# COLUMBIA-RICHLAND FIRE DEPARTMENT

## 2025 ANNUAL REPORT





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# MESSAGE FROM THE FIRE CHIEF



Hello!

Welcome to the 2025 Annual Report of the Columbia-Richland Fire Department (CRFD).

As fire chief for the City of Columbia and Richland County, I am proud to share the progress, accomplishments, and milestones our department achieved over the past year. In many ways, 2025 was defined by meaningful growth and forward momentum for CRFD.

Our department continues to invest in new equipment and resources to help meet the increasing demand for service across our community. New firetrucks were placed into service out at Station 7 in Cottontown, Station 6 along St. Andrews Road, and Station 16 in the Harbison area. This helped strengthen our operational readiness and response capabilities.

After years of collaboration between our members and community stakeholders, we also reached a significant milestone with the approval of development plans for a new fire station in the Olympia area. Once completed the new Station 2 will help improve the services we provide to an area highly used by citizens and visitors to the city.

Our department's commitment to community service also remained a cornerstone of our mission. Through the annual CRFD Firefighters Feeding Families Holiday Food Drive, more than 600 area households received groceries during the holiday season. Additionally, our participation in the annual Firetruck Pull in the spring helped generate a record-breaking $64,000 in support of our partners at Curing Kids Cancer.



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We were equally encouraged by the continued growth of the CRFD Youth Empowerment Academy. With the support of the Columbia Urban League, we hosted two sessions of the academy in the summer, with 19 students successfully completing the program.

I invite you to explore this report to learn more about the work we accomplished together in 2025. Each achievement reflects the shared dedication, professionalism, and service-minded spirit of our CRFD members, who remain committed to protecting and serving our community each day.

**Yours in Service,**

**Aubrey D. Jenkins**

Columbia-Richland Fire Chief






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## OUR MISSION

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

## OUR CORE VALUES

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

## CRFD OVERVIEW

**Vision.**
Extraordinary people providing extraordinary service.

The Columbia-Richland Fire Department is committed to delivering excellence through world-class, community-driven emergency services that are both effective and financially responsible. Our members demonstrate an unwavering commitment to the safety and well-being of the citizens we serve, as well as to one another.

The department's career and volunteer firefighters respond to a full spectrum of emergency incidents across the 772 square miles of Richland County. The types of incidents include medical emergencies, fires, civilian rescues, and hazardous material incidents.

CRFD's Fire Prevention Division also plays a critical role in safeguarding the community. The division conducts fire and life safety inspections throughout the City of Columbia, performs fie investigations and leads Community Risk Reduction (CRR) efforts. These efforts include proactive public safety education and outreach programs designed to reduce risk and enhance fire safety awareness across Richland County.

CRFD is comprised of five divisions of labor that includes:

- Office of the Fire Chief
- Fire Prevention Division
- Administration & Community
- Operations
- Professional Services

| AREA OF COVERAGE: City of Columbia | |
|---|---|
| **City Population:** | 136,632<br>*(as of April 2020 Census)* |
| **Population Rank** | 2nd in South Carolina |
| **2025 ISO Rating** | Class I |

The department is staffed by nearly 500 career firefighters, supported by 27 full-time civilian employees, and approximately 77 volunteer firefighters. Together, these personnel provide comprehensive emergency services across Richland County.

CRFD crews operate from 32 fire stations (20 located in Richland County and 12 within the City of Columbia), as well as four administrative support facilities across Richland County. These stations are strategically located to ensure efficient and effective service to area residents, businesses, and visitors.



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| AREA OF COVERAGE: Richland County | |
|---|---|
| **County Population:** | 416,147<br>*(as of April 2020 Census)* |
| **Population Rank** | 2nd in South Carolina |
| **2025 ISO Rating** | Class II |

The department's commitment to operational excellence, training, and Community Risk Reduction is reflected in its Insurance Services Office (ISO) ratings. The City of Columbia currently holds a Class 1 ISO rating, which is the highest possible designation. Richland County meanwhile maintains a Class 2 ISO rating. These classifications underscore CRFD's strong performance and its dedication to providing high-quality fire protection services.





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# FIRE PREVENTION

CRFD's Fire Prevention Division provides comprehensive oversight of fire inspections, fire investigations, internal affairs investigations and permitting and plan review for new and existing construction within the City of Columbia.

In addition to its regulatory responsibilities, the division manages staffing for special events, lockbox key assignments, public fire education programs, strategic planning initiatives, false alarm abatement, and the compilation of monthly and annual statistical reports.

## Mission Overview

The Fire Prevention Division is dedicated to safeguarding lives, property and the environment through proactive fire risk reduction strategies. Its mission is to prevent fires before they occur by enforcing fire codes, educating the community, and promoting fire safe practices across the communities we serve.

## Core Responsibilities

- **Fire and Life Safety Inspections:** Conducting routine and compliance-based inspections to ensure adherence to local and state fire codes.
- **Plan Review & Permitting:** Evaluate construction, renovation and fire protection system plans to verify code compliance prior to approval.
- **Public Education & Outreach:** Deliver fire and life safety programs to schools, businesses, and community groups. This includes Fire Prevention Week activities hosted by the department.
- **Community Risk Reduction (CRR):** Identify high-risk areas for fires in the City of Columbia and Richland County and then implement targeted initiatives to reduce the risk. These initiatives include, but are not limited to, performing smoke alarm installations in area homes as well as home safety checks.
- **Fire Investigation Support:** Assist with origin and cause analysis of fires to identify trends and support the prevention of future incidents.

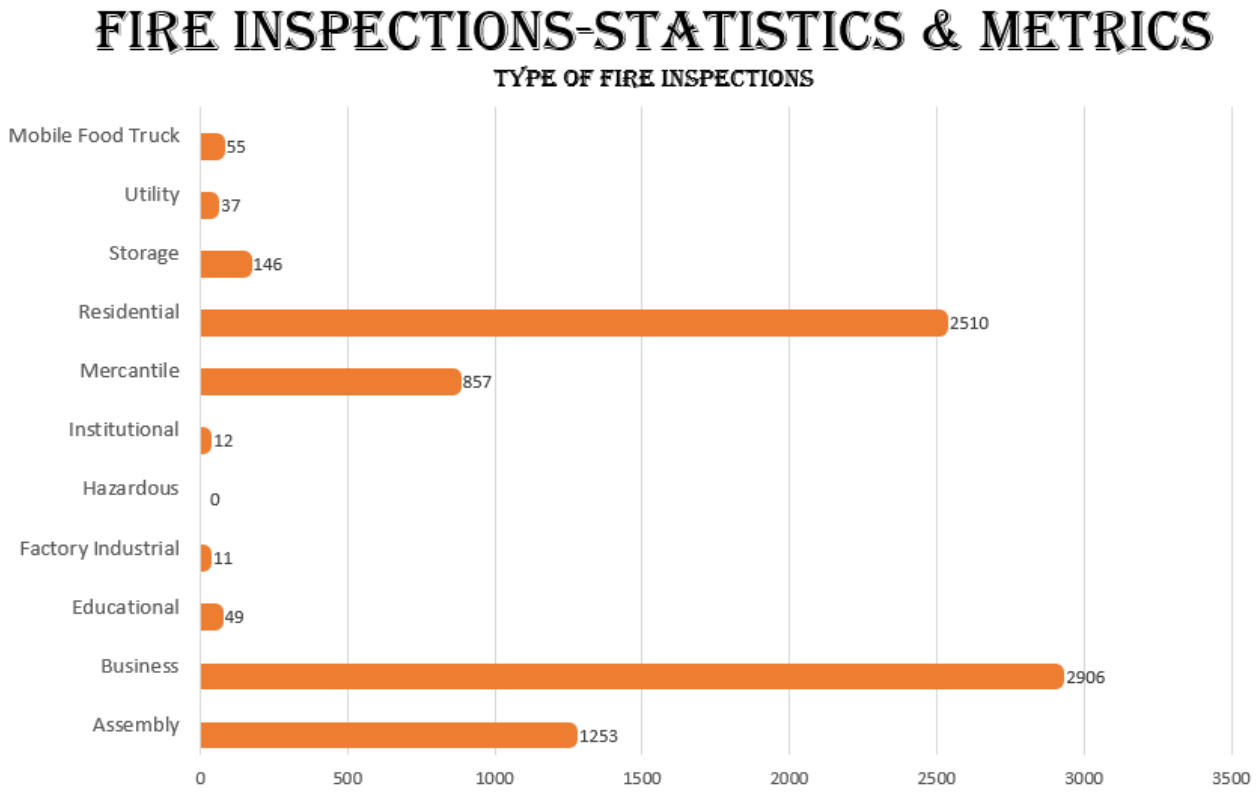


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## 2025 HIGHLIGHTS

- **The Fire Prevention Division achieved a 91% correction rate on inspected properties**. This high percentage reflects staff commitment to address and identity hazards and ensure public compliance with fire safety standards. This high rate of compliance also demonstrates the division's effectiveness with inspections and follow-up processes to reduce risks and improve community safety.
- **Division personnel conducted 7,836 fire inspections throughout the year.**
- Through continued Community Risk Reduction (CRR) efforts, CRFD was recognized as a "Fire Safe South Carolina Community" by Fire Safe South Carolina for the sixth consecutive year.

## FIRE INSPECTIONS






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## CUT GAS LINE RESPONSE

In 2025, Fire Prevention personnel responded to 41 critical incidents involving damaged natural gas lines during construction activities. These high-risk situations required immediate, coordinated response between multiple agencies to mitigate the potential for fires and explosions.

During these incidents, prevention staff:

- Responded rapidly to scenes to assess hazards and establish a safe perimeter alongside fire suppression crews.
- Coordinated with utility providers to secure and shut off gas lines and mitigate further risk.
- Conducted post-incident inspections and provided contractors with guidance on excavation safety. They also made sure that contractors complied with local codes and ones set by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA).

## SPECIAL EVENTS

The division organized and supported 357 special events throughout the year. These events promoted fire safety awareness, community engagement, team building, and also support the mission of reducing fire risks in our area.

Staff in the Fire Prevention Division supported these events by providing pre-event inspections, fire watch coverage, and code compliance oversight.

## FIRE INVESTIGATIONS

The Columbia-Richland Fire Department investigates fires that occur within city limits. Investigators from the CRFD Fire Marshal's Office respond to incidents involving significant property loss, injuries, suspected intentional acts, or situations requiring specialized expertise. The primary purpose of a fire investigation is to determine the origin, cause, and contributing factors of each fire.

In 2025:

- Investigators responded to 32 fire investigation requests
- Origin and cause were successfully determined in all cases
- Four investigators remained on-call daily to ensure timely response



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Key Findings:

- **Incendiary Fires (Arson):** 5 cases (16%)
- **Accidental Fires:** 23 cases (72%) were classified as accidental
    - Leading causes included smoking materials, cooking, electrical issues, heating equipment, candles, fireworks and dryers.
- **Undetermined:** 4 cases (12%)

## FIRE PLAN REVIEW

The Fire Plan Review Program ensures that new construction in the City of Columbia as well as renovations, and fire protection system installations comply with applicable local, state, and national fire codes before work begins.

This proactive approach helps prevent hazards, reduce costly corrections, and promote safer building practices.

**Core Functions:**

- **Review Building Plans:** Evaluate architectural and engineering drawings for compliance with fire and life safety codes.
- **Assess Fire Protection Systems:** This includes fire alarms, hood suppression, and special hazard systems for proper design and installation.
- **Conduct Permitting:** Issue permits for fire protection systems, and hazardous operations.
- **Hold Pre-Submittal Meetings:** Work with contractors and developers to clarify requirements and streamline approvals.
- **Coordinate with City of Columbia:** Collaborate with the city's building department to ensure integrated safety compliance.

**2025 Plan Review Activity**

The average turnaround time for plan review was two weeks. During the year, members of the Fire Prevention Division reviewed:

- 78 site plans
- 41 hood suppression systems
- 136 fire sprinkler plans
- 195 fire alarm plans



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## FIRE EDUCATION

The Fire Prevention Division continued to expand its public education outreach efforts reaching residents across all age groups.

In 2025 the department:

- Participated in 1,536 fire-safety events
- Reached approximately 36,000 people
- Installed 403 free smoke alarms for residents in need

**Key Accomplishments**

- **School Programs:** Delivered fire safety presentations to elementary and middle school students. These educational opportunities taught students home fire escape planning, the important of smoke alarms, and fire prevention practices.
- **Senior Outreach:** Staff conducted fire safety sessions at senior centers. These sessions covered cooking safety, electrical hazards in the home and emergency preparedness.
- **Community Events:** Members of the Fire Prevention Division participated in major city events such as the Soda City Market, the South Carolina State Fair, and local festivals. During these events, staff provided interactive demonstrations and distributed fire safety educational materials.
- **Special Initiatives:** Staff supported programs such as Girl's Empowerment, reinforcing safety education and leadership.
- **Fire Prevention Week:** The department hosted activities in schools and businesses, including live demonstrations and safety drills. These exercises reached thousands of area residents.

## ADMINISTRATIVE DUTIES

The administrative responsibilities of the Fire Prevention Division are essential for maintaining operational efficiency, compliance, and accountability. These duties support the division's core functions of issuing pyrotechnic permits, and false alarms letters, as well as responding to requests through the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

In 2025 staff completed the following administrative duties:

- Resolved 1,566 phone calls
- Answered 536 FOIAs
- Issued 46 pyrotechnic permits



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- Issued 22 false alarm letters

## INSPECTION REPORTS ONLINE (IROL)

IROL, a cloud-based compliance management platform, is designed to streamline fire and life safety inspection processes. It connects fire departments, contractors, and property owners to ensure timely reporting, code compliance, and risk reduction.

The Fire Prevention Division of the Columbia Richland Fire Department uses IROL to track fire protection system inspections. This includes inspections on fire sprinklers, fire alarms and hood suppression systems. IROL is also used to monitor special hazard systems, and high-risk occupancies, and generate monthly compliance reports for CRFD leadership and strategic planning.

In 2025, more than 1,000 reports were filed using IROL.

- 928 fire protection systems were found complaint
- 128 fire protection systems were found to be deficient
- Systems filed in IROL had an overall compliance rate of 87.88%

## FIRE PREVENTION: COMMUNITY OUTREACH

### **Smoke Alarm Blitz in Hollywood Hills** – March 22, 2025

CRFD members canvassed the Hollywood Hills community on Saturday March 22 to install free smoke alarms in area homes.
They were joined by officials with SC State Fire as well as volunteers from the American Red Cross of South Carolina.



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By the time the blitz was over in the early afternoon, 250 free alarms were installed for area homeowners. This campaign targeted high-risk neighborhoods in an effort to reduce fire-related injuries and deaths.

## **2025 Fire Prevention Parade** – October 3, 2025

Area schools near Two Notch Road in Columbia and their students enjoyed the sights and sounds of the annual Fire Prevention Parade in October.

The Columbia-Richland Fire Department hosts the parade each fall to promote fire safety and education in communities across Richland County. This year's parade took participants down stretches of Barhamville Road, Waverly Street, and Elmwood Avenue in Columbia. It passed three area schools before concluding at Drew Wellness Center where a post-parade community block party was held.





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# ADMINISTRATION & COMMUNITY DIVISION

The Administration Division of the Columbia-Richland Fire Department oversees a broad range of critical functions that support daily operations and long-term strategic growth. This includes the research, developmental, procurement and deployment of equipment and resources necessary to ensure operational readiness across the department.

## FACILITY ENHANCEMENTS

### New Station 2 in Olympia

After years of collaboration and research, plans were adopted to construct a new fire station for communities in the Olympia section of Columbia. Members of the city council approved development plans for the project in late 2025. A groundbreaking ceremony was held for the new station in early 2026.

Once completed, the new station will enhance service delivery and response capabilities in this growing area.




### Burn Building Replacement

In 2025, CRFD secured funding to replace the existing burn building at the department's training grounds. Due to significant structural deterioration, replacement of the building was necessary to maintain safe and effective training operations.

To maximize cost efficiency, the new structure will maintain the original footprint while being upgraded to meet modern standards. The facility is being constructed in accordance with current National Fire Protection



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*(Ongoing work to replace CRFD's new Burn Building at the department's training grounds. Demolition of the old burn building began prior to Thanksgiving 2025. The new building is expected to be completed in late spring 2026.)*

Association (NFPA) training standards and it will incorporate enhanced safety features to better protect personnel.

The new burn building is expected to provide 25 to 30 years of operational life and will significantly improve the department's ability to conduct safe and effective live-fire training.

**Space Needs Study**

To support long-term facility planning, CRFD completed Space Needs Assessments for the following stations:

- Station 1 (Headquarters)
- Station 3 (Industrial Park)
- Station 6 (St. Andrews)
- Station 8 (Atlas Road)

These assessments evaluated facility conditions and identified necessary upgrades to meet modern fire service standards related to firefighter health, safety, contamination control, privacy, and operational efficiency.

The results of each study will provide a roadmap for station renovations, expansions, or potential replacements that will allow the department to modernize our aging facilities while also prioritizing funding opportunities on a station-by-station basis.

The studies identified several common deficiencies in all stations that were reviewed. These included outdated building layouts, limited contamination control measures, and insufficient privacy and gender-



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separated accommodations. The findings also confirmed that modifications within the current building footprints are not sufficient. This means renovations, expansions, or replacement options will be required to meet current standards.

## FLEET UPGRAGES

CRFD stations received new firetrucks in 2025. These include Station 6 off of Broad River Road, Station 16 in the Harbison area, Station 12 off of North Main Street, as well as Station 7 in Cottontown.

A community 'Push In' ceremony was held for the new Ladder 7 on March 3, 2026. Current members of the department joined CRFD retirees and community leaders as the new Pierce Ascendant 107 model ladder truck into the station.








Later in the year, the department made plans to bring a new firetruck in for Station 3 near the city's industrial park.



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During 2025 the department also put in service several new vehicles to include:

- Swiftwater rescue truck
- Nissan Frontiers (4) for support techs
- Department training staff truck
- Solar boat
- Double stake boat trailer with two galvanized boats and two inflatable rescue rafts




## FIRE HYDRANTS

Over the course of the year, staff in the CRFD Logistics Division completed work on 15,453 hydrants. This included FLOW tests on hydrants as well as work order repairs.



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## AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

***Battalion Chief Sean Cason –*** Recognized with the 'First Responder Award' by the Knights of Columbus **(January)**



***Ret. Engineer Chante Coad –*** Honored as First Black Female Firefighter in CRFD History **(February)**

***Fire Chief Aubrey D. Jenkins, Staffing Chief Leah Gardner, Division Chief Robert Hughes and Fire Captain Kirk Tilton –*** Recognized with the Patriot Award from Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve under the U.S. Department of War **(March)**





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***Volunteer Fire Captain Eric Crane –*** Honored with CRFD Letter of Commendation **(March)**

***Volunteer Firefighter Nigel Graham, Volunteer Firefighter Akil Finley & Volunteer Firefighter Kourtney Menches –*** Recognized with the CRFD Daniel Carrington Volunteer Award **(March)**

***Senior Firefighter Andrew Morris –*** Honored with CRFD Ozakie Knotts Senior Firefighter Award **(March)**

***Engineer Devon Ash & Engineer Ethan Blackmon –*** Received the CRFD Timmy Young Engineer Award **(March)**

***Engineer Bryce Machain & Fire Captain Bryan Spitzer –*** Recognized with the CRFD Willie Warren Outstanding Service to the Department Award **(March)**

***Battalion Chief Sean Cason & Battalion Chief Prentiss McLaurin –*** Honored with the CRFD Battalion Chief Joe M. Kee Award **(March)**

***Training Officer Shaun Murphy –*** Presented with the CRFD Robert "Buzz" Busbee Meritorious Cross **(March)**

***Vi Hendley –*** Presented with the CRFD Chief's Cross **(March)**

***Firefighter Clayton Alnor, Firefighter Nicholas Carter, Firefighter Tanner Davis, Firefighter William Gambrell, Firefighter Jordan Herbert, Firefighter Cameron Jones, Firefighter Trevor Merck, Firefighter Gavin Plant, Senior Firefighter James Dunbar, Senior Firefighter Christian Evans, Senior Firefighter Gary Gardner, Senior Firefighter Trenton O'Rafferty, Senior Firefighter Dustin Parthemore, Senior Firefighter Braeden Slater, Senior Firefighter Trever Sulser Jr., Senior Firefighter Howard Washington, Engineer Bradley Brown, Engineer Jonathan Garcia, Engineer Matthew Hook, Engineer Acie Kibler, Engineer Josh Moskaitis, Engineer Anthony Rembisz, Engineer Bryan Richardson, Engineer Reinaldo Sabb, Fire Captain Chad Alexander, Fire Captain Austin Graham, Fire Captain Blake Harlin, Fire Captain Dale Hornsby, Fire Captain Adam Lostetter & Fire Captain Kenneth Warr –*** Honored with the CRFD Green Cross **(March)**

***Rescue Company 1 – 1st Shift (Fire Captain Christopher Byrd, Engineer Campbell Jacobs, Senior Firefighter Ryan Espling and Firefighter Zachary Finch) –*** Recognized with a CRFD Company Citation **(March)**





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***Ladder Company 7 – 1st Shift (Fire Captain Blake Cartee, Fire Captain Nicholas Branham, Senior Firefighter Ryan Hall and Senior Firefighter Franklyn Owen)*** Recognized with a CRFD Company Citation **(March)**

***Rescue Company 4 – 1st Shift (Fire Captain Jerry Teal, Engineer Ethan Shepard & Firefighter John Christmus)*** Recognized with a CRFD Company Citation **(March)**



***Ladder Company 8 – 1st Shift (Fire Captain Elliot Konieczko, Engineer Jason Chavis, Firefighter Micaiah Humphries & Firefighter Cole Piepenburg)*** Recognized with a CRFD Company Citation **(March)**

***Rescue Company 1 & Battalion 5 – 1st Shift (Battalion Chief Gregory Walker, Fire Captain Christopher Byrd, Engineer Campbell Jacobs, Senior Firefighter Ryan Espling and Firefighter Zachary Finch) –*** Recognized with a CRFD Company Citation **(March)**

***Rescue Company 5 – 1st Shift (Fire Captain Jonathan Beresford, Engineer Blake Hott & Firefighter Casey Finch)*** Recognized with a CRFD Company Citation **(March)**

***Firefighter Ryan Boyle, Firefighter Ryder Clemmo, Firefighter Jessie Hardin, Senior Firefighter Caleb Jacobs, Senior Firefighter John Terry, Senior Firefighter Travis Wiggins, Engineer Dustin Allen, Engineer Cody Dominick, Engineer David Fender, Engineer Jacob Lutz, Engineer Garrit Van Amerongen, Engineer Brad Youngblood, Fire Captain Marcus Bostick, Fire Captain Steven Buff, Fire Captain Robert Hare, Fire Captain David Meier & Fire Captain Bobby Philips*** Honored with the CRFD Phoenix Award **(March)**

***Firefighter Bryce Minick & Firefighter Mario Trejo –*** Presented with the CRFD Maltese Cross **(March)**

***Firefighter Zachary Finch, Senior Firefighter Ryan Espling & Engineer Campbell Jacobs –*** Honored with the CRFD Medal of Bravery **(March)**

***Fire Captain Paul Morris –*** Honored with the CRFD Medal of Honor **(March)**



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***Battalion Chief Kevin Sandifer –*** Recognized with the Firefighter of the Year Award by Richland Post 6 of the American Legion **(March)**



***Columbia-Richland Fire Department –*** Honored as a FireSafe South Carolina Community for the sixth consecutive year **(June)**

***Eric Febles & South Chester Fire Chief Eugene Hudson –*** Presented with a CRFD Citizen Certificate of Recognition **(August)**





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***Columbia-Richland Fire Department*** **–** Honored by Town of Blythewood **(August)**



***Columbia-Richland Fire Department*** **–** Honored by University of South Carolina Football on First Responders Night **(September)**

***Training Officer Kiante Curenton*** **–** Received the Servant-Leadership Award from Eastminster Presbyterian Church **(September)**





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***Fire Chief Aubrey D. Jenkins*** **–** Named 2025 Walk Ambassador for the 2025 Columbia Sickle Cell Walk **(September)**




***Fire Captain Nicholas Young*** **–** Honored with the Hero Award by Thompson Funeral Home at its annual First Responders Cookout **(October)**

***Fire Chief Aubrey D. Jenkins*** **–** Honored by the Columbia Urban League with the President's Award (**November)**





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# 2025 COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHTS

## CRFD Awards Ceremony 2025

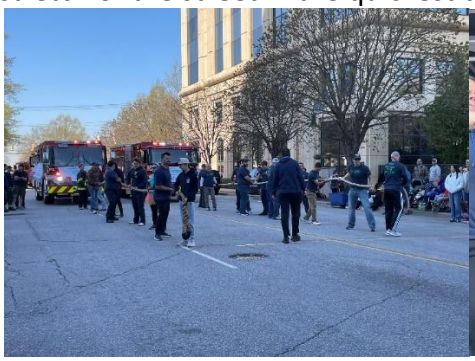
The Columbia-Richland Fire Department came together in March to honor our members for their exemplary work. The department's annual awards ceremony was held at the South Carolina State Fairgrounds with more than 80 firefighters receiving awards. This included several firefighters who exhibited incredible bravery in the line of their duty.




Award honorees for the ceremony were nominated by members of the Columbia-Richland Fire Department. The CRFD Awards Committee, which is made up of our personnel, carried out the task of reviewing nominations at the end of 2024 and ultimately selecting which members would receive awards.

## 2025 Fire Truck Pull to Benefit Curing Kids Cancer

Department members were proud to support our partners at Curing Kids Cancer for the annual Fire Truck Pull in March. For the first time the competition was held on Hampton Street between Main and Assembly in downtown Columbia. The event was a sell out in 2025 with 32 teams competing to see who could pull a CRFD fire engine down a stretch of the street in the quickest time.






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This year's Fire Truck Pull was also a soaring success with a new record high of $64,000 being raised to support Curing Kids Cancer and local research into pediatric cancers at Prisma Children's Hospital Midlands.

## Reunion Luncheon for Department Retirees

Men and women who have bravely served the Columbia-Richland Fire Department were invited and welcomed back Friday, May 9, 2025 for an afternoon of food and fellowship.




The department and Fire Chief Aubrey D. Jenkins hosted a special luncheon for retired members at CRFD Headquarters on Laurel Street. More than 90 retirees took part to reconnect with their former colleagues and socialize with currently serving members of the department.



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## New Bikes for School Students

During the year Fire Chief Jenkins continued his practice of purchasing and gifting dozens of free bicycles to area schools. These bikes were presented to students who showed the most improvements in their standardized testing.





Excelling students at Carver-Lyon Elementary and Watkins-Nance Elementary benefited from this program.

## CRFD Youth Empowerment Academy

Working with the Columbia Urban League, our department was able to increase attendance for our summer Youth Empowerment Academy.

In 2025 nearly 20 teenagers took part in the program through two sessions that were offered. Each year the academy gives participants a behind-the-scenes look at their fire service and teaches them useful skills to excel in any career path.

In what was also a first for the academy, both sessions this summer included trips outside of the Columbia area. Teens in the June session of the program traveled to Myrtle Beach to represent the department during the 2025 SC Fire Rescue Conference. The second group took a field trip to Charleston in July to visit the Charleston Fire Department as well as the Charleston 9 Memorial.



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## 2025 Sickle Cell Walk

Fire Chief Jenkins had the honor of being named Walk Ambassador for the 2025 Columbia Sickle Cell Walk.

This was done in recognition of multiple events that CRFD sponsored to raise holiday gifts for area kids and teens living with forms of sickle cell disease.



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Inclement weather resulted in this year's walk having to be cancelled on September 27. In light of that, event organizers at the James. R. Clark Memorial Sickle Cell Foundation opted to hold an awards program on October 21 to recognize Chief Jenkins and others in our community for their work bringing awareness to sickle cell disease.

## **Fall Festival at Station 20** – October 25, 2025

The annual Fall Festival at CRFD Station 20 was once again a huge success, as families from across Richland County attended the event.

The festival is a yearly effort of the career firefighters and volunteer members at Station 20, which serves Ballentine and other communities in northwest Richland County.

Citizens enjoyed free food at the firehouse as well as games, bounce houses and several live gear demonstrations from the firefighters. In all, nearly 2,000 people came out to enjoy the event.



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**Thanking Our Administrative Members** – November 7, 2025

Members of the CRFD administrative team received red-carpet treatment during a special lunch hosted by Fire Chief Jenkins at the Progressive Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Many of the top administrators with the City of Columbia and Richland County were also in attendance to thank our administrative staff for their daily work serving our department and the community.







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**2025 Firefighters Feeding Families Holiday Food Drive** – December 22, 2025

More than 600 families in need across Richland County were supplied with food for the holiday season thanks to members of the Columbia-Richland Fire Department and its partners.




This was a new record set by CRFD's annual "Firefighters Feeding Families Holiday Food Drive," which is now in its sixth year. Dozens of vehicles passed through fire department headquarters in Columbia on Monday December, 22, 2025 to collect free supplies of groceries, produce, and meats.



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Members of the Columbia City Council and Richland County Council were also present to help distribute grocery bags to citizens who requested food assistance. At times, the line outside of CRFD headquarters on Laurel Street extended for several city blocks.



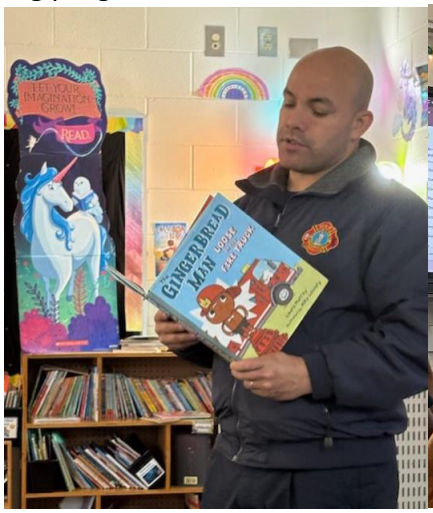


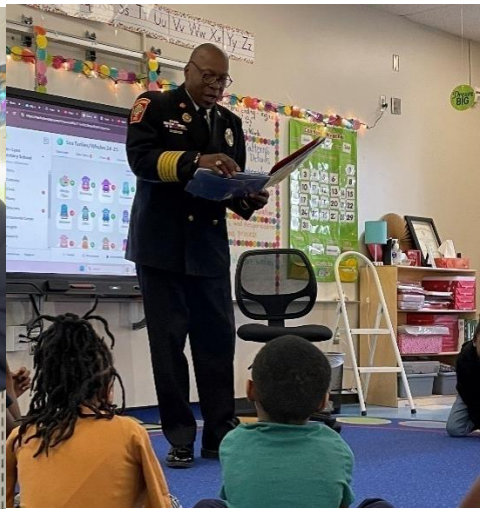

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## Other Notable Items

Over the course of the year members of our department also supported:

- The city's "Go Red" campaign to promote women's heart health
- Multiple reading programs and events at area schools





- The City Manager's Go Red Heart Walk
- Firefighter Legislative Day 2025 at the South Carolina State House




- The City of Columbia's Annual Career Fair
- The 2025 Battle of the Badges Blood Drive in support of the American Red Cross of South Carolina



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- The 2025 Carolina Brotherhood Ride
- National Night Out 2025




- ‘Back to School’ events in Richland School District One



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- The annual 9/11 Morning of Remembrance and Stephen Siller Tunnel to Towers 5K Run & Walk



- The 2025 First Responders Charity Softball Tournament at Segra Park
- The Mayor's Campaign Against Breast Cancer
- The 2025 City of Columbia Veterans Day Parade
- Devine Night Out and Vista Lights
- Fitness Court Launches for the city in Rosewood Park & Woodland Park






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- The 2025 Carolina Carillon Holiday Parade







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## PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE

The CRFD Public Information Office acts as a liaison between our agency and the communities we serve. The department's Public Information Officer communicates information from CRFD in a number of ways. This includes through our many social media platforms and by providing information to numerous media outlets in the Columbia area.






During the year, our PIO provides and coordinates interviews between members of our department and various media outlets. This includes CRFD appearances on local TV and radio stations as well as interviews for area magazines, newspapers, and student-run publications at Columbia area colleges and universities. The PIO also manages the department's website, plans CRFD events, and handles any direct inquiries to the department made by our citizens.

The purpose of the CRFD Public Information Office is to provide transparency in all affairs of the department with our citizens and aid them in providing community feedback to the department and its leadership.





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| PIO STATISTICS | |
|---|---|
| **Type** | **Amount** |
| Media Press Releases | 30 |
| Interviews/Media (Radio, On Camera & By Phone) | 203 |
| Online Inquiries to Department | 531 |

| SOCIAL MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Platform** | **Number of Followers** | **Number of Posts** |
| Facebook | Approx. 29,000 | 409 |
| Instagram | 7,463 | 366 |
| X | Approx. 10,700 | 539 |
| NextDoor Neighbor | - | 28 |



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## PROFESSIONAL SERVICES DIVISION

CRFD's Professional Services Division oversees staffing levels for the department as well as human resource matters. This includes the recruiting, hiring and promotion of our members.

The division also helps develop departmental policy and oversees the many volunteer firefighters working in our Volunteer Services Bureau.

### HIGHLIGHTS ON DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL



In 2025, the department hired 68 employees. This overall figure includes:

- 54 standard firefighter recruits
- 8 certified firefighters
- 2 fire training officers
- 2 fire support technicians
- 1 fire analyst specialist
- 1 lead administrative assistant (Operations)

Forty firefighters completed training and graduated from CRFD's Fire Academy. Specifically:

- 23 firefighters graduated in June as part of Recruit Class 2025-01, and
- 17 firefighters graduated in December as part of Recruit Class 2025-02.



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A total of 59 employees separated from CRFD during the year. Specifically:

- 30 members resigned,
- 15 were terminated, and
- 14 members retired

***Promotions***

The department promoted 60 members to new ranks of leadership during 2025. These promotions included:

- 1 fire repair technician
- 1 volunteer senior firefighter
- 24 career senior firefighters
- 17 engineers
- 6 fire captains
- 3 battalion chiefs
- 2 division chiefs
- 1 chief of fire training
- 1 chief of planning & compliance
- 4 deputy fire marshals






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## RECRUITMENT & OUTREACH INITIATIVES

Our department received 929 applications for employment in 2025. Members of our recruitment team also received 615 interest forms and attended 38 recruitment events.

Staff in the Professional Services Division also:

- Met with prospective applicants to explain details about the fire department virtually through our *Digital Dialogue* sessions.

- Hosted 12 engagement meetings in an open-house style format during the year for firefighter candidates. These meetings were held after they received their conditional offers for employment and before they began firefighter recruit school.

- Assisted with promotional assessments at four neighboring fire departments.

- Participated in the following community events:
  - ‘Coffee with Counselors’ organized by Lexington-Richland School District 5
  - Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) annual awards ceremony and new officer installation
  - ‘Play it Safe Non-Violence Rally’ at Bolden Stadium
  - National Night Out 2025



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  - The annual 'Midlands Regional Business and Industry Showcase' attended by nearly 3,000 people

- Supported activities for the 2025 CRFD Youth Empowerment Academy.
- Attended multiple neighborhood community meetings.
- Employed new marketing materials including banners, table clothes, and back-drops.

## STAFFING OFFICE INITIATIVES

During 2025, the CRFD Staffing Officer:

- Coordinated retirement presentations for our members with representatives from the SC Public Employee Benefit Authority (PEBA).
- Addressed and managed concerns from our personnel
  - Responded to more than 4,000 phone calls and
  - more than 4,000 emails.
- Facilitated 23,996 configuration updates, 1,792 personnel updates, 5,447 roster updates, and 410 outbound messages during the department's migration of Telestaff in August.
- Assisted FD employees with scheduling for leave cases and roster updates.
- Frequently answered employee questions regarding FMLA, workers compensation, military time, and physical disability.
- Assisted staff in the Health and Safety Division with processing workers compensation claims.
- Created a Timecard Approval Report. The percentage of employee timecards approved each pay cycle increased from seven percent to more than 90 percent in 2025.
- Created an accrual spreadsheet to help personnel calculate potential accrual projections during a desired timeframe.
- Started forecasting staffing projections.
- Implemented and gave presentations to two classes of firefighter recruits covering general information for Telestaff, shift work, pay cycles, timecards, leave cases, accruals, mandatory days, etc.
- Held more than 16 one-on-one or group training sessions on timecards and the new WFM system for timecard management.
- Trained every new supervisor in the department on timecards, Telestaff, reports, and accruals.
- Processed 157 Final Payout forms, and had over 16 plaques and certificates made for retirees.
- Printed and disseminated more than 600 Hour Summary Reports for firefighter tax deduction



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- Created two auctions to streamline an interest list for truck openings. This significantly reduced departmental time processing thousands of vacation requests for CRFD members. Continue to work on employees being able to participate in a vacation request auction.
- Presented satistics, concerns, accomplishments, answered questions, and accepted tasks at monthly meetings of the department's Operation Division.

**CRFD VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTER FIGURES**

| 2025 | |
|---|---|
| **Number of CRFD Volunteer Firefighters** | 84 |
| **Volunteer Applications Received** | 47 |
| **Candidates Who Started Recruit School** | 14 |
| **Candidates Who Completed Recruit School** | 10 |
| **Volunteer Training Hours Completed** | 5,328 |
| **Hours of Instruction by Volunteers** | 1,333 |
| **Number of Emergency Responses by Volunteers** | 2,259 |
| **Number of Hours Staffed by Volunteers at CRFD Fire Stations** | 6,624 |



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## OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY DIVISION

The Division of Occupational Safety and Health safeguards the physical and mental well-being of CRFD personnel through proactive risk management, training, and compliance oversight. By reducing injuries, preventing occupational illness, and promoting safe operational practices, the division works to protect our firefighters and the citizens they serve.

A healthy and protected workforce ensures reliable staffing, operational readiness of our members, and uninterrupted emergency response for our community.

During 2025, the CRFD Health & Safety Division experienced the following key accomplishments:

- Achieved measurable injury-reduction milestones,
- Implemented new department-wide safety programs and augmented existing ones, and
- Made significant strides in advancing overall firefighter health and safety.

## INJURIES

Regardless of where an injury occurs while on the job, it is department policy to record all incidents and near misses involving CRFD employees and volunteer firefighters. In addition, we provide a consistent pathway for employee injury management and return to full duty status.

CRFD employees are encouraged to report any incident or near miss. In 2025, the injury rate for our members was stable when compared to years prior. During the year, there were:

- 65 total on-duty firefighter injuries reported to the Health & Safety Division,
- three exposure incidents requiring member evaluation, and
- zero serious injuries to members requiring hospitalization.

In addition, department members lost 520 workdays due to injuries and illnesses. To combat this, several members who sustained injuries were assigned to light duty or transitional assignments.

## TRAINING & RISK-REDUCTION EFFORTS

During the year, the Health and Safety Division delivered 45 hours of training to department employees. The key focus areas of these sessions were on injury prevention, proper use of firefighter personal protective equipment (PPE), cancer prevention, driver safety and behavioral health.



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## FIREFIGHTER WELLNESS & BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

- During the year, 98 percent of all department employees participated in annual medical exams.
- Gym member participation among members increased. Going forward, the Health & Safety Division is working to create an annual fitness test for CRFD firefighters.
- Behavioral health support availability was provided to all department members through the Family Life and Officer Wellness (FLOW) program.

    - In 2025, there were 27 peer support or critical incident response activations at the department. FLOW counselors also offered 148 total therapy sessions and served 65 of our personnel following critical incidents.

## CANCER & EXPOSURE PREVENTION EFFORTS

- **PPE Decontamination Practices:** CRFD continues adoption of enhanced procedures for firefighter gear decontamination. This was undertaken to reduce exposure among our members to carcinogens.
- **Exposure Reporting and Tracking:** The department also continues to strengthen documentation of exposures among our members and implemented tracking systems to ensure timely follow-up and long-term health monitoring.
- **Cancer-Prevention Education Efforts:** CRFD began department-wide cancer prevention training focusing on risk reduction for cancer, early recognition of symptoms, and behavior health awareness.
- **Screening and Early Detection Programs:** The department promoted and supported member access to annual physicals and cancer-screening programs to improve early detection rates among our members.

## WORKERS COMPENSATION & COST AWARENESS

During the past year, 68 Workers' Compensation claims were filed by CRFD members. Overall, the cost associated with claims decreased in 2025.



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## OPERATIONS DIVISION

CRFD's Fire Suppression Division operates from 32 strategically placed fire stations. With more than 500 active personnel, the department is responsible for responding to various types of emergencies. These include fires, technical rescues, hazardous material incidents, natural disasters, and medical calls across the City of Columbia and Richland County.

The department covers 750 square miles and approximately 431,000 South Carolinians who live in Richland County.



## OPERATIONS DIVISION: STATISTICS

**During 2025, the department responded to 40,130 emergency calls.** This is a 4.1 percent increase when compared to the previous year. In 2024 department personnel responded to 38,546 emergency calls.

Of the overall calls (see chart) for the year:

- 49 percent were rescue and emergency medical service-related (one percent decrease compared to previous year), and
- 20 percent were false alarm calls.

| 2025 INCIDENT TYPES / NUMBER | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Incident Series** | **Total Number** | **Percentage** |
| Rescue & EMS Incident | 19,535 | 49% |
| False Alarm &False Call | 8,044 | 20% |
| Motor Vehicle Accidents | 4,897 | 12% |



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| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Good Intent Call | 2,737 | 7% |
| Fire (see next chart) | 1,808 | 4.5% |
| Hazardous Condition (no fire) | 1,604 | 4% |
| Service Call | 964 | 2.4% |
| Special Incident Type | 513 | 1.3% |
| Severe Weather & National Disaster | 11 | 0.03% |
| Overpressure, Rupture, Explosion, Overheat (no fire) | 7 | 0.02% |

Of the 1,808 fire incidents, the types of fires included:

| Type of Fire | Number |
|---|---|
| Structure | 520 |
| Grass | 346 |
| Vehicle | 279 |
| Brush | 234 |
| Forest | 144 |
| Dumpster/Outside Rubbish | 104 |

Estimates show, that in 2025, the total fire loss for areas serviced by CRFD was more than **$18 million** in property loss. Along with that, there was more than **$6 million** in contents loss for area properties.

When comparing our response totals month by month -- **January, March, and October** had the highest number of calls during the year.

## TOP RESPONDING STATIONS & APPARATUS

CRFD Station 1 had the highest call volume in 2025, with 3,700 calls for service, while Station 6 was a close second with 2,559 total service calls for the year. Station 14 finished the year third for number of service calls with 2,393.

| 2025 TOP STATIONS FOR INCIDENT RESPONSE | |
|---|---|
| **Station** | **Calls for 2025** |
| Station 1 (Headquarters) | 3,700 |
| Station 6 (St. Andrews) | 2,559 |
| Station 14 (Dentsville) | 2,393 |
| Station 9 (Shandon) | 2,054 |
| Station 13 (Eau Claire) | 1,986 |
| **TOTAL:** | 12,692 |



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Engine 1 out of Station 1 was the 'Top Apparatus' in 2025. It responded to 3,046 calls for service during the year. Ladder 7 out of Station 7 finished in second place with 2,867 calls for service.

| 2025 TOP APPARATUS OR INCIDENT RESPONSE | |
|---|---|
| **Apparatus** | **Calls for 2025** |
| Engine 1 (Headquarters) | 3,046 |
| Ladder 7 (North Columbia) | 2,867 |
| Engine 6 (St. Andrews) | 2,731 |
| Engine 4 (Northeast Columbia) | 2,410 |
| Engine 13 (Eau Claire) | 2,234 |

For county apparatus, Rescue 3 answered the most calls in 2025 with 2,360 calls. Engine 14 finished second with 2,192 calls and Ladder 14 was close behind with 2,170 calls.

| 2025 TOP COUNTY APPARATUS FOR INCIDENT RESPONSE | |
|---|---|
| **Apparatus** | **Calls for 2025** |
| Rescue 3 | 2,360 |
| Engine 14 | 2,192 |
| Ladder 14 | 2,170 |
| Engine 34 | 2,070 |
| Engine 24 | 1,744 |

## SHIFT CALL VOLUME

Throughout the year, all three shifts at the department experienced a similar steady call volume between them. At the end of the year, statistics show that 2nd Shift responded to the most with 34.3 percent:

- **2nd Shift** – 12,902 emergency responses (34.3 percent)
- **1st Shift** - 12,428 emergency responses (33 percent), and
- **3rd Shift** – 12,288 emergency responses (32.7 percent)

## COUNTY & CITY CALL VOLUME

- The City of Columbia's 12 fire stations responded to 22,463 calls in 2025. This amount represented 55 percent of all calls for the year.
- Richland County's 20 fire stations responded to 17,004 calls in 2025. This amount represented 43 percent of all calls for the year.

## TURNOUT TIMES

Turnout time performance continues to be an area of focus for the department. In 2025, 87 percent of our turnout time for service calls exceeded 120 seconds, while eight percent met the benchmark of less than 80 seconds, and five percent fell between 80 and 120 seconds.



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## OPERATIONS DIVISION: MAJOR INCIDENTS

### **2-ALARM FIRE AT SPRING LAKE APARTMENTS** – January 1, 2025

In the early hours of New Year's Day, CRFD 2nd Shift crews responded to a reported structure fire at the Spring Lake Apartments on Garners Ferry Road. Upon arrival, first-due units encountered heavy fire conditions and quickly requested a 2nd Alarm to bring additional resources to the scene.

Fire had fully engulfed a second-floor apartment and extended into the attic space of the building. Crews worked aggressively to contain and extinguish the fire and they ultimately brought the incident under control.

Following the fire, CRFD Fire Marshal's Office determined the property to be unsafe for occupancy. Subsequent inspections conducted by the Fire Prevention Division identified multiple concerns, including electrical issues, detached ceilings in several buildings and signs of structural decay.

### **2-ALARM FIRE AT SPRING LAKE APARTMENTS** – January 31, 2025

Just before midnight on January 31 our 3rd Shift crews responded to a reported fire at the Hampton Greene Apartments off of Gills Creek Parkway.

While en route, Tower 9 saw a plume of smoke in the air and the crew called for a working fire dispatch. Firefighters arrived on scene to find heavy fire coming from one building and flames quickly spreading through the roof. This prompted officers on scene to call for a 2nd Alarm - dispatching more crews.

All occupants escaped the building safely and there were no injuries. One other apartment building also suffered exterior damages due to the high heat. Roughly 18 people were left displaced.





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## **2-ALARM FIRE ON WASHINGTON STREET** – February 1, 2025

CRFD 3rd Shift crews responded to a second 2-Alarm fire shortly after 4 a.m. on February 1.

Crews were dispatched to a commercial property on the 1500 block of Washington Street. Upon arrival, they found fire coming through the roof of a vacant building with flames extending to the property next door. The fire was quickly upgraded to a 2nd Alarm.

Aerials were used to bring the fire under control and extinguish it. No one was found inside either property and no one was injured.

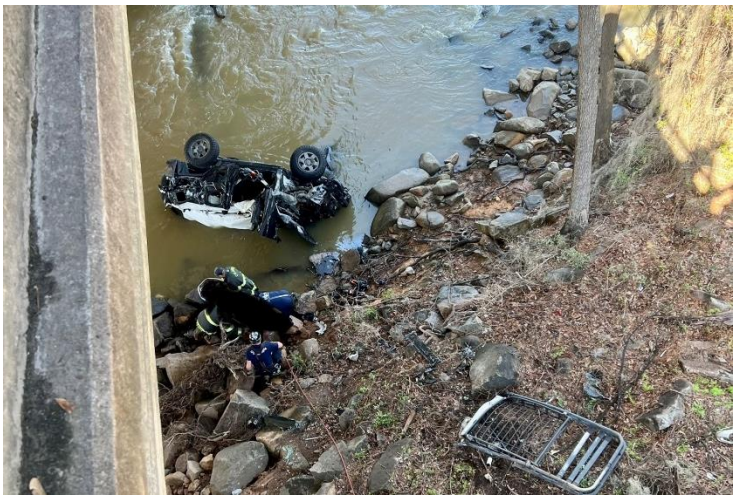


## **MOTOR VEHICLE ACCIDENT WITH PATIENT ENTRAPMENT ON I-126** – March 12, 2025

Our 1st Shift crews working in the downtown area saved a man's life after he was involved in motor vehicle accident on I-126 in Columbia. The vehicle was traveling westbound over the I-126 bridge spanning the Broad River when it hit a guardrail, went off the bridge, and crashed into the river. The car caught fire on impact after landing near the riverbank.



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Firefighters on 1st Shift quickly got down to the vehicle and were able to extricate the driver. He was then taken from the scene by Richland County EMS to an area hospital with significant injuries. He has since recovered.

The actions taken by our 1st Shift crews who were on this call will be recognized by the SC State Firefighters' Association in 2026 during its annual Fire Rescue conference in Myrtle Beach.

## **2-ALARM FIRE AT PROVIDENCE PARK APARTMENTS** – April 16, 2025

In mid-April, 3rd Shift crews were toned out to a 2-Alarm fire raging through a building at Providence Park apartments.

Crews arrived on scene to find heavy fire spreading through one side of the building and this prompted officers on scene to call for a 2nd Alarm — dispatching more resources.

Multiple aerials were used to knock the fire down and it was ultimately brought under control and extinguished. There were no injuries. Roughly half of the building was affected by fire and other damages.





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**2-ALARM FIRE AT BRIARGATE CONDOMINIUMS** – April 19, 2025

3rd Shift crews along with units from Irmo Fire District, responded to Briargate Condominiums off of Broad River Road for a 2-Alarm structure fire in late April.

Three people were taken to the hospital after fire ripped through one of the condominium buildings on the property. Due to the extent of the fire officers on scene called for a 2nd Alarm - dispatching more resources.

Twelve of the buildings 24 units were heavily damaged by fire, smoke, and water. Two firefighters suffered minor injuries during the operation and were later released.






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## **2-ALARM FIRE AT DOLLAR TREE** – April 19, 2025

CRFD 3rd Shift crews were toned out for a second 2-Alarm fire on April 19, 2025. Shortly before 5:30 p.m. firefighters were sent to the Dollar Tree on Rosewood Drive for a reported fire. They arrived to find black smoke coming out of the front of the building.

The fire broke out in an aisle of the store and extended into the attic. Crews entered the building and quickly brought the incident under control.

Staff and customers who were inside the store at the time evacuated safely. The interior of the building did receive heavy damages.




## **2-ALARM FIRE AT CALIFORNIA DREAMING** – May 24, 2025

Our 2nd Shift crews were able to keep a fire from spreading through a large well-known restaurant in downtown Columbia.

Firefighters responded to California Dreaming on Assembly Street on the evening of May 24, 2025. Upon arrival officers on scene quickly called for a 2nd Alarm after fire was seen showing from a rear section of the roof.

After establishing a water supply firefighters made entry, traced the fire to the ventilation system of the restaurant, and extinguished it.



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The restaurant had employees and customers inside at the time, but everyone evacuated safely and there were no injuries.

## **2-ALARM FIRE ON BRADFORD RIDGE LANE** – July 12, 2025

A lightning strike in northeast Richland County set off a fire that reached 2-Alarms and left three homes damaged on the evening of July 12, 2025.

Our 3rd Shift crews responded to the scene on Bradford Ridge Lane shortly after 6:45 p.m. Firefighters arrived to find one home fully on fire with flames quickly spreading to the home next door. This prompted officers on scene to call for a 2nd Alarm dispatching more resources.



There were no injuries, but both homes were left uninhabitable and at least seven people were left displaced. A third home also suffered exposure damage due to the fire.



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## **2-ALARM FIRE WITH FIREFIGHTER MAYDAY** – August 21, 2025

Two CRFD firefighters were taken to the hospital after suffering injuries during a fire in a business on Two Notch Road.

Our 3rd Shift crews responded to the fire near Two Notch and Weir Road shortly after 2:20 a.m. on August 21, 2025. Upon arrival firefighters encountered fire coming from the rear of the structure.

Crews made entry into the building. Minutes into the operation, a portion of the roof structure collapsed. Two firefighters became entrapped and a MAYDAY was immediately called. Officers on scene called for a 2nd Alarm dispatching additional crews to the scene.

One of the firefighters was able to self-rescue while other crews worked to free the second firefighter. Once extricated, the second firefighter was able to walk out of the building.

Both firefighters were taken to the hospital to be evaluated and later released. By the end of the year, both members returned to active service.






## **FIRE IN ABANDONED APARTMENT BUILDING** – October 11, 2025

CRFD 3rd Shift crews brought a fire under control that tore through an abandoned apartment building on the 1700 block of Washington Street.

Firefighters arrived on scene shortly before 1 a.m. October 11 to find fire quickly moving through the building.



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Ladder 7 and Ladder 9 got their aerials up and quickly began fire suppression efforts.

No one was injured during the operation, but all 10 units of the building were left damaged by the fire.



## **2-ALARM FIRE ON THANKSGIVING DAY –** November 27, 2025

CRFD 3rd Shift crews responded to an apartment complex on Byron Road shortly after 11:20 a.m. on Thanksgiving morning.

Units arrived on scene to find heavy fire coming through the roof and multiple sides of the building. This prompted officers on scene to call for a 2nd Alarm. Firefighters quickly began efforts to stop the fire from spreading to other buildings. The fire was brought under control and extinguished.

All occupants of the building escaped to safety and there were no injuries.

## **HOUSE FIRE WITH OCCUPANT RESCUE –** December 13, 2025

Firefighters from multiple shifts rescued a citizen from a house fire at a home on Easter Street in mid-December.

Crews responded to the home in the Greenview community at around 7:50 a.m. on December 13 and firefighters found smoke coming from the back of the property on arrival. After making entry, crews encountered heavy smoke conditions inside the home and located the fire in the kitchen.



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One occupant of the home — an elderly individual in a wheelchair - was located in a rear bedroom of the property. Our firefighters were able to safely evacuate him. All other residents also safely got out and there were no injuries.




The fire was extinguished and five people were left displaced.

## **2-ALARM FIRE ON NEW YEAR'S EVE –** December 31, 2025

Our 1st Shift crews closed out 2025 by taking on a 2-Alarm fire in northeast Richland County that damaged several homes in The Summit subdivision.

Firefighters arrived on scene on Glen Knoll Drive at around 9:30 p.m. to find one home on the street fully involved and fire quickly spreading through the home next door. This prompted officers on scene to call for a 2nd Alarm dispatching more crews to the scene.



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Firefighters made entry into the second home and were able to bring the fire there under control and extinguish it. The home where the fire started was completely destroyed and a third property neighboring it also suffered radiant heat damage.

Seven people were left displaced but there were no injuries.



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## OPERATIONS DIVISION: TRAINING DIVISION

**In 2025, members of the Columbia-Richland Fire Department completed 129, 915 total training hours. This reinforced the department's commitment to operational readiness, safety and professional development.**

A total of 3,360 hours were dedicated to direct delivery instruction requiring certified instructors to provide curriculum aligned with state and national standards.

Beyond instructional delivery, the Training Division managed a range of strategic initiatives designed to enhance performance, ensure compliance and support long-term organizational growth.

### I. Total Training Hours Recorded (Direct Delivery, Company Drill and Self-Study)

| Total Training Hours | |
|---|---|
| Direct Delivery, Company Drill and Self-Study | 129,915 |

### II. Direct Delivery Course Summary:

| Direct Delivery Course Summary | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Training Area** | **Total Days** | **Course Hours** | **Instructor Hours** |
| Career Recruit School | 144 | 1,440 | 5,619 |
| Career Driver Operator | 50 | 480 | 1035 |
| Career Promotion Academies | 66 | 528 | 1,063 |
| Multi-Unit Drill | 30 | 216 | 432 |
| Chief Officer Leadership Training | 18 | 72 | 120 |
| Volunteer Recruit School | 116 | 624 | 1,389 |
| Volunteer Driver Operator | NA | NA | NA |
| **Totals:** | **424** | **3360** | **9658** |

### III. Cost of Training by Service Area:

| Cost of Training by Service Area | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Training Type** | **Instructor Hours** | **Approximate Cost** |
| Career Recruit School | 5,619 | $176,881.82 |
| Career Driver Operator | 1035 | $37,733.46 |
| Career Promotion Academies | 1,063 | $41,797.07 |
| Medical | NA | $15258.37 |
| Multi-Unit Drill | 432 | $14,799.74 |
| Chief Officer Leadership Training | 120 | $5,104.32 |
| Volunteer Recruit School | 1,389 | $27,456.07 |
| Volunteer Driver Operator | NA | NA |
| **Totals:** | **9658** | **$319,031** |



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### IV. Administrative Projects:

| Administrative Projects | % Complete |
|---|---|
| Physical Endurance Test Implementation for Recruit Firefighters | 100% |
| Medical Training Program Update | 100% |
| Fire Suppression Systems Update | 100% |
| Live Fire Training Structure Renovation | 90% |
| Engineer Promotion Academy curriculum revision | 75% |
| Captain Promotion Academy curriculum revision | 75% |
| Battalion Promotion Academy curriculum revision | 75% |
| Volunteer & Career Personnel Training Parity | 75% |
| Site Safety SOG | 75% |
| NFPA 1403 Compliance | 75% |
| Engineer Promotional Process Revision | 25% |
| Driver Curriculum Update | 25% |

## KEY ADMINISTRATIVE PROJECTS & PROGRAM ENHANCEMENTS

**Physical Endurance Test (PET) Implementation**

To improve recruit readiness and reduce preventable injuries, the Training Division implemented a new Physical Endurance Test (PET) as a prerequisite for entry into recruit training. Developed through multi-class data analysis collaboration with the Professional Services Division, the PET establishes baseline fitness standards aligned with academy success. Recruits complete the assessment multiple times throughout training to measure progress and performance.






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**Medical Training Program**

In response to updated certification requirements, the department introduced a revised medical training curriculum. Company officers were certified as instructors and this created a consistent, shift-based delivery of standardized training. This approach increased frequency, improved compliance and enhanced emergency medical service delivery.

**Fire Suppression Systems Update**

Updated fire suppression guidance was developed and integrated across all training programs. This included the department's recruit school, engineer academy, driver/operators training program, promotional courses and continuing education. This endured consistent instruction aligned with current National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards and departmental procedures.

**Live Fire Training Structure Renovation**

Renovation of the department's live fire training structure began in November of 2025 with completion anticipated in the second quarter of 2026. The upgraded facility will support enhanced training capabilities and align with the department's updated Standard Operating Guidelines (SOGs) for site safety and live fire operations.

## LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT & CURRICULUM UPDATES

The Training Division is continuing to refine promotional and leadership development programs for the department:

- **Engineer Academy:** Updated curriculum revised leadership and tactics modules; ongoing evaluation cycles established.
- **Captain Academy:** Restructured content emphasis on fire dynamics, building construction and tactical decision-making.
- **Battalion Chief Academy:** Streamlined program length and identified need for a post-graduation task manual to support continued development.

**Volunteer and Career Personnel Training Parity:** Efforts continued to align training standards between volunteer and career firefighters. In 2025 a volunteer firefighter completed the engineer academy for the first time. Planning is now in place to launch a dedicated Volunteer Recruit School in 2026 which will mirror the career training curriculum to ensure consistency across the workforce.



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## SAFETY, COMPLIANCE & PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Development of a Site Safety Standard Operating Guideline (SOG) to enhance drill ground safety and continue progress toward full compliance with NFPA 1403 live fire training standards.

- Implementation of standardized command sheets and documentation for live fire evolutions
- Development of a revised engineer promotional process to expand advancement opportunities
- Expansion of driver/operator training curriculum, including a 40-hour aerial operator course, with full implementation planned for 2026.

## TRAINING RESOURCES & CAPACITY

The Training Division is staffed by a training coordinator and six career-training officers. It is also supported by qualified adjunct instructors from shift personnel and volunteers. While this model proved operational flexibility, the reliance on adjunct instructors has created budgetary strain. Establishing a dedicated training overtime budget will improve financial transparency and reduce impact on suppression overtime resources.

## 2025 TRAINING HIGHLIGHTS

- **Blue Card Train the Trainer Program:** Hosted for the first time in the Midlands, this program strengthened incident command training across CRFD and its regional partners. Our department certified two new instructors along with the Irmo Fire District, Fort Jackson Fire Department and the West Columbia Fire Department. Multiple agencies participated enhancing interoperability and operational consistency.
- **Regional Collaboration:** Provided evaluators for Lexington County Fire Service's promotional process strengthening interdepartmental relationships and aligning operational standards across jurisdictions.
- **"Reindeer Games" Training Exercise:** In December of 2025, CRFD 2nd Shift conducted a multi-day shift-wide event focused on engine, ladder, rescue, driver/operator and command level skills. The exercise promoted skill development through structured, scenario-based competition.

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## OPERATIONS DIVISION: SPECIAL OPERATIONS

CRFD's Special Operations Division provides specialized technical rescue and hazardous materials response capabilities for the City of Columbia and Richland County. In 2025, the division focused on enhancing operational readiness, mitigating risk and strengthening interagency coordination.

Through structured training and competency-based evaluation, personnel maintained proficiency in high-risk, low-frequency incidents, including:

- Structural collapse rescues
- Confined space rescues
- Trench rescues
- Hazardous material responses

Investments in advanced equipment and detection systems improved responder safety, situational awareness and decision-making during complex incidents.

### OPERATIONAL READINESS & INTERAGENCY COORDINATION

Readiness was validated through full-scale exercises and after-action reviews focused on:

- Command integration
- Communication effectiveness
- Resource management
- Technical performance

Findings from these evaluations were incorporated into updated training plans and standard operating guidelines. This helped reinforce a continuous improvement model.

CRFD Special Operations personnel routinely operate within unified command environments. In 2025, notable multi-agency responses included:

- **Trench Rescue (February 17, 2025):** Coordinated response with the Newberry County Fire Service and Lexington County Fire Service
- **Hazardous Materials Incident (October 2, 2025):** Joint response with Cayce Fire Department and Lexington County Hazardous Materials Team

These operations demonstrated strong interoperability, coordinated planning and adherence to established safety and operational standards.



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**Special Operations Training Initiatives**

- Delivery of technical rescue and hazardous materials training courses
- Full-scale operational readiness exercises for regional Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) and Chemical Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD)/Hazmat Teams
- Annual refresher training in specialized disciplines, including confined space rescue
- Joint training evolutions with local and regional partner agencies

Through continued investment in training, evaluation and regional collaboration, the Columbia-Richland Fire Department remains committed to delivering safe, effective and professional emergency services while advancing organizational excellence and community protection.

**Equipment Purchases**

## Regional Assets – Midlands Regional Teams

**USAR – SCTF-5**

- Replacement of all hand tools and specialized breaking/cutting tools cache for structural collapse and all rope equipment on Collapse 5 (clutch bags, Azteks, Capto's, gear bags, and rope bags)
- Two double-stack boat trailers for deployment. Each trailer is equipped with:
    - Aluminum John Boats with motor
    - ASAP 18 tent for shelter
    - Hoist kit
    - Spare tire and bearings upgrade kits
    - Tie downs
    - Light package
    - 30 gallon fuel pack
    - 30 gallon fresh water pack
- Two solar inflatable boats with motors for deployments (boats will go on the double stack trailers)
- Dry suits
- Wet suits
- PFDs
- Water rescue helmets
- Water rescue boots
- Class III access harnesses



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**WMD/HAZMAT - SCHM-5**

- 908 Devices XplorIR chemical detection system
- FLIR radiation detection equipment
- Multi-threat suits
- Level A and Level C HazMat ensembles
- Calibration gases
- Chemical detection papers
- Two lithium-ion battery detection cases

**City/County Investments**

- Solar inflatable rescue boat with jet power motor
- Two (2) Kubota utility terrain vehicles (UTVs)
- Rope clutch bags for technical rescue operations
- Special Response Team (SRT) pickup vehicle
- UTV/ wrap/ lights
- County rope bags
- Sensit combustible gas meters
- HazMat 300 Splash suits



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## 2025 Special Ops Training

## Flammable Liquid and Gas Training Alpek

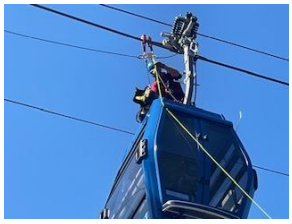



## Rescue Scenarios at American Spiral Weld





## Gondola Training



## SCTF-5 USAR Training







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## SCTF-5 USAR Operational Readiness Exercise







## WMD/HazMat Training

## SCHM-5 Operational Readiness Exercise






## HAZMAT Joint Training with Cayce Fire Department and Lexington County HazMat







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## Mutual Aid Response to Neighboring Counties

## Trench Rescue with Newberry and Lexington County





## HazMat Response with Cayce Fire Department and Lexington County HazMat

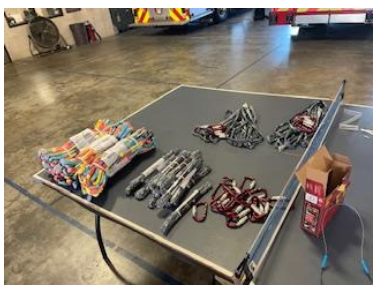




## Special Operations Equipment Purchases

## Rope Equipment for County Rescues and Ladder 14







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## New SRT and Solar Boat Purchase with City Funds





## Midlands USAR Regional Team Purchases – SCTF-5





## Midlands WMD/HAZMAT Regional Team Purchases -- SCHM-5






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