

River Falls Fire Department 2016 Annual Report



**"Pride and
Ownership"**



Mission Statement

“The purpose of the River Falls Fire Department is to protect and preserve life and property in the City of River Falls and surrounding Towns and to promote the prevention of fires and other emergencies through fire safety education”.





Letter from the Chief

I am pleased to present the 2016 River Falls Fire Department Annual Report.

This report is a compilation of many of our accomplishments as well as a review of our inventory, call volume, statistics and other items of interest. I would like to thank the dedicated volunteers that have worked to make the accomplishments of this report possible.

Our membership is focused on serving the River Falls Community through professional emergency response and fire safety education. I am grateful for their dedication and service.

I would also like to thank the Mayor and City Council members, the Police and Fire Commission, the River Falls Rural Fire Association, City Administrator Scot Simpson and City staff for the support they have given the River Falls Fire Department in 2016.

Scott Nelson, Fire Chief





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MEMBERSHIP

2016 ended with 41 paid on call members and 1 full time Chief on the department.

Years of Service as of December 31, 2016

Carl Gaulke	44 years 3 months	Matt Johnson	13 years
Frank Holter	43 years	Adam Larson	13 years
Gary Eloranta	42 years 6 months	Sean Slaikeu	13 years
Gene McKahan	42 years 4 months	Michael Fecht	9 years 8 months
Pauly Cudd	35 years 10 months	Nathaniel Baar	9 years 7 months
Tom Foley	31 years 3 months	Danny Nicholson	9 years 7 months
Douglas Rudesill	30 years 10 months	James Rimer	9 years 7 months
Bill Cernohous	27 years 2 months	Scott Nelson*	6 years 3 months
Bill Lubich	27 years 2 months	Neil Engel	5 years 10 months
Troy Malmer	27 years 2 months	Garrett Gill	5 years 10 months
Mike Moody	27 years 2 months	Ky Kaminski	5 years 10 months
Ed Nicholson	27 years 2 months	Robert Kerr	5 years 10 months
Pauline Williams	24 years 5 months	Ted Slowiak	5 years 10 months
Chris Cernohous	21 years 3 months	Dustin Dodge	3 years 10 months
Jason Sammon	21 years 1 month	Matt Dodge	3 years 10 months
Molly Foley	21 years 1 month	Brendan Johnson	3 years 10 months
Matt Cernohous	15 years	Charles Meyer	3 years 10 months
Dean Grisar	15 years	Shawn Olson	3 years 10 months
Evan Larsen	15 years	Brian Roquette	3 years 10 months
Ed Vlack	15 years	Justin Wilson	3 years 10 months
Scott Gavin	13 years		

*Indicates Fire Chief

Total Years of Service: 675 years 2 months (Average of 16 years 6 months)

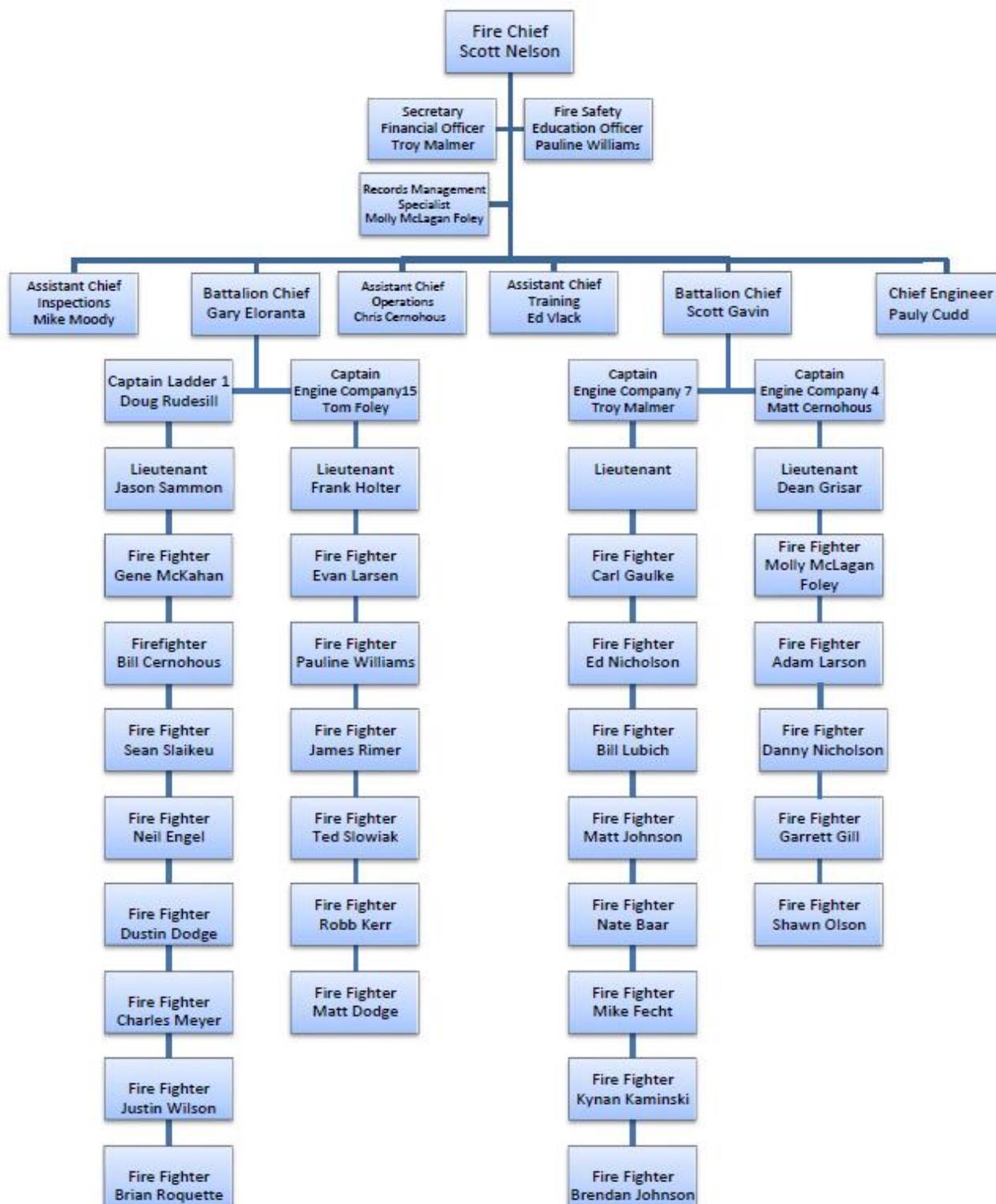
RETIREMENTS/RESIGNATIONS:

The following members retired or resigned from the department in 2016:

- Jonathan Gaulke
- Dan Dudley
- Steve McClusky
- Mitch O'Keefe
- Jonathan Wright

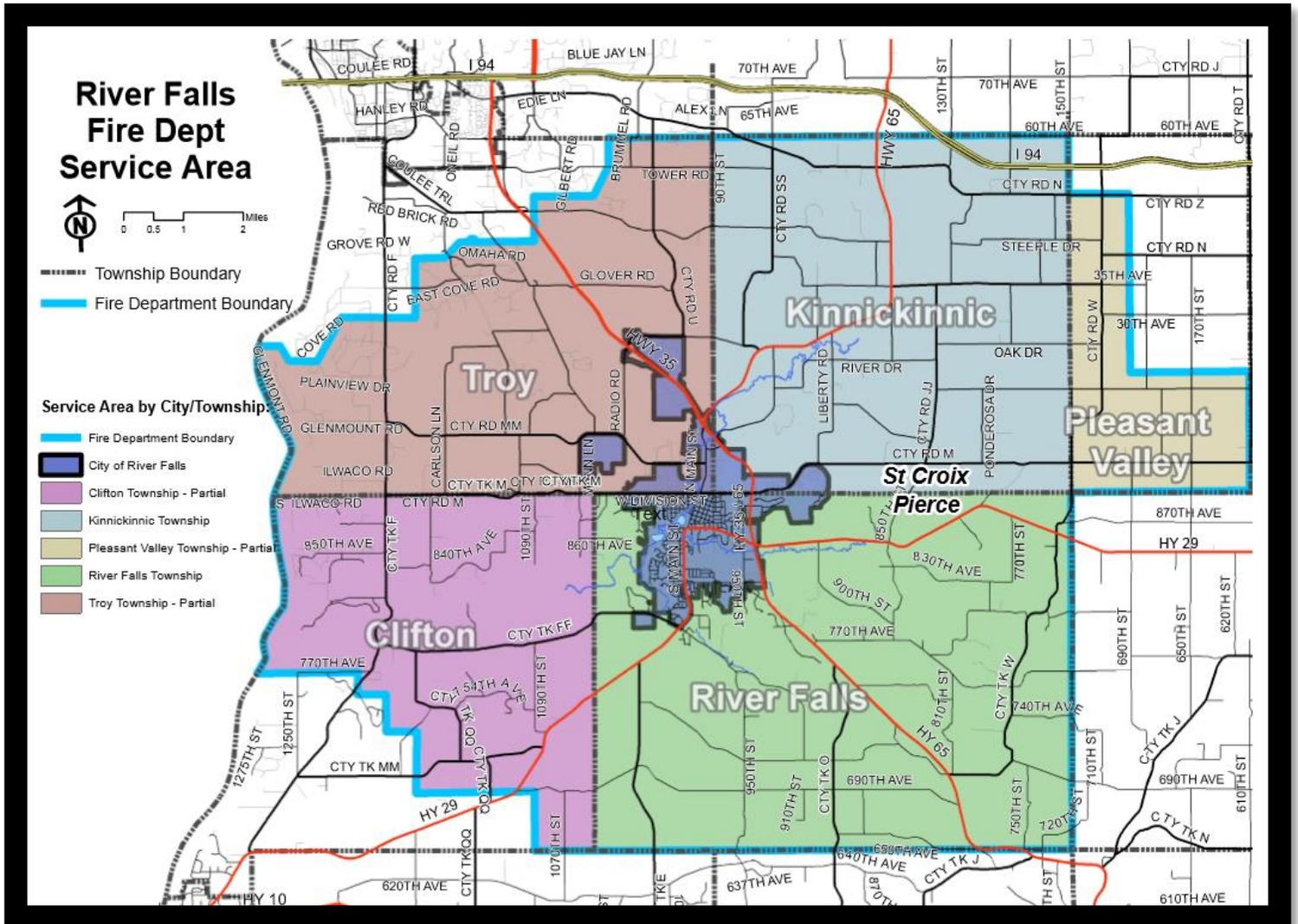


Organizational Chart





Service Area Map



Partnerships

In 2016, the Rural Association (made up of the Towns of Troy, Kinnickinnic, Clifton, River Falls, and Pleasant Valley) contributed \$292,381 of the \$835,375 department budget or 35%. The River Falls Fire Department would like to thank the Rural Association for their partnership and support.



2016 Highlights

2016 Firefighter of the Year: Molly McLagan Foley

Molly McLagan Foley was surprised when she heard her accomplishments being described at the River Falls Fire Department's annual banquet. That was when she began to realize she was about to be named River Falls Firefighter of the Year.

"It's just an honor," Foley said. "I'm proud of what I do, so it was kind of fun to receive it."

"Molly was chosen by her peers for this annual award," said Fire Chief Scott Nelson. "She is not only a firefighter and inspector but works behind the scenes to maintain all our records, including run reports and training activities. She truly has been an integral part of the Fire Department for 21 years."



In addition to handling fires, alarms and car accidents with the rest of the department, Foley is one of the River Falls Fire Department's inspectors. She started inspecting city buildings in 2005. Foley said inspections have gotten a lot easier over the years, in part thanks to digital records and an increased number of inspectors.

Foley also worked with the River Falls Fire Department's records management. She helped set up a new program called "I am Responding" that allows the firefighters to get pages on their phones, and let others on the department know if they are responding to the page.

Foley joined the department in 1995 after she saw a sign at UW-River Falls that asked people if they wanted to take firefighting classes. "Twenty-one years later, I'm still taking classes," Foley said, referring to the department's regular Monday night trainings. "But I sure enjoy it."

She said the best parts of the River Falls Fire Department include the flexibility — and the people.

"It's like a family," she said, of the people.



Department Highlights

- Engine 6 was removed from service.
- Oyster Feed was held Monday February 1st.
- Rapid Deployment Craft (RDC) was purchased by donations from the First National Bank of River Falls. Several training sessions were held on how to deploy it to rescue someone from a water incident.
- The Moody family purchased a large kayak for the department and the department purchased a 2nd one.
- Doug Rudesill was named American Legion's Outstanding Firefighter at their banquet on April 16th.
- Smoke Alarms, donated by the American Red Cross, were installed on April 16th.
- Mock car crash with River Falls High School on April 20th.
- Department Family Picnic with the Department as special guests at the Fighting Fish game July 13th.
- Participated in Touch a Truck on June 18th
- Participated in the School Supply give away.
- Read to children at the Fox Den Books on August 17th.
- Open House September 26th.
- Softball game PD & Fire vs Theta Chi.





Department Training

Training for members of the River Falls Fire Department takes place every Monday evening from 6:30 p.m. until around 9:30 p.m., except on holidays. The department has approximately 80% attendance per meeting on average.

Annual training goals and the training schedule are prepared by the Training Committee, which consists of the following members:

- **Assistant Chief Ed Vlack: Committee Oversight**
- **Firefighter Mike Fecht: Committee Chair**
- **Firefighter James Rimer: Committee Vice Chair**
- **Lieutenant Dean Grisar**
- **Lieutenant Jason Sammon**
- **Firefighter Andrea Ellefson**
- **Firefighter Ky Kaminski**
- **Firefighter Brian Roquette**
- **Firefighter Sean Slaikeu**

Training on the first Monday of each month consists of monthly maintenance to ensure that all vehicles, equipment, and tools are in proper working order. In even numbered months this is followed by a business meeting. In odd numbered months, this is followed by either officer training or an officers' meeting.

The River Falls Fire Department training schedule covers a variety of topics. However, the primary focus of the training is to enhance skills needed for incidents that demand immediate, potential life-saving action, such as a structure fire or a vehicle accident.

In February, the River Falls Fire Department assembled a Fire Academy that was held on 4 consecutive Monday evenings. Members received 12 hours of training in one of the following classes: The First Five Minutes, Advanced Pump Operations, Specialized Operations Team Orientation, Rural Fire Ground Management. Outside instructors came and presented the training and neighboring departments were invited. This training made headlines in the River Falls Journal and the Wisconsin Fire Journal.

In addition to the training room at the Fire Hall and on-site training, the River Falls Fire Department training tower, located near the City of River Falls wastewater treatment plant, is utilized for training as often as possible.





Equipment and Apparatus

Rolling Stock

- Engine 4: 2001 Freightliner, 1,500 GPM pumper.
- Engine 7: 1989 Ford, 1,250 GPM pumper.
- Engine 15: 2015 Pierce, 1,500 GPM rescue/pumper
- Ladder 1: 2004 Pierce 100' aerial/2,000 GPM pump.
- Tanker 1: 1994 Freightliner, 2,000-gallon tanker/personnel carrier.
- Tanker 2: 1995 Freightliner, 2,000-gallon tanker/personnel carrier.
- Brush 1: 2001 Ford, 250 GPM grass/brush truck.
- Brush 2: 2012 Chevy Hi-Pressure GPM grass/brush truck.
- Ranger: 2003 Polaris Ranger.
- Model A Ford, used for department promotions.
- 1939 Ford, used for department promotions.
- Fire Safety House trailer, used for Fire Safety Education.
- 2003 Hazmat enclosed trailer.
- 2004 Hazmat enclosed trailer.



Hydrants

The City of River Falls maintains 690 fire hydrants that can be used to provide water for fire suppression operations. These hydrants are flushed annually and maintained by the River Falls Water Utility.





Public Education

The 2016 Public Fire Safety Education program brought a year of the familiar, a year of change, and the continued goal to keep fire safety education engaging and entertaining for all ages.

The biggest change for our program in 2016 was ending the 45-plus year tradition of fire department kindergarten rides. In place of the ride kindergarten students were given a hands-on tour of a fire engine. They held the fire hoses, sat in the driver's seat, and explored the various compartments on the truck.

Another change this year was to our annual River Falls Days Children's Water Fight event. Always a well-attended activity but requiring multiple entities to host, the decision was made by the department to change the event to a less demanding activity. This year we introduced "water-ball" for kids ages 3-13. Kids enjoyed the experience of using a real fire hose, partnering with a firefighter, and the fun of spraying water.

Every year we are honored to be part of the educational experience for the following groups and events:

- Jacob's Ladder
- UWRF Child Care Center
- River Falls Parks and Recreation
- Fox Den Books
- Faith Lutheran Pre-School
- Boy and Girl Scouts
- "Fire Fighters Are Your Friends"
- River Dazzle
- River Falls Days
- River Falls Fire Department Annual Open House
- Touch-A-Truck (Bi-Annual)
- River Falls School District

In 2016 our school program included changes to the presentation format. In past years, the program was presented to large groups of students at one time. This required multiple firefighters to be available to help with the program. In 2016 we brought the program to individual





classes which meant a more intimate learning environment, less manpower required, and allowing the teachers of the students to participate in learning with their students. Following the 2016 school program a survey on the training was sent to all the schools and teachers. We received an overwhelmingly positive response that the program should continue to be presented to individual classrooms as well as additional information allowing us to create the best learning environment possible. Our program includes the following schools in grades K-5 with customized presentations for each grade level:

- Rocky Branch Elementary
- Westside Elementary
- Greenwood Elementary
- St. Bridget's School
- River Falls Public Montessori School
- Heartland Montessori School

Our programs give presentations to over 1,650 students and include fire safety house tours, Freddie the Fire Truck, hands on presentations, lots of questions and even more laughs.

We strive to provide the best public fire safety education as possible and continue to bring new and motivational ideas for the program in the future.





Summary of Significant Events

Date	Summary
1/12/2016	Shed fire.
1/21/2016	House fire due to a "hoverboard" being plugged into a wall outlet.
2/12/2016	House fire that resulted in complete loss of the house and a fatality.
2/15/2016	Chicken coop shed fire.
2/29/2016	Responded to car accident where a fatality occurred.
4/17/2016	Fire in a building with multiple businesses.
6/13/2016	Semi-truck roll-over on a roundabout.
6/27/2016	Assisted Roberts Fire and Law Enforcement in searching for a missing adult.
7/24/2016	Responded to ventilate home where a car was left running in the garage.
8/18/2016	Structure fire resulting in total loss of house and no loss of life.
9/3/2016	Responded to a barn fire.
10/4/2016	Assisted law enforcement in removal of a deceased individual from a field
10/18/2016	Car accident due to a medical condition. Victim was trapped inside of car which had crashed into the side of the building.
10/21/2016	Car accident with injury and a fatality.
11/12/2016	Responded to a motorcycle accident with serious injuries.
11/19/2016	Extricated victim from single car accident.
12/5/2016	Responded to Skid Steer and car crash.
12/8/2016	Boat on fire next to garage attached to home.
12/13/2016	Boarding house fire. Structure of was damaged but not destroyed.



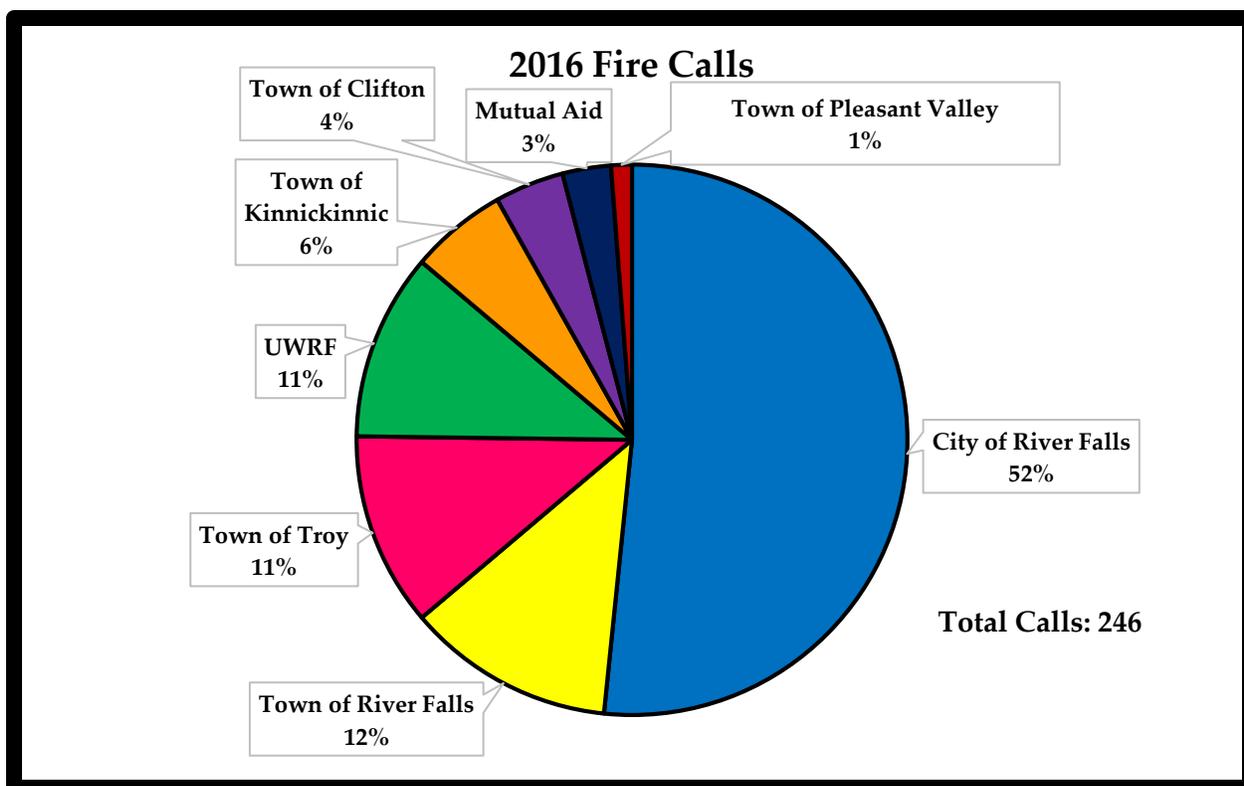
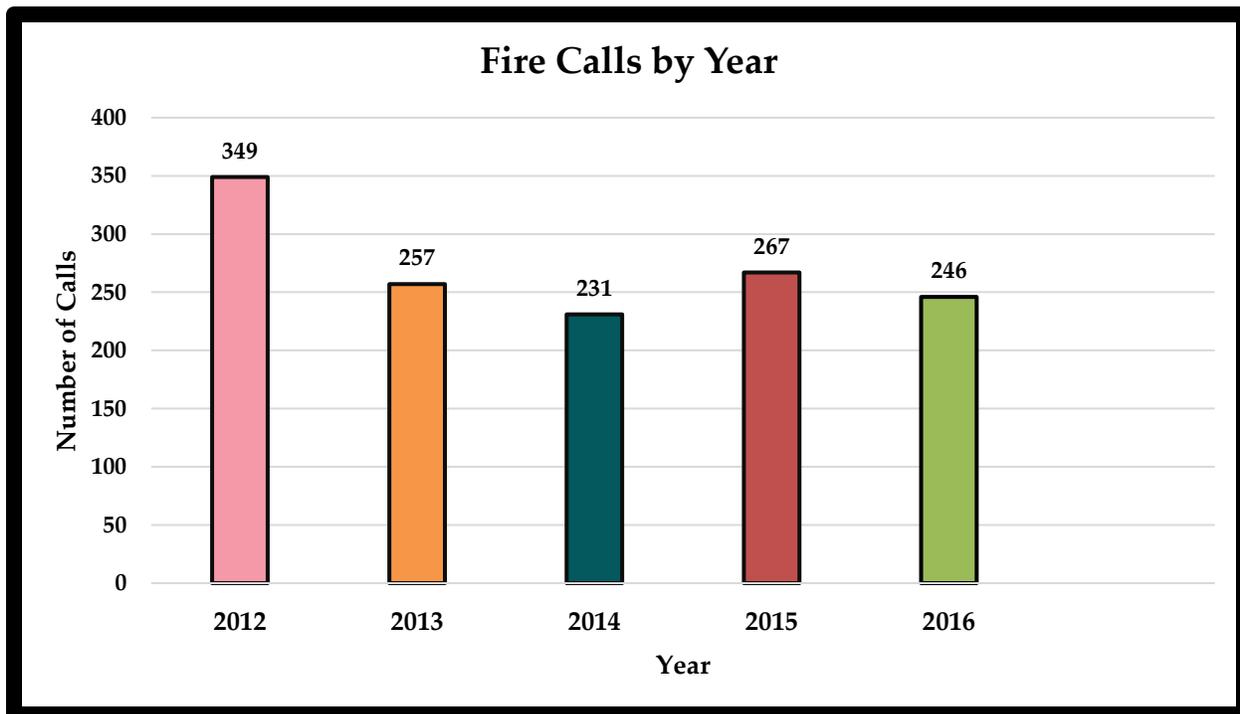
Safety and Inspections

In River Falls and the surrounding contracted townships, there are approximately 700 properties that require fire inspections. Thanks to the efforts of Inspectors Tom Foley, Molly Foley and Doug Rudesill, 580 fire inspections were completed in 2016, nine of which were re-inspections of properties. Our goal is to inspect each of these properties once per year.

Part of the inspection process is educating property owners and business owners of the intent and benefit of the various fire codes. Tom, Molly & Doug have been doing an excellent job of that, therefore we have seen a definite improvement with compliance.

During 2016, inspections staff attended over 50 meetings with city staff on upcoming building projects, witnessing alarm and sprinkler tests at construction projects, meeting on site with property owners to discuss code issues and meeting with fire investigators at fire scenes. Based on the site plan reviews for upcoming projects it appears that 2017 will be a busy year for construction inspections.







Annual Alarm Summary Report
Reporting Between 01/01/2016 - 12/31/2016

Situation	Jan 16	Feb 16	Mar 16	Apr 16	May 16	Jun 16	Jul 16	Aug 16	Sept 16	Oct 16	Nov 16	Dec 16	Total
100 Series Fire	5	3	2	2	3	2	5	3	6	2	3	3	39
200 Series Overpressure Rupture, Explosion, Overheat (no fire)	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
300 Series Rescue & Emergency Medical Service Incident	3	4	2	1	2	4	3	2	7	5	8	6	47
400 Series Hazardous Condition (No fire)	2	0	4	1	4	3	5	4	2	3	3	5	36
500 Series Service Call	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	2	8
600 Series Good Intent Call	3	3	4	1	1	2	5	0	0	0	3	5	27
700 Series False Alarm & False Call	6	1	8	7	12	5	5	5	10	9	11	6	85
900 Series Special Incident Type	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	3
Grand Total	21	12	21	12	22	17	23	15	26	20	28	29	246

Incident Type Summary Report
Reporting Between 01/01/2016-12/31/2016

Incident Type	Count	% of Incidents	Est. Property Loss	Est. Content Loss	Total Est. Loss	% of Losses
Fire						
Fire, other (100)	2	0.81%	\$0.00	\$502.00	\$502.00	0.05%
Building fire (111)	13	5.28%	\$589,500.00	\$356,000.00	\$945,500.00	89.63%
Fuel burner/boiler malfunction, fire confined (116)	1	0.41%	\$5,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$6,000.00	0.57%
Mobile property (vehicle) fire, other (130)	1	0.41%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Passenger vehicle fire (131)	7	2.85%	\$58,950.00	\$100.00	\$59,050.00	5.60%
Road freight or transport vehicle fire (132)	1	0.41%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Water vehicle fire (134)	1	0.41%	\$1,800.00	\$0.00	\$1,800.00	0.17%
Off-road vehicle or heavy equipment fire (138)	1	0.41%	\$25,000.00	\$0.00	\$25,000.00	2.37%
Natural vegetation fire, other (140)	1	0.41%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%



Forest, woods or wildland fire (141)	1	0.41%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Grass fire (143)	1	0.41%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Outside rubbish fire, other (150)	1	0.41%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Outside rubbish, trash or waste fire (151)	1	0.41%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Dumpster or other outside trash receptacle fire (154)	1	0.41%	\$5,000.00	\$0.00	\$5,000.00	0.47%
Special outside fire, other (160)	2	0.81%	\$50.00	\$0.00	\$50.00	0.00%
Outside equipment fire (162)	2	0.81%	\$8,000.00	\$0.00	\$8,000.00	0.76%
Cultivated vegetation, crop fire, other (170)	2	0.81%	\$1,200.00	\$240.00	\$1,440.00	0.14%
	39	15.88%	\$694,500.00	\$357,842.00	\$1,052,342.00	99.76%
Overpressure Rupture, Explosion, Overheat (no fire)						
Excessive heat, scorch burns with no ignition (251)	1	0.41%	\$2,500.00	\$0.00	\$2,500.00	0.24%
	1	0.41%	\$2,500.00	\$0.00	\$2,500.00	0.24%
Rescue & Emergency Medical Service Incident						
Medical assist, assist EMS crew (311)	6	2.44%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Motor vehicle accident with injuries (322)	34	13.82%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Motor vehicle accident with no injuries. (324)	4	1.63%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Search for person on land (341)	1	0.41%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Extrication of victim(s) from vehicle (352)	1	0.41%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Removal of victim(s) from stalled elevator (353)	1	0.41%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
	47	19.12%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Hazardous Condition (No Fire)						
Hazardous condition, other (400)	4	1.63%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Gasoline or other flammable liquid spill (411)	1	0.41%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Gas leak (natural gas or LPG) (412)	6	2.44%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Oil or other combustible liquid spill (413)	2	0.81%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Chemical spill or leak (422)	1	0.41%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Carbon monoxide incident (424)	5	2.03%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Heat from short circuit (wiring), defective/worn (441)	1	0.41%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Arcing, shorted electrical equipment (445)	1	0.41%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Accident, potential accident, other (460)	2	0.81%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Vehicle accident, general cleanup (463)	13	5.28%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
	36	14.64%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Service Call						
Person in distress, other (510)	1	0.41%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%



Smoke or odor removal (531)	2	0.81%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Assist invalid (554)	1	0.41%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Cover assignment, standby, move up (571)	4	1.63%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
	8	3.26%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Good Intent Call						
Good intent call, other (600)	2	0.81%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Dispatched and cancelled en-route (611)	9	3.66%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
No incident found on arrival at dispatch address (622)	6	2.44%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Authorized controlled burning (631)	1	0.41%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Steam, other gas mistaken for smoke, other (650)	1	0.41%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Smoke scare, odor of smoke (651)	5	2.03%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Steam, vapor, fog or dust thought to be smoke (652)	1	0.41%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Hazmat release investigation w/no Hazmat (671)	2	0.81%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
	27	10.98%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
False Alarm & False Call						
Malicious, mischievous false call, other (710)	2	0.81%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Central station, malicious false alarm (714)	5	2.03%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
System malfunction, other (730)	1	0.41%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Smoke detector activation due to malfunction (733)	6	2.44%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Alarm system sounded due to malfunction (735)	1	0.41%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
CO detector activation due to malfunction (736)	1	0.41%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Sprinkler activation, no fire - unintentional (741)	1	0.41%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Smoke detector activation, no fire - unintentional (743)	30	12.20%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Detector activation, no fire - unintentional (744)	3	1.22%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Alarm system activation, no fire - unintentional (745)	18	7.32%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Carbon monoxide detector activation, no CO (746)	17	6.91%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
	85	34.57%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Special Incident Type						
Citizen complaint (911)	3	1.22%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
	3	1.22%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Total Incident Count:	246		Total Estimated Loss:		\$1,054,842.00	



Future Department Goals

We have identified several projects to work on and goals to be met as our department evolves to meet the needs of the membership and the community we serve. Some include:

- **Develop short and long-term strategic/work plan**
 - Review Inspections program & related personnel needs
 - Implementation of administrative rules and guidelines
 - Training on Standard Operating Guidelines
 - Training on Wisconsin MABAS (Mutual Aid Box Alarm System)
 - Officer training/succession planning
 - Volunteer recruitment & retention
 - Evaluate long-term facility needs
- **Research funding opportunities**
 - Grants, public & private
 - Community partnerships
 - Charges for service

Thank you for your continued support of the River Falls Fire Department.

