



Columbia-Richland Fire Department

2022 Annual Report



1800 Laurel Street
Columbia, SC 29201

OUR MISSION

We save lives and protect property through community risk reduction and professional emergency response to the public we serve.

CORE VALUES

Community representing both citizens and employees.
Integrity with professionalism.
Service above self.

MESSAGE FROM THE FIRE CHIEF



Hello,

It is my honor to present to you the Columbia-Richland Fire Department's 2022 Annual Report.

As chief of the department, I am fortunate to lead the many firefighters and civilian staff members who each year make the contents of this report possible. The quality work they do every day truly makes a difference for CRFD and the area citizens we serve.

The year 2022 was, in many ways, one of transition for our department. While the threats brought on by COVID-19 in no way disappeared, we were able to bring back many activities we had not enjoyed since the onset of the pandemic. In April, CRFD was thrilled to support the Firetruck Pull in support of Curing Kids Cancer. For the first time since 2019, the event was held in-person as teams of citizens pulled our firetrucks in support of children battling pediatric cancers. By the end of the event, more than \$19,000 had been raised to fund area cancer research and treatment.

Later in October, we were able to resume our annual Fire Prevention Parade and Community Block Party. This event had been on hold due to COVID-19. In its return to Columbia, this year's Fire Prevention Parade made its way through communities along Monticello Road. After the parade, CRFD treated members of the public to an afternoon of free food, games, and fun focused on fire prevention.

The department's year-round efforts to promote fire education and safety were also a major highlight of the year. In June, CRFD was again named a "FireSafe South Carolina Community." The department earning this honor for the third consecutive year is a true testament to how much work our members put into preventing fires and other emergencies in our area neighborhoods. Community Risk Reduction activities will only continue to take on a bigger role at CRFD as we move through the coming years.

Yet while there were great achievements, 2022 would also bring many new challenges for our department. The constant need to recruit new firefighters was met with creative and enterprising solutions. At the beginning of the year, we launched our new "Direct Hire" program. This gave us the ability to hire, train, and get new firefighters to start serving the community faster through an abridged training academy open to experienced applicants.

Our department also explored new ways to attract entirely new applicants to the fire service using social media. By having “Riding with CRFD” videos on social media, we had a unique opportunity to highlight the daily work of our firefighters in new ways. This recruiting project brought a swarm of popular videos and content to our social media platforms and gave prospective applicants an inside look at daily life at CRFD.

To get a “full picture” of what the year 2022 brought for our department, I hope you enjoy perusing the pages of this report.

Like every year, its contents are a true illustration of the dedication our members have for serving our community and our citizens.

Be safe and be well,

Aubrey D. Jenkins
Columbia-Richland Fire Chief

VISION

Extraordinary people providing extraordinary service. We are committed to excellence in every task we perform. Our department will provide our citizens with world-class emergency services that are community driven and financially responsible with unheralded dedication to the safety of our citizens and employees.

DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

Columbia-Richland Fire Department (CRFD) is a combination career and volunteer all-hazards department providing a full complement of services covering 772 square miles. These services include emergency medical services, fire suppression, technical rescue, swift water rescue, hazardous materials response, fire and life safety inspections, fire investigation, community risk reduction and public fire safety education.

The department is comprised of five divisions of labor. They consist of the Office of:

- Fire Chief,
- Administration,
- Fire Prevention,
- Operations, and
- Professional Services.

The department has more than 482 sworn positions, 27 full-time civilians, and approximately 100 volunteers. It operates from 32 fire stations (20 county and 12 city stations) and four administrative support facilities. Fire stations are strategically located to meet the emergency service needs of the residents, businesses, and visitors of Columbia and Richland County.

As a result of the review of the department’s operations, training, and community risk reduction, the department currently has an Insurance Services Office (ISO) rating of a class 1. The county has an Insurance Service Office (ISO) rating of a class 2. Staff continues to evaluate countywide standards to ensure the department will be able to achieve a class 1 rating in the county.

Area of Coverage: City of Columbia	
City Population:	133,114
Population Rank	1st in South Carolina
Population Density	977/square mile
ISO Rating	Class I

The department values all community members and its employees, and strives to provide the best service possible by putting the community and its needs first through community outreach and other cooperative communication processes.

Area of Coverage: Richland County	
Population	414,576
Population Rank	2nd in South Carolina
Population Density	507.9/square mile
ISO Rating	Class II

The department works to ensure the community is informed and is able access programs and services.

OFFICE OF FIRE CHIEF

The **Office of Fire Chief** directs overall policy, planning and management of the Columbia-Richland Fire Department with the aid of four Assistant Fire Chiefs. The Fire Chief directly interacts with the Public Information Officer, Accreditation/Community Risk Reduction Chief, the Health and Safety Coordinator, and Fiscal Management and the Senior Leadership team daily to accomplish the mission the organization.

Additional responsibilities of the fire chief also include:

- Developing and promoting policies.
- Delegating tasks to staff and monitoring daily operations.
- Organizing the workplace so that the workflow is streamlined.
- Making changes to increase efficiency in the workplace.
- Overseeing the Insurance Service Office (ISO) rating.

The Assistant Fire Chief of **Administration and Community** is Chief Mickey Folsom (right). This division encompasses many layers of responsibility and includes product specification development, and purchasing and procurement. Currently, within the Columbia Fire Department's Administration Division provides supplies and equipment for fire suppression, emergency medical response, HazMat response, and technical rescue to all divisions.



The Assistant Fire Chief and Fire Marshal for the **Office of Fire Prevention** is Chief George Adams (left). This division provides oversight of fire inspections, fire investigations, internal affairs investigations, and permit administration and plan review for new and existing construction in the City of Columbia.

The prevention office also takes care of staffing for special events, lockbox key assignments, public fire education programs, strategic planning for the department, false alarm abatement, and compiling monthly and annual statistical reports.

The Assistant Fire Chief of **Operations** is Chief Christopher Kip (right). The suppression bureau operates from 32 strategically located fire stations and is responsible for effective responses to all emergencies for the City of Columbia and Richland County.

The **Public Information Office** coordinates public requests for a variety of issues, including motion pictures and television licensing, media events, civic and community activities/events, as well as city and official business. The public information officer is Mike DeSumma.

The **Accreditation/Community Risk Reduction Office** includes the management, coordination, and oversight of implementations of community risk reduction (CRR) programs, record management systems, ISO compliance, standard operating guidelines, data analysis, and delivery of CRR presentations. It is managed by Chief Will Broscius.

The **Office of Occupational Health and Safety** works to promote and protect the health and safety of all employees, volunteers, and visitors who participate in activities related to the department's mission of protecting life safety and service to the community. It is managed by Chief Albert Owusu.



Before sharing important information and statistics, please allow us the opportunity to review several awards and recognitions as well as the 2022 department highlights.

AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

Fire Chief Aubrey D. Jenkins was honored in February with a billboard display for being the first African-American fire chief in the history of the City of Columbia.

Division Chief William Broscius graduated in March from the Leadership Institute at the South Carolina State Firefighters' Association.



The **CRFD 3rd Shift Crews** were honored in March with a billboard display by Hammond School for their work saving the school from a two-alarm fire.

Fire Captain Kelvin Patterson received the 2021 Firefighter of the Year award in April from Richland Post 6 of the American Legion.

CRFD Station 8 was honored with the Outstanding Service Award from Community Wellness Outreach in April.



Firefighter Justin Gallman received the Timmy Young Volunteer of the Year award in May from CRFD Station 30.



Columbia-Richland Fire Department was presented with the Community Service Award from Modern Woodmen of America in May.

Each year, the SC Fire-Rescue Conference is hosted by the SC State Firefighters' Association in June. In 2022, numerous awards and recognitions took place. They include:

Retired Training Captain Jack Veal was inducted into the South Carolina State Firefighters' Association Hall of Fame.

CRFD 1st & 3rd Shift Members were presented with two Meritorious Awards for actions they took to save lives on the scene of two emergency incidents.



Columbia-Richland Fire Department was recognized as a "FireSafe South Carolina Community" for the third straight year.



Fire Captain Kelvin Patterson was honored in September with the Outstanding Leadership Award from Eastminster Presbyterian Church.

Battalion Chief Jacob Eller, Rescue 4 2nd Shift, Ladder 14 2nd Shift, Engine 17 2nd Shift & Engine 3 3rd Shift were recognized with the CRFD Phoenix Award in December for the life-saving medical care they provided to citizens on several calls.



2022 DEPARTMENT HIGHLIGHTS

Direct Hire Program

In an effort to bolster recruiting for the department and streamline the process of hiring qualified firefighters, the department kicked off 2022 by launching its new “Direct Hire Program.”

Applicants were able to qualify if they possessed the necessary firefighting certifications. These recruits were then able to begin their service with the department following an abridged training academy.

Run Calls in Just Weeks!

Apply-Here!

COLUMBIA

ENG 6 INE

Direct Hire Program

Columbia-Richland Fire Department

Abridged training academy open to candidates with firefighting experience and IFSAC and/or Pro-Board Firefighter I and Firefighter II certifications.

In 2022, CRFD welcomed 13 new firefighters after they completed the Direct-Hire Program.



Firetruck Pull for Curing Kids Cancer

In April, the department supported the annual “Firetruck Pull” in support of “Curing Kids Cancer.” This was the first time since 2019 that the event was held in person in downtown Columbia. The threat of COVID-19 resulted in the competition being held virtually for the past two years.



Teams took turns pulling two CRFD fire engines a distance of about 30 feet to see who could do it in the quickest time. Event proceeds went to support “Curing Kids Cancer” and its mission of funding

pediatric cancer research and patient care services in our area.

In its first year back in person, more than \$19,000 was raised for ‘Curing Kids Cancer.’



Push-In for New Ladder 4

Also in April, a Community “Push-In” ceremony was held to usher the new Ladder 4 into service at CRFD Station 4.

The firetruck is a dual-engine/ladder that will help our crews meet a growing call volume in northeast Richland County.

Several elected leaders from the City of Columbia as well as Richland County joined us for the event.



Sound the Alarm Campaign

CRFD staff, in conjunction with the American Red Cross of South Carolina, installed more than 200 smoke alarms in homes in the Ridgewood and Byrneswood neighborhoods.



The teams covered 83 households during the May 14 blitz. While going door-to-door, department members also took time to share fire prevention and home safety information with area residents.



Riding with CRFD

Efforts to step up recruiting for the department also included launching a new virtual ride-along series that began airing on CRFD social media platforms.

In May, the department debuted its first episode of “Riding with CRFD.” This allowed for a unique perspective as staff shadowed different crews throughout the agency. This not only helped draw prospective hires to the department, but it also gave citizens a way to see the kind of work CRFD firefighters do each day.



In 2022, eight episodes of “Riding with CRFD” aired on our Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram accounts.

CRFD Firefighters Honored at 2022 SC Fire-Rescue Conference

In June, the department had several reasons to celebrate during the annual South Carolina Fire-Rescue Conference.

For the third straight year, the department was recognized as a “FireSafe South Carolina Community.” This was in recognition of our ongoing efforts to prevent fires and other emergencies through community risk reduction activities.

CRFD firefighters also collected two meritorious awards during the conference awards banquet.

Our 3rd Shift firefighters were honored with one of the awards for rescuing two people from a house fire in

Richland County in February 2021. The second meritorious award was given to our 1st Shift crews for a water rescue they made on the Broad River in August of 2020.



Also during the awards banquet, retired CRFD Training Captain Jack Veal was inducted into the South Carolina State Firefighters’ Association Hall of Fame.



CRFD Youth Academy

For two weeks in July, 12 young citizens took part in the first CRFD Summer Youth Academy. The Columbia Urban League referred these participants to the department.

The two-week day program focused on giving participants an inside look at their fire department while also teaching valuable, life-saving skills they can use to aid their communities.

The program concluded with a July 22 graduation ceremony, where each participant was recognized and received a certificate of completion.



Fire Prevention Parade

For the first time in three years, the Columbia-Richland Fire Department held a community parade as part of Fire Prevention Week.



The 2022 Fire Prevention Parade focused on communities along Monticello Road in Columbia. Participants in this year's event met at Grace Christian Ministry on the morning of October 8.

By 11 a.m., the parade was making its way down Ridgewood Avenue and ultimately to Hyatt Park. A community block party was also held with free food, fun activities, and games.



Joining us in the parade were our partners at South Carolina State Fire as well as the marching band and color guard from nearby Eau Claire High School.

2022 Firefighters Feeding Families Holiday Food Drive

The department's third annual "Firefighters Feeding Families Holiday Food Drive" was a huge success. In fact, the CRFD set a new all-time high for donations raised.



In December, the department took in enough food donations to fill nearly 300 bags. Those bags were distributed to area families in need of food assistance during the holiday season.



The success of this year's campaign was made possible thanks to several generous donations from area stores.

Richland County Councilwoman Cheryl English also made a substantial financial contribution to help purchase food for the drive.

Other events supported by the department in 2022 include:

- City of Columbia Inauguration Day (January)
- Columbia Lifesavers Blood Drive (February)
- Firefighter Legislative Day, SC State House (March)
- Carolina Classic Home & Garden Show (March)
- Airsafe Disaster Drill at CAE (March)
- Gamecock Women's Basketball Championship Parade (April)
- City of Columbia Career Fair (April)
- 2022 Battle of the Badges Blood Drive (May)
- 2022 National Night Out (August)
- Tunnel to Towers 5K & 9/11 Morning of Remembrance (September)
- Rapid Shelter Columbia Project (October)
- Carolina Carillon Holiday Parade (December)









PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE

The Public Information Office acts as a liaison between the agency and the communities served. The department’s Public Information Officer communicates information from CRFD in a number of ways. This includes our many social media platforms and providing information to numerous media outlets in the Columbia area. The purpose of the Office is to provide transparency in all affairs of the department to our citizens and aid them in providing community feedback to the department and its leadership.



In comparison to 2021, there was a 57 percent increase in the number of posts on the four social media platforms this year. The increase is in part due to the successful launch of the “Riding with CRFD” virtual ride-along series.

Social Media Platform	Number of Posts	Highlights
 Twitter	977	Followers surpassed 10,500, which is a six percent increase from 2021.
 Facebook	810	Followers surpassed 20,000, which is an 11 percent increase from 2021.
 Instagram	665	Followers surpassed more than 5,500, which is a four percent increase from 2021.
 Nextdoor Neighbor	30	New platform that shares updates from public agencies.
Total: 2,482 posts		

**CITIZEN
INQUIRIES**
539

CITIZEN INQUIRIES

Every day, staff receive questions and comments through either the website or social media platforms. This year, there were more than 500 inquiries. This number remains consistent with previous years.

DEPARTMENT INTERVIEWS

The number of media interactions remains consistent. In 2022, there were 242 interactions with the media. Specifically, there were 98 on-camera and 143 phone interviews. The highest number of on-camera interviews occurred in July in regards to a fatal fire as well as a flash-flood event. The highest number of interviews by phone occurred in August, with 22. One local radio interview occurred in December.

**DEPARTMENT
MEDIA
INTERACTIONS**
242
ON CAMERA - 98
PHONE - 143
RADIO - 1

**FREEDOM OF
INFORMATION
REQUESTS**
292

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT REQUESTS

During the year, the department receives Freedom of Information (FOI) requests from the media and citizens.

In 2022, the department received and responded to nearly 300 requests for information. This number remains consistent with previous years.

WEBSITE

The CRFD website continues to be a popular and useful tool to raise public safety awareness, recruit new members, and provide information. In 2022, there were 41 news stories posted to the site.

**WEBSITE
STORIES**
41

**PRESS
RELEASES**
33

PRESS RELEASES

The department continues to use press releases as another useful tool for providing information to the public, and the number remains consistent with previous years. This past year, 33 press releases were distributed to the media. The topics covered by these releases ranged from announcements of staff promotions to notices of training exercises and community charity events.

In March, the department proudly announced the graduation of the first five members who completed the new “Direct Hire” program. In April, staff announced that \$19,000 had been raised at the annual Firetruck Pull, and in December, staff celebrated collecting and donating 300 bags of food to feed the hungry through the “Firefighters Feeding Families Holiday Food Drive.”

ACCREDITATION & COMMUNITY RISK REDUCTION

In 2022, CRFD's Division of Accreditation and Community Risk Reduction took on several projects that had the goal of streamlining department services, record keeping, and equipment oversight. This included selecting a new vendor for the department's records management system and website. The division also began working with other departments in the City of Columbia to implement a new computer system for tracking the condition of fire hydrants.



In September, the division assisted South Carolina State Fire with hosting a pilot class in Community Risk Reduction for Chief Officers. This was the first time this course was delivered anywhere in the country and was well attended by CRFD executive members.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY

The Occupational Health & Safety Division works each year to promote and protect the health and safety of department employees, volunteers, and visitors who participate in activities related to the department's missions of protecting life safety and providing service to the community.

In 2022, the division:

- Introduced an Accident Review Board to address the high incidence of motor vehicle accidents involving department vehicles,
- re-educated personnel on safety management processes,
- raised awareness of health and safety matters within the department, and
- reviewed existing policies affecting the safety and health of our employees.

COVID-19 Pandemic & Its Impact

Due to the COVID-19 infection, the CRFD experienced an increase in quarantine levels among its members in 2022. These surges corresponded to the number of COVID infections reported by the South Carolina Dept. of Health and Environmental Control. Despite these predicted spikes, the number of COVID cases traced to the workplace was minimal. The number of 2022 quarantine cases compared to 2021 decreased by nearly 19 percent.

The department made significant efforts to quarantine and isolate COVID-exposed and infected personnel in order to prevent the virus from spreading further among staff members. Measures such as enhanced response protocols for firefighters, increased cleaning and disinfection of fire stations and equipment, and decontamination procedures for workers responding to confirmed COVID-19 patients aided in keeping stations clean and members from being infected.

COVID-19		
	2022	2021
Personnel quarantined	135	166
Personnel hospitalized	1	2
Related deaths	0	1

Mental Health

The Columbia Fire department’s goal is to have the psychological risks of the fire service addressed as aggressively as other safety and physical health care concerns. Any member of the department who wishes to discuss work or personal stressors has access to professional resources.

In 2022, Post Trauma Resources staff members offered training for CRFD leadership teams, division chiefs, battalion chiefs, and captains. The results of the training showed an increase in leadership consultations and referrals for personnel who previously might have been overlooked until their condition reached a crisis state. In total, there was an increase in personnel using the FLOW program services compared to previous years.

The CRFD has a group of trained members who are available to provide support to firefighters after potentially traumatic calls. The Peer Support group spends hours responding to and coordinating these efforts. The peer supporters are there to listen, provide information about coping, and arrange further assistance when wanted or needed. In 2022, 11 new Peer Support Team members were trained and certified by Post Trauma Resources.

The CRFD chaplains are also available to listen and provide support from a spiritual perspective.

Injuries

Employees report all injuries, accidents, and near misses, as well as all unsafe work areas and unsafe work practices, to the Health & Safety Bureau. The division’s policy is to record all incidents and near-misses (regardless of where they occur) that involve CRFD employees and volunteer firefighters. If an injury occurs, the division also works to provide a consistent pathway for injury management so an injured member can return to full-duty status.

In 2022, there were 74 work-related injuries reported to the Health & Safety Division. There has been a significant improvement in reporting near misses and injuries that do not require medical attention. However, staff must continue to promote the requirement to report near misses, as there is still a need for 100 percent compliance.

2022 Category of Injuries	Number of Injuries
Fire ground injuries	16
Injuries incurred during medical calls	5
Injuries while working at MVA scenes	3
Exposures (Blood-borne)	0
Exposures (Chemical)	0
Injuries incurred during firefighter training	9
Recruit school injuries	12
Injuries incurred while exercising	7
Miscellaneous injuries	22
Total Number of Injuries	74

Compared to 2021, the number of injuries decreased by nearly three percent. However, compared to five years ago, the number has decreased by almost 27 percent.

Category of Injuries	Number of Injuries				
	2017	2018	2019	2021	2022
Fire ground injuries	40	23	19	23	16
Non- fire ground injuries	42	48	58	53	58
Total Number of Injuries	101	71	77	76	74

The department is required to maintain workers' compensation coverage. In 2022, there were 74 claims filed and two denied (three percent).

Workers' Compensation Claims	
Filed	74
Denied	2

In 2022, there were 26 accidents involving CRFD fleet vehicles. This is a 16 percent decrease from the previous year, with 31 accidents reported.

2022 CRFD Fleet Vehicle Accidents	
County Vehicle accidents	7
City Vehicle accidents	19
Total vehicle accidents	26

The specific types and number of accidents include:

CRFD driver at fault	14
Damage to apparatus (non-MVA causes)	13
Damage caused by apparatus hitting station bay doors/walls/stationary objects	13
Backing accidents	9
Number of accident while responding to emergencies	6
Damage to apparatus with unknown causes	4
Number of CRFD personnel injured in vehicle accidents	0
Equipment falling from apparatus and damaging other vehicles on road	0

Cancer Prevention Initiatives

During 2022, the Administrative Division worked diligently on cancer preventative initiatives that will have lifelong benefits for our department’s personnel. One specific initiative was moving approximately 80 percent of the ice machines at CRFD stations out of the Hot Zone areas to the Cold or Warm Zone areas of the firehouses.

Hot Zone	Areas of stations where fighting gear and apparatus are kept. These items are more likely exposed to fire and carcinogenic materials during a shift.
Cold & Warm Zones	Areas are those that should be kept free of carcinogenic materials. These include the dayrooms, kitchen areas, and bunkrooms at the fire stations.

Additionally, the department also purchased:

- A second set of bunker gear for all fire suppression staff, and
- Extractors and gear dryers for each firehouse.

These initiatives allow staff members to have a clean set of “backup” gear and the ability to clean their bunker gear at the stations. This especially prevents staff members from transporting dirty gear in their personal vehicles.

ADMINISTRATION & COMMUNITY

The Administration and Community Division encompasses many layers of responsibility. Two of the most impacting areas in which staff work on a daily basis is product specification development, and purchasing and procurement. This division combines command staff expertise and leadership with departmental support services to oversee the department’s budget, accreditation, fleet management, logistics, ISO classification, station property maintenance, and reporting functions.

Department Facilities

CRFD fire stations are open and serve our communities 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. This makes it increasingly necessary to repair and update fire stations as needed.

Currently, the Administration Division is in the process of evaluating the needs and addressing several areas at fire stations. This includes, but is not limited to, updating station shower stalls, bathrooms, dorm rooms, and kitchens, as well as pursuing cancer-care initiatives at all stations.

Boat House Zoo Project

A shed near Riverbanks Zoo was upgraded and fortified. It safely stores equipment for the department to be used for water rescues and other emergencies on the Saluda River. This makes emergency responses to that area more efficient.

Training Burn Building

The department received approval to upgrade its Training Burn Building to meet all standards set by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). This will also improve instructional delivery in training classes.

In addition to these projects, the Administrative Division is also working with city and county operational services to address yearly maintenance issues that may arise for department apparatus and equipment.

Fleet

The department operates 31 engines, four ladder trucks, five rescues, 17 brush trucks, and 15 tankers. In addition, the department has 10 reserve engines, three reserve ladder trucks, four reserve rescue units, three reserve brush trucks, and three reserve tankers.

During the year, CRFD added to its fleet. This includes:

- Pierce Enforcer PUC 107' ladder truck for Station 4
- Pierce 2100-gallon tanker for Station 23
- Spartan 1500 GPM engine for Station 22
- Gator at Station 23 to assist with needs at the Congaree National Forest, and
- 13 Hurst eDRAULIC combo sets

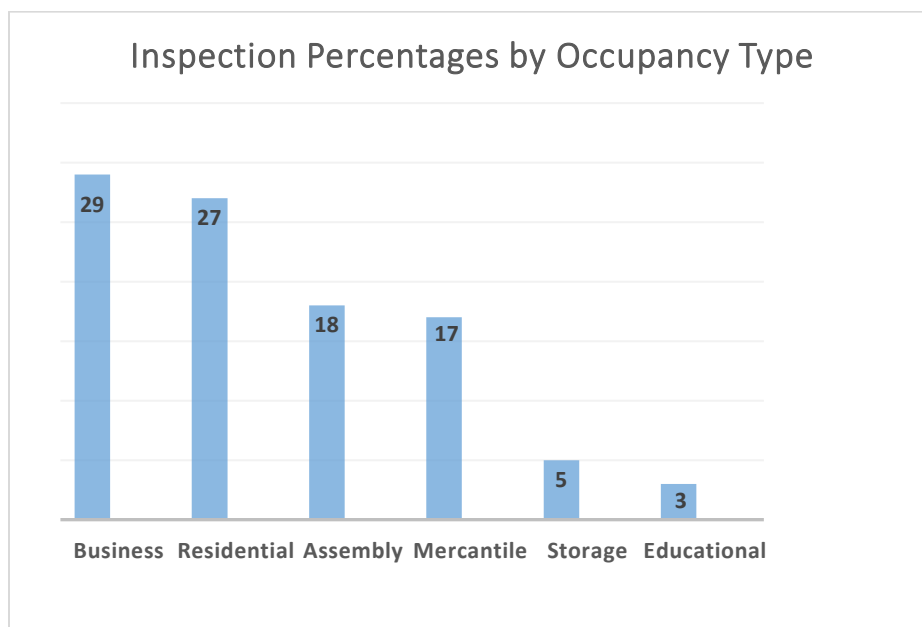


FIRE PREVENTION DIVISION

The Fire Prevention Division provides fire and life-safety services to the community by conducting public education and community outreach events, supporting community outreach programs, conducting inspections of existing commercial and multi-family buildings, and providing fire-related plan reviews and field inspections on new commercial construction. This last function includes witnessing tests of fire protection and suppression systems on new buildings as well as conducting site inspections, conducting fire cause investigations, issuing operational permits for businesses, and correcting fire code violations in buildings.

In 2022, the Fire Prevention Division performed 5,724 inspections, which uncovered 6,407 fire code violations. The number of inspections was a 31 percent increase compared to last year. Of all the violations that were uncovered, 84 percent were corrected by the follow-up inspection.

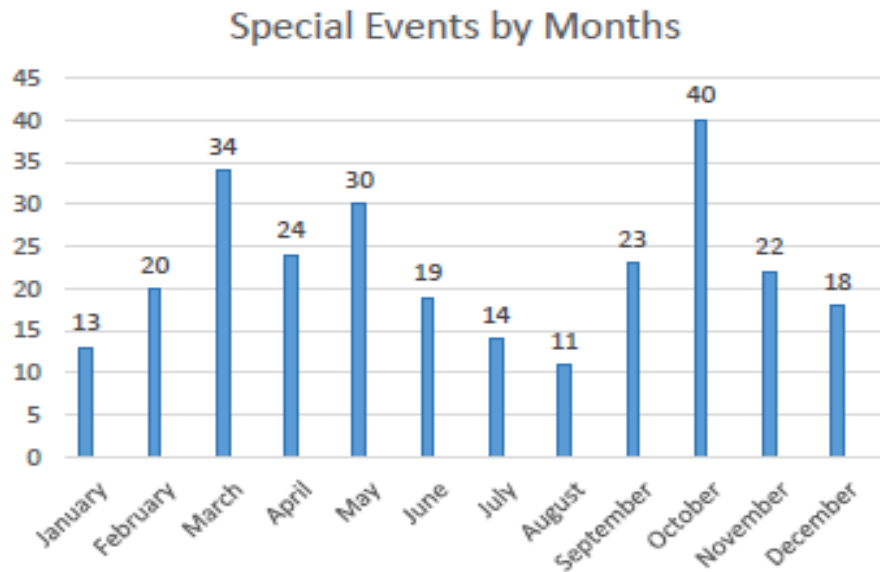
The majority of inspections were performed in business occupancies (29%), residential occupancies (27%), and assembly occupancies (18%).



Special Events

The Fire Prevention Division is also responsible for maintaining fire and emergency protection at large venue events. Personnel must be involved in planning, safety enforcement, and event site inspections. The marshal conducting any inspection will issue notices when any non-fire code-compliant issue needs correction. The marshal also re-inspects the site to ensure compliance.

In 2022, the Fire Prevention Office oversaw 268 events. These events include university games, retail shows, mobile food truck shows, festivals, and concerts. The two busiest months were March and October.

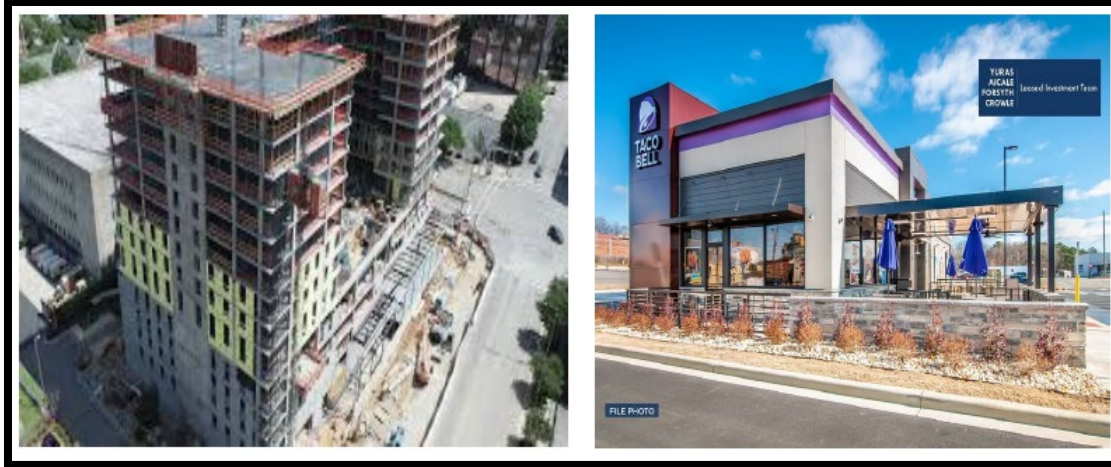


Fire Plan Review

The fire plan reviewer works in conjunction with City of Columbia Development Services to ensure code compliance and the integrity of the fire protection systems for a new property from its design review to its final inspection. Staff is responsible for reviewing site plans, fire alarm systems, fire sprinkler systems, smoke evacuation systems, fire pumps, standpipes, generators, and tank removals and installations.

In 2022, there were 588 plan reviews, which is a four percent increase from the previous year. The majority of plan reviews were for buildings and sites.

Number of Plan Reviews	
Building	215
Site	153
Sprinkler	98
Fire Alarm	85
Certificate of Occupancy	28
Encroachment	8
Clean Agent	1
TOTAL	588



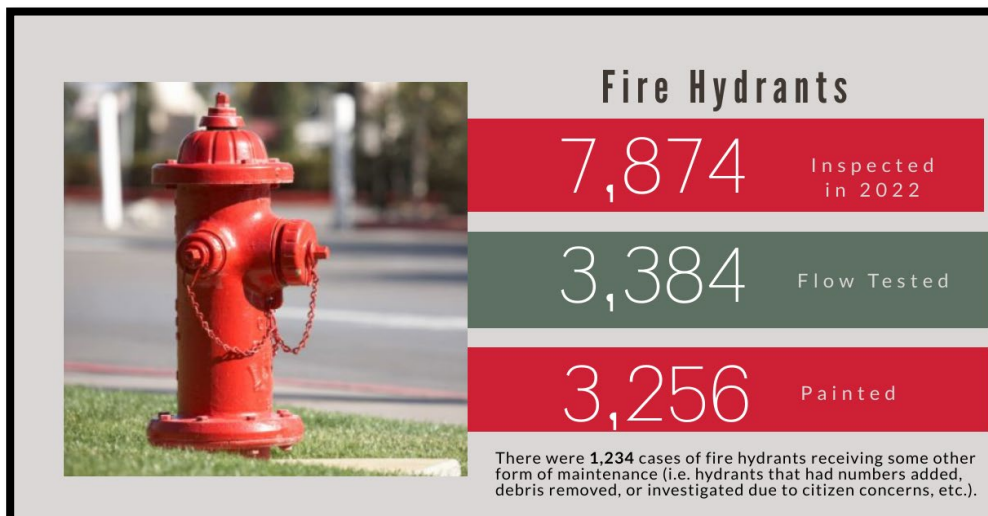
Fire Investigation

The Fire Marshal’s Office is responsible for the investigation of fires, which include structures, vehicles, outside vegetation, rubbish, suspicious fires, and fires with no identifiable origin or cause. In 2022, the office conducted 38 fire investigations. This is consistent with previous years.

Following those 38 inspections, 68 percent of the fires were classified as accidental (i.e., non-intentional), 18 percent as incendiary (intentionally set), and 13 percent as undetermined.

Annual Hydrant Inspections

Staff ensure all of the hydrants in the county are in proper condition and verify they are operational. Personnel completed 7,874 inspections in 2022, which is a 13 percent increase over the previous year. During inspections, personnel look for any damage or obstructions that could interfere with proper hydrant operation.



Public Fire Education

The Fire Prevention Division schedules, plans, and coordinates most of CRFD's public fire education events. In 2022, the department conducted 357 fire education demonstrations and 21 virtual fire station tours.

The Public Fire Education Office also conducted 258 home fire safety surveys and 10 fire drills.

Fire prevention staff also installed 449 smoke alarms, 118 carbon monoxide alarms, and 43 batteries for alarm devices.

Additional highlights include the hiring of three employees as well as receiving an honorary proclamation from the Columbia City Council proclaiming October as Fire Prevention Month in Columbia. The presentation was made to highlight the year-round efforts of the Fire Prevention Division and its work to prevent fires in the community.



Prevention staff members also played an integral part in organizing the department's Sound the Alarm Campaign, the CRFD Youth Academy, as well as activities for National Fire Prevention Week. This included the 2022 Fire Prevention Parade.

OPERATIONS

The Operations Division is responsible for ensuring a safe, effective, and efficient response to all calls for fire service from the public or partner agencies in the City of Columbia and Richland County. These responses require a variety of actions, including fire suppression, medical stabilization and basic life support, hazardous material (HazMat) mitigation, and the execution of technical rescues.

Preparation and support for HazMat mitigation and technical rescue responses are performed by the Special Operations subsection of the Operations Division.

When requested, the department also frequently responds to calls for service outside of the areas of our jurisdiction through mutual aid and automatic aid agreements. These neighboring areas we could respond to include Cayce, West Columbia, Irmo, Lexington County, Fairfield

County, Kershaw County, Sumter County, and Fort Jackson.



Occasionally, when we are specifically requested during a major emergency, our department supports more distant regions of the state through the South Carolina Firefighter Mobilization System or the state's Emergency Response Task Force.



Operational Statistics

The department's suppression bureau operates from 32 strategically located fire stations with five battalions.

Engine Companies	31
Ladder Companies	5
Rescue Companies	5
Water Tenders	15
Brush Trucks	16

In 2022, the department responded to 38,297 emergencies, which is a 12 percent increase from 34,110 calls the previous year. Tragically, seven fire deaths occurred in six fatal fires in Richland County – including the loss of three lives in September 2022.

Nearly 60 percent of calls in 2022 were rescue and emergency medical service-related, a two percent increase from 2021. Twenty percent were false alarms and calls.

The specific type of incident and total number with its percentage for each include:

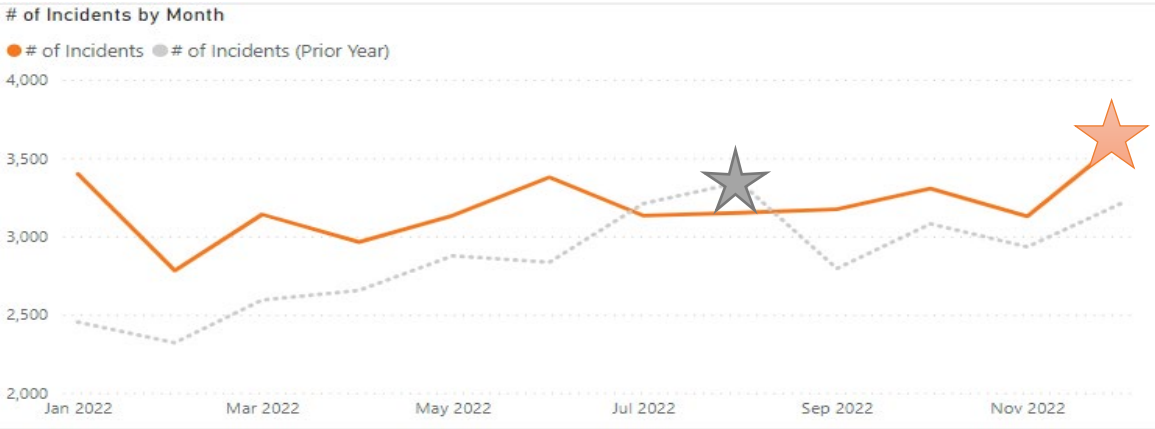
INCIDENT SERIES	NUMBER OF 2022 INCIDENTS	Percentage
Rescue & Emergency Medical Service Incident	22,474	59%
False Alarm & False Call	7,616	20%
Good Intent Call	3,644	9.5%
Fire (<i>see next chart</i>)	1,695	4.4%
Service Call	1,661	3.0%
Hazardous Condition (no fire)	1,038	2.7%
Special Incident Type	83	.22%
Overpressure, Rupture, Explosion, Overheat (no fire)	51	.13%
Severe Weather & Natural Disaster	35	.09%
TOTAL	38,297	

Of the 1,695 fire incidents, the types of fires include:

FIRE INCIDENT TYPES	NUMBER OF INCIDENTS
Structure Fire	587
Natural Vegetation Fire	545
Mobile Property (Vehicle) Fire	303
Outside Rubbish Fire	176
Fire, Other	41
Special Outside Fire	25
Fire In Mobile Property Used as a Fixed Structure	15
Cultivated Vegetation, Crop	3
TOTAL	1,695

When reviewing the 2022 incidents (see chart) on a month-to-month basis, January, June, and especially December 2022 had the highest number of calls. During the previous year, the number of calls peaked after July and were, most likely, COVID -19 related.

2022 Response Totals Compared to 2021



2022 TOP NINE STATIONS INCIDENT RESPONSE	
Station 1 (Headquarters)	3,199
Station 6 (St. Andrews)	2,446
Station 14 (Dentsville)	2,231
Station 13 (Eau Claire)	2,194
Station 9 (Shandon)	1,951
Station 8 (Atlas Road)	1,861
Station 16 (Harbison)	1,788
Station 34 (Elders Pond)	1,777
Station 12 (Greenview)	1,746
TOTAL	19,193

Specifically, CRFD Station 1 (Headquarters) had the highest call volume with 3,199 calls for service.

Station 6 (St. Andrews) was second for call volume with 2,446 calls for service.

Station 14 (Dentsville) had the third highest with 2,231 calls for service.

TOP FIVE APPARATUS INCIDENT RESPONSE	
Engine 1 (Headquarters)	2,640
Engine 6 (St. Andrews)	2,377
Engine 13 (Eau Claire)	2,352
Ladder 7 (North Columbia)	1,808
Engine 16 (Harbison)	1,796

Stationed in the more rural areas of the county, the following apparatus and number of incidents include:

Rescue 2 (Ballentine)	835
Battalion 5 (Greenview)	595
Rescue 4 (Congaree Run)	564
Battalion 2 (St. Andrews)	475
Rescue 5 (Hopkins)	434
Battalion 1 (Olympia)	405
Battalion 3 (Sandhill)	343
Battalion 4 (Lower Richland)	321

Additionally, the estimated amount of total fire loss is more than \$3 million and the total property saved is more than \$4 million in 2022.

Special Operations

Accomplishments include:

- Completing annual drills for regional response HazMat and search and rescue teams
- Purchasing Blackline HazMat metering equipment
- Introducing a new annual skill-based rope rescue assessment and swim test
- Hosting Response to Chlorine gas emergency classes
- Completing recertification training for swiftwater, confined space, and trench rescue



Fire Logistics

The Fire Logistics Office supports the operational mission of the department by ensuring personnel are provided with the best emergency and non-emergency equipment and supplies available. This equipment is maintained in the best operational condition possible to ensure everyone has properly functioning apparatus and gear.

Additionally, the Logistics Office works to ensure Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) for personnel complies with local, state, and federal standards. Staff continues to develop and grow the quartermaster system and protocol for fire hydrant inspections and repairs.



Training

Employees completed 122,548 hours of training in 2022 in every level at the department. This includes Direct Delivery, Company Drill, and Self-Study. The number of training hours in 2022 is a 20 percent increase from the previous year.

Of that number, 11,211 were direct delivery training hours requiring a qualified instructor to deliver curriculum-based course material to meet a national or state standard.

TRAINING HOURS
122,548
DIRECT DELIVERY
11,211

Direct Delivery Course Summary			
Training Area	Total Days	Course Hours	Instructor Hours
Career Recruit School	256	2,560	4,723
Career Driver Operator	90	864	2,151
Career Promotion Academies	62	496	681
Special Operations	54	502	1,071
Medical	24	216	164
Multi-Unit Drill	45	300	400
Chief Officer Leadership Training	15	60	72
Volunteer Recruit School	128	660	1,793
Volunteer Driver Operator	18	96	136
Volunteer Refresher Burn	2	5	20
TOTALS	694	5,759	11,211

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

The Professional Services Division encompasses many areas within the fire service of the City of Columbia and Richland County. The responsibilities include managing the volunteer services, staffing levels, recruitment, hiring, promotions, employee human resource functions, policy development and quality control for the organization.

In 2022, the department hired 50 new personnel filling open positions. Last year, the Professional Services Division developed a new multi-tiered recruit school. The department has maintained the traditional 18-week Standard program for non-certified candidates, and an eight-week Direct Hire program for Certified Firefighter 2 candidates. Each recruit school will allow a maximum of

30 students per class. Typically, the department conducts two of the 18-week Standard classes, for a max of 60 candidates. This adjustment will allow the department to train up to 120 potential candidates in the same amount of total instructional time.

Currently, the Professional Services Division is divided into three specialized bureaus: Volunteer Services, Staffing, and Recruitment-Hiring.



Volunteer Bureau

In 2022, the Volunteer Bureau received 202 interest forms from potential volunteer applicants. Following conversations with many potential applicants and advanced recruitment, 56 individuals submitted an official volunteer firefighter application resulting in 38 new volunteers.

Staffing

The CRFD Staffing Bureau managed all Telestaff rosters and daily staffing assignments along with managing the Kronos timekeeper system for payroll

Recruitment

The Bureau attended in-person events throughout 2022. The department received more than 400 applications for open/posted positions.

Abridged List of Administrative Projects

Development of Department's new Direct Hire Program Recruit School

The Training Division developed a program allowing the department to reap the advantage of hiring qualified firefighters through an accelerated recruit training program. The division worked with suppression officers to design a six-week program focusing on global firefighter performance, emphasizing critical thinking, variable forecasting, and multilayer task performance.



Supplemental Direct Hire Driver/Operator Program

The Training Division developed a three-week accelerated driver operator program, which affords the department an opportunity to directly hire qualified firefighters, drivers, and operators.

Curriculum Revisions for Promotional Academies and Training

This includes the department's Engineer Academy, Captain Academy, and Battalion Chief Academy for career and volunteer firefighters.



2022 Staff Promotions



In 2022, many members of the CRFD earned promotions to new ranks of leadership within the department.

They include:

- 12 senior firefighters
- 10 engineers
- 12 fire captains

- Three battalion chiefs
- One Division Chief of Special Operations
- One Volunteer Coordinator



