

# Same number as last year: Godfrey Fire Protection District releases 2017 annual report

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**GODFREY** - The Godfrey Fire Protection District responded to 1,971 calls in 2017, which is the exact same amount as 2016.

In a report released from Godfrey Fire Chief Erik Kambarian, those calls are separated into their natures and incidents. The majority of the calls were for medical emergencies

at 1,493 followed by people falling with 347 calls. Of the fall calls, 217 were for an uninjured person requesting a lift assistance.

Of the medical calls, 776 were for basic life support, 90 were for advanced life support and 14 involved the administration of Narcan, which is described as a "miracle drug" designed to prevent overdose victims from dying.

Fires were the least common calls to the Godfrey Fire Protection District, with only 69 confirmed fires. Of those, 15 were structure fires, 12 were vehicle fires and 28 were brush, grass or wildland fires. Only one civilian was injured during a structure fire.

Motor vehicle and machinery accidents were the cause for 108 calls to the department, of those, 68 involved injuries and only three required extensive extraction.

February was the busiest month with 186 calls, and August was the slowest with 133.

Chief Kambarian also said the department's fleet is aging "despite significant investment in repair and maintenance." Two 1998 rescue pumpers suffer mechanical problems, despite the ability they have to respond to a wide variety of medical and fire emergencies.

As far as community outreach is concerned, more than 1,700 children and 900 adults were able to take part in community events, school visits, CPR classes, CPR community events, car seat installations and smoke detector installations. As many as 350 people attended the district's open house this year.

The district also participated in several community events such as the Village of Godfrey Easter Egg Hunt, Kidcation and a Backstoppers event at the Alton-Wood River Sportsman club in Godfrey.

Through combined efforts with the Red Cross, 31 smoke detectors were installed in Godfrey and 46 car seats were installed. This year, the district will add an additional car seat technician.

Last year was also the seventh year of the district's business inspection program, which helps businesses ensure commercial properties are safe to the public. All three shifts performed more than 250 inspections, and less than five percent required interventions by the Godfrey Fire Protection District and the Godfrey Building and Zoning Administrator.

One of those businesses was the Hiway House Motor Inn, which has since been demolished following a multi-year effort, which documented a "variety of code

violations" including a fire alarm described as "troublesome" and a missing smoke detector in a room with several children, which was not deemed safe for occupancy at the time.

Training also plays a huge role within the Godfrey Fire Protection District. Firefighter Jacob Elder organized a real-time drill testing the department's preparedness for hazardous materials. Elder is the training coordinator for the Madison County Hazardous Materials Team, and the September 2017 drill validated the district's "hazmat engine" as a rapid response resource for the county's hazmat team.

The district received several grants throughout 2017 as well. Those included the following:

- \$1,000 from Illinois American Water Company for a fire hose
- \$13,657 from Illinois Public Risk Fund for personal protective equipment
- Annual assistance from Bowers Towing
- Memorial donations in remembrance from Keith Sanders
- Rope Rescue Course tuition waivers from Phillips 66 Wood River Refinery
- Donations from Godfrey first United Methodist Church for cardiac arrest equipment

The report was dedicated in honor of Keith Sanders who died on January 16, 2017. Sanders was a volunteer at the Godfrey Fire Protection District from Feb. 1960 through Oct. 1981. He retired at the rank of captain.