

Billings City Administrator Weekly Report

February 27, 2021

1. Legislative Update –

- **HB578** passed Judiciary unanimously Wednesday morning.
- The latest list of bills we are tracking is attached.

2. Legislative Video Conference – Thursday, March 11th at Noon. MSUB, College of Business MacDonald Hall, Room 163. The 4th of 7 in a partnership between the City, Chamber and MSUB. Please RSVP through wynnette.

3. 21st Street Underpass – Information on the 21st Street Underpass was developed by HDR as part of MDT's statewide 2016 Rail Grade Separation Study and is attached. Staff has reached out to MRL to request record drawings for the 21st Street Underpass and when we receive it, we will update the cost estimate.

4. Rocky Vista University Medical School – Tuesday evening we met with leadership of the medical school. House Montana's only medical school will further anchor Billings as the medical hub for this region of the US. The next critical step for RVU is to receive their accreditations for the Billings site. This process is expected to play out through April and May of 2021.

5. Police Calls – Councilmember Ewalt asked at the February 22nd council meeting the amount of police calls for service at various housing units in Billings. The 2020 City of Billings Taxes and Assessments on these properties are also listed below.

Time Period 2/20/2020 to 2/20/2021

1225 Lake Elmo (Edgewood) – 163 CFS and 43 cases

1203 Lake Elmo (Brush Meadow) – 81 CFS and 22 cases

3900 Olympic (Shilo Glen) – 197 CFS and 69 cases

Address	Tax ID	City of Billings Taxes Paid	City of Billings Assessments	Total Tax and Assessments Paid to City of Billings in 2020
1225 Lake Elmo (Edgewood)	D05299A	\$ 8,077	\$ 6,302	\$ 14,379
1203 Lake Elmo (Brush Meadow)	D05299	\$ 7,943	\$ 7,541	\$ 15,484
3900 Olympic (Shilo Glen)	C10239	\$ 17,005	\$ 23,538	\$ 40,543

6. Annual Report – the Fire Department 2020 Annual Report is attached.

7. Landfill Drop-Off Facility -

W.O. 17-12, Landfill Drop-Off Facility includes the new construction of a drop-off building, maintenance building, and scale plaza. It will eliminate the need for customers to be at the active face of the landfill, minimize blowing litter, improve efficiency in operations, improve safety for employees and customers, and accommodate future material diversion opportunities.

The drop-off building is a fully enclosed, 60,000 sq ft building with large overhead doors, for commercial and residential customers to enter and unload garbage without having to access other areas of the landfill. Waste will be dumped onto the concrete “tipping” floor, then Solid Waste staff will push the waste through openings of the floor into large transfer trailers in the tunnel below. When filled, staff will haul the trailers to the active face for landfilling. There are also dedicated areas outside the building where recyclables, construction debris, branches, large bulky items, and household hazardous waste can be dropped off.

The maintenance building is approximately 10,000 sq ft with two large drive-through bays as well as a dedicated welding bay. It will provide a heated and larger space for staff to work on and repair equipment. It also has storage for equipment parts and fluids, locked tool storage, and locker rooms, a break room, and office space for Landfill staff.

The new scale plaza has been in operation since December, 2019. It accommodates both inbound and outbound scales, and is located so all customers will cross the scales prior to unloading any waste and will then cross again to be weighed prior to exiting the Landfill.

Design began in 2017. Construction started April 1, 2019, and was completed in under two years. Public Works staff, HDR Engineering, and Swank collectively worked together on value engineering prior to beginning construction that reduced overall costs by over \$700,000. Excluding a major change order related to drilled piers, change orders totaled less than 1% of the contract amount. The final amount paid to Swank will be approximately \$20.5 million, about \$300,000 LESS than the originally awarded contract amount.

Normal operations within the Landfill have not been impacted during construction. The new facility will be put into operation in March, 2021.



8. Building Division News – Please find attached the Building Division Bulletin for February 2021.

Have a good weekend.

5.2.5 21st Street, Billings, MRL MP 225.32, DOT# 087450N

5.2.5.1 EXISTING CONDITIONS OVERVIEW

The 21st Street underpass in Billings is located on the local roadway network between the 13th Street underpass and the 27th Street at-grade crossing. The 21st Street underpass was identified as a relief route for lower-height vehicles during construction for a 27th Street grade separation project, if programmed by MDT in the future. The MDT District Administrator identified improvements to 21st Street as an aid to local traffic movement regardless of a 27th Street grade separation project. It has a signed vertical clearance of 8 feet and actual vertical clearance at 8.5 feet with an existing roadway width of 24-feet face to face of curb. The AADT at the underpass is around 2,500 vehicles per day with approximately 1.5 percent of the traffic being low height commercial vehicles. The existing horizontal clearance is 1.54 feet. The structure is not listed in the MDT BMS. The current concrete supported on steel H-pile structure was constructed in 2002 replacing an earlier constructed timber bridge. The roadway undercrossing passes below four railroad tracks and is shown in Photo 5-5.

The structure has ADA-compliant pedestrian walkways on both the east side and west sides of the underpass. Montana Avenue, located approximately 100 feet north of the underpass, is a one-way street in the eastbound direction. The undercrossing is used by low-height vehicles and some emergency response units wanting to avoid traffic congestion at 27th Street, especially when passing trains block the at-grade crossing. The current undercrossing has gravity flow storm drainage tied to the City of Billings storm drains.

The 21st Street underpass is one of two grade separations within the downtown area (13th Street being the second) and has been identified in the 2014 LRTP as a high priority project to reconstruct the underpass to enhance clearance and capacity.

5.2.5.2 POTENTIAL IMPROVEMENTS TO CROSSING

Based on observations, several recommendations were identified and potential improvements to increase the vertical clearance under the 21st Street underpass are described and illustrated in Figure 5-3. Improvements include lowering the roadway to increase the vertical clearance of the underpass to enhance capacity. The pile supports for the concrete caps would need to be checked for the increased vertical opening. Discussions with the railroad would need to occur for approval of the retaining wall systems and concrete bent protection for the lowered roadway. The potential lowering of the 21st Street/Minnesota Avenue intersection may impact surrounding businesses; however, their accesses could be modified to accommodate improvements at this existing underpass.



Photo 5-5. 21st Street underpass, north side of Montana Avenue, looking south

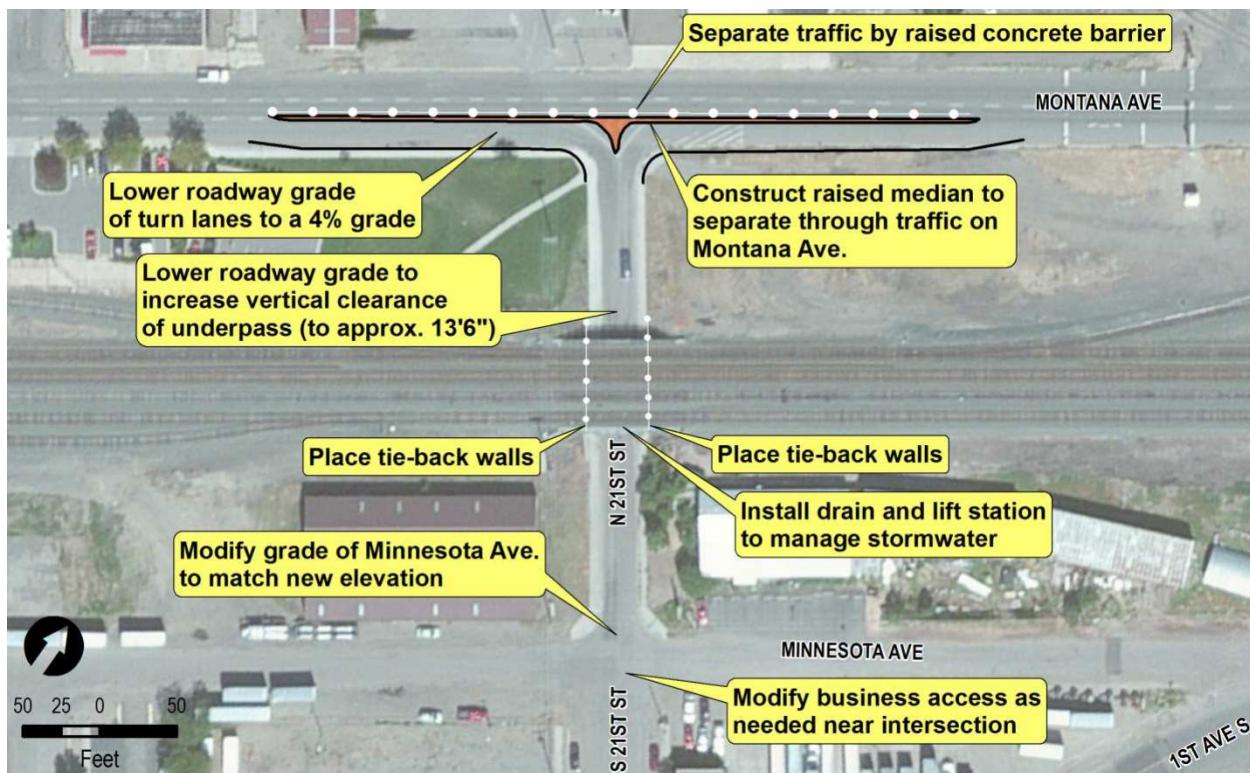


Figure 5-3. Potential Improvements to 21st Street Underpass

The limits of 21st Street within the work area would likely need to be closed during construction to lower the roadway and Montana Avenue could require full or partial lane closures when constructing the retaining wall and lowering the southerly portion of road as shown above. A pump system would likely be needed for storm drainage as the lowered elevation would be below the elevation required for a gravity flow system to connect to the existing storm drain systems. The lowered roadway would still be above the existing groundwater table in the area.

A rough conceptual order of magnitude opinion of probable project cost is approximately \$1.5 to \$3.0 million for these improvements. The drainage pumping system and potential overflow storage, fiber optic line lowering and potential business impacts south of the underpass have an impact on the opinion of probable project cost. While not providing for full truck passage as recommended in the LRTP, the increased clearance enhances capacity allowing for use of the undercrossing by all emergency equipment and increases usability for most vehicles.

Reconstructing the underpass to provide for a minimum of 14 feet of clearance could potentially further impact groundwater at the site and result in greater impact on Montana Avenue and Minnesota Avenue. Further studies and design, as well as coordination with the railroad, would be necessary to refine improvement options and estimated project costs as well as determine the feasibility of accommodating large trucks. If a grade separation project is programmed by MDT for 27th Street, further studies could determine the actual need of 21st Street as a detour route for some of the traffic from 27th Street during construction.



ANNUAL REPORT

2020



FIRE

EMS

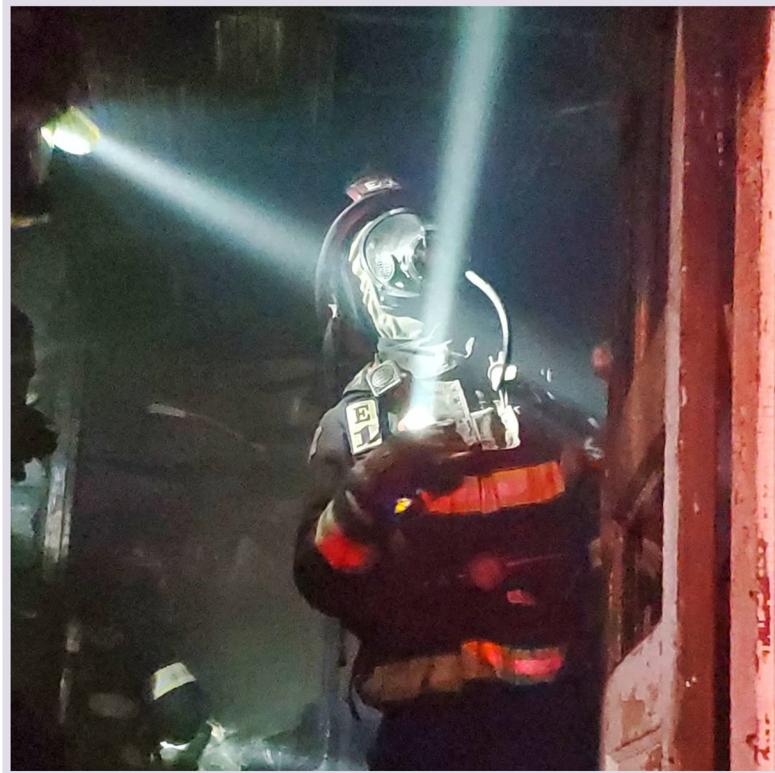
RESCUE

9-1-1



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Billings
FIRE
DEPARTMENT

2020 ANNUAL REPORT



On behalf of the men and women of Billings Fire / City-County 911 Center, I am pleased and honored to present the 2020 Annual Report.

2020 proved to be an extremely challenging year. At the year's beginning, the BFD focused efforts to educate the City Council and citizens about the need for additional Fire / Rescue resources for our community. An independent study revealed that the BFD remains two fire stations and several firefighters below the national average, equating to slower response and service delivery times to our citizens.

The BFD experienced a continued increase of nearly 8% in Calls for Service, increasing from 17,000 in 2019 to over 18,000 in 2020. The increased severity and need for resources to mitigate these calls were unprecedented, but internal leadership remarkably took the initiative and handled the advanced volume.

With both the Fire and Police Chiefs' assistance, the City Administrator presented a \$12 million Public Safety Mill Levy to our taxpayers to maintain our current service levels. We are very thankful that our community saw this need, voted on, and passed this levy on September 14, 2020.

The year's most significant challenge was COVID-19 and its detrimental effects on Fire / 911's services and staff. The 911 Center experienced significant challenges in maintaining staffing due to the virus, and Fire adapted to new procedures for patient care. Strong teams of personnel worked very hard to set up a system to manage this pandemic, allowing us to keep the department's services operating at exceptional levels.

Once again, our community should be incredibly proud and thankful for Billings Fire / 911 staff who consistently perform with flexibility, ingenuity, professionalism, compassion, skill, and the strong desire to deliver exemplary Emergency Services to our community.



Respectfully,

William Rash
Fire Chief



2020 ANNUAL REPORT

WE ARE... The City of Billings organized the first Billings Fire Department in 1883. Billings Fire has 161 personnel, including firefighters, paramedics, EMTs, dispatchers, administrative staff, and fire prevention staff.

WE PROUDLY SERVE... All residents, businesses, and organizations within our response area including the Billings Urban Fire Service Area (BUFSA).

- **18,284** total calls for service
- **46.9%** are EMS/Rescue related calls
- **53.1%** are Fire/Service/Other related calls



BFD and 9-1-1 Employees
161



Billings Population
110,000 people
12,000 in our BUFSA



BFD Service Area ISO Rating
3/10



Apparatus and Support Vehicles
37



Billings Size
43.75 sq miles
47.73 sq miles (BUFSA)



DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

Administration—Department oversight by the Fire Chief, two Asst. Chiefs, and two administrative support staff.

Operations / EMTs—110 line personnel of firefighters, EMTs, and paramedics, responding to diverse fire, rescue, and medical emergencies.

Fire Prevention Bureau—Fire Marshal, Asst. Fire Marshal, three Deputy Fire Marshals, a temporary assignment from suppression, and administrative support staff are committed to education, fire and life safety code enforcement, fire investigations, and community risk reduction programs.

Maintenance—The City of Billings Fleet Maintenance Department conduct all maintenance for Fire Department vehicles.

Training—A Training Chief and an Asst. Training Chief/EMS Coordinator with a temporary assignment from suppression ensures personnel at all levels have the knowledge, skills, and abilities to respond to emergency calls.

Mission Statement

The Billings Fire Department is dedicated to utilizing the latest education, methods, and technology in providing outstanding fire, rescue, and EMS services to our valued citizens and those who visit our community.

Vision Statement

The Billings Fire Department aspires to be the finest provider of fire, rescue, and EMS services within the state and region through calculated planning, training, and implementation of service delivery needs.

Motto

“Our Family Serving Your Family”

2020 ANNUAL REPORT



2020

Billings Fire Department

William Rash Fire Chief

Pepper Valdez
Senior Assistant Chief
Administration

Matt Hoppel
Assistant chief
Operations

K. Johnson Battalion Chief Battalion C
E. Regele Battalion Chief Battalion B
D. Mitchell Battalion Chief Battalion A
J. Lyon Swing Battalion Chief
J. Jiggins 1st Chief 1/Safety

Captains	Captains	Captains
Solheim Thurrahien McEvenson Kinhead Bushfield	Cottrell Krieger Little Flaury Tipton	Sohlheim Thurrahien McEvenson Kinhead Bushfield
Townsend Lohof Harper Koffler Allard	Wagner Mamavek Nagel Trewella Robertus	Townsend Lohof Harper Koffler Allard

Engineers	Zimmerman Ellis Banfield Rickheit C. Moore	Abell O'Donnell Hedstrom Newman C. Moore	Schauer R. Moore Voller Zahn McCamley	Norby Sulser Noe Wilkins	McKinney Compton Janes Richards Ahrams	Roper Barbeau Bogunovich Weis J. Thompson
Engineers						

Riske	Firefighters	Firefighters	Firefighters
J Times Hauf Muhs	Ellis Laszloffy	K'Donnell Gates Overstreet H. Evenson	Stamp Ferguson Robinson Bueter Makin Cochack

Sheehan
Carlson
Clark
L. Johnson
Branger
Anderson
Peterson
Vincent
Schoenning
Moon

Holland
Ekblad
Heminger
K. Timnes
Strain
Skilling
A. O'Toole
Ehrlick
Fischer
Rivard
Stovall
Thompson, T

Landon
Smith
O'Brien
H. Johnson
Cassou
Hernandez
Benton



2020 ANNUAL REPORT



Public Safety Mill Levy

With both the Fire and Police Chiefs' assistance, the City Administrator presented a \$12 million Public Safety Mill Levy to our taxpayers to maintain our current service levels. We are very thankful that our community saw this need, voted on, and passed this levy on September 14, 2020.

Grants

In alliance with Billings Police and Yellowstone Sheriff, Yellowstone County Public Safety received \$13,135 in allocations from the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG). The JAG program allows public safety departments to use the money for needed equipment to enhance performance.

Billings Fire's Hazardous Materials Unit received a \$300,000 federal grant to implement a drone program. The unit will use unmanned aerial devices to survey HAZ-MAT emergencies from a distance, protecting firefighters from hazardous conditions.

Technology

Billings Public Safety received an upgrade to their *New World* records software, enhancing GIS and CAD interfaces. This helps dispatch, police, and fire responders identify addresses and properties more efficiently.

Target Solutions "Check It" program (purchased in 2019) was fully expanded in 2020 to implement all department equipment and supplies inventory. The software aids the department in monitoring service/wear-out dates and shortages of necessary medical supplies.

2020 Retirements

Ed Regele, Battalion Chief—35 years
Wayne Townsend, Captain—28 years
Diane Guy, Comm Center Mgr— 34 years
Kelly Klein, Admin Support II— 19 years



New Hires

Jay Bueter	March 9, 2020
Josiah Laszloffy	March 9, 2020
Keenan Makin	March 9, 2020
Chase Overstreet	March 9, 2020
Michael Ritter	March 9, 2020
Chase Robinson	March 9, 2020
Patrick Landry	July 15, 2020
Derek Yeager	November 30, 2020



Fire Promotions

Captain Allen McKinney
Engineer Justin Tinnes

Dispatch Promotions

Derek Yeager — Comm Center Manager
Priscilla Martinez—Asst Comm Mgr
Travis Hunt—Administrative Support II





Fiscal Year 2020 Budget

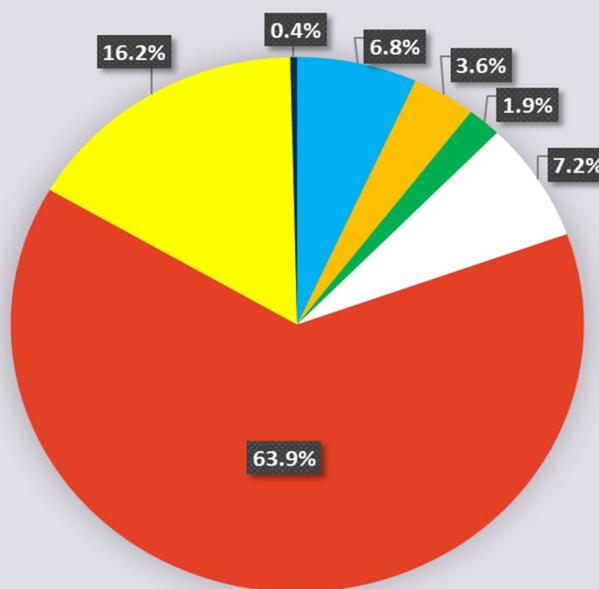
The administration's goal is to secure appropriate financial resources so that department personnel can provide the best public safety services to our community. Billings Fire's FY 2020 approved budget totaled \$20.9 million, representing an increased spending authority of 4.75% over FY 2019. Suppression costs, including wages, overtime, and fringe benefits, accounted for 64% of the expenditure of FY 2020. The remaining 36% contributes to fuel, equipment, maintenance, the Fire Prevention Bureau, training, and the 911 Call Center.

Approved FY 2020 Operating Budget

Administration	\$1,420,953
Prevention/Investigation	\$753,636
Training	\$403,391
Equip/Maintenance	\$1,514,580
Suppression	\$13,399,476
9-1-1 Center	\$3,399,483
Communication Equip	\$81,707
Fire's Total	\$20,973,126

Key Metrics

	161	Employees
	7	Stations
	110	Firefighters
	6	Administrators
	2	Training Officers
	37	9-1-1 Staff
	5	Investigators
	1	Comms Specialist



Administration	Prevention/Investigation	Training
Equip/Maintenance	Suppression	9-1-1 Center
Communication Equip		



2020 ANNUAL REPORT

The administrative office is considered the business side of the fire department. The Fire Chief, Assistant Chief of Administration, Chief of Operations, and two administrative support staff help maintain a budget overview, all internal and external correspondence, policy distribution, health and risk management, fleet management, facilities maintenance, and guidance for personnel matters. This division is also responsible for grants and procurement of new revenue resources and is directly accountable to the City Manager and Assistant City Manager.

2020 demonstrated to be a year of a pandemic precipitated by COVID-19. The virus caused the Billings Fire Department and departments all over our great nation to continuously develop and implement new policies following CDC guidelines. To stay ahead of the pandemic's challenges, the BFD created a COVID Task Force responsible for monitoring other departments within our region and current trending to afford our team the latest information to make sound decisions to keep us healthy and safe. The team was made up of individuals from diverse backgrounds and experts in various fields to provide a cohesive and ferociously determined group to keep us at the forefront of any new developments. The new, and mostly temporary policies, created operational changes in the EMS arena and all-but scrubbed our training calendar for a good portion of the year. Additionally, keeping a healthy workforce challenged the administration to remain fully operational with no decrease in our level of service to our employees and the community.

At the start of the pandemic, procurement of necessary equipment proved perplexing due to the scarcity of supplies and a short workforce, not only across the nation but globally. On the bright side, as the year came to a close, we began to realize that supplies were slowly becoming readily available. Also, if there was a silver lining to the pandemic, the Federal Government released funds to help local and state governments ease the financial burden stemming from COVID. The funds helped our City with costs associated with sick-leave, overtime, and, when available, necessary supplies. They even helped our department buy new software to make public education and fire prevention more efficient in our quest to keep our community safe. Unrelated to the pandemic, the department was happy to obtain approval to purchase two new Piece pumper trucks with estimated delivery of early fall of 2021. Another positive for the BFD was the deferred-maintenance fund provided long-overdue repairs to fire station six, a neglected project for many years. We are proud of the new look for such a deserving part of the City. We anticipate making some significant and similar repairs to one of our stations in midtown.

Overall, 2020 seemed like an eternity for the BFD with all of the uncertainty brought about by COVID. Still, the challenges were met head-on by unrelenting and determined individuals collectively known as the Billings Fire Department.



OFFICE OF PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS



The Office of Professional Standards (OPS) was created to accept and responsibly address citizen and member commendations and complaints. The OPS is under the direct supervision of the Assistant Fire Chief of Administration, who reports directly to the Fire Chief.

It is of the utmost importance that the Billings Fire Department maintains public trust and ensures the integrity of the department's membership. The Billings Fire Department and OPS work diligently to hold all members to a high standard of conduct and professionalism by providing a fair and consistent complaint process. It is also the responsibility of the Billings Fire Department and OPS to recognize members who have gone above and beyond the call of duty by processing public and departmental requests for commendations.

In addition to addressing all internal/external complaints and commendations, the OPS continues to review every incident where department property has been damaged. This process proves invaluable in identifying and addressing safety concerns through policy development and training.



2020 ANNUAL REPORT



The Billings Fire Department has experienced a 68.9% increase in call volume since 2010. The rise in population, land utilization, and events held in Billings account for the greater demand on the department's services.

RATE OF MULTIPLE CALLS IN 2020

CONCURRENT INCIDENTS	PERCENTAGE
Single Incident	37.84 %
2	34.07 %
3	17.50 %
4	6.87 %
5 or more	3.69 %

This page's graphs indicate Billings Fire Department's 2020 trends in total call volume, calls per fire station, and the percentage of calls per hour of the day. The "Rate of Multiple Calls" chart states that over 60% of calls occur with two or more at one time, illustrating the hard work of the men and women of the Fire Department.

INCIDENT RESPONSE DATA



18,284 Total Calls for Service



8,575 EMS/Rescue

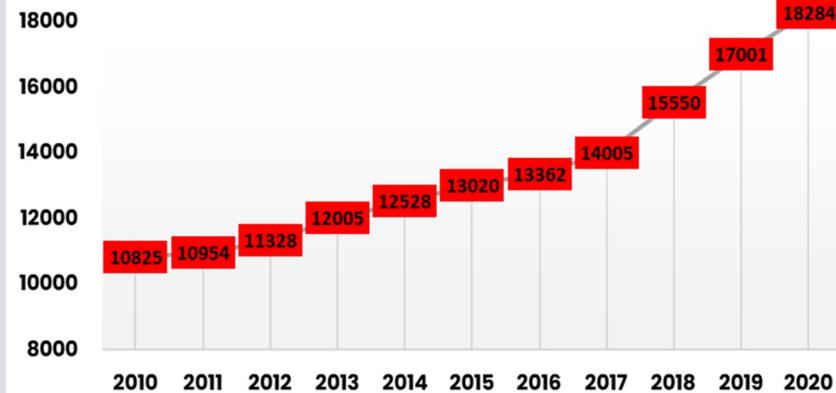


446 Fires



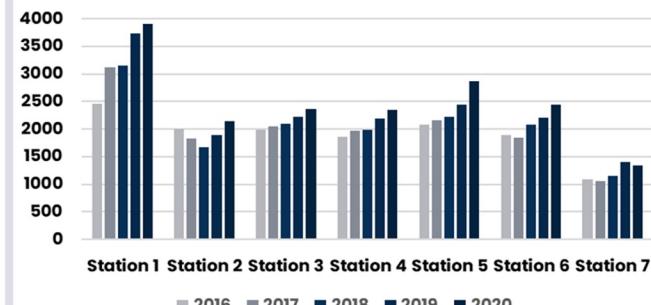
9,263 All "Other" Service

BFD Call Volume

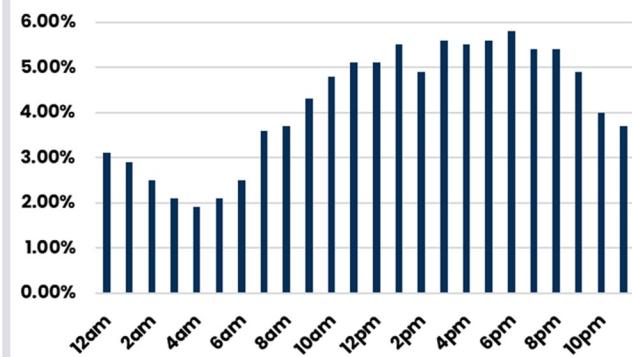


Billings Fire documents each call for service in an incident report held at the National Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) standards. Through NFIRS, fire departments can assess local, state, and national level trends of fire service and resource use. Calls for service include fire, emergency medical, rescues, and good intent calls for the public. The Fire Prevention Bureau contributes to fire investigations, public education, smoke alarm installations, and business inspections.

Call Volume by Station



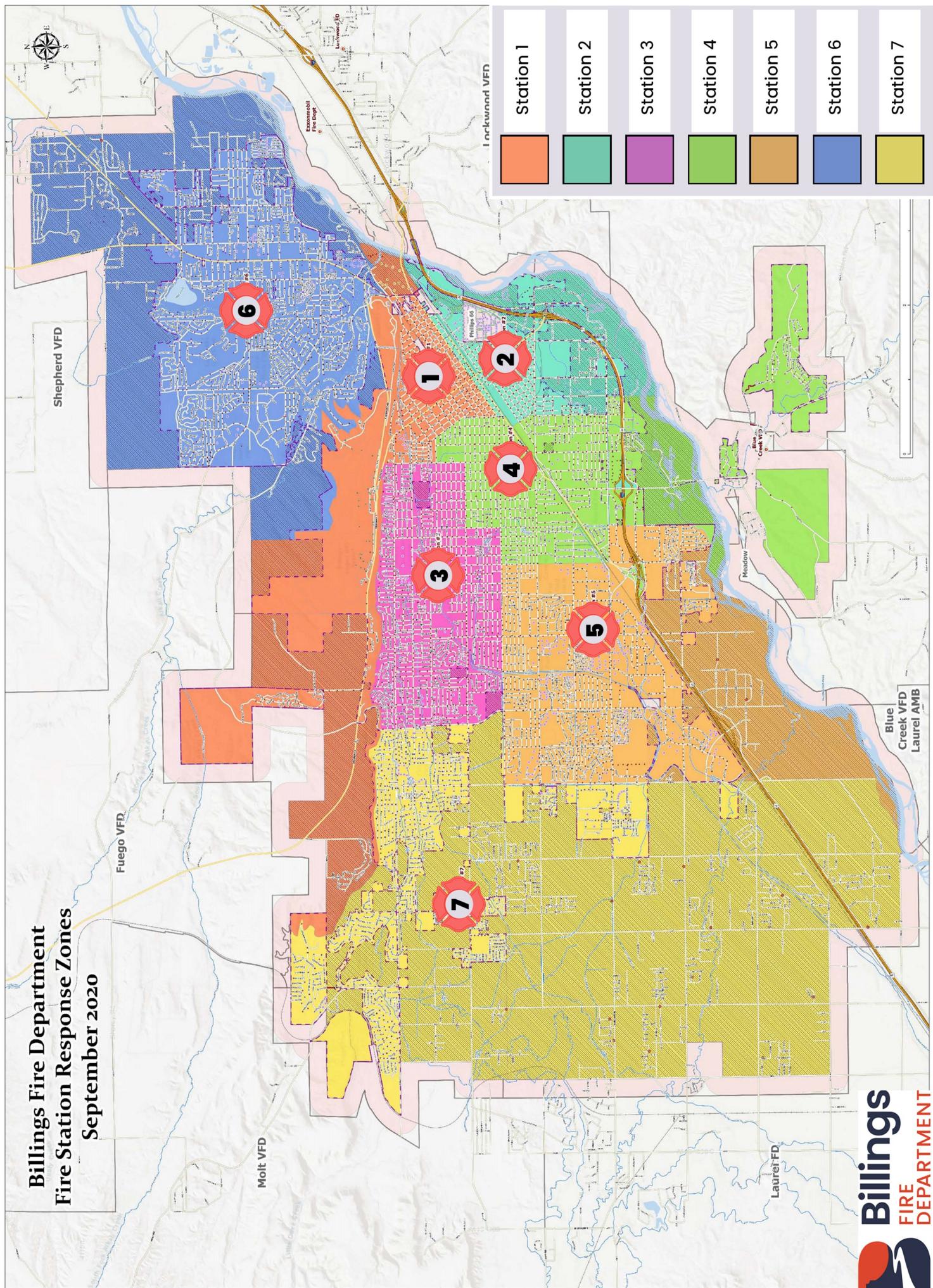
2020 BFD Service Demand by Time of Day



Billings Fire Department

Fire Station Response Zones

September 2020





2020 ANNUAL REPORT

Billings Fire Emergency Responses

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) regularly updates the publication *Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Career Fire Departments*, known as NFPA 1710. This national data model helps develop fire departments' planning, execution, and evaluation of fire/EMS services and response times.



Response times are developed by evaluating the initial time a call is received by 9-1-1 to the first and last arriving units at an incident. Firefighters' turn-out time and travel time equal response times, known as dispatch to arrival. The National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) classifies emergency incidents as fire, EMS, rescues, hazardous material, and severe weather or natural disasters. NFPA 1710 states that responses must meet a standard goal, 90% of the time in fire, EMS, and total emergency responses. While the overall performance is essential to department evaluation, these standards do not reflect the entirety of emergent and non-emergent responses combined.

Using an average time is one of the most accepted "normalized" standards in response time analysis. An average of such an extensive data set will contain skewed numbers with many outliers, inaccurately reflecting performance. Using a percentile measurement will demonstrate that most of the data set has met a particular performance level compared to the national standard. Of the 17,397 response calls, we deleted 3,295 as responses must possess an emergency identification and an arrival time for evaluation.



NFPA 1710 STANDARDS



BFD Overall Emergency Response Performance, 2020 (Fires, EMS, Rescues, HAZ-MAT, Severe Weather/Natural Disasters)				
	Call Processing	Turnout Time	Travel Time	Total Response Time
Average	01:35	01:46	05:25	06:22
90th Percentile	02:08	02:51	08:14	10:13

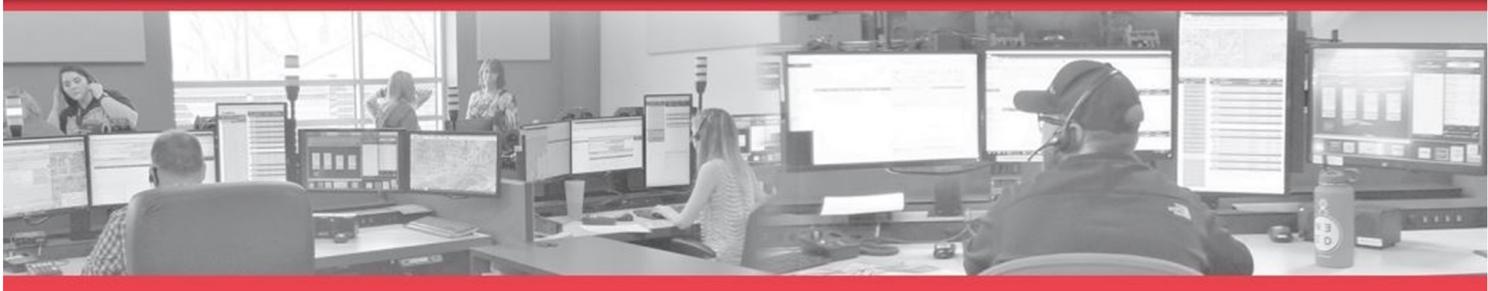
Response Element	NFPA Recommendation	BFD Response Times
Call Processing (First Unit)	60 Seconds @ 90th Percentile for EMS 80 Seconds @ 90th Percentile for Fire	02:08 02:05
Turnout Time (First Unit)	60 Seconds @ 90th Percentile for EMS 80 Seconds @ 90th Percentile for Fire	02:46 02:35
Travel Time (First Unit)	4 minutes @ 90th Percentile for Fire	07:04
Travel Time-Full First Alarm (Fire Suppression Incident)	8 minutes @ 90th Percentile (All 5 apparatus total response time)	17:15

NFPA 1710, *Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Career Fire Departments* (National Fire Protection Association 2020)

2020 ANNUAL REPORT

The Billings City / County Communications Center

Message from Communications Center Manager Derek Yeager



The Billings City / County Communications Center provides the critical link between the community and a vast array of local, county, state, and federal public safety resources.



2020 presented unique sets of challenges for the 911 Center. Complications due to COVID-19 included extreme staffing shortages resultant of sick leave and retirements, as well as a critical lack of qualified applicants. To minimize staffing obligations and bring forward the necessary service level to meet the community's needs, employees worked an unprecedented amount of overtime, requiring shift and position coverage. Much appreciation to the staff, having worked 60+ hour weeks for months on end while demonstrating professionalism and dedication to the City of Billings and Yellowstone County citizens.

The Billings City/County Communications Center serves as Yellowstone County's heartbeat, assisting an estimated 160,000 citizens, excluding Laurel. The Center handled more than 300,000 emergency and non-emergency calls, occurring roughly every 90-100 seconds. These calls resulted in the Center deploying 302,000 public safety resources 170,000 times from over 26 different fire, ems, and law enforcement organizations within Yellowstone County.

The Communications Center Manager and Assistant Manager provide operational support for the supervisory staff, oversee the citywide 800 MHz radio system, and are liaisons with City, County, State, and Federal public safety agencies. A key focus for the Center is training and continuing education in emergency services. Staff annually complete CEUs to maintain certifications in Emergency Medical Dispatch, Criminal Justice Information Networks, Security Awareness Training, and monthly Cyber Security training. Maintaining standards in the multidisciplinary emergency communications world plays a vital role in quality assurance to dispatch services for the Billings Police Department, Yellowstone County Sheriff's Office, Billings Fire Department, County Rural Fire, and EMS agencies.

2020 finished with the retirement of long-time employee and Center Manager Diane Guy, having served the City of Billings for over 30 years, beginning as a phone operator. Her tenure brought the instrumental implementation of new technology, protocol development, and preparation for the Center to enter the second decade of the 21st century. Derek Yeager joined the team as Center Manager in December and became the first external candidate hired into the position. Derek comes to the Center with a background as a Montana Fire Management Officer with over 20 years of professional wildland firefighting at state and federal levels across the country.

2021 brings the promise of progressive leadership moving the Center to an appropriately expanding mission interface to include upgrades in technology and the Center's preparation to meet an expanding community's needs.

CITY/COUNTY 9-1-1



2020 ANNUAL REPORT

Aside from fighting fires, the Operations Division includes specialized teams to handle all other emergencies. The geographical locations of Billings challenge these men and women each day. Operations also supported public education in 2020 with engine drive-by visits, making a positive presence in the community while following social distancing guidelines.

Fire

Each of the 7 fire stations staff a minimum of 3 firefighters, trained to perform fire, EMS, and rescue services. In 2020, Billings and its surrounding areas experienced a 58% increase in fire related incidents from 2019.



426 Total Fires



119 Structure Fires



66 Vehicle



241 Trash/Grass Fires



32% Confined to Object of Origin



Rescue and Extrication Team

33 firefighters possess specialized skills necessary for safe and effective rescues. Technical rescues include high/low angle, water/ice, confined space, and trench incidents.

BFD Vehicles

6 Engines + 3 Reserve
1 Ladder Truck + 1 Reserve
1 Quint (Ladder/Engine Combo)
2 Water Tenders
4 Wildland Trucks
2 Water Rescue Crafts
1 Rescue Truck
1 Haz-Mat Regional Response Unit
1 Collapse/Trench Response Unit
1 Mobile Air Unit and Trailer
1 Fire Investigation Unit
2 Battalion Chief Response Units
12 Bureau and Staff Vehicles



75 Rescue Calls



37 Extrications



10 Water Rescues



7 High-Angle Rescues

Hazardous Materials Team

30 firefighters are hazardous material technicians, possessing the skills to handle all spills, leaks, and hazardous material dangers in the surrounding Billings areas. Haz-Mat members also assist Montana agencies in regional emergencies.



322 HazMat Calls



26 Chemical Spills



118 Utility/CO Calls



87 Gas Leaks





Becoming Exceptional Firefighters

2020 Training Highlights

The BFD continues to heighten its water rescue capabilities. One training focus included educating more members on the Rescue Water Craft's operation, with several training sessions on the Yellowstone River during summer hours.



In January 2020, the BFD's Peer Support Program introduced a new design called "Peer-to-Peer Mentors," peers educating department peers on the benefits of mental health wellness and which resources are available to members and their families.

The department updated its "Incident Command" Standard Operating Guideline (SOG), then provided over six weeks of classroom training and several months of practical skills scenarios for all emergency responders.



After a twelve-week academy, the department welcomed six new firefighters. The academy consists of taking each recruit through high-stress environments and its rigors, teaching the technical skills to be effective firefighters.

Billings Fire Training Division

The Training Division consists of two full-time employees, the Training Chief (TC), the Asst Training Chief/Emergency Medical Services Coordinator (ATC/EMS), and one temporary assignment from suppression filling the Logistics Officer position. The TC oversees the ATC/EMS and Logistics Officer, working together to accomplish training goals and fire department logistics management.

The Training Division halted most training for 2020, as a significant amount of exercises and drills could not adhere to proper social distancing guidelines. Billings Fire completed collectively **25,196 hours** of training, a 10% decrease from 2019. Goals for 2021 include increasing exercise and drill opportunities to improve the proficiency of the department's members.





2020 ANNUAL REPORT

Billings Fire EMS Update

Billings Fire's Emergency Medical Services offer a

large range of professional care, from Basic to

Advanced Life Support. As medicine perceptually

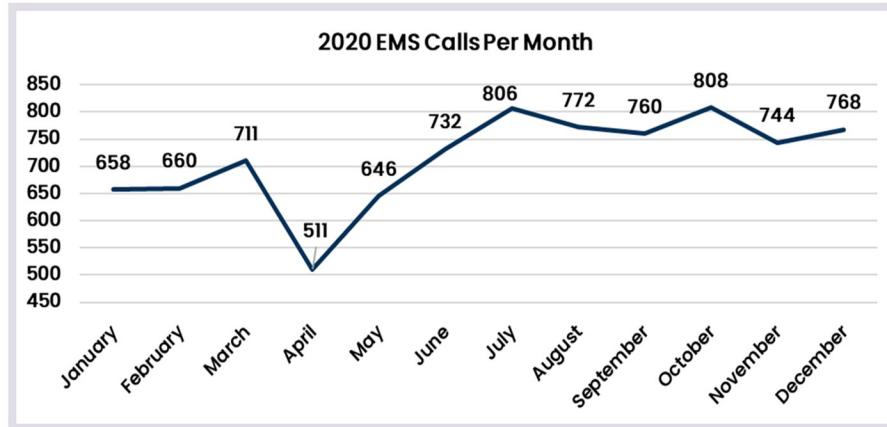
evolves, the men and women stay up-to-date with the latest

trends in patient care. Billings Fire responded to **8,575** total

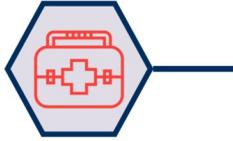
EMS calls, a 2.9% increase from 2019, despite the fewer EMS

Calls in April due to the "Shelter in Place" COVID-19 response

in Montana and Yellowstone County.

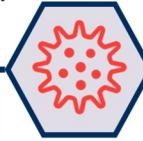


≈ 23.5 EMS calls per day



8,575 Total EMS Calls

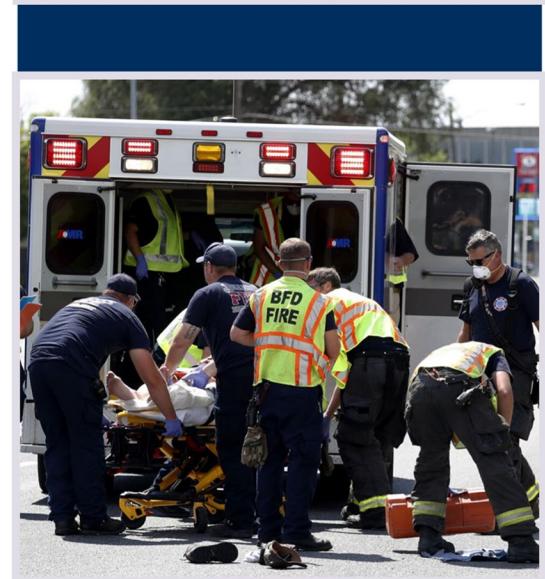
414 COVID-19 Suspected Calls



1,240 Interventions Performed



432 Medications Administered



BFD Certifications and Licenses

125 Nationally Registered, Emergency
Medical Technicians and Paramedics

24 Yellowstone County Accredited
Paramedics

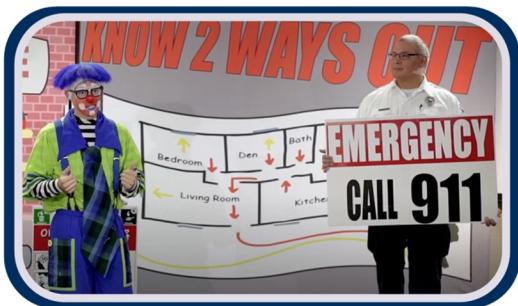
Most Common Injuries/Illness

Falls	14.82%
Breathing Problems	9.28%
Sick Person	9.01%
Seizure	7.63%
Motor Vehicle Accident	7.54%
Other	51.72%



FIRE PREVENTION BUREAU

The Fire Prevention Bureau's mission is to prevent and control fires, reduce fire-related deaths and injuries, and promote community fire safety through enforcement, education, and investigation.



FIRE ORIGIN AND CAUSE INVESTIGATION

Part of preventing fires is determining where and how they started by applying scientific methodology. Though not all fires require FPB involvement, incidents where FPB investigations were needed are on the rise. There was a 64% increase in fire investigations from 2019 to 2020.

BUSINESS INSPECTIONS

The FPB enforces locally adopted fire codes inside the Billings city limits through inspections of buildings and businesses, including educational, institutional, assembly, and business occupancies.

PRE-APPLICATION MEETINGS

Prior to breaking ground, a developer will need to meet with the FPB to ensure they're doing so under certain parameters, i.e., fire department access and a water supply that will aid in protecting homes and businesses.

PLANS REVIEWED

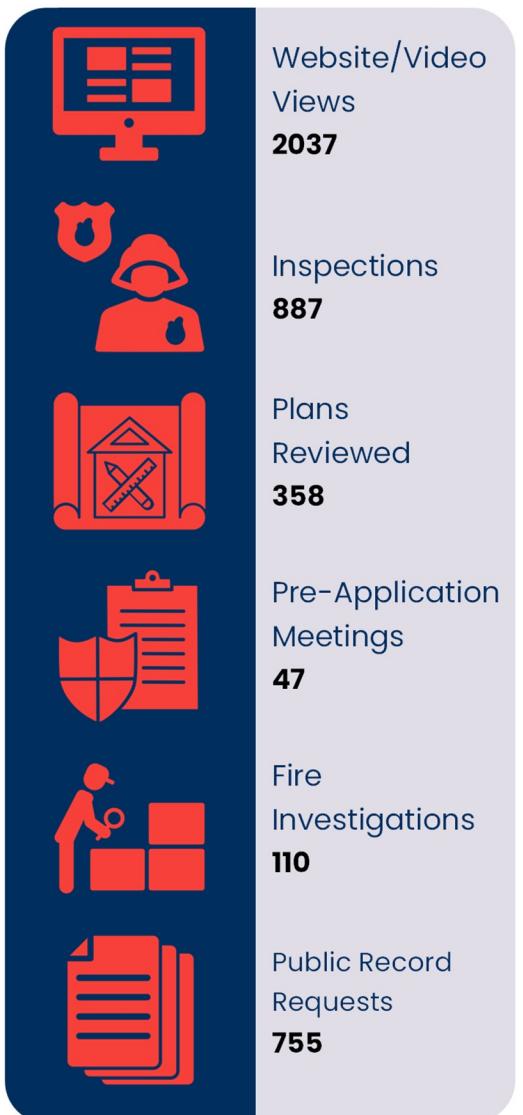
The FPB conducts compliance reviews on plans for new and remodeled buildings and fire protection systems.

PUBLIC SAFETY WEBSITE/VIDEOS

Fire safety and education is particularly important for high-risk groups like children and seniors. Due to 2020's pandemic, the FPB had to move away from in-person presentations, and instead implement year-round online features such as fire safety videos and interactive games.

PUBLIC RECORDS REQUESTS

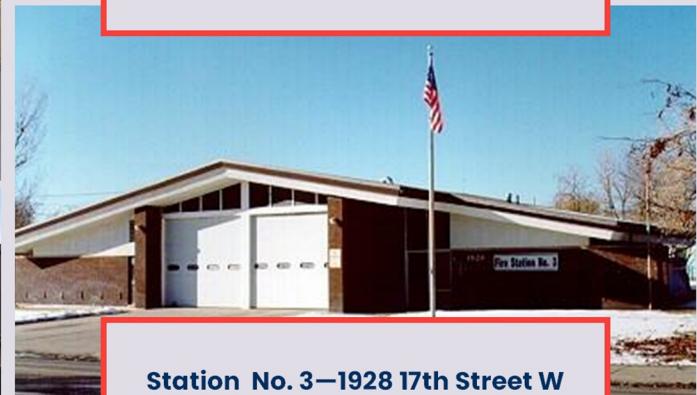
Requests for copies of reports and audio associated with incidents are fielded by the FPB's administrative assistant.





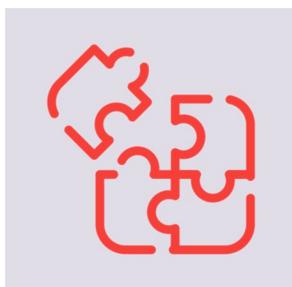
2020 ANNUAL REPORT

BFD FACILITIES





BFD Strategic Goals



Growth

Continue to advocate for much needed Fire Station #8 (Heights) and Fire Station #9 (West End) along with necessary staffing and equipment.

Achieve having one paramedic on each engine and truck company 24/7.

Begin the cooperative process for a new Emergency Operations Center.



Standards

Continue to evaluate EMS service delivery to ensure best practices are being utilized.

Complete and maintain Policies and Procedures.

Maintain positive partnership between Labor and Management.

Continually reevaluate operational effectiveness of BFD resource deployment.



Development

Enhanced integration between Fire and 9-1-1.

More emphasis on programs for firefighter and 9-1-1 dispatch mental health.

Provide more opportunities for professional development and succession planning.





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(406) 657-8423

www.billingsmt.gov/fire

ANNUAL REPORT

2020



BUILDING DIVISION BULLETIN – FEBRUARY 2021

Note From the Building Official

2825 3rd Ave. N.
Billings, MT. 59101
P 406.657.8271

Jessica Iverson
Building Official

I am excited to be back at the Building Division and appreciate the opportunity to lead this fantastic team of professionals. 2020 was a weird year in many ways, but as we know, construction in Billings continued strong through the pandemic. The Building Division adapted as best it could during these difficult times. We are excited for the changes 2021 brings with new division staff and a new electronic plan review program that we hope will lead to a better service experience for our customers.

We continue to strive to uphold our mission to ensure the safety, security, and health of Billings' citizens and visitors through building code enforcement, while being a partner to the community and building industry.

Jessica Iverson, CBO
Building Official and Facilities Manager

Electronic Plan Review

City of Billings Building Division will start on-line electronic plan review on **March 1st, 2021**. Projects requiring plan review must be submitted through our online portal and we will no longer accept paper plans.

This new system will cut down significantly on paper waste, increase efficiencies in plan review, and customers will be able to submit electronic plans at any time from any location.

Please see the attached e-plan review FAQ and visit our website for more information: www.billingsmt.gov/Building

New Employees

We have had many changes to the Building Division staff over the last year with retirements, new hires, and promotions. In 2020, we had seven staff members retire or leave to pursue new opportunities, so we had many positions to fill.



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Jessica Iverson
Building Official

Jessica Iverson rejoined the Building Division in September to take on Building Official and Division Management duties with Brian Anderson's retirement. Leigh Mackie joined the team last year as our office administrator.

Former Plans Examiner, Travis Fenton, was promoted to Deputy Building Official at the start of this year and Ben Lich joined the team in January as a Plans Examiner.

Becky Klein was promoted to Senior Permit Tech last year and Gabe Baracker joined the team as our new Permit Technician.

On the inspection side, we have added two combination inspectors: Bonnie Johnson and Mark Cole, along with Russ Pitsch, our new Plumbing Inspector.

We are currently advertising for a Plans Examiner position, which is now our only vacant position. We are looking forward to being fully staffed in the near future.

Email Inspection Requests

You can now send your inspection requests directly to our inspectors at inspections@billingsmt.gov. Please include type of inspection, address of inspection, your name, your phone number, date of inspection, and any other relevant information that will help our inspectors.

Required Inspections

The following inspections will now be required for all applicable projects before continuing to the next phase of construction:

- Foundation metal pier/pile electrical grounding req'd. NEC 250.52(A)(2).
- Pier inspections and reports, compaction reports, observations, and all associated soils reports that apply, must be completed and received by the Building Division prior to footing inspections.
- Floor framing, or engineered foundation wall bracing, shall be installed and inspected PRIOR to placing backfill against foundation walls over 4 feet tall. IRC 404.1.7.
- Floor frame inspections shall be required BEFORE floor sheathing is installed. This includes crawlspaces.
- Blower-door testing on applicable projects by an approved 3rd party.
- Energy commissioning reports on applicable projects.
- Mid-Roof inspections are required AFTER the roof is "dried in" and BEFORE shingles are installed on ALL new construction and re-roofs.



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Jessica Iverson
Building Official

E-Plan Review FAQ

Q: What is E-Plan Review?

A: E-Plan Review is an electronic software program for reviewing digital plans. Instead of submitting multiple copies of paper plans, the plans examiners will review the plans digitally.

Q: What are the advantages of E-Plan Review?

A: There are many advantages to E-Plan Review:

- It allows customers to submit plans from the comfort of their home or office at any time instead of visiting the Building Division office.
- It cuts down on paper waste by only requiring one set of plans be printed after approved instead of multiple sets for submission.
- All reviewers across the city review the same set of plans concurrently.
- Correction lists are e-mailed to the applicant.
- Resubmittals are easily done online instead of bringing in new sets of plans.
- Applicants can pay online.

Q: Do I have to use the new system?

A: Yes – for any projects that require plan review, you must submit electronic plans. If you are unable to do so for some reason, please call our office and we will work with you on a solution. Small projects drawn on 11 x 17 paper or smaller can be scanned in at our office.

Q: What if my project doesn't require plan review?

A: You can still come in and get permits at our counter. Additionally, permits that don't require plan review may be issued over the phone, please call our office to confirm with a permit tech. Some non-plan review permits can also be submitted by email at permits@billingsmt.gov.

Q: What fees are due and how do I pay them?

A: For Residential projects, no fees are due at initial submission. Your plans will be reviewed and accepted for review or rejected with comments. After plans are approved and the permit is ready to be issued, the applicant will receive an email with information about how to pay their fees and download their approved set



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Jessica Iverson
Building Official

of plans. The applicant must have one full-size set of plans printed and present on the jobsite prior to their first inspection.

For Commercial projects, your submitted plans will be reviewed and accepted for review or rejected with comments. After plans are accepted for review, the applicant will receive an e-mail with payment instructions to pay the plan review fee. Once the plan review fee is paid, the project will enter the plan review queue. When the plans are approved and the permit is ready to be issued, the applicant will receive an email with information about how to pay their fees. Once those fees are paid, they are able to download their approved set of plans. The applicant must have one full-size set of plans and supporting documents printed and present on the jobsite prior to their first inspection.

Q: Will this new system speed up the plan review process?

A: The timeframe on plan reviews is still dependent on number and complexity of submittals at a given time, along with staffing levels. The new program on its own will likely not lead to quicker plan review timeframes, but it also should not lead to longer review times.