

2023

Vernon Township Fire Department Annual Report



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State of the Department



In the brief time that Vernon Township Fire Department has been in existence it is remarkable how much we have accomplished as a team. 2023 continued to be a year of growth for the Vernon Township Fire Department, in this report, it is my pleasure to share with you the statistical data, day to day operations and services provided by the members of the Vernon Township Fire Department.

Our accomplishments this year include new career personnel, a new station, new equipment, and new apparatus. All these help us provide the best service we can to the citizens, business owners and visitors to Vernon

Township, Fortville and McCordsville.

These accomplishments would not be possible if it were not for the dedicated members of the department. I am proud to serve alongside each of them to provide the most effective, efficient, and professional services possible.

Respectfully

Mark A. Elder
Fire Chief

Mission, Vision, and Values of the Department

Mission Statement

The mission of the Vernon Township Fire Department is to save lives, provide assistance to its customers, protect property, and assist in the recovery process in a professional manner.

Vision Statement

To provide the highest quality of service to our customers

Values

Honesty-being truthful and transparent in all our actions.

Integrity-having strong ethical and moral principles

Community-supporting our citizens by providing quality service.

Accountability-The acceptance of responsibility.

The Vernon Township Fire Protection Territory Board

The Vernon Township Fire Protection Territory was formed July 1, 2020. The Territory is in the northwest corner of Hancock County, Indiana. Vernon Township Fire Department (VTFD) protects the citizens of the Town of Fortville, the Town of McCordsville and the unincorporated rural area of Vernon Township. The Territory Board is made up of the Vernon Township Trustee, and a member of the McCordsville and Fortville Town Councils. The fire chief serves as an Ex-Officio member of the board.



Florence "Flory" May is the Vernon Township Trustee and serves as the Board President for the Vernon Township Fire Territory. She is President of The Registration System LLC and serves on the Hancock County Community Foundation Emeritus Board. Flory served as a US Army commissioned officer and is a Gulf War veteran. Flory and her husband, Tony, are both graduates of Indiana University and Purdue University.



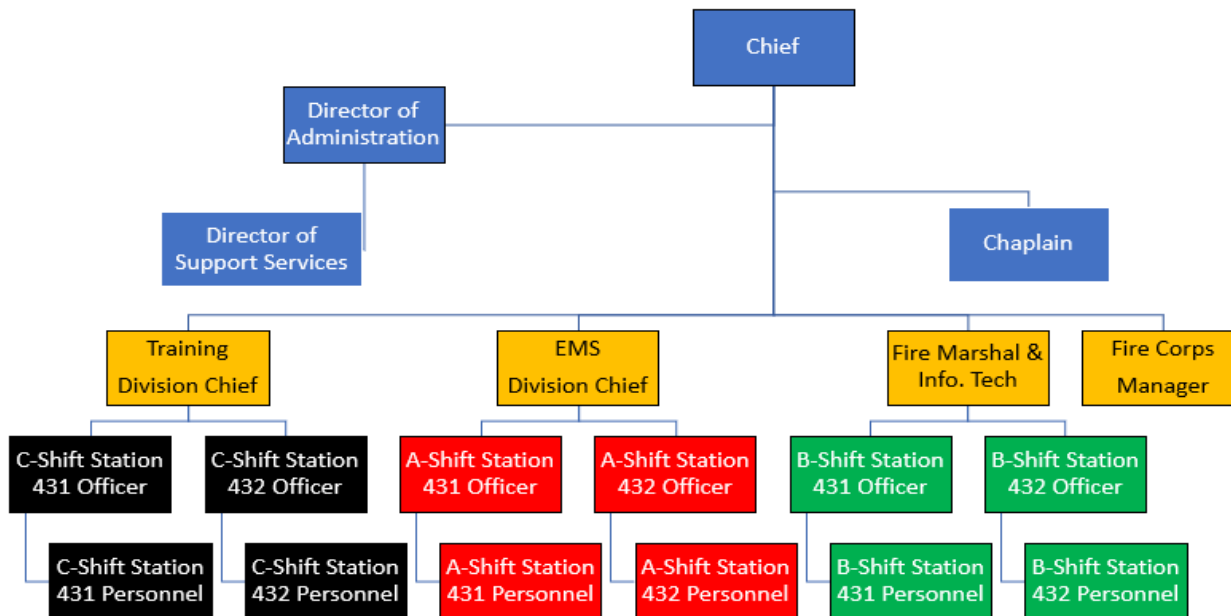
Greg Brewer is the representative for the Town of McCordsville. He was elected in November of 2019 to represent Council District 2. Greg graduated from Greenfield-Central High School in 1992 and attended Indiana University. At Indiana University he was a member of the IU Football Program and a member of the Phi Gamma Delta Fraternity. He graduated in 1996 with a BS in Public Affairs from the School of Public and Environmental Affairs. He is a Financial Advisor/General Principal with 17 years of experience with the past nine years as part owner of Cornerstone Financial Services. Greg and his wife Megan are the parents of Zach and Jacqueline.



Tonya Drake Davis is the Town Council President for Fortville. Tonya is the Operations Manager at Shades by Design. Tonya is married to her husband, Kent. She is a lifelong resident of Fortville and graduate of Mt Vernon High School.

VERNON TOWNSHIP FIRE DEPARTMENT

2023 Organizational Chart



Finance, Administration & Human Resources

2023 was a year of tremendous growth for Vernon Township Fire Department. We hired 11 new people: 10 full-time operations personnel and a Director of Support Services to assist both the Fire Department and the Township with building and grounds maintenance. In the 1st quarter of 2023, we hired five of our part time personnel as career firefighters. We had four resignations in 2023 but we were fortunate to hire Firefighter/Paramedics with prior experience. Our average length of full-time service is 15 months as the department has only recently started career hires.

Personnel hired full time in 2023.



Bret Byerly



Corbyn Carroll



Maddelyn Clock



Nathan Goodman



Louis Grandpre



Evan Heinkel



John Hiatt



Grant Kennedy



Zach Inman



Bryan McIver



Jacob Sayre



Tony Buechler

Richard Hiser was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant. As a Lieutenant, Hiser has additional responsibilities with the EMS Division. Stacy Nielsen was appointed Director of Administration.



We are placing an emphasis on streamlining our HR processes including payroll, onboarding/offboarding, performance management and compliance. Beginning in January of 2024 we are employing Paycor as our human resource management platform. We brought on additional online compliance training that was completed by all employees.



Accomplishments

- Opening of Station 432 in McCordsville
- Hired eleven career personnel.
- Change of payroll vendors with an implementation of a HR Management System.
- Established Director of Administration position
- Realignment of office staff for more efficient operations.
- Reduction of duplicate equipment from the department fleet.
- Began planning process for training facility.
- Development of long-range plan and Capital Improvement plans.
- Received FEMA grant for the purchase of a LUCAS chest compression device.

Facilities and Apparatus

Facilities

In 2023 Vernon Township moved into its new station in McCordsville. This station was designed for career personnel who will operate from this station twenty-four hours a day. The station was designed by DELV Design and constructed by Garmong Construction Services. Several members of the fire department served on the design committee to make sure this station would meet the needs of the department and community. The station was designed with firefighter health and safety as a top priority. The construction was completed in August of 2023 and was delivered under budget.



Apparatus

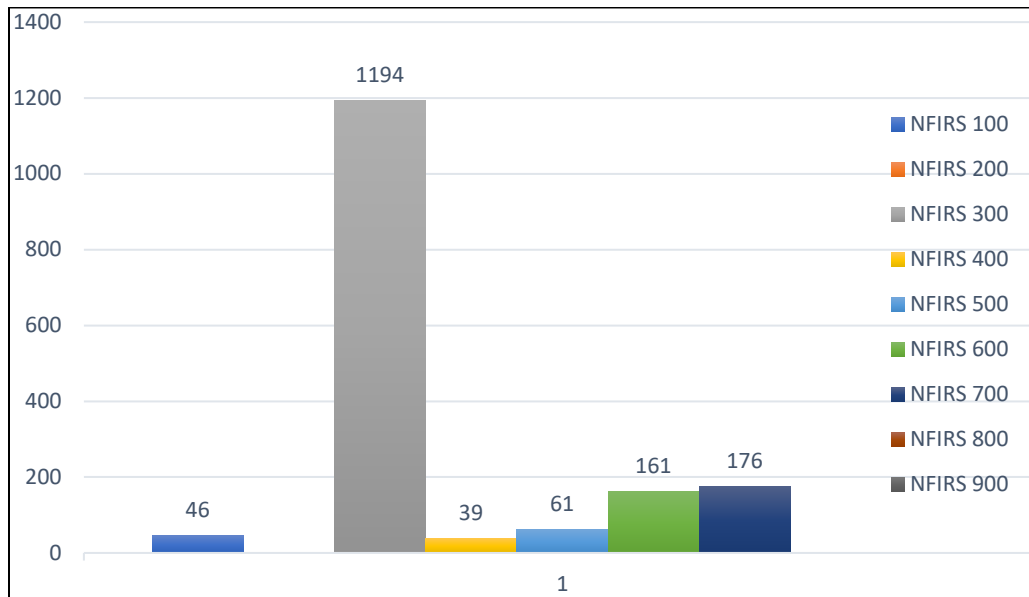
A new ambulance build design was completed in 2022, our EMS Chief has been working with the vendor and closely monitoring its progress. This new addition to our fleet should be in service in June of 2024. Vernon Township Fire Department also purchased Sugar Creek Township Fire Department's retired ambulance. With this purchase VTFD was able to place an ambulance that was equipped with an automatic patient loading system at Station 432 in McCordsville. Once the new ambulance is delivered, this unit will become a reserve apparatus for use when our primary pieces are out of service for maintenance.



Incident Response

The number of incidents has increased annually since becoming a fire territory, 2023 was no different. Vernon Township Fire Department responded to 1681 call for service which is a record high. Of those calls the largest percentage was for Rescue and Emergency Medical Services.

Incidents By NFIRS Category

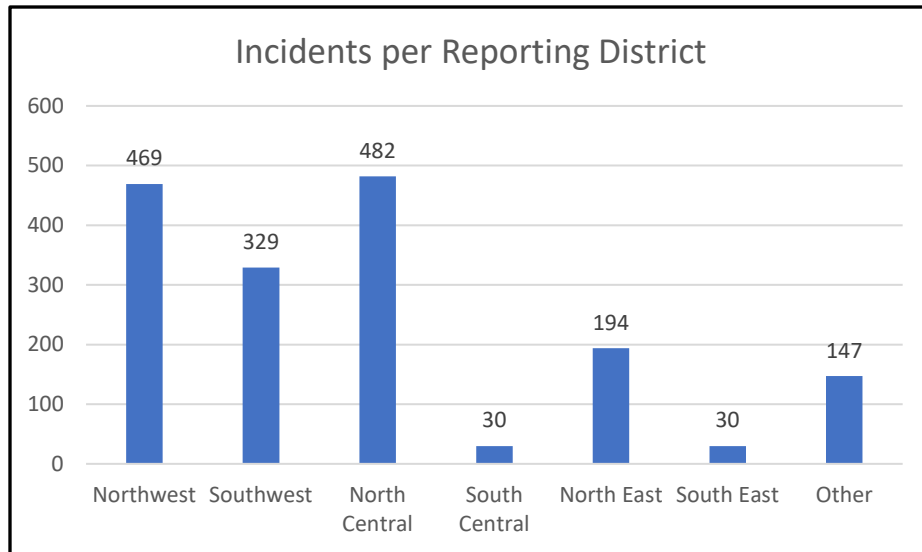


NFIRS 100-Fire	46
NFIRS 200-Overpressure Rupture, Explosion, Overheat (no Fire)	0
NFIRS 300-Rescue and Emergency Medical Services	1194
NFIRS 400-Hazardous Condition-No Fire	39
NFIRS 500-Service Call	61
NFIRS 600-Good Intent Call	161
NFIRS 700-False Alarm and False Call	176
NFIRS 800-Severe Weather and Natural Disaster	2
NFIRS 900-Special Incident Type	2
Total	1681

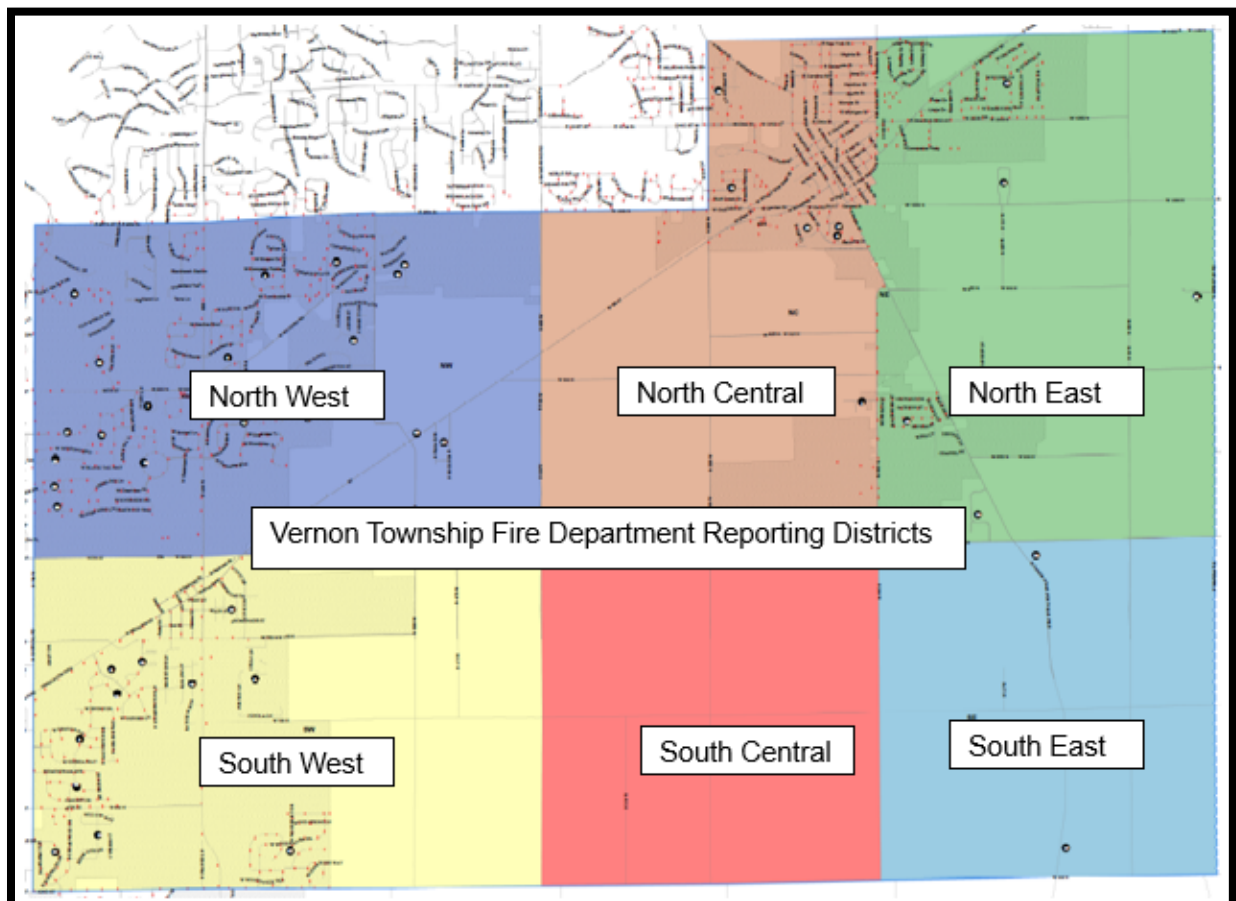
The National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) is a voluntary reporting standard that fire departments use to uniformly report on the full range of their activities, from fire to emergency medical services to severe weather and natural disasters.

Incidents Per Reporting District

The busiest areas of Vernon Township are the Northwest and North Central Districts



*Other category are mutual aid responses outside of Vernon Township



Incident Responses by Unit

Apparatus	Responses
CART431 (Special Event)	1
Engine 431	890
Engine 432	897
Grass 431	9
Medic 431	1122
Medic 432	73
Staff 4301 (Fire Chief)	164
Staff 4304 (EMS Chief)	49
Staff 4305 (Fire Marshal)	36
Staff 4306 (Training Chief)	184
Tanker 431	29
Tech. Support Unit 438 (Fire Corps)	23

Response Times

Vernon Township Fire Department operates from two stations. Station 431 is in Fortville; Station 432 is in McCordsville. Personnel are on duty 24 hours per day, 7 days per week ready to respond immediately to any call for assistance. Our average turnout time is one minute and 14 seconds. Our average travel time is four minutes and fifty-four seconds. Our average total response time is six minutes and eight seconds.

Turnout Time (Average)	1:14
Turnout Time (90th%)	2:07
Travel Time Average	4:54
Travel Time (90th%)	7:54
Total Response Time (Average)	6:08

Turnout Time

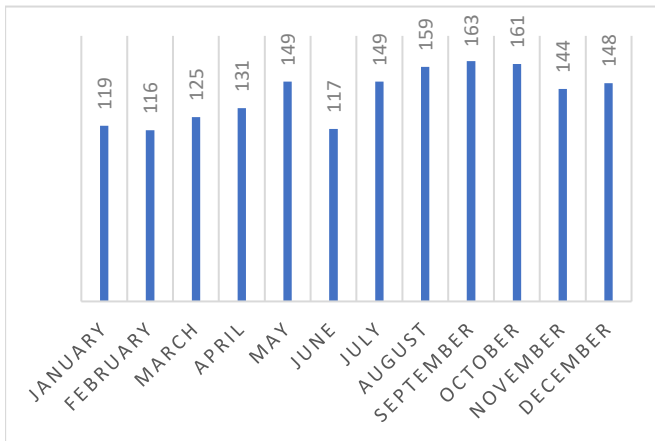
Turnout time measures the time elapsed from when the emergency dispatcher informs the fire unit of an emergency and when the unit leaves the fire station.

Travel Time

Elapsed time from when an emergency vehicle goes enroute to the time that it arrives to the incident.

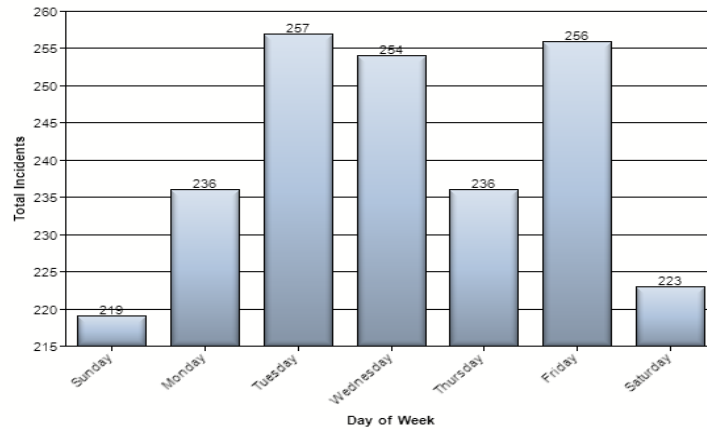
Incidents by Month

The busiest months are September and October.



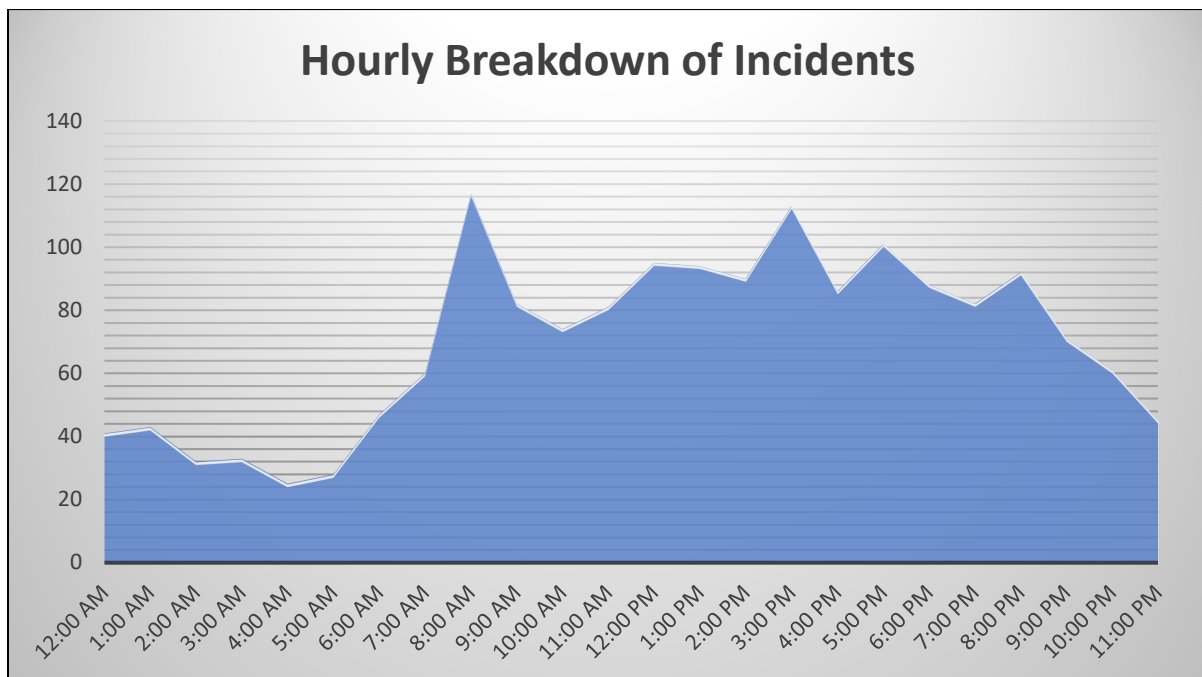
Incidents by Day of Week

The busiest days of the week are Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday.



Incidents by Hour of Day

Our busiest times of the day are from 8:00 am to 9:00 am and 3:00 pm to 4:00 pm.



Emergency Medical Services



Division Chief Kiely Culberson

2023 was a big year for growth in the EMS division. We went from having one paramedic on duty a day in 2020, to two to three in 2023. This is a tremendous success as other departments are struggling to acquire and retain paramedics. We became a paramedic precepting site for IU Health Lifeline. This enabled us to send a member of Vernon Township to the 2023 class at no cost to the agency, and subsequent paramedic licensure to an employee. More schools have reached out to us to become precepting sites. This not only gives us the opportunity to teach, but also lets students see the atmosphere that they may want to get involved with. A controlled substance license was acquired through the state and federal authorities.

After implementing the LUCAS devices on cardiac arrests, we have seen a significant increase in return of spontaneous circulation (ROSC) on scene. Four groups were given CPR save awards in 2023 for having a patient return home in a neurological normal state. Our ROSC rate for 2023 was 54%. Several CPR classes were completed for staff and civilians. Eighty CPR cards were issued with forty additional individuals taught hands only CPR. The department was able to purchase additional devices in 2023 from a grant and sound financial practices.

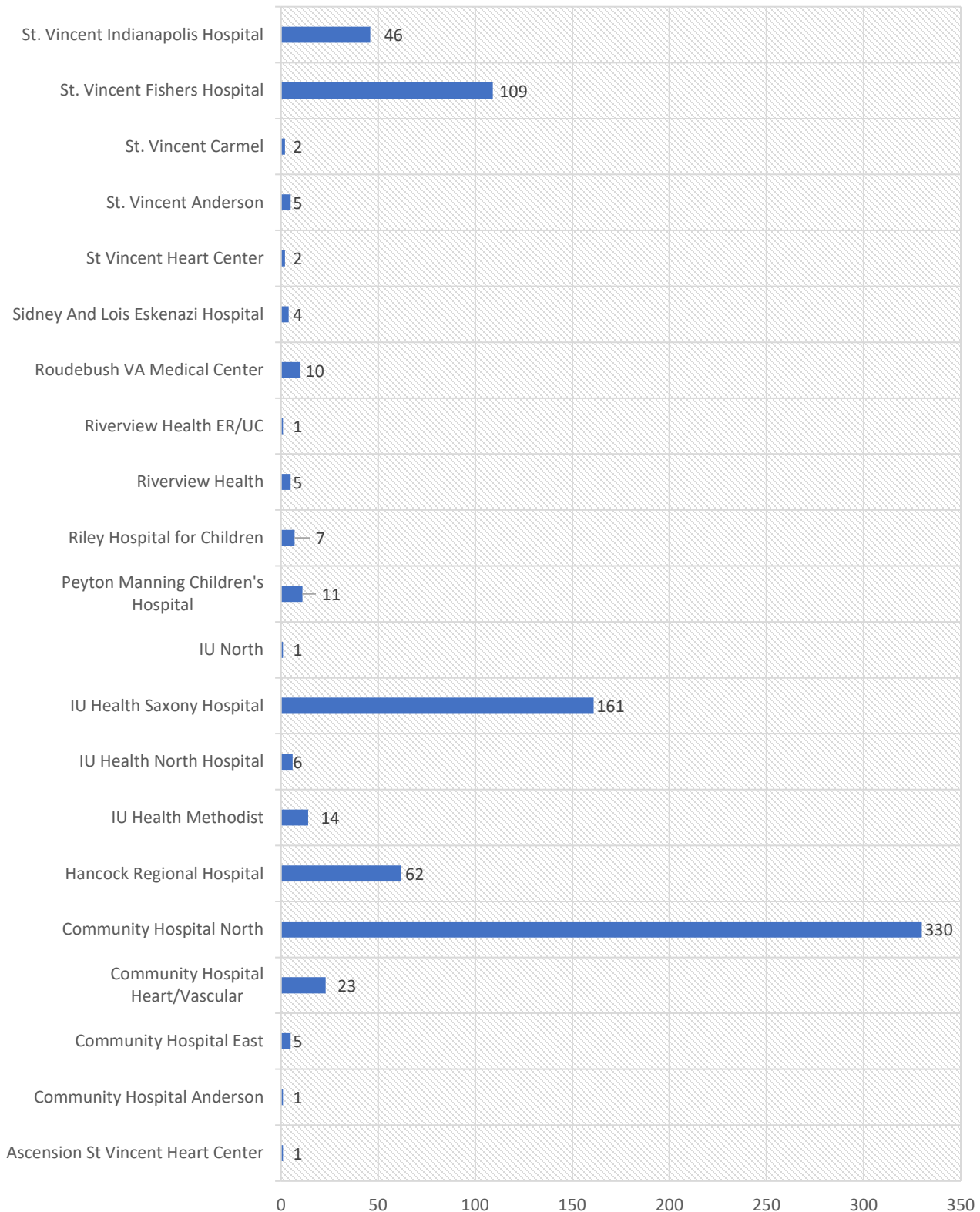


LUCAS DEVICE

Accomplishments

- Staffing increased from one to three paramedics on shift daily.
- Obtained controlled substance licensing from the state and federal government.
- Ballistic vests and helmets purchased and placed on apparatus.
- Active participant in county wide Critical Incident Stress Management team.
- LUCAS at both stations.
- Purchased a used ambulance from another agency that was newer and in better condition to replace current Medic 432. This will become a reserve unit once the new truck arrives in 2024.
- Paramedic precepting site for IU Health. More schools are reaching out to utilize VTFD for student ride outs.
- One student graduated from medic school in December.
- Drug screens/medical screens set up with private vendor.
- CPR training was provided for department personnel and police departments.
- EMS Vending machines placed in each station for inventory control.
- Medic 432 in service as primary apparatus

Hospital Transports



Training



Division Chief Scott Hathaway



Vernon Township firefighters had a busy year of training in 2023. We had a total of 7401 hours of training with 5984 hours of fire related training and 1417 hours of EMS training. During the year we formed a great relationship with Greenfield Fire and Buck Creek Fire and began joint live fire training at Greenfield's training facility. This is the first live fire training we have been able to perform since becoming a full-time department.

This year we had the opportunity to train in an acquired house that the town of McCordsville allowed us to use before it was demolished. We were also able to practice standpipe operations at the Madison Loft Apartments while they were under construction.

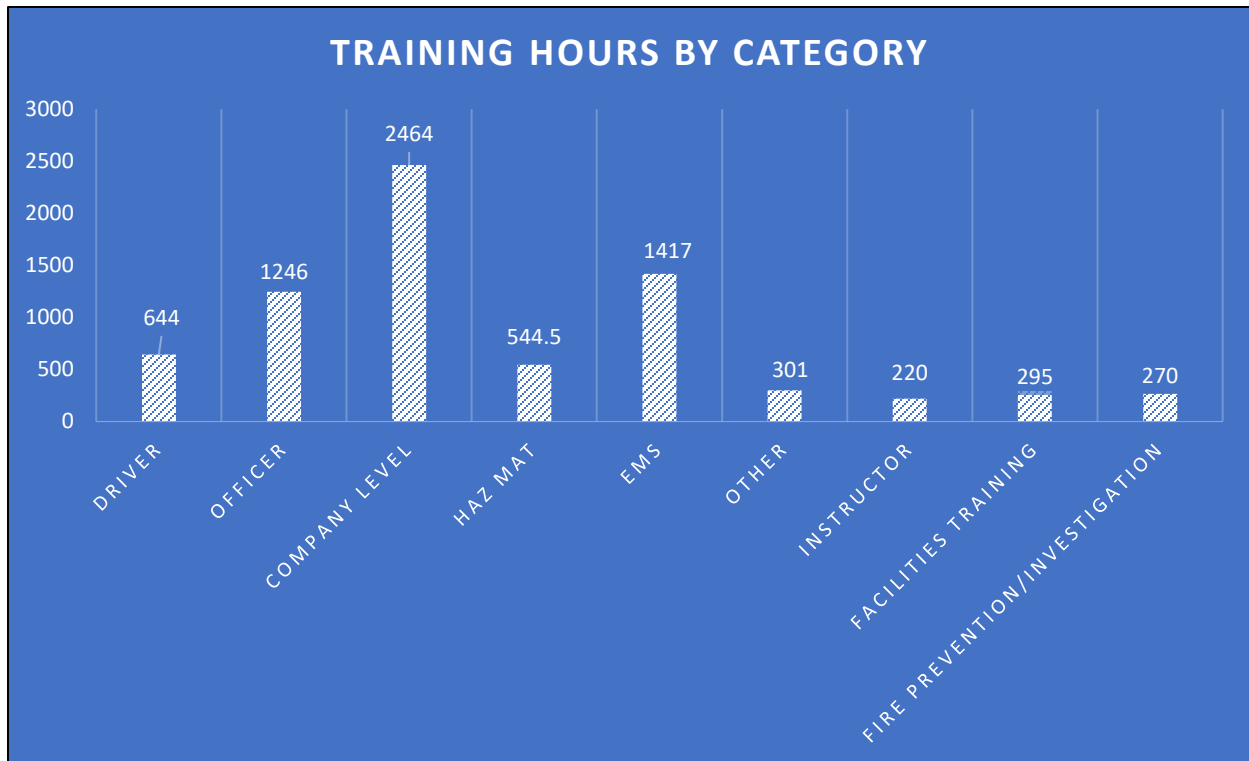
Our officers completed the Safety Officer and Fire Officer 2 courses during the year. 12 firefighters completed the FOST class (Fire Officer Strategy and Tactics) that Lt. Campi led. We also created a ride out officer task book which will prepare our firefighters to fill the officer role when the normal officer is off.

Vernon Township Fire Department also provided a fire engine and crew to assist at FDIC (Fire Department Instructors Conference) in 2023. This was a great experience for our firefighters as they were able to observe and participate in hands-on training provided by instructors from multiple departments.

I would like to thank all our firefighters for their dedication and hard work throughout the year.

Accomplishments

- Fire Officer Strategy and Tactics Certification Course completed.
- Safety Officer Certification Course completed.
- Fire Officer II Certification Course completed.
- Rideout officer process implemented.
- Mutual aid training increased.
- Live fire training was provided for all personnel.
- Increase in training hours in EMS, Fire, Rescue and Hazardous Materials.
- Mental Health Awareness training for department personnel.
- Purchased workout equipment for Station 431
- Fire Corps increased call out.
- Haz Mat and EMS training with Police Departments
- Several members attended active assailant response training.



Community Risk Reduction



Fire Marshal Josh Earl

Public Education and PR

VTFD had 34 Public Education and Public Relation events for 2023 which is a 62% increase from 2022. We continue to grow and foster community relationships with the schools, preschools, and other organizations throughout the township. With station tours, school visits, and participation in community events, we continue to get more requests to participate in community events.

Our social media reached 109,983 people on Facebook in 2023 which is a 10% increase, while we reached 697 people on Instagram which is a 126% increase. We gained 567 new Facebook followers in 2023 and 55 new followers on Instagram. Our most popular social media posts are about community involvement, incidents, promotions, awards, and job postings.

IT and Equipment

In 2023 VTFD purchased iPads for the front-line apparatus and staff vehicles to be used as mobile data terminals. These iPads are used for daily interactions with ESO for reports, as well as our mobile CAD (which was also purchased in 2023) enabling units to mark enroute to an incident, on scene, and back in service. Using these devices has given us more accurate run time information; they have also eliminated the need to utilize the radios to mark enroute or on scene which keeps the radio channel clear for other communications with dispatch.

During the summer we purchased all new KNOX equipment from the KNOX company including

- Key Secure devices to secure KNOX Keys in the apparatus and staff vehicles.
- eKey's, a new locking mechanism that can track who accesses a KNOX Box and allows for mutual aid access into other departments' KNOX Boxes when needed.
- New MedVaults to secure our narcotic medications in.
- New Station Vaults to secure expired medications in.

All these new KNOX devices are monitored through a cloud account that provides information on when a device is accessed,



Inspections, Investigations, and Plan Reviews

VTFD conducted 230 inspections in 2023, a 49% increase from last year. Inspections in occupied businesses on Main Street in Fortville have been completed and are progressing towards McCordsville. A total of 934 violations were discovered. Most business owners have been very receptive to inspections and the program being established. Development of a county wide fire ordinance to enhance inspections continues with coordination and cooperation between VTFD, Greenfield, Buck Creek, and Sugar Creek as well as the county.

There was a total of 5 fire investigations conducted in 2023. Investigations are conducted by either the Fire Marshal or Fire Chief. Three on shift personnel were certified as investigators in 2023, and a plan will be developed to train them and begin to utilize them in the future.

There were 65 new construction plan reviews conducted in 2023. The working relationship between both towns' building departments and the county continues with coordinating joint inspections and consulting each other during plan reviews.

Pre-Plans

This year shift crews performed pre-plans for the first time ever on 247 businesses in our area. Pre-plans help us in the event of an emergency incident by collecting emergency contact information for businesses, identify the location of items that would be essential during emergency operations such as exits, utility meters, and fire protection equipment locations. Having the crews conduct the pre-plans is vital as it gets the front-line personnel out into the buildings so that they can become familiar with them and know their way around better.

Accomplishments

- Preplans for local business are being completed by shift personnel.
- iPad for Mobile Data Tablets installed in apparatus.
- iPhones for staff instead of using personal phones for department business.
- KNOX devices (e-key). This system will phase out the current mechanical key lock being used.
- Increase in public education/public relation events.
- Main Street businesses inspected.
- Established working relationships with local building inspectors.
- Participation on committee for county wide fire prevention ordinance
- Social Media presence increased.
- Increase in inspections.
- Participated in Shop with Public Safety with both police departments.

Fire Corps



Trevor Oak



Ken Fronek



The Fire Corps are volunteer interested citizens who wish to contribute time and energy to assist the fire department personnel and other first responders in Hancock County. Fire Corps provides rehab for firefighters, participates in public relations, traffic control, educational activities, and other functions as required at emergency incidents and department functions.

Monthly meetings, training activities, new member orientation, and other routine activities are organized and led by members of the fire corps leadership team, Trevor Oak, and Ken Fronek.

The VTFD thanks all the members of the Fire Corps, who in 2023, donated 445 hours of time through twenty-one incident responses, and several public relation events.

The Vernon Township Fire Corps is open to anyone that wants to be a part of the fire department as an interested citizen. If you are interested in joining the VTFD Fire Corps, please contact us at admin@vernonfire.us or visit our website at www.vernonfire.us





Station 431
600 Vitality Drive,
Fortville, IN 46040



Station 432
6091 West 900 North
McCordsville, IN 46055



Vernon Township Trustee and Vernon
Township Fire Department
Headquarters

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