

# Wausau Fire Department 2023 Annual Report



City of Wausau  
Katie Rosenberg, Mayor  
Becky McElhaney, Council President

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Wausau City Council

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First Aldermanic District

**MICHAEL MARTENS**

Second Aldermanic District

**TOM KILIAN**

Third Aldermanic District

**DOUG DINY**

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**William Graef**, Commissioner (4/24)

**Rick Reyer**, Commissioner (4/25)

**Kathy Strasser**, Commissioner (4/27)



**WAUSAU FIRE FIGHTER'S ASSOCIATION  
LOCAL 415**

**Adam Rahn**, President

**Maxxwel Nowitzke**, Vice President

**Cody Wiesman**, Secretary/Treasurer

**Shahn Kariger**, Member at Large





# Wausau Fire Department

## 2023 BY THE NUMBERS

<b>POPULATION</b> 39,833	<b>AREA SERVED</b> 19.22 Sq. Miles	<b>CALL VOLUME</b> 6,951	<b>UNIT RESPONSES</b> 9,741	<b>FIRE STATIONS</b> 3	<b>TOTAL PERSONNEL</b> 66 Ops / 8 Admin
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<b>STRUCTURE FIRES</b> 44 <b>VEHICLE FIRES</b> 11 <b>BRUSH/GRASS FIRES</b> 17 <b>FIRE ALARM ACTIVATIONS</b> 233 <b>ELECTRICAL CALLS</b> 22	<b>MEDICAL/1<sup>ST</sup> RESPONDER</b> 6,313 <b>TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS</b> 139 <b>EXTRICATIONS</b> 9 <b>HAZMAT SPILLS/LEAKS</b> 32 <b>PUBLIC ASSISTANCE</b> 101	<b>COMMUNITY IMPACT</b> 3,208 Adults & 8,120 Children <b>TOTAL INCIDENT HOURS</b> 5,421:45:34 Hours <b>TRAINING HOURS</b> 15,515.40 Hours <b>#1 MEDICAL DISPATCH</b> Falls - 864 <b>MUTUAL/AUTO AID GIVEN</b> 361 <b>MUTUAL AID RECEIVED</b> 11	<b>BUSIEST STATION</b> Station 1 – 2,867 Calls <b>BUSIEST CREW</b> A Crew – 2,381 Calls <b>BUSIEST UNIT</b> Med 1 – 1,620 Calls <b>BUSIEST MONTH</b> July – 679 Calls <b>BUSIEST DAY</b> Monday – 1,052 Calls <b>BUSIEST TIME</b> 3 PM – 408 Calls
<b>UNIT TURNOUT TIME PERFORMANCE</b> (STATION NOTIFICATION – UNIT ENROUTE) 1 Minute 55 Seconds / 90% OF THE TIME <b>CARDIAC (STEMI) ON SCENE TIME</b> (UNIT ARRIVED AT PATIENT – LEFT SCENE TIME) 17 Minutes 16 Seconds / 90% OF THE TIME	<b>UNIT TRAVEL TIME PERFORMANCE</b> (UNIT ENROUTE – UNIT ARRIVAL) 6 Minutes 33 Seconds / 90% OF THE TIME <b>STROKE ON SCENE TIME</b> (UNIT ARRIVED AT PATIENT – LEFT SCENE TIME) 14 Minutes 25 Seconds / 90% OF THE TIME		

### MISSION

It is the mission of the Wausau Fire Department to provide rapid, professional, emergency services to protect and enhance our community.

### CORE VALUES

**Professionalism** - We choose to take pride in our work, communicate effectively, project a positive image, and deliver service at the highest standards every time, in every situation.

**Accountability** - We accept responsibility and take ownership for our actions.

**Integrity** - We act ethically, honestly, and lead by example by having our actions reflect our word.

**Respect** - We choose to treat everyone the way we would like to be treated.

**Compassion** - We recognize individuals stricken by misfortune and take action to alleviate their pain as we serve them with kindness and understanding.



# 2023 Fire Chief Report



**Wausau Fire Department**  
606 East Thomas Street  
Wausau, WI 54403  
Telephone (715) 261-7900  
Fax (715) 261-7910



Katie Rosenberg, Mayor

Jeremy Kopp, Fire Chief

We are proud to present the 2023 annual report of the operations and activities of the Wausau Fire Department. 2023 was a challenging and rewarding year for our organization with many milestones being achieved and projects being accomplished. Following the retirement of Chief Robert Barteck on December 15th, I was honored to be appointed as the next Wausau Fire Chief. The Police and Fire Commission conducted a nationwide search for the next Chief. I was humbled and honored to be chosen as the 13th Fire Chief in the department's history. This opened the Deputy Chief position, and Justin Pluess was chosen. Justin started his new role January of 2024.

2023 was the busiest year in the department's 154-year history, with 6,951 calls for service. This report provides insight into many data points we monitor. EMS remains the bulk of the department's workload with 90% of the call volume, EMS Division Chief Jared Thompson provides some interesting insights into the data in his portion of this report. The department also had an uptick in significant calls last year, which is laid out in the operations data. Training Division Chief Dave Briggs continues to pioneer new ways to improve our training and preparedness and details many successes in his portion of this report. Under the leadership of Fire Marshal Brian Stahl, the Prevention Division continues to work collaboratively with community business leaders to ensure code compliance.

By far, the biggest story for 2023 was the completion of the in-house paramedic class in which we graduated all 7 of the EMT basics that were hired at the beginning of the year. This was a process that we had never attempted before and needed our entire department to believe in and help with. The members of this department not only stepped up to the challenge but made us a department that many others in the state are looking at to accomplish the same goal. It is hard to put into words how proud we are of these individuals and all the members of the department that helped achieve this milestone. We plan to be fully staffed at 74 personnel early in 2024, we are currently two away as I write this report. That is such an accomplishment considering we were 18 firefighters away from this 1 year ago! Recruitment of quality candidates remains challenging, but we are finding excellent candidates.

Our aging infrastructure of Central and Station Three remains a hindrance to our daily operations. To try to encompass the problem fully, Five Bugles Design completed a Facilities Assessment of Central. The report found that Central has failing electrical systems, failing HVAC systems, plumbing problems, lacks proper privacy and bathrooms for female firefighters, lacks proper administrative and training space, and a litany of other problems. In 2020, the city invested \$120,000 into the station and made the men's locker room toilets and showers operational again and added a small office space for firefighters to write reports. In 2024, I will bring the topic to the Public Health and Safety Committee to restart the conversation about the future of Central.

# 2023 Fire Chief Report



**Wausau Fire Department**  
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Katie Rosenberg, Mayor

Jeremy Kopp, Fire Chief

Station Three is in better condition and needs annual maintenance to keep the station in good working order. The Council approved \$75,000 to refurbish the apparatus bays in 2023. The spalling concrete around the floor drains have been removed and repaired. The floor has been completed, new turn-out gear lockers, fresh paint, and added plumbing for an eventual turn-out gear washer/extractor have been ordered and will be fully functional by mid-year of 2024. This will make that space like new.

An emerging strain on our resources is coming from surrounding rural EMS systems requesting help. For many years we have contracted to supply EMS coverage to the Village of Maine and the Townships of Hewitt, Wausau, Texas, and Berlin. We have also had contracts for intercepts with rural EMS providers as far west as Owen-Withee and as far east as Wittenberg and all in between. These intercept contracts allow a rural EMS provider to call us while they are enroute to a Wausau hospital, and our paramedics will meet them along the highway corridor, hop in their rig and deliver paramedic-level care the remainder of the transport to the hospital. The emerging request for our resources has been when a rural EMS provider cannot staff an ambulance and requests us to respond to their jurisdiction to mitigate the call. This pulls a Wausau ambulance into a rural community to meet the need. While this is rare, it is worth noting and monitoring. This is indicative of what is occurring with EMS systems across Wisconsin. Many communities that rely on volunteer EMTs to staff ambulances are battling recruitment and retention and are becoming more strained. This pushes the workload to neighboring jurisdictions with more resources, like ours. More to come on this topic in 2024.

In 2023, we achieved Accreditation through the Commission on Accreditation of Ambulance Services (CAAS). Preparing the application documentation was a massive effort, and we have already made several changes in policy and operations to meet their stringent guidelines. We are also on track to receive two new ambulances that are CAAS accreditation approved, one will be here in April and the other in October or November.

The Wausau Fire Department's continual climb in organizational excellence is not easy. Despite the hurdles in our path with the high call volume, recruitment, and aging infrastructure, the men and women of this department remain steadfast in their commitment to selfless service and stand ready to meet the community's needs.

In closing, I want to thank the Wausau community for supporting our organization. Every day we received thank you notes and other expressions of appreciation for our organization. This means a great deal to our staff and motivates us to continue our organizational mission.

Thank you,

Jeremy Kopp, Fire Chief



# 2023 Deputy Chief's Operations Report

## Personnel:

In 2023 the Wausau Fire Department has seen a lot of changes in personnel with promotions, retirements, and new hires.

### Retirements

Engineer Kurt Riel	12/05/2023
Chief Robert Barteck	12/15/2023

### Promotions

Engineer Alfred Buch	01/01/2023
Engineer Maxxwel Nowitzke	12/06/2023
Chief Jeremy Kopp	12/16/2023

### New Hires

Firefighter/Paramedic John Lauer	05/08/2023
Firefighter/Paramedic Nolan Bouffleur	05/08/2023
Firefighter/Paramedic James Brockman	02/10/2023
Firefighter/Paramedic Ashley Sakis	02/10/2023
Firefighter/Paramedic Ethan Cordova	02/10/2023
Firefighter/Paramedic Koua Xiong	02/06/2023
Firefighter/Paramedic Derrick Krueger	02/06/2023
Firefighter/Paramedic Zachery Ihle	02/06/2023
Firefighter/Paramedic Joshua Koll	02/06/2023
Firefighter/Paramedic Benjamin Springob	02/06/2023
Firefighter/Paramedic Dylan Shifflett	02/06/2023
Firefighter/Paramedic Marshal DeValk	10/02/2023
Firefighter/Paramedic Hunter Wolslegel	12/11/2023

### Years of Service Milestones

Lieutenant Theodore Tautges	30 Years
Firefighter/Inspector Brad Ludwig	20 Years
EMS Division Chief Jared Thompson	20 Years
Battalion Chief Kraig Kruzan	20 Years

# 2023 Deputy Chief's Operations Report

## **Fleet:**

Ladder 2: Ladder 2 continues to represent a noteworthy enhancement. This essential ladder truck supplanted Engine 2, offering a multifaceted solution as both an engine and a vehicle equipped with a 75-foot ladder on the west side. The significance of this upgrade was particularly pronounced in the industrial park, mitigating the time previously required to deploy Truck 1 from the central station to incidents necessitating a ladder truck. Like Engine 1 and Engine 3, Ladder 2 was equipped with numerous safety features to ensure the well-being of our personnel and meet national standards. All three of these rigs are deemed essential for meeting NFPA guidelines, maintaining our ISO 2 rating, and progressing towards our goal of achieving an ISO 1 rating.

Battalion 1: The introduction of a new incident command car into service marks a significant enhancement in the operational capabilities for the battalion chiefs. This replacement ensures an improved array of equipment, empowering battalion chiefs to effectively assume command across a diverse range of emergency incidents.

Upcoming Arrival: Looking ahead, the Wausau Fire Department is excited to announce the arrival of a two new ambulance scheduled for 2024. In April 2024, after the conclusion of the Fire Department Instructor's Conference (FDIC) and its display, we anticipate the arrival of one of the two new ambulances. This addition will further enhance our emergency medical response capabilities and better serve the community.

## **Buildings and Grounds:**

New apparatus floors at Station 3: We are pleased to announce new improvements at Station 3, including new apparatus floors, gear washer/dryer and gear lockers. The previous apparatus floor at Station 3 exhibited substantial deterioration, rendering it both unsightly and unsafe. These enhancements provide better organization and accessibility for our firefighting equipment, ensuring a more efficient response to emergency situations.

Gear Washer and Dryer: Dirty turnout gear, laden with carcinogens linked to cancer, poses a significant health risk to firefighters. Ensuring proper cleanliness becomes a crucial controllable factor in mitigating this threat. This is why the Wausau Fire Department purchased firefighter gear washer/extractor and dryer that will be installed in early part of 2024. The acquisition of a gear washer and dryer is important to being NFPA 1851 compliant and upholds the health, safety, and fiscal responsibility of our firefighting personnel. Ensuring the cleanliness of gear is not only a controllable factor in reducing potential health threats but also aligns with industry best practices for safety. Additionally, the safety of our firefighters, whose turnout gear is designed for protection, relies on regular cleaning and inspections to maintain the integrity of its components, and prevent injuries. From a financial standpoint, investing in a gear washer and dryer serves as a prudent measure to extend the lifespan of turnout gear, avoiding the unnecessary strain on budgets associated with neglected maintenance. In light of these considerations, the purchase of a gear washer and dryer is a strategic investment to reinforce our commitment to the well-being and safety of our firefighting team.

# 2023 Deputy Chief's Operations Report

**HVAC Duct Work Maintenance:** We are pleased to report that all HVAC ductwork in all fire stations has been professionally cleaned, ensuring optimal performance and air quality for our personnel. Regular ductwork cleaning is crucial for maintaining indoor air quality and ensuring the efficient functioning of heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems. Over time, dust, debris, allergens, and contaminants can accumulate in ducts, circulating unhealthy air throughout living or working spaces. This can lead to respiratory issues and exacerbate allergies. By investing in ductwork cleaning, one not only enhances the overall indoor air quality, promoting a healthier environment, but also optimizes the performance of HVAC systems, potentially lowering energy costs and extending the lifespan of the equipment.





# Station Information

## Central Fire Station

2,867 Incidents

Central Fire Station is located at 606 E. Thomas Street, Wausau, WI. It houses Car 1 (Chief's vehicle), Car 2 (Deputy Chief), Battalion 1 (Incident Command), Truck 1, Engine 1, Med 1, Rescue 1, Med 4, Med 5, Car 5, three Inspection vehicles, Utility 1, Water Rescue Boat, Airboat, and Inflatable Rapid Deployment Craft.



Of the 22 line crew on each of our 3 crews, 11 of those are stationed at Central Fire. This includes, one Battalion Chief, one Lieutenant, 2 Engineers, and seven Firefighter/Paramedics.

Wausau Fire's Administrative staff is also stationed at Central Fire and includes the Fire Chief, Deputy Fire Chief, Fire Marshal, Training Division Chief, EMS Division Chief, Lieutenant of Inspections, Firefighter/Inspector and one Administrative Analyst.

# Station Information

## Station 2

1,957 Incidents

Station 2 is located at 3017 Seymour Lane, Wausau, WI. It houses Ladder 2, Med 2, Engine 2, and the Hazardous Materials Truck and Trailer.



Of the 22 line crew on each of our 3 crews, 6 of those are stationed at Station 2. This includes one Lieutenant, one Engineer, and four Firefighter/Paramedics.

## Station 3

2,127 Incidents

Station 3 is located at 800 E. Bridge Street, Wausau, WI. It houses Engine 3, and Med 3.



Of the 22 line crew on each of our 3 crews, 5 of those are stationed at Station 3. This includes one Lieutenant, one Engineer, and three Firefighter/Paramedics.



# 2023 Training Division Chief's Report

## Training Division Overview

2023 was an incredible year for training despite numerous logistical hurdles. Not only did we hire and train 13 new members (18% of the organization), but we continue to do so while finding creative ways to train without facilities or props. Our community partners, such as Community Development, the Wastewater Department, Joe Rader Towing, Yaeger Auto Salvage, Hilltop Auto, and others, provide us with many opportunities and locations to train on various disciplines that we would otherwise lack.

While the Training Division Chief creates and disseminates the training, the true success of the training program rests solely on the dedication and drive of our members. The Battalion Chiefs distribute the daily assignments for the Lieutenants to conduct a large portion of the training, and the crew members push hard to learn and improve throughout the lessons. It is because of the quality of our members, that the training program is a success. Their efforts have a direct correlation to our ability to respond and provide service to our community members and visitors.

## Annual Fire & Rescue Training

Each year we cover various topics in fire suppression, search and rescue, and specialized rescue. Some of the most notable training from 2023 included changes in our approach to search and rescue. Everyone at WFD has been taught similar methods in search and rescue based on textbook curriculum initially introduced in the 1980s and 1990s. Following a conference in April, the Training Division Chief brought back new methods that have been statistically proven to have higher success rates in finding and removing victims from fires. While we do not face fire incident rescues often, this is one of the most crucial moments when we must be ready to perform with the best knowledge, skills, and abilities possible.

Another high impact training this year was an updated approach to a concept called Rescue Task Force (RTF). RTF is a unified approach between Fire, EMS, and Law Enforcement to an Active Shooter or Hostile Event in which each agency and discipline combines to enter “warm” zones to rescue those in harms way. While RTF has primarily a law enforcement and EMS focus, it is based in the National Fire Protection Association standards. We took the national standard and created a curriculum for all our members to receive training on, prior to the hands-on components. Following the lecture, each member of WFD participated in simulations alongside Wausau PD officers to treat and move through buildings to rescue injured persons.

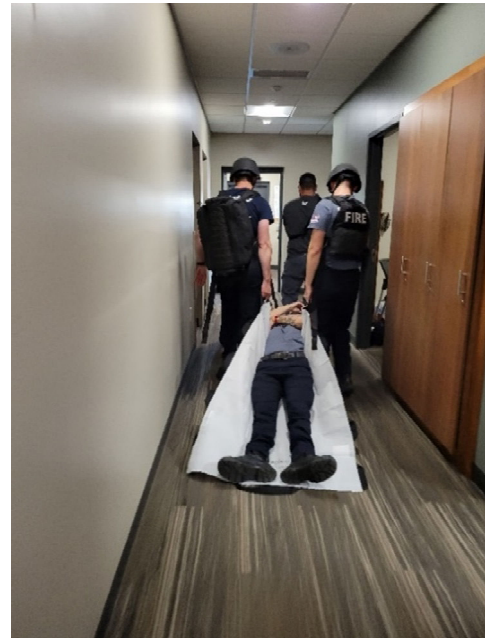
Other specialized rescue training included various disciplines such as rope rescue, confined space, vehicle extrication, ice rescue, hazardous materials response, and others. Annually, we train on different aspects of these specialties. Through our community risk assessment, we determine what and where our hazards are, to focus our educational efforts to address the needs.



# 2023 Training Division Chief's Report



Improved search and rescue training.



RTF training removing a casualty.

## External Training and Education

### FDIC

Training Division Chief Briggs and Deputy Chief Kopp attended the Fire Department Instructor's Conference (FDIC) in Indianapolis, the largest firefighter training conference in the world. This conference, based in Indiana, is host to world renowned speakers and classes and allows the opportunity to experience new and emerging technologies to improve our response capabilities.

TDC Briggs selected hands-on training and lectures to attend that fit the organizational needs of the Wausau Fire Department. After returning from the conference, TDC Briggs condensed the most crucial information and presented it to each of our three crews. In the weeks after returning to work, the hand-on concepts were also taught to the crews during scenario-based drills.





# 2023 Training Division Chief's Report

## Verisk/ISO

On December 4<sup>th</sup>, Deputy Chief Kopp, TDC Briggs, and Lt. Inspector Kariger attended an eight-hour training on the Insurance Services Office (ISO) Fire Suppression Rating Schedule and how the assessment/rating impacts us as a department and community. 52 firefighters and fire officers from around Wisconsin attended this course held in Wausau.

The City of Wausau is currently an ISO of 2. Upgrading to an ISO of 1 will equate to insurance savings for most homeowners and businesses throughout the community. To improve the score, we must work towards improving benchmarks internally at WFD and throughout specific aspects of community readiness such as dispatching, water distribution, and other components. Our greatest deficits in the past were personnel and our deployment model. Since the last evaluation, we have taken great strides to improve these two categories. To achieve greater credit, a certified training facility access is needed.

## Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services (DPS)

On December 8<sup>th</sup>, administrative staff from WFD took part in a training session on best practices in accurate reporting to the National Fire Incident Reporting System hosted by the Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services. Sarah Brown and Aaron Andre presented on national requirements, state statutory mandates, and local best practices. Our next step after this training is to adjust our policies and procedures to emulate the best practices we were trained on.

## WI DOT and Traffic Incident Management

Operating on Wisconsin roadways is becoming one of our greatest organizational safety hazards to our members. To improve the safety of our operations at scenes involving roadway interaction, we requested the Wisconsin Department of Transportation to provide in-person training on Traffic Incident Management (TIM). This national standard curriculum was presented by Retired Portage County Sheriff's Office Chief Deputy, Dan Kontos. Mr. Kontos was instrumental in creating the Wisconsin approach to TIM and he has become a national speaker and presenter on the topic. Mr. Kontos presented in-person to each of our three crews on concepts to direct traffic through or around scenes in which we are operating. Additionally, he presented on how we can maintain awareness while on scene. This training was a great refresher for some, and new for a majority of our members.

## Recruit Academy

The Wausau Fire Department recruit academy has been a staple of our organization's initial training for new hires over the years. Three academies, training 18% (13 members) of our workforce, occurred throughout the year. While 2022 had five academies, only 8 members went through the academy.

The influx of so many new members (31% of the department) over the past two years has been challenging to train members to proficiency consistently. Even with standards and outlines, individuals play the most significant role in their ability to gain knowledge and skill. If it were not for our members investing in these new hires, we wouldn't be seeing the quality of service we are able to deliver today.

# 2023 Training Division Chief's Report

Our academy content is standardized to include concepts such as personal protective equipment, fire behavior, forcible entry, ground ladders, hoses and streams, etc. Once the fire-service foundational lessons are covered, we begin to dive deeper into each of these topics and add to the depth of knowledge and skill to include critical thinking and decision-making scenarios.

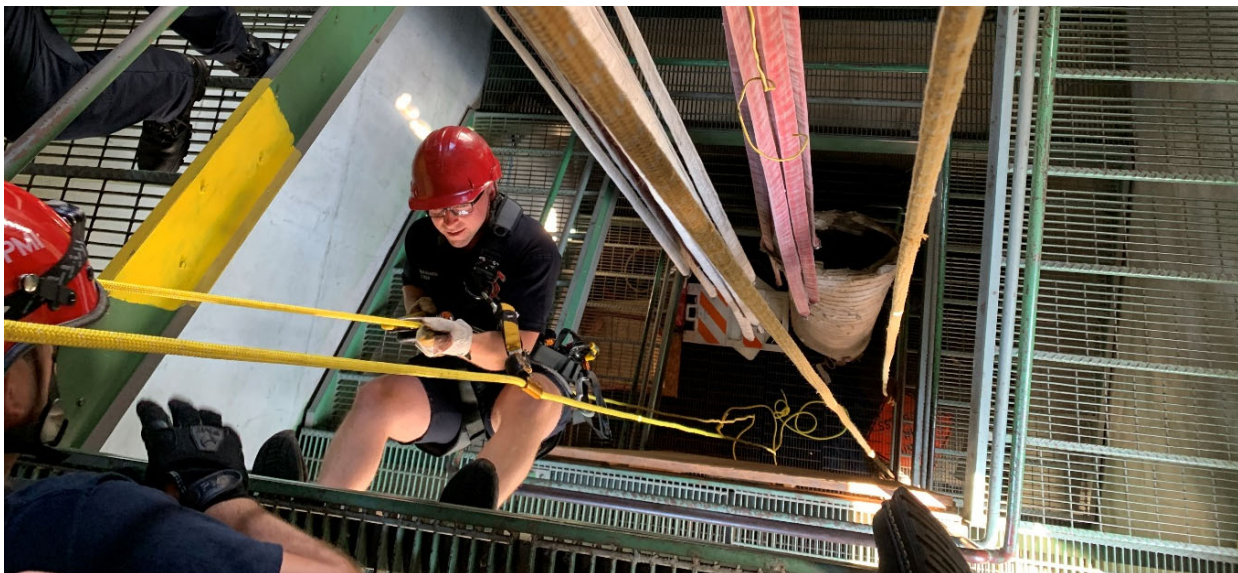


Above Left: Recruits become intimately familiar with their PPE and survival techniques.

Above Right: Recruits flow and move with a 2 ½" hoseline flowing 296 gallons/minute.

## Conclusion

Training is a foundation for our organization, as with many. From the top to the bottom, we provide vast mandatory and optional training throughout each year to improve our members professionally and personally. We believe that impactful education will help foster an environment for people to learn and grow to provide the level of service we would want for our own family. A goal for 2024 is to pursue a training committee concept to keep seeking out best practices and customized delivery methods to ensure we are meeting the needs of our members.





# 2023 Training Division Chief's Report



Type of Training	# of Hours -YTD
Company Training	7,014.20
Driver/Operator Training	1,126.25
Facilities Training	48.00
Hazardous Materials Training	537.50
Misc Training	55.25
Officer Training	765.95
Specialty Training	1,370.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,917.15</b>

## Training Categories:

Company Training – General firefighting training

Officer Training – Included leadership, management, supervision, and tactical considerations

Driver/Operator Training – Operation of fire apparatus

Hazardous Materials Training – How to mitigate the leak or spill of hazardous substances

Specialty Training – Rope, confined space, trench, collapse, ice, water, and other special rescues.

Facilities Training – Training at a live-burn facility (may include off-duty time)

Misc Training – Any other training category such as software, administrative, etc.

Type of Training	# of Hours -YTD
Admin Training	133.50
EMS Training	4,312.25
Fire Instructor Training	596.00
Fire Prevention Training	28.00
Investigation Training	128.50
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,198.25</b>

Thank You,

David Briggs, Fire Training Chief

# 2023 Fire Prevention/Inspection Report

The Fire Prevention Division is responsible for many services pertaining to Fire Department functions and obligations. The predominate obligation is performing annual and bi-annual inspections for all places of employment, public buildings, and businesses within the City of Wausau limits.

**Inspections:** The Prevention Division completed a total of 3279 inspections for 2023. Of those inspections, 348 businesses had a violation documented during the initial inspection. This number also includes 47 Consultation inspections. Consultation Inspections consist of new construction and remodeling projects within the City of Wausau. This year, we have a total of 60 outstanding violations that carried over from 2023. These re-inspections will be followed up with throughout the month of January 2024. This scenario happens when the initial inspections are performed in the month of December and a violation correction order is given for 28 days from the notice.

**Technology and Software:** Our APX software for inspections and pre-plans is continually being upgraded with information that is pertinent for successful responses. New for 2023, we now use APX for our fire investigation reports. This addition allows us to use an NFPA 921 compliant formatted report during the information collection phase for a more complete investigation. This addition helps us track our fire response and investigation to differentiate between properties we inspect versus uninspected properties. This data is helpful in furthering our initiative with Community Risk Reduction.

Since the Wausau Fire Department entered into an agreement with The Compliance Engine (TCE) in 2021, we have continually improved the content being added and removed from the website. TCE is a proactive compliance solution application and service which will help Inspectors reduce time spent in administering fire code requirements. This will increase our ability to enforce and verify compliant fire protection systems and strengthen the protection for citizens and visitors. The Prevention Division received and reviewed 1,339 inspection and repair reports throughout the year. Of those reports, 1,214 were compliant, and 125 were deficient. This number is up from the 2022 numbers of 1,200 compliant systems and 120 deficient. The reason for the increase is simply due to an effort in updating profile information, removing outdated information while also adding new buildings with fire protection systems. We expect to see that number slightly fluctuate year to year depending on when the reports are submitted. We remain vigilant seeking a greater level of compliance when deficiencies are found.

**Investigations:** The Prevention Division performed a total of 22 formal Fire Investigations for 2023. The state requirement for any municipal Fire Department is that every reported fire is investigated. The non-formally investigated fires are completed by the line crews while still on scene. These are simple fires that are either witnessed by the owners or obvious in nature. These fires pertain to garbage cans, dumpsters, cooking/kitchen, chimney fire or fires where the owner already knows what occurred prior to the fire department being called and can be classified without calling fire investigators to the scene.



# 2023 Fire Prevention/Inspection Report

**Education:** Lieutenant Shahn Kariger attended the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, MD, three times throughout 2023. He completed the rigorous six-day Case Preparation and Witness Testimony course in January. This experience prepared him to present a case in a jury trial courtroom setting, while working with two nationally known defense attorneys. This is a required component to write the test for the International Association of Arson Investigators Certified Fire Investigator (IAAI-CFI). Lt. Kariger returned to the NFA in March for the six-day Forensic Interviewing and Evidence Collection course which gave him the knowledge and skills to document, collect and submit evidence for fire investigations. This course also satisfied the requirements for the IAAI Evidence Collection Technician (ECT) certification. An opportunity to attend the six-day Leadership Strategies for Community Risk Reduction course came up with an unexpected vacancy in August. This content is what was used in the Executive Fire Officer program which provided Lt. Kariger with the knowledge of how to assess, prevent, reduce, and mitigate community risk. These three courses are significant for the department as they provide an increased awareness during investigations, and a new perspective for fire prevention by building community resiliency.

Lt. Kariger completed his Bachelor of Science degree in Fire Administration/Fire Investigation from Columbia Southern University, graduating summa cum laude (4.0 GPA) in December. This is impressive to say the least and will go far in his credibility as a fire investigator. All three courses he attended at the NFA this year transferred toward his degree as well.

**Continuing Education:** The Prevention Division attended two IAAI conferences in 2023. These two conferences help us meet the “tested” continuing education criteria needed to maintain our Fire Investigation Technician (IAAI-FIT) certifications. We also attended the annual Wisconsin State Fire Inspector Association (WFSIA) conference which included continuing education in the topics of CRR, human trafficking, clean energy, fire protection and fire stop systems, carbon monoxide safety, change of use/occupancy, plan review, and new NFPA codes and standards.

**Public Outreach:** The Prevention Division performed 16 Smoke and CO detector installs for 2022. Reaching a total of 24 people. This “install” program is a collaboration between The Wausau Fire Department, The American Red Cross, and the City of Wausau’s Community Development. Each household must have the detectors installed by the Prevention Division for them and they receive a 20-minute fire safety talk and Safety inspection of their homes during the installation.

In a typical year the Prevention Division would also perform “meet and greets” with multiple community organizations. These organizations include the United Way, Neighbor to Neighbor, Noon Optimist and assisted living communities throughout the City of Wausau. These meetings consist of discussions ranging from fire safety & prevention, fire alarms and drills, to day-to-day Fire Department operations.

**Problem Properties Resource Team:** The Prevention Division participates in a joint committee with other City of Wausau department heads and members from zoning, inspections, public works, PD, attorney’s office, and the mayor. This quarterly meeting presents problem properties to the committee for remediation solutions. We discussed a total of 39 properties within the City for 2023. Typically, these properties deal with problem landlords, delinquent taxes and blight or dilapidated buildings.



# 2023 EMS Division Chief's Report

**School Programs:** The pandemic kept us from doing in person fire safety programs from 2020 through 2022. In 2023, we were welcomed back by the Wausau School District. An instructional learning plan was still available for each school by way of a flash drive if they chose that route. These lessons were a combination of websites and videos pertaining to fire safety. We were able to visit 10 elementary schools for in person programs. We did perform and review a total of 11 fire drills for the school system throughout 2023. We witness the drills first, noting any ways for improvement and then perform a small critique with the principal and staff on ways to improve this process. It includes input about the time it takes to evacuate, egress pathways, and staff communication for student accountability.

Thank You,

Brian Stahl, Fire Marshal



# 2023 EMS Division Chief's Report

In 2023, the Wausau Fire Department responded to 6,313 medical calls. Despite the challenges of staffing shortfalls and increased demand for prehospital emergency medical calls, the Wausau Fire Department met those challenges head-on. Without the dedicated EMTs and Paramedics who fulfilled their sworn job duties, the Wausau Fire Department would not have been able to answer all the calls for help that poured in daily.

On August 23, 2023, the Wausau Fire Department achieved a goal that was set some three ago, becoming a CAAS (Commission on Accreditation of Ambulance Services) Accredited EMS department. August 23, 2023, confirmation was received from the CAAS Panel of Commissioners that the City of Wausau Fire Department met all of their standards with a perfect score from their on-site panel review team.

What does an accreditation from CAAS mean? Well, it signifies that your service has met the “gold standard” determined by the ambulance industry to be essential in a modern emergency medical services provider. These standards often exceed those established by state or local regulation. The CAAS standards are designed to increase operational efficiency and clinical quality, while decreasing risk and liability to the organization.

The process includes a comprehensive self-assessment and an independent external review of the EMS organization. This independent process provides verification to your Board of Directors, city council, medical community and others that quality care is provided to the community.



## Wausau Fire Department's Cardiac Care

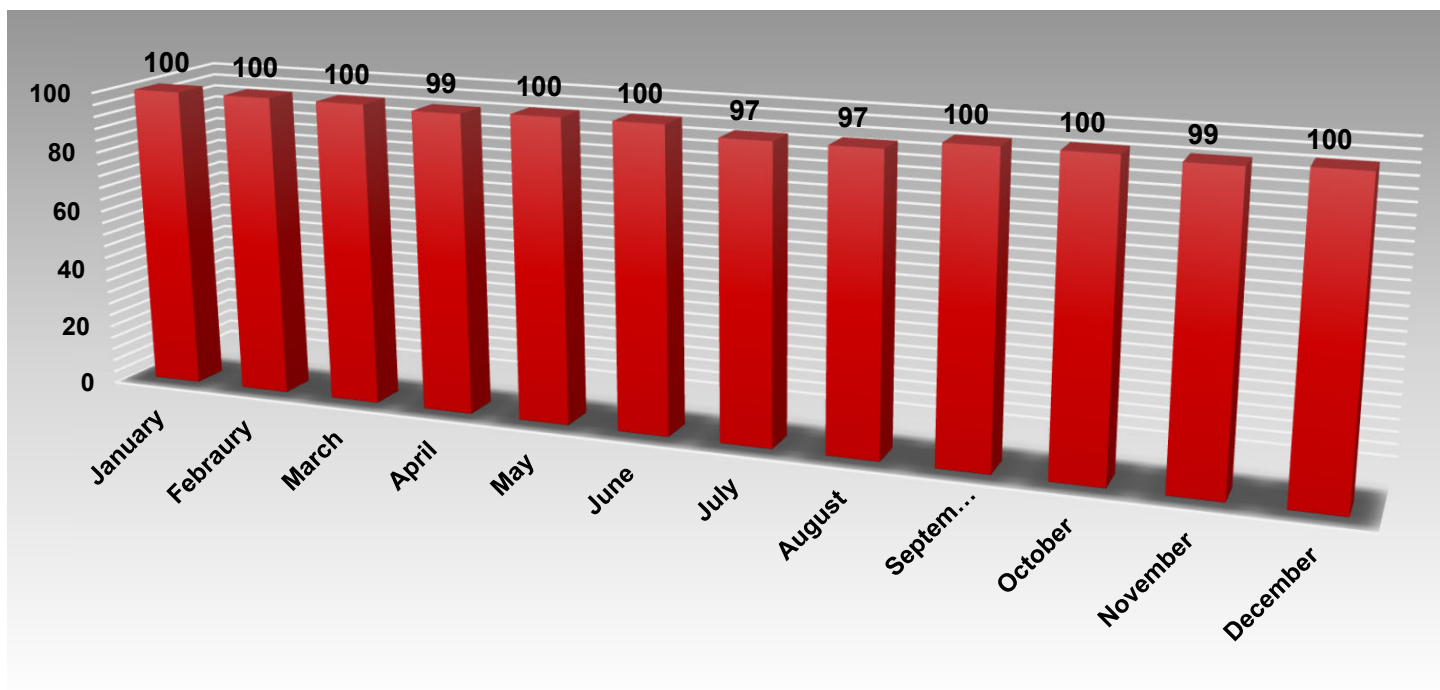
Every month, the Wausau Fire Department's EMS Division tracks the time it takes our paramedics to obtain a 12 Lead ECG and administer aspirin for patients with an initial complaint of non-traumatic chest pain/acute coronary symptoms. The goal set by the EMS Division is to obtain these 12 lead ECGs within 10 minutes of making patient contact 90% of the time and administer aspirin within 5 minutes of making patient contact 90% of the time. Portions of this goal were adopted from *the American Heart Association Mission: Lifeline program*.

The City of Wausau Fire Department is a part of an elite group of prehospital providers recognized by the *American Heart Association* for our commitment and success in implementing a higher standard of care by ensuring that every STEMI patient receives treatment according to nationally accepted evidence-based guidelines and recommendations, and standards.

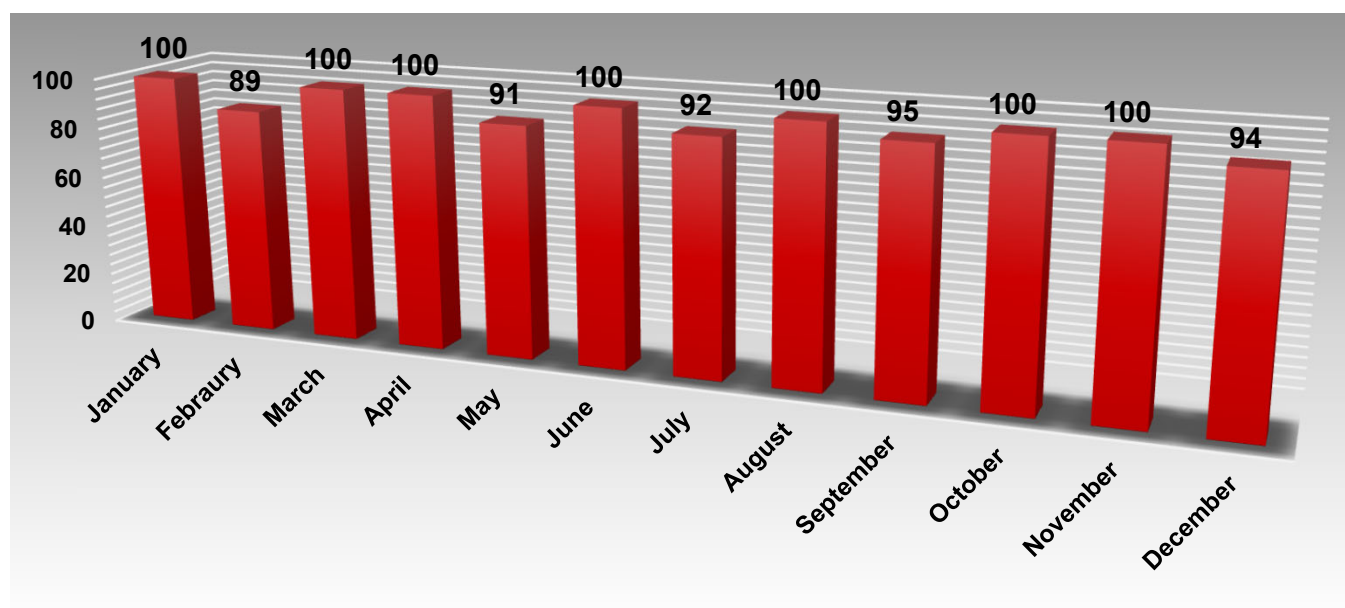
# 2023 EMS Division Chief's Report

Our department members deserve credit for their intense work in the field as they rapidly assess and render advanced life support care to patients suffering a cardiac event.

## 12 Lead ECG Percentages



## Aspirin Administration Percentages





# 2023 EMS Division Chief's Report

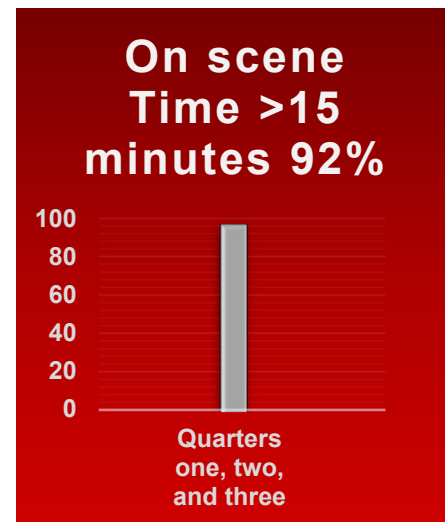
## Stroke Care

The Wausau Fire Department voluntarily participates in the Coverdell Stroke Program. The Coverdell Stroke Program is named after the late U.S. Senator Paul Coverdell, who died in July 2000 due to a stroke. In 2021, Wisconsin was one of 13 states to receive funding in the latest iteration of the Coverdell grant program, extending Wisconsin's ongoing participation since 2012. This program analyzes specific data recorded during the care and transport of a patient suffering an acute stroke. The Coverdell Program sends quarterly report cards highlighting our overall performance.

In this report, we are highlighting our department's total on-scene time and documentation of a last known well time. The Coverdell Program's goal for on-scene times is less than 15 minutes, and documentation of a last well-known time is 60% of patient encounters. Limiting on scene time is critical because the sooner the stroke patient receives definitive care, the less injury to the brain occurs. The last known well time is also essential to ascertain because some of the definitive care a stroke patient is eligible to receive is time-sensitive. *This report reflects quarters one, two, and three, as quarter four's data has yet to be published from the Coverdell Stroke Program.*

The Wausau Fire Department is proud to report that we have exceeded the Coverdell Stroke Program's goals for quarters one, two, and three of 2023.

On March 14, 2023, The Wausau Fire Department received the **Pre-notification to Hospital Award** at the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Coverdell Performance Improvement Award conference.



WISCONSIN COVERDELL  
STROKE PROGRAM

# 2023 EMS Division Chief's Report

## Intercepts

The Wausau Fire Department has several EMS intercept agreements with area fire and EMS departments that request the assistance of our paramedics for patients who need advanced life support interventions. Primarily, the paramedics from Station 2 respond to those requests for service. In 2022, the Wausau Fire Department fulfilled 59 paramedic intercepts.

The City of Wausau faces many challenges in EMS revenue collection. 27% of the patients that the Wausau Fire Department transported were billed to Medicaid, and 53% were billed to Medicare. These state and federal programs only reimburse EMS agencies a fixed amount, leaving agencies with a substantial deficit to offset.

## Conclusion

The EMS Division of the Wausau Fire Department looks forward to continuing to advance its clinical practices throughout 2024. As the EMS industry continues to change and evolve, the Wausau Fire Department will be right there, always looking to improve and streamline the care delivered to the Wausau area.

Thank you,

Jared Thompson, EMS DC





# 2023 EMS Division Chief's Report

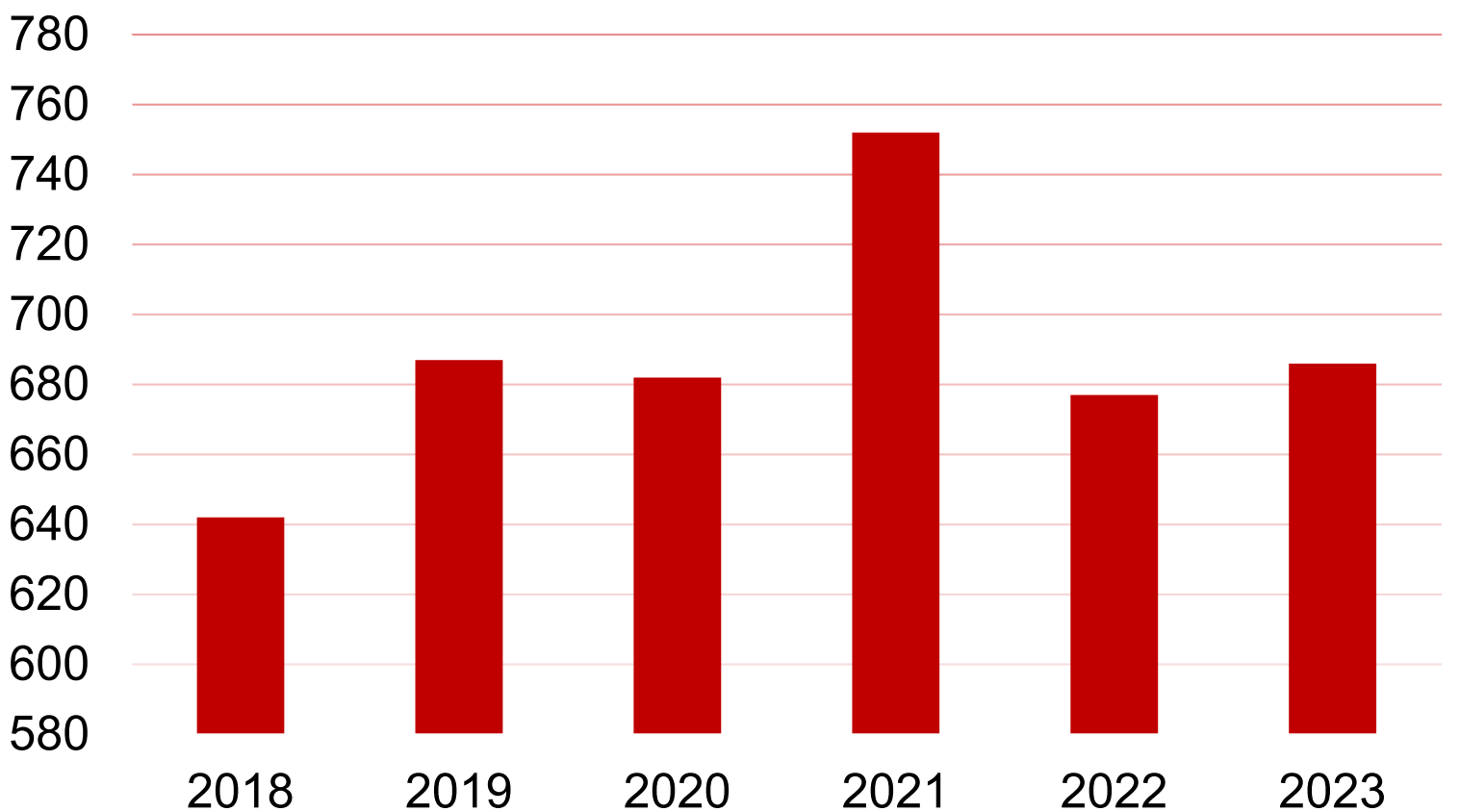
Type of Training	# of Hours -YTD
ARV – Other	0.25
ARV – Oxygenation	74.5
ARV – Simulated Intubation	73.5
ARV – Ventilation	69
CARDIO – Acute Coronary Syndrome	85
CARDIO – Cardiac Arrest	143.5
CARDIO – Other	111
CCP – Cardiovascular System	2
CCP – Pharmacology	4.5
CCP – Respiratory	23
Protocol Study/Review	39.5
ACLS	390.75
PALS	347
PHTLS	498
EMT Basic Refresher	80
TEMS Training	501
MED – Medication Delivery	25.75
MED – Neurological Emergencies/Seizures	41
MED – OB Emergencies	30
MED – Other	88
MED – Special Healthcare Needs	1.25
OPS – Case Review w/ or w/out Medical Director	13
OPS – Documentation/HIPAA/Compliance	130.25
OPS – Other	76.5
OPS – Pediatric Transport	3
OPS – Skills Validation w/ or w/out Medical Director	30
PED – Handtevy	35
PED – Neonatology	6
TRAUMA – Hemorrhage Control	10
TRAUMA – Other	67
TRAUMA – Triage	25.5
All Other EMS Training	1,287.50
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4,312.25</b>

ARV = Airway, Respiration and Ventilation  
 CARDIO = Cardiovascular  
 CCP = Critical Care Paramedic  
 ACLS = Advanced Cardiac Life Support  
 PALS = Pediatric Advanced Life Support  
 PHTLS = Pre-Hospital Trauma Life Support

TEMS = Tactical EMS  
 MCI = Mass Casualty Incident  
 MED = Medical  
 OPS = Operations  
 PED = Pediatrics  
 TRAUMA = Trauma

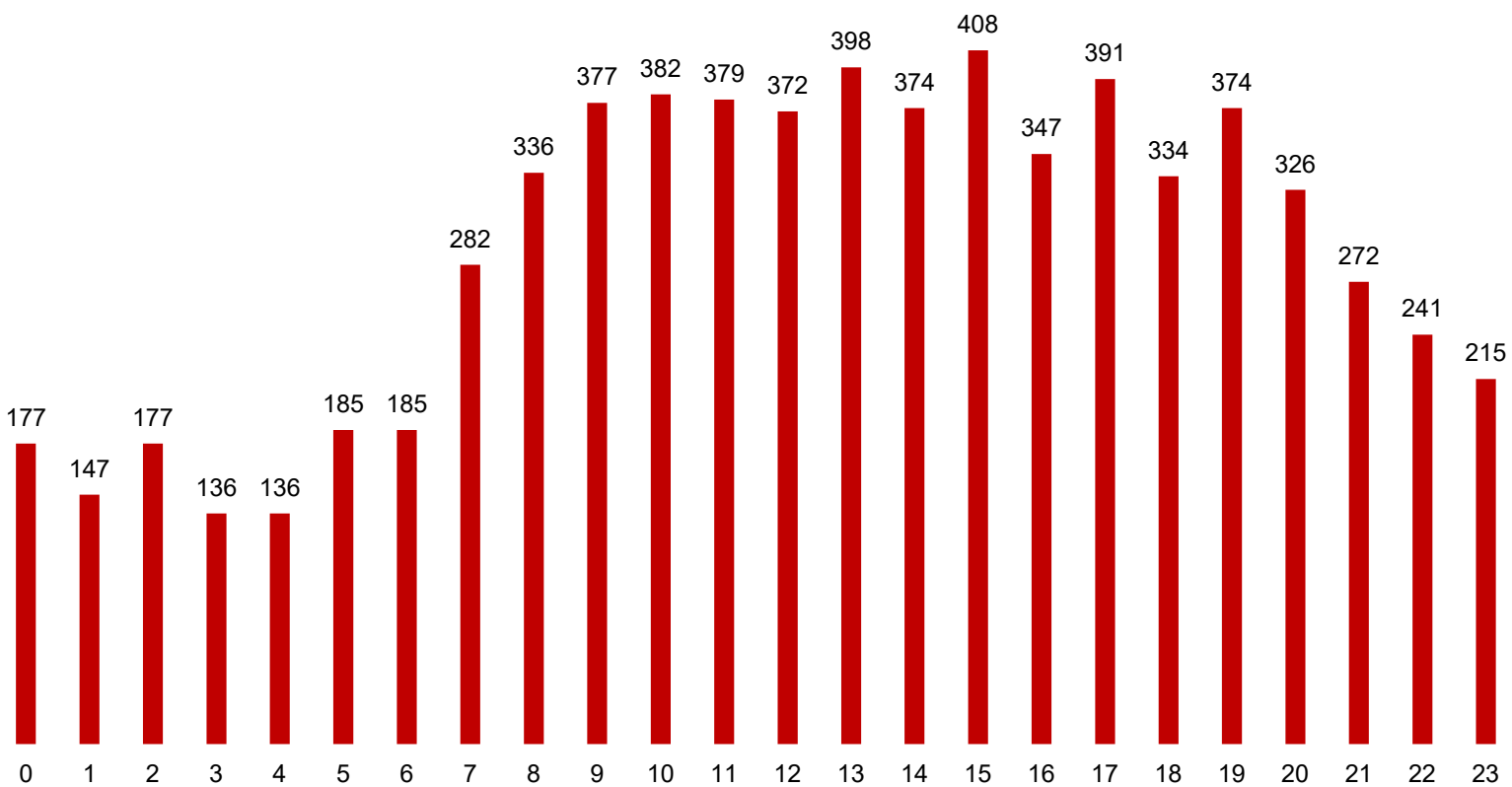
## Yearly Fire Response Comparison Chart 2018-2023

Year	Total
2018	642
2019	687
2020	682
2021	752
2022	677
2023	686

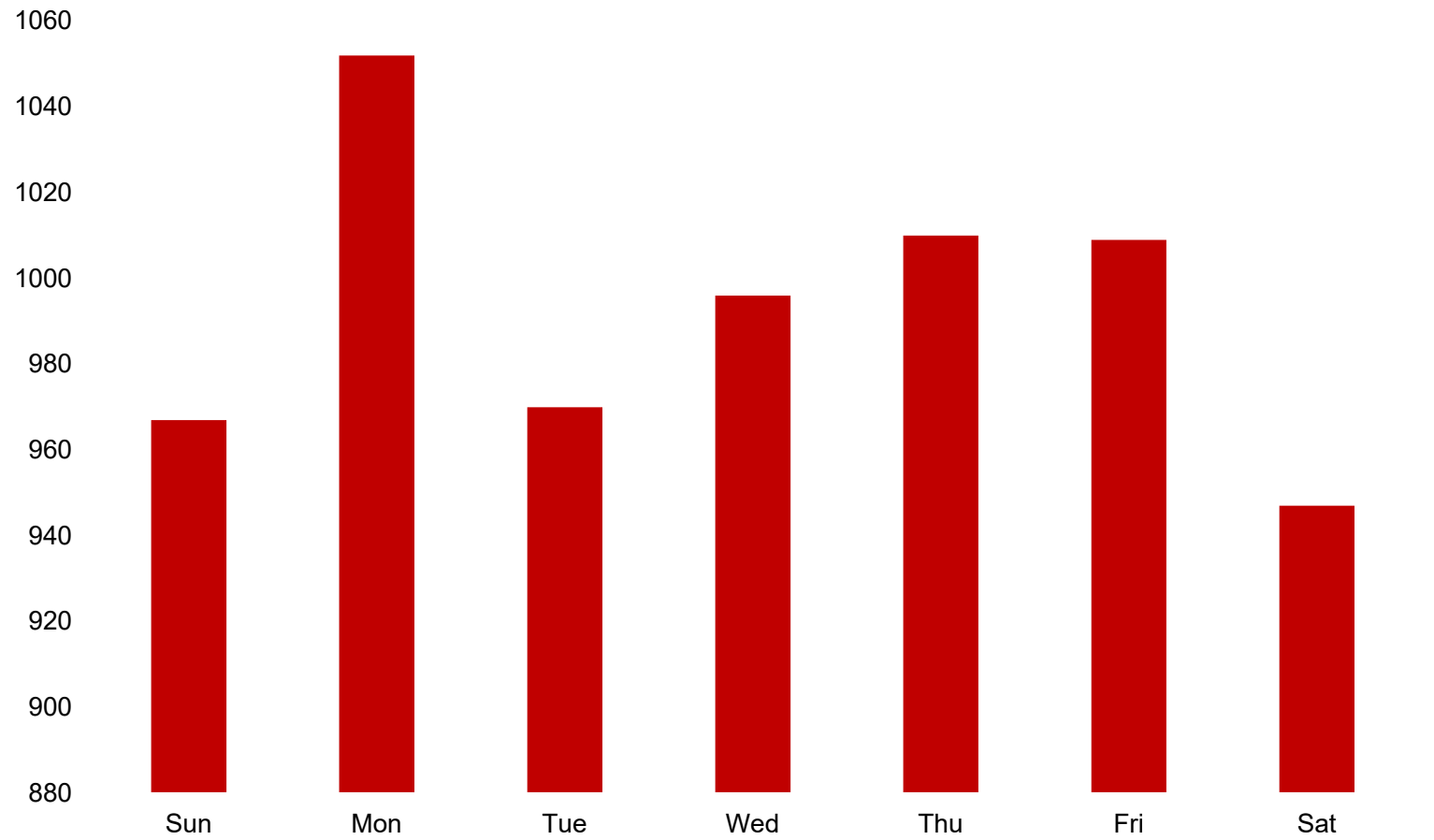




# Incidents by Hour of Day

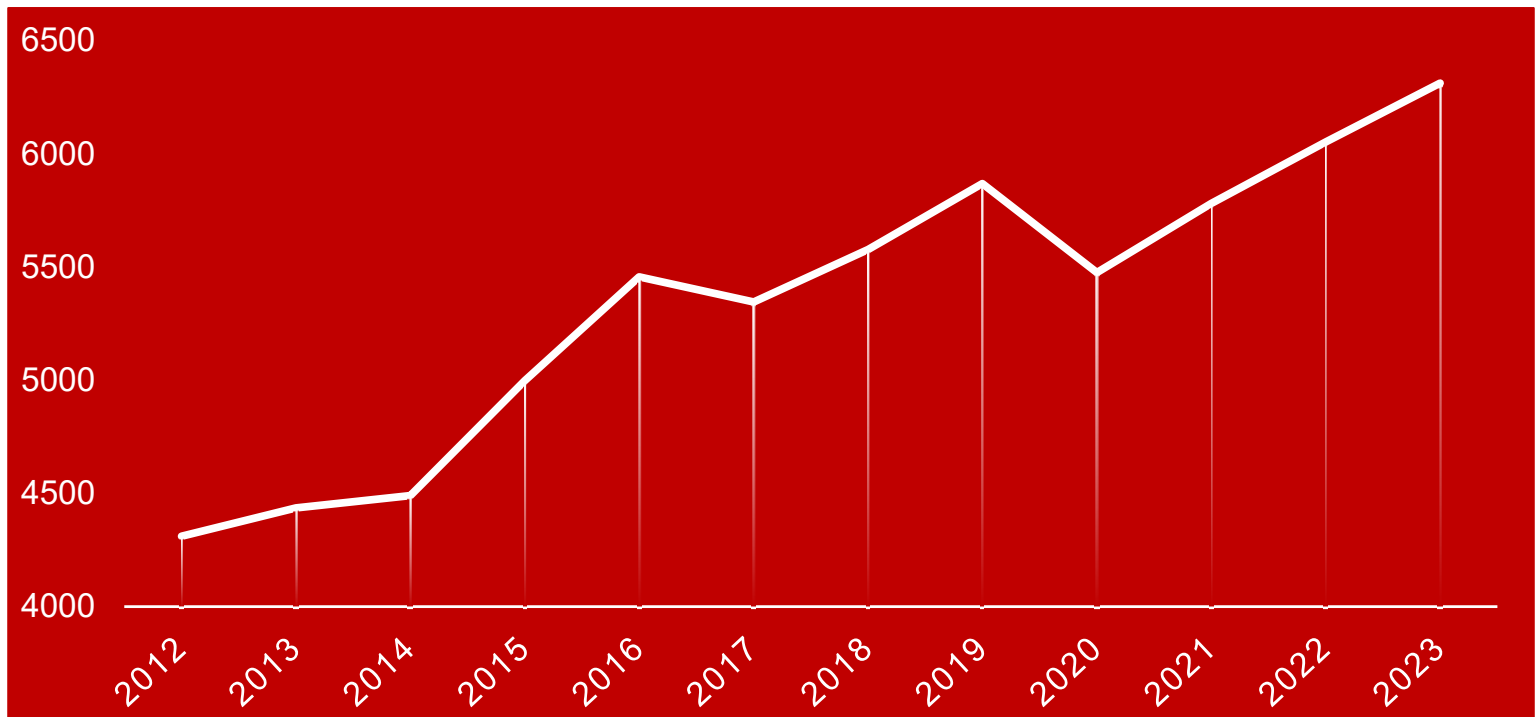


# Incidents by Day of Week



## Patient Care Reports 2018 - 2023 (by month)

Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Tot	% of Chg
2018	441	474	463	438	517	456	445	456	439	469	443	537	5,578	+4.34%
2019	484	449	524	514	464	457	546	469	496	479	480	507	5,869	+5.22%
2020	468	451	433	330	409	463	483	454	473	539	466	507	5,476	-6.69%
2021	453	404	439	443	487	526	496	515	484	495	515	525	5,782	+5.59%
2022	543	464	487	448	526	512	481	539	478	500	524	551	6,053	+4.69%
2023	528	466	501	475	537	510	611	512	486	563	547	577	6,313	+4.30%



# Township Ambulance Responses

Township	2020	2021	2022	2023
City of Abbotsford			2	3
City of Antigo				1
City of Merrill		2	2	1
City of Mosinee		3		
City of Schofield		1	2	1
Clark County		1	1	1
Town of Bergen				1
Town of Berlin	29	27	28	37
Town of Bevent			1	
Town of Bern			1	
Town of Cassel		10	3	5
Town of Elderon		1	1	
Town of Emmet		3		
Town of Frankfort				1
Town of Franzen			1	
Town of Hamburg			6	
Town of Halsey			1	1
Town of Harrison			1	
Town of Hewitt	16	14	25	27
Town of Johnson			1	3
Town of Knowlton				1
Town of Marathon		1	3	2
Town of Mosinee		2		1
Town of Norrie				1
Town of Rib Falls		7	5	5
Town of Rietbrock		2	1	1
Town of Stettin	3	5	2	2
Town of Texas	54	79	62	54
Town of Wausau	77	89	113	136
Town of Weston				1
Town of Wien		4	3	3
Village of Athens		1	5	7
Village of Edgar		5	1	4
Village of Hatley				1



# Township Ambulance Responses

Township	2020	2021	2022	2023
Village of Kronenwetter		1		1
Village of Maine	80	109	102	151
Village of Marathon City		16	2	12
Village of Rib Mountain		3	6	8
Village of Rothschild		1	2	1
Village of Stratford		1	1	
Village of Weston	9	12	12	26
Wittenberg			1	
Wood County			1	
<b>Total</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>451</b>	<b>398</b>	<b>504</b>





# Contact Information



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