



# 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

Village Fire Department



[www.villagefire.org](http://www.villagefire.org)   
901 Corbindale Road   
Houston, TX 77024

# Letter From Interim Fire Chief Miller

## **A DEPARTMENT IN TRANSITION:**

2023 saw some significant changes. Upon the departure of Chief David Foster from his service with the department, I was appointed to the position of Interim Fire Chief in February 2023. The administrative staff, officers, department members, board of commissioners, and city officials were all professional and supportive in the transition of leadership and moving the department forward.

The first order of business was to familiarize myself with various ongoing projects. These included the purchase of two new ambulances, annex/tower roof project, main roof installation issue, upcoming Insurance Services Office (ISO) inspection, firefighter turnout gear replacement, and emergency accountability radio purchase. My administrative staff was excellent at acclimating me to my new role.

It was important for our city leaders to meet their fire department's new Interim Fire Chief, so I attended each city's council meeting and introduced myself. Having previously worked as Emergency Management Coordinator, I already had a working relationship with many of the villages' administrative staff and department heads. I met with them all and let them know I was looking forward to a productive professional relationship. I was overwhelmed at how much support was offered to my staff and me.

A needs assessment was conducted to determine what was working efficiently and where we could improve. Major items assessed were:



# Letter From Interim Fire Chief Miller (cont.)

- day-to day operations
- dispatch center
- department guidelines, policies, & procedures
- job descriptions & staffing
- station & apparatus maintenance
- department budget & capital replacement plan
- Investments, contracts, & vendors
- banking & accounting
- HR/payroll system
- EMS billing

We evaluated the feasibility of relocating fire department dispatch operations to MVPD. The cost was submitted to the VFD Board of Commissioners and is still being considered as a possible option.

New firefighter turnout gear was purchased to replace existing gear that was determined to be manufactured with a carcinogen. In May the department accepted two new ambulances. Thanks to a generous donation, we were able to purchase \$10,000 of gym equipment to replace some old, worn pieces. With the assistance of a consultant, we were able to easily navigate an ISO survey earlier in the year, and I am happy to report that the department maintains its Class 1 rating.

One major challenge throughout the year was the multiple budget amendments that were required to fund the department for the remainder of 2023. The amendments addressed shortfalls within the original 2023 budget and provide a solid framework for responsible spending in 2023. Additionally, during the budget workshop process this year, the budget format was updated, and line items were reorganized for 2024 so that the budget presentation is transparent and easier to follow.

The department moved forward with several much-needed changes in vendors and processes. AT&T's emergency responder network, FirstNet, is now our new cell service provider with more dependable coverage, especially in times of disasters/emergencies when they will provide portable cell locations. In August, we contracted with a new EMS billing provider, Emergicon. We're very happy with their customer service and their user-friendly client platform. In the latter half of the year, we began the implementation of new accounting software as well as HR/payroll software for better efficiency.

# Letter From Interim Fire Chief Miller (cont.)

Our annual Family Day event took place in October. Employees' families were invited to check out the station, eat good food, and participate in activities and fellowship. Service awards were also presented to employees and celebrated with everyone in attendance.

We acquired a drone, thanks to MVPD. We look forward to using it to assist emergency personnel, view disaster/damage from a safe distance, assist in search and rescue operations, aid in post-fire investigation, and assist with public relations projects.

These are just a few highlights from 2023 in our continued efforts to provide the best service to the citizens of the Memorial Villages. We consider it an honor to serve and look forward to having a wonderful 2024 as we continue to move forward.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Howard Miller, Jr.", written in a cursive style.

Howard E. Miller, Jr.  
Interim Fire Chief

## Our Mission

Our mission is to save lives, protect property, and serve our community with courage, commitment, and compassion.



## Who We Serve

Village Fire Department proudly serves all six Memorial Villages: Bunker Hill, Hedwig, Hilshire, Hunters Creek, Piney Point, & Spring Valley. The department provides both fire and emergency medical services to a coverage area of over 9 square miles, with a residential population of over 20,000 people and a growing daytime population.

## ISO Rating

The Insurance Service Office (ISO) rating is a classification of public fire protection services. This has a direct effect on insurance rates for residents and businesses in the community. Village Fire Department holds an ISO Class 1 rating, which is the best rating possible. VFD continues to evaluate all fire protection services to maintain the ISO Class 1 rating.



# Highlights & Accomplishments



## Training

- Live burn training completed
- Additional TCFP specialized certifications
- Higher TCFP certification levels
- Fire & EMS continuous training

## Staff

- Fire Marshal Rusty Kattner retired
- Brian Croft promoted to Fire Marshal

## Station

- Annex & training tower roof replacement completed
- Two new replacement ambulances delivered
- ISO evaluation - kept ISO Class 1 rating
- New gym equipment received thanks to generous donation

## Community Risk Reduction

- Community CPR classes
- School visits
- Station tours

## Upcoming Highlights

- Hire 3 additional firemedics January 2024
- Increase training opportunities
- Main building roof completion

# Organization Chart

**Board of Commissioners**

**Fire Chief**

**Admin**

**Operations  
A, B, & C Shift**

**Prevention**

**Administrator**

**1 Deputy Chief per shift**

**Fire Marshal**

**Administrative  
Specialist**

**2 Captains per shift**

**Communications**

**3 Operators per shift**

**4 Dispatchers**

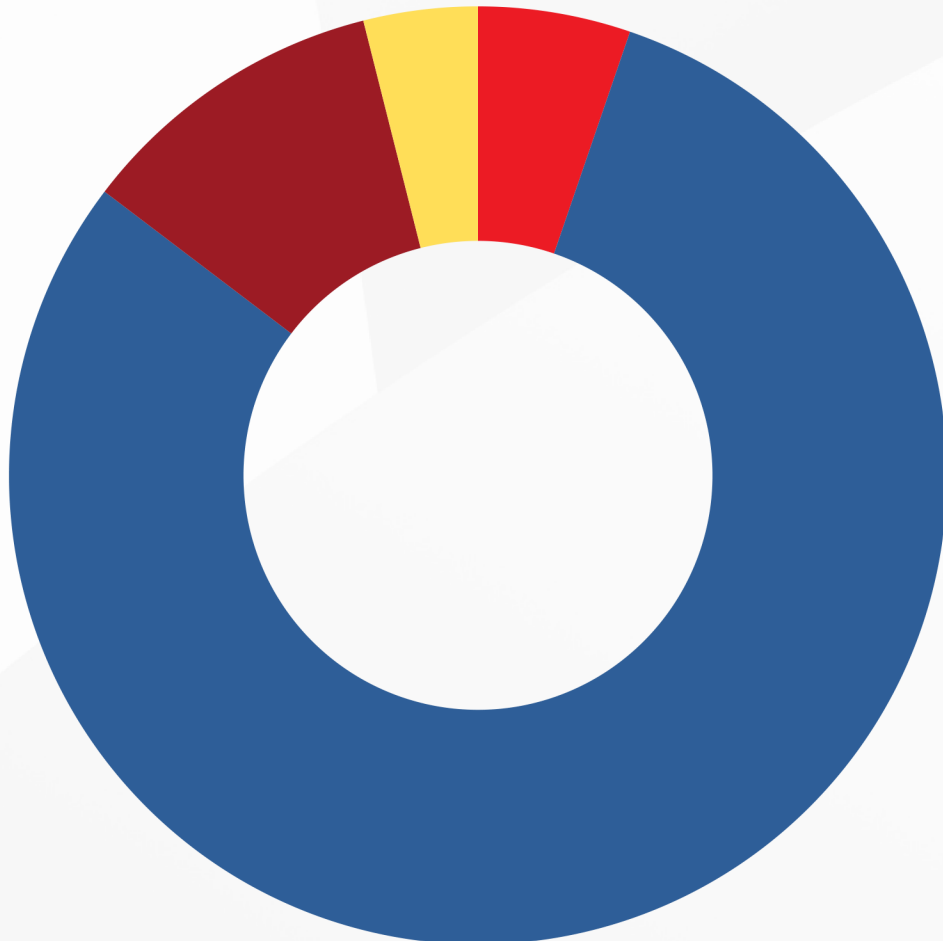
**Mix of 8 Firemedics &  
Firefighters per shift**

**Total VFD  
Positions: 50**

# 2023 Budget

## 2023 Amended Budget (Amendment 2023-05)

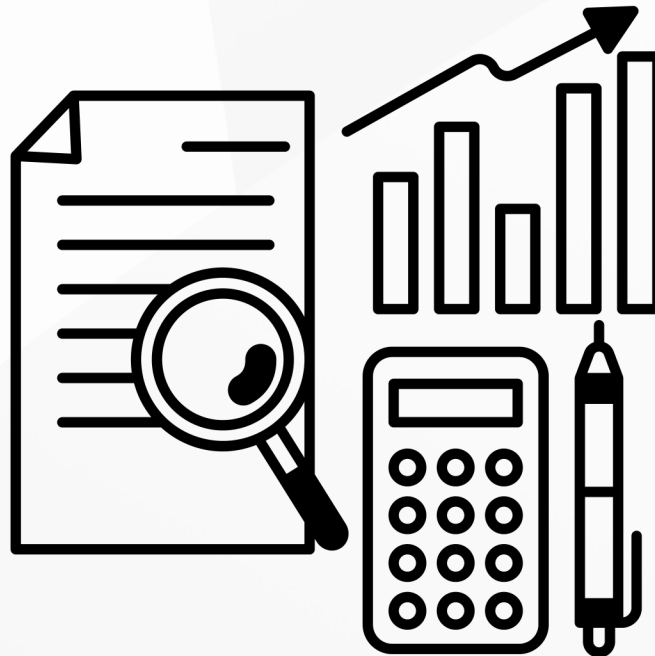
- Capital Expenditures \$ 507,810
- Personnel Expenditures \$ 7,737,862
- Operational Expenditures \$ 1,036,453
- Capital Replacement \$ 380,000





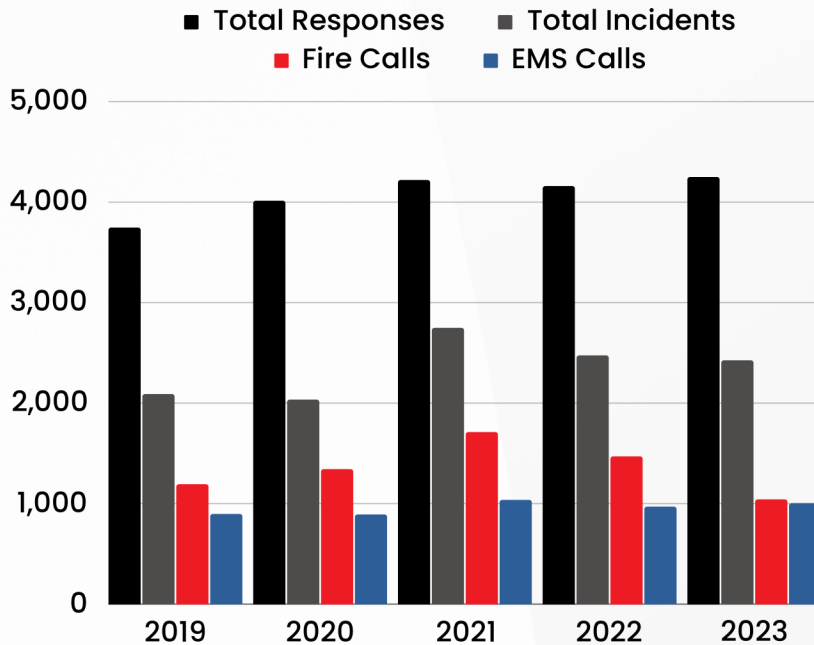
# Financial Highlights

- 7% salary adjustment for most employees
- Major purchases
  - two new ambulances
  - annex & training tower roof repair/replacement
  - new CAD server
  - eight new portable radios
  - accountability software
  - new turnout gear

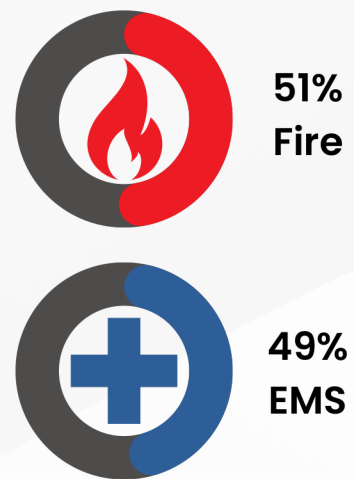


# Responses & Incidents

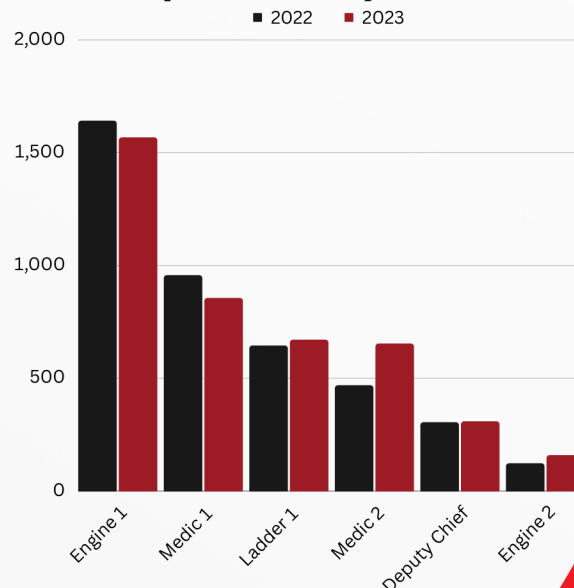
## Responses, Incidents, & Call Type



## 2023 Call Types: Fire vs. EMS



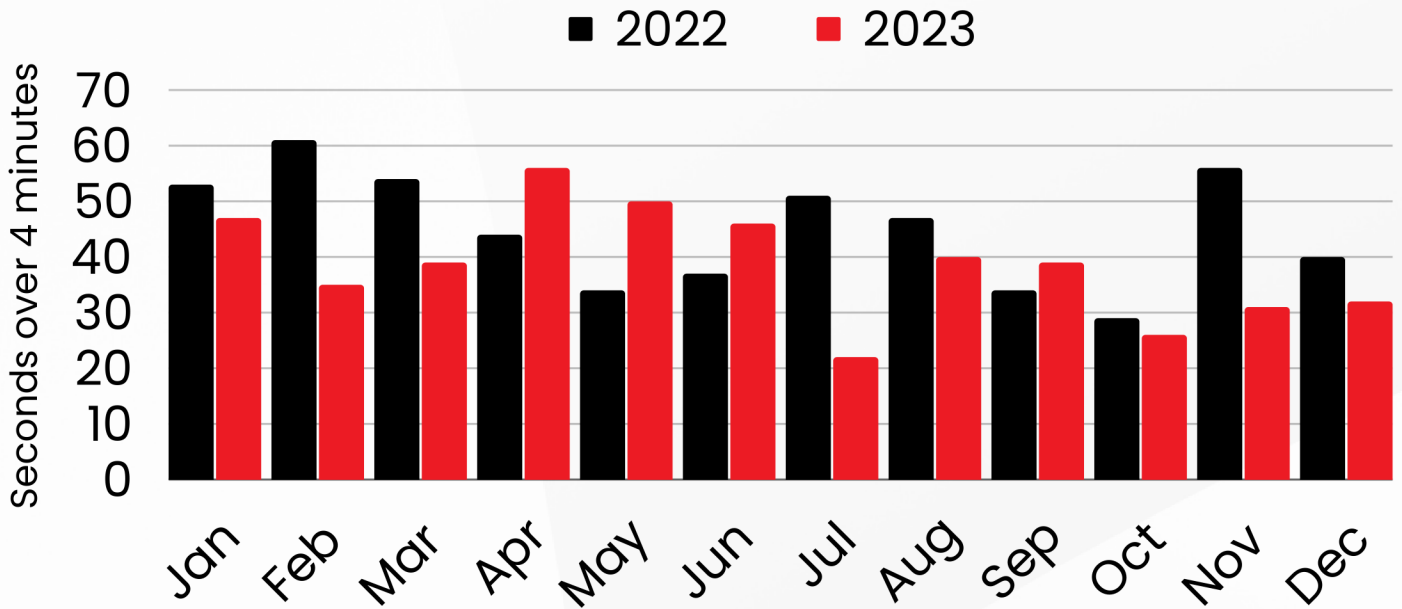
## Responses by Truck



2023's total call volume was 2,426 incidents resulting in 4,250 responses.

An incident is one call. A response is counted each time a truck is sent to respond to a call. One incident may require two or more trucks resulting in more than one response per incident.

# Average Response Time



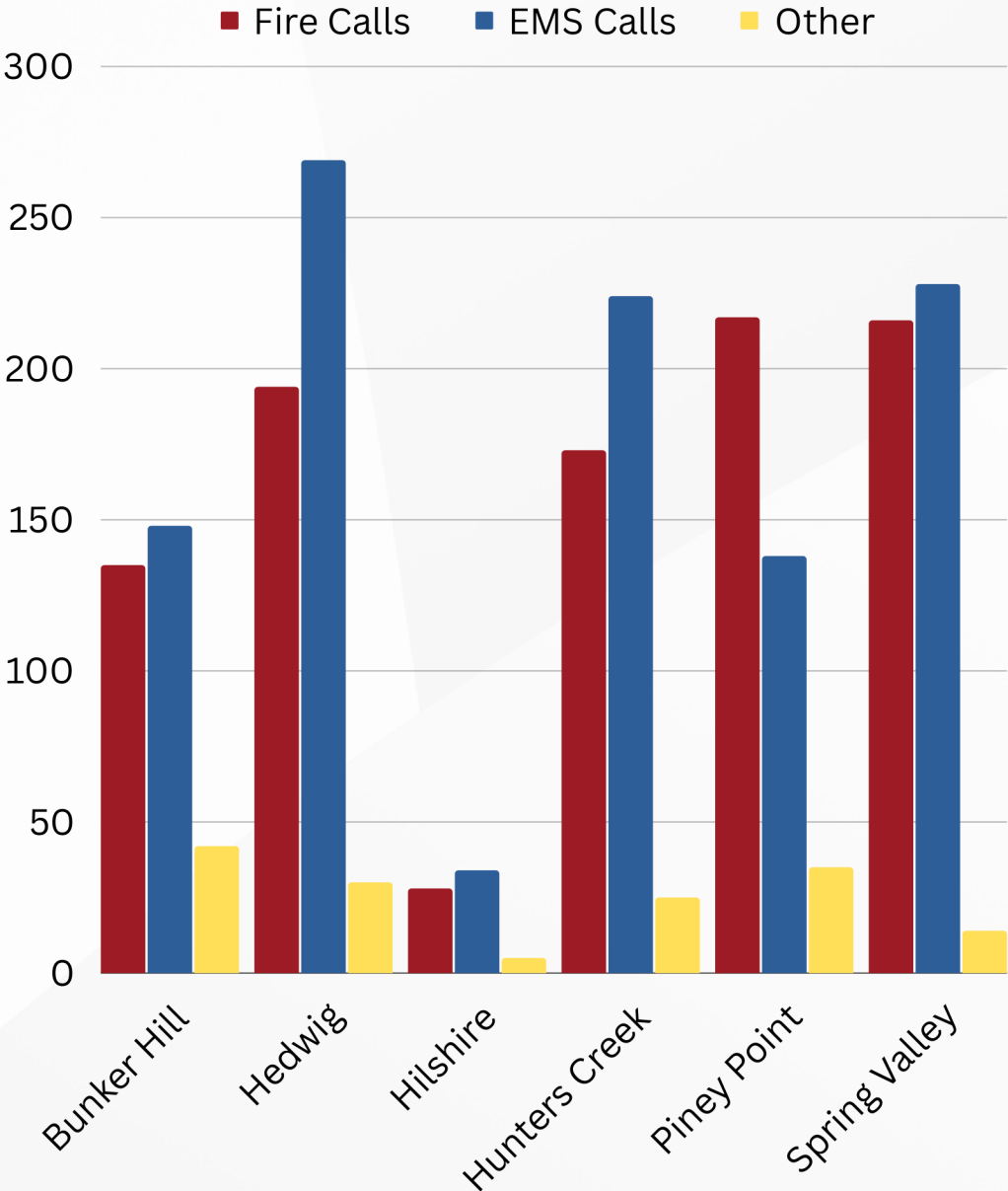
2022 Average Response Time:  
**4 minutes, 45 seconds**

2023 Average Response Time:  
**4 minutes, 38 seconds**



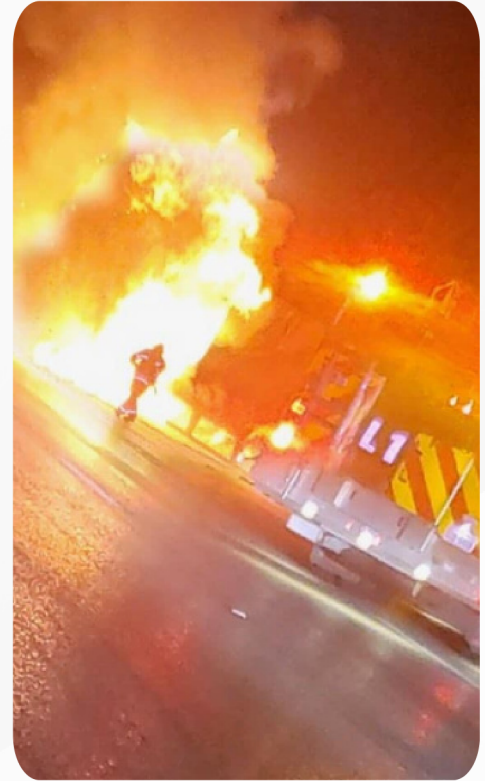
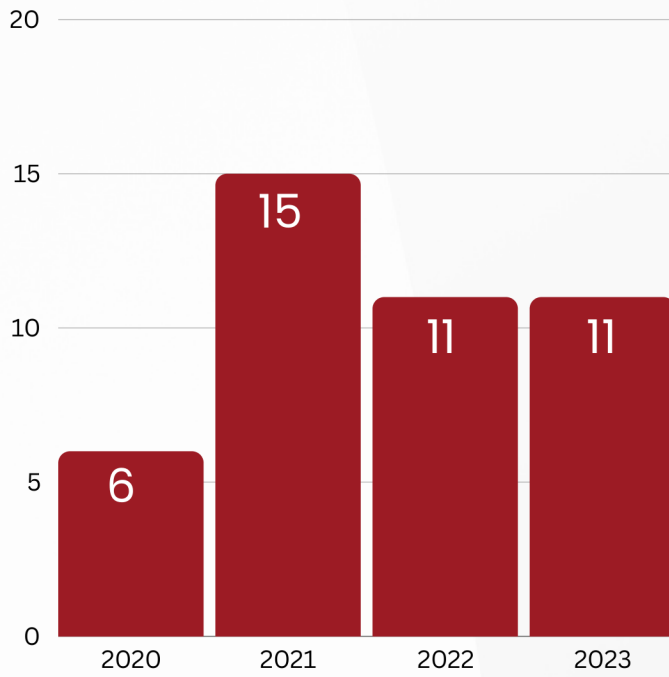
# Call Types By Location

## 2023 Call Types by Location



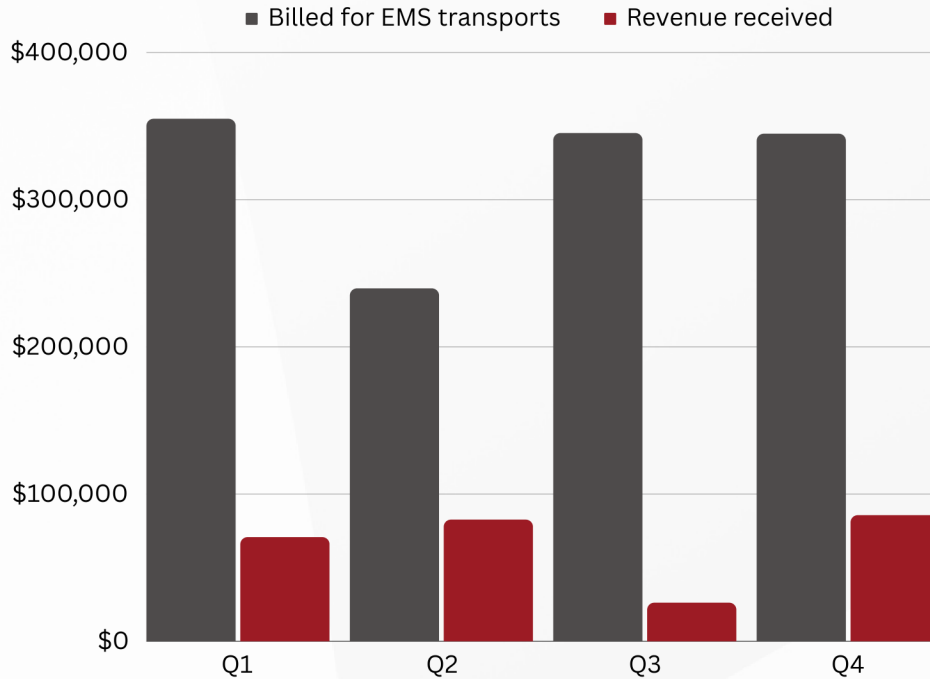
# Fire

## Structure Fires



# EMS

## 2023 Quarterly EMS Funds



Note: EMS billing company changed on 8/1/2023 from ImageTrend to Emergicon

Total amount billed for EMS transports: **\$1,284,677.53**  
Gross amount received for EMS transports: **\$265,247.56**



**Average response time to  
EMS calls:**

**4 minutes,  
25 seconds**

**...that's 32% FASTER than  
the standard/base!**

Note: standard/base is  
6 minutes, 30 seconds

# Most Common Calls in 2023

## Fire Type Calls

400 Fire Alarm Residence	21 Vehicle Fire
255 Motor Vehicle Collision (MVC)	18 Automatic Aid- Elevator Rescue
102 Automatic Aid- Apartment Fire	16 House Fire
66 Fire Alarm Business	13 Transformer Fire
64 Fire Alarm Church or School	12 Check for the Smell of Smoke
41 CO Detector No Symptoms	12 Automatic Aid
33 Check for the Smell of Natural Gas	12 Automatic Aid- High Rise Fire
31 Powerlines Down Arcing/Burning	12 Automatic Aid- House Fire
30 Automatic Aid- Building Fire	10 Elevator Rescue
29 Automatic Aid- Gas Leak	10 MVC with Entrapment
24 Gas Leak	8 Automatic Aid- Entrapment MVC

## EMS Type Calls

177 Sick Call	25 Overdose/Poisoning
123 Fall Victim	23 Hemorrhage/Laceration
114 Unconscious Party/Syncope	18 Abdominal Pain
83 Difficulty Breathing	15 Allergic Reaction
72 Heart Problems	12 Diabetic Emergency
61 Chest Pain	11 Possible D.O.S.
57 Medical Alarm	9 Cardiac/Respiratory Arrest
37 Seizures	8 Back Pain
34 Unknown Medical Emergency	7 Choking
30 Psychiatric Emergency	7 Traumatic Injury
30 Stroke	5 Assault
29 Injured Party	5 Heat/Cold Exposure

## Other Type Calls

133 Service Call Non-emergency
24 Object Down in Roadway

# END OF REPORT



Joey Gamez received  
the St. Florian Award  
October 15, 2023