

2023

ANNUAL REPORT

BOWLING GREEN FIRE DEPARTMENT



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bgky.org/fire
#MakeItBetter

Cover: Firefighters recover a flag at the State St Fire 07.21.2023
Above: A fire hydrant given to Deputy Chief GIlliam for his retirement 08.31.2023



"THE CHALLENGES OF MEETING THE DEMANDS THAT STEM FROM THE EXPLOSIVE GROWTH ONLY PROVIDE AN OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE, SAVE, AND PROTECT MORE THAN EVER."

JUSTIN BROOKS
FIRE CHIEF

FROM THE CHIEF'S DESK

Growth, a challenge or an opportunity? In 2023, the City of Bowling Green continued its torrid pace for growth when it came to seeing an increase in population, traffic, job growth, and new and expanding infrastructure developments. The answer of whether growth is seen to be that of a challenge or an opportunity is really dependent on the individual's perspective. For the Bowling Green Fire Department in 2023, the men and women wearing the uniform would find over 8,000 opportunities to serve, save, and protect the people of our community.

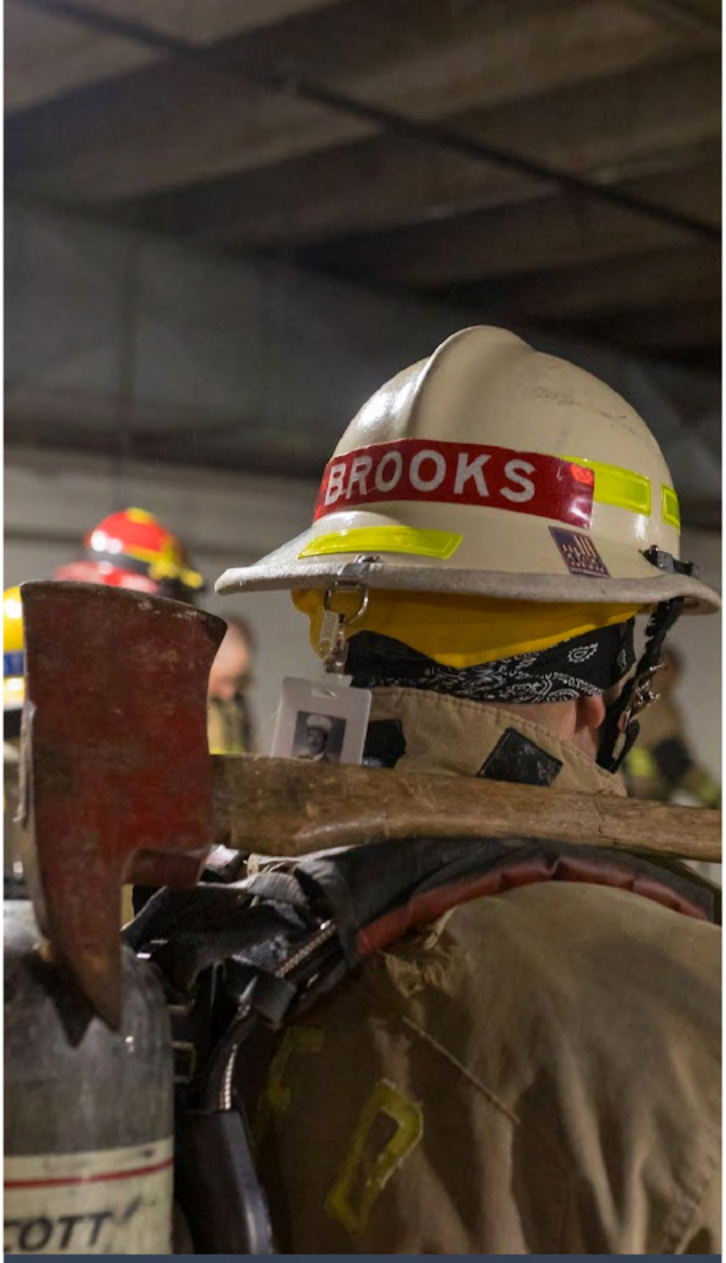
Sure, growth brings challenges in terms of meeting the growing expectations of our community when it comes to various services needed from the fire department. The BGFD navigated this past year by gaining a greater perspective; the Fire Department is an all hazards, service-based occupation. No longer is the Fire Department just concerned with extinguishing fires.

With the "all hazards" perspective made clear and confirmed in 2023, the future of the BGFD will provide additional opportunities in the days, months, and years ahead. From future fire stations to the need to increase staffing, the challenges of meeting the demands that stem from the explosive growth only provide an opportunity to serve, save, and protect more than ever.

I cannot think of a better place to serve in the role of a firefighter than in the City of Bowling Green. The Department continues to receive the needed support from city leadership to sustain and expand the services provided by the BGFD. Proof of that continued support came in the benchmarks and accomplishments found in 2023. From hiring 15 firefighters to meet the demands of a new fire station, to approving a second Battalion Chief to be added to daily minimum staffing level in 2024, the BGFD is allowed to grow alongside the city, so that every need is met within the benchmarks set and communicated as the standard of service expected.

Remaining an accredited agency in 2023 and holding an ISO Class 1 rating, the BGFD remains one of just 122 career fire departments nationwide having both designations together. When much is given, much is required. History has proven that we are indeed stronger in numbers. So as the city looks to strengthen its case as the best, the BGFD will look to lead from out front on being ready for what is to come, or maybe what is to be added. Until then, the BGFD continues the preparation needed to assure the performance meets the need, wherever and whenever called upon to serve, save, and protect. Growth can only be viewed as an opportunity when serving others who need you.

Justin Brooks





MISSION, VISION, & VALUES

"HONOR, INTEGRITY, AND PROFESSIONALISM. CHOOSE TO UPHOLD THESE CORE VALUES NOT JUST TODAY, BUT EVERYDAY. AT NO POINT WILL WE ACCEPT ANYTHING LESS. WHEN MUCH IS GIVEN, MUCH IS REQUIRED."

- CHIEF JUSTIN BROOKS

In 2021, a committee was formed to redefine the Department's Mission, Vision, and Values statements. The committee included 12 personnel from all ranks and all shifts. The first step was to ensure common ground and shared definitions. Hours were spent brainstorming, charting, crossing out, and prioritizing. The committee landed on the following guiding principles for the Bowling Green Fire Department

MISSION

To Serve, Save, and Protect. Make it Better.

VISION

Continuous improvement through intentional efforts for excellence

VALUES

Honor
Integrity
Professionalism

The City of Bowling Green remains the third largest and fastest-growing city in the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

Established in 1898, the Bowling Green Fire Department is a fully-paid, all-hazard department providing professional service to the City of Bowing Green for 125 years. The BGFD protects an area of 42.6 square miles and an estimated population of 75,000.

BGFD services to the community include fire and rescue operations, emergency medical services, fire investigations, aircraft rescue firefighting, hazardous materials response, community risk reduction, and education programs.

The BGFD operates out of seven strategically-located fire stations to ensure adequate coverage of the City. Station 8 in the Kentucky Transpark area of the City is set to open in April 2024 to address a gap in response time compliance.

In 2023, daily minimum staffing was 33 personnel with 11 frontline apparatus in service daily: seven engines, three aerials, and one command vehicle.

$19.1M

FY24 ADOPTED OPERATING BUDGET

$255

COST PER CAPITA

03.02.2023

BREAK-EVEN DATE PROPERTY SAVED EXCEEDS OPERATING BUDGT



DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW



2023 IN REVIEW

GROWTH THROUGH IMPROVEMENT

The Department has been internationally accredited through the Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI) since 2008. Having been most recently re-accredited in 2018, this year brought the challenge back around. In 2022, an accreditation team was formed from all ranks within the Department, from firefighter to Fire Chief.

Documents were submitted in March 2023 to CFAI, including an in-depth self assessment, Strategic Plan, and Community Risk Assessment/Standard of Cover. A team of fire service professionals from around the country came to visit Bowling Green in June and recommended the Department for re-accreditation. A core team appeared before the Commission on August 28, 2023 in Chicago and was granted re-accredited status.

Special thanks to the dedicated Accreditation Team: Accreditation Manager Elyse Jonker, Firefighter Jonathan Harrell, Firefighter Ben Hurt, Firefighter Curtis Napier, Firefighter Brett Pitchford, Engineer Austin Conner, Captain Chris Britton, Captain Michael Webster, Deputy Chief Rob Gilliam, Deputy Chief Bret Smith, and Fire Chief Justin Brooks.

Pictured: Chief Brooks, Deputy Chief Gilliam, Elyse Jonker, Deputy Chief Smith, and team leader Mike Higgins following the Commission hearing in Chicago.



SEE HOW WE'VE GROWN

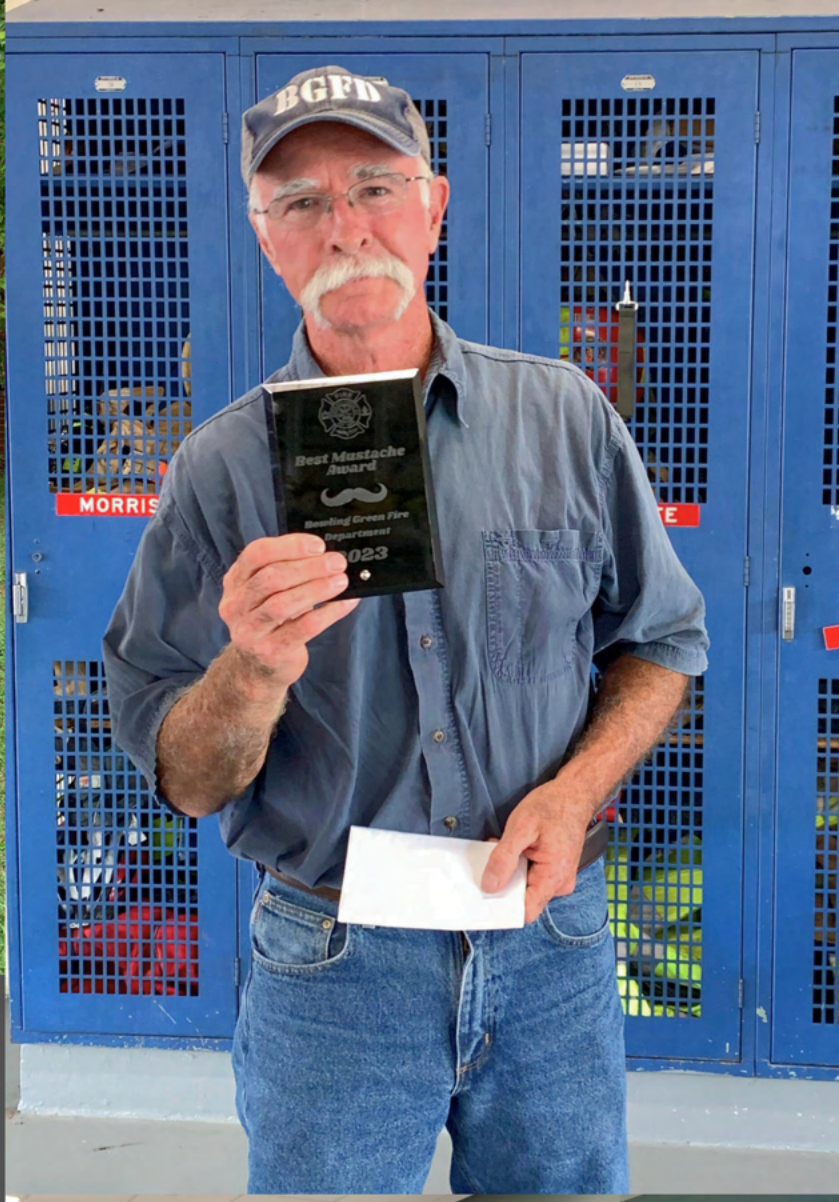
In 2023, the Bowling Green Fire Department celebrated 125 years of *making it better* for the City of Bowling Green. Vintage commemorative t-shirts were given to all employees (pictured above).

On July 15, 2023, a 125th Anniversary Celebration was held for all current and retired employees. As a throwback to the hundredth anniversary in 1998, a mustache contest was held with two winners, one retired and one active duty. Bucket rides to rescue cats from a tree, food trucks, family activities, and retiree story hour brought the family together in celebration.

BGFD members from 1963-2023 were in attendance and a lot of memories were shared. We are proud to serve, save, and protect the City of Bowling Green and will continue to do so another 125+ years

ON SEPTEBMER 1, 1898, BOWLING GREEN'S FIRST PAID FIRE DEPARTMENT CAME INTO EXISTANCE WITH FIRE CHIEF JAMES A. WILKERSON AND TWO APPOINTED FIREMEN, JOHN MOLTENBERRY AND DAVE HARRISON





"I THINK WE NEED TO HONOR OUR RETIREES. IF THIS IS A CELEBRATION OF THE LAST 125 YEARS, WE NEED TO HONOR THE GUYS THAT CAME BEFORE US AND LAID THE FOUNDATION THAT WE HAVE TODAY."

- FIREFIGHTER DYLAN HAWKINS








Space Walk
270-678-6642







STATION 8

8:31

2023 90TH PERCENTILE TRAVEL TIME TO TRANSPARK

The Transpark area of Bowling Green was identified as a gap in performance with a 90th percentile travel time of over 8 minutes, while the benchmark standard set for the Department is 4 minutes city-wide. Previous leaders of the Department reviewed the data and saw the need for this Station years ago based on City annexation, growth, and call volume in the area.

The land for Station 8 was donated to the City in 2019 and ground breaking took place in April of 2023. This project was partially funded with $1 million from the Commonwealth of Kentucky Community Development Block Grant, presented to BGFD by Governor Andy Beshear on August 30, 2022.

Pictured below: Judge Executive Doug Gorman, Mayor Todd Alcott, Chief Justin Brooks, and City Manager Jeff Meisel shovel dirt at the groundbreaking for Station 8

TRAINING INSTRUCTOR

An additional position within the Training Division was approved by City leadership in the FY'24 budget. The position was also approved by the Kentucky Public Pensions Authority in September. Engineer Dakota Justis competed and was selected as the Department's Training Instructor, increasing the Division's personnel from five to six.



GROWTH & EXPANSION

WHAS CRUSADE FOR CHILDREN

2023 was the first year BGFD partnered with WHAS Crusade for Children to raise funding for several programs that benefit children in our community. BGFD hosted a touch-a-truck event, encouraging community members to stop by as many stations as possible for the opportunity to win a personal station tour. Donations were collected at each station and a total of $2,180 was raised for this cause

$2,180

RAISED BY BGFD FOR CRUSADE FOR CHILDREN

OFFICER TRAINING SCHOOL (OTS)

In March, the Bowling Green Fire Department opened its doors to outside students for the first time in our 5th annual Officer Training School (OTS).

Students from BGFD, as well as students from 5 other Kentucky fire departments, came together to learn and grow individually, but more importantly as a team. They were challenged mentally and physically, and came out with a drive to be the best versions of themselves for their families, departments, crews, and for their communities.

The course focuses on servant leadership, developing students in their confidence, communication, and personal mission.

Participating agencies were Anchorage-Middletown Fire Department, Elizabethtown Fire Department, Glasgow Fire Department, Henderson Fire Department, and Paducah Fire Department. Graduating class pictured below



POLICE + FIRE SOFTBALL

On July 6, 2023, while responding to a call for service, Bowling Green Police Officer Matt Davis was shot several times, suffering multiple life-threatening gunshot wounds. Because of the actions taken by other officers and first responders on scene, although critically injured, Officer Davis survived the incident and is still recovering.

On September 25, 2023, the third annual Police + Fire Softball Game was held at WKU. T-shirts were sold to participants and other members of the police and fire communities. BGFD partnered with Blue Cotton, a local screen printing company, and proceeds from the t-shirts went directly to support Officer Davis's recovery.









GM Bowling Green Assembly Corvette Plant



Barren River Area Child Advocacy Center

GROWING PARTNERSHIPS

In 2023, the Department fostered existing partnerships and created new ones. Meeting the mission is a team effort, and we appreciate community partners working together for the same goals



Family Enrichment Center



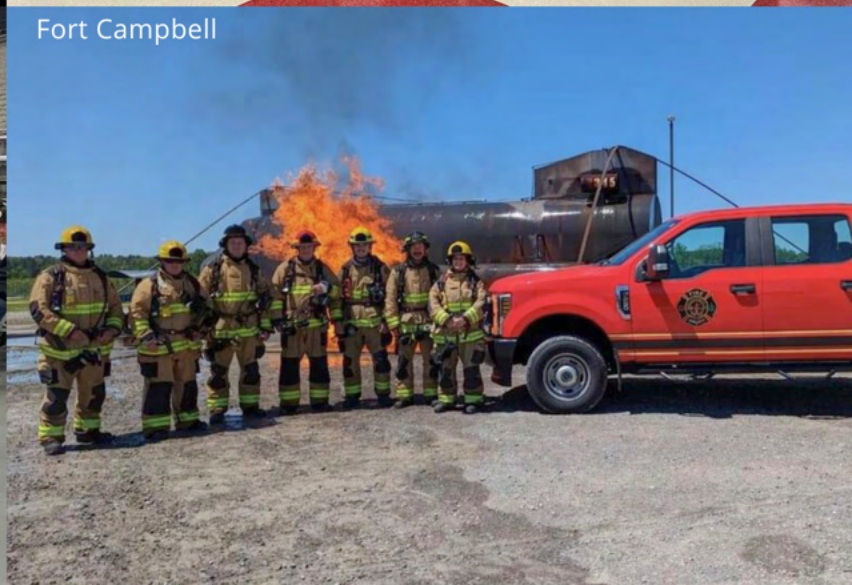
Mission BBQ



Team Focus



Team Construction



Fort Campbell



RECORD GROWTH

In November of 2022, a record-setting recruit class was hired with a class of 13 recruits. For the Training Division, 2023 started with in the midst of the Department's largest Recruit Academy to date. Training utilized more instructors and more stations to accommodate the large class size. The Recruit Academy concluded in March with 13 recruits ready for shift assignment.

This was just a trial-run, as the Training Division then geared up for an even larger task, another record-setting class.

On October 17, 2023, the Board of Commissioners approved the appointment of 22 firefighters to the Recruit Academy Class of 2024 (below). Fifteen of the positions were approved in anticipation for the opening of Station 8 in 2024.

"THE BGFD HAS ENTERED UNCHARTED WATERS IN TERMS OF GROWTH. THIS GROWTH IS NOT ONLY GOOD FOR US BUT ALSO GOOD FOR THE GROWING NUMBER OF CITIZENS WE SERVE."

- SHANNON PARDUE,

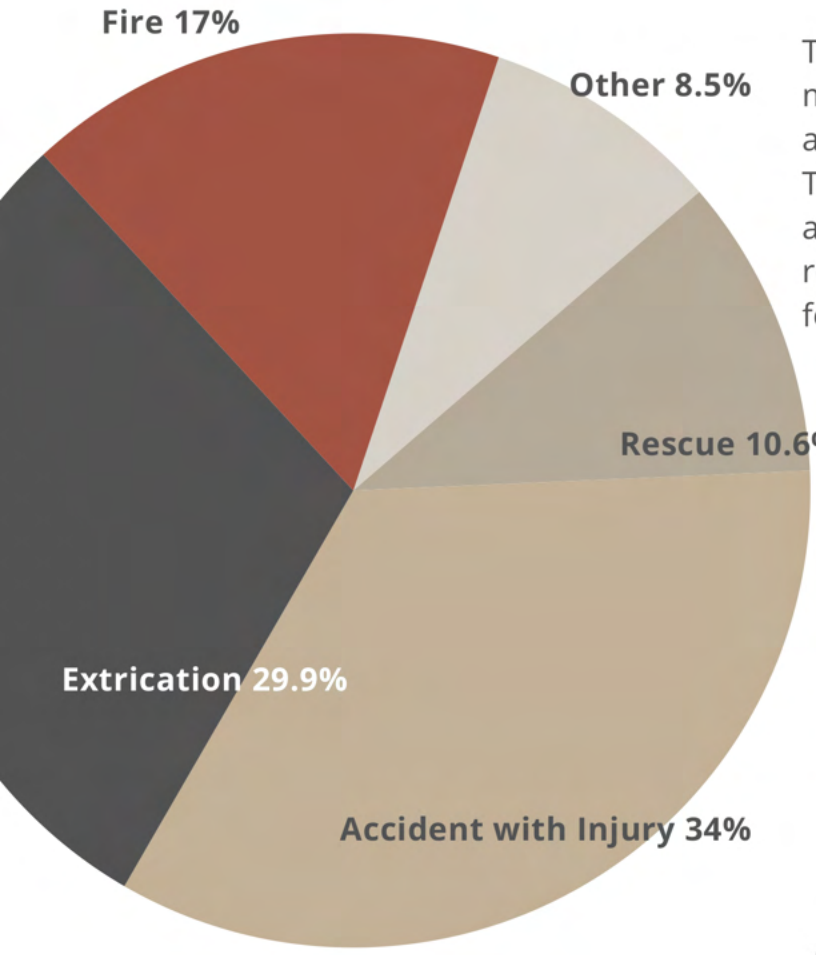
ASSISTANT CHIEF OF TRAINING

Graduating Class of 2023 (above): Levi Anthony, Zachary Barnhart, Evron Carlson, Bryce Chandler, Brandon Jaggers, Miguel Paredes, Josh Scott, Griffin Spainhoward, Stephen Stoll, Nate Sutton, Brandon Thomas, Austin Valentine, and Lane Woodward





GROWING OUR SERVICE



The Bowling Green Fire Department holds several mutual aid agreements and one automatic aid agreement for service outside of the City limits. These agreements include a technical rescue agreement with Warren Co. Fire Departments for rope and water rescue, and mutual aid agreements for fires, vehicle extrication, and fire investigations.

In 2023, the Department saw an increase in requests for service outside of the response district. There were 39 mutual/automatic aid responses made in 2022 and 47 in 2023, a 20% increase.

Of 47 requests for aid in 2023:

- 16 accident with injury
- 14 extrication
- 8 fire
- 5 rescue
- 4 other incident types

Above: Crews respond to a vehicle fire 07.14.2023

20%

INCREASE IN REQUESTS FOR AID

14

EXTRICATIONS FROM A VEHICLE

CAVE CITY TRENCH RESCUE

THE BOWLING GREEN FIRE DEPARTMENT HAS HAD A TRENCH RESCUE TEAM FOR APPROXIMATELY 30 YEARS AND OVER THOSE YEARS, COUNTLESS HOURS HAVE BEEN SPENT PREPARING FOR THAT ONCE-IN-A-CAREER INCIDENT. ON JULY 1, 2023, THAT INCIDENT ARRIVED, AND ALL THE PRIOR TRAINING AND PREPARATION CAME TO FRUITION.

Rescue 1 and Truck 1 responded with 6 personnel to a trench rescue in Cave City, approximately 30 miles north of Bowling Green. A female had been working in a trench when it collapsed and she was fully encapsulated under the dirt. An off-duty callback was requested for the technical rescue team, and 9 members of the team responded to assist.

Cave City Fire Department crews were first to arrive. They were able to uncover the victim's face and place patient on O2. This was around the 15:25 mark. Upon BGFD arrival, there were numerous people unprotected inside the trench trying to dig. Efforts were made immediately to get them out and remove them to a safe area.

R1 arrived and met with off-duty BGFD personnel and the Cave City Fire Chief. Engineer Dustin Jones had developed a good incident action plan that was implemented immediately. Ground pads, ventilation and ladders were placed in and around trench. A bridge was placed across trench to aid in panel sets and shoring. Initial panels were set horizontally and placed closest to the victim. Due to the collapse and the fact that only the top of patient's head was visible, placement of the strongbacks was difficult. Once other members of the Tech Rescue team arrived on scene it was determined that Engineer Maynard had the most experience in Trench rescue and he was put in command of the operations. The decision



15

RESCUERS RESPONDED

3:00

HOURS FROM ARRIVAL TO VICTIM REMOVAL

was made to change to horizontal panel sets to increase the capture of the trench walls. Significant amounts of back filling was needed due to the irregular shapes of the trench walls after collapse. The first panel was set using a combination of Paratech Air shores and Ellis screw jack shores.

ONCE THIS PANEL WAS SET, THE FIRST BGFD MEMBER WAS PLACED IN THE TRENCH TO MAKE PATIENT CONTACT AND BEGIN DIGGING (16:30).

Captain Anthony and Captain Harbin entered the trench to oversee digging, shoring, and patient care as well as to ensure the safety of personnel rotating through interior trench operations and they remained in these positions throughout.

A second panel was then set next to the victim and crews worked to shore while other members continued patient care and digging. Once the second panel was set, a paramedic from Barren-Metcalfe EMS made entry into the trench and, assisted by BGFD personnel, started an IV in the arm that was uncovered and placed the victim on a heart monitor (approx. 17:10). The second panel was secured and more crew members rotated through to remove dirt away from the patient.

The victim location was actually directly under the trench wall. This proved difficult to back fill the panels because that was the space that she occupied. Crews continued to remove dirt and Captain Anthony assisted Barren-Metcalfe with patient care while in the trench. As crews removed more and more dirt, another shore was placed on the bottom of the panels to protect the trench walls from further collapse under the first panel sets. These were put in place while crews continued to dig.

At approximately 18:15, crews had uncovered the victim down to her knees. While scooping dirt away they felt a hard handle and the victim advised it was the shovel she was using. Crews that were in the trench pulled the shovel out with rope. This allowed the dirt around her to loosen and the victim was able to wiggle her legs. Crews moved a Stokes basket down to the bottom of the trench. Crews then lifted the victim out of the remaining dirt and placed her on the Stokes basket and she was lifted from the trench and placed on a stretcher and into EMS care at approximately 18:25. All crew members exited the trench at 18:40. Crews extricated equipment and loaded it back onto trailers and cleared the scene at 20:12.

A successful rescue of a fully encapsulated trench rescue victim is very rare. But with great preparation comes great outcomes. The victim was hospitalized for several weeks but fully recovered. The team was able to meet with her a month later.

“IF IT WEREN’T FOR THE 30 YEARS OF KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, TRAINING, AND PREPARATION THAT HAD OCCURRED LEADING UP TO JULY 1ST, 2023, THIS INCIDENT LIKELY WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN A SUCCESS.“

- BATTALION CHIEF JOE HARBIN



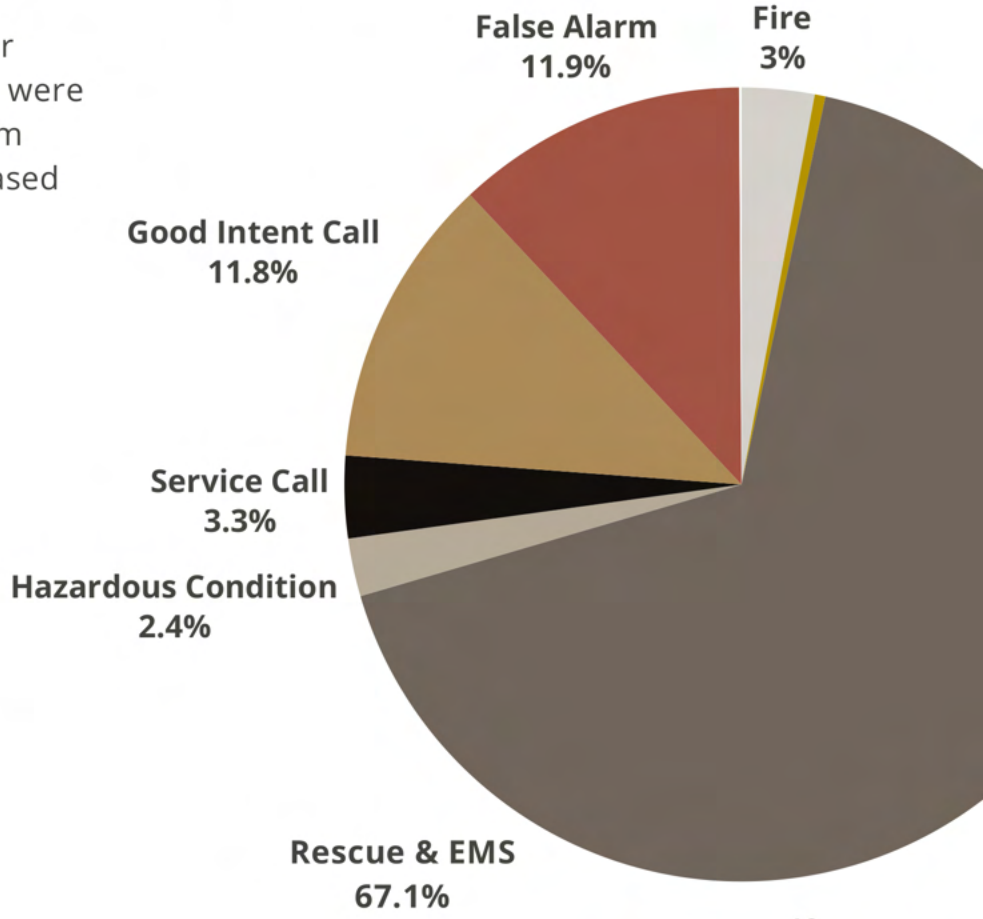


BY THE NUMBERS

The Bowling Green Fire Department responded to a total of 8,305 calls for service in 2023. This represents an 8.8% increase from 2022 total calls for service of 7,633.

Approximately 67% of calls were for emergency medical service and 3% were fire. EMS call volume increased from 2022 by 12%, while fire calls decreased by 19%.

246 - Fire
5570 - Rescue & EMS
196 - Hazardous Condition
278 - Service Call
984 - Good Intent Call
987 - False Alarm
44 - Other Call Types



Above: Acquired structure training with recruits 11.28.2023

CALL VOLUME ANALYSIS

Stations 1 and 4 had the largest call volumes of all stations and together account for 50% of the total run volume for the department. Rescue 1 responded to the greatest number of incidents with a total of 1644, followed by Engine 4 with 1547. Both Station 1 and Station 4 are dual-company stations with Rescue 1 and Engine 4 both accompanied by an aerial company. This confirms that BGFD resources are distributed appropriately within the response district.

Stations 5 and 7 remain the slowest with lower call volumes than other stations, however both saw an increase in call volume from 2022 with 24% for Station 7 and 5% for Station 5. It is predicted that Station 5's call volume will decrease in 2024 with the opening of Station 8 in the Transpark area of Bowling Green.

Of the total 8,305 calls for service, 6,859 required emergency response. This represents 82%, an increase from 79% emergency response to calls for service in 2022.

Total response time city-wide for all types of emergency calls was 6 minutes and 11 seconds for the first-arriving unit. This is over 91% compliance with BGFD's benchmark response time goal of 6 minutes and 20 seconds for Fire, and 6 minutes and 45 seconds for EMS.

Pictured: Structure Fire on State St. 07.21.2023

8.8%

TOTAL CALL VOLUME INCREASE FROM 2022

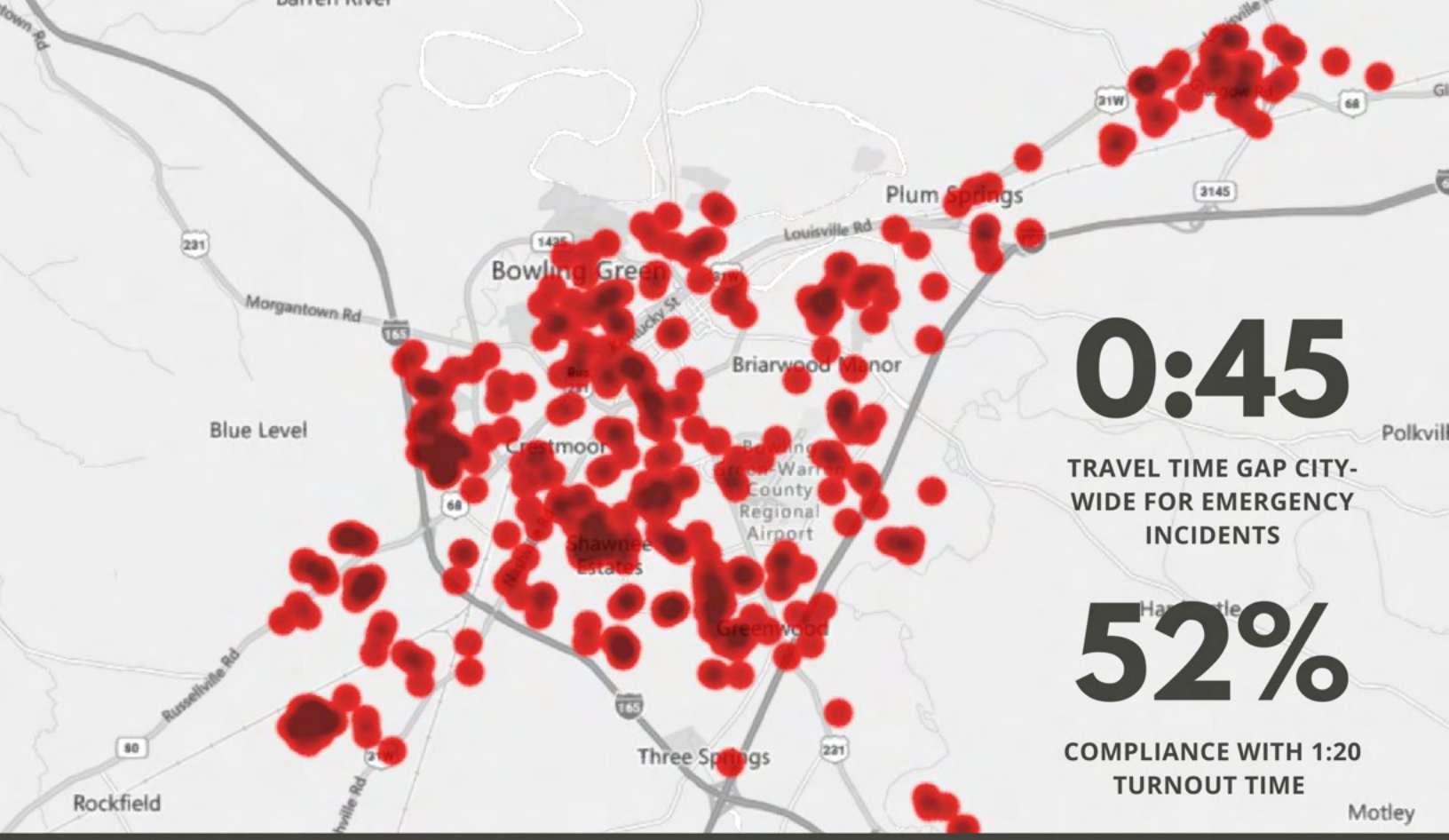
82%

OF INCIDENTS REQUIRED EMERGENCY RESPONSE



6:11

90% TOTAL RESPONSE TIME TO ALL EMERGENCY INCIDENTS



PERFORMANCE GAP ANALYSIS

It is the duty of the BGFD senior staff members to monitor incident data to ensure the requirements for the standards are met. When any non-conforming trends are identified, BGFD senior staff members shall make recommendations to bring response times within compliance.

Gaps in the Department's performance have been identified by analyzing the incident data from 2023. Above is a travel map where the first-arriving unit's travel time to emergency incidents was greater than or equal to 5 minutes. The benchmark for travel time in all districts in 4 minutes, 90 percent of the time, while actual performance was 4:45.

There is a significant gap in travel time in the northern Transpark area of Bowling Green, with the 90th percentile travel time of 8:31 for 103 emergency runs, while 90th percentile travel time to the rest of the city is 4:34. This area has long been identified as a gap for the Department. Construction of Station 8 in this area began in April 2023 and will complete in April 2024. It is anticipated that travel times to this area will significantly decrease with the addition of Station 8.

Engine 3 is the fourth busiest company with a total of 1,021 emergency calls, and had the longest first-in travel time following Engine 5. Engine 3's 90th percentile travel time was 5:23. Station 3's district covers over 10 square miles, nearly 25% of City square mileage. The focus area for Station 9 has been identified on Russellville Rd, which will relieve Engine 3 of call volume, increasing its compliance with response time standards.



PERFORMANCE GAP ANALYSIS

Early in 2023, the Department became aware of a discrepancy in the reported and the actual call processing time. The time captured in the Emergency Reporting RMS is under 30 seconds at the 90% mark. Investigation revealed that the problem is in the AT&T system and the way calls come into the Dispatch Center. Calls come in in various ways: 911 calls, automatic alarm systems, dedicated EMS landline, and other non-emergency lines. The RMS system can only capture one route that calls come in. Work with IT, Dispatch, and AT&T provided no solutions. With no other options, the department began tracking a small set of incidents monthly by timing recordings of 25 calls manually. This is a cumbersome process but it does provide an accurate report, the results of which reveal the gap in reported times versus actual call processing times.

0:21 RECORDED TIME FOR FIRE

1:39 ACTUAL TIME FOR FIRE

0:20 RECORDED TIME FOR EMS

1:00 ACTUAL TIME FOR EMS

Although all incident types are subject to this gap in call processing time, the effect is most seen in the large dataset of EMS incidents. These times are from a very small sample size, inherently having low reliability. The Department will continue to track this issue and build a larger data set to improve the accuracy of the report. As accuracy improves, solutions will be sought to fix the issue.

Above: Firefighter Moyers gives a truck tour to summer camp kids 07.06.2023

FIRE SUPPRESSION

The Bowling Green Fire Department Fire Suppression program provides an elite level of fire suppression service to the City of Bowling Green through rapid response, aggressive fire attack, and state-of-the-art equipment and technology. On every emergency incident, the top priorities of BGFD Fire Suppression response are life safety, incident stabilization, and property conservation.

In 2023, BGFD responded to a total of 246 fire incidents, down 19% from 2022.

BENCHMARK

For 90% of all moderate and high risk structure fire responses, the total response time for the arrival of the first-due unit, staffed with 3 firefighters shall be: **6 minutes and 20 seconds** in all districts

Below: Structure Fire on State St 07.21.2023

FIRE INCDIENT TYPES:

Structure Fires: 85

Mobile Property Fires: 37

Outside Fires: 117

Other Fires: 7

6:25

ACTUAL 90% FIRST-DUE RESPONSE TIME

87%

COMPLIANCE WITH RESPONSE TIME BENCHMARK



PROGRAM REPORTS



FIRE SUPPRESSION

In 2023, the Fire Suppression Program focused on improving the department through research and distribution of new tools, equipment, and tactics along with standardization of resources to be more effective and efficient department-wide.

By the end of 2023, all 1 ¾" hose on all front-line engines was standardized. Countless man-hours from the Hose and Nozzle Committee members went into researching, loading, pulling, and evaluating possible hoseloads for this new load. The color of hose selected was also evaluated. This all adds up to more manageable, effective, and consistent hose and nozzle packages for firefighters and more consistent pressures for engineers. Passive entry bags were also added to all front-line apparatus.

The need to standardize accountability program between all 3 shifts was realized in 2023. Through multiple discussions, accountability boards were put on Bat1 for the entire shift, eliminating the need for a crew member to "drop off" accountability tags, allowing crews to go straight to work when arriving on scene. A second set of boards is being developed so the accountability and tactical board are integrated together.

Considerable legwork was completed on the approved Battalion 2 position in 2023, with the anticipated start date of 3 new Battalion Chief positions as January 1, 2024.

"THROUGH ADMINISTRATIVE AND CITY SUPPORT, COUPLED WITH DRIVEN AND ENGAGED PERSONNEL, OUR FIRE SUPPRESSION PROGRAM AND ALL THOSE INVOLVED ARE WORKING HARD TO *MAKE IT BETTER*."

- BATTALION CHIEF ERIC SCOTT

Above: Structure Fire on W 15th 11.24.2023

EMS

The Bowling Green Fire Department provides emergency medical care as first responders at the EMT-Basic level to serve citizens and visitors. BGFD has an agreement with MedCenter Health EMS to provide assistance on certain calls as dictated by agreed-upon standard operating guidelines and procedures. BGFD's Medical Director is Dr. Robert Wasson, who provides oversight to the EMS Program. 97% of sworn members are certified to at least EMT-Basic, with several members certified at the EMT-Paramedic level. BGFD Paramedics do not provide ALS care but provide continuing education to basic providers.

In 2023, BGFD responded to a total of 5570 EMS incidents, a 12% increase from 2022.

BENCHMARK

For 90% of all emergency medical services responses, the total response time for the arrival of the first-due unit, staffed with 3 firefighters shall be: **6 minutes and 45 seconds** in all districts

*EMS total response time includes an inaccurate alarm handling time. Actual performance is estimated to be 40 seconds longer than reported. (See performance gap analysis on page 22)

EMS ACTION TAKEN:

Control Bleeding: 226

CPR Performed: 73

Narcan Administered: 58

Other Medications: 98

Oxygen Applied: 440

6:03

ACTUAL 90% FIRST-DUE RESPONSE TIME*

95%

COMPLIANCE WITH RESPONSE TIME BENCHMARK



ARFF Night Drill 05.01.2023

HAZ-MAT

The Bowling Green Fire Department Hazardous Materials Program is designed to meet the standards set forth by NFPA 475, NFPA 472, and OSHA 1910.120. All members are trained to Awareness and Operations Level. Some members are trained to Technician level.

In 2023, BGFD responded to a total of 109 hazardous materials incidents, an increase of 6% from 2022.

BGFD personnel recorded 2239.5 Haz-Mat training hours for 2023.

BENCHMARK

For 90% of all hazardous materials responses, the total response time for the arrival of the first-due unit, staffed with 3 firefighters shall be: **6 minutes and 20 seconds** in all districts

HAZ-MAT INCDIENT TYPES:

Gas/Flammable Liquid Spill:	14
Gas Leak (Natural Gas/LPG):	65
Oil/Combustible Liquid Spill:	3
Chemical Spill:	1
Carbon Monoxide Incident:	21
Other Incident Types:	2

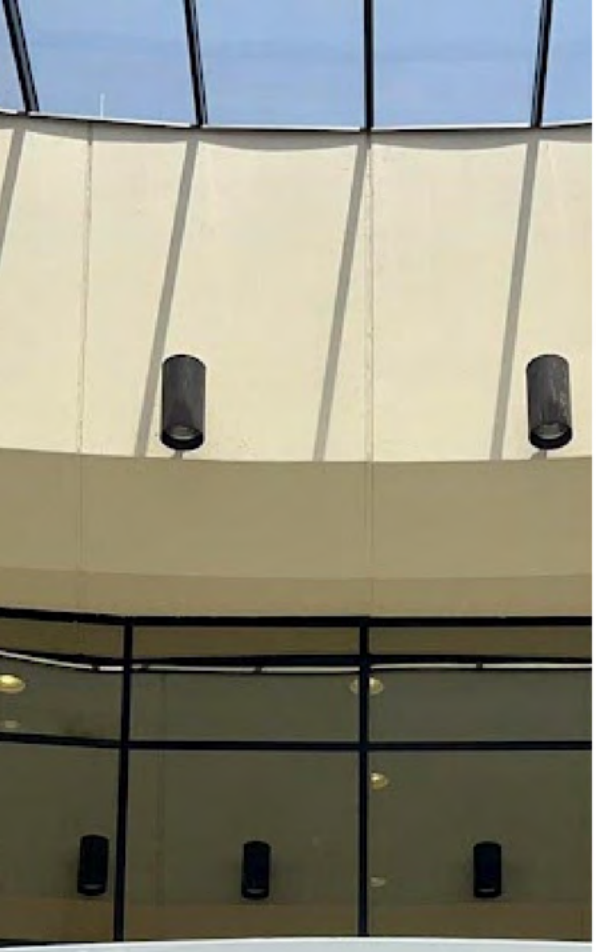
8:22

ACTUAL 90% FIRST-DUE RESPONSE TIME

63%

COMPLIANCE WITH RESPONSE TIME BENCHMARK







HAZ-MAT

2023 brought the beginning of a major change for the BGFD Hazardous Material program. The decision was made to move the program from Station 3 to Station 6. By doing this, personnel and equipment will be positioned in a better area to make faster responses to both the North and South sides of Bowling Green. The concentration of sites needing this program are in these areas. By moving this program, an additional crew will be available to assist with the day-to-day operations and also allow for better pre-incident assignments for Hazardous Materials incidents.

BGFD Hazardous Materials personnel continued to assist The City of Bowling Green and Warren County during the annual hazardous waste day. Personnel were on site for early detection and mitigation if an incident occurs during this event

DOMESTIC PREPAREDNESS

2023 brought a few changes to this program. A train derailment tabletop was led by Warren County Emergency Management. This tabletop provided an opportunity for all personnel involved to work together in managing this incident. This scenario enabled others to learn additional roles and responsibilities during a large-scale event.

City and individual district maps were created to enable the Command Staff to track incidents and personnel, plan responses, and to assist with giving directions to non-BGFD emergency personnel who are assisting with large incidents.

BGFD remains engaged with the latest KY USAR developments. This will be a large project that KY Emergency Management is leading. Legislators will need to budget funds for this program to reach its fullest potential.

Pictured: Members completed Hazmat Technologies course at the Center for Domestic Preparedness 05.26.2023

TECHNICAL RESCUE

The Bowling Green Fire Department provides six technical rescue specialties to the City of Bowling Green: Structural Collapse, Trench Rescue, Vehicle and Machinery Extrication, Swiftwater Rescue, Confined Space Rescue, and Rope Rescue. The specialized knowledge and skills required to perform technical rescues as well as the low frequency of incidents means that personnel need to continually train to keep their skills polished.

In 2023, BGFD responded to a total of 33 technical rescue incidents, an increase of 10% from 2022.

BGFD personnel recorded 1447 Technical Rescue training hours for 2023.

BENCHMARK

For 90% of all low-risk technical rescue responses, the total response time for the arrival of the first-due unit, staffed with 3 firefighters shall be: **6 minutes and 20 seconds** in all districts

2023 TECHNICAL RESCUES

Extrication:	26
Swiftwater Rescues:	4
High-Angle Rope Rescues:	2
Trench Rescue:	1

6:53

ACTUAL 90% FIRST-DUE RESPONSE TIME

67%

COMPLIANCE WITH RESPONSE TIME BENCHMARK

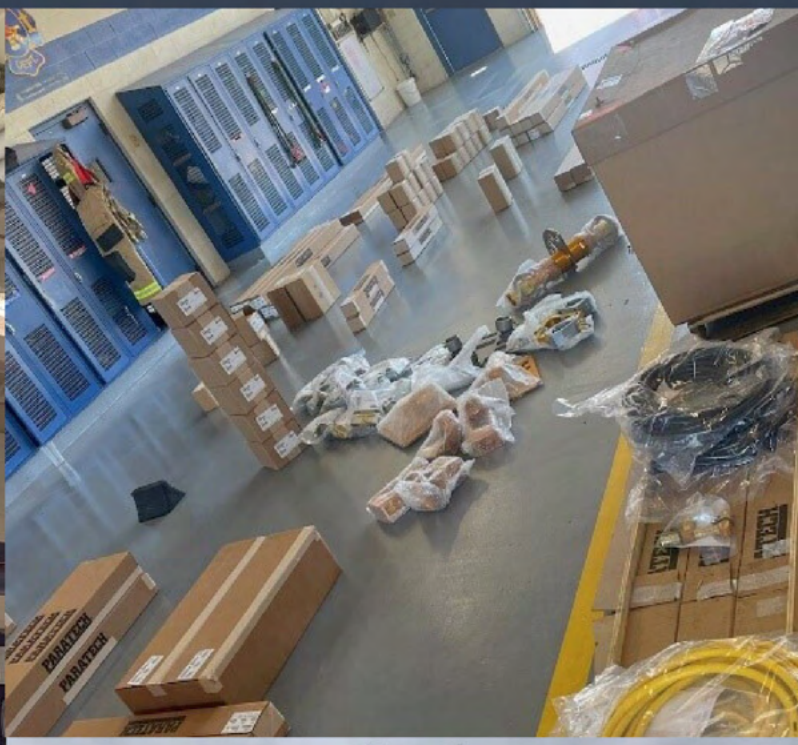


Swiftwater Training 04.12.2023

TECHNICAL RESCUE

Personnel cannot respond to incidents or apply their knowledge and skills without the proper equipment for each specific hazard that they may encounter. 2023 marked a significant step forward by placing in service a dedicated technical rescue truck and trailer (TECH1) as well as the delivery of a significant amount of new equipment. The truck and trailer is a huge step in allowing us to store and transport the large amount of equipment that is required for technical rescue. A major purchase of Paratech rescue struts was made in FY23 and that equipment was delivered in March of 2023. The equipment was sorted, trained on, and mounted in TECH1. This equipment will replace lumber and nails with high strength aluminum struts and shores. This equipment will be utilized for structural collapse, trench, and extrication and will result in quicker rescue times. Other equipment that arrived in 2023 was a new dewatering pump for trench rescue, Kodiak struts for extrication, new search rope for all apparatus and new DNA carabiners for main and belay line bags to better position our CMC Clutches for rope rescue.







ARFF

The Bowling Green Fire Department Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting (ARFF) program had a successful 2023 in conjunction with the Bowling Green/Warren County Regional Airport (BGWCRA).

Part of the program's annual evaluation is to ensure all 12 members (4 per shift) stationed at Station 2, "Airport Fire Station," cover all FAA Part 139 required subject areas of training throughout the year (including first aid); this training is documented in the records management system and is provided to the FAA Inspector by the Assistant Chief of Training to ensure requirements are met and the airport can maintain its certification.

In late April and early May, crews at Station 2 completed annual BGFD airport refresher training that the airport crews conduct for their respective shifts. During the week of May 1-5, crews participated in an airport night drill. Also in May, crews went to Ft. Campbell to complete the annual ARFF certification burn.

Sixteen aircraft standbys were conducted throughout the fall due to the WKU football team and their opponents utilizing charter aircraft to fly in and out of BGWCRA. The BGWCRA donated a small, experimental private jet they acquired to the BGFD to utilize for training at the end of 2020. The aircraft continues to be utilized for training throughout the year after being repainted in the spring. Upcoming budget requests will include department decals identifying it as a training prop.

Station 7 continues to participate in ARFF training along with Station 2. Station 2 Captains coordinate training for both crews.

Pictured below: T-28 Navy Training planes stopped at BGWCRA to refuel 07.31.2023



1,519

TOTAL ARFF TRAINING HOURS DEPARTMENT-WIDE

COMMUNITY RISK REDUCTION

"AS THE CITY GROWS, SO DOES THE NEED FOR INTENTIONAL COMMUNITY RISK REDUCTION. WE WILL CONTINUE TO FOSTER THOSE RELATIONSHIPS WITH OUR COMMUNITY PARTERS TO REACH THE CITIZENS OF BOWLING GREEN"

- JASON BROOKS ASSISTANT CHIEF OF PREVENTION

The city's growth is greatly outpacing the BGFD's ability to keep up with the demand of annual fire and life safety inspections. However, over 2600 inspections were completed in 2023, thanks in large part to part-time inspectors. Additional personnel will be requested in future budget requests to meet the needs of the growing community.

2600

INSPECTIONS COMPLETED

251

COMMERCIAL PERMITS REVIEWED

In 2023, the Building Department issued 2232 building permits, with 251 of those being commercial permits. Inspector Coleman reviewed all commercial permits as well as many of the other building permits due to need for FD access and/or fire suppression systems.

Continued growth of the city to include large scale facilities such as the AESC battery plant directly coincides with the need for growth both in Fire Suppression but also in code enforcement and plan review operations to monitor this growth.

In addition to the code enforcement side of CRR, in 2023 the Department expanded outreach events in the community through smoke alarm/fire extinguisher drives in collaboration with Red Cross and other community partners into targeted neighborhoods.



Structure Fire on Jody Richards Dr. 11.14.2023

PUBLIC EDUCATION

The Bowling Green Fire Department works with national partners to bring the "Sound Off with the Home Fire Safety Patrol" curriculum to schools throughout the city of Bowling Green. In-class fire safety presentations are conducted to educate second and third grade students on the importance of working smoke alarms and escape plans.

In addition to the Sound Off Program, the BGFD also promotes fire safety through other education programs such as senior citizens programs, station tours, public firehouse festivals, school events, etc. Fire safety education is also promoted through many social media outlets.

The Department will continue to strive to educate those in our community alongside suppression personnel through both public education and community outreach events.



CRR Coordinator Katie McKee at 9-1-1 education event 03.11.2023 at Warren Co. Library

23,149

COMMUNITY MEMBERS REACHED THROUGH PUBLIC EDUCATION EFFORTS

2023 SOUND OFF ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS:

DISHMAN MCGINNIS

NATCHER

TC CHERRY

PARKER BENNETT CURRY

The Prevention Division also conducted a smoke alarm drive for community around Dishman McGinnis Elementary School in conjunction with Red Cross resulting in 60 smoke alarms installed.

60

SMOKE ALARMS INSTALLED


THANK YOU!
BGFD









INVESTIGATIONS

In 2023, investigators were able to attend training conferences as well as the NFA Basic Origin and Cause class which allows them to apply for the Fire Investigation Technician certification through the International Association of Arson Investigators.

Captain Cornwell along with ADC Millie attended their annual ATF recertification and Millie was awarded Top Dog in the nation for ATF Accelerant Detection Canines.

The end of the year saw the Investigation Unit implementing a new report writing software, Blazestack. This software will boost productivity as it allows for data capture in a customizable workflow on the fire scene. It will cut down on error-prone manual report writing, allowing for a consistent format for all investigators in the unit. In addition, statistical data will be automatically generated through this software for all investigations. Implementing this software will decrease the time spent writing reports and increase the quality.

The future of the investigations division will see more growth to match the need throughout the city and county, as well as providing the best investigation for citizens of Bowling Green utilizing Law Enforcement certified officers.

Investigation numbers continue to remain high again in 2023. The numbers shown below indicate not just the total but the breakdown of determination categories.

2023 INVESTIGATIONS

Incendiary:	6
Accidental:	49
Undetermined:	46
Natural:	5
Citation:	2
Total:	**108**



Structure Fire on McFadin Station 01.05.2023

120+

MEMBERS ATTENDED OUTSIDE TRAINING

14

STATES FOR OUTSIDE TRAINING CONFERENCES, SYMPOSIUMS, ETC.

36,179

TOTAL DEPARTMENT TRAINING HOURS

233

AVERAGE TRAINING HOURS PER SWORN PERSONNEL

TRAINING

The Training Division coordinates, tracks, and records training for all Department members in firefighting, search and rescue, hazardous materials, and all types of specialty rescue. The Training Division assists with the development of training initiatives that include the latest methods, techniques and skills. The Department is committed to a strong training program. The training schedule is populated daily with company training opportunities to assist and educate officers in conducting drills daily. The fire service is a dynamic, changing profession requiring constant training to provide a high level of service.

In 2023, the Department was gifted with 2 large acquired structures and utilized them for suppression and recruit training scenarios in January and February. Training personnel were able to schedule 2 training events with Vanderbilt Medical staff for EMS training, one in February, the other in May. In February, a trip was made to Ft. Campbell to tour their training facilities which resulted in annual ARFF certification burns conducted at their facility.

A large-scale, multi-company firefighter rescue drill was conducted during the month of May. The annual week long Active Shooter training with local police and EMS agencies took place at a local preschool in July. Also in July, the Training Staff prepared for promotional testing in August.

Below: Acquired structure training with recruits 11.28.2023





PSTC CONSTRUCTION

On May 22, 2023, ground was broken on the new Police and Fire joint Public Safety Training Center to be built on the 5.7 acre property adjacent to Station 5 and the current Training Center which was purchased in January 2020. There have been several delays in this $22 million project due to the presence of sinkholes in this property. Construction is estimated to be completed in 2025.

Department training has been impacted by construction with site work beginning in June. The beginning of construction in June created a need to postpone Driver's recertification. It was rescheduled and completed in September. October 22nd was the beginning of the largest recruit class in the department's history. Due to the construction at the training center, modifications to and alternate locations for training had to be made.

Through construction, the Training Division has remained creative, fluid, and flexible, ensuring all Department members have been able to reach training benchmarks and goals.



HEALTH, SAFETY, & FITNESS

Again in 2023, the Department's Health and Safety Program has taken a holistic approach to firefighter well-being by including health, safety, wellness, and fitness in one all-inclusive program. This paradigm aims to prioritize total wellness for all employees. Internally, the program is administered primarily by the Safety Committee, the Fitness Committee, the Peer Support Team, and the department's Health and Safety Officer. Partners who work closely with the program include the City Health and Risk Manager, the City Physician, the Director of HR, and dedicated mental health clinicians.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Improved tracking of annual fitness testing results
- Completed creation of the BGFD/BGPD Peer Support Team Policy
- Revised the Critical Incident Stress Management Policy
- Implemented a system for tracking the number of Peer Support Team contacts
- Better tracking of Critical Incident responses
- Developed a return-to-work physical test

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT:

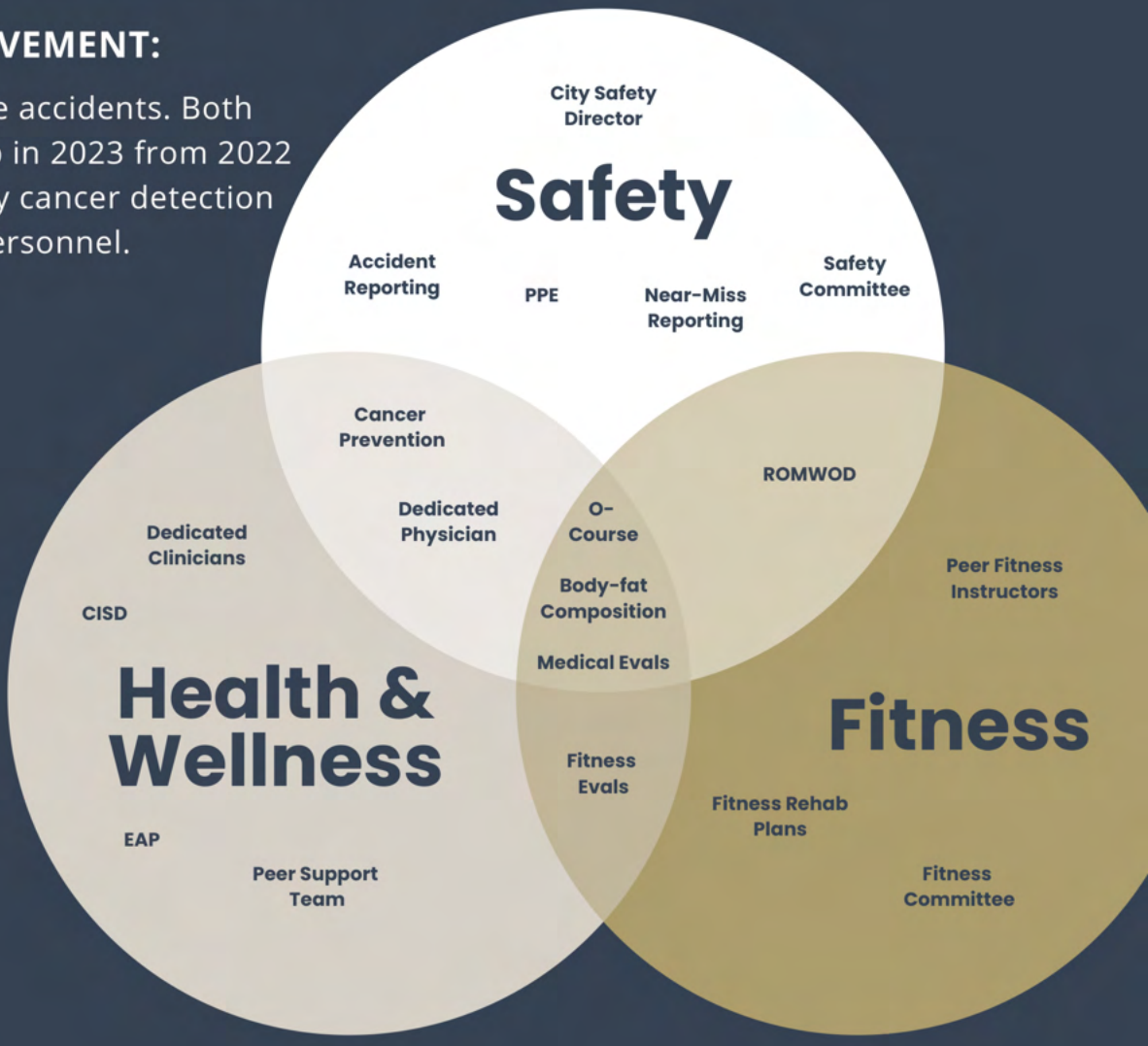
- Injuries and vehicle accidents. Both categories were up in 2023 from 2022
- Implement an early cancer detection screening for all personnel.

12

TOTAL INJURIES TO PERSONNEL

8

TOTAL VEHICLE ACCIDENTS



PEER SUPPORT

2023 saw the continued development of the Peer Support Team. In two short years, this vital initiative has grown from an emerging idea to a fully established program. The 17 members of the team met quarterly for training and education and learned from the City's dedicated clinicians. BGFD personnel responded to 50 critical incidents during the year, defined as any incident that could overwhelm a firefighter's usual coping strategies. These incidents and other life events led to 51 recorded contacts from the Peer Support Team. Confidentiality is the foundational principle of this program. The team will continue to support and care for the people of the fire department. As peer support becomes embedded in the culture, these activities will become more and more common.

50

CRITICAL INCIDENTS

51

RECORDED PEER SUPPORT CONTACTS

FITNESS

The fitness of department members continued to be of highest priority in 2023. In October, the Department began a new daily schedule reflecting this prioritization. At 0730 every morning, crews begin their day with a 1-hour workout. Only emergency responses, with rare other exceptions, interrupt this hour of PT. This assurance of a daily workout can only benefit the health and fitness of firefighters, ensuring the citizens of Bowling Green are served by the most capable individuals the department can provide. Additionally, the fitness program expanded electronic tracking of annual testing. A treadmill run to reach target heart rate, push-ups, timed planks, and body-fat composition, in addition to other metrics, are measured and recorded. Tracking the fitness test results and comparing with previous year results will provide the department with additional tools to continue evaluating and improving the fitness of all members.



8:29

AVERAGE O-COURSE TIME

1:02

IMPROVEMENT FROM 2022 AVERAGE

For 2023, the Safety Committee, Peer Support Team, and Fitness Committee completed regular, annual tasks including:

- Annual medical exams for all personnel (including blood panel),
- Fitness evaluations
- Recruit class health and wellness orientation
- Reviewing all accidents and injuries.



COMMUNICATIONS

At the conclusion of the year, the communication system was functioning effectively and efficiently. Improvements to the public safety radio communications infrastructure in recent years, including the implementation of Zello and FirstDue alerting, have resulted in a robust communication system with redundancies built in. However, some goals remain difficult to achieve. The Department is still seeking a CAD interface with EMS dispatch in order to improve response times for Medcom requests, and the inability to accurately capture call processing times is a complex issue with no clear solution. (See performance gap analysis on page 22)

65,000

911 CALLS RECIEVED

110,000

TOTAL CALLS RECIEVED

For 2023, the Department made 8,305 responses, all dispatched through the 911 Dispatch Center. 911 Dispatch created over 125,000 incidents for BGPD, 8,305 incidents for BGFD, and over 3,500 incidents for Warren County Volunteer Fire Departments. Department personnel met with Dispatch on several occasions to identify areas of improvement for both the Department and Dispatch to improve delivery of service.

With the advent of Motorola AVL and automatic responding and on-scene capture, the Department made a modification to standard radio traffic. Units other than the first unit on scene for multi-unit responses no longer notify Dispatch on Channel 1 of their status, they only notify other units on the operational channel. This change has resulted in less radio traffic and has improved communication efficiency.

Regularly-scheduled meetings between the Fire Department and Dispatch have proven to be valuable opportunities to improve collaboration and service. Addressing issues with individual runs at these meetings has allowed for training opportunities and service improvements.



AWARDS & RECOGNITION

ANNUAL AWARDS CEREMONY

On January 12, 2024, the third annual employee awards ceremony was held in the engine bay of Station 1 Headquarters. The following awards were given in recognition of excellent service:

MEDAL OF HONOR FOR UNIT

Awarded to the unit which performed outstanding service to the public safety of the community through their actions at a trench rescue on July 1, 2023. Awarded to: Captain Isaac Anthony, Captain Bryan Fulkerson, Captain Joe Harbin, Captain Craig White, Engineer Chad Ennis, Engineer Dustin Jones, Engineer Jeremy Maynard, Firefighter Zachary Barnhart, Firefighter Brennan Elsas, Firefighter Dylan Hawkins, Firefighter Taylor Kiser, Firefighter Shathan McCoy, Firefighter Justin Meredith, Firefighter Mason Michael, and Firefighter Zach Shuffett,

AWARD OF MERIT

Awarded to Captain Kris Mitchell for performance of duties which have been carried out in an outstanding manner

SERVICE EXCELLENCE AWARD

Awarded to Captain Kevin Lashley for outstanding service and dedication to the overall wellbeing of Department members

COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD

Awarded to Captain Chris Durbin for commendable time and effort donated toward the betterment of the community



CHRIS BUCHANON
OFFICER OF THE YEAR



CHAD ENNIS
ENGINEER OF THE YEAR



KENNY JAMES
FIREFIGHTER OF THE YEAR

ANNUAL AWARDS CEREMONY

FITNESS AWARDS

Fitness Award presented to Firefighter Jon Moyers for outstanding commitment to his own physical fitness and the fitness of fellow crew members.
"O" Course Award presented to Firefighter Brennan Elsas for completing the "O" Course in 05:55, recording the fastest time of the year.
"O" Course Award presented to Firefighter Jordan Wilson for reducing his BGFD "O" Course time by 03:16, recording the most improved time of the year.

LEGACY AWARD

Awarded to Retired Lieutenant Tom Harris for commendable time and effort donated toward the betterment of the community.

SAFETY AWARD

Awarded to Dr. Randall Davidson for outstanding service and dedication with regard to the safety of Department members and families

CHIEF'S AWARDS

Awarded to Firefighter Nick Atkins for his commitment to selfless sacrifice for the Department and its members
Awarded to Elyse Jonker for commendable time and effort given toward the betterment of the Department.

OFFICER OF THE YEAR

Awarded to Captain Chris Buchanon for exceptional commitment to outstanding service and professionalism

ENGINEER OF THE YEAR

Awarded to Engineer Chad Ennis for exceptional commitment to outstanding service and professionalism

FIREFIGHTER OF THE YEAR

Awarded to Firefighter Kenny James for exceptional commitment to outstanding service and professionalism



CITIZEN LIFESAVING AWARD

The mission of the Bowling Green Fire Department is to Serve, Save, Protect. Make It Better. The Department likes to recognize those in the community who also carry out the same mission.

On May 17th, 2023, John was attending a fitness class at Orange Theory when he went into cardiac arrest. Chonda, an employee at Orange Theory, and Scott, a member attending the same class, went into action utilizing the AED on site and administering CPR until help arrived.

On October 19th, BGFD honored Chonda and Scott's quick action which saved John's life with Citizen Lifesaving Awards





PROMOTIONS

Morris, Harbin, Bates, James, Justis

Each year, eligible members compete in the promotional process for the opportunity to advance in the leadership of this department. In 2023, several had the chance due to resignations, retirements, and the addition of a position in the Training Division. The future of the services provided by BGFD is in good hands due to the current and upcoming leaders found in the uniform.

DEPUTY CHIEF

Doug Morris (9/6)

BATTALION CHIEF

Joe Harbin (9/6)

CAPTAINS

Chris Bates (9/6)
Jeremy Maynard (7/19)

ENGINEERS

Alan Bush (7/19)
Austin Conner (10/18)
Kenny James (9/6)
Dakota Justis (9/6)
Corey Mahaney (9/20)

OFFICE ASSOCIATE II

Angie Harp (12/20)



Mahaney



Maynard, Bush



Conner

In 2023, the Department celebrated the retirement of 3 members. We congratulate these men on their retirements and thank them for their many years of dedicated service to the City of Bowling Green.

DEPUTY CHIEF ROB GILLIAM - 08.31.2023

20 years of service

ENGINEER CALVIN WATTS - 08.31.2023

25 years of service

ENGINEER DON BROD - 09.30.2023

23 years of service

RETIREMENTS



Gilliam



Watts



Brod



AGENCY PERFORMANCE TRACKING

STRUCTURE FIRE

For 90 percent of all risk categories in structure fire responses, the total response time for the arrival of the first-due unit, staffed with 3 firefighters, shall be: 6 minutes and 20 seconds in all districts. (n=53)

For 90 percent of all moderate/significant risk structure fire responses, the total response time for the arrival of the effective response force (ERF), staffed with 20 firefighters and officers on 6 fire apparatus and 1 command vehicle shall be: 10 minutes and 20 seconds in all districts. (n=32)

There were no low risk structure fires (type 121) within the reporting period and only 3 max risk structure fires (111 in a max-risk structure). Neither type is reported below.

MODERATE/SIGNIFICANT RISK STRUCTURE FIRE (111)	BENCHMARK	2023 PERFORMANCE	GAP
Alarm Handling	1:00	1:10	0:10
Turnout Time	1:20	1:44	0:24
Travel Time - First-Due	4:00	4:17	0:17
Travel Time - ERF	8:00	11:51	3:51
Response Time - First-Due	6:20	6:25	0:05
Response Time - ERF	10:20	14:37	4:17

EMS

For 90 percent of all emergency medical services (EMS) responses, the total response time for the arrival of the first-due unit, staffed with 3 firefighters, shall be: 6 minutes and 45 seconds in all districts. (n=5131)

There were no high risk EMS incidents (mass casualty/active shooter) within the reporting period. Only moderate risk EMS incidents are reported below.

*EMS response times include an inaccurate alarm handling time. Actual performance is estimated to be 40 seconds longer than reported. (See performance gap analysis on page 22)

MODERATE RISK EMS (311, 322, 323)	BENCHMARK	2023 PERFORMANCE	GAP
Alarm Handling	1:45	0:35	-1:10*
Turnout Time	1:00	1:37	0:40
Travel Time - First-Due	4:00	4:39	0:39
Response Time - First-Due	6:45	6:03	-0:42*

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

For 90 percent of moderate risk hazardous materials response incidents, the total response time for the arrival of the first-due unit, staffed with 3 firefighters, shall be: 6 minutes and 20 seconds in all districts. (n=43)

For 90 percent of moderate risk hazardous materials responses, the total response time for the arrival of the effective response force (ERF), staffed with 11 firefighters and officers on 3 fire apparatus and 1 command vehicle shall be: 10 minutes and 20 seconds in all districts. (n=17)

There were no low risk haz-mat incidents (type 420) within the reporting period and only 1 max risk haz-mat incident (type 422). Neither type is reported below.

MODERATE RISK HAZ-MAT (411,412)	BENCHMARK	2023 PERFORMANCE	GAP
Alarm Handling	1:00	2:20	1:20
Turnout Time	1:20	1:45	0:25
Travel Time - First-Due	4:00	5:31	1:31
Travel Time - ERF	8:00	13:18	5:18
Response Time - First-Due	6:20	8:22	2:02
Response Time - ERF	10:20	16:55	6:36

TECHNICAL RESCUE

For 90 percent of low risk technical rescue responses, the total response time for the arrival of the first-due unit, staffed with 3 firefighters, shall be: 6 minutes and 20 seconds in all districts. (n=12)

For 90 percent of all low risk technical rescue responses, the total response time for the arrival of the effective response force (ERF), staffed with 7 firefighters and officers on 2 fire apparatus and 1 command vehicle shall be: 10 minutes and 20 seconds in all districts. (n=6)

There was only 1 moderate risk technical rescue incident (types 354, 355, 356, 357, 360, 363) within the reporting period. Only low risk technical rescue incidents are reported below.



LOW RISK TECHNICAL RESCUE (352)	BENCHMARK	2023 PERFORMANCE	GAP
Alarm Handling	1:00	1:26	0:26
Turnout Time	1:20	1:37	0:18
Travel Time - First-Due	4:00	4:19	0:19
Travel Time - ERF	8:00	9:09	1:09
Response Time - First-Due	6:20	6:53	0:33
Response Time - ERF	10:20	14:50	4:30

Pictured: Grain bin rescue training at Station 1 01.12.2023

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT



Landmark Award from State St. Fire Station, torn down in early 2024 as a result of the July 2023 fire

BGFD COMMAND STAFF

JUSTIN BROOKS
Fire Chief

BRET SMITH
Deputy Chief, Operations

DOUG MORRIS
Deputy Chief, Logistics

JASON BROOKS
Assistant Chief, Prevention

TIM BUCHANON
Battalion Chief, C Shift

JOE HARBIN
Battalion Chief, A Shift

SHANNON PARDUE
Assistant Chief, Training

ERIC SCOTT
Battalion Chief, B Shift

ELECTED OFFICIALS

MAYOR TODD ALCOTT

COMMISSIONER CARLOS BAILEY

COMMISSIONER DANA BEASLEY-BROWN

COMMISSIONER MELINDA HILL

COMMISSIONER SUE PARRIGIN

ANNUAL REPORT BY

ELYSE JONKER
Exectuive Assistant

BOWLING GREEN FIRE DEPT

625 E. 6th Avenue
Bowling Green, KY

(270)393-3702
bgky.org/fire
joinbgky.org/fire

@bgkyfire
#MakeItBetter