

# Wausau Fire Department Monthly Report

May 2022



# EMS WEEK

Rising to the Challenge

**May 15-21, 2022**

## **Fire Chief Report by Chief Robert Barteck**

May's biggest highlight was welcoming three new Firefighter/Paramedics to our department to fill recent vacancies. Deputy Chief Kopp's report introduces them to our community. Again, this month the Division Chief's and Fire Marshal provide some unique insights into our daily operations. These individuals and responsible for keeping this department on a continual course towards organizational excellence through their hard work.

### **Monroe (NC) Fire Department visit:**

I was privileged to again serve as a Peer Evaluator for the Center for Public Safety Excellence during the accreditation evaluation process of the Monroe (NC) Fire Department. The process began months earlier and I was tasked with evaluating the department on 7 of 23 key criteria. Our four-person team poured through documents and made recommendations for changes. Then we traveled to Monroe for a 3-day site visit where we confirmed what the department was reporting in their documentation. At the end of the site visit, our evaluation team recommended Monroe FD for accreditation.

The site visit was fascinating. One of the most unique things I witnessed was their computer software for dispersed deployment of the County run ALS ambulances. The system called MARVELOUS uses five years of call data to predict the vicinity of the predicted next 911 call for an ambulance. The on-duty med units are displayed on an active heat map that highlights where the most likely 911 call will come from. It will then use that data to recommend the movement of ambulances to that vicinity. It was a fantastic use of data-driven decision-making. I totally geeked out on the system and will be exploring the feasibility of using a similar system here.

### **Additional Firefighter/Paramedics Initiative:**

On May 24, the Finance Committee unanimously approved our request to use ARPA funding to pay for three new firefighter/paramedic positions for the first 2.5 years. The committee funded the full amount to pay for these firefighters but asked the Finance Director to smooth the transition of funding to the tax levy over the 2.5 years to ease the positions into the City budget. On June 14, the Common Council will take action on the request. Once passed by the Council the department will use candidates from the current hiring process to fill the new positions. This will restore the department's operational staffing back to the level established in 1970 of three 19 firefighter crews.

No announcements have been made about the FEMA SAFER Grant yet. We expect announcements of award winners to begin in July or August. In January, the department submitted a grant for nine additional firefighters. If we receive the grant FEMA will fully fund the nine new positions for 3 years.

### **Capital Improvement Requests:**

This past month we have worked on finalizing two Capital Improvements (CIP) requests for 2023. These requests will be reviewed, scored, and ranked by the CIP Committee. Each department prepares documents in a standard template to ease comparative scoring. We are requesting CIP funds for two items: Station Three apparatus floor needs repair, and we are requesting funding to purchase a piece of property that would be the eventual new home of fire station one.

#### **Station Three Apparatus Floor:**

This CIP request is for needed repairs and updates of the apparatus bay at fire station 3. Station 3 was constructed in 1981 and replaced an old station in the same location. This apparatus bay is 41 years old without any updates being made since the initial construction. This request would be for a complete update of the entire apparatus bay which is currently in disrepair. This would include a repair of floor drains, extensive concrete repair and finish, new turn-out gear lockers, paint on walls and ceilings, and the addition of a turn-out gear washer and dryer. All these items to be repaired or replaced are as old as the building except for the

washer and dryer as those would be an addition to the station that did not exist before. The department has written a federal grant for the washer/dryer but has received any notification yet. The addition of a turnout gear washer/extractor and dryer would eliminate the need for firefighters to bring their contaminated gear to station 1 to decontaminate. This also gives us the ability to clean our gear and get back into it in as little as an hour and a half compared to a full day by air drying it and taking it to another station to be washed. The estimated cost of this project is \$019,300.

#### Fire Station One Replacement Land Acquisition:

This CIP would purchase the property at 811 & 815 Grand Ave, on the corner of Floral Lane and Grand Ave for the eventual replacement of Fire Station One. The property is currently on the open market with an asking price of \$815,000. This equates to \$8.67 per square foot for the 2.19 acres of a vacant property. The fair market value of property in that vicinity of the city is estimated by the City Assessor at \$7.00 to \$9.00 per square foot. The fire department has a unique need for a large property within a few blocks of the current fire station one for an eventual replacement station. The Grand Ave and Thomas St corridors are the main travel arteries for fire, EMS, and rescue apparatus to make responses within that region of the city. No other vacant properties exist in this area of the city that is appropriate for a fire station. Fire station one was identified in 2015 as needing replacement but no plan has been put in place yet. Securing this unique perfectly positioned property is the best first step in starting a plan for its replacement.

Fire Station 1 was completed in May 1962 at a cost of \$300,000. Fire Chief Wilber Petzold touted it as the "most modern fire station in the nation." The site for the station was chosen wisely and in the current response, studies put the station strategically placed for fast response times using the Grand Ave and Thomas St corridors as the main travel arteries. The station has served the city well for the last 60 years, having only had minor remodeling in the office and living quarters. In 2020 and 2021 CIP funds were used to temporarily band-aid major plumbing problems, add a small computer workstation for firefighters, and replace overdue office furniture and other items to temporarily improve living conditions. In 2015 the station was identified as needing replacement. Starting a five-year plan was discussed but never implemented. The aging station no longer meets the needs of this community, and a replacement plan needs to be implemented. To begin this planning Five Bugles Design was contracted to refresh its station functionality study. Engineers from different trades have completed their site visits and the report is expected by June 16, 2022. The report will be forwarded to the CIP Committee then. The preliminary findings are what we expected. The station fails to meet the growing needs of the community. The station lacks adequate privacy for female firefighters, it lacks proper bathroom facilities for staff and visitors, it has failing electrical, plumbing, and HVAC systems, lacks proper training space, and lacking office space for administrative staff. The property at 811 & 815 Grand Ave on the corner of Grand and Floral Lane is the ideal site to build a replacement station.

In closing, I would like to thank all our elected officials and Police and Fire Commissioners for the continued support of our department. We are working on planning a Council night with the fire department where we will provide tours of the three stations and a firehouse meal. We are currently working on selecting a date. In the meantime, please stop down and visit us at the fire station for a cup of coffee and a tour.

Thank you,  
Robert Barteck – Fire Chief

## EMS Division by EMS Division Chief Jared Thompson

May was a very productive and busy month for the EMS Division. We welcomed and introduced three new firefighter/paramedics to Wausau Fire. Matt, Steve, and Marissa come to our department with a solid background in paramedicine. I have included some training photos of our new recruits working on airway management and adult and infant interosseous access. As paramedics, we have the skill set to drill a needle into a bone and administer fluid and medications through this route. We use this route when peripheral venous access is not possible.



### Cardiac Arrest Registry to Enhance Survival (CARES) Data

CARES is a secure, Web-based data management system in which participants enter local data and generate their own reports. Communities can compare their EMS system performance to de-identified aggregate statistics at the local, state, or national level and discover promising practices that could improve emergency cardiac care. By reporting all our cardiac arrest data to CARES, this helps us as a fire department measure our performance and identify how to improve cardiac arrest survival rates. By joining CARES, we gain more than just access to information that will help them improve performance.

We also contribute to one of the largest EMS registries in the world, and one of the few that also includes patient outcome information from hospitals.

I am proud to announce that our cardiac arrest survival percentage is 14%. Overall, the state of Wisconsin is at 8% and nationally, the United States is at 7%. All our cardiac arrest survivors walked out of Aspirus Wausau Hospital with complete neurologic function which I attribute to the implementation of our Advanced Cardiac Resuscitation protocols which is designed to increase blood flow to and from the brain and heart.



This is a photo of a patient last year who suffered two out of hospital cardiac arrests in the span of three month. Both times Wausau Fire paramedics resuscitated him, and he was able to walk out of the hospital and is still enjoying life!



**Responses by Municipality (EMS Patient Care Reports):**

City	# of Runs	% of Runs	# of Runs – YTD
City of Merrill	0	0.00%	1
City of Mosinee	0	0.00%	0
City of Schofield	0	0.00%	0
City of Wausau	493	93.73%	2,327
Clark County	0	0.00%	0
Other	0	0.00%	0
Town of Berlin	2	0.38%	9
Town of Bevent	0	0.00%	1
Town of Cassel	1	0.19%	1
Town of Elderon	0	0.00%	0
Town of Emmet	0	0.00%	0
Town of Franzen	0	0.00%	1
Town of Hamburg	1	0.19%	1
Town of Hewitt	2	0.38%	10
Town of Marathon	0	0.00%	1

Town of Mosinee	0	0.00%	0
Town of Rib Falls	0	0.00%	2
Town of Rib Mountain	0	0.00%	6
Town of Rietbrock	0	0.00%	0
Town of Stettin	0	0.00%	0
Town of Texas	7	1.33%	29
Town of Wausau	9	1.71%	40
Town of Wien	0	0.00%	0
Village of Athens	0	0.00%	1
Village of Edgar	0	0.00%	0
Village of Kronenwetter	0	0.00%	0
Village of Maine	11	2.09%	36
Village of Marathon City	0	0.00%	0
Village of Rothschild	0	0.00%	1
Village of Stratford	0	0.00%	0
Village of Weston	0	0.00%	1
<b>Total</b>	526	100.00%	2,468

## Fire Training Division by Training Division Chief David Briggs

May was filled with an incredible amount of learning. Three new members joined us and began their recruit training while the rest of our members continued with their on-going knowledge, skills, and abilities.

### Recruit Academy

Our recruit academy is an ongoing adaptation depending on when our recruits start, their past experiences, or lack of, and feedback from prior recruits. We are constantly evolving and seeking feedback from our members to ensure we are providing the best environment for each other to learn and develop.

During the academy, our recruits focus on personal protective equipment, hose lays and deployment, placing and using ground ladders, search and rescue, firefighter safety and survival, and fireground strategy and tactics. Each of these concepts range from physical to mental and from simple to complex in nature. We strive to develop our members to be thinkers and leaders from the first day in the door.



Search and Rescue Training



Ground Ladder Training

## EVOC

It is that time of year again. In May, every line member of the organization completed the Emergency Vehicle Operations Course (EVOC) through a collaboration with NTC. We have trained staff at WFD to conduct and perform the training; however, we lack the facility large enough to be able to set-up and run the course. NTC allowed for our members to complete the course at the Wausau Campus.

This training requires each member to drive through multiple stages of driving forward, “swerving” through cones, driving straight through a narrow passage, turning around in a tight area, and backing into narrow spaces. This is a difficult training to hold as the size of our vehicle pose the risk of damaging driving surfaces even with the best vehicle operators at the wheel.



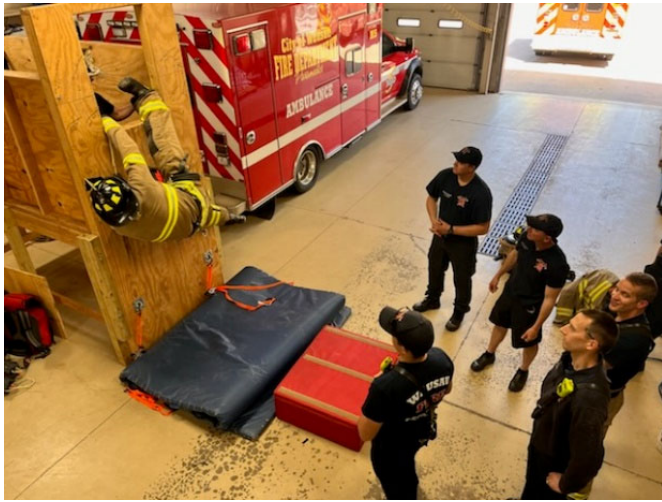
Multiple vehicles driving the EVOC course.

## Bailout Kits and Training

All members received training on new bailout kits put into service recently. These kits replaced equipment that had to be removed from service due to age and condition. Bailout Kits are intended to provide a means of escaping an elevated area of a building when fire conditions change rapidly, and firefighters become trapped. However, these kits also allow us to rescue trapped victims and firefighters who may have been injured. It is our goal to acquire more of these kits due to the number of elevated buildings in the Wausau Area. They are a significant expense and grant funding is being sought. For further information on these kits and their uses, please contact the Training Division Chief and/or use the following links to learn of their importance.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HeMSVPDm-ss>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A7cETsw4Ze0&t=119s>



Members performing bailouts on a training prop.

### Rope Rescue Pick-Offs

A pick-off is a rope technique that we can use to rescue someone stuck at height or even below grade. Picture a window washer stuck on the Dudley Tower or another tall building. Our aerial trucks may be tall, but they are not tall enough to reach every building in the city due to height and setbacks from the road. This specialized capability is not common to all fire departments due to lack of funding or time to train. However, our risk assessments show that the Wausau area has the need. Each member of the line is taught different techniques to contribute to the event of a rope rescue. However, not every member is trained to perform this version of pickoff as it relies extremely heavily on the individual rescuer instead of a team-based approach. This is just one more step we take to utilize our staffing levels to the best of our ability.

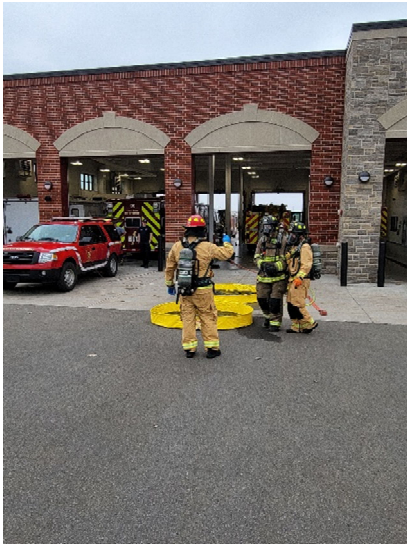


Members performing ascending, descending, and victim rescues.



## Hazardous Materials Training

As the city, county, and state Tier 2 hazardous materials response team, we must remain proficient in responding to incidents involving various chemicals. In the beginning of May, each shift participated in a refresher day that focused on scenario-based learning. A vehicle was “discovered” to have a cloud of an unknown substance coming from inside with a note on the window. How do we respond? How do we mitigate it? How do we identify the cause? Each of these questions are addressed in the training by our well-prepared members. Every scene is different, but the approach can be practiced preparing us for what comes next.



Instructors from the LaCrosse Fire Department teaching through the Wisconsin Regional Emergency All-Climate Training Center provided us with a Haz-Mat refresher and specialized propane response training.

## Wisconsin State Committees

The Wisconsin Technical College committee on fire officer training met in May to begin revising the dated content to certify new fire officers. This process will take months to complete but has the end-goal of making fire officers in the state more prepared to take on the challenges they face as being the first formal line of supervisor. The committee includes statute, standard, and curriculum review prior to creating the new certification process and state curriculum.

Type of Training	# of Hours	% of Hours	# of Hours -YTD
Company Training	694.5	67.59%	3,376.32
Officer Training	13	1.27%	510.30
Driver/Operator Training	66	6.42%	182.75
Hazardous Materials Training	217.5	21.17%	427.25
Specialty Training	35.5	3.45%	845.25
Facilities Training	0	0.00%	47
Misc Training	1	0.10%	52.33
<b>Total</b>	<b>1027.5</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>5,441.20</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	% of Hours	# of Hours -YTD
Admin Training	14.25	5.36%	83
Fire Instructor Training	64.25	24.18%	389.5
Fire Prevention Training	0	0.00%	0
Investigation Training	0	0.0%	0
EMS Training	187.25	70.46%	1,211.25
Total	265.75	100.00%	1,683.75

## Fire Prevention Division by Fire Marshal Brian Stahl

**Inspections:** Within the City of Wausau for the month of May, we performed 665 total inspections. We had 65 properties that had Fire Code Violations. These properties will require follow up inspections to confirm compliance. We conducted 0 consultation inspections for the month of May.

**Investigations:** The prevention Division conducted no Fire Investigations for the month of May.

**Public Outreach:** Our Public outreach programs for May consisted of three Fire Alarm drills for schools within the Wausau School District. Schools are mandated by the State of Wisconsin to have at least one witnessed Fire Alarm Drill throughout the school year.

**Education:** Firefighter/Inspector Brad Ludwig attended a two week "Fire Investigation: Essentials" class at the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg Maryland. This class was held from May 9<sup>th</sup> until May 20<sup>th</sup>. The successful completion of this class will allow FF/Inspector Ludwig to challenge the International Association of Arson Investigators (IAAI) and receive his "Fire Investigation technician" Certification (FIT). This certification is a requirement by the Wausau Fire Department to participate and run fire investigations. This certification must also be maintained with continuing education every three years.

Unfortunately, Lieutenant Shahn Kariger had his one week "Expert Witness" class canceled yet again. This will mark three times that Lt. Kariger has applied for and been accepted by the National Fire Academy to attend this class only to have it canceled. Lt. Kariger is working towards fulfilling the requirements needed to obtain his IAAI "Certified Fire Investigator" (CFI) certification. This designation and certification is the "Gold Standard" within the fire investigation world. It usually takes at least four years of active fire investigations and education to obtain this certification. We are continuing to look for other avenues to get Lt. Kariger the Expert Witness class.



United States  
Consumer Product Safety Commission

# Fireworks Injuries & Deaths

2020 REPORT

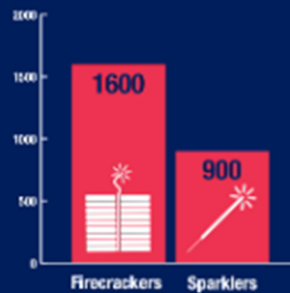
#CelebrateSafely

## Fireworks Safety Tips

- ★ Never allow children to play with or ignite fireworks.
- ★ Make sure fireworks are legal in your area before buying or using them.
- ★ Keep a bucket of water or a garden hose handy in case of fire or other mishap.
- ★ Light fireworks one at a time, then move back quickly.
- ★ Never try to re-light or pick up fireworks that have not ignited fully.
- ★ Never use fireworks while impaired by alcohol or drugs.
- ★ More Fireworks Safety Tips: [cpsc.gov/fireworks](https://www.cpsc.gov/fireworks)

## How & When Injuries Occurred

### Injuries by Firework Type



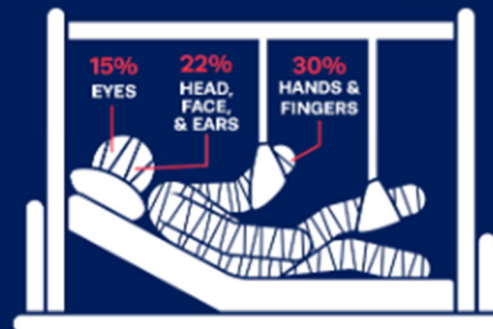
**66%**

of injuries occurred in the month around the July 4th holiday



## Most Injured Body Parts

**44%** of the injuries were burns



## Spike in Fireworks Injuries & Deaths

**50%**

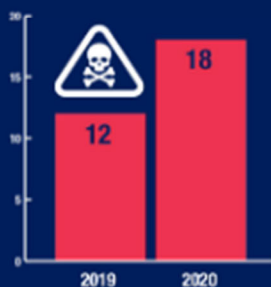
increase in deaths & injuries compared to 2019



**15,600**

people were treated in ERs for fireworks injuries

### Deaths from Fireworks



Source: U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission 2020 Fireworks Annual Report



CPSC.gov  
USCPSC

## Prevention Division Activities:

Inspections Completed	Monthly	Year to Date
Routine Fire Inspections	612	1,473
Re-inspections	53	105
All other Inspections	2	19
<b>Total Inspections</b>	<b>665</b>	<b>1,595</b>
Fire Investigations	0	5
<b>Inspection Department Activities</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>YTD</b>
Public Engagement Activities	15	48

# Fire Operations Division by Deputy Chief Jeremy Kopp

## Significant calls:

On May 21, we assisted the Village of Maine Fire Department and the Marathon County Sheriff's Department with a water rescue. At 1:18 PM, the Wausau Air Boat responded to the Village of Maine for the report of two individuals in the river who were in a capsized boat. Dispatch advised the Air Boat crew to report to the Brokaw boat launch. Wausau Med 2 also responded to the same boat launch. Upon arrival, the Air Boat was launched with a crew of 4, including Med 2's crew. A search was conducted on the west bank, south of the bridge near the spillway where the first victim was thought to be. The victim was located clinging to a branch in the water. The victim was pulled from the water into the boat. At the time, it was unknown where the second victim was, so the Air Boat returned to the boat launch with the first victim. Village of Maine first responders took the patient to the ambulance to warm up. The Airboat crew returned to the river and began a search for the second victim. With direction from dispatch, the second victim was located on the west bank of the river. The patient was assisted into the boat and transported to the boat launch. Both individuals were wearing personal floatation devices and survived with only minor injuries.

## Recruitment and Retention:

### New Firefighters:

We welcomed three new firefighter/paramedics in May to the Wausau Fire Department team. Marissa Wilson, Steve Annen, and Matthew Riley all completed a three-week academy and were sworn in by the City Clerk at a celebration on May 27. They were then assigned to crews and will continue their training under the guidance of peer field training officers. Once they have completed that phase, they will begin to count toward daily staffing levels.

### Incoming Candidates:

The department extended a conditional offer to another firefighter/paramedic candidate moving through pre-employment. Once the candidate has completed that portion, they will be interviewed by the Police and Fire Commission on June 27.

### Wausau Fire Career Night:

On May 19, we hosted a Career Night and invited people interested in learning about a career at Wausau to Station Two. We had an excellent showing of 18 people that night that spent the evening moving through three hands-on stations and visiting with Wausau firefighters and representatives from North Central Technical College. It was a fun evening, and we are helping a few interested candidates with advice about educational paths that will meet our requirements.

## Fleet:

Our new ladder truck being built by Sutphen in Ohio is nearing completion. I will be traveling in mid-June with the City Fleet Manager to perform a final inspection of the truck. Once that inspection is complete, it will be driven to Wisconsin for the final outfitting of cabinets and installation of tools by the dealer Custom Fire. This truck is a mid-mount 75' ladder built specifically for our operations on narrow and hilly streets. The truck will be the first of its kind in the area. We have agreed to allow the dealer to showcase the truck at the Wisconsin State Fire Chief's Conference in Green Bay on June 24 and 25. Watch our social media pages to get a sneak peek of this truck soon.

## Buildings and Grounds:

- If you drive by Station One, you might notice a change. Unfortunately, we had to cut down two trees on the property because they were blocking the security cameras installed last year. The cameras were installed for security after some vandalism incidents at Station One.
- Through the Capital Improvements process, we identified Station Three’s apparatus floor as the highest need for repair and updating. Chief Barteck explains in detail in his monthly report the project details.
- The City Facilities manager installed Culligan water coolers at all three fire stations. This gives employees a second source of clean drinking water. The coolers have been very popular with the staff.
- The planter on the Thomas Street Side of Station One has been planted with “Midnight Madness petunias. We have decided not to grow vegetables in that planter this year because it was hard for us to upkeep them. The petunias seem to like their new home and are multiplying quickly.

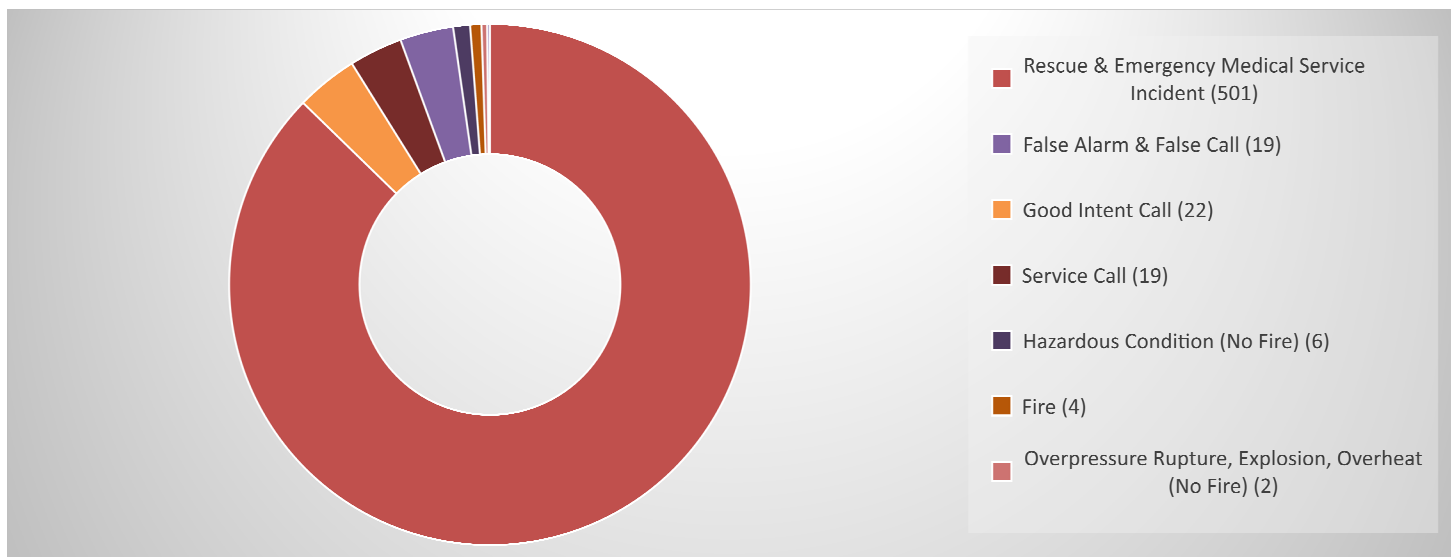
**Overtime and scheduling:**

- The line crews continue to work exorbitant mandated overtime shifts. We have worked with the Battalion Chiefs to create a new system to give more advanced notice when shifts are going to be mandated and then provide the staff an opportunity to pick which mandated shift will work best for their schedule.
- If you have any questions about the operations portion of our monthly report, don’t hesitate to contact me or stop for a visit.

Thank you,  
Jeremy Kopp – Deputy Fire Chief

**Significant Fire Events:**

Date	Address	City	Incident #	Type
5/10/2022	1514 Brady Street	City of Wausau	F22000785	Cooking fire, confined to container
5/19/2022	1300 Young Street	City of Wausau	F22000839	Building fire
5/26/2022	624 Hamilton Street	City of Wausau	F22000884	Outside storage fire
5/31/2022	151814 Baneberry Court	Rib Mountain	F22000913	Building fire



**Responses by Municipality (All NFIRS Reports):**

City	# of Runs	% of Runs	# of Runs - YTD
City of Merrill	0	0.00%	2
City Of Mosinee	0	0.00%	0
City Of Schofield	0	0.00%	1

City Of Wausau	541	94.25%	2,582
Clark County	0	0.00%	0
Taylor County	0	0.00%	0
Town Of Berlin	2	0.35%	9
Town of Bevent	0	0.00%	1
Town Of Cassel	1	0.17%	1
Town Of Elderon	0	0.00%	0
Town Of Emmet	0	0.00%	0
<b>Town of Franzen</b>	0	0.00%	1
Town Of Hamburg	1	0.17%	1
Town Of Hewitt	2	0.35%	10
Town Of Marathon	0	0.00%	1
Town Of Mosinee	0	0.00%	0
Town Of Rib Falls	0	0.00%	2
Town Of Rib Mountain	1	0.17%	8
Town Of Rietbrock	0	0.00%	0
Town Of Stettin	0	0.00%	0
Town Of Texas	7	1.22%	29
Town Of Wausau	9	1.57%	40
Town Of Weston	0	0.00%	0
Town Of Wien	0	0.00%	0
Village Of Athens	0	0.00%	1
Village Of Brokaw	0	0.00%	2
Village Of Edgar	0	0.00%	0
Village Of Kronenwetter	0	0.00%	0
Village Of Maine	10	1.74%	34
Village Of Marathon City	0	0.00%	0
Village Of Rothschild	0	0.00%	1
Village of Stratford	0	0.00%	0
Village Of Weston	0	0.00%	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>574</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>2,727</b>

## **Activity/Incident Hours Committed**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Time Committed</b>
NFIRS Incidents	91:18:37 Hours
EMS Incidents	779:00:03 Hours
Non-Incident Activities (Station Maintenance, Vehicle Check-off/Fire Pre-plan, Hazmat Outreach, Administration duties, Public Education, Committee and Staff Meetings)	900.6 Hours
Training (including Wellness)	1,293.25 Hours

## **Aid Responses:**

<b>Type of Aid</b>	<b># of Runs</b>
Mutual Aid Given – EMS	1
Mutual Aid Given – Fire	1
Automatic Aid Given – EMS	24
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)	1
Total Non-Aid Incidents (outside City with no other agency response)	7