

Wausau Fire Department Monthly Report

September 2022



(Crew from Engine 3/Med 3 made quick work of extinguishing a vehicle fire on September 2nd)

Fire Chief Report by Chief Robert Barteck

September was filled with good news about grant success! We are notified of two grant awards that will help the department and community enormously. The timing of the news couldn't be better as we are working at completing our 2023 budget with only cost-to-continue increases. Our spending restraints were already tight and with inflation, at an all-time high, we are struggling to budget for essential needs in the department.

Wisconsin EMS Flex Grant:

The Wausau Fire Department EMS Division received \$146,000 from the Wisconsin EMS Flex Grant.

The EMS Flex Grant has been awarded to 442 Wisconsin licensed emergency medical services (EMS) throughout the state to help deliver prehospital emergency services. Originally, Governor Tony Evers directed the Department of Health Services to use \$12 million in American Rescue Plan Act – State and Local Funds, to give Wisconsin EMS providers funding to relieve the financial effects of COVID-19 on services. Due to the overwhelming responses from over 400 applicants submitting requests totaling \$63 million, the Governor has added an additional \$20 million to allow more funding assistance to be provided to service agencies bringing the total amount awarded to licensed Wisconsin EMS services to \$32 million.

We will present a proposal to accept the \$146,000 grant to the Finance Committee in October. We plan on dividing the grant to fill key resource needs: \$100,000 – New Ambulance, \$30,000- Power Load Cot, \$10,000- EMS Equipment, and \$6,000- EMS Training.

Staffing for Effective Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant:

On September 21, 2022, we received notice from FEMA that we were awarded our \$3,164,763 SAFER Grant Request. This grant will fully fund nine new firefighter positions in the Wausau Fire Department for three years (2023, 2024, & 2025). This was a highly competitive grant. FEMA received 1576 applications and made 118 awards totaling \$360 million. With a success rate of only 7.5%, we were extremely fortunate to receive the grant award.

The nine firefighters funded through the SAFER Grant bring the total council Approved and funded new firefighter positions to 12. In December 2021, the Public Health and Safety Committee and the Human Resources Committee recommended the creation of 12 new positions to meet increasing call demand and increasing responsibilities for emergency response.

This staffing increase will be transformational for the Wausau Fire Department. This is the first staffing increase since 1970. The 12 additional firefighter/paramedic positions will allow the department to increase the daily minimum staffing to the NFPA 1710 National Standard for fire apparatus staffing. Once all positions are filled and deployed Engine One, Three, and Ladder Two will have three-firefighter minimum staffing. It will also allow a rotation for firefighter/paramedics between the department's three ALS-Level ambulances and the three-fire suppression apparatus.

We have begun recruiting for these open positions and anticipate hiring in two phases. Phase One will be current candidates that are already firefighter/paramedic trained and will likely be hired before the end of the year. Phase two will consist of EMT-Basic firefighters that will be hired in February and immediately begin training as paramedics in a Wausau Fire in-house paramedic class.

It is an exciting time in Wausau Fire Department as we set upon a historic staffing increase of epic proportions. We greatly appreciate the support of the Police and Fire Commission and the Common Council to help us make this staffing increase a reality.

Thank you!

Robert Barteck – Fire Chief

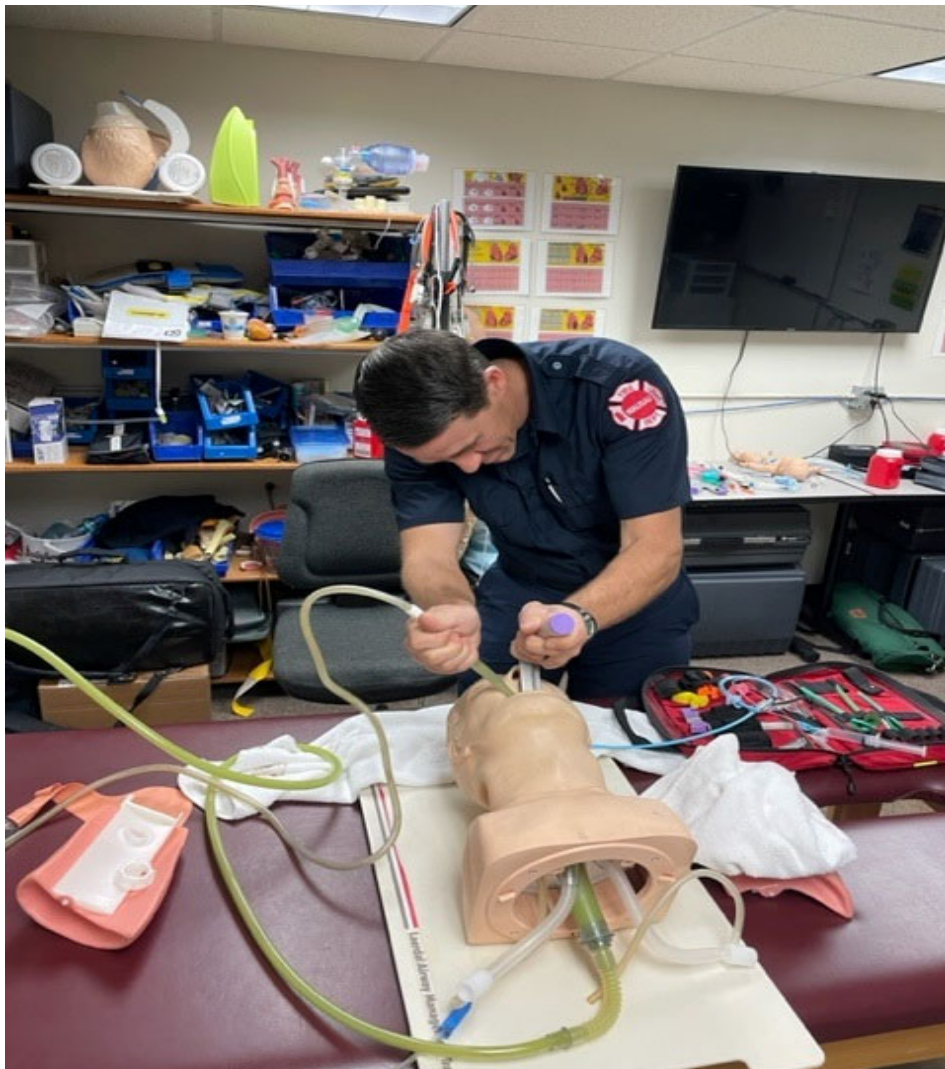
EMS Division by EMS Division Chief Jared Thompson

September was another exciting month for the EMS Division. We currently are designing two new ambulances that the fire department and the department of public works have budgeted for 2023. Designing and spec'ing out ambulances is not like it used to be. The ambulance committee and the ambulance manufacturers are facing some interesting supply chain challenges. Many chassis and other integral components are very hard to find and have extended lead times of two to three years. This has made the ambulance committee look at different ambulance manufacturers that we have never considered. One ambulance manufacturer is Wheeled Coach. They are one of the largest ambulance manufacturers in the US. They face fewer challenges with the supply chain issues than other smaller manufacturers do because they have been able to buy and stock many chassis and internal components that are needed to complete an ambulance build. They are the sole ambulance manufacturer for the Fire Department of New York (FDNY) EMS. They produce 150 ambulances for FDNY EMS every year. The ambulance committee next meets on October 19th, to finalize our design.

During September, a vast majority of EMTs and Paramedics participated in the American Heart Association CPR refresher course. Every two years all EMS personnel are required to take a refresher course in CPR. This is a four-hour course that focuses on high-quality chest compressions which is the most important aspect when caring for a person who suffers a cardiac arrest. Pictured below is A-crew performing chest compressions. The TV screen is displaying real-time feedback on how well they are compressing the mannequin's chest and then it displays their overall score after two minutes. This encourages a healthy dose of competition between crew members during their CPR training.



In September, we had the privilege of welcoming Jerod Blomberg to Wausau Fire. He brings a very unique view to our EMS division. Coming from a very large EMS system in California, he has made it clear that Wausau Fire EMS is very aggressive and progressive in our EMS protocols and procedures. There were a handful of medications and procedures that Wausau EMS carries and performs that Firefighter/Paramedic Blomberg needed to be refreshed on. Pictured below is Firefighter/Paramedic Blomberg learning a new procedure, Suction Assisted Laryngoscopy with Airway Decontamination (SALAD), that Wausau Fire EMS uses when performing endotracheal intubation.



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%	1
City of Wausau	446	93.31%	4,206
Clark County	0	0.00%	1
Other	0	0.00%	0
Town of Berlin	6	1.26%	20
Town of Bevent	0	0.00%	1
Town of Bern	0	0.00%	2
Town of Cassel	0	0.00%	3
Town of Elderon	1	0.21%	1
Town of Emmet	0	0.00%	0
Town of Franzen	0	0.00%	1
Town of Hamburg	0	0.00%	3
Town of Halsey	1	0.21%	1
Town of Harrison	0	0.00%	1
Town of Hewitt	2	0.42%	16
Town of Marathon	0	0.00%	2
Town of Mosinee	0	0.00%	0
Town of Rib Falls	2	0.42%	4
Town of Rib Mountain	0	0.00%	6

Town of Rietbrock	0	0.00%	1
Town of Stettin	0	0.00%	1
Town of Texas	1	0.21%	49
Town of Wausau	6	1.26%	71
Town of Wien	0	0.00%	3
Village of Athens	1	0.21%	3
Village of Edgar	0	0.00%	1
Village of Kronenwetter	0	0.00%	0
Village of Maine	12	2.52%	66
Village of Marathon City	0	0.00%	2
Village of Rothschild	0	0.00%	2
Village of Stratford	0	0.00%	1
Village of Weston	0	0.00%	7
Wittenberg	0	0.00%	1
Total	478	100.00%	4,478

Fire Training Division by Training Division Chief David Briggs

August Scheduled Training: (not all photographed)

- Fire Behavior 3rd Edition
- High Rise Fire Operations
- Standpipe and Portable Standpipe Operations
- Technical Rescue Drill – Vertical Confined Space
- The Colors of Fire Service Leadership

As in every monthly report, the amount of training is significant. September was interesting in the fact that the scheduled training was completed but we were so busy that no photos were taken of the scheduled concepts. However, we made sure to document many of the impromptu and un-scheduled training events that took place.

A brief breakdown of our scheduled activities follows:

Fire Behavior 3rd Edition

This training involved video-based learning on understanding scientifically tested fire behavior from the time of fire ignition through the fire's growth and decay. Fire has been the same consuming creature for centuries. However, the fuel types and building construction dramatically affect how we can fight fires and the survivability for the occupants.

High Rise and Standpipe Operations

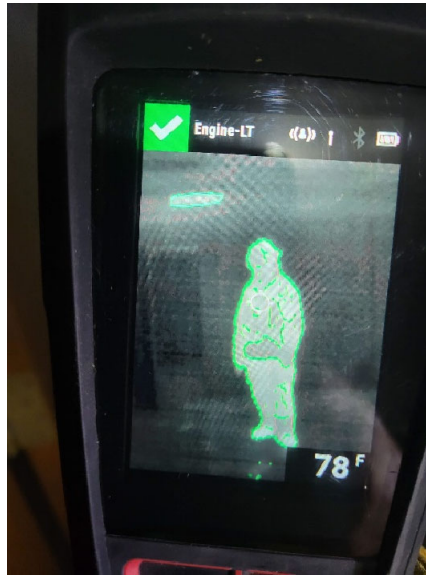
These two drills were combined by most crews to perform fire attack skills in elevated locations such as office buildings, apartment complexes, and even some commercial structures. Often, we must carry our hoses and hook them to a pipe that is pre-plumbed in these types of buildings, then supply water to the building with a fire engine and suppress the fire without our hose coming straight from our pump panel. This type of drill is extremely labor intense as it requires us to carry our hoses up staircases to the floor below the fire, make the connection, and then proceed to advance and fight the fire.

Vertical Confined Space

Only one crew was able to perform Confined Space Training as we simply ran out of time with the other two (for now). Confined Space Rescues are rare in the City of Wausau. However, the risk is certainly there with near-daily entries made by city employees and others in the workplace. We cannot take this type of specialized rescue for granted.

The Colors of Fire Service Leadership

This presentation spoke on key concepts of leadership and followership that can aid firefighters regardless of their rank and seniority. Each helmet color represented a different rank or positional responsibility in the fire service. Each position was presented with pearls of wisdom to aid each member of the organization in recognizing their leadership potential and responsibilities. With each helmet color (rank), a book was referenced to also provide an opportunity to dive deeper into the content after the lecture. We ended with a strong correlation to improving leadership qualities and the benefits both on-duty, and off.



Above: Training with our new MSA LUNAR device during search and rescue training.



Above: Our newest recruit, Jerod, completing forcible entry, ladder operations, and hydrant connections.



Above: FF/P Sethany being mentored by an experienced Engineer on pump operations before she started Driver-Operator class through NTC.



Above: Our airboat operators maintaining proficiency with the AirRanger and giving Recruit Firefighter Jerod a breeze after hitting his fire training hard all day.

Wisconsin Rapids Fire Department Seminar

On Friday, September 30th, National fire service speaker and retired Seattle Fire Captain Mike Gagliano presented "This House Rocks" and "The Art of Go/No-Go." This training was hosted in Wisconsin Rapids by the Wisconsin Rapids Fire Department.

Lt. Bauknecht and Training Division Chief (TDC) Briggs attended with the plan to bring back the knowledge to the rest of Wausau Fire and hopefully prepare for an upcoming event. Lt. Bauknecht and TDC Briggs have been working with a community partner to bring Mike and his wife Anne to Wausau to share their perspectives on the fire service and fire service marriage.

During the presentation and breaks, firefighters collaborated and made connections to gain perspective on issues in the fire service including training, morale, work/home balance, and more. In the photos that follow, you can see some of the connections made by Lt. Bauknecht and TDC Briggs.

Mike presented on the following:

"This House Rocks" focuses on firefighters rejuvenating their love for the job and on collaborative efforts in the firehouse that translate to an effective team on the fireground.

"The Art of Go/No-Go" provides firefighters with a simplified approach to fireground size-up and decision

making. The method Captain Gagliano shared, assists firefighters in making recognition-primed decisions in mere seconds to set initial strategy and tactics to mitigate an incident.

We hope to bring Captain Gagliano and his wife Anne to the Wausau area in 2023 to share their knowledge, perspectives, and experience with more firefighters who love this profession.



Above: L to R, FF Beattie from Beaver Dam FD, Captain Mike Gagliano, FF DuCharme from Beaver Dam FD, TDC Briggs from Wausau FD, Lt. Bauknecht from Wausau FD

Wisconsin State Committees (WFD is represented on)

Fire Officer

The Wisconsin Technical College committee on fire officer training continued to meet. The meeting on September 22nd completed curriculum revision and we finalized the written examination test pool validation. Our next step is to prepare the accompanying content and student guide to prepare for the certification process.

Technical Rescue

A new committee was formed through the WTCS on creating the first Wisconsin recognized and standardized technical rescue curriculum beyond the most basic levels. While the state utilizes Proboard certification for Task-Force 1, it is not a WTCS curriculum. For those in the state requesting certification in technical rescue, there is currently very limited availability of training. This new committee has the goal of creating course content that can meet the needs of organizations throughout the state regarding disciplines such as:

- Rope Rescue
- Tower Rescue
- Confined Space Rescue
- Trench Rescue
- Collapse Rescue
- Water Rescue
- Swift-Water Rescue

Type of Training	# of Hours	% of Hours	# of Hours -YTD
Company Training	442	57.89%	5,956.17
Driver/Operator Training	82.25	10.77%	509.25
Facilities Training	36.75	4.81%	85.25
Hazardous Materials Training	16.5	2.16%	548.75
Misc Training	0	0.00%	52.33
Officer Training	93	12.18%	832.30
Specialty Training	93	12.18%	1,218.50
Total	763.5	100.00%	9,202.55

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	1.5	0.38%	89.75
EMS Training	341.65	87.63%	1,937.90
Fire Instructor Training	26.75	6.86%	495.50
Fire Prevention Training	0	0.00%	0
Investigation Training	20	5.13%	115
Total	389.90	100.00%	2,638.15

Fire Prevention Division by Fire Marshal Brian Stahl

Inspections: Within the City of Wausau for the month of September, we performed 137 total inspections. Of those 10 were re-inspections. We had 27 properties that had Fire Code Violations with 43% being Fire Extinguisher Annual Maintenance. These properties will require follow up inspections to confirm compliance. We conducted 5 consultation inspections for the month of that were either remodel projects or new construction.

Investigations: We had zero Fire Investigations for the month of September. We also responded to zero recreational fire complaints.

Public Outreach: The Youth Fire Setting Intervention and Prevention program was completed on September 28th. This entailed a follow-up questionnaire for the mother along with a general discussion and Q/A. The child (eight-year-old) has successfully retained most of the fire safety education that was provided. We performed three smoke detector installs, each of which provided one CO detector and three Smoke detectors to residents.

Education: We attended the Fall IAAI Conference that was held on Sept 20-22 in Eau Claire. This was a three-day conference that provided education for investigating explosions, large incident responses (riots), and Meth Lab fires. These presentations were provided by the ATF and the Wisconsin DOJ.



Prevention Division Activities:

Inspections Completed	Monthly	Year to Date
Routine Fire Inspections	125	2,034
Re-inspections	10	232
All other Inspections (Consults/burn complaints,etc)	2	35
Total Inspections	137	2,297
Fire Investigations	0	7
Inspection Department Activities	Number	YTD
Public Engagement Activities	6	87

Fire Operations Division by Deputy Chief Jeremy Kopp

Significant calls:

Wausau Fire was lucky enough in September to only respond to two vehicle fires. We were still busy running emergency ambulance calls at a record rate, but it is rare to see the fire response calls down to two. This is the time of year when we are reaching out to the public to be even more careful because we are entering the heating season. Hopefully we can keep these numbers low on the fire side throughout the fall with community outreach and education.

Recruitment and Retention:

With the closing of the application process on September 18th we were able to set up two full days of interviews. The 1st round being October 10th and 11th and the 2nd round being November. We had 27 applicants and are hopeful that many of them pass through the process and help us get a step closer to our new minimum requirements for staffing. Firefighter Paramedic Jared Blomberg started his first day of our academy on September 12th and first day on the line working with his new crew on September 26th. We had a very nice swear in ceremony at station 2 with Jared and his family on September 22nd.

Fleet:

Engine 2 was sent over to Zentara for front end repairs suffered last winter. This is scheduled to be completed early October and Engine 4 will then be sent to DPW to be auctioned off. We are still waiting on confirmation of our leased vehicles to be replaced. The replacement of these vehicles will put in place a much-needed command vehicle currently Car 2 that is ten years old. The other replacements will be for the inspector vehicles as well as the Deputy Chief's car.

Buildings and Grounds:

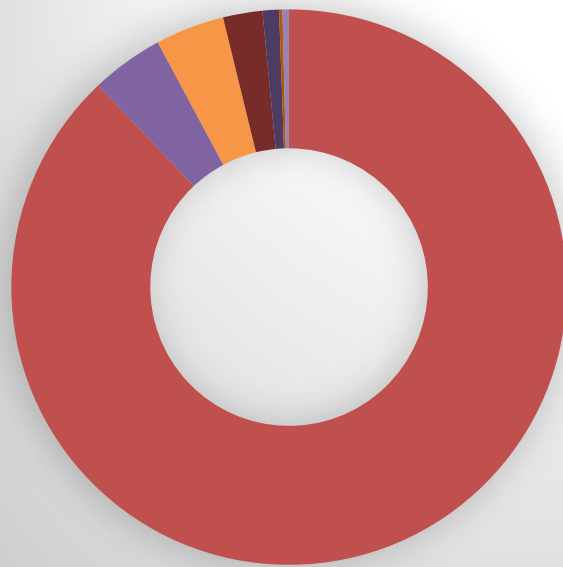
All windows have been cleaned inside and out of all three stations and ready for winter. The concrete drain in the apparatus bay at Central Fire has been completed and is fully functional and looks great. We are moving forward on updating the apparatus bay at station 3 and securing pricing.

Overtime and Scheduling:

We have 9 members on FMLA into the winter months for the birth of their babies! Must be something in the water (LOL). This will cause some extra overtime as well as one member on light duty for a leg injury. As always if you have any questions about operations please do not hesitate to call or come in and see me. 715-261-7901

Significant Fire Events:

Date	Address	City	Incident #	Type
09/02/2022	816 E. Bridge Street	Wausau	F22001538	Passenger vehicle fire
09/03/2022	1125 W. Bridge Street	Wausau	F22001543	Passenger vehicle fire



- Rescue & Emergency Medical Service Incident (460)
- False Alarm & False Call (22)
- Good Intent Call (21)
- Service Call (12)
- Hazardous Condition (No Fire) (5)
- Fire (1)
- Overpressure Rupture, Explosion, Overheat (No Fire) (0)
- Special Incident Type (2)
- Severe Weather & Natural Disaster (0)

Responses by Municipality (All NFIRS Reports):

City	# of Runs	% of Runs	# of Runs - YTD
City of Merrill	1	0.19%	3
City Of Mosinee	0	0.00%	1
City Of Schofield	0	0.00%	4
City Of Wausau	493	94.08%	4,678
Clark County	0	0.00%	1
Taylor County	0	0.00%	0
Town Of Berlin	6	1.15%	20
Town of Bern	0	0.00%	2
Town of Bevent	0	0.00%	1
Town Of Cassel	0	0.00%	3
Town Of Elderon	1	0.19%	1
Town Of Emmet	0	0.00%	0
Town of Franzen	0	0.00%	1
Town of Halsey	1	0.19%	1
Town Of Hamburg	0	0.00%	3
Town of Harrison	0	0.00%	1
Town Of Hewitt	2	0.38%	16
Town Of Marathon	0	0.00%	2
Town Of Mosinee	0	0.00%	0
Town Of Rib Falls	2	0.38%	4
Town Of Rib Mountain	0	0.00%	8
Town Of Rietbrock	0	0.00%	1
Town Of Stettin	0	0.00%	1
Town Of Texas	1	0.19%	48
Town Of Wausau	4	0.76%	68
Town Of Weston	0	0.00%	0
Town Of Wien	0	0.00%	3
Village Of Athens	1	0.19%	3
Village Of Brokaw	2	0.38%	8

Village Of Edgar	0	0.00%	1
Village Of Kronenwetter	0	0.00%	0
Village Of Maine	10	1.91%	58
Village Of Marathon City	0	0.00%	2
Village Of Rothschild	0	0.00%	2
Village of Stratford	0	0.00%	1
Village Of Weston	0	0.00%	8
Wittenberg	0	0.00%	1
Total	524	100.00%	4,955

Activity/Incident Hours Committed

Category	Time Committed
NFIRS Incidents	79:45:59 Hours
EMS Incidents	735:29:21 Hours
Non-Incident Activities (Station Maintenance, Vehicle Check-off/Fire Pre-plan, Hazmat Outreach, Administration duties, Public Education, Committee and Staff Meetings)	800.95 Hours
Training (including Wellness)	1,153.40 Hours

Aid Responses:

Type of Aid	# of Runs
Mutual Aid Given – EMS	5
Mutual Aid Given – Fire	0
Automatic Aid Given – EMS	19
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
Total Non-Aid Incidents (outside City with no other agency response)	7