

## **Burlington Fire Commission Meeting**

Tuesday October 14, 2025 08:30-09:18

Members Present: Chair Jake Perskinson, Vice Chair Kevin McLaughlin, Linda Sheehey, Monica Chapman, and Ashley Bond (via Zoom). Chief Michael Curtin, Deputy Chief of Administration Stephen Petit, and Administrative Assistant Meghan Sweeney. BFFA members Bryan Mathieu, John Husbands, Josh Kirtlink, Christopher Sullivan, Dennis Wilson, Christopher Reinfurt, Patrick Stewart, and Battalion Chief McDonough joined for the Commissions and stayed to discuss new business. Christopher Sullivan joined for entirety of meeting.

Call to Order – 08:30 am.

Meeting minutes using assistance from AI:

### **Motion to Amend/Adopt Agenda-**

Fire Commission meeting on October 14th, 2025, began with a motion to reorder the agenda, which was approved. Motion made by Commission McLaughlin and seconded by Sheehey with all in favor. Old New Business moved to item 5 with Review and Accept Minutes moving to item 6 and Chief's Oral Report moving to item 7.

### **Public Comment –**

No comment from member of public.

### **Commissions –**

The commission then conducted the swearing-in ceremony for Christopher Sullivan as captain and Kevin Alexander as lieutenant, acknowledging their leadership and dedication over the past year.

### **Old Business/New Business-**

The fire department discussed challenges and successes in responding to calls, particularly in City Hall Park. They highlighted the high demand and variable nature of overdose calls, noting that patients are often unreceptive and that police support is not always available. The department also mentioned changes to the police response model, including the use of CSLs for mental health calls. The discussion touched on the time and resource demands of these calls, as well as the importance of data in understanding call patterns.

The discussion focused on safety concerns for firefighters and emergency medical personnel, particularly regarding physical confrontations and needle stick incidents during calls. The participants discussed the lack of formal self-defense training for firefighters, despite the presence of body armor and ballistic helmets. They noted that while some dual-certified police officer firefighters carry weapons, most EMS personnel are prohibited from doing so, creating a safety gap in certain situations.

Participants expressed worry about the physical and mental toll on members due to increased assaults and verbal abuse, as well as the inappropriate use of emergency services for non-urgent matters. There was agreement on the need to continue discussions with relevant stakeholders,

including the police commission and administration, to address these issues and explore potential solutions.

The discussion focused on two main topics: the status of a proposed safe injection site in Burlington and concerns about firefighter safety. While no specific location for the injection site has been confirmed, there was discussion about whether increased access to such sites might affect overdose rates, though no concrete data was provided. The conversation then shifted to concerns about firefighter safety, with one participant suggesting that firefighters might benefit from carrying non-lethal self-defense tools, though others expressed hesitation about this proposal, preferring to keep firefighters focused on their primary emergency response duties.

### **Review and Accept Minutes from August Meeting-**

Motion to accept minutes made by Commissioner Chapman and Commissioner McLaughlin. Seconded by Commissioner Sheehey.

### **Chief's Oral Report-**

Chief Curtin sent his report to commissioners in advance for review. Additional items discussed:

### **Repeat Offender Policy Review**

The meeting focused on discussing the challenges and opportunities related to addressing repeat offenders and the impact of policy changes on public safety. Participants highlighted the need for policy adjustments and increased awareness to reduce the number of repeat incidents, emphasizing the importance of addressing root causes rather than just symptoms. They also reviewed data on call volumes, drug-related incidents, and the effectiveness of current resources, noting a significant drop in overdose confirmations despite a high dispatch rate. The discussion concluded with a review of heat maps showing high-concentration areas for calls and potential issues with alarm systems in certain buildings.

### **Staffing and Operations Update**

The team discussed staffing challenges, including 14 open positions due to current vacancies and 6 members on leave, leading to a 19% increase in overtime hours. They highlighted recruitment efforts with 4 new employees starting next Monday, including 3 lateral transfers and 1 community member. The CRT data for September showed 59 patient contacts, 11 Narcan kits distributed, and 6 company-level inspections completed. Station 1's floor refinishing project is nearly complete, and the team participated in community engagement activities including public education events and firehouse tours.

### **Fire Department Recruitment and Improvements**

The fire department discussed recruitment challenges, noting that while they had enough candidates for available slots, they decided to defer some candidates to the spring of 2026 due to tight timelines. They reported receiving 65 entry-level applications and 15 lateral applications, with 24 candidates tested and 2 selected for final consideration. The department is also working on various facility improvements across all stations, including apparatus floor repairs, structural supports, and sprinkler system inspections, with Station 2's floor replacement project nearly complete and Station 3 beginning engineering phase for dorm renovations.

### **Department Operations and Safety Updates**

The meeting covered several operational updates, including a \$124,000 inspection project that will be implemented in stages, and a successful Coast Guard drill where 7 members participated. The department discussed plans to enhance water response capabilities, with Chief Aumand

leading efforts to rebuild the technical rescue team, and they received new SCBA equipment. EMS reported conducting live burns and preparing for paramedic refresher courses, while the Training Division shared updates on elevator rescue training and upcoming live burns. The Fire Marshal's office highlighted successful outreach at the farmer's market and efforts to promote lithium-ion battery safety. The conversation ended with a discussion about the high number of paramedics in the department and concerns about member well-being, emphasizing the need for regional and state collaboration on mental health initiatives.

Motion to adjourn made by Commissioner Sheehey and seconded by McLaughlin. All in favor meeting adjourned at 09:18 am.

DRAFT



# BURLINGTON FIRE DEPARTMENT

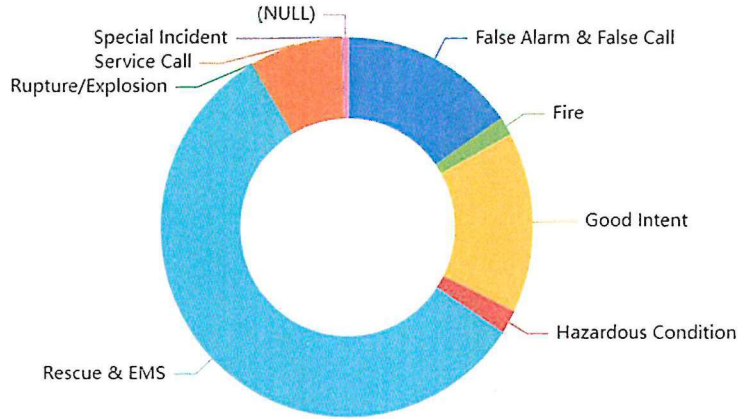
136 S. Winooski Avenue, Burlington, VT 05401  
 Phone: (802) 864-4554 Fax: (802) 865-5387

## Chief's Report to the Fire Commission: September Data Points October 14, 2025

### Call Volume & Activity Summary

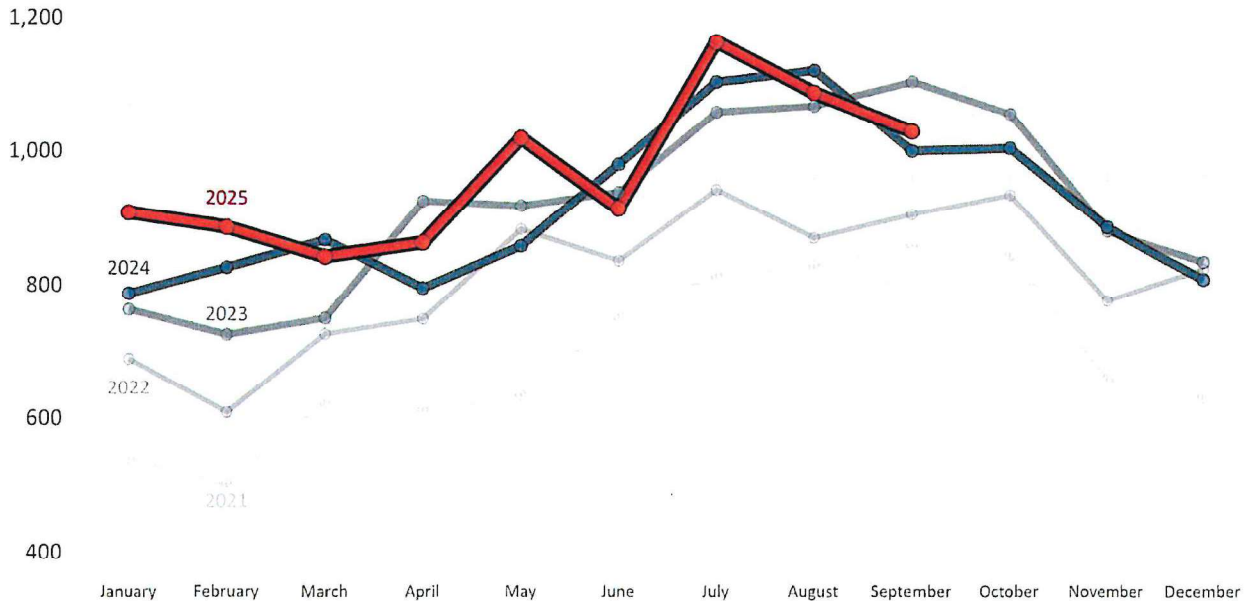
Total Incidents for the month of September: **1,028**  
 Total Incidents: **8,766** (As of 10/1/25)

- Fire Incidents: **172**
- EMS: **586**
- Hazmat: **21**
- Service Call/Public Assist: **82**



During the same period in 2024, we responded to **1,004** incidents, a **2.4%** increase from last year.

Fire Department Monthly Response Totals, 2021 - 2025  
 Source: First Due



Data through 9/30/2025



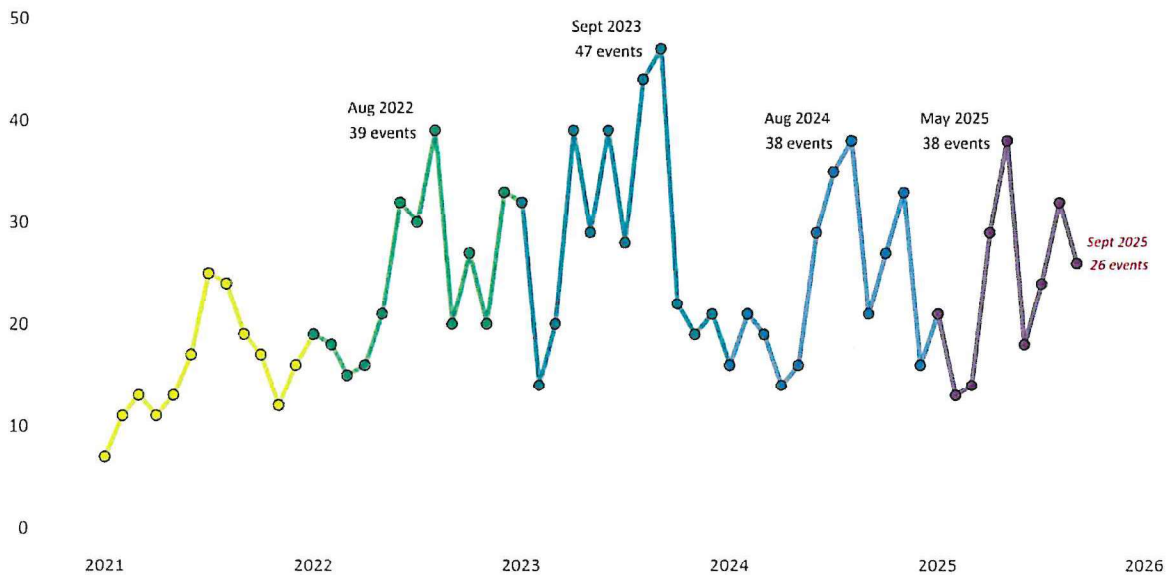
# BURLINGTON FIRE DEPARTMENT

136 S. Winooski Avenue, Burlington, VT 05401  
 Phone: (802) 864-4554 Fax: (802) 865-5387

## EMS Data:

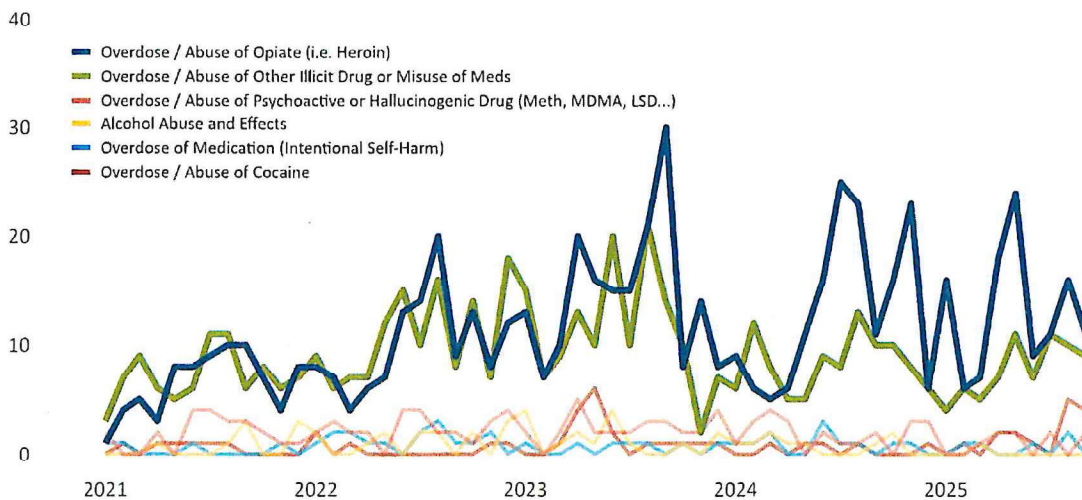
In September 2025, Burlington Fire Department crews responded to 26 confirmed drug-related events or overdoses, down from 38 in May 2025 and below the same month last year (47 in September 2023). While the overall trend remains variable month to month, this represents a notable decrease compared to prior peak periods.

Confirmed Drug Events / Overdoses by Month  
 Siren incidents with a Working Diagnosis or Secondary Impression that contains 'Overdose/Drug Abuse' or 'Poisoning'



Data through 9/30/2025

Monthly Working Diagnoses & Secondary Impressions for Confirmed Overdoses / Drug Events  
 Top diagnoses that reference substances



Note: Incidents can have more than one Secondary Impression.  
 Note: This chart excludes alcohol-only events.  
 Non-substance diagnoses include 'Altered Mental Status', 'Anxiety Attack / Acute Stress Reaction', and 'Psychiatric / Behavioral Problem'  
 Data through 9/30/2025

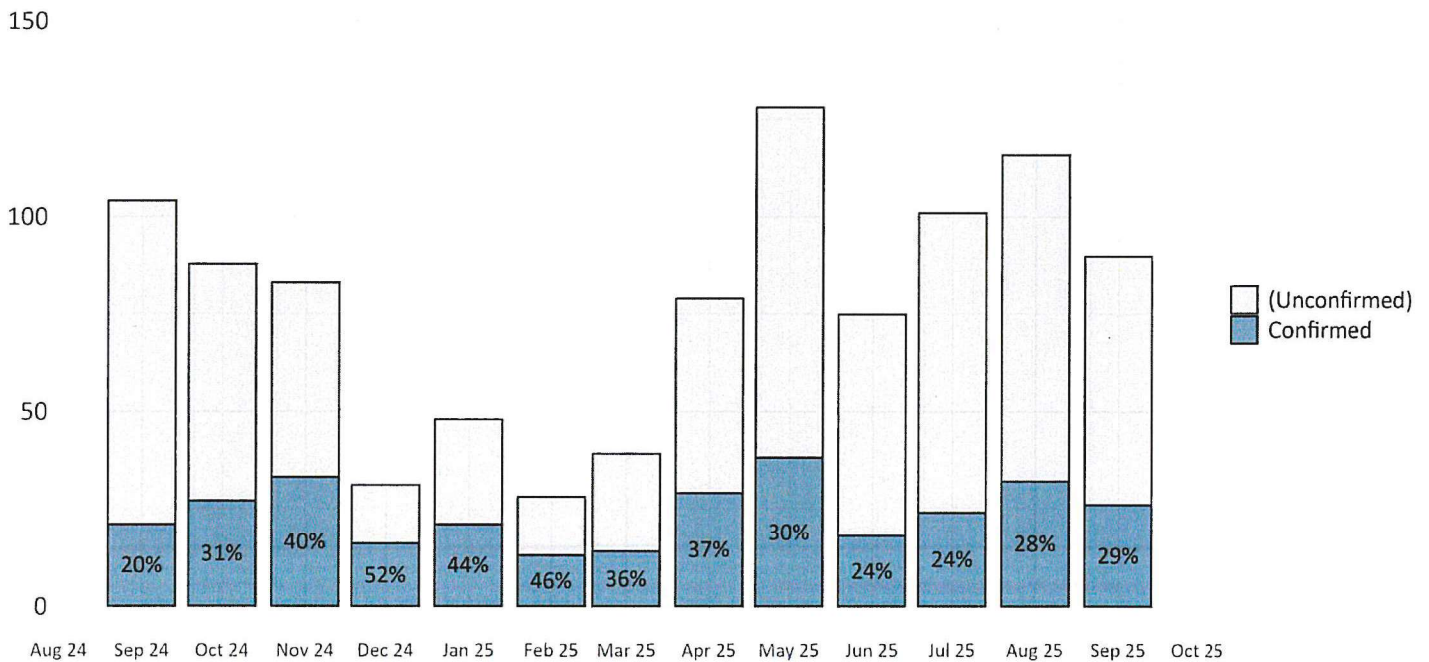


# BURLINGTON FIRE DEPARTMENT

136 S. Winooski Avenue, Burlington, VT 05401  
Phone: (802) 864-4554 Fax: (802) 865-5387

Over the past year (Sept 2024–Sept 2025), Burlington Fire was dispatched to an average of 80–100 overdose-related calls per month, though only about 25–35% of those were confirmed as actual overdoses on scene. The remaining 65–75% were found to involve other medical, person sleeping, person left the scene, person denies EMS attention, or behavioral conditions. While the total number of dispatched overdose calls has remained relatively steady since spring, the confirmation rate continues to hover around one-third.

**BFD Events Dispatched as Overdoses**  
*Confirmed on scene vs. not confirmed on scene*



*Confirmation obtained via responder diagnosis in Siren  
Data through 09/30/25*





# BURLINGTON FIRE DEPARTMENT

136 S. Winooski Avenue, Burlington, VT 05401  
Phone: (802) 864-4554 Fax: (802) 865-5387





# BURLINGTON FIRE DEPARTMENT

136 S. Winooski Avenue, Burlington, VT 05401  
Phone: (802) 864-4554 Fax: (802) 865-5387

## CRT Data for September 2025:

Staffed 14 days for the month of September

Total Contacts	Narcan Kits	Wound Care Kits	Comfort Care Kit	Referrals
59	11	1	3	3

## Personnel & Staffing

Total Department Staff: Uniformed Members **88** / Authorized **95**

- Minimum Daily Staffing: **22**
- Vacancies: **8**
- Injuries/LOA/FMLA: **6**
- Staff Training Hours: **496**
- Company Level Inspections: **6**

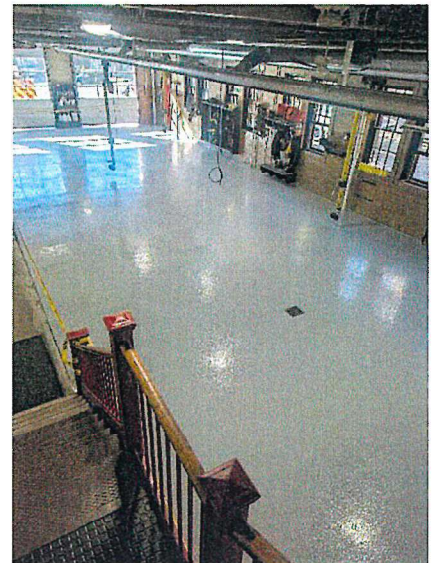
Overtime Type	2025 Hours	2024 Hours	% + -
Minimum Staffing	831	695.75	+19
Mandatory	123.75	141.5	-12.5
CRT	279.25	117	+138.6
Emergency	5.5	0	+550
Extra Duty Events	132	96.5	+36.7

## Firehouses

- Station 1 floor refinishing completed

## Community Engagement

- 9/6 Public Education event at 35 Cambrian Way
- 9/17 Ladder 2/Ambulance 2 Firehouse Tour
- 9/23 Firehouse tour Station 1
- 9/29 Ride Along with Ladder 2 for day tour





## BURLINGTON FIRE DEPARTMENT

---

136 S. Winooski Avenue, Burlington, VT 05401

Phone: (802) 864-4554 Fax: (802) 865-5387

### Division Updates:

#### Operations Division:

- 7 members of BFD participated in the MARSEC USCG drill on August 27th at the USCG station. Drill went well and met the needs of the USCG Northern Sector Command. Beneficial for our members to interact with various agencies at the drill.
- Met with USCG 9/25, pursuing viability of a grant for future acquisition of boat for emergency response on the lake and shoreline.
- Attended Chittenden County Fire Chiefs meeting on 9/17 in Essex Jct.
- Aerial apparatus along with ground ladders on all apparatus were tested and with the exception of two ground ladders passed. Two ground ladders need minor repairs, which will be done in house.
- A team of five members along with DC OPS has been created to evaluate the benefits of Drone use in fire department operations. One meeting has taken place and a second meeting on 10/9 will be had with UVM UAS team for further input/education and operational limitations.
- Our desire to evaluate technical rescue capabilities within the department is on-going. BC Aumand will lead our efforts.
- We have taken delivery of new SCBA units which will replace every SCBA unit on all of our apparatus. Major upgrade to improved units and safety to our members. Lt. Mathieu is leading the changeout which will include training our members in the month of October.

#### Administrative Division:

- Currently revising FROI SOG and related forms with the assistance of Derek Gavelis.
- Next recruit academy is scheduled to begin on October 20<sup>th</sup>, with (4) recruits (3 laterals and 1 entry level). Establishing a list for an anticipated May 2026 Recruit Academy. Note: Received 65 applications for entry-level and 15 lateral firefighter applications.
- Station 1: Apparatus floor and stairwell renovation in progress. Floor expected to be finished for Friday, October 10<sup>th</sup>. Total project completion date TBD. The apparatus floor will be re-organized. Additional details will be forthcoming.
- Station 2: In process of obtaining pricing to complete floor apparatus bay floor finish. Stay tuned.
- Station 2: One of the basement floor drains has a complete blockage (closest to the A side). Avoid washing vehicles in basement. Working with Kim Bleakley to establish a replacement or repair plan.
- Station 2: Farrington Construction will be installing a new cover on the sump pump pit.
- Station 2: Pursuing an annual HVAC PM agreement. In progress.
- Station 3: Initial stages of engineering for dorm room project and apparatus bay floor.
- Station 4: Exterior man doors recently replaced. In the process of replacing furniture. All stations:
  - Executed contract with vendor to complete PM/service on exhaust capture system. Vendor is expected to be on site next week to conduct service work.
  - Assessing need for sprinkler system repairs across all stations following recently completed annual inspections.
- Reminder to shift commanders and company officers to complete required employee appraisals.



## BURLINGTON FIRE DEPARTMENT

---

136 S. Winooski Avenue, Burlington, VT 05401

Phone: (802) 864-4554 Fax: (802) 865-5387

### EMS Division:

- **Inventory and Apparatus Evaluation:** We are continuing our comprehensive review of EMS inventory and evaluating each apparatus to identify current and future needs.
- **Medication Administration Safety:** A draft policy regarding medication administration safety is in development to enhance standardization and reduce potential risk.
- **Fire Rehabilitation Support:** The EMS Division is providing Fire Rehabilitation coverage during the Live Burn Training exercises being conducted by the Fire Training Division.
- **Training and Education:** We are preparing to offer a Paramedic Refresher Course, which will serve as an outside training opportunity. Preparations are also underway for our in-house EMT and AEMT Refresher Courses.
- **Provider Development:** Five members have completed their AEMT program as required by contract, and their state licenses are beginning to arrive. Getting these members operationally ready and up to date with the PREVENT Initiative and Controlled Substance policies remains a current priority.
- **Medical Direction and Training:** Dr. Sheeser has returned for the month of October and is providing focused paramedic training sessions. As of October 1st, we also welcome our new District Paramedic Medical Director, **Dr. Doug George**, who has served on the district board and brings extensive experience through his work with HealthNet's Critical Care Transport Team, Vermont State Police, USAR, and other tactical units and trainings. We are very excited for the future under his leadership and partnership.
- **Community Collaboration:** The Division recently presented its first case to the Situation Table and is taking the lead in coordinating care and reconnecting the patient with essential services to mitigate future risk.

### Training Division:

- Thanks to an invitation from Warren Fire Department, six members were able to attend Elevator Emergency Management, Presented by Dragon Rescue Management.
- T1 and L2 crews completed department training on a new Patient Tie in System for the stokes baskets.
- Members completed the Annual Fitness Assessment organized by our Fit4Fire committee.
- Three members are beginning Fire Officer 1&2 which will run until November.
- B-Shift will be conducting Live Burn Training at the Vermont Fire Academy on October 8th and C-Shift on October 22nd.
- Our pack techs, as well as pack techs from three neighboring departments, will receive training from Scott for the new Scott Air Packs on October 10th.
- Lt Mathieu is scheduled to conduct department wide training for the rest of our members on the new packs the following week.
- Recruit Academy 25-02 is scheduled to begin on October 20th. These Academies are not only challenging for the Recruits. A great deal of support from the membership is required to put on a quality Recruit Academy and adequately prepare new members to serve the community here in Burlington.



## BURLINGTON FIRE DEPARTMENT

---

136 S. Winooski Avenue, Burlington, VT 05401

Phone: (802) 864-4554 Fax: (802) 865-5387

Thank you to all of the members who have already stepped up and those who will over the next few months.

- BFD is hosting Managing Disciplinary Challenges in the Fire Service by Curt Varone on October 22-23.

### **Fire Marshal:**

The Fire Marshal Office had a successful fire prevention day at the Farmers Market down on Pine St. on 10/4/25. We bought a Sparky the Fire Dog costume and we were joined by Champ and Riley from UVM for a short time. A sprinkler head demonstrations attracted multiple people through out the day. Fire extinguisher training was sought after by many people from two years old to sixty plus. We are also giving fire safety presentations to Juniper House, Thayer House, Fern Hill, Three Cathedral Square and Heineberg Senior Housing this year. The fire safety theme this year is lithium-ion battery safety. We purchased two informational towers to place in apartment buildings to stress the importance of lithium-ion battery safety. We are also working on getting into the school system.



# BURLINGTON FIRE DEPARTMENT

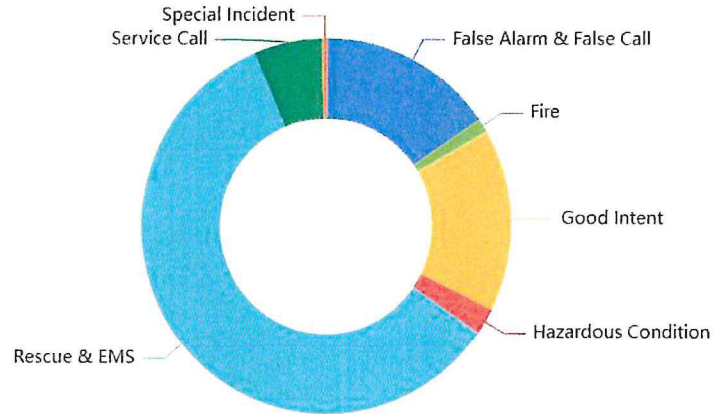
136 S. Winooski Avenue, Burlington, VT 05401  
 Phone: (802) 864-4554 Fax: (802) 865-5387

## Chief's Report to the Public Safety Committee: August Data Points September 25, 2025

### Call Volume & Activity Summary

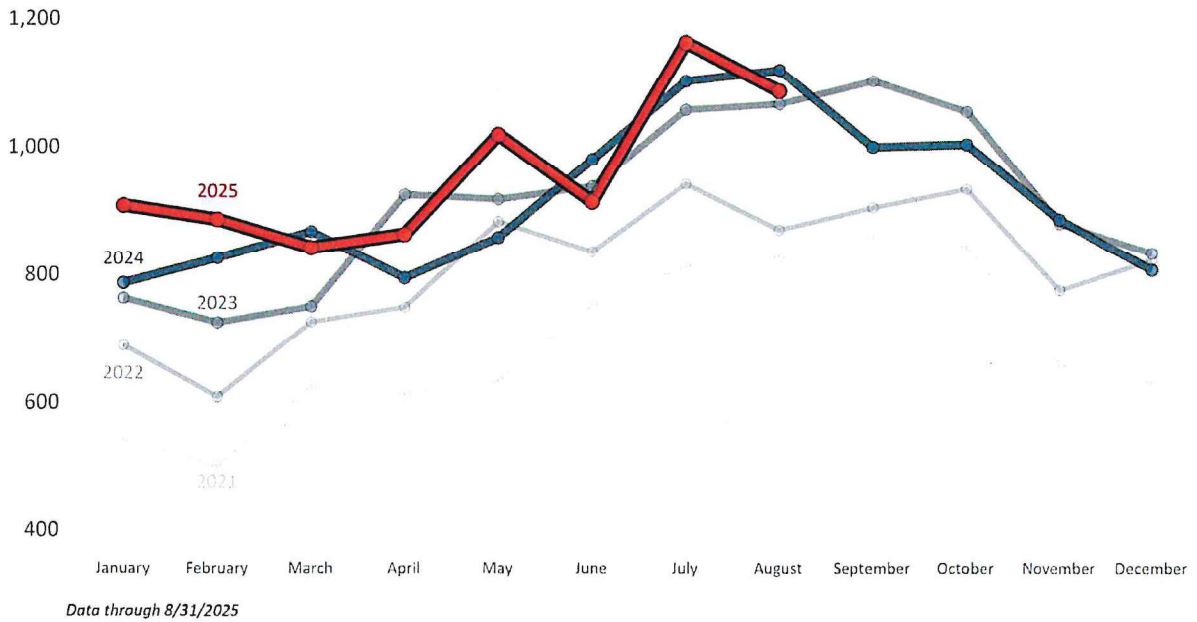
Total Incidents for the month of August: 1,086  
 Total Incidents: 7,731 (As of 9/1/25)

- Fire Incidents: **180**
- EMS: **641**
- Hazmat: **25**
- Service Call/Public Assist: **65**



During the same period in 2024, we responded to 1,119 incidents, a 2.9% decrease from last year.

Fire Department Monthly Response Totals, 2021 - 2025  
 Source: First Due





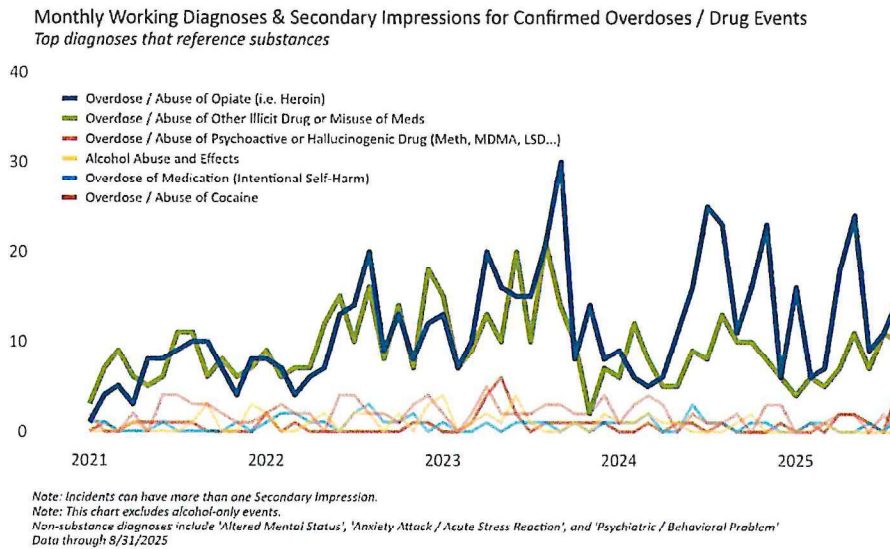
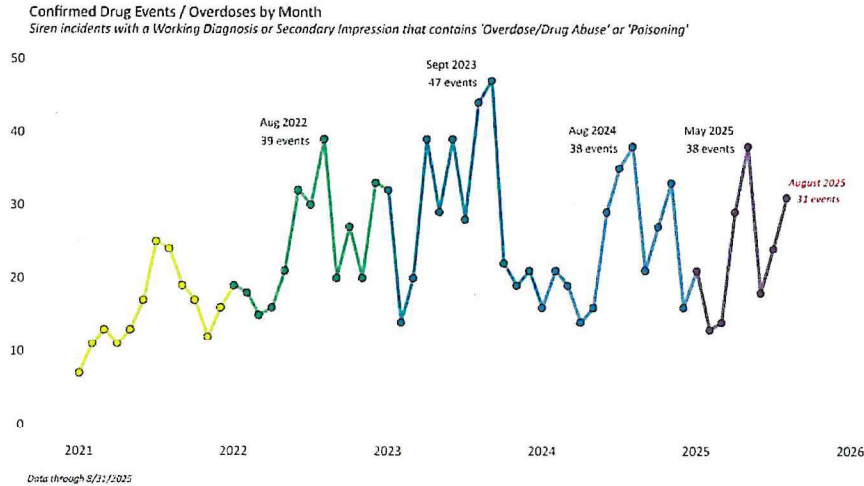
# BURLINGTON FIRE DEPARTMENT

136 S. Winooski Avenue, Burlington, VT 05401

Phone: (802) 864-4554 Fax: (802) 865-5387

## EMS Data:

The following charts presents monthly data on EMS-confirmed overdose and drug-related incidents in our community from 2021 through August 31, 2025. It categorizes the top types of substances involved, based on working diagnoses and secondary impressions gathered in the field.



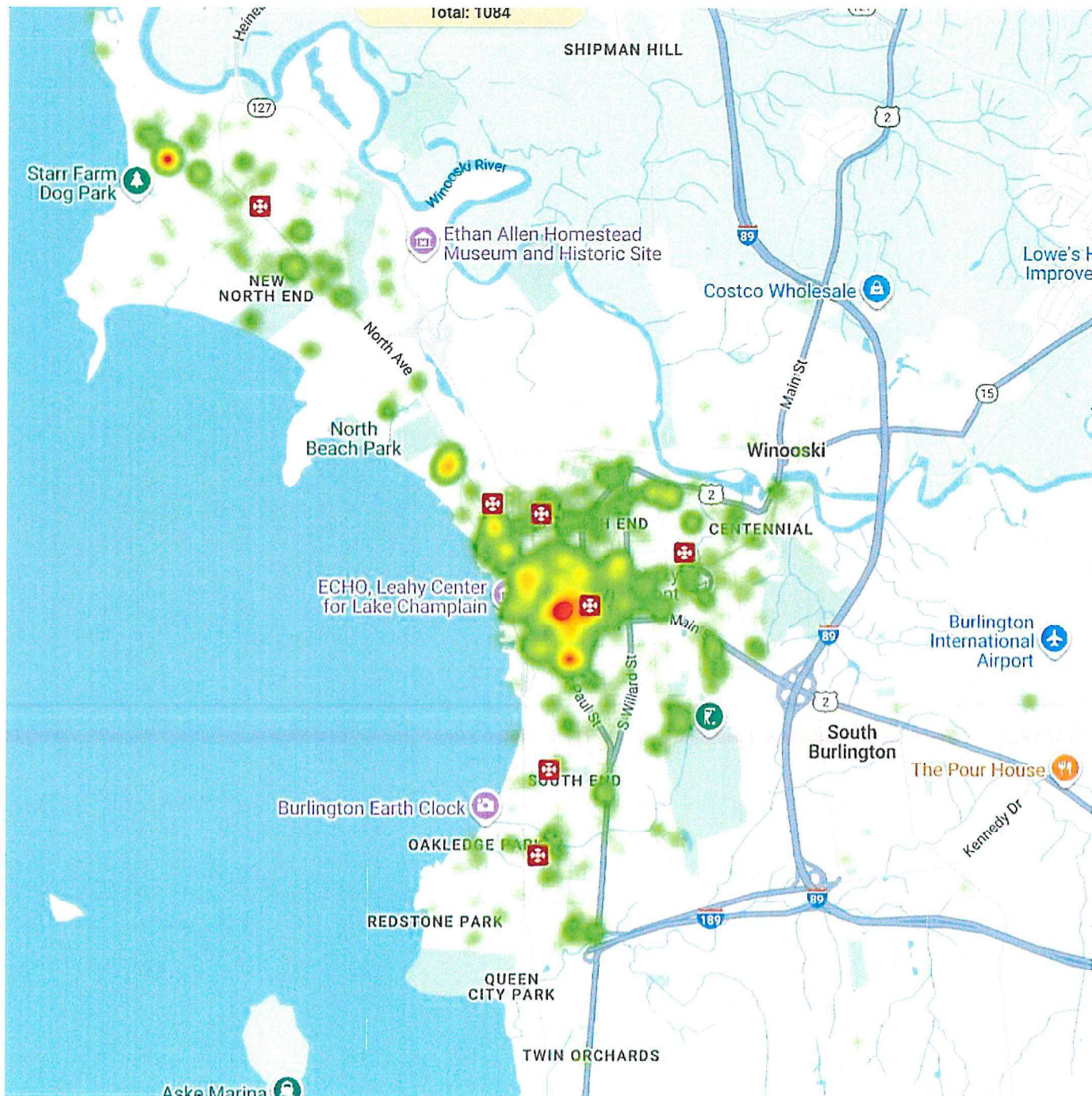
- Incidents involving opiate abuse (e.g., heroin, fentanyl) are consistently the highest among all substance types.
- The second most frequent category involves other non-opiate illicit drugs or misuse of medications. These are legal medications being used improperly (e.g., anti-anxiety meds, sleep aids, ADHD stimulants)



# BURLINGTON FIRE DEPARTMENT

136 S. Winooski Avenue, Burlington, VT 05401

Phone: (802) 864-4554 Fax: (802) 865-5387





## BURLINGTON FIRE DEPARTMENT

136 S. Winooski Avenue, Burlington, VT 05401

Phone: (802) 864-4554 Fax: (802) 865-5387

### CRT Data for August 2025:

Staffed 5 days for the month of August

Total Contacts	Narcan Kits	Wound Care Kits	Comfort Care Kit	Referrals
28	1	1	4	0

### Personnel & Staffing

Total Department Staff: Uniformed Members **88** / Authorized **95**

- Minimum Daily Staffing: **22**
- Vacancies: **8**
- Injuries/LOA/FMLA: **4**

Overtime Type	2025 Hours	2024 Hours	% + -
Minimum Staffing	672.75	602.5	+11.6
Mandatory	245.75	62	+296.3
CRT	176.5	37.5	+370.6
Emergency	37.5	19.75	+89.8
Extra Duty Events	39	64.5	-39.5

### Community Engagement

- 8/12 UVM RA Orientation
- 8/18 Station 2 Tour
- 8/19 Station 4 Tour
- 8/22 HO Wheeler Fire Safety Walk Through
- 8/25 City Place Walk Through
- 8/31 Station 2 Tour





# BURLINGTON FIRE DEPARTMENT

136 S. Winooski Avenue, Burlington, VT 05401  
Phone: (802) 864-4554 Fax: (802) 865-5387

## Social Media:

10:29

### Professional dashboard

Home **Insights** Content Engagement Mon

Last 90 days Jun 25 - Sep 22

**530,502 Views** [See all](#)

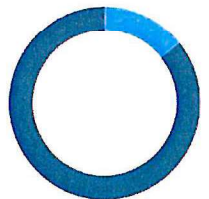
↓-12% from previous 90 days

Last 90 days 530K

Previous 90 days 602K

**7 Messaging conversations started** [See all](#)

↓-72% from previous 90 days



**5,294 Interactions** [See all](#)

↓-48% from previous 90 days

Multi photo 1.7K

10:29

### Professional dashboard

Home Insights Content Engagement Mon

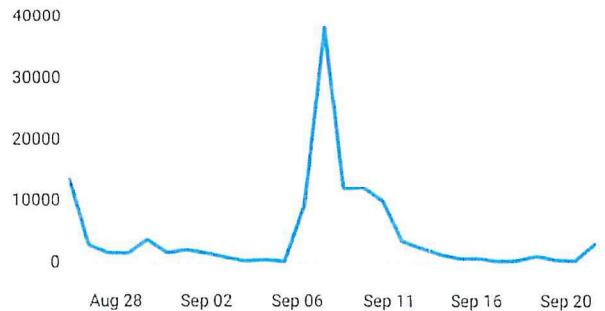
**Recognize your newest top fans**

You have new top fans. Mentioning them to show appreciation can help engagement. [>](#)

**Insights** [See all](#)

Last 28 days

**126,785 Views** ↓-39% from previous 28 days



**19K** ↑17% **Engagement**

**3** ↓-25% **Messaging conversa...**

**10** **To**

**Engagement** [See all](#)

Maybe you guys should get a boat or at least share one with the PD?

Gene · 2 wks

Fire Commission  
Tuesday, October 14, 2025 08:30  
Fire Station #1  
136 South Winski Avenue  
SIGN-IN SHEET

NAME	EMAIL
Kevin McLaughlin	CountyOne@Asc.com
Linda SHEEHY	LSHEEHY@gmail.com
Mike Curtin	MWRTN@BurlingtonVT.gov
Jake Perkins	jperks@burlingtonvt.gov
Ashley Bond via Zoom	
Monica Chapman	mchapman@purduecan.com
Christopher Sullivan	CSullivan@BurlingtonVT.gov
Stephen Petit	spetit@burlingtonvt.gov

Please note that this sign-in sheet and any information provided on it will be maintained as a public record and may be subject to disclosure under the Vermont Public Records Act.