



ANNUAL REPORT 2021

Peters Township Fire Department

Michael R. McLaughlin Jr., Chief

David M. Caputo, Deputy Chief

William N. Gaughan, Assistant Chief



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FROM THE CHIEF

I am pleased to present this annual report on behalf of the dedicated men and women that make up the Peters Township Fire Department. With 1,583 emergency responses, 2021 was the busiest year in our 84-year history. Increase in services are an expected result of growth in the community and one that we account for in our plans for future emergency response.

In an ongoing effort to increase fire coverage to meet the township's growth, the Fire Station 3 project pressed forward with the Township hiring EPM Architecture to design the facility. This multi-year project began in 2019 and pending council's approval will continue with construction of the station this year.

We were proud to play a part in the vaccination effort against CoVid-19 through partnerships with Washington Health and Hill Top Pharmacy. Clinics were made available in Township facilities providing easy access for residents to be vaccinated. During these efforts, the department was front and center, offering planning, logistics, and even operations as many of our certified medical providers administered vaccines.

As the year continued, we were excited to return in-person programs like the Open House and public education. Other notable accomplishments throughout the year included our participation in a pilot program from the National Fire Protection Association in Community Risk Reduction, launching a new department website, recertifying our Advanced Life Support medical license, and replacing the mansard on fire station 1.

"These advancements would not be possible without the amazing support we receive from Township Administration, Council, and most importantly, the support of our community residents."



Michael R. McLaughlin Jr.
Fire Chief & Emergency Management Coordinator



ABOUT US



Who We Are

Our team is made up of over 50 personnel, comprised of both career and volunteer firefighters, professionally trained in fire, rescue, emergency medicine, and hazardous materials response.

What We Do

Our firefighters provide an “all-hazard” response to emergency incidents in Peters Township and surrounding communities. The organization places an emphasis on preventing emergencies before they occur via Community Risk Reduction. These efforts include fire inspections & code enforcement, fire & life safety education, and targeted risk reduction activities. As part of community outreach, personnel participate in community events and provide services such as car seat installations. The department is also responsible for the emergency management functions of Peters Township.



How We Do It

Our department operates out of two fire stations, one of which is staffed 24/7/365 with an intent to staff a third station by 2023. This guaranteed staffing ensures an immediate response as soon as a 911 call is received. These stations house ten fire apparatus including 3 engines, 1 rescue/engine, a 109' aerial ladder truck, and specialized squads, as well as a boat and UTV.



2021 HIGHLIGHTS

Despite the ongoing impacts of the pandemic, our organization persisted, answering a record number of calls, and bringing back many programs that our community enjoys and expects.

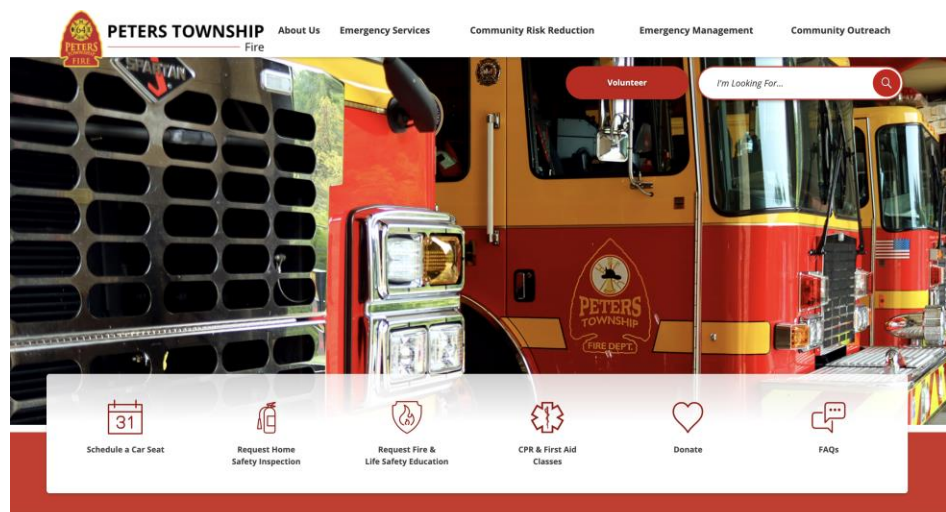
Station 1 Mansard Replacement

As part of a capital improvement plan, the mansard at station 64-1 was replaced. Station #1 on East McMurray Road was originally built in 1972 and received an addition in 1998. Much of the mansard was original to the building from 1972 and showed signs of significant deterioration. The new aluminum mansard provides extra protection from moisture and rust, and a high-performance finish will allow the vibrant new mansard to last for decades. Finally, new LED soffit lighting replaced in the mansard that will aid safety and reduce operating costs.



Website Launch

The fire department was the gracious recipient of a new website, provided as part of a package purchased by Peters Township. Fire department personnel worked alongside a township website development team in training, designing, and launching the new website. While we continue to buildout some areas of the website, major components are live such as sections for news and events, electronic sign-ups for CPR/AED courses, home inspections, and more! We look forward to utilizing additional advanced features in the months to come.



Station #3 Design

In 2020, Peters Township purchased land on Bebout Road toward Venetia Road with the intent to build a third fire station. Fire Department data identifies a critical need in the Venetia District for a staffed fire station to reduce response times for crucial incidents like medical emergencies and structure fires.

Peters Township Fire Department Chief Officers have spent the year working with township officials and EPM Architecture to design a station that fits the needs of the township and department at the most reasonable cost to our community. As 2022 begins, the township is expected to begin the prequalification of bidders for the construction of the station.



Pending final approval from township council, it is our hope that the construction of this station will be completed by the end of 2022 and staffing will begin in late 2022 and early 2023. This staffing will drastically increase the public safety of our residents in Venetia and provide the same standard of response and care that those living closer to our staffed station in McMurray expect and receive.

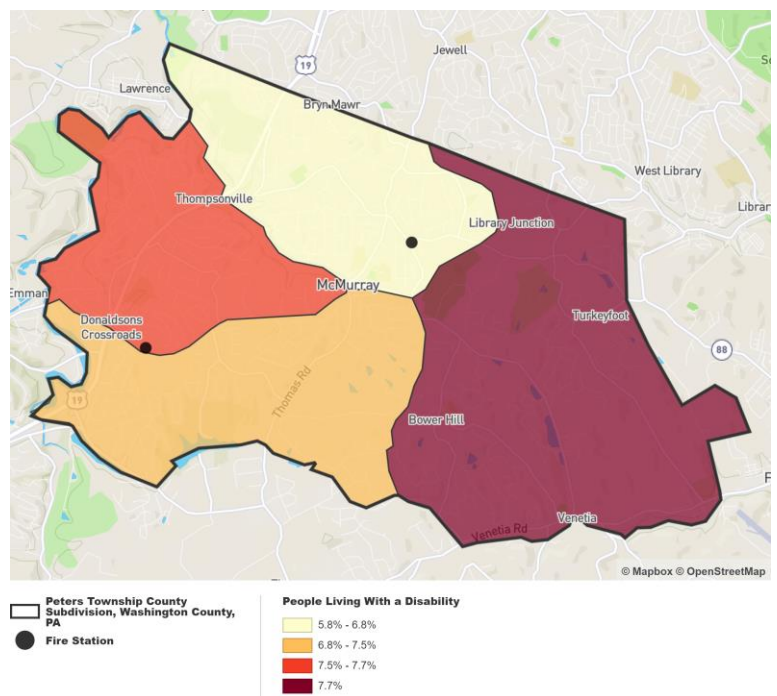
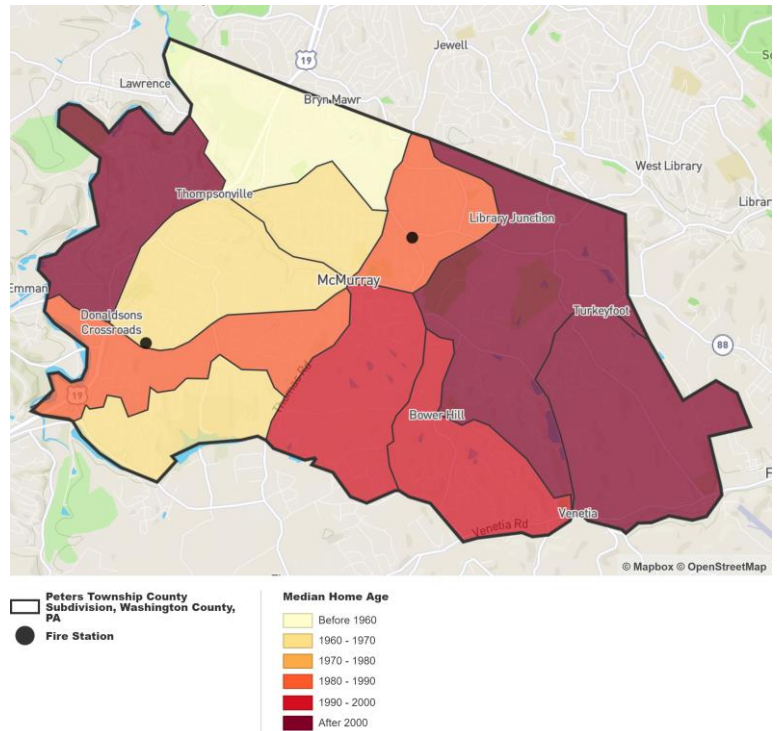


NFPA Community Risk Reduction Pilot

The Peters Township Department was chosen as one of just 200 fire departments throughout the country to participate in a pilot program for the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). The program focused on community risk reduction and provided departments with a tool that analyzed department data in conjunction with extensive public data about hosing types, ages, residents with disabilities, call volume etc.

Our organization had access to this information for approximately 12-months and was able to provide feedback about the product to the NFPA. In return, we made use of cutting-edge technology that automatically took and interpreted data, identifying significant risks and problem areas within our community. While many of these risks were already known, it provided us with quantifiable data, that assist in delivering these concerns to the general public.

The data obtained from this tool was used in the discussions surrounding the necessity of an additional fire station that is staffed in the Venetia district. The images to the right depict specific problem areas that pose increased danger during fires. The top image depicts the age of homes - newer homes burn faster during fires, resulting in less time to escape. The lower picture shows households with disabilities. Sadly, those with some type of disability are statistically more likely to die in a fire.



PA Department of Health Recertification

PTFD is one of few fire departments in the state licensed as an advanced life support (ALS) Quick Response Service (QRS). What does that mean? We have three fire apparatus that are licensed through the state department of health to carry advanced medications and tools like those carried on an ambulance. Paramedics and EMTs that work or volunteer for PTFD are therefore able to provide critical life-saving treatment prior-to or in conjunction-with an ambulance.



Ambulances are often out-of-service while transporting patients to the hospital. Because of this, response times for EMS crews can be delayed if they're out of the area. Thankfully, Peters Fire crews are within township boundaries unless assisting a neighboring community and can provide a rapid response, render medical aid, and transfer care to an ambulance upon their arrival. For serious medical emergencies, a fire department paramedic will often ride with the ambulance to the emergency room to assist the EMS Crew.

Cardiac Monitors, AEDS, & AutoPulse

Early in 2021, PTFD placed (3) Zoll cardiac monitors, (16) AEDs, and (3) AutoPulse CPR Devices in service. This equipment was purchased via government funded grants, saving the township hundreds of thousands of dollars. The cardiac monitors offer several tools to our Paramedics, but most importantly they allow us to perform EKGs, manually defibrillate patients if needed, and identify any abnormalities with heart rhythms. These monitors are placed on our ALS apparatus as mentioned above.

The AEDs were placed in service on township fire apparatus, police vehicles, and in municipally owned buildings. Peters Township firefighters perform monthly testing and inspections on these devices.

Finally, the AutoPulse Automatic CPR devices were placed in service on our ALS certified apparatus. These devices are clinically proven to increase the chance of survival during a cardiac arrest when applied. They ensure continuous CPR on a patient even while extricating them from a home or transporting them to the ambulance. This allows our paramedics and EMTs to focus on other medical concerns such as intubation, IVs, and the administration of medications.



To the right, Captain Chris Barton reviews equipment on a Zoll Cardiac Monitor. Below, employees from Zoll train Peters Firefighters on the AutoPulse Device as Kelsey Sylvester, the Township's Media Specialist films the training.



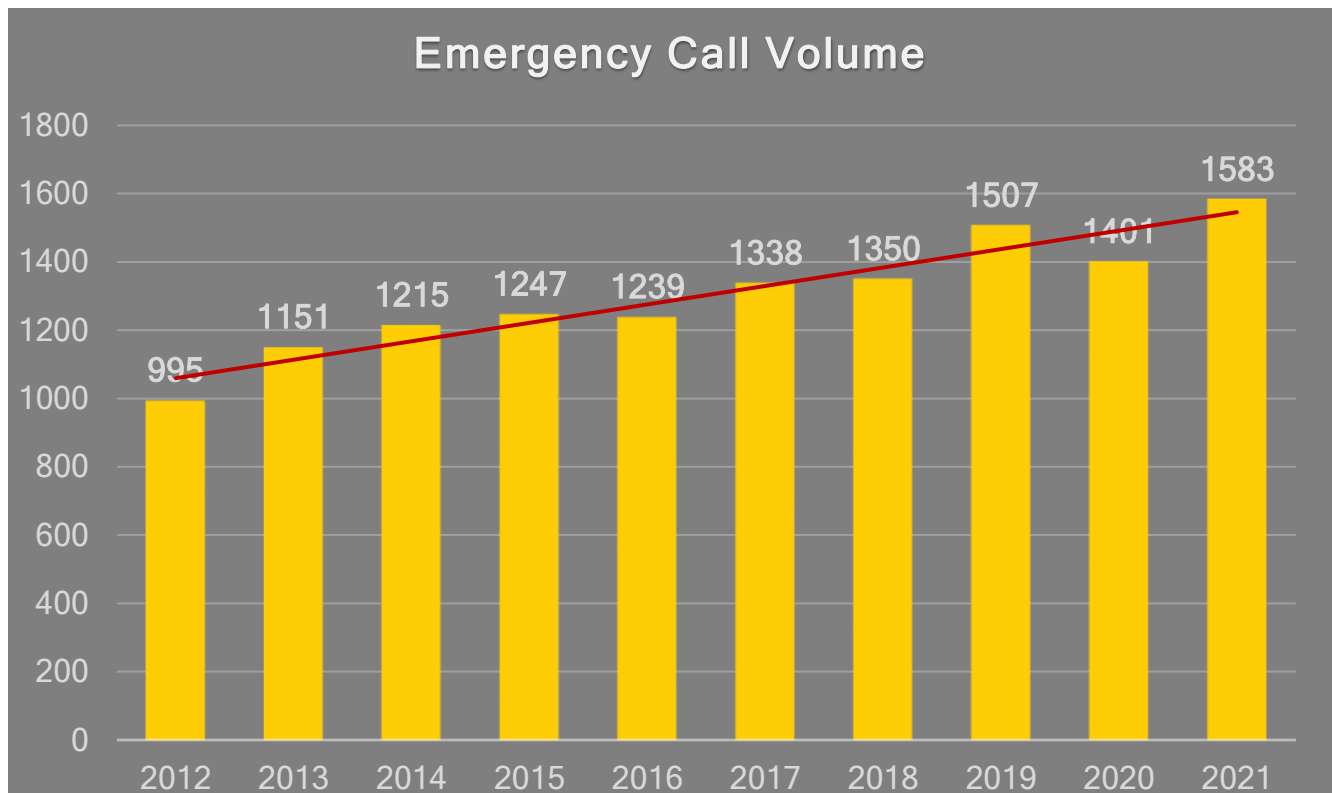
EMERGENCY RESPONSE

The Peters Township Fire Department's primary purpose is to respond to various emergencies throughout our township and surrounding communities in order to reduce and eliminate hazards to people, property, and the environment. Peters Fire personnel are trained and equipped to respond to a wide range of emergency incidents that include fire, rescue, and emergency medical. Additionally, the department responds to a wide range of public service calls such as utility and water emergencies. Over the past five years, PTFD has seen a steady rise in emergency incidents.

Call Volume

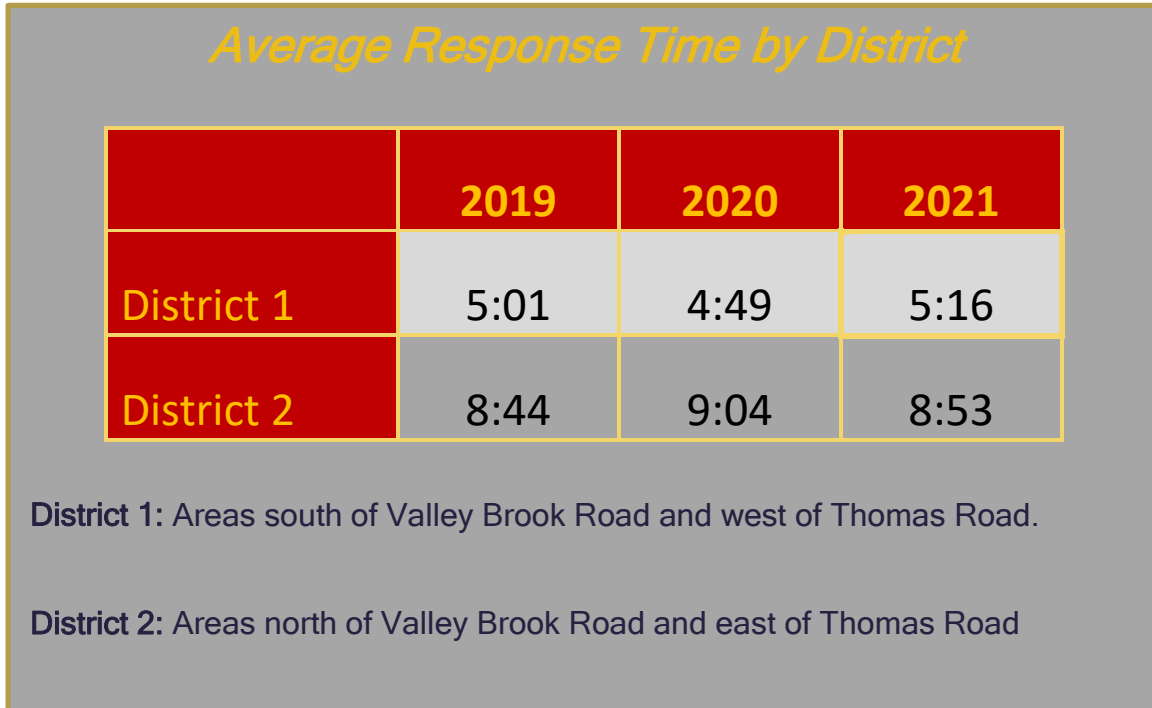
As noted by the chart below, we continue to see a steady rise in emergency call volume over the past 10-years. Our organization averages an increase of **5% per year** and saw nearly a **60% increase** in call volume over this ten-year period.

Our career and volunteer staff currently meet the challenge of adequately responding to this sizeable call volume while still providing an extensive list of non-emergency services. However, it is evident based on the previous 20-years of emergency call data as well as the continued growth of the township in both residential homes and commercial occupancies, that we will need to increase staffing in order to meet the inevitable rise service demand.

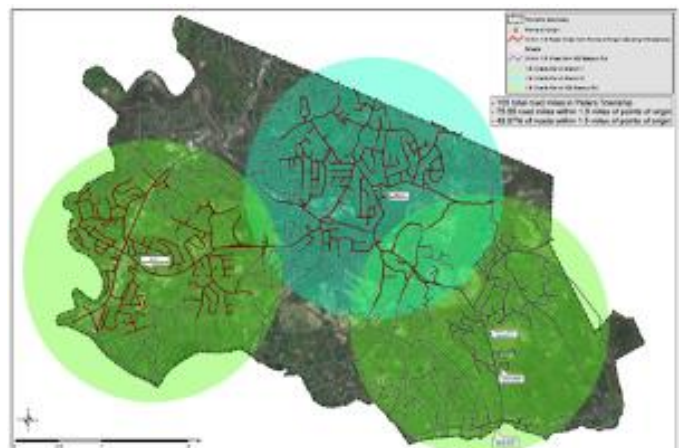
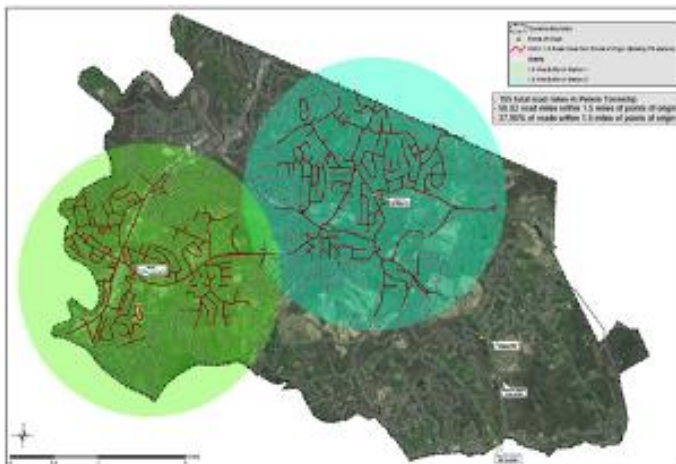


Response Times

With rapid response and mitigation of emergencies at the forefront of our mission, the accurate tracking and evaluation of data such as response times is crucial to our organization.



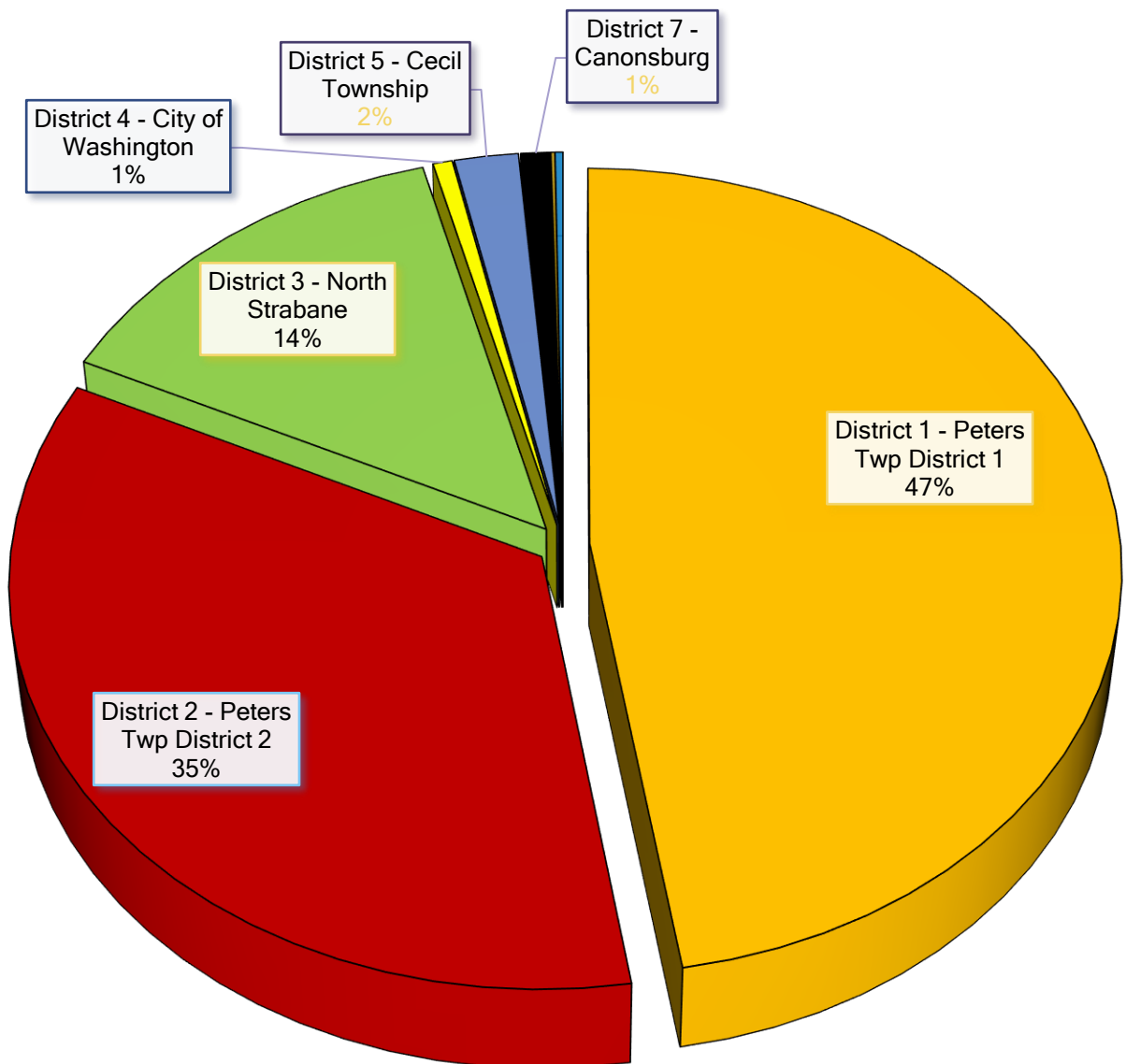
As indicated above, response times for district 1 increase from the previous year. Much of this is due to the increase in traffic during 2021 as COVID restrictions were reduced. In district 2, we were able to decrease our response times slightly from 2020, however we expect this number to decrease substantially with the addition of Station #3 in the Venetia District. The picture to the left below depicts our current coverage per national standards of our township with two fire stations; the picture to its right shows the increase in coverage with station 3.



Calls by District

Of the 1,583 calls for emergency assistance received by the Peters Township Fire Department, 1,300 or 82% were within our township. The remaining 18% were in surrounding communities for mutual aid. Mutual aid is a crucial component of fire & emergency services. Working structure fires, significant vehicle accidents, and complicated rescue scenarios often require more resources than a single department can provide in a short period of time. Therefore, we call our neighboring agencies for help and in turn, we do the same for them. Below you will see our call breakdown per area.

Peters Township & North Strabane have a long-term automatic aid agreement stating that our departments will respond mutually for fire alarm activations, confirmed structure fires, and accidents with entrapment.



Incident Types

The Peters Township Fire Department responds to a wide range of emergency calls. The chart below provides a two-year comparison of incident type and frequency per year.

This information is valuable to us for several reasons, one of which is steering the focus our public fire and life safety education programs in order to reduce community risk.

This data is evaluated on a regular basis to monitor for trends. As trends are observed, further research is performed to look for common factors such as neighborhood and

age group. Based on the results, we can target education and community outreach to specific age groups, neighborhoods, or business types in an effort to reduce the frequency of a given emergency and ultimately increase public safety.

Incident Type	2019	2020	2021
Structure Fire	30	16	13
Structure Alarm	376	335	410
North Strabane	232	206	212
Mutual Aid	59	75	61
Rescue	15	24	24
Vehicle Accident - No Entrapment	82	83	92
Hazardous Condition	237	194	192
Rescue - Mutual/Auto Aid	7	7	11
Vehicle Fire	6	7	4
Brush Fire	12	12	9
Other Fire	7	5	5
Medical	296	271	328
Weather Related	2	23	60
Miscellaneous	146	143	162
Total	1507	1401	1583

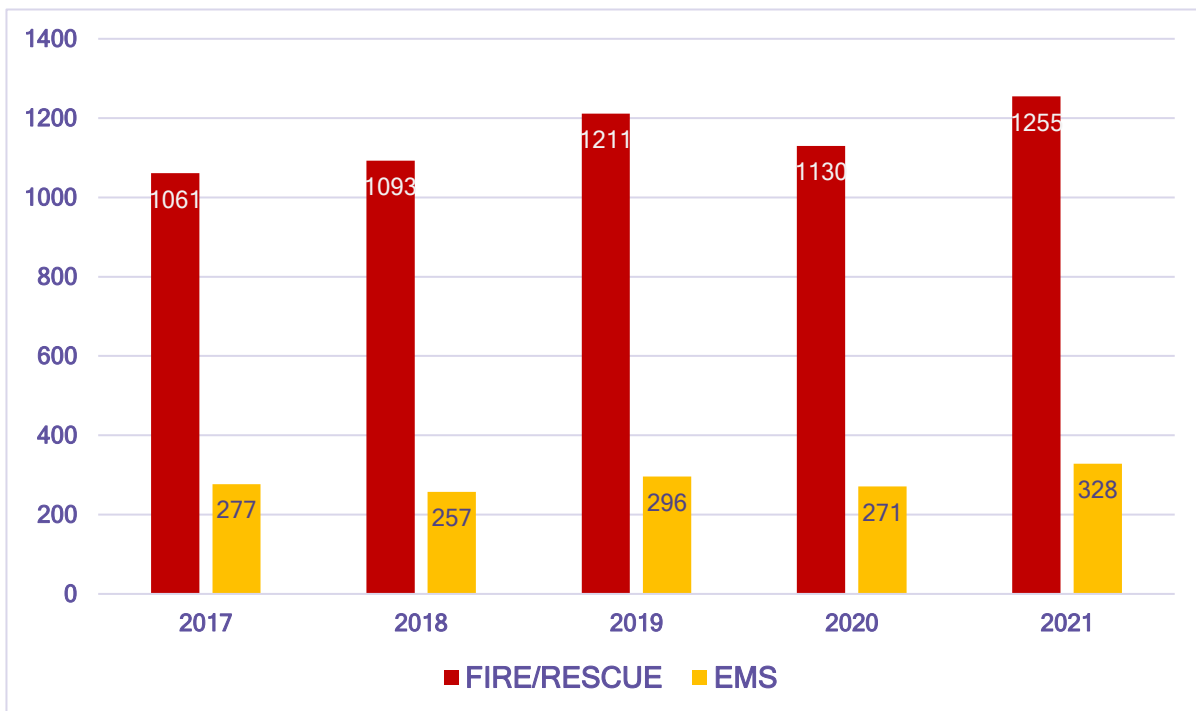


Emergency Medical Response

The Peters Township Fire Department is one of few fire departments in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania that is certified under the Department of Health as an Advanced Life Support Quick Response Service (QRS). A QRS certification allows the department to respond to emergency medical calls when an ambulance has a delayed response or there is a high priority call such as an unconscious patient. PTFD has three fire apparatus certified as Advanced Life Support QRS vehicles, meaning they carry all the equipment that an ambulance has, apart from being able to transport a patient. This equipment allows our personnel who are cross-trained in both fire and EMS as EMTs and Paramedics to administer life-saving medications and interventions prior to the arrival of an ambulance. These capabilities coupled with our strong relationship with Peters Township Police and EMS cultivates a team approach when caring for critically ill and injured patients and contributes to positive patient outcomes.



Fire/Rescue vs. EMS Calls (5 year)



Emergency Management

Under the direction of Peters Township Fire Chief and Emergency Management Coordinator Mike McLaughlin Jr., PTFD performs the Emergency Management functions for Peters Township.

Emergency management is the managerial function charged with creating the framework within which communities reduce vulnerability to hazards and cope with disasters. Emergency management seeks to promote safer, less vulnerable communities with the capacity to cope with both man-made and natural hazards and disasters.



Covid-19 Response

Since the start of the Pandemic, Peters Township Emergency Management has coordinated the township's response. The department assisted third-party entities with the logistics and operations with vaccination clinics. Fire Chief & Emergency manager McLaughlin spent countless hours after the vaccines were introduced to ensure that vaccinations were accessible and convenient for Peters Township residents interested in receiving them. This was made possible through partnerships with the Washington Health System and Hilltop Pharmacy, among others. Pictured right are Peters Firefighters inoculating Peters School District employees.



Emergency Operations Center (EOC)

A Township-wide emergency EOC is located at Station 64-1 on East McMurray Road. The EOC is essential to the continuum of emergency services during natural and man-made disasters. It provides a unified location for the management and command of incidents and depending on the type and size of incident, includes representatives from fire, police, EMS, emergency management, public works, and township officials.



Public Information

Another function of Emergency Management is Public Information. Our department believes in prompt and transparent notification to public of emergency incidents, including impending weather, utility emergencies and more. This information is provided via social media (FaceBook, Twitter, Instagram) using graphics and videos, as well as other forms such as our cable TV station, website notifications, and News Media when appropriate. Below are a few example notifications.

SUNDAY, MARCH 14

BURNING ADVISORY

Please avoid burning due to increased hazards today.



Due to low humidity, dry brush, and gusty wind, the risk for brush fires is elevated today.

PETERS TOWNSHIP EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

URGENT WEATHER INFORMATION
August 31, 2021

2-4" of Additional Rainfall Expected

Please assist Peters Township Emergency Crews in the following ways:

- Avoid flooded roadways and other areas. Cars and pedestrians can quickly be overcome by rapidly moving waters.
- Avoid downed power lines as they can re-energize at any time.
- Dial 911 for any type of assistance, including reporting damage to private or public property, including roadways.

There is potential for severe flooding due to already saturated ground.

Dial 911 for Assistance!

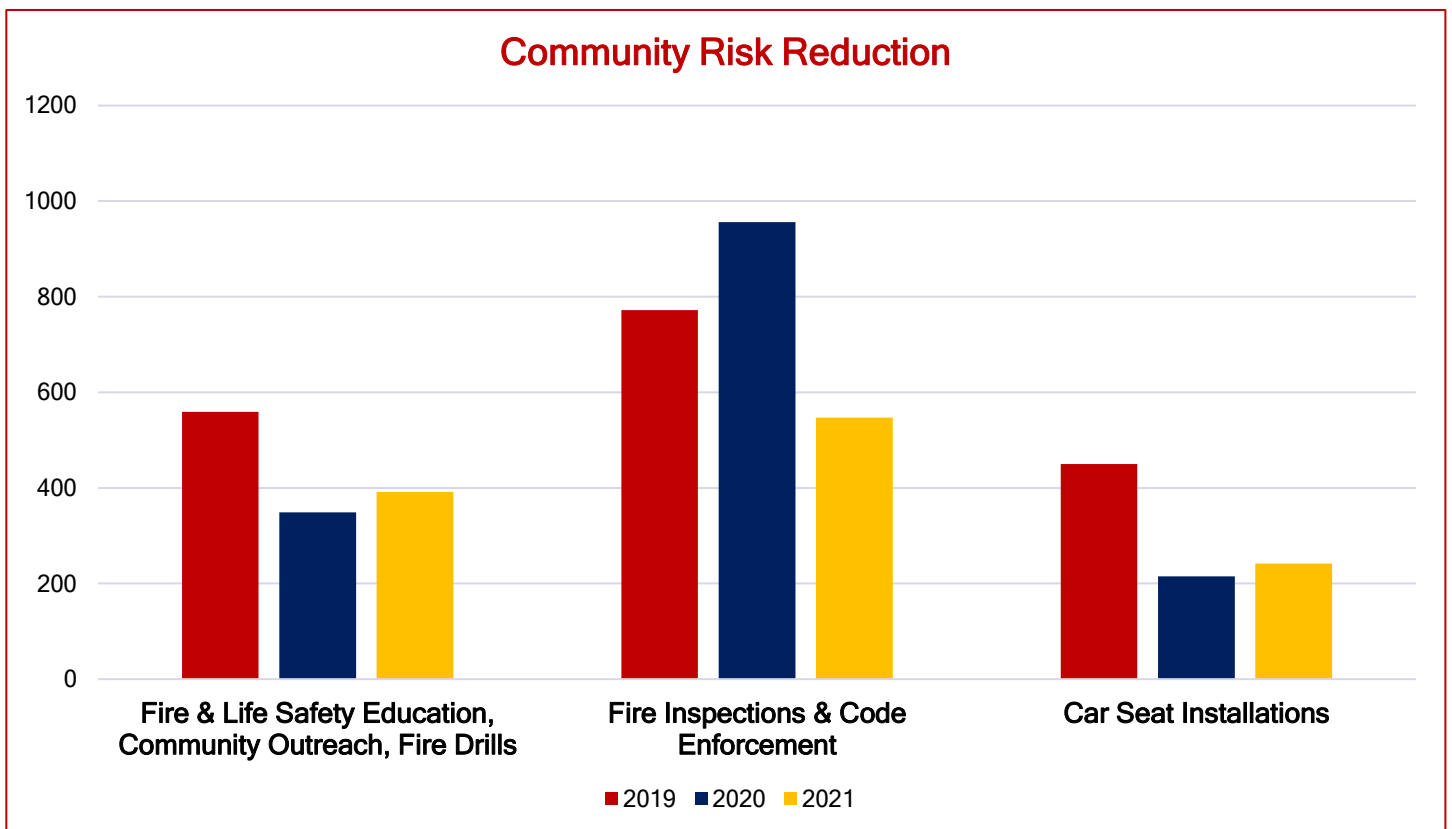


COMMUNITY RISK REDUCTION

The Peters Township Fire Department prides itself on the aggressive and proactive approach taken on the prevention of emergencies before they happen through Community Risk Reduction. This is accomplished through a multitude of services including residential and commercial inspections and safety consultations, public fire & life safety education, and a strong presence within the community. The following pages will review Community Risk Reduction and other areas of community outreach and public relations. The below chart highlights these non-emergency services.

In 2021, we were able to reintroduce several popular programs including CPR & first aid classes, the in-person Open House, in-person car seats and more.

As we review the chart below, there is a noticeable decrease in Fire Inspections due to the completion of the new Peters Township High School and The Waters senior living facility. These two projects required multiple interactions by the fire inspector each week and were closed out in early 2021.



Fire Prevention Programs

Fire Inspections & Code Enforcement

Under the direction of the Fire Chief, PTFD assigns one firefighter as the inspector. This firefighter works closely with the Peters Township Planning Department to ensure all codes are strictly adhered to. This is accomplished not only through plan reviews prior to construction, but throughout the building process, and with final testing and inspection once the building is complete. Duty crews also assist in routine annual inspections of occupancies to ensure all fire and life safety standards are continuously being met.



Fire Drills

On a monthly basis, all personal care facilities, childcare centers, preschools, and educational institutions must undergo a supervised fire drill. PTFD crews conduct these drills and test both occupants and staff on their reaction to a fire alarm activation. Additionally, these drills allow us to test the alarm systems and the companies who monitor them to ensure that they are working properly and will notify us quickly in case of a fire or emergency.

Residential Fire & Life Safety Programs

Peters Firefighters often conduct consultations in residential homes as well. Crews work with the homeowners to identify hazards within the home and mitigate them as soon as possible. Topics discussed include smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, fire extinguishers, what to do in the event of a fire, trip hazards, etc. Residents can schedule these inspections by calling the fire department.



Fire & Life Safety Education

Toddler – Young Adult

Peters Township Fire Department is very active in the many schools and early childhood education/daycare programs within the community. In addition to the monthly fire drills, all students receive fire prevention lessons geared at familiarizing them with firefighters and their gear, discouraging the use of matches or heating materials, and what to do in the event of a fire. We frequently see this training put in action during actual emergencies.



Adult – Senior Citizen

PTFD offers a number of opportunities for adults to receive fire education throughout the year. In addition to the Citizen's Fire Academy, PTFD offers educational opportunities to various community groups, social clubs, and housing communities. Programs are also offered for senior citizens in semi-assisted living facilities.



Staff Training

Our personnel have a long history of training business and non-profit staffs throughout the community. These professions range from healthcare and education to manufacturing and service industry. These programs reach hundreds of people that live or work in Peters Township.

CPR & First Aid

We were thrilled to reintroduce CPR & First Aid classes to laypeople and healthcare providers. We have a long-standing belief that each resident we educate about CPR improves the safety of all residents within our community. PTFD Staff was able to provide 2+ classes per month in the second half of 2021 and will continue into 2022. Additionally, we introduced a new online registration for these platforms that was well-perceived by attendees and PTFD staff alike.



Community Outreach

Without our community, we wouldn't be here! Our firefighters take an active role in our community and truly engage with residents any time they have the opportunity. The more our residents are familiar with our personnel, the safer our community is. We participate in a number of events each year to maintain and continue building our relationship with our community members, and we are always open to new opportunities!



We were thrilled to welcome back community outreach opportunities in 2021, and did so with the safety of our crews and our community in mind!



TRAINING

Being prepared and trained for the increasingly wide range of calls we respond to is a top priority of the Peters Township Fire Department.

In 2021, Peters Fire personnel spent over 4,800 hours training on a multitude of topics. These classes include department-wide weekly trainings, classes at the national, state, and county fire academies, and attendance at regional and national educational conferences.

Additionally, this year our personnel made significant progress receiving Pro-Board certifications and other benchmarked certifications through the Department of Health for Emergency Medicine. On a daily basis, our crews review training topics like street locations, building construction, and apparatus placement.



Above, firefighters perform training on vehicle fires. Below, our crews trained on forcible entry techniques and reviewed water rescue equipment



VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY

The Peters Township Fire Department was built by a group of community volunteers, and they remain a strong and necessary force within our organization today.

In a combination fire department comprised of both career and volunteer firefighters, mutual respect and camaraderie is essential for the greater success of the organization, and we are thankful to have that here at Peters Township Fire Department.

Both career and volunteer staff spend time each year recruiting new volunteer firefighters, onboarding them with our organization, and training them to perform in emergency situations.



Volunteer Duty Program (VDP)

The VDP was originally established in 2009 as a way for volunteer firefighters to work side-by-side with career firefighters on duty. Through this program, firefighters sign up for a pre-scheduled time block in which they will staff the station, participate in training, and other operational duties. Not only does this program increase personnel in-station, but it further strengthens the already steady relationship between crews. In 2020, Chief Officers expanded this program to include (2) hour shifts, as well as over night shifts in order to increase our manpower in station.

Total VDP Shifts & Hours Covered

YEAR	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
SHIFT	681	645	707	711	797
HOURS	2724	2724	2828	2715	2990

2022 OBJECTIVES

Spec & Build New Pumper

As part of the township's capital improvement budget, there is money allocated to replace an aging fire pumper as part of a regularly scheduled replacement plan. Department Leadership will work to solicit bids, award a contract, and build the apparatus in 2022. We are optimistic to take delivery of a unit late in 2022.

Fire Station #3

Work will continue in 2022 to pre-qualify general contractors for the construction of Station #3. Once a list of qualified bidders has been established, this project will be put out for bid, pending council approval. Council would then vote to award a contract based on bid results. Our hope is for this project to be completed by end of year.

Modify Deployment Plans to Account for New Station

With the addition of a third fire station comes significant planning. Currently, we operate with (1) staffed fire station and (1) home response station. As such, our township is divided into two districts. The addition of the third station will involve review of current and future staffing models, distribution of apparatus and equipment and review and editing of our districts and dispatch procedures.

Plan & Implement Staffing Changes to Fit New Deployment Model

With the intent to staff a second station, our admin team will review potential staffing models and prepare proposals for township leadership and council. Our goal is to confirm a staffing model, implementation plan, and begin the process by end of year.

Mass Casualty Drill

Every community stands the risk of a mass casualty incident (MCI), whether due to a man-made act of domestic terror, or a natural disaster such as flooding. Many agencies must work together in these incidents, often spanning multiple counties. Planning and practicing for these events prior to their occurrence results in the best possible outcomes for our community.

THANK YOU

We look forward to serving you in 2022! We appreciate the unmatched support we receive from our residents and business owners, township leadership, and Peters Township Council.

Additionally, we are grateful to work with great teams at the Peters Township Police, Public Works, Planning, Library, Recreation, Cable Television, and Zoning Departments!

Providing this level of service that has become our standard would not be possible without our dedicated and professional career and volunteer firefighters!

Peters Township Firefighters are pictured below after defeating the police department in the annual softball game!

