

# Annual Report

# 2022





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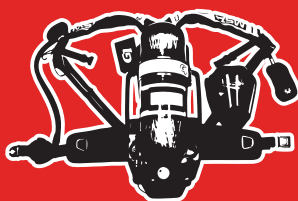
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MESSAGE  
FROM  
CHIEF  
DIRKSEN



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# A MESSAGE FROM CHIEF DIRKSEN



To the Citizens of Fargo,

Several significant challenges were managed by FFD personnel in 2022, including those that resulted from the impacts of COVID, record inflation, supply chain issues, increased cost of goods and services, as well as delays in receiving equipment. We have seen the impact of an incredibly competitive labor market. While we have been able to recruit enough quality employees to fill open positions, we have seen a number of young talented employees leave, well before retirement age, for opportunities in the private sector as well as other fire service agencies.

Planning activities were a priority during most of 2022. The City of Fargo authorized a bond sale for the construction of Fire Station 8, a remodel and addition to Fire Station 2 and the purchase of a new fire engine for Fire Station 8. Committees were formed that worked through the design of the fire station projects as well as the new fire engine. All projects have been put out for bids and the department eagerly anticipates the completion of these important projects.

Primary goals in 2022 focused on solidifying the department's foundation and securely positioning the organization for the next several years. In 2022, our services included 14,559 responses to emergency calls for service. The Suppression and Community Risk Reduction Divisions conducted 6,611 commercial and apartment fire inspections. Our staff completed, on average, 319 hours of training to maintain proficiency in skills, supervision, and service.

The FFD continually looks for ways to improve our service level and honor our mission, vision and values. The health and safety of our employees is consistently a top priority. We remain focused on physical and mental health by implementing policies and programs that help ensure long healthy careers. With firefighters facing a significantly higher risk of a cancer diagnosis than the general public, we will continue to identify and implement practical solutions that will help the FFD bring those numbers down.

In 2022, we bid farewell to Captain Robert Cuchna (32 years of service), Captain Clark Dietz (30 years of service), Firefighter Greg Schmidt (29 years of service), Firefighter Steve Sylvester (26 years of service), Firefighter Michael Binder (23 years of service), Firefighter Michael Brown (21 years of service), Captain Michael Ambrose (17 years of service), Captain Joseph Sabourin (17 years of service), Firefighter Matt Buchholz (12 years of service) and Firefighter Matt Dawson (10 years of service).

Fourteen new faces joined the department this past year and we are excited about the energy, enthusiasm and ideas these new employees bring to the FFD. I am inspired by the dedication I see throughout the organization, and am reassured by the talent and leadership I see at every level.

I am excited about 2023 and all the opportunities that the FFD will encounter. Our department is committed to provide exceptional public safety. We are thankful for the opportunity to serve the citizens of Fargo.

Regards,

**STEVEN DIRKSEN**  
*Fargo Fire Chief*

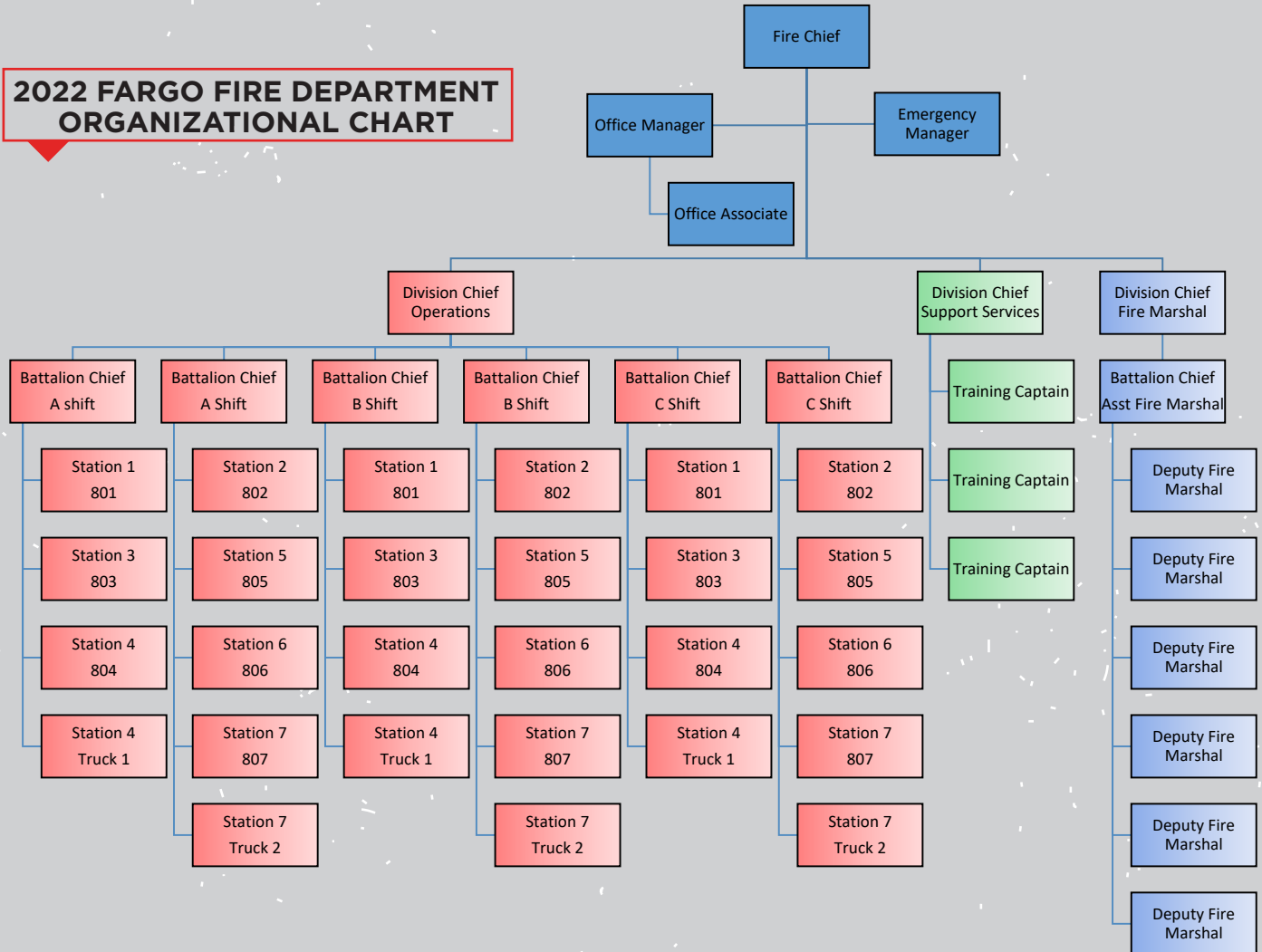




# ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



## 2022 FARGO FIRE DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATIONAL CHART





# 2022 NEW HIRES



**Ethan Spaid**



**Logan Anderson**



**Brandon Mallea**







# 2022 NEW HIRES



Ryan Blotsky



Kyle Grosz



Cody Mehlich





# 2022 NEW HIRES



**Jeremy Hoemberg**



**Chase Johnson**



**Brendan Farley**



**Matt Vrchota**







# 2022 NEW HIRES



Lance Rognlin



Jordan Mead



Wyatt Swanson



Jonathan Coyle







# 2022 RETIREMENTS



**Robert Cuchna**  
Captain  
32 years of service

**Clark Dietz**  
Captain  
30 years of service

**Greg Schmidt**  
Firefighter  
29 years of service







# 2022 RETIREMENTS



**Steve Sylvester**  
Firefighter  
26 years of service

**Michael Binder**  
Captain  
23 years of service

**Michael Brown**  
Firefighter  
21 years of service







# 2022 RETIREMENTS



**Michael Ambrose**  
Captain  
17 years of service

**Joseph Sabourin**  
Captain  
17 years of service

**Matt Buchholz**  
Firefighter  
12 years of service

**Matt Dawson**  
Firefighter  
10 years of service







# 2022 PROMOTIONS



**Kent Orvik**  
Captain

**Jordan Bernier**  
Captain

**Joe Burchill**  
Captain











# PLANNING GOAL 1











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

- » **Inspect 100% of all commercial property, hospitals, clinics, schools, nursing homes and churches.**

Inspections Completed					
	Inspections Assigned	Suppression	Bureau	Total	%
Apartments	 788	 793	 0	793	100%
Commercial	 5699	 4228	 1590	5818	100%

- » **Detectors were present in over 78% of residential occupancy fires and operated at over 70% of those fires. The fire was too small to activate the detector 20% of the time.**

- » **FFD Goal: Where fire suppression is present contain the fire to the room of origin 90% of the time.**

2021				2022	
	Suppression System Present	No Suppression System Present		Suppression System Present	No Suppression System Present
Contained to room of origin	 97%	 66%		 88%	 67%
Spread beyond room of origin	 3%	 34%		 12%	 33%



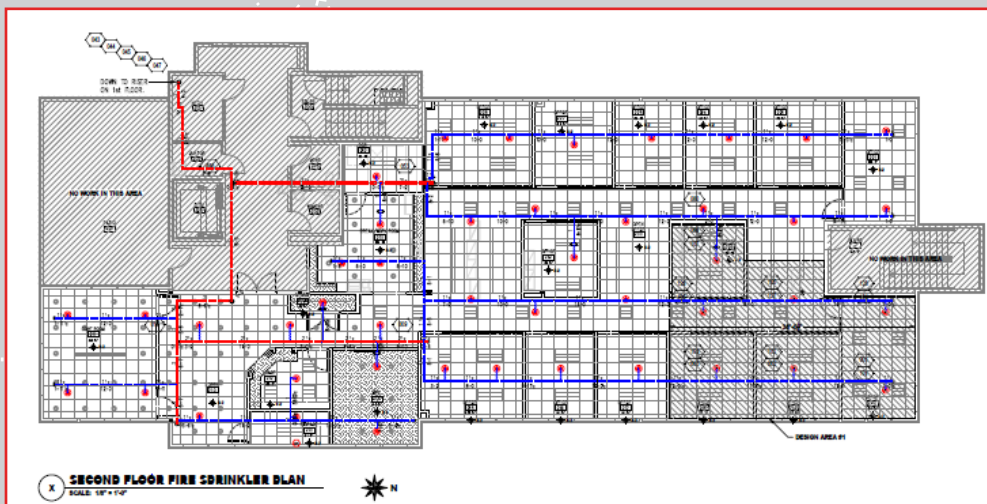


# PLANNING GOAL 1



**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 reviews of fire protection systems are conducted to ensure systems are installed properly and will be reliable. In 2022, 219 fire protection system plans were reviewed and approximately 491 acceptance tests were witnessed.



Home fire  
sprinkler  
informational  
display at Fire  
Station 1



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# PLANNING GOAL 1



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

- » Provide education to special need organizations, as well as other groups.
- » We continue to reach out to the children in the community through the “Learn Not to Burn” program. This year all elementary schools within the city of Fargo were provided with a lesson on “911”, “Two Ways Out” and general fire safety. Nearly 5,000 children were provided information through presentations in the classroom.
- » Our adult education system gave safety talks, presentations, fire extinguisher training and public relations events where contact was made to over 6,400 adults. The audience includes apartment building managers, building safety professionals and childcare providers and citizens.
- » FFD maintains a Facebook, Twitter and YouTube page in addition to the communication that is provided through The City of Fargo web page, [FargoFire.com](http://FargoFire.com)

**Fire Simulation  
VR Goggles**





# PLANNING GOAL 1



**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 2022 fire investigations results are listed below.

## » Classification Fires

**148 + 60 + 41 + 29 + 2 + 1 = 281**

<i>Unintentional</i>	<i>Undetermined</i>	<i>Failure of Equip. or Heat Source</i>	<i>Intentional</i>	<i>Under Investigation</i>	<i>Act of Nature</i>	<b>Total</b>
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## » Types of Fires (Top three)

**128**

*Building fire*

**54**

*Passenger vehicle fire*

**36**

*Dumpster fire*

**53**

*Cooking area, kitchen*

**14**

*Exterior balcony*

**12**

*Bedroom*

## » Structure Fire Origin (Top three)

## » Structure Fire Cause - Heat Source (Top three)

**63**

*Radiated, conducted heat from operating equipment*

**30**

*Smoking Materials*

**15**

*Undetermined*

## » Intentionally Set Fires

**11**

*2018*

**24**

*2019*

**37**

*2020*

**38**

*2021*

**29**

*2022*



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# PLANNING GOAL 1



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

- » **Provide 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.

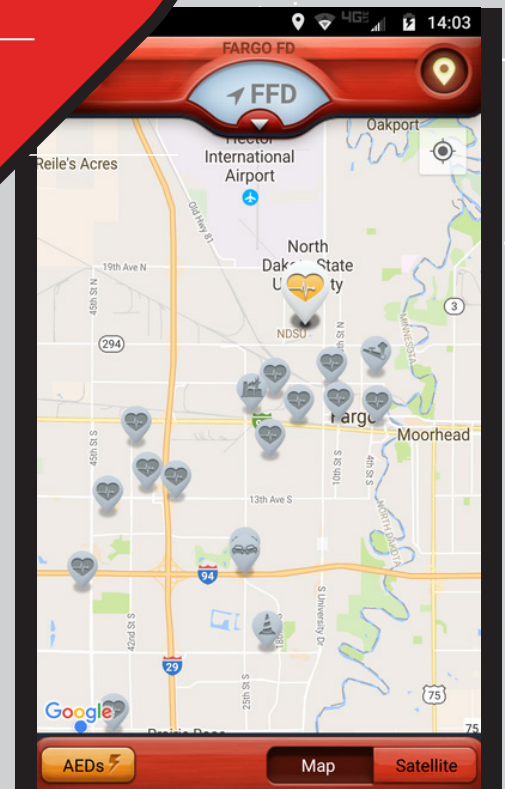
**1,652**

*followers (December) on FFD's*

**PulsePoint**

**274**

*devices received a notification that CPR was needed in 2022.*





# PLANNING GOAL 2

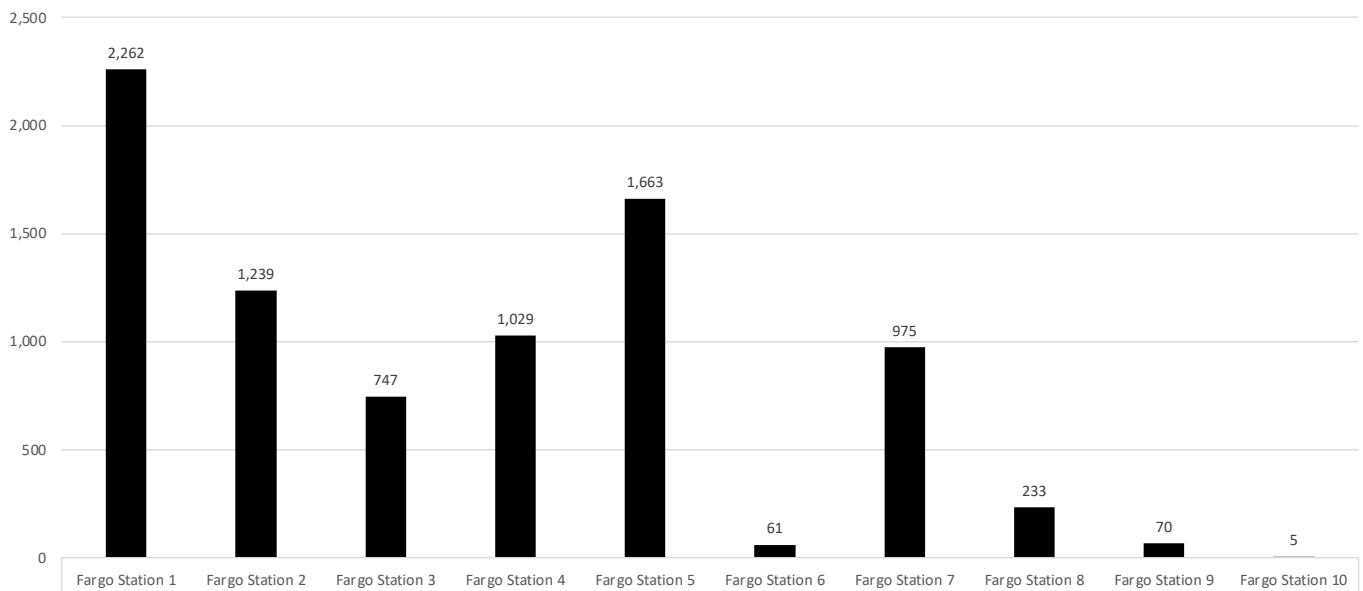


**Integrate our emergency medical response capability with other service providers to ensure that the needs of the customer are met.**

## » EMS incidents by Station planning zone

The Fargo Fire Department is an all-hazard 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 3

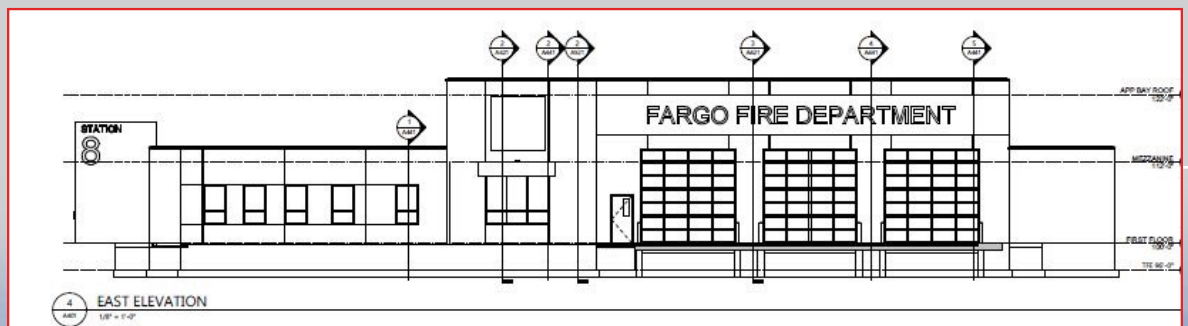


**Ensure systems and processes are in place to minimize the impact on life and property from fires, disasters and other emergencies.**

## » Future Fire Station 8

Bidding and Construction expected to begin in 2023 with a completion date in the middle of 2024.

As The City of Fargo continues to grow, the FFD closely analyzes the number of responses, as well as the time it takes to respond to the various calls. The FFD has divided Fargo into ten planning zones to be able to more closely monitor the needs in those zones. Planning Zone 8 is approximately 65% built-out and calls for service are on the rise in this area. It has become apparent that it is now time to invest in a new station, adding equipment and personnel to meet the needs of the citizens in this area of our community.





# PLANNING GOAL 3



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

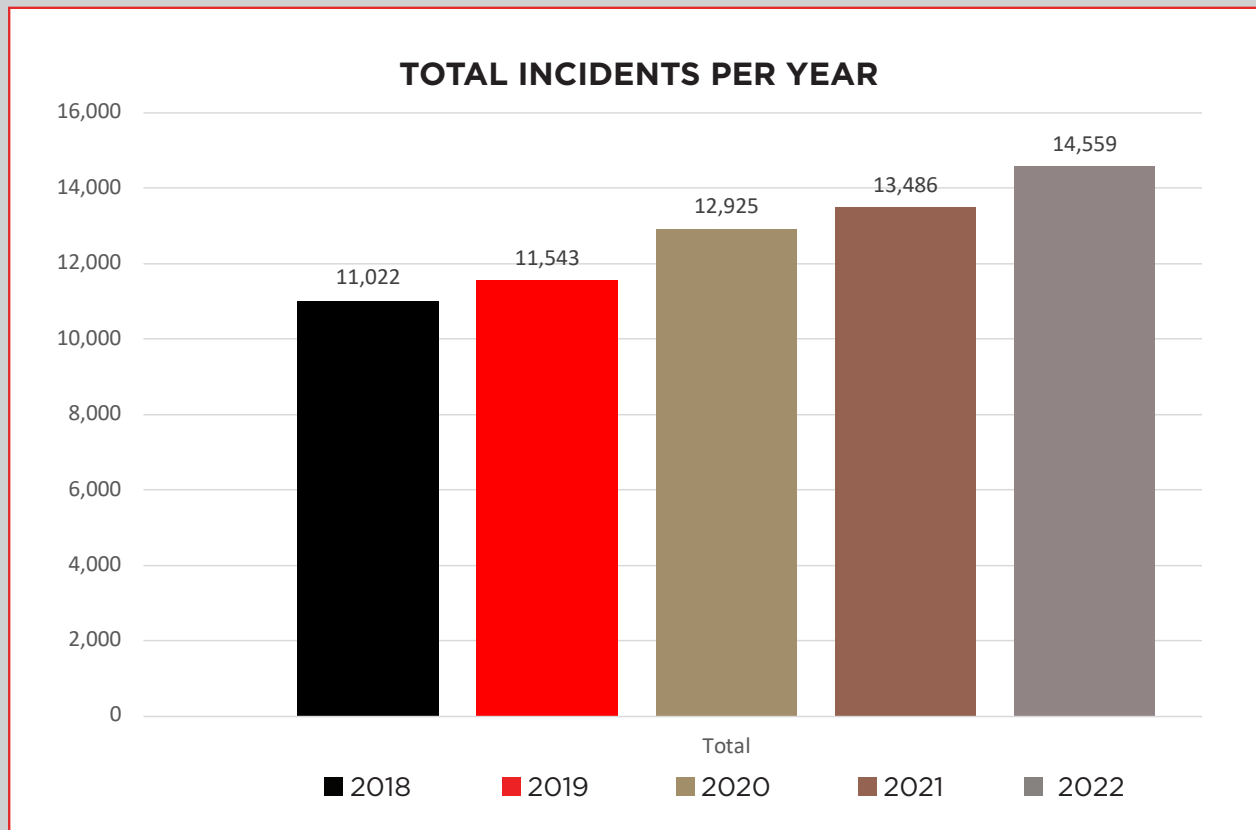
» As The City of Fargo grows, the number of calls for service for the FFD continues to increase.

## 14,559

*Calls for service the FFD's Fire Suppression Division responded to in 2022.  
This includes mutual aid responses outside of The City of Fargo.*



**2018-2022 response statistics are reflected below.**







# PLANNING GOAL 3

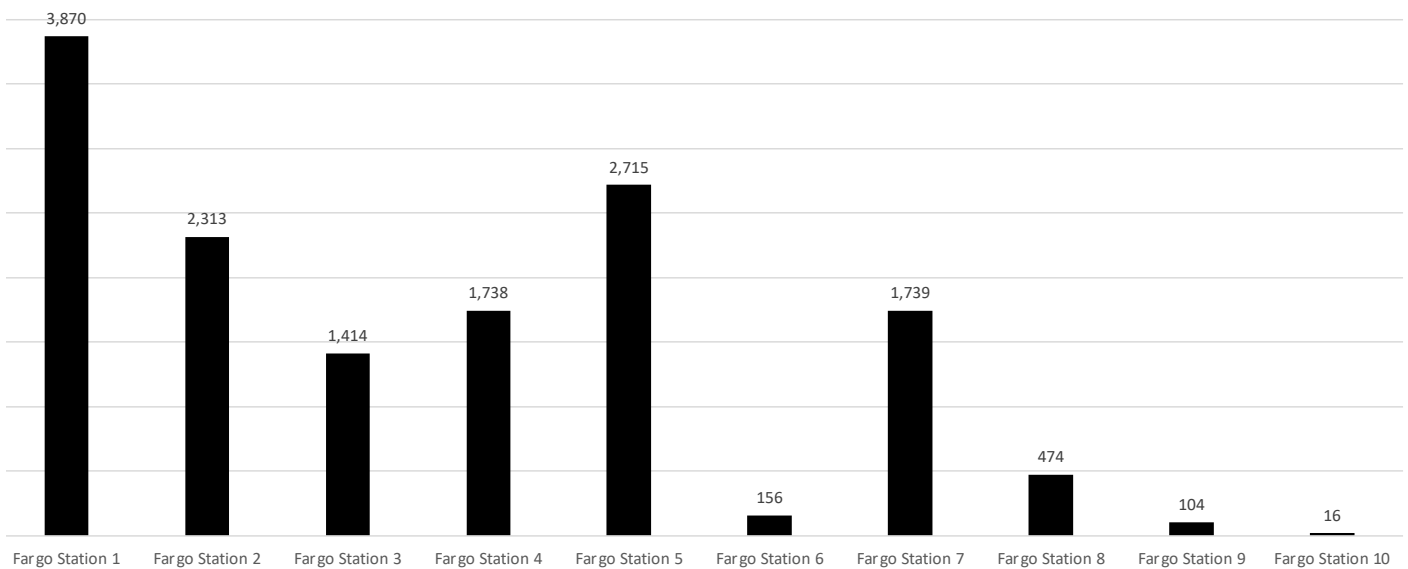


**Ensure systems and processes are in place to minimize the impact on life and property from fires, disasters and other emergencies.**

» As our community continues to grow in population as well as geographic size, the FFD's calls for service continue to increase.

Fire Station 1 (which is located in Downtown Fargo) continues to be the busiest of all fire stations. Station 5 (located in the West Acres area) is seeing a significant increase in calls for service.

**NUMBER OF INCIDENTS BY STATION PLANNING ZONE**





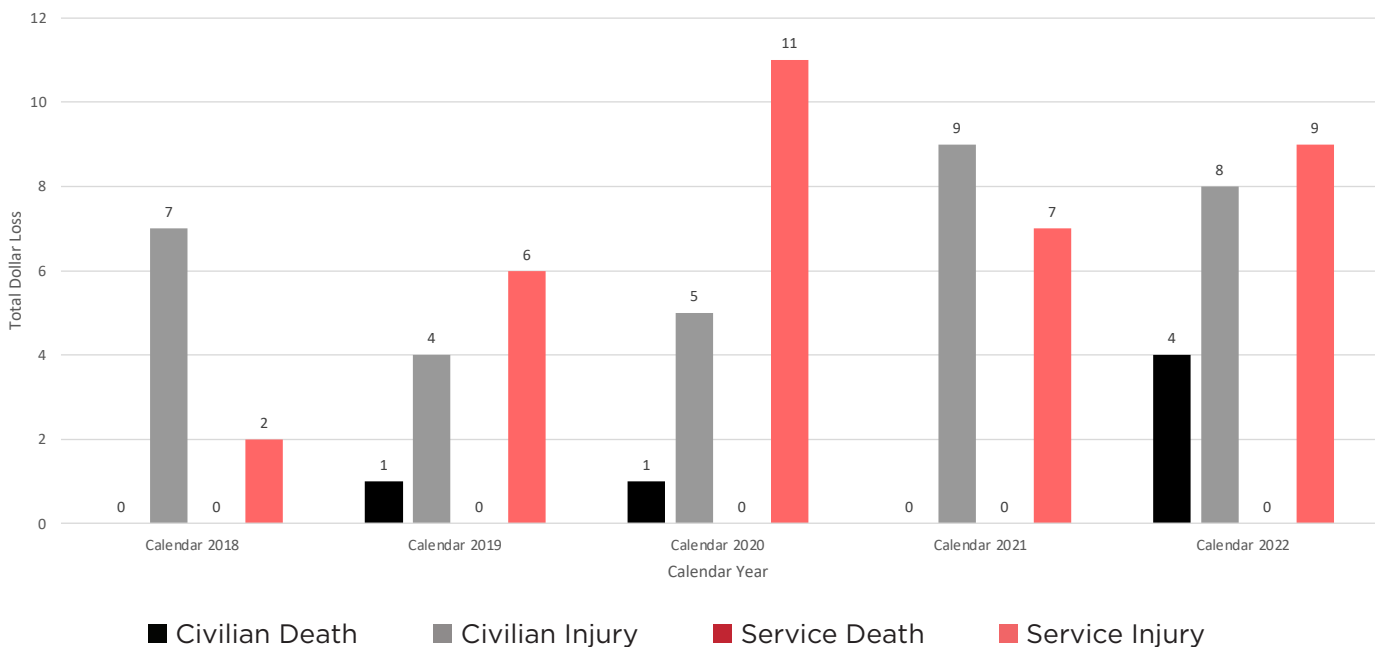
# PLANNING GOAL 3



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

» In 2022, there were four civilian deaths and eight civilian injuries, the highest the community has experienced in the last 20 years. Although the work can be dangerous, FFD Firefighters continue to complete their job responsibilities every day.

## FIRE INJURIES & FATALITIES







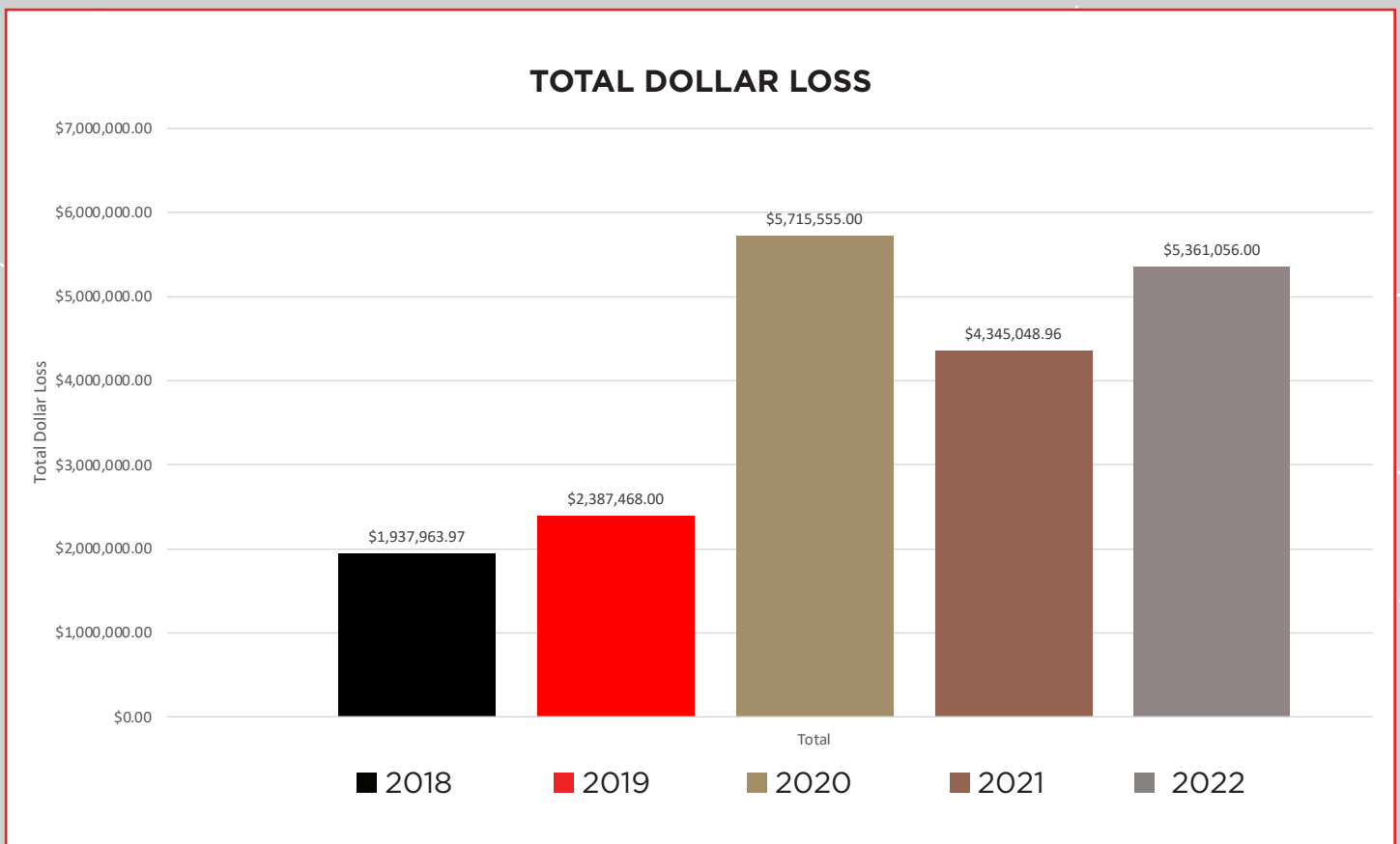
# PLANNING GOAL 3



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

» The number of fires in Fargo has increased in the past three years.

Prior to 2020, the Fargo community experienced less than 200 fires per year. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, the FFD has seen an increase in the number of fires within the city, resulting in an increase in the dollar amount of loss experienced. Additionally, there have been two apartment buildings and one nursing home that were classified as a total loss in the last three years. These incidents represent significant losses and have increased the overarching numbers.





# PLANNING GOAL 3



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

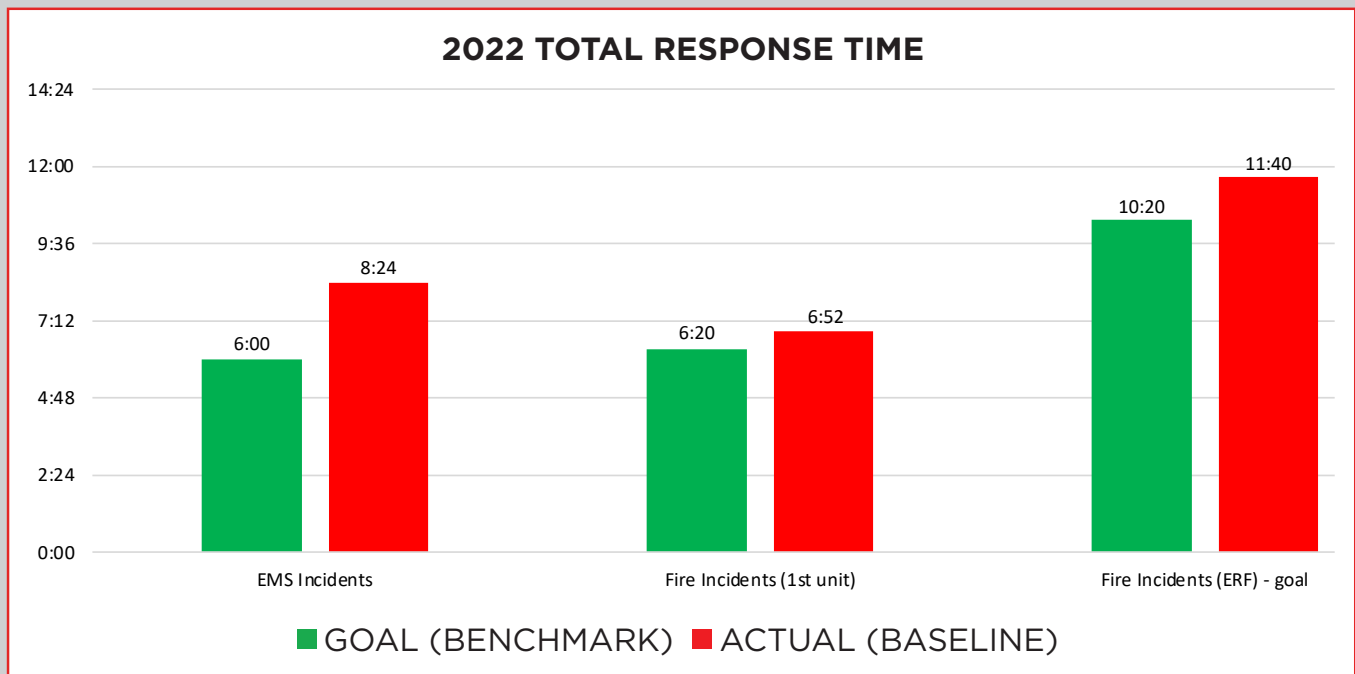
» Response time; the FFD strives to respond as quickly as possible to all incidents. The FFD follows the National Fire Protection Standard (NFPA) 1710 as a guide for response time goals. NFPA 1710 provides a nationwide standard for all size departments and cities.

» 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 enroute 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 just that, 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.







# PLANNING GOAL 3

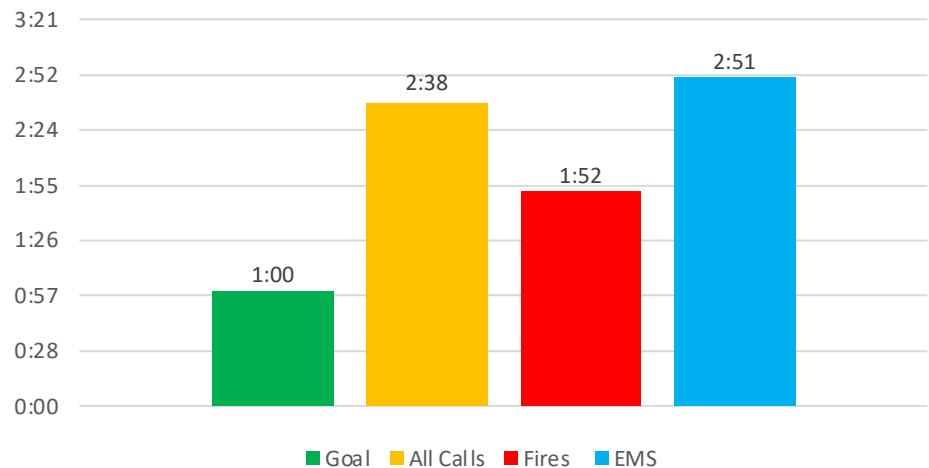


Ensure systems and processes are in place to minimize the impact on life and property from fires, disasters and other emergencies.

## » Alarm Handling and Turnout Times

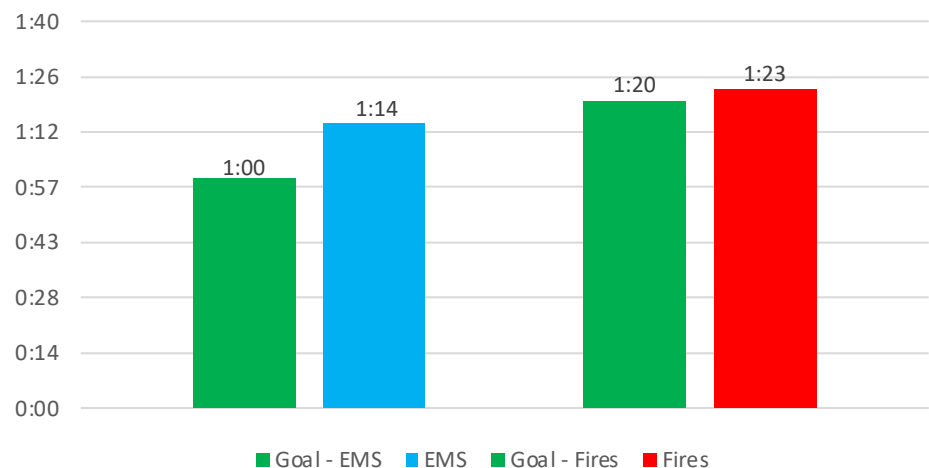
Before alerting the fire department on EMS calls, dispatch has to determine what the problem is and who needs to be sent, so these times are longer than for fires.

ALARM HANDLING



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.

TURNOUT TIMES





# PLANNING GOAL 3

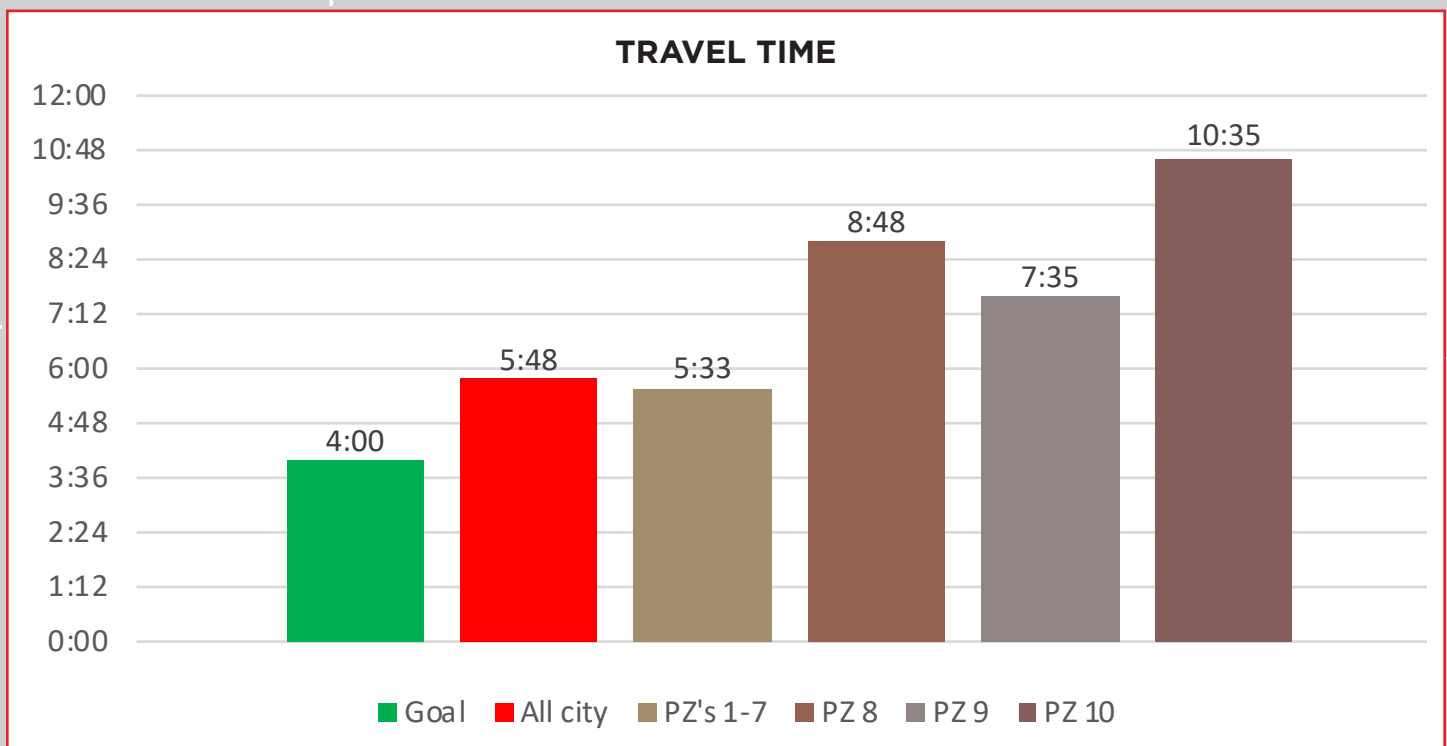


**Ensure systems and processes are in place to minimize the impact on life and property from fires, disasters and other emergencies.**

## » Travel Time

The goal for travel time is four minutes. Many factors affect these times including weather, traffic, and station location. Fire stations are placed strategically throughout the city, with a new station expected to be complete in Planning Zone 8 in 2024.

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.

These correlate to fire stations in The City of Fargo. For example, Planning Zone 7 correlates with Fire Station 7 in the Osgood neighborhood. PZ's 8, 9 & 10 do not yet have a fire station in place; they are used to determine future needs.







# PLANNING GOAL 3



**Ensure systems and processes are in place to minimize the impact on life and property from 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.

FFD responded to

**163**

hazardous materials incidents in 2022.







# PLANNING GOAL 3



**Ensure systems and processes are in place to minimize the impact on life and property from 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 (NDDDES) to provide Technical Rescue Response in Southeast North Dakota. NDDDES 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 2022 occurred within Fargo city limits.

FFD responded to

**72**

technical rescue incidents in 2022.







# PLANNING GOAL 3



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

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

FFD responded to

**3**

water rescue emergencies in 2022.







# PLANNING GOAL 4



**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.**

» In 2022, the Fargo Fire Department and West Fargo Fire Department held **3 joint recruit classes**. The FFD had 14 new firefighters complete the academy.

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 4



**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.

All personnel are provided 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 Fargo Police and RRRDC because they will be working closely with these organizations on a regular basis in their new position.

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)

Members attend classes at the NFA in Emmitsburg, MD and instructors are brought in to Fargo, ND to provide classes annually.

The Texas Engineering Extension Service (TEEX) in college Station, TX.

The Center for Domestic Preparedness in Anniston, AL.

» **The Fargo Fire Department will promote safety along with the health and wellness of employees by providing annual medical examinations for all uniformed employees.**

The FFD provided all sworn personnel with annual medical checks through Employee Health in 2022.

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 2022 and continue to work on improving health, wellness, and safety for the department.



# PLANNING GOAL 5

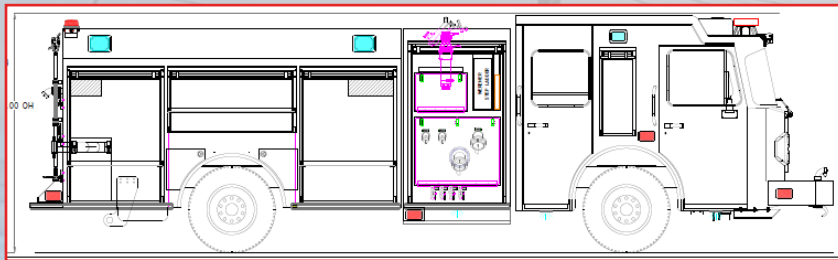


**Maintain an organization that effectively administers, plans and manages the physical resources of the department.**

- » 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.

Future Engine 808 and training at Station 4.







# PLANNING GOAL 6



**The 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.

2021 IFC adoption: The City of Fargo adopted the 2021 International Fire Code with local amendments. This adoption coincides with the 2021 International Building Code that is enforced by The City of Fargo Inspections department.

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







# PLANNING GOAL 6



The 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.

» 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 **6,500 adults and over 16,800 children.**



2022  
Firefighter  
Public  
Activities



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# 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 2022.

» Participate every year in **Fill-the-Boot**.

» Members donated their time and help raise

**\$22,849**

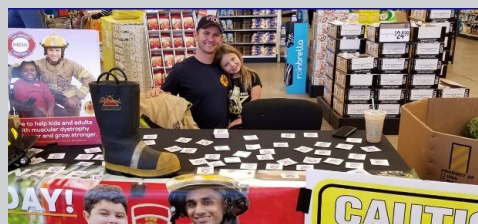
for the MDA to be put towards research and to help send kids to the MDA summer camp.

» Local 642 also donated

**\$1,500**

towards this cause.

» Members attended the **MDA Boot Camp** to learn more about fill-the-boot Members also attended the MDA 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 2022.



» Donated time to staff kettles and ring the bell for **Salvation Army** for a day helped raise

**\$12,048**



» The Fargo Fire Department bought and delivered gifts to children in local hospitals on Christmas Day 2022.



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# 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 2022.

» Donated money to **Hometown Heroes night** at a Fargo Force game. Money raised during this benefits regional emergency services departments.

» Donated

**\$1,000**

to **Lend a Hand** to support a Local 642 member.

» Donated money to sponsor teams in golf tournaments that supported Salvation Army and local volunteer fire departments.

» Sponsored teams and donated money to support various other events to support community members in need.

These events included a dodge ball tournament to benefit a local teacher who had a stroke, the local Polar Plunge, and a sled hockey tournament put on by Hope Inc.

» Participated in the **Christmas Gift Fashion Show** that benefits local families in need.





# 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 2022.

» Purchased and installed a grave stone for a former Local 642/FFD member with an unmarked grave.



» Purchased fire safety billboards to be placed throughout the community.



» Participated in various local events such as the Fargo-Moorhead St. Patrick's Day Parade and the 9/11 stair climb.







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**FARGOFIRE.COM**

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