



AURORA FIRE DEPARTMENT *ANNUAL REPORT*



2023



BY THE NUMBERS

FIRES

- STRUCTURE FIRES • 142
- VEHICLE FIRES • 59
- OTHER FIRES • 121
- TOTAL FIRES = 322

+ MEDICAL CALLS

- EMS CALLS • 17,729
- VEHICLE ACCIDENTS • 1,406
- OTHER RESCUE CALLS • 85
- TOTAL RESCUE/EMS = 19,220



SERVICE

- SERVICE CALL • 515
- GOOD INTENT • 690
- TOTAL SERVICE/GOOD INTENT CALLS = 1,205

FALSE ALARMS

TOTAL FALSE ALARMS = 1,509

SEVERE WEATHER

TOTAL SEVERE WEATHER ALARMS = 4



SPECIAL INCIDENT

TOTAL SPECIAL INCIDENT ALARMS = 12



2023 TOTAL INCIDENTS

22,838

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November 2023 P.O.W. - M.I.A. Remembrance Ceremony

AFD - FIRE CHIEF’S REPORT

It is my privilege to present the Aurora Fire Department’s 2023 annual report. The department saw an increase of almost 1,000 calls compared to 2022, and we were almost 18 percent busier than 2019. As the city continues to build new residential and commercial units, we don’t anticipate slowing down anytime soon.

To address the strain on available resources, we put our first new unit since 2017 into service. On June 10, Medic 13 began running out of Station 9, located on Diehl Road. This ambulance will serve the North Farnsworth corridor, as well as all the City north of the tollway, Stonebridge, and much of Marywood. To man this additional vehicle, we hired our largest group ever. 24 personnel were sworn in on March 20. 21 completed the academy, and 20 of those continue to serve today. We anticipate the need for multiple hiring groups each year for the next couple of years, as Engine 13 and Truck 14 begin operations in the northeast part of the City, and Medic 12 begins to operate out of Station 12, in the southeast portion of the City.

A Training Officer was added to the Training Division to work with the Training Division Chief. This second person in the Division will help ensure our personnel stay trained and ready to answer the call for service when it comes in, as well as help with the large workload that comes with hiring and teaching as many people as we currently are.

Station 4, located at 800 Michels Avenue, has outgrown its useful life span. A deferred maintenance plan identified over \$500,000.00 of work the building would need over the next five years to remain functional. In addition to this, the building, opened in 1965, is too small to accommodate the larger fire apparatus of today, as well as being in close proximity to Station 1. Station 4 will be relocated to the property just east of the Aurora Police Department. The new station will also house the fire department administration, creating a public safety complex, where the leaders of both public safety agencies will be in proximity to each other. This move, along with Station 9 moving to Eola Road between Liberty and New York streets and Station 13 being built at Bilter Road and Nan Street, will provide the best coverage of the city, allowing us to respond with increased efficiency to more calls, and ultimately save more lives and property.

We have not escaped the supply chain issues which began in 2020. It is still taking three years to have an ambulance or fire apparatus delivered from time of purchase. The continued support of many City departments has been realized, allowing us to plan and order the apparatus, ensuring they arrive when we need them.

The daunting tasks of designing and building three fire stations, designing and ordering multiple fire engines, trucks, and ambulances, and hiring and training these many new firefighters is truly a team effort. Every person in the department has helped with some part of the growth, whether it is in administration, or at a station helping train the new personnel so they are ready to respond when you need us. I want to recognize all of the men and women of the Aurora Fire Department for their efforts in 2023 and know they will continue to shine in 2024.

David McCabe
Fire Chief

AFD - DEPUTY CHIEF'S REPORT

Aurora is the second largest city in the state and continues to grow each year along with the demand for emergency services. With the support of the City Administration, City Council, and the citizens, the Aurora Fire Department has met and will continue to meet the future challenges of our expanding responsibilities. The men and women of the Aurora Fire Department are committed to providing the citizens and guests of the City of Aurora with the highest possible level of emergency service in their time of need.

The Aurora Fire Department has seen the demand for emergency services continue to climb. In 2023, the department responded to 22,838 calls for fire/rescue and EMS services. The commitment and support by the City Administration has given the Fire Department the resources to meet these demands. In 2023, the Fire Department held two fire academies. The spring academy provided the department with new members to staff and put the 8th ambulance into service on the north side of the City. The fall academy provided the department with new members to staff and put a ladder truck into service, also on the north side of the City, where future development is beginning rapidly.

Future development in the City prompted the Fire Department's priorities in 2023 to include working with the architects to design the City's 10th fire station along with relocating two current fire stations. The Fire Department is looking forward to breaking ground in 2024 for the three new fire stations.

The Department will hold two fire academies again in 2024. The fall academy will provide the department with new members to staff and put into service the City's 9th ambulance on the far southeast side that is growing. This class of new firefighters will bring the Fire Department's sworn personnel to 251 at the close of 2024.



Fall 2023 Graduation and Promotion Ceremony

Dan Osman
Deputy Fire Chief

AFD - SUPPORT SERVICES

Support Services had an exciting year in 2023. We ordered three fire engines, three ambulances, and one ladder truck for the coming years. The Department took delivery of two new ambulances: Medic 7 and Medic 8. Medic 13 was placed into service responding out of Station Nine in July. The Fire Station buildings project got started with the selection of architects for Station 13, Station 9, and Station 4. Land for Station Nine was selected and procured, and we now know where the three new buildings will be located.

The Department was awarded and accepted an Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) through the Federal Emergency Management Agency to replace fire hoses that are over 20 years old. This will facilitate us in replacing 662 lengths of hose. This grant will bring up to \$287,659 of federal money into the city.

Among the many projects and things accomplished were multiple station projects including bay floor heaters, boilers, garage door replacement, and a new sliding door and window wall at our Central Station. A bathroom remodel was completed at Station 5. Concrete replacement at Station 8 was also done. Architectural work on Station 3's second floor remodel was received, and the construction will occur in 2024.

Matt Anslow
Assistant Chief of Support Services

AFD - OPERATIONS

The Aurora Fire Department takes an all-hazards approach to emergency incidents. In addition to providing EMS and Fire related services, the Fire Department maintains trained professionals in the areas of: water rescue (swift, ice, scuba), trench collapse, confined space rescue, high angle rescue, vehicle extrication, hazardous materials, tactical emergency medical services, child protective seat installation. The delivery of these services is the responsibility of the Operations Division within the Fire Department. The operations division maintains a daily minimum of 55 personnel who operate out of 9 stations that are strategically located throughout the city. Within those stations, the department staffs 12-- fire apparatus (9 Engines/ 3 Trucks), 3 Battalion Chiefs, and 8 Medic units. In 2023, Medic 13 was added to the fleet to better serve the northeast corner of our city. Medic 13 is currently housed at Station 9 until Station 13 is completed. The Aurora Fire Department also provides mutual aid to surrounding communities that are members of MABAS Division 13. This year, Aurora once again experienced its busiest year.

The Operations Division continues to provide and seek innovative resources, techniques, and training for our firefighters to accomplish their jobs safely and effectively. We look forward to a safe and productive 2024 for the men and women of the Aurora Fire Department.

Kevin Nickel
Assistant Chief of Operations

AFD - FIRE PREVENTION BUREAU

The Fire Prevention Bureau is a division of the Aurora Fire Department that was established to help prevent fires within the community. The Fire Prevention Bureau currently consists of the Fire Marshal, (3) Full-Time Inspectors, and (1) Administrative Assistant. With over 200,000 residents in the City of Aurora, and even more daily visitors, the Bureau has the responsibility to ensure everyone is safe. The Bureau accomplishes this by enforcing all adopted fire codes and ordinances at commercial, industrial, healthcare facilities, schools, and even certain residential properties. In partnership with the Engine and Truck Companies of the Aurora Fire Department, these over 8,000 properties are inspected for life safety and fire hazards on an annual basis.

In addition to conducting inspections, the Bureau also participates in community outreach programs such as English and Spanish fire safety talks and demonstrations related to fire prevention and education, fire extinguisher and cooking safety training, and evacuation drills at schools, healthcare facilities, and commercial and industrial businesses. The Bureau and Fire Companies will conduct home safety surveys with any residents that contact the Department, to ensure that they have working smoke and Carbon Monoxide detectors, as well as helping to identify and mitigate any possible trip and fall, fire, or electrical hazards. The Bureau also reviews fire plans for new and existing building and housing developments with the Building and Permits Division of the City of Aurora, to ensure fire response tactics and accessibility are met based on the proper fire and life safety code. The City of Aurora requires all businesses to have Knox Boxes installed, with the Bureau enforcing the ordinance and installation requirement. This program allows a master key to be placed in a secured box that only the Aurora Fire Department has access to. The business owners can purchase the boxes directly on the Knoxbox.com website, and then call the Bureau once installed, so that the keys can be added, and the box secured.

Some of the other responsibilities of the Fire Prevention Bureau and Office of the Fire Marshal are to oversee the Fire Investigations Team, Coordinate Fire Prevention Week and Month activities during October, and assist when needed with the Juvenile Fire Setter's Program.

The Fire Prevention Bureau investigates all citizen complaints related to fire and life safety hazards within the community, as well as any referrals to the Bureau following failed business inspections due to life safety hazards discovered by the Fire Companies. The Bureau, with the assistance of the Property Standards Division, will also investigate and ensure compliance with carbon monoxide emergencies within rental properties.

Other inspections conducted by the Fire Prevention Bureau, include food truck (MFUs), fireworks, hazardous material storage, and fire lanes. In addition, the Bureau will issue operational permits for carnivals, circuses, bonfires, fire pits, tents, and special events.

The following are recorded numbers for some of the mentioned duties conducted by the Fire Prevention Bureau, for the previous year:

FIRE PREVENTION BUREAU

The Aurora Fire Prevention Bureau is responsible for enforcing the following codes:

- City of Aurora Code of Ordinances, Chapter 17 International Fire Code/2015 NFPA Life Safety 101/2015.
- International Building Code/2015.
- Reference NFPA STANDARDS.

A total of 1721 inspections were conducted in 2023.

FIRE PREVENTION BUREAU		FIRE COMPANIES	
Routine Inspections	292	Routine Inspections	1018
Re-Inspections	47	Re-Inspections	174
Special Inspections	56	Complaint Inspections	21
(Includes referrals, complaints, certificate of acceptance, hazmat, tanks, fire lanes, posting corridors, & misc.)			
Food Trucks	11		
Subtotal	508	Subtotal	1213
		TOTAL YEAR INSPECTIONS = 1721	

PERMITS ISSUED

Installation of Above- and Below-Ground Fuel Tanks	5	
Building Fire Suppression Systems	xx	
Building Fire Alarm Systems	xx	
Building Hood Suppression Systems	xx	
Operational Permits (Propane, Hazardous Material, Assembly)	13	
Tent Permits	4	
Fireworks	9	
Open Burning	30	
Outdoor Fireplaces	46	
TOTAL PERMITS ISSUED		107

AFD - TRAINING REPORT

As we reflect on the past year, I am proud to present the annual review of the Fire Department Training Division for 2023. It has been a year filled with challenges, accomplishments, and growth for our department. Through dedication, hard work, and a commitment to excellence, we have continued to enhance our skills, improve our readiness, and serve our community with distinction.

Training Initiatives and Achievements:

1. **Training Programs:** This year, we continue to grow the training programs aimed at improving the skills and preparedness of our firefighters. These programs included firefighting tactics and techniques, specialized training in hazardous materials response, advanced medical care, arson investigation, tactical EMS (swat medics) and the water recovery team,
2. **Simulation Exercises:** Our department conducted a series of realistic simulation exercises to simulate real-life emergency scenarios. These exercises provided valuable hands-on experience and allowed our firefighters to practice their skills in a controlled live environment. We developed our Investigation team by utilizing the structures the City was able to obtain.
3. **Recruit Training:** We continued to grow the Aurora Fire Department by 29 new members in 2023
4. **Paramedic Program:** In 2023 the Aurora Fire Department collaborated with multiple agencies to develop an in-house paramedic program to be kicked off in 2024. In late December, the approval was given by Illinois Department Of Public Health

Professional Development:

1. **Certification and Accreditation:** Multiple members of our department achieved important certifications and accreditations in various areas of firefighting and emergency response. These certifications demonstrate our ongoing commitment to maintaining the highest standards of professionalism and expertise.
2. **Leadership Training:** We invested in leadership development programs to empower our officers and firefighters with the skills and knowledge necessary to excel in their roles. These programs focused on effective communication, decision-making, and team management.

AFD - TOTAL TRAINING HOURS 2023:
91,930

Challenges and Opportunities:

While we celebrate our achievements, we recognize that challenges lie ahead. As we look to the future, we remain committed to addressing emerging threats, staying abreast of advancements in firefighting technology, and continuously improving our training programs to meet the evolving needs of our community.

In closing, I want to express my sincere gratitude to each and every member of the Fire Department for their hard work, dedication, and professionalism throughout the year. Your commitment to excellence is truly commendable, and it is a privilege to help train and develop such an outstanding group of people.

Here's to another year of service, teamwork, and success.

OTHER ACTIVITIES – 2023

BUREAU

FIRE PROTECTION - (Includes fire test, fire suppression, Evacuation plans)	10
PLAN REVIEWS -	23
FIRE PREVENTION PROGRAMS - Attendees: 3,117	41
FIRE DRILLS -	40
HYDRANT FLOW TESTS -	10
VIOLATIONS ISSUED (Includes blocked exits, blocked corridors, non-compliance and failure to comply)	72
ALARM RESPONSES BY THE COMPANIES -	569
FALSE FIRE ALARM VIOLATIONS -	
Chargeable – No Fine Issued	350
Chargeable – Fine Issued	200
CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTOR ACTIVATIONS -	178

Month	Less than 10 PPM	10 to 99 PPM	100 PPM and greater	Total
January	4	7	2	13
February	9	5	1	15
March	2	3	5	10
April	4	5	3	12
May	3	8	2	13
June	9	9	4	22
July	10	11	2	23
August	5	4	2	11
September	4	9	0	13
October	6	4	0	10
November	8	7	0	15
December	8	11	2	21
Total # of CO Incidents for 2023				178

AFD - EMS REPORT

The Aurora Fire Department provides Advanced Life Support (ALS) services to the City of Aurora with eight ALS ambulances and nine ALS fire engines. The ambulances are always staffed with at least two paramedics. The engine personnel include at least one paramedic. During the 2023 year, the Aurora Fire Department responded to 19,223 9-1-1 calls for emergency medical assistance and provided EMS care for 19,820 individuals, up 5 percent over 2022 and up 22 percent from pre-pandemic responses (2019). In addition to 9-1-1 responses, the Aurora Fire Department provided standby medical services for 50 local football games, RiverEdge park concerts, parades, and other community events throughout the city.

A total of five members of the Aurora Fire Department, including two sworn firefighters and three civilian Cadets entered the Southern Fox Valley Paramedic Training Program in 2023. Three sworn firefighters and two civilian Cadets graduated from paramedic training in December because one of the Cadets was hired as a full-time Aurora firefighter during his paramedic training. We continue to work with the area hospitals for continuing medical education to provide the residents of the City of Aurora with highly qualified, skilled, and educated emergency medical providers.

The Aurora Fire Department's Tactical EMS (TEMS) program currently consists of 13 tactical paramedics, four of which are new members added in 2023. With 29 training events completed in 2023, the TEMS medics are specially trained to treat wounded officers and civilians in hazardous environments such as drug interdiction, hostage negotiations, and barricaded subjects. These TEMS medics support the Aurora Police Department SWAT Team, with 24 total activations in 2023. The TEMS medic's role is to provide immediate treatment to injured persons during high-risk law enforcement operations, provide the scene commander with a medical threat assessment, and promote the safety and health of law enforcement personnel.

The Aurora Fire Department has a roster of 16 certified CPR Instructors who provided CPR and first aid instruction to approximately 435 individuals in 2023, from City employees to doctor's offices and public organizations within the City.

The Quality Assurance program for the Aurora Fire Department is responsible for the ongoing review and evaluation of all aspects of EMS from protocols, testing, education, equipment, documentation, and the wide spectrum of patient care provided by Aurora Fire Department paramedics.

In 2022, the Southern Fox Valley EMS System, with input from the Aurora Fire Department, began a review and rewrite of the EMS Protocols that culminated in new and updated guidance for all EMS providers in the region. These new and improved protocols went into effect in April 2023. All EMS providers in the Aurora Fire Department completed training and testing to meet these new Standards of Care.

The EMS Division of the Aurora Fire Department has been actively working with the City of Aurora through its internal and external partners to combat homelessness within the City. These efforts help to pinpoint and guide addiction treatment, counseling, job placement, and other mental health services for the homeless in the community.

EMS is a vital component and integral part of the Aurora Fire Department. EMS continues to evolve and provide outstanding services to all people within the City of Aurora. This is made possible by dedicated and well-trained personnel who are committed to maintaining the highest standard of care that the City of Aurora has come to expect.

Nathan Costner
EMS Division Chief

Fall 2023 Training Burn Down



RETIREMENTS



MARK MATKOVICH
ASST. CHIEF, SUPPORT SERVICES
27 YEARS 0 MONTHS



JAVAN CROSS
FIRE MARSHAL
26 YEARS 0 MONTHS



CHARLES PRBYLSKI
CAPTAIN
28 YEARS 0 MONTHS



PAUL SMITH
LIEUTENANT
22 YEARS 9 MONTHS



GLEN HASENHEYER
CAPTAIN
28 YEARS 4 MONTHS



RANDALL LEEK
SHIFT COMMANDER - BATT. CHIEF
25 YEARS 0 MONTHS



STEVEN WEDLL
LIEUTENANT
21 YEARS 2 MONTHS



CLINT RAFAC
SENIOR PARAMEDIC
27 YEARS 1 MONTH



ERIC CALKINS
CAPTAIN
26 YEARS 3 MONTHS



KRIS TAPPENDORF
DIV. CHIEF OF E.M.S.
23 YEARS 8 MONTHS



ALBERT TORRES
LIEUTENANT
27 YEARS 6 MONTHS



Szilage, Jr. Steven
Badge 526
02/17/03 Hired
01/01/23 Promoted



Keigher, Gregory
Badge 556
08/11/08 Hired
01/01/23 Promoted



Acuff, Matthew
Badge 562
03/29/10 Hired
04/22/23 Promoted



Dixon, John
Badge 579
10/19/12 Hired
04/23/24 Promoted



Calhoun, Aaron
Badge 554
08/11/08 Hired
06/04/23 Promoted



Bledsoe, Joe
Badge 519
02/11/02 Hired
07/24/23 Promoted



Herrick, Jeff
Badge 481
09/29/97 Hired
08/04/23 Promoted



Matile, Jason
Badge 550
10/08/07 Hired
09/27/23 Promoted



Stawikowski, Aaron
Badge 501
08/21/00 Hired
02/13/23 Promoted



Clinton, Thompson
Badge 561
08/11/08 Hired
04/22/23 Promoted



Contreras, Tomas
Badge 527
02/17/03 Hired
04/22/23 Promoted



Oros, Garrett
Badge 571
03/29/10 Hired
04/27/23 Promoted



Kellogg, Daniel
Badge 563
03/29/10 Hired
06/09/23 Promoted



Larson, Jason
Badge 504
08/21/00 Hired
07/24/23 Promoted



O'Donnell, Keith
Badge 548
09/12/05 Hired
08/07/23 Promoted

PROMOTIONS LIEUTENANT

TOTAL SERVICE AT AURORA FIRE DEPARTMENT: 282 YEARS 8 MONTHS



Chomiak III, Michael
Badge 552
10/08/07 Hired
01/01/23 Promoted



White, Jerald
Badge 487
09/21/98 Hired
06/04/23 Promoted



Radde, Brian
Badge 463
02/05/96 Hired
08/27/23 Promoted



Hoffman, Michael
Badge 569
03/29/10 Hired
04/27/23 Promoted



Sprinkle, Abraham
Badge 541
09/12/05 Hired
07/24/23 Promoted



Kerley, Jeffrey
Badge 565
03/29/10 Hired
04/22/23 Promoted

CAPTAIN



Torres, Wilfredo
Badge 451
02/5/96 Hired
01/01/23 Promoted



Allway, Jeremy
Badge 474
03/03/97 Hired
04/27/23 Promoted



Kaufman, Michael
Badge 544
09/12/05 Hired
09/27/23 Promoted

BATTALION CHIEFS

DIVISION CHIEFS

FIRE MARSHAL

ASSISTANT CHIEF



TRAINING
Demas, Jason
Badge 472
03/03/97 Hired
07/24/23 Promoted



E.M.S.
Costner, Nathan
Badge 497
11/22/99 Hired
09/09/23 Promoted



Temes, Christopher
Badge 528
02/17/03 Hired
03/04/23 Promoted



Anslow, Matt
Badge 514
06/04/01 Hired
02/10/23 Promoted

2023 9/11 Ceremony





***TRADITION
HONOR
EXCELLENCE
AND DISCIPLINE***

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Published July 1, 2024