

# ***Cowlitz 2*** ***FIRE & RESCUE***



## **Organizational Action Plan (OAP)**

August 2024

# *Preface*

The organization will continue to focus on service to the residents, businesses, and visitors of the District and the health and wellness of its members. The District will make it a priority to put the right people in the right roles to have the greatest impact for the people we serve.

We will continue with our efforts regarding succession planning in all facets of the organization. This effort is twofold: first to provide redundancy and depth to all critical functions; and second to maintain continuity of operations at all times. This is based on the premise that nobody is so important that the department can't or won't function without them.

As a result of these changes, this Organization Action Plan (OAP) will reflect the current assignments in a revised organization chart as well as revise the established overall goals and objectives of the District.

## **Top Priorities:**

- Improve recruitment and retention of staff.
- Provide an effective organization that performs critical functions while maintaining a manageable span of control.
- Continue to seek alternative funding sources and be cost-efficient while improving levels of service. Renegotiate contract service area contracts that are expiring.
- Continue to develop an effective modern volunteer force that emphasizes non-traditional modes of participation.
- Continue to provide for succession development in all aspects of the organization.
- Develop a relevant standard of cover for the entire service area and provide a staffing and deployment plan with alternatives for a four-station model.
- Continue efforts to coordinate with automatic aid partners.
- Work to balance mutual aid disparities between our agency and other agencies we support.
- Provide opportunities for training at all levels of the organization.

# **Goals & Objectives**

## **General Information**

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

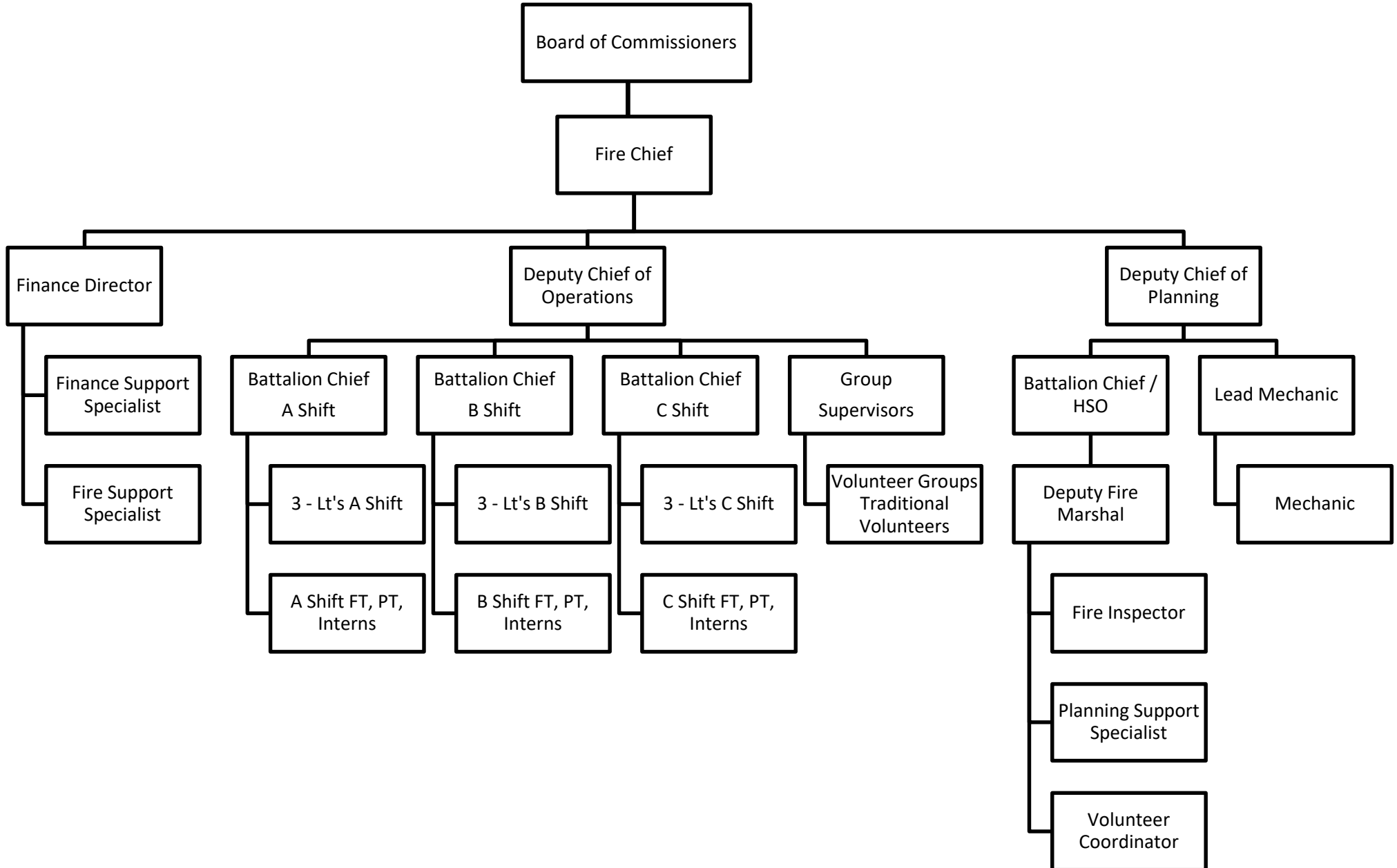
Serve with Duty, Respect, and Integrity

### **VISION STATEMENT**

It is the vision of Cowlitz 2 Fire & Rescue to be recognized as an all hazards risk service provider by working collaboratively with regional and local agencies. We strive to meet the fire and life safety needs of our diverse community and maximize the efficient use of all resources.

### **Core Values**

Be honest  
Be reliable  
Be present  
Be accountable  
Value people  
Know your job  
Be life-long learners  
Utilize sound judgment  
Give the benefit of the doubt  
Invest in yourself and others



# Goals, Objectives & Priorities

**Goal A: Maintain/improve the District's ability to respond in a rapid, coordinated and efficient manner to all emergencies**

Objective		Priority
A-1	Improve the staffing plan, including develop/maintain effective modern volunteer force that emphasizes non-traditional areas of participation.	High
A-2	Improve all fire suppression response operations	High
A-3	Improve all emergency medical response operations	High
A-4	Maintain/improve a hazardous materials response program	Low
A-5	Explore/develop cooperative agreements and partnerships with other agencies to assist with funding	Medium
A-6	Maintain/improve and regularly update disaster planning including continuity of operations.	Medium
A-7	Maintain and enhance comprehensive training programs with a focus on advanced and company officer training.	High
A-8	Maintain/improve plan review and code enforcement activities	Medium
A-9	Maintain/improve fire investigation process	Medium
A-10	Revise the Standard of Cover and resource deployment plan	High
A-11	Expand response operations to include a community paramedicine program	Medium
A-12	Enhance recruitment and retention of staff. Explore/develop recruitment and retention incentives.	High
A-13	Analyze a four-station response model, to include Station 24, including current and predicted emergency call volume	High
A-14	Develop a four-station staffing model	Medium

**Goal B: Develop, implement and update a financial plan to support the District's mission**

Objective		Priority
B-1	Maintain a long-range financial plan to support the District's mission	Medium
B-2	Explore other revenue sources.	Medium
B-3	Explore alternate delivery options of our EMS services	Medium

**Goal C: Maintain the current annual planning process**

Objective		Priority
C-1	Board of Commissioners, annually, evaluate, revise and prioritize goals and objectives	Low

**Goal D: Provide quality facilities and equipment**

<b>Objective</b>		<b>Priority</b>
D-1	Continue implementing and updating the facilities plan	Low
D-2	Continuously update and implement the apparatus plan	Medium
D-3	Explore and implement appropriate new technology	Low
D-4	Expand Station 24 to support 24/7 staff and community volunteers	High

**Goal E: Continue to improve communications and marketing**

<b>Objective</b>		<b>Priority</b>
E-1	Maintain all public education programs.	Low
E-2	Improve internal and external outreach through the use of social media and electronic communications.	Medium
E-3	Continue/improve internal communications with and between career staff and volunteers	High
E-4	Continue/improve communications with other agencies	Medium

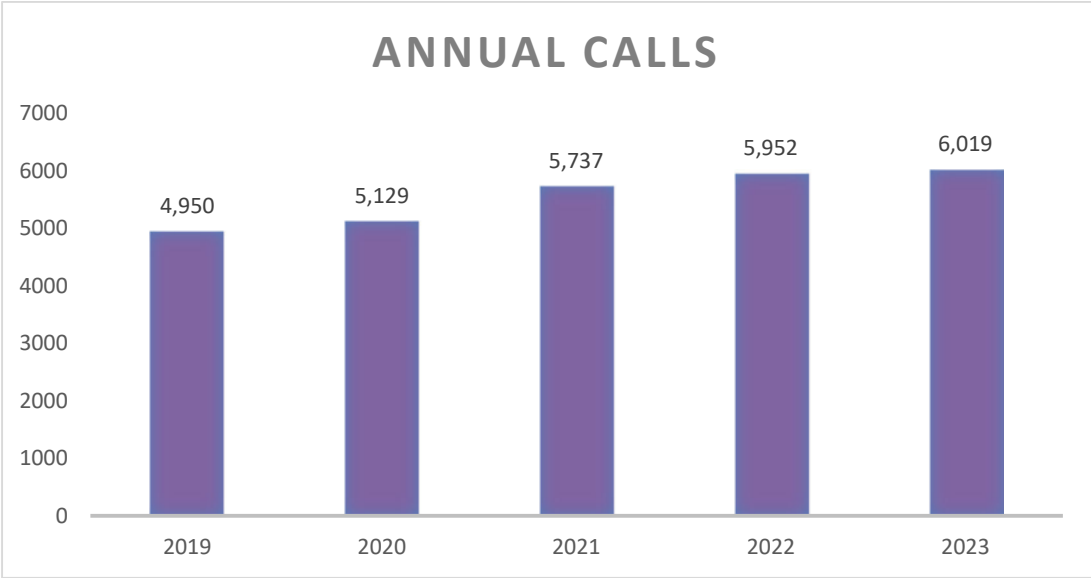
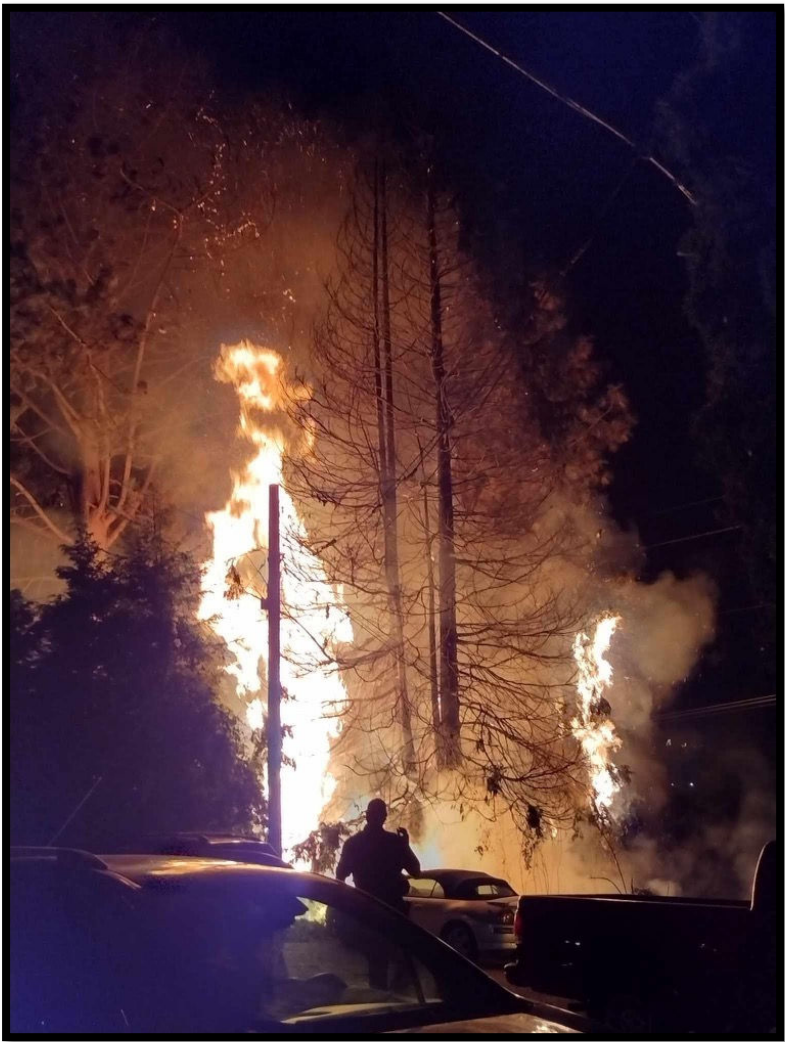
**Goal F: Continue to develop District policies and operations guidelines**

<b>Objective</b>		<b>Priority</b>
F-1	Staff to develop and board to review new and existing policies and revise as needed.	Low
F-2	Review and revise Emergency Response Guides.	Low

# Prioritized Objectives

Objective	Priority	Objectives
A-1	High	Improve the staffing plan, including develop/maintain effective modern volunteer force that emphasizes non-traditional areas of participation
A-2	High	Improve all fire suppression response operations
A-3	High	Improve all emergency medical response operations
A-7	High	Maintain and enhance comprehensive training programs with a focus on advanced and company officer training
A-10	High	Revise the Standard of Cover and resource deployment plan
A-12	High	Enhance recruitment and retention of staff. Explore/develop recruitment and retention incentives
A-13	High	Analyze a four-station response model, to include Station 24, including current and predicted emergency call volume
E-3	High	Continue/improve internal communications with and between career staff and volunteers
D-4	High	Expand Station 24 to support 24/7 staff and community volunteers
A-5	Medium	Explore/develop cooperative agreements and partnerships with other agencies to assist with funding
A-6	Medium	Maintain/improve and regularly update disaster planning including continuity of operations
A-8	Medium	Maintain/improve plan review and code enforcement activities
A-9	Medium	Maintain/improve fire investigation process
A-11	Medium	Expand response operations to include a community paramedicine program
A-15	Medium	Develop a four-station staffing model
B-1	Medium	Maintain a long-range financial plan to support the District's mission
B-2	Medium	Explore other revenue sources
B-3	Medium	Explore alternate delivery options of our EMS services
D-2	Medium	Continuously update and implement the apparatus plan
E-2	Medium	Improve internal and external outreach through the use of social media and electronic communications
E-4	Medium	Continue/improve communications with other agencies
A-4	Low	Maintain/improve a hazardous materials response program
C-1	Low	Board of Commissioners, annually, evaluate, revise and prioritize goals and objectives
D-1	Low	Continue implementing and updating the facilities plan
D-3	Low	Explore and implement appropriate new technology
E-1	Low	Maintain all public education programs
F-1	Low	Staff to develop and board to review new and existing policies and revise as needed
F-2	Low	Review and revise Emergency Response Guides (ERG)

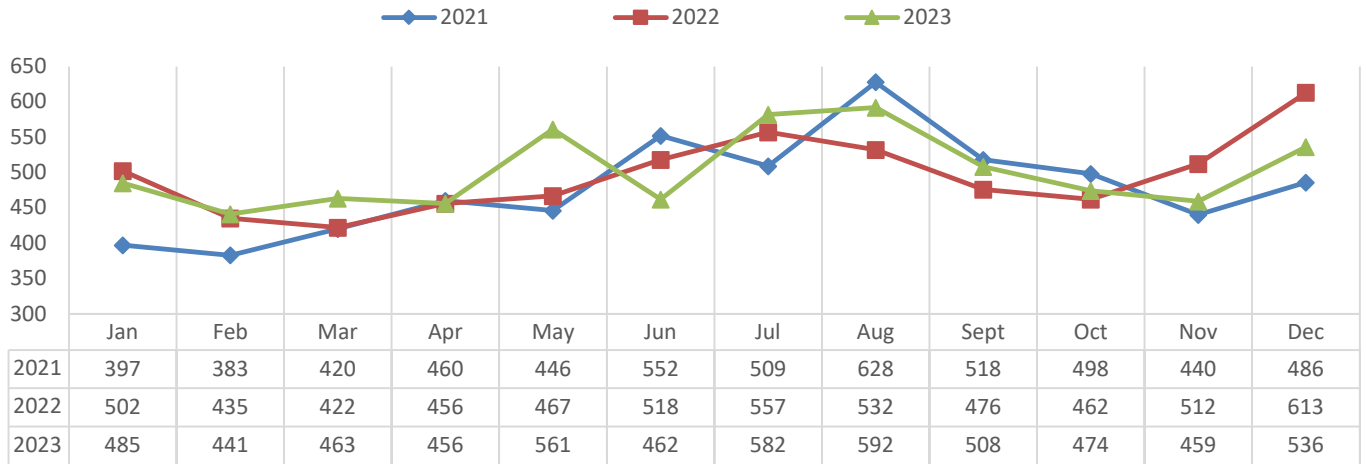
2023 Annual Statistics



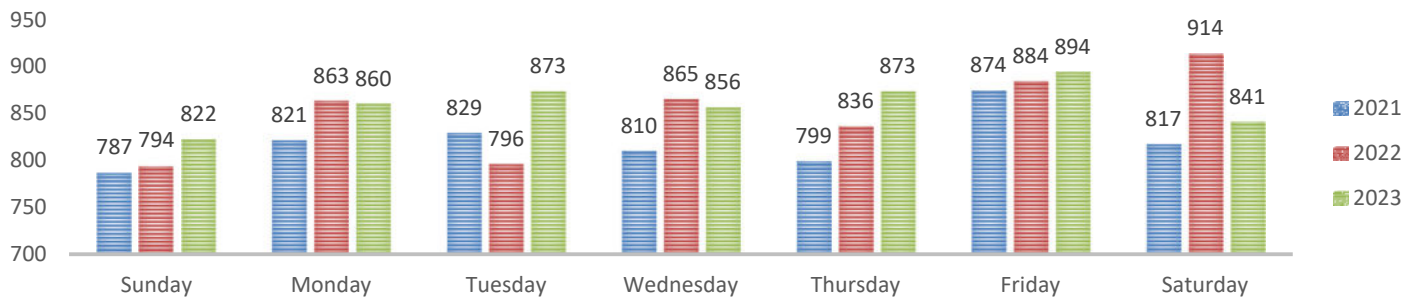


# Calls by Date

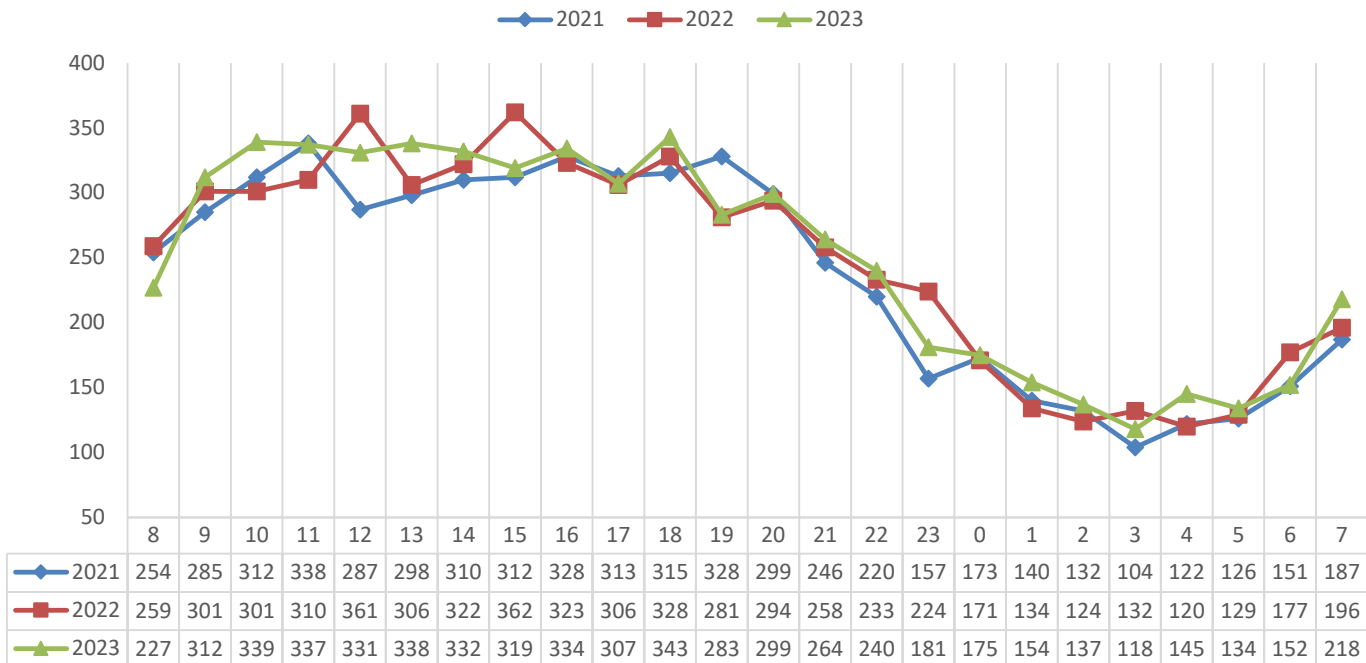
## CALLS BY MONTH



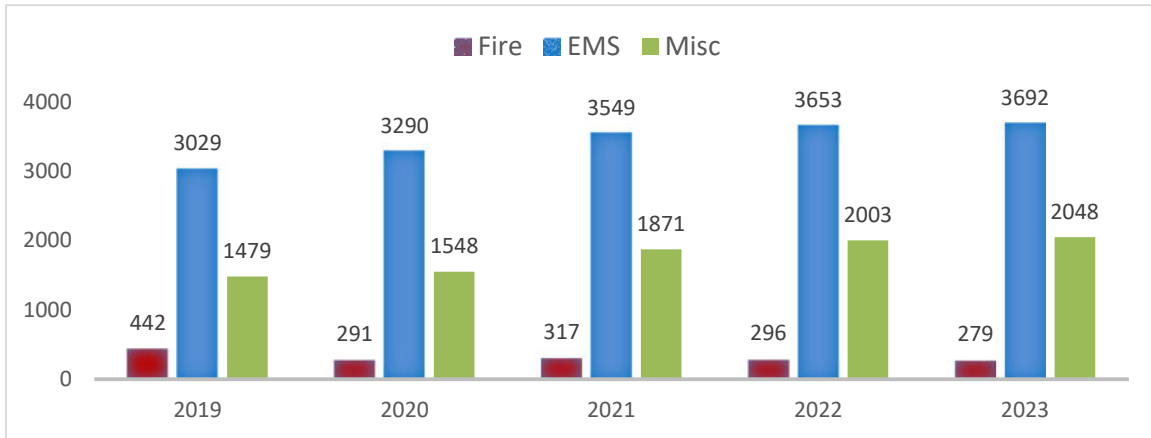
## CALLS BY DAY



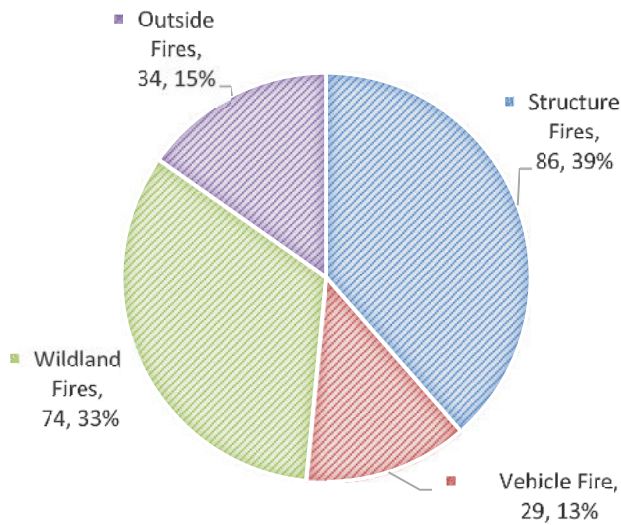
## CALLS BY HOUR



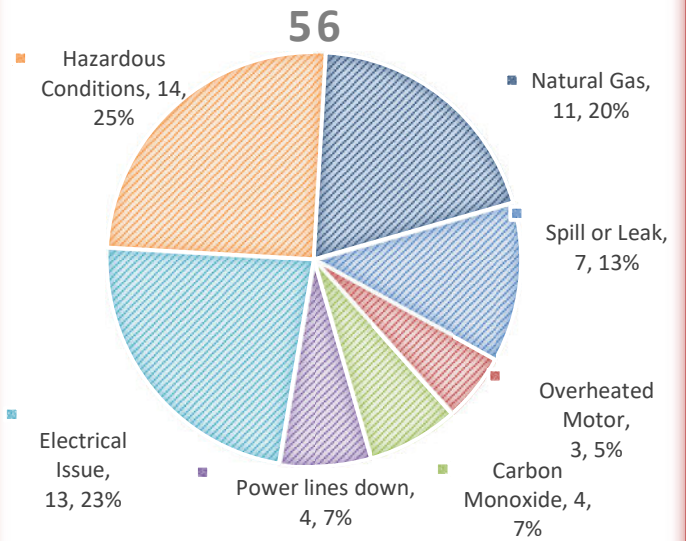
# Calls by Type



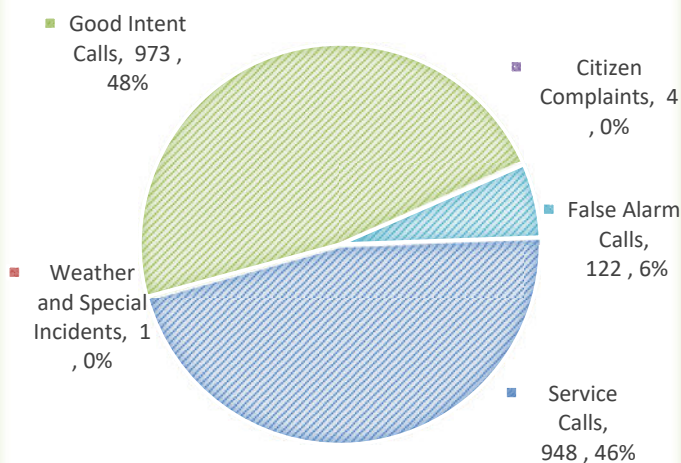
## FIRES- 223



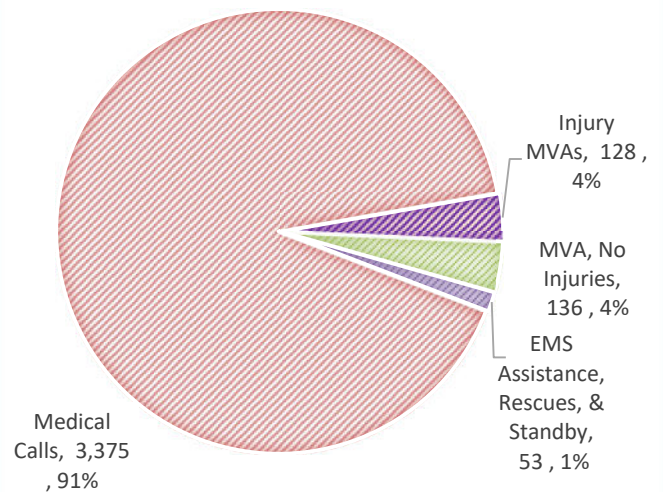
## FIRE HAZARD CALLS-



## MISCELLANEOUS CALLS- 2,048

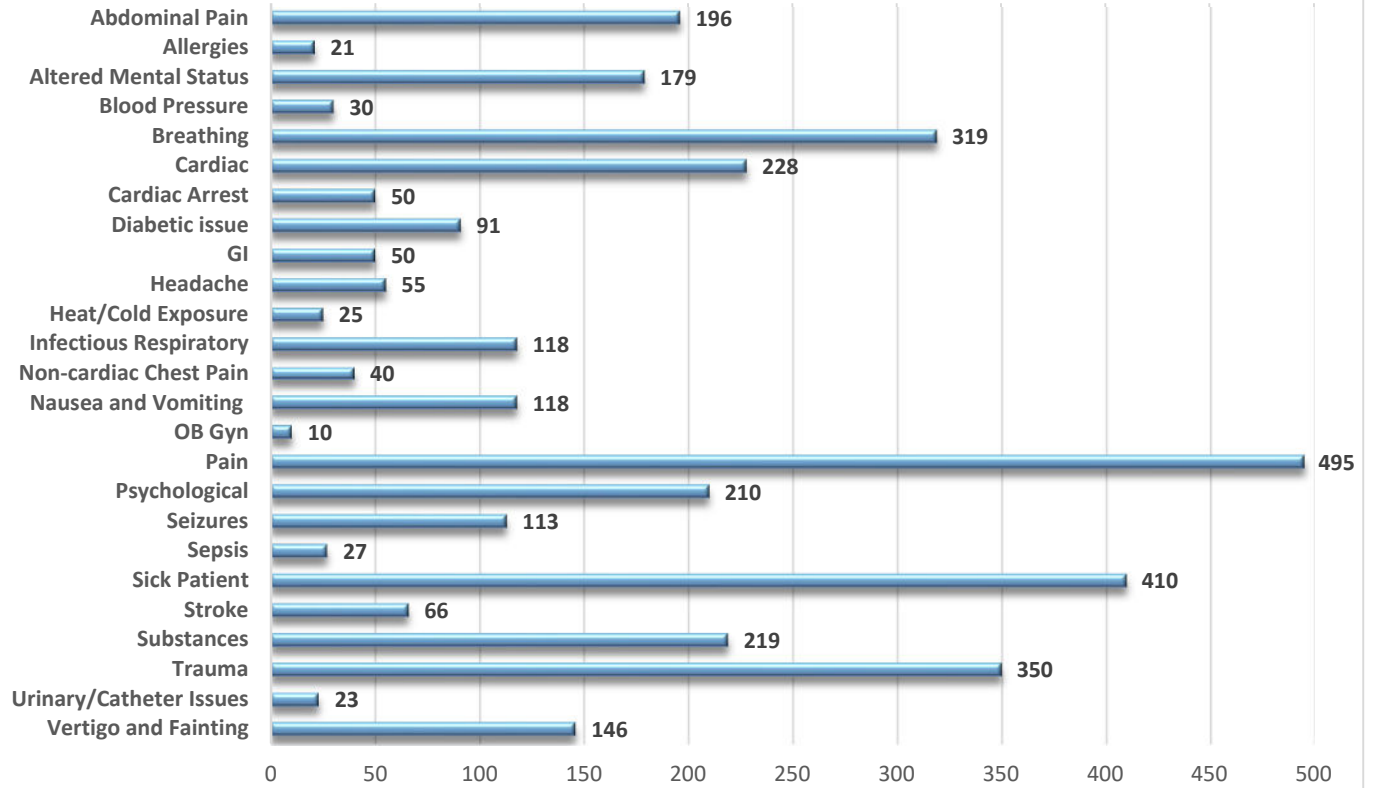


## EMS CALLS-3,692

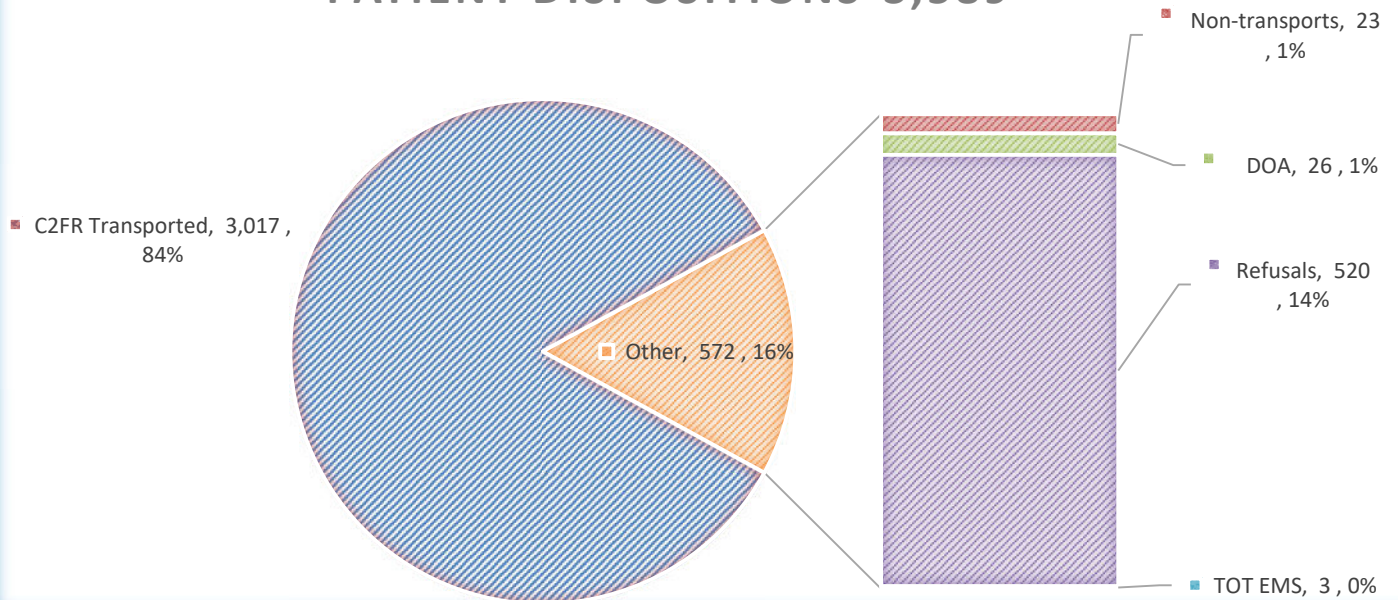


# EMS Calls with Patient Care

## MEDICAL CALLS BY PRIMARY PROVIDER IMPRESSION-3,589

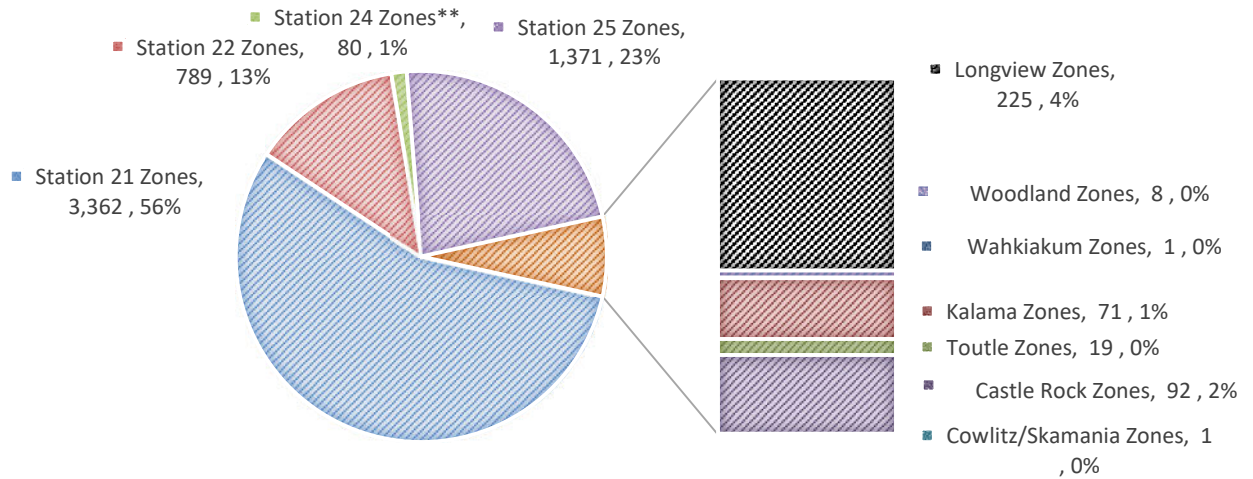


## PATIENT DISPOSITIONS-3,589



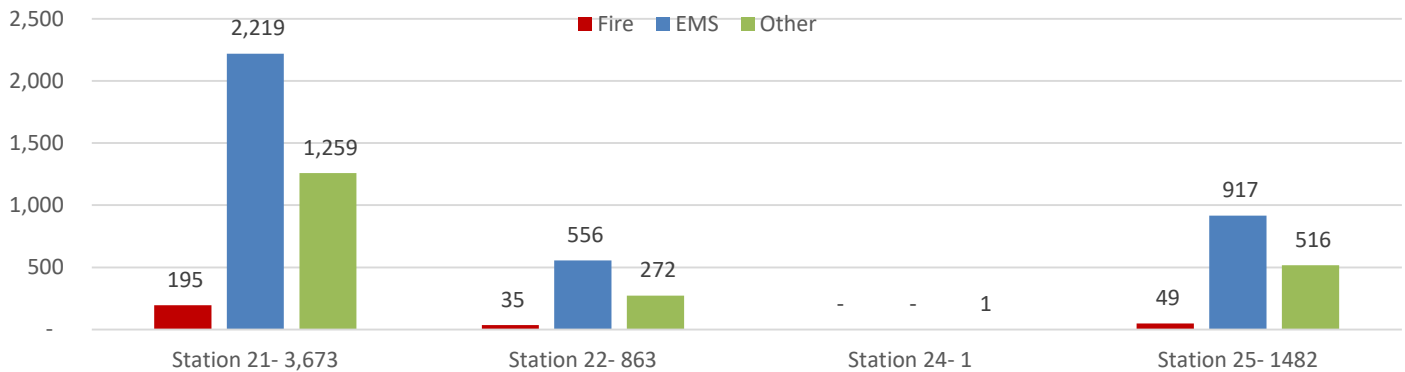
## Calls by Zones and Response

### CALLS BY LOCATION-6,019

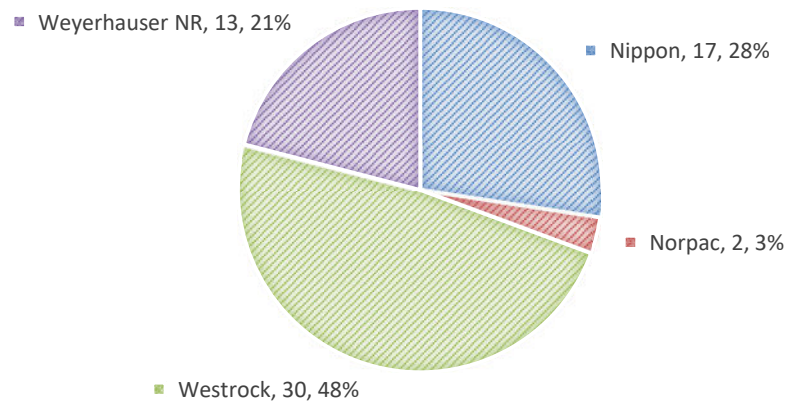


*\*\*Most Station 24 area calls coded to Station 21 Response Zone starting in June 2022*

### Calls by Primary Station Responding- 6,019



### INDUSTRIAL AREA CALLS BY ADDRESS- 62





## Aid Given and Received

**Total Aid Given- 216 | Total Aid Received- 86 | Other Aid- 112 | Total Aid Calls- 414**

### Longview Fire Department

Automatic Aid Given				Mutual Aid Given				Automatic Aid Received				Mutual Aid Received			
Fire	EMS	Other	Total	Fire	EMS	Other	Total	Fire	EMS	Other	Total	Fire	EMS	Other	Total
11	15	32	58	3	12	2	17	12	10	5	27	3	11	1	15
Total Aid Given: 75								Total Aid Received: 42							

### Cowlitz County Fire District #6- Castle Rock

Automatic Aid Given				Mutual Aid Given				Automatic Aid Received				Mutual Aid Received			
Fire	EMS	Other	Total	Fire	EMS	Other	Total	Fire	EMS	Other	Total	Fire	EMS	Other	Total
7	28	19	54	4	10	5	19	3	9	2	14	1	2	0	3
Total Aid Given: 73								Total Aid Received: 17							

### Cowlitz County Fire District #5- Kalama

Automatic Aid Given				Mutual Aid Given				Automatic Aid Received				Mutual Aid Received			
Fire	EMS	Other	Total	Fire	EMS	Other	Total	Fire	EMS	Other	Total	Fire	EMS	Other	Total
7	18	25	50	2	6	3	11	2	8	5	15	1	6	0	7
Total Aid Given: 61								Total Aid Received: 22							

### Cowlitz County Fire District #3- Toutle

Automatic Aid Given				Mutual Aid Given				Automatic Aid Received				Mutual Aid Received			
Fire	EMS	Other	Total	Fire	EMS	Other	Total	Fire	EMS	Other	Total	Fire	EMS	Other	Total
2	0	0	2	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
Total Aid Given: 3								Total Aid Received: 2							

### CCFD #1- Woodland

### Clark Cowlitz

### Wahkiakum

### Cowlitz Skamania #7

Automatic Aid Given		Mutual Aid Received		Mutual Aid Given		Mutual Aid Received		Mutual Aid Given		Mutual Aid Received		Mutual Aid Received		Mutual Aid Given	
Fire	EMS	Fire	EMS	EMS	Fire	EMS	EMS	Fire	EMS	Other	Total	Other	Total	EMS	
0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	
1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1	

### Other Aid

No Fire District			Industrial Area Contract			Ambulance Service		
Fire	EMS	Other	Fire	EMS	Other	From AMR	To Longview	To Toutle
0	0	1	3	41	18	3	31	15
1			62			49		

\*Multiple departments may give us aid on one call

## Average Response Times

\*Priority Code 3 Response (lights and sirens)

2022 Turnout and Response Times			
1st Responding Unit		All Responding Units	
Station 21 Area		Station 21 Area	
Turnout	Response	Turnout	Response
01:45	04:57	01:35	06:02
+48 seconds	+6 seconds	+38 seconds	+71 seconds
Station 22 Area		Station 22 Area	
Turnout	Response	Turnout	Response
01:26	09:24	01:27	10:46
+12 seconds	-1 second	+13 seconds	+81 seconds
Station 24 Area		Station 24 Area	
Turnout	Response	Turnout	Response
01:05	13:56	00:57	14:09
+15 seconds	+58 seconds	+8 seconds	+30 seconds
Station 25 Area		Station 25 Area	
Turnout	Response	Turnout	Response
01:15	06:17	01:35	07:30
+14 seconds	+22 seconds	+33 seconds	+40 seconds
Out of District Area		Out of District Area	
Turnout	Response	Turnout	Response
01:36	10:48	01:53	11:54
-16 seconds		+7 seconds	+50 seconds

2023 Turnout and Response Times			
1st Responding Unit		All Responding Units	
Station 21 Area		Station 21 Area	
Turnout	Response	Turnout	Response
01:01	05:11	01:16	06:13
-44 seconds	+14 seconds	-9 seconds	+11 seconds
Station 22 Area		Station 22 Area	
Turnout	Response	Turnout	Response
01:10	08:28	01:42	10:46
-16 seconds	-56 second	+15 seconds	
Station 24 Area		Station 24 Area	
Turnout	Response	Turnout	Response
00:47	13:51	01:17	15:02
-18 seconds	-5 seconds	+20 seconds	+53 seconds
Station 25 Area		Station 25 Area	
Turnout	Response	Turnout	Response
01:36	06:11	01:19	07:30
+16 seconds	-6 seconds	-16 seconds	
Out of District Area		Out of District Area	
Turnout	Response	Turnout	Response
01:36	10:58	02:04	12:10
-10 seconds		+11 seconds	+16 seconds

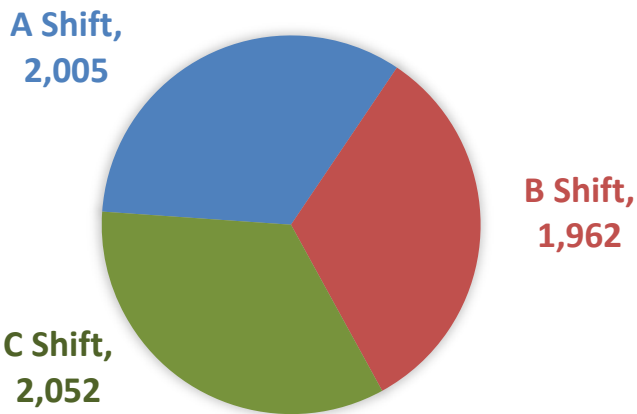
Average Total Response (turnout + response) Times by Unit					
Station 21		Station 22		Station 25	
A21	0:08:23	A22	0:14:37		
M21	0:06:37	M22	0:09:29	M25	0:08:00
M212	0:07:37	M222	0:08:39	M252	0:06:35
E21	0:06:41	E22	0:11:36	E25	0:10:43
E212	0:10:18				
L21	0:07:32			L25	0:12:15
BR21	0:10:35	BR22	0:10:20	BR25	0:09:42
TE21	0:20:16	TE22	0:17:02	TE25	0:16:20
CHF21	0:08:31	CHF22	0:09:44	HAZ25	0:06:00
		BR24	0:19:49		

## Response Details

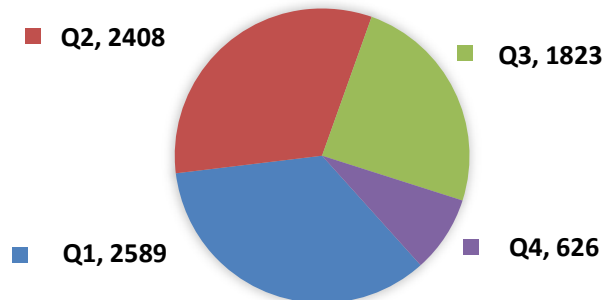
### Overlapping Dispatches - 503 Calls

Number of times where <b>2</b> calls overlap	163
Number of times where <b>3</b> calls overlap	46
Number of times where <b>4</b> calls overlap	6
Number of times where <b>5</b> calls overlap	3

#### CALLS BY DUTY SHIFT-6,019

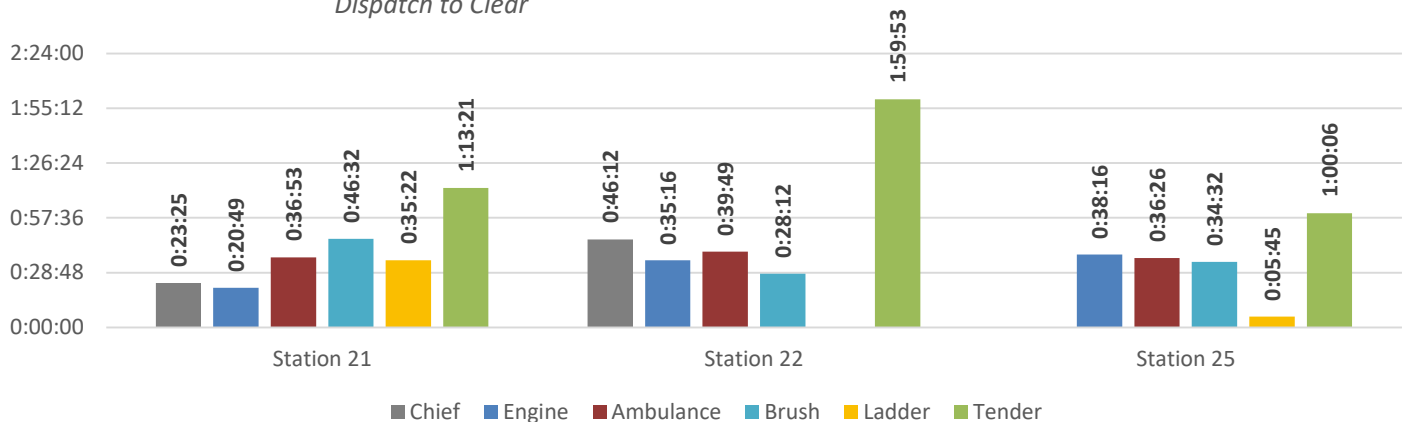


#### INTERN HOURS ON SHIFT BY QUARTER-7,448 HOURS



#### Average Time on Task

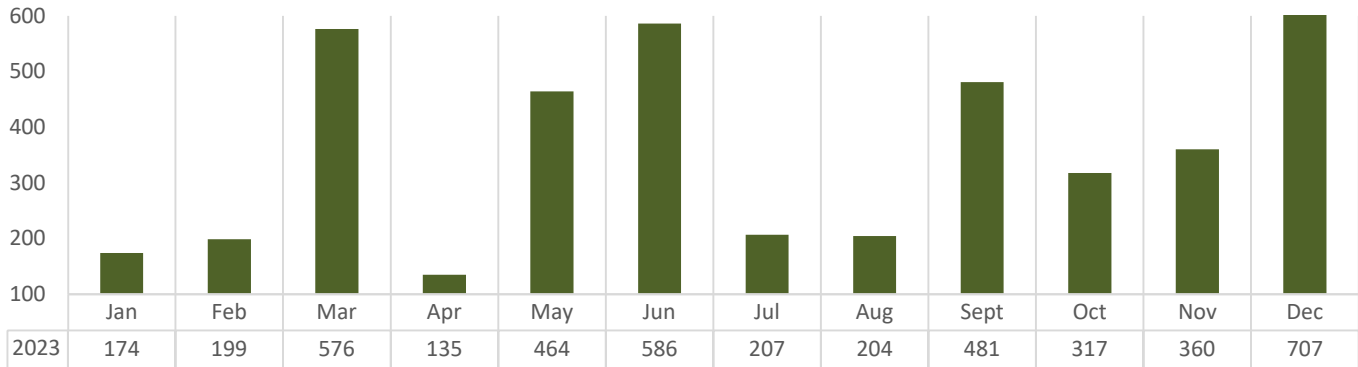
*Dispatch to Clear*



## Volunteer Staffing and Response

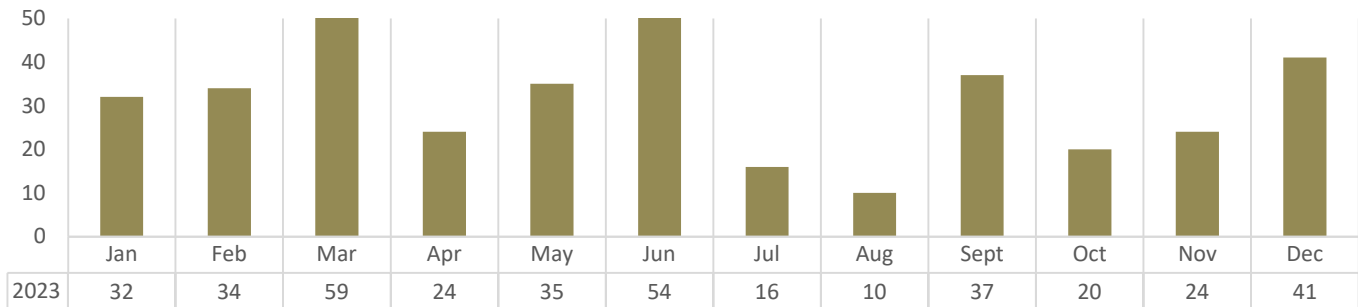
### VOLUNTEER HOURS ON SHIFT BY MONTH- 4,411

*12-24 hours, not including intern shifts*



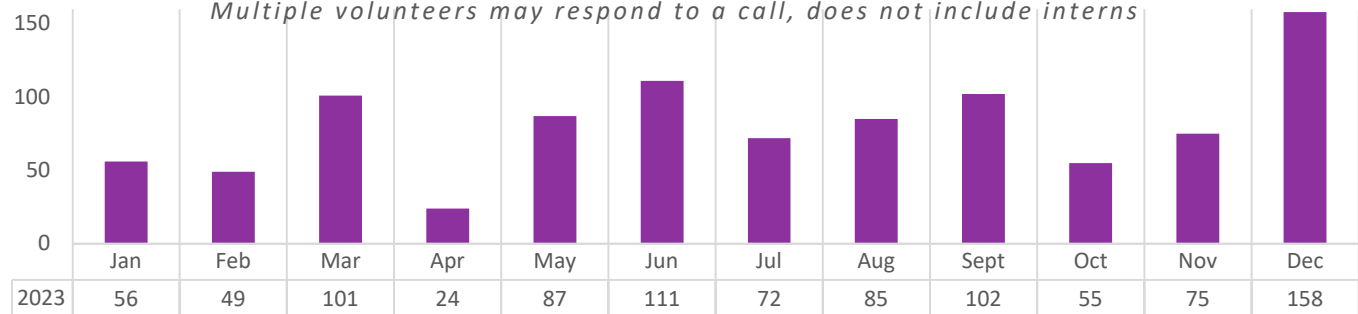
### VOLUNTEER SHIFTS BY MONTH- 386 SHIFTS

*12-24 hours, not including intern shifts*



### CALLS WITH VOLUNTEER RESPONSES BY MONTH- 975 CALLS

*Multiple volunteers may respond to a call, does not include interns*





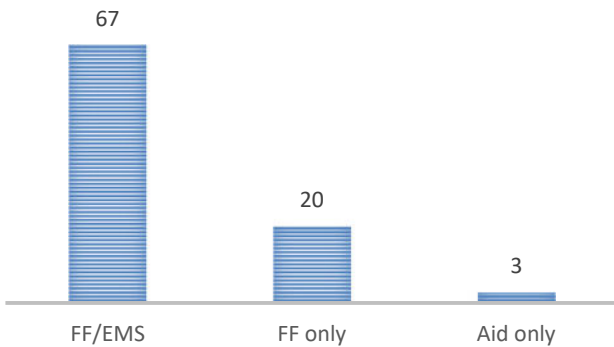
## Current Member Demographics

### MEMBERS OF C2FR

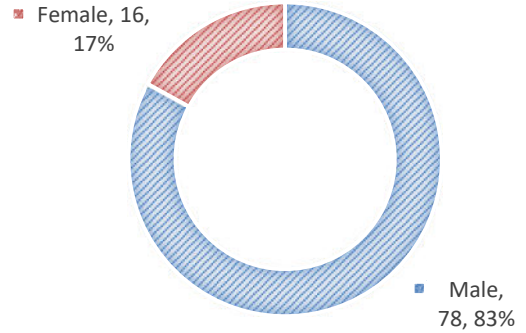
94

20 Cadets

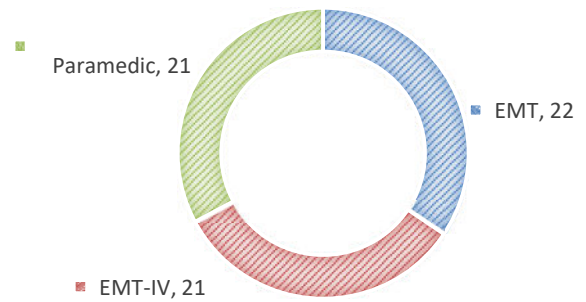
### FIRE TRAINING



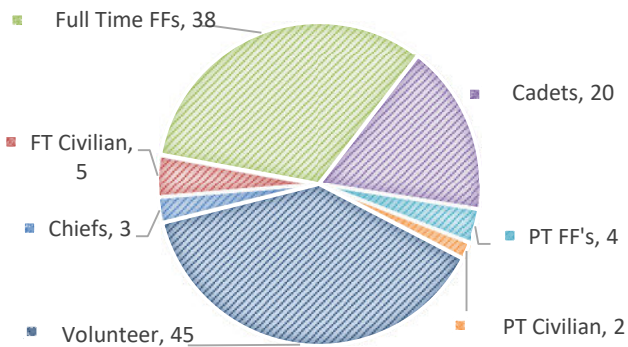
### GENDER



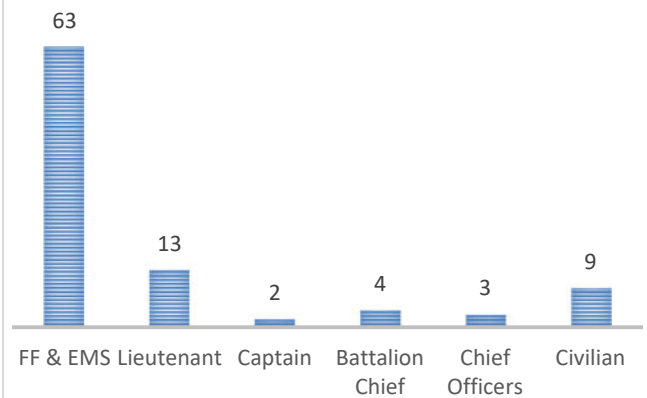
### EMS TRAINING



### EMPLOYMENT\*



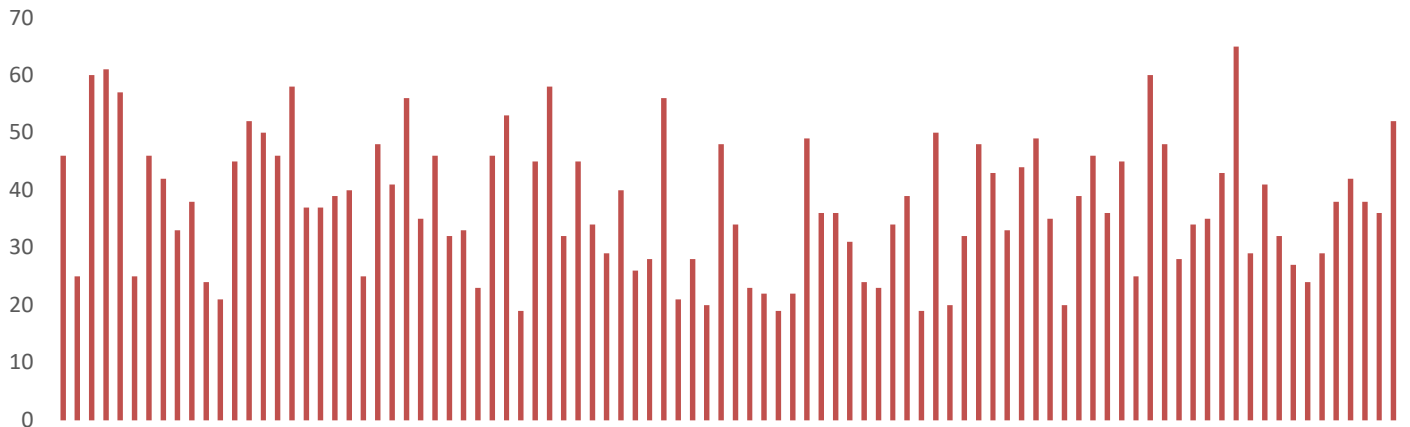
### RANK\*



\*Davis, Ellis, and Trotter are included in both Civilian and Volunteer counts

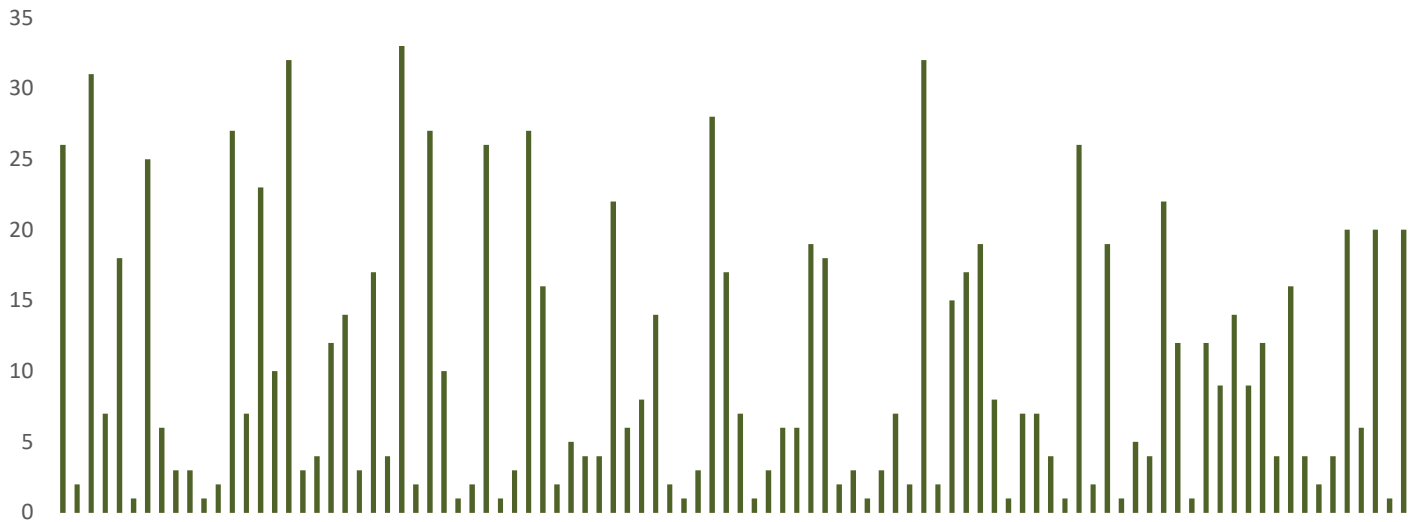
## AGE OF MEMBERS

AVERAGE AGE - 38



## YEARS OF SERVICE

AVERAGE YEARS OF SERVICE - 10.22



# Apparatus Deployment & Replacement Strategy

The District currently operates from four (4) locations. This would include stations 21, 22, 24 (volunteer only) and 25. This section of the OAP will provide the projected deployment strategy and apparatus replacement schedule for the four (4) station response areas. Replacement dates for apparatus are estimates based on the following criteria:

- Years in service: engine - 20 years; ladder truck - 20 years; ambulance - 10 years; brush units - 15 years; tenders - 25 years; command, staff and utility units - 10 years
- Mileage per year and service life
- Annual maintenance cost
- Availability of parts for ongoing maintenance
- Ongoing value to District services
- Extended service life may be recommended based on historical use and serviceability at the recommended replacement date. Administrative and maintenance staff will evaluate the replacement the need on an annual basis before the OAP update.
- Anything in **red** is at or past the estimated replacement \*YEAR\*. Evaluate the option of the vehicle being extended in years of service.
- New engine has been ordered; delivery in late Spring 2025.

<b>STATION 21</b>				
<b>APPARATUS TYPE</b>	<b>MANUFACTURE YEAR</b>	<b>CHASSIS NUMBER</b>	<b>CALL SIGN</b>	<b>ESTIMATED REPLACEMENT YEAR</b>
Engine	2018 Pierce	E06	E21	2038
Engine	2007 Pierce	E04	E212	2027
Tender	2002 International	T01	TE21	2027
Medic	2023 Northstar	AC10	M21	2033
Medic (reserve)	2018 Northstar	AC07	M212	2028
Command	2023 Ford F150	P16	CH21	2033
Brush	2021 Ford F550	P15	BR21	2036
<b>STATION 21 ADMIN</b>				
Staff vehicle	2011 Ford F250	P11	U21	Extended
Command	2020 Ford F150	P14	CH22	2030
Chief vehicle	2018 Ford F150	P12	203	2028
Staff vehicle	2006 Jeep Cherokee	C11	Blue	*2022*
Chief vehicle	2023 Ford 150	P17	201	2034
Chief vehicle	2023 Ford 150	P18	202	2034
Staff vehicle	2005 Ford Explorer	C04	Wrapped	Extended
Staff vehicle	2007 Ford Ranger	P10	Utility	Extended

<b>STATION 22</b>				
Engine	2003 Pierce	E01	E22	*2023*
Tender	2010 Peterbilt	T03	TE22	2035
Medic	2021 Northstar	AC09	M22	2031
Brush	2006 Ford F550	P09	BR22	Extended
<b>STATION 24</b>				
Engine	1997 Pierce	E17	E24	Extended
Brush	2006 Ford F350	P07	BR24	*2021*
<b>STATION 25</b>				
Ladder truck	2014 Pierce Quantum	L01	L25	2034
Tender	2006 International	T02	TE25	2031
Medic	2019 Northstar	AC08	M25	2029
Medic (reserve)	2016 Northstar	AC06	Reserve	2026
Hazmat	2006 Freightliner	HM2	HM25	2026
Engine	2009 GMC 5500	E05	E25	2029
Utility	2006 Ford F250	P05	U25	*2021*
<b>Under Build</b>				
Engine	2025 Pierce	E07	E21	2045
<b>Surplus in 2023</b>				
Staff Vehicle	2006 Jeep	C10	Gold	Staff Vehicle
Ambulance	2008 Northstar	AC03	M212	Ambulance
<b>Reassigned 2023</b>				
STL / Staff	2012 Chevy Tahoe	C08		*2022*
Plan/ DFM	2013 Ford Explorer	C02		*2023*
<b>STATION 28 – MAINTENANCE SHOP</b>				
Utility	2006 Ford F350	P04	U282	Extended
Utility	2006 Chevy 2500	P06	U28	Extended

## **VEHICLE LIST BY TYPE:**

### **Engine**

2018 Pierce  
2009 GMC 5500  
2007 Pierce  
2003 Pierce  
1997 Pierce

### **Ambulances**

2023 NorthStar  
2021 NorthStar  
2019 NorthStar  
2018 NorthStar  
2016 NorthStar

### **Brush Engines**

2021 Ford F550  
2006 Ford F550  
2006 Ford F350  
2006 Ford F350

### **Tenders**

2010 Peterbilt  
2006 International  
2003 International

### **Staff Vehicles**

2023 Ford F150  
2023 Ford F150  
2023 Ford F150  
2020 Ford F150  
2018 Ford F150  
2013 Ford Explorer  
2012 Chevy Tahoe  
2011 Ford F250  
2007 Ford Ranger  
2006 Ford F250  
2006 Jeep Grand Cherokee  
2005 Ford Explorer

### **Hazmat**

2006 Freightliner

### **Ladder Truck**

2014 Pierce

### **Shop Truck**

2006 Chevy 2500  
2006 Ford F350

# **Shop Services**

With administrative oversight provided by a Battalion Chief and Deputy Chief of Planning, a Lead Mechanic and Mechanic provide our shop services at a facility that we share with the City of Kelso Public Works. This has been a good partnership with Kelso over the years and should continue to serve the District well into the future. In 2018 we completed a remodel at the shop in conjunction with the City of Kelso which resulted in a 15-year commitment from them to allow us to operate as we are with no changes. The efficiencies and cost savings gained through our highly skilled shop staff combined with our capacity to do work for other fire agencies have enabled us to keep our overall costs lower and improved our ability to have more direct control over our maintenance, acquisition and repairs. Our mechanics also have the skills to build apparatus such as tenders, brush engines and command vehicles. By not outsourcing these projects, we leverage the skills, knowledge and abilities of our highly capable staff and gain even more efficiency.

Legislation passed in the spring of 2019, RCW 52.12.031, which expands contract powers and interlocal agreement authority for vehicle maintenance. In the past, we had developed an interlocal agreement with the City of Kelso to provide services for their repair needs; however, a review by the State Auditor resulted in direction that we could not provide those services. With this legislation, we now have clear authority to expand our services to maintain and repair vehicles owned by county, city, town, school district or other political subdivisions. At this time, there are no plans to resume such outside services due to the existing fire service vehicle workload.

In prior years, we serviced several non-Cowlitz County fire district apparatus. In 2023, a deep review of shop services and maintenance and repair unit factors indicated the need to refocus the shop services. This refocus centered on District and Longview Fire apparatus while supporting other Cowlitz County fire districts. Two out-of-county districts were notified that effective March 2024 C2FR would stop servicing their apparatus. Since March 2024, the shop has been able to balance preventive maintenance and running repairs while at the same time balancing regular hours and overtime hours worked.

# **Deployment Strategy (Personnel)**

## **Staffing Configuration:**

C2FR utilizes a three-platoon response staffing strategy with shift personnel working an average of 50 hours per week. The target number of career staff on each shift is 13 on each shift, with a total of 23 career paramedics distributed throughout the organization. This includes no less than 6 paramedic-certified individuals assigned to each shift. As we move toward our goal of 24/7 staffing at four stations, we will need to evaluate our need for paramedic-certified personnel. In 2020, the District was awarded a three-year Safer Act grant to hire up to 3 additional line personnel, that grant expired at the end of 2023.

Each shift has 13 career staff assigned, and our goal is to add one more per shift for a total of 14 per shift. In addition to the full-time staffing target, our goal is to maintain 2 part-time and 2 interns per shift, and 45 shift volunteers available to supplement staffing. We will continue to look for opportunities to increase staffing and evaluate the effectiveness of our part-time and intern programs. This target staffing level will provide for coverage during FMLA and short-term or long-term disability leaves, temporary change of duty assignments, and other similar occurrences.

Recent demand and competition for experienced Firefighters, and particularly Firefighter/Paramedics, has increased staff turnover and made maintaining target staffing numbers difficult. Between 2023 and the current writing of this document, the organization has had eight (8) career full-time employees exit the organization, a 20% turnover rate; this has adversely impacted maintaining staffing goals. We anticipate one (1) additional retirement in calendar 2025. Recruitment strategies for qualified Firefighter/Paramedics will continue, however, a focus on developing qualified Paramedics into Firefighter/Paramedics and developing Firefighter/EMT's into Firefighter/Paramedics will need to be explored as long-term staffing options.

Our goal that Stations 21, 22 and 25 to be staffed 24/7 has been achieved. If there is additional staff available, several staffing algorithms are in place that add staff to Station 22 and then an additional BLS car at Station 21 during the daytime hours.

Future goals include the rehabilitation and expansion of Station 24 and staff it 24/7. The term staffing does not mean simply career staff; rather the use of all categories of personnel available. All career and part-time line personnel are a minimum of EMT certified.

## **Target Volunteer Staffing Levels:**

We progressed to a model that utilizes shift volunteers, interns and non-response volunteers.

Volunteers were assigned to shifts or sign up for shifts to support staffing three stations on a full-time basis.

In the fall of 2023, the Planning Section and Volunteer Coordinator developed a new weekend shift/staffing model. More detail on volunteer staffing see page 35.

## Current Shift Assignments

This section illustrates current staffing levels at each station and on apparatus based on current and projected operational needs as well as funding capability.

<b><u>SHIFT</u></b>	<b><u>Full-time</u></b>	<b><u>Part-Time</u></b>	<b><u>Volunteer/Interns</u></b>
A-Shift	12 of 13	0 of 2	1 of 2
B-Shift	11 of 13	1 of 2	2 of 2
C-Shift	12 of 13	1 of 2	2 of 2

## Target Daily Station and Apparatus Staffing:

### Station 21

Medic 21     2  
Engine 21    3 (capable of swinging to other apparatus)  
Chief 21     1  
Aid 21       2 (overflow staff and combination of career and volunteer)

**Station 22** Medic 22            3 (capable of swinging to other apparatus)

**Station 24**    Overflow staff  
Engine 24      As available

**Station 25**    Medic 25            3 (capable of swinging to other apparatus) and hazmat vehicle location

Volunteer Staffed Peak Activity Unit (PAU): 3

Our Target Daily Staffing level is 15 personnel assigned per shift, excluding day shift personnel.

# **Deployment**

## **Paramedic and EMT Staffing:**

### **ALS Capable Units:**

- One ALS Medic unit at Station 21 (one back-up unit is available)
- One ALS Medic unit at Station 22
- One ALS Medic unit at Station 25 (one back-up unit is available)
- Engine 21 staffed ALS as available. This allows for an immediate deployment to back-up medic unit
- Each ALS medic unit is equipped in accordance with WAC 246-976-300 for ALS ambulance vehicles and communications equipment as defined by WAC 246-976-310

### **BLS Capable Units:**

- The front-line apparatus (other than ambulances) at each station is equipped for licensure for a BLS aid unit per WAC 246-976-300 and communications equipment as defined by WAC 246-976-310
- Engine 21 is equipped with ALS cardiac equipment consistent with medic units/ALS medical kit with medications consistent with medic units

### **Target EMS Response Times (see map for defined zones according to NFPA 1710) for priority code 3 responses:**

- Urban areas: 8 minutes or less 90% of the time
- Suburban areas: 12 minutes or less 90% of the time
- Rural areas: 20 minutes or less 90% of the time
- Wilderness areas: ASAP (i.e., logging roads or no road access)
- Pre-program computer aided dispatch to allow for maximum depth of coverage by maintaining automatic and mutual aid with all other local transport agencies

### **Current Deployment Strategy for ALS Medic Units:**

- Provide one ALS unit staffed full time at Station 21 to provide primary ambulance transport service to the areas of C2FR that include all of the City of Kelso and the unincorporated areas east of the Cowlitz River. Utilize all on-duty personnel as available to immediately staff backup medic unit 21-2 or other apparatus as needed based on call type and volume considerations. When needed, staffing on Engine 21 or any other staffed unit may be redeployed to reserve medic units to facilitate the operational needs.
- Provide one ALS unit staffed full-time at Station 22 to provide primary ambulance transport service to the areas of C2FR that include all first-due fire blocks for Station 22. Utilize automatic and mutual aid to backfill and/or respond when deemed necessary for operational considerations including the need for more resources, and/or based on the closest available unit deployment plan.
- Provide one ALS unit staffed full-time at Station 25 to provide primary ambulance transport service to all Station 25 fire blocks. If operationally we cannot staff Station 25 with ALS, it will be the first station to drop from ALS to BLS.



**Target Fire Response Times (see map for defined zones according to NFPA 1710) for priority code 3 responses:**

- Urban areas: 8 minutes or less 80% of the time
- Suburban areas: 12 minutes or less 80% of the time
- Rural areas: 20 minutes or less 80% of the time
- Pre-program computer-aided dispatch (CAD) to allow for maximum depth of coverage by maintaining automatic and mutual aid with all other local agencies

**Current Deployment Strategy for Fire Rescue Apparatus:**

- Provide one Type 1 engine at each station
  - At station 25 this is accomplished by L-01 operated as Ladder 25
- Provide one Type 5 or 6 engine (brush truck) at each station
- Provide one reserve Type 1 engine to support surge operations and apparatus maintenance
- Provide one reserve Type 6 engine (brush truck) to support surge operations, mobilization backfill and apparatus maintenance
- Provide vehicle extrication coverage one each station

# **Finance & Administration**

The Fire Chief, Deputy Chiefs, and Finance Director (FD) are the executive team. A new Fire Chief began employment on July 17, 2023.

The complexity of managing the business functions in conjunction with the line operations is significant. Our District has continued to grow and operate efficiently even within an economic environment that has not always been favorable. We have been involved in numerous local and state-level issues that have helped the economic viability of the District and afforded the opportunity to provide excellent and cost-effective service to our residents and businesses.

The Board of Commissioners authorized and District voters approved a six-year levy lid lift in November 2022, raising the regular levy rate from \$0.97 per thousand to \$1.35 per thousand, within the \$1.50 per thousand of assessed value allowed by state law, for the first year (collection rates that were payable to us in 2023). For the next five years, the Board may increase the regular levy rate up to 5% each year (through 2028). Our capital improvement bond levy is \$0.15 per thousand currently. Supply chain issues and the resulting inflation have significantly increased the cost of items and utilities, fuel has skyrocketed, and our call volume has been steadily increasing the last few years, which in turn has increased our consumables costs and equipment replacement needs. Upon expiration of the six-year levy lid lift, we will be limited by law to a 1% increase in property tax collection each year, which does not keep up with inflation. Our annual budget is about \$15 million each year.

In the most recent years, we've been busy improving the financial standing of the District by reinforcing existing programs or developing new programs. Our effort has been internal and external. Examples of the effort are:

- Developed an uncommitted reserve of \$3.5 million to support operations and programs. This fund was developed during the most difficult economic recession experienced in our community in decades. The target goal for the District is to get to 40% of the budget allocated to an uncommitted reserve fund.
- In order to support the mission of the District, we now have two Deputy Chief positions, one who has oversight of the Planning Section and one who has oversight of Operations.
- In 2023, we developed a capital reserve fund for replacement of capital equipment and apparatus; the current balance is roughly \$1.85 million.
- Voters approved a capital improvement bond to build new fire stations that replaced existing old stations and acquired apparatus and equipment. This process took many years to come to fruition. Managing the bond is very complex and the necessary financial processes are monitored and performed by the Finance Director. The bond proceeds have been fully expended. This bond will be paid off in 2036.
- C2FR worked with four other fire departments for several years to get legislation passed and a program implemented in 2018 that allows for a new funding source through the federal Ground Emergency Medical Transport (GEMT) program. Every fire agency in Washington that provides EMS services can benefit from this program. Funding from GEMT continues to supplement our revenue stream throughout the year and; the request and receipt process is managed by Finance Director. This generates an estimated \$1 million in revenue each year. However, there are changes anticipated within the GEMT program that will affect our revenue stream and how calculations are handled in the future, potentially adversely affecting this revenue source.
- Our medical transport user fee program has grown to provide over \$1 million in revenue each year and continues to provide a steady flow of income that supports District operations. Our

Finance Director works closely with our billing company to ensure we stay on target throughout the year and work out any issues as they arise.

- We've worked through a process to partner with Longview Fire in a 50/50 arrangement to provide service to the unprotected industrial area along the Columbia River by contract. Several of these contracts were up for renewal at the end of 2023 and they are all still outstanding. At least one business has expressed interest in annexation, but nothing has officially occurred. New businesses have also been developed in this industrial area, and are in need of fire and EMS contracts. However, at least one business does not appear to be interested in entering into an agreement, which will provide new issues for our agencies to manage when responding.
- In 2018 we entered into a contract to provide payroll and accounting services to the new 911 Public Authority, which are performed by our Finance Director. In 2023 we entered into further agreements with them to provide more in-depth financial services while they try to stabilize staffing. The workload is being managed and will most likely go through the end of 2024.
- The career SAFER grant expired at the end of 2023 and the District absorbed over \$310,000 annually in personnel costs (that was paid for and supported by the SAFER grant).
- We've continued to strengthen our wildland firefighting program. However, reimbursements have been slow over the last couple of years which does affect our revenue stream at times.
- Our shop facility provides service to neighboring fire agencies that is cost-effective for them and helps create efficiencies and develop revenue for us.
- Our contracts for code enforcement with the City of Kelso and Cowlitz County continue to strengthen our relationships with these two very important local government agencies while providing revenue to help support critical functions for the District. An increase in these fees is being considered internally, and once a recommendation is made we will meet with each agency to discuss the outcome to implement and obtain Board approval of the new fees.
- Evaluate rates for services with outside agencies periodically (approximately 5 years) to be consistent with market costs.

The overall financial health of the District has improved, but we are struggling to maintain staffing and keep up with improving our infrastructure. Staff continues to monitor the budget on a consistent basis to ensure we continually support the financial needs of the District.

The Finance Support Specialist assists with medical billing, accounts payable, accounts receivable and general filing. This position is also being trained as the backup for payroll and other accounting functions.

The Fire Support Specialist maintains the department website and monitors the department's social media accounts, in cooperation with the Public Information Officer. This position also provides coordination of public education.

# **Succession Planning**

We are committed to looking to the future in all aspects of our services and organization. We have been very proactive in succession planning and processes for most areas of operation for the past five to seven years. This includes the development of the Planning Section as well as reorganization implementing the use of Battalion Chiefs at the appropriate level. We have planned for succession in several critical positions and will continue to do so in the coming years. These positions include the Fire Chief, Deputy Chiefs, Lead Mechanic, Deputy Fire Marshal, Volunteer Coordinator, and other command-level positions such as Battalion Chief and Lieutenant. In the event of an immediate need to fill the Chief or Deputy Chief positions, a separate document outlines recommended assignments and a framework for a selection process if needed.

Succession in the following positions will be critical to the business of running the District. With the recent difficulty in identifying personnel interested in participating in the Planning Section due to the change in assignment from shift to days, this will pose some serious challenges for the District to manage.

## **Fire Chief:**

A new Fire Chief was recently hired from outside the organization. Continued efforts to identify and develop personnel for the future succession of this position is critical. Continue to identify and train internal staff that have an interest in this position for future opportunities.

## **Deputy Chiefs:**

There are two Deputy Chiefs; one of Operations and one of Planning. The intent is for the two positions to be interchangeable to meet the needs of the District. Continue to identify and train internal staff that have an interest in these positions for future opportunities.

## **Finance Director**

In April of 2023, we reclassified a Fire Support Specialist to a Finance Support Specialist and reclassified the Fire Fiscal Analyst to Finance Director. The Finance Support Specialist has focused responsibility by training to be a backup for a number of Finance Director functions.

## **Deputy Fire Marshal:**

This position is currently filled by a Lieutenant, with backup performed by the Deputy Chief Planning, a Battalion Chief, and a Fire Inspector. They all have the necessary certifications.

## **Health and Safety Officer:**

This position is critical to the health and safety of department personnel. This role is currently assigned to the Battalion Chief of Planning.

## **Mechanic:**

Develop a succession plan to ensure the continued operation of the shop to maintain our fleet. Our recent mechanic hire has previous shop management experience and may be suitable to fill the Lead Mechanic position in the future.

## **Fire Science Instructor:**

We are currently filling this position by contracting with a District volunteer. The administration will continue to develop innovative programs to enhance and grow the succession plan for this position.

**Volunteer Coordinator:**

We hired a part-time employee to fill this position. Our Fire Support Specialist can provide backup for these duties as needed. We will continue to evaluate the effectiveness of this position and how to improve the program overall. Continuity of operations in this position is important and administration will continue to identify opportunities for further succession of this position.

# **Capital Facility Plan**

## **Stations Overview:**

- Station 21 is assigned as the headquarters station and is located in the City of Kelso. It was built in 1984. The building continues to serve its primary purpose and response area well. It continues to need ongoing maintenance and repairs. This facility should serve well as the headquarters station for the foreseeable future.
- Station 22, located at Bakers Corner was completed in 2020. This station currently houses the backup IT site. Even though it is actually within the western border of the City of Longview, it is still well-sited to provide response to the west end of the District. This station is now staffed 24/7 with a combination of career, part-time and volunteers. Work occurred in the spring of 2024 to improve the exterior ground maintenance and reduce future maintenance needs.
- Station 24 is located in Rose Valley. It was built in 1967 and is currently used for community coverage, extra apparatus and logistical storage. The station interior needs to be painted and other minor ongoing maintenance is needed along with restructuring the storage plan in-place in the apparatus bays. To support the nearly 1,500 residences in the station 24 response area, the current station location is the most practical compared to sites closer to exit 36 or the Longview Wye.
- Station 25 is located in the Lexington area of the District. The new station was completed in April 2020. Staff and resources were redistributed to provide for 24/7 staffing of the station with a combination of career, part-time and volunteers. Work occurred in the fall of 2023 and finished up in the spring of 2024 to regrade the front yard to reduce water pooling.
- Station 28, the District shop, is located on Parrott Way in Kelso and provides all of the mechanical maintenance for the District's apparatus. The building is owned by the City of Kelso and approximately 5,800 square feet of the building is available for the District's use through an inter-local agreement. The shop facility has the capacity to do pump testing. Additional storage developed in partnership with the City provides the necessary warehouse space for the maintenance section. A major renovation of this facility was completed by the City of Kelso in partnership with the District. The installation of a twenty-foot-wide overhead door has greatly enhanced the capability at the shop.
- Station 29 is the recruit training facility located behind Station 21. It houses Tender 21 as well as a classroom, logistical support and EMS supplies. The classroom also serves as the Board of Commissioners meeting room. Exterior doors and windows were replaced on the training prop and the painting of this building was completed in early 2023. The training room floor was replaced and the room painted in the summer of 2023

## **Planned Facility Projects:**

- Station 21 – Parking area was resurfaced and striped in 2023. Continue to explore and implement if funding allows for electronic gates for rear parking lot. Facility access control improvements are proposed by adding card reader system and installing it on all exterior and specific interior doors. Seeking grant funding as it becomes available.
- Station 22 – Regular maintenance as needed after new construction.
- Station 24 –Expand station living quarters with modular housing unit (single or double wide) placed on-site of the current building and regular maintenance as needed.
- Station 25 – Regular maintenance as needed after new construction.
- Station 28 (District Shop) – The pump test pit will need to be overhauled within the next few years. The City of Kelso has indicated they plan on doing an extensive paving project within the next two years at the site, the pump test pit overhaul should be coordinated with that work.
- Station 29 and training grounds – Ongoing maintenance as needed.
- All stations and facilities – Assess overall needs, develop a plan and implement to modernize security features at all District facilities.
- In conjunction with Kelso School District construction training classes, adding exterior storage sheds at stations 22 and 25 to move lawn maintenance equipment out of apparatus bays.

# **Planning Section**

The Planning Section is an administrative support team whose members primarily work traditional business hours to provide assistance to smooth department operation. The section includes a Deputy Chief, Battalion Chief, Deputy Fire Marshal, Fire Inspector and Volunteer Coordinator. A firefighter is assigned to Planning as the Planning Support Specialist, assisting Planning with various assignments, including, but not limited to assisting with the High School Cadet Program, logistical support and training support. All Planning Section personnel are response capable and staff up additional units or assist in providing coverage when deemed necessary, as well as maintain certifications as instructors for different elements of the District.

The Planning Section is responsible for many aspects of department business and functions. Great emphasis is placed on developing crossover capabilities among staff.

## **Fire Marshal Duties:**

The Fire Chief holds the title of Fire Marshal for the City of Kelso, and the District holds a contract with Cowlitz County to perform code enforcement and fire investigations. The Deputy Fire Marshal reviews building permits and plans and inspects new construction to ensure it complies with the building code as it applies to fire and life safety. The Fire Inspector and Planning Support Specialist (as needed) inspect existing commercial facilities and multi-family dwellings to ensure they continue to meet all applicable fire codes. The Deputy Chief of Planning and a currently certified Battalion Chief not assigned to the Planning Section can fill either of these roles when necessary.

## **Logistics and Facilities:**

The Deputy Fire Marshall is also assigned the logistics specialist and facilities maintenance role. This position inventories and orders EMS supplies, station supplies, fire equipment, uniforms and PPE. In addition, it oversees the building upkeep of all of the District's stations.

## **Training/Health & Safety Office (HSO):**

The Battalion Chief of Planning is assigned the role of training/health and safety officer. Each year, the Planning Section creates a training calendar for the year that outlines the training goals for fire and EMS for the year. The Battalion Chief of Planning is tasked, with help from Planning staff, company officers and training specialists, with executing that plan through daily shift training, weekly drill nights, OTEP, and special training events. He/she reviews training requests as they are received and prioritizes training opportunities to get the most return for the department.

In addition, the Battalion Chief of Planning coordinates training with outside agencies. Mutual training is held with Longview Fire Department, Cowlitz County Fire District #5 and Cowlitz County Fire District #6 as time and schedules allow.

## **Wildland Program:**

Wildland deployments are a summer staple at the District, and we are effective due to the support from the Planning Section. A Battalion Chief is currently the Southwest Region Alternate Coordinator for the Washington State Fire Defense Committee and a main contact for the DNR. We lead a regional strike team and deploy multiple resources on short notice. The Deputy Chief of Operations is the crossover staff to help with wildland deployments.



## **High School Program:**

The high school fire science class is an invaluable resource to develop future District Volunteers and personnel and in proving community support. The students assist in many community outreach programs. Each year, Kelso School District has guaranteed funding to support the program for at least 15 students and recently increased the amount of funding per student. One priority set for the contracted instructor will be recruitment and growth of the class.

## **Volunteer Program**

The District is heavily dependent on our volunteer program. We currently have approximately 45 volunteers. The volunteer program is administratively led by a Volunteer Coordinator responsible for recruitment, intake, tracking participation, and conducting exit interviews. Volunteer Lieutenants oversee the operational aspects of the program. The primary focus of the program is to provide educated and well-trained emergency responders to the District.

The Planning Section makes the following recommendations for our volunteer program:

- Focus on retention through volunteer officer development and volunteer incentives such as the shift stipend program.
- Focus on recruitment for the shift volunteers and emphasize participation in wildland firefighting.
- Focus on dedicated staffing and daily integration with on-duty crews from all volunteers with an emphasis on a peak activity unit (PAU) staffed by volunteers.

Retention is the highest priority for the volunteer program. It reduces costs associated with turnover and increases the level of experience available. Incentives like the shift stipend are highly valued by our volunteers.

About half of our volunteers live outside of our District. A shift volunteer signs up for shifts and is dedicated to staffing as opposed to the traditional volunteer that responds via pager or cell phone when dispatched from home. We will continue to focus on recruiting shift volunteers, and add the additional focus on encouraging participation in wildland deployments.

Volunteer staffing follows the deployment strategy section of the OAP. When minimum staffing levels are achieved a Peak Activity Unit is created and staffed. A new volunteer staffing configuration was tested during the first quarter of 2024. Volunteers were asked to staff an additional response-capable unit on Saturdays. Each Volunteer Shift would rotate every six weeks and provide known staffing. After the first quarter trial was complete it was deemed not feasible to accomplish this with the current training level of our Volunteers. We have since moved to emphasize task book completion and training. Recent turnover has left us with an insufficient number of qualified Driver Operators, Officers, and EMS transport. Training for the remainder of 2024 has been adjusted to close these operational gaps.

Dedicated staffing is the most effective way to utilize our volunteer program. We will continue to support the daily integration of volunteers with the on-duty crew under the duty chief's direction.

Staff has researched the feasibility and interest of volunteers who are interested in participating in a Resident Volunteer program, and recommends not moving forward with this program at this time.

## Grants:

The District is fortunate to have received several significant grants. The Planning Section continues to support efforts to obtain department funding through grant opportunities. The Fire Support Specialist regularly searches for grant opportunities and communicates with the day shift staff to identify the areas of greatest need.

Once grants are awarded, appropriate personnel are assigned to be responsible for grant administration and reporting.

Current grants in process:

Grant Title	Purpose	Amount	C2FR Match
2021 SAFER Act	Volunteer R&R	\$502,730	\$0
Hazmat Grant	Hazmat	\$66,358	\$0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$569,088</b>	<b>\$0</b>

The District was successful in applying for and being awarded the 2019 SAFER Act grant for hiring three full-time employees. The grant had three years of performance that ended in January of 2024. The District will now provide full funding for those positions (receiving approximately \$310,000 per year for these positions).

The District was successful in applying for and being awarded the 2021 SAFER Act grant for volunteer recruitment and retention that began on June 18, 2023. This is a four (4) year grant that includes training opportunities, stipend increases, PPE, marketing, and tuition assistance.

The District received funds from the SW Region 4 FEMA grant that was awarded in 2022. The grant is providing \$66,358 for hazmat training. This includes money for the training, travel, meals and backfill for our members attending. This money has to be spent by October 31, 2024.

## Event Planning:

The Planning Section works as a team to plan and coordinate large events for our department. Specifically, department all call meetings which take place twice a year, and the annual District dinner. Planning also facilitates the annual 9/11 memorial and assists with public education events.

The Planning Section supports staffing in a variety of ways. They offer additional response coverage and assistance as needed, and often staff a unit so that on-duty crews can attend training. Planning Section staff also assist in providing personnel for public education events.

# **Specialty Groups & Teams**

## **Technical Rescue Groups**

Currently, the only agency in the county that can access waterways with a boat or similar is the Cowlitz County Sheriff's Office; and they also provide oversight for the volunteer-based Cowlitz County Dive Rescue Program. On a regional basis, the Clark County Tech Rescue Team has both rescue swimmers and fire department-owned boats that can be deployed to our area on a call when needed.

The District also relies on the regional capability maintained in Clark County for technical rope rescue including both high and low angle. The Longview Fire Department maintains a confined rescue program that we also rely on. Our commitment to regional capability has been focused on hazardous material response.

## **Hazardous Materials (Hazmat) Response**

A hazardous materials response team is an important part of an all-hazards response system especially when serving a heavy industrial base and interstate commerce by water, rail and surface transportation, where a high risk/low frequency to a major hazmat incident is possible.

### **Hazmat in our Response Area**

- Cowlitz County has 14 facilities covered by a Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC), that report under the Toxic Release Inventory (TRI).
- Cowlitz County has the second-highest number of TRI releases, with 3,010,572 pounds, in the state of Washington.
- The Interstate 5 corridor is the major North / South surface transportation route in the state of Washington and ranks as one of the busiest corridors in the country. Approximately 8,500 trucks averaging 16 tons of cargo use the corridor per day.
- The Columbia River flows past the District. It is the busiest waterway for maritime operations in the state of Washington. The annual top five types of vessels making port on the waterway were as follows: Bulk Carrier - 886, Vehicle Carrier - 190, Barge - 195, General Cargo – 73, and Tanker - 81. It is also important to note that all but 33 of the vessel port visits were upstream of the Port of Astoria and passed by the District.
- A railroad corridor runs North/South through the District, serving cargo and passenger trains, and averaging 60 trains per day.

### **Current Hazmat Response Team**

- C2FR hazmat team has 9 technicians consisting of 3 battalion chiefs, 4 lieutenants and 2 firefighters.
- In 2022 there were 20 hazardous materials calls, of which more than 90% of the missions were handled by the duty chief; the duty chief and a single company; or the duty chief and two companies.
- In 2022 there were 89 fires in buildings that usually contain hazardous materials. Recent studies have also shown that structure fires can contain high levels of carbon monoxide and hydrogen cyanide in burned and non-burned rooms or apartments, for hours after suppression activities. Annually hazmat team expenses are approximately \$100,000.00 inclusive of salary premiums, benefits, tools, equipment and training. This does not include base personnel salaries, replacement of suits, vehicles or large purchases of tools/equipment.

## **Team Assignment for Hazmat**

A new development in structure firefighting is for hazmat teams or member(s) to be charged with decontamination and sampling of the scene and firefighters for early recognition of harmful toxins, reducing long-term effects and early death of firefighters.

## **Revenue for Hazmat**

There needs to be a dedicated revenue stream to support the team going into the future. With decreased grant monies, the options are as follows:

- Regional fee through the LEPC's in each of the four counties in Region 4, based on the type and quantity of materials stored at each LEPC facility.
- LEPC fee for each of the 14 LEPC facilities in the county based on the type and quantity of materials stored at each LEPC facility.
- Cowlitz County fee as established by the Cowlitz County Commissioners based on the type and quantity of materials stored at each LEPC reporting facility.
- The District has approached the eight Tier II agencies in the Contract Service Area for additional funding of \$5,000 each per year for support of the hazmat program.

A cost recovery method for billing hazmat response needs to be developed, along with a stronger partnership for regional hazmat response between Cowlitz 2 and Vancouver Fire and the four-county LEPC's in Region 4. Accurate data entry and reporting are a vital component to any program and much more so to a hazmat team to secure funding.

## **SCBA Maintenance Technician**

With administrative oversight provided by a Battalion Chief, we have three trained SCBA technicians. The value of this program is that our cost for ongoing and immediate repairs are lower with the work being done by certified technicians in-house. In addition, this program adds to our level of expertise and training on the air packs at the shift and volunteer levels.

## **Fire Investigation**

The District provides fire investigation duties beyond that of a company-level investigation. This program is funded by the contract with the County to provide investigation duties. With administrative oversight provided by the Deputy Fire Marshal, we have six trained investigators among the shifts. They receive premium pay and are on occasion requested to respond from home as part of a call out to conduct a fire investigation that is beyond the capability of a company officer.

