



Geneva Fire Department Annual Report



2021

GENEVA FIRE DEPARTMENT

47 CASTLE STREET
GENEVA, NEW YORK 14456
315 - 789 - 6305



FIRE COMMISSIONERS
Donald F. McGuigan
Gary S. Passalacqua
Donald A. Wheeler

FIRE CHIEF
Michael A. Combs

ASSISTANT FIRE CHIEFS
Kevin J. Powers
James F. McCormack
John G. Wright, Jr.

On behalf of the women and men of the Geneva Fire Department, I am honored to present the 2021 Annual Fire Report. This report is a snapshot of the combined efforts of the department throughout 2021, but it does not represent how proud I am of the time, dedication and sacrifice my team has displayed.

Year to year the brave men and women of the Geneva Fire Department continue to represent the core values of this department and show their community just what they are made of. From career to volunteer, recruit to veteran, the professionalism, courage and selflessness they display is truly complimentary of the term “Geneva’s Bravest.”

There were no major changes between 2020 and 2021. We were still adjusting to ever changing pandemic guidelines and we never wavered on our mission to protect this great city. Our department mission is essential. We needed to adapt to provide the same level of emergency service to the community and we exceeded that standard.

Our call volume was up about 18% from 2020, but was more on trend with “pre-covid” years. Our code inspection program is back on track and fire prevention programs are returning to normal. Overall training hours and participation didn’t fluctuate and morale seems to be on an upswing. The Hook & Ladder company finished the specifications and ordered the City’s new ladder truck. Our career staff saw 2 retirements and 2 new hires. We also were able to recruit 16 new volunteers throughout our 3 volunteer companies.

I would like to take this time to officially thank my entire team for their outstanding efforts this year. I would also like to thank the City Manager, Mayor, City Council, Geneva Police department, mutual aid agencies, OCSO dispatchers, DPW, City Staff and the front-line workers for the amazing efforts in keeping the city safe.

Respectfully,

Michael A. Combs, Fire Chief

Fire Prevention through Education



MISSION STATEMENT

The combined efforts of the volunteer and paid staff of the Geneva Fire Department shall always be directed towards a fire safe community. The fire department shall attempt to educate the community on all matters of fire safety, while maintaining a well-equipped and properly trained fire suppression force.

FIREFIGHTER CODE OF ETHICS

As a firefighter and member of the Geneva Fire Department, my fundamental duty is to serve the community; to safeguard and preserve life and property against the elements of fire and disaster; and maintain a proficiency in the art and science of fire engineering.

I will uphold the standards of my profession, continually search for new and improved methods and share my knowledge and skills with my contemporaries and successors.

I will not allow personal feelings, nor danger to self, deter me from my responsibilities as a firefighter.

I will at all times, respect the property and rights of all men and women, the laws of my community and my country, and the chosen way of life of my fellow citizens.

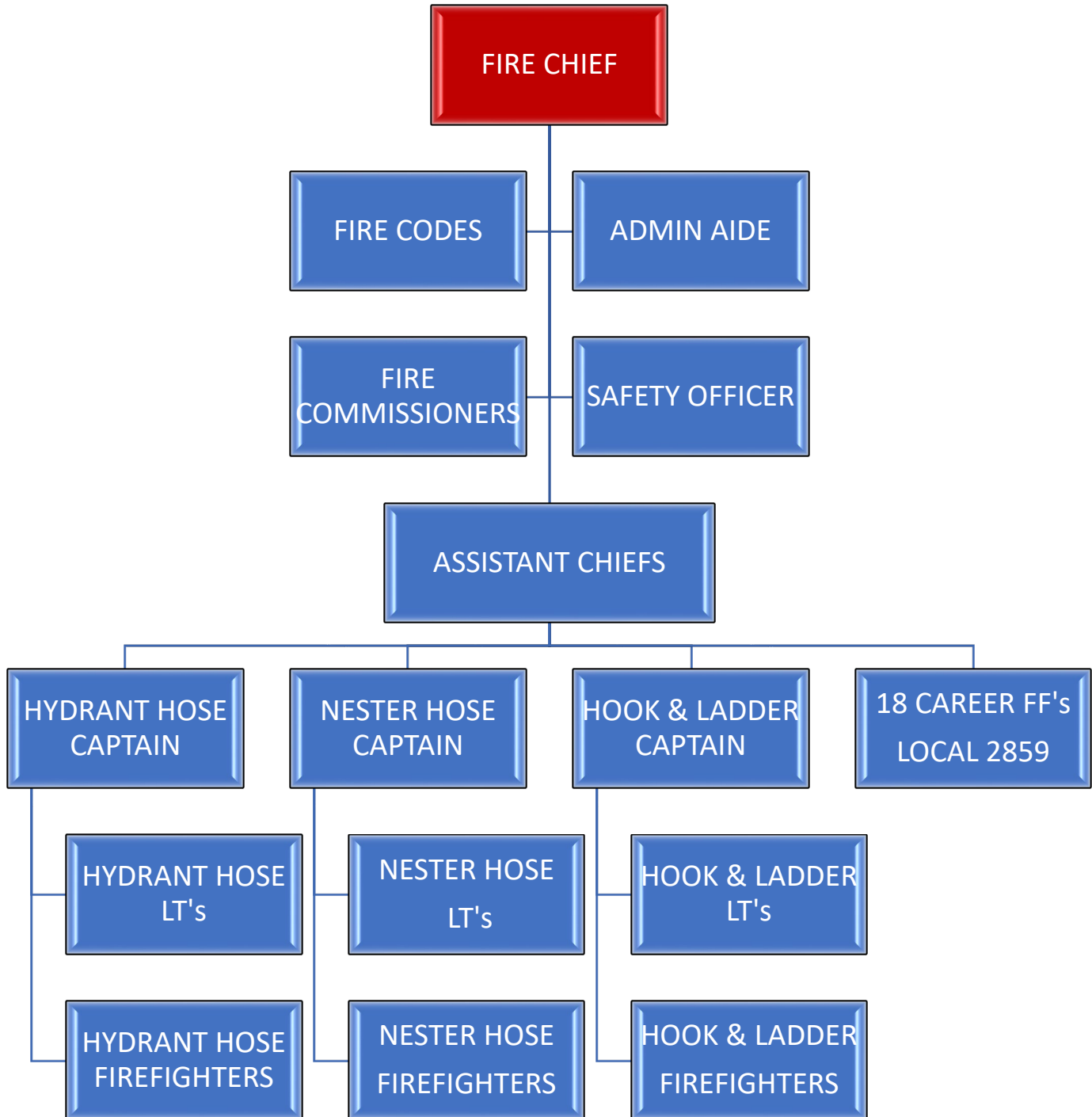
I recognize the badge of my office as a symbol of public faith, and I accept it as a public trust to be held so long as I am true to the ethics of the fire service. I will never use my official position to obtain advantages or favors for myself, my friends or family.

I will constantly strive to achieve the objectives and ideals, dedicating myself to my chosen profession—saving of life, fire prevention and fire suppression.

As a member of the Geneva Fire Department, I accept this self-imposed and self-enforced obligation as my responsibility.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The Geneva Fire Department is a combination department that is comprised of 3 volunteer fire companies, a career firefighting staff, a fire codes division and 2 administrative aides.



DEPARTMENT ADMINISTRATION

MICHAEL COMBS - FIRE CHIEF

DON MCGUIGAN - FIRE COMMISSIONER

GARY PASSALACQUA - FIRE COMMISSIONER

DON WHEELER - FIRE COMMISSIONER

KEVIN POWERS - ASSISTANT CHIEF/SAFETY OFFICER

JAMES MCCORMACK - ASSISTANT CHIEF

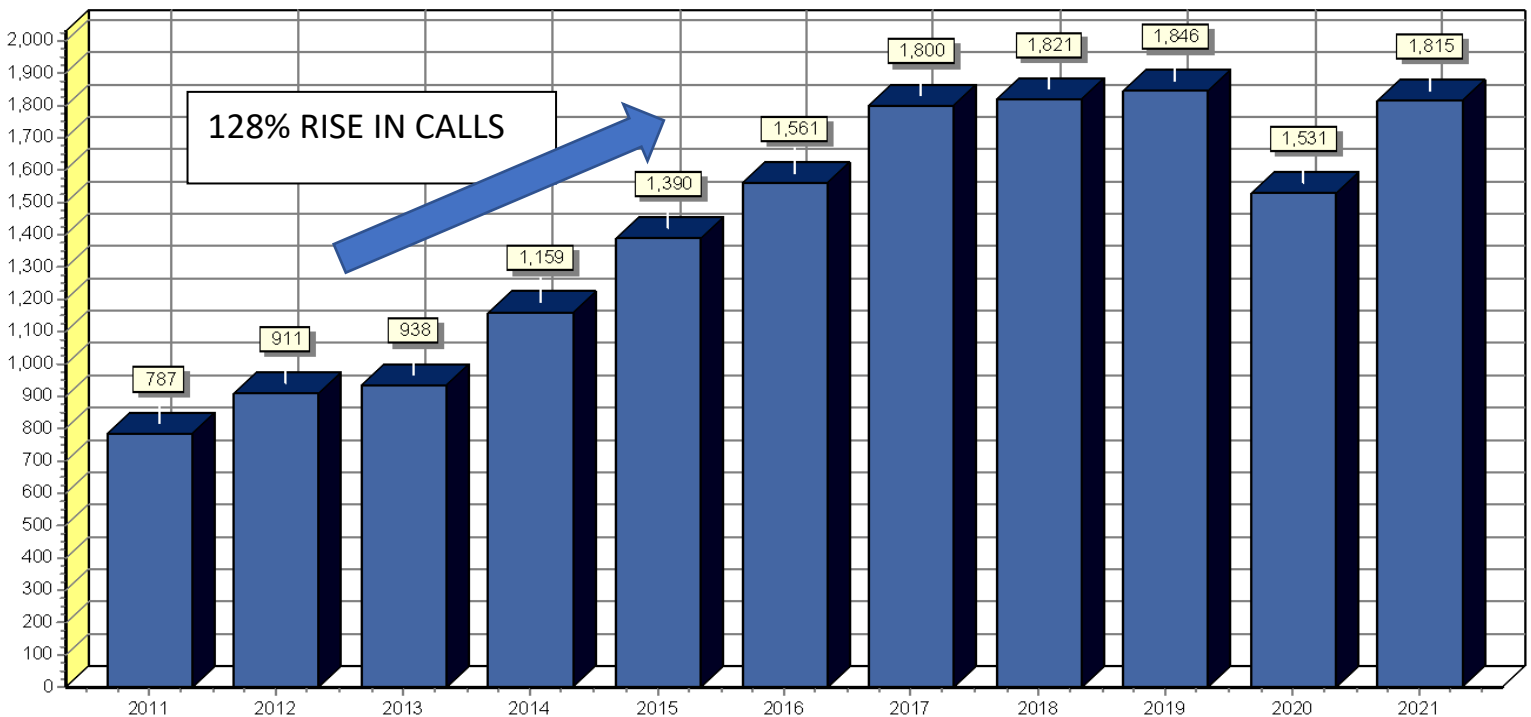
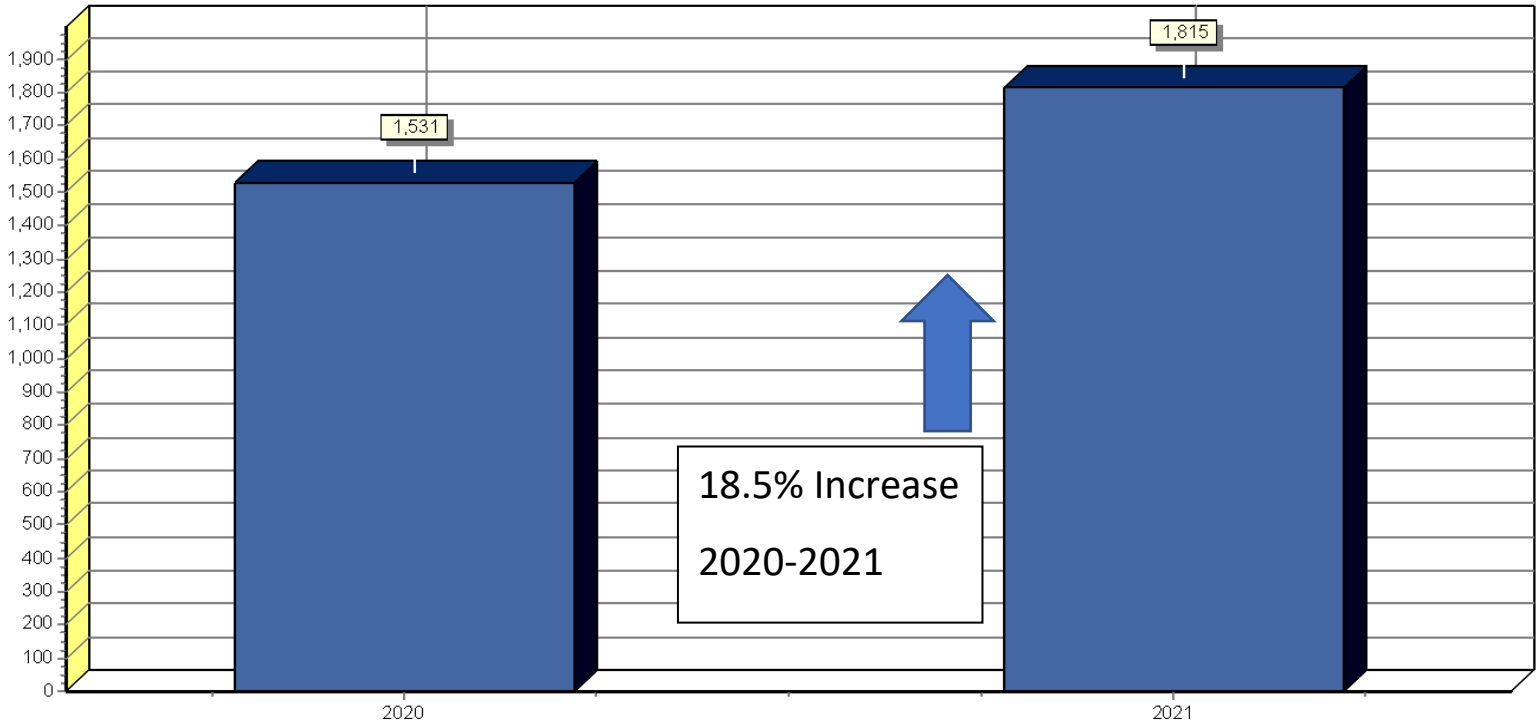
JOHN WRIGHT - ASSISTANT CHIEF

ANNE ALAIMO - ADMINISTRATIVE AIDE

LAUREN KARLSEN – ADMINISTRATIVE AIDE [FIRE/CODES]

CALL VOLUME

In 2021 the Geneva Fire Department responded to 1815 calls for service. This is an 18.5% increase from 2020. The call volume was most likely lower in 2020 due to the pandemic. The total call volume for 2021 is on par with a 5-year trend. On a 10-year analysis, the department has seen call volumes rise 128% from 2011 to 2017 then level off over the past 5 years. The increase over the 10-year period is most likely due to the reorganization of fire dispatch and the development of a more robust code enforcement program.



CALL RESPONSE DATA

The Geneva Fire Department responds to all types of incidents ranging from a large-scale commercial building fire to a vehicle leaking fluid. On the next page is two charts depicting incident type by percentage of 1815 total calls for service for 2021 and the time it took for each category. The calls are broken into the following 7 general categories:

FIRE – Any fire in a structure, vehicle, trash container, or brush/grass.

RESCUE & EMS – Motor vehicle accident, entrapments, rope, water & ice rescue, CPR or First Aid, drownings, assistance given to ambulance services.

HAZARDOUS CONDITION – Gasoline/fuel spills, natural/propane leaks, carbon monoxide leaks, oil spills, power lines down, accident clean ups, etc.

SERVICE CALL- Fire safety inspections, lock outs, water problems, smoke/odor removal, animal rescues, assisting police or other agencies, mutual aid standby, etc.

GOOD INTENT CALL – Any call that is dispatched but cancelled prior to arrival, calls where no emergency was found, authorized controlled burning, etc.

FALSE ALARM - Fake or prank call, unintentional transmission of alarms, bomb scares, system malfunctions, etc.

SEVERE WEATHER/NATURAL DISASTERS – Floods, wind storms, lightning strikes, tornados, earthquakes, etc.

SNAPSHOT OF LARGER EMERGENCIES IN 2021

TOTAL OF **45** FIRES

82 MOTOR VEHICLE ACCIDENTS

3 LARGE HAZMAT INCIDENTS

25 CARDIAC ARRESTS/CPR CALLS

10 OVERDOSE/NARCAN RESPONSES

WATER SALVAGE & CLEAN UP AT GENEVA GENERAL HOSPITAL LABRATORY

135 WEATHER RELATED/ STORM EMERGENCIES (59 IN ONE EVENING)

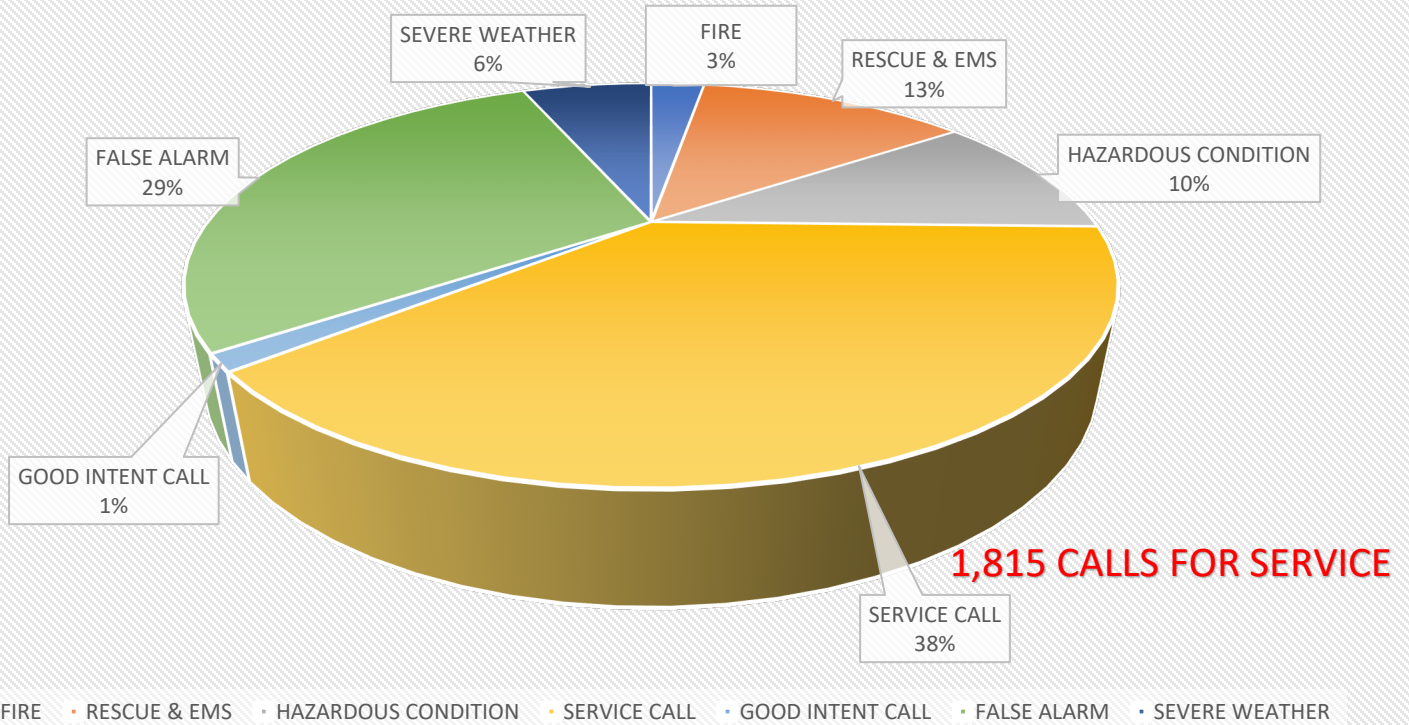


CALL RESPONSE DATA

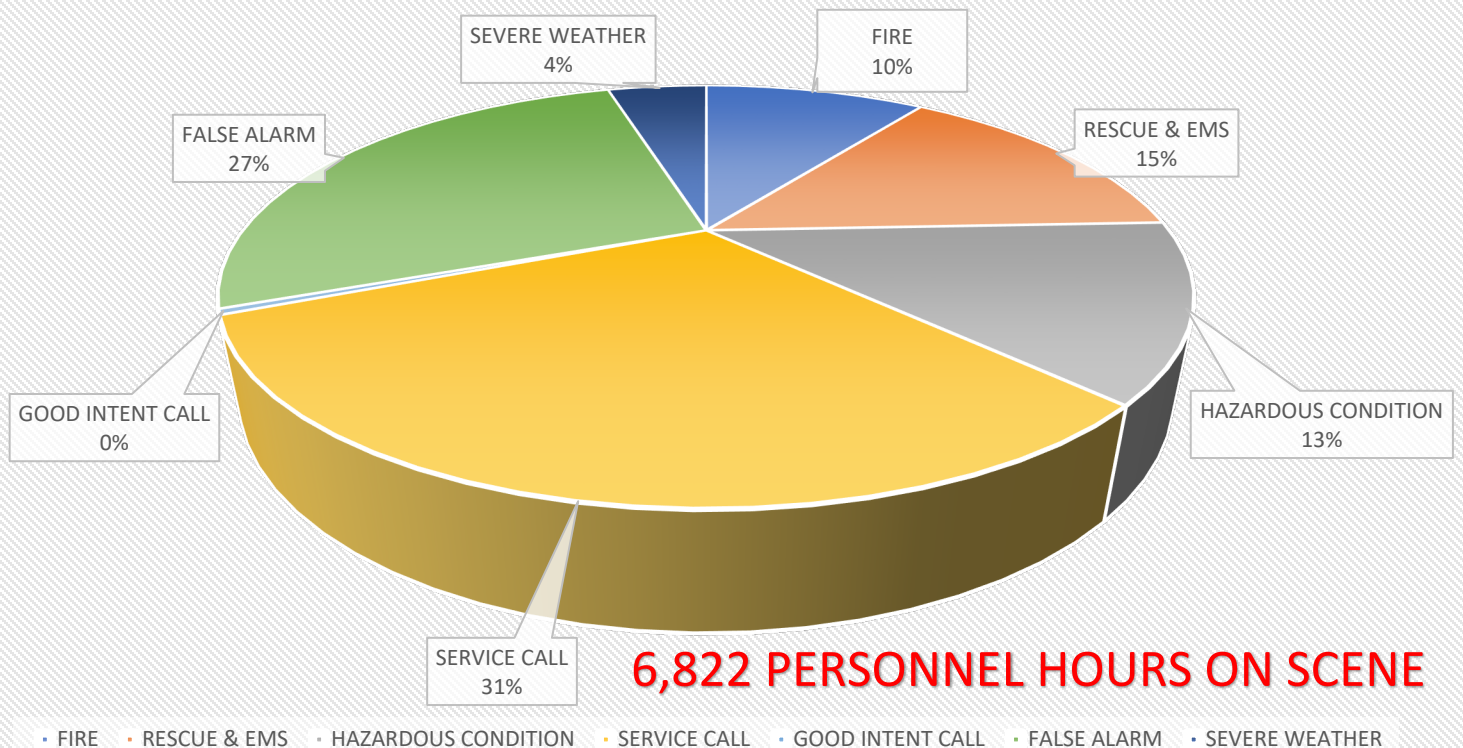
Comparison of incident types and time required for mitigation.

Example: FIRE accounted for 3% of our total calls, but accounted for 10% of our total time.

INCIDENT TYPE BY PERCENTAGE 2021



PERCENTAGE OF TIME ON INCIDENTS 2021



TRAINING REPORT

Training is one of the most important components of a good safe fire department. Continuing education in the fire service is necessary due to ever-evolving technology, advancements in building materials and developments in safety research. The Geneva Fire Department has always prided ourselves on a training program that is relevant, repetitive and realistic. Each year all department members receive basic and specialized training based on their duties. These trainings include: Hazard Ops/Recognition, Fire Station Safety, Response Safety, Fire Scene Safety, Protective Clothing, S.C.B.A. training, Tool & Equipment, New Developments, Hazardous Communications, Bloodborne Pathogens, Confined Space, FF Health & Wellness, Emergency Escape System Training CPR/AED/First aid & Vehicle Extrication.

In addition to these, volunteer members are required to attend individual company trainings monthly and career staff must maintain a minimum of 100 hours each of in-service training.

2021 TRAINING HIGHLIGHTS

5,468 total training hours

4 FF's became certified Emergency Medical Technicians

1 FF completed the Recruit Fire Fighter Academy

1 FF completed Rope Rescue Technician course

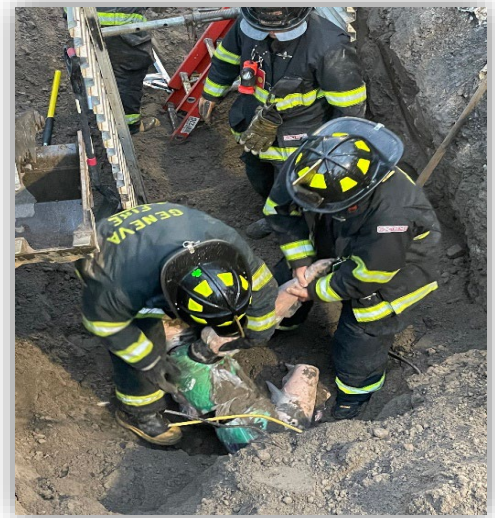
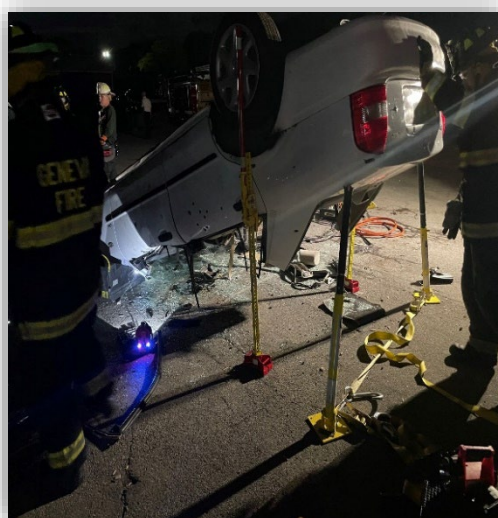
15 FF's Recertified as Building Safety Inspectors

3 FF's Recertified as Code Enforcement Officers

1 FF Certified as Code Enforcement Officer

Completed initial recruit training for 2 new career FF

All staff completed Harassment, Workplace Violence, Diversity/Equity/Inclusion training

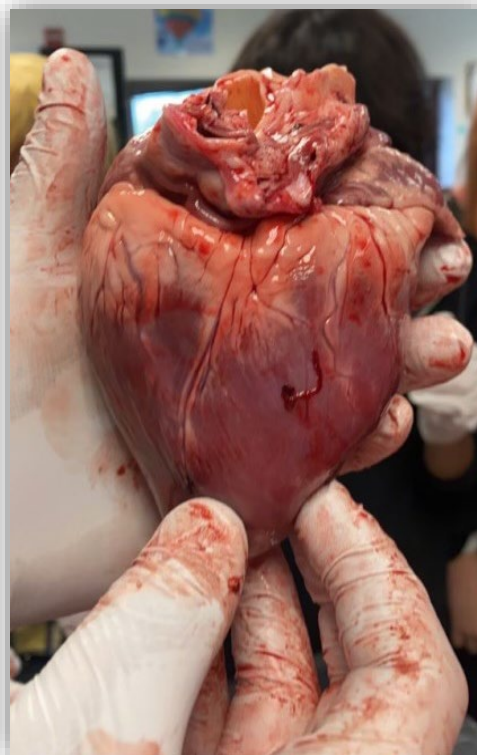


TRAINING REPORT

In addition to the many hours our department spends training, we also offer a variety of outreach training opportunities to businesses, Geneva community, schools and city staff. Even this year with the pandemic still looming, we were able to conduct a substantial amount of outreach classes.

2021 OUTREACH TRAINING HIGHLIGHTS

- CPR/AED Training for Smith Opera House
- CPR/AED Training for entire Geneva Police Department
- CPR/AED/First Aid training for 32 DPW staff
- Stop The Bleed course for Geneva Police Department
- Fire Extinguisher training for city staff
- Anatomy dissection/demonstration for Geneva Middle School
- Fire Extinguisher training for multiple Geneva businesses
- Emergency Escape System Training for Town Fire Dept.
- Vehicle Extrication Drill for FLCC/HWS Students
- HWS Resident Advisor Fire Safety training



FIRE PREVENTION

"Fire prevention through education" is the motto for the Geneva Fire Department, and we take it very seriously. It is a fact-based model and data confirms it. The more we can educate the public, the more fires we prevent. The fire service is typically a reactive force; however, fire prevention is a proactive step we are proud and motivated to participate in. Every year we have tried new approaches to educate the public and this year was no different with the restrictions from the pandemic protocols.

2021 FIRE PREVENTION EFFORTS

Developed and distributed fire prevention videos to city schools

Conducted fire drills in all city schools

Hosted fire station tours to home schoolers and local residents

Spoke at senior citizen facilities about fire and cooking safety

Conducted fire drills at large manufacturing facility

Delivered fire safety talks to local preschools, daycares and summer camps

Partnered with American Red Cross to install smoke detectors in 41 city residences



CODE ENFORCEMENT

Much like a good fire prevention program, code enforcement is another step in a proactive approach towards saving lives. The fire department has a large role in the City's Code enforcement program. The Fire Chief also serves as the Fire Marshall and his staff are all certified as Code Enforcement Officers or Building Safety Inspectors. All career firefighters attend a basic codes school and must accomplish refresher training every year to stay certified. Some typical things that the fire department inspectors look for in a routine inspection could be but not limited to: working smoke detectors, proper fire extinguishing systems, emergency lighting, clear exit pathways, property maintenance, electrical hazards, flammable storage, etc. On duty firefighters are available to conduct fire safety inspections 7 days a week.

2021 FIRE CODE INSPECTION DATA

Total Inspections: **332**

Commercial Inspections: **198**

Residential Units: **646** Units (no residential inspections Jan-Mar due to covid)

Re-inspections: **140**

Fire system, sprinkler, Ansul system tests: **10**

Large venue tent inspection: **5**

Inspect all festival food vendors for proper fire safety

Inspect all K-12 educational buildings

COMMUNITY INVOLVMENT

Participated in Golisano's Children's Hospital "Good Night Lights"

Assisted local safety workers with breathing apparatus requirements

Worked with local film crew on movie special effects and pyrotechnics

Provided a multitude of birthday, daycare & holiday escorts/drive-bys

Participated in several parades and neighborhood events

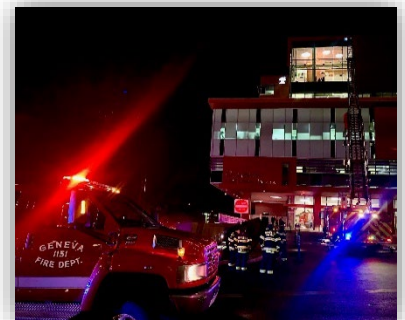
Escorted sports teams back home after benchmark victories

Supported local marathons and lakefront events

Cleaned up graffiti in several public locations

Conducted event fire watch for large venues

Attended several career days



APPARATUS

The Geneva Fire Department operates and maintains a fleet of 8 fire service vehicles; 3 Class A fire engines, 1 ladder truck, 1 Rescue, 1 mini pumper and 2 utility vehicles. The career staff perform daily and weekly inspections of the fleet. They also are responsible for minor repairs, cleaning, washing and waxing. Every year the career staff assist fleet services in pump recertification testing. The staff also pressure test every inch of hose annually.

Replacement of fire apparatus is based on a national standard and serviceability. In 2021 a new ladder truck was purchased and construction began. It has an expected delivery of April 2022. The new truck will be replacing our 2000 Pierce Sky Arm with a 2022 Pierce Ascendant.



2021 APPARATUS USE & RESPONSE DATA

2006 ENGINE 11 – 525 RESPONSES. 313 HOURS OF USE

2002 ENGINE 12 – 386 RESPONSES. 208 HOURS OF USE

2012 ENGINE 13 – 536 RESPONSES. 316 HOURS OF USE

2000 LADDER 81 – 442 RESPONSES. 284 HOURS OF USE

2017 RESCUE 71 – 770 RESPONSES. 512 HOURS OF USE

2009 MINI 51 – 192 RESPONSES. 108 HOURS OF USE

2009 UTILITY 61 – 291 RESPONSES. 198 HOURS OF USE

2016 UTILITY 110 – 178 RESPONSES. 102 HOURS OF USE



RETIREMENTS

The Geneva Fire Department would like to thank 2 members of the career staff for their service and wish them a long, happy and healthy retirement.

2021 RETIREES



FF Michael McCormack retired in January after 32 years of service. During his service FF McCormack also served as Union President, Municipal Fire Instructor, Code Enforcement officer and the operator of Rescue 1.



FF Ted Smith retired in September after 20 years of service. During his service FF Smith also served as Union president, Building Safety Inspector and the operator of Truck 81.



NEW RECRUITS

Recruitment and retention have been on a downward trend in the fire service globally for the past few years. This is believed to be attributed to more stringent requirements, economy, pandemic, etc. We are looking forward to finding new ways to find qualified and motivated citizens that want to help their communities through volunteering as well as finding and retaining quality career staff to replace retirees. This year we welcomed 16 new volunteers and 2 new career recruits!



In February, we welcomed Probationary Firefighter Nicholas Raplee to the team. Nick comes to us from the United States Air Force and has served as a Firefighter for the past 10 years. He is also a volunteer Firefighter with the Nester Hose Co.

In September, we welcomed Probationary Firefighter Christopher Campbell to the team. Chris was working at the city wastewater treatment plant and has a degree in engineering. He is also a volunteer Firefighter with the Hydrant Hose Co.



FIRE DEPARTMENT HISTORY

The first organized fire protection afforded by the then Village of Geneva began in 1806 when three fire wardens were hired to patrol the streets looking for fires. In 1816, the first fire department was organized.

By 1851, Geneva was protected by five volunteer fire companies. In 1866, the Village purchased its first hand drawn, steam driven pump to supply fire fighters with a more reliable source of water.

In 1870, the fire department was reorganized to be manned entirely by paid fire fighters that drove horse drawn fire engines.



In 1880, the Hydrant Hose Company was founded. The Hydrant Hose still serves the City as the oldest volunteer fire company in Geneva. The Hydrant Hose serves as the first due engine company manning Engines 1111, 1112 and 1151.



Two more volunteer companies were formed six years later. In February 1886, the C.J. Folger Hook and Ladder Company was founded, followed a month later by the Nester Hose Company. Both companies continue to serve the citizens of Geneva to this day.

The Hook and Ladder unanimously voted to name the company after Charles J. Folger, a former resident and fire fighter of Geneva.

Folger, who was born in Nantucket, Mass., moved to Geneva when he was 12. A graduate of Hobart College, he was admitted to the bar in 1839 and rose steadily through the ranks serving as the president of the Geneva Village Board of Trustees, a State Senator, and Secretary of the Treasury in the Cabinet of President Chester A. Arthur.

The Hook and Ladder is the City's first due truck company manning Quint 1181

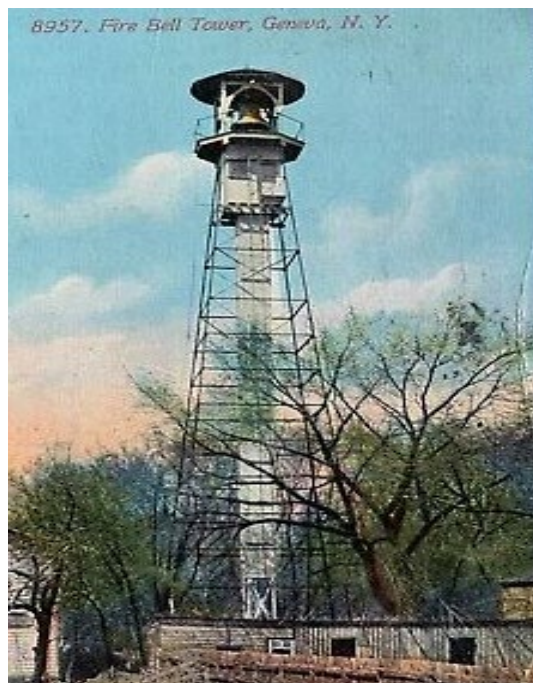


The Nester Hose is named after the Company's founder, Samuel K. Nester. Nester was a prominent Geneva businessman. He owned the Nester Malt House and the Nester, later the Seneca Hotel. Nester also served as the company's first president.

The Nester Hose is the City's second due engine company, manning Engine 1113.



Also in 1886, Geneva installed its first fire alarm bell on Seneca Street to alert volunteers of an emergency. The bell was moved to the corner of William and Pulteney streets in 1891, and replaced by the fire horn in 1966.



By 1890, Geneva was protected by seven volunteer fire companies: the Hydrant Hose, the C.J. Folger Hook and Ladder, the Nester Hose, the Ogoyago Hose, the Black Diamond Hose, the Kanadasaga Hose, and the Holtz Protectives.

In 1898, the first chemical wagon was bought by Geneva and driven by a paid driver out of the Hydrant Hose Station. The chemical wagon was the first motorized fire engine in Geneva. Five years later, the Nester Hose Company accepted delivery of an American LaFrance fire engine that was also driven by a paid driver.

In 1924, Louis McGuigan became the department's first career fire chief. After 34 years of dedicated service, McGuigan retired making room for Carlton J. Naegele to become the City's second chief in 1958.

Naegele continued to update the department's equipment, purchasing the first diesel engines in 1971. The following year the City's volunteers donated a rescue truck to the department. In 1974, the department's apparatus upgrade continued with the first aerialscope in Upstate New York.

After 28 years of service, Naegele handed over the reins of the department to Ralph DeBolt in 1987. DeBolt prepared the Geneva Fire Department for the 21st century,

introducing Enhanced-911 in 1995, computerizing the department's reports and training records, and, of course, putting the department on the World Wide Web.

In 1996, the Geneva Fire Department responded to a then record 806 incidents, including 105 calls for assistance in a 12-hour period on the busiest day in the history of the department, January 19.

In 1998, the Folger Hook and Ladder and the Nester Hose moved from their station behind City Hall, which was built in 1813, to a state-of-the-art facility on Genesee Street.

The new station also paved the way for the arrival of Quint 1181. The new apparatus, which arrived in 2000, is longer than its predecessor and would not have fit in the old station. The 2000 Pierce Sky-Arm is the first of its kind in New York State, has a reach of 100 feet - 25 more than the 1974 Mack-Baker it replaced - and also features a 2,000 gallon per minute pump - a feature not present on the Mack-Baker.

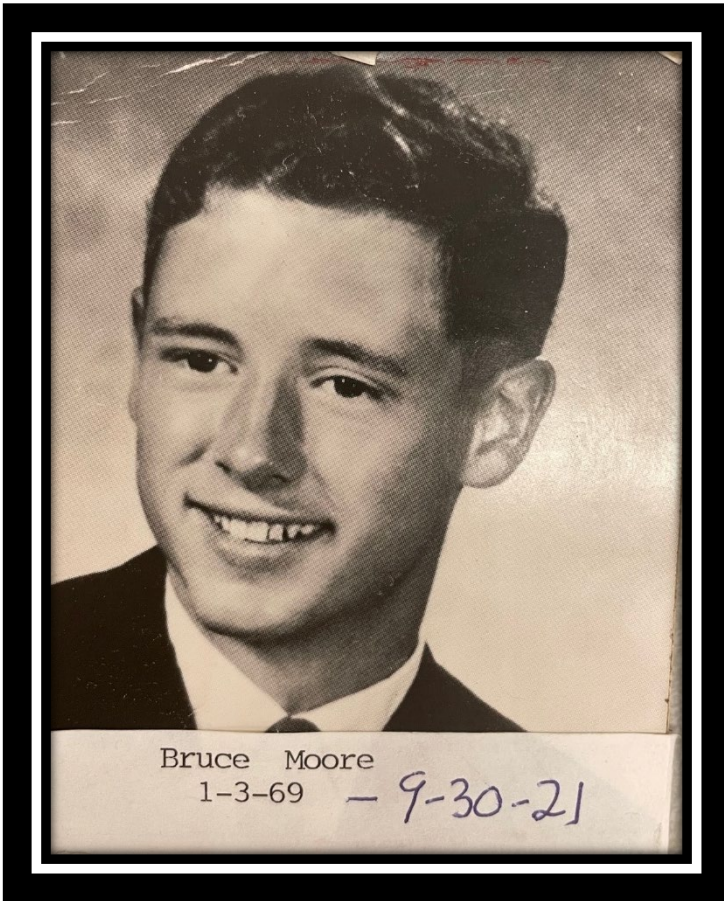
In March of 2005, Bruce Moore was appointed Chief of the Department after serving as Assistant Chief of the Hydrant Hose Company for 14 years.

In August of 2011, Michael A. Combs was appointed Chief of the Department after serving as a career staff firefighter and municipal fire instructor.



Pictured L-R: Chief's McGuigan, Naegele, DeBolt, Moore & Combs

IN MEMORY



In 2021 the Geneva Fire Department lost Past Chief Bruce Moore. Chief Moore served as City Fire Chief from 2005-2011. Prior to that he was an Assistant Chief for 14 years. He joined the Department in 1969 as a firefighter and served in many capacities until his appointment as Chief. Chief Moore was very active in the fire service and enjoyed participating on the fireground as well as administration. Some of the other titles held were 2nd lieutenant, 1st lieutenant, Captain, Vice President, President, Secretary, Board of Directors & City Fire Commissioner. Our thoughts and thanks are with the entire Moore family. You will be missed by many. Thank you for your 52 years of dedicated service to the citizens of Geneva and all the members of the GFD, we'll take it from here. Rest easy sir.