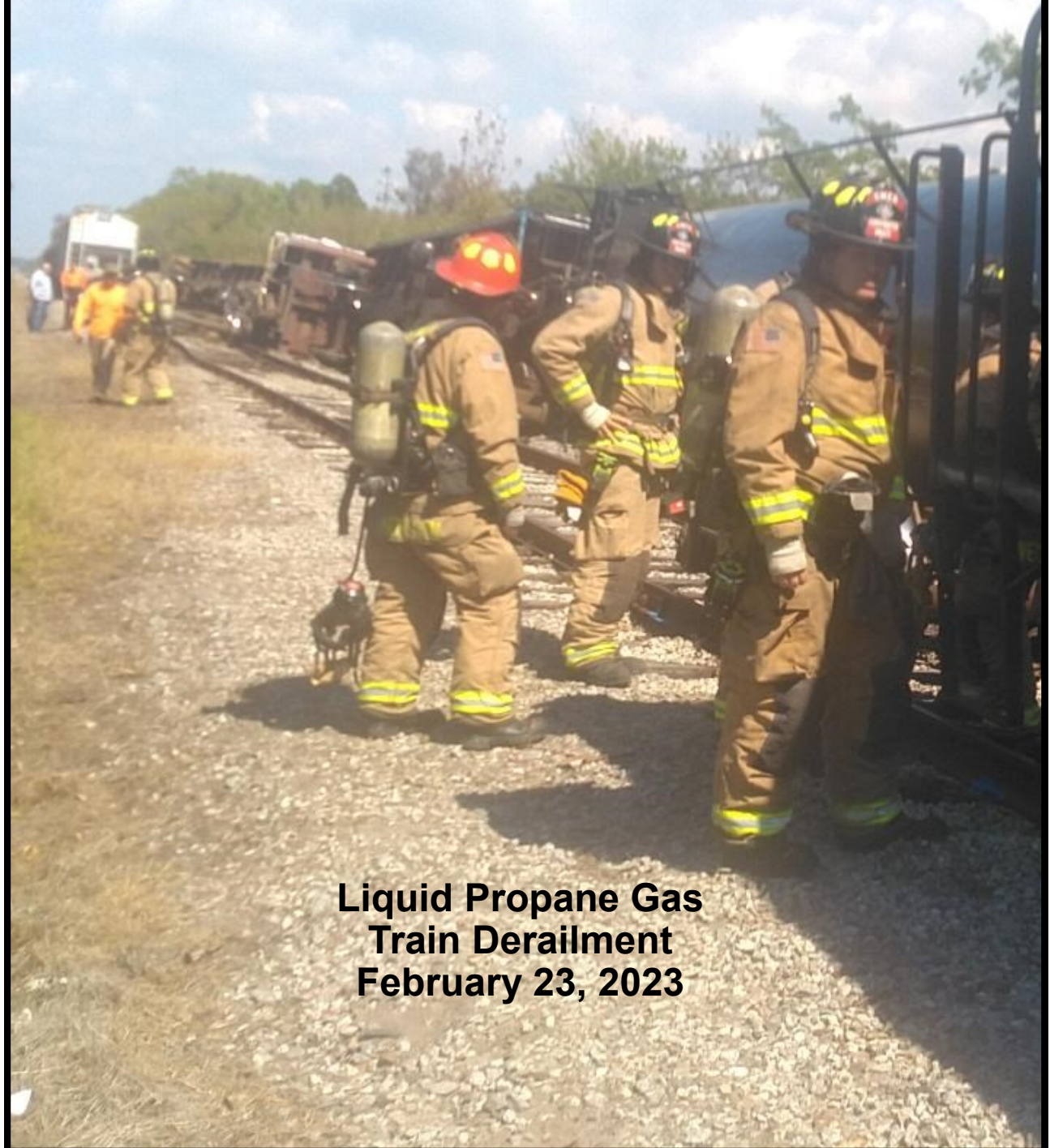




# SOUTHERN MANATEE FIRE RESCUE

## Annual Report 2023



**Liquid Propane Gas  
Train Derailment  
February 23, 2023**

# SOUTHERN MANATEE FIRE & RESCUE DISTRICT 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

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### Mission Statement

Protecting lives and property by providing a superior level of service through prevention and emergency response to the public.

### Vision Statement

We will be recognized as leaders in our profession by setting the standards of excellence while providing World Class Public Safety Services through integrity, innovation and professionalism.

### Slogan

***“PRIDE THROUGH PERFORMANCE”***

### Values

As members of the Southern Manatee Fire Rescue District we take pride in our commitment to professional service by maintaining our skills, knowledge and abilities. All members of the Southern Manatee Fire Rescue District are committed to conducting ourselves in an ethical manner, conforming to a moral standard of right versus wrong by treating each other and the citizens we serve humanely, professionally and honestly. We ascribe to the following Values.

**Accountability and Fiscal Responsibility** – Members of the Southern Manatee Fire Rescue District are accountable to each other and the community we serve. We accept responsibility for our decisions and actions. Accountability applies not only to the professional manner in which the District meets its primary goals but also to the efficiency, effectiveness and fiscal responsibility which guides all of our actions.

**Integrity and Trust** – Members of the Southern Manatee Fire Rescue District are honest and fair in our dealings with our citizens and each other. We are honorable to our profession, and we inspire each other to maintain trustworthiness, openness and sincerity.

**Honor and Respect** – We are a “fire department” family. We are committed and accountable to each other because our lives depend on it. We value the role each member plays in our organization. We respect those that came before us, and will strive to make the organization better for those who follow. We will place a special and high regard on the premise of treating others as we would like to be treated.

**Teamwork and Discipline** – We seek out and value the input and opinions of our members at all levels of the organization. Teamwork is the building block that drives the Fire District’s labor/management process. We work as a team to cooperate locally, regionally and nationally to improve service to our citizens and maintain a safe and effective work environment. We value a professional attitude with high moral work ethic that can enhance our team.

**Service Excellence and Competency** – We do all we can to ensure the best possible service to our internal and external customers/communities through smart, well trained, humble, dedicated, competent, hard-working, safe members. We are active participants in the communities where we live and work.

**Innovation and Flexibility** – We recognize the value of change in responding to and meeting the ever-evolving needs of our customers and members. We are committed to seeking out effective methods and progressive thinking toward change. We recognize the value of ongoing education and training. We adapt to the ever-changing needs of our community, the organization, and the environment.

**Professionalism and Dedication** – Providing service with a high standard of ethics, behavior and competence.

**Compassion** – Providing service with empathy and sympathy for the suffering of others.

**Readiness and Motivated** – We value preparedness, training and education, safety and wellness, dedication and an understanding that lives are more valuable than property.

**Family** – We will support coworkers, their families and our community.

# SOUTHERN MANATEE FIRE & RESCUE DISTRICT

## Administrative Division

### OVERVIEW

The Southern Manatee Fire & Rescue District was formed June 1, 1990 with the merger of the Oneco-Tallevast Fire Control District and the Samoset Fire Control District. The combination department provides fire protection to a population of approximately 60,000 permanent residents and grows to 70,000 with winter residents in a 34 square mile area. Geographically, the District includes the areas south of the City of Bradenton, east of First Street, west of the Braden River and north of University Parkway, the Sarasota County line. Major transportation routes within and adjacent to the District include U.S. 41, U.S. 301, State Road 70, University Pkwy and I-75.

In addition, the District is served by two railroad lines, Seminole Gulf Railroad and Seaboard Coast Line. The southwestern portion of the District borders on the Sarasota-Bradenton International Airport. The Southern Manatee Fire & Rescue District protects the largest industrial area in Manatee County. The total value, as of 2022, of commercial and residential properties protected is \$6,562,792,282.

The Southern Manatee Fire & Rescue District operates five (5) fire stations that are staffed 24 hours a day, a training facility, and an administrative office that also houses our Fire Prevention Division. The District employs 82 Firefighter/EMT/Paramedics and 15 staff for a total of 97 full time employees.

- Administration 2451 Trailmate Drive
- Station 1 6100 15<sup>th</sup> Street East
- Station 2 1911 30<sup>th</sup> Avenue East
- Station 3 7611 Prospect Road
- Station 4 5228 45<sup>th</sup> Street East
- Station 5 7301 Honore Avenue
- Training Facility 7611 Prospect Road
- Building Maintenance Facility 1911 30<sup>th</sup> Avenue East



In addition, we have an extensive mutual and automatic aid response system with all neighboring fire departments and agencies, including all Manatee County Fire Districts, Manatee County EMS, City of Bradenton Fire Department, Sarasota County Fire Department and the Sarasota Bradenton International Airport.

Southern Manatee Fire & Rescue District holds a Class **3** rating from the Insurance Services Office (ISO). We missed a Class 2 by only a few points. We have made changes to our responses which will get us to a Class 2 on our next review. The lower the rating the greater the possibility that property owners could see a reduction in their insurance premiums.

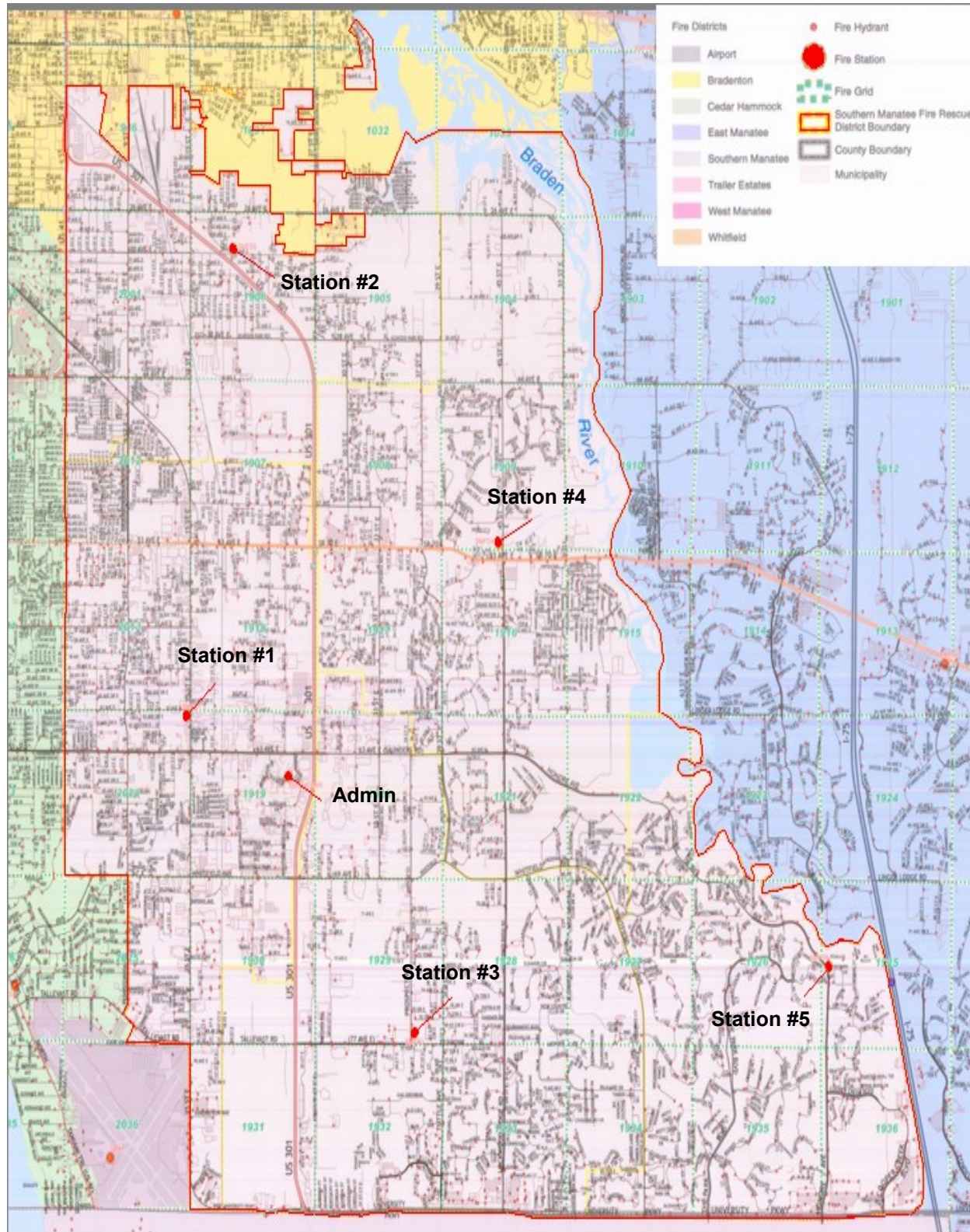
Daily activities include interaction with the following agencies:

- Manatee County Department of Public Safety
- Manatee County Sheriff's Office
- Manatee County Government
- Manatee County Building/Planning Department
- School Board of Manatee County
- Florida State Highway Patrol
- Manatee and Sarasota Emergency Management
- Other fire districts and departments in Manatee County



Southern Manatee Fire & Rescue Administrative Complex





# Southern Manatee Fire & Rescue District

## BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS

James Grote—Secretary, Treasure, Vice-Chair

Daniel Center—Commissioner

Melanie Marken—Chair Person

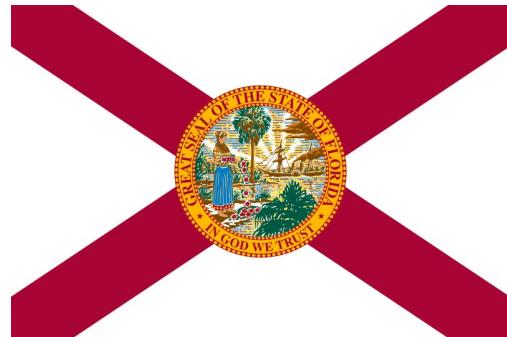
James Cena—Commissioner

Anthony Evans—Commissioner

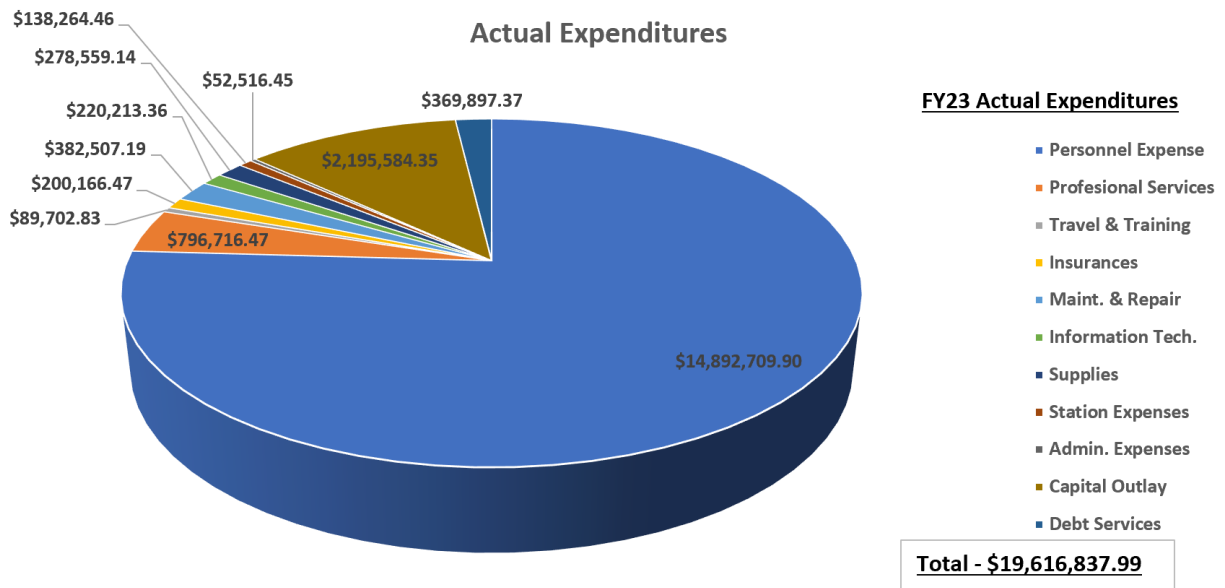
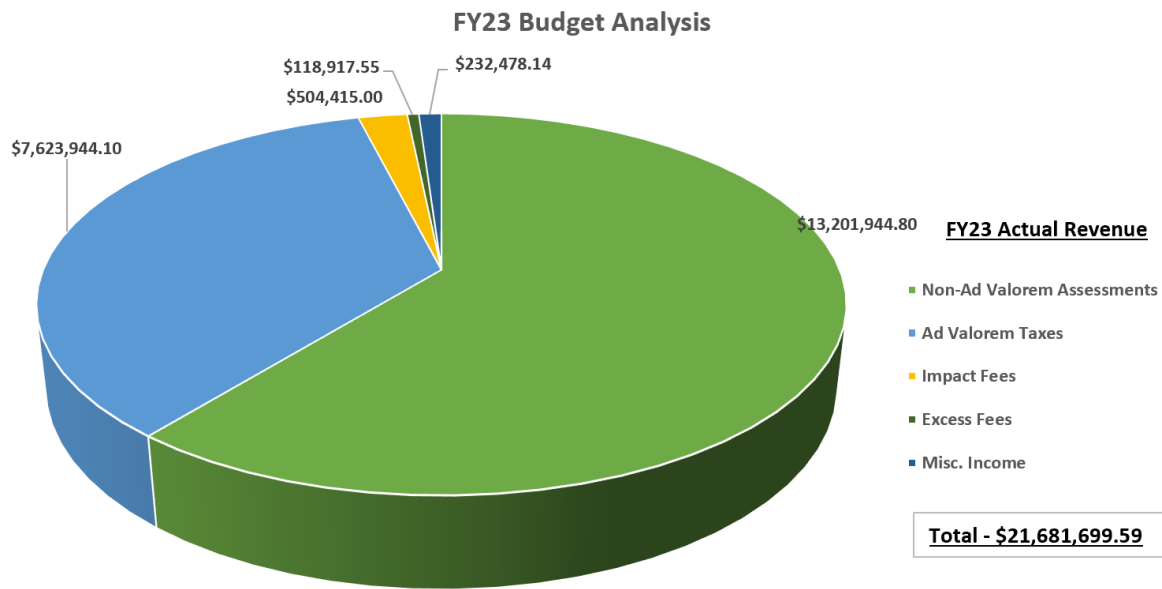
The Administration Division is directed by a Board of Fire Commissioners who are elected by the District's community. The Administration Division consists of the Fire Chief, Assistant Chief, Executive Management Assistant and Financial Specialist. The operations include overseeing various administrative support services:

- Daily business operations
- Management of personnel policy and procedure
- Develop and maintaining the District's financial operating plan
- Building and ground maintenance
- Purchase and distribution of supplies
- Maintenance and repair of equipment

The District has been ever changing with the rapid growth of Southwest Florida. The District is committed to provide the best fire-rescue protection available and to raise the awareness of fire prevention education within our community. We have established a process of positive interaction of all employees, working together to meet the needs and objectives of the District.



### FY23 Budget Analysis





## Accomplishments Achieved in 2023

The Southern Manatee Fire Rescue District strives to perform at the highest level of service to its citizens. Our members are always ready to take on new challenges. It is through the dedication of each department member and the outstanding support from the community and the Board of Fire Commissioners that allows the District to have continued success, year over year.

The District continues to use the Strategic Planning Process to guide the organization through turbulent economic and political times. Our plan outlines the District's goals and objectives for the present and future, allowing us to track the accomplishments while delivering the most cost-effective, superior level of service to the citizens of Southern Manatee.

The following is a list of a few of our accomplishments that were achieved during 2023:

During the year we had four (4) personnel retire, they are;

- Battalion Chief Herb Smith – 33 years of service
- Training Chief Bobby Thayer – 33 years of service
- Exec. Management Asst. Debbie Tuckerman – 33 years of service
- Logistics, Larry Sarver – 13 years of service

We wish each of them a happy and well-deserved retirement. They will be sorely missed.

With retirements also comes the promotions and new hires, which were:

- Dan Anderson to Training Chief
- Chad D'Agostino to "C" Shift Battalion Chief
- Dave Wernet to EMS Officer
- Mike White to Lieutenant

### New hires in 2023

- Ron Byers – Logistics
- FF/EMT Tyler Stem
- FF/PM Andrew Garcia
- FF/EMT Bailey Howell
- FF/EMT Billy Quevedo
- FF/EMT Zachary Duncan

Captain Mike Bloski was awarded the Florida Fire Chiefs 2023 Hazmat Responder of the Year at the Florida Fire Conference in Orlando on January 10, 2024. Captain Bloski continues to make the SMFR Hazmat Team a recognizable name throughout the entire State of Florida, and beyond. Well done Mike.

Our Advanced Life Support Program continues to evolve and expand. In 2023 we had four paramedics achieve their "charge" status or Paramedic-in-Charge (PIC), they are:

- FF/PM James Burkett
- FF/PM Michael Dunois
- FF/PM Andrew Garcia
- FF/PM Logan Savitsky

Training Chief Dan Anderson and EMS Officer Dave Wernet continued to receive a Narcan grant. In 2023 alone we were awarded 5 separate grants for a total of 550 individual doses. This grant is shared with all other fire agencies throughout Manatee County. Countless lives have been saved as a result of the administration of the opioid antagonist. It works by blocking the effects of opiates to relieve dangerous symptoms caused by high levels of opiates in the blood. Great job to Dan and Dave for their continued efforts in life saving support.

We still continue to struggle with apparatus orders and the associated lead times for delivery. We ordered and paid for a new pumper in October 2022 and the anticipated delivery date is March 2024. This is challenging from both a budgeting standpoint as well as replacement considerations and does not look to change in the near future. We continue to project at least a 24 month timeframe from order to delivery. This, in part, was the reason we have chosen to add a third reserve engine to our fleet.

Ladder 339 was converted to Advanced Life Support. This is our 4th station to become an ALS provider.

Southern Manatee will be the first department in Manatee County to install the Location Alerting System at a fire/EMS station. This system allows for individual tones in the bunkrooms utilizing a selector switch to match the engine assignment for individual firefighter.

In October of 2022 (start of fiscal 2023) we began the new IAFF Local 2546 contract. This contract is a three (3) year contract that will conclude on September 2025. The process was smooth and the District continues to enjoy a very good relationship with the Union and its members.

On August 30, 2023 Hurricane Idalia made landfall in the Big Bend area of Florida. The storm made landfall at a category 3, with maximum sustained winds of 125 mph. SMFR sent a total of 5 personnel for 10 days on an engine strike team deployment. They were predominantly working in and around Live Oak in Suwannee County.

For the second year in a row, we held our Annual Awards Banquet at Palm Aire. The event was well attended by approximately 140 employees and family members. The following people were recognized for their contributions to the organization and the citizens we serve:

- Dave Wernet – Staff Employee of the Year
- Tim Keusch – Firefighter of the Year
- Tyler Stem – Rookie of the Year
- Brian Hodges – Officer of the Year

In October a dozen employees attended the Morton's Annual Chili Cookoff in Sarasota. Although we did not place this year, we all feel we have the best Chili Chef in Inspector Chuck Moonen.

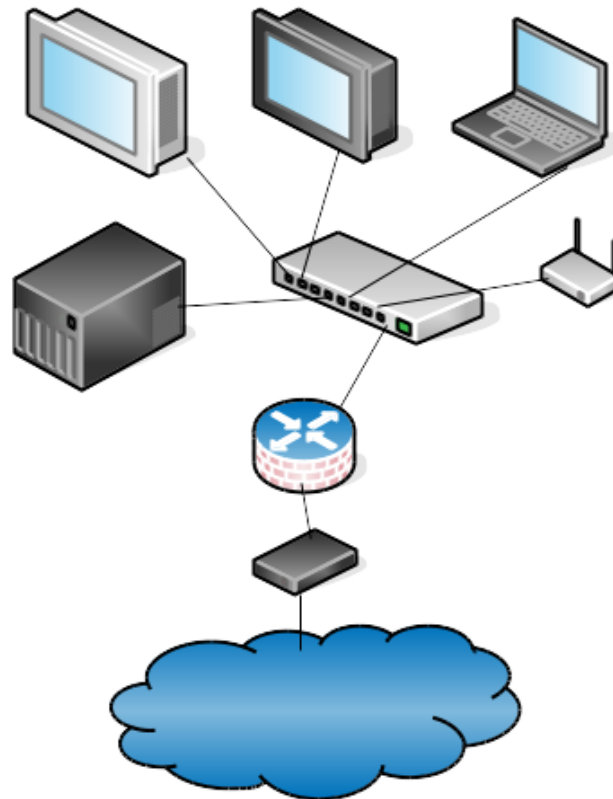
Construction continues to expand in the District, both residential and commercial. Several large apartment complexes are in the beginning stages and should be completed in 2024. Additionally, the largest commercial building in our District has begun construction. It is a 1,150,000 square foot refrigerated grocery supply warehouse located in the Tallevast area.

# IT'S THE FUTURE

As the new year rolled in, new equipment was purchased to replace the our on premises networking equipment. That includes routers, switches and Wi-Fi access points in our stations and administration. These devices allow each remote fire station to communicate with the administration building and provides public Wi-Fi access to personal. The updated hardware was necessary to insure maximum security and upgrade network compacity.

Other responsibilities of the Information Technology department include:

- Managing Email
- Sever and workstation security and maintenance
- Incident reporting software including state and federal compliance
- Maintain accounting software
- Document archiving and preservation
- Personal scheduling software
- Cellular device and account management
- VOIP phone systems
- Hardware purchasing, configuring and maintenance
- Public document requests
- Security cameras







## **HR Accomplishments for 2023**

Promotions: 9

New Hires: 7

Retirees: 4

Janee Ferguson took over as Executive Management Assistant following the retirement of Debbie Tuckerman.

The administrative assistants and accounting staff from all fire districts in Manatee County continue to meet on a quarterly basis.

Medical premiums increased by 9.5%. Dental and vision premiums had no change. Cigna remains as the district's provider for health, dental, and vision insurance.

Chief Bounds, Chief Anderson, and EMA Ferguson attended the FASD conference this year. Ferguson connected Edmunds Gov-Tech, which is an ERP System, that will to replace our current accounting system, Great Plains. Edmunds Gov-Tech is a government-based ERP system that will improve our processes for accounting and payroll. It will provide employees access to their pay information, allow admin department heads to access financial reports, and plenty more benefits that our current system cannot. The new system will be implemented in FY 24-25. The district also obtained a new cancer policy after attending the conference. The new cancer policy covers expanded cancers that are not considered the statutory cancers. As an extra benefit, this policy covers retirees who remain on SMFR health insurance following 10 years of their retirement date, and civilian staff.

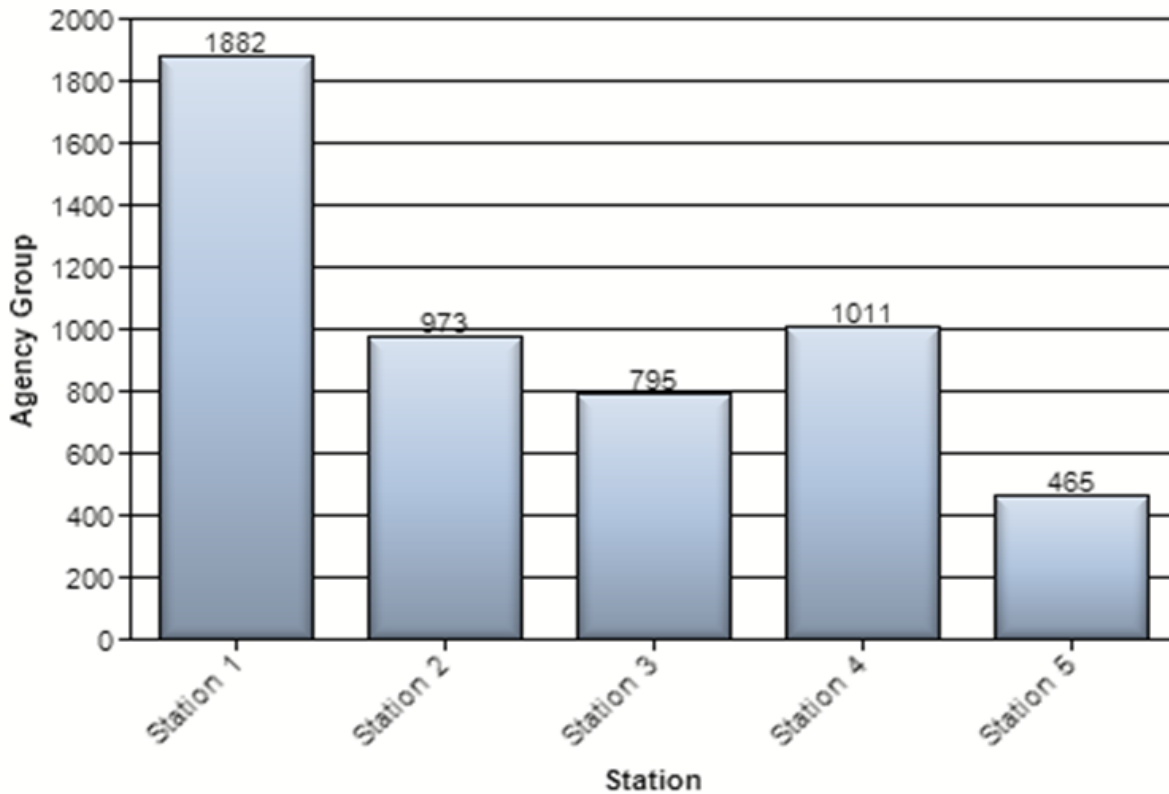
We continue to enjoy a beneficial relationship with Rescuer Pro (payroll conversion software). With the implementation of Gov-Tech, a new version and upgrades will be done at that time.

Federal legislation increased the applicable age required for minimum distribution requirements under the SECURE 2.0 Act. Effective September 27, 2023, Florida Municipal Pension Trust Fund amended the basic plan documents to reflect this change.

# Emergency Medical Services

The District now has 27 State Certified Paramedic's.

2023 The district had 1,600 Advanced Life Support calls.



In July of 2023, the district added it's forth ALS apparatus with Ladder 339 becoming a state recognized ALS non transport Ladder Truck. We also have one ALS staff vehicle that operates independently in the district.

In 2022 we had five (5) Paramedics successfully complete our Paramedic-In-Charge training and successfully complete Medical Director testing to become Credentialed Paramedics. Since then, we have added four (4) additional Credentialed Paramedics. The district now has 27 State Certified Paramedics as of the end of 2023 and will be adding to this number in 2024 with two (2) currently attending paramedic school at Manatee Technical College.

With the increase of Credentialed Paramedics comes the ongoing training. To aid in this process, three (3) Credentialed Paramedics obtained their Advanced Cardiac Life Support Instructor, bringing our total ACLS Instructor number to five (5).



2023 Medication break down

Counts	Jan '23	Feb '23	Mar '23	Apr '23	May '23	Jun '23	Jul '23	Aug '23	Sep '23	Oct '23	Nov '23	Dec '23	Jan '24	Total
Acetaminophen	1	1				1								3
Albuterol	3	4	1	1	1	2	1	3	1	1		2		20
Aspirin	6	1	4	1	2	3	3	7	2	3	1	1		34
Ativan	1		1		1					1				4
Atrovent	3	4	1	1	1	2	1	3	1	1		2		20
Benadryl			1		1									2
Cardizem			1											1
Dextrose 10%	1		2		1	5	3	3	1			1		17
Epinephrine 1:10		1	2	5				7	4	8	4	6		37
Famotidine				1	1									2
Glucagon								1						1
Ketamine				1										1
Narcan	12	6	7	3	5	4	8	7	4	1	3	3		63
Nitro Paste							1							1
Nitroglycerin										2				2
Nitrostat	3		3			2	3	1				1		13
Ondansetron											1			1
Oral Glucose		1	3	1		1	1		4					11
Rocuronium				1										1
Sodium Bicarb 8.4%								2		4		1		7
Solu-Medrol		1								1	1			3
Zofran	1							1	1		1			4
<b>Total</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>17</b>		<b>248</b>

## Logistics

In March of 2022, the Logistics position was created for Southern Manatee Fire Rescue. The official title of this position is a Logistics Officer and holds the rank of Captain. The Logistics position would be filled from within the department and would be awarded to the individual whom scored the highest in a competitive testing process. The responsibilities of the Logistics Officer are the procurement, budgeting and managing of major projects, inventory and distribution of supplies. These major projects include:

**Personal Protective Equipment/Clothing**

**Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus**

**Rescue Extrication Equipment**

**Radios**

**Cascade/Compressor Unit**

**Apparatus Fuel Supply**

**Uniforms**

**Fleet Maintenance**

**Hose & Ladders**

**Cleaning/Decon Extractors**

**Annual Service Testing**

**Firefighting Foam**

Prior to the implementation of the Logistics Officer, the aforementioned responsibilities were shared amongst line personnel (officers & firefighters). Line personnel work twenty-four (24) consecutive hours and then are off duty for forty-eight (48) consecutive hours. A normal work day includes apparatus accountability checks, several hours of training, responding to emergency calls and fielding unscheduled assignments. As you can see, a normal day is quite busy, now add a demanding/time consuming project in addition to the daily mix created extra stress to our line personnel. The sole purpose of creating the Logistics position was to alleviate ma-







# OPERATIONS 2023

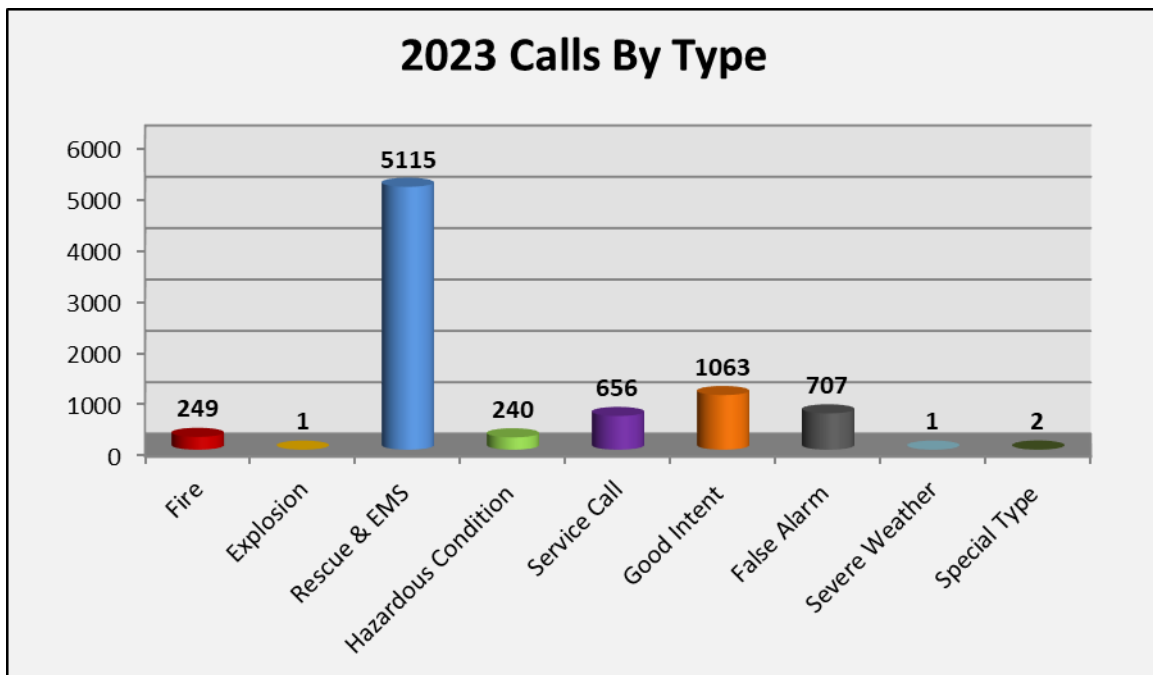
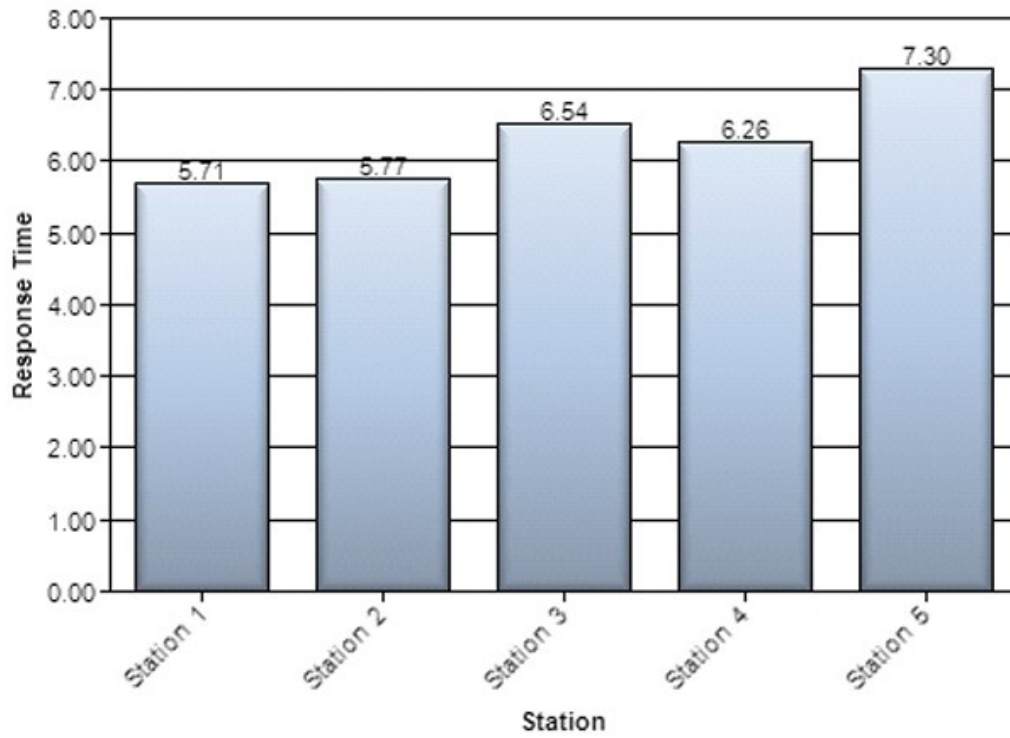
## 2023 Annual Report: Operations

Southern Manatee Fire Rescue is an ISO Class 3.0 fire department and is committed to providing our community with prompt, effective and fiscally responsible service by efficiently utilizing available resources from both within the department and from outside agencies. Southern Manatee Fire Rescue also actively seeks and has obtained grant funding for equipment, supplies and training to aide in our endeavor.

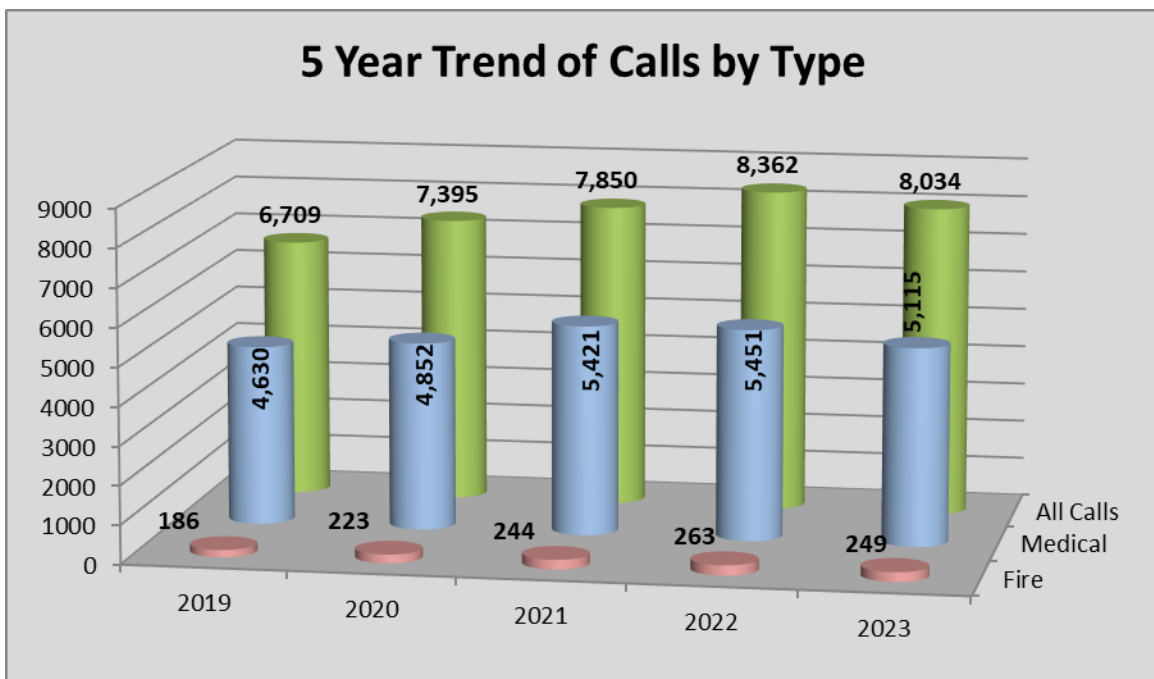
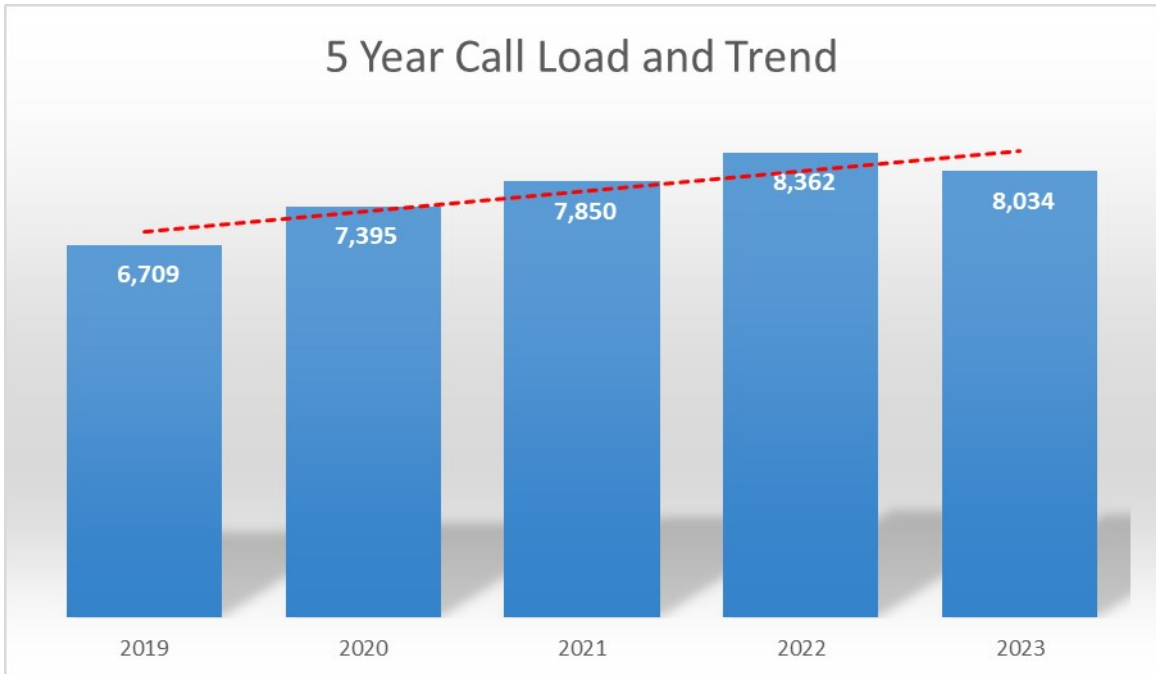
Southern Manatee's Operation Division's foremost responsibility is responding to and mitigating emergencies calls by providing essential services in the areas of emergency medical services, fire suppression and hazardous materials response. The Operations Division is led by the Assistant Chief of Operations and three separate Battalions. Each Battalion is comprised of (1) Battalion Chief, (7) Lieutenants and (20) firefighters. The Operation Division's Battalions are divided into three separate shifts A-B-C, each comprising of 28 personnel who work a 24/48-hour shift schedule. Our personnel work from 5 fire stations housing a total of 84 full time employee positions, and are supported by a Chief of Training, a Hazardous Materials Training Captain, a Logistics Captain, an EMS Lieutenant and a Facilities Maintenance person. The Operations Division staffs 8 class A fire engine pumpers, a 107' aerial ladder/pumper and a Hazardous Materials response truck. This year SMFR responded to over 8379 emergencies with an average response time being 5:02 minutes. In 2022 Southern Manatee Fire Rescue experienced a call volume of 8666 calls and 8158 calls in the year 2021. This averages to 8401 calls per year, which is a volume increase of 10.08% compared to 2019 call volumes.

Each year we strive to improve the level of service provided to the community. It has been determined that patient survival is directly related to the amount of time it takes to receive treatment, therefore we work extremely hard to ensure rapid responses and we continuously train to keep up with modern technology regarding basic and advanced life support. Most of the time fire departments are the first emergency responders to arrive at the scene of a dispatched medical emergency, this offers the fire crews primary access to patients for initial treatment. By expanding our capabilities and placing medications and other equipment on the fire engines medical treatment can be started sooner rather thus increasing patient survival rates. With direction and support from our Administration, the Operations Division has aligned its focus on expanding our current Advance Life Support program within the department. The goal to have a fourth ALS fire engine ready for service by end of year 2023 was met and the new ALS pumper went into service in August of 2023. Now, we plan on adding a fifth ALS engine in the year 2024 or 2025.

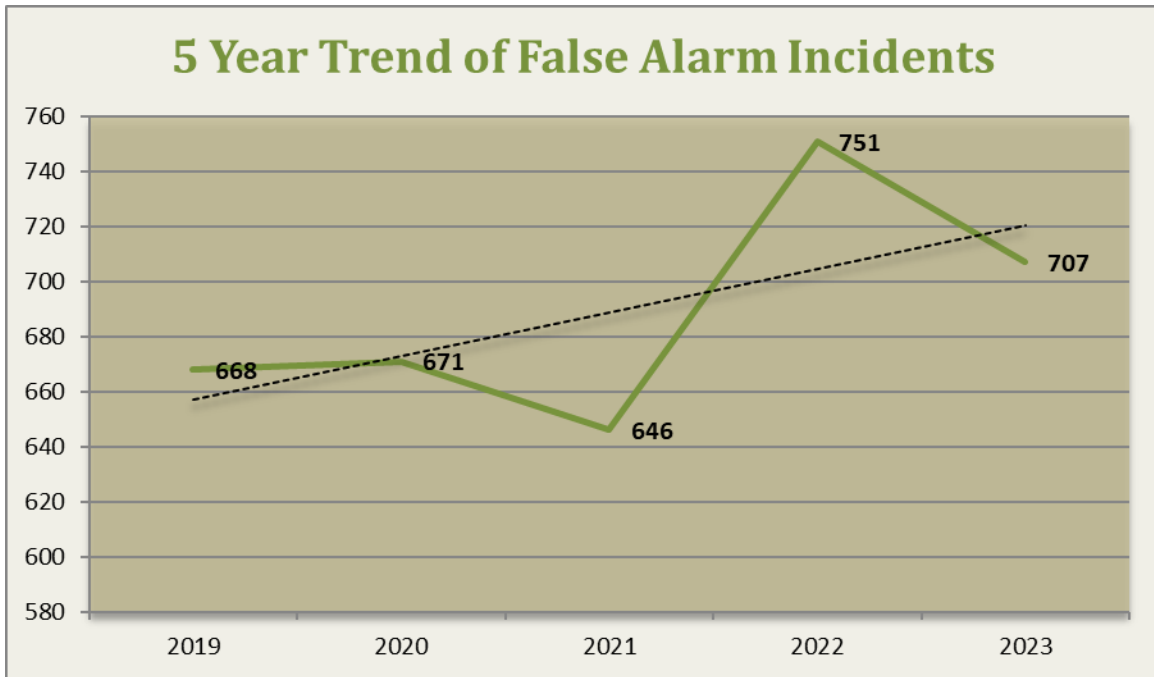
Southern Manatee also enhances its service to the public through a series of agreements which allow our organization to cooperate with local and state agencies to provide and receive additional crews and resources during disasters and in times of need. Southern Manatee cooperates with our neighboring fire departments and have agreements in place which provide for "Move-Ups" from nearby fire departments to help cover the district during times of exceptionally high call volume so you as a resident are never left unprotected. We are honored to be your fire department.

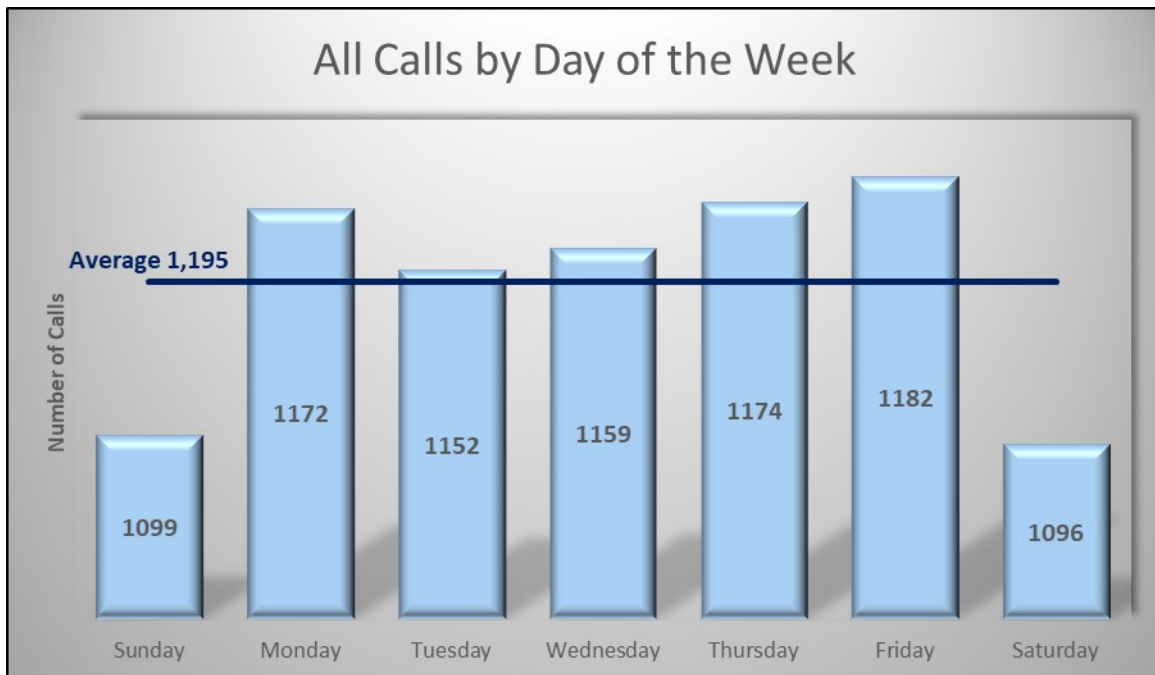
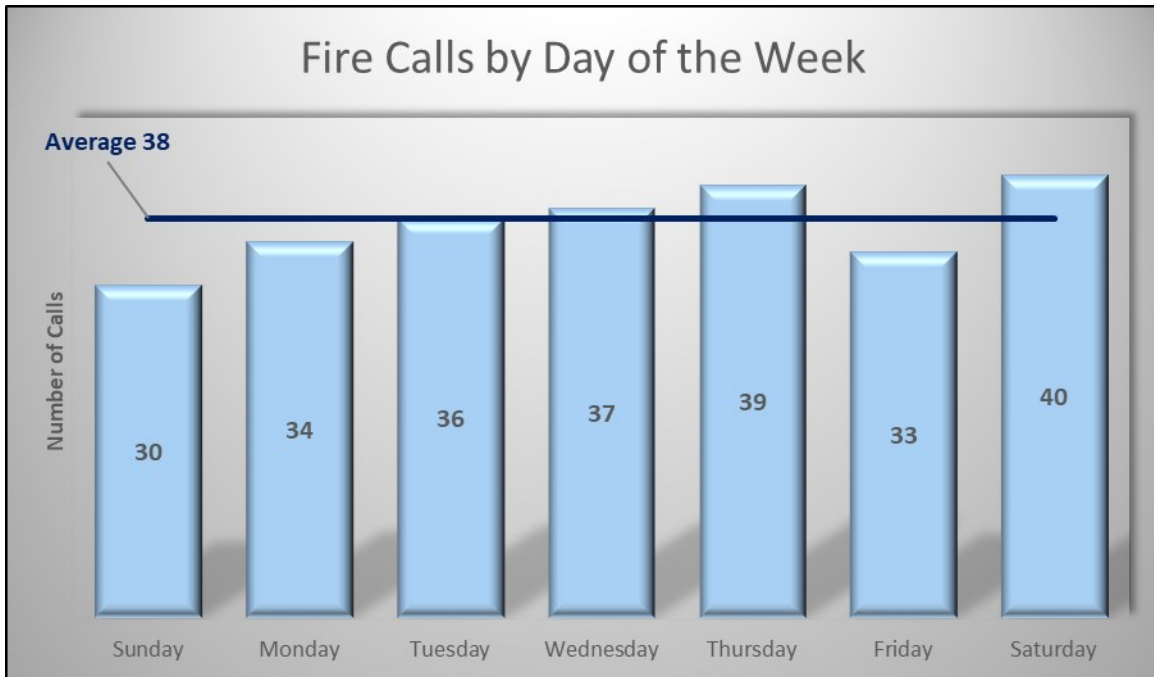


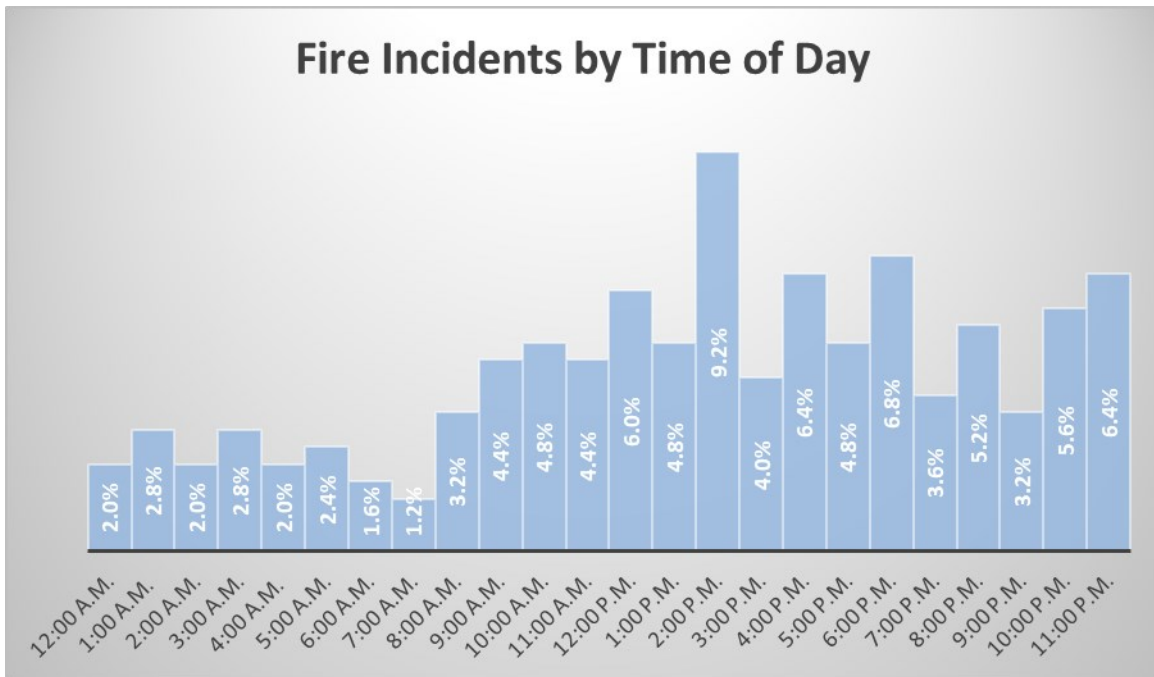
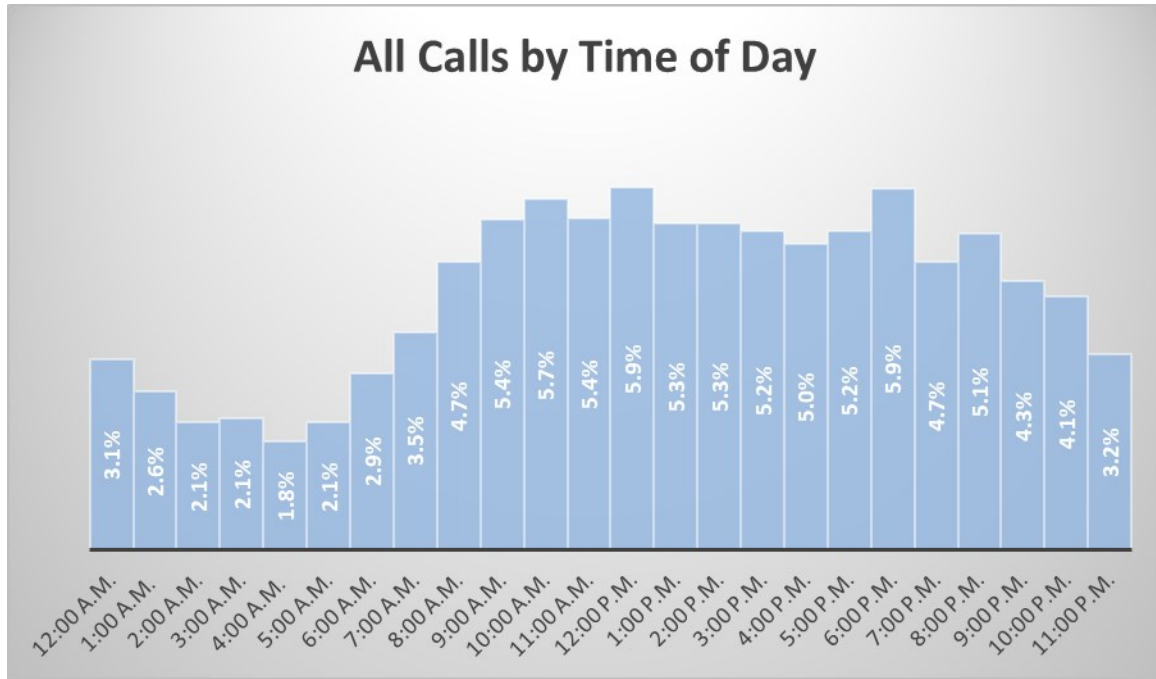


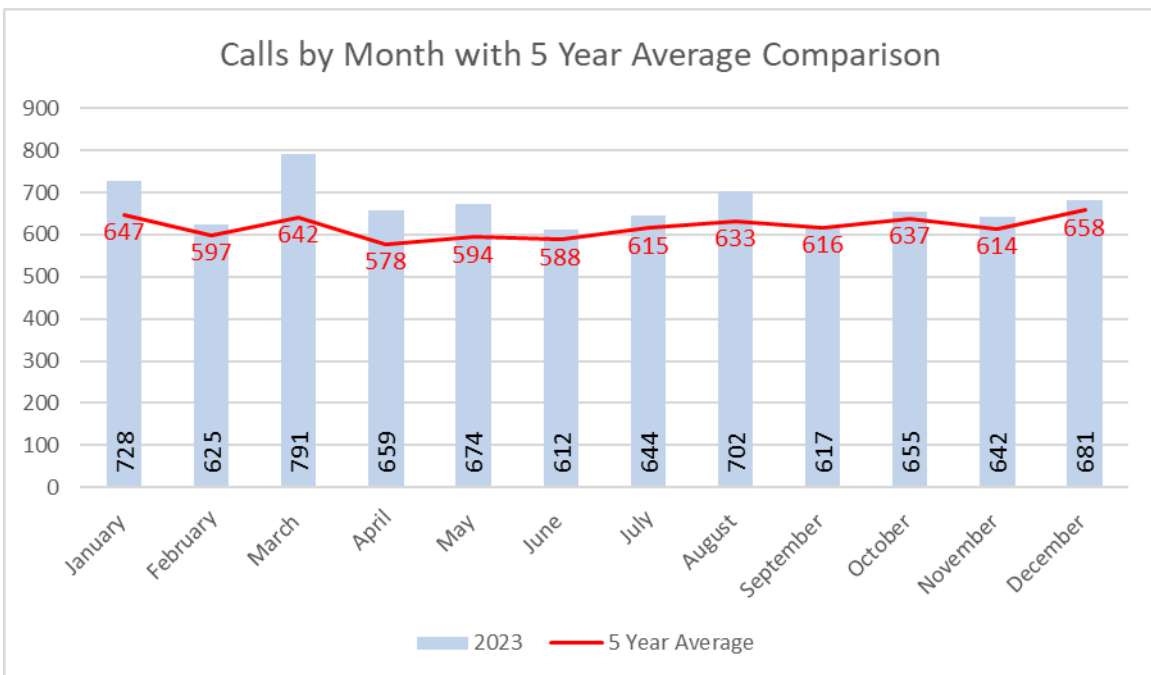
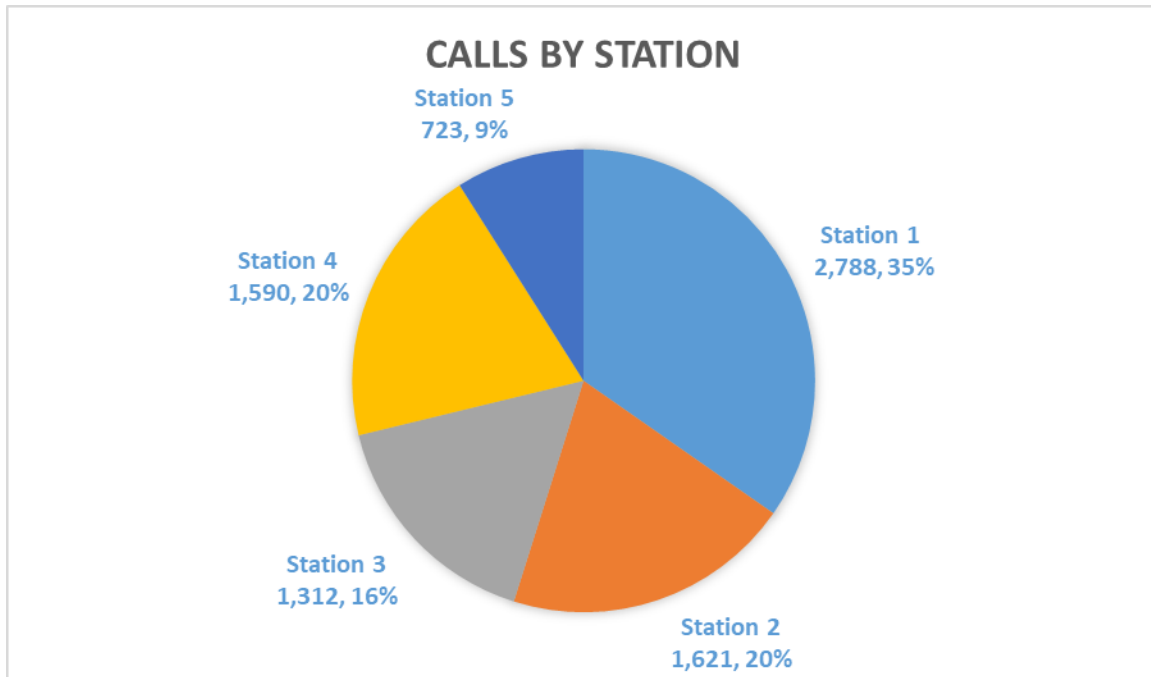














## Special Operations Report



Hazardous materials can be found in every community. They are in almost every home and in most commercial businesses. Hazardous materials are shipped every day via land, air, and sea pathways and exist in every fire district in Manatee County. If released, hazardous materials may cause harm to people, the environment, critical infrastructure, and property. Their potential for harm exists regardless of whether hazardous materials are released by accident, malicious actor, fire, or weather-related event. Our SMFR Hazmat mission statement that is outlined in our 2023 SMFR Hazmat strategic plan is "Providing a hazardous materials response to the citizens of Manatee County by mitigating chemical, biological, and WMD incidents utilizing specialized skills, protecting life, property, and the environment, and supporting infrastructure." Southern Manatee's Hazmat Materials Response Team (HMRT) Annual Report provides an overview of the team's activities, which include preparedness activities, team strategic goals and objectives, and notable incidents. The annual report serves as a comprehensive summary of the team's efforts in managing hazardous materials and responding to incidents throughout the reporting year. This report also reflects the ongoing commitment to preparedness, response effectiveness, and continuous improvement in managing hazardous materials incidents. Today, our core values of response remain consistent with our district's mission and direction:



Lt. S. Hodges observes containment of marine diesel spill.

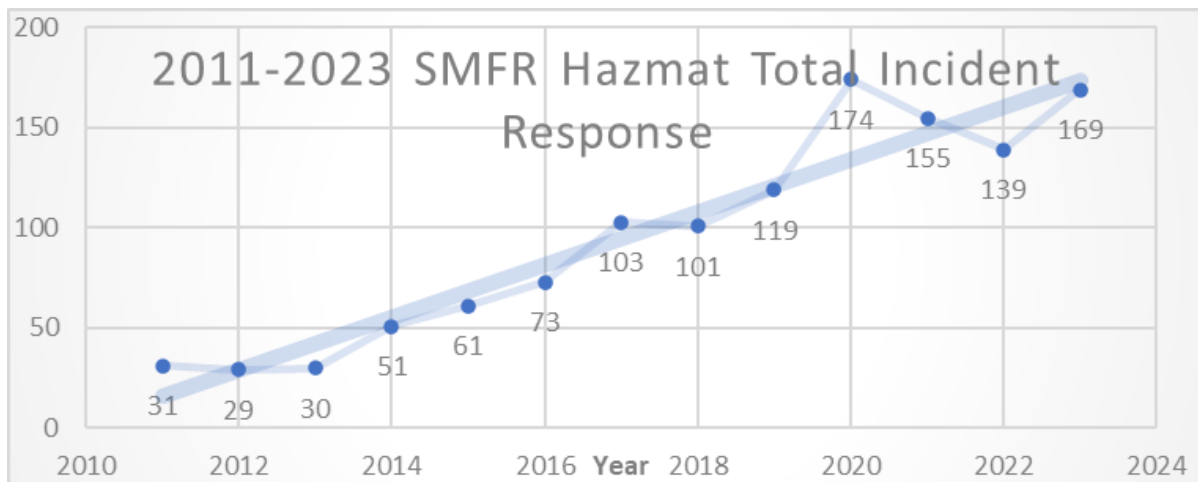
1. Specialized trained personnel to respond to all hazard's emergencies. Responding to several disciplines of hazardous materials events.
2. Equipment packages consisting of mitigation leak equipment, detectors, and UAS/ Drone operations following federal and state team typing to carry out our mission.
3. On-going training on hazardous materials and WMD response.

SMFR personnel trained 33,019.58 hours in during 2023; over 3,774.75 hours of hazmat materials training were performed by members of our response team. This was a increase of 7% annual increase representing our team commitment to education. The average annual training hours for each SMFR Hazmat Specialty team members were 77 hours. This training covers a wide range of topics, that included certification under the Florida State Fire College for Hazmat Technician Certification to national seminar attendance in accordance with the State Emergency Response Plan (SERP) and federal standards. It should be noted that 3 members of the team are presenters nationally as subject matter experts in hazmat response. These members are Battalion Chief Gould, Captain Bloski, and Firefighter Gatani. Since the organization of the SMFR

HMRT in 2014, this district has responded to several requests for service from all parts of southwest Florida. SMFR is designated by the Manatee County Fire Chiefs' Association to provide this response to all nine (9) fire districts within Manatee County. The HRMT is currently staffed by 31 specialty team members spread across three shifts. The main response is centered around our Station 2 located in the Samoset community on the northern edge of our district. At the core of our response is HZ-328, a Pierce Heavy Rescue that is manned at all times by Hazardous Materials Technicians and serves as additional emergency response vehicle in the 34-mile district. Serving as an additional response vehicle, this unit responded to 490 incidents in 2023 both fire related and hazmat response. This is augmented by other response vehicles that include HZ-327 spill supply truck and TR-10, a 24' reserve response trailer. Lastly, the district response includes an AR-AFFF firefighting foam unit designed for specialized transportation incidents. In 2023, the team increased in response capability by upgrading our response equipment to include planned replacement of our specialized advanced detection equipment. Within our strategic goals, plans and regulations is recognition at state level response. SMFR is considered a Type I hazmat team with the Florida designation of HM-6F under the SERC deployment plan. This was exercise in a 2022 deployment in a specific role as Hazmat Task Force being deployed for this sole duty in southwest Florida area after Hurricane Ian. In 2023, SMFR HMRT responded to over 169 hazmat incidents both in district and mutual aid to other districts. This represents an increased call volume of 8% as compared to 2022 (139 incidents) and a 5-year call volume increase of 43% (73 incidents). The most common hazmat incident that this district responded to are as followed:



March 2023 Train car derailment from UAS/ Drone observation.



1. Flammable Vapor or Liquid:	51%
2. Chemical Hazard (No leak reported):	12%
3. Carbon Monoxide (Actual + suspected):	9%
4. Assist another agency (subject matter expert):	8%
5. Chemical Spill or Leak (Toxic or Corrosives):	8%



It should be noted that Manatee County Fire districts have responded to a large amount on natural gas leaks in 2023; by SMFR data this district had a 40% increase in these incidents (82 responses). Some other notable incidents that SMFR HMRT responded to in 2023:

Feb. 2, 2023: Mutual Aid to Cedar Hammock Fire Dept for natural gas leak.

SMFR with detectors located a gas leak in line 6-foot under pavement.

March 28, 2023: In-District response to rail road accident.

A large rail tank car carrying LPG/Propane derailed with no leak.

August 24, 2023: Mutual Aid to Cedar Hammock Fire District for Clan lab.

SMFR assisted State Fire Marshall on a residential home that had a small drug lab.

August 29, 2023: Mutual Aid to Manatee County for Marine Diesel Fuel leak.

SMFR was requested by ESF-4 desk to investigate diesel spill pre-hurricane conditions.

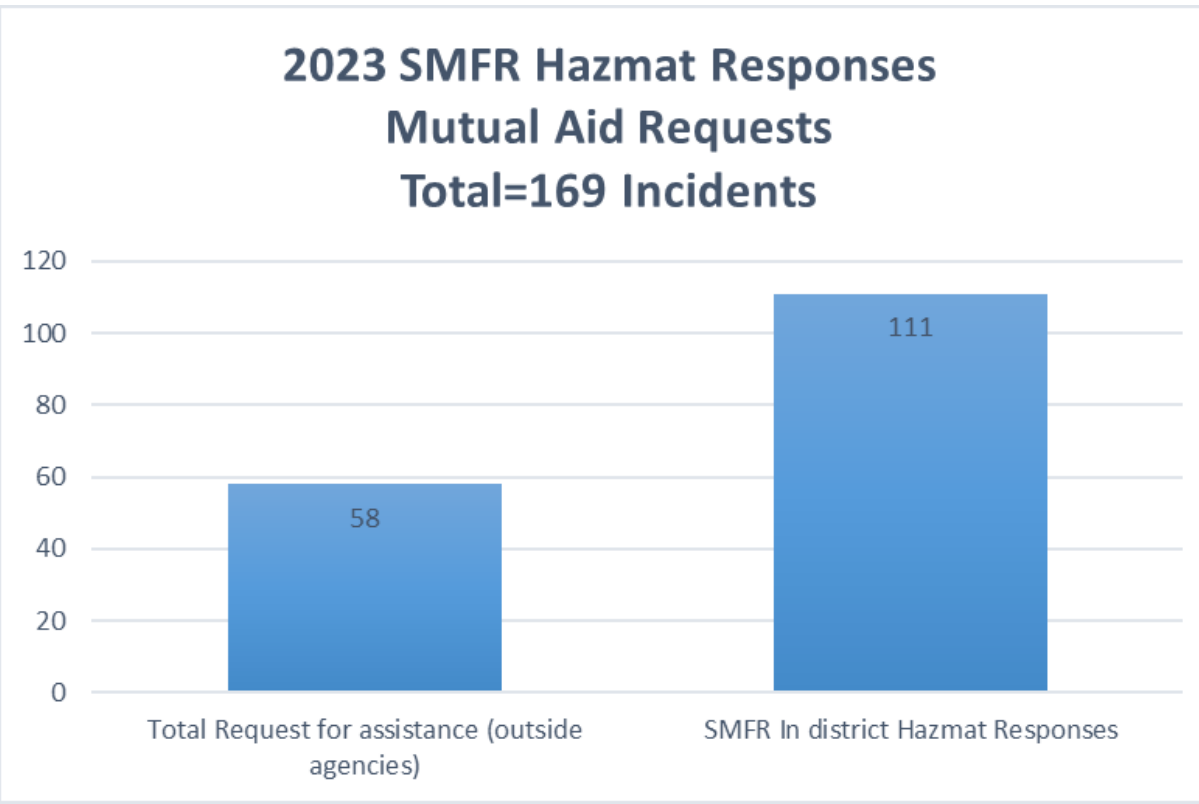
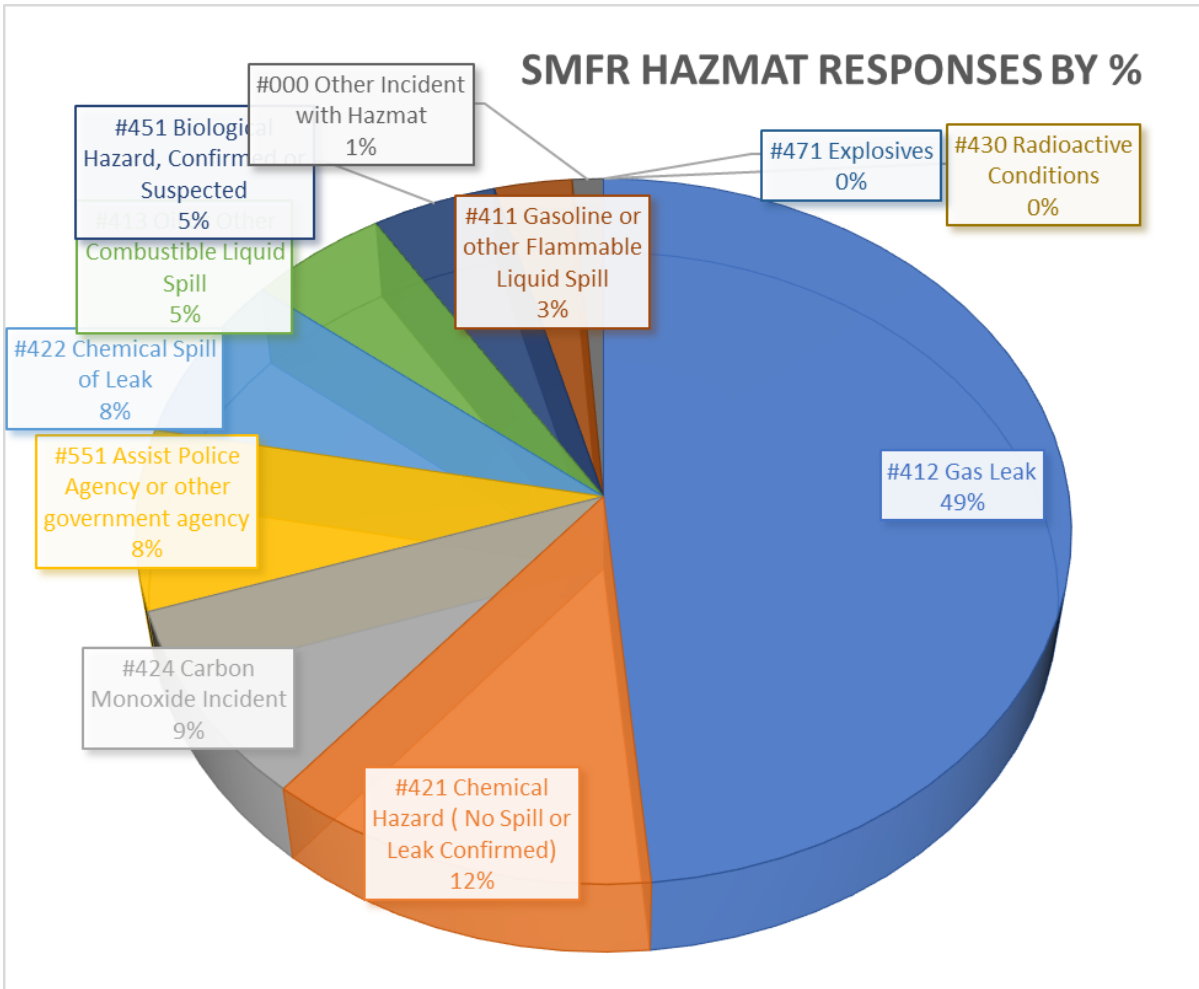
August 31, 2023: Mutual Aid to East Manatee Fire District for marine vessel sinking.

SMFR assisted with a large boat that sank in inner channel with 300 gallons of diesel.

October 18, 2023: SMFR in-district response to commercial fire that involved haz-waste.

Haz-waste properly stored in the area contributed to fire growth.

Today, our core values of response remain consistent with our district's mission and direction. They are encompassed within the district meeting our team mission of specialized trained personnel to respond to all hazard's emergencies. SMFR is committed to maintain and forecast future equipment packages consisting of mitigation leak equipment, detectors, and UAS/Drone operations following SERC team typing. This coupled with on-going training on hazardous materials and WMD response allows diversity and multi-tiered skills with our response package.





# FIRE PREVENTION

The Fire Prevention Division is responsible for the regulatory and code enforcement segment of the fire service. This includes but is not limited to annual business inspections, plans review that includes site, construction and suppression system, fire investigations, Youth Fire-setting and Public Education. New National Codes, Florida State Laws and Regulations, Manatee County Codes and our own Local Ordinance change how we do business. Each member assigned to Fire Prevention must keep up with code changes as they occur every year. This year we added to our fire extinguisher training a state of art electronic fire extinguisher training simulator. This simulator allows us to bring training inside a building, out of the heat of the sun with no extinguisher powder to clean up. This has been a big hit to our extinguisher training program. We have been able to add daycares, mobile home residents, office staff, and many more, how to use a fire extinguisher in an emergency.

The year 2023 was a very productive year. With the addition of two new Fire Inspector/Investigators, every day was a training experience. I accepted this challenge, training both of the Inspectors to be the best they can be and even more.

This year's October National Fire Prevention Month moto was "Cooking Safety Starts with YOU." We visited every elementary school and day care within the district and taught the safety message along with handouts. Every year the schools and daycares look forward to a visit from the fire department. They get to hang out with firefighters and see firetrucks. It is a great experience many children remember all their life. We also had our first Open House since Covid at our Fire Station #3, It was a great turnout.



**Fire won't wait.**  
**Plan your escape.**

firepreventionweek.org

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The Fire Prevention Division also works closely with many agencies and departments within the county. Just in Manatee County, we work with Planning and Development, Permitting, Zoning, Utilities, Traffic, Public Safety, Code Enforcement and the newly added Code Enhancement department. We are in contact with engineers of multiple trades. Architects and civil engineers that contact Fire Prevention during the planning stages of a project, they reach out to discuss the design and fire safety features of large and small projects.

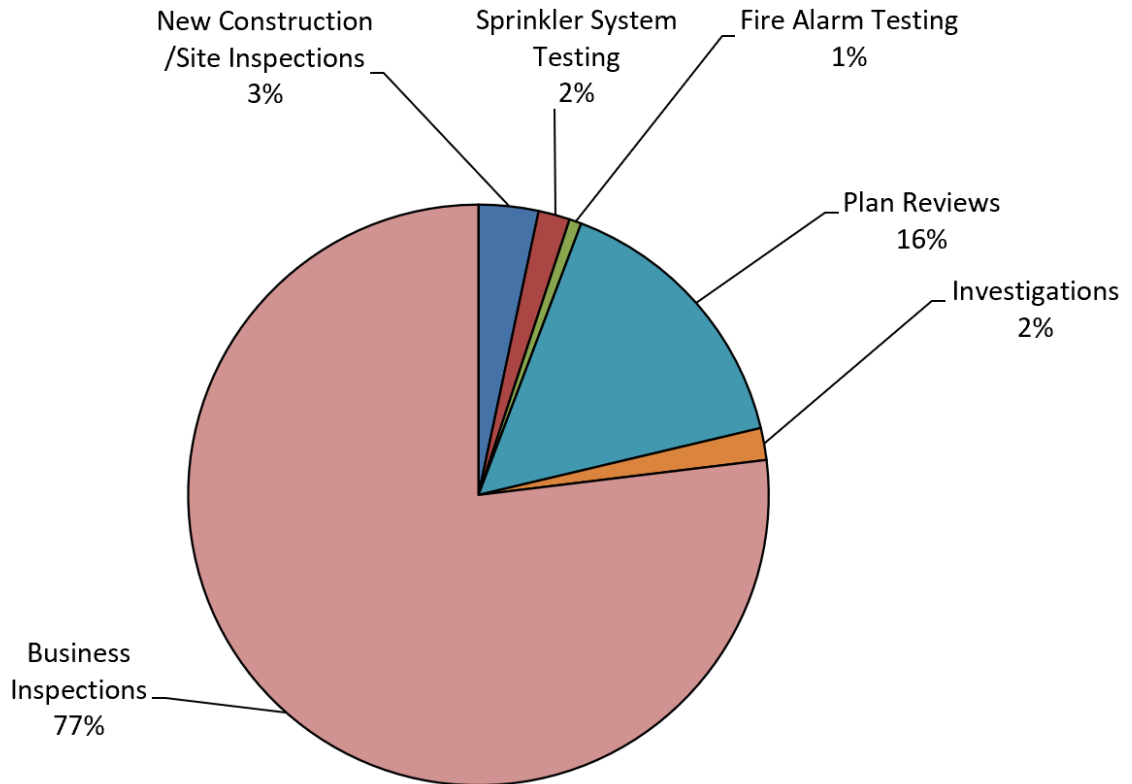
Construction projects are growing in numbers daily. This year we added 649 Residential living units for a total of 3,103,408 square feet and added 11 Commercial buildings for a total of 1,891,082 square feet to the fire district. The 2024 year will also be a great year for added square footage.

With all the added growth we somehow find a way to keep on task with everything we do. Fire Prevention has a great team and will keep on achieving and surpassing our projected goals

Fire Prevention Division has always used the motto "Adapt, Improve and Overcome." This year I felt the needed to change this motto, due to the new added staff. Our new motto is Listen to what everyone has to say, learn something new every day, and never stop asking questions!



## 2022 Fire Prevention Additional Responsibilities



**Business Inspections: 6488**

- Initial
- Vacant/ No Access
- Reinspection
- Completed
- New Construction/ Site Inspections: 281**
- Courtesy Inspection
- Fire Walls/Tenant Sep. /Penetration
- C.O. Finals
- Hood (Mechanical) Light Test, General
- Suppression System Final

**Sprinkler System Testing: 148**

- Visual/Pipe Check
- Hydro/ Pressure Test
- System Flush
- Final Acceptance

**Fire Alarm Testing: 57**

- Final/ Acceptance

**Plan Reviews: 1310**

- Site Plans Reviews
- Construction Plans Reviews
- System Plans Review

**Investigations: 150**

- Fire
- Complaints
- Code Research

## 2023 Training Data

Total In-House training hours: 33692.83

Per Person yearly Average: 370.25

Driver Certs: 19

Outside Classes completed: 221

Promotions: 10

State Certifications: 34

New Employees: 6

In 2023, Southern Manatee Fire & Rescue (SMFR) personnel conducted training daily and logged 33,692 hours. SMFR has a Training Division that consists of a Training Chief, Hazmat Training Captain, and EMS Officer. The Training Division oversees three (3) Field Training Officers (FTO) and three (3) EMS preceptors assisting with training. The FTO's and EMS preceptors conduct hands on trainings within their respective discipline and shift. The Training Division oversees department wide training and ensures that all SMFR personnel are in compliance with State and National requirements.

The Training Division also oversees a department wide wellness program. This program is in charge of conducting monthly group fitness trainings as well as daily individual fitness training. There are three (3) fitness coordinators that keep our crews on track with maintaining a high level of physical fitness and mental well-being.

In 2023, we began the process to create a Peer Support Organization within SMFR. In January of 2024 seven (7) personnel will be attending a three (3) day Peer Support program. This organization will give SMFR personnel someone to turn to in their time of need. This organization along with our Employee Assistance Program shows our priority for our personnel's mental health.

This year the Training Division continued to service SMFR's businesses and residents by providing CPR and First Aid training. In 2023, we were able to train over 100 residents and employees of businesses within our district CPR and First Aid. We are proud to know



that so many individuals are now able to provide life saving efforts if the need arises.

The County Training Officer's group made a decision to begin county wide Engine company training as well as county wide Command Officer training. These trainings were conducted quarterly with SMFR hosting one (1) Engine company training events and two (2) Command Officer training events in 2023. These trainings have given the crews and command officers the ability to interact with other districts which is has proven vital with the county closest unit response program.



SMFR has also seen the most personnel at any one time advancing their college education. In 2023, SMFR had five (5) personnel in a program to complete their Bachelors degree. This along with the continuing education and company officer classes being attended shows the dedication of SMFR personnel and the Training Division to ensure that SMFR can provide the best service possible.





## Vehicle Maintenance



Southern Manatee Fire Rescue District's fleet consists of (8) fire engine pumpers, (1) 100' ladder truck, (1) Hazmat Squad, (1) Battalion unit and 14 staff vehicles of various types. We are replacing the two oldest fire pumpers in the fleet with a new 2023 and 2024 Pierce model pumpers. All of the fire apparatus and staff vehicles are maintained by the district using outside agencies to perform all preventive maintenance and repair work. All work is performed within the Fire District at various

locations. The repair and preventive maintenance for fire apparatus is performed at Ten-8 Fire Equipment which employees certified Emergency Vehicle Technician as required by National Fire Protection Association, Sunstate International and Callaghan Tires of Bradenton, while the staff vehicles are serviced and repaired at Kauffman's Automotive, both locations offer full technical mechanical services.

Vehicle repairs are conducted by scheduled appointments on an as needed basis or repairs are handled during preventive maintenance services. The frequency of preventive maintenance services varies from fire apparatus to staff vehicles. The apparatus go through a preventive maintenance service every 150-200 hours of operating time, while staff vehicles go through their services every 3000 miles. We inspire to maintain all vehicles at superior level in order for the District to provide emergency services without interruptions.

Fire apparatus require special preventive maintenance for specific areas of the apparatus, which is not the case for staff vehicles. Some of these special maintenance areas include annual pump testing, annual pump service and the annual aerial testing. These specifics



a



are performed once a year and are scheduled by our service provider. The basic classification of apparatus preventive maintenance include level 1 and level 2.

**Level 1 Preventive Maintenance:**

Full vehicle inspection, Oil change, Filter replacement, Fluid checks, Tire gauging, Pump packing, Safety inspection

**Level 2 Preventive Maintenance:**

Full vehicle inspection, Oil change, Filter replacement, Fluid checks, Tire gauging, Pump packing, Safety inspection, Air filter, Transmission service, Brake inspection, Chassis lube, Cooling system, Ac system, Fuel system,

These maintenance services are performed at every other interval and are scheduled by the district's logistic officer who manages the vehicle apparatus maintenance program in house at Southern Manatee Fire Rescue.



Equipment/Vehicle Type	Year Purchased	Purchased Cost	Vehicle I.D.	2023 Maintenance Cost
Pierce Pumper	2010	\$397,105.00	E-12	\$12,560.58
Pierce Pumper	2010	\$397,105.00	E-13	\$480.00
Pierce Pumper	2015	\$483,894.00	E-14	\$53,360.62
Pierce Pumper	2015	\$483,894.00	E-15	\$10,707.49
Pierce Pumper	2016	\$454,577.00	E-17	\$5,788.71
Pierce Pumper	2018	\$537,260.00	E-19	\$11,502.28
Pierce Aerial	2017	\$901,654.00	E-18	\$14,435.50
Pierce Squad	2020	\$770,454.00	E-20	\$5,474.46
Pierce Pumper	2020	\$592,492.00	E-21	\$4,724.59
GMC Sierra Dually	2003	\$9,050.00	T-3	\$8069.70
Ford F150	2016	\$23,000.00	C-16	\$39.98
Ford F150	2016	\$23,000.00	C-17	\$39.98
Ford F150	2016	\$23,000.00	C-18	\$39.98
Ford F150	2016	\$23,000.00	C-19	\$39.98
Ford F150	2017	\$24,709.00	C-20	\$489.39
Chevy Suburban	2017	\$58,031.00	C-21	\$422.92
Ford F250	2018	\$37,942.00	C-22	\$39.98
Ford Explorer	2018	\$33,494.00	C-23	\$39.98
Ford Explorer	2018	\$33,494.00	C-24	\$39.98
Ford Explorer	2018	\$33,494.00	C-25	\$296.56
Ford T-150 Van	2018	\$25,113.00	C-26	\$243.08
Ford Explorer	2020	\$41,775.00	C-27	\$370.52
Ford F250	2022	\$43,260.00	C-28	\$188.10
Chevy Suburban	2021	59,749.00	C-29	\$408.38
Chevy Trail Blazer	2022	28,633.00	C-30	\$79.96
Ford F150	2023	36,687.00	C-31	\$0.00
		<b>\$11,151,732.00</b>		<b>\$129,882.70</b>



## Car Seat Program

All 50 states and the District of Columbia have child safety seat laws. Child safety seat laws require children to travel in approved child restraints or booster seats and some permit or require older children to use adult safety belts. The age at which belts can be used instead of child safety seats differs among the states. Young children usually are covered by child safety seat laws, while safety belt laws cover older children and adults.



The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety reports that motor vehicle crashes are a leading cause of death for children younger than 13. Most crash deaths occur among children traveling as passenger vehicle occupants, and proper restraint use can reduce these fatalities. Restraining children in rear seats instead of front seats reduces fatal injury risk by about three-quarters for children up to age 3.

Southern Manatee Fire Rescue has six certified Car Seat Technicians, and all of their respective certifications have been renewed during the past year. These technicians collectively installed 43 seats in 2023, up from 29 in 2022. Each technician is certified voluntarily, are passionate about child safety, and are continuing to educate themselves on knowledge and techniques.

Southern Manatee Fire Rescue wishes to continue our partnership with Safe Kids to promote all aspects of child and adolescent safety. They have assisted us with car seat purchases as well as helping to educate us. This program creates and maintains positive public relations with the public as well as providing a needed service.



## Southern Manatee Union Bargaining Units/Local 2546

2023 was a good year at for L-2546 at Southern Manatee Fire Rescue. We were able to secure a 3-year collective bargaining agreement (CBA), that both labor and management were pleased with. Included in the new CBA was an increase to our Paramedics (PIC's) specialty incentive. This ensures that our Paramedics are getting very competitive pay to keep up with the demanding responsibilities of working as a Paramedic-in-charge (PIC).



Southern Manatee saw a few retirements from employee's that had long successful careers. Battalion Chief Herb Smith, Training Chief Bobby Thayer, and Executive Manager Debbie Tuckerman all said goodbye in 2023. Each of them was honored with a retirement luncheon and were given a plaque from our Local. We wish Herb, Bobby, and Debbie good luck in their future endeavors.

With the retirements in 2023 SMFR also saw our fire dept. family grow. We welcomed probationary Firefighters Dallas Valdez, Zachary Duncan, Andrew Garcia, Bailey Howell, Billy Quevedo, and Tyler Stem. All six (6) new hires joined our Local their first week. I'd like to welcome them to Southern Manatee and L-2546. Good luck in your future careers.

This year Southern Manatee and L-2546 were able to raise money for Muscular Dystrophy (MDA), Sozo's Ministries, and The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society of Sarasota/Manatee. We were able to use monies collected from the FL Firefighter license plate funds to support The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society and Sozo's Ministries this holiday season, each receiving a check for \$1,000. In March 2023, our MDA Boot-drive collected over \$16,000.



Last but not least, in April 2023, Ian Segneri was officially appointed as our Union Steward. FF Segneri has been very active with our Local attending almost every E-Board meeting. Segneri was also invited to Tallahassee in early 2023 to assist our Local with meeting our elected officials and discussing any upcoming Bills that affect FL Firefighters. Last year the FL Legislature and Governor DeSantis restored many of the pension benefits that were cut in 2011. A big "Thank You" to all our union members that went to Tallahassee to speak with the delegation, our hard work paid off.

In closing, I would like to wish everyone a happy & healthy 2024. The next 3 – 5 years at Southern Manatee are going to see some major changes with more retirements, promotions, and hirings on the horizon. There is also a good chance next year that all first-out engines at SMFR will be providing ALS service. SMFR and L-2546 are looking forward to the challenges and opportunities coming in the near future.



## Employee Recognition Program

Southern Manatee Fire Rescue recognizes the value of the services and sacrifices made to protect the lives and property of Manatee County citizens by its Firefighters and members of the public. The dedication of these individuals is recognized at the Commission meetings. In addition to the “Years of Service” awards, other categories include the Phoenix Award for saving the life of a cardiac arrest victim, Genesis Award for the delivery of a baby in the field, Military Awards for those who served and the “End of the Year” Annual Awards. Below are the recipients for 2023:

**Officer of the Year:** Lieutenant Brian Hodges

**Firefighter of the Year:** Firefighter Tim Keusch

**Rookie of the Year:** Firefighter Tyler Stem

**Staff Employee of the Year:** EMS Officer Dave Wernet



Lieutenant  
Brian Hodges



EMS Officer  
Dave Wernet



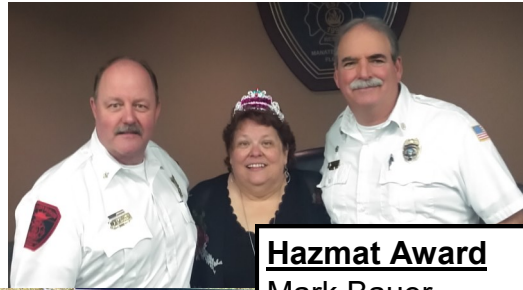
Firefighter  
Tyler Stem



Firefighter  
Tim Keusch

**Service Awards**

Daniel E. Anderson	25 Year
Sean M. Connor	25 Year
Richard L. Gatanis	20 Year
Justin P. Sperko	20 Year
Jerry Bennett, III	15 Year
Justin Markey	15 Year
Brittan M. Williams	10 Year
Brandon C. Baserva	5 Year
Brian A. Craycraft	5 Year
Alex D. Davis	5 Year
Michael R. Dunois	5 Year
Logan J. Savitsky	5 Year
Justin S. Young	5 Year
Shawn Myles	5 Year
James Burkett	1 Year
Luis Paneranes	1 Year
Wesley Wollenberg	1 Year
Justin Woods	1 Year
Andrea Fullen	1 Year



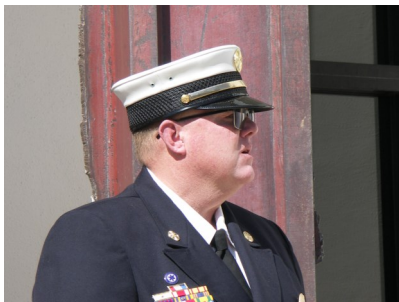
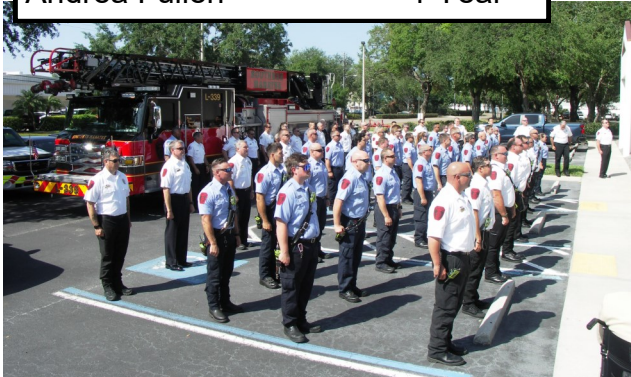
**Hazmat Award**

Mark Bauer  
Richard Gatanis



**Hurricane Ian**

Thomas M. Bloski  
Brandon Baserva  
Duane Ely  
Brent Ranney  
Sean Connor  
Melvin Bonds  
Justin Young  
Steven Gibson  
Tim Keusch  
Chris Burghdurf



**Recent Retirements**

Battalion Chief Herb Smith – 33 years  
Training Chief Bobby Thayer – 33 years  
Exec. Management Asst. Debbie Tuckerman – 33 years  
Logistics, Larry Sarver – 13 years

