



GALESBURG FIRE DEPARTMENT

2020 ANNUAL REPORT

PREPARED BY: RANDY HOVIND, FIRE CHIEF

INTRODUCTION

In this report, you will find the numbers behind all that the Galesburg Fire Department (GFD) personnel were involved in for 2020. What you will not see is all the extra behind the scenes work that takes place everyday.

Captain Matt Lewis did a phenomenal job as the Training Captain and stepping up to handle PPE ordering and tracking for KCEMA. Thanks to all department members for the focus, input and patience for the tumultuous year of 2020. You are what makes this department run like a well-oiled machine.

Randy Hovind, Fire Chief

EMERGENCY RESPONSES

Emergency Activity Reporting

GFD continues to utilize Firehouse software to create response reports that are transmitted monthly with our emergency activity information to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). These figures are included in state and national fire incident statistics. FEMA allows access to Illinois statistics by the Office of the State Fire Marshal. GFD has participated in the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) for over 30 years and has submitted Galesburg's information electronically since 1995. Firehouse software is no longer being updated or supported. Thankfully GFD's admin have been working with PSB's IT Department to find a suitable replacement that will eliminate our reliance on multiple software packages, spreadsheets, mail merging, you name it. Times have changed and it is time for our software to work for us making the data we provide more meaningful.

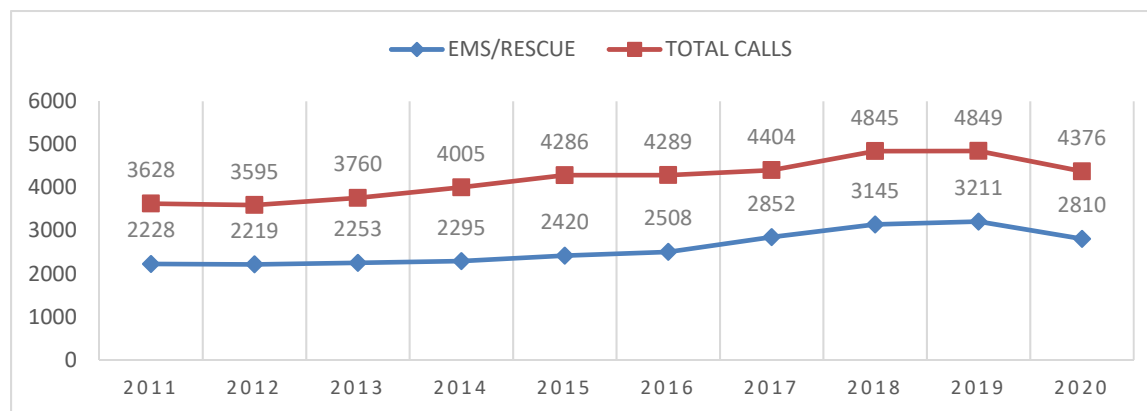


Figure 1
GFD Comparison of EMS and Total Call Volume

Total Calls / EMS

The chart in Figure 1 reflects a 10-year analysis of response trends in EMS/Rescue and Total Emergency Calls. The largest share of the department's emergency response volume continues to be in EMS/Rescue.

In 2020, the department experienced its first decline in call volume since 2012. We feel reasonably sure that this is in large part due to COVID. Although we responded to a significant number of EMS calls, people were sheltering in place for over a month, businesses were closed, so not as many accidents or medical calls were run.

Fires

The total number of fires in Galesburg has decreased steady over the last 10 years at an average of 93; with 72 fires in 2020. The number of false alarms went down slightly in 2020 to 303. Figure 2 shows a comparison of fires to false alarms.

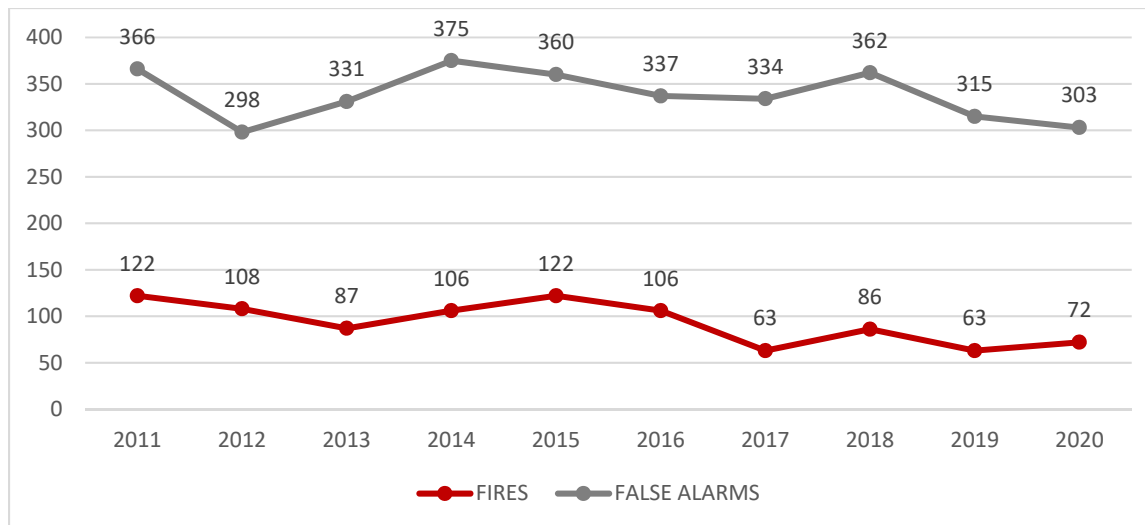


Figure 2
GFD Comparison of Fires and False Alarm Response Numbers

The Fire Department responded to 72 fires (1.65% of total calls). This included 27 structure fires. Three fires were caused by cooking but limited to the container in which they started. There were 6 vehicle fires, 18 rubbish or dumpster fires, and 9 other outside fires including those involving brush or grass.

Of the 72, 24 originated in Central Station's territory. Central Station covers a smaller area with less residential occupancies, which may account for this figure. 25 fires occurred in Brooks Street Station's first-in area, and 22 fires originated in the area protected by Fremont Street Station. One fire call was outside the city limits.

For the structure fires, the bedroom was found to be the area of origin of the highest number of fires with 4 fires. Thirteen of the structure fires were caused by unintentional actions, 22 fires whose cause is still undetermined after investigation, and 14 that were still being investigated at the time of this report.

Dollar Loss

The total dollar loss for all fires was \$405,730.

2012	2013	2104	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
\$2,755,930	\$1,222,963	\$1,126,021	\$1,716,276	\$1,000,755	\$735,410	\$431,625	\$851,925	\$405,730

Based on federally established incident reporting guidelines the following costs cannot be included in the NFIRS reported dollar loss figure: overtime, clean-up costs, emergency lodging/food for fire victims, business interruption coverage, and other costs associated with a fire incident. Our dollar loss figures are actual dollar amounts paid out by insurance companies for structure and contents loss or actual uninsured structure repair figures. In the case of uninsured property, the assessed structure valuation may be used.

Overpressure Rupture, Explosion, and Overheat (no fire)

In 2020, there was one report of overpressure rupture.

2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
0	3	3	3	2	1	2	0	0	1

Medical Emergencies

2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
2,228	2,219	2,253	2,516	2,685	2,731	2,852	3,145	3,211	2,810

Galesburg firefighters are Licensed Emergency Medical Technicians trained in the use of cardiac defibrillators. Firefighters respond to emergency medical calls to initiate medical care or assist Galesburg Hospital's Ambulance

Service (GHAS) paramedic units. Galesburg Hospitals' Ambulance Service paramedic units do all emergency and non-emergency ambulance transports in Galesburg. If a GHAS ambulance is not available or the ambulance crew needs our assistance at a non-emergency scene, we will respond at their request. The Emergency Medical System Director, who is a Galesburg emergency room physician, reviews and approves GFD medical response policies. The Galesburg Area EMS System annual reviews GFD members' credentials to ensure compliance with all Illinois Department of Public Health guidelines. In 2016, the department expanded its mission and service by carrying and administering basic life support medications. This included Narcan for overdose situations, nitroglycerine for chest pains and heart attacks, and epinephrine for anaphylaxis and allergic emergencies.

GFD responded to 2,810 medical and rescue emergencies. There were 2,587 calls for emergency medical assistance unrelated to vehicle accidents. Of these, GFD was the first medical response agency on-scene on 1,896 responses. GFD personnel assisted Galesburg Hospital Ambulance System's personnel who arrived first or simultaneously with GFD on 667 alarms; provided medical care at 71 vehicle accidents with injuries and 10 vehicle/pedestrian accidents while performing extrication of trapped victims at 2 incidents. Citizens were removed from stalled elevators on 5 occasions. GFD responded to 142 calls to vehicle accidents where there were no injuries, but where other hazards such as fuel spills were present.

Hazardous Condition – No Fire

There were 111 responses in the Hazardous Conditions - No Fire category. The top sub-categories included 13 vehicle accidents, general cleanup, 11 Arcing, 11 carbon monoxide incidents, and 11 power lines down.

2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
123	119	147	131	130	125	142	143	120	111

Service Calls

A total of 512 responses were classified as Service Calls. This total is significantly higher than any previous years. Reasons for this increase may be an ever-wider array of services by the department and the expanding use of cell phones by the public. Once again, the significant sub-category of this field was 336 invalid assists. The department also responded to 62 calls for unauthorized burning.

2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
208	234	241	282	369	402	370	479	506	512

Good Intent

The department responded to 567 calls classified as Good Intent Calls. The sub-categories: dispatched or canceled enroute (172 calls), no incident found on arrival (288 calls), smoke scare/odor of smoke/steam (12 calls), and Haz Mat release investigation with no Haz Mat found (42 calls which include carbon monoxide checks in buildings with no CO detector). There were 41 calls reported for burning that were authorized by the fire department.

2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
574	608	601	590	606	577	598	628	628	567

False Alarm/False Call

The number of false alarms fell slightly again for the second year in a row. The largest volumes of calls in the sub-categories were: unintentional alarm system or detector activation with no fire (143), alarm system sounded due to malfunction (73), and malicious false alarms (1).

2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
366	298	331	375	360	337	334	362	315	303

Severe Weather/Natural Disaster

There were no alarms related to weather or natural disaster.

Alarm Time Analysis

Statistics in this category change very little year to year. Statistics on time of day can be useful in determining manpower needs. However, the numbers do not show an overwhelming need to target any specific block of time; emergency calls can and do happen throughout the 24-hour window of opportunity as witnessed in Figure 3.

Experience has shown that the human element is active in some form or another as a cause in most all calls and hence the higher volume of calls during the most active times of the day. Structure fires, in particular, occurred throughout the 24-hour day.

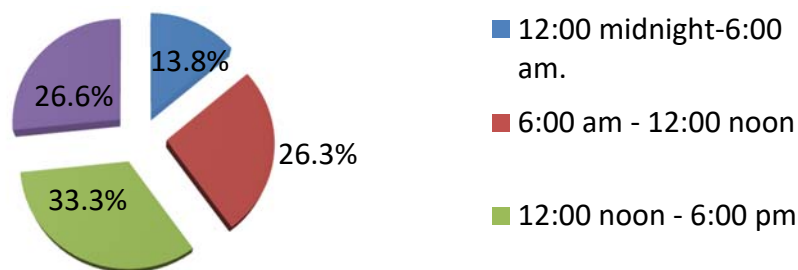


Figure 3
GFD Emergency Responses by Time of Day

Alarm Volume Relevant to Time of Year

As depicted in Figure 4, there was not a month or season of 2020 when the department was significantly busier with alarms. April had the lowest call volume at 298.

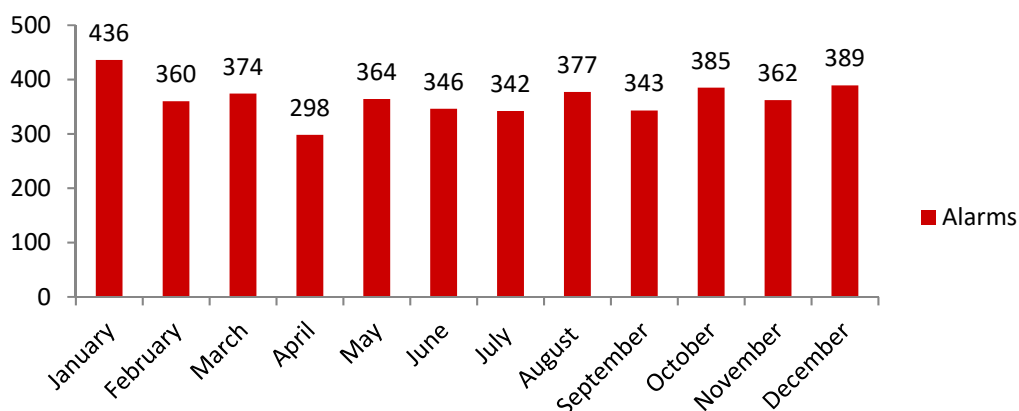


Figure 4
GFD Emergency Responses by Month

Response by District

Responses are broken down into station districts or territories. The statistics in this category represent fire company territories and not EMS response territories, which are significantly different. When apparatus become busy with other calls, training, inspections, and various other duties, other units respond to calls not normally assigned to the territory where the call is originating. Therefore, these statistics are of geographical significance only, unit response breakdowns are more reflective of which stations and vehicles were actually doing the work. As depicted in figure 5, Central Station's first due response territory had 31.10% of the calls. This covers part of Ward 5 and primarily all of Ward 4. Brooks Station had 32.29% of the calls (part of Ward 1 and primarily all of Wards 2 and 3) and 36.38% of the calls originated in Fremont Street station's first-in response territory (part of Ward 1 and primarily all of Wards 5, 6, and 7). Less than 0.23% / 10 calls were for mutual aid outside the city.

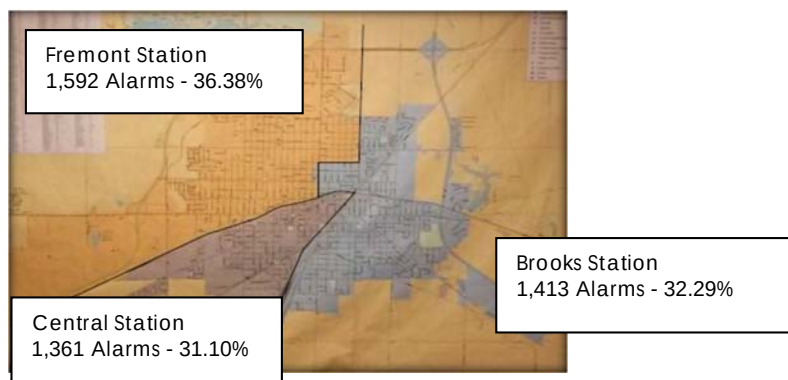


Figure 5
GFD Emergency Responses/Loss by Engine Company Response District

Response Time

Average response time for the first unit on scene at all calls in 2020 was 4 minutes 27 seconds. This is an increase of 16 seconds over the previous year. 89.2% of all calls were responded to in less than 6 minutes from the time of alarm. These figures are somewhat skewed to the high side in that not all responses require a “lights and siren” emergency response. Longer response times for non-emergency calls such as carbon monoxide investigations, invalid assists, and odor investigations represent a significant number of the call volume. The reporting software does not include seconds into the calculations, so this number may be skewed. In addition, members often forget to punch the “on-scene” button in a timely fashion, so the time logging could be delayed.

The average response time for the first due Engine Company at structure fires was 4 minutes 19 seconds. This is 3 seconds longer than 2019. Generally, as the total call volume has increased over the years, this time has incrementally increased. The first engine was on-scene within 5 minutes at 85.1% of all structure fires. This is a negative trend given the department’s goal and NFPA Standard of having the first engine on-scene in 5 minutes (includes a 1 minute reaction time) for 90% of structure fires. We have one incident over 16 minutes in response as it was at the BNSF railyard. If that incident was removed, our average would have been 3 minutes and 8 seconds.

Response Calls by Unit

The statistics shown in Figure 6 represent the response activity of the individual fire apparatus. In 2020, there were a total of 5,268 emergency vehicle responses. Engines 51, 52, and 53 are the front line engines. Engine 54 is the back-up or reserve engine. Unit 55 is the rescue squad at Central Station. When the department is at less than 13 personnel, rescue calls must be handled by Unit 54 in Fremont’s district. Unit #58 serves mainly as the Duty Officer’s Vehicle at Central Station and as the back-up when #55 is out of commission.

Rescue 55 was by far the busiest piece of response equipment due to its function as a rescue squad for EMS calls and a command vehicle for fire alarms. Engine 52 and Engine 54 at the outside stations were again relied on heavily for fire and EMS response in their districts. These pumpers continue to be the department workhorses and their ability to make the projected service life is questionable. To answer part of this issue we did move the new Engine 54 to Fremont and moved Engine 53 to reserve status.

In terms of unit activity per response territory, the area in Fremont Street Station has the most calls. This includes multiple unit responses. This is geographically the largest response area so it would follow that there is more activity in total.

District	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	Total
Central	7	242	43	57	118	1,134	10	2	124	3	1,740
Brooks	7	50	1,132	54	52	250	6	7	102	2	1,662
Fremont	8	51	41	435	786	388	8	4	129		1,850
Outside City	3		3	1	1	3	1	2	1		15
Total	25	343	1,219	547	957	1,775	25	15	356	5	5,267

Figure 6
GFD Annual Unit Emergency Response Totals vs Response Territories

Mutual Aid

The department responded to 10 mutual aid calls outside the city. Of these, 1 call was for East Galesburg Fire Protection. Three of the calls were for MABAS events. On 2 mutual aid calls, our crews were cancelled prior to arriving at the scene.

Deaths and Injuries

There were two fire related civilian deaths. There were eleven minor injuries to firefighters during the year.

NON-EMERGENCY ACTIVITIES

Staffing

- Currently at 42 sworn firefighters with average daily manning at 11.03 personnel
- Conducted annual physicals including optional stress tests according to NFPA standards on all members at Cottage Medical Plaza.
- Completed fitness evaluations via department's Firefighter Challenge course on all union members.
- The Training Division did not complete extinguisher training in 2020 due to COVID.
- Continued to see favorable outcomes using Basic Life Support drugs in our EMS responses. Started in 2016, this has greatly expanded our capabilities to serve the public in life-threatening situations. The use of Narcan was successful on several opioid emergencies, and we see regular use of baby aspirin, breathing treatments, oral glucose, and nitroglycerine. In particular, the frequent use of CPAP (continuous positive airway pressure) has alleviated breathing distress for COPD and CHF patients.

Equipment

- Completed annual testing and maintenance of 3 fire pumps, 1 aerial ladder platform, 16 ground ladders, 48 air paks, 82 air cylinders (20 hydrostatic tests), 98 air masks, numerous hazardous materials monitors, 3 SCBA compressor systems, 3 building sprinkler systems, 155 lock boxes in the city, and 12 fully-encapsulated hazardous materials suits.
- GFD fire hose were tested in April. Any hose that failed was removed from service. The department did not purchase hose during the year.
- Hydrant testing was conducted as per normal
- The department continued inspection of turnout gear as per NFPA 1851. A goal was set in 2018 to equip every firefighter with a front-line and back-up set of turnout gear in 5 years. A 5-year turnout gear contract was bid out and awarded to MES in 2018. GFD purchased 10 new sets of turnout gear and other protective equipment as-needed.
- Completed daily testing of all fire apparatus and associated equipment.
- Firefighters completed the countless daily and weekly checking of apparatus and equipment, cleaning of stations, upkeep on all refrigerators, washers, dryers, and heating systems while attending to public calls for non-emergency service.

Training

- Personnel were offered 82 hours of formal training per firefighter (34 hours in EMS and 48 hours in fire/rescue), maintained EMT certifications on all personnel (11 license renewals) and requirements for state haz mat and tech rescue teams.
- Facilitated monthly regional firefighter testing at the Hawthorne Training Site in cooperation with the University of Illinois Fire Service Institute and State Fire Marshal's Office.
- The MABAS Region #31 Hazardous Materials team maintained its roster and training.

Fire Prevention Bureau

- Performed codes studies and plan reviews for 43 projects, conducted 231 original inspections of commercial occupancies, numerous re-inspections and 30 commercial self-inspections. The department continues to see a downward trend in the number of code violations per year.
- The Fire Prevention Bureau issued 216 occupancy and 17 use permits.
- During Fire Prevention Week and at other times, suppression personnel visited and conducted fire drills at all elementary schools and all Knox College residence facilities.
- In conjunction with the Illinois State Fire Marshal's Office, FF Ben Johnson, designated OSFM School Inspector, inspected all 8 of the public schools in Galesburg.
- The Fire Protection System Records program grew again in 2020. The system insured the annual maintenance and testing of 220 sprinkler systems, 27 standpipe systems, 251 fire alarm systems, 8 fire doors and 108 hood systems. The Bureau notifies building owners to provide documentation of annual testing to the department.

- The GFD fire investigation team, consisting of Captains Schmitt, Captain Seitz and Brackett, Firefighters Clayton, Caruana and Walters conducted 26 Origin and Cause investigations. One hundred and seventy five hours were spent working on fire investigations. Eighty seven of those hours were completed while on duty and 88 hours of overtime investigating fires. Eleven of the fires were determined to be accidental in nature, two were incendiary (or intentionally set), none were of natural causes (lightning), and thirteen fires were undetermined. The estimated dollar loss from these fires is approximately \$406,880. The fire investigation unit worked in conjunction with GPD Special Operations personnel and the Illinois State Fire Marshal's Office. There were two fire fatalities resulting from a residential structure fire.
- The Prevention Bureau continued the smoke detector campaign with area agencies led by the Red Cross.

Community Involvement

- The department was heavily involved in community events and parades as allowed with the COVID pandemic.
- Galesburg Firefighters continued their annual support of the Salvation Army by ringing bells for three days at Wal-Mart.
- GFD and Local #555 came in first in the entire state for the Muscular Dystrophy Association's Golden Boot Award, even without hitting the streets due to COVID, collecting \$15,460 through the "Fill the Boot" campaign. This is a testament to the graciousness of the people of Galesburg and the surrounding area.

Revenue

- The department generated \$27,935 in false alarm fees. Over \$10,635 more than in 2019.
- The number of properties in the Contract Fire Protection Program remained relatively steady at 24 representing annual revenue of \$11,834.90, over \$1,340 more than in 2019.
- The Fire Prevention Bureau issued 216 occupancy and 17 use permits totaling \$8,155

Technology

- Working with the 9-1-1 Coordinator, the Fire Department Secretary and members of the department continued working towards the new record management system. Staff have looked at Tyler and Pro Phoenix.
- Continued to use the fire-recall notification system FireQRVS, to shorten response time and provide a more efficient method of contacting off-duty members during emergencies.

Emergency Management

- KCEMA submitted annual and quarterly documentation for the Emergency Management Performance Grant. The city received \$27,196.99 through a county pass-through from FEMA to offset the Fire Chief's salary.
- KCEMA hosted 4 classes this year for IEMA.
- The KCEMA submitted the Knox County Emergency Operations Plan, The Continuity of Operations Plan, The Continuity of Government Plan, The Alternate Housing Plan and the Disaster Recovery and Redevelopment Plan.

Miscellaneous Department Info

- The department continued to build relationships with other City Departments through common training with GPD and Galesburg Hospitals Ambulance Service. GFD Inspections continued to work closely with the inspectors in Community Development.
- The Galesburg Fire Department continued to partner with Community School District 205 to host the Galesburg Area Vocational Center Fire Science Program.
- The Fire Chief or one of the management staff attended most of the meetings of the Emergency Telephone Systems Board, Fire and Police Commissioners Board, Development Review Committee, Traffic Advisory Commission, City Council, Knox County Board, Western Illinois Firefighters Association, and MABAS Division #31 among others.
- GFD Chaplain Glen Bocox and Photographer Bill Dickerson continue to be valuable assets to the department. Chaplain Bocox assists victims at fire and other emergency scenes by providing insight into what we are doing, information about post-fire details, and comfort. When requested, his work extends to surrounding fire departments. Bill's photography helps document our history and work while also playing a key role in fire investigations.