

City of Monroe Wisconsin Fire Department Community Centered Strategic Plan

2025 – 2034



Photo Credit: Pierce Manufacturing



**City of Monroe Wisconsin Fire Department
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Introduction

MissionCIT is pleased to present the following Strategic Plan for the City of Monroe Fire Department. The Fire Chief, City Administrator, and Common Council should be applauded for their foresight in developing such plans to help guide the future of the department.

MissionCIT is pleased to have been able to work with such great leaders and stakeholders of the City of Monroe and the Monroe Fire Department to develop the strategic plan. We would like to particularly recognize the following individuals for their input and efforts in this process:

City Administrator Brittney Rindy
Fire Chief Al Rufer
Alder Kyle Knoll
Alder Corrine Wartenweiler
Alder Lynne Kleven
Alder Heidi Treuhardt

Mayor Donna Douglas
Asst. Administrator Rob Jacobson
Alder Tom Miller
Alder Richard Thoman
Alder Matt Sheaffer
Alder Mary Jane Grenzow

We would also like to recognize the many community leaders, stakeholders, and department members who participated in our online surveys, meetings, interviews, and Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Challenges sessions, whose input and perspective was integral to completing the strategic plan. In these sessions we looked to identify the areas in which the public perceived the fire department as doing well and where it could improve, but also what the public expected from the department as far as services and operational capabilities. We were fortunate to hear from a wide range of stakeholders representing local businesses, public safety, healthcare, citizens, and retirees. To allow for anonymity and encourage open discussion, we did not ask participants to sign in. We cannot, therefore, name each participant individually, but extend our gratitude to all who took part.

We would like to particularly thank Fire Chief Al Rufer and Administrator Brittney Rindy for their assistance in providing us excellent historical information and current data about the department with which to make informed recommendations.



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Executive Summary

Through a systematic process, the MissionCIT team conducted online surveys and met with multiple fire district and outside groups to hear of the issues, concerns and needs within the district. The messages from all of these meetings were fairly consistent in that the citizens are proud of their community and the fire department. The members of the fire department are dedicated and committed to providing the best service possible. The elected officials and city administration is committed to supporting the department in meeting its needs to provide high quality services.

Several themes appeared consistently in the sessions and were used to draft the organizational goals for the strategic plan. Those goals are:

- Goal #1 – Provide for adequate staffing in the Monroe Fire Department now and into the future.
- Goal #2 – Provide the funding required to operate the Monroe Fire Department now and into the future.
- Goal #3 – Maintain and continue to develop mutual aid relationships now and into the future.
- Goal #4 – Support and secure EMS services in the City of Monroe now and into the future.
- Goal #5 – Provide for the health and safety of the members of the Monroe Fire Department through proactive risk reduction now and into the future.
- Goal #6 – Improve dispatch and communication services for the Monroe Fire Department now and into the future.
- Goal #7 – Provide well trained firefighters and emergency responders to the community now and into the future.
- Goal #8 – Provide quality fire stations and equipment for Monroe Fire Department now and into the future.
- Goal #9 – Provide Community Risk Reduction Programs based on research and the understanding of the Monroe community now and into the future.

Numerous objectives were formulated to help the Monroe Fire Department achieve these goals over the next ten years. Those objectives are contained in this report. In addition, there are several recommendations from the study team for the City to consider, which were derived from the research, analysis, and study of the data provided by the city and fire department for this strategic plan.



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Achieving the goals set forth in the plan will require a tremendous amount of work by all the members of the fire department, as well as many within the city's staff. In some cases, there will be a need for additional funding and community support. The result will be positive in helping the Monroe Fire Department move forward and continue to provide the citizens of Monroe with high quality, timely, and efficient emergency services.



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The Community

The Monroe Fire Department (MFD) covers 5.6 square miles within the city limits of the City of Monroe, the county seat of Green County, Wisconsin. Proudly known as the “Cheese Capital of the USA,” 2020 U.S. Census data places the population of the city, and therefore the primary coverage area, at approximately 10,660. This represents a slight decline in population of 1.6% over the past two decades. During Monroe’s biennial Cheese Days festival, however, the population can easily soar to over 50,000. The population density is 1,904 per square mile. According to the American Community Survey, the median household income is \$51,996.

The median age in the city is 42.1 years, which is slightly higher than the 41.1 years reported in the 2010 census, indicating an aging population overall. Approximately 11% of the population is below the poverty line.

According to census data, there are 5,126 housing units in the city, with limited growth anticipated over the next several years. The Zoning Department estimates current planned development including the Haven Homes neighborhood could bring in an average of 14 families per year over the next 5 years. In line with national trends, however, there exists a housing shortage in Monroe, so there is some question as to how many of these would be new residents and how many would be relocating within the city.

Also under construction is a new development outside the city limits. While not within the primary service area covered by MFD, these additional families could pose a slight increase in requests for service while active within the city of Monroe.

While the industrial park is full, there is potential commercial growth near the new high school. Also anticipated is a Menards, which, as the anchor store, could bring additional commercial/retail ventures resulting in revenue growth and increased requests for

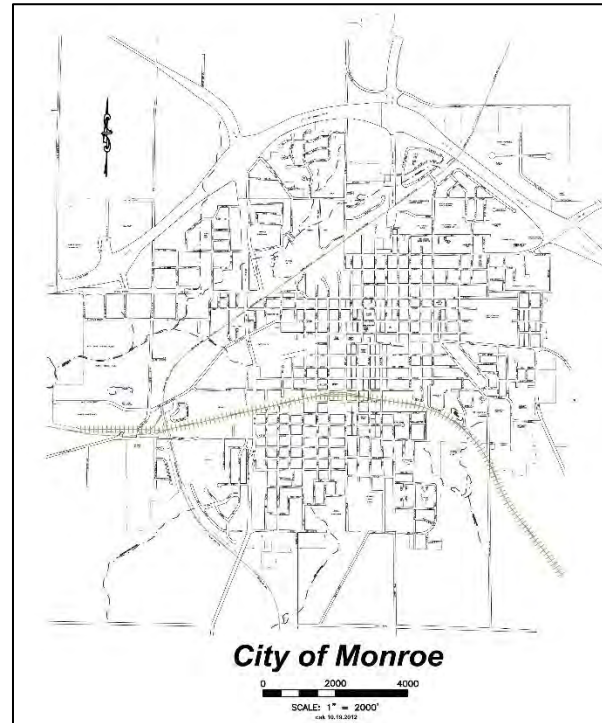


Figure 1: Street Map for the City of Monroe. Source: City of Monroe Public Website.



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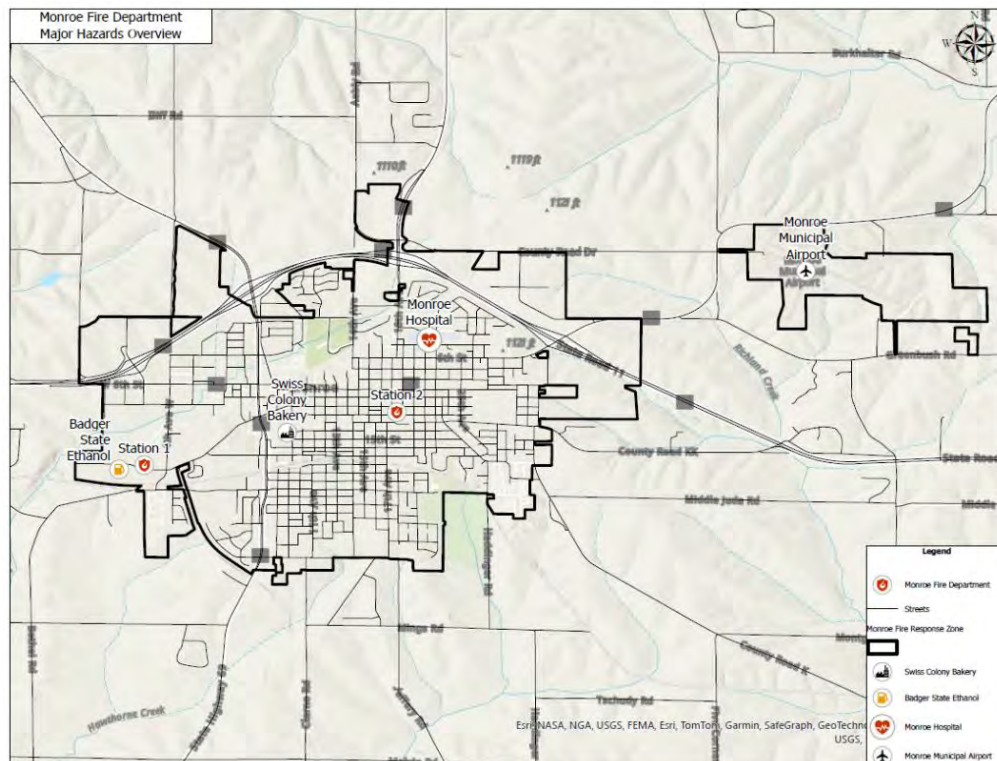
service. However, it is anticipated that these projects will not be completed in the short (1 – 3 years) to mid-term future.

The city is currently soliciting for economic development and has built a strong working relationship with the Green County Development Corporation (GCDC). GCDC exists to grow and support business development within Green County. The City of Monroe provides an annual contribution to the GCDC in return for the Corporation’s assistance with business development in the city.

General Risk Assessment

The risk assessment revealed several types of risks within the city, including the historic downtown area/city center, and several identified target hazards. The downtown area, described as something out of a Hallmark movie, boasts many sizable historic structures. Typically, these buildings may have undergone multiple and significant renovations over the years, often without permits or the knowledge of the fire department. Particularly challenging are roof-overs, electrical issues, and in some cases, false fronts. With multiple storefronts situated directly against their neighboring buildings, fires in similar downtown areas have commonly spread to multiple adjoining structures before being controlled. Primary construction types are standard wood frame and ordinary construction.

Figure 2: Risk Map





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Additional Focused Target Hazards

Industrial Facilities

Badger State Ethanol has maintained a stellar safety record throughout its existence. Its management and response staff are well-trained in responding to an event at the facility. There exists, however, the potential for a large-scale incident that overwhelms the capabilities of the on-site staff.



Badger State Ethanol Facility in Monroe

Colony Brands has a large footprint in the city with multiple facilities and large numbers of employees, particularly during the holiday season. Fire load can also increase significantly during the holidays with increased product storage, processing, and shipping.

Within the city there are numerous warehousing and storage locations that can present various hazards, notably the types of products stored. While regular inspections and pre-planning can help identify specific risks, the nature of warehousing and storage facilities often includes continually changing product and materials.

Schools and SSM Hospital

Schools and SSM Health Monroe Hospital both present significant life-safety risks due to large numbers of people and/or students. As a 58-bed facility with multiple specialties under-roof, the hospital presents life-safety risks from multiple perspectives.



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The life-safety risk increases at the schools during sporting events, assemblies, concerts, and other productions that draw a crowd.



SSM Health Monroe Hospital – Monroe. Source: SSM Public Website, 2/2025

There are six schools located within the Monroe School District.

- Abraham Lincoln Elementary School (public)
- Monroe Middle School (public)
- Monroe High School (public)
- Northside Elementary School (public)
- Parkside Elementary School (public)
- Saint Victor Elementary School (private)

A new high school facility is currently under construction. Once it is completed it will include numerous outdoor recreation facilities and areas for the students and the public.

Mobile Homes

Mobile homes are a unique consideration due to their age, proximity to each other, and tendency to burn quickly. Additionally, mobile home parks and neighborhoods can present difficulties for fire apparatus access and pose limitations to operational ability.

The primary residential construction type within the service area is standard wood frame, with many having brick-faced street facing or accent walls. According to the 2024 Monroe Housing Study, of the 5,126 housing units in the city, less than 1% of owner-occupied housing was vacant and 4.1% were rental properties. This indicates a dearth of empty properties and expectation that any fire call to a residence could present a life-safety hazard.



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Monroe Regional Airport

The Monroe Municipal Airport is located just northeast of the city. The airport is operated by the City of Monroe and oversight is provided by the Airport Board of Management, which contains Common Council members as well as other appointed community members. The MFD has responsibility to provide fire services to the airport. The MFD does not have a dedicated Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting (ARFF) vehicle assigned to the airport as it is not required by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). A crash on or off the airport property could present a safety hazard to the residents and firefighters depending on the exact location and size of the aircraft involved in the accident. ARFF response is a specialty and requires additional training and equipment for successful outcomes. The MFD has a significant complement of firefighting foam due to the industrial facilities within the city and has the capability to apply the foam should a crash or accident occur.



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Governance and Oversight

With a population of approximately 10,660, the City of Monroe is identified by Wisconsin state statute as a third-class city (10,000 to 38,999 residents). The city is governed by an elected Mayor, a nine-member elected city council known as the Common Council, and various boards and agencies. Terms for the Mayor and Common Council are two years. Terms are staggered on the Council.

Answering to the Mayor and Council is the City Administrator. The administrator is tasked with carrying out the policy decisions made by the Common Council and making sure city services are delivered efficiently and effectively.

The Fire Chief answers directly to the City Administrator and is responsible for administering the department including its budget, services, and compliance with local, state, and federal rules, ordinances, and laws. The Fire Chief also serves as the emergency management official for the city.

Wisconsin law requires that cities appoint a board of Police and Fire Commissioners to oversee the processes of hiring, discipline, and termination of public safety personnel. The Police and Fire Commission consists of five citizens, appointed by the mayor, to serve five-year staggered terms. The political makeup of the Commission must not include more than three citizens from the same political party for fairness. The Fire Chief works with the Police and Fire Commission to provide information as requested concerning hiring processes, candidate qualifications, disciplinary issues and results. The Police and Fire Commission also serves as an avenue to hear employee appeals regarding issues and decisions of the Fire Chief involving hiring, promotion, or disciplinary actions.

The Monroe Fire Department provides very limited emergency medical services (EMS) to the community but does not hold responsibility for EMS transport in the city. The responsibility for EMS provision is held with Green County Emergency Medical Services (EMS). Green County EMS is a private, not-for profit, volunteer organization that is located within the City of Monroe. Green County EMS provides both emergency and non-emergency medical response services. Recently, Green County EMS began hiring full-time paramedics and emergency medical technicians to staff units during peak hours. Significant call volume increases, and lack of volunteer availability was cited by the EMS Director as reasons requiring paid personnel.



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The Fire Department

Mission Statement of the City of Monroe, Wisconsin Fire Department

“The Monroe Fire Department is committed to provide prompt, reliable fire and life safety services to the residents and visitors of Monroe. We will do this through teamwork, communication, and professional career development. We, as firefighters, will promote an environment that encourages safety, innovation, and creativity from within, and always maintain a positive public image.”

Vision Statement of the City of Monroe, Wisconsin Fire Department

“We will constantly strive to be better people, better firefighters, and a better department not better than anyone else, but better than we were before.”

History

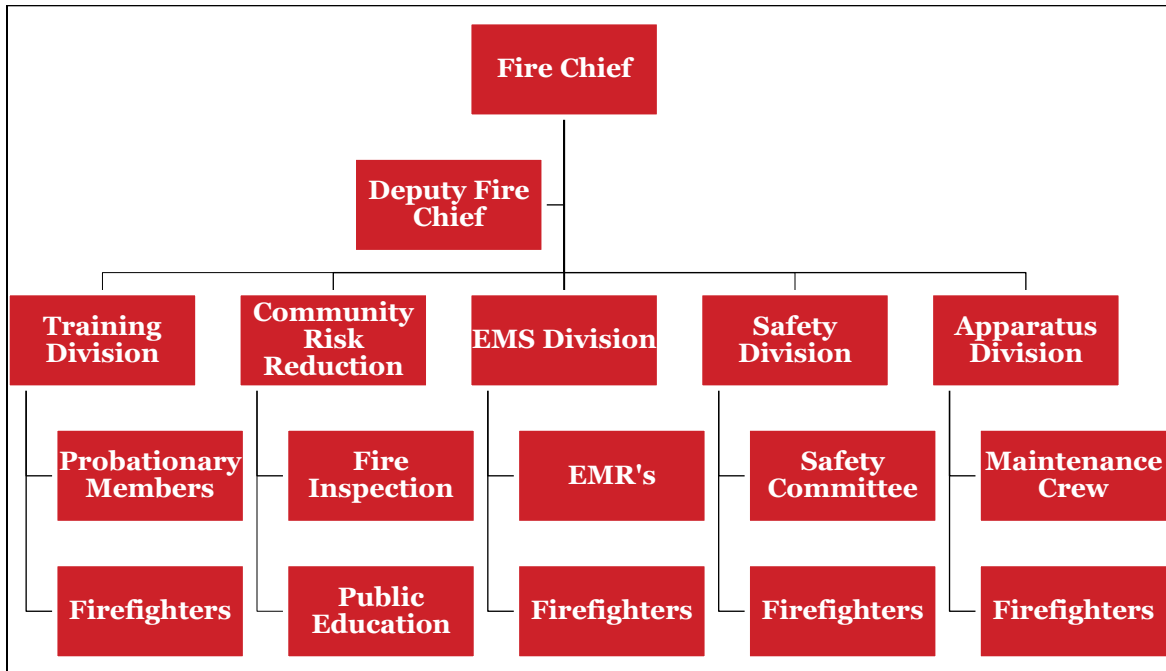
The Monroe Fire Department traces its formation to 1858, celebrating its 150th birthday in 2008. Over the past four decades, the MFD has undergone significant changes in its organization and operation. These changes include a succession of full-time fire chiefs, interim fire chiefs, full-time and part-time administrative staff, a significant reduction in volunteer staff, and a reduction in coverage area with a corresponding loss of contract revenue.

The Monroe Fire Department has a primary coverage area consisting of 5.6 square miles within the City of Monroe. The current resident population hovers around 10,600, but can increase significantly due to community events, sporting events, and seasonal employees. MFD currently operates with a full-time Fire Chief and approximately 19 volunteer/paid-on-call (POC) firefighters. The Fire Chief has been authorized to hire a full-time Fire Inspector and a half-time Deputy Chief. These positions, however, are on hold pending the completion of the strategic plan. With full-time, part-time, and volunteer personnel, MFD is considered a combination department, though primarily volunteer.



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Figure 3: Monroe Fire Department Organizational Structure 2024



Source: Monroe Fire Department 2024 Annual Report

Current and past practice requires that firefighters are trained to the Firefighter I and Emergency Medical Responder level. Though some members are certified EMT's or Paramedics, the Fire Department does not have primary EMS responsibility, but instead provides manpower and back-up assistance to Green County EMS.

In October 2022, the Insurance Services Office (ISO) assigned the Monroe Fire Department a Public Protection Class (PPC) rating of 2/2Y. This classification is often used by insurance companies when setting fire insurance rates for communities, especially on commercial properties. This represents a grading in the top 5% of all communities. ISO grades fire departments across the nation based on an established rubric to obtain a Fire Suppression Rating Schedule (FSRS), which is then used to determine the PPC. To arrive at the FSRS, ISO reviews the following areas: Needed Fire Flow, Emergency Communications, Fire Department, and Water Supply. While it is not in the scope of this report to analyze the ISO grade, it is necessary to refer to the ISO grading scale when discussing observations and recommendations, and how they may impact future ISO grades.

Operationally, perhaps the most significant change to the department occurred in 2021 when two neighboring Townships, Monroe Township and Clarno Township, did not renew their contract with the City of Monroe for fire services. Subsequently, the two communities created their own volunteer fire department which began servicing the Townships in January 2021. The newly created fire department's fire station lies within



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the legal boundaries of the City of Monroe. Although some members of the MFD left to join the new department upon its creation in 2021, the MFD was able to absorb the loss and continue to service the community without a decrease in its service level.

It is not within the scope of this Strategic Plan to perform a detailed examination of the leading causes of the contract cancellation and development of the new fire department. It is apparent, however, after talking to members of both departments, that no reconciliation or re-consolidation of departments is imminent. While this situation has presented some challenges within the MFD, both departments continue to work well together operationally via mutual aid and within the MABAS system.

The Strategic Plan will assist the Fire Chief and elected officials in planning for future needs of the department, the City of Monroe, and the residents and businesses they serve.



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Master Plan

A developed master plan for an organization observes how the organization is operating, the services provided and what infrastructure and staffing are in place, all relative to the risks and demographics of the community. A long-range forecast is then developed to make improvements in organizational service levels, infrastructure and staffing.

MissionCIT, LLC has developed the following master plan for the City of Monroe Fire Department based on all the known data, level of operations, and future projected needs. The master plan is broken down into several key areas that include Staffing, Stations, Apparatus, Community Risk Reduction, and Health, Safety and Wellness.



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Section 1: Funding

During the site visit, the study team met with the City Administrator, city staff, and representatives of the accounting firm of Baughman & Associates Ltd., to discuss the funding of the fire department currently and into the future. Baughman and Associates serve as direct advisors and essentially provides many aspects of a finance officer for the city.

General Fund

Funding for the city’s operations is provided through its general fund. The primary source of operating revenue comes from annual tax levies to the citizens which are based on assessed property values. The study team reviewed budget documents supplied by the city for the last five fiscal years. The information provided indicates that general property tax levies make up approximately 65% of the operating revenue collected by the city. Additional revenue required is made up from intergovernmental sources, license fees, forfeitures, penalties, and other miscellaneous revenue. Over the study period revenues met expenditure needs.

Table 1: City of Monroe Annual Projected Revenues, FY2021 - FY2025

Fiscal Year	Property Taxes Generated	Total Revenues	Property Taxes % of Total Revenue
2021	\$7,376,871	\$11,264,510	65.48
2022	\$7,429,485	\$11,804,573	62.93
2023	\$7,667,860	\$11,448,356	66.97
2024	\$7,988,614	\$12,551,445	63.64
2025	\$8,385,238	\$13,223,017	63.41

Source: City of Monroe Provided Documents, City of Monroe, WI Official Website

During its site visit in November 2024, the study team inquired from city officials and Baughman, Ltd representatives if there were any limiting factors anticipated to the city’s ability to continue to fund services over the next five to ten years. The group identified that state law caps the ability to increase the tax levy for the general fund based upon a formula which considers net new growth in the city. Without growth in the city, increasing tax revenues will likely be difficult.

A recent workforce housing study conducted by the Southwestern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission in 2024 indicates that the total population in Monroe is declining and is projected to continue to do so. This will likely lead to a reduction in tax revenue over time. The trends also indicate the average age of the population is increasing, with those in the group over 65 becoming a larger part of the total population over time. An



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aging population generally results in additional stress on the emergency response system. A declining tax base and increased calls for service will likely make funding those services more difficult. The result could lead to reduced service levels to the citizens if not properly addressed. The group also indicated there have been no recent increases in shared revenues from the state, which also creates concerns moving forward.

Capital Improvements/Debt Service

Under Wisconsin law, tax levies for debt service for capital improvements is not capped. However, the city has a policy which only allows debt at 75% of the state legal debt limit. The legal debt limit is set by law as 5% of the assessed value of property in the city. Currently, the city is at 50% of its legal debt limit which is calculated to be up to \$58,000,000. Therefore, there is some room for expansion of capital improvements should the need occur, and the city's desire to take on additional debt and the millage to support it. However, any levy added for debt increases the total tax levy to the citizens. Any tax increases required will likely be better applied to the operating side of the MFD if at all possible.

Fire Department Operating Budget

The fire department's operating budget is contained within the public safety section of the city's operating budget. The three departments under the public safety section are: (1) police department, (2) fire department, and (3) emergency management. Historically, the data indicates that public safety functions require better than 1/3 of the total city operating budget. The police department is the largest public safety agency in the city, with 19 full-time patrol officers plus administrative staff. Therefore, the police department consumes most of the public safety budget. The fire department consists of the full-time Fire Chief, the full-time Fire Inspector (new position for FY2025), and the half-time Deputy Fire Chief (funded but not currently staffed). The Fire Chief also serves as the city's emergency management official. For FY2025 the fire department's budget is 15.19% of the total public safety budget and is 5.29% of the city's approved operating budget. Over the last five years, the department's budget has increased its share of the public safety and overall city budget by approximately 5%.



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Table 2: Comparison of City, Public Safety, and Fire Department Operating Budget Amounts FY2021 – FY2025

Budget Year	Approved City Operating Budget	Approved Public Safety Budget	Approved Fire Department Budget	Public Safety Budget as Percentage of City Budget	Fire Department Budget as Percentage of Public Safety	Fire Department Budget as Percentage of City Budget
2025	\$13,223,017	\$4,600,825	\$698,976	34.79%	15.19%	5.29%
2024	\$12,551,447	\$4,459,262	\$686,269	35.52%	15.38%	5.49%
2023	\$11,438,356	\$3,987,835	\$559,590	34.73%	14.03%	4.87%
2022	\$11,804,573	\$3,889,840	\$508,730	32.95%	13.08%	4.31%
2021	\$11,264,510	\$3,797,580	\$407,200	33.71%	10.72%	3.61%

Source: City of Monroe Provided Documents, City of Monroe, WI Official Website

Wisconsin Act 12 – Shared Revenue

Wisconsin Act 12 is known as local government funding legislation. The Act provides additional state revenues to municipalities, in this case the City of Monroe, which is known as shared revenue. The Act was amended in 2023 by the Wisconsin Legislature. As a result, several changes began to take place in 2024. There are two opportunities for shared revenue under the Act.

1. General Aid – This is a general revenue disbursement to the city from the shared revenue fund. In 2024, counties and municipalities were held to the same allocation received in 2023.
2. New Supplemental Aid – This is separate supplemental aid to counties and municipalities for spending on law enforcement, fire protection, emergency medical services, emergency response communications, public works, courts, and transportation. The act prohibits the use of supplemental aid for administrative services.

The new supplemental aid component can be important for the MFD as an additional revenue source to offset the costs of growth required in the department over the next five years and into the future. In respect to fire protection and EMS, the Act requires counties and municipalities to annually certify to the state Department of Revenue (DOR) that the county or municipality fire protection and/or EMS service has maintained at least two of the following criteria at a level at least equivalent to the previous year:

1. Expenditures, not including capital expenditures, for fire protection and EMS,
2. The number of full-time equivalent fire fighters and EMS personnel employed by or assigned to the county or municipality.



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3. The level of training and maintenance of licensure for fire fighters and EMS personnel providing fire protection and EMS within the county or municipality.
4. Response times for fire protection and EMS throughout the county or municipality, adjusted for call location.

Annual increases in the shared revenue disbursement are tied to increases in the state’s sales and use tax revenues. For 2025, the estimated increase is 2.3% which equates to approximately \$55,000 for the city over the disbursement in 2024.

Recommendation 1.1

It is recommended that the city continue to pursue all alternative revenue sources, such as Act 12 shared revenue, to support the MFD above the current level.

Recommendation 1.2

It is recommended that the city and MFD consider grant opportunities such as FEMA’s Fire Act Grant (AFG) and Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) programs to supplement funding for personnel, apparatus, and equipment.

Recommendation 1.3

It is recommended that the city and MFD reconsider its purchase of replacement apparatus for Squad 5 and Squad 6 as identified in the city’s current Consolidated 2024 - 2029 Capital Improvement Plan for Council until the analysis of the size and makeup of the fleet in comparison to the community’s needs contained within this report is reviewed and considered. See Section 6 for more details.



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Section 2: Volunteer Recruitment and Retention

As a predominantly volunteer fire department, recruitment and retention of volunteers is critical to the future success of the MFD. According to studies from the National Volunteer Fire Council, the average age of a volunteer firefighter continues to rise, with approximately 75% of volunteers in communities with a population of 10,000 – 25,000 being over the age of 30. Statistics show that 20% are over the age of 50. This creates even more urgency in recruitment of young volunteers due to the aging out of the current roster. The department has a Recruitment and Retention program in place in an effort to increase personnel and attract younger members. Facets of the program include appeals on the website, social media, word-of-mouth, and during public relations events. These efforts have resulted in several applicants over the past few years, though few have been retained. The current hiring process typically includes a recruiting push during April, May, and June, with interviews in July and hiring in August or September. This timeline is used to create a cohort of recruits to train and go through the probationary period together as a unit. Recruits are then registered for fire school to begin their initial fire training and are also required to attend department training and work sessions on Tuesday and Thursday evenings.

Challenges with recruitment and retention include the time commitment and the difficulties in obtaining the required training through Blackhawk Technical College. While the technical college offers the training locally, it does not always meet the minimum number of students required to hold the course. MFD recruits then have to travel to another site an hour away, further increasing the time commitment. Additionally, this results in significantly later nights, creating difficulties for personnel who have to work in the morning. The Fire Chief has recently taken the initiative to hold the necessary classes in-house to reduce travel time and improve convenience for recruits.

Another area of consideration is the level at which new recruits are required to train. Currently, new recruits are required to train to Wisconsin Firefighter Level I and obtain Emergency Medical Responder (EMR) certification. This is a substantial time investment as the Firefighter I certification requires 120 hours and the EMR is a 90-hour course. There has been some discussion within department leadership about reducing the requirements for firefighter certification to the minimum, which would significantly reduce the training hours required to 60. This, however, would not provide the Firefighter Level I or II certification. The ISO grading schedule places significant emphasis on Firefighter certification compliant with NFPA standards. Typically, full credit is given for Firefighter II (Professional Firefighter) certification, and half credit given for Firefighter I. No credit is given for personnel not meeting those certification



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levels. Reducing the training requirements below NFPA standards could result in a significant reduction in the fire department grade and a corresponding reduction in the ISO Classification.

The current volunteer component of the MFD is under stress, which has a negative effect on the future of the fire department. More specifically, the volunteers are under stress due to:

- Training requirements
- Call volume
- Lack of available time
- Declining numbers due to aging out of the system
- Reduced interest in volunteering by residents of the city

All these issues impact the availability of current volunteers for the fire department, when its calls for service, particularly EMS assist calls, are increasing. The same issues can have a negative effect on the recruitment and retention of future volunteers. To provide greater stability for the volunteer system, much greater emphasis will need to be placed on flexibility in response, training, time commitments and the work-life balance of volunteers.

The culture of an organization plays a vital role in recruitment and retention, particularly in regard to volunteer members. A toxic culture can drive away even the most dedicated volunteers. The department leadership recognizes the importance of promoting a positive culture within the MFD.

During the stakeholder discussions it was discovered that Colony Brands heavily invests in recruitment and retention initiatives as they also struggle with maintaining required staffing. They have offered to assist the Fire Department with their recruitment activities.

Recommendation 2.1

MFD leadership should reach out to Colony Brands for assistance in reviewing and revising the current recruitment program.

Recommendation 2.2

Continue to promote a positive culture by emphasizing teamwork, building a relationship with volunteers, and publicly acknowledging them for their efforts.



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Recommendation 2.3

It is recommended that the MFD review the SOP manual and ensure that all members know and understand what is expected of them and enforce its content across the board with all personnel.

Recommendation 2.4

It is recommended that the MFD undertake the proactive recruitment of non-operational volunteers to perform administrative and support functions within the department to ease time commitments on the firefighters.

Recommendation 2.5

It is recommended that the MFD develop flexible and innovative training programs to accommodate personal schedules and needs of the membership.

Recommendation 2.6

It is recommended that the MFD consider applying for a SAFER grant in 2025-26 for volunteer recruitment and retention initiatives, as well as additional career firefighter positions.



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Section 3: System Workload and Performance

System workload and performance is an evaluation of the fire department response system and its ability to provide prompt, efficient and effective emergency assistance to the citizens and community.

The fire department provides both emergency and non-emergency services to the citizens of Monroe. The department responds to all fire related incidents in the city as well as surrounding communities as mutual aid. Fire incidents include structure fires, vehicle fires, wildfires (including brush and grass), fire alarm activations (with fire and false alarms), smoke scares, etc.

The department also provides a limited emergency medical services (EMS) response. These responses include cardiac arrests, assisting when called by the local EMS service (Green County EMS/GCEMS), and lift assist requests from the public. It should be noted that in the event there is no ambulance available in the City, the MFD provides first response service to all EMS incident types until GCEMS can clear a unit. In these situations, by Standard Operating Guidelines (SOG's) the next assigned ambulance would be from Argyle, which is approximately 20 minutes away.

The department also provides rescue services such as extrications from vehicle accidents, industrial machinery, and farm equipment.

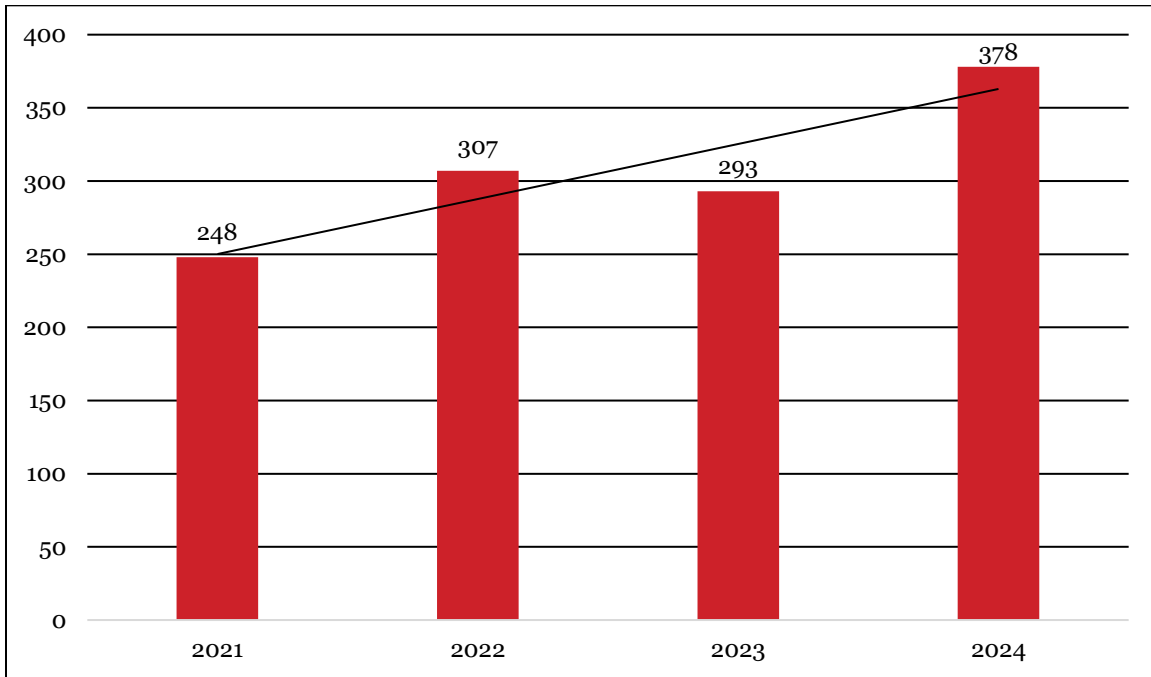
The service level provided is appropriate for the current hazards and risks in the city of Monroe. However, as EMS call volumes continue to increase in the city, the MFD is likely going to see an increase in assistance requests from GCEMS. In turn, this may lead to more instances where an MFD unit arrives first-due more often. As a result, careful tracking of EMS call volume coupled with increased training of MFD response personnel to advance the service delivery level from EMR to Basic Emergency Medical Technician or greater will be advantageous over the next five to ten years.

The department responded to 378 calls for service in calendar year 2024. This equates to an increase from 2023 to 2024 of approximately 29%. Prior to 2024 the data indicates that responses were consistent around 300 per year. The Fire Chief stated there was nothing new or different in the way the department responded to or reported calls in 2024 that might suggest why there was such an increase.



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Figure 4: Monroe Fire Department Calls for Service



The maps below indicate that calls are spread throughout the city. The all-incident heat map provides a graphic representation as to where the call volume is most concentrated. On the heat maps the deeper red the color, the more concentrated the call type. The information gained by heat mapping helps the leadership identify areas of increased risk in the city and then develop programs to address those risks and attempt to reduce the hazard.



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Figure 5: All Incident Locations Map: 2021-2024

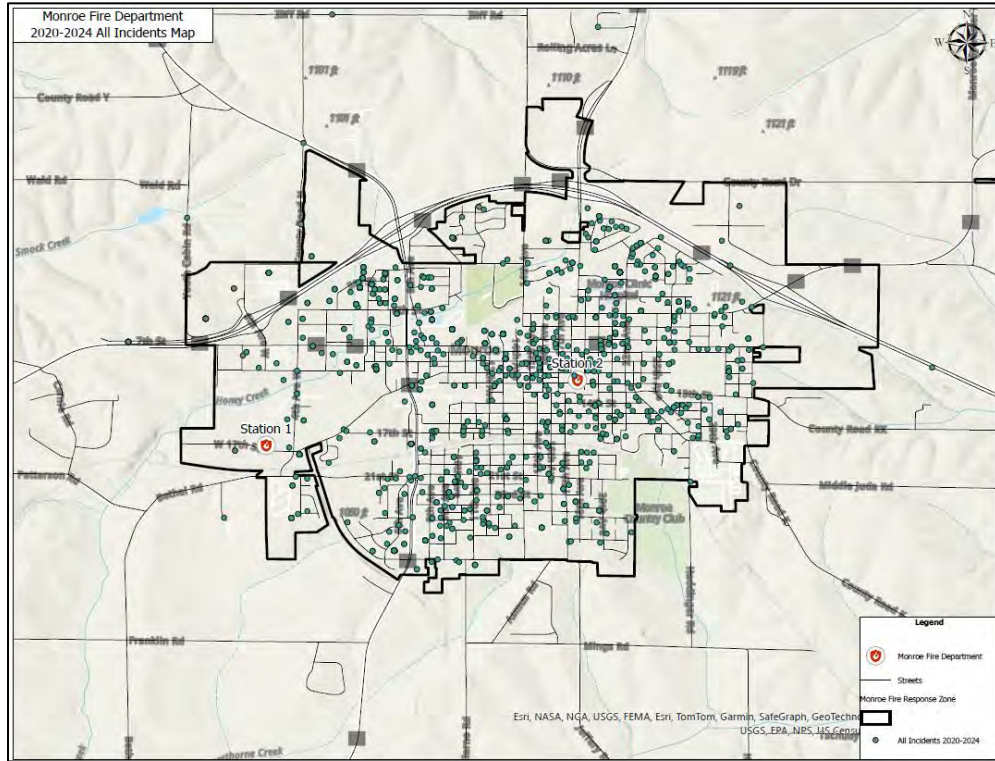
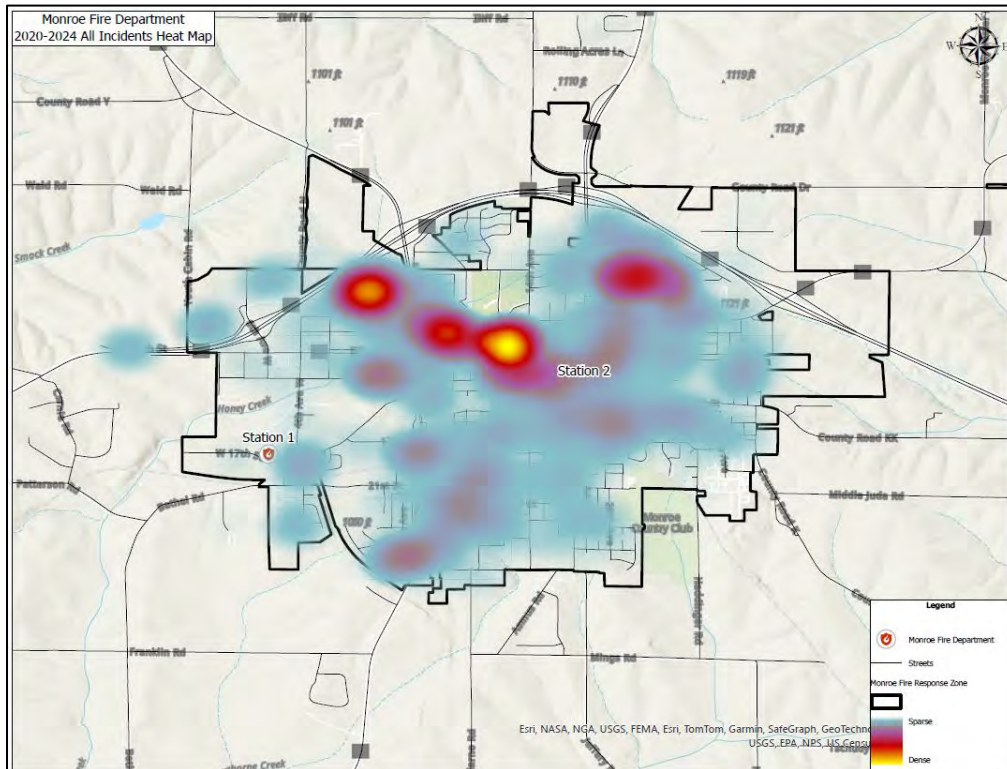


Figure 6: All Incident Heat Map: 2021-2024





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Evaluating the types of calls also helps provide insight into the service provision of the fire department. To analyze the call types, the study team placed calls into one of six different categories: fires, EMS, rescues, hazardous materials, service calls, and false alarms.

Figure 7: Monroe FD Call Volume by Type 2021 - 2024

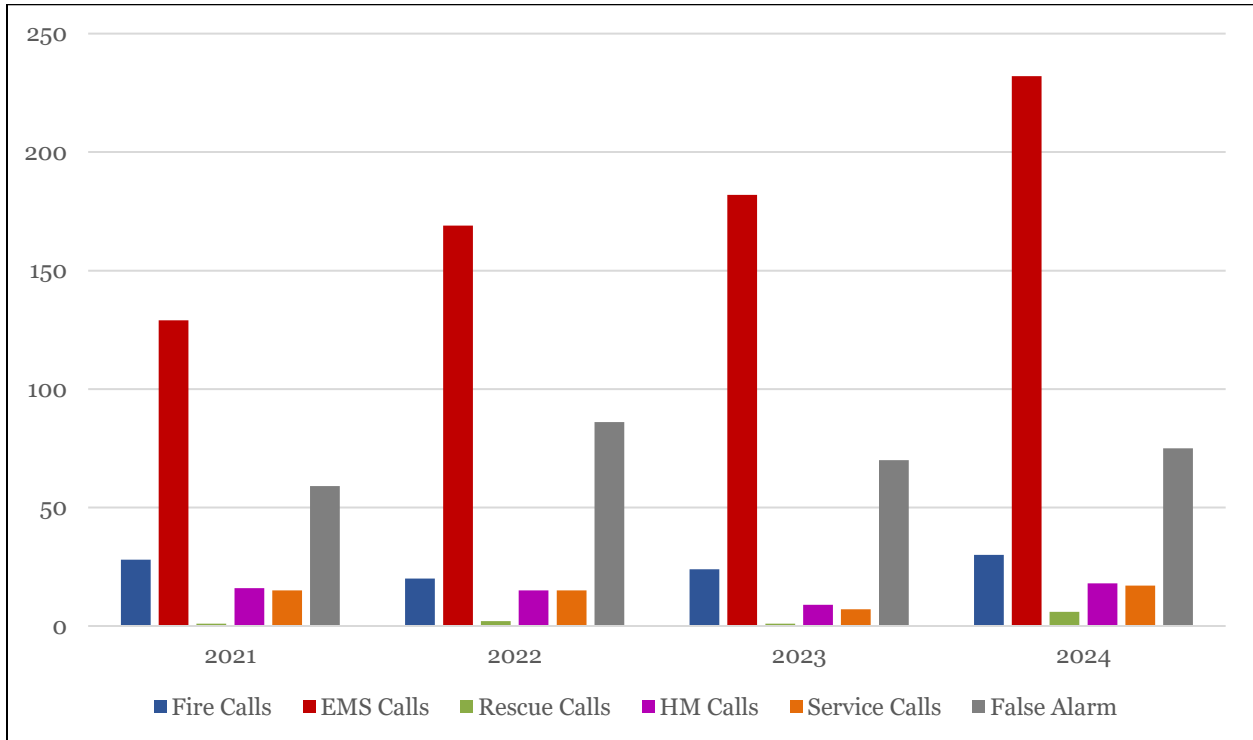


Table 3: Breakdown of Calls by Type and Percentage, 2021-2024

Category	Number of Calls	Percent of Total Calls
EMS	712	58.0%
False Alarm/Cancelled	290	23.6%
Fire	102	8.3%
Hazardous Materials	58	4.7%
Service	54	4.4%
Rescue/Extrication	10	1.0%



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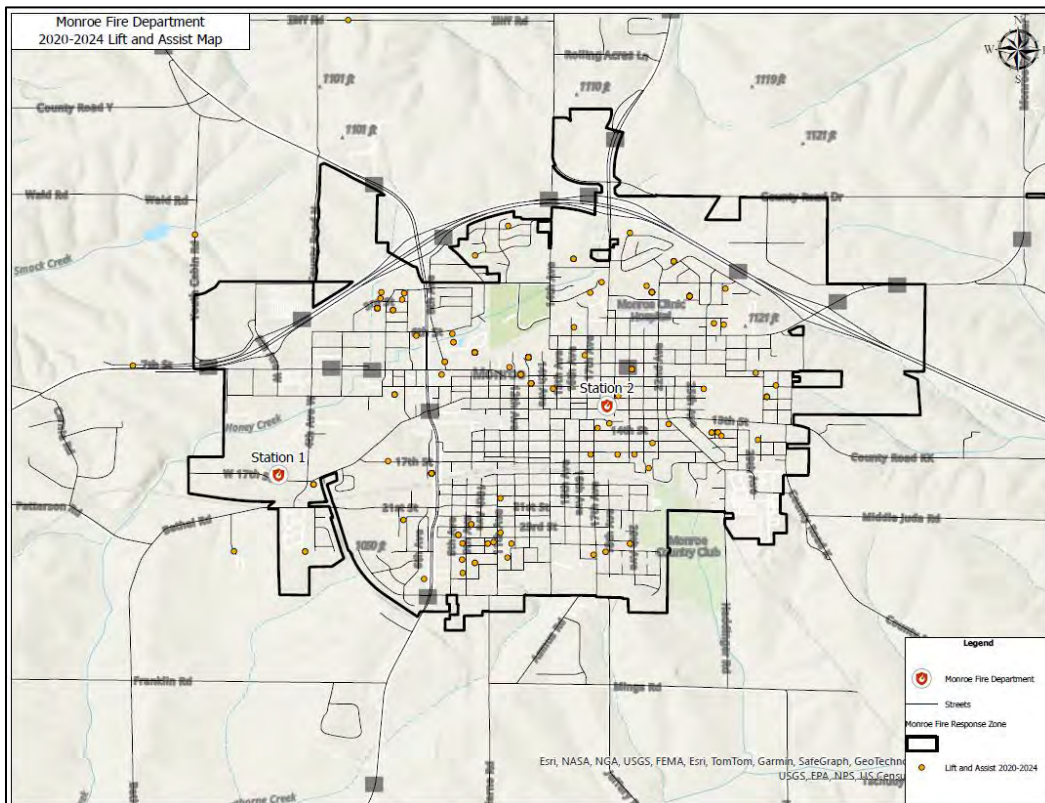
Largest Call for Service Type: Lift Assists (Figures 8 and 9 below)

A lift-assist is a non-emergency response to assist a citizen who has typically fallen or cannot get themselves up without assistance. In the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) lift assists are typically coded as service calls (Code 554 – Assist Invalid). However, the Monroe Fire Department has an internal policy coding lift assists under the EMS category (Code 320 – Emergency Medical Service, Other).

The study team analyzed call data provided by the department for the years 2021 to 2024. The study team found that lift assist responses constituted approximately 66% of all EMS calls which equates to approximately 38% of all calls over the study period. The lift assist dilemma is a nationwide issue for the fire service. As the population ages, the fire service is facing increasing numbers of requests for lift-assist services. Local and state social service agencies typically do not have the resources to provide lift-assist service and it is not covered by Medicare if the patient is not injured. Therefore, people turn to the resources that are available. This is usually the local fire department.

The Monroe Fire Department has an exceptionally high percentage of its calls for lift-assist service at almost 40% compared to the national average which is approximately 10%.

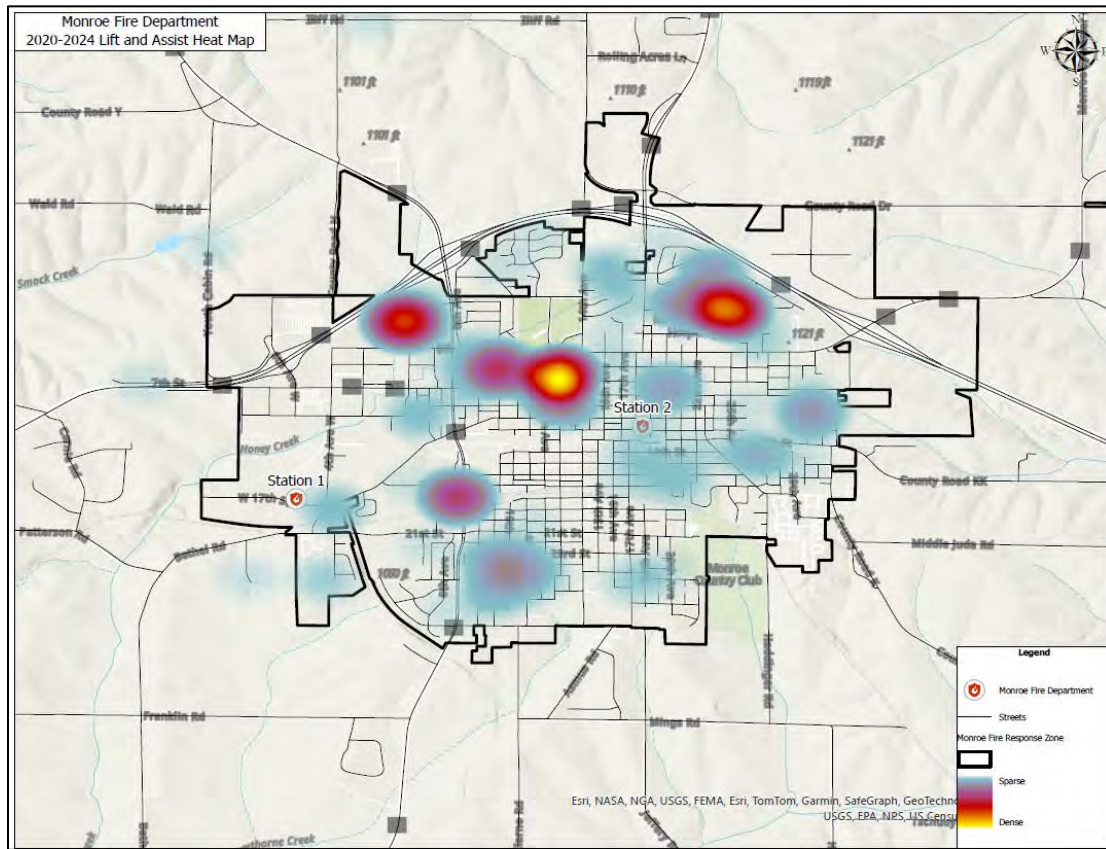
Figure 8: Lift-Assist Location Map





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Figure 9: Lift-Assist Heat Map



Fire Call Analysis (Figures 10 and 11 below)

Building fires made up the largest component of total fire related calls in the city. Building fires accounted for approximately 25.5% of total fire responses. Electrical wiring/equipment problems ranked second at 12.75% of the total. Cooking fires are the third highest category at 9.8%.

Analyzing calls not only by category but by type within the category gives the decision makers in the fire department the opportunity to assess current and future equipment needs, community risk reduction programs, and firefighter training and development needs. Careful analysis of this information allows fire department managers to tailor response programs to the needs of the local community and makes the best use of the tax dollars provided for the provision of service.

The fire incident call locations map and fire incident heat map indicate that the greatest concentration of fire calls are in the southwestern portion of the city.



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Figure 10: Fire Incident Locations Map 2021-2024

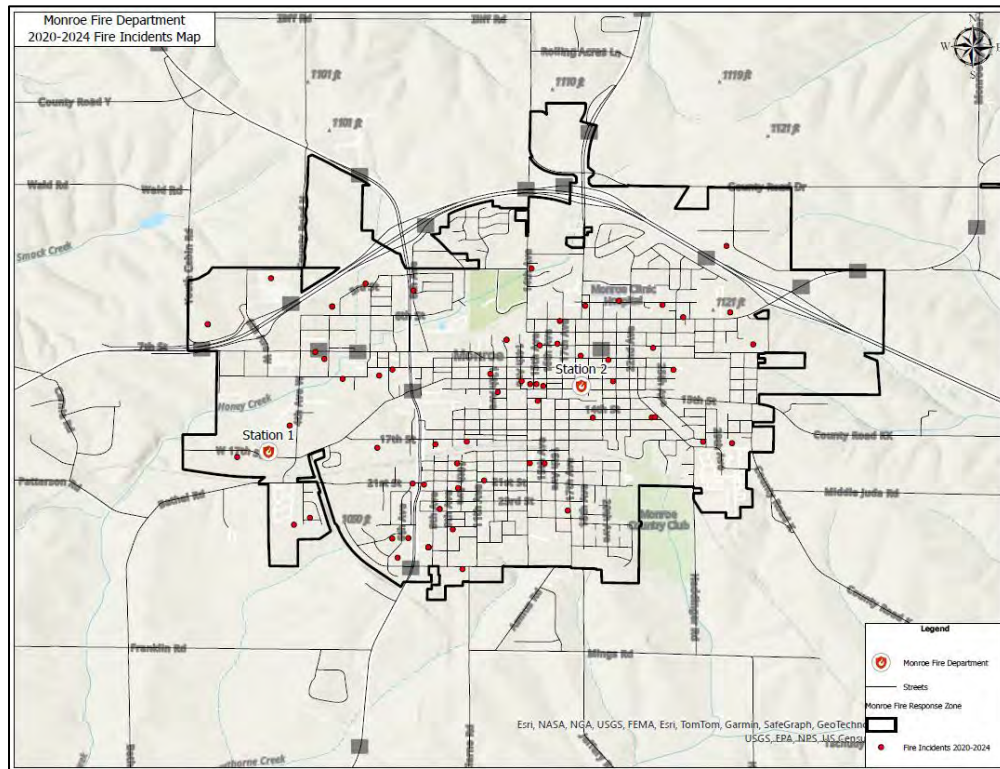
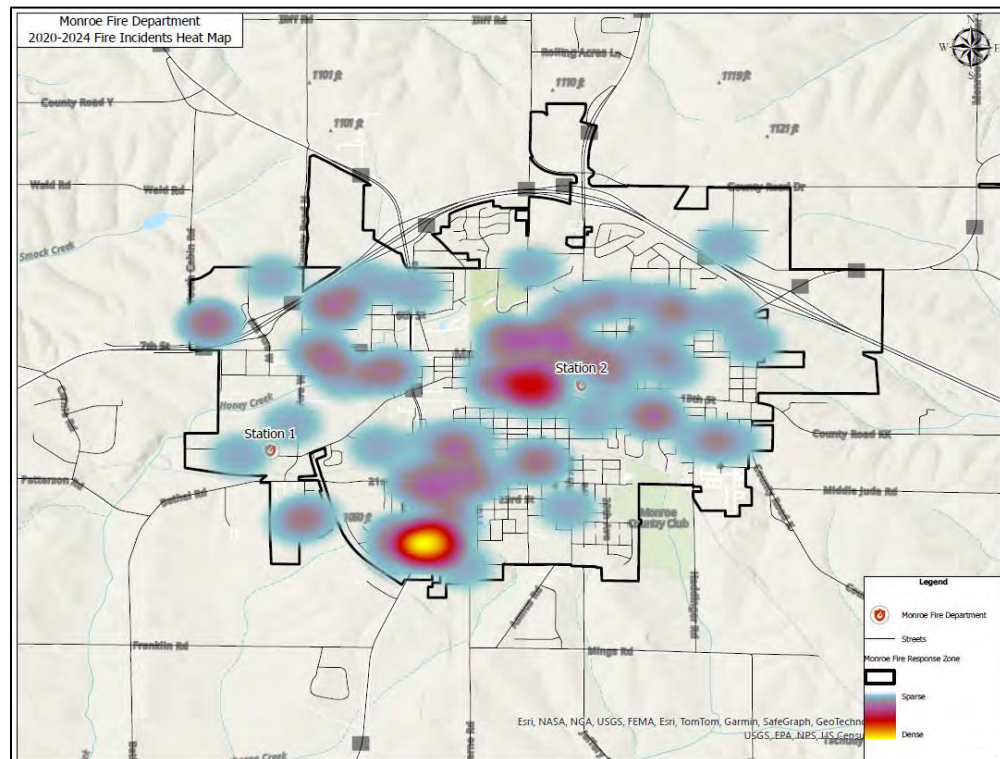


Figure 11: Fire Incident Heat Map 2021-2024





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Time of Day and Day of Week Studies

It is important to know when calls are occurring within the city. By tracking call data, trends can be determined over time as to when the fire department can expect to be its busiest. The following table is graphic representation of the times when calls occur within the city. Times where there are less calls are indicated by green. As volume increases, the color changes toward yellow, then orange, and finally red which indicates the highest call volumes.

**Table 4: Monroe Fire Department Call Volume
by Day of Week and Hour of Day**

Hour	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
00:00 - 00:59	3	6	2	4	7	6	2
01:00 - 01:59	3	2	5	4	4	6	4
02:00 - 02:59	2	5	4	4	2	2	3
03:00 - 03:59	3	2	3	4	2	8	6
04:00 - 04:59	5	6	2	9	4	6	2
05:00 - 05:59	4	4	5	4	9	3	2
06:00 - 06:59	12	5	8	8	7	11	8
07:00 - 07:59	4	5	13	9	6	13	4
08:00 - 08:59	8	10	13	6	2	9	11
09:00 - 09:59	14	9	5	9	14	8	8
10:00 - 10:59	11	14	12	8	9	8	1
11:00 - 11:59	11	6	11	9	11	9	10
12:00 - 12:59	8	5	11	9	11	9	9
13:00 - 13:59	8	10	13	11	9	9	7
14:00 - 14:59	6	15	11	9	6	7	18
15:00 - 15:59	10	11	8	6	7	11	6
16:00 - 16:59	10	6	12	6	10	3	9
17:00 - 17:59	14	10	10	8	11	11	13
18:00 - 18:59	8	8	7	11	9	8	11
19:00 - 19:59	7	12	7	6	11	8	4
20:00 - 20:59	5	14	6	12	7	6	6
21:00 - 21:59	6	7	4	7	9	7	4
22:00 - 22:59	12	4	6	5	5	9	3
23:00 - 23:59	3	3	6	6	2	14	2

As with most communities, call volumes in Monroe begin to build in the 6:00 AM to 7:00 AM time frame. The volume increases throughout the workday hours (7:00 AM through 7:00 PM) and decreases through the overnight hours.

Monroe Shift Schedule and Call Volumes

To further analyze when calls occur, the fire department breaks each 24-hour day into three “shifts” for tracking purposes. Shift 1 runs from 7:00 am through 3:00 pm. Shift 2 runs from 3:00 pm through 11:00 pm. Shift 3 runs from 11:00 pm through 7:00 am. The following table identifies the number of calls that occur during each shift over the study period.



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Table 5: MFD Call Volume by Shift 2021 - 2024

Shift/Timeframe	Number of Calls	% of Total Call Volume
1 (0700 – 1500)	511	41.5%
2 (1500 – 2300)	453	36.8%
3 (2300 – 0700)	268	21.7%

This is a unique way of tracking call volume for the Monroe Fire Department. Typically, such schedules are used in paid fire departments. However, considering that the paid-on call responding members of the department have full-time jobs, families, and commitments, using the shift schedule allows the department to review call volume in relation to what its members are doing outside of their commitment to the department. Shift 1 coordinates closely to the work schedules of most people. Shift 2 coordinates with the family commitment time of most fire department members. Shift 3 coordinates to the overnight hours when most members are resting at their residences.

Approximately 41.5% of the call volume over the study period occurs during the shift 1 period. While in Monroe for the site visit, the study team learned that many of the businesses in the city employ members of the department. The businesses support the fire department and community in many ways, one of the largest of which is by allowing members to respond to emergency calls from their employment. However, it was mentioned by more than one business that as call volumes have increased, it is becoming more difficult to let fire department members respond as their absence has a negative impact on the business. The data indicates call volumes are increasing in the city. This will have an impact on staffing numbers, especially when members must make a decision between their full-time employment and fire department responses.

The shift 2 period is the second highest response period of the day with 36.8% of the call volume. Calls during shift 2 impact many of the member’s off time and activity time. This is compounded by the fact that Saturday, a weekend day, has the highest call volume of the week. As more and more of the member’s down time becomes burdened with response, some may find that the department is becoming a larger commitment than they anticipated or are ready to accept. As call volumes increase, members may be forced to make a decision regarding remaining a member of the fire department.

The shift 3 period is the slowest period for call volume at 21.7% of the total. Studies conducted specific to firefighter safety indicate that the loss of sleep due to the broken sleep patterns of firefighters has a correlation to cardiac disease. According to statistics maintained by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation (NFFF), the chief cause of death and injury to firefighters is cardiac disease/cardiac arrest. During the site visit, the Monroe Fire Chief discussed the number of times members are responding during the shift 3 time period and provided

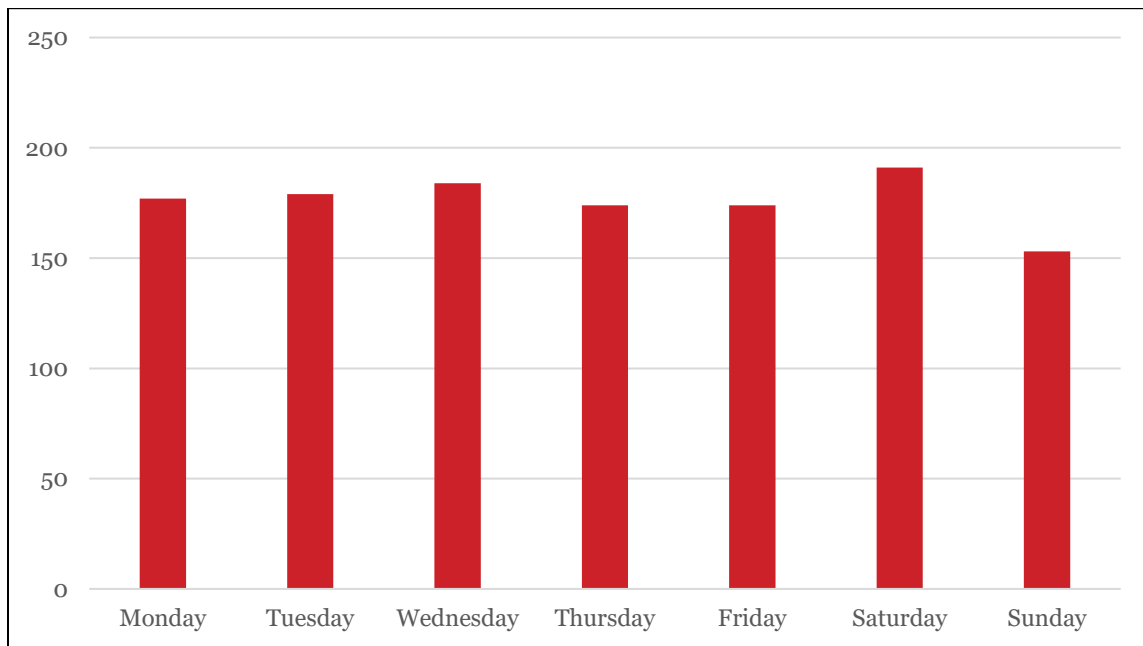


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redacted copies of time sheets to show that more than once per week the most dependable responders are being called out of their sleep to respond. The average on scene time for the fire department for the years 2021-2024 is 33 minutes, 28 seconds. Therefore, adding a modest amount of time for response to and from the station, gearing up, and driving to the scene, it can be assumed that each member response during shift 3 can cost the member at least one hour of sleep if not more. Over time this tends to wear on the members and can lead to illness, burnout, and lower morale. The type of response also has an impact, especially on willingness to respond and morale. Members generally are more eager to respond to true emergencies such as fires than they are non-emergencies such as lift assists. With only 19 rostered firefighters, the workload is spread over a relatively small group of members requiring more out of each person. This has the potential to lead to quicker burnout and further loss of members.

Busiest Day of the Week - Saturday

Figure 12: Call Volume by Day of Week, 2021 - 2024



There is not much difference in the total volume by any given day. Saturday is the busiest day of the week based upon the data provided with 191 responses. Wednesday is the second busiest with 184 responses logged and Sunday is the slowest day of the week with 153 responses.



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Fire Loss Statistics

Most fire service agencies track total fire loss and report it as one of many statistics to help explain response efficiency and effectiveness. There are two components to calculating fire loss. The first is the pre-fire value of the property or object involved in the fire. For real estate this can be the market value of the property or its appraised total value. The second component is the estimated total loss due to the fire. Many agencies use the insurance loss value once all investigations are complete. Other agencies make an estimate based on the percentage of the property that is involved and damaged from the fire incident. There is no set national standard on how to calculate the loss. Over the years, the Monroe Fire Department has calculated pre-incident value and total fire loss in multiple ways. This makes it difficult to truly compare the data in the following table. Beginning in 2024, the department established it would use the city’s appraised value of a property to establish its pre-incident value. To determine the property’s total fire loss the department determined it would estimate the percentage of the building suffering damage and that percentage when multiplied by the pre-incident value would establish the total fire loss. Using a consistent method from year to year will help the department establish trends for fire loss that can be considered with other data to help evaluate its performance.

Table 6: Fire Loss Data 2021 – 2024

Calendar Year	Pre-Incident Value	Total Fire Losses	Loss as Percent of Pre-Incident Value
2021	\$5,352,900	\$412,500	7.7%
2022	\$245,000	\$165,000	67.3%
2023	\$2,642,950	\$359,950	13.6%
2024	\$402,425	\$50,300	12.5%
TOTAL	\$8,643,277	\$987,750	11.4%

Fire loss must be considered with other response criteria such as response times, response staffing levels, and availability of additional response units for overlapping calls. Fire loss can be somewhat deceiving such as a small fire in a large commercial structure. In this case, the total loss will be very small compared to the total value of the structure. In another case, a building may be well involved in fire before it is detected and reported. By the time the fire department arrives there will be little to save. Statistically, the property loss compared to property saved may approach 100 percent and there was little to fire department could do to affect the outcome. Caution must be used if considering fire loss in planning for future fire department enhancements. MissionCIT is reporting the fire loss in this report as it comes directly from information provided as a component of the study data.



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Fire Department Overlap – Response Availability, Reliability and Resiliency

Fire department reliability refers to the ability of the department to respond first due in its assigned response area. In other words, how often does another agency have to come into the City of Monroe first due to handle a call because the Monroe Fire Department is busy on another call. When multiple calls occur at or close to the same time, the fire service refers to this as overlap. The department has the ability to track overlapping calls through its records management system, Emergency Reporting (ER).

Table 7: Overlapping Call Data

Calendar Year	Total Calls	Overlapping Calls	Overlap %
2021	248	15	6.05%
2022	307	10	3.26%
2023	293	14	4.78%
2024	378	24	6.35%
Period Total	1226	63	5.14%

Overlap is important to track as it is an indicator of when the system may be reaching overload. As the overlap percentage increases, both the reliability and resiliency of the system is challenged. Reliability is defined as the percentage of the time a unit is available to respond as the first unit to calls in its assigned response area. Resiliency refers to how quickly the emergency response recovers from responses and continues to provide a high level of service.

In the case of the Monroe Fire Department, the response data provided only provides overlap percentages. An additional calculation known as unit reliability can be performed and will provide the decision makers with the percentage of time the department is available to respond in its response area. The data provided by the fire department did not include “cleared” times for each incident which are required to calculate reliability.

However, the department’s overlap percentage over the four-year study period is very good at 5.14%. This indicates there is not yet a multiple call problem in the city. In addition, there is not a problem where calls are being held by the dispatchers while waiting for a response unit to become available. This is known in the fire service as “cueing”. Additionally, the average time on scene for the fire department over the study period is approximately 30 minutes. This is a good turnaround time and helps to quickly free response units up for the next call for service. This in turn suggests there is good resiliency in the fire department side of the emergency response system.



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Mutual Aid

Mutual aid is an important part of the system workload. The Monroe Fire Department provides mutual aid to neighboring communities and also receives aid from those same communities. With reduced roster numbers, mutual aid becomes much more important for the department. There are two types of mutual aid. The first is known as automatic mutual aid. Under automatic mutual aid, supporting units from other agencies are included on the run orders for the incident immediately from dispatch. This is the best type of mutual aid, in that all participating entities have agreed to send equipment directly on first dispatch without any delay. In this way supporting units respond and arrive the quickest.

The second type of mutual aid is known as non-automatic mutual aid. With this type of aid, personnel from the requesting fire department must notify dispatch to contact the requested agency to respond. Typically, units on scene or enroute to the scene realize a need for assistance and make the call through a standardized process to request mutual aid. Since this type of aid relies on calls from those needing assistance, it takes longer to get additional units on scene.

Whether mutual aid is automatic or non-automatic, the entities involved should have signed mutual aid agreements. The MFD participates in the Mutual Aid Box Alarm System (MABAS) which has been adopted by the state of Wisconsin. MABAS is used by the MFD for local, regional, and statewide mutual aid. MABAS will be discussed in further detail in the report.

Table 8: Mutual Aid Response Data

Calendar Year	Aid Type	Total	Total Call Volume	% of Total
2021	Aid Given	25	248	10.10%
	Aid Received	4	248	1.62%
2022	Aid Given	7	307	2.28%
	Aid Received	3	307	0.98%
2023	Aid Given	64	293	21.84%
	Aid Received	9	293	3.07%
2024	Aid Given	101	378	26.72%
	Aid Received	18	378	4.76%
Total for the Period	Aid Given	197	1,226	16.10%
	Aid Received	34	1,226	2.77%

The data provided by the fire department shows that mutual aid is given at a much higher rate than it is received. This is something that should be closely monitored in the future, especially as call volumes increase. Discussions were held with the Monroe Fire



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Chief to help determine why there was a sizable increase in mutual aid given in 2023 and 2024. The reason relates to how certain calls are coded in the records management system. The MFD codes all assistance calls to other agencies as mutual aid given calls. Any call for assistance from agencies such as Green County EMS, Monroe Rural FD, Monroe PD, and Green County Coroner are considered mutual aid given and coded as such in the MFD records management system. This was a new coding method for the MFD which led to the increase in mutual aid given calls. The majority of the additional calls are attributed to assistance calls for GCEMS.

Response Times

One of the primary methods fire service administrators track the performance of their departments is through careful study of response times. There are multiple segments in the total response time. The commonly recognized segments are:

1. **Call Received Time** – this is the time the call is picked up in the dispatch center.
2. **Call Processing Time** – this is the amount of time the dispatch center takes to process the call and get the information out to the fire department. Call processing time begins when the call is picked up in dispatch and ends when the information has been transmitted to the fire department.
3. **Turnout Time** – this is the time it takes fire department personnel to assemble at the fire station, gear up, mount the fire apparatus and begin the response to the scene of the emergency. Turnout time begins when the dispatch information has been transferred to the fire department and ends when the responding unit marks enroute to the emergency.
4. **Drive Time** – this is the time it takes the fire department to drive and arrive on the emergency scene. Drive begins at the end of the transmission placing the unit enroute and ends when the unit marks on scene.
5. **Return to Quarters Time** – this is time that is recorded when the response unit notifies dispatch the unit has completed its assignment and is available for another call. Scene cleared time begins when the unit arrives on scene and ends when the unit notifies dispatch it is available for another response.

Data provided by the fire department did not include the “call received” and “call cleared” times from the dispatch center. For this reason, it was not possible for the study team to calculate the call processing times, nor the total on scene time for the call data. However, a separate report from the department included the average on scene time for the call data and is included in Table 9 below. The information in Table 9 does not include non-emergency calls.



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Table 9: Response Time Values 2021 – 2024

Year	Turnout Time		Travel Time		Total Response Time		On Scene Time Average
	Median	90 th Percentile	Median	90 th Percentile	Median	90 th Percentile	
2021 (n=118)	03:00	06:37	02:39	05:00	06:03	09:22	30:50
2022 (n=109)	03:47	07:23	02:26	05:39	07:03	13:24	45:31
2023 (n=104)	04:03	6:50	02:12	04:06	06:08	10:27	25:41
2024 (n=148)	04:02	07:40	02:06	04:19	06:07	11:05	26:54

Source: Monroe Fire Department, Emergency Reporting Report 1730: All Unit Incidents by Date Range.

In keeping with NFPA Standards 1720 and 1221, all response time elements are reported at a given percentile. Percentile reporting is a methodology by which response times are sorted from least to greatest, and a "line" is drawn at a certain percentage of the calls to determine the percentile. The point at which the "line" crosses the 90th percentile, for example, is the percentile time performance. Thus, 90 percent of the call times were at or less than the result. Only 10 percent were longer.

Percentile differs greatly from average. Averaging calculates response times by adding all response times together and then dividing the total number of minutes by the total number of responses (mean average). Measuring and reporting average response times is not recommended. Using averages does not give a clear picture of response performance because it does not identify the number and extent of events with times beyond the stated performance goal.

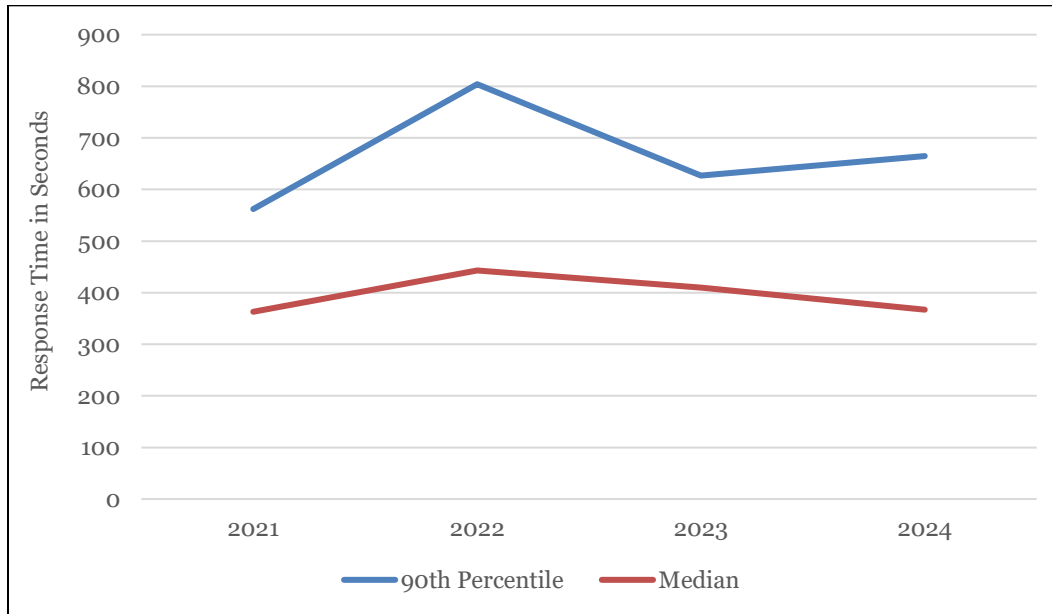
The total response time for a unit is the time the unit is notified, the amount of time it takes for the unit to go enroute and the travel time to get to the scene. In Table 9 above, the letter “n” denotes the number of incidents considered in the data set for this report. Only emergency responses as identified in the data set were considered. Non-emergent calls are considered in the total call volume analysis but are not considered in the response time calculations.

The data indicates that over the 2021 – 2024 response time study period, both the 90th percentile and median times increased in 2022. In 2023 and 2024 the median times returned to levels very similar to 2021. The 90th percentile returned to a slightly higher level in 2023 and 2024 than those from 2021. No one thing stood out in the 2022 data other than there were some longer response times (greater than 10 minutes) compared to data sets from 2023 and 2024. The study team evaluated the data set to make certain there were no MABAS-Out of the city calls or other outlier calls included in the data used in the calculations.



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Figure 13: Monroe Fire Department Response Time Comparison 2021 - 2024



Data Disclaimer

It should be noted that the number of calls in the data sets used for the response time calculations above is relatively small. Typically, a data set of at least 400 data points is preferred because in a smaller data set, a few outlier data points can artificially skew the calculations performed on the entire data set. This can lead decision makers to make incorrect decisions.

In addition, the MFD only reports the response time segments of the first vehicle to arrive on the scene. All responding MFD apparatus and trucks use the same times as the first responding apparatus. In some instances, this may be a chief's vehicle which carries no water, hose, or other substantial firefighting equipment. Although the chief can provide a size-up of the incident and begin to make an action plan to handle the emergency, the deployment of hose lines for a fire attack requires a fire apparatus (engine, ladder truck, rescue, etc.). As a result, the times above only represent the first MFD vehicle on the scene. In the event the first unit is a chief, it can be assumed there will be a delay until a fire engine, aerial ladder, rescue, or other firefighting vehicle arrives on scene.



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Response Time Performance

NFPA 1720 also recommends for a combination career/volunteer department, in the case of a working structure fire, multiple fire units arrive within a(n):

- 9-minute response time in an urban area (greater than 1,000 persons per square mile) with an assembled force of 15 firefighters 90% of the time. (Monroe Fire Department: 1904 persons/square mile)
- 10-minute response time in a suburban area (greater than 500 but less than 1,000 persons per square mile) with an assembled force of 10 firefighters 80% of the time
- 14-minute response time in a rural area (less than 500 persons per square mile) with 6 firefighters 80% of the time
- Travel distance is greater than 8 miles from a station, no response time performance measure is identified, but it is recommended that at least 4 firefighters arrive 90% of the time.

Applying the above standard to the MFD indicates its response times are close to the NFPA recommendations. However, the standard also indicates that an assembled force of 15 firefighters is required. This is known as the effective response force (ERF) which is the minimum number of firefighters required to safely and efficiently bring the incident under control.

Placing the proper response unit on the scene quickly is important to begin operations and report any additional needs to incoming or mutual aid units. However, working fire incidents require more than one unit and the rapid arrival of additional equipment and personnel is critical to the successful control of the incident. Additional equipment and personnel make up what is known in the fire service as the effective response force or ERF. Tracking the ERF provides a more complete picture of the response than merely tracking the arrival of the first unit. The ERF time is the point at which adequate personnel and equipment are on scene to begin to fully control the incident at hand.

As discussed earlier, the department does not maintain times for each of its units that respond to the scene. Rather, the department only maintains times for the first unit that responds, and all additional responding units report those same times. As a result, it was not possible for the study team to track response times for additional units and personnel. Therefore, it is not possible to calculate an ERF currently. ERF and staffing requirements are discussed further under Section 4 of this report which deals directly with proper staffing.



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Recommendation 3.1

It is recommended that the MFD develop a policy that standardizes the method for calculating fire loss versus property saved statistics so that trends may be developed. Such trends, when used in conjunction with other types of data, can assist leaders in making service delivery decisions and may help improve efficiency.

Recommendation 3.2

It is suggested that the MFD calculate response times using median as well as 90th percentile fractile values. These values should be considered the baseline for the department from which new response time goals (benchmarks) can be developed for the next five-year period.

Recommendation 3.3

It is suggested that the MFD work with its dispatching entities to capture the times of all of its units when responding to calls for service. Capturing these times is necessary to provide a complete picture of the response capabilities in the City of Monroe.



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Section 4: Staffing

As a combination department, MFD currently staffs with a full-time fire chief and 19 volunteer firefighters. Personnel are alerted to a request for service via Green County Dispatch and respond to Station 2 to retrieve gear and the apparatus needed for the call type. Over 38% of the call volume is lift assist calls, which initially do not require an EMS response. These lift assist calls are dispatched as an “all-call” response, meaning that any volunteer who is available should respond. This “all-call” alert typically results in an average response of 3 personnel on an engine and 2 in a utility vehicle. Depending on other job-related commitments, the chief may be able to assist as well.

Other calls are handled similarly, with firefighters responding from throughout the community. This presents several challenges:

1. There is no standard minimum number of personnel responding
2. As call-volume increases, it is becoming more difficult for personnel to respond
3. Fewer volunteers are available to share the workload
4. Employers are becoming more cognizant of their employees leaving work to respond to calls
5. Increased training and workload make it difficult for firefighters to maintain a healthy work/life balance

The Chief has indicated his concern for firefighter burnout due to the increased call volume, training demands, and time commitment to the department. Sessions with community stakeholders and more specifically the business and industrial leaders indicated that, while they are currently supportive of their employees responding to calls, as the volume increases it could put a strain on their productivity and require putting limitations on or abandoning the practice.

A review of department member demographics indicates the average age of a firefighter is approximately 43.5 years, with an average of over 17 years of service. Several members have achieved or exceeded minimum retirement requirements. This presents multiple challenges. It is expected that several more experienced firefighters will retire from service over the next few years. Studies are clear that as firefighters age, the risk of injury or cardiac related emergencies significantly increases. Additionally, age related challenges can reduce or limit activity and effectiveness on the fire ground.

A review of responses by each current department member over the past 3 years since the split reveals that each firefighter, on average, responds to 113 calls per year, or approximately 30% of all requests for service. Individually, the top responder averages 244 responses, while the lowest individual response rate was 28 calls per annum. In practical terms, this means that in addition to weekly training requirements, the average

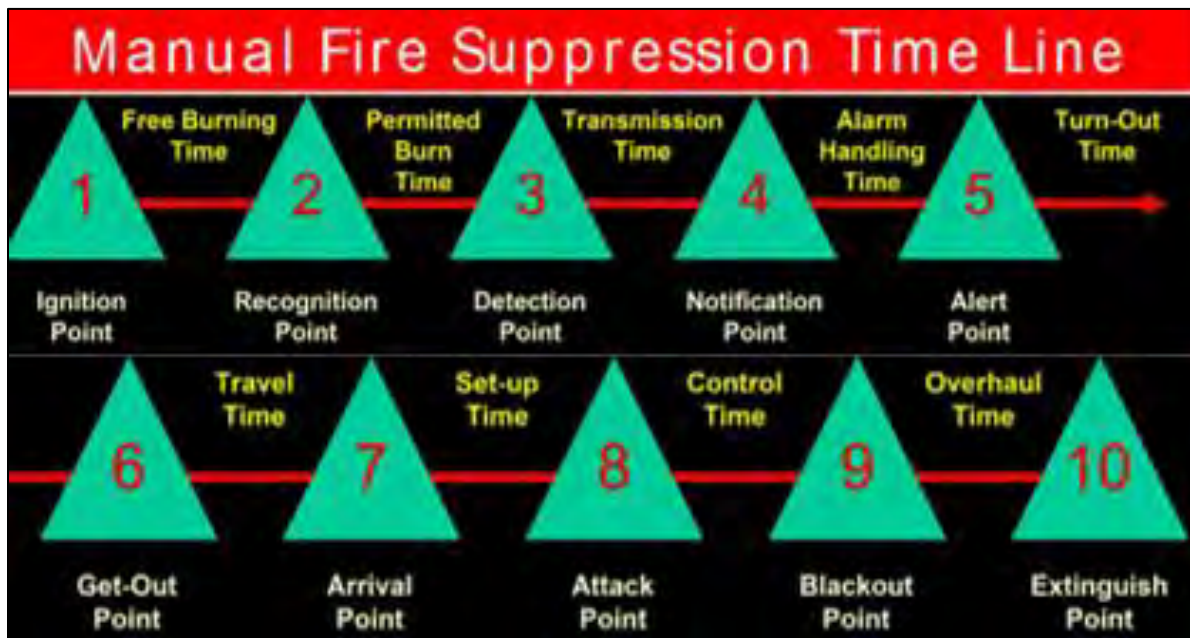


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volunteer is responding to over 2 calls per week, with an average approaching 7 firefighters per call.

It is necessary to preface any discussion of fire department performance by first describing the manual (as opposed to automatic) fire suppression timeline. All fires undergo the ten points in the chart below, also known as “proxy measures.” These measures affect fire department performance and fire outcome. For example, when a fire starts, it typically burns until it is detected (1 and 2). This recognition and detection time, up until the alert point are out of the fire department’s control. When the fire is reported, the amount of time required to process and dispatch the incident (4) is under the control of emergency communications. Items 5-10 are then up to the fire department. In theory, the quicker the fire department can turnout, respond, arrive, set up, and attack the fire, the better the outcome. Thus, the discussion will mostly focus on these latter measures to describe the effective firefighting force and apply them to the volunteer fire system in Monroe.

Figure 14: Manual Fire Suppression Time Line



Source: Rexford Wilson Manual Fire Suppression Timeline. Used with permission by John Oates, CEO, International Public Safety Data Institute (PSDI) 2024

Fire behavior is another concept to understand when looking at effective fire department operations. Like humans, fire has a life cycle, and understanding this can mean the difference between life or death during an incident. Research has determined that there are four stages of a fire, and it is important to understand these in order to safely combat a structure fire. The four stages are as follows:

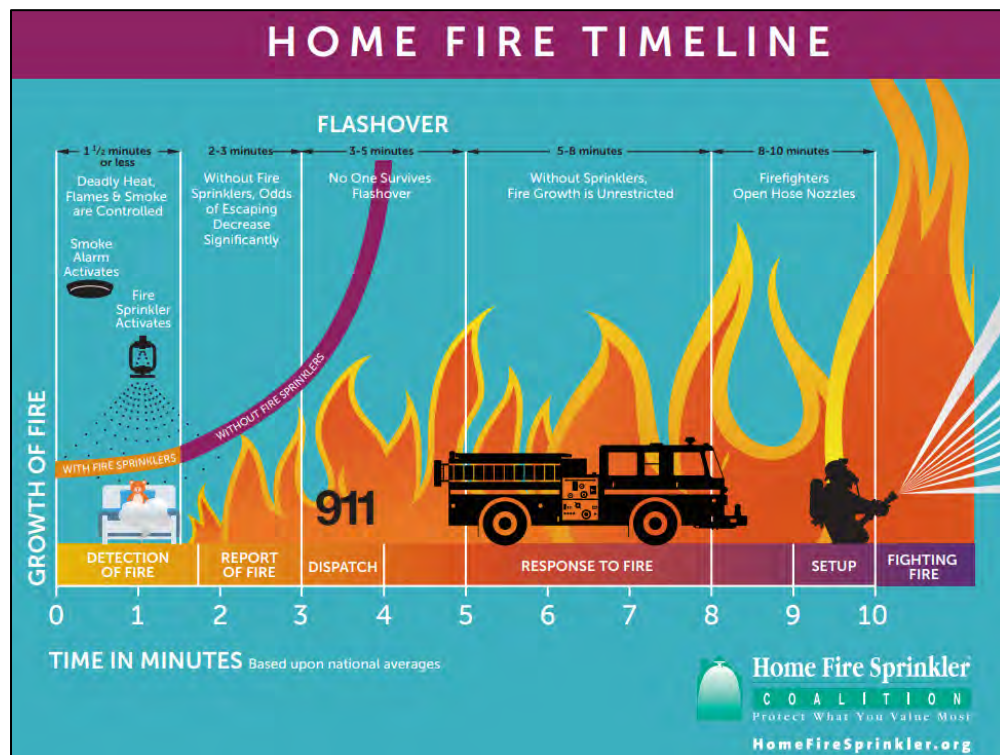


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- **Ignition** - The initial stage when fuel, oxygen, and heat combine in a chemical reaction. A fire extinguisher can usually control the fire at this stage.
- **Growth** - The fire's size increases as more fuel ignites. The fire's growth is affected by many factors, including the amount of fuel, weather conditions, and ceiling height. Indicators of the growth stage include increased room temperature, brown stains, cracks in windows, and a layer of smoke above the flame.
- **Fully developed** - The fire has spread to most or all the available fuel and temperatures peak. This is the most difficult stage to suppress because the fire is causing the most heat damage.
- **Decay** - The fire consumes its available fuel, temperatures decrease, and the fire's intensity decreases. The fire eventually becomes a smolder or goes out.

A rapid transition between the growth and the fully developed stages is called “flashover,” which occurs when most of the combustible material in an enclosed area, also known as a fuel rich area, such as a home or commercial building with typical furnishing and finishes, ignites simultaneously. Flashover produces temperatures which can easily reach 1,800 degrees Fahrenheit or greater in a matter of seconds, producing an un-survivable environment for both firefighters and occupants. The chart below depicts the research-based timeline average in a structure fire.

Figure 15: Home Fire Timeline



Source: Home Fire Sprinkler Coalition, 2024



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Contrasting the two charts demonstrates that flashover can occur in less than eight minutes, and often within three to five minutes from ignition. This means that in an unsprinklered property, occupants have little time to escape. Further, firefighters entering the building at this critical moment could face explosive fire development.

Firefighting is a task-oriented, labor-intensive team operation requiring continual training, physical stamina, and an understanding of buildings and fire behavior. Most every analysis of labor ranks firefighting as one of the most dangerous of all occupations. Successful firefighting operations are dependent upon several factors, to include:

- Enough firefighters who are trained and equipped to perform tasks safely and efficiently
- The safe arrival of firefighters; such that task execution may be done in a timely fashion; and
- Coordinated task execution and incident management, with a constant focus on the safety of occupants and firefighters.

Broken down, the major tasks needed to manage an incident successfully and safely include:

- Prompt emergency dispatch and relay of pertinent information to firefighters
- Safe arrival to the scene
- Tactical placement of apparatus
- Establishment of incident command with situation-based priorities (360-degree size-up, situation report, and development of initial priorities, notably victim rescue, protection of exposed properties, confinement, and extinguishment of fire)
- Establishment of an uninterrupted sustained water supply
- Utility control
- Tactical ventilation of the building
- Tactical deployment of firefighting hose lines
- Tactical deployment of ladders
- Victim rescue and EMS
- Medical evaluation for firefighters
- Preservation of unburned private property
- Safe overhaul of the building to ensure fire is out
- Incident de-escalation and return to quarters
- After action review

The inability to perform these tasks in a rapid, coordinated sequence can lead to unnecessary damage and, worse, civilian or firefighter death and injury. For example, if the arrival of firefighters is delayed by long alarm handling time, long or excessive turn



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out time, or a long response time, a structure fire will advance from the ignition phase to the growth phase in under 10 minutes. This means a one-room fire could quickly involve several rooms, necessitating additional personnel and water supply from stations at farther distances. Likewise, if firefighters do not arrive in simultaneous sequence, rescue and suppression actions may be attempted without appropriate safeguards in place, such as proper use of personal protective equipment (PPE) to include self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA), “back up” hose lines and sustained water supply, endangering both civilians and firefighters.

The concept of “safe staffing” for structural firefighting has evolved over the last 30 years. Much of this development has been the result of analysis of significant incidents from across the country where firefighters and civilians have been killed. Through the formal reviews of these incidents, common themes have emerged, and recommendations have been attained on best practices for fire departments when dealing with these incidents. In addition, the science of firefighting has been advanced through laboratory testing and analysis of fire behavior. Many theories which formed the tactics of firefighting over the last 30-40 years have been disproved, resulting in vast changes to tactical and task level operations.

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) has developed consensus-based standards which provide guidance for the proper complement and arrival of response units and their staffing levels, as follows:

- NFPA 1500, “*Standard on Fire Department Occupational Safety, Health and Wellness Program*”, Section A.8.5.1.1 recommends that “a minimum acceptable fire company staffing level should be four members responding on or arriving with each engine and each ladder responding to any type of fire.”
- Similarly, NFPA 1500, Sections 8.6.4, 8.6.5, 8.6.6, and 8.6.7, dictate crew management requirements during an emergency incident. These provisions require teams of at least two personnel, who must be in visual, audible, or physical means when operating in hazardous areas.
- NFPA 1720, “*Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Volunteer Fire Departments*”, uses as a baseline 2,000 square foot, wood frame dwelling, without a basement or exposures. However, it does not recommend minimum staffing levels. Instead, it allows the local authority having jurisdiction (AHJ) to establish specific unit staffing levels and response times to meet the needs of the department. NFPA 1720 does allow an authority to identify different “demand” zones and to establish requirements to meet those needs. NFPA 1720 requires firefighting operations to begin within two minutes of arrival, with all of the equipment needed to fight the fire, 90 percent of the time.



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- In addition to NFPA, regulations are also in place to govern “safe” operations at a structure fire. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OHSA) has regulations for operating in a hazardous atmosphere (Immediately Dangerous to Life and Health, or IDLH). OSHA 1910.134 (g)(4) requires at least two trained members to enter IDLH atmosphere (such as a structure fire) and remain in contact with each other through visual, audible, or physical means, and that at least two members must remain outside (Initial Rapid Intervention Crew, (IRIC) to monitor the inside crew as well as conditions and be available for immediate rescue should the situation warrant. This is commonly known as the “two in two out” regulation.

Figure 16: NFPA 1720 Minimum Staffing and Response Times

Demand Zone ^a	Demographics	Minimum Staff to Respond ^b	Response Time ^c (minutes)	Meets Objective
Urban area	> 1000 people /sq. mi.	15	9:00	90%
Suburban area	500-1000 people / sq. mi.	10	10:00	80%
Rural area	< 500 people / sq. mi.	6	14:00	80%
Remote area	Travel distance greater than or equal to 8 miles	4	Directly dependent on travel distance	90%
Special risks	Determined by AHJ	Determined by AHJ based on risk	Determined by AHJ	90%

a – A jurisdiction can have more than one demand zone

b – Minimum staffing includes members responding from the AHJ’s department and automatic aid

c – Response time begins upon completion of the dispatch notification and ends at the time interval shown in the table

Source: 2020 Edition of NFPA 1720 – “Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Volunteer Fire Departments”

It should be noted that based on the City of Monroe’s population density, the staffing and response time requirements fall under the Urban Area criteria in the above chart. This means the MFD should be providing **15 firefighters, within 9 minutes of receiving the alarm, 90% of the time.**

The issue does not appear to one of response time but of having enough personnel on scene with an average firefighter per call value of 7. The recommendations below are designed to increase the on-scene total number of firefighters.



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Recommendation 4.1

It is recommended that the MFD should consider requiring both the Fire Inspector and Deputy Chief positions to be certified firefighters and respond to calls, particularly during on-duty hours.

Recommendation 4.2

It is recommended that the MFD continue to foster working relationships with neighboring departments and emergency response agencies with the goal of achieving the recommended staffing levels for each type of incident through the use of automatic-aid and mutual-aid.

Recommendation 4.3

With the decline in new volunteers, limited availability of existing volunteers, and increased call volume, it is recommended that the MFD consider developing a plan for a paid staffing model to ensure the ability to respond to the most common call types.

Recommendation 4.4

It is recommended that the MFD establish an “on-call” schedule for volunteers to ensure response for common call types (i.e. lift assists) and limit the number responding to 2 or 3. This allows those not on call to have a break from responding. In the event there is a large-scale incident, such as structural calls and any manpower heavy incident, then all personnel would be expected to respond.



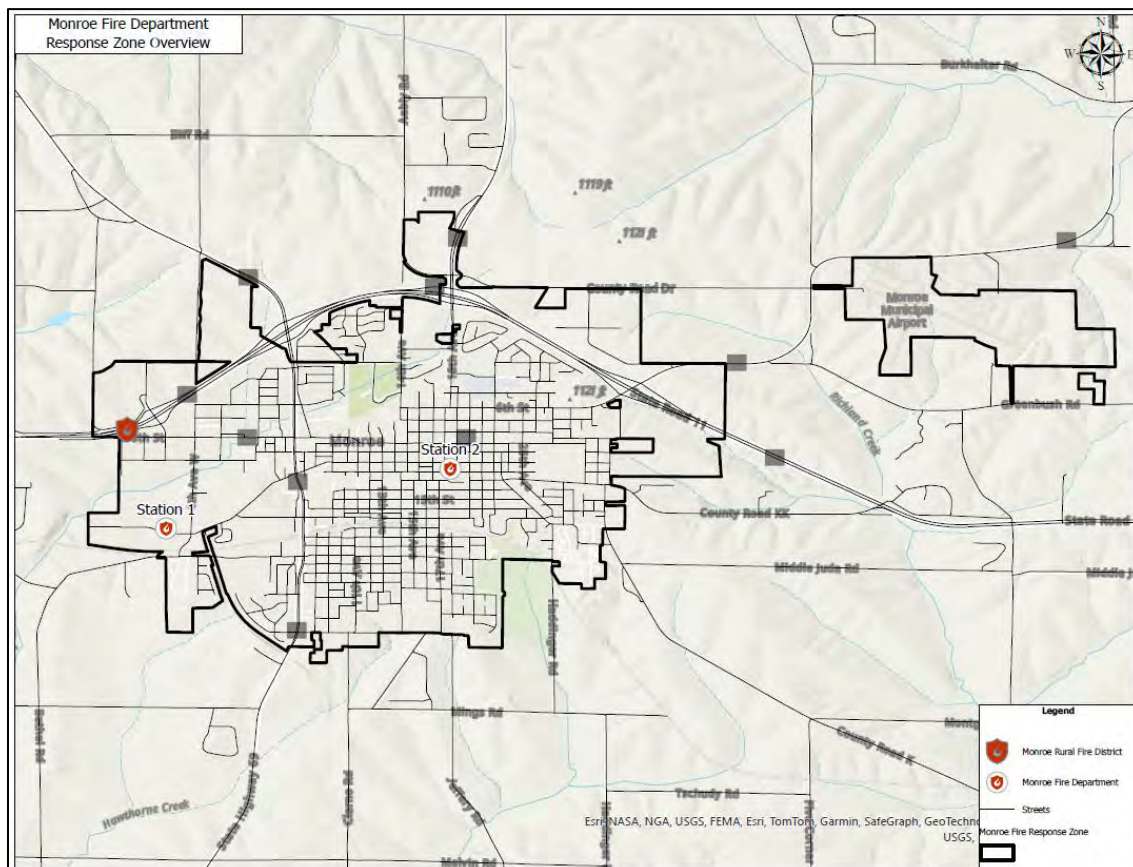
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Section 5: Department Deployment and Operations

Fire, Rescue, and Service Calls

The Monroe Fire Department (MFD) is the primary fire service provider in the City of Monroe. The MFD primarily responds from Fire Station 2 as it is the most central to the entire city. The department utilizes paid-on-call volunteer personnel along with its career Fire Chief to provide fire, rescue, and limited EMS service. The MFD is also responsible for providing service to Monroe Municipal Airport. The MFD does not maintain or staff an ARFF certified response vehicle as there is no requirement for such a vehicle at the airport due to the size of the planes and no commercial service availability.

Figure 17: MFD Fire Response Zone Overview





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Firefighters, when notified of an emergency, report directly to Fire Station 2 to retrieve the apparatus and respond to the emergency. Pagers are carried by all firefighters for purposes of receiving the alarms. Engines require a minimum of three personnel to be present before responding.

Citywide Response Coverage Times

The maps in Figures 18 and 19 below were created by GIS software to provide a graphic representation of the MFD response area based upon seven- and eight-minute driving times from Fire Station-2. The software assumes drive times based upon average conditions and normal response timeframes.

As stated earlier in the report, *NFPA 1720: Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Volunteer Fire Departments, 2020 edition*, suggests a response time target of 9 minutes for a city with a population density greater than 1,000 persons per square mile (City of Monroe = 1,904 persons per square mile according to the 2020 US census).

Two minutes are allotted within the nine minutes for fire personnel to turn out leaving 7 minutes of travel time to get to the fire emergency. The drive time study result indicates the entire City of Monroe is well within the 7 - minute drive time boundary. The latest full year of response time data is 2024 and indicates:

Table 10: MFD 2024 - 90th Percentile Times (emergent calls only)

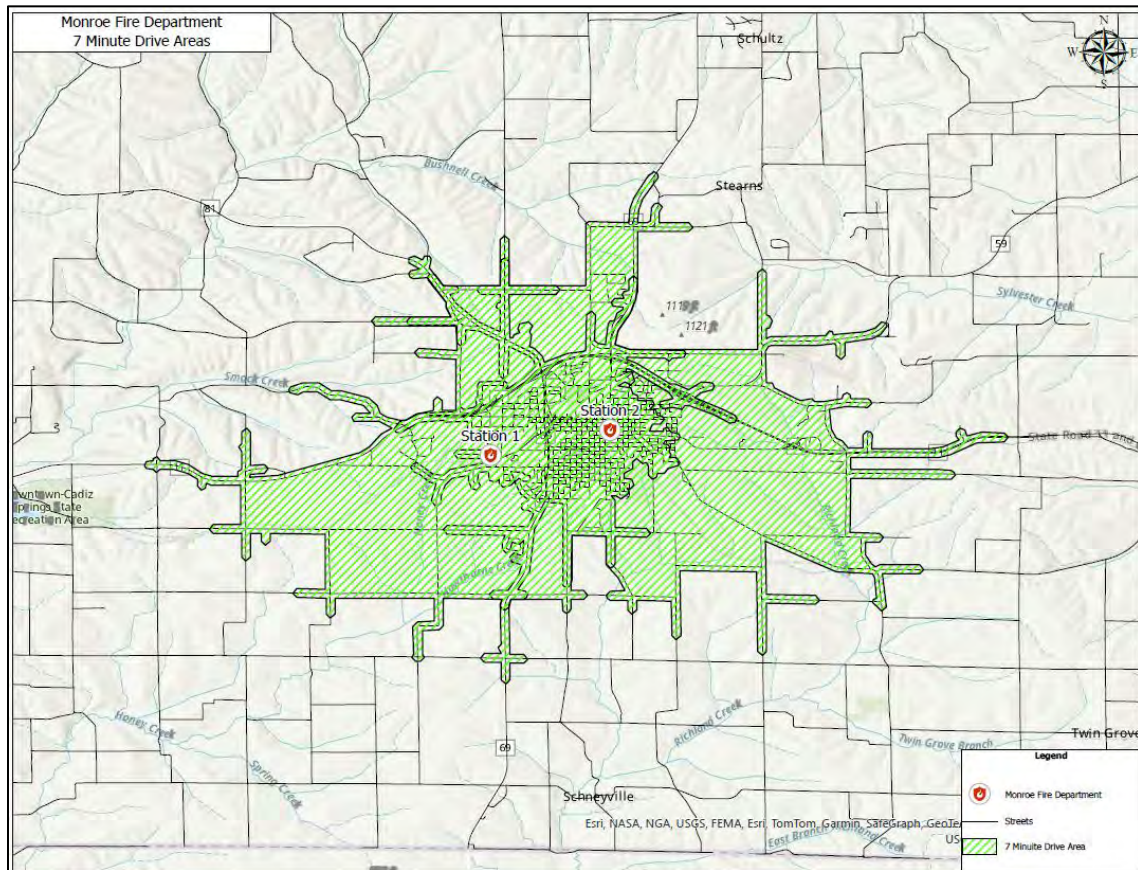
90th Percentile Turnout Time	90th Percentile Travel Time	90th Percentile Response Time
07:40	04:19	11:05

The total response time is greater than the recommendations from NFPA 1720 not due to travel (driving) time, but rather due to turnout time. The only solution to this is placing firefighters at the stations to immediately man and respond the apparatus when a call is received. It is the belief of the consultant team that the current call volume of the MFD considered with its relatively low 90th percentile response time does not warrant 24 hour paid staffing on the apparatus at this time. However, should call volumes increase as discussed elsewhere in this report, additional staffing will likely be required.



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Figure 18: MFD 7 -Minute Drive Distances



While on site and in discussions with the Fire Chief, he requested the study team consider the City of Monroe as a suburban agency due to the number and nature of its calls. Even though the city’s population places it as an urban area, the argument can be made that the area is more similar to a suburban one than an urban one. Therefore, the following map is based upon the suburban criteria of *NFPA 1720: Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Volunteer Fire Departments, 2020 edition*, which requires **10 personnel to respond within 10 minutes, 80% of the time**.

Figure 19 identifies that the entire city can be reached within 8 minutes’ drive time. Since the Standard allows 10 minutes for arrival, it is assumed that there are 2 minutes for turn out and 8 minutes for travel (drive) time.



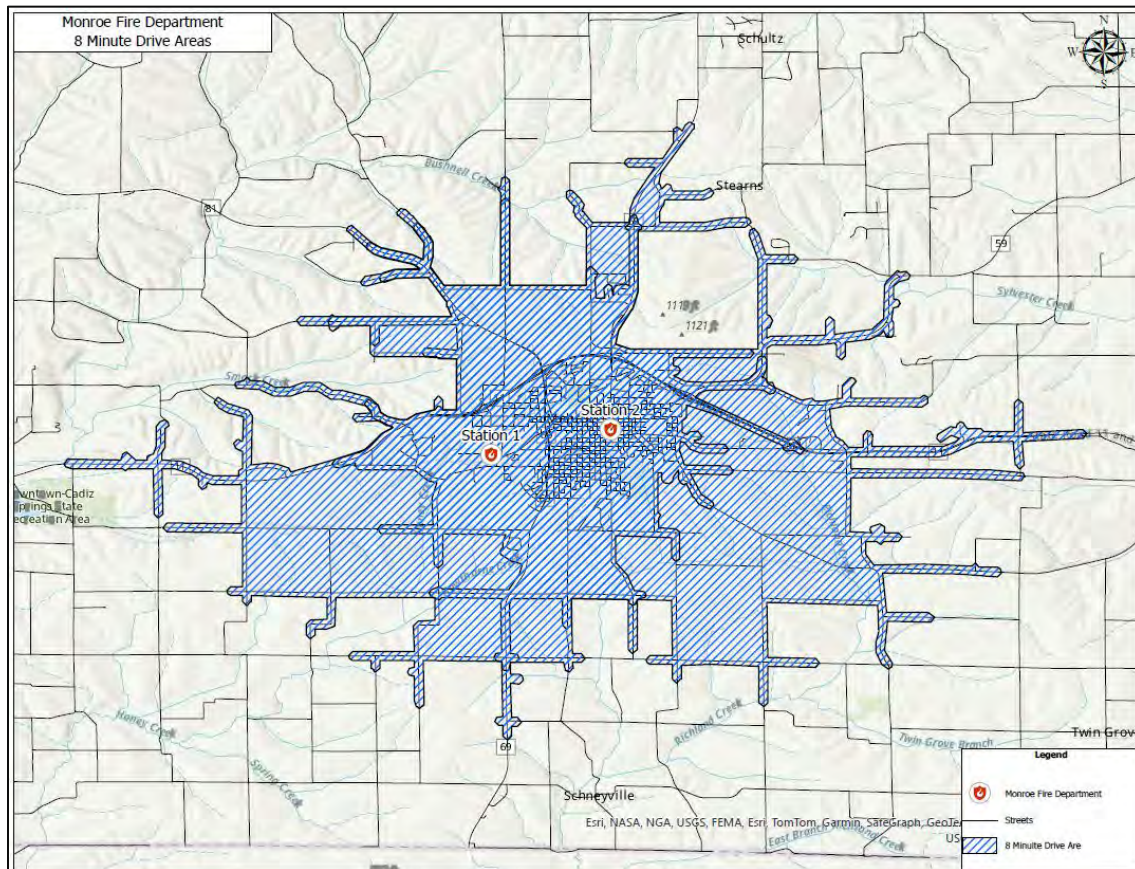
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Table 11: MFD 2024 - 80th Percentile Times (*emergent calls only*)

80 th Percentile Turnout Time	80 th Percentile Travel Time	80 th Percentile Response Time
06:25	03:33	09:39

Since the suburban criteria are calculated at the 80th percentile, the target times are lower than for the urban criteria which are calculated at the 90th percentile. Utilizing the suburban criteria the MFD’s **response times meet** the recommendations within NFPA 1720. The ability of the MFD to place the recommended number of personnel on scene within 10 minutes is the question and the difficulty for the MFD.

Figure 19: MFD 8 - Minute Drive Distances



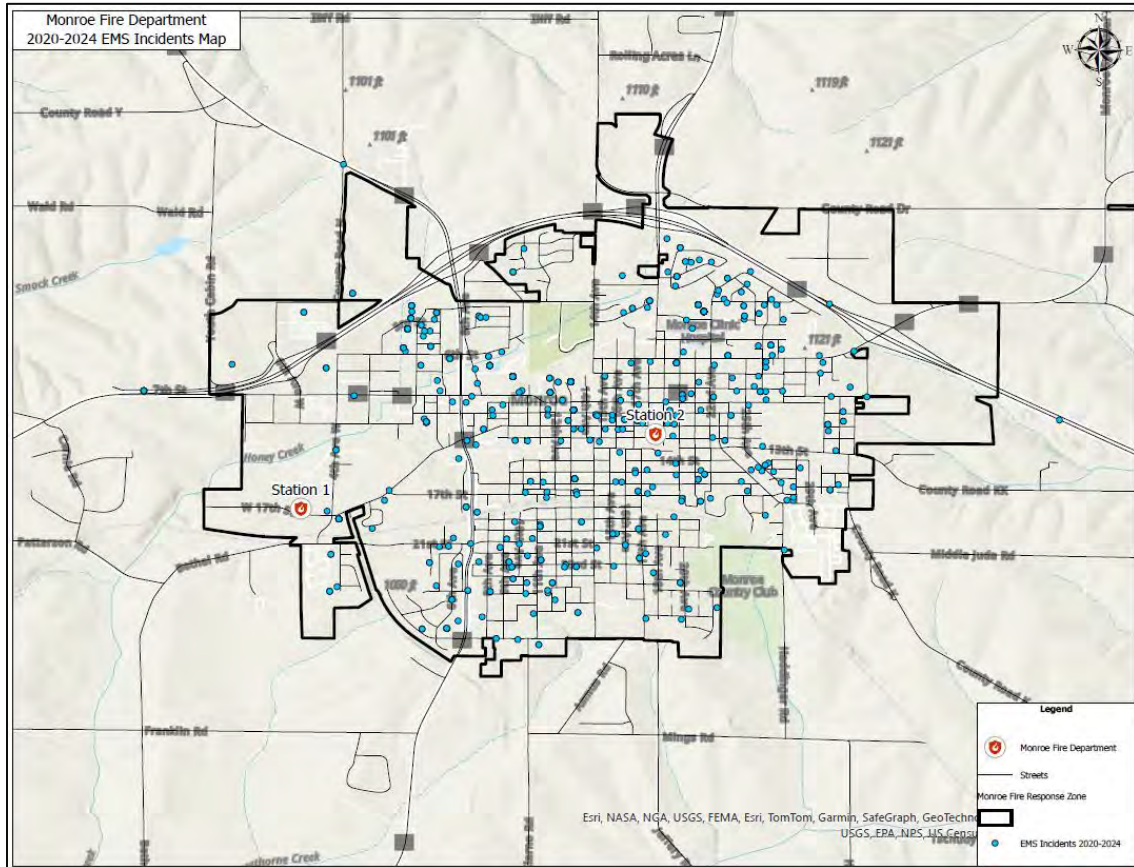


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Emergency Medical Services (EMS)

EMS responses make up the largest call type segment for the MFD. The following maps provide a graphical representation of where EMS calls are occurring in the City of Monroe.

Figure 20: MFD EMS Incidents 2020 - 2024





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Figure 21: MFD EMS Incident Heat Map

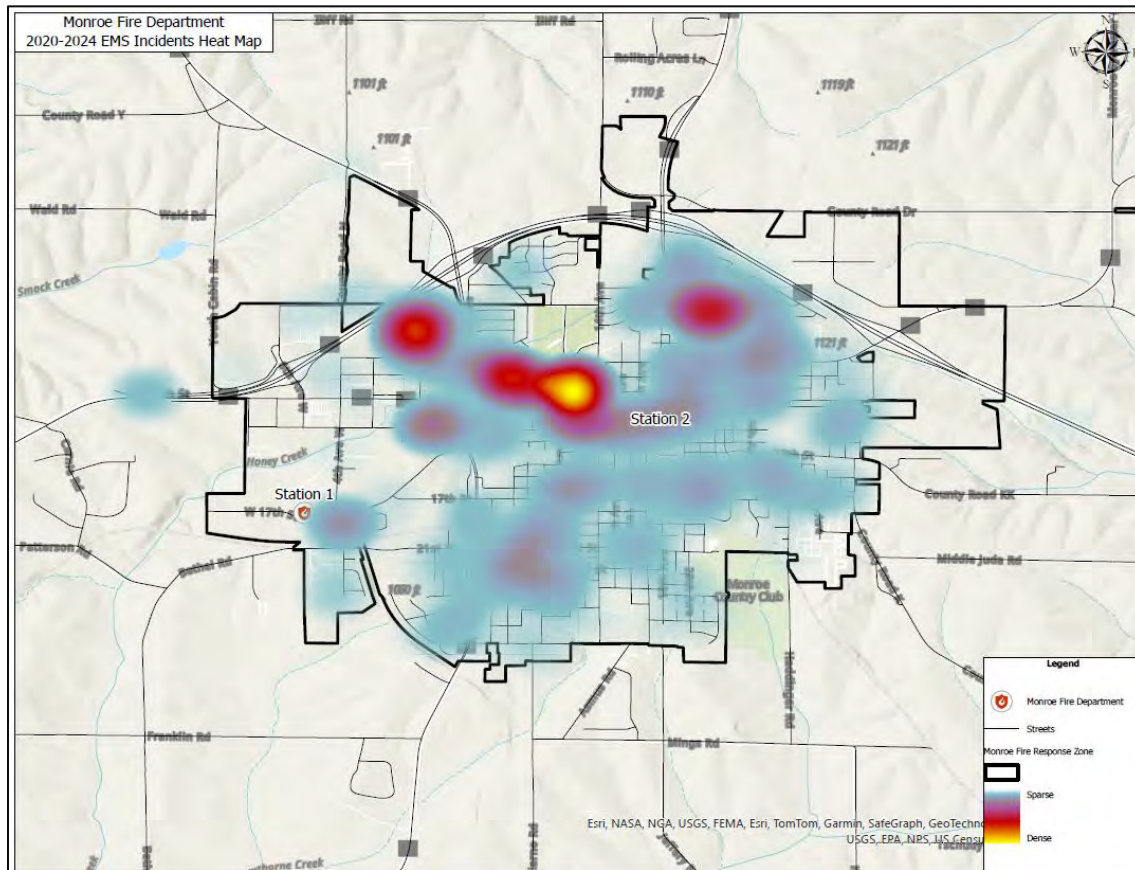


Figure 20 identifies all the locations where EMS calls occurred, while Figure 21 identifies those areas where multiple calls have occurred. Performing these studies over time and comparing will provide decision makers with the ability to view new and emerging patterns of calls and better plan with programs to address the changes. (Note: Most modern records management systems now come with the capability to quickly run these studies)

The responsibility for emergency medical services, including transport to the hospital, within the City of Monroe falls to the Green County EMS Department, Incorporated (GCEMS). GCEMS was created in 1974 and is a private agency and not for profit. It should also be noted that GCEMS is not affiliated with the city of Monroe or Green County government. The agency is managed by a ten-member Board of Directors (three regular members and seven community members) which oversees the EMS Chief Paramedic who coordinates all day-to-day operations of the department. At the time of the site visit with the EMS Chief, the department maintained 37 volunteers and 8 full-time employees. Fifteen of the members were paramedics, 8 were non-EMT drivers, and the remainder were EMT's.



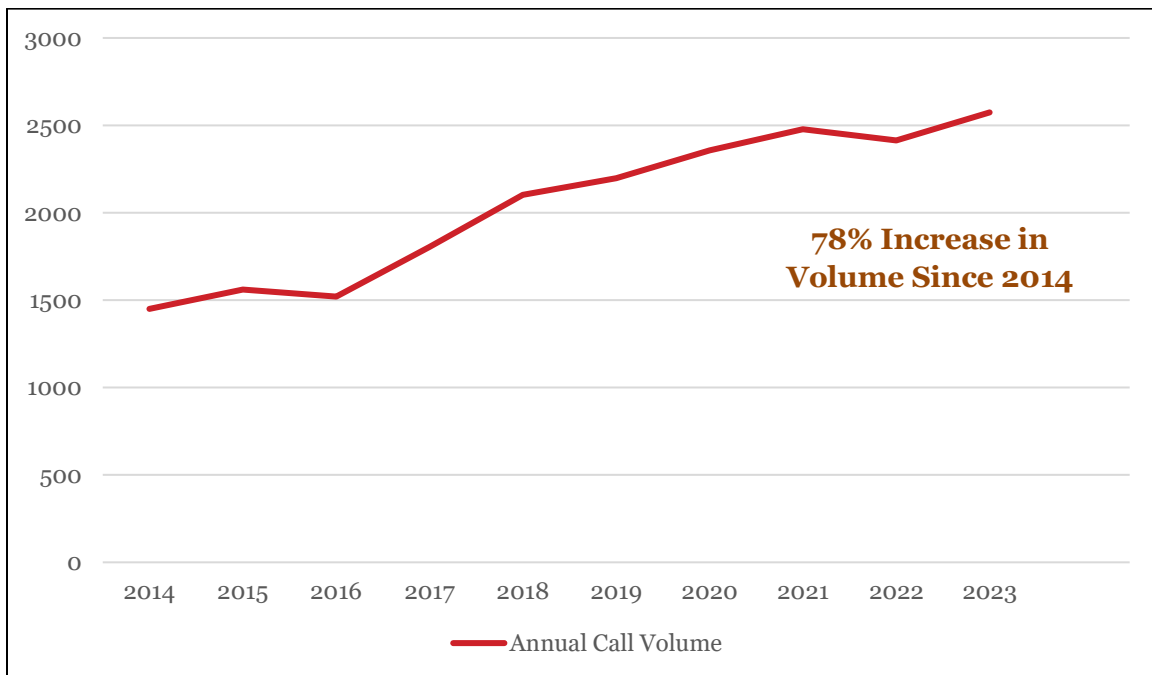
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The EMS Chief indicated in the site visit interview with the study team that staffing was GCEMS’ biggest issue. He cited difficulty in finding volunteers who could make the time commitment that is required to the organization. He also stated it was likely GCEMS would need to hire more staff to meet a growing call volume in the community.

GCEMS responds to all emergency medical incidents within the City of Monroe as well as a large portion of Green County and Lafayette County. In 2016 GCEMS began providing non-emergency transport as well. Most of the non-emergency transport originates from the hospital and goes to Madison or other nearby larger facilities. Wisconsin state law requires licensed emergency ambulance service agencies to keep an emergency ambulance available in the community when providing non-emergent transport services out of the service area. GCEMS complies with the statute and maintains emergency capability.

Since 2014 GCEMS call volume has increased approximately 78%. GCEMS responded to 2574 calls in 2023. Values for 2024 were not available for this report. However, call totals through 10 months of 2024 indicated GCEMS was on track to meet or surpass the total for 2023.

Figure 22: Green County EMS Call Volume 2014 – 2023



Source: Green County EMS – Chief Dan Rufer

Funding to operate GCEMS comes from fees for services rendered in both its emergent and non-emergent response services. GCEMS also receives donations from the community to assist with its revenues. GCEMS does not have a contract with the City of Monroe and therefore does not receive funding from the city.



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Since the City of Monroe does not have a contract with GCEMS to provide services, it has very little oversight into the service levels being provided. This is not to say that GCEMS is not providing a high level of service to the citizens of Monroe. All discussions with city staff indicate that GCEMS is providing a high level of service to the citizens. However, as call volumes continue to increase, the city has little legal oversight to set minimum levels of service it wants for its citizens. This is something that should be analyzed closely by the City in the event it feels it needs more input into the process in the future.

Recommendation 5.1

It is recommended that the MFD and City review the MABAS mutual aid agreement annually and make any updates to mutual aid response as required by that agreement.

Recommendation 5.2

It is recommended that the MFD continue to develop the emergency medical service capabilities of its personnel to prepare for a transition to a higher level of service as first responders. As GCEMS faces similar recruiting issues as the MFD, the fire department will likely find it is dispatched to respond to more emergency medical incidents as the first arriving unit to begin treatment until EMS can get a unit to the scene.



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Section 6: Apparatus

The study team had the opportunity to tour the fire department and view all the apparatus in the MFD. The fleet of apparatus is in excellent condition and appears to be well maintained. At the time of this writing, apparatus assigned to Station 1 included the following:

- Aerial Ladder 7
- Engine 1
- Squad (Rescue Engine) 5
- Engine 3 (Retired)
- C-10 – Ford Explorer
- C-11 – Dodge Durango
- C-12 – Dodge Durango (retired)
- Air Trailer

Station 2 Apparatus included:

- Aerial Truck 51
- Engine 2
- Squad (Rescue Engine) 6
- C - 5 – ½ ton Dodge Ram Pickup (Used for Inspections)
- Utility 13 – ¾ Ton Service Truck
- Haz Mat Trailer
- UTV
- Light Tower
- Foam Trailer

According to *NFPA 1901: Standard for Automotive Fire Apparatus*, the recommended replacement cycle for fire apparatus is 15 years of front-line duty, followed by 10 years in a reserve capacity. This schedule is recommended and can fluctuate based on many factors including the condition of the vehicle, fire body, aerial device (if applicable), engine hours, mileage, call volume, maintenance, and successful passing of a pump and/or aerial device test.

With the recent delivery of Truck 51, the next units identified for replacement include both Squad 5 & 6 (2004 models) at an estimated cost of \$1,200,000 each. Department personnel and leadership are reluctant to use Engines 1 & 2, both 2014 model Pierce pumpers, due to design limitations. These include the high hose bed, making it difficult to remove and reload hose and creating a fall/injury risk to department personnel.



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Table 12: Monroe Fire Department – Apparatus Fleet

Unit/Type	Year	MFG	Pump Capacity	Tank Capacity	Riding Positions	Notes
T-51	2024	Pierce	1750	300	6	
E-1	2014	Pierce	1750	780	6	
E-2	2014	Pierce	1750	780	6	
E-3	1990	Pierce	1250	750	6	
S-5	1999	Pierce	1750	750	6	Cascade Fill Station, Rescue Tools
S-6	2004	Pierce	1750	750	6	Cascade Fill Station, Rescue Tools
L-7	1990	Pierce	1750	200	6	
TOTAL	-	-	11,750	-	42	





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Over the past four to five years, the cost of new fire apparatus has risen dramatically due in large part to increased production costs. The average delivery time has also skyrocketed to an average of 3-4 years or more from the time of order placement. This is largely due to the long wait to source some needed components from external suppliers. Add to this the planning and specification writing process, and the time from conception to delivery can easily approach 5 years.

The study team evaluated the number of riding positions, size of the department, and annual call volume in comparison to the size of the fleet and needs of the community to assess if the fleet is sized correctly. It is our opinion that there is an opportunity to reduce the fleet size over time and reduce maintenance, operating, and replacement costs. Maintaining a fleet that is right sized for the organization adds to efficiency and saves the taxpayers money. The study team’s recommendations are below and should serve to get the conversation started.

Recommendation 6.1

It is recommended that the MFD develop a plan to reduce the total fleet size to more closely mirror the needs of the department, the capabilities of the volunteer staff, and the ISO requirements.

Recommendation 6.2

It is recommended that the MFD and City of Monroe develop a plan to replace Engine 1 & Engine 2 over time. The new engines should include both firefighting and rescue capabilities. Once replaced, maintain one engine in reserve status.

Recommendation 6.3

It is recommended that the Squad Engines (5 & 6) should be phased out of frontline operations and removed from service as E-1 & E-2 are replaced. To reduce maintenance costs, consider removing the on-board cascade systems and adding storage for spare air bottles.



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Section 7: Equipment

The fire department operates with Scott 4.5 self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) that was purchased in 2016. NFPA standards require at least one SCBA with cylinder and a back-up cylinder per riding position on the apparatus. The MFD has 42 riding positions which would require 42 SCBA and 84 SCBA cylinders. The assessment of this equipment during the site visit indicated that this requirement is met. Basic annual preventive maintenance is performed on the SCBA and the air bottles are hydrostatically tested as per recommended best practices. The SCBA, however, are not flow tested annually due to the additional expense and the relatively light use over the course of a year. They are, however, flow tested bi-annually to ensure proper function. The department conducts annual facepiece fit testing of their personnel, as required by NFPA standards.

MFD currently has one SCBA compressor and fill station located at station 2. Additionally, there are air-fill cascade systems on each of the squad engines (Squad 5 and Squad 6), as well as a dedicated air trailer with cascade system that can be taken to scenes when needed. Per the Fire Chief, the trailer is rarely used and was most recently activated in response to a mutual-aid request outside the city.

The fire department issues two full sets of turnout gear to all members. This is to ensure a back-up set of gear in the event that the primary set is being cleaned or otherwise out of service due to recent use or contamination. This aligns with best practices. Turnout gear and PPE is inspected on a regular basis to ensure suitability for use, however much of the current gear is outdated and non-compliant with the 10-year service life requirement set forth in NFPA 1851, “Standard on Selection, Care, and Maintenance of Protective Ensembles for Structural Firefighting and Proximity Fire Fighting.”

Within the fire service, there are multiple consensus national standards and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) that have developed standards and regulations for fire/EMS agencies to administer and follow regarding equipment used for firefighting and for personnel safety. National consensus standards are developed by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). Although not law, they are considered the baseline standards that fire service agencies should strive to meet. Even though local government workers and volunteers are not covered by OSHA within Wisconsin, it is recommended best practice that fire departments work towards protecting their members by following the standards.



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Recommendation 7.1

It is recommended that the MFD immediately look into flow testing its SCBA units on an annual basis as recommended by NFPA 1852, “*Standard on the Selection, Care and Maintenance of Open Circuit Breathing Apparatus*” and OSHA 1910.134 and 1910.156.

Recommendation 7.2

It is recommended that the MFD develop a gear replacement plan to ensure all personnel are outfitted in NFPA compliant turnout gear.

Recommendation 7.3

It is recommended that the MFD develop a long-term replacement plan for SCBA and air cylinders which includes actual current and future needs of the department. Right sizing the cache of SCBA units and spare cylinders to the department will reduce the capital outlay required for maintenance and replacement as required by the standards of best practice.

Recommendation 7.4

It is recommended that the MFD develop a long-term financing strategy for equipment replacements such as SCBA, turn-out gear and other large replacement cost equipment.

Recommendation 7.5

It is recommended that the MFD study the possible reduction in maintenance costs by omitting the on-board cascade systems from the rescue trucks.



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Section 8: Stations and Facilities

Monroe Fire Department currently operates out of two stations, known as Station 1 at 601 W. 17th Street, and Station 2 at 1110 18th Avenue. The older of these, Station 2, was constructed in 1965 and is currently part of the city administration and public safety complex. It served as the sole fire station for several decades until the construction of Station 1 in 2010.

Positioned 1.6 miles away from Station 2, Station 1 was built in response to the risk associated with the Badger State Ethanol plant at 820 W. 17th Street and to provide additional coverage to the City.

Currently housing several pieces of apparatus and support equipment, Station 1 houses the City’s emergency operations center and serves as the administration and classroom training hub of the fire department. During the on-site visit, several meetings were held at Station 1, including sessions with department leadership, firefighters, public and private stakeholders, and a representative of the Police and Fire Commission.

When constructed, the hope was that Station 1 would be of primary response importance due to its location. However, over time it was learned that the location was not optimal and had little effect on response times. In addition, response from the station is complicated due to accessing and crossing Highway 69. As a result, the majority of emergency responses are made from Station 2 with Station 1, serving primarily for administration, training, and EOC functions.

Current and future expected call volume and volunteer proximity as well as heat maps showing the concentration of calls indicate that Station 2 will continue to be the better positioned of the current facilities for operational response. Station 2, however, lacks the office space needed, training space, and potential living quarters space for the continued evolution of the department. It can be assumed that expansion is likely during the life of this plan. While on the site visit, the study team inquired about the availability of space to grow the department. Staff from the City indicated there were likely some options available to explore over time with already existing facilities. The use of existing facilities does not require substantial new construction and may be more cost effective. A study of available locations for the MFD to utilize is a good starting point to prepare for potential growth and operational changes within the fire department.



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Figure 23: MFD Fire Station 1



Figure 24: MFD Fire Station 2





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Merit Center (Training Area)

The Merit Center is a well-appointed, multi-hazard response training center owned and operated by the City of Monroe and Monroe Fire Department. Boasting many different props and skills stations, the Merit Center provides the department with an opportunity for hands-on training simulation for many different scenarios. Though it has been renamed in honor of a past member, in all focus groups it is still referred to and continues to be known as the Merit Center. MFD and the city can be proud of the facility as it is not common for a city the size of Monroe to have a fire training center of this scale.

In the past, in addition to MFD, the Merit Center was supported and utilized to varying degrees by other area departments, but in recent years use by other departments has been discouraged for security and safety reasons. Members of MFD, however, continue to use the facility as they can obtain hands-on training opportunities that they could not otherwise accomplish. Even though there are safety and security concerns, thought should be put into encouraging neighboring departments to utilize the Merit Center in coordination with the MFD. Such mutual aid training will only better prepare all the departments to work safely, efficiently, and effectively together when the time comes.

Current plans for the facility include repair and maintenance of props and improved security measures including fencing and security systems.

Recommendation 8.1

It is recommended that the City and MFD conduct an analysis of City owned facilities that may be able to provide additional space for living quarters, kitchen facilities, and other facilities required to provide 24 hour per day firefighter coverage to the City in the event a transition to a combination fire department is needed in the future. The current Station 2 does not have the ability to expand to provide these facilities.

Recommendation 8.2

It is recommended that the City and MFD take the necessary steps to ensure the security and functionality of the Merit Center and its props to ensure the safety of personnel.



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Recommendation 8.3

It is recommended that the MFD explore ways to involve neighboring departments in training at the Merit facility to improve the skills and competencies of mutual-aid department personnel.

Recommendation 8.4

It is recommended that the MFD consider incorporating a driver training course into the Merit Center grounds. ISO requires 18 hours of driver training per person per year to achieve full credit. If there is no adequate property for such a course, the combined City/County Public Works Facility, if built, may have the capability for a parking/driving area that is sufficient.



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Section 9: Dispatch and Communications

The dispatch process for the Monroe Fire Department is shared by two agencies. The Green County Sheriff's Office (GCSO) serves as the public safety access point (PSAP) for all agencies within Green County. All 911 emergency calls are routed to GCSO where they are answered, and the appropriate fire or EMS agency is notified of the call. In the case of the Monroe Fire Department, GCSO, after dispatch, forwards the call to the Monroe Police Department Dispatch Center (MPD). The MPD dispatchers maintain contact with the responding MFD units and remain the dispatchers for the entirety of the call for service. This is a unique situation in that the call is being transferred after answer. When there is a situation where calls are being answered in one location and transferred to another, there is always some concern as to how much time is lost in the process. However, since GCSO is dispatching the call to the fire department before transferring to MPD this is less of a concern.

The dispatch center's performance would normally be compared to consensus standards found in the National Fire Protection Association Standard 1225 – *Standard for Emergency Services Communications, 2022 edition*. NFPA 1225 combines NFPA 1061 - *Standard for Public Safety Telecommunications Personnel Professional Standards* and NFPA 1221 - *Standard for the Installation, Maintenance, and Use of Emergency Services Communications Systems* and establishes the following:

1. **Establishes two (2) time standards for the handling of emergency calls coming into the communications center:**
 - a. **90% of all calls coming into the communications center** should be answered within **10 seconds**.
 - b. **90% of all processing of the calls** shall be handled within **60 seconds**. (Extensions are granted for reports involving Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) protocols, foreign languages, the deaf, hazardous materials, technical rescue, criminal activity that might compromise responder safety, text messages and “calls that require determining the location of the alarm due to insufficient information.”)
2. **Requires at least two (2) people in the communications center at all times.** This is to make sure the call processing standards can be met. Also, additional personnel are required to assist with firefighter “Maydays” when requested by the Incident Commander.
3. **Requires the communications center be secure** from intruders as well as cyber hazards that could disrupt the communications system and process. This is an ever-pressing problem.



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4. **Must have system concordance** in that people calling 911 do not have to dial a special code from their location (hotels, offices, etc., requiring a prefix to access an outside line). This is typically handled through the code enforcement process.

NFPA 1225, like all of the consensus standards is not enforceable unless it is adopted by state or local law. However, the standards are recognized as the best national practices. Not every community follows NFPA, and some may only follow parts of the standards. The standards provide a good benchmark to use to compare current service provision and provide opportunities for future improvement.

Both the GCSO and the MPD Communications Centers utilize Motorola’s Spillman CAD System for dispatching purposes. In most cases, Spillman has the ability to communicate with Emergency Reporting’s Records Management System (ERRMS) which is utilized by the MFD for all of its reporting needs. When asked about call processing times for either or both dispatching entities, that information was not available, nor was it being tracked. Therefore, there is no way to trace a call through time stamps from when it was received until it is dispatched to the fire department’s members. As mentioned earlier in the report there is also no dispatch CAD time stamp tracking of each individual response unit. This makes it impossible to calculate valid response and ERF times. Capturing and recording time stamps throughout a call from the time it is received in dispatch until its completion is a vital component to assessing the response of the fire department and identifying ways to increase efficiency and effectiveness.

During the site visit, the study team was not able to gain access to the GCSO Communications Center. However, the study team did have the opportunity to tour the MPD Communications Center. During the visit the team observed the dispatcher performing well. At the time, the dispatcher was the only working in the communications center and was also having to address the needs of the public and police officers coming into the police station with questions and requesting information. This practice should be re-evaluated and if possible, the dispatchers should be isolated from external distractions to be able to perform their most important duties which impact firefighter, EMT, and law enforcement officer safety.



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Recommendation 9.1

It is recommended that the City of Monroe/MFD request from the appropriate communications center, GCOS or MPD, that the following time segments for each responding unit assigned to an emergency are recorded:

1. Dispatch call answering time
2. Dispatch call processing time
3. Dispatch time to the fire department
4. Fire unit enroute to the scene time
5. Fire unit arrival on scene time
6. Fire unit scene cleared time (available)

It is important to maintain all times for the entire response to better calculate the true time it is taking to get help to the citizens.

Recommendation 9.2

It is recommended that the MPD Communications Center be brought into compliance with national communications center standards such as National Fire Protection Association Standard 1225—*Standard for Emergency Services Communications, 2022 edition*. To assist in this process the City may consider contracting a comprehensive study of the MPD’s Communication Center’s processes, procedures, and facilities to establish a plan.



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Section 10: Health, Safety, and Wellness

The most valuable asset of any organization is its people. Fire departments are no different, and this is more acute with volunteer fire departments, who are struggling nationwide to maintain rosters of available and qualified personnel. Maintaining a viable volunteer and career response force requires many resources to properly outfit, equip, and train personnel. Often overlooked, however, is the physical and mental health needs of responders, especially volunteers.

Firefighters are dying in greater numbers from non-firefighting trauma. While firefighters are still dying in fires, when compared to occupational diseases, notably cardiac issues and cancer, there is no comparison. Additionally, firefighters are now falling victim to suicide at an unprecedented crisis rate.

Fortunately, over the last thirty years, through advanced research by many organizations, great insight has been gained into the root causes of Line of Duty Deaths (LODDs), and this has led to improvements in creating awareness of factors which contribute greatly to LODDs. Never has there been so much research and so many programs made available to combat all LODDs. The National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), in combination with the United States Fire Administration (USFA), the International Association of Firefighters (IAFF), the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC), the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation (NFFF), the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), and other industry stakeholders, have developed strategies to reduce LODD events and to create a culture of survival in the fire service.

Over the last thirty-year period, there has been a downward trend in the number of firefighter LODDs. With the exception of the 9/11 tragedy (and the on-going 384 “9/11 cancer” LODDs) and losses related to COVID-19, firefighter deaths have averaged less than one hundred per year, or down approximately 30%.

The NFPA provides an annual summary of firefighter injuries and LODDs. Their data for 2023 revealed:

- A total of 89 on-duty U.S. firefighter fatalities
- Of these deaths, 50 were volunteer firefighters (including two part-time firefighters), 30 were career firefighters, seven were non-municipal wildland firefighters, and two were military firefighters
- Cardiac-related events accounted for the largest number of reported firefighter injuries and deaths



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The report details work activities which resulted in LODDs:

- 32 firefighters died from performing fireground activities
- 19 firefighters died from while responding or returning from emergencies
- 10 firefighters died while engaged in training
- 10 firefighters died while in the performance of non-firefighting emergencies
- 7 firefighters died in course of normal station duties
- 5 firefighters died from performance in EMS
- 3 firefighters died while performing station maintenance
- 3 firefighters died performing unspecified duties

Table 13: Line of Duty Death Causes for Calendar Year 2023

Cause of Injury	Fatalities	Percentage
Overexertion/stress/medical	48	54%
Crashes	18	20%
Rapid fire progress/backdraft	5	6%
Caught, trapped	4	5%
Struck by vehicle or falling object	7	8%
Fall from height	3	3%
Electrical contact/Other exposure	2	2%
Gunshot	1	1%
Undetermined	1	1%
Total	89	100%

Table 14: Firefighter Line of Duty Death Nature of Injury Data for 2023

Nature of Injury	Fatalities	Percentage
Sudden cardiac	36	40%
Traumatic injury	31	35%
Unspecified medical	8	9%
Asphyxiation	4	4%
Burns	3	3.5%
Gunshot	2	2%
Drowning	1	1.5%
Embolism/stroke	3	3.5%
Other	1	1.5%
Total	89	100%



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Years of data have shown that the most LODDs result from occupational health and other non-firefighting causes. The following overview highlights nationally recognized current trends, issues and challenges to firefighter health, safety, and wellness.

Cardiovascular Disease

Firefighters are among the highest risk groups for serious medical conditions, notably cardiovascular disease (resulting in sudden cardiac arrest) and cancer. The prevalence of cardiovascular disease is associated with many job-related factors. These include:

- Lack of sleep
- Poor diet
- Tobacco use
- Dehydration
- Lack of proper exercise
- Physical demands of the job
- Adrenaline “rush” cycle
- Exposure to the environment
- Lack of “down time” in between work shifts

Consistently, cardiovascular disease is the most common cause of death among firefighters. As noted, in 2023, the NFPA reported that 40% of all firefighter duty related fatalities were caused by cardiac events. Volunteer firefighters led this statistic as compared to career employees (65% to 35%).

Cancer

Occupational cancer has rapidly emerged as the greatest threat to firefighter health. The NIOSH has been a leader in cancer research and has determined that, when compared to the number of cancers expected using U.S. population rates, the firefighters in this study had a modest increase in cancer diagnoses (9% percent increase) and cancer-related deaths (14% increase). Other partner entities have developed additional research and support programs to assist firefighters in prevention and mitigation of this disease. These include the American Cancer Society, the IAFF, and the IAFC. In 2018, Congress passed the Firefighter Cancer Registry Act which mandated the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) create a voluntary registry to collect health and occupational information to determine cancer incidence in the nation’s fire service. Over 10,000 firefighters have signed up on the registry. In 2022, the International Agency for Research on Cancer found sufficient evidence to link firefighting with several types of cancer.

The NFPA data presently does not include the number of LODDs caused by cancer. This could change with the increasing scientific link between working as a firefighter and developing cancer. However, it is known that fires today expose personnel to various



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hazardous substances, many of which are known carcinogens. Firefighters can be exposed to hundreds of different chemicals in the form of gases, vapors, and particulates. Some of these hazardous substances are byproducts of combustion or burning, such as benzene and formaldehyde. Others come from the materials burning or in the fire debris, such as asbestos from older structures. Research now points to the presence of Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS), a compound found in firefighting foams and turnout gear as contributing to occupational cancer in the fire service.

Firefighters can come into contact with chemicals by breathing them in, getting them on their skin or in their eyes, or by ingesting them. If protective clothing, known as turnout gear, is not cleaned, or stored after a fire response or training event, chemicals on the gear or equipment can contaminate vehicles and the fire station. Reusing dirty turnout gear or respiratory protection can also result in exposures to hazardous substances. These exposures can occur by skin contact with contaminated personal protective equipment (PPE) or by breathing in or ingesting particles from contaminated PPE.

Suicide

The Firefighter Behavioral Health Alliance (FBHA) identified 79 firefighter suicides in 2023. Again, because of the lack of a conclusive link to the job of a firefighter, it is difficult to reliably include this number in the annual NFPA report. Suicide is a relatively new issue which is considered by some as the greatest cause of firefighter fatalities. The NFFF estimates that the number may be higher than reported by FBHA, and it is clearly a rate higher than experienced by the general population. The CDC has done research in this area which reveals that firefighters are at an elevated risk for suicide because of the environments in which they work, compounded by the general “macho” culture which is very prevalent in the profession. Stress plays a role here as it may be acute or chronic, caused by exposure to violent incidents (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, or PTSD), pandemic illness, substance abuse, and the overall work schedule which can result in strained personal relationships. Without adequate intervention, feelings of hopelessness, depression, and anxiety often lead to suicide. There is no formal program, such as an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for stress management for volunteers.

Roadway Incidents

The danger to firefighters, as well as other first responders, highway workers, and pedestrians shows an alarming number of “struck by” roadway incidents. As noted, in 2023 NFPA cited six firefighter fatalities from being struck on the roadway. Impaired driving due to being drowsy, drugged, drunk or distracted (the four D’s) has led the Emergency Responder Safety Institute (ERSI), in collaboration with the National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC), NFFF, NFPA, and law enforcement to focus on public awareness, apparatus visibility standards and training for first responders regarding this



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problem. Training is available through a several organizations which highlight preventive measures to reduce these incidents and their effects.

Active Shooter

Communities across the country are having to deal increasingly with domestic violence. The active shooter incident has permeated communities both large and small and has forced a more coordinated response by the fire service and law enforcement (known as Rescue Task Force, or RTF). The two primary missions-neutralizing the shooter and rapid patient extrication, now run concurrent versus in recent past where EMS waited outside until the building or area was cleared. Many lives have been lost due to large volume blood loss because of the extended time to initiate patient care. Now, thanks to federal Assistance to Firefighters (AFG) funds availability for ballistic vests for the fire service and more aggressive exsanguination protocols, more lives may be saved. Apart from the physical danger associated with entry into a shooter's area, the effects on short and long-term mental health of first responders are at the forefront of recovery and survival intervention efforts.

16 Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives- “Blueprint for Safety”

In 2004, at a fire safety summit in Tampa, Florida sponsored by the NFFF, the “Everyone Goes Home” program was developed. The hallmark “16 Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives” was produced as “blueprint” for reducing firefighter fatalities by 25% within five years and 50% within 10 years. In 2014, a second gathering, called “Tampa 2” was convened to assess the data at the 10-year mark. While substantial progress had been made in reducing firefighter fatalities, it was determined that much more work was and is needed. Most recently, in 2024, the NFFF hosted a summit to again evaluate the initiatives and there are revisions pending.

The 16 Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives are still very relevant, and should be considered for any fire department health, safety, and wellness program. The elements are as follows:

1. Define and advocate the need for a cultural change within the fire service relating to safety; incorporating leadership, management, supervision, accountability, and personal responsibility.
2. Enhance the personal and organizational accountability for health and safety throughout the fire service.
3. Focus greater attention on the integration of risk management with incident management at all levels, including strategic, tactical, and planning responsibilities.
4. All firefighters must be empowered to stop unsafe practices.



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5. Develop and implement national standards for training, qualifications, and certification (including regular recertification) that are equally applicable to all firefighters based on the duties they are expected to perform.
6. Develop and implement national medical and physical fitness standards that are equally applicable to all firefighters, based on the duties they are expected to perform.
7. Create a national research agenda and data collection system that relates to the initiatives.
8. Utilize available technology wherever it can produce higher levels of health and safety.
9. Thoroughly investigate all firefighter fatalities, injuries, and near misses.
10. Grant programs should support the implementation of safe practices and/or mandate safe practices as an eligibility requirement.
11. National standards for emergency response policies and procedures should be developed and championed.
12. National protocols for response to violent incidents should be developed and championed.
13. Firefighters and their families must have access to counseling and psychological support.
14. Public education must receive more resources and be championed as a critical fire and life safety program.
15. Advocacy must be strengthened for the enforcement of codes and the installation of home fire sprinklers.
16. Safety must be a primary consideration in the design of apparatus and equipment.

Department Safety and Operating Conditions

MissionCIT generally reviewed the current operating guidelines/programs/processes available for MFD personnel related to health, safety, and wellness. These include:

Firefighter Accountability System

The department has a firefighter accountability system of name tags that can be removed from their PPE and placed on red and white boards in the apparatus, creating a “Passport” system for tracking on-scene personnel and company assignments. Proper use of the Accountability System is outlined in MFD SOP 4.0007. Per the SOP, this system is required to be used on all calls and trainings by both MFD and mutual-aid personnel. It is encouraged that MFD continue to use and train on the accountability system.



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Medical Examinations

Though previously the fire department required NFPA-based physical examinations as part of the hiring process for new firefighters, it currently only requires a basic pre-employment physical similar to that used by the police department. Existing department members are offered voluntary annual physicals but they are not required. Research indicates the current approach was done as a cost-saving measure, as NFPA physicals cost well over \$1000. There is some concern, however, that some members may present a physical risk if called upon to perform the essential duties of a firefighter. As noted previously, firefighters' health is a critical issue nationwide. The research is clear that success in the early detection of occupational diseases, principally cardiovascular disease and cancer, is greatly enhanced by the administration of both entry level and on-going comprehensive medical examinations. NFPA 1500, "*Standard on Fire Department Occupational Safety, Health, and Wellness Program*", requires that members meet the medical requirements of NFPA 1582, "*Standard on Comprehensive Occupational Medical Program for Fire Departments*". This applies to members and membership candidates. NFPA 1582 is considered the "best practice" for addressing firefighter health issues. On October 10, 2023, the United States Fire Administration (USFA) affirmed that "every firefighter in the United States should receive a comprehensive annual medical examination".

Mental Health

The city offers an Employee Assistance Program which department personnel may elect to take advantage of. There is no formal or informal trained Peer Support network within the department.

Physical Fitness

No physical fitness policy exists. A previous plan to require a Physical Agility Test was tabled after significant pushback from department personnel. Minimal fitness equipment to include treadmills is located at Station 1, however the fitness room is currently used for storage and not easily conducive to use for fitness activities. There was some discussion about the possibility of department personnel being granted permission to use the fitness equipment at the senior center.

Station Fire Safety

It is customary that primarily volunteer-based fire systems often rely on "home response" for coverage. Stations often are designed for apparatus storage, with space for periodic company meetings or training space. This is generally the case in Monroe. Overall, the stations were in good physical condition, but there was evident a need for reducing clutter (trip or fall hazards), including work tools and incomplete projects. These concerns will become more important as the department moves to minimal "sleep in" crews.



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“Clean” Practices

Neither of the stations were equipped with vehicle exhaust removal/filtration systems to reduce the exposure to apparatus exhaust. Gear lockers are positioned within the apparatus bay area, exposing turnout gear and personal equipment to carcinogen exposure due to vehicle exhaust. MFD does own gear wash/extractor equipment for cleaning gear and removing carcinogens. The department has a policy in place for the proper wearing of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) including turnout gear. While personnel do a gross decontamination of turnout gear while on-scene after an incident, turnout gear is typically only routinely cleaned twice per year. There is no written SOP in place requiring that turnout gear be thoroughly cleaned after any exposure, including the products of combustion, however cancer wipes and hand sanitizer are made available to personnel and commonly used.

Operating Guidelines and Practices

From the review of the current operating guidelines and policies in the fire department handbook, several specific areas are also noted.

- The majority of policies were established over a decade ago by prior administrations. SOPs should be reviewed regularly and updated as necessary with a revision date clearly noted.
- There are several job descriptions for officer positions not currently filled. Typically, span of control should be 3-7 personnel per officer.
- In Section 6 of their policies, consideration should be given to establishing guidelines for handling electric vehicle fires.

Tobacco Use and Facial Hair

There were no written prohibitions against smoking and smokeless tobacco, nor a tobacco cessation program for members. The MFD follows the OSHA guidelines in regards to facial hair and SCBA mask use.

Recommendation 10.1

It is recommended that the MFD work to provide required annual health assessments to its career and volunteer personnel based on NFPA 1582, “*Standard on Comprehensive Occupational Medical Program for Fire Departments*” in addition to entry physicals. Health and Wellness programs received the lowest rating of all programs offered by the MFD in the internal member survey.



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Recommendation 10.2

It is recommended that the MFD consider funding opportunities to install exhaust removal systems in both stations. In the interim, leadership should research ways to isolate turnout gear and personal equipment from vehicle exhaust. Diesel soot and exhaust gases have been shown to be carcinogenic and imbed into the fabric of firefighters' gear and personal equipment if left exposed in the apparatus bay area of the fire station.

Recommendation 10.3

It is recommended that the MFD conduct an organizational audit against NFPA 1500, "*Standard on Fire Department Health, Safety, and Wellness Programs*" and develop a long-term plan to meet the safety requirements within the document.

Recommendation 10.4

It is recommended that the MFD regularly review and update its operating policies and procedures, at least every 3-5 years to ensure that policies and procedures are current and reflect the current operating conditions within the department and of the national fire service, to include;

- Electric vehicle fires
- New firefighting, ventilation or fire attack practices as published by the Fire Safety Research Institute

Recommendation 10.5

It is recommended that the MFD consider promoting a fitness culture to include additional equipment and a dedicated space conducive to exercise. In the event there is not a space available in the fire department's facilities, consider a public gym or other agency that may be willing to provide services for the MFD members.

Recommendation 10.6

It is recommended that the MFD make all personnel aware of mental health resources available to them and encourage members to seek assistance as needed.



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Section 11: Training

Firefighter Training in Wisconsin

Chapter SPS 330 of the Wisconsin State Code of Statutes provides for Fire Department Safety and Health Standards. Subchapter 6 of the statute relates directly to the training and education of firefighters in the state. Oversight for firefighter training falls to the Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS). The WTCS Board has an extensive policy and procedure manual, updated in January 2025, providing the certification requirements and process for those interested in certification in Wisconsin. The certification program is designed to meet the requirements set forth in Wisconsin state law. Firefighter I or II Certification is not required in Wisconsin to perform as a firefighter. However, firefighters must complete minimum training through a program overseen by the WTCS Board. Similar requirements exist for those wishing to become driver-operators of the apparatus as well as officers. The WTCS offers International Fire Service Accreditation Congress (IFSAC) certification programs for those wishing to achieve a higher level of training.

Required Certifications - Fire

Internally, the MFD has an established training program and follows the state requirements with its members. The MFD policy manual also addresses job requirements through detailed position descriptions and job focused policies and procedures. The MFD for its firefighter, driver-operator, and officer positions requires a higher level of training than the state law requires. For example, a firefighter is required to become a certified FF1 and obtain Emergency Medical Responder Certification within 18 months of the date of hire. Similar certification requirements exist for the other ranks in the department. Currently the department has the following number of certified personnel by specialty:

Table 15: Training Certifications Within the MFD

Training Certification Level or Equivalency	Number of Personnel
Firefighter I	18
Firefighter II	14
Driver/Operator	12
Fire Officer I	10
Fire Officer II or higher	3
Haz-Mat Operations	18
Haz-Mat Technician	0
Fire Instructor 1	9
Fire Instructor 2	1



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Ongoing Training

The MFD has a defined training program stipulated in MFD Standard Operating Guideline 5.0001 – Training Program. The SOG provides that all members must participate in training each month and identifies the minimum subjects for training annually. The policy was effective 12/2/2014. The MFD maintains training records on its members utilizing an in-house spreadsheet. Certification documents for personnel are maintained electronically within the department as well as within the WTCS certifications portal website.

EMS Training

EMS licensing, training and certification is managed by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS). DHS oversees the licensing of all EMS personnel within the state of Wisconsin. DHS publishes the initial certification and subsequent re-certification standards required for each level of EMS responder. DHS sanctions EMS training centers across the state of Wisconsin. Most of the available EMS level training for MFD personnel is conducted through Blackhawk Tech at either its Monroe or Janesville locations.

All MFD personnel are required to maintain, at a minimum:

1. Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation Rescuer Certification
2. State of Wisconsin Emergency Medical Responder (EMR) or higher-level medical certification/licensure.

As with fire training, the department has an established ongoing EMS training program in-house. The in-house training program lists CPR as one of the required training sessions all personnel must attend annually.

Required Medical Control

Medical control for the MFD is provided by an emergency physician affiliated with the SSM-Health Monroe Hospital. Green County EMS also uses the same physician for its medical control. The hospital currently maintains 14 different agencies under medical control.

During the site visit interview with the GCEMS Chief, it was discussed that none of the agencies in Monroe routinely participate in mass casualty incident training relating to active shooter situations. Even though communities may be relatively small, it has been proven by previous events that all are vulnerable. The EMS Chief spoke highly of the hospital and estimated its capability in a mass casualty event to be able to handle two (2) red tagged (critical) patients, one (1) yellow (serious) patient, and two (2) green (stable) patients simultaneously. Additional patients will have to wait for treatment



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locally or be transported to other area facilities. Without coordination between all responding agencies (law enforcement, fire, EMS), the scene, which is already chaotic from the event, will break down even further. Training and live drills in preparation of such events are needed to provide for the best possible outcome should an event ever occur.

Training Records

The study team reviewed the training hours provided by the department for 2024 and found that the program covered what appeared to be a wide range of subjects. However, the team was not always able to fully distinguish between fire training and medical training with the records provided. Therefore, the results posted here are more generic than what the study team usually presents. The team analyzed data from 2023 since that was the last full year of data in the data set provided. The data indicates that training hours were reported for 20 members of the MFD. The total training hours reported for 2023 break down as follows:

Table 16: MFD Training Hour Statistics

Item	Hours
Total Training Hours All Members	1,651.25
Lowest Number of Hours	9.25
Highest Number of Hours	210.00
Median Hours	68.875
Median Hours per Month	5.75

The MFD conducts training two (2) Tuesdays each month. The median of 5.75 hours per month indicates there is a strong commitment from the members to attend training to be better prepared for the emergencies found in the community.

Recommendation 11.1

It is recommended the MFD continue to develop its records management software systems (RMS) to be better able to document training hours. There are several solutions for training documentation commercially available.



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Recommendation 11.2

It is recommended the MFD continue to build its relationships with the Green County Sheriff's Office, Green County EMS, Monroe Police Department, and SSM-Health Monroe in developing mass casualty plans and exercises to test the response system's ability to address large mass casualty events, especially active shooter incidents.



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Section 12: Community Risk Reduction

Over the last 15 years, the term “community risk reduction” has become a standard for progressive fire departments across the country. Community risk reduction, more commonly referred to as CRR, pertains to programs administered by the fire department to make the community safer by reducing risk before emergencies occur. The goal is to identify the life safety and health risks in the community, then design and deliver programs to address those risks. As revenues for the operation of the fire department continue to be harder to obtain, it is imperative that leaders spend the money that is available to address the specific needs of the community such as in CRR programs.

It should be noted that Monroe Community stakeholders ranked CRR programs 4th of the top 5 programs/services they wanted from the MFD when polled during the stakeholder’s meeting during the site visit.

Inspection and Building Safety Program

The MFD has an active fire prevention and risk reduction program. The MFD uses a part-time fire inspector to perform fire and life safety inspections on the commercial properties in the city. The fire inspector reports directly to the Fire Chief. Recently, the Common Council for the city approved to make the fire inspector a full-time position. However, as of the writing of this report, the Fire Department has not transitioned the position to full-time. The Fire Chief is awaiting the results of this report and its recommendations before taking action on the inspector position.

A formal fire prevention inspection program decreases the risk of fire and subsequently life and property loss in a community by identifying potential issues before they become a significant hazard. Even when buildings are built to the most current standards of safety, over time, circumstances can change which can cause unsafe conditions for the public, employees, and firefighters. Excessive storage of combustible materials, blocked exits, damaged or disabled fire alarm and fire suppression systems, and other unsafe practices, compromise the ability of a building to effectively withstand the effects of a fire.

Apart from fire prevention code enforcement, the most effective way to protect lives from fire and reduce building damage is through community-based outreach and education on high-risk behaviors. When people are made aware of the prevalence of fire in America and are equipped with accurate information about causes and actions they may undertake, the risk of accidental fires are reduced.



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Presently, the fire district does not have a uniform, **data driven** program to educate the public on fire and life safety. The members of the fire department do provide some public safety messaging to community groups through the delivery of the fire safety programs (national level statistics) and their participation in the local schools.

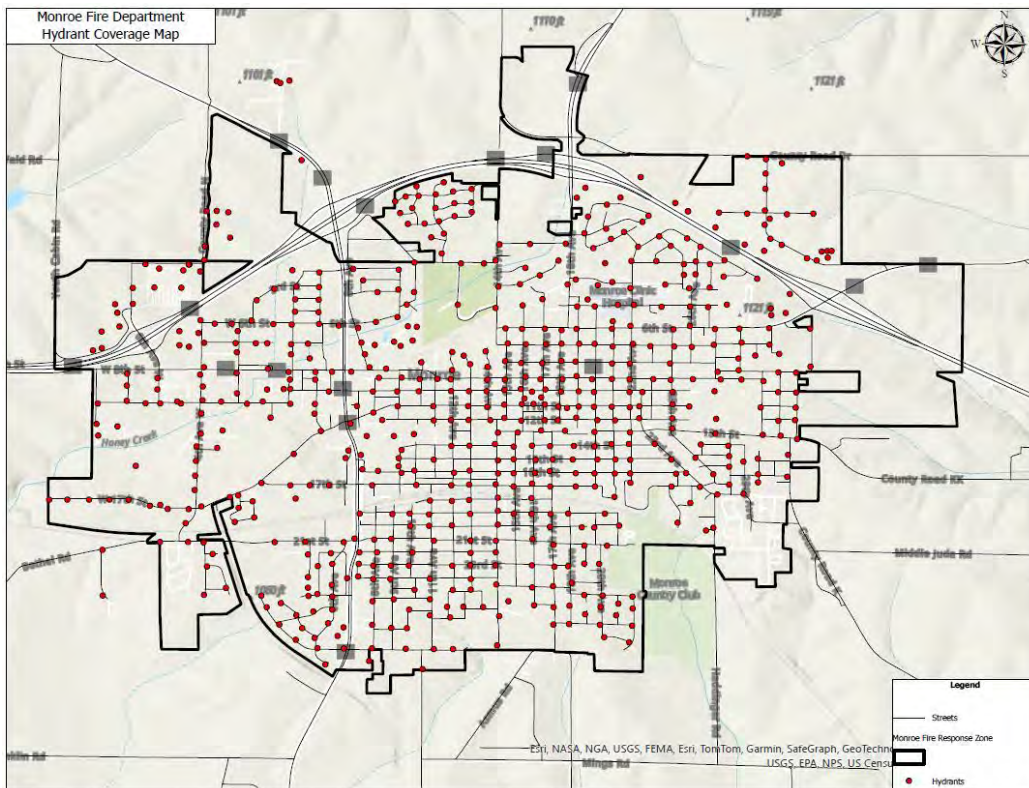
Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Public Program

The department also has a program to teach CPR to the public. Programs such as community CPR are helpful and reduce the risk in the community by essentially converting members of the public to lay-rescuers. Sudden cardiac death is a key cause for loss of lives in communities. These events are very sudden occurring with little warning. The timeframe for successful resuscitation decreases by 10% each minute after 4 minutes from the onset of the problem. Teaching community members to provide CPR can effectively extend the patients' chances of survival while awaiting the arrival of fire and EMS responders.

Water Supply (Fire Hydrants)

Maintaining a sufficient and accessible supply of water with which to fight fires is also critical to reducing risk in the community. The City of Monroe has an extensive fire hydrant supply network.

Figure 25: City of Monroe, WI Fire Hydrant Coverage Map





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The map above shows the location of all hydrants available within the city. It appears better than 90% of the city is covered by fire hydrants which is a very good indicator. Having good coverage is only one component of having adequate water supply. Other factors include water main sizes, water pressure, and water system capacity. Data from the city’s latest ISO Inspection indicates the water supply system is very good, scoring 35.56 points out of a possible 40 points.

Table 17: ISO Grading Values for Firefighting Water Supply

	Earned Credit	Credit Available
616. Credit for Supply System	26.26	30
621. Credit for Hydrants	3.00	3
631. Credit for Inspection and Flow Testing	6.40	7
Item 640. Credit for Water Supply:	35.66	40

Recommendation 12.1

It is recommended that the Monroe Fire Department conduct a comprehensive community risk assessment (CRA) to help guide its CRR efforts. Data and community knowledge should be included in the CRA.

Recommendation 12.2

It is recommended that the Monroe Fire Department continue to expand its emergency medical outreach programs to the community. Joint community training sessions with personnel from GCEMS should be considered.

Recommendation 12.3

It is recommended that the Monroe Fire Department hire the already approved Fire Inspector to enhance the safety of the community through a comprehensive fire and life safety inspection program.



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Section 13: ISO Rating Information

The Insurance Services Office (ISO) provides underwriting services to the insurance industry to include the assessment and rating of fire service organizations. The rating system is a determination of how well a fire department is prepared to serve a community.

The ISO rating scale runs from 1-10 with lower scores indicating a better rated fire department. An on-site assessment is conducted and the information and data that are gathered are then analyzed using an ISO Fire Suppression Rating Schedule (FSRS). A Public Protection Classification (PPC[®]) grade is then assigned to the community. There is extra credit available for fire departments with community risk reduction (CRR) efforts.

The PPC program evaluates communities according to a uniform set of criteria, incorporating nationally recognized standards developed by the National Fire Protection Association and the American Water Works Association. A community's PPC grade depends on:

- **Needed Fire Flows**, which are representative building locations used to determine the theoretical amount of water necessary for fire suppression purposes.
- **Emergency Communications**, including emergency reporting, telecommunicators, and dispatching systems.
- **Fire Department**, including equipment, staffing, training, geographic distribution of fire companies, operational considerations, and community risk reduction.
- **Water Supply**, including inspection and flow testing of hydrants, alternative water supply operations, and a careful evaluation of the amount of available water compared with the amount needed to suppress fires up to 3,500 GPM.

One of the main criteria for the PPC score is driving distance from the closest fire station to the fire scene. For maximum credit for driving distance, ISO requires that structures be within 5 driving miles from the nearest station. In addition, ISO requires that commercial properties be within 1.5 miles of the nearest station and within 2.5 miles of the nearest ladder company. ISO differs from NFPA in that ISO uses distance to determine risk and NFPA uses time to assess the risk. The following GIS distance studies indicate that better than 90% of the City of Monroe is within the 1.5-mile driving distance from the nearest station with a fire engine. The entire city and parts of the surrounding area are within the 2.5-mile driving distance from the nearest station with a ladder truck.



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Figure 26: MFD 1.5-Mile Driving Distance Map

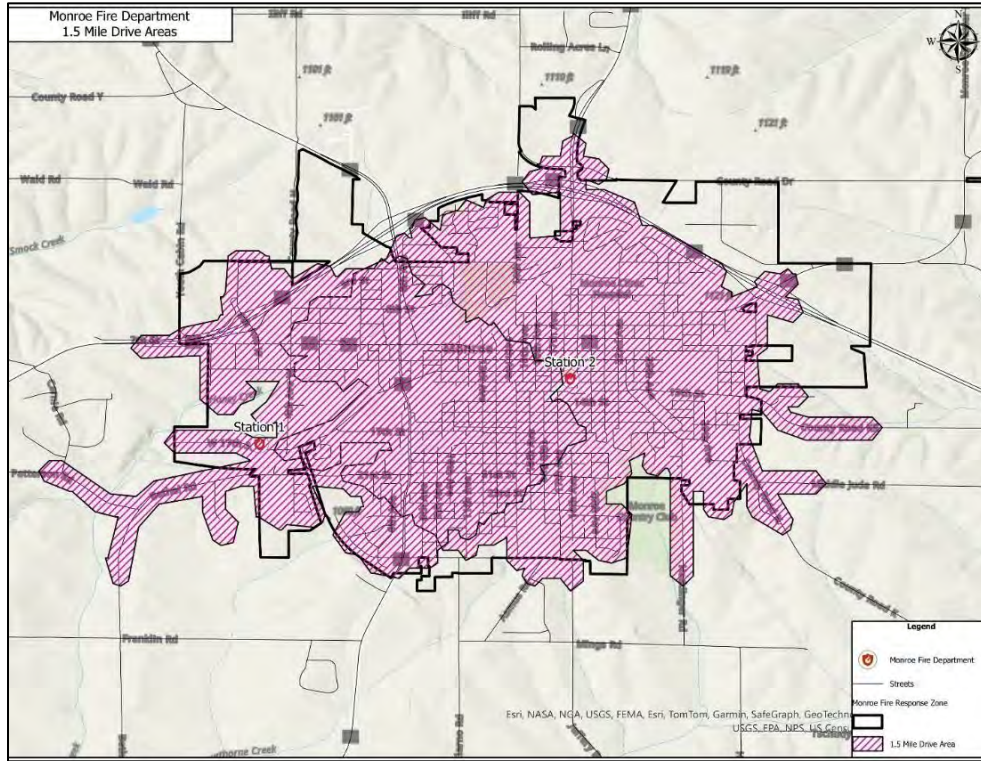
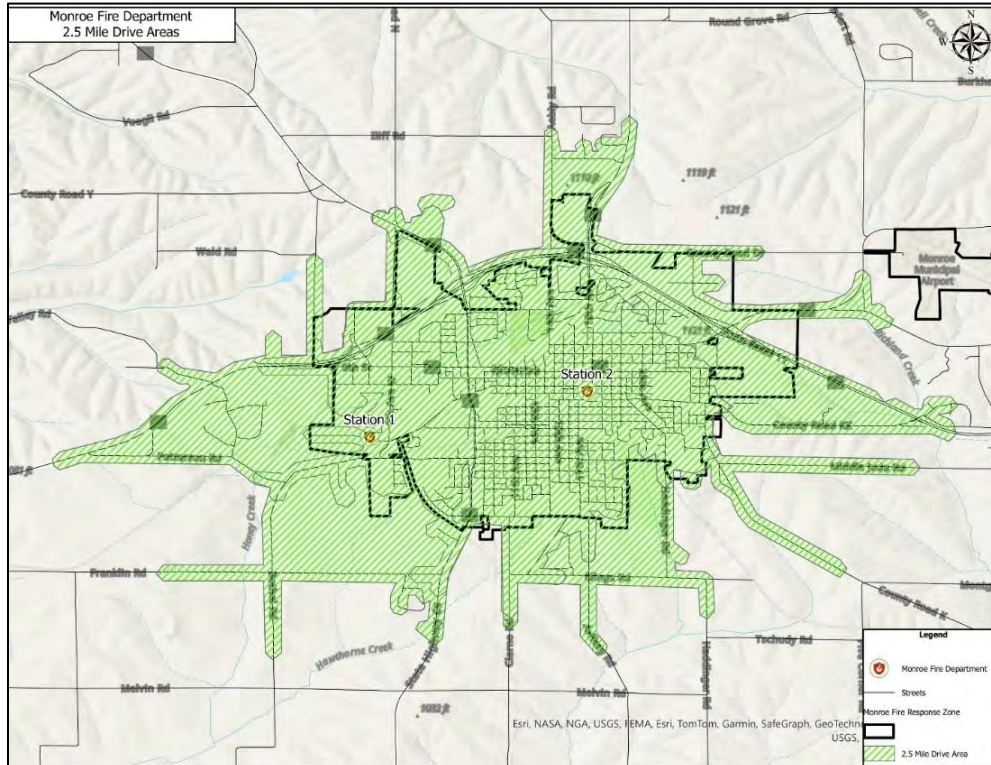


Figure 27: MFD 2.5-Mile Driving Distance Map





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In 2022, ISO conducted an assessment and provided a rating of the Monroe Fire Department and assigned a rating of Class 02/2Y. The Class 02 rating applies to properties within five road miles of a fire station. The class 2Y rating applies to properties that lie more than 1000 feet from a fire hydrant but are within five road miles of a fire station. At the time of data collection, The Y rating also is based on every station having the ability to respond, and “haul” at least 4,000 gallons of water. A summary of the ISO scoring is provided for reference.

Table 18: ISO Grading Values

FSRS Feature	Earned Credit	Credit Available
Emergency Communications		
414. Credit for Emergency Reporting	3.00	3
422. Credit for Telecommunicators	3.18	4
432. Credit for Dispatch Circuits	2.40	3
440. Credit for Emergency Communications	8.58	10
Fire Department		
513. Credit for Engine Companies	6.00	6
523. Credit for Reserve Pumpers	0.50	0.50
532. Credit for Pump Capacity	3.00	3
549. Credit for Ladder Service	3.81	4
553. Credit for Reserve Ladder and Service Trucks	0.26	0.50
561. Credit for Deployment Analysis	9.81	10
571. Credit for Company Personnel	4.18	15
581. Credit for Training	7.52	9
730. Credit for Operational Considerations	2.00	2
590. Credit for Fire Department	37.08	50
Water Supply		
616. Credit for Supply System	26.26	30
621. Credit for Hydrants	3.00	3
631. Credit for Inspection and Flow Testing	6.40	7
640. Credit for Water Supply	35.66	40
Divergence	-3.00	--
1050. Community Risk Reduction	5.22	5.50
Total Credit	83.54	105.50

The ISO ratings program provides an objective, countrywide standard that helps fire departments in planning and budgeting for facilities, equipment, and training. ISO ratings are used by insurance underwriters and better ratings may lower fire insurance premiums for communities.



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The ISO usually rates fire departments every 3-5 years. Departments may request a rating sooner if changes have been made that may positively affect the PPC score. Based on the last ISO rating for the fire department, it is only 6.46 points from improving to a Class 1 department. Conversely, the loss of only 3.55 points would reduce their rating to a Class 3. There are several possible areas that the fire district can focus on to help improve their operations and lower their class rating. Some of these categories are sub-areas within the larger categories, so the points awarded may not necessarily equate to whole points out of the total of 105.50 in the rating system. These areas included:

Company Personnel	4.18 out of 15 points
<p>This area looks at the available, on-duty personnel to respond to incidents. From its report, ISO credited CCFA with 1.13 on-duty personnel and an average of 9.87 on-call (volunteer) personnel responding to first alarm structure fires. This area represents the greatest possibility for improvement in overall grade. The total average personnel on scene at a structure fire is 11 which is significantly lower than the 15 as recommended by NFPA 1720. Having fewer people on scene to complete the tasks that are required means it will take longer to achieve incident objectives. Also, those working on scene will be tasked with doing more and fatigue will set in quicker. Fatigue may lead to injuries to personnel over time.</p>	
Water Supply – Inspection and Flow Testing of Fire Hydrants	6.4 out of 7 points
<p>Fire hydrants are expected to be inspected and flow tested on a regular basis.</p>	
Training	7.52 out of 9 points
<p>This section looks at the number of hours of training, the class content taught and the type of training, such as new member training, officer training, and driver training. The fire district obtained the following points in this category:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Company training - 12.50 out of 25 points • Officer training - 12.00 out of 12 points • Driver training - 5.00 out of 5 points • New Driver training - 3.33 out of 5 points 	



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Recommendation 13.1

It is recommended that the MFD should attempt to increase staffing levels on a daily basis to satisfy national standards and recommendations. Doing so will have a positive impact on safety and may improve ISO ratings.

Recommendation 13.2

It is recommended that the MFD require through contractual agreement that the GCSO Communications Center and the MPD Communications Center conduct a thorough review of communications capabilities including emergency reporting, telecommunications, dispatch protocols, and telecommunicator training and certification should be accomplished annually to ensure maximum credit for dispatching services.



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Section 14: Grants

Federal Grants

There are several federal grant programs available to the MFD to assist with the hiring of career personnel, the recruitment and retention of volunteer paid-on-call personnel and the purchase of firefighting equipment. These programs are administered through the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The two programs include the Assistance to Firefighter Grant (AFG) Program and the Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Program. These grant programs open for a set period each year to accept applications and then close while applications are reviewed, and awards made. The information on the grant programs comes from the most recent FY24 Notice of Funding Opportunities (NOFO).

https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/documents/fema_fy2024_afg_nof.pdf

Any new information or changes to these programs has been delayed due to changes in Administration. Within the current AFG program, fire departments can apply to purchase firefighting equipment such as personal protective equipment, breathing apparatus, fire apparatus, and safety equipment such as fire station vehicle exhaust systems, etc. During each yearly cycle, program requirements and priority funded items are published. In the AFG program, departments are typically only required to provide 5% of the necessary funds for the purchase of approved items. Departments who are experiencing significant fiscal stress can apply for a waiver to DHS to have the 5% match waived.

The SAFER grant program is available to departments for the hiring of career personnel or for the recruitment and retention of volunteer firefighters. Typically, priority is given to those departments which do not currently meet national NFPA standards regarding staffing. In this program, recipient departments are awarded funds to hire and pay full time personnel for a three-year period at no cost share by the department. Funds can also be provided to pay for the initial personal protective equipment and training of these personnel. Departments desiring to increase their volunteer membership can apply for SAFER grants to fund volunteer recruitment campaigns, entry level physicals, training, uniform, and personal protective equipment costs and even fund salaries and benefits for volunteer recruitment and retention program managers. Departments are limited to submitting only one application per year for either the hiring of career personnel or volunteer recruitment and retention.



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State Grants

The Wisconsin Department of Revenue offers an innovation grant program. The program encourages entities such as tribes, municipalities, and counties to combine services to reduce operating costs and increase effectiveness and efficiency. Combining fire and EMS services is an area that over time may provide cost savings and an increase in effectiveness. This is especially true as the fire and EMS agencies in Monroe are seeing difficulties recruiting and retaining volunteer members, which is pushing the services toward the hiring of career personnel. This is a national trend and there is little to indicate trends will change. Currently, neither MFD or GCEMS are considering consolidating services. However, over the next five years, the subject deserves discussion and consideration.

Recommendation 14.1

It is recommended that the Monroe Fire Department work with in-house or professional grant writers to apply for AFG Grant funding for equipment and SAFER Grant funding to bolster staffing.



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Benchmark Data

MissionCIT reached out to several departments that are similar to the Monroe Fire Department to provide benchmark data to assist in the study. Benchmark data provides a department an idea of how others are doing with similar items such as staffing, pay, benefits, and response. After numerous attempts to obtain responses from the other departments by the consultant team and the Monroe Fire Chief, only one agency responded. Therefore, there is not adequate information to make any recommendations based on benchmark data.



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Future Picture of Paid-On-Call Volunteer Emergency Services System

The future of the MFD will likely be a slow transition to a hybrid department maintaining paid-on-call firefighters supplemented by a limited number of full-time firefighters. The exact number of full-time firefighters required and the time at which they will be required will depend upon the success of the MFD's recruitment and retention programs, total workload levels at the time, and the availability of funding to support the program.

The current volunteer paid-on-call component of the MFD is under stress, which has a negative effect on the fire department. More specifically, the volunteers are under stress due to:

- Training requirements
- Call volume
- Lack of available time
- Declining numbers due to aging out of the system
- Reduced interest in volunteering by citizens

All of these issues impact the availability of current volunteers for the MFD, when its calls for service, particularly EMS calls, are increasing. The same issues can have a negative effect on the recruitment and retention of future volunteers.

To provide greater stability for the volunteer system and potentially extend the time before paid assistance is required, much greater emphasis will need to be placed on:

- Proactive recruitment of new members - This should include non-operational volunteers who can serve in support roles and ease time commitments for fire department volunteers.
- Proactive efforts and programs to incentivize and retain existing volunteers.
- Flexible and innovative training programs to accommodate personal schedules and needs.



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Recommendations

MissionCIT has made multiple recommendations throughout this report for improvements to the Monroe Fire Department. These recommendations, along with the Goals and Objectives in the Strategic Plan found later in this report, can help to improve the organization in the following areas:

- Staffing
- Volunteer Recruitment and Retention
- Funding
- Safety
- Organizational Processes and Procedures

These improvements will take time, effort, and funding to accomplish. To be successful, the city Administration and the Fire Chief will have to commit to action and prioritizing a long-term focus on these items.



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Survey Information

As a component of the development of the strategic plan, the study team conducted surveys, interviews, and meetings to develop input from the public, the elected officials of the city, the administration of the city, and the members of the fire department. The information gathered through this process helps the study team better understand the issues within the city, department, and the citizens being served by the MFD.

Community Stakeholder Meeting

To truly be effective, the Strategic Plan must be community centered and forward focused. If the community is not considered and involved in the process, it is likely that any goals and objectives developed to guide the fire department over the next five years will be misguided. Often emergency services leaders get so involved with the day-to-day issues of keeping the service going that they can lose sight of the strategic needs of the community and organizational goals.

During the site visit, the study team conducted an open meeting with members of the community which included business leaders, citizens, school officials, hospital representatives, and members of the city's administration. The purpose of the meeting was to ascertain the public's opinion of the fire department as it currently operates, as well as to identify the services it expects from the MFD now and into the future.

The community members in attendance were asked to provide a **listing of the services they believe the fire department currently provides**. Responses from the group were:

- Assist EMS
- Fight Fires
- Fundraising
- Hazardous Materials Spill Response
- Mutual Aid for Other Agencies that Need Assistance
- Parades (participate)
- Provide Public Education (CPR classes)
- Training to Department Members to Be Prepared

Participants were then asked to provide a **listing of the services they wanted now or in the future**. Responses from the group were:

- Community Risk Reduction Activities and Programs
- Home Fire Safety Inspections
- Outreach and Marketing About the Department
- Staffing (adequate staffing/more recruits)



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Throughout the meeting the group was very talkative and participated in the process. There was a substantial amount of discussion regarding the formation of the Monroe Rural Fire District and its impacts on the current state of the services of both agencies. However, the group agreed that both agencies worked together when necessary. The group also was very appreciative of the job the MFD does on a daily basis for the community.

Finally, the group was asked to **prioritize its top five (5) areas of importance for the MFD to provide to the community**. The top five were chosen from the services list created earlier. The results were:

1. Fighting Fires
2. Assisting EMS
3. Acquiring and Maintaining Adequate Staffing Now and Into the Future
4. Providing Community Risk Reduction Programs Tailored to the Monroe Community.
5. Training for a Well-Prepared Response Team

The Top 5 List provides a good starting point for the development of the department's next five years' Strategic Goals and Objectives.

Internal Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Challenges Session

In addition to the public stakeholder meeting, the study team met with a group of department rank and file members to conduct a SWOC analysis from their viewpoint. Unfortunately, although the meeting was advertised and offered to all members of the department, a group of only four (4) people attended. The Fire Chief and Company Officers of the department were asked not to attend since sometimes rank and file members will not speak freely when their supervisors are present. The members attending the meeting at the study team's request remained anonymous. The group, although small, was very engaged and provided good discussion and responses. The members of the group take their jobs as firefighters seriously and are dedicated to the department and the community. However, they did express concerns throughout the meeting and SWOC process regarding the department. The SWOC session responses were (in no ranked order):

Strengths

- The department has nice “stuff”, trucks, equipment, and stations.
- The department has many talented people.
- The department is developing its EMS program and that is going well.
- Members are offered an annual physical at no cost to them.



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- The MERIT Center (training facility) is an outstanding facility and tool available to help train the department.

Weaknesses

- The department is very young. It has lost a great deal of the experience it once had due to the split, retirements, etc.
- The training program is weak. We need a better driver training program.
- The department is down to 20 members.
- The annual physical has been trimmed down.
- Not taking care of MERIT Center.
- Reduced access to the MERIT Center by other agencies.
- Slacking on upkeep of the equipment.
- Opportunities are not offered equally.
- Lack of willingness to work with other agencies (Rural).
- Onboarding program has decreased from what it was previously.
- Standards for new hires have diminished.
- No form to how things happen.
- The department needs to acknowledge when things did not go well.
- The Police and Fire Commission does not represent the firefighters. There is no place to go.

Opportunities

- Improve ourselves going forward.
- Establish a training committee
- Build mutual aid relationships
- Identify the customer (community)
- Develop leadership's relationships with the line (rank and file)

Challenges

- Trying to get people on the truck as quickly as possible.
- Animosity (both sides, other fire departments as well)
- Ongoing drama

As with all surveys and exercises of this type, it is always prudent to evaluate the responses with some skepticism. There is always the opportunity to air grievances in these scenarios which is not the purpose of the session. On the other hand, leaders must take the comments seriously and use the information as part of a bigger body of data from which to make decisions. Just as in the community meeting data, there is data in this session that can and should be utilized to make decisions regarding the goals and objectives for the MFD over the next five years.



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Elected Officials and Interviews

The study team met individually with the Mayor and each Common Council member to acquire their perspective on the fire department and strategic plan. The interviews focused on two main questions:

1. What is your impression of the fire department currently?
2. Where do you see or want to see the fire department in five years?

Generally, the responses were very positive in regard to the current fire department, with many stating the department environment is better now than it was before and during the recent split with Monroe Rural. Most of the elected officials realized the need for additional volunteer firefighters now and that recruiting, training, and maintaining firefighters is the main concern to address moving into the future. Most recognized the dedication of the firefighters but were concerned with the loss of older members and experience stating that it could be dangerous without proper training for the younger personnel. The elected officials also mentioned the need to work with outside agencies such as Monroe Rural over the next five years to provide more cooperative services. Although some of the elected officials realized the difficulty, the possibility of reuniting the City of Monroe Fire Department with the Monroe Rural Fire Department at some point in the future was discussed.

Internal Member Survey

As an additional method of polling the membership for its impressions of the department, an online survey was provided. The survey was accessed by an online link and responses were anonymous. In general, the responses from the survey were very positive from the membership of the department. This is indicative of a well-performing organization and is credited to the department's leadership and the support of the City. Fourteen members of the department responded to the survey and supplied responses. Of those responding, 50% had less than five years of work in the department which speaks back to the SWOC comment regarding a young department. However, the remaining 50% had at least 16 years with the department and 28.6% of those respondents having 26 or more years.

Of the 14 respondents, the majority (78.5%) were at the Probationary Firefighter, Firefighter, MPO, or EMR rank. The remainder of the respondents were company or chief level officers. The breakdown nearly mirrors the makeup of the department as far as the number of firefighters compared to the number of officers/chiefs.

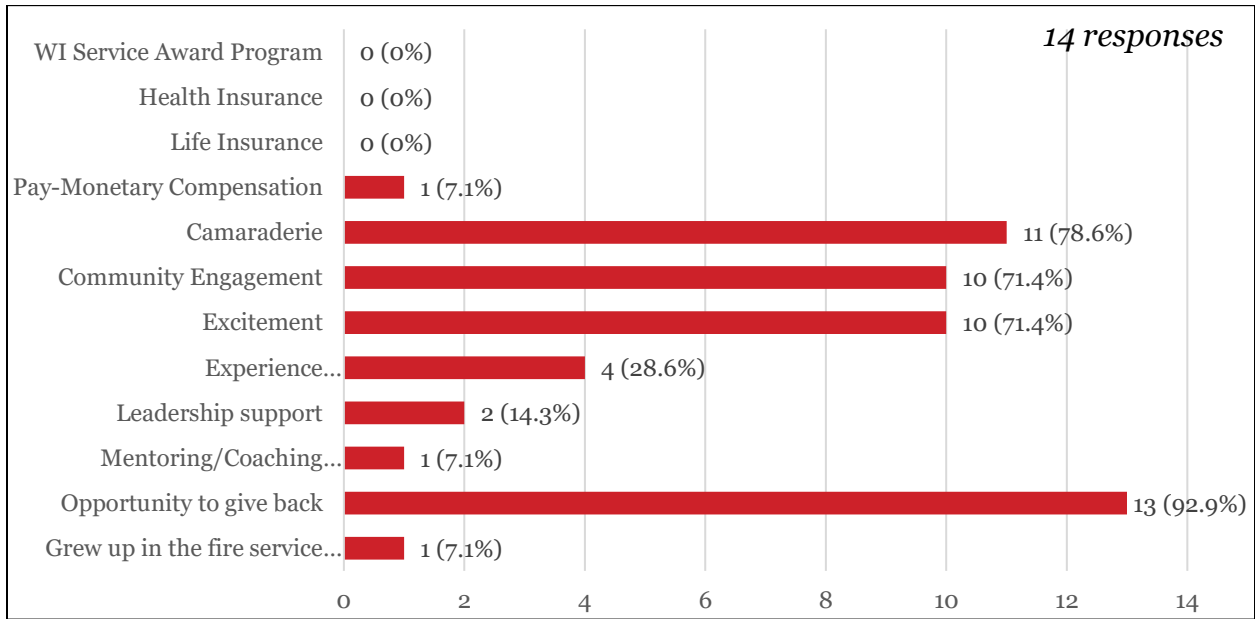
In the last six (6) months 28.6% of the members of the department have felt like quitting, while 14.3% were unsure about quitting. The remaining 57.1% responded they had not considered leaving the department.



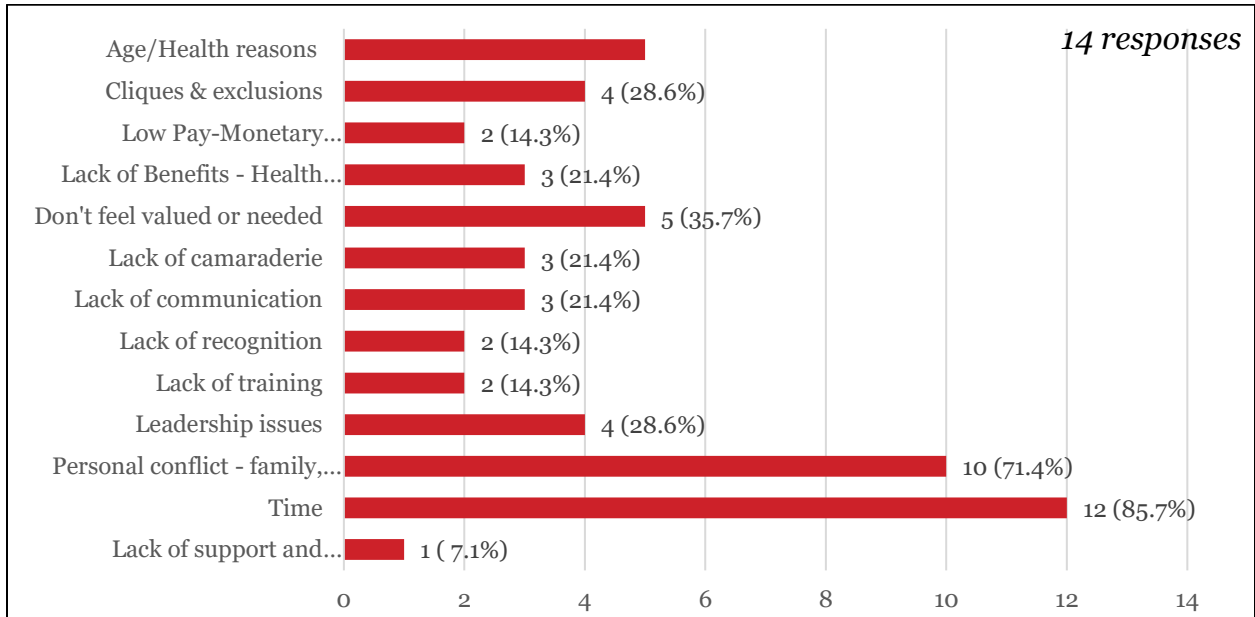
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The following charts provide information as to why people do and do not want to join the MFD. This information can assist leaders in making decisions regarding recruiting and retention within the department.

What are the reasons you became a paid-on call member with the department? Choose all that apply.



What are the reasons you feel are deterrents to becoming a paid-on call member in the department? Choose all that apply.





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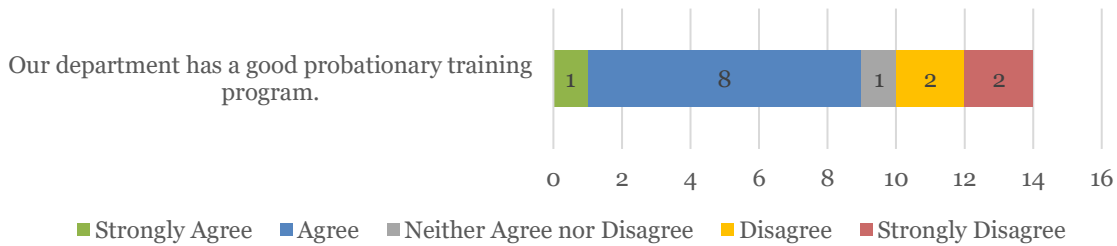
Detailed Survey Responses and Analysis

The survey asked respondents to provide feedback on the department’s efforts in several fire service categories. Those categories are:

- Training and Professional Development Programs
- Recruitment and Retention of Paid-On-Call (POC) Volunteers
- Level of Communication within the Levels of the Department
- Department’s Working Environment (morale, trust, etc.)
- Department’s Approach to Safety
- Leadership and Direction in the Department
- Department’s Service Delivery
- Department’s Equipment and Facilities
- Appraisal of How Well Services are Delivered by Service Type
- Appraisal of Benefits Provided to POC Volunteers
- Provide the Reasons Members Joined the Department
- Provide Information on Deterrents to Becoming a Member of the Department

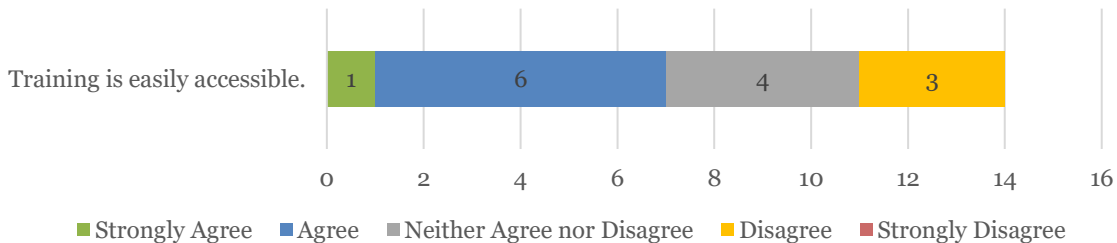
Training and Professional Development Responses

Question 1



Analysis - The majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. This conflicts somewhat with data from the SWOC session. However, there was a greater number of younger respondents in the data set which likely led to this result.

Question 2

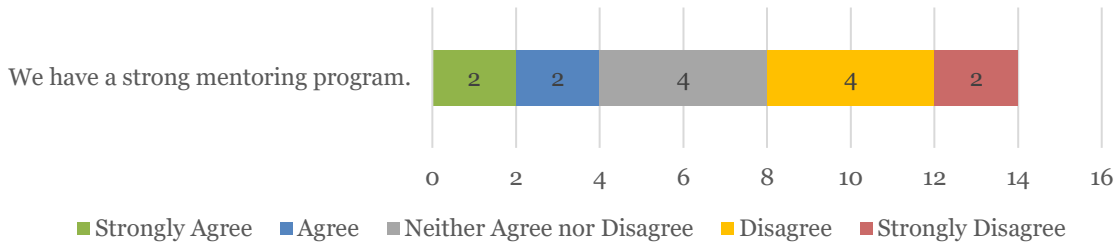




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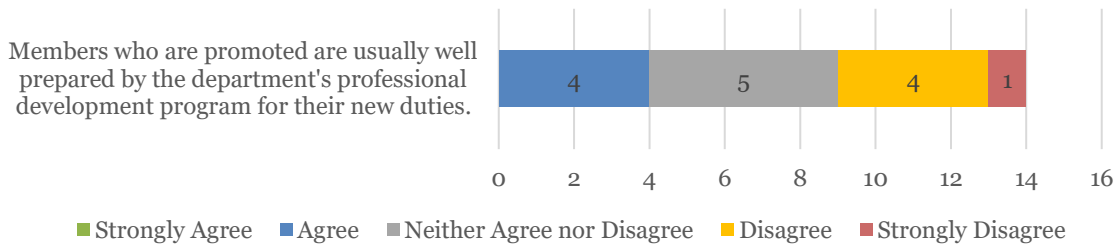
Analysis - The respondents were split on this question. If members have the idea that training for their job is not easily accessible this can lead to lower morale and eventual loss of the members.

Question 3



Analysis - Respondents either did not have an opinion (4), disagreed (4), or strongly disagreed (2) with this statement. Mentoring programs have long lasting positive effects when implemented properly. In young departments mentoring is an excellent way to bring the younger members along quicker and safer.

Question 4

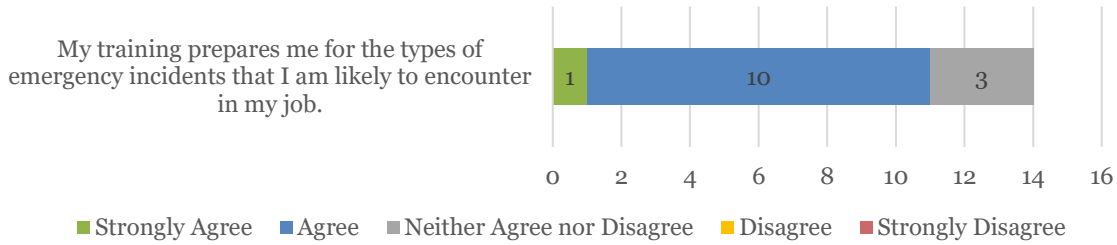


Analysis - Only 4 of the respondents agreed with this statement while the rest either did not have an opinion (5), disagreed (4), or strongly disagreed (1). This data may indicate the members do not believe those who are being promoted within the department are fully prepared to assume the new roles. It could also mean that some in the department do not agree with those being promoted. This could be input from the employees who are receiving new supervisors or supervisors who feel they are not ready for their new role.



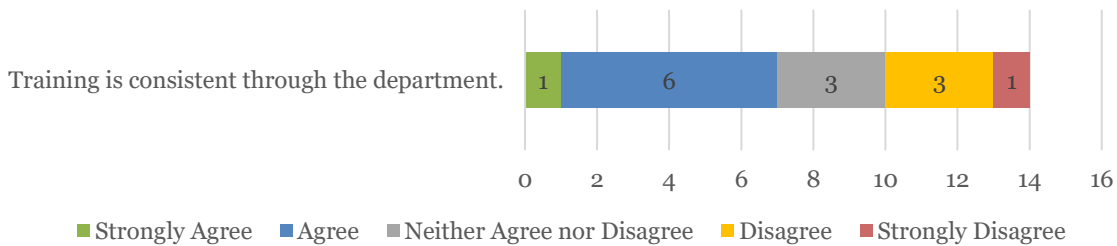
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Question 5



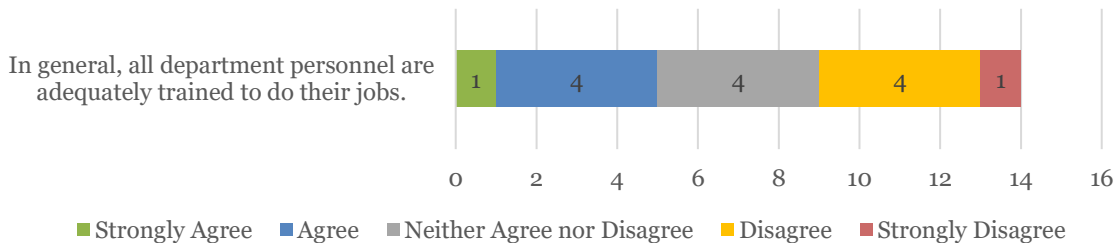
Analysis - Of the 14 respondents the majority indicated they agreed with this statement (10), while 3 had no opinion and 1 strongly agreed. This indicates that the training program is preparing department members satisfactorily based upon the impressions of the members. This leads to confidence in performing job duties.

Question 6



Analysis - The respondents are split on this question. Six respondents agreed, 1 respondent strongly agreed, while 3 respondents had no opinion, 3 disagreed, and 1 strongly disagreed. Training consistency is important to maintain so that everyone is conducting tasks and procedures in the same manner, efficiently, effectively, and safely. This result should be further investigated by leadership to make certain that training is applied consistently across the organization, including access to training programs.

Question 7



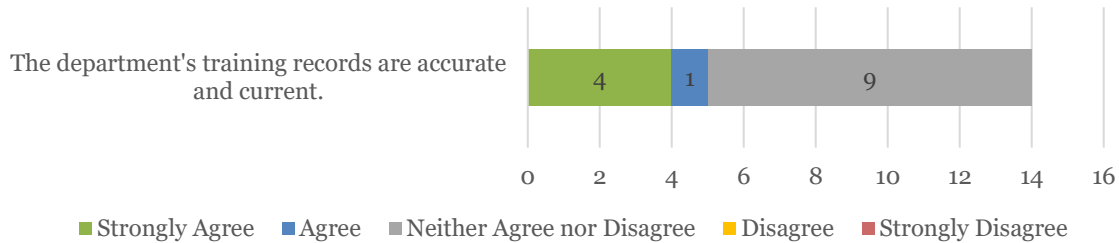
Analysis - The respondents were split evenly on this question. Four respondents had no opinion, 3 respondents disagreed, 1 respondent strongly disagreed, 3 respondents agreed, and 1 respondent strongly agreed. This result is somewhat in conflict to



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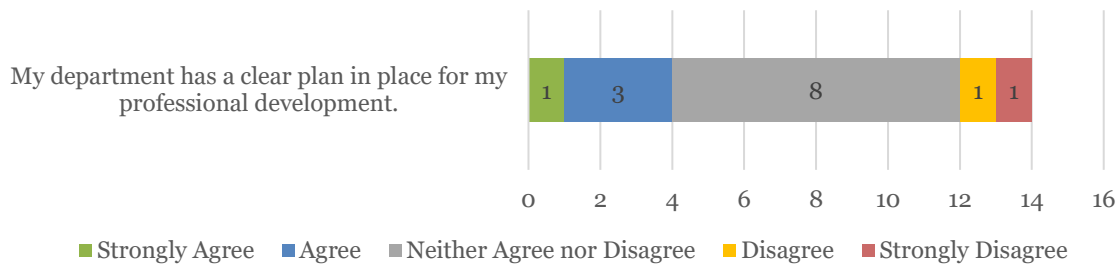
Question 5 regarding training to be able to handle the emergencies to which members respond. In Question 5, 10 respondents agreed that they were properly trained.

Question 8



Analysis - In general, respondents either had no opinion (n=9), agreed (n=1), or strongly agreed (n=4). It is not unusual for members to not know or have an opinion on training records unless they are directly involved in administration or the training program.

Question 9



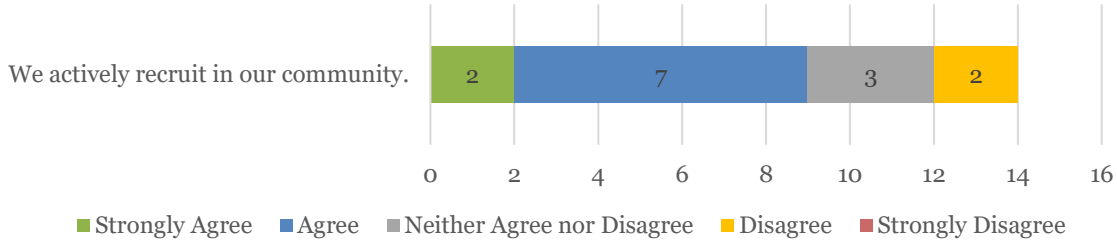
Analysis - In general, respondents are somewhat split on this question. One (1) respondent strongly disagreed, one (1) disagreed, eight (8) had no opinion, three (3) agreed, and one (1) strongly agreed. Career planning along with succession planning helps keep personnel moving upward and preparing for greater responsibility. This helps keep the organization grounded and looking forward with future leaders being developed before the time comes.



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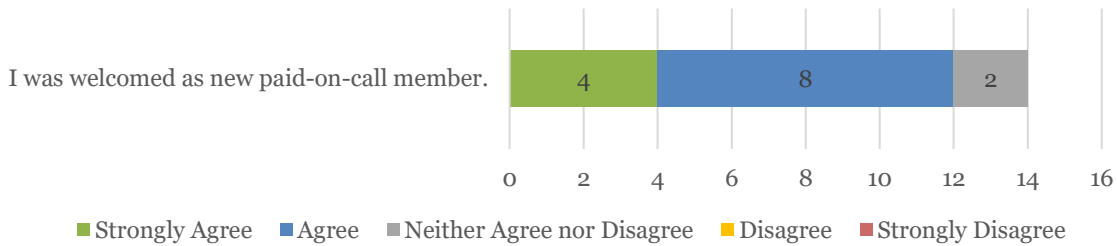
Recruitment and Retention Responses

Question 1



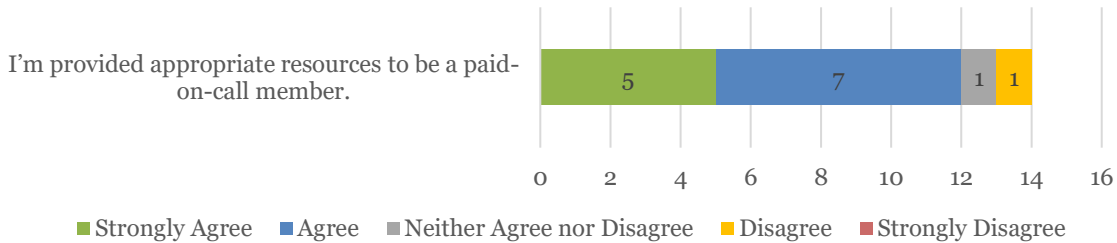
Analysis - Greater than 50% of the department either has no opinion or agrees with the statement. However, it is difficult to categorize that the entire department is aware of the recruiting effort when there are no opinion (3) and disagree (2) responses. The recruitment program should be presented to the members and their assistance in projecting it into the community should be requested.

Question 2



Analysis – The overwhelming majority of the respondents found that they agreed or strongly agreed with the statement and felt welcomed as a new firefighter in the organization.

Question 3

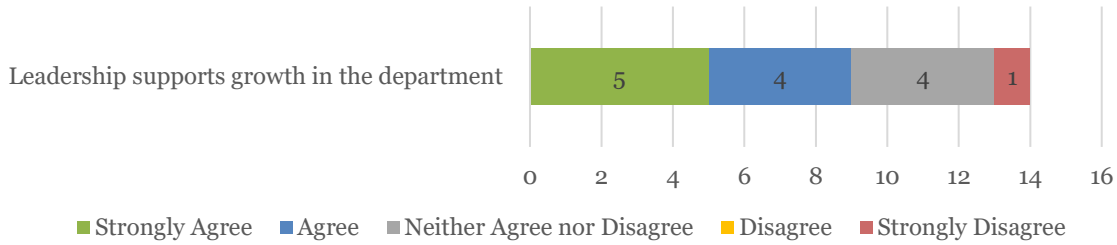


Analysis – The overwhelming number of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with this question indicating their agreement with the resources provided to be a member.



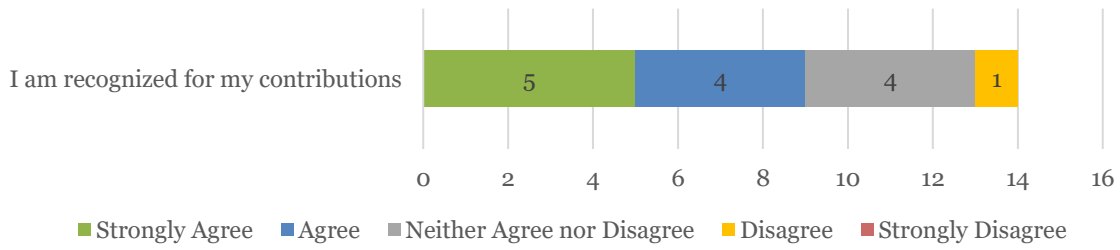
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Question 4



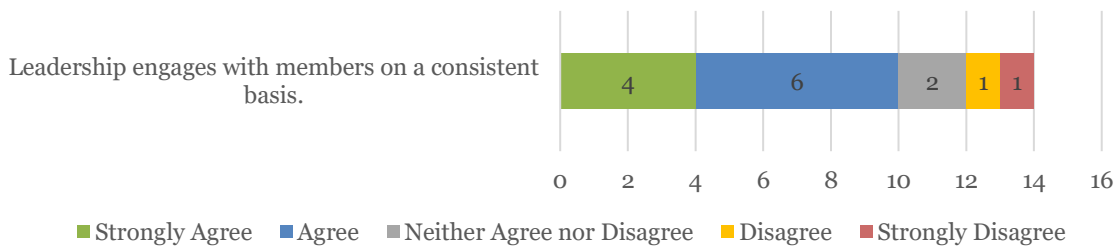
Analysis – Generally the respondents agree with the question. Nine respondents either agreed (4) or strongly agreed (5). This indicates the rank and file as a group believe leadership wants them to grow in the department and their careers.

Question 5



Analysis – The majority of the members responded positively to this question indicating they are receiving support and acknowledgement from superiors and the community for what they are providing. This is important to maintain morale and purpose for the members.

Question 6

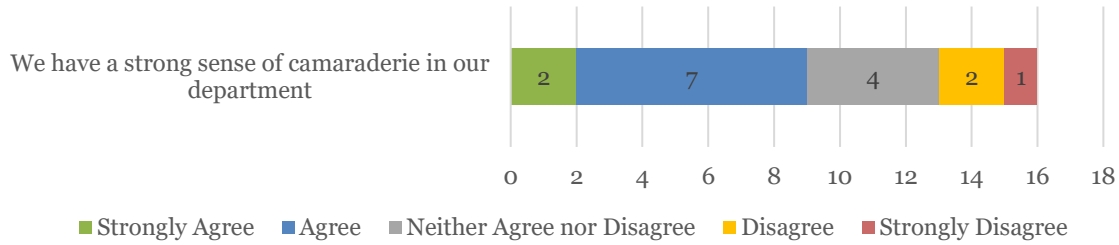


Analysis – The majority of respondents agreed (6) or strongly agreed (4) with this question indicating that department appointed leaders are consistently engaging with the membership. However, there are two negative responses which cannot be denied, especially with consistency. If, over time, the membership perceives that leadership is not being consistent in its messaging, administration of programs, and enforcement of rules and policies, there can be loss of trust and morale in the ranks. Leaders should be aware of how they are perceived and continue to set the example on a daily basis.



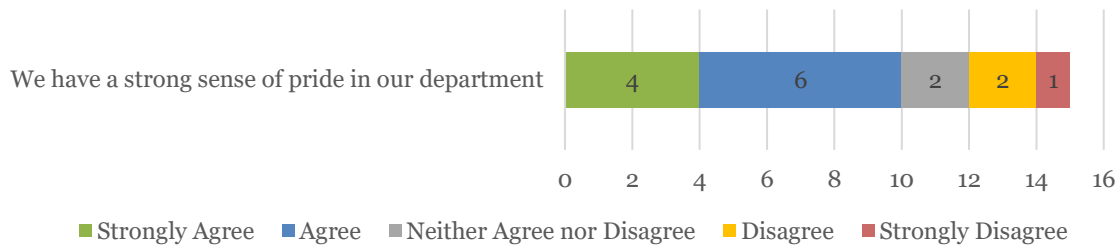
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Question 7



Analysis – This question has 16 responses although there were only 14 registered respondents. However, the majority of respondents (9) agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. However, there were 3 respondents who disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement. Camaraderie is one of the tenets of the fire service. Firefighters consider themselves brothers and sisters and a close working relationship is needed to effectively perform the job successfully. The leaders of the department should watch this closely to stay ahead of potential problems.

Question 8



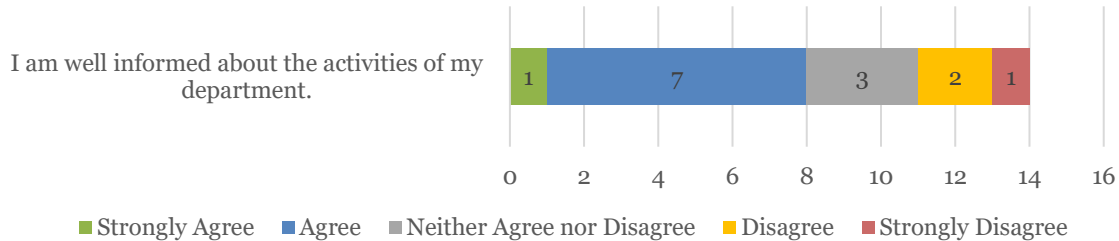
Analysis – The responses to the question are similar to the responses regarding camaraderie, which makes sense. Pride tends to mean that the members feel good about their department, their equipment, and the service they are providing to the community. Having a strong sense of pride in the organization is healthy and promotes morale. However, as the data shows, there are some members who are not perceiving the department in the same way as the majority of the members. This can lead to internal strife and create harm to the organization if left unrecognized.



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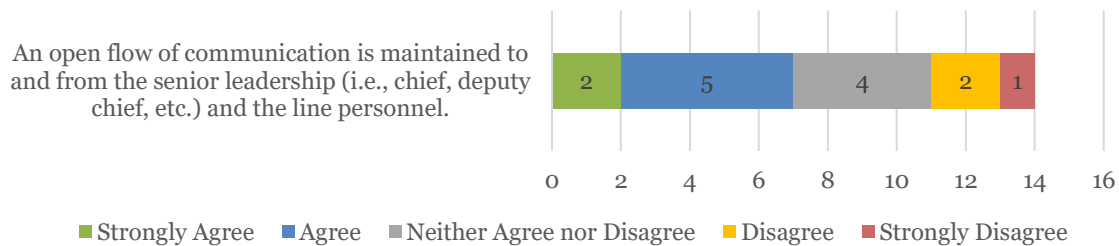
Communication Responses

Question 1



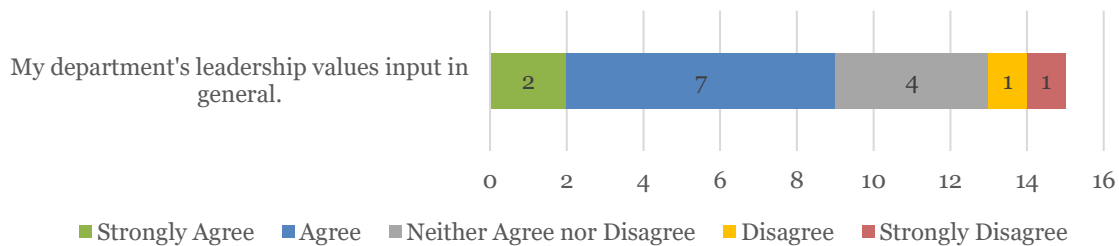
Analysis – The majority of the respondents agreed (7) or strongly agreed (1) with the question. Communications up, down, and across the chain of command are important to the effective operation of the department. Also, keeping members informed is important to control rumors, maintain consistency and maintain morale.

Question 2



Analysis – The majority of respondents agree that there is an open flow of communication in the organization. Having approachable leaders opens communications and enhances the overall mission of the organization.

Question 3



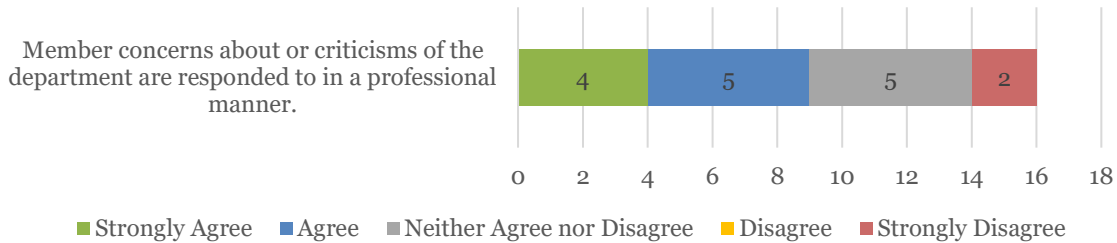
Analysis – Fifteen members responded to this question. The majority (9) of respondents agreed with the question while 2 respondents disagreed. Four respondents had no opinion on the question and that has been the trend throughout this section of the survey. It is impossible to discern whether the no opinion responses



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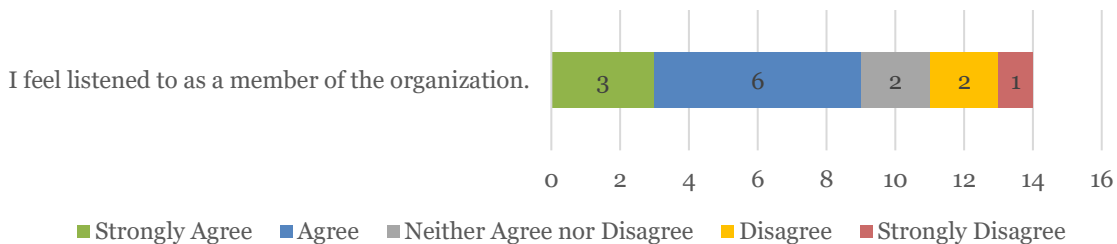
lean one way or the other. It is always possible those with no opinion have not had the need to provide input.

Question 4



Analysis – Nine of the 16 members who responded to this question agreed, while 2 members strongly disagreed. However, 5 members did not have an opinion either way. Therefore, it is difficult to fully evaluate the response other than the majority agreed. Professionalism at all levels is important to the organization. Lack of professionalism is quickly recognized by the community and will lead to a loss of that support.

Question 5



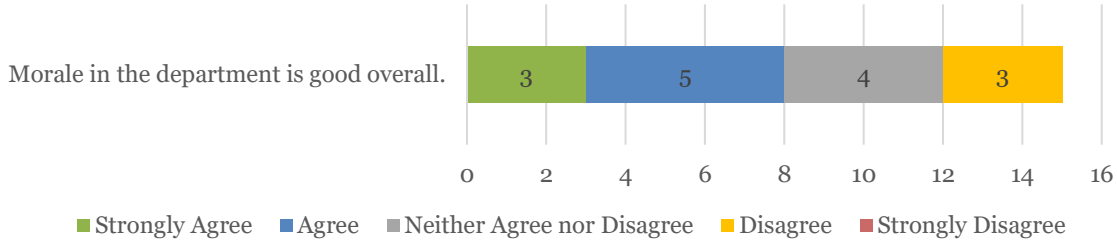
Analysis – The majority (9) of members who responded agreed with the question, but the trend of two to three responses disagreeing with the question is also present. However, the responses were more well defined with only 2 respondents having no opinion. This data indicates that on the whole, most members feel listened to and believe their voices are heard and they can make a difference. This is very positive for the organization.



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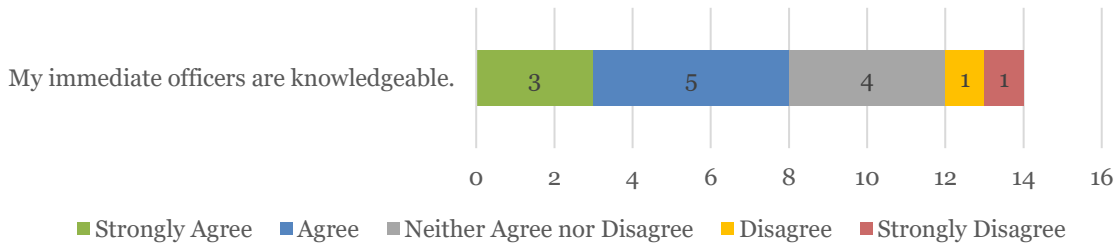
Department Environment Responses

Question 1



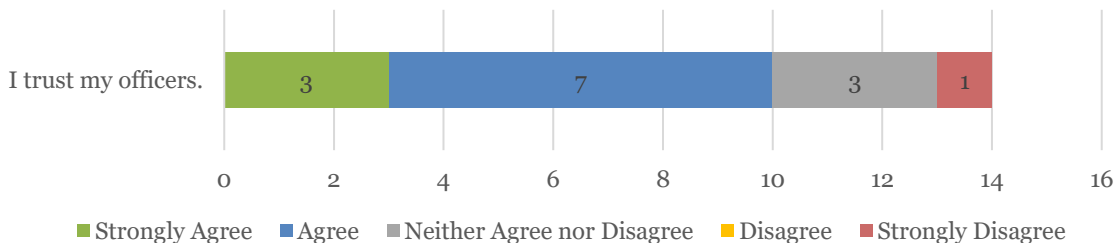
Analysis – It is felt within the department that morale is generally good. Eight members agreed (5) or strongly agreed (3). Morale is an important aspect to measure since it effects all personnel. High morale typically means the organization is functioning at a high level and personnel are committed. However, it only takes a small minority of members to have low morale and adversely impact the rest of the personnel.

Question 2



Analysis – The majority of the members responded positively to this question and feel their officers are knowledgeable. This is important because it builds trust between the officers and the firefighters.

Question 3



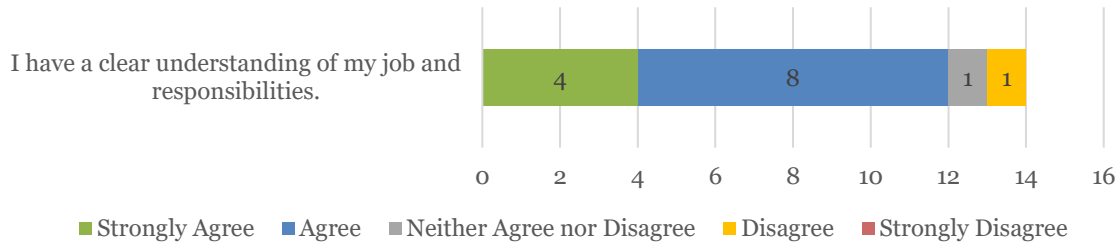
Analysis – The majority of the department’s members have trust in their officers. Trust in leadership is critical in the fire service, where decisions must be made quickly



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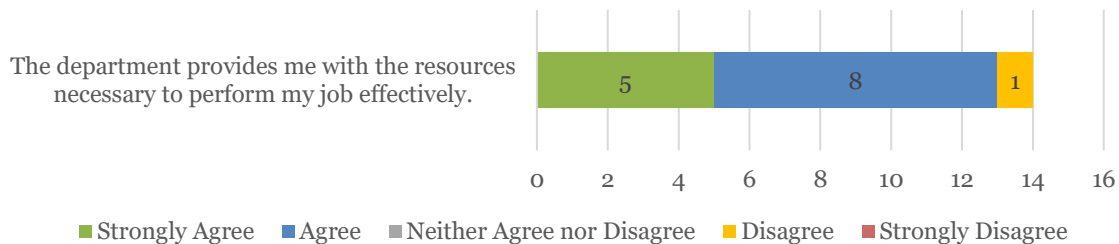
and can impact the safety of everyone. Trust is needed to keep the organization functioning at an appropriate level.

Question 4



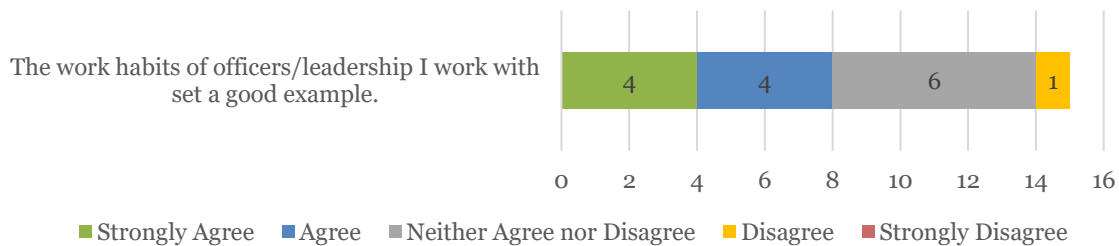
Analysis – Overwhelmingly, the members support this question. Firefighting requires members to work together as teams. Twelve members agreed (8) or strongly agreed (4) with the question. Often these teams perform multiple tasks as a group and it is critical to success that all members understand their jobs and responsibilities. Confidence is also increased when members feel comfortable with the job and its responsibilities.

Question 5



Analysis – Overwhelmingly the members responded in agreement (8) and strongly in agreement (5) to the question. Also, there were 0 responses of no opinion. One of the issues the study team often encounters while consulting for other organizations is a lack of resources required to perform the job. This is not an issue with the MFD and the members realize it.

Question 6

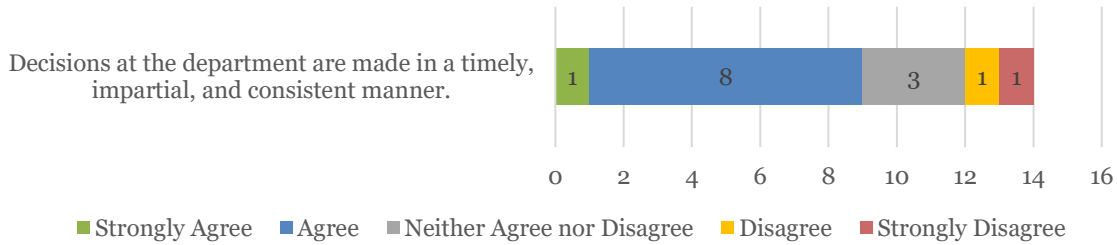




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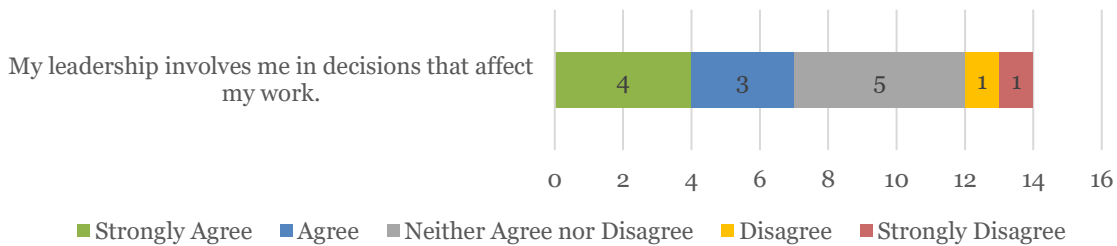
Analysis – A substantial number of members (6) expressed no opinion on this question. A tenet of good leadership requires the leader to set a good example of the work and values of the organization. Eight members agreed or strongly agreed with the question indicating the leaders are doing their jobs, at least in the eyes of the members.

Question 7



Analysis – The members are more split on this question than most others in this section. However, 9 members of the department agreed (8) and strongly agreed (1) with the question. Decision making is critical in fire service organizations, both on the fireground and in the day-to-day operation at the station. The fact that the majority of the membership agrees that decisions are made timely, impartial, and consistent indicates the organizations leadership and decisionmakers are respected and trusted by the members.

Question 8



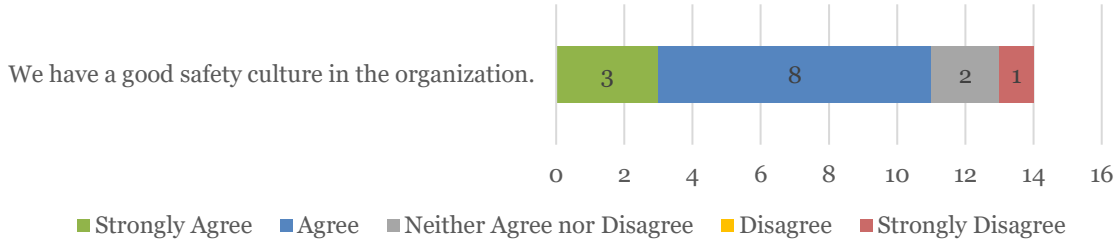
Analysis – Members desire to be included in the decisions that affect their work, especially when the members safety depends on those decisions. As with the other questions in this section, the members agree (3) and strongly agree (4) with the question. The responses indicate the organization’s leadership involves members consistently in the decision-making process.



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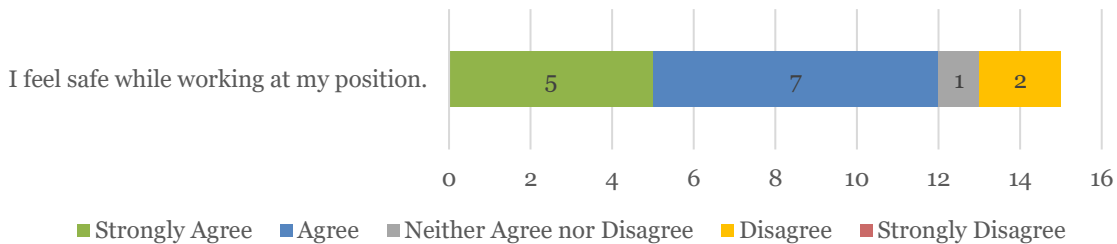
Organizational Approach to Safety

Question 1



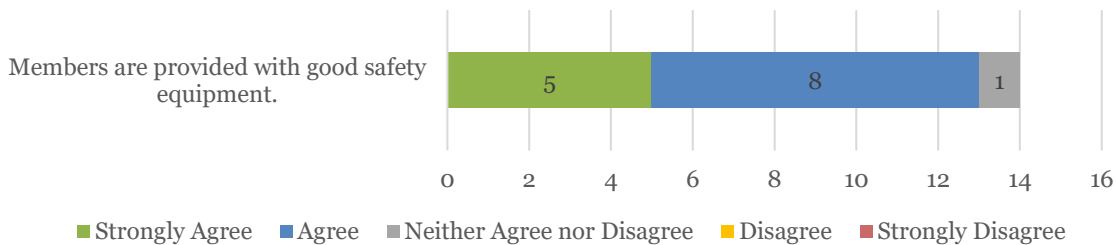
Analysis – The majority of the members agree (8) or strongly agree (3) with the question. Having a culture that values safety is important in the fire service.

Question 2



Analysis – Twelve members agreed (7) or strongly agreed (5) with the question. The responses indicate there is an overall feeling of safety and confidence in the organization.

Question 3

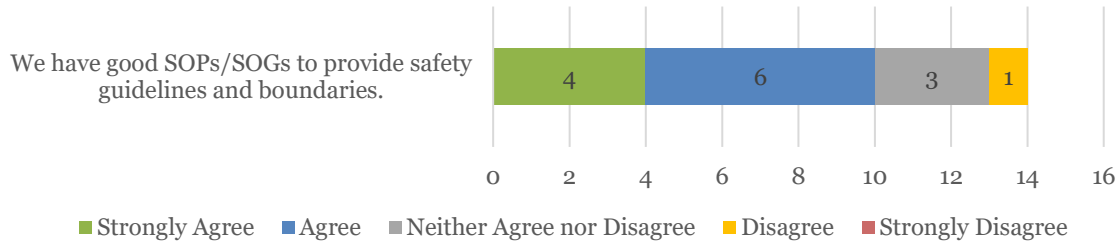


Analysis – Overwhelmingly the members agree (8) and strongly agree (5) with the question. Referring back to earlier questions on equipment, this further fortifies that the MFD is well equipped with good equipment and the members know it.



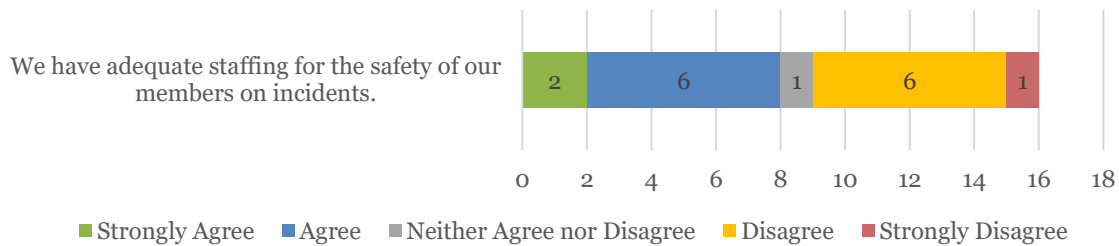
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Question 4



Analysis – As with the other questions in the safety category, the members responded positively to the SOG’s and Procedures directing the operations of the department. Having and maintaining good operating policies, SOG’s, and procedures is vital to successful operations in the fire service.

Question 5



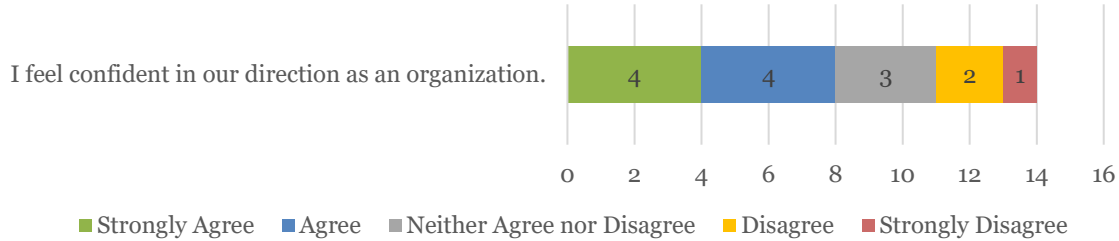
Analysis – The question of staffing is always a challenging one in the fire service. The MFD members are essentially split on this question. Six members disagree and another strongly disagreed that staffing is adequate. On the other hand, 6 members agreed and an additional 2 members strongly agreed that staffing is adequate in the MFD. Adequate staffing is needed to safely, quickly, effectively and efficiently control fire and other emergencies to which the MFD responds. NFPA Standards, such as NFPA 1710 and NFPA 1720 set guidelines for proper staffing. Staffing is discussed in detail in Section 4 of this report where those guidelines are explained and compared to the MFD.



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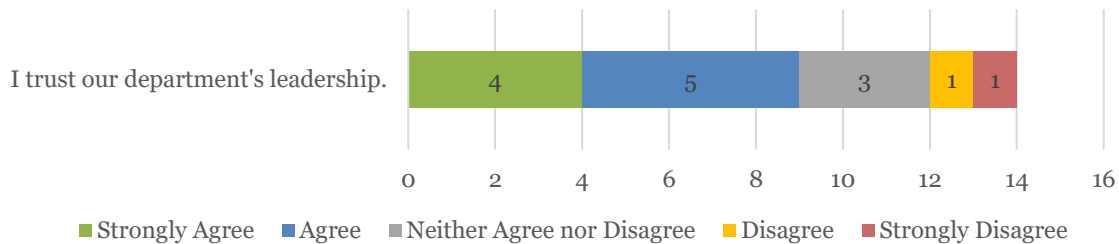
Leadership and Direction Responses

Question 1



Analysis – The majority of the members agreed with this question. It is important that members understand and agree with the direction of the department to build confidence in the mission.

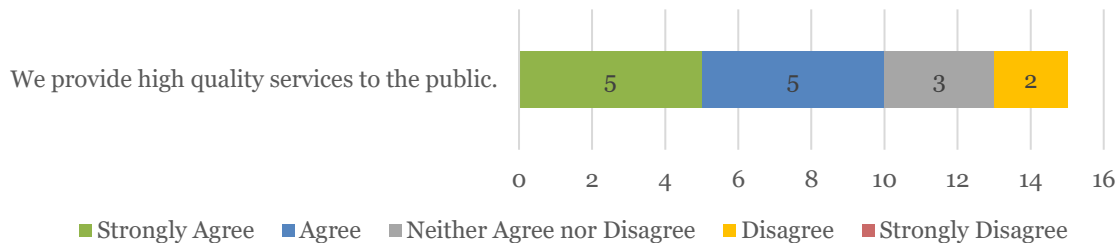
Question 2



Analysis - As with the previous question, the majority (9) of the members agree (5) or strongly agree (4) with this question. The members tend to follow their leaders when there is trust. Leadership studies have proven that trust in one another is a value in strong organizations. This is especially valuable in situations where teamwork is needed to protect life and property.

Service Delivery Responses

Question 1



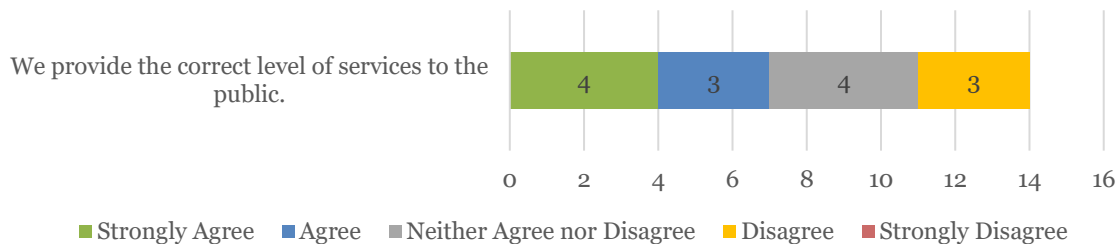
Analysis – The respondents overwhelmingly feel the services delivered by the MFD are of high quality. This corresponds to the information provided by the public in the



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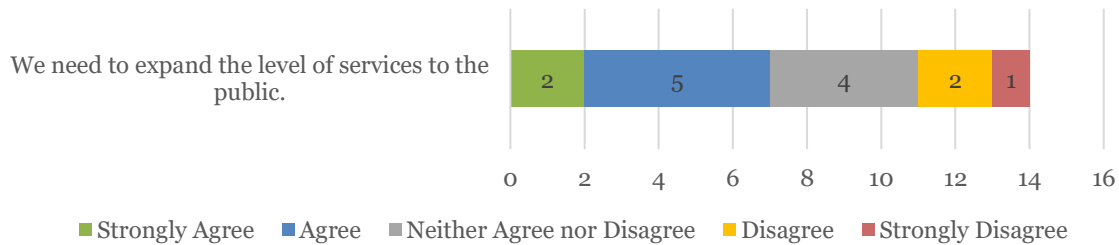
stakeholders meeting. High performing organizations build off of great service and push to develop a culture of constant improvement always striving to be even better.

Question 2



Analysis – The respondents were somewhat split on this question. There were 3 respondents who disagreed with the question. This is higher than most of the other questions in the survey. However, 7 respondents felt like the service level is correct. Information from the community stakeholders meeting indicates the community members in attendance felt like the service level is correct.

Question 3



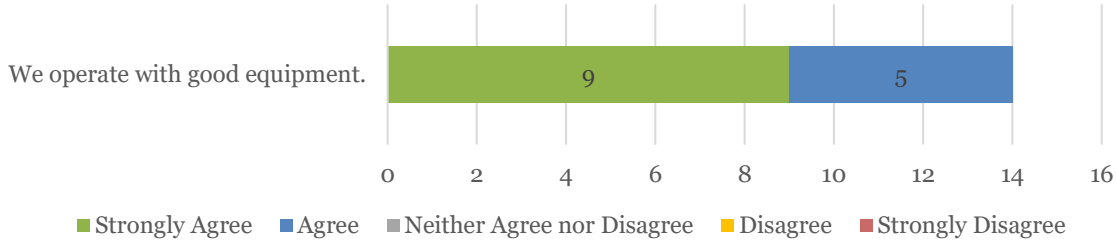
Analysis – This is an interesting result in that in Question 2 above, the members were in the majority in agreeing that the service level is correct. However, the members in this question of whether services need to be expanded again voted in the majority (7) that the service level should be expanded. It should also be noted that 4 members had no opinion in either Question 2 or 3. Further sampling may be able to discern what, if any, new services are perceived to be needed. From the public stakeholders meeting, there were no new services outside of those already available from the MFD.



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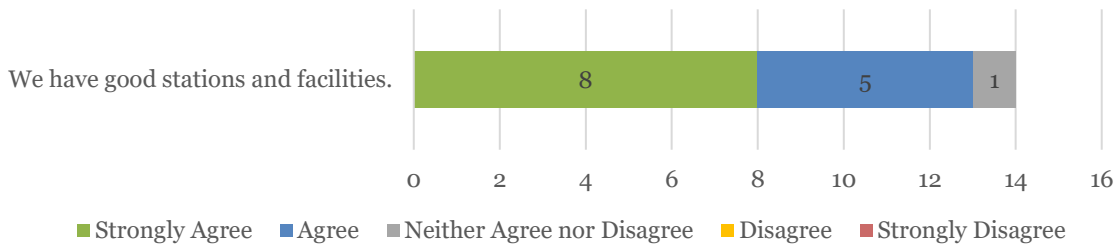
Equipment and Facilities Responses

Question 1



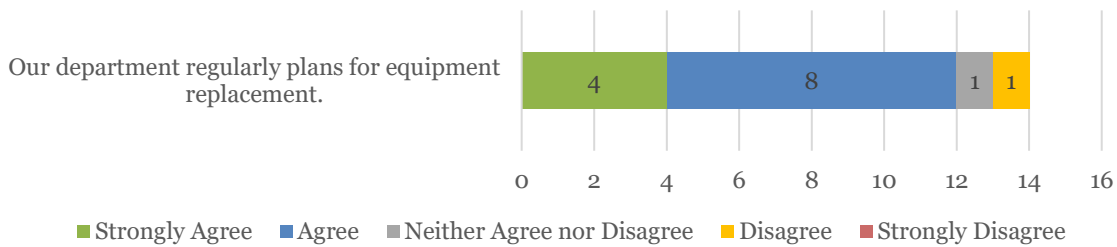
Analysis – The respondents overwhelmingly either agreed (5) or strongly agreed (9) with this question. The respondents realize they work with excellent equipment in good repair.

Question 2



Analysis – The respondents overwhelmingly agreed (5) or strongly agreed (8) to the question. The respondents realize they have good stations and facilities in Station 1, Station 2, and the MERIT Center (training grounds).

Question 3

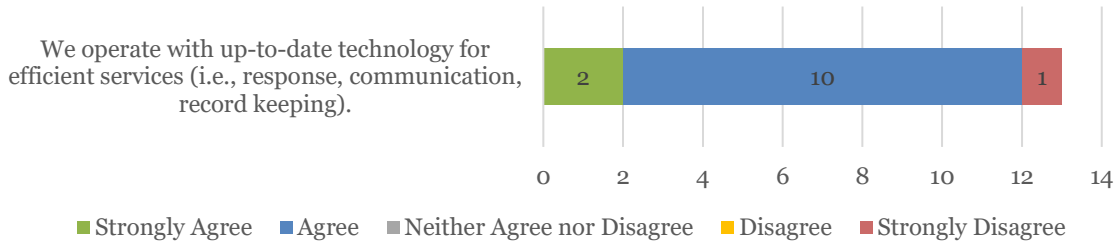


Analysis – The respondents overwhelmingly agreed (8) or strongly agreed (4) with the question. Following a detailed replacement plan for equipment, including fire apparatus and fire stations, is critical to maintaining a satisfactory response posture over time.



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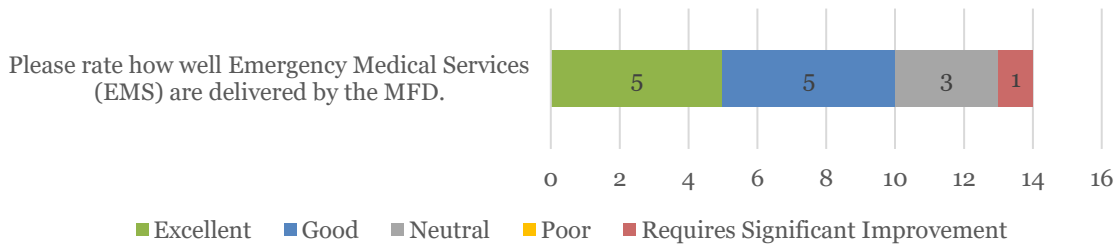
Question 4



Analysis – The respondents overwhelmingly agree (10) or strongly agree (2) with the question. Technology is important in emergency response and should be a priority of any emergency response organization. As with equipment and facilities, replacement and update plans should be developed to stay ahead of the technology advancement curve.

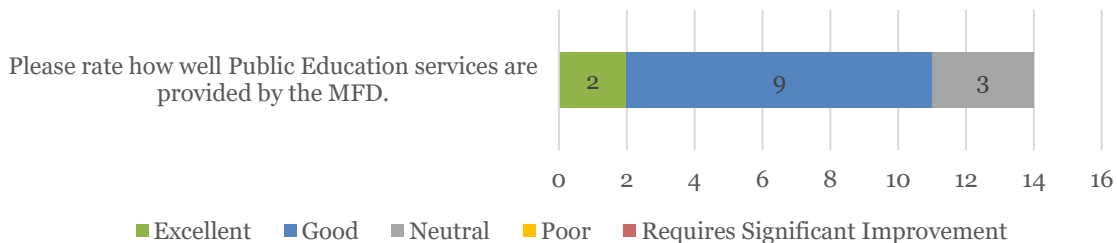
Service Delivery Ratings

Question 1



Analysis – Overall the respondents felt that the delivery of EMS services is good (5) to excellent (5). It must be noted that 1 respondent felt the service level requires significant improvement. The survey precludes comments on individual comments so there is no explanation as to the respondent’s reason for the rating.

Question 2

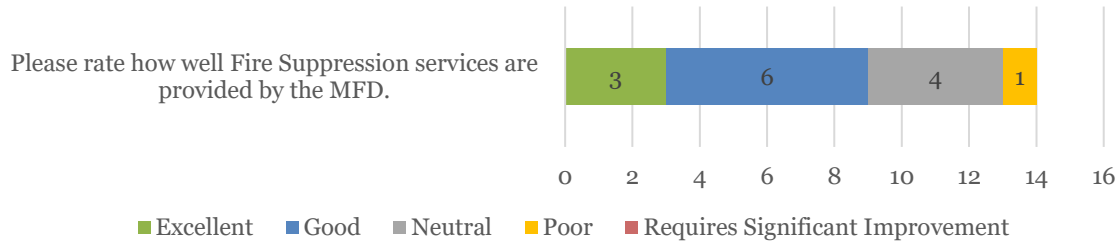


Analysis – Overall the respondents felt that the MFD is providing good to excellent public education services to its citizens.



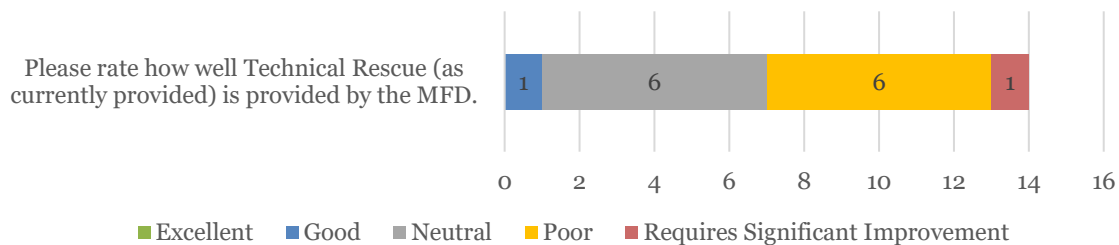
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Question 3



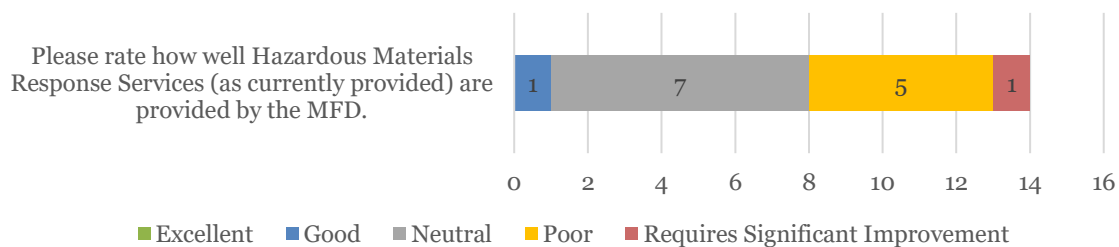
Analysis – The majority of the respondents felt the MFD provides good (6) to excellent (3) fire suppression services to the community.

Question 4



Analysis – The respondents reported that technical rescue service delivery is poor (6) or in need of significant improvement (1). Six respondents were neutral on the subject and only 1 respondent felt that the service was good. The survey precludes comments on individual comments so there is no explanation as to the respondent’s reason for the ratings provided.

Question 5



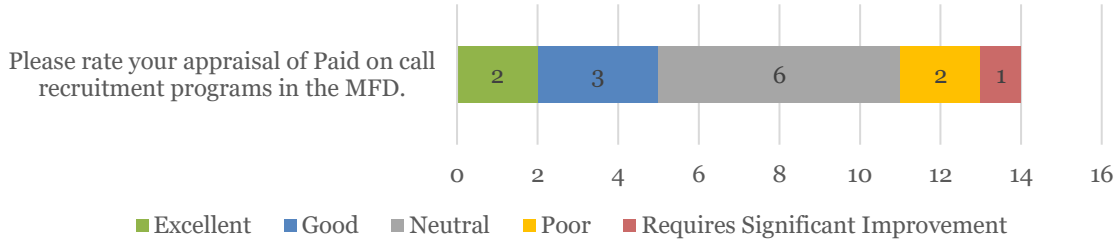
Analysis – The majority of respondents had no opinion on how well the MFD responds to hazardous materials spills. This is possibly due to the low number of responses. However, the MFD considers all carbon monoxide calls to be hazardous materials responses. Proper protocol for responding to these incidents directly effects both public and responder safety. Six respondents either felt like the MFD response is poor (5) or requires significant improvement (1). One respondent rated MFD response to hazardous materials as good.



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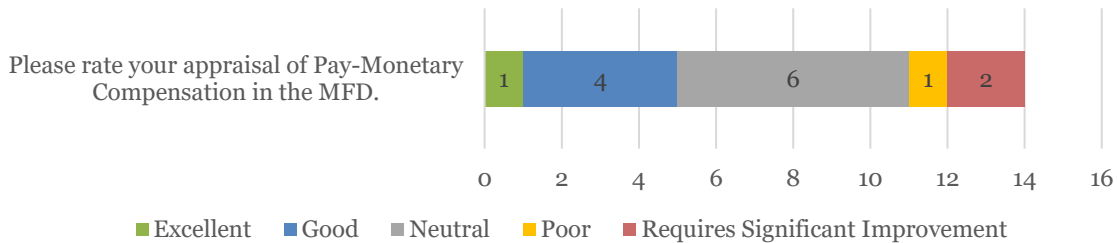
Department Features Ratings

Question 1



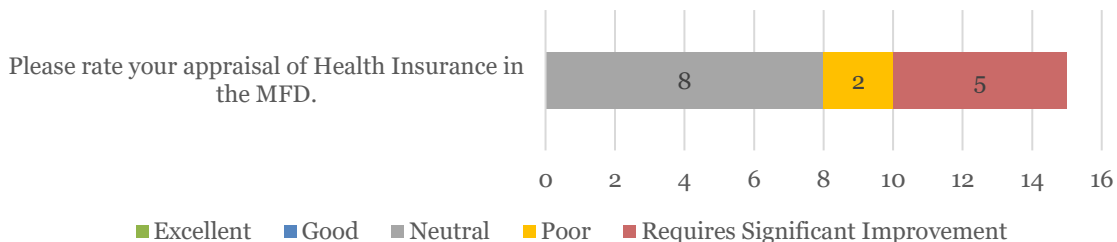
Analysis – The majority respondents had no opinion on this feature of the department. This may indicate respondents are not familiar with the paid-on-call recruitment efforts of the MFD. Those responding positively about the program were nearly equivalent to those responding negatively. Recruitment programs are a major component for the success of all fire departments. Nationwide, volunteer departments are experiencing difficulties in recruiting. Members of the department can be good recruiters through their contacts in the community.

Question 2



Analysis – Six respondents felt neutral about the pay and monetary compensation offered by the MFD. The remainder of the respondents were split with 5 respondents being positive while 3 respondents had a negative opinion of pay and compensation. The city just amended its pay rates for several positions effective January 1, 2025. This survey was conducted prior to that date. Therefore, there may be some change in the results due to the new rates.

Question 3

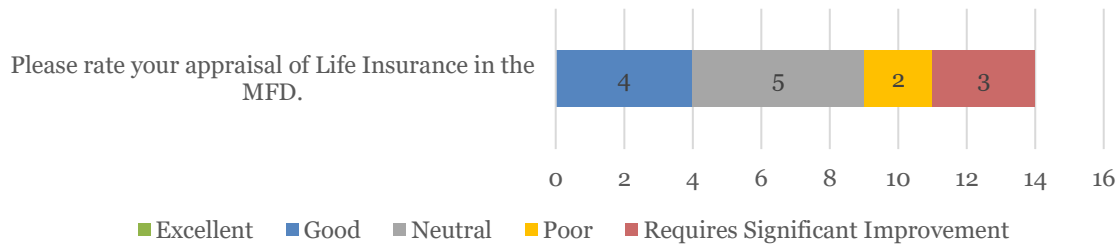




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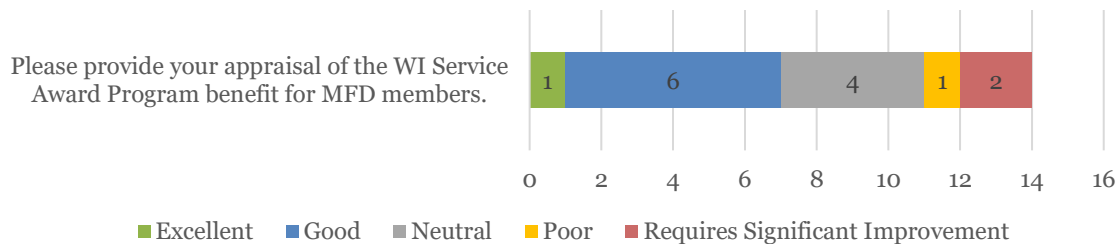
Analysis – Paid-on-call Firefighters, being part-time employees, do not qualify for health insurance through the city. Therefore, this question does not directly apply. However, access to affordable health insurance may be a benefit to consider if it is possible based upon the city’s policy requirements.

Question 4



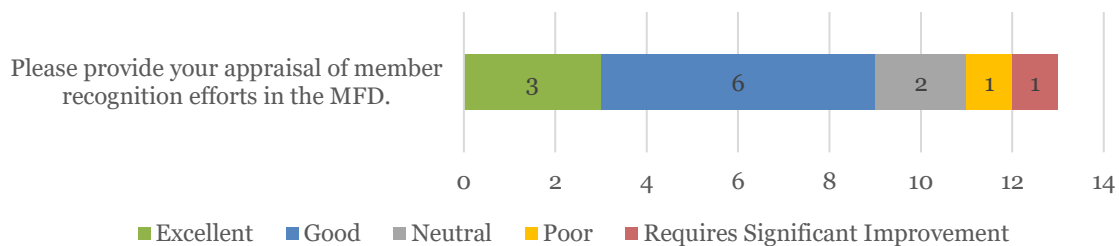
Analysis – Five respondents felt the life insurance was poor while 4 respondents felt the insurance was good. Five respondents had no opinion concerning life insurance. Education and a discussion about life insurance may help leadership better understand how the members feel about the quantity and quality of life insurance.

Question 5



Analysis – There were 7 positive responses to 3 negative responses from the members regarding the Wisconsin Service Award Program. A discussion of the benefits of the program may help members better understand this benefit.

Question 6

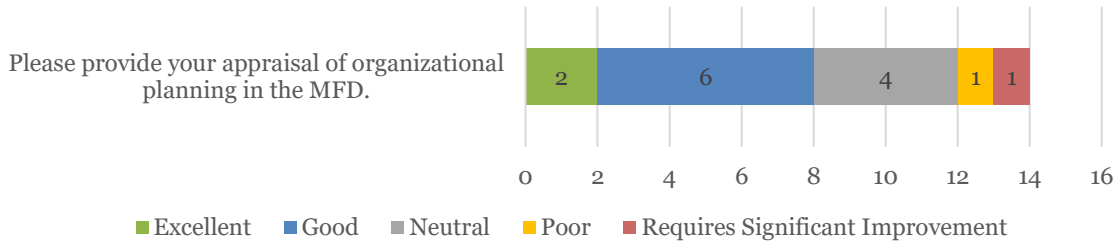


Analysis – The members overwhelmingly responded positively to the member recognition efforts of the department.



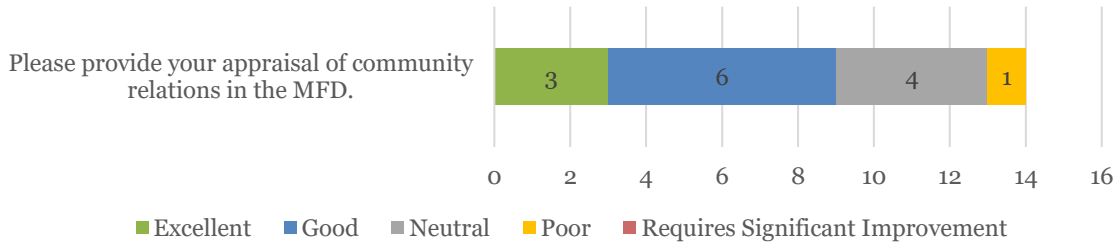
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Question 7



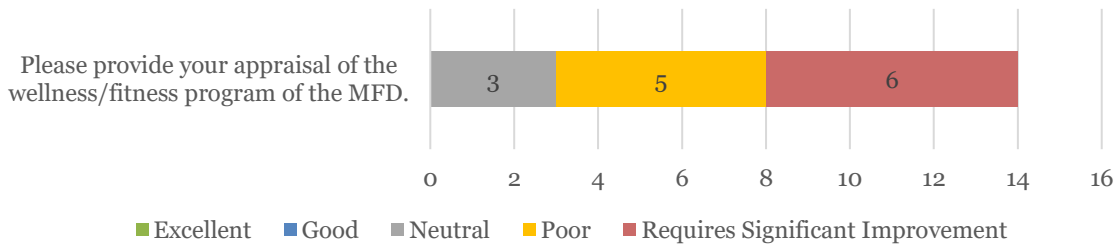
Analysis – Respondents responded positively (8) to the question. Only 2 respondents responded negatively. Informing the membership on the plans of the organization is necessary to provide positive direction for the organization and maintain morale.

Question 8



Analysis – The membership very positively agreed that the MFD has good relations with the community. It is positive when the membership feels the department is liked and respected in the community. Also, it is positive when the department is linked to the community in its relationship to always do better.

Question 9



Analysis – Of those responding to this question, there were only 3 respondents who had no opinion on this question. No members felt the wellness/fitness program was good or better. Six respondents felt the programs require significant improvement and 3 members felt the program is poor. This indicates the members are desiring to see more in the way of wellness/fitness from the leadership through policy and programs.



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Strategic Planning Process

Step 1: Gather Stakeholder Information

The strategic planning process uses multiple methods to gather information and perspective on many aspects of the City of Monroe Fire Department. The survey team collected information from both internal and external stakeholders of the department using online surveys, in-person meetings, and interviews, as well as strength, weakness, opportunity, and challenge (SWOC) planning sessions.

Online assessment surveys were distributed by the department to the internal members of the organization. The surveys provided anonymity to respondents and were designed to obtain the perspective of each person regarding the operations of the department, and where those operations can improve.

In addition to the internal survey instruments, the MissionCIT study team conducted in-person meetings with internal and external stakeholders to gain their perspective on the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Challenges (SWOC) within the fire district. It is important when looking at an organization and developing long-term goals and objectives for the Strategic Plan that the perspective of both members and outside stakeholders be taken into consideration. Each group has its own unique view of the organization and can add value to the end product and direction of the organization. The following groups are included in the SWOC summaries:

External Stakeholders Group: Local business leaders, local hospital representatives, local industry representatives, City of Monroe Administration leaders, citizens

Internal Stakeholders: Rank and file firefighters, company officers (comments included to preserve anonymity)

Internal and external stakeholder perspectives make up the first set of information in the strategic planning process.

Step 2: Conduct the Fire Department Assessment

The study team conducted an extensive assessment of the MFD's current operational capabilities, equipment, facilities, and apparatus. This assessment included response capabilities, policies, and procedures. It also includes a review of call statistics to provide a picture of when, where, how often, and how many calls occur in the city. Finally, the assessment evaluates the response times for the fire department to determine if national standards and the public's desire for a rapid, safe, and efficient



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response are being met. The fire department assessment makes up the second set of information in the strategic planning process.

Step 3: Conduct the General Community Risk Assessment

The study team conducted a general risk assessment for the MFD’s response area. This assessment is used to determine the types of emergencies that are occurring, and likely to occur within the primary response area. This is done to determine the types of apparatus, equipment, and staffing required daily to safely and effectively address the hazards and risks. For this assessment, the study team evaluated the basic types of structures, businesses, industries, and critical infrastructure found in the city. Special attention is provided to those hazards that will quickly tax and overwhelm the current response system. Community assessment is the third and final set of information in the strategic planning process.

Step 4: Identify Strategic Themes and Create Strategic Goals and Objectives:

The study team took all three informational components and developed a group of nine strategic themes from which to develop strategic goals and objectives. The strategic goals are broad and make up the framework for the City of Monroe Fire Department Strategic Plan for the next ten years. To achieve each goal numerous objectives will be required. Objectives are much smaller in scope and work together to achieve all of the strategic goals.

The MissionCIT consultant team has provided several documents to assist with the development of the objectives. Two of those documents are contained in this report and are:

1. **Strategic Plan Themes, Goals, and Considerations** – This document provides the City and Fire Department with the consultant teams best professional recommendation for the Monroe Fire Department for the next 10 years. The document also provides items to be considered by leadership when assessing each individual goal.
2. **Appendix 1: Suggested 10-Year Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives** – This document provides leadership with each goal plus examples of objectives the consultant team suggests supporting the achievement of each strategic goal. As leadership works with the Common Council on the review of the report, this document can help as an example for the development of new additional objectives to support the strategic goals and the overall plan.

The MissionCIT consultant team is also providing City and Fire Department leadership with one additional document that is not included within this report but under separate cover. This document is titled the City of Monroe Fire Department 10-Year Strategic



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Goals and Objectives Implementation Plan. The document contains two sections as follows:

- **Implementation Plan** – this document provides the consultant teams professional recommendations for implementing the strategic plan goals and objectives in Appendix 1. It is likely that leadership for the City, the Fire Department, and the Common Council will want to make some adjustments to the consultant team’s suggested plan. This is common practice in most communities. Therefore, the implementation component is being provided as an example for use as needed.
- **Implementation Costs Plan with Funding Matrix** – this document provides the consultant team’s projected costs and possible sources to support the implementation plan for the strategic goals and objectives. This document can also serve as an example for City, Fire, and Common Council leaders as they work through the review and adoption of the Fire Department’s 10-year Strategic Plan.



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Strategic Themes, Strategic Goals, Considerations

Theme 1: Staffing and its impact on operations is becoming a concern for the City of Monroe Fire Department and City leadership.	
Strategic Goal 1:	Provide for Adequate Staffing for the City of Monroe Fire Department currently and into the future.
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment of volunteer paid-on-call firefighters is becoming more difficult as the population demographics change in Monroe. • There is a need for additional full-time paid positions in the MFD. • There is potentially a need for a combination department in the future.

Theme 2: Funding is a challenge and a Concern for the Fire Department and the City.	
Strategic Goal 2:	Provide the funding necessary to operate the City of Monroe Fire Department currently and into the future.
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Property tax millage increases are capped by state law and may not be adequate for community MFD needs. • <i>Wisconsin Act 12</i> Shared Revenues are already committed, and growth is not expected to increase the funding source significantly in the near future. • <i>Wisconsin Act 12</i> Innovation Funds may be of some assistance, but increases may not be adequate to fully address the city’s emergency response needs.

Theme 3: Maintain and Develop Mutual Aid Relationships	
Strategic Goal 3:	Maintain and continue to develop mutual aid relationships currently and into the future.
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mutual aid as a potential interim solution to staffing issues. • Mutual aid formal agreements discussions with neighboring departments. (MABAS)



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Theme 4: Provision of EMS Service to the City of Monroe with Increasing Call Volumes	
Strategic Goal 4:	Support EMS Service in the City of Monroe currently and into the future.
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MFD’s role in EMS response will likely increase as call volumes increase into the future. • MFD working with GCEMS for training and coordination as MFD plays a greater role in response.

Theme 5: Personnel Safety and Risk Reduction	
Strategic Goal 5:	Provide for the health and safety of Monroe Fire Department through risk reduction currently and into the future.
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are concerns regarding aspects of the department’s safety and wellness plans both internally and externally. • Development of risk reduction programs that are needed by the department.

Theme 6: Dispatch and Communications	
Strategic Goal 6:	Improve dispatch and communications services for the MFD now and into the future.
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications centers (Green County Sheriff’s Center and Monroe Police Department Communications Center) compliance with national best practice standards. • MFD take a greater role in helping the communications centers in developing emergency call receipt and dispatch procedures, standard operating guidelines and policies.



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Theme 7: Training Programs and Facilities Development	
Strategic Goal 7:	Provide well-trained firefighters and emergency responders to the community now and into the future.
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire training and driver training development. • MERIT Center suitability to the response needs • Access by mutual aid companies

Theme 8: Stations and Equipment	
Strategic Goal 8:	Provide quality fire stations and equipment for the MFD currently and into the future.
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Station, equipment, and facility needs compared to the risks in the community. • Additional facilities for increases in staffing or a change in operational methods.

Theme 9: Community Risk Reduction	
Strategic Goal 9:	Provide Community Risk Reduction (CRR) Programs based on research and understanding of the community now and into the future.
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue and increase community risk reduction programs already in existence (fire and life safety inspections and public CPR training). • Community risk reduction is one of the public stakeholders top five priorities for the department.



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Appendix A: 10 Year Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Provide for adequate staffing in the MFD currently and into the future.	
Objective 1-A	Establish a volunteer recruitment working group within the organization to address recruitment and retention issues.
Objective 1-B	Enlist the assistance of Colony Brands and other local businesses with marketing departments in developing a recruitment program.
Objective 1-C	Develop an “on call” plan to include staffed station coverage to improve response times and ensure a reliable response minimum.
Objective 1-D	Initiate and complete the process for hiring: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full-Time Deputy Fire Chief • Full-Time Fire Inspector • Part-time Administrative Assistant (consider sharing with another city department)
Objective 1-E	Require the new full-time positions of Deputy Fire Chief and Fire Inspector to obtain Firefighter certification to assist the volunteer paid-on-call response force during the daytime hours.
Objective 1-F	Recruit and develop non-response volunteers for administrative and support functions such as logistics, maintenance, etc.
Objective 1-G	Develop a contingency hiring plan and associated funding plan for full-time employees (FTE) in the event recruiting and retention efforts are not successful. The plan should include staffing for one engine daily with at least three personnel and should be supplemented by volunteer personnel that are available.
Objective 1-H	Review, update, and report to the Common Council annually the progress of the plan.

Goal 2: Provide the funding required to operate the MFD currently and into the future.	
Objective 2-A	Prepare for a potential increase in tax millage based upon the success of recruiting and retention efforts.
Objective 2-B	Develop a comprehensive marketing and social media communications plan for working towards a millage rate increase to provide the “why” and “benefits” to the community.
Objective 2-C	Prepare to utilize a larger portion of Wisconsin Act 12 Shared funds to the MFD to increase staffing levels over the next 3 – 5 years.
Objective 2-D	Consider charging a service fee to local businesses for the provision of fire and life safety inspections annually to help offset the costs of the Fire Inspector.



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Objective 2-E	The fire department should work with the city to develop a ten-year budget which includes all salary, benefits, operating costs, and capital projects to serve as a guideline for planning. This is especially important if the annual review of plan progress indicates the need for additional FTE's.
Objective 2-F	Increase the number of grant opportunities applied for by the MFD to help offset the operating costs.
Objective 2-G	Continue to work on increasing the collections from charges for services provided by the MFD to help offset costs.

Goal 3: Maintain and continue to develop mutual aid relationships currently and into the future.

Objective 3-A	Review current relationships with mutual aid departments and agencies and address any concerns that may exist.
Objective 3-B	Review and verify the effectiveness of the MABAS agreement and the department's participation under the agreement annually.
Objective 3-C	If not already existing, work with the Communications Centers to build pre-defined automatic mutual aid agreements into the computer aided dispatch system (CAD).
Objective 3-D	Work with the leadership of all mutual aid and automatic mutual aid companies to develop an annual training calendar to provide opportunities for all agencies to train together.

Goal 4: Support and secure EMS service in the City of Monroe currently and into the future.

Objective 4-A	MFD leadership should explore with Green County EMS leadership the possibility of increasing the number of EMS qualified (EMT or Paramedic level) MFD volunteer personnel to assist with staffing EMS units during busy times.
Objective 4-B	The MFD should upgrade its training requirements so all response level personnel will become, at a minimum, certified Basic EMT's. This can occur over time and will help address the current level and projected future increases in EMS call volumes.

Goal 5: Provide for the health and safety of Fire Department personnel through risk reduction currently and into the future.

Objective 5-A	Develop a long-term organizational safety improvement plan based upon the recommendations in NFPA 1500: Standard on Fire Department Health, Safety, and Wellness Programs.
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Objective 5-B	Develop a comprehensive career and paid-on-call volunteer firefighter entry and assessment process based on the OSHA Fire Brigade Standards to include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical Abilities Test (PAT) • Physical Exam at entry then annual health assessments moving forward
Objective 5-C	Develop and encourage a physical fitness program for active department members to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum functional fitness standards • Fitness Center/Workout area with equipment to promote cardio-centric exercises • Access to Personal Fitness Trainers to develop and implement fitness goals
Objective 5-D	Develop and administer a comprehensive SCBA and equipment safety and maintenance program based upon NFPA and OSHA Standards to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual SCBA bench flow testing • Annual SCFA mask fit testing for each employee • Annual N-95 mask fit testing for each employee • Appropriate SCBA hydrostatic testing of air cylinders
Objective 5E	Develop and administer a comprehensive cancer reduction program for all members to include education, equipment, and training in ways to reduce carcinogens in the workplace.

Goal 6: Improve dispatch and communications services for the MFD now and into the future.

Objective 6-A	Work with the Green County Sheriff's Office Communications Center (GCSOCC) leadership to develop a comprehensive policy and procedures manual identifying all dispatch protocols for emergency responses.
Objective 6-B	Work with the City of Monroe Police Department's Communications Center (MPDCC) leadership to develop a comprehensive policy and procedures manual identifying all dispatch protocols for emergency responses.
Objective 6-C	Work with the GCSOCC to integrate time stamps for emergency responses into the records management system software utilized by the MFD. Time stamps required should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call pickup time in the communications center • Time the call was dispatched to the MFD • Time the MFD acknowledges the call



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time each MFD unit marks enroute to the emergency scene • Time each MFD unit marks on-scene at the emergency scene • Time each MFD unit clears the scene and is back in service
Objective 6-D	<p>Work with the MPDCC to integrate time stamps for emergency responses into the records management system software utilized by the MFD. Time stamps required should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call pickup time in the communications center • Time the call was transferred to the MPDCC • Time the MFD acknowledges the call • Time each MFD unit marks enroute to the emergency scene • Time each MFD unit marks on-scene at the emergency scene • Time each MFD unit clears the scene and is back in service
Objective 6-E	<p>Work with the GCSOCC and MPDCC to comply with nationally recognized best practices for the operation of emergency service communications centers.</p>

Goal 7: Provide well-trained firefighters and emergency responders to the community now and into the future.

Objective 7-A	<p>Review current requirements and develop standard training requirements for career and volunteer personnel, including position certification requirements.</p>
Objective 7-B	<p>Develop and implement alternate means of department training to more easily accommodate the volunteer’s schedules and promote work-life balance.</p>
Objective 7-C	<p>Identify and implement ways to make initial certification training more easily accessible to prospective volunteers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue building a mutually beneficial relationship with Blackhawk Tech • Work with neighboring departments to ensure minimum necessary class sizes for the training to be held locally.
Objective 7-D	<p>Increase the joint training efforts with other surrounding fire departments and organizations.</p>
Objective 7-E	<p>Develop a comprehensive user’s manual and plan for external use of the MERIT Center. The facility should remain under the control of the MFD but encourage participation from other departments. The User’s manual should identify at a minimum all policies, procedures, and protocols for the use of the facility. The manual should also identify the qualifications required for instructors, site safety officers, and support staff.</p>



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Objective 7-E	Promote and allocate funds for attendance at outside venues including regional and national conferences and the National Fire Academy.
Objective 7-F	Encourage personnel to take advantage of free online education and training to include FEMA Emergency Management Institute, the National Fire Academy, etc.

Goal 8: Provide quality fire stations and equipment for the MFD currently and into the future.

Objective 8-A	Depending on the success of recruitment and retention efforts, there may be a need within the next 5 – 10 years for additional facilities to support full time employees. The MFD should start to identify needs for housing and maintaining on-duty staffing to include meal prep/cooking areas, crew quarters, office spaces and sleeping areas.
Objective 8-B	Work toward a smaller, more manageable, fiscally responsible, and multi-functional fleet of apparatus as specified earlier in this plan.
Objective 8-C	Develop a plan to ensure the proper amounts and type of equipment based on expected roster size and community needs.

Goal 9: Provide Community Risk Reduction Programs based on research and understanding of the community now and into the future.

Objective 9-A	Conduct research to include such things as response data, census demographic data, and input from the citizens to develop community risk reduction programs and materials.
Objective 9-B	Continue to expand the public CPR training program and expand into other areas such as public AED's in high foot traffic areas such as downtown Monroe and temporarily at festivals and other public events.
Objective 9-C	Consider developing a community risk reduction workgroup with members from the MFD, GCEMS, MPD, local hospital, and local interested citizens to help conduct the research and develop the programs.