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Message from the Fire Chief

Hazards and risk cannot be eliminated; therefore, a community risk assessment is vital to help the Meridian Fire Department operate as safely and efficiently as possible. A community risk assessment aids in our strategic planning process, as well as evaluates operational needs, and helps determine and justify financial needs. As the second largest city in the State of Idaho, it is critical to maintaining a proactive and engaged approach to risk reduction. This begins with the approval of this document; the Community Risk Assessment 2021. It is an honor and privilege to present this document to you on behalf of the excellent work of the Meridian Fire Department's Prevention Division.

Kris Blume

Fire Chief

Executive Summary

Community Risk Assessment (CRA)

Why the assessment? According to the Vison 20/20 group (www.strategicfire.org): "Community Risk Reduction is not a new concept for the fire service. Fire departments have been actively involved in fire prevention for many years through public education, building inspections and other activities. Although there is no specific blueprint for developing CRR plans in U.S. fire departments, there are some common and essential steps. Essentially, the fire service exists not only to respond to emergency incidents, but also to proactively prevent or mitigate the impact of such incidents within their communities. CRR provides a more focused approach to reducing specific risks. In addition, a comprehensive CRR program involving community partners, firefighters, and other staff, can result in an organizational culture that recognizes the importance of reducing risks within a community. It is important that fire service leaders, their firefighters and other staff begin to shift their thinking towards reducing and mitigating risks, as this will ultimately be expected by their communities and elected officials."

The process for this report was a data and information driven method for identifying the areas of the City and the fire department where improvements could be made to lessen the risks to our citizens. The following report will begin with a description of the community served and the services provided by the Meridian Fire Department. The report will provide information on community risk, distribution and concentration of resources, historical performance, growth management, and analysis reports.

The CRA identified risk levels and target hazards to analyze and categorize the risk present in our fire district. Included in the report is ideal station response locations, apparatus and staffing, current performance capabilities and service delivery.

Some of the findings included:

- The construction of additional fire stations, and possible relocation of current stations, to improve coverage in the growing areas of the city.
- Maintaining appropriate staffing levels to ensure resources match growth and service demands.
- Maintaining and improving mutual aid agreements with neighboring cities and fire districts.
- Improved department training.
- Continued and improved area-wide (multi-jurisdictional) training.
- Involving front line staffing (Firefighters) more in Community Risk Reduction (CRR). Provide training, and encourage suppression personnel to embrace CRR as an important and vital part of their jobs.
- Reducing some types of calls to reduce the number of unnecessary responses (ie: false calls, good intent calls, service calls).
- Providing additional Fire Inspectors to augment the current staffing to meet desired business inspection benchmarks.
- Continue to provide training in advanced fire investigation best practices for all Investigators, and supplement investigation training for suppression officers.
- Working with the Ada County Medical Director, and under the Ada County City Emergency Services System (ACCESS), together with Central District Health (CDH) and local hospitals, the MFD can assist with determining methods to provide effective and efficient methods to help the community deal with healthcare issues.
- Increasing public education programs, funding, and staffing.
- Increase programs and classes directed at Senior Citizens.
- Replace the current Fire Safety Center with a mobile Fire Safety Trailer.
- Establish a Community Risk Coordinator to manage department wide community risk activities and planning.

This document is just the first step of many into Community Risk Reduction. The next step is the writing and subsequent adoption of the actual plan which would take our assessment and make it a living document.

Sincerely,

Joseph Bongiorno
Deputy Chief of Prevention – Fire Marshal

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Results of a Community Risk Assessment of Meridian, Idaho

Utilizing information from multiple sources, the City of Meridian Fire Department (MFD) conducted a Community Risk Assessment using a systematic approach to the process. Ultimately, the results of this assessment will be utilized to create a complete Community Risk Reduction (CRR) plan that will include strategies and tactics to mitigate risks to the community.

Two primary categories were examined: service demand and community risks. Service demand consisted of a retrospective analysis of five years of fire department incident data from 2016 through 2020. Data was acquired from the department's records management system (RMS) and computer-aided dispatch (CAD) records from the communications center.

As with all other communities, the City of Meridian has potential risks. Such risks can be human-caused (e.g., preventable injuries, fires) or naturally occurring (e.g., frequently occurring severe weather; earthquakes, hurricanes). During this process the MFD identified and prioritized potential and likely risks.

Community Information

Geography

Meridian is a city located in Ada County in the U.S. state of Idaho.

Meridian is located at: 43°36'51"N 116°23'56"W (43.614229, -116.398963)

According to the United States Census Bureau, the city has a total area of 26.84 square miles (69.52 km 2), of which, 26.79 square miles (69.39 km 2) is land and 0.05 square miles (0.13 km 2) is water.

Figure 1 – Meridian's location in the United States

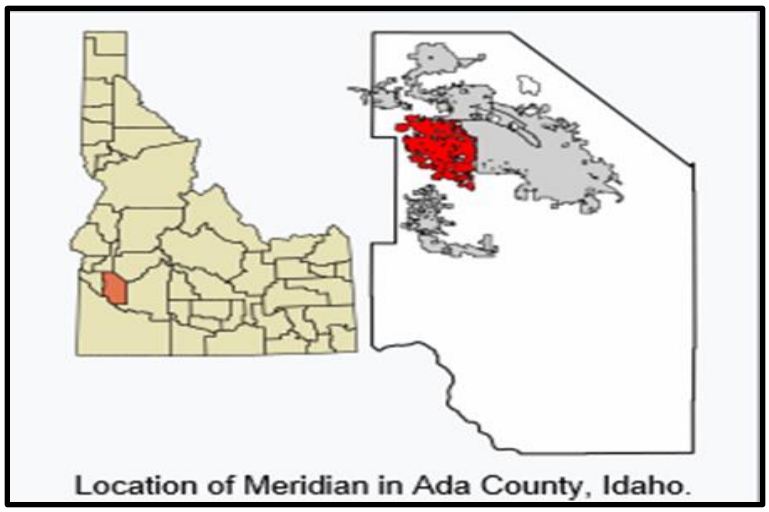


Figure 2 – Meridian's Location in Idaho, and in Ada County

As of the 2010 census, the population of Meridian was 75,092 making it, at that time, the third largest city in Idaho after Boise and Nampa. A 2015 census estimate placed the population at approximately 92,147. With a 2018 Census estimate of 106,804 and a 1000% increase in population since 1990, the city is currently estimated as the second largest in the State of Idaho. Meridian is considered the state's fastest-growing city and among the fastest-growing cities in the United States.

Meridian ID	2015	2016	2017	2018
Census Estimates	92,147	96,280	100,653	106,804

Figure 3- Population Census Data

Municipal Organization

The City of Meridian lies at the heart of Idaho's Treasure Valley. Meridian is a magnet for people looking for a family-oriented community in the Intermountain West. A long and vibrant heritage in agriculture has given way to homes and businesses that share a common goal - being part of a diverse and vibrant community that is a great place to work, live, and raise a family.

Over the past 25 years, the City has grown substantially. So too has its responsibilities, service expectations, and staffing requirements. Today, the City of Meridian is a full service city that staffs more than 525 employees distributed between eleven departments, has an operating budget of more than $90M, and currently serves a population of more than 106,000 residents.

City Services

Cities are unique organizations because of the diversity and complexity of their service offerings. Like all cities, Meridian provides many primary services directly to the community while forming partnerships with other governmental units to provide the remainder of services to its citizens. The City of Meridian currently provides the following services directly to the community:

- Police
- Fire and Medical Response
- Land Use, Planning and Building
- Parks and Recreation Services
- Water
- Sewer
- Economic Development
- Administrative Services

Meridian Welcome Sign

Meridian Water Tower

City History

The town was established in 1891 on the Onweiler farm north of the present site and was called Hunter. Two years later an I.O.O.F. lodge was organized and called itself Meridian because it was located on the Boise meridian, and the town was renamed. The Settlers' Irrigation Ditch, 1892, changed the arid region into a productive farming community. Meridian was incorporated in 1903.

According to the United States Census Bureau, the city of Meridian has a total area of 26.84 square miles (69.52 km2), of which, 26.79 square miles (69.39 km2) is land and 0.05 square miles (0.13 km2) is water.

Additionally, the Rural Fire District is composed of an additional 32.16 square miles. This creates a total service area for the Meridian Fire Department of 59 square miles.

Meridian is just west of the state capitol, Boise. It's intersected by Interstate Highway 84 that runs east/west through Meridian. The majority of Meridian lies on a flat plain, roughly in the north central part of the Treasure Valley. There is a low bench along the southeast edge of the city. Several irrigation canals, that generally run from the southeast to the northwest, cross the city. The Boise River runs north of the city. The Snake River runs far south of the city. Squaw Butte is visible to the north at 5,873 feet (1,790 m). Shafer Butte is visible to the north east at 7,572 feet (2,308 m). The Owyhee Mountains are visible to the far south.

The majority of the city lies north of I-84. Streets are given a north, south, east, or west prefix identifying the orientation of the street and where the street is in relation to the intersection of Franklin Road and Meridian Road. Roads with a north prefix are north of Franklin Road (which runs east and west). Roads with a west prefix are west of Meridian Road (which runs north and south). Many residents identify which section of the city they live in by the closest intersection of major roads that are generally laid out in square miles.

From west to east, the major roads are Can-Ada, Star (this is four square miles on northwest corner of City between Chinden and Ustick), McDermott, Black Cat, Ten Mile, Linder, Meridian, Locust Grove, and Eagle.

From north to south, the major roads are Chinden (Highway 20/26), McMillan, Ustick, Cherry (west of Meridian) or Fairview (east of Meridian), Franklin, Overland, Victory, Amity, and Lake Hazel. There is an approximate three square mile area south of Lake Hazel that extends just past Columbia on the southeast corner of the City between just west of Meridian Rd and extends to just east of Eagle Rd.

I-84 is between Franklin and Overland. Pine is another major road that runs east/west and lies between Cherry and Franklin.

A railroad line runs east/west and lies between Pine and Franklin. Most of the city's industrial areas are concentrated along this railroad line with some other industrial areas near the east side of the city southwest of the intersection of Fairview and Eagle. Union Pacific formerly owned the line, but Boise Valley Railroad now owns the line, running trains on weekdays from Boise to Nampa.

Old-town Meridian centers on the intersection of Main Street and Pine Street. In the older section of the city, there are numbered streets up to 15th street to the west and up to 5th street to the east.

Climate

Meridian's climate is characterized as semi-arid with four distinct seasons. Meridian experiences hot and dry summers where temperatures can often exceed 100 °F (38 °C), as well as cold winters with occasional light snowfall. Rainfall is usually infrequent and light, usually averaging less than an inch (25.4 mm) per month. December is the wettest month with an average of 1.55 inches (39 mm) of precipitation, and August is the driest month with 0.24 inches (6.1 mm). Spring and fall are generally temperate.

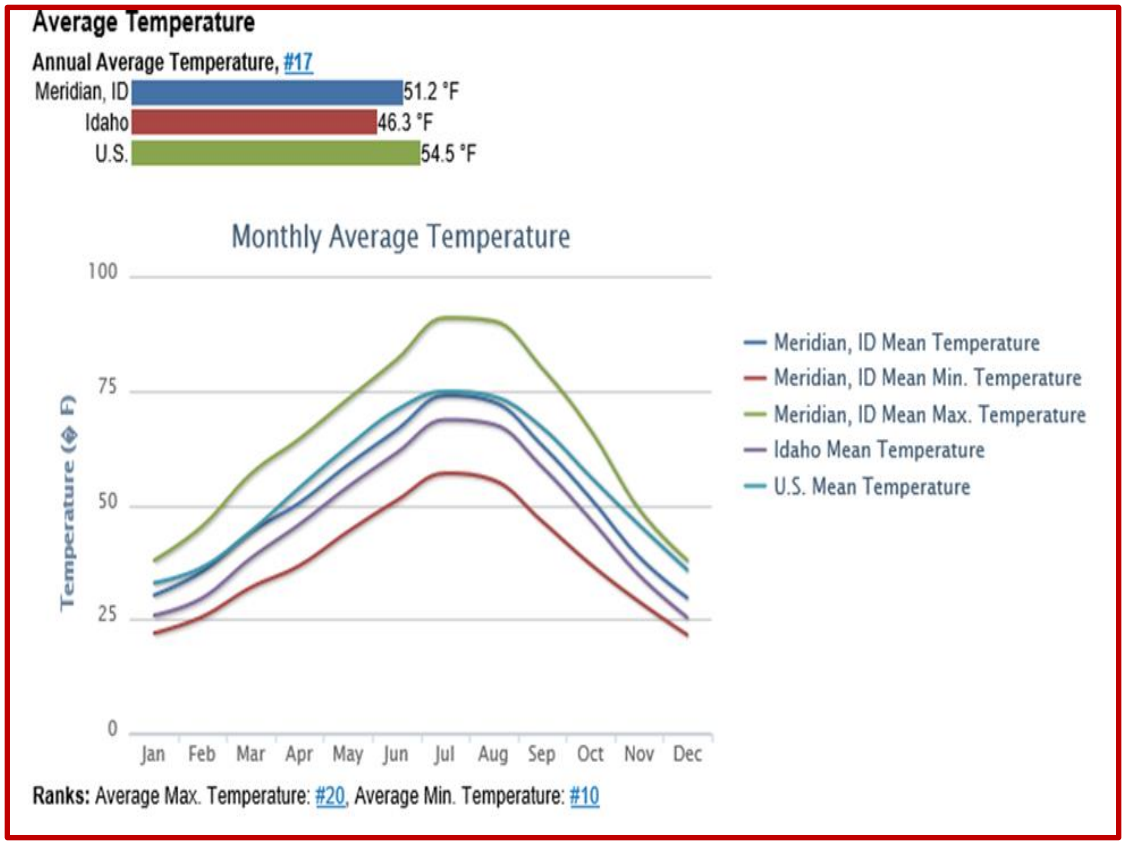


Figure 4 – Meridian Temperatures

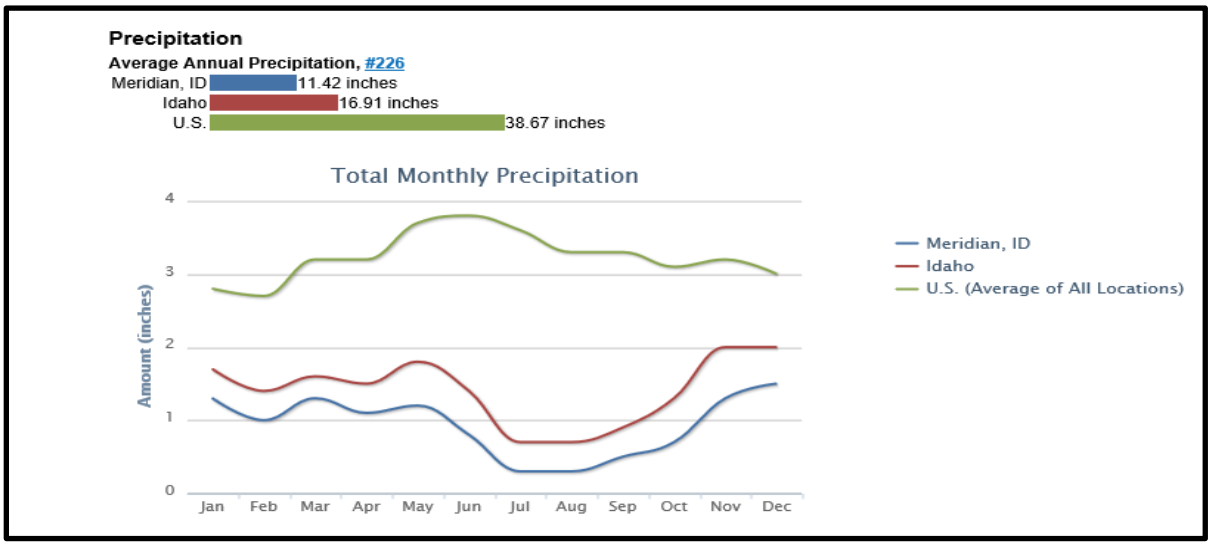


Figure 5 - Meridian Precipitation

Scentsy World Headquarters – Meridian, ID

Demographic Profile

The City of Meridian has an estimated 2018 population of 106,804 (US Census Bureau), with a land area comprising just over 26.84 square miles. There are an approximate 3979 persons per square mile.

According to the Community Planning Association of Southwest Idaho (COMPASS), in 2019 the population within the Rural Fire District was 7,350, and within City Limits was 114,680. The land area of the Rural Fire District combined with the City area totals 59 square miles.

Figure 6 lists the percentage of age distribution, gender and racial/ethnicity composition of the city. The population has increased by 38.8% since 2010.

City of Meridian Demographic Profile	Percent of Population
Persons under 5 years	6.4%
Persons under 18 years	31.7%
Persons 65 years & over	9.6%
Female persons	50.5%
Caucasian only	89.1%
Black or African American only	0.2%
American Indian & Alaska Native only	0.3%
Asian only	4.0%
Pacific Islander only	0.4%
Two or more races	4.1%
Hispanic or Latino	7.8%
	Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Figure 6- Meridian Population Data

Meridian City Hall

Social Characteristics

For all persons age 25 or greater, 95.5% have a high school education or greater, and 35.2% have a Bachelor's degree or higher. There are 34,783 households averaging 2.78 persons per household.

Economic Characteristics

Median household income during the period 2014–2018 was $68,131. Per capita income during 2018 was $32,585. Approximately 8.8% of the population is considered below the poverty level. Median gross rent per month is $1045. Meridian is changing from a farming and dairy community to a modern urban community, and has a number of key businesses that are providing employment and helping to keep the economic drivers of the community strong. Scentsy, St. Luke's Medical Group, Blue Cross of Idaho, the West Ada School District, and the City of Meridian are the top employers in the city, providing jobs to many residents.

Housing Profile

There are 34,829 housing units, with a home ownership rate of 76.7%. Median value of owner-occupied homes is $242,000. With the rapid rush of population into Meridian, a 132% increase since 2000, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of single-family homes, and housing developments built since 2000. Recently, there has been an increased call for more multi-family housing. This has started to take place within the last two years and the department is not yet feeling the impact, as most of these large projects are just about to complete the construction phase and begin taking in residents.

Meridian Housing – Multi-Family (The Lofts)

Meridian Housing - Single Family (Construction)

Figure 7 shows the zoning in the City of Meridian. Multi-family apartment complexes as well as convalescent homes are shown in relation to commercial, industrial, high-density residential and standard residential areas. The core of the city houses the majority of both industrial and commercial areas, while the outer areas of the city are primarily standard residential areas.

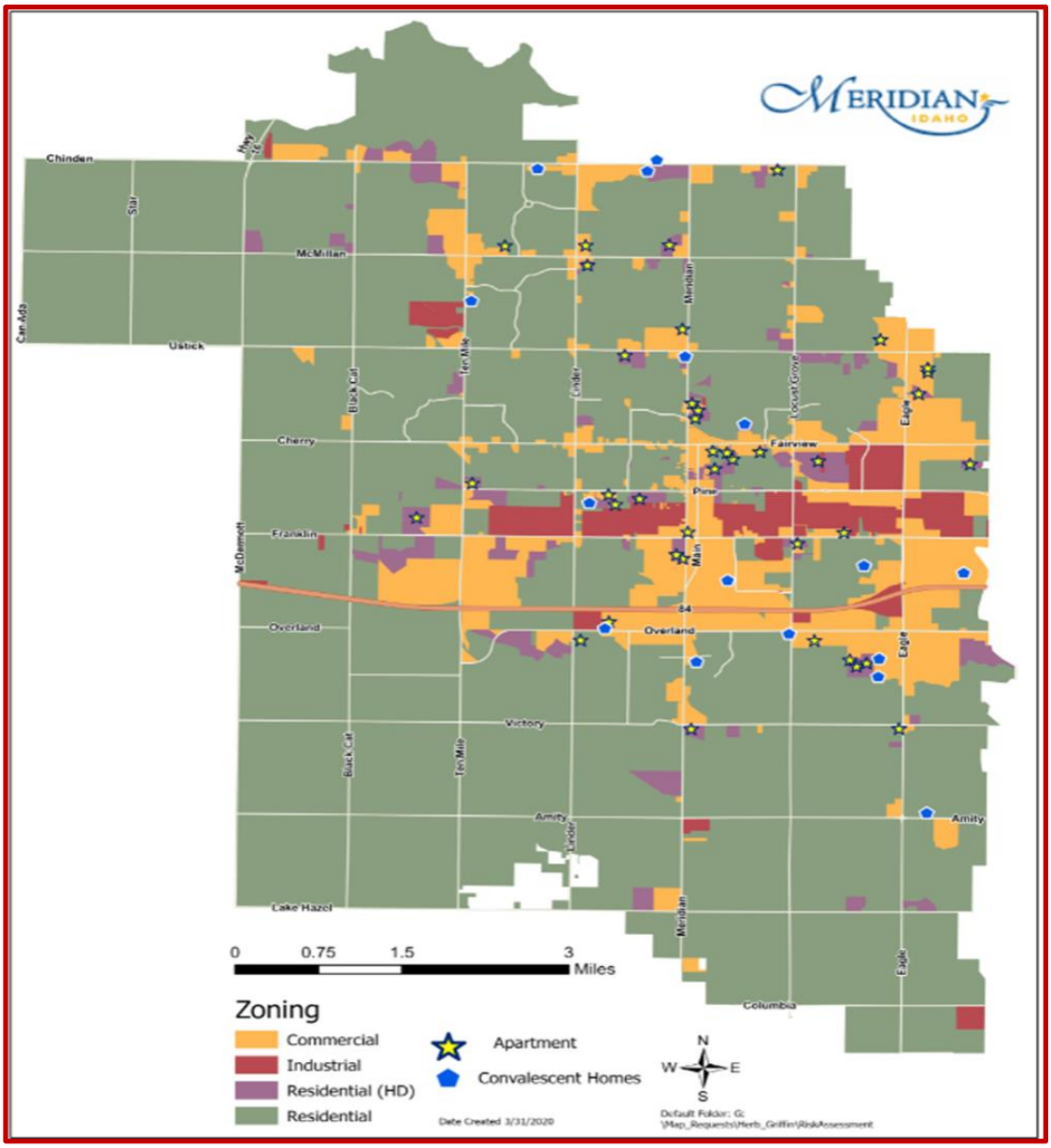


Figure 7 – Meridian Zoning

Meridian Fire Department

Mission Statement

To protect and enhance our community through professionalism and compassion.

Vision Statement

A premier organization recognized for providing a safe community through professionalism, innovative actions, and community involvement

MFD Guiding Principles

Compassion - We will provide friendly and compassionate service to each other and the public we serve.

Professionalism - We will dedicate ourselves to be an educated workforce striving to meet the community's and our employees' changing needs.

Honesty - We will conduct ourselves in an honest manner and be transparent in our interactions.

Ownership - Ownership of our department will be expressed through tradition, loyalty, and dedication.

Trust - We will earn and maintain trust through integrity, our actions, and holding to commitments.

Truck 31 at Fire Station #1

Meridian Fire Department History

In early 1908, the City of Meridian formed their first Fire Department when a group of volunteers successfully tested a newly purchased Champion double cylinder chemical fire extinguisher. With LeRoy Adams as the first Fire Chief, the department started out fairly small, serving only 600 residents at the time. Jacob Eames, a local blacksmith followed Chief Adams as the second Meridian Fire Chief and in approximately 1924 Amos Whitely, another local blacksmith and skilled mechanic took the job.

As the City and Department continued to grow, Roger Welker took over the Fire Chief position in 1945. Chief Welker remained Chief until 1983, dedicating 38 years to our Department. In the early 1950's the Meridian Rural Fire Protection District formed a partnership with the City of Meridian to better protect and serve the citizens of Meridian and the citizens in the surrounding rural area. The Rural Fire District is composed of 32.16 square miles with many pockets within the City. A percentage of the Meridian Fire Department budget is funded by this partnership. This joint venture is proved very beneficial to the City and the Rural Fire District and continues today. The Rural District employs three District Commissioners.

In late 1983, Kenny Bowers became Meridian Fire's fifth Fire Chief. Chief Bowers served in this capacity part-time until 1992 when he moved into the position full-time. Chief Anderson accepted the position of Fire Chief for the City of Meridian in April of 2005, retiring in April of 2010. The Department's current Chief, Mark Niemeyer, was then promoted to Fire Chief.

Today the department runs on a $12 million dollar budget. There are six fire stations, a training tower and a Fire Safety Center within the District. The Department currently employs 91 employees. Meridian Fire currently responds to over 7,700 calls per year.

1943 GMC Fire Parade Truck

Meridian Fire Department Resources & Service Areas

MFD operates five Type 1 engines and a 100-foot ladder truck out of six strategically located fire stations (Stations 31–36) within the city. Each apparatus is fully staffed 24 hours per day, seven days per week. The complement of Meridian Fire Department fire apparatus include five front-line fire engines, one ladder truck, one command vehicle, one water tender, two wildland fire brush engines and three reserve fire engines. The majority of locations within the city can be reached within 4 minutes of each fire station.

Figure 8 - Map of City with Fire Stations

Meridian Fire Department Services Provided

The Operations Division of the Meridian Fire Department is responsible for the delivery of day-to-day emergency and non-emergency services to the citizens we serve. These services are provided by fire department personnel responding from six, strategically located fire stations in the City of Meridian. The Operations Division is comprised of all emergency response personnel, the Training Division, Logistics division and the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Division. The MFD provides the following services:

- Fire suppression
- Emergency medical services (EMS) – advanced life support (ALS) first response
- Public education – fire and life safety
- School safety
- Youth fire setting prevention and intervention program
- Car seat inspections
- Fire inspections
- Annual citizens academy

Public Safety Academy 2019

Customer Expectations

In order to dedicate time, energy, and resources on services most desired by its customers, the Department needs to understand what their customers consider priorities. With this knowledge, internal emphasis may need to be changed or bolstered to fulfill customer needs.

While conducting preparation for the Meridian Fire Departments Strategic Plan in 2016, the department surveyed the citizens of Meridian through a Citizens Advisory Group. The results of that survey helped to educate the department on what services the citizens of Meridian thought were important.

Figure 9 shows the services and the percentage of importance placed on each service by the public.

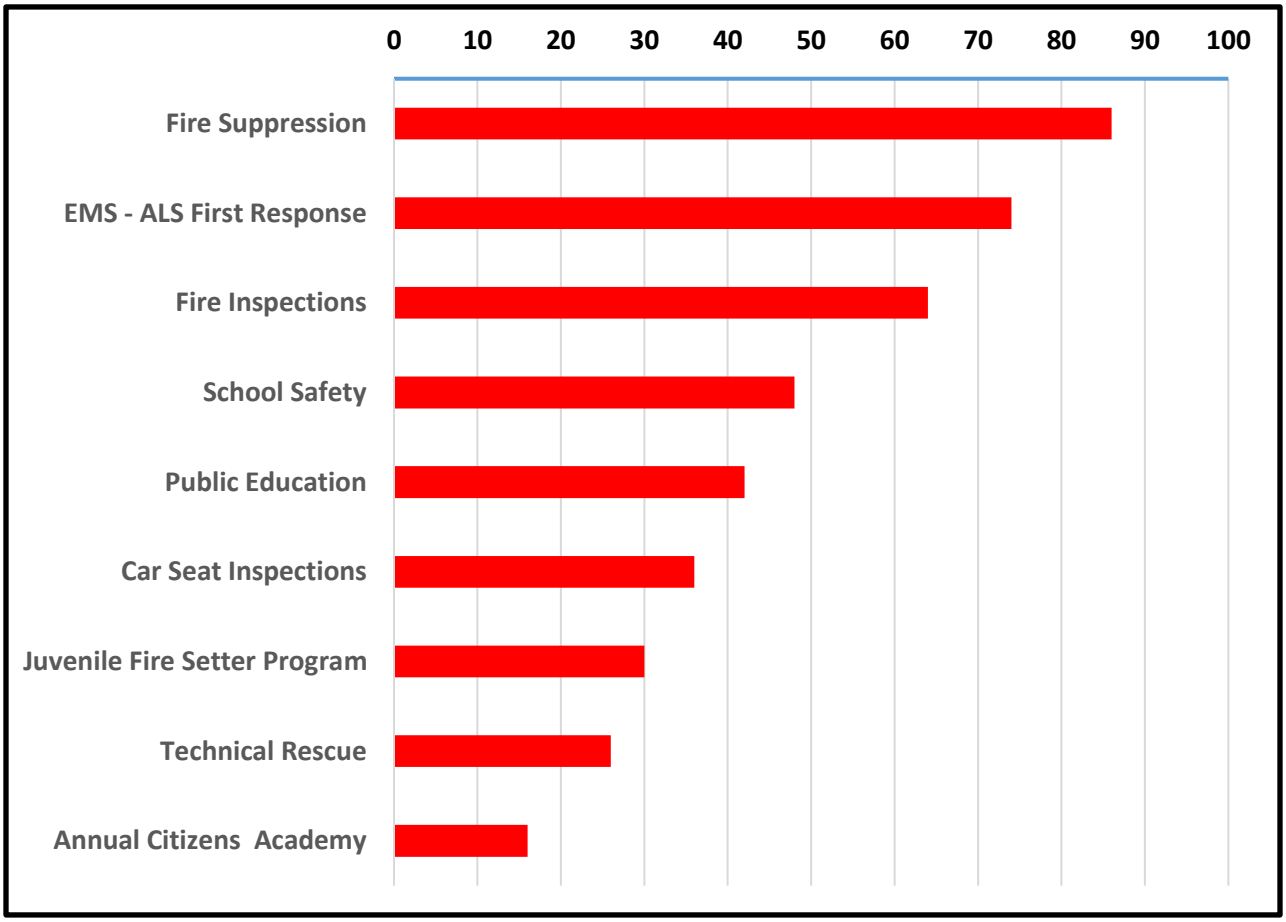


Figure 9 – Percentage of Importance/Expectations per Citizen's

The citizen stakeholder group also identified the following expectations.

- Fire prevention – code enforcement, smoke alarms, education, inspections.
- Annual fire department inspection - provide citizens, businesses, and schools with expert advice and inspections to prevent fires.
- Public education.
- Participate in fire drills – schools.
- Public should be educated as much as possible, depending on funds available.
- Fire suppression - respond quickly to fire situations & chemical spills
- EMS – medical first response; respond quickly to medical situations.
- Better medical training, as first responders
- Location of station's to improve response times.
- Training- required equipment, knowledge of area and facilities.
- Training / top equipment - response, community involvement.
- Friendly, on time, trained.
- Adequate funding – per population, per firefighter.
- Transparency – what are costs?

Structure Fire Training

Fire Overhaul and Investigation

Current Budget

The Meridian Fire Department has an Operating Budget of $15,685,387. Figure 10 shows the breakdown of costs for the 2020 Operating Budget.

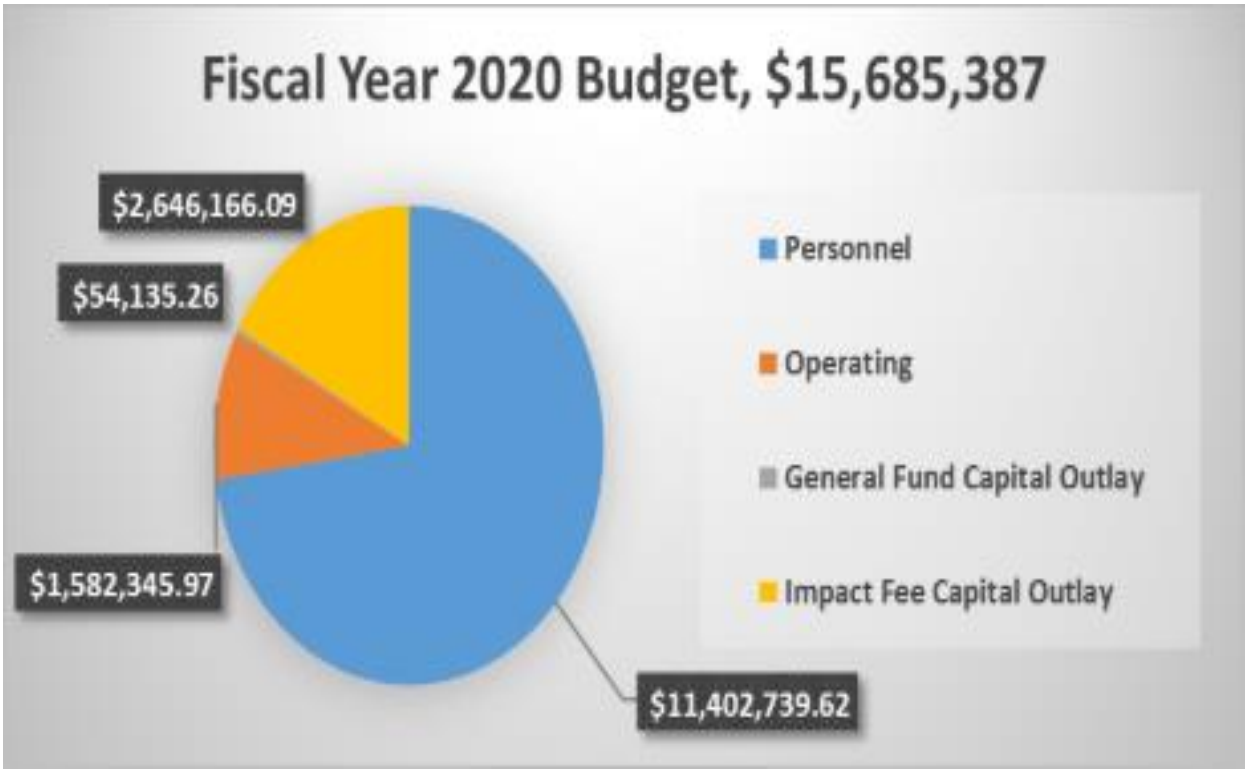


Figure 10 – Meridian Fire Department Budget

Service Demand

In 2020, the Meridian Fire Department responded to 7,895 calls for service. This constituted an 2% increase over the call volume in of 2019. 59% of the calls were for emergency medical incidents including vehicle collisions. The remaining 41% of the calls comprised of calls to fires, fire alarms, services calls, gas leaks and other emergencies.

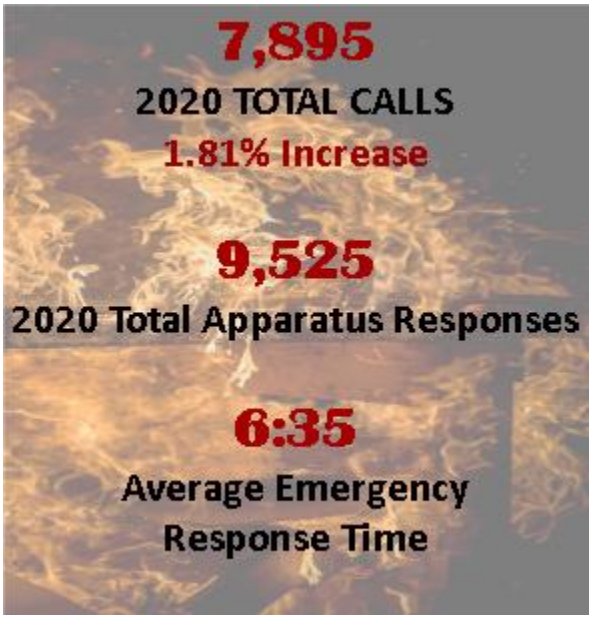


Figure 11 – Total Incidents 2020

During the 60-month period of January 1, 2016 through December 31, 2020, the Meridian Fire Department was dispatched to 35,636 incidents—or an average of 7127 calls annually.

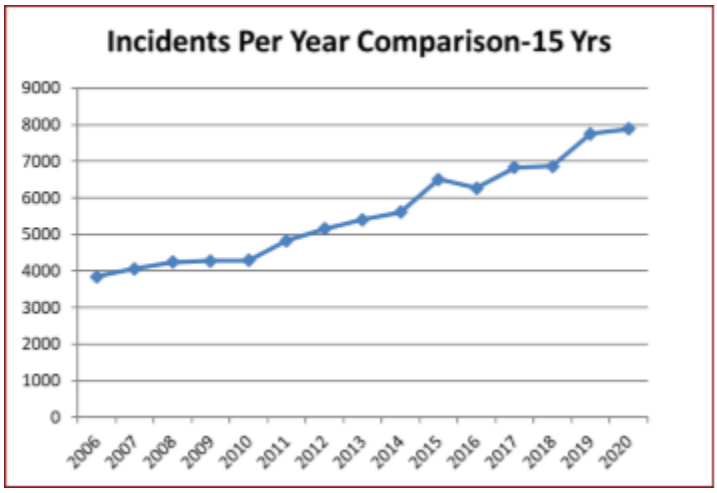


Figure 12 – 15 Year Incident Comparison

Incident Types

Call (incident) types were based on the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) standard definitions, as developed through the U.S. Fire Administration, National Fire Data Center. "Incident Type" is defined as the situation found by emergency personnel on arrival at the scene, and includes the full spectrum of fire department activities from fires to EMS to public service. NFIRS incident types are organized into nine series. Within each of these are additional codes that define the incident more specifically.

NFIRS Incident Type	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	TOTALS
300 - EMS (Including Vehicle Accidents)	3767	4103	4123	4581	4706	**21280**
Other (200,400,600,800,900)	832	1096	1161	1436	1564	**6089**
500 – Service Calls	820	831	963	992	891	**4497**
700 – False Alarms/False Calls	357	530	456	569	570	**2482**
100 - Fires	499	279	170	176	164	**1288**
Annual Totals	**6275**	**6839**	**6873**	**7754**	**7895**	**35636**

Figure 13 - Incident Types by Year 2016-2020

According to the data from 2016-2020, of the 35,636 incidents responded to, the most prominent types of calls are EMS 59.6%; other calls (emergency and non-emergency) 19.8%; service calls 11%; false alarms 7%; and all fires 2%

Other calls include dispatched and cancelled enroute, hazardous materials, good intent calls where there was no emergency on arrival, and any special type of incident that does not fall under another category.

Good Intent incidents reside in Series 600 in NFIRS. For this report, they were classified in the "Other" section in Figure 13. This grouping represents the second-highest number of responses over the 5-year period 2016-2020, representing 15% of the total incident volume.

Service calls are usually non-emergency calls to assist a community member. These include servicing of smoke alarms by changing batteries and lift assists which will be addressed later in this report.

False alarms are responses where there has been some type of alarm that has either malfunctioned, or been deliberately, or accidently, activated with no true emergency.

False Alarm incidents reside in Series 700 in NFIRS. While this grouping only represented 7% of total incidents from 2016-2020, it should be noted that each of these responses began as a possible structure fire response, and required the dispatching and response of multiple units.

Figure 14 shows the number of incidents in these classifications in 2020, and the percentage of responses within the classification numbers.

Type of Incident	2020	Percentage of Total Responses Within That Series
Dispatched and Cancelled Enroute (Series 600)	1079	64%
No Incident Found at Dispatch Address (Series 600)	65	4.7%
False Alarm Unintentional(Series 700)	209	36.6%
False Alarms Due to Malfunction (Series 700)	160	28%

Figure 14 – Good Intent and False Calls 2020

Of these calls in 2020, **1079** of the Good Intent incidents were dispatched and canceled enroute. An additional **65** responses were categorized as No Incident Found at Dispatch Address. Combined, these two codes accounted for 69% of all of the "Other" type incidents.

As for False Alarms, **160** incidents, (22% of all False Alarms/Calls), were classified as being attributed to some type of malfunction. In addition, **209** incidents, (27.6% of all False Alarms/Calls), were classified as unintentional with no fire present. These combined to account for 64.7% of the total False Alarm/Calls in 2020.

Additional analysis of MFD's incidents showed no significant statistical differences in call volumes when considering day-of-week or month-of-year. The conclusion drawn is that the department's call volume by incident type remains consistent throughout the year. The frequency of incidents, by hour-of-the-day, is analyzed for the purpose of predictability. The busiest periods for MFD is between the hours of 0800 (8:00 am) and 2100 (9:00 pm) daily. These times are consistent among all incident types.

The primary incident-types are listed in Figure 15, with the total volume of each for 2020.

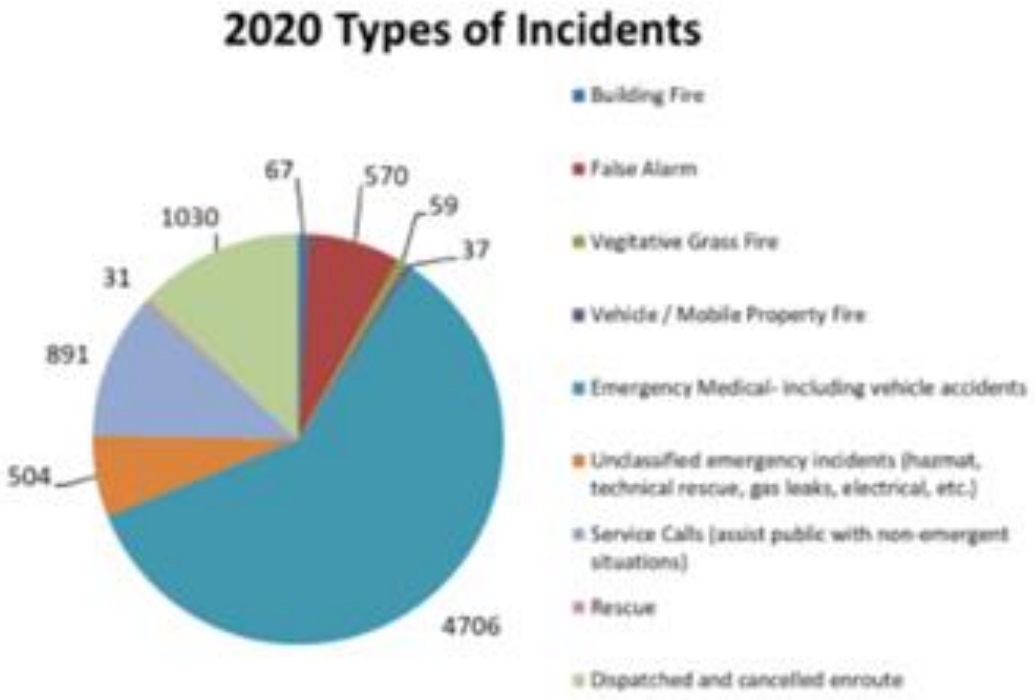


Figure 15- Types of Incidents 2020

Fire Incidents

An analysis of fire incidents categorized within the NFIRS 100 series was conducted to determine a more detailed insight. Figure 16 lists four of the more frequent fire-related incidents, by year, during 2016–2020. As shown, building fires, brush fires, and passenger vehicle fires were the three most common.

*Note: The numbers for all types of fires in Figure 15 and Figure 16 do not correlate because Figure 15 is based on overall typing, while Figure 16 is more specific as to what was found on arrival to be burning.

The total number of fires involving structures from 2016-2020 was **968**. The total number of fires involving vegetation was **658**, and the number of total fires involving vehicles of all types was **238**.

Four Frequent Fire-Related Incidents by Year						
NFIRS Incident Type	**2016**	**2017**	**2018**	**2019**	**2020**	**TOTALS**
111–Building fires	50	68	49	49	40	**256**
113–Cooking fires (no extension)	14	9	15	20	19	**77**
142–Brush or brush-and-grass mixture fires	45	23	28	26	18	**140**
131–Passenger vehicle fires	26	38	22	27	29	**142**
Annual Totals:	**135**	**138**	**114**	**122**	**106**	**615**

Figure 16 – Fire Incidents Types

The lower numbers in building fires and especially cooking fires can be attributed to aggressive fire inspections, public education programs, as well as newer construction guidelines.

The decreasing number of brush fires is likely due to the expanse of housing tracts into areas where there was once agriculture. As the City continues to expand, the wildland interface area shrinks. However, there are still areas around the Fire District, especially in the northeast corner, western and southern edges, which have an urban interface threat. There are also multiple pockets of open land scattered within the City itself, which could pose a risk to residences.

Fire Causes

After reviewing fire investigation reports from 2016-2020, the types of fire causes experienced by the Meridian Fire Department shows that although many investigations were unable to specifically determine the cause of the fire, there were a significant number of identifiable causes for those incidents where an investigator was requested to help the suppression crews.

Failure of some type in an electrical system was a cause determination that occurred often and consistently. Mechanical failure of machinery and devices, battery charging overloads, and faulty wiring all contributed in this area. Some of these causes can be attributed to construction or manufacturing defects, the others are directly related to human error and neglect.

Combustibles too close to a heat source was another area where there were multiple and recurring determinations. This included construction defects where structural members were in direct contact with heat sources and heating elements were used in proximity to combustibles. Again, human error and neglect contributed to many of these types of fire causes.

The next series of fire causes were human related causes. This series included improperly discarded smoking materials, fireworks, unattended cooking and or candles, arson, and controlled burns that were unattended or not fully extinguished. All of these items can and should be addressed as educational issues to help reduce their numbers in the future.

There were additional specific determinations that either were single reference incidents or occurred only a couple of times in the five years' worth of reports that were reviewed.

The ability to determine fire causes is critical to ensure that construction methods, manufacturing methods, and public education efforts are all focused on reducing the possibility of fire ignition. The Fire Prevention Division of the Meridian Fire Department continually furthers their training and education to stay on the forefront of knowledge to help businesses and homeowners remain safe in their buildings. This includes the fire inspectors, investigators, and public educators.

Fire suppression crews are trained in basic investigation methods so that they can assist with helping to determine fire cause without having to call in an investigator. This allows them to identify and protect areas of origin until an investigator arrives, and provide reliable witness as to what was found upon arrival to the fire scene.

Additionally, suppression crews are trained in public education as they are in direct contact with the community on a daily basis. The community recognizes them as the experts on all things related to fire safety, so maintaining and keeping up with current safety practices allows them to disseminate information to the public with every interaction.

Fire Risk Assessment

In general, fire hazards are related to the characteristic type and layout of a city's development. The majority of Meridian is devoted to residential or low-rise commercial development that is composed predominantly of wood-frame construction. Data indicates that of fires involving structures, over 80 percent occur in residential and small commercial buildings. There are over 50 high occupancy buildings and/or buildings housing immobile populations, which require special logistical demands. A large area on the southern and western portions of Meridian are considered a wildland-urban interface wherein wildfires could potentially affect a portion of the Meridian community.

The fire risk analysis takes into account fire potential (probability), life hazards and economic impact (consequences), occupancy use, construction features, fire protection systems, fire flow requirements, and community risk factors. Based upon this analysis of existing and potential community risk, in addition to the probability and consequences of these events, the following hazard levels have been established:

- Low Risk: Small structures that are remote from other buildings are considered low hazard occupancies. Examples include detached garages and sheds. Also included in this category are vehicle fires, rubbish fires, and small vegetation fires.
- Moderate Risk: Moderate hazard areas are also known as typical hazards. Most of Meridian falls into this category. Single-family dwellings, multifamily dwellings, and small or medium apartments/condominiums (≤ 39 units) and small commercial occupancies (≤ 10,000 square feet) are example of moderate risk structures.
- High Risk: These properties are typically substantial structures that in an emergency may bear the risk of large loss of life, loss of economic values to the community, or large property loss. Low and midrise hotels, schools, large shopping centers, large apartment or condominium complexes (40+ units), large commercial buildings (>10,000 square feet), senior citizen housing, and skilled nursing facilities are examples of high-risk occupancies.
- Special Risk: St. Luke's Hospital is classified as special risk. Special Risk is an exceptional classification that addresses critical tasking for a unique incident type. These unique incident types, although low in probability, may threaten a significant number of lives, may result in excessive economic loss, and/or may cause severe long-term damage to the environment.

Emergency Medical Services Incidents

The Meridian Fire Department switched over to a new EMS records management system in 2018 (ESO). Incident records indicated that from 2018 through 2020, there were **31,530** primary impressions noted with patient encounters.

The NFIRS categories give a very broad description of most EMS incidents but are inadequate in describing more specific details of illnesses and injuries. For example, the majority of EMS incidents were categorized as *32–EMS incident (includes patient refusals)*. In order to get a more complete perspective of EMS, it was necessary to examine patient records in detail. This was done by evaluating the primary impressions and causes of each case.

Figure 17 shows the ten most common EMS patient encounters from 2018 through 2020 and the percentage of overall EMS calls they represent.

While the data shows that Traumatic Injuries are the most common patient encounter, it does not break down the causes, or the ages of victims. While vehicle accidents make up a large number of these incidents, falls also contribute in high numbers to this type of incident, especially within the older demographic (age 65+). The next three patient encounters, General Weakness, Altered LOC, and Chest Pain/Discomfort, all have a higher propensity to be in the 65+ age group.

Figure 18 shows a pie chart of the percentage of responses for the ten most frequent primary impressions as compared to each other. **These ten most common patient encounters represent 67% of all EMS patient encounters for the Meridian Fire Department.**

Type of Patient Encounter	Total Number of Primary Impressions	Percentage of total Primary Impressions
Traumatic Injury	7238	22.9%
General Weakness	2371	7.5%
Chest Pain/Discomfort	1486	4.7%
Altered Mental Status	1457	4.6%
Syncope/Fainting	1380	4.3%
Seizures	1348	4.2%
Acute Respiratory Distress (Dyspnea)	1304	4.1%
Pain (non-traumatic)	1152	3.6%
Abdominal Pain	1218	3.8%
Mental Disorder	1152	3.6%

Figure 17 – Ten Most Common Patient Encounters 2018-2020

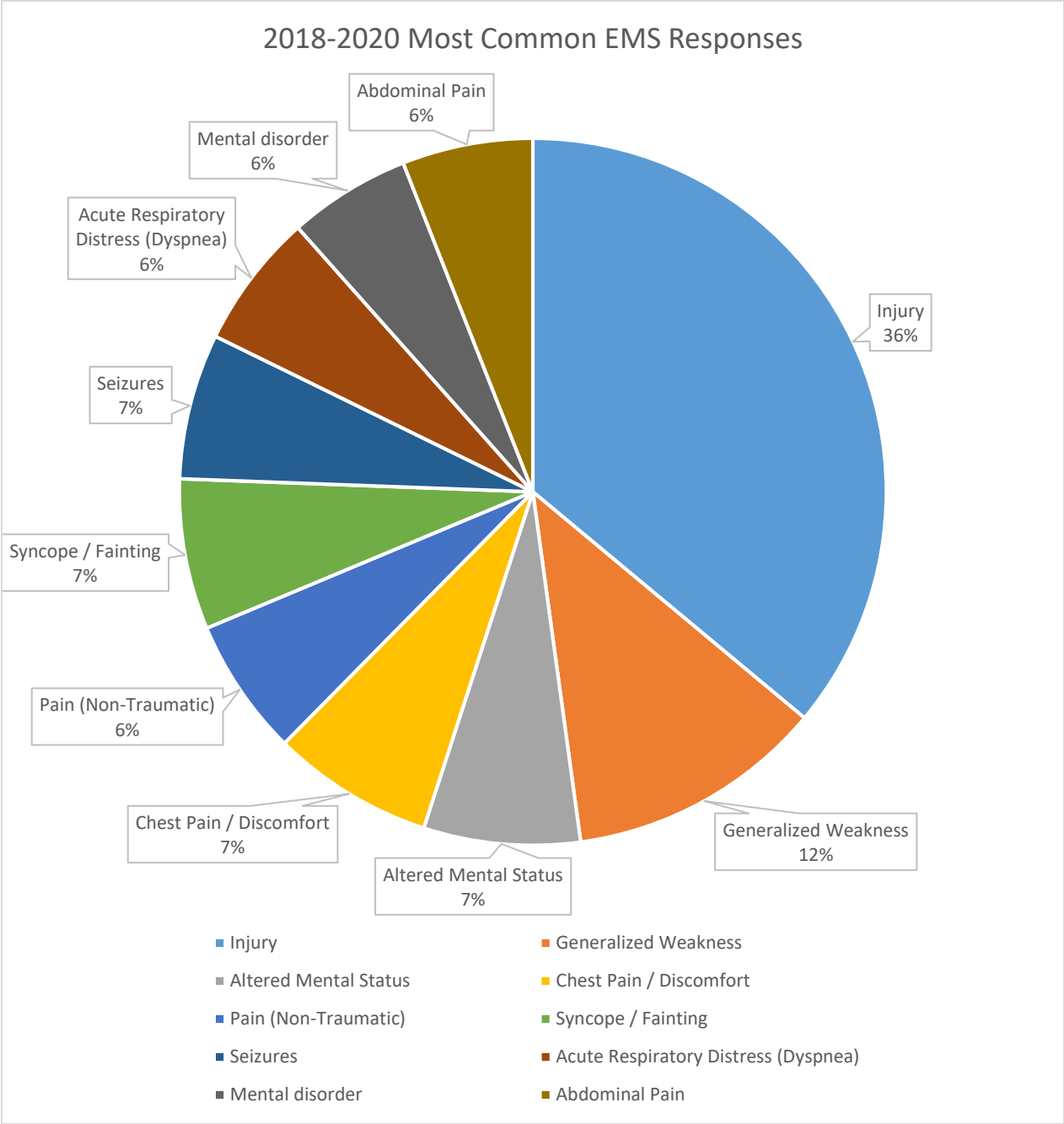


Figure 18 – Pie Chart of 10 Most Common EMS Patient Encounters 2018-2020

Additional study into the EMS records shows that those persons age 65 and greater represented **38%** of the total patients. Since this group only represents **10%** of the total population, their impact on the EMS system is staggering. Figure 19 shows the five largest breakdown by outcome for patients over 65 years, and the percentage of each type of responses they account for:

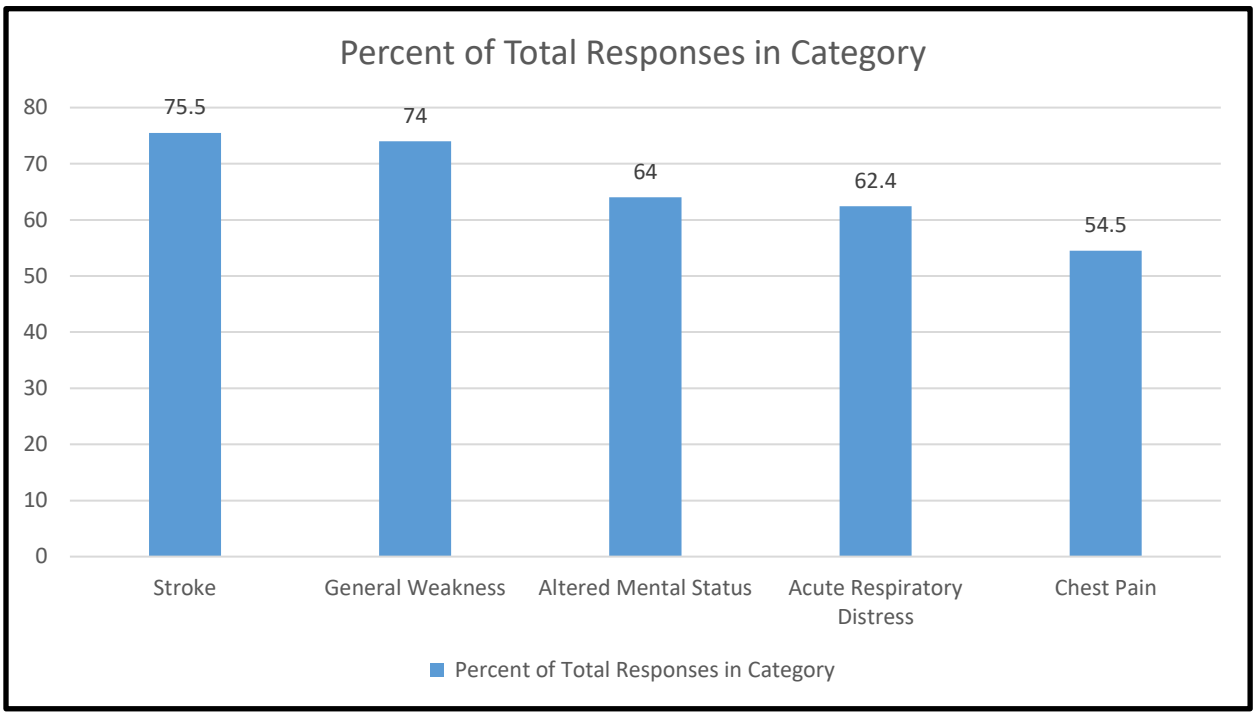


Figure 19 – Percentage of Responses in Category for Patients Aged 65 and Older

Within this age group, females represent 58% of the patients encountered, while males represent the remaining 42% of the patients encountered. Overall, female patients over age 65 account for 22% of the total patient contacts and males over age 65 account for 16% of the total patients encountered.

The Meridian Fire Department does not transport patients but does provide Advanced Life Support until the transporting agency arrives. As first responders, the MFD plays a valuable role in the community by contributing to the patient's outcome by means of early intervention.

Community CPR (Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation)

The Ada County City Emergency Services System (ACCESS) went through a system wide RFP to standardize Cardiac Monitors in the county. Through this process and the standardization, they now have the ability to have instantaneous CPR feedback. All fire crews, on all cardiac arrests, will have the ability to monitor their CPR quality in real time. This helps improve cardiac arrest survivability. As a system, ACCESS has been hovering just above 40% cardiac arrest survival rate in Ada County. Having CPR feedback for all of the crews is vitally important to achieve their survivability goal of 50%.

CPR – or Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation – is an emergency lifesaving procedure performed when the heart stops beating. Immediate CPR can double or triple chances of survival after cardiac arrest. In one year alone, 475,000 Americans die from a cardiac arrest. More than 350,000 cardiac arrests occur outside of the hospital each year.

CPR, especially if administered immediately after cardiac arrest, can double or triple a person's chance of survival. About 90 percent of people who experience an out-of-hospital cardiac arrest die. However, according to 2014 data, nearly 45 percent of out-of-hospital cardiac arrest victims survived when bystander CPR was administered.

The Meridian Fire Department provides hands-only CPR instruction to the community in a program called *HeartSAFE Meridian*.

The five links in the adult out-of-hospital Chain of Survival are:

- **Recognition** of cardiac arrest and **activation** of the emergency response system
- Early **cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR)** with an emphasis on chest compressions
- Rapid **defibrillation**
- Basic and advanced emergency medical services
- Advanced life support and post-cardiac arrest care

A strong Chain of Survival can improve chances of survival and recovery for victims of cardiac arrest.

Globally, cardiac arrest claims more lives than colorectal cancer, breast cancer, prostate cancer, influenza, pneumonia, auto accidents, HIV, firearms, and house fires combined.

Emergency Medical Services Risk Assessment

Requests for Emergency Medical Services (EMS) are the most frequent type of service provided by the Meridian Fire Department. EMS incidents account for 59 percent of emergency activities and correspondingly have the greatest impact on Meridian Fire Department resources. The residential population is a significant factor in assessing the probability of EMS incidents. As the population of the Meridian increases and ages, the demand for EMS will increase proportionately. There is a range of EMS incident types. The following hazard levels have been established for EMS risk:

- Low Risk: Injured and ill persons, without airway, breathing, or circulatory problems.
- Moderate Risk: Cardiac arrest, severe respiratory distress, patients meeting trauma center criteria or other specialty center criteria.
- High Risk: Multi-victim incidents with five or more patients.

Lift Assist Incidents

As noted earlier, one non-EMS category that results in many responses in Meridian is lift assists. This is classified in NFIRS as code 554 - Assist Invalid. Figure 20 shows the steady increase in these types of responses over the 2016-2020 period.

Number of Assist Invalid	**2016**	**2017**	**2018**	**2019**	**2020**
Responses per Year	213	231	300	334	356

Figure 20 – Number of Invalid Assist Responses per Year 2016-2020

The data shows that the average increase is 11.9% per year, which corresponds to the current housing boom, which began in 2016. Most of those responded to were over age 65. The expectation is that as our community ages, these types of incidents will increase.

There are a number of reasons that this type of incident is important in determining value during this assessment process:

- Many of these calls turn into full EMS responses
- The numbers are slowly increasing
- More assisted living facilities are being built which will provide an opportunity for more responses as those facilities don't want their employees performing this service
- Many of the cities' new residents are retired and relocating from other areas.

Target Hazards

Smoke Alarm Program

In 2012, what began as an idea to better prepare citizens turned into reality when the Meridian Fire Department accepted an $112,000 grant from FEMA to initiate a smoke alarm education and installation program. Project SAFE (Smoke Alarms for Everyone) has turned out to be a shining success. It is a known fact that early alerting of a fire saves lives. It also helps to save the lives of firefighters. Conducting a search for a victim in a working fire is one of the biggest dangers to firefighter safety. Put simply "saving you is helping to save us". Working with volunteers and members of the Fire Department, when a home was found to have non-existent or non-functioning alarms, new alarms were installed or replaced as necessary. Over 2800 smoke alarms were installed in Meridian homes in 2012, including 110 "bed shakers" for the hearing impaired. These special detectors shake a small, thin unit placed under the mattress that in turn alerts the resident of a potential fire. Working with the Idaho Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, this program was one of the first in the nation.

Although the FEMA grant funds have been exhausted, Project SAFE is an on-going program. Since 2018, the MFD has replaced an average of 470 smoke alarms per year in the community. The goal of the program is ensuring that every home has working smoke alarms, and it has grown to become a staple of customer service within the community. The MFD, when requested, will respond to a customer's home and assist with battery change outs, or alarm replacements if necessary. This program allows for continued maintenance of smoke alarms throughout the community, and reduces the risk of falls from ladders for seniors who, due to many factors, should not be climbing ladders.

Older Adult Safety

The smoke alarm program provides access into homes where fire safety, slip and fall safety, and other general safety measures can be discussed with the older adult homeowner. Since slips and falls are one of the leading causes of injury to older adults, and the results of these types of injuries are the leading cause of the loss of independence, discussing ways to avoid these injuries is critical to ensuring a healthy senior population.

The Public Education Division has been active in providing fire safety, and slip and fall safety classes to older adult groups and developments, in order to help keep these groups healthy.

Building Inspection Program

An important safety issue are the businesses and buildings within the community. The MFD addresses this with the Fire Prevention Building Inspection Program. The MFD currently has two inspectors who, along with the Fire Marshal, go out into the community and conduct fire safety inspections on schools, businesses, and special events to insure public safety. Figure 21 shows the number of fire inspections conducted from 2017 through 2020.

Year	Total Inspections
2017	2482
2018	3165
2019	3224
2020	2519
2017-2020 Totals	**11,390**

Figure 21 – Total Inspections 2017-2020

In 2020, the Meridian Fire Department completed 2,519 fire and life safety inspections. There were 1,120 violations noted and 889 violations cleared. With the adoption of The Compliance Engine (a third party company that helps monitor and track occupancies that have fire alarms, sprinklers or cooking hoods with extinguishing systems) the top 5 violations were noted:

- Sprinkler system maintenance past due
- Exit signs: Burned out or not functioning
- Fire alarm system maintenance past due
- Fire extinguishers: Annual service not completed or the extinguisher(s) were missing
- Extension cord misuse: Using extension cords instead of surge protectors

All of these systems are required by code, to be tested and maintained on an annual or semiannual basis. In 2020, there were 2,691 inspections entered into The Compliance Engine (TCE).

By inspecting and discovering these fire code safety violations and having them corrected, the community risk is greatly reduced.

Schools

Schools are a target hazard in the community due to the large number of schools, over 40, and the fact that over 30% of the total population under 18 years of age. Figure 19 shows the locations of the public schools in the West Ada School District. There are a large number of private schools within the community as well.

One of the most important areas of concern is school safety. The MFD, along with the Meridian Police Department, West Ada School District, and many other local and state agencies, are together working on a project to meet NFPA 3000 requirements (Standard for Active Shooter/Hostile Event Response (ASHER) Program).

The ISCRS (Idaho Standard Command Responses for Schools) was formed by the Treasure Valley School Safety Committee, which focuses on standardizing protocols for the initial protective actions a school should take during an emergency.

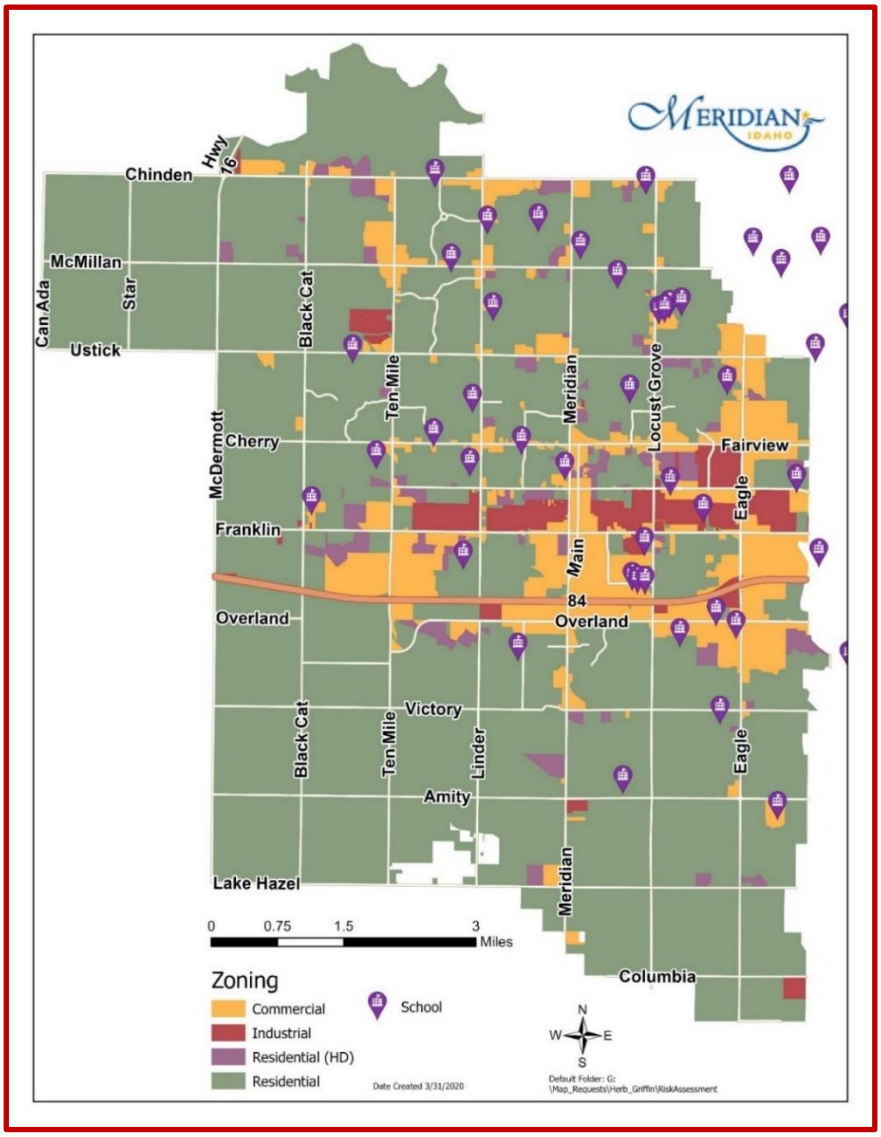


Figure 22 – Location of Schools within Meridian

The ISCRS was developed so that all organizations involved in ASHER incidents at school locations would be operating off the same operational directives, and be better able to communicate from the beginning of the incident using the same terminology.

This school safety initiative has been adopted by over 60% of the school districts in Idaho.

Natural Hazards

Meridian is fortunate that based on its position in the center of an extremely large and flat valley, it is not prone to many serious natural disaster issues faced elsewhere. The semi-arid nature of the area, the distance from the surrounding mountain ranges, and a favorable jet stream, has produced mild winters, limited flood risk in the spring season, and very little urban interface fire danger during the summer months.

Earthquakes

Earthquakes are a possible natural hazard in Idaho, however history suggests that the magnitude and frequency of these events are not such that extensive wide spread damage is likely. Most buildings in Meridian have been built using recent earthquake standards and are expected to withstand the forces exerted during a quake.

Earthquake Damaged Building (California)

Severe Weather

Severe heat occurs during the two hottest summer months, July and August. Outdoor activities can be dangerous if heat precautions are not taken. Excessive heat poses a significant risk to people's health, including heat exhaustion and heat stroke, which can result in death. Excessive heat generally means unusually hot temperatures, possibly combined with oppressive humidity that persists for two or more days.

Thunderstorms

Thunderstorms are a hazard in Southern Idaho. These storms move in and out quickly, bringing with them heavy rains, hail, high winds and lighting. Severe thunderstorms are officially defined as storms that are capable of producing hail that is an inch or larger or wind gusts over 58 mph. Hail, this size can damage property such as plants, roofs and vehicles. Wind this strong is able to break off large branches, knock over trees or cause structural damage to trees. Thunderstorms also produce tornadoes and dangerous lightning; heavy rain can cause flash flooding.

Although snowfall is usually light, in the winter of 2016-2017 there was an unprecedented amount of snow that fell on the entire Treasure Valley area. "Snowmageddon", as it was dubbed, dropped 39" of snow. Normal annual snowfall is around 19", so the amount of snow that fell during this season was twice the normal amount. In addition to occasional major snow events such as this, inversions can occur which have in the past created long streaks of sub-zero temperatures.

"Snowmageddon", Winter 2016- 2017

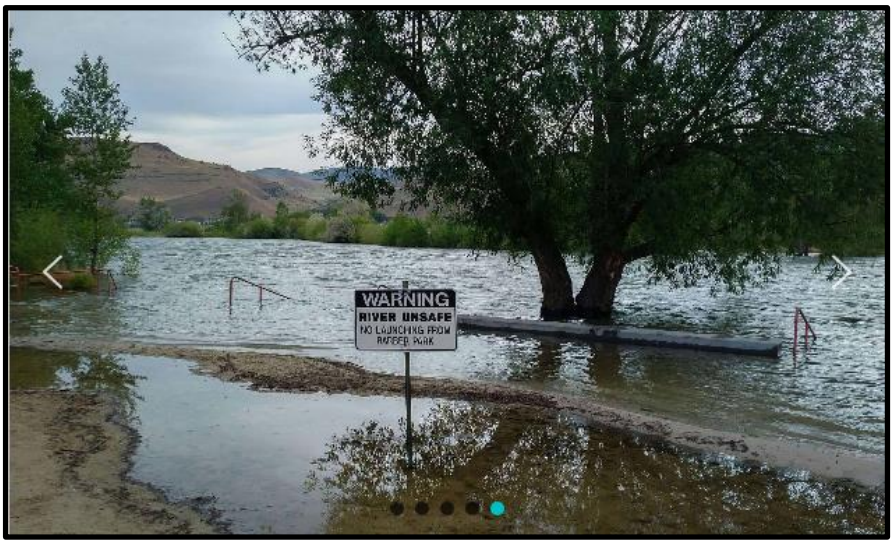
Wildland Fires

As discussed in the Fire Incident section, wildfires along the southern and western edges of the city are a threat. WUI (Wildland Urban Interface) areas are the areas that have grass fires that pose a risk to structures. There are pockets of these areas within the Rural Fire District, that have limited access and limited (or no) water available for firefighting. The MFD utilizes fire crews to canvass these areas in order to be as prepared as possible in case of an urban interface incident, while development has continued to shrink these areas of threat.

Wildland Grass

Flooding

Flooding is a small risk along the Boise River, which touches the northwestern most edge of the fire district. The city does have numerous irrigation canals running through it. These create hazardous locations; contribute to water rescue responses in the spring, and summer months.



Flooding Along Boise River

Technological/Human Hazards

Hazardous Materials

Hazardous material incidents account for about 2 percent of all calls to the Fire Department. A major hazardous materials release is in the low probability, high consequence category. There are different types of hazardous materials incident responses ranging from a single engine response (e.g., an abandoned container of motor oil), to a response requiring the Department's entire staff for a major release of hazardous materials. Additional resources are available if needed from the City of Boise Fire Department.

Utility Failure

Risks from a prolonged utility failure are considered low probability with low consequence. Critical City infrastructure, such as City Hall, the Police Department, Public Works, the Senior Center, and each fire station have emergency power capability with procedures in place to maintain essential emergency services.

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Transportation Hazards

Boise Airport

Air

The City of Meridian has no airport within its boundaries. It is located 11.2 miles away from Boise Airport (BOI), but is within a direct flight path. Risks from an air transportation emergency are considered to have low probability with high consequence. The Department is capable of handling small air transportation incidents through current policies and procedures. Additional specialized resources are available through Mutual Aid.

Railroad

The City of Meridian currently has a railroad system that operates within its boundaries. The Boise Valley Railroad (BVRR) began operations in November 2009. The BVRR consists of 68 miles of track on two separate branches, the Wilder Branch and the Boise Cut-off.

Boise Valley Railroad

The Wilder Branch runs from Wilder, Idaho, to Caldwell, Idaho. The 25 mile Boise Cut-off runs from Nampa, through Meridian, to the Boise Airport, southeast of Boise, Idaho, the state's largest city. The BVRR also includes trackage rights from Nampa to Caldwell on the Union Pacific Railroad line. The major commodities of the Boise Valley Railroad include potatoes, lumber, fertilizer, and fuels.

The rail system risk is in the low probability with high consequence category. The presence of the rail system adds to the potential for mass casualty and/or rescue incidents. Policies, procedures, and mutual aid agreements are in place to handle this potential.

Highway

Meridian provides emergency services to portions of the I-84 Freeway that transverses the City. In addition, State Highways 16, 20/26, 55, and 69 all pass through parts of Meridian. Motor vehicle accident risks are in the high probability with low consequence category. All highway/street incidents do have the potential to be in the low probability with high consequence category if the incident involves hazardous materials, multiple patients, or is a complex incident.

I-84 in Meridian, ID

Security Hazards

Civil Disorder

The City of Meridian sits in the most densely populated area of the State of Idaho, and while there has not been any history of civil disorder, there always exists the possibility of occurrence. As the probability of these events occurring is low, the associated risk falls into the low probability with high consequence category. While generally a police department issue, fire departments do attempt to extinguish fires and treat the injured, when safe, during these events. In the event of an incident occurring, the Meridian Fire Department would team up with law enforcement and operate using the policies, tactics and procedures developed for riot situations.

Terrorism (Critical Infrastructure Systems)

While the City of Meridian is immediately neighboring the City of Boise, which is both the State Capital and the most populated city in the State of Idaho, the risk of terrorism is low. The most notable hard targets are Gowen Field (10.8 miles), Mountain Home Air Base (61.6 miles), and the Idaho National Laboratory (220 miles). Idaho Power has 17 hydroelectric dams along the Snake River. The likelihood of domestic terrorism is the more likely threat in this category. Acts of terrorism are in the low probability with high consequence category.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The Community Risk Assessment process has allowed the Meridian Fire Department to observe the City of Meridian community and the Fire Department services. By viewing the Department from a historical perspective, understanding the current services provided, knowing the community expectations, evaluating service demands by utilizing fire and EMS data, determining key areas of potential risk, and assessing all potential hazards, the department has the tools necessary to develop a clear and comprehensive Risk Assessment Plan.

While the MFD does a good job as a reactive organization, as is the case with most fire departments in the country, it is necessary to be more pro-active in the future.

There are multiple areas where the Meridian Fire Department can improve its Community Risk Reduction. Among them are:

- The construction of additional fire stations, and possible relocation of current stations, in order to improve coverage in the growing areas of the city. As the city grows outwardly to its furthest borders, and fills in the undeveloped islands within its current borders, additional resources will be required to provide timely and proper responses to an ever-increasing call volume.

- Maintaining appropriate staffing levels to ensure resources match growth and service demands. While this in itself is a reactionary measure, it is essential to keeping the risk reduction at a level commiserate with growth.

- Maintaining and improving mutual aid agreements with neighboring cities and fire districts. The ability to share resources is important as no jurisdiction has the financial ability to provide all necessary services for every threat. Natural disasters such as large wildland fires, large-scale structure fires, multiple simultaneous incidents and other large-scale incidents can overload a department's resource quickly. Assistance from neighboring agencies allows these types of incidents to be handled without sacrificing the ability to provide the base services that continue to be needed during these high resource necessary events.

- Improved department training. Department training provides the opportunity to practice repetitive skills and keep crews up to date on the latest methods. The MFD has a Training Division that includes a Division Chief and Two Training Captains. In addition, Company Officers provide training within their own districts and on-line training is provided throughout the department. Maintaining a high level of readiness through training keeps firefighters safe, builds confidence and pride in the firefighters, and gives the community confidence in the professionalism of their firefighters.

- Continued and improved area-wide (multi-jurisdictional) training. This type of training is combining units from different jurisdictions at one location, and training collectively as a group. Area-wide training allows for information sharing, communications familiarity, and creates a sense of teamwork with crews who do not work together regularly. This type of training provides smoother operations when multiple agency units are involved together on incidents. An example of multi-jurisdictional training is high-rise firefighting. Conducting training with all parties who might be assisting on a large scale incident such as this allows for smooth operations, effective communications, management of resources, and a better chance of successful completion of tasks with minimal risk of loss of life for both victims and firefighters.

- Involving front line staffing (firefighters) more in Community Risk Reduction (CRR). Provide training, and encourage suppression personnel to embrace CRR as an important and vital part of their jobs. Change the, historically, reactionary way of thinking and encourage a more proactive thought process towards reducing risk within the community. Placing an emphasis on prevention activities and education will help to reduce the non-emergent responses, keeping suppression crews available for more urgent and true emergencies.

- Reducing good intent and false calls in order to reduce the number of unnecessary responses (i.e.: False Calls, Good Intent Calls, Service calls). As noted above, community risks can be reduced through aggressive fire and life safety education and prevention services. By employing a department-wide mindset of CRR, these programs can be more focused and effective. Proper and thorough education of the public in all aspects of community risk will reduce those instances where the public contacts the fire department because they either did not know how to handle the situation or did not know whom else to call. While this will not eliminate these types of responses, reducing these would have a significant impact on the availability of resources, and could reduce the need to provide additional crews and equipment, thus providing a financial benefit to the community as well.

- Providing additional fire inspectors to augment the current staffing. This will allow the Fire Prevention Division to be able to keep up with growth and development, maintaining, and confidently improving, safety in all buildings within the City of Meridian and the Rural Fire District where the public has access.

- Continue to provide training in fire investigation for all investigators, and supplement investigation training for suppression officers. Determining fire causes are essential in order to recognize patterns, determine trends, and develop safety messaging and education for the public. This also provides valuable data for understanding the fire risk within the community.

- Working with the Ada County Medical Director, and under the Ada County City Emergency Services System (ACCESS), together with Central District Health (CDH)* and local hospitals, the MFD can assist with determining methods to provide effective, and efficient methods to help the community deal with healthcare issues. One issue of importance would be to determine ways to reduce recidivism. Recidivism in healthcare has been defined as the tendency by ill patients to relapse or return to hospitals for treatment**.** Anecdotal data and historical experience shows that many patients, recently released by hospitals, are returning to the hospital, usually within 30 days, after discharge. These patients utilize 9-1-1 and the emergency department and are often readmitted. Some of these patients do not understand how to properly care for themselves after their release from the hospital initially. Their inability to manage their medicines, follow-up treatments, and home health care drive them back into the hospital setting after experiencing a setback in their health status.

One possible solution to the specific issue of recidivism is the use of community paramedics.

Community paramedicine is a relatively new and evolving healthcare model. It allows nurses, paramedics and emergency medical technicians (EMTs) to operate in expanded roles by assisting with public health and primary healthcare and preventive services to underserved populations in the community. The goal is to improve access to care and avoid duplicating existing services.

Some patients lack access to primary care and use 9-1-1 and emergency medical services (EMS) to receive healthcare in non-emergency situations. This can create a burden for EMS personnel and health systems. Community paramedics can work in a public health and primary care role to address the needs of residents in a more efficient and proactive way.

Community paramedics generally focus on:

- Providing and connecting patients to primary care services
- Completing post hospital follow-up care
- Integration with local public health agencies, home health agencies, health systems, and other providers
- Providing education and health promotion programs
- Not duplicating available services in the community

*(CDH, Public Health District IV, is one of seven public health districts within the state of Idaho, serving the counties of Ada, Boise, Elmore, and Valley. Health districts were established in 1970 under Idaho Code to ensure essential public health services are made available to protect the health of all citizens of the state - no matter how large or small their county population. With a vision of Healthy People in Healthy Communities, CDH's emphasis is on decreasing risk factors for chronic disease, improving quality of life and increasing the years of healthy life among residents.)

- Increasing public education programs, funding, and staffing. This will strengthen the existing programs the department already has in place. It will provide funding, equipment and staffing to provide additional programs.

- Increase programs and classes directed at Older Adults. Work with this segment of the community and provide classes on Slip and Fall safety, Cooking safety, AED (automated external defibrillator) and CPR training. Provide continued education on smoke alarms, exit drills and how and when to call 9-1-1. Augment current programs that address senior driving issues and proper handling of smoking materials. One addition would be to add a Home Safety Inspection program to provide seniors with a review of their home and identify potential unsafe conditions. This segment of the population, as noted earlier, accounts for almost 40% of the EMS responses in the community.

- Replace the current Fire Safety Center with a mobile Fire Safety Trailer. Currently the MFD has a Fire Safety Center, a fixed facility where the Public Education Division works out of, and hosts schools and other groups. One drawback to this facility is the difficulty that school groups have in utilizing it to its fullest. A school group has to schedule a time for programs at the facility, secure a bus to transport the students to and from the facility, and complete whatever internal procedures the school district requires to conduct the field trip. By providing a mobile safety facility, the logistics of transporting students and lost class time would be eliminated. This would encourage more teachers to utilize the fire and life safety programs offered by the MFD.

- Establish a Community Risk Coordinator to manage department wide community risk activities and planning.

- In the future, the City of Meridian will work with department partnerships (Police, Fire and Community Development) to create a non-emergency alternative response unit that will ensure the community is receiving the appropriate level of care for non-emergent situations. The intent is to bring the full measure of city resources for the benefit of community members and reduce the strain of non-emergent 911 calls on the emergency response system.

By utilizing the results of this risk assessment, the Meridian Fire Department can begin the next steps in the Community Risk Reduction planning process. This will start with the development of strategies to mitigate risks, followed by the preparation and implementation of a CRR plan. After implementation, the department will monitor, evaluate and modify the plan as necessary.

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