

2023 ANNUAL REPORT

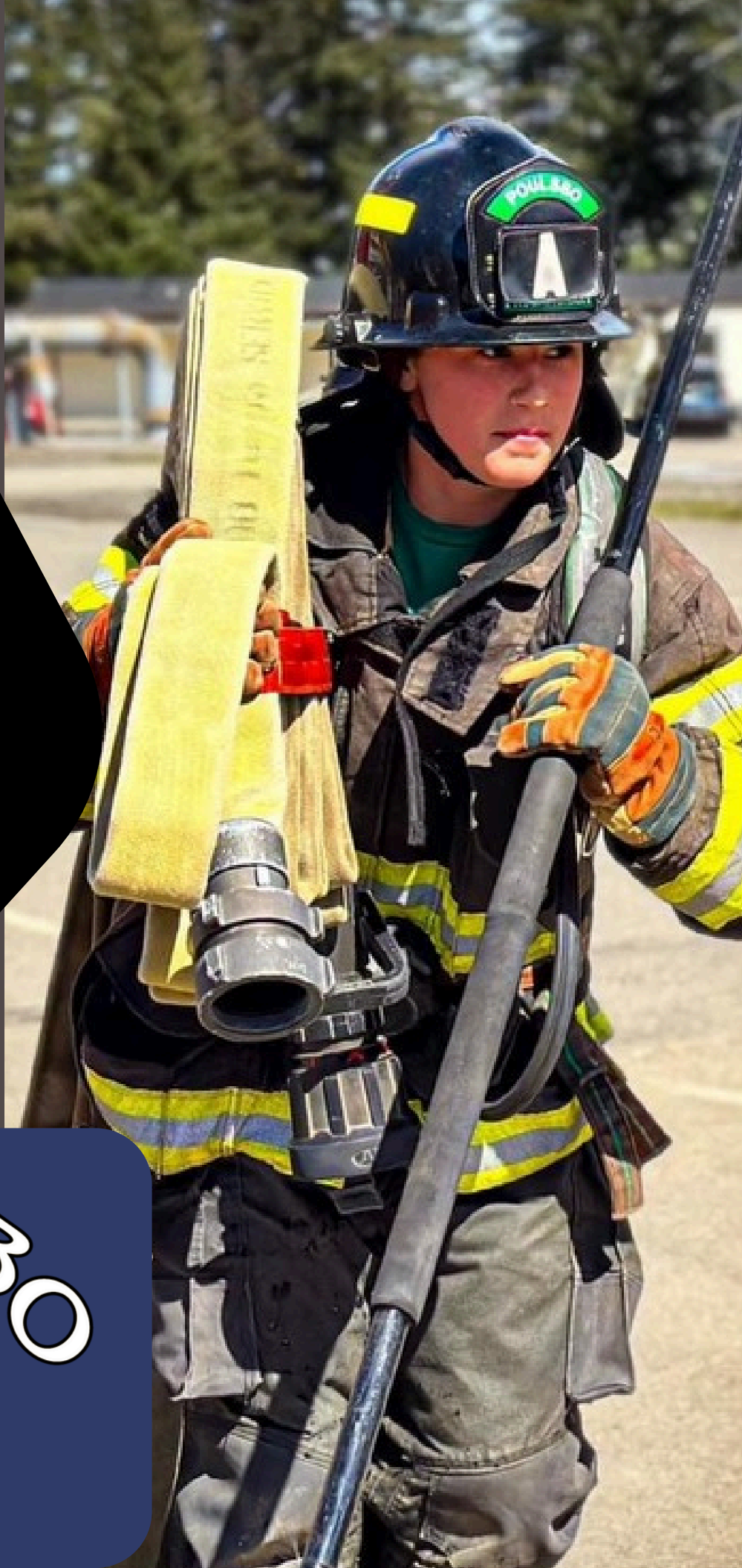




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Cover photo: Probationary firefighter, Lauren Tracy, participates in a drill at the Kitsap County Training Consortium.



FIRE CHIEF REPORT

'Them' is the simple word that defines the culture of the Poulsbo Fire Department and serves as our official motto. It means that every action is to be taken with the mindset of serving those who rely upon us for their safety and well-being. Since 1936, the Poulsbo Fire Department has been protecting our community, putting the safety and well-being of others first and foremost. We are proud to carry on that tradition and honor the trust our community has in us to serve them.

The department's prevention programs showed significant benefits for the community in 2023. Concerning Fire Prevention, the department's Deputy Fire Marshal, Lt. Tom Harvey, completed 571 fire and life safety inspections in commercial occupancies. For 2023, there were no substantial working fires in commercial occupancies that had a fire and life safety inspection completed within the previous three years. Concerning emergency medical services (EMS) prevention, the department's Community Assistance Referral and Education Services (CARES) team continued their success in connecting the most vulnerable members of our community with the resources needed to prevent future medical crises. For community members making multiple 911 calls for help, and/or accessing the emergency department at Saint Michael Medical Center, there was a 69% reduction in 911 calls and 65% reduction in emergency department visits over a 6-month period following intervention by the CARES team. The reduction in use of the EMS system and emergency department is a significant benefit for the entire community, but more importantly prevents medical emergencies that can have tragic outcomes for the individual. The effectiveness of these prevention programs contributed to a reduction of emergency incidents, estimated at 113 calls.

With the approval of the fire levy renewal in 2022, the department was able to move forward with several capital projects necessary to sustain emergency response service levels into the future. Most significantly, the department selected a contractor for the construction of a new fire station, Station 76, on Viking Way, utilizing the design-build process, with construction planned to start in mid-2024, and the station to be staffed and response-ready at the beginning of 2025. The department also completed the specifications and ordered a quint-style ladder truck, which has the same capabilities as our current fire engines, with the addition of a 75' aerial ladder. The department expects to receive delivery of the ladder truck in 2026. The new station and ladder truck are key components of the department's [strategic plan](#) to keep pace with our growing community.

More importantly, the 2022 fire levy renewal provided the funding for the department to begin hiring and training additional firefighter/EMTs and firefighter/paramedics, providing the additional emergency response concurrent with community growth. The addition of personnel in 2023 will help the department meet the goal of increasing the 24-hour emergency response staffing from nine (9) personnel to eleven (11) by 2025, allowing for the 24/7 staffing of the new station on Viking Avenue.

Despite this focus on meeting the future needs of the growing community, our emergency response crews remain committed to serving the needs of the community today. On a daily basis, our emergency response crews train for and provide life-saving emergency responses to fires, rescues, and emergency medical calls, averaging over 12 emergency responses per day. Each one of the 4,368 emergency incidents is important to us; it is a moment in which a community member is relying upon us for their safety and well-being. We take that responsibility seriously and will continue to strive to earn and maintain the community's trust.



Jim Gillard

FIRE CHIEF JIM GILLARD



OUR MOTTO: "THEM"

Every action is to be done with the mindset of serving those that rely upon us for their safety and well-being. It is about those we serve, those we serve with, and those who allow us to serve.



OUR MISSION

The mission of the Poulsbo Fire Department is to protect and enhance the safety and well-being of our community.

OUR VISION

Our vision is to build upon the community's trust in us to protect their family, neighbors, and property as we would our own.



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OUR LEADERSHIP

Board of Fire Commissioners



Jim Ingalls

Chairman
Fire Commissioner



Darryl Milton

Fire Commissioner



Dave Ellingson

Fire Commissioner



Jeff Uberuaga

Fire Commissioner



Chris Quinn

Fire Commissioner
January - June



Bill Whiteley

Fire Commissioner
July - December

DEPARTMENT LEADERSHIP

Nichole Sawyers

Administrative Director

Jim Gillard

Fire Chief

Chris Rahl

Battalion Chief
A Shift

Tom Harvey

Deputy Fire Marshal

Wendy Luther

Finance Manager

Jeff Russell

Deputy Fire Chief

Justin Zeigler

Battalion Chief
B Shift

Jake Gillanders

Medical Officer

Brett Annear

Fleet Manager

Shane Anderson

Battalion Chief
Training

Craig Becker

Battalion Chief
C Shift

Kurt Krech

Battalion Chief
Volunteer

Scott Pickard

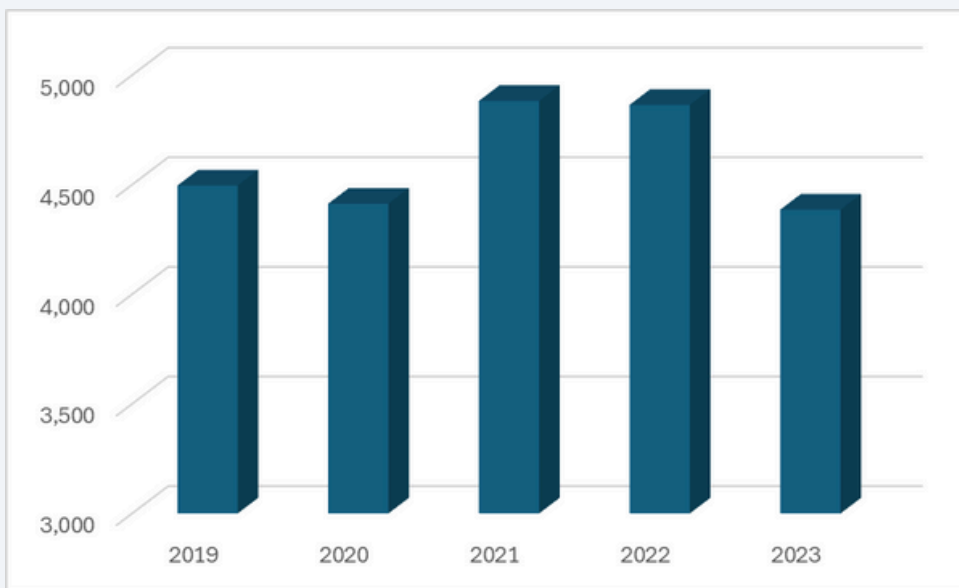
Facilities Manager

OPERATIONS REPORT

In 2023, the Poulsbo Fire Department responded to 4,368 emergency incidents which includes 380 mutual aid incident responses. Of the 2,823 emergency medical services (EMS) incidents 1,762 were basic life support (BLS) and 1,060 were advanced life support (ALS) which accounted for 71% of all emergency responses. In total, this was a 2.8% reduction in call volume from 4,495 emergency incidents in 2022. This marked a slight departure from the fire district's emergency incident trend over the past five years.

An evaluation revealed that the majority of the reduction in emergency incidents occurred as a result of prevention activities. The fire prevention bureau performed a total of 496 fire and life safety inspections within the City of Poulsbo as well as an additional seventy-five (75) fire and life safety inspections within the unincorporated fire district. Our Community Assistance, Referral, and Education Service (CARES) program provides services throughout North Kitsap and Bainbridge Island. In 2023, they received 555 referrals from first responders (73% referred by Poulsbo Fire and Poulsbo Police), performed 1,822 contacts, and made 877 referrals for services. These interactions resulted in a 69% reduction in 911 usage over a 6-month period and a 65% reduction in emergency room visits over a 6-month period for individuals referred to the program.

ANNUAL EMERGENCY INCIDENTS

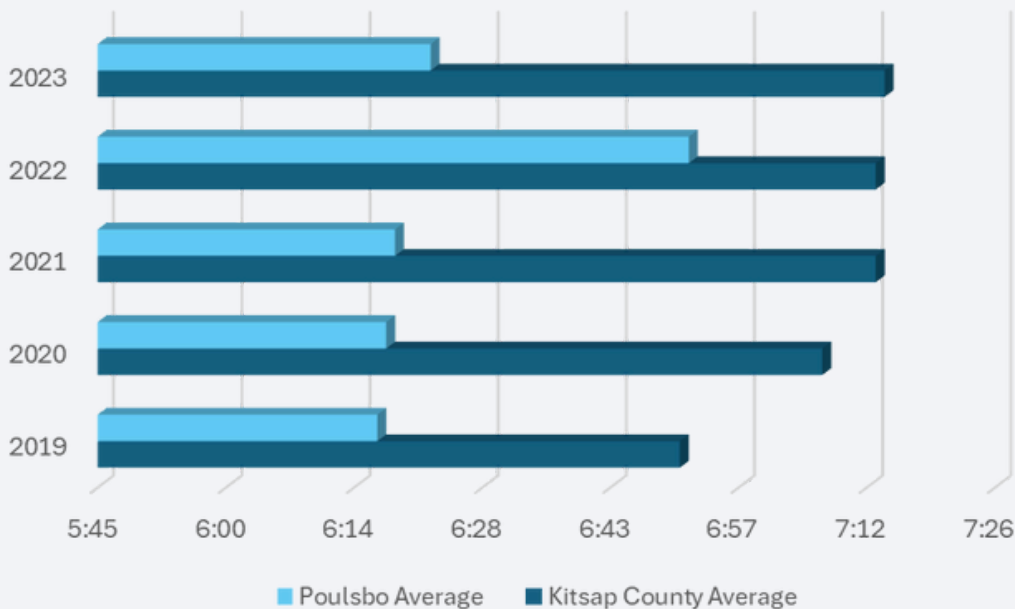


OPERATIONS SUMMARY

In 2023, we responded to 4,368 calls (including 380 mutual aid responses assisting other fire departments) while maintaining a faster average response time than the Kitsap County average.



PRIORITY 1 & 2 RESPONSE TIMES



Priority 1 and 2 calls are classified as those calls which present an immediate threat to life or property.

For additional information and insight into our response times, please review our [Emergency Response Service Level Objectives Report](#).

SPECIAL OPERATIONS



WILDLAND - Poulsbo Fire Department currently has eight career members and several volunteers that make up the Poulsbo Wildland Team (PWT). The PWT is specially trained and equipped for local, state, and federal response. In 2021 the PWT began developing a "community risk reduction" program to address local risk management and prevention of wildland fires. In 2023, Poulsbo Fire Department responded to 21 brush fires. With the addition of our new multi-use "brush truck" in 2022, the department has been able to increase our strength and capability in fighting wildland fires.

RAPID ENTRY RESCUE SWIMMER PROGRAM - Poulsbo Fire Department currently has six active rescue swimmers trained to respond to emergencies that involve water rescue, assessment, and rendering medical aid to persons in distress. The department's rescue swimmers are exposed to all elements, including the waters of the Puget Sound, which has an average temperature of 46.4 degrees. Training involves a 40-hour class, specific fitness requirements, and ongoing training to ensure their safety. Our rescue swimmers are all issued specialty equipment in order to safely work in the environment they are responsible for operating in.



MARINE - The marine program includes two dedicated marine apparatus that provide fire and rescue support for more than 20 miles of shoreline in the fire district. Marine 71 is a 19 ft. Safe Boat positioned to respond to the Hood Canal and Marine 74 is a 28 ft North River Fire Boat stationed at the Port of Poulsbo for response to Liberty Bay and Puget Sound. All career personnel are trained to operate Marine 71. There are currently 15 qualified pilots for Marine 74, with all response personnel trained as deckhands. In 2023, the department responded to one marina/boat fire and six water rescues.



TECHNICAL RESCUE - Captain Jake Gillanders leads the Kitsap County Special Operations Team (KSORT). KSORT provides technical and specialty rescue services. Currently, four members from the Poulsbo Fire Department serve on this team.

COMMUNITY RISK REDUCTION

Our goal is to educate the public on taking precautions to prevent fires and recognize hazards.

The services that our Deputy Fire Marshall provides to the community of Poulsbo are:

- Conduct plan reviews to ensure new construction and renovations comply with the international fire code
- Improving and implementing changes depending on the results of the report
- Conduct annual fire inspections in commercial buildings to ensure compliance with federal, state, and local codes, laws, and ordinances
- Conduct life safety inspections to assist and make recommendations for our community members in their homes
- Assist with the issuance and installation of key boxes or Knox® boxes for both commercial and residential community members
- Assist community members with the installation and inspection of smoke alarms



COMMERCIAL FIRE & LIFE SAFETY INSPECTIONS

Jurisdiction	2022	2023
City of Poulsbo	389	496
Kitsap County	100	75
Total	489	571

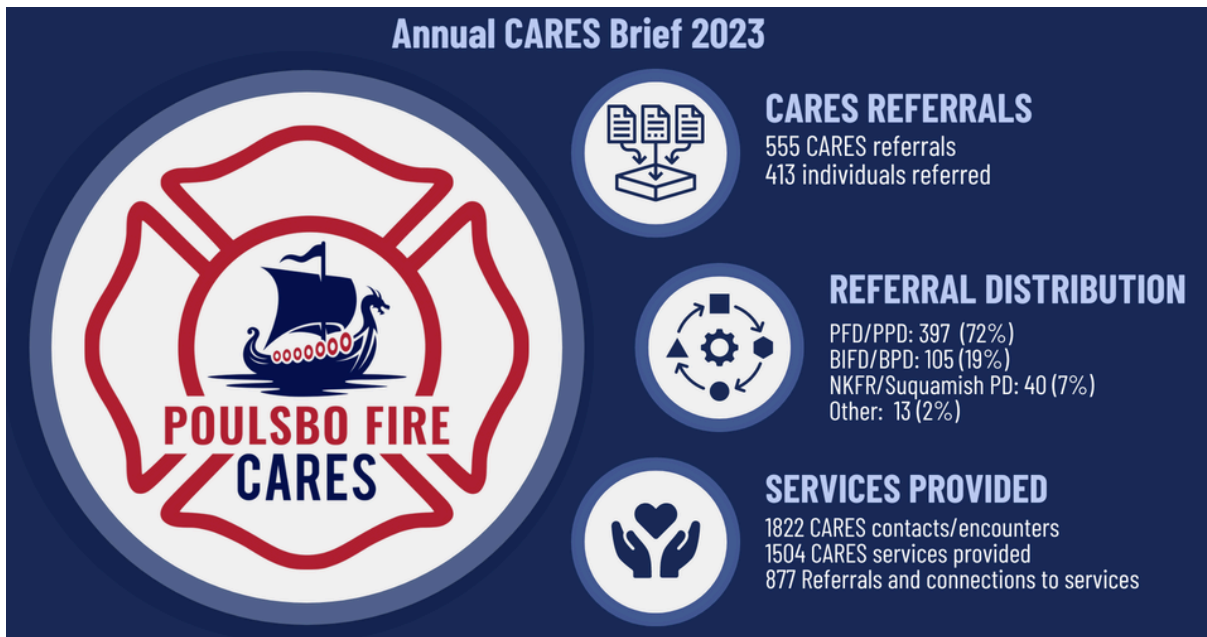


You can help keep your home and family safe by reviewing our [preparedness checklist](#). If you would like assistance in conducting a home safety inspection, please contact us to schedule a visit.

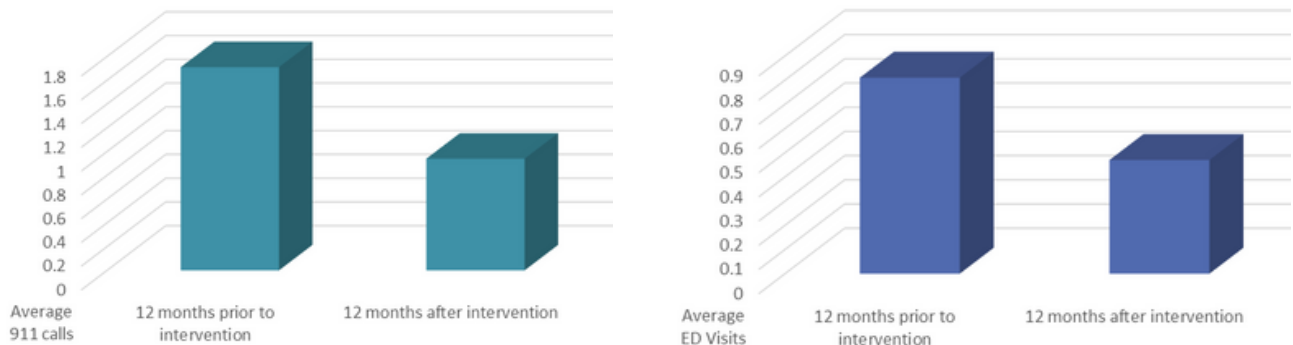
POULSBO FIRE CARES

COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE, REFERRAL, AND EDUCATION SERVICE

Poulsbo Fire CARES embodies a comprehensive approach to community well-being, comprising a dedicated team of professionals adept in crisis intervention and community support. At its core, Fire CARES pairs a firefighter/EMT skilled in crisis management with a mental health professional, forming a multidisciplinary unit aimed at addressing behavioral health needs within the community. Dispatched through collaborative efforts between the fire and police departments, the Fire CARES team stands ready to provide essential support to individuals grappling with a spectrum of challenges, including chronic medical conditions, mental health issues, substance use disorders, and home safety concerns.



CARES INTERVENTION OUTCOMES



With a track record of success, Fire CARES stands as a proven model that not only enhances individual outcomes but also yields cost-saving benefits. By reducing reliance on emergency response mechanisms and curbing unnecessary visits to emergency rooms, Fire CARES contributes significantly to optimizing resource allocation while ensuring that individuals with barriers to care receive the support they need. For community members making multiple 911 calls for help, and/or accessing the emergency department at Saint Michael Medical Center, there was a 69% reduction in 911 calls and 65% reduction in emergency department visits over a 6-month period following intervention by the CARES team.

TRAINING



EMS TRAINING = 1,253 HOURS
FIRE & OTHER TRAINING = 9,187 HOURS

2023 represented our 2nd year under the banner of the Kitsap Fire Training Consortium. As a training group made up of Bainbridge Island Fire Department, Bremerton Fire Department, Central Kitsap Fire and Rescue, North Kitsap Fire and Rescue, Poulsbo Fire Department, and South Kitsap Fire and Rescue, joint training focused on apparatus operator, fire operations, health and safety, incident management, firefighter fireground safety training, mass casualty incident management, vehicle extrication, and special operations training.



Are you interested in learning life-saving CPR & AED skills? Connect with us on our [website](#) for upcoming training.

STATIONS AND STAFFING



Station 71 - 911 NE Liberty Rd

Station 71 has five personnel on duty, 24 hours a day: E71 with a company officer and FF/EMT; M71 with a FF/PM and a FF/EMT; and BN71 with the shift Battalion Chief, who is either an EMT or paramedic.



Station 77 - 1305 NW Pioneer Hill Rd

Station 77 protects the Viking Ave corridor, Olhava, and Clear Creek communities. Station 77 is staffed with two personnel 24 hours a day: a company officer and FF/PM cross-staffing E77 and M77. Two additional FF/EMTs are assigned to dayshift during peak hours.

4 STATIONS

7 SUPPORT STAFF

52 CAREER
FIREFIGHTER
EMTS/PARAMEDICS

Station 72 - 28882 Falkner Rd NE

Station 72 is located in the Surfrest neighborhood, serving the Port Gamble and Edgewater communities 24 hours a day, staffed with two personnel: a company officer and a FF/EMT or FF/PM cross-staffing E72 and M72.

Station 73 - 1863 Northeast Pacific Avenue

Station 73 is located in Keyport; this volunteer staffed station houses a basic life support aid unit and a fire engine. It also houses the antique Model T fire engine.



You can review the [Capital Facilities Plan](#) to learn more about the department's plans to provide and account for the growing service level needs of our community.

FLEET

In 2023, the department aimed to capitalize on savings in the fleet department. Despite Medic Unit 322 being 25 years old, it has undergone its third re-chassis, completed in March 2024. The department decided to re-chassis this unit for a third time due to the substantial cost-benefit versus purchasing new. Keeping the medic box and replacing the chassis has allowed the department to save a significant amount of capital. The cost for a new medic unit is approximately \$320,000. The price tag for the re-chassis was \$236,780. Each time the department has chosen to re-chassis versus purchasing a new medic unit, the department has saved an average of \$80,000–\$90,000, resulting in an approximate total savings of \$255,000.

A new E-1 Engine was ordered for Station 72 from the manufacturer in 2021 to serve the north end of our fire district. Due to the ongoing supply issues, the fire truck arrived in 2023 and was officially “pushed in” to service during Station 72's fall open house. Poulsbo Fire has a vehicle replacement schedule of 25 years for our fire trucks, 10 years in a first-out status, and 15 years in a reserve status. Our new E-72 engine will replace a 2001 engine, which will then replace a 1992 engine in reserve status. The new Emergency One fire truck had a price tag of \$624,431.81, which equates to about \$32,000.00 each year of its service life.

In 2023, our department started one of the largest fleet projects to date as we began the bid process to purchase a new quint-style aerial fire truck to support increased building heights in Poulsbo. This process required the collaboration of our fleet mechanics, firefighters, and our leadership team. Ultimately, the department concluded the Emergency One product line best suited our needs. With a build time of approximately three years, the department can expect delivery of the 75' aerial fire truck in 2026.



2023 Mechanic of the Year
Brett Annear

Fleet Manager Brett Annear was honored with the Washington State Fire Chiefs Mechanic of the Year award. Brett said, “It is a great honor to be chosen as the Mechanic of the Year and to represent our Poulsbo Fire Department.”

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Poulsbo Fire strives for fiscal responsibility, controlling costs, and transparency. As a public agency, our major revenue sources are linked to stable income from taxes, limited by state law. These limitations make it necessary to regularly ask for voter approval to ensure tax rates keep pace with inflation and costs to sustain service levels for our growing community.

In 2023, the current fire and EMS levies represent a total of 88% of the district's total revenue. To reduce taxpayer impact and provide a stable funding source, levies are staggered on a six-year cycle. The department also continues to pursue revenue sources to reduce the community burden, including expanding fees for service, impact mitigation fees, and state and federal grants. In 2023, the department was awarded grants in excess of \$100,000 to provide funding for the growing CARES program.

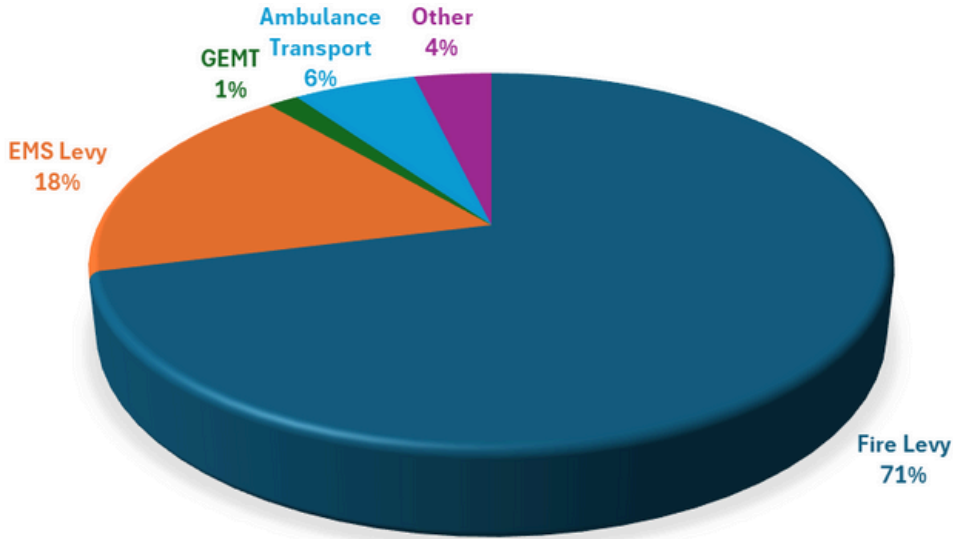
The annual expenditure budget is approved by the elected board of fire commissioners. Adoption of the district's five-year financial projections is used as a planning tool to ensure financial sustainability and the ability to grow with the community while maintaining service levels.



The Washington State Auditor's office conducts biennial financial audits of the department. In our 30-year history of audits, the department is proud to be free of any findings. You are invited to review our [most recent audit](#) conducted in 2023, which contains the results of our independent audit.

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

REVENUE

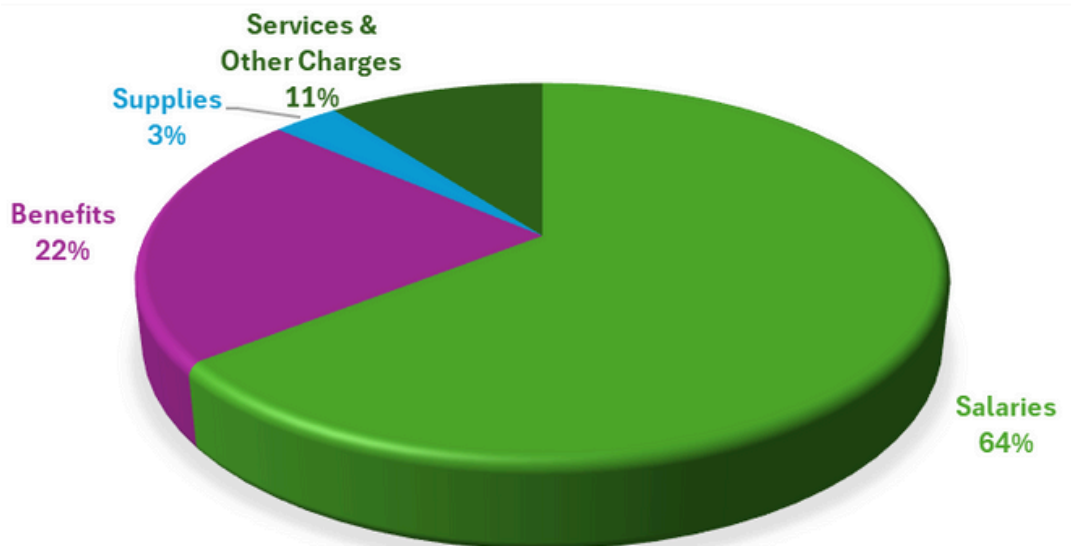


Fire Levy	\$10,199,014
EMS Levy	\$2,546,248
GEMT	\$216,824
Ambulance Transport	\$858,880
Other	\$538,444
Total 2023 Revenue	\$14,393,692

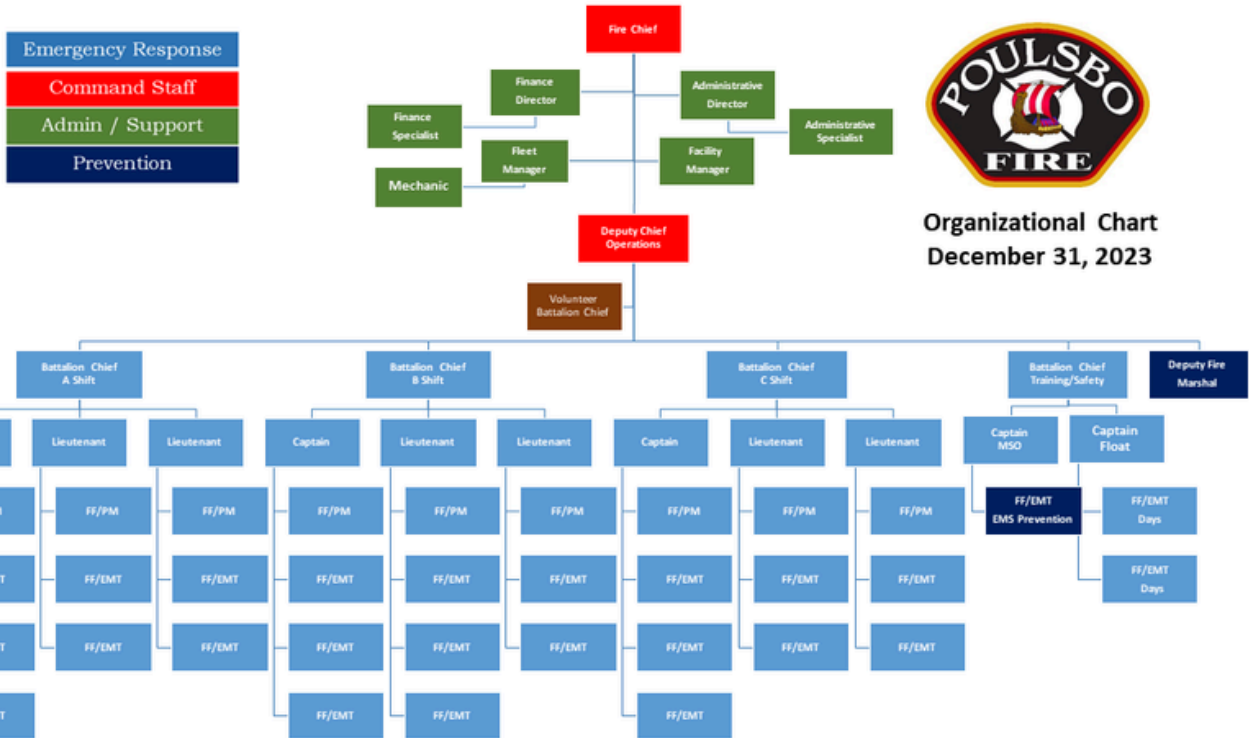
Poulsbo Fire Department is primarily funded through property taxes. The normal levies are a permanent fire levy and a six-year EMS levy. In 2023, levy revenue provided 88% of the district's total revenue. Additional revenue is generated through a fee-for-service patient transport and Ground Emergency Medical Transportation (GEMT) program. Excess revenue has been utilized to support and fund capital projects within the fire district.

EXPENSES

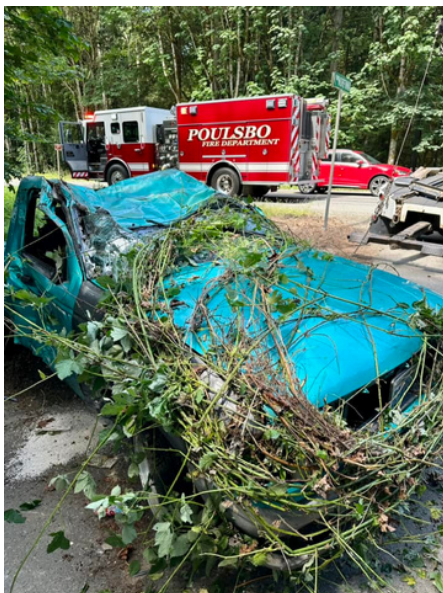
Salaries	\$7,510,638
Benefits	\$2,588,447
Supplies	\$372,696
Services & Other Charges	\$1,210,193
Total 2023 Expenses	\$11,681,975



HUMAN RESOURCES



Poulsbo Fire Department is currently staffed by 52 firefighter/EMT/paramedics which provide 24/7 coverage to our community. Our crews are further supported by seven support staff members. Over the course of 2023, the department hired two administrative specialists, one facility manager, one seasonal groundskeeper, two firefighter/EMTs, and two firefighter paramedics to cover growth and attrition within the organization. Four new EMTs also joined our volunteer program.





HUMAN RESOURCES

PROMOTIONS



**Captain
Ryan Sommer**
Firefighter/Paramedic

Ryan Sommer has worked for Poulsbo Fire since 2006 and was promoted to lieutenant in 2021. Ryan holds a bachelor's degree in paramedicine from CWU and has overseen several department programs during his time here. Ryan says his success is because of the support of his wife, Melissa, his children, Claire and Cade, and family and friends.



**Lieutenant
Josh Warter**
Firefighter/Paramedic

Josh Warter started in the fire service as a volunteer in 2000. In 2017, Josh came to Poulsbo Fire as a lateral fire fighter paramedic, and was promoted to Lieutenant in January of 2023. Josh is heavily involved with many programs at Poulsbo Fire to include marine pilot, rescue swimmer, peer support, and CARES. Josh is currently completing his Bachelor's degree for Fire Administration through Eastern Oregon University. Josh lives in Gig Harbor with his wife Cindy, son Jace, and daughter Emeryn.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE!



YEARS

- Curtis Lightner
- Andrew McCaffrey
- Nicholas Navarro
- Stacey Pitt
- James Pratt
- Don Stevens
- Samantha Thomas
- Commissioner Uberuaga



YEARS

- Michael Prevost



YEARS

- Tevya Friedman
- Alan Green



YEARS

- Tom Harvey
- Dave Musselman



YEARS

- Andrew Plenge

HUMAN RESOURCES

COMPLETED PROBATIONARY TRAINING



Cameron Rasmus - Firefighter/Paramedic

Cameron is originally from Maple Valley, WA. He started his fire service career in 2018 with Mountain View Fire/Rescue as a Volunteer FF/EMT, followed by a transition to Vashon Island Fire/Rescue as a part-time FF/EMT while completing paramedic school. Cameron enjoys spending time with his family and exploring the Pacific Northwest through hiking, skiing, and sailing.

NEW EMPLOYEES



Carissa Robideaux - Administrative Specialist

Carissa joined the department in March of 2023 as our Administrative Specialist having previously worked as an Administrative Specialist for the Poulsbo Police Department. Carissa holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Communication from Cal Poly, Pomona. Outside of work, Carissa enjoys spending time with her husband, Cory, and their two teenage daughters, traveling, camping, skiing, biking, hiking – really anything that involves the outdoors!



Scott Pickard - Facilities Manager

Scott joined the department in May 2023 as our Facilities Manager. Scott is a graduate of North Kitsap High School and worked for the City of Bainbridge Island Public Works department for 16 years before coming to the fire department. Scott enjoys spending his free time with his girlfriend and his three sons, cheering them on in their sports pursuits, as well as camping in the Pacific Northwest.



Hudson - Peer Support Canine

Hudson, a purebred English Labrador Retriever, was born in December 2020 in Northern California. Donated to Assistance Dogs Hawaii, they initially trained Hudson as a facility dog before he transitioned to a peer support canine for the Poulsbo Fire Department. Hudson started “working” at the firehouse in January 2023, and his adoption was finalized in November 2023. This jovial three-year-old enjoys napping, snacking, receiving pets, chasing birds, and playing with his best friend, Duke.

IN OUR COMMUNITY



Whether it's an impromptu neighborhood car wash, participating in Poulsbo's Viking Fest traditions, or during one of our station open houses, being part of and engaging with our community is one of our most cherished privileges and rewards.



IN OUR COMMUNITY



In a tradition spanning 35 years, Poulsbo Fire Department has served as a proud escort for Santa Claus traveling throughout our Poulsbo neighborhoods, not only delivering holiday cheer, but receiving gifts for those in need. In 2023, thanks to the generosity of our community, we were able to deliver 1,960 pounds of non-perishable food donations and a monetary donation of \$1,340 to North Kitsap Fishline.

