



# ANNUAL REPORT

## LOVES PARK FIRE DEPARTMENT 2023



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# MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF

JAMES HART



Another busy year is in the books for the Loves Park Fire Department. 2023 started with a big change – the retirement of Chief Jerry Wiltfang. He served as our Chief for five years and expanded Loves Park Fire into a full-time professional fire department with a solid foundation of success. We are thankful for all of his hard work. I am honored to step into the role of Fire Chief for our department and strive to always remain humble and ready to serve. I look forward to continuing to raise the bar for success in the future.

I want to thank Mayor Jury, the City Council men and women, and the rest of the City of Loves Park for their ongoing support of our fire department. Since becoming the Chief in January, I have observed that the City and its departments band together as a cohesive unit to address projects and issues. This team approach creates a collaborative culture throughout the City that breeds success.

Our training division has also raised the bar this year. Several of our members have obtained new certifications, including:

- Fire Officer I
- Fire Apparatus Engineer
- Fire Instructor I & II
- Fire Investigator
- Fire Inspector

Four of our members recently graduated from paramedic school and we have enrolled four additional members that are anticipated to graduate in the summer of 2024. We sent three of our members to the Fire Department International Conference (FDIC) where they got the opportunity to learn new and innovative fire service best practices. Training and professional development is one of my top priorities. Continuing education is paramount for the overall success of a fire department.

As the City of Loves Park has grown, so has our call volume. The City of Loves Park Fire Department will continue to seek out creative solutions to meet the needs of the community we are proud to serve. We are committed to regularly evaluate our service delivery, ensuring we are remaining fiscally responsible while still upholding our mission, vision, and values.

Respectfully,

James Hart  
Fire Chief



# 2023 ACCOMPLISHMENTS



- Renewed a 3-year contract with Paramedic Services of Illinois, Inc. (PSI) that includes competitive wages, annual salary increases for retention, annual physicals, and uniforms for our members.
- Hired a full-time Deputy Chief of Operations within the PSI staffing contract.
- Purchased a new command vehicle for the Deputy Chief of Operations.
- Dispatching services changed from Mercy Rock Com to the Winnebago County 911 Center, improving our response times, increasing safety, and gaining more ISO credit, all without increasing expenses.
- Completed the elevator safety program with the Office of the State Fire Marshall, giving us the ability to control all elevator inspections in the City, and giving the City a new source of revenue.
- Started utilizing Flow MSP Pre-Planning software to efficiently pre-plan commercial structures throughout the city, which significantly increases safety and enhances interoperability with outside agencies.
- Implemented a new response policy, adding a Quick Response Vehicle or QRV. The QRV responds to all medical incidents in place of the engine or quint, reducing wear and tear on our large apparatus and saving on repairs.
- Implemented an updated department policy and procedure manual through an agreement with Lexipol, a professional risk management company. These new policies and procedures ensure that our department meets and/or exceeds the standards set forth by NFPA, OSHA, etc.
- Implemented a Community Risk Reduction program, ensuring all commercial occupancies are inspected annually and risks are identified throughout the community that can be mitigated.
- Ordered a replacement breathing air compressor and cascade for station 2.
- Increase in call volume.

# MISSION VISION VALUES



## MISSION STATEMENT

"With pride and dedication, the Loves Park Fire Department strives to provide the highest level of services to preserve lives, protect property, and provide our citizens a safer community to call home."

## VISION STATEMENT

"The Loves Park Fire Department will always strive to remain progressive, innovative, and dynamic to ensure we are delivering the highest level of emergency services afforded to our city."

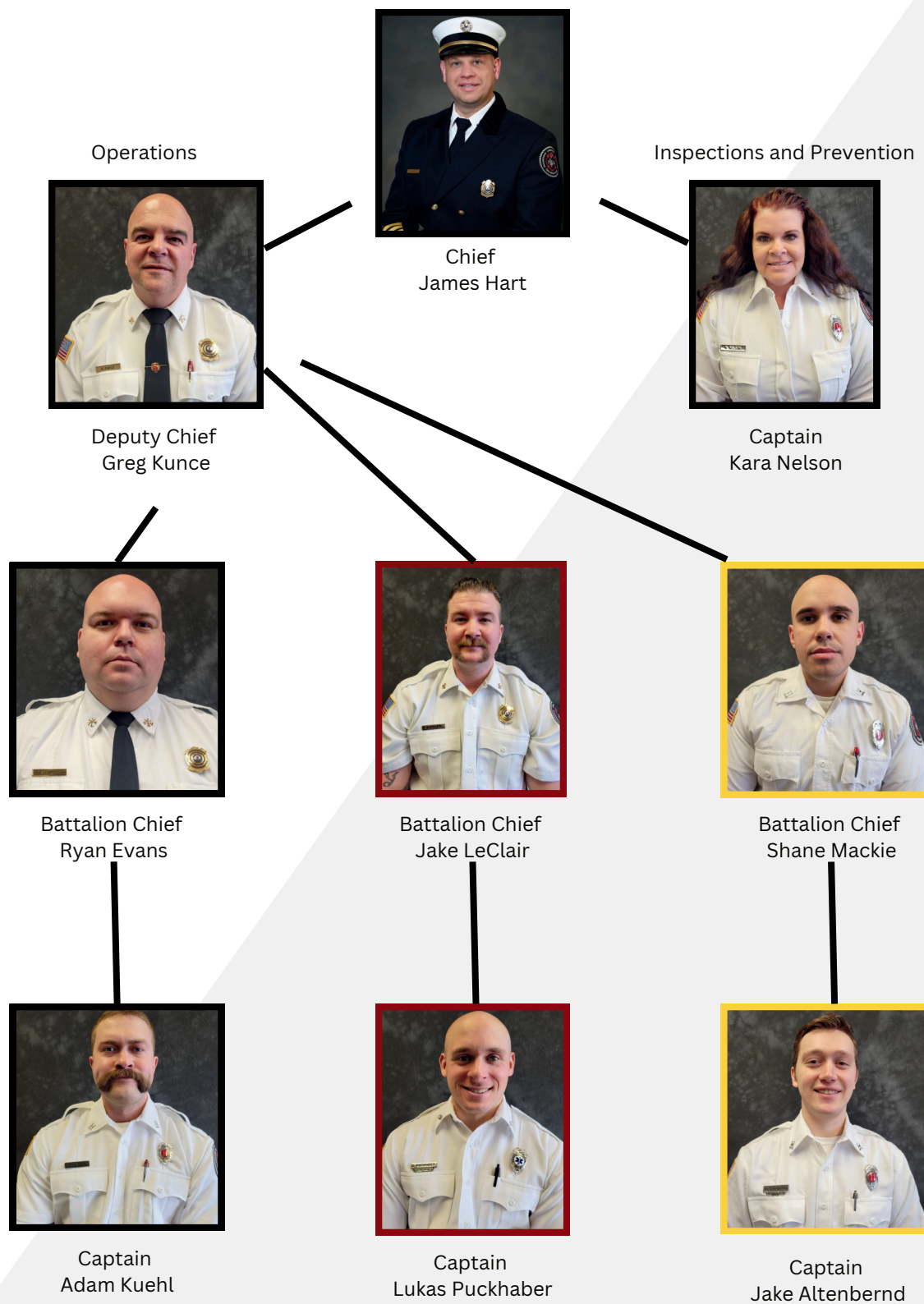
## VALUES

Our members shall display these values in all they do, as representatives of the City of Loves Park and Loves Park Fire Department.

- Honesty
- Integrity
- Compassion
- Respect to All
- Kindness
- A Strong Work Ethic
- Strive for Excellence



# ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



# 2023 PROMOTIONS



Our administration was restructured to include a full-time Deputy Chief of Operations. Greg Kunce accepted this promotion in April of 2023. The Deputy Chief of Operations works a 40-hour work week and focuses on day-to-day operations.



Shane Mackie was promoted from Captain to the Gold Shift Battalion Chief following Chief Kunce's promotion to Deputy Chief of Operations



Jake LeClair was promoted from Captain to the Red Shift Battalion Chief following Chief Hart's appointment as Fire Chief.



Lukas Puckhaber was promoted from FF/PM to the Red Shift Captain following Chief Mackie's promotion.



Jake Altenbernd was promoted from FF/PM to the Gold Shift Captain following Chief LeClair's promotion.



Kara Nelson was promoted from FF/PM to the Captain of Inspections and Prevention after Captain Adam Kuehl returned to shift.

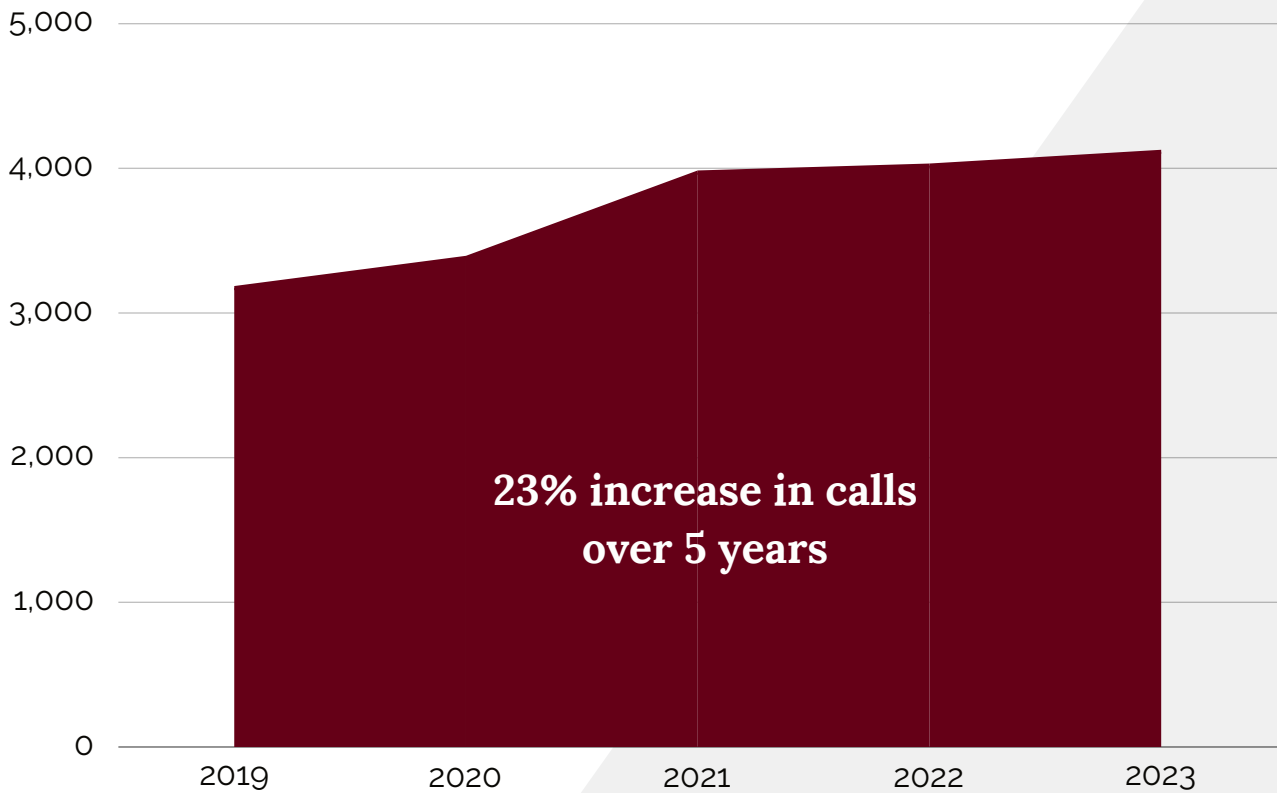


Captain Adam Kuehl returned to shift from Inspections and Prevention to become the Black Shift Captain.

# RESPONSE DATA



## 2023 Calls for Service - 4,114



## TIMES

00:58 seconds

Average Time of Dispatch to Enroute

04:29 mins.

Average Time Enroute to Onscene

# RESPONSE DATA

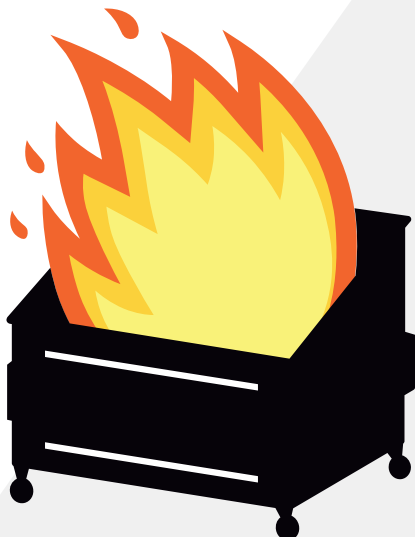


**Automatic Alarms**  
**234**



**Structure Fires**  
**39**

**Vehicle Fires**  
**11**



**Other Types of Fires**  
**34**

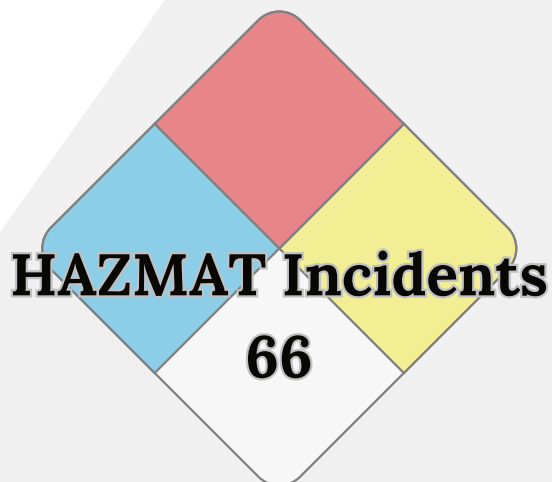
# RESPONSE DATA



**EMS Calls**  
**3,042**



**Public Assists**  
**383**



**HAZMAT Incidents**  
**66**

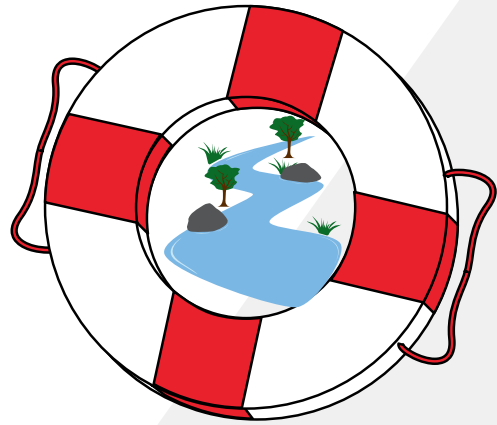
**Smoke/Odor Investigations**  
**45**

# RESPONSE DATA



## Water Incidents

7



## All Other Call Types

253

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## Mutual Aid Incidents

Mutual Aid Given	Mutual Aid Received	Auto Aid Given	Auto Aid Received
251	122	25	38

# RESPONSE DATA



## Stations



Station 1  
1,232 Incidents

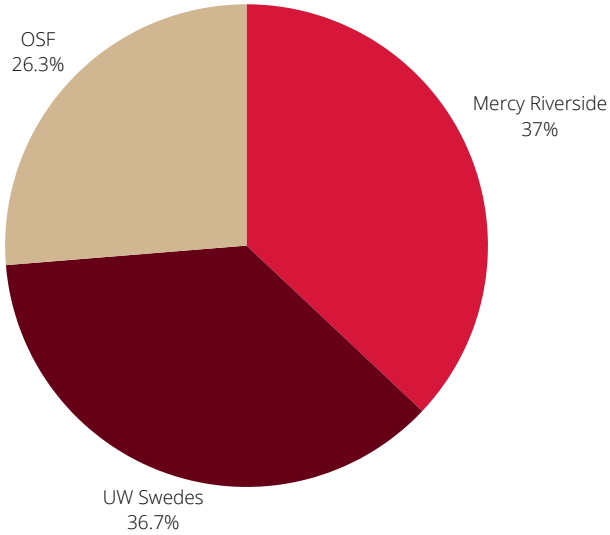


Station 2  
2,882 Incidents

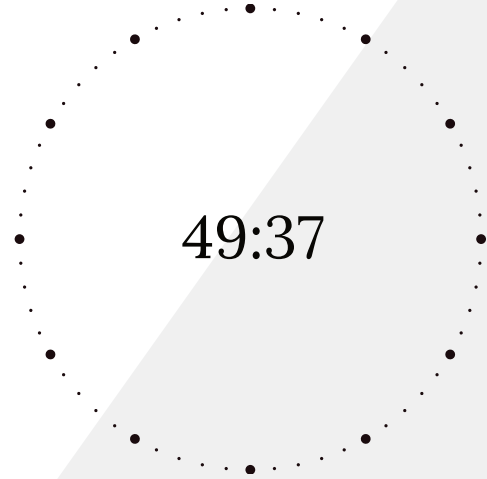
# EMS INCIDENT STATISTICS



## Transport Destinations



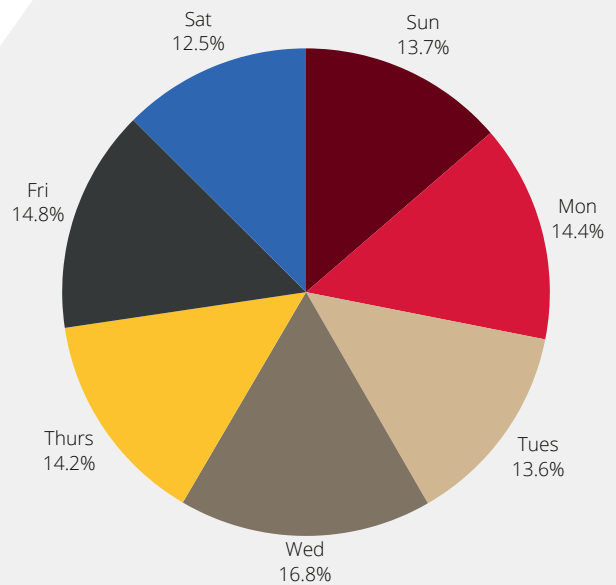
## Average EMS Incident Duration in Minutes



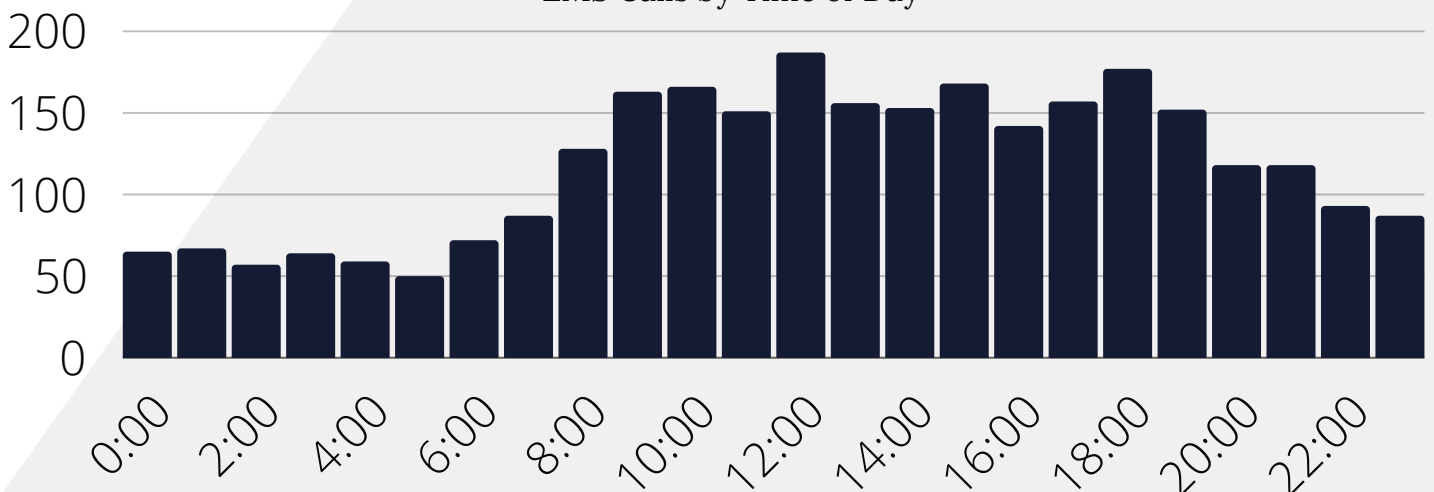
## Average Transport Time in Minutes



## EMS Calls by Days of the Week



## EMS Calls by Time of Day



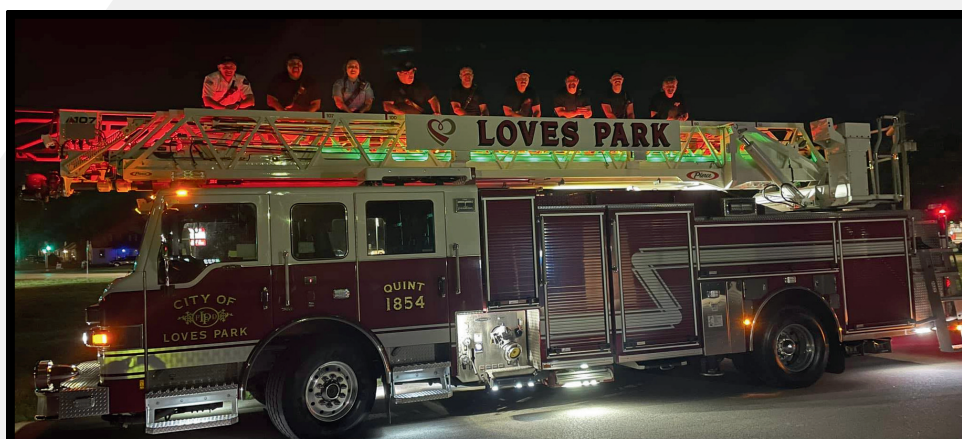
# INSPECTIONS AND PREVENTION



The Loves Park Fire Department Inspections and Prevention Bureau led by Captain Kara Nelson had a very busy and productive year. We are committed to ensuring our community is a safe place to live and do business. Captain Nelson took ownership of this by ending the year with over 1,000 inspections, events, pre-plans, etc.

With the restrictions of COVID-19 coming to an end this year, Captain Nelson was able to get us back into local schools for drills, fire prevention education, and other public relations events. It was a pleasure to get back out into the community. This gives us the ability to meet community members and build relationships during planned events, not just during an emergency. We are looking forward to another great year in 2024.

TYPE OF INSPECTION	TOTAL
Fire Protection System Tests	31
New Business/Business Licenses	132
Annual/General Inspection	681
Special Event	24
Pre-Plans Created	202
School Drills	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,075</b>

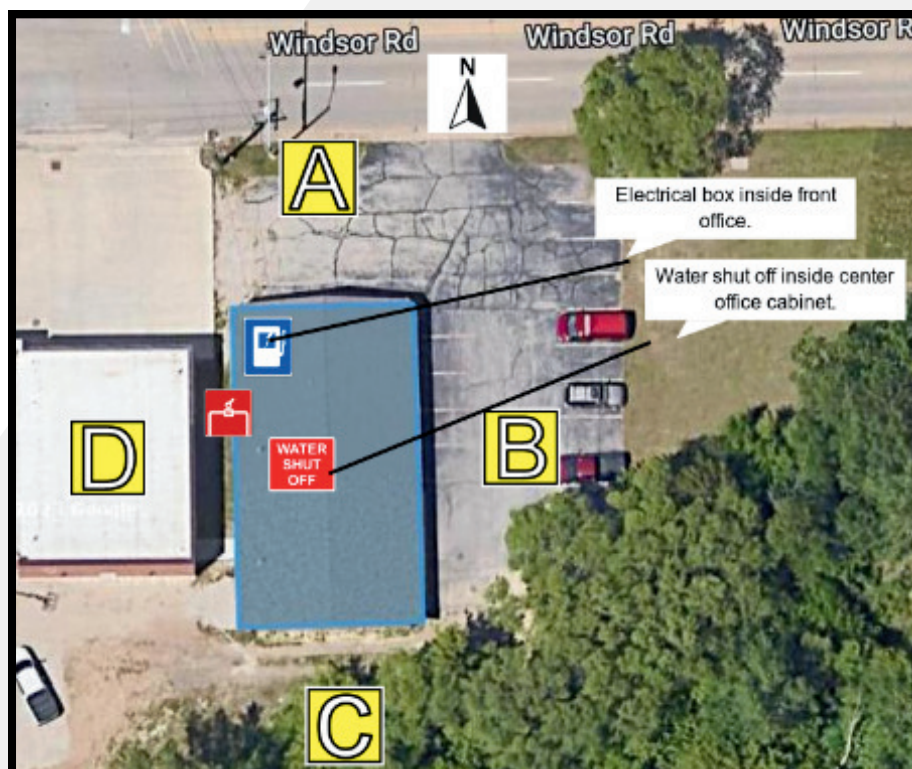


# PRE-INCIDENT PLANNING



FlowMSP gives us the ability to plan ahead, making us much more prepared for emergencies. This not only makes us more efficient and prepared but will also give us additional credit towards our ISO rating in the future.

Below are two examples of aerial images that we will see on our way to an incident involving a building we have pre-planned. This software also displays the construction type, occupancy type, needed fire flows, hydrant locations with flow rates, known hazards, contact information, etc. This is an invaluable tool in the event of a large incident.



# DEPARTMENT TRAINING



Chief James Hart and the members of the Loves Park Fire Department believe that training is the backbone of a successful and efficient fire department. The purpose of the Training Division is to enhance our skills to an essential level to provide the best care possible for the citizens of Loves Park as well as the surrounding area. This is obtained by providing purposeful, and up-to-date training opportunities to best fit the situations that may be encountered when responding to emergencies. The Training Division is responsible for developing, and distributing training to our members. The Company Officers ensure that trainings are completed by each of their members daily.

Our department utilizes a records management software program called VectorSolutions to record and track assigned training for the year. The monthly training is developed and entered into the software to ensure compliance with the Insurance Service Office (ISO) training standards. An ISO training credential is assigned annually to department members based on each individual's job classification for the calendar year. There is a minimum of 240 hours of annual training assigned to the credential. These hours are further broken down into the following categories:

- Company Training Hours: 192
- Facilities Training: 18
- Officer Training: 12
- Driver Training: 12
- Hazardous Material Training: 6

This ISO training credential is strictly related to firefighting activities. Department personnel also participate in monthly Emergency Medical Services (EMS) training. Additionally, various personnel train in areas such as vehicle and machinery extrication, active shooter response, and surface water and ice rescue.

Respectfully,

Shane Mackie  
Battalion Chief & Training Officer



# DEPARTMENT TRAINING



Our members completed a combined total of 8,697.5 hours of training in calendar year 2023.

Additionally, our members attended the following classes:

- Chief James Hart - Fire Investigator
- Batt. Chief Ryan Evans - Instructor 2
- Capt. Kara Nelson - Fire Inspector 1
- Capt. Jake Altenbernd - VMO
- Capt. Lukas Puckhaber - VMO, CoFo
- Capt. Adam Kuehl - VMO, CoFo
- FF/PM Noah Evans - VMO, Instructor 1
- FF/PM Sidney Thompson - VMO
- FF/EMT Eduardo Diaz - VMO, Currently in the Paramedic Program
- FF/EMT Andrew Helser - VMO, Currently in the Paramedic Program
- FF/EMT Brent Tullock - Rope Ops
- FF/EMT Joshua Pawolski - Basic Ops Fire, TRA, FSVO, Hazmat Ops, Paramedic Graduate
- FF/EMT William Pretzer - Basic Ops Fire, TRA, FSVO, Hazmat Ops
- FF/EMT Jorge Mondragon - Basic Ops Fire, TRA, FSVO, Hazmat Ops
- FF/EMT Cameron Schuring - Paramedic Graduate
- FF/PM Mike Ahrens - Paramedic Certification
- FF/EMT Jake Watson - Currently in the Paramedic Program
- FF/EMT Jake Schiro - Currently in the Paramedic Program
- FF/EMT Noah Dillon - Paramedic Graduate
- FF/EMT Brian Kippell - Currently in the Paramedic Program

# COMMUNITY RISK REDUCTION



This year, our department turned part of our focus outward toward our community to reduce identified risks. The community risk reduction program is a part of our fire prevention and inspections bureau that focuses specifically on identifying risks throughout the community. Risk is defined as anything that could pose a real or potential threat to life or property. We can identify a risk by utilizing response data, census data, and actual knowledge of a real or potential risk. After the risk is identified, the real work begins. Our community risk reduction team, comprised of our Captain of Inspections and Prevention, the Deputy Chief of Operations, and the Fire Chief, get to work brainstorming ways to mitigate, reduce, or resolve the risk. After a plan is developed, we work diligently with community members/stakeholders, city officials, other city departments, local relief organizations, etc. to fully implement the plan.

## 2023 Community Risk Reduction Projects

- **Household Smoke Alarms**

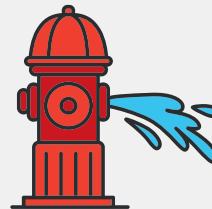


Many households throughout the community do not have functioning smoke alarms. This is because of neglect, lack of regular maintenance, or the inability to afford new or replacement alarms.

We have partnered with The American Red Cross to aid us in eliminating this risk throughout the community. The American Red Cross provides our department with new smoke alarms and we install them in households throughout our community that are in need.

Citizens who need smoke alarms are encouraged to call our Fire Inspections and Prevention Bureau at 815-654-5049 to schedule an appointment. During this appointment, we will conduct a home safety survey, identifying any fire and life safety risks within your home, discussing our findings and ways to eliminate risks, and installing the new smoke alarm(s).

- **Forest Hills Village- Lack of Adequate Fire Hydrants**



In the spring we identified that several of the fire hydrants within the Forest Hills Village neighborhood were not capable of supplying an adequate amount of water for fire suppression, per the National Fire Protection Association's (NFPA) standards. This was because of inadequate water main sizes and an aging water system within the neighborhood. This raised concern, as a significant lack of available water in the event of a large fire would pose a serious threat to property and potentially lives.

Forest Hills Village is a privately owned mobile home community with a private water system. So, we have been working diligently with the owners of the property, the Loves Park Water Department, and the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) to resolve this issue. Forest Hills Village took this concern very seriously, eventually hiring a third party to develop a model that could permanently resolve this issue. Forest Hills Village hired ARC Design to develop a plan to upgrade the water system and install new adequate hydrants that would meet the NFPA standard.

ARC Design has created a plan that provides significant upgrades and that meets the NFPA standards. This plan has been approved by the fire department and the water department and implementation of this plan is hoped to begin in early 2024.

This is a huge victory for the safety of all those who live in Forest Hills Village.

# CAPITAL PURCHASES



**2023 Polaris Ranger  
UTV Wildland Vehicle**

**New Breathing Air Compressor  
Cascade System**



**2023 Chevrolet Silverado 1500  
Deputy Chief Command Truck**

# PRIMARY APPARATUS



**Engine 1801**



**Quint 1854**



**Medic 82**



**Medic 81**



**QRV 1845**



**Battalion 18**

# PROJECT FIRE BUDDIES



Project Fire Buddies, Inc.

"Our story -

*In December 2016, a young child who was battling cancer fell ill with a high fever. A group of Oak Forest Firefighters answered the 911 call, transporting the child to the hospital for life-saving treatment.*

*The experience touched our hearts and we wanted to do more to help. So, we reached out to some of the other firefighters at the Oak Forest Fire Department and created Project Fire Buddies.*

*Project Fire Buddies brings joy to kids struggling with serious illnesses. In our first year, we ran a Christmas toy drive, collecting presents from generous community members and purchasing some themselves, then delivering the gifts to the children's homes. The first responders went big, showing up in shiny fire trucks, police cruisers, and ambulances with sirens blasting and lights shining. No matter what the kids were going through at the time—chemotherapy, radiation, or side effects from their medication and treatments—these visits brightened their day. The smiles were contagious.*

*Since then, Project Fire Buddies has kept expanding, sponsoring multiple children throughout the year. This year, we're looking to sponsor many more children who could use some good cheer. Our volunteers visit with their fire buddies at home, play games, read books, bring gifts for special occasions, and show the kids just how special they are.*

*Project Fire Buddies started with the Oak Forest Fire Department, but our ranks keep expanding with new departments set to join in the mission this upcoming year. Visit our Departments page to see if a fire or police department near you is part of the Project Fire Buddies family."*

This year our department became the first chapter of Project Fire Buddies outside of the  
Chicago suburb region.

Helping kids during a difficult period of their lives was something we could all get on  
board with.

If you know of a child in need locally, please visit  
<https://www.projectfirebuddies.org/loves-park>

Our chapter of Project Fire Buddies...

## Loves Park Chapter Board

**Andrew Helser**  
President

**Kara Nelson**  
Vice President

**Josh Powlowski**  
Secretary

**Mario Lara**  
Board Member

# DEPUTY CHIEF STEVEN PASH



Sadly, this year we had to say goodbye to one of our brothers. Deputy Chief Steve Pash served the community for 48 years as a member of the Loves Park Fire Department since 1975. Deputy Chief Pash retired in April and unfortunately passed away in September. His service to the department and community will not be forgotten. The fire department administration building will forever be dedicated in his honor.



# PHOTOS FROM 2023



# PHOTOS FROM 2023



# PHOTOS FROM 2023



# THANKS FOR A GREAT 2023



As we move into another year we are looking forward to further growth and opportunities to serve our great community. 2024 is already off to a great start. Make sure you stay tuned to our social media pages and website for up-to-date information and details about the department.

Sincerely,

James Hart  
Chief

