



# ANNUAL REPORT 2023



Cottage Grove Fire Department

[www.cottagegrovefire.org](http://www.cottagegrovefire.org)

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# MESSAGE FROM CHIEF ARCHIBALD

**Dear Community Members, Community Leaders, and Fire Department Staff,**

Another year has come and gone. This year the department finished with 346 calls for service. This was a 10% increase in calls for service from 2022. This report is intended to provide an overview of the department, its staff, the types of calls we respond to, and the accomplishments of this department.

The Cottage Grove Volunteer Fire Department is currently staffed by 46 active Volunteer's and 2 honorary personnel from, the Town and Village of Cottage Grove along with residents from the Town of Pleasant Springs. These men and women volunteer their time and expertise for Fire Prevention and Protection programs in the community and all emergencies. The department was established in 1929 and has been 100% volunteer ever since. The staff of this department have embodied pride in their community and a strong commitment to helping others.

Tender 1 was replaced in August with a 2023 Pierce Kenworth Tender. Old Tender 1 was retired and sold on Wisconsin Surplus. The Village and Town of Cottage Grove approved the purchase of a new Squad to replace current Squad 1. The new Squad is scheduled to be delivered sometime in August 2024. This year the department recruited 5 new members and lost 4 members resulting in a net gain of 1 new member.

There are five divisions within the Department: Maintenance, Public Education, Personnel/Records, Training/Safety and Fire Inspections. The Training Division provided the staff over 5,440 hours of training in 2023. The Public Education Division conducts tours of the Emergency Services Building and fire prevention demonstrations to the schools and childcare facilities throughout the year. The Inspection Division conducted inspections of all businesses in the Town of Cottage Grove, Village of Cottage Grove, and the Town of Pleasant Springs.

The department experienced significant loss this year. On October 28th, Firefighter Gavin Wendricks passed away from injuries sustained in a motorcycle accident. Gavin joined the department in April of 2022, joining his father Paul who has been a member of CGFD since 1998. Gavin had a big heart and always had a big smile on his face. He will be greatly missed.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the entire staff for all their hard work and dedication to this department and the communities they serve. I would ask you the next time you see these people to say hello and thank them for their service. I would also like to thank all the employers that allow our volunteers the flexibility in their workdays to respond to emergencies and assist the communities. I am honored to have served as the chief of this department since 2018 and appreciate the continued support provided by community members and municipal leaders.

**Fire Chief Nick Archibald**

# DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

The Cottage Grove Fire Department serves the Town of Cottage Grove, Town of Pleasant Springs, and Village of Cottage Grove. It covers approximately forty-eight (48) square miles and serves a population around 14,000 residents. The Department has achieved an ISO rating of a 3 in the Village of Cottage Grove and 5/10 in the Towns of Cottage Grove and Pleasant Springs. Operating expenses, equipment, and facilities are provided through municipal funding. The Department has one (1) station which houses: a Ladder Truck, two Engines, two Tenders, a Squad, Rapid Response Vehicle/Brush Truck, and a Command Car. Additionally, the Department owns and maintains an antique parade truck as well as a UTV and trailer that were purchased from funds raised through donations.

The Cottage Grove Fire Department has been, and is currently, staffed entirely by volunteer members. The first fire engine was purchased for Cottage Grove by community members in 1911. In 1929, the Department was officially established and recognized by the State of Wisconsin. In 2023, the Department celebrated its 94<sup>th</sup> year. Members are honored to serve the community, are proud to volunteer, and they are humbled by the support of their families, friends, neighbors, and community.



# RISK MANAGEMENT STATEMENT

"The Cottage Grove Fire Department will respond with the assumption that we can save lives, property and the environment. We will risk our lives to save a savable life. We will risk our lives in a calculated manner to save property. We will not risk our lives to save those lives, property or the environment that are unsavable."

# DEPARTMENT MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission shall be accomplished through quality **SERVICE** delivery as follows:

**SAFETY:** for the community we protect and the personnel that protects it

**EDUCATION:** through programs for our residents and youth

**RESPONSIVENESS:** to the suggestions, influences, appeals or efforts of others

**VISION:** from the past, to the present, and into the future

**INSPECTIONS:** investigations and pre-incident plans

**COMMITMENT:** to our community, our families, ourselves and each other

**EMPATHY:** for all

The fulfillment of our mission begins with training and pre-incident planning. All our volunteer firefighters are, at a minimum, certified at the WI Entry Level Firefighter level. Most of our Department members are certified at the Firefighter I or II levels. Staffing also includes certified: Fire Instructors, Fire Inspectors, Safety Officers, Wildland Firefighters, Hazardous Material Technicians, Ice Water Rescue Technicians, and Apparatus Engineers through State and Federal Programs and the National Fire Academy. Our training division provides regular opportunities for members to advance their skills in fire- fighting and rescue operations.

# DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



**F1 Chief-Administration/Operations**

**F2 Assistant Chief- Administration**

**F3 Assistant Chief- Operations**

**F4 Captain- Training**

**F5 Captain- Apparatus/Maintenance**

**F6 Captain- Pre-Planning/Inspections/Investigations**

**F7 Lieutenant- Personnel/Safety**

**F8 Lieutenant- Fire Prevention Education**

**F9 Lieutenant- Public Information**

**F10 Lieutenant- Pre-Planning/Inspections**

# DEPARTMENT STAFF



## IN MEMORIAM



Gavin Wendricks  
Firefighter  
LOS 1.56 years



The Cottage Grove Fire Department would like to thank the community for their support and kindness as a result the loss of FF Wendricks. We are grateful for the outpouring of love and comfort provided and we appreciate everyone who reached out and touched our hearts, and especially the Wendricks Family's.



Nick Archibald

Fire Chief

LOS 16.67 years



April Hammond

Assistant Chief

LOS 22.61 years



Jess Robinson

Assistant Chief

LOS 13.90 years



Jason Helgeland

Captain

LOS 17.08 years



Lance Severson

Captain

LOS 22.61 years



Josh Hammond

Captain

LOS 16.26 years



Jaime Gogola

Lieutenant

LOS 4.16 years



Grant Lorang

Lieutenant

LOS 3.99 years



Jason Kudrna

Lieutenant

LOS 8.17 years



Kevin Laufenberg

Lieutenant

LOS 16.67 years



Joseph Baker

Firefighter

LOS 2.58 years



Ryan Breyer

Firefighter

LOS 1.32 years





Cole Brown  
Firefighter  
LOS 7.75 years



Cadance Coleman  
Firefighter  
LOS 1.07 years



Trevor Cooper  
Firefighter  
LOS 3.41 years



Dawson Covoloskie  
Firefighter  
LOS 1.74 years



Emma Dabbs  
Firefighter  
LOS 2.84 years



Angela Elmer  
Firefighter  
LOS 2.32 years



Ehren Ezzell  
Firefighter  
LOS 2.32 years



Brandon Fritsch  
Firefighter  
LOS 18.58 years



Kennedy Gage  
Firefighter  
.07 Years



Ryan Greendeer  
Firefighter  
LOS 2.74 years



Mike Grob  
Driver Operator  
LOS 4.25 years



Thomas Grob  
Firefighter  
LOS 5.31 years



Mattea Grumke

Firefighter

LOS 1.74 years



Morgan Johnson

Firefighter

LOS 1.42 years



Cody Kellsvig

Firefighter

LOS Year 0.57 years



Robert Kuckuk

Firefighter

LOS 1.74 years



Dennis Larson

Firefighter

LOS 34.90 years



Tom Laude

Firefighter

LOS 3.92 years



Justin Leistikow

Firefighter

LOS 4.25 years



Michael Lundeen

Firefighter

LOS 0.74 years



Arlin Maag

Firefighter

LOS 13.32 Years



Matt Mabie

Firefighter

LOS 23.16 years



Katie Miller

Firefighter

LOS 5.83 years



Tim Miller

Firefighter

LOS 9.49 years



Hryistian Murphy  
Firefighter  
LOS 0.67 years



Joe Nemec  
Firefighter  
LOS 1.17 years



Braden Palmer  
Firefighter  
LOS 0.49 years



Erik Severson  
Driver/Operator  
LOS 27.76 years



Mitch Strehlow  
Firefighter  
LOS 4.49 years



Pete Strommen  
Firefighter  
LOS 2.74 years



Jake Vetter  
Firefighter  
LOS 1.92 years



Paul Wendricks  
Firefighter  
LOS 25.93 years



Kyle Wheeler  
Firefighter  
LOS 1.49



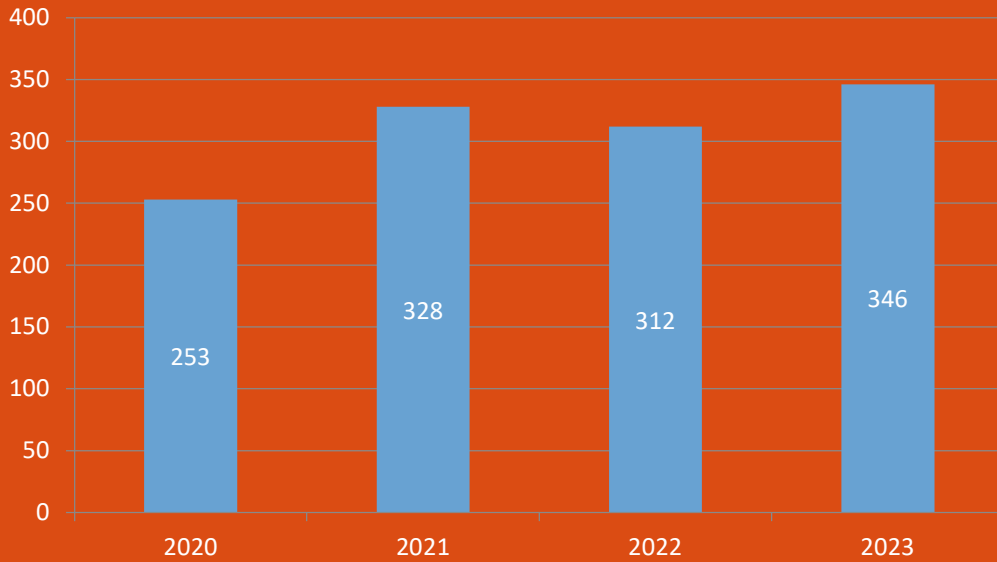
Roger Floerke  
Active Honorary  
LOS 40.50 years



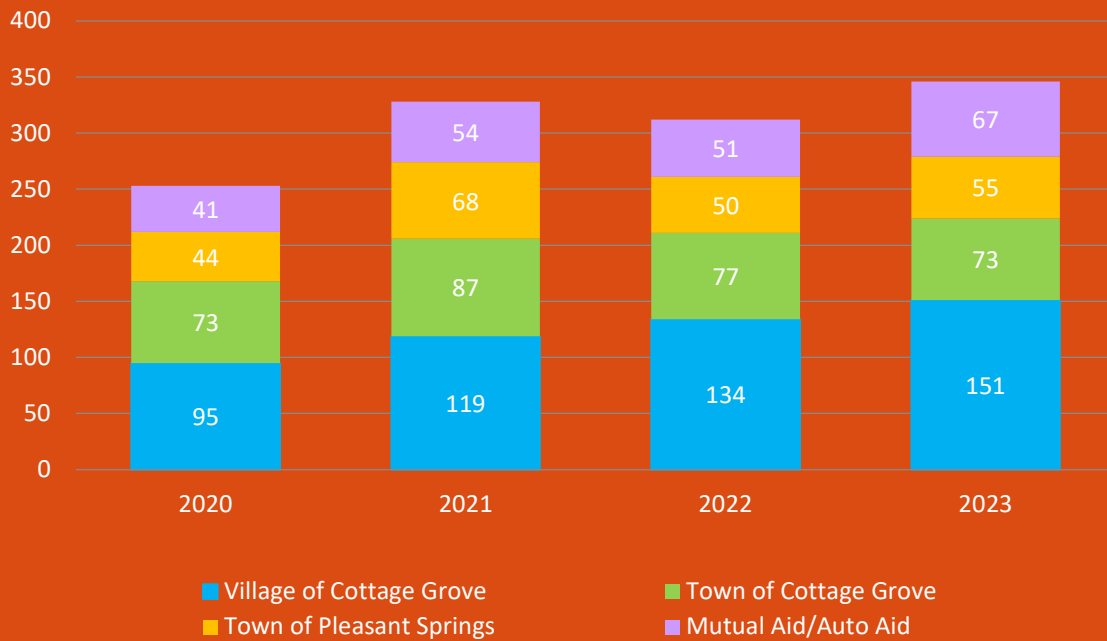
Joel Hammond  
Active Honorary  
LOS 45.16

# CALL DATA AND ANALYSIS

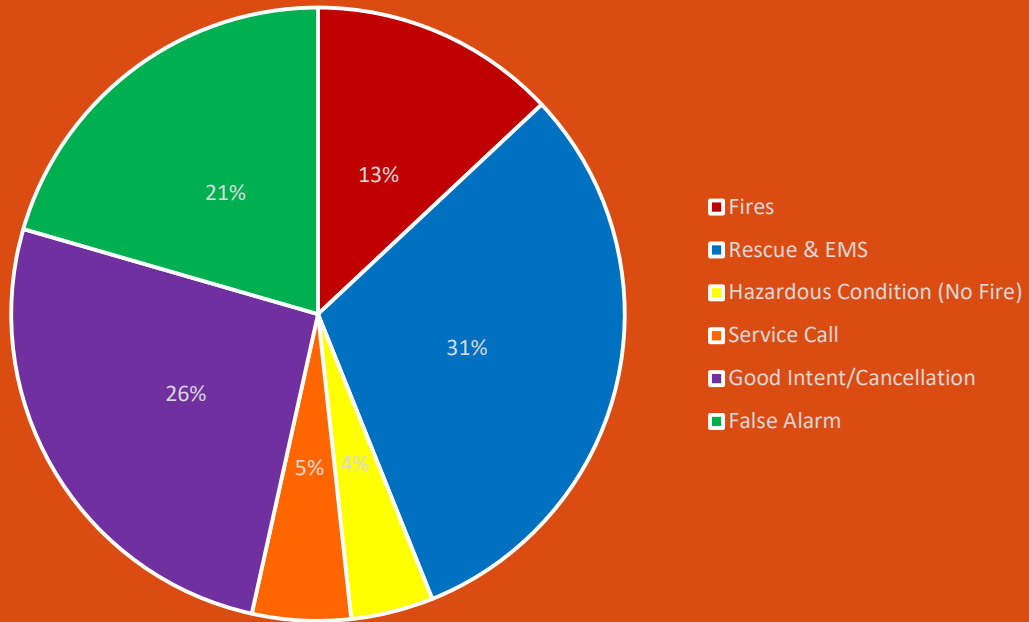
## Total Runs by Year



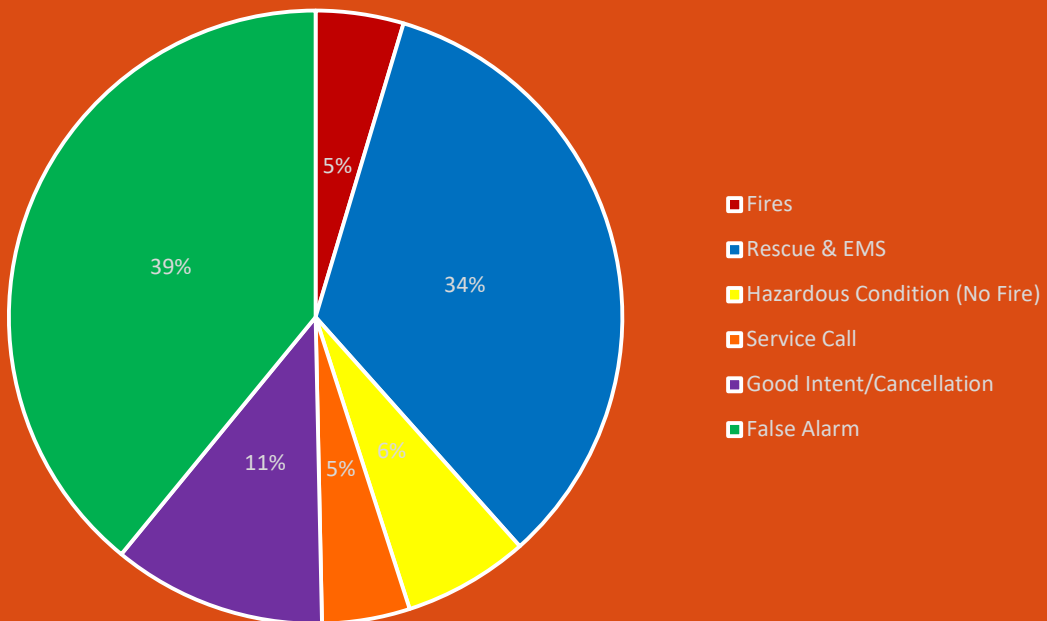
## Runs by Area



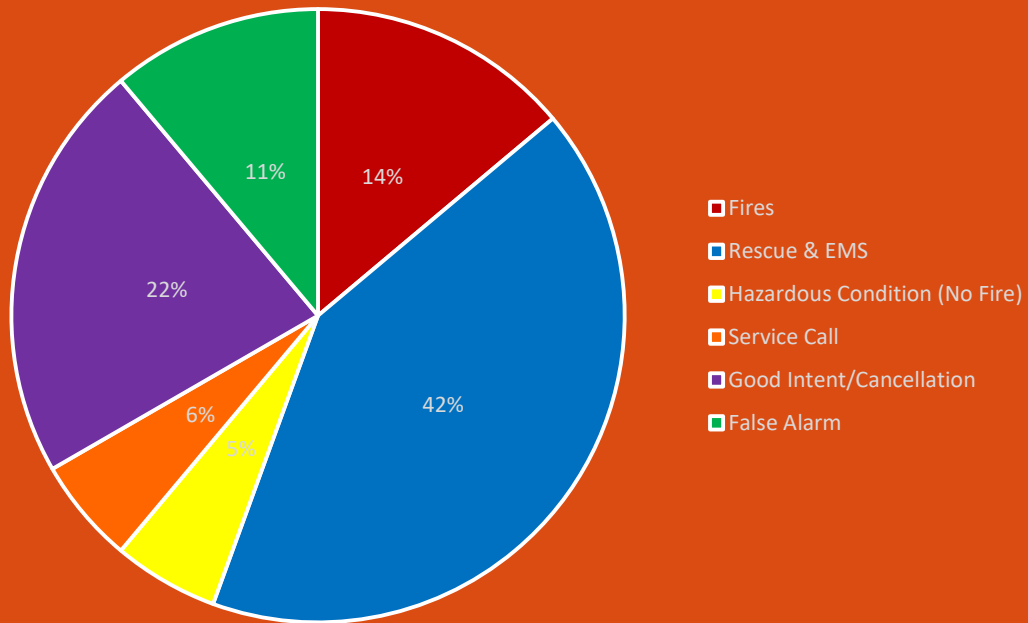
## 2023 Call Types – All



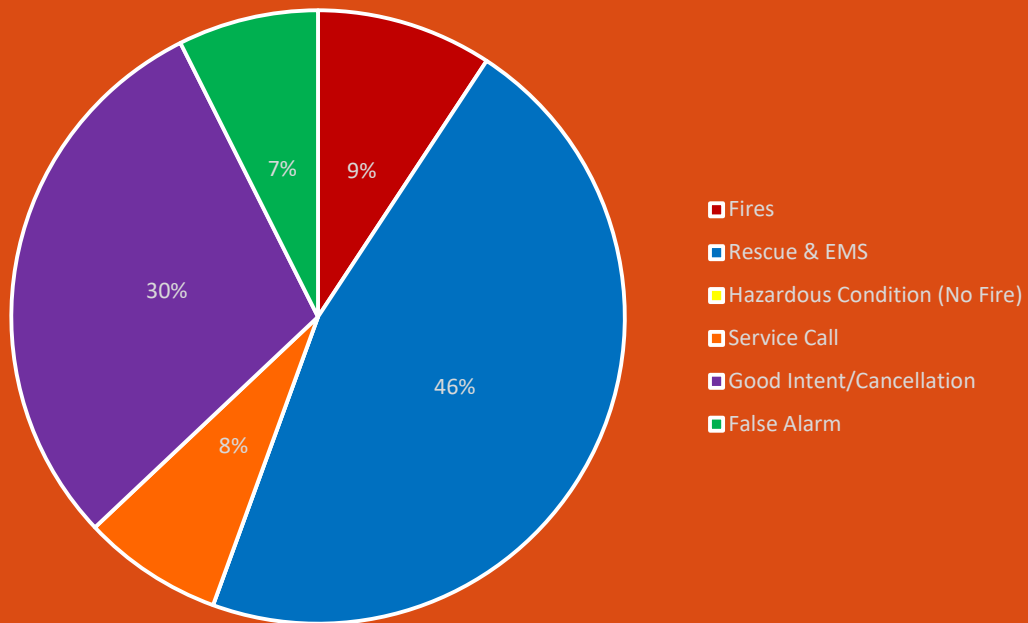
## 2023 Call Types - Village of Cottage Grove



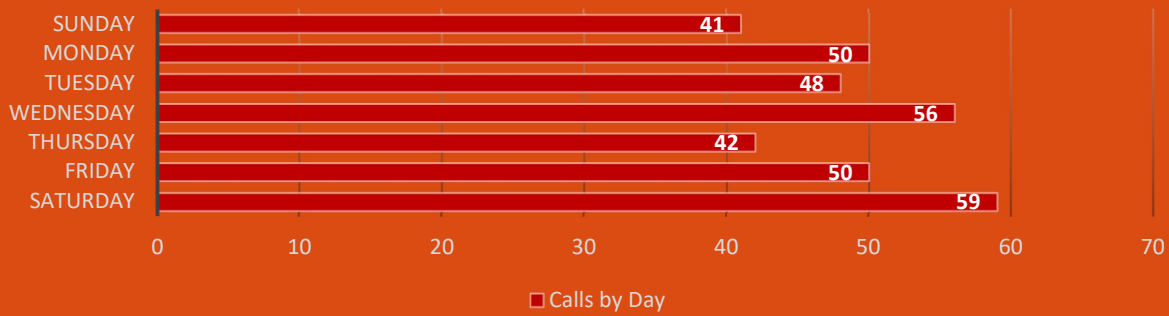
## 2023 Call Types - Town of Cottage Grove



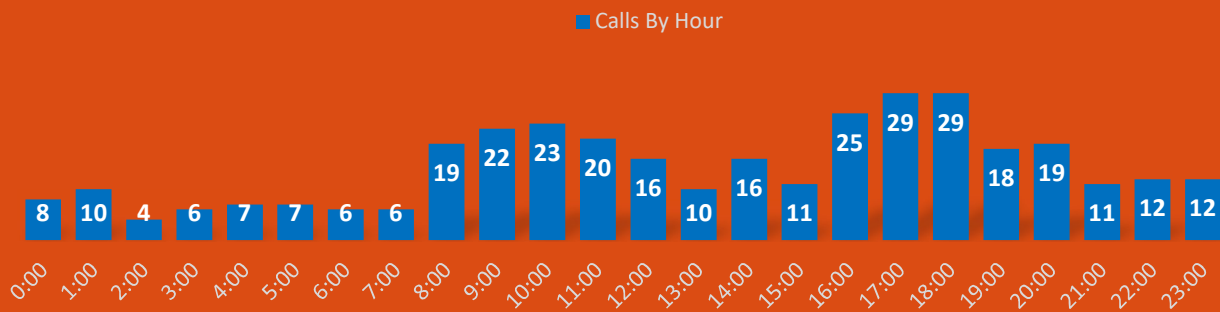
## 2023 Call Types – Town of Pleasant Springs



## Calls by Day



## Calls By Hour



## 2023 Response Time Averages

The Cottage Grove Fire Department adheres to a practice of non-emergent response to calls unless dispatch indicates the possibility to reduce death, serious injury, or the potential to prevent damage to property. Emergency response can create risk for first responders and others on the road. The Cottage Grove Fire Department balances risk and reviews the benefits of faster response based on call type, call updates, and information received on calls from dispatch. The data below reflects both emergent and non-emergent responses.

	Average Turnout Time 1 <sup>st</sup> Apparatus	Average Travel Time 1 <sup>st</sup> Apparatus	Average TOTAL Response Time 1 <sup>st</sup> Apparatus ALL call types	Average TOTAL Engine Response Time for Confirmed Fire	Average TOTAL Response Time for ALL Apparatus ALL Call types
VCG	00:49	4:44	5:31	7:20 *(3)	6:46
TCG	00:45	5:00	5:46	8:46 *(6)	8:44
TPS	00:49	7:51	8:40	13:28 *(1)	10:40

\*Total number of Structure fire type fires reported in 2023

Note: Times are dependent on Dispatch accuracy and Dispatch manual entry. NFPA 1720, Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Volunteer Fire Departments (a best practice standard) recommends a response time of 9 minutes in urban areas, 10 minutes in suburban areas, and 14 minutes in rural areas for structural firefighting responses.

# FIRE PREVENTION AND PUBLIC EDUCATION

The Cottage Grove Fire Department Fire Prevention and Public Education Divisions ensure the residents, business owners, and visitors in all communities served receive appropriate education and resources related to preventing unwanted fires and eliminating hazards on or in their properties. The Fire Department currently has eight (8) Certified Fire Inspectors and three (3) additional trained Fire Inspectors. Five (5) of our Fire Inspectors are also Licensed Fire Detection, Prevention, and Suppression Inspectors and one (1) also maintains a license as a Commercial Building Inspector. The Fire Department also has licensed Journeymen on staff in the fields of Sprinkler Fitting and HVAC. Having staff with training in the trades allows the Department to function in a capacity that aids in Fire Inspection, Prevention, and Investigation services.

In 2023, Inspectors were provided several commercial building plans by the Municipalities for review and input. Inspectors conducted several initial walkthroughs and inspections at new construction sites. Inspectors will continue to participate in and work with the Municipalities on the continued growth and proposals as they are presented and offered to the Fire Department for review and input. Fire Inspectors completed **673** fire inspections in the district in 2023 to ensure compliance with SPS 314, NFPA, and applicable Fire Code requirements. Occupancies are inspected twice a year. Fire Inspectors noted fire violations in each Municipality. When violations were noted, Inspectors worked to provide education and follow-up on any noted violations and will continue to work with building owners on code compliance. Inspectors ensure that occupancy records are kept up to date to ensure the best emergency response and effective pre-planning.



In 2023, the Fire Department brought some heat to numerous public education events. There was much excitement and enthusiasm with our inaugural Firefighter for a Day event, where 5 teenagers immersed themselves in firefighting action – complete with in depth discussions of apparatus and equipment, a doll house burn to exemplify a structure fire, obstacle courses, and epic water fights using fire hose and nozzles! In addition to Firefighter for a Day, 2023 included Marketplace Days, Community Night Out, Touch-a-Truck, Fire Prevention Week, Fire Drills, and hosting an open house for the community. Amidst the fun of these events, a strong focus on educational material was provided to empower the community with essential knowledge to proactively plan for critical incidents.

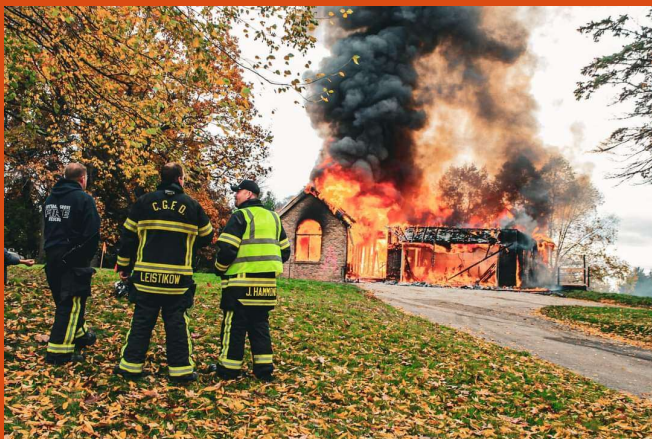




# TRAINING

In 2023, the Cottage Grove Fire Department provided 161 in-house training classes, along with 7 Madison College certification courses, and many different online certifications, for a total of 5,440 staff member training hours. CGFD had 3 structures that were donated to the department that we were able to train in and do live training burns on. The training schedule for the upcoming year is prepared in early December with a focus on fire and rescue tactics and strategies. The Department considers itself proactive in adapting to new and more advanced techniques. We review target hazards, methods of operation, water movement, water supply, fire ground tactics, ICS, firefighter safety, accountability, RIT and much more. In 2023, Training Division provided trainings on:

- Search and Rescue
- Ground Ladders
- Ropes & Knots
- Firefighter Survival
- Fireground Tactics
- Wildland Live Fire Training
- Rural Water Movement
- Turbo Draft Training
- Municipal Water Movement
- Hose Advancement and Hose Loads
- Driver Operator Training/EVOC
- Exterior Fireground Operations
- Incident Command
- Radio Communications
- Accountability
- SCBA Awareness
- Annual Facepiece Fit Testing
- Air Consumption Drills
- Solar/PV Safety Training
- Aerial Ladder Training
- New Tender 1 Training
- New Extrication Equipment Training
- New Cascade System Training
- RIT Training
- Vehicle Extrication Training
- Ultra-High-Pressure Training
- Vehicle Fire Trainings
- Live Structure Fire Trainings
- ASIM Training
- Hazmat/Railcar Training
- Tank and Pipeline Trainings



Several staff members also took advantage of additional seminars and training opportunities. They pursued training in: Tank farm and pipeline trainings, Ice Rescue training, and Live fire training with McFarland Fire Department, and Staff also pursued training related to Peer Support, Fire Investigation, Photovoltaic Systems, Incident Safety Officer, and DNR Wildland training. Members also participated in ICS/NIMS training.

Members of Cottage Grove Fire Department have demonstrated professionalism, dedication, and pride in the fire service while attending training. All training was accomplished while members still faced commitments to family, work, and other obligations, or obstacles.

Course/Certification	No. Completed in 2023
WI State Entry Level Firefighter	5
WI State Firefighter I/Hazmat Operations	7
WI State Firefighter II	4
WI State Aerial Operator	7
WI Fire Officer I	2
Emergency Services Instructor I	1
Ice Rescue Certification	5

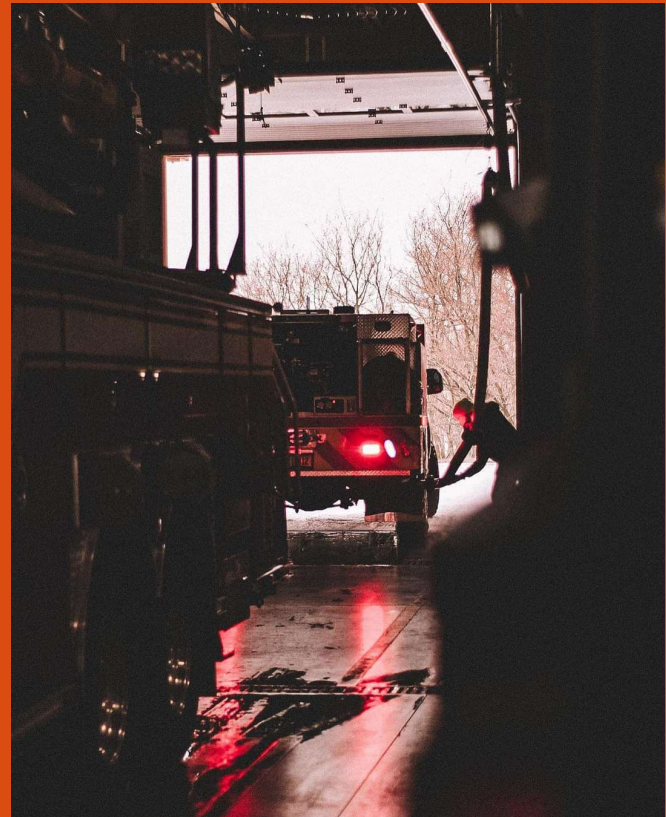
# RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

The Cottage Grove Fire Department, like 80% of communities across the nation, relies on volunteers to answer the call. If you are at least 18 years of age, reside and/or work in the Town or Village of Cottage Grove and have an interest in learning more, please call the Department's non-emergency number (608-839-4343 ext. 13), and a member will contact you to answer any questions and provide you with additional information. You can visit the Cottage Grove Fire Department website at [www.cottagegrovefire.org](http://www.cottagegrovefire.org) for more information or to apply.

The Cottage Grove Fire Department will supply you with your own Personal Protective Equipment and the necessary training. The community will provide you with the work. Because the Department is fully volunteer, it is important the Training Program and modules correlate and provide a direct balance with a member's family and home life. All training is paid for by the Department. Training evolutions are scheduled on the first, third, and fourth Tuesday evenings of the month. Additional training and make-ups are often scheduled on the fifth Tuesday. Members also complete training and truck checks on scheduled Sunday mornings.

In addition to Department training evolutions, new members are required to complete basic firefighting courses through MATC or provide documentation of completed courses. The Cottage Grove Fire Department will pay for any course fees and provide necessary textbooks.

The Cottage Grove Fire Department prides itself in its diversity and inclusion. The national average for female volunteers in the fire service is 11%; Cottage Grove Fire Department maintains an average of 18% female volunteers. We encourage anyone who is interested and able, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, protected veteran status, etc. to apply!



# NEWS AND UPDATES



Car One (CGC1) was put in service in February of 2023 and has proven to be a positive addition to the fleet allowing for quick incident assessment and ability to ensure appropriate resource allocation and need to incidents. Tender One (CGT1), purchased from Reliant in Slinger, WI was put into service in August 2023. CGT1 is a Pierce Kenworth and will be used for structure fire responses in all areas served by the Cottage Grove Fire Department.

Squad One (CGS1) will be arriving in early 2024 and Ladder One (CGL1) will be arriving in 2028. Both trucks were purchased through Reliant in Slinger, WI and will be new units from Pierce Manufacturing, Inc. in Appleton, WI.

The Cottage Grove Fire Department continued our legacy of applying for first responder grants. Notable grants received include a \$50,000 grant from **Acendium**. Funds have been allocated for the purchase of new training equipment, props, and simulators.

The 2023 DNR grant was used to transition from a gas-powered chainsaw to a battery powered chainsaw. It was also used to purchase new water backpacks and personal protective equipment.

Funds raised in 2023, allowed us to purchase and install new FLIR, Thermal Imaging Cameras (TICs). This equipment was put in service on Engine 4 and Ladder 1.

Between our annual fundraising, donations to the Department and grants, we have been able to make these purchases without taxpayer dollars, saving our residents thousands of dollars.



## 2023 COTTAGE GROVE FIRE DEPARTMENT AWARDS

**Responder of the Year: Mitch Strehlow**

**Captain's Award: Dawson Covoloskie**

Top Call Percentages:

Most Training Attended:

FO: Nick Archibald	80%
FF2: Ryan Greendeer	46%
FF1: Joe Nemec	36%
ELFF: Cadence Coleman	34%

FO: Jaime Gogola	282.3 hours
FF2: Hrystian Murphy	240.6 hours
FF1: Joe Nemec	313.6 hours
ELFF: Kyle Wheeler	183.3 hours

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT!**

