

BURLINGTON FIRE COMMISSION
Minutes of the Meeting
October 1, 2024

These are the minutes of the October 1, 2024, meeting of the Burlington Fire Commission. The meeting convened at 08:35 hours via Zoom and in person with Commissioners Perkinson, Chapman, Sheehey, and McLaughlin. Chief LaChance, Deputy Chief Curtin, Battalion Chief of Training Troy Ruggles, and Administrative Assistant Meghan Sweeney were also present.

Call to Order

Commissioner McLaughlin called the meeting to order at 08:35.

Motion for Meeting End Time

Motion to end meeting by 09:30 from Commissioner Sheehey, seconded by Commissioner Chapman.

Motion to Adopt Agenda

No motions made.

Public Comment

No members of the public were present.

Chief's Oral Report

Chief Lachance's report (attached) was emailed to commissioners. Additional discussion of topics included:

Personnel—Chief LaChance said the number of members who have submitted applications for the next lieutenant process is surprisingly low. He thinks the cover officer position that many newly promoted lieutenants are assigned may not be as appealing. This can be negotiated, but the promotion process may need to be held again sooner to fulfill officer vacancies.

Fleet – New ambulances now take three years to build. Pairing that with the expected life of current ambulances means that the current Ambulance 2 should have been purchased in 2023. Ladder 2 is a 2017 truck.

Buildings—Memorial Block discussions are still ongoing. Different locations are under consideration for a public safety building that would be a new location for Station 1 and the Police Department.

Radio System Upgrade—Equipment will need to be moved to City Place. Contingency money is available to pay for this move. Lieutenant Brad Wilson has done a wonderful job with this project.

Community Response Team—While discussing the non-transport numbers, Commissioner McLaughlin asked if there was a general age group of those refusing treatment and transport. Chief LaChance thinks it's mostly people in their mid-20s to mid-40s.

Training—BC Ruggles: The recruits are testing for FFI next week and then Firefighter II after that. He hopes they will be assigned to shifts and apparatus by October 14th. EMS refresher training will be offered in the winter months.

BC Ruggles applied and was awarded an AFG grant that focused on our members' lack of live fire training opportunities. The grant allows us to host three trainings (offered for each shift) for live burns at the Vermont Fire Academy. He's hoping the burns will happen in the spring of 2025, Fall of 2025, and then in the Spring of 2026. The grant expires in June of 2026. It will cover the transport cost, so he hopes to rent a bus and bring the entire shift at a time.

The lateral transfer posting is going live today. Recruitment for fire service is generally down, and we as a department have seen the effects. In the last couple of years, our retention has been better. However, we have seen classes from 2020 and 2021 where the majority of members moved on and left the fire service jobs. We hope the lateral transfer process will allow those who want to stay in the profession but move to the area to find it more fiscally possible. We are also recognizing people who are current members who came with prior experience. There is no retro pay for them, but they will get pay steps and recognition of experience, allowing them to be promoted sooner.

EMS Division: Commissioner Chapman asked what buprenorphine is. It's an opioid blocker that allows people who are experiencing a high to come down but not so much that they have completely crashed. It will hopefully allow people to level out enough to accept the services offered to them after we treat the overdose. DC Curtin explained he tries to think of it as a more advanced Narcan. Commissioner Chapman asked if any other cities were involved in the pilot program. Chief LaChance thinks Bennington, Newport, and Brattleboro are also trying this.

Commissioner Chapman asked if the department is able to accept donations from the public. We are; however, when the money is used, it still falls under the general guidelines of the city's purchasing policy.

Commissioner Chapman asked if there were any safety concerns for the department after the Red Square incident. Chief LaChance stated that the event was handled swiftly by responding BFD and BPD units. The area construction affected scene access.

Review and Accept Minutes from the August Meeting

Commissioner McLaughlin asked for a motion to accept the August minutes. Commissioner Sheehey moved the motion, and the minutes were accepted.

Old Business/New Business

- The commission's status is that they are requesting the city administration to discuss the budget bond vs. budget—no updates.
- Public Safety forum—Chief LaChance attends the meetings; however, they are provided with the same report he provides the commission with statistics. He was also asked to join the Ward 3 meeting in November to discuss public safety.
- Discuss upcoming commission date—Chief LaChance wondered if the Commission would be willing to meet on the second Tuesday of the month during the months we meet. This would allow him to capture the full month data he's trying to report on. The commissioners were in favor, but they wanted to wait to finalize when Commissioner Bond was present.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by motion from Commissioner Chapman and seconded by Commissioner Sheehey at 09:37.



Burlington Fire Department



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October 01, 2024

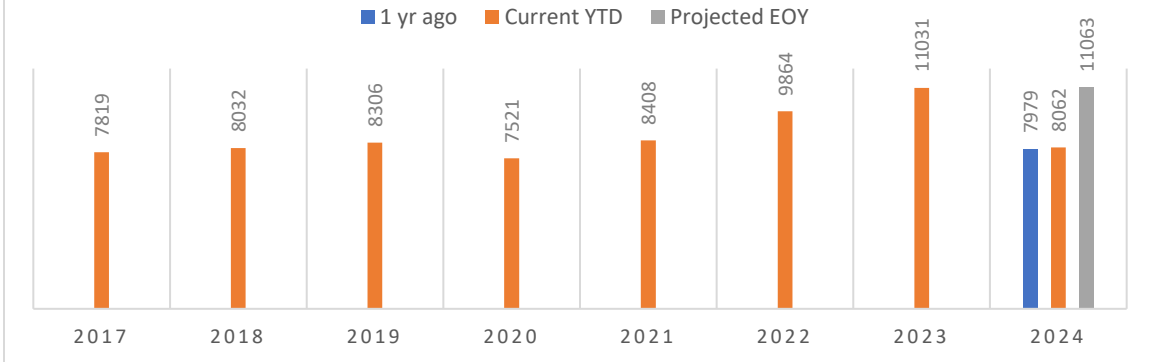
Chief's Report to the Burlington Fire Commission

Personnel: We currently hold three vacancies. BC Jamie Valyou has submitted his intent to retire. His last duty day on shift is Oct. 19. He has accepted the Fire Chief position in Charlotte, Vermont. After a promotional process for Battalion Chief held in August, Christopher Laramie was appointed the Battalion Chief of B-Shift, satisfying the vacancy created when DC Curtin was promoted. Mark McDonough has been promoted to the Battalion Chief of C-Shift, satisfying the vacancy created by BC Valyou. Capt. McDonough's promotion is effective October 21. It's been my pleasure to make other promotions based on these command staff appointments. Congratulations to Christopher Sullivan for his promotion to Captain, Kevin Alexander for his promotion to Lieutenant, and Jason Charest for his upcoming promotion to Lieutenant, effective on October 21. Our Captain's and Lieutenant's promotional lists are exhausted with these latest promotions. We will conduct the Lieutenant's process in November and the Captain's in February 2025. BOF and CC have approved our lateral hiring process. The job posting for the lateral position will open on October 01.

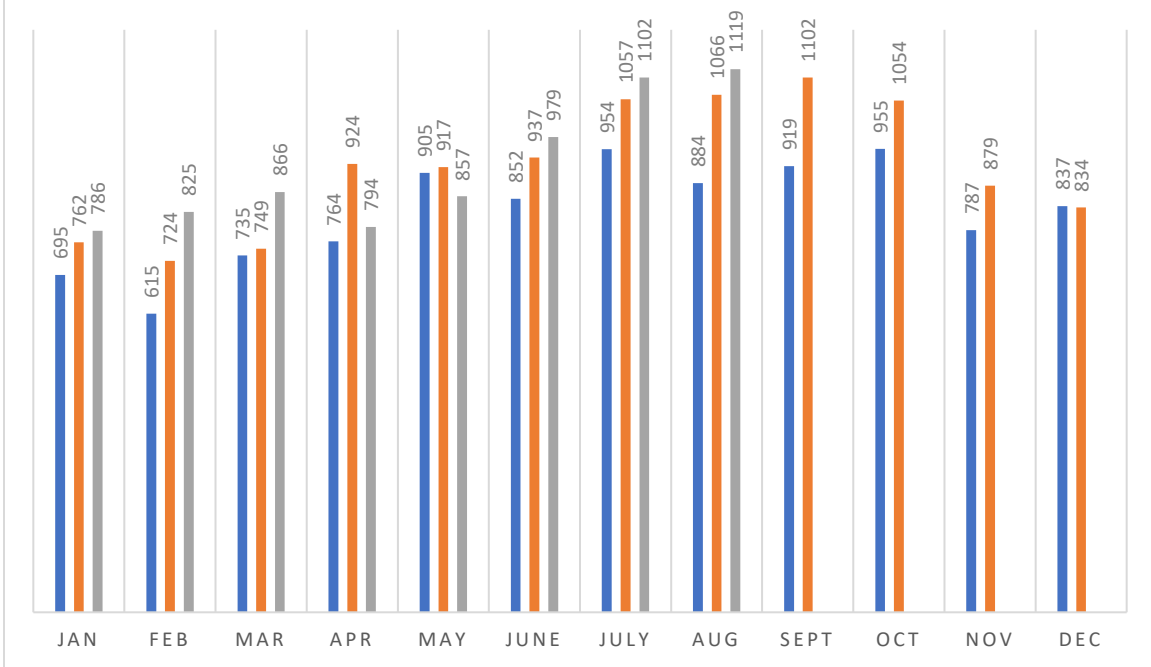
Fit4Fire: Our Fit4Fire committee meets quarterly to discuss new ideas and programs. In September, the Fit4Fire team, with the department's support, conducted an annual fitness assessment of members. This is a voluntary assessment, but the team believes that we had an 80+% participation rate, the highest yet. In December, a class about peer support will come to Burlington. The IAFF offers this course and will be open to other area departments.

Responses: As of Sept 22, 2024, the fire department had reached incident number 8,062. During the same period in 2023, we reached incident number 7,979, a 1.04% increase over the same time last year.

FIRE DEPARTMENT RESPONSE TOTALS CALENDAR YEAR UPDATED THROUGH 09/22/2024



2022 - 2024 RESPONSES BY MONTH



Overtime: August 01 – September 22

- | | <u>2023</u> | <u>2024</u> |
|--|-------------|-------------|
| • Minimum Staffing Overtime: | 1069.5 hrs | 1130.25 hrs |
| • Mandatory Minimum Staffing Overtime: | 242 hrs | 191.5 hrs |

The above data shows a 5.6% increase in Minimum Staffing Overtime and a 20.87% decrease in Mandatory Minimum Staffing Overtime during the same period last year.

Overall, the minimum staffing overtime burden on the employees and city budget increased by 0.78%.

Note: The above overtime burden on the staff accounts for Minimum Staffing Overtime, giving us the 22 people required to meet minimum staffing levels. This does not account for extra duty jobs, dispatch extra duty, or CRT overtime. In the same period, our staff committed to the following extra duty, dispatch extra duty, and CRT overtime:

- Extra Duty: 156.5 hrs
- Dispatch: 326 hrs
- CRT Overtime: 114.5 hrs

Fleet: Funding for fleet replacement continues to be a priority for the city’s fleet committee. Ensuring fleet repair requests are addressed promptly and coordinated with the shift commanders to reduce response disruptions is a primary concern for the DC of Operations. We expect delivery of two fire apparatus to the Fire Department this week. Engine 1 and Engine 3 will be replaced with this delivery. The current Engine 1 will become the new Engine 6. The current Engines, 6 and 3, will be sold after the transition. With the three-year build schedule for new ambulances and a five-year delivery timeline for new fire trucks, a priority should be placed on a sustainable fleet purchasing plan. The city is working on a plan to fund our next ambulance for 2027 delivery.

Buildings: We currently have contracts for annual PM maintenance for our bay doors and plymovent systems. The RFP to replace the apparatus floor at Station 2 has been awarded. We are working on scheduling and are concerned this will need to be delayed until the spring. With the cold weather coming, we are limited to where we can store trucks. Fire Trucks cannot remain outside in below-freezing weather without being in operation, as the water can freeze, damaging the unit.

Radio System Upgrade: The Comms System Upgrade is progressing well. As of now, all of the equipment has been installed on all four sites: 1 North Ave, 100 Bank St, Diversity Hill, and Jeffords Hall. The Delivered Audio Quality test was completed in the first week of September, and the results were very promising. Many places that were

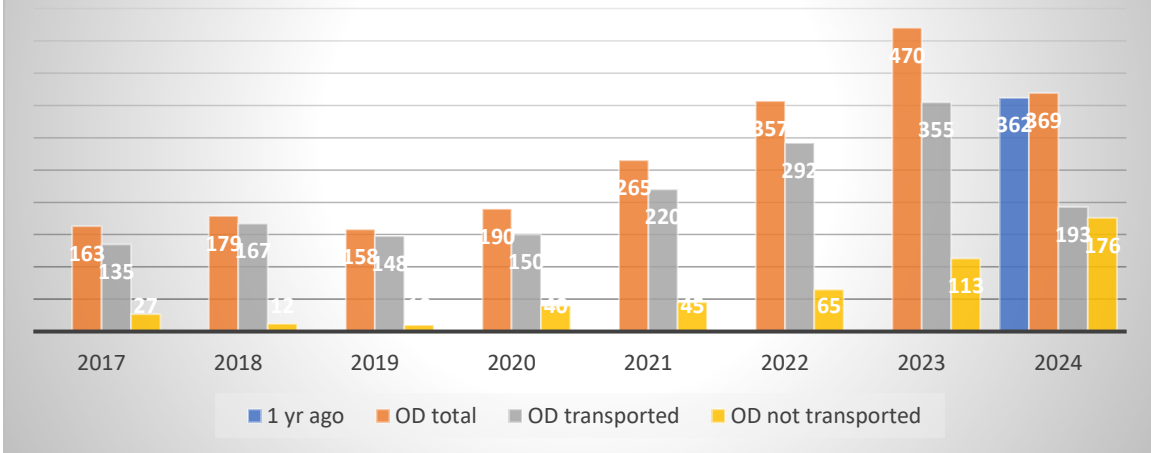
"dead zones" for Fire and PD are now loud and clear. We continue to work with FD and PD to get radios programmed for the cutover. We are waiting for the FCC to approve 2 more frequencies. We are waiting for BCS and Consolidated Communications to connect the redundant back-haul links. Once this is complete, Motorola requires two more inspections to finalize the system. After the inspections, we can set a date for the cutover.

Motorola is getting a quote from BCS for the equipment move once City Place is ready.

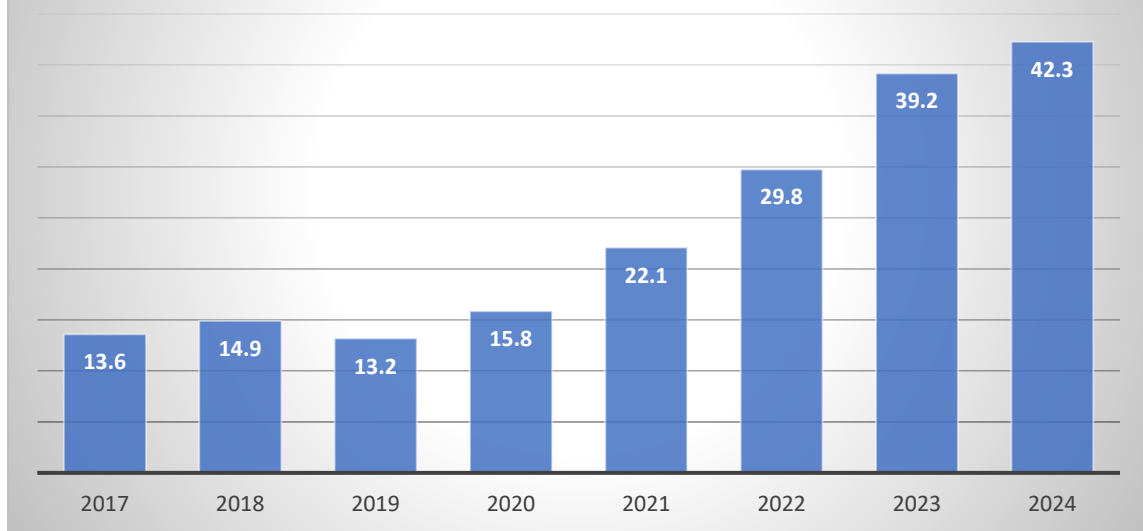
Community Response Team Pilot: Staffing of the CRT in August and September has decreased from prior months. Over the last two months, our average in-service time has been about 7 hours per week. The month of August shows overdose numbers consistent with the same month of the year prior. There are two disturbing trends happening. One is the significant increase in Overdose, accounting for a spike in monthly averages. The other is the alarming trend of people not seeking medical care after an overdose. Non- transports after overdose were averaging between 10% and 25% of the total. We are now seeing that in almost 50% of the overdoses we respond to, the person does not seek further medical treatment.

		2022	2023	% change 22/23	2024	% change 23/24
January		19	40	111%	25	-38%
February		20	29	45%	25	-14%
March		20	28	40%	23	-18%
April		26	43	65%	17	-60%
May		26	38	46%	37	-3%
June		38	56	47%	49	-13%
July		38	39	3%	59	51%
August		39	57	46%	57	0%
September		24	67	179%		
October		33	25	-24%		
November		31	24	-23%		
December		44	24	-45%		
			Implementation of CRT			

Overdose Total: Transported: Not Transported Data through 09/22/2024



Average Overdose Responses per Month Data through 09/22/2024



We are tracking data from the CRT deployment. Below are some metrics showing the program's impact. This data shows how many people the team has touched, the quantity of wound care supplies handed out, comfort care supplies distributed, Narcan leave-behind kits distributed, the number of referrals, direct phone requests, and incidents where the team went above and beyond in their duties.

Total:	1980	2841	285	212	54	17	4
	# of Attendees	# of Wound Care Items Distributed	# of Comfort Care Supplies Distributed	# of NLB Kits Distributed	Total # Referrals/Bridge to Service Providers	Total Request For CRT Members Via Phone	Total Above & Beyond Incidents

Operations Division:

- BFD deployed three members with state USAR to Florida for Hurricane Helene. They are currently relocating to North Carolina.
- The CAD Cloud Migration is complete and off the city servers. There were minor hiccups, but overall, it went smoothly, and all systems are back up and operational. Thank you to SF Cochran and Scot Barker for their work on this migration
- All apparatus have been pump tested and passed.
- The lieutenant's process application period closed on 9/27. Two members submitted resumes.
- Captain's test reading list has been published and distributed to members.
- The New Firehouse Committee is brainstorming basic concepts of what a new firehouse would look like and feature.
- We are in the process of transitioning to E-keys with our Knox box system. Moving forward, only the electronic core will be available to purchase. If properties want to retrofit their current boxes, that is an option. The E-Key has many advanced features, such as recording who used the key and at what building as it has the electronic core for audit purposes. It also enhances interagency operations as if another dept comes to Burlington and has the E-Key system, they can use their key with their dept code to open boxes that have the electronic core, and it's all trackable. The same goes if BFD goes to Shelburne, who is now 100% E-Key boxes. South Burlington and Williston are going to be utilizing E-Keys as well.
- We met with the Coast Guard to discuss the contract they are federally required to have and toured the facility. The Coast Guard would like to train together more and offered their facility for hosting training if BFD wanted it. They would also

like to work on building a better relationship with BFD and BPD and will invite us and our families to a haunted house/trunk-or-treat they will be putting on in October.

Fire Marshal's Office: The Fire Marshal's office is working with operational staff to ensure a successful fire prevention week in October. This year, the week is October 6 – 12. The department will host an event on October 12 at the Champlain School on Pine St. There will be fire prevention handouts, special guests, the Division of Fire Safety trailer, Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream, food trucks, and firefighters.

Training Division:

1. Recruits nearing the end of Academy. They begin testing out the first week of October.
2. VT Gas has been outfitting the McNeil training building with gas props for training purposes.
3. We have several buildings within the city we will be using for training and company drills in the near future.

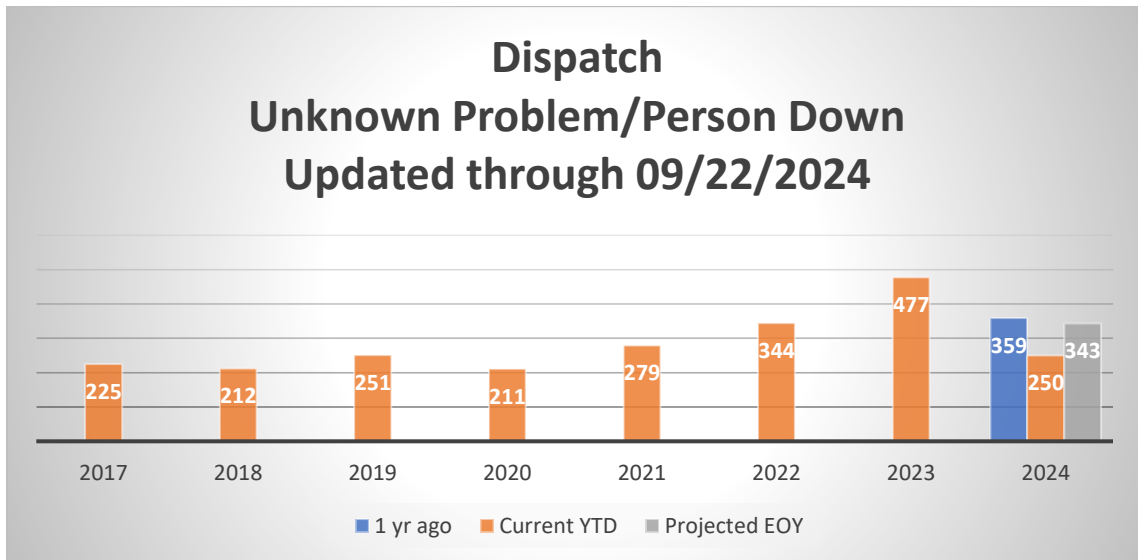
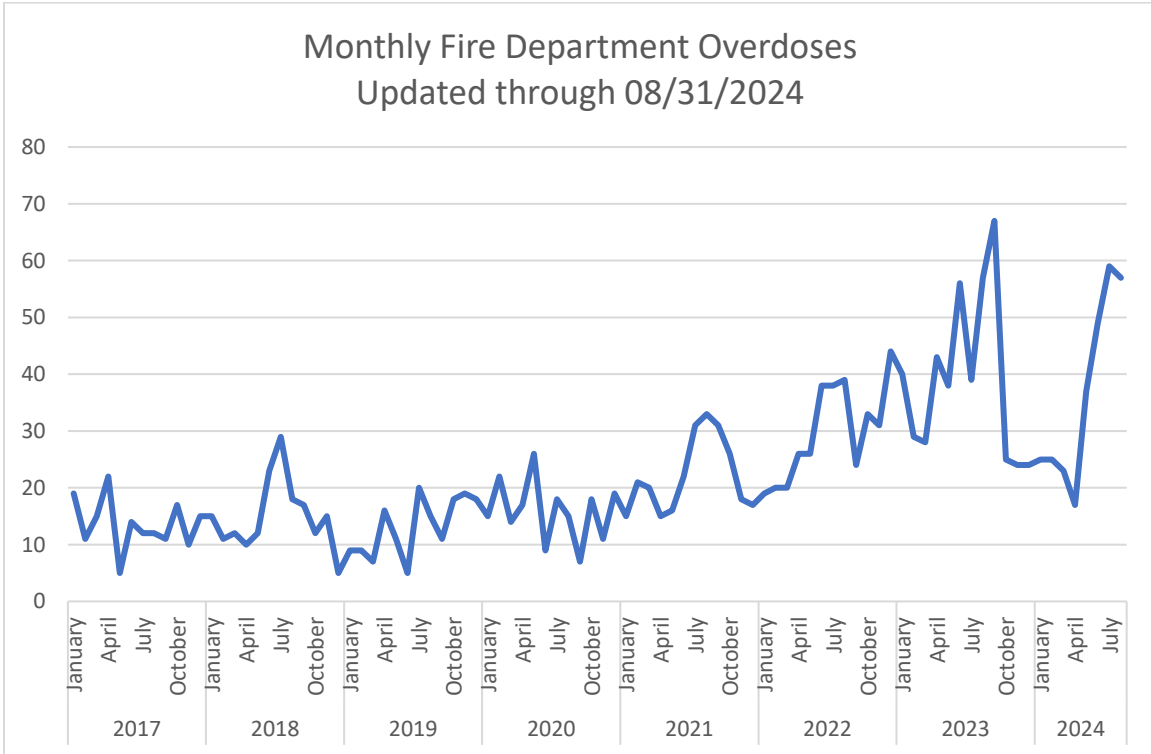
EMS Division: The division is currently conducting department-wide EMS training focused on the PREVENT Initiative, particularly highlighting the new Standard Operating Procedure related to controlled substances. This training also covers the state-approved variance allowing our AEMTs to administer Suboxone (buprenorphine).

We are also working on the Medicare Ground Ambulance Service report, which is due by November 30th. On the clinical side, we are reintroducing case reviews with Dr. Michael Sheeser, who will join our paramedics on the first Friday of every month. Other case reviews will also be a central focus of our October EMS training for the entire department.

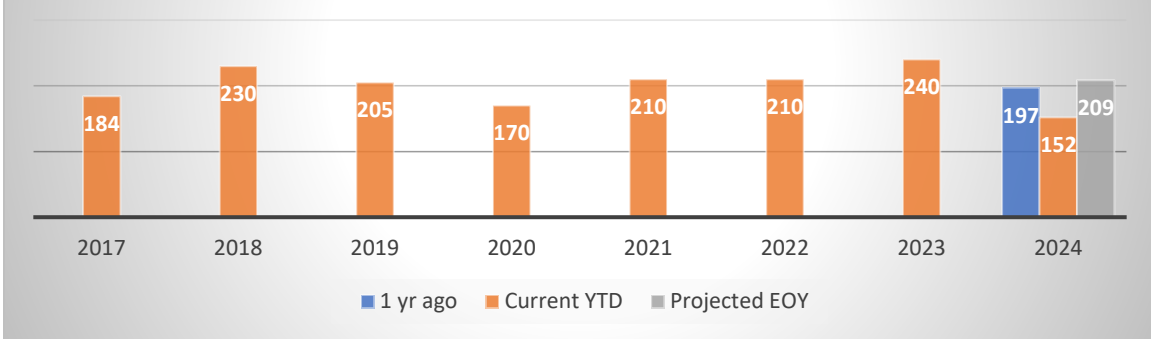
We're also strongly emphasizing documentation practices and QA/QI, especially with the added support from the Vermont Department of Health in gathering data related to the PREVENT Initiative.

We received a new infant airway mannequin that lets us specifically work on airway management skills. Dr. Sheeser and I will sign off on airway skills for our paramedics on October 4th and utilize the mannequin amongst all providers based on their scope.

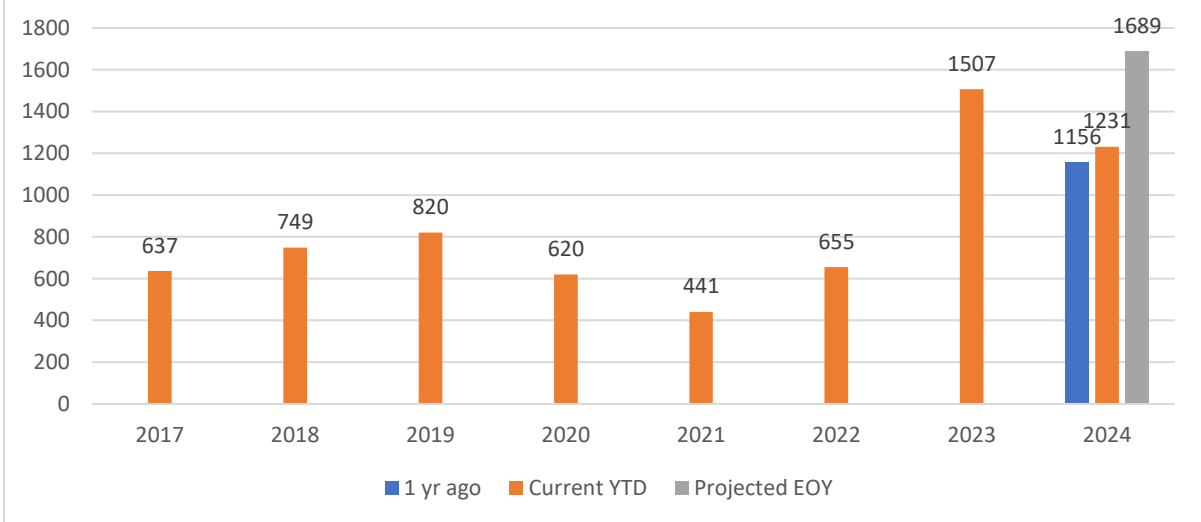
Latest EMS Response Data:



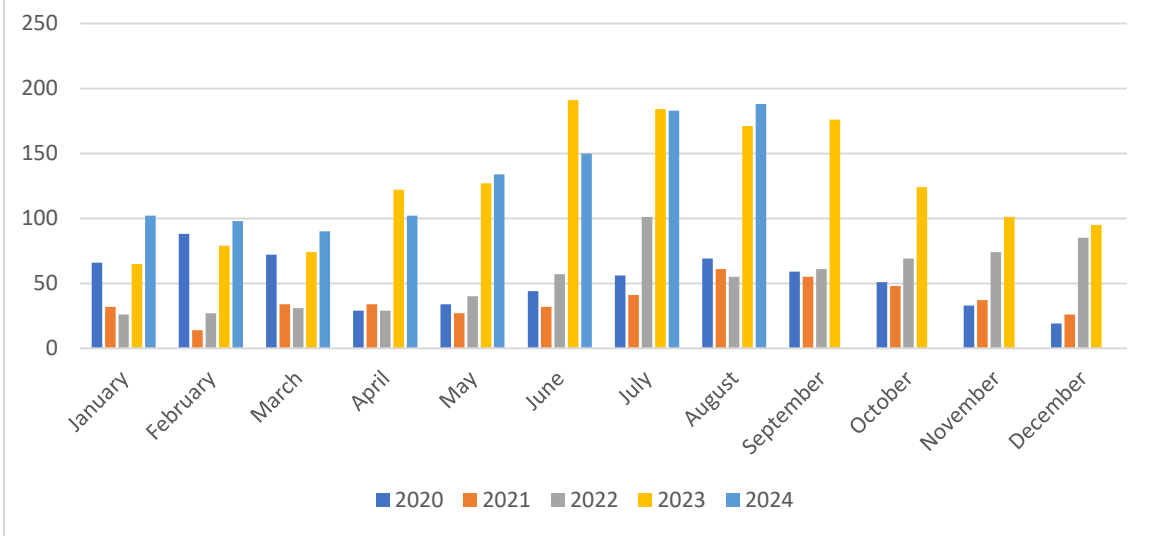
Dispatch Alcohol Intoxication Updated through 09/22/2024



Annual Fire Department EMS Responses to Homeless/Houseless/Transient/ No Address Population Updated through 09/22/2024



Monthly Fire Department EMS Responses to Homeless/Houseless/Transient/No Address Population



Monthly Fire Department EMS Responses to Homeless/Houseless/Transient/No Address Population Data Through 08/31/2024

