



# ANNUAL REPORT 2024



**Cottage Grove Volunteer Fire Department**

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

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4030 CTH N

Cottage Grove, WI 53527

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Message from Chief Archibald	3
Department Overview	4
Risk Management Statement	5
Department Mission Statement	5
Department Goals and Initiatives	6
Department Organizational Chart	7
Department Staff	8
Call Data and Analysis	12
Fire Prevention	16
Training	17
Recruitment and Retention	18
News and Updates	19
Fire Department Contacts	20

# 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 368 calls for service. This was a 6% increase in calls for service from 2023. 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 42 active volunteers and 1 honorary personnel from the Town and Village of Cottage Grove along with residents from the Town of Pleasant Springs. These individuals 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.

The Village and Town of Cottage Grove approved the purchase of a new Squad to replace the current 1998 Squad 1. Squad 1 was replaced in October with a 2024 Pierce Enforcer. Old Squad 1 was retired and sold on Wisconsin Surplus. This year the department recruited 4 new members and lost 6 members resulting in a net loss of 2 members. The fire department continues its recruitment and retention efforts with annual mailers and volunteer recruitment drives.

There are five divisions within the Department: Maintenance, Public Education, Personnel/Records, Training/Safety and Fire Inspections. The Training Division provided the staff with over 3,892 hours of training in 2024. The Public Education Division conducts tours of the Emergency Services Building and fire prevention demonstrations to 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.

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 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 of around 14,000 residents. The Department has achieved an ISO rating of 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 2024, the Department celebrated its 93<sup>rd</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:

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

**E**DUICATION: through programs for our residents and youth

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

**V**ISION: from the past, to the present, and into the future

**I**NSPECTIONS: investigations and pre-incident plans

**C**OMMITMENT: to our community, our families, ourselves and each other

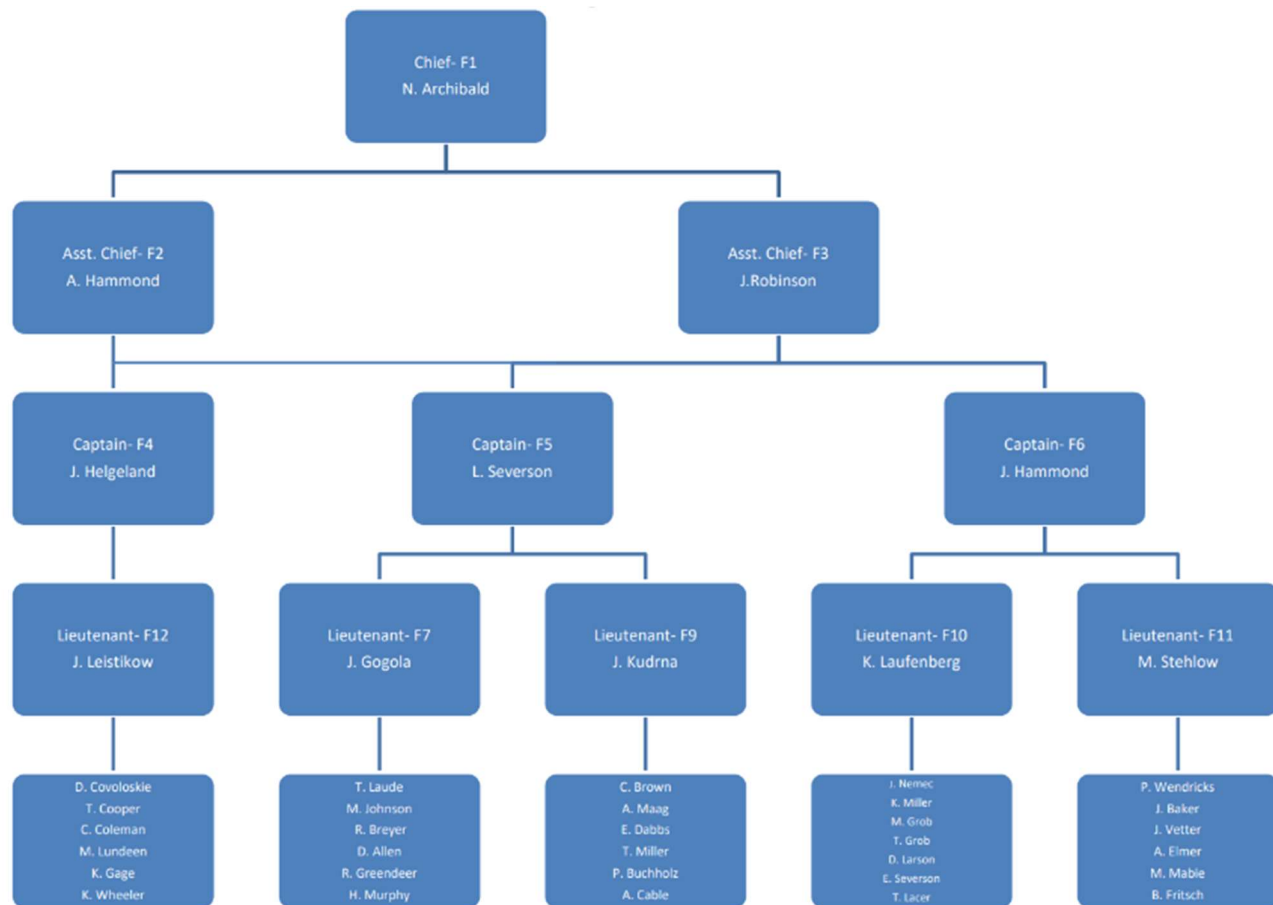
**E**MPATHY: for all

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 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 GOALS AND INITIATIVES

- Provide a productive and safe training environment for firefighters by performing and ensuring an ongoing evaluation of the CGFD training program.
  - Review any Instructor Training needs
  - Maintain an Annual and Monthly Training Schedule
  - Craft training courses with schedules, objectives, and goals
  - Ensure adequate documentation and details of training records
  - Develop and plan training with partner agencies (EMS, LE, and other Fire)
  - Monitor personnel for attendance monthly
  - Provide member orientation and probationary training
- Provide effective community outreach, hazard assessments, and planning by evaluating the Fire Inspection Program.
  - Review any Inspector Training needs
  - Conduct inspection ordinance reviews with municipalities
  - Ensure effective outreach and communication related to fire prevention, emergencies, and general department information through PIO/social media
  - Update Pre-Plan Information in Records Management System
- Ensure effective response with minimum staffing/responder turnout to all calls.
  - Evaluate Responder Turnout
  - Assess Weekends and Holidays responses
  - Assess Department needs, member availability, and future planning
- Ensure adequate and timely response to all emergency calls.
  - Evaluate Call Response time and Response Data
  - Utilize MDTs to assess needed improvements
  - Review response matrix and adjust if necessary
- Ensure staff have access to all equipment and PPE they need to complete and perform their duties safely and to the best of their ability.
  - Assess Equipment and PPE needs
  - Evaluate current capital budget evaluation and predictions
  - Completion of biannual gear inspections to determine gear needs
- Ensure that the Health and Safety of members are continuously accounted for.
  - Promote regular gear washing to limit carcinogen exposure
  - Ensure newly active members complete required health screenings
  - Promote Annual Physicals
  - Ensure timely use of Defusings and Debriefings post incident by trained members and professionals
  - Ensure that members always have access to EAP resources and that resource information is always posted
- Ensure that all members receive fair and equal treatment, and all members and prospective members feel welcomed, included, supported, and valued.
  - Ensure each company has unit cohesion
  - Continuing recruitment and retention efforts
- Ensure that all response incidents are properly documented by responding staff.
  - Ensure a consistent approach to documentation and data entry
  - Provide appropriate training to applicable staff

# DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



**F1 Chief-Administration/Operations**

**F2 Assistant Chief- Administration/Safety**

**F3 Assistant Chief- Operations/Safety**

**F4 Captain- Training Division (Training, Safety, etc.)**

**F5 Captain- Assets Division (Personnel, Apparatus, Equipment, etc.)**

**F6 Captain- Prevention Division (Inspections, Pub Ed, Honor Guard, etc.)**

**F7 Lieutenant- Personnel**

**F9 Lieutenant- Public Information**

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

**F11 Lieutenant- Public Ed/Honor Guard & Peer Support**

**F12 Lieutenant- Training**

# DEPARTMENT STAFF



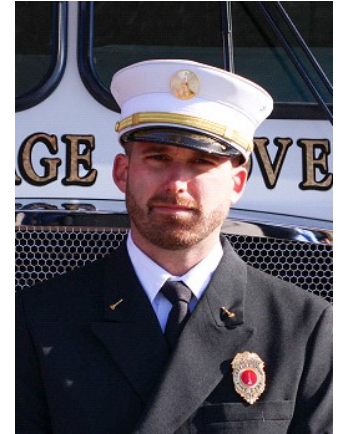
**Nick Archibald**  
Fire Chief  
LOS 17.67 years



**April Hammond**  
Assistant Chief  
LOS 23.61 years



**Jess Robinson**  
Assistant Chief  
LOS 14.90 years



**Jason Helgeland**  
Captain  
LOS 18.08 years



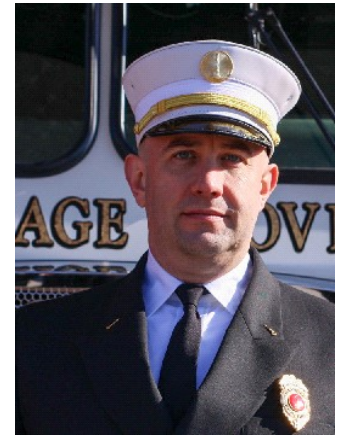
**Lance Severson**  
Captain  
LOS 23.61 years



**Josh Hammond**  
Captain  
LOS 17.26 years



**Jaime Gogola**  
Lieutenant  
LOS 5.16 years



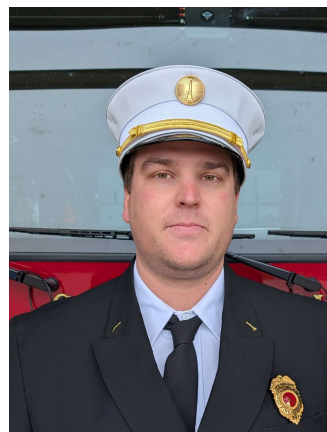
**Jason Kudrna**  
Lieutenant  
LOS 9.17 years



**Kevin Laufenberg**  
Lieutenant  
LOS 17.67 years



**Mitch Strehlow**  
Lieutenant  
LOS 5.49 years



**Justin Leistikow**  
Lieutenant  
LOS 5.25 years

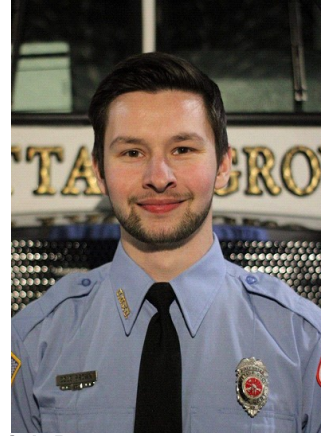




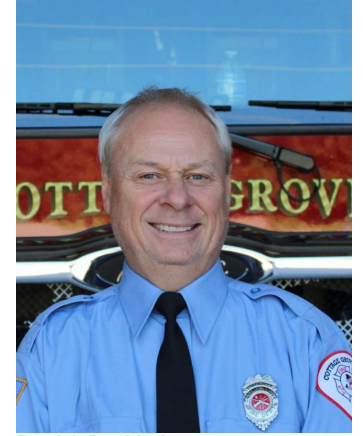
**Joseph Baker**  
Firefighter  
LOS 3.58 years



**Ryan Breyer**  
Driver/Operator  
LOS 2.32 years



**Cole Brown**  
Firefighter  
LOS 8.75 years



**Patrick Buchholz**  
Driver/Operator  
LOS 0.75 years



**Anthony Cable**  
Firefighter  
LOS 0.90 years



**Cadance Coleman**  
Firefighter  
LOS 2.07 years



**Trevor Cooper**  
Firefighter  
LOS 4.41 years



**Dawson Covoloskie**  
Firefighter  
LOS 2.74 years



**Emma Dabbs**  
Firefighter  
LOS 3.84 years



**Angela Elmer**  
Firefighter  
LOS 3.32 years



**Brandon Fritsch**  
Firefighter  
LOS 19.58 years



**Kennedy Gage**  
Firefighter  
1.07 Years



**Ryan Greendeer**  
Firefighter  
LOS 3.74 years



**Mike Grob**  
Driver/Operator  
LOS 5.25 years



**Thomas Grob**  
Firefighter  
LOS 6.31 years



**Morgan Johnson**  
Firefighter  
LOS 2.42 years



**Trinity Lacer**  
Firefighter  
LOS 0.75 years



**Dennis Larson**  
Firefighter  
LOS 35.90 years



**Tom Laude**  
Firefighter  
LOS 4.92 years



**Michael Lundeen**  
Firefighter  
LOS 1.74 years



**Arin Maag**  
Firefighter  
LOS 14.32 Years



**Matt Mabie**  
Firefighter  
LOS 24.16 years



**Katie Miller**  
Firefighter  
LOS 6.83 years



**Tim Miller**  
Firefighter  
LOS 10.49 years



**Hristiyan Murphy**  
Firefighter  
LOS 1.67 years



**Joe Nemec**  
Firefighter  
LOS 2.17 years



**Erik Severson**  
Driver/Operator  
LOS 28.76 years



**Jake Vetter**  
Firefighter  
LOS 2.92 years



**Paul Wendricks**  
Firefighter  
LOS 26.93 years



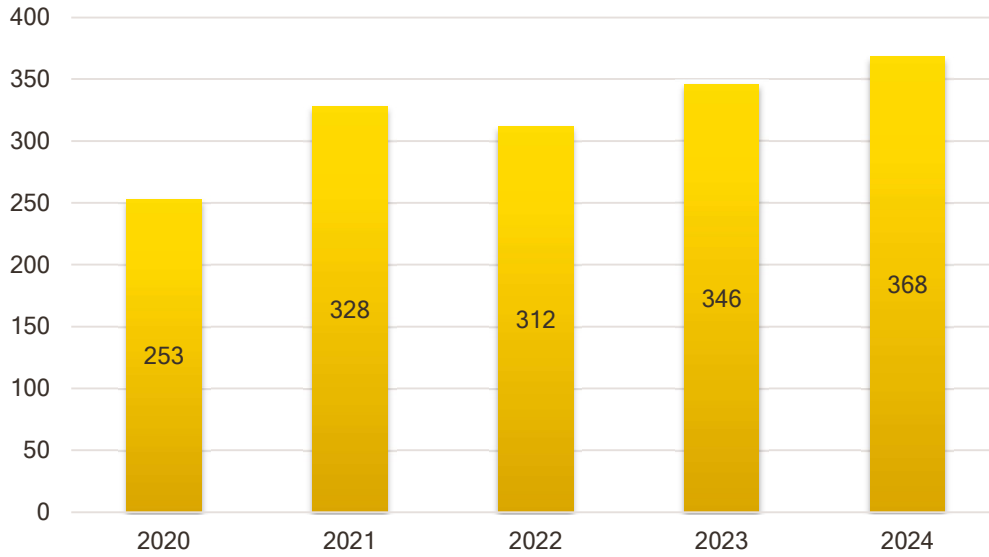
**Kyle Wheeler**  
Firefighter  
LOS 2.49



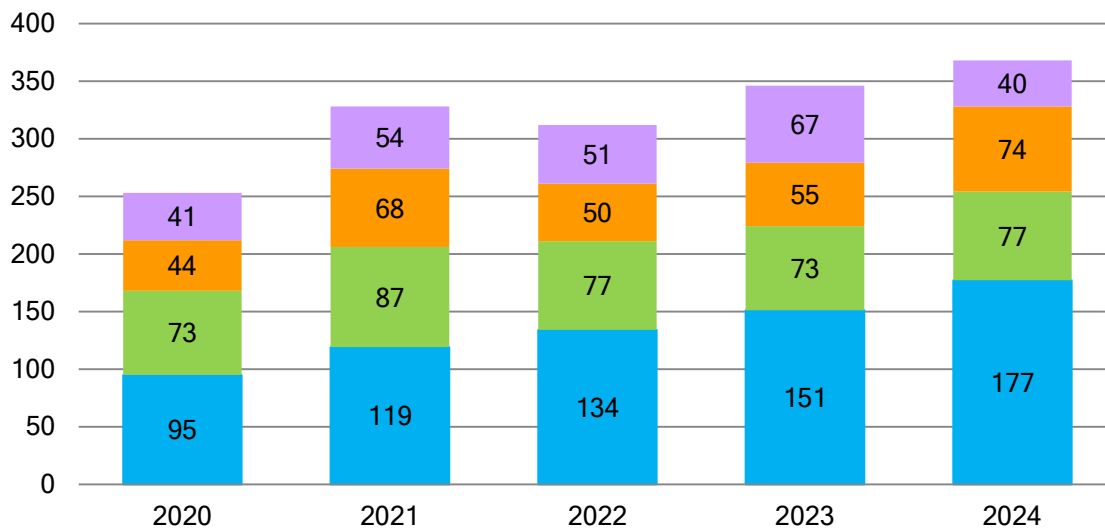
**Joel Hammond**  
Active Honorary  
LOS 46.16

# CALL DATA AND ANALYSIS

## Total Runs by Year

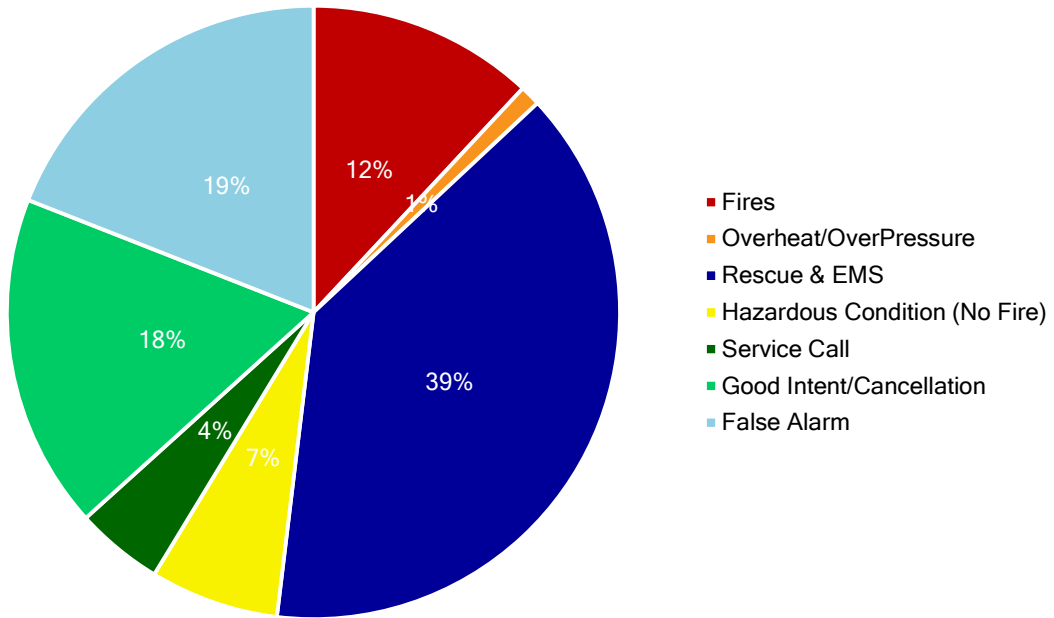


## Runs by Area

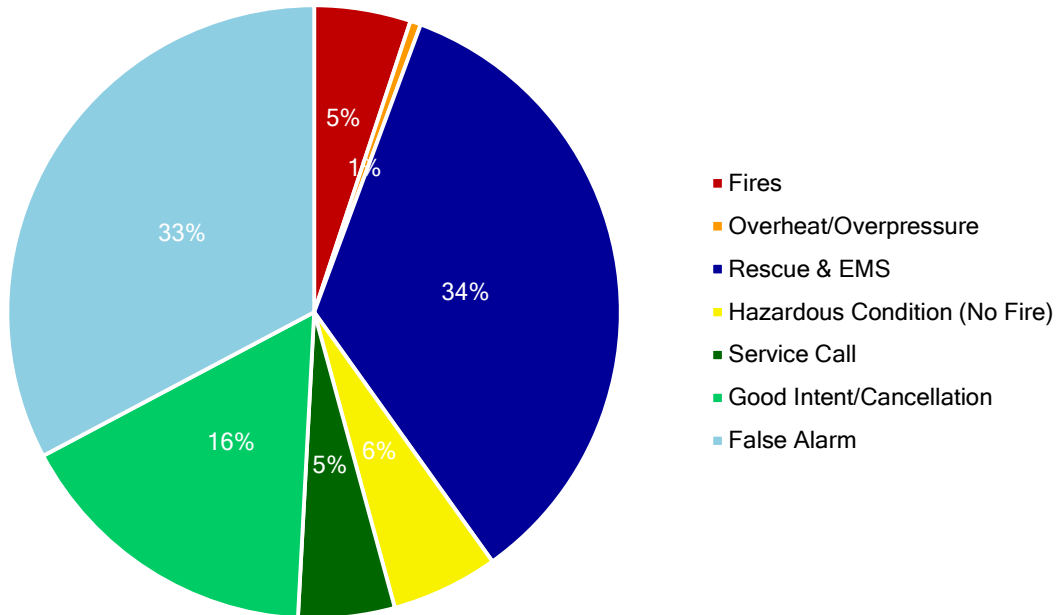


- Village of Cottage Grove
- Town of Cottage Grove
- Town of Pleasant Springs
- Mutual Aid/Auto Aid

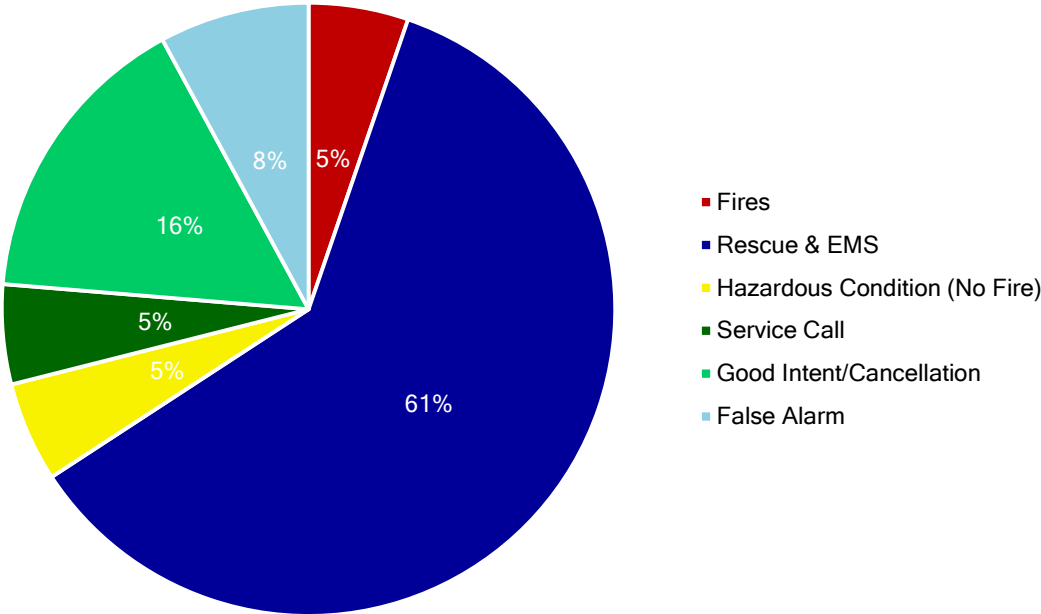
### 2024 Call Types - All



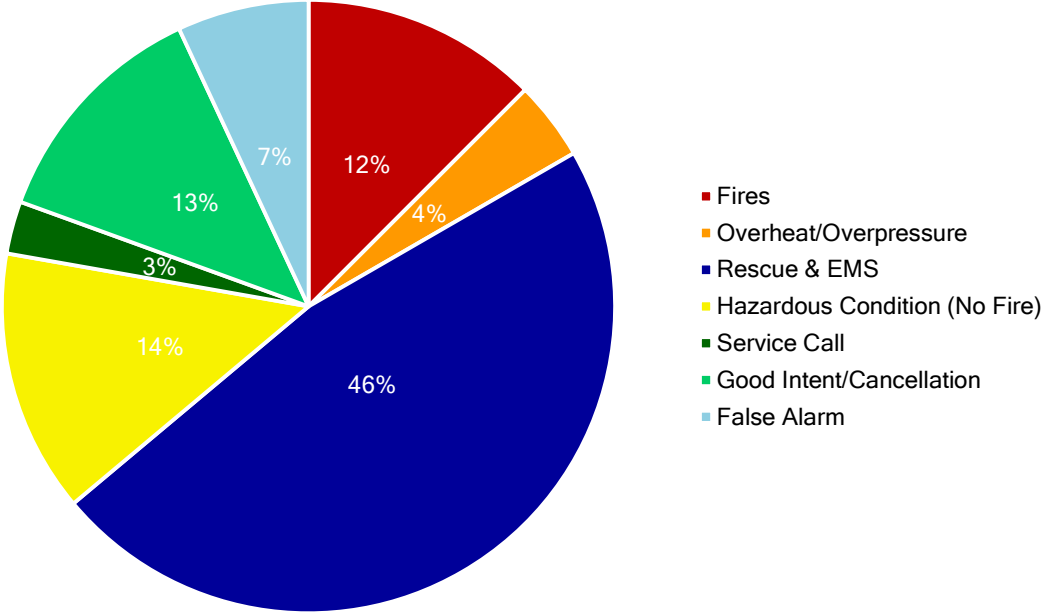
### 2024 Call Types - Village of Cottage Grove



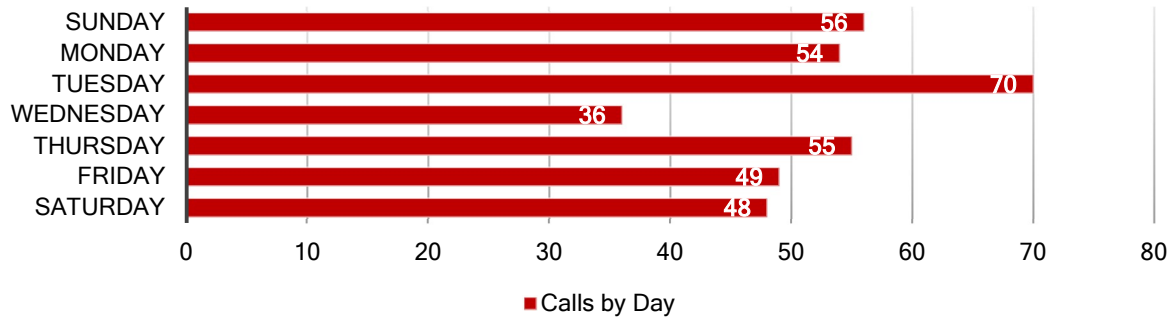
### 2024 Call Types - Town of Cottage Grove



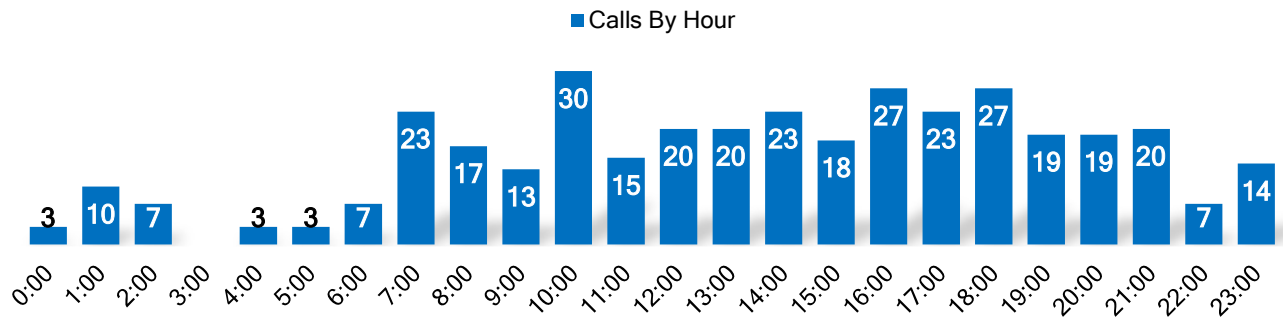
### 2024 Call Types - Town of Pleasant Springs



### Calls by Day



### Calls By Hour



## 2024 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 responses 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	00:19	5:01	5:20	9:21 *(5)	7:05
TCG	00:12	5:42	5:54	NA *(0)	7:35
TPS	00:25	8:20	8:45	14:08 *(2)	10:53

\*Total number of Structure fire type fires reported in 2024

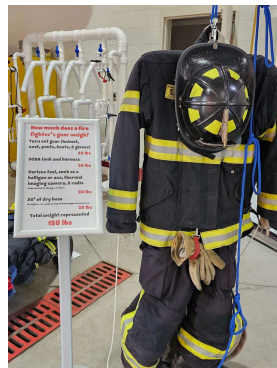
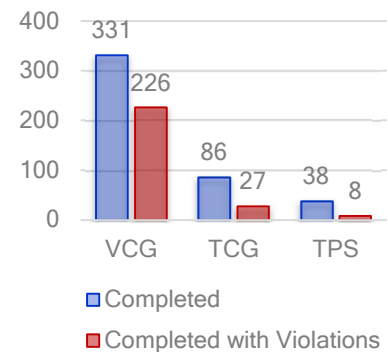
Note: Times are dependent on Dispatch accuracy and Dispatch manual entry. NFPA 1720, Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Volunteer Fire Departments (a best practice standard) recommends a response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

# FIRE PREVENTION

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 2024, Inspectors were provided with 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 717 fire inspections in the district in 2024 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.

2024 Fire Inspections



In October 2024 the Fire Department hosted its annual open house during Fire Prevention Week. Every year the Fire Department opens its doors to the community to provide tours, education, and engagement as it relates to fire prevention and risk reduction. Fire Prevention week is the longest running public health observance in our country and has been observed since 1922. It is held over the week of October 9<sup>th</sup> (in commemoration of the Great Chicago Fire) and is sponsored by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA.)

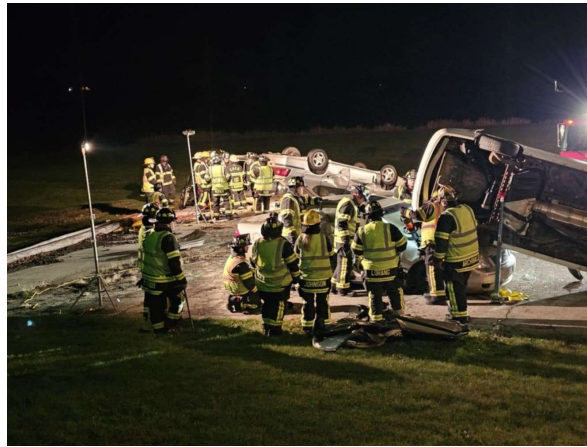
The Fire Department also participated in local community outreach events including Marketplace Dayz, Community Night Out, Touch-a-Truck, and Christmas in the Grove. Fire Department staff also participated in fire drills and visits at local schools and daycares. Amidst the fun of these events, a strong focus on educational material was provided to empower the community with essential knowledge to proactively plan for critical incidents.



# TRAINING

In 2024, the Cottage Grove Fire Department provided 119 in-house training classes, along with 4 Madison College certification courses, and many different specialized or online certifications, for a total of 3,892 staff member training hours. 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 2024, the Training Division provided training 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
- Standpipe Operations
- Aerial Ladder Training
- New Squad 1 Training
- Technical Rescues
- RIT Training
- Vehicle Extrication Training
- Ultra-High-Pressure Training
- Vehicle Fire Trainings
- ASIM Training
- Aircraft Safety
- Traffic Incident Management
- Stop the Bleed
- Hazmat Training
- ATV/UTV Training
- Electric Vehicles/Equipment Hazards



Several staff members also took advantage of additional seminars and training opportunities. They pursued training in Vehicle Extrication with Deerfield and Cambridge Fire Department and Ice Rescue training with McFarland Fire Department. Staff completed National Fire Academy classes in Incident Safety Officer and Fire Investigator. Staff also pursued training advanced training related to Peer Support and Crisis Intervention, Vehicle Fire Arson Investigation, and Live Fire Instruction related NFPA 1403.

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 2024
WI State Entry Level Firefighter	1
WI State Firefighter I/Hazmat Operations	3
W State Firefighter II	2
WI State Pump Operator	4
WI State Aerial Operator	3
Ice Rescue Certification	5
NFA Incident Safety Officer	1
NFA Fire Investigation First Responder	2

# 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 or driver-operator 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



In October 2024, Squad 1 (CGS1) was put into service. CGS1 was purchased from Reliant in Slinger, WI. CGS1 is a Pierce Enforcer and will be used for a variety of calls including vehicle accidents, structure fires, and technical rescues. CGS1 is considered a “toolbox” which carries a two sets of extrication tools, forcible entry tools, a cascade system, water rescue equipment, hazmat and decontamination supplies, and fire investigation equipment. CGS1’s cab was also built and designed to serve as an incident command center, with additional radios and a desk.

The Fire Department used a portion of Ascendium grant funds in 2024 to purchase two new rescue manikins for search and rescue practice. The Fire Department has been raising funds through donations and events to use in conjunction with the remaining Ascendium grant funds to purchase a roof simulator and forcible entry prop. It is hoped that the prop will be purchased in late 2025!



The Village and Town of Cottage Grove approved the purchase of TNT battery powered extrication tools, including a cutter, spreader, and ram. The tools have been installed on new CGS1. CGS1 retained the hydraulic set of extrication tools as a back-up. The CGFD fleet now has a full set of battery powered extrication tools on CGE4 and CGS1, a full hydraulic set on CGS1, a hydraulic combi tool on CGS1, and a battery powered combi tool on CGB1. These extrication tools ensure the department’s ability to provide effective emergency rescue and response for vehicle accidents and technical rescues.

## 2024 COTTAGE GROVE FIRE DEPARTMENT AWARDS

**Responder of the Year: Justin Leistikow**

**Captain’s Award: Arlin Maag**

Top Call Percentages:

FO: Nick Archibald	78%
FF2/FF1: Emma Dabbs	52%
ELFF/DO: Mike Grob	58%

Most Training Attended:

FO: April Hammond	202.75 hours
FF2/FF1: Joe Nemec	198 hours
ELFF/DO: Patrick Buchholz	180.25 hours

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT!**

# FIRE DEPARTMENT CONTACTS

**Chief - Nick Archibald**

Chief@CottageGroveFire.org

NArchibald@CottageGroveFire.org

**Public Information - Jason Kudrna**

JKudrna@CottageGroveFire.org

**Training Division - Justin Leistikow**

JLeistikow@CottageGroveFire.org

**Fire Prevention- Josh Hammond**

Inspections@CottageGroveFire.org

JHammond@CottageGroveFire.org

**Public Education/Events- Mitch Strehlow**

MStrehlow@CottageGroveFire.org

**Festival Chairman - Kevin Laufenberg**

Festival@CottageGroveFire.org



**988**  
SUICIDE  
& CRISIS  
LIFELINE

There is hope

Talk with us. If you or someone you know needs support now, call or text 988 or chat 988lifeline.org

PEP22-06-03-004

The advertisement features a blue box with the number 988 and the text 'SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE'. To the right is a logo with a pink heart and hands, with the text 'There is hope'. Below the blue box are icons for a question mark in a speech bubble and a chat bubble. At the bottom center is a QR code, and at the bottom right is the reference number 'PEP22-06-03-004'.