

# Springfield Fire Department Annual Report 2015



Commission on  
Fire Accreditation  
International

The SFD is accredited through CPSE/CFAI



CITY OF  
Springfield FIRE



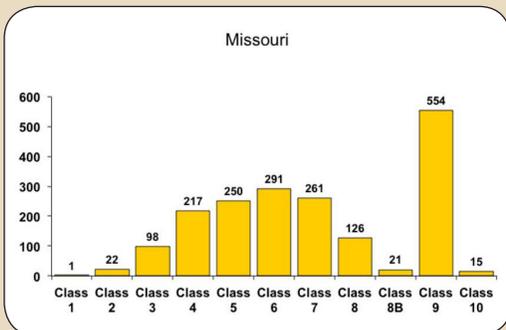
## Message from the Chief

FIRE CHIEF DAVID A. HALL

During the past year, the Springfield Fire Department (SFD) has continued to make progress in most areas. In December, the City was notified that it would maintain its Class 2/2x rating from the Insurance Services Office (ISO). This was very positive news because we received 86.06 points out of the 100 points possible, which was a full five point improvement over just four years ago. This is the first time the community was rated using the updated rating system, which now recognizes the department's efforts in public education, fire investigation, and code enforcement. This places the City solidly within the Class 2 rating, and **top 1 percent in the state.**

***// We received... a full five point improvement over just four years ago. This places the City solidly within the Class 2 rating //***

The SFD also saw some significant budgetary improvements, both in its capital and operating budgets. For the first time, the City had met its needed reserves for the Workers' Compensation fund. This allowed these excess funds being used to build the reserve to then be reallocated to the departments. This funded non-personnel budget requests made by the department, including: turnout gear, public education, physicals, training, and EMS supplies, in addition to funding a mid-range capital replacement



SOURCE: ISO MITIGATION

*Springfield has a solid ISO 2 rating which puts us in the top 1% in the state in fire protection.*



**Pictured on cover L-R:**  
Water Rescue Specialists Cody Rein and Mark Becker helping Ed Underwood and his dog to safety. Photo courtesy of Joe Thomas/Greenbox Photography. 417-812-6206  
www.greenboxphotography.com

## Water Rescue

In addition to their regular incident responses, many Springfield Firefighters are members of specialty teams within the Springfield Fire Department (SFD). One Specialty Team includes the Water Rescue team, which was formed in 1990 and consists of 30 members. This team is just one of the Specialty Teams within the Special Operations Division managed by Special Operations Battalion Chief Richard O'Connor. The Water Rescue Team members respond to moving water incidents, usually involving a stranded motorist or someone swept away in a current during flooding conditions like those we experienced in 2015. The team responded to 79 swift water and flood incidents making over 30 rescues. They also provide ice rescue. The team utilizes two power inflatable rescue boats and other tools to aid in rescues.

*In 1897, the volunteer fire department was officially changed to a paid department.*

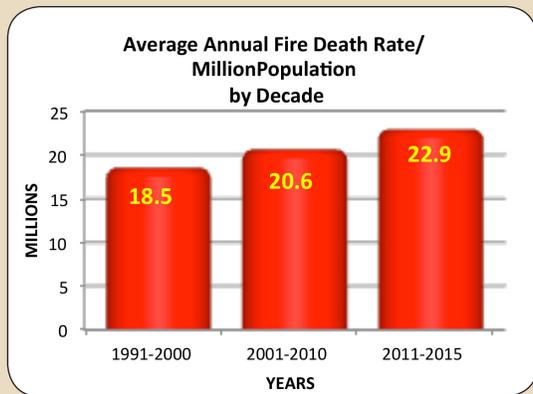
### Timeline gallery



# Message from the Chief, (cont.)

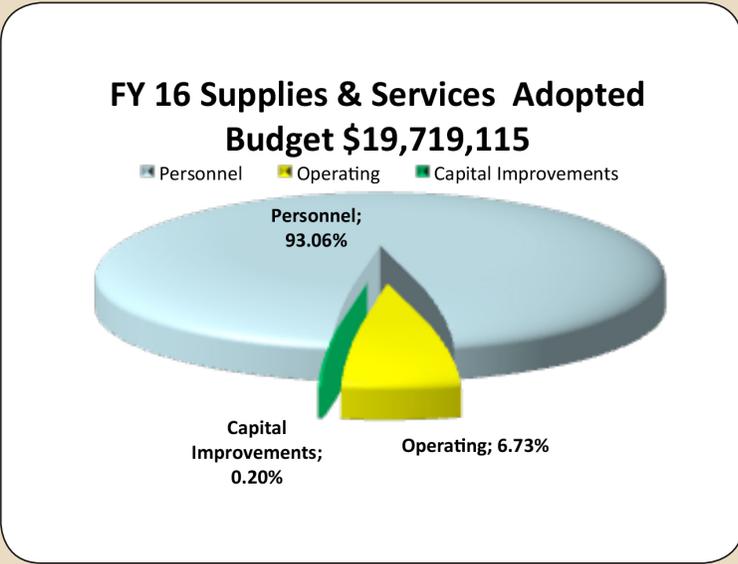
schedule. The department also received funding to replace several apparatus, including: Hazardous Materials response vehicle, water rescue boat and two water rescue vehicles, air supply vehicle used to refill breathing air for firefighters, heavy rescue vehicle, two engines, and numerous staff vehicles. In addition, we received funding to replace all Automatic External Defibrillators (AED's), roofs at stations 1 and 8, and generators at stations 2 and 10. We also received funding to purchase a practical training facility and build a drill tower. Lastly, the Department created station-level budgets where the Company Officers were given a budget for station supplies, tools and equipment, and office supplies, so they could decide how the funding should be utilized.

The one area that continues to plague the community is its fire death rate. In 2015, there were three fire deaths. Springfield averages 3.25 per year, which is a rate of 22.9 deaths per million of population. The national average is 13.3 and the state of Missouri average is 18.4. However, for the first time, fire fatalities were included as a Red Flag issue within the Community Focus Report. This should help guide education and resources to combat this problem in the future.

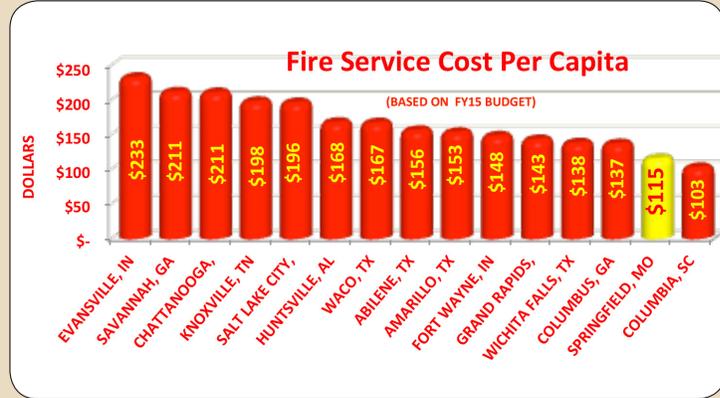



**MISSOURI  
AVG DEATH  
RATE 18.4**

**NATIONAL  
AVG DEATH  
RATE 13.3**



**93% of the budget is for personnel costs**



# Division Highlights: Operations

## OPERATIONS – Chief David Pennington

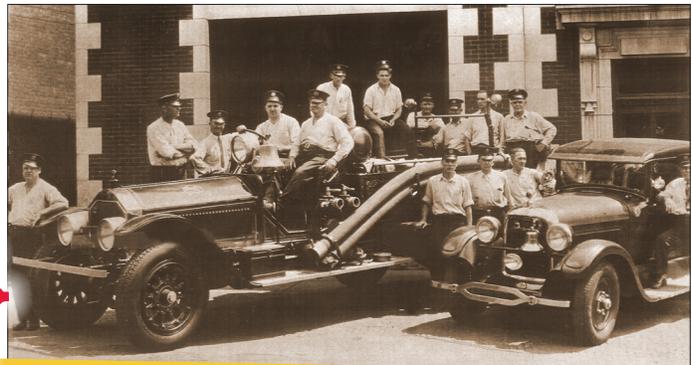
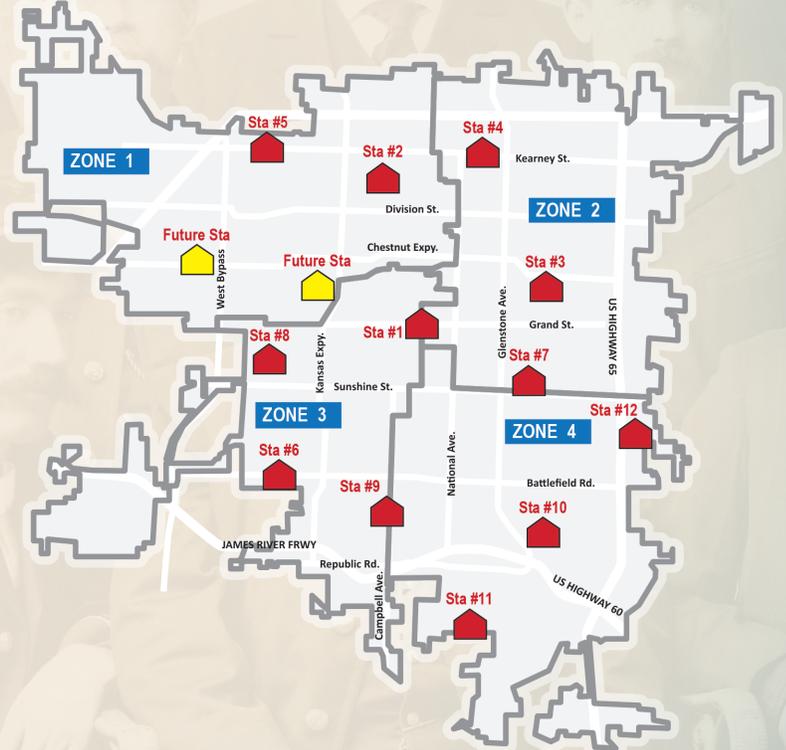
The men and women of the Operations Division had a busy year in 2015, and were actively involved throughout the community in several ways. Response to emergency incidents remained steady in 2015, with the division answering 15,961 calls for service. The number of fires within the City decreased to 711 incidents during 2015 from 907 calls in 2014, while response to medical emergencies remained high at 8,344 incidents, which is 52% of the overall call volume for the year.

The department completed a staffing and deployment analysis that critically evaluated the placement of fire companies, staffing compliments, and comparisons to national standards associated with best practices for emergency response to fires and emergencies. The results of this study allowed the division to reorganize several companies to provide better service, decrease overall response times to the areas of highest demand, and increase overall staffing on the fire scene through a “priority staffing” model. This planning also allowed the department to make projections for future locations of several fire stations that will serve West-central, and West Springfield, in addition to the need for the reconstruction of two aging fire stations that are currently serving the community.

The division continued its focus on standardization of fire apparatus, equipment, and fire ground operations to increase efficiency and safety during emergency response and to provide the highest degree of customer service to the City. The department continued its focus on community engagement and involvement, and has seen the expansion of the Neighborhoods Program from nine to 24 neighborhood groups participating. The Neighborhoods Program was developed as a partnership to facilitate communication between the neighborhoods and the Fire Department. Additionally, during the summer, fire companies could be found on Saturday mornings at Farmers Park, providing public safety education and interacting with families, as well as providing service through the United Way Day of Caring, while in the Fall you could find our firefighters on local college campuses and in the Springfield Public Schools classrooms educating students about fire prevention

and campus fire safety. The Special Operations teams continue to provide excellence in service to the community and Region D, with an extremely busy year for the water team, **responding to 79 swift water and flood incidents and making over 30 rescues.**

## SPRINGFIELD FIRE STATIONS



# Calls for Service

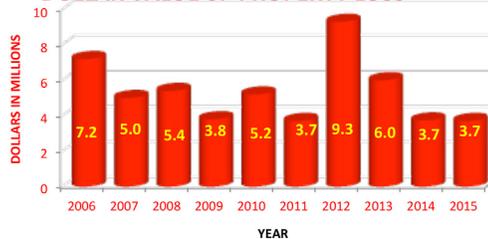
*2015 saw Springfield's fewest fire calls in more than 10 years. We continue to promote fire safety, educating citizens to raise awareness on how they can make an impact to reduce these numbers.*

**Yearly Fire Comparison**



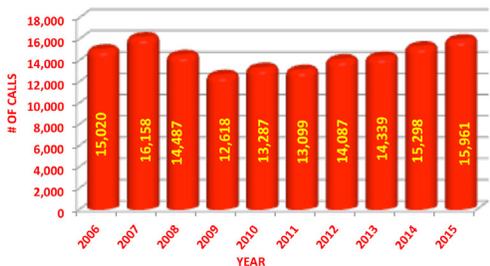
*The Springfield Fire Department supports code enforcement and educates citizens on fire prevention and actions they can take to directly aid in the reduction and control of fire loss.*

**DOLLAR VALUE of PROPERTY LOSS**

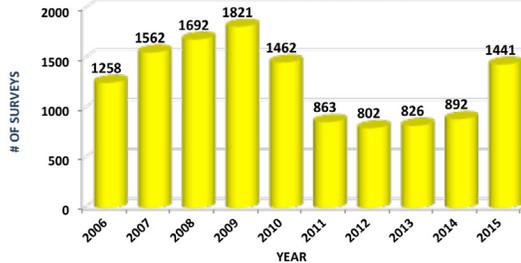


*The SFD crews conduct building surveys every year as part of a concerted effort to save lives and provide a safer community.*

**Yearly Calls for Service**

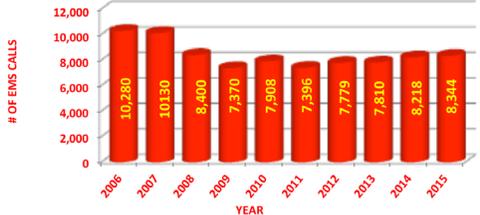


**BUILDING SURVEYS**

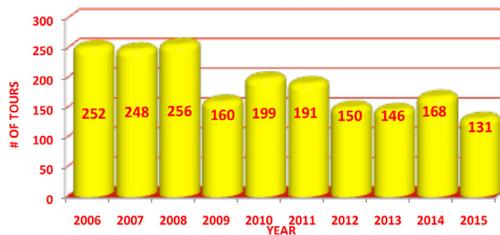


*We will continue to evaluate this program to see if our efforts toward our target groups directly correlates with the decrease in station tours.*

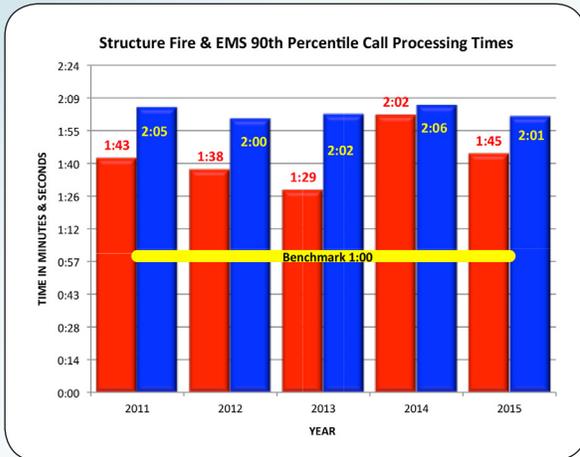
**YEARLY EMS COMPARISON**



**STATION TOURS**

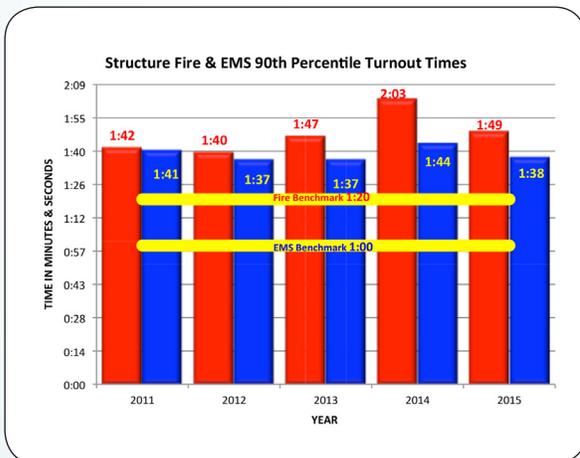


# Response Service Levels



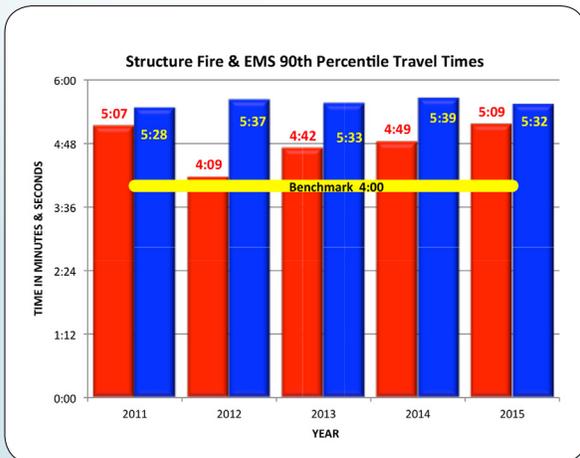
**Our goal is for at least 90 percent of our calls to 911 to be dispatched within 1 minute from the time the call is received.**

- Structure Fire 90th percentile call processing times
- EMS 90th percentile call processing times



**Our goal is for at least 90 percent of our calls to be leaving the station by 1:20 for fire calls and 1:00 for EMS calls from the time they are dispatched.**

- Structure Fire 90th percentile turnout times
- EMS 90th percentile turnout times



**Amount of time it takes when crews leave the station until they arrive on structure fires or EMS incidents 90 percent of the time.**

- Structure Fire 90th percentile travel times
- EMS 90th percentile travel times



# Response Service Levels

These graphs are the foundation for evaluating how quickly the Fire Department responds to requests for service. Each graph shows how long it takes for us to reach 90% of the calls.

The first graph looks at how long it took the **first fire unit** to arrive at a **fire** 9 out of 10 times.

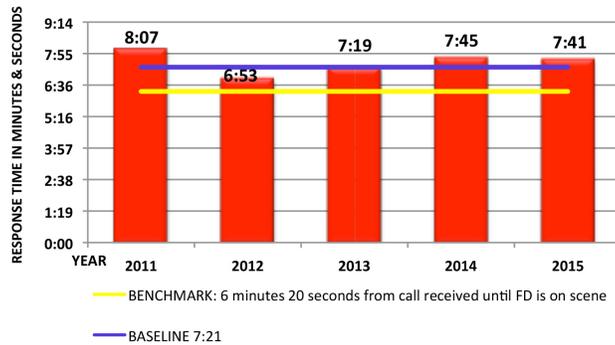
However, many fires require more than one fire unit in order to be able to extinguish it, so the second graph looks at how long it took **all of the fire units** to arrive at a **fire** 9 out of 10 times.

The last graph shows how long it took the **first fire unit** to arrive to a **medical emergency** 9 out of 10 times.

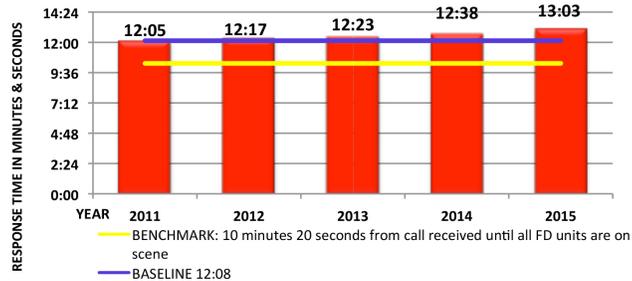
Each graph also shows the baseline performance goal established by the Department as well as the nationally recognized benchmark. *All times are measured from the initial call to arrival.*

*The Benchmark is the ideal goal our department tries to meet. The Baseline is the average of the last 5 years.*

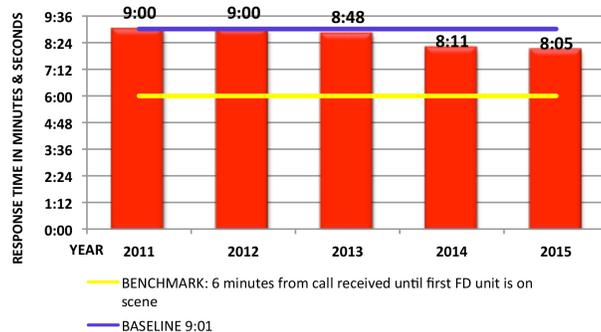
Structure Fire 90th Percentile Initial Unit Response Times



Structure Fire 90th Percentile Effective Response Force Response Times



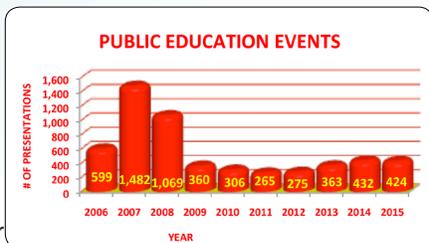
EMS 90th Percentile Initial Unit Response Times



# Division Highlights: Prevention

## FIRE PREVENTION – Chief Randy Villines

Fire and Life Safety Educator Cara Erwin worked with Fire Department personnel as they visited **36 elementary and middle schools**. As a group, they were able to educate over 10,000 students.



The Prevention Division partnered with **Parents As Teachers**, which resulted in a dramatic increase in the number of Residential Fire Safety Surveys conducted throughout the city. As representatives with Parents As Teachers visited homes, they evaluated the homes for working smoke alarms, fire escape plans, and overall fire and life safety items.

With an improving economy, the number of projects and developments within the community continue to rise, which created a tremendous uptick in the number of plan reviews conducted by the fire marshals assigned to plans review.

The Fire Marshals' concentrated efforts throughout the year to ensure occupancy loads were kept in check in the bars and nightclubs within the community. This success was due in part to having early conversations with bar and nightclub owners.

The Springfield Fire Department Bomb Squad had a busy year

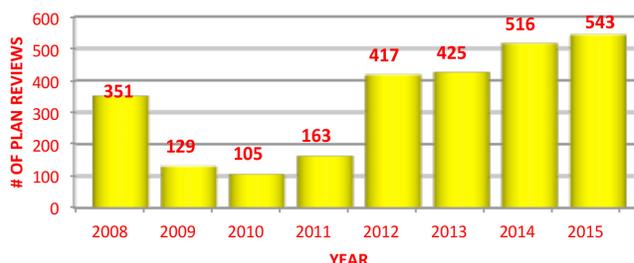


responding to live military ordnances, abandoned backpacks, a two-day explosives mitigation at a private residence in Newton County, and a three-day explosives situation involving an explosives-carrying truck fire inside the Westside Springfield Underground.

### Fire Prevention Departmental Trends

Year	Public Education Events	Station Tours	Smoke Alarm Install	Crew Surveys	Fire Marshal Inspections
2015	424	131	652	1441	144
2014	432	168	737	892	200
2013	363	146	684	826	151
2012	275	150	1023	802	197
2011	265	191	2274	863	337
2010	306	199	435	1462	371
2009	360	160	434	1821	414
2008	1069	256	469	1692	225
2007	1482	248	674	1562	541
2006	599	252	751	1258	542

### BUILDING PLAN REVIEWS



# Division Highlights: Training

## TRAINING – Chief Andy Woody

During the past year, the Training Division has continued to see a lot of changes. One of the most notable was the departure of *Assistant Chief of Training Andy Woody*, who left to take a position with the Searcy, Arkansas Fire Department. We wish him the best in his new role.

During the year, the division continued to provide all of the required activities the department needs to ensure its personnel perform safely and efficiently to meet the level of performance expected by the community. Activities included: physical ability testing of firefighter candidates and all incumbent personnel, driving assessment of all drivers, quarterly EMS drills, special operations training, and the various academies including firefighter, equipment operator, truck, and rescue. These academies ensure that all personnel are properly trained and prepared to assume positions rather than getting trained after assuming the position through on-the-job experience.



*Practical Training Annex*

The Training Division had the good fortune to acquire property that came up for sale located directly south of the Police-Fire Regional Training Center. The “Practical Training Annex” has a large brick-front metal building with warehouse, office, and classroom space that will meet the division’s needs for years to come. Half of the warehouse space is being used as a centralized location for all of the

department’s tools, equipment, and supplies. The other half is being used for an indoor training area. A “dirty” classroom is housed in the front part of the building, which allows firefighters to move freely between the practical areas of the facility to the classroom without having to change clothes.



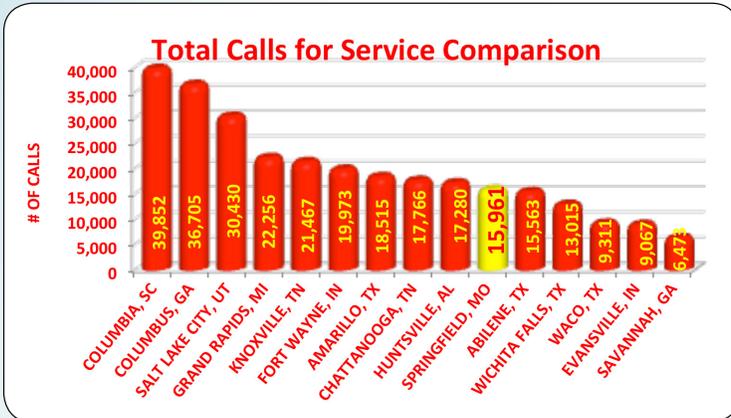
*The new drill tower will look similar to the one pictured.*

The Training Division also received funding for a new drill tower to replace the one at 1205 S. Campbell, by old Fire Station 6. The tower will be constructed at the Practical Training Annex to centralize all practical training activities. The drill tower will have a four-story tower for rope practices, standpipe operations, and other above-grade activities. It will also have a two-story, residential-style building to allow for search, hose, and ventilation practices in a structure that replicates the structures we see most. Through our partnership with the Ozarks Technical Community College Fire Science Technology program, a confined space rescue prop was installed, being the first prop to be installed at the Practical Training Facility.

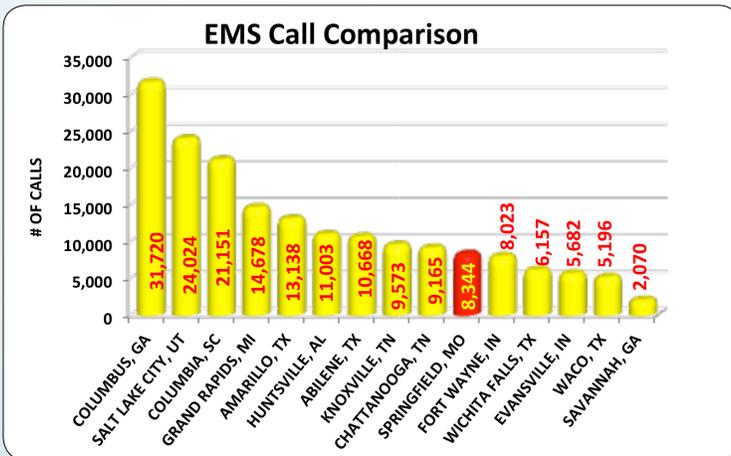


# Benchmark City Comparisons

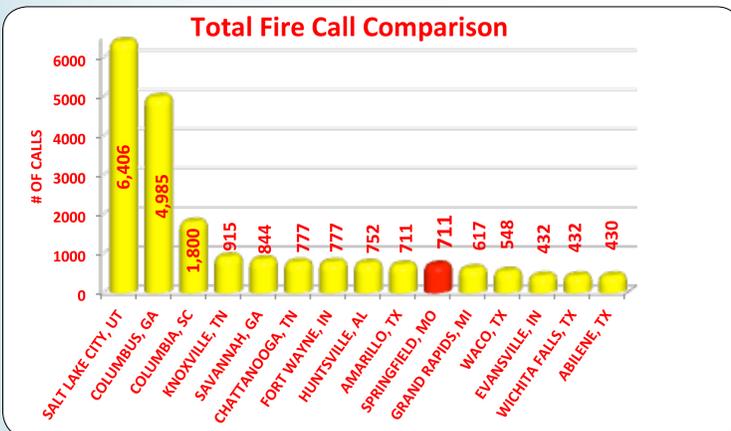
*The Springfield Fire Department continues to be proactive in identifying educational opportunities and programs to promote a safer community. We strive to educate and empower citizens on how they can make a positive impact on fire prevention.*



*We compare our performance levels to similar cities as well as continually monitor ways to improve our service levels.*



*Springfield Firefighters provide basic life support on all medical calls.*



*In 2015, Springfield had 234 fewer fires than in 2014, placing its call volume in the lower half compared to its benchmark cities.*

# 2015 Fire Department Award Recipients

## FIREFIGHTER OF THE YEAR:

Jeffrey S. Elliott



*Rescue Specialist Jeff Elliott* has been a member of the Springfield Fire Department for over 17 years. RS Elliott continually demonstrates a professional work attitude. Elliott approaches his job each day with an attitude to make himself and his crew better. Education has been very important to RS Elliott and he is continually studying, whether it is in the military, the fire service or self-improvement. He is a student of the fire service, working diligently to stay current in all skills. He has assisted in both the basic and the rescue academies. RS Elliott routinely attends new recruit physical fitness training, pushing and working out with the new firefighters. He never misses an opportunity to educate others around him. When speaking about Jeff, *Battalion Chief Brad Eden* says, "Anytime a new situation comes up, he is always teaching the firefighters around him."

Rescue Specialist Elliott works tirelessly on each and every scene to which he is dispatched and is credited with multiple rescues during the Madison Towers fire, as well as receiving credit for multiple life saves during recent flooding events. He works to increase firefighter morale and promotes physical fitness by organizing activities such as ice hockey, benefit runs and outdoor trips.

## FIRE OFFICER OF THE YEAR:

David A. Pennington



Dozens of Springfield Fire Department personnel were honored for their heroic efforts in 2015 at the annual awards ceremony, held Feb. 23, 2016. *Assistant Chief of Operations David Pennington* was named Fire Officer of the Year.

Chief Pennington has worked tirelessly to develop the Operations Division. He is a continuous force in pushing the development of the individual firefighter, Officer and Command staff personnel. He has been the strongest advocate for developing ways to improve continuity in our approach to response through Operational Guidelines and policy development. He spends countless hours on and off duty to achieve the goals he and the department have set.

Pennington "has been instrumental in obtaining millions of dollars in grant funding to purchase various items that make our job safer, easier and generally better ... It is for his total dedication to the operations of this department I recommend him for the honor of fire officer of the year," according to the nomination letter.



# 2015 Fire Department Award Recipients

## Medal of Valor:

Michael J. Kuss,  
Swift Water Rescue 5-29-15

*The Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor is awarded to a public safety officer who has exhibited exceptional courage, extraordinary decisiveness and presence of mind, and unusual swiftness of action, regardless of his or her own personal safety, in the attempt to save or protect human life. This act is deemed to be above and beyond the call of duty.*

*For the purpose of this award, a public safety officer is defined as a person serving a public agency, with or without compensation, as a firefighter, law enforcement officer, or emergency personnel. The term "law enforcement officer" includes a person who is a state or local corrections or court officer or a civil defense officer.*



was swept off the roadway and into the tree line west of the roadway. The two adults and three children were clinging to trees at our arrival and yelling they couldn't hold on much longer. They had been in the water around 30 minutes at this point. I will refrain from discussing the technical nature of the incident as the pertinent aspect was the evolution of the rescue. A boat based rescue plan was developed and executed, in very difficult circumstances, without proper back up possible. Mistakes at this point would surely have resulted in injury or death on the part of the rescuers or victims. Time was running out for the family so an immediate rescue was required while the victims were still savable. The 3 children were rescued first and brought back out

of the trees to safety. FF Michael Kuss volunteered to stay behind, in the dark flooded tree line, with the two adults and provide instruction as to what to do and assure the parents that their children would soon be safe. A rescuer was left behind to ensure the stability of the remaining victims, provide hope and to allow a workable victim to rescuer ratio in the returning boat, in case of incident. (the boat had capacity, but not enough crew to rescue 5 in the event of a flip). The boat returned to the location where Kuss and the parents waited. They were recovered and brought to safety without incident.

On May 29th at approximately 23:29, a mutual aid call for assistance was received from Logan Rogersville Fire Department for a family of 5, swept away during a major storm and flooding in the area. The incident was just south of Steelman Bridge where the family vehicle

**Number of Special operations life saves during water rescues in 2015**

**Elliott-12  
Weeks- 12  
Becker-11  
Smithson-11  
Kuss-10**

**Owings-9  
Thompson-8  
Hammer-6  
Nevins-4  
Chambers-3**

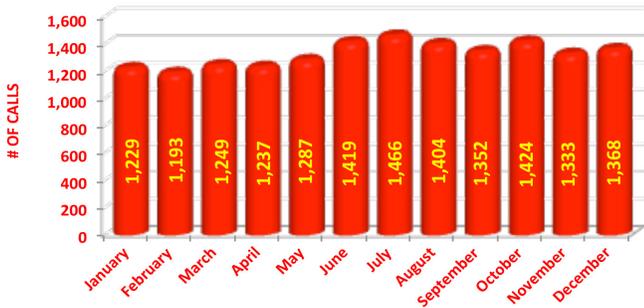
**Pool-3  
Grover-3  
Tate-3  
Anderson-2  
Delozier-1**

**Lisenby-1  
Hargrave-1  
Sexton-1  
Rein-1  
Gardner-1**

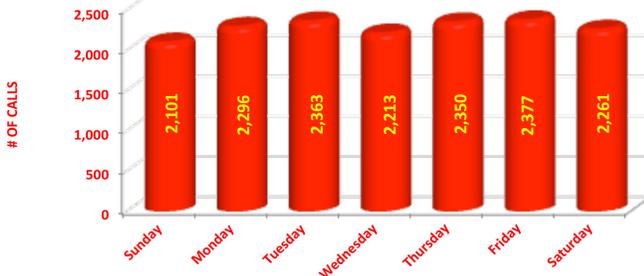


# 2015 Calls for Service Breakdown

### 2015 Call Volume by Month



### 2015 Call Volume by Day of Week



### 2015 Calls by Time of Day



## Departmental Trends

Year	Structure Fires	**Total Fire Calls	EMS Calls	***Total Calls in Millions	*Fire Loss Dollars	****Initial Unit-Moderate Risk Firesincludes Turnout + Travel Time Only	**** Initial Unit-Low to Moderate Risk Medical includes Turnout + Travel Time Only
2015	246	711	8,344	15,961	3.658	6:58	7:10
2014	305	907	8218	15298	3.728	6:52	7:23
2013	208	835	7,805	14,339	6.009	6:29	7:10
2012	246	1,025	7,779	14,087	9.254	5:49	7:14
2011	244	951	7,390	13,099	6.190	6:49	7:09
2010	258	835	7,908	13,287	5.220		
2009	283	830	7,370	12,618	3.806		
2008	351	919	8,400	14,487	5.414		
2007	363	1075	10,130	16,158	4.989		
2006	322	999	10,280	15,020	7.179		
2005	301	919	10,446	14,724	4.224		
2004	250	823	9,707	13,933	4.985		
2003	243	801	9,162	13,493	4.954		
2002	249	817	10024	14990	4.457		
2001	243	819	10,007	15,223	4.365		
2000	231	801	9,473	14,211	3.144		
1999	241	900	8,789	13,003	4.002		
1998	228	861	6,817	12,250	1.409		
1997	217	662	6,805	10,541	2.687		
1996	208	790	5,769	10,057	2.067		
1995	252	901	4,634	9,589	3.135		
1994	267	905	3,698	8,245	3.994		
1993	301	1050	3,739	7,488	2.888		
1992	335	963	3,641	7,394	2.328		
1991	309	993	2,777	6,457	2.042		
1990	272	876	2,054	5,664			

\*These figures have not been adjusted for inflation.

\*\*Total Fire Calls include Structure + Vehicle + All other fire types.

\*\*\*Total Calls includes Total Fire + EMS + All other call types

\*\*\*\* Standards of Cover includes Turnout + Travel Time Only(Fires 111 & Medical 300,311,320,321)

Source: FireHouse NFPA Fire Experience Survey for calls and Stats FD in 2014 & 2015 for SOC

**Our number one cause of accidental fires is cooking. Number two is careless smoking in a residence.**

**In 2015, call volume peaked between 5-6 p.m. Most fires occur between the hours of 3 and 9 p.m. when most people are home.**

### Partnership with Parents As Teachers allows department to teach lasting fire safety lessons

To better protect the community from fires, the Springfield Fire Department launched a home fire safety campaign in 2015 offering free home safety surveys and partnering with Springfield Public Schools' Parents As Teachers (PAT) program to conduct surveys in the homes of families who utilize PAT services.

Nearly 80% of all fatal fires in Springfield occur in homes. From careless smoking to unsafe cooking, most of these home fires are caused by human behaviors and are, therefore, completely preventable.

During the surveys, firefighters and/or PAT educators check homes for common fire hazards and educate families to reduce their risks. They check for a number of safety items, including:

- Working smoke alarms
- Proper placement of fire extinguisher
- Adequate airspace around electronics
- No electrical outlets overloaded
- Stove and oven maintained ... and much more!

If no working smoke alarms are found, or if the family requests additional alarms or batteries, Springfield firefighters follow up to install them **at no charge**.

The department set a goal to conduct home safety surveys in 200 Springfield homes during 2015. With the help of Parents as Teachers, the department far exceeded this goal by conducting nearly 500 home safety surveys!

"These surveys are invaluable because the information learned during the visit doesn't stay with the home, it remains with the residents," said *Assistant Chief of Prevention Randy Villines*. "These are fire safety lessons that will truly have a lasting impact."



## 2015 Year in Review

### Back to School: Firefighters visit nearly 10,000 Springfield students during Fire Prevention Month



For the first time during October's Fire Prevention Month, Springfield firefighters visited family and consumer science, health, culinary arts and food/nutrition classes in Springfield middle- and high schools to teach fire safety lessons. Pre-teen and teen students learned how to prevent common fires, how to put out small kitchen fires, how and when to use a fire extinguisher and much more.

For the last several years, fire department educators spent each October visiting elementary schools in the city limits. In fact, October 2015 was a record-breaking Fire Prevention Month for SFD, with fire department staff visiting nearly 10,000 elementary school students. Fire Prevention Month 2015 was also significant because it was the first time the department took its fire safety program to middle schools and high schools on a widespread scale.

During the elementary school visits, educators provide two age-appropriate fire safety lessons to every classroom. In addition to the fire safety lessons, students each receive activity books, which allow children

to retain the lessons and involve their family members.

Students also take home a smoke alarm survey that asks parents if they have a working smoke alarm and if they would like one installed for free. Students who return the surveys are entered into a drawing, and the winning student received a ride to school in a fire truck.

"This partnership with Springfield Public Schools is critical to protecting lives in our community," said *Fire and Life Safety Educator Cara Erwin*. "These students are beginning to make important decisions - sometimes life or death decisions. We hope they carry the information they learn during our presentations with them into adulthood and hopefully use it to reduce the number of fires in our community."

Cooking fires are the No. 1 cause of residential fires in Springfield and almost always preventable. In addition to significant damage, cooking fires are also to blame for many injuries.

"Knowing how to prevent and the proper way to extinguish a cooking fire could significantly reduce the number of burn injuries in our community," said Erwin.



Commission on  
Fire Accreditation  
International

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## **Springfield Fire Department's Mission**

*We are the Springfield Fire Department,  
a professional organization dedicated  
to serving our community.*

## **Springfield Fire Department Values:**

**PROFESSIONALISM**

**INTEGRITY**

**COMPASSION**

**SERVICE**

**VALOR**

