



Chikaming Township Fire Department

Office 269.469.6362
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fofficer@chikamingtownship.org

13535 Red Arrow Highway
Harbert, MI 49115
www.chikamingtownship.org

January 9, 2024

2023 Department Annual Report

Greetings,

I am excited to present the 2023 annual fire department report to the residents of Chikaming Township. Notable projects completed this year include a few significant vehicle repairs and catching up on preventative maintenance, equipment upgrades, two grants for new equipment, updating business pre-plans, and hiring two new team members.

The department members are a dedicated group of full-time, part-time, and paid-per-call individuals who respond to both fire and medical emergencies 24x7x365. They work hard to ensure that Chikaming Township is a safe place for our residents and the many visitors! Department members responded to 579 calls for service this year including seven vegetation/grass fires, four vehicle fires, thirty motor vehicle accidents, and nine structure fires – six being mutual aid calls to neighboring jurisdictions.

In addition to our annual trainings such as vehicle extrication, water rescue, and fire suppression, five department members completed ICS 300 and ICS 400 courses; respectively, Intermediate Incident Command Systems for Expanding Incidents, and Advanced Incident Command Systems Command and General Staff Complex Incidents. Completing the ICS 300 and ICS 400 courses consists of a total of five, in-person, full day classroom sessions and a final written examination.

Brad Miller had a busy year as he upgraded medical licenses to the EMT-Basic level, obtained Fire Officer I certification, and became a Certified Fire Instructor I.

Greg Nelson provides coverage for emergency medical calls in the mornings and continues to be responsible for code enforcement and managing the rental safety program. He assisted with updates to Ordinance No. 141 which covers residential property rentals in the fall.

Miller and Nelson have spent time working together this past year cross-training in their roles so we can provide continuity of service when either of them may be on an extended vacation. They have worked closely together updating our business pre-plans and have started the daunting task of pre-planning the nearly 500 short-term rental properties as well. This valuable pre-plan information allows fire officers to start planning their first steps of an emergency response before arriving at the scene.

Two new members started: Kahler Johannsen is a Paramedic and Michael Martinak is an EMT – and both are MI certified firefighters. Welcome!!



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Kahler and Mike join our current full-time and part-time team members in providing 24x7x365 on-duty coverage for our medical first responder unit. The on-duty person is frequently the first member on scene for fire calls and can complete a quick size-up to determine what resources are needed.

The good news for 2023 just keeps going as we were excited recipients of two grants! A \$10,000 fire equipment grant through the State of MI was used to purchase 11 Seek personal thermal imaging cameras. These amazing tools provide firefighters with enhanced situational awareness and significantly improve search and rescue capabilities, but ultimately serve as a lifeline for a disoriented or trapped firefighter assisting them with self-rescue maneuvers.

The second awarded grant was a regional project with New Buffalo Township, Three Oaks Township, and Chikaming Township Fire Departments partnering together to replace our outdated Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) packs with ones that meet the current safety standards. We were approved \$495,828.57 in Federal Funding as available through the Assistance to Firefighters Grant from the US Department of Homeland Security Federal Emergency Management Agency. Our departments need only provide a 5% (or about \$24,791.43) match, which is a huge cost savings for our residents, given an estimated total project cost of \$520,620.00!

We anticipate delivery of the SCBA units in March and plan to have them in-service by the end of April.

At the regular December meetings of New Buffalo, Three Oaks, and Chikaming Township Boards and the New Buffalo City Commission, each municipality voted to support exploring a fire services regionalization effort. The Fire Chiefs from each of those departments met multiple times last fall to discuss problems faced by each department and potential solutions, including evaluating the potential benefits of working closely together in the future. Given this project is only in a conceptual phase – there are many more questions than answers at this point – but it is certainly thought provoking.

CTFD accomplished many great things in 2023 and we anticipate an even busier 2024. Follow us on Facebook and stay up to date as we roll out additional services to the community we serve.

I would like to extend a personal “Thank You!” to every great member of the Chikaming community for their continued support of the department by providing us with the vehicles, equipment, and training needed to keep the community safe.

Please do not hesitate to give me a call should you ever have questions. The members of CTFD are looking forward to another great year in 2024!

Cordially,

Allen Weich
Fire Chief – Chikaming Township



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Mission

The mission of the Chikaming Township Fire Department is to provide the best quality of professional life safety, fire protection, First Responder medical treatment, and to mitigate and manage all emergencies for the citizens and visitors of Chikaming Township.

The mission is accomplished through being responsive to the needs of the citizens with an emphasis on emergency service delivery, training, ensuring fire code compliance, and public safety education.

Vision

The Chikaming Township Fire strives to meet the changing needs of the community for fire protection, pre-hospital and out of hospital emergency medical care and believes that by the timely application of the advances of both the art and science of fire and medicine to the practice of fire suppression and of emergency medical services, we can decrease suffering, improve the health of the community, and save lives and property.

Team

David Abele, Lieutenant

Bradley Miller

Don Dobberstein

Gregory Nelson

Terry Germain

Samuel Nowak

Timothy Gould

David 'Mick' Oldenburg, Assistant Chief

Roger Harrington

Nathan Oman

Irving Hischke

Michael Schuler

Jeffrey Hischke, Captain

Ryan Sullivan, Lieutenant

Laura Hooker

Carson Taylor

Kahler Johannsen

Cory Thompson

Michael Martinak

Allen Weich, Chief



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Community Outreach

Chikaming Police & Fire personnel met River Valley High School Girls Varsity Volleyball team on the court for an exhibition event. This was the second year for this event, and we hope this continues to be an annual tradition. Everyone had a great time! (And no one was injured!)

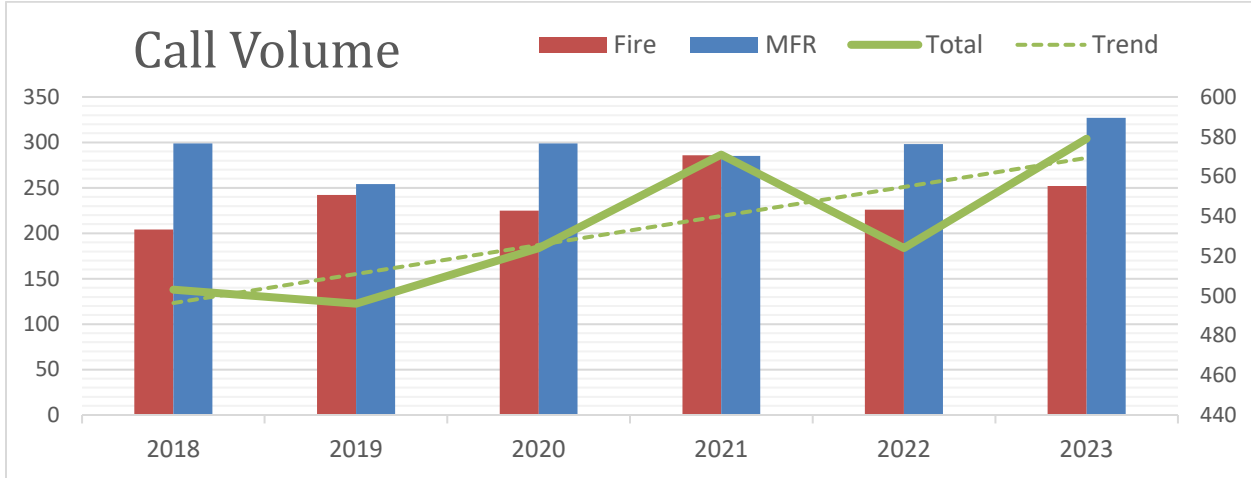




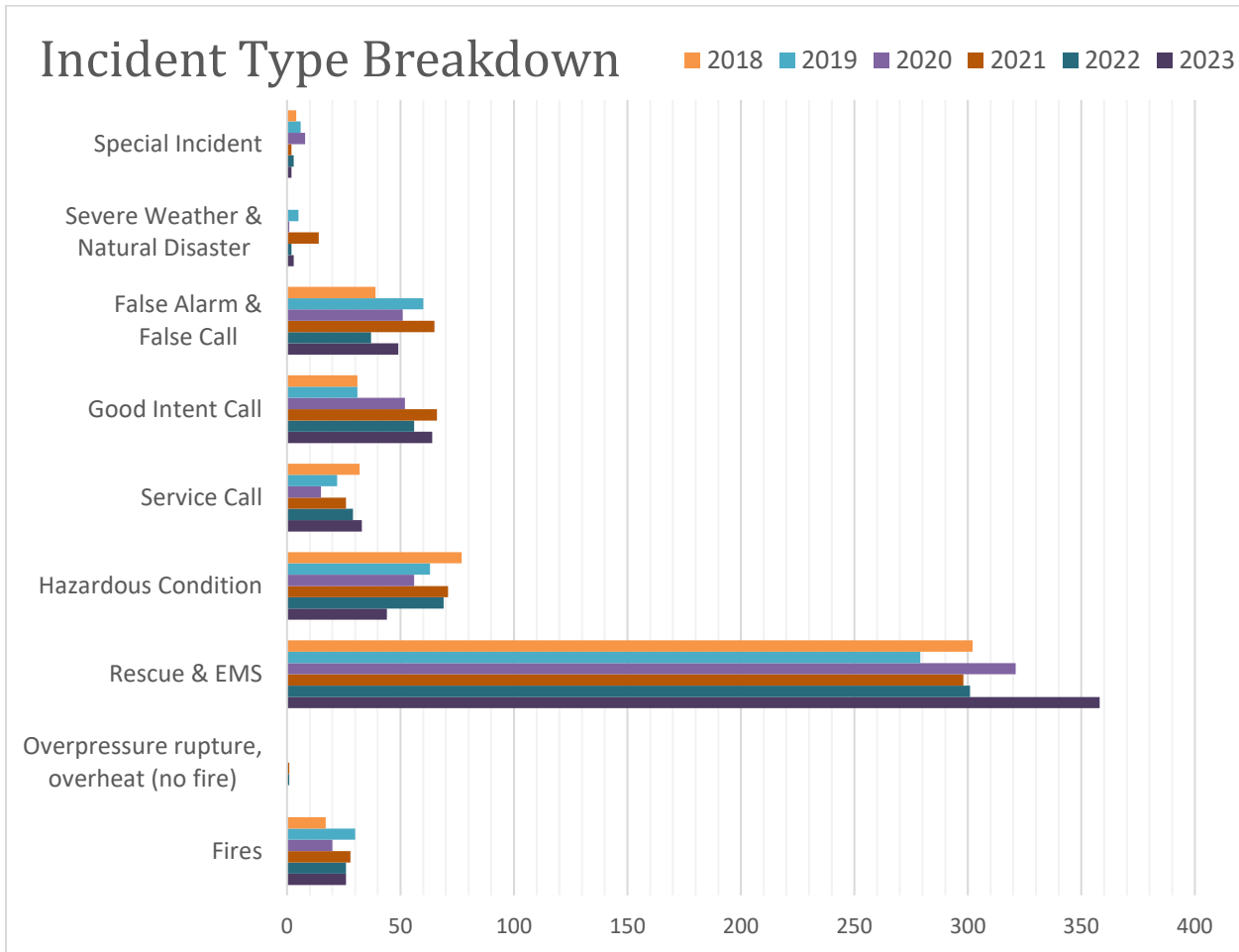
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(Left axis for Fire and Medical call volume, Right axis for Total call volume and trends)





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Fleet

- **1992** S & S 3000-gallon Tanker
- **2005** American LaFrance 1500 gpm Liberty Pumper
- **2006** Ford F350 Brush Truck
- **2013** Ford Explorer command vehicle
- **2016** Marion 2000 gpm Squad (Rescue Pumper)
 - Medical first responder equipped for rescue incidents
- **2016** Ford F150 Code Enforcement & Medical First Responder vehicle
- **2023** Chevrolet Tahoe Medical First Responder vehicle

Equipment Upgrades – Seek Personal TICs

11 Seek FirePRO 300 thermal imaging cameras (with retractable lanyards) were purchased funded by a \$10,000 State of MI Grant.

FirePRO 300

