

PRIDE OF

UPTOWN

2023

# ANNUAL REPORT

KENDOSHA

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# A MESSAGE FROM THE FIRE CHIEF

2023 became the year of "new normals" for the Kenosha Fire Department. The COVID pandemic left a lasting imprint on our everyday lives. Many of the challenges of the pandemic persist, such as supply chain issues. Unfilled ambulance chassis orders are still outstanding – some as old as two years. While COVID cases have dropped overall, it has become a new normal like seasonal flu and RSV. Additionally, some of the local hospitals re-instituted a mask mandate in the last weeks of December. It appears the influence of COVID is here to stay.

The closing of Froedert South Hospital's emergency department was another "new normal" to adapt to. The shutdown of this location created an increase in call volume this year, and more notably impacted the department's average "time on call." KFD's Med Units are spending more time transporting patients west, reducing their availability for other calls. Fire and city administrations are working to add the additional resources needed to put another Med Unit into service. In the meantime, the fine men and women of the KFD will continue to provide high quality care to patients.

CIP funding, along with community fundraising led by Police and Fire Commissioner Cucunato and the AFL-CIO, allowed the department to procure three drones and pay for pilot training. These drones will be multifunctional and helpful in all areas of the department's mission, including suppression, search and investigation. Another new initiative was the addition of a Tactical Emergency Medical Support team (TEMS). This new team works directly with the police department's SWAT Team and is a great example of police and fire working together.

The KFD hired its largest class in department history in 2023. Through the efforts of our Diversity Recruitment Committee, applications have increased in recent recruitments, but interest in protective service careers is far from what it was in past decades. We will continue to put resources toward recruitment efforts, but unfortunately I believe the decline in applicants is another "new normal."

With the rate of retirements in recent years and the addition of many new personnel, we have become a very young department with an average age of 37 years old. Almost 70% of our department has 10 or less years of experience. This has created new challenges for us and we are doubling down on training efforts. We have increased the use of outside resources for instruction and concentrated heavily on subjects such as smoke reading, building construction and fire behavior to address the inexperience.

Finally, I would be remiss in not mentioning this is my last KFD Annual Report as Fire Chief. I will be retiring after 33 years with the department on April 1, 2024. I am truly blessed to have had the opportunity to serve on the Kenosha Fire Department. The fire service is a very rewarding career and I am grateful for the experiences I have had and the trust extended to me by city leaders and our citizens. I wish nothing but the best for the City of Kenosha and am very confident that the men and women of the KFD will continue to provide outstanding service to the community going forward, doing so with **Pride, Dedication, and Courage.**

Respectfully,  
Fire Chief Christopher Bigley



# PERSONNEL UPDATE

## New Hires

### Probationary Firefighter/EMT

*Nolan Radke  
Alexandra Miller  
Justin Long  
Tyler Dahl  
John Franckowiak  
Keegan Koprovic  
Fernando Arreola  
Michael Yule  
Teofanez Lopez  
Santino Ruffolo  
Tyler Huckstorf  
David Strouf  
Tyler Cannon  
Brian Flitcroft  
Dominick Wojciechowski  
Paul Haas  
Jacob Davellis*

## Retirements

*Division Chief Nick Eschmann  
House Captain David Sass  
AO Steven Ledding  
Captain Brian Sekey*

## Promotions

### Apparatus Operator

*Andrew Belsky  
Kyle Dahl  
Lars Bonovich  
Samuel Spair  
Steven Kroening  
Jonathan Perrino  
Matthew Francis  
James Corwith  
Taylor Tautges*

### Lieutenant

*Joseph Sielski  
Kristin Kaminski  
John Vos  
James Ludvigsen  
Daniel O'Connell  
Chad Stoeber  
Ryan Anderson*

### Captain

*Brian Sekey  
Todd Leipzig  
Dale Moss  
Matthew Mitacek*

### House Captain

*Jeff Wunder  
David Steidtman  
Wes Djuplin*

### Division Chief

*William Glass  
William Swanson*

### Battalion Chief

*Scott Krueger*

## Milestones

### 5 Years

*Andrew Heiler  
Rita Kemen  
Nicholas Moss  
Matthew Price  
Michael Schmitz  
Pedro Villa  
David Wade*

### 10 Years

*Garrett Boye  
Abbie Gilewski  
Kyle Hoff  
Justin Morman  
Taylor Santelli  
Greg Spencer  
William Swanson  
John Tenuta*

### 15 Years

*James Adams  
John Alia  
Raymond Tessmann  
John Vos*

### 20 Years

*Ryan Anderson  
Timothy Lewis  
Stephen Lombardi  
Matthew Mitacek*



Thank you to our retirees for a career of service to the citizens and visitors of Kenosha. Enjoy your well-deserved retirement!



## DIVISION OF TRAINING & SAFETY



The Division of Training and Safety is responsible for providing ongoing training to new and current members of the department, establishing and adhering to safe work practices in hazard zones, and maintaining the administrative duties required by both the department and Wisconsin State Statute Chapter SPS 330. KFD members continued to practice Search and Rescue, RIT training, Hose Advancement, Driver Operator (Pump & Aerial), Hazardous Materials, and other various Job Performance Requirements (JPRs) as set forth by the Training Division. In 2023, the division focused on hands-on practical training scenarios. These scenarios provide real time training that simulates emergencies that may be encountered in the field. Examples included high rise fires, multi-family dwelling fires, and structure fires with confirmed victims trapped. Other practical training included establishing water supply, refreshing on engine company operations, pumping water into an aerial master stream, and SCBA search and rescue training. The Training Division also provides yearly RIT (Rapid Intervention Team) training to our members, preparing them for an event in which a firefighter needs to be rescued from a hazardous condition.

This year, high emphasis was put on the importance of collaborative training efforts with different agencies. The US Coast Guard and the KFD respond to water emergencies on a frequent basis. In order to strengthen our joint response, we worked closely with the Coast Guard to conduct scenario based training with their crews. Kenosha Fire also works closely with the Kenosha Police Department. KFD members instruct Kenosha police officers throughout the year on our fire department responses, medical emergencies and treating trauma patients.

Future training goals will include electric vehicle training and the continuation of ICS simulation classes. This coming year will also continue our department-wide diversity, equity, and inclusion classes.

In the role of Safety Officer, the Division Chief responded to over 100 incidents. This type of response requires 24/7 call availability. The type of calls included structure fires, water-related emergencies, vehicle accidents, hazardous material situations, and other incidents that warrant a Safety Officer being implemented into the command structure. The Safety Officer also frequently responds to mutual aid requests.





## KFD RECRUIT ACADEMY

The Kenosha Fire Basic Recruit Training (BRT) Academy of 2023 graduated 18 recruits in June. It represented the largest recruit class in Kenosha Fire Department history. Four lead instructors were supplemented with additional adjunct instructors through the three month long academy. The use of KFD's new training tower was invaluable. The tower allowed instructors to run evolutions with all 18 recruits operating simultaneously in their roles. Throughout the academy, recruits received approximately 90 hours of additional EMS training. This training consisted of trauma simulations, cardiac arrest care, medication administration, and advanced airway management.

The BRT class of 2024 is projected to have 10 or more recruits that will go through an approximately three month long academy. The Training Division is ready and able to meet the challenge by utilizing high quality instructors from within our ranks, a state-of-the-art training facility, and technological advancements in curriculum delivery.





## DIVISION OF EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES



The Emergency Medical Services Division continued to provide high-quality, professional prehospital medical care to the citizens and visitors of Kenosha. The KFD is an innovative leader in emergency medical circles in the state of Wisconsin and strives to create a culture of excellence through the intentional focus on exceeding industry best practices. This is reflected in the fact that the men and women of the KFD were recognized, for the 8th consecutive year, by the American Heart Association with its "Gold Plus" award for outstanding care for victims of Acute Coronary Syndrome and STEMI, the most serious of heart attacks. Kenosha Fire joined the Wisconsin Coverdell Stroke Program in 2018, allowing us to compare our treatment of suspected stroke patients against key performance indicators for stroke care, as well as other Coverdell program participants and EMS systems in the state of Wisconsin. Since joining the Coverdell Stroke Program, the KFD has been recognized as one of the top three departments in the Wisconsin for the highest level of prehospital stroke care.

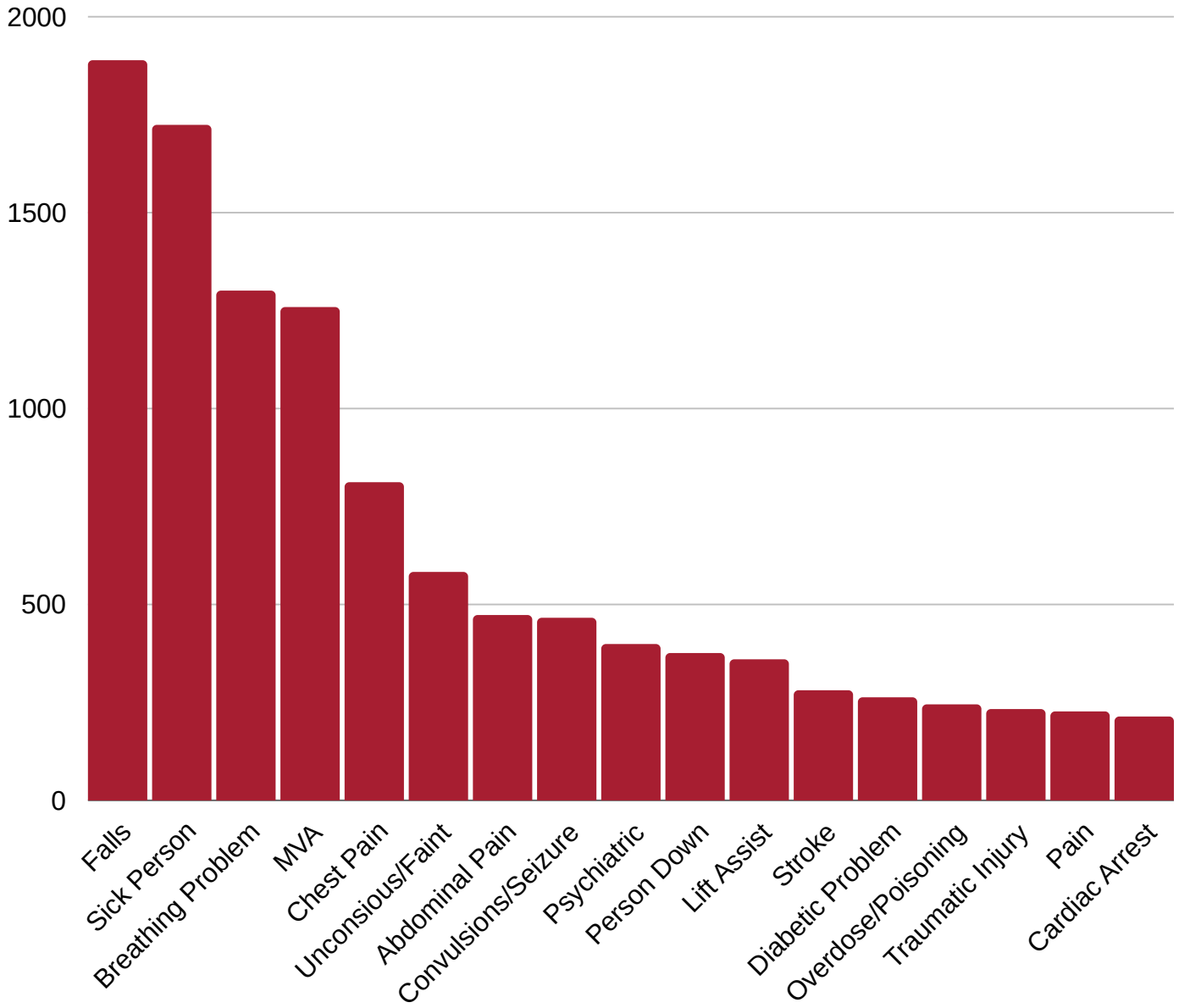
Emergency Medical Services account for over 85% of KFD's requests for service. These services are provided by 152 dual-trained medical providers. In 2023, KFD again responded to thousands of medical incidents that were answered by 72 EMTs and 80 Paramedics. The KFD has also made significant commitments to educating more Paramedics, with nine students graduating in 2023, and another six students currently enrolled with a projected graduation of June 2024.

The EMS Division maintains an expectation of high-quality patient-centered care, with a focus on continuous provider and system quality improvement. This is achieved with continuing education that exceeds the minimum standards set by the state and a robust Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) process that identifies areas for improvement and develops action plans to carry out those improvements. We continued our relationship with the Medical College of Wisconsin and our Medical Director, Dr. Tom Grawey, to help ensure that all of our EMS training is of the highest quality and we are on the cutting edge of EMS practices.

KFD EMS is one of the largest and busiest systems in the state of Wisconsin and continues to enjoy an excellent reputation. The EMS Division currently partners with Kenosha County Public Health to address the opioid epidemic in our city via the KORI Team (Kenosha Opioid Response Initiative). In 2023, the 33 members of the team visited over 85 people whose lives have been affected by opioids and connected them with valuable resources. We also collaborate with the ADRC (Aging Disability Resource Center) to connect those that suffer a fall with specialized resources. In 2023, the KFD referred 281 citizens who received no-cost assistance from the ADRC. The KFD continues to actively seek additional areas for partnering with outside entities to bring added value and service to the citizens and visitors of Kenosha.



# MOST COMMON EMS CALLS





# OPERATIONS



2023 realized all the hard planning and work that went into establishing the Tactical Emergency Medical Support (TEMS) team. The team was immediately called upon by the Kenosha Police Department (KPD) and has continued to be an integral part of the joint response to high-risk situations throughout the city.

Two new Automatic Response Aid (ARAs) agreements were created to help improve our response efforts along I94 and the far northwest corner of the city. Both the Village of Somers and the Village of Pleasant Prairie have agreed to assist KFD with calls for service on the interstate. Limited access points to the interstate was the rationale behind this agreement. The town of Paris has agreed to send a first responder med unit to calls that occur in the far northwest corner of the city. Their station location allows them to arrive on scene and begin any patient treatment prior to the arrival of KFD crews.

Whether it is working closely with KPD or our neighbors to the north and south, operationally, the Kenosha Fire Department continues to find ways to improve and provide the best possible services to the citizens and visitors of Kenosha.



# UNMANNED AERIAL AIRCRAFT (DRONES)

In spring of 2023, the Kenosha Fire Department took delivery of three state of the art DJI M30T drones. Each drone is equipped with cutting edge technology. With the addition of the drones, the level of service the fire department is able to provide the citizens of Kenosha has increased.

The Department utilizes the drones at structure fires, water rescue/missing persons, fire investigations, and on the training ground. The drones are currently kept on Battalion 1, Car 6 (Safety Officer), and in the Fire Prevention Bureau. Currently, the department has four Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) certified drone pilots who are licensed to operate the drones.



All the drones are fully equipped with a thermal, wide-angle, and high resolution optical camera. They also have the ability to record video. A laser rangefinder and speaker/spotlight are installed on each drone as well.

One drone was purchased using city funds. The two other drones were purchased with donated funds. The local chapter of the AFL-CIO was instrumental in securing donations from individuals and businesses throughout the community. A special thank you to those who coordinated the fundraising initiative from the onset and donated.





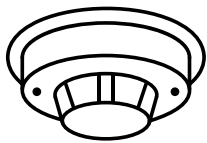
# DIVISION OF FIRE PREVENTION

The Fire Prevention Bureau (FPB) is staffed with two personnel, led by Division Chief Jake Waldschmidt. The primary function of the FPB consists of overseeing department-wide fire inspections, fire investigations, public safety education, and public information.

Fire department members perform inspections of existing buildings, along with inspecting new construction projects from the concept review to final occupancy. Kenosha Fire Department inspectors performed over 7,100 inspections of multi-family, commercial, and industrial buildings. The FPB ensures proper installation and maintenance of all life safety systems, including fire alarms and suppression systems.



162 Plan Reviews



21 Smoke  
Detector Installs

The FPB is charged with conducting fire investigations. The FPB conducted over 60 fire investigations in 2023. The FPB began instructing line personnel on how to conduct a proper investigation, so company officers are able to complete a fire investigation that meets the NFPA 921 Guideline.

The FPB also provides fire and life safety education and outreach programs. In 2023, the Fire Safety House program was restarted after a hiatus due to the COVID pandemic. The Fire Safety House visited 19 schools and educated over 2,300 students on fire safety. Crews also got out to the schools and gave fire safety presentations, fire truck demonstrations, and talks on how to be safe in the home.

99 Special Event Reviews  
92,625 Attendees

33 Station Tours  
354 Attendees

15 Public Education Events





PRIDE | DEDICATION | COURAGE

