

2023

# Marshalltown Fire Department



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### **Message from the Chief**

The members of the Marshalltown Fire Department (MFD) are pleased to offer you this annual report for the year 2023. This working document addresses your fire departments daily activities and accomplishments. It is our goal to offer the highest level of service possible for the citizens and to the business community of Marshalltown.

The trend of increasing requests for service continued, but at a smaller percentage. In 2023, the department responded to 3,476 calls for service, which represents a 1.5 % increase from 2022. Overlapping calls increased again in 2023. As discussed in previous years this is a trend that has the potential for serious implications as there may not be a unit available to respond, or greatly delayed, to an emergency.

Like 2022, 2023 was a stable year in terms of employment as no staff changes occurred. In 2024, two members of the department have indicated they will retire.

In 2023, costs for goods and services continued to increase and, in some cases, have doubled creating strains on the operations budget. Additionally, supply chain issues for essential supplies and equipment have continued to be a challenge. Suppliers tell us things are getting better and will continue to improve in 2024. Time will tell if that is true.

Fire code compliance inspections increased for a second consecutive year. Our partnership with Iowa Inspections LLC has helped the department by completing inspections of business/mercantile type occupancies, allowing the department to focus on occupancies that require an operational permit to function. Additionally, the department began revising and digitizing preplans making them more readily available to crews as they are responding to fires. In addition to preplans, old inspection and arson investigation records are being digitized.

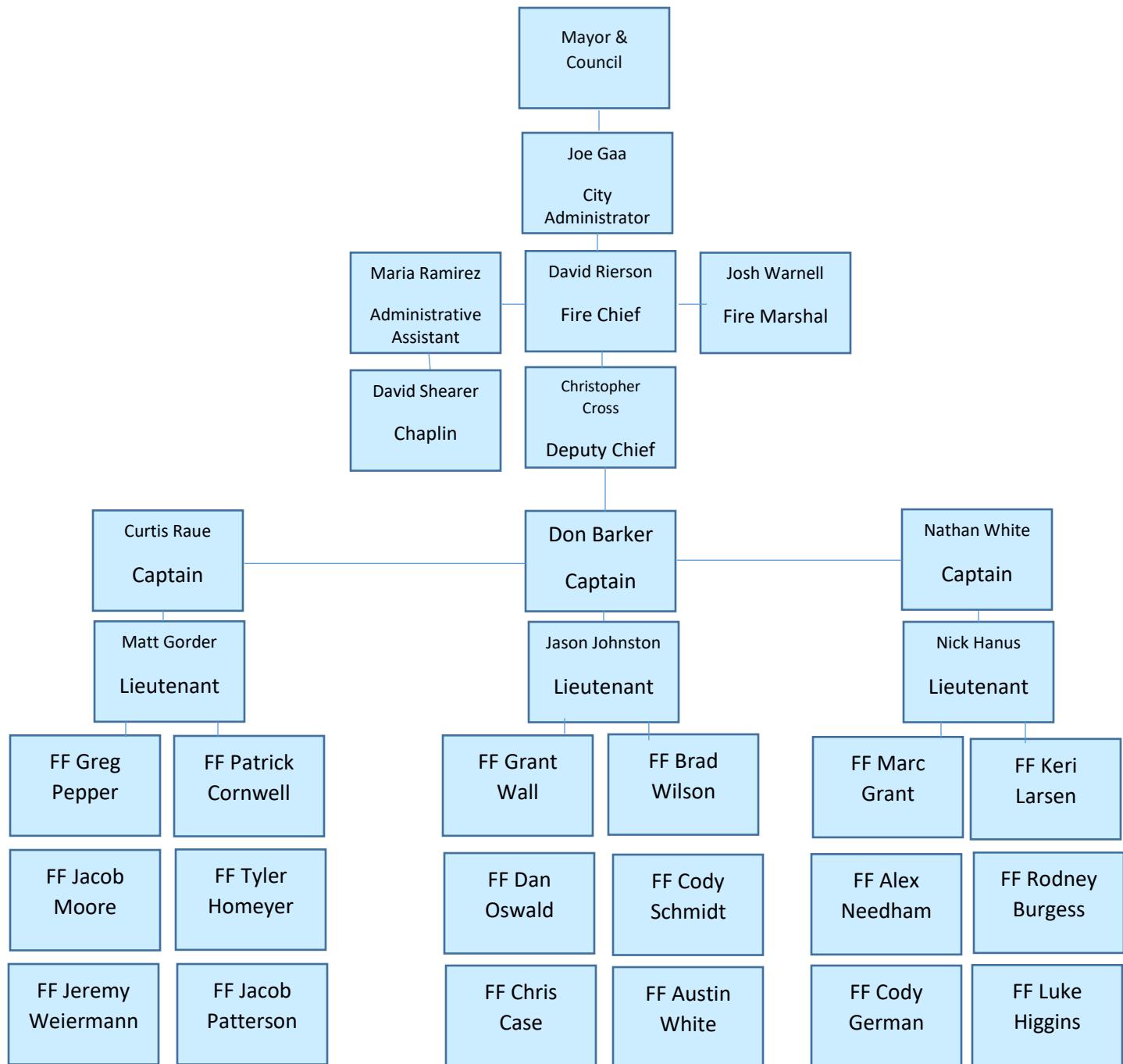
The 2023 Annual Report will be the last report submitted by me as I am retiring in 2024. I am appreciative of the opportunity that was afforded me in 2014 when the City Council hired me to be the Fire Chief. It has been an honor to work with the men and women of the department and the city.

Sincerely,

*David Rierson*

David Rierson - Fire Chief

# Organizational Structure



## Administrative Staff & Officers



David Rierson – Fire Chief



Christopher Cross – Deputy Chief



Joshua Warnell – Fire Marshal



Nathan White - Captain



Curtis Raue - Captain



Don Barker - Captain



Jason Johnston - Lieutenant



Nick Hanus - Lieutenant



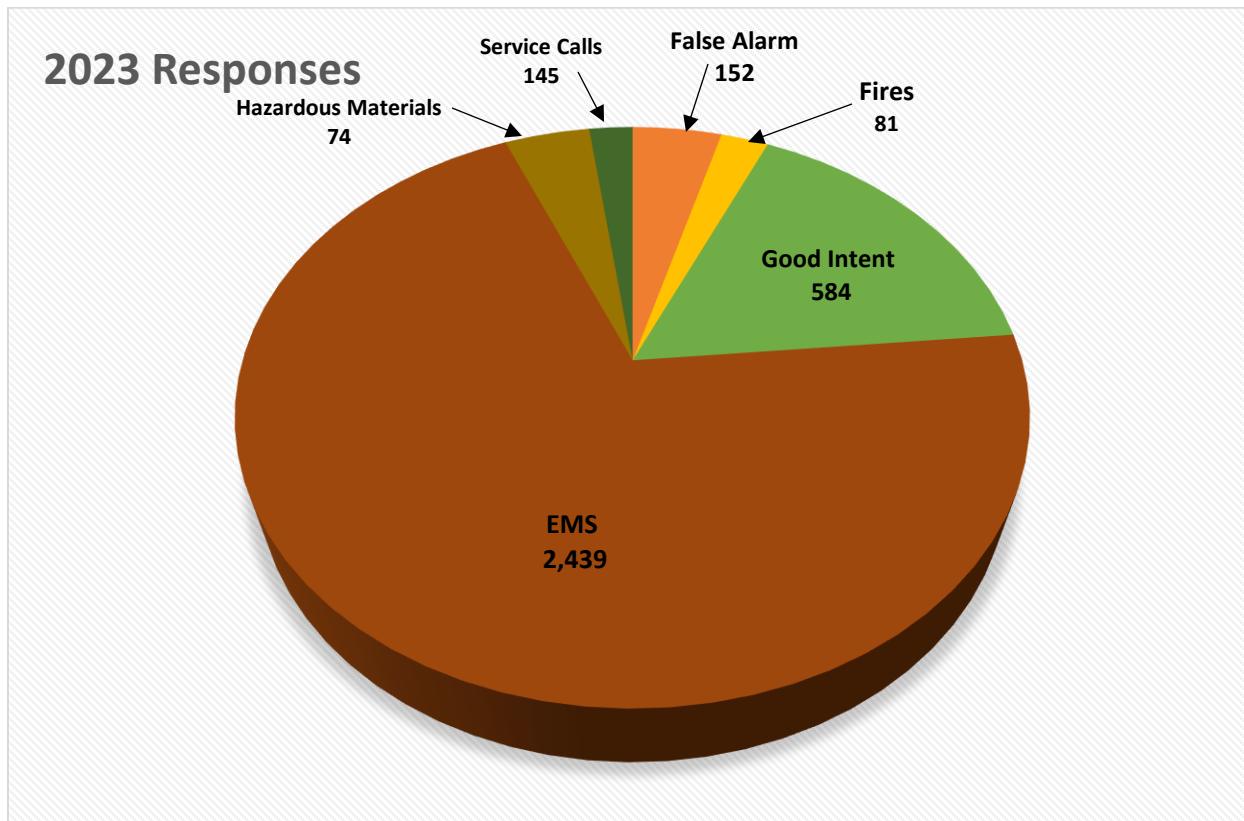
Matt Gorder - Lieutenant

# Reports and Statistics

## Incident Breakdown

As an all-hazards department, Marshalltown Fire Department responds to emergencies that include fires, emergency medical calls, hazardous materials incidents, water and ice rescue, trench and confined space rescue, and vehicle extrication. In 2023, the department responded to 3,476 requests for service, which represents an increase of 1.5 percent over 2022 (3,423). Listed below are explanations of the categories and a chart breaking down fires by type and other calls for service as well as maps showing distribution of calls throughout the City.

1. EMS: Includes emergency medical calls and extrications.
2. Fires: Includes structural, vehicle, brush and weeds, and rubbish.
3. False Alarm: Includes accidental alarm trips.
4. Service Calls: Includes Smoke or odor scares, animal rescues, water problems, and public assistance.
5. Hazardous Materials: Includes release, containment, and mitigation of a hazardous substance.
6. Good Intent: Includes dispatched & cancelled, smoke scare or odor, authorized controlled burn. And steam, fog, or dust thought to be smoke.



| 2023 Fires By Incident Type        | Number    |
|------------------------------------|-----------|
| Building Fire                      | 22        |
| Cooking Fire (contained)           | 9         |
| Chimney/Flue Fire (contained)      | 1         |
| Outside Storage                    | 3         |
| Outside Rubbish, Trash, Waste Fire | 8         |
| Dumpster Fire                      | 4         |
| Passenger Vehicle Fire             | 10        |
| Mobile Property Fire               | 2         |
| Grass Fire                         | 10        |
| Brush or Brush/Grass Mix Fire      | 2         |
| Overheated Motor/Equipment Failure | 9         |
| Mobile Home                        | 1         |
| <b>Total Fires</b>                 | <b>81</b> |

### **Turnout/Response Time Fires/Rescues**

In 2023, the average turnout time for fires/rescues/tech rescues is 2:36 and response time of 7:40.

### **Fire Loss**

In 2023 property fire loss is valued at \$225,500, which is a decrease from 2022 (\$449,320). This can be attributed to 17 less structure fires in 2023 vs. 2022. Content fire loss is \$109,600.

### **Fires**

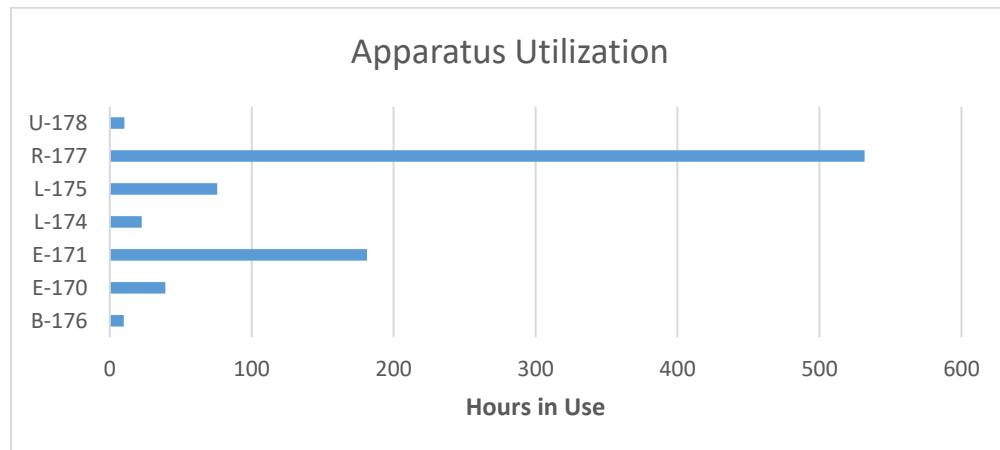




## EMS

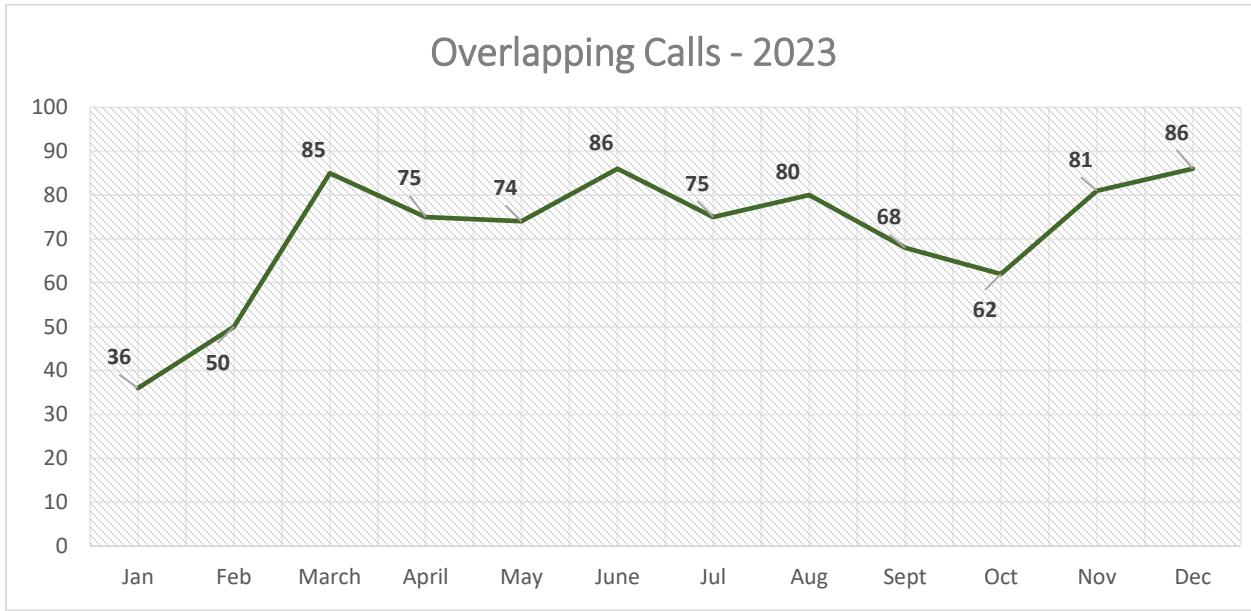
Marshalltown Fire Department responds with UnityPoint EMS on specific medical calls. In some instances, the department arrives on scene prior to the ambulance and begins patient care. EMS calls responded to include cardiac arrest/CPR, difficulty breathing, seizures, diabetics, strokes, and traumatic injuries. Additionally, there are times when the fire department crew, depending on patient condition, help either render patient care in the ambulance or drive it for the EMS crew to the hospital. In 2023, the department responded to 2,439 medical calls with an average turnout time of 2:14 and response time of 6:05.

## Apparatus Utilization in Hours

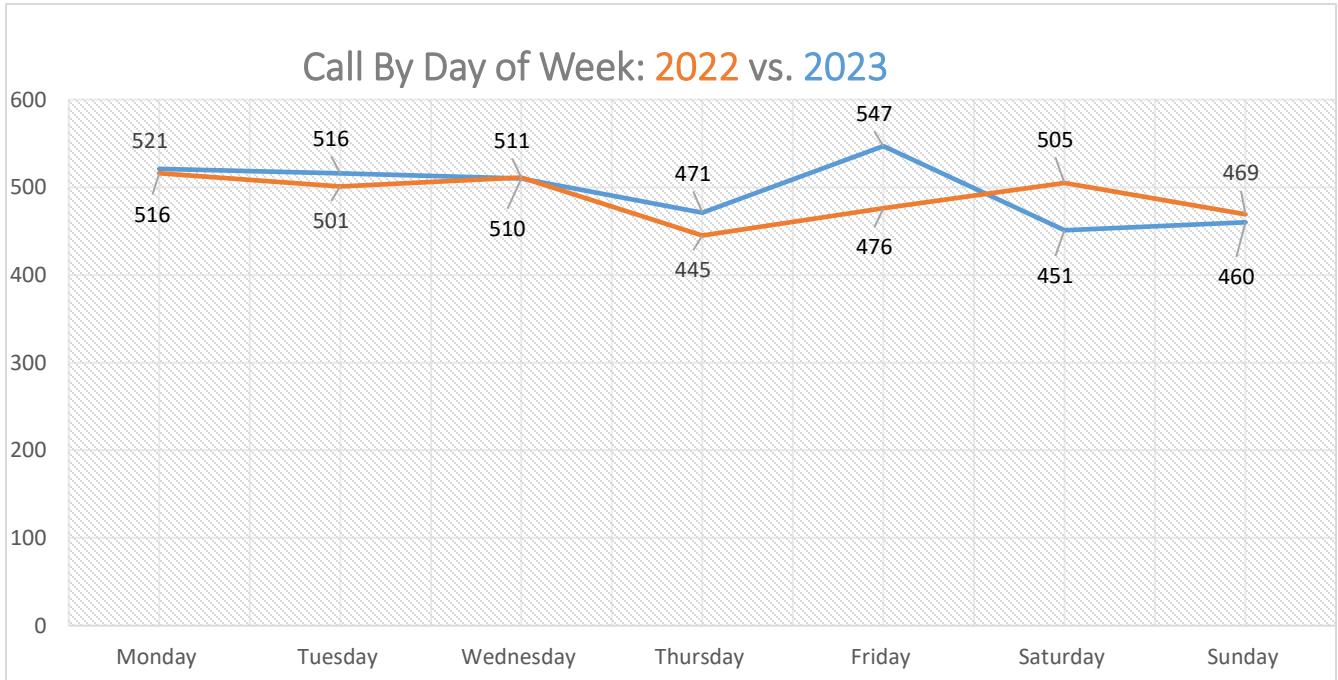
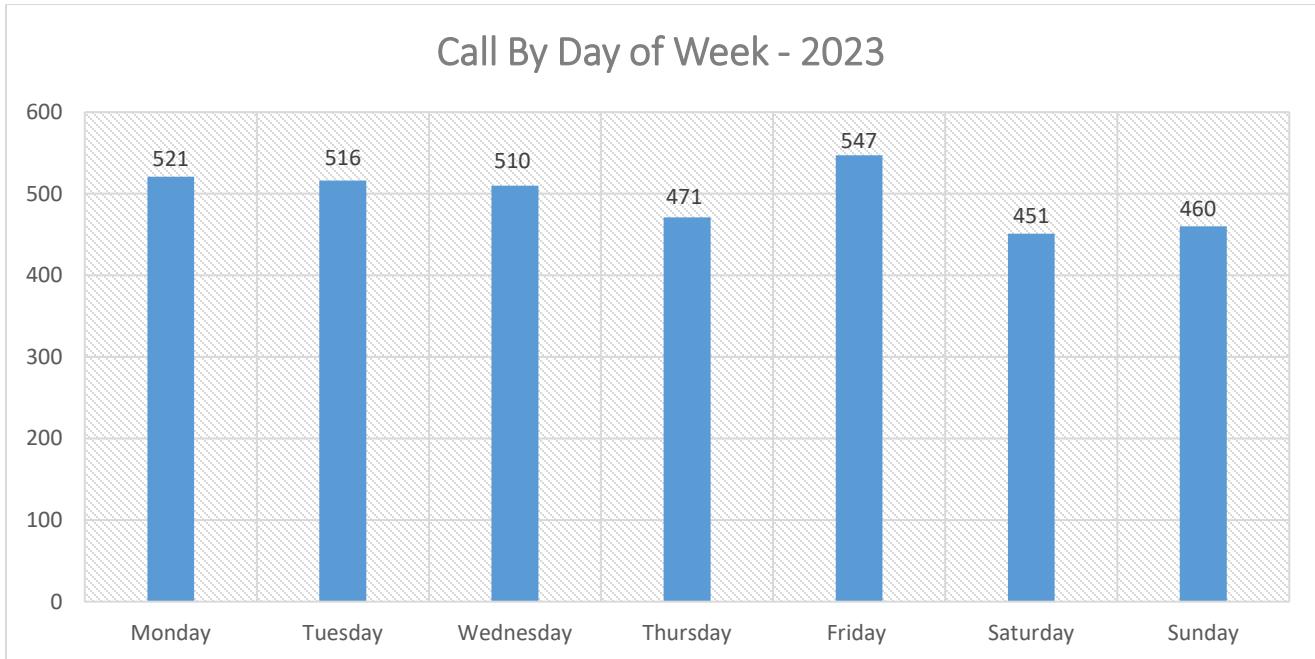


## **Overlapping Calls:**

Overlapping calls are those times when the department has more than one call for service occurring at the same time. This is an important statistic to track as it could result in either delayed or no response. In 2023, we experienced a slight increase in overlapping calls (858 vs. 841), which represents 24.70% of our total calls. A visual graph of the overlaps is located below.

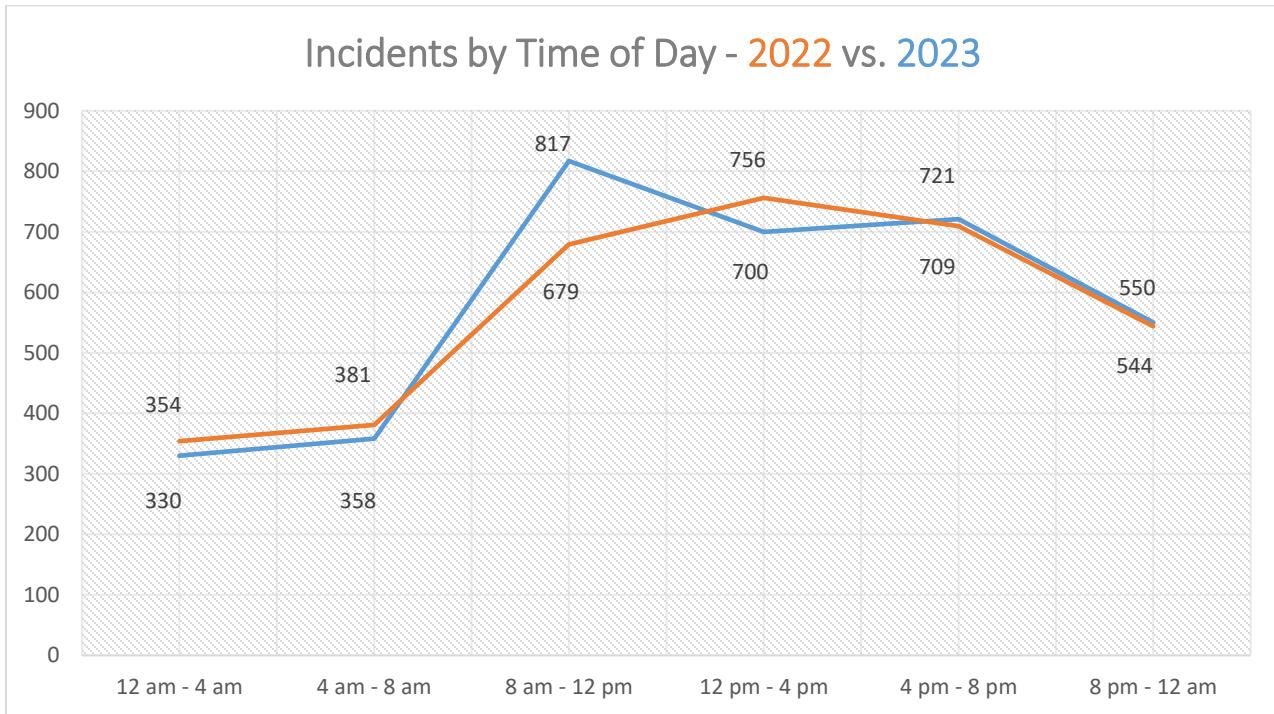
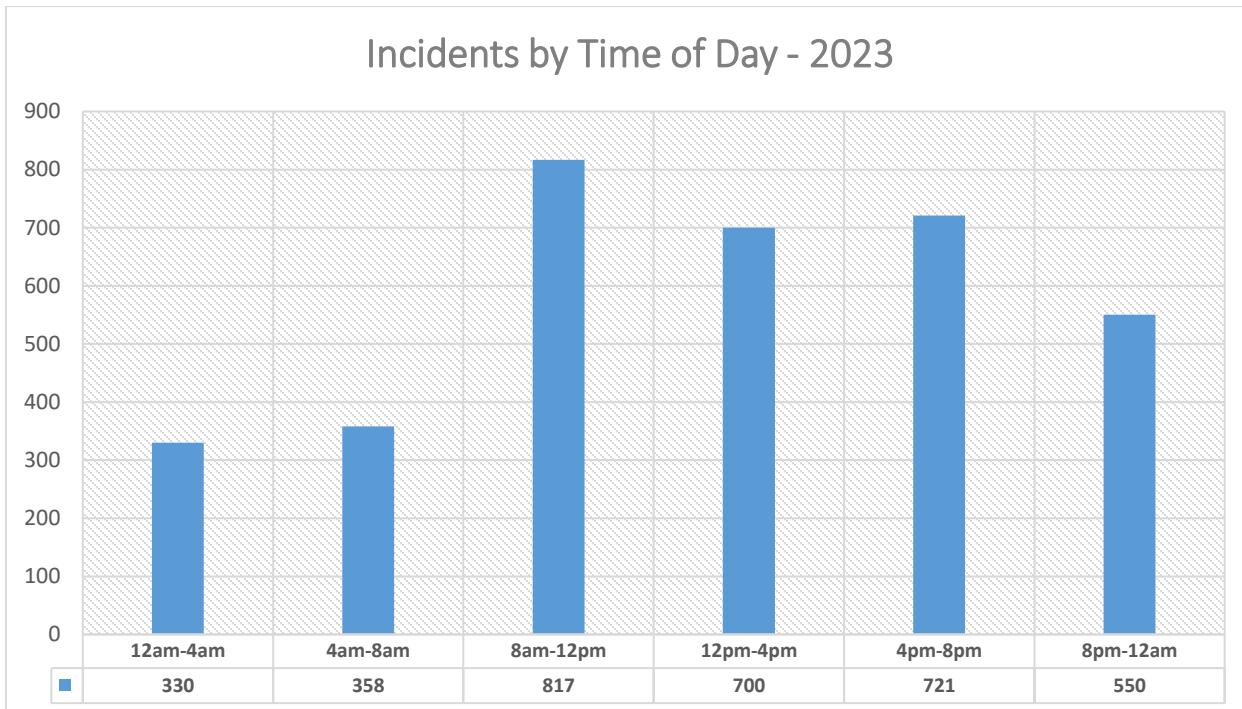


### **Calls by Day of Week:**



### **Calls By Hour of the Day:**

As in previous years, the department remains busiest between the hours of 8:00 am and 8:00 pm.

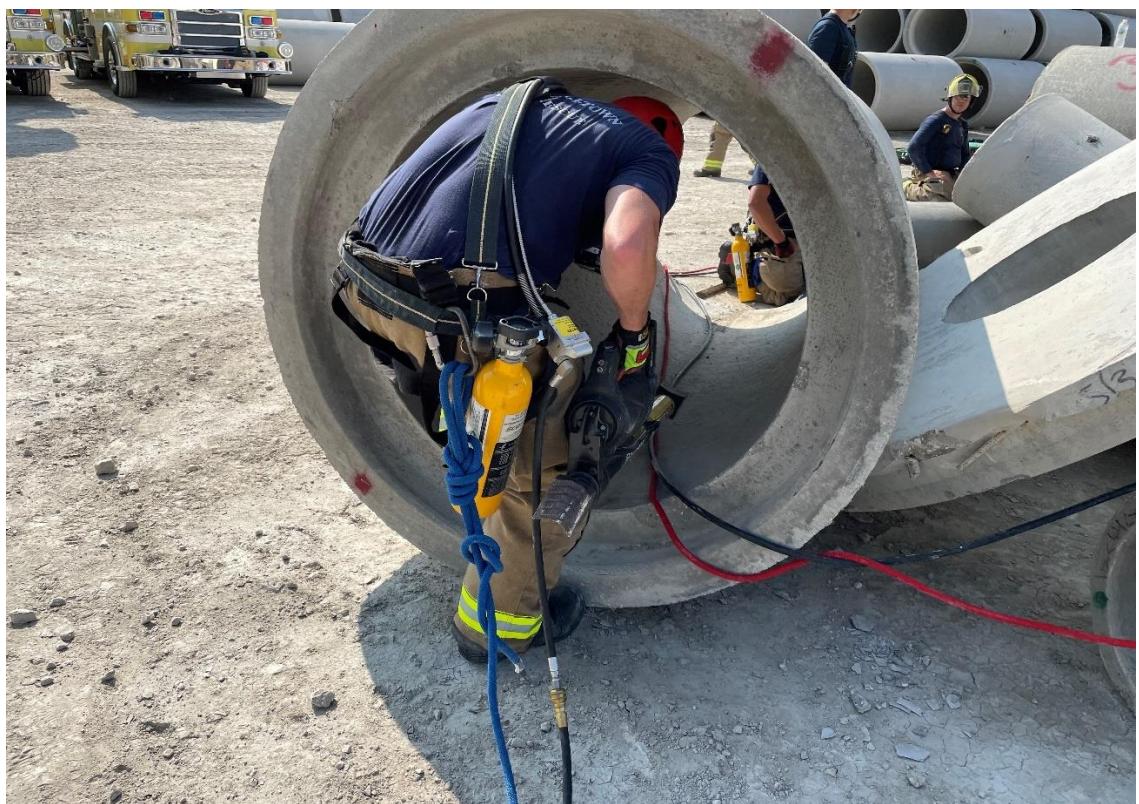
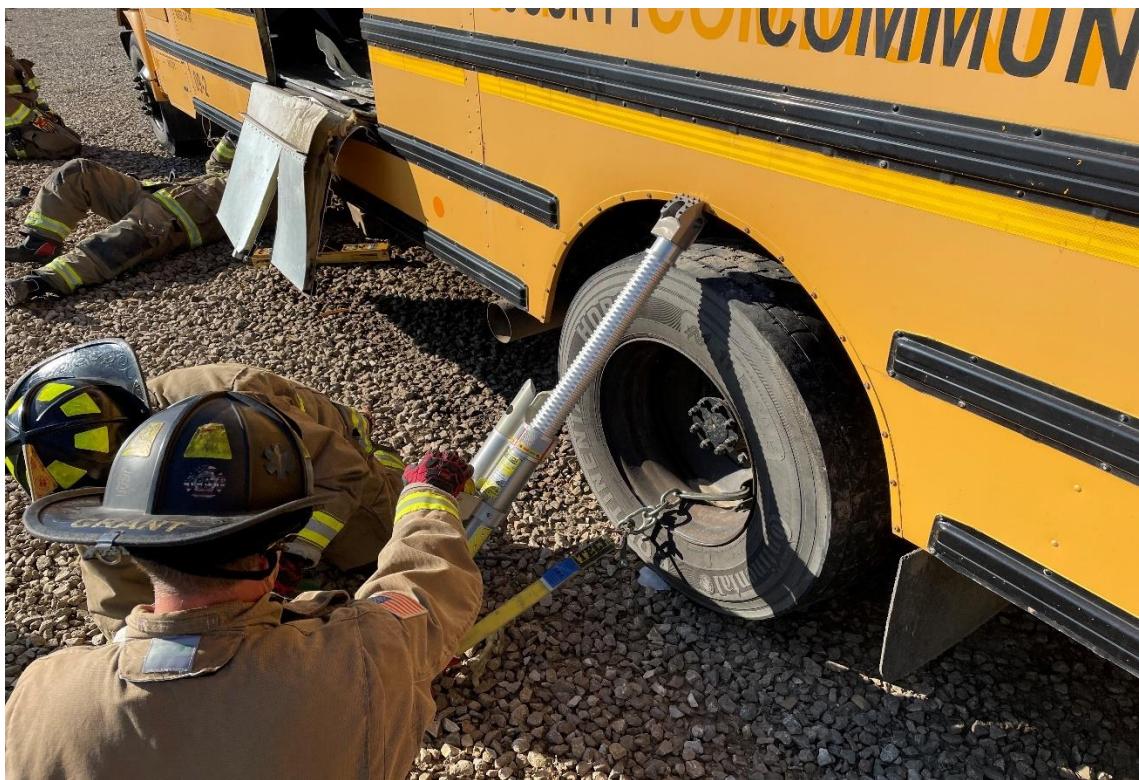


## **Training**

As an all-hazards department, training is an important part of our annual activity. Department training is provided through a combination of in-house instruction, online classes, and outside classes and training. 1,987 person-hours were spent training in the areas of EMS, fire, hazmat, OHSA, and technical rescue (confined space, ropes, and water rescue). Below is a breakdown of the hours.



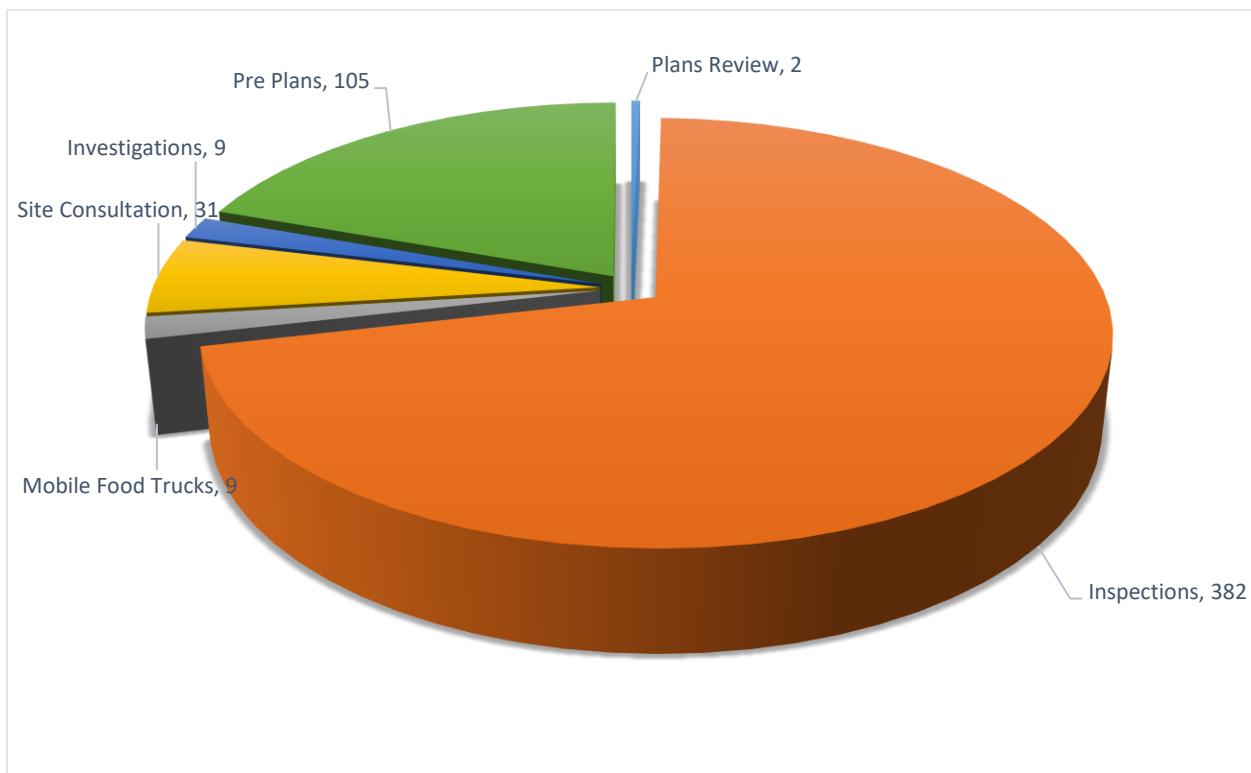




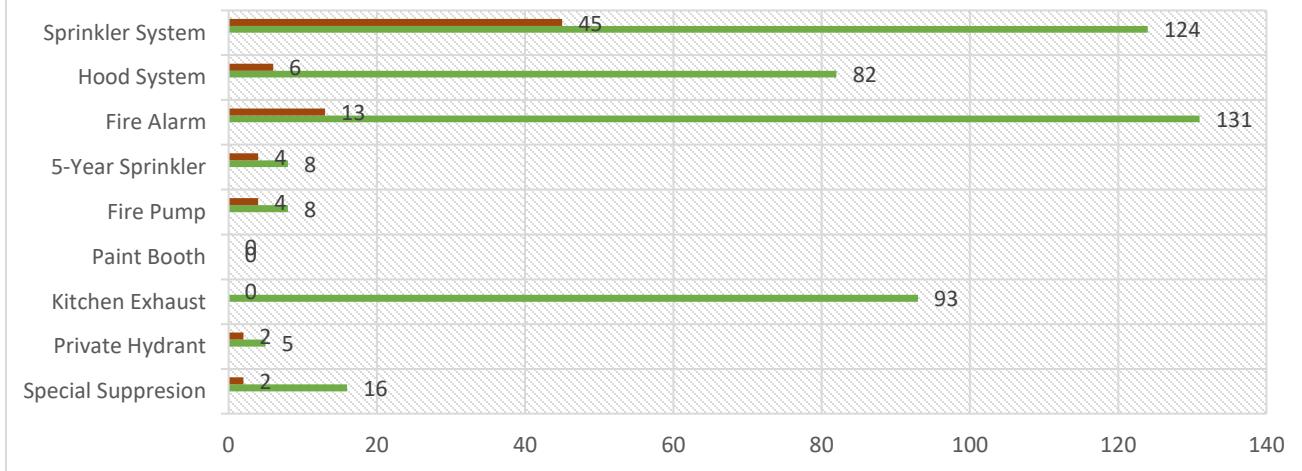
## **Fire Marshal's Office**

In 2023, total inspection numbers increased to 424, up from 308 in 2022. Each year, the department focuses inspection activities on occupancies that require an annual operational permit to conduct business. This includes restaurants, churches, bars, repair garages, body shops, and hazardous processes. In 2023, the department completed 266 permit inspections. Business occupancies were not being inspected consistently, if at all. To help the inspection process, the department contracted with Iowa Inspections LLC in 2022 to inspect business occupancies in the City. In 2023, Iowa Inspections completed 158 inspections compared to 97 in 2022. The department continued its association with the Compliance Engine. The Compliance Engine sends notification to property owners who have fire protective systems (sprinklers, hood systems, alarm systems) when service is due, as well as when there are deficiencies in need of correction. In 2023, the Compliance Engine reported 682 system inspections of which 68 were non-compliant (9%). In addition to inspections, the department began revising building preplans and making the information available in fire apparatus through our new report management software. Fire Investigators conducted 9 fire investigations of which two were determined to be arson.

### **2023 Activity**



## Compliance Engine Reported Inspections - 2023



## Fire Prevention & Education

Each year the fire department conducts learn not to burn training, provides station tours, and participates in community activities. In 2023, the total number of events was 35.





### **Retirements, Deaths, New Employees, Promotions, and Anniversaries**

For those of us in the fire service, the people we work with become our second families. As such, we celebrate members who have reached milestones in their careers and honor those who are no longer with us. Unfortunately, we report the death of retired Captain Tim Hillygus. Additionally, there were no retirements or promotions.

## Anniversaries

|                  |                |
|------------------|----------------|
| Cody German      | 5 years        |
| Nick Hanus       | 15 years       |
| Patrick Cornwell | 15 years (MFD) |

## Department Staff



**Oswald**



**Grant**



**Schmidt**



**Larsen**



**Pepper**



**Weiermann**



**Wall**



**Cornwell**



**Moore**



**Wilson**



**Homeyer**



**Needham**



**German**



**Patterson**



**Case**



**A. White**



**Higgins**



**Burgess**

## **Department Improvements/Updates**

In 2022, the department took the initial steps in implementing a new records/report management system. Implementation continued into early 2023 with completion in March. The new system provides the department with a more robust fire inspections module and the system combines our building pre-planning with the fire inspections module so when an entry is made in one module it automatically updates the other. This provides the officer-in-charge with immediate information about an occupancy while enroute to the scene. Additionally, the system meets the new state and federal requirements for EMS reporting.

Building preplans and old inspection and arson investigation records are being digitized. This will clean/free up file space in the Fire Marshal's office.

In 2023, the department continued its public-private partnership with Iowa Inspections LLC for the inspection of business occupancies.

In December, the department began the process of replacing our R-177. Fire equipment and apparatus delivery times have not recovered post COVID with delivery times still between 2 – 3 years.

Additionally, prices are increasing 10 to 15 percent per year. In January 2024, the department will ask the City Council to approve entering into an agreement to purchase the new vehicle. This will save the city two-year's worth of price increases with delivery in 2026 when the current vehicle is scheduled for replacement.

## **The Future**

The department will continue to see increases in calls for service, driven mostly by the need for emergency medical services. From a budget standpoint, like other departments in the city, it will be challenged to find more cost effective ways to provide service as available resources decrease.

The department is training a member as a Fire Education Specialist to work with the schools and kids on fire safety. This person will also receive Juvenile Firesetter training and work with our younger citizens who have or have the identified propensity for starting fires.

Fire Officers will continue work on their development plans, meeting with the Fire Chief and Deputy Chief quarterly to check progress. Additionally, officers will be provided the opportunity to job shadow the administrative officers as a part of development.

The future of the department will be in the hands of a new Fire Chief. After nearly 10 years with the city and 40 years in the fire service, I have decided to retire. It has been an honor to serve as your Fire Chief and I am appreciative of the opportunity that was given me in 2014. More importantly, it has been a privilege to serve with the members of Marshalltown Fire Department. I wish you all the best!