

River Falls Fire Department 2017 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

It is my privilege to present the 2017 Annual Report for the City of River Falls Fire Department. This document represents considerably more than a review of our inventory, call volume, and other statistical data; rather it highlights the accomplishments by the many paid-per-call firefighters who comprise the membership of this department. The success we enjoy today and the opportunities that lie before us are only made possible due to the commitment and professionalism of each of our members.

2017 was an exciting year. Nine new recruits were added to the ranks to fill positions that were vacated through attrition during the past four years. Two of the new members came back on to the department after long absences.

Our membership is focused on serving the River Falls Community through professional emergency response and fire safety education. We are all very proud of our department, its accomplishments and its service to the River Falls community.

I am personally grateful to our membership for their contributions. I would also like to thank our Mayor and City Council members, our 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 2017.

Scott Nelson, Fire Chief





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MEMBERSHIP

2017 ended with 48 paid on call members and 1 full time Chief on the department.

Years of Service as of December 31, 2017

Carl Gaulke	45 years 3 months	James Rimer	10 years 7 months
Gary Eloranta	43 years 6 months	Scott Nelson*	7 years 4 months
Gene McKahan	43 years 4 months	Neil Engel	6 years 10 months
Pauly Cudd	36 years 10 months	Garrett Gill	6 years 10 months
Tom Foley	32 years 3 months	Ky Kaminski	6 years 10 months
Douglas Rudesill	31 years 10 months	Robert Kerr	6 years 10 months
Bill Cernohous	28 years 2 months	Ted Slowiak	6 years 10 months
Bill Lubich	28 years 2 months	Dustin Dodge	4 years 10 months
Troy Malmer	28 years 2 months	Matt Dodge	4 years 10 months
Mike Moody	28 years 2 months	Brendan Johnson	4 years 10 months
Ed Nicholson	28 years 2 months	Charles Meyer	4 years 10 months
Pauline Williams	25 years 5 months	Shawn Olson	4 years 10 months
Chris Cernohous	22 years 3 months	Brian Roquette	4 years 10 months
Jason Sammon	22 years 1 month	Justin Wilson	4 years 10 months
Molly McLagan	22 years 1 month	Justin Athorp	10 months
Mark Hilden	17 years	Ryan Bailey	10 months
Matt Cernohous	16 years	Greg Deitsche	10 months
Dean Grisar	16 years	Adam Meier	10 months
Evan Larsen	16 years	Kyle Morrow	10 months
Ed Vlack	16 years	Andrew Rinneck	10 months
Scott Gavin	14 years	Chad Zess	10 months
Matt Johnson	14 years		
Adam Larson	14 years		
Sean Slaikeu	14 years		
Michael Fecht	10 years 8 months		
Nathaniel Baar	10 years 7 months		
Danny Nicholson	10 years 7 months		

*Indicates Fire Chief

Total Years of Service: 783 years 2 months (Average of 15 years 2 months)

RETIREMENTS/RESIGNATIONS:

The following members retired or resigned from the department in 2017:

- Frank Holter



New Members

Nine new members were added to the ranks of River Falls Fire in 2017. Of the nine, two, Mark Hilden and Andrea Ellefson, were past members who came back to the department. The remaining seven members completed their Firefighter I training by the end of the year and began the second phase of their training, Firefighter II, early in 2018. All totaled, they will complete over 200 hours of firefighter, hazardous materials, apparatus operator, and first aid training – in addition to regular weekly drills.

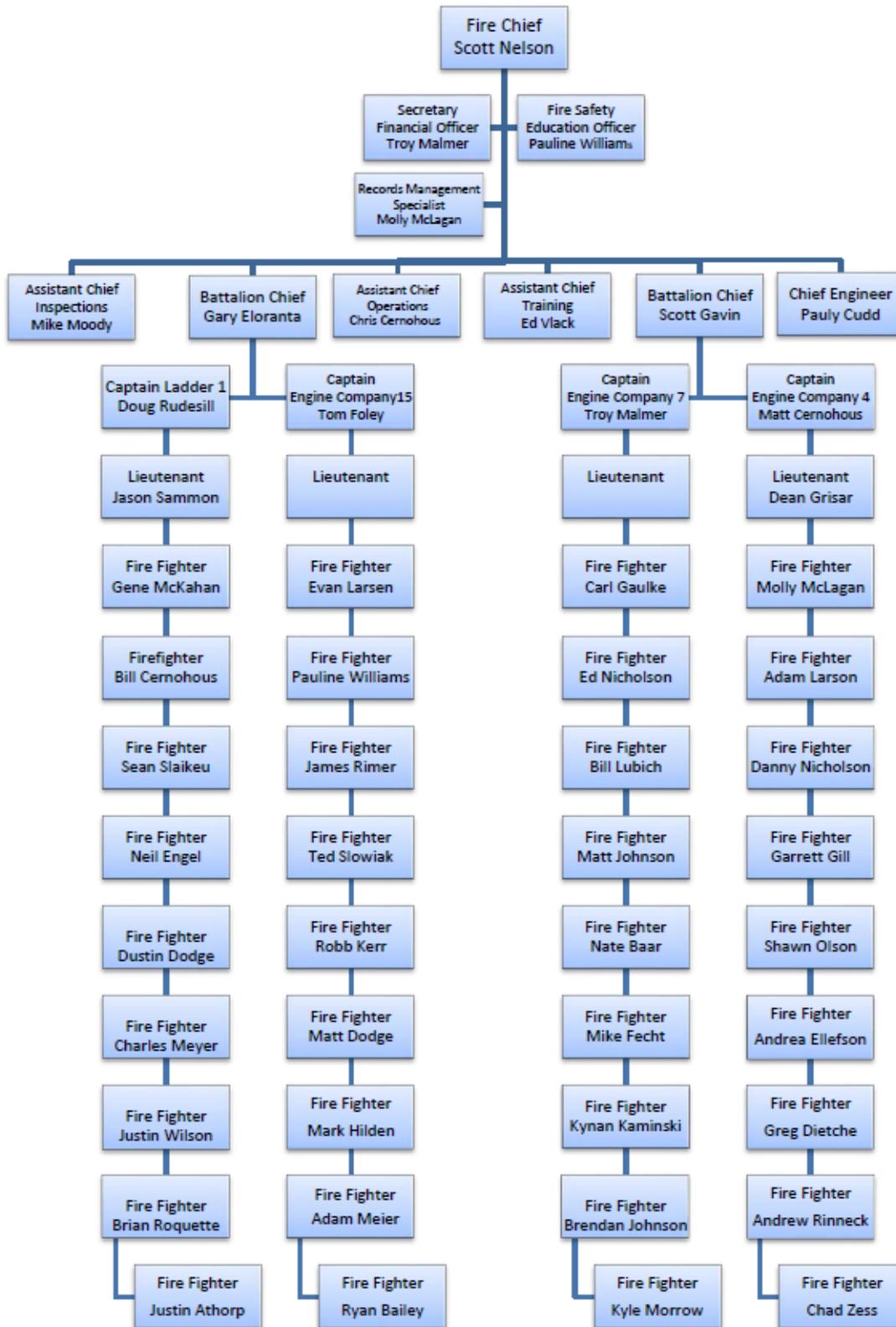
Photo with names.



Left to right – Kyle Morrow, Justin Athorp, Chad Zess, Andrew Rineck, Ryan Bailey (in truck), Greg Dietsche, Andrea Ellefson, Adam Meier, Mark Hilden

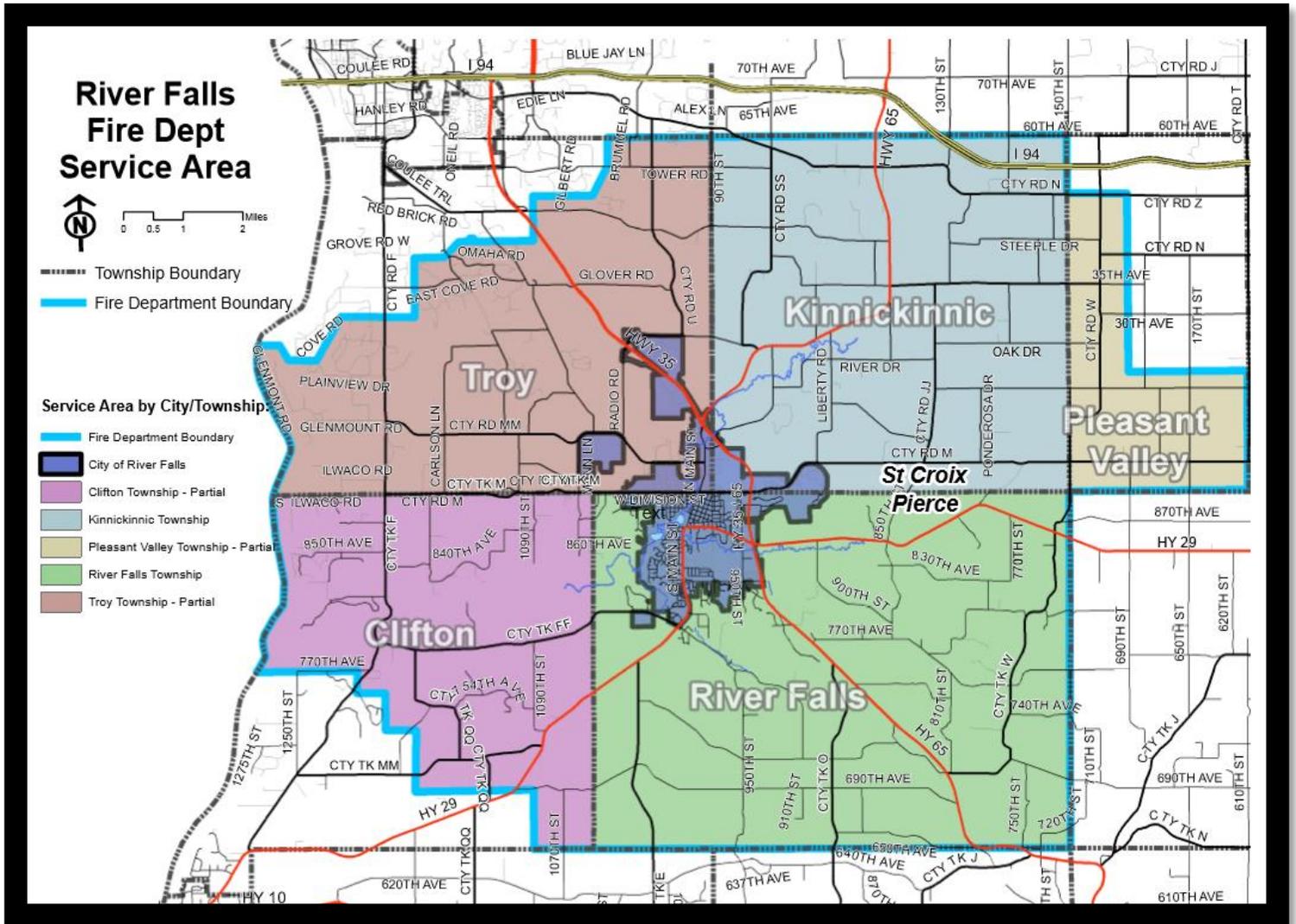


Organizational Chart





Service Area Map



Partnerships

In 2017, the Rural Association (made up of the Towns of Troy, Kinnickinnic, Clifton, River Falls, and Pleasant Valley) contributed \$291,786 of the \$802,216 department budget or 35%. The River Falls Fire Department would like to thank the Rural Association for their partnership and support.



2017 Highlights

2017 Firefighter of the Year: Mike Fecht

Mike Fecht was named 2017 Firefighter of the Year at the Fire Department Annual Awards Banquet held in January 2018. Mike has been a firefighter for 37 years, ten of which has been with the River Falls Fire Department. He served with Maplewood Fire and South St. Paul Fire. In addition to his service to River Falls, Mike also is a full-time as a firefighter at the Minneapolis Airport.

Mike has served as a first responder with River Falls EMS for 13 years and joined River Falls fire three years after that. Fecht said its always a privilege to help others, along with the other crews with which he's worked.



“Mike is not only passionate and a team player, he has a great knowledge base to share with us because of his full-time experience.” Chief Nelson commented. “He is also humble enough to have a deep respect for the fire service and serving the people in our community.”

When receiving the award, Mike thanked his wife, Laura for her total support and said, “It’s a privilege to say that I’m a firefighter for River Falls.”

Frank Holter retired after 43 years of service with RFFD. He was given a shadow box at the RFFD Annual Banquet to commemorate his time on the department. Frank served from January 7, 1974 and retired on January 9, 2017. During his career, he was a firefighter, Lieutenant and Captain. During these past years, Frank was very active with public education and even had a kitchen in the Fire Department Safety House named after him.





2017 Department Highlights

- Frank Holter retired after 43 years of service.
- Oyster Feed was February 6th.
- We welcomed 9 new members to the department in February.
- Participated on May 18th Firefighters are your Friends event.
- Department Family Picnic with the Department as special guests at the Fighting Fish game July 26th.
- Completed our ISO inspection receiving a Class 3 rating which we were one of 2,015 departments in the Country to receive.
- Received a four gas monitor from the proceeds of the West Wind Chicken Fry on River Falls Days.
- Participated in the School Supply give away.
- Participated with EMS and Police in the National Night Out stopping by at block parties.
- Remodeled our old basement meeting room into a training room.
- Purchased a new Haz Mat Trailer and converted the old one into a Specialized Rescue trailer.
- Annual Open House was held on September 25, 2017.
- Participated in Law Enforcement Torch Run.





Department Training

Training for members of the River Falls Fire Department takes place every Monday evening from 6:00 p.m. until around 9:30 p.m., except on holidays. This is a significant commitment by our members. Training for other area fire departments varies from two times a month to three times a month. Even though the River Falls Fire Department trains that often that covers a variety of topics, the training officers frequently state that there are not enough Mondays to train on all the topics we would like to train on.

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

- **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. On the first Monday of even numbered months, once the maintenance is completed, we then have a business meeting. On the first Monday of odd numbered months, this is followed by either officer training or an officers' meeting.

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 Fire Prevention enclosed trailer.
- 2004 Specialized Rescue enclosed trailer.
- 2017 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 2017 Fire Safety Education group once again enjoyed a busy year of activities and community events.

This year we missed having one of our favorite educators joining us in the year of activities. Frank Holter said goodbye to the River Falls Fire Department Family after over 40 years of dedicated service. The kitchen in the fire safety house carries his name and is lovingly referred to as, “Frank’s Kitchen.” Frank was an instrumental educator to thousands of children over the years and will be deeply missed! We wish him and his family well in his retirement.

Events this year included fire hall tours and safety presentations to Jacobs Ladder, UW-RF Learning Center, Boy and Girl Scout organizations, and our annual “Firefighters Are Your Friends” event.



As we moved through 2017 we once again enjoyed the weekend activities of River Falls Days. Our Children’s Water Ball event was well attended and there were smiles everywhere! We splashed in the water at Glen Park for the Park and Rec Water Day event and children learned about how fire apparatus can transport and deliver water to a working fire.

“National Night Out,” had members visiting various neighborhoods and promoting public safety. “Run with the Cops” was a fundraiser for Special Olympics that had Sparky enjoying time with some amazing individuals!

As summer faded into fall we hosted our Annual Fire Dept. Open House and saw large crowds and lots of activities for all to enjoy and learn from. This year we were honored to have the “Seat Belt Convincer,” from the Wisconsin DOT. The audience learned the importance of seat belt use and the dangers of a roll-over crash.



The Fire Safety Education Program went into high gear as we headed into the schools and enjoyed time with students. Several of our new fire department members joined in the activities and saw first-hand the impact this program has on students and adults alike.



This year's NFPA Theme, "Every Second Counts," taught students the importance of smoke detectors and escape plans. Our program once again reached students grades K-5 in the River Falls School District. They enjoyed the hands-on tours of a fire truck, visits with Sparky, fire safety games, and the experience of the fire safety house.



Our year concluded with the always popular River Dazzle Parade and a sparkling ride down Main Street. This is a chance to say Thank you to the community for their continued support of the River Falls Fire Department and to wish everyone a safe year ahead.

2018 promises to be another year filled with educational opportunities, community event participation, and exciting new memories.



Summary of Significant Events

Date	Summary
1/13/2017	Carbon monoxide incident resulting in a fatality.
3/29/2017	Commercial kitchen fire with major damage
3/31/2017	Assist EMS with deceased person.
4/3/2017	Pedestrian Vs motor vehicle resulting in a fatality.
5/20/2017	Assist EMS with a deceased person
6/6/2017	Assist EMS with a deceased person.
6/11/2017	House fire in Town of Clifton with major damage.
6/20/2017	Kitchen fire with major damage.
7/7/2017	Fire in mechanical room at laundromat.
10/30/2017	Carbon monoxide incident resulting in a fatality.
11/11/2017	House fire in Town of River Falls with major damage. Several dogs died in the fire.
12/1/2017	Report if an explosion. Squirrel on power line caused transformer fuse to blow.
12/10/2017	Garage fire in Town of River Falls with major damage.
12/27/2017	Had the opportunity to use our ice rescue equipment to save a goose on the Kinni.
12/31/2017	Assist EMS with deceased person.
December 2017	With our first cold snap of the year in December we had 3 sprinkler systems freeze up and burst pipes.

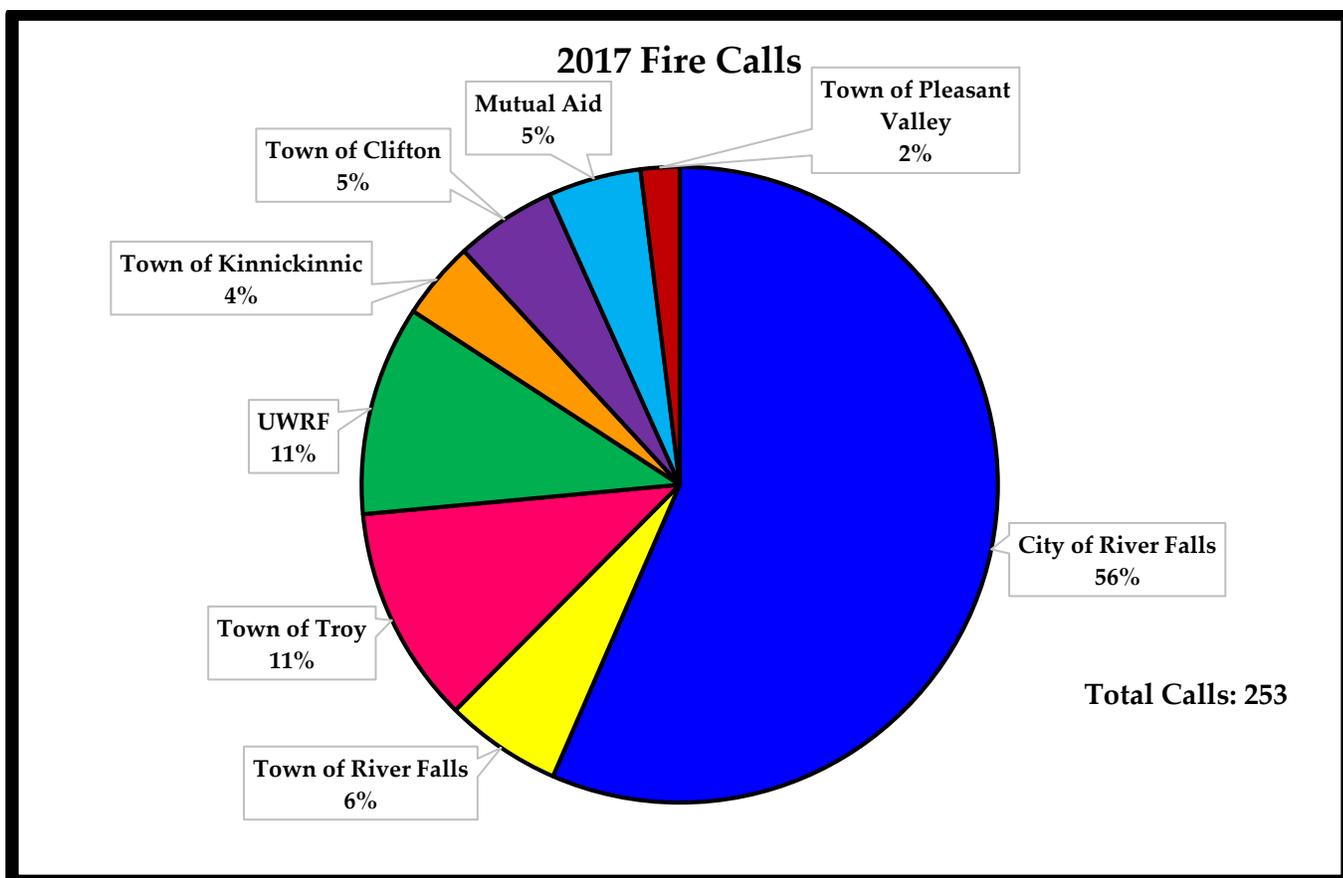
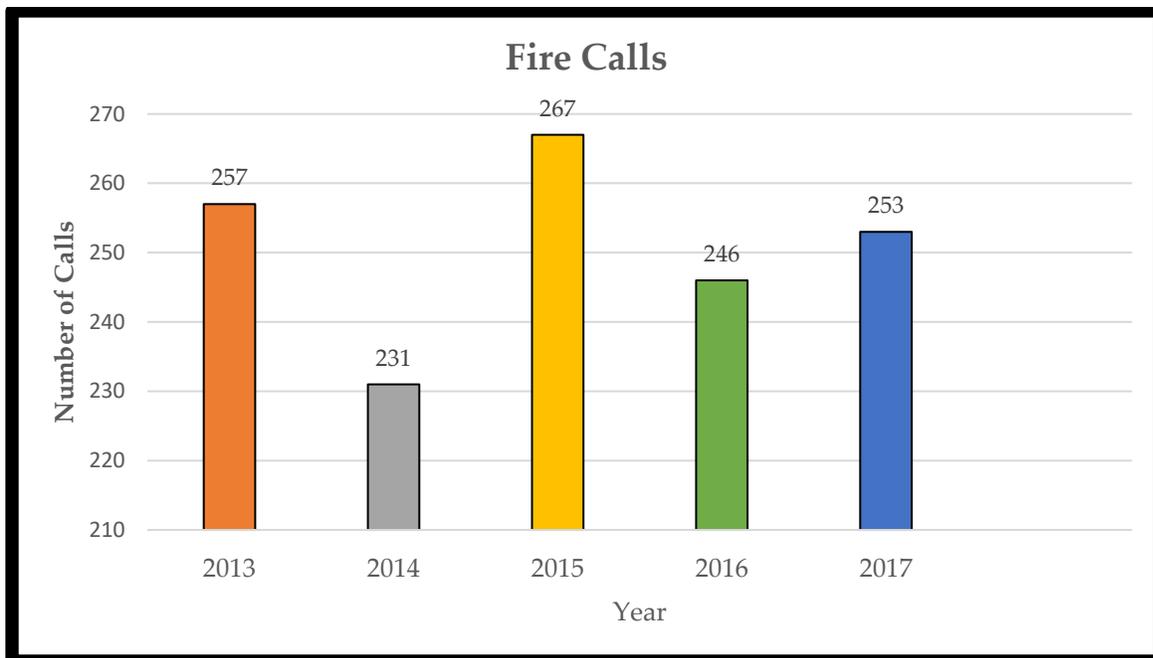


Safety and Inspections

Thanks to the efforts of inspectors Tom Foley, Molly Foley and Doug Rudesill we completed inspections on 620 properties within the City and surrounding Towns within our fire district. This is an increase of 40 over 2016 and is over 90% of inspectable properties within the fire district. Because of the continuing focus on fire safety education we continue to see improved compliance.

2017 was a very busy year for construction projects as there were roughly 100 meetings pertaining to construction projects. These meetings dealt with everything from site plan review meetings, onsite inspections during the construction process and then final acceptance inspections of sprinkler systems and alarm systems for final occupancy. 2018 is already beginning to look like another busy construction year as there have been a lot of calls from people with questions about fire code, fire extinguishers, recreational fire pits, controlled burns, etc.







Annual Alarm Summary Report

Reporting Between: 01/01/2017 - 12/31/2017

Printed On: 04/05/2018

Situation	Jan 17	Feb 17	Mar 17	Apr 17	May 17	Jun 17	Jul 17	Aug 17	Sept 17	Oct 17	Nov 17	Dec 17	Total
100 Series Fire	3	0	3	4	5	4	2	4	2	2	1	2	32
300 Series Rescue & Emergency Medical Service Incident	2	4	5	4	4	5	2	3	7	5	8	4	53
400 Series Hazardous Condition(No fire)	2	0	2	2	3	5	3	0	1	5	2	0	25
500 Series Service Call	0	0	2	2	1	3	1	0	2	1	1	6	19
600 Series Good Intent Call	1	1	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	3	2	3	23
700 Series False Alarm & False Call	7	7	9	5	7	5	7	6	10	12	9	16	100
900 Series Special Incident Type	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Grand Total	15	13	23	19	22	24	16	15	24	28	23	31	253

Incident Type Report (Summary)

From 01/01/17 To 12/31/17

Report Printed On: 04/05/2018

Incident Type	Count	% of Incidents	Est. Property Loss	Est. Content Loss	Total Est. Loss	% of Losses
1 Fire						
Fire, other (100)	3	1.19%	\$25,000.00	\$1,500.00	\$26,500.00	3.09%
Building fire (111)	9	3.56%	\$458,200.00	\$261,000.00	\$719,200.00	83.92%
Fires in structure other than in a building (112)	1	0.40%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Cooking fire, confined to container (113)	1	0.40%	\$0.00	\$300.00	\$300.00	0.04%
Trash or rubbish fire, contained (118)	1	0.40%	\$0.00	\$500.00	\$500.00	0.06%
Passenger vehicle fire (131)	10	3.95%	\$40,450.00	\$100.00	\$40,550.00	4.73%
Road freight or transport vehicle fire (132)	1	0.40%	\$60,000.00	\$0.00	\$60,000.00	7.00%
Brush or brush-and-grass mixture fire (142)	3	1.19%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Grass fire (143)	1	0.40%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Special outside fire, other (160)	1	0.40%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Outside equipment fire (162)	1	0.40%	\$10,000.00	\$0.00	\$10,000.00	1.17%
	32	12.69%	\$593,650.00	\$263,400.00	\$857,050.00	100.01%
3 Rescue & Emergency Medical Service Incident						
Rescue, EMS incident, other (300)	1	0.40%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Medical assist, assist EMS crew (311)	14	5.53%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Motor vehicle accident with injuries (322)	31	12.25%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Motor vehicle/pedestrian accident (MV Ped) (323)	1	0.40%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%



Motor vehicle accident with no injuries. (324)	3	1.19%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Extrication, rescue, other (350)	1	0.40%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Removal of victim(s) from stalled elevator (353)	2	0.79%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
	53	20.96%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
4 Hazardous Condition (No Fire)						
Hazardous condition, other (400)	2	0.79%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Gasoline or other flammable liquid spill (411)	1	0.40%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Gas leak (natural gas or LPG) (412)	2	0.79%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Carbon monoxide incident (424)	6	2.37%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Electrical wiring/equipment problem, other (440)	1	0.40%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Power line down (444)	2	0.79%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Arcing, shorted electrical equipment (445)	2	0.79%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Accident, potential accident, other (460)	1	0.40%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Vehicle accident, general cleanup (463)	8	3.16%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
	25	9.89%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
5 Service Call						
Water problem, other (520)	1	0.40%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Smoke or odor removal (531)	5	1.98%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Animal rescue (542)	1	0.40%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Assist police or other governmental agency (551)	5	1.98%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Cover assignment, standby, moveup (571)	7	2.77%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
	19	7.53%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
6 Good Intent Call						
Dispatched and cancelled en route (611)	12	4.74%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
No incident found on arrival at dispatch address (622)	1	0.40%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Authorized controlled burning (631)	1	0.40%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Steam, other gas mistaken for smoke, other (650)	1	0.40%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Smoke scare, odor of smoke (651)	1	0.40%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Steam, vapor, fog or dust thought to be smoke (652)	3	1.19%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Smoke from barbecue, tar kettle (653)	1	0.40%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
HazMat release investigation w/no HazMat (671)	3	1.19%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
	23	9.12%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
7 False Alarm & False Call						
Malicious, mischievous false call, other (710)	5	1.98%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Central station, malicious false alarm (714)	1	0.40%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Local alarm system, malicious false alarm (715)	1	0.40%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Alarm system sounded due to malfunction (735)	4	1.58%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
CO detector activation due to malfunction (736)	3	1.19%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Unintentional transmission of alarm, other (740)	4	1.58%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Sprinkler activation, no fire - unintentional (741)	2	0.79%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Smoke detector activation, no fire - unintentional (743)	50	19.76%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%



Detector activation, no fire - unintentional (744)	1	0.40%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Alarm system activation, no fire - unintentional (745)	18	7.11%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Carbon monoxide detector activation, no CO (746)	11	4.35%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
	100	39.54%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
9 Special Incident Type						
Citizen complaint (911)	1	0.40%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
	1	0.40%	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Total Incident Count:	253		Total Est. Loss:		\$857,050.00	



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.

