

# Fremont Fire Department 2020 Annual Report



Structure Fire September 23, 2020 Courtesy Photo



# FREMONT FIRE DEPARTMENT

## 2020 ANNUAL REPORT

Todd Bernt, Fire Chief  
415 East 16<sup>th</sup> Street  
Fremont, NE 68025



January 2020

Received grant from Wal-Mart for Fire Prevention Materials for the Fremont Elementary Schools

February 2020

Received donation from the Fremont Board of Realtors for smoke/carbon monoxide detectors.





Courtesy Photo  
Structure Fire  
May 24, 2020

Structure Fire  
March 17, 2020



Structure Fire  
May 23, 2020

# **FREMONT FIRE DEPARTMENT**

## **ANNUAL REPORT**

### **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

#### **SECTION I**

##### **DEPARTMENT**

Mission Statement

Letter from the Chief

Staff

Department History

#### **SECTION II**

##### **FIRE RESPONSES**

Types of Alarms & Fire Causes

Fire Loss & Fire Runs Per Year

Day of Week & Time of Day

Fire Runs Per Month & Fire Runs Per Shift

Fire/EMS Runs by Section of City

#### **SECTION III**

##### **EMS SERVICES**

Types of Medical Emergencies

Patient Age

EMS Runs Per Year & EMS Runs Per Month

Day of Week & Time of Day

EMS Runs Per Shift

#### **SECTION IV**

##### **DEPARTMENT TRAINING**

Call Back Statistics

#### **SECTION V**

##### **PUBLIC RELATIONS ACTIVITIES**

FAQ

Check us out on the City's web page at:

<http://www.fremontne.gov/fire>

# Section 1



August 25, 2020  
Vehicle Fire



**Department**

## Message from Chief Bernt



### MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of the Fremont Fire Department is to protect Life and Property by providing:

- \* Fire and Safety Education
- \* Fire Prevention
- \* Prompt response to Fire, Medical and other related Emergencies

With professionally trained personnel in an efficient and cost-effective manner.

Dear Honorable Mayor and City Council,

On behalf of the members of the Fremont Fire Department, I'm proud to present the 2020 Annual Report. This report is a testament to your fire department member's professionalism and dedication to our community. In 2020, we responded to a total of 3,110 emergencies; 2,824 medical and 286 fire. The fire department saw a 3% increase in emergency calls from 2019.

COVID-19 was new to the fire department with not knowing how this virus reacts, how to best protect ourselves and the community we serve. It led to new policies and procedures in responding to EMS incidents. As a result of COVID, the fire department had to cancel its annual open house and many of our community/school public education activities

Our 2,824 Emergency Medical Services (EMS) responses account for approximately 91% of our fire and EMS responses. We had a total of 2,928 patient contacts with the average patient age of 60.49 years old. The fire department saw a 1.6% increase in EMS emergencies, but a 2.6% decrease in patient contacts from 2019.

Of the 286 fire emergencies, 42 were extinguishable fires which include 4 exposure fires (two structure and two vehicle). An exposure fire is when property that receives damage from the original fire. There were 7 fires out on our arrival but were still investigated. Electrical and smoking materials were the leading causes of fires. The fire losses for 2020 totaled to \$1,494,843. In 2020, there was a 23% increase in fire emergencies from 2019.

Documented training hours for the department totaled 2,043.75 hours. Our training hours saw a 52% decrease in total hours due to COVID. Across the state and nationally, training opportunities were cancelled or postponed. These are opportunities we send personnel for our training needs.

The accomplishments of the Fremont Fire Department are only possible through the ongoing dedication of each firefighter's commitment to our community. None of which would be possible without the support of the mayor, city council, city administrator, and the citizens of Fremont.

Sincerely,

Todd Bernt  
Fire Chief

**COMMAND STAFF**



Fire Chief Todd Bernt  
Paramedic  
28 years of service

**A-SHIFT**



Captain Jamie Meyer  
Paramedic  
27 years of service



Lieutenant Brian Monaghan  
Paramedic  
10 years of service



Levi Alley  
Firefighter/Paramedic  
10 years of service



Terry Luthy  
Firefighter/Paramedic  
8 years of service



Alex Iniguez  
Firefighter/Paramedic  
3 years of service



Jason Meyer  
Firefighter/Paramedic  
3 years of service



James Bazer  
Firefighter/EMT  
1 years of service



Zachary Toole  
Firefighter/EMT  
1 year of service



Brian Carpenter  
Firefighter/EMT  
<1 year of service

**Pictures courtesy of Rader Photography**

**B-SHIFT**



Captain Pat Tawney  
Paramedic  
28 years of service



Lieutenant Zach Klein  
Paramedic  
14 years of service



Alan Atkinson  
Firefighter/Intermediate  
29 years of service



Todd Coffey  
Firefighter/Paramedic  
28 years of service



Dave Wordekemper  
Firefighter/Paramedic  
25 years of service



Wyatt Swartz  
Firefighter/EMT  
16 years of service



Rich Osterloh  
Firefighter/EMT  
14 years of service



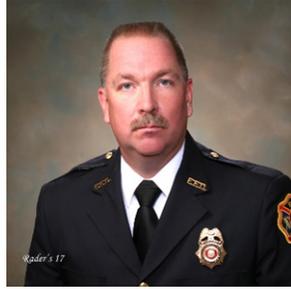
Blake Wagner  
Firefighter/Paramedic  
4 years of service



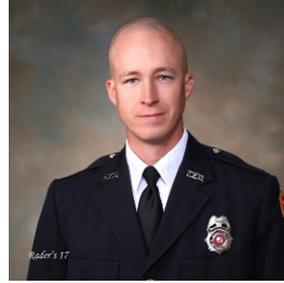
Jason Shreck  
Firefighter/Paramedic  
2 years of service

**Pictures courtesy of Rader Photography**

## C-SHIFT



Captain Tom Christensen  
Paramedic  
25 years of service



Lieutenant Nick Morris  
Paramedic  
16 years of service



Mike Schuler  
Firefighter/EMT  
14 years of service



Tyler Thomas  
Firefighter/Paramedic  
14 years of service



Darek Schuller  
Firefighter/EMT  
8 years of service



Rick Schutt  
Firefighter/Paramedic  
8 years of service



Peter Kafonek  
Firefighter/Paramedic  
4 years of service

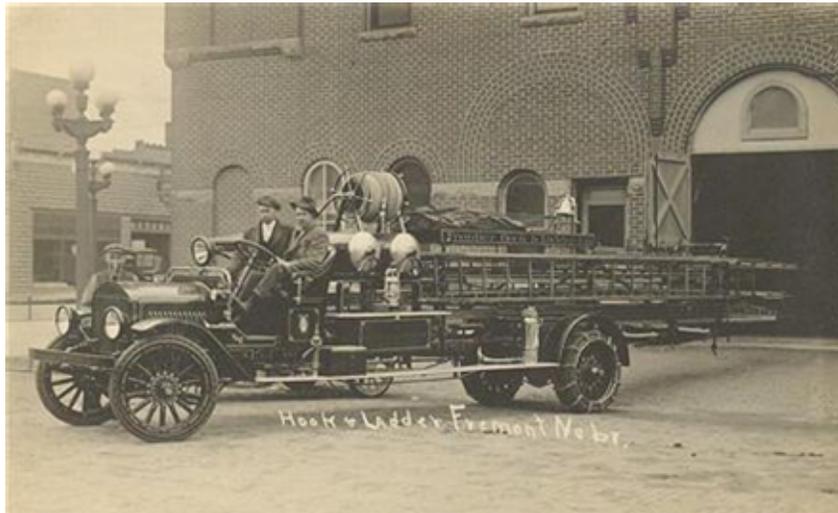


Christian McKenzie  
Firefighter/EMT  
2 years of service



Riley McCoy  
Firefighter/EMT  
<1 year of service

**Pictures courtesy of Rader Photography**



### FREMONT'S FIRE DEPARTMENT HISTORY

Established in the late 1860's, the Fremont Fire Department was the third fire department in the state of Nebraska. Several fire companies made up the early Fire Department:



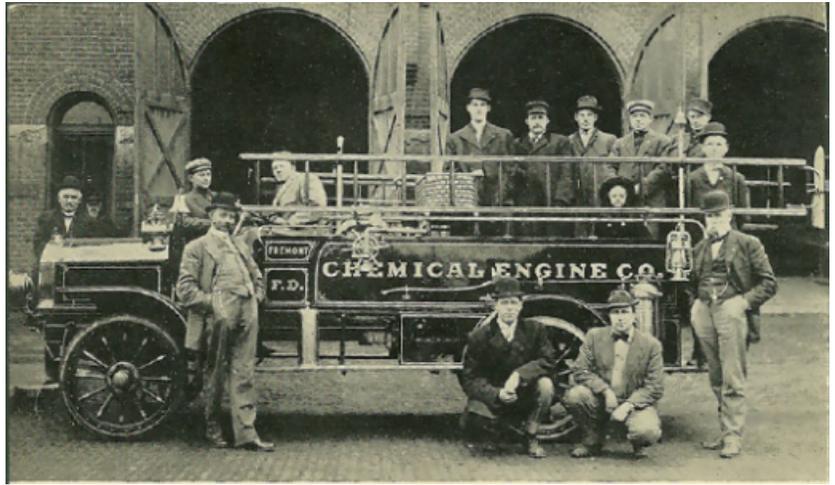
- Frontier Fire Company, November 1868
- Fremont Engine Company, February 1872
- Red Jacket Engine Company, December 1874
- J.C. Cleland Hose Company, 1883
- Mechanic Hose Company, May 1886
- G.W.E. Dorsey Hose Company, May 1886
- W.G. Mercer Hose Company, February 1890

These were all volunteer companies which, in 1890 boasted a membership of 182. A board of directors for the volunteer fire department was formed in 1891. The board was made up of 16 members (two from each of the seven companies, plus a president and vice president). This board was the governing body of all the volunteer firefighters.



In 1888 the Fremont City Hall was built at the corner of 4th Street and Park Avenue. This building also contained the fire station. A bell tower was erected in this building to call citizens with teams of horses to pull the fire wagons and hose carts. When the bell sounded, the first person to get to the station and hook their team of horses to a piece of fire equipment got paid for their services. In 1900 the city was split into six wards, with one hose reel cart placed in each ward.

The City of Fremont purchased a Wilcox Hose and Chemical Truck in 1911. This was the first motor driven fire truck in the state of Nebraska. A man was hired for \$65 a month to run and take care of the truck. He became the first paid employee of the Fremont Fire Department. Additional motorized trucks were purchased in 1915, 1919, and 1922. The position of a paid Fire Chief was created in January 1929, and was held by Harry D. Struve until September 1932. Since 1929 Fremont has had eleven career Fire Chiefs, one (Carl Hansen) died in the line of duty in 1969.



In July 1937, the seven volunteer fire companies were reduced to four. The volunteer fire department remained divided into companies until about 1990 when “companies” were dropped and all members began meeting together under the heading of Fremont Volunteer Fire Department.

The current fire station, at 415 East 16th Street, was built in 1968 for \$240,000.00. It houses three pumpers (two front line trucks and one reserve truck), one aerial, one water rescue/command center unit, EMS quick response pickup, and three ambulances/rescue squads. We also have two paramedic bicycles and a boat that we keep at this location.

Today’s Fremont Fire Department consists of 27 career firefighters, who work three shifts of nine firefighters each. Shifts are 24 hours long, with 48 hours off.



Our department’s fire protection area covers approximately eight square miles. Through our Mutual Aid agreements, our rescue squad and fire response does not stop at the city limits. It extends into the rural communities and surrounding areas, and our Advanced Life Support Service allows us to intercept critical patients when requested with area fire departments. It’s interesting to note that it was in the late 1960’s and early 1970’s, members of the department became the first Emergency Medical

Technicians (EMT’s). The last thirty years have seen tremendous change in our rescue squad service. Defibrillators were introduced to the department in December 1989 and were a controversial

acquisition at the time. The next year, members of this department saved their first life as a direct result of using a defibrillator. In 1993 the City approved the department's request to become an Advanced Life Support (ALS) service. In 1995, we obtained our paramedic license.



Presently, additional services the Fremont Fire Department provides is water rescue, ice rescue, trench rescue, high/low angle, confined space rescue, and hazardous materials response at the operations level. We're always looking at building on the foundation that was built by the early founders of the Fremont Fire Department.

We're proud of our history. It's reflected in a sense of tradition and "family" our firefighters have towards their job and one another. The most outstanding part of the fire service is the

heart of each firefighter. The best equipment means nothing without the commitment and dedication of our firefighters. We are determined to provide our community with the best possible service, now and in the future.



This photograph of Fremont's City Hall was published in the Fremont Tribune for the City's 150<sup>th</sup> "birthday". The three large open doors indicate the area of the building that housed the fire department. The building was located at 4<sup>th</sup> and Park Avenue.

# Section 2



Structure Fire November 18, 2020

# Fire Response

## Fire Reponses

The department responded to 286 fire related calls. November was the most active month with 33 fire calls. Total fire losses for the year totaled \$1,494,843. There were 28 fire related incidents where the responding units were cancelled enroute. In 2020, there was a 23% increase in fire emergencies.

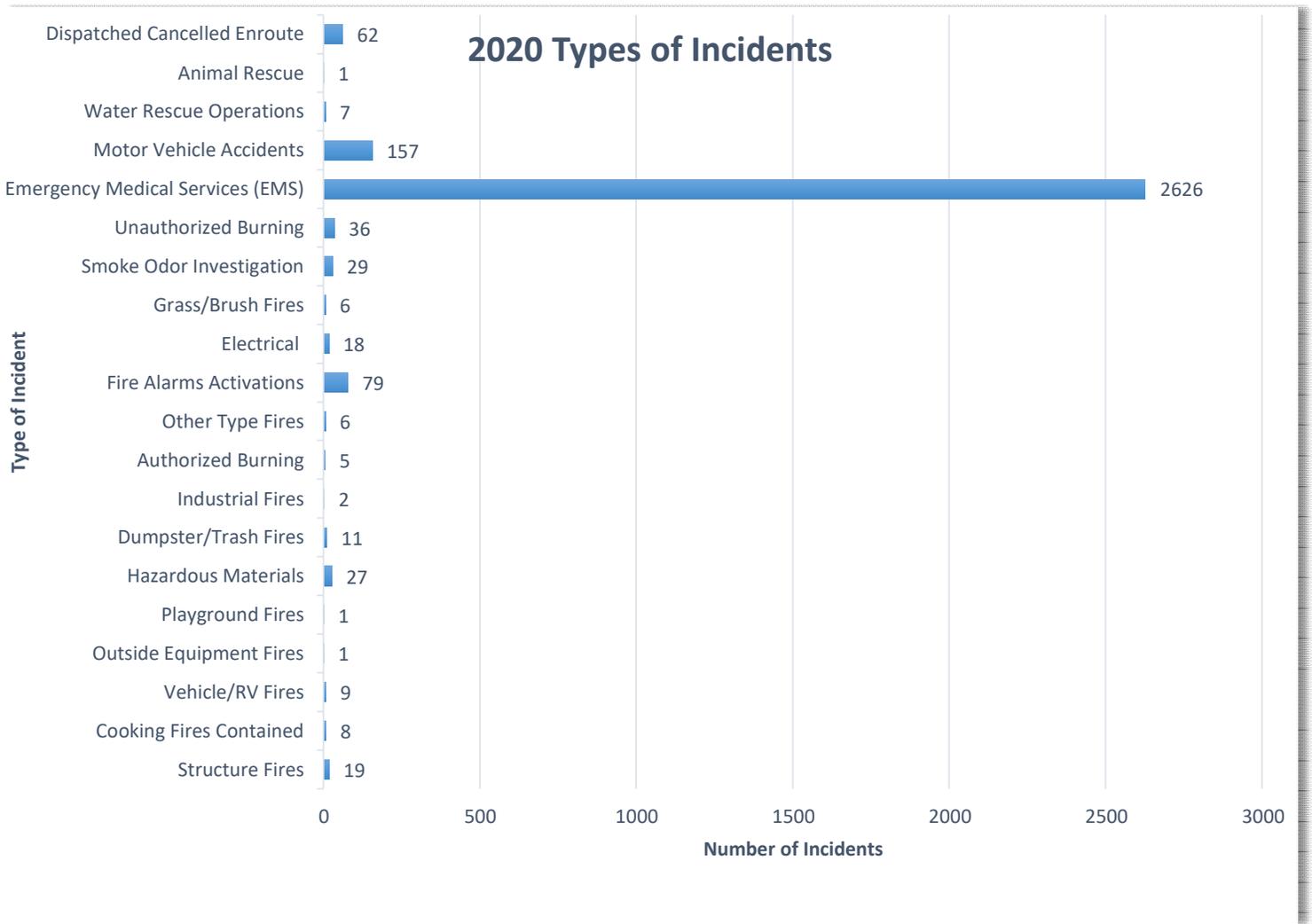
There was one civilian fire related fatality in 2020. There were four civilian injuries and four firefighter injuries related to fire emergencies in 2020.

Average response time for in-town fire emergencies is 6 minutes 3 seconds. Response time is measured from the time the call is received at the fire station, to the time fire department units/personnel arrive on scene.

Total fire billing amount for calls collected in 2020 was \$24,085.08. The current fire billing rates are: Engine \$500.00 per hour, Aerial/Ladder Truck \$750.00 per hour, Utility Truck \$200.00 per hour, Command Vehicle \$100.00 per hour, Heavy Rescue \$250.00 per hour, and Mileage \$8.00 per mile per vehicle. Equipment Cost: Jaws of Life \$250.00, Power Saw \$75.00, Vehicle Stabilization Struts \$75.00, Hydraulic Jacks/Chisels \$75.00, Air Bags \$50.00, Cribbing Blocks \$10.00, Hand Tools/Shovels \$10.00, Ventilation Fan \$50.00 and Damaged Equipment fair market value.

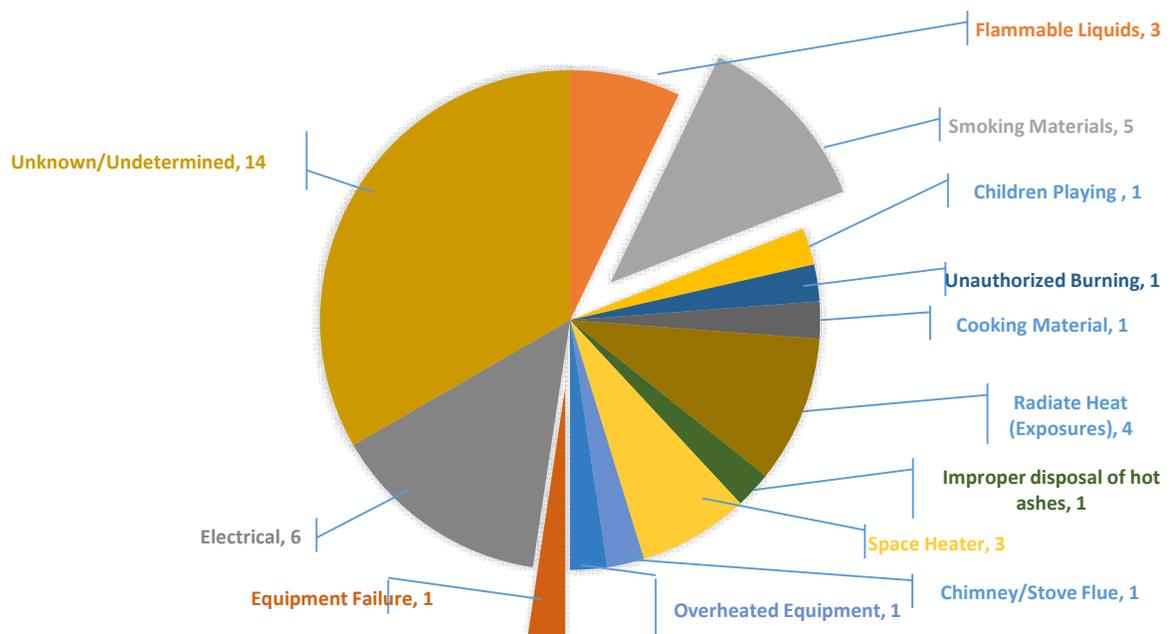
Structure Fire August 11, 2020





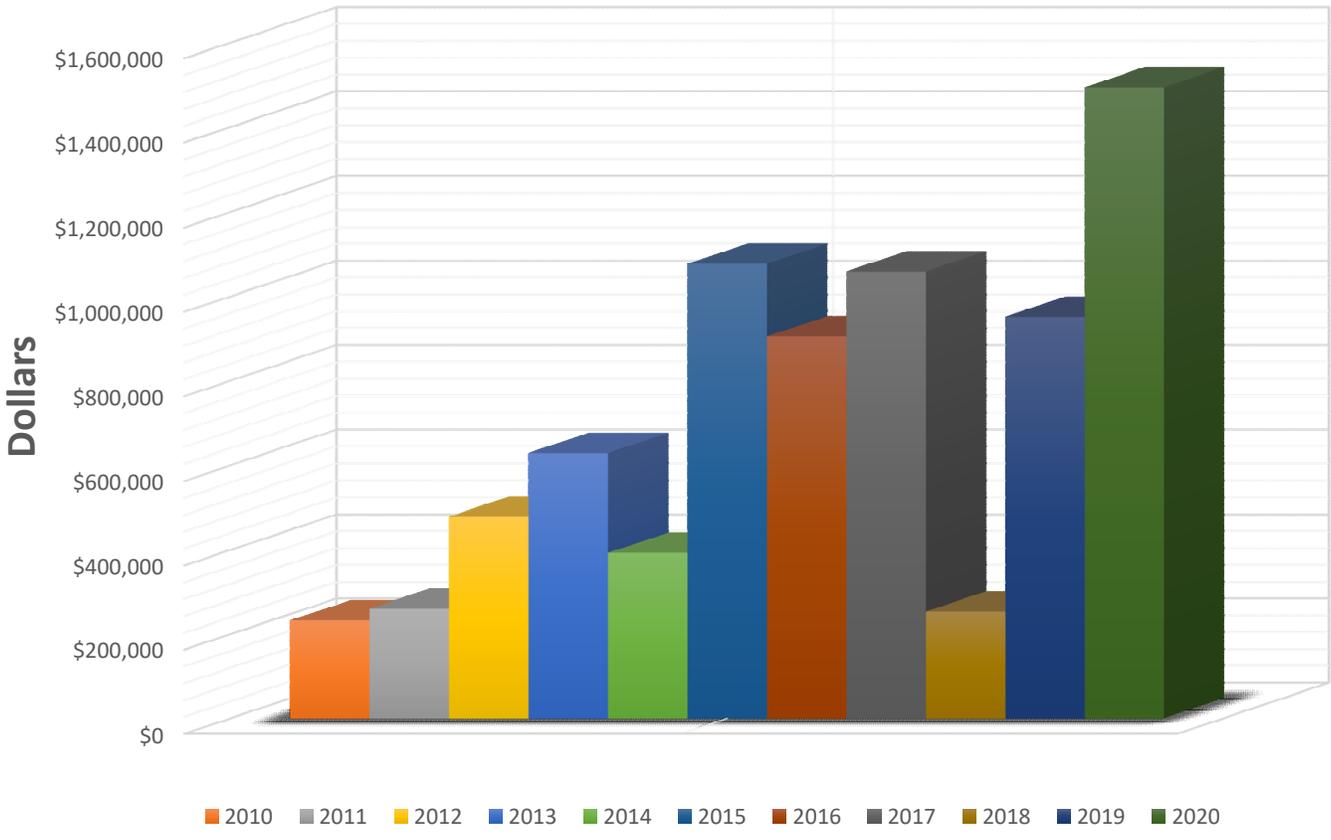
\*Not included in the above chart are the 4 exposure fires, two structures and two vehicles.

### CAUSES OF FIRES

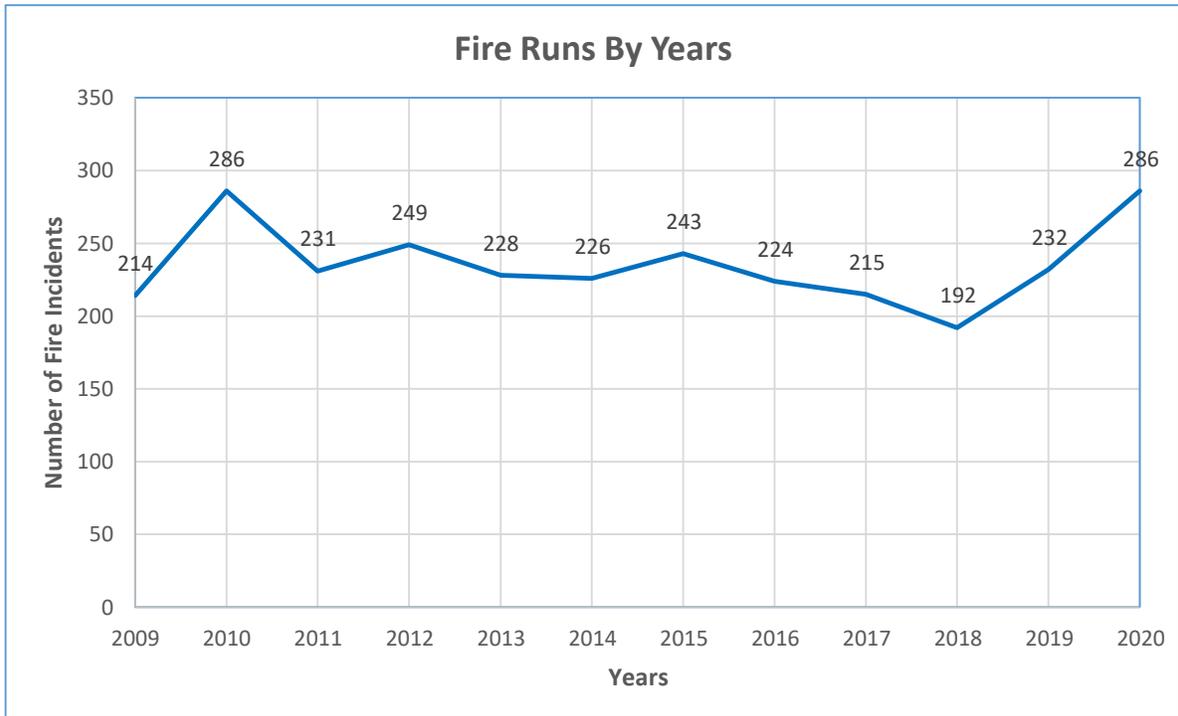


(42 fires requiring extinguishment including 4 exposures)

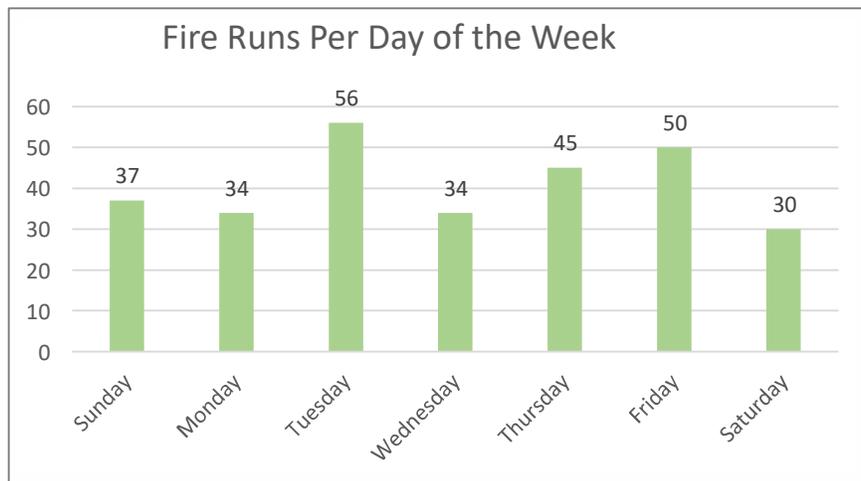
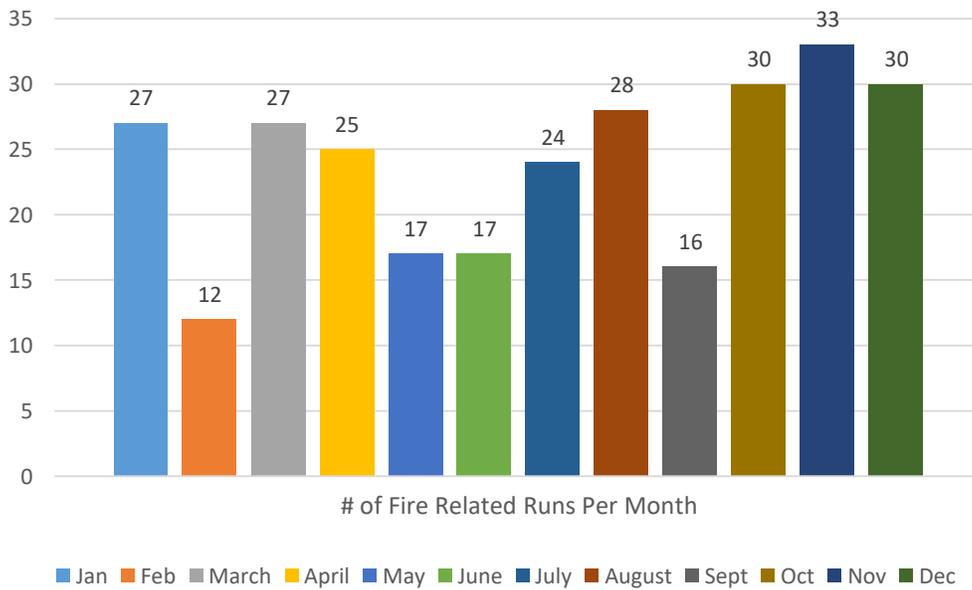
### Fire Losses By Year

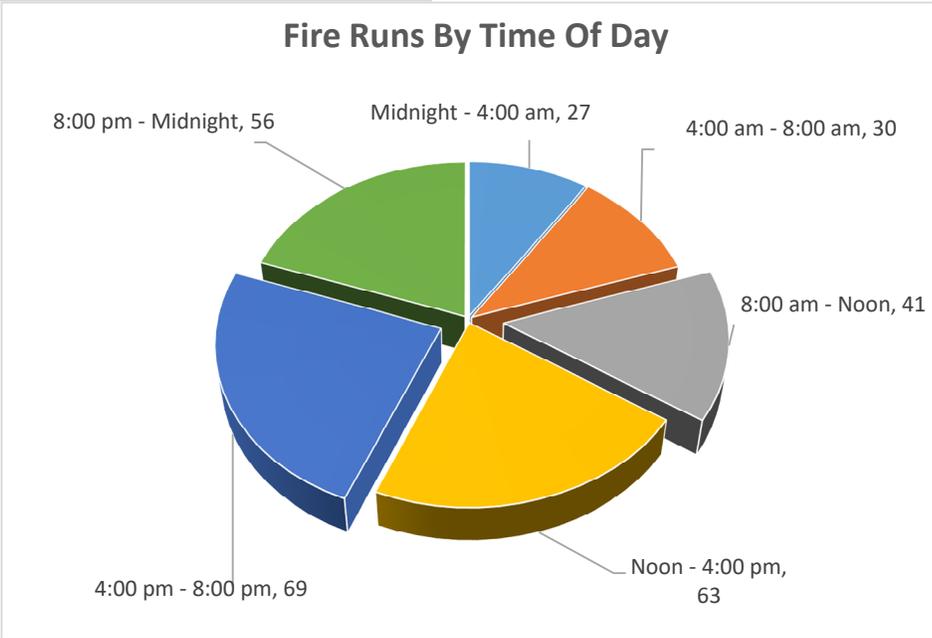
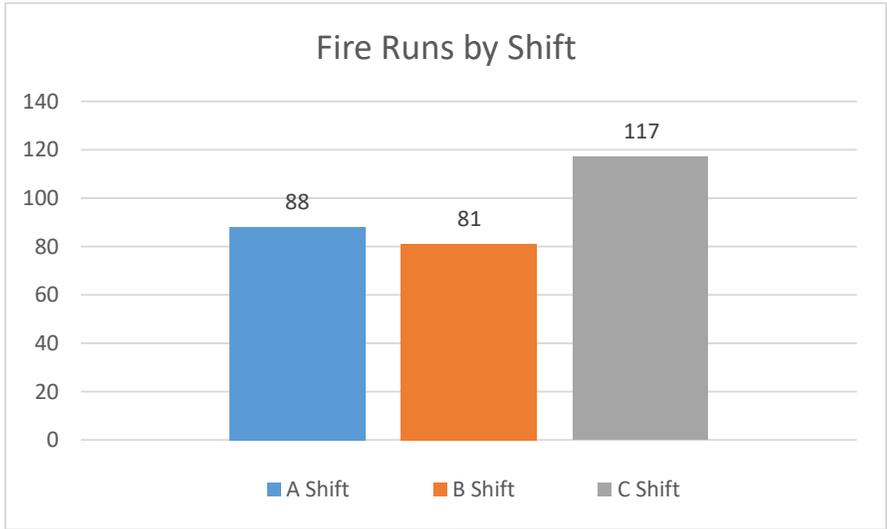


Structure Fire January 2, 2020



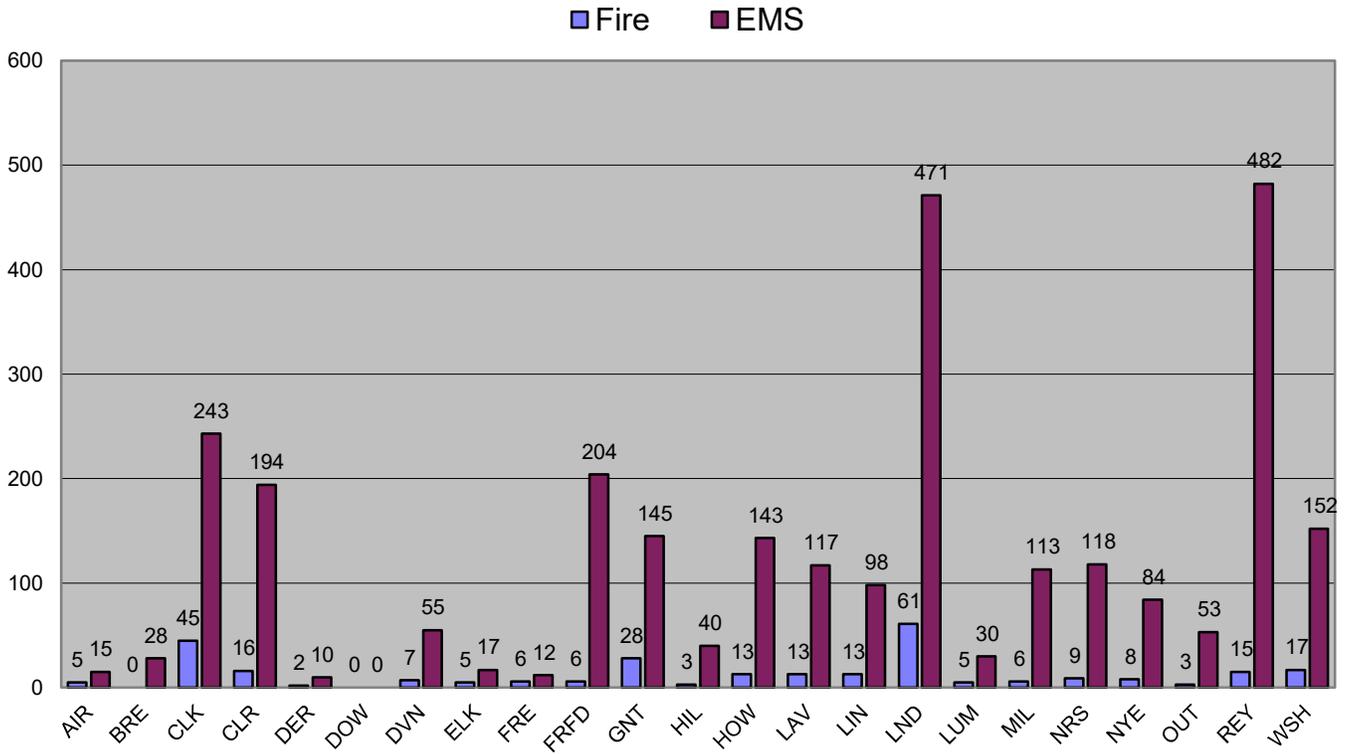
### 2020 Fire Runs Per Month



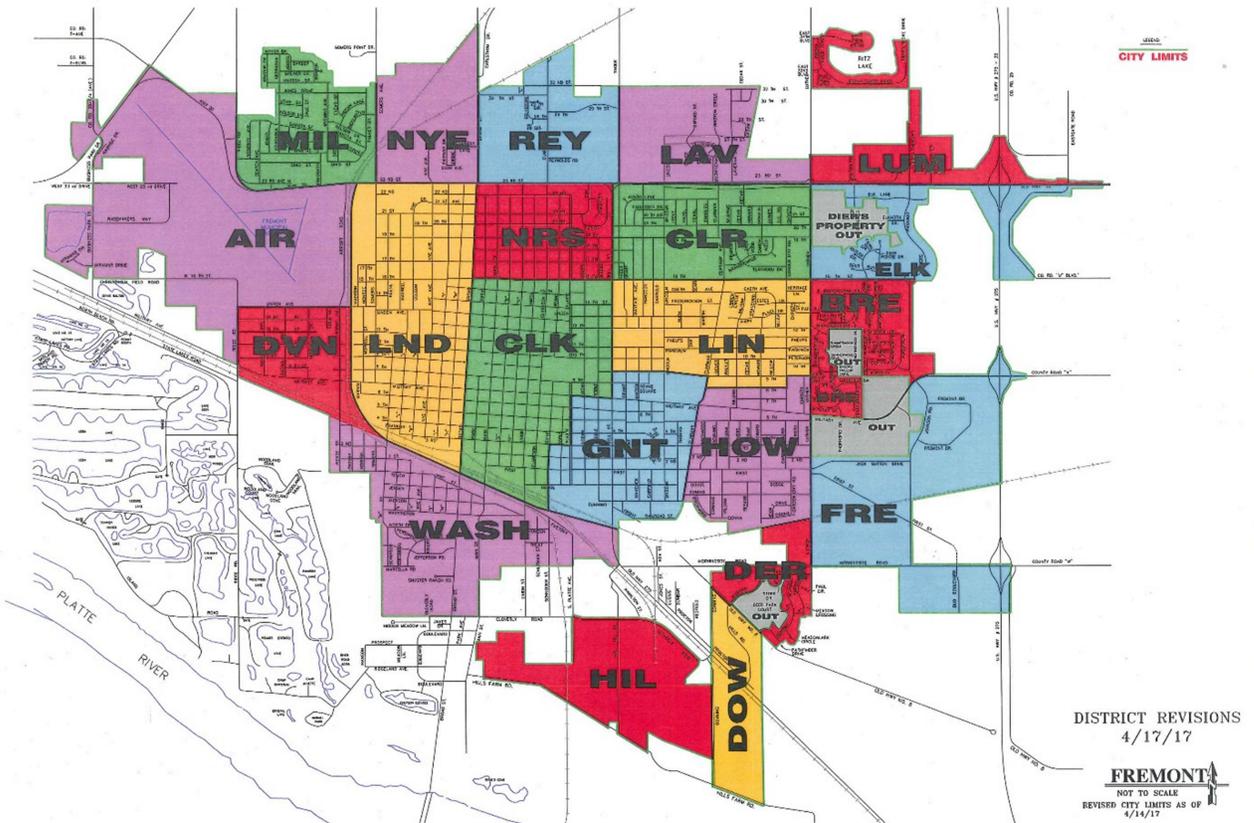


RV Fire that extended into a house  
May 21, 2020

# 2020 Fire/EMS Emergencies By Section of City



FRFD-Fremont Rural Fire Department District  
 OUT-out of city limits and out of Fremont Rural Fire Department District



# Section 3



Firefighter/Paramedic Peter Kafonek receiving COVID-19 vaccine shot

## Emergency Medical Services (EMS)

## EMS SERVICE

The Fremont Fire Department responded to 2,824 medical emergencies which include 157 motor vehicle accidents (MVA) and 29 Advance Life Support (ALS) intercepts with area fire departments. The fire department had 2,928 patient contacts. Of the 2,928 patients, 677 (23%) were Advanced Life Support (ALS), 1,395 (48%) Basic Life Support (BLS), and 856 (29%) refused care/transport. The average patient age was 60.49 years old. There were 34 EMS related incidents where the responding units were cancelled enroute. November was the busiest month with 285 EMS calls. The fire department saw a 1.6% increase in EMS emergencies, but a 2.6% decrease in patient contacts from 2019.

There were two firefighters that were injured on EMS related emergencies in 2020.

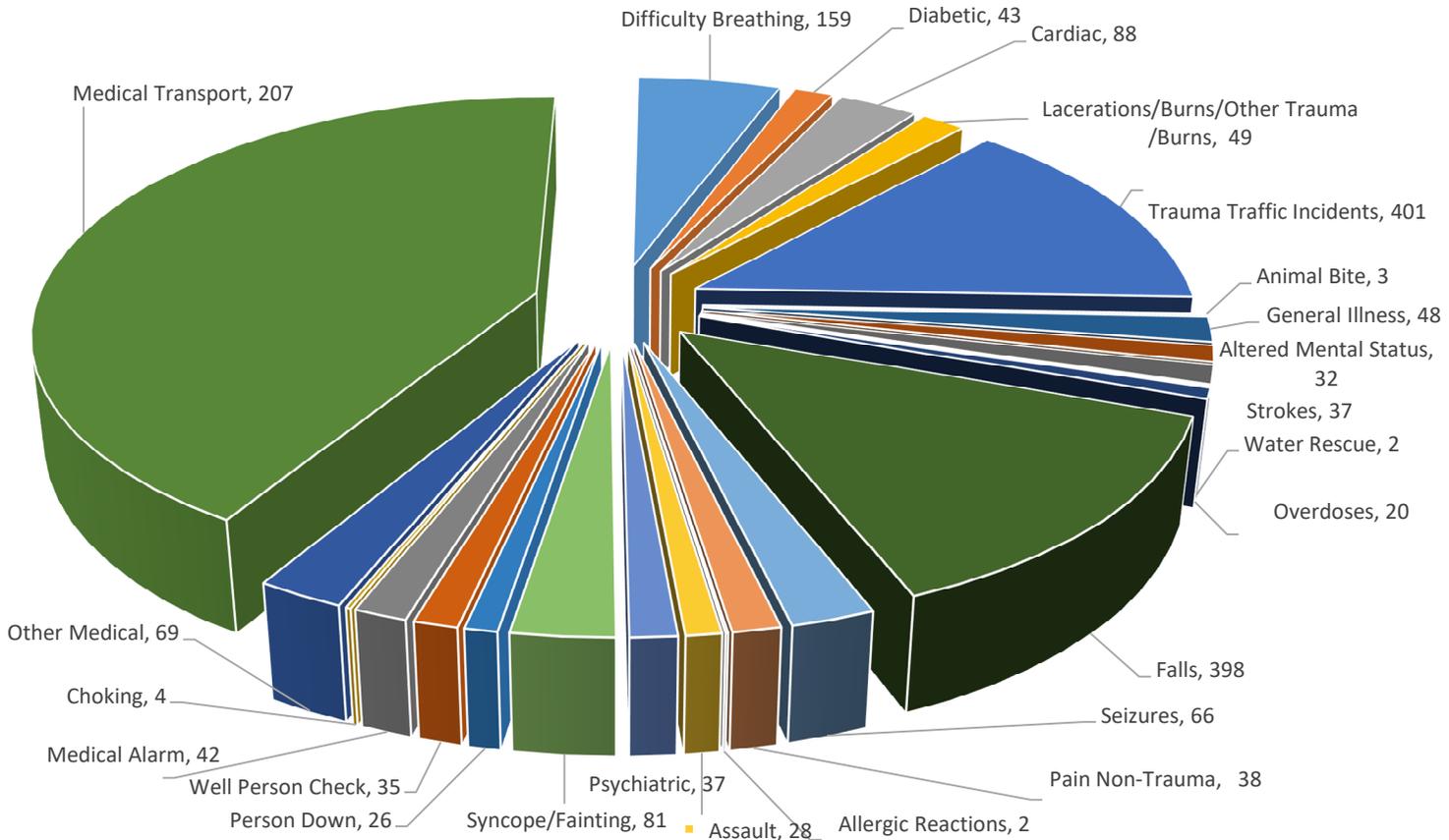
Average response time for in-town EMS emergencies is 4 minutes 50 seconds. Average response time for out-of-town EMS emergencies is 8 minutes and 32 seconds. Response time is measured from the time the call is received at the fire station, to the time fire department units/personnel arrive on scene.

The EMS service provided by the fire department generates revenue through user fees, which are determined by the level of service provided. The department's current rates are: BLS (Basic Life Support) \$671.00; ALS1 (Advanced Life Support - Level 1) \$805.00; and ALS2 (Advanced Life Support - Level 2) \$1,008.00. A \$15.26 per mile one-way fee is added to all transport runs. When transporting is not necessary, but ALS assistance is given to a patient at the scene there is a \$242.00 fee. When personnel are requested to "intercept" with an ambulance from another community, a contract has been put in place to receive \$175.00 of what is collected by the transporting squad (the transporting agency bills the patient). For the year (January - December 2020) a total of \$655,120.44 in squad user fees were collected by the City.

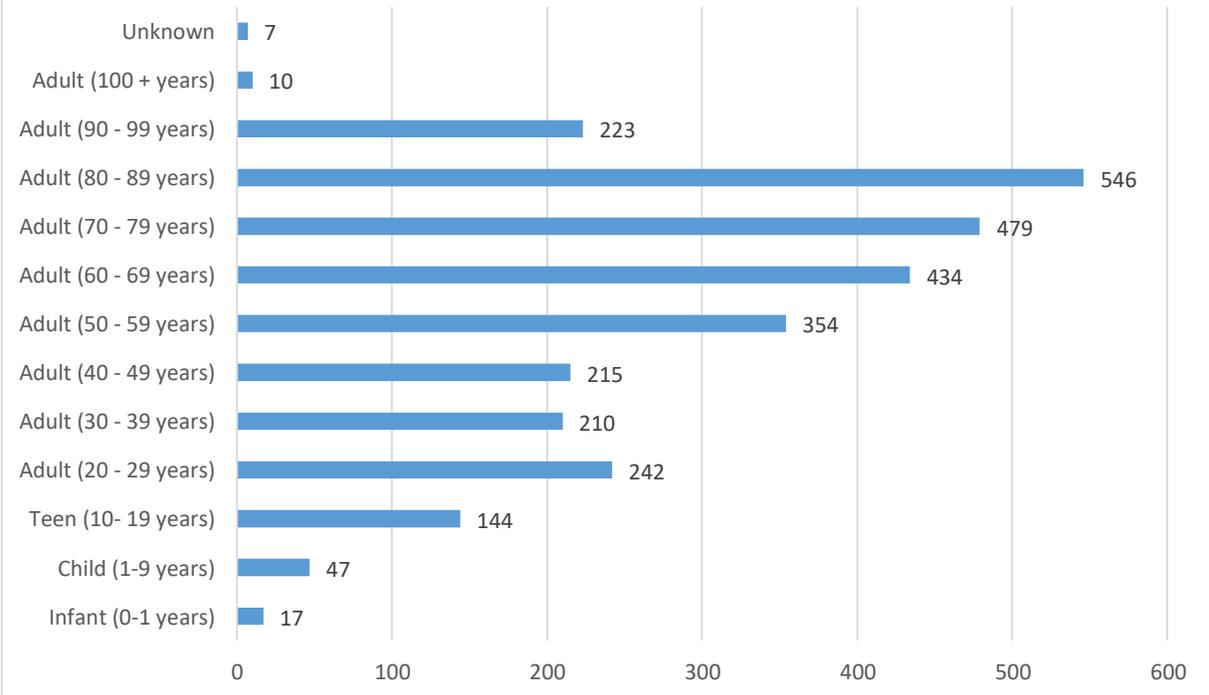


Assisting at a motor vehicle accident  
Courtesy Photo

# Medical Emergency Types

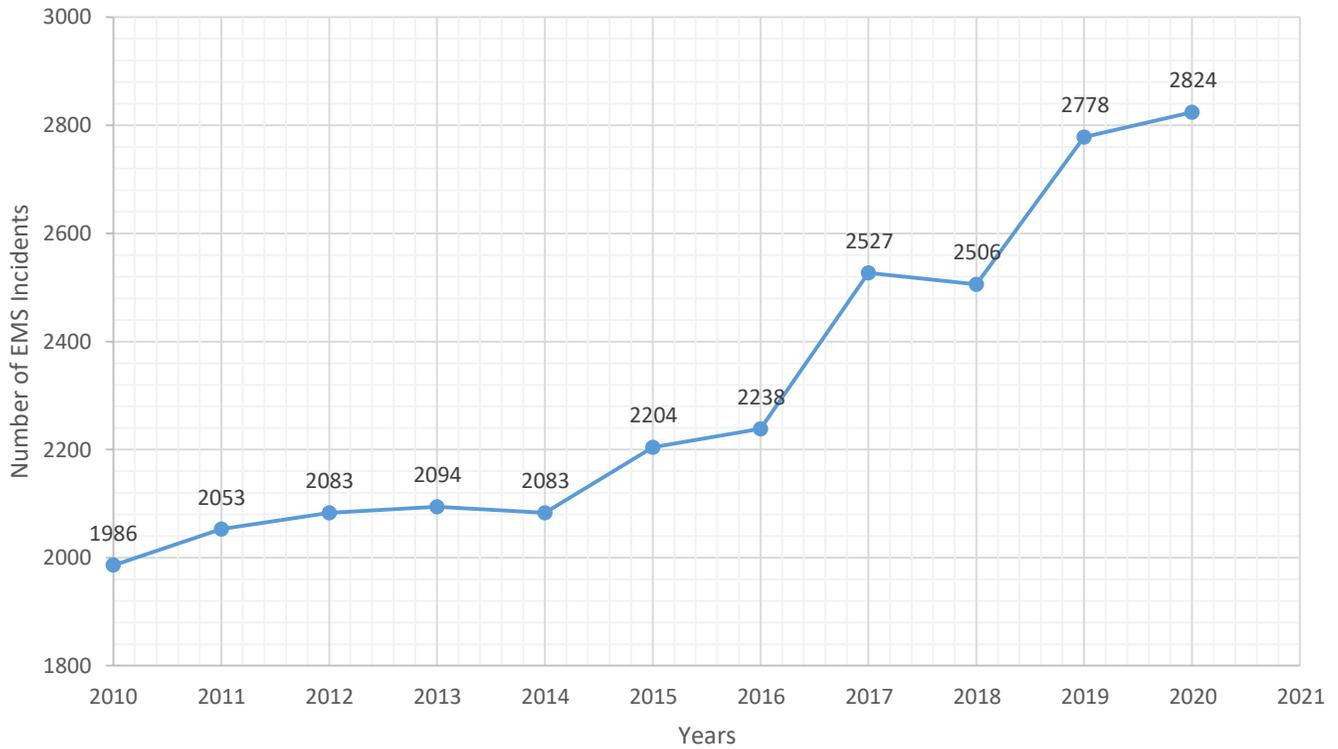


## Patient Age's 2829 Patient Contacts

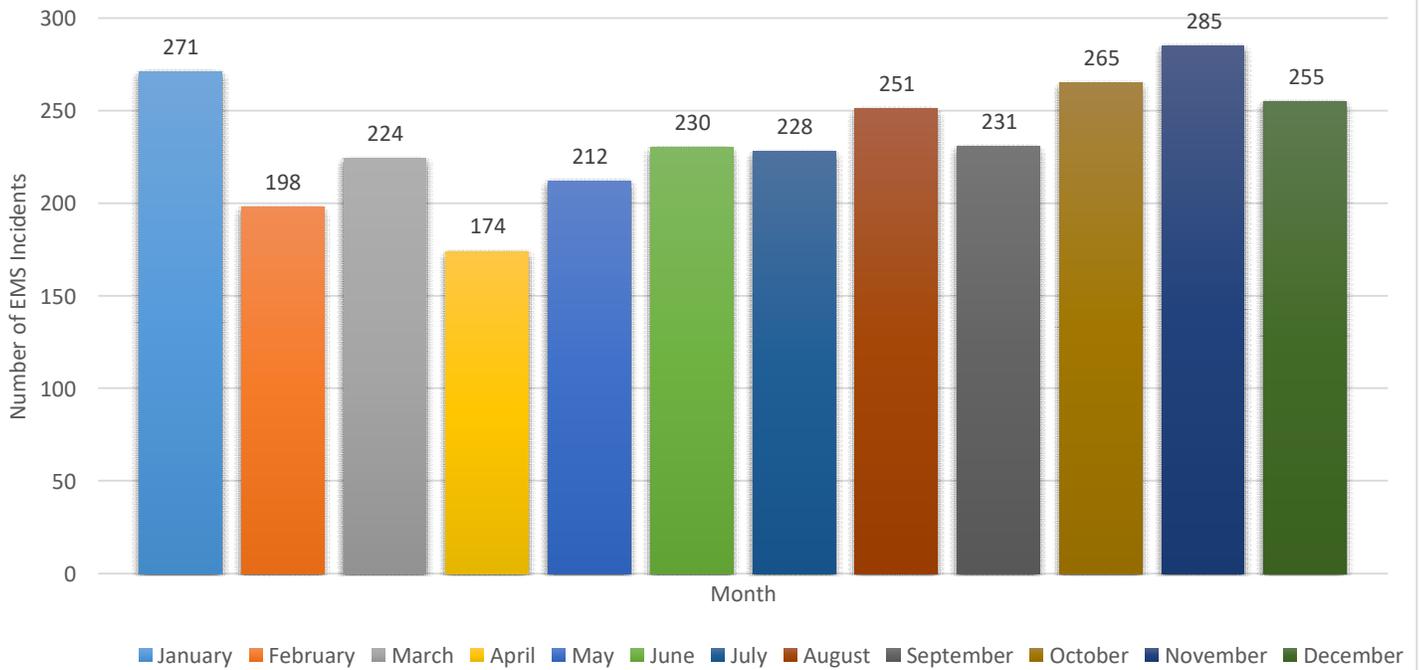


**Average Patient Age: 60.49 years old**

### EMS Incidents By Years



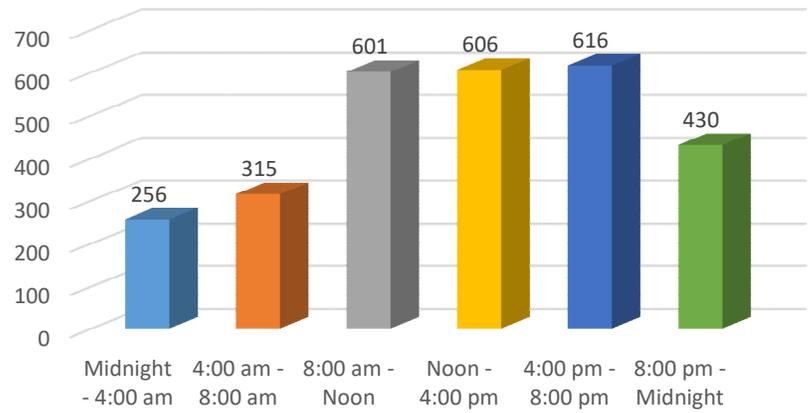
### EMS Incidents Per Month



### EMS Incidents Per Shift



### EMS Incidents By Time of Day



# Section 4



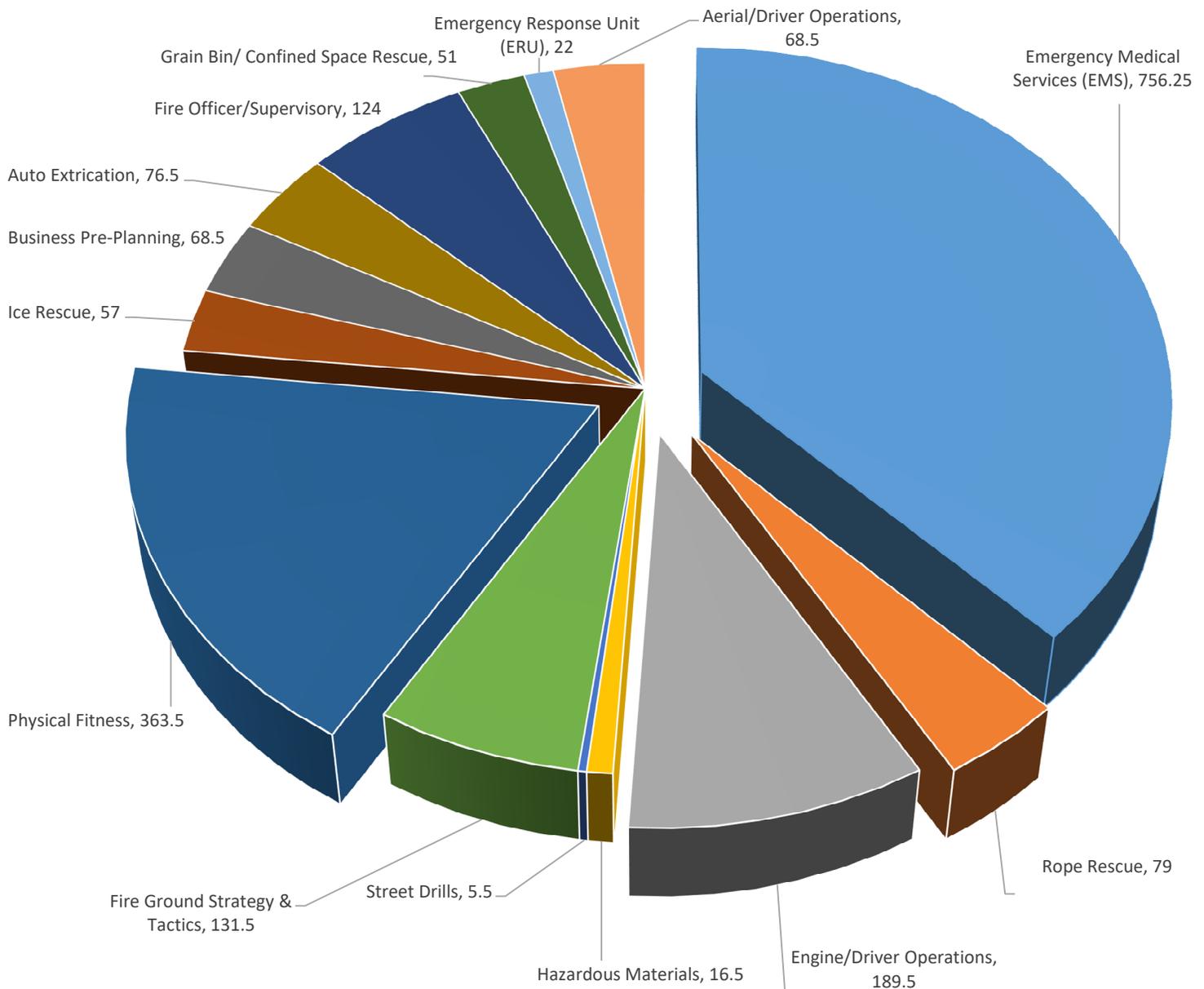
Ice Rescue Training      February 2020      Courtesy Photo

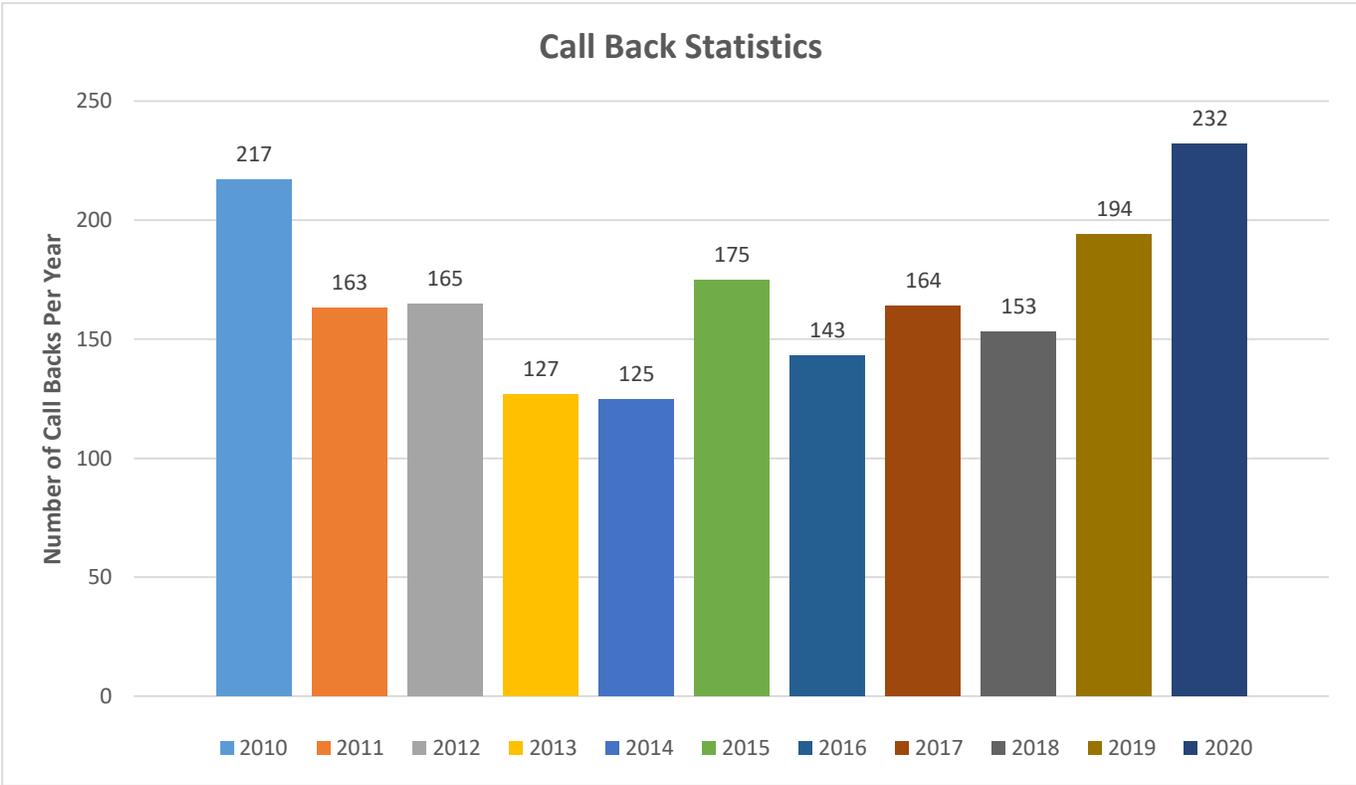
## Department Training

## Department Training

In 2020, department personnel received roughly 2,079.75 hours of training. Due to COVID-19, fire department training has decreased by 52%. This is due to training being cancelled throughout the state and nationally. We do send personnel to training opportunities outside the fire department. Fire department training does involve various areas dealing with pumper/aerial driver operations, street drills, vehicle extrication, confined space, high angle/low angle rope rescue, emergency medical services (EMS), hazardous materials response, fire ground strategy & tactics, and technical rescue. The department conducts yearly training to maintain their paramedic and EMT licenses with the State of Nebraska and the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians including Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) and Pediatric Advance Life Support (PALS).

### Fire Department Training Hours 2,079.75 Total Hours





Call backs are used when additional staffing is needed to staff the fire station due to multiple emergencies happening at the same time or to provide staffing at an EMS and/or fire emergency when needed. In 2020, there were 232 call backs.



C-Shift Aerial Training July 2020

# Section 5



C-Shift presenting Clarmar School with the Junior Fire Marshal Traveling Trophy.  
January 2020

## Public Relations Activities

Due to COVID-19, fire department public education activities have been cancelled due to safety concerns to the public and fire department personnel. Activities cancelled include the annual open house, fire station tours, visits to daycares and schools, changing smoke alarm batteries for the elderly and disabled citizens, and fire extinguisher training for area businesses to name a few. We hope to start these activities going into 2021.

For 2020, the fire department was able to distribute fire prevention materials and home safety checklists to the grade schools. The Junior Fire Marshal Program is for all Fremont kindergarten through fourth grade students. The students are given a 'Home Safety Checklist' to take home. With the help of parents or guardians, they go through their home looking for fire hazards and correcting the problem for a fire safe home. Both the student and parent or guardian sign, return the checklist back to school, and then the checklists are picked up by the fire department. The school with the highest percentage of 'Home Safety Checklist' returned, are awarded the traveling 'Junior Fire Marshal Program' trophy for the year. The 2020 school with the highest returns was Clarmar School with 67%, other school's returns are Trinity 66%, Linden 59%, Grant 26%, Bergan Elementary 28%, Howard 25%, Bell Field 20%, and Washington 9%.



Fremont Fire SCUBA Divers assisting Fremont Police Department with a stolen vehicle recovery.  
May 8, 2020

## FAQs

### *What is a Key Lock Box and where can I obtain one?*

A Key Lock Box System is a high security, rapid entry option containing appropriate keys, access cards or other small items necessary to allow the Fire Department to gain entry to a building or alarmed portion in the event of an emergency without property damage due to forcible entry. Key Lock Boxes are ideal for commercial and industrial businesses protected by automatic alarm system or automatic suppression system or such building that are secured in a manner that restricts access during an emergency; for multifamily residential buildings that have restricted access through locked doors and have a common corridor for access to the living units; public school buildings, nursing, adult day care, and long-term care and assisted living facilities, child day-care facilities, nursery and preschools and private schools, churches, and community centers. In Fremont, the fire chief designates the type of key lock box system to be implemented within the city. Contact the fire department at 402- 727-2688 for more information.

### *Do you install or inspect child car seats?*

No, we don't. However, members of the Dodge County Sheriff's Office are certified to install and inspect car seats. You may reach them at 402-727-2700 to make an appointment. They are located in the Dodge County Courthouse (435 N Park in Fremont). Three Rivers District Health Department also provides this service. They can be reached at 402-727-5396 and are located at 2400 North Lincoln Avenue in Fremont.

### *Why do firefighters cut holes in the roof and break windows of a building on fire?*

This is called "VENTILATION". There are two basic reasons for ventilating a structure. The first is, removal of dangerous gases, heat, and dark smoke that accumulate in a burning building reducing visibility and greatly impeding rescue and firefighting efforts. Second, ventilation allows firefighters to relieve the structure of superheated gases and smoke which spread fire and contribute to dangerous situations like flashover and back draft explosions.

### *What should I do with HOT fireplace ash?*

DO NOT remove hot ashes from the fireplace immediately. Wait up to 2-3 days and let the ashes cool completely in the fireplace until there are no remaining hot embers before removing them. Place cool ash in a metal container and store outside away from the home and all combustibles.

### *What is your response area?*

Our fire response area is within the Fremont City limits. EMS (Emergency Medical Service) is provided east to the Washington County line, west approximately seven miles, north two miles, and south to the Platte River. Upon request from neighboring agencies, in accordance with mutual aid agreements, those lines can be crossed.

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