

2025

Columbus Fire and EMS
Community Risk Assessment/
Standards of Cover



Thursday, May 28, 2026

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INTRODUCTION

This document serves as the Columbus Fire and Emergency Medical Services (CFEMS) Standard of Cover (SOC) Document. The SOC is one of four key elements of the Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI) accreditation process. The SOC, as defined by the CFAI, “...are those written procedures that determine the distribution and concentration of fixed and mobile resources of an organization.”

The main purpose of creating and maintaining an SOC is to place a focus on deployment and concentration of resources that ultimately assist the department in ensuring a safe and effective response force for fire suppression, emergency medical service, hazardous materials, technical rescue, and specialty response situations.

The SOC defines CFEMS’ level of service and describes the roles and responsibilities of each service, as well as deployment strategies and operational elements to maintain the stated level of service. In addition, the document contains data elements along with recommendations to enhance the department’s performance. The primary goals of the department are to improve service delivery and increase safety for the citizens of Columbus, Georgia.

One of the challenges within the fire service is keeping pace with an increasing demand for its services. The SOC provides department management with a process to constantly measure and evaluate the level and quality of service delivered to the community. It also provides quantitative data to justify financial requests made to the Columbus Consolidated Government Council.

CFEMS utilizes the SOC and accreditation process to identify shortcomings and integrate the plan to address these shortcomings into the Department’s short-term strategic plan.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of the Standards of Cover (SOC) is to define and measure the appropriate level of service based on a comprehensive study of the department's historical performance, deployment strategies, and community risk factors to determine the capability of its response system. This process uses a systems approach to evaluate data in the records management system and set standards based on that data. The department will then be able to match community needs (risks and expectations) with appropriate levels of service to operate in a safe, efficient, and effective manner.

This document describes the Columbus Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services' service area, the risks that must be protected and reduced within the community, our capabilities, and our performance objectives and measures. This information will allow the department to identify risks in the community, analyze and establish levels of response service to respond to those risks, and evaluate the department's performance. Benchmark response times have been established that the department strives to meet. These response time goals will contribute to our commitment to continually improving how we deliver our services.

The department has established baseline and benchmark performance data for response categories for the urban setting. The efficient geographic dispersion and placement of resources near service delivery points will lead to maximum effectiveness when responding to the greatest number and types of risk.

In conclusion, this Standards of Cover is a dynamic document that reflects the changing needs of the Columbus Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services and serves as a mechanism for constantly seeking opportunities for improvement. It is a key element in our plan to reduce risk to our residents and visitors. We are committed to providing the most effective services in a fiscally responsible manner and to continually evaluating our performance in the constant pursuit of improvement.

SECTION I: JURISDICTION PROFILE

The lure of making money from cotton and the waterpower of the Chattahoochee River shaped the Muscogee County seat of Columbus for more than a century after the Georgia legislature created the city in 1828. Located at the head of river navigation, Columbus first boomed as a cotton-trading center. Entrepreneurs quickly harnessed the river's power, and Columbus became one of the South's earliest—and remained one of its largest—mill towns. The creation of neighboring Camp Benning (later Fort Benning) in 1918 added another dimension to the city. By the 1960s, Columbus began shedding the image of a mill and military town, as its business and civic leaders diversified the economy, modernized its government, and launched a series of cultural initiatives. By 2000, as the city rediscovered its picturesque river, private and public funding revitalized the original downtown into a premier venue and educational center for the fine and performing arts.

Antebellum Years

In 1828, the state legislature, realizing the economic potential of a location on the Chattahoochee River at the fall line, planned the city and auctioned its lots. The author Washington Irving's contemporary writing about explorer Christopher Columbus probably influenced the naming. The original town consisted of a rectangle, thirteen blocks north to south (from the river to Seventeenth Street) and nine blocks east to west (from the river to Sixth Avenue), nestled against the irregular bank of the river on the west and south. A four-block commons area or green space surrounded it on the north, east, and south.

The subsequent availability of land reinforced the obsession with making money from cotton, but only a few realized the dream of becoming wealthy planters. Columbus warehouses and merchants served planters and farmers within a fifty-mile radius. Initially, the river linked the city's economy via Apalachicola, Florida, to the world cotton market, primarily to Liverpool, England.

The river's commercial advantage diminished in the 1850s with the arrival of railroads (via branch lines from Fort Valley and from Opelika, Alabama). Steamboats still plied the Chattahoochee, but rails began connecting Columbus with larger markets. The emerging rail center of Atlanta eclipsed Columbus as the western metropolis of Georgia.

The Chattahoochee River's waterpower made Columbus a manufacturing center. The river powered gristmills and sawmills as early as 1828, and a textile mill north of town by 1838. The city of Columbus, which controlled the greatest potential waterpower site in the South, never spent any public money developing this resource. Rather than building a canal to deliver waterpower to various locations within the city (as Augusta did), Columbus simply sold the rights to dam the river and restricted the use of the resulting power to a two-block area along the

Chattahoochee (between present-day Twelfth and Fourteenth streets). That decision limited the city's early industrial development. Even so, by the 1850s, five water-powered mills produced textiles, flour, and sawn lumber, and at other locations, fourteen smaller companies produced a variety of goods. In 1853, the landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted, an indefatigable traveler and astute observer, declared Columbus the largest manufacturing city south of Richmond, Virginia.

Factories tripled their output and shifted to war-related products. Storekeepers boarded up their windows and began making drums, fifes, India rubber cloth, and sewing tents and uniforms. The Iron Works produced steam engines for ships, while the Navy Yard built the ironclad *Muscogee*. The need for workers pushed the city's population from 10,000 to 15,000.

Swift's factory began on one waterpower lot (1868 and 1880) and then expanded north of Fourteenth Street, with new mills appearing in 1887, 1904, 1916, 1926, and 1950. Young's and Swift's mills became the foundations of two dynasties. As the city's economy expanded, industries moved into the remaining land on the East Commons, and middle-class suburbs grew in the Wynnton area, which was first served by streetcars and then by automobiles.

Mayor L. H. Chappell (1897-1907 and 1911-13) modernized the city. During the Spanish-American War (1898), he lured a military training camp to town, paved and curbed downtown streets, built sewers and steel bridges, planted trees, and created the modern municipal water works, which transformed the muddy Chattahoochee into drinking water.

In September 1918, the U.S. War Department created Camp Benning, located on Macon Road near what is now the public library. Extensive lobbying efforts resulted in a permanent camp, Fort Benning, in 1922. For almost twenty years, it functioned primarily as a training center for infantry officers. During World War II (1941-45), the post assumed a more expanded mission.

In 1919, Ernest Woodruff, a Columbus native and Atlanta businessman, engineered the purchase of Coca-Cola from the Candler family for \$25 million. W. C. Bradley, who was chair of the board of Coca-Cola for twenty-seven years, served as Woodruff's partner, selling stock to friends and acquaintances, primarily in the Chattahoochee Valley. That investment still pays significant dividends to the community.

By 1927, the city had entered the Great Depression as the demand for cotton textiles plummeted. In the 1930s, several Columbus mills borrowed money from New York banks to continue running. Construction at Fort Benning also provided much-needed jobs. By 1940, Fort Benning was brimming with activity. Meanwhile, the Greater Columbus Committee outlined new goals. These resulted in consolidating the county and city schools in 1949 and establishing Columbus College (later Columbus State University) in a closed mill in 1958. Until that

time, Columbus was the largest southern city without a college. In 1961, the Columbus Area Vocational-Technical School (later Columbus Technical College) was founded.

By the 1970s, the Columbus Storefront economy had changed. Local businessmen stopped excluding new industries that might raise local wages and began seeking new manufacturers, such as Dolly Madison Bakery (1970) and Pratt and Whitney (1984), which made jet engine parts. But local initiative created the most dynamic enterprises—Aflac Insurance, Synovus Financial Corporation, and Total System Services.

According to the 2010 U.S. census, the population of Columbus is 189,885, the third-largest city in the state. By 2003, Columbus had renewed its appreciation for the Chattahoochee River. Under a federal court order to build a combined sewer-overflow system, the Columbus Water Works began developing the Riverwalk, which is to extend for twenty miles, from Fort Benning, south of town, to Lake Oliver to the north. Once the reason for the city's establishment, the Chattahoochee River will once again become the most distinctive feature of the city.

Municipal projects have included construction of a softball complex, which hosted the 1996 Olympics softball competition; construction of the Chattahoochee River Walk; construction of the National Civil War Naval Museum at Port Columbus; construction of the Coca-Cola Space Science Center; the expansion of the Columbus Museum, and road improvements to include a new downtown bridge crossing the Chattahoochee River to Phenix City. During the late 1990s, commercial activity expanded north of downtown along the I-185 corridor.

During the 2000s, expansion and historic preservation continued throughout the city. South Commons has been revitalized. This area combines the 1996 Olympic softball competition complex, A. J. McClung Memorial Stadium, Golden Park, the Columbus Civic Center, and the Jonathan Hatcher Skateboard Park.



The National Infantry Museum and Soldier Center, which opened in 2009, stands just outside the gates of Fort Benning. The facility includes a museum that houses thousands of unique artifacts relating to the U.S. Infantry's role in shaping the nation's history. These artifacts were formerly housed in the base's National Infantry Museum, which received a Governor's Award in the Humanities in 1991.

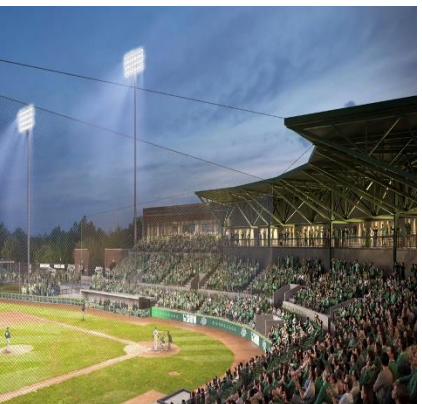


The River Center for the Performing Arts, which opened in 2002, houses Columbus State University's music department and is the city's venue for fine and performing arts. In 2002, Columbus State's art and drama departments moved to downtown locations. Such initiatives have provided Columbus with a cultural niche and with vibrant and modern architecture mixed among older brick facades.



The "Ready to Raft 2012" campaign is a project that created an estimated 700 new jobs and is projected to bring in \$42 million annually to the Columbus area. The project resulted in the longest urban whitewater rafting venue in the world. This venue, in addition to other outdoor and non-outdoor tourist attractions, led to 2.34 million visitors coming to Columbus during the fiscal year 2022, as well as \$304 million dollars in visitor spending according to the Columbus Convention and Visitors Bureau. The Blue Heron zip line was

opened in July 2014 and consists of a triple-zip line across the Chattahoochee River, a treetop aerial course consisting of 10 obstacles, and 400 ft. treetop triple-zip lines along the banks of the Chattahoochee River. The zip lines run from Columbus, Georgia, to Phenix City, Alabama, and back across from Phenix City, Alabama, to Columbus, Georgia.



In May 2023, Columbus leadership proposed to bring a Minor League Baseball team to the city, marking a significant step forward in enhancing local sports and economic development. Following this support, the city approved a \$50 million renovation of Synovus Park, ensuring the stadium met official Minor League standards. By January 2024, the vision became a reality when the Mississippi Braves announced their relocation to Columbus, Georgia, with plans to begin play in the 2025 season. The team officially unveiled its name, the Clingstones, on September 6, 2024. Paying homage to the region's rich

agricultural heritage through the well-known peach variety. Continuing to build excitement, the organization introduced its mascot, Fuzzy, in November 2024, further establishing the team's identity and connection with the community.

LOCATION

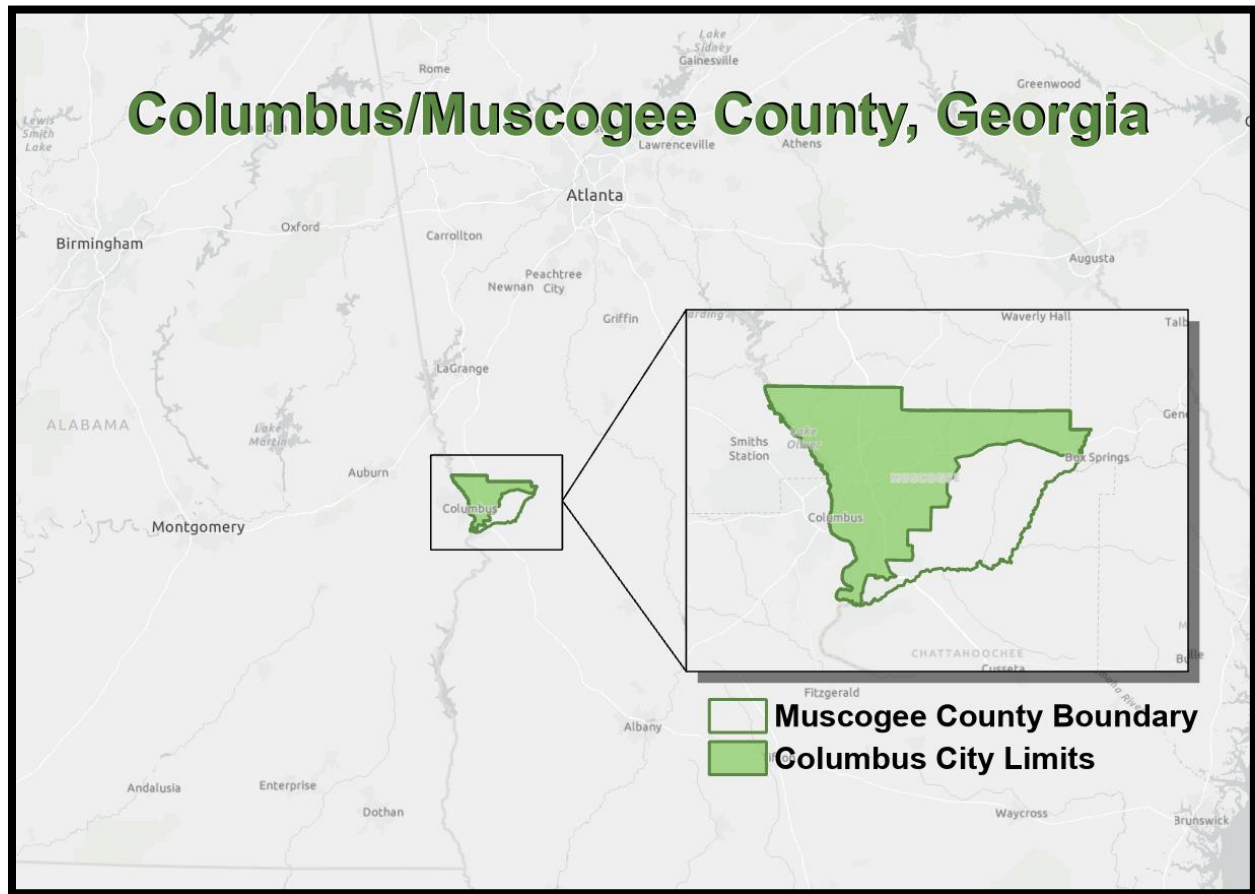


Figure 1.1 Map: Service Area Location

Interstate 185 runs east of the city, with access from exits 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 12, and 14 to the city. Interstate 185 runs from Ft Benning north for 47 miles to Interstate 85. U.S. Route 27, U.S. Route 280, and Georgia State Road 520 (known as South Georgia Parkway) all meet in the interior of the city. U.S Route 80 runs north of the city, locally known as J.R. Allen Parkway; Alternate U.S. Route 27 and Georgia State Route 85 run northeast from the city, locally known as Bill Heard Expressway.

The corporate boundaries of Muscogee County encompass 220 square miles, of which 216.3 square miles (560 km²) is land and 4.7 square miles (12 km²) (2.14%) is water. This includes approximately 3000 acres acquired in a land swap completed in 2001 between Fort Benning, Chattahoochee County, and the City of Columbus. The 3000 acres (4.6 square miles) acquired in the land swap will be utilized for industrial development and recreational use. The addition of this property to the jurisdictional area will increase the need for fire protection services in the future. See Figure 1.1 for the city location. The city is located at: 32°29'23"N 84°56'26"W 32.489608°N 84.940422°W.

CLIMATE

Daytime summer temperatures often reach highs in the mid-90s, and low temperatures in the winter average in the upper 30s. Columbus is often considered a dividing line or "natural snowline" of the southeastern United States with areas north of the city receiving snowfall annually, with areas to the south typically not receiving snowfall every year or at all. Columbus, Georgia, gets 48 inches of rain per year. The US average is 39. Snowfall is 0 inches. The average US city gets 26 inches of snow per year. The number of days with any measurable precipitation is 71. Columbus, GA is a High-Risk area for tornados. According to records, the largest tornado in the Columbus area was an F3 in 1954 that caused seven injuries and zero deaths. Columbus has a higher tornado index level than the state or nation (Figure 1.2 Tornado Index). The higher the level, the higher the chance of a tornado event. Columbus has a humid subtropical climate according to the Koppen climate classification system.

How to

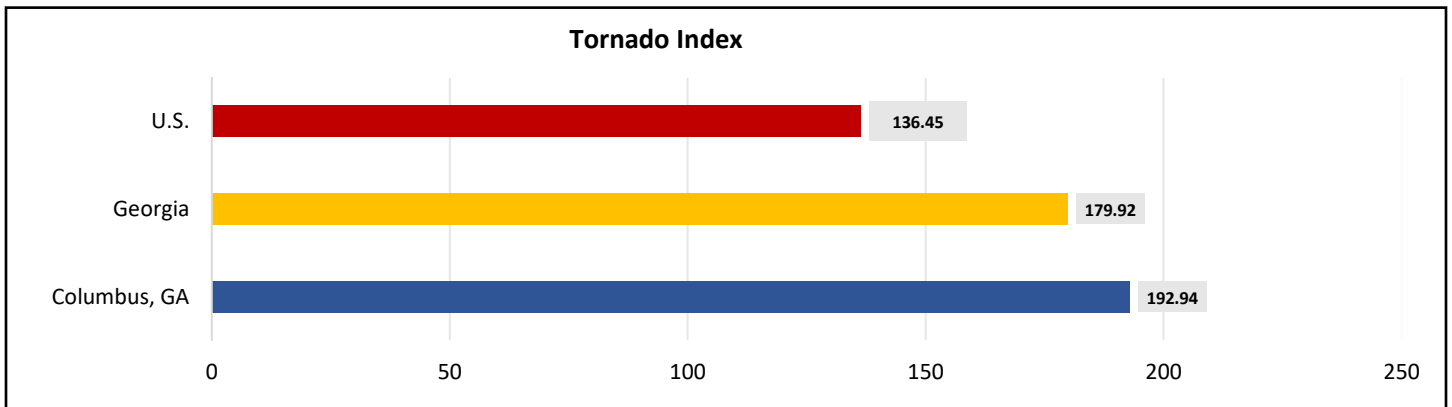


Figure 1.2 Chart: Tornado Index

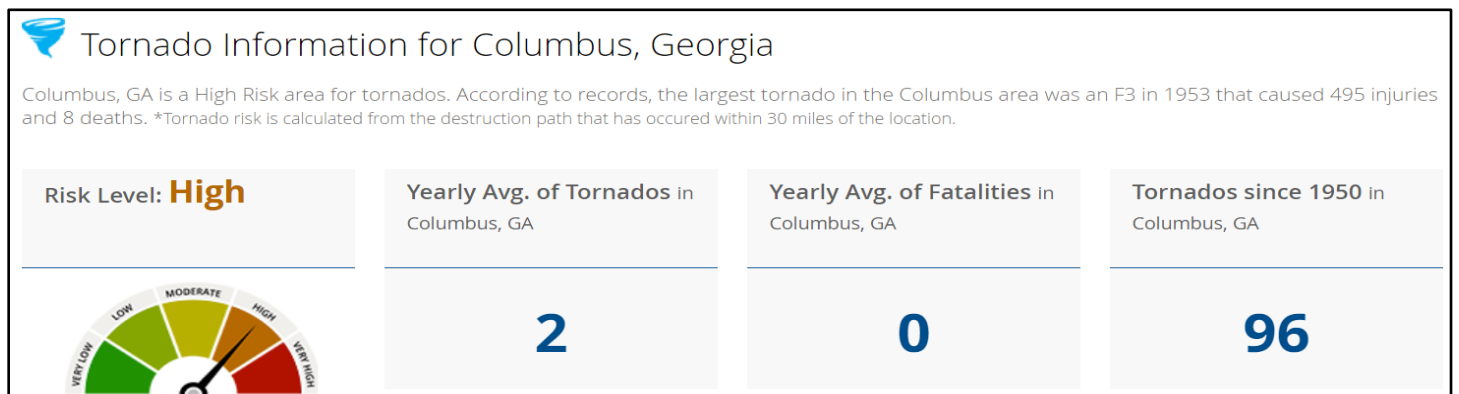
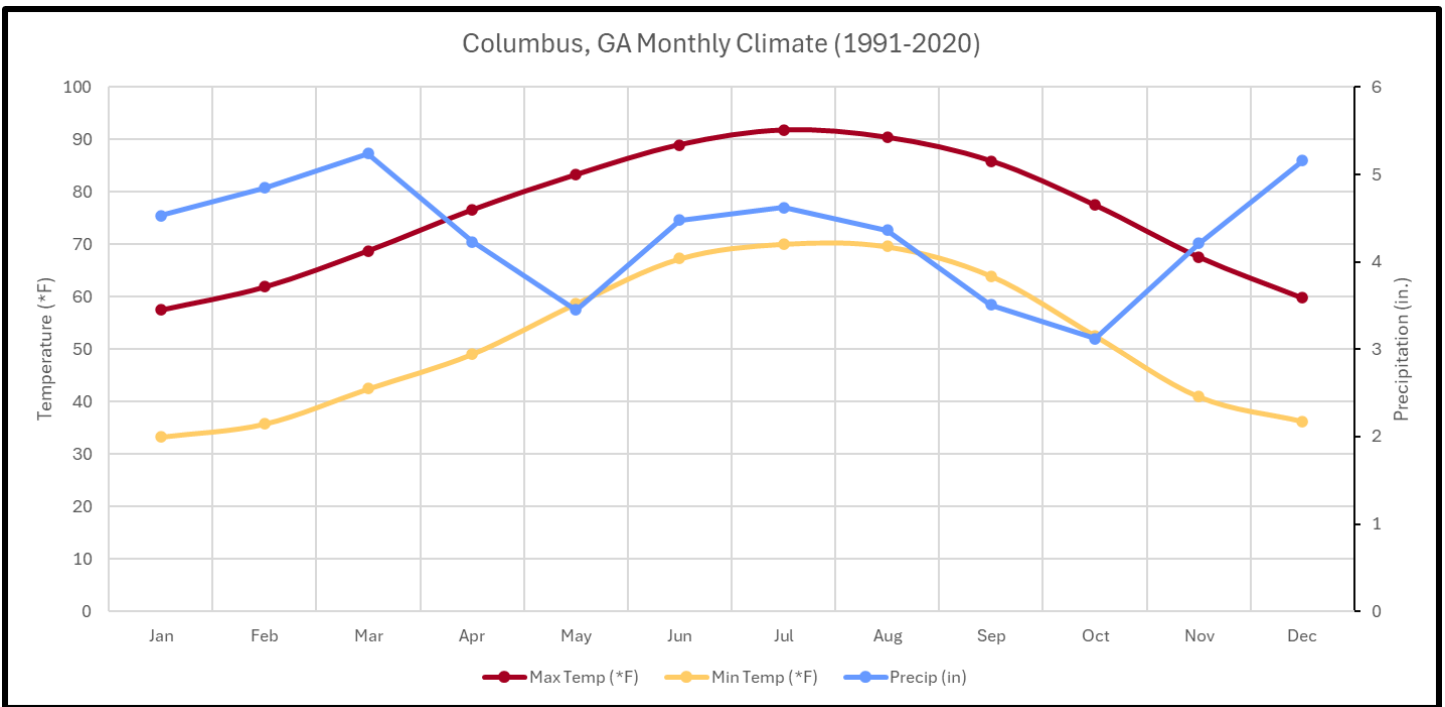


Figure 1.3 Chart: Climate Normals Quick Access (Source: NOAA NCEI U.S. 2020)



*Highest Avg Temp: July (91.8F)

* Highest Precipitation: March (5.24in.)

POPULATION

The 2020 U.S. Census population for Columbus is 206,922, up from 189,885 in the 2010 Census. The population density was 877.5 people per square mile. There were 91,617 housing units at an average density of 453.5 per square mile (136.0/km²). The racial makeup of the city per the 2020 census was 45.2% White, 48% African American, 2.8% Asian, 0.5% Native American, 0.2% Pacific Islander, and 3.2% from other races. Hispanics or Latinos of any race were 7.7% of the population. (Figure 1.5 Chart: Demographic (2020) Census)

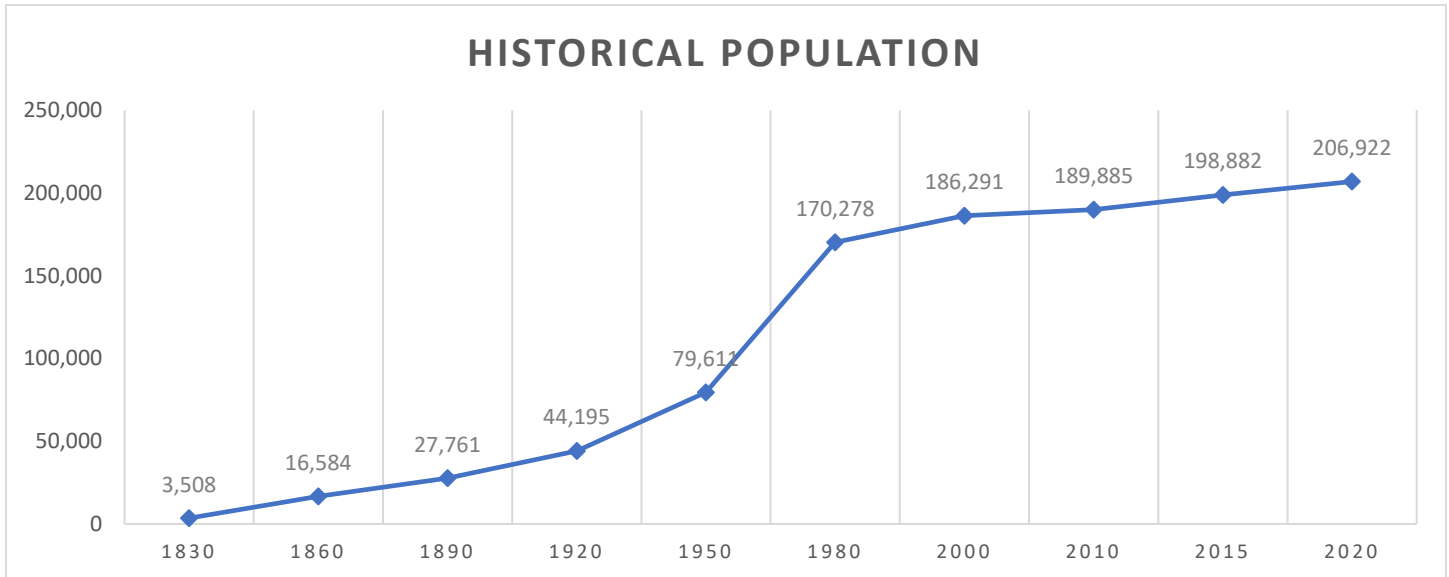


Figure 1.4 Chart: Historical Population

	Year 2010	Year 2024	% Variance
Under 18 Years	29.5%	26.9%	-2.6%
18 to 64	58.7%	57.4%	-1.3%
65 and over	11.8%	15.9%	+4.10%
Total	190,417	201,830	+11,413

Figure 1.5 Chart: Demographic Census

In the city, the population is diverse with 26.9% under the age of 19, 57.4% from 19 to 64, and 15.9% who were 65 years of age or older. The median age was 34.4 years. The population by gender is females 51.2% and males 48.8%. The median household income for Columbus in 2020 was \$47,418, as compared to \$61,224 for Georgia. As compared to the 2010 Census, the median income has increased 22%. Poverty rates for Columbus (28.9% =/<18 years, >18 years 32.4%.

Figure 1.6 Map: Census 2020 Population Density

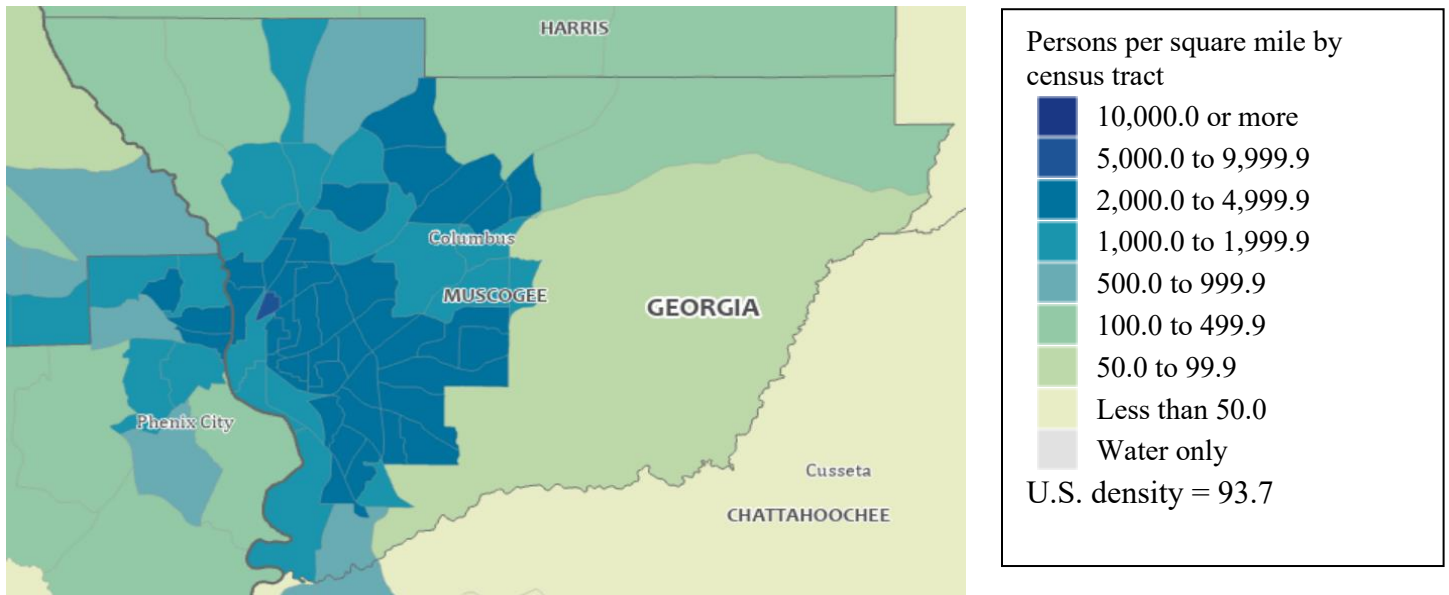
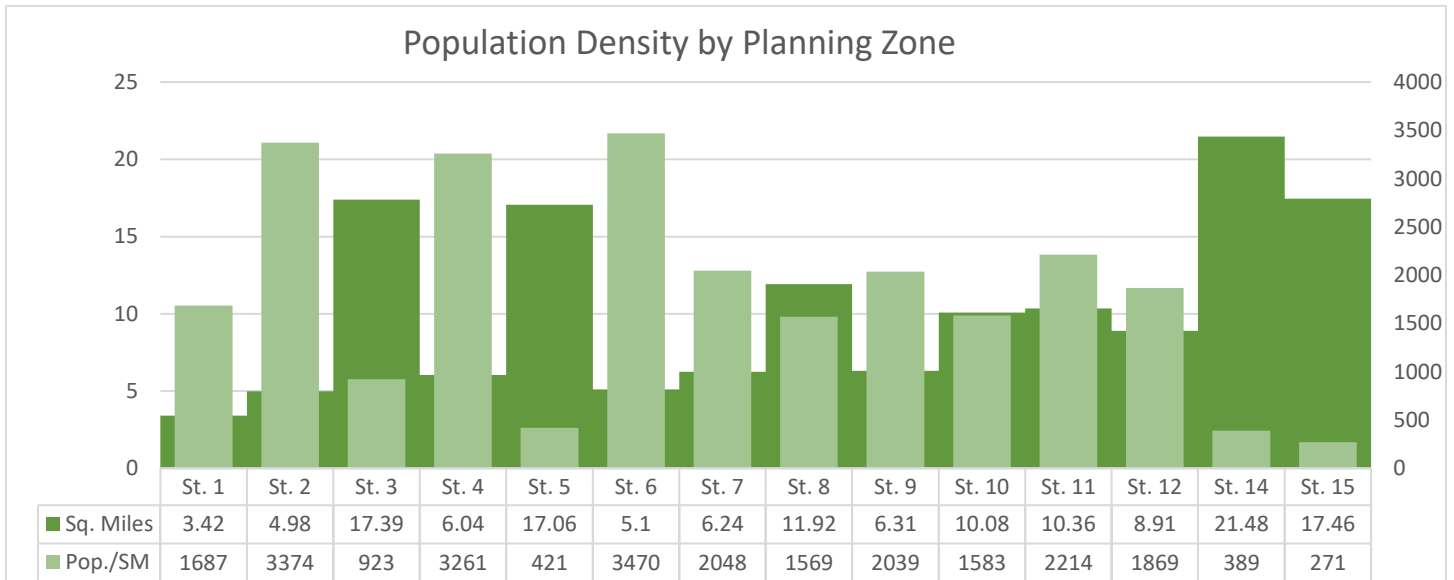


Figure 1.7 Chart: Population Density per Station Territory



BUSINESS AND RECREATION

The Columbus, GA-AL Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), as defined by the United States Census Bureau, is an area consisting of six counties in Georgia and one county in Alabama, anchored by the city of Columbus. Estimates from the 2020 census indicate that the Columbus MSA population is 328,872. The Bureau of Labor Statistics shows a labor force change from 2021 to 2025 as follows: the labor force decreased from 123,895 to 123,338 (-557), and employment increased from 115,275 to 118,385 (3,110). The unemployment rate as of March 3, 2022, is 3.8. In Columbus, there are 13 major private sector employers (500 or more employees). They provide 25,890 jobs or 26% of the workforce of the Columbus, GA-AL MSA. The top 10 employers for the Columbus MSA are listed in Figure 1.8.

Figure 1.8 Chart: Principal Employers 2025

Columbus Metropolitan and Nonmetropolitan Area Employment			
Principle Employers for Columbus 2025			
Ft Benning Military Reservation (U.S. Army)	45,320	1	62.0%
Muscogee County School District	5,500	2	7.0%
Piedmont Columbus Regional	3,080	3	4.0%
Aflac	2,900	4	4.0%
Columbus Consolidated Government	2,789	5	4.0%
Kia Motors Manufacturing Georgia	2,700	6	4.0%
TSYS (Global Payments)	2,600	7	4.0%
The Pezold Companies	2,000	8	3.0%
Pratt & Whitney	1,850	9	3.0%
St. Francis-Emory Healthcare	1,735	10	2.0%
Total Top 10	70,474		

The Fall Line Trace Bike Trail (Figure 1.9) runs from the Riverwalk through Columbus West to East, for 11 miles. Extending from downtown Columbus to Psalm Road in Midland, the trail offers an eclectic cross-section of the community: busy shopping areas, business districts, a medical complex, neighborhoods, the Columbus State University campus, and other schools. A connection to the beautiful and historical 15-mile Chattahoochee Riverwalk at the trail's southern end adds to its appeal.



Figure 1.11 Map: Fall Line Trace, Bike Trail

GROWTH AND NEW CONSTRUCTION

The Chattahoochee River is the region's greatest natural resource. In a previous era, the river helped establish Greater Columbus as a textile hub. While industry has long since evolved in a different direction, the river can continue to power economic growth by serving as an amenity and focal point around which people can gather. By continuing to develop and activate its riverfront, particularly the geologically stunning stretches through the core of the region, Greater Columbus can significantly improve its ability to attract and retain talented individuals, the most important growth consideration in the modern economy. Through decades of public and private investments in Greater Columbus, the river surroundings have significantly improved, and the ability of individuals to access and enjoy the river has been enhanced. Greater Columbus now has an opportunity to go even further to differentiate its riverfront from those of other regions, which could, in turn, help to address or overcome other challenges and shortcomings, such as low growth rates, limited Interstate connectivity, and a lack of external awareness.

In 2014, a group of public, private, and nonprofit leaders from across the Greater Columbus, Georgia region came together to create a comprehensive small community and economic development strategic plan. This 10-month process culminated in the Regional Prosperity Initiative, which addressed a full range of issues influencing the region's competitiveness, prosperity, and quality of life. The Regional Prosperity Initiative brought together local leaders and the expertise of Market Street Services—a national economic, community, and workforce development consulting firm—to analyze the competitiveness of Greater Columbus as a place to live, learn, work, visit, and do business. This initiative promises to transform Greater Columbus over the next decade and beyond. The implementation of this plan is the Columbus 2025 initiative. This name better reflects the central role Columbus plays in the region's future success. This strategic plan builds on the work done through the Regional Prosperity Initiative to better understand the competitive landscape for talent and economic development. We learned that we have accomplished much in our efforts to transform Greater Columbus into a community ready for the 21st century. We also learned that we have a long way to go to achieve the Columbus 2025 goals of reducing poverty, increasing prosperity, and improving the quality of life for everyone who lives here.

Recommended strategies include:

- Develop a physical, flexible, and professionally staffed center for entrepreneurial activities in a highly visible location,
- Formalize a collaborative Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) program to ensure optimal conditions for existing firms to thrive,
- Develop a comprehensive economic development marketing program,
- Create cradle-to-career (C2C) partnerships to align education, training, business, and social services to increase talent levels in Greater Columbus,
- Collaborate across state lines to further promote activation of the Chattahoochee Riverfront through the region's core.

Columbus conducted a study of the feasibility of a high-speed rail system from Columbus to Atlanta-Hartsfield Airport. The Columbus to Atlanta corridor is deemed feasible for high-speed passenger rail service based on the data collected and the technical analysis. Moving forward, the Columbus Consolidated Government will begin working on both immediate and long-term next steps for successful implementation. These include incorporating the study into the Georgia State Rail Plan, preparing for the next planning and environmental assessments, and identifying funding/financing strategies for implementation.

The Opportunity Zone Program was adopted in 2015 to provide an incentive to businesses and developers to create jobs. The benefit to a business locating within the boundaries of a designated Opportunity Zone, where the business creates eligible net new jobs in Georgia, is the Georgia Job Tax Credit. This credit is up to \$3,500 per job created. In Muscogee County, the maximum benefit is \$2,500 per job created. New or expanding businesses are eligible to participate.

The State of Georgia is working on creating a 1,500-acre park in north Columbus along the Chattahoochee River on Lake Oliver (Figure 1.10). The master plan includes cottages, RV and tent camping, lake view platform campsites, hiking and biking trails, disc golf, green spaces for gatherings such as festivals, and more.

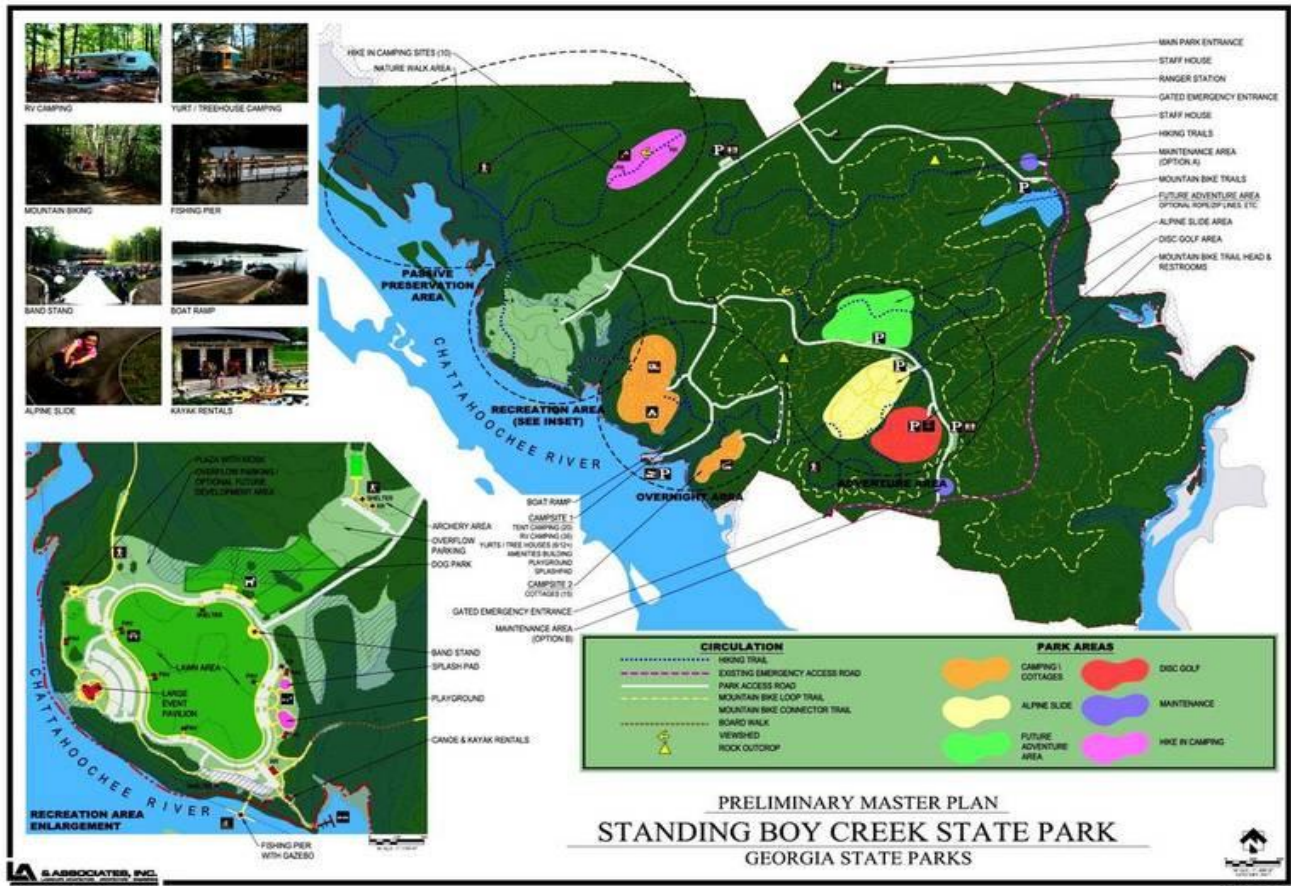


Figure 1.12 Map: Proposed State Park

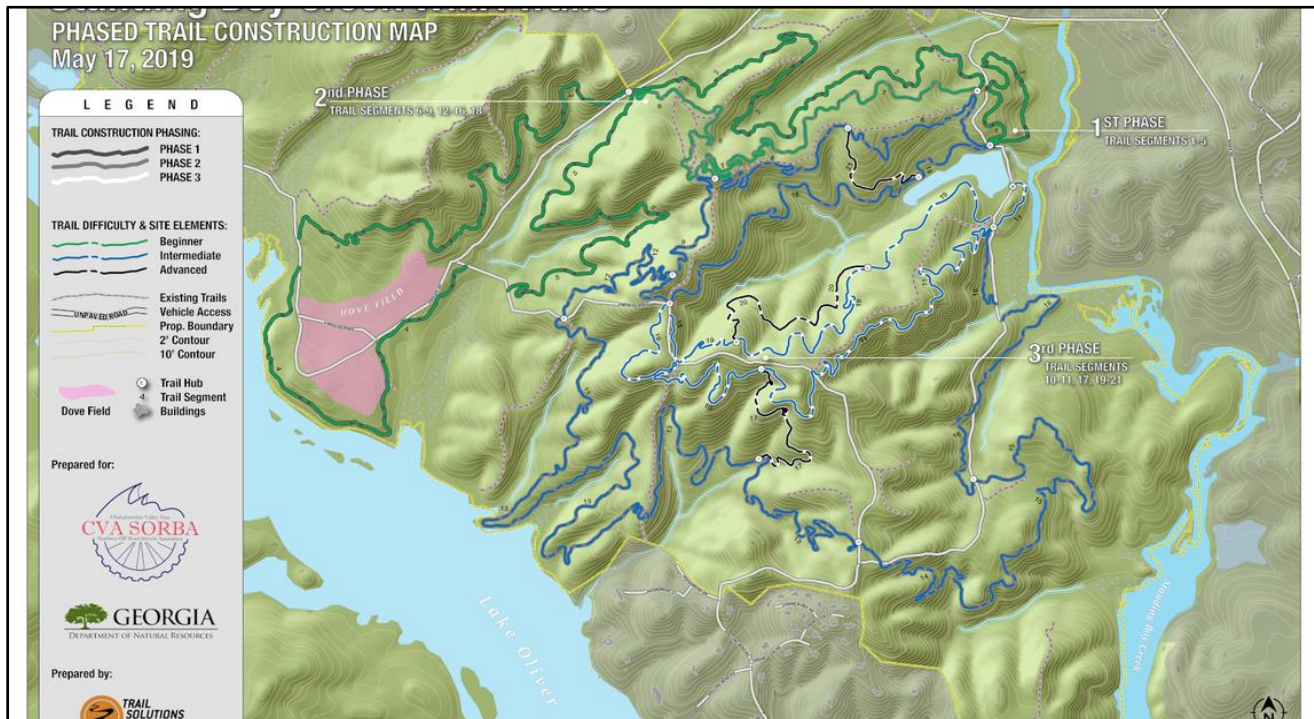


Figure 1.13 Map: Mountain Bike Trail – Standing Boy Creek State Park

GOVERNANCE

Columbus, Georgia, is a consolidated government, which establishes a single countywide government with powers and jurisdiction throughout the territorial limits of Muscogee County. The Charter of the Columbus Consolidated Government provides for a mayor-council-city manager form of government.

The mayor is aided by a city manager who, in the performance of his duties, is responsible to the mayor. The elected mayor, who also serves as the City’s Public Safety Director, is in a full-time position. The Council consists of ten (10) elected councilor positions, of which eight (8) members are elected from established council districts and two (2) are at-large, elected members.

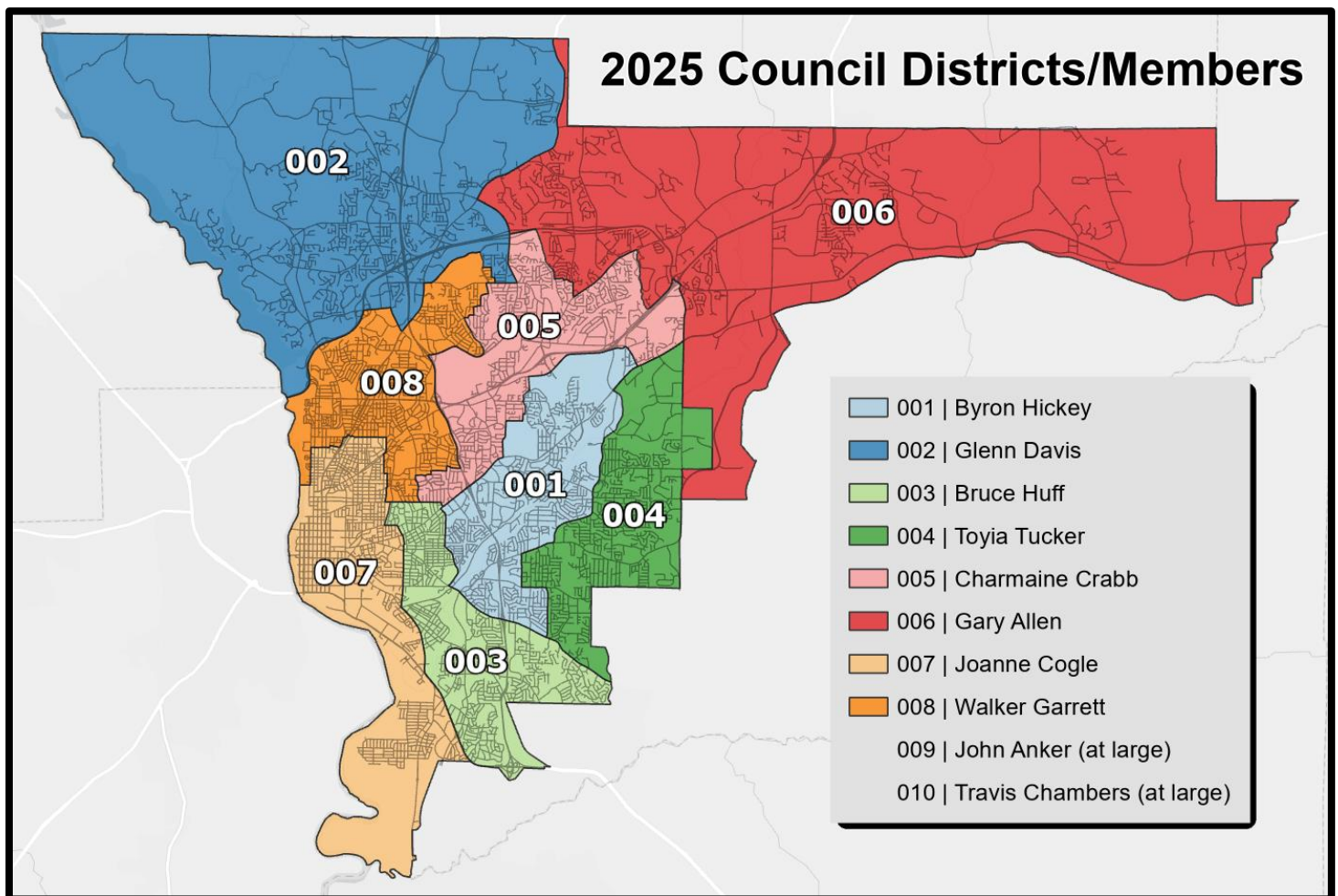


Figure 1.14 Map: Council Districts

The Consolidated Government provided by the Charter shall be known as the mayor-Council-City Manager form of government. The mayor shall be aided by City Officers, who, in the performance of their duties, shall be responsible and accountable to the mayor except as otherwise provided in the Charter, by Georgia Law, or by Rules of the State Bar of Georgia. Those people who are deemed to be City Officers are outlined in sec. 4-300 of the Charter, as amended. Section 4-300 states the City Officers of Columbus, Georgia shall consist of the City Manager, the City Attorney, the Chief of the Columbus Police Department, the Chief of the Columbus Fire and EMS Department and the Warden of the Muscogee County Prison, all of whom shall be responsible to and accountable to the Mayor of Columbus, Georgia, except as otherwise provided in the Charter, by Georgia law or by Rules of the State Bar of Georgia.

FUNDING

The Department is funded through the Columbus Consolidated Government’s General Fund Budget. The Department’s fiscal year 2026 approved budget, including OLOST, was \$41,474,635.

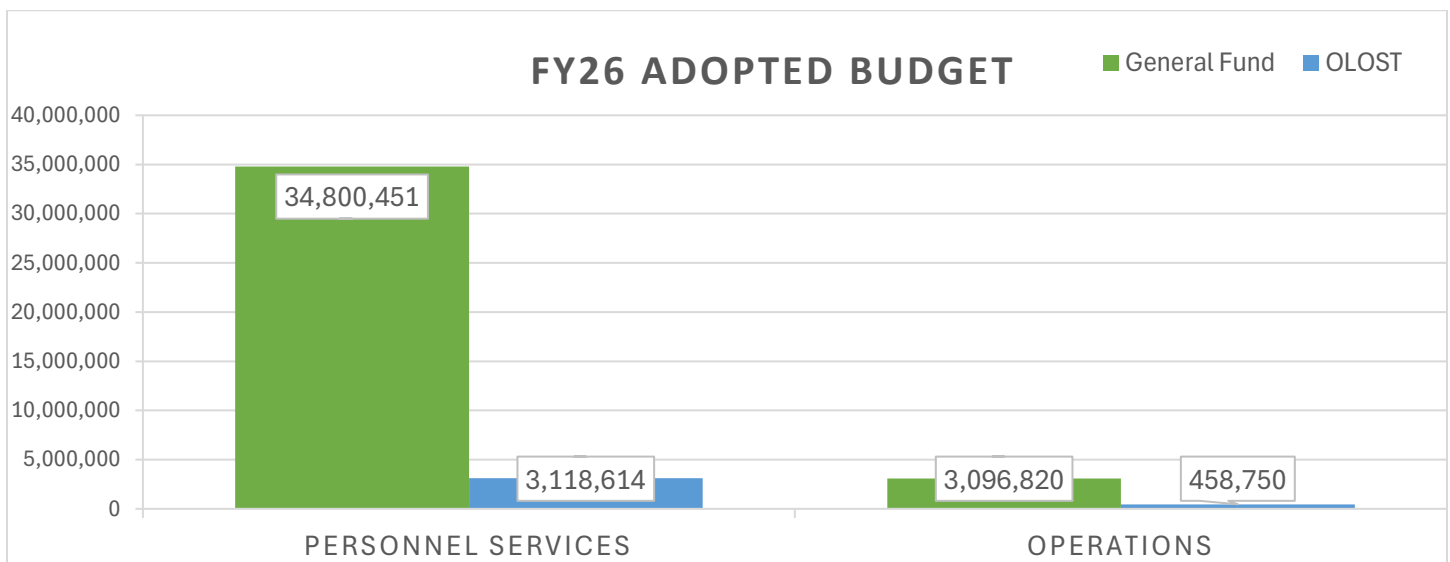


Figure 1.15 Chart: Fiscal Year 2026 Budget Breakdown

Capital Improvement Program

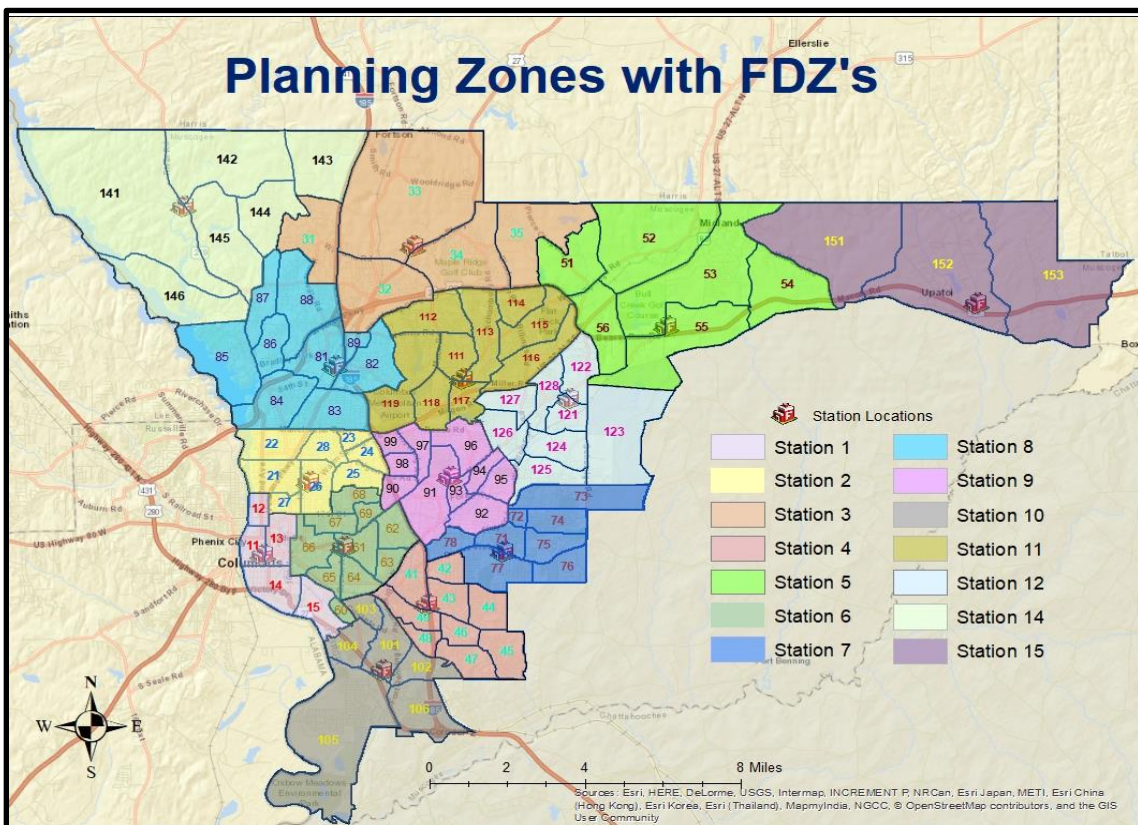
The City (Fire/EMS, 911 Dispatch, and Columbus Water Works) was re-evaluated by the Insurance Services Office (ISO) in February 2017. The results of the ISO review became available in June 2017. CFEMS received a Public Protection Classification (PPC) rating of 1/1x, improving from a PPC of 2/9. The new CFEMS Headquarters and Fire Station 5 are both scheduled to open in 2026. In addition, remodels for Fire Stations 8 and 4 will begin, marking the start of significant upgrades to our facilities.

SECTION II: DOCUMENTATION OF AREA CHARACTERISTICS

CFEMS’s 220 square mile jurisdiction is divided into three battalions with 14 stations distributed throughout the jurisdiction. For dispatching purposes, the service area is broken down into 14 station territories or “planning zones.” The station territories are further subdivided into geographic areas called Fire Demand Zones (FDZ). There are 102 FDZs within CFEMS’ service area (Figure 2.1 Planning Zones). The type of response allows the closest unit to respond based on the location of the incident within an FDZ.

SERVICE AREA BOUNDARIES

Geographical boundaries for the Columbus Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services are the boundary lines of Muscogee County (Columbus City Charter Section 1-102), excluding that area which lies within the boundaries of the Fort Benning Military Reservation. Boundaries were established by the consolidation of the City and County Governments in 1971 (Consolidated Government). Mutual aid agreements exist with surrounding communities. Surrounding agencies requiring assistance must make requests through proper channels as detailed in mutual aid agreements. The geographical boundaries have been set by law and have been clear and understood by all governmental entities involved. (Figure 2.2: Service Area)



MUTUAL AID BOUNDARIES

The department maintains a Statewide Mutual Aid Agreement (SWMA) with local, state, and federal agencies to provide additional assistance and resources to this jurisdiction in the event of a disaster. These agreements are reciprocal in scope and clearly define the department's responsibilities, limitations, and liabilities in the event these agreements become activated. The department currently maintains all-hazard/all-emergencies mutual aid agreements with all contiguous Fire and EMS departments and county governments. The department is also a member agency of the Georgia Mutual Aid Group and is designated as Georgia Search and Rescue (GSAR) Task Force 9. These agreements have been adopted by the governing authority and signed by the mayor.

Through these agreements, the department has immediate access to additional equipment and staffing to respond to and mitigate major emergencies in the most cost-efficient manner possible. The agreements are mutually beneficial to Columbus and the surrounding communities.

The department does not have any automatic aid agreements with any of the surrounding agencies. This is due primarily to the fact that the surrounding departments are either not strategically located or staffed to respond within our jurisdiction promptly. (Figure 2.2 Mutual Aid)

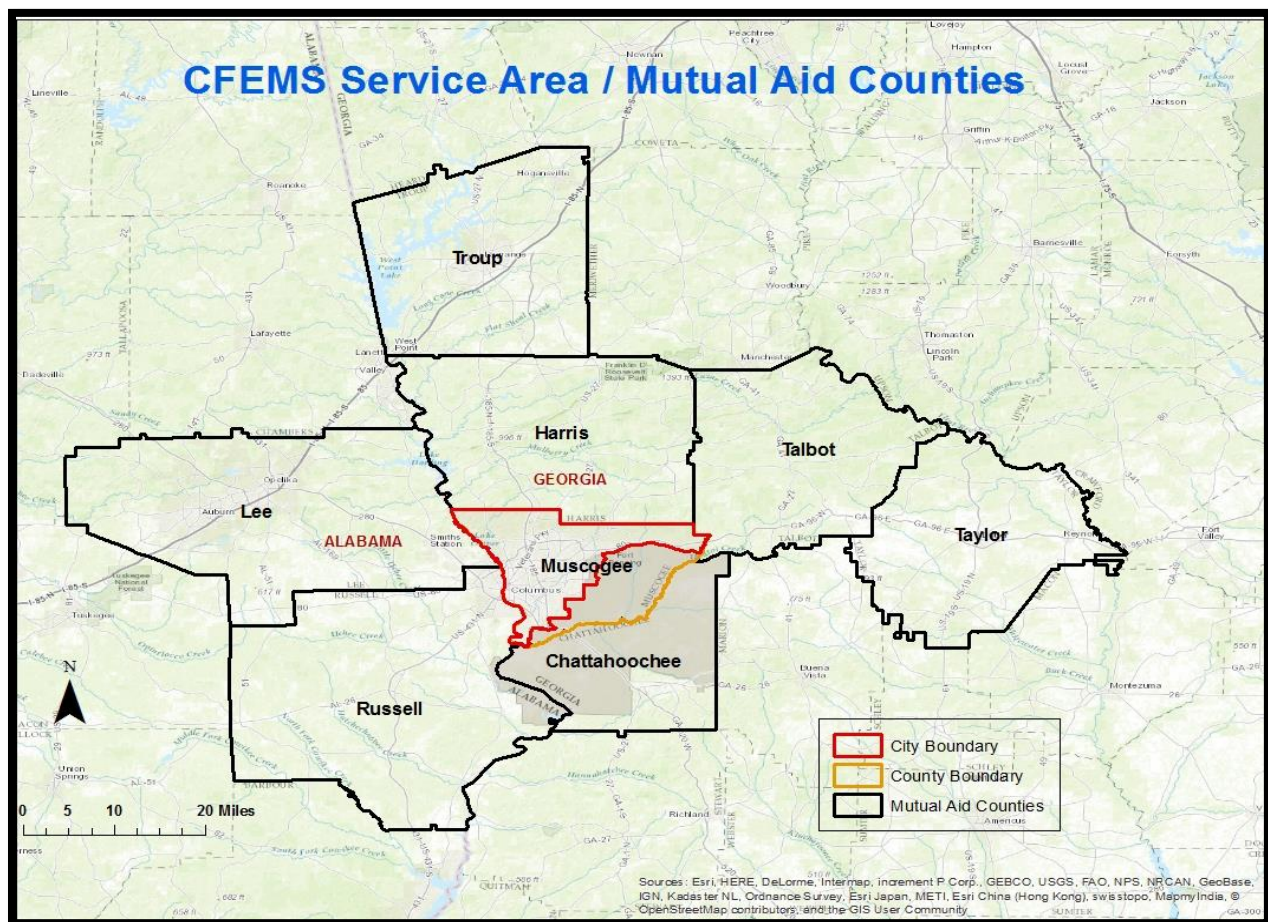


Figure 2.2 Map: Mutual Aid

CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Critical infrastructure is the systems needed to maintain minimum services for the operation of a community. Critical infrastructure includes transportation, communications, water, power, and healthcare. Columbus Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services (CFEMS) assesses the critical infrastructure within the planning zones through pre-fire planning activities and annual inspections through Community Risk Reduction.

Roadways are maintained and repaired by the city's Public Works department. The street maintenance division is responsible for over 650 miles of curbs and gutters, along with over 900 miles of public sidewalks. They provide services to Columbus residents and government personnel related to street repairs and maintenance, which includes city streets and state routes, sidewalk repair, curb/gutter, fence, guardrail repairs, and graffiti removal. Columbus has 26 miles of rail lines that run through the city, operated by Norfolk Southern and Georgia Southwestern Railroad. Commodities carried most often include Chemicals, Forest Products, Lumber, Petroleum Products, and Pulp and Paper. (Figure 2.6 Critical Infrastructure)

Columbus provides public transportation through the METRA department. METRA currently operates 15 buses serving 10 bus routes in the Columbus area, Monday through Saturday, excluding holidays. METRA also provides ADA Complementary Paratransit Service to eligible people with disabilities who are, because of their disability, unable to board, ride, or disembark from an accessible vehicle in METRA's regular bus service.

Columbus Water Works (CWW) provides water and a sanitary sewer system to the city of Columbus. CWW also helps to identify elements of the water system, including hydrants, water mains, system issues, including outages, improvements, maintenance, and care. The first water treatment plant was built in 1964 and currently operates as a modern treatment facility that serves the entire community. CWW operates two water treatment facilities in Columbus and one in Ft Benning that serve Columbus, Fort Benning, and parts of Harris and Talbot counties.

Georgia Power supplies the majority of Columbus with power. Flint Energies and Diverse Power provide power to some rural areas of the city. Two of Georgia Power's nineteen hydroelectric dams are in Muscogee County; they are North Highlands Hydroelectric Generating Plant and Oliver Dam Hydroelectric Generating Plant (Figure 2.3 Dams).

LAKE OLIVER DAM

NORTH HIGHLAND DAM

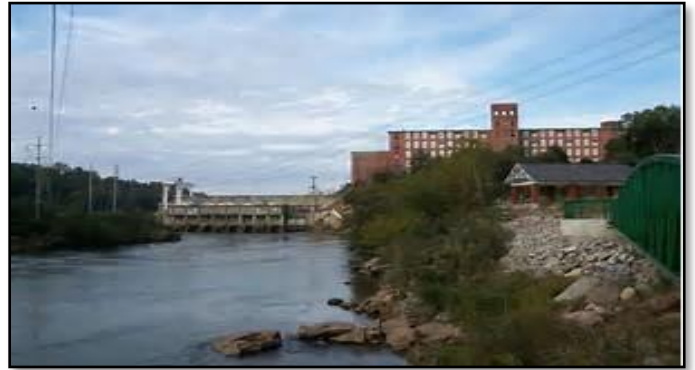


Figure 2.3 Images: Dams

Columbus currently has three hospitals that provide emergency services. Piedmont Columbus Regional’s Midtown Campus (Figure 2.4 Medical Center) is a Level 2 trauma center and serves most of west central Georgia and East Central Alabama. St. Francis Hospital (Figure 2.5 St. Francis) is the regional cardiac hospital; they have experienced tremendous growth in the last several years. Piedmont Northside Campus opened in 2018 and has been effective in reducing patient volume at the other hospitals. Hospitals have responded by implementing changes to personnel and processes to reduce the time ambulances are out of service. CFEMS implemented an extended wait time protocol, approved by the department medical director, to allow department personnel to use the Emergency Service Index (ESI) to determine the urgency of treatment. Based on the ESI score, personnel can, after a 30-minute wait, advise the ED charge nurse of their findings and that they are going back in service. CFEMS will continue to work diligently with hospitals to share ideas for better delivery of services.

Figure 2.4 Piedmont Midtown

Figure 2.5 St. Francis

Figure 2.6 Piedmont Northside

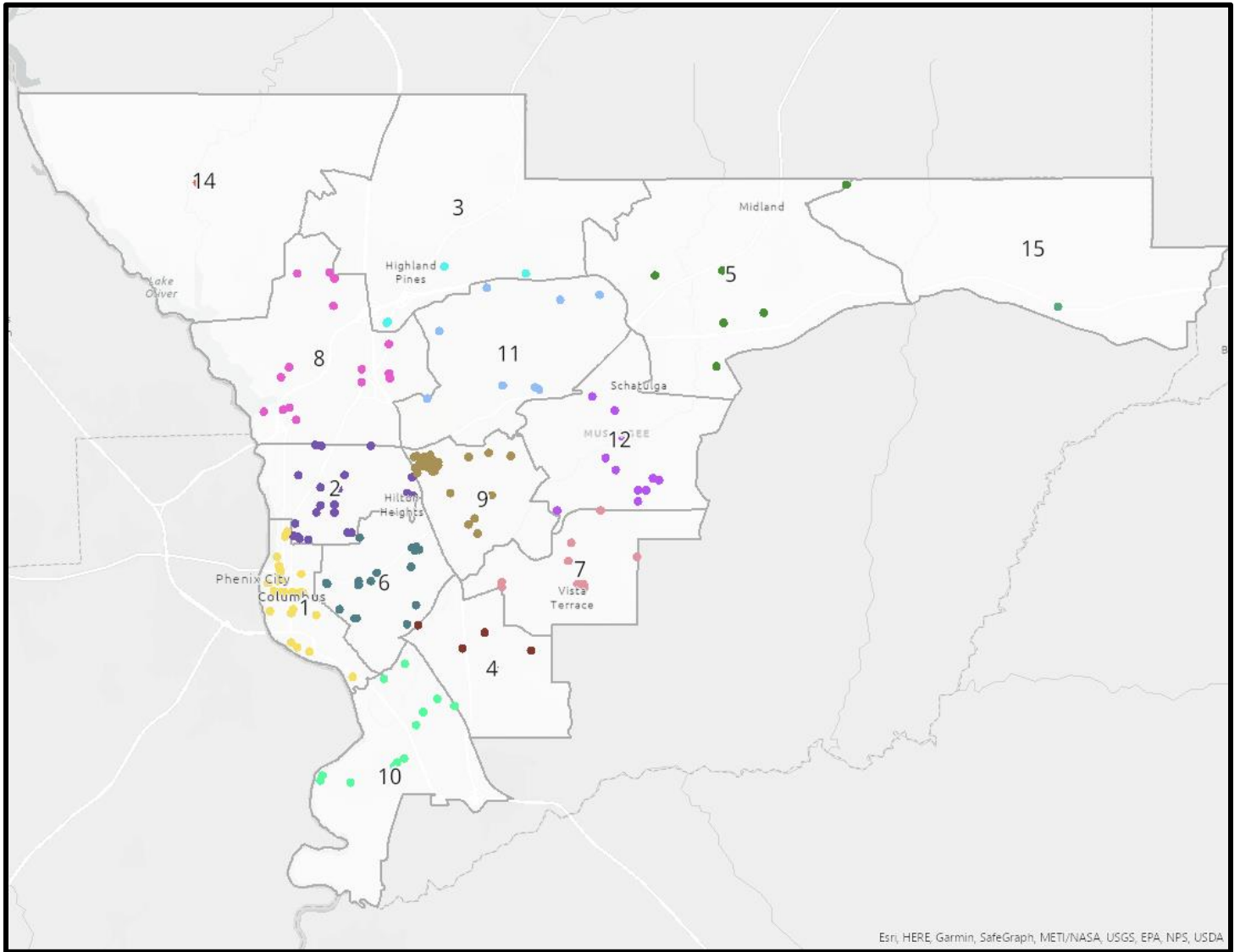


The 911 communications center's Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD) was upgraded to Tyler CAD in June 2025. The 911 center maintains an operational backup center that can be accessed quickly if the main center becomes non-operational.

Figure 2.7 Image: 911 Center



Figure 2.8 Map: Critical Infrastructure



SECTION III: DESCRIPTION OF AGENCY PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

MISSION

The Columbus Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services is dedicated to the protection of life, property, and the environment by providing professional and courteous service of exceptional quality through incident mitigation, education, and prevention as an all-hazards response agency.

VISION

To be a model of excellence by developing innovative leaders to meet the evolving needs of the community, thereby setting the standard for other departments through professionalism and commitment to the department's mission and core values.

VALUES

We, the members of the Columbus Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services, are committed to the following values in our interactions with coworkers and customers:

- Professionalism – In application, appearance, and attitude
- Respect – For each other, our Department, the Consolidated Government, and our customers
- Integrity – Demonstrate honesty and fairness
- Diversity – Be open-minded and responsive to the uniqueness of our community and department members without regard to race, age, gender, religion, ethnic origin, or sexual orientation
- Excellence – Strive to provide the very best service possible

HISTORY OF CFEMS

Columbus' first volunteer fire department was established in 1831. In 1843, the service was ordained and chartered by the Georgia State Legislature. It operated under a semi-paid plan from 1887 to 1898.

In 1898, the city council adopted by ordinance a fully paid department with twenty-six members. The ordinance gave the mayor and council the authority to elect the Fire Chief. As the city grew, more personnel and apparatus were authorized and put in service.

In 2001, the Columbus Fire Department and Columbus Emergency Medical Services merged to become Columbus Fire and Emergency Medical Services. The merger, although stressful in the beginning, has produced a department better equipped to meet the needs of the community. All apparatus are staffed with a Georgia state-certified firefighter that hold either an EMT-I, AEMT, or Paramedic certification.

Today, the Department provides community risk reduction, fire suppression, emergency medical services, hazardous materials response, and technical rescue services to the citizens and visitors of Columbus from fourteen (14) locations throughout the City. The department is currently organized into five (5) divisions: Community Risk Reduction, Operations, Resource Management, Emergency Medical Services, and Training. The Chief of CFEMS serves as the Chief Administrative Officer and is responsible for the overall operation of the department. The Chief reports directly to the mayor, who serves as the Public Safety Director.

The City of Columbus has a PPC rating of 1/1x and the Department has maintained International Accreditation through the Center for Public Safety Excellence since 2002.

The department currently operates 30 daily units; technical rescue, hazardous materials, and emergency management have units that operate as needed. The total number or percentage of operations personnel who are currently medically certified is 309 (95%). In 2002, the department began training personnel at the EMT-I level, and in 2013, AEMT. Since the in-house EMT training was initiated, the department has trained 284 personnel. The department began providing paramedic training in 2006 and has currently trained 103 personnel as paramedics. The department is striving to achieve a response model that includes at its core personnel certified to render the most pre-hospital emergency care to the citizens and visitors of Columbus, Georgia.

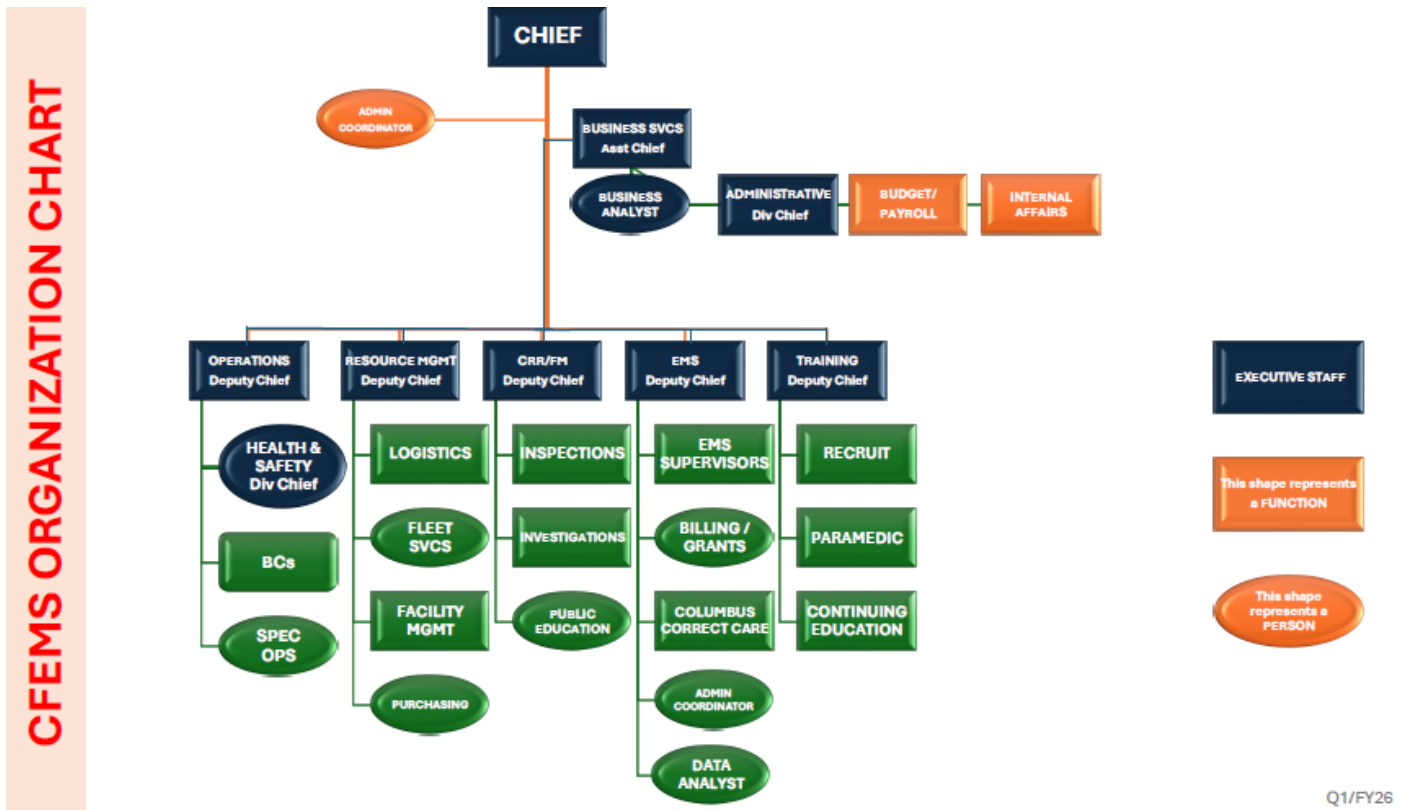
ORGANIZATION

The department falls under the umbrella of Public Safety and is governed by the mayor, who is also the Director of Public Safety. The mayor is the official spokesperson for the consolidated government, presides at all meetings of the City Council, and is the Director of Public Safety.

The Chief, who reports directly to the Mayor/Director of Public Safety, leads the department alongside an Assistant Chief, five Deputy Chiefs, and two Division Chiefs who oversee daily operations. There are five Deputy Chiefs (DC): DC of Training, DC of Community Risk Reduction, DC of Operations, DC of Emergency Services, and DC of Resource Management. There are two Division Chiefs: DC of Administrative Services and DC of Health and Safety.

Field supervision is the responsibility of nine Battalion Chiefs who report to the Deputy Chief of Operations. Daily, each station has a Captain or Lieutenant who oversees station operations and call mitigation. Station Officers report directly to Battalion Chiefs. (Figure 3.1)

Figure 3.1: Organizational Chart

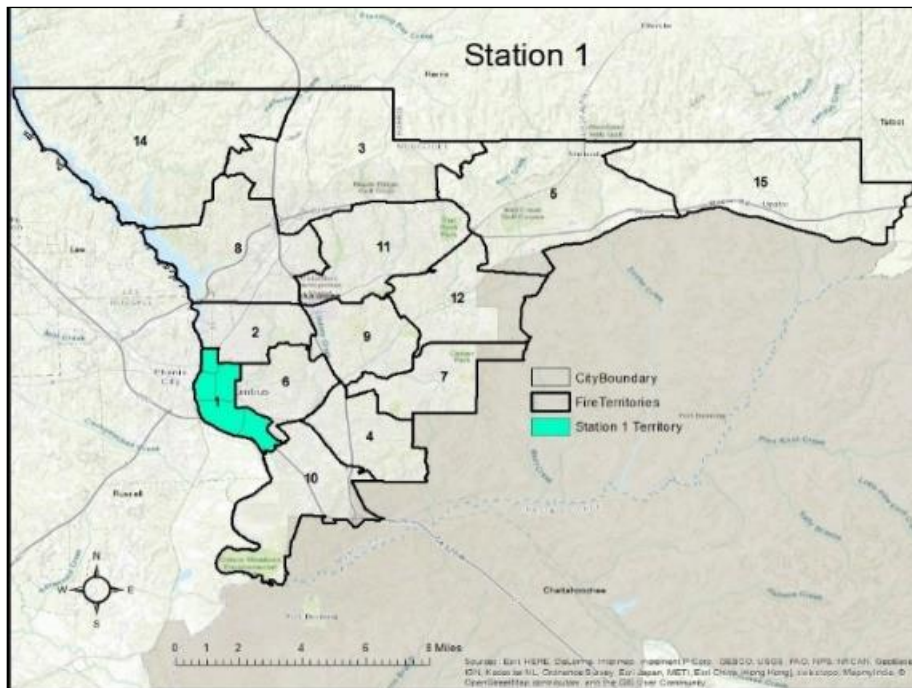


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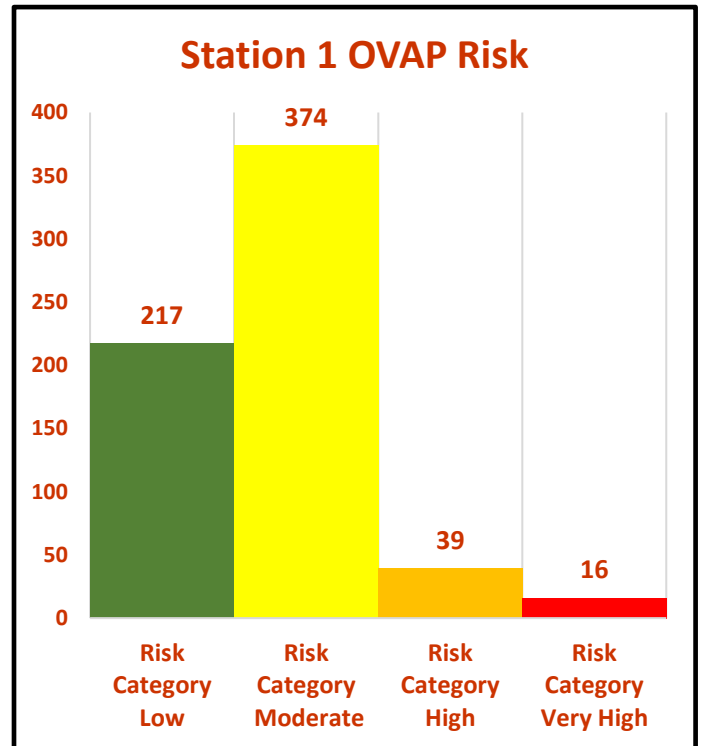
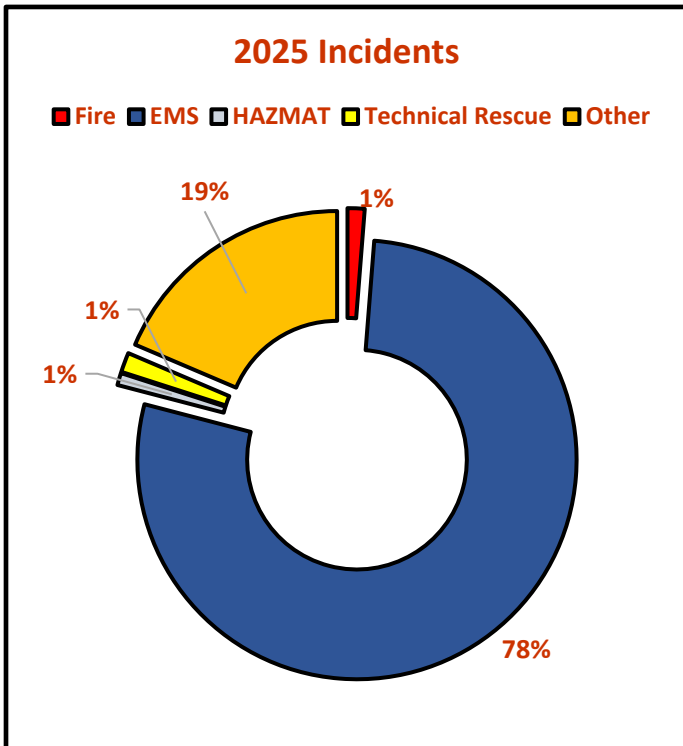
FACILITIES

CFEMS currently operates out of 18 facilities, 14 of which house emergency response personnel and equipment. The remaining four facilities provide a variety of services to the department, including training, resource management, an accredited Paramedic program, and administrative offices for CFEMS staff. The Department has identified three stations that will be renovated, and one replaced with funds approved in a 2021 special purpose local option sales tax (SPLOST) initiative.

Fire Station 1 – 205 10th St.

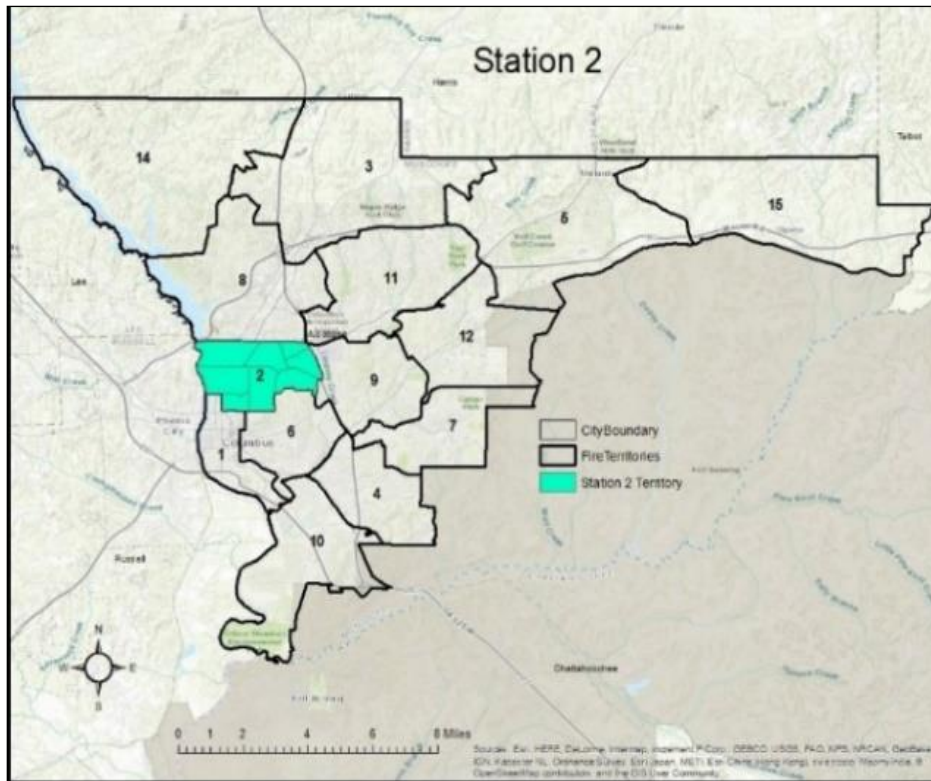


FIRE PLANNING ZONE #1						
Incident Type	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2021-2025
Fire	44	32	35	42	39	192
EMS	1352	1418	1995	2375	2419	9559
HAZMAT	14	26	30	23	28	121
Technical Rescue	29	14	52	44	45	184
Other	470	492	547	669	578	2756
TOTAL	1909	1982	2659	3153	3109	12812

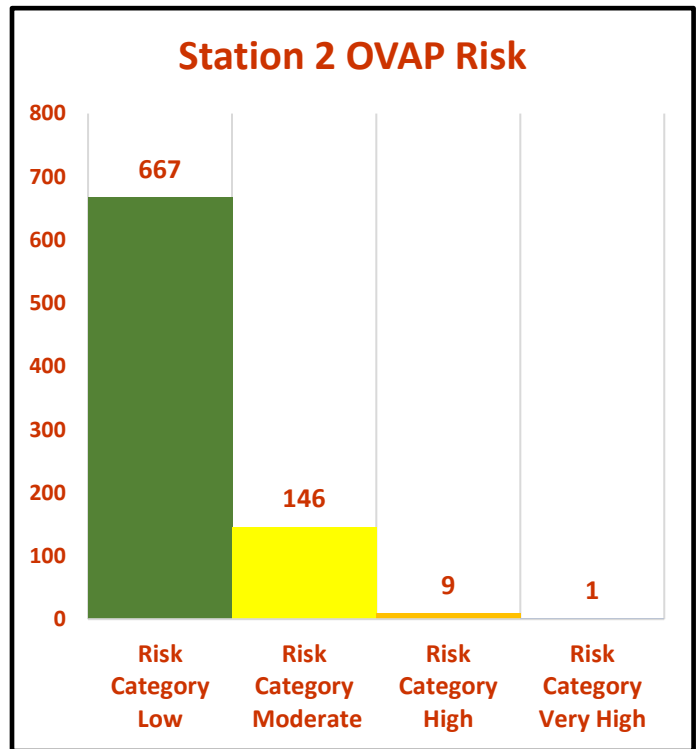
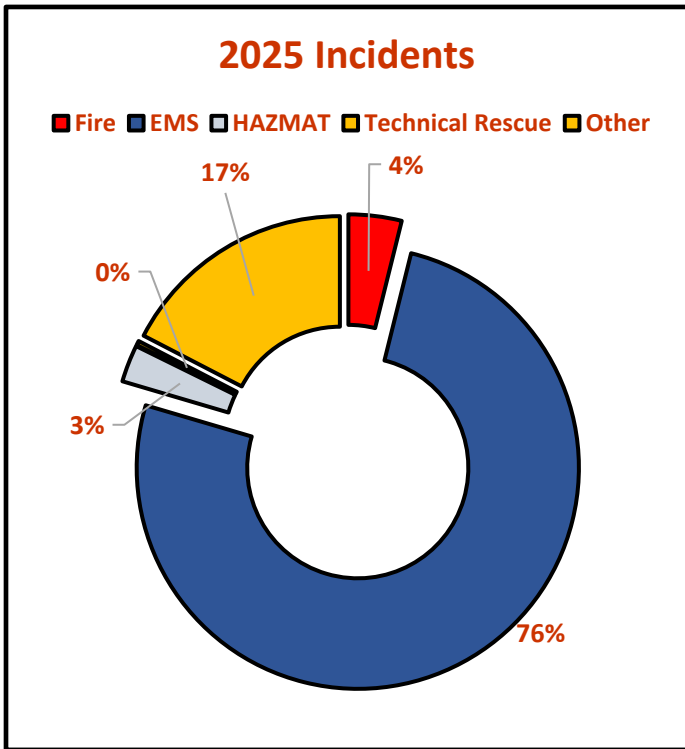


Resources:	E1, L1, R1, B1, M1
Population in Zone:	5,769
Critical Infrastructure Facilities:	25

Station 2 – 1035 33rd St.

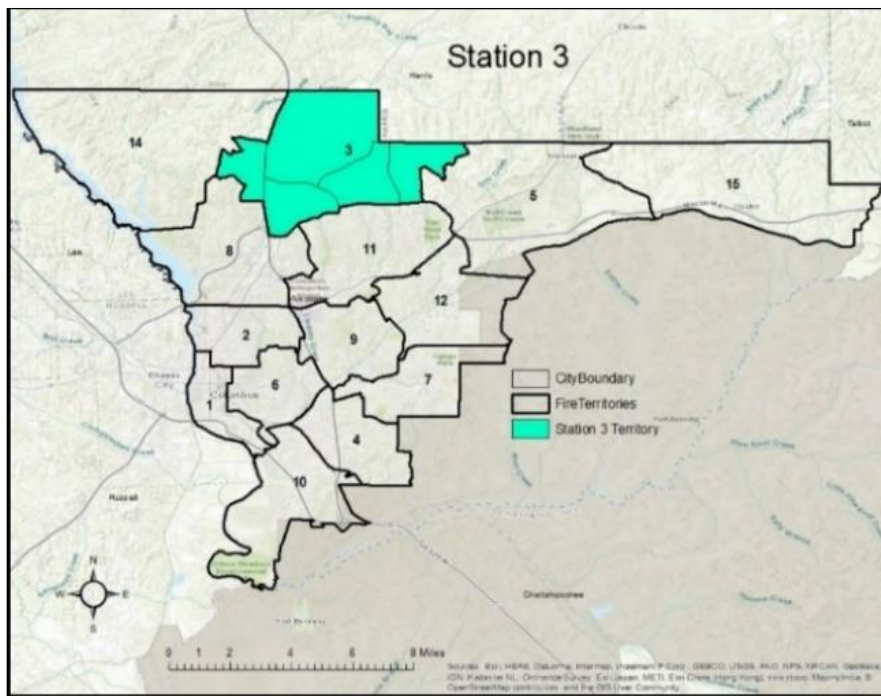


FIRE PLANNING ZONE #2						
Incident Type	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2021-2025
Fire	141	190	164	177	134	806
EMS	3111	3297	2639	2623	2614	14284
HAZMAT	56	56	60	49	94	315
Technical Rescue	6	3	7	5	11	32
Other	577	598	569	620	601	2965
TOTAL	3891	4144	3439	3474	3454	18402

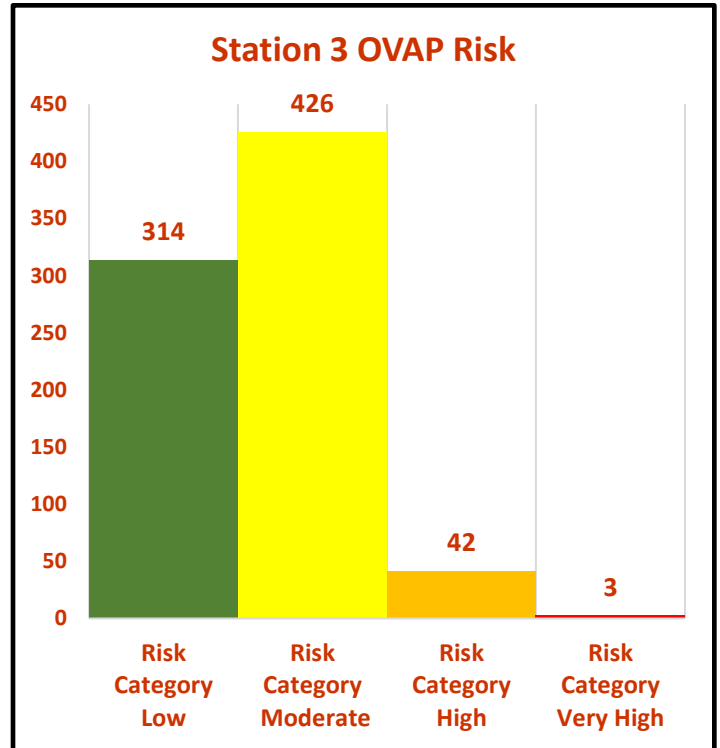
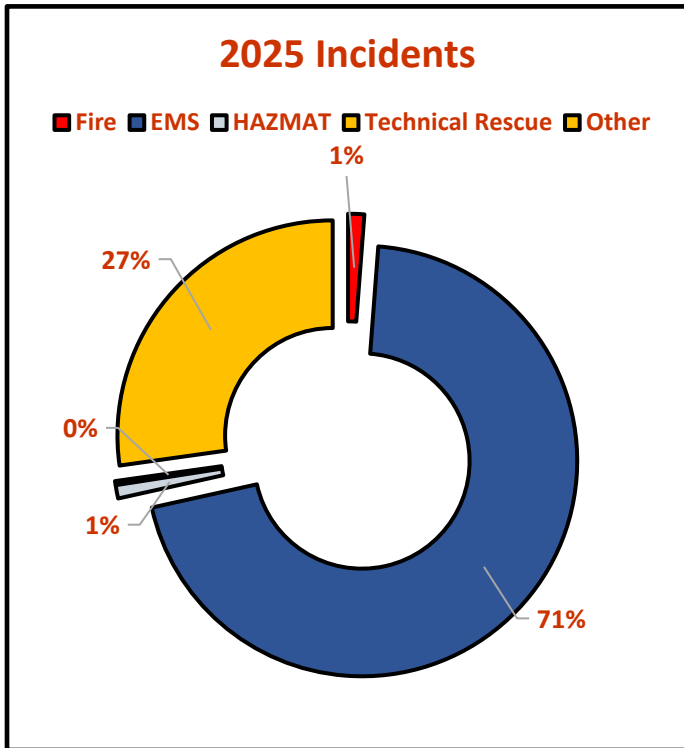


Resources:	E2, M2
Population in Zone:	16,804
Critical Infrastructure Facilities:	21

Station 3 – 2000 American Way

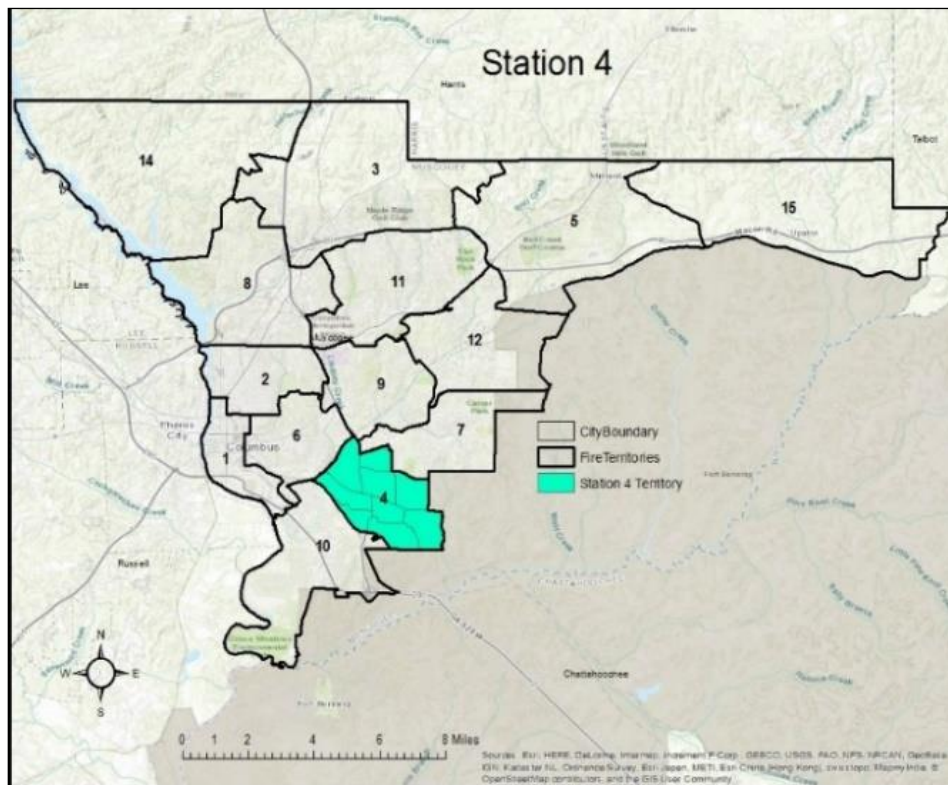


FIRE PLANNING ZONE #3						
Incident Type	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2021-2025
Fire	41	47	47	40	29	204
EMS	1621	1581	1606	1603	1687	8098
HAZMAT	39	43	18	24	24	148
Technical Rescue	2	4	3	4	6	19
Other	436	454	500	613	653	2656
TOTAL	2139	2129	2174	2284	2399	11125

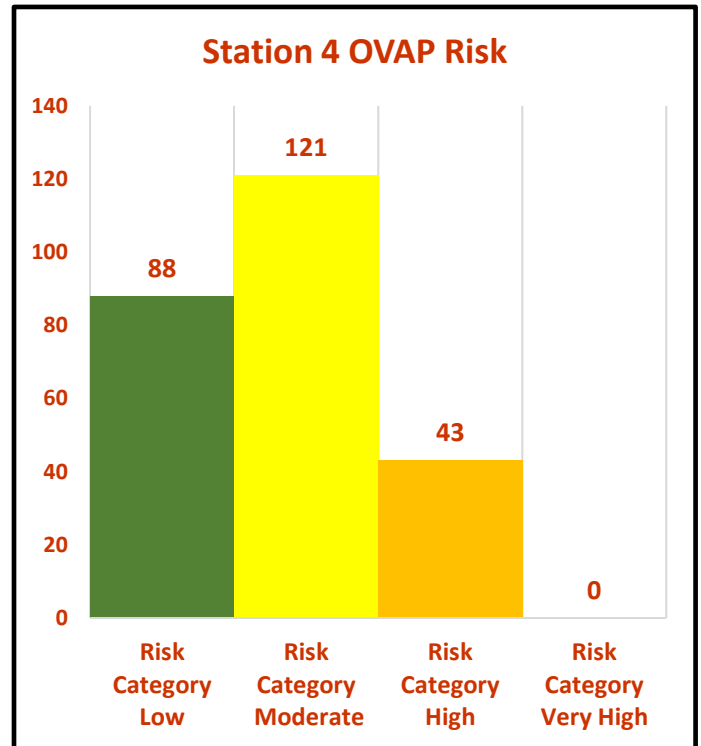
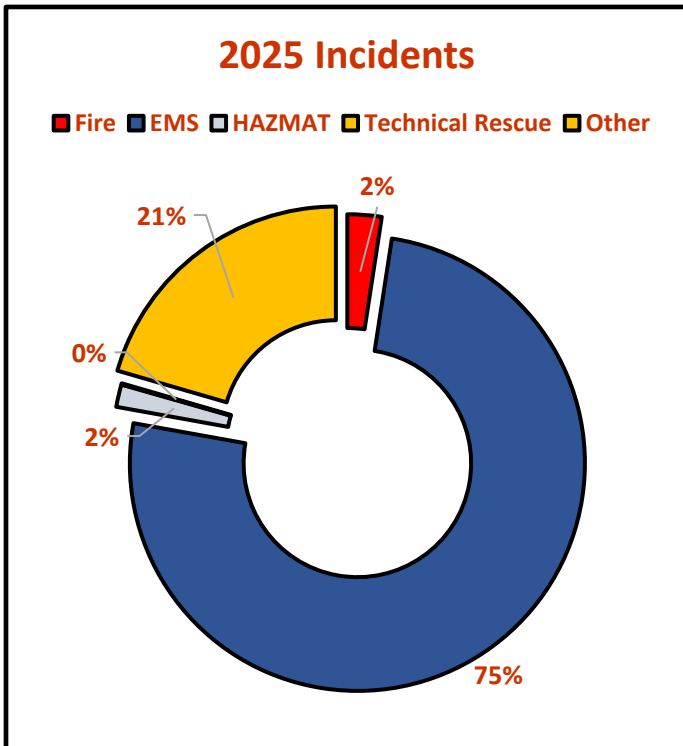


Resources:	E3, M3
Population in Zone:	16,054
Critical Infrastructure Facilities:	4

Station 4 – 200 North Oakley Dr.

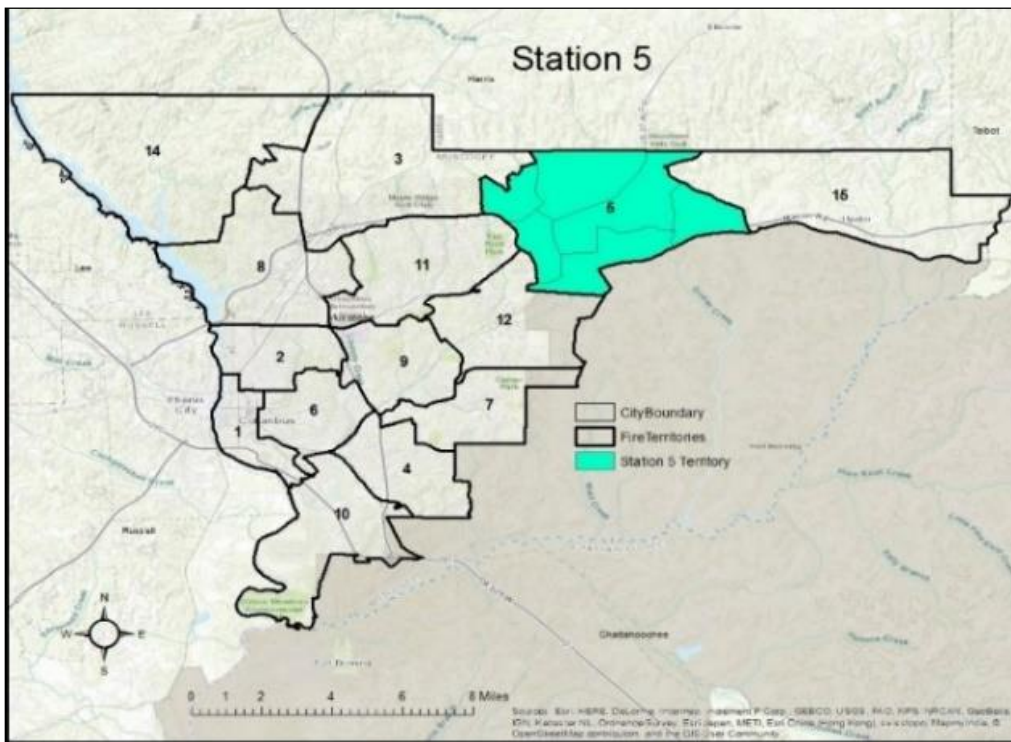


FIRE PLANNING ZONE #4						
Incident Type	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2021-2025
Fire	79	82	50	72	67	350
EMS	1842	1724	1861	1636	2085	9148
HAZMAT	45	67	53	47	44	256
Technical Rescue	2	2	1	1	2	8
Other	464	496	517	652	567	2696
TOTAL	2432	2371	2482	2408	2765	12458

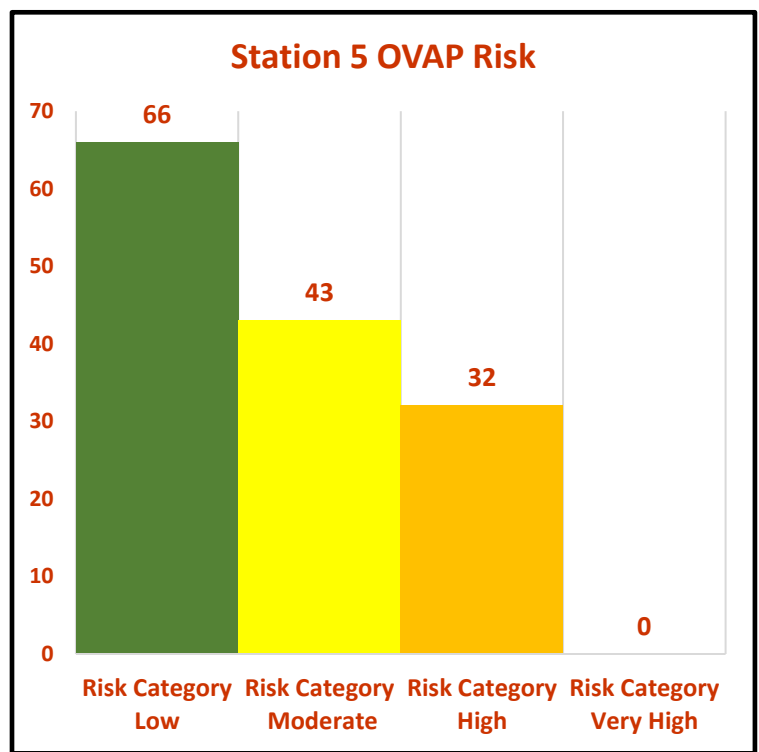
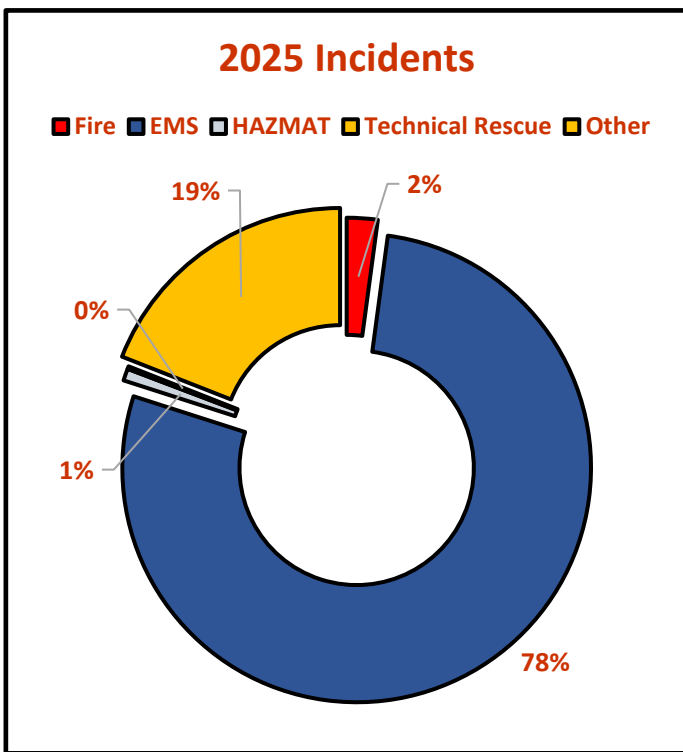


Resources:	E4, L4, M4
Population in Zone:	19,696
Critical Infrastructure Facilities:	5

Station 5 -- 6700 Lynch Rd.

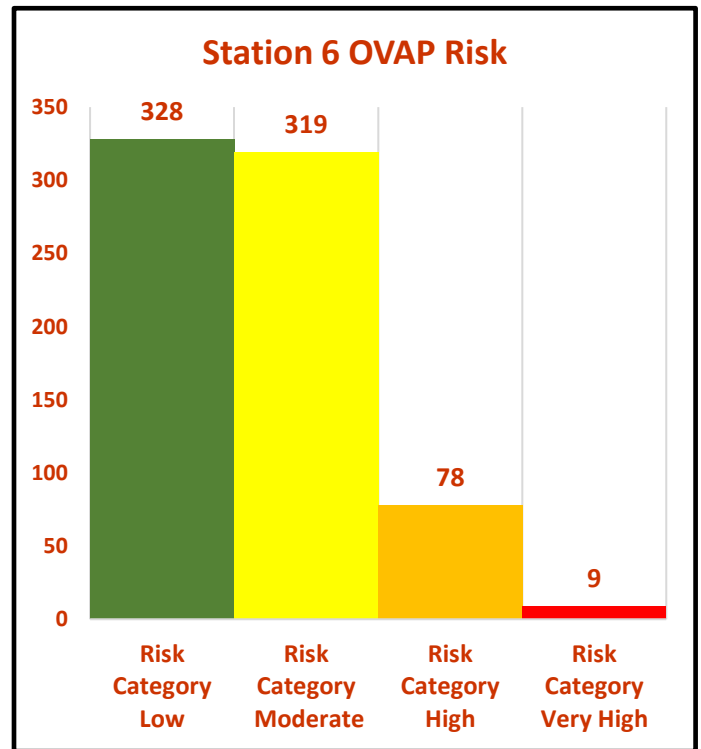
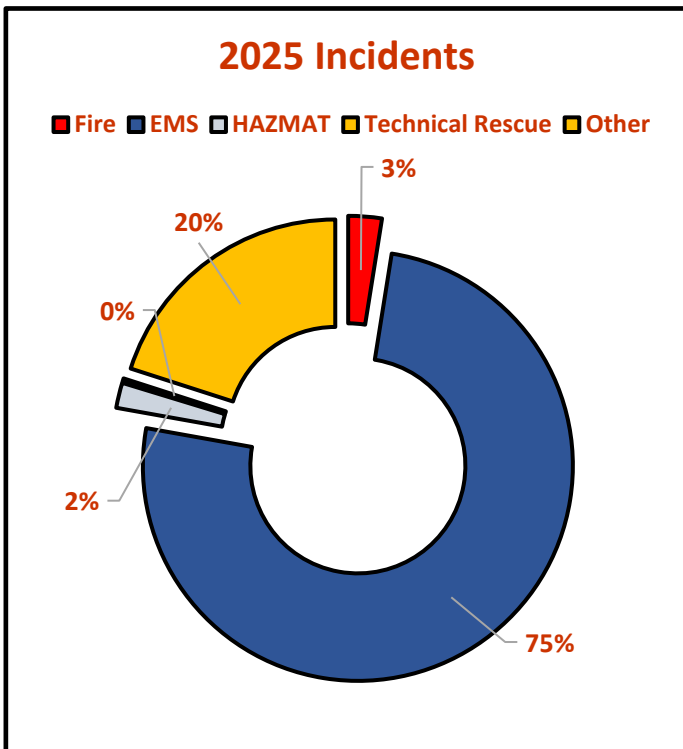


FIRE PLANNING ZONE #5						
Incident Type	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2021-2025
Fire	21	19	27	17	23	107
EMS	474	569	708	741	842	3334
HAZMAT	2	17	7	10	9	45
Technical Rescue	2	0	2	4	2	10
Other	134	123	155	183	206	801
TOTAL	633	728	899	955	1082	4297



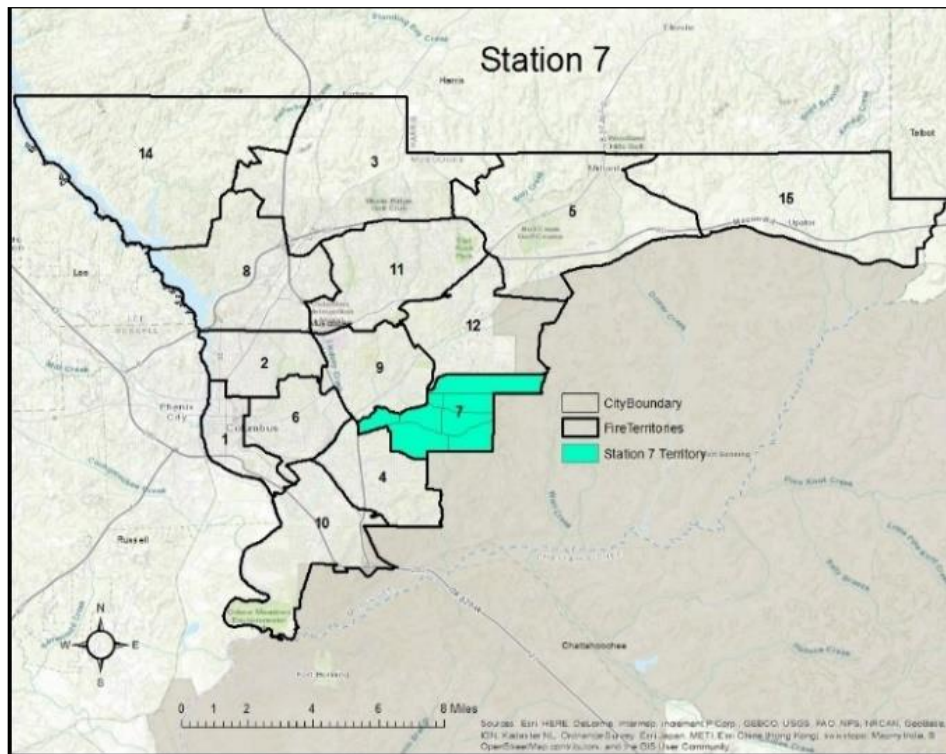
Resources:	E5, M5
Population in Zone:	7,188
Critical Infrastructure Facilities:	6

FIRE PLANNING ZONE #6						
Incident Type	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2021-2025
Fire	126	120	105	105	102	558
EMS	2665	2763	2834	2430	3051	13743
HAZMAT	62	86	70	70	77	365
Technical Rescue	4	3	5	9	10	31
Other	851	760	862	940	812	4225
TOTAL	3708	3732	3876	3554	4052	18922

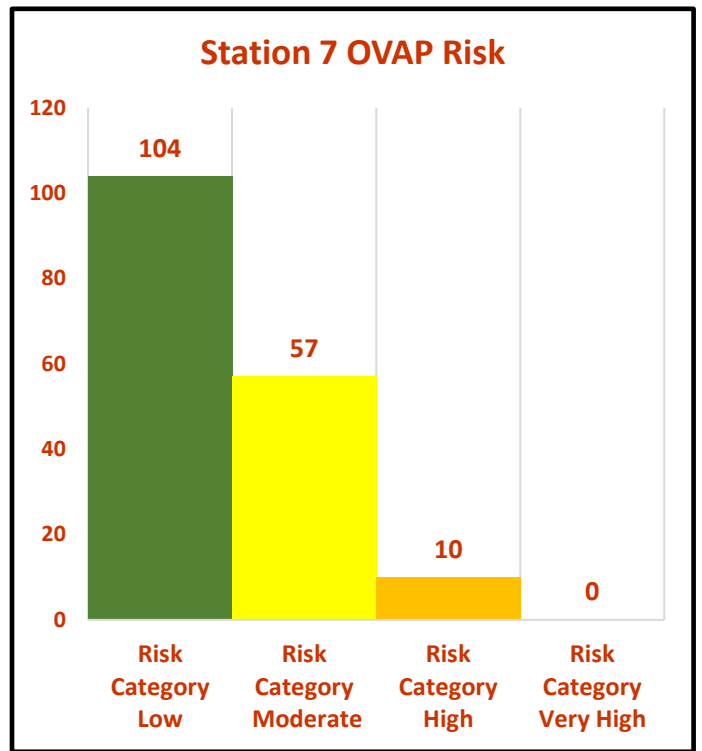
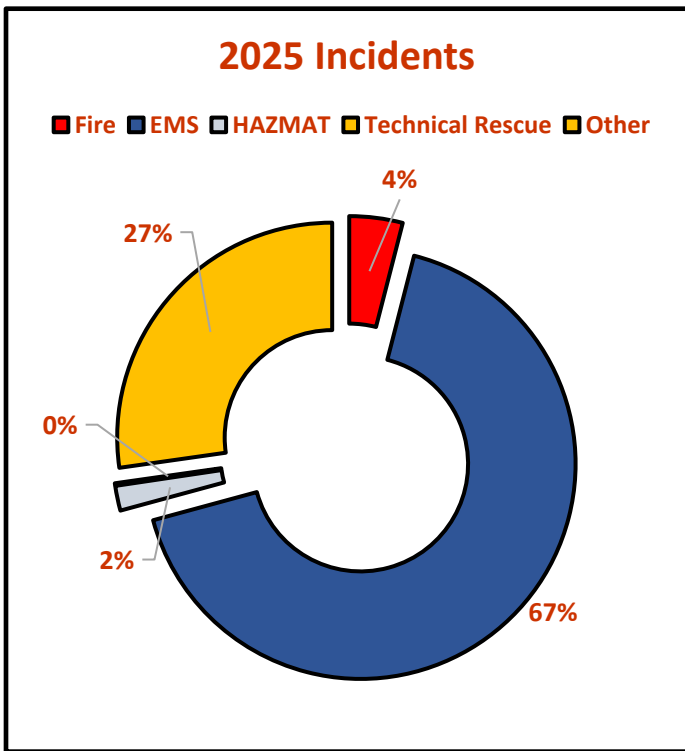


Resources:	E6, L6, M6, S6
Population in Zone:	17,698
Critical Infrastructure Facilities:	16

Station 7 – 5343 Buena Vista Rd

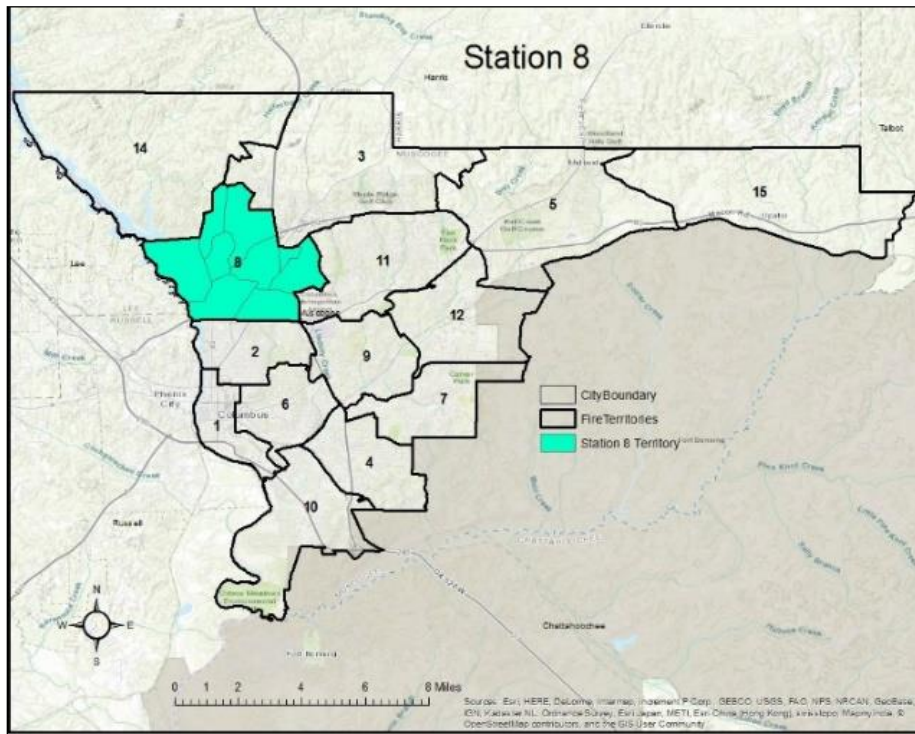


FIRE PLANNING ZONE #7						
Incident Type	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2021-2025
Fire	54	65	69	75	75	338
EMS	1519	1320	1338	1168	1250	6595
HAZMAT	31	18	20	19	35	123
Technical Rescue	1	3	2	1	2	9
Other	364	360	473	510	510	2217
TOTAL	1969	1766	1902	1773	1872	9282

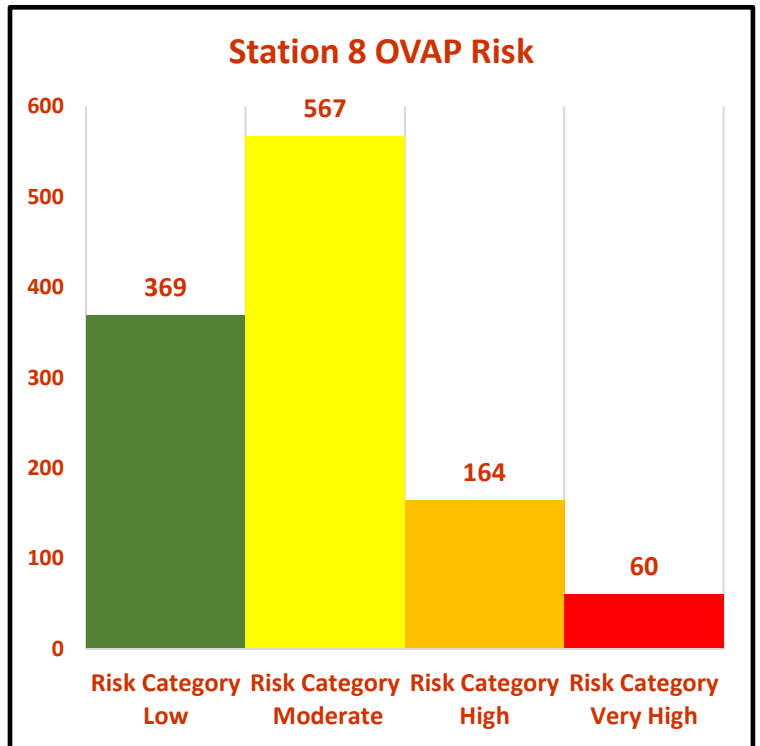
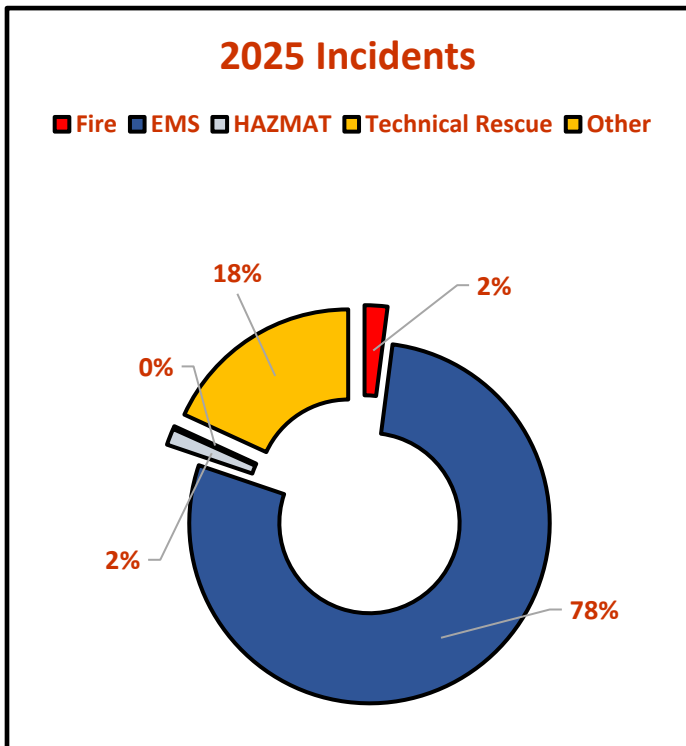


Resources:	E7, M7
Population in Zone:	12,780
Critical Infrastructure Facilities:	9

Station 8 – 5844 Whitesville Rd.

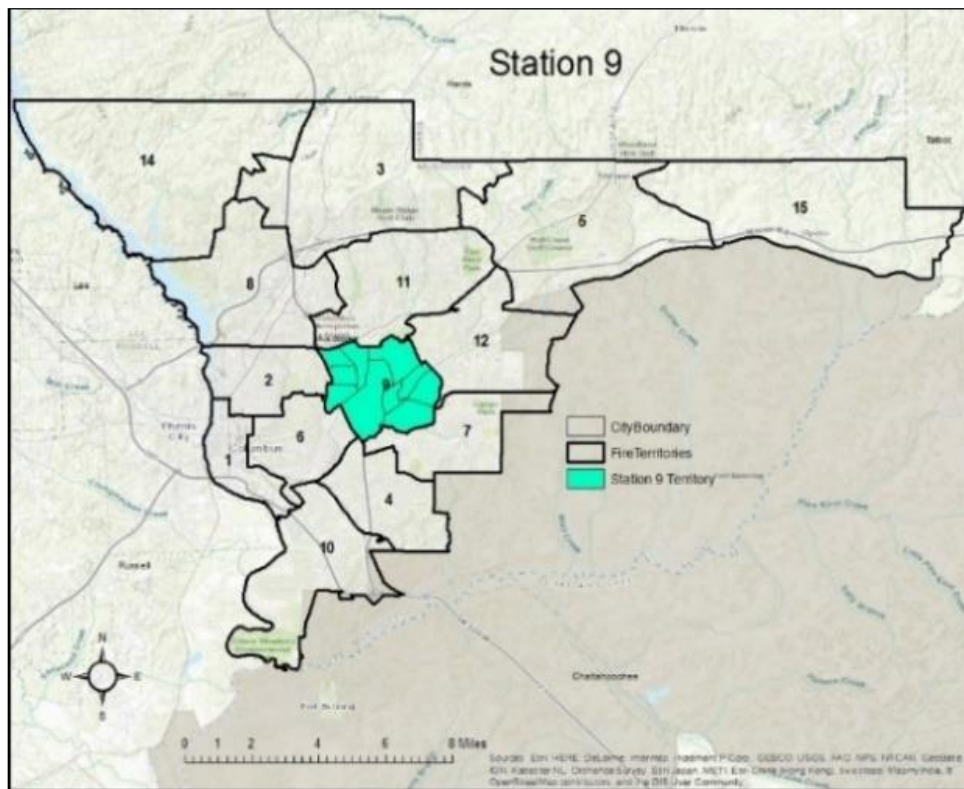


FIRE PLANNING ZONE #8						
Incident Type	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2021-2025
Fire	82	92	108	96	84	462
EMS	3006	2855	3057	3198	3210	15326
HAZMAT	37	58	41	40	61	237
Technical Rescue	6	4	5	9	6	30
Other	511	561	600	615	746	3033
TOTAL	3642	3570	3811	3958	4107	19088

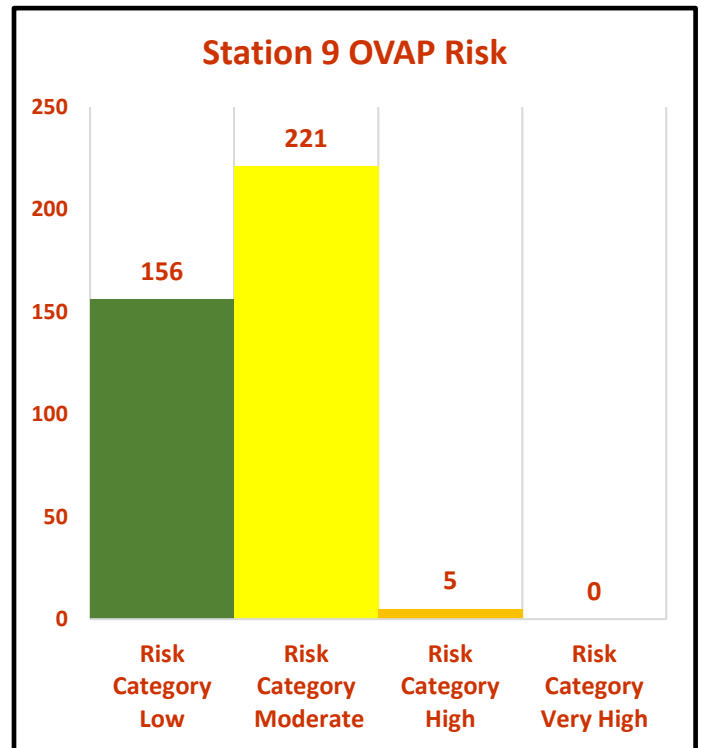
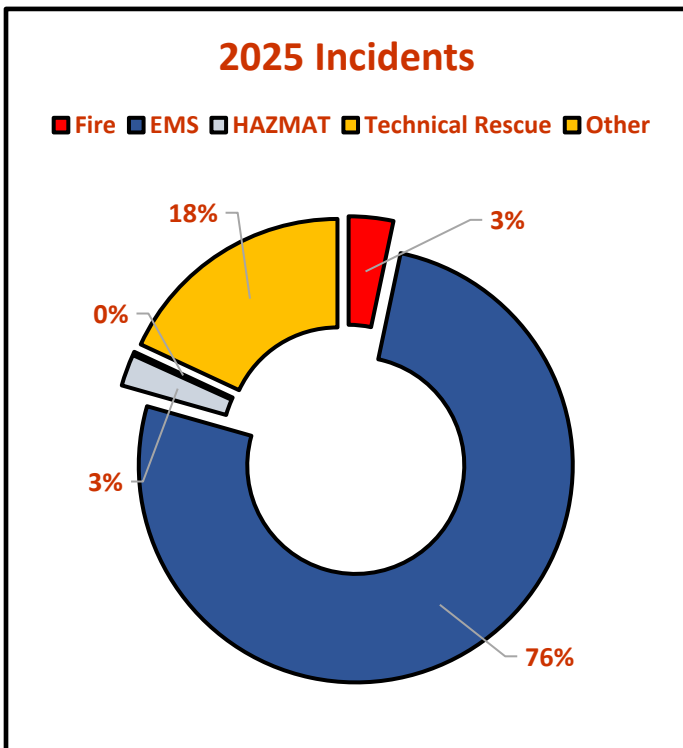


Resources:	E8, L8, M8, B2
Population in Zone:	18,708
Critical Infrastructure Facilities:	15

Station 9 – 4191 Macon Rd

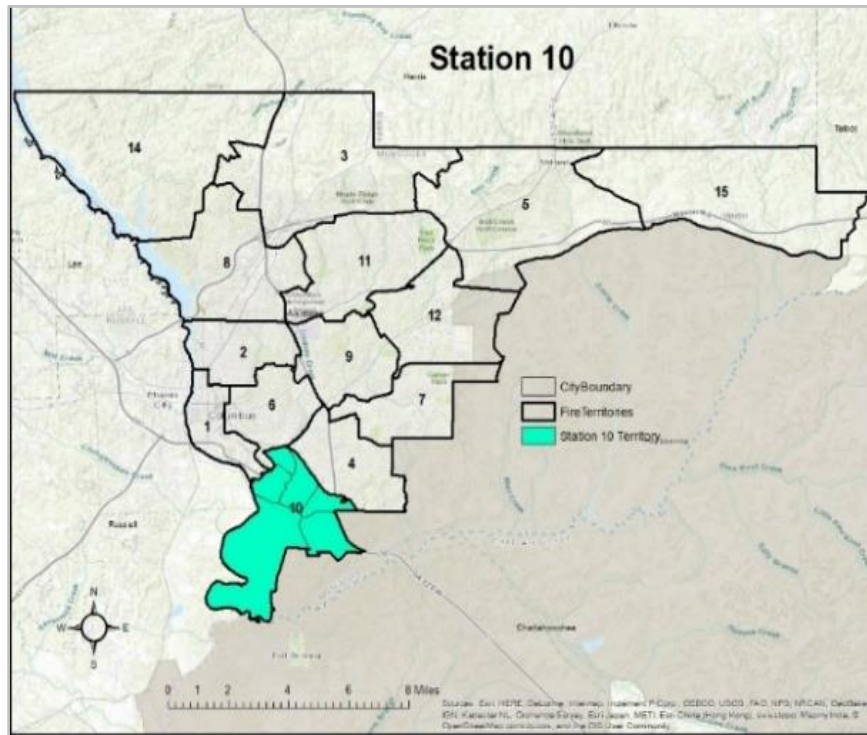


FIRE PLANNING ZONE #9						
Incident Type	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2021-2025
Fire	56	70	50	64	63	303
EMS	1868	1995	1823	1311	1444	8441
HAZMAT	39	40	42	41	45	207
Technical Rescue	2	3	2	6	3	16
Other	358	386	306	324	343	1717
TOTAL	2323	2494	2223	1746	1898	10684

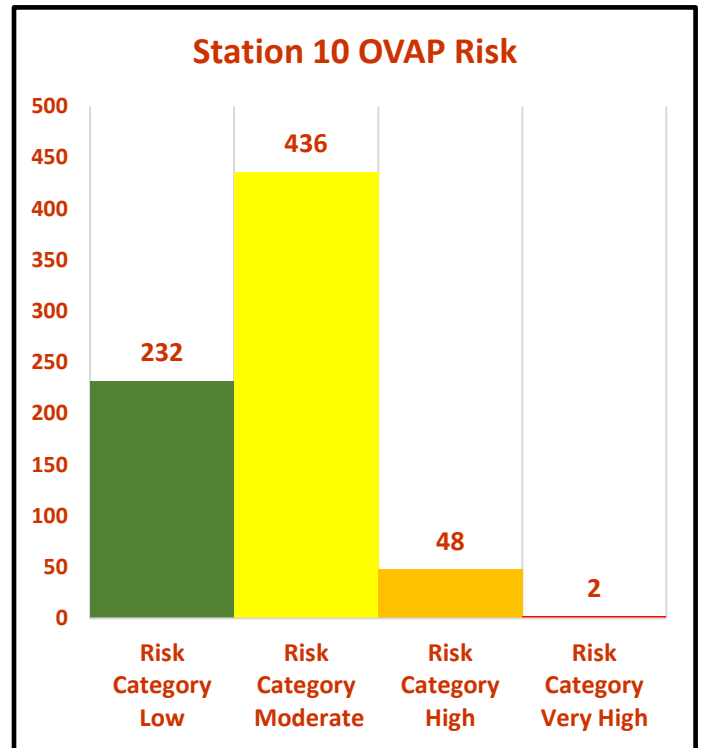
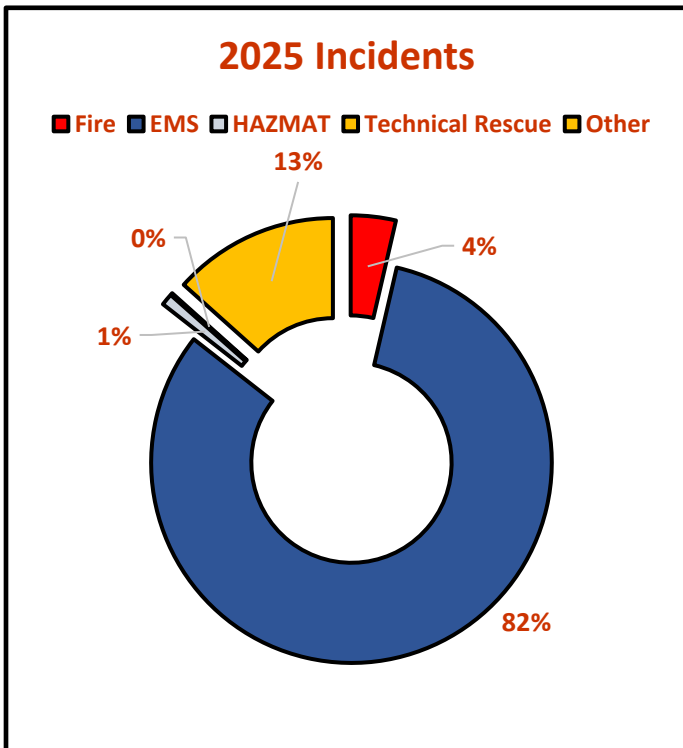


Resources:	E9, M9
Population in Zone:	12,863
Critical Infrastructure Facilities:	44

Station 10 – 1441-U Benning Dr.

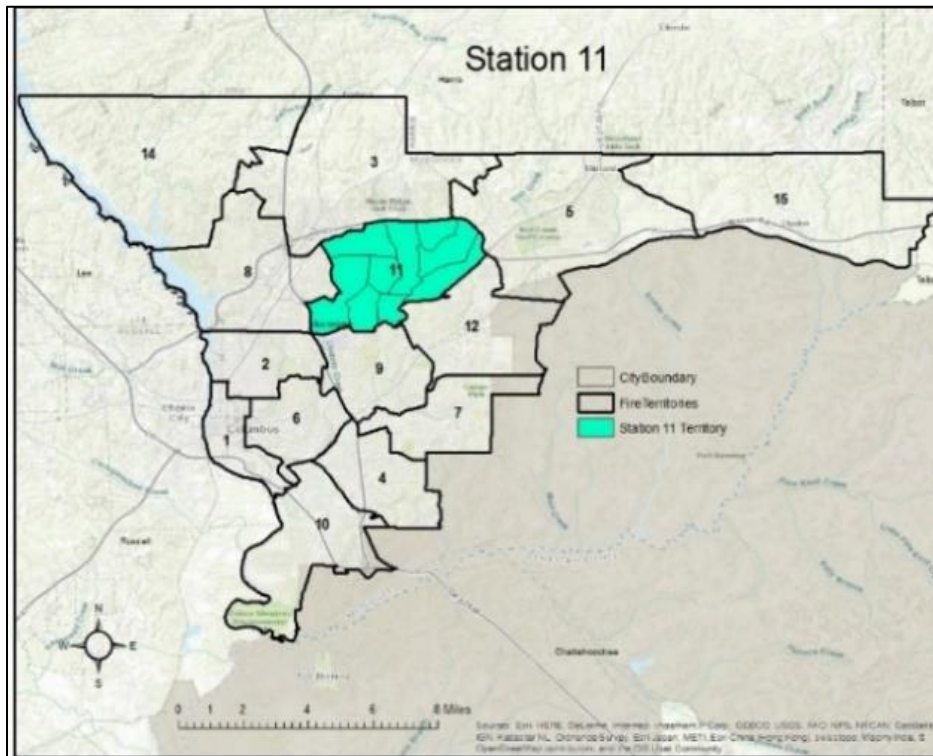


FIRE PLANNING ZONE #10						
Incident Type	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2021-2025
Fire	104	122	178	151	152	707
EMS	3614	3281	3457	3427	3430	17209
HAZMAT	56	81	53	40	40	270
Technical Rescue	4	4	7	4	4	23
Other	493	659	629	632	560	2973
TOTAL	4271	4147	4324	4254	4186	21182

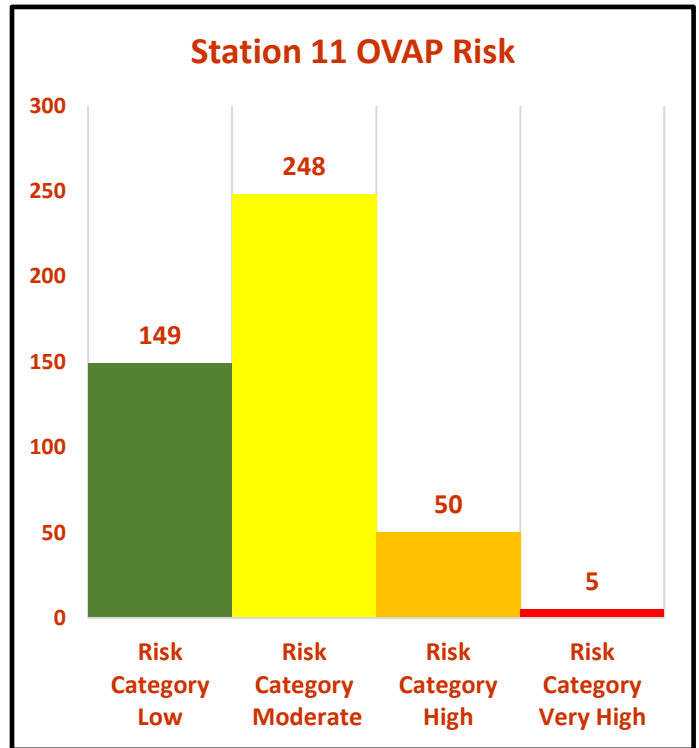
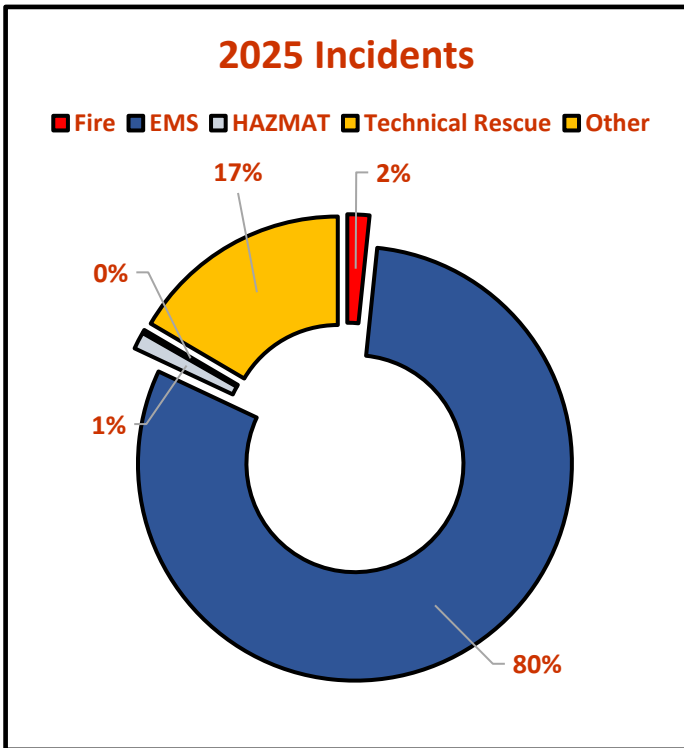


Resources:	E10, L10, M10, M16
Population in Zone:	15,958
Critical Infrastructure Facilities:	12

Station 11 – 4617 Warm Springs Rd.

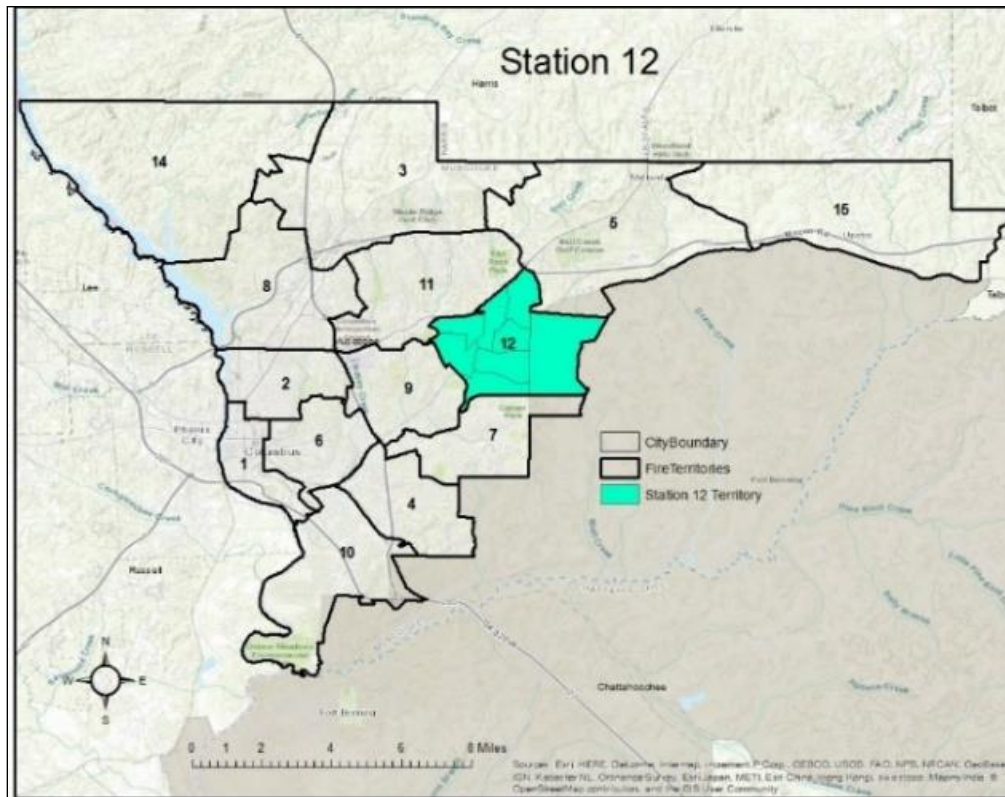


FIRE PLANNING ZONE #11						
Incident Type	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2021-2025
Fire	73	74	86	68	57	358
EMS	2193	2511	2575	2711	2792	12782
HAZMAT	45	43	46	54	44	232
Technical Rescue	3	5	1	2	7	18
Other	414	491	597	654	575	2731
TOTAL	2728	3124	3305	3489	3475	16121

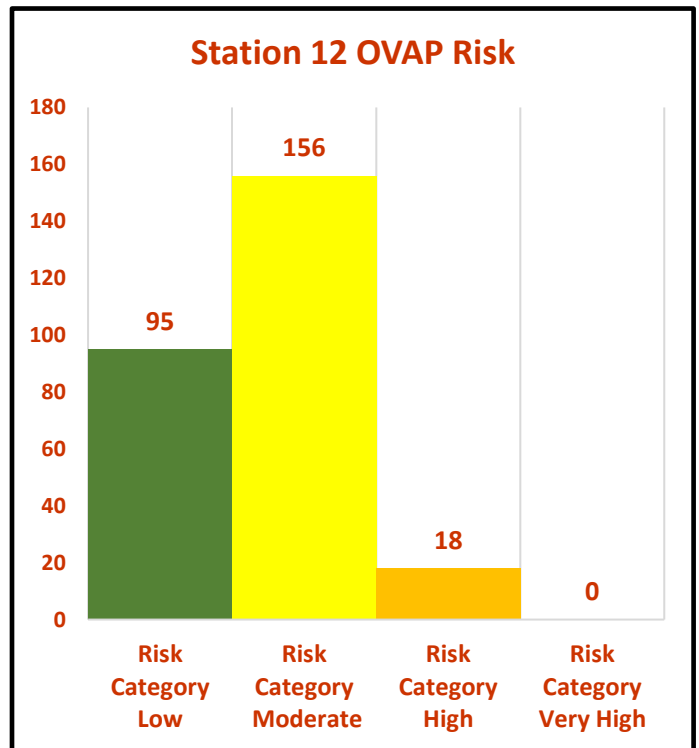
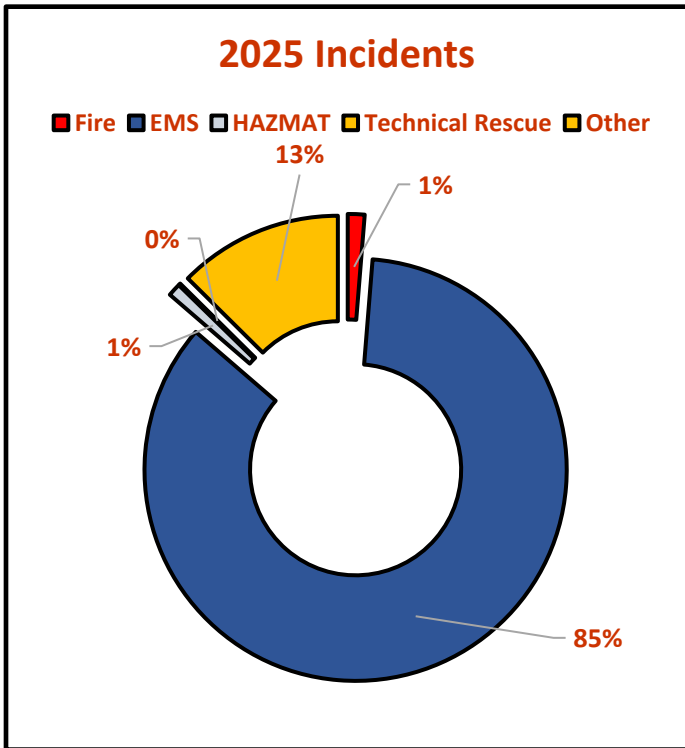


Resources:	E11, S11, M11
Population in Zone:	22,941
Critical Infrastructure Facilities:	7

Station 12 – 5225 Cargo Dr.

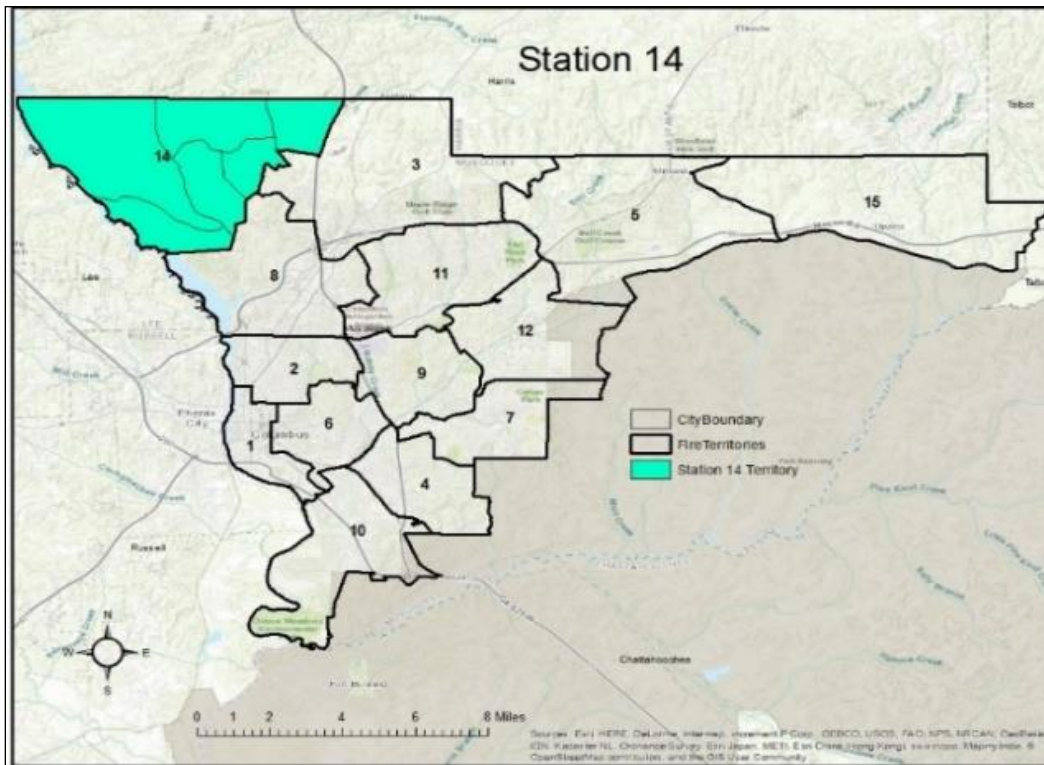


FIRE PLANNING ZONE #12						
Incident Type	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2021-2025
Fire	43	31	32	27	26	159
EMS	1633	1751	1435	1827	1723	8369
HAZMAT	25	30	20	16	20	111
Technical Rescue	3	2	4	2	2	13
Other	248	240	219	260	255	1222
TOTAL	1952	2054	1710	2132	2026	9874

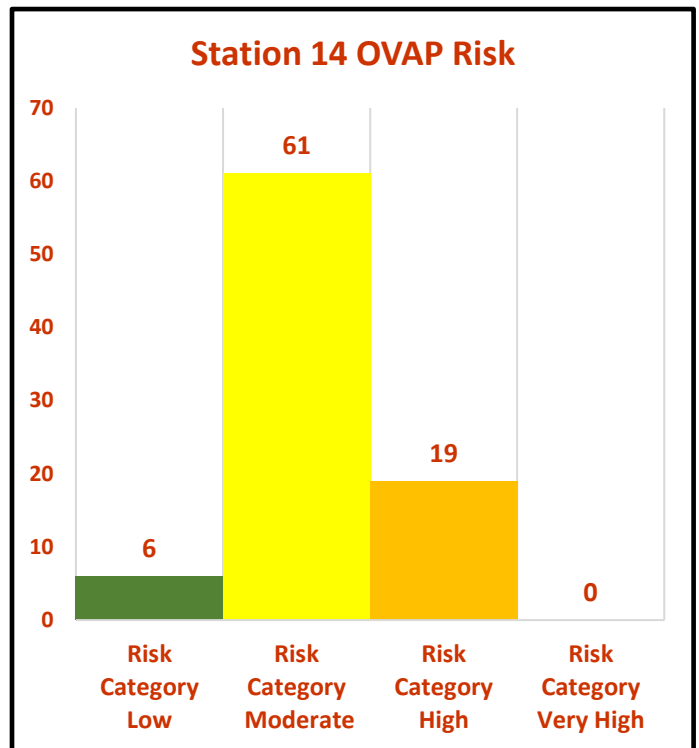
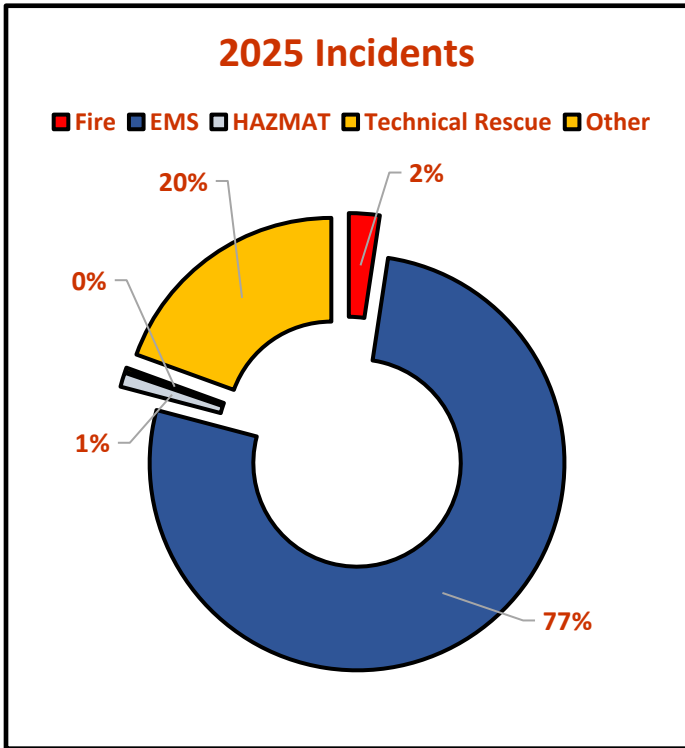


Resources:	L12, B3, M12
Population in Zone:	16,649
Critical Infrastructure Facilities:	11

Station 14 – 1180 Old River Rd.

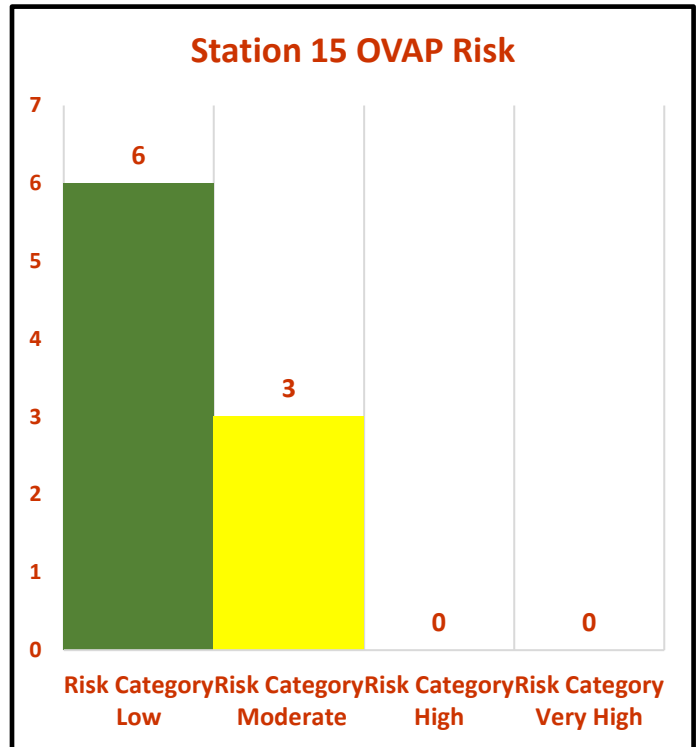
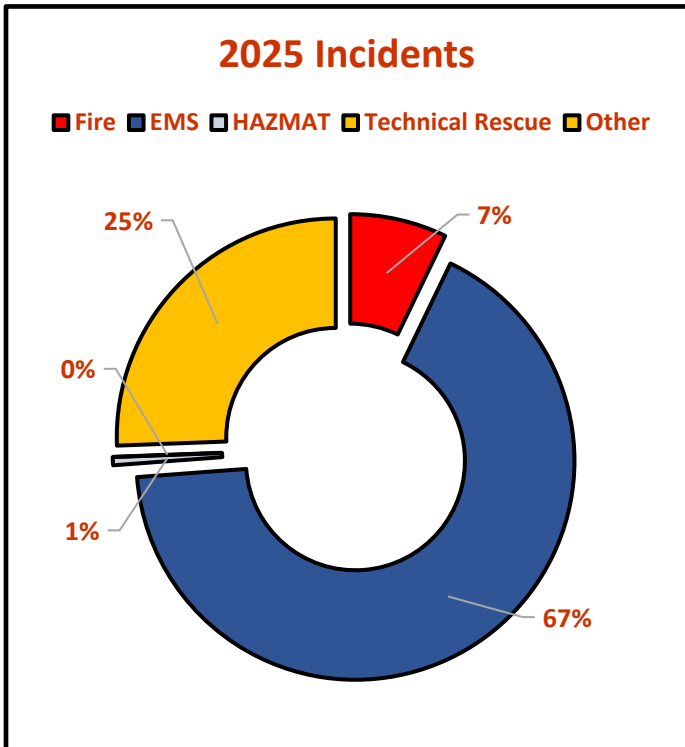


FIRE PLANNING ZONE #14						
Incident Type	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2021-2025
Fire	8	7	9	17	15	56
EMS	280	312	464	544	481	2081
HAZMAT	5	3	4	8	7	27
Technical Rescue	0	0	1	0	2	3
Other	61	57	117	118	122	475
TOTAL	354	379	595	687	627	2642



Resources:	E14
Population in Zone:	8,359
Critical Infrastructure Facilities:	1

FIRE PLANNING ZONE #15						
Incident Type	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2021-2025
Fire	16	18	2	8	12	56
EMS	95	114	153	120	112	594
HAZMAT	3	2	4	6	1	16
Technical Rescue	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	19	41	30	35	43	168
TOTAL	133	175	189	169	168	834



Resources:	E15
Population in Zone:	4,725
Critical Infrastructure Facilities:	2

SERVICES

The CFEMS is a full-time, paid, fire and emergency services department with no volunteer resources. The CFEMS' current level of service is adequate to deliver the services expected by the community for most incidents. For those rare incidents that tax the capacity of the department, external agency agreements have been established to provide additional resources if necessary. This level of service satisfies the expectations of Columbus' citizens and elected officials. The department provides fire suppression, emergency medical services with transport, hazardous materials response, technical rescue, swift water rescue, and is a Georgia Search and Rescue Task Force (GSAR) (Team 9). The County's 911 system is operated by the police department and has the responsibility of dispatching for every department within the city that requires 911 services.

The CFEMS has fourteen strategically located stations equipped with 13 engines, 6 ladder trucks, and 2 squad trucks staffed daily. The CFEMS also has a dive truck, GSAR truck, trench truck, and hazardous materials unit, that are staffed as needed. Eight of the departments, 14 stations are equipped with a CFEMS Advanced Life Support (ALS) transport ambulance. The department contracts with two private ambulance companies that provide three 24-hour ambulances. Department engine minimum staffing is 4 (officer, driver, and 2 FFs), ladder minimum staffing is 3 (officer, driver, FF), (exception is ladder 12, and it is staffed with two firefighters due to it functioning as an engine on many occasions), squad truck minimum staffing is 4 (officer, driver, 2 FF's). All of the department's fire apparatus are designated ALS and are staffed with a Fire medic when staffing allows. Station 6 houses the department's hazardous materials team, and Station 9 provides technical rescue responses. Station 1 is designated as the swift water and dive rescue response team. Ambulances are staffed with one Advanced EMT (AEMT) and one EMT-Intermediate (EMT-I) or two AEMTs. The Deputy Chief of Operations monitors staffing to ensure battalion chiefs are following the department's staffing guidelines. The department is currently staffed with more officer medics than fire medics. Data analysis has shown that fire apparatus arrived at moderate-risk EMS incidents 4 minutes faster than the ambulance. Due to these factors, the department has transitioned into a delivery model that will allow for ALS care to reach citizens in a timelier manner. Fire medics are placed on all fire apparatus, and ambulances will be staffed with AEMTs and EMT-I's.

DEPARTMENT DIVISIONS

Community Risk Reduction (CRR)

The Community Risk Reduction (CRR) Division is responsible for enforcing life safety codes, issuing permits, and conducting plan reviews for fire suppression and detection systems, including fire flow testing and the placement of new hydrants. The division performs comprehensive life safety inspections and leads the development and implementation of the Community Risk Reduction Plan. CRR also administers a wide range of fire and life safety initiatives designed to enhance overall community safety, including free home safety surveys, residential carbon monoxide checks, school-based fire prevention education, a juvenile fire setter intervention program, complimentary smoke alarm installations, and various community risk reduction and improvement projects. The division maintains its status as a Georgia-certified law enforcement agency, reinforcing its role in both prevention and enforcement. In addition to proactive safety efforts, CRR conducts fire origin and cause investigations, supports the prosecution of fire-related criminal offenses, and responds to citizen inquiries and complaints, with investigative operations further strengthened by the support of an accelerant detection K-9 team.

Operations

The Operations Division is responsible for delivering fire suppression, emergency medical services, and specialized rescue operations to the community, including hazardous materials response, high-angle rescue, confined space rescue, trench rescue, and water rescue and recovery. The division is staffed by 423 sworn personnel and operates within a city structure divided into three battalions, maintaining a minimum of 99 personnel on duty daily across three 24-hour shifts. Responding to approximately 45,000 emergency incidents each year, the division deploys multiple units to the majority of calls. Operations are conducted from fourteen stations, housing thirteen engine companies, six ladder companies (Quints), three command vehicles, two squad companies, one Georgia Search and Rescue (GSAR) heavy rescue unit, and twelve advanced life support ambulances, four of which are operated by private ambulance services. The division is led by a Deputy Chief who oversees daily operations, along with a Special Operations Captain/Coordinator responsible for managing all special operations resources, including training, equipment, and incident support. Additionally, every engine, ladder, and squad company is equipped with Thermal Imaging Cameras (TICs), and each apparatus carries an Automatic External Defibrillator (AED) or cardiac monitor along with a full complement of first responder equipment. Extrication equipment is strategically distributed throughout the city to ensure rapid access and is located on all ladder companies, both squad companies, and Engine 15.

Resource Management

The Resource Management Division is responsible for the budget process, including research/development, procurement, bid specifications, and ensuring the efficient repair/replacement of all emergency equipment assigned to the department. The division works closely with other city departments to ensure the efficient repair of the department's facilities and vehicles. The division supplies fourteen stations with emergency and non-emergency equipment and is responsible for all records pertaining to the repair/replacement of all personal protective equipment, including the required testing, repair, and replacement of self-contained breathing apparatus. The division provides rehabilitation services at emergency incidents and is responsible for issuing uniforms and personal protective equipment to all sworn personnel.

Training

The Training Division conducts and coordinates all department training activities including but not limited to recruit training, fire suppression, emergency medical, rescue, officer development, national incident management system (NIMS), and other training programs as necessary to meet established state and federal mandates each year. The division is responsible for ensuring that all department members meet the training requirements as set forth by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), Insurance Services Office (ISO), Georgia Firefighter Standards and Training, Columbus Consolidated Government, Georgia Department of Human Resources, and the internal requirements of the Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services.

COMMUNITY RISK REDUCTION/OUTREACH

The Department of Columbus Fire and Emergency Medical Services (CFEMS) is dedicated to reducing risk within the community. The Community Risk Reduction (CRR) division consists of inspections, fire investigations, and public education. The department's public education program educates, on average, 15,266 children (pre-K through 8th grade) and 824 (65+) adults in the areas of fire and injury prevention. The inspections personnel ensure that businesses within Columbus follow local and state laws to provide a safe environment for employees and citizens. Through fire investigations, data is gathered as to the origin and cause of fire events; that information can later be incorporated into the public education program. The department offers free smoke detectors and installation for citizens. Through a collaboration with the Red Cross, the department has conducted community smoke detector initiatives that target a chosen geographical section of the city for door-to-door contact with citizens for smoke detector installation and fire safety education. Field personnel are the department's main providers of public education; through school visits and station visits, our personnel interact with the community frequently. The department distributes hundreds of educational materials annually; more emphasis has been placed on Spanish literature to ensure all citizens within the community are educated in fire safety.

The Deputy Chief of Community Risk Reduction serves concurrently as the City Fire Marshal. In this capacity, the Fire Marshal oversees two Captains (Assistant Fire Marshals), each responsible for managing a primary division function—Investigations and Inspections. The Fire Marshal also provides direct oversight of the Public Safety Educator.

The division includes eight Fire Inspectors/Investigators who conduct fire origin and cause investigations, perform inspections, deliver public education programs, complete plan reviews, and issue permits. In addition to these responsibilities, the Fire Marshal serves as the department's Public Information Officer.

FIRE INVESTIGATIONS

The investigative services section of CRR has three full-time investigators and maintains at least three reserve investigators who serve in field operation positions when not needed for fire investigations. The three investigators work 24 hours on a designated shift. Reserve investigators fill in during vacations, sick leave, etc.

CFEMS has adopted NFPA 921, "A Guide for Fire and Explosion Investigation," and NFPA 1033, "Standard for Professional Qualifications for Fire Investigator". The principles and practices of NFPA 921 and NFPA 1033 are part of the instruction curriculum of the Georgia Public Safety Training Center's Arson Investigation Program. CFEMS personnel must complete this training prior to being placed in the position of fire investigator. Each fire

investigator is required to utilize these codes to ensure best practices are used for the systematic approach to their fire scene investigations.

The department is authorized through City Ordinance to investigate the origin, cause, and circumstances of any fire in the jurisdiction. The Georgia Peace Officer Standards and Training Council (POST) has recognized the City of Columbus, Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services, as a law enforcement agency as defined in O.C.G.A. 35-8-2 et al. Seq.

PUBLIC SAFETY EDUCATION

The Community Risk Reduction Division takes a proactive approach to public fire safety education. The department offers a variety of safety-oriented programs to the public, such as free smoke detector installations, free home safety surveys, classes on fire extinguisher usage, presentations and consultations with corporate officials, speeches to civic groups, and takes full advantage of local media and social media platforms to promote fire safety. The Community Risk Reduction Division utilizes the findings of the Community Risk Assessment to determine areas of concentration for the public education program.

Most public safety education programs are conducted within the Muscogee County School District, local private schools, and child daycare centers. Initiated in 1992, it is an in-depth program that is provided for all Muscogee County schools. The CRR division strives to instill in children positive fire safety behaviors through these school-based programs. Children in the system learn positive safety values at an elementary level and carry them with them throughout their lives. The school programs are focused on children in pre-K through the 8th grade. The CRR division also focuses on the elderly population age 65+ through Fire Safety education provided to large group centers and neighborhood civic groups.

YOUTH FIRE SETTER INTERVENTION

The department conducts juvenile fire setter intervention sessions with identified participants through one of the inspectors who is formally trained to conduct the session. The sessions are conducted in a structured and private environment with the legal guardian's permission. A log of all participants is kept by the inspector who coordinates with the fire investigators in providing this service.

PUBLIC ACCESS DEFIBRILLATION

Effective bystander CPR, provided immediately after cardiac arrest, can double a victim's chance of survival. Providing the public access to an AED should further increase the likelihood of a victim surviving cardiac arrest.

The city has placed AEDs in all government buildings to ensure that early access defibrillation is available to citizens who may experience a cardiac emergency while visiting government facilities. There are businesses throughout the community that have AEDs to protect their employees as well as any patron that visits their business.

STAFF

CFEMS is authorized to fill 433 positions: 423 sworn and 10 civilian positions. Fire suppression personnel are assigned to one of three shifts: A, B, or C. Each shift works 24 hours on-duty and 48 hours off-duty. Minimum on-duty staffing for each shift is 94 personnel consisting of three battalion chiefs, eight captains, 13 lieutenants, 21 sergeants (drivers), and 49 firefighters.

Sworn personnel are trained to respond to fire-related incidents, medical emergencies, hazardous materials incidents (HAZMAT), technical rescues, mass casualties, and other emergencies. All recruits are being hired and trained to Firefighter II, Hazmat Operations, and Advanced EMT (AEMT). CFEMS provides Advanced Life Support (ALS) by requiring at least one Fire medic on all ambulances and many of the department's engines. CFEMS has an accredited paramedic program that trains an average of 15 paramedics annually. Contracted private ambulances must be equipped as advanced life support, with a minimum of one paramedic per ambulance.

ATTRITION AND RECRUITING

In 2021, a diverse recruitment team was formed with volunteer field personnel to assist in the department’s goal of being more representative of the community we serve. The team will attend job fairs targeting high school students, explore recruitment opportunities through a partnership with Fort Benning, and explore other opportunities available within the community and surrounding jurisdictions. The charts below show the current demographic of the department as well as the current retention rates of new hires (first 24 months). The recruiting efforts of the department are an effort to create a more diverse workforce that is reflective of the city’s demographic. In addition, the targeted recruiting is an effort to increase retention rates among our newly hired employees to create a more experienced workforce.

2025 Department Demographics							
Caucasian Male	Caucasian Female	African American Male	African American Female	Hispanic Male	Hispanic Female	Other Male	Other Female
272	22	62	10	14	2	8	2
69.74%	5.61%	15.82%	2.55%	3.57%	0.51%	2.04%	0.51%

2024-2025 Cadet Demographics and Retention							
	Caucasian Male	Caucasian Female	African American Male	African American Female	Hispanic Male	Other Male	Total
Hired	90	10	35	7	7	5	112
Resigned/Terminated	36	3	14	2	3	2	43
Percentage	26.79%	28.57%	55.56%	50.00%	50.00%	33.33%	38.39%

2024 - 2025 Cadet Separation Factors						
EMT School	Fire School	Physical	Discipline Reason	Job Change	Family Reason	Total
15	12	5	7	17	5	43
25.58%	6.98%	16.28%	16.28%	23.26%	11.63%	N/A

RESOURCES

ENGINE

Thirteen of our fourteen stations have one engine, with the exception of Station 12, which is equipped with one ladder truck. All engines are NFPA-designated ‘triple combination’ engines, equipped with a 1500 GPM fire pump, hose complement, and water tank. The minimum staffing on an engine is four personnel (see SOG OPS-20 Staffing Management Guideline): one officer, one driver, and two firefighters. The role of the engine company during fire suppression operations is to pump water onto the fire through a variety of fire hoses and associated appliances to lower the temperature of the fuel below its ignition temperature, thereby extinguishing the fire. The engine crew also operates hose lines, conducts search and rescue, and performs any other duties conducive to quick and effective fire containment that contribute to saving lives and protecting property. This unit and crew provide a variety of emergency medical services capabilities.

LADDER

There are six ladder truck companies strategically placed throughout the city. The length of the aerial ladders varies in length but ranges from 75 to 105 feet. All frontline ladder trucks have the capacity to pump water with a 1500 GPM pump. The minimum staffing on a ladder truck is three personnel (one officer, one driver, and one firefighter) (see SOG OPS-20 Staffing Management Guideline); exception is Ladder 12 staffed with four personnel (one officer, one driver, and two firefighters) (see SOG OPS-20 Staffing Management Guideline). Ladder trucks provide elevated work platforms and master streams when the situation dictates, and otherwise, they aid in fire suppression efforts conducted by engine companies, including entry and ventilation. All ladder trucks carry a complete complement of first-line battery-operated extrication equipment, spreaders, cutters, forced entry tools, etc., and are routinely dispatched to rescue calls. This unit and crew provide a variety of emergency medical services capabilities.

SQUAD

CFEMS operates two squad trucks: one at Station 6 and one at Station 9. Minimum staffing is four: one officer, one driver, and two firefighters (see SOG OPS-20 Staffing Management Guideline). Squad 6 acts as the department’s hazardous materials truck, as well as providing manpower, lighting, and air tank refill at fire and rescue scenes. Squad 9 personnel are trained to act as our technical rescue truck and have a minimum level of hazardous materials training as well.

BATTALION CHIEF

Minimum staffing is one battalion chief/acting battalion chief assigned to each of the department's three battalions over three squads for a total of nine battalion chiefs. The vehicle is a Ford F150 truck.

EMS

CFEMS currently staffs eight 24-hour transport ambulances. They are staffed with at least one EMT-I and a AEMT. All apparatus are at a minimum medical first responder units (MFRU) and staffed with at least one Fire Medic when staffing permits. The city has contracted with two private ambulance services to provide 4 24-hour ambulances and 2 peak-time ambulances to supplement ambulance transport services and respond to 911 calls from CFEMS stations.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

CFEMS has 68 members assigned to the Hazardous Material Teams (HMT's). The teams are located at Station 6 on three different shifts. The department's Special Operations Captain (rescue coordinator) directs the HMT in training, exercises, and leadership. The special operations captain also meets with the hazmat team officers on a biannual basis, or as needed, to discuss issues involving training, personnel, policies, procedures, and equipment procurement.

HAZMAT EQUIPMENT

<u>Station 6</u>	<u>Station 9</u>
Engine 6: 2023 E-One Typhoon pumper	Squad 9: 2016 E-One Cyclone II 20' non-walk-in box with special storage compartments.
Ladder 6: 2016 E-One Cyclone II 100' Quint	
Squad 6: 2017 E-One Cyclone II 20' non-walk-in	
Decon 6: 2004 E-One Cyclone 22' non-walk in w/ command unit	

TECHNICAL RESCUE

CFEMS has 65 members assigned to the Technical Rescue Team (TRT). The members are located at Station 1 and Station 9 on three different shifts. The department’s Special Operations Captain directs the TRT in training, exercises, and leadership. The special operations captain also meets with team officers on a biannual basis, or as needed, to discuss issues involving training, personnel, policies, procedures, and equipment procurement.

TRT Equipment

<u>Station 1</u>	<u>Station 9</u>
Rescue 1: 2023 Dodge 2500 20ft Dive Van	Squad 9: 2016 E-One Cyclone II 20' non-walk-in box with special storage compartments allowing operation as a squad unit.
Rescue 2: 2015 Ford F-250 4x4	<u>Station 9</u>
Boat 1: 18' Alum-craft w/ 60 HP jet drive	Rescue 3: GSAR TF 4A 2009 Spartan Custom crew cab tractor pulling a General Safety utility trailer approximately 53' long.
Boat 2: Inflatable Zodiac boat w/ E-tec jet pump engine	Rescue 4: 1995 International w/ 48' goose neck tractor
Boat 3: Rescue One Connector w 60hp Mercury	Trench Rescue: Homesteader 20' x 8' tow-behind trailer
Boat 4: Rescue one Inflatable w/ 25hp Mercury	
Jet Ski 1: Two 2022 Sea-Doo GTI SE 170	

SECTION IV: ALL-HAZARD RISK ASSESSMENT

The Community Risk Assessment (CRA) is a core component of community risk reduction efforts within the Columbus Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services (CFEMS). With a thorough evaluation of the risks, specific to Muscogee County, the department can plan mitigating strategies for potential threats to the public’s safety. CFEMS identifies risk based on the nature and magnitude of hazards and risks within the geographic boundaries of Muscogee County, Georgia.

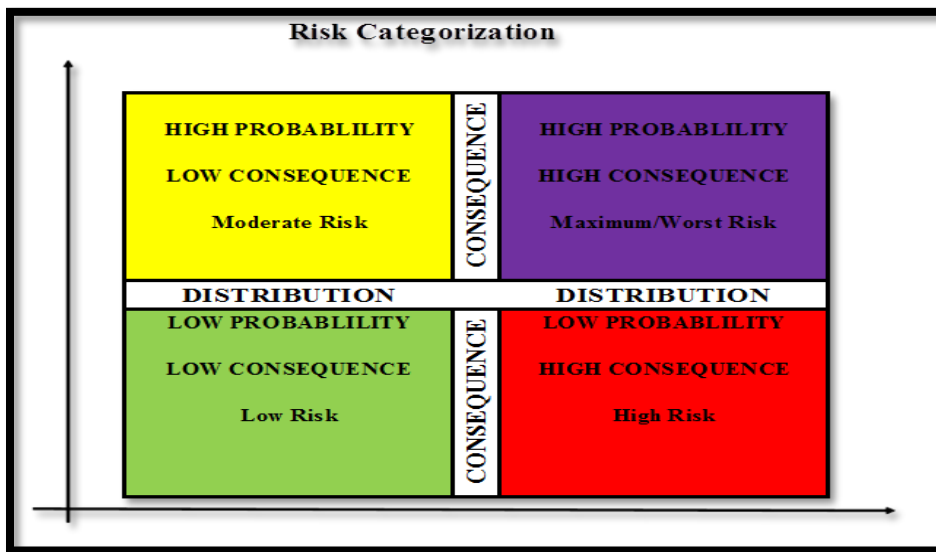
METHODOLOGY:

The department utilizes a Two-Axis methodology to qualify the risk level from each hazard. The model is used to rate the risk based on the estimated frequency and consequence/impact of an event. The department uses this information to determine proper distribution and concentration of its emergency response resources for a given hazard or risk. In simple terms:

Increased Impact = Increased Concentration. (Figure 4.1: Risk Categorization)

PROBABILITY/CONSEQUENCE MATRIX

Figure 4.1 Chart: Risk Categorization



The department’s risk assessment is shared with external partners (Ex, Piedmont Health Care, Safe Kids, Adult Trauma Injury Prevention Committee) to determine the community risk mitigation strategies and tactics. The CRA is updated every five (5) years to ensure there are no changes to the risks faced and that mitigation efforts are still relevant to reduce community risk.

Risk Identification:

The Columbus Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services has identified several hazards to the community to include Fires, Emergency Medical Incidents, technical rescue incidents, domestic preparedness, and Social Vulnerability.

Risk Assessment

The department assesses each risk/hazard based on the probability of occurrence and community impact. While probability is described as the likelihood that a given risk/hazard will occur, community impact is best described as the magnitude or reasonably expected loss that will be experienced.

Risk Classification

The department classifies these hazards per several programs, which include emergency management, fire suppression, emergency medical services (EMS), technical rescue, hazardous materials, community risk reduction, and domestic preparedness. For example, fire risks most directly affecting the fire suppression program are classified as such.

Risk Categorization

The department categorizes the threat each hazard poses within each program area on a scaled grading system to include (low, moderate, high, and very high)

FIRE EMERGENCIES:**FIRE FLOW AND WATER SUPPLY**

The City of Columbus receives its water supply from the Columbus Water Works, which is a public utility. The water supply is taken directly from the Chattahoochee River at Lake Oliver. The Columbus Water Works maintains 1,202 miles of water main and 16 storage tanks (12 elevated + 4 ground storage) with 29.46 million gallons of storage. Normal draw for the system is 32.61 million gallons per/day, 90 million gallons per/day is permitted. The system has 10 pumping stations with a capacity of 148 million gallons daily. The supply is distributed through three (3) distribution systems: the North Columbus Zone, the High Service Zone, and the Gravity Zone. CWW plans continually to enhance its redundancy and security capabilities related to water supply and has regular update/ planning/ coordination/ communication meetings with the Columbus Department of Fire and EMS, which have proven to be mutually beneficial. According to Columbus Water Works records, there are

seven thousand eight hundred and eighty-eight (7,888) hydrants on the city system, with new hydrants added for new development. Maintenance of hydrants installed on private property is the responsibility of the property owner. Of the 7,888 hydrants, 200 are private.

STRUCTURE RISK CATEGORIZATION:

For business, commercial, industrial, and multi-family residential structures, the agency utilizes an occupancy vulnerability assessment scoring system (OVAP) to categorize the fire risk in each structure.

Occupancy types assigned a higher score are considered to be more critical than those with a lower score. A score should be assigned to each of the following categories:

- Number of occupants/life safety
- Building construction
- Impact (including economic) on the community
- Number of stories
- Presence of automatic fire suppression/detection systems
- Overall size (square footage)
- Number of fire hydrants nearby
- Level of hazard
- Building usage

The structure is scored in (10) ten areas of concern and given an overall rating from Low risk to Very High risk based on the numerical score assigned.

LOW RISK

Low-Risk properties are those that, if involved in a fire, represent a minimal threat to the community. These are less likely to have a significant loss of life or financial impact because of the fire. Examples of Low-Risk properties are not limited to but include open tracks of land, rubbish fires, vehicle fires, and detached Storage Buildings.

MODERATE RISK

Moderate-Risk properties are determined through conducting an Occupancy Vulnerability Assessment Profile (OVAP). The OVAP determination for moderate risk includes an occupancy load from 26 to 75 and represents a moderate community impact. These structures have monitored fire detection and at least partial fire suppression. At least 2 or more hydrants are located within 1000 feet and are usually used as a multi-family residence. The building construction is ordinary type 3 and usually 2 stories in height. The total square footage is from 5,000 square feet to 14,999 square feet. All 1 and 2-family dwellings and select multi-family dwellings are considered moderate risk and receive the same response as properties identified as moderate risk through OVAP scoring.

HIGH RISK

High-Risk properties are determined through conducting an Occupancy Vulnerability Assessment Profile (OVAP). The OVAP determination for high-risk occupancies includes an occupancy load from 76-125, represent a high community impact if lost, and usually have only monitored fire detection with no fire suppression capability. These structures may have only 1 hydrant within 1000 feet and may be used as industrial/large business/large residential. These structures may be constructed using heavy timber and may range in height from 3 to 5 stories. The square footage is usually from 15,000 square feet to 29,000 square feet and could be minor infrastructure or contain some hazardous materials. Response to high-risk properties has been updated in the CAD system to ensure a sufficient and effective response force based on the identified risk.

VERY HIGH

Very High-Risk properties are determined through conducting an Occupancy Vulnerability Assessment Profile (OVAP). The OVAP determination for very high-risk occupancies includes an occupancy load over 126, represents a very high community impact if lost, may have no fire alarm or fire suppression capability. These structures may have no hydrant within 1,000 ft. or may be considered critical infrastructure. The building material may be type 5 (all-wood framed) and over 5 stories in height. The square footage may exceed 30,000 and may be industrial or contain significant hazardous materials. Response to very high-risk properties has been updated in the CAD system to ensure a sufficient and effective response force based on the identified risk.

Figure 4.2 Chart: OVAP Risk Categories 2025

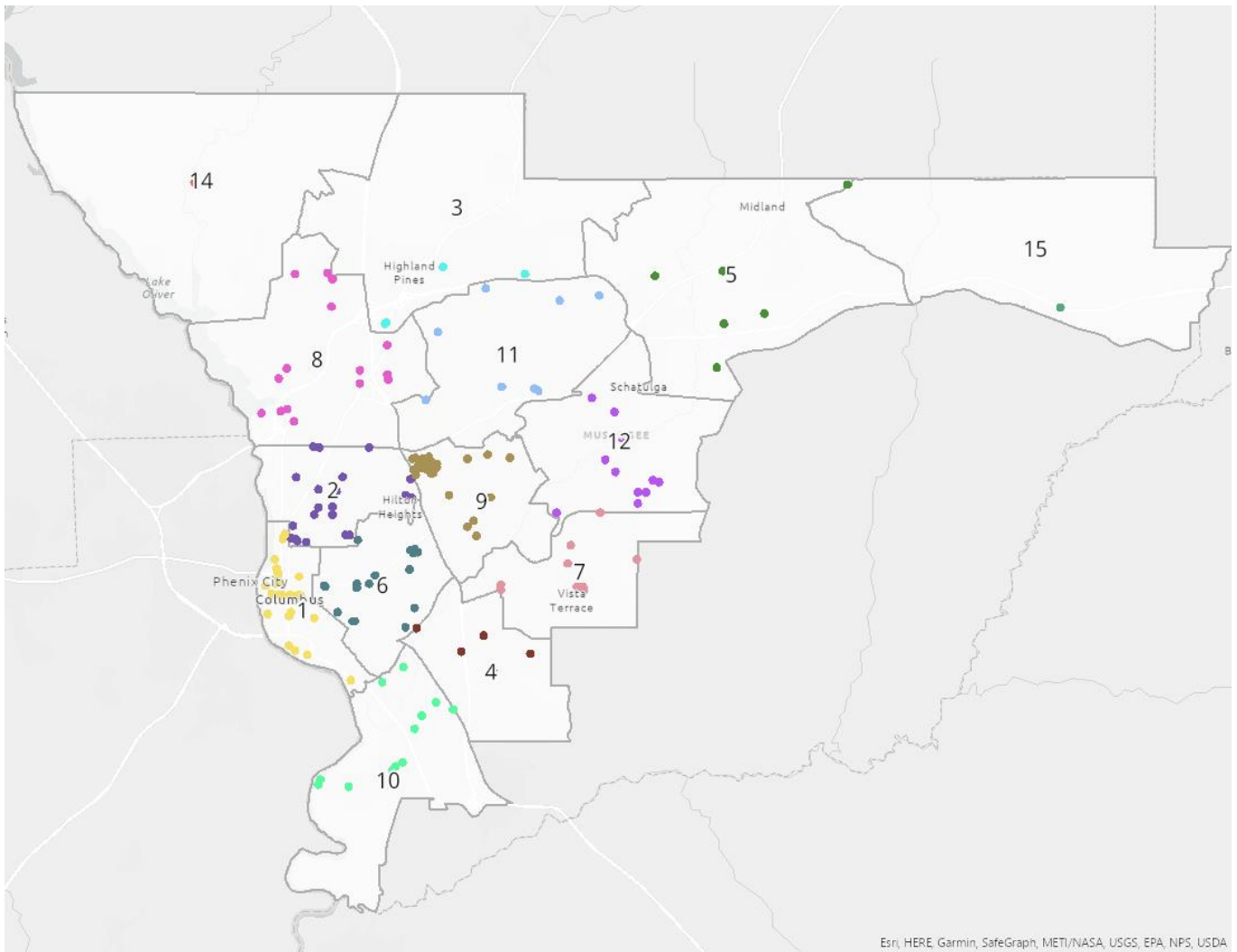
Territory	Risk Category Low	Risk Category Moderate	Risk Category High	Risk Category Very High	Totals
Station 1	217	374	39	16	646
Station 2	667	146	9	1	823
Station 3	314	426	42	3	785
Station 4	88	121	43	0	252
Station 5	66	43	32	0	141
Station 6	328	319	78	9	734
Station 7	104	57	10	0	171
Station 8	369	567	164	60	1160
Station 9	156	221	5	0	382
Station 10	232	436	48	2	718
Station 11	149	248	50	5	452
Station 12	95	156	18	0	269
Station 14	6	61	19	0	86
Station 15	6	3	0	0	9
Total	2797	3178	557	96	6628

TARGET HAZARDS

Target Hazard facilities provide essential products and services to the public that are necessary to preserve the welfare and quality of life in the county. In addition, these facilities support important public safety, emergency response, and/or disaster recovery functions. It is of great importance that the county prioritizes mitigation actions, which reduce the risk of damage to these facilities, which are so essential to the county’s wellbeing.

(Figure 4.3 Map: Target Hazards)

Target Hazards per Station Planning Zone



RISK CLASSIFICATION: FIRE SUPPRESSION (OVERALL ASSESSMENT)

After a comprehensive review of department response records from 2021-2025, the most probable type of fire event in Columbus Georgia, involves a cooking fire in a detached single-family residential dwelling. For these events, the Probability is high, and the community Consequence/Impact is Moderate.

According to Department records from 2021-2025 the jurisdiction experienced a total of 1,740 Structure Fires; 1,358 of which were Residential. To include:

- 1038 Private Dwellings
- 382 Apartments

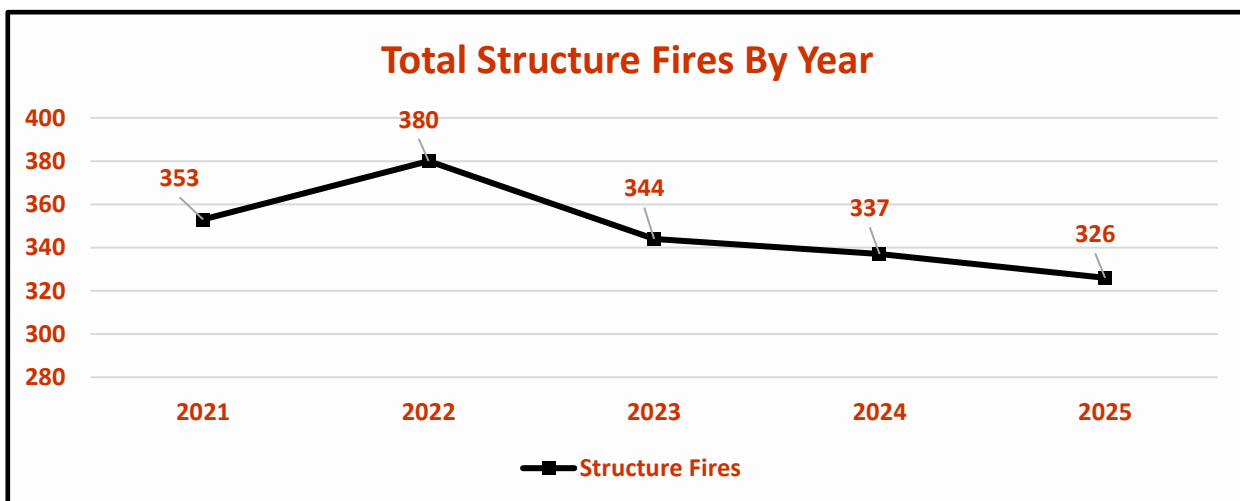
From 2021-2025, there were 1038 private dwelling fires in the jurisdiction. This accounts for 67% of residential building fires and 57% of all structure fires for the 5-year period.

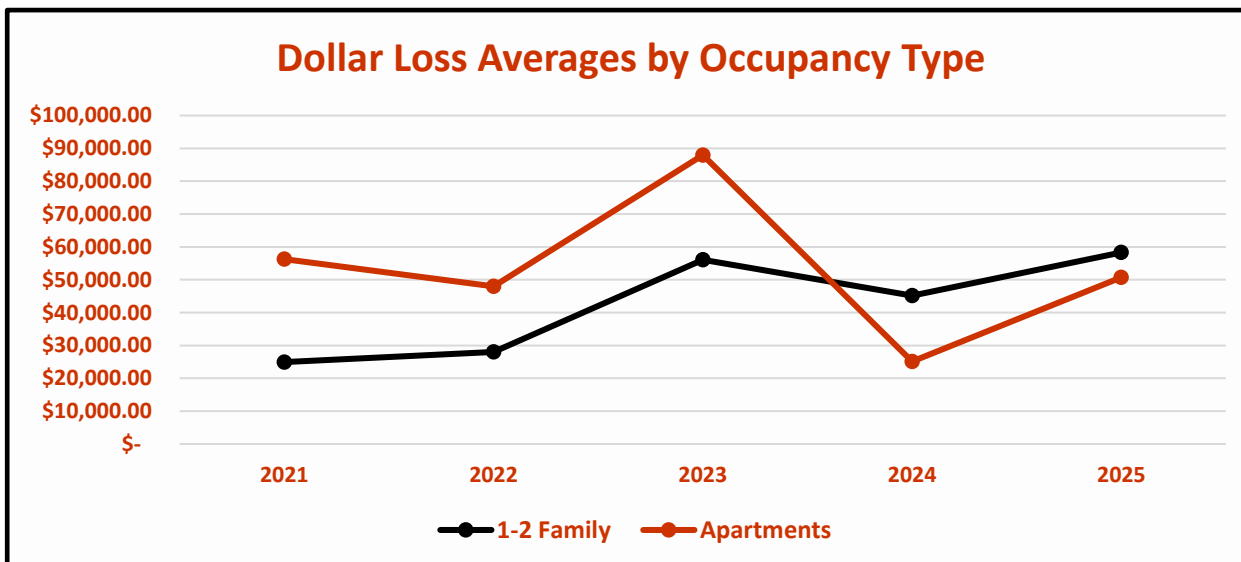
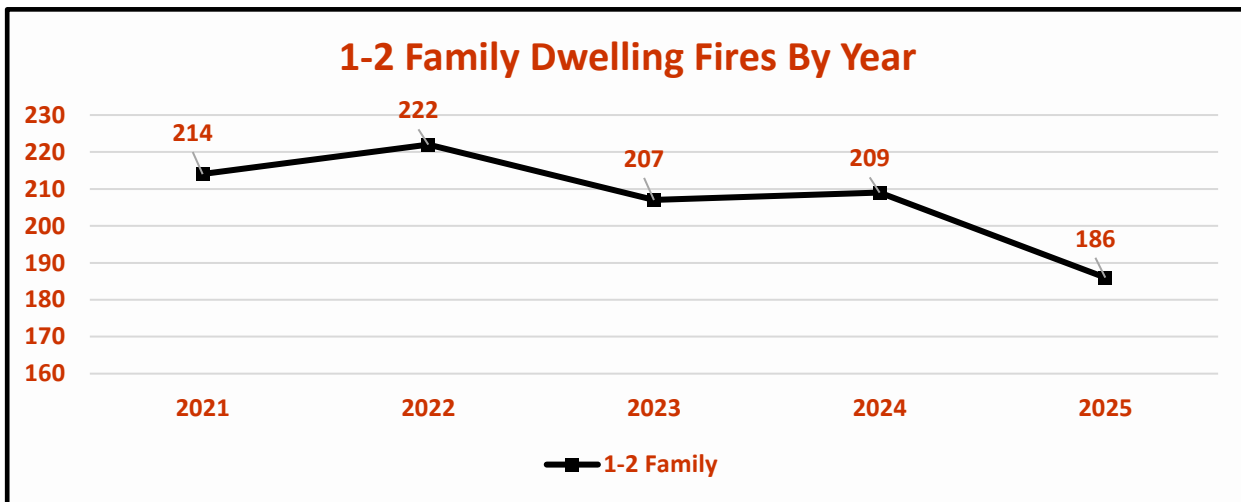
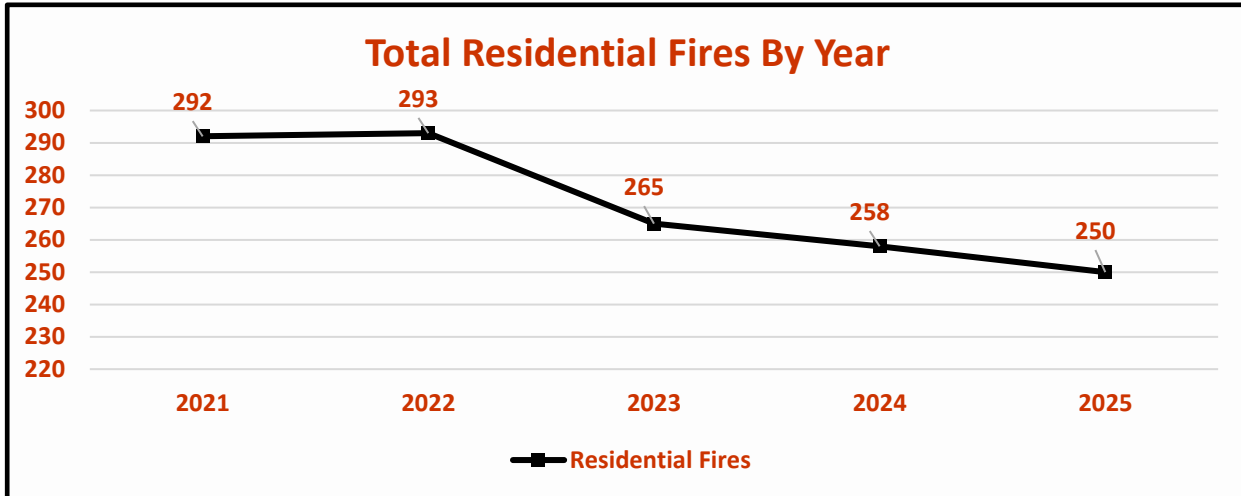
The second most probable type of fire event is apartment fires. For these events, the Probability is High, and the Consequence is Moderate due to the increased potential loss of life and family displacement as compared to private dwelling fires.

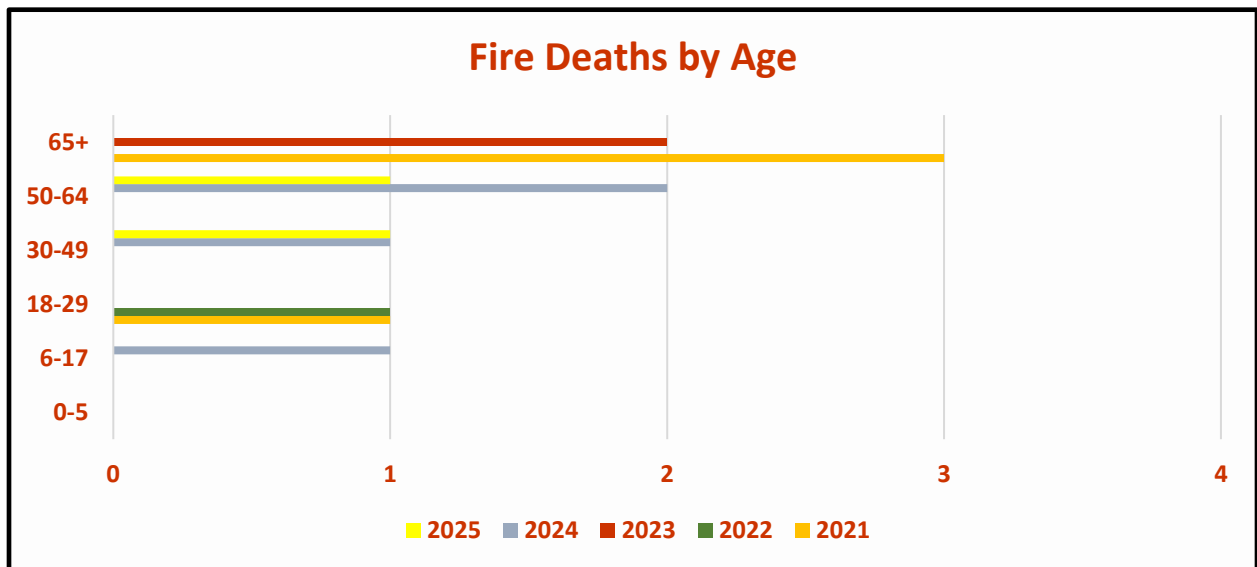
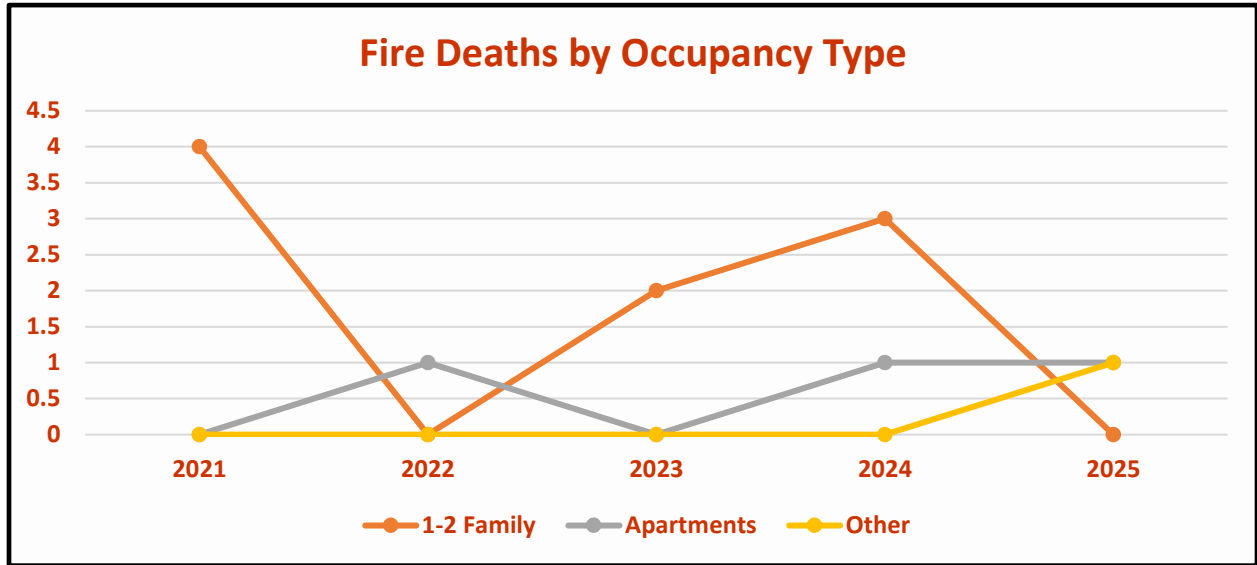
From 2021-2025 there were 382 apartment fires accounting for 26% of the residential building fires and 22% of all structure fires during the 5-year period.

These two fire incident types combined account of 93 percent of residential fires and 79 percent of total uncontrolled structure fires in the jurisdiction during the 5-year period. The most at-risk age group for fire death in the jurisdiction were those 60-69.

Figures 4.4 to 4.11 Charts: (Fire Data)







EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

EMERGENCY Medical Services (EMS) refers to the treatment and transportation of individuals experiencing acute medical illness or a traumatic injury. The nature of these injuries or illnesses can range from minor to life-threatening. Most EMS incidents involve a single patient with repercussions to the patient’s family, employer, and community. Motor vehicle accidents, workplace accidents, epidemic infectious diseases, and other mass casualty incidents can affect multiple patients. From 2021-2025, the department responded to 129,996 calls for EMS services, resulting in approximately 125,400 patient contacts.

The three most frequent primary first impressions involved General Sickness (54%), Pain (8%), followed by Behavioral (5%). According to the Adult Injury and Prevention Committee, motor vehicle accidents and ground-level falls are two of the most prominent emergencies experienced by Piedmont Regional Hospital locations.

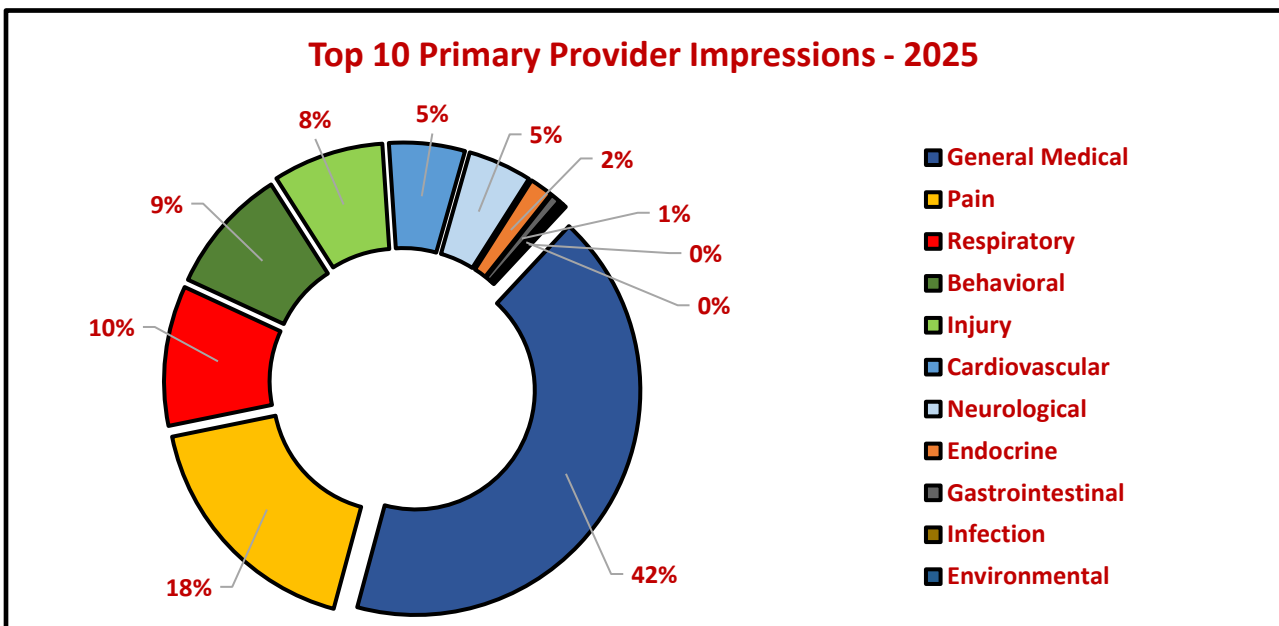
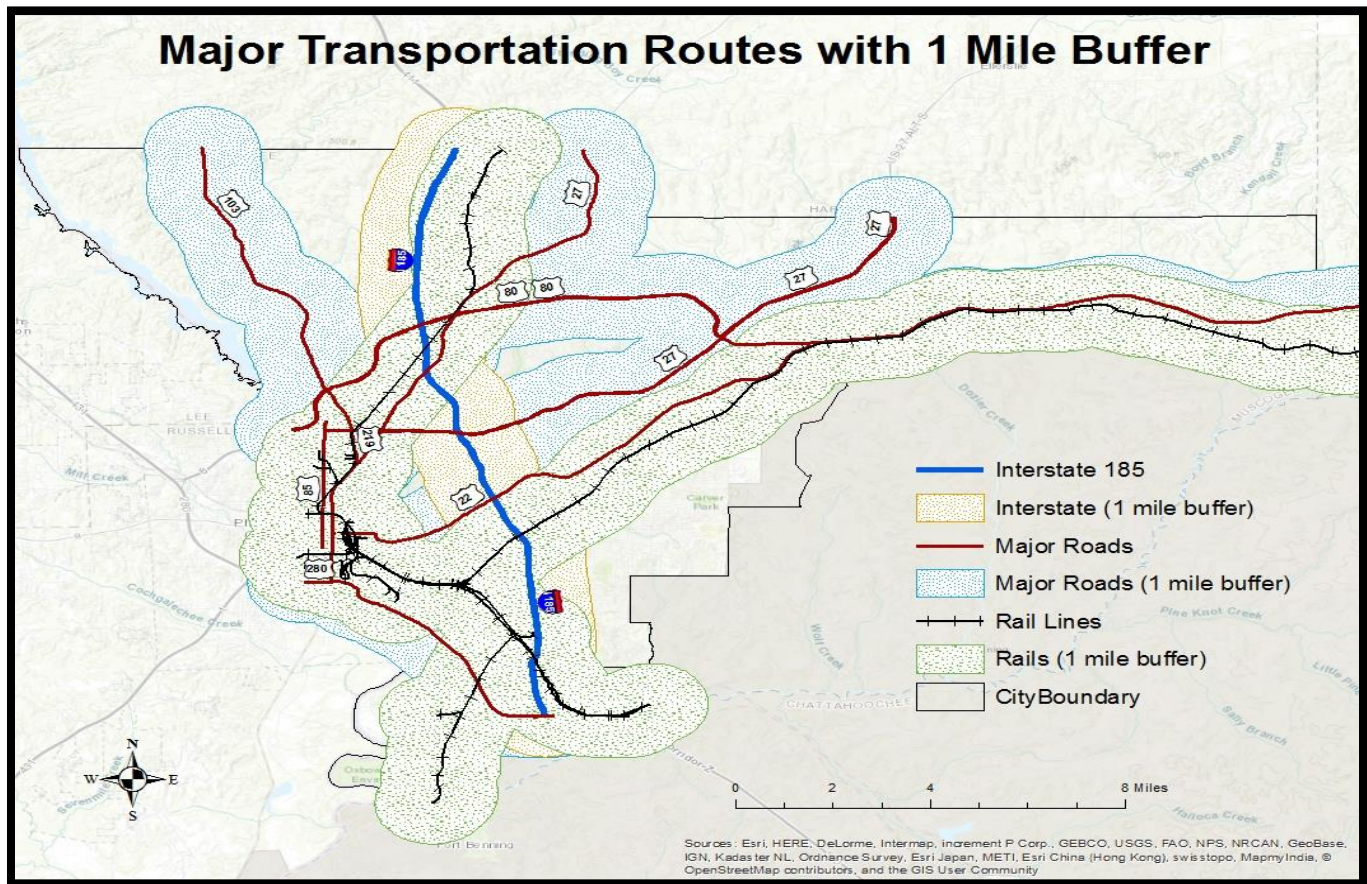


Figure 4.12 Chart: Top 10 Provider Impressions

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS:

The term “hazardous materials” (HAZMAT) refers to certain chemical substances that can pose a threat to the health or the environment if released or misused. People affected by hazardous materials can suffer long-lasting health effects, serious injury, and even death. Sources of such materials are agriculture, industry, medicine, research, and consumer goods. In the United States, an estimated 4.5 million facilities manufacture, use, or store hazardous materials in varying quantities. This is not only true for large industrial plants, but also for local dry cleaners, gardening supply stores, and even homes, where hazardous chemicals are stored and used regularly. For this document, a Type 1 hazmat incident is defined as an incident that requires the response of multiple specialized units, including the Hazardous Materials Team, to properly mitigate the incident. Type 2 hazmat incidents are of a lesser nature (Ex. Natural gas leaks in a residential setting, vehicle fuel spills, and generally only require the response of a single resource to properly mitigate the incident.

Figure 4.13 Map: Transportation with 1-Mile Buffer



HAZARDOUS MATERIALS EVENT PROFILE

Probability

Hazardous Materials are most often accidentally released under two conditions:

- From fixed locations, where the materials are produced, processed, stored, or sold.
- In-transit when the materials are transported.

Many industrial and commercial locations store one or more potentially hazardous chemicals, and the areas around or near these storage locations are particularly at risk of fixed spills. Potential losses can be estimated for fixed source spills because the location and a rough estimate of the hazardous materials are known. However, potential losses due to transportation-related incidents are difficult to estimate due to the wide variety of circumstances inherent in this type of incident.

The jurisdiction maintains a professionally trained and equipped Hazardous Materials Response Team capable of a technician-level response. When the Columbus Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department responds to hazardous materials incidents, and the responsible party is known, the CCG charges the responsible party for the cleanup. The CCG is only burdened with funding for the incident mitigation if the cause or source of the incident cannot be found. This case is rare and applies especially to incidents involving the Chattahoochee River. A spill of hazardous materials into Lake Oliver from specific points, such as pipeline crossings, is the most serious threat to Columbus-Muscogee County's water quality, according to the Columbus Water Works management. Non-point source pollution carried in stormwater runoff from urban structures is also a matter of concern.

Hazardous Materials have the potential to create significant public safety challenges within the jurisdiction. Because hazardous materials are handled and stored at over seventy-four fixed facilities in Columbus-Muscogee County, GA, and countless amounts of unknown products are transported on the road and railways in the jurisdiction, the threat of an accidental release is high. The volume of traffic passing through the county and major traffic intersections places the community at significant risk of in-transit hazardous-material incidents.

Risk Classification: Hazmat Program

Overall Risk Assessment and Categorization:

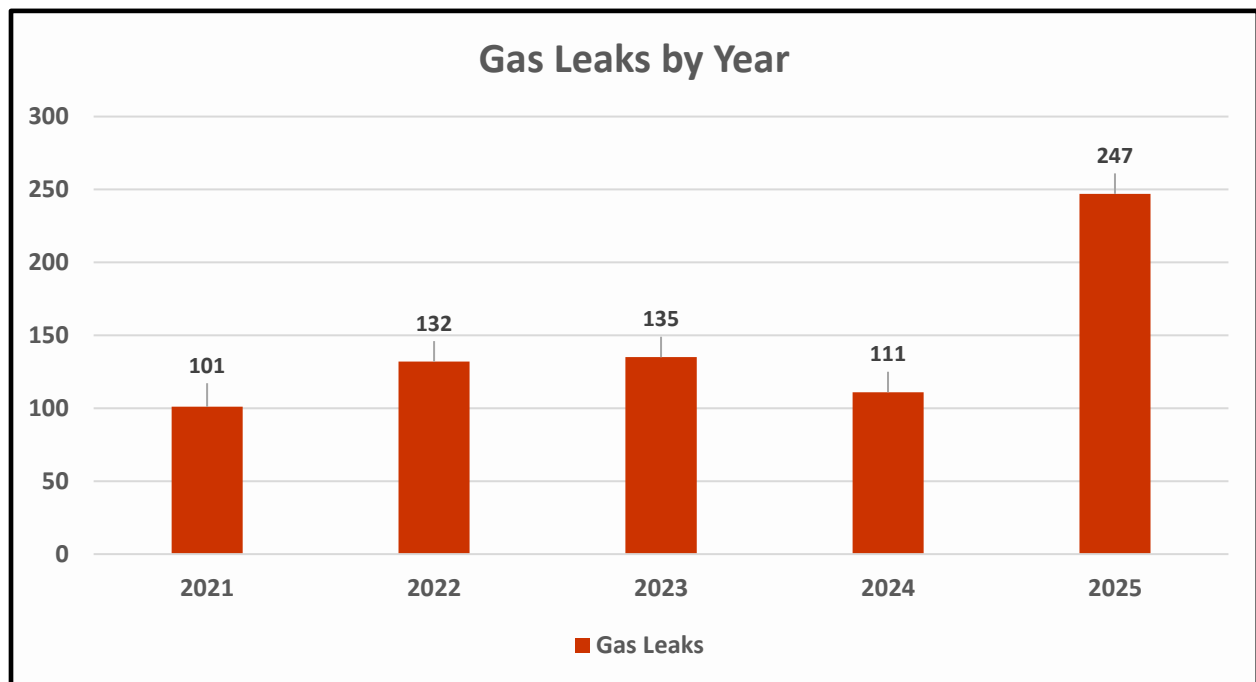
Type 1 Haz-Mat Incident Risk Analysis / Probability-Low / Impact-High

Type 2 HazMat Incident Risk Analysis / Probability-High / Impact-Low

From 2021-2025, the jurisdiction experienced 10 reported Type 1 Haz-mat releases, which involved anhydrous ammonia, chlorine, and ethylene glycol.

From 2021-2025, the jurisdiction experienced multiple reported Type 2 Hazmat releases, the most frequent being residential Natural Gas leak conditions.

Figure 4.14 Chart: Gas Leaks by Year



TRANSPORTATION ACCIDENTS

Transportation is the conveyance of passengers and goods from one place to another. An accident involving a car, bus, train, airplane, or other vehicle is a transportation-related accident. When commercial vehicles are involved, where enterprises convey goods in their commercial vehicles, it is also called a cargo accident, and hazardous materials spills might be one of the results of transportation accidents.

Probability

Columbus-Muscogee County's roads are busy, and the combination of congestion, unsafe or illegal speed, and driving under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs or mere lack of attention (distracted drivers) can lead to accidents. The threat applies mainly along the major thoroughfares as depicted in Figure 4.15

According to the Georgia Governor's Office of Highway Safety, 124 fatalities occurred in Columbus- Muscogee County for the years 2020-2024. (Latest Data)

Figure 4.15 Chart: Transportation Map



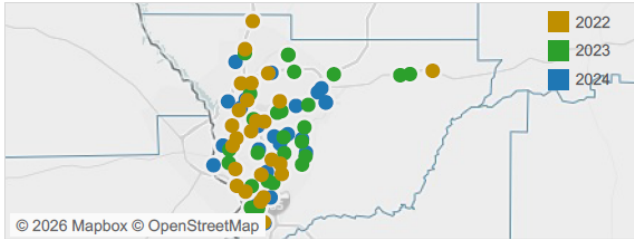
GEORGIA COUNTY FACT SHEETS
2024 Preliminary

Muscogee County

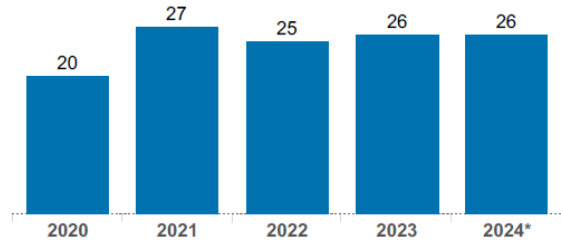
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Muscogee

Fatal Crashes | 2022-2024*



All Traffic Fatalities | 2020-2024*

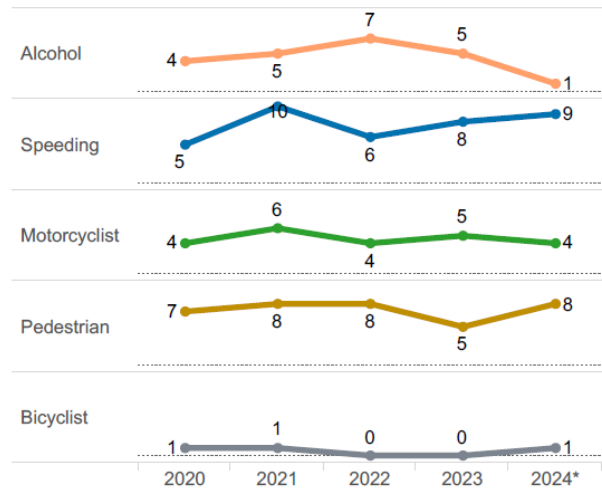


Crashes & Serious Injuries | 2020-2024*

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024*
Crashes	6,670	7,353	6,759	6,695	6,112
Suspected Serious Injury	83	103	127	111	82

The number of crashes and suspected injuries may vary depending on other sources (i.e., GEARS or Numerics). Data from 2020-2024 were obtained from GDOT databases revised by Crash Outcomes Data and Evaluation System (CODES).

Traffic Fatalities by Type | 2020-2024*



Note: A single fatality can be categorized more than once. Therefore, the SUM of individual cells will not equal the total due to double counting. Alcohol test results are imp..

Passenger Vehicle Occupant Fatalities Restraint Use

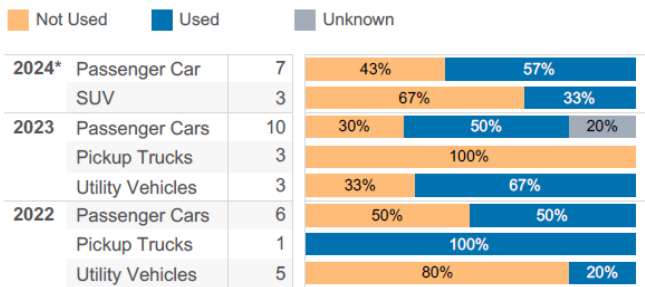


Figure 4.16 Maps/Charts: Latest Vehicle Fatality Data

TECHNICAL RESCUE

Technical rescue incidents involve complex situations that require specialized equipment and highly trained personnel to minimize loss. These incidents may include trench collapse, structural collapse, high-angle rope rescue, swift water rescue, machinery extrication, advanced vehicle extrication, large animal rescue, and confined space rescue, often exceeding the capabilities of standard response units and requiring resources and personnel with advanced certifications and specialized training.

The department responds to an average of 58 technical rescue calls per year. Most of these responses are related to elevator entrapments, vehicle extrication, and swift water events. The jurisdiction is unique in that the western boundary is set by the Chattahoochee River, which attracts large numbers of citizens for recreation, especially in the summer months. As a result, the jurisdiction must respond to frequent water emergencies in the river, which can and do experience changes in water flow for power generation needs in the community. These changes in flow rate can sometimes be a surprise to patrons who venture into the riverbed and find themselves unable to exit before rising water levels become too much to overcome during exit. The department maintains a swift water rescue element for response to such emergencies.

Currently, all CFEMS ladder companies, squad companies, and Engine 15 are equipped with vehicle extrication equipment suitable to handle the most common motor vehicle entrapments. Stations 1 and 9 have more advanced equipment and training to deal with rescue incidents requiring a more complex response. These three stations are also geographically remote from each other, which allows for a timelier response to complex technical rescue incidents. The table below lists the technical rescue incidents that occurred between 2021 and 2025.

Probability

From 2021 to 2025, the department responded to **293** Technical Rescue Incidents

The most prevalent technical rescue incidents were:

- Extrication from Elevator- **69**
- Swift Water Rescue - **38**
- Extrication from Vehicle-**31**

Risk Classification: Technical Rescue

Overall Risk Assessment and Categorization:

- Elevator Rescues - the Probability is Moderate, and the Community Impact is Low.
- Vehicle Extrications - the Probability is Moderate, and the Community Impact is Low.
- Swift Water Rescues - the Probability is Moderate, and the Community Impact is Low.

Figure 4.17 Chart: 5-Year Rescue Incidents

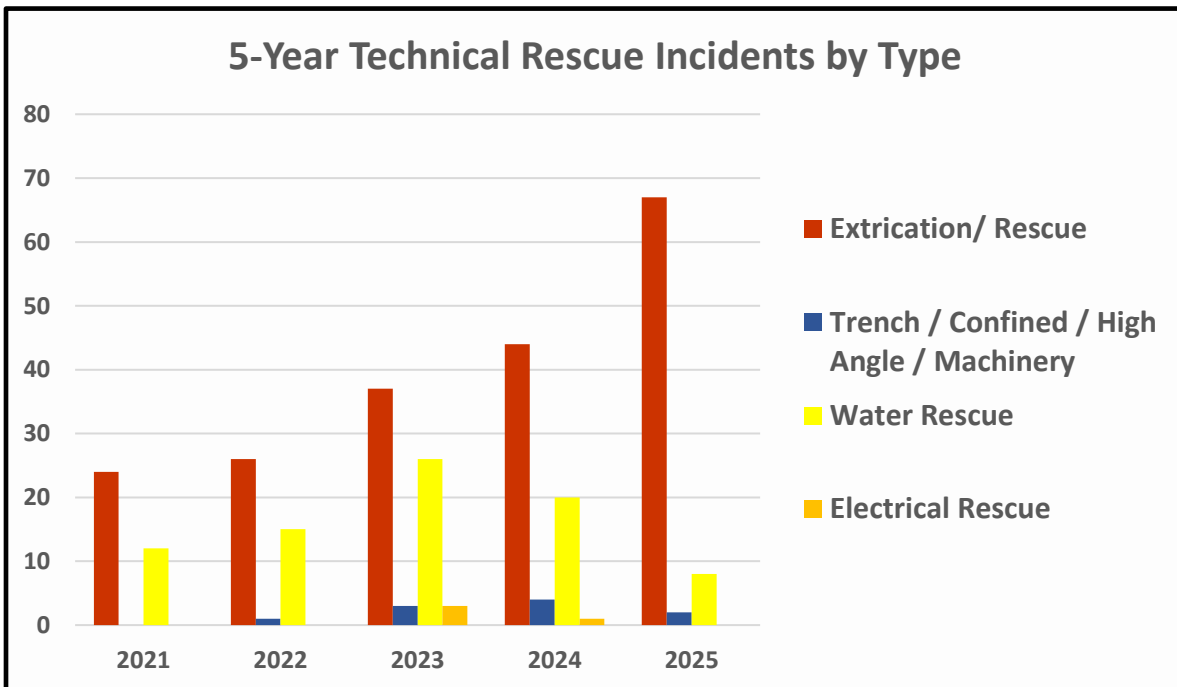
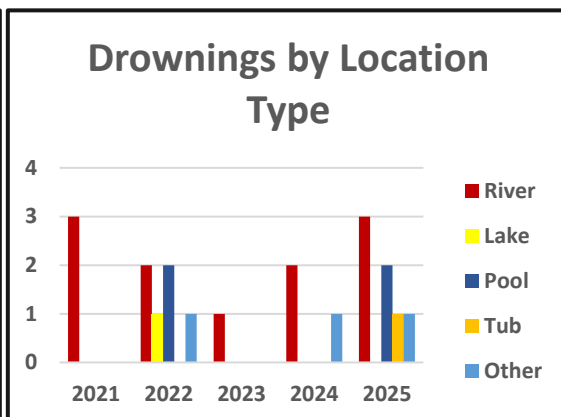
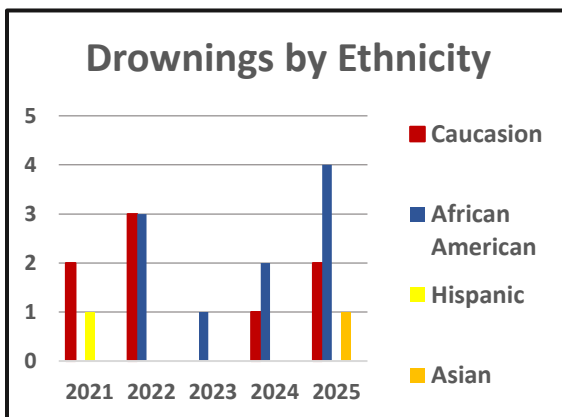
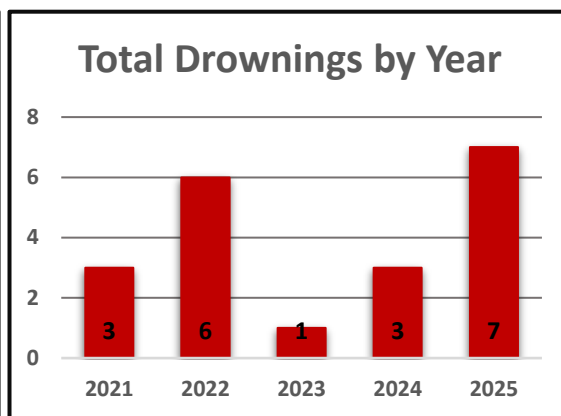
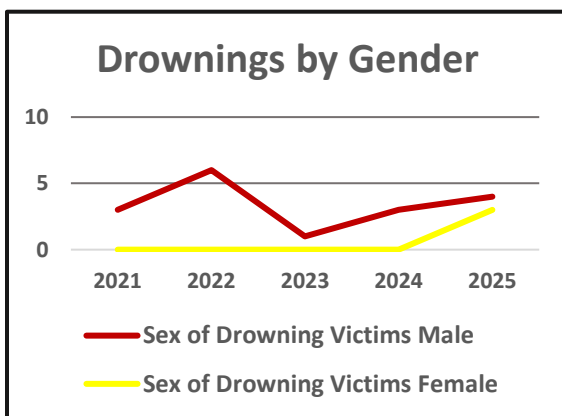
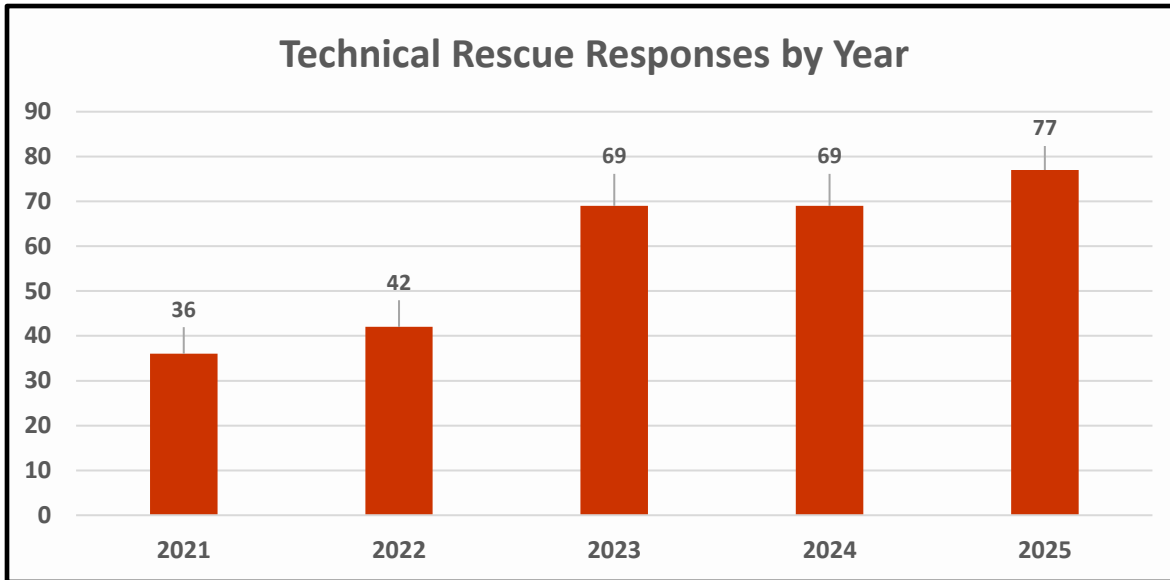


Figure 4.17 Charts: Technical Rescue Incidents by Year



SEVERE WEATHER

TORNADO EVENT PROFILE

While the Dixie Alley, the region of maximum tornado frequency, is a nickname sometimes given to areas of the southern United States that are particularly vulnerable to strong or violent tornadoes. This is distinct from the better-known Tornado Alley and has a high frequency of strong, long-track tornadoes that move at higher speeds (50+ miles per hour). Dixie Alley includes much of the area of the lower Mississippi Valley. It stretches from eastern Texas and Arkansas across Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee, Alabama, Georgia, to upstate South Carolina and western North Carolina; the area reaches as far north as southeast Missouri and southwest Kentucky. The State of Georgia has experienced at least 1,500 tornadoes since 1950, with 454 of them being classified Category EF2-EF5, strong to violent. Columbus-Muscogee County was hit by at least 14 Tornadoes and one funnel cloud since the 1950s. (Figure 4.2: Tornadoes)

Columbus-Muscogee County Tornado Events 1953-2025

Figure 4.18 Chart: Tornadoes

DATE	TORNADO F SCALE	DEATHS	INJURIES	DAMAGE PROPERTY
4/18/1953	F3	2	300	\$25,000,000
2/22/1961	F1			\$25,000
3/31/1961	F3			\$25,000
5/16/1966	F1		11	\$2,500,000
5/1/1978	EF2		3	\$2,500,000
11/20/1983	EF1		2	\$250,000
3/29/1991	EF0			\$2,500
5/5/1991	EF1			\$250,000
11/22/1992	EF1			\$250,000
3/13/1997	EF1		1	\$775,000
11/15/2006	EF0			\$500
3/1/2007	EF2		1	\$28,000,000
4/19/2009	EF1			\$3,000,000
4/3/2017	EF1			\$100,000
3/3/2019	EF3			\$500,000
4/14/2019	EF0			\$150,000
4/14/2019	EF0			\$25,000
4/6/2025	EF1	2		\$100,000

Source: National Climatic Data Center

In Columbus-Muscogee County, there are approximately 84,182 structures, of which 71,450 are classified residential, 11,393 commercial, 147 industrial, 52 agricultural, and 647 religious/non-profit. The remaining 493 structures are essential facilities and include 326 government, 113 education, and 54 utility structures.

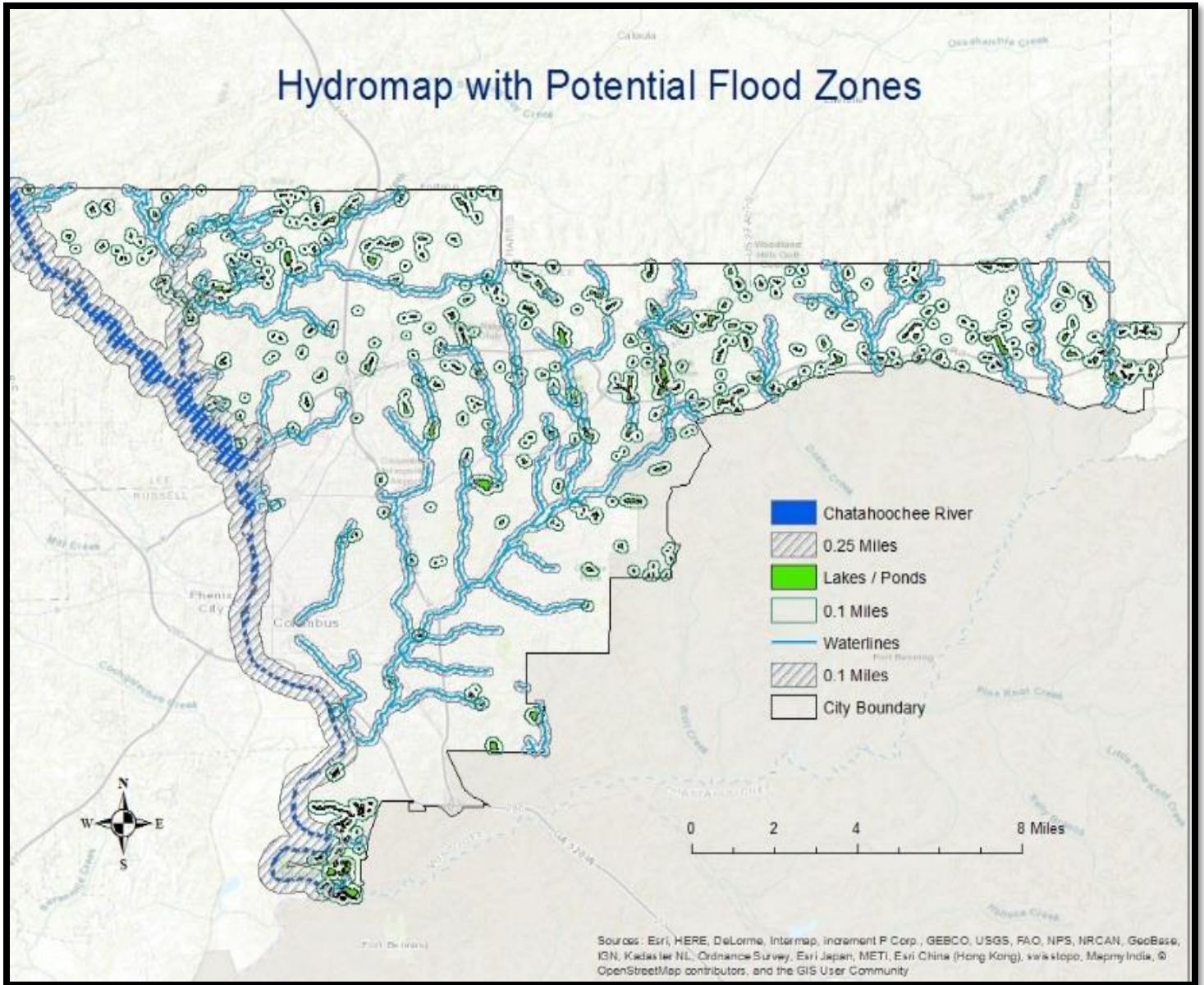
The 83,689 non-critical structures are potentially exposed to the threat of a tornado, just like the identified critical facilities. The total population of Columbus-Muscogee County, 206,922 residents, is endangered by a tornado. Older, non-critical private homes are especially at risk of being damaged by high winds or tornadoes. In Columbus-Muscogee County, 28.9% of all housing units were built before 1960. These houses, older than 45 years, may be more vulnerable to natural hazards than newer houses.

FLOOD EVENT PROFILE

Floods are defined as the rising of bodies of water, such as rivers and streams, overflowing their natural or artificial banks and submerging normally dry land. These high-water stages are often related to severe tropical storms or torrential rains from hurricanes. Floods can be slow, as the result of extended rain or a storm event, or fast rising, as the result of a flash flood. Flash floods and dam failure can be expected when an area is affected by large amounts of rainfall in a short time. However, flooding usually develops over a period of days.

Much has been done in Columbus-Muscogee County to reduce damage from flooding. Due to the County's proximity to the Chattahoochee River and to the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts, risk of flooding due to tropical storms is high, but the probability of this type of flooding causing extensive damage is moderate. (Figure 4.3 Flood Zones)

Figure 4.19 Map: Flood Zones



TERRORISM:

A standard definition of terrorism is the use of violence to elicit a general climate of fear in a population, to bring about a certain political objective, or to coerce or intimidate a government or civilian population. Terrorists may be members of political organizations, nationalistic and religious groups, revolutionaries, and even state institutions (such as armies and intelligence services).

Terrorism can take many different forms, including but not limited to the use of explosives, taking of innocent civilians as hostages, contaminating water or food supplies, plotting assassinations of prominent figures, or utilizing chemical, biological, and /or radiological agents in populated areas.

TERRORISM EVENT PROFILE, FREQUENCY OF OCCURRENCE, AND PROBABILITY

The location of Ft Benning, the largest Army training post in the nation, is contiguous to South Columbus. A terrorist act on the post would severely impact the army's training ability and the economy of the entire area. Many private citizens are employed by Ft Benning. This heightens the threat level to the county because an attack on the base would also directly affect Columbus.

Within the county, several international and multi-national corporations reside. These corporations and entities are identified in a separate document, which is classified and not available to the public. They employ thousands of individuals from Columbus and the surrounding area. The loss of any one of them from a terrorist incident would cause substantial losses to the economy and well-being of the entire region.

Columbus is the trade and economic center for a 16-county region, representing an effective buying income of approximately seven billion dollars annually. A terrorist incident would seriously affect commerce and trade for the entire region.

Critical infrastructure, such as telecommunications, natural gas and petroleum pipelines, banking and finance, air, rail, and highway transportation are either centralized in or traverses this jurisdiction. Any interruption to any part of the infrastructure would have a domino effect throughout the region, impacting areas hundreds of miles away. Employment, trade, tourism, and even recreation would suffer catastrophic damage.

DAM FAILURE

A dam is a barrier that prevents the flow of water, especially when it is built across a watercourse for impounding water. Dams have many benefits, which include navigation, agricultural irrigation, the provision of drinking water, and hydroelectric power. Dams are constructed to create lakes for recreation and to help in preventing or reducing floods.

Dam failure can pose serious risks. Dams fail for two main reasons: physical weakness in the structure, caused by a faulty design, wrong operation, or poor maintenance, weathering, mechanical changes, and chemical agents; and inundation of the dam by flood waters, such as in the wake of a hurricane. Once a dam breaks, property damage and the loss of life downstream of the dam can be caused by the energy of the water stored upstream.

DAM FAILURE EVENT PROFILE

To date, no problems have been recorded about dam failure in Columbus-Muscogee County. Regulation of the Chattahoochee River started when the first of eight privately owned dams was constructed on the river upstream from Columbus-Muscogee County between 1860 and 1962. Lake Oliver Dam was the last of these dams. Oliver Dam, between Phenix City, Alabama, and Columbus-Muscogee County, impounds the waters of Lake Oliver. Throughout the years, however, Oliver Dam continues to have updated construction additions. Oliver Dam is owned and operated by the Georgia Power Company and impounds the waters of Lake Oliver. The property line of the reservoir is the 337-foot contour line. The Georgia Power Company has an easement to flood land between the 337 and 342-foot contour lines.

The federally funded West Point Dam, about 30 miles linear distance upstream of Columbus- Muscogee County, was operational in 1975, and is the first dam upstream from Columbus- Muscogee County to have floodplain management as one of its purposes.

Should a breach occur at West Point Dam, upstream of Columbus-Muscogee County, or of Oliver Dam between Phenix City and Columbus-Muscogee County, the areas downstream, including uptown Columbus, would be in danger of flooding, destruction, and economic hardship.

SOCIAL VULNERABILITY:

Several factors, including poverty, lack of access to transportation, and crowded housing, may weaken a community’s ability to prevent human suffering and financial loss in the event of disaster. These factors are known as social vulnerability. The Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) ranks each census tract on 14 social factors, including poverty, lack of vehicle access, and crowded housing, and groups them into four related themes. Those themes are Socioeconomic Status, Household Composition, Race, Ethnicity, Language, Housing / Transportation, and Overall SV, which includes all themes. The darker the color, the higher the vulnerability. (Figures 4.21: Social Vulnerability)

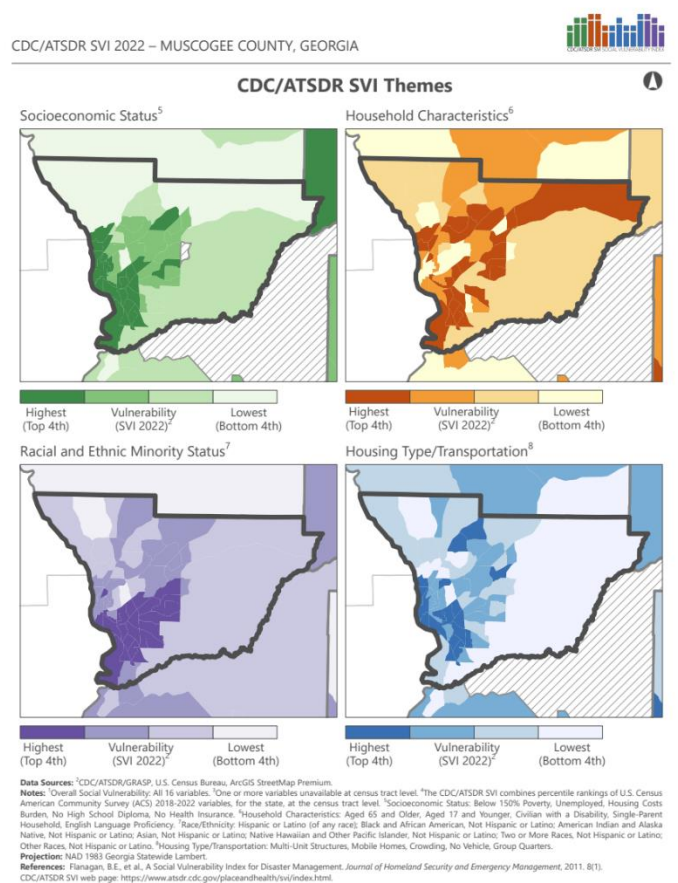
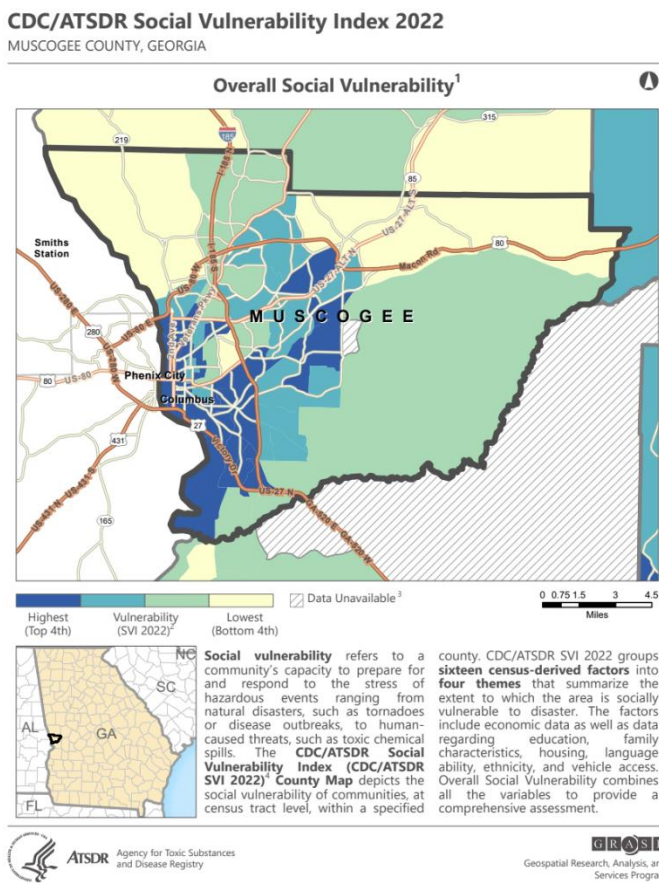


Figure 4.21 Maps: Social Vulnerability Information

SECTION V: CURRENT DEPLOYMENT AND PERFORMANCE

CFEMS has established a dispatch configuration for each incident to which the department responds. The type of incident is based on the type of risk and critical task analysis. CFEMS attempts to provide consistent service levels based on the number of resources available within the city and the distance between these resources.

DATA COLLECTION & ANALYSIS

CFEMS has the technology and ability to record, store, archive, and recall information about fire loss, injury and life loss, property loss, and other associated losses. In 2014, the department changed its records management systems and began using ImageTrend Records Management Software (RMS), which is presently used. ImageTrend is a National Emergency Response Information (NERIS) compliant incident reporting software package. The department utilizes ImageTrend Elite for Hydrant Inspection and Pre-Fire Planning records management. The department also uses ImageTrend Elite for electronic patient care reporting on all medical calls.

The incident module within ImageTrend is used to record all fire and emergency medical services incidents. The incident module complies with the National Emergency Response Information System framework as required by the US Fire Administration and National Emergency Medical Services Information Systems (NEMSIS) requirements. CFEMS standard operating guideline, OPS-10 Incident Reporting, details the standard used for records management. Each officer in charge (or acting officer) of the station from which a unit(s) responds is responsible for ensuring that each incident record from his/her station has been thoroughly completed with accurate information and includes all narrative information necessary to document specific details of the incident. The battalion chief will review reports for their stations and mark the status of the report as QA/QI to signal it has been reviewed.

The QA/QI process (facilitated by the Deputy Chief of Operations, Deputy Chief of Community Risk Reduction/Fire Marshal, and Deputy Chief of EMS) further reviews incidents for quality control, data entry, and archiving purposes. QA/QI personnel are dedicated to the systematic monitoring and evaluation of fire and EMS reports to ensure that standards of quality are met. The Deputy Chief of EMS reviews a minimum of 10% of all EMS reports. Records are corrected as necessary, and quality control issues are addressed through the chain of command.

Quality assurance of fire investigations is the responsibility of the Deputy Chief of Community Risk Reduction/Fire Marshal. Fire investigations within the incident module are sealed from field personnel.

CFEMS gained the ability to analyze the response area to determine the impact of deployment changes based on historical data.

CFEMS now utilizes a variety of analysis tools to evaluate historical incidents. Below is a list of some of the analysis tools used:

- ImageTrend Report Writer
- Microsoft Excel
- Power BI
- ArcGIS

The department analyzes response time elements using two standard deviations and the 90th percentile. Outlier data is defined in OPS-10 Incident Reporting. CFEMS hired a Business Analyst in August 2025, who is responsible for putting into place these processes, analyzing the data, and preparing reports.

DEFINING SYSTEM PERFORMANCE

The measurement of system performance falls into four categories: distribution, concentration, reliability, and comparability.

An adequate distribution of resources is necessary to respond to incidents throughout the jurisdiction, regardless of significance. Distribution of fire companies assures a specific response time performance for a percentage of the calls for service. Ideally, 100% of the community would have a fire company on the scene within the allotted response time. Distribution of fire companies is considered adequate if fire companies can respond to at least 90% of the incidents within the stated travel response-time goal.

Concentration is the spacing of multiple resources arranged close enough so an initial effective response force (ERF) can be assembled on the scene within the department's established response time goals. An initial ERF will most likely stop the escalation of the emergency for a specific risk type.

Stations and apparatus must be equally distributed in the community to provide a timely initial response for all calls. Additionally, the station locations and staffing patterns must concentrate resources to respond to a major event within the desired ERF goals. The CFEMS apparatus has historically been placed based on distribution, while much of the equipment carried has been based on concentration.

DISTRIBUTION

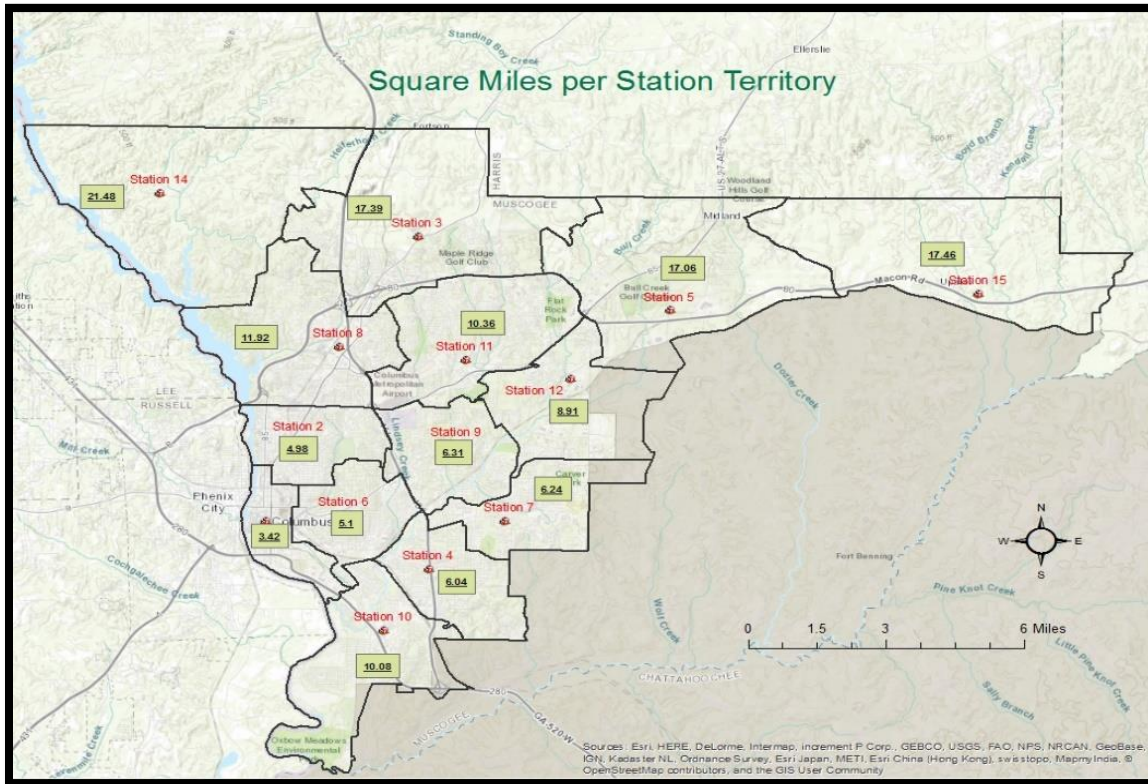
These measures are comparative measurements relative to the distribution of CFEMS resources. An example is locating first-due resources throughout the jurisdiction to provide all citizens with a quick response for initial intervention. CFEMS stations are located to ensure rapid deployment of first-due resources (primarily engines) for the purpose of minimizing and mitigating routine emergencies. The department's goal for an equitable level of service is that everyone has a station within five road miles.

In the past, stations and equipment were placed based on the assumption that all areas have the same risk and probability of an event occurring. Every member of the community expects the same level of service regardless of risk. Because of this, stations in Columbus will continue to be distributed evenly around the city.

SERVICE DELIVERY AREA

Columbus spans 220 square miles. Columbus has 1,164 miles of public streets. The 10 most centrally located station territories average 7.3 square miles, with 9 of the 10 accounting for 87% of the total population.

Figure 5.1 Map: Territory Square Miles



ALS RESOURCES

Tracking medical information and technologies must be ongoing to ensure that a high standard of care is met at every patient contact and to ensure the best possible protection for our personnel.

Data was analyzed that showed movement of current physical resources would result in minimal improvements. The only movement that would result in significant improvement was moving ALS capabilities to all fire apparatus. The department initiated the first phase of moving all fire medics to fire apparatus and staffing ambulances with EMT-Intermediates and Advanced EMTs in April of 2023. Data during this time showed that close to 90% of EMS responses only needed the capabilities of EMT-Intermediates and Advanced EMTs, keeping ALS resources within the response area the majority of the time. Full implementation of this department delivery model was completed in January 2024.

 Incidents: Incidents per Station Territory by Year

Totals do not reflect the basic life support incidents the private ambulance companies respond to without the assistance of department units. They do not complete an NFIRS report, and they are not included in total counts. Beginning in 2023, the department will capture fire, rescue, and hazmat incidents from NFIRS. Medical incident call counts will be captured through a CAD report in ImageTrend.

Figure 5.2 Chart: Calls per Station Territory by Year

<i>Station</i>	<i>2021</i>	<i>2022</i>	<i>2023</i>	<i>2024</i>	<i>2025</i>	<i>Station Total</i>
<i>1</i>	2,434	2,523	2,651	3,150	3,099	13,857
<i>2</i>	3,239	3,454	3,423	3,471	3,448	17,035
<i>3</i>	1,927	1,949	2,164	2,273	2,390	10,703
<i>4</i>	2,323	2,196	2,464	2,402	2,752	12,137
<i>5</i>	811	855	881	945	1,072	4,564
<i>6</i>	3,588	3,534	3,870	3,555	4,033	18,580
<i>7</i>	2,060	1,899	1,895	1,770	1,864	9,488
<i>8</i>	3,951	3,746	3,785	3,947	4,099	19,528
<i>9</i>	2,457	2,624	2,213	1,744	1,889	10,927
<i>10</i>	4,453	4,417	4,324	4,246	4,155	21,595
<i>11</i>	2,972	3,080	3,282	3,486	3,469	16,289
<i>12</i>	1,448	1,559	1,678	2,130	2,013	8,828
<i>14</i>	354	417	595	684	625	2,675
<i>15</i>	143	192	188	169	167	859
<i>Yearly Total</i>	32,017	32,253	33,225	33,803	34,908	166,205

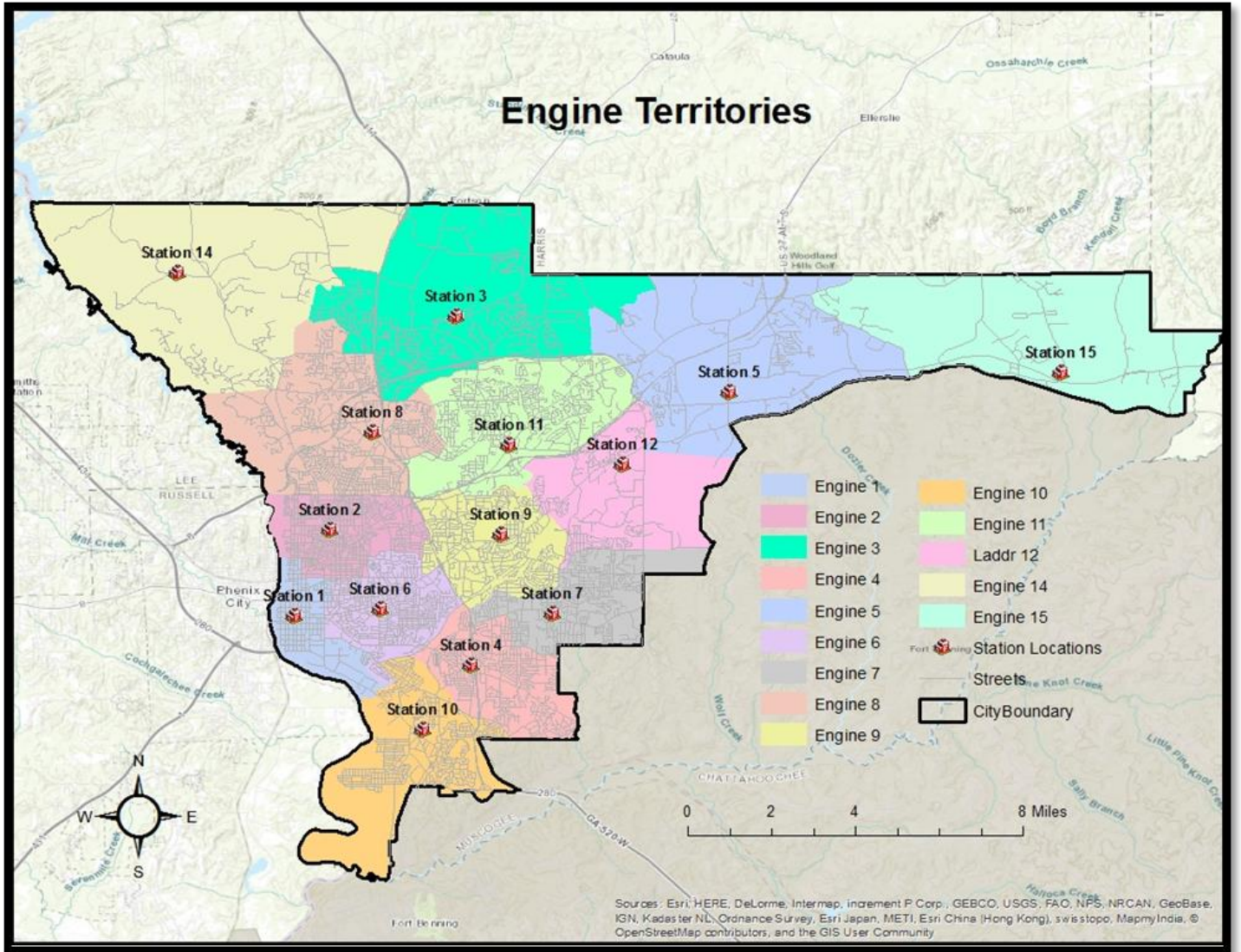


Figure 5.3 Map: Engine Territory

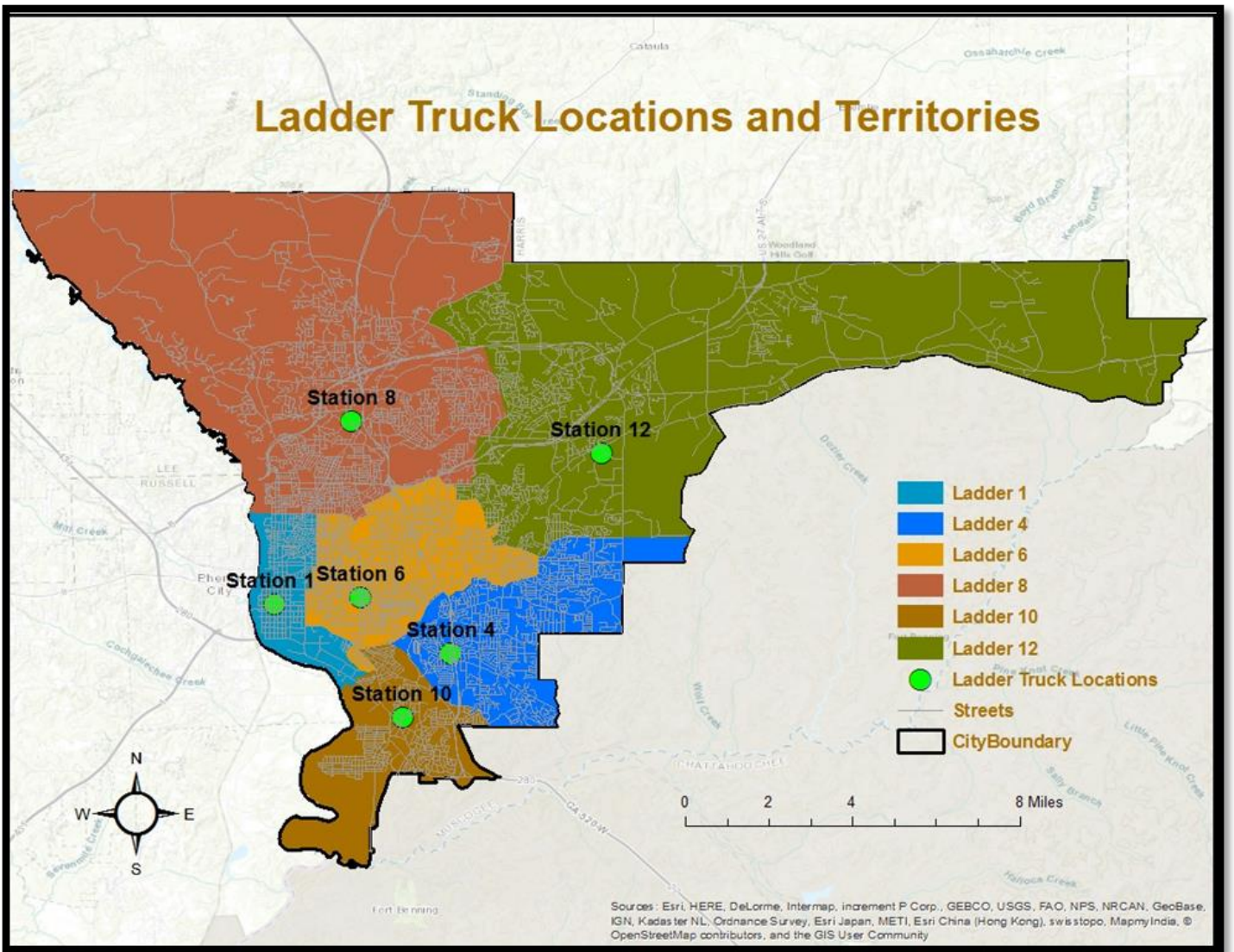


Figure 5.4 Map: Ladder/Quint Territory

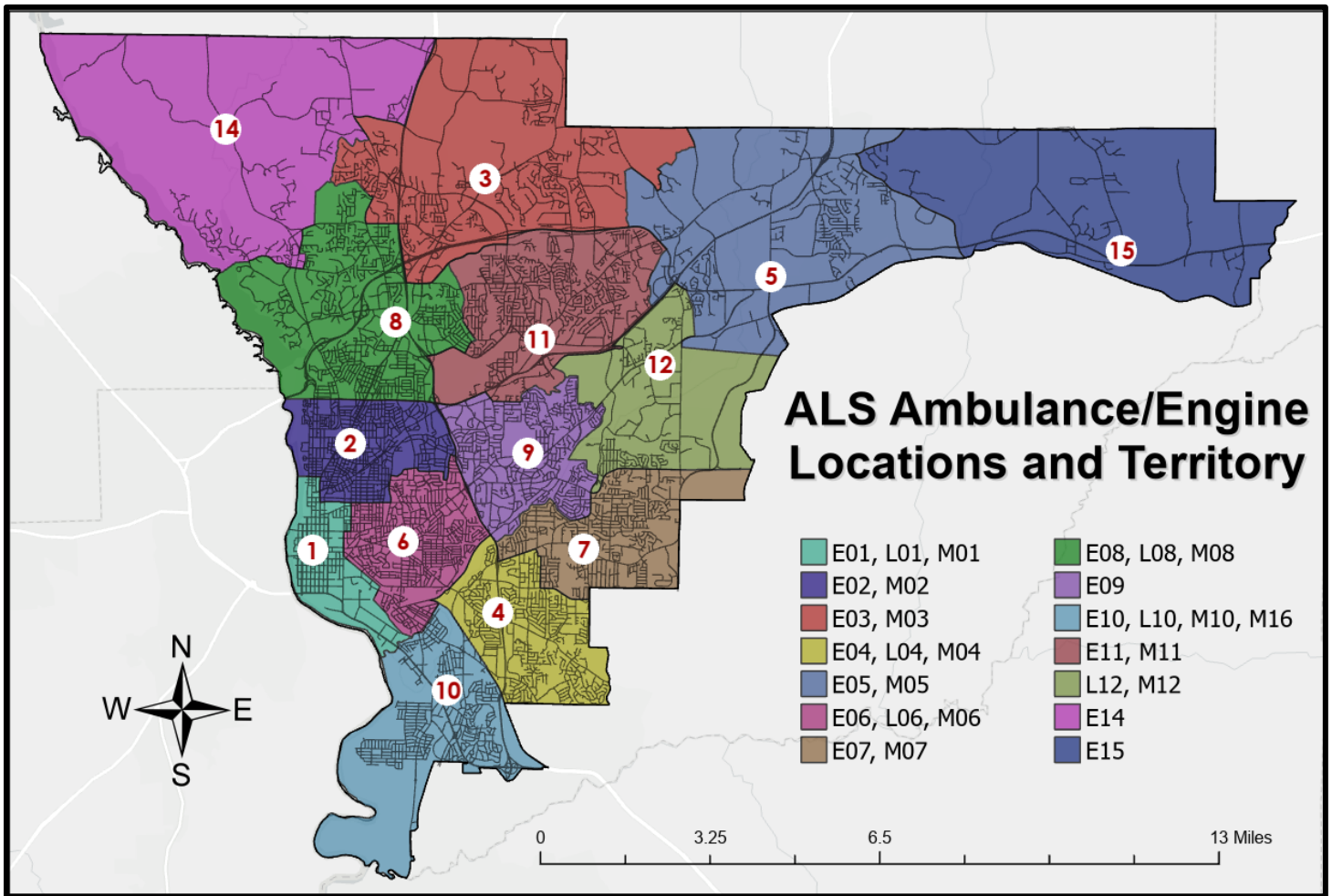


Figure 5.5 Map: Ambulance & ALS Engine Territory

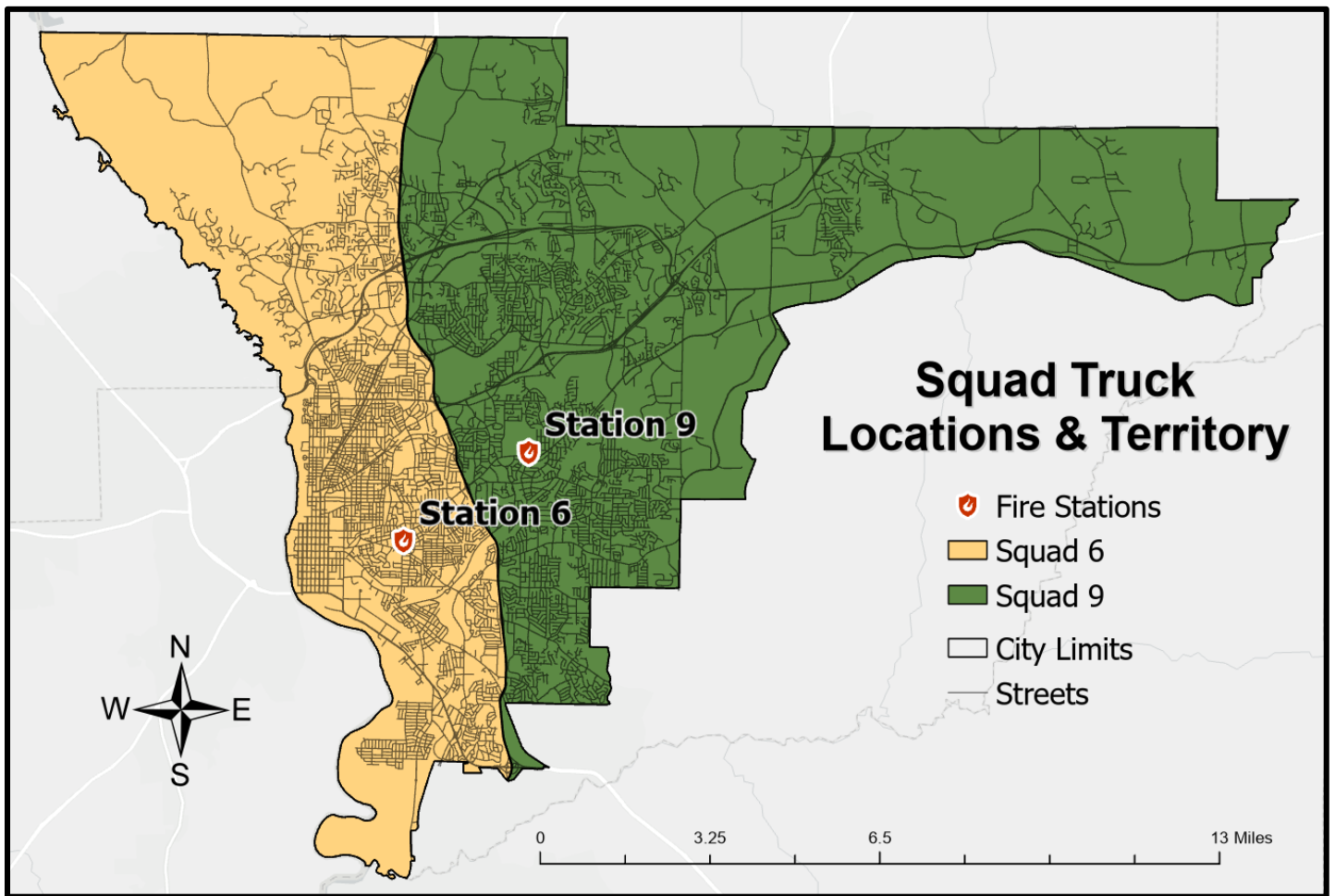
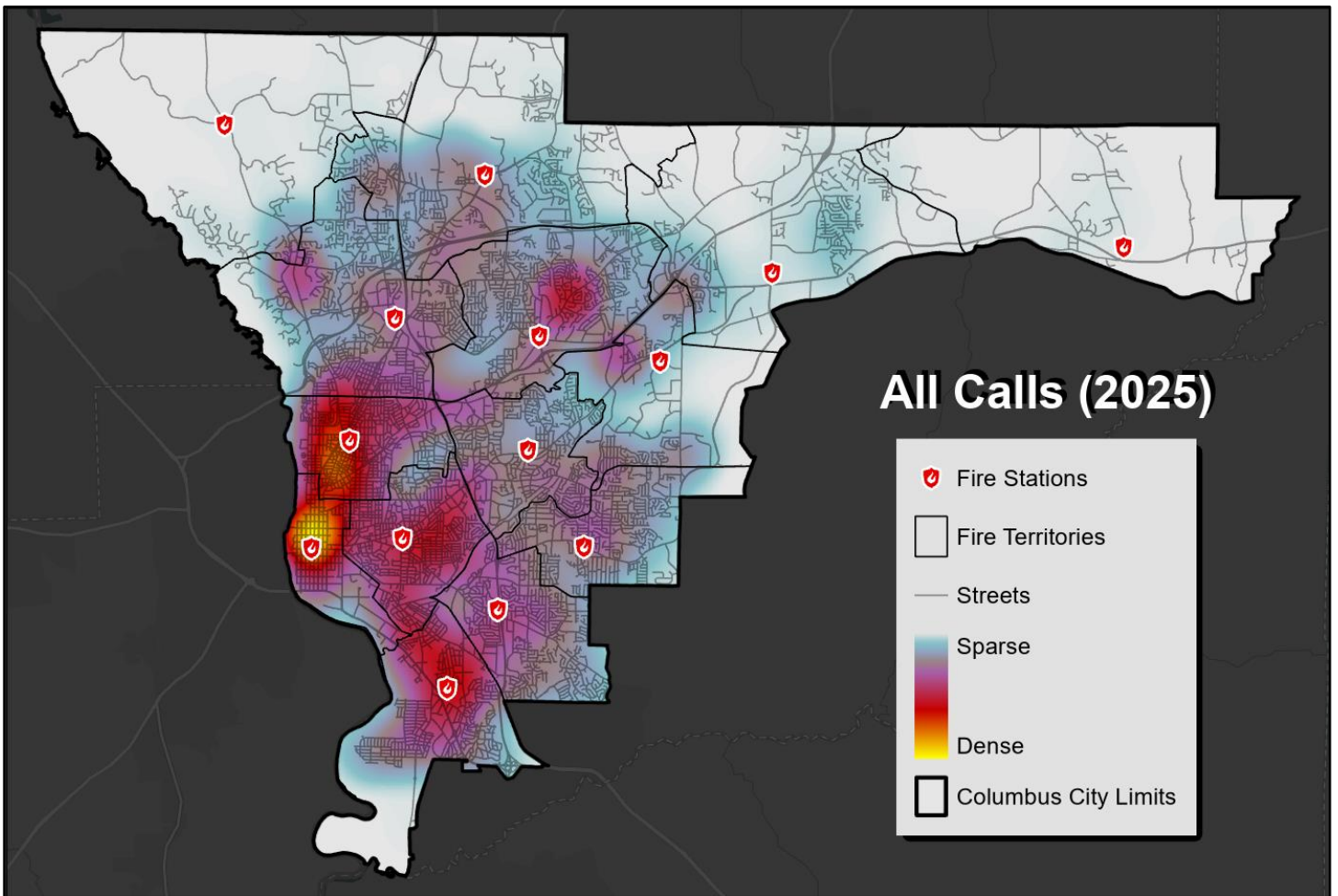
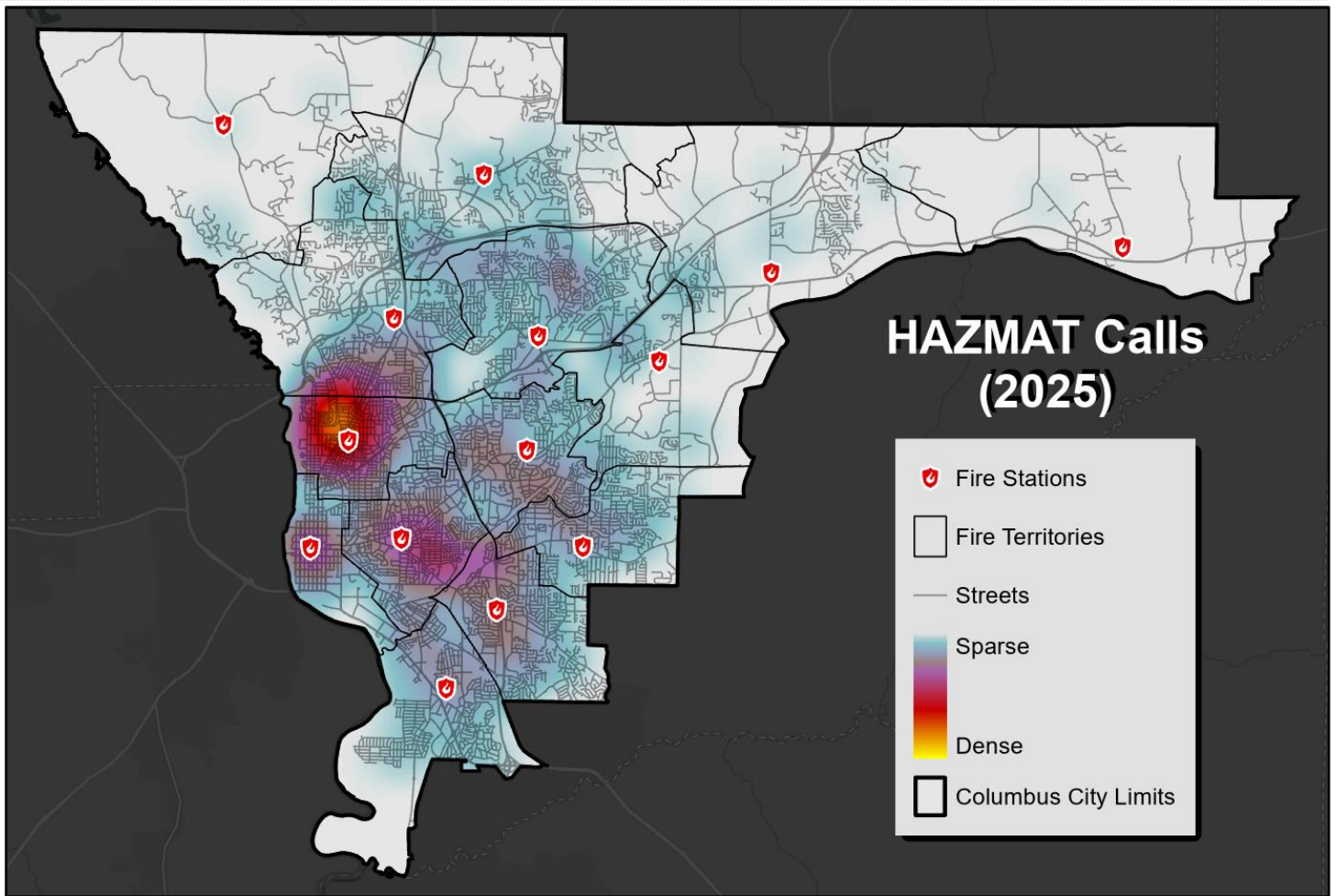
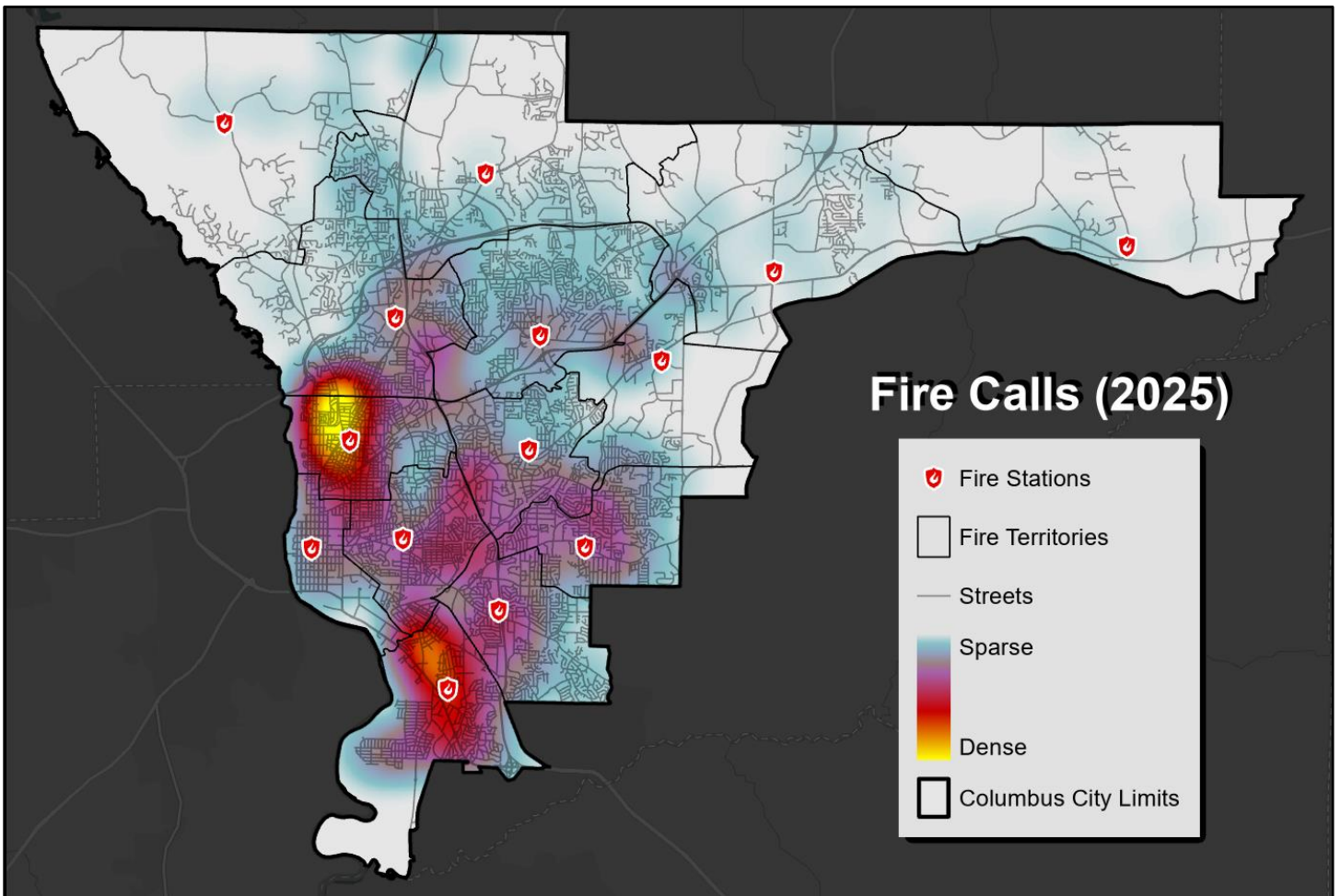
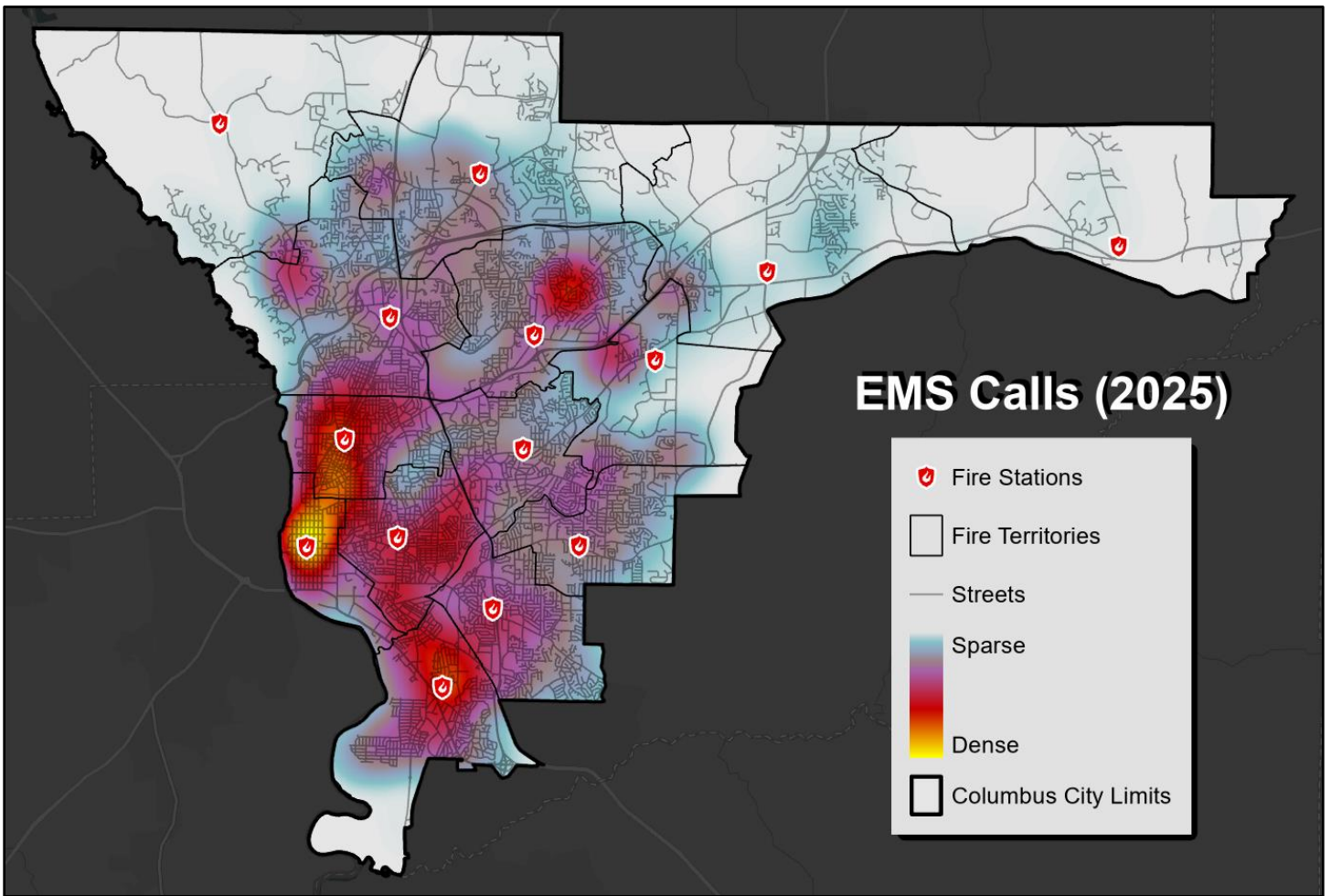


Figure 5.7 Map: Hazmat Territory









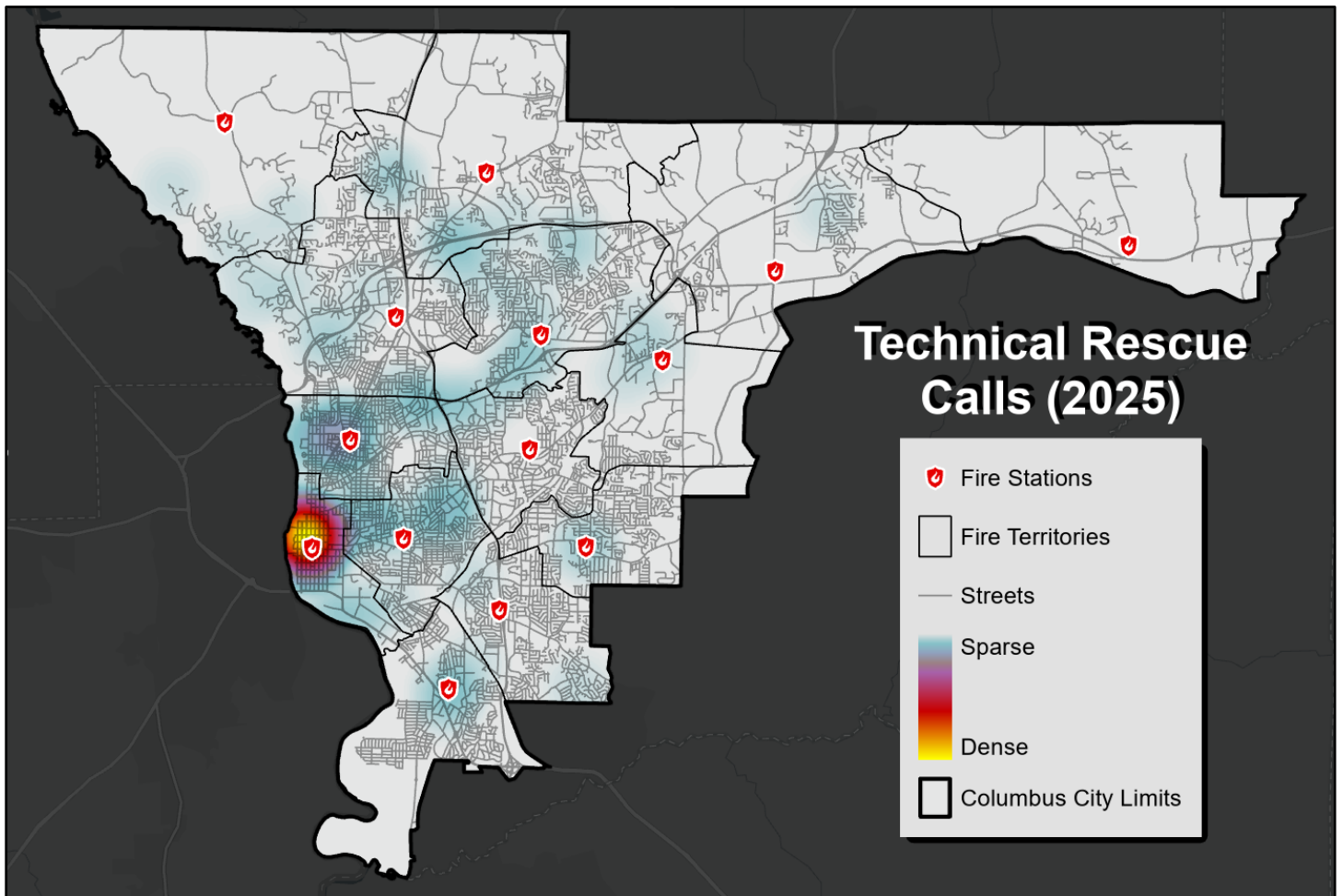


Figure 5.8-5.12 Heat Maps

MOVE-UPS

During daily operations, CFEMS utilizes a move-up procedure to back-fill certain stations affected by an incident. This procedure allows the department to maintain adequate geographic coverage during prolonged incidents. On all major incidents, an unaffected Battalion Chief is tasked with handling move-ups. The move-up Battalion Chief may request mutual aid during exceptionally large or complex incidents that substantially affect the department's response capability. The move-up Battalion Chief will notify dispatch operators which crews to move where, and when to do so. When the dispatched crew leaves the scene and returns to service in their response area, the crew that was covering their territory will return to their assigned station.

ISO

FSRS Feature	Earned Credit	Credit Available
Emergency Communications		
414. Credit for Emergency Reporting	2.55	3
422. Credit for Telecommunications	3.99	4
432. Credit for Dispatch Circuits	3	3
440. Credit for Emergency Communications	9.54	10
Fire Department		
513. Credit for Engine Companies	6	6
523. Credit for Reserve Pumpers	0.5	0.5
532. Credit for Pump Capacity	3	3
549. Credit for Ladder Service	3.08	4
553. Credit for Reserve Ladder and Service Trucks	0.5	0.5
561. Credit for Deployment Analysis	9.57	10
571. Credit for Company Personnel	11.75	15
581. Credit for Training	8.54	9
730. Credit for Operational Considerations	2	2
590. Credit for Fire Department	44.94	50
Water Supply		
616. Credit for Supply System	29.11	30
621. Credit for Hydrants	3	3
631. Credit for Inspection and Flow Testing	7	7
640. Credit for Water Supply	39.11	40
Divergence	-1.58	-
1050. Community Risk Reduction	4.26	5.5
Total Credit	96.27	105.5

Figure 5.13 Chart: PPC Rating

September 1, 2017, CFEMS was awarded a Public Protection Classification (PPC) of 1/1x by the Insurance Services Office (Figure 5.13: PPC Rating). Due to ISO being behind on its inspections, it could be an additional two years before the department is inspected again.

NFPA 1710

While this standard is a goal for the organization, it must be understood that reaching the standard will take a significant amount of time. In examining this, the past needs of the community should be evaluated, as well as the present and the future needs.

The NFPA 1710 standard fails to take service area square miles or population density into consideration. The lack of consideration for area and population served makes meeting the standard more difficult for a city department. The cost associated with station placement alone is prohibitive.

Beginning in 2002, during the department's first accreditation process, CFEMS began analyzing data. The CFAI Accreditation process brought about a more formal need to identify gaps in coverage. Historical data was analyzed to reveal that station location should consider service demands, population density, and historical data to best determine new station locations.

The self-assessment process and the organization's shift to becoming a data-driven organization will begin to bring CFEMS more in line with the NFPA standard. The department is currently delivering service with an asset deployment plan based largely on geographical considerations and 90th percentile times. Moving forward, these considerations will drive the location of future assets to reduce CFEMS response times. Traditionally, the department has been dispatched by station planning zones. The department desires to move to Automatic Vehicle Locator (AVL) dispatching to ensure the closest unit is dispatched to all incidents. The department has opened communications with the 911 center leadership and Motorola to start moving in this direction.

The self-assessment has revealed where the department currently is in relation to NFPA 1710 and reinforced the goal of meeting the standard. The process will take a considerable amount of time.

CRITICAL TASKS

On-scene operations, critical tasking, and an ERF are the elements of standards of cover analysis that aid in determining appropriate staffing levels, the number of units needed, deployment strategies, and duties to be performed at an incident. A department must be able to determine what tasks should be completed to have a positive influence on the outcome of the situation and define the number of personnel and apparatus required to complete those tasks in an effective manner. Because each emergency scene is different, the order of activities undertaken to achieve objectives may vary depending on the immediate needs. The variables of the scene should be assessed upon arrival to determine where the resources available can be most effectively used to meet our primary objectives, which are:

1. Life Safety (Occupants, emergency workers, bystanders, etc.)
2. Incident Stabilization
3. Property Conservation

CFEMS defines critical tasks for fire, EMS, technical rescue, and hazmat. A minimum number of personnel must be identified to initiate all tasks required, and an incident commander must be on scene to assign the specific tasks. CFEMS critical tasks are not pre-assigned based on unit designation (e.g., ladder trucks are not always assigned the task of ventilation); however, the incident commander takes into consideration the type of unit and equipment available before assigning a specific task to a crew.

All personnel have the training required to perform the specific tasks assigned. Assigning tasks to crews rather than to individuals maintains crew integrity and thereby increases firefighter safety, efficiency, and accountability.

STRUCTURE FIRES

On-scene operations, critical tasking, and an ERF are the elements of the SOC that aid in the determination of appropriate staffing levels, number of units/companies needed, optimal deployment strategies, and duties to be performed on the fire ground or emergency incident scene. A department must be able to determine what tasks need to be completed to have a positive influence on the outcome of the situation, as well as the number of personnel and apparatus required to complete those tasks in an effective manner.

A critical task during a structure fire is one that must be conducted by firefighters in a timely manner to control the fire prior to flashover, perform rescues, or extinguish the fire. Life safety is paramount when identifying critical tasks. The National Fire Protection Agency guidelines were used to assist in identifying CFEMS critical tasks. The 2-in/2-out standard was also used to identify critical tasks on the fire ground. The standard requires

firefighters to go into a fire with at least one other firefighter and not leave without them. The 2-in/2-out also ensures the safety of those entering the structure by requiring personnel to remain outside and to function as a firefighter rescue team. This means that when crews are working in a hazardous environment, they will have in place a Rapid Intervention Team (RIT) after the arrival of the effective response force.

The tasks assigned to each unit are based on the priority presented when units arrive on scene.

1. Rescue Mode – victims in immediate need of rescue.
2. Fast Attack Mode – actions of the first in engine can make a significant positive outcome on the incident (incipient stage fires or small single-room fires).
3. Command mode – Immediate actions of one unit will not significantly affect the outcome of the incident, and the critical tasks are assigned based on priority and unit arrival.

During rescue mode and fast attack mode, the entire crew of the first in company engages in tactical operations and passes command to the next due unit. Both modes usually last only several minutes and end when the situation is stabilized, command is assumed by the next due unit, or command is transferred to a chief officer.

STRUCTURE FIRE CRITICAL TASK ASSIGNMENTS

Incident Command (IC) (1) – Command is established by an officer or acting officer assigned to remain outside of the structure to develop a size-up and evaluate primary factors. Primary factors include life hazards for occupants and firefighters, location of fire, construction, area and height, occupancy/contents, exposures, time of day, auxiliary appliances, weather, apparatus/personnel, water supply, and special matters. The IC will assign critical tasks based on seven common strategic goals: Rescue, exposure, confinement, extinguishment, ventilation, salvage, and overhaul. IC will be transferred to the second arriving engine/ladder if the initial command was not established from a fixed position.

Personnel Accountability Officer (1)

CFEMS utilizes four forms of accountability: Level I, II, III, and IV.

A. Level I Accountability:

1. Personnel turn in their Personnel Accountability Tag (PAT) to their company officer at the start of their shift. The officer attaches the PATs to the Apparatus Collector Ring.
2. Level I is in place when all present crew members' PATs are on the Apparatus Collector Ring.
3. Columbus Fire and Emergency Medical Services will maintain Level I Accountability.

B. Level II Accountability:

1. Any time during an emergency, the Incident Commander has the option to direct units to account for personnel operating at the emergency by means of PATs and Collector Rings.
2. The Incident Commander will direct all Collector Rings to be brought to the Command Post.
3. The Company Commander or his/her designee will secure the unit collector ring and take it to the Command Post.
4. Administrative staff personnel who respond to an emergency incident where the Incident Commander has directed Level II accountability or greater shall report to the command post to have their Yellow or Silver PAT collected and logged in on the Accountability Chart.
5. The designated Accountability Control Officer will organize and log Collector Rings and PAT's utilizing an Accountability Control Chart and the command assignment board.

C Level III Accountability:

1. When the Incident Commander determines that the incident requires extremely stringent accountability, he will implement Point of Entry (i.e., Hazardous Materials Zones, large commercial structures).
2. To implement Points of Entry Control, the Incident Commander will designate officer(s) to monitor all points of entry into the hazard zones, structures, confined spaces, etc. These officers will coordinate closely with the Safety Officer. The designated radio call sign will be "Entry Control".
3. "Entry Control" will ensure that each entering member's White or Black PAT is collected, and the time of entry and assignment are recorded in the Entry Control Chart.
4. When members exit a control point, their time out shall be logged in the Entry Control Chart, and their PAT will be returned to be placed back onto their turnout coat. Members who exit via a remote-control point shall inform Entry Control of their exit.

D Level IV Accountability:

1. Any time during an incident, the Incident Commander has the option/responsibility of initiating a Personnel Accountability Report (PAR). Accountability Report Benchmarks would include, but not be limited to:
 - a. Any report of a missing or trapped firefighter.
 - b. A change from offensive to defensive mode during the incident.

- c. Any sudden hazardous event; flashover, back draft, collapse, imminent BLEVE, expansion of the hazard/hot zones, etc.
 - d. Rescue Teams reporting an all clear.
 - e. At the report that the fire is under control.
2. The Incident Commander can initiate a PAR by means of:
- a. A radio command to all on-scene units to respond PAR to command.
 - b. A face-to-face command via the Safety or designated Accountability Officer.
 - c. Initiating **“CODE RED,” all personnel shall exit the building when signaled by a 30-second blast of apparatus air horns.**
 - d. Initiating a **“Mayday,”** a universal signal for someone in distress.
3. Upon Commands, Initiation of a PAR:
- a. All personnel/crews will immediately report to their assigned apparatus. 4
 - b. Companies whose engine has reversed lines to distant hydrants will report to a unit of close proximity to their working group.
 - c. Company Officers - by means of Collector Rings and PATs will account for all their personnel and report a PAR to Command (i.e., "Command, from Engine 6, I have a PAR" [all members present]).

Incident Safety Officer (ISO) (1) – The designation of the incident safety officer will be held by the 2nd due battalion chief. The ISO should be certified by either a national or CFEMS certification program. The ISO will follow the “Incident Safety Officer” guideline as established by the CFEMS SOG: OPS-08. In the event of two structure fires simultaneously, the arriving squad truck officer will be the ISO. The ISO has the direct responsibility to focus solely on all safety aspects of the incident.

Pump Operator (1) – One engineer/driver or acting engineer/driver is designated as the pump operator. In a typical response, the 1st in engine will supply the Pump Operator. The pump operator will operate the pump, participate in establishing the water supply, provide necessary lighting, and make necessary equipment accessible.

Water Supply (1) – If the pump operator is unable to establish a permanent water supply, the engineer/driver of the 2nd arriving engine is designated as the water supply. Water supply will establish a permanent water supply to the Pump Operator.

Attack Line (2) – A minimum of two firefighters is designated as the fire attack and is assigned to the attack line. An attack line is a 1 ¾” hose that produces 100-150 GPM, usually handled by a minimum of two firefighters. Each CFEMS engine carries two attack lines pre-connected to the pump. Hose selection is dependent upon the type of structure involved, distance to the seat of the fire, and the stage of the fire.

Back-Up Line (2) – A minimum of two firefighters are designated as Fire Attack and are assigned to the back-up line. A back-up line is usually a 1 ¾” hand line (the same size as the initial attack line) that is taken in behind the attack crew to provide cover in case the fire overwhelms them, or a problem develops with the attack line.

Search and Rescue (SAR) (2) – A minimum of two firefighters are assigned to search for and remove victim(s). SAR is coordinated with the fire attack on the Attack Line with life safety as priority. A two-person SAR crew is normally sufficient for most moderate/low-risk structures, but additional crews are needed in multi-story buildings or structures with people who are not capable of self-preservation.

Ventilation Crew (2) – A minimum of two firefighters are assigned to the ventilation crew and given the designation of Ventilation. Ventilation removes superheated gases and obscuring smoke, thereby preventing flashover and allowing attack crews to see and work closer to the seat of the fire. It also gives the fire an exit route so that attack crews can push the fire out the opening they choose and keep it from endangering people or property. Ventilation is coordinated with Fire Attack and Incident Command.

Rapid Intervention Team (3) - A Rapid Intervention Team (RIT) should consist of a minimum of three (3) firefighters, assembled on the scene, whose primary assignment is planning and carrying out actions necessary for the rescue of fire personnel per SOG: OPS -07. More than one RIT may be necessary for large incidents or large-scale training exercises.

LOW-RISK FIRE INCIDENT

For a Low-Risk Fire incident, the total personnel needed for an effective response force is 3 personnel. A Low-Risk fire incident (vehicle, dumpster, grass, etc.) dispatch compliment is either 1 engine (4) or 1 ladder truck (3). An effective response force arrives when the unit arrives on the scene.

Low Risk Fire Incident (vehicle, dumpster, grass, etc.)	
Critical Task	Minimum Personnel
Size up and 360 walk-around completion, command	1
Pump operator	1
Initial attack line (1 ¾ line minimum with 150 GPM capabilities)	1

MODERATE RISK FIRE INCIDENT

For a Moderate Risk Fire Incident (Residential Structure Fire), the total personnel needed for an effective response force is 17 personnel. A Residential structure fire dispatch complement of at least: 2 engines (8), 1 Squad (4), 1 ladder truck (3), 2 battalion chiefs (2). An effective response force arrives when both engines, the squad truck, ladder truck, and both battalion chiefs arrive on scene.

Medium Risk Fire Incident (<i>Single Family Residence < 2,500 sq. ft.</i>)	
Critical Task	Minimum Personnel
Size up and 360 walk-around completion, command	1
Pump operator	1
Initial attack line (1 ¾" line minimum with 150 GPM capabilities)	3
Water Supply (dual 3" lines or 5" supply lines from permanent water supply)	2
Safety officer (2 nd battalion chief)	1
Backup line (same size line or higher of initial attack line)	3
Search and Rescue	3
Ventilation Operations	3
Rapid Intervention Team (RIT)	4*
*Upon notification of a working fire, another pump will be called for RIT	
Total	17

HIGH RISK FIRE INCIDENT

For a High-Risk Fire incident (Commercial Building Fire), the total personnel needed for an effective response force is at least 24 personnel. A commercial building fire dispatch complement is: 3 engines (12), 1 squad (4), 2 ladder trucks (6), 2 battalion chiefs (2). An effective response force arrives when all units are on scene, and 24 personnel are available for assignment.

High Risk Fire Incident (Commercial Structures)	
Critical Task	Minimum Personnel
Size up and 360 walk-around completion, command	1
Pump operator	2
Initial attack line (1 ¾" line minimum with 150 GPM capabilities)	3
Second attack line (1 ¾" line minimum with 150 GPM capabilities)	3
Water Supply (dual 3" lines or 5" supply lines from permanent water supply)	2
Safety officer (2 nd battalion chief)	1
Backup line (same size line or higher of initial attack line)	2
Search and Rescue	3
Rapid Intervention Team (RIT)	4
Ventilation Operations	3
Total	24

VERY HIGH-RISK FIRE INCIDENT

For a Very High-Risk Fire Incident (**High Risk Occupancy**), the total number of personnel needed for an effective response force is at least 28 personnel. A High-Risk occupancy fire dispatch complement is: 4 engines (16), 2 ladder trucks (6), 2 battalion chiefs (2), and 1 squad truck (4). An effective response force arrives when all units are on scene, and 28 personnel are available for assignment.

Very High-Risk Fire Incident (High-Density Occupancy)	
Critical Task	Minimum Personnel
Size up and 360 walk-around completion, command	1
Pump operator	2
Initial attack line (1 ¾" line minimum with 150 GPM capabilities)	3
Second attack line (1 ¾" line minimum with 150 GPM capabilities)	2
Water Supply (dual 3" lines or 5" supply lines from permanent water supply)	2
Safety officer (Lt. or higher incident safety officer)	2
Backup line (same size line or higher of initial attack line)	2
Sector Lobby Control Officer	1
Base Control Officer	1
Accountability officer	1
2 nd Battalion Chief	1
Search and Rescue	2
Staging Officer	1
Rapid Intervention Team (RIT I)	4
Ventilation Operations	3
Total	28

EMS CRITICAL TASKS

CFEMS responds to an average of 26,000 EMS calls per year, or approximately 71 calls per day. In Columbus, ambulances and/or fire apparatus respond to all basic and advanced life support (ALS) calls. All ALS calls are dispatched to the closest fire apparatus and ambulance. Potential vehicle extrication calls are also dispatched to the closest unit with extrication tools, an additional ambulance, and a battalion chief.

EMS Critical Tasks <i>BLS Response (Non-Life-Threatening Events)</i>	
Critical Task	Minimum Personnel
Dispatched ambulance (Provide BLS services and transport)	2

EMS Critical Tasks <i>ALS Response (Cardiac, Stroke, or Trauma)</i>	
Critical Task	Minimum Personnel
Closest fire apparatus (Provide ALS/BLS services)	3
Dispatched ambulance (Provide ALS/BLS services and transport)	2

LOW VOLUME MULTI-UNIT

CFEMS responds to a multitude of incidents other than fires or EMS. These include hazmat calls, technical rescue, severe weather and natural disasters, and service calls. While individually these calls do not occur in large numbers, as a total, they do represent a substantial number of calls. CFEMS uses the National Fire Service Incident Management System (NIMS) as a model for management of emergency scenes. NIMS is a guide for any emergency incident that does not have a specific CFEMS guideline. Implementing the NIMS model prevents the dangerous scenario of free-lance operations and allows for unity of command with an effective span of control.

HAZMAT Critical Tasks

Critical tasks for the CFEMS hazardous material team are impossible to define because the nature of assets needed is not determined until the arrival of the first-arriving fire officer. Action taken can differ substantially based on the type of incident involved. There are various levels of personal protection as well as different mitigation tactics. Some incidents may only require an operations-level trained response engine.

Response is the portion of incident management in which personnel are involved in controlling a hazardous materials incident defensively or offensively. The activities in the response portion of a hazardous materials incident include:

- a. Analyzing the incident
- b. Planning the response
- c. Implementing the planned response
- d. Evaluating the process

Hazmat Operations Critical Tasks	
Critical Task	Minimum Personnel
First Engine- Officer assumes command; size up; initial incident safety officer; notify and call for resources. Isolate site and deny entry (decon and resources as needed)	3
First Ambulance- Medical team; pre-entry & post-entry vitals	2
HAZMAT truck- Field safety officer (hazmat tech qualified), Entry team, Back up team	3
First Ladder - Decon Setup	3
Second Engine- Decon team	3
Battalion Chief - Receives command, provides continual size-up	1
Total	15

TECHNICAL RESCUE CRITICAL TASKS

Critical tasks for the Technical Rescue Teams are impossible to define because the nature of assets that are needed is not determined until the arrival of the first-arriving fire officer. Depending on the incident, other assets may be sent non-emergency. The goal of the Technical Rescue Team is to recognize and identify the need for technical rescue services involving incidents such as structural collapse, trench collapse, complicated or advanced vehicle/machinery extrication, confined space rescue, rope rescue, etc. The team performs rescue or incident stabilization as necessary to accomplish life safety and property conservation. In cases of very large events, such as a large life hazard structural collapse, perform initial steps toward incident mitigation to involve size-up, requesting additional technical rescue services, performing rescue, shoring, and other steps toward incident stabilization until additional resources arrive to assist.

Water Rescue

Water Rescue Critical Tasks	
Critical Task	Minimum Personnel
Engine - officer assumes command; size up; initial incident safety officer	3
First Ambulance - medical team	2
Ladder Truck - entry team supervisor, back up team supervisor, back up team	3
Second Ambulance - surface support	2
Battalion Chief - receives command, provides continual size-up	1
Total	11

Vehicle Extrication

Vehicle Extrication Critical Tasks	
Critical Task	Minimum Personnel
Engine- officer assumes command; size up; initial incident safety officer	3
First Ambulance- initiate patient care	2
Ladder Truck- perform extrication	3
Second Ambulance- lifting, equipment shuttle	2
Battalion Chief- receives command, provides continual size-up	1
Total	11

Technical Rescue

Technical Rescue Critical Tasks	
Critical Task	Minimum Personnel
First Engine - officer assumes command; size up; initial incident safety officer, set up	3
Ambulance - medical	2
Ladder Truck - rescue supervisor, safety officer, et up anchors/main line/belay line	3
Second Engine - line attendant/edge monitoring, rigging/rope/entry team, plus tenders	3
Second Ambulance - lifting, equipment shuttle	2
Battalion Chief - receives command, provides continual size-up	1
Total	14

TIME COMPONENTS

In Columbus, most calls originate from the Columbus 911 Center, which serves as the public safety answering point (PSAP) for Columbus.

CFEMS measures alarm handling (processing), turnout, travel, and total response time.

- Alarm handling/processing: the time from pick-up to dispatch.
- Turnout: begins when a unit receives notification of the emergency and ends when the unit is enroute to the emergency incident (the unit's wheels begin to roll). The maximum time for turnout should not exceed the benchmark of 80 seconds for fire and rescue and 60 seconds for hazmat and medical alarms.
- Travel: begins when a unit is enroute to the emergency incident (the unit's wheels begin to roll and 911 is notified that the unit is responding) and ends when the unit arrives on the scene.
- Total response: the sum of all the time components (Alarm handling + Turnout + Travel). The time begins when 911 receives notification of the emergency and ends when the unit(s) arrive(s) on the scene.

The special service-level objectives in the benchmark statements are based on industry standards, best practices, and the needs of the department. The objectives are approved and adopted by department management with the full support of the Mayor, City Manager, and City Council.

RESPONSE TIME PERFORMANCE

Columbus is mainly urban in terms of population density, with some small areas of rural density.

CFEMS utilizes fractal measurements to measure performance. Using the 90th percentile more accurately describes response times over a broad geographical area. The 90th percentile measures how often a unit reaches a particular area of their response district within a certain time. For Accreditation, CFEMS utilizes the 90th percentile to measure response times.

Prior to establishing baseline performance, the data needs to be cleaned to remove statistical outliers. CFEMS removes non-emergency responses, exposures, mutual-aid responses, and response times with a NULL value for each time component. CFEMS does not rely on mutual aid to complete the ERF.

Outliers in the data set are examined to monitor the changes we implement concerning quality control. Outliers are used in identifying and analyzing possible problem areas.

Several factors affect response times that are beyond the control of responders and dispatchers. When responding to reported structure fires, all units respond in emergency mode.

BENCHMARKING

Establishing a benchmark offers the agency a figurative goal to aim for. Below are CFEMS benchmark response-time objectives for each level of service. CFEMS considers the area served as an urban community. All response time benchmarks are designated for urban population density.

FIRE

The Department's benchmark service-level objectives are as follows:

Benchmark

For 90% of all Low-Risk Fire incidents, the total response time for the arrival of the 1st unit shall be 6 minutes and 20 seconds. The first arriving engine shall be capable of: providing a minimum of 3 personnel, providing 1500 GPM and a minimum static water source (tank water) of 750 gallons; initiating command and providing for incident safety; requesting additional resources; deploying 200' of 1 ¾" hose-line while flowing a minimum of 150 GPM; establishing an uninterrupted water supply as needed; containing the fire; performing salvage and overhaul operations; conduct a fire cause determination, and produced related documentation.

For 90% of all moderate risk structure fires, the total response time for the arrival of the first-due unit, staffed with a minimum of 3 fire personnel, shall be 6 minutes and 20 seconds. The first due unit shall be capable of but not required to simultaneously perform the following tasks: providing 1500 GPM and a static water source of a minimum of 750 gallons, initiating command; requesting additional resources; establishing and advancing an attack line flowing a minimum of 150 GPM; establishing an uninterrupted water supply; containing the fire; rescuing at-risk victims; and performing salvage operations. It is understood that the first due unit has the responsibility to conduct a proper size-up and may delegate the other tasks to other arriving equipment. These operations shall be done in accordance with departmental standard operating guidelines while providing for the safety of responders and the public.

For 90% of all moderate-risk structure fires, the total response time for the arrival of the ERF of seventeen personnel is 10 minutes and 20 seconds. The ERF for moderate risk shall be capable of establishment of incident command outside of the hazard area for the overall coordination and direction of the initial full alarm assignment with a minimum of one member dedicated to this task, establishment of an uninterrupted water supply of a minimum of 400 GPM for 30 minutes with supply lines maintained by the driver/operator, establishment of an effective water flow application rate of 300 GPM from two hand-lines, each of which has a minimum flow rate of 150 GPM with each hand-line operated by a minimum of two members, provision of at least one team, consisting of a minimum of two members to raise ground ladders and perform ventilation, establishment of a rapid intervention team consisting of a minimum of two members and if an aerial device is used in operations one member to function as an aerial operator to maintain primary control of the aerial device at all times.

For 90% of all high-risk structure fires, the total response time for the arrival of the first-due unit, staffed with a minimum of three firefighters, shall be 6 minutes and 20 seconds. The first due unit for all risk levels is capable of: providing a minimum of 750 gallons of tank water ;and 1,500 GPM pumping capacity; initiating command; requesting additional resources; establishing and advancing an attack line flowing a minimum of 150 GPM; establishing an uninterrupted water supply; containing the fire; rescuing at-risk victims; and performing salvage operations. These operations are done in accordance with departmental standard operating guidelines while providing for the safety of responders and the public.

For 90% of all high-risk_structure fires, the total response time for the arrival of the ERF, staffed with twenty-four personnel, shall be 13 minutes and 20 seconds. The ERF for high risk structure fires shall be capable of establishment of incident command outside of the hazard area for the overall coordination, direction, and safety of the initial full alarm assignment with a minimum of two members dedicated to managing this task, establishment of two uninterrupted water supply lines at a minimum of 400 GPM, with an operator, establishment

of an effective water flow application rate of 300 GPM from three hand-lines each which has a minimum flow rate of 150 GPM with each hand-line operated by a minimum of two members to effectively and safely maintain each hand-line, provision for one support member for each attack back-up and exposure line deployed to provide hydrant hookup and to assist in laying of hose lines utility control and forcible entry, provision of at least two victim search-and-rescue teams each consisting of a minimum of two members, provision of at least two teams each team consisting of a minimum of two members to raise ground ladders and perform ventilation, establishment of a rapid intervention team with a minimum of two members, if an aerial device is used in operations one member to function as an aerial operator and maintain primary control of the aerial at all times.

For 90% of all very high-risk structure fires, the total response time for the arrival of the first-due unit, staffed with a minimum of three firefighters, shall be 6 minutes and 20 seconds. The first due unit for all risk levels is capable of: providing a minimum of 750 gallons of tank water and 1,500 GPM pumping capacity; initiating command; requesting additional resources; establishing and advancing an attack line flowing a minimum of 150 GPM; establishing an uninterrupted water supply; containing the fire; rescuing at-risk victims; and performing salvage operations. These operations are done in accordance with departmental standard operating guidelines while providing for the safety of responders and the public.

For 90% of all very high-risk structure fires, the total response time for the arrival of the ERF, staffed with twenty-eight personnel, shall be 15 minutes and 20 seconds. The ERF for very high risk structure fires shall be capable of: Establishment of incident command outside of the hazard area for the overall coordination, direction, and safety of the initial full alarm assignment with a minimum of two members dedicated to managing this task, establishment of two uninterrupted water supply lines at a minimum of 400 GPM, with an operator, establishment of an effective water flow application rate of 300 GPM from three hand-lines each which has a minimum flow rate of 150 GPM with each hand-line operated by a minimum of two members to effectively and safely maintain each hand-line, provision for one support member for each attack back-up and exposure line deployed to provide hydrant hookup and to assist in laying of hose lines utility control and forcible entry, provision of at least two victim search-and-rescue teams each consisting of a minimum of two members, provision of at least two teams each team consisting of a minimum of two members to raise ground ladders and perform ventilation, establishment of a rapid intervention team with a minimum of two members, if an aerial device is used in operations one member to function as an aerial operator and maintain primary control of the aerial at all times.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

Advanced Life Support (ALS) for our agency means “the assessment, and if necessary, treatment or transportation by ambulance, utilizing medically necessary supplies and equipment provided by at least one individual licensed at the level of paramedic. Basic Life Support (BLS) means “treatment or transportation by ground ambulance vehicle or treatment with medically necessary supplies and services involving non-invasive life support measures by at least one individual at the level of Emergency Medical Technician - Intermediate (EMT-I) or Advanced Emergency Medical Technician (AEMT). Medical First Responder (MFR) service means an agency or company duly licensed by the department that provides on-site care until the arrival of the department's designated ambulance provider. All fire apparatus are staffed with a paramedic as staffing allows; if not, all units are staffed with a minimum EMT Intermediate. Per department guideline, the OPS-20 Staffing Management *Guideline*, the department is staffed as follows: engines (4 personnel), ladder trucks (3 personnel); (exception ladder 12 is staffed with 4 personnel), and squad trucks (4 personnel). There are twelve ALS ambulances (eight city and four private), three peak load ALS ambulances (12 hours), and 19 ALS Fire Apparatus. The agency’s BLS ambulances are staffed with a minimum of two personnel, one of whom must be an AEMT. The private EMS providers' ambulances are required to be ALS with a minimum of two personnel, one of whom must be a paramedic. The ALS fire apparatus is staffed with a minimum of four personnel, one of whom must be a paramedic.

The department contracts with two third-party providers to supplement EMS coverage for the city. The ambulance providers are required to meet response time criteria for 90% of all dispatches. The initial arriving unit shall have the capabilities of providing first responder medical aid, including automatic external defibrillation, until the ambulance arrives on scene. If the ambulance arrives on scene first, its personnel shall initiate care, and the staff from the initial fire apparatus shall provide support as needed.

For 90% of all moderate risk ALS EMS response incidents, the total response time for the arrival of the first unit shall be 6 minutes and 00 seconds. The first-due unit shall be capable of: providing incident command and producing related documentation; completing patient assessment; providing appropriate treatment; performing AED; initiating CPR; and providing IV access and medication administration.

For 90% of all ALS EMS response incidents, the total response time for the arrival of the ERF, staffed with a minimum of 4 personnel, shall be 10 minutes and 00 seconds. The ERF shall be capable of providing incident command and producing related documentation; completing patient assessment; providing appropriate treatment; performing manual external defibrillation; initiating CPR; and providing IV access and medication administration.

HAZMAT

For 90% of responses to low-risk HazMat incidents, the total response time for the first unit, staffed with a minimum of 3 personnel, shall be 6 minutes and 20 seconds. The first arriving Hazmat unit, HMRT, shall be capable of assessing safe entry routes to the incident, identifying a defensive perimeter and an operational area, staging area, and defensive operations.

For 90% of all moderate risk Hazmat incidents, the total response time for the arrival of the first-due unit, staffed with a minimum of three fire personnel, shall be 6 minutes and 20 seconds. The first due unit shall be capable of but not required to simultaneously perform the following tasks: be able to implement command and control operations that include a preliminary identification of the substance in accordance with the 5 hazardous materials SOG's in CFEMS standards operating guidelines.

For 90% of all moderate risk Hazmat incidents, the total response time for the arrival of the ERF of eighteen personnel is 10 minutes and 20 seconds. The ERF for moderate risk shall be capable of implementing command and control operations in accordance with the 5 hazardous materials SOG's in CFEMS standards operating guidelines.

High Risk – All units at station 6 must respond

Very High Risk –High risk plus calling in an off-duty shift of hazmat members

A slower response standard is needed to account for travel time to distant portions of the county, as well as non-emergency responses to some incidents.

High and very high-level responses are rarely, if ever, utilized. Most of the hazardous materials incidents in the city can be mitigated with an operations-level response unit.

TECHNICAL RESCUE

For 90% of responses to moderate-risk rescue incidents (vehicle extrication), the total response time for the first unit, staffed with a minimum of 3 personnel, shall be 6 minutes and 20 seconds. The first arriving unit will determine if rescue equipment is needed and request a rescue unit with the proper equipment.

For 90% of responses to moderate-risk rescue incidents (vehicle extrication), the total response time for the arrival of the effective response force (EFR) of eleven personnel shall be 10 minutes and 20 seconds. The EFR shall be able to implement command and control operations, which include establishing a safety zone and incident command.

For 90% of responses to high-risk rescue incidents (swift water), the total response time for the first unit, staffed with a minimum of 3 personnel, shall be 6 minutes and 20 seconds. The first arriving unit will determine if rescue equipment is needed and request a rescue unit with the proper equipment. The first arriving unit shall establish command and control to determine the need for technical rescue equipment.

For 90% of responses to high-risk rescue incidents (swift water), the total response time for the effective response force (EFR) of eleven personnel shall arrive on scene shall be 12 minutes and 20 seconds. The ERF shall be able to implement command and control operations.

BASELINE PERFORMANCE

Before measuring baseline emergency responses, statistical outliers were removed, as well as all non-emergency responses, mutual aid assistance, exposures, 2nd alarm times, and NULL time values. Non-emergency responses are also not considered because they would have been driving with the flow of traffic for a portion of their response. Unless otherwise noted, NULL time values are removed. These times represent an incomplete time segment. E.g.: if a unit was cancelled, the arrival time would be equal to NULL because the unit did not arrive on scene. The categories and criteria for measuring baseline performance at the 90th percentile are detailed below.

FIRE PERFORMANCE

FIRES – LOW RISK

For 90% of all low-risk fires, the total response time for the arrival of the first-due unit, staffed with a minimum of 3 fire personnel, is 9 minutes and 04 seconds. The first due unit shall be capable of but not required to simultaneously perform the following tasks: providing 1500 GPM and a minimum static water source of 750 gallons, initiating command, requesting additional resources, establishing and advancing an attack line flowing a minimum of 150 GPM, containing the fire, and establishing a supply line if needed. It is understood that the first due unit has the responsibility to conduct a proper size-up and may delegate the other tasks to other arriving equipment. These operations shall be done in accordance with departmental standard operating guidelines while providing for the safety of responders and the public.

FIRES – MODERATE RISK

For 90% of all moderate risk fires (single family residential structure fires) the total response time for the arrival of the first-due unit, staffed with a minimum of three fire personnel, is 6 minutes and 40 seconds. The first due unit shall be capable of but not required to simultaneously perform the following tasks: providing 1500 GPM and a minimum static water source of 750 gallons, initiating command; requesting additional resources; establishing and advancing an attack line flowing a minimum of 150 GPM; establishing an uninterrupted water supply; containing the fire; rescuing at-risk victims; and performing salvage operations. It is understood that the first due unit has the responsibility to conduct a proper size-up and may delegate the other tasks to other arriving equipment. These operations shall be done in accordance with departmental standard operating guidelines while providing for the safety of responders and the public.

For 90% of all moderate risk fires, the total response time for the arrival of the ERF of sixteen personnel is 18 minutes and 58 seconds. The ERF for moderate risk shall be capable of: Establishment of incident command outside of the hazard area for the overall coordination and direction of the initial full alarm assignment with a minimum of one member dedicated to this task. Establishment of an uninterrupted 5” water supply line maintained by the driver/operator. Establishment of an effective water flow application rate of 300 GPM from two hand-lines, each of which has a minimum flow rate of 150 GPM with each hand-line operated by a minimum of two members, provision of at least one team, consisting of a minimum of two members to raise ground ladders and perform ventilation, establishment of a rapid intervention team consisting of a minimum of two members and if an aerial device is used in operations one member to function as an aerial operator to maintain primary control of the aerial device at all times.

(Moderate Risk) Fire Suppression Baseline Performance			2021- 2025	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021	Agency Benchmark
Alarm Handling	Pick-up to Dispatch	Urban	2:02	2:11	1:33	1:30	N/A	1:17	1:00
Turnout Time	Dispatch to Enroute	Urban	1:25	1:11	1:00	1:32	1:20	1:24	1:20
Travel Time	1st Unit Distribution	Urban	4:48	4:20	4:40	4:39	4:18	4:53	4:00
	ERF Concentration	Urban	11:29	10:48	10:40	12:07	10:14	17:02	8:00
Total Response Time	1st Unit Distribution	Urban	6:40	7:08	6:10	6:36	6:24	7:01	6:20
			n=783	n=153	n=177	n=169	n=192	n=92	
	ERF Concentration	Urban	18:58	16:00	14:55	17:34	19:22	28:39	10:20
			n=260	n=77	n=66	n=58	n=39	n=20	

(Moderate Risk) Fire Suppression 2021-2025 Total Response Times		Baseline	Benchmark	Gap
1st Due	Urban	6:40 n=783	6:20	+0:20
ERF	Urban	18:58 n=260	10:20	+8:38

FIRES – HIGH RISK

An effective response force (ERF) for high risk was historically dispatched with the same response units as the moderate risk fire response of seventeen personnel. The department conducted a community risk assessment in 2022, and based on the findings, the department's response model was updated. The assessment scores dictated the risk level assigned to different types of fires. The department worked with Motorola to update the response model within the CAD database to allow for the correct dispatch of units based on risk category. Historically, dispatch has sent the same standard response to all building fires regardless of risk category, with the responding incident commander requesting additional units when necessary. Moving forward, the department will be better able to track the high and very high fire response time elements.

FIRES – VERY HIGH RISK

An effective response force (ERF) for very high risk was historically dispatched with the same response units as the moderate risk fire response of seventeen personnel. The department conducted a community risk assessment in 2022, and based on the findings, the department's response model was updated. The assessment scores dictated the risk level assigned to different types of fires. The department worked with Motorola to update the response model within the CAD database to allow for the correct dispatch of units based on risk category. Historically, dispatch has sent the same standard response to all building fires regardless of risk category, with the responding incident commander requesting additional units when necessary. Moving forward, the department will be better able to track the high and very high fire response time elements.

EMS PERFORMANCE

BLS – LOW RISK

Times data for low-risk Basic Life Support (BLS) EMS responses is not calculated due to the fact that many incidents the department classifies as BLS are responded to non-emergency, without lights and sirens.

ALS - MODERATE RISK

For 90% of all moderate-risk Advanced Life Support (ALS) EMS response incidents, the total response time for the arrival of the 1st unit with a minimum of 2 personnel is 8 minutes and 51 seconds. The first-due ALS unit shall be capable of: providing incident command and producing related documentation; completing patient assessment; providing appropriate treatment; performing AED; initiating CPR; and providing IV access and medication administration.

For 90% of all ALS EMS response incidents, the total response time for the arrival of the ERF, staffed with a minimum of five firefighters and officers, is 13 minutes and 25 seconds. The ERF shall be capable of providing incident command and producing related documentation; completing patient assessment; providing appropriate treatment; performing manual external defibrillation; initiating CPR; and providing IV access and medication administration.

(Moderate Risk) EMS Baseline Performance			2021- 2025	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021	Agency Benchmark
Alarm Handling	Pick-up to Dispatch	Urban	3:40	4:10	1:37	3:45	1:55	3:21	1:00
Turnout Time	Dispatch to Enroute	Urban	1:13	1:13	0:59	1:11	1:24	1:17	1:20
Travel Time	1st Unit Distribution	Urban	6:06	5:57	5:45	5:56	5:32	7:17	4:00
	ERF Concentration	Urban	10:11	9:51	10:04	9:34	9:43	9:21	6:00
Total Response Time	1st Unit Distribution	Urban	08:51	10:21	7:44	7:44	7:39	10:41	6:20
			n=30,216	n=7788	n=7030	n=5656	n=4206	n=5536	
	ERF Concentration	Urban	13:25	15:36	12:01	11:34	12:01	14:28	8:20
			n=25,255	n=6760	n=5760	n=4900	n=3353	n=4482	

(Moderate Risk) EMS 2021-2025 Total Response Times		Baseline	Benchmark	Gap
1st Due	Urban	8:51 n=30,216	6:20	+2:31
ERF	Urban	13:25 n=25,255	8:20	+5:05

HAZMAT PERFORMANCE

HAZMAT MODERATE RISK

For 90% of all moderate risk hazmat incidents, the total response time for the arrival of the first-due unit, staffed with a minimum of three fire personnel, is 9 minutes and 4 seconds. The first due unit shall be capable of, but not required to, simultaneously perform the following tasks: be able to implement command and control operations that include a preliminary identification of the substance in accordance with hazardous materials standard operating guidelines.

For 90% of all moderate risk hazmat incidents, the total response time for the arrival of the ERF of eighteen personnel is 12 minutes and 44 seconds. The ERF for moderate risk shall be capable of establishing command and control operations in accordance with the hazardous materials standard operating guidelines.

(Moderate Risk) HAZMAT Baseline Performance			2021- 2025	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021	Agency Benchmark
Alarm Handling	Pick-up to Dispatch	Urban	3:17	3:48	1:59	5:04	2:03	2:00	1:00
Turnout Time	Dispatch to Enroute	Urban	1:13	0:59	1:00	1:13	1:17	1:22	1:20
Travel Time	1st Unit Distribution	Urban	6:19	5:32	6:15	7:04	5:57	6:00	4:00
	ERF Concentration	Urban	8:51	7:46	9:33	8:09	5:44	7:31	8:00
Total Response Time	1st Unit Distribution	Urban	9:04	9:51	8:36	10:03	8:10	8:40	6:20
			n=1788	n=327	n=323	n=373	n=528	n=237	
ERF Concentration	Urban	12:44	17:38	12:10	11:13	7:32	9:21	10:20	
		n=38	n=13	n=6	n=9	n=7	n=3		

(Moderate Risk) HAZMAT 2021-2025 Total Response Times		Baseline	Benchmark	Gap
1st Due	Urban	9:04 n=1788	6:20	+2:44
ERF	Urban	12:44 n=38	10:20	+2:24

TECHNICAL RESCUE MODERATE RISK

For 90 percent of responses to moderate risk rescue incidents, the total response time for the first unit, staffed with a minimum of 3 personnel, is 6 minutes and 51 seconds. The first arriving unit will determine if rescue equipment is needed and request a rescue unit with the proper equipment. The first arriving unit shall establish command and control to determine the need for extrication equipment as outlined in SOG OPS-12 Vehicle Incident Response.

The technical rescue team with an effective response force (EFR) of 11 personnel arrives on scene in 12 minutes and 48 seconds at the 90th percentile. The ERF shall be able to implement command and control operations, which include establishing a safety zone. The incident commander shall assign duties as outlined in SOG OPS-12 Vehicle Incident Response.

(Moderate Risk) Technical Rescue Baseline Performance			2021- 2025	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021	Agency Benchmark
Alarm Handling	Pick-up to Dispatch	Urban	1:13	0:40	5:39	N/A	N/A	1:09	1:00
Turnout Time	Dispatch to Enroute	Urban	2:43	0:16	2:53	N/A	0:59	1:42	1:20
Travel Time	1 st Unit Distribution	Urban	4:41	4:10	2:31	N/A	5:34	4:06	4:00
	ERF Concentration	Urban	5:40	N/A	5:34	N/A	N/A	5:00	8:00
Total Response Time	1st Unit Distribution	Urban	6:51	5:06	10:58	N/A	7:49	5:27	6:20
			n=9	n=1	n=4	n=0	n=1	n=3	
	ERF Concentration	Urban	12:48	N/A	10:53	N/A	N/A	13:11	10:20
			n=3	n=0	n=2	n=0	n=0	n=1	

(Moderate Risk) Technical Rescue 2021-2025 Total Response Times			Baseline	Benchmark	Gap
1st Due	Urban		6:51 n=9	6:20	+0:31
ERF	Urban		12:48 n=3	10:20	+2:28

TECHNICAL RESCUE HIGH RISK

For 90 percent of responses to high-risk rescue incidents, the total response time for the first unit, staffed with a minimum of 3 personnel, is: 12 minutes and 14 seconds. The first arriving unit will determine if rescue equipment is needed and request a rescue unit with the proper equipment. The first arriving unit shall establish command and control to determine the need for water rescue equipment as outlined in SOG R-04 Water Rescue.

For 90 percent of responses to high-risk rescue incidents, the total response time for the ERF of 11 personnel was not calculated, as there was not enough data or incidents for an accurate measure between 2021 and 2025. The ERF shall be able to implement command and control operations, which include establishing a safety zone. The incident commander shall assign duties as outlined in SOG R-04 Water Rescue.

(High Risk) Technical Rescue Baseline Performance			2021- 2025	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021	Agency Benchmark
Alarm Handling	Pick-up to Dispatch	Urban	2:12	4:57	2:09	N/A	2:08	2:13	1:00
Turnout Time	Dispatch to Enroute	Urban	1:12	0:39	0:53	1:08	1:42	1:10	1:20
Travel Time	1st Unit Distribution	Urban	8:26	3:38	4:14	5:30	11:27	18:06	4:00
	ERF Concentration	Urban	12:42	4:04	N/A	N/A	12:37	N/A	8:00
Total Response Time	1st Unit Distribution	Urban	12:14	N/A	N/A	9:30	13:01	N/A	6:20
			n=37	n=1	n=8	n=13	n=12	n=3	
ERF Concentration	ERF Concentration	Urban	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	10:20
			n=8	n=1	n=3	n=2	n=1	n=1	

(High Risk) Technical Rescue 2021-2025 Total Response Times			Baseline	Benchmark	Gap
1st Due	Urban		12:14 n=37	6:20	+5:54
ERF	Urban		N/A n=8	10:20	N/A

SECTION VI: EVALUATION OF CURRENT DEPLOYMENT AND PERFORMANCE

RELIABILITY

The response reliability for engines in 2025 is 85%, with 15% of all calls being handled by non-first due units. CFEMS is continually analyzing data to determine why units are responding outside of their own first-in territory.

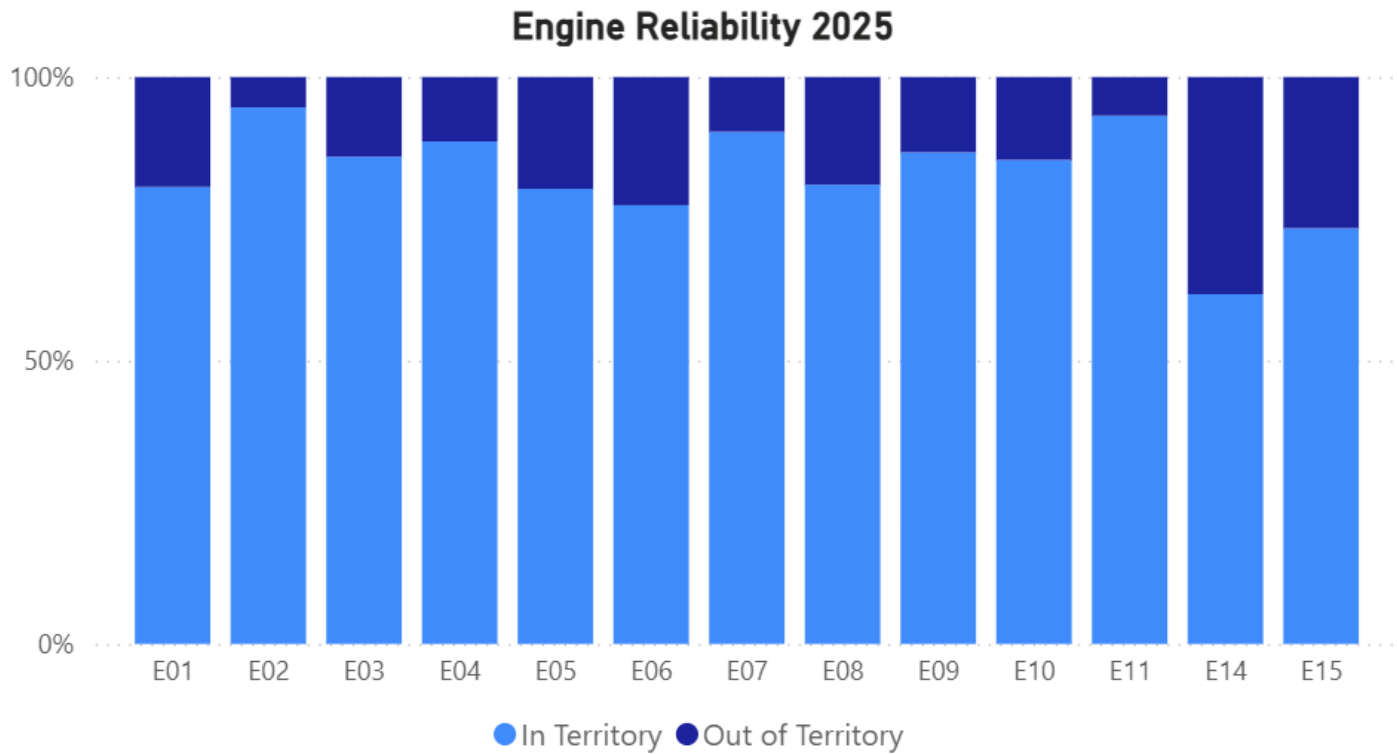


Figure 6.1 Chart: Engine Reliability

The response reliability for ladders is 93%, with 7% of all calls being handled by non-first due units. CFEMS is continuously analyzing data to determine why units are responding outside of their own first-in territory.

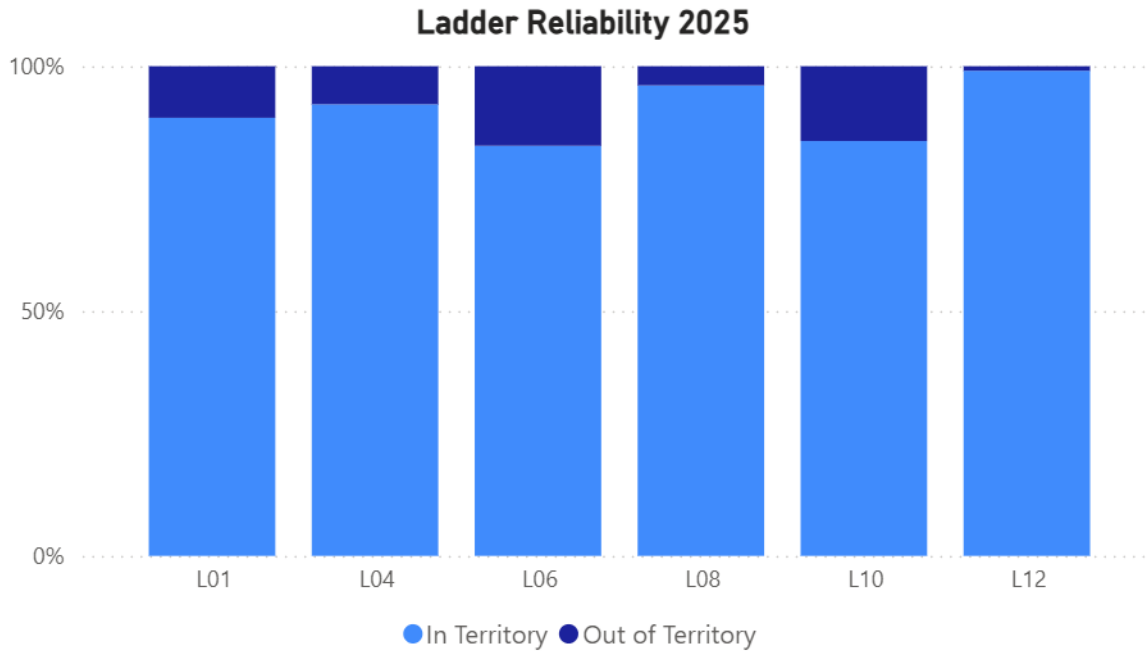


Figure 6.2 Chart: Ladder Reliability

The response reliability for Squads is 88%, with 12% of all calls being handled by non-first due units. CFEMS is continuously analyzing data to determine why units are responding outside of their own first-in territory.

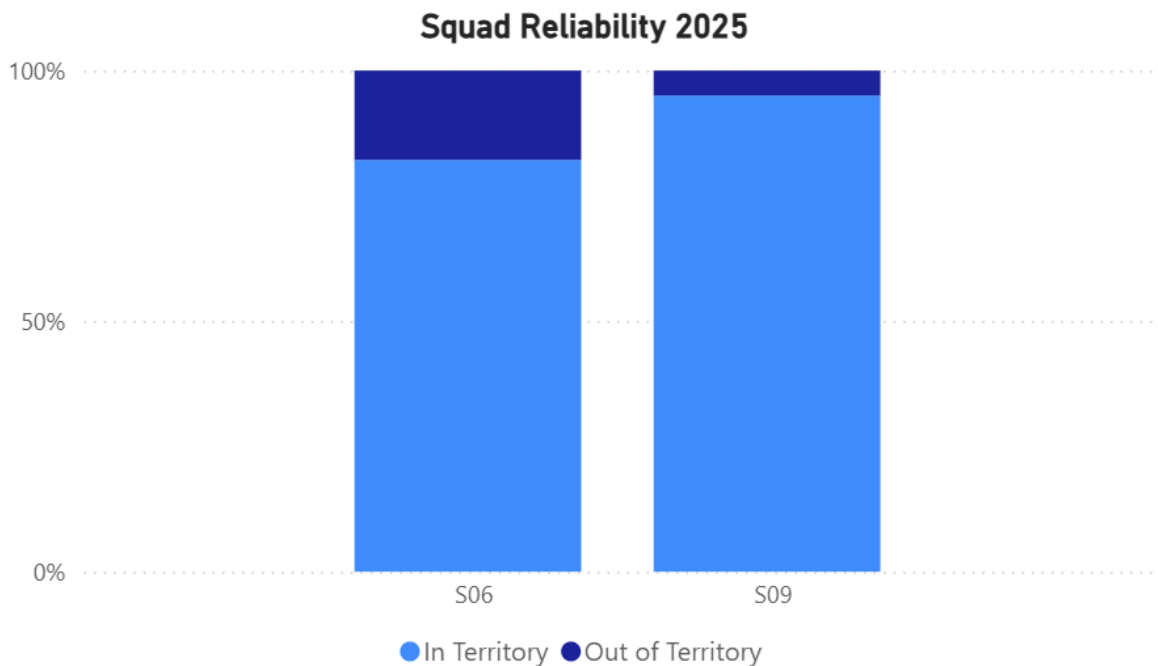


Figure 6.3 Chart: Squad Reliability

The average response reliability for Ambulances is 55%, with 45% of all calls being handled by non-first due units. On average, the engine arrives at ALS calls three minutes faster than the dispatched ambulance. This delayed response from ambulances and the fact that the department has more ranked fire medics assigned to fire apparatus than non-ranked fire medics has prompted the department to change its delivery model to allow for faster ALS care to citizens in need. The department has moved all fire medics to fire apparatus and staffed ambulances with EMT Intermediates and Advanced EMTs as of January of 2024.

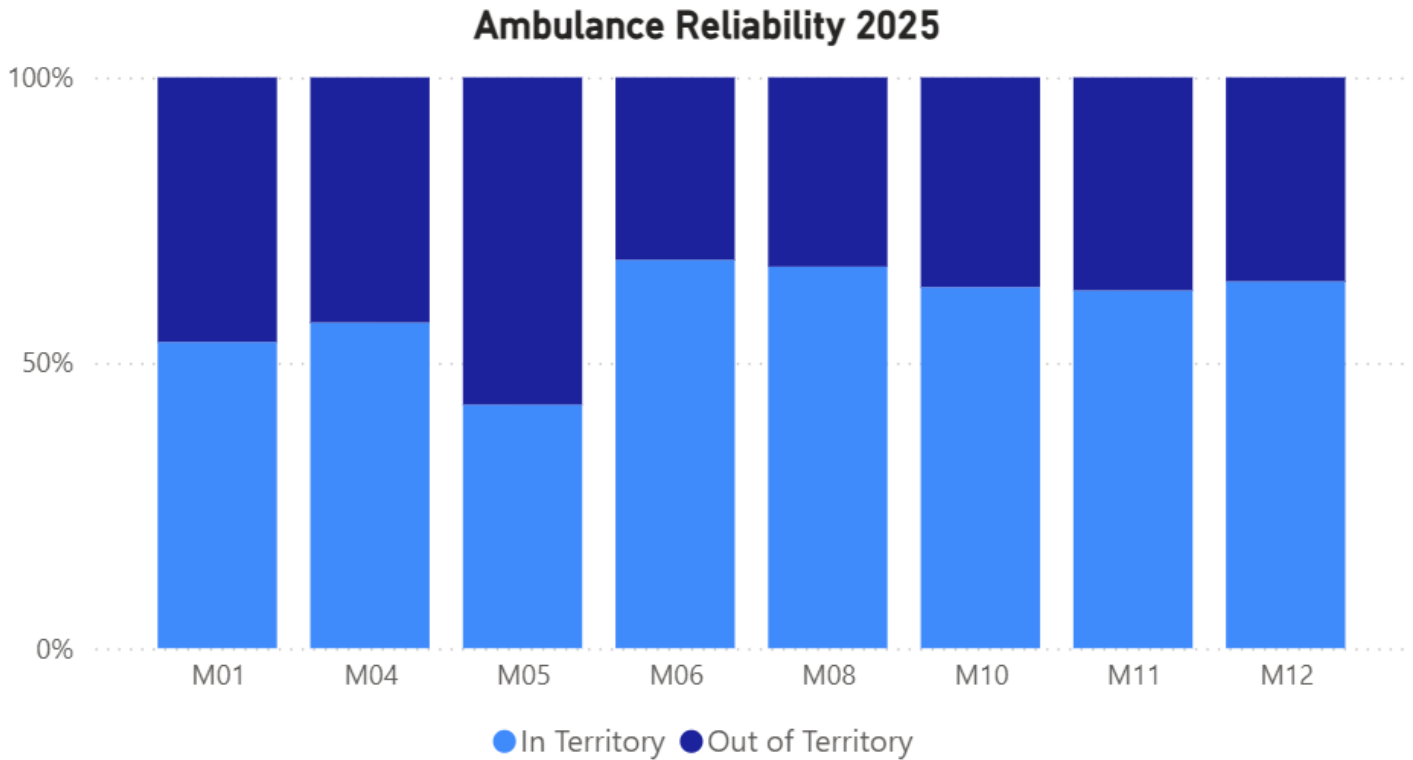


Figure 6.4 Chart: Ambulance Reliability

FIREFIGHTER INJURY/FATALITIES

CFEMS understands that the department has been very fortunate and has not had an on-scene line of duty death (LODD) since March 26, 1973. CFEMS is continually making cultural changes to increase firefighter health, safety, and wellness. Risk of injury and fatalities are managed through proper training, personal protective equipment (PPE), and actions on the fire ground. All are being trained as safety officers and are trained on incident size-up, initial company operations, and first-in tactical decision-making. Many of the standard operating procedures are life-safety focused as well. (Figure 6.5 Injuries)

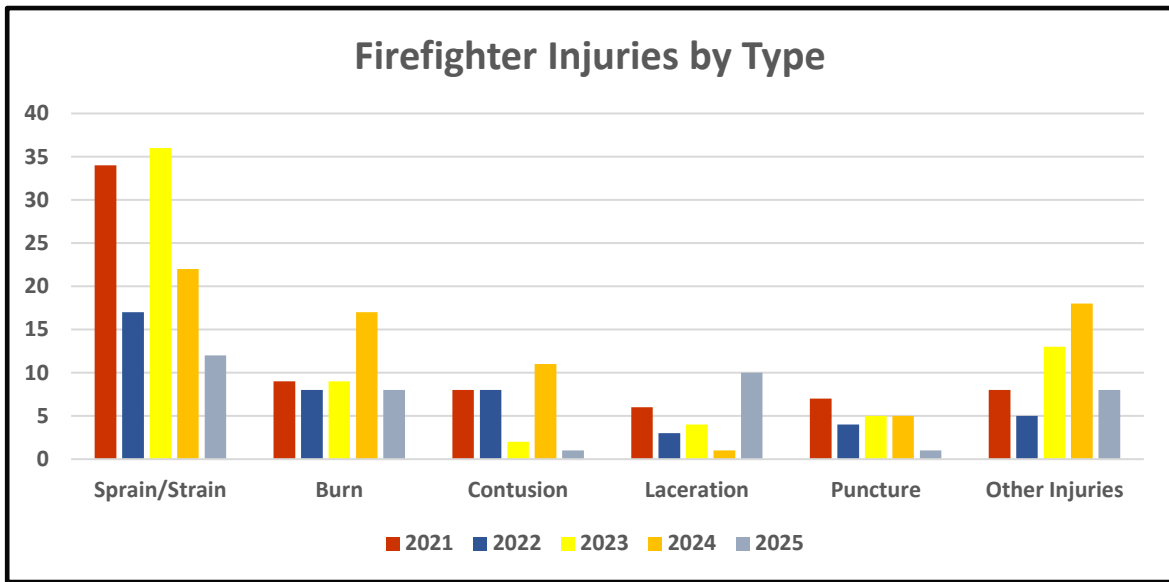


Figure 6.5 Chart: 2021 – 2025 Injuries

The department promotes a healthy lifestyle through annual mandatory health screens. CFEMS has been approved for funding for the One Test cancer screening blood test for all members, as well as a low-dose CT scan available for members 40 years of age and older. After Action Reviews are held after large incidents to ensure continuous improvement of performance, identification of unsafe actions, and to ensure proper communications. On-the-job injuries are monitored to identify unsafe working practices and trends. Identified hazards and trends in injury cause are addressed through policy changes and personnel education.

CIVILIAN CASUALTY/FATALITY

According to the National Safety Council (NSC) Injury Facts 2020, 1 in 1,450 people will die from exposure to fire, flames, or smoke. Fire is the fourteenth leading cause of injury-related death across all ages. (Figure 6.6 NSC)

Cause of Death	Odds of Dying
Heart Disease	1 in 6
Cancer	1 in 7
COVID-19	1 in 12
All preventable causes of death	1 in 21
Chronic lower respiratory disease	1 in 28
Opioid Overdose	1 in 67
Suicide	1 in 93
Motor Vehicle Crash	1 in 101
Fall	1 in 102
Gun Assault	1 in 221
Pedestrian Incident	1 in 541
Motorcyclist	1 in 799
Drowning	1 in 1,024
Fire or Smoke	1 in 1,450

Source: National Safety Council estimates based on data from the National Center for Health Statistics—Mortality Data for 2020, as compiled from data provided by the 57 vital statistics jurisdictions through the Vital Statistics Cooperative Program. Population and life expectancy data are from the U.S. Census Bureau. Deaths are classified based on the 10th Revision of the World Health Organization's "The International Classification of Diseases" (ICD). Numbers following titles refer to External Cause of Morbidity and Mortality classifications in ICD-10.

Figure 6.6 Chart: National Safety Council Injury-Related Deaths

According to the US Fire Administration (2020), rates per 1,000,000 population:

- National fire death rate: 10.7
- National fire injury rate: 50.6
- Gender and Race: African American males (19.1) and American Indian males (18.7) have the highest fire death rates per million population
- Age: People ages 85 or older have the highest fire death (38.0) and ages 50-54 have the highest injury (66.4) rates

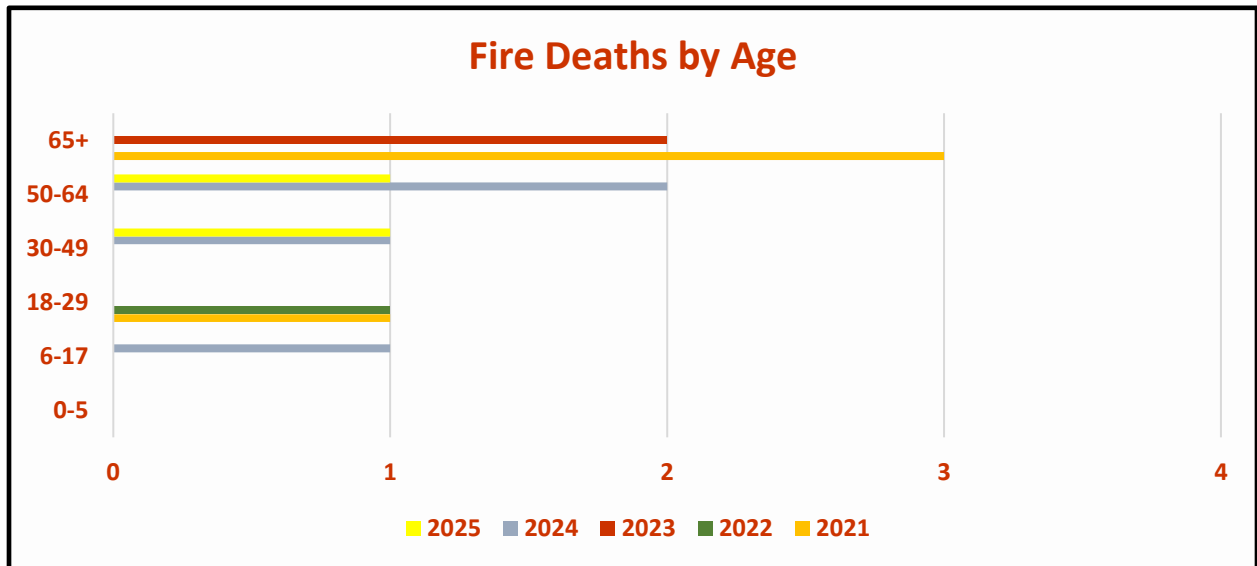
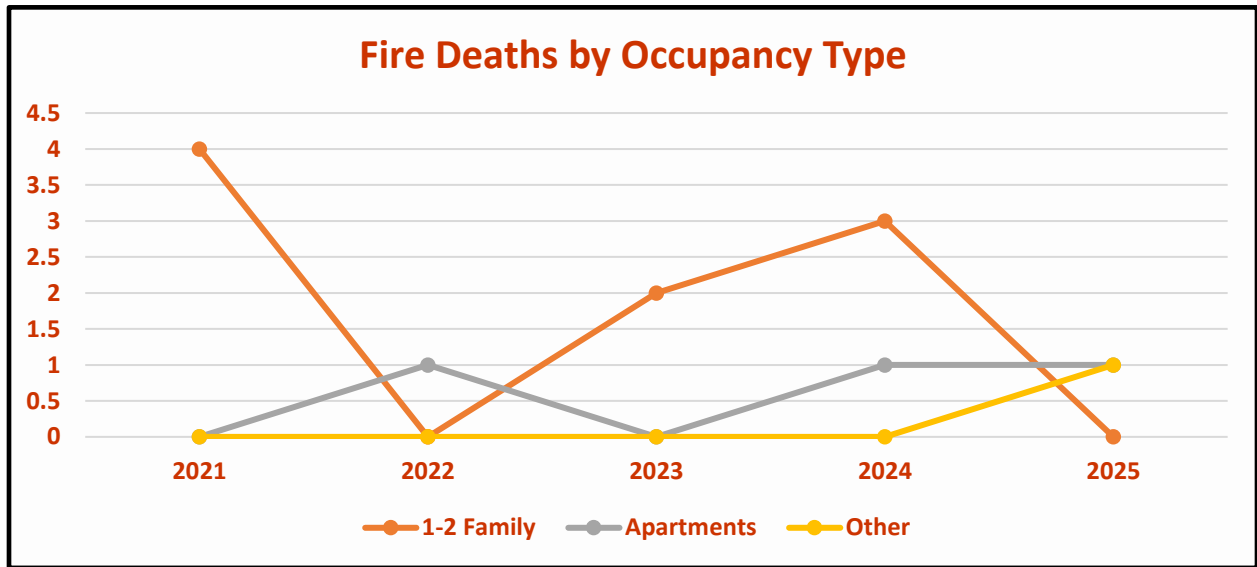


Figure 6.7 Charts: Fire Deaths in Columbus

SECTION VII: PLAN FOR MAINTAINING AND IMPROVING RESPONSE CAPABILITIES

CALL PROCESSING

The 911 communications center's Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD) system was upgraded to Tyler CAD in June 2025. The 911 center maintains an operational backup center that can be accessed quickly if the main center becomes non-operational. For 2025, call processing times have been calculated at approximately 4 minutes and 6 seconds at the 90th percentile, while the NFPA standard for call processing is 60 seconds. This is believed to be due to low staffing levels and a recent change in leadership at the 911 center. Toward the end of 2025, they were closer to being fully staffed, and CFEMS has been communicating with dispatch managers on call processing expectations and identified benchmarks. The CFEMS will continue to work with dispatch leadership to reduce call processing times. CFEMS established quarterly meetings with the dispatch team and have implemented fail safe operations with the new system to maintain dispatch capabilities.

TURNOUT

Turnout times are monitored through the quality assurance process, and extended times are questioned. The department publishes apparatus turnout times through the department's digital information sharing platform to help motivate personnel.

RESOURCE ALLOCATION

In 2004, the department contracted with private ambulance providers to provide four 24 hr. ambulances to enhance response capabilities while reducing workload for personnel. In 2017, two additional 24 hr. units were added due to an increase in calls for service. The contract was amended in 2020 when one of the three providers stopped providing services, reducing the providers to two. Currently, one private provider provides two 24-hour ambulances and one peak time unit, and the second provider provides one 24-hour ambulance and two peak time ambulances.

SUPPLEMENTAL AMBULANCE CONTRACT

CFEMS' supplemental ambulance contract with the ambulance providers was renewed in 2025. To ensure CFEMS' response time requirements are met, the new contract specifies:

- Mandatory data reporting to CFEMS
- Bill patients at the current CFEMS rate
- All equipment shall be equivalent to CFEMS equipment
- Participate in the QA/QI process on care delivery
- Conflict resolution policy

ALS CAPABILITIES

All department ambulances are staffed with at least one Advanced EMT, and private ambulances responding out of CFEMS stations are staffed with a paramedic. The department has 19 fire apparatus staffed with a paramedic as staffing allows. All fire apparatus are designated by the state EMS office as medical first responder units. Tracking of medical information and technologies must be ongoing to ensure that a high standard of care is met at every patient contact and to ensure the best possible protection for EMS providers.

AMBULANCE WALL TIME

The time units out of service at the hospital have consistently reduced the number of units available to respond to calls for service. CFEMS has worked with local hospitals to reduce “wall time.” The hospitals have made changes to their triage and processes to reduce wait time, but citizens continue to utilize hospital emergency rooms for non-emergent conditions that could be handled through primary care, urgent care facilities, or other social resources, challenging the hospital systems. Additionally, more inpatient admissions throughout the hospitals cause a backlog of patients in the ED, reducing the availability of ED beds. In 2021, wall time at emergency department (ED) #1 was at 51 min at the 90th percentile; ED #2 was at 51 min at the 90th percentile; and ED #3 was at 49 min at the 90th percentile. From 2021 to 2025, wall time has remained steady with one hospital and a slight decrease with the other two hospitals. This caused a cascading backlog of patients in the ED. In 2025, ED #1 decreased to 41 min at the 90th percentile.

QUALITY ASSURANCE/QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

A Quality Assurance and Quality Improvement (QA/QI) process provides for the review of all reports entered in the department’s records management software. It is the responsibility of the company officer /acting officer to review each NFIRS and patient care report (PCR) to ensure 100% validity, and to ensure all pertinent data has been entered and is accurate. Response times are monitored, and aberrant times can be corrected if known to be incorrect. After review, station officers change the “status” to “reviewed” or “QA/QI by station officer”. Next, the battalion chief /acting battalion chief is responsible for reviewing all NFIRS reports within their battalion. Reports that are marked “reviewed” are selected and, following their review, change the “status” to “QA/QI” or “QA/QI by battalion chief”. This process is to be completed no later than the following shift. Staff conducts a monthly review of NFIRS reports to ensure the Quality Assurance process is working to produce accurate/complete NFIRS reports. The EMS Deputy Chief reviews patient care reports on high acuity calls involving stroke, STEMI, cardiac arrest, significant trauma, and pediatric patients to ensure protocol is being followed. Once reviewed, the Deputy Chief of EMS will select “QA/QI by EMS Supervisor.”

TURNOVER/RETIREMENT

Each year, CFEMS has vacancies due to retirements, resignations, and terminations. Hiring for vacant positions is time-consuming and has become increasingly more challenging. In an effort to retain Fire medic positions, an ordinance change provided for incentive pay of \$6,200 as well as moving Fire medics from a Grade 14 to 15. This has helped with retention of Fire medics and has increased the number of members willing to attend paramedic training to fill vacant positions.

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Retired	13	15	11	5	20
Resigned	39	43	39	29	46
Terminated	3	1	0	0	0
Fire Medics	9	7	7	4	7

Figure 6.8 Chart: Personnel Separation Reasons

CFEMS PARAMEDIC PROGRAM

Columbus Fire and EMS began the first in-house paramedic program in 2004 to fulfill the need for paramedics in the department and the community. The National Registry of EMTs (NREMT) implemented programmatic accreditation as an eligibility requirement for National EMS certification at the paramedic level. It was a lengthy and comprehensive process to become accredited through CAAHEP in 2018. The paramedic program consists of a 13-month in-house program that entails 1472 total training hours (724 Didactic, 216 Lab, 532 Clinical). Students must pass a pre-test plus Anatomy and Physiology to enter the program. The CFEMS signed an articulation agreement with Columbus Technical College in January 2020, affording students up to 41 collegiate semester hours upon completion of the program.

ORGANIZATIONAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN (5-YEAR)

Delivery of services with continued increases in call volume, coupled with apparatus integrity issues, is a constant concern. The department continues to focus on the health and safety of personnel through fitness and wellness initiatives. The department will continue to work to improve technology to allow for safer operations and a more robust collection of data. With the implementation of a five-year strategic planning effort, the CFEMS hopes to effect change in the following areas:

- Apparatus Replacement and Maintenance
- Professional Development
- Community Risk Reduction Efforts
- Delivery of Services
- Technology Advancement
- Health, Wellness, and Safety of Personnel