



DEDICATION PRIDE TRAINED TEAMWORK RESPECT PROFESSIONALISM INTEGRITY DUTY



2023

ANNUAL REPORT

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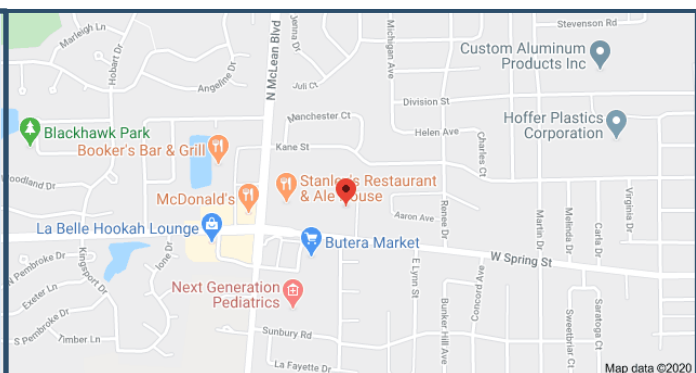
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South Elgin Fire District is located in Kane and parts of DuPage Counties, approximately 44 miles northwest of downtown Chicago. Our District encompasses 24 square miles and serves an estimated population of 30,000. The District provides service to the residents of South Elgin, and also parts of the Villages of Bartlett and Campton Hills, and unincorporated St. Charles.

South Elgin & Countryside Fire Protection District currently operates out of three fire stations, located uniformly within the District to help us serve our residents better!

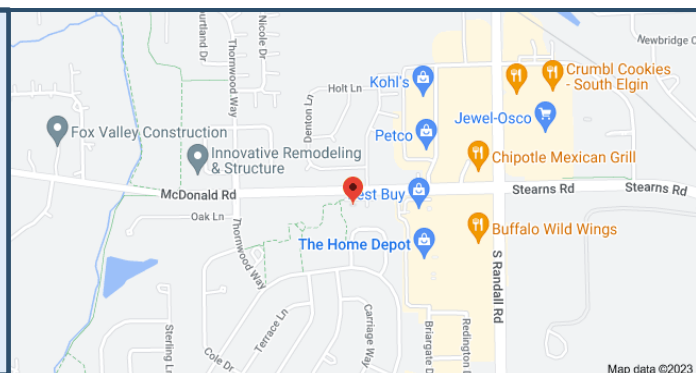
Opened in July of 2020, the District Headquarters Station 21 houses the administrative offices and is located at 1090 W. Spring Street.

STATION 21
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES
1090 W. SPRING STREET
SOUTH ELGIN, IL 60177
847-741-2141
FAX 847-741-2184



Station 22, built in 2002, is located west of Randall Road at 2055 McDonald Road. The District's Fire Prevention Bureau Office is located at Station 22.

STATION 22
FIRE PREVENTION BUREAU OFFICE
2055 MCDONALD ROAD
SOUTH ELGIN, IL 60177
847-531-8641 FAX 847-531-8639



Station 23, also built in 2020, is located at 498-A South Elgin Boulevard and operates and implements a jump company; the crew utilizes either an ambulance or fire engine as immediate need indicates.

STATION 23
498 A SOUTH ELGIN BOULEVARD
SOUTH ELGIN, IL 60177
847-648-9401





SOUTH ELGIN & COUNTRYSIDE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

1090 W SPRING STREET, SOUTH ELGIN, IL 60177



DIANA CORNELISSEN
President

RONALD R. BOHLMAN
Secretary

JEFFREY A. SPEYERS
Treasurer

JEFFREY T. THERIAULT
Trustee

KATHLEEN HAZELWOOD
Trustee

WILLIAM J. LUCHSINGER
Fire Chief

Dear Fellow Residents,

The Board of Trustees for the South Elgin and Countryside Fire Protection District oversaw a very busy year. Among many important actions were the administrative and employee accomplishments. These successes made the delivery of services more efficient and effective.

Administrative strategies were based upon a proactive approach to operations. The focus was placed on financial planning, diversified training and innovative staffing. These objectives were flexible by design and remain ongoing. Our conscientious professionals performed above and beyond duties. The detail-oriented administrators collaborated to set, work toward and meet goals. Meanwhile, dedicated firefighter/paramedics maintained exceptional emergency preparedness and provided exemplary interventions. Additionally, expert support personnel managed the continuity of data, educational and public services. This collective productivity was and continues to be remarkable.

Much more precise operational information can be found in the 2023 Annual Report. It comprehensively presents statistics and measures by which our lives and property are safeguarded. If any questions, just contact the South Elgin and Countryside Fire Protection District.

Safety for all,
Your Board of Trustees



LETTER FROM THE CHIEF

Fire Chief William J. Luchsinger

I am pleased to present this annual report for 2023 and share all the positive aspects and the direction we have moved, and continue to move our Fire District towards. Our Fire District is your fire district, and everything we do and plan for is for the sole purpose of ensuring we are providing the highest level of service our community has come to expect while making sure we are always being responsible to the community's finances and assets (equipment).

In late March of 2023 the Fire District experienced a tremendous loss in the passing of our Fire District President Mary Van Winkle. Mary had been a strong supporter of the Fire District long before she became part of the Board of Trustees. She always had a saying, "take care of my boys (and girls)," as she cared very deeply about each and every member of our Fire District family. Mary has been and will continue to be missed. Not only within our Fire District family, but within the community as well.

As everyone should be aware, the interest rates in 2023 rose to levels we have not seen in a couple of decades. One of our main priorities is to make sure we are always handling the District finances, your tax money, in the most fiscally responsible way possible. I am pleased to announce that the District capitalized on the 2023 interest rates. Administratively, we assessed all operations of the District and identified short (less than 6 months) and mid-range (6-24 months) operating costs. We partnered with the District's investment firm to develop a laddered investment plan to put our money to work to make money. The majority of the District's financial operations are supported by property taxes. As all property owners are aware, property taxes are due in two installments to the county and those installments are dispersed to all the taxes bodies like the Fire District. Therefore, our District must make those funds last the entire year. As we assessed our operations, we identified how much money the District needed to operate over a specific period of time. We transferred funds that were identified for use in later months to our investment firm to put into a laddered portfolio. I am pleased to report that we were able to capitalize on the market and received a sizable amount of money on sheer interest. We will continue to maximize the current interest rates to our benefit and capitalize on the market whenever we can. Just as the average home owner experiences rising inflation costs, so does the Fire District. With prices rising on everything from new ambulances (\$300,000) to fire engines (\$900,000), fuel, and medical equipment, we must be fiscally responsible wherever we can.

In 2022 and early 2023 the District was experiencing severe staffing shortages and was forced to use overtime on a regular basis to sustain daily operations. This was a result of many different factors that combined to make a "perfect storm." Retirements from 2022 and 2023 that resulted in promotions and / or vacancies became difficult to fill. Injuries compounded the staffing struggles which also lead to a historic amount of overtime. As a result, the District saw the highest use of overtime in a single year in our history. The amount of overtime that our staff was forced to fill was not healthy or sustainable. As a result, we evaluated the operations of the District and determined that the District would benefit from two things. One, a need to increase the authorized level of full-time firefighters from 38 to 41. Two, change the requirements for full-time employment. As a result, we now have the ability to hire firefighters that are enrolled in paramedic class, and we can assist them with completing their course and become licensed paramedics. The District Board authorized the increase in staffing and changed the hiring requirements. A new full-time eligibility test was announced with the change in requirements and as a result of the new list, we have hired three additional full-time firefighters, which have made an immediate and positive impact on our staffing and the overtime situation.



In 2023 the District also evaluated its choice of fiscal year; the fiscal year has always been June 1st, through May 31st. It was determined that the District could benefit by electing to change from a fiscal year to a calendar year for budget purposes. Topics such as payroll, property taxes, collective bargaining agreements, and training are a few things that are based on a calendar year. Matching the administrative fiscal year with the operations allows for better analysis of the operations and fiscal responsibility. Matching the fiscal year to the calendar provides for more accurate data which allows for better analysis which is used to drive decisions and the direction of the Fire District. As a result, the District adopted a modified “stub” year from June 1st, 2023 through December 31st, 2023 to reset the fiscal year. January 1st, 2024, was the start of the new calendar year for the District. This change will align all aspects of the Districts operations to the calendar year moving forward.

There were two main goals adopted and put forth by the District in 2023. The first administrative goal was to establish or implement strategic objectives to better prepare the District long term. Such as realignment of the budget year, establishing separate operational and long-term fund balances, a comprehensive financial report in lieu of a standard audit, complete replacement of antiquated HVAC system (Station 22), the signing of a new collective bargaining agreement with Local #4833 to name a few. The operational goal was to focus on training, and a return to the basics. In the start of 2023 firefighters started with the basics of firefighting and as the year progressed, so did the training. The year was capped off by the acquisition of three “acquired structures.” Property owners within the District that have elected to have their homes razed, donated them to the Fire District. This was unexpected, however, extremely valuable to the Fire District. There will be more in the training report, but the operational goal to return to the basics was capped off by more than four months of live fire training in acquired structures, which is by far the best type of training we can offer.

Some other major 2023 accomplishments that you will read about throughout this report include the ordering of a new ambulance, new fire engine, fire prevention bureau car, and a capital replacement of an HVAC system to name a few. The District has been aggressively transitioning to a long-term focus with emphasis on fiscal responsibility and personnel while also setting yet another record year for emergency incident requests.

The Fire District is required to complete an audit after each fiscal year. An audit is conducted by qualified professionals to ensure accuracy and reliability of financial statements, internal controls and the use of public funds. In 2023 the District elected to complete an Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR) instead of a standard audit. The ACFR incorporates an audit report, however, it goes farther in depth to provide the reader a better understanding of the District's uses of the funds as well as provide a trending history or snap shot in time rather than simply a singular year in question. The ACRF is an in-depth report for the residents to better understand the Fire District and where their money has been spent, not just for the prior year, but past years as well. The ACFR can be found by visiting the District website.

Please review this annual report in its entirety as we share some very valuable information. Information such as our response times, incidents by districts, call volume by time/day, Annual Treasurer's Report, personnel and so much more. I also encourage you to visit our website at www.southelginfire.com to find additional information relating to our District. As always, please feel free to stop by your local station and talk with the firefighters as they are always readily available for a visit or to answer any of your questions.

Respectfully,

William J. Luchsinger
Fire Chief

Dedicated to service, committed to caring





BOARD OF TRUSTEES

President Diana Cornelissen

Secretary Ronald R. Bohlman

Treasurer Jeffrey A. Speyers

Trustee Jeffrey T. Theriault

Trustee Kathleen A. Hazelwood

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Chairman William B. Sohn

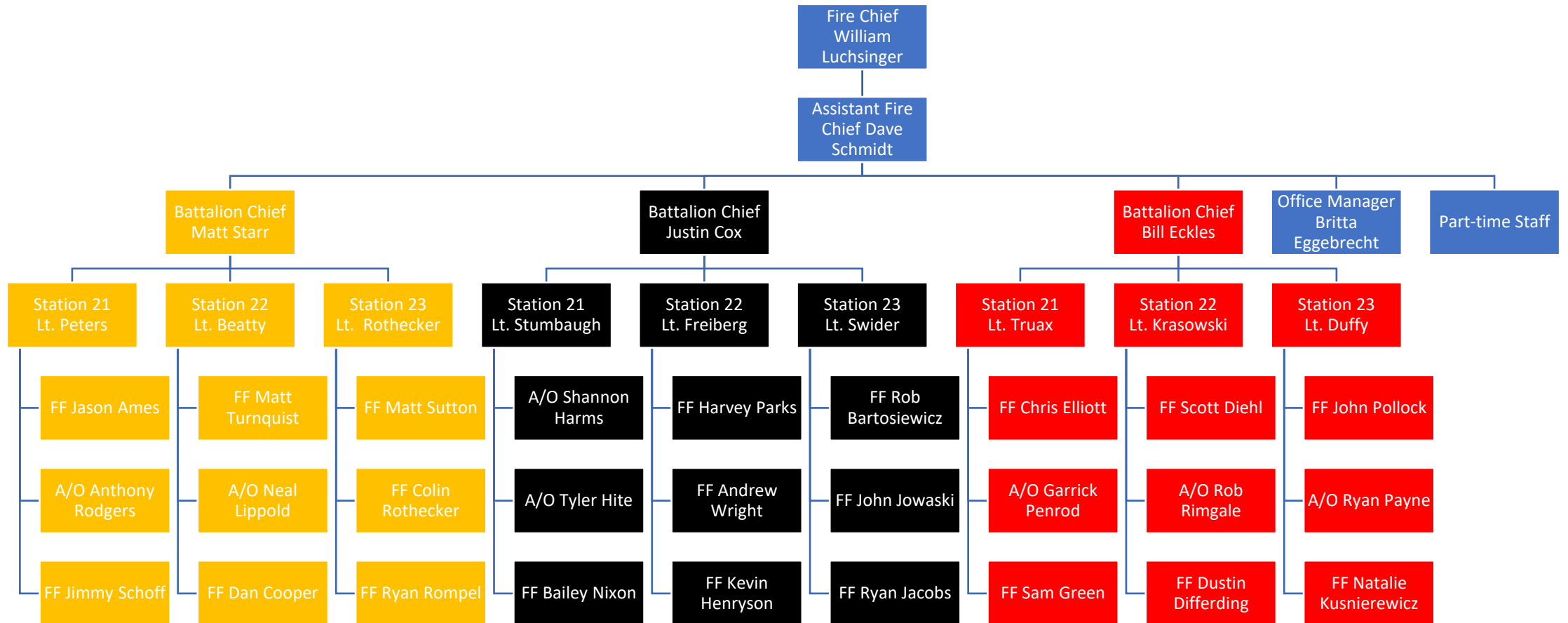
Secretary Shane A. Hamilton

Commissioner Sara C. Johnson

Fire Chief William J. Luchsinger

Assistant Fire Chief David A. Schmidt

Department Organizational Flow Chart



2023 NEW HIRES

SECFPD BOARD TRUSTEE

KATHLEEN HAZELWOOD 08/08/2023

FULL TIME FIREFIGHTER / PARAMEDICS

KEVIN HENRYSON 01/15/2023

RYAN ROMPEL 10/30/2023

FULL TIME FIREFIGHTER / EMT-B

RYAN JACOBS 10/30/2023

NATALIE KUSNIEREWICZ 10/30/2023

PART TIME FIREFIGHTER / EMT-B

ANTHONY GRECO 01/07/2023

MATEO HERRERA 01/07/2023

JOHN LUNDVICK 01/07/2023

ANTHONY RAMIREZ 01/07/2023

MARISSA ROMAN 01/07/2023

PATRICK ROY 01/07/2024

LOGAN SHARP 01/07/2023

ZACHARY STEGE 01/07/2023

CHLOE WALTERS 01/07/2023

JULIA ZENZ 01/07/2023

JOHN FLYNN 05/23/23

JOSEPH HANSEN 05/23/2023

ISAAK ESTRADA 09/08/2023

24
SQUARE MILES

2

EST. 30,000
POPULATION OF
SOUTH ELGIN FPD

3
NUMBER OF FIRE
STATIONS

0

3943
CALLS IN 2023
TO 9-1-1

41
FULL-TIME
FIREFIGHTERS

2721
EMS CALLS

17
PART-TIME
FIREFIGHTERS

2

117
FIRE CALLS

3
ALS AMBULANCES

3

2
ALS FIRE ENGINES

15,378.75 TRAINING HOURS



ISO RATING

South Elgin & Countryside Fire Protection District prides itself in providing residents and visitors of our community with excellent service.

All fire departments are subjected to a ranking from the Insurance Services Office, also known as an ISO rating or score. A fire department's ISO rating is a determination by the Insurance Services Office of how well your department is able to serve the community. To determine an ISO score, the Fire District goes through a thorough assessment led by the Insurance Services Office. ISO conducts field visits in order to collect information on fire protection efforts in communities throughout the United States, and then analyzes the data using its Fire Suppression Rating Schedule (FSRS). The rating is based on four factors:

1. The Fire District's ability to receive and respond to emergencies
2. The District's equipment, personnel, and training
3. The water supply and distribution
4. Communication and dispatch procedures

We are then assigned a score between 1 and 10, with lower numbers indicating a better score. High ISO scores can increase home insurance rates in the community. The Fire District's input is approximately 50% of the final classification determination. South Elgin & Countryside Fire Protection District is proud to report our ISO rating is currently a **Class 2** within the Village limits and for the rural areas. This rating ranks among the top 3.4 percent of fire agencies in the State for preparedness training and responsibility!



2023 CALL VOLUME

2023 call volume shows that the District responded to 3,943 requests for service, a 5.2% increase over 2022. Over the last five years, we've seen a 25.9% increase in calls for service.

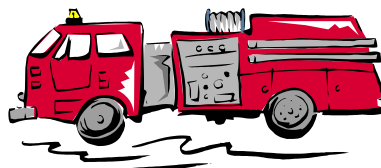
With the amount of growth we continue to see within the Village of South Elgin and the Fire District, we can expect to continue to see the call volume increase.



YEAR	#
2019	3129
2020	3149
2021	3754
2022	3749
2023	3943
Grand Total	17724

Incident Type Category	#	%
Fire	117	3%
Explosion/Rupture	7	0.2%
EMS	2721	69.0%
Hazardous Condition	148	3.8%
Service Call	243	6.2%
Good Intent	442	11.2%
False Alarm	258	6.5%
Severe Weather	4	0.1%
Other	3	0.1%
Grand Total	3943	100.0%

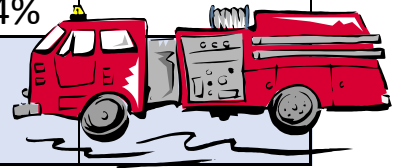
District	#	%
District 21	1,783	45.2%
District 22	654	16.6%
District 23	609	15.4%
District 24	57	1.4%
District 27	75	1.9%
Mutual/Auto Aid	765	19.4%
Grand Total	3756	100.0%





CALL TIMES

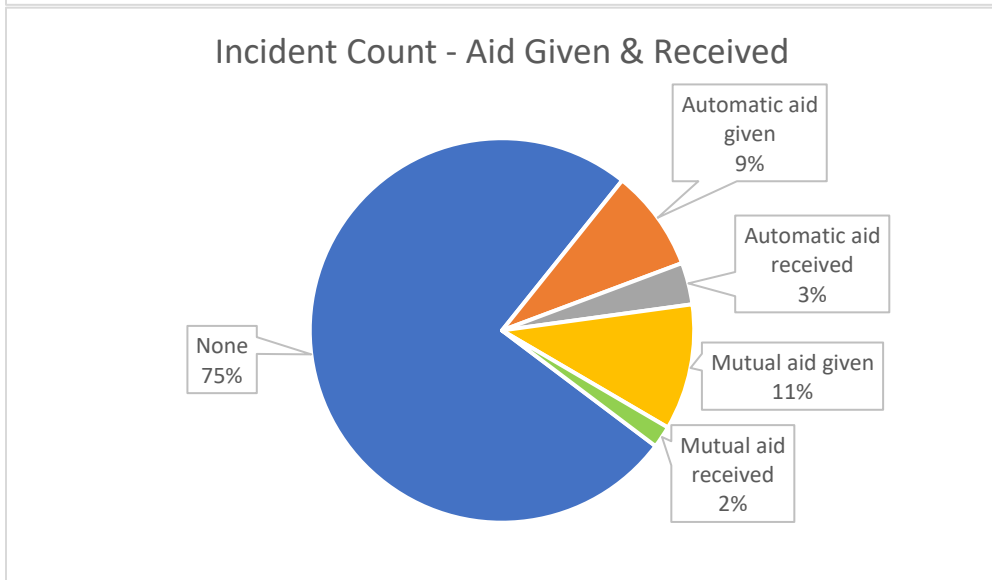
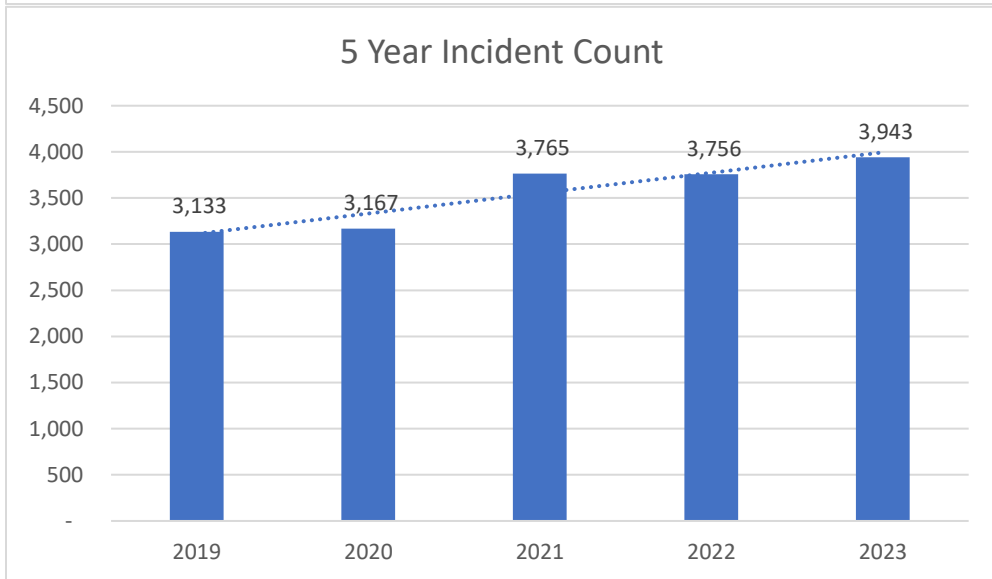
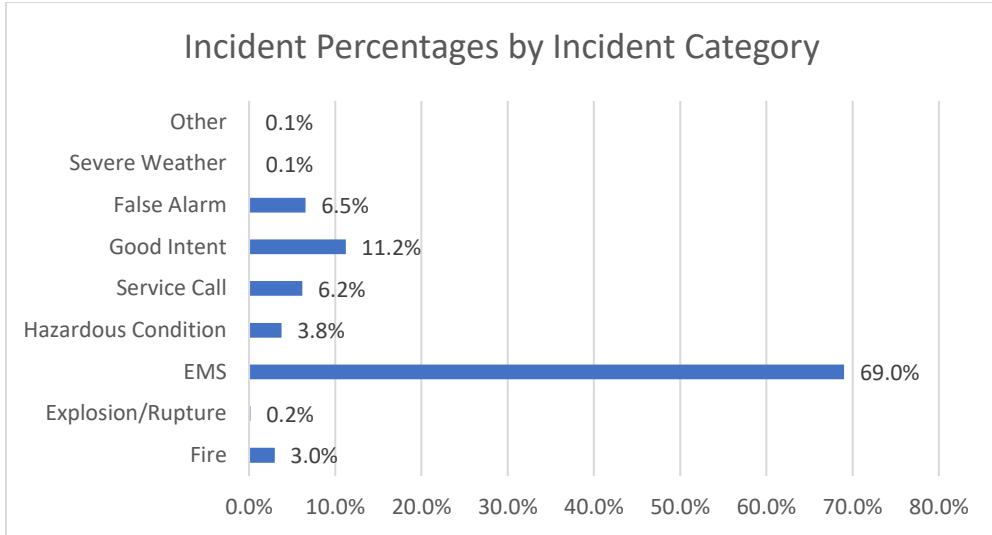
Response Time by District	#	%	RspTm
District 21	1783	45.2%	0:03:59
District 22	654	16.6%	0:04:16
District 23	609	15.4%	0:04:41
District 24	57	1.4%	0:07:33
District 27	75	1.9%	0:07:34
Mutual / Auto	765	19.4%	
TOTAL 2023 CALL VOLUME	3943		



Busiest EMS time of day?

Highest Call Volume - Time of Day & Day of Week									
Time Frame	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Total	%
0000-0400	64	46	54	43	50	41	45	343	8.7%
0400-0800	46	55	44	53	49	54	53	354	9.0%
0800-1200	96	112	139	126	117	104	86	780	19.8%
1200-1600	107	134	123	158	131	135	109	897	22.7%
1600-2000	124	162	139	183	117	129	102	956	24.2%
2000-0000	74	72	102	89	79	100	97	613	15.5%
Grand Total	511	581	601	652	543	563	492	3943	100.0%

INCIDENT REPORTS



EMS DIVISION REPORT

South Elgin's EMS Division is responsible for the licensure of ambulances, paramedic equipped fire engines, medical equipment and supplies as well as maintaining continuing education for all personnel. We currently have three ALS ambulances, two ALS fire engines (one more in the works), and one BLS utility terrain vehicle (UTV). The District's relationships with our EMS System, Project Medical Director, and Illinois Department of Public Health are also managed by our EMS Division.

In 2023 we were still experiencing challenges presented to us by the COVID-19 virus. Once again, and with more confidence, we answered these calls with professionalism and compassion. The department and EMS Division worked closely with state, regional, and local authorities to ensure that our PPE was adequate, our protocol was appropriate, and we were current on the latest trends and guidelines.

We are currently sponsoring three of our Emergency Medical Technician-Basic's (EMT-B) to Paramedic school. This is a very hard one-year advanced medical training that requires an enormous amount of schooling, clinical hospital time, and in-field clinical time to obtain the national and state level certification. This provides the best advanced care within our scope of practice to better treat our citizens.

Our EMS division was able to obtain a grant to purchase three new AED's and first aid kits for our battalion chief car, assistant chief car, and our chief car.

The District purchased state-of-the-art video laryngoscopes to enhance the levels and successes of tracheal intubation.

Cardiac Arrest numbers:

- 48 cardiac / respiratory arrests in total.
- 10 DOA / unworkable.
- 16 ROSC (Return of Spontaneous Circulation).
- 7 ROSCs walked out of the hospital.

This is a 44% ROSC rate!

Usually when the public thinks about the job of their fire department, they think of them fighting fires. In 2023, of the 3,943 calls that South Elgin Fire District responded to, 2,721 of them were EMS calls, which is roughly 69%! EMS services are by far the Fire District's most requested support that we provide.

Submitted by Lt. Jason Peters

EMS Coordinator



Fire Investigation Team



Fire investigations are a vital component of compiling accurate fire origin and cause. These determinations are essential in protecting the lives and property of our District's residents, businesses, and visitors, and to prevent future incidents.

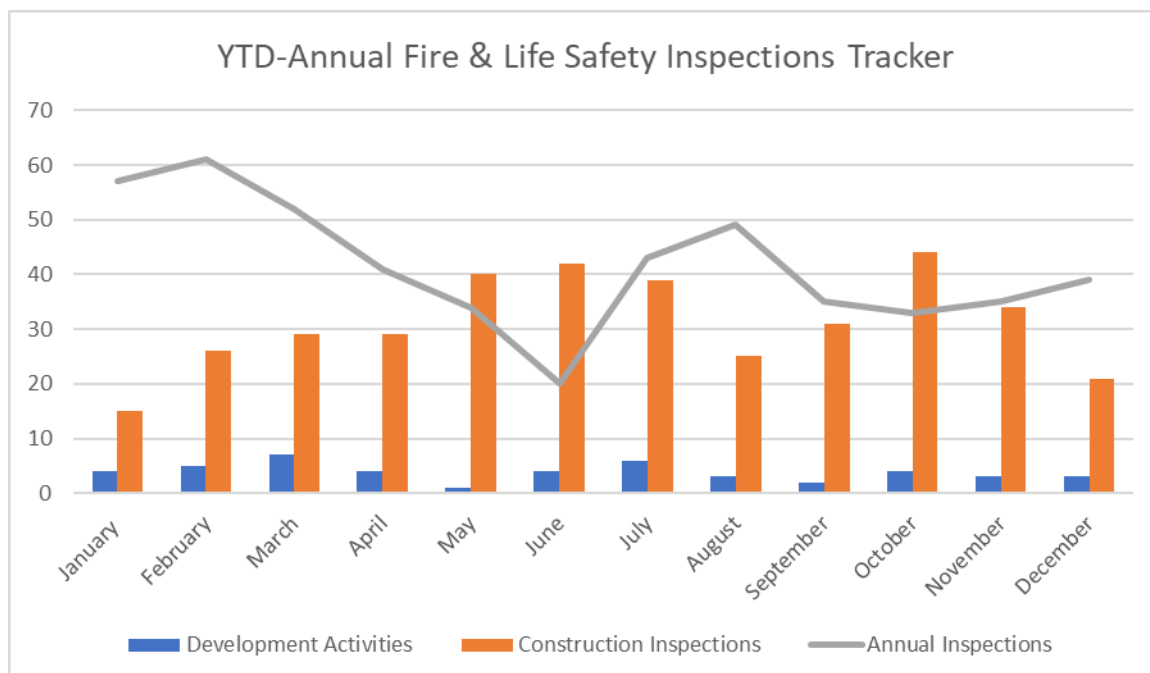
- The South Elgin Fire District Fire Investigation Team is made up of six certified members: Lt. Rich Stumbaugh, Lt. Brian Beatty, FF/PM Scott Diehl, FF/PM Garrick Penrod, FF/PM Samantha Green, and FF/PM Shannon Harms.
- We have two members on the Kane County Fire Investigation Task Force: Lt Stumbaugh and FF/PM Diehl.
- The Fire Investigation Team investigated 17 fires for our department in 2023.
- The Kane County Task Force was called out 12 times in 2023.
- The Fire District hosted a training with the Kane County Task Force over two days that covered fire scene investigation, documentation, photos and interviewing. Twenty attendees participated in this training.
- The SECFPD members completed numerous hours of training during the year. One class was held in conjunction with the Aurora Fire Department covering advanced pattern recognition and fire dynamics; this was a two-day class with over forty people in attendance.

FIRE PREVENTION

The South Elgin Fire Prevention Bureau serves the public by providing fire and life safety inspections, community education, and investigation services to help prevent fires, enhance public safety in all buildings, and improve emergency responders' ability to manage an incident. By doing this, we help achieve a safe, vital, and economically sustainable community. Inspector Arnie Zabran works with the Village of South Elgin Community Development Department on the planning of new developments within multiple industrial, commercial, and residential districts. The Fire Prevention Bureau is made up of Inspector Zabran, BC Bill Eckles, and Part Time Admin Liz Loss.

Here are some of the tasks the Bureau has accomplished this year:

- 20 developmental projects were reviewed this year, the largest project being Rat Pack Storage at 118,000 square feet (located within the Village of Bartlett).
- 7 solar panel installation projects were reviewed.
- Witnessed water flows with Baxter and Woodman throughout the Village of South Elgin (Baxter and Woodman to develop a report on volume and pressure in the water system).
- Upgraded our access to the NFPA online portal, transitioning from the more limited NFPA online resources and paper books to the portal. You can log on from any remote device for access to Fire Prevention Standards and it has multi-user capabilities.
- Transitioned the Bureau from the FireHouse software and paper inspection reports to Image Trend which has improved data recovery and streamlined inspections.
- Focused on updating business emergency contact information.
- Reviewed current business preplan information and updated in FLOW MSP.
- Coordinated/Inspected one firework event with the Mad Bomber Pyrotechnic Company for the South Elgin High School Homecoming celebration



Public Education

- Open House was extremely successful for South Elgin community interaction
- Newly ordered inflatable fire education simulator
- Participated in the SEHS's Homecoming Parade
- Visited numerous block parties throughout the summer
- Participated in the Camp I am Me visitors day parade



Events the District participated in through the Village of South Elgin's Parks and Recreation:

- Almost Winters Day
- Unplug Illinois
- Back to School Bash
- Tuna Kahuna
- U46 Walk to School Day
- Auctioned off a fire truck ride to school to help out Corron School PTA



CPR Classes

- 57 total students for the year, including members of the District and community

Fire signs

- A whopping total of 168 fire signs were installed this year!



OPEN HOUSE



On October 21st the District hosted an Open House for the community. We were very fortunate to end up with an amazing fall day and a wonderful crowd of visitors! Activities such as Special Team and CPR demonstrations, station tours, interactive oven fire extinguishment, the landing of a medical helicopter, yummy snacks, fire safety information giveaways, and much, much, more were provided. Outside community organizations were also present to talk about services they provide. A record number of residents / visitors poured into the station and made this event a huge success!





HAZMAT TEAM

The South Elgin & Countryside Fire Prevention District's HAZMAT Team members are professionally trained and certified to decontaminate areas exposed to dangerous materials. Hazardous materials response (HAZMAT) teams are the first line of defense in situations dealing with "hazardous materials" which refers to any substance that poses a significant risk to people, property, or the environment. HAZMAT teams are deployed to deal with spills, leaks, and other accidental releases of these materials. Our team is made up of team leader FF/PM Ryan Payne, FF/PM Scott Diehl, Lt. Eric Truax, FF/PM Tyler Hite and FF/PM Rob Rimgale.

In 2023 the South Elgin Fire District's HAZMAT Team responded to five emergency Division 2 call outs. These calls involved gas leaks, CO alarms, and other hazardous chemicals. South Elgin Fire District is the home of the Division 2 Hazmat Team trailer. A new trailer hitch has been purchased for the trailer thanks to Division 2. Training for the department has been completed every quarter. Topics covered this year were De-con, Radiation, ERG usage, and Dura Chem 500 suits. Division 2 updated our equipment by purchasing 9 Dura Chem suits; they are the newest type of protection on the market for HAZMAT. Other purchases made for the HAZMAT Team in 2023 were Tyler Tins for the monitors on the engines, and F-1 leak kits for the engines with the financial partnership from Foreign Fire.



Submitted by FF/PM Ryan Payne

SOUTH ELGIN FIRE HONOR GUARD

The South Elgin Fire Honor Guard is a special team dedicated to promoting firefighters, and the fire service as a whole, to the public in a positive and professional manner. The Honor Guard's mission is to provide, as a line of duty death benefit, dignified, honorable services for fallen firefighters, their surviving family members, and brothers and sisters through the organization of and participation in funeral and memorial services. The South Elgin Fire Honor Guard is also tasked with presence at memorials, ceremonies, parades, and color postings.

Current members are as follows: Lt. Rich Stumbaugh, Lt. Eric Truax, FF Scott Diehl, FF Ryan Payne, FF Shannon Harms, FF Anthony Rodgers, FF Robert Bartosiewicz, and FF Tyler Hite. Of these members, Lt. Stumbaugh, FF Diehl, FF Payne, FF Harms, and FF Hite have been inducted into the AFFI State Honor Guard and attended several drills and the annual convention.

These Members have participated in the 31st Elgin Area Annual Firefighter Memorial, Funeral Services and Casket Guard for Board President Mary Van Winkle, AFFI Honor Guard Convention hosted by Bartlett, as well as several area and State Firefighter Line of Duty Deaths and Non-LODD Funerals and ceremonies for the fire district.

In late 2023, Active Retired Member Steve Diehl passed away after a courageous battle with ALS. Steve, along with his brother Scott, built the South Elgin Honor Guard as we know it today. Steve will always be remembered for his dedicated service to the South Elgin Fire District Honor Guard.

South Elgin Fire District Honor Guard members continue to represent the fire service under the oath:

**TO HONOR, TO CHERISH, TO REMEMBER, TO SALUTE,
WITH OVERWHELMING PRIDE FOR YOU, MY COMRADE I WILL**



STATION MAINTENANCE

The South Elgin Fire District Station Maintenance falls under the Logistics Division and is responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of the fire stations and auxiliary building operated by the fire district. Station Maintenance is overseen by Battalion Chief Matt Starr, with assistance from Lt. Brian Beatty and FF/PM Matthew Sutton.

Station Maintenance ensures the department's buildings operate efficiently on a day-to-day basis. This includes many things that also happen as day-to-day activities in your own home. The fire stations operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. The buildings are stocked with cleaning supplies, kitchen needs, and maintenance items like furnace filters. The station maintenance team works together to keep adequate supplies available as well as make an effort to find the most cost-efficient means of purchasing them. The team also manages repairs that can be done within our means to keep the buildings operating smoothly. This includes, but is not limited to, appliance repair, various filter replacement, and minor landscape issues. A major event in 2023 was the overhaul and replacement of the HVAC system at Station 22. You can read more about this project in the Station 22 section. See highlights below about the stations and what we have done to keep them in tip top shape.

General:

- Investigated and solicited bids for phone service providers (we decided to stay with our current provider but found several cost-saving measures which drove down our contract fees).
- Continued to partner with the Village of South Elgin for contracted lawn maintenance of all buildings.
- Solicited bids for and signed a maintenance contract for annual preventative maintenance on our back-up generators (this was added to include our two newer buildings).
- Solicited bids for and signed a contract for semi-annual service of HVAC and associated systems at Station 21 and 23 (this includes HVAC, apparatus floor heat system, ToxAlert system, snow melt system, and apparatus bay ventilation systems).
- Elevator Service Contract was re-negotiated to remove unnecessary costs.
- Grease trap and kitchen hood cleaning, as necessary.
- Gutter cleaning at all buildings.
- Annual re-certification of Fire Alarms, Sprinkler system, and Fire Extinguishers.

Submitted by Battalion Chief Matt Starr

STATION 21 MAINTENANCE

Station 21 is located at 1090 West Spring Street and was opened in July 2020. This is our headquarters station, and is home to our Office Manager team, Fire Chief, and Assistant Fire Chief. The station is also staffed with a Battalion Chief, Lieutenant, and four firefighters 24 hours a day. Below is a list of items completed at Station 21 in 2023:

- A concrete pad was poured around our fire hydrant. During initial construction, the hydrant was landscaped around with plants and mulch. With the regular use of the hydrant for training and re-filling of apparatus, we found the landscaping was being washed away, mud and debris was being tracked into the station, and wet and muddy areas created slip, trip, and fall hazards. Station Maintenance solicited bids and a concrete pad was poured, creating a safe and improved space for an extensively used hydrant.
- Lingering roof leaks from initial construction of the building were addressed and repaired under the building's initial construction warranty.
- Soil and seed were placed around the sidewalks and other low spots in the landscaping that has settled since initial construction.
- Annual Elevator Service was completed. This included a new state mandated Fire Alarm Initiating Device test and generator backup test that had not been previously completed.
- The front and rear blacktop parking lots were seal-coated, and all spaces were re-striped.



STATION 22 MAINTENANCE



Station 22 is located at 2055 McDonald Rd and was opened in 2002. Station 22 is staffed by our Fire Inspector and Administrative Assistant. The station is also staffed with a Lieutenant and four Firefighters 24 hours a day. Below is a list of items completed at Station 22 in 2023:

- Removal of dead and scrub trees along the south property line to improve esthetics for our neighbors.
- Seal-coating and re-stripping of the parking lot.
- Drywall repair and re-painting of certain areas.
- Overhaul/Replacement of HVAC system-

Station 22 reached the ripe old age of 21 years old this year. For the past five or more years, the fire district has been doing its best to keep the existing HVAC system running. The station was built utilizing two large air handlers and two dual compressor air conditioning units to heat and cool the space. The air conditioning units have struggled to stay running and maintain the space temperatures. In the summer months, as many as four portable A/C units were in use around the building to supplement the system. A lawn sprinkler was also being used to help the failing exterior A/C units output some cool air. The system was also running on an antiquated Building Automation System (BAS) to control its operation. We were advised that if certain parts failed, the system would be unrepairable, and our HVAC system would not operate. The Fire District brought in companies to look at overhauling and replacing the existing system. The system replacement prices came in at well over \$650,000.00 to replace. The station maintenance team and the Fire District Board felt that there could be other options to meet the HVAC needs of the station and be more fiscally responsible to our taxpayers. 20/10 Engineering was enlisted to evaluate our system and evaluate other options to the originally proposed system. They produced a plan in which the station was zoned off into six different areas that would be heated and cooled independently with its own HVAC unit. After careful consideration, including dividing the project into separate phases, the project was put out to bid. The winning bid came in at approximately \$470,000.00 to complete all phases of the work... a savings of over \$180,000.00 from the original project proposal! The Fire District Board approved the bid and work was planned to be done in a way to limit interruption of service to the community and keep the firefighters working in the building as comfortably as possible. Contingency plans were put in motion in the event the building needed to be closed during construction. Work began officially in August of 2023. Initial work included moving and adding additional duct work, pouring new concrete pads for A/C condensers, and installing two HVAC units in existing closets in the building. Once a certain point was reached and the outside temperature had dropped a bit, the existing units were shut down and removed. Once removed, the remaining new units were installed where the old sat and units were fired up as available to provide heat to the building as needed. As part of the system, a new BAS was also installed to help us better control and monitor the environment in the building. Most of the work was completed on schedule at the end of November with only a few minor punch list items remaining at the time of this report. We are also happy to report that the project was completed with no need to close the station and interrupt service to the surrounding community!

STATION 23 MAINTENANCE



Station 23 is located at 498A South Elgin Boulevard and was opened in April 2020. Station 23 is staffed with a Lieutenant and two firefighters 24 hours a day. Below is a list of items completed at Station 23 in 2023:

- Trimming back trees along the South property line which were overhanging the station, resulting in clogged gutters and soil erosion along the south side of the building.
- Restoration of soil and seed along sidewalks from original construction settling
- Lingering roof leaks from initial construction of the building were addressed and repaired under the building's initial construction warranty.
- A parking lot light was found to have an electrical issue that was repaired.

Annex Building: The Annex Building is located at 8N709 Stevens Road, and dates to the late 1960s/early 1970s. The building originally was an unmanned fire station and now serves as storage for our Safety Trailer, 1942 Diamond T fire engine, training props, and general equipment. Below is a list of items completed at the Annex in 2023:

- Roof Repairs were made. Damage was noted to the roof from animals attempting to gain access to the building after making their way to the roof via low hanging branches.
- Significant tree trimming was completed on trees that provided animals access to the roof.
- The overhanging branches that were removed had also caused a significant buildup of debris in the gutters.
- A dumpster was brought in, and old and unused items were removed and disposed of.

TECHNICAL RESCUE TEAM

- South Elgin Fire District's Technical Rescue Team members are trained to respond to special rescue situations including rope rescue, confined space, structural collapse and trench rescue. All team members are required to complete annual training in each of these four disciplines.
- The South Elgin Technical Rescue Team currently has four members: BC Justin Cox, Lt. Eric Truax, Lt. Mike Rothecker and FF/PM Neal Lippold. All of our members are also on the MABAS Division 2 deployment roster.
- South Elgin Fire District hosted 3 drills this year in conjunction with Lafarge/Holcim Aggregates and Welch Brothers; businesses in our District helping host valuable training at their sites.
 - o Drills were in confined space, structural collapse, and rope rescue at the above businesses, taking into consideration the unique and challenging situations each location individually presented.
- We purchased new rope and rope equipment to update our older equipment to bring us up to the newer industry standards.
- Our four members attended 17 drills, putting approximately 68 hours of training in the books for the 2023 year.
- Two of our members participated on a standby rescue team in Hampshire, joining other members of Division 2 at the clock tower. The team spent multiple days at the site so the company could repair a furnace tower. It was a unique situation that allowed our members a chance to follow and gain experience with our procedures and policies.
- In 2024 the team is looking at adding another member to the training roster.





TRAINING



One of the District's main goals of 2023 was to focus on improving training within the Fire District, returning back to the basics of firefighting and emergency medical services. Our firefighters certainly more than achieved that goal, almost doubling the training hours from 2022. A very aggressive training schedule was made by A/C Dave Schmidt and B/C Justin Cox, a different type of training was chosen each month.

- Training hours for 2023: 15,378.75
- Bootcamp completed for 14 Part-time employees.
- Orientation completed for 3 Full-time employees.
- 31 new state certifications obtained by 20 members.



Training purchases by the District/Foreign Fire

- Medical Training Mannequin
- Forcible Entry Training simulator

These two pieces of training equipment will provide not only basic skills reinforcement, but they can also be combined with more complex training events.

The year was capped off by the acquisition of three houses within our district to burn. The property owners contacted Chief Luchsinger to "donate" their properties, allowing the firefighters the opportunity of four months of live fire training. We are thankful for these training opportunities, they were extremely valuable to the Fire District, and by far, the best type of training we can provide our firefighters.



VEHICLE MAINTENANCE

Our number one goal is to provide safe and reliable vehicles/apparatus that are ready to respond and perform at the highest level while serving our community. South Elgin & Countryside FPD is able to provide valuable, money-saving, in-house vehicle maintenance for our fleet; this includes: preventative maintenance, non-warranty repairs, tire replacement, and much more. Our Vehicle Maintenance Team is made up of FF/PM Matthew Turnquist (Head of Vehicle Maintenance), FF/PM Dustin Differding, Lt. Jason Peters, and FF/PM Chris Elliott.



In late 2022, Chief Luchsinger worked with the maintenance department and together they created our Vehicle Replacement Program. The purpose of the Vehicle Replacement Program is to establish a defined schedule for the replacement of the apparatus in the fleet. An established schedule provides for a clear and concise program that defines the life expectancy of apparatus as well as a funding mechanism for their replacement. Long-range planning supports the District's initiative of defining and sustaining our operations well into the future of our organization. The Vehicle Replacement Program not only benefits the District, it is a benefit to the South Elgin community overall. Vehicle orders initiated in 2023:

- The District ordered a new ambulance in 2022. We had to wait on Ford to obtain the chassis to complete the vehicle. The dealer is hoping to receive the chassis and begin production sometime in the first half of 2024.
- The District ordered a new E-One fire engine in the fall of 2023. The new engine build time will take approximately two years from time of order. A pre-construction meeting was scheduled for the beginning of March 2024.
- The District ordered a new Fire Prevention Bureau car (Car-24) to replace the 2010 Ford Explorer. The new inspector vehicle that was purchased is a 2024 Chevrolet Equinox. We are hoping to receive delivery in the first quarter of 2024.

In Loving Memory of President Mary Van Winkle

President Mary Van Winkle was appointed to the South Elgin & Countryside Fire Protection Board in July of 2010 and was appointed as the Board President in June of 2015. She was a proactive advocate for the Fire District and its personnel. Her continual goal was to ensure the residents of the Fire District always received the highest level of service and that her “boys” (and girls) were well taken care of. She is, and will always be, dearly missed by all.



Dedicated to Service, Committed to Caring



The District's mission is to minimize the impact of life safety or property threats resulting from fire, emergency medical, or other hazardous conditions.

These perils may include structure fires, vehicle accidents, hazardous conditions, industrial accidents, or specialized rescues.

Our goal is to accomplish this mission through progressive personnel training, public education, comprehensive code enforcement, and utilizing our personnel, vehicles and equipment at a constant state of readiness.

