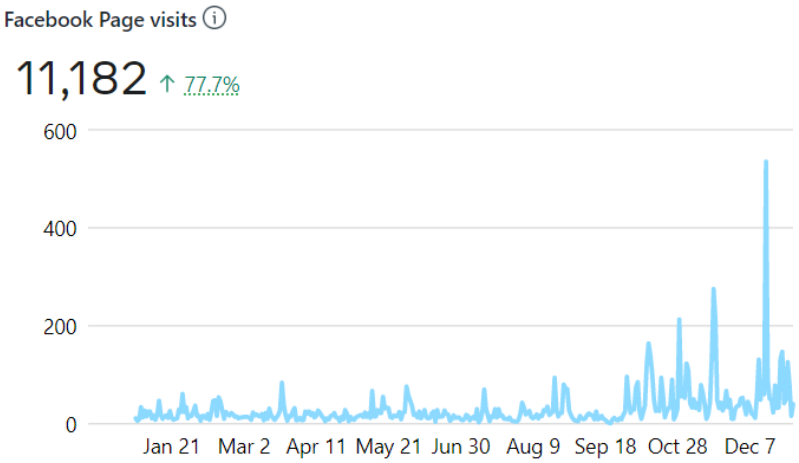
SAFER continues to seek partnerships throughout our community, allowing us to engage citizens, educate them, and reduce risks in our district.

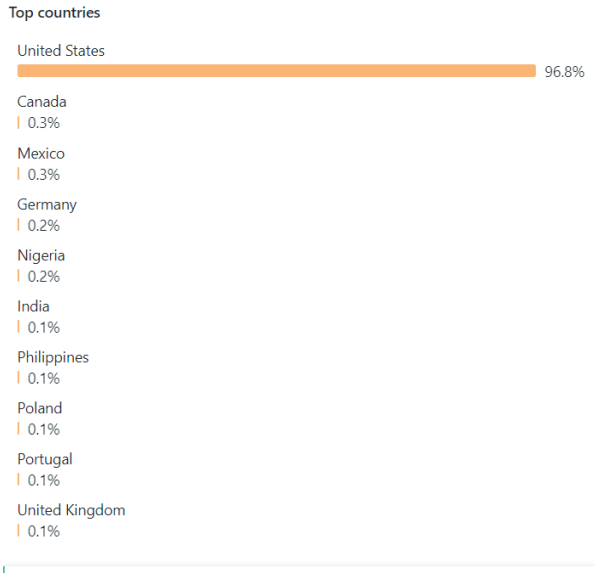
Respectfully,

Kristy Chula

Kristy Chula
Engineer – Red Shift
Community Risk Coordinator







FLEET INFORMATION

Station 1

Engine 11 – 2020 Custom Fire Pumper
Truck 11 – 1999 Pierce 100’ Platform
Rescue 12 – 2010 Marion Heavy Rescue
Tender 11 – 2006 Pierce 3000gal Tender
Med 11 – 2021 Type 1 Braun Ambulance
Med 12 – 2014 Type 3 PL Custom Ambulance
Med 13 – 2016 Type 3 Braun Ambulance
Medic 1 – 2016 Ford Interceptor
Brush 11 – 2010 Dodge 4500
Battalion 1 – 2019 Ford F150
Boat 11 – 2005 Zodiac
UTV – 2022 Intimidator
Car 1 (Chief) – 2017 Ford Expedition
Car 2 (Deputy Chief) – 2016 GMC Canyon
Car 3 (Fire Marshall) – 2022 Bronco Sport

Station 2

Engine 21 – 2020 Custom Fire Pumper
Rescue 21 – 2016 Custom Fire Pumper
Battalion 2 – 2016 Ford F150
Med 21 – 2020 Type 1 Braun Ambulance
Med 22 – 2019 Type 3 Braun Ambulance
Hovercraft – 2022 Neoteric
Brush 21 – 2020 Dodge 3500
UTV – 2021 Intimidator





CLOSING REMARKS – ERIC LANG, DEPUTY CHIEF

2022 was definitely a year of change for the district. We started with a change in administration with the appointment/promotion of Chief Finke, we continued to work through a rebranding campaign, and we followed that up by significantly reducing our future capital costs through grants while updating our fleet and larger capital purchases. Grant-funded purchases in 2022 included; duty lockers, cascade systems, a PPE extractor (washer), a PPE dryer, technical rescue equipment, a video conference system, fire training software, a ventilator, cardiac monitors, and a UTV with high-pressure skid. In total, we were able to divert over $489,929 in future capital costs. Additional capital future savings of $350,000 have been realized by the sale of the 2010 Pierce 75' quint to fund the purchase of an ambulance in 2024-2025.

Employee mental health and staff morale have been at the forefront in 2022. As such, Chief Finke actively sought out and identified a district Chaplin. We would like to welcome Father Greg Bohren of St. Agnes (Weston, WI) to the district. He has been interacting with our crews on shift and during functions to help out where he can. The administration continues to closely monitor calls and offer debriefs and mental health services to those employees who need them. We also continue to work on employee recognition as we recognized individuals for firefighter service, EMS service, and leadership awards at SAFER's first annual awards banquet.

We have realized many challenges along the way but we have persevered as we continue to provide exceptional service at a fiscally responsible rate. SAFER responded to over 3700 calls for service or an average of over 10 calls per day. Between those calls, our crews are participating in daily training, vehicle inspections and maintenance, station maintenance, and public relations activities. Staffing remains a hot topic as the City of Wausau expanded its ranks by 12 individuals, many coming from local adjacent services like SAFER. With fewer people to draw from, we strive to advertise our brand as often as possible to assure our future.

Thank you for looking through the pages of this document and allowing me, Chief Finke, and the remainder of the administration, officers, and staff at SAFER the opportunity to serve our communities. The support of the municipal boards, the SAFER Board of Directors, and the SAFER Fire Commission allow us to continue our pursuit of excellence in Fire, Rescue, and Emergency Medical response.

Respectfully

Eric A. Lang

Eric A. Lang
Deputy Fire Chief
SAFER District