



GEARHART FIRE DEPT

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2024 End of Year Report



About

The Gearhart Volunteer Fire Department was formed in 1906. We are a combination Department serving both the City of Gearhart and Gearhart Rural Fire Protection District, spanning approximately 29 square miles. Gearhart Fire additionally holds automatic and mutual aid agreements with every agency in Clatsop County, spanning from Knappa Fire District to Elsie Vinemapple Fire & Rescue and the Oregon State Fire Marshal.

Our Mission

Gearhart Fire is committed to serving the Gearhart Fire Protection area and neighboring communities with the highest level of life and property protection. We achieve this by providing excellent and compassionate service in an atmosphere that encourages innovation, professional development, and diversity. We strive for excellence, respect, trust, support and honor both internal and external. Our members are our most valuable assets.

Organizational Function

The Gearhart Fire Department is governed by a 5-member elected City Council as well as 4-member elected District Board of Directors. The District Board governs as its own legal entity and contracts services to the City of Gearhart for emergency services response. The Fire Chief of the Gearhart Fire Department serves as both the Department head of the City of Gearhart Fire Department and the Gearhart Rural Fire Protection District. The Chief is responsible for personnel management and delegating the supervision of all other paid and volunteer staff. Under the current organizational structure, the Fire Chief delegates authority through a Division Chief in charge of Operations, Training, and Fire Marshal. A number of other duties are delegated through positions consisting of a Assistant Chief, Captain, Lieutenant, Safety Officer, and two AIC (Acting in Capacity) Lieutenants.

The Gearhart Fire Department consists of two fire stations. Station 2900 (670 Pacific Way) is located on the south side of the district, on Pacific Way. The second station is 2900A (33496 West Lake Rd) and is at the intersection of Westlake Ln & Highway 101. The stations encompass a maximum roster of 35 volunteers with two paid staff. Currently the department includes 1 Fire Chief, 1 Division Chief, 1 Volunteer Assistant Chief, 1 Volunteer Captain, 1 Volunteer Safety Officer, 3 Volunteer Lieutenants, 1 Volunteer Public Information Officer, 1 Volunteer Acting-In-Capacity (AIC) Lieutenant, 2 Intern Firefighters, 13 Volunteer Firefighters, and 2 Volunteer Support Firefighters.

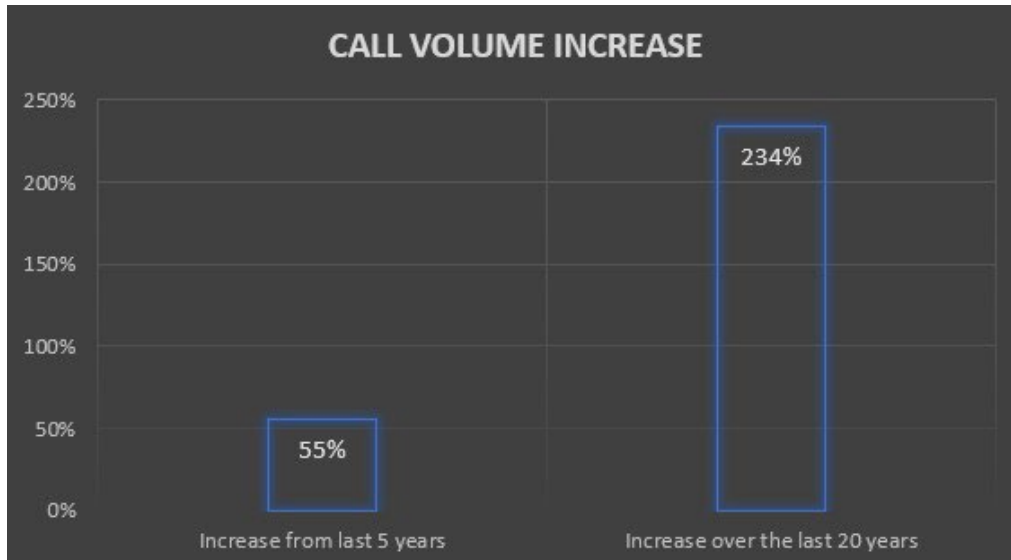
Volunteer firefighters perform the exact same duties as career firefighters, facing the same dangers, challenges, and responsibilities in protecting their communities. They respond to fires, medical emergencies, technical rescues, and hazardous incidents with the same level of training, professionalism, and dedication, making them just as essential in emergency response. The only difference is that volunteers do it without receiving a salary, often balancing their firefighting duties with other careers, families, and personal commitments. Their commitment and skillset are above a career firefighter, as they do it in their spare time.

Volunteer firefighters are the backbone of many communities, providing essential emergency response services while saving taxpayers millions of dollars annually. These dedicated individuals risk their lives to protect homes, businesses, and natural areas, often responding at a moment's notice. Their presence ensures faster response times in rural and small-town areas where paid departments may be limited. Beyond firefighting, they contribute to public safety through medical aid, disaster relief, and fire prevention education. By fostering a strong sense of community and civic duty, volunteer firefighters not only save lives and property but also strengthen the very fabric of the communities they serve.

Gearhart City Council	Gearhart Fire Organizational Chart		Gearhart Rural Fire Protection District Board
	Fire Chief Josh Como Firefighter since 1997		
	Division Chief Adrienne Park Firefighter since 2007		Firefighter/P.I.O. Laura Harrell Firefighter since 2022
	Assistant Chief Randy Como Firefighter since 1988		
Safety Officer Randy Bowers Firefighter since 2018			Captain Chad Sweet Firefighter since 1997
Lieutenant Tony Como Firefighter since 2002	Lieutenant Rob Brooks Firefighter since 1997		Lieutenant Cesar Alcala Firefighter since 2014
	AIC Lieutenant Mike LaLonde Firefighter since 1988		
	Firefighter Charles Iverson Firefighter since 2004	Firefighter Rene Ortega Firefighter since 2014	Firefighter Jaeden Brown Firefighter since 2016
	Firefighter James Schneider Firefighter since 2017	Firefighter Lindsey Wolfe Firefighter since 2017	Firefighter Tanner Rich Firefighter since 2018
	Firefighter Jake Brown Firefighter since 2019	Firefighter Chris Carter Firefighter since 2022	Probationary Firefighter Kori Brooks Firefighter since 2022
	Firefighter Jeremy Crawford Firefighter since 2023	Firefighter Rachel Barnes Firefighter since 2023	Firefighter Moses Ley Firefighter since 2024
	Probationary Firefighter Brandon Duffy Firefighter Since 2024	Intern/Firefighter Carson Bates Firefighter since 2023	Intern/Firefighter Chance McKeown Firefighter since 2023
	Support Firefighter Ron Britton Firefighter since 1976	Support Firefighter Tanner Como Firefighter since 2023	

Response (Calls)

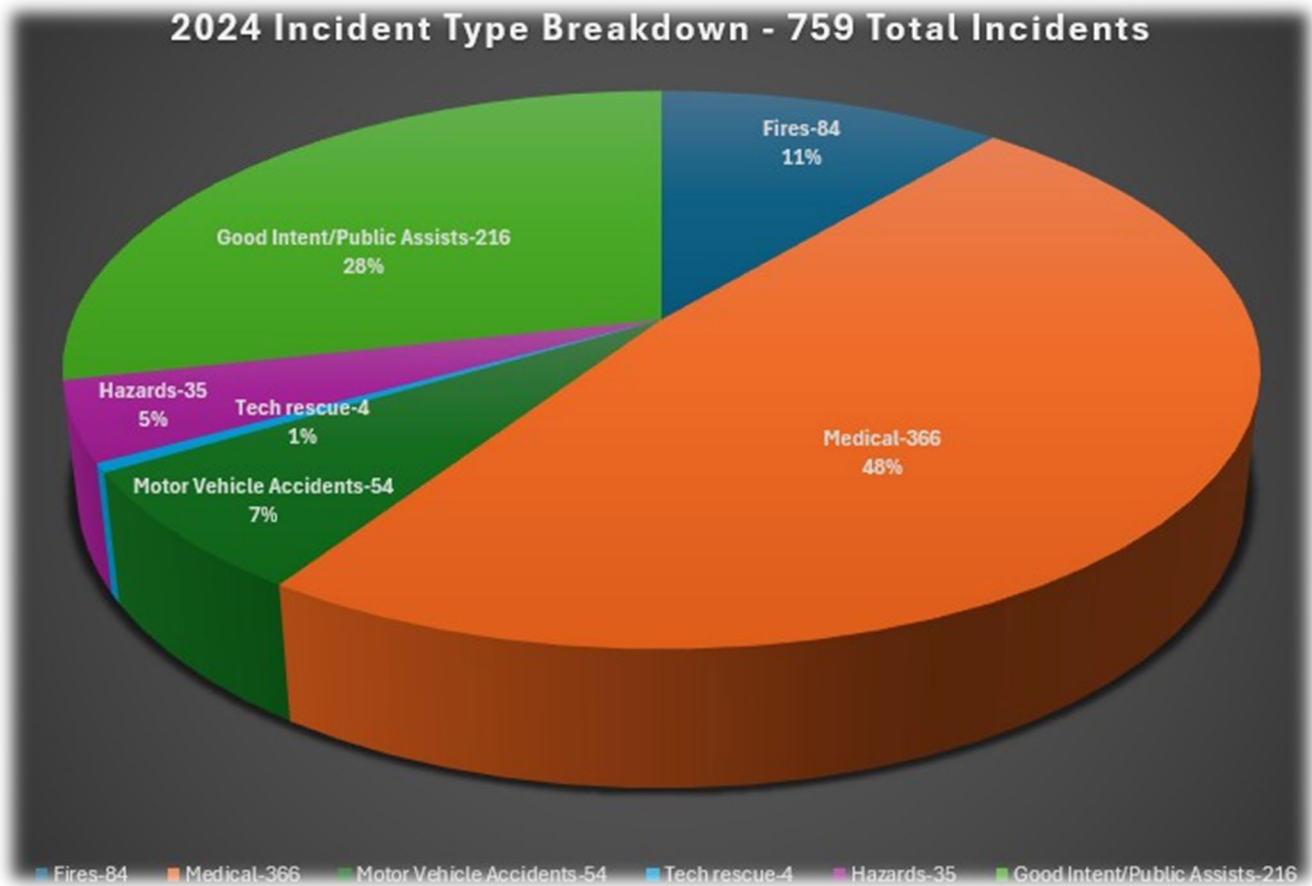
Our department responded to 759 calls in 2024 including fires, motor vehicle accidents, hazardous materials, and medical emergencies. This is an increase of 55% from the last 5 years and a 234% increase over the last 20 years.



This increase in call volume has certainly been a testament to the dedication of each of our volunteers. These calls come in during the day, night, weekends, holidays, often taking volunteers away from their homes and families to answer the call of others. It's important to note that although our roster may be decent, we do not see every one of these volunteers for every one of those calls. Sometimes we are fortunate to have an excess of help, and sometimes we are only responding with a limited number of firefighters on the engine. Through the increased volume of calls and shortage of volunteer availability, Gearhart Fire has always responded to calls within its service area which includes an on-duty fire officer.



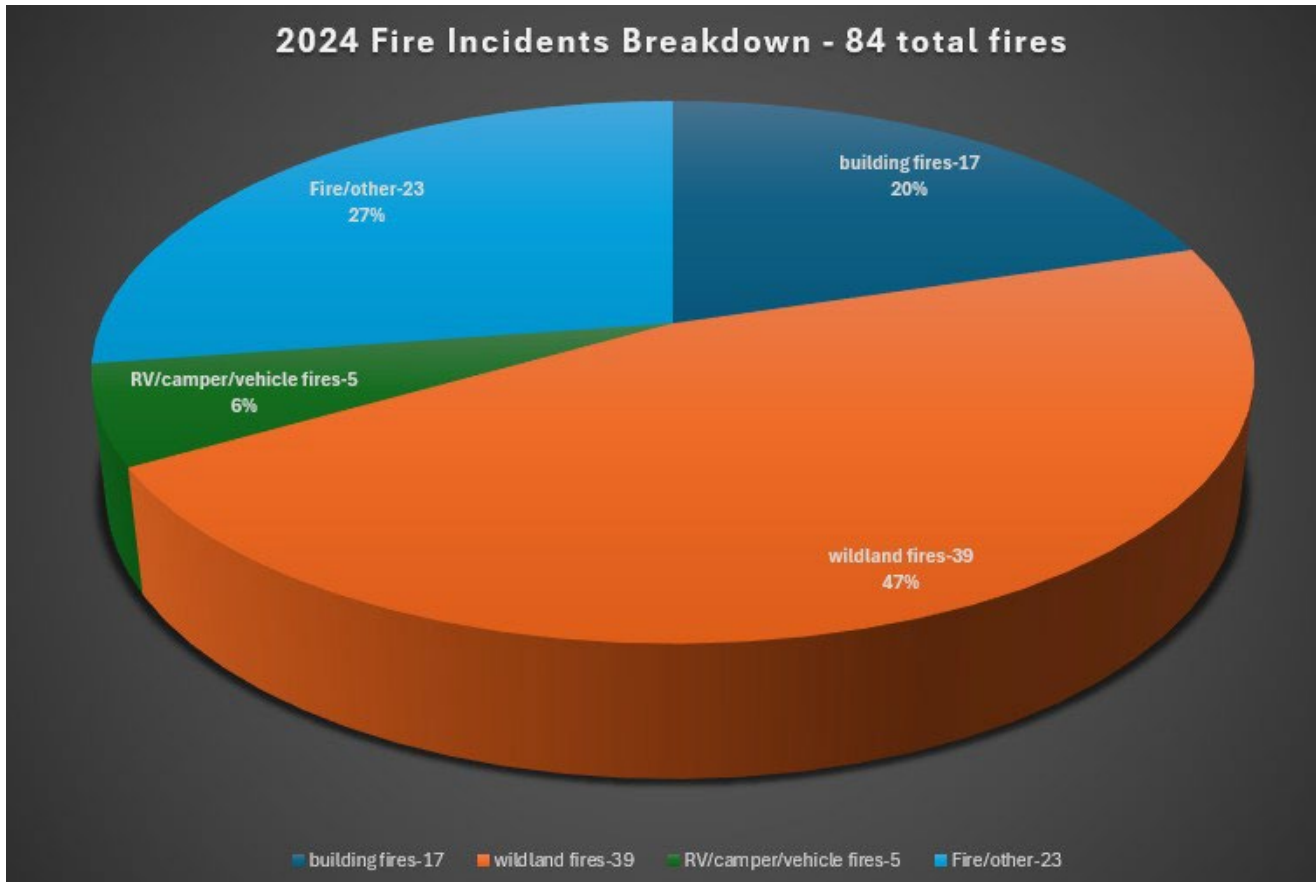
Response Breakdown



In 2024 Gearhart Fire responded to a total of 759 calls for service, broken down into:

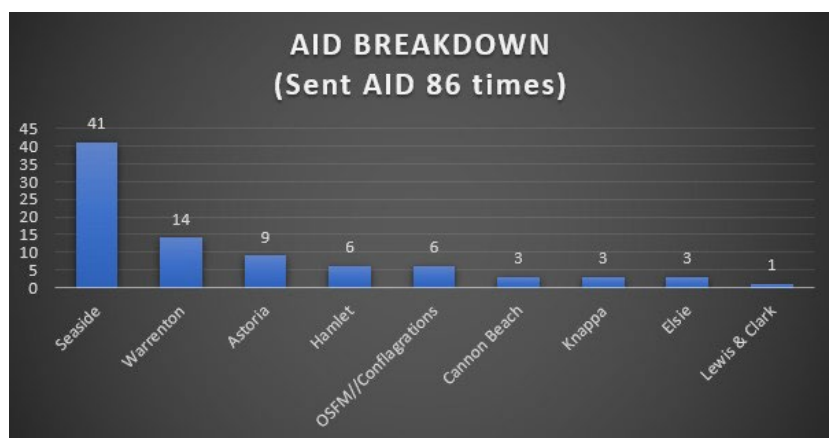
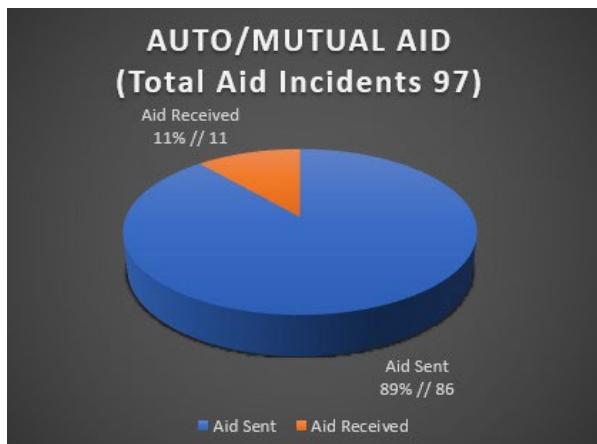
- 48% - Medical related
- 28% - Public Assist
- 11% - Fire (fire breakdown on separate graph)
- 7% - Motor Vehicle Accident related
- 5% - Hazards
- 1% - Technical Rescue related

Fire Incident Breakdown



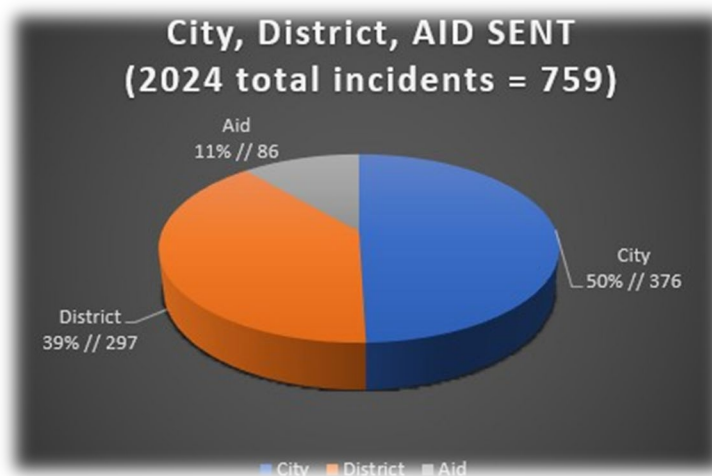
47% - Wildland Fires
27% - "Other Fires" (EG. Camp fires, beach bon fires, unauthorized burning)
20% - Building Fires
6% - Mobile Property Fires

Automatic and/or Mutual Aid

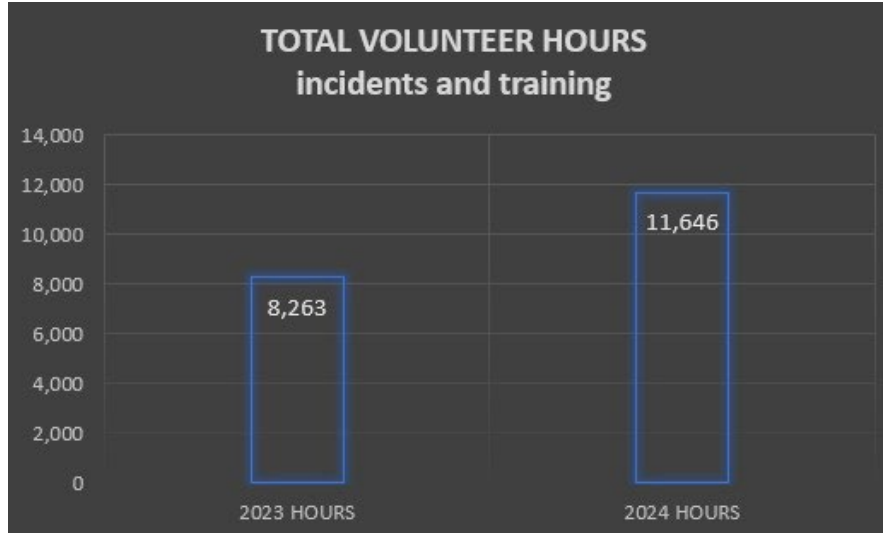


Gearhart Fire holds necessary mutual aid agreements with every department in the County to provide life and/or property-saving resources in critical times of need. We additionally sent aid statewide under the umbrella of the Oregon State Fire Marshal. Though this graph depicts aid sent out of our response area, note that it is to those agencies who will return aid to us when needed. Mutual-Aid-Agreements are a common cornerstone of emergency response agencies around the United States, with our initial County-wide Mutual-Aid-Agreement originating circa 1960.

Response to The City vs The District



Volunteer Hours



There was a 41% increase in hours over last year. This is due to incidents with more complex scenes, extended times for coverage, investigation, time to return apparatus to service, and training hours.

Training

2023

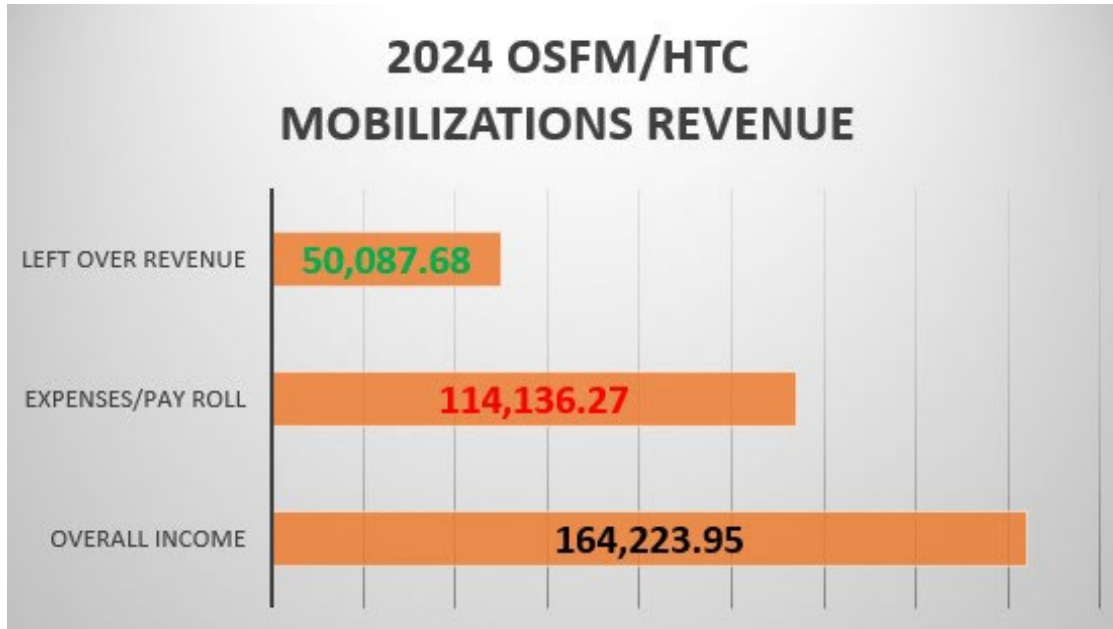
2024

2,867 Hours

6,389 Hours

Our training hours saw an increase in the overall rise in total hours from last year. Despite responding to 15 more incidents in 2024 than in 2023, our incident time decreased while our training hours increased. This reflects our commitment to improving efficiency and effectiveness. Our goal remains to provide swift, skilled responses to those in need during their most challenging moments.

Mobilization Revenue



Annual mobilizations provide numerous benefits to our agency, enhancing our capabilities both locally and Statewide. These deployments offer invaluable hands-on experience that strengthens our firefighters' skills when responding to emergencies at home. They also foster strong Regional and Statewide relationships, ensuring seamless collaboration with partner agencies.

Participation in the Statewide Mutual-Aid system is crucial—not only do we assist other communities in times of need, but we also rely on that same support when faced with major incidents in our own jurisdiction. As a State-recognized emergency response resource (we are a government agency in the State of Oregon/we are the Governor's resource), we play a vital role in Oregon's disaster response efforts.

Additionally, the Oregon State Fire Marshal (OSFM) has invested heavily in our agency, providing hundreds of thousands of dollars in grants and equipment to enhance our operational readiness. As demonstrated in the graph above, mobilizations also generate significant revenue for our agency, helping sustain and improve our department while benefiting our personnel through funding and experience.

Insurance Service Office (ISO) ISO rating. (Further details in separate files on website)

Insurance Service Office (ISO) is an independent organization who conducts what is referred to as Public Protection Classification (PPC) survey and onsite review. Part of the review compares community risks to what the fire district can provide in fire suppression (e.g., putting out fires). The ISO PPC Program plays an important role in the underwriting for insurance companies. Most US independent insurers use PPC information as part of their decision-making when deciding insurance coverage and premium rates. PPC rates are on a scale from “1” to “10”, with “10” being no protection and “1” being the highest community protection possible. PPC rating occurs approximately every 10 years unless there is a significant change in the community, e.g., re-districting.

Gearhart Fire’s PPC rating is classified as a “3”. Our work to provide for upgraded apparatus, training/certification, documentation on inspections and in-house operations, better this rating. By holding a lower classification number, this, in part, improves the insurance rate for individuals inside our response area.

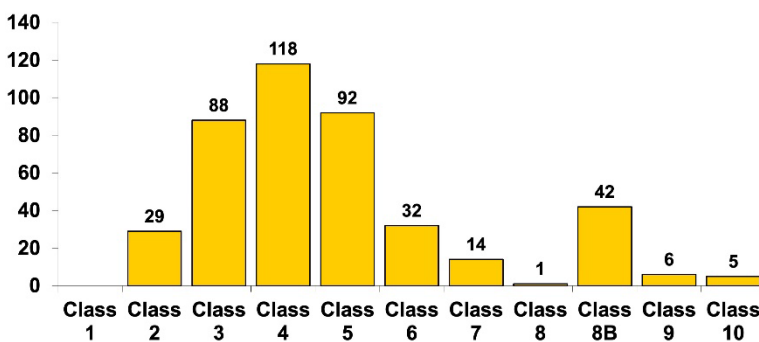
PPC points are given within the following categories: a) apparatus, b) staffing, c) water supply, d) training, and e) fire prevention.

Why Care about ISO?

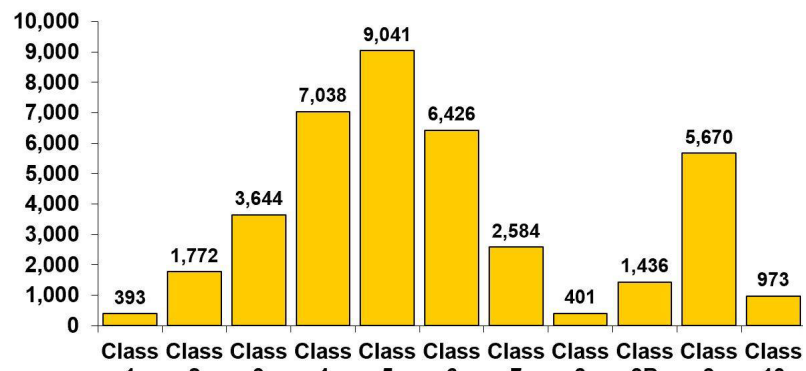
It is important for homeowners and commercial owners alike to realize that changes in a Department’s ISO can impact their insurance bills. The lower the score, the better their insurance rate.

The challenging goal is to maintain our “3” rating while working to lower it to a “2”, by addressing where we can advance, such as updating fire apparatus, maintaining hydrants for the City and District, documenting hydrant maintenance, fire inspections, and fire prevention pre-plans. The graphs below depict just how many departments currently hold a “3” rating. This is all in part to the work of our volunteers and staff!

Oregon



Countrywide



Apparatus List

APP #	Location	Year	Make/Description	Notes
2921	Main	2010	Type-1 // Pierce Fire Engine	
2923	Sub	1997	Type-1 // Spartain Fire Engine	replacement goal utalizing grants within the next 5 years
2935	Sub	2024	Rosenbaur Pumper Tactical Tender	GRANT from OSFM // co-owned City/OSFM
2972	Main	2006	Type-3 // Mercedes FireMog	
2976	Sub	2013	Type-6 // F-550 Brush truck	
2989	Main	2024	Type-7 // CanAm UTV	purchased with association fundraising and mobilization reimbursements
2951	Main	2001	Tech Rescue // F-550	
RWC-1	Main	2012	Rescue Water Craft // Kawasaki	purchased used from Nahalem (Association fundraising)
RWC-2	Main	2012	Rescue Water Craft // Kawasaki	purchased used from Nahalem (Association fundraising)
2961	Main	2008	Type-3 // Command F-250	Duty Officer Vehicle
2962		2007	Type-3 // Command GMC Yukon	Division Chief staff vehicle
2963		2018	Type-3 // Command Ram 1500	Fire Chief staff vehicle

2921

City Owned



2961

City Owned



2923

City Owned



2951

City Owned



2962

City Owned



2935

City/OSFM CO-Owned



2972

City Owned



2963

City Owned



2976

City Owned



2989

City Owned



RWC-1

City Owned



RWC-2

City Owned



