

Ross Township
Fire Department

2024

Annual Report



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Your Ross Township Fire Department... who we are and what we stand for

Our Mission

We are an organization of dedicated professionals whose Mission is to Save Lives, Protect Property, Protect the Environment, Provide the best possible service to the community, and to Treat People Nice.

Our Vision

The Ross Township Fire Department will be recognized as an agency that reflects the best practices in delivering services to our community. We will demonstrate professionalism in all we do by pursuing and achieving our goals and continuous improvement in all duties and responsibilities, enhancing services our community trusts us to provide.

In honoring the community's trust, we will be well-trained and equipped to deliver quality departmental programs and services. We will foster improvement in infrastructure and asset protection, and resiliency by using strategies to support our delivery to the community. We will proactively engage with our community through outreach and community initiatives to support and educate those we serve.

We will invest in our greatest organizational asset through comprehensive workforce development initiatives and ensure that our department is appropriately staffed and professionally developed to accomplish our Mission.

Our community's expectations will be met or exceeded by holding one another accountable for carrying out our Mission, living our values, and that this vision become reality.

Our Values

P – Professionalism, we will uphold a professional image by the way we look, act, and perform our Jobs.

R – Respect, we strive to promote diversity and treat each other and those we serve with integrity.

I – Integrity, we are accountable through our everyday actions and communications.

D – Dedication, we are committed to the Mission, our department, each other, and the community.

E – Excellence, we strive to achieve and maintain the highest service levels.

Our Motto

Be Professional, Adaptable, Be Nice

Chief's Message



It is my pleasure to present the Ross Township Fire Department's Annual Report for 2024, and the first report submitted under my command. The information contained within will provide you a snapshot of our department, including: history, activities, and statistical data on incident response and other department information. In 2024 the department responded to 1504 incidents, up approximately 18% (225 calls) from 2023. The resolute men and women of your fire department respond to fires, fire alarms, medical emergencies, vehicle accidents, and hazardous materials incidents, among countless other calls for service. These professionals also provide fire prevention, public education, community outreach, and fire inspection services to the community.

As we reflect on the past year, I am incredibly proud of the progress we have made, the challenges we have overcome, and the unwavering commitment of the men and women at Ross Fire Department. Last year has been one of growth, resilience, and innovation driven by our shared dedication to service and excellence.

Our achievements are a direct result of the hard work and passion of our firefighters and paramedics, the township administration, and our stakeholders. Whether it was advancing key initiatives, strengthening the impact we have in the community, or enhancing operational efficiencies, we have continued to push forward with purpose and determination.

Looking ahead, we remain committed to our mission, vision, values, and motto. The road ahead will present new opportunities and challenges, but I am confident that, together, we will continue to build on our successes and create an even stronger future.

Lastly, I am proud to serve as your fire chief and lead such an experienced and talented group of men and women who proudly serve our community. Thank you for your continued support and dedication. I look forward to another year of progress and collaboration.

Christopher Johns, OFC, OFE

Fire Chief

Administration/Support Services

The Office of the Fire Chief, supported by the Command staff, functions as the Ross Township Fire Department (RTFD) administrative backbone, diligently addressing the organization's multifaceted organizational needs. With a strategic focus on efficiency and effectiveness, these leaders work behind the scenes to ensure seamless coordination and execution of various tasks essential to the department's mission. From personnel management to resource allocation, their responsibilities extend beyond the front lines of emergency response, emphasizing the critical role played by efficient administration in sustaining the department's overall functionality.

The unwavering commitment to fiscal responsibility is one of the foremost priorities ingrained in the RTFD's operational principles. Understanding the significance of the funds derived from levies, the department prioritizes sensible financial management. This commitment optimizes the utilization of available resources and reflects a dedication to transparency and accountability. By upholding rigorous standards of fiscal responsibility, RTFD aims to fortify its financial foundation, ensuring the sustained capability to deliver high-quality emergency services to the community. The department's adherence to careful financial practices is a testament to its commitment to long-term sustainability and its responsibility as stewards of public funds.



2024 Total Annual Fire Department Budget

\$1,701,924.58

2024 Total Expenditures

\$1,604,708.98

Personnel Expenditures (Wages, overtime, pension)

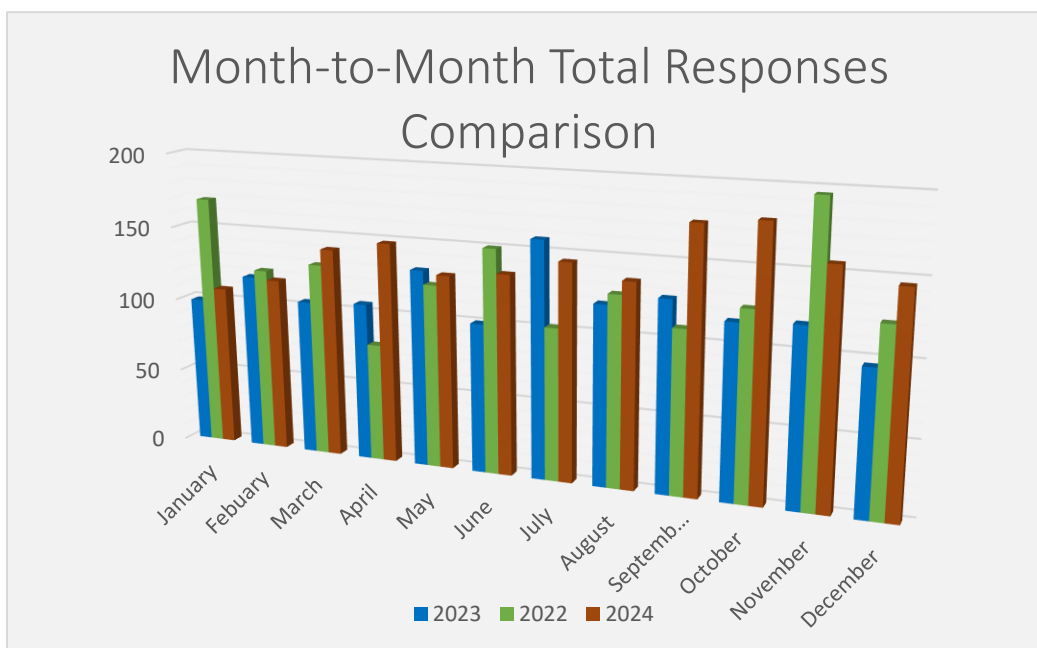
\$1,283,767.18

Operations Expenditures (Electric, water, fuel, IT service)

\$320,941.80

Operations/Suppression/EMS

The Operations Division of the Ross Township Fire Department is the backbone of emergency response, responsible for managing all frontline firefighting, rescue, and emergency medical services. With a commitment to excellence, this division shoulders the day-to-day responsibility of delivering essential emergency services. From the urgent rhythm of fire suppression to the compassionate response to medical calls, the Operations Division is a versatile force equipped to mitigate various crises. Our expertise extends beyond traditional firefighting and compassionate emergency medical services, encompassing hazardous materials mitigation, technical rescues such as auto extrication or swift water rescues, and solving our community's problems. In addition to the swift and efficient emergency response, the Operations Division plays a crucial role in maintaining the department fleet, ensuring that the tools of their trade are in peak condition. Additionally, our proactive approach is evident in the meticulous pre-emergency planning inspections conducted on target buildings throughout the community. The Operations Division stands as the stalwart guardian of Ross Township, embodying a commitment to service, preparedness, and the well-being of the community they tirelessly serve.

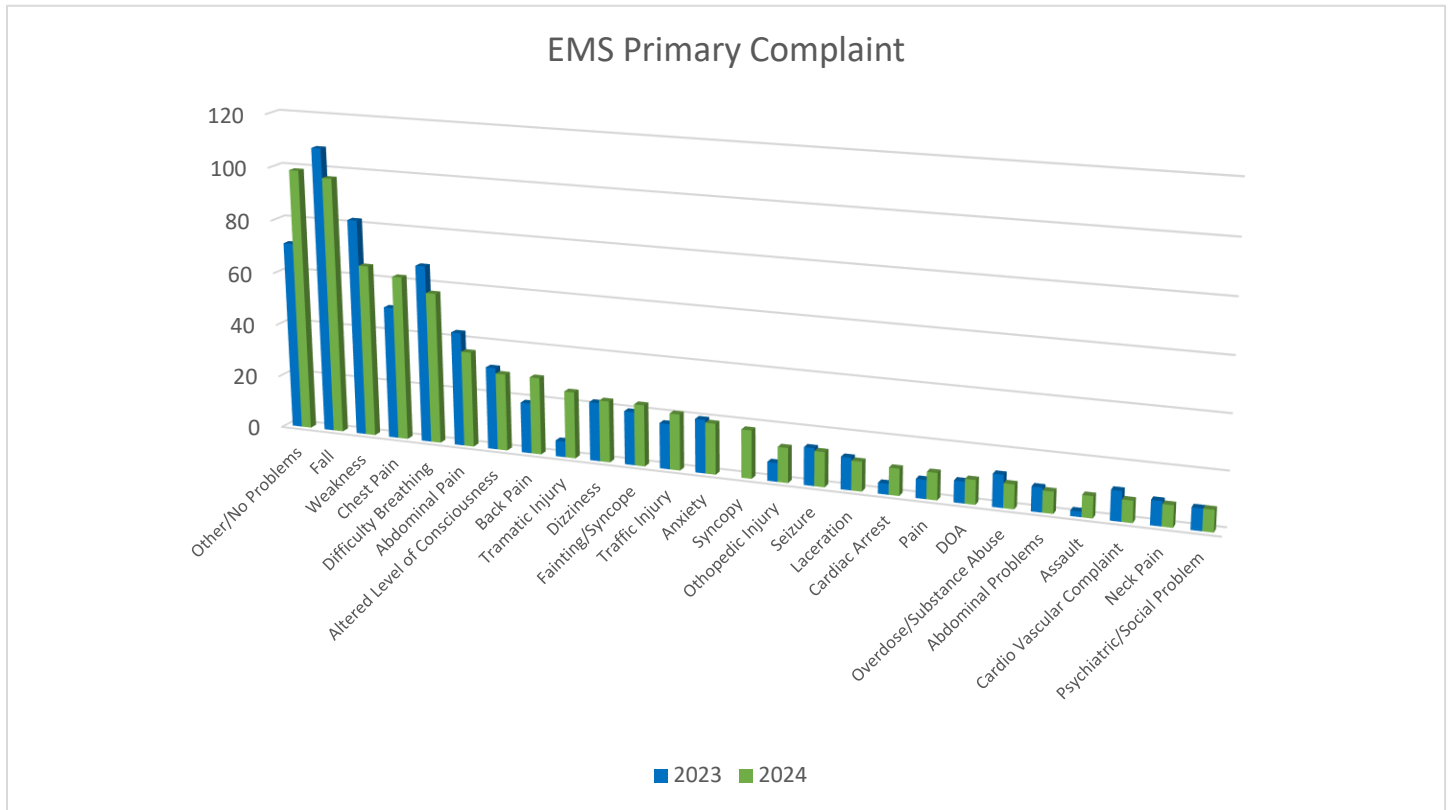


The department totaled 1504 responses in 2024, up 18% from 2023. This increase in total responses could be attributed to many variables within and outside of Ross Township. This year, RTFD responded to significantly more traffic collisions and incidents outside of Ross Township than ever before. This graph demonstrates the responses provided by the Ross Township Fire Department each month over the last three years.

The heartbeat of the Ross Township Fire Department is the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) division, which plays a critical role in the department's mission by providing life-saving medical care, rapid response to medical emergencies, and transportation of sick and injured people to the appropriate facility. Serving as the front line of healthcare in times of crisis, the EMS team embodies reassurance for residents facing medical emergencies. Whether it's a critical situation or a moment that demands urgent care, our EMS team ensures that help is just moments away. Beyond the immediate response, the EMS team fosters a sense of security for our community's residents, knowing that a skilled and empathetic team is ready to navigate the complexities of their medical emergencies. The department's commitment extends to preventive initiatives, community education, and forging connections that strengthen the community's overall health. In every ambulance ride and every medical intervention, the Ross Township Fire Department is a beacon of hope, resilience, and unwavering support, exemplifying the profound impact that dedicated emergency medical services have on the well-being and vitality of the Ross Township community.

Operations/Suppression/EMS...(continued)

In 2024, our dedicated staff of professionals responded to 1188 medical emergencies. These responses account for nearly 79% of the total responses by the Ross Township Fire Department. As the number of medical emergencies continues to increase within Ross Township, the community can trust that a highly trained team of compassionate professionals will care for them. In 2024, the department responded to a myriad of medical emergencies. Below is a graph that provides a glimpse of the top 25 causes of an EMS response.

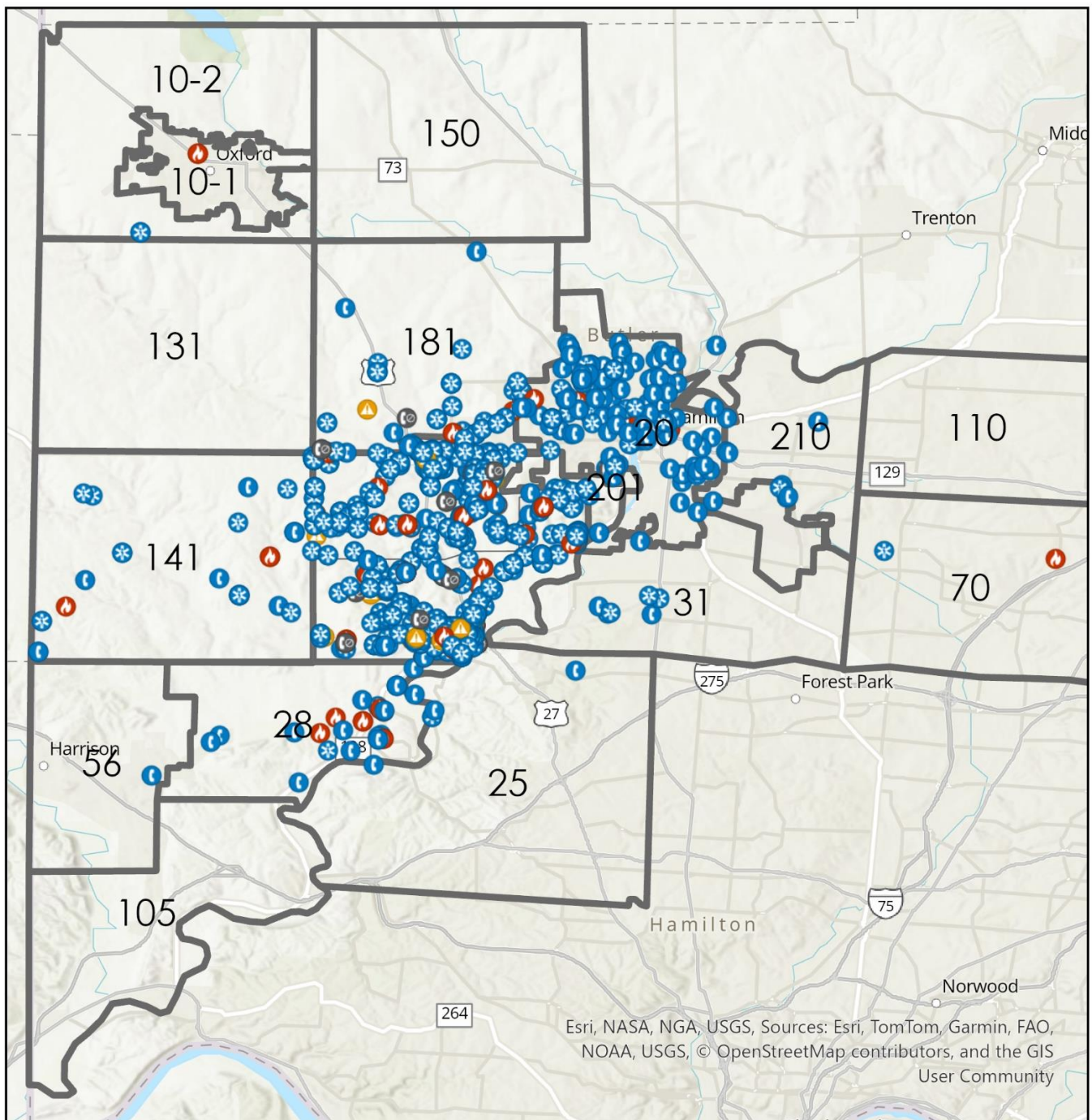


The unwavering commitment of the Ross Township Fire Department to the safety and well-being of the community is underscored by its strategic utilization of emergency services through two strategically located fire stations. Nestled in close proximity to the neighborhoods with the largest populations, these stations serve as vigilant guardians, ensuring a timely and competent response to emergencies. Staffed by highly trained professionals 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, these firehouses stand resilient, ready to combat any crisis.

The significance of rapid response times in emergency services cannot be overstated. The men and women staffing our fire stations recognize the critical importance of time in emergency situations. In an average of 96 seconds from the moment a call is received, our crews are mobilized and in route to the emergency scene. This immediate response is not merely a matter of statistics; it is a deliberate and calculated effort to minimize the crucial time elapsed between an emergency call and the arrival of assistance.

Arriving at the emergency location within 5 minutes of the initial 9-1-1 notification, our professionals ensure that aid is on-site swiftly, maximizing the potential for positive outcomes. In emergencies, every second counts, and the Ross Township Fire Department's commitment to a rapid and effective response is a testament to the understanding that rapid intervention can make the difference between life and death.

Operations/Suppression/EMS....(continued)



Incidents

- EMS & Rescue
- False Alarm False Call
- Fire

- Good Intent Call
- Hazardous Condition
- Overpressure Rupture, Explosion, Overheat

- Service Call
Station
Mutual_Aid

2024 Major Incidents

January:

- Hamilton-Cleves Rd—provided aid to Crosby Twp for large mulch pile fire
- New Haven Rd.—provided aid to Crosby Twp for 1-alarm fire
- Puthoff St-assist City of Hamilton with 1-alarm residential fire

February:

- Layhigh Rd-1-alarm residential fire-assisted by Morgan Twp.
- Hueston St-Assist City of Hamilton with 1-alarm residential fire

March:

- Cincinnati-Brookville—provided aid to Morgan Twp for 1-alarm residential fire
- Westview Ave—assist City of Hamilton with 1-alarm residential fire; 2 victims rescued
- Schoenling Rd—assist Morgan Twp with MVA; AirCare transported 1 victim

April:

- Hamilton-Cleves Rd-2 alarm commercial structure fire-assisted by Colerain, Morgan, City of Fairfield
- Olympus Ct—assisted city of Hamilton with 1-alarm residential fire
- Oxford-Reily Rd—assist City of Oxford with multi-vehicle crash with 7 injured



May:

- Founder's Row—assisted West Chester with 3-alarm residential fire (Air & Light 1)
- College Corner Pk—assisted City of Oxford with 1 alarm residential fire
- California Rd—assisted Morgan Twp. with multi-vehicle crash with entrapment

June:

- Kraus Ln—1-alarm commercial fire-assisted by Morgan, Colerain, City of Hamilton
- Great Miami River—assist City of Fairfield with water rescue/recovery
- New London Rd—MVA with entrapment and fatality; assisted by City of Hamilton

August:

- Dayton St—assist City of Hamilton with 4 alarm commercial fire
- McWhorter Dr—assist Hanover Twp with 1 alarm residential fire
- Oriole Dr—large scale propane leak; assisted by Colerain Twp, Morgan Twp, Butler Co. EMA
- Great Miami River—assist Colerain with water rescue

October:

- Baltimore Pl—Assist Crosby Twp with 1 alarm residential fire
- Longhorn Dr—1 alarm residential fire; assisted by Morgan & Colerain
- Main St—assist City of Hamilton with 1 alarm residential fire
- Ross-Hanover Rd—motorcycle crash, 1 fatality
- Ross-Millville Rd—assist Hanover Twp with Landing Zone for AirCare

November:

- Thrush Ave—1 alarm residential fire; assisted by Morgan & Colerain

December:

- Northfork Rd—Assist Morgan Twp with 1 alarm residential fire

Mutual Aid.....Neighbors helping neighbors

In the previous section you will note that many of the major incidents Ross responded to were in neighboring jurisdictions. Why is that? Ross Township and the surrounding communities all have a mutual aid agreement with each other. A mutual aid agreement allows departments to share resources such as personnel, apparatus, and specialized equipment when an incident exceeds a single department's capabilities. Mutual aid is especially crucial for large fires, hazardous materials incidents, mass casualty events, and natural disasters. There are many benefits of mutual aid agreements including:

- Ensures faster response times, especially in rural or understaffed areas
- Enhances fire suppression, rescue operations, and EMS capabilities
- Provides access to specialized equipment, such as aerial trucks, hazardous materials teams, and technical rescue teams
- Strengthens interagency cooperation and training opportunities

RTFD Strategic Plan

The Ross Township Fire Department developed and adopted the 2021-2025 Strategic Plan, a long-range plan for the delivery of emergency services. The Strategic Plan will function as a road map for the constantly evolving future. Below are some of the initiatives laid out within the Strategic Plan.

Strategic Initiative 1 – Exceptional, Innovative Service Delivery

In the last five years, the department has continued to see an increasing demand in calls for service, community outreach, and community risk reduction tasks. As the department adapts to the community's ever-changing needs, we must continue a comprehensive approach to be proactive, produce measurable results, and remain fiscally responsible.

Strategic Initiative 2 – Strong Adaptive Infrastructure

Our focus is to provide the necessary physical and technical infrastructure and services to support our strategic vision and operational readiness. This focus includes not only new stations, fleet, equipment, and technology for the anticipated growth during the coming years but also maintaining, remodeling, or replacing existing aging infrastructure.

Strategic Initiative 3 – Thriving Healthy

Our culture embraces the fire service traditions while positioning ourselves as leaders of progressive philosophies and tactics. We are continuing to evolve our culture within the fire service. Our goal is to direct that evolution over the coming years by defining and infusing our desires into everything we do, from hiring and promoting our personnel to the internal and external services we provide. We enjoy a loyal, professional, and highly trained membership that delivers quality services. In the coming years, we intend to strengthen our wellness initiatives to further reduce injuries and recovery time and provide more tools to our personnel to handle the job and life stresses and improve overall mental wellness and job satisfaction. Leadership development and labor/management relations will be a priority.

Strategic Initiative 4 – Proactive, Strategic Communication

We desire a targeted, strategic approach to our methods of communication with our internal and external audience. We understand that it's not just the volume of critical communication but also the quality and alignment with a clear purpose, such as safety themes, expanding knowledge, and supporting its Mission. Externally, we would like to be more proactive with media relations, be more in tune with our demographic's communications desires, and have a formal philosophy and strategy about how we market our organization. Internally, we want to increase the overall frequency and effectiveness of our communications.

Prevention/Education...an ounce of prevention

The Ross Township Fire Department's Prevention Division strives to improve the lives of Ross residents by preventing fires and reducing the impact in the event a fire does occur. How do we typically accomplish this?

- Inspections
- Responding to complaints regarding fire and life safety code violations
- Educational activities



A cornerstone of our proactive approach to fire prevention involves using various public education programs, such as Fire Safety Week. Recognized for its value, Fire Safety Week has gained popularity through its positive and engaging methodology, offering students an enriching and enjoyable learning experience focused on fire and life safety. Notably, in 2024, the program successfully reached an audience of approximately 700 students from Elda Elementary and Ross Intermediate School.

Recognizing the value of firsthand experiences, many schools and clubs frequently contact us for station tours, giving students direct insight into our firefighters' living and working environments during their duty hours. These tours extend beyond physical space, providing a platform for imparting crucial fire and life safety tips. For schools, groups, or organizations wanting to arrange an insightful tour, we encourage you to contact our Fire Prevention Division. Your proactive engagement is pivotal in reinforcing our community's safety and preparedness culture.

In addition to education and outreach, our fire and life safety inspectors conducted nearly 200 business inspections in 2024. These inspections are essential to identifying and mitigating potential fire hazards before they become emergencies. Our team plays a vital role in protecting lives, property, and the community's economic well-being by ensuring that businesses comply with fire codes and safety regulations. These efforts reduce the risk of fire incidents and foster a culture of safety and preparedness that benefits everyone.



Highlights for 2024



Chief Steve Miller retired after 4 decades of service to Ross and the surrounding communities; Assistant Chief Chris Johns was promoted to Fire Chief.



Nick Alvis, Eric Simon, Ron Stenger, and Robin Grant celebrated 25 years of service to Ross Township;

Lt. Rob Embry was promoted to Captain;

Capt. Jared Morris was promoted to Assistant Chief.



Capt. Embry began his two-and-a-half-year journey with OFE Class 24.

Delivery of new Medic 102 after a 3-year waiting period.



Ross Township Fire Department members Phil Clayton, Chris Sander, and Jason Agoston are deployed to Florida to assist with Hurricane Milton.

Assistant Chief Morris celebrated 20 years of service to Ross Township



2024 Personnel Accomplishments

Matt Schumann: Accepted Fire Chief position with Miami Township (Hamilton County)

Shawn Wurzelbacher: Accepted Full-Time Shift Captain position with the City of Oxford

Will Black: Accepted Full-Time position with Clearcreek Township Fire

Mason Green: Accepted Full-Time position with Liberty Township Fire

Eliza Jones: Began Paramedic school

Cade Tatum: Began Paramedic school

Lt. Rick Simmons: Completed Fire Safety Inspector course

Zach Timmons: Completed Fire Safety Inspector course; completed Fire Investigation Tech course

Steve Meyer: Completed Fire Officer I & II; completed Fire Investigation Tech course

Personnel Welcomed in 2024

Robert Potter—FF/Medic

Tony Shroyer—FF/EMT

Andrew Jones—FF/Medic

Steve May—FF/Medic

Blake Olson—FF/Medic

Cory Gabbard—FF/EMT

Mason Green—FF/EMT

Ben Kaake—FF/EMT

Jared Baker-- FF/Medic