



Yakima County Fire District #4

East Valley Fire Department

2021 Annual Report

The Board of Fire Commissioners (David Ramynke, 2021 Chairman, Ben St. Mary, 2021 Vice Chairman and Les Riel, Commissioner), as well as Chief Dale Hille are proud to provide this information that reflects operations of the East Valley Fire Department (EVFD), Yakima County Fire District #4, during 2021.

It seems as though everywhere you turn in the East Valley you see growth. Construction of new homes, new businesses opening, and more people associated with both. This was highly evident to us in the East Valley Fire Department (EVFD) as we saw a record 20% increase in call volume in 2021 over 2020, with being paged 1601 times for service. Of those calls, 1056 were classified as Emergency Medical Service calls, and 546 calls were for other types of emergencies, including: structure fires, wildland fires, rescues, vehicle accidents, as well as fire alarms and false alarms.

There is no doubt that Covid was a factor in our increased response rates. It also had a serious effect on our personnel. We struggled through the vaccination mandate by Governor Jay Inslee and the fallout of that mandate which impacted our personnel. Yet through it all, your EVFD maintained adequate response personnel and adapted to the challenge with a positive outlook and an aggressive response to the challenges.

One of the largest steps that the EVFD made in 2021 was the commitment to full-time staffing of Station 42 in Terrace Heights 24 hours a day, 365 days a week. The remodel of the station in Terrace Heights set the stage for creating a staffing model that would support the full-time response from this station as well as Station 40 on Beaudry Rd. With this commitment, the Board of Commissioners (BOC) felt necessary to add to the career staff numbers to ensure that we have the people available to respond from both stations. Hiring of three additional firefighters the end of 2021 allows for continual staffing, which is supplemented by our highly trained and professional volunteer firefighters, primarily on nights and weekends, as they are available.

Administratively, our District Secretary, Jenifer Mize moved away from the area, and our administrative assistant, Katelynn “Kaydee” Hogan was promoted to District Secretary. With

the Fire District looking to the future, we had Kaydee in training as part of the District succession plan. Although sooner than we had anticipated, the transition to this challenging position was made easier by having Jenifer work remotely for several month during Kaydee’s onboarding in her new position. Thank you, Jennifer, for your service to the EVFD, and welcome Kaydee to your new position!

As the East Valley grows, we work diligently to anticipate the growth and the challenges that growth can bring to the emergency services. Working together with our neighbors as needed, we are confident that we are bringing a high quality of service to our East Valley neighbors and all the people we serve.

This all comes with a cost, and the BOC works diligently to be prudent in the finances of the Fire District to make the most of the tax dollars you provide for our services in current operations, as well as saving for future expansion and growth. We thank you all for your support and we pledge to be good stewards of that which we are entrusted.

“THE DISTRICT”

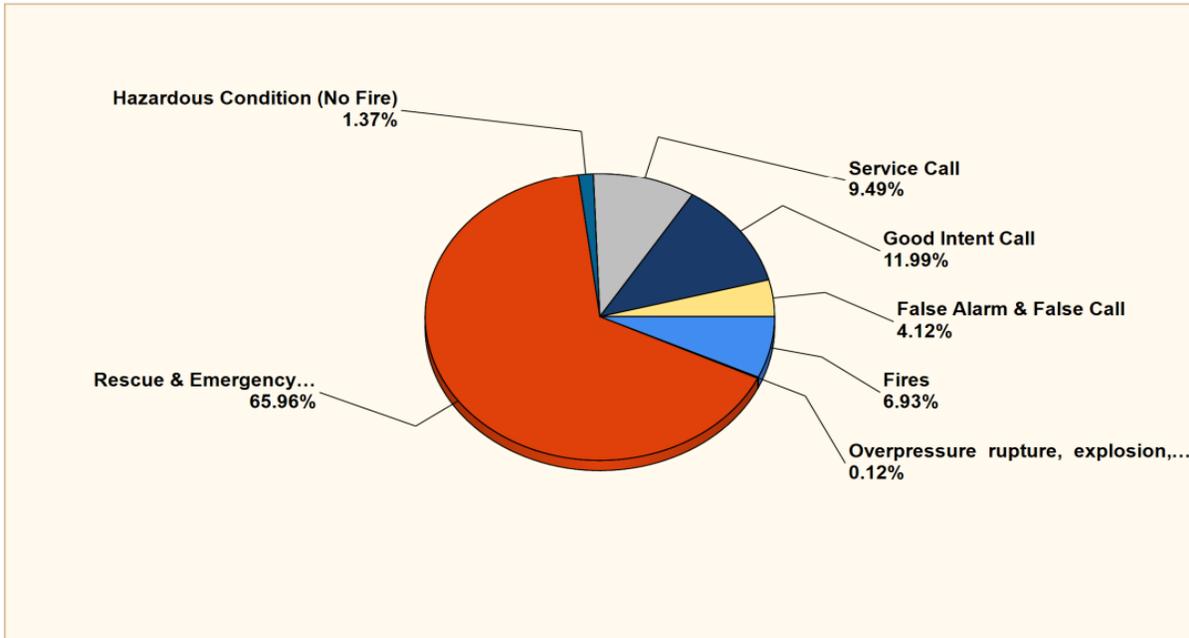
TOTAL CALLS 2020 - 1329

TOTAL CALLS 2021 - 1601

INCREASE 2020 – 2021 = 20.0%

As you can see in the following charts, Emergency Medical Service calls are the majority of our call volume.

FDID	MAJOR INCIDENT TYPE	NUMBER OF INCIDENTS	% of TOTAL
39D04			
	Fires	111	6.9%
	Overpressure rupture, explosion, overhear - no fire	2	0.1%
	Rescue & Emergency Medical Service	1056	66.0%
	Hazardous Condition (No Fire)	22	1.4%
	Service Call	152	9.5%
	Good Intent Call	192	12.0%
	False Alarm & False Call	66	4.1%
	Total Number Incidents for 39D04:	1601	



Every call we go on is different. It is up to the officer in charge to code the call in multiple available categories for information tracking. Here is a brief explanation of the call types shown in the previous charts:

FIRES:

This is when we arrive at a scene and find a fire of any type as the major reason for the call. It could be a structure fire, a wildland fire, a vehicle fire, or many other types that we respond to.

OVERPRESSURE RUPTURE, EXPLOSION, OVERHEAT – NO FIRE:

This designation is used when a container of some sort exceeds its working pressure and ruptures, with no fire associated.

RESCUE AND EMERGENCY SERVICE:

This is the majority of our call volume. It correlates to any medical related call we respond to including falls with injuries, sickness, medical conditions, etc. It also includes vehicle accidents, water rescues and other emergency rescue situations we respond to. Along with the fire department being dispatched to the call, an ambulance is typically dispatched also. The ambulance may be cancelled if the EMT's on scene and the patient determine that emergency transport is not needed.

HAZARDOUS CONDITION (NO FIRE):

This category is often associated with calls that have potential of a dangerous situation, and we are called to help mitigate the problem before it becomes an emergent situation.

SERVICE CALL:

Service calls are those times when we are called to assist the public in a non-emergency situation. These often are calls for a smoke detector or CO2 detector sounding, and yes, the proverbial “cat stuck in a tree”.

GOOD INTENT CALL:

A good intent call is most often associated in our area with lift assists for someone that has fallen, with no injuries, but needs help getting up again.

FALSE ALARM & FALSE CALL:

This category is for false alarms, smoke investigations which produce no fire emergency, unfound accidents or vehicle collisions, etc.

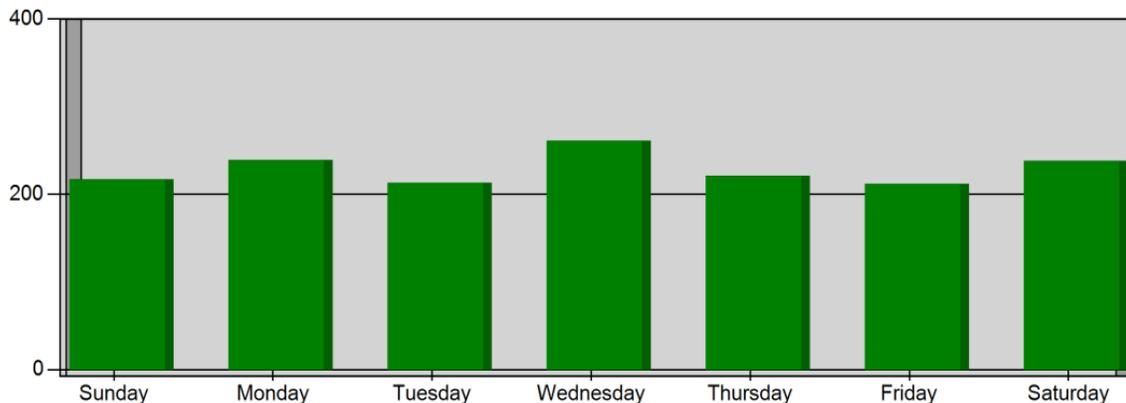
We respond to all calls we are dispatched to. However, we urge the public to use the 911 system wisely as false alarms and false calls, medical calls that are truly not emergencies, and other calls that could be handled in another way are very costly to the Fire District, and ultimately, the taxpayers that trust us to be stewards of their money, in addition to taxing our personnel and taking them from other true emergency situations occurring.

Overlapping calls are when we are already on an emergency call and we are dispatched to another call at the same time. This is where having response from two stations, as well as adding additional full-time personnel is critical to mitigate each emergency quickly and efficiently.,

OVERLAPPING CALLS	
# OVERLAPPING	% OVERLAPPING
320	19.99

This average had months which were as high as 28%. Yet, the EVFD handled the load with skilled personnel and efficient operations.

As you can see, calls for emergency service delivery has very little to do with the day of the week.



“Neighbors Helping Neighbors”

The East Valley Fire Department responded 24 times to assist our neighbors when there was a Mutual Aid request for additional equipment or manpower. We, in turn, requested Mutual Aid 2 times from our neighbors for assistance on larger incidents.

“OUR PERSONNEL”

EVFD has 15 full time career personnel. Three shifts cover the Fire District, working a schedule of 48 hours on and 96 hours off. Each shift has a Captain, a Lieutenant, and, as of January 2022, three firefighters. The shift Captain and one firefighter are assigned to Station 40 (Moxee) and the Lieutenant and two firefighters are assigned to Station 42 (Terrace Heights). The Fire Chief is also available for response during normal business hours, as well as overnight and weekends on an as needed basis.

We also rely on our 12 highly trained volunteer firefighters to fill shifts and supplement our staffing as their schedules allow. The EVFD, as many other combination and volunteer fire agencies lost several valuable members due to the August vaccination mandate. This along with the fact that finding enthusiastic individuals with the time needed to gain necessary and mandatory training, as well as pulling response shifts, is becoming more and more difficult with the demands on people’s time. We are, however, continually looking for people that wish to serve their community as a volunteer firefighter. If you wish more information, please stop by or <https://secure.emergencyreporting.com/training/?csrt=9829651287558612723> call one of our stations.

There was 3424 hours of training accomplished in 2021 with both career and volunteer firefighters. Volunteer firefighters spent 856 total man hours, or an average of 71 hours per individual training to keep their skill levels high. Several of the people included in this figure were completing their recruit courses and probationary year, totaling approximately 160 of mandatory initial training each.

Most training is done with both stations training together, which is why you may see both engines at one or the other stations during the day for a period. It is imperative that all members of a shift work as a coordinated unit, and this is accomplished by constantly training together to hone their skills.

“OUR RESPONSE”

2021 gave the EVFD a true look at the results of the remodel of Station 42 in Terrace Heights to accommodate full-time career staffing, and the results on Station 40 with the staffing split between the two stations. The real question was with the number of personnel we currently had, could we sufficiently cover the Fire District. The answer was yes, but we can do better.

With the two stations staffed, the Fire District was in effect split into two zones for dispatching and response purposes. The determining factors of whether one or both stations are dispatched to a call are based on call type and severity. For example, active fires, vehicle accidents and CPR calls get both stations dispatched as they require more manpower on the scene. While “routine” medical calls will normally only be assigned to the station serving that zone. There is always the option for the Officer of the engine to upgrade the call and request assistance from the other station if needed, as well as release the other engine from a call if they are not needed to return to cover their area.

The following chart shows the relative call break-down for zones. The Central (St. 40) and East (Station 41) zones are actually combined when dispatched. This shows that the Terrace Heights area has a larger call volume than the Moxee area. This is what drove the decision that the new firefighters will be stationed at Station 42 in Terrace Heights in 2022 to give more manpower for calls in that area.

ZONE	NUMBER OF CALLS
Central - St-40 Area	60
East - St-41 Area	621
West - St-42 Area	920
TOTAL:	1601

Of major importance when there is an emergency, is how fast we can get out the door, and to your door. Here is how we did in 2021. On average, it took just over two minutes for us to be dispatched by SunComm (our contracted dispatch center through the City of Yakima). This timeframe is quite normal in the emergency services and one that dispatch centers are always working to improve.

AGENCY	AVERAGE DISPATCH TIME (Alarm to Dispatch)
Yakima County FD #4	0:02:18

Once dispatched, it took, on average, 2 minutes and 33 seconds for our vehicle to be on the road. This time varies depending on the nature of the call as fires and vehicle accidents require personnel to don extra personal protective equipment before leaving the station.

SHIFT	AVERAGE TURNOUT TIME as MM:SS (Dispatch to Enroute)
A Shift	2:31
B Shift	2:46
C Shift	2:23

With all that factored in, the average time from dispatch to the door of the emergency scene in 2021 was just shy of 9 minutes. This time averages calls close to stations, as well as those that have extended drive times for response. Please notice that with the opening of Station 42 to full time operations, the average response time (dispatch to door) was reduced by 1 minute 44 seconds over the entire Fire District.

YEAR	RESPONSE TIME (minutes)
2020	10.13
2021	8.69

The average response times for each zone (St. 42, Terrace Heights and St. 40, Moxee) are shown below. The response from St. 42 is slightly longer due to extended drive times to many of the calls in the hills above Terrace Heights, as well as poor road conditions in many of the areas.

ZONE	AVERAGE RESPONSE TIME in minutes (Dispatch to Arrived)
West - St-42 Area	09:06
East - St-41 Area	08:13

“The Future”

As we walk through 2022, we are excited to bring a more robust response profile with some of the best firefighters in the Yakima valley. The addition of three more full-time firefighters gives the Fire District greater options and opportunity for emergency response. The anticipated hiring of a Deputy Chief of Operations, Safety & Training will assist the Fire District in aligning training, recruitment of both career and volunteer firefighters, as well as operational decisions to move us into the future.

In addition, a new design of one of our front-line brush trucks will give us the opportunity to respond to all calls with a smaller vehicle, giving better access and resource use.

In 2022, we are beginning a feasibility study that will potentially start the process of building a training facility to serve our firefighters, as well as being a hub for multi-agency training in the Yakima valley. Consistent training is what keeps your firefighters competent and efficient.

The East Valley Fire Department is always striving to provide exceptional customer service in a dynamic and growing community through leadership, training, public education, preparedness and stewardship of our resources. We welcome input from you on how we are doing, as well as suggestions on how we can improve. Some changes take time and careful consideration, while other changes may be easily implemented that increase efficiency with a small adjustment. Whatever the case, we are open to new and innovative ideas to help us serve you better.