

2020

**Kenosha Fire Department
Annual Report**



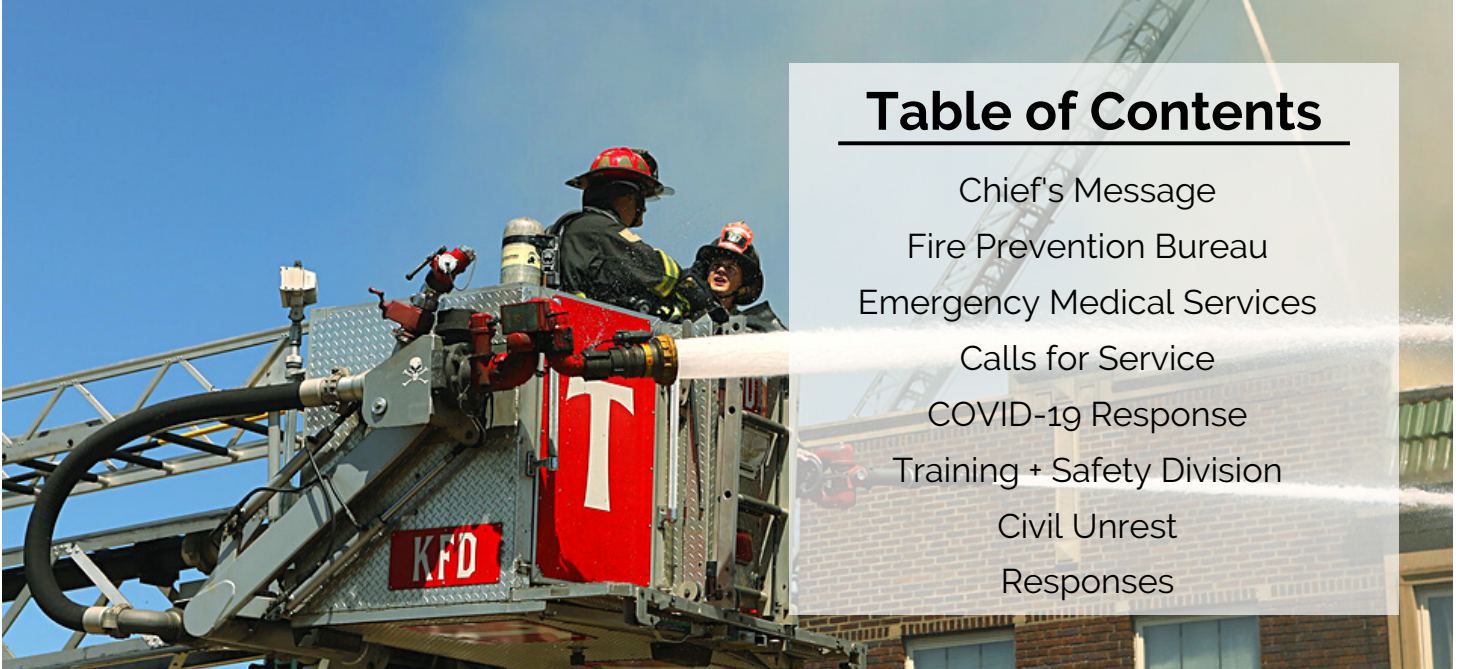


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CHIEF'S MESSAGE

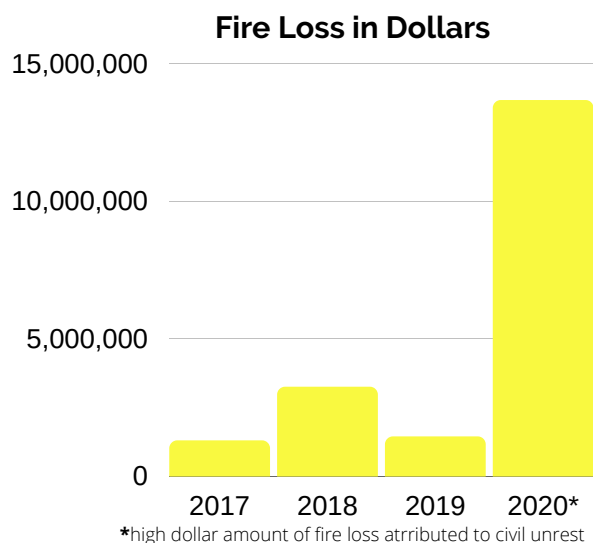
The year 2020 may have been the most challenging year for the Kenosha Fire Department in its 169-year history. In February, the United States began to see cases of COVID-19 and by March, the Kenosha Fire Department began responding to calls for COVID patients, administering the best care possible in accordance with guidelines and recommendations that were changing almost daily. The pandemic had an adverse effect on nearly every aspect of our operations, including our ability to train, provide safety education and public outreach, and conduct community fire inspections. It impacted how we operated on calls, from changes in how dispatch information was collected to sourcing and using additional personal protective equipment. Inevitable exposures and ill employees required us to develop new call-in procedures and staffing guidelines. As a department, we had the unique challenge of combating and preventing employee-to-employee exposures while our men and women continued to work 24-hour shifts in close quarters. Despite the challenges, our personnel persevered and provided the excellent standard of care we are known for, even going so far as to win commendations. In 2020, the KFD received the American Heart Association "Gold Plus" Award for the seventh year in a row.

A new challenge began on August 23rd. Following an officer involved shooting, civil unrest broke out across the city. Over the next week, Kenosha experienced large scale protesting, violence, looting and arson. During that period, the Kenosha Fire Department and dozens of MABAS fire departments responded to over 32 fires. These fires put a tremendous strain on all of the resources of this department, most importantly our people.

While the trials of 2020 tested the abilities and resilience of this department, I am proud to say the men and women of the Kenosha Fire Department successfully met and overcame the challenges head on, and did so with Pride, Dedication, and Courage.

Respectfully,
Interim Chief Christopher Bigley

DIVISION OF FIRE PREVENTION



Public Education Programs

Program	# Events	Attendance
Public Events		
KUSD Fall Fire Safety Program	6	550
Ride in A Fire Truck	10	48
Engine/Sparky Presentation	2	100
Public Safety Presentations	4	520
Fire Safety Training	4	160
Smoke Alarm Installation	23	68
Bonfire / Fire Marshall	0	0
Fire Safety Booth	1	2601
Fire Station Tours	40	240

Total: 4287

The Fire Prevention Bureau (FPB) oversees the fire inspections of existing buildings by line personnel and phased inspections of new construction to ensure proper installation of life safety components, along with the maintenance of the life safety systems in existing buildings. Fire investigations are conducted by the Division Chief and Inspector when required by state statute. The FPB also performs public education programming, however, in 2020 the COVID-19 pandemic drastically limited event participation. Public education requests were suspended in March, along with station tours.

Wisconsin State Statute SPS 314 requires the KFD to fire inspect every commercial occupant and multifamily residential unit twice a year. In 2020, 3970 fire inspections were performed by the line firefighters. The FPB personnel performed 520 fire inspections which included new occupancies, new construction and new and existing life safety system checks. 15 fire inspections were also logged by FPB staff for outdoor events that took place in the city. Overall, fire inspection numbers were greatly reduced due the Covid-19 pandemic.

Fire investigations are conducted as required by Wisconsin State Statute SPS #314. The Fire Investigation Unit is staffed by two personnel assigned to the FPB. It investigated 12 fires in the year 2020, not counting the numerous fires related to civil unrest. Inspector Aulds worked closely alongside many agencies, including the ATF, to advance the arson investigations of local businesses and vehicles that were set ablaze. The FPB also maintained it's working relationship with the Kenosha County Fire Investigation Team. The partnership with the county fire investigators is mutually beneficial, as the FPB adds to their arsenal of investigators while giving the city better fire investigation on call coverage.

It is the experience of the Bureau that "prevention" is the best defense against fire play. Although the Juvenile Fire Setter program is enormously successful, children who have the propensity for fire play that do not receive fire safety instruction continue to be "at risk."

Juvenile Fire Setters Counseled: 4

Juvenile Repeat Offenders: 1

Juveniles Referred to Intake Services: 0

This year the FPB charged \$69,885 on 138 reviews and permits.



DIVISION OF EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

The Emergency Medical Services Division of the Kenosha Fire Department faced a number of significant challenges in 2020. Our focused effort to provide seamless and effective pre-hospital emergency medical care to the citizens and visitors of Kenosha was mired by a global pandemic and localized civil unrest. The men and women of the KFD were also confronted with a dramatic increase in calls for traumatic injuries. Despite all of the challenges and stressors, the KFD emergency medical services rose to the occasion and responded to 10,607 calls for service. There were a total of 11,354 patient or citizen contacts during these calls.

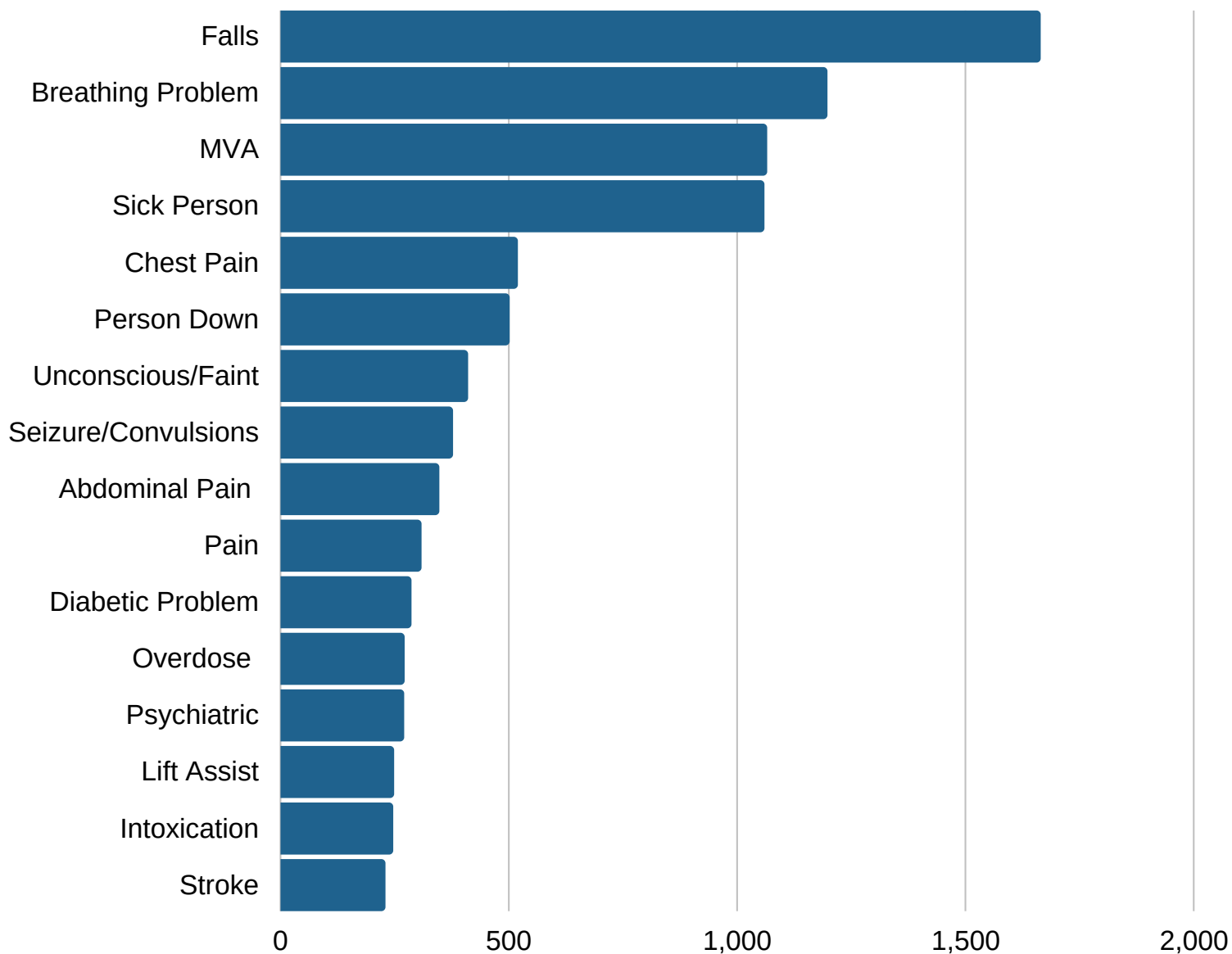
We expanded our partnerships to meet the demands presented by the COVID-19 Pandemic. At times it was challenging to obtain personal protective equipment to keep our personnel safe while providing care and transporting patients experiencing symptoms associated with SARS-CoV-2. To reduce the likelihood of spreading the virus, we began fogging our ambulances and stations with a hydrogen peroxide based solution manufactured by HALOSIL. We worked with federal, state and local partners to formulate best practices for providing emergency care. Those relationships proved to be incredibly helpful as we developed strategies for testing and vaccination. Our medical director, Dr. Tom Grawey, and the entire Emergency Medicine group at the Medical College of Wisconsin were instrumental in establishing these relationships.

Throughout 2020, the EMS Division of the KFD continued to be an innovative leader in emergency medical circles in the state of Wisconsin. We ignored distractors and remained focused on strengthening a culture of excellence through the intentional focus on exceeding industry best practices. These efforts were recognized by the Wisconsin Stroke Coalition's Coverdell Performance Improvement Awards. The Kenosha Fire Department received awards for completeness of records and comprehensive stroke care. Additionally, for the 7th consecutive year, the men and women of the KFD were recognized by the American Heart Association with its "Gold Plus" award. This award showcases Emergency Medical Service organizations across the nation for providing excellent care for victims of acute coronary syndrome and ST elevation myocardial infarction.

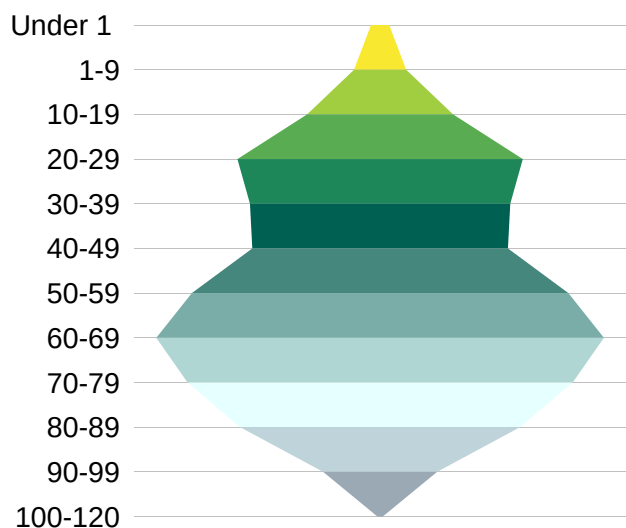
As 2020 came to a close, the Division Chief of EMS James T. Poltrock retired. Jim led the EMS Division for more than a decade and through his leadership the EMS Division made a number of dramatic improvements. House Captain Nicholas Eschmann was promoted as his replacement. While 2020 represented a stressful year, the EMS Division will fondly reflect on the many acts of kindness and support shown to our members by the community. This support reminds us to stay focused on our culture of excellence.



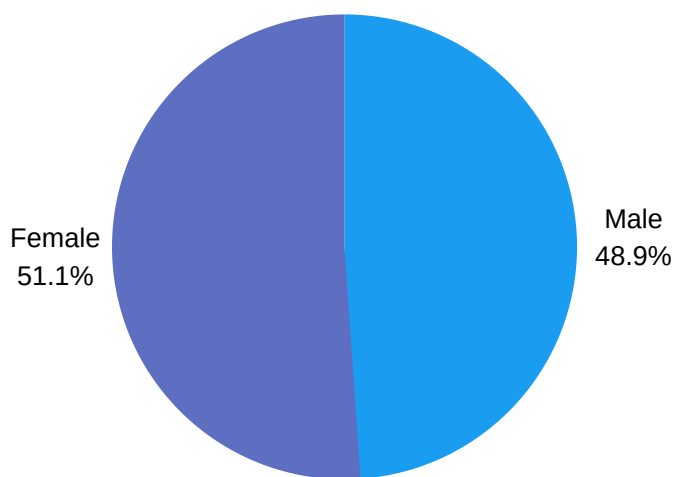
MOST COMMON EMS CALLS



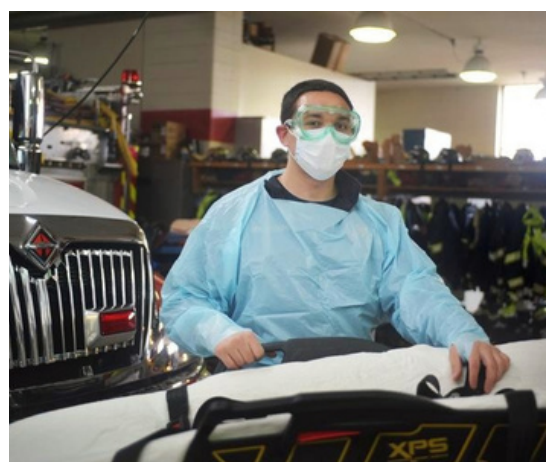
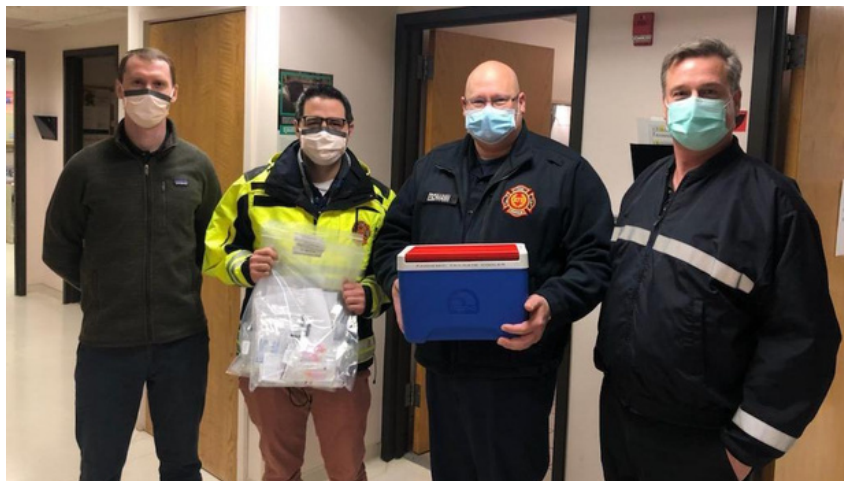
PATIENT AGE (YEARS)



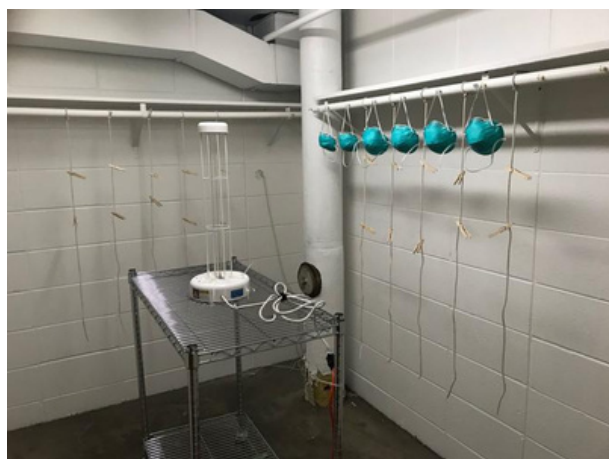
PATIENT GENDER



COVID-19 RESPONSE



The Kenosha Fire Department emerged as and remains a state-wide leader in the management of and response to the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition to the care provided to community members with COVID-19 symptoms, we were an instrumental part of the community's COVID preparedness plan. Early in the pandemic when personal protective equipment was short, KFD partnered with scientists at UW-Parkside and Marquette to develop and test an N95 mask decontamination protocol that was recognized by the State of Wisconsin as a "best practice" in decontamination procedures. An old firehouse became a drive through COVID testing site, providing a total of 2,473 tests to Kenosha residents. Due to early preparations and partnership with the local health department, the KFD was the first fire department in the state of Wisconsin to offer COVID vaccination for our employees. The department organized vaccine clinics for other City departments, providing over 250 doses. As the pandemic continues to impact our community, the KFD remains ready to respond at a moment's notice, rising to whatever challenges are set in front of us.



DIVISION OF TRAINING AND SAFETY



In order to support the Mission Statement of the Kenosha Fire Department, the Division of Training and Safety assumes the responsibility of providing continuous training to new and current members of the department, establishing and adhering to safe work practices in hazard zones, and maintaining the administrative duties that are required by both the department and Wisconsin State Statute Chapter SPS 330.

The COVID-19 pandemic forced the Division to augment training for the year 2020. We were challenged with anticipating the unknown as the pandemic swept through Kenosha. We had to turn inward and rely on station-led training and programs that were already in place. The challenge was to maintain a high level of preparedness without the use of external partners such as Gateway Technical College. Throughout the year, the Training Division ensured that the fundamental skills of all firefighters in all ranks were being reassured. Members of the department practiced Search and Rescue, RIT training, Hose Advancement, Operations in the Roadway, and other various Job Performance Requirements (JPRs) as set forth by the Training Division.

The Kenosha Fire Basic Recruit Training Academy of 2020 encompassed a class of nine recruits. This class pushed the instructors to perform at their highest levels of teaching skills as they prepared the recruits for their new career.

In the role of Safety Officer, the Division Chief of Training and Safety responded to nearly 100 incidents throughout 2020. This type of response requires the Officer to be available for call 24/7. The type of calls included structure fires, water related emergencies, vehicle accidents, hazardous material situations, and other incidents that warranted a Safety Officer being implemented into the command structure. Per SPS 330.14, the use of a Safety Officer is required. Unfortunately, it is near impossible for one person to be on-call every day of the year. In order to improve the availability of a Safety Officer in 2021, the Training Division will work to implement a program that will not only benefit line officers by providing incident command exposure, but provide for an on-call Safety Officer with availability 24/7 throughout the year.

In October, two new policies and procedures were implemented based upon lessons learned from the Civil Unrest of 2020. These policies and procedures will enable us to be better prepared moving forward and have been shared nationwide as a template for other departments looking to learn from our experience.

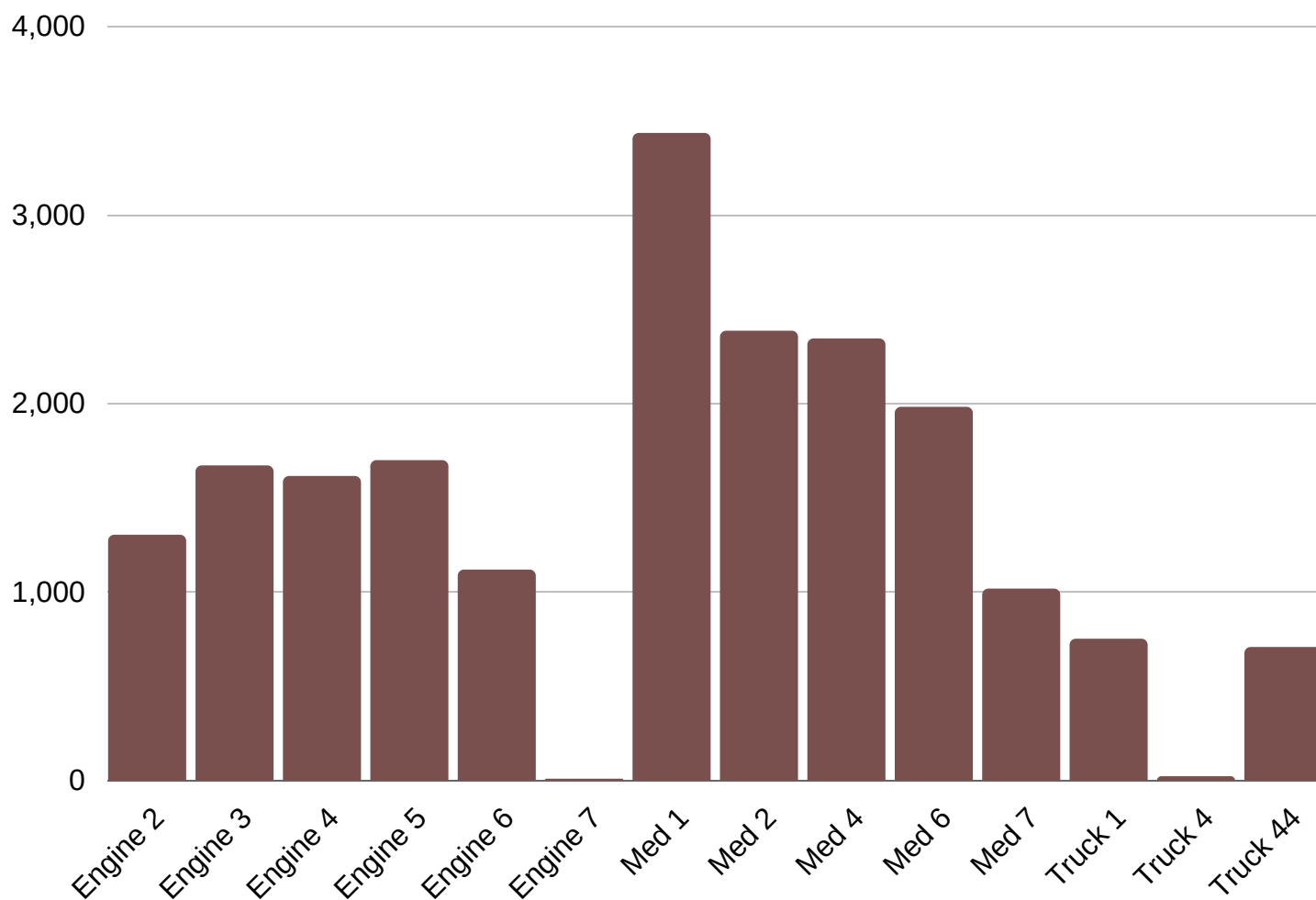
Training goals for 2021 include the continuation of RTF training with KPD, continued Self-Defense/Subject Control training for our members, an update to the "Red Books" given to promoted officers, as well as continued training through JPRs. The department will also participate in Hazardous Materials training.

CIVIL UNREST

Starting August 23rd 2020 and lasting approximately ten days, the City of Kenosha experienced civil unrest following a police shooting. The civil unrest included mass protests, looting, arson, property damage and two homicides. 37 different federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies, the National Guard, and dozens of MABAS fire departments assisted our local forces with a response. Following the unrest, the City of Kenosha Public safety departments had to prepare for and support the significant visits of two dignitaries. One visit was from United States President Trump and the other from Presidential candidate Joe Biden.



APPARATUS RESPONSES



ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSES

