



ANNUAL REPORT 2022

Montgomery County Fire & Rescue Service

TABLE OF CONTENTS

A Message From The Chief	3
About MCFRS	4
Mission	4
Vision	4
Values	4
MCFRS Goals & Objectives	7
MCFRS Year in Review	9
2022	9
Achieved and maintained the highest degree of readiness	10
Optimized assets to ensure mission success	11
Minimized preventable deaths and injuries and their negative impact	13
Provided for the wellbeing of the workforce	16
Built and maintained relationships with internal and external partners	17
Implemented change to enhance performance	19
MCFRS Statistics and Response Times	20
FY24 Workplan	26
Farewell, Chief Goldstein!	32

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF

After two full years of the pandemic, things started to make a comeback in 2022. Daily call volume returned full steam and projects and change inside MCFRS were in full gear.

The annual report highlights a continued infusion of new apparatus, expansion of EMIHS functions, and big enhancements in FY23.

This report highlights the great work, effort, changes, and innovations each one of you took



I ask you to keep being safe, clean, supportive of each other, and ready to answer the residents' emergency and non-emergency needs.

Work on the revision of the department's master plan is in progress; the new plan must be completed and adopted by County Council by December 31, 2023. That plan will set the roadmap for the department for the next six years, 2024-2030.

In early May, the Center for Public Safety Excellence peer team assessment visit occurred. The team's recommendation is for MCFRS to be accredited again for the fourth time. The final decision will be made in late August 2023.

As we finalize this Annual Report, I made the announcement of my June 30, 2023, retirement. This decision is full of emotion, as 35 years with MCFRS comes to an end. I have too many people to thank by name and it's best to thank each of you for your commitment to the service, to the residents, and to each other. MCFRS will continue to evolve, to adapt to the community needs, and to provide an exceptional level of service.

We must remain focused on customer service - the customers are the residents of and visitors to Montgomery County - to those that need FRS service. Part of that focus is to:

- ✓ Treat all you interact with, work with, or come in contact with - with **RESPECT**.
- ✓ Ensure your conversations and actions are **RELEVANT** to fire rescue duties while on-duty.
- ✓ Be **PROFESSIONAL** in your actions.

Thank you, again, for your service and commitment to the department and to Montgomery County.

Scott Golda

Fire Chief



ABOUT MCFRS

The MCFRS is a combination career and volunteer all-hazards department providing a full complement of emergency medical services, fire suppression, technical rescue, hazardous materials response, swift water rescue, fire investigation, and fire and life safety resources and education. The MCFRS is comprised of approximately 1,250 career fire/medical personnel and 100 professional support staff, plus an additional 800 active local fire and rescue department (LFRD) fire/medical and 1,200 administrative/support personnel. The department operates from 47 work sites, 37 of which are fire and rescue stations, positioned to meet the emergency service needs of the residents, businesses, and visitors in Montgomery County.

Mission

The mission of the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service is to protect lives, property, and the environment with comprehensive risk reduction programs and safe and effective emergency response provided by highly skilled career and volunteer service providers representing the County's diverse population.

Vision

The vision of the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service is to enhance public safety and support quality of life through direct immersion in our communities, effectively blending outreach and education, and by leveraging our career and volunteer workforce to deliver exceptional services and improve our resiliency to meet increased challenges.

Values

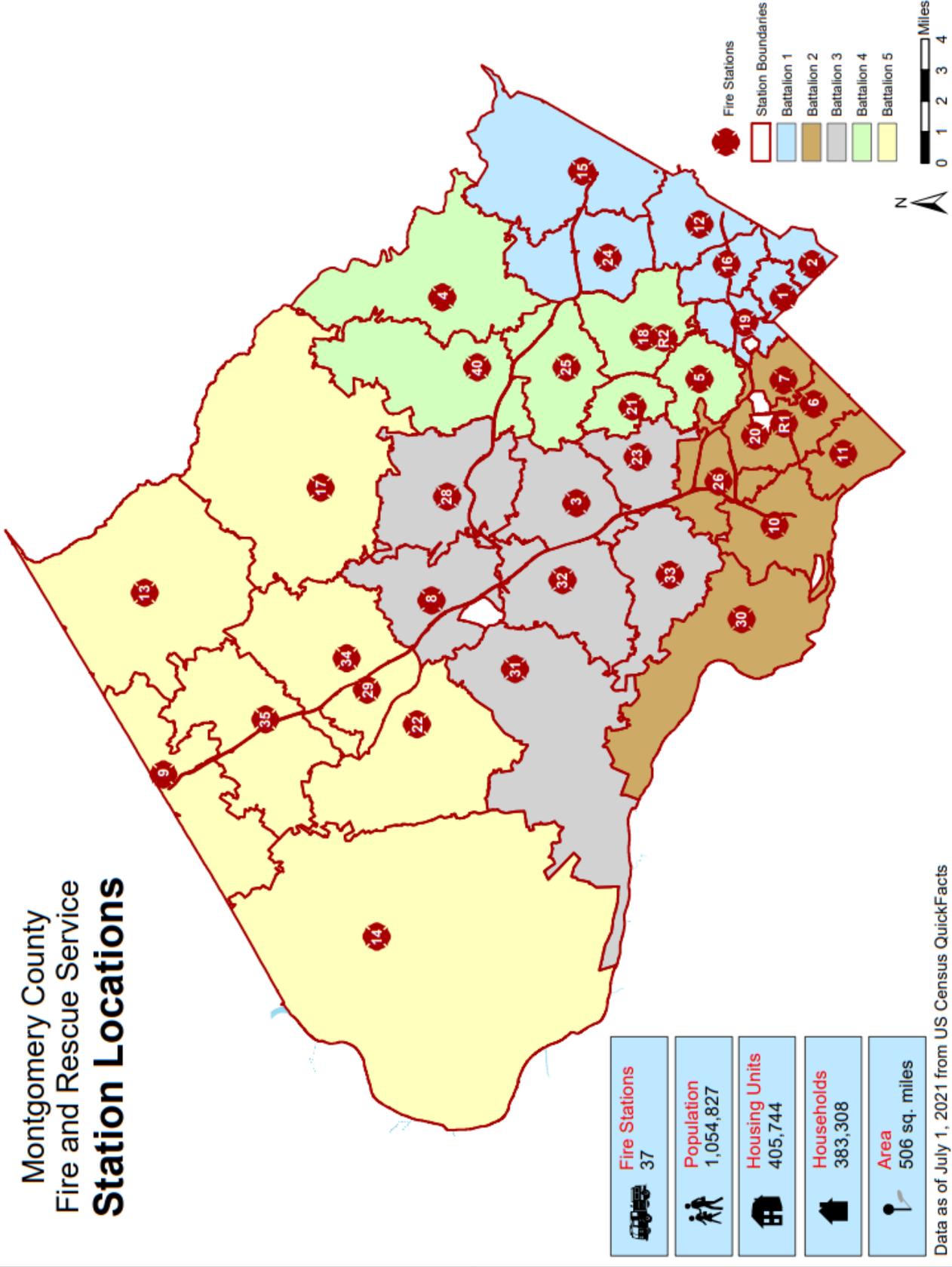
MCFRS providers are committed to the following principles:

- Deliver services to our customers with impartiality and excellence
- Promote the highest standards of safety and welfare
- Serve with integrity and mutual respect
- Recognize the importance of diversity of our workforce and communities
- Promote the efficient and effective utilization of our resources, and ensure that all organizations and personnel comprising the MCFRS share the responsibility for continuously improving their capabilities, effectiveness, and efficiency
- Be responsible for the honor of our profession and public service
- Promote equity and harmony among career and volunteer personnel
- Maintain and promote open honest communication, creativity, and competence
- Be accountable and ethical
- Continuously improve public confidence and trust





Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service Station Locations

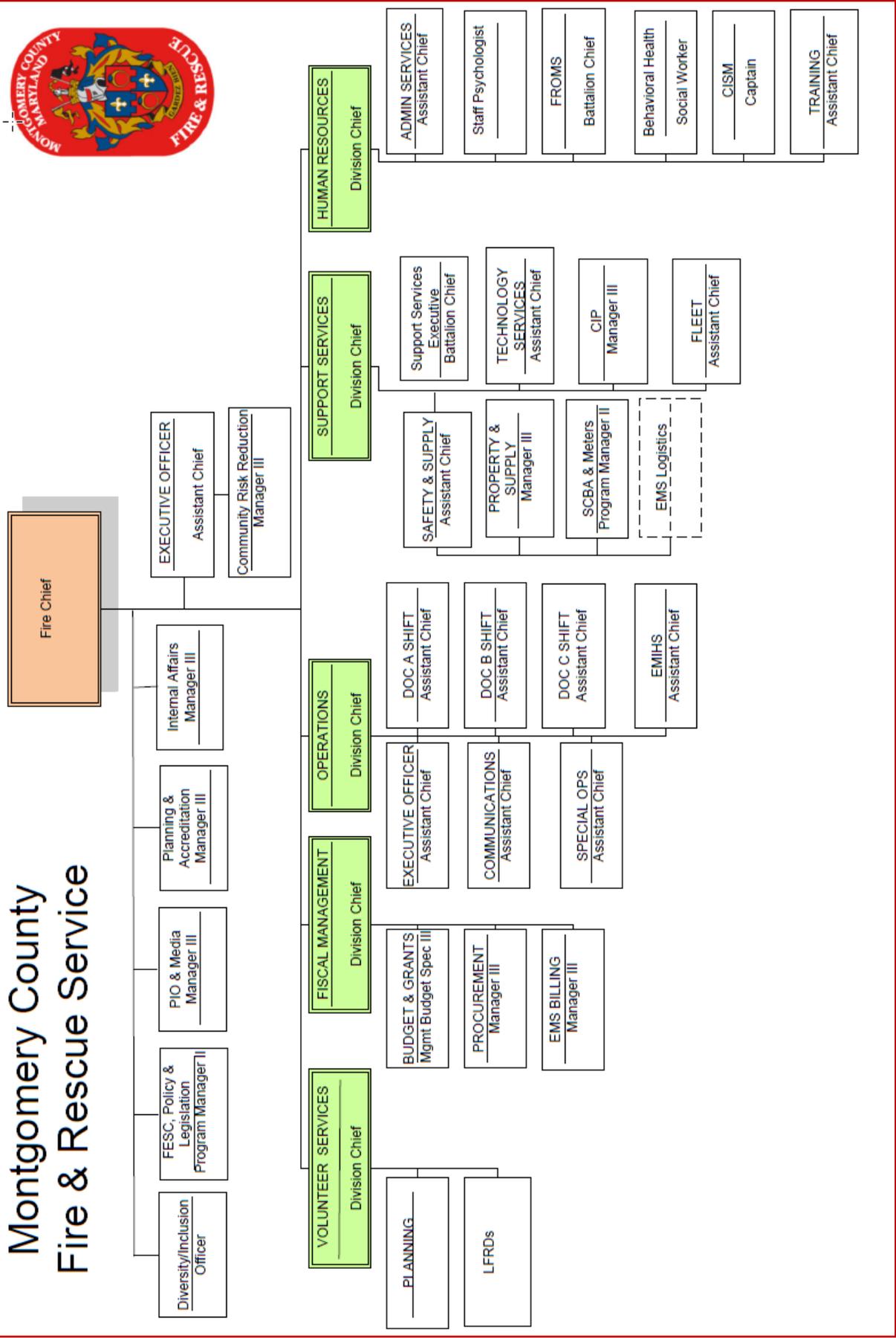


	Fire Stations 37
	Population 1,054,827
	Housing Units 405,744
	Households 383,308
	Area 506 sq. miles

Data as of July 1, 2021 from US Census QuickFacts

P:\Planning\GIS\Countywide Maps\Mocoby\thenumbers_letter.mxd Date: 3/23/2023

Montgomery County Fire & Rescue Service



Organizational chart as of 3/2023.
Readers may click the chart for a more detailed version.



MCFRS Goals & Objectives

MCFRS members continued to work towards the department's long-established goals in support of its mission in 2022:

- To maintain operational readiness for an all-hazards mission and response capability, including emergency medical services, fire suppression, technical rescue, water/ice rescue, aviation fire-rescue, hazardous materials, and explosive device emergency services through effective deployment and leverage of career and volunteer resources (i.e., staffing and equipment) in a fiscally responsible manner.
- To minimize the number of deaths and number/severity of injuries to our customers through a comprehensive, all-hazards, risk reduction strategy implemented through our community outreach program.
- To ensure that MCFRS embraces diversity and continuously recruits the career and volunteer personnel required to effectively deliver our services and programs, and undertakes the steps needed to address the current and projected training needs for career and volunteer leadership and workforce development (e.g., PSTA classes, online training, in-service training, station drills, classes provided by the Maryland Fire-Rescue Institute, etc.) and retain these individuals for long-term service to the community.
- To provide for and enhance the wellness, safety, training, and professional development of our personnel, including implementation of risk reduction strategies to improve occupational safety and to improve the health and wellness of MCFRS personnel.
- To seek, create and maintain strong partnerships with municipal, regional, State and federal agencies, the citizenry, and private and nonprofit organizations and institutions within Montgomery County so that we may enhance our capabilities and responsiveness to their needs/concerns and leverage their collective capabilities to assist us in our life safety, community risk reduction, injury prevention and property protection efforts to keep the community safe.
- To maintain and grow our infrastructure, including facilities, apparatus, equipment, communications systems, and information technology systems to support our mission.
- To establish an organizational commitment to evaluate, develop, and implement new technologies and innovations on a continuous basis that will enhance the effective delivery of services and performance of business processes.



- To ensure the transparency of our business operations and that open lines of communication are maintained with our customers.
- To set a desirable and attainable course for the future through strategic planning and with the establishment and periodic reassessment and refinement of our mission, vision, strategic direction, and objectives.
- To evaluate our progress and strive for continual improvement through accreditation, program appraisals, performance measurement, community feedback and technological enhancements that allow for comprehensive analysis of all aspects of MCFRS operations and administration.

To meet these goals, the MCFRS consistently strives to meet six objectives:

- Achieve and maintain the highest degree of readiness
- Optimize assets to ensure mission success
- Minimize preventable deaths and injuries and their negative impact
- Provide for the wellbeing of the workforce
- Build and maintain relationships with internal and external partners
- Implement change to enhance performance



**CLOSE BEFORE YOU
DOZE.**

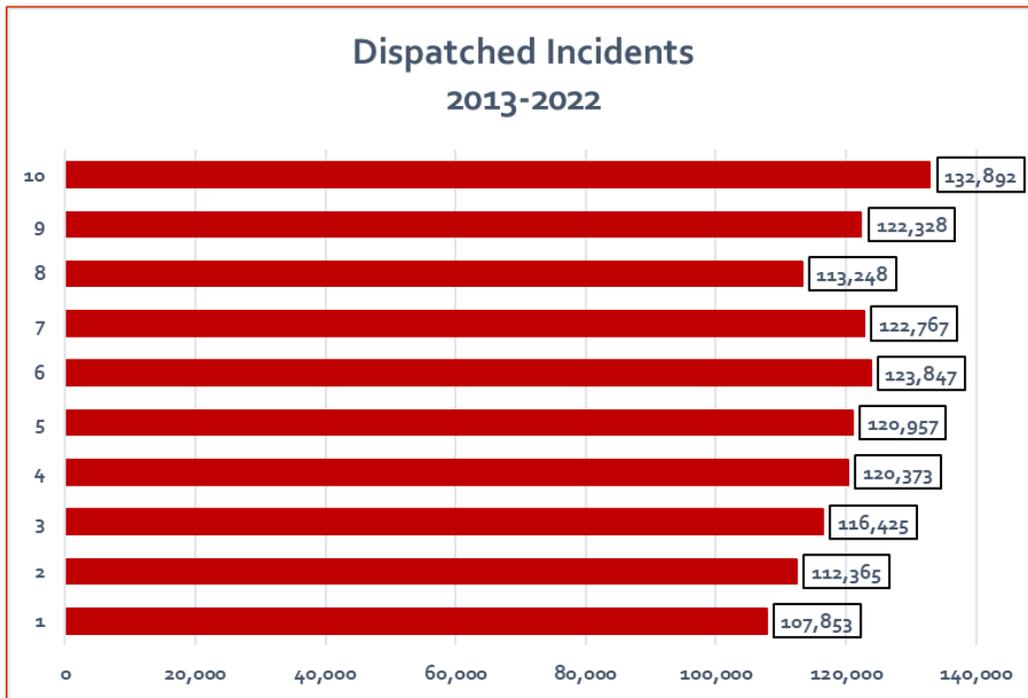
**SEE the DIFFERENCE a
CLOSED door can make!**

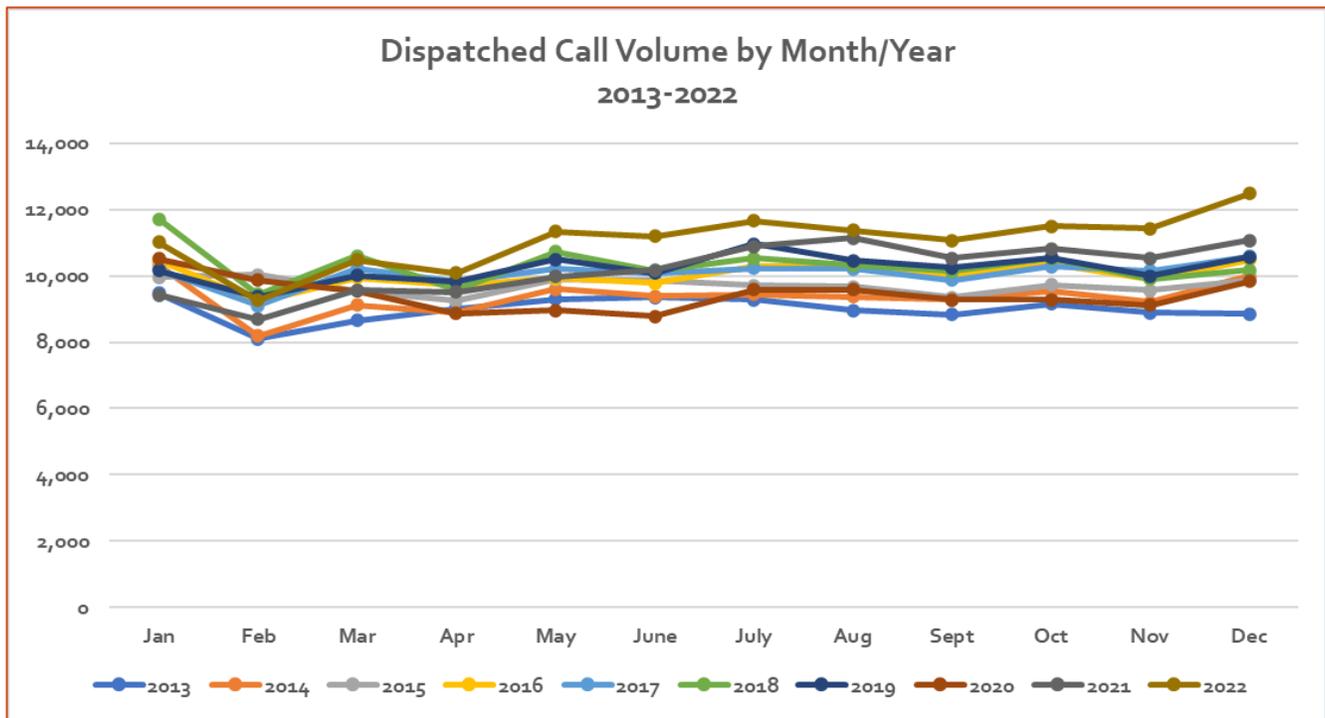


MCFRS YEAR IN REVIEW

2022

2022 was a busy year; there were 132,892 dispatched calls for service in Montgomery County. MCFRS personnel responded to two building explosions and encountered a once-in-a-lifetime call involving a small plane stuck in a high voltage utility tower. This was the highest number of dispatched calls in at least the last 10 years and was 8.6% higher than 2021. Except for February 2022, there were more than 10,000 dispatched incidents every month; in December, there were 12,484 dispatched incidents, the highest number of dispatches in recent history.





Achieved and maintained the highest degree of readiness

- Appointed eight new Station Commanders in 2022.
- Recruit classes 50 and 51 graduated in 2022, placing 62 women and men into fire stations throughout Montgomery County. More than 100,000 hours were provided by the Training Academy instructors to recruits and existing personnel. Property and Supply outfitted all the recruits with PPE and clothing and provided new member clothing to 270 LFRD candidates.
- Support Services' Fleet Section focused on apparatus and equipment:
 - Purchased equipment for and placed new apparatus AT718, AT719, RE714, RS703, RS729, T716, T725, T731 into service and secured contracts for six new engines, one new tanker, a technical rescue vehicle, and 11 new ambulances.
 - Made lighting enhancements to all five new tractor-drawn aerials after receiving feedback from the field.
 - Sponsored training for new rescue squads and towers.
 - Placed 14 new light duty command and general staff fleet vehicles into service in 2022, including three EV Ford Mustangs.
 - Water rescue kits were issued to all EMS transport units.
 - Sponsored demos and evaluations of SAM system, piercing nozzles, master stream valves, and ventilation fans.



- EMS Logistics ordered new LP15s and exchanged them with older models in the field and purchased five new Lucas devices and five new AEDs. The section also worked with EMIHS to purchase and distribute fully stocked BLS backpacks to the field.
- Instituted a rural water supply process monitoring program following performance testing on the use of 4” large diameter hose in relay pumping operations. A [Challenges in the Street](#) covered relay pumping considerations.

Optimized assets to ensure mission success

- Facility Maintenance received a total of 2,381 defects through the Fire Station Defect reporting system, an average of 6.5 per day, and logged nearly 6000 on-call hours. A new Program Manager and Facility Maintenance Coordinator were hired in 2022, enhancing the level of service provided previously by the single Captain.
- The Fleet Section received and addressed 3,401 defect reports, completed preventive maintenance on 257 heavy apparatus, and finished addressing nine major issues across all 2019 Pierce pumpers.
- Following several retirements, Fleet successfully hired four mechanics and one Fleet Support manager, and promoted an Equipment Services Coordinator, a crew chief, and a parts manager. The processes for hiring more mechanics, a small tools manager, and small tools mechanic were initiated.
- The Technology Services Section has again made several improvements to information and technology systems to better support MCFRS:
 - Replacement computers were deployed to the entire organization.
 - Created and deployed an all-in-one FZ55 “Toughbook” to replace three separate machines for administrative chief officers.
 - Implemented Microsoft Office 365 Shared Activation Licensing for shared workstations throughout the department.
 - Assisted with procurement and licensing of SQL 2019.
 - Migrated to an enterprise version of Jotform.
 - Developed a Google Browser Cache clean application for ePCR Toughbooks.
 - Developed a Per Diem Time Tracking System.
 - Upgraded FireApp to include a “working out of class” activity module and a fire “saves” module to capture the number of persons rescued by MCFRS personnel from structure fires.
 - Introduced an ACU Gateway to improve Zello audio performance.
 - Assisted other County agencies in the creation of the new BRAC-355 tunnel by installing radio and cellular bi-directional amplifiers (BDA) and County



private branch exchange (PBX) for communications coverage inside and outside of the structure.

- The Technology Services Section also hired a new Web Coordinator to serve as the department's webmaster and online content creator. The new webmaster rewrote the Public Safety Training Academy's (PSTA) website last year.
- Further relaxation of Covid protocols in 2022 made it an unusually busy year for CERT outreach. Aligning with the MCFRS vision of resilient communities, CERT conducted 10 public service events, of which the most significant was the reintroduction of the long-dormant Storm Camp program, a free, half-day interactive educational event for adults and children to prepare for some of the natural and manmade threats and hazards they could experience. The deployment of CERT 700 has had a significant impact on outreach, serving as a focal point for event attendees and enabling the team to expand their range of activities; compression-only CPR demos, education about utility cutoffs, and "touch-a-truck" activities have all become a part of their outreach toolkit, and are made possible by having access to the apparatus.



CERT & CERT 700 set up for the Presidential visit to Richard Montgomery High School

- A clinical disposition officer (EMS700) to monitor hospital status, designate receiving hospital destinations, and provide clinical and operational oversight of the EMS system was added in 2022. EMS700 works from a console at the emergency communications center. They speak via radio with each EMS crew to discuss the clinical care and destination for each patient prior to their departure from the scene. This adds value by managing the flow of EMS transport units into our crowded local emergency departments and avoids overloading any one hospital with patients whenever possible. The clinical oversight of EMS700 improves care navigation for patients with specialty needs such as strokes, traumatic injuries, heart attacks, palliative care, and pediatrics. EMS700 also encourages alternative care options for patients with low acuity complaints. EMS700 serves as the primary point of contact for hospital staff and field clinicians requiring immediate access to an EMS supervisor. Since the implementation of EMS700 in October, MCFRS has observed a marked downward trend in the median drop time for our patients and a meaningful reduction in EMS incident cycle time.
- An additional duty officer (EMS702) was also added in October. EMS702 increases the field supervisory coverage from two to three and is assigned to Station 26 on Democracy Blvd. This directly improves the geographic coverage of the entire county and reduces staffing stress for each of the three supervisors. EMS702 adds value by promoting improved relationships with our field clinicians and hospital partners and increases supervisory attendance to high acuity patients like cardiac arrests and the severely injured.

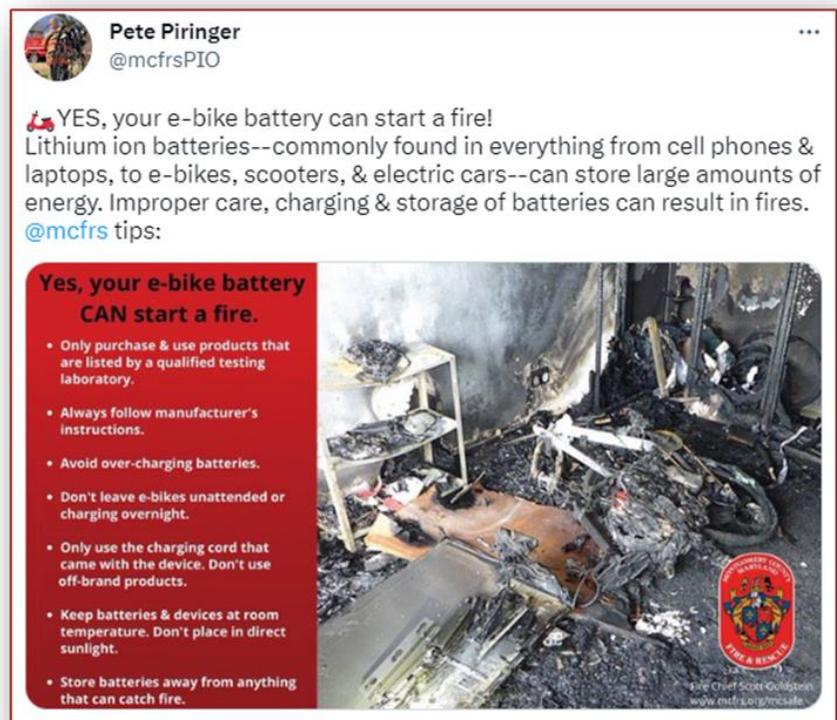
Minimized preventable deaths and injuries and their negative impact

- The Fire and Rescue Occupational Medical Services (FROMS) reported 10 instances in which medical concerns were detected during physicals, which allowed for early treatment and preventive care.
- The Safety & Supply Section designed and began publishing *The Safety Dispatch*, a quarterly publication containing statistics and other important safety and prevention information and initiatives.
- The Hazardous Materials team was delegated the responsibility of enhancing MCFRS response capabilities for battery emergencies, specifically lithium-ion battery incidents, which are a growing response trend across the fire service globally. These incidents include fire and hazardous material issues associated with small electronic devices, personal mobility devices (PMD), electric vehicles (EV), and battery energy storage systems (BESS). Operations has dedicated funding to training and equipment with a focus on being able to mitigate incidents in the safest manner possible and expanding the knowledge base across all shifts. All Hazardous Materials officers were trained by an outside vendor who specializes in battery emergency response strategy and tactics. All



department personnel were advised to consult the Hazardous Materials Team when encountering a lithium-ion battery emergency and a team standard operating guideline was developed. The department purchased specialized equipment, including battery overpacking material, electric vehicle fire blankets and specialty nozzles capable of keeping battery packs cool and preventing thermal runaway. The knowledge, skills and abilities from the vendor training was also taught to Hazmat members through monthly team training and company level training opportunities, with the goal of increasing community impact by decreasing the risk to the public and MCFRS personnel, and codifying risk management practices to mitigate incidents.

- From 2021 to 2022, Montgomery County witnessed a significant increase in deaths attributed to opioids, heroin, and fentanyl. Acknowledging that MCFRS' role in battling these tragedies transcends emergency response, the department partnered with Maryland's Opiate Intervention Taskforce, Montgomery County's Health and Human Services (HHS), and Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS). MCFRS has become a leading in-county distributor of "Leave Behind" Narcan kits, provided through grant funding. These kits contain self-explanatory information, Fentanyl test strips, as well as potentially life-saving reversal medication. Upon request, MCFRS also provides residents with hands-on training in the kit's use.
- Several *After the Fire* efforts were conducted in 2022, including a 3-day, countywide safety and community risk reduction effort following a significant lithium-ion battery fire involving an e-scooter in a non-sprinklered high-rise building. MCFRS has utilized social media to increase awareness and educate the community of the dangers of lithium-ion powered devices, and how to prevent fires.



After the Fire efforts can be an effective way for MCFRS to engage the County's diverse communities and bolster its community risk reduction initiatives through unique and meaningful approaches. Pre-loaded with useful



information from the Community Risk Reduction Section, including a synopsis of the fire, historical trends in the immediate area, and recommendations regarding whom to speak, what to communicate, and issues to take note of, MCFRS personnel immediately canvas the affected area on foot, following all fires in which significant injuries or property damage occurred, or unusual circumstances were present or occurred. In real-time, personnel are capable of quickly uploading their encounters and findings in an intuitive application utilizing apparatus-based Sonim phones and mobile data computers. Analysis of these efforts further identifies evolving threats, aids in formulating additional initiatives, and improves the way the department directs personnel to address mission-based initiatives.

- The Community Risk Reduction Section worked tirelessly behind the scenes and in the community to engage residents through multiple outreach, prevention, and education programs and initiatives to minimize deaths and injuries. This small, but determined team of professionals, with support from field personnel, saw a tremendous increase in their statistics in 2022, with activities finally returning to normal in the post-pandemic era. There was an 88.3% increase in the number of home safety checks conducted, and a 361% increase in the number of smoke alarms installed.

CRR Dashboard – CY22

Key Performance Indicators

	354	Home Safety Checks
	987	Smoke Alarms Installed
	36	After the Fire Events
	178	Carbon Monoxide Alarms Installed
	1884	Child Safety Seats Installed
	898	Community Presentations
	88	Community Events <small># of Recruits Trained in CRR since May 2017</small>

Social Snapshot



Website Traffic

- CY22 Total Pageviews: 704,983
- CY21 Total Pageviews: 685,412
- CY20 Total Pageviews: 697,441
- CY22 Web Visitors – 130,839



Blogspot

- CY22 Blogs Published – 20



Twitter

- CY22 Annual Impressions **3.3M**
- CY21 Annual Impressions: **4.3M**
- CY20 Annual Impressions: **4.4M**
- Followers 44,500

- Sparky made several appearances in 2022, as MCFRS supported the County's [Vision Zero](#) efforts to improve pedestrian safety and end traffic deaths.



Provided for the wellbeing of the workforce

- FROMS moved into newly renovated office space and consolidated individual therapy officers into a new Mental Health and Wellness suite, with officers for clinical staff and CISM/peer support leadership, as well as training and conference/meeting space. This will create a more conducive care and learning environment for first responders.
- A new vendor was selected to provide occupational medical services.
- The Safety Section worked in concert with Risk Management to inspect every MCFRS worksite.
- The Safety and Facilities Maintenance section implemented a Fire Station Mold Inspection and Mitigation Policy.
- Two new Safety Officers were trained and added to the A and C shifts, and a new, backup Safety Officer was trained on A shift.

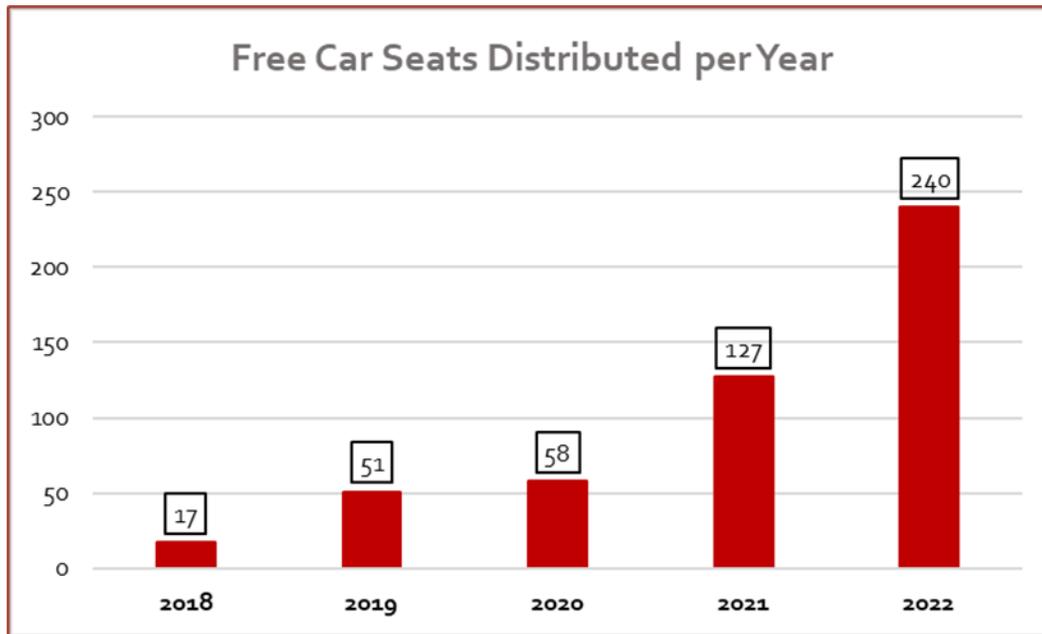
- The Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) shop completed more than 4,000 service orders, which included SCBA repairs, maintaining meters, docking stations, and breathing air compressors.
- Two new FIT test machines were purchased and calibrated.
- Several projects from the Level of Effort Capital Improvement project list were also completed or initiated:
 - Designed and began the full station HVAC upgrade at Stations 13 and 31.
 - Replaced the flat roof section at Station 14 and completed a full roof replacement at Station 30.
 - Completed construction of the new female facility expansion at Station 30.
 - Resurfaced the parking lot at Station 8, incorporating new federal ADA site requirements, and initiated the design and engineering phase of the resurfacing project for Station 5.
 - Station 11 received an update to its life safety systems and the emergency generator was replaced.
 - Reviewed plans and assisted with startup of the new Station 35.
 - Assisted the local fire rescue departments (LFRDs) with planning for full station renovation/replacement of Stations 11 and 24.

Built and maintained relationships with internal and external partners

- MCFRS is part of a joint workgroup with DOT, DPS, DEP, and many others working to understand thermal runaway in battery cells and manage the waste stream. MCFRS focused on increasing awareness and knowledge and improving operational response to lithium-ion fires through an episode of *Challenges in the Streets* dedicated to [Battery Emergencies](#).
- The LOSAP office spearheaded the inaugural launch of a LOSAP information desk at the annual Maryland State Firemen's Association (MSFA) convention. This required months of preparation, which included recruiting LOSAP Administrators from all of Maryland's counties to provide their respective county's LOSAP benefit information, coordination with the MSFA's operating director, and creating a schedule for staffing the information desk during the convention. Not only did the LOSAP information desk provide resources and check benefit status for hundreds of attendees, but it was a proof-in-concept that showed the interest and value of the information desk. Because of this, it will be placed in a more visible location for the 2023 MSFA convention.
- Established Home Depot as an official vendor for Montgomery County and developed a process to assist Station Commanders with tool and maintenance needs that cannot be made via P-Card.



- The Community Risk Reduction Section, through partnerships with various social services and nonprofit agencies, distributed a whopping 240 free car seats to families in need in 2022. This program has been growing, and CRR is looking for additional grant funding opportunities and to strengthen the partnerships, to reach those families most in need.



- MCFRS was selected to participate in the pilot of a nation school-based program called “Sound Off” in 2022, and had resounding success, documenting a 50% increase in knowledge gained amongst 2nd and 3rd grade students in Title I schools who participated in the program. The Community Risk Reduction Section has struggled to keep up with demand from MCPS requesting the very popular program, so plans have been made to introduce a virtual curriculum and expand training to teachers to deliver the program in the future as a strategic approach to provide critical fire safety education to elementary school students.



Implemented change to enhance performance

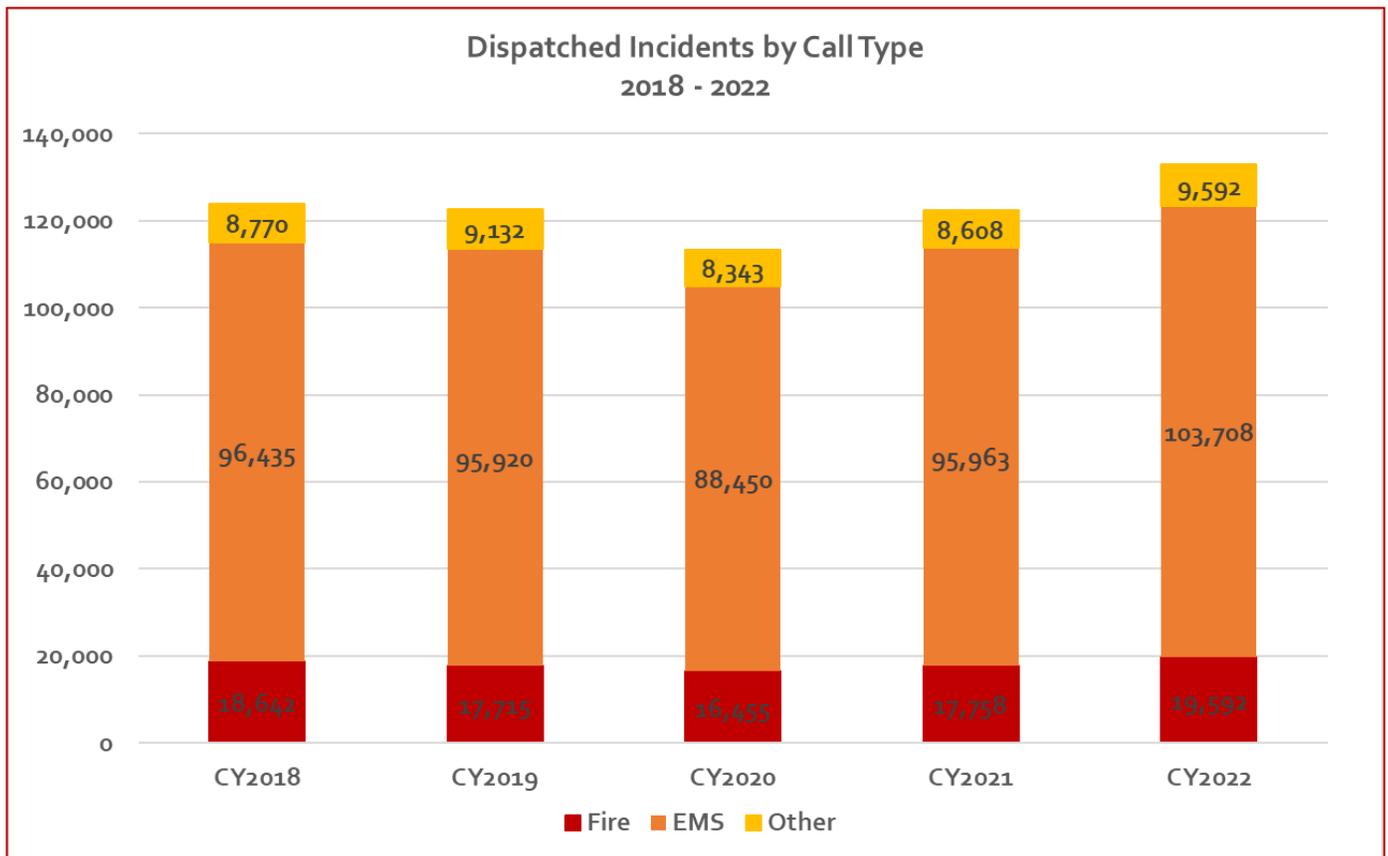
The MCFRS is always seeking ways to create efficiencies and make improvements to enhance performance and add value.

- Following numerous legislative changes and requirements in 2021 and a review by the Public Safety Committee, MCFRS created a civilian manager position to oversee the Fire and Explosives Investigations Unit (FEI). After interviewing candidates in the last half of 2022, MCFRS selected a seasoned arson and explosives investigator with extensive personnel management and policy development experience to lead the unit; the new manager was in place at the beginning of 2023.
- The Planning and Accreditation Section, in collaboration with Operations, spent a lot of time rethinking the department's approach to risk, and how the concepts of equity, vulnerability, and resilience factor into the approach MCFRS must consider as it plans for the next 5 to 10 years. This effort resulted in a revised risk assessment for Montgomery County hazards, and a framework that will serve as the foundation for future planning efforts. You can read the full *Evaluating Risk in Montgomery County* report [here](#).
- The Community Risk Reduction Section, with the help of Technology Services, completed development and deployment of a new CRR application, "Athena TaskPro", which can be used in the field to collect information and photos and track task-time duration.
- The Division of Volunteer Services initiated a semi-annual training schedule for LFRDs to learning about the County's volunteer record keeping database, PIMS. There were two training sessions offered, which attracted representatives from more than half of the LFRD corporations; the next session will be offered in the spring of 2023.



MCFRS STATISTICS AND RESPONSE TIMES

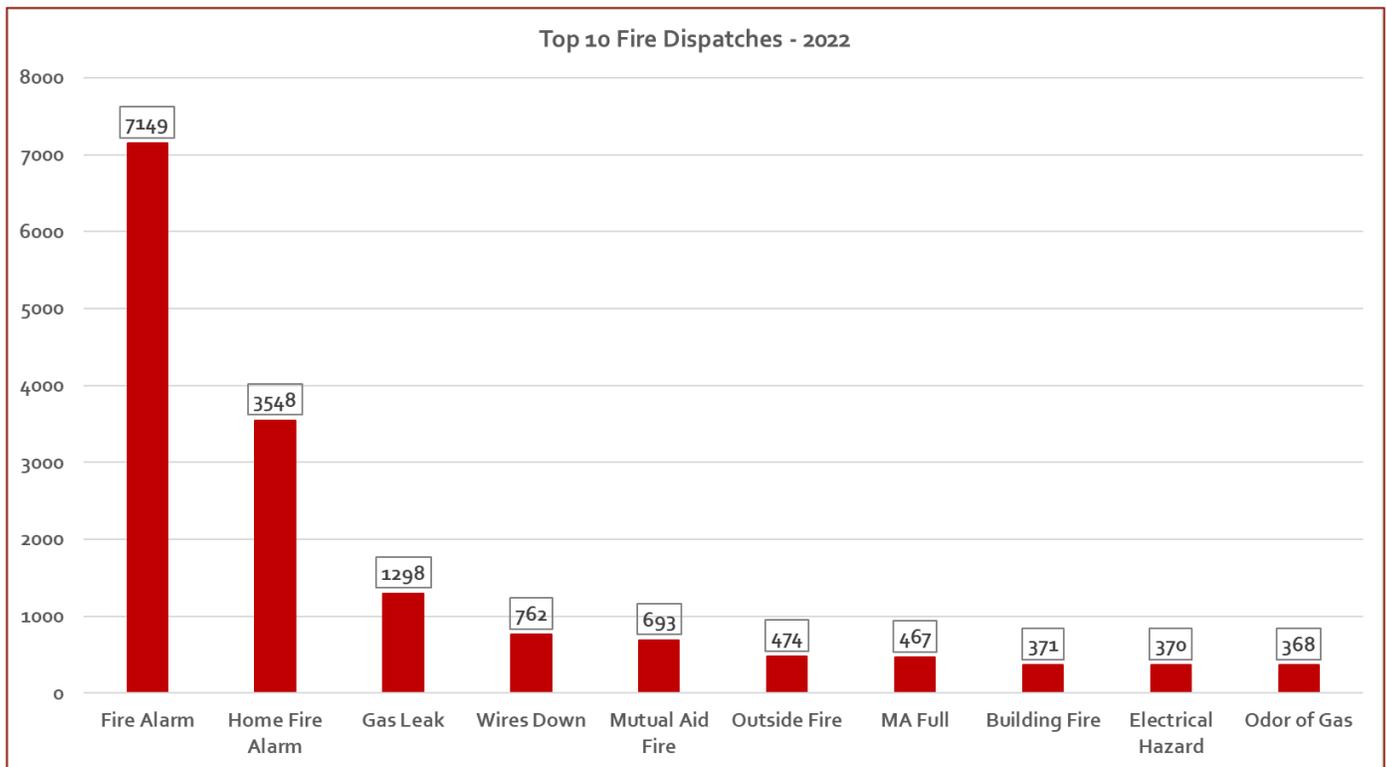
As previously mentioned, 2022 call volume was higher than any time in recent history; dispatched incidents were 8.6% higher than dispatched incidents in 2021, and call volume is up 7.3% over the last five years.



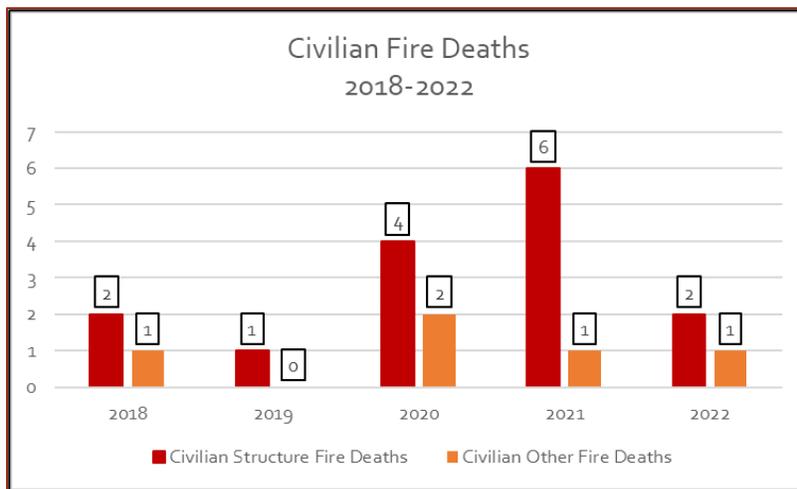
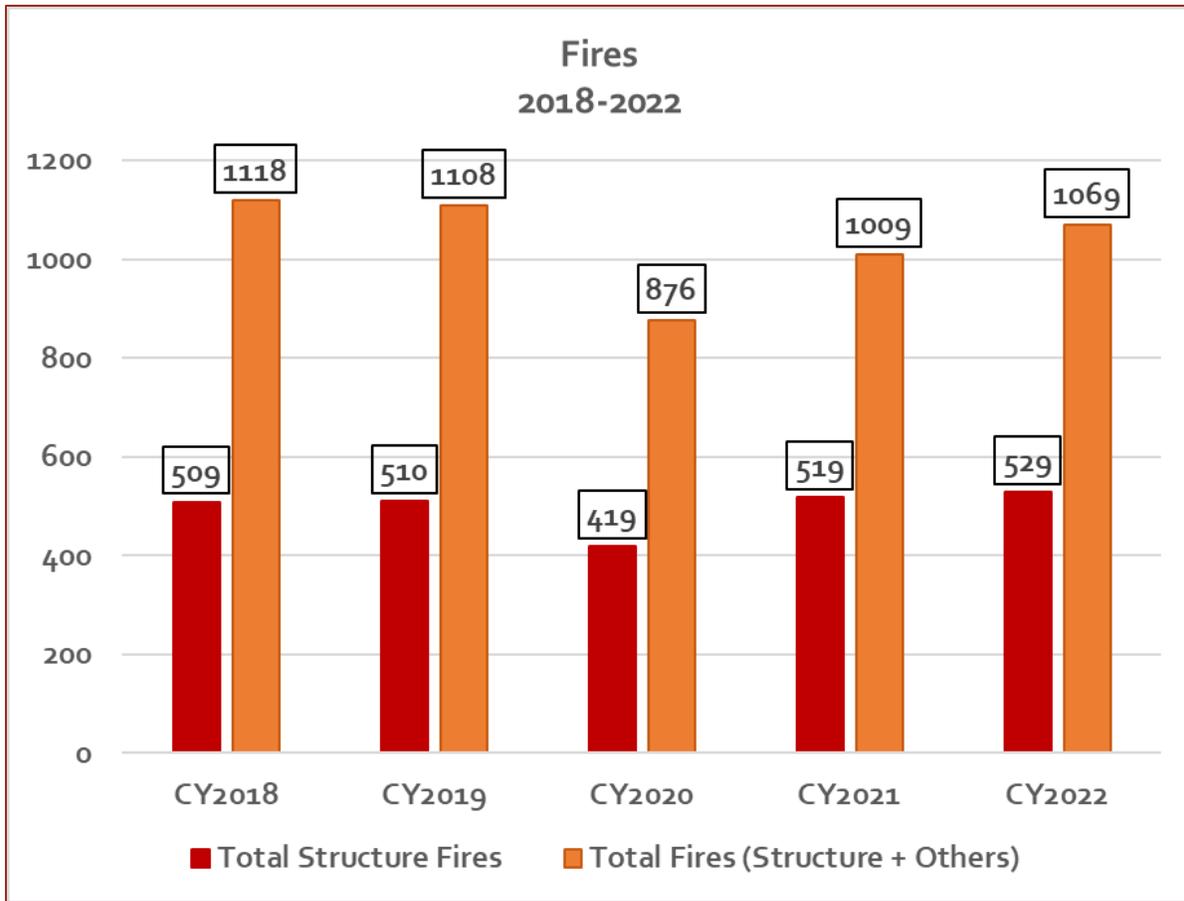
Data retrieved 3/8/2023 using Crystal Reports. Call volume includes 6,108 mutual aid calls.



In 2022, there were 921 incidents dispatched as *Fire Full Assignment (FFA)*, a 4.5% increase from the previous year. These are the most serious fire-related incidents, as the 911 call taker has learned from the caller that smoke or flame is visible within or outside a structure, making the incident more urgent and life-threatening.



MCFRS recorded 1069 total fires in 2022, a 6% increase from 2021. Of those, 529 were structure fires.



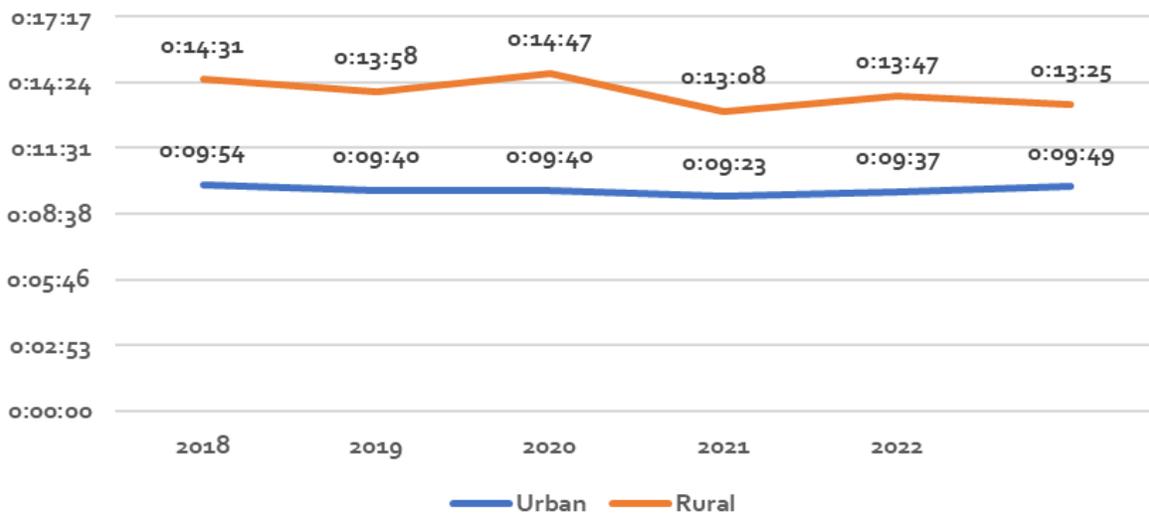
	CY2018	CY2019	CY2020	CY2021	CY2022
Total Structure Fires	509	510	419	519	529
Estimated Structure Fire Loss	\$27,715,197	\$27,955,161	\$23,149,245	\$28,021,532	\$37,398,082



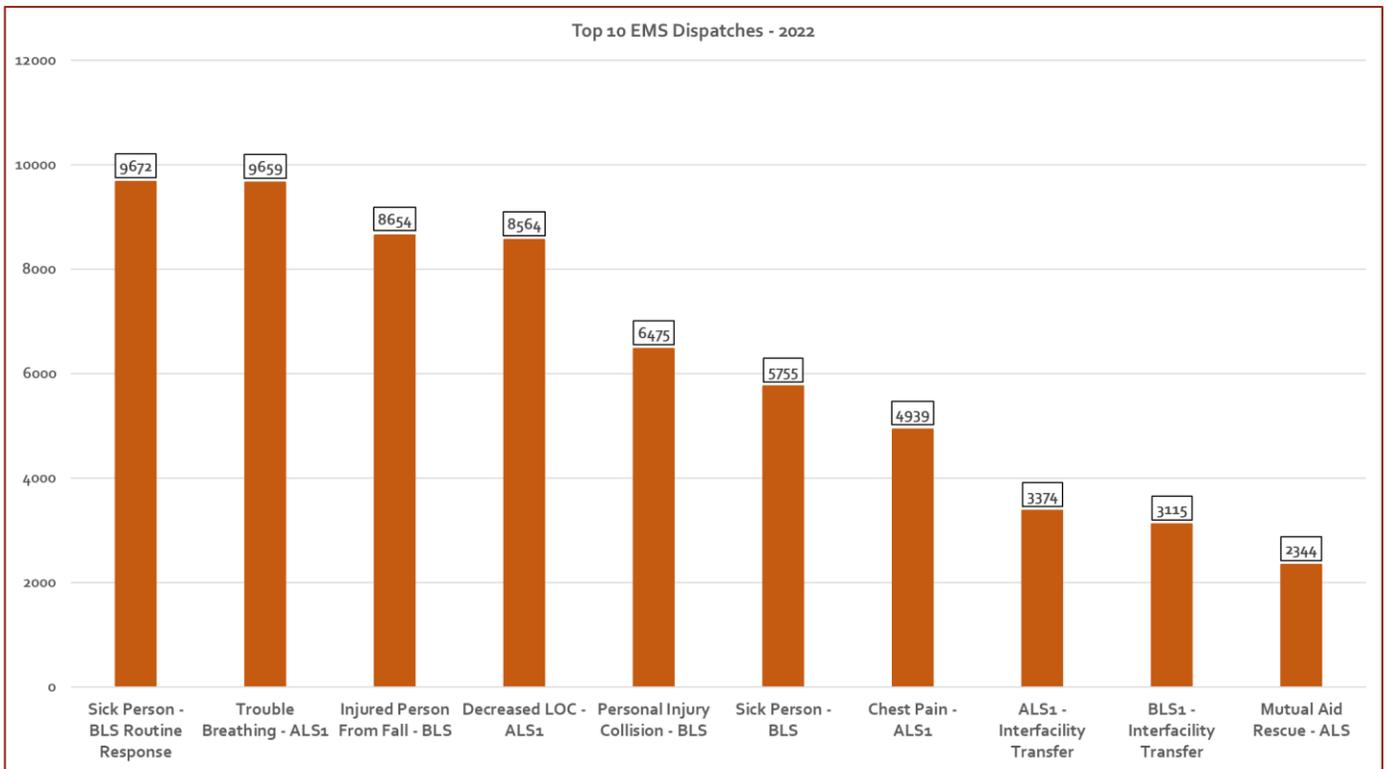
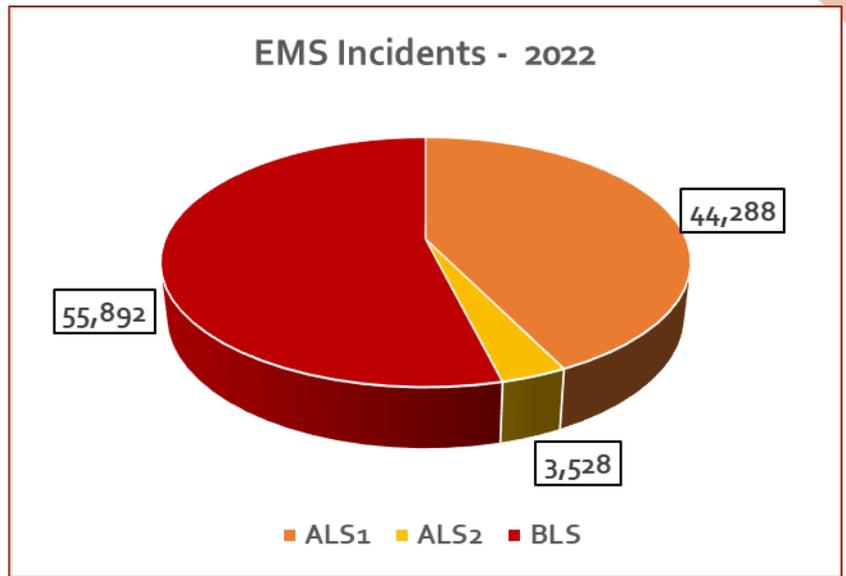
Fire Full Assignment (FFA) (90th percentile)

	2021		2022		Benchmarks	
	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
Phone to Dispatch	0:03:48	0:03:25	0:03:25	0:03:40	0:03:00	0:03:00
Turnout	0:01:38	0:02:25	0:01:36	0:02:27	0:01:20	0:02:00
Travel	0:05:53	0:09:58	0:06:06	0:09:40	0:05:45	0:09:30
Total Response - FAU	0:09:37	0:13:47	0:09:49	0:13:25	0:09:15	0:13:45

First Arriving Unit Total Response Time - FFA Calls 2018-2022



EMS-related incidents comprised 78.0% of the call volume in 2022, while fire-related incidents accounted for 14.7% of the call volume. ALS incidents accounted for 46.1% of EMS calls in 2022. The slight increase in ALS calls can be attributed to an increase in ALS1 calls, specifically, patients with trouble breathing and those with altered level of consciousness (LOC).



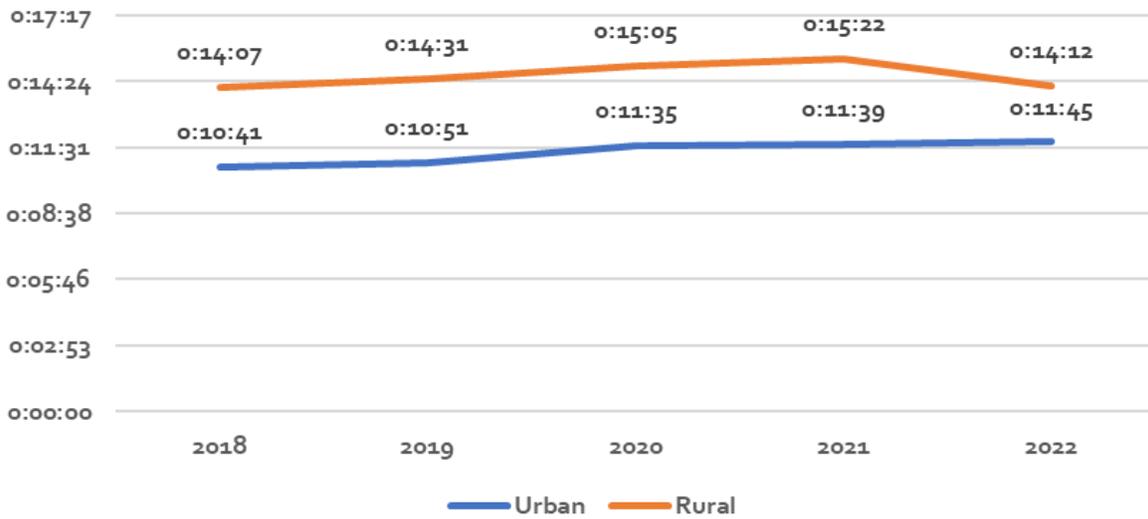
The Fiscal Management Division processed patient care reports associated with 65,361 ambulance transports and collected \$20.98 million in ambulance transport revenue. MCFRS also received \$9,346,086 in Maryland Emergency Service Transporter Supplemental Payment Program (ESPP) funding.



Advanced Life Support (ALS) (90th percentile)

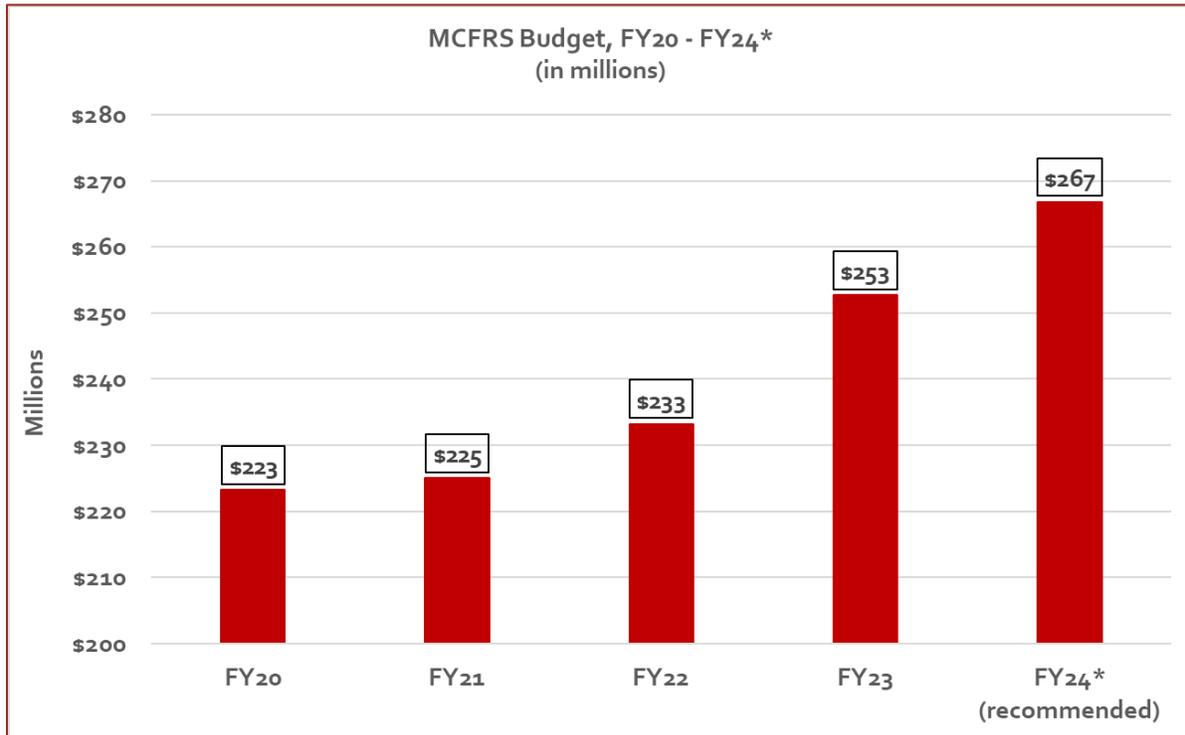
	2021		2022		Benchmarks	
	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
Phone to Dispatch	0:03:45	0:03:59	0:03:57	0:03:46	0:03:00	0:03:00
Turnout	0:01:37	0:01:41	0:01:35	0:01:38	0:01:20	0:01:20
Travel	0:06:38	0:10:18	0:06:42	0:09:37	0:06:00	0:10:00
Total Response - FAU	0:11:39	0:15:22	0:11:45	0:14:12	0:10:15	0:14:00

First Arriving Unit Total Response Time - ALS Calls 2018-2022



FY24 WORKPLAN

At the time of this report's publication, the FY24 budget review process is underway, and MCFRS is waiting to hear if the County Council is going to pass or modify the County Executive's recommended MCFRS budget of nearly \$267 million. If it passes without any changes, the FY24 budget of \$266,818,826 is 5.6% higher than the FY23 budget.



This FY24 budget includes funding for 11 new support positions:

- A civilian Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) officer to support efforts to normalize conversations within the department on equity, and operationalize new equity-centered practices, policies, and procedures. This fulfills a recommendation from the *Reimagining Public Safety* report completed in 2022, [Building Organizational Capacity for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the Fire & Rescue Service](#).
- A uniformed Community Action Coordinator and two civilian Community Risk Reduction specialists to deliver targeted prevention and education services to our most vulnerable populations, the young and the elderly.
- An Administrative Specialist III and Program Manager II to provide contract and human resources support.



- A civilian Investigator III to expedite Internal Affairs' investigations in an effort to reduce unnecessary overtime associated with administrative leave.
- An Information Technology Specialist III to manage the Public Safety Land Mobile Radio System.
- A Fleet Road Technician to service apparatus in the stations to reduce the amount of time units are kept out of service.
- A uniformed Critical Incident Stress Management manager and supervisory psychologist to enhance mental health support for first responders.

In addition to these initiatives, the MCFRS will be working on the following activities in 2023:

- The FY24 budget also includes funding for 57 new recruits to fill Recruit Class #54 in January 2024, so the Division of Human Resources will remain committed to recruiting and hiring activities, including the administration of entrance exams and CPAT mentoring/testing.
- The Public Safety Training Academy is preparing to undergo reaccreditation in July by the Maryland Fire Service Professional Qualifications Board.
- Technology Services has several significant initiatives occurring in 2023:
 - Deployment of new FZ55s and portable radios for MCFRS apparatus and new ePCR computers.
 - Issuance of an REOI and evaluating perspective replacements for the RMS and LCMS systems.
 - Implementation of new CAD hardware for better system performance.
 - Implementation of a new GIS mapping system maintained by public safety.
 - Upgrade of all MCFRS servers to upgraded versions of Windows and SQL and migrate all current Crystal reports to new SQL server reporting system.
 - Transition of all technology assets into the new asset management system.
 - Transition of EMS narcotics tracking to new tracking system (PSTRAX).
 - Modernization of MCFRS social media presence.
- Property and Supply will make recommendations for new turnout gear and hoods at the conclusion of the trial that was in progress at the time of this writing.
- Fleet will be completing the hose retention netting project for all pumpers in the fleet, as well as completing construction of the TRT unit and placing it, two tankers and three more towers into service. Two new lift sets will also be placed into service in 2023.



- With the support and coordination of DGS, Fleet is also hoping to implement new fleet maintenance software system that will include apparatus tracking and defect reporting.
- CIP and Facilities have several projects on their plate, including the completion of the new Community Service Building, which will house Community Risk Reduction, Tech Ops, and FRS Facilities personnel, and completion/closeout of Station 35 construction. Design for White Flint Station 23 is also expected to begin in the fall.
- CRR, in collaboration with the Operations Division, will work to devise a fire safety strategy targeting the 75 non-sprinklered residential high rises in Montgomery County.
- A six-month pilot program beginning May 1 will place A733B at Station 33 to allow the LFRDs, led by Chief Hinde (Rockville Volunteer Fire Department), to staff the unit in response to demand surges. The rostered RVFD Duty Officer (VBC703 or VDC700), Chief 703, or Chief 703B will deploy on-call staffing or recall staffing based on foreseeable demand, i.e., multiple alarm incidents, weather emergencies, evolving incidents in other jurisdictions, etc. They will monitor any First Watch Notification - "Surge Plan Phase 3-Severe-30 Trans Units Comm Trigger Alert" - and mobilize staffing for A733B. When members are scheduled as dedicated staffing of A733B, they are to report for duty as scheduled. When members committed to on-call staffing or recall staffing are deployed, they are expected to report to Company 33 within 30-45 minutes of notification that the unit is being placed in service. In either case, upon arrival at Company 33, members assigned to A733B shall notify the station officer on duty (if available) and the ECC. The implementation of A733B increases the responsibility of the LFRDs. Overall, the resident benefits from increased transport capabilities during surges and may prevent MCFRS from entering the difficult situation of nearly all transports committed.
- One of the goals of the Emergency Medical and Integrated Health Section (EMIHS) this year is to deploy one IV pump with every set of ALS gear and mandate that all IV infusions, including fluid boluses, are administered via pump. The primary reason for the deployment is to enable MCFRS to expand our formulary to include norepinephrine in the setting of return of spontaneous circulation after out-of-hospital cardiac arrest. There is a growing evidence base that suggests that norepinephrine is superior to epinephrine, our current vasopressor in these situations. Improving the neurologically intact discharge (walking, talking, fully functional) of patients on whom we regain pulses is the overarching goal of the change. Additionally, we will be soon expanding our formulary to include IV nitroglycerin for certain respiratory distress patients. This medication can be administered in multiple small doses without a



pump, but it can also be administered as a continuous infusion via an IV pump. Using the continuous infusion will allow clinicians more control of the administration based on the patient's needs. The process of "titration to effect" allows them to start at one level, gauge the effects, and adjust how much medication the patient is receiving. The medical evidence suggests that minority groups are overrepresented in the patients suffering from this disease process, compared to the population at large. The outsized impact of this disease process on potentially vulnerable populations allows MCFRS to implement a therapy that will have a proportionate impact on their health status outcomes. Finally, the current method of administration of IV infusions involves clinicians counting IV drops per second and performing a series of complex mathematical calculations to deliver the medication at the correct rate. Additionally, it also relies on the clinician to stop the medication when the desired dose has been administered. In the contemporary EMS environment where clinicians may be operating by themselves as the only advanced life support provider, they must simultaneously monitor the patient for the desired effect or changes in status, move the patient, communicate with the hospital and complete a litany of other tasks. The IV pump will function as a set-it-and-forget-it solution, thereby allowing them to focus on other demands while the pump continues to deliver the right dose of the medication at the right rate and stop when complete. This functionality reduces the cognitive workload of the clinician and eliminates error points in patient care, improving quality, and increasing value to our patients and the organization.

- To better manage the complexities of mutual aid in Montgomery County, Operations appointed an MCFRS automatic/mutual aid liaison in 2022 to enhance cross-jurisdictional dialogue, identify potential system improvements, and shepherd adjustments. Our federal fire partners have always been afforded access to hands-on training and virtual course offerings, which has bolstered continuity of operations during mutual responses and improved the department's overall effectiveness when engaged in a unified response incident. In 2023, three of our federal partners will integrate their command staff into the MCFRS Certified Chief Officer (CCO) model, which establishes minimal qualifications and proficiencies for initial and subsequent recertifications. Candidates have already begun acquiring 12 hours of Chief Officer Professional Development and Improvement (COPDI) credit; later, participating departments will enroll their command officers in a 1-day orientation that explains the process, policies, and basic tenets of "command" within the MCFRS framework. Candidates will also complete a written exam testing their knowledge of the Incident Review Policy (IRP), undergo a formal evaluation in the simulator laboratory, and participate in an interview prior to being certified.
- The Mobile Integrated Healthcare (MIH) program, which has never had the luxury of full-time field personnel assigned to it, is looking forward to adding



two daywork FFIII/Paramedics this year, who will provide full-time field coverage from Monday to Friday, 0700 to 1700. Prior to the COVID pandemic, MIH paramedics would work on an overtime basis and receive sporadic assistance from an external nurse. However, since 2020, MIH has been fortunate to have a dedicated social worker and nurse on board. These new team members have performed home visits as necessary to cater to patients' needs or conduct more comprehensive evaluations. With the new paramedics, MIH will be able to conduct more home visits and respond promptly to calls from known patients who call 911. MIH medics will be involved in every home visit, as originally intended. This move will also allow us to start billing MIH home visits through Medicaid MCO's, as Medicaid only reimburses visits that involve a paramedic. In CY22, we managed to complete at least 60 visits in the field, but a much higher visit rate is anticipated going forward. This increase in visits will not only support the needs of our patients, but also provide greater support to our clinicians working in the field.

- The new FEI manager has put forth an effort to revise the existing FEI policies and procedures, which are outdated, and create new policies and procedures to conform with recent legislative changes as they relate to police agencies and police reform. The result was the development of a new Standard Operating Guidelines (SOG) manual that will outline how the unit will operate and comply with the new laws, as well as the new requirements for obtaining and maintaining police certification. To date, several new SOG's have been drafted and reviewed that are ready to be implemented. Several more need review or need to be drafted, with a goal of having a completed manual within a year. In addition, the unit will have a process to evaluate the new SOG's and conduct annual reviews to ensure compliance with any new law changes. This manual will be a valuable tool for all new personnel assigned to the unit. However, staffing remains an issue; the unit currently faces a staffing shortage. Despite having a process for new candidates, FEI was unsuccessful in filling the current and anticipated vacancies. Similar to what other law enforcement agencies across the nation are experiencing, recruiting new personnel is extremely challenging and the selection process is somewhat difficult, as it requires potential candidates to pass a vigorous background check. As a result, FEI is now looking at different concepts and configurations to staff the unit, which may include the use of non-law enforcement personnel. It is the intent to submit at least three different staffing proposals via the chain of command within the next few months so the unit can move forward with filling vacancies and maintain the level of service that is currently in place.
- MCFRS will support efforts to update the Montgomery County Emergency Operations Plan, and in collaboration with OEMHS, review and update the MCFRS Continuity of Operations plan.



- Efforts to update the Master Plan, which was extended in 2022 to allow for completion of the two *Reimagining Public Safety* studies, are underway. A new plan is expected at the end of 2023. Of the 120 specific initiatives that were outlined in the 2016-22 Master Plan, 22.5% can be considered *complete*, while 39.2% of the initiatives are in various stages of progress.
- The Planning Section will continue to collaborate with Operations to further elaborate upon, institutionalize, and operationalize the notions of risk, vulnerability, and resilience. During the last Chief Officers' briefing, the following objectives were established for 2023:
 - Improve community impact.
 - Increase organizational resilience.
 - Codify our risk management approach.
- The Planning Section is also in the process of hiring a recently reclassified Performance Management & Data Analyst position, which will be responsible for identifying and addressing reporting needs across the entire department, and building analytical processes, dashboards, and other interfaces to communicate with stakeholders. This position will be invaluable as MCFRS develops the next Master Plan and further enhances the framework of risk and vulnerability it began building in 2022. Similarly, work that started in 2022 in EMIHS, in partnership with HHS, to examine MCFRS-provided care through an equity lens and ensure that steps are taken to promote similar benefits and equality of outcome for everyone, is a priority for the department and will continue. Over the last year, the first step was to engineer a methodology to stratify the voluminous points of data in a reliable and meaningful way with regards to equity. To that end, EMIHS embraced the concept of equity areas, specifically the Equity Focus Areas (EFA) defined by the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission and the Equity Enhancement Areas (EEA) defined by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments. The census tracts of every response in the system were assessed to determine whether the incident occurred in an EFA or EEA. Using that index, we can now stratify all response data, including patient care, based on whether the incident occurred in an equity area or not. Some work has already been completed to analyze incident prevalence by type and basic response interval comparisons were performed. The current work focuses on building out the National EMS Quality Alliance (NEMSQA) quality measures for both future analysis of overall system performance, as well as historical analysis to the measures in and outside of equity areas. Completion of that work is ongoing, and several months away.



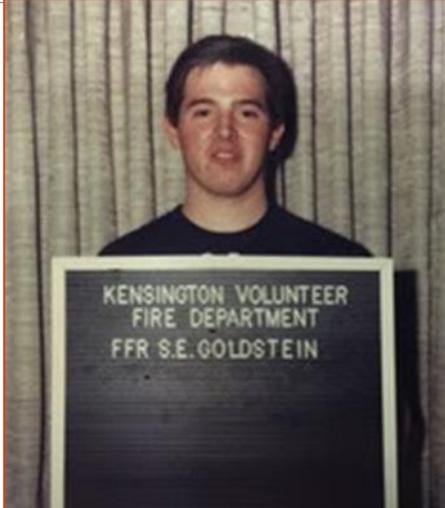
Farewell, Chief Goldstein!

In April 2023, Montgomery County Fire Chief Scott Goldstein announced he would retire on June 30, 2023, after serving Montgomery County for 33+ years, eight of them as the chief of the Montgomery County Fire & Rescue Service. He was the department's fourth chief since legislation created the position in 2004.

From a young boy who loved fire trucks, to volunteer at Kensington, to Fire Chief of a nationally accredited and recognized metropolitan fire department (and arguably, the best), Chief Goldstein leaves Montgomery County to become the fire chief of Cowlitz 2 Fire & Rescue in Kelso, Washington.



The members of the Montgomery County Fire & Rescue Service thank you, Chief, for your years of service and dedication to the department and the residents of Montgomery County. We wish you and your family the best in the next chapter of your life.





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