



# ANNUAL REPORT 2025

**Prepared for:**

Lake Mills Council and City Manager  
And the Towns of Aztalan, Lake Mills,  
Millford, Oakland, Waterloo.

**Prepared by:**

Jason A. Russ, Fire Chief



## Message From the Chief

It is my honor to present the 2025 Annual Report for the Lake Mills Fire Department. It is also a privilege to recognize the dedication, service, and accomplishments of the members of this department. Their unwavering commitment is what makes the Lake Mills Fire Department an exceptional organization.

Our staff take great pride in serving the communities within our jurisdiction. They consistently demonstrate the professionalism and performance our residents expect and deserve. We remain committed not only to delivering outstanding emergency responses, but also to fostering strong collaboration and meaningful relationships throughout the communities we serve. Our goal is to be more than a service provider; we strive to be an integral and trusted part of each community.

In 2025, we continued to experience steady growth in service demand, with call volumes increasing nearly every year. This rise is due in part to ongoing community development, but more significantly to the expansion of our service area. The Town of Lake Mills reinstated EMS coverage through our department, and the Town of Oakland began receiving service for a portion of their community. As a result, call volume increased from 293 responses in 2024 to 351 in 2025. I am proud to report that our staff met this increased demand with professionalism, resilience, and an unwavering commitment to public safety.

The Lake Mills Fire Department continues to work diligently to address community risk reduction and emergency response needs. I remain continually impressed by the dedication and skill of our firefighters. Their determination enables us to meet operational goals and uphold the standards our communities expect. For our firefighters and for the residents we serve, I will continue to advocate for an effective, efficient, well-staffed, professional, and service-focused organization.

Thank you for your continued support.

**Jason A. Russ**

**Fire Chief**

# Mission and Values

The Mission Statement of the Lake Mills Fire Department is to minimize the loss of life, property and environment from fires, natural disasters, life threatening situations, and to assist other emergency organizations.

Our Mission shall be accomplished through quality service delivery as follows

**Safety:** for the community we protect and the personnel that protect it.

**Education:** through programs for our residents and youth.

**Responsivness:** to the suggestions, influences, appeals or efforts of others.

**Vision:** for the past to the present and into the future.

**Inspections:** investigations and pre-incident plans.

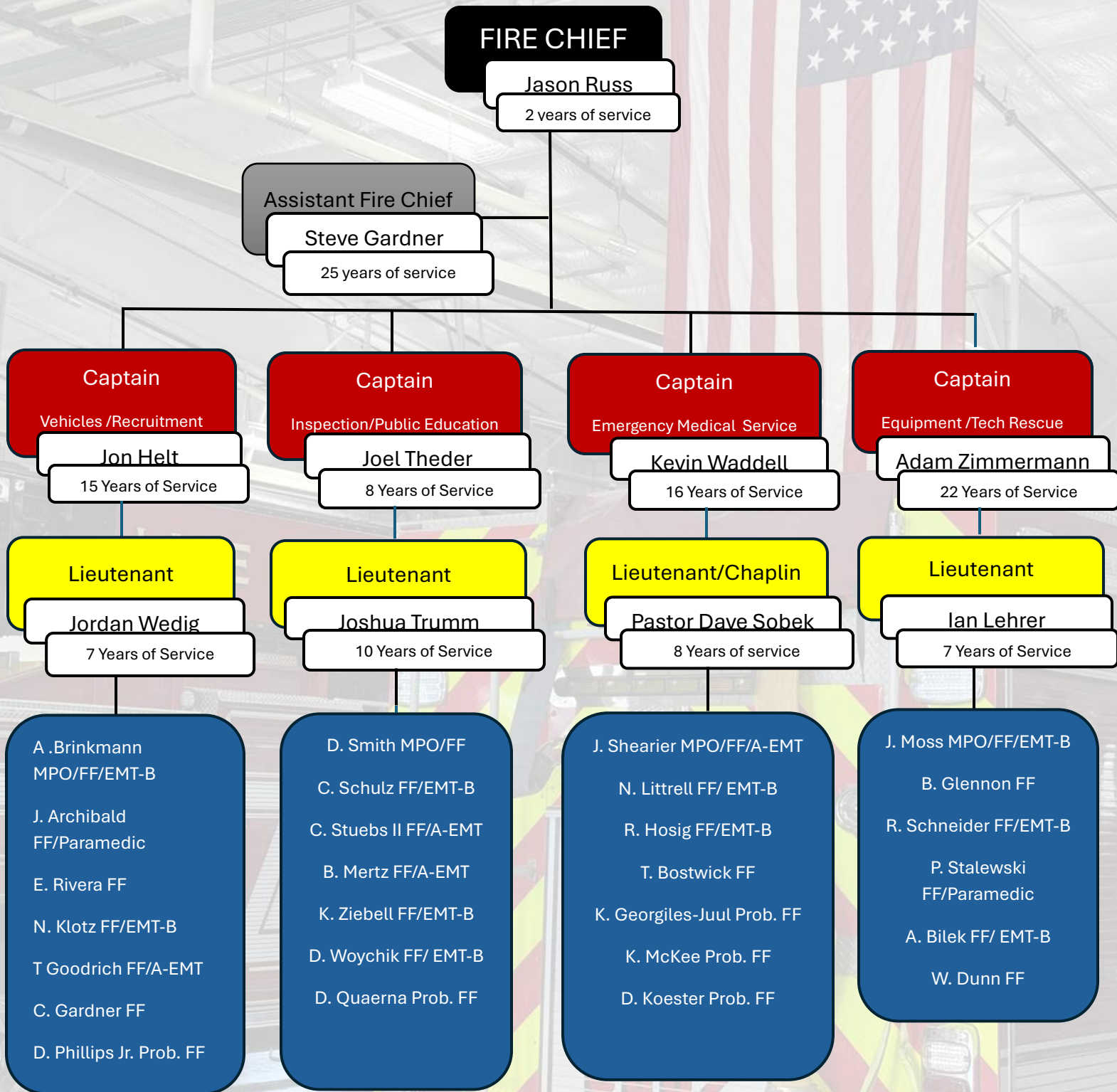
**Commitment:** to our community and families.

**Empathy:** for all.

# Vision Statement

Lake Mills Fire Department is committed to always promote positive attitude, keep things in perspective and always “Do The Right Thing” to protect our community.

# LMFD Organizational Structure



# LMFD Supports Our Veterans



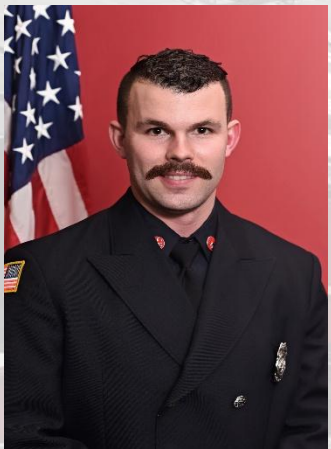
Steve Gardner



Scott Erwin



Andrew Brinkmann



Joshua Trumm



Jason Shearier



Edward Rivera



Brendan Mertz



Dominic Woychik

# Fire Station



Location:  
120 Veterans Lane  
Lake Mills, Wi 53551

Built 2005

2025 Upgrades to the station was new garage door openers and a new HVAC control system.



# LMFD Heavy Apparatus



2022 Pierce Engine  
8861



2019 Pierce Rescue  
8862



2024 Pierce Ladder  
8871

2006 Mack Granite  
Tender 8891



# LMFD Light Duty Apparatus

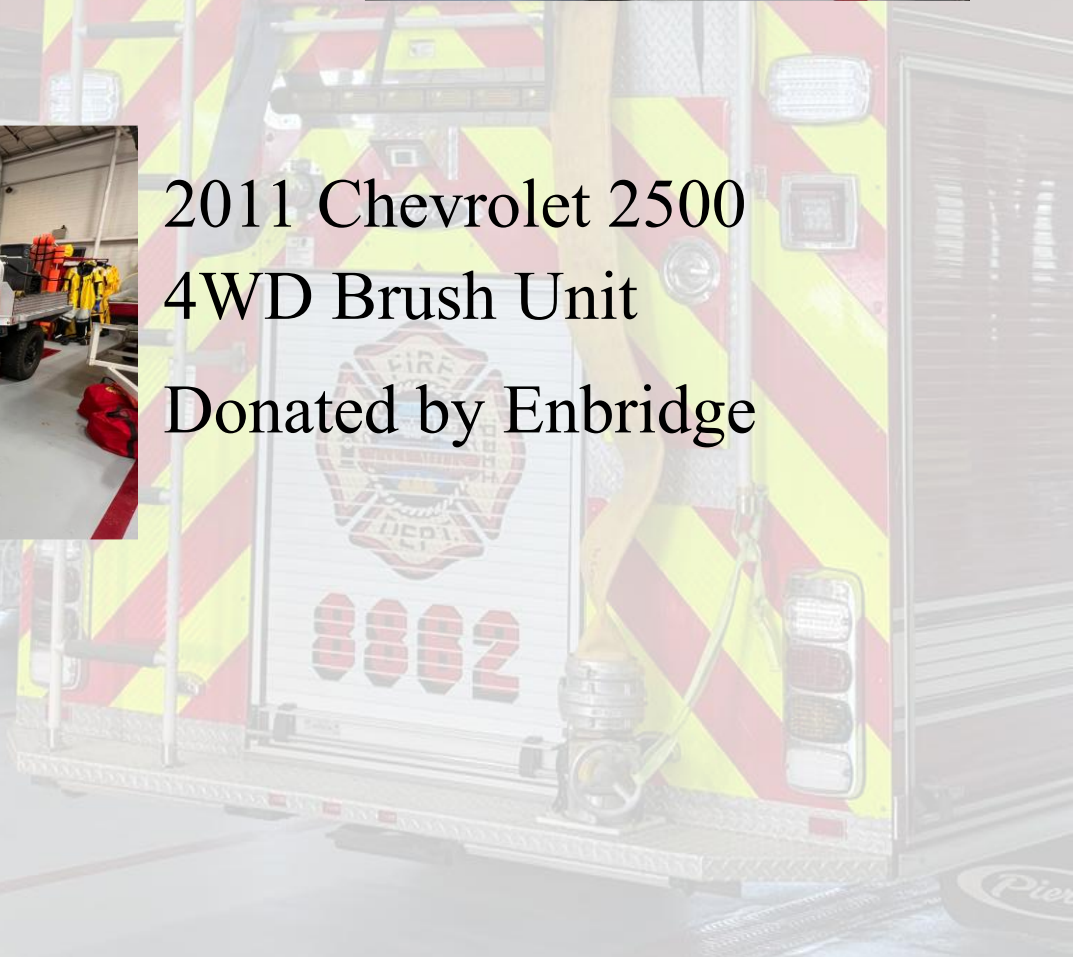


2010 GMC 4500 4WD  
Rescue

2017 F-250 Ford  
4WD Brush Unit



2011 Chevrolet 2500  
4WD Brush Unit  
Donated by Enbridge

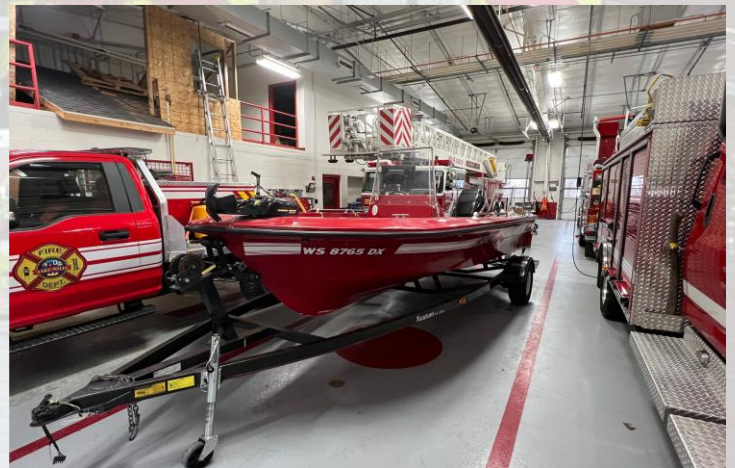


# LMFD Medical and Special Rescue



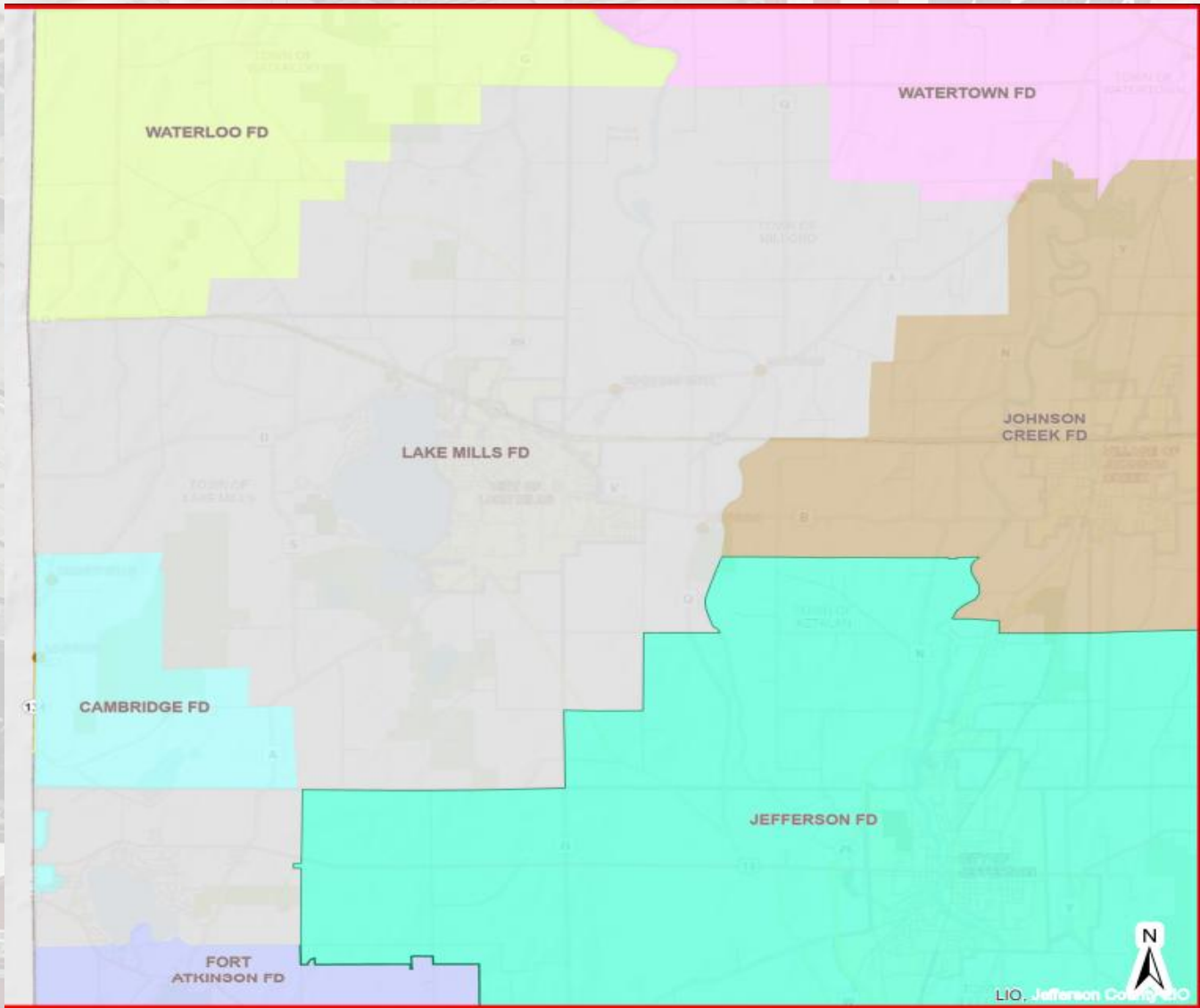
2022 Horton F-350  
Ford Ambulance

1993 Tuffy Boat



2002 Rivercraft  
Airboat

# LMFD Coverage Area



City of Lake Mills FD covers all or portions of the following communities:

- City of Lake Mills
- Town of Lake Mills
- Town of Oakland (Joined 2025)
- Town of Aztalan
- Town of Milford
- Town of Waterloo

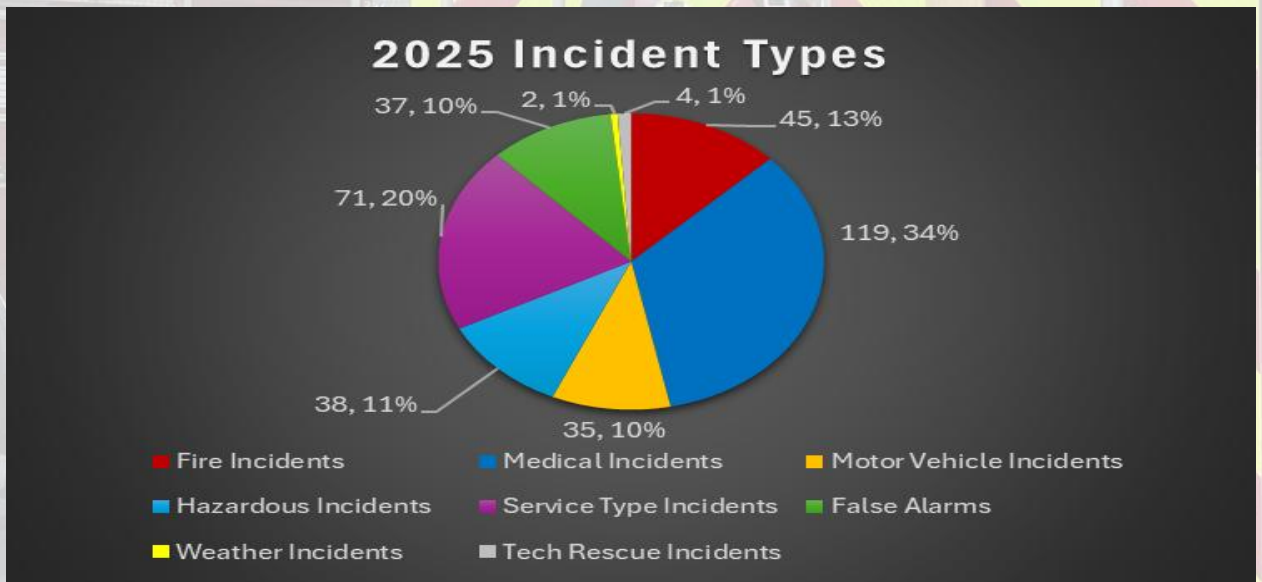
# 2025 Calls for Service

The Lake Mills Fire Department experienced a notable increase in calls for service, rising from **297 calls in 2024** to **351 calls in 2025**. As with any emergency service, annual call volume naturally fluctuates based on community needs, seasonal factors, and incident trends.

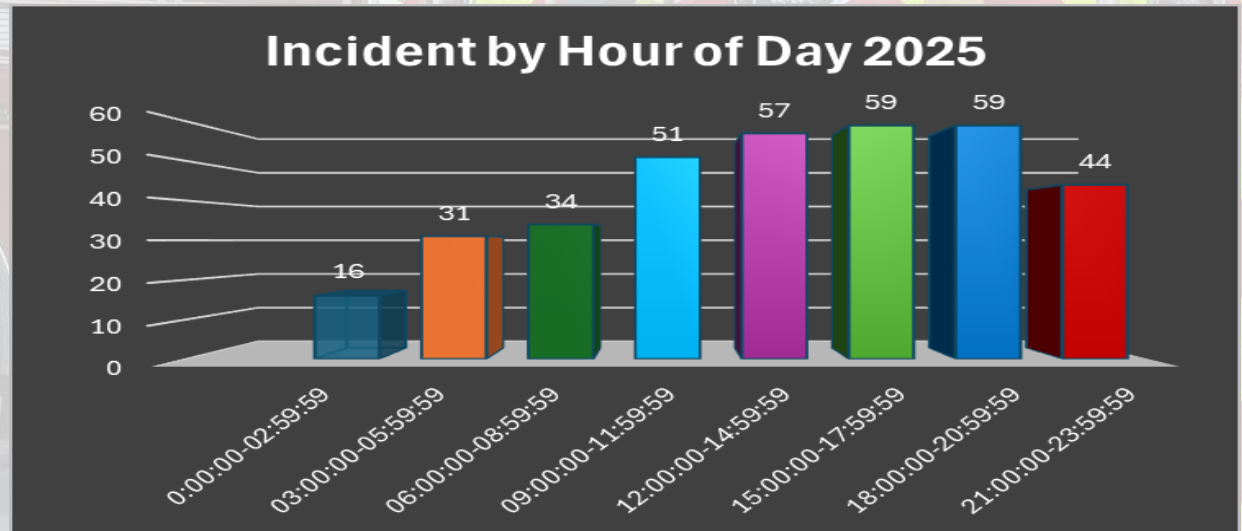
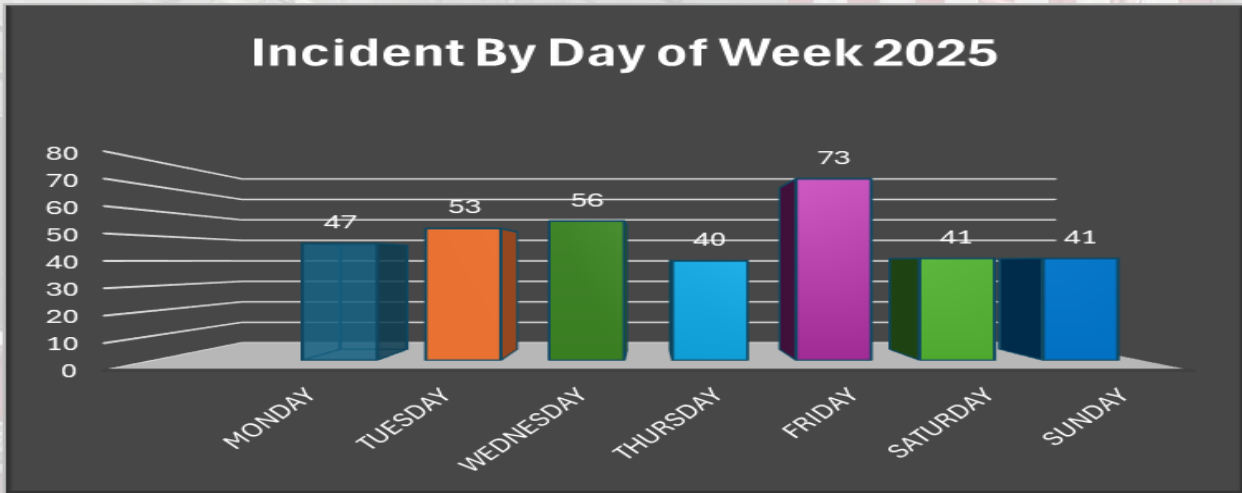
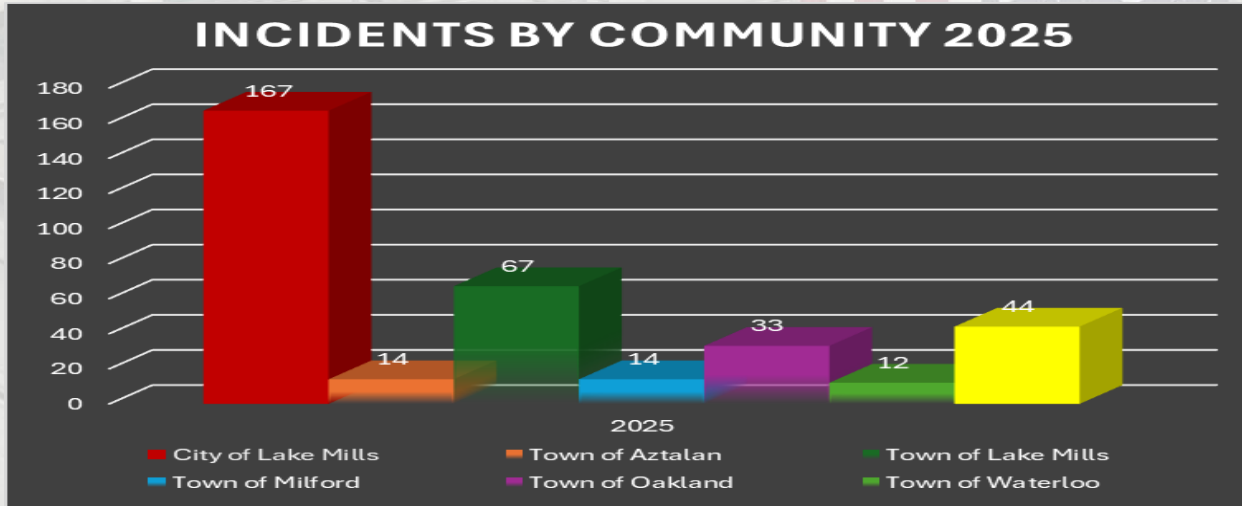
The chart below illustrates the year-over-year comparison between **2024** and **2025**, highlighting this increase in service demand.

Additional charts provide a breakdown of **daily call activity**, offering a clearer picture of how calls were distributed throughout each year. These visual summaries help identify patterns, peak activity periods, and overall workload trends for the department.

Community	2025	2024	% of change
City of Lake Mills	167	188	-11.17%
Town of Aztalan	14	7	100.00%
Town of Lake Mills	67	48	39.58%
Town of Milford	14	5	180.00%
Town of Oakland	33		
Town of Waterloo	12	16	-25.00%
Out of Service Area	44	33	33.33%



# Daily Activities



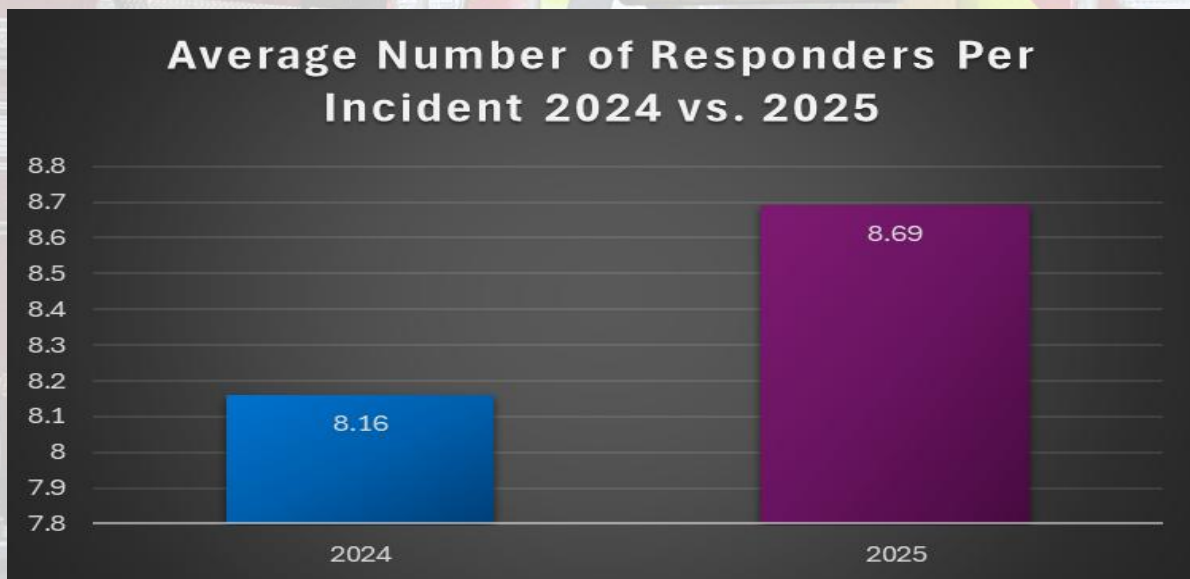
## Staffing and Availability Overview -- Combination Model

The success of a Paid-on-Call (POC)/Career fire department is directly tied to the availability of its members and the time they can dedicate to responding. The Lake Mills Fire Department provides protection to approximately **12,000 residents** across all communities within our service area.

Our current roster consists of 38 personnel — 2 career staff and 36 Paid-on-Call members. Of the POC staff, two work for a city department and are permitted to respond during their work hours, which significantly strengthens daytime coverage between 6:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.

However, staffing availability continues to shift. Personal schedules, family commitments, and lifestyle changes all influence response capacity. Additionally, more POC members are pursuing full-time careers with other departments, which further impacts our ability to maintain consistent coverage as they leave our department.

This evolving availability trend is an important concern and should remain a key focus as we plan for the coming years. Ensuring reliable staffing during all hours will be essential to sustaining the level of service our community expects.



## Property Value Protected and Fire Loss Overview

The Lake Mills Fire Department protects a significant amount of property value each year. This includes not only residential homes, but also commercial buildings, public infrastructure, vehicles, and other mobile property within our service area.

In 2025, LMFD responded to four major residential fires and one commercial fire in our response area. For each incident, LMFD personnel document the estimated property loss and compare it with the Jefferson County assessed property value. This process helps illustrate the financial impact of fire incidents and the value of the assets protected.

The graph below reflects this comparison, showing the relationship between estimated fire loss and the overall property values at risk during these incidents.





# Don't train till you get it right, train till you can't get it wrong!

## Training and Professional Development

The Lake Mills Fire Department trains consistently, holding structured department training on the first three Tuesdays of every month. This does not include the additional hours required for initial firefighter certification, EMS licensure, or specialized off-site training such as conferences, academies, and advanced skills courses.

In 2025, LMFD personnel logged over 3,100 total training hours. While this is a significant commitment, continuous improvement is essential in the fire service. There are always opportunities to refine skills, adapt to new techniques, and strengthen operational readiness.

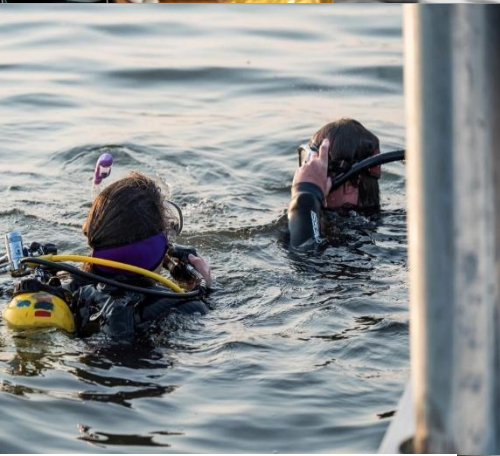
One of the most valuable training opportunities in 2025 was the ability to conduct an acquired structure live burn, generously provided by Lynn and Cary Perschke. The Perschke family contacted Chief Russ after determining that a property they planned to demolish might be useful for fire department training. Their generosity allowed LMFD to conduct extensive, realistic, scenario-based exercises.

From the 3,100 total hours logged in 2025, nearly 400 hours were completed in this single structure. Training evolutions included:

- **Search and Rescue**
- **Rapid Intervention Team (RIT)** operations, including rescuing downed firefighters
- **VEIS** (Vent, Enter, Isolate, Search) techniques
- **Live Fire Attack** under realistic conditions

This opportunity significantly enhanced the department's readiness and provided invaluable hands-on experience that cannot be replicated in a classroom setting.

We extend our sincere appreciation to Lynn and Cary Perschke for their support and for providing such a meaningful training environment.



# **Fire Prevention and Public Education Division**

**Captain, Joel S Theder**

## **Fire Prevention and Public Education Division**

The City of Lake Mills Fire Departments Division of Fire Prevention and Public Education is responsible for performing fire inspections in all public buildings, places of employment, and multi-family housing. Our mission is to ensure that residents are safe and being protected by making sure buildings and property owners are following the fire prevention codes. The Fire Prevention and Public Education Division are responsible for performing annual and bi-annual inspections for the entire City of Lake Mills, as well as in the surrounding townships of Aztalan, Lake Mills, Milford, Waterloo, and Oakland.

### **Fire Inspections**

In 2025 City of Lake Mills Fire Department was responsible for over 328 inspectable properties in the city and surrounding townships. These inspections are completed by one full time employee (Captain Joel Theder) and four additional paid-on-call firefighters (Lieutenant Josh Trumm, Lieutenant Ian Lehrer, Firefighter Roxanne Schneider, and Firefighter Caleb Gardner) all inspectors are State of Wisconsin Certified. Of the 343 inspectable properties 571 inspections were performed on these properties, of the 571 inspections performed 125 fire code violations were documented, and of the documented 125 fire code violations 50 were corrected. Aside from fire inspections, the City of Lake Mills Fire Department is also responsible for planning and testing review of new and existing fire alarm systems, new and existing sprinkler systems, and new construction plans. They also work with law enforcement, insurance investigators, insurance adjusters and State officials with fire cause and origin. They answer questions from the public on fire safety questions. They work with environmental companies that are performing environmental studies on properties and have questions about the history of the property in question.

### **Public Education**

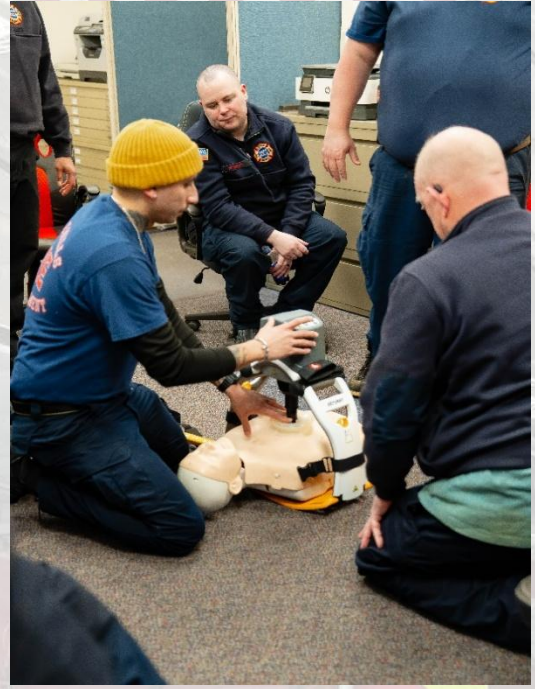
This year the fire prevention week theme for 2025 was “Charge Into Fire Safety – Lithium-Ion Batteries In Your Home”. The City of Lake Mills Fire

Prevention and Public Education Division delivered that fire safety message to our local youth by conducting fourteen classroom education sessions and three station tours, where we reached approximately over 1000 students. During fire prevention week the LMFD visited all the Lake Mills area daycares, preschools, and elementary schools. In 2025 the LMFD introduced a new piece of educational material to better deliver our message, an inflatable fire safety and education house was purchased by the LMFD membership and was added as part of our educational message. During these educational sessions, the students are reminded of the importance in having working smoke detectors in the home, as well as practicing their Exit Drills in The Home better known as “EDITH.” Over 3500 pieces of fire prevention educational materials were handed out to all students, and each grade of the Lake Mills Elementary School participated in the annual LMFD Fire Prevention Week Coloring Contest where a winner from each grade is selected and rewarded with a fire truck ride to school.



The City of Lake Mills Fire Department Fire Prevention and Public Education Division also provided additional fire safety educational opportunities to the Lake Mills community in 2025. Demonstrations on the proper use and safety of fire extinguishers are given to many local businesses, nursing homes, and the Lake

Mills School District on an annual basis. The LMFD also has two certified American Heart Association CPR/AED Instructors on staff which provide CPR/AED, First Aid, Bloodborne Pathogens, and Stop the Bleed training. During 2025 the LMFD conducted 17 CPR/AED and First Aid classes for community residents, businesses, and City of Lake Mills Staff.



### Public Relations – Community Enrichment

The City of Lake Mills Fire Department Fire Prevention and Public Education Division also believes in giving back and supporting the amazing community of Lake Mills that supports us throughout the year. So, through 2025 the LMFD participated in many community activities to get out and give back to the community. These activities consisted of the Fill the Boot Drive for Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA) of Wisconsin where this year the LMFD was awarded the Muscular Dystrophy Association of Wisconsin GOLDEN BOOT AWARD. This award is handed out to the highest earning non-union combination fire department in the State of Wisconsin. This year the LMFD raised \$10,877.00 which all goes to benefit local families and residents living with muscular

dystrophy to help them live happier and healthier lives. During the holiday season the LMFD has two major events that we participate in, first is the annual holiday food drive where the LMFD staff put out food collection barrels in the community from Mid-November to Mid-December, all food donations this year went to benefit our friends at the Rock Lake Manor and the Lake Mills Food Pantry, which provides support to families in need in the Lake Mills Community and Jefferson County. Second, the LMFD went out twice this year during the Christmas season and rang bells at The Lake Mills Market and Walgreens in support of the Salvation Army of Jefferson County, where all funds raised go to benefit families in need in the Jefferson County area. In 2025 the LMFD continued with the annual Touch a Truck Event which was sponsored and hosted by McDonald's. This event provided local youth and their families with the opportunity to get an up-close and personal look at fire apparatus, police vehicles, tow trucks, tractors, and DPW equipment. This event also allowed citizens an opportunity to ask questions and get to know their local responders in a relaxed environment.





In conclusion, 2025 was another successful year for the City of Lake Mills Fire Department and the Fire Prevention and Public Education Division. We implemented some innovative programs and activities, while promoting fire and life safety in a fun and educational environment. With 2025 complete we look forward to 2026 and another year of fun, community involvement, and continuous improvement as we continue to always put our professional foot forward.

## 2025 LMFD Public Relations Events

- Lakeside Lutheran High School Kinderfest Event - February
- Town of Oakland Dip for Dozer Event - February
- Lake Mills High School Boys Wrestling State Escort - February
- Read Across America Reading Event w/ Little Woodland Preschool - March
- CPR/AED Training for UW Healthcare Staff - March
- CPR/AED Training for Kuhl Korner Campus (2 days of training) - March
- CPR/AED Training for Real Hope Community Church (2 days of training) - March
- First Aid Training for Lake Mills Girl Scout Troop - April
- Lake Mills Young Men's Group Meeting and Training - April
- Lakeside Lutheran High School Physics Class Egg Drop - April
- Lake Mills High School Farm Safety and Fire Extinguisher Training - April
- Easter Bunny Drop Off at Commons Park for Easter Egg Hunt - April
- CPR/AED Training for Little Woodland Preschool – April
- LMPD Bike Rodeo (Standby EMS Coverage) - May
- 1<sup>st</sup> MDA Fill the Boot – May
- American Legion Memorial Day Service (LMFD Color Guard) – May
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Lake Mills McDonald's Touch the Truck Event – May
- Lake Mills High School Track and Field State Escort – June
- Lake Mills Optimist Club Junior Fishery- June
- National Night Out Against Crime w/ LMPD – June
- Lake Mills Town and Country Days Parade
- LMFD Day at the Legion Slider Trailer for Town and Country Days – June
- Little Woodland Preschool Fire Station Tour – July
- LMFD Standby for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Fire Works – July
- Watertown Annual Lights and Sirens Event – July
- Stop, Drop, and Roll Pet Fire Safety Event – July
- CPR/AED Training for Lake Mills School District Coaching Staff – July
- Lake Mills High School Varsity Football Game (EMS Coverage) – August
- CPR/AED Training for Lake Mills Community – August
- CPR/AED Training for Lake Mills School District Teachers (3 days of training) – August
- LMFD Day at the Legion Slider Stand Downtown
- Lakeside High School Varsity Football Game (EMS Coverage) – August
- Lake Mills High School Varsity Football Game (EMS Coverage) – September
- LMFD Scoops and Ladders Event w/ Jerzey Junction – September
- Lakeside High School Varsity Football Game (EMS Coverage) – September
- Lakeside High School Varsity Football Game (EMS Coverage) – September

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- A photograph of a fire truck in a fire station. The truck is red with yellow and red reflective stripes. It has a white door with a fire department emblem and the number '8882'. An American flag is hanging in the background. The text is overlaid on the image.
- **2<sup>nd</sup> MDA Fill the Boot – September**
  - **Lake Mills High School Homecoming Bonfire – October**
  - **Lake Mills High School Homecoming Parade - October**
  - **Lakeside High School Homecoming Parade - October**
  - **Lake Mills High School Varsity Football Game (EMS Coverage) – October**
  - **Lakeside High School Varsity Football Game (EMS Coverage) – October**
  - **2025 Fire Prevention Week Activities at all Lake Mills Schools and Daycares – October**
  - **Crystal Farms Fire Extinguisher Training – October**
  - **Lake Mills Home Schooled Kids Station Tour – October**
  - **Lake Mills High School Tennis Team State Escort – October**
  - **Lake Mills High School Varsity Football Game (EMS Coverage) – October**
  - **Lakeside High School Varsity Football Game (EMS Coverage) – October**
  - **Lakeside Lutheran High School Career Day Presentation**
  - **Lake Mills High School Varsity Football Game (EMS Coverage) – October**
  - **CPR/AED Training for Little Woodland Preschool – October**
  - **Lake Mills Elementary School 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Station Tour – October**
  - **2025 Lake Mills Witches Night Out – October**
  - **Lake Mills High School Varsity Football Game (EMS Coverage) – October**
  - **Annual LMFD Holiday Food Drive - November**
  - **Deliver Santa Claus for Annual Lake Mills Tree Lighting – December**
  - **Ring Bells for Salvation Army at Lake Mills Market and Walgreens – December**
  - **Ring Bells for Salvation Army at Lake Mills Market and Walgreens – December**

