

# ANNUAL REPORT

2022



**FIRE**

**EMS**

**RESCUE**

**9-1-1**



# 2022 ANNUAL REPORT

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

MESSAGE FROM THE FIRE CHIEF	01
FIRE DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW	02
ORGANIZATIONAL CHART	03
ADMINISTRATION	04
FINANCE & BUDGETING	05
NFPA 1710 STANDARDS	06
BFD RESPONSE AREAS	07
INCIDENT RESPONSES	08
OPERATIONS	09
EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES	10
SUPPRESSION	11
RESCUES	12
HAZARDOUS MATERIALS	13
AIR TEAM	14
TRAINING	15
FIRE PREVENTION BUREAU	16
CITY / COUNTY 9-1-1 CENTER	17
INITIATIVES AND ACHIEVEMENTS	18
2022 FORECASTING	19
FACILITIES	20



**Billings**  
**FIRE**  
**DEPARTMENT**

# 2022 ANNUAL REPORT



2022 established another challenging year for the men and women of the Billings Fire Department. With the help of our community and the two previous mill levies, our department experienced the necessary growth to keep up with the demands of the Magic City. We implemented several programs to control the number of calls for service on our fire engines, such as priority dispatching and mobile response teams.

We purchased a decommissioned fire station that belonged to the city 35 years ago at a fraction of the cost of buying property and then building a new one. With good luck, this property fell back into our hands and is in a strategic location that will assist the Heights community by August 2023. Adding another station in the Heights will aid with the forecasted incident increase when the Inner Belt loop and bypass become operational.

With a focus on providing exceptional public safety services to our community, planning continues for a crisis response unit and how we dispatch fire, EMS, and law enforcement. There is no question that our city is growing, and the complexity in calls for service continues to increase. In 2023, our priorities will shift to cooperating with local agencies to address drug addiction, mental health issues, and homelessness in the community.

On behalf of the men and women of the BFD and the 911 Communications Center, I am pleased and privileged to present the 2022 Annual Report. Thank you for being so supportive, and as always, stay safe.

Respectfully,

Pepper Valdez  
*Fire Chief*

MESSAGE FROM THE FIRE CHIEF





# 2022 ANNUAL REPORT

**We ARE...** The City of Billings organized the first Billings Fire Department in 1883. Billings Fire has 175 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).

## MISSION STATEMENT

The Billings Fire Department is dedicated to utilizing the latest education, methods, and technology in providing outstanding emergency services.

## VISION STATEMENT

The Billings Fire Department aspires to be the finest provider of emergency services.



## DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

**ADMINISTRATION** — Department oversight by the Fire Chief, Asst. Chiefs, Senior Admin Coordinator, and Administrative Support staff.

**OPERATIONS & EMS** — Firefighters, EMTs, and paramedics, responding to diverse fire, rescue, hazardous materials, and medical emergencies.

**FIRE PREVENTION BUREAU** — Fire Marshal, Asst. Fire Marshal, Deputy Fire Marshals, 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** — Training Chief & Assistant Training Chiefs ensure personnel at all levels have the knowledge, skills, and abilities to respond to emergency calls.

**9-1-1 COMMUNICATIONS CENTER** — Dispatchers, Shift Supervisors, Asst. Manager, and Manager of the 911 center field calls from the public to dispatch safety agencies of Yellowstone County.

## DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW



**Total Calls for Service**  
19,212



**EMS/Rescues**  
50.35%



**Fires/Service/Other**  
49.65%



**BFD and 9-1-1 Employees**  
175



**Apparatus & Vehicles**  
40



**Billings Population**  
119,000 people  
10,000 in our BUFSA



**Service Area ISO Rating**  
3/10

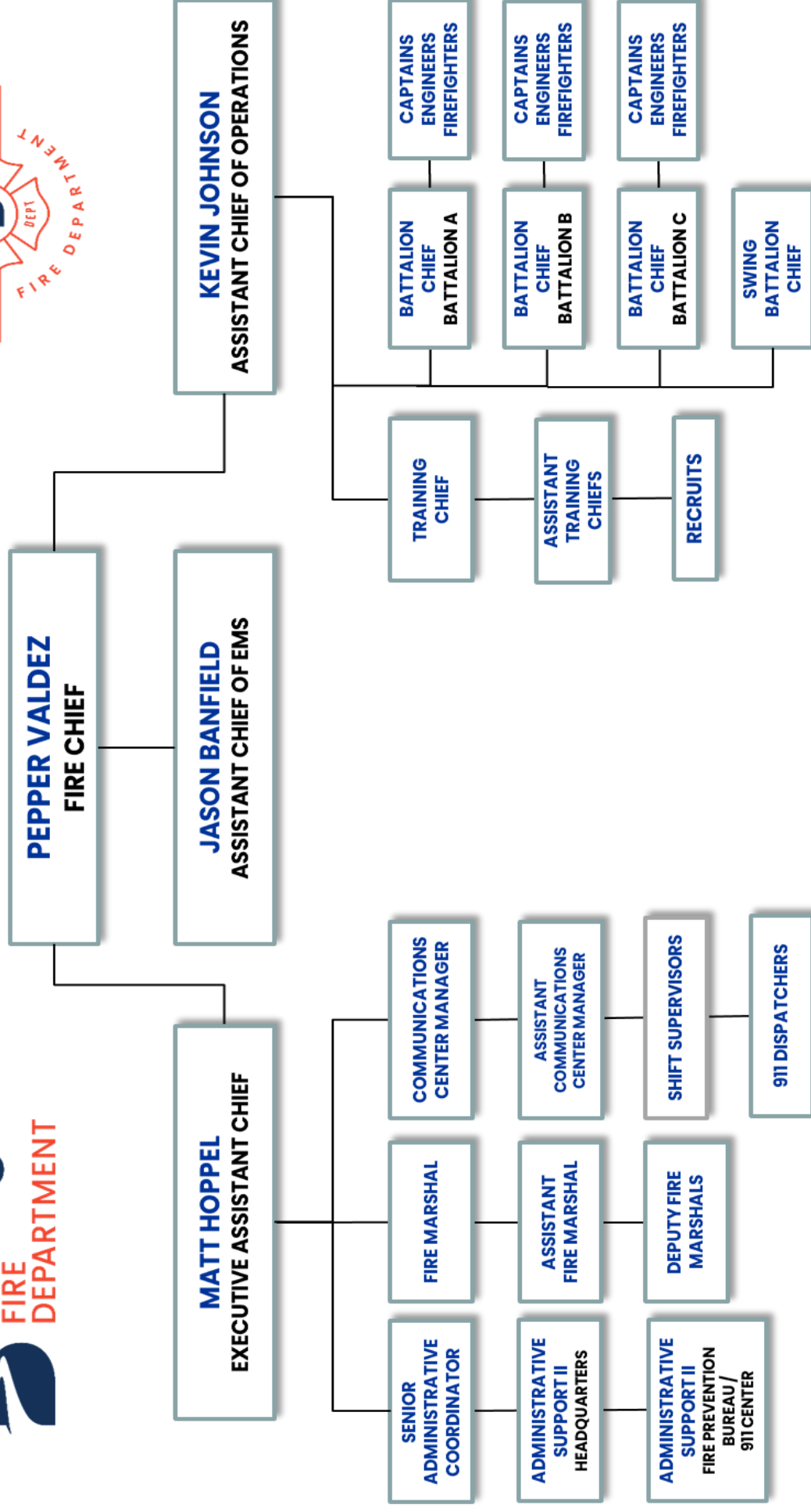


**Response Area — 91.46 sq miles**  
45.57 sq miles (city limits)  
44.60 sq miles (BUFSA)  
1.29 sq miles (Landfill)





2022





# 2022 ANNUAL REPORT

## ADMINISTRATION

The Administrative Office is considered the business side of the Fire Department. The Fire Chief, Executive Assistant Chief, Assistant Chief of Operations, Assistant Chief of EMS, Senior Administrative Coordinator, and 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 and Assistant City Administrators.

### FIRE STATION DEFERRED MAINTENANCE PROGRAM

BFD made significant progress in 2022 on continuing the Fire Station Deferred Maintenance Program funded by a long overdue budget increase. This program includes all Fire Department infrastructure, building, and station renovations to become more energy efficient. The City of Billings Facilities Services Department helps manage these projects which rely heavily on firefighter input to improve the functionality, appearance, and livability of the stations.

### 2022 PROJECTS

- **Station 1**—Basement remodel, training room and office. Accessible restroom.
- **Station 7**— Removed shingles and installed red metal. Above Ground Storage Tank install. Courtyard repairs.
- **Station 8**—Purchase, plan review.
- **Training Center**— Two stair installations, basement props, movable interior walls.

### OFFICE OF PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

The Office of Professional Standards (OPS) was created to responsibly address citizen and member commendations and complaints under the direct supervision of the Executive Assistant 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 BFD and OPS works 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 BFD and OPS to recognize members who have gone above and beyond the call of duty by processing public and internal requests for commendations. In 2021, OPS developed a policy to expand the awards process to include citizens and civilian employees who demonstrate outstanding public services.

### STATION 7 REPAIR



Old asphalt shingle roof



New red metal roof



## FISCAL YEAR 2022 BUDGET

The administration's goal is to secure appropriate financial resources to ensure department personnel can provide the best public safety services to our community. Billings Fire's FY 2022 approved budget totaled \$23.7 million, representing an increased spending authority of 11.3% over FY 2021. Suppression costs, including wages, overtime, and fringe benefits accounted for 64.5% of the expenditure of FY 2022. The remaining 35.5% contributes to fuel, equipment, maintenance, the Fire Prevention Bureau, training, and the 911 Call Center.

## Key Metrics



**175**  
Employees



**10**  
Facilities



**121**  
Firefighters



**7**  
Administrators



**3**  
Training Officers



**37**  
9-1-1 Staff



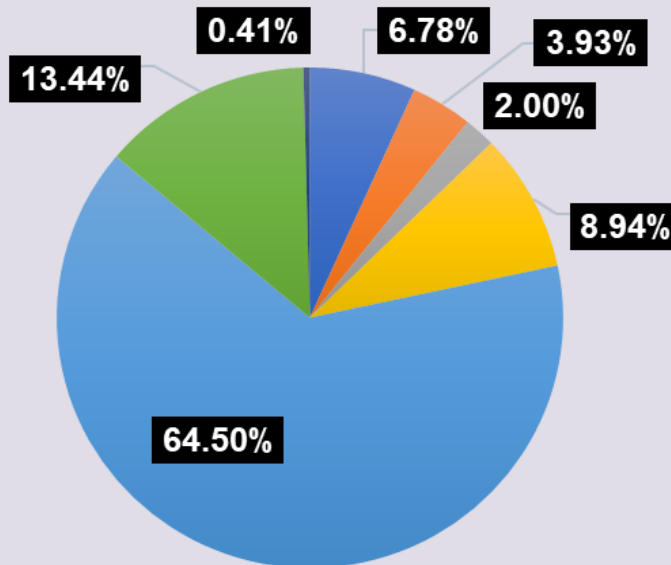
**6**  
Investigators



**1**  
Comms Specialist

## Approved FY 2022 Operating Budget

Administration	\$1,607,446
Prevention/Investigation	\$932,518
Training	\$474,527
Equip/Maintenance	\$2,120,806
Suppression	\$15,298,792
9-1-1 Center	\$3,188,955
Communication Equip	\$97,132
Fire's Total	\$23,720,176



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





# 2022 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 and 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 of an incident. Engine company 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, severe weather, or natural disasters. NFPA 1710 states that responses must meet a standard goal of a 90th percentile in time for 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 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 18,312 responses, we deleted 7,935 that did not possess an emergency identification or an arrival time for evaluation.

**NFPA 1710 STANDARDS**

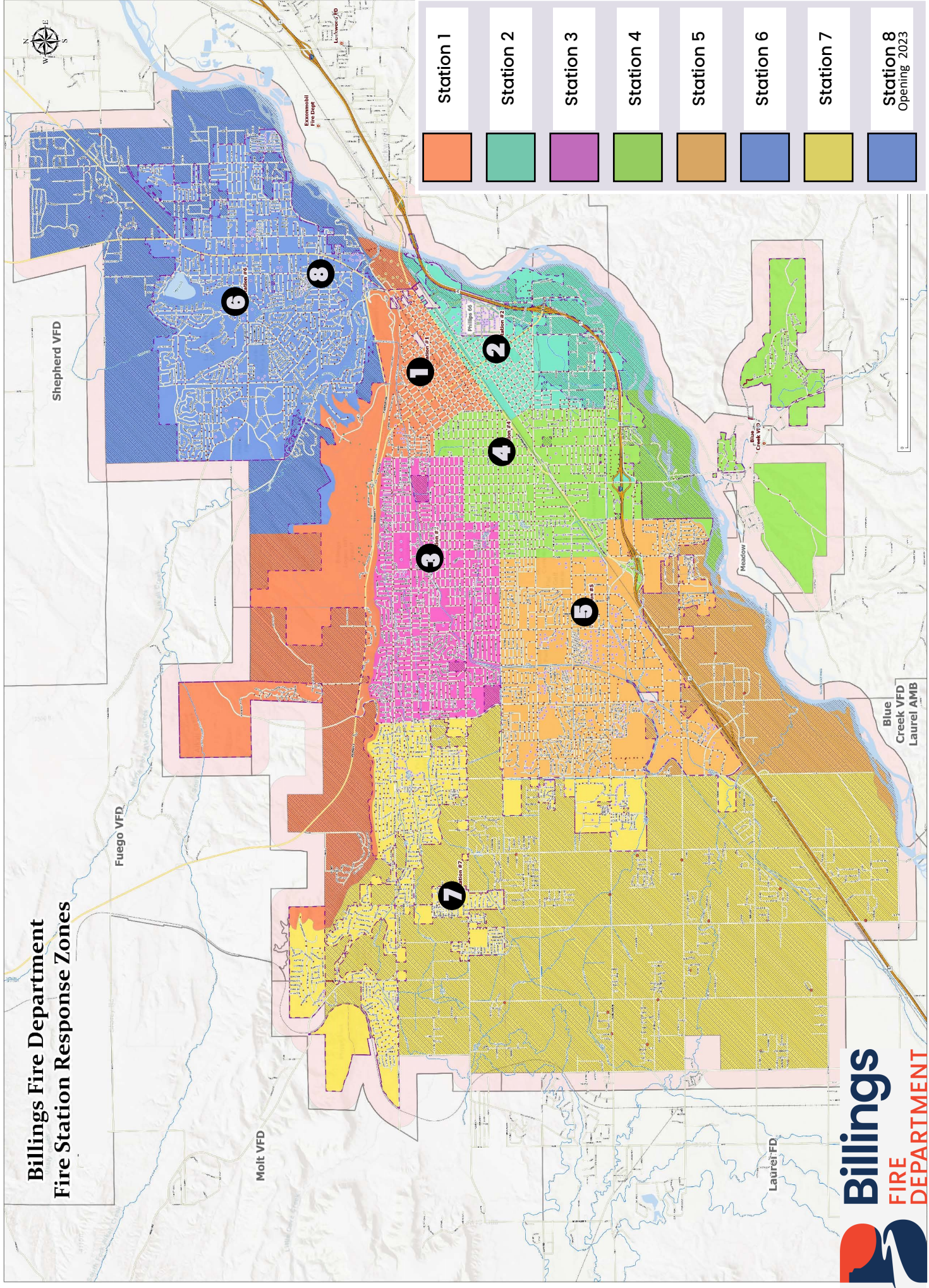
BFD Overall Emergency Response Performance, 2022				
	Call Processing	Turnout Time	Travel Time	Total Response Time
Average	01:22	01:44	04:33	06:07
90th Percentile	02:16	02:49	07:47	09:31

Response Element	NFPA Recommendation	BFD Response Times
Call Processing (First Unit)	60 Seconds @ 90th Percentile for EMS	02:20
	80 Seconds @ 90th Percentile for Fire	00:37
Turnout Time (First Unit)	60 Seconds @ 90th Percentile for EMS	02:49
	80 Seconds @ 90th Percentile for Fire	02:41
Travel Time (First Unit)	4 minutes @ 90th Percentile for EMS	07:38
	4 minutes @ 90th Percentile for Fire	07:51
Travel Time-Full First Alarm (Fire Suppression Incident)	8 minutes @ 90th Percentile (5 apparatus total response time)	23:39

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)



# Billings Fire Department Fire Station Response Zones



Station 1	Station 2	Station 3	Station 4	Station 5	Station 6	Station 7	Station 8 Opening 2023





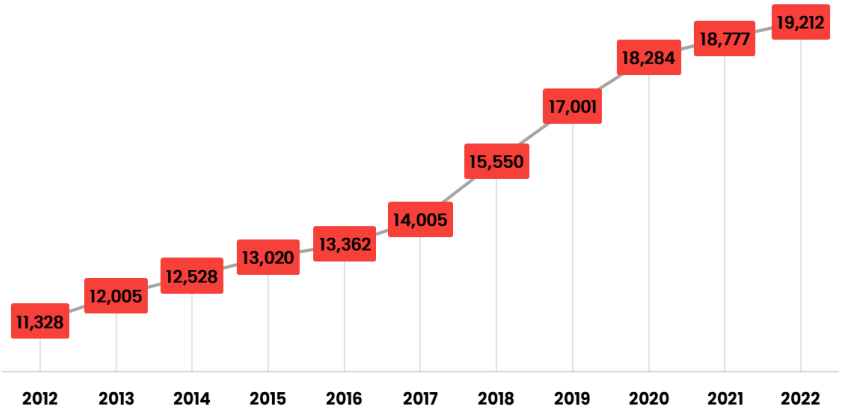
# 2022 ANNUAL REPORT

Call volume experienced a 69.6% increase since 2012, showing an average 4.94% increase each year. 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 2022

CONCURRENT INCIDENTS	PERCENTAGE
Single Incident	40.78 %
2	34.03 %
3	16.33 %
4	5.98 %
5 or more	2.88 %

BFD Call Volume by Year



Billings Fire documents each call for service in an incident report held at the National Fire 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.

This page's graphs indicate Billings Fire Department's 2022 trends in total call volume, call volume in each fire station response area, and the percentage of calls per hour of the day. The "Rate of Multiple Calls" chart states that nearly 59.22% of calls occur with two or more at one time, illustrating the hard work of the men and women of the Fire Department.

## INCIDENT RESPONSES



19,212 Total Calls for Service

9,674 EMS/Rescue

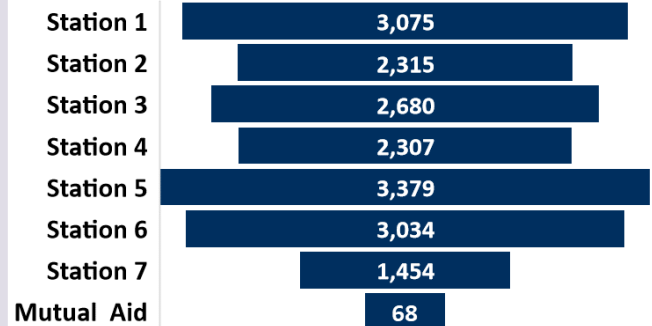


358 Fires

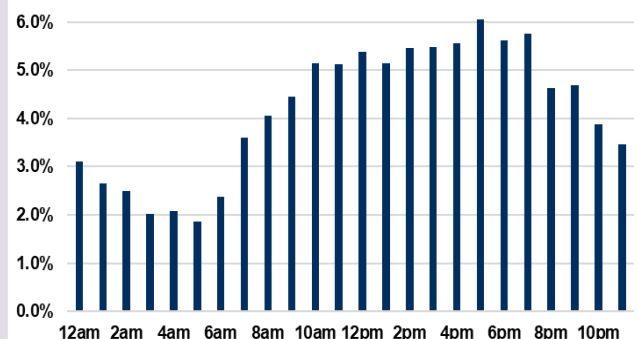
9,180 All "Other" Service



Call Volume by Station Area



BFD Service Demand by Time of Day





# 2022 ANNUAL REPORT



## OPERATIONS

Aside from fighting fires, the Operations Division oversees the Training Division, Logistics, and specialized teams to handle all other emergencies. These teams include *Rescue*, *Hazardous Materials*, and *Air Teams*. The geographical locations of Billings challenge the technicians on every call, from the Yellowstone River to the Rimrocks.



### SUPPRESSION PERSONNEL

4 Battalion Chiefs  
30 Captains  
30 Engineers  
57 Firefighters

### RESCUE TEAM

32 Technicians

### AIR TEAM

10 Technicians

### TOTAL APPARATUS RUNS

2018 — 18,044  
2019 — 20,152  
2020 — 22,122  
2021 — 23,155  
2022 — 23,312

### HAZMAT TEAM

30 Technicians

### BILLINGS FIRE VEHICLES/EQUIPMENT

6 Engines + 3 Reserve  
1 Ladder Truck + 1 Reserve  
1 Quint (Ladder/Engine Combo)  
2 Water Tenders  
5 Wildland Trucks  
4 Water Rescue Crafts  
1 Rescue Truck + Response Trailer  
1 Haz-Mat Regional Response Unit  
1 Mobile Air Unit and Trailer  
1 Hose Van  
1 Shuttle Bus  
1 Fire Investigation Truck  
2 Battalion Chief Response Units  
3 Training/Safety Vehicles  
10 Bureau and Staff Vehicles  
3 Unmanned Aircraft Systems



OPERATIONS

# 2022 ANNUAL REPORT



## BILLINGS FIRE EMS

Billings Fire's Emergency Medical Services offer a large range of professional care, from Basic to Advanced Life Support, including medical care after rescues. With increased demands on EMS, firefighters often ride in ambulances to aid critical patient care. As medicine perpetually evolves, the men and women stay up-to-date with the latest trends in patient care, such as purchasing Zoll Autopulse Resuscitation Systems in 2022, offering better chest compressions in pre-hospital care. Billings Fire responded to 9,674 total EMS calls, a 3.6% increase from 2021.



**9,674 Total EMS Calls**



**≈ 26.5 EMS Calls per Day**



**409 Firefighter Ride-Ins**



**1,113 Interventions Done**



**645 Medications Given**

**36 Narcan doses**

## NOTABLE EVENTS

**Childbirth / Field Deliveries** — Five babies were delivered successfully prior to arrival to hospital by BFD firefighters and AMR.

**CPR Saves** — Of the 111 reported CPRs performed at EMS incidents, 48 patients returned spontaneous circulation; 4 were discharged from hospital care with "good functional status," showing a 8.3% success rate, on par with the national average. (Good functional status means one's ability to perform daily activities required to meet basic needs, and maintain their health and well-being).

**Mobile Response Team** — Billings Fire implemented Squad 1 on December 01, 2022. Recommended in the 2019 CPSM study, the MRT program responds to calls with the intent to decrease the response volume on company engines. One EMT and one Paramedic staff the MRTs, with additional responses to other areas when call demand is high.



## Most Common Injuries/Illness

Sick Person	18.30%
Cardiac	17.48%
Falls	9.68%
Stroke/Seizure	14.34%
Breathing Problems	8.66%
Vehicle Accident Injury	6.84%
Trauma	11.83%
Other	12.88%



# 2022 ANNUAL REPORT



## FIRE SUPPRESSION

All seven fire stations staff a minimum of three firefighters, trained to perform fire suppression. In 2022, Billings and its surrounding areas experienced a 20% decrease in fire related incidents from 2021.

Structure fires happen on permanent constructed buildings, fences, detached garages, or storage sheds. Trash, grass, and other fires include any fire outside a structure or vehicle. Exposures include another object ignited or damaged because of an initial fire; an example is a vehicle fire setting a fence on fire, or a grass fire setting a structure on fire.



**358 Total Fires**



**123 Structure Fires**



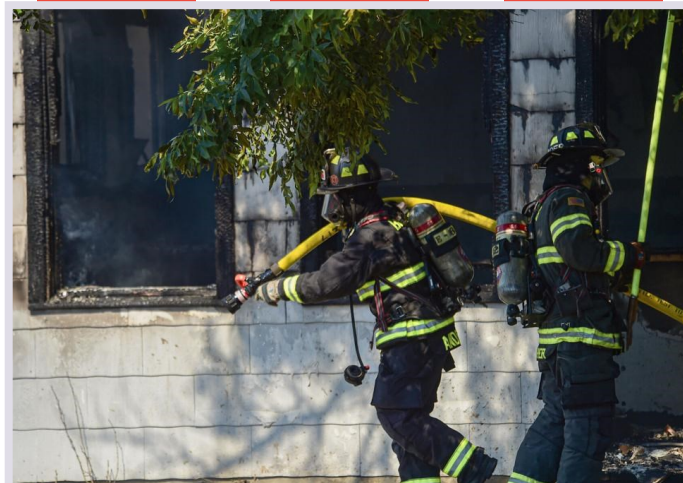
**159 Trash/Grass/Other Fires**



**58 Vehicle Fires**



**18 Exposure Fires**



## FALSE ALARMS

Per Department policy, when an alarm sounds in a building a fire engine will respond, even if there is no fire or hazard. False alarms may occur from equipment malfunction, response to non-hostile smoke from cooking, and malicious/mischievous fire-alarm pulls. 2022 experienced a 18.8% increase in false alarm calls.

Types of False Alarm	Number of Alarms
Malicious, Mischievous	46
System Malfunction	268
Unintentional	855
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,169</b>

## WILDLAND FIREFIGHTING

During the dry, hot months of the year, BFD personnel who are qualified as wildland firefighters provide assistance to the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC). Wildland fires consist of natural grass, forest, and open land fires with no water readily available for suppression. In 2022, BFD wildland firefighters fought over 18 wildland fires within Yellowstone, Carbon, Stillwater, Musselshell, and Big Horn Counties.







# 2022 ANNUAL REPORT

## TECHNICAL RESCUE AND EXTRICATION TEAM

The Billings Fire Department Technical Rescue Team comprises of 32 rescue experts who perform advanced skills in technical rope rescue, swift water, ice rescue, watercraft rescue, vehicle extrication and stabilization, structural collapse, confined space, trench rescue, animal rescue, and heavy lifting (Air bag) techniques. Rescues are categorized as EMS calls, and this page showcases the specific calls of the Rescue Team's expertise. Throughout 2022, Rescue 2 responded to 1,175 calls for service, with 61 incidents coded as "life-saving."

### VEHICLES AND EQUIPMENT

**RESCUE 2** — A specially outfitted GMC 4500 carrying all ropes equipment and hauls rescue response trailer or water craft trailers.

**Collapse Response Trailer** — An enclosed utility trailer carrying all collapse and confined space rescue equipment. Houses power tools, hardware, and lumber to construct walls and struts for cave-in prevention during rescues.

**Water Rescue Crafts** — Four water rescue crafts with tow-in rescue boards to easily maneuver the Yellowstone River and Lake Elmo.

### NOTABLE EVENTS

**Yellowstone River Flooding** — Rescue techs refreshed water techniques using new Kawasaki Jet Skis. New BFD Standard Operating guidelines for swift and flat waters were adopted and trained right before the major flooding of the Yellowstone River in June, 2022. No critical incidents occurred during the flooding.

**Confined Space Training** — BFD Rescue, Air, and HazMat teams collaborated on a three-day confined space training taught by Glacier Rescue Solutions. This created an updated SOG and successful training at the COB Water Treatment Plant.

**"Man vs. Machine"** — BFD hosted a four-day course at Exxon Refinery, taught by RNR Rescue. Course covered extraction and patient access techniques if a person were caught in dangerous industrial machinery, with updates to pre-hospital medical skills such as new styles of tourniquets.



**61 Total Rescues**



**44 Extrications**



**4 Search & Rescues**



**6 Water Rescues**



**7 High-Angle Rescues**



# 2022 ANNUAL REPORT



## HAZARDOUS MATERIALS RESPONSE TEAM

The Billings Fire Department and its personnel are the largest hazardous materials response agency in eastern Montana. All members of suppression are trained at the hazmat operations level and 30 firefighters are designated as Hazmat Technicians or Specialists, qualified to respond to incidents ranging from tanker and rail car accidents to terrorism involving chemical, biological, or explosive agents. With three nearby refineries, an extensive railroad presence, and interstate highway crossroads, the presence of hazardous materials is a fact of life in Billings and Yellowstone County. When activated by Montana Disaster and Emergency Services (MT-DES), the BFD's Regional Hazmat Team may also be mobilized to support hazmat responses throughout the state.

## VEHICLES AND EQUIPMENT

**HAMMER 5** — A Freightliner truck outfitted to handle initial hazmat incidents and tow the hazmat response trailer.

**HazMat Response Trailer** — A three axle enclosed trailer housing a command center and hauls all monitoring, containing, and decontamination equipment for hazardous materials responses.



**415 HazMat Calls**



**185 Utility/CO Calls**



**104 Gas Leaks**



**47 Chemical Spills**



**79 No Hazard Found**



## NOTABLE EVENTS

**Centennial Ice Arena** — The BFD Hazmat Team responded to Centennial Ice Arena for an ammonia leak from their ice-making system. The team monitored the area for presence of ammonia outside the structure, then conducted a series of entries, isolated the leak, and advised facility owners about the leak's location after control.

**Nevada National Security Site** — BFD Team members joined other Montana hazmat technicians at the Nevada National Security Site for an exercise of responses to dirty bombs or nuclear incidents. While there, team members worked with the latest detection equipment and new skills in patient decontamination and site mapping.

**Department of Homeland Security**—The Hazmat Team program manager traveled to Israel to continue dirty bomb and radiation training. Grants from the Department of Homeland Security allowed this opportunity for enhanced training.







# 2022 ANNUAL REPORT

## SCBA AIR TEAM

The Air Team is made of ten technicians that are Scott In-House Repair Certified. Each member is required to take a class and recertify every two years. Duties consist of making repairs to air packs, mask mounted regulators, self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) masks, and cylinders, as well as filling air and oxygen cylinders. The Air Team fits all Suppression and Fire Prevention Bureau personnel for SCBA masks, half masks, and N95 masks. During fit and flow tests, if any equipment is out of factory specifications, technicians make proper adjustments to bring them into compliance. The Air Team also provides fit testing for Billings Police and Yellowstone County Sheriff departments, and can provide mutual-aid to surrounding areas for any major incident.



On average, a tank of pressurized air will last a firefighter 20-30 minutes, depending on their breathing rate and how active they are during a fire. A firefighter may use 2-3 tanks during a fully involved fire.

## VEHICLES AND EQUIPMENT

**Mobile Air Unit & Trailer** — An outfitted van that carries extra air equipment, air cylinders, and tools to make repairs in the field. The van tows a 6000psi portable air compressor that can be used in the field to fill cylinders. The trailer is equipped for supplied air for hazmat and rescue operations.

### **Equipment**

90 Air packs  
155 Mask Mounted Regulators  
6 Supplied Air Packs w/ 15 minute Escape Cylinder

## HIGHLIGHTS

### **Cylinders Filled**

The Air Team filled over 1,426 SCBA cylinders used during BFD operations, a 18.8% increase from 2021.

Medical Oxygen Cylinders Filled—262

Air Pack Flow Tests — 95

Mask Mounted Regulators Flow Tested — 170  
Quantitative Fit Tests (SCBA Mask and Half-Mask Respirators) — 274

Qualitative Fit Tests (N-95) — 136



**AIR TEAM**

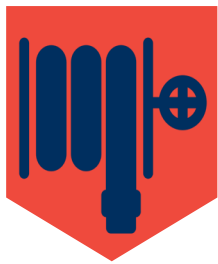


# 2022 ANNUAL REPORT



## **BECOMING EXCEPTIONAL FIREFIGHTERS**

### 2022 Training Highlights



After a twelve-week academy, the department welcomed ten new firefighters. The academy consists of taking each recruit through high-stress environments and its rigors, teaching the technical skills to be effective firefighters. Lockwood also trained one firefighter during the BFD's academy.

The Training Division was fortunate to secure a second Assistant Training Chief from the 2021 Public Safety Mill Levy. Eliminating the temporary Logistics Officer position, the new role took over the equipment management side of the Division as well as the Engineer Development Program.



## **BILLINGS FIRE TRAINING DIVISION**

The Training Division consists of three full-time employees, the Training Chief and two Assistant Training Chiefs, working together to accomplish training goals and logistics management. The BFD uses powerful programs through Vector Solutions, Inc. to accomplish online learning, equipment maintenance, and scheduling.

Training spent 2022 focusing on reconnecting firefighters with all disciplines of the BFD, especially skills involved with the rapid advancements in fire, rescue, and EMS technologies. Billings Fire completed collectively 31,623 hours of training, a 17.5% increase from 2021. Goals for 2022 included quarterly training and refresher programs specific to specialty teams, and further broken down for each engine crew.



With the MT National Guard locating new aviation operations in the Billings area, firefighters received instruction from flight medics on aircraft fire, rescue, and EMS emergencies. The partnership between local and state agencies will provide additional resources to the BFD's training.



TRAINING



# 2022 ANNUAL REPORT

## 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 INVESTIGATIONS

Part of preventing fires is determining where and how they started by applying scientific methodology. Although not all fires require FPB involvement, fortunately the FPB investigated 34% less fires than 2021.

### 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 AND PLANS REVIEW

Prior to breaking ground, a developer will need to meet with the FPB to ensure they're doing so under certain parameters, such as fire department access and a water supply that will aid in protecting homes and businesses. The FPB conducts compliance reviews on plans for new or remodeled buildings and their respective fire protection systems.

### PUBLIC SAFETY EDUCATION

Fire safety and education is particularly important at Billings Fire Department. The public education team received over 20,000 website views to accessible fire safety topics and activities. The team was able to visit local schools again after COVID-19 restrictions were lifted.

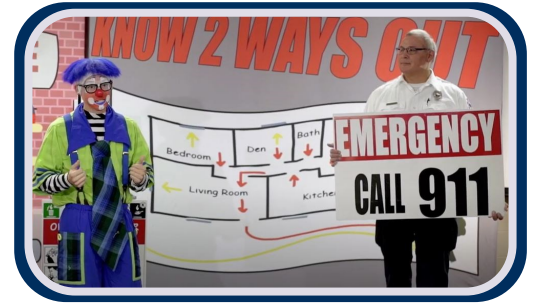
The education program also provides free fire and carbon monoxide detectors in local residents' homes through a program with the American Red Cross.

### PUBLIC RECORDS REQUESTS

Requests for copies of reports and audio associated with incidents are fielded by the FPB/911 Administrative Support.

### FALSE FIRE ALARM RESPONSE ORDINANCE

Approved on December 13, 2021, Ordinance 21-5787 allows the Billings Fire Department to charge businesses where suppression crews respond to numerous false alarms. The fees charged to alarm system owners is intended as a deterrent and mechanism to reduce unwanted false alarms.



Fire Investigations  
**81**



Inspections  
**900**



Pre-Application Meetings  
**128**



Plans Reviewed  
**330**



Website/Video Views  
**21,541**



Home Detector Installations  
**15**



Public Record Requests  
**616**

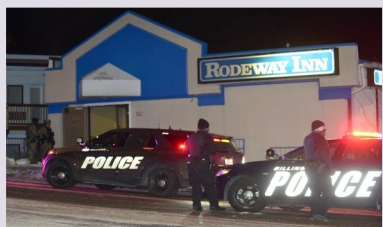


False Alarm Violations  
**520**

# 2022 ANNUAL REPORT

## JOINT CITY / COUNTY COMMUNICATIONS CENTER

The Joint City / County Communications Center provides the critical link between the community and public safety resources, assisting an estimated 160,000 citizens, excluding the City of Laurel. Dispatchers handle calls for service to 26 different fire, EMS, and law enforcement organizations within the county. Thirty-one Dispatchers work in tandem with four Shift Supervisors to receive, coordinate, and process emergency and non-emergency radio/telephone traffic 24-hours a day. The 9-1-1 Manager and Assistant Manager provide operational support while overseeing the 800 mhz radio system.



After 20 years of use, the 800 MHZ Trunked Radio System will be replaced in 2023. Partnering between the City of Billings and State of Montana, the Department of Justice secured a spot on a statewide-ASTRO multi-band trunked radio network, allowing better communication for all agencies in Yellowstone County. The new system is a complete overhaul of communications for the City and comes with cost-savings from sharing the technology.

In cooperation with Billings Police, the 911 Communications Center began encrypting City law enforcement radio traffic. Public broadcasting ended to allow better protections of victim names, health information, and first responders.



Dispatchers created 154,106 calls for service to the public, a 4.3% decrease from 2021. The Communications Center dispatches municipal, county, state, and federal public safety resources within Yellowstone County. Units dispatched in 2022 totaled 272,233, an average of 31 units per hour.

Dialing 9-1-1 is nationally recognized to receive emergency help. Additionally, The Communications Center has a non-emergency line to alleviate the 9-1-1 phone lines. Dispatchers answered 294,874 emergent and non-emergent calls, occurring roughly every 90-100 seconds.







# 2022 ANNUAL REPORT

## 2021 PUBLIC SAFETY MILL LEVY

On December 1, 2022, the BFD introduced the Mobile Response Team, developed from the policy recommendations within the funding from a \$7.1 million Public Safety Mill Levy to share between Fire, Police, Courts, and Public Health Services. \$1.5 million aided the fire department.

The BFD expanded it's staff by adding a Deputy Fire Marshal and Assistant Training Chief to the roster. These positions specialize in BFD's efforts in fire prevention, logistics, and department training.

## EQUIPMENT

The BFD purchased two SUVs for the MRT program, one for Assistant Fire Chief, and one for the upcoming Crisis Response Unit. The vehicles were purchased with funds from the City Equipment Replacement Plan, federal and state grants, and mill levy funding.

## LEADERSHIP TRAINING

BFD hosted special guest Michael Wallace to conduct command staff training. Wallace, a retired Fire Chief of east coast fire departments, facilitates chief and executive leadership programs, focusing on managerial processes in the fire industry.



### 2022 Retirements

Vince Christensen, Captain—32 years  
Steve Nugent, Captain—28 years  
Alan Lohof, Captain—27 years

### New Hires

Firefighter Ash  
Firefighter Brandt  
Firefighter Dayton  
Firefighter Dollarhide  
Firefighter Frehse  
Firefighter Kueker  
Firefighter Letendre  
Firefighter Marth  
Firefighter Perry  
Firefighter Sluder  
Firefighter Sullivan

### Promotions

Fire Marshal Bill Tatum  
Asst. Fire Marshal Jaime Fender  
Deputy FM Justin Robertus  
Deputy FM Becky Biggins

Asst. Training Chief Chelsea Thompson  
Asst. Training Chief Chris Voller

Captain Rickbeil  
Captain Zahn  
Captain Jares  
Captain Biggins

Engineer Muhs  
Engineer Evenson  
Engineer Greenwood  
Engineer Solberg  
Engineer Gersbach



## BFD STRATEGIC GOALS



### GROWTH

Continue to monitor and gather data for proper timing and placement of Fire Station #9 (West End), and proper timing for staffing Fire Station #8 (Heights).

Achieve having one paramedic on each engine and truck company 24/7, with implementation of Mobile Response Team program.

Continue the cooperative process for a new Emergency Operations Center.

Enhance the level of service by utilizing neighboring resources.



### 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, developing and implementing a Behavioral Health Unit with community partnerships.

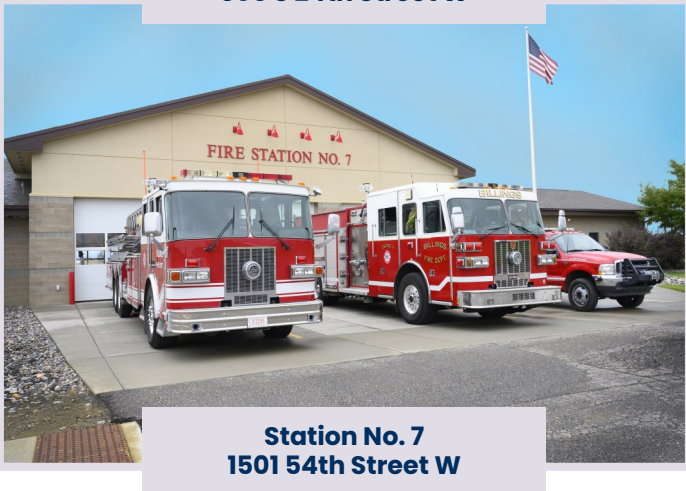
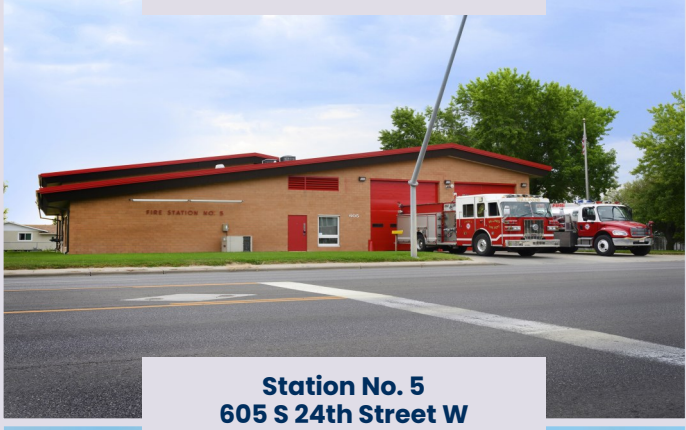
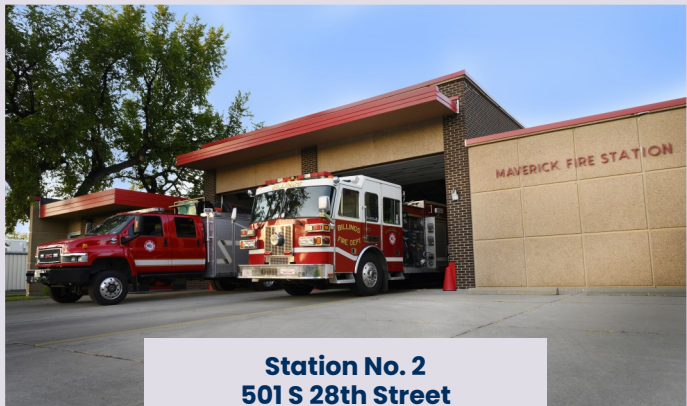
Provide more opportunities for professional development and succession planning.







# 2022 ANNUAL REPORT





**OUR FAMILY  
SERVING  
YOUR FAMILY**





# ANNUAL REPORT

## 2022

**2305 8TH AVENUE N • BILLINGS, MT • 59101**

**(406) 657-8423**

**[www.billingsmt.gov/fire](http://www.billingsmt.gov/fire)**

March, 2023