



GREAT FALLS FIRE RESCUE

2023-2024 REPORT





EDUCATION • PREVENTION • RESPONSE



Great Falls Fire Rescue

> Introduction



Jeremy Jones

Fire Chief

A Word From the Fire Chief:

It is my honor to present the two-year annual report of Great Falls Fire Rescue. This report reflects not just numbers on paper, but the dedication, adaptability, and resilience of the men and women who serve our community every day.

Over the past two years, GFFR has continued to evolve in how we provide all hazards emergency services. Through careful adjustments to our response model, we have reduced call volume by prioritizing critical life-safety incidents and partnering with allied agencies better positioned to handle non-emergent needs. These changes ensure that when the seconds matter most, our firefighters are ready and able to respond.

Our commitment to community engagement has also deepened. We've expanded efforts to connect through education on fire and life safety, and by continuing to build partnerships that make our community stronger and safer. These relationships are the heart of who we are as a department.

This period has also brought challenges. The failure of a public safety levy and bond was disappointing, as those initiatives represented much-needed investments in the future of our service. Nonetheless, the men and women of GFFR remain steadfast in their commitment to doing the job to the best of their ability, every day, with the resources available.

We have also seen moments of bittersweet change. Retirements of respected colleagues marked the close of proud careers, even as we celebrated the arrival of new firefighters as well as the well-earned promotions of others. This cycle of transition embodies the strength of our department - experience and tradition passing into the hands of a new generation of dedicated professionals.

I am proud of the progress we've made, the challenges we've met, and the unwavering service our department provides. To the members of Great Falls Fire Rescue, thank you for your courage, your commitment, and your heart. To our community, thank you for your trust and partnership. Together we will continue to move forward, resilient and dedicated to protecting lives and property.

With respect,

Jeremy Jones
Fire Chief
Great Falls Fire Rescue

Mission

To protect lives and property by delivering professional, all hazards emergency services to our community through public education, fire prevention, training, and response.



Vision

To make a difference by providing progressive response and innovative avenues of safety and education to everyone we serve.



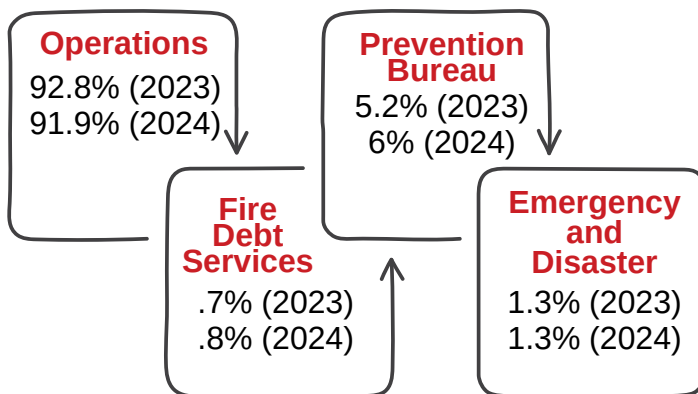
Budget At A Glance

GFFR's Fiscal Year Runs from July 1 - June 30

	FY'23	FY'24	FULL TIME POSITIONS
FIRE OPERATIONS	\$9,825,279	\$10,213,434	65.6
FIRE PREVENTION	\$548,069	\$666,332	4.4
EMERGENCY & DISASTER	\$134,774	\$147,310	1
FIRE DEBT SERVICE	\$77,046	\$85,959	-
TOTAL	\$10,585,168	\$11,113,035	71

BUDGET BREAKDOWN

How GFFR's budget is distributed to each division within the dept.



Budget Definitions

Personal Services - Costs of paying employees, including salaries, wages and benefits.

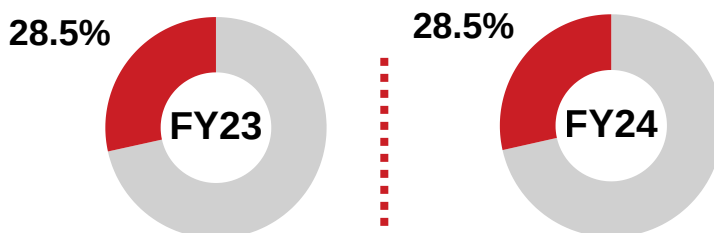
Supplies - Costs of office supplies, repair and replacement for equipment.

Purchased Services - Costs of services provided by vendors to accomplish routine, continuing and necessary functions.

Internal Services - Costs of services provided by another City department (i.e. accounting, equipment maintenance, or human resources).

Debt Services - The repayment of 's borrowed money, with interest, on a payment schedule.

GFFR and the City's General Fund



GFFR is funded through the City's General Fund. These graphs reflect what percentages of the General Fund's expenditures are designated to GFFR

GFFR's 2023 & 2024 Budget

80% is designated to Personal Services

3% is designated to Supplies

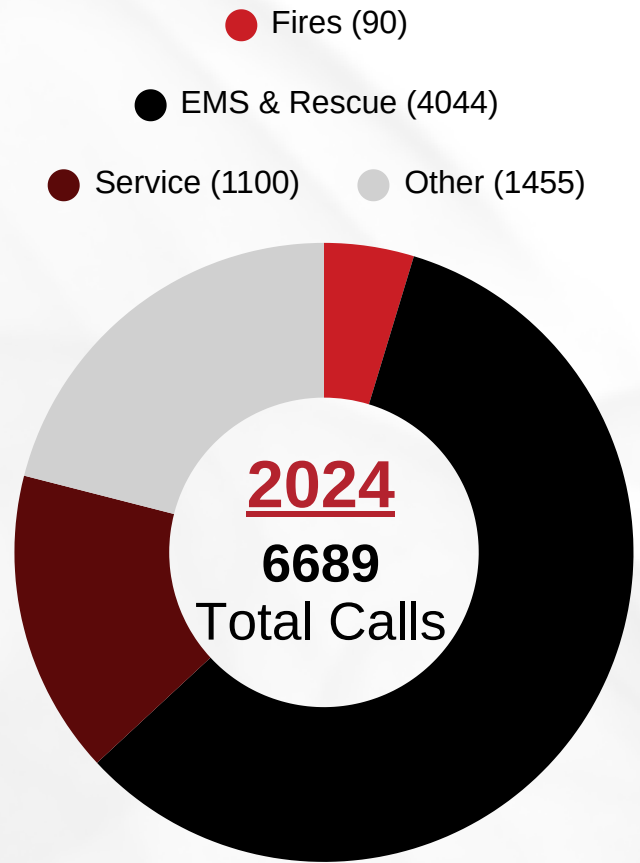
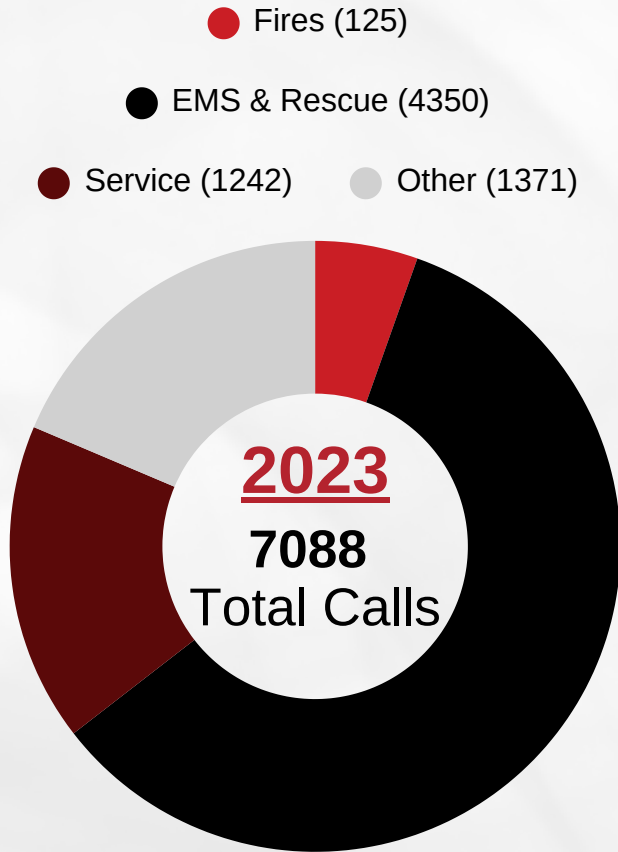
4% is designated to Purchased Services

12% is designated to Internal Services

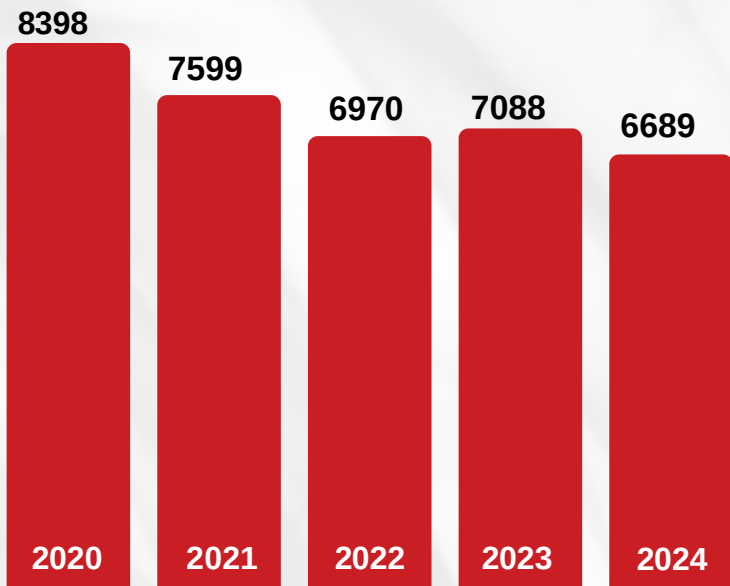
1% is designated to Debt Services

(All percentages are rounded up or down to the nearest whole number)

INCIDENTS

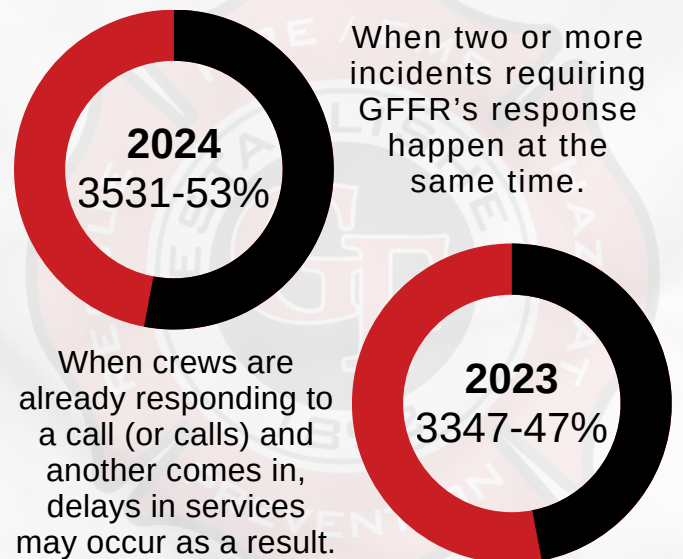


Total Incidents 2020-2024



Decrease of incident numbers beginning in 2021 was a result of GFFR no longer automatically responding to minor medical calls.

Overlapping Incidents



“Service” Calls: Lift Assists; Public Service; Police Matters; Water/Steam Leaks; Other Water problems; Lock-out; Person in Distress

“Other” Calls: Overpressure, Explosion; Hazardous Condition - No Fire; Good Intent; False Alarm; Severe Weather; Special Incidents



FIRE INCIDENTS

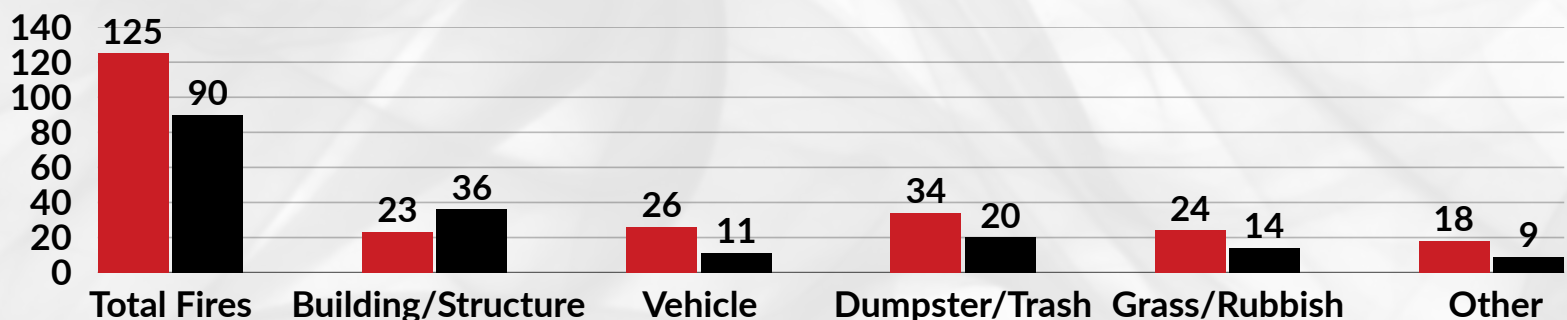
Fire Loss
(Damage from fire, smoke,
water and overhaul)

Smoke Detectors
present in
Building/Structure Fires

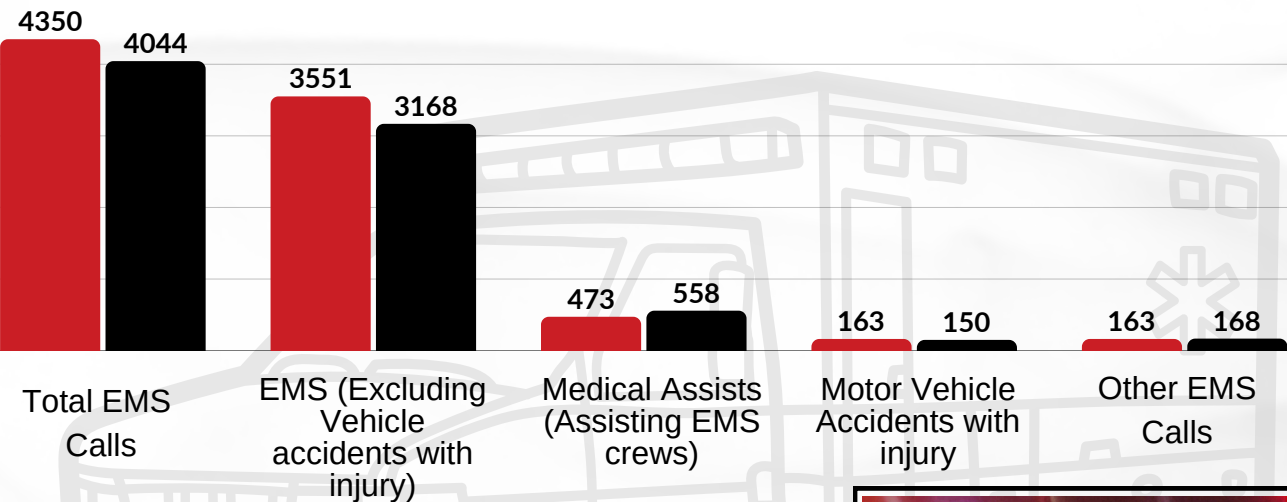
	<u>2023</u>	<u>2024</u>		<u>2023</u>	<u>2024</u>
Property Loss	\$1,127,150	\$1,999,550	Yes	10	15
Content Loss	\$213,300	\$732,360	No	7	8
			Undetermined	6	13

Fire Calls

● 2023 ● 2024



Emergency Medical Services



Total GFFR Transports

(2023) 162

(2024) 72

WHY the Decrease?

City Ordinance designates GFFR to provide oversight of EMS in the City. The City contracts with Great Falls Emergency Services (GFES) to be the primary agency to transport patients from the incident location to the hospitals.

GFFR transporting patients is dependent on the capacity of GFES staffing and their available responding units. GFFR and Dispatch are notified of GFES' available responding units daily. GFFR will provide or assist with patient transport when GFES units are otherwise committed.

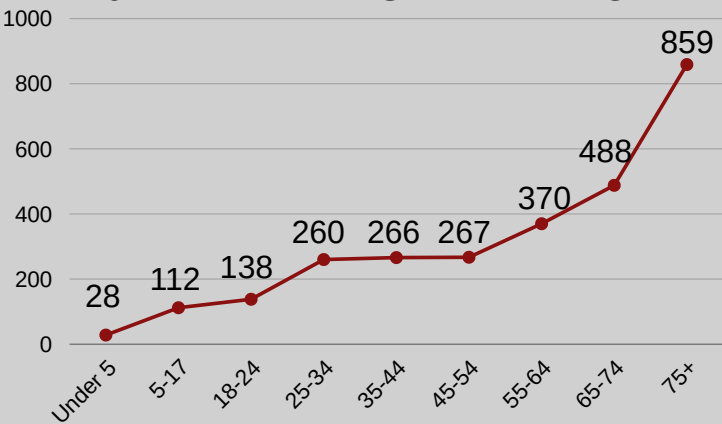
GFFR focuses its response on the most critical, life-threatening emergencies, especially when resources are limited. By prioritizing and/or redirecting non-emergency calls to the appropriate partners, we ensure our crews are available to respond quickly when lives are at risk. If non-emergency calls are not handled properly, they can tie up units and delay response to life threatening emergencies. Thanks to strong coordination efforts, the need for GFFR to provide patient transport decreased in 2024.



Cardiac Arrest Patients Responded To and Treated



2024 PATIENT AGE BREAKDOWN



*Patients numbers are categorized by years of age

By the Numbers

2023-2024 Response Snapshot

2024 GFFR worked to reduce calls that request assistance lifting patients or residents at staffed care and residential facilities.

Lift Assists

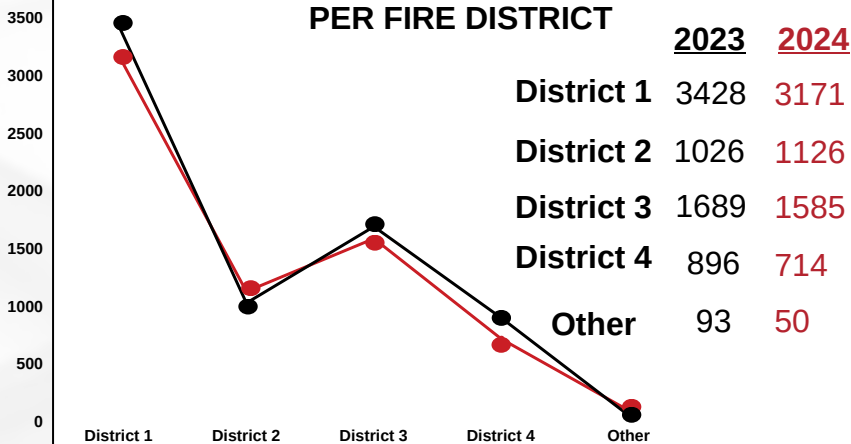
-15.5% from 2023



Motor Vehicle Accidents with Injuries

150 (2024) 13 Less than 2023 (163)

GFFR'S RESPONSE TO INCIDENTS PER FIRE DISTRICT



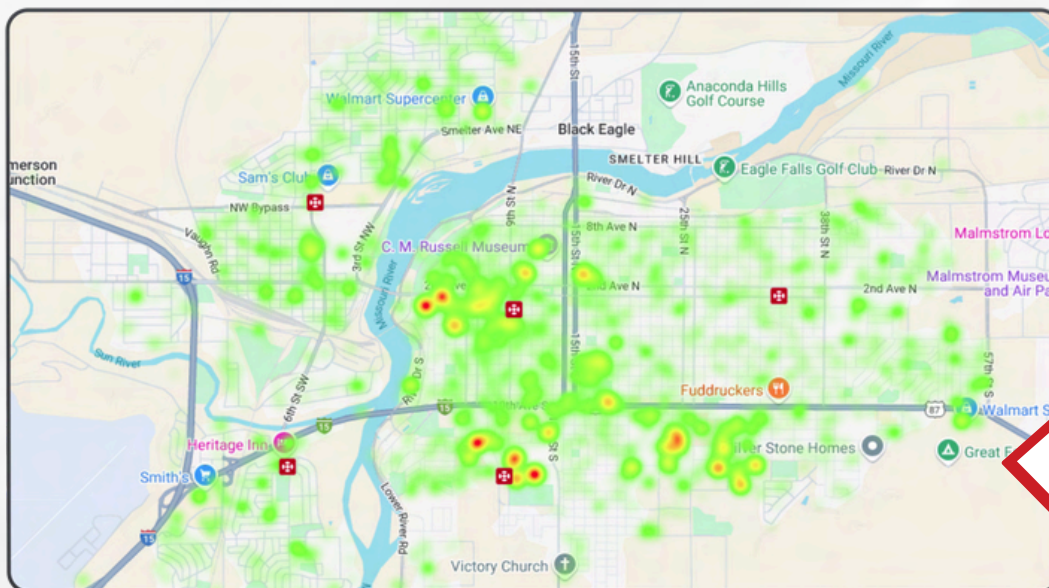
Service Calls - 2024

1100 ↓ -142 from 2023(1242)

Average Travel Time

From notification issued from dispatch to GFFR's arrival at scene

2023 4m 39s 2024 4m 44s



2024 experienced **MORE** building fires than 2023



23 (2023)
36 (2024)

2024 GFFR's Response Heatmap

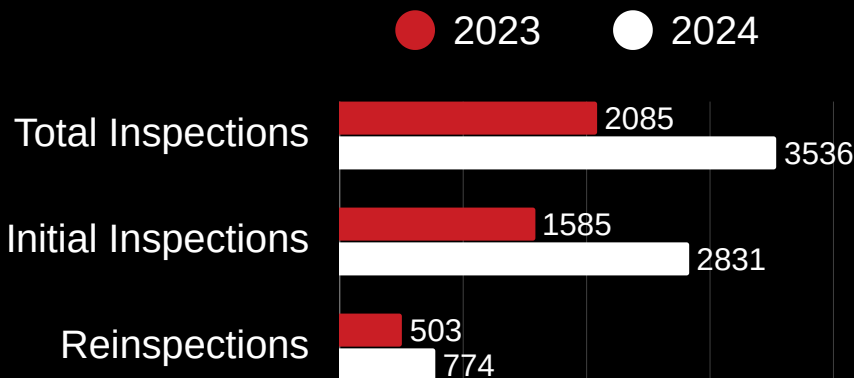
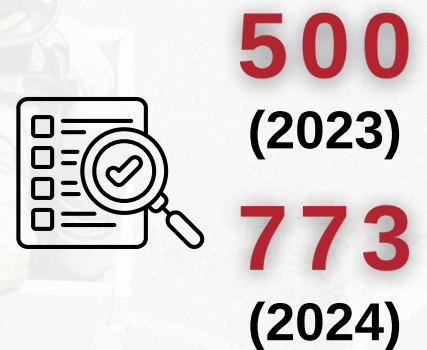
*Response areas are indicated in green, yellow, and red. Areas with higher response volume are indicated in yellow and red.

SAFETY STARTS HERE: INSPECTIONS THAT PROTECT

Inspections Types:

- ☒ Annual Inspection/ Safety Inspection Certificate (SIC)
- ☒ Fire Alarm Acceptance
- ☒ Hood System Acceptance Test
- ☒ Mobile Food Vendor
- ☒ Sprinkler System Acceptance
- ☒ Sprinkler System Flush
- ☒ Sprinkler System Hydro Test
- ☒ Reinspections

Inspection Violations (Includes Reinspections)



New Mobile Food Vendor and Temporary Cooking Operations Requirements

All Montana ExpoPark food vendors passed the State's new fire code requirements with 100% compliance



In 2023, the State of Montana adopted the 2021 International Fire Code (IFC), which introduced new safety requirements for mobile food preparation vehicles under Section 319. This section references the 2021 NFPA 96 Standard focusing on mobile food vendors and temporary cooking operations.

While these changes created some challenges adjusting to the State's new requirements, GFFR worked closely with vendors by providing checklists, guidance and resources to make compliance achievable.

Thanks to these partnerships, participating vendors successfully met the code safety requirements ensuring safer operations for both operators and the public.

Fire Prevention Bureau

Executive Fire Officer Graduate, Assistant Chief McIntosh

Assistant Chief of Prevention, Michael McIntosh joined only 16 other firefighters as a graduate of the Executive Fire Officer Program in 2024.

The EFO Program has an extensive application process and takes 2 (up to 4) years to complete.



The EFO Program is structured to empower executive officers to develop, maintain and expand their abilities to apply effective communication skills, strategically plan for a prepared and safer community, prioritize personal and organizational growth, exercise leadership to meet the challenges of the department and community and develop, evaluate and implement public policies.

Arson Investigation Training

GFFR hosted the Montana Chapter of the International Association of Arson Investigators annual training during May of 2024. Attendees included law enforcement, fire service investigators and private insurance investigators.



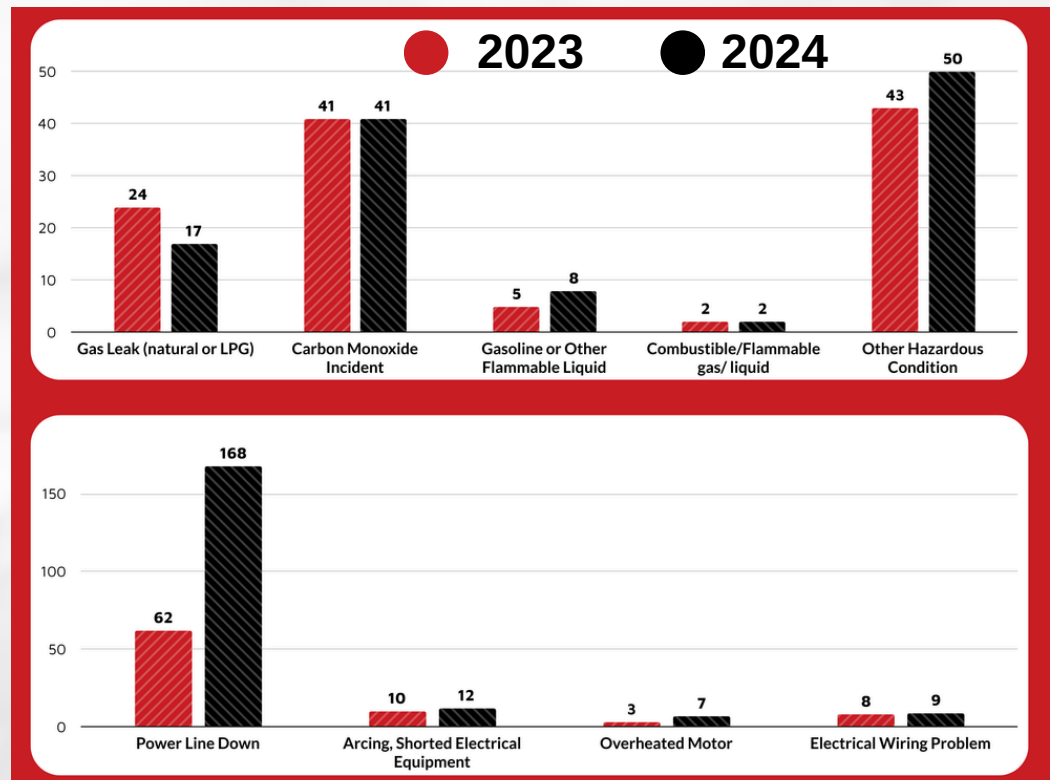
Building to Burn

GFFR was grateful to Groupe ADF Inc. and Great Falls College MSU for jointly working with us to build two reusable burn cells that GFFR will use for educational demonstrations and fire investigation training! The burn cells were completed and delivered in April of 2024.

Groupe ADF Inc. designed the plans with GFFR's vision, and Great Falls College MSU welding students made the vision come to life.



Hazardous Materials/ Hazardous Conditions



Planning, Preparedness and Partnerships

Great Falls Fire Rescue and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) of Region 8 conducted a hazardous material tabletop exercise that focused on identifying strengths and areas for improvement when responding to (2) chemical release events in Great Falls.

Over 40 people representing 24 organizations attended and discussed capabilities including: Operational Coordination; Operational Communications; Public Information and Warning; Environmental Response/ Health & Safety; and Planning. Goals of the exercise were to increase awareness of local responsibilities and support activities in response to a hazmat incident and identify potential weaknesses in plans and procedures during a high stress event.



July 2024

Hazmat
Response
Tabletop
Exercise



Grants and Donations

GFFR Receives Assistance to Firefighters Grant Award

March 2023, GFFR received notification from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) that they were awarded \$990,500.00 to purchase an aerial apparatus replacing GFFR's 96' Quint Aerial through their Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) submission. City Commission voted to support GFFR applying for the AFG grant and approved funding for the 10% match and remaining cost of purchasing the new aerial apparatus.

Great Falls Fire Rescue's new aerial was delivered during October of 2023, where it underwent a post-delivery inspection and crews completed manufacturer training. October 26th, 2023, the 23' Pierce Enforcer Ascendant was put into front line service. The 96' Quint was retired, no longer used for emergency response.



2023 Pierce Enforcer Ascendant - \$1,512,975.80
FEMA AFG Award - \$990,500.00

Remaining Balance - \$522,475.80 (paid out of GFFR FY23 Budget and Central Garage Reserve Budget)

Railcar Donation Enhances Readiness



August of 2024, GFFR was donated a railcar training prop for our firefighters for enhanced training for high/low pressure ruptures or leaks, confinement exercises and plenty of other complex scenario based rail incidents.

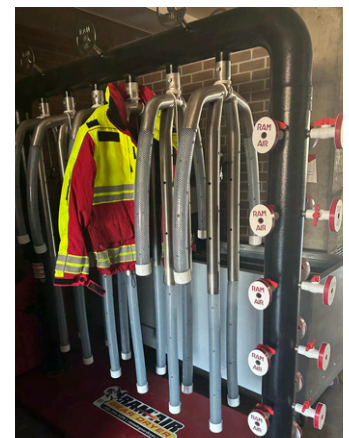


Community contributors included Jimmy Flipowicz of Steel Etc., M&D Construction, Maxim Crane, Sletten Construction and BNSF for their help moving and securing the prop at GFFR's Training Center.

Leary Foundation Grant Awarded to GFFR

After years of unsuccessful funding attempts, GFFR was awarded the 2024 Leary Foundation Grant. The \$1200 grant funded a gear dryer to improve efficiency, extend the life of protective gear, and reduce maintenance.

Previously, gear was dried by fans blowing on gear hanging on pipes in the basement of Station 1 - a slow process that left firefighters relying on backup gear with lower safety standards. The new dryer improves response readiness and better protects GFFR's firefighters from harmful contaminants.



Community Focused, Professionally Driven

COMPANY OFFICER ACADEMY

2023 was the first year of GFFR held their Company Officer Academy. This academy focuses not only on emergency response management but organizational leadership as well.

GFFR is always looking for ways to develop our members to provide the highest level of community service.



CITIZENS ACADEMIES

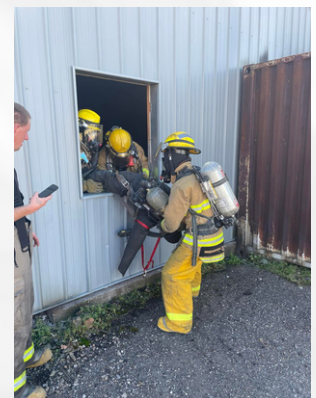
GFFR's Citizen's Academy offers community members the chance to gain first hand knowledge and experience of the services we provide to our community.

For 6 weeks, participants learned about topics ranging from fire suppression to technical rescues.



TRAINING TOGETHER

Members of area fire departments train with GFFR focusing on risk management, Maydays and rapid intervention to improve skills as well as interoperability among multiple departments.



LEADERSHIP TRAINING

GFFR members are offered the opportunity to participate in the City of Great Falls Leadership Training Program.

Engineer Nolan Taylor was GFFR's 2024 participant who completed the multiple week training with other emerging leaders throughout the City's Departments.



The Next Chapter Awaits

GFFR celebrated the retirements of several of its finest.



2023
Battalion Chief
Jeff Jackson
33 Years



2023
Captain
Dan Cherry
27 Years



2023
Deputy Chief
of Training
Nolan Eggen
20 Years



2023
Engineer
Ben Zietzke
20 Years



2024
Assistant Chief
of Operations
Robert Shupe
29 Years



2024
Battalion Chief
Jay Jarrett
24 Years



Milestone Promotion

GFFR was pleased to mark a notable first in our department's history. Maren Reilly was the GFFR's first woman to be promoted to Captain.

While her promotion was a historical step for our department, it is foremost a reflection of her character, qualifications and readiness to lead.

As Captain Reilly continues to make achievements in her new role, a door also opens for future generations of young women to see what's possible in the fire service.



Rising Through the Ranks

Marking Moments of Advancement and Achievement



Assistant Chief of Operations

Jeremy Virts (2024)

Deputy Fire Chief of Training

Jason Furr (2023)

Battalion Chief

Colton Walter (2023)

Captain

Chris Newman (2023)

Maren Reilly (2023)

Lieutenant

Adam Jordan (2023)

Firefighter

(2023)

Tyler Bartel

Tyrell Foran

Kolter Lund

Quinten Spring

Grayden Irish

Rocky Vance

(2024)

Jakob Bloom

Tim Egnosk

Bryce Nelson

Eddie Scheidler



Perspective on Public Safety Levy & Bond

In November, 2023, Great Falls voters declined to pass both the operating levy and capital bond of the proposed Public Safety package, aimed at funding fire, police, legal and court services.



After months of education and outreach, majority of Great Falls voters chose to oppose the proposed 2023 Public Safety Levy and Bond that would have provided funding needed to increase and maintain safety in Great Falls.

For GFFR, the Public Safety Levy would have funded 32 firefighters, 1 fire prevention staff member, safety equipment and training to increase coverage, improve response times, expand fire prevention activities and provide greater access to emergency medical services.

The proposed \$21.17 million infrastructure bond would have designated \$14,358,000 to acquire land, designing, constructing and equipping a fifth fire station and a revolving equipment schedule buy in.

GFFR continues to review our delivery of services and seek out alternative funding opportunities to deliver effective emergency response to Great Falls.

Fire Department (Presented Work Session 12/20/22)	Proposed
Operational needs	
32 Firefighters	\$3,221,837
Initial safety equip/ PPE needed	\$403,200
Additional driver/operators (Engineers)	\$40,443
Additional supervisor (Captains)	\$56,379
Paramedic in Charge	\$9,839
Additional annual occupational physicals	\$93,000
Additional uniforms/ PPE	\$87,619
Additional uniform allowance	\$61,750
Additional safety equipment	\$100,762
Additional building maintenance	\$125,000
Apparatus Equipment Revolving Schedule	\$941,782
1 additional Deputy Chief of Fire Prevention	\$141,950
Total Fire Operational Request	\$5,283,560

Fire Department (Presented Work Session 12/20/22)	Proposed
Capital Request	
One-time Equip Revolving Schedule buy in	\$4,358,000
Fire Station #5	\$10,000,000
Total Capital Request	\$14,358,000

Public Safety Mill Levy and Bond Results:

Levy	Bond
62% Not In Favor	54% Not In Favor
38% In Favor	46% In Favor

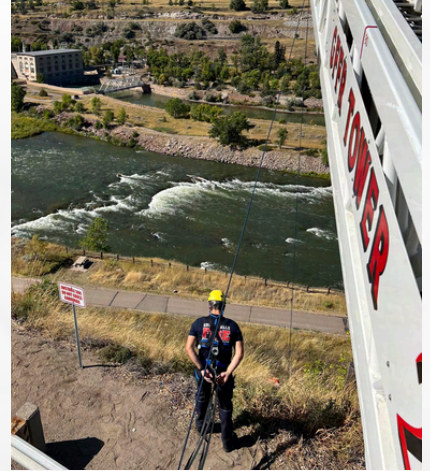
The Power of Community Support

Highlights of the Great Falls Fire Rescue Foundation's donations that help fuel our mission.



In Action: 2023-2024 Training Moments

A visual look at the hard work, hands-on learning, and teamwork behind the scenes.



GFFR logged a collective total of 35,701 training hours between 2023 and 2024.



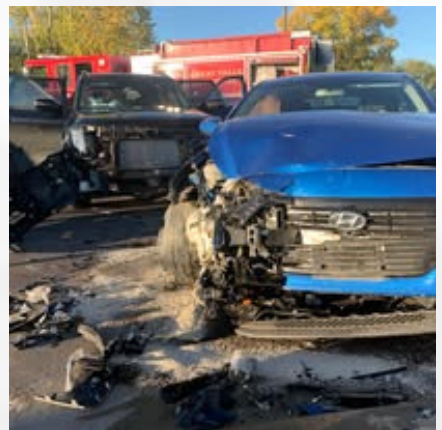
EDUCATING AND ENGAGING

Anytime we can engage with community members is a good time!



When Seconds Count...

Reflecting back on several of GFFR's 2023 and 2024 responses.



FACES OF GFFR

Behind Every Helmet - Members with a Mission



“Service to others is the rent you pay for your room
here on Earth,”

-Muhammad Ali



FOR MORE INFORMATION



+406-727-8070



www.greatfallsmt.net/fire



105 9th St S
Great Falls, MT 59401