

Barre Fire Department

2021 Year End Report

Mission Statement:

The mission of the Barre Fire Department is to minimize the loss of life, property, and the environment from fires, natural disasters, hazardous materials incidents, and life threatening situations. This is achieved through fire suppression, ALS level emergency medical response, disaster management, fire prevention, and public education, provided by a dedicated and well trained force.

2021 Highlights:

2021 turned out to be the busiest year in Department history for emergency responses with the Department making 1325 incident responses. This was an increase of 137 incidents from 2020 where the Department responded to 1188 incidents.

In October the Department received and placed into service the new Ambulance 2, which replaced the 2005 ambulance 2.

Working with the local Board of Health, the Department was able to conduct a few COVID vaccine clinics for the town residents before the Governor's mandate of regional vaccine clinics. The Department was still able to offer home COVID vaccination for those 4 residents who were unable to leave their residence.

Utilizing CARES Act money, the Department was able to add an additional staffed member to the station 10 hours a day 7 days a week from August 1st to December 31st. This additional member greatly enhanced the Department's ability to respond to multiple calls that occurred simultaneously. This led to the Department reducing the amount of mutual aid that it needed to call for 2nd medical calls by having the 2nd ambulance staffed.

COVID19:

COVID19 continued to adversely affect the Department in 2021. In total in 2021 the Department responded to 79 known COVID related incidents and transported 40 COVID positive patients to the area Hospitals. Despite the knowns and dangers associated with COVID, the members of the Barre Fire Department continued to provide the best Emergency service to the citizens of the Town of Barre. Members continued to put their safety and their family's safety in jeopardy, in order to continue to provide the emergency service to the Town. While COVID certainly had a negative impact on the Department and the members of the Department, COVID highlighted the dedication and commitment that the members of the Department have for the Town and to the

mission of the Department to save life and property. COVID is only 1 of the many dangers that the members of the Department face on a daily basis.

Staffing:

The Barre Fire Department responds out of 3 Fire Stations, and operates a fleet of 3 Engines, 1 Engine-Tanker, 1 Aerial, 1 Heavy Rescue, and 3 Forestry Fire Units, and 2 ALS ambulances. The Barre Fire Department is comprised of 45 members and is commanded by a Fulltime Chief. The Department is comprised of 1 Deputy Fire Chief, 2 Assistant Chiefs, 2 Captains, 4 Lieutenants, and call 40 Firefighters / EMTs. In addition to the call force the Department employs 4 fulltime FF/Paramedics and FF/EMTs, along with 9 per diem Paramedics.

The Fire Department is a primarily on call service meaning that members are called in when an emergency is dispatched and are not at the station on duty. Being an on-call Fire Department presents a few challenges when it comes to providing emergency response. When an emergency call is received, an emergency alert is sent out via emergency alerting pagers that each member of the Department carries. When an emergency alert is received, the Firefighters from the Department must stop whatever they are doing and respond to their respected station, where they then have to man one of the Departments fire apparatus and respond to the Emergency. This results in an average response time of 8 minutes from 1st 911 call to the first apparatus arriving on scene. The national standard is 6 minutes. This response time would be much greater if not for the fact that the town is able to operate 3 fire stations which dramatically reduces response times especially with the fact that the town is 45 square miles and the Department has to make long response drives

As with previous years the Department has continued to struggle with retaining call members. It is becoming harder for members to commit to the increased training requirements and call volume, with members having to work hard to balance their personal, and work lives with their Department responsibilities.

Currently 68% of all the Departments responses are within the 12 hour daytime period between 6am-6pm, the same time period that the least amount of call members are able to respond. The Department staffs 1 FF/Paramedic at the Fire Station 24 hours a day 7 days a week. The Department also staffs a FF/EMT 7 days a week from 7am-9p to fully staff 1 ambulance. From 9pm-7am 7 days a week, 2 members are paid on call from their home for ambulance coverage. This staffing allows for coverage of 1 ambulance call, however the number of simultaneous calls is growing exponentially and coupled with the lack of daytime call members is leading to a heavy reliance on the use of the mutual aid system. See the response section for more details. Additional daytime staffing will be needed to be handle the daytime responses where the call force is unable to respond. In 2020 the number of mutual aid ambulance calls decreased as the Department was able to staff more 2nd ambulance calls due to the increase in the number of on call EMTs the Department was able to add to the roster in 2020. The Department is still currently working towards trying to get EMT training for its members to increase the number of available EMT's to staff the 2nd ambulance when simultaneous calls occur. This has not been

something that the Department has been able to accomplish due to the cost associated with EMT training.

Responses:

2021 was the a busiest year for the Barre Fire Department, responding to 1325 calls for service, an 11.5% increase from 2020 where the Department responded to 1188 incidents.

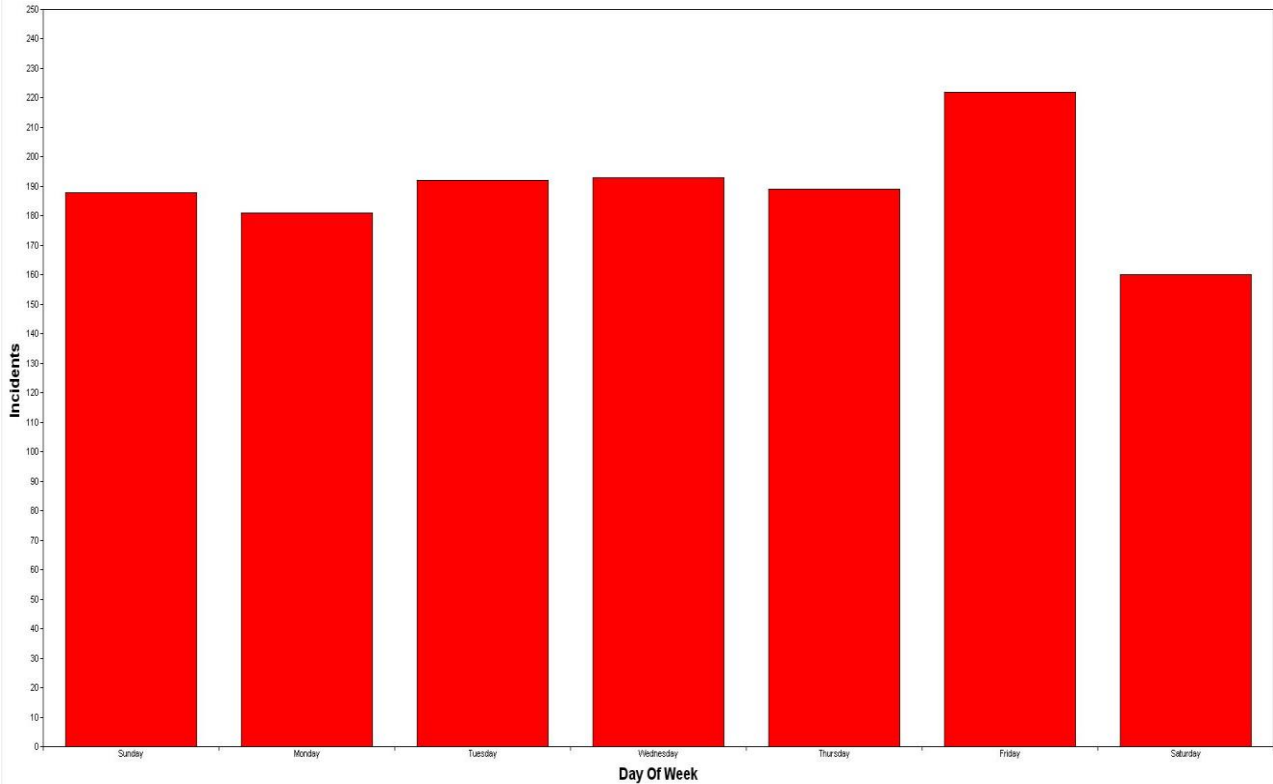
Of the 1325 Fire Department responses made in 2021, 17 were for Building Fires, which resulted in a dollar loss of \$279,300. However the Department was able to save over 10 million in personnel and property value from damage due to the mitigation efforts of the Firefighters, the Department equipment, and the Fire Apparatus. The 17 building fires resulted in 1 Firefighter injury and 2 civilian injuries.

The biggest fire in 2021 occurred at a vacant property on West St. The fire consumed a vacant single family residence, 5 vehicles, a garage, 2 campers, and a myriad of automotive parts and supplies The fire went to 2 alarms with mutual aid tankers being needed due tot eh lack of fire hydrants on that section of West St.

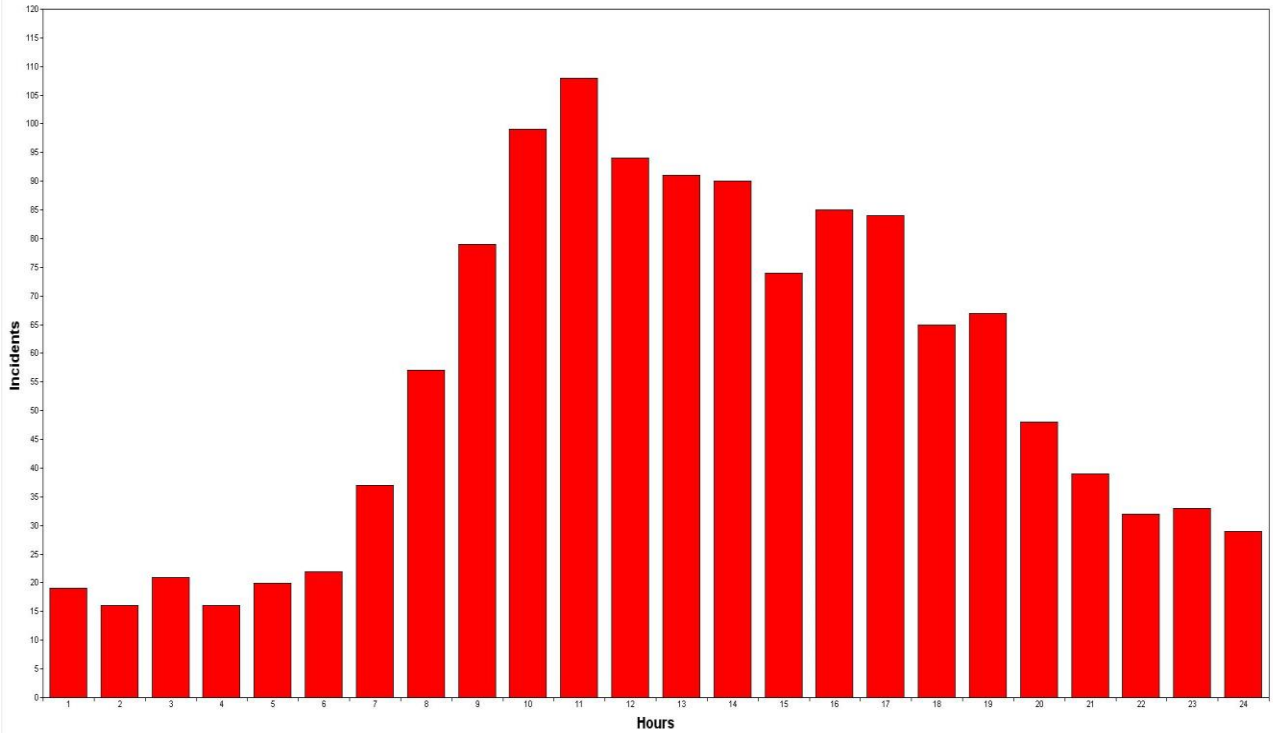
The Department again responded to numerous building fires where the smoke alarms alerted the residence to the fire, resulting in rapid notification to the fire Department. The rapid notification led to a quick response to the fires which ultimately led to reduced property damage.

Major Incident Type	# of Incidents	% of Incidents	% Change from 2020
Fires	40	3.9	30
Overpressure/Rupture	1	0.1	0
Rescue & EMS	974	73.5	+24
Hazardous Conditions	58	4.4	-57
Service Calls	109	8.2	+20
Good intent Calls	39	2.9	+8
False Alarms / False Calls	88	6.6	+4
Severe Weather/Natural Disaster	4	0.3	-70
Special Type / Complaint	0	0	0
TOTAL	1325		+11.5

Incidents By Day of Week



Incidents By Time of Day



Incident Type

<u>Incident Type</u>	<u>Occurrences</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Building fire	17	1.3
Fires in structure other than in a building	1	0.1
Cooking fire, confined to container	2	0.2
Chimney or flue fire, confined to chimney or flue	3	0.2
Fuel burner/boiler malfunction, fire confined	4	0.3
Trash or rubbish fire, contained	1	0.1
Natural vegetation fire, other	1	0.1
Forest, woods or wildland fire	8	0.6
Brush or brush-and-grass mixture fire	11	0.8
Outside rubbish, trash or waste fire	3	0.2
Outside storage fire	1	0.1
Overpressure rupture of steam boiler	1	0.1
Medical assist, assist EMS crew	6	0.5
EMS call, excluding vehicle accident with injury	905	68.3
Motor vehicle accident with injuries	44	3.3
Motor vehicle/pedestrian accident (MV Ped)	1	0.1
Motor vehicle accident with no injuries.	1	0.1
Search for person on land	2	0.2
Search for person in water	1	0.1
Extrication, rescue, other	3	0.2
Extrication of victim(s) from vehicle	1	0.1
High-angle rescue	2	0.2
Swift water rescue	1	0.1
Rescue or EMS standby	7	0.5
Hazardous condition, Other	1	0.1
Combustible/flammable gas/liquid condition, other	1	0.1
Gasoline or other flammable liquid spill	1	0.1
Gas leak (natural gas or LPG)	6	0.5
Oil or other combustible liquid spill	3	0.2
Toxic condition, Other	3	0.2
Carbon monoxide incident	4	0.3
Electrical wiring/equipment problem, other	3	0.2
Overheated motor	3	0.2
Power line down	7	0.5
Arcing, shorted electrical equipment	8	0.6
Biological hazard, confirmed or suspected	1	0.1
Building or structure weakened or collapsed	2	0.2

Aircraft standby	1	0.1
Vehicle accident, general cleanup	14	1.1
Person in distress, other	14	1.1
Lock-out	21	1.6
Water evacuation	3	0.2
Water or steam leak	3	0.2
Smoke or odor removal	1	0.1
Animal rescue	2	0.2
Public service assistance, other	5	0.4
Assist police or other governmental agency	10	0.8
Public service	10	0.8
Assist invalid	26	2.0
Unauthorized burning	7	0.5
Cover assignment, standby, moveup	7	0.5
Good intent call, other	3	0.2
Dispatched & canceled en route	28	2.1
Authorized controlled burning	3	0.2
Prescribed fire	1	0.1
Smoke scare, odor of smoke	4	0.3
Bomb scare - no bomb	1	0.1
System malfunction, other	1	0.1
Sprinkler activation due to malfunction	2	0.2
Smoke detector activation due to malfunction	3	0.2
Alarm system sounded due to malfunction	18	1.4
CO detector activation due to malfunction	4	0.3
Unintentional transmission of alarm, other	26	2.0
Smoke detector activation, no fire - unintentional	6	0.5
Detector activation, no fire - unintentional	1	0.1
Alarm system activation, no fire - unintentional	20	1.5
Carbon monoxide detector activation, no CO	6	0.5
Flood assessment	1	0.1
Lightning strike (no fire)	2	0.2
Severe weather or natural disaster standby	1	0.1
TOTAL	1325	100.0

EMS:

The Department currently provides ALS level care 24 hours a day 7 days a week to the residents of Barre, New Braintree, and half of Hardwick. Barre Fire currently has a contract with the Town of New Braintree to provide the primary ambulance service, and a contract with Hardwick to provide primary ambulance to half of the Town of Hardwick. Being geographically located a far distance from the major hospitals in Worcester, ALS care is necessary in order to ensure that people receive the appropriate pre-hospital care when they are having a medical emergency leading to many successful outcomes.

The number of Rescue calls the Department responded increase by 24% in 2021 with 974 responses. The rescue incidents range from EMS calls, motor vehicle accidents, technical rescues, missing persons, pedestrian accidents, stalled elevators, machinery rescues, vehicle extrications, and water rescues ect. EMS calls account for a large portion of the Rescue responses with the Department responding to 905 reported EMS calls.

The Department also saw an increase in back to back calls which puts a major stress on the local emergency resources. Like all small towns across the Commonwealth, it is becoming increasingly harder to attract and retain call EMTS and paramedics. This makes responding to numerous medical calls simultaneously difficult. However in 2021 the Department was able to respond to 118 simultaneous EMS calls. This is considerably more 2nd simultaneous call responses than in 2020 due in part to the increased station staffing. Due to the increased staffing at the Station mutual aid ambulance requests decreased in 2020. The increase in staffed 2nd medical calls, increased the EMS billing receipts income which is used to offset the EMS operating budget.

Ambulance break downs continue to plague the Department. Throughout the year 1 and sometimes both ambulances were out of service due to mechanical breakdowns. A majority of the patients that the Department transports, go to Worcester Hospitals. This coupled with the number of ambulance calls and the conditions of the Town roads results in both Ambulances requiring considerable maintenance to keep on the road. A2 which is a 2005 was out of service for most of 2021 and went permanently out of service in July. Rutland Fire was gracious enough to let us borrow their spare ambulance until the new Ambulance 2 arrived in October. The Department also applied for and received EMS Class 5 ambulance licensing for Fire Engine 4 effectively turning it into a non-transport ambulance. Engine 4 responded to numerous medicals throughout the year when one or both of the ambulances were out of service.

Mutual aid ambulance requests: 131

ALS intercepts means that a Barre ambulance transported a patient to the hospital, however the patient required ALS level care and the Department was not able to provide a paramedic to provide that care so a mutual aid ALS ambulance responded whose paramedic got into the back of Barres ambulance and continued transport. For 2021 this request decreased due to the fact

that with the added station staffing during the day time, the Paramedic is able to stay back in Town when the primary ambulance call is BLS. This makes the Paramedic available for the next ambulance call at the ALS level.

Fire Prevention:

2021 was the busiest year ever for fire prevention. Inspections and permitting were at an all-time high. The Department conducted 306 Inspections, and an increase of 102 from 2020 and issued 212 Permits an increase of 33 from 2020

TYPE	INSPECTIONS CONDUCTED
Annual Inspections	19
Oil Burner / Oil Tank	18
Fire Drill	11
Fire Safety	37
Follow-Up	3
New Construction	14
Plan reviews	10
Propane Tank	44
Quarterly Inspection	4
SAFE Fire Education	8
Smoke Detector Installation	9
Smoke Detector 26F	124
Sprinkler Testing	2
Tank Removal	0
Tank Truck	3
Underground Tank	0
TOTAL	306

This list does not include fire prevention duties that were performed during emergency responses by the responding firefighters and fire officers. It also does not represent the phone calls, plan reviews, and station visits by residents and contractors with fire prevention questions or concerns.

Fire Education:

With the re-opening of the schools the Department once was able to conduct student fire education albeit with a little different approach due tot eh mask mandates and distancing requirements. Over the course of the summer the Department participated in some community

event spreading the fire education message and delivering fire education materials to our community members.

Captain Divirgilio again was successful in writing this year’s SAFE (Student Awareness of Fire Education) grant from the Department of Fire Services, and the Department was awarded \$7172 which the Department uses to fund the Fire Education program. .

Apparatus:

The Fire Departments fleet of Apparatus are aging and in need of serious replacement. The average age of the Fire Departments front line Fire Apparatus is 24.5 years old. The national NFPA standard recommends that fire apparatus be removed from front line service and placed in reserve status once they become 15 years old.

The Department is in desperate need of a new pickup truck. The Departments 2 pickup trucks are both 38 years old and becoming harder and harder to repair. The Rutland Fire Department was kind enough to donate their 1997 pickup truck (which they were sending to the crap yard) to the Department to fill this gap. Prior to receiving this vehicle the Department was using its apparatus to conduct inspections and to conduct the day to day operations of the Department. After some repair work was made the Department put the truck into service and is still in-service as of today.

Apparatus	Year	Location	Remarks
Engine 4	2019	Station 1	1 st Due Engine for Fire District 1
Engine 6	1996	Station 1	Engine Tanker partial refurbished December 2018
Engine 1	2002	Station 2	1 st Due Engine for Fire District 2
Engine 5	1990	Station 2	Refurb 2004, New Pump 2012
Ladder 1	1999	Station 1	Purchased used in 2017 – Refurbished
Rescue 1	2005	Station 1	
Forestry 1	1985	Station 3	
Forestry 2	1986	Public Safety	
Forestry 4	1986	Station 1	
Ambulance 1	2016	Station 1	
Ambulance 2	2005	Public Safety	

Special Operations:

Barre Fire is part of the Fire District 8 Technical Rescue Team and as such has been appointed as an equipment host Department. This has put well over \$350,000 worth of specialized rescue equipment on Rescue 1 and has given the Department a Technical Rescue Trailer full of trench Rescue Equipment. As part of being a host equipment community the Department may respond

Statewide in the event of a major rescue or emergency. This equipment that the Department houses can be used for specialized rescue missions such as trench collapse, building collapse, confined space, underwater rescue, silo rescues, heavy machinery rescues, high angle rescues, ect. The Department currently has 5 members assigned as rescue technicians on the team as well as 5 Divers assigned to the dive section of the team. The Department responded to 5 rescue events this year as members of the D8 Technical Rescue Team.

Fire Stations:

Fire Station 1 is located at 61 N. School St. and is the Departments headquarters. Fire Station 1 was originally the DPW building and underwent renovations making into a Fire House in 1995 When the DPW moved into its new building. The station houses Engines 4 & 6, Ladder 1, Rescue 1, Ambulance 1, and Forestry 4. Unfortunately, due to the size and age of the station modern Fire Apparatus will not fit into the Station. Every fire apparatus that is housed at station 1 has required the station to be renovated specifically for that apparatus. The Station is beyond the point where it can be further renovated for any other modern fire apparatus.

Fire Station 2 is located at 50 Main St. in South Barre. Fire Station 2 provides vital fire protection to the densely-populated area of south Barre. Due to the close proximity of the buildings in South Barre, any fire that breaks out has the potential to turn into a conflagration. Fire station 2 used to be the old Fire Station 3 and was closed down in 1997. The station was empty until the original Station 2 located at 34 Wheelwright Rd was damaged and the trucks moved back in in Late 2016. Station 2 is still undergoing renovations, with most repairs being completed by members of the Department and DPW. Station 2 houses Engines 1 & 5 and has 15 members assigned.

Fire Station 3 is located at 30 Wheelwright Rd in Barre Plains. Station 3 was built in 1822 as a school. In 1932 it became a fire station. Due to the age and some damage to the building it was deemed unsafe for modern fire apparatus. Currently Station 3 is home to Forestry 1, and is used to store the spare firefighting equipment, hose, hazmat supplies, the light trailer, ATV, Hazmat trailer, and the emergency management supplies.

Public Safety Building located at 655 South St. This building houses Ambulance 2 and Forestry 2. This building also houses all of the EMS supplies and is used every day by the on duty members and after every EMS call to restock the ambulances the appropriate EMS supplies.

Grants:

The following grants were awarded to the Department in 2021:

- \$7172 from the SAFE (Student Awareness Fire Education) grant program through the Department of Fire Services to be used for Fire Education programs for students and seniors.
- \$2000 from the Volunteer Fire Assistance Grant from Forest Fire PPE(personal protective equipment)
- \$2700 from the MEMA EMPG grant for 2 new rescue chain saws.
- \$12,500 from the Department of Fire Services for the purchase of firefighting PPE.

As a host community for the Fire District 8 Technical Rescue Team, the Department has continued to receive numerous technical rescue equipment over the course of the last year to adding to its Technical Rescue Trailer including dive and trench rescue equipment. If not for being a host community for the D8 Technical Rescue Team the Department would not have the means to purchase all of the specialized rescue equipment that it has received as part of the team.

Closing:

In closing I would like to thank all of the citizens, the Finance Committee, Selectman, and all the other town boards that have overwhelmingly supported the Department over the course of the last year. The Department relies on the citizens and the town administration to provide the funding necessary for the Department to continue to perform its mission and provide the best level of service for the residents of Barre. As the Chief of Department I am very proud to be able lead to such a great organization of highly trained and highly dedicated personnel. The town of Barre is very fortunate to have such an effective Fire Department. I would also like to thank the Police, DPW, and the Rutland Regional Emergency Communication Center, for their continued support and assistance with all of the responses during the last year.

Respectfully Submitted;

Robert Rogowski

Fire Chief