



LEIGHTON TOWNSHIP FIRE DEPARTMENT

2025 Year End Report



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FIRE RESCUE

Letter from the Chief

It is with tremendous pride that the officers of the Leighton Township Fire Department present our 2025 year-end report. The accomplishments highlighted this year reflect the professionalism, dedication, and unwavering commitment of our firefighters and officer team.

We are deeply grateful for the strong support we have received from our community, the township board, and the many partnering departments we worked alongside throughout 2025. The value we provide to Leighton Township is measured directly by the service we deliver, and we remain committed to offering the highest-quality emergency response to everyone who lives, works, or visits our community.



This past year has been record-setting in several important ways. As our community continues to grow, so too has our call volume—once again reaching the highest number of emergency incidents in our department’s history. Despite the increase, we also achieved our fastest average “on-scene” time ever recorded. This improvement is the result of key enhancements, including:

- Having a full-time Fire Chief during daytime hours, when 53% of our calls occur.
- Expanding part-time staffing during the busiest periods of the week.
- Strengthening our paid on-call response, with medically certified personnel carrying equipment in their personal vehicles, enabling immediate care even before apparatus arrival.

In 2025, we also invested in our operational capabilities. The department added a 2019 Ford Explorer to serve as a quick-response medical unit and replaced our aging inflatable rescue boat with a new zodiac rescue craft, enhancing our ability to provide rapid water and ice rescue services.

I cannot say enough about our exceptional team of 28 firefighters whose dedication has built this program into what it is today. We are equally grateful for the generous support of our residents, whose contributions help us continue improving the services we provide. Community involvement remains a priority for us, and our members take great pride in participating in fire safety programs at schools and the library, as well as supporting local events such as Balloon Fest, school field days, the fly-in event, Green Lake fireworks and 5K, Halloween activities, Christmas events, and more.

Every member of the Leighton Township Fire Department responds to a wide range of emergencies that threaten lives and property. They willingly accept the risks inherent in this profession, finding purpose and reward in serving their neighbors—and often complete strangers—in their greatest moments of need.

It is both an honor and a privilege to serve as your Fire Chief. I look forward to continuing this work alongside the dedicated men and women of the Leighton Township Fire Department for many years to come.

Thankful,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Matt Weston', written over a light blue circular watermark.

Matt Weston
Leighton Township Fire Chief

Our Vision

We engage the community through progressive community outreach. We maintain a constant state of readiness to respond to all incidents through training, maintenance of equipment, and desire to serve our community. We seek to warrant the respect of our citizens by anticipating and responding to their ever-changing needs.

Our Mission

Leighton Township Fire Department's mission is to enhance the quality of living by preventing or minimizing injury, loss of life and or property resulting from fire, accidents and natural emergencies occurring within our community. In addition, we stand ready to support our neighboring fire departments in all of the above.

To fulfill this mission, Leighton Township Fire Department is trained in fire suppression, fire prevention, emergency management, hazardous materials management, ice rescue, extrication, personal injury accidents and medical emergencies.

Our Values

Professionalism– Conduct ourselves with professionalism in application, appearance, attitude and standards.

Integrity– Exhibit honesty and fairness.

Compassion– Demonstrate kindness and empathy.

Responsibility and Accountability– Show professional, personal and fiscal responsibility for our actions.

Respect– Display high regard for each other, our department and our customers, the citizens and visitors of Leighton Township.

Diversity– Serve with open and responsive mindedness to our unique community.

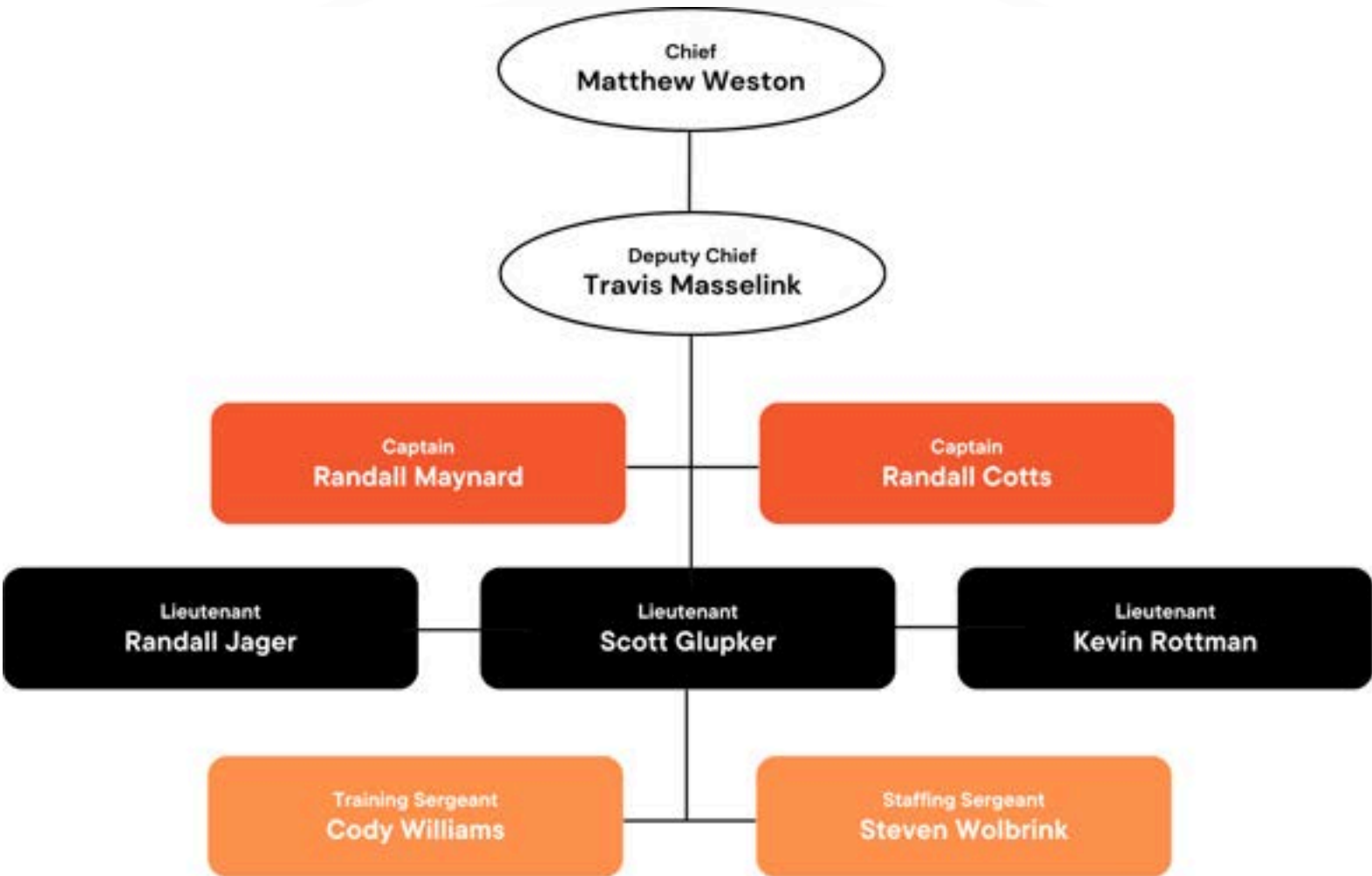
Commitment– Exemplify dedication in all department endeavors.

Teamwork- Promote positive interaction, support and trust within the department and for the community.

Department Information



Department Officers



FIRE RESCUE

Station 1

Moline Station



Firefighters

**Peter
Fennema**

**Joey
Mancuso**

**Roger
Miedema**

**Elaine
Munguia**

**Andrea
Pringle**

**Tim
Rose**

**Cody
Williams**

**Joe
Wylls**

**Jeff
Zuiderveen**

Station 2

Green Lake Station



Firefighters

**Brian
Bollone**

**Rob
Breese**

**Greg
Bultsma**

**Mark
Burkart**

**Jack
Hott**

**Casey
House**

**Ethan
McQuay**

**Paul
Richard**

**Matt
Rubino**

**April
Rogers**

**Levi
Seif**

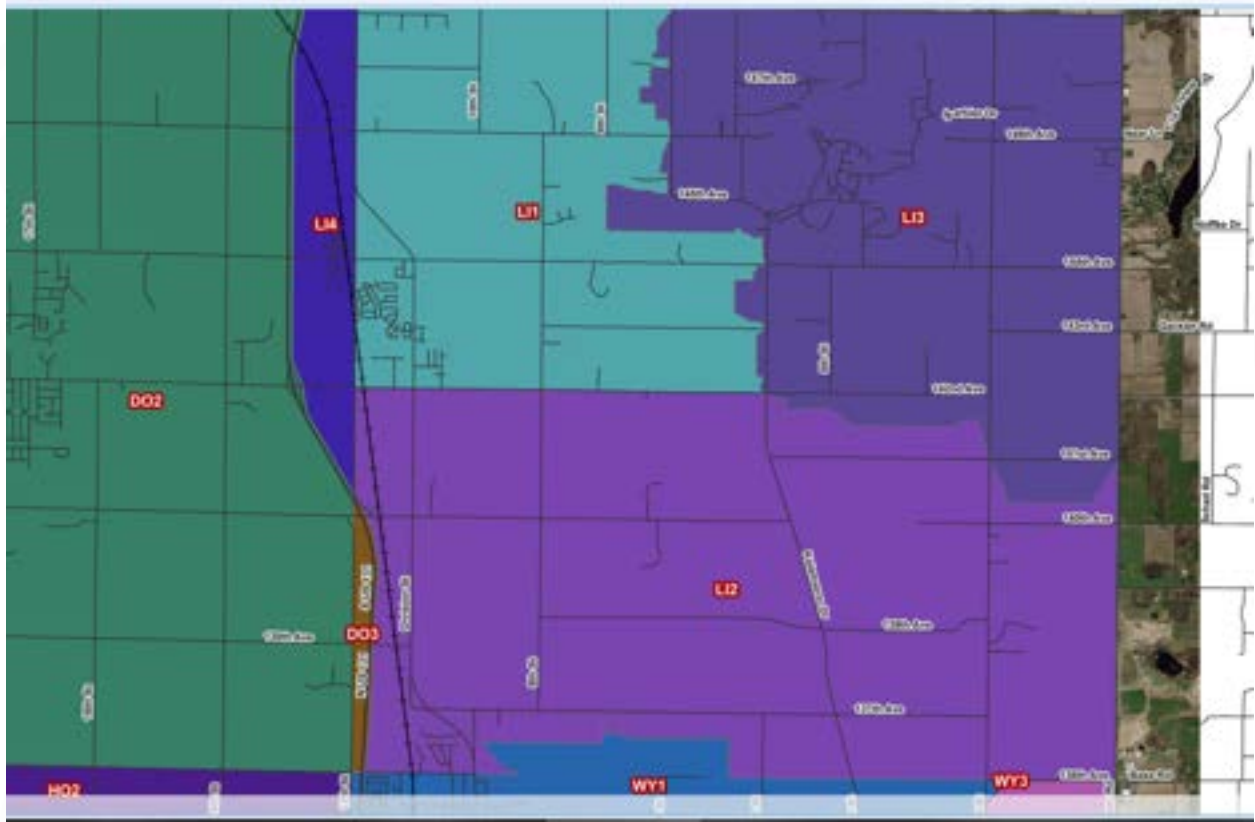
**Mike
VanHarn**

2025 New Hires

This year, Leighton Township fire department added two new members to the roster. Ethan McQuay and Matt Rubino. Both have come to the department with extensive firefighting and medical response experience. They were both able to start right away without moving through the normal probationary academy, and our department is fortunate to have them both.



Response Area & Mutual Aid Departments



Section 5 Fire Department	Automatic Mutual Aid
LI1 Leighton	Dorr Wayland
LI2 Leighton	Wayland DORR
LI3 Leighton	Thornapple Dutton Caledonia
LI4 Leighton	Dorr Wayland

Awards and Recognition

Firefighter of the Year

The Leighton Township Firefighter of the Year award is a peer to peer voting process each year with the only qualification of the winner cannot be the same as the previous year. The winner this year has dedicated himself to the department all year, and is willing to take on any tasks that need doing.

He is constantly willing to help and has an exceptional work ethic, always remembering to represent the department well to the public.

The Leighton Township Fire Department would like to congratulate Greg Bultsma as Firefighter of the Year in 2024!

Some of the reasons our firefighters gave for Greg's nomination include:



“Greg continually takes any classes he can to continue his education, and better himself as a firefighter and EMR. He also works hard at the station conducting inspections, and is always one of the first on scene or station for fire and medical calls. He has been very supportive to me as a new firefighter and EMR assisting with training and mentoring.”

“Greg has shown a true passion for the community and department. He goes on a lot of calls, both fun and tedious. He is a brother that can be counted on. He is always pushing to be better.”

“He has taken extra classes to learn more. He does equipment checks to keep the rigs stocked and ready to respond. Even with working a full time job, he still responds to over 100 calls a year.”

“Hard work and always willing to learn and always willing to help anyone!”

“A lot of behind the scenes work, always willing to help where needed, makes all training and special events, goes above and beyond.”

Greg started with us in June 2021 and has never looked back. He is constantly wanting to learn, take classes and better himself as a firefighter. He is always working on stations, trucks, training, and anything he sees that needs doing. Greg is also on the WAEMS board representing Leighton Township. We are lucky to have Greg as part of our team. Congratulations!

Outstanding Service Award

We are fortunate to have a great team that always has individuals willing to give the extra time to help with all the behind the scenes work to keep the department equipment and vehicles ready and always ready to respond.

This year I would like to recognize an individual who consistently has given time and effort that often goes unnoticed. Anyone who has ever held the position of training officer knows how much time is dedicated and often thankless the job can be. Year after year Cody Williams has attended classes, researched different training methods and hands-on techniques to keep training different and fresh and has put a ton of effort and time into incorporating continuing education credits into our normal training so extra sessions or blitzes are not needed. This has set Leighton apart from all other departments. Organizing and leading 36 training sessions per year can be very challenging.



Cody, thank you for keeping Leighton on the cutting edge for training and your OUTSTANDING EXCELLENCE.

We appreciate all you do for LTFD and the community of Leighton!

Most Calls Run in 2024

As a paid-on-call fire department, the commitment our personnel make to their community does not go unnoticed. Making an emergency call always means leaving work, family, or just personal time. This is part of the job that everyone understands, but is always a struggle. As the department grows and our calls for service increase, this demand keeps going up.

So, the fire department wishes to congratulate Scott Glupker - for the second year in a row - for responding to the most calls in 2024. Scott continues to show his devotion to this department

and community while maintaining his own businesses and family, and running over 61% of calls again. Well done Scott!



FIRE RESCUE

Department Updates



Riding for Ryan

In 2025, the Leighton Township Fire Department became a pick up location for Riding for Ryan flags. This is a local movement to keep children safe on the roads while riding their bikes. These yellow flags will easily attach to the rear wheel on a child's bike and extend high enough, and be visible, for large vehicles to see them.

Giving peace of mind for our community and freedom for the children is a cause that LTFD will always stand behind. If you would like a flag for your kids, or family, stop by Leighton Fire Station 2 for a free bike flag.

Rescue Boat

In 2024, LTFD had acquired a rescue boat for the many lakes, ponds, and reservoirs, but unfortunately the boat had a lot of damage that would not allow it to sustain into the next year. Thankfully, the boat had proven its effectiveness in a short time and LTFD was

able to purchase a replacement in 2025. This is a very similar model, and will be able to carry this department into the future with keeping our community safe on the water.



Community Involvement

Another has come and LTFD is continuing to place the community as the priority. The fire department is always available for emergency response, but helping the people and providing education is a major reason the department exists.

Working with our local schools is the best way for the department to give back to the community and provide early education to the children about fire safety and what to look for if they ever need the fire department to respond.



Starting with the end of the year, LTFD has been assisting with our local school's field days. These are end of year activity days that the fire department can be a part of just to spray water and give the children something fun to do. Our education is not always about the gear or trucks, sometimes it is just being present for the schools.



Once the schools start up again, the fire department takes the opportunity to kick off Fire Safety Month by going to the different area schools to educate about the importance of escape routes in the home, when to call 911, and for the younger students - just seeing a firefighter in full gear. When all the equipment is on, and firefighters start breathing air, that can be a scary experience for young children, causing them to hide in the event of an emergency. Our goal is to familiarize what we look like in gear and breathing air, so everyone knows that firefighters are there to help and not to hide from.





Balloonfest continues to be the major event that happens within Leighton Township, requiring weeks of planning, coordination, and reviews to ensure safety for everyone that comes to the area to enjoy the event. 2025 was no different and LTFD maintained a constant staffing of the event to ensure all festival patrons and event staff were safe.

Keeping with our annual tradition, the fire department also held a Christmastime Santa Parade. LTFD is proud to be able to bring Santa around our neighborhoods to bring happiness to the families that live in our community.

Finally, the fire department participated in the first annual Police vs. Fire softball game. This was a great night for friends and families to come and support all of our local first responders.



Smoke Alarm Installation

In 2025, Leighton Fire continued their mission to keep the residents and homes safer in the event of a fire by offering free smoke and carbon monoxide installations to anyone in the community. These are benefits that are offered through the state of Michigan and the fire department is provided with battery operated smoke and CO alarms at no cost to the department or taxpayers.

Last year, the department installed 151 detectors into the homes around the township. If you would like an alarm installed, please contact the station and we will get that scheduled with you.

Training

Rapid growth is affecting every township in Southwest Michigan, leading to a considerable increase in calls and demand for emergency services. While every fire department is trying to figure out how to keep up with the demand and continue to provide exceptional services, they must rely more heavily on mutual aid and the departments surrounding them to maintain their response.

With this in mind, Leighton Fire has spent a lot of time and effort strengthening the relationships we have with our neighboring fire departments through training and development together.

Starting off 2025, Leighton Township joined up with Dorr Township to have a landing zone course with AeroMed out of Corewell Health. Setting up a landing zone requires first responders to designate a large open area for a helicopter to land that is free of any obstructions on the ground and in the air - there can be no power lines or branches above the landing area - and be able to communicate over specialized radio channels with the pilots of the helicopter.



Once the landing zone is established and the helicopter can land, firefighters still have to assist the AeroMed crews with getting access to the patient, packaging them onto a stretcher, and loading into the helicopter. These operations are done specifically on major accidents where immediate transport is necessary and using the roads would not be effective enough. This also requires a lot of personnel on scene to be done effectively, so combining departments is a perfect opportunity to hone these skills and work with other people.



Later in the year, Leighton Fire worked with Wayland Fire Department, Dorr Fire Department, and Caledonia Fire Department on a search and rescue training operation. Thanks to Caledonia Fire, we were able to utilize their interior building to simulate search and rescue operations. This is a two story building, set within the fire station, that is fully outfitted with furniture and appliances that can be given reduced visibility with fog machines. This gives first responders the opportunity to practice searching a building for possible trapped victims in a fire.

This skill is one that needs to be done rapidly as visibility and tenability of a structure that is on fire decreases continuously. When seconds matter, firefighters need to be ready to implement their training and rescue someone from their home. Working together with our mutual aid departments ensures we are all prepared for this type of emergency and ready to keep our citizens safe across the whole area.



Finally, Leighton Township Fire Department was able to work together with Thornapple Township Emergency Services to prepare for the dangers that accompany hunting season in Michigan. Hunting is a prevalent pastime in Michigan, and in this area, with a high risk that can accompany the time in the woods. Falling from a tree stand, negligent firearm discharges, or personal injury happen around the area every single year. These are not just standard medical responses, they often have a high level of complexity involved. Access to the patient, having all the equipment necessary, finding our patients, and being able to get them to the ambulance are all challenges that plague first responders on hunting accidents.

Every fire department cannot have every single piece of equipment they will need for every single response. Again, having relationships with neighboring departments is paramount to success in these emergencies. Partnering with Thronapple, another mutual aid department, gave us access to their off-road utility vehicle. This vehicle allowed us to gain access to heavily wooded and difficult terrain areas for rescue. There were multiple patients set up that crews needed to prioritize and respond to from the station, with no prior knowledge.

When given the opportunity, we attempt to make our training as realistic as possible. Sometimes that involves putting our departments in situations they were not intending to see at the start of training. Mock calls that come from dispatch, real-life scenarios that are staged off site, or just doing full speed exercises ensure that our firefighters are as prepared as possible for the next emergency.



Department Certifications

This past year we had numerous members become sworn in with our fire department, which is an additional step compared to becoming a member and being certified. To be sworn in, a firefighter must complete, or already have, their Firefighter I & II certification and complete our probationary firefighter program. This program is designed to get our responders comfortable with our tools, the gear, and apparatus. A probationary program also gets everyone better trained on exactly how this department operates, and what to expect when rolling up to different incident scene.

We are pleased to announce the introduction of Casey House, Elaine Munguia, Joey Mancuso, Ethan McQuay, and Matt Rubino!



There were also two certifications of Fire Officer III, the chief officer certification. This is a 40 hour class that covers the roles and responsibilities of being a chief officer within the modern day fire service. Of the many assignments, the capstone project included writing an entire grant proposal with actual data. The entire project was up to being a 50 page document with graphs, explanations, and quotes for simulated projects. Congratulations Dept Chief Travis Masselink and SGT Cody Williams on this accomplishment!

Grants and Donations

Every year, the generosity of this community always exceeds our expectations. In 2025, that was no different. Through a collection of donations and fund raising, the department was able to purchase a Genesis Extrication Ram. This device is used in motor vehicle accidents that require firefighters to extricate a patient from the vehicle due to being pinned in or inaccessible. The essential function of the ram is to drive a piston forward and push out whatever is in front of the device. Using this piece of equipment, responders can push the dash of a vehicle forward, assist with stabilization, or help lift objects with over 24,000 pounds of force. Having this piece of equipment has already been useful in our responses and allowed our firefighters to be more effective and efficient on scene.

With another donation from Plummer's Disposal, a local family business, Leighton was able to purchase a MSA 5 gas monitoring system. This adds additional capability to our responses to smoke odors, carbon monoxide alerts, or any possible dangerous gas call. This monitor can scan a wider range of airborne particles and has an active pump which will draw air in and read faster than our traditional monitors. This device has been a welcome addition to our response and has given our residents and responders greater peace of mind when entering homes that have their detectors signaling.

In addition to donations, Leighton Township Fire Department is always looking for qualifying grant opportunities to further improve and support our operations. In 2025, LTFD was awarded the Michigan Volunteer Fire Capacity Grant to help with the purchasing of gear. We were able to use those funds to purchase 10 sets of Hybrid Response gear for our highest responders. This gear looks like our normal turnout gear, but it does not have the flame and heat resistance built in. This gear is designed for training, extrication emergencies, wildland firefighting, or any other call that doesn't require being in a fire. Adding this gear will allow our highest responders versatility on calls. This gear can be worn to stay cooler in the summer, have a greater range of motion, or be faster on a majority of our calls.

The fire department is continuously grateful for all those that help support us and all the funding opportunities we are able to participate with.

Calls and Responses

This year was another major record breaking year for the Leighton Township Fire Department and the calls ran for year. In 2025, LTFD ran **659** calls for the year, that amount is an increase to our call volume of **25.52%** from 2024. Typically, our department plans and budgets for an increase of 5-10% each year on call volume to account for the increase of population and general township development. However, a growth of over 25% is a much larger increase than what was expected and ends up having a major impact on the responses of our first responders, maintenance on equipment, and the need for constant growth and development within the fire department.



We are continually grateful to have a team of firefighters at Leighton Township that are willing to leave their families, jobs, and personal lives to respond to emergencies within their area. As our community continues to grow, the demand on our members will also increase. The department is trying to find new ways to keep up with the growth of our new call volume, and we appreciate all the support of the members of our community.

Notable calls from this year all revolve around mutual aid with our neighbors again. We were able to provide aid multiple times to our neighbors on major structure fires. Leighton Fire sent assistance to Dorr, Wayland, and Thornapple on major structure fires.

Structure fires are calls that will always require a lot of personnel. With many departments having full paid-on-call staffing, or a limited duty crew, these calls require calling numerous departments to handle and maintain. Staffing and response numbers will always be critical to being the most effective on scene, with modern day fires the scene is changing faster than ever. Buildings are burning faster than they used to, and the amount of time people have to escape their homes have been reduced to seconds, not minutes.





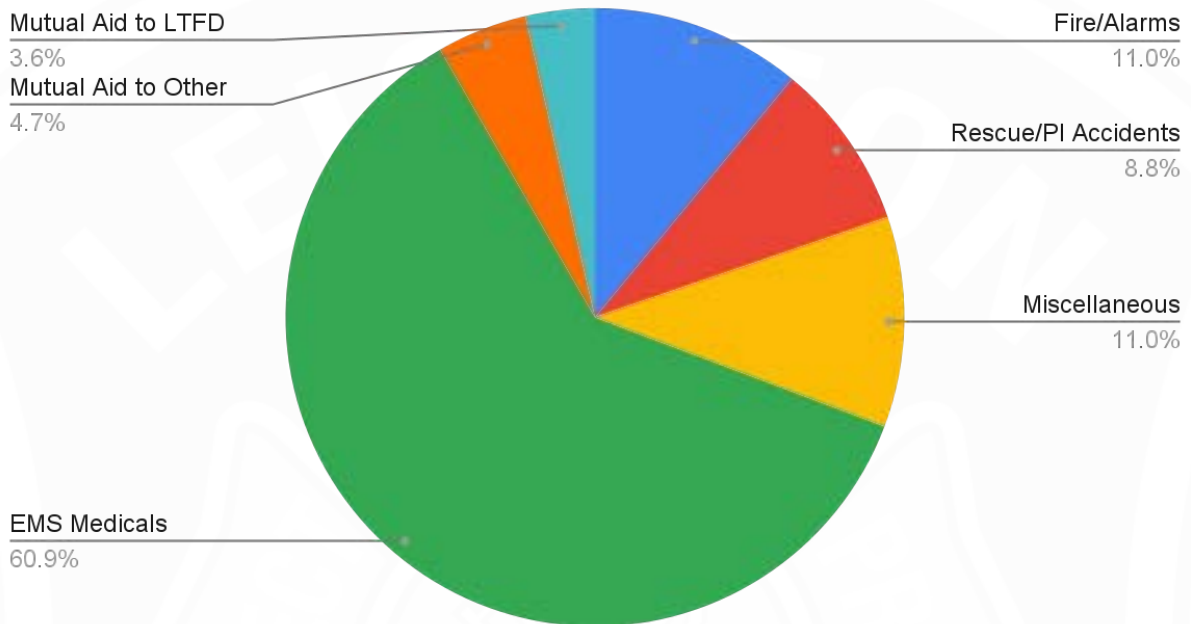
With the ever changing fire environment, lithium ion battery fires have made their way into Leighton Township. Lithium ion batteries are a hot topic within the fire service currently - they burn quickly, they burn hot, and are nearly impossible to extinguish. With the increase in battery operated tools and vehicles, this issue was a matter of time for our department. However, the first battery issue was encountered within a battery operated scooter that caught on fire. LTFD was able to identify and isolate the issue to prevent major damage.

Fires are a major consideration for this department; however, all first responders must be prepared for a hazardous materials emergency to arise as well. This year, there was a vehicle fire that turned into a major HAZMAT situation within this township. A large truck, hauling a variety of gasses, caught fire and then started to release those chemicals. Thanks to the help of our mutual aid partners, and requesting help from the Allegan County Emergency Operations Center, and a hazardous materials clean up company, this emergency was able to be handled with minimal risk.

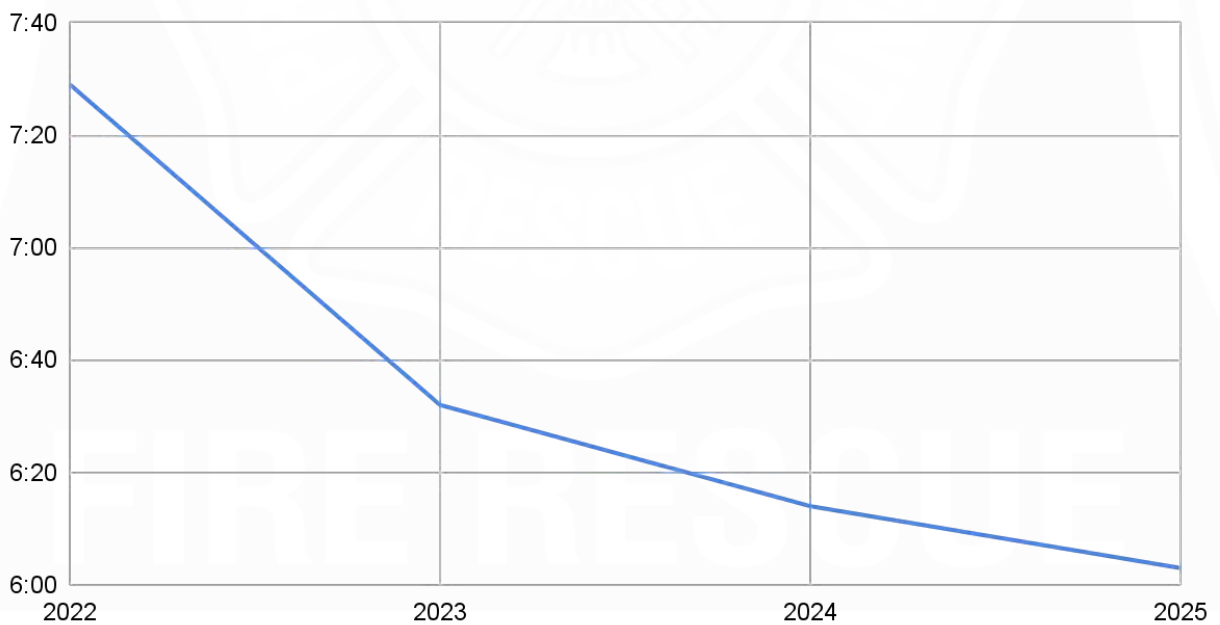


Call Statistics

2025



Average Response Time

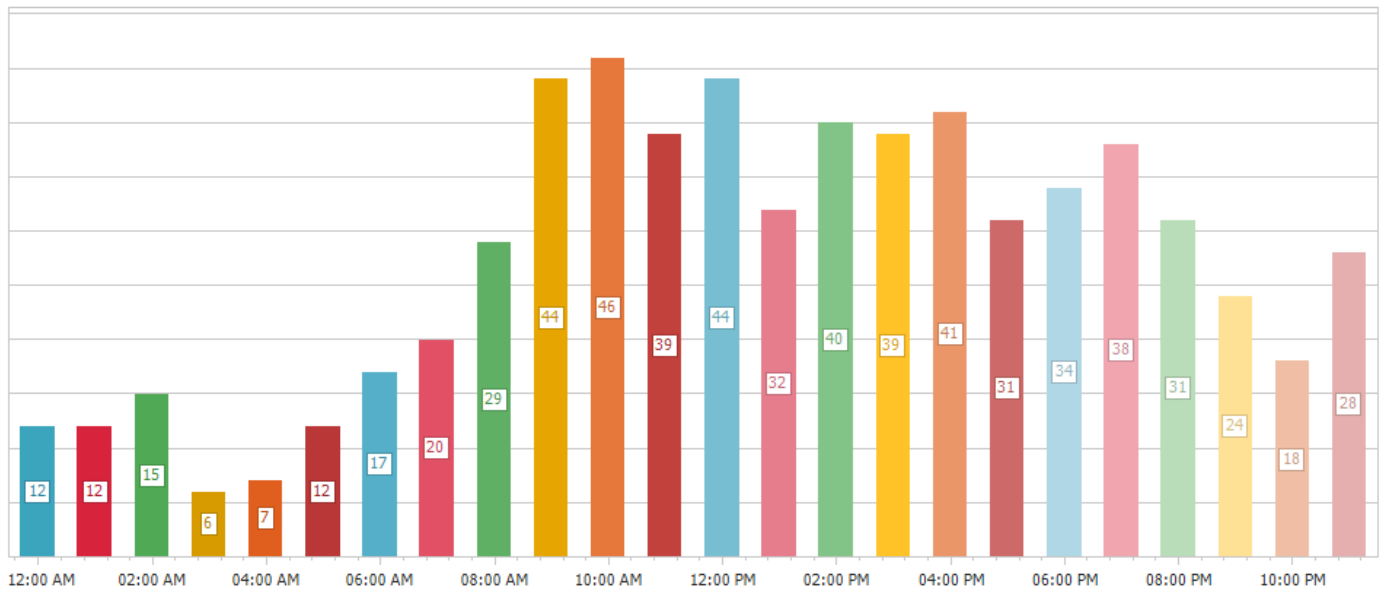


Average Response Time and Number Responding

<u>Incident Type</u>	<u>Count</u>	<u>Average Response Time</u>	<u>Average # Responding</u>
111 - Building fire	14	8m 43s	13.79
112 - Fires in structure other than in a building	1	13m 50s	14
113 - Cooking fire, confined to container	2	2m 30s	11.5
118 - Trash or rubbish fire, contained	2	8m 30s	6.5
123 - Fire in portable building, fixed location	1	3m	17
131 - Passenger vehicle fire	1	1m	12
132 - Road freight or transport vehicle fire	1	5m	15
138 - Off-road vehicle or heavy equipment fire	2	8m	9.5
142 - Brush or brush-and-grass mixture fire	1	5m	10
143 - Grass fire	1	11m	9
150 - Outside rubbish fire, other	5	6m	9.8
151 - Outside rubbish, trash or waste fire	1	10m	11
311 - Medical assist, assist EMS crew	378	5m 49s	4.47
322 - Motor vehicle accident with injuries	17	4m 33s	12.76
323 - Motor vehicle/pedestrian accident (MV Ped)	2	5m 30s	15.5
324 - Motor vehicle accident with no injuries.	8	3m 23s	12.25
350 - Extrication, rescue, other	2	5m 30s	14.5
352 - Extrication of victim(s) from vehicle	1	5m	8
360 - Water & ice-related rescue, other	1	10m	12
400 - Hazardous condition, other	1	4m	0
412 - Gas leak (natural gas or LPG)	7	5m 55s	4
424 - Carbon monoxide incident	2	6m	7
444 - Power line down	47	6m 5s	11.26
460 - Accident, potential accident, other	4	5m 8s	8
531 - Smoke or odor removal	1	3m	4
550 - Public service assistance, other	2	11m 30s	4
551 - Assist police or other governmental agency	7	5m 43s	4.43
571 - Cover assignment, standby, moveup	6	8m 24s	7.5
611 - Dispatched & canceled en route	90		5.12
631 - Authorized controlled burning	2	5m 32s	4
651 - Smoke scare, odor of smoke	9	10m 27s	7.89
700 - False alarm or false call, other	2	9m	7

733 - Smoke detector activation due to malfunction	1	6m	4
735 - Alarm system sounded due to malfunction	13	5m 51s	9.15
740 - Unintentional transmission of alarm, other	6	7m 30s	4.17
744 - Detector activation, no fire - unintentional	1	4m	12
745 - Alarm system activation, no fire - unintentional	2	2m	8
746 - Carbon monoxide detector activation, no CO	7	8m 9s	5.29
815 - Severe weather or natural disaster standby	1	1m	17
900 - Special type of incident, other	1	5m	18
911 - Citizen complaint	1	5m	3
Total	659	6m 3s	6.08

Incidents by Time of Day



FIRE RESCUE

A large, faint watermark of the Leighton Township Fire Department logo is centered on the page. The logo is a Maltese cross with a fire helmet in the center. The word "LEIGHTON" is arched across the top, and "FIRE RESCUE" is arched across the bottom.

**From every firefighter with the Leighton Township
Fire Department,**

Thank you!

We cannot do this job without you