



**2024 Year End Report**

# **VAN WERT FIRE DEPARTMENT**

1% Better Everyday: Small Wins, Big Gains



# Van Wert Fire Department Annual Report.

## Introduction & Legacy

Established in 1869, the Van Wert Fire Department proudly commemorates 155 years of dedicated service to our community. With a heritage steeped in courage and commitment, our department has continually evolved to meet the challenges of modern emergency response while remaining steadfast in our mission to protect life and property.

## II. Personnel & Service Coverage

The strength of our department lies in our exceptional team, comprising 18 highly trained on-duty firefighter/EMTs supported by an additional 10 reserve members. This skilled cadre is the backbone of our operations, ensuring that every call is met with rapid and professional response.

- **Primary Service Area:** Our operations extend throughout the city, home to 11,018 residents as per the US Census Bureau (2024).
- **Extended Coverage:** In partnership with Pleasant Township, we provide fire and EMS services to an extra 5.9 sections outside the city limits.
- **Urban & Rural Reach:** We manage a 14-square-mile urban response area and proudly serve as the sole full-time Advanced Life Support Ambulance provider for a sprawling 410-square-mile county, bridging both densely populated and rural communities.

## III. Comprehensive Emergency Services

As a suburban/rural all-hazard agency, our department is equipped to address a wide spectrum of emergencies. Our services include, but are not limited to:

- **Firefighting & Emergency Medical Care:** Rapid response to fire incidents and medical emergencies with state-of-the-art equipment and expertise.
  - **Specialized Rescue Operations:**
    - Hazardous Materials Incidents
    - High/Low Angle Rescues
    - Confined Space Rescues
    - Trench and Structural Collapse Operations
    - Ice, Water, and Grain Bin Rescues
- **Additional Responsibilities:** We conduct mass casualty responses, implement proactive fire prevention measures, and perform comprehensive annual fire safety inspections.

## IV. 2024 Performance Metrics

In 2024, our department responded to 2,216 calls for service—a notable increase of 4.47% over previous metrics. This surge underscores both the growing operational demand and our unwavering commitment to community safety. Our team's efficiency and readiness have been crucial in managing the heightened call volume, ensuring that every incident is addressed promptly and professionally.

## V. Mutual Aid & Collaborative Response

Our robust mutual aid agreements with county departments further fortify our emergency response capabilities. In 2024, we provided assistance on 112 calls for aid, while also receiving support on two occasions. These collaborative efforts highlight our integral role within the broader emergency network, fostering a unified approach to community protection.

## VI. Conclusion

For over a century and a half, the Van Wert Fire Department has been a cornerstone of public safety in our region. Our commitment to excellence in firefighting, emergency medical services, and specialized rescue operations continues to drive us forward. As we celebrate our storied past and look to the future, we remain dedicated to safeguarding our community with integrity, expertise, and unwavering resolve.

## Welcome to the Van Wert Fire Department's 2024 Annual Report

It is with immense pride and a deep sense of duty that we unveil our 2024 Annual Report—a definitive testament to our unwavering commitment to proactive community engagement and exceptional service to our valued citizens. This report not only chronicles the significant milestones and notable achievements of the past year but also reflects our relentless pursuit of excellence in every facet of our operations.

Over the course of 2024, our dedicated team embraced every challenge with resolve, determination, and an unyielding spirit of service. From strategic operational enhancements to innovative community outreach initiatives, our efforts have been directed at fortifying the safety and well-being of both the citizens of Van Wert and our neighboring communities. Serving you is not just our mission—it is our honor.

As you navigate through the pages of this report, you will discover a comprehensive analysis of our department's activities, a detailed narrative of our successes, and an insightful look into the experiences that have shaped our journey. We celebrate our achievements and, equally important, learn from the challenges encountered along the way—each experience contributing to our growth and readiness for the future.

Looking ahead, we remain inspired by the trust you place in us and are eager to build on the foundations of the past. Our commitment to continuous improvement and community-centered service drives us forward, ensuring that we are always prepared to meet the evolving needs of our community.

Thank you for your steadfast support and for being an integral part of our shared journey toward a safer, stronger future.



# CALLS FOR SERVICE

TOTAL INCIDENTS 2024

2216

Percent of EMS Calls

89.9%

Count of EMS Calls

1990

Percent of Fire Calls

2.3%

Count of Fire Calls

51

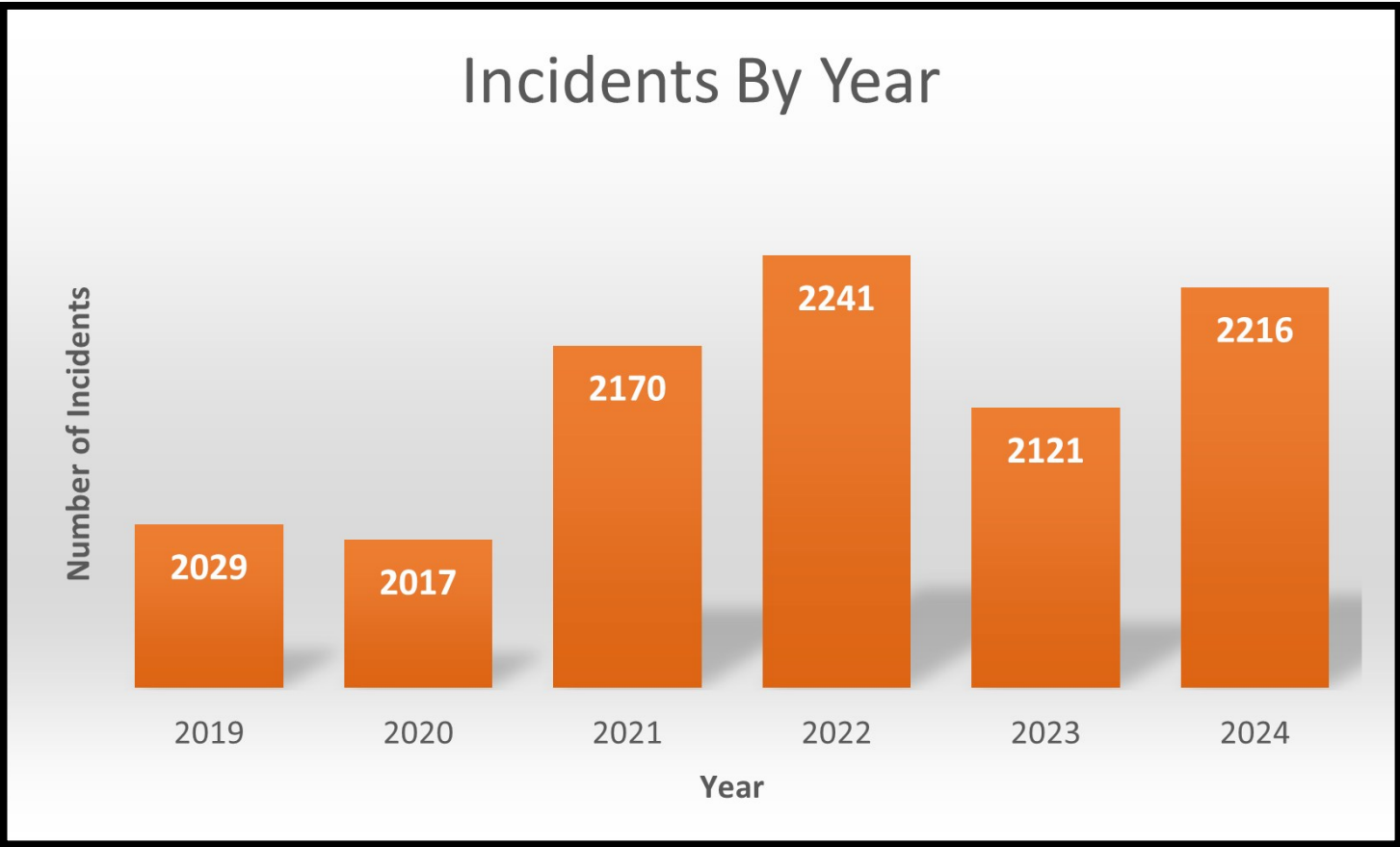
Percent of Other Calls

7.8%

Count of Fire Calls

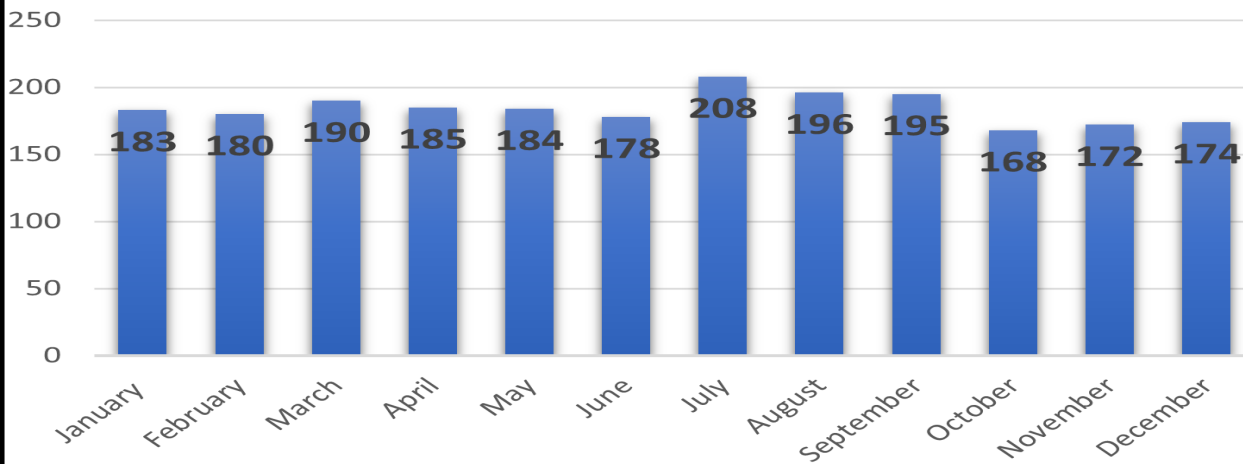
175

Incidents By Year

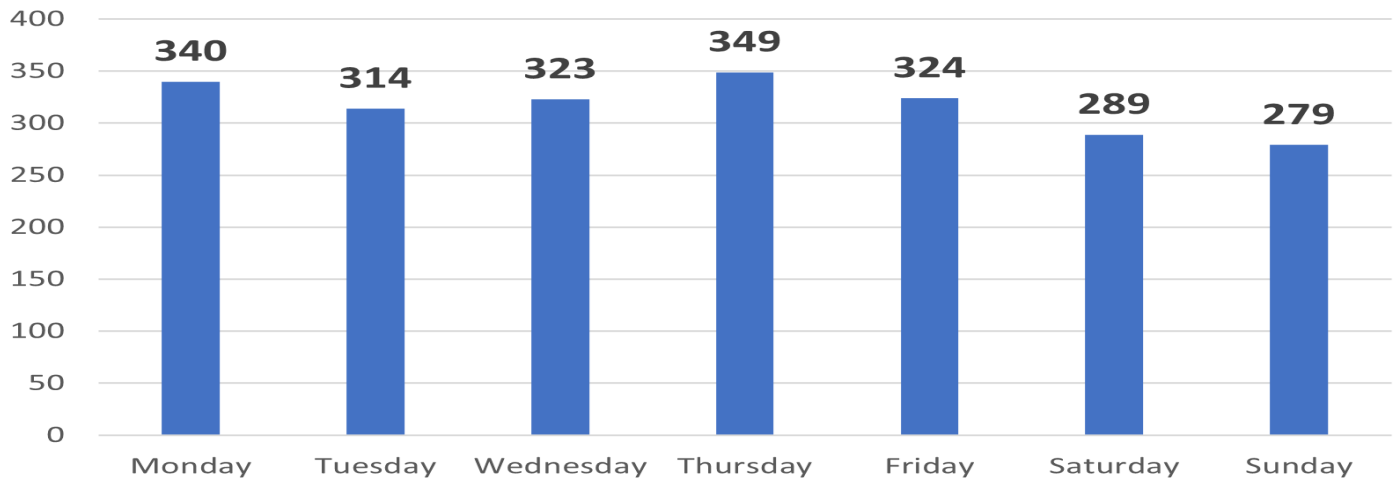


# CALLS FOR SERVICE

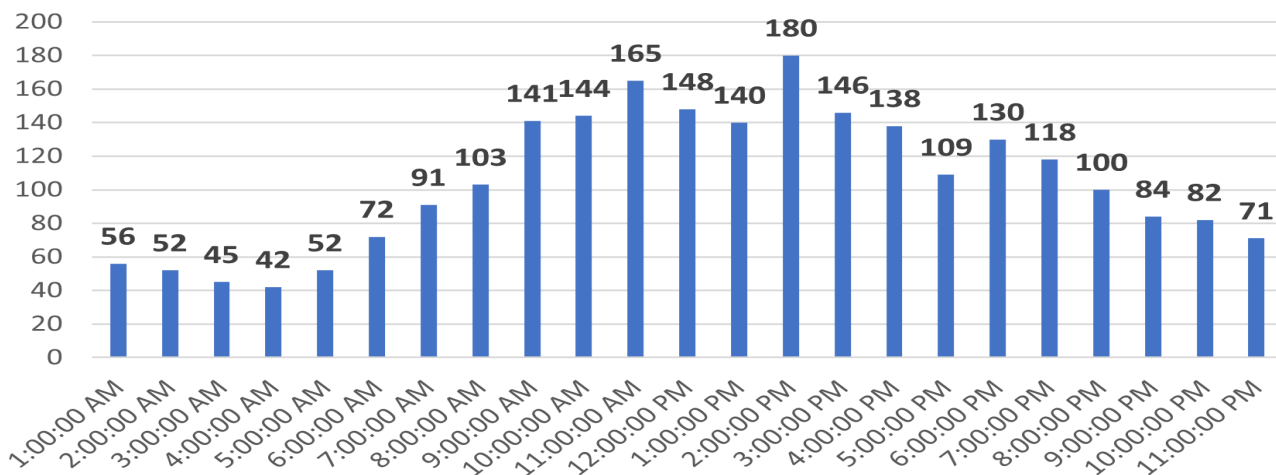
## Monthly Run Volume



## Daily Breakdown of Incidents



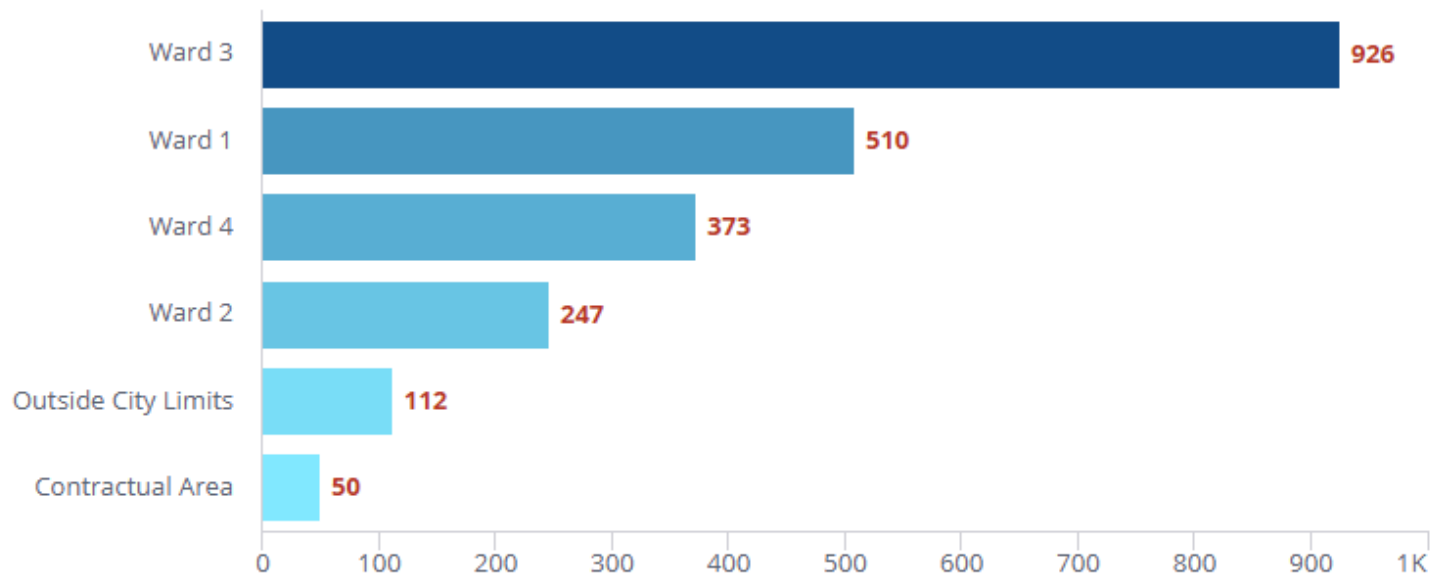
## Hourly Breakdown of Incidents



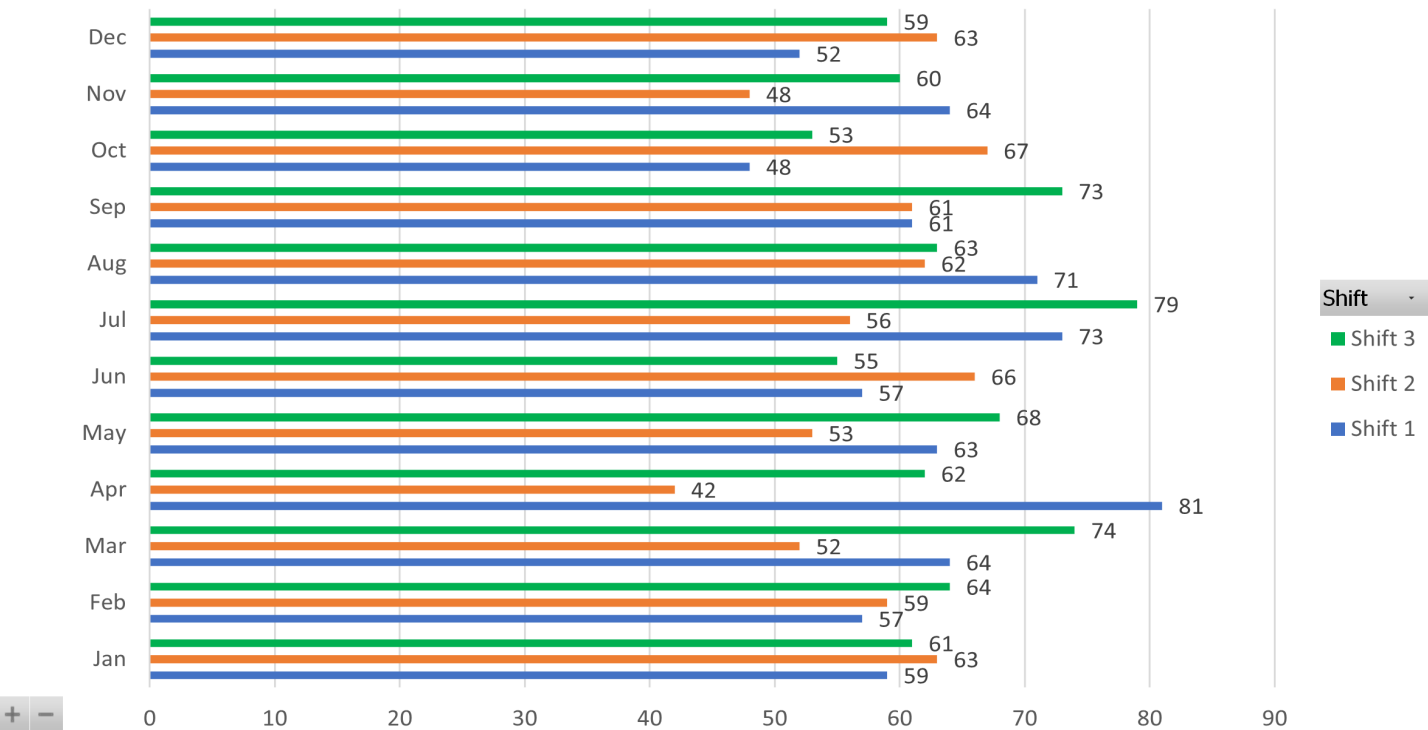


# CALLS FOR SERVICE

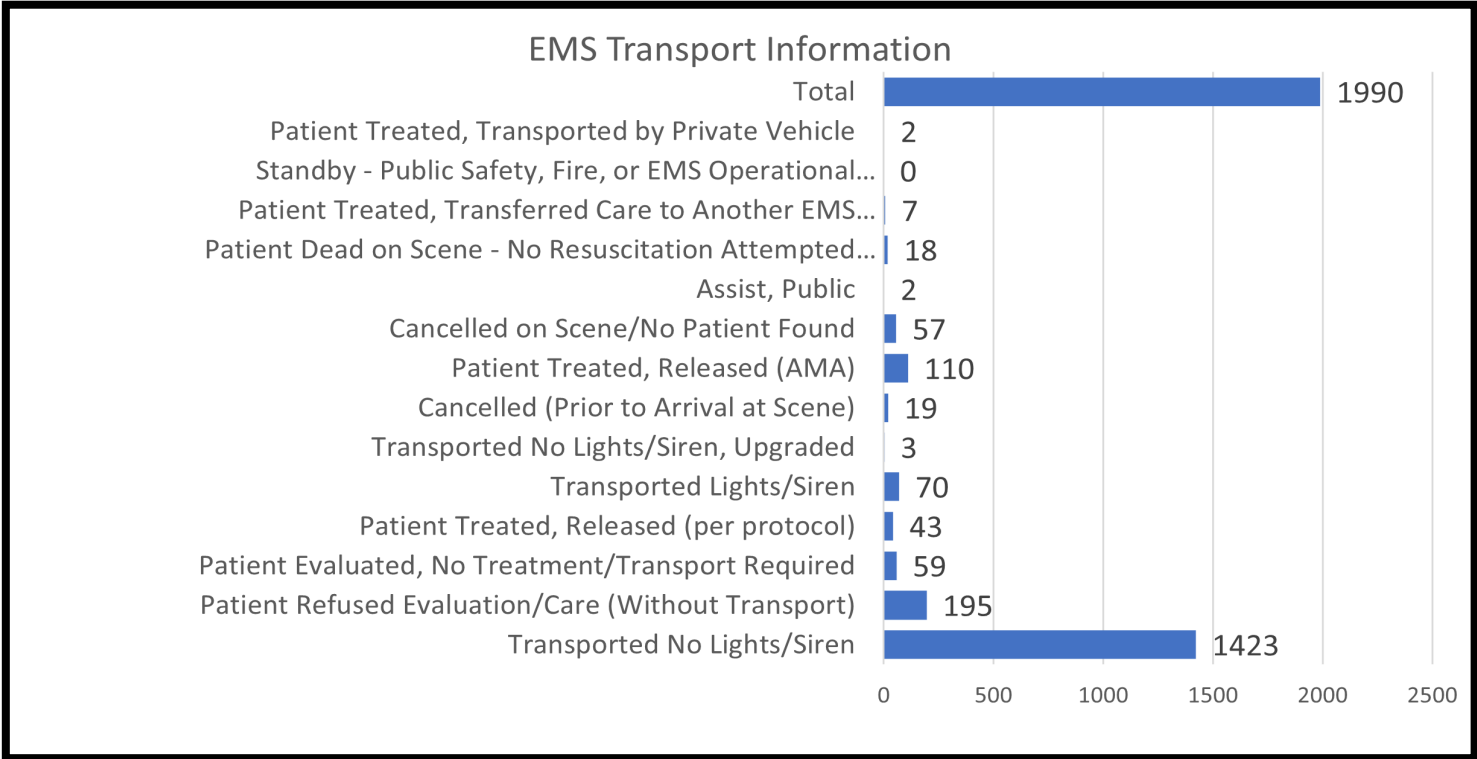
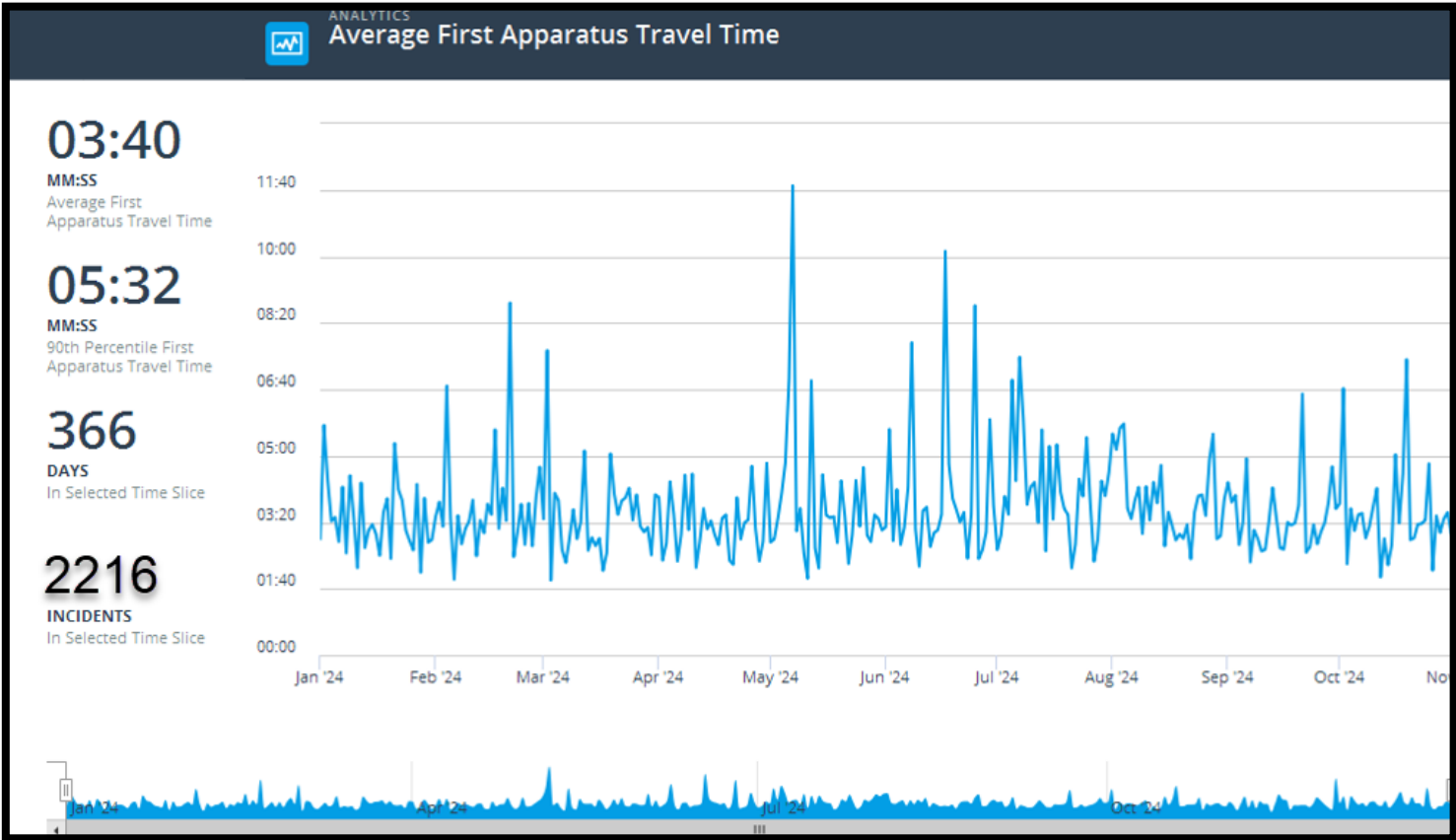
Count of Incidents by District



Sum of Count of Incidents Per Shift



# CALLS FOR SERVICE



# INCIDENT STATISTICS

**528**

Overlapping calls  
(2 or more incidents at  
same time)  
23.83%



**01m:48s**

Average Time Out of  
Station from Time  
of All Calls Received

**6.07**

Incidents per Day



**03m:10s**

90th Percentile  
Out of Station from  
Time of Call Received

**112**

Calls for Aid Given

**2**

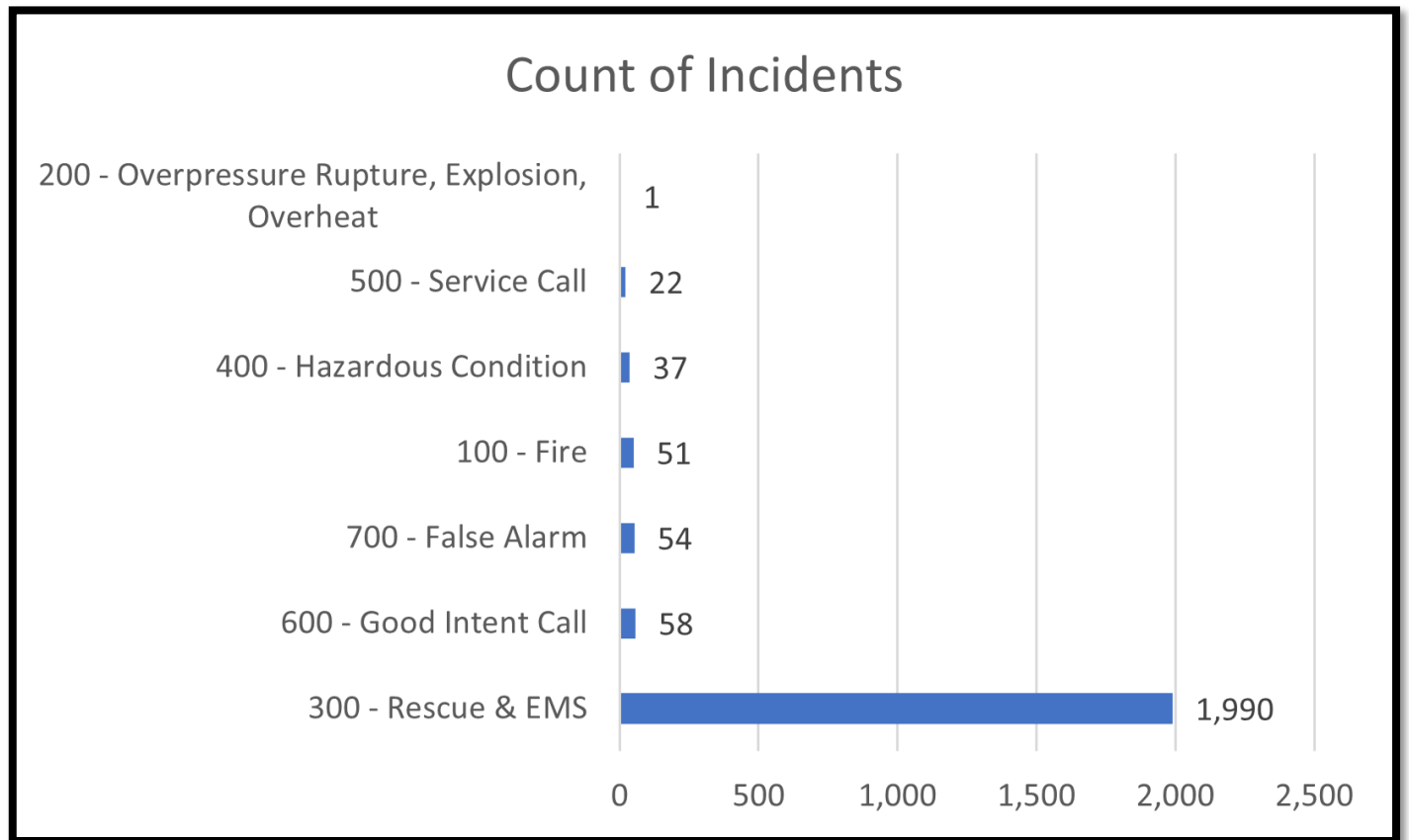
Calls for Aid Received

**10,765**

Incidents in Last 5  
Years



# INCIDENT STATISTICS



# INSPECTION STATISTICS

System Name	Total (# Reports)	Monthly Submit Avg (# Reports)	Deficiency (%)	Compliance (%)	Inspection/Submission Interval Avg (# Days)
Internal Inspection - Annual	47	5	29.79% (14)	70.21% (33)	6
Dry Chemical Suppression	3	0	0.00% (0)	100.00% (3)	12
Fire Extinguishers	8	2	0.00% (0)	100.00% (8)	7
Commercial Hood Cleaning	2	0	50.00% (1)	50.00% (1)	106
Commercial Hood Suppression	50	7	8.00% (4)	92.00% (46)	18
Fire Pump	4	0	0.00% (0)	100.00% (4)	5
Sprinkler 5 Year	1	0	0.00% (0)	100.00% (1)	11
Fire Sprinkler System	14	2	50.00% (7)	50.00% (7)	7
Fire Alarm System	57	7	10.53% (6)	89.47% (51)	2

# INCIDENT STATISTICS

## Fire Incident Financial Impact: Breakdown of Total Value, Loss, and Savings

Incident Type	Total Value	Total Loss	Percent Saved
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 8,240,360.00</b>	<b>\$ 1,324,200.00</b>	<b>83.93%</b>
Fire, other	\$ 1,265,000.00	\$ 45,000.00	96.44%
Building fire	\$ 2,611,780.00	\$ 419,350.00	83.94%
Fires in structure other than in a building	\$ 102,500.00	\$ 77,500.00	24.39%
Cooking fire, confined to container	\$ 205,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	99.51%
Trash or rubbish fire, contained	\$ 131,000.00	\$ 100.00	99.92%
Mobile property (vehicle) fire, other	\$ 426,000.00	\$ 133,000.00	68.78%
Passenger vehicle fire	\$ 11,400.00	\$ 8,650.00	24.12%

## VEHICLE RESPONSE

Unit	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
B-1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
C-1	1	1	1	1	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
C-14	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
C-2	13	38	44	6	23	60	46	58	68	51	18	7
E-3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
E-4	13	3	5	1	5	2	7	5	4	4	5	4
E-5	9	8	7	8	4	9	6	18	9	18	6	15
E-6	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	2	0
L-1	1	0	4	1	0	1	2	0	1	1	0	0
L-2	2	2	1	2	0	1	2	3	1	2	4	2
M-7	76	2	104	17	147	12	178	4	160	4	125	4
M-8	65	30	12	21	20	9	16	18	17	15	15	13
M-9	17	136	60	138	13	149	2	154	3	128	22	140
T-11	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>216</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>263</b>	<b>263</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>187</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>396</b>	<b>440</b>	<b>480</b>	<b>394</b>	<b>432</b>	<b>490</b>	<b>520</b>	<b>526</b>	<b>526</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>394</b>	<b>374</b>

# PERSONNEL



## Chief:

**Jon Jones**

### **Shift 1**

### **Shift 2**

### **Shift 3**

**Captain Craig King**

**Captain Brian Ankney**

**Captain Dave Cummings**

**Lieutenant Doug Edelbrock**

**Lieutenant Nick Steyer**

**Lieutenant Zach Merkle**

**FF/Advanced Gary Gasser**

**FF/Advanced Jeff Ricker**

**FF/Paramedic Ed Carter**

**FF/Paramedic Brett Schumm**

**FF/Paramedic Kory Smith**

**FF/Paramedic Ethan Fraker**

**FF/Advanced Alex Greutman**

**FF/Paramedic AJ King**

**FF/EMT Trevor Spridgeon**

**FF/EMT Adam Schumm**

**FF/EMT Jacob Durden**

**FF/EMT Cam Miller**

## Reserves

**Brock Profit**

**Ryan Beck**

**Justin Brant**

**Reide Jackson**

**Sal Sajun**

**Charles Myers**

**Nate Wiechart**

# 2025: ADVANCING READINESS AND LEADERSHIP

## Personnel Enhancements and Organizational Changes

Our department's average length of service is 9.67 years, reflecting a solid foundation as a young team poised for significant growth ahead.

- **Sustaining Agility:**

By infusing fresh perspectives and modern approaches, we aim to maintain a dynamic and resilient workforce ready to meet evolving challenges. We are committed to coaching and preparing our leadership and ranks for the future through ongoing self-reflection and professional growth within our department.

- **Seamless Integration:**

We will welcome new recruits who not only align well with our department's culture but also possess the capacity to be trained to meet our high standards. These new team members will blend seamlessly with our experienced staff, ensuring the preservation of the institutional knowledge and operational excellence built over nearly a decade.

## New Leadership Role –

### **Administrative Captain**

Introducing the Administrative Captain role is a cornerstone of our personnel strategy, designed to elevate our department's operations and community connections. This key position will:

- **Streamline Operations:** Oversee and coordinate training sessions and inspections to ensure our procedures remain not only current but are continuously refined for optimal efficiency. This role is pivotal in ensuring that our operations run smoothly and consistently at peak efficiency.
- **Enhance Community Engagement:** Spearhead and organize community events that build stronger ties between our department and the public. Additionally, the Administrative Captain will establish robust Community Risk Reduction procedures and guidelines, ensuring our community is well-informed and proactively protected.
- **Manage Administrative Duties:** Provide essential administrative support that enables our leadership team to focus on strategic operations and overall departmental effectiveness. By handling critical day-to-day tasks, this role ensures our long-term success and operational excellence.

## Equipment Upgrades –

### **Modern Apparatus**

To further improve our emergency response capabilities, we are investing in cutting-edge equipment. Two new Braun Liberty ambulances will soon join our fleet, designed for streamlined operations with enhanced reliability and improved medical support. Their innovative design optimizes space and performance, equipping our team with the latest technology for superior on-scene care.

Additionally, we are introducing a new KME rescue engine, redesigned to meet our evolving demands in rescue operations and daily manpower requirements. Engineered for rapid deployment and efficient management of diverse emergency scenarios, this advanced apparatus will play a critical role in supporting our rescue missions.

We will also be updating our current daily officer vehicle to a Ford F-150. This upgraded vehicle will serve as both a first-out and chase vehicle on ambulance runs. The increased capacity of the F-150 allows us to carry more equipment for specialized situations, including school threats, emergency responses, and non-emergency calls.

Together, these modern upgrades will significantly bolster our operational readiness, ensuring we are fully prepared to handle a wide range of challenges.

# 2025: A YEAR OF GROWTH AND INNOVATION

At the Van Wert Fire Department, our commitment to training is the cornerstone of our mission to deliver exceptional service and ensure community safety. In 2025, we are elevating our training programs by building advanced infrastructure that meets both today's needs and future challenges. In partnership with Vantage Career Center, we're developing a state-of-the-art, three-story training facility equipped with modern training props and dedicated spaces for both theoretical learning and hands-on practice. This comprehensive training ground will enable our team to refine their skills in controlled, realistic scenarios.

In addition to our cutting-edge facility, we are dedicated to continuous leadership development and specialized paramedic training. Building on the success of our "Grow Your Captains" initiative in 2024, our expanded leadership program is designed to boost departmental efficiency and empower leaders at every level. The upcoming expansion of our paramedic class will further enhance our team's medical expertise and elevate our emergency response capabilities. Through these strategic initiatives, the Van Wert Fire Department reaffirms its commitment to training, ensuring our personnel are fully prepared to protect and serve our community now and into the future.

## Advanced Training Infrastructure

### **Collaborative Training Facility:**

In partnership with Vantage Career Center, we are proud to announce the development of a state-of-the-art, three-story training facility. This cutting-edge campus will feature modern training props designed to simulate real-life scenarios, allowing our team to sharpen their skills in a controlled, safe environment. With dedicated spaces for both theoretical learning and hands-on practice, the facility provides a comprehensive training ground that meets current and future demands.

The addition of this training facility is a key component of our broader strategy to lower our ISO insurance rating from a 3 to a 2. While it won't achieve that goal on its own, it works in tandem with other initiatives we are actively pursuing to enhance our overall operational excellence.

## Continued Leadership Development

### **Department Leadership Training Program:**

At the Van Wert Fire Department, our commitment to developing strong leaders is a cornerstone of our operational success. Building on the success of our Grow Your Captains program in 2024, we are excited to extend our leadership training into 2025. This initiative is designed to equip every member of our team—from senior officers to new recruits—with the skills and confidence to drive change and uphold high standards across the board.

The impact of our leadership training has been clear, with positive feedback demonstrating measurable improvements in departmental efficiency. By continuing to invest in leadership development, we ensure that our team is not only well-prepared to tackle current challenges but is also poised to innovate and excel in the future. This ongoing focus on cultivating empowered leaders reinforces our commitment to excellence and strengthens our ability to serve our community effectively.

## Specialized Paramedic Training

### **Paramedic Class Expansion:**

In 2025, we will host another paramedic class with three of our personnel attending, enhancing their medical expertise and boosting our emergency response capabilities. This initiative underscores our commitment to excellence, ensuring our team is exceptionally prepared to provide the highest level of care to our community in every medical emergency.

# **NAVIGATING THE FUTURE: CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIC INITIATIVES**

## **Concerns and Upcoming Challenges**

As we look ahead, our department faces a dynamic landscape where evolving community needs, technological advancements, and fiscal realities present significant challenges. One major concern is managing our workforce transition, as many experienced personnel approach retirement. Over the next five years, we also anticipate a significant change in leadership—with the arrival of a new Fire Chief and potentially multiple new captains and lieutenants—adding another layer of complexity to our staffing strategy. Recruiting and retaining quality staff is increasingly difficult in today's competitive fire service, where lateral transfers often lure well-trained professionals to departments offering better financial security. This trend not only depletes our ranks of skilled individuals but also strains our capacity to deliver critical services at peak efficiency. Addressing these staffing challenges requires a comprehensive strategy that includes reexamining compensation structures, enhancing career development opportunities, and bolstering our recruitment efforts.

In addition to staffing issues, we are contending with a substantial rise in costs for both equipment and personnel. Investments in modernizing our facilities, upgrading our fleet, and adopting advanced training technologies are essential to keep pace with the growing demands of our community. However, these improvements come with a significant financial burden. With our call volume continuing to increase—and with no signs of slowing—it is imperative that our city reconsiders current wage levels and staffing numbers to match our operational needs. Addressing these fiscal challenges through increased funding and strategic resource allocation will ensure that our department remains robust, well-equipped, and capable of providing the highest level of service.

Furthermore, as we modernize our facilities, we must also address the aging of our current living quarters, which are nearing 60 years old. We are actively exploring options to upgrade these spaces to better meet modern standards and to accommodate both men and women in the future—an upgrade our current station was not originally designed to support. This critical improvement will not only enhance the quality of life for our personnel but also bolster our overall operational efficiency and readiness for the challenges ahead.

## **Summary**

In summary, our department is navigating a multifaceted set of challenges—from workforce transitions and leadership changes to rising costs and aging facilities. By strategically investing in modern equipment, upgraded training facilities, and enhanced recruitment and retention initiatives, we are positioning ourselves to meet the evolving demands of our community while ensuring long-term operational excellence.

Thank you for your continued support as we work together to build a stronger, safer future.