

Wausau Fire Department Monthly Report

March 2023



(Certified Aerial Operator Training)

Fire Chief Report by Chief Robert Barteck

March was busy for the fire department administration, and I have much to share.

Congressional Directed Spending Request: In February, Senator Baldwin's regional representative, Gregg Wavrunek, visited Central wanting to know what the needs of Wausau Fire are. I knew Senator Baldwin had helped other Wisconsin communities with Fire Station replacement. (Platteville received \$7 million in Federal funding to build a new fire station.) So, I inquired if it was possible to obtain federal funding to replace Central Fire Station. After touring the facility, he thought Senator Baldwin would support the request, and we proceeded forward. He encouraged me to apply for a Congressional Directed Spending Request through Senator Baldwin. In March, the announcement came that the application period was open. The tight deadline did not allow us to take the request to the Finance Committee, so I sought the mayor's permission before applying. We requested \$14 million for a new station's land acquisition, design, and construction. On April 11, Senator Baldwin will visit Central Fire Station to tour the facility and learn about our organization.

Central Fire Station: The discussion of the future of the Central Fire Station continues. We have had a tough winter at Central, and the problems with the aging facility are becoming more troublesome every year. We hope to begin the discussion about the future of the facility. As a first step to restarting conversations, we will present a facilities assessment report conducted by Five Bugles Design at the April Public Health and Safety Committee Meeting. The station needs many updates and repairs. The facility assessment report found a myriad of problems that need to be addressed. This will take long-term planning and a strategic approach to keep the station functioning economically.

Hiring: We made conditional offers to three entry-level firefighter candidates in March. Two of them are fully certified Firefighter/Paramedics and will be hired and begin a traditional entry academy in May. The third candidate is a firefighter currently enrolled in the NTC Paramedic program. That candidate will join our other six Paramedic students in the Wausau Fire cohort of the NTC program. We expect that group to complete their training in November. These leave three remaining positions to fill the new roster of 74 members. We are planning on posting another application period in May.

Wisconsin Chief's Education Conference: Deputy Chief Kopp and I traveled to Madison to attend the Wisconsin Chief's educational winter conference. This conference is unique because it is only full-time career Fire Chiefs from around Wisconsin. The conference had many interesting topics, with the biggest being hiring best practices.

Adaptive Leadership lectures: Unfortunately, in my position as Chief, I spend most of my time with the other higher-ranking officers and not enough with the firefighters and engineers. To help change that, I have begun a four-part leadership development series based on the National Fire Academy Executive Fire Officer program. In March, I wrapped up my lectures with all the staff, discussing the practical application of Adaptive Leadership Practices in the Fire Service. I based this lecture on Heifetz and Linsky's book *Leadership on the Line, Staying Alive through the Dangers of Leading*. It is an excellent book demonstrating a clear path for tackling adaptive leadership problems. In June, I will meet with all three crews to present the second part of the leadership series.

Committee of the Whole Presentation: On March 28, the Common Council held a Committee of the Whole and asked for a presentation from the Fire Department on issues and possible solutions relating to the homeless population in Wausau. I presented the data we had gathered over the last two years that shows that our department is called daily to help someone who considers themselves

homeless. The Fire Department Paramedics are often the first point of contact for medical care. Typically, these are for chronic or addiction-related problems that are not emergent and prevent an ambulance from being available for another call. I brought up the Madison Community Care Paramedic program as a possible resource to help with these issues. The Council liked the idea and wants a presentation on what a full-time Community Care Paramedic can provide to our community at the June Public Health and Safety Committee. I am contacting community partners for this project and garnering information about their programs from Madison and Greenfield Fire Departments. More to come on this project.

I hope you find this monthly report informative. Don't hesitate to contact me if you have further questions or want additional information added to this report.

Robert Barteck – Fire Chief

EMS Division by EMS Division Chief Jared Thompson

CAAS Accreditation

We have submitted all clarification documents to CAAS this last month. The next step is the official on-site review, where CAAS sends three evaluators to our department to review our EMS operations internally. We are patiently awaiting further communication with CAAS.



EMS Patient Experience Report

The EMS Division is excited to share our patient care experience report for March. Our overall score was 92.76%. I want to highlight the category entitled **“Extent to which medics cared for you as a person.”** In this category alone, our paramedics scored 95.83%. When individuals experience a medical emergency, sometimes this can be overlooked, and patients can feel forgotten while receiving medical care. This category truly reflects the *character* of our paramedics!



Pediatric Emergencies

In March, our paramedics had 22 pediatric patient encounters ranging from 3 months to 17 years of age. Some emergencies included seizures, overdoses, choking, breathing problems, and allergic reactions. One such call involved a 4-year-old female who was active in a seizure. Upon our crews' arrival, they confirmed that the patient was still experiencing a seizure. All pediatric medication dosages are weight-based, so we have a system that pre-calculates the dosage. The crew was able to utilize this system and administer the correct dose of rescue medication to stop the seizure. The patient made a full recovery.

Cardiac Care Benchmarks

The EMS Division is proud to share that we met two main cardiac benchmarks tracked monthly. I would like to share the “administration of aspirin to patients who present with an acute coronary syndrome (ACS)”

benchmark. For March, we surpassed our goal of aspirin administration within five minutes of patient contact 90% of the time with 100%. This means that every patient that presented with ACS received this life-saving medication within 5 minutes.

Aspirin is considered to have a Class I indication by the AHA (American Heart Association), meaning there is strong evidence and/or agreement that it is helpful and good for the patient suffering from acute coronary syndrome or suspected acute coronary syndrome.

Responses by Municipality (EMS Patient Care Reports):

City	# of Runs	% of Runs	# of Runs – YTD
City of Abbotsford	0	0.00%	0
City of Merrill	0	0.00%	1
City of Mosinee	0	0.00%	0
City of Schofield	0	0.00%	0
City of Wausau	453	90.42%	1,363
Clark County	0	0.00%	0
Other	0	0.00%	0
Town of Bergen	0	0.00%	1
Town of Berlin	0	0.00%	7
Town of Bevent	0	0.00%	0
Town of Bern	0	0.00%	0
Town of Cassel	0	0.00%	0
Town of Elderon	0	0.00%	0
Town of Emmet	0	0.00%	0
Town of Franzen	0	0.00%	0
Town of Hamburg	0	0.00%	0
Town of Halsey	0	0.00%	1
Town of Harrison	0	0.00%	0
Town of Hewitt	2	0.40%	6
Town of Johnson	1	0.20%	1
Town of Marathon	0	0.00%	0
Town of Mosinee	0	0.00%	0
Town of Rib Falls	1	0.20%	2
Town of Rib Mountain	0	0.00%	2
Town of Rietbrock	0	0.00%	0
Town of Ringle	1	0.20%	1
Town of Stettin	0	0.00%	1
Town of Texas	9	1.80%	13
Town of Wausau	14	2.79%	36
Town of Wien	0	0.00%	1
Village of Athens	0	0.00%	3
Village of Edgar	0	0.00%	1
Village of Kronenwetter	0	0.00%	0
Village of Maine	15	2.99%	39
Village of Marathon City	0	0.00%	2
Village of Rothschild	0	0.00%	1
Village of Stratford	0	0.00%	0
Village of Weston	5	1.00%	13
Wittenberg	0	0.00%	0
Wood County	0	0.00%	0
Total	501	100.00%	1,495

Fire Training Division by Training Division Chief David Briggs

March Scheduled Training:

A brief breakdown of our scheduled activities follows:

- Air Management
- Emergency Vehicle Operations Course (EVOC)
- Rope Rescue Mechanical Advantage
- Search and Rescue
- Driver-Operator/Aerial Certification (8 members)

Air Management

All firefighters who perform fire suppression were tasked with assessing how much air they consume in low activity and high activity scenarios. Through this training, each member can identify their work of breathing and the duration they have in their air tank in relation to the energy they expend. This allows us to gauge the time firefighters must perform work in an Immediately Dangerous to Life and Health (IDLH) emergency.

EVOC

Every year, members conduct driver training to refresh on the finer points of skilled maneuvering of such large vehicles. This year's drill was conducted at the NTC Wausau Campus to close off a safe area and set-up the cone course. Since not everyone can drive the course at the same time, many members also discussed positioning of vehicles, our policies, and procedures regarding vehicle operations, and safe operations within the community.



Rope Rescue Mechanical Advantage

Over the past few months, we have been working through various rope rescue foundational concepts and build on them as we progress. This month required members to call on training from the past two months and create an anchor point, consider angles, loads, and weights, and then we worked through building mechanical advantage systems to facilitate hauling heavier loads. Each shift was able to complete this task with the benefit of a "load cell" that visibly shows what theory explains regarding force we apply to our rope systems.

Search and Rescue

"Search Culture" is becoming a buzz word in our industry. Some are saying that firefighters across the nation are not focusing on the search and rescue of victims to the degree in which we swore our oath. The reality here in Wausau is that we have always trained to perform victim rescues. However, we are now using statistical data to improve our search methods, techniques, and priorities as compared to how many of us were initially trained. Each member, on each crew, at each station is working to improve our knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform effective and timely searches for victims.

Driver-Operator/Aerial

Eight members of Wausau Fire have been working through February and March to complete the Wisconsin Technical College System Driver-Operator/Aerial certification course. This course was conducted through Northcentral Technical College with Training Division Chief Briggs as the instructor for our members as well as one member from South Area Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER), and one member from the Merrill Fire Department. Throughout the training, members operated aerial apparatus near NTC and around the City of Wausau to gain applicable experience in driving, positioning, and deploying aerial devices. All ten (WFD, SAFER, and MFD) students passed the course and are slated to take certification testing in April and May.



Non-Scheduled Training Topics

Ice Rescue and Rope Ascending/Descending were crew-initiated training events that members saw a need and addressed it. With all off our new hires, we are trying to address outlying training needs as they come up to ensure our members feel proficient when the call occurs.



Wisconsin Technical College System Committees

The Fire Officer 1 and 2 committee finished a final review of all formatting of the new curriculum and the

content is now ready to be released in the state in the coming months. This process took nearly six months to complete all work. It is possible that the Wausau Fire Department may host the first offering of this new curriculum.

The Technical Rescue committee has been on hiatus for a small period while the state office was wrapping up the officer content. We are in the process of scheduling our next meeting. There has been a significant amount of interest in this curriculum from around the state with many organizations contacting the Wausau Fire Department due to the known involvement in the process. While this process is to improve content delivery throughout the state, it has a direct impact on the service WFD offers and our recognition as a leader among organizations at the state level on multiple fronts.

Type of Training	# of Hours	% of Hours	# of Hours -YTD
Company Training	554.15	41.75%	1,554.15
Driver/Operator Training	433.8	32.69%	533.30
Facilities Training	4	0.30%	4
Hazardous Materials Training	1.5	0.11%	93.75
Misc Training	7	0.53%	52
Officer Training	37.45	2.82%	177.45
Specialty Training	289.25	21.79%	523.25
Total	1327.15	100.00%	2,937.90

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	% of Hours	# of Hours -YTD
Admin Training	9	3.58%	41
EMS Training	175.25	69.75%	632
Fire Instructor Training	67	26.67%	145
Fire Prevention Training	0	0.00%	0
Investigation Training	0	0.00%	10
Total	251.25	100.00%	828

Fire Prevention Division by Fire Marshal Brian Stahl

Inspections: Within the City of Wausau for the month of March, we performed 370 total inspections. Of those 19 were re-inspections. We had 44 properties that had Fire Code Violations. These properties will require follow up inspections to confirm compliance. We performed a total of 4 consultations and 1 Hydro test. These entail sprinkler systems, fire alarms, and site visits for new construction.

Investigations: The prevention Division conducted 1 Fire Investigation for the month of March. This investigation was deemed intentional and will require follow up from the Wausau Police Department.

Public Outreach: During the month of March, we had 4 scheduled public outreaches. We observed 2 Fire Drills at Elementary schools. These drills require time management, accountability, and organizational benchmarks for our staff to advise on. We also performed 2 Fire Safety presentations that were requested from area community groups.

Education: The month of March was slated for education pertaining to the certifications and continuing education to maintain these certifications. The certifications that required continuing education pertain to

EMS and HVAC inspector Licensing. Both certifications are job requirements for all three inspectors.



Prevention Division Activities:

Inspections Completed	Monthly	Year to Date
Routine Fire Inspections	347	436
Re-inspections	19	64
All other Inspections (Consults/burn complaints,etc)	5	11
Total Inspections	370	509
Fire Investigations	1	5
Inspection Department Activities	Number	YTD
Public Engagement Activities	15	30

Fire Operations Division by Deputy Chief Jeremy Kopp

Significant calls:

Wausau Fire responded to four significant calls in March. C crew responded to a water rescue call in which the vehicle was submerged in a pond on the west side of town. Ladder 2 crew dressed in water suits and were able to make entry of the submerged car from the top and locate a patient whose head was just above water. The crew was able to extricate the patient from the vehicle and the pond safely and quickly. C crew handled this unique call perfectly. Another call was for a basement fire where B crew was able to locate the fire in a dryer and extinguish it before it spread to the structure. C crew was also the crew working on a day when they were dispatched to an apartment fire on the 7th floor of an assisted living apartment complex. C crew was able to gain access and extinguish two separate fires in the apartment with the help of the sprinkler system before it spread. The fourth significant call was a cooking fire where B crew was able to extinguish quickly.

Recruitment and Retention:

We were able to extend offers to three more firefighters in March with a hopeful start date in May. Division Chief Briggs, Division Chief Thompson, and I were able to attend an all-day job fair at Wausau West High School. Students were bussed in all day from area schools, and we were able to talk with hundreds of students about our profession. There is another job fair coming up in April at the U.W. that we will also be attending. The Peer Focus Group in conjunction with management has been working hard on gathering data for retention ideas. This will consist of surveys internally as well as external to fire departments throughout the state.

Fleet:

Unfortunately, we saw Med 2 blow it's engine in March and is being replaced at Brickners as I write this report, hopefully we get it back in April. Battalion 1 has been received with all upfits completed and will replace Car 2 and go into service on April 5th. This is a half-ton Chevy pickup with a topper and will be a welcomed addition for the Battalion Chiefs. Ladder 2 was having some sensor issues which were affecting the use of the ladder and new sensors were put on and seem to have remedied the issue.

Buildings and Grounds:

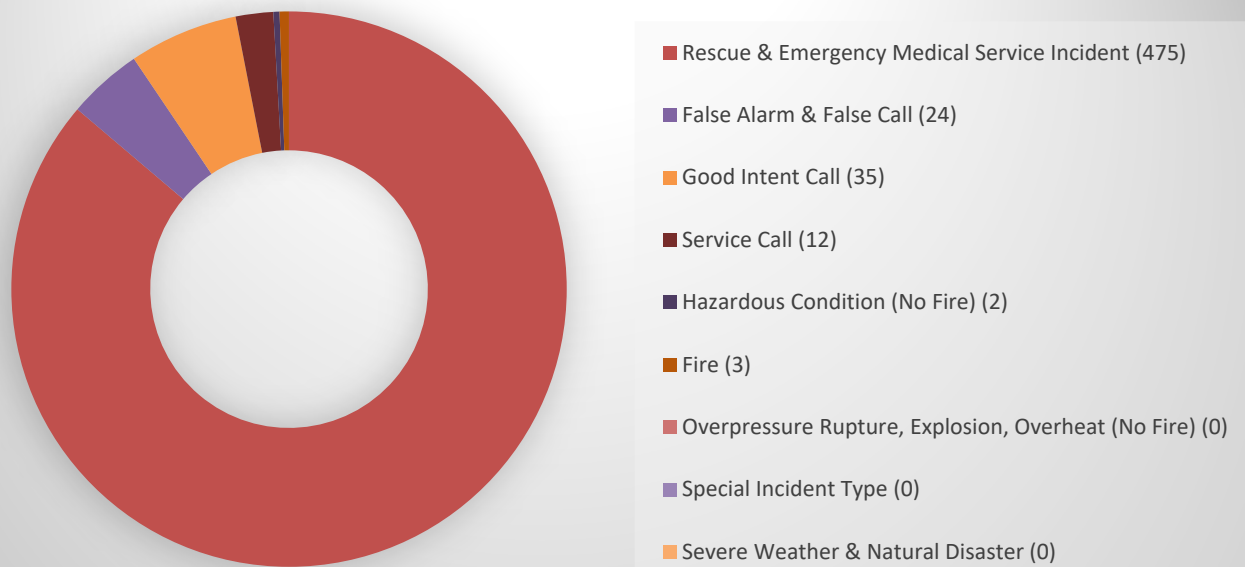
We are still anticipating the remodel of station 3 apparatus bay this year. Station 2 concrete and drains were fixed, and the contractors found a damaged in-floor heat pipe they were able to fix while working on the concrete. I am brainstorming and gathering ideas for personal vehicle parking next year at station 1 and station 3. When we move into our new deployment and staffing plan in January of 2024, we will not have enough parking for our employees at these two stations with the already limited parking we have.

Significant Fire Events:

Date	Address	City	Incident #	Type
3/11/2023	1129 Arthur Street	City of Wausau	F23000387	Building fire
3/13/2023	3402 Terrace Court	City of Wausau	F23000398	Cooking fire, confined to container
3/21/2023	500 Grand Avenue	City of Wausau	F23000450	Building fire

Monthly NFIRS Incident Comparison:

	2023	2022	2021	% Of Change from 2022 to 2023
January	579	591	502	-2.03%
February	506	507	456	-0.20%
March	551	540	497	2.04%
April		498	503	
May		574	556	
June		590	583	
July		531	587	
August		600	577	
September		524	525	
October		545	552	
November		574	562	
December		612	590	
TOTAL		6686	6490	



Responses by Municipality (All NFIRS Reports):

City	# of Runs	% of Runs	# of Runs - YTD
City of Abbotsford	0	0.00%	0
City of Colby	0	0.00%	0
City of Merrill	0	0.00%	1
City Of Mosinee	0	0.00%	0
City Of Schofield	0	0.00%	0
City Of Wausau	505	91.65%	1,506
Clark County	0	0.00%	0
Taylor County	0	0.00%	0
Town of Bergen	0	0.00%	1
Town Of Berlin	0	0.00%	7
Town of Bern	0	0.00%	0
Town of Bevent	0	0.00%	0
Town Of Cassel	0	0.00%	0
Town Of Elderon	0	0.00%	0
Town Of Emmet	0	0.00%	0
Town of Franzen	0	0.00%	0
Town of Halsey	0	0.00%	1
Town Of Hamburg	0	0.00%	0
Town of Harrison	0	0.00%	0
Town Of Hewitt	2	0.36%	6
Town of Johnson	1	0.18%	1
Town Of Marathon	0	0.00%	0
Town Of Mosinee	0	0.00%	0
Town Of Rib Falls	1	0.18%	2
Town Of Rib Mountain	0	0.00%	2
Town Of Rietbrock	0	0.00%	0
Town of Ringle	1	0.18%	1
Town Of Stettin	0	0.00%	1
Town Of Texas	7	1.27%	11

Town Of Wausau	14	2.54%	36
Town Of Weston	0	0.00%	0
Town Of Wien	0	0.00%	1
Village Of Athens	0	0.00%	3
Village Of Brokaw	0	0.00%	0
Village Of Edgar	0	0.00%	1
Village Of Kronenwetter	0	0.00%	0
Village Of Maine	15	2.72%	39
Village Of Marathon City	0	0.00%	2
Village Of Rothschild	0	0.00%	1
Village of Stratford	0	0.00%	0
Village Of Weston	5	0.91%	13
Wittenberg	0	0.00%	0
Wood County	0	0.00%	0
Total	551	100.00%	1,636

Activity/Incident Hours Committed:

Category	Time Committed
NFIRS Incidents	155:23:10 Hours
EMS Incidents	791:31:21 Hours
Non-Incident Activities (Station Maintenance, Vehicle Check-off/Fire Pre-plan, Hazmat Outreach, Administration duties, Public Education, Committee and Staff Meetings)	1,116.00 Hours
Training (including Wellness)	1,578.40 Hours

Aid Responses:

Type of Aid	# of Runs
Mutual Aid Given – EMS	4
Mutual Aid Given – Fire	0
Automatic Aid Given – EMS	27
Automatic Aid Given – Fire	0
Mutual Aid Received – EMS	0
Mutual Aid Received – Fire	0
Automatic Aid Received – EMS	0
Automatic Aid Received – Fire	0
Other Aid Given – EMS	0
Request for EMS from Other Agencies to the City of Wausau (not Aid)	0
Request for Fire from Other Agencies to the City of Wausau (not Aid)	0
Total Non-Aid Incidents (outside City with no other agency response)	15