

2024

# ANNUAL REPORT.







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# MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF



It is my honor to present the Fargo Fire Department's 2024 Annual Report, highlighting the dedication, hard work and unwavering commitment of the men and women who serve this community every day. The members of the Fargo Fire Department are the heart of our organization, and their steadfast dedication to ensuring they are trained and ready to respond at a moment's notice is nothing short of inspiring.

Whether responding to emergencies, conducting life-saving training or engaging with the community, our firefighters exemplify Professionalism, Responsibility, Integrity, Dependability and Empathy. The countless hours spent honing their skills and preparing for the unexpected are a testament to their passion for serving the residents of Fargo. Their commitment to protecting life and property is the foundation of our department's mission, and I could not be more proud of their service.

I would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to the citizens of Fargo for their support of the public safety sales tax. This investment in public safety will allow us to better serve the community and I pledge to present a budget that utilizes these funds in a manner that is fiscally responsible and will meet the needs of the department.

As I reflect on my tenure as Fire Chief, I am filled with gratitude for the opportunity to lead this incredible department for the past 13-plus years. It has been a privilege to serve alongside such dedicated professionals and to be entrusted by the community to lead this organization. Since I've already announced my retirement effective May 16th, 2025, I want to share that while this decision comes with mixed emotions, I leave with confidence knowing the Fargo Fire Department is in capable hands and well-prepared to face the challenges ahead.

Thank you to The City of Fargo and its residents for your unwavering support of our department. Your trust, encouragement and partnership have been essential to our success, and it has been my honor to serve as your Fire Chief.

With deepest gratitude,

A handwritten signature in red ink that reads 'Steven Dirksen'.

**STEVEN DIRKSEN**  
FARGO FIRE CHIEF

# THANK YOU





## CORE VALUES



*The Fargo Fire Department (FFD) holds its members to a high standard because our community members call us in their time of need. The department expects its members to always respond professionally and treat the public with respect and empathy. The department's values – identified as most important by the members – provide guidance in the actions we take and the decisions we make. The acronym for Fargo Fire Department's values is*

**P. R. I. D. E.**

### **P**rofessionalism

Commitment to Quality • Pride in Your Work

### **R**esponsibility

Accountability • Maturity • Ability to Respond

### **I**ntegrity

Moral Honesty • Intellectual Honesty

### **D**ependability

Worthy of Trust • Constructive Communication • Team Effort • Working Together

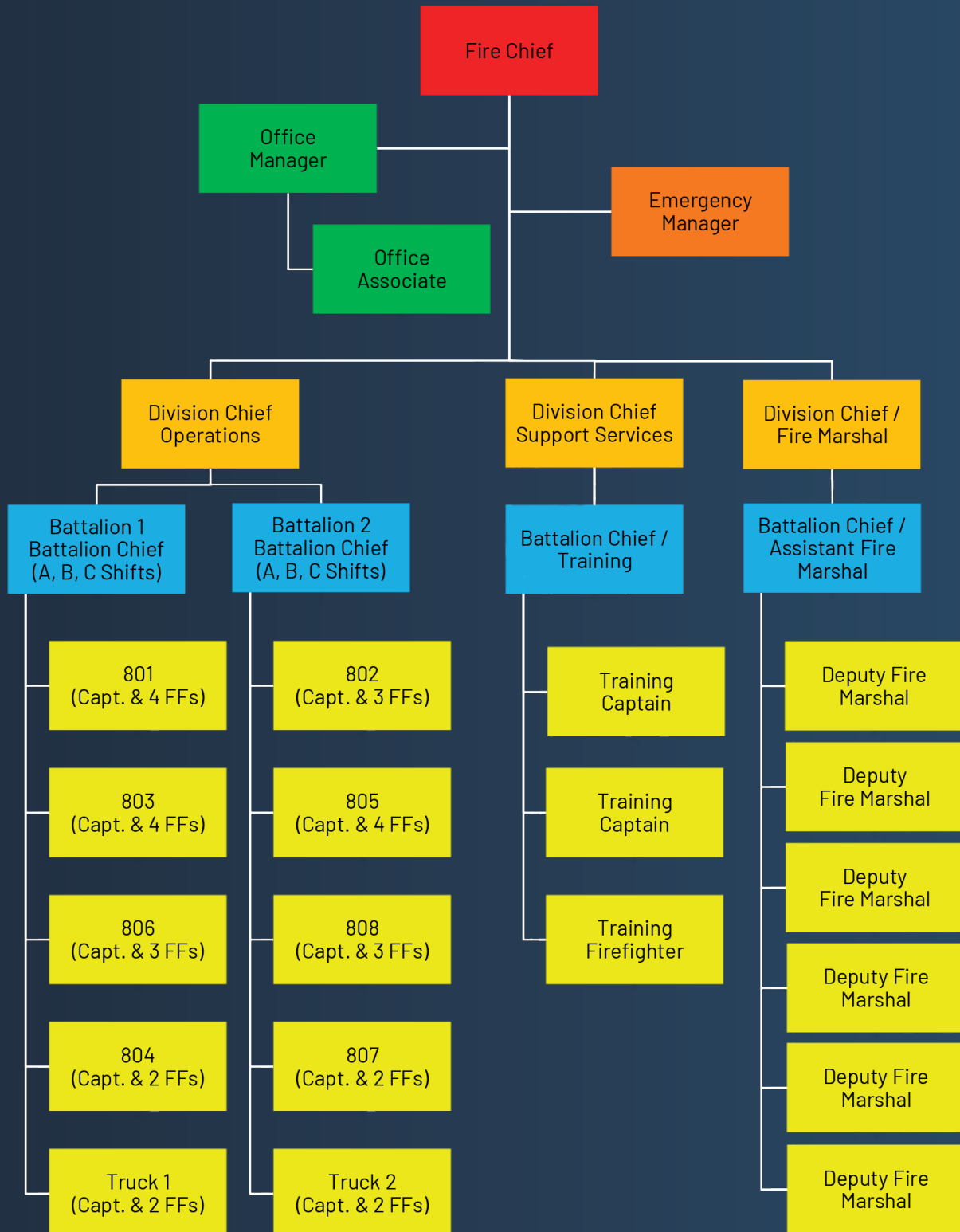
### **E**mpathy

Ability to Understand Others • Fairness • Straightforwardness • Sincerity





# ORGANIZATIONAL CHART





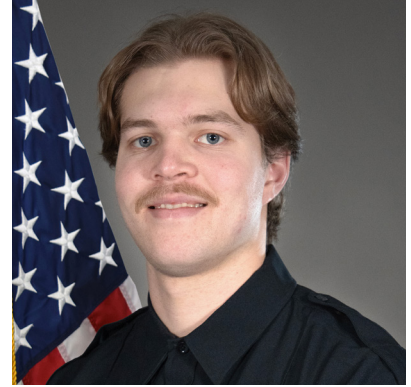
# 2024 NEW HIRES



**JACOB BOUSHEE**  
Firefighter



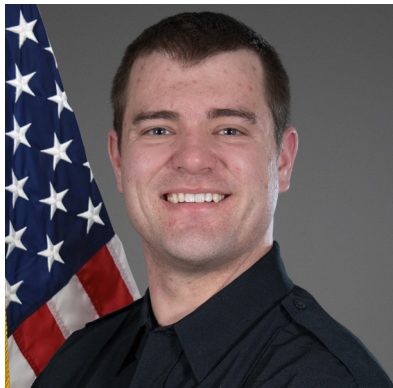
**CHRISTIAN CANTORE**  
Firefighter



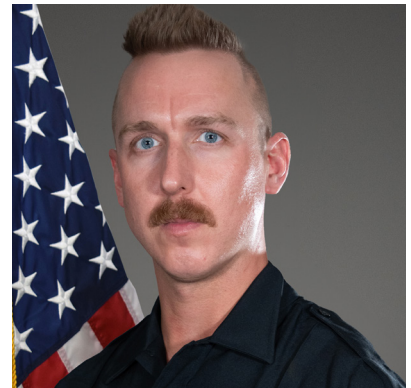
**CHRISTIAN FROMM**  
Firefighter



**TANER HETTINGER**  
Firefighter



**BRENNAN KESSLER**  
Firefighter



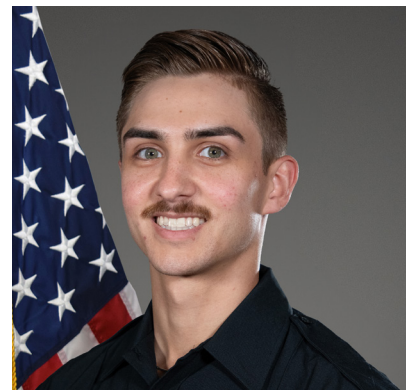
**TRAVIS MARTEL**  
Firefighter



**ZACHARY MARTINEZ**  
Firefighter



**ROSS MONSON**  
Firefighter



**JUSTIN NIMRICHTER**  
Firefighter





# 2024 NEW HIRES



**JALEN PLATH**  
Firefighter



**BROCK RELLER**  
Firefighter



**JON ROBIDEAU**  
Firefighter



**CHERYL STUBBE**  
Office Associate III



**CALEB WALTERS**  
Firefighter



# 2024 RETIREMENTS



**JASON MEHLISCH**  
Captain  
29 years of service



**JAMES GARVEY**  
Deputy Fire Marshal  
18 years of service



**WILLIAM NELSON**  
Firefighter  
15 years of service

# THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE





# PLANNING GOAL 1

Safeguard the community through proactive prevention, preparedness and public education programs.

## INSPECTION GOAL

Inspect  
**100%**  
of all commercial properties

including hospitals, clinics, schools, nursing homes, churches and 50% of apartment buildings.

**6,709**  
Occupancies assigned for inspection

**8,918**  
Inspections completed

## SMOKE DETECTORS

**79%**  
Residential homes had a smoke detectors present





Smoke detectors were present in over 79% of residential occupancy fires and operated at 55% of those fires. Fires were too small to activate smoke detectors 32% of the time.

## FFD GOAL

**90%**  
Containment to room of origin

Where fire suppression is present, contain the fire to the room of origin 90% of the time.



	2023		2024	
	Suppression System Present 	No Suppression System Present 	Suppression System Present 	No Suppression System Present 
CONTAINED TO ROOM OF ORIGIN	<b>97%</b>	<b>81%</b>	<b>94%</b>	<b>78%</b>
SPREAD BEYOND ROOM OF ORIGIN	<b>3%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>22%</b>



# » PLANNING GOAL 1 CONTINUED

Safeguard the community through proactive prevention, preparedness and public education programs.

## COMPLETE PLAN REVIEWS

for all proposed construction to ensure compliance with the adopted International Fire Code.

## ACCEPTANCE TESTS AND PLAN REVIEW

of fire protection systems are conducted to ensure systems are installed properly and will be reliable. In 2024, 197 fire protection system plans were reviewed and approximately 550 acceptance tests were witnessed.

## PROVIDE EDUCATION

to special need organizations, as well as other groups.

## LEARN NOT TO BURN

We continue to reach out to the children in the community through the "Learn Not to Burn" program. In 2024, all elementary schools within the city of Fargo were provided with a lesson on fire exits and smoke alarms. Nearly 4,500 children were provided information through presentations in the classrooms of 25 schools.



# 2,500

Adult Education System Contacts were made

Our adult education system gave safety talks, presentations, fire extinguisher training and public relations events where contact was made to over 2,500 adults. The audience includes apartment building managers, building safety professionals and childcare providers and citizens.

# 76%

Occupants fire alarm response

In 2024, occupants who were alerted by fire alarms responded appropriately 76% of the time during active fires.

## PROVIDE COMMUNICATION TO RESIDENTS

FFD maintains a Facebook, Twitter and YouTube page in addition to the communication that is provided through FargoFire.com





# » PLANNING GOAL 1 CONTINUED

Safeguard the community through proactive prevention, preparedness and public education programs.

## INVESTIGATE TO DETERMINE ORIGIN AND CAUSE OF ALL FIRES

Investigations are conducted to determine the origin and cause of a fire. The 2024 fire investigations results are listed below.

### CLASSIFICATION FIRES



### TYPES OF FIRES (TOP THREE)



### STRUCTURE FIRE ORIGIN (TOP THREE)



### STRUCTURE FIRE CAUSE - HEAT SOURCE (TOP THREE)



### INTENTIONALLY-SET FIRES





# » PLANNING GOAL 1 CONTINUED

Safeguard the community through proactive prevention, preparedness and public education programs.

## HEART SAFE FARGO PROGRAM

The FFD provides training and direction to the public, as requested, to support the Heart Safe Fargo Program.

The PulsePoint app is free and allows users to follow incidents the FFD is dispatched to and will send a notification when CPR is needed in a public location.

3,114

followers in 2024 on FFD's

**PulsePoint**

160

devices received a  
notification that CPR  
was needed  
in 2024.







## » PLANNING GOAL 2

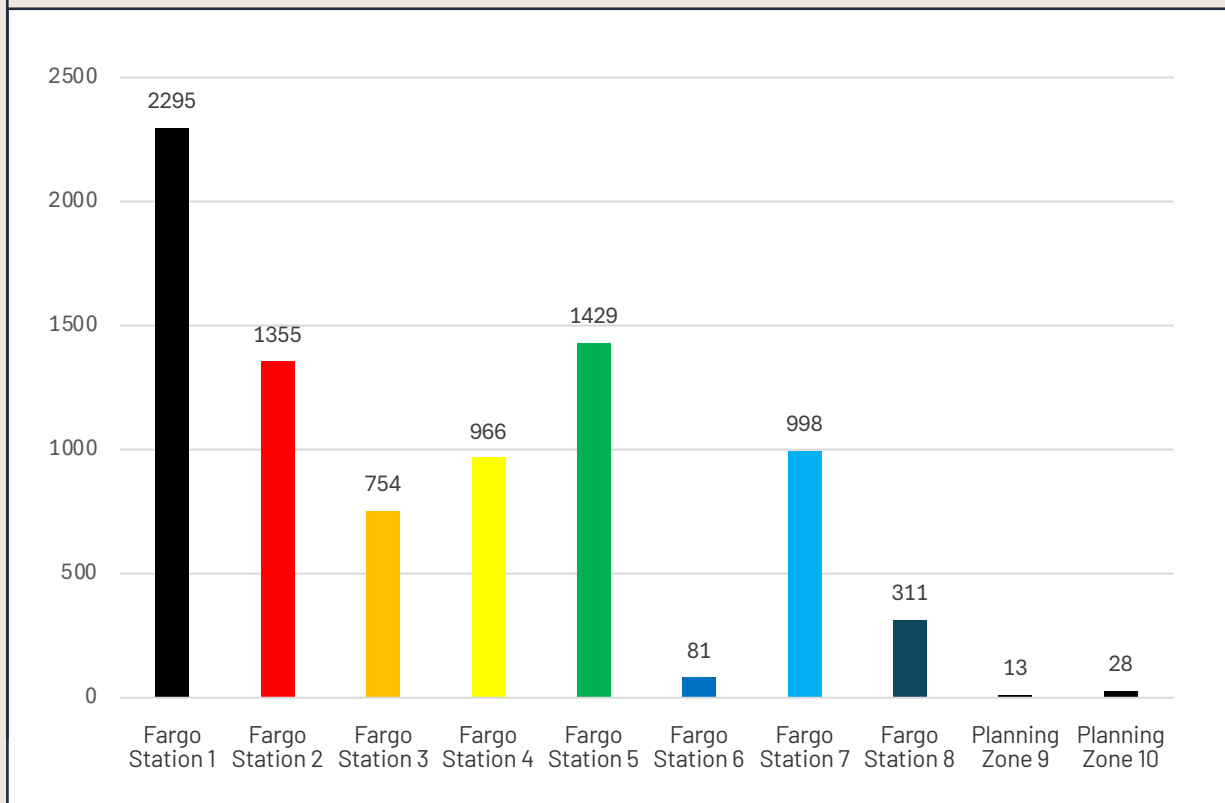
Ensure systems and processes are in place to minimize the impact on life and property from medicals, fires, disasters and other emergencies.

### EMS INCIDENTS BY STATION PLANNING ZONE

The Fargo Fire Department is an all-hazards response organization. The responses made by crews are not limited to solely fire-related incidents. Calls for service can include medical assists, motor vehicle accidents, natural gas leaks and more. The majority of all responses made by the Fargo Fire Department are in service to members of our community who are experiencing some type of medical issue. All Fargo Firefighters are certified EMT's and are well-trained to respond to citizens and visitors in emergency situations.



### NUMBER OF EMS RESPONSES





## » PLANNING GOAL 2

Ensure systems and processes are in place to minimize the impact on life and property from medicals, fires, disasters and other emergencies.

### STATION 5 RECONSTRUCTION

Station 5 temporarily closed on September 26, 2024, to begin reconstruction and renovation work after an engineering assessment found structural issues due to shifting ground beneath the building. The closure is expected to last until August 2025 and The City has allocated \$2.5 million for the project.

During this time, calls in the Station 5 coverage area will be handled by nearby stations, FFD Engine 805 operating from the West Fargo main fire station and mutual aid with the West Fargo Fire Department.



### FIRE STATION 8 GRAND OPENING

Fire Station 8 became fully operational on Monday, October 28. The community was invited to attend an open house to celebrate the grand opening and tour the facility.

Breaking ground on June 20, 2023, this \$5.3 million project was completed in just 16 months and came in under budget – an achievement that reflects the dedication of our planning team. Station 8 has been thoughtfully designed to prioritize firefighter health and safety, incorporating hot, warm and cold zones to enhance comfort and security in living and working spaces.







## » PLANNING GOAL 2 CONTINUED

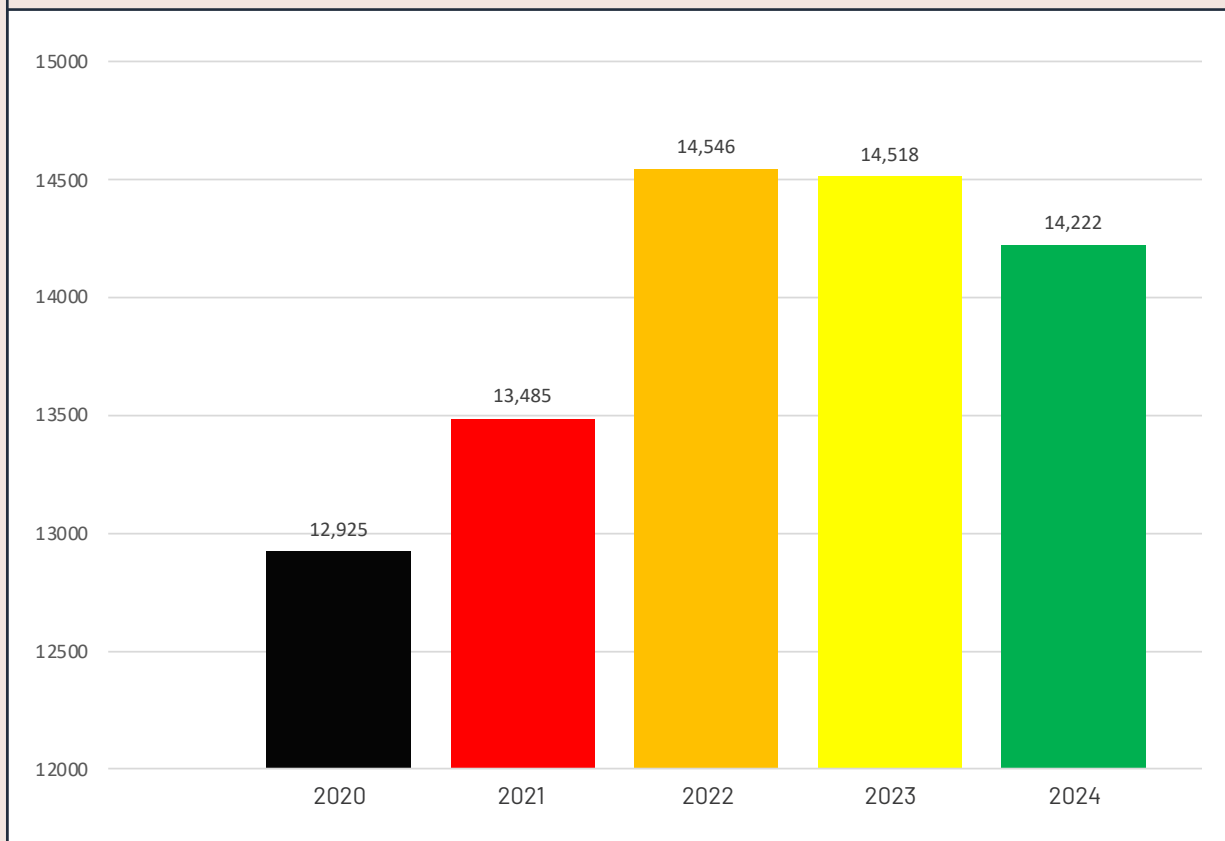
Ensure systems and processes are in place to minimize the impact on life and property from medicals, fires, disasters and other emergencies.

# 14,222

Calls for service in 2024. This includes mutual aid responses outside of the city of Fargo.



### 2020-2024 TOTAL INCIDENTS PER YEAR





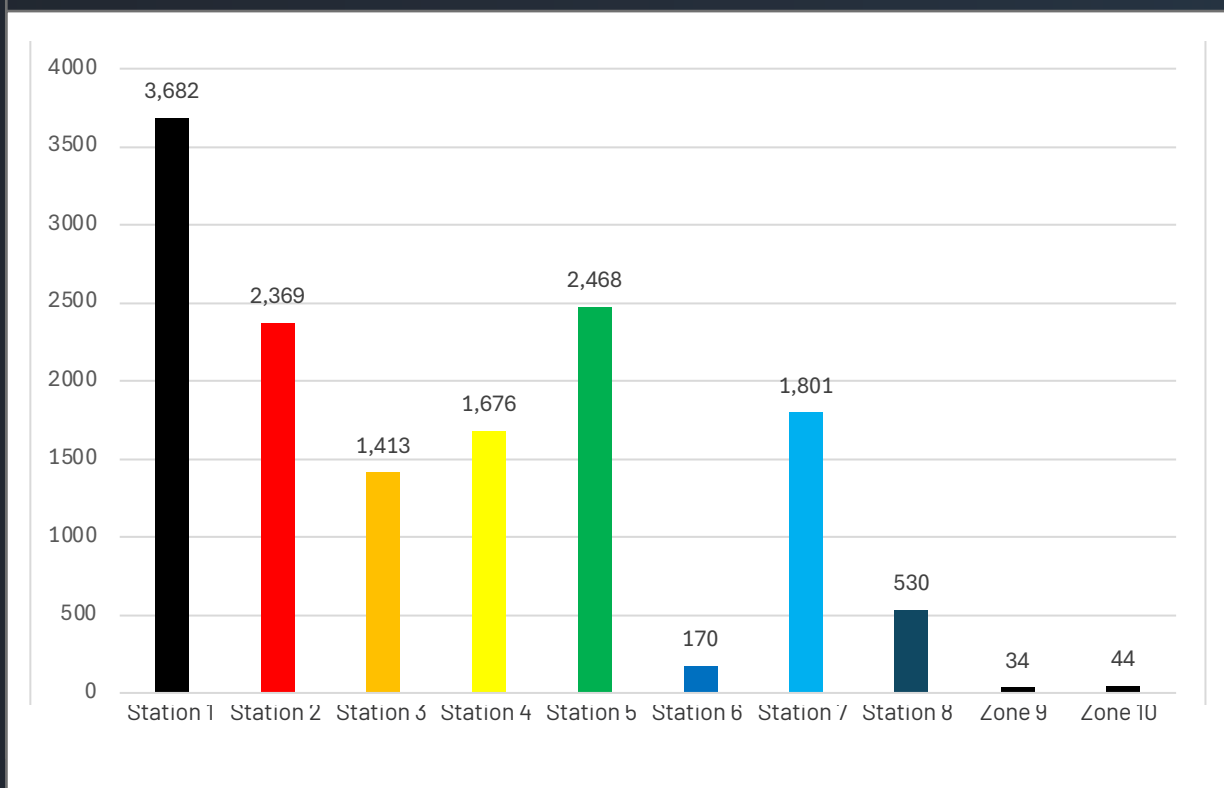
## » PLANNING GOAL 2 CONTINUED

Ensure systems and processes are in place to minimize the impact on life and property from medicals, fires, disasters and other emergencies.



### NUMBER OF INCIDENTS BY STATION PLANNING ZONE

The number of incidents by Planning Zone saw some variability in 2024 due to Station 5 closing for renovations. Planning Zones were adjusted once Station 8 became fully operational causing the size of Planning Zone 9 to be reduced.





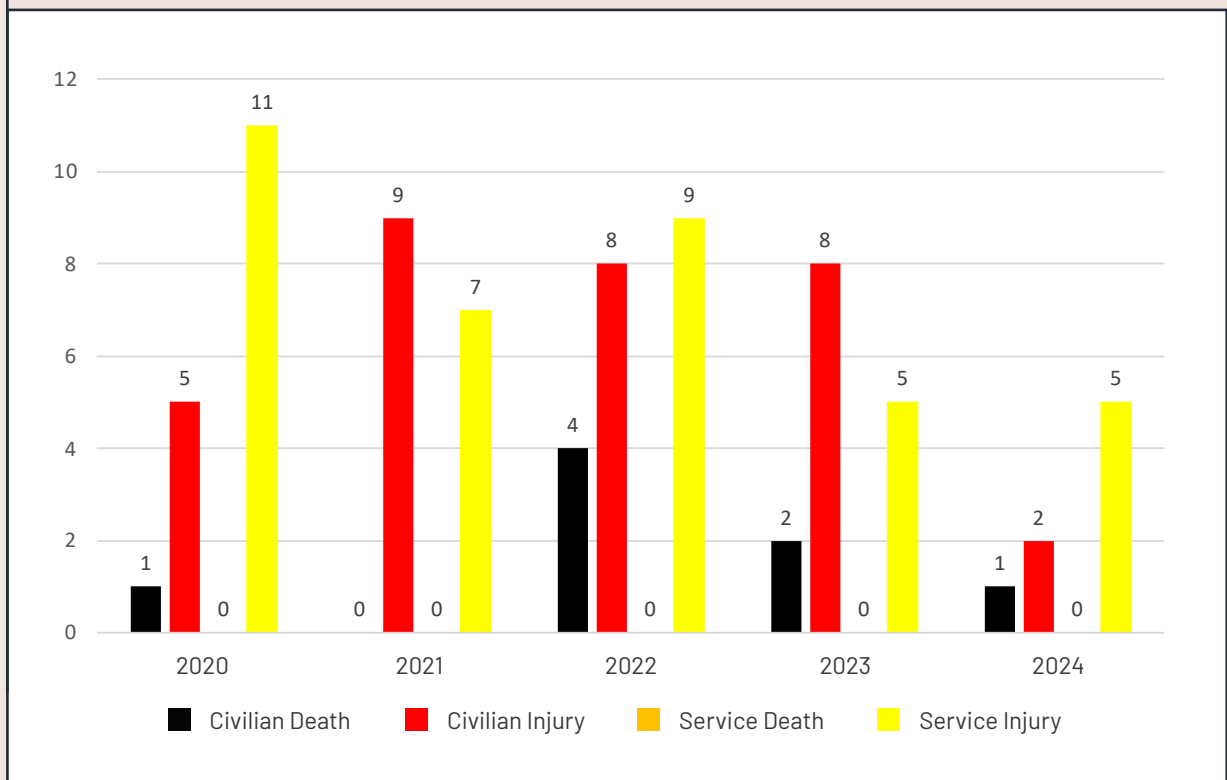


## » PLANNING GOAL 2 CONTINUED

Ensure systems and processes are in place to minimize the impact on life and property from medicals, fires, disasters and other emergencies.



### FIRE INJURIES AND FATALITIES IN 2024, THERE WERE TWO CIVILIAN INJURIES AND ONE CIVILIAN DEATH



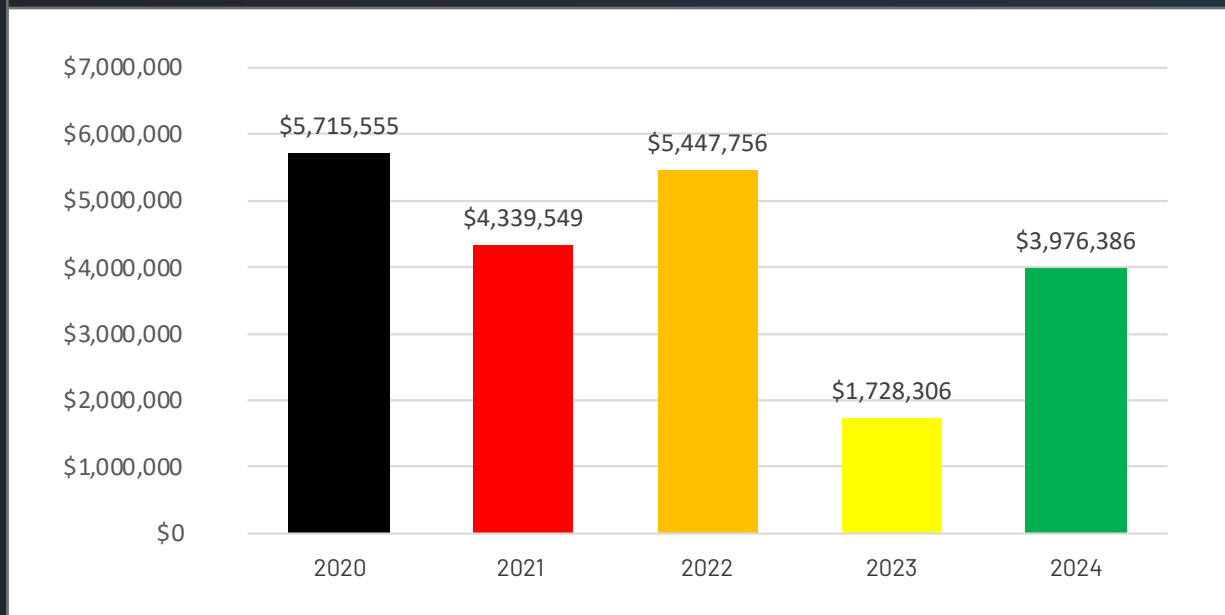


## » PLANNING GOAL 2 CONTINUED

Ensure systems and processes are in place to minimize the impact on life and property from medicals, fires, disasters and other emergencies.



### 2020-2024 TOTAL DOLLAR LOSS





## » PLANNING GOAL 2 CONTINUED

Ensure systems and processes are in place to minimize the impact on life and property from medicals, fires, disasters and other emergencies.

The FFD strives to respond as quickly as possible to all incidents and follows the National Fire Protection Standard (NFPA) 1710 as a guide for response time goals. NFPA 1710 provides a nationwide standard for all size departments and cities.

### THREE COMPONENTS COMPRISE TOTAL RESPONSE TIME

**Alarm Handling Time** – The time that the dispatch center takes to answer a 911 call and dispatch the appropriate fire department unit(s).

**Turnout Time** – The time that it takes fire crews from when they are notified of an incident to when the apparatus is en route to the incident.

**Travel Time** – The time that it takes fire crews to drive to the scene of the incident.

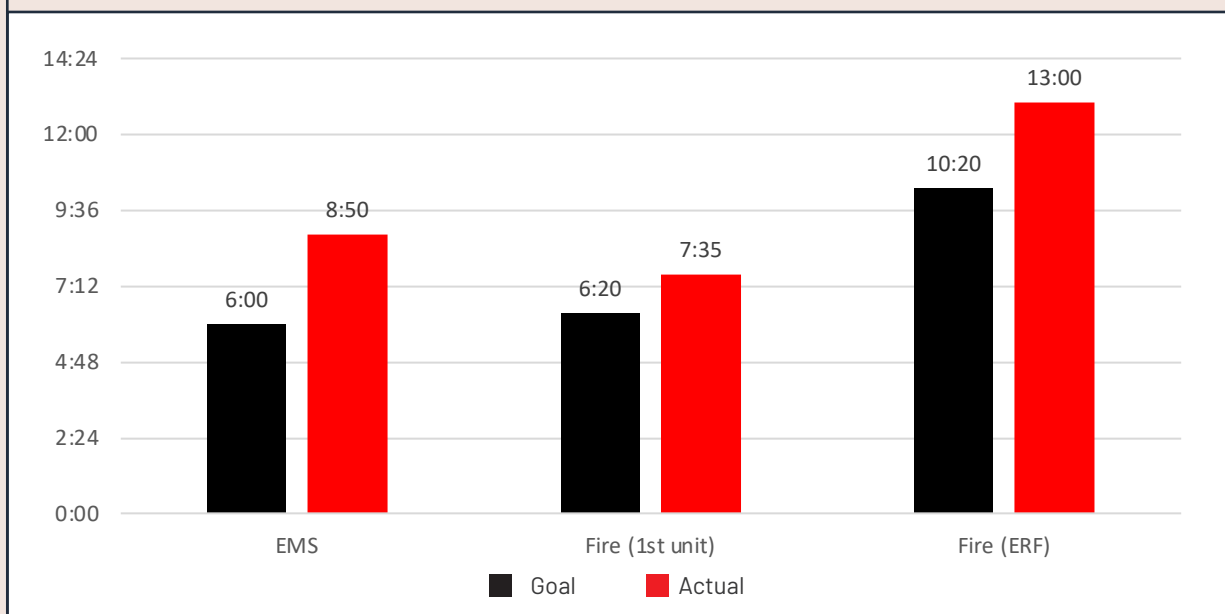
The **first unit** on Fire incidents is the first engine or truck to arrive on scene.

The **ERF** is the Effective Response Force needed to fight a fire and includes a first alarm assignment of 16 personnel.



### 2024 TOTAL RESPONSE TIME

As an accredited agency, the Fargo Fire Department measures times at the 90th percentile. This means the times reported are the actual times the department responds 90 out of 100 responses.







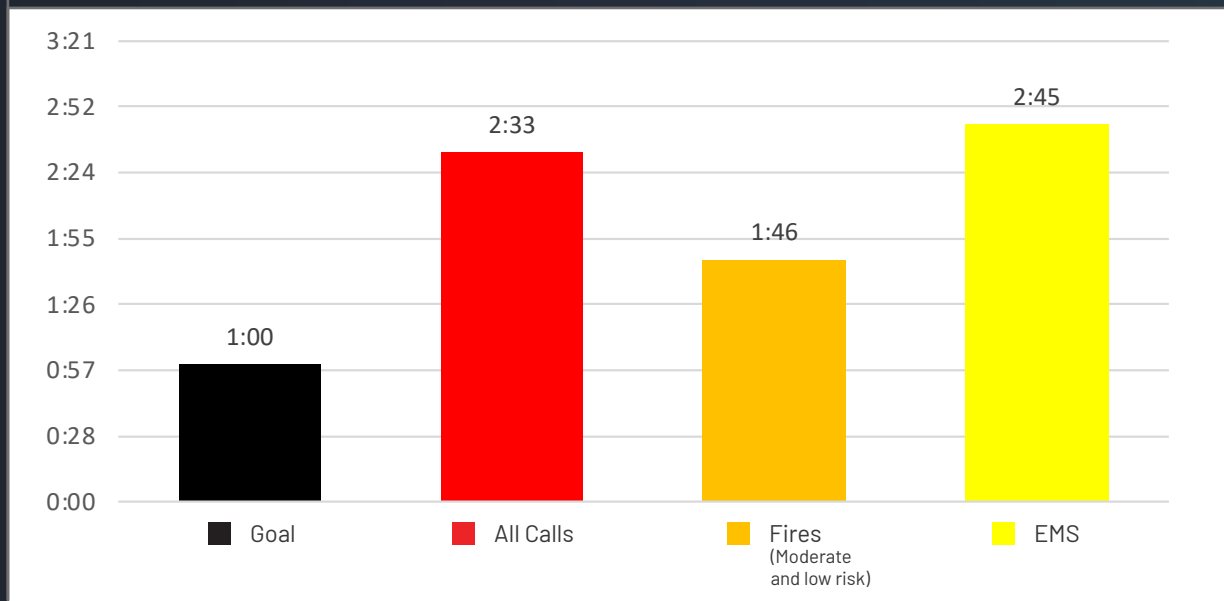
## » PLANNING GOAL 2 CONTINUED

Ensure systems and processes are in place to minimize the impact on life and property from medicals, fires, disasters and other emergencies.



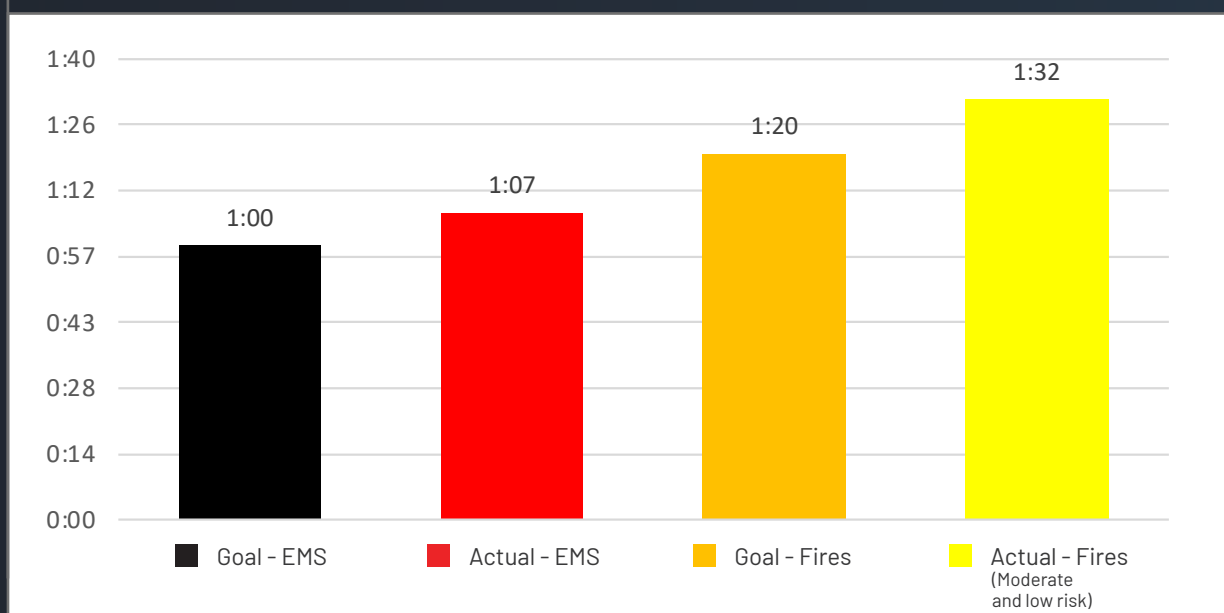
### ALARM HANDLING

Before alerting the fire department on EMS calls, dispatch has to determine what the problem is and who needs to be sent, so these times are longer than for fires.



### TURNOUT TIMES

The goal time for fires is 20 seconds longer than EMS because the crews need to put on their turnout gear before they leave the station.





## » PLANNING GOAL 2 CONTINUED

Ensure systems and processes are in place to minimize the impact on life and property from medicals, fires, disasters and other emergencies.

### TRAVEL TIME

The goal for travel time is four minutes. Many factors affect these times including weather, traffic and station location. Travel times were affected by the closure of Station 5 while other units cover Planning Zone 5. Engine 805 was moved to West Fargo Fire Department's main fire station until Station 5 reconstruction is complete.

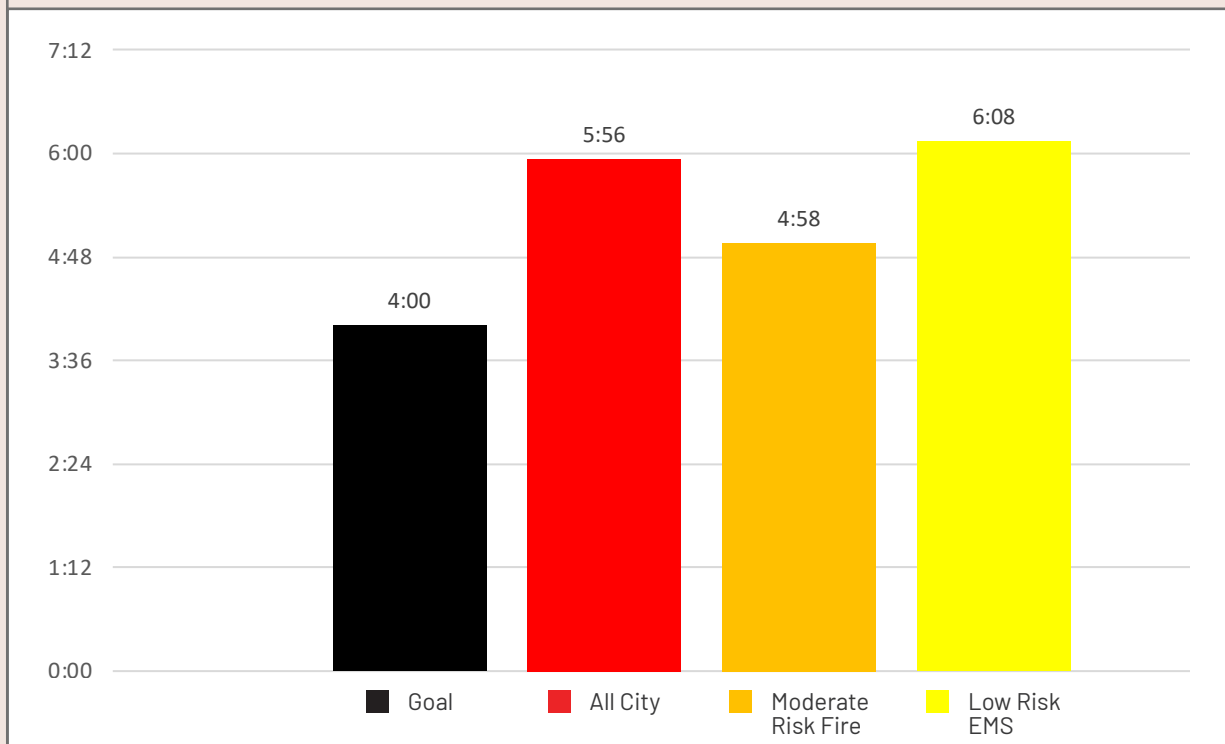
Opticomms, devices that change the traffic lights, are used at intersections so apparatus do not face delays caused by red lights.

### PZ'S ARE PLANNING ZONES

Planning Zones (PZ's) correlates to the geographic area surrounding a fire station in The City of Fargo. For example, Planning Zone 7 correlates with Fire Station 7 in the Osgood neighborhood. PZ's 8 and 9 have been covered by Station 8 since the grand opening in October 2024.



### TRAVEL TIME





## » PLANNING **GOAL 2** CONTINUED

Ensure systems and processes are in place to minimize the impact on life and property from medicals, fires, disasters and other emergencies.

### PROVIDE EMERGENCY RESPONSE TO HAZARDOUS MATERIALS INCIDENTS WITH FIREFIGHTERS TRAINED TO THE TECHNICIAN LEVEL

The FFD has an agreement with the North Dakota Department of Emergency Services (NDDDES) to provide Hazardous Materials Response in Southeast North Dakota. NDDDES provides funding annually to support the team with equipment and training. The agreement also provides reimbursement when assistance is needed in the Southeast Region.

# 151

Number of hazardous materials incidents responded to by the FFD in 2024







## » PLANNING **GOAL 2** CONTINUED

Ensure systems and processes are in place to minimize the impact on life and property from medicals, fires, disasters and other emergencies.

### **MAINTAIN A TECHNICAL RESCUE TEAM WITH SPECIALIZED TRAINING IN FOUR CORE COMPETENCIES**

The FFD has an agreement with the North Dakota Department of Emergency Services (NDDes) to provide Technical Rescue Response in Southeast North Dakota. NDDes provides annual funding to support the team with equipment and training. The agreement also provides reimbursement when assistance is needed in the Southeast Region. All responses in 2024 occurred within Fargo city limits.

# 85

Number of technical rescue incidents  
responded to by the FFD in 2024







## » PLANNING **GOAL 2** CONTINUED

Ensure systems and processes are in place to minimize the impact on life and property from medicals, fires, disasters and other emergencies.

### WATER RESCUE TEAM

The primary goal of the water rescue team is to respond to and manage water rescue emergencies within the city.

# 15

Number of water rescue emergencies responded to by the FFD in 2024







## » PLANNING GOAL 3

Recruit, develop and retain the highest quality team members and implement a comprehensive training program that provides for continuous education and career preparation opportunities to all personnel.

### TRAINING ACADEMIES

In 2024, the Fargo Fire Department, West Fargo Fire Department and Moorhead Fire Department held two training academies. The FFD had 13 new firefighters complete the academies.

### ANNUAL TRAINING

All members of the FFD are required to completed **248 hours** annually to maintain proficiency and credentialing in different disciplines such as EMS, hazmat, and technical rescue.







## » PLANNING **GOAL 3** CONTINUED

Recruit, develop and retain the highest quality team members and implement a comprehensive training program that provides for continuous education and career preparation opportunities to all personnel.

### ENCOURAGE PROFESSIONAL GROWTH OF OFFICERS AND FIREFIGHTERS THROUGH EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

The FFD provides an in-house professional development program for personnel which includes a monthly professional development topic and presentation.

All new officers spend a week in class prior to going on shift to prepare them for their new position. Part of this class includes ride-along's with The Fargo Police Department and Red River Regional Dispatch Center because they will be working closely with these organizations on a regular basis in their new position.

In addition to in-house training, the FFD also sends personnel to outside training classes that help ensure firefighters are using the current best practices. The department tries to maximize grant funding for many of the outside training opportunities. These include training opportunities at the following nationally recognized institutions:

- The National Fire Academy (NFA) in Emmitsburg, MD.  
Instructors are brought in to Fargo, ND annually to conduct classes.
- The Texas Engineering Extension Service (TEEX) in College Station, TX.
- The Center for Domestic Preparedness in Anniston, AL.

### PROMOTE SAFETY, HEALTH AND WELLNESS FOR EMPLOYEES BY PROVIDING ANNUAL MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS

The FFD provided all sworn personnel with annual medical checks through Employee Health in 2024. All sworn non-exempt personnel also complete an annual fitness test.

The FFD Safety Committee and the FFD Health & Wellness Committee both met quarterly in 2024 and continue to work on improving health, wellness and safety for the department.







## » PLANNING GOAL 4

Maintain an organization that effectively administers, plans and manages the physical resources of the department.

### CHECK AND EVALUATION PROCESSES

Numerous daily, weekly, monthly and yearly checks and evaluation processes are in place to manage the department's physical resources. For example, firefighters conduct daily checks on each emergency response apparatus. Weekly and monthly evaluations are conducted on items such as fire station generators and all tools and equipment located on over 20 emergency response vehicles.







## » PLANNING GOAL 5

The Fire Department will work to be dynamic and continually adjust to meet the changing fire problems, new technologies, laws, regulations and changes occurring in the community.

### MONITOR LEGISLATION THAT COULD AFFECT THE FARGO FIRE DEPARTMENT, THE CITY OF FARGO AND THE FIRE SERVICE IN NORTH DAKOTA

The Fargo Fire Department continues to reduce risk through public education, fire prevention inspections and fire investigations.

The Fargo Fire Department presented significant changes of the 2024 International Fire Code to the board of appeals. This adoption coincides with the International Building Code that is enforced by The City of Fargo Inspections Department. The 2024 codes are expected to be adopted by the City in the fall of 2025.

The department works with local, state and federal officials to ensure laws are in place to protect our community and our employees.

### THE FFD WILL WORK TO IMPROVE PUBLIC CONFIDENCE IN THE FIRE DEPARTMENT THROUGH PUBLIC RELATIONS

Station tours, truck show-n-tells, parades, block parties and other public activities have allowed the department to have direct contact with nearly **2,500 adults and over 13,300 children.**





# » FARGO FIREFIGHTERS IAFF LOCAL 642

International Association of Firefighters (IAFF) Local 642 donated their time and money to various organizations and causes in the community throughout 2024.

## FILL-THE-BOOT

Members donated their time and help raise over

**\$17,000**

for the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA) to be put towards research and to help send kids to the MDA summer camp.

Local 642 also donated

**\$1,000**

towards this cause.

Members attended the MDA Boot Camp to learn more about fill-the-boot. Members also attended the summer camp for a day to spend time with the kids at the camp.





# » FARGO FIREFIGHTERS IAFF LOCAL 642

International Association of Firefighters (IAFF) Local 642 donated their time and money to various organizations and causes in the community throughout 2024



Rang bells for The Salvation Army's  
Red Kettle Campaign and helped raise

> \$11,000







# » FARGO FIREFIGHTERS IAFF LOCAL 642

International Association of Firefighters (IAFF) Local 642 donated their time and money to various organizations and causes in the community throughout 2024.

## OTHER EVENTS

IAFF Local 642 participated in many local events which supported first responders and community members.

- Donated money to **Hometown Heroes night** at a Fargo Force game. Money raised during the game benefits regional emergency services departments.
- Donated money to sponsor teams in golf tournaments that supported **The Salvation Army** and local volunteer fire departments.
- Sponsored teams and donated money to support various other events to support community members in need.
- Participated in the **Christmas Gift Fashion Show** that benefits local families in need.
- Participated in various local events such as the **Fargo-Moorhead St. Patrick's Day Parade** and the **9/11 Stair Climb**.





 **FIRE STATION**  
637 NP Avenue

 **FIRE STATION**  
3020 25 Street South

 **FIRE STATION**  
1101 25 Avenue North

 **FIRE STATION**  
2701 1 Avenue North

 **FIRE STATION**  
930 40 Street South

 **FIRE STATION**  
4630 15 Ave North

 **FIRE STATION**  
3957 Village Lane South

 **FIRE STATION**  
6617 33 Street South



**FARGOFIRE.COM**