



ANNUAL REPORT

2021



Chief's Letter



BLUFFTON TOWNSHIP FIRE DISTRICT

357 FORDING ISLAND ROAD
OKATIE, SOUTH CAROLINA 29909



To All Citizens and Visitors of the Bluffton Township Fire District,

I am pleased to present this report on the activities of the Bluffton Township Fire District for the year ending December 31, 2021. The service area protected by the District continues to see rapid residential, commercial and population growth. To meet the demands created by the growth, the District continues to add staff, facilities, and equipment. At the end of 2021, the department had 9 full-time staffed fire stations and 151 personnel. The operating budget for FY2021 was \$15,964,382.

During 2021 the men and women of the District continued to battle through the COVID-19 pandemic to provide the best quality care to our citizens. I am exceptionally proud of the effort our personnel have put forth under some of the most difficult of conditions. At the same time personnel have worked diligently to address several key components of the District's 2018 – 2023 Strategic Plan making headway on many projects.

Coming out of the pandemic into 2022, the District is looking forward to expanding the current Sun City fire station to accommodate additional personnel and services. This project is funded by fire impact fees and is scheduled to be complete by the end of 2022. The District will also begin the process of updating and re-writing its ten (10) year capital improvements (CIP) plan as well as its Strategic Plan ahead of the end of 2023.

It is an honor and a pleasure to serve the community as your fire chief.

Respectfully submitted,

John W. Thompson, Jr.
Fire Chief

Mission

The Bluffton Township Fire District's mission is to efficiently protect the lives and property of our community in a kind and professional manner.

Vision

is to be widely known as an internationally accredited fire district that protects the lives and property of our community in a kind and professional manner.

Because we care, we will prove our leadership through bolstered work in community risk reduction and emergency management, reducing hazards and building protections within the district. We will always strive to show we are progressive through our enhancements in EMS and special operations for the betterment of those we serve.

To personify respect and dedication, we will invest in our great assets, our members. By strengthening our workforce planning, we will be ever ready now and, in the future, to answer the call. We will communicate more effectively to ensure the continuity of our messages to unify us further. This will be rounded out by our research and investment into technology that will help us all perform more efficiently.

Furthering our desire to demonstrate that we value trust internally and externally, we will strive to maintain our current infrastructure, while developing strategies for growth that are performance-based and fiscally responsible.

Dedicated to continuous improvement and the pursuit of excellence organizationally and personally, we will always remember our past and embrace our futurity by holding each other accountable for fulfilling our mission, living our values, accomplishing our goals, and bringing this vision to fruition.



Making History: International Accreditation

The Bluffton Township Fire District was unanimously accredited through the Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI) for the first time in October 2020. Accreditation is a continuous improvement model that uses quantitative analysis to identify gaps in performance. The District is dedicated to the CFAI improvement model, and it is committed to improving the services it provides to its community stakeholders.



The Accreditation model is a self-assessment and evaluation improvement model that focuses on a comprehensive examination of all characteristics of the District to understand its performance. The process uses community-focused, data-driven, and outcome-based results to identify gaps in performance. The process typically takes three to five years to complete. Accreditation status is recognized as a measure of excellence within the fire service.

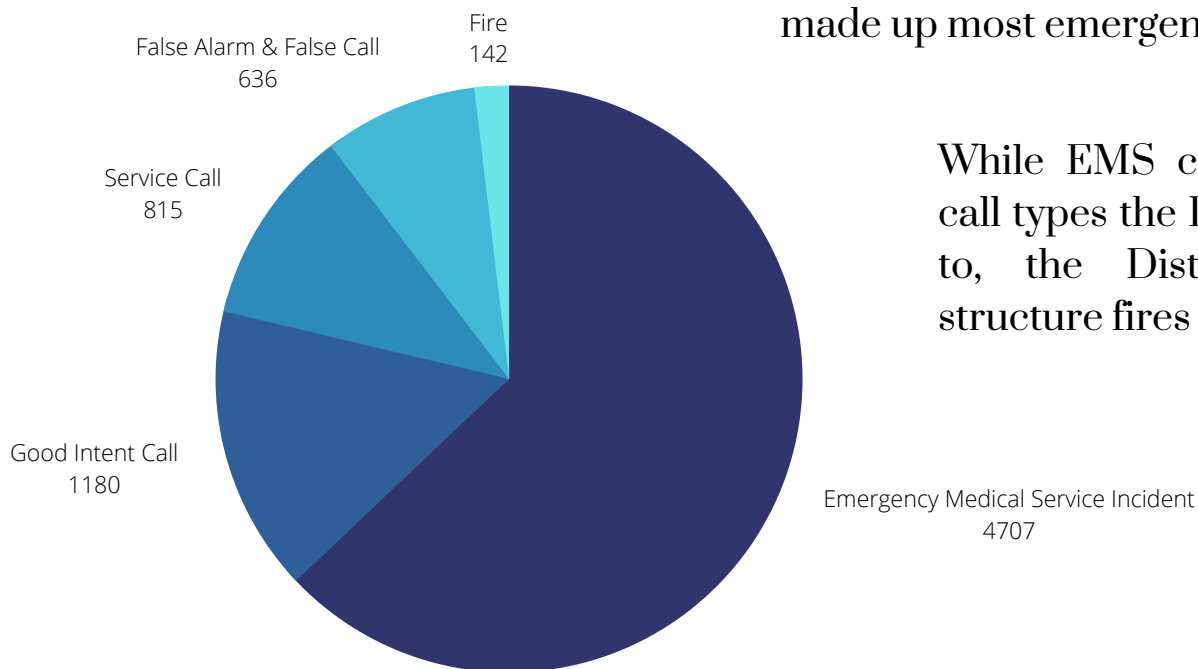
2021 By The Numbers

Bluffton Township Fire District has grown from three volunteer fire stations in 1978 to nine (9) fire stations with 151 line personnel and 24 administrative staff. The area the District protects is 246 square miles with a population of 62,914.

The District provides four core services to the stakeholders of Bluffton; fire suppression, emergency medical service (EMS), technical rescue, and hazardous materials.

The District responded to 8,815 incidents in 2021. That is an increase of 16.1% from 2020 and 43.1% from 2018.

Incidents By Call Type



Though the District responded to over seven thousand calls, EMS incidents made up most emergency calls with 63%.

While EMS calls are the most call types the District responded to, the District ran to 47 structure fires in 2021.



DailyDeployment

There are nine stations located throughout the District to provide maximum coverage. Eight stations deploy, at a minimum, one engine with three highly trained personnel to respond to all emergencies.

In addition to these eight stations, the District's headquarters station, Station 35, deploys at a minimum one truck, one rescue, one engine, and one battalion with ten specialized personnel and physical resources to respond district-wide for all emergencies that require special equipment and expertise.

2-Battalions: Battalion vehicle: This is a command vehicle where it carries specific equipment to help manage an emergent scene. The Battalion has two personnel assigned.



8-Engine Companies: Fire engines are apparatuses that carry a certain amount of water, fire hoses of different sizes, ground ladders, equipment, and a water pump. There are three personnel assigned to this apparatus.

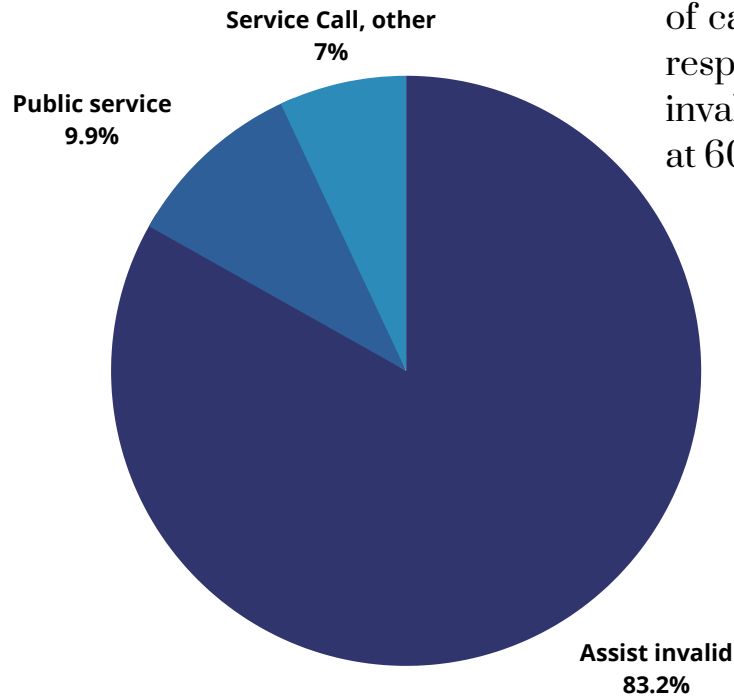
1-Ladder (Truck) Company : Truck (Platform) apparatus are similar to quints in that they both have hydraulic ladders, but the truck does not have a water pump and a platform to work from within. Instead, the truck is assisted by an engine that supplies the truck with the water needed to fight the fire. There are four personnel assigned to this apparatus.

1-Quint: Quints get their name because they serve five functions: 1. They carry water. 2. they carry fire hoses of different sizes. 3. They have a hydraulic ladder that extends to a certain height. 4. They carry ground ladders, and 5. They have a water pump. There are three personnel assigned to this apparatus.

1-Rescue: Rescue: The Rescue is a specialized piece of apparatus that carries with it a variety of rescue equipment. The Rescue does not have fire hose or a water pump. The Rescue is crossed staffed with Truck personnel.



Service Calls: Breakdown

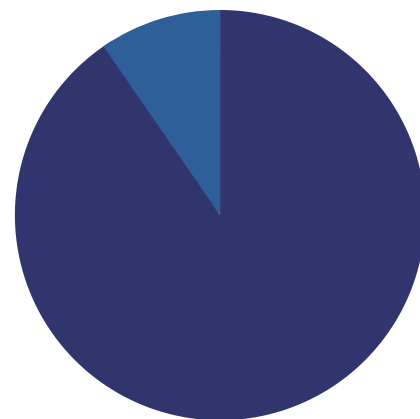


Service calls are an excellent example of non-emergency incidents that the fire District responds to most often. Though these types of calls are non-emergent, they still require a response. The pie chart shows that assist invalid calls make up most of these incidents at 607, or 83%.



Good Intent Calls: Breakdown

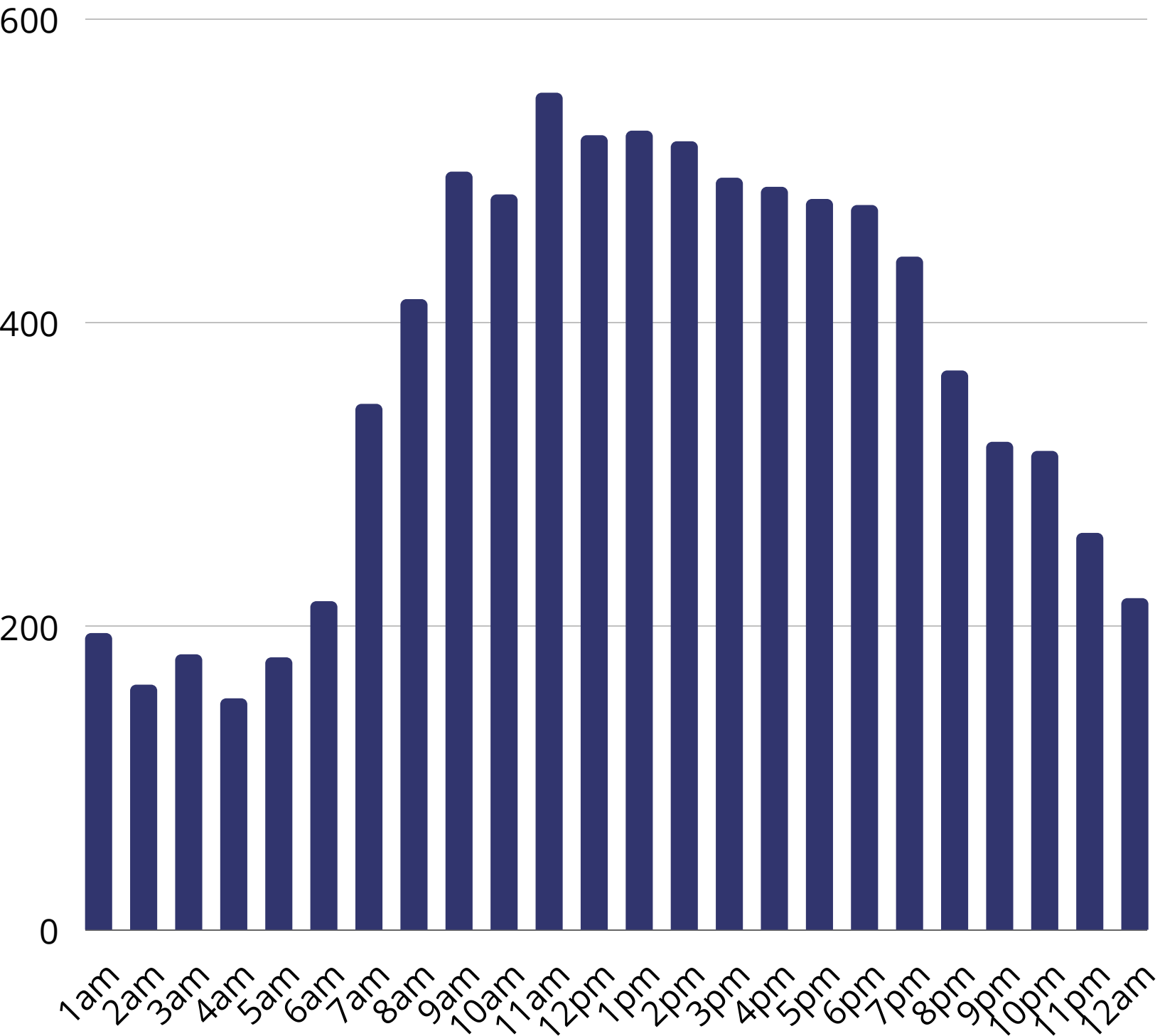
**No incident found on arrival at dispatched address
9.6%**



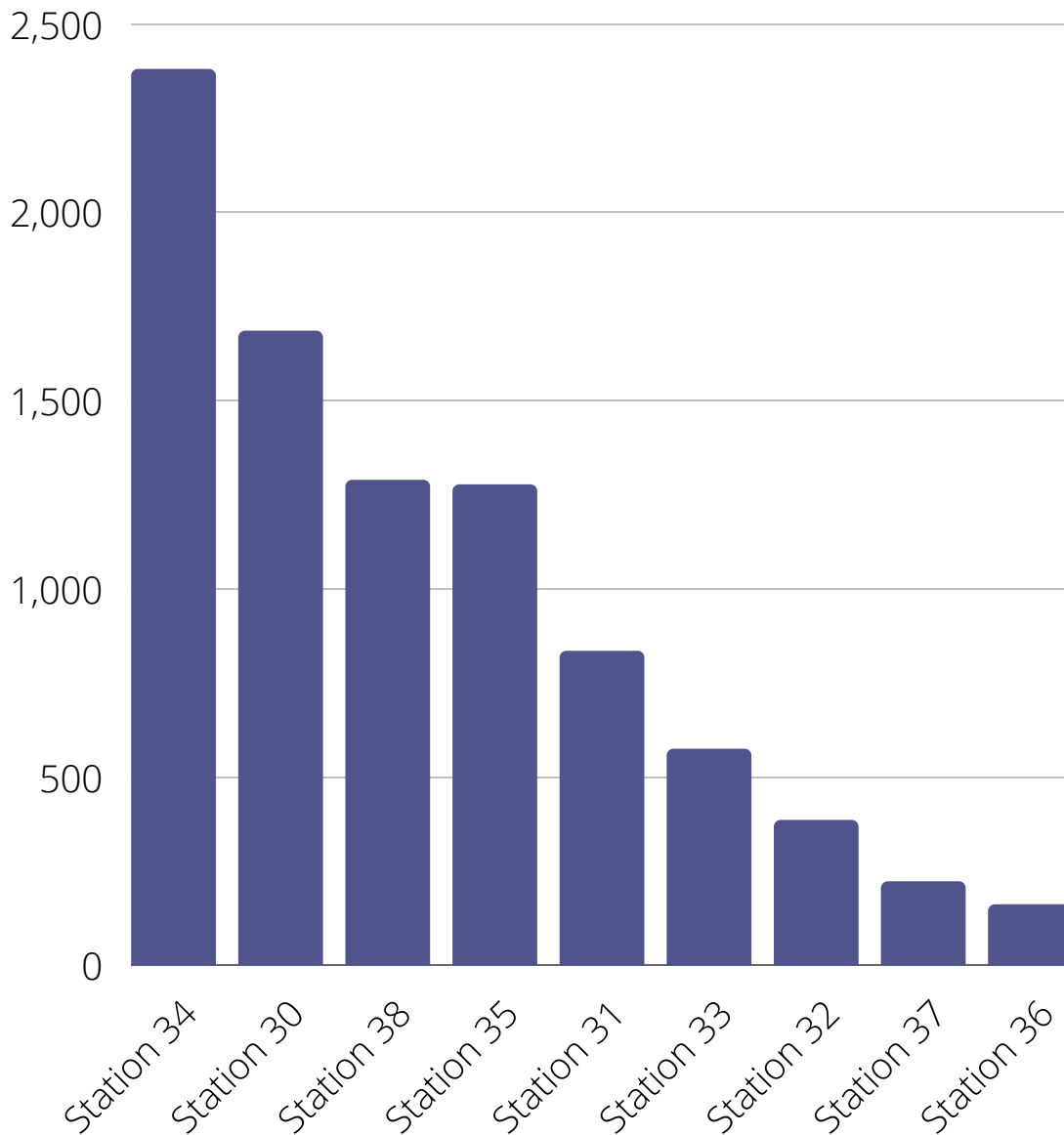
Good Intent Call Type: These are emergent calls the District responds to but are canceled before their arrival. This happens in part because the District is a non-transport agency. Comparatively, Beaufort County EMS is the only transport service for the county, excluding Hilton Head Island, and is stationed at four (4) of the District's stations, where they arrive on the scene first and do not need assistance from the District.

**Dispatched & canceled en route
90.4%**

By Hour of Day: All Calls



Call Volume by Station



The top three busiest stations in the District.

The busiest station in 2021 is station 34, the Sun City station with 2,379. The second busiest station is station 30 on Burnt Church Rd, with 1,684; the third busiest station is station 38, the District's newest station located on Hampton Parkway, with 1,288.

On-Going Projects

- Since the District successfully earned its international accreditation status, it has successfully submitted its first annual compliance report to the CFAI.
- The Sun City fire station (Station 34) renovation project was awarded a contract and is due to start in mid-2022.
- The Sun City POA has voted to pass the proposed new station 39 property. This will help the District with the concentration and distribution of physical and human resources. This new station will have a more significant impact on reducing response time in the northwest portion of Sun City.
- COVID-19 and the following variants have affected 62 firefighters in the past year. Most of the firefighters recovered without hospital intervention; however, two firefighters had to be admitted but have fully recovered. The CDC has also recognized that the virus is now an endemic state.
- While the impact of COVID-19 and its variants did affect the District, the District was able to provide limited services in community risk reduction. Some programs were open to the public on and off throughout the 2021 reporting year. 63 car seat checks, 359 CPR classes, and 42 smoke alarm checks were completed.

Completed Projects

- The IT division has successfully replaced and implemented new hardware and software, completing the upgrade to the network security.
- Station 32 (Callawasia area) renovation was completed and was dedicated in late October. With station 31 (Pritchard area) the new location, the District will improve its response time for the growing area it serves, which will improve patient care and treatment.



Financial Snapshot

The District's fiscal year is from July 1st to June 30th. As of January 1st, 2022, the district is at 50 percent of the current fiscal year (FY) 2021/2022. The total expenditures for year-to-date are at 51.16 percent of \$16,761,722.

- The Operations division is 52.77% of its budget.
- The Administrative division is 48.51% of its budget
- The Training division is 40.26% of its budget
- The Fire Prevention division is 41.98% of its budget.
- The Maintenance division is 42.28% of its budget.

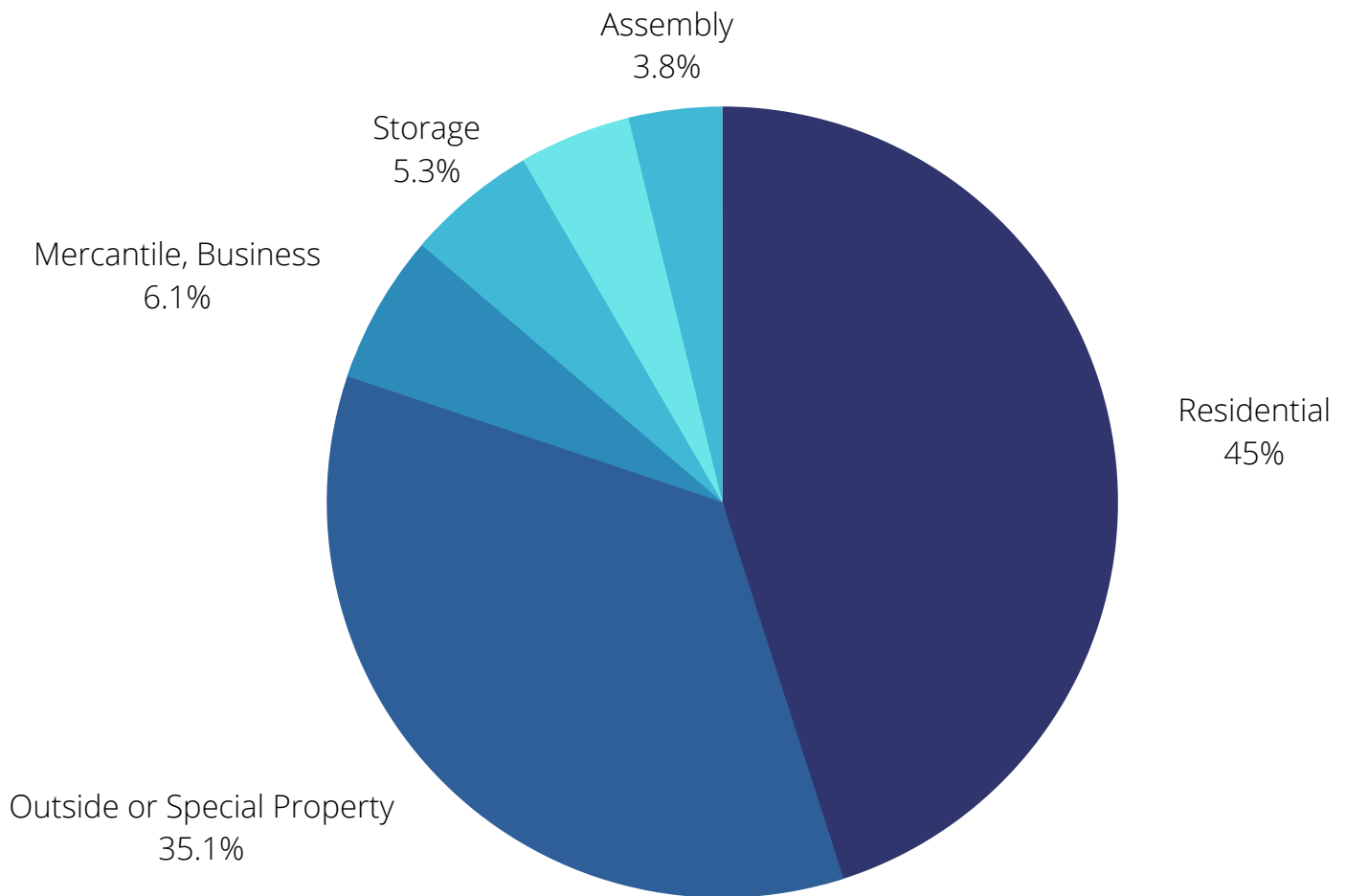


Fire Suppression

	Fires Non-structure	Structure Fires	Fatalites
2021	92	47	
2020	94	40	
2019	97	43	2

NFIRS Non-Structure Fires 115-118, 131-138, 141-143, 151-155, 161-164, 171-173

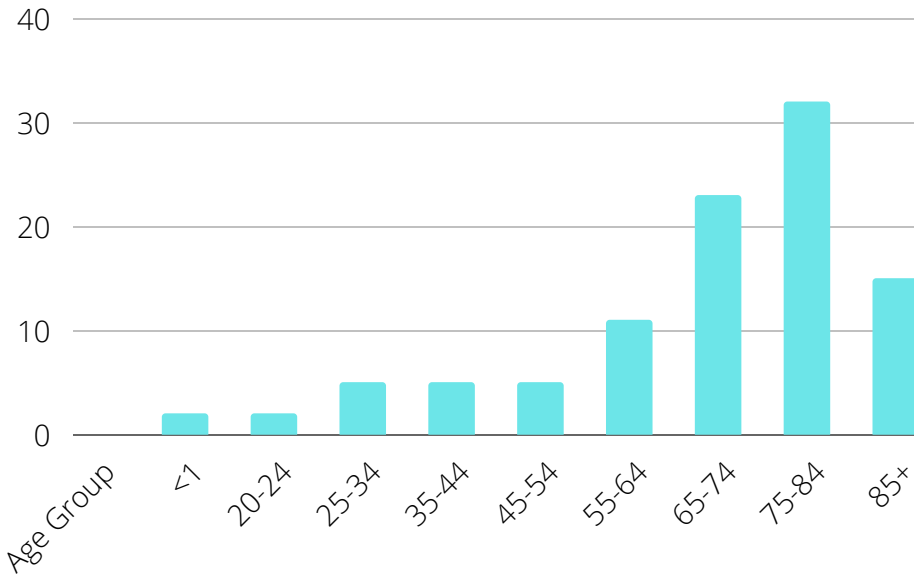
NFIRS Structure Fires 111-114, 121,123



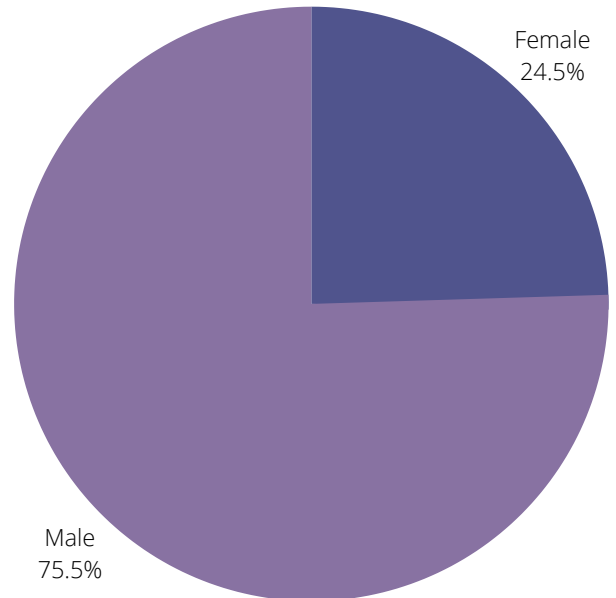
Cardiac Arrest



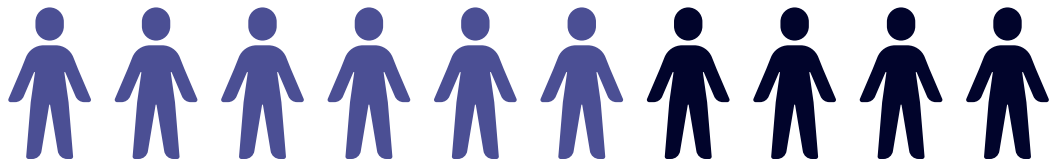
The District responded to a total of 102 cardiac arrests in 2021. The peak age with the most events is between 75 and 84. Research has shown that the more personnel can provide effective CPR, the higher the survivability. For the District to provide the most effective CPR, the District changed its deployment model from one engine response in 2020 to two (2) engines and a battalion for a total effective response force (ERF) of eight personnel. The change came due to an analysis of the EMS risk assessment.



Moreover, the District provides a very successful public CPR program, where stakeholders can learn about CPR, Automatic External Defibrillator (AED), and

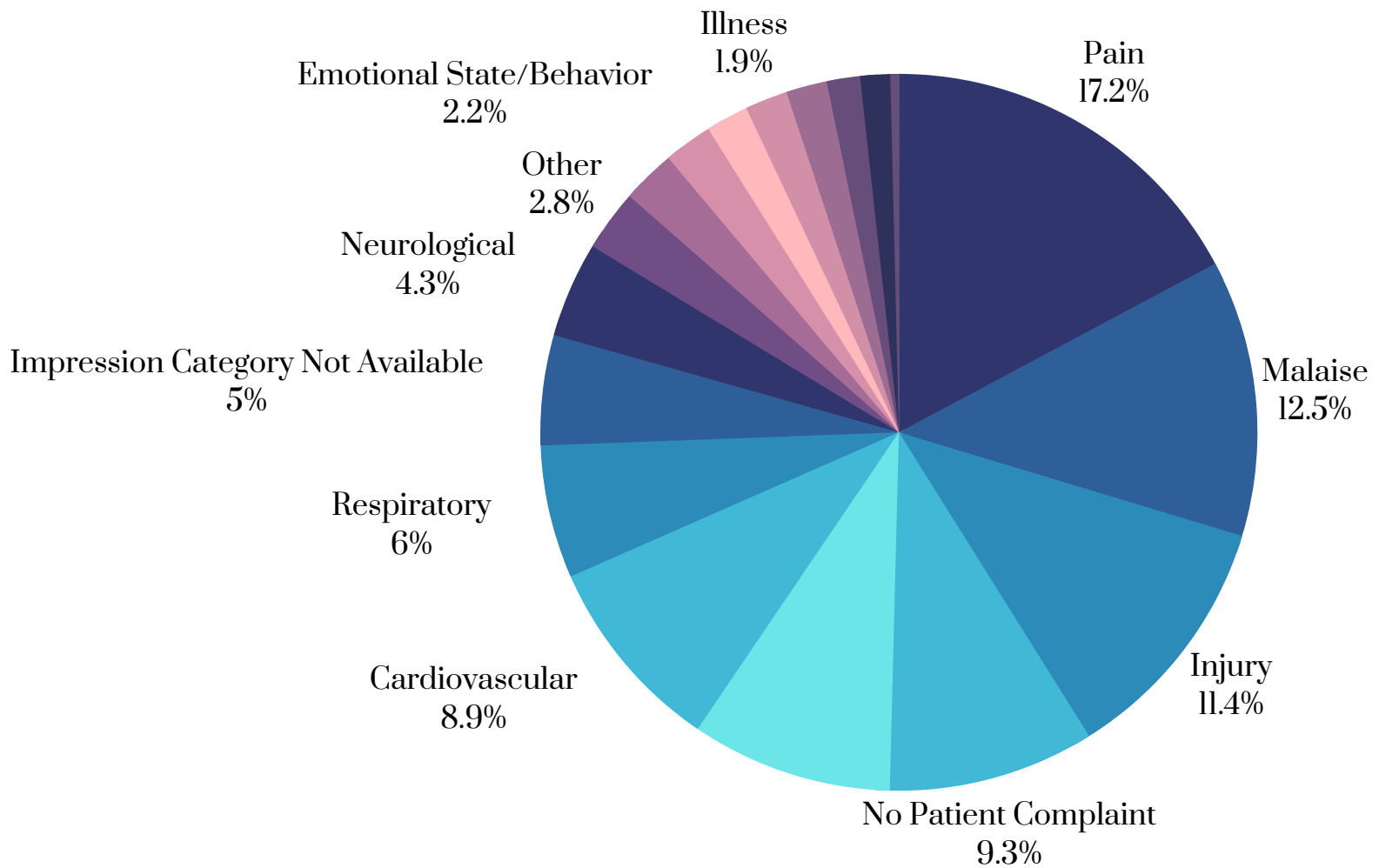


CPR



Emergency Medical Service

Call type by Primary Impression



2021 Promotions

Amanda Cazenave Administrative Assistant II

Paul Harrelson Training Officer II

Rhett Livingston Battalion Chief - Accreditation

Jayne Beach Battalion Chief - Operations

Derek Church Deputy Chief - Operations

Veronica Gutierrez Lieutenant- Community Risk Reduction

Luis Aponte Firefighter II

Timber Hexamer Firefighter II

Cody Beach Firefighter II

Seth Hunter Firefighter II

Toby Bonsall Firefighter II

Brandon Morgan Firefighter II

Justin Bowers Firefighter II

Travis Pedlar Firefighter II

Nicholas Feiler Firefighter II

Nicklas Pona Firefighter II

2021 Promotions continued

Collin Roach Firefighter II	Jacob Lemus Firefighter III
Colby Wagner Firefighter II	Matt Ortiz Firefighter III
Charlie Campbell Firefighter III	Mara Prosolow Firefighter III
Jason Carle Firefighter III	Andrew Redhead Firefighter III
Wes Crum Firefighter III	Scott Smith Firefighter III
Barry Descaro Firefighter III	Jeremy Eby Firefighter IV - Driver
Blake Drew Firefighter IV - Special Ops	Jason Williams Firefighter IV - Driver
Kevin Etheredge Firefighter III	Guillermo Holzmann Firefighter IV - Leadership
Daniel Heslin Firefighter III	Joe Helms IT Manager
William Taylor Horton Firefighter III	Travis Boulware Lieutenant
Craig Hysell Firefighter III	Jacob Hartley Lieutenant