



2025 ANNUAL REPORT



BEECHER FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

Letter From The Fire Chief

Dear Board of Trustees, Residents, and Members of the Beecher Fire Protection District,

It is my honor to present the 2025 Annual Report for the Beecher Fire Protection District. As we reflect on the past year, I am proud of the dedication and professionalism demonstrated by our officers, firefighters, paramedics, and support staff in their continued service to our community.

Throughout 2025, the District responded to 1,165 emergency incidents, underscoring our unwavering commitment to protecting life and property. Our personnel continued to enhance their skills through expanded training initiatives, while strategic investments in equipment and technology further strengthened our operational efficiency and effectiveness.

This year also marked a significant milestone in the District's history with the hiring of our first full-time career Lieutenant/Paramedics. This achievement represents the culmination of years of thoughtful planning, fiscal stewardship, and a steadfast commitment to long-term service excellence. In addition, the District successfully secured multiple grants to support critical operational needs and advance our mission.

Looking ahead, the Beecher Fire Protection District remains focused on continuous improvement through innovation, strong community partnerships, and proactive planning to meet the evolving demands of emergency services.

I extend my sincere appreciation to the Board of Trustees and the residents of the Beecher Fire Protection District for your trust and support. It is a privilege to serve this community. I am also deeply grateful to our firefighters and administrative staff for their professionalism, dedication, and commitment to excellence.

As we move forward into another year, we remain optimistic and committed to continued growth and service to our great community.

Sincerely,

Joseph M. Falaschetti Jr.
Fire Chief



Mission Statement:

The purpose of our Mission Statement is to answer the following questions:

Who are we?

Why do we exist?

What do we do?

For whom?

The Beecher Fire Protection District takes pride in providing a safe community by protecting its residents and visitors from loss of property and lives. This is accomplished through fire prevention, public education, and emergency medical care. These services are provided by a twenty-four hour staffing of well-trained firefighters and emergency medical personnel, who take honor in providing professionalism in all their duties.



Core Values:

We, the members of the Beecher Fire Protection District, are committed to the following values in our interactions with coworkers and customers:

Professionalism—In application, appearance, attitude, and standards.

Integrity—Demonstrate honesty and fairness.

Compassion—Demonstrate kindness and empathy.

Responsibility and Accountability—Professionally, personally, and fiscally responsible for our actions.

Respect—For each other, our department, the citizens and visitors of the Village of Beecher, and unincorporated areas.

Diversity—Be open minded and responsive to the uniqueness of our community without regard to age, gender, religion, or ethnic origin.

Commitment—In all department endeavors.

Teamwork—Encourage unity and a cooperative attitude.

Health and Safety—Personal and professional health and safety is paramount in fulfilling the mission of the Beecher Fire Protection District.



Vision Statement:

The Beecher Fire Protection District is a regional leader providing the highest level of fire, rescue, emergency medical, and prevention services to a diverse and growing community with:

- Mission-essential staffing and training.
- State-of-the-art equipment and technology.
- A strong, diverse, and sustainable funding base while maintaining stewardship of taxpayer resources.
- A safe environment for our citizens through effective and comprehensive prevention and public education programs.
- A safe and healthy workforce.



Beecher Fire Protection District

Community Profile

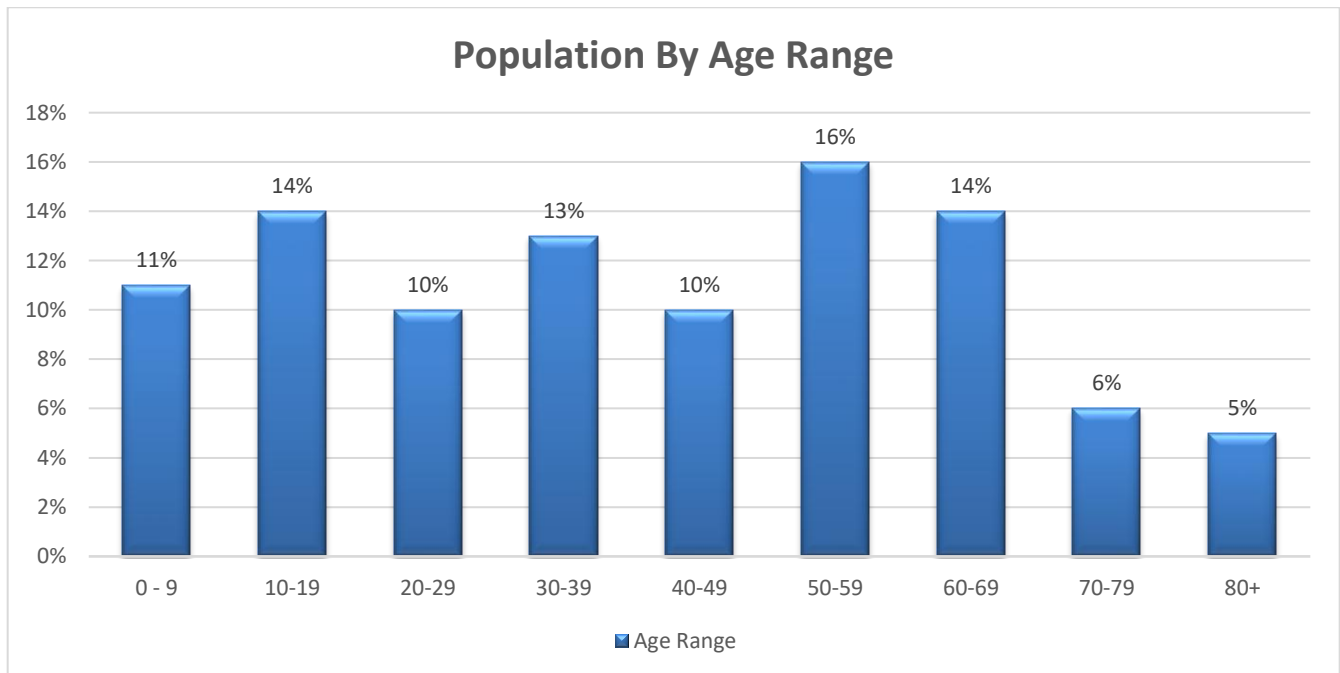
- **Population Served:** 7,504 residents
- **Housing Units:** 3,274 homes
- **Median Age:** 42.6 years
- **Median Household Income:** \$92,279
- **Poverty Rate:** 4.6%

Demographics

- **Race & Ethnicity:**
 - White: 87%
 - Hispanic: 10%
 - Asian: 2%
 - Black: 1%

Service Area

- **Coverage Area:** 56 square miles



Fire District Administration



Fire Chief
Joseph Falaschetti Jr.



Deputy Fire Chief
Operations
Michael Heusing



Assistant Fire Chief
Support Services
Timothy McGannon



Administrative Assistant
Angela Koehne

Fire District Facilities

Beecher Volunteer Fire Department, Inc.

711 Penfield Street

Originally constructed in 1985



Beecher Fire Protection District – Station 44

711 Penfield Street

Remodeled, expanded, and modernized in 2021



Beecher Fire Protection District Fire Training Facility

30236 S. Town Center Road



Fleet

The Beecher Fire Protection District maintains a fully operational fleet designed to support both emergency medical services and fire suppression operations. The District’s EMS capabilities include two Advanced Life Support (ALS) ambulances in regular service, supplemented by a reserve ambulance that is activated during scheduled preventive maintenance or in the event of unscheduled mechanical issues.

In addition to its EMS assets, the District operates a diverse range of fire suppression apparatus tailored to meet a variety of emergency response needs. This includes an ALS-equipped rescue engine that responds to structure fires, vehicle accidents, and medical emergencies, providing critical life-saving interventions prior to the arrival of ambulance personnel.

The fleet also features a pumper-tender with a 2,500-gallon water tank, specifically designed for firefighting operations in rural areas lacking hydrant access. A 75-foot quint (a multipurpose ladder truck) further enhances the District’s firefighting and rescue capabilities. Additional apparatus include a brush truck for wildland or grass fires, a Polaris Ranger 6×6 configured for off-road responses in difficult-to-access terrain, and a utility pickup truck used for snow removal, equipment transport, and towing the UTV trailer.

Lastly, each chief officer operates a staff vehicle equipped with advanced communication systems and multiple radios, enabling effective incident command and coordination at emergency scenes.



Ambulance 44

Fleet ID: MV-A4

2023 Ford F550 4x4 Osage Super Warrior

Advanced Life Support Ambulance

2023 Purchase Price: \$209,200

Estimated Purchase Price in 2026: \$480,000

Expected Replacement: FY32/33



Ambulance 45

Fleet ID: MV-A3

2019 Ford F550 4x4 Osage Super Warrior

Advanced Life Support Ambulance

2019 Purchase Price: \$265,000

Estimated Purchase Price in 2026: \$480,000

Expected Replacement: FY29/30



Reserve Ambulance

2014 Ford E450 Road Rescue

Fleet ID: MV-A2

2012 Purchase Price: \$185,769

Estimated Purchase Price in 2026: \$400,000

Expected Replacement: FY27/28



Engine 44

Fleet ID: MV-F3

2012 Pierce Arrow PUC Rescue Engine

1000 Gallon Water Tank

1500 GPM Pump

Full Complement of Vehicle Extrication Equipment

2012 Purchase Price: \$564,345

Estimated Purchase Price in 2026: \$1,280,000

Expected Replacement: FY31/32



Truck 44

Fleet ID: MV-F1

2006 Pierce Enforcer 75-foot Ladder Truck

500 Gallon Water Tank

1500 GPM Pump

Full Complement of Vehicle Extrication Equipment

2006 Purchase Price: \$521,501

Estimated Purchase Price in 2026: \$1,600,000

Expected Replacement: FY33/34



Pumper Tender 44

Fleet ID: MV-F2

2009 Pierce Arrow Pumper Tender

2500 Gallon Water Tank

1250 GPM Pump

2009 Purchase Price: \$531,724

Estimated Purchase Price in 2026: \$1,100,000

Expected Replacement: FY28/29



Brush 44

Fleet ID: MV-F4
2001 Ford F350 Brush Truck
300 Gallon Water Tank
250 GPM Pump
2001 Purchase Price: \$60,000
Estimated Purchase Price in 2026: \$245,000
Expected Replacement: FY25/26



Chief 46

Fleet ID: MV-C3
2017 Ford F150
2017 Purchase Price: \$53,000
Estimated Purchase Price in 2026: \$92,000
Expected Replacement: FY26/27



Chief 45

Fleet ID: MV-C4
2019 Chevrolet Tahoe SSV
2019 Purchase Price: \$71,000
Estimated Purchase Price in 2026: \$90,000
Expected Replacement: FY30/31



Chief 44

Fleet ID: MV-C6
2025 Chevrolet Tahoe SSV
2025 Purchase Price: \$82,500
Estimated Purchase Price in 2026: \$89,000
Expected Replacement: FY37/38



Utility 44

Fleet ID: MV-C5
2024 Chevrolet Silverado 2500
2024 Purchase Price: \$83,800
Estimated Purchase Price in 2026: \$90,000
Expected Replacement: FY36/37

**UTV 44**

Fleet ID: MV-F5

2013 Polaris Ranger 6x6

120 Gallons Water Tank

60 GPM Pump

2013 Purchase Price: \$36,000

Estimated Purchase Price in 2026: \$70,000

Expected Replacement: FY36/37

Beecher Fire Protection District Staffing Overview

The Beecher Fire Protection District operates on a three-shift model, designated as Red, Gold, and Black shifts. Each shift begins at 6:00 AM and concludes at 6:00 AM the following day, when personnel are relieved by the incoming shift.

Staffing Composition Prior to July 30, 2025

Daily staffing includes two full-time contract firefighter/paramedics contracted through Metro Paramedic Services, a division of Superior Ambulance Service. While these individuals follow the District's rules, regulations, and wear the official uniform, they are employees of Metro Paramedic Services and receive their compensation and benefits through that organization.

To augment our staffing levels, the District schedules up to three part-time firefighter/paramedics or firefighter/EMTs per day. These individuals submit their availability one month in advance and are assigned shifts accordingly. Part-time personnel do not receive benefits such as health insurance, retirement plans, or pension contributions. On average, 90 part-time shifts must be filled each month to maintain operational readiness.

The District maintains a minimum daily staffing level of four qualified firefighter/paramedics or EMTs. However, we consistently strive to staff five personnel per shift to ensure appropriate coverage for our two advanced life support (ALS) ambulances and fire suppression apparatus.

History of Contract Staffing

In 2014, due to ongoing difficulties in maintaining consistent part-time staffing, the District entered into a service agreement with Kurtz Ambulance Service to provide contracted firefighter/paramedics to staff one ambulance. In 2018, this contract transitioned to Metro Paramedic Services. Both companies operate on a for-profit basis.

Initially, this arrangement offered much-needed stability to our staffing model. However, over time, contract agencies have struggled to meet staffing guarantees due to the regional and

national shortage of firefighter/paramedics. These contract roles are often viewed as transitional positions, with individuals gaining experience before moving on to full-time civil service roles. Since 2014, 26 firefighter/paramedics have filled our two contracted daily positions. Each turnover incurs a substantial investment in training and onboarding to ensure personnel are prepared to meet the District's standards of care.

Standards of Cover and Strategic Planning

In 2022, the Beecher Fire Protection District completed a comprehensive Standards of Cover (SOC) and Community Risk Assessment (CRA). This evaluation identified and prioritized risks specific to our jurisdiction and outlined expected levels of service and performance standards. The SOC/CRA guided our efforts to allocate resources efficiently and plan for continuous service improvement. One of the key vulnerabilities identified was our reliance on the existing staffing model, particularly contracted and part-time personnel.

Following the publication of the SOC/CRA, the District began implementing strategic improvements. Administration developed a 10-year Fleet and Facility Plan to anticipate and budget for major capital expenses such as apparatus replacement and future facility construction, including additional fire stations. Our core mission guides every decision: delivering exceptional service to the residents of the Beecher Fire Protection District. Achieving that mission requires consistent, reliable staffing. Recruitment—and more critically, retention—of qualified personnel is essential to that goal.

Transition to Full-Time Leadership Positions

After several years of planning and financial preparation, the District made the pivotal decision to hire three full-time Lieutenant/Paramedics—a milestone in our staffing evolution. This decision was made in collaboration with our Board of Trustees and Governmental Accounting, Inc., the District's third-party financial accounting & consulting firm, following three years of careful budgeting and forecasting.

The Beecher Fire Protection District (BFPD) Board of Trustees and administration, in consultation with District legal counsel, initiated the hiring process in accordance with the Fire Protection District Act and the Rules of the Board of Fire Commissioners. To support this effort, BFPD engaged the National Testing Network to post the job announcement and administer the written examination. Additional components of the selection process included a candidate physical agility test, an oral interview, and the opportunity for candidates to submit documentation for applicable preference points.

Upon completion of the testing process, a final eligibility register was approved and posted. Conditional offers of employment were then extended to the top three qualified candidates on

the register, contingent upon successful completion of a medical examination and background check.

Each Lieutenant/Paramedic is assigned to one of the three shifts and serves in a supervisory leadership capacity. Their responsibilities include overseeing daily operations at the shift level, conducting structured training sessions, coordinating fire suppression and emergency medical responses, managing station and apparatus maintenance, and engaging in community outreach and education initiatives. These individuals ensure that all activities are conducted in accordance with Fire District policies and operational guidelines, playing a vital role in enhancing the professionalism, efficiency, and reliability of our service delivery.

With the hiring of three Lieutenant/Paramedics on July 30, 2025, the Beecher Fire Protection District amended its contract with Metro Paramedic Services. The previous contract provides six Metro Paramedic Services personnel; under the amended agreement, this number is reduced to three. Although daily staffing levels will remain unchanged, the addition of Fire District-employed Lieutenant/Paramedics represents a significant advancement in improving staffing stability and organizational continuity.



Lt. Welsh



Lt. DuBois



Lt. Budimir

Current Total Staffing:

- 3 – Full-Time Lieutenant/Paramedics
- 3 – Contract Firefighter/Paramedics
- 36 – Part-Time Firefighter/Paramedics/EMTs
- 1 Full-Time Fire Chief
- 1 Part-Time Deputy Chief
- 1 Part-Time Assistant Chief

Daily Staffing:

Maximum Daily Shift Level Staffing:

- 1 Full-Time Lieutenant/Paramedic
- 1 Contract Firefighter/Paramedic
- 3 Part-Time Firefighter/Paramedics or EMTs

Minimum Daily Shift Level Staffing:

- 1 Full-Time Lieutenant/Paramedic
- 1 Contract Firefighter/Paramedic
- 2 Part-Time Firefighter/Paramedics or EMTs

Governance & Legal Basis

The Beecher Fire Protection District was initially established as a fire “committee” in 1884 to try to provide fire protection. In 1911 the Beecher Volunteer Fire Department was organized and was later incorporated in 1973 as a Special District under the Illinois Compiled Statutes (ILCS) Special Districts- Fire Protection District Act (70 ILCS 705/). As a Special District, the Beecher Fire Protection District operates as an independent governing body, separate from the Village of Beecher.

The Beecher Fire Protection District is governed by a Board of Trustees, consisting of five (5) elected officials who oversee the Fire District’s business, financial, and operational activities. Trustee elections are staggered over six (6) year terms, to ensure continuity of leadership.

Funding Sources

As a Special District, the Beecher Fire Protection District’s primary funding source is property tax revenue levied on property within the district. Unlike municipalities, the Fire District does not receive sales tax revenue or other municipal funding.

Primary Revenue Sources

Property Taxes (Approximately 74% of total funding)

- Levied based on Equalized Assessed Valuation (EAV) of the properties in the district.
- Subject to the Property Tax Extension Law Limit (PTELL) capping tax levy increases at 5% or the Consumer Price Index (CPI), whichever is lower.
- Includes a dedicated Pension Fund Levy within tax limitations

EMS Service Fees

- Emergency Medical Services (EMS) transport fees
- False alarm fees – The Fire District is not currently charging false alarm fees
- Motor Vehicle Accident Fees for non-residents
- Fire Prevention Bureau Fees

Investment Income and Grants

- Federal, state, private grants to support equipment, and operations.
- Investment returns from financial reserves

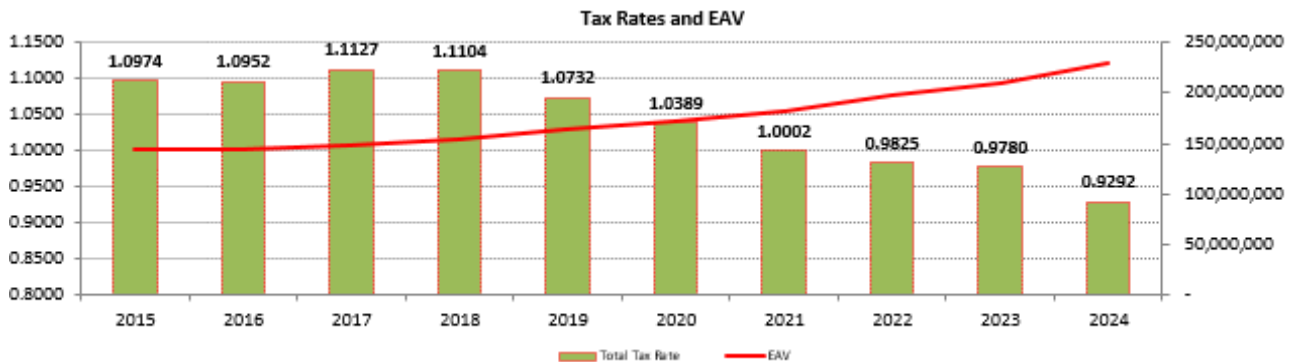
The Beecher Fire Protection District, as a Special District, has limited revenue sources and cannot impose additional taxes beyond those permitted under Illinois Law.

Budget Overview

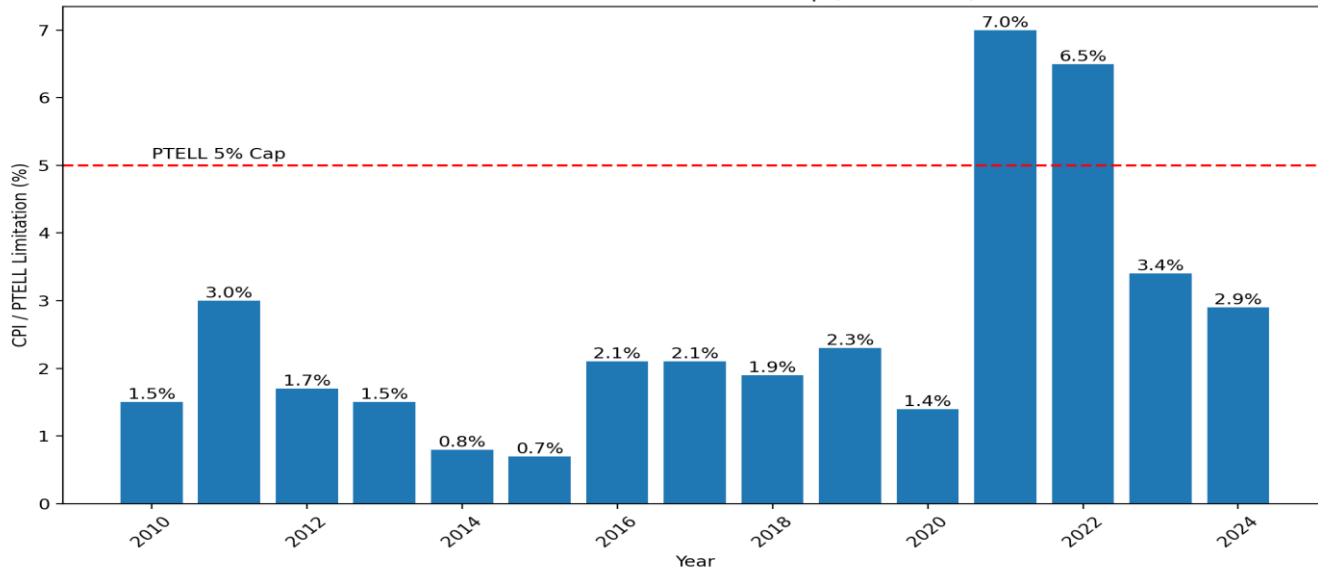
Total Operating Budget FY24/25: \$2,452,778

Personnel Costs: 76% of total expenditures

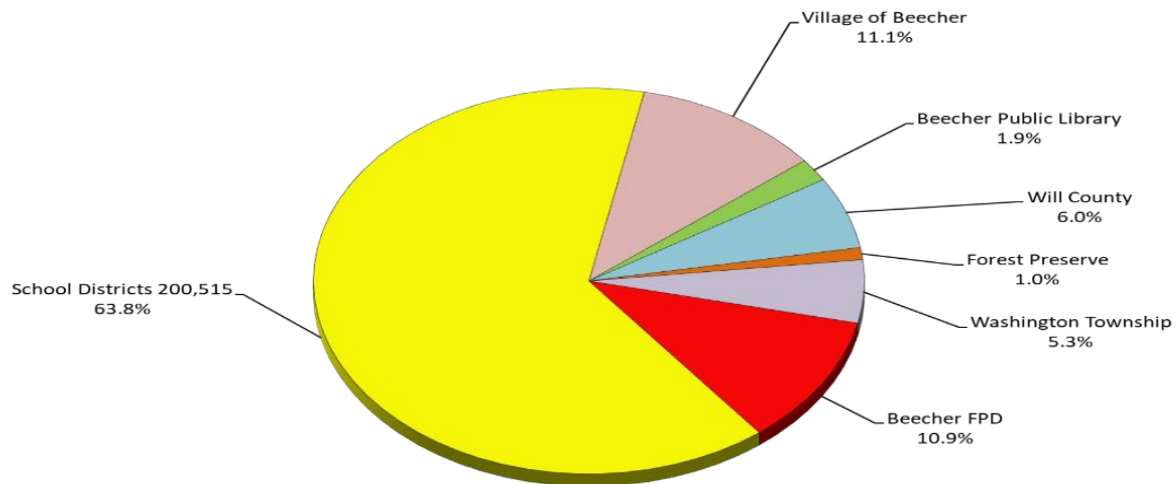
The budget is designed to sustain emergency response capabilities, enhance firefighter training, maintain apparatus and infrastructure, and adapt to community growth and risk factors associated with such.



Illinois PTELL CPI Limits with 5% Cap (2010-2024)



How does the BFPD compare to other local taxing bodies?



Board of Trustees

The Beecher Fire Protection District Board of Trustees is a five person elected board. The Board of Trustees serves as the District's policy making body and is responsible for providing financial oversight and strategic policy direction. The Board of Trustees is also active in the Fire District functions such as promotional ceremonies, award ceremonies, and many other community events.



Margie Cook
President



Michael Waterman
Secretary



David Kolosh
Treasurer



Bruce Becker
Trustee



Lyle Siefker
Trustee

Beecher Firefighters Pension Fund

Career firefighters employed by the Beecher Fire Protection District participate in the Illinois Article 4 Pension Code, commonly referred to as the Downstate Firefighters' Pension Fund. The Pension Fund is administered by a five-member Board of Trustees consisting of two trustees appointed by the President of the Fire District Board, one retired firefighter who is a participant in the Fund, and two active firefighter members elected by the Fund's participants.

The Pension Fund Board of Trustees serves as the fiduciary authority for the Fund. In this capacity, the Board is responsible for conducting hearings and rendering determinations related to service retirements, disability benefits, actuarial matters, and other pension-related decisions, all in accordance with the authority granted under the Illinois Article 4 Firefighters' Pension Fund statute.

Pension Fund Board of Trustees

- President: Joe Falaschetti
- Treasurer: David Kolosh, Fire District Treasurer
- Secretary: Carmella Welsh
- Trustee: Marcis DuBois
- Trustee: Bryce Budimir

In 2021, pursuant to a mandate by the State of Illinois, the Beecher Firefighters' Pension Fund transferred its investment assets to the Illinois Firefighters' Pension Investment Fund (IFPIF). Established by statute, the IFPIF consolidated the investment assets of all Illinois Article 4 firefighter pension funds into a single pooled investment fund. As required by law, local pension boards transferred investment authority to the IFPIF and no longer exercise control over investment management or asset allocation.

The consolidation was designed to enhance investment performance through economies of scale, expanded access to diversified investment strategies, and professional asset management that may not have been available to smaller standalone funds. While investment authority now resides with the IFPIF, the local Pension Fund Board retains full responsibility for administering benefits, making pension determinations, and reviewing fund disbursements in accordance with state statute.

Pension accounting practices are reviewed annually by an independent auditor, and the Pension

Fund Board engages a third-party actuarial firm to evaluate funding status and establish required contribution levels. The Beecher Firefighters' Pension Fund remains one of a limited number of firefighter pension funds in the State of Illinois that is over 100 percent funded, a status it has maintained since its establishment in November 2017.



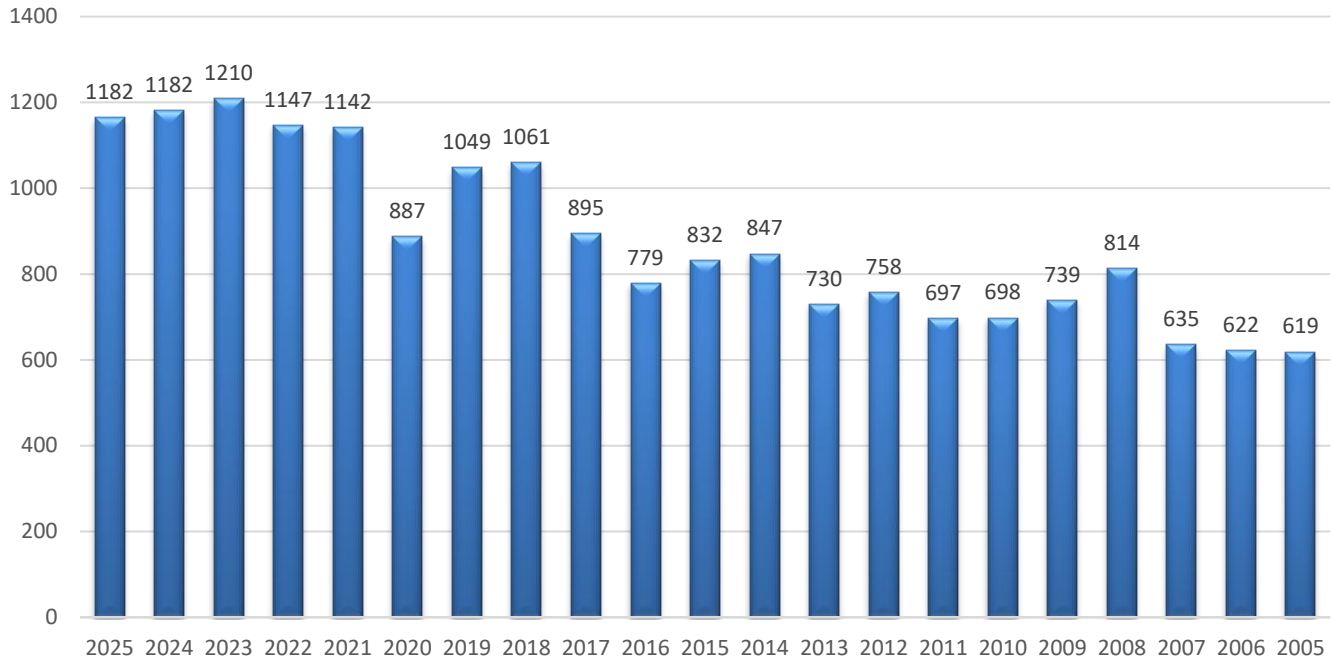


FIRE SUPPRESSION, EMS, AND RESCUE SERVICES

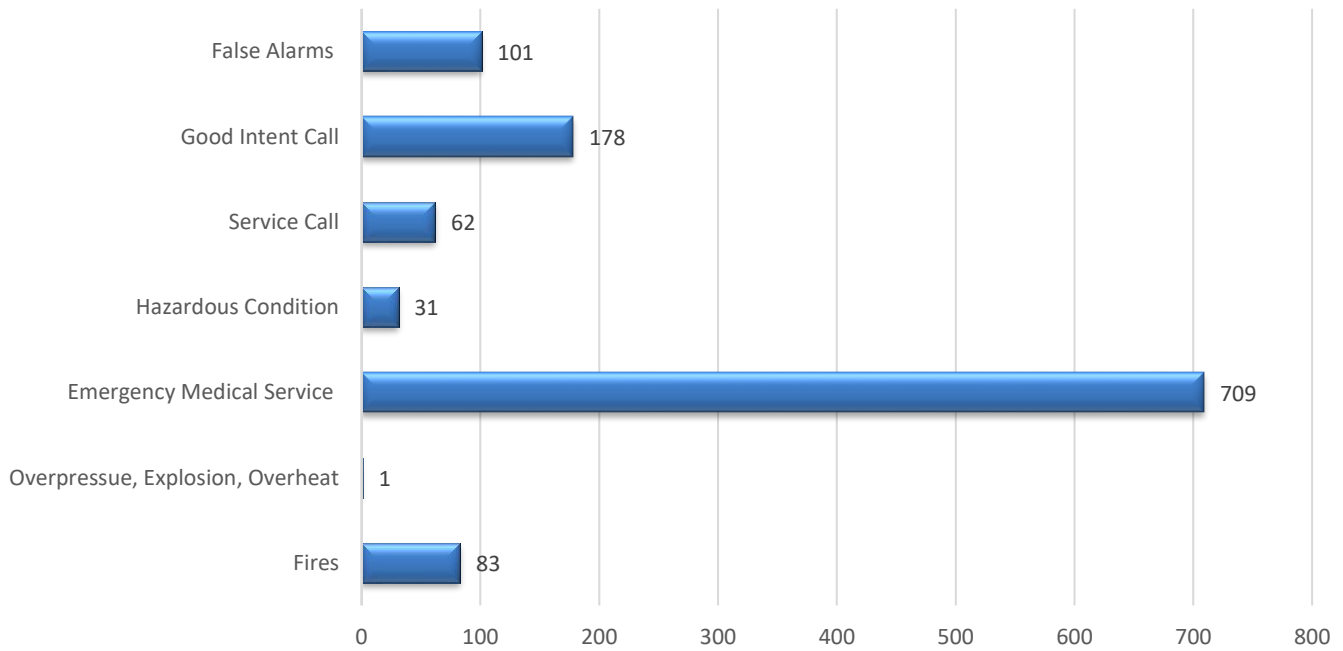
Fire suppression and rescue services include the response to, control of, and mitigation of emergency incidents involving structural, vehicle, and brush fires; hazardous materials incidents; vehicle extrication and other specialized rescue operations; fire alarm activations and investigations; smoke and odor investigations; natural gas and electrical distribution system emergencies; weather-related incidents; carbon monoxide alarm activations; and elevator rescues.

From 2015 through 2025, the Beecher Fire Protection District experienced a sustained increase in demand for emergency services. During this period, annual call volume increased by approximately 40 percent, rising from 832 calls for service in 2015 to 1,165 calls for service in 2025.

20 Year Incident History (2005 - 2025)

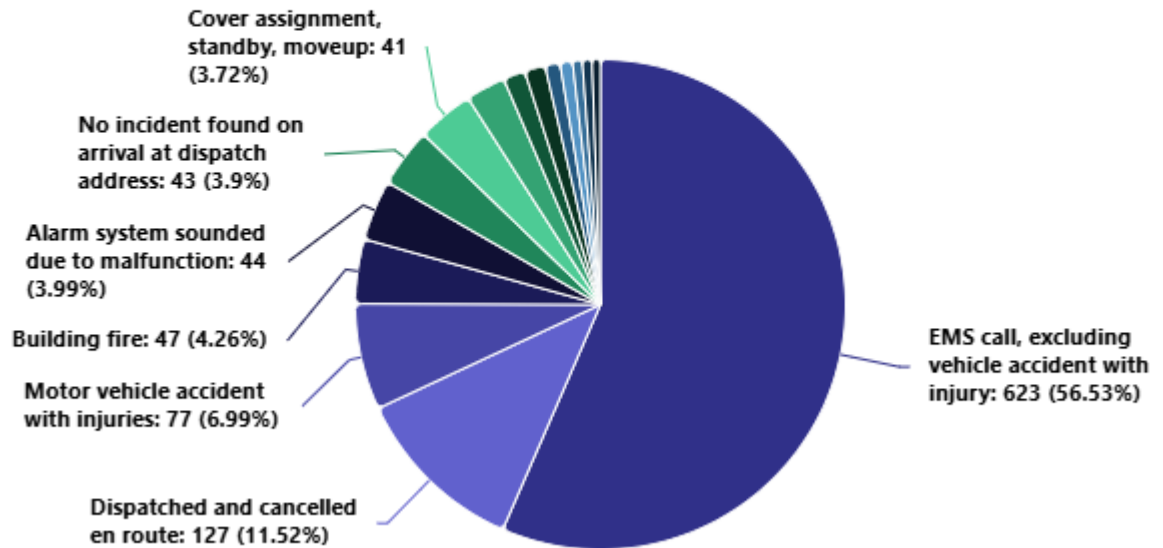


2025 Incident Breakdown By Type



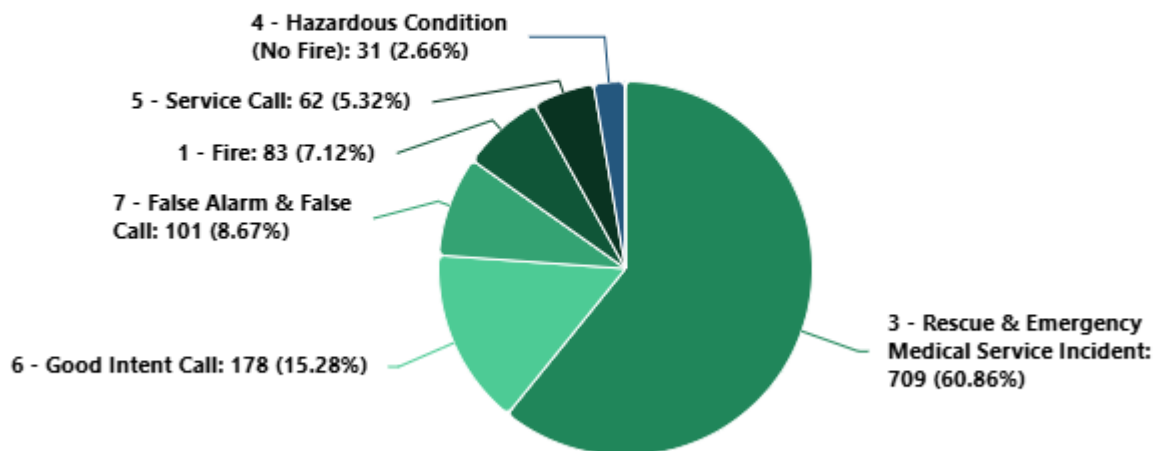
Incident Types (Top 15)

Jan 01, 2025 to Dec 31, 2025



Incident Type Categories

Jan 01, 2025 to Dec 31, 2025

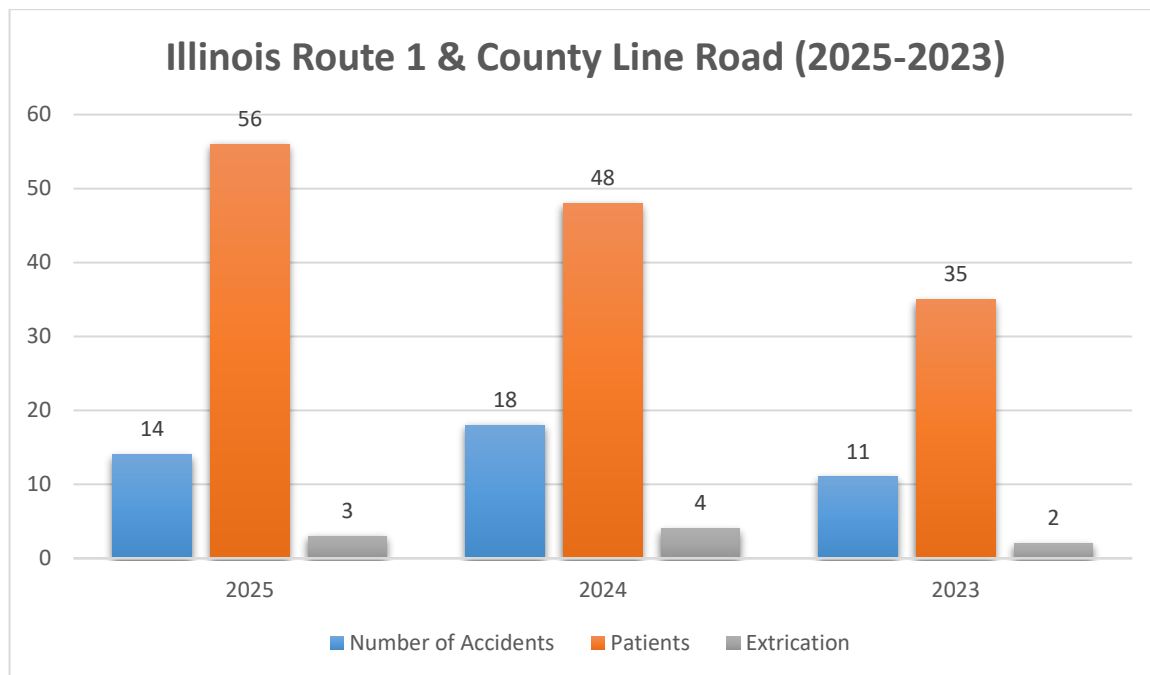


Motor Vehicle Accidents

Of the 77 motor vehicle accidents handled in 2025, 14 took place at the intersection of Dixie Highway and County Line Road. This single intersection accounted for approximately 18% of all crash responses, underscoring the ongoing safety concerns in this corridor. This corridor represents a particularly high-risk area within the District due to its role as part of the Illinois Department of Transportation Priority Freight Network.

Dixie Highway experiences an average daily traffic volume exceeding 5,900 vehicles, including more than 1,800 commercial trucks, resulting in truck traffic comprising over 30 percent of all vehicles on the roadway. Contributing further to the complexity of this intersection, the west leg of County Line Road carries approximately 20 percent truck traffic, while the east leg carries approximately 9 percent.

The convergence of high traffic volumes, a significant concentration of heavy commercial vehicles, and freight-related roadway demands continues to present operational and safety challenges for emergency responders. As a result, this area remains a focal point for response planning, training, and ongoing risk-reduction efforts within the Beecher Fire Protection District.

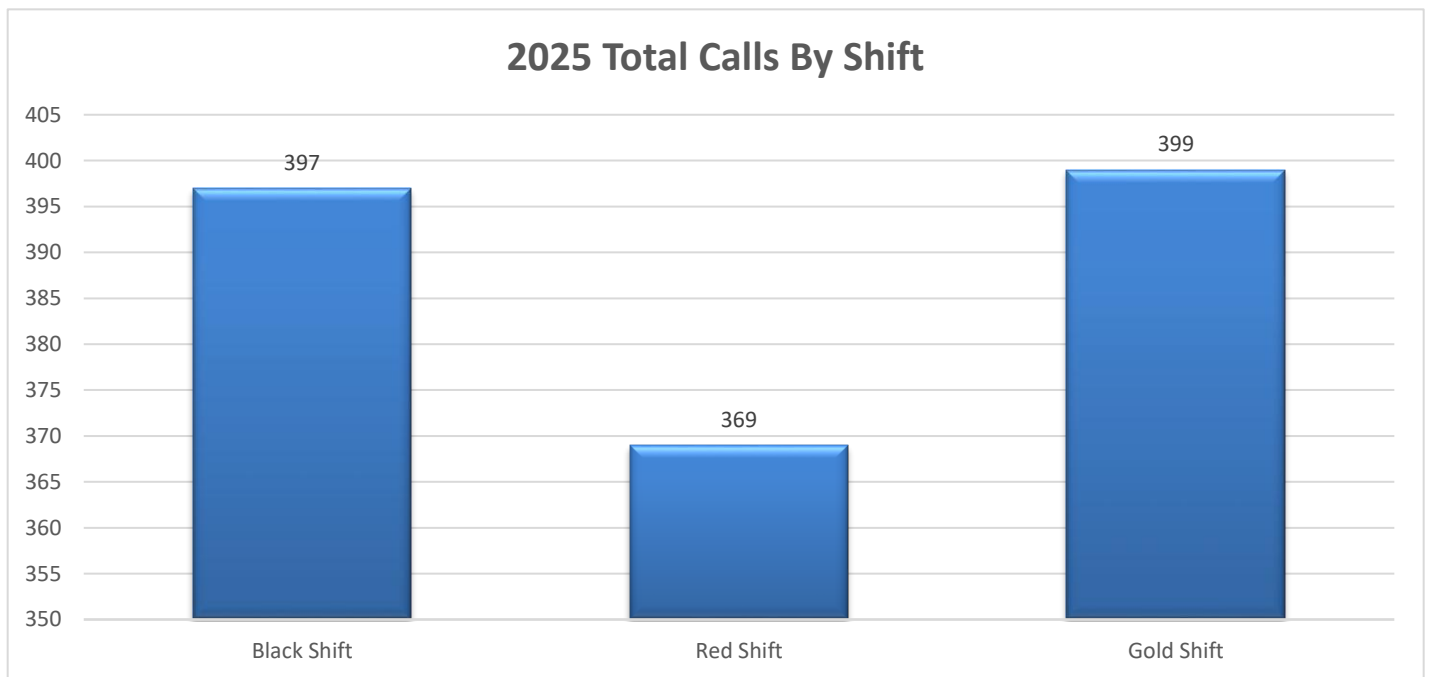


Simultaneous Incidents

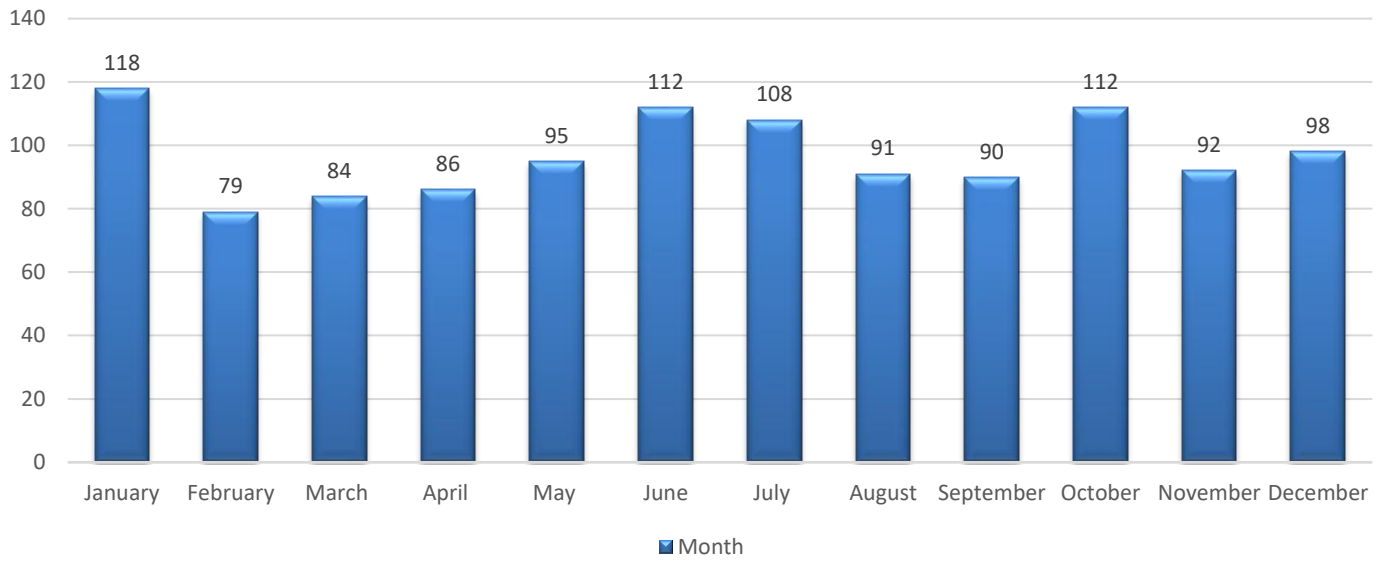
Simultaneous incidents occur when other incidents are underway, and a new incident occurs. About every 1 in 6 calls occurred when another incident was already in progress. These overlaps represent significant stressors on system reliability. It forces units outside of our primary response area, triggering mutual aid and significantly lengthening response times. Overlapping incidents are a primary factor in determining operational planning, primarily the requests for additional staff and future fire station needs to keep up with the demand for services.

Overlapping Calls: 182

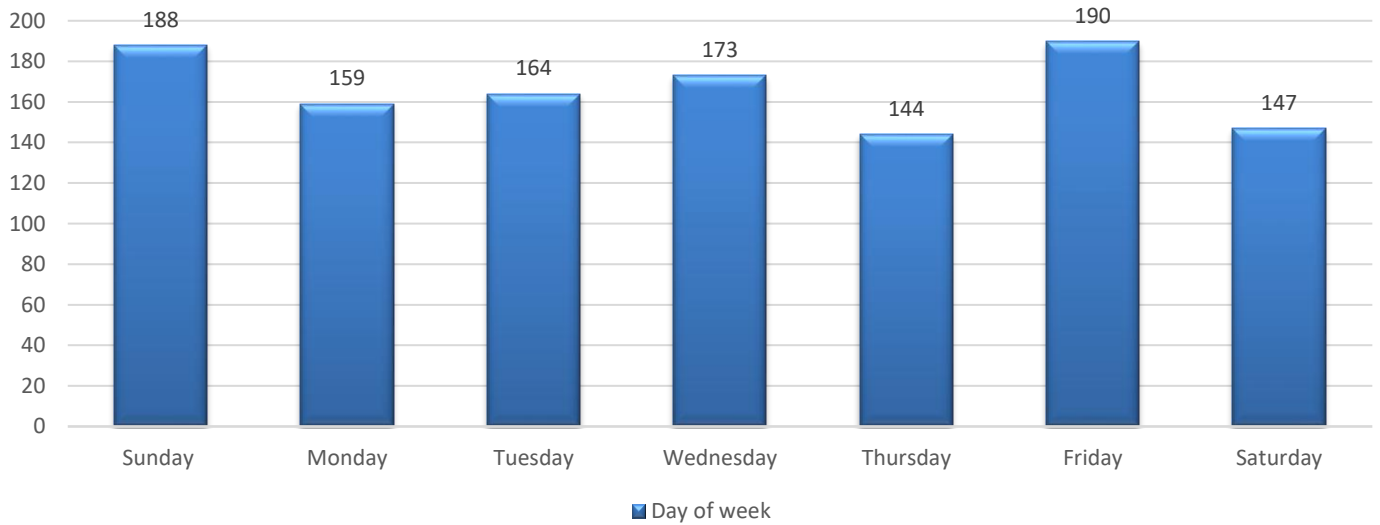
Percentage Overlapping: 16%



2025 Incident Breakdown By Month

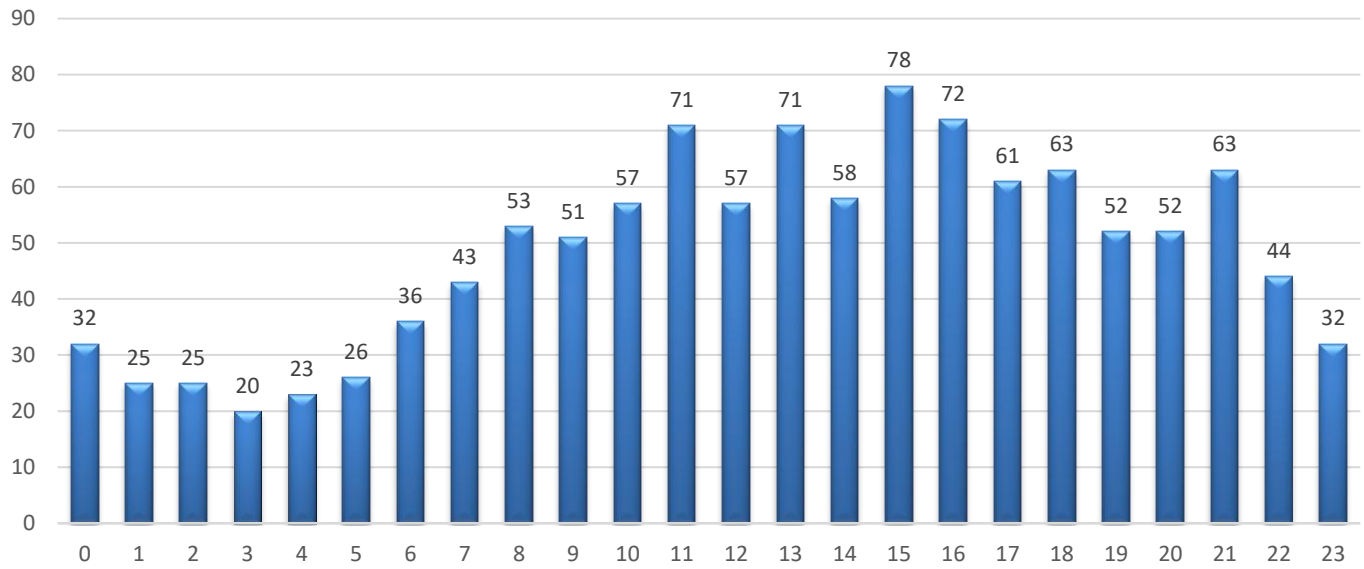


2025 Incident Breakdown By Day Of The Week

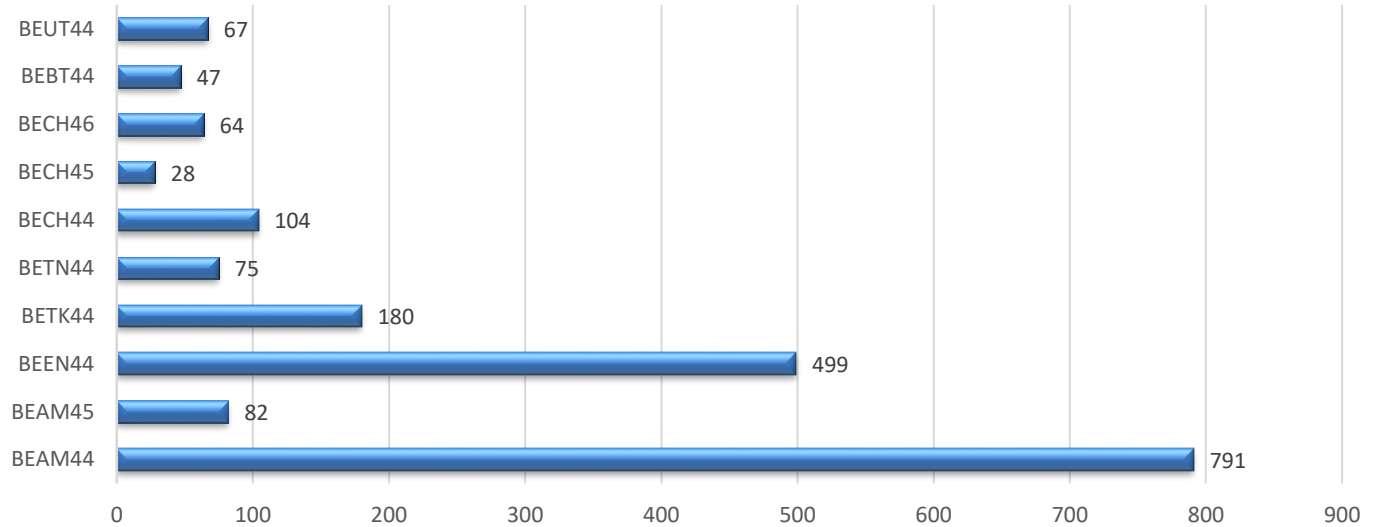


Emergency incidents can occur within the Beecher Fire Protection District at any time. In 2025, the highest concentration of calls occurred between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m.; however, emergencies are not confined to predictable schedules. Regardless of the hour, the dedicated members of the Beecher Fire Protection District remain prepared to respond 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, ensuring continuous protection for our residents, businesses, and visitors.

2025 Incident Breakdown By Time Of Day



2025 Responses By Unit



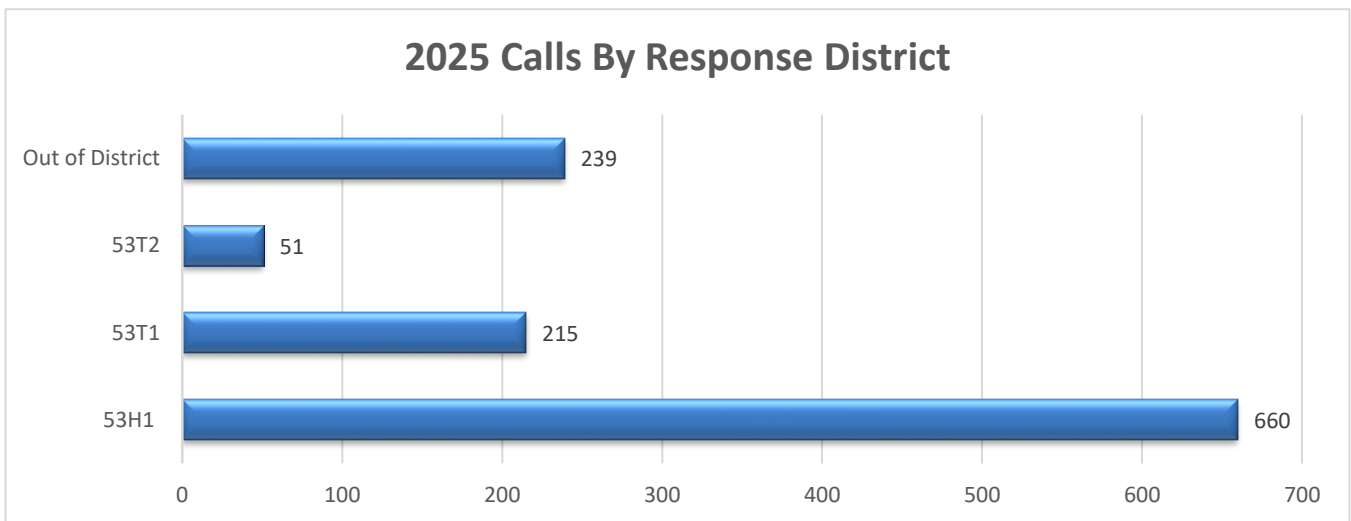
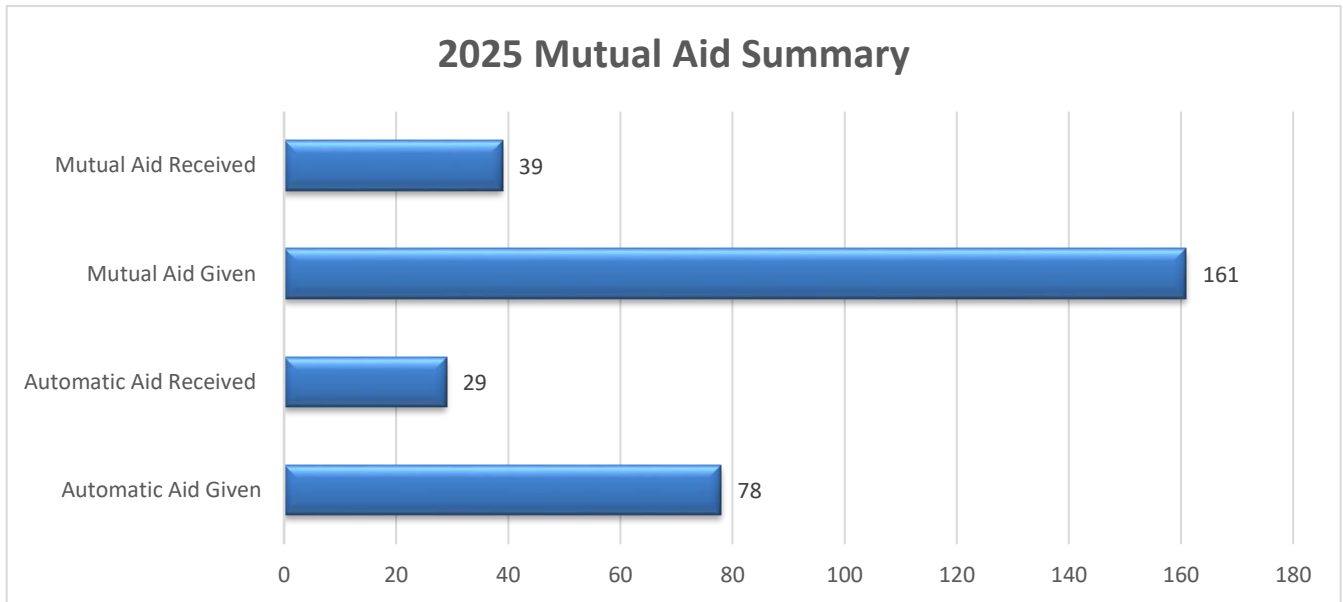
Mutual Aid

Participation in automatic and mutual aid agreements with neighboring fire departments remains a critical component of the Beecher Fire Protection District's operational readiness and regional cooperation.

In 2025, the District provided mutual aid assistance to neighboring communities on 161 incidents and provided automatic aid on 78 incidents outside our jurisdiction.

In return, the District received mutual aid from neighboring departments on 39 incidents within our community and received automatic aid responses on 29 incidents.

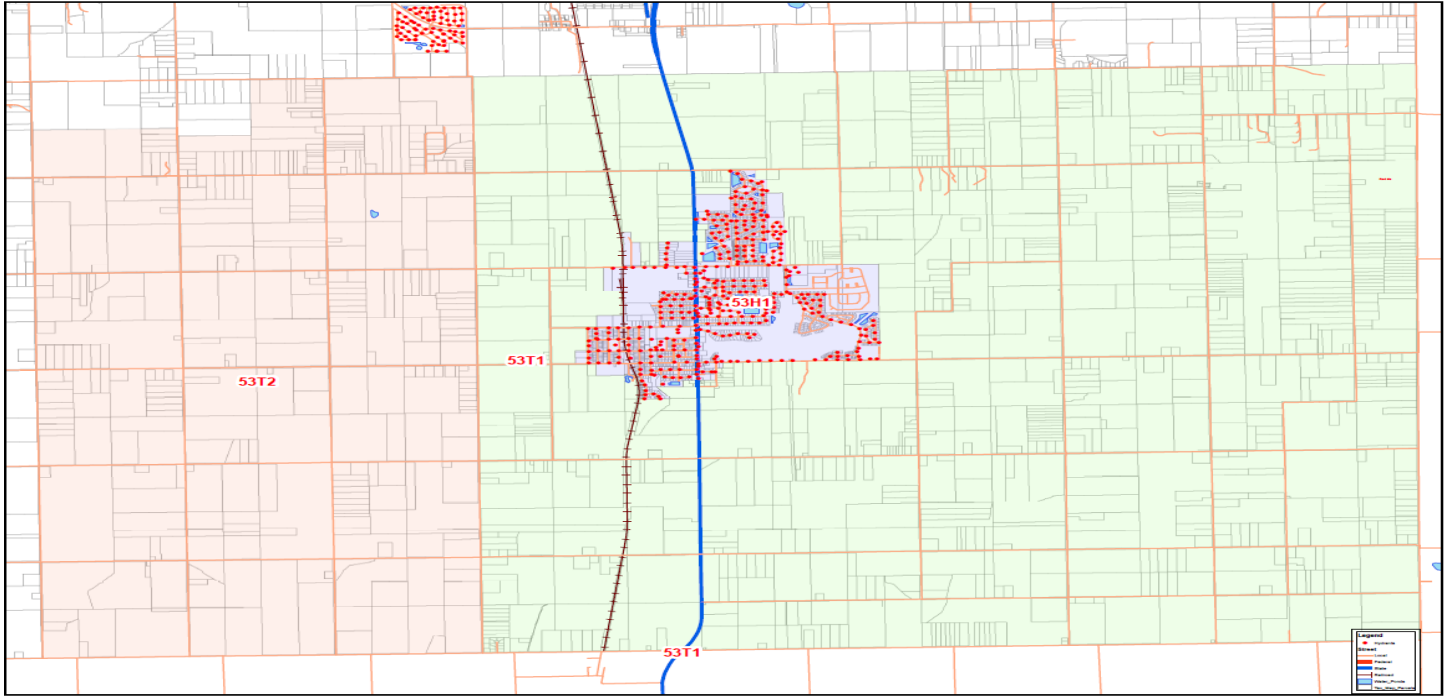
These cooperative response agreements ensure that the closest and most appropriate resources are dispatched to emergencies, while also providing access to additional personnel and apparatus when incidents exceed the capacity of the initial response.



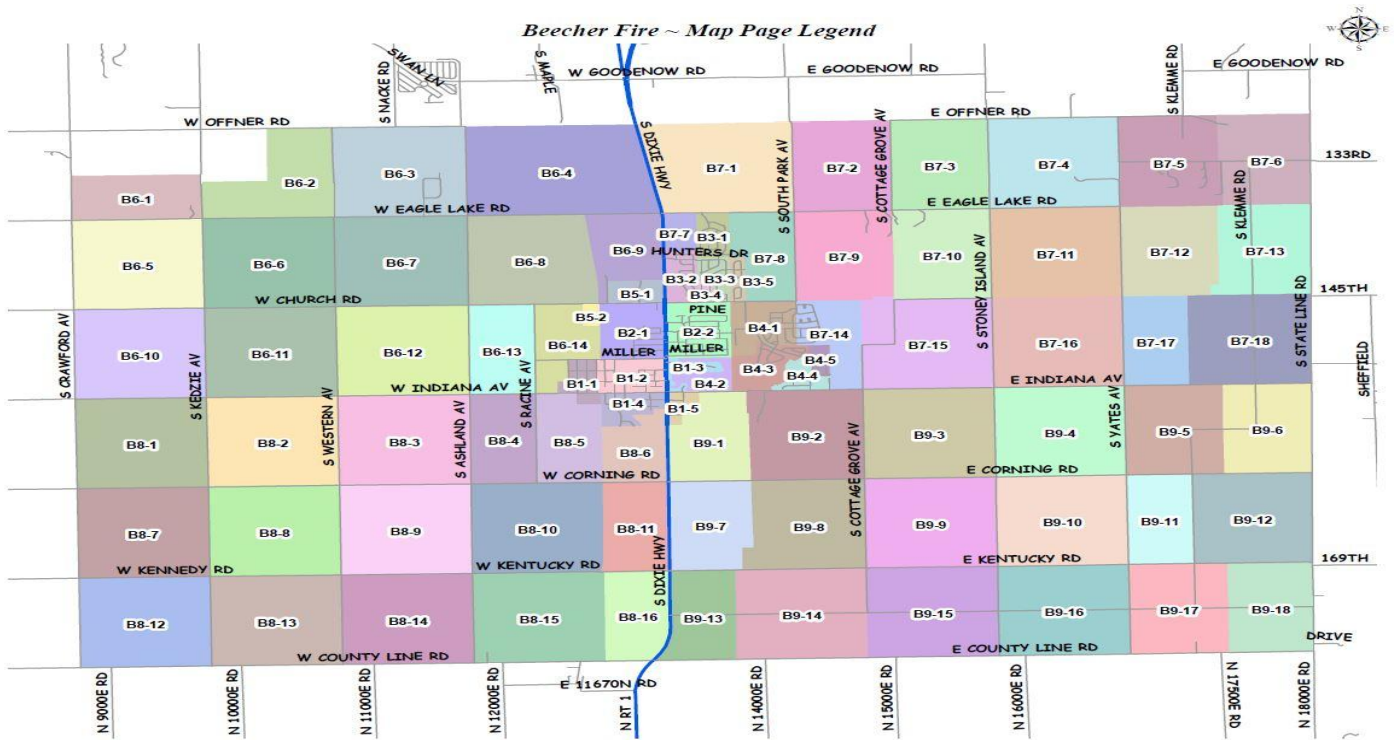
Breakdown of Response Districts

- **53H1:** Areas generally located within the corporate limits of the Village of Beecher that are served by municipal fire hydrants.
- **53T1:** The geographic area bounded by Ashland Avenue to the west, Stateline Road to the east, County Line Road to the north, and Offner Road to the south.
- **53T2:** The geographic area bounded by Ashland Avenue to the east, Crawford Avenue to the west, County Line Road to the north, and Offner Road to the south.
- **Out of District:** Any location situated outside the established boundaries of the Beecher Fire Protection District.

Beecher Fire Protection District Beat Map



Beecher Fire Protection District Boundary Map

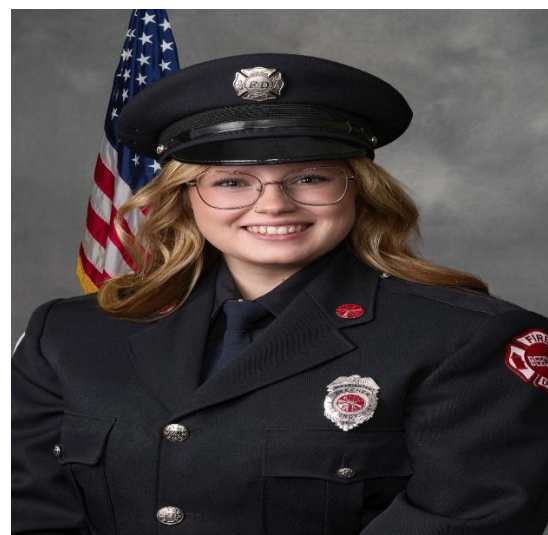




EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

Emergency Medical Services (EMS) represent a core component of the Beecher Fire Protection District's all-hazard response system and consistently accounts for the largest percentage of total incidents, 60.86% in 2025. These include medical emergencies, traumatic injuries, overdoses, cardiac issues, respiratory distress, cardiac arrests, and motor vehicle accidents. EMS also provides critical support in mass casualty events and public health crises.

Medical emergencies are often unpredictable, chaotic, and executed in challenging environments so a fire engine with additional personnel may respond as well to provide sufficient resources to handle complex situations that may be encountered, and also to be available for simultaneous calls. The EMS Division operates under the direction of Joshua Daisy serving as EMS Coordinator and Ashley Rock serving as Assistant EMS Coordinator.



Core Mission

The mission of the Beecher Fire Protection District's EMS Division is to deliver advanced, time-critical medical interventions combined with compassionate, patient-centered care. As the first link in the continuum of emergency medicine, the Division is committed to rapid response, clinical excellence, and ensuring positive patient outcomes from the moment care begins.

Capabilities & Responsibilities

The EMS Division provides Advanced Life Support (ALS) services through both frontline ambulances and ALS-equipped fire apparatus, ensuring rapid access to life-saving care regardless of incident type or location.

- Staffing includes 27 Paramedics and 20 EMTs, all of whom are cross-trained as Firefighters, allowing for seamless integration of fire suppression and emergency medical operations.
- Medical oversight is provided through Silver Cross Hospital, ensuring evidence-based protocols, continuous quality improvement, and clinical accountability.
- Advanced medical equipment includes ZOLL X Series cardiac monitors, LUCAS automated chest compression systems, and GlideScope advanced airway equipment, enabling high-quality resuscitative and critical care in the field.
- The Division also supports the community through CPR, AED, and First Aid training, strengthening bystander readiness and survivability prior to first responder arrival.

2025 EMS Performance Metrics

- EMS Call Volume: 709 incidents
- Cardiac Arrest Save Rate (Ventricular Fibrillation): 16.67%
(National average: 10.2%)
- Pre-Arrival CPR Provided: 66.67% of cardiac arrest incidents

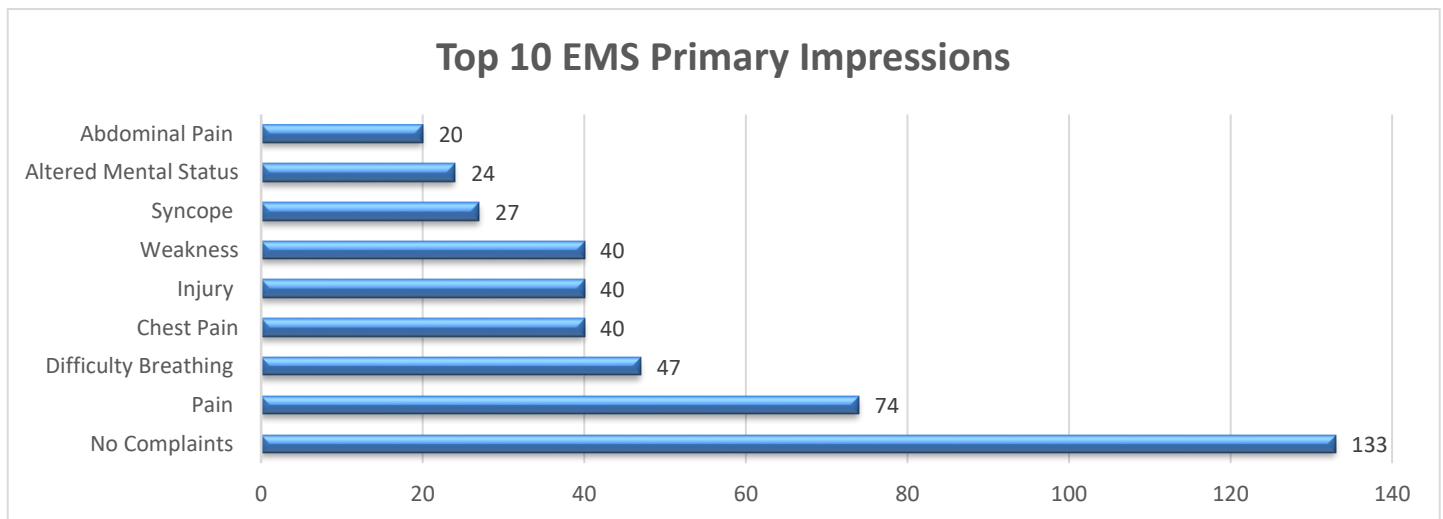
These outcomes reflect the Division's emphasis on early intervention, high-performance CPR, and strong coordination between dispatch, responders, and receiving facilities.

2025 Highlights & Operational Advancements

In 2025, the EMS Division achieved significant advancements in both training and equipment, directly enhancing patient care and responder effectiveness. Both frontline ambulances, as well as the ALS-equipped engine, were outfitted with GlideScope video laryngoscopes to improve first-pass intubation success rates and overall airway management outcomes.

In April, the Beecher Fire Protection District hosted an in-house EMS Conference, providing comprehensive education on key operational and clinical topics. Training sessions included legal considerations in EMS documentation, cardiac arrest scene management, advanced airway techniques, and mass casualty incident triage, ensuring personnel remain prepared for both routine and complex emergency responses.

In December, the Beecher Fire Protection District formally transitioned from the Riverside EMS System to the Silver Cross EMS System. This transition was supported by robust training initiatives provided by Silver Cross and was implemented to enhance clinical integration and improve communication and coordination with EMS partners throughout Will County.



Transport Destinations

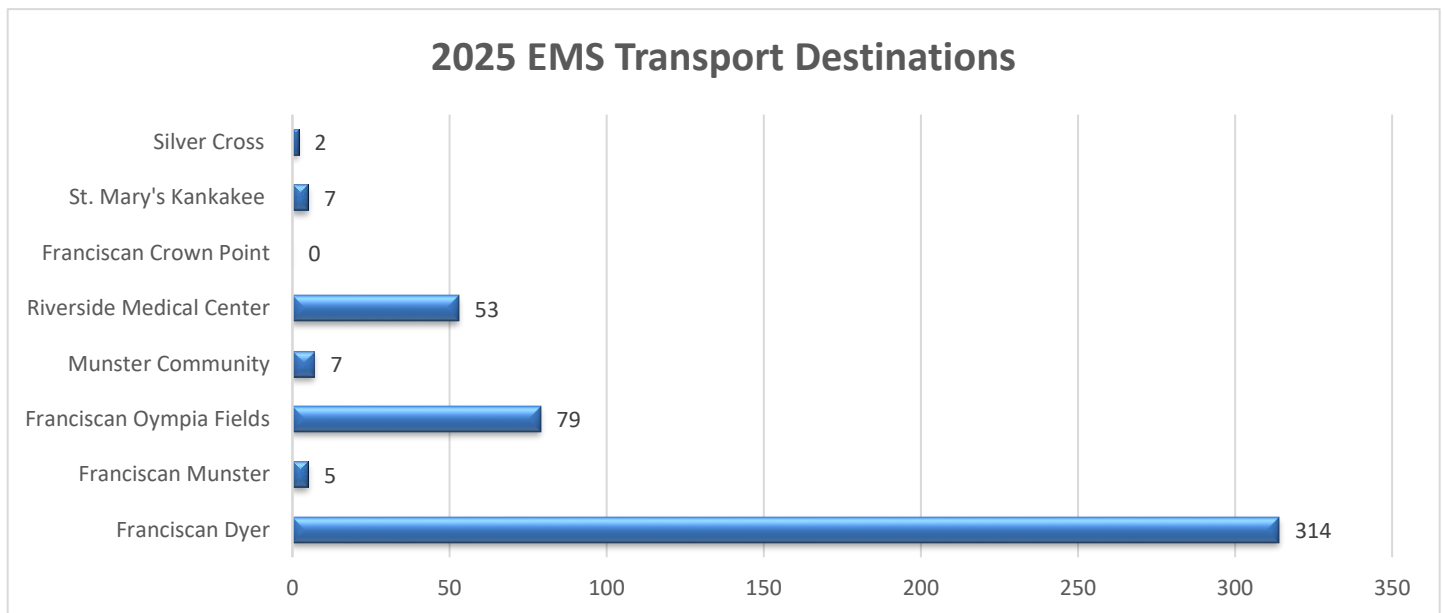
The Beecher Fire Protection District operates within the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) Region 7 Emergency Medical Services system. Due to its geographic location, the District faces inherent challenges related to access to appropriate receiving hospitals, which directly impacts ambulance transport times and overall patient care delivery.

Ambulance transport destinations are determined by patient acuity, medical condition, and the specialized services required to ensure the highest standard of care. While Franciscan

Dyer Hospital serves as the closest emergency department, many patients—particularly those requiring higher levels of care—must be transported to more distant facilities. The nearest Level II Trauma Center available to District residents is Riverside Medical Center in Kankakee, resulting in significantly extended transport times compared to more centrally located EMS agencies.

These prolonged transport distances place additional demands on Beecher Fire Protection District resources, including increased unit out-of-service times, reduced system coverage, and heightened reliance on mutual aid to maintain community protection. Extended transports also contribute to longer patient transfer intervals, delayed access to definitive care, and increased operational stress on paramedic staff operating in a high-acuity, resource-constrained environment.

Despite these challenges, the Beecher Fire Protection District remains committed to delivering timely, high-quality emergency medical care through advanced clinical training, strategic resource deployment, and regional coordination. However, the District’s geographic limitations and extended transport times underscore the need for continued investment in EMS capabilities, staffing, and system resiliency to ensure consistent and effective emergency care for the community.





Community Risk Reduction

A comprehensive Community Risk Reduction (CRR) program enables the Beecher Fire Protection District to proactively reduce all-hazard risks through a coordinated, data-driven approach. By integrating education, enforcement, engineering, economic incentives, and emergency response—commonly referred to as the Five E’s of Community Risk Reduction—the District addresses risk before emergencies occur while strengthening long-term community resilience.

Together, these five pillars influence behavior, improve safety outcomes, and promote a culture that prioritizes prevention, preparedness, and shared responsibility throughout the District’s service area.

The Five E’s of Community Risk Reduction

Education

Public fire and life safety education remains the foundation of the District’s CRR strategy. By increasing awareness of common hazards, prevention techniques, and appropriate emergency actions, the Fire District empowers residents to take an active role in protecting themselves, their families, and their property. Education initiatives build preparedness, encourage safe decision-making, and foster strong partnerships between the community and emergency responders.

Enforcement

The Fire District supports life safety compliance through inspections, plan reviews, code enforcement activities, and collaboration with local authorities. Consistent enforcement of fire codes and life safety regulations helps ensure a safer built environment and reinforces accountability. These efforts promote uniform standards and cultivate a culture of shared responsibility for public safety.

Engineering

Modern fire protection increasingly relies on engineered safety solutions, including automatic sprinkler systems, smoke and carbon monoxide alarms, and fire-resistant construction materials. Code-compliant design and construction reduce risk at its source by slowing fire spread, protecting exit pathways, and allowing critical time for safe evacuation and effective fire department intervention.

Economic Incentives

Financial incentives—such as insurance discounts, tax benefits, and grant-funded safety improvements—encourage residents and businesses to invest in proactive risk-reduction measures. By reducing financial barriers to safety upgrades, economic incentives help make prevention more accessible and sustainable across the community.

Emergency Response

Despite strong prevention efforts, emergencies will still occur. A highly trained, well-equipped, and strategically deployed emergency response system remains essential. The District's emergency response capabilities minimize property damage, save lives, and provide residents with confidence that timely, professional assistance will be available when it is needed most.

Public Information and Prevention

The Fire District's Public Education and Fire Prevention efforts are designed to address today's most pressing life safety challenges through targeted, evidence-based programming. These initiatives focus on reducing preventable emergencies by addressing risk factors before they escalate into crises.

Educational outreach is tailored to meet the needs of specific populations, including:

- Students: Fire safety education, school visits, and fire drills through programs such as *Learn Not to Burn*
- Seniors: Fall prevention initiatives and home fire safety education
- Businesses: CPR and emergency preparedness training
- Residents: Smoke and carbon monoxide alarm installations and CPR training

The overarching goal of these efforts is to protect lives, prevent emergencies, and strengthen overall community resilience.

Community Risk Reduction Division

Fire Prevention

Fire prevention and inspection activities within the Village of Beecher continue to be managed by the Village following the termination of the intergovernmental agreement with the Fire District in 2023. The Fire District and Village remain actively engaged in discussions to reestablish collaborative processes that allow the Fire District to provide professional feedback and technical input during plan review activities.

In 2025, the Fire Prevention Bureau completed multiple plan reviews for developments within the District's response area, including fire alarm and automatic sprinkler system plans for the following projects:

- Beecher Police Station – 250 W. Church Road
- First Community Bank and Trust of Beecher – 1111 S. Dixie Highway
- Union Electronics Distributors – 615 W. Church Road
- Faith United Reformed Church – 130 W. Corning Road

These reviews help ensure that new and renovated structures meet applicable fire and life safety standards, contributing to safer development throughout the community.

Public Education

The Community Risk Reduction Division plays a critical role in advancing the Fire District's mission by developing and implementing programs that reduce the likelihood and severity of emergencies. The Division focuses on preventing loss of life, property damage, personal injury, and environmental impacts through proactive education, policy development, and community engagement.

In addition to delivering public education programs, the Division coordinates special events, supports community outreach initiatives, and collaborates with partner agencies to promote consistent life safety messaging throughout the District.

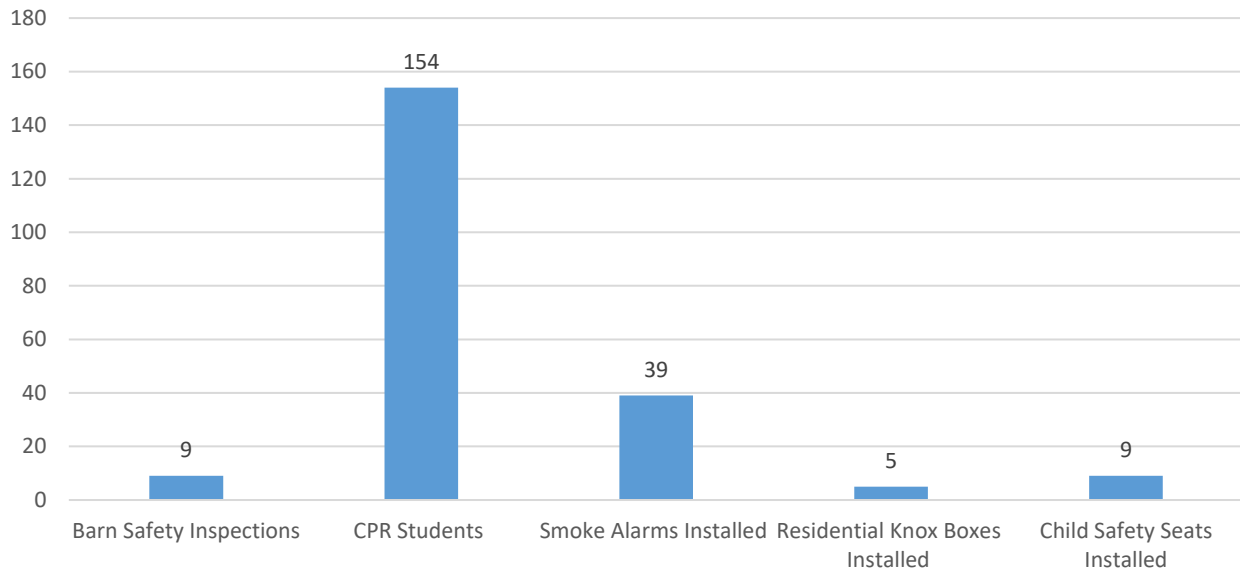
Core Mission

To prevent emergencies and enhance community resilience through proactive education, outreach, and behavior-based risk reduction strategies.

Responsibilities and Capabilities

- School-based and senior education programs
- CPR/AED and First Aid training
- Home safety checks, smoke alarm installations, Knox Box installations, and barn safety inspections
- Junior Fire Academy Program

2025 Programs & Services



Community Support & Mental Health Program

Mission

The mission of the Beecher Fire Protection District Community Support & Mental Health Program is to enhance community resilience by delivering compassionate support and facilitating access to coordinated local resources for individuals and families experiencing crisis, promoting stability, recovery, and long-term well-being.

Program Overview

The Beecher Community Support & Mental Health Program was developed in response to a documented and sustained increase in mental health-related emergency responses within Washington Township. Over a 36-month data collection period, the Fire District identified significant growth in behavioral health-related calls, particularly among youth ages 10–19 and older adults ages 60–69.

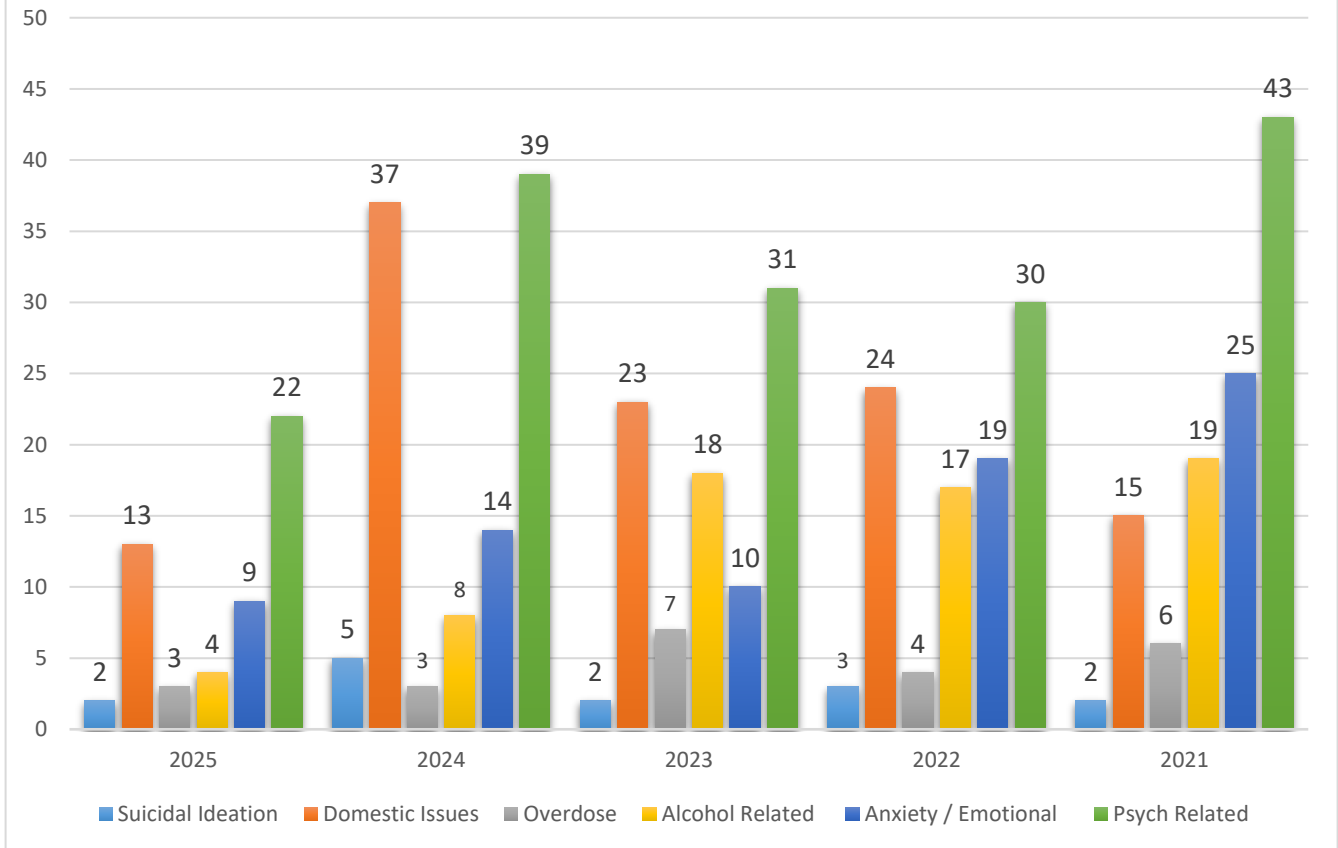
Historically, these patients were transported to emergency departments, where access to long-term behavioral health services is often limited. This model frequently resulted in short-term stabilization without continuity of care or structured follow-up, increasing the likelihood of repeat emergency utilization.

To address this gap, the Fire District—working in partnership with Washington Township—launched the Community Support & Mental Health Program on June 29, 2024. The program provides residents with direct access to professional behavioral health services through Thriveworks, including counseling for stress, anxiety, and depression; couples and family therapy; psychiatric services; medication management; and related supports.

Firefighters and paramedics distribute program resources during emergency responses and community interactions, ensuring residents have immediate access to referral pathways and follow-up care.



Beecher Fire Protection District Mental Health Related Incident Trends 2021-2025



Program Impact

The Community Support & Mental Health Program directly addresses service gaps by embedding behavioral health referrals into emergency response, community outreach, and follow-up engagement. This approach ensures residents experiencing a wide range of challenges receive timely, coordinated access to care before conditions escalate into crisis.

In 2025:

- 14 referrals were made through IRIS to Thriveworks
- 194 Community Support Services patient follow-up visits were completed
- 42 patients were successfully connected to critical resources, including:
 - Will County Senior Services
 - U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Aid & Attendance benefits
 - Homeless assistance resources

- Mortgage and rental assistance programs
- Alzheimer's and caregiver support services

Through these efforts, the Fire District continues to stabilize service delivery, strengthen early intervention and referral effectiveness, reduce preventable emergency utilization, expand community partnerships, and support the long-term sustainability of the program.



2025 Organizational Accomplishments

Strategic Grant Awards & Equipment Modernization

- Awarded \$40,215 through the Firehouse Subs Public Safety Foundation Grant Program for the acquisition of state-of-the-art Genesis battery-operated extrication equipment, enhancing our vehicle rescue capabilities and reducing patient disentanglement times. The equipment was placed in service on May 21, further strengthening our all-hazards response readiness.
- Awarded \$19,742 through the Illinois Office of the State Fire Marshal Small Equipment Grant to purchase new Paratech Rescue Airbags and Rescue 42 Heavy-Duty Stabilization Struts, significantly improving technical rescue stabilization capabilities and firefighter safety during complex incidents.
- Awarded \$12,114 through the Earthrise Energy RISE Grant Program for the purchase of three GlideScope video laryngoscopy systems, now deployed on all ambulances and the ALS Engine. These advanced airway devices improve intubation success rates, enhance patient outcomes, and support our commitment to delivering high-quality advanced life support care.

Operational Readiness & Resource Enhancement

- Placed into service a new 2025 Chevrolet Tahoe SSV (MV-C6) as Chief 44 on July 25, enhancing command mobility, incident management capabilities, and administrative efficiency. This was a planned capital expense that was established through the Fleet and Facility Plan with the surplus declaration of MV-C2.
- Implemented interagency duty schedule sharing through the First Arriving Dashboard platform, strengthening regional communication and improving situational awareness during staffing challenges. This initiative reinforces our commitment to cooperative response within MABAS and neighboring departments.
- Transitioned to Strongpay, a payroll system specifically designed for fire protection districts and municipal agencies, ensuring improved accuracy, compliance, and fiscal accountability.
- Conducted a comprehensive review and update of the District's Standard Operating Guidelines (SOG) Manual to ensure alignment with current operational practices, best standards, and organizational growth.

Workforce Development & Leadership Advancement

- Successfully completed the testing process for the newly established career Lieutenant/Paramedic positions. Following written examinations, oral interviews, and preference point evaluations, the Board of Trustees extended conditional offers to the top three candidates. The three Lieutenant/Paramedics were officially sworn in on July 29, marking a historic milestone in strengthening our career staffing model and long-term service delivery strategy.
- Partnered with Jorge Bonilla of Bonilla Coaching to provide ongoing leadership and communication development for Chief Officers and Line Officers. Beginning in June, 75-minute leadership sessions were incorporated into monthly staff meetings, culminating in staff graduation from the John Maxwell High Road Leadership Program in December. This investment reinforces a culture of accountability, integrity, and professional growth.
- Developed and implemented a formal Cadet Program, designed to mentor and prepare future members of the fire service. Under the leadership of Lieutenant Zelhart, the program launched with an orientation on August 7 and currently includes five Cadets who meet weekly. The structured curriculum emphasizes academic success, leadership development, and foundational fire service skills.

Community & Organizational Strengthening

- Increased the number of certified Illinois Secretary of State Third-Party Safety Officers within the organization from one to four, enhancing our ability to provide driver safety testing and certification services locally. Current certified officers include Chief Falaschetti, Deputy Chief Heusing, Assistant Chief McGannon, and Lieutenant Zelhart.
- Presented life insurance renewal options to the Board of Trustees. Demonstrating strong support for member welfare, the Board unanimously approved increasing the District-provided life insurance benefit from \$10,000 to \$50,000 per member, significantly enhancing financial protection for our firefighters and their families.
- The Beecher Firefighters Association generously funded the purchase of five residential Knox Home Boxes to support expansion of the District's Residential Knox Box Lease Program, strengthening access for emergency responders and improving resident safety.
- Completed a capital improvement project involving professional landscaping enhancements on the northeast corner of the fire station, further improving the appearance, safety, and community presence of our facility.



2025 Training Division Highlights

The Training Division is responsible for the scheduling and delivery of emergency response training and education of the Beecher Fire Protection District. This includes fire training, EMS, technical rescue, and hazardous materials, along with training with our mutual aid departments on a regular basis.



The goal of the Training Division is to ensure that the firefighters of the Beecher Fire Protection District are well trained and ready to respond to any emergency that may arise. To achieve this goal, Beecher firefighters consistently train on realistic and pertinent topics safely every day. Utilizing the Training Tower, and the training tower grounds members of the Beecher Fire Protection District are given the opportunity to hone basic and advanced skills. This allows Beecher Firefighters to perform at a high level when an actual incident takes place.



2025 Training Division Accomplishments

Training Tower Enhancements

In 2025, the standpipe system within the District's training tower was repaired, restoring full operational capability for high-rise evolutions and standpipe operations. In addition, a metal wall and secured door were installed leading to the high-rise staircase, creating a more realistic and controlled environment for specialty lead-out operations. These upgrades significantly enhance firefighter safety while improving realism in high-risk training scenarios.

29% Increase in Total Training Hours

Total training hours increased by 29% from 2024 to 2025. This substantial growth reflects expanded part-time staffing, increased participation in outside certification programs, and the implementation of more structured daily training schedules. Utilization of the training tower also increased, providing personnel with a realistic, safe, and controlled setting to refine critical fireground and EMS competencies prior to real-world application.

Expansion of Automatic Aid Training Partnerships

Monthly automatic aid drills with the Crete Fire Department and Crete Township Fire Protection District continued throughout 2025, strengthening interagency coordination and operational familiarity. In addition, the University Park Fire Department began participating in joint monthly training sessions when available, further enhancing regional preparedness and response consistency.

MABAS Division 27 Mutual Aid Training Leadership

The Beecher Fire Protection District continued to host MABAS Division 27 mutual aid drills, including both foundational skill development and live fire evolutions at the District's training tower. These exercises strengthen interoperability, improve communication, and reinforce standardized fireground operations across departments.

A key advancement in 2025 was the development and refinement of a standardized command board. After multiple revisions based on feedback from command officers during live burn scenarios, the final product was distributed to Chiefs throughout MABAS Division 27. This initiative promotes consistent command terminology, improved situational awareness, and greater operational efficiency during multi-agency incidents.

During the final MABAS 27 training of the year, the Illinois Fire Service Institute provided instructors and specialized training props at no cost to participating departments. This State of Illinois grant-funded program allowed regional departments to access advanced instruction and resources, enhancing training quality while maintaining fiscal responsibility.

Implementation of On-Duty Pre-Incident Planning Program

2025 marked the first year of formally scheduled, on-shift pre-incident planning. Utilizing the FlowMSP platform, on-duty personnel conducted structured preplans for commercial, industrial, and educational occupancies throughout the District. This program ensures critical building information is immediately accessible during emergencies and establishes an annual review process to maintain data accuracy and operational readiness.

Illinois State Fire Marshal Recertification Compliance

The Office of the Illinois State Fire Marshal implemented a new statewide recertification requirement for various fire service credentials in 2025. The Beecher Fire Protection District successfully recertified all eligible members who met continuing education and attendance requirements, ensuring full compliance and maintaining professional competency standards.

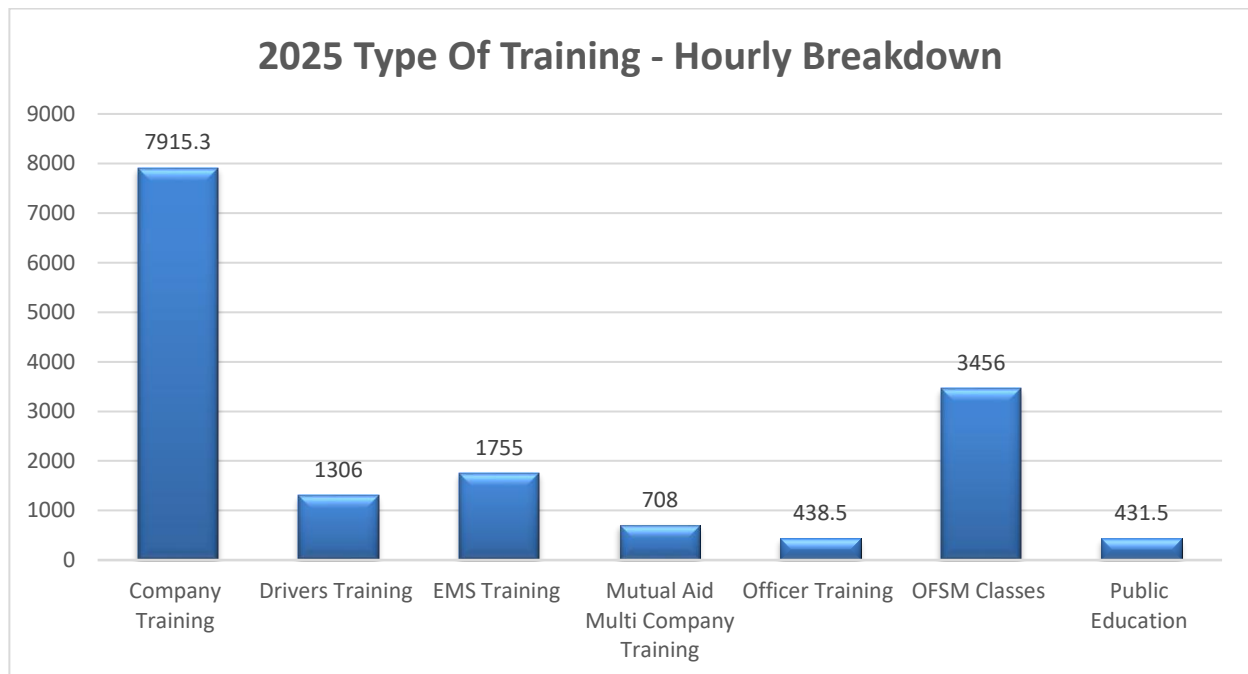
Professional Certification Achievements

Seven (7) new members successfully obtained their Basic Operations Firefighter certification in 2025, strengthening the District's operational workforce.

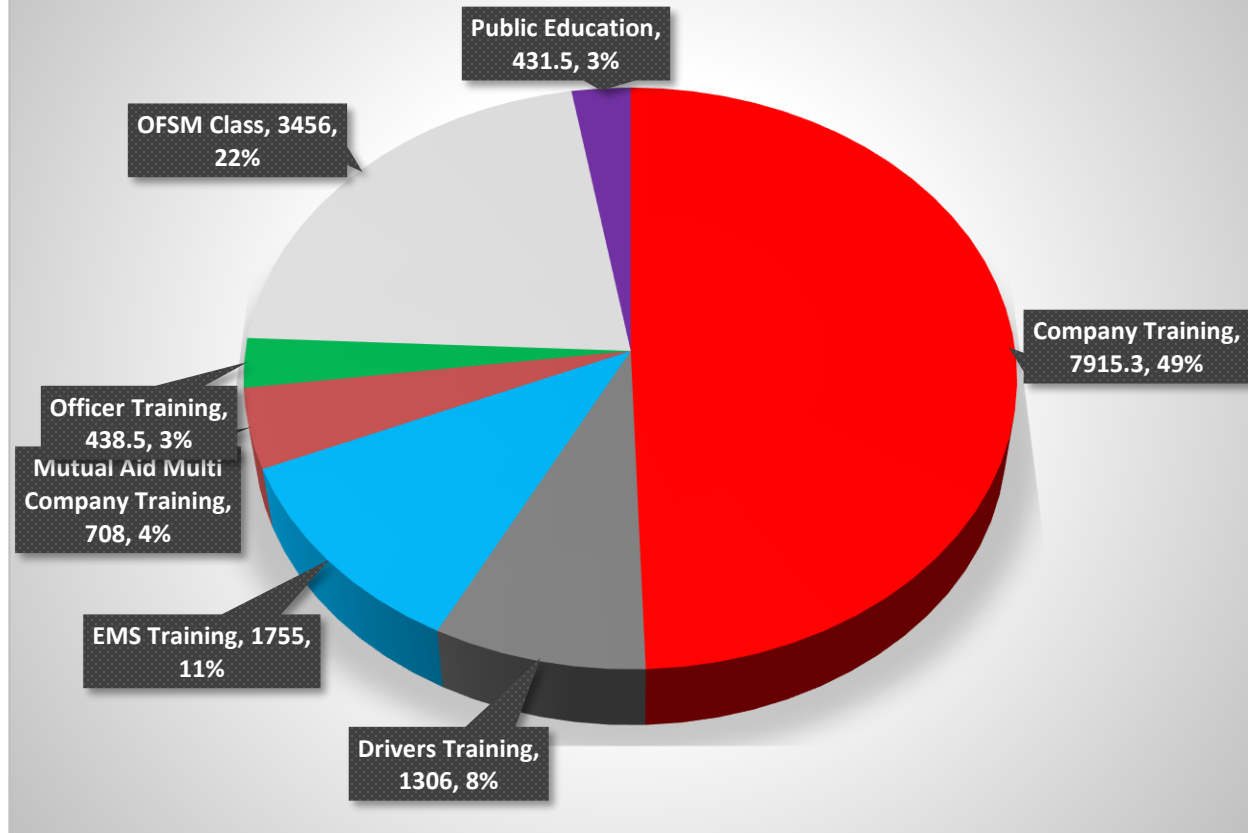
Additionally, members attended 38 Office of the Illinois State Fire Marshal (OSFM) certification courses, including:

- Basic Operations Firefighter
- Advanced Technician Firefighter
- Company Fire Officer
- Advanced Fire Officer
- Common Passenger Vehicle Rescue
- Fire Apparatus Engineer
- Fire Inspector
- Fire Service Instructor II
- Fire Service Vehicle Operator
- Hazardous Materials Operations
- Rope Operations
- Rope Technician
- Surface Water Operations
- Training Program Manager
- Trench Rescue Technician

These certifications represent a significant investment in professional development and directly enhance the District's ability to deliver advanced, all-hazard emergency response services.



2025 Training by Type - Percentage Breakdown



The Beecher Fire Protection District maintains a comprehensive and progressive training program focused on high-risk, low-frequency fire and emergency response scenarios, as outlined above. These training priorities ensure our personnel are prepared to safely and effectively manage the most complex and dangerous incidents they may encounter.

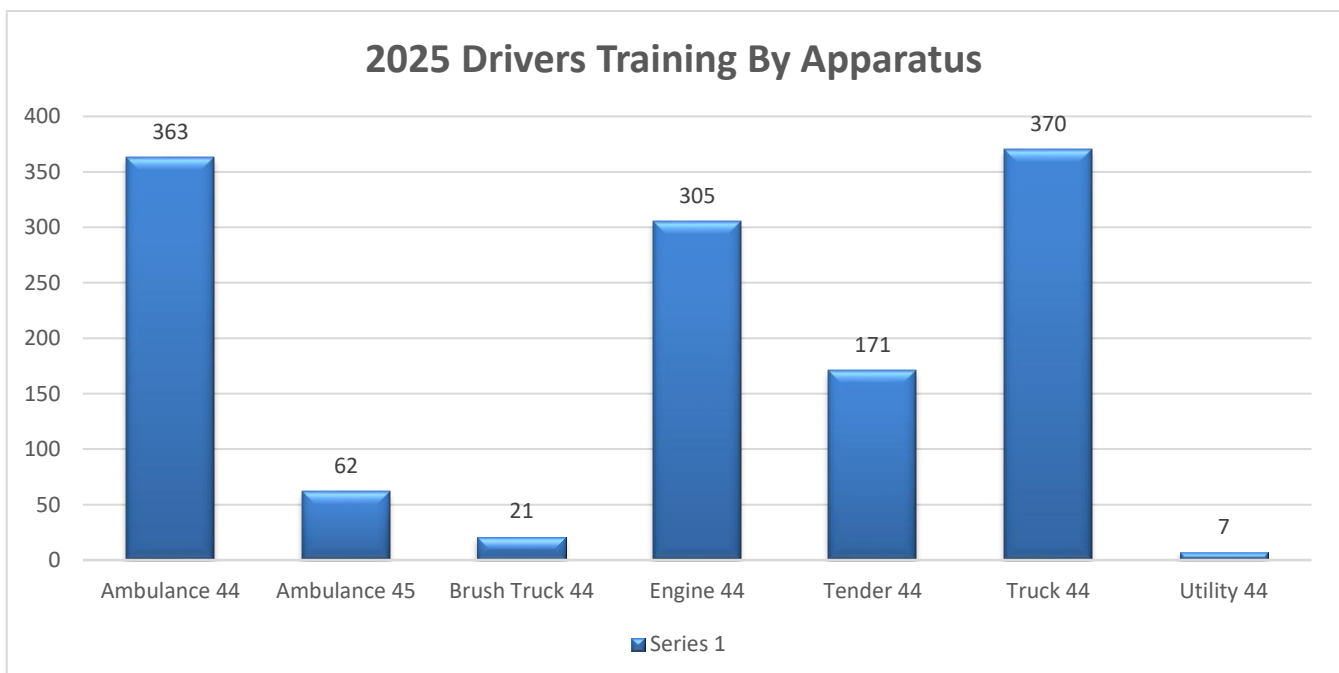
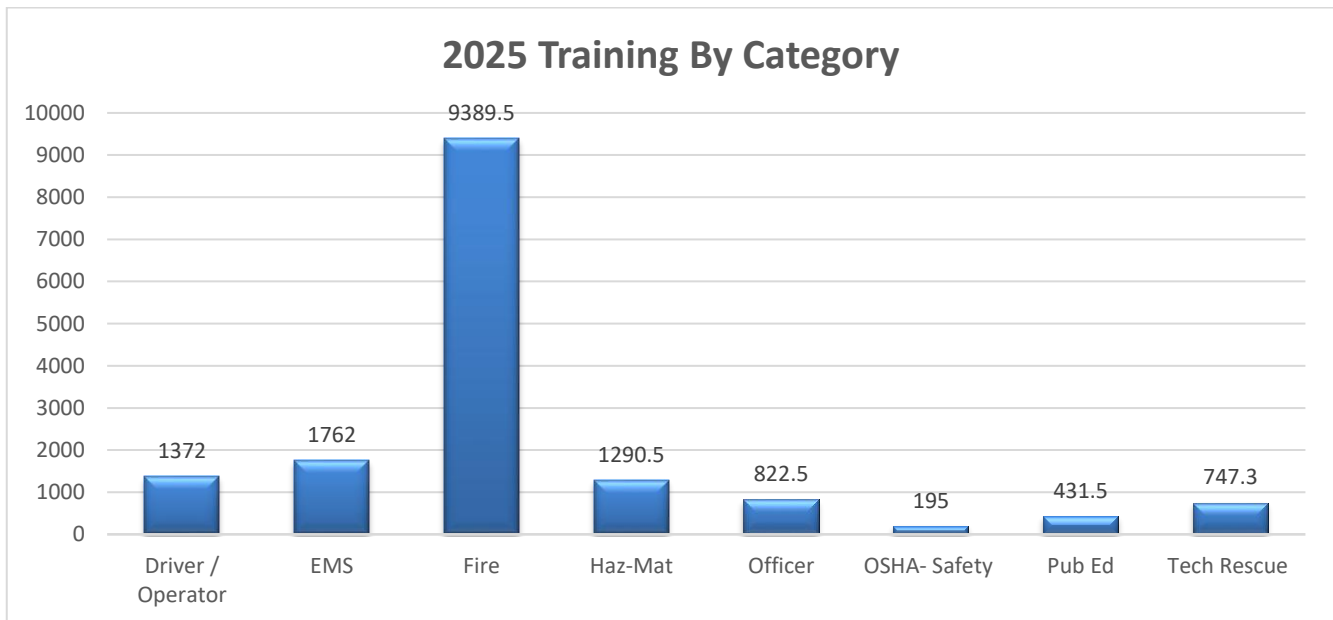
In 2025, members of the Beecher Fire Protection District collectively completed 16,010.3 hours of training, reflecting a strong organizational commitment to readiness, professional development, and operational excellence. Training occurs on a daily basis and includes structured “Quick Drills” led by company officers, reinforcing core skills, situational awareness, and operational consistency.

In addition to daily drills, scheduled company-level training is conducted at 9:00 a.m., Monday through Saturday. These sessions take place at the fire station, the training tower, throughout the District, and at out-of-district locations when participating in regional and mutual-aid training opportunities. This diverse training environment ensures members are exposed to realistic conditions and varying operational challenges.

The District continues to place a strong emphasis on regional collaboration by actively participating in joint training with our automatic-aid partners and fellow agencies within MABAS Division 27. Training hours also include multi-company and mutual-aid drills utilizing live-fire training props and theatrical smoke at the District’s training tower. These exercises provide invaluable experience working alongside

neighboring departments under realistic, high-stress conditions—mirroring how crews operate during real-world incidents.

To further strengthen leadership and command capabilities, the Incident Command System is regularly incorporated into training evolutions, providing strategic and tactical command-level instruction for Lieutenants and Chief Officers. This focus ensures that officers are well-prepared to manage complex incidents, coordinate resources effectively, and make sound decisions in dynamic emergency environments.



The Beecher Fire Protection District's Training Tower remains a cornerstone of our hands-on operational readiness program. This purpose-built facility is utilized regularly to conduct a wide range of realistic, scenario-based training evolutions designed to enhance firefighter proficiency, reinforce safe operational practices, and strengthen incident command capabilities.

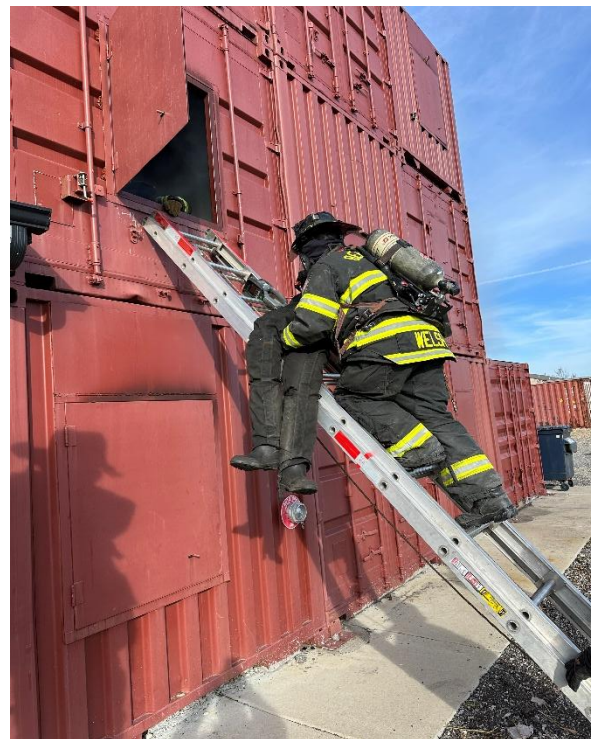
Throughout the year, the Training Tower supports diverse training disciplines, including fire suppression operations, search and rescue, ladder operations, ventilation techniques, mayday and RIT scenarios, and multi-company coordination drills. These practical evolutions ensure our personnel maintain the skills, confidence, and tactical awareness necessary to perform effectively in high-risk, high-consequence environments.

The breakdown above reflects the total hours invested and the various types of training completed within the Training Tower. This consistent investment of time and resources demonstrates the District's unwavering commitment to operational excellence, firefighter safety, and delivering the highest standard of service to the residents and businesses of our community.

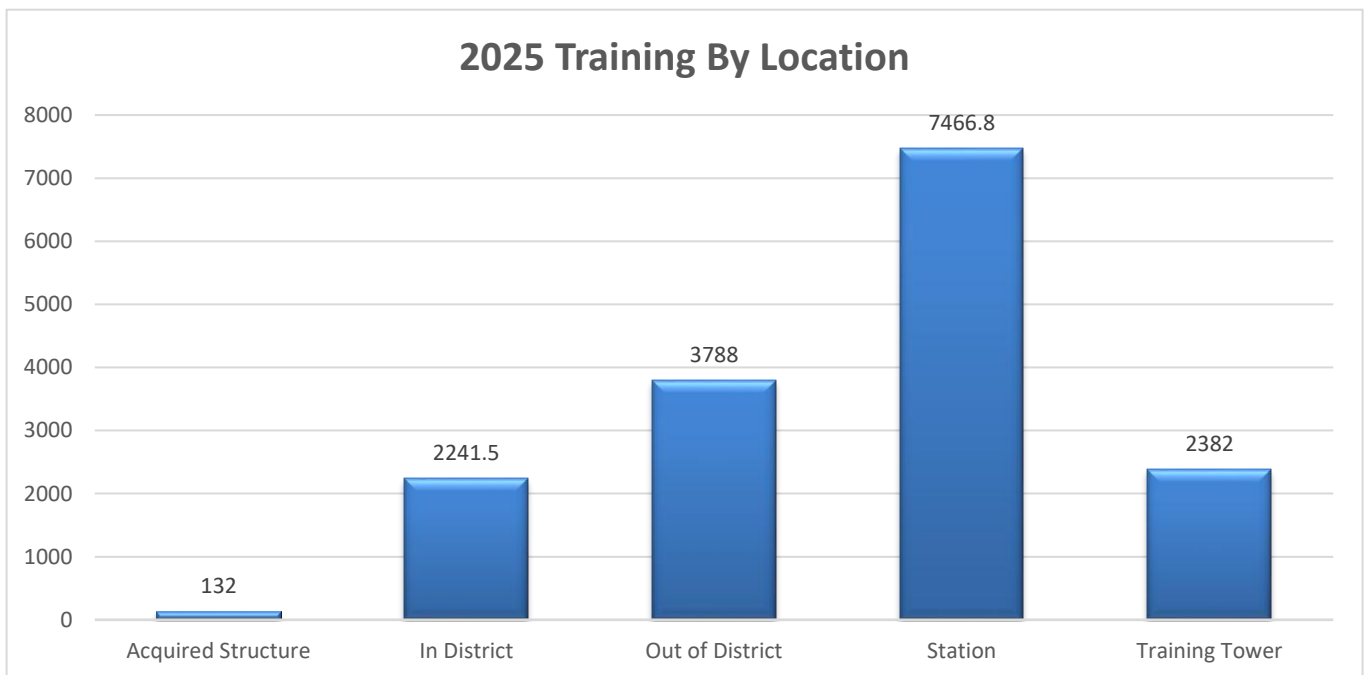
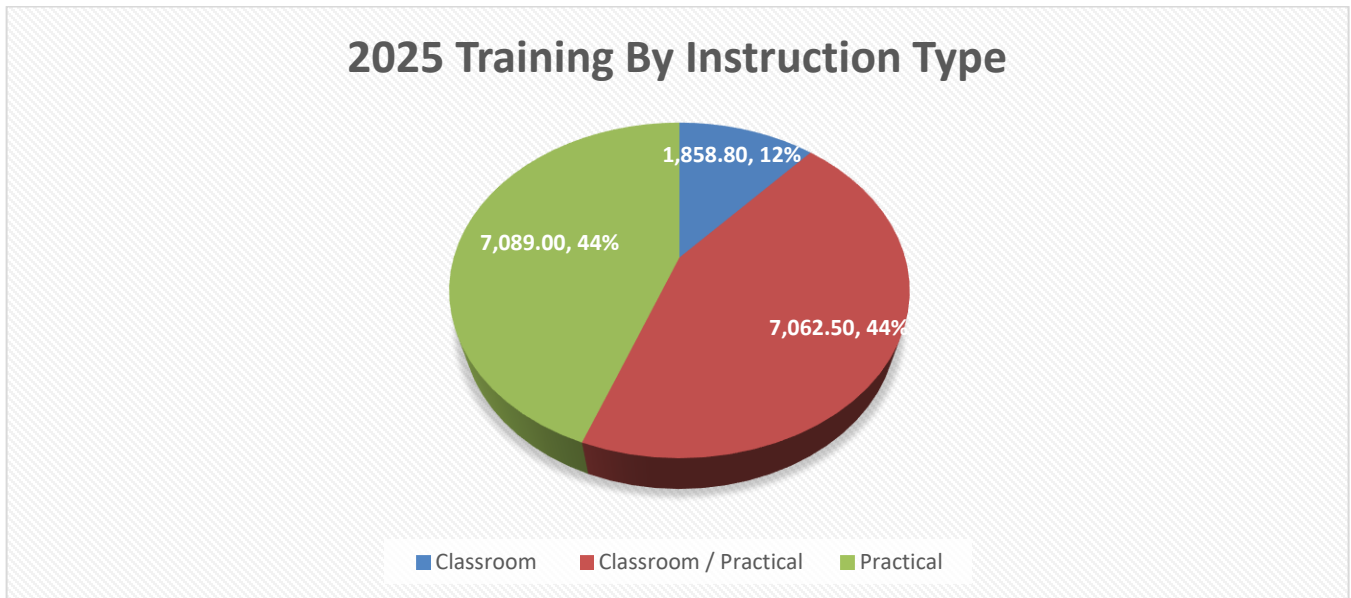
Company Drills

The foundation of the Fire District's training program is conducted at the company level. These training evolutions are typically led by the Lieutenant assigned to the shift, with all on-duty personnel actively participating in hands-on drills and discussions. To ensure consistency, effectiveness, and alignment with District standards, Lieutenants are provided with a defined training topic and a structured lesson plan. Each shift completes the same training curriculum, reinforcing uniformity in knowledge, skills, and operational expectations across the organization.

To ensure all members maintain the highest level of operational readiness and to meet ISO facility training requirements, the Fire Protection District regularly conducts live fire training. Multi-company drills held at the training tower bring all on-duty firefighters together to operate as a unified team under realistic fireground conditions. These training evolutions emphasize the effective use of the Incident Command System, coordinated hoseline advancement, primary and secondary search operations, and ladder deployment in smoke-filled and live fire environments. In addition, mutual and automatic aid training exercises provide valuable opportunities to train alongside our partner agencies. These drills strengthen interagency coordination, reinforce standardized operating procedures, and ensure seamless operations with the departments we rely upon during actual emergency incidents.



Method of Instruction



The Beecher Fire Protection District employs a comprehensive, multi-disciplinary training approach to ensure all firefighters and officers are prepared to operate safely, effectively, and professionally in an increasingly complex emergency environment. By combining hands-on skill development, classroom instruction, and real-world experience, the District fosters a culture of continuous learning, accountability, and operational excellence.

Practical, Hands-On Training

Practical, scenario-based training is a cornerstone of the District's training program. These hands-on evolutions allow firefighters to develop and refine critical skills through realistic, repetitive

practice. By simulating real-world emergency conditions, this training reinforces muscle memory, sound decision-making, and coordinated fireground operations, ensuring members can perform confidently and effectively when seconds matter most.

Classroom-Based Training

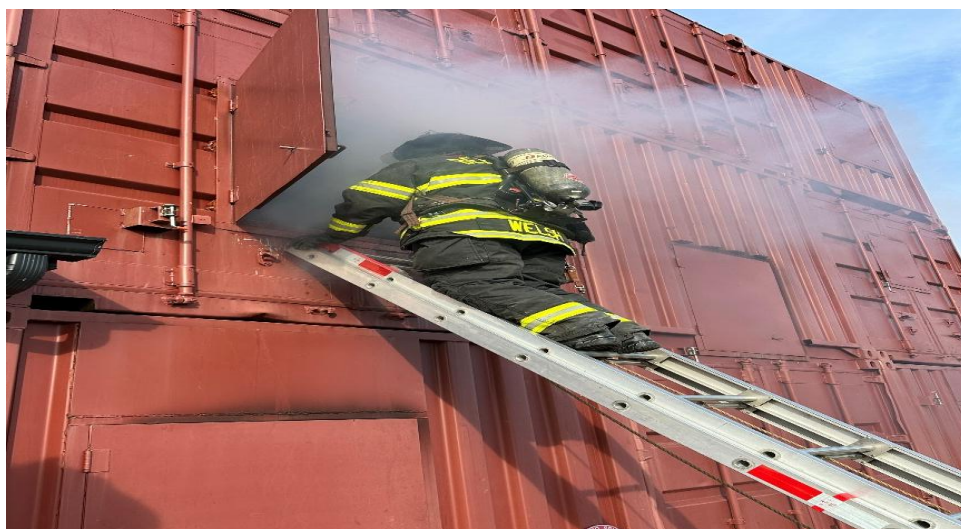
Classroom instruction provides an essential foundation for both fire suppression and emergency medical services education. This training format encourages open discussion, shared learning, and the exchange of experience among members. Classroom-based training includes officer meetings, shift meetings, personnel evaluations, and online coursework through platforms such as Vector Solutions, allowing the District to deliver consistent, standardized instruction while addressing emerging trends, policies, and best practices.

Blended Classroom and Practical Training

The District also utilizes a blended training model that integrates classroom instruction with hands-on application. This approach allows instructors and company officers to clearly define training objectives, review concepts, and align expectations prior to practical evolutions. By connecting theory with application, this model enhances comprehension, reinforces learning outcomes, and increases the overall effectiveness of training.

Experience-Based and Leadership Development Training

Experience-based training plays a vital role in preparing members for leadership responsibilities. This includes acting officer assignments and participation in fire investigations, providing firefighters with opportunities to step into supervisory roles and gain firsthand experience in decision-making, personnel management, community interaction, and problem solving. Additionally, training frequently occurs during and after emergency responses, where crews review incidents on scene, mentor newer members, and conduct constructive critiques. This real-time learning environment strengthens operational performance and supports the District's commitment to delivering the highest level of service to the community.



Summary

The Beecher Fire Protection District continues to serve as a regional model for high-quality emergency services training, both within the District and across the MABAS Division. As an all-hazards response agency, the District must be prepared to rapidly deploy and integrate specialized resources to mitigate incidents involving fire suppression, hazardous materials, technical rescue, and mass-casualty events. Achieving successful outcomes in these complex environments requires personnel who possess not only the appropriate certifications, but also the experience, proficiency, and confidence that come from consistent, realistic training.

Throughout 2025, the Beecher Fire Protection District reaffirmed its commitment to training excellence by researching, developing, and facilitating progressive training opportunities that reflect real-world operational demands. These efforts ensure that our residents and regional partners receive a consistently high standard of service while strengthening interoperability with neighboring agencies. This year once again demonstrated that the District remains proactive, disciplined, and forward-thinking in preparing its members for the full spectrum of emergencies they may encounter.

In support of this mission, the Beecher Fire Protection District established several strategic training goals for 2026. These objectives are designed to set a strong foundation for the future, support the continued maintenance of the District's ISO Class 2 rating, and sustain an exceptionally high level of fire and EMS-based, scenario-driven training. Equally important, these goals reinforce the District's commitment to providing a safe, controlled, and professional training environment for our members and the external agencies that utilize the Beecher training facilities.

2026 Training Division Goals

Expand Participation in the Training Officer Development Program

Broaden involvement in the District's training program by incorporating additional personnel into the planning and instructional process. This initiative will cultivate new perspectives, strengthen succession planning, and intentionally mentor younger members in the responsibilities associated with serving as a Training Officer. The goal is to ensure long-term sustainability and continued excellence in our training operations.

Increase Regional Engagement and Host Division-Level Training Programs

Position the Beecher Fire Protection District as a premier training site within MABAS Division 27 by actively hosting outside courses and regional training opportunities. This will include certifying a dedicated cadre of members in NFPA 1403 (Standard on Live Fire Training Evolutions) to support

compliant, high-quality live fire instruction. Expanding regional participation reinforces interagency collaboration and enhances Beecher's reputation as a training leader.

Complete the buildout of the SCBA Maze Training Prop

Finalize construction and expansion of all remaining props within the SCBA confidence maze. These enhancements will provide advanced, scenario-based skills training that improves firefighter proficiency, air management discipline, problem-solving under stress, and overall operational readiness.

Develop a Modular "Dirty" Classroom Facility at the Training Tower

Acquire two additional shipping containers to construct a dedicated classroom space adjacent to the training tower. This modular facility will support both classroom and blended instructional formats, improving efficiency and creating an integrated training environment.

Construct a Dedicated Storage and Workshop Area at the Training Facility

Build out a secured storage and workshop space within a shipping container at the training tower. This area will house training equipment, consumables, and prop-maintenance materials, improving organization, accountability, and operational readiness.

Establish Educational Partnerships with Regional Institutions

Formalize partnerships with Kankakee Area Career Center and Prairie State College to host training evolutions at the Beecher Training Tower. Providing safe, realistic, and standards-based training opportunities will support students entering or advancing in the fire service while strengthening Beecher's role in workforce development.

Upgrade Electrical Infrastructure at the Training Site

Coordinate with ComEd to extend permanent electrical service to existing and newly constructed container facilities. Reliable power will support classroom technology, lighting, prop functionality, and overall site safety.

Improve Structural Durability of Training Tower Interior Components

Replace existing wood-constructed wall separations within the training tower with metal wall assemblies. This upgrade will enhance durability, reduce maintenance costs, and improve safety during live-fire and high-intensity training evolutions.

Communications & Dispatch



In 2018, following the State of Illinois' adoption of Public Act 99-0006, which mandated the consolidation of smaller Emergency Telephone System Boards (ETSBs) and dispatch centers, four agencies — Romeoville, EastCom, Lincolnway, and the Will County Sheriff's Office — unified to form a centralized communications agency now known as the Laraway Communications Center (LCC).

The Laraway Communications Center serves as a multi-agency public safety answering point (PSAP) located in Joliet, Illinois. LCC provides dispatch services for police, fire, and emergency medical agencies throughout the region. Its highly trained telecommunicators ensure that every call for service is handled with professionalism, accuracy, and urgency — from the initial 9-1-1 call through the arrival of first responders on scene.

Call Processing Performance

Nationally recognized standards recommend that emergency calls be processed within 60 seconds at least 90% of the time and within 120 seconds at least 99% of the time.

For 2025, LCC reported the following average call processing times:

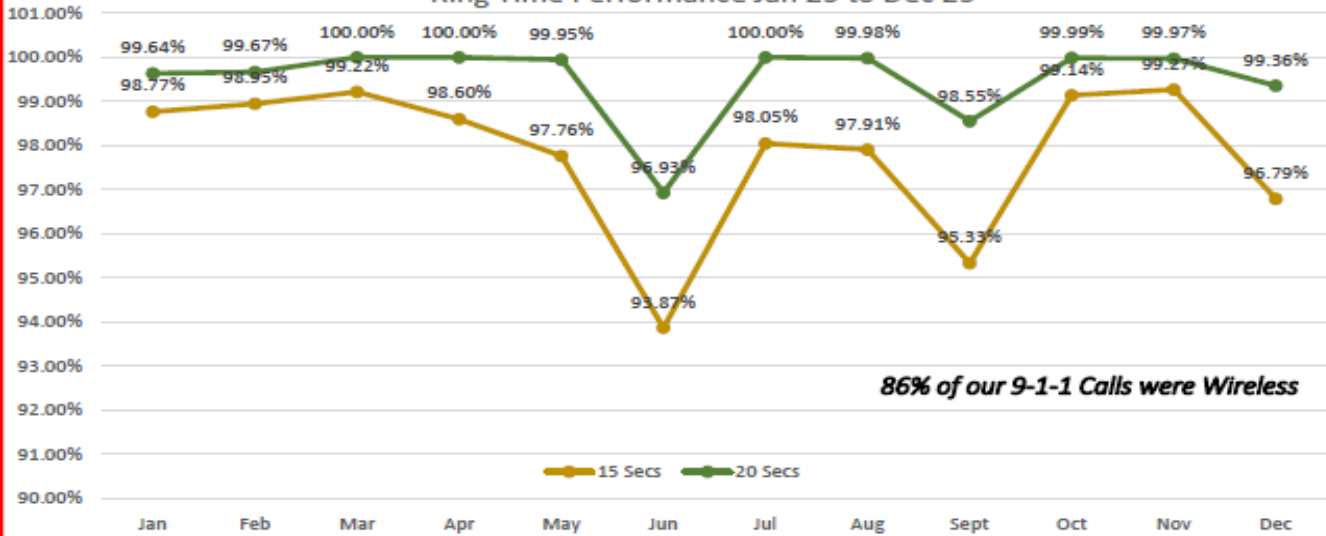
- **Fire Calls:** Average processing time of 0:48
 - 78.62% processed within 60 seconds
 - 97.69% processed within 120 seconds

These performance metrics reflect the volume and complexity of calls managed by LCC while demonstrating a continued commitment to efficient, coordinated emergency communications that directly support responder effectiveness and community safety.



LARAWAY COMMUNICATIONS CENTER SNAPSHOT 2025 Annual Statistics

Ring Time Performance Jan 25 to Dec 25



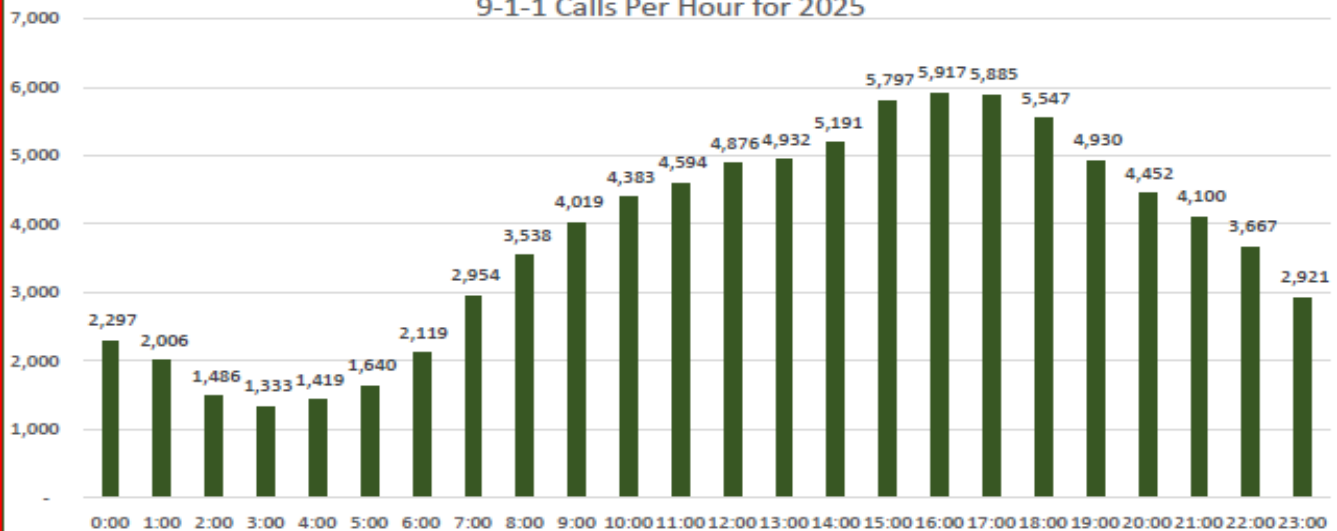
86% of our 9-1-1 Calls were Wireless

Call Answering Times should be within 15 seconds 90% of the time and 20 seconds 95% of the time.

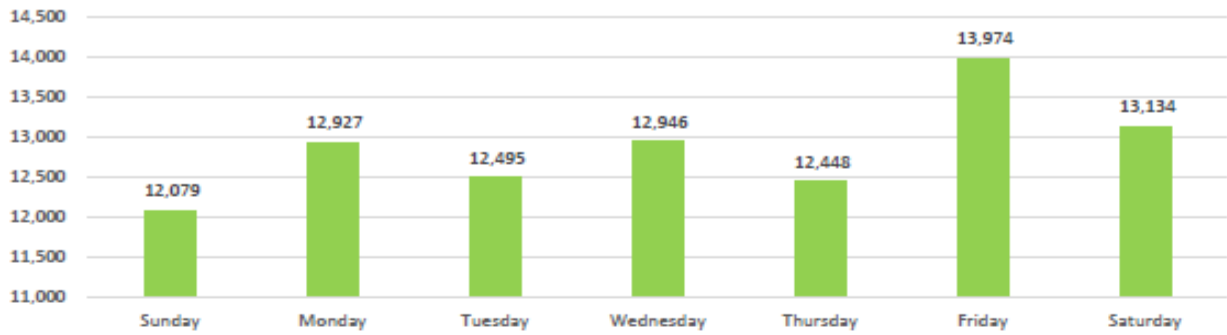
2025	9-1-1 Calls	15 Secs	20 Secs	% of Calls
LCC	90,508	98.55%	99.91%	33.16%
Wescom	104,839	99.64%	99.97%	38.42%
Joliet	77,553	98.68%	99.94%	28.42%

2025	Admin Calls	15 Secs	20 Secs	% of Calls
LCC	189,699	98.42%	99.33%	39.67%
Wescom	183,576	99.70%	99.88%	38.38%
Joliet	104,996	99.42%	99.67%	21.95%

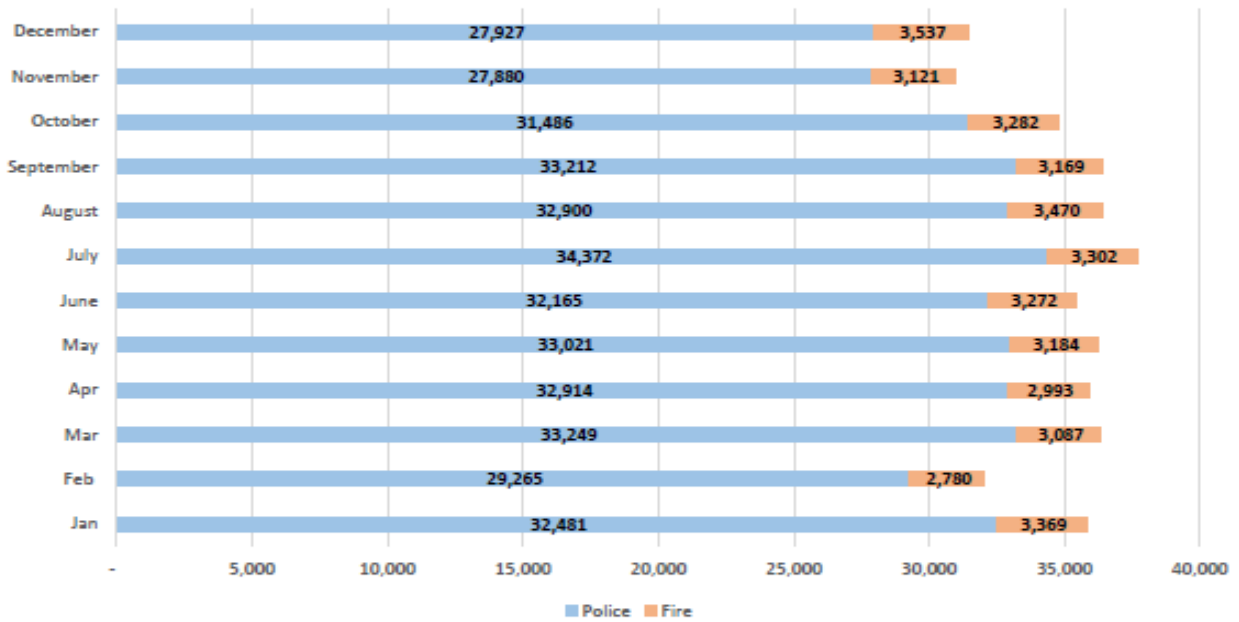
9-1-1 Calls Per Hour for 2025



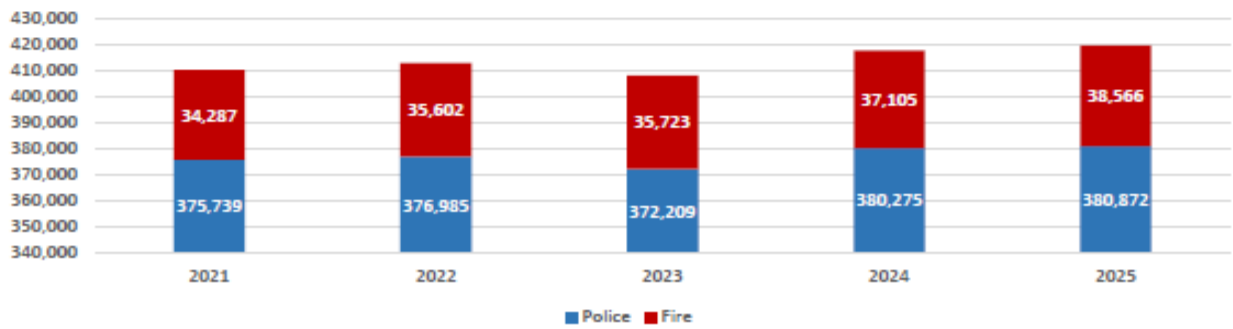
9-1-1 Calls by Day of Week for 2025

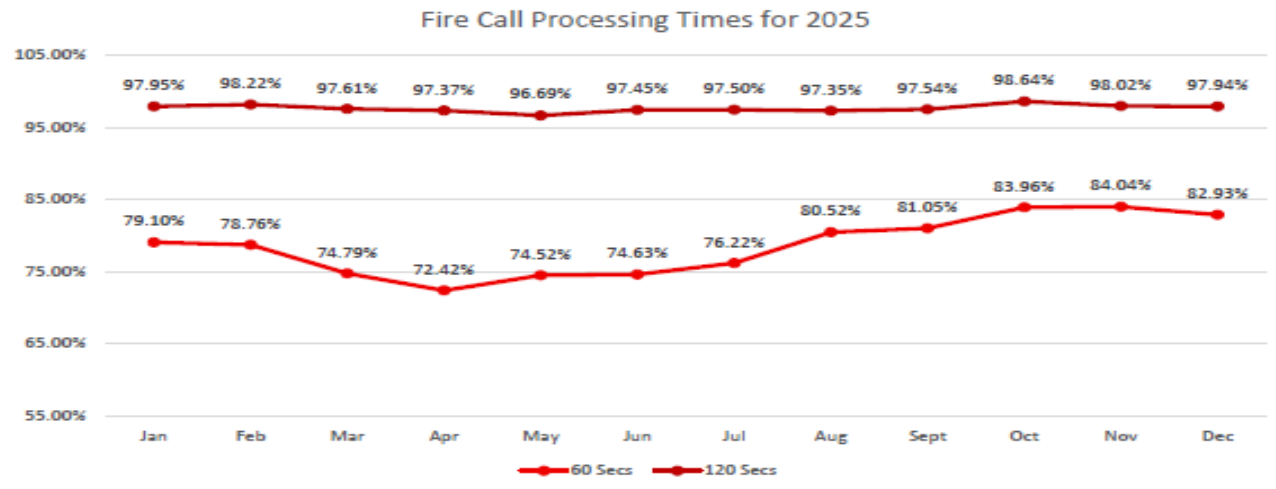


Total CAD Incidents for 2025



Total CAD Incidents Last 5 years

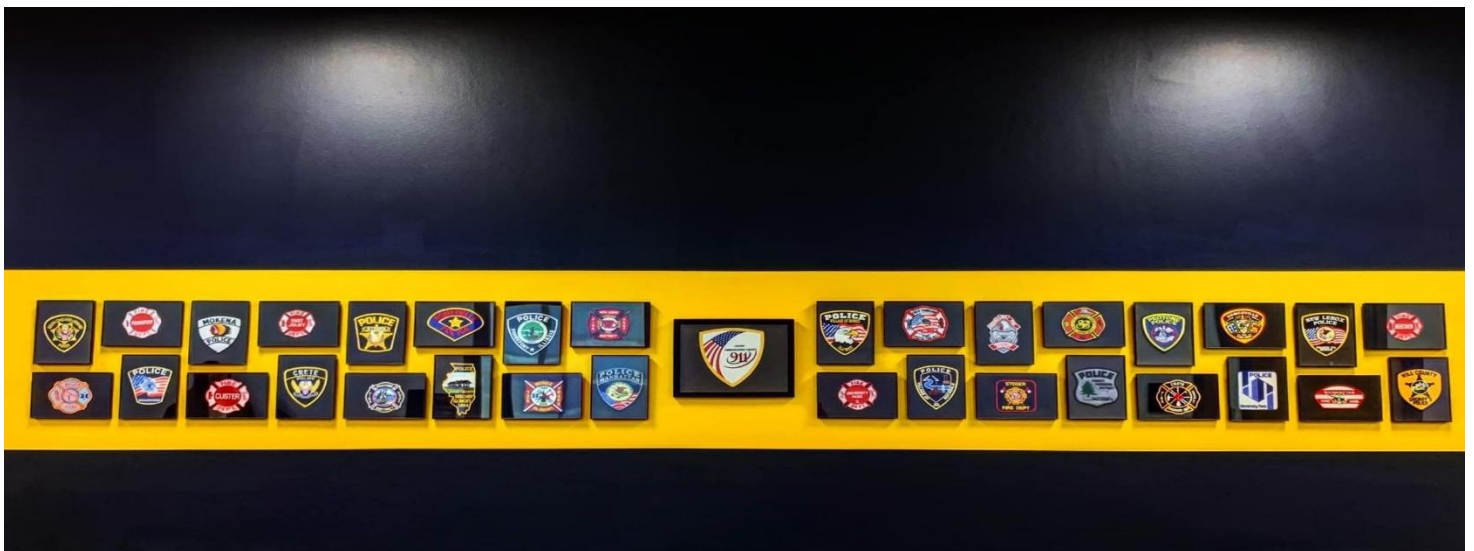




The success of our operations in the field begins long before our apparatus leave the station. It starts with the calm, steady, and professional voices answering the call for help. Their ability to gather critical information, prioritize emergencies, provide lifesaving instructions, and coordinate resources with precision is the foundation upon which every effective response is built.

Without the skill, dedication, and composure of your telecommunicators, the efforts of our firefighters and paramedics simply would not be possible. They are the first link in the chain of survival and the unseen professionals who ensure our crews arrive informed, prepared, and positioned for success.

We recognize that their work is demanding and often done without public recognition. Their professionalism, attention to detail, and unwavering commitment to serving our communities do not go unnoticed. The partnership between our agencies continues to strengthen because of the leadership, teamwork, and shared mission to protect and serve. We are proud to work alongside such a dedicated team and look forward to continuing our strong partnership in the year ahead.



Foreseeable Challenges in the Future

Regional Hospital Service Reductions & EMS System Impact

Over the past several years, the regional healthcare system has undergone significant service reductions and facility closures, directly impacting EMS transport patterns, ambulance availability, and overall system capacity throughout our service area.

Recent Hospital Closures and Service Reductions:

- St. James Hospital – Closed in 2018
- MetroSouth Medical Center – Closed in 2019
- St. Mary's Hospital (Kankakee) – Obstetrics Department closure and Level II Trauma designation removed in 2025
- Morris Hospital & Healthcare Centers – Level II Trauma designation removed in 2025

In addition, we are closely monitoring the planned 2027 transition of Franciscan Health Dyer from a full-service hospital with a 24-hour emergency department to a dedicated behavioral health facility.

Currently, approximately 68% of Beecher Fire Protection District ambulance transports are directed to Franciscan Dyer. The next closest receiving facility, Franciscan Health Olympia Fields, frequently operates at or near capacity. This has resulted in increased ambulance diversion, hallway bed placements, and extended patient transfer times, often requiring transport to more distant facilities.

The anticipated loss of a primary receiving hospital will significantly alter our operational model and response readiness.

Current Average Transport & Call Times

Transport to Franciscan Dyer

- Average transport time (scene to hospital, normal conditions): 19 minutes, 23 seconds
- Total call time (dispatch to unit back in district and available): 1 hour, 50 minutes, 29 seconds

Transport to Riverside Medical Center

- Average transport time (scene to hospital, normal conditions): 34 minutes, 58 seconds
- Total call time (dispatch to unit back in district and available): 2 hours, 24 minutes, 29 seconds

Longer transport distances significantly increase total unit commitment time. When ambulances are committed for extended periods, the District may temporarily lose up to 50% of its available on-duty staffing capacity, reducing immediate availability for secondary or concurrent emergencies.

This creates operational strain not only within Beecher, but also across neighboring jurisdictions that are experiencing similar transport delays and hospital capacity challenges. As a result, reliance on mutual aid becomes less predictable and more complex.

If these transport time increases become sustained, the District will need to strategically evaluate staffing levels, deployment models, system demand, and long-term capital planning to ensure continued service reliability and community protection.

Rail Infrastructure & Transportation Risks

The Beecher Fire Protection District is traversed by two parallel mainline rail corridors operated by Union Pacific Railroad and utilized by multiple freight carriers, including CSX Transportation. These heavily traveled rail lines bisect the Fire District geographically, effectively dividing the community into eastern and western response areas.

Within our Fire District boundaries, there are eight railroad crossings, seven of which are at-grade crossings and one that serves as a grade-separated underpass. This infrastructure configuration presents ongoing operational challenges that must be accounted for in staffing, deployment, and long-term planning.



Operational & Risk Considerations

1. High-Hazard Materials Transport Potential

The corridor carries mixed freight, including tank cars that may transport hazardous materials. While rail remains statistically safe, a derailment or hazardous materials release would present a

complex, resource-intensive incident requiring regional coordination, specialized training, and potential large-scale evacuation.

2. Extended Train Blockages

Freight trains routinely block one or more of the seven at-grade crossings. During these events:

- Response units may be forced to reroute to the single underpass at Corning Road.
- Travel times may increase depending on the location of the incident.
- Simultaneous calls on opposite sides of the tracks may stretch available resources.
- Ambulance transport routes may be altered, extending hospital turnaround times.

This rail corridor essentially splits the District in half operationally. When crossings are blocked, the two sides of the community function almost as separate service zones.

3. Mass Casualty Incident (MCI) Risk

Rail-related incidents have the potential to generate:

- Multi-patient trauma events
- Hazardous material exposure incidents
- Secondary fires or structural impacts
- Extended operational periods requiring MABAS activation

The District maintains preparedness for such events through training, tabletop exercises, and regional mutual aid planning.

4. Complex Railroad Coordination

Rail incidents require immediate coordination with railroad dispatch, rail police, hazardous materials response teams, and regional emergency management agencies. Establishing secure access, ensuring track shutdown confirmation, and managing unified command adds additional layers of complexity compared to routine emergencies.

Operational Readiness

To address these risks, the Beecher Fire Protection District continues to prioritize:

- Rail-specific incident command training
- Hazardous materials operations and technician-level preparedness
- Mutual aid coordination
- Pre-incident planning of crossings and access points
- Data tracking of response delays related to train blockages

The rail corridor remains both an economic asset to the region and a defined risk profile within our Community Risk Assessment.

Identified Infrastructure Needs – Second Station Consideration

The 2022 Community Risk Assessment and Standards of Cover Study identified the long-term need for a second fire station within the District. This recommendation was based on projected call volume growth, development patterns, travel time analysis, and response reliability modeling.

Since 2015, the District has experienced significant increases in call volume, and growth trends indicate continued development in residential and commercial sectors. When combined with:

- Geographic division caused by the rail corridor
- Increasing EMS demand
- Hospital transport time impacts
- Expanded service expectations

The operational strain on a single-station deployment model becomes more pronounced.

Strategic Rationale for a Second Station

A future second station would:

- Reduce travel times to underserved or growth areas
- Improve reliability during simultaneous incidents
- Offset response delays caused by rail blockages
- Strengthen EMS system resiliency
- NFPA compliance (travel and response times)
- Support long-term staffing sustainability

The presence of two parallel rail lines effectively creates a scenario where response reliability can be compromised by infrastructure outside the Fire District's control. A second station strategically located on the opposite side of the corridor would significantly mitigate this risk.

Forward-Looking Planning

While no immediate construction is planned, the District continues to monitor:

- Development density and building permits
- Response time performance benchmarks

- Crossing blockage frequency
- EMS unit hour utilization
- Mutual aid dependency trends

The recommendation for a second station remains a strategic planning priority and will be revisited as growth, infrastructure demands, and funding opportunities evolve.

Rising Costs of Fire Apparatus

Impact on the Beecher Fire Protection District

Like fire departments across the nation, the Beecher Fire Protection District (BFPD) is seeing unprecedented increases in the cost of fire apparatus. As a combination department operating 12 frontline and reserve vehicles while responding to 1,165 emergency incidents in 2025, maintaining a reliable and modern fleet is critical to ensuring uninterrupted service to our residents.

Current Market Conditions

- Modern custom fire engines now frequently exceed \$1 million per unit.
- Aerial ladder apparatus can approach or surpass \$2 million, depending on specifications and safety features.
- Persistent volatility in steel, aluminum, electronic components, and labor costs continues to drive sustained manufacturer price increases.
- Federal safety and emissions standards, along with increasingly sophisticated onboard technology, have further increased apparatus complexity and cost.

For a district the size of the BFPD, even a single major apparatus purchase represents a significant percentage of the annual capital budget.

Operational & Financial Impacts on BFPD

1. Capital Budget Pressure

- Maintaining our established replacement schedule has become increasingly challenging under PTELL limitations and capped revenue growth.
- As a combination department with both full-time and part-time staffing, our apparatus must remain dependable and immediately deployable, increasing maintenance and lifecycle demands.
- Traditional 15–20 year replacement benchmarks are becoming more difficult to sustain without advanced planning and disciplined capital reserves.
- Extending apparatus life beyond recommended best-practice standards increases maintenance costs and potential downtime risk.

For the BFPD, apparatus reliability is not optional — it directly impacts response effectiveness, essential service delivery, and firefighter safety.

2. Extended Lead Times

- Apparatus delivery timelines that once averaged approximately 12–18 months now commonly extend 36–48 months or longer.
- Long-range planning must now occur 5–10 years in advance, requiring stable forecasting and multi-year capital projections.
- Planning must remain resilient through election cycles, fluctuating CPI adjustments, and unexpected capital expenditures — such as the recent emergency fire station structural repairs.

The extended lead times also limit flexibility; once an order is placed, design changes or specification adjustments become costly and difficult.

3. Program & Infrastructure Tradeoffs

- A larger portion of the Fire District’s capital allocation must now be dedicated to apparatus replacement planning.
- Simultaneous inflationary pressures on fuel, maintenance, insurance, utilities, and facility upkeep compound fiscal strain.
- The Fire District may be forced to:
 - Defer facility improvements
 - Postpone training infrastructure upgrades
 - Extend the service life of existing vehicles
 - Seek alternative funding sources, grants, or revenue adjustments to maintain fleet sustainability

Balancing apparatus replacement with staffing, training, community risk reduction initiatives, and infrastructure maintenance requires deliberate and strategic decision-making.

Long-Term Strategic Considerations

The Beecher Fire Protection District remains committed to proactive capital planning, disciplined reserve funding, and transparent communication with the Board of Trustees and our residents. However, the national apparatus market conditions present a structural challenge for combination and suburban fire districts operating within statutory revenue limitations.

Sustaining a modern, safe, and capable fleet will require continued long-range forecasting, fiscal prudence, and community support.

Staffing Model Challenges

Like many combination fire departments across Illinois and the nation, the Beecher Fire Protection District continues to experience measurable challenges in recruiting and retaining qualified part-time personnel. As a primarily combination department serving a growing and increasingly complex response area, staffing reliability remains one of our most critical operational priorities.

The staffing model of the BFPD is fundamentally structured around its full-time workforce, which includes both district-employed and contract-employed personnel. This core staffing group provides daily leadership, operational continuity, administrative oversight, EMS transport capability, and emergency response stability. The investment in full-time staffing reflects the District's long-term commitment to reliability, accountability, and professional service delivery.

Within this framework, the assignment of three part-time Firefighter/Paramedics/EMTs per day plays a vital and strategic role in operational readiness and overall response success. These positions are not supplemental in nature — they are an essential component of the deployment model that ensures apparatus can respond appropriately staffed and in compliance with safety standards. This staffing model requires approximately 90 part-time shifts per month, supported by a roster of 38 part-time firefighters. While this staffing pool has historically provided flexibility, recent workforce trends have significantly impacted availability.

Post-pandemic employment shifts, expanded full-time work commitments, increased educational demands, and regional competition for certified firefighter/paramedics have resulted in higher call-off frequency and reduced shift coverage. These challenges are not unique to Beecher; however, they have a direct and tangible impact on our ability to consistently meet operational benchmarks.

These part-time positions are essential to maintaining:

- Minimum daily staffing standards necessary for safe fireground and EMS operations
- Reliable emergency response times throughout the District
- Operational safety and compliance with two-in/two-out and other OSHA safety requirements
- NFPA performance benchmarks

As emergency call volume continues to trend upward and regional hospital transport times increase, sustained instability within the part-time staffing model may require a long-term structural evaluation of the Fire District's workforce configuration. This evaluation could include expanded full-time staffing, revised deployment models, or alternative scheduling strategies to

ensure the Beecher Fire Protection District remains positioned to provide consistent, safe, and high-quality emergency services to our residents.

Maintaining operational readiness is not optional — it is foundational to the trust our community places in us.

