

2021 ANNUAL REPORT



5791 Lacy Road, Fitchburg, WI 53711

Tel: 608-270-7070

Email: fire@fitchburgwi.gov

Website: www.fitchburgwi.gov/fire





TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	CHIEF'S MESSAGE	10	PERSONNEL
2	CORE VALUES, MISSION STATEMENT, AND VISION	11	FIRE CAUSE & ORIGIN INVESTIGATION
3	50 YEAR ANNIVERSARY	12	OUTREACH & EDUCATION
4	ORGANIZATION CHART	13	EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT
5	AT A GLANCE	14	SUPPORT SERVICES
6	2021 BUDGET	15	MONTHLY & PLATOON TRAINING
7	PEER SUPPORT	16	TECHNICAL RESCUE & SPECIAL OPERATIONS
8	OPERATIONS	17	FIRE SERVICE INTERNSHIP
9	PREVENTION & INSPECTION	18	HONOR GUARD



CHIEF'S MESSAGE



February 28, 2022

Citizens of Fitchburg
Mayor Richardson
City Council Members
Police and Fire Commission Members
Public Safety and Human Services Committee Members

Although the ongoing ebbs and flows of COVID-19 (and its many variants) challenged our approach to deliver service throughout 2021, it didn't limit us. We addressed community needs while considering the impact on health, operations, and economics. Through a dedicated effort, our firefighters rose to the challenge, adapted to the work environment, and provided a quality service.

2021 marked Fitchburg Fire Department's 50th Anniversary. We were able to celebrate this milestone by bringing members and their families together during our awards and pinning ceremony. We held off as long as we could (hoping to invite more people from the community and past membership); but COVID restrictions persisted through the end of the year. A decision was made to conduct a smaller, thoughtful celebration and live-stream the proceedings with the assistance of FACTv.

We used our 50th anniversary to move forward with a couple of purchases and programs that had not been prioritized over the past couple years. In 2021, we implemented an awards program that recognizes professional accomplishments and distinguished service. We also updated Class "B" Uniforms and designed a new badge. All of these projects had been requested by department membership and all changes were made with firefighter input.

We are fortunate to work for a community that invests in facilities and equipment. The following (significant) projects were advanced and/or completed in 2021:

- Squad 2 Re-Chassis
- Hydraulic Extrication Tool Upgrade
- Command Car Specification
- Station #1/EOC Upgrades
- Records Management - ESO Implementation
- Drone Equipment (through private donation)

As the City of Fitchburg continues to grow/develop, we will continue to see increasing demands on service delivery. Although I believe we will have the ability to staff a combination department (career and paid-on-premises/part-time/intern firefighters) into the foreseeable future, the reliance on part-time staff will have to be reconsidered. In 2021, Deputy Rich Roth retired from our sworn staff. Rich filled full-time hours for part-time pay. We were not able to fill his position with existing staff. Our senior, part-time employees work full-time jobs and have family responsibilities that prevent them from putting in the same amount of time that Rich did.

This staffing void was predicted. The solution requires careful thought and consideration of a staffing plan - one that reflects realistic expectation and fiscal sustainability. The end-goal should be to staff our department (maintaining existing station minimums - 9 people on shift per day) with a staff that is comprised of 75% career and 25% paid-on-premises/intern firefighters. The speed in which we will be able to make this happen will depend on the City's ability to fund. In order to have a staffing plan with S.M.A.R.T. objectives (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-Based) we need to know what the funding mechanism looks like.

We are fortunate to serve a growing community; but growth has its challenges for adequate staffing. As Chief, I continue to be impressed by the dedication of our firefighters - their determination and ability allows us to achieve more. The extra effort of our membership is noble; however, it is only sustainable to a point. To that end, I will continue to advocate for an effective, efficient, well-staffed, and valuable service.

Thank you for your support. Please reach out if more information is needed. Sincerely,
Joe Pulvermacher, Fire Chief

OUR MISSION



CORE VALUES

Honesty & Integrity
Pride & Ownership
Passion & Professionalism

MISSION STATEMENT

The Fitchburg Fire Department strives:

To Serve

by providing care through a dedicated and dependable response

To Learn

by exercising readiness through repetition and vigilance. We will train to our limits... (not afraid of failure in a training environment) as we work toward competence and confidence

To Respect

by exhibiting teamwork, honor, and accountability at all levels – continually treating others in a way that we would want to be treated

To Lead

through initiative and service excellence, we are committed to be an example in our profession and in our community

VISION

For those we are sworn to protect... For those with whom we serve...
For all who live in, work in, or visit the City of Fitchburg,
We envision our optimal future:

We know our "Why,"

Regardless of our forward momentum, we will never forget why we do what we do... compassion, respect, professionalism.

We value our "What,"

Our accomplishments provide a significant amount of pride for active members and those who identify with our history

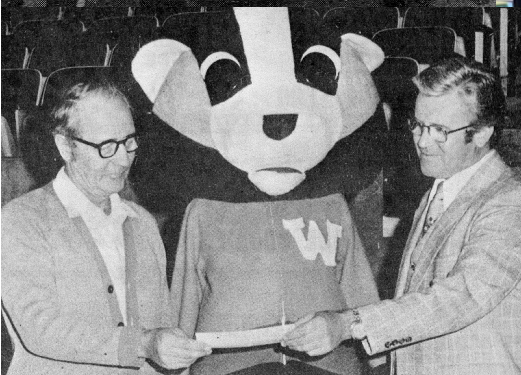
We will constantly strive to improve our "How,"

Through research, planning, training, and a progressive mindset.

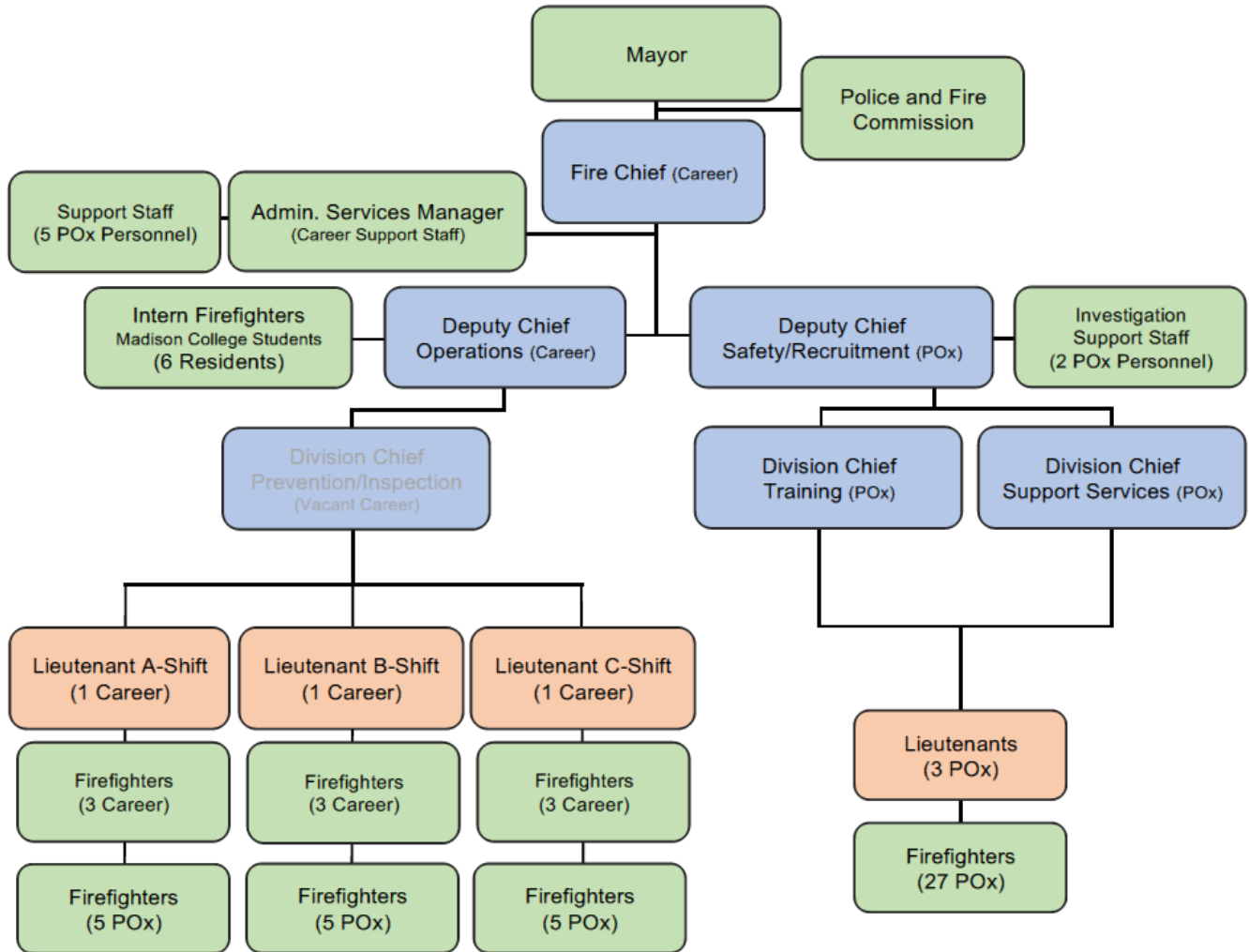
While working toward our "WOW!"

We are standard bearers in our profession... an example for others to follow.

50 YEAR (1971 - 2021) ANNIVERSARY



ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



AT A GLANCE



14

CAREER
FIREFIGHTERS

33

PAID ON CALL
FIREFIGHTERS



11

SUPPORT
STAFF

2,128
CALLS FOR
SERVICE



2,150

INSPECTIONS



\$3.1M

OPERATING
BUDGET



5,577

TRAINING
HOURS

AT A GLANCE

CHIEF PULVERMACHER - 2021 BUDGET

-5220- Fire Department

	2016 Actual	2017 Actual	2018 Actual	2019 Actual	2020 Actual	2021 Estimate
Personnel Costs	\$2,134,848	\$2,287,532	\$2,379,396	\$2,527,468	\$2,342,147	\$2,600,547
Contractual Services	23,859	24,572	26,036	23,712	33,465	18,100
Operating Expenses	281,928	287,219	231,600	251,973	229,732	241,205
Allocated Benefits	103,805	101,280	188,885	202,400	233,855	242,405
Total	\$2,544,440	\$2,700,603	\$2,825,917	\$2,883,550	\$2,839,190	\$3,102,257

The following spreadsheet breaks down personnel costs. Providing a 5-year trend of actual investment and the estimate for 2021 expenses. 2016 – 2020 information was retrieved from adopted budgets. The 2021 estimate was retrieved from the Mayor's 2022 proposed budget.

	2016 Actual	2017 Actual	2018 Actual	2019 Actual	2020 Actual	2021 Estimate
Career	\$951,031	\$1,011,695	\$1,069,221	\$1,108,501	\$1,134,414	\$1,157,148
POC Service	\$557,110	\$536,648	\$516,656	\$557,608	\$523,957	\$643,761
Overtime	\$80,539	\$146,076	\$192,135	\$141,488	\$65,886	\$100,209
PT/LTE Wages	\$30,895	\$26,925	\$21,075	\$18,885	\$20,250	\$23,400
Benefits	\$515,273	\$566,189	\$580,309	\$578,984	\$597,640	\$676,029
Total	\$2,134,848	\$2,287,533	\$2,379,396	\$2,405,466	\$2,342,147	\$2,600,547

-5290- Other Public Safety

	2016 Actual	2017 Actual	2018 Actual	2019 Actual	2020 Actual	2021 Estimate
Personnel Costs	\$1,173	\$1,157	\$791	\$1066	\$727	\$ -
Contractual Services	546,223	631,489	682,861	672,285	880,130	947,447
Operating Expenses	110	115	-	-	75	-
Allocated Benefits	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	\$547,506	\$632,761	\$683,652	\$673,351	\$880,932	\$947,447

"Other Public Safety" is a portion of the budget that the Emergency Management Director monitors. It is the placeholder in the budget for two significant expenses:

- Fitchburg's contributions to Fitch-Rona EMS
- Radio Communications Contracts (DaneCom)



CHIEF PULVERMACHER - 2021 PEER SUPPORT



Peer support is one facet of our psychological health and wellness campaign. The intent behind peer support is to provide emergency responders with skills that assist in the recognition of critical incident, post traumatic, and cumulative stress. Support team members learn techniques that are necessary to better understand the signs and symptoms of stress and its effects on job performance and health. Support team members facilitate discussions that help identify defusing methods - and other resources available through a purposeful continuum of care.

The Fitchburg Public Safety Wellness Team is comprised of Firefighters, Police Officers, and Paramedics. Fitchburg Police, Fitch-Rona EMS, and Fitchburg Fire share the responsibility associated with peer support. Further, this team provides assistance to other public safety agencies who have experienced a significant, critical incident.

CONTINUING EDUCATION

In 2021, the peer support group participated in training that involved assisting individuals in crisis and group crisis intervention. Sometimes called "emotional first aid," the course presented the core elements of a comprehensive, systematic, and multi-component crisis intervention. The need for appropriate follow-up services/referrals was also discussed.

2021 DEPLOYMENTS

Endeavor Fire Department - January 2021
McFarland Fire Department (x2) - April 2021
Fitchburg Fire Department, Curry Court - September 2021



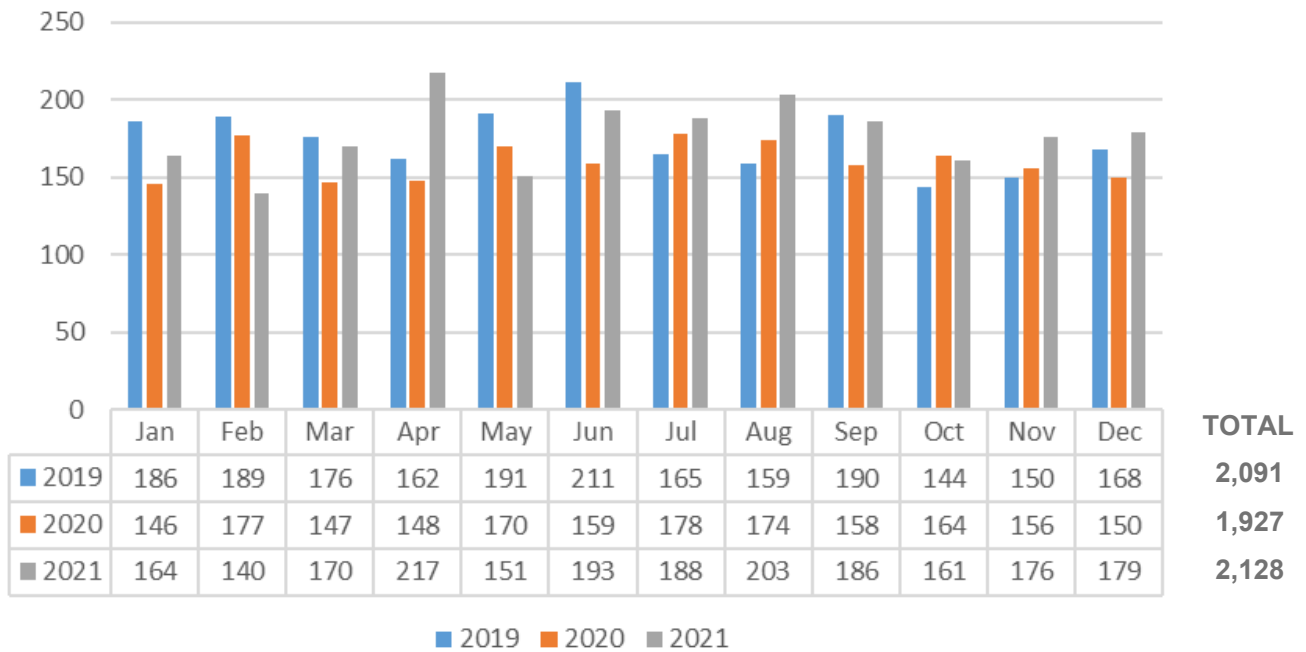
DEPUTY CHIEF GROSSEN - OPERATIONS

FFD responded to 2128 total calls for service in 2021, which is an average of 5.8 calls per day. This is also an increase in service of 201 more calls than 2020, a 10.4% increase. Our busiest month was April with 217 calls.

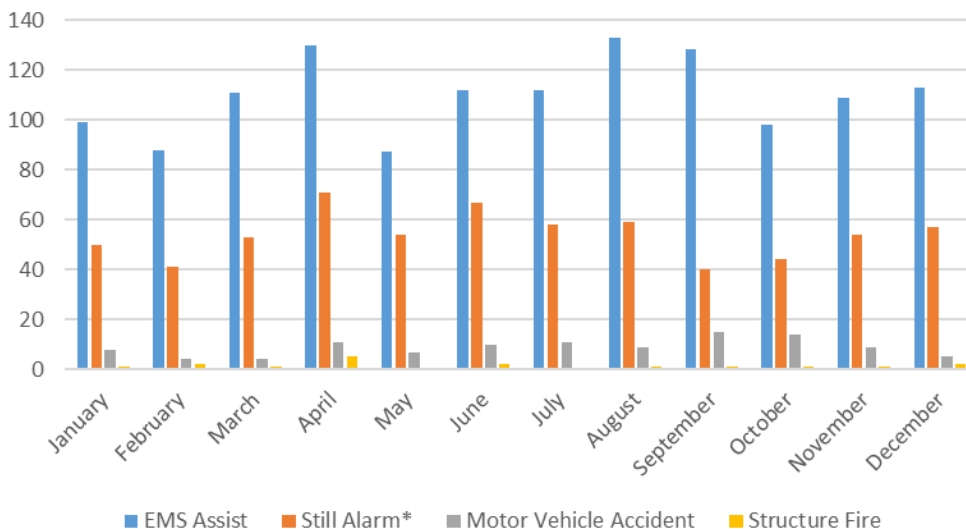
Over the last year we responded to the following on average per month:

- 110 EMS Assists – August Highest Number of Responses of 133
- 54 Still Alarms – April Highest Number of Responses of 71
- 9 Motor Vehicle Crashes – September Highest Number of Responses of 15
- 1.4 Structure Fires – April Highest Number of Responses of 5

CALLS FOR SERVICE, BY MONTH:

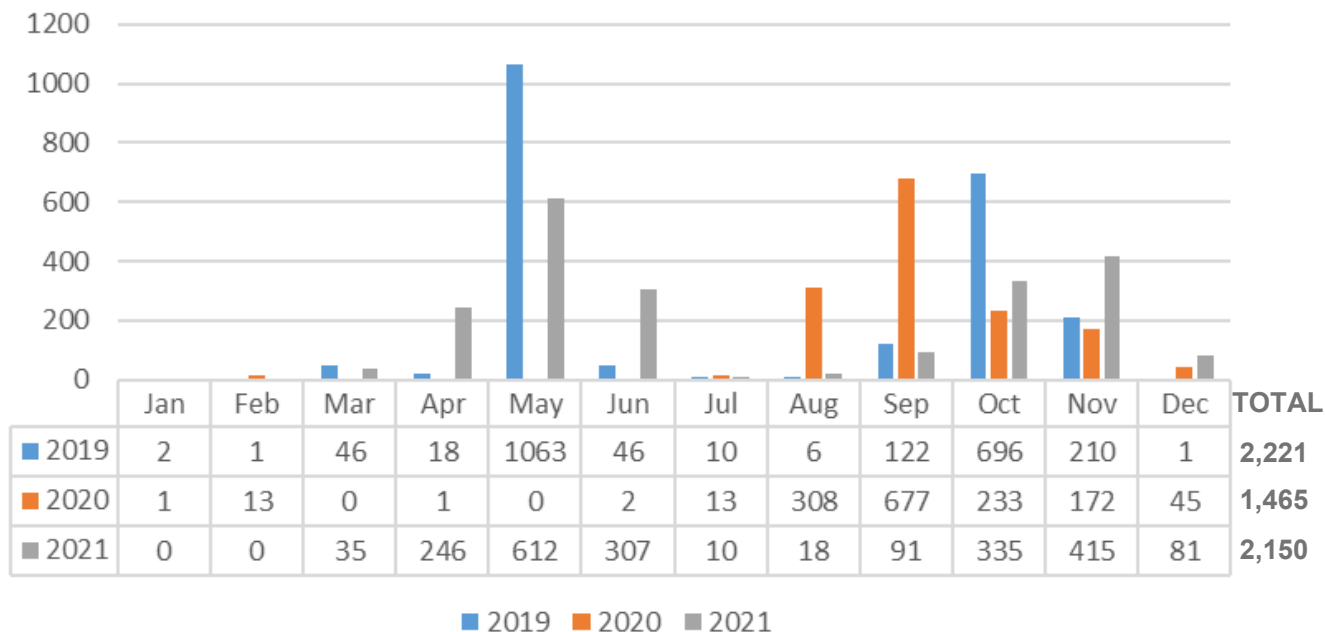


MOST COMMON CALL TYPE:



DEPUTY CHIEF GROSSEN - PREVENTION & INSPECTION

INSPECTIONS COMPLETED BY MONTH:

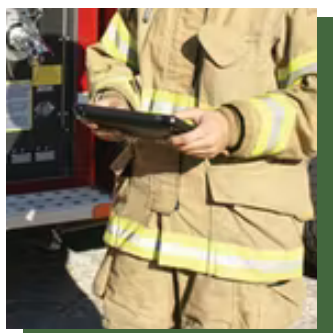


REVENUE FROM STATE (DSPTS 2% DUES):

There are three key factors to consider in understanding the computation of fire dues payments and why the amounts may change for a municipality from year to year:

1. The Fire Dues fund amount is subject to change based upon the amount of fire insurance underwritten in Wisconsin in the year.
2. The percentage each municipality receives changes due to the relationship between the growth of the local community and the overall growth within the state.
3. The amount of disbursement is subject to change due to the hold-harmless provisions.

Fire Insurance Tax (2% Dues)	
2019	\$126,590
2020	\$133,050
2021 Estimate	\$145,284



UPDATED INSPECTION TECHNOLOGY:

With a grant received from FM Global, we were able to update the iPads we use for fire inspections and EMS reporting. These devices are enabled to provide building owners and business operators real-time inspection reports. Although purchased in the 4th quarter of 2020, this technology was put in service for our 2021 inspections.



RECRUITMENT & RETENTION PERSONNEL



HIRED IN 2021

Matthew Gehne, POx Firefighter

Jason Gonzalez, POx Firefighter

Nabeel Qureshi, Support Services

Bryan Balzano, Intern Firefighter

Molly Schulz, Intern Firefighter

Matt Suchomel, Intern Firefighter

Thomas Zielieke, Intern Firefighter

Kimberly Miller, Fire Admin. Services Mgr.

LENGTH OF SERVICE MILESTONES

2 YEARS

Firefighter Michael Urben

Firefighter Cody Didier

Firefighter Nathan Wilson

Firefighter Justin Shaffer

Firefighter Brad Ritter

Firefighter Donald Sparby

Firefighter Emmanuel Mielke

Firefighter Callahan McCreary

Firefighter Emily Schwarzenberger

5 YEARS



Chief Joe
Pulvermacher



Firefighter
Dustin Roder

15 YEARS



Firefighter
Adam Dorn



Meredith Shelton,
Admin. Services
Manager

20 YEARS



Division Chief Jeff
Berman

25 YEARS



Jay Wilson,
Fire Investigator



Lieutenant Dave
Berman



FIRE CAUSE & ORIGIN INVESTIGATION

WISCONSIN DOJ 165.55 ARSON INVESTIGATION:

"(1) The chief of the fire department [or designee]... shall investigate... the cause, origin and circumstances of every fire occurring in his or her city, village or town by which property has been destroyed or damaged when the damage exceeds \$500, and on fires of unknown origin he or she shall especially investigate whether the fire was the result of negligence, accident or design. Where any investigation discloses that the fire may be of incendiary origin, he or she shall report the same to the state fire marshal."

FITCHBURG JOINT FIRE INVESTIGATION TASK FORCE:

Members of the City of Fitchburg Joint Police and Fire Investigation Team work to determine the cause of a fire: accidental, intentional, or undetermined. Once the investigation is completed, insurance companies may choose to investigate further; when we list the cause as intentional, an additional criminal investigation may begin. When we list the cause of a fire as "undetermined," the investigators were unable to find definitive evidence pointing to any one specific cause.

INCIDENTS INVESTIGATED:

Of the 83 incidents that were listed as "fire, overpressure/rupture, explosion, and overheating" related incidents, 11 required fire investigation. 2021's estimated damages are listed in the comparative chart below:

Fire Damage (Loss) Estimates	
2021	\$516,250
2020	\$630,000
2019	\$1,530,000



Leopold Way



Anton Drive

COOKING RELATED FIRES:

Of the 83 fire incidents reported, At least 26 incidents were reported as "cooking related." Many times these fires were confined to the cooking container. In some situations, they extended to combustible items/surfaces that were in the area of origin.



Meadowood Drive



Chalet Gardens



Lacy Road



Halite Way

PUBLIC OUTREACH & EDUCATION



The Fitchburg Fire Department suspended (or significantly limited) its prevention and outreach efforts in 2020 due to pandemic restrictions. As vaccines became more accessible in 2021, we worked toward re-establishing outreach:

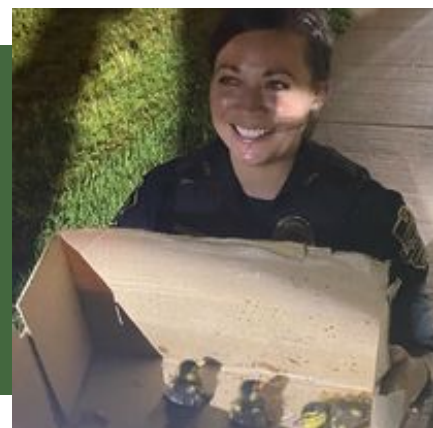
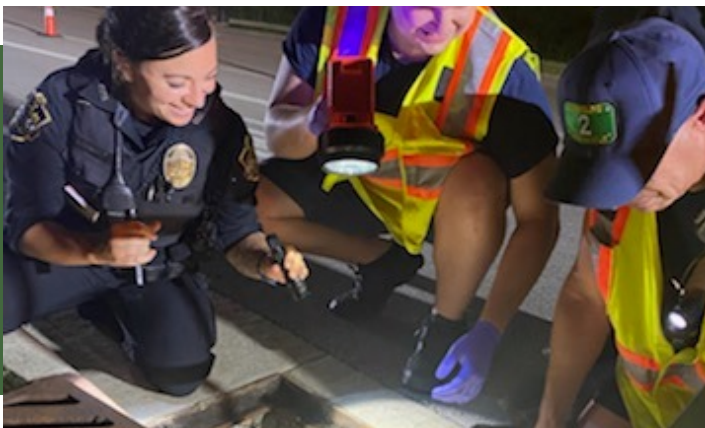


Instead of having an open house at our Fire Station in 2021, we took our fire safety message on the road and visited the North Fish Hatchery and Verona Road neighborhoods:

A collage of three images. The left image shows a firefighter in a yellow jacket and helmet interacting with a young child. The middle image is a flyer for the "FITCHBURG FIRE DEPARTMENT COMMUNITY SAFETY EVENT" held on Wednesday, October 20 at 5302 Verona Rd (Little John's Kitchen) from 5:00 to 7:00 PM. The flyer lists activities: Fire Safety Presentations, Live Demonstrations, Pictures with Sparky, and Meet Police Officers & Paramedics. A blue starburst graphic says "VENUE CHANGE". The right image shows a firefighter wearing a blue cap with the number "2" and a dark blue hoodie, standing in front of a green fire truck. A red banner at the bottom of the collage reads "Justin Shaffer Fire Fighter/ EMT, Fitchburg Fire Department" and "Talking Fitchburg".

ANIMAL RESCUE:

A couple things to note about animal rescue. We never jeopardize our emergency response in order to conduct an animal rescue (we remain in-service throughout). We try not to get involved in a situation that is likely to resolve itself positively. We will attempt an animal rescue in order to prevent others from putting themselves at increased risk. We always work within our scope - only using skills we are trained to provide.



CHIEF PULVERMACHER - EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT



READINESS AND TRAINING:

The role of emergency management is best summarized through readiness, response, and recovery. Community preparedness requires the development of skills and professional networks. The intent is to have a working knowledge of agencies and assets available during disaster and crisis. The following emergency management objectives were accomplished in 2021:

- Dane County Emergency Management partnership reinforced
- Backup power upgraded for the Emergency Operations Center (Lacy Road Firehouse)



The following classes were hosted in Fitchburg:

- Situation Unit Leader
- Facility Unit Leader
- Wide Area Search
- Resource and Documentation Unit Leader
- Active Shooter Incident Management

PANDEMIC RESPONSE AND COORDINATION:

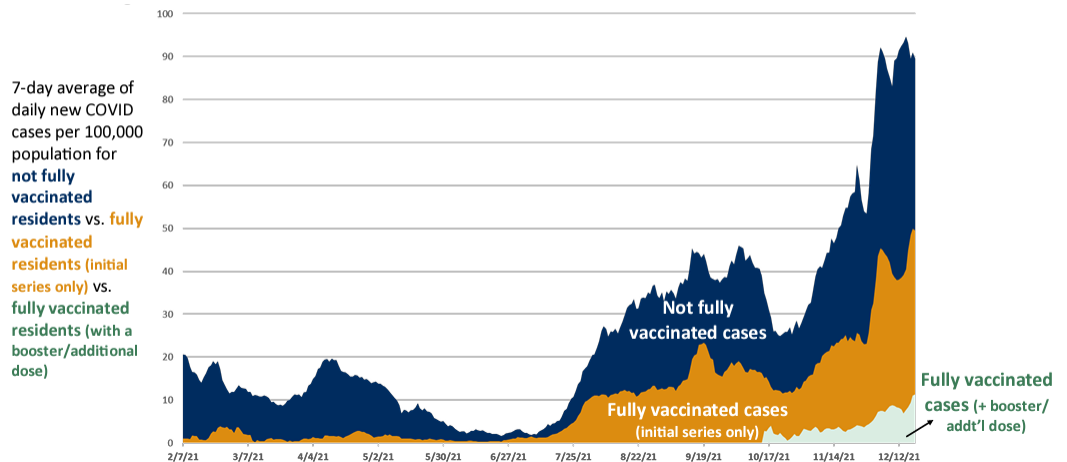
Although vaccination efforts began for public safety in December of 2020, Fitchburg Fire (Emergency Management), Fitchburg Human Resources, and Fitchburg Family Pharmacy worked to provide vaccination and booster clinics throughout 2021.

Fire Station #1's apparatus bay was used as a drive through clinic to expedite the process.



Federal, State, County, and Local COVID efforts were coordinated through Dane County EM and PHMDC

Case Trends by Vaccination Status



Source: PHMDC 2021 Data Snapshot

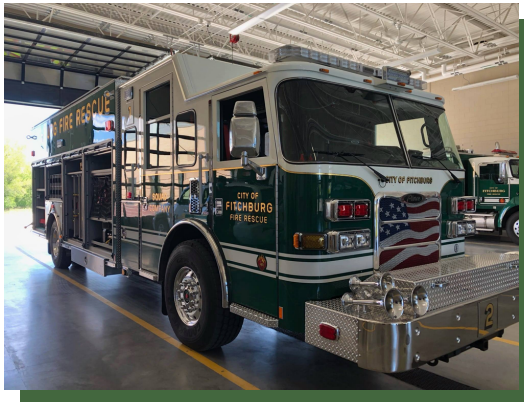


DIVISION CHIEF WUNSCH - SUPPORT SERVICES



The Fire Department's Support Services Division is responsible for prioritizing equipment purchases and maintenance. Our command staff officers are generally responsible for the oversight of various projects; however, recommendations and input are received from all department members. The primary focus of Support Services involves:

- New vehicle design and procurement
- Specification and purchasing of fire equipment and protective clothing
- Maintenance, repair, and disposal of existing vehicles and equipment
- Minor maintenance and repairs of the Firehouses and their ground



SQUAD #2 REFURBISHMENT/RECHASSIS:

In an effort to maximize the value of investment, Squad #2 received a new cab- while the utility box component was refurbished. This effort allowed us to minimize the cost of replacement by utilizing those components that remained in good condition. Although this project was funded in 2020, the Squad was equipped and placed in-service in the 1st quarter of 2021. Battery-powered extrication tools (Holmotro) were also purchased through this CIP.

RADIO/ COMMUNICATIONS USER TEST:

In 2022, Fitchburg Fire and Police Departments will be replacing their mobile and portable radios. In an effort to select the equipment that has the most predictable/reliable service, Fitchburg Firefighters conducted a user test. Data/feedback that was received during the test provided justification for radio specification.



COMMAND CAR SPECIFICATION:

Due to supply chain issues, the Command Staff Car (that was intended for the 2021 budget) was not available. Although the specification was finalized and the order was placed in 2021, delivery is anticipated in 2022.

We have modified our command car chassis from a 3/4 ton Suburban to a Police Responder Ford F-150. The change was made for fiscal and operational reasons.

MONTHLY & PLATOON TRAINING



Training in the fire service is essential - the environment in which we work is continuously evolving. In order to establish knowledge, skills, and ability (and maintain competency), we must train. Although the State of Wisconsin identifies a minimum number of hours a firefighter must train, the Fitchburg Fire Department surpasses that amount due to the demands of a growing community.

Every day we train on a topics that range from fire suppression, prevention, investigation, technical/special events and EMS skill just to name a few, for approximately 1 hour each day.

In 2021 members of the department completed roughly 5600 hours of training. Below is how these hours break down.

On Duty Training - 1 hour of training per day:

- 360 days of the year
- 8 people per shift
- 2880 hours of training on shift

Classes offered through colleges and other training avenues:

- 20 Different Classes (Topics)
- 82 Training Sessions
- 2697 Hours of Training

5577 TOTAL HOURS OF TRAINING



TECHNICAL RESCUE & SPECIAL OPERATIONS

Over the past four years, the Fitchburg Fire Department has been assessing its capability and capacity during an emergency that requires a technical rescue response. Staffing, equipment, and training were carefully evaluated to determine realistic expectation, needed practice, and available assistance.

We developed a plan to determine our equipment and training priorities. It was determined that a significant portion of our rope inventory required replacement. Since rope is used in most technical rescues, purchasing rope was our first priority. Select firefighters were trained in rope rescue. Based on that training, we were able to address the purchase of other tools that were needed to equip our response. Our philosophy was to “equip to our training,” not “train to our equipment.” The idea is that we learned things about best practices and didn’t buy unnecessary equipment.

As Fitchburg continues to develop, we anticipate that construction sites and industrial occupancies will provide an increased risk for technical rescue response. In the four years since this project started, technical rescue skills have already been used and proven effective. With the increased potential, we identified the following order of training priority:

- Rope Rescue
- Confined Space Rescue
- Trench Rescue
- Collapse Rescue

It is our intent to work in conjunction with (not independent of) other technical rescue providers. These incidents are labor intensive and require specialized skills. Fitchburg’s closest technical rescue asset is at least 30 minutes away. FFD needs to be able to address the initial stages of the incident and ensure that techniques applied in these incidents reflect the skills of those coming in to support the rescue effort.

PERSONNEL:

A majority of our firefighters will be trained to the operations level. A select number of firefighters will be trained to the technician level – they will be our resident experts and technical rescue trainers.



FIRE SERVICE INTERNSHIP

Under the general management of the Fire Science Internship Program Mentor, this position is responsible for station/department activities, emergency response, and learning the profession by completing a course of study that culminates in an Associate Degree in Fire Science from Madison College. The position generally functions at the task level during emergency incident stabilization.

FIRST YEAR INTERNS:

All interns are expected to fully be embedded in our department in areas such as training, familiarization with equipment and preparing for their first year of college in the Fire Science Degree program. The first year is critical to a successful internship as it sets the foundation of the fire service before learning advanced skills in both fire and EMS.

SECOND YEAR INTERNS:

The second year of the internship is intended to add on to each intern's skill set and prepare them to be marketable for full time employment. If granted, interns will be allowed to attend trainings outside the department and even the state. Second year interns will be held to a higher standard and expected to assist the first year interns with any possible hardships.

THIRD YEAR OPTION:

Once successfully completing the two year internship and graduating, each intern will have an option to transition into a paid on premise member with FFD and continue to be a valuable asset to our department. Attending Paramedic school will be highly recommended but NOT offered by FFD. Interns that decide to attend Paramedic school are offered room and board during that time span.



HONOR GUARD



Established in September of 2011, the Fitchburg Fire Department's Honor Guard formed to honor and remember firefighters and other public servants. The Honor Guard is affiliated with the Fitchburg Fire & Rescue Association and is not an official element of the department or the City. Regardless of affiliation, the Honor Guard represents the department and our City at funerals, memorial services and any other function authorized/requested by the chief of the department.

Members provide assistance through vigilance and support - all in an effort to honor and remember first responders who have answered their final alarm.

2021 DEPLOYMENTS

- Milwaukee FD, LODD Funeral - Feb 8
- Mazomanie FD, Retiree Funeral - Feb 14
- Boscobel FD, Active Duty Funeral - Feb 28
- Fennimore FD, Active Duty Visitation - Mar 9
- Town of Madison FD, Active Duty Funeral, Mar 13
- Endeavor/Moundville FD, Active Duty Funeral - Mar 20
- Fitchburg FD, Retiree Visitation - Jun 27
- McFarland FD, Retiree Funeral - Aug 21
- Project Hero Bike Escort, Fitchburg - Aug 26 - 27
- Arcadia-Glencoe FD, Active Duty Funeral - Aug 28
- City of Fitchburg 9/11 Bell Ceremony - Sep 11
- Wisconsin Rapids, Final Alarm Ceremony - Oct 9
- Fitchburg FD, Awards/Pinning/ Anniversary - Nov 3
- Evansville FD, Active Duty Funeral - Nov 11





Meredith Shelton served the Fitchburg Fire Department for 15 years in various capacities. Most recently, she fulfilled the role of Administrative Service Manager. In 2021, Meredith accepted a project/program management role with a local event production company. We value the contributions Meredith made to the Fitchburg Fire Department over her tenure and wish her well in her new endeavors.



After 35 years of dedicated service, Deputy Chief Rich Roth stepped down from his sworn firefighter position. We would like to acknowledge Rich's contributions to the City of Fitchburg and the Fitchburg Fire Department. Although Rich will be helping out in other areas, we would like to take this moment and share our appreciation for a job well done!



FITCHBURG FIRE RES

FITCHBURG FIRE RES

