

# KAUKAUNA FIRE DEPARTMENT



FIRE/RESCUE



EMS



PREVENTION



TRAINING



MAINTENANCE

## 2024 ANNUAL REPORT

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# KAKAUNA FIRE DEPARTMENT

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## 2024 ANNUAL REPORT

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# MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF

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## 2024 Annual Report

I am honored and privileged to present the Kaukauna Fire Department's Annual Report for 2024. As our community continues to grow, the demand for our services increases, and I am constantly impressed by the dedication and resilience of our personnel. 2024 was a record-setting year, responding to 1,903 incidents and logging over 3,388 hours of training. We continued our bi-annual inspections of all commercial and multi-family facilities, conducting 1,248 inspections. All of these numbers are expected to grow in the upcoming years.



*Jacob Carrel  
Fire Chief*

Recognizing the needs of a growing city, Kaukauna undertook a comprehensive staffing assessment in 2024 as part of a larger People Management Plan. This crucial, multi-phase assessment identified the need for additional firefighter/paramedics to meet service demands now and into the future. Based on these findings, the department proposed adding three new firefighter/paramedic positions in the 2025 budget as an important first step toward addressing this gap. We appreciate the city leadership's consideration and subsequent approval of this initial request moving into 2025, and we look forward to continued collaboration to ensure our staffing levels align with the community's needs and the safety and well-being of our staff. This report details the many ways in which our team served the community with professionalism and adaptability throughout 2024.

Recruitment has become a critical challenge at unprecedented levels, and Kaukauna is not alone. A recent study by the University of Wisconsin–Oshkosh’s Whitburn Center found that 83 percent of fire chiefs report staffing is harder to maintain than five years ago, while demand continues to increase. In many areas, positions are going unfilled while the demand is at an all-time high. Funding remains a concern, but the lack of qualified applicants entering the fire and EMS service is alarming. Lawmakers at the state level, technical colleges, and fire chiefs across Wisconsin are actively collaborating to develop innovative solutions.

Reflecting on this year’s challenges and accomplishments, I want to express immense pride in the daily work and dedication of our firefighters. Their commitment to providing for the safety and health of our residents and visitors is truly exceptional. We are deeply grateful for the partnership and support of our residents, city staff, and elected officials. This essential support enables us to provide our community with the highest level of protection and care.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jacob Carrel', written in a cursive style.

# CITY OFFICIALS & COMMISSIONERS

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## MAYOR

- ANTHONY J. PENTERMAN

## COMMON COUNCIL MEMBERS

- MARTY DECOSTER
- JENNIE EGGLESTON
- KELLI ANTOINE
- JOHN MOORE
- BRIAN SCHELL
- MARY JO KILGAS
- PENNIE THIELE
- MIKE COENEN

## POLICE & FIRE COMMISSIONERS

- SHANNON YOUNG
- BETH JASIAK
- PAUL VAN BERKEL
- TIM HUFSCHMID
- CARLA ZACHARIAS

# FIRE DEPARTMENT STAFF

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## Administration



Jacob Carrel  
Fire Chief  
5 Years of Service



Megan Brouch  
Administrative Assistant  
1 Year of Service



Craig Schneider  
Assistant Chief - EMS  
26 Years of Service



Heath Buechel  
Assistant Chief - Training  
17 Years of Service

# FIRE DEPARTMENT STAFF

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## A-Shift



Cody Foss  
Assistant Chief  
Fire Inspector  
15 Years of Service



Ryan Steffel  
Lieutenant  
Paramedic  
14 Years of Service



Lonny Ziemer  
Driver/Operator  
Paramedic  
27 Years of Service



Austin Klister  
Driver/Operator  
Paramedic  
8 Years of Service



Elliot Chier  
Firefighter  
Paramedic  
2 Years of Service



Vacant  
Firefighter  
Paramedic

# FIRE DEPARTMENT STAFF

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## B-Shift



Joe Resch  
Assistant Chief  
Community Risk Reduction  
16 Years of Service



Nick Bouressa  
Lieutenant  
Paramedic  
12 Years of Service



Ryan Kussow  
Driver/Operator  
Paramedic  
19 Years of Service



Nick Ziegler  
Driver/Operator  
Paramedic  
11 Years of Service



Sam Klimek  
Firefighter  
Paramedic  
5 Years of Service



Ray Shanle  
Firefighter  
Paramedic  
7 Months of Service

# FIRE DEPARTMENT STAFF

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## C-Shift



Chad Gerrits  
Assistant Chief  
Maintenance/Equipment  
21 Years of Service



Mike Hamilton  
Lieutenant  
Paramedic  
24 Years of Service



Brian Inocelda  
Driver/Operator  
Paramedic  
11 Years of Service



Robert Aschenbrener  
Driver/Operator  
Paramedic  
7 Years of Service



Sam Hebert  
Firefighter  
Paramedic  
3 Years of Service

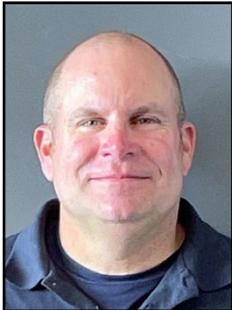


Wyatt Gezella  
Firefighter  
Paramedic  
2 Years of Service

# FIRE DEPARTMENT STAFF

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## Paid-On-Call



Jeff Moericke  
26 Years of Service



Alex Bain  
14 Years of Service



Brad Van Asten  
14 Years of Service



Kurt Vanderloop  
11 Years of Service



Justin Uitenbroek  
10 Years of Service



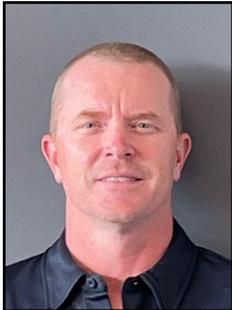
John Novak  
1 Year of Service



Jeremy Uitenbroek  
9 Years of Service



Keith Romenesko  
5 Years of Service



Shaun Simon  
4 Years of Service

# FIRE DEPARTMENT STAFF

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## Paid-On-Call



Cory Swedberg  
1 Year of Service



Trevor Prusinski  
1 Year of Service



Kyle Reif  
1 Year of Service



Tom Self  
1 Year of Service

# EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

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The Kaukauna Fire Department has made significant advancements in technology this year, enhancing our emergency medical services and improving patient care. Key improvements include the successful implementation of field-based reporting using tablets, along with the integration of cardiac monitors that transmit critical patient data into our reporting system. These technological upgrades have streamlined our operations through increased data accuracy and a decrease in total call time.

This year, the department successfully implemented field-based reporting via tablets. EMS personnel can now add data and complete electronic patient care reports (ePCR) while directly on an EMS run. This advancement reduces administrative time, improves data accuracy, and ensures faster transmission of information to receiving medical facilities. As a result, we can provide more timely care, reduce documentation errors, and improve patient outcomes.

In addition to the new reporting system, we upgraded our cardiac monitors to transmit critical data, including EKG readings, medication administration, procedural actions, and vital signs, into our electronic patient care reporting system (ePCR). This integration ensures that all key data is captured accurately and comprehensively, reducing errors and enhancing the quality of our patient records. This data also improves the continuity of care when patients are transferred to hospitals, as the medical team has access to complete and accurate patient information.

This past year, the department transitioned to EMS/MC, a cutting-edge company specializing in EMS billing and coding. EMS/MC offers an advanced client portal, EMSight, which allows the department to access trip-level details, crew analytics, and real-time billing information. This upgrade will improve billing accuracy, streamline operations, and enhance financial reporting, benefiting both the community and the department.

The Kaukauna Fire Department remains focused on providing exceptional emergency medical services through innovation, dedication, and a commitment to continuous improvement. We are excited for the future and look forward to further enhancing the quality of care we provide to the citizens we serve in our community.



*Craig Schneider*  
*Assistant Chief of EMS*

# EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

## 2024 EMS STATISTICS

Incident Location	2021	2022	2023	2024	% of Total
City of Kaukauna	1,149	1,300	1,333	1,394	88.4%
Village of Combined Locks	5	128	139	144	9.1%
Town of Holland	17	17	22	23	1.5%
Town of Buchanan	37	22	1	4	0.3%
Town of Grand Chute	1	0	8	4	0.3%
City of Appleton	8	7	4	3	0.2%
Village of Little Chute	57	52	5	2	0.1%
Village of Wrightstown	1	2	0	2	0.1%
Town of Freedom	0	7	1	1	0.1%
Town of Kaukauna	46	56	1	0	0.0%
Town of Vandebroek	34	40	0	0	0.0%
Village of Kimberly	0	1	2	0	0.0%
Town of Greenleaf	2	0	1	0	0.0%
City of Menasha	0	3	0	0	0.0%
City of Seymour	0	1	0	0	0.0%
Town of Bovina	0	1	0	0	0.0%
Town of Morrison	1	0	0	0	0.0%
Village of Ashwaubenon	3	0	0	0	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,361</b>	<b>1,637</b>	<b>1,517</b>	<b>1,577</b>	<b>100%</b>

Response Disposition	# of Runs	% of Runs
Patient Treated, Transported by KKFD	1,145	72.6%
Patient Treated, Released	189	12.0%
Patient Evaluated, No Treatment/Transport Required	129	8.2%
Canceled (Prior to Arrival)	34	2.2%
Patient Refused Evaluation/Care (No Transport)	30	1.9%
Patient Dead at Scene - No Resuscitation Attempted	22	1.4%
Canceled on Scene (No Patient Contact)	9	0.6%
Canceled on Scene (No Patient Found)	7	0.4%
Patient Dead at Scene – Resuscitation Attempted (No Transport)	5	0.3%
Standby- No Services or Support Provided	4	0.3%
Canceled (Request Transferred to Another Provider)	2	0.1%
Patient Treated, Transferred Care to Another EMS Unit	1	0.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,577</b>	<b>100%</b>

# EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

## 2024 EMS STATISTICS

Emergency Response Times in the City of Kaukauna Fire Department Notified > First Unit On Scene	# of Runs	% of Runs	% Goal
Less than 5 Minutes	462	69.7%	90%
Greater than 5 Minutes	201	30.3%	10%

*NFPA 1710 standard is less than 5 minutes 90% of the time.*

*Kaukauna Fire Department's 90<sup>th</sup> percentile time is 6 minutes, 12 seconds.*

Incident Location Type	# of Runs	% of Runs
Residence - Single Family Home	725	45.9%
Nursing Home (SNIF, LTCF, Etc.)	297	18.8%
Residence - Apartment or Townhouse	258	16.3%
Street or Highway	76	4.8%
Public Building – Commercial Establishment	35	2.2%
Health Facility – Free-Standing ED/Urgent Care Center	34	2.2%
Factory	33	2.1%
Health Facility - Medical Office	22	1.4%
Not Applicable/Not Recorded	19	1.2%
Public Building - Restaurant/Café	18	1.1%
School – High School	13	0.8%
Residential Institution - Not Otherwise Listed	7	0.4%
Recreation Area – Public Park	6	0.4%
Public Building – Government	6	0.4%
Sport Facility - Field	6	0.4%
Public Building - Not Otherwise Listed	3	0.2%
School - Elementary	3	0.2%
School - Middle School	3	0.2%
Health Facility – Not Otherwise Listed	3	0.2%
Recreation Area - Not Otherwise Listed	3	0.2%
Religious Facility (not school)	2	0.1%
Construction Site - Building	1	0.1%
Health Facility – Ambulatory Surgery Center	1	0.1%
Construction Site - Industrial	1	0.1%
School – College or Trade School	1	0.1%
Farm	1	0.1%

# EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

## 2024 Financial Report

Coverage Contracts	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Village of Combined Locks	\$0	\$0	\$72,540	\$72,820	\$72,180

Billing Charge Summary	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Total Charges	\$1,033,601	\$1,133,796	\$1,341,496	\$1,279,725	\$1,302,289
Gross Revenue	\$521,903	\$512,668	\$627,547	\$665,385	\$634,017
Service Revenue	\$487,828	\$479,900	\$588,452	\$624,115	\$595,976

Payor Mix	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Commercial Insurance	16.3%	17.8%	17.4%	16.1%	19.5%
Medicaid	13.0%	13.2%	15.2%	15.9%	13.7%
Medicare	55.0%	55.7%	53.4%	54.2%	58.6%
Private	13.3%	10.5%	11.5%	10.7%	6.0%
Other	2.4%	2.8%	2.5%	2.2%	2.1%

Collection Rate by Payor	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Commercial Insurance	83.2%	73.1%	69.2%	84.2%	66.5%
Medicaid	26.6%	21.7%	34.0%	42.7%	38.1%
Medicare	40.1%	38.4%	40.5%	44.8%	45.4%
Private	77.2%	67.3%	53.6%	49.8%	21.8%
Other	90.2%	57.0%	83.9%	64.9%	76.7%
Overall Collection Rate	50.5%	45.3%	46.8%	52.0%	48.7%

# TRAINING

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The Kaukauna Fire Department’s annual training program is built to satisfy the standards set by the Insurance Services Office (ISO), the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), OSHA workplace-safety regulations, and Wisconsin SPS 330. In 2024, we advanced both foundational skills and complex emergency-operational proficiency so every member, from probationary firefighter to company officer, remains ready for whatever the next call brings. Our approach actively combines leadership development and officer education with vital hands-on drills, such as live-fire evolutions, flashover simulations, and joint exercises, reinforcing the knowledge, decision-making, and technical skills our community relies upon.



*Heath Buechel  
Assistant Chief of Training*

## Training Program Highlights

### **Elevating Leadership & Succession**

- **Fire Officer Leadership Education Program** – A critical component to enhance our fire officers’ leadership qualities.
- **Step-Up Officer Workbook** – Prepares experienced firefighters to assume the duties of a company officer. It covers essential leadership, tactical, and administrative functions required for the position.
- **Officer Development Certifications** – Enhanced departmental capabilities as three officers and one driver completed Officer-level courses, while several members attained Fire Instructor I and Driver-Operator credentials.

### **Advanced Live Fire Competency**

- **Flashover & Fire Behavior Labs** – Live burn evolutions at Fox Valley Technical College placed crews inside controlled flashover conditions, illustrating the heat signature and ventilation hazards of modern fuels.
- **Company Operations Drills** – Focused on enhancing company-level coordination through simulations involving quick-attack strategies, water movement, and rescue techniques in limited-staffing scenarios.

# TRAINING

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## Specialized Technical Skills

- **Bus Extrication** – Hands-on drills with Kobussen Bus Company refined patient-access and disentanglement techniques unique to bus emergencies.
- **HazMat Operations-Level Upgrade** – Additional certifications moved the entire department to the Operations Level, improving regional response capabilities.

## Regional Collaboration

Joint live fire days with Neenah-Menasha, Grand Chute, and Fox Crossing Fire Departments strengthened interoperability and familiarized crews with neighboring fire departments’ tactics and equipment.

## Training by the Numbers

### *Annual Training Requirements per Firefighter to Meet Standards*

Type of Training	Training Focus	Hours
Company Training	Group/Shift/Company Focused Training	192
Facilities Training	Live Fire and Smoke	18
Hazmat Training	Maintain Skills	6
OSHA Training	Hazardous Communication	4
EMS Training	Maintain Paramedic Licensure	32
Officer Training* Required for all fire officers	Maintain Skills / Succession Planning	12
Driver Training* Required for existing drivers	Maintain Skills	12
New Driver Training* Required for new drivers	Learn/Develop Skills	60
Recruit Training* Required for new hires	New Employee Training	240

# TRAINING

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## *Total Hours of Training Received by Kaukauna Firefighters in 2024*

Type of Training	Hours
EMS: Cardiac, Stroke, Medical, Trauma	567
EMS: CPR, Advanced Life Support	189
Fire: Company/Shift/Group Training	1,781
Fire: Existing Driver Training	198
Fire: Facilities (Live Fire and Smoke)	124
Fire: Recruit Training	103
Fire: All Other Categories	426
Total Hours	3,388

## **New Tools for 2024**

- 4-Gas Monitor – Expanded atmospheric monitoring at hazardous materials scenes, including the overhaul stage at structure fires.
- Sensit HXG-3P Flammable-Gas Detector – Flammable gas and vapor detection provides an extra layer of safety during operations.
- Battery-Powered K-12 Saw – Lightweight, highly effective tool that enhances our ability to perform rapid rescues and cut through obstacles in emergency situations.



## **Challenges Addressed**

Limited staffing and overtime demand occasionally reduced drill attendance. However, administrative support and flexible scheduling helped to keep all critical evolutions on track. A renewed focus on fundamental skills, such as hose movements, ladder deployment, and search skills, ensured the proficiency of all firefighters.

# TRAINING

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## Looking Forward – 2025 Goals

1. **Leadership Education** – Continue to expand knowledge and preparedness for our fire officers, preparing them for critical decision-making situations.
2. **Increase Emphasis on High-Risk, High Reward** – Increase emphasis on training scenarios such as live fire drills, vehicle extrications, to ensure readiness for these complex situations.
3. **Deepen Response District Awareness** – Integrate pre-incident planning into training drills to sharpen tactical size-up.
4. **Strengthen Succession Planning** – Build new and innovative ways to build internal talent to fill key department roles to ensure a smooth transition when positions become vacant.

This training year's successes are measured not only in hours spent or certifications earned, but in our personnel's increased confidence and competence. Every training session, every evolution, and every challenge faced has strengthened our ability to serve with excellence.

Looking ahead, we remain committed to continuous improvement. We are poised to expand our training programs, push the boundaries of our capabilities, and ensure that our department stays at the forefront of fire service readiness. Together, we will continue to rise to the challenges of tomorrow, ensuring a safer, stronger Kaukauna for all.



# FIRE REPORT

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The Kaukauna Fire Department is a combination fire department that consists of 21 full-time paid staff and 13 active paid-on-call members. All full-time staff are cross-trained as firefighters and licensed paramedics. Each shift is comprised of 6 firefighters, including the ranks of Assistant Chief, Lieutenant, two Driver/Operators, and two Firefighter/Paramedics. Administrative day staff consists of the Fire Chief, Asst. Chief of EMS, and Asst. Chief of Training. Staff is aided by an Administrative Assistant one day per week.

In addition to fire suppression and emergency medical services, we provide swift water rescue, ice rescue, confined space entry, trench rescue, and extrication services. The fire department actively pursues fire prevention through regular inspections and public education activities.

*The Kaukauna Fire Department is committed to providing a safe and healthy community for both citizens and businesses by minimizing fire loss through sound prevention efforts, competent suppression techniques and efficient medical care.*

# FIRE REPORT

## 2024 FIRE STATISTICS

Incident Type - Summary	2021	2022	2023	2024	% of Total
Fire	24	18	28	19	1.0%
Rescue & EMS	1,317	1,607	1,482	1,547	81.3%
Hazardous Condition	45	57	27	83	4.4%
Service Call	45	50	42	39	2.0%
Good Intent	67	58	75	101	5.3%
False Alarm & False Call	52	70	78	105	5.5%
Special Incident	8	4	8	9	0.5%
<b>Total Incidents</b>	<b>1,558</b>	<b>1,864</b>	<b>1,740</b>	<b>1,903</b>	<b>100%</b>

Property Loss - Summary	2021	2022	2023	2024
Pre-incident Property Values	9,977,800	11,112,550	17,360,200	6,082,350
Total Value Lost	124,550	55,550	951,641	256,150
Total Value Saved	9,853,250	11,057,000	16,408,559	5,826,200

Casualty – Summary	2021	2022	2023	2024
Civilian Injuries	1	2	0	1
Civilian Deaths	0	0	0	0
Firefighter Injuries	0	0	1	1
Firefighter Deaths	0	0	0	0

# INSPECTIONS

All Kaukauna firefighters continue to conduct quarterly fire inspections. Despite increasing calls for service and limited staffing in 2024, the Kaukauna Fire Department conducted 1,248 fire inspections throughout the community. A key focus in 2024 was enhancing the thoroughness of follow-up inspections and the resolution of fire code violations. Through collaborative efforts, Chief Carrel, Administrative Assistant Megan Brouch, and I determined that discrepancies in completing follow-up fire inspections were primarily due to issues within the ImageTrend software and human data entry errors. These factors have been addressed, and the completion rate for follow-up inspections on identified violations now meets departmental expectations for timely follow-up. Administrative Assistant Brouch has been an extremely important part of the fire inspection division's success.



*Cody Foss  
Assistant Chief of Inspections*

2024 Fire Inspection Summary	
Inspections Completed	1,248
Violations Found	105
Violations Corrected	77

Most Cited Violations		
906.2	Fire Extinguisher Maintenance	40
1008.1	Means-of-egress Obstruction	14
604.2.5	Exit Signage – Emergency Power	8
1013.3	Exit Signage – Illumination	7
505.1	Address Number Identification	6

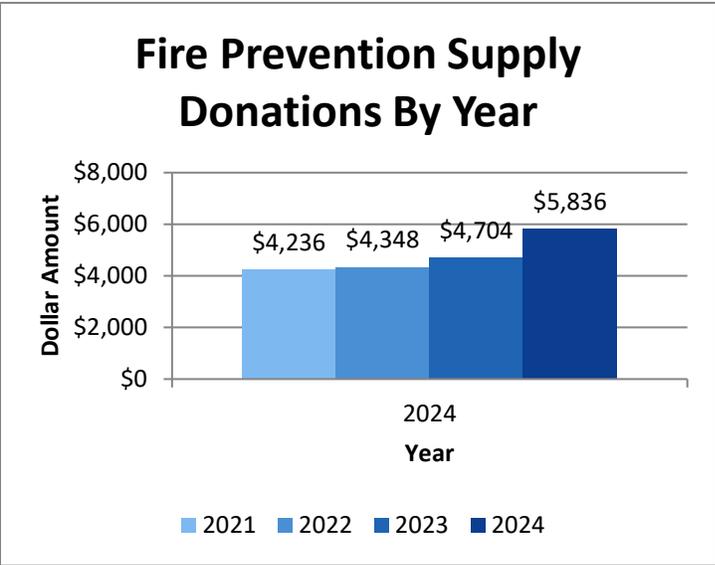
# COMMUNITY RISK REDUCTION

In 2024, our Community Risk Reduction (CRR) division continued to evolve to meet the changing needs of our community. Building on the foundation we established last year, we expanded our efforts beyond traditional fire prevention to address a wider range of safety risks through education, partnerships, and proactive initiatives.

This year, we delivered 33 educational sessions to Kaukauna Area School District (KASD) students, emphasizing the theme "Smoke alarms: Make them work for you!" Through these visits, we engaged with 1,242 students directly and distributed educational materials to more than 2,100 students. Thanks to the generosity of local Kaukauna businesses in collaboration with the National Fire Council, we raised \$5,242 in donations to support the distribution of these critical fire prevention materials. Additionally, our ongoing partnership with the Kaukauna Recreation Department allowed us to host another successful Safety Town Event.



*Joe Resch  
Assistant Chief of Community Risk Reduction*



Through our continued collaboration with the American Red Cross and private donors, we installed smoke and carbon monoxide detectors in 66 local homes, improving home safety for at-risk residents. Our free home safety assessment program remains available year-round, ensuring every household in need can access life-saving equipment and expert guidance.

This year, we also renewed our partnership with the Outagamie County Aging and Disability Resource

Center (ADRC) to implement a Fall Reduction program. This initiative focuses on reducing falls among our aging population by providing in-home referrals to the ADRC. Through this collaboration, we aim to connect at-risk individuals with resources and support to enhance their safety and well-being.

# APPARATUS & EQUIPMENT

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Under Assistant Chief Chad Gerrits' leadership, our Apparatus and Equipment Division continues to be the backbone of the Kaukauna Fire Department's operational readiness while providing exceptional value to our taxpayers. Our firefighters take pride in maintaining our fire apparatus, specialized tools, and the fire station itself.

As in years past, our firefighters handle substantial vehicle maintenance responsibilities, from daily inspections, routine maintenance, to technical repairs. They regularly collaborate with the city mechanic from the Department of Public Works (DPW), fostering a partnership that improves efficiency, reduces costs, and ensures our vehicles meet necessary operational standards. Throughout 2024, the department maintained its fleet of 12 fire apparatus, with crews working diligently to address numerous maintenance challenges and ensure all vehicles remained operational and ready for emergency response.



*Chad Gerrits  
Assistant Chief of Apparatus/Equipment*

Beyond vehicle maintenance, our on-duty crews dedicate significant time to maintaining the station and its facilities. They tackle everything from cleaning and landscaping to snow removal, minor plumbing repairs, and general upkeep. This hands-on approach preserves our station's condition and protects the community's significant investment in the facility for the long term.

We take immense pride in handling many technical and routine maintenance tasks in-house. In 2024, our firefighters:

- Tested and maintained 13 ground ladders to meet NFPA 1932 standards.
- Pressure-tested 200 lengths of fire hose, in accordance with NFPA 1962 standards
- Completed Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) Truck Inspections on all of our large vehicles in collaboration with DPW's mechanic.

This focus on internal capabilities ensures we address repairs and services efficiently, saving both time and money for our city.

Looking ahead, we're excited about the arrival of our new Pierce Ladder Truck, expected in early summer of 2025. A dedicated committee poured countless hours into designing this truck specifically for Kaukauna's needs, ensuring it will serve our community effectively for years to come.

# APPARATUS & EQUIPMENT

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This past year also saw significant improvements in how we manage our maintenance operations. Working with our Administrative Assistant and the City Maintenance Department, we created a more streamlined system for tracking work orders, monitoring costs, and optimizing resources going forward.

Notable Maintenance Issues Addressed in 2024:

- Engines:  
Exhaust repair, coolant leaks and repair, intake pressure gauge replaced, intake valve replacement, Kussmaul replaced.
- Ladder Truck  
Exhaust repair, hydraulic cylinder replacement, and recirculation line repair.
- Ambulances: Tires, batteries, heating issues, air conditioning, air compressor, parking brake.



*Engine 2121 on the lift in the Street Department shop. DPW Mechanic Harlan Hirschy is a valuable resource for the fire department.*