



2024 ANNUAL REPORT

DURANGO FIRE & RESCUE



MISSION

RESPOND, PROTECT, CARE FOR ALL.
SERVICE WITH HONOR.
WE ARE DURANGO FIRE & RESCUE.

VALUES

SERVICE FOR ALL...

THROUGH: HARD WORK,
DEDICATION, PROFESSIONALISM.

WITH: RESPECT, INTEGRITY,
COURAGE.



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EMS ADMINISTRATION DIVISION







FROM THE CHIEF

RANDY BLACK

2024 was a great year for Durango Fire & Rescue. In the first full year as Fire Chief, I am incredibly proud of the men and women who work tirelessly to take care of our community. They have continually exceeded the expectations of our customers, including patient care, rescues, fires, calls for service, or anyone in need. I can't tell you the number of calls, emails or texts I receive complimenting our staff on their compassion, the quality of care, and the amazing service. It is truly an honor to work with such dedicated team members to care for our community.

There were many accomplishments during the past year. First, we did our first ever community-driven Strategic Plan. Our organization has continued to develop since the consolidation in 2002. We went from an IGA to a Fire District, worked on adequate funding, then needed to get a formal path forward to ensure we met the needs and expectations of our community. Our Strategic Plan has been accepted by the Board of Directors, and we are working to finish the implementation of the plan, which we'll publish on our website.

Another accomplishment during 2024 was moving into the new Administration Building at 103 Sheppard Drive. This allowed us to divest ourselves from the 104 Sheppard Drive building and allow the Training Division and Operational Staff at Station 1 to have more adequate space in which to operate. It also added four more conference rooms to our capacity, which are frequently all in use. Our Board meetings are also held in the new building, freeing up the Training Room for training classes.

We received two fire apparatus that we ordered in 2022 during the year. First was a 4x4 Engine to serve the north part of our district, including the ski area. The second was a new model of engine for our in-town crews. It has a design that moved the pump under the cab instead of being in the body, creating 35% more storage for safety and emergency response equipment. Both trucks are in service and serving the community.

Finally, after 40 years of being in a "temporary" fire station, we broke ground on our new Station 2! This was a culmination of years of work by current and previous boards, current and previous administrations, and is finally a reality. Our new Fire Station 2 will be ready for staff in June 2025, with full completion in November 2025. This will provide a new, state-of-the-art, safe and welcoming environment for our staff to live in while they serve the community. We can't wait to host an open house and show the community the new station, and to move our staff into a modern, purpose-built, safe and healthy environment.

I would be remiss to not address the financial challenges that arose during 2024. The Colorado State Legislature continued to reduce the funding to special districts across the state, in the name of cutting taxes. Unfortunately, the tax revenue they cut is the revenue we rely on to operate. With the realignment of the 550 corridor, our response times have increased to the southern part of our district. There has also been a higher demand of services in the Three Springs area. With these two in mind, we need revenue to build a station in Three Springs. We are working with the City and our Board to discuss potential solutions to continue meeting the needs of the community placed on our organization.

Thank you for your support, your calls of thanks, and for always taking care of our members while they take care of you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Randy Black".

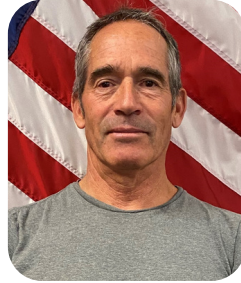
Randy Black
Fire Chief



BOARD OF DIRECTORS



KAREN BARGER
PRESIDENT
TERM: 2023-2027



STEVE LIST
VICE PRESIDENT
TERM: 2022-2025



TINA MCCALLUM
SECRETARY/TREASURER
TERM: 2022-2025



SAMANTHA GALLAGHER
TERM: 2022-2025



ROB FARINO
TERM: 2023-2027



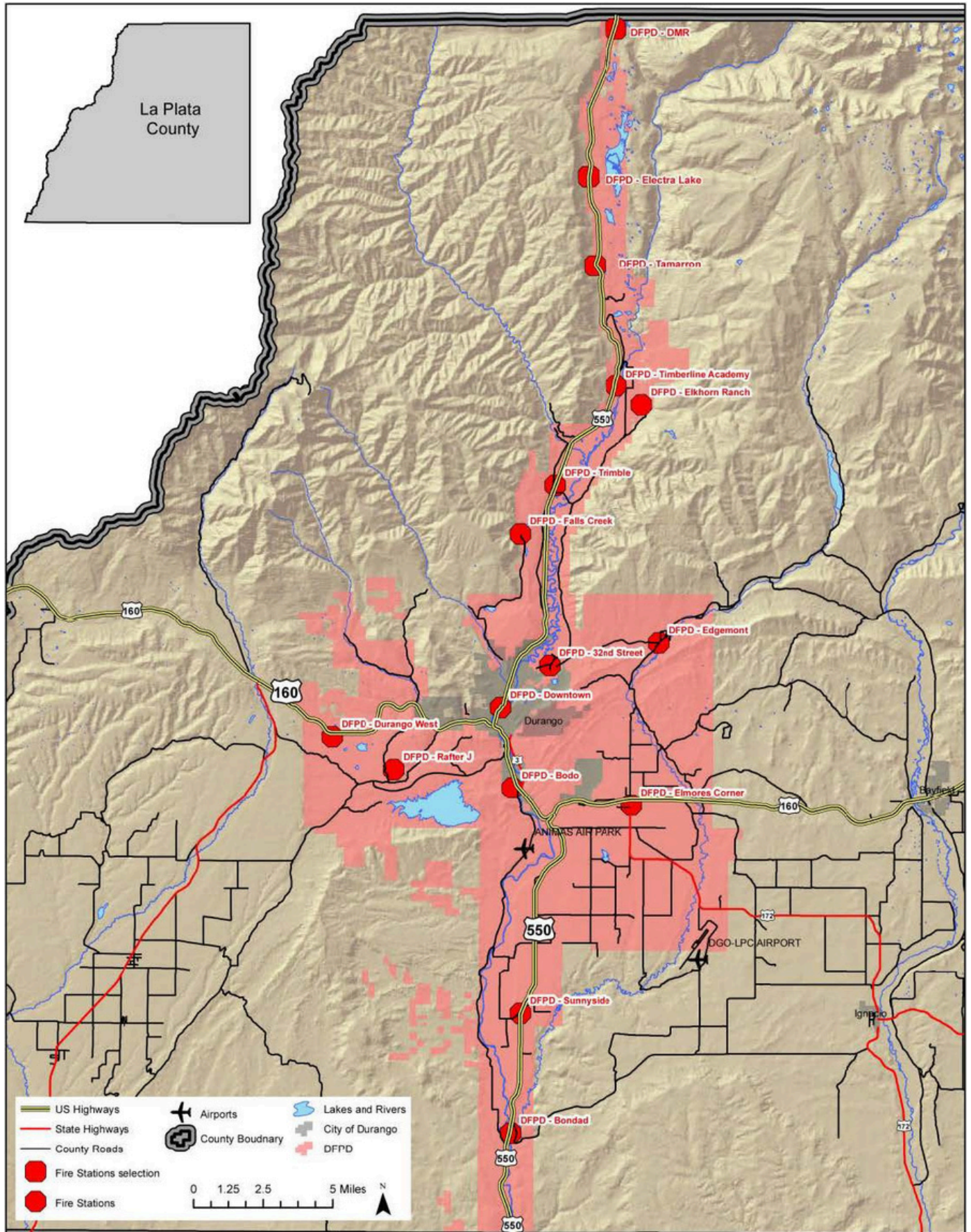
JOHN DEZENDORF
TERM: 2023-2027



LYLE MCKNIGHT
TERM: 2023-2027

The Durango Fire Protection District is funded by a 8.2 mill levy from property tax and a contract with the City of Durango. The District is governed by a seven-member board of directors, elected at large. The governing board is responsible for, among other things, adopting the budget, appointing committees, and hiring the District fire chief. The fire chief is responsible for carrying out the policies of the board of directors, and is the Chief Executive Officer of the Fire District, hiring and managing all staff of the district.

DISTRICT MAP



DISTRICT MAP

BUSINESS SERVICES SECTION



- FINANCE
- HUMAN RESOURCES
- INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY



FINANCE

Durango Fire and Rescue's **Finance Department** has been awarded a certificate for excellence in financial reporting by the Government Finance Officers Association annually from 2010-2023. A two-person office consisting of the director and an administrative assistant, the Finance Department is in charge of all the day-to-day accounting functions for Durango Fire & Rescue, including accounts payable, payroll, accounts receivable, and deposits. In addition, the Finance Director is responsible for the following:

- Provide regular financial reports and financial information to management and the Board of Directors.
- Confer with the Fire Chief to produce the annual budget.
- Work with external auditors to complete the annual audit.
- Prepare the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report.
- Consult with management on long-term financial planning and the capital improvement plan.

FINANCE

FULL ANNUAL BUDGET
AND PAST ANNUAL
COMPREHENSIVE
FINANCIAL REPORTS ARE
AVAILABLE ONLINE AT
DURANGOFIRE.ORG.



DURANGO FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT CAPITAL PROJECTS FUND BUDGET VS ACTUAL

DURANGO FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT CAPITAL PROJECTS FUND BUDGET VS ACTUAL FOR 2023 AND 2024 AND 2025 BUDGET

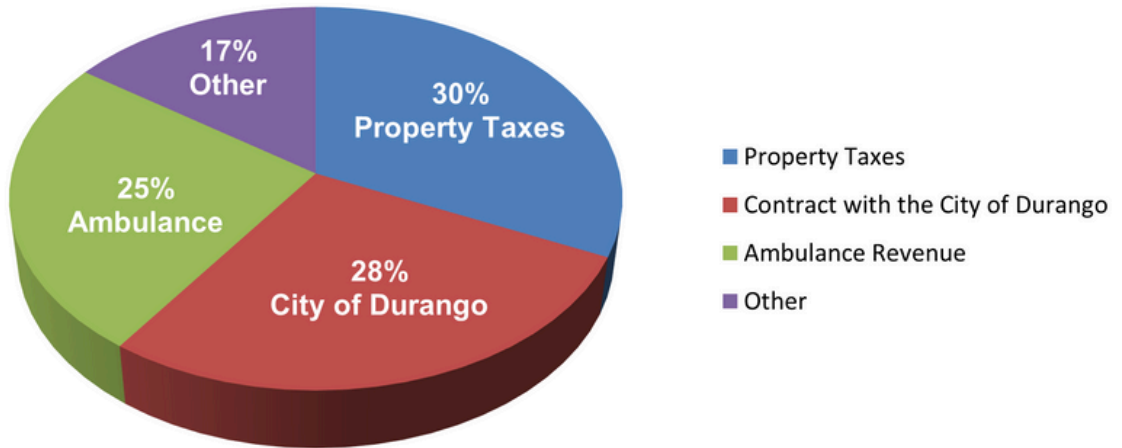
	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	2024 Budget	2024 Actual*	2025 Budget
Revenues					
Transfer from General Fund	\$1,750,000	\$1,750,000	\$1,200,000	\$2,200,000	\$1,200,000
Capital contribution from City of Durango	272,052	272,052	272,052	272,052	272,052
Lease purchase funding	-	-	12,000,000	12,500,000	-
Impact fees	200,000	661,351	200,000	581,901	200,000
Capital grants	405,000	327,214	-	114,037	
Rent	120,000	116,101	250,000	270,419	150,000
Sale of assets	3,550,000	3,630,537	1,200,000	1,334,176	-
Interest	5,000	31,826	5,000	432,187	200,000
Total revenues	<u>6,302,052</u>	<u>6,789,081</u>	<u>15,127,052</u>	<u>17,704,772</u>	<u>2,022,052</u>
Expenditures					
Capital expenditures					
Capital expenditures for Station 2	600,000	275,271	12,000,000	5,755,239	8,000,000
Purchase of 103 Sheppard Drive	4,300,000	4,144,474	320,000	407,937	-
Capital equipment	2,108,000	1,973,150	2,550,000	3,379,415	1,222,000
Lease purchase payments	-	-	600,000	538,611	1,100,000
Total expenditures	<u>7,008,000</u>	<u>6,392,895</u>	<u>15,470,000</u>	<u>10,081,202</u>	<u>10,322,000</u>
Excess of revenues over (under) expenditures	<u>(705,948)</u>	<u>396,186</u>	<u>(342,948)</u>	<u>7,623,570</u>	<u>(8,299,948)</u>
				Beginning Fund Balance (Capital Projects Fund)	8,712,816
				Ending Fund Balance (Capital Projects Fund)	412,868

* 2024 Results are unaudited.

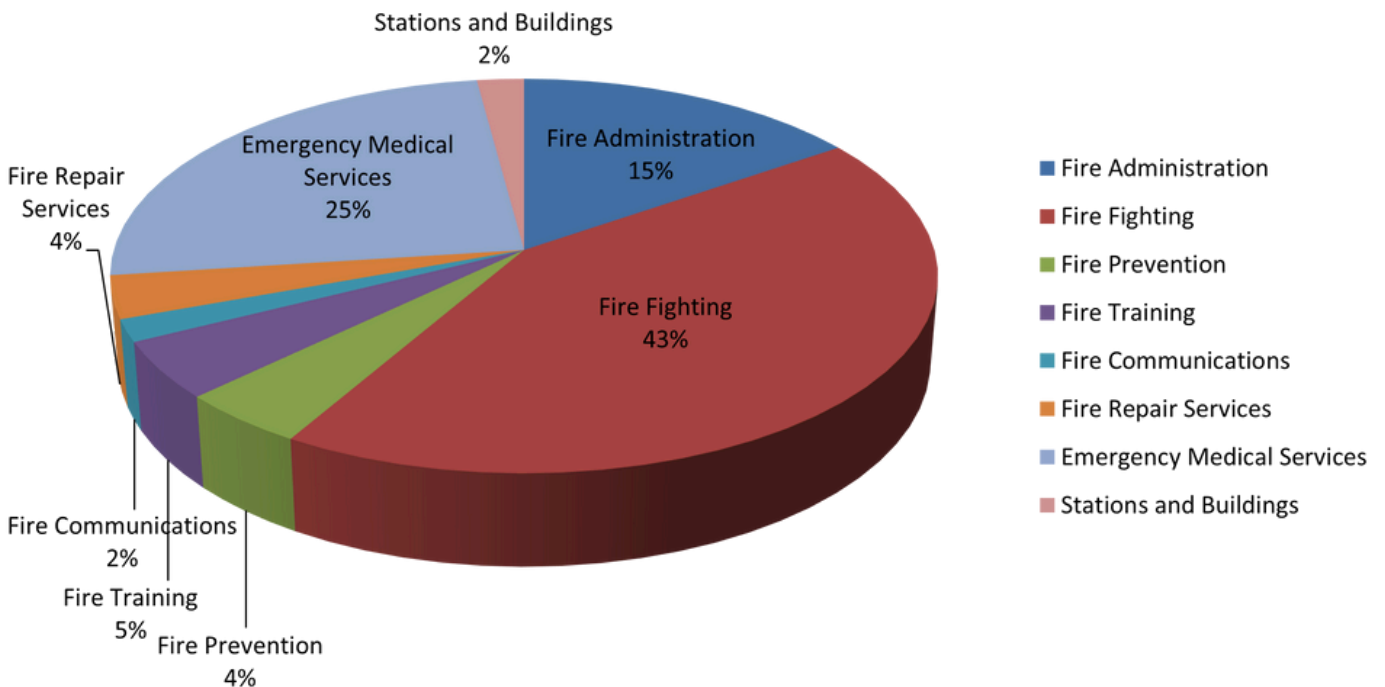


FINANCE

2024 Actual Revenue by Source



2024 Actual Expenditures by Department



DURANGO FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT GENERAL FUND BUDGET VS ACTUAL

DURANGO FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT GENERAL FUND BUDGET VS ACTUAL FOR 2023 AND 2024 AND 20254 BUDGET

	<u>2023 Budget</u>	<u>2023 Actual</u>	<u>2024 Budget</u>	<u>2024 Actual*</u>	<u>2025 Budget</u>
Revenues					
Property taxes	\$5,227,708	\$5,174,783	\$6,458,353	\$6,677,078	\$5,955,280
Specific ownership taxes	1,000,000	1,019,568	1,000,000	1,049,511	1,000,000
Contract with City of Durango	4,910,344	4,910,344	5,735,059	5,828,264	5,631,881
Other local taxes	15,000	29,948	15,000	44,683	15,000
City of Durango capital contribution	-	-	-	-	-
Other revenues					
Ambulance income, net**	3,668,480	4,346,272	5,168,480	5,241,874	4,621,265
Fees for services	1,175,000	1,369,442	1,270,000	1,410,762	940,000
Grants	406,000	119,589	256,000	294,440	306,000
Interest	50,000	266,953	240,000	329,735	240,000
Miscellaneous income	60,500	97,666	60,500	51,121	160,500
Total revenues	<u>16,513,032</u>	<u>17,334,565</u>	<u>20,203,392</u>	<u>20,927,468</u>	<u>18,869,926</u>
Expenditures					
General government					
Fire administration	1,878,232	2,021,035	2,497,690	2,616,207	2,083,050
Fire fighting	6,477,100	6,577,723	6,982,500	7,306,252	6,843,000
Fire prevention	702,300	704,797	768,600	763,608	848,300
Fire training	649,900	620,305	856,100	801,281	1,022,710
Fire communications	167,100	148,045	362,002	310,388	227,600
Fire repair services	612,650	589,257	618,700	596,386	644,650
Emergency medical services	4,652,500	4,142,862	4,905,000	4,239,997	5,004,000
Stations and buildings	254,500	281,156	356,000	354,422	389,000
Capital outlay	-	-	-	-	-
Contingency	100,000	-	200,000	-	200,000
Total expenditures	<u>15,494,282</u>	<u>15,085,180</u>	<u>17,546,592</u>	<u>16,988,541</u>	<u>17,262,310</u>
Excess of revenues over (under) expenditures operating	<u>1,018,750</u>	<u>2,249,385</u>	<u>2,656,800</u>	<u>3,938,927</u>	<u>1,607,616</u>
Transfer to capital projects fund	<u>1,750,000</u>	<u>1,750,000</u>	<u>2,200,000</u>	<u>2,200,000</u>	<u>1,200,000</u>
Excess of revenues over (under) expenditures	<u>(731,250)</u>	<u>499,385</u>	<u>456,800</u>	<u>1,738,927</u>	<u>407,616</u>

Beginning Fund Balance (General Fund) 7,541,007

Ending Fund Balance (General Fund) 7,948,623

* 2024 Results are unaudited.

** Ambulance revenue is stated net of contractual and bad debt write-offs



HUMAN RESOURCES

Human Resources was busy in 2024, staffing leadership roles and working to stay in front of challenging employment times. Over the past year, we have successfully hired for several key leadership roles, strengthening our team and positioning our department for continued growth and success. We experienced a significant amount of upward movement within the organization, with many members stepping into new leadership roles and taking on greater responsibilities.

Durango Fire and Rescue works diligently to stay up to date with current salary and benefit trends. By doing so, recruitment and retention are not as taxing; however, just like other employers, DFR has had a fair share of hard-to-fill positions. Skilled trade positions, such as firefighter/EMS workers, are becoming harder to hire as already-trained employees. DFR has had great success with hiring entry-level employees and providing the required technical training in house.

STAFFING NUMBERS BY POSITION

Fire Chief - 1

BUSINESS SERVICES SECTION:

Finance - 2

Human Resources - 2

SUPPORT SERVICES SECTION:

Deputy Chief - 1

Fire Marshal - 7

Fleet & Facilities - 4

OPERATIONS SECTION:

Deputy Chief - 1

Fulltime FF/Medics - 72

Reserve FF/Medics - Approx. 15

Volunteers - Approx. 15

Inter-Facility Transport - 4

Training - 5

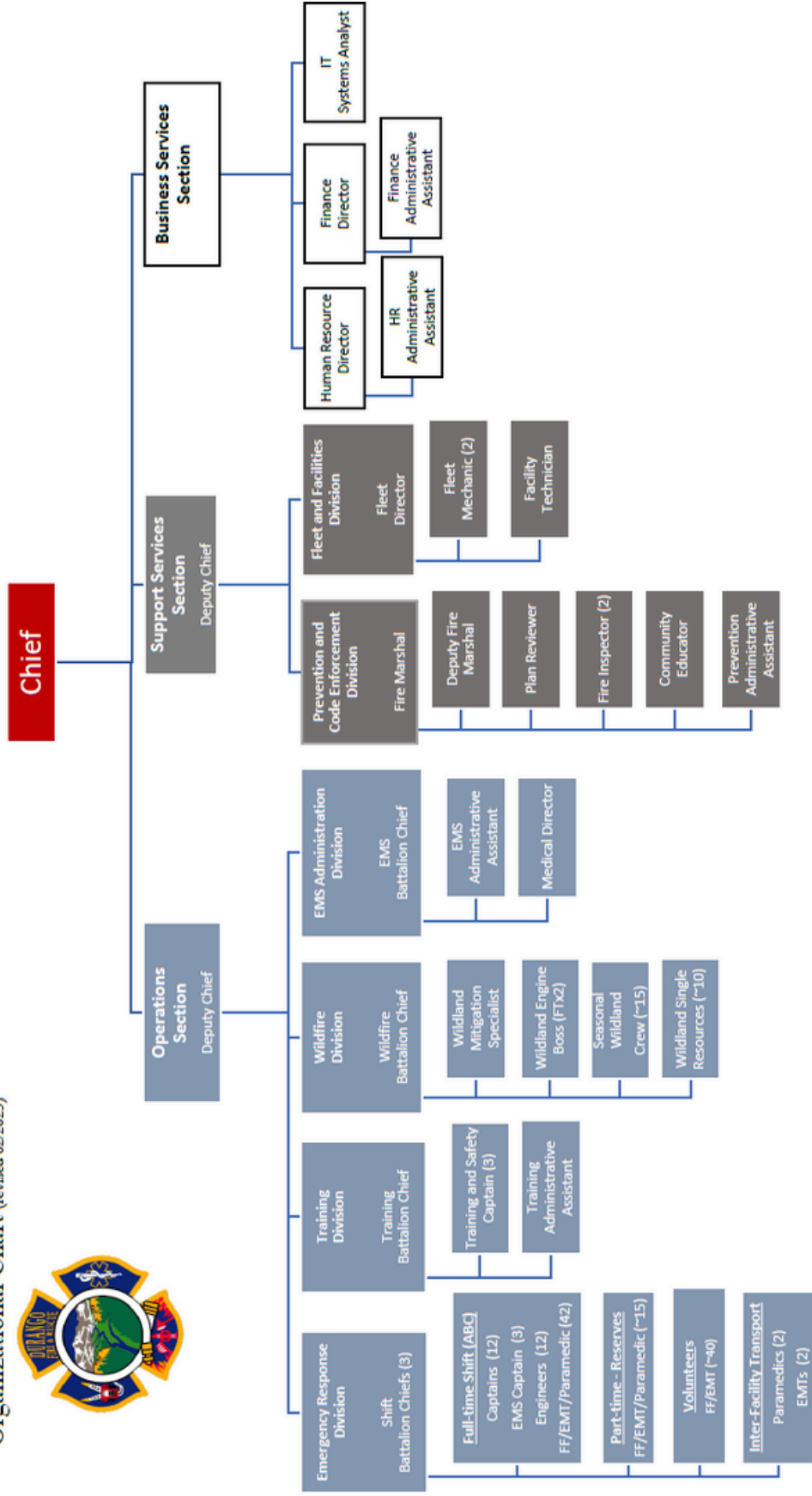
Wildfire - 22

EMS Administration - 3



Durango Fire & Rescue

Organizational Chart (revised 02/2023)



SUPPORT SERVICES SECTION



- FIRE MARSHAL DIVISION
- FLEET AND FACILITIES DIVISION



FIRE MARSHAL DIVISION

The **Fire Marshal Division** is tasked with providing a fire and life-safety environment that protects the enjoyable quality of life for all residents and visitors within the Durango Fire & Rescue (DFR) service area. This is accomplished by reviewing and evaluating emergency and non-emergency incidents, new or changing community risks involving fire or life safety, outreach and educational programs, trends in new construction, occupancy operations, and code development. This report, along with previous years' reports will be used as part of developing a community risk reduction plan to determine areas to focus resources, programs and efforts, to best achieve an overall reduction of threats from fire and life-safety issues within the community.

The Fire Marshal Division underwent several changes in 2024; the retirement of Karola Hanks as Fire Marshal, adapting to staffing changes within both the City of Durango and La Plata County's Community Development and Building Departments, as well as moving the offices from the 104 Sheppard Dr. location to the new Administration Building located at 103 Sheppard Dr. Even though this move was just across the street it required significant coordination due to the extensive technological needs of the division.

The DFR website was redeveloped, which required the processes for the division to interact with the public to be updated. This involved a major portion of the interactive forms and information to be modified for a more user-friendly and streamlined experience. Additionally, the Division has expanded its role in the collection of fire impact fees for new construction within the district. This has required establishing new processes for invoicing and payments.

A strategic planning process was completed by the division following the one conducted for DFR. Having a new Fire Marshal and some staff changes provided the need to determine the division's goals and path forward by identifying opportunities for process improvement, technology and program enhancements, and better establish overall duties, responsibilities, and training needs of staff. The strategic plan like, that of the district, is a living-working document that will require continued review and revision during its implementation.

To better utilize available electronic programs for records management, permitting and report development, the division has implemented the use of two new programs. First, Open Gov is a system that the City of Durango Community Development had initiated for their planning and permitting processes. The division was included in the use of the programs for plan review of projects within the City of Durango. Second, is a trial and evaluation of a program called Blazestack, utilized for documenting and developing reports for fire investigations. Each of these programs allows the Division to become more effective and efficient in performing the associated tasks in these areas. Additionally, it greatly improves the ability to manage records and information as well as sharing it with other divisions or departments as needed.

The Division works with the city and county planning and building departments, architects and engineers, general contractors, state agencies, federal agencies, homeowners, and life safety system contractors to ensure that construction meets the locally adopted codes and associated standards. The interpretation and application of these codes and standards are necessary to provide the minimum requirements for fire and life safety, property conservation, and firefighter/emergency responder safety in our community.

In 2024, a total of 515 construction and fire system plan reviews were completed. Additionally, 234 planning and pre-app meetings were attended. Since 2021, when the Division reviewed only 310 plans there has been a significant increase of development within the District greatly impacting the demand of services on the Fire Marshal Division.

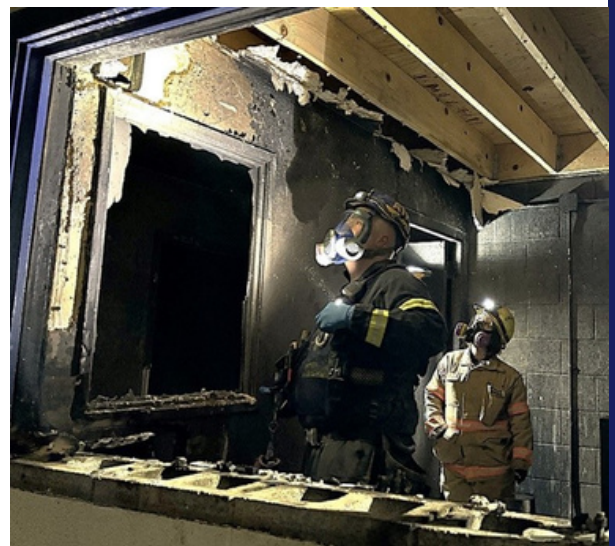
Occupancy and Construction Fire Inspections			
Bumpouts	5	LPG/NG Temp. Heating System	2
Carnivals and Fairs	9	Mobile Food Preparation	19
Construction	29	NFPA 13 Suppression System	50
Final Construction Inspection	32	NFPA 13D Suppression System	115
Re-Inspection (Final Construction)	5	NFPA 13R Suppression System	9
Elevator Interface with Fire Alarm	4	Re-Inspection (Fire Sprinkler)	16
Emergency Responder Radio Coverage	4	Occupancy Load Calculation	1
Exhibits and Trade Shows	5	On-Site System Inspection	1
Explosive/Blasting-Fireworks	2	Re-inspection	209
Fire & Life Safety Inspections	226	Solar PV System	24
Fire Alarm & Detection System	46	Special Events	33
Re-Inspection (Fire Alarm)	13	Standpipe Systems	1
Fire Dept. Access Emergency Gates	1	Temporary Membrane Structures	3
Kitchen Fire Suppression System	5	Underground Water Supply	34
Knox Box/Locks Update	13	Re-Inspection (Underground)	1
Total			917

Plan Reviews Conducted	
Fire Code Review	116
Fire Systems Review	220
Planning Project Review	139
Special Events	40
Total	515

The **Open Burn Permit** program issued 65 new permits and renewed 318 permits. This program, approved by the State of Colorado Air Quality Control Division, allows us to locally approve small open burning projects that aid in wildfire mitigation, defensible space development and ditch maintenance. It provides the opportunity to educate on how to burn safely, contact information for who is burning, and to reduce the volume of false calls.

The Division is also responsible for determining the **origin and cause of fires** in the District. Lessons learned from these investigations are used to educate the public and prevent future fires. Fire Investigators are certified through the International Association of Arson Investigators and the National Association of Fire Investigators. In 2024 the Fire Marshal Division experienced a significant increase in calls completing 39 fire investigations.

The Division continues to improve and enhance its processes and methods in service delivery to provide effective, high-quality fire and life-safety programs to reduce risks within the District.





FLEET AND FACILITIES DIVISION

The **Fleet and Facilities Division** consists of a director, two mechanics, and one facilities maintenance technician. The Division is responsible for the repair, maintenance, and purchasing of all fire department vehicles and station needs. This Division also performs all NFPA-required testing for the fleet.

FACILITIES

Station 1 - 142 Sheppard Drive - Bodo Park Station
Station 2 - 1235 Camino Del Rio - Downtown Station
Station 3 - 770 CR 251 - East Animas/32nd Street Station
Station 4 - 8565 Hwy 550 S. - Sunnyside Station
Station 5 - 6342 CR 240 - Edgemont Station
Station 6 - 31263 Hwy 550 N. - Trimble Station
Station 7 - 204 Hwy 172 - Elmore's Station
Station 8 - 615 W. Fork Rd. - Rafter J Station
Station 9 - 50 Lazy Pine Drive - Durango West Station
Station 10 - 587 Elkhorn Mtn. Road - Elkhorn Ranch Station
Station 11 - 4040 Hwy 550 S. - Bondad Station
Station 12 - 225 Academy Drive - Timberline Station
Station 13 - 6363 Falls Creek - Falls Creek Station
Station 14 - 40839 Hwy. 550 N. - Tammaron Station
Station 15 - 44301 Hwy 550 N. - Electra Lake Station
Station 16 - 49816 Hwy. 550N. - DMR Station
Administration Facility - 103 Sheppard Drive
Fire Training Facility - 182 Sheppard Drive

UPDATES TO FACILITIES

- Construction on Station 2 began in downtown Durango.
- Installation of the clean air system at Station 3.
- New HVAC system up and running at the new Admin Building.
- Remodeling projects in Admin Building making it more usable for DFR.
- Reroofing the Admin Building.



Station 2 - Under Construction

FLEET

- 17 Fire Engines
- 2 Reserve Fire Engines
- 2 75' Aerial Ladder Trucks
- 1 100' Aerial Ladder Truck
- 1 Tender - 3000 gallon
- 1 Tender - 2400 gallon
- 1 Tender - 2000 gallon
- 6 Tenders - 1500 gallon
- 9 ALS Ambulances
- 1 ALS Interfacility Transport Ambulance
- 1 Hazardous Materials Unit Trailer
- 6 Brush Trucks - Type 6
- 4 Brush Trucks - Type 3
- 1 EMS Supervisor Vehicle
- 1 Chief Vehicle
- 2 Deputy Chief Vehicles
- 1 EMS Chief Vehicle
- 4 Battalion Chief Vehicles for Operational Command
- 4 Fleet/Facilities Division Maintenance Vehicles
- 3 Training Division Staff Vehicles
- 6 Prevention and Code Enforcement Staff Vehicles



UPDATES TO FLEET

- Incorporated a Seafac 6 post Mobil truck lift in the fleet shop for our day-to-day operation.
- Successfully pump tested all apparatuses in the fleet.
- Successfully completed ladder testing on all three ladder trucks.
- Completed preventable and annual maintenance on all vehicles in the fleet.
- Completed reprogramming on VMUX multiplexing system on one engine and several reprogramming on turbo actuators for several vehicles in our fleet.
- Continuing EVT education for both mechanics in the department.



OPERATIONS SECTION



- EMERGENCY RESPONSE DIVISION
- TRAINING DIVISION
- WILDFIRE DIVISION
- EMS ADMINISTRATION DIVISION

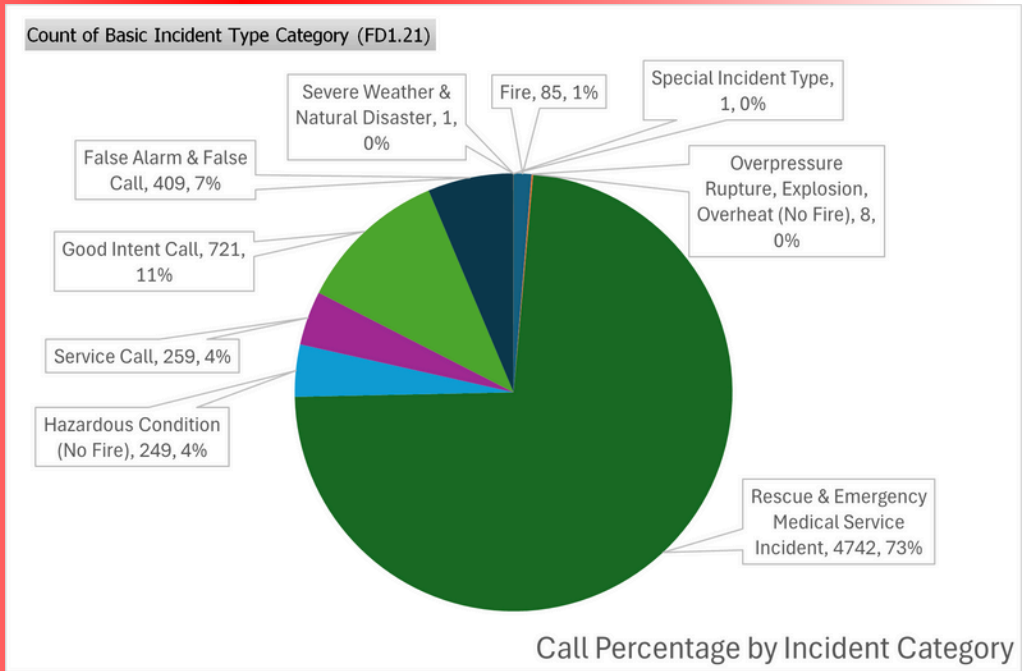


OPERATIONS SECTION

Durango Fire & Rescue has 16 fire stations strategically placed within the district boundaries to maximize coverage during an emergency. The organization is the first due emergency response in the 325 square-mile district. DFR also provides ambulance transport services to the Fort Lewis Mesa Fire District. **DFR responded to 6,475 incidents in 2024.**

THE OPERATIONS SECTION CONSISTS OF ALL EMERGENCY RESPONSE, INCLUDING:

Structure Fires
Brush and Wildfires
Gas Leaks/Odors
Motor Vehicle Crashes
Fire Alarm Activations
Emergency Medical
Hazardous Materials
Swiftwater Rescue
High Angle Rope Rescue
Low Angle Rope Rescue
And many more...



The Operations Section is overseen by the Deputy Chief of Operations and Battalion Chiefs. Notice the staffing listed below--one battalion chief and five captains to ensure the proper supervision and activation of emergency crews. In addition, there are battalion chiefs who oversee the Wildfire, EMS, and Training Divisions. Daily responses to calls include full-time, part-time, seasonal, and volunteer members.

DAILY STAFFING INCLUDES:

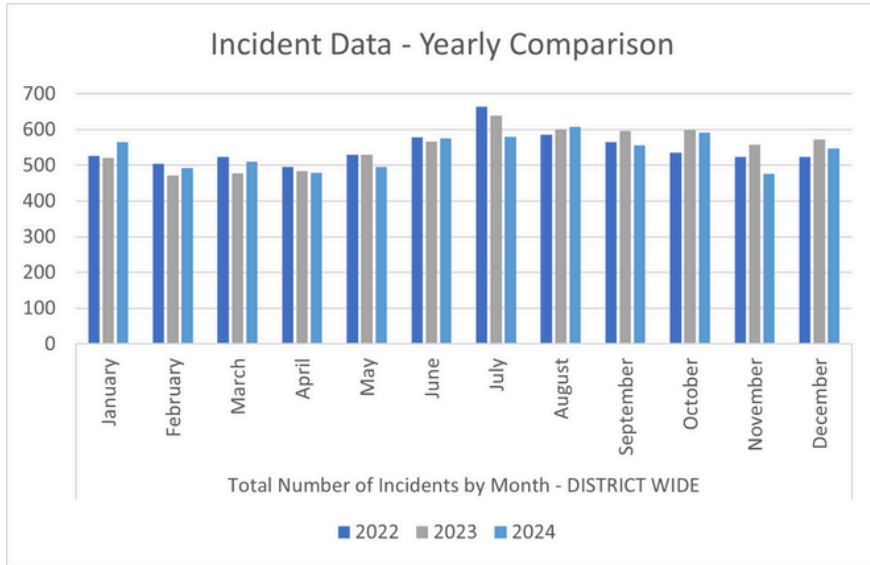
- 1-Battalion Chief
- 1-EMS Captain
- 1-Safety Captain
- 4-Fire Engines (12 with captains/engineers/firefighters)
- 5-Emergency Ambulances (with 10 EMTs and paramedics)
- 1-Non-Emergency Ambulance (with 2 EMTs and paramedics)



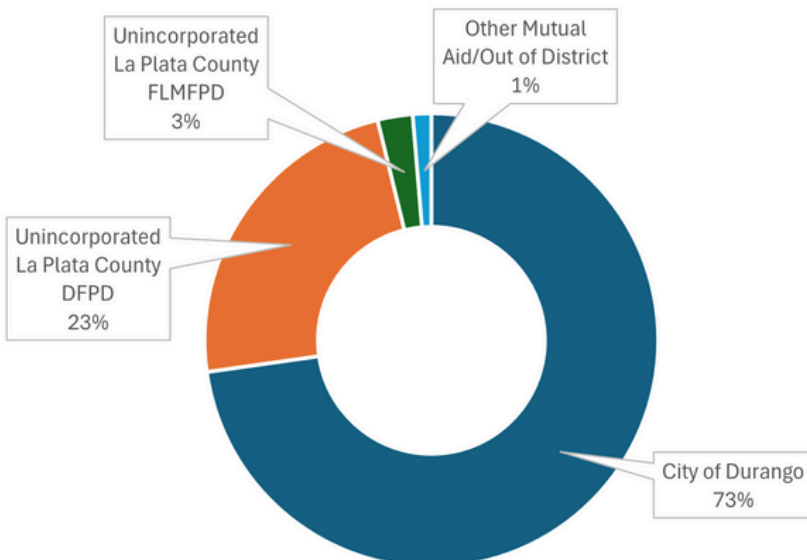
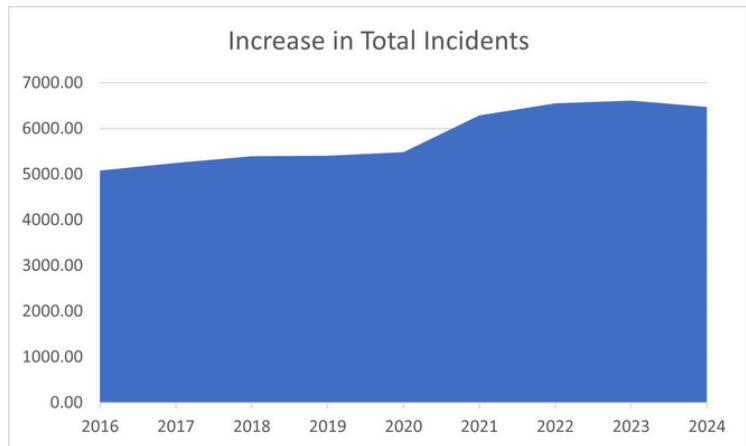
EMERGENCY RESPONSE DIVISION



INCIDENT DATA - YEARLY COMPARISON



INCREASE IN TOTAL INCIDENTS



EMERGENCY RESPONSE DIVISION



TRAINING DIVISION

2024 was another busy year for the **Training Division**. We conducted an evening Fire 1 class for 12 members during the spring, from which we were able to hire a few into full-time positions. This Fire 1 class is approximately 150 hours of instruction time including Hazmat and Firefighter Training.

Due to retirements and promotions, three new Training Captains were brought into the Division in the spring. Each worked hard to help their shifts conduct training exercises throughout the year. They also serve as a designated Safety Officer for incident response and can back up the on-duty Battalion Chief during busy times within and surrounding the district.

DFR had its first large group hiring, including five full-time positions and five Reserve positions. These members completed a three-week new-hire orientation, including Firefighter and EMS skills, technical rescue, vehicle extrication, driver-operator, and IV Certification. They were put through rigorous physical conditioning, intense training scenarios, and most importantly, team-building exercises.



2024 Training Events: Ice Rescue, Swift Water, Ropes and Embankment Rescue, Live Fire Training, Vehicle Extrication, Fire Instructor 1, Fire 2 class, Blue Card IC, Mass Casualty Incident Response, Wildfire response, EMS Training, and many more hours logged at the company level within each fire station. The Training Division was able to take advantage of River City Hall demolition with some realistic training scenarios in a less familiar or unknown environment. 2025 is not slowing down and we look forward to providing the highest level of training to our firefighters who directly serve our community.





TRAINING DIVISION



WILDFIRE DIVISION

2024 was a productive year despite a slow fire season locally. DFR's **Wildfire Division**, along with Los Pinos Fire, San Juan County (NM), and Southern Ute BIA started the fire season with the Four Corner's Wildfire Academy (4CWA). The 2024 4CWFA trained 117 local students on topics covering fire weather, incident command, and firefighting tactics. This was provided for free with the support of local departments, the USFS, BLM, and BIA. The Division was able to assist the local USFS districts with prescribed fires in the spring and fall as well as several wildfires in the early part of the summer. 2024's monsoon season came in mid-June with a few small lightning fires. DFR was able to send out engines, crews, and incident command staff to fires in California, Idaho, Wyoming, New Mexico, Texas, along with several other fires in Colorado. The Wildfire Division continues to grow in its wildfire suppression capabilities, prescribed fire program, and mitigation efforts, largely due to the partnerships and collaborations with our local, state and federal partners. Many of these collaborations have been developed for decades. The interagency wildfire suppression and mitigation that helps protect our community is unheard of in many communities outside of La Plata County.

WILDFIRE DIVISION



MITIGATION AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH

DFR is a member of Wildfire Watershed Protection Fund (WWPF). The WWPF is an intergovernmental agreement between La Plata County, the City of Durango, and Durango Fire & Rescue. The city and county contribute financial assistance to fund a WWPF coordinator and a grant writer. DFR provides a workforce to perform some of the mitigation work and implementation of prescribed fire in mitigated areas. In 2023 La Plata County received a grant from the State of Colorado to perform mitigation on commonly held HOA property along County Road 240 and the Florida River north of County Road 234. In 2023 DFR received a grant from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to perform fire mitigation in an area similar to the La Plata County mitigation grant. The EPA grant is funded through Water Infrastructure Improvement for the Nation (WIIN) program. The Florida River area has been identified as a priority based on the number of homes and the fact that the Florida River supplies most of Durango's drinking water and significant agricultural water in downstream areas. DFR also partnered with Mountain Studies Institute (MSI) to develop the first real-time water-quality monitoring on the Florida River. This allows for a baseline of water quality, and in the event of a wildfire, work towards the return to a pre-fire baseline implementation. DFR and La Plata County also partner with Wildfire Adapted Partnership, a local non-profit organization, to engage with and work with property owners to get grant funded mitigation accomplished.

In 2024 DFR was able to expand the WIIN Grant area to include all of DFR's service area. This was done to move mitigation focus to other areas in our district that did not have current grant funding. Once we were able to expand out we began a 35 acre mitigation project near Durango West and planned another adjoining project that will start once the Durango West project is complete. Once both projects are completed, we will have close to 50 acres treated that directly impact 50 homes and will help protect three subdivisions and over 500 homes. Part of the 2024 mitigation success was utilizing local contractors and businesses for many projects. DFR realizes that there is a significant backlog of mitigation needs and working with local industry to build capacity and shared trust is one way to increase the scale and efficiency of mitigation in our community.

Between work on county grant projects, WIIN grant projects, and City projects, DFR's Wildfire Division completed nearly 75 acres of mitigation, 9 acres of prescribed burning, 43 wildfire risk assessments, and oversaw several other projects using local contractors and the Southwest Conservation Corp. The Division also engaged with over 20 public presentations or classes, many in conjunction with the Fire Marshal Division.



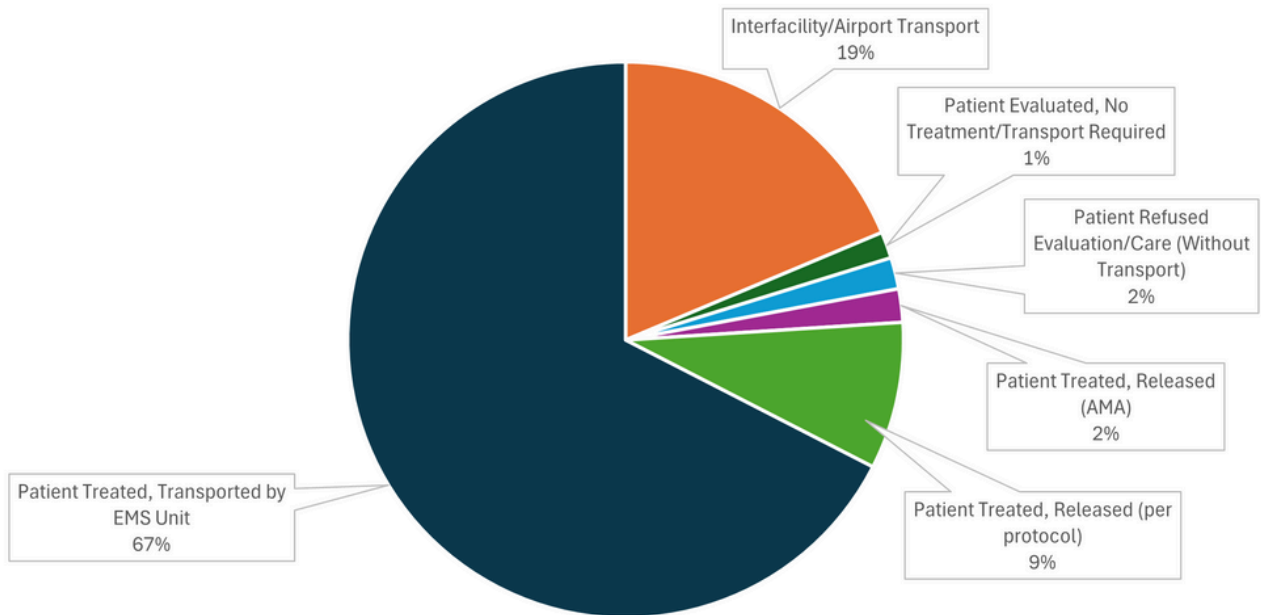


EMS ADMINISTRATION DIVISION

Our **EMS crews** continued to be very active in 2024 with consistent call volumes as well as high patient acuities. During 2024, DFR EMTs and Paramedics responded to 4,926 emergency calls, contacted and assessed 4,338 patients, and transported 3,203 patients to receiving facilities. Our local non-emergency ambulance services transported 544 patients. Despite the sustained number of calls for service, as well as the challenging nature of many of those calls, our outstanding crews demonstrate a caring, compassionate, and professional approach to all our patients. We emphasize these factors with regular training and a solid quality assurance process.

EMS ADMINISTRATION DIVISION

Count of Disposition Incident Patient Disposition



Cardiac arrest survival rates are one measurement of any community that supports quality CPR and AED use, as well as the EMS program that responds to provide a higher level of care and transport. In 2024, DFR responded to 23 patients with witnessed out-of-hospital cardiac arrest. Sixty-one percent of these cardiac arrest patients had return of spontaneous circulation after resuscitation prior to arrival at the Emergency Department, and 26% survived to be discharged home. The national out-of-hospital cardiac arrest survival rate is around 10%. We continue to seek ways to improve upon these and all types of patients we serve.

Our long-range Interfacility Transport (IFT) program was less utilized in 2024 but remained a very busy resource. This program provides scheduled ALS ground ambulance transport of patients to destinations out of the region. In 2024, our IFT teams completed 109 trips, mostly to the Front Range, occasionally to Grand Junction, Montrose, and other locations. These long transports take a toll on both staff and vehicles. We appreciate our IFT crews and thank them for another safe and professional year providing this vital service.

On the new equipment front, 2024 was a good year for continuing to support our crews and the community we serve. We added another automated CPR device, as well as a new cardiac monitor/defibrillator to the EMS Captain response vehicle. After some bad news about the discontinuation of some vital airway management equipment, we found ourselves with a big project to study, select, and purchase the new devices. We then conducted staff training and final operational deployment.

Durango Fire & Rescue continues to proudly serve the community through hundreds of man hours of special event medical staffing, the most ever, due to some new events. Although our usual events keep us busy (rodeos, football, triathlon, and cycling) DFR staffed large multi-venue events, a concert, and even a couple boxing events, while continuing to work closely with event planners as special event demands in the Durango area continue to grow.

Our administrative team continued to participate advocating on EMS issues at the local, regional, and state levels. We worked hard during the 2024 state legislative cycle attempting to pass a bill to prohibit ground ambulance balance billing, while assuring insurance providers pay reasonable reimbursement rates. We also continued to participate with the multi-year Colorado EMS System Sustainability Project, and more recently the State Interfacility Transport Task Force. July of 2024 also marked the official start of state ground ambulance licensing. Although the process is much more arduous than the former county-level licensing renewal, we look forward to the opportunities for system improvement that come with a more robust set of requirements.





**PREPARED BY THE STAFF
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