

La Crosse Fire Department

2021 Annual Community Report



Serving the La Crosse Region
with Quality Services Since 1896



Our Mission



We promote safety, reduce risks, and respond to calls for fire suppression, emergency medical services, and all-hazards rescue. We earn the community's trust through preparedness, professionalism, and dedication to service.

Firefighters Renee Christensen & Andrew Stadler presenting virtually during Fire Prevention Week 2021

Our Values

Respect reflects our belief that all persons have equal value and deserve our due attention.

Integrity leads us to honor our commitments and to do what is right.

Service drives us to put the needs of the community first.

Excellence encompasses our professionalism and dedication to continuous improvement of knowledge, skills, and abilities.



Captain Bayer & crew presenting 5-year-old Liam with a LifeSaver Award.



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Letter from Fire Chief Ken Gilliam

To the Citizens of the Communities We Serve,

Taking this annual opportunity to look in the organizational rearview mirror, it is clear that 2021 was a year of significant transitions and unexpected opportunities. As the world has continued to adapt to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, so has our department adapted and evolved. Through it all, I have been honored to lead the members of the La Crosse Fire Department as we collectively upheld the Mission and Core Values of our organization.

In early 2021, we continued our support of city-wide **Unified Incident Command** team and **Emergency Operations Center** efforts that operated throughout much of 2020 to meet the challenges presented by the pandemic. The **spring elections** occurred and we welcomed a new Mayor and six new Common Council members to the City of La Crosse leadership, as well as three new appointments to our five-member Police and Fire Commission (PFC). I will take this opportunity to thank outgoing Mayor Tim Kabat, Council President Marty Gaul, and the other departing members of the Council and the PFC for their support of our organization. As we were unable to host in-person social gatherings during this transition, our **"goodbyes"** were certainly less than optimal and I want you all to know that we appreciate your efforts and commitment to the community, and we wish you all the best in the future.

While on the subject of **"goodbyes"**, in 2021 we witnessed several retirements of members for whom we could not provide a proper send-off celebration. These personnel are listed later in this report and we wish them all the best in their retirement years. We also saw the voluntary departure of a few of our members who moved on to other great job opportunities, and likewise, we wish them well in their future endeavors. I will take this opportunity to single out Assistant Fire Chief Craig Snyder who retired in December to pursue a new opportunity in another state. Craig was one of the first people I met when I came to La Crosse in 2017, and I cannot thank him enough for his support of me and his dedication to this organization. He was a dedicated servant to this community, a friend to many, and he will be missed. Likewise, my extreme gratitude goes out to all of our retirees who continue to support this organization as private citizens.

As we said our **"goodbyes"** to many, we also said **"hello"** to some new partners. Building off of the Wisconsin Policy Forum study *"Something In Common – Exploring Fire and EMS Service Sharing Opportunities in the La Crosse County Region"* published in December of 2020, we were approached by the three municipalities served by the **Holmen Area Fire Department (HAFD)** in the spring of 2021 to explore opportunities. We came to agreement on a short-term **"Shared Fire Administration"** contract and I was sworn in as the HAFD Fire Chief in July. While this project created significant time impacts for me, our chief officers, and several other LCFD personnel, I know that this time investment and efforts to help out our neighbors will pay off in long-term dividends. I want to take this opportunity to **thank everyone** who stepped up to support this unique opportunity, and I want to thank the leaders of these neighboring communities who took a leap of faith with our department. While long-range consolidation negotiations continue into 2022, we can look back and clearly see that we have made tremendous progress and impact for stronger regional public safety.

We strengthened **other partnerships** in 2021 as well. In addition to our contracted fire and EMS response services, we took over building inspections and construction permitting for the **Town of Medary**. We updated our Paramedic Program agreement with **Gundersen Tri-State Ambulance** and continue to embrace this partnership opportunity to provide the highest quality of emergency medical services possible to our citizens. We renewed our Hazardous Materials Team contract with the state and we made significant progress towards updating, renewing, and properly funding our statewide urban search and rescue team Wisconsin Task Force 1. We reached an agreement with **Mayo Clinic** to provide support to our firefighter physical fitness initiatives, and we secured funding and partnered with **Life Scan Wellness Centers** to provide annual NFPA 1582 compliant firefighter physicals moving into 2022.



We made significant **progress on facility updates**. We acquired property and designed a **new Station 4** with a planned ground breaking in the spring of 2021. Community member efforts to save the old Station 4 with a historic designation prevailed, and we secured Mayor and Council support to redirect the funding to a **new Station 2** while we regrouped on the new Station 4 challenges. The Station 2 design work was also challenged by a unique site in a great location, our optimal space needs, and pandemic-related issues related to rising construction material costs and availability. Despite these challenges, our design team pulled together a great plan and we went out for bid in November with ground breaking expected for spring of 2022. We also circled back to start re-design of a new Station 4 on the remaining property around the historic Station 4, and that project will go out for bid in the summer of 2022.

We split and upgraded the bathroom and locker room at **Station 3** to provide more appropriate restroom facilities at this station while buying time for future addition and renovations. We also designed and started a significant remodel of the bathroom, locker room, and bunk room at **Station 1** which was completed in early 2022. With our new-found expertise in bathroom remodels, we also completed a bathroom remodel at the **Holmen Station** to meet the same privacy and gender equity goals. These long overdue remodels provided many challenges while crews remained in the active stations, and I want to thank all of our members at the LCFD and the HAFD for their patience and professionalism as we got this work done while keeping the fire stations open for business. Thanks also to Mayor Kabat, Mayor Reynolds, and the two overlapping Common Council groups for their ongoing fiscal support to make these station upgrades a reality.

All in all, 2021 seemed like a long year that went by really fast. There is so much more that I could write about, and so little page space. Please enjoy reading about all of our accomplishments detailed throughout this Annual Community Report, and I hope that you will join me in taking great pride in this amazing and evolving organization. Through all of the challenges in 2021, we remain actively engaged with the community as we worked to educate, promote safety, reduce risks, and provide prompt and skilled response to calls for help. We strive to be a great place to work. We plan hard, train hard, and work hard to make sure that everyone gets home safe.

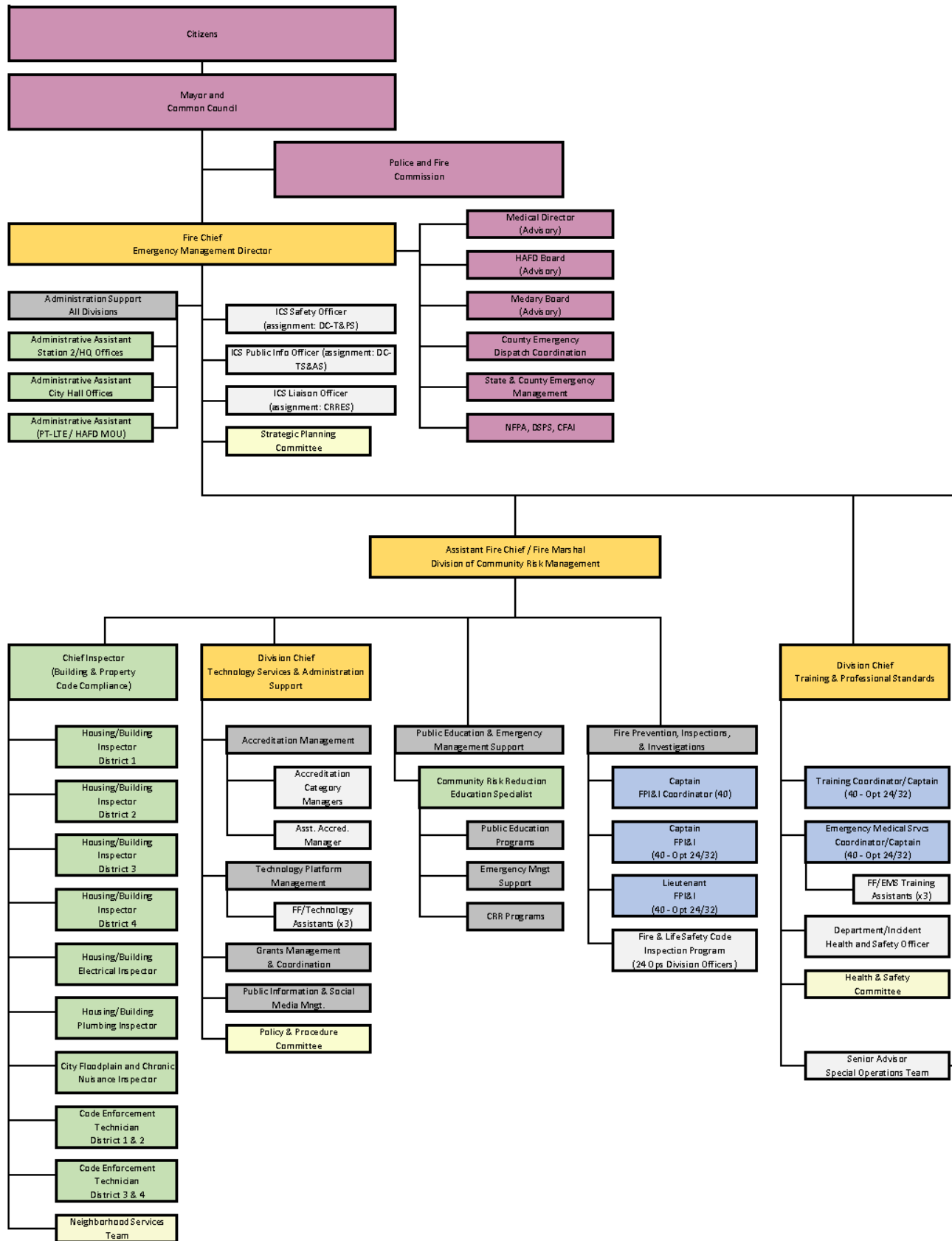
Thank you for taking the time to review this La Crosse Fire Department Annual Community Report.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ken Gilliam", is written on a white rectangular background.

Ken Gilliam
Fire Chief and Emergency Management Director





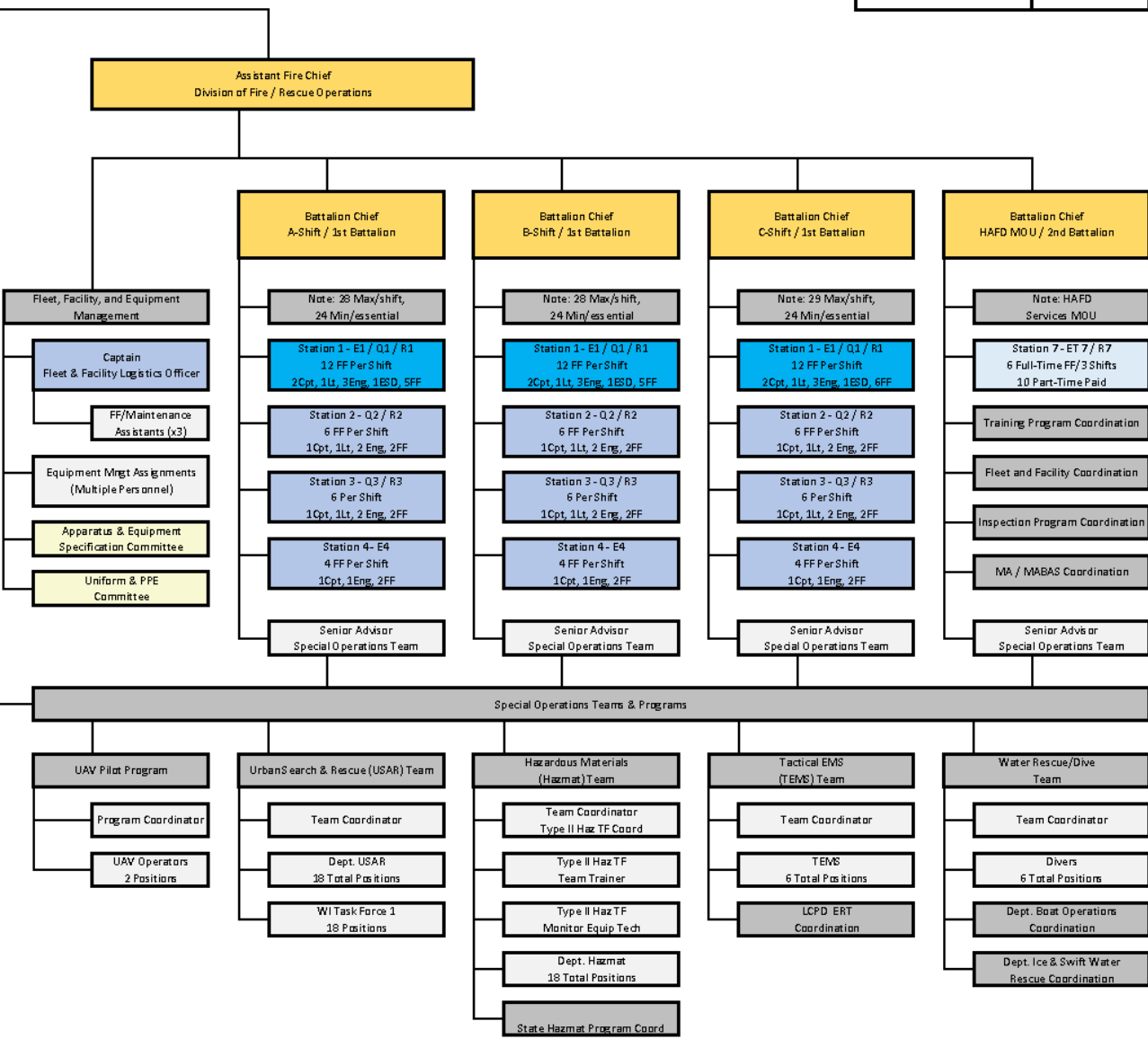
**La Crosse Fire/Rescue and Community Risk Management
Organizational Chart 2021-2022**

Color Coding Explanation

Government / Public / Advisory
Sworn Chief Officers
Sworn Fire/Rescue Personnel
Civilian Personnel
HAFD Sworn Fire/Rescue Personnel (No LCFD FTE)
Responsibilities
Dual-Staffed Assignments (No FTE)
Committees

Table of Org Positions

LCFD Sworn	98
LCFD Civilian	15
LCFD Sub-Total	113
HAFD Sub-Total	16
Combined Total	129



Agency Accreditation

CFAI 2019-2024

Accreditation is a process of self-assessment, strategic planning, and continuous improvement toward better business and operational practices. The process lies bare your department's strengths and weaknesses and provides a roadmap for transforming those areas of vulnerability into powerful community assets

In April of 2021, the fire department conducted a facilitated meeting with its internal stakeholders to review the department's five-year strategic plan. This review occurred at the midway point of the plan to review all that has been accomplished, what items need to be re-evaluated, what items are no longer relevant, and finally what new items need to be added. This meeting took place over three days and helped fire department personnel refocus efforts to tackle established priorities.

Also in April, the La Crosse Fire Department was approached by the Holmen Area Fire Board with a request to take over administrative duties for the Holmen Area Fire Department (HAFD). This request came as a result of the findings conducted by the Wisconsin Policy Forum in their report "Something In Common: Exploring Fire and EMS Service Sharing Opportunities in the La Crosse County Region." A Memorandum of Understanding was drafted and agreed upon by both municipalities and in June, LCFD took over administrative duties for the Holmen Area Fire Department. According to the Center for Public Safety Excellence, HAFD did not need to be included in the accreditation process for the 2021 calendar year.

In July of 2021, the La Crosse Fire Department also completed its second Annual Compliance Report (ACR). The purpose of the Annual Compliance Report (ACR) is to ensure that the Fire Department has maintained compliance with all core competencies established by the Commission of Fire Accreditation International (CFAI). Any changes that have occurred in the previous year must be explained and supported with documentation. Another purpose of the ACR is to evaluate our performance data and compliance with the strategic recommendations for improvements made by CFAI when the department was re-accredited. It is my pleasure to report that the results of our ACR concluded that the "La Crosse Fire Department has demonstrated that it complies with all stated standards and core competencies." And that the "Commission on Fire Accreditation international accepts the La Crosse Fire Department Annual Compliance Report and that the agency retains their Accredited Agency Status."

Finally, the new records management system that was implemented in late 2020, was able to extract detailed, comprehensive reports which allowed analysis for areas of improvement to be made more accurately. The administrative staff is then able to put procedures in place to fix gaps that are discovered.

In conclusion, the La Crosse Fire Department will continue to push forward in analyzing its service delivery and make improvements that are in line with its strategic plan, and look for opportunities to build upon its current services as it moves into 2022.



City of La Crosse Emergency Management

The La Crosse Fire Department is the City of La Crosse's lead department charged with Emergency Management. Emergency Management involves the planning, preparedness, mitigation, response and recovery phases related to all humanitarian aspects of emergencies. The aim is to prevent and reduce the harmful effects of all hazards, including disasters and weather-related events, among other large events.

In January of 2021, the LCFD published two key documents related to the City's Emergency Management practices and procedures. The Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) is a living document that outlines the emergency response to an incident or disaster event and is a plan for how the City will function during the aforementioned phases of a given emergency. This document was updated several times over the course of 2021 to reflect changes in City staffing and this updated document will be put to Common Council for approval in early 2022.

The EOP is based on the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and is scalable from small to large incidents. It allows, as needed, for seamless integration with County, State, and Federal resources who also operate under NIMS.



The Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) is also a living document, but is confidential in scope and serves as guidance for City administration and departmental leadership. The COOP outlines how the City will continue to provide services when operations and staffing are affected by an incident or declared event until full operations are restored. Used together, the EOP and COOP give guidance to City leaders on how best to manage any major incident or crisis.



The LCFD was able to procure recovery funding via the office of Wisconsin Emergency Management (WEM) for the heavy rains and flooding that occurred in La Crosse in early August. This funding was able to assist various City departments with infrastructure repair and assisted in the overall recovery from the event.

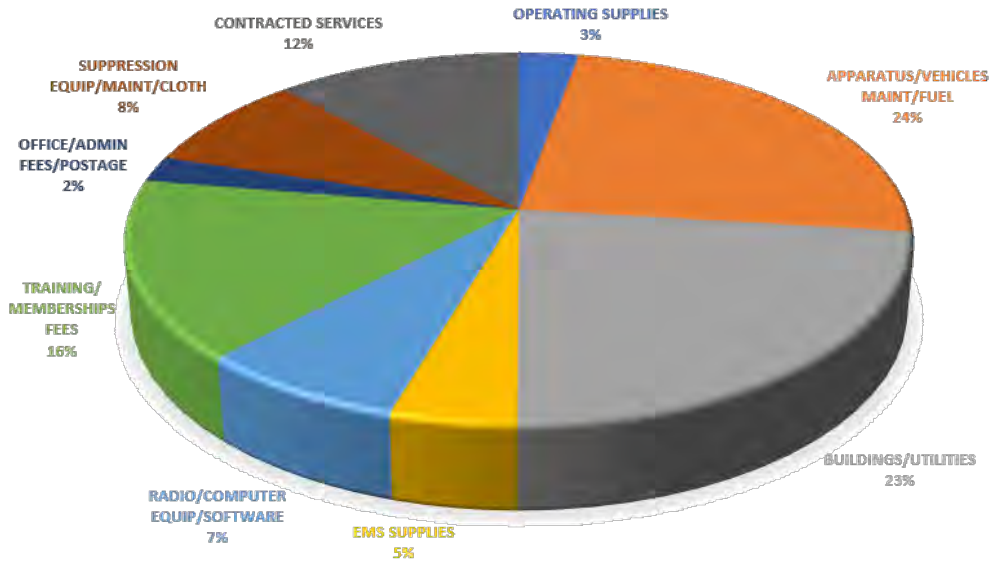


2021 Budget

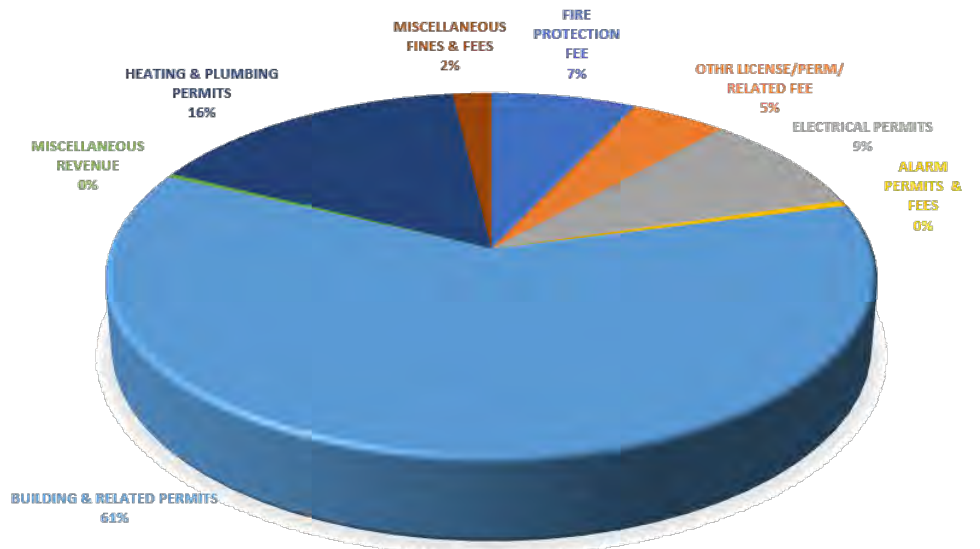
**Total 2021
Expenses:
\$12,144,508.91**



**Total 2021
Operating Expenses:
\$576,493.16**



**Total 2021
Revenues:
\$1,265,470.87**



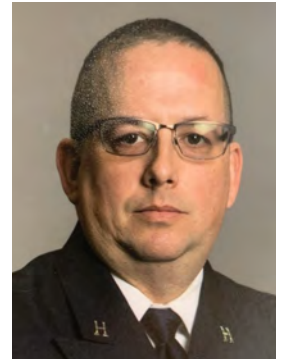
2021 Personnel Changes

Promotions and Appointments		
David Duchrow	Captain	February 13, 2021
Blake Hundt	Lieutenant	February 16, 2021
Jacob Lincoln	Engineer	February 13, 2021
Joseph Albrecht	Engineer	February 12, 2021
Joel Schmit	Assistant Mechanic	February 12, 2021
Clayton Anderson	Engineer	April 30, 2021
Erin Statz	Engineer	September 24, 2021
Cole Wiggert	Engineer	October 11, 2021
Corey Mathison	Engineer	December 31, 2021
New Hires		
David Foster	Code Enforcement Technician	February 15, 2021
Chase Montgomery	Firefighter	May 17, 2021
Benjamin Leis	Firefighter	May 17, 2021
Andrew Stadler	Firefighter	May 17, 2021
Michael Suntken	Building Inspector	July 26, 2021
Kale Pike	Firefighter	October 25, 2021
Andrew Berzinski	Building Inspector	November 15, 2021
Retirements		
Tom Stange	28+ years of service	March 10, 2021
Tim Welke	24+ years of service	January 17, 2021
Todd Beyer	23+ years of service	July 27, 2021
Craig Snyder	23+ years of service	December 9, 2021
Todd Bina	19+ years of service	September 30, 2021

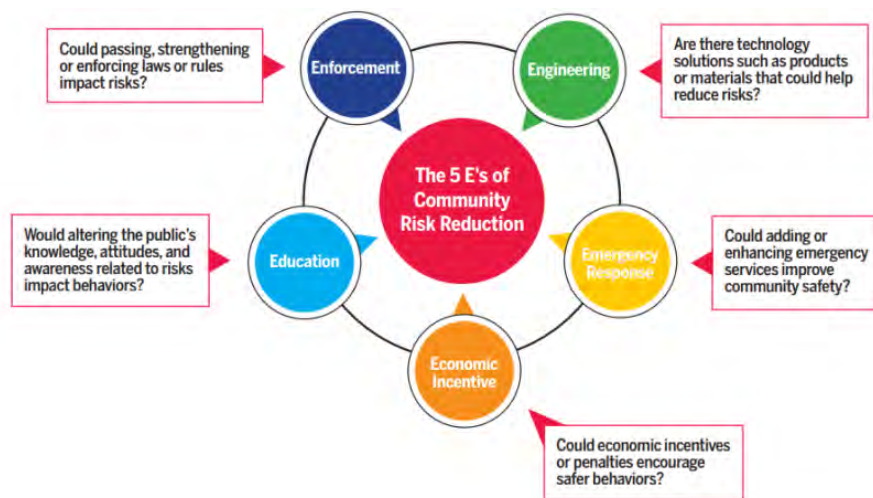


Division of Community Risk Management

Assistant Fire Chief Steven Cash
Former Assistant Chief Craig Snyder



The Division of Community Risk Management (CRM) is tasked with identifying and prioritizing local risks and integrating the strategic investment of resources to reduce their occurrence and impact to the community. In other words, it is a process to help the La Crosse community find out what our risks are and then to develop a plan to reduce the risks viewed starting with those identified as high priorities. Responsibilities of the Division of Community Risk Management include, but are not limited to, fire and building inspections, fire prevention and suppression inspections, life safety inspections, code enforcement, plan reviews, public education, risk assessment, and fire investigations. Through the **5 E's of Community Risk Reduction**: Education, Engineering, Enforcement, Emergency Response and Economic Incentives, the department will continue its mission of providing a safe environment for the residents, visitors, and stakeholders of the community of La Crosse.



In 2021, the Division of Community Risk Management took over building inspection services and permitting for the **Town of Medary**. The Division also provided administrative oversight and guidance with the **Holmen Area Fire Department** regarding fire inspections and public outreach.

2021 also saw significant equipment upgrades in relation to public education and fire investigation. The department acquired a **new fire safety simulator** that replaced the fire department's old fire safety house. The fire safety simulator comes with cutting edge technology that will provide training for multiple ages and demographics that were previously unable to be reached with our old safety house. CRM also received a new truck that is better equipped for doing fire investigations as well as a new state of the art 3-D camera. This camera will provide full three-dimensional, high definition renderings of rooms and buildings that have been involved in a fire or other incidents. These images will be instrumental in any potential litigation, after-action reviews, and training.

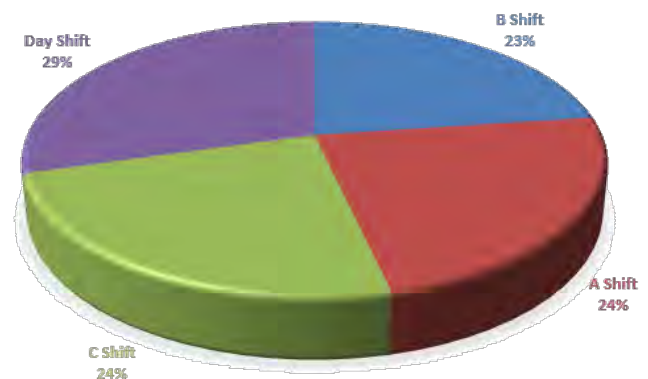
Finally, the Division of Community Risk Management acquired **new software** that will better **streamline the process** of conducting fire inspections in the City of La Crosse and the Town of Medary. Though the software was purchased on 2021, it will not be fully implemented until the second quarter of 2022.

Division of Community Risk Management Fire Inspections

The LCFD has **two full-time fire inspectors and 25 fire officers (Captains and Lieutenants)** who perform approximately **5,000 occupancy and fire life safety inspections annually** between the City of La Crosse and the Town of Medary. These inspections are performed in accordance with Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services (DSPS) 314 and the City of La Crosse Municipal Code.

The LCFD began assessing community risks within the City in 2010, and completed a formal Community Risk Assessment in 2020. This assessment gathered information and provided the following response analysis: district overview, special hazards, occupancy risk assessment, occupancy analysis emergency call history, and fire flow analysis. Fire inspections are performed for all commercial properties and all three-unit or larger residential properties. **The City is divided into 41 planning zones**; which are approximately one mile by one mile. The Town of Medary is a zone by itself. Using this data, inspections are assigned to LCFD officers to execute one or two times throughout the calendar year.

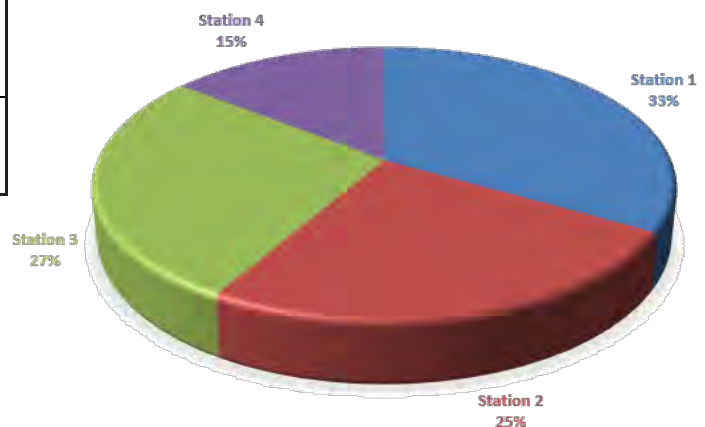
2021 Fire Inspections by Shift



2021 Fire Life Safety Inspections/Occupancies

# of Total Inspections	5,515
# of Total Completed Inspections	5,505
# of Total Re-Inspections	371
# of Total Completed Re-Inspections	367
# of Total Occupancies	2,866
# of Completed Occupancies	2,863
# of Un-started Occupancies	3
# of Follow Up Occupancies	0
# of Unresolved Violations	296
# of Resolved Violations	517
% of Occupancies Inspected	99.90%
% of Occupancies Completed	99.90%

2021 Fire Inspections by Station



Division of Community Risk Management Community Risk Educator Pat Corran



Similar to many challenges posed in 2020, 2021 also proved to be a year where the Division of Community Risk Management was forced to be nimble in our efforts to educate and engage the citizens of the region on fire and life safety. With this said, the Division is proud of what was accomplished over this past year and, in fact, **increased performance** in several metrics prior to pre-pandemic years and expanded to new areas of focus as outlined in our Community Risk Reduction Plan released in the spring.

In October, we worked closely with local public and parochial schools to virtually enter every La Crosse elementary school classroom for Fire Prevention Week. Over the week, we discussed the importance of having working fire and carbon monoxide alarms in the home and other vital home fire safety measures like having an escape plan and sleeping with the bedroom door closed. In an effort to assess comprehension, 4th and 5th grade students were assigned online pre- and post-tests. On average, 4th grade students **improved pre-test scores by 17%** and 5th graders **improved scores by over 25%**.

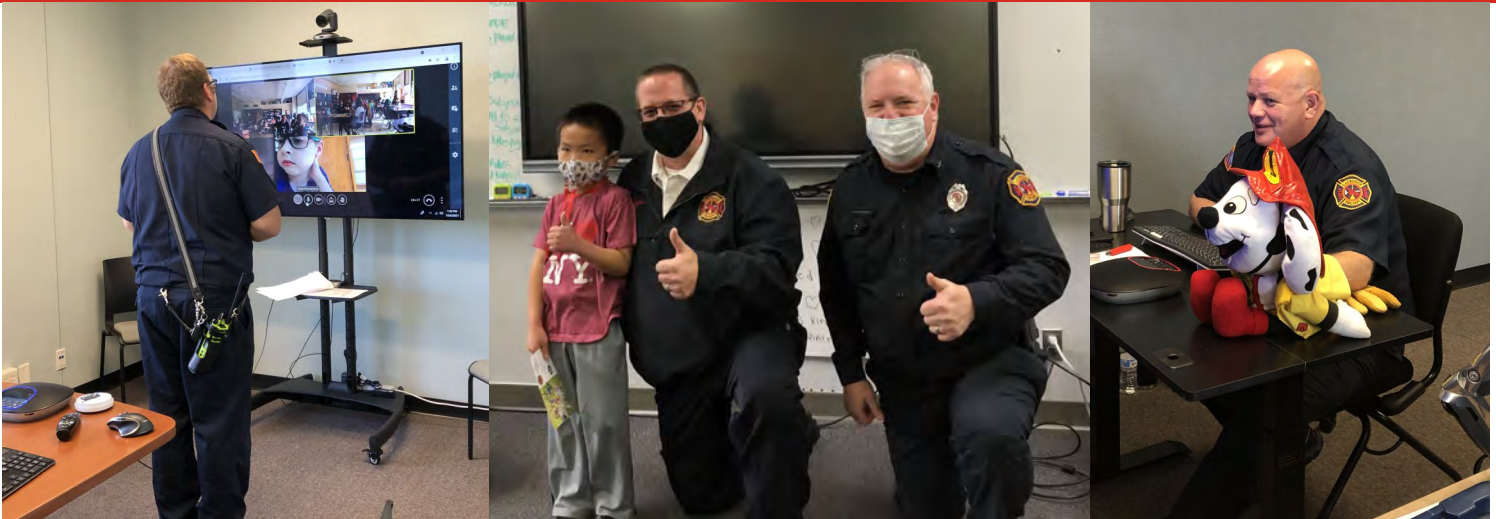
Annually, the La Crosse Fire Department **reaches over 8,000 children and adults** in La Crosse and the surrounding communities regarding risk reduction education and information.

The La Crosse Fire Department **installed over 130 smoke alarms** in homes in La Crosse and Medary in 2021. The LCFD's largest Community Risk Reduction project completed in 2021 involved **installing over 2,500 SmartBurners** in La Crosse Housing Authority units. This collaborative project was funded through a FEMA grant with the goal of preventing cooking fires, the most common reason the LCFD is called upon to put out a fire. SmartBurners are temperature-limiting stovetop elements that replace traditional coil elements and prevent cooking oils from reaching their ignition point.

The Division of CRM also expanded into new Community Risk Reduction programming in 2021 including teen driving safety, work aimed at decreasing falls in older adults, further collaboration with La Crosse's university-aged population on fire and life safety education, upping our efforts on reducing opioid-related deaths in the Coulee Region, and organizing two Drug Take Back Days where **over 750 pounds of prescription medications were disposed of safely**.

A highlight of 2021 was taking acquisition in November of our new fire safety simulator. This state of the art, 26-foot trailer was purchased through gracious funding provided by the La Crosse Community Foundation, Kwik Trip, Gundersen Health, LHI/Optum Serve, State Farm, and FEMA AFG FP&S. We are excited about rolling this out to the community in 2022!





Community Risk Education Notable 2021 Events

Date	Event	Outreach	Total Impact/Results
Feb 13	Myrick Park Mask Handout	COVID-19 prevention	2,500 masks issued
Mar 11	Impact Teen Driving Course	Teen distracted & reckless driving	30 families
Apr 24	Drug Take Back Day	Proper disposal of prescription medications	550lbs of pill weight collected
May 8	Red Cross - Sound the Alarm	Free smoke alarm & safety information	50 alarms installed
May 17	Aquinas High School	Fire/rental safety talk with seniors	80 graduating seniors
July 7	Camp Send-A-Kid	Youth fire safety discussion	60 campers, 25 staff
Aug 14	Medary Family Fun Day	Cooking fire demonstrations	100 people
Sept 10	UWL Eagle Fest	University-aged cooking/fire safety	75 students
Oct 4-12	Fire Prevention Week	Youth fire prevention education	Over 4,500 students
Oct 23	Drug Take Back Day	Proper disposal of prescription medications	200lbs of pill weight collected
November	SmartBurner Installations	Cooking fire prevention	Over 2,500 burners installed

2021 Fire Prevention Week - “Knowing the Sounds of Safety”

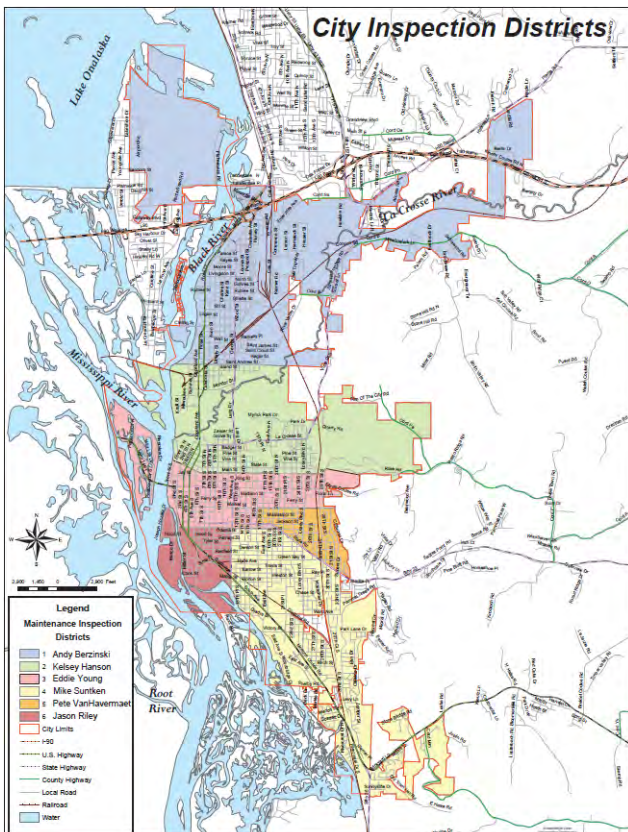


Division of Community Risk Management

Chief Building Inspector David Reinhart



The Division of Community Risk Management also provides a **full range of inspection services** that includes: plan review, construction review, and property maintenance inspection field operations; full electrical, erosion control, HVAC, and plumbing inspection operations; investigation of code violations on private property; floodplain management; tavern and rooming house inspections; sign inspections; electrical and gas licenses; and assignment of property addresses. **Our division takes great pride in ensuring** that La Crosse continues to be a safe place to live, work, and visit.



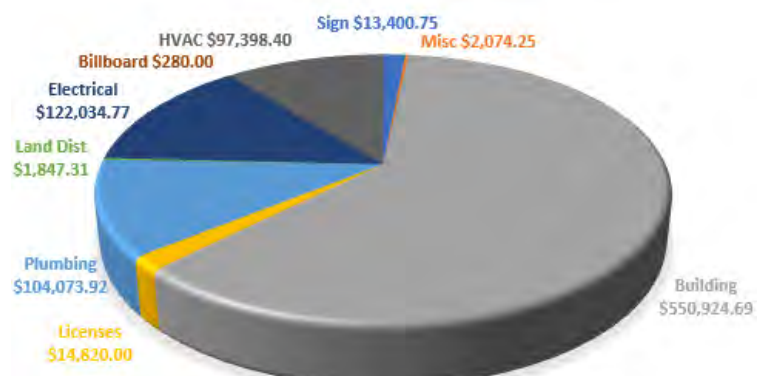
In 2021, the Division's Building Inspectors and Code Enforcement Technicians managed:

- **18 registered** vacant buildings
- **Maintenance enforcement** activities decreasing from 3,483 incidents in 2020 to **2,237** in 2021
- **26 newly** constructed residential buildings
- **12 newly** constructed commercial, industrial, and institutional structures
- **23** construction **additions** to single-family dwellings
- **60** construction **alterations** to commercial buildings
- **40 decks** constructed
- **38** garage/utility buildings **razed**
- **12** commercial structures **razed**
- **31** residential buildings **razed**

2021 Building Inspection Permits Issued



2021 Building Inspection Annual Fee Summary





Division of Community Risk Management

Fire Investigations

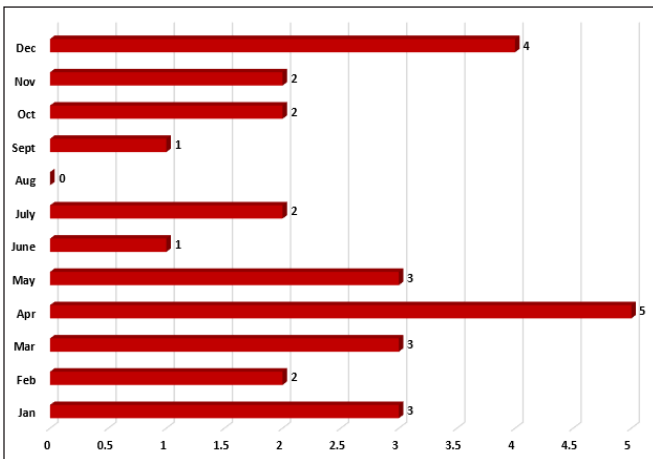
Captains Tim Knudsen & Kyle Soden



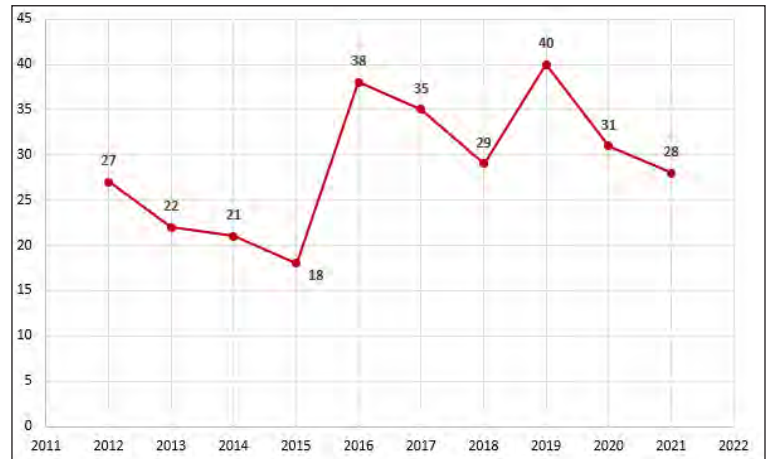
The Division of Community Risk Management’s Fire Investigators were challenged with investigating **28 fire scenes in 2021** to perform cause and origin investigations. The La Crosse Fire Department has two Fire Investigators who are certified to the levels of **“Fire Investigation Technician”** and/or **“Certified Fire Investigator”** by the International Association of Fire Investigators (IAAI). The designation of Certified Fire Investigator takes approximately **five years** to obtain. The La Crosse Fire Investigators work with the La Crosse Police Detectives when a fire is determined to be incendiary. This year, there were ten incendiary fires that resulted in five arrests for Arson.

We also wanted to take this moment to congratulate **Assistant Chief Craig Snyder who retired in November on 2021.**

2021 Investigated Fire Scenes By Month



Total Investigated Fire Scenes Annual Comparison



Below: Actual photo from a 2021 fire investigation cause
 Right: AC Snyder, Chief Inspector Reinhart, & Captain Knudsen reviewing damage to 304 Pearl Street and surrounding buildings.



Division of Training and Professional Standards

Division Chief Todd Adams



The La Crosse Fire Department Training and Professional Standards Division is responsible for training the men and women of the La Crosse Fire Department, Community Risk Management and Holmen Fire Department. We strive to develop confident, competent and professional Emergency Service Providers, community Educators and code enforcement officers. Our Training and Professional Standards Division set high standards and demands these standards from all personnel so we can provide the best possible service to the City of La Crosse, Town of Medary, Village of Holmen, Town of Holland and Town of Onalaska.

With the COVID Variants “Delta and Omicron” impacting us more than ever, it has shown us how to be more flexible, intuitive, innovative and patient with our daily routines, emergency call responses and regular trainings. Our personnel have had to adjusted to the “new normal” of wearing face masks, distancing ourselves and training with restrictions. While still adapting to change due to COVID in 2021 the Training and Professional Standards Division managed to complete more than **35,000 hours of training**, taught more than **300 classes** and trained **four new recruits**. This is a true testament to the importance we place on training in the Fire Service.

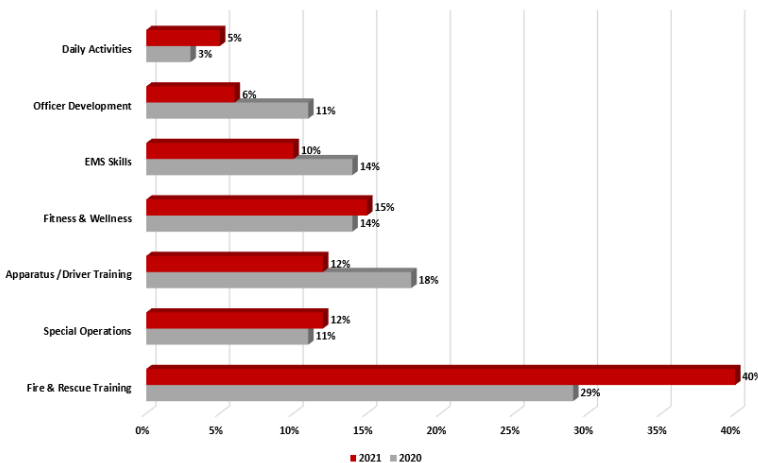
The Training Division alone cannot complete the **35,000 plus hours of training**. Through a combination of Firefighters, Line Officers, 2 AFG Grants and Outside instructors we were able to complete training for the **129 men and women** of the La Crosse Fire Department, Community Risk Management Division and Holmen Fire Department. Together, we facilitated a comprehensive training program that developed the professional men and women who provide Emergencies Services, code enforcement and inspections to our communities. Last year the Training Division used **74 La Crosse Fire Department personnel and six outside instructors** to meet our NFPA, OSHA and ISO mandated 20 hours a month per individual of training. This training mandate was met once again in 2021 with each individual completing an **average of 31.22 hours** of training per month.

The 2021 Training Budget was supplemented by **two FEMA AFG grants**. “The Primary goal of the Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) is to meet the firefighting and emergency response needs of fire departments and non-affiliated emergency medical service organizations” The first grant awarded in late 2019, was to be used by late 2020, but due to COVID the grant spending deadline was extended out through March 2022. This grant covered training costs for NFPA 1002 Driver Operator certification, NFPA 1021 Fire Officer I, II, III and IV certifications, NIMS compliant Incident Management Training and Officer Development. With this Grant in 2021 we were able to get our Drivers NFPA Certified in Driver Operator- Aerial, CDL-Class B certified, all Officers and Officer Candidates through the NFPA Fire Officer 1 & 2 class, ten firefighters **completed a 64-hour** NIMS Compliant Blue Card Command and Communications training, all Officers completed an 8-hour refresher on Incident management communications and all Officer Completed an Officer development program through Ethical Leaders in Action. The second AFG grant was awarded in July of 2021 and will cover Officer development, Leadership Seminars, Fire Service Instructor 1 & 2 training, Live Fire Instructor Certification and Training for our Mental Health PEER Support Team.

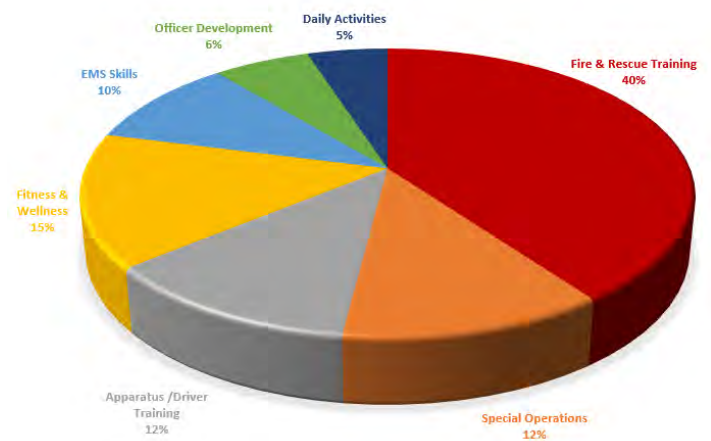
Division of Training and Professional Standards 2021 Highlights

- 327** Total number of training topics delivered in 2021.
- 74** Total number of La Crosse Fire Department personnel used as Instructors in 2021.
- 6** Total number of outside instructors brought in to teach specialty topics.
- 35,223** Total training hours for La Crosse Fire Personnel.
- 31.22** Average hours a La Crosse firefighter trained per month in 2021.
- 3,871** Total hours spent on inspecting personal protective equipment, apparatus, and life safety equipment.

2020 vs. 2021 Training Hours



2021 Training Hours by Category



2021 was certainly a unique year for the Training Division, from fluctuations in personnel, to managing constantly changing training platforms to mandated NFPA, OSHA and State requirements. Our goal for 2022 will be to continue to provide training that encompasses all our personnel from Probationary Firefighters up to our Administrative staff. We will begin the process of training our PEER Support Team, implement annual physicals and a wellness program, to assist our personnel with their physical and mental health needs. We will continue working within our community resources, to foster great relationships with our surrounding communities and to develop a well-trained, professional and prepared Department.

I would like to **thank** the following for their **continued support** of the La Crosse Fire Department Training and Professional Standards Division. The City Building Rehab Program, City CRM, City Streets Department, Gundersen Lutheran, Mayo Health Care, Western Technical College, University of Wisconsin La Crosse, Don's Towing, Mathy Construction, Hess Excavating, J.F. Brennan / Brennan Marine, Marine Land, BNSF Railroad, EXCEL Energy and all other community partners for providing support to our service and unique opportunities, you are greatly appreciated!



Live fire and extrication training @ training tower, REACT @ Camp Douglas



Airport and water rescue training along with probationary training

Division of Operations

All-Hazards Fire, EMS, & Rescue

Assistant Fire Chief Jeff Murphy



The La Crosse Fire department operations division is responsible for response to all hazards in our community. We respond to fires and EMS calls on a daily basis, but we are also responding to the less frequent emergencies. The rivers and bluffs around La Crosse are one of our greatest assets, but they are also the location for emergencies each year. Our USAR (Urban Search and Rescue) and Water rescue teams are always prepared to respond in any weather to those unique emergencies. The Hazardous Materials Team is also responding in and around La Crosse, with a highly skilled team of Hazardous Materials Technicians. This group of professionals, work as a state funded resource, that is available to La Crosse citizens on a moment's notice.

The three shifts, that protect our city every day, are strategically located throughout La Crosse. The Firefighters respond from four fire stations on Engines, Quint's (Ladder Engine combination) and rescues. These well-trained professionals train and prepare daily for any emergency that may arise in our community.

La Crosse Firefighters were called to help members of our community, **6,888** times in 2021. **Over 4,700** of those calls are for medical emergencies and they come at all hours of the day. There were **107 fire related calls** last year as well. We are most proud of the number of calls that are contained to the room of origin after our arrival. **96% of the fires** that we responded to last year, are contained to the room that they were in when we arrived on scene. We had 21 firefighter injuries in 2021, which is only one less than the previous year. We expect that our **health and wellness** initiatives will help reduce this statistic even more in future years.

We took delivery of a **new 107' Pierce ladder truck** last year. Quint 1 is the newest apparatus in our fleet and has a taller ladder than any our departments history. What makes this truck unique, is the overall size is smaller, because it is engineered to ride on a single axle. The 75' Quint that was replaced, will stay in reserve service for **five more years**.

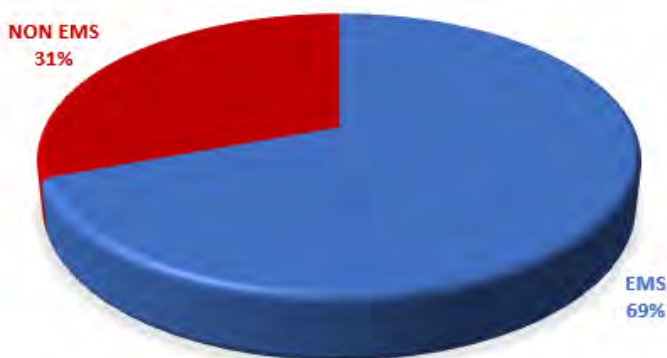
New Quint 1 and Old Quint 1



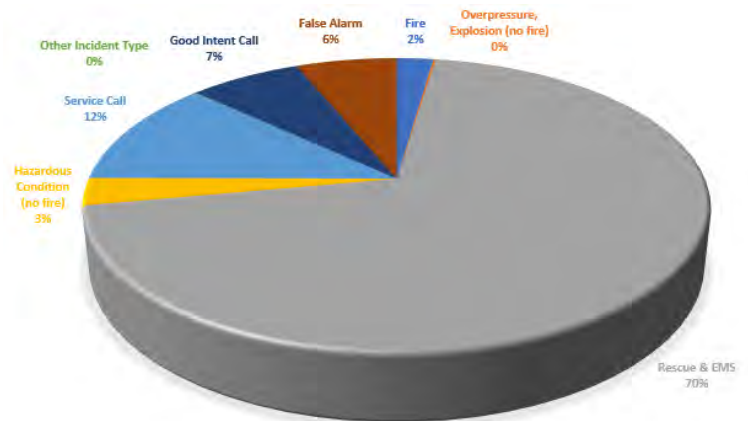
Fire Station 1 went through an extensive remodel in 2021, which included private bunk areas for firefighters and additional shower & bath facilities. The Station 3 locker room and bath were also separated into two private baths. The planning for the replacement of Stations 2 and 4 continue and construction should begin on Station 2 in **June of 2022**. When our newest stations were **built in 1967**, firefighters were all white males and the facilities were built with that in mind. We have been a more diverse organizations for several years and these improvements are critical to supporting all of our employees equally.

The firefighters that serve you, are thankful for the support of the La Crosse community and appreciate the trust that you have placed in us. We look forward to a year where COVID has less impact on our daily lives and our customers are safer, in our community.

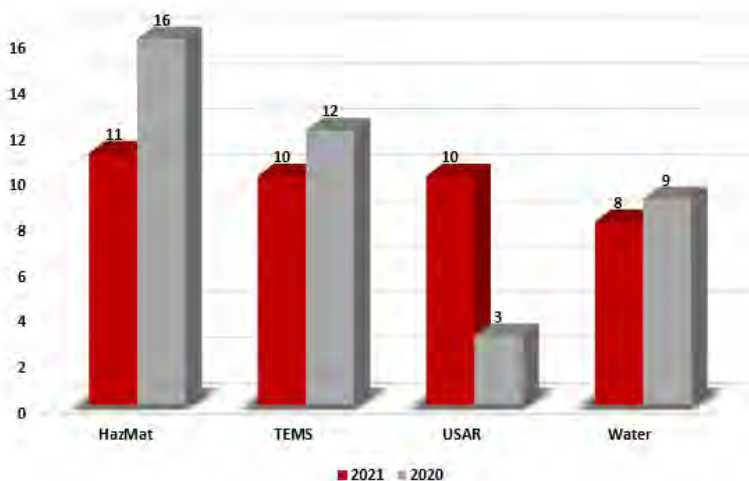
2021 Total Calls - Non EMS vs. EMS



2021 Total Incidents by Type



Special Operations Teams Calls - 2020 vs. 2021



2021 Property/Contents Saved



Division of Operations

Emergency Medical Services

Captain/EMS Coordinator Jim Hillcoat



The La Crosse Fire Department provides emergency medical services (EMS) to the City of La Crosse and Town of Medary. The department's EMTs and Paramedics responded to **4,713 medical related calls in 2021**. Notable calls responded to were **46 cardiac arrests** and **111 drug overdoses**. LCFD staff consists of eighty EMTs and **14 Paramedics** responding out of four fire stations. LCFD operates under the Medical Direction provided by Gundersen Health System and adheres to regional medical guidelines.

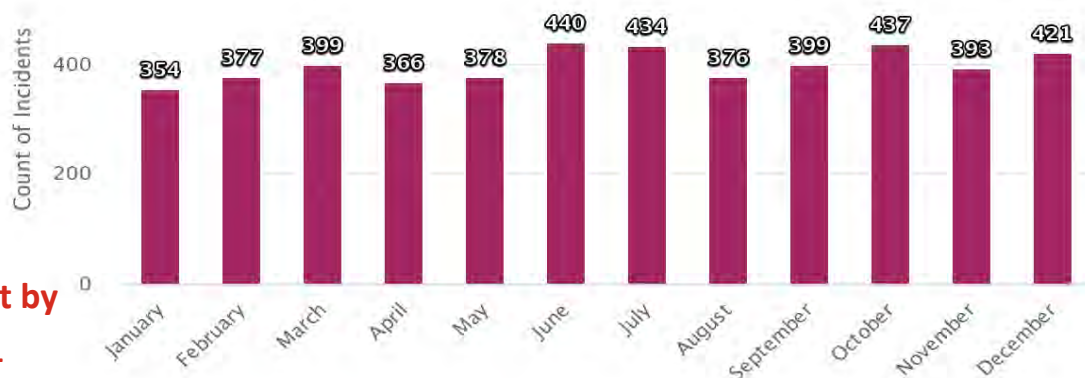
LCFD continues to work toward a strategic plan goal of increasing the number of Firefighter/Paramedics. Two of LCFD's Firefighter/EMTs achieved Paramedic certification in 2021 and completed the required field training in partnership with Gundersen Tri-State Ambulance (GTSA). In April of 2021, a milestone was achieved when a Leased Employee Agreement was finalized between LCFD and GTSA. This agreement made it possible for LCFD Paramedics to work on GTSA ambulances as contracted employees. This arrangement gives LCFD Paramedics more clinical opportunity for skill retention. LCFD Paramedics are required to work **12-hours per month** on a GTSA ambulance as a clinical requirement.

An EMS Coordinator and three EMS Assistants work closely with the LCFD Division of Training and Professional Standards to provide regularly scheduled EMS Training for LCFD EMTs and Paramedics. EMS training is scheduled monthly for each shift. The training consists of subject matter which fulfills requirements for Tri-annual EMS license renewals through the State of Wisconsin DHS EMS section. LCFD provided **3,675 EMS training hours** to its EMTs and Paramedics in 2021.

The COVID-19 pandemic unfortunately continued through 2021 as new variants emerged. The number one priority was keeping our First Responders protected so they could continue to respond and provide high quality emergency medical service. This was accomplished through continued use of enhanced dispatch protocols and specific operational procedures to minimize risk to LCFD First Responders.

The LCFD EMS program continues to evolve along with the working relationship with our EMS transport provider, Gundersen Tri-State Ambulance. More capabilities have been approved for LCFD providers. One of those capabilities is the approval of LCFD Paramedics to document patient refusals of care and transport when patients decide against transport after EMS is activated. This allows for LCFD to cancel responding ambulances and results in better use of resources in times where ambulance resources may be limited. LCFD also responded to **45 lift assist requests** from GTSA and provided personnel during **transport of critical patients 111** in 2021. LCFD and GTSA will continue to pursue more collaborative operations as we move into 2022.

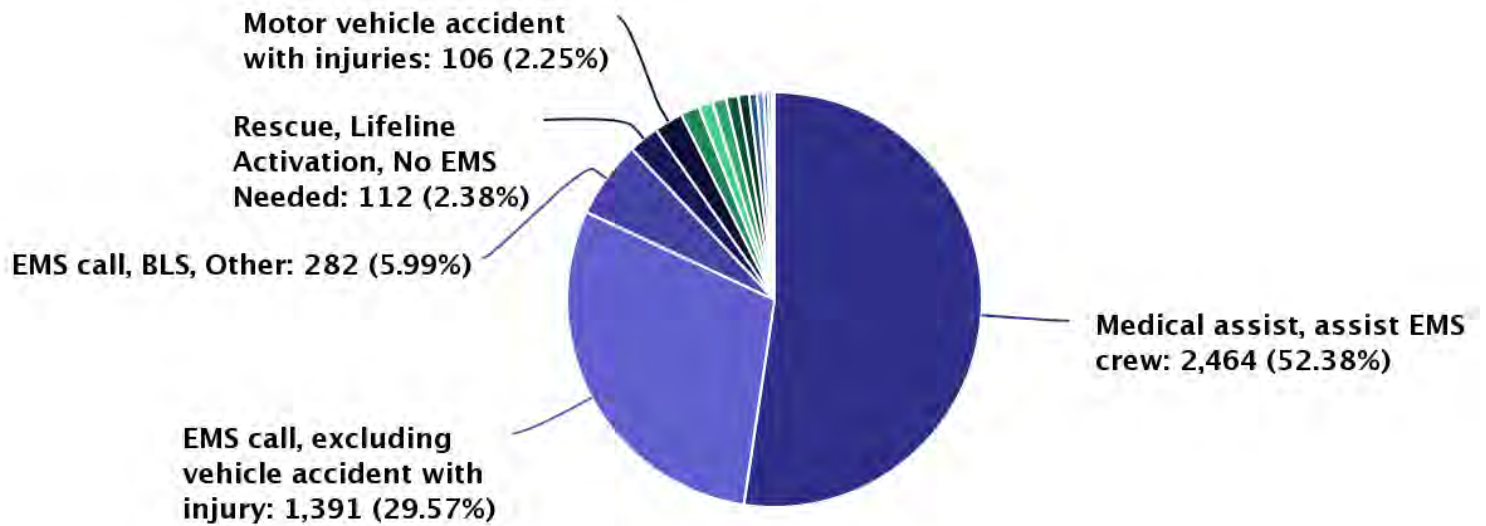
We all hope to see the COVID-19 pandemic subside in the new year and get back to more normalized operations. Until then, LCFD EMS will continue to adapt, overcome, and succeed in providing high quality emergency medical services to the community.



EMS Incident Count by Month for 2021



Most Common EMS Incident Types for 2021



Top Left: crush injury training Top Right: Pat Corran and Chris Eberlein, MD conduct a demonstration Bottom: Health Science Academy 25

Division of Operations Hazardous Materials Team

Captain Blane Neher



The La Crosse Regional Hazardous Materials Team (HAZMAT) is a **25-member unit** that specializes in **responses to chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and explosive** related incidents. The team was formally established under the direction of Wisconsin Emergency Management (WEM) in July 2000. The department has been designated by WEM as a National Incident Management System (NIMS) "Type 2" asset. Our team currently provides hazardous materials response for **nine counties** in West Central Wisconsin. Within this area, we protect **90-miles** of the Mississippi River, **287-miles** of rail lines, and **121-miles** of interstate. Every team member is required to attend at least 48-hours of Hazmat Team drills per year, along with standard competency-based exercises designed to maintain technician-level skills. Our team also operates as a **Radiological Field Team** for the WI Department of Health Radiation Protection Section. The team trains and prepares for response to radiological/nuclear incidents that could require rescue, reconnaissance, mitigation, and sampling operations. **The state provides 100% of the funding** for both the Radiological and HazMat teams. The funding includes worker's compensation and reimbursement for costs incurred during responses with no responsible party.

In 2021, members of our team responded to **108 calls for service**, where hazmat monitors and equipment were involved in the incident. The types of calls of our Hazmat Members responded to this year involved biological incidents, chemical spills, Carbon Monoxide incidents, combustible gas and liquid spills, natural gas leaks, oil spills, and toxic chemical condition incidents. The La Crosse Regional Hazmat Team had **eleven significant Hazmat incidents** in 2021 where Hazmat Operations played a major role in mitigating the incident.

2021 HazMat Responses:

- 02/20 Mercury Spill
- 04/01 Diesel Spill
- 04/06 Natural Gas Leak Controlled with Gas Clamp
- 04/21 IED incident
- 05/27 Identification of Illegal Drugs
- 06/01 Natural Gas Leak Controlled with Gas Clamp
- 08/17 Natural Gas Leak Controlled with Gas Clamp
- 08/26 Natural Gas Leak Controlled with Gas Clamp
- 10/20 Semi Trailer Roll Over in River / Diesel Spill
- 10/29 Natural Gas Leak Controlled with Gas Clamp
- 10/29 Chemical Odor



Aftermath of a two vehicle accident; diesel spill which was contained and cleaned up

Division of Operations

Urban Search and Rescue

Engineer Wade Flisram



The La Crosse Fire Department Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) Team is an **18-member unit** that specializes in various technical rescue disciplines. The mission of the USAR team is to prepare for and respond to **technical rescue emergencies** both locally and regionally. These emergencies may involve structural collapse, major extrication or disentanglement, confined space rescue, trench rescue, flood and swift water rescue, high/low angle rope rescue, and wide area search.

The USAR team is supported by one heavy rescue apparatus, a 32-foot 2004 Pierce Sabre which carries specialized equipment for rope rescue, confined space and structural collapse incidents as well as a 21-foot enclosed trailer which contains lumber and trench rescue equipment. USAR Team members train regularly on duty and meet every other month for a large-scale training which involves equipment review, call review and rescue scenarios. Training also consists of team members attending outside training to learn new skills and obtain certifications in the specialized areas of USAR.

Our abilities and resources continue to be challenged with the growth of the Mississippi Valley Conservancy, Human Powered Trails, and the addition of the Town of Medary response district. The team is working with the Parks and Recreation Department and nonprofit groups to develop an Emergency Location Marker system to help aid our response using GPS location. We continue to push ourselves to adapt to an ever-expanding technical rescue mission, and we appreciate the community's support of our team and the services that we provide to keep our residents and visitors safe.



2021 Technical Rescue Responses:

- 01/24 Medical Assistance within Hixon Trail System
- 04/27 Injured Cyclist on Hixon Trails
- 05/08 Structural Shoring of Damaged Building from Vehicle Impact
- 05/15 Injured Cyclist on Hixon Trails
- 06/09 Medical Assistance within Hixon Trail System
- 08/16 Medical Assistance within Hixon Trail System
- 09/19 Cyclist on Hixon Trails
- 10/08 Responded and Recovered Person who fell off Miller Bluff
- 10/31 Medical Assistance with Hixon Trail System
- 12/10 Assist with Vehicle Accident Patient Removal



Bluff highline/high angle training

Division of Operations

Water/Ice/Dive Rescue

Captain Tom Griffith



The mission of our Water/Ice/Dive Team is to provide the community with rescue and recovery capabilities in **all water environments**, from surface and ice related emergencies, to underwater rescue and recovery. Our team is capable of searching for and collecting evidence or other significant items. The team serves the city and the surrounding region with a 18-person team that includes **9 Divers** who are certified in a variety of specialized rescue diving operations. All of our Divers have been **certified** through Dive Rescue International, Profession Association of Diving Instructors (PADI), or National Association of Underwater Instructors (NAUI), and they all must pass annual water fitness and scuba skills tests. All members of the team are trained in dive operations, sonar use, boat operations, underwater camera work, ice rescue, and water based EMS.

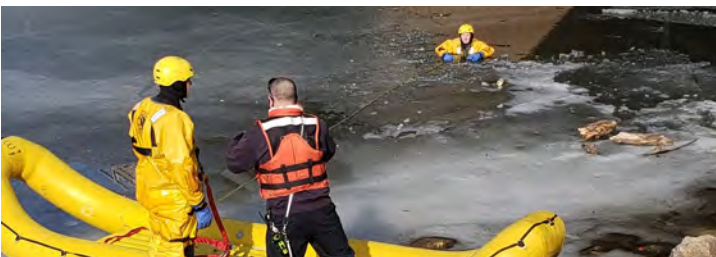
The La Crosse Fire Department participated in **1,769 hours** of water related training in 2021, including cross training non-team members of the department. This cross training allows for rapid response to safely rescue and render aid to victims involved in any and all water related emergencies. Our team conducts full team trainings on a monthly basis, and we were able to fully certify one new diver in 2021. We had the opportunity to train with the Army Corps of Engineers at the lock and dam. [Photo] As well, we trained with our Hazmat Team to conduct boom operations to capture oil from a possible train derailment in the river.

In August, mother nature provided a tremendous training opportunity. After a couple of days of heavy rain, the La Crosse River was the perfect location for swiftwater training and gave us a chance to train the entire department in the use of our new 15' Zodiac inflatable boat. (delivered in early 2021) Swiftwater skill swill continue to be a focus of our team in 2022.

In 2021 our divers were still able to conduct **68 dives**, and have recorded **971 total dives** since September of 2015. Our team responded to 17 water related calls for assistance, which was an 89% increase from 2020.

2021 Water Team Responses:

- 01/08 Ice rescue
- 01/16-21 Ice Rescue
- 03/04 Searching for drowning victim
- 06/05 Boating accident
- 07/07 Assist LCPD with evidence recovery
- 07/13 Water rescue
- 08/07 Floor response (mutual aid)
- 09/18 Water rescue



Ice and swift water rescue training. Right: photo by Doug Connell of La Crosse

Division of Operations

Tactical EMS

Firefighter Frank Garritano



In 2021, the Tactical Emergency Medical Services (TEMS) Team continued to grow and develop into a cohesive team while serving and positively contributing to the City of La Crosse. Once again, the pandemic played a part in the team's ability to train, however, the team adapted and did our best to maintain our various medical skills and readiness to respond to high threat situations.

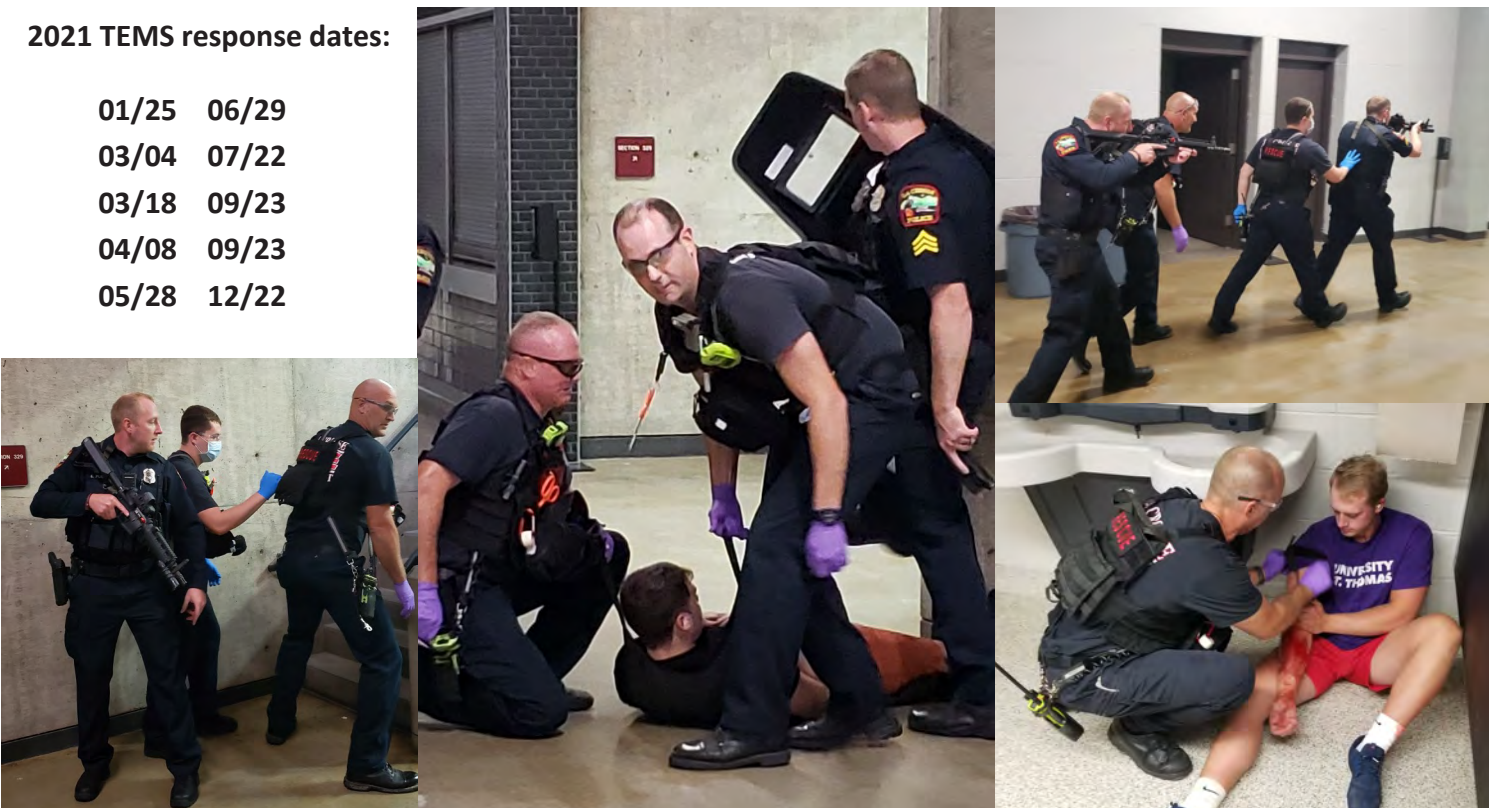
In 2021, we had a total of **10 callouts**, and **over 70 hours of various team training**. A diverse set of skills is required for Tactical Operators to be effective; maintaining those skill sets and a state of readiness is a primary focus for this team. Some of the topics covered this year were: specialized rescue operations, tactical emergency casualty care, team movement and concepts, injured/downed officer situations, and self-aid/buddy aid for ERT officers.

Along with the above-mentioned skills that we continued to refine, the TEMS Team also had the chance to lead Rescue Task Force training for both the LCPD ERT and the entire La Crosse Fire Dept., plus, a select number of officers from other local law enforcement agencies. Being that it was such a large training, we were lucky enough to be allowed access to the La Crosse Center and Western Technical College, had live role-players and used sensory deprivation devices to add to the validity of the training. The combination of all of those things made for a phenomenal learning environment and a chance to collaborate with local public safety.

Thanks to the continued support from all the parties involved with the TEMS Team, we look forward to another year of progress, advancing our skills, and serving the City of La Crosse.

2021 TEMS response dates:




01/25	06/29
03/04	07/22
03/18	09/23
04/08	09/23
05/28	12/22



Joint Rescue Task Force Training with La Crosse Police Department at the La Crosse Center

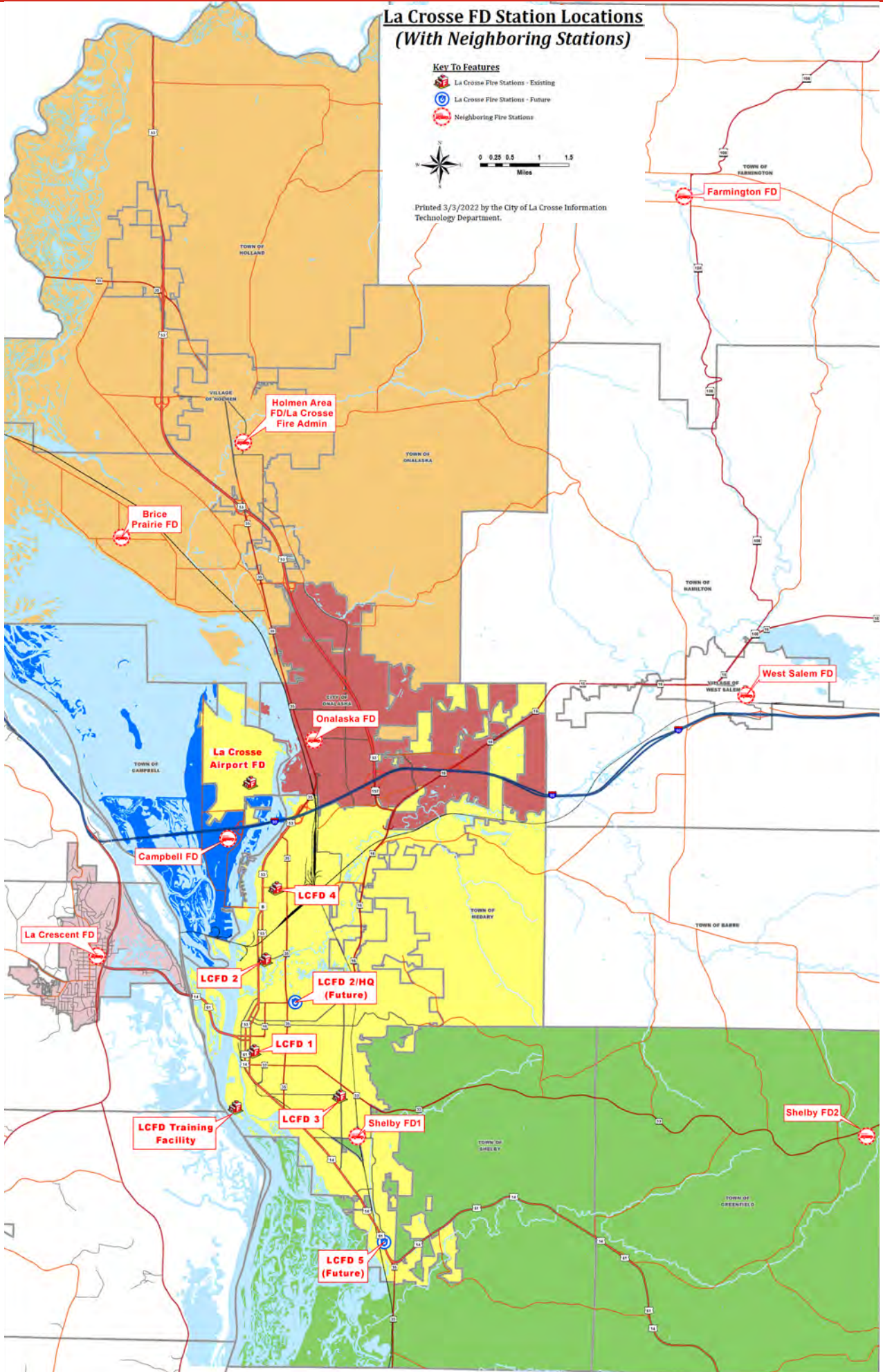
La Crosse FD Station Locations (With Neighboring Stations)

Key To Features

-  La Crosse Fire Stations - Existing
-  La Crosse Fire Stations - Future
-  Neighboring Fire Stations



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Division of Operations

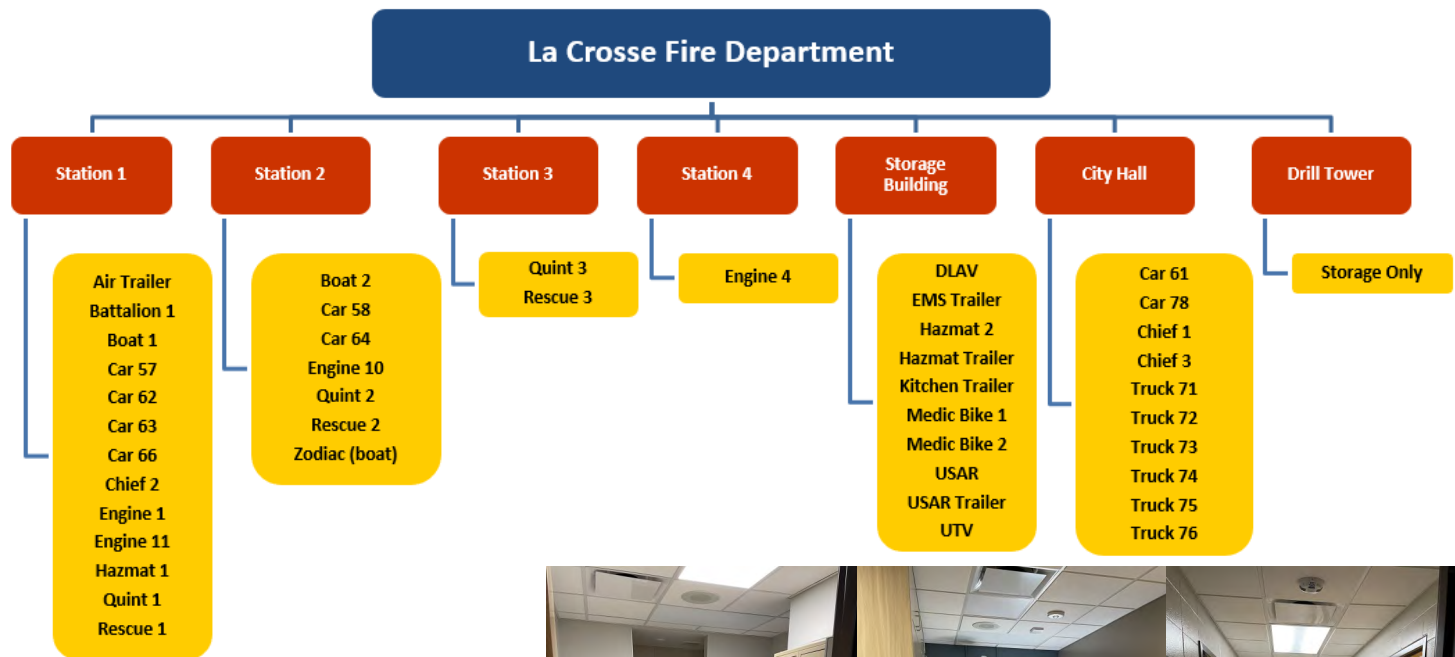
Fleet, Facilities, & Logistics Officer

Captain Bill Treanor



Operating under the department's Division of Operations, the department's Fleet, Facilities, and Logistics (FFL Officer's responsibilities include coordination of repair and maintenance of fire apparatus and support vehicles, and all of the department facilities. This includes annual maintenance and testing of pumps and firefighting equipment. The FFL Officer is supported by three Firefighters who are assigned in dual-roles as Assistant Mechanics on each of the three operational shifts. This four-person team coordinates with many other members of the department who are assigned to annual equipment testing and maintenance duties to ensure that all equipment, apparatus, and facilities are operationally ready, in compliance with state and federal laws, and ultimately safe for department personnel and those in the community, who we serve.

Additionally, the department provides apparatus and equipment maintenance support for vehicles and equipment at other area fire departments. These services are provided on a cost-recovery contractual basis and supports our regional partners with cost-effective maintenance and testing services. We believe that these services support good mutual-aid relations and provides an opportunity for regional interoperability advancements.



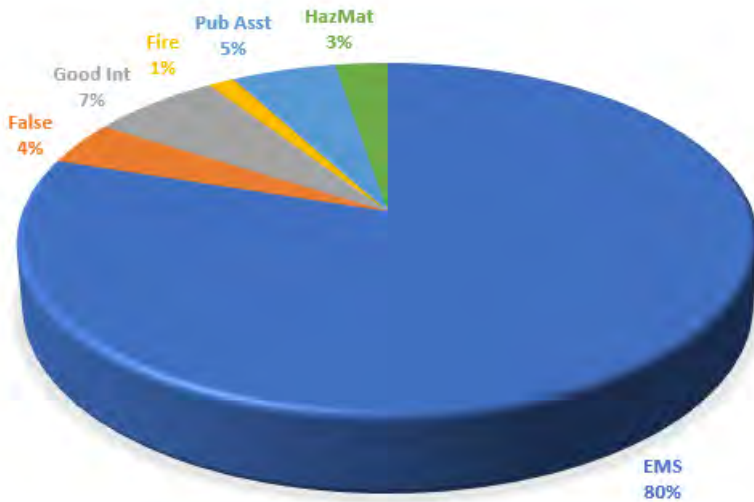
New Quint 1



Station 1 Remodel

Town of Medary Administration & Fire Operations

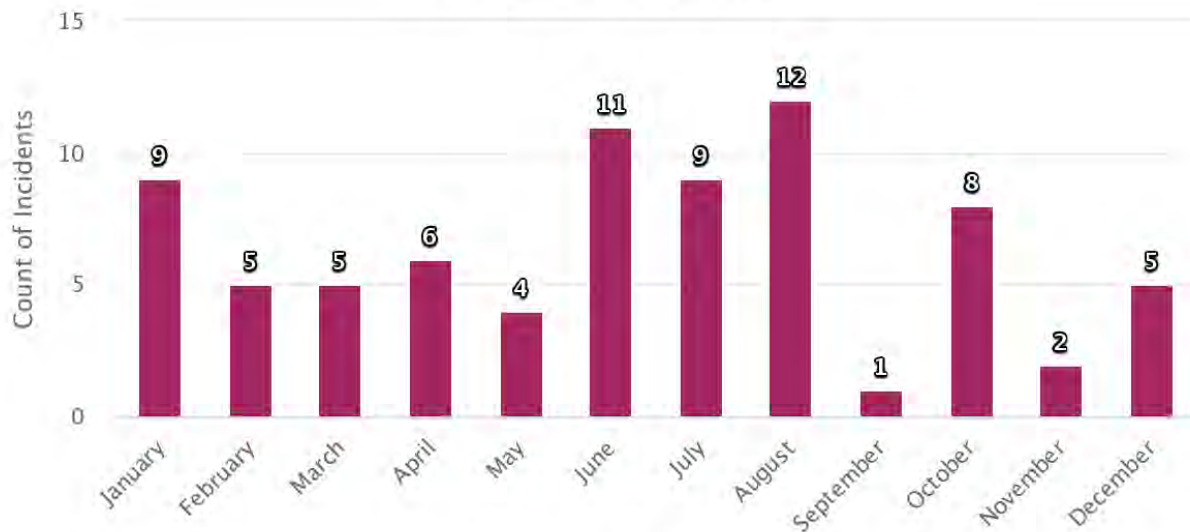
2021 Incidents by Type



Median Total Response Time



Incidents by Month



2021 Contract Revenue

DSPS 2% Revenue 2021:	\$ 8,021.20
Medary Contract Revenue 2021:	\$ 74,399.51
Fire Station Special Fund Interest earned 12/31/2021:	\$ 564.94
Fire Station Special Fund Total Balance:	\$ 82,985.65

Town of Medary Community Risk Reduction



Medary
Family Fun
Days



August 13, 2021



2021 Building Permits Issued

Permit Type	Permit Qty	Permit Valuation
Building - Accessory - Garage - Detached	3	\$ 67,000.00
Building - Accessory - Solar Panel	5	\$ 121,033.83
Building - Accessory - Wooden Patio Deck	1	\$ 8,000.00
Building - Duplex - New	1	\$ 274,000.00
Building - Footing/Foundation	1	\$ 490,000.00
Building - Single Family - Addition	2	\$ 185,000.00
Building - Single Family - New	3	\$ 1,364,000.00
Building - Single Family - Alteration	1	\$ 350,000.00
Mechanical - Electrical - Electrical	13	\$ 125,042.00
Mechanical - Electrical - Electrical (CSS)	2	\$ 74,592.00
Mechanical - HVAC - HVAC	4	\$ 52,980.00
Mechanical - HVAC - HVAC (CSS)	3	\$ 46,283.00
Mechanical - Plumbing - Plumbing	5	\$ 93,300.00
Totals	44	\$ 3,251,230.83

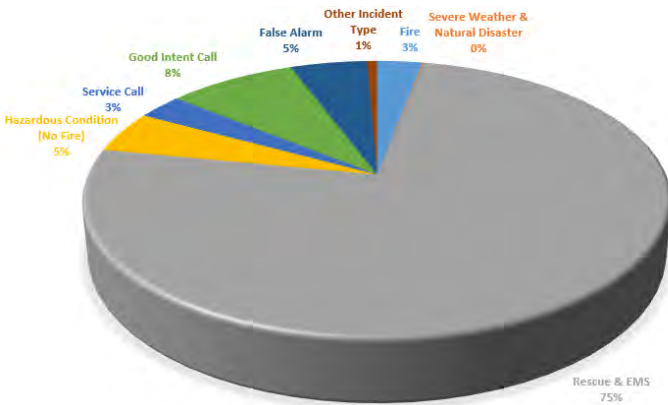
2021 Fire Life Safety Inspections

Occupancies	19
(2x/year)	
Total Fees	\$894.00
Included in contract invoice	
2021 Violations	
Found	11
Corrected	9

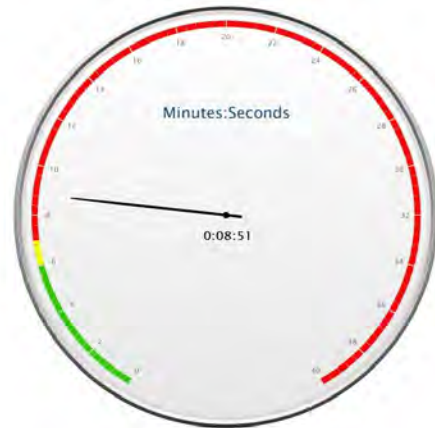


Holmen Area Fire Department

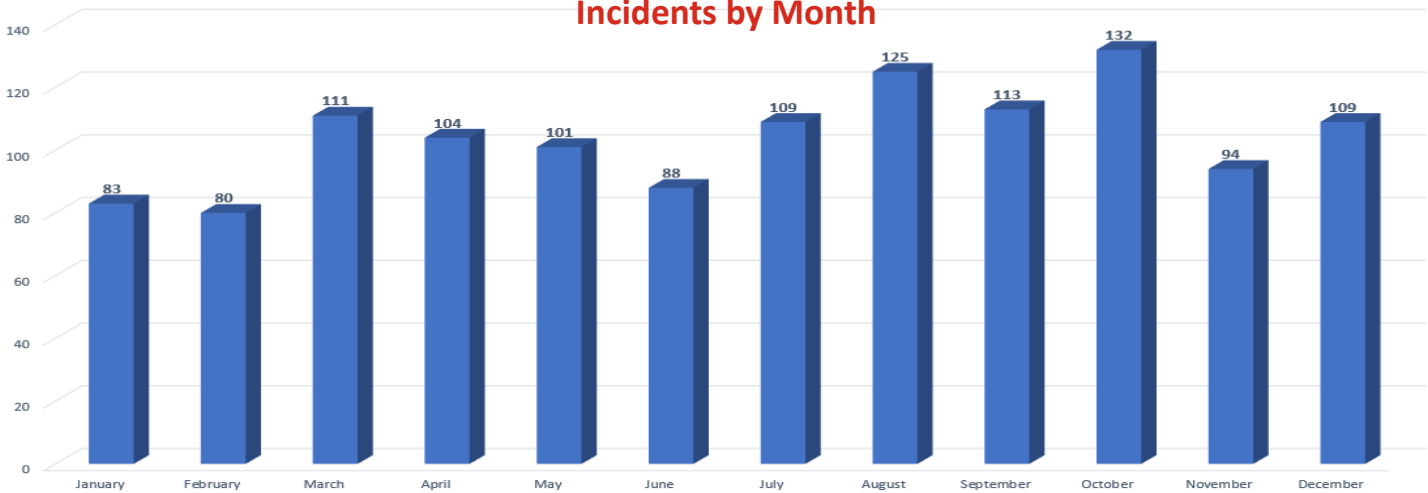
2021 Incidents by Type



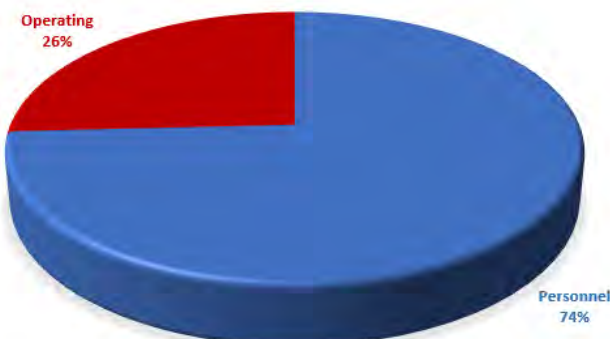
Median Total Response Time



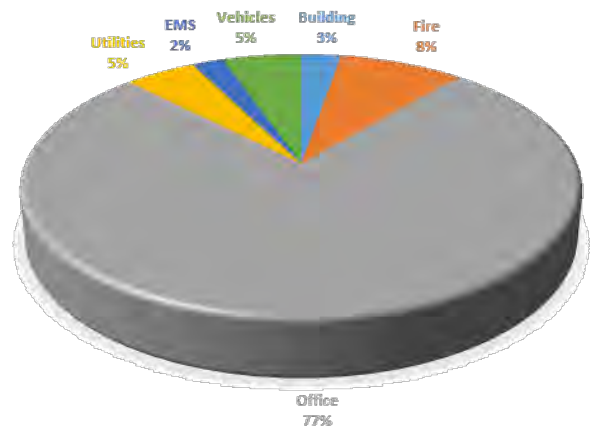
Incidents by Month



Total 2021 Expenses



Total 2021 Operating Expenses

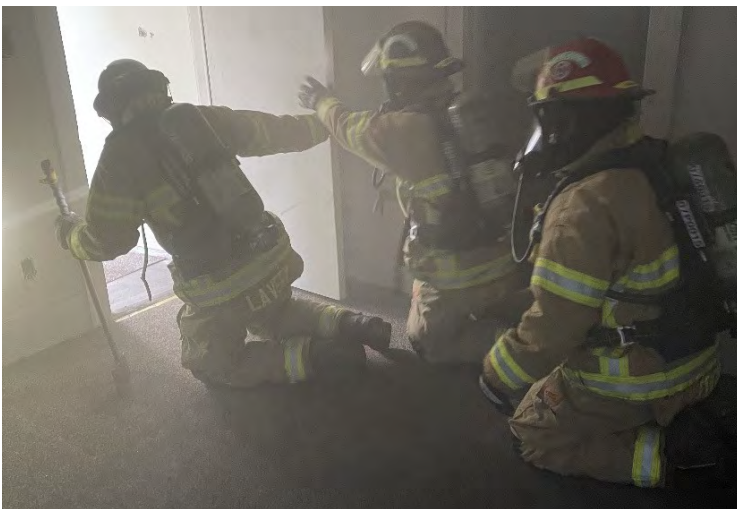




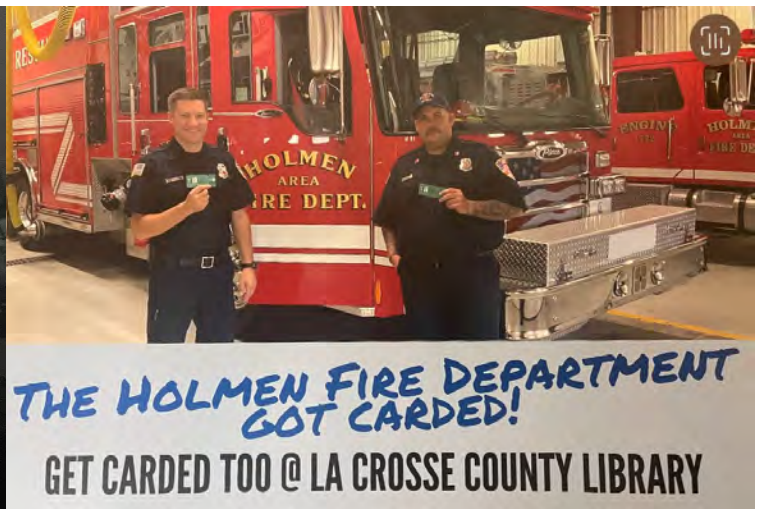
Below: fire and evacuation training



Above: Chief Gilliam being sworn in by HAFD Fire Board President, Patrick Barlow



Below: water rescue training at Fred Funk Boat Landing in Brice Prairie



Below: Jeremy Cook (not pictured), Phillip Davies, and Tony Kropelin were recognized by 7 Rivers Cardiac Arrest Preparedness & Education for their efforts in a cardiac arrest save





Cole Doblar

WI Air National Guard
115th Fighter Wing



Andrew Servais

WI Air National Guard
115th Fighter Wing

Serving Our Country & Community

Honoring our firefighters for protecting our nation and our local community.

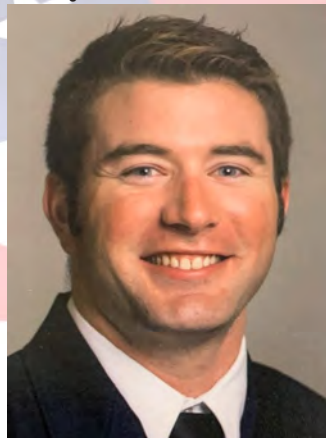
MN National Guard
C Co 2-211
Medevac

Clayton Anderson



MN National Guard
C Co 2-211
Flight Medic

Ryan Rushton



U.S. Army Reserves
86th Training Division
Headquarters

Kyle Soden





Wade Flisram

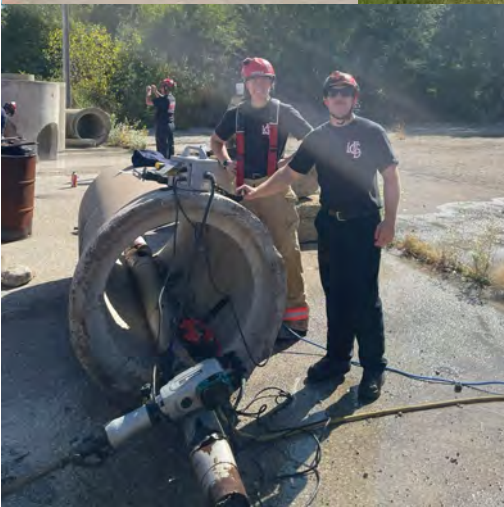
The Department awards a **“Firefighter of the Year”** award to an employee who is selected from a group of peer nominations.

This award is decided by a committee of peers and recognizes department personnel for their community service excellence, both on and off duty.

In 2021, the organization was pleased to present **Wade Flisram** with this distinguished and well-deserved award.

Wade is our USAR Team leader, a member of the Water Team and has been the leader of many department projects over his 24-year career. Wade has also organized countless fundraising activities in the community. We are proud to have Wade as a part of our team.





City of
La Crosse Fire
Department



City of La
Crosse WI Fire
Department



@lacrossefire



@laxfd



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LA CROSSE WI 54601

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fdinfo@cityoflacrosse.org

www.cityoflacrosse.org/your-government/departments/fire-department



La Crosse Firefighters fighting a fire at 304 Pearl Street, January 2021.