



MAYOR AND COUNCIL REPORT

Thunderbolt Fire Rescue – Mission Statement

At Thunderbolt Fire Rescue, our mission is to **protect lives, property, and the environment** through dedicated service, rapid response, and professional excellence.

We are committed to serving the citizens and visitors of our community with **honor, integrity, and compassion**—providing fire suppression, emergency medical care, public education, and disaster response.

Through continuous training, teamwork, and community engagement, we strive to deliver the highest level of service, ensuring safety and resilience for all.

Thunderbolt Fire Rescue – Vision Statement

Our vision is to be a **leader in emergency services**, recognized for our **excellence, innovation, and commitment** to community safety.

We strive to build a department that is **highly trained, well-equipped, and deeply trusted**, always prepared to meet the evolving needs of the people we serve.

Through proactive outreach, progressive training, and a culture of respect and accountability, we aim to inspire **confidence, pride, and partnership** within our community.

Prepared by:

Odis Boyles

Chief of Thunderbolt Fire Department

Thunderbolt Fire & Rescue

Monthly Report to Town Council

June 2026

Submitted by: Fire Chief Odis Boyles

Monthly Incident Summary

During the month of **June 2026**, Thunderbolt Fire & Rescue responded to a total of **18 emergency incidents**, consisting of:

- **4 Fire Calls**
- **13 EMS Calls**
- **1 Public Service Call**

Despite a lower overall call volume compared to previous months, personnel maintained a constant state of readiness and continued focusing on training, emergency preparedness, equipment maintenance, and hurricane planning to ensure the department remains prepared for both daily emergencies and large-scale incidents.

Hurricane Preparedness

Throughout June, department personnel conducted an extensive review and update of the Thunderbolt Fire & Rescue Hurricane Preparedness, Response, Evacuation, and Recovery Policy. The revised policy establishes clear responsibilities before, during, and after tropical weather events and aligns our operations with the National Incident Management System (NIMS), the Incident Command System (ICS), Chatham Emergency Management Agency (CEMA), and state emergency management procedures.

The revised policy includes:

- Mandatory staffing requirements for all natural disasters and hurricane events.
- Pre-storm apparatus and equipment inspections.
- Fueling and preparation of all emergency vehicles.
- Coordination with regional emergency management partners.
- Personnel accountability procedures.
- Damage assessment operations following storm impacts.
- Recovery operations designed to restore emergency services to the community as quickly as possible.

For a direct-impact Category 3 hurricane or greater, Thunderbolt Fire & Rescue will participate in the regional Critical Workforce Shelter Program located at Georgia Southern University in Statesboro. Through an existing regional agreement, space is allocated for Chatham County and participating municipal emergency personnel, allowing firefighters and their immediate families to shelter safely while ensuring emergency staffing remains available for post-storm operations.

Training

Training remained a major focus throughout the month, emphasizing firefighter safety, operational readiness, and emergency medical proficiency. Personnel completed training in the following areas:

- Working safely in extreme temperatures, including heat stress prevention, hydration, rehabilitation, and firefighter safety.
- **NFPA 1001 Fire Control**, focusing on fire suppression techniques, hose line management, and fireground operations.
- Fire extinguisher safety, including proper extinguisher selection, inspection, maintenance, and practical use for various classes of fire.
- EMS heat-related illnesses and emergencies, including recognition and treatment of heat exhaustion, heat stroke, dehydration, and other environmental emergencies.
- EMS CPR training, reinforcing high-quality cardiopulmonary resuscitation skills and current lifesaving guidelines.
- Academic training covering departmental policies, operational procedures, emergency response best practices, and continuing professional development.

These training sessions ensure department personnel remain proficient in both fire suppression and emergency medical services while maintaining compliance with state and national training standards.

Department Operations

Routine inspections, apparatus maintenance, equipment checks, station maintenance, and operational reviews were completed throughout the month to ensure every response vehicle and piece of equipment remains service-ready.

As part of the department's ongoing commitment to risk management and patient documentation, Thunderbolt Fire & Rescue has implemented a new **Refusal of Medical Care (Against Medical Advice - AMA) Form**. This form is completed whenever a patient with decision-making capacity declines medical evaluation, treatment, or ambulance transportation after being advised of the potential risks. The form documents that the patient has been informed of the possible consequences of refusing care and acknowledges their decision. This standardized documentation strengthens patient care records, aligns with EMS best practices, and helps reduce liability exposure for both the Fire Department and the Town of Thunderbolt.

Personnel also reviewed departmental procedures and emergency response guidelines to improve consistency, efficiency, and firefighter safety.

Community Commitment

Thunderbolt Fire & Rescue remains committed to providing professional emergency services while strengthening our preparedness for hurricane season. Through continued planning, training, equipment readiness, and coordination with CEMA and neighboring agencies, the department stands ready to protect the citizens, visitors, and businesses of the Town of Thunderbolt.

Looking Ahead

During the coming month, the department will continue to:

- Conduct hurricane preparedness activities throughout the community.
- Maintain close coordination with CEMA and regional emergency response agencies.
- Continue emergency response and disaster preparedness training.
- Review and refine departmental operational procedures.
- Ensure all personnel and equipment remain prepared for immediate emergency deployment.

Thunderbolt Fire & Rescue appreciates the continued support of the Mayor and Town Council as we remain dedicated to protecting our community through professionalism, preparedness, and service.

Emergency operations may be limited or suspended whenever conditions create an unreasonable risk to personnel.

3. DEFINITIONS

Hurricane Watch

Conditions are possible within the specified area.

Hurricane Warning

Hurricane conditions are expected within the specified area.

Mandatory Staffing Event

Any hurricane, tropical storm, flooding event, tornado, severe weather event, declared emergency, or disaster requiring emergency operations.

Critical Workforce Shelter

A designated shelter location established for essential government and emergency personnel to safely shelter prior to a major storm and rapidly re-enter the affected area after the storm.

4. HURRICANE READINESS LEVELS

OPCON 5 – HURRICANE SEASON

(June 1 – November 30)

- Review hurricane response plans.
- Update emergency contact information.
- Inspect generators and emergency equipment.
- Verify communications equipment.
- Conduct annual hurricane preparedness training.
- Review evacuation and sheltering procedures.

OPCON 4 – HURRICANE WATCH

(72–96 Hours Prior to Potential Impact)

- Begin continuous weather monitoring.
- Notify personnel of possible activation.
- Review staffing schedules.
- Inspect apparatus and equipment.
- Coordinate with CEMA and Town Administration.
- Verify Active911 functionality.

deployment.

- Immediately notify supervisors of circumstances preventing response.

Failure to report for a mandatory staffing event without authorization may result in disciplinary action.

6. PRE-STORM PREPARATIONS

FACILITY PREPARATIONS

The department shall:

- Inspect all facilities.
- Test generators.
- Verify fuel supplies.
- Secure outdoor equipment and furniture.
- Verify operation of emergency lighting.
- Clear storm drains where practical.
- Verify communications systems are operational.

APPARATUS PREPARATIONS

- Fuel all apparatus and support vehicles.
- Inspect emergency lighting systems.
- Test portable radios.
- Verify operation of pumps and rescue equipment.
- Inspect chainsaws and fuel supplies.
- Inventory EMS supplies.
- Prepare damage assessment kits.

PERSONNEL PREPARATIONS

Personnel shall report with:

- Three duty uniforms.
- Rain gear.
- Work gloves.
- Flashlight and spare batteries.
- Bedding and pillow.
- Toiletries.
- Prescription medications.
- Cell phone charger.
- Additional footwear and clothing.

7. CRITICAL WORKFORCE SHELTER OPERATIONS

CATEGORY 3 OR GREATER DIRECT IMPACT STORMS

When a Category 3 hurricane or greater is forecast to make a direct impact on Chatham County, Thunderbolt Fire Rescue may activate the Chatham County Critical Workforce Shelter Plan in coordination with CEMA.

The designated shelter location is Georgia Southern University in Statesboro, Georgia.

Thunderbolt Fire Rescue participates under a countywide agreement that provides shelter space for:

- Chatham County Government personnel.
- Municipal government personnel.
- Municipal public safety personnel.
- Critical infrastructure personnel.
- Other approved critical workforce personnel.

The City of Savannah maintains a separate sheltering agreement and location and is not included in this shelter assignment.

PERSONNEL AND EQUIPMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Upon activation, participating municipalities shall provide:

- Number of personnel assigned.
- Apparatus assignments.
- Support vehicles.
- Specialized equipment.
- Resource needs.
- Contact information.

The Fire Chief or designee shall serve as liaison with CEMA.

DEPLOYMENT

Personnel and apparatus assigned to the shelter shall:

- Be fully fueled and inspected.
- Carry necessary equipment and supplies.
- Be prepared for a minimum seventy-two-hour deployment.
- Report to designated staging locations as directed.

RE-ENTRY OPERATIONS

Personnel and equipment shall return to Chatham County upon authorization by CEMA.

Upon re-entry, Thunderbolt Fire Rescue shall prioritize:

- Damage assessment.
 - Emergency response.
 - Debris clearance.
 - Infrastructure assessment.
 - Community recovery operations.
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8. STORM RESPONSE OPERATIONS

Emergency responses shall be prioritized as follows:

1. Immediate threats to life.
2. Rescue operations.
3. Fire suppression.
4. Hazardous conditions posing imminent danger.
5. Protection of critical infrastructure.
6. Property conservation.

Emergency responses may be suspended when:

- Sustained winds exceed 50 mph.
- Wind gusts exceed 65 mph.
- Roadways become impassable.
- Flooding prevents safe travel.
- Conditions place responders at unreasonable risk.

The Officer in Charge shall notify dispatch and mutual aid partners whenever operational status changes.

9. DAMAGE ASSESSMENT

Following the storm, personnel shall conduct damage assessments of:

- Fire stations.
- Apparatus.
- Utilities.
- Communications systems.

- Public infrastructure.
- Critical facilities.
- Major roadways.

Damage assessment information shall be reported through CEMA and Town Administration channels.

10. MUTUAL AID

Thunderbolt Fire Rescue may request or provide mutual aid through:

- Savannah Fire Department.
- Chatham County Fire Department.
- CEMA.
- Georgia Emergency Management Agency (GEMA).
- Other approved agencies.

All mutual aid operations shall operate under ICS.

11. POST-STORM OPERATIONS

Personnel shall not operate alone during post-storm operations.

Personnel shall:

- Wear appropriate PPE.
- Work in teams.
- Document hazards.
- Report injuries immediately.
- Maintain accountability at all times.

Priority recovery objectives shall include:

1. Life safety.
 2. Incident stabilization.
 3. Restoration of emergency services.
 4. Infrastructure assessment.
 5. Community recovery support.
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12. RECOVERY OPERATIONS

The Fire Chief or designee shall:

- Determine when normal operations resume.
- Coordinate resource requests.
- Evaluate staffing needs.
- Coordinate with municipal leadership.
- Establish operational priorities.

Recovery operations may include:

- Search and rescue.
- Welfare checks.
- Flood response.
- Debris removal support.
- Fire prevention inspections.
- Damage assessment support.

13. POST-INCIDENT REVIEW

Following any significant hurricane event, Thunderbolt Fire Rescue shall conduct an After-Action Review.

The review shall evaluate:

- Staffing effectiveness.
- Communications performance.
- Equipment readiness.
- Mutual aid effectiveness.
- Resource management.
- Areas requiring improvement.

Recommendations shall be incorporated into future revisions of this policy.

Odis Boyles
Fire Chief

Thunderbolt Fire Rescue

Date: _____



THUNDERBOLT FIRE DEPARTMENT

REFUSAL OF MEDICAL CARE / AMA

Date: _____ Time: _____

Patient Information

Name: _____ DOB: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Assessment

Patient evaluated by Thunderbolt Fire Department.

Patient Refusal

I acknowledge that:

☐ My condition has been explained to me.

☐ I understand the risks of refusing treatment and/or transport, including worsening illness or injury, permanent disability, or death.

☐ I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have received satisfactory answers.

☐ I voluntarily refuse:

☐ Treatment ☐ Transport ☐ Treatment & Transport

☐ I understand I may call 911 at any time if my condition changes or worsens.

Signatures

Patient/Legal Representative

Signature: _____ Date/Time: _____

Print Name: _____

Witness (if available)

Signature: _____

Print Name: _____

EMS Provider

Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date/Time: _____

Unit: _____

Narrative / Additional Comments

By signing this form, I acknowledge that I have been advised to seek further medical evaluation and/or transport by EMS. I understand the potential risks of refusing care and accept responsibility for my decision.