



NEW RICHMOND FIRE & RESCUE DEPARTMENT



**2025
ANNUAL REPORT**

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the New Richmond Fire & Rescue Department is to preserve life and property, promote public safety, and foster economic growth through leadership, management, and actions as an all-risk life safety response provider. The Department focuses on responding rapidly to emergencies and providing appropriate intervention and community education.

OUR COMMUNITY

The New Richmond Fire & Rescue Department proudly provides fire prevention, fire suppression, fire inspections, extrication, and rescue operations for a 150-mile radius consisting of the following local units of government:

City of New Richmond
Village of Star Prairie

Town of Erin Prairie
Town of Star Prairie

Town of Richmond
Town of Stanton

FIRE BOARD

Tom Weinmeyer
Scott Grady
Mike Montello
Rita Keating
John Van Dyk
Tom Heintz
Dave Naser
Dave Stephens
Dick Hesselink

CITY COUNCIL

Mayor Jim Zajkowski
Craig Kittel
Greg Gartner
Scott Grady
Mike Montello
Pete Vrieze
Tom Weinmeyer

POLICE & FIRE COMMISSION

Jon Hailey, Kirk Lindell, Andrea Kier, Michael Hedges,
Shawn Demulling

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

Tom Weinmeyer, Ron Volkert, Greg Gartner,
Bill O'Connell, Shawn Demulling



OUR FIREFIGHTERS

Josh Bell
Chris Bendix
Daryl Chute
Andrew DeShane
Shaun Henke
Josh Hines
Jon Hirt
Noah Hughes
Brad Johnson

Kiel Kwiatowski
Tony Leblanc
Josh Lindstrom
Dan Maslowski
Tristen Mortel
Brad Olek
Paul Opseth
Vivian Roberts
Santiago Ruiz

Jerry Smith
Mike Strey
Jeff Swanson
Rick Swanson
Jeremy Sylvester
Sarah Thurston
Tasha Tourville
Oliver Wettstein
Darius Wherley

OUR EXPLORERS

Local youth ages 14-18 who are interested in learning more about firefighting are encouraged to join our Explorers Program to participate in some classroom training and hands-on lessons. Explorers can also participate in many of our community events throughout the year. Students who earn certifications in EMT, EMR, Firefighter I, Firefighter II, and/or Fire Inspector can earn a \$500 Career and Technical Education Incentive Grant per certification from the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) upon their high school graduation.



VEHICLE	DESCRIPTION	YEAR
3261	Engine	2003
3262	Engine	2017
3263	Ladder Truck	2010
3264	Chief's Vehicle	2017
3265	Rescue Pumper	2006
3266	Brush Truck	2009
3267	Brush Truck	1999
3268	Tender	2006
3269	Tender	2001
3270	Rescue	1996
3271	Engine	1997
3272	Assistant Chief's Vehicle	2021
N/A	UTV	2018

OUR VEHICLE FLEET

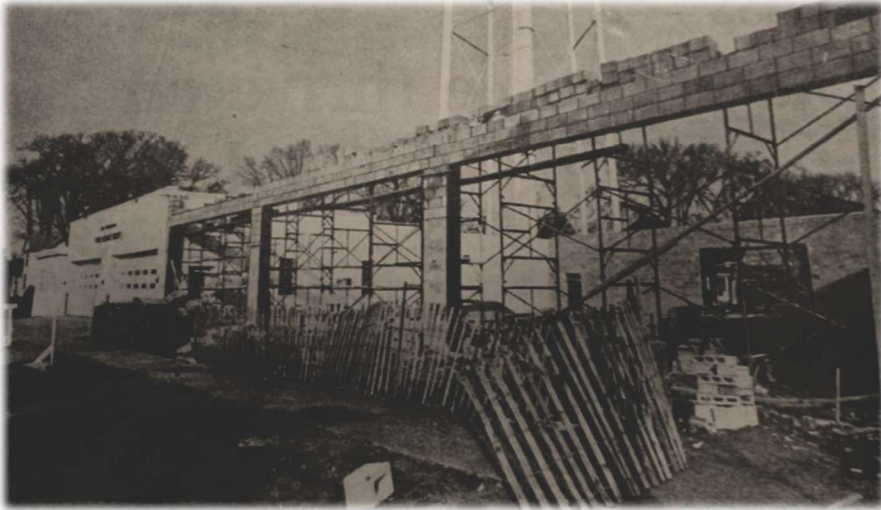
The New Richmond Fire & Rescue Department uses a variety of specialized vehicles to respond to vehicle accidents, structure fires, grass and off-road events, and water/ice rescues.



OUR HISTORY

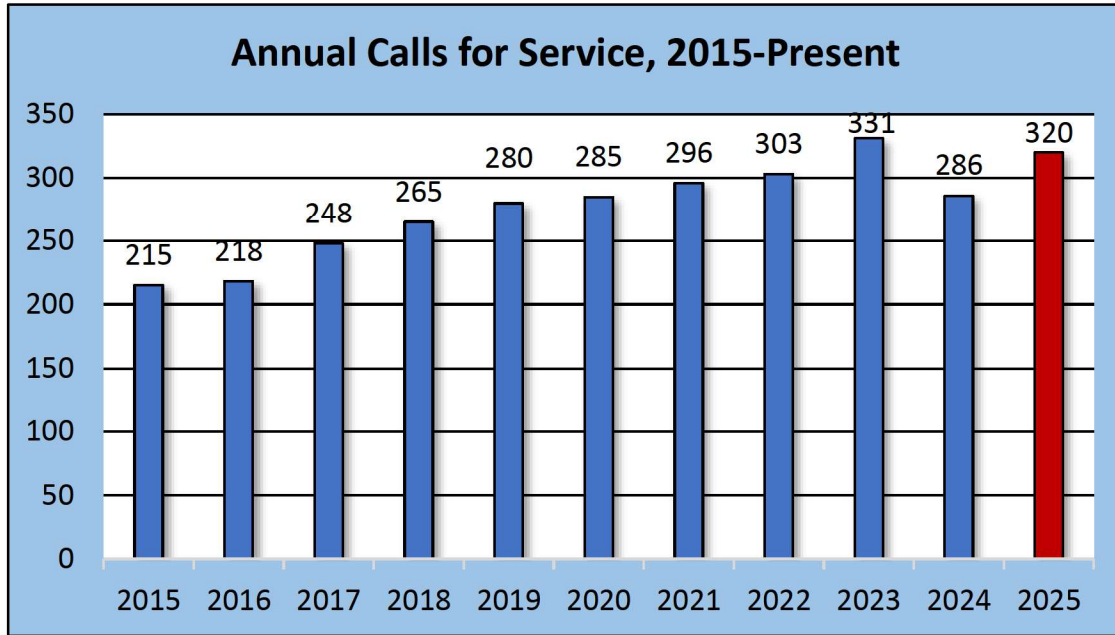
A fire department was established in New Richmond in 1875, with the establishment of what was first known as “The Minne-ha-ha Engine Company No. 1.” A “truck house” for the first fire truck – a hook and ladder truck twenty feet long with pails on both sides – was constructed in 1880. Fires wiped out much of the City in 1892, and again in 1899 following the infamous cyclone that destroyed much of the city. Early bucket brigades advanced thanks to the invention of water-pumping engines and municipal water supplies. Common citizens selflessly participated on the fire department to help protect their communities and their fellow citizens, and this tradition continues to this day. We are appreciative of the hundreds of citizens who have served on the New Richmond Fire & Rescue Department over the years and helped their fellow citizens during a time of need. The fire station, trucks, and specialized equipment have certainly changed over past 150 years, but the principle at the core of the New Richmond Fire & Rescue Department – service to the community – has not changed.



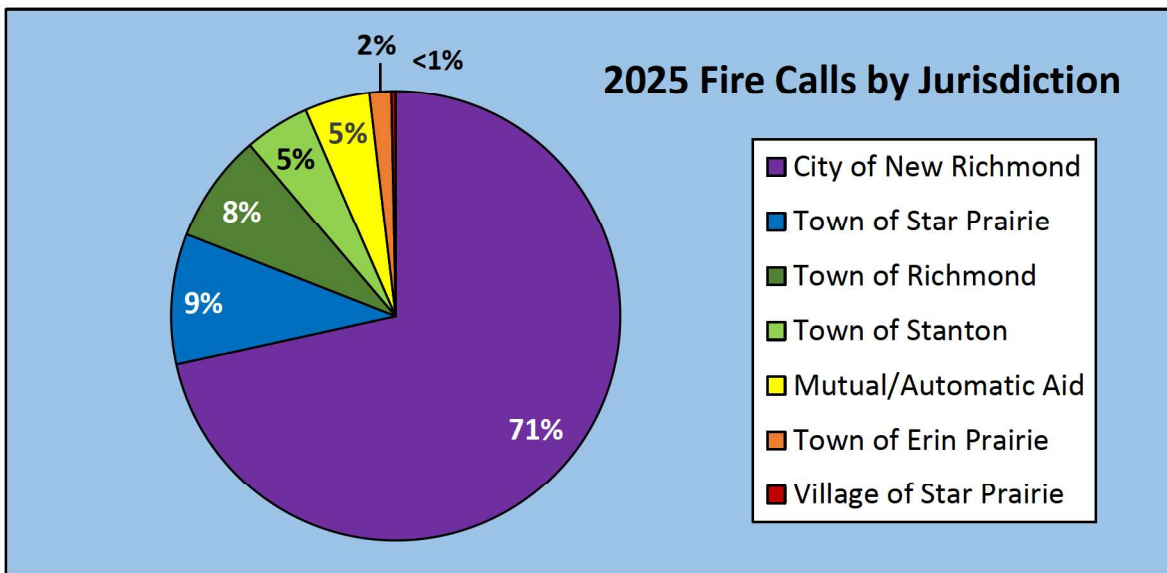


2025 CALL VOLUME & INCIDENT SUMMARY

As St. Croix County continues to grow, so too has the number of calls for service. In 2025, the New Richmond Fire & Rescue Department received 320 calls for service, an increase from the year prior but slightly below a record-high number of calls in 2023.



The New Richmond Fire & Rescue Department directly serves residents and businesses in the City of New Richmond, Town of Star Prairie, Town of Richmond, Town of Stanton, Town of Erin Prairie, and Village of Star Prairie. The graph below illustrates the 320 calls for service received in the 2025 calendar year, sorted further according to jurisdiction.



2025 INCIDENT SUMMARY CONTINUED

The New Richmond Fire & Rescue Department has a positive working relationship with its neighboring agencies, who assist each other when the need arises. “Automatic Aid” refers to when the St. Croix County Communications Center (Dispatch) pages more than one fire department simultaneously for a single incident, without a request initiated by a fire department. Automatic aid agreements are especially beneficial to get the necessary resources to the edges of the respective jurisdictional boundaries. “Mutual Aid” refers to when Dispatch pages a fire department after the first responding fire department requests assistance. Mutual aid is most common when there is a very large incident that requires considerable resources, and/or one fire department might be responding to multiple calls at the same time.

Call Type	Count
Cancelled in Route	67
Motor Vehicle Accident	42
Alarm System Notification	37
Gas Leak	35
Medical Assist - EMS	25
Electrical	16
Carbon Monoxide, False Alarm	13
Carbon Monoxide	13
Grass Fire	12
Building Fire	11

Besides calls cancelled in route, the most frequent type of call for service in 2025 was to assist with motor vehicle accidents, which is common due in part to having two state highways running through the City of New Richmond. There was an increase in calls for gas leaks and medical assists in 2025. It might surprise some people to learn that building fires make up a relatively small number of the total calls received. Firefighters are asked to assist with an increasingly wide range of emergency situations; thus, they require a variety of specialized equipment, tools, and training.

FIRE INSPECTIONS

The New Richmond Fire & Rescue Department performs annual inspections of commercial and industrial businesses, office buildings, nursing homes, apartment buildings, etc. to identify possible fire hazards. In 2023, the City Council adopted an ordinance requiring emergency access boxes be installed near the front entrance of new commercial buildings, to allow for faster and safety entry into the building for first responders and reducing property damage. Since 2024, a re-inspection fee of \$50 can also be imposed for third and subsequent re-inspections, to further encourage voluntary compliance in addressing violations in a timely manner.

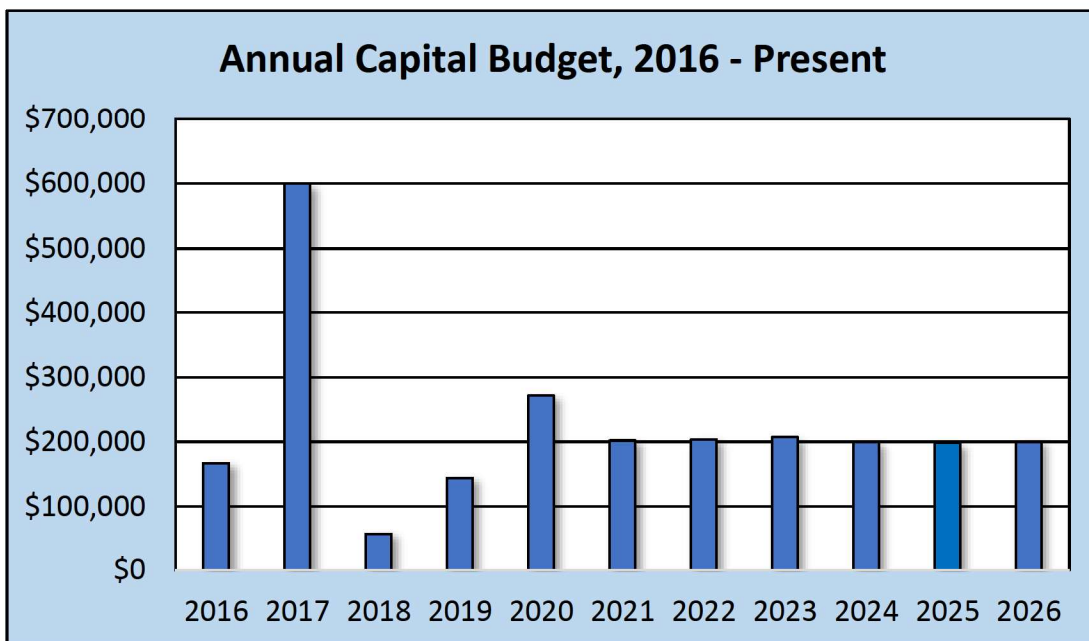
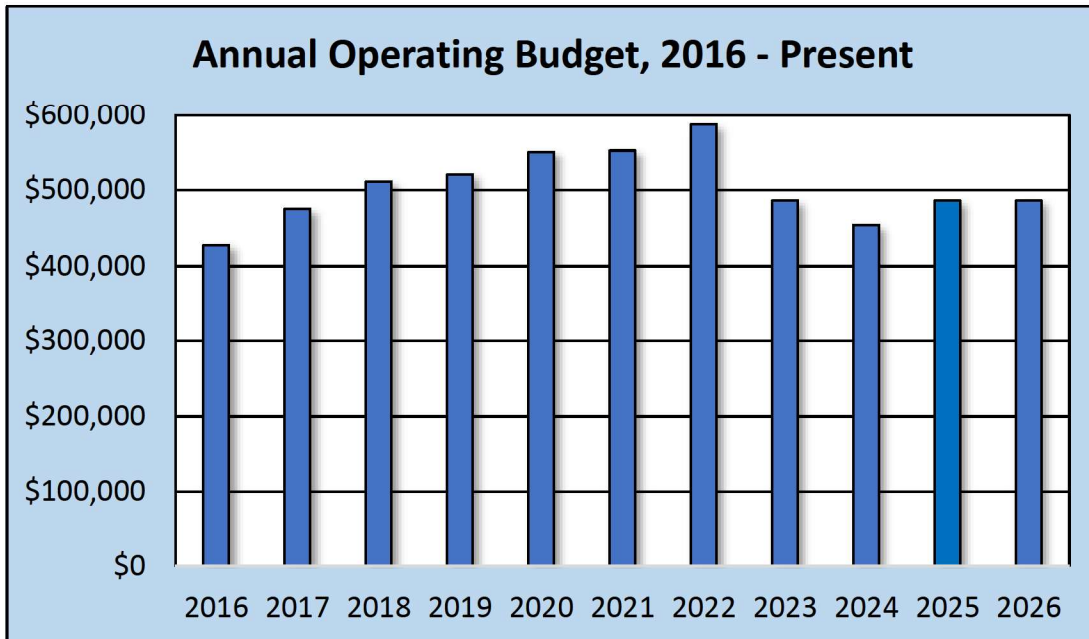


Current Fire Inspectors:

Josh Bell, Daryl Chute, Marc Chute, Tony Leblanc, Brad Olek, Mike Strey, Jeremy Sylvester, and Nick Watters

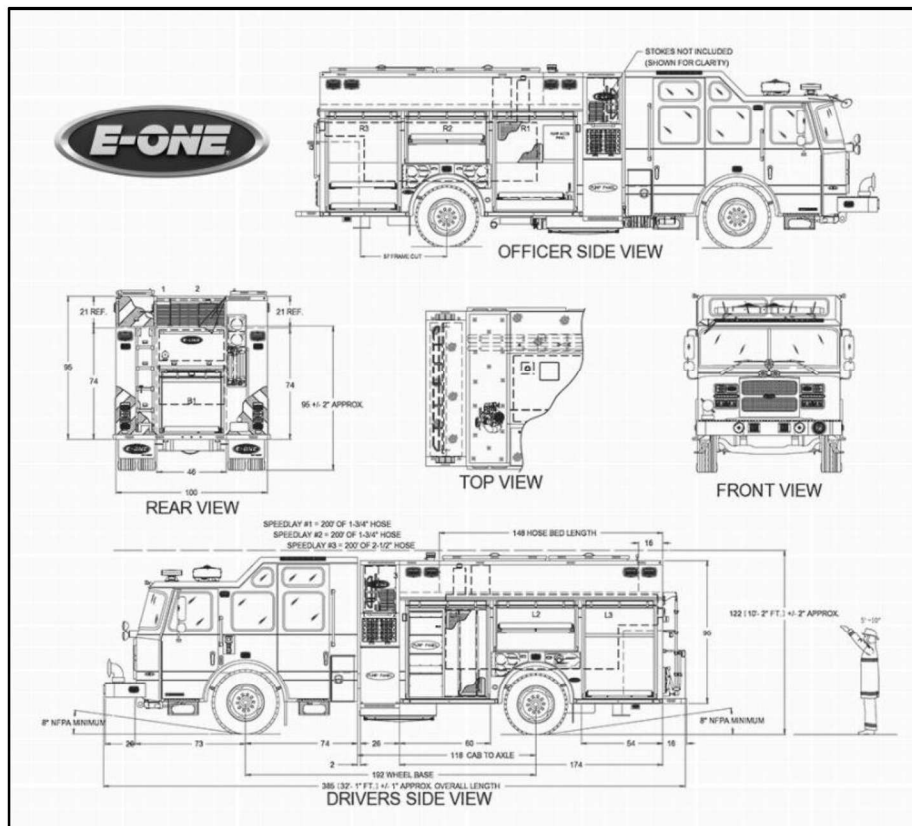
HISTORICAL OPERATING & CAPITAL BUDGETS

The operating budget for the New Richmond Fire & Rescue Department has been relatively flat since 2023. The main drivers of the operating budget are compensation for firefighters, vehicle repairs and maintenance, insurance, supplies and equipment, and training. The capital budget has consistently been around \$200,000 per year, apart from 2017, when a new vehicle was purchased. The 2026 capital budget does not reflect the purchase of a replacement apparatus, which has been approved but receipt may not occur until December of 2026.



REPLACEMENT OF APPARATUS 3265

In the fall of 2025, the replacement of Truck 3265 was recommended by the Fire Board and approved by the City Council. Truck 3265 is a 2006 Rescue Pumper, with roughly 90,000 miles and 7,315 hours, that is used in all rescue responses and was purchased as a used apparatus from a larger fire department. The industry standard for a rescue pumper is 15 years, after which time the apparatus is either refurbished or moved to reserve status, and the apparatus would be removed from service in years 20-25. Truck 3265 has a cracked frame and several other maintenance issues and will now be replaced with a new apparatus – an E-One Stainless Steel E-Max Rescue Pumper. The new apparatus includes a 6-seat cab, galvanized underbody support frame, Cummins engine, 1,030-gallon water tank and 30-gallon foam tank, stainless steel body, and firecom communication system. The cost of the new apparatus is \$1,084,765, and delivery/receipt is currently anticipated to occur in December of 2026.



MUNICIPALITY	COST SHARE	COST
City of New Richmond	55.5%	\$602,044.58
Town of Erin Prairie	2.8%	\$30,373.42
Town of Stanton	4.2%	\$45,560.13
Town of Star Prairie	16.9%	\$183,325.29
Town of Richmond	18.3%	\$198,512.00
Village of Star Prairie	2.3%	\$24,949.60

EXPLORERS COMPETE AT MN STATE FAIR

The New Richmond Explorers participated in the 2025 Governor's Fire Prevention Day at the Minnesota State Fair and once again brought some hardware back home to New Richmond at the end of the competition. They received first place in presentation and fourth place overall out of fifteen teams. Job well done by the New Richmond Explorers and advisors!



PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

The New Richmond Fire & Rescue Department was once again very active in engaging with the local community throughout 2025. Some of the highlights included:

- Dads and Donuts open house event on Father's Day weekend
- Annual "water fights" during Fun Fest for local kids to experience what it's like to be on the fire hose line
- National Night Out, in partnership with the New Richmond Police Department and the New Richmond Area Ambulance Service
- Visits to more than 1,300 children at local schools and childcare centers to help educate youth about fire safety during National Fire Prevention Week
- Annual open house night during National Fire Prevention Week, including a vehicle extrication demonstration and free fire truck rides
- Community chili feed (special thanks to Captain Ken's Foods for their donation of 250 pounds of chili to go with all the fixings) along with a silent auction and raffle
- Second-annual "Pumpkin Drop" event in November, where community members could bring pumpkins to be dropped from the ladder truck
- Participation in parades and other community events



FAQS – PROSPECTIVE FIREFIGHTERS

Do I have to be a City resident?

No. Firefighters must reside within fifteen miles of the City boundaries; several firefighters reside in the surrounding townships/villages. Many of our firefighters also work outside of New Richmond and even in Minnesota.



Do I need advance training to be hired?

No. While we certainly welcome firefighters with previous experience and training, most new hires have little or no previous training or experience. Probationary firefighters must complete over 100 hours of coursework offered through Northwood Technical College (or another college) including *Firefighter I*, *Hazmat*, *Auto Extrication*, and *Emergency Medical Responder* to gain the basic knowledge and skills necessary to safely perform firefighting functions. Registration fees and the cost of books/materials are covered.

What is the time commitment?

The New Richmond Fire & Rescue Department has regularly scheduled meetings and trainings on Monday nights. Both the initial Firefighter I training and continuing education are significant commitments. In terms of responding to calls, some professions may not allow for a firefighter to leave work, and some firefighters commute for work and may only be able to respond to calls on nights/weekends, so while call percentages vary, firefighters shall respond to a minimum of 25% of fire calls per calendar year (which equates to roughly 6 calls per month).

What are the benefits of serving as a paid per call firefighter?

Firefighters make a direct impact in their community and find it rewarding to serve others in a time of need, and to interact with and educate their fellow citizens about fire safety. Firefighters develop strong relationships with fellow firefighters and first responders in New Richmond and neighboring agencies. Serving as a firefighter is also a great opportunity to further develop one's leadership skills, confidence, and abilities to communicate and work together on a team.

Are firefighters paid?

While firefighters receive some monetary compensation for their efforts, they serve first and foremost to help the community. Probationary firefighters who have not yet completed their coursework earn \$15 per hour. After moving to non-probationary status, firefighters earn between \$18 and \$21 per hour for calls, trainings, and meetings. The City also contributes to a 457(b) employer-sponsored retirement plan.

How do I apply to join?

Contact Human Resources Manager Sarah Reese at 715-246-4268 or sreese@newrichmondwi.gov to complete an application form and to learn more. Applicants will be invited to participate in an interview. New probationary firefighters are approved by the Police & Fire Commission, pending completion of a background check and physical exam.

HOW YOU CAN HELP US

You can help the New Richmond Fire & Rescue Department in several different ways – big and small. We appreciate the continued support from our local community!

Serve As a Firefighter

We are always looking for high-character, service-minded individuals who are interested in becoming firefighters. We welcome new recruits year-round and provide all necessary training. If you are a local employer, encourage and support your employees to serve as firefighters – it's a great way to give back to the community and your employees will become stronger leaders. If you or someone you know might be interested in learning more about serving as a firefighter, please contact us! We would be glad to meet with you and answer any questions that you or someone else might have.



Support Fire Safety Education

Consider making a financial contribution to support our National Fire Prevention Week visits to local schools and childcare centers. Teach your children and grandchildren the dangers of fire and how to respond if there is a fire. Plan and practice escape routes from your home. Teach the importance of closing doors before going to sleep to prevent fires from spreading.

Adopt a Fire Hydrant

Hydrants can easily get buried in snow and ice during the winter months. If there's a hydrant near your home or business, please clear at least three feet around the hydrant and clear a pathway to the street. Every second matters during an emergency, and keeping the hydrants clear saves our firefighters considerable time if they need to access them.



Participate in Our Community Events

Consider attending our various community events throughout the year, including our pancake breakfast, Fun Fest water battle, National Night Out, and Fire Prevention Week Open House. We always welcome donations, sponsorships, silent auction items, and volunteers.

Install Smoke Detectors and Carbon Monoxide Detectors

It sounds simple, but installing smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors and replacing the batteries at least once a year is critical for the early detection of a fire in your home or business. Offer to assist an elderly neighbor or parent/grandparent as well.

