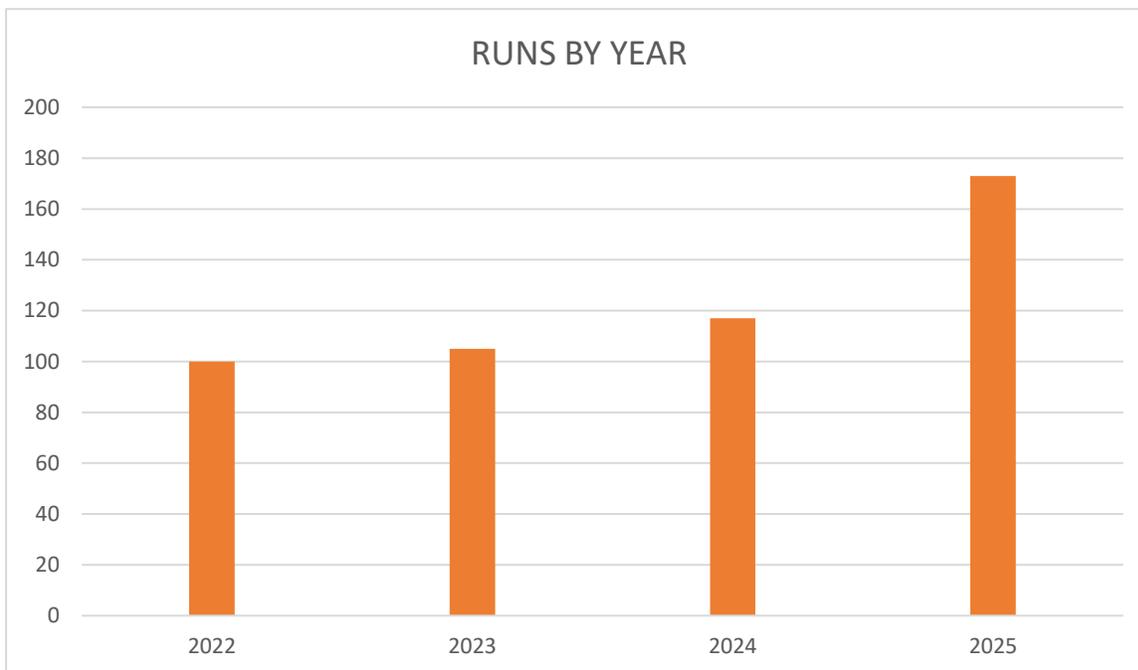


2025 MIFD REPORT

The following report highlights runs, training, outlook, and concerns for the Mackinac Island Fire Department for the year 2025

2025 was a record year for the MIFD, unfortunately that's not something we aspire to attain but run volume and e-bike incidents were off the charts this year compared to years previous. Having ended 2024 with 117 runs, the year 2025 ended with 178 responses from the MIFD, a 34% increase! The MIFD also set two other records set this year which included most runs in a day (5) and most runs in a week (12). Just a tremendously busy year in all facets of our response and mitigation responsibilities.



MAJOR INCIDENTS

Without question, the biggest incident we experienced this year (and perhaps in the last 20 years) was the ice storm. As you are all aware, the MFD took the forefront of managing the

incident on behalf of the city and while the incident itself was unparalleled in anyone's memory, it is safe to say the Island and its residents came out relatively unscathed compared to our surrounding communities.

The MIFD did work around the clock for the first 48 hours of the incident and remained in the Firehouse in some capacity for almost 80 straight hours. Of course, the culmination of the efforts was the joint work with the Michigan National Guard and MABAS Strike Force that helped turn the tide on road openings and general cleanup. The joint work between the Guard, State Park and City was also a first.

OTHER INCIDENTS

Other incidents that are clearly on the rise are the number of e-bike battery fires both isolated to the battery and causing structure fires. In May the MIFD responded to a structure fire in a downtown apartment building that would ultimately be a total loss. Later in October, another housing dorm fire was found to be a result of an ebike battery malfunctioning.

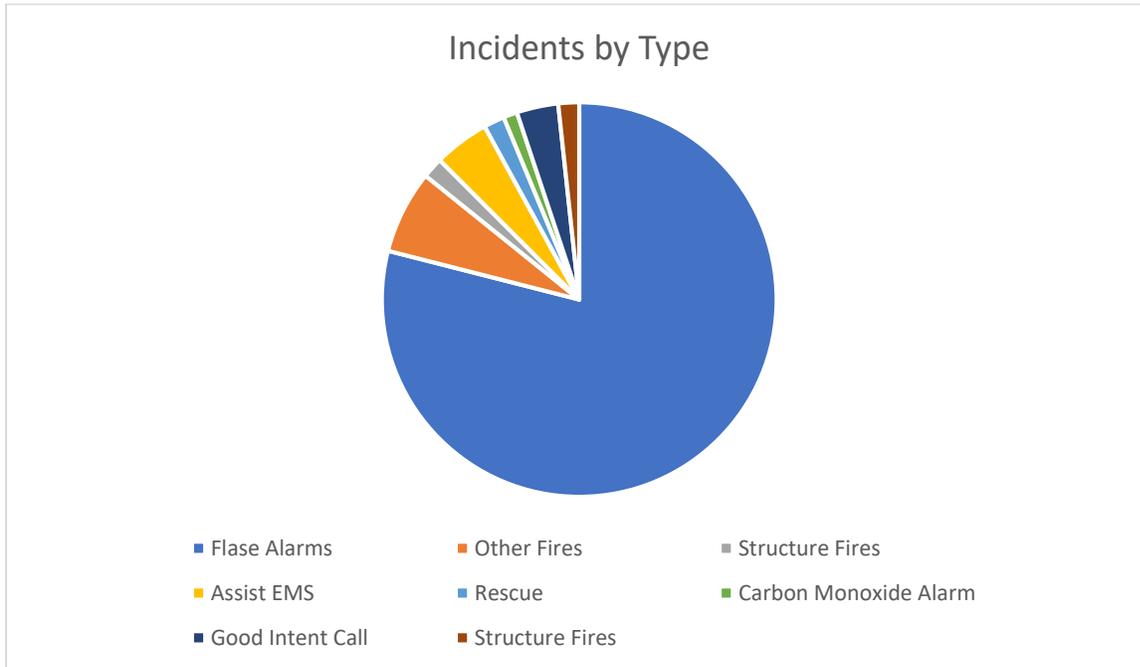
False alarms were on the rise this year. Despite repeated warnings to property owners about carelessness causing needless responses, the MIFD saw a tremendous uptick of alarms not needing the fire department. In an unprecedented move, The Chief of Department declared a zero-warning movement going forward in mid-2025 and for the first time in recent memory citations for false alarms were issued.

It should be noted that these citations were only issued for alarms that were completely at the control of the property owner, that includes activation due to construction dust (sanding drywall) and activation due to maintenance on the alarm itself without calling the alarm company that automatically dispatches the MIFD. While nobody on the MIFD is fond of issuing citations, the sad truth is that sometimes it's the only measure of enforcement that achieves relief for the City.

The MIFD performed two rope rescues this summer. One in May and another in August. The second one was as close to having a major issue as you can get as the person needing rescue made it known they were going to let go of the branch they were clinging to on the side of Robertson's Folly "any second".

While structure fires were only at 3, other fire responses totaled 12 which is also a recent record. In recent years the department has responded to only a handful of calls that weren't false alarms, however, this year despite having a tremendous false alarm call volume it should be noted that 23% of the time we left the firehouse, our services were needed for something beyond resetting an alarm.

Total Incidents by type:



Incidents by the numbers:

False Alarms 139

Storm/Severe Weather/Downed Tree 5

Good Intent Call 5

Assist EMS 8

Structure Fires 3

Other Fires 12

Rescues 3

Carbon Monoxide Alarm 2

TRAINING

Training is always at the forefront of the MIFD's priorities. We are pleased to report that all members of the department currently employed in the position of Firefighter have met or exceeded all State of Michigan mandated training hours.

This year the State of Michigan changed their training tracking system in their MILOGIN/SMOKE platforms. This change over for all members was cumbersome and time-consuming but had to be done to meet standards. Nobody likes wasting precious training time on paperwork, but I am pleased that the upgrade is behind us.

At present, all but one member has attained the training level of State of Michigan Firefighter 2 and HazMat Operations level. The lone member who has not is assigned as a maintenance/mechanic pump operator.

Our annual Detroit Training Weekend continues to be the pinnacle of our yearly training regimen. While its inception was under the pretense of a one-time operation, it has become so important, fulfilling and relevant that it continues to be scheduled and in fact, in February of 2026 we will be holding our 10th annual event!

It should also be mentioned that we currently have 5 members in the Straits of Mackinac Firefighting Academy that have an anticipated graduation date of mid-May.

FLEET SERVICES

Our fleet hasn't changed since the acquisition of Ladder 1 several years ago. Although the preventative maintenance on Engine 1, Ladder 2 and Squad 1 has increased in recent years, we are happy to report there is no major issue with any of the performances of the rigs aside from age.

SUCCESSION PLANNING

The Council was recently provided with the new command structure of the MIFD. Although initially Chief of Department St. Onge and 1st Deputy Chief Rickley intended to retire in early May of 2026, they have both opted to continue in their current positions to ensure a smoother and more experienced level of Officers to take over the department in the not too distant future.

FIRE PREVENTION

As the City is probably aware, Fire Captain Chuck Pereny has been appointed the Fire Marshall and has been working on an inspection regimen with a more organized record-keeping system.

CONCERNS

The MIFD continues to warn about single family dwellings that have been converted to employee housing without the consent of the City. The concern to the MIFD is that while responding to an alarm at single family dwelling and finding out the hard way that the number of occupants exceeds the buildings allowable residency per the local zoning.

The biggest concern of course is the ongoing proliferation of e-bike battery malfunctions that have resulted in an uptick of fires and fire-related danger. While many properties have strict, no indoor storage or charging, the act of doing so is still an ongoing situation. It should be

mentioned that the USCG has begun to investigate the dangers associated with a potential ebike fires on a passenger vessel.

Another concern that has been previously expressed is the new system of fuel storage that contractors have utilized at major construction projects. Ongoing projects are starting to utilize fuel storage tanks on sites that often consist of 500-gallon tanks of diesel and or gasoline. While the tanks seem to be steel and of study construction, it should be noted that their placement is at the whim of the construction manager and or contractor and it is the MIFD's opinion that the City, particularly the MIFD and building department have a say in the placement and contents of these tanks. In calendar year 2024 the Chief of Department ordered the removal of tank that was placed within 20 feet of an occupied structure.

Faithfully Submitted,
Jason St. Onge, Chief
Mackinac Island Fire Department