



125
Years
OF SERVICE

MEDICINE HAT FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

2025 YEAR IN REVIEW



LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The City of Medicine Hat acknowledges that we live and work on treaty territory. The City pays respect to all Indigenous Peoples and honours their past, present and future. We recognize and respect their cultural heritages and relationships to the land.

Medicine Hat is situated on:

- Treaty 7 and neighbour to Treaty 4 territory.
- Traditional lands of the Siksika (Blackfoot), Kainai (Blood), Piikani (Peigan), Stoney Nakoda, and Tsuut'ina (Sarcee) as well as the Cree, Sioux, and the Saulteaux bands of the Ojibwa peoples.
- Homelands of the Métis Nation.

HONOURING OUR FALLEN

On September 13, 2025, the Medicine Hat Fire & Emergency Services (MHFES) Fallen Firefighter Memorial Service honoured the brave members of MHFES who lost their lives in the line of duty or as a result of an approved work-related illness. Our Memorial Honour Roll dates back to 1913, marking the first recorded line-of-duty death in our city's history.

Today, it includes 12 names – each representing a firefighter who courageously served our community and made the ultimate sacrifice to protect lives, property, and the environment. We hold their memories with the deepest respect, and we remain committed to ensuring their service and sacrifice are never forgotten.



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Photo courtesy of Randy Feere

MESSAGE FROM THE FIRE CHIEF

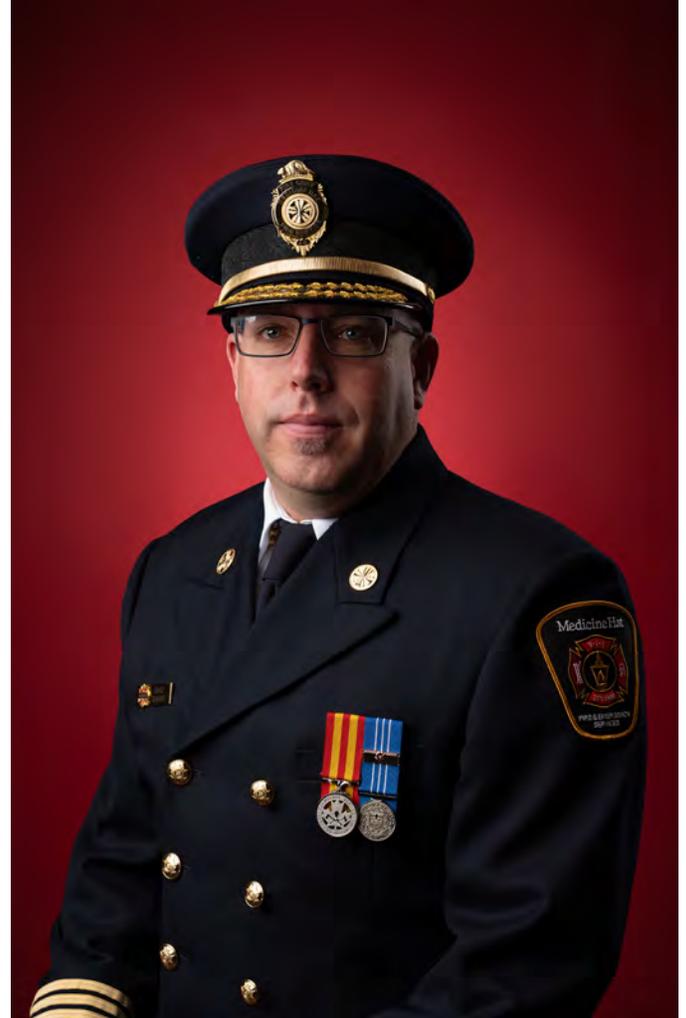
I am pleased to present the 2025 Year in Review—a reflection of a year defined by progress, innovation, and a strong commitment to the community we serve. Our culture is grounded in accountability, integrity, respect, professionalism, care, and teamwork. These values guide every decision we make and every call we respond to, and they remain the foundation of the trust placed in Medicine Hat Fire & Emergency Services.

This year once again demonstrated our one team approach. Across 911 Communications, Suppression, Community Safety, Training and Logistics, and Administration, our members consistently showed skill, resilience, and dedication to public service. This report highlights not only the services we provide, but the people behind them—professionals who serve with pride, purpose, and a shared commitment to community safety.

As our community evolves, so does our work. We continue to address emerging challenges, including risks associated with lithium-ion batteries, growing social and community safety concerns, and the need for accessible fire and life safety education. At the same time, we remain deeply committed to the mental health and well-being of our members, recognizing that a healthy, united workforce is essential to our success.

In 2025, we advanced several key priorities aligned with City Council objectives, including strengthening partnerships with community and government organizations, expanding public education and engagement opportunities, implementing a comprehensive mental health and wellness strategy for all first responders, and continuing the rollout of Next Generation 911 to enhance emergency communications.

This year also marked our 125th Anniversary, a milestone that invited reflection on our history and the spirit that has carried this department forward since 1900. From the earliest volunteers to today's members, that same sense of courage, duty, and service continues to define who we are.



As we look ahead, we remain committed to being a progressive, innovative, and community-focused department while honouring the legacy of those who served before us.

I am immensely proud to lead this department, an organization built on service, strengthened by teamwork, and deeply rooted in community.

Stay safe,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chad Eakins".

Chad Eakins, Fire Chief and Director



MISSION

To provide optimum protection and prevention for our residents, businesses, and visitors. We are continually adapting to uphold the quality of life and public safety in our community. We will focus on our core values to provide services that exceed expectations of our residents.

VISION

To remain a progressive and innovative service that ensures a safe community through access to, and delivery of comprehensive public safety services.

VALUES

Accountability

Integrity

Respect

Professionalism

Caring

Teamwork

YOUR MEDICINE HAT FIRE & EMERGENCY SERVICES

Your Medicine Hat Fire & Emergency Services (MHFES) exists to support a safe, prepared, and resilient community. Every interaction, whether responding to emergencies, delivering safety education, or working behind the scenes, contributes to reducing risk and supporting residents where they live, work, and gather. MHFES' role extends beyond emergency response, with a strong focus on prevention, awareness, and collaboration to help keep people safe before emergencies occur.

Strategic and responsible decision-making guides how Fire & Emergency Service's protects the community and uses public resources. Through careful planning, risk assessment, and data-informed analysis, MHFES makes choices that prioritize community safety while remaining fiscally responsible. A comprehensive training program is central to this approach, equipping firefighters and staff with the skills, knowledge, and confidence needed to respond effectively to both routine calls and complex, evolving emergencies. Ongoing training ensures teams are prepared for what comes their way, while supporting safe operations and high-quality service delivery for the community.

Community connection remains central to MHFES direction moving forward. By listening to residents, working with partner agencies, and communicating clearly about risks and safety, MHFES continues to strengthen trust and accessibility. Through planning, adaptability, and ongoing engagement, MHFES remains focused on delivering reliable, community-centered service today and into the future.



Medicine Hat Fire & Emergency Services

SERVES AN ESTIMATED



68,714
residents



30,681
residences



119.7
km²

MEANS TO SERVE

Fire Stations	3
Engines	5
Ladder Trucks	2
Command Vehicle	1
Brush Trucks	3
Aircraft Rescue (ARFF)	1
Surface Rescue	1
Technical Rescue	1
Jet Boat	1
Zodiac	1
Fire Investigation Unit	1
Support Trucks	7

OUR 2025 LEADERSHIP TEAM



Chad Eakins, Fire Chief and Director
Director



Douglas Gill, Deputy Chief
Fire Operations



Garnet Decker, Assistant Deputy Chief
Community Safety, Training & Logistics



Jaci Fox, Manager Strategy & Analytics
Technology, Project Management, Reporting and Analytics



Stacy Smith, Superintendent of 911
911 Operations

SUPPORT SERVICES

The Fire Administration and Leadership Team provides strategic oversight and essential administrative support to ensure the effective, responsible operation of the organization. Through expertise in budgeting, analytics, policy development, planning, payroll, and core administrative functions, the team supports operational excellence and organizational accountability. Working collaboratively, they uphold strong stewardship and deliver the high standard of service our community expects.

Budget

The 2025 MHFES' approved gross operating budget was \$19,000,000. Salaries comprised of 92% of the budget.

Budget Considerations

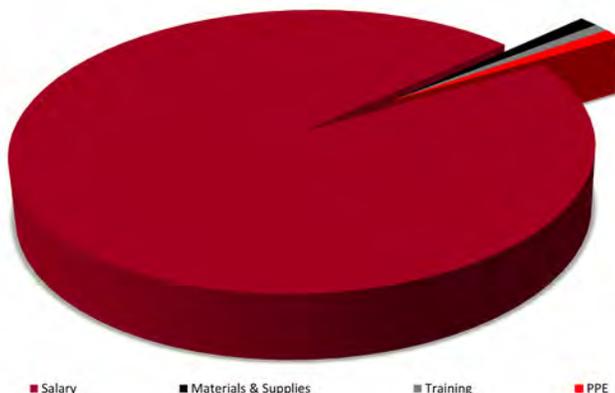
Salary includes: salaries, benefits, overtime, and training costs.

Materials other includes: small equipment purchases and repairs, truck related equipment and repairs (fire extinguisher maintenance, all SCBA testing and maintenance).

Training includes: specialized courses, instructor costs, and training props.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE): all protective equipment and uniforms.

Effective budgeting ensures readiness, safety, and sustainability while aligning with community needs and fiscal constraints. Equipment and other costs have increased significantly in the recent years making forecasting challenging.



ADMINISTRATION AND SUPPORT



Fire Chief
Chad Eakins

Leadership Team (4)

Administrative Assistants (2)

Chaplains (2)

TOTAL PERSONNEL IN 2025

Chiefs	3
Manager and Superintendent	2
Administrative Assistants	2
Chaplains	2
Operations	80
911 Communications	20
Training and Logistics	2
Community Safety	5

OUR PEOPLE

Milestones

Many of our members reached significant milestones in their years of service to the community. Congratulations!

- 35 years of service, 1 member
- 30 years of service, 1 member
- 20 years of service, 5 members
- 15 years of service, 1 member
- 10 years of service, 7 members

Service Medals

- 20 year Canadian Fire Services Exemplary Medal, 4 members
- 22 year Alberta Emergency Services Bronze Bar, 2 members
- 12 year Alberta Emergency Services Medal Bar, 14 members



Promotions

This year, our Training Logistics Officer was promoted to Chief Training Officer. Well deserved! MHFES looks forward to your positive contributions and leadership.

Honour Guard

In 2000, the MHFES Honour Guard was formed with the International Association of Fire Fighters Local 263 to formally represent both organizations at ceremonial events across the City of Medicine Hat. The 12-member Honour Guard is trained and prepared to participate in both planned and unplanned occasions, including annual ceremonies such as Remembrance Day and the Medicine Hat Stampede Parade, as well as funerals for active and retired members of MHFES.



HONOURING 125 YEARS OF SERVICE

2025 marked 125 years of service, dedication, and commitment, for Medicine Hat Fire & Emergency Services. Since 1900, generations of firefighters and support staff have answered the call—protecting lives, property, and the wellbeing of this community through times of growth, challenge, and change.

This milestone year provided an opportunity to pause and reflect on the people, moments, and values that have shaped the department. While equipment, training, and response capabilities have evolved over the decades, our purpose has remained the same: to serve with professionalism, courage, and care.

As we honoured our past throughout the year, we also recognized the strength of our present-day service and the responsibility we carry into the future. The 125th anniversary was not only a celebration of history, but a reaffirmation of our commitment to the community we proudly serve.



Key Highlights

- Hosted an archival photo exhibit at the Esplanade Arts & Heritage Centre featuring 25 historic images that highlighted the evolution of the fire service and honoured the people and significant moments and milestones, throughout the years.
- Welcomed renowned Canadian street artist Victor Fraser, who generously donated his time and talents to create murals at both Station 2 and Station 3 in recognition of the department's 125th Anniversary. Internationally known for his powerful sidewalk murals, Fraser maintains a personal connection to Medicine Hat and was honoured to contribute to this milestone.
- Honoured our fallen firefighters at a National Firefighters Memorial Day service at Station 3 on September 13.
- Hosted a one-time Firefighter Gala at Co-op Place to honour the department's history while raising funds for the Firefighter Charitable Foundation. The event brought together current and retired members, community partners, and residents to reflect and share stories that captured 125 years of service.



911 COMMUNICATIONS

The 911 Communications Branch provides emergency and non-emergency call-taking, dispatch, and incident management support for Medicine Hat, the Town of Redcliff, and the County of Forty Mile. As the region’s Primary Public Safety Answering Point, the centre serves as the first point of contact for all 911 calls and conducts initial EMS triage. The branch supports multiple agencies, including Medicine Hat Fire and Emergency Services, Medicine Hat Police Service and Bylaw, Special Transit, after-hours Utilities, and HALO flight-following, while coordinating response efforts during emergency events.

National Telecommunicators Week

Each year, we recognize 911 dispatchers during National Telecommunicators Week (celebrated the 3rd week of April annually), honouring their vital role as the first point of contact during emergencies. This year, messages of appreciation were collected from the many departments and partner agencies they support, including HALO, Medicine Hat Transit, Environmental Utilities, Redcliff Fire, Information Technology, Parks and Recreation, and Municipal Works.

“I can’t believe the work our telecommunicators do and the pressure they’re under. People think our job is tough, but in my opinion, theirs is infinitely harder and we appreciate everything you do.”

Wade Gleisner
Fire Chief, Redcliff Fire and Rescue



911 TEAM MEMBERS



Superintendent of 911
Stacy Smith

911 Operations Supervisor (2)

911 Operators (14)

911 Casual Operators (4)

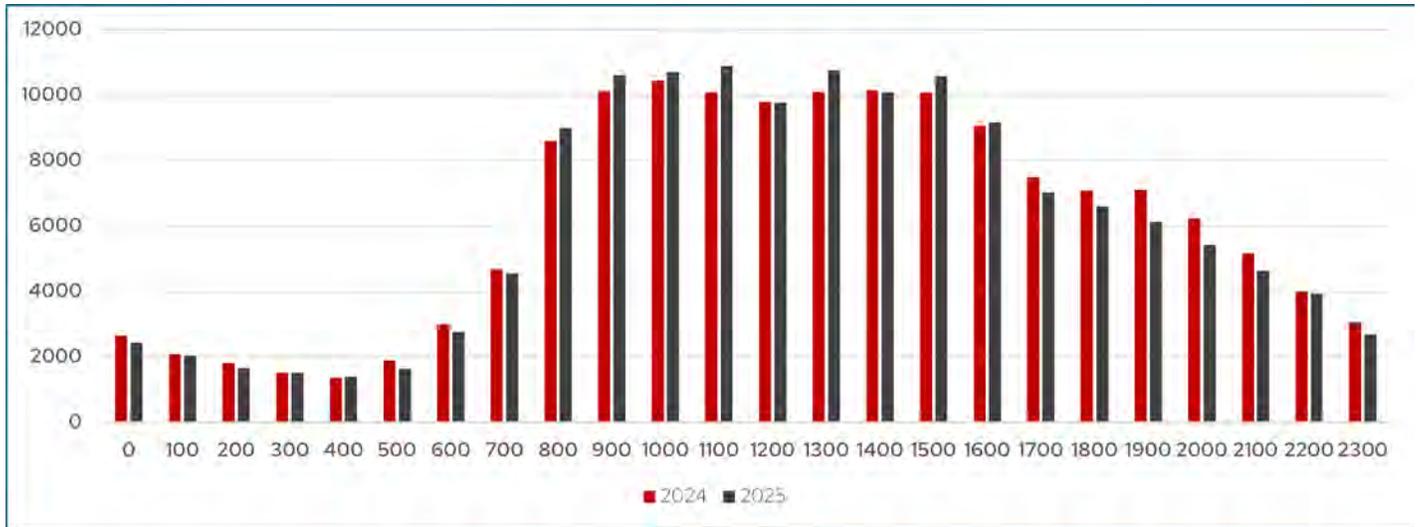
CALLS

Incoming Calls	121,412
Outgoing Calls	25,083

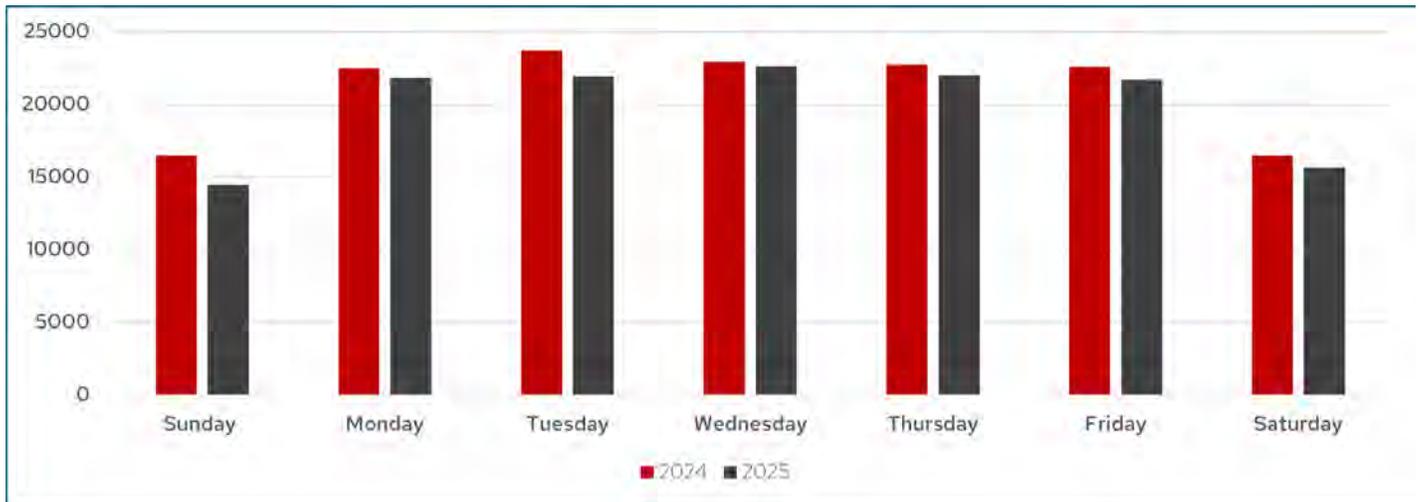
TYPES OF INCIDENTS

Medicine Hat Police Service	35,545
MHFES	2,981
Rural Fire	367
Special Transit	15,905
Utilities	1,354

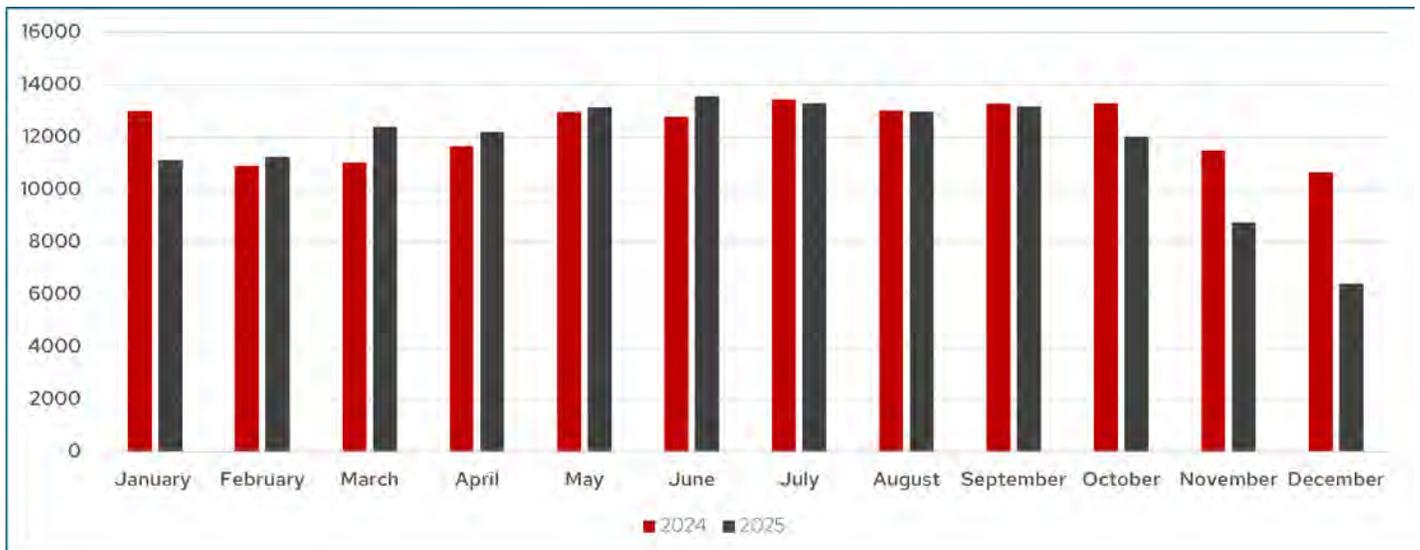
Call Volume by Hour in 2024 - 2025



Call Volume by Day of Week in 2024 - 2025



Call Volume by Month in 2024 - 2025



COMMUNITY SAFETY

The Community Safety branch focuses on preventing fires, incidents, and reducing risk through fire inspections, fire investigations, and public education.

Fire inspections are conducted to enforce the Alberta Fire Code, which is the foundation of effective fire prevention and a key factor in reducing the loss of life and property. These inspections help identify hazards and ensure buildings meet safety requirements.

Following a fire, Community Safety members conduct fire investigations to determine the origin and cause. Information gathered through investigations helps improve fire prevention strategies and guides future public education efforts.

Public education supports both inspection and investigation work by raising awareness, sharing safety information, and helping the community understand how fires start and how they can be prevented.



COMMUNITY SAFETY MEMBERS



Fire Marshal
Scott Hanelt

Fire Prevention Officers (3)

Fire and Life Safety Educator (1)

PROPERTY SAVED AND LOST



\$34.4M

worth of property and infrastructure involved in fire



\$30.7M

was protected and saved by MHFES



\$3.7M

was lost as a result of fire



78

fire investigations in 2025

High School Forensics Programming

The high school forensics course expanded this year through delivery at Medicine Hat High School, providing students with enhanced access to fire science education. The program supports classroom learning while introducing real-world applications of fire investigation and potential career pathways within fire and emergency services.

Pro-Active Engagement and Community Enhancement (PEACE)

The PEACE team is a multi-agency group that responds to encampments in Medicine Hat through a coordinated, safety-focused approach. Encampments are identified and assessed to address fire and life safety risks, environmental health concerns, and community impacts, while also supporting connection to housing and social services.

Fire & Emergency Services plays a key role by assessing fire hazards such as open flames, unsafe heating or cooking practices, and proximity to buildings or high-risk areas. These assessments help guide appropriate responses, with enforcement used only when necessary to address immediate safety concerns.

Plans Review

The Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC) is a cross-departmental group that reviews development applications and City-led projects to ensure they meet established bylaws, standards, and safety requirements. TCC provides a coordinated City approach to reviewing subdivisions, development permits, utility right-of-ways, and capital projects, helping streamline approvals and provide clear expectations for developers.

In 2025, members of the Community Safety branch participated in the review of **57 development plans** by contributing fire and life safety expertise to support safe design, emergency access, and risk reduction.



Unightly Properties

In 2025, the City's Unightly Properties Committee met quarterly to monitor and address derelict and vacant properties throughout the city that may pose safety or livability concerns.

Members of the committee conducted **7 on-site** tours to review properties firsthand.



Fire Life Safety Checks and Inspections

- **2154** annual / **597** revisit
- **215** annual / **149** re-inspections



Plans Review

- **57** Technical Coordination Committee Submissions Completed



Fire Investigations

Top 5 causes of fires:

- arson
- undetermined
- careless smoking
- appliance related
- lithium-ion battery



5 Most Frequent Violations

- fire extinguisher maintenance
- emergency lighting maintenance
- exit sign illumination
- fire alarm maintenance
- fire extinguisher installation

PUBLIC EDUCATION AND PREVENTION

The Community Safety branch develops and delivers data-driven fire and life safety information and campaigns to residents of Medicine Hat and surrounding areas. The branch focuses on reducing risk and helping prevent emergencies through community engagement, partner collaboration, and strategic communication.

After the Fire

The After the Fire program is a door-to-door campaign conducted in neighbourhoods following a fire incident. A total of **285 homes** were attended this year.

In 2025, MHFES developed and designed a **Guide to Fire Recovery** for those residents that have experienced a fire in their home.



The guide is available for download online at medicinehat.ca/fire.

Fire Prevention Week

This year's Fire Prevention Week™ (FPW) campaign, October 5-11, "Charge into Fire Safety™: Lithium-Ion Batteries in Your Home," focused on helping residents understand how to use lithium-ion batteries safely. While school programming was reduced due to the teacher strike, MHFES still shared important safety information with **21 schools** and delivered presentations to students from kindergarten to Grade 6 where possible.



Steps to Safety

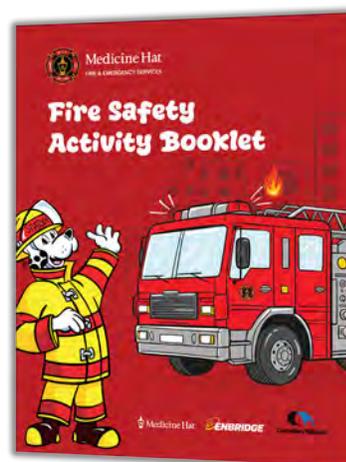
Steps to Safety is MHFES's senior safety program, focused on fire safety and fall prevention for older adults. In 2025, MHFES reached **252** senior adults.

Open Houses

MHFES hosted two open house events—one at Station 2 and one at Station 3—welcoming more than **900 residents**. Families and children enjoyed hands-on safety learning and interactive activities, including live emergency demonstrations, junior firefighter challenges, station tours, and a safety button-making station.

Youth Fire setter Intervention Referral and Education Services

The Youth Fire setter Intervention program connects youth and their families with a trained Community Safety educator for early, supportive intervention. The program continues to build awareness and referrals, and in 2025 MHFES worked directly with **3 families**.



*In 2025, Community Safety designed a custom **Fire Safety Activity Booklet** to help kids learn key fire safety messages through fun, age-appropriate activities. The booklet is shared during school visits and community events to continue safety conversations at home.*

SERVING THE COMMUNITY

Throughout the year, our team supported and connected with the community in ways beyond emergency response. From welcoming families at our Halloween event at Station 2, to having our Deputy Chief participate as a keynote speaker at the Big Brothers Big Sisters Headstrong Summit, we continue to be present, approachable, and actively involved.

Community Events

- Participated in the **Headstrong Summit** on March 25, engaging more than **80 students** in Grade 8 and 9 in youth mental wellness discussions and action planning. Our Deputy Chief delivered the keynote address.
- Hosted a **safety booth at Old Navy** on April 26 as part of a national Kids Safety Event.
- Participated in a **public engagement event** on May 1 with several City of Medicine Hat departments at Big Marble Go Centre.
- Participated in **National Indigenous Peoples Day** activities on May 20, supporting the construction and painting of a traditional tepee for public display at City Hall in collaboration with Indigenous community partners.



- Participated in **Big Truck Day** on July 5 at Big Marble Go Centre, where two fire trucks were displayed for families to explore.
- Supported **The Great Big Paddle** event on July 5, providing river-safety information and on-water monitoring for more than **100 participants** along the South Saskatchewan River.
- MHFES supported the **Firefighters Gala silent auction** on October 21, 2025, which raised more than **\$19,000** for the Medicine Hat Firefighters Charitable Foundation.
- Hosted a **Halloween community event** at Station 2, where MHFES staff handed out candy and glow sticks to more than **230 youth and families**.



SUPPRESSION

The Fire Suppression branch responds to a wide range of emergencies across the city, including structure fires, vehicle extrication, hazardous materials incidents, ice and water rescues, technical rescues, medical emergencies, and life safety checks. Eighty firefighters across four platoons are strategically deployed across three fire stations—Station 1 on Parkview Drive NE, Station 2 on Trans Canada Way SE, and Station 3 at the airport—ensuring timely and effective response throughout the community.

In addition to fire and rescue operations, MHFES continues to play a critical Medical First Responder (MFR) co-response role in support of Emergency Health Services. Crews regularly provide early patient assessment, CPR, defibrillation, airway management, and scene safety for incidents such as cardiac arrests, overdoses, seizures, respiratory distress, and traumatic injuries. This coordinated response model strengthens inter agency collaboration, improves patient outcomes, and reflects the evolving role of fire suppression in delivering comprehensive emergency care.



SUPPRESSION MEMBERS



Platoon Chiefs (4)

Captains (12)

Lieutenants (4)

Firefighters (60)

TOP 6 EMERGENCY RESPONSES

Fire Alarms	884
Medical First Response	507
Motor Vehicle Collision	271
Fires (Other)	249
Public Services	239
Hazmat	211



First Responder Academy

In 2025, MHFES continued its strong community engagement through a key partnership with the newly launched First Responder Academy at Monsignor McCoy High School.

Developed in collaboration with the Medicine Hat Police Service and local educational partners, this program provides students with hands-on training, mentorship, and real-world insights into emergency service careers, including firefighting and public safety. MHFES personnel contribute their expertise as mentors and instructors, helping young people develop practical skills, teamwork, and resilience while inspiring the next generation of first responders.



Local Incident Statistics

Top 5 Collision Intersections:

- 13th Ave SE at Trans Canada Hwy SE
- College Ave SE at Trans Canada Hwy SE
- 16th Street SW at Trans Canada Hwy SW
- 13th Ave SE at Strachan Rd SE
- Dunmore Rd SE at Trans Canada Hwy SE

Top 5 Medical First Response:

- Lift Assist
- Cardiac Arrest
- Overdose
- Access to buildings
- Falls

Lights & Sirens Response:

- 63% with lights and sirens activated
- 37% lights and sirens not activated



80 seconds

Time it takes for a firefighter to gear up and be on the road

ADVANCED RESPONSE

Firefighters provide Advanced Response by training throughout the year in specialized disciplines for complex and technical emergencies.

The **Aquatics Group** consists of 12 members and is responsible for surface water and ice rescue. In addition to maintaining specialized skills through monthly, year-round training, the group delivers aquatic rescue training to crews across the department to ensure consistent operational readiness.

The **Hazardous Materials Response Group**, consisting of 10 members, confirms, assesses, stabilizes, and identifies dangerous substances, while also delivering hazardous materials training and guidance to department members to strengthen overall operational capability.

The **Technical Rescue Team**, drawn from 16 suppression-branch members, is trained to mitigate local rescue challenges such as high rises, steep coulees, and confined spaces, with a focus on rope rescue and confined-space rescue.

Together, these specialized groups and team expand MHFES readiness and help crews prepare to respond effectively to a wide range of unique and challenging incidents.



1,077.5 hours
of Technical Rescue Training



718 hours
of Hazmat Training and
Review



384 hours
of Water Rescue
Training and Review





TRAINING & LOGISTICS

The Training & Logistics branch ensures firefighters are prepared to respond safely, effectively, and consistently to the full range of emergencies faced in our community. Through coordinated training delivery, skills maintenance, equipment and resource readiness, and leadership development, the branch supports operational readiness, health and safety, and career progression across all ranks. All training meets national safety standards established by the National Fire Protection Association, along with applicable provincial and national certification requirements.

Rapid Vehicle Extrication Training

Our crews conducted hands-on rapid vehicle extrication training to explore multiple techniques for safely removing patients from damaged vehicles. The training focused on patient stabilization, responder safety, and efficient tool use while evaluating different access and removal methods based on vehicle damage, patient condition, and scene hazards. Through scenario-based practice, crews strengthened coordination and decision-making to support faster, safer outcomes during real-world motor vehicle collisions.



TRAINING & LOGISTICS MEMBERS



Chief Training Officer
Travis Siggelkow

Training & Logistics Officer (1)

TRAINING HIGHLIGHTS

Ice Rescue Technician	582 hours
Nozzle & Water Mapping	648 hours
High Performance CPR	96 hours
Swift Water Rescue	276 hours
Jet Boat Technician	212 hours
Residential Search	96 hours
Vehicle Extrication	596 hours
Aerial Operator	400 hours
Flammable Rail	118 hours

The Cost of Protection

Protective gear is essential to keeping firefighters safe in some of the most hazardous conditions imaginable. Each piece is designed to withstand extreme heat, toxic environments, and physical stress while allowing firefighters to move, breathe, and respond effectively. These costs reflect a necessary investment in safety, performance, and readiness. All equipment meets national safety standards established by the National Fire Protection Association to ensure that our firefighters are protected to the highest level required for emergency response.



Search and Rescue Training

Search and rescue training this year focused on operating in zero-visibility environments. Firefighters trained in a fully darkened structure using artificial smoke to simulate heavy smoke conditions, navigating multiple rooms, hallways, and obstructions within a former YMCA facility. This realistic, hands-on training strengthened spatial awareness, communication, teamwork, and victim search techniques.



13,895
of skills maintenance training



3,554
technical/leadership training



2,876
SCBA inspections were done



925
cylinders refilled

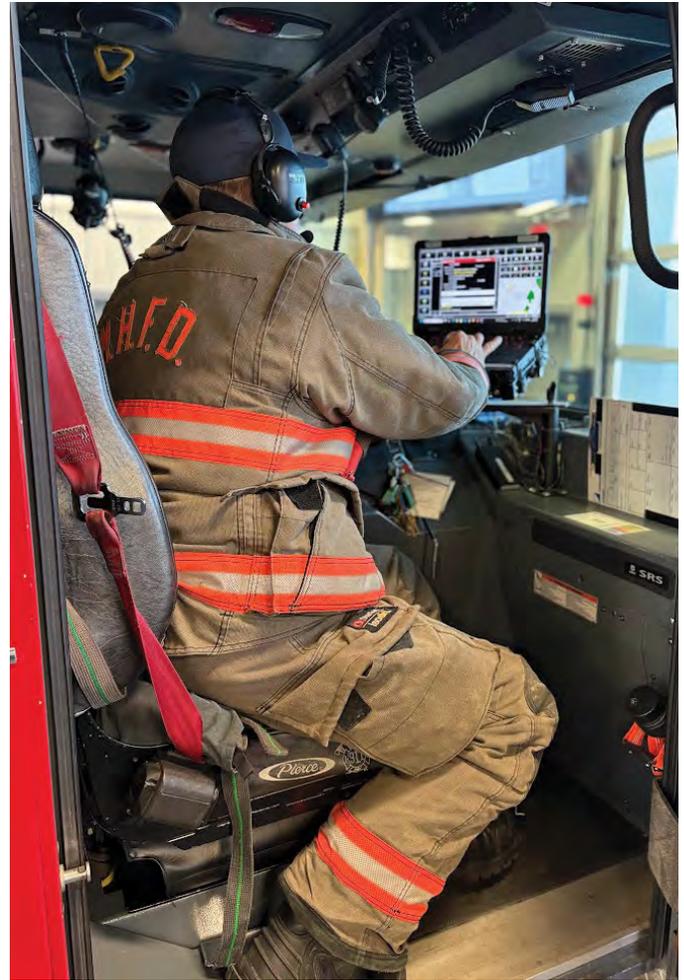
TECHNICAL SUPPORT

Next Generation 911

Next Generation 911 (NG911) transition is now underway in the Communication Center, representing a major step forward in modernizing our emergency communications infrastructure. We are currently in a comprehensive testing phase for the new call handling system to confirm performance, resiliency, interoperability, and seamless alignment with established operational workflows.

This NG911 platform significantly enhances operational continuity through greater network redundancy, intelligent failover, and more dynamic call routing, ensuring reliable service even during high-volume or degraded network conditions. Just as importantly, it positions us for the future by enabling richer, more precise data exchange—including improved caller location accuracy, text-to-911 capabilities, and the potential to receive multimedia such as photos or video—providing critical context at the earliest stages of an incident.

Collectively, these advancements strengthen public access to emergency services while equipping call takers and responders with faster, clearer, and more actionable information to support confident decision-making during time-sensitive events.



Technology within the fire service is continuously advancing, driving more efficient, informed, and effective operations. We leverage innovations such as controlling traffic signals, optimized routing, and comprehensive pre-incident planning to enhance firefighter safety and uphold the highest standards of community protection.

2025 Mobile Data Computer refresh

The Mobile Data Computer (MDC) was replaced in all fire apparatus to ensure consistent, reliable access to critical incident information across the fleet. Keeping fire apparatus technology current is essential for maintaining operational readiness, improving situational awareness, and enabling faster, more informed decision-making in dynamic emergency environments. Modern, supported systems also reduce downtime and cybersecurity risk, helping crews remain connected, safe, and effective in the field.

2025 APX Mobile inspection

In 2025, we implemented APX software as the first phase of our transition to a new Records Management System. This Canadian-built, multi-dimensional platform centralizes all data in a single, user-friendly environment, with the initial phase focused on deploying the Mobile Inspection module to streamline field inspections and data capture.



HEALTH & WELLNESS

Medicine Hat Fire & Emergency Services is committed to promoting psychological and physical health and well-being for all staff, and we continue to enhance the portfolio of services and training available.

Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM)

Following potential traumatic events, both firefighters and 911 dispatchers are given the opportunity to participate in peer-led defusing sessions. Championed by our peer support teams, these CISM debriefings are essential for providing immediate, effective support and fostering resilience among first responders and others affected by traumatic events.

Wellness and Support

Wellness initiatives continue to play an important role in supporting the overall health and readiness of our first responders. Regular medical and occupational health assessments, and annual fitness evaluations, help our responders monitor their overall wellness and identify potential concerns early. These programs are designed to keep our firefighters healthy, safe, and mentally ready to respond effectively while serving



Chaplain

A significant milestone this year was the hiring of a second fire service chaplain. Throughout the past year, MHFES Chaplains continued to play a vital role in supporting the mental health and overall well-being of our members and their families. In collaboration with our department psychologist, they delivered family-focused mental health presentations designed to increase awareness, strengthen coping strategies, and help families better understand the unique stressors associated with emergency services work. These sessions emphasize the importance of supporting not only our members, but also their support networks at home.

In addition to their internal support role, MHFES chaplains provide critical assistance during emergency incidents, particularly when residents are displaced by fire or other significant events. Responding alongside operational crews, chaplains offer compassionate, immediate emotional support to individuals and families experiencing loss, trauma, or sudden displacement. Their presence helps residents navigate the initial shock of an emergency and connect with community and recovery resources.

2025 BY THE NUMBERS

This section begins with public education and some community outreach data, followed by emergency response, and investigation statistics. This reflects how our service works to reduce risk first, while remaining fully prepared to respond when incidents occur.

Public Education

Throughout 2025, we provided fire and life safety education to:

	6,031 residents
Pre-Kindergarten	394
Kindergarten to Grade 6	3,562
Middle School	176
High School	221
Adult	1,106
Seniors	252
New Canadians	35
After the Fire	285

Media Outreach

Social media and local media play an important role in sharing safety initiatives, public education messages, and timely information with the community.



f Facebook
1,391,329 views (up 317.8% from 2024)
81,342 reach (up 62.3% from 2024)

@ Instagram
103,839 views (up 473.9% from 2024)
2,436 engagements (up 155.9% from 2024)



Local Media Coverage
 Appeared approximately **85 times**
 in local print and broadcast media.



5,128
total incidents

Life Safety Checks	2154	42%
Inspections	215	4.2%
Alarms	844	16.4%
Medical First Response	507	9.8%
Hazmat	211	4.1%
Motor Vehicle	271	5.3%
Destructive Fire	249	4.8%
Public Service	239	4.7%
Investigative Mode	133	2.6%
Fire Investigation	79	1.5%
Public Education	93	1.8%
Structure Fire Residential	39	1.0%
Structure Fire Non-Residential	4	0.1%
Rescue	22	0.4%
Mutual Aid	10	0.2%
Public Hazard	58	1.1%



2,584
emergency incidents



6:18
emergency response time
to 1,394 red incidents



Property saved
 Total Contents: \$34,352,600
 Total Loss: \$3,651,000
 Total Saved: \$30,701,600
 Saved: **89.37%**

Fire Incident Response Explained

MHFES aims to have the first Engine arrive within 6 minutes and 20 seconds in 90% of incidents (90th-percentile performance). This Council-approved response time is grounded in National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards, occupant tenability in fire conditions, and the anticipated time to structural floor collapse when exposed to fire.

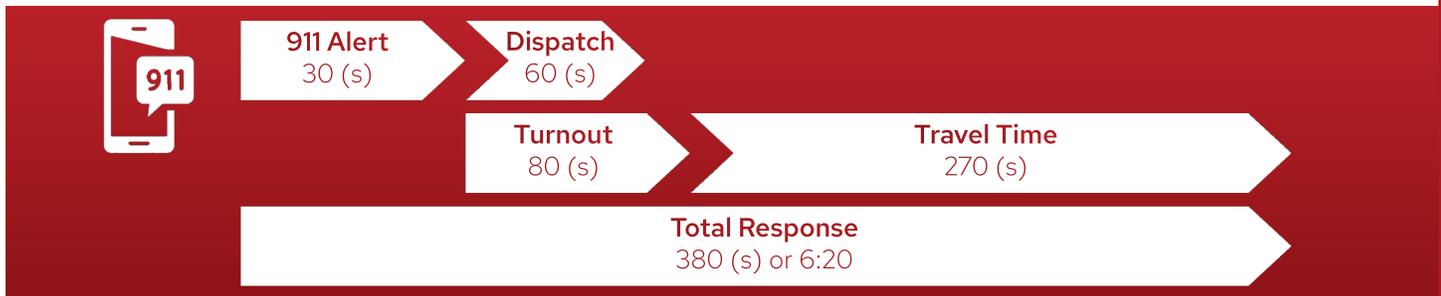
Medicine Hat 911 utilizes a pre-alert tone to provide MHFES with early notification of incoming fire and emergency incidents. This pre-alert is initiated within 30 seconds of a 911 call being answered and identified as a Medicine Hat Fire incident.

Fire dispatch must complete voice dispatch within

60 seconds, a time interval shared concurrently with the fire department turnout activities.

By pre-alerting calls and overlapping voice dispatch and turnout time, MHFES creates significant efficiency in apparatus response, ensuring the first-arriving unit reaches the scene as quickly as possible—where seconds are critical to life safety, fire control, and property conservation.

This benchmark is established for structure fire incidents and is the same response-time standard applied to all lights and siren responses. MHFES achieved a first apparatus arrival time of 6 minutes and 18 seconds on 1,394 incidents, 90% of the time.



RESPONSE DATA

All time is calculated in seconds and based on the 90th percentile in its individual metric.

First Truck on Scene

	Council Approved Target Response	2023	2024	2025
Total Response Time	6:20	6:06	5:56	6:00
Travel Time	4:30	4:41	4:08	4:20
Turnout Time	1:20	1:39	1:31	1:38
Alert Time	0:30			

MHFES strives to respond with the first arriving Engine Company within 6:20, 90% of the time (90th percentile performance). This Council approved response time target for first arriving engines is based on the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Standards, tenability for occupants in burning buildings, and time to collapse when fire impinging on structural floor members.

Full Alarm Assignment

	Council Approved Target Response	2023	2024	2025
Total Response Time	12:20	10:39	10:40	10:25
Travel Time	10:30	9:16	9:00	9:40
Turnout Time	01:20	1:31	2:20	2:09
Alert Time	0:30			

MHFES strives to place two engine companies and one ladder company on scene in 12:20, 90% of the time (90th percentile performance).

Total Response Time:
Notification of emergency to 'at scene'.

Travel Time:
En route to 'at scene'.

Turnout Time:
Notification of emergency to beginning point of travel time.

Alert Time:
Time call is received to time units are alerted.

CHALLENGES WE ARE FACING

While there are many highlights from 2025 to celebrate, there were also challenges faced by MHFES and our community.

Managing Fleet Risk

The fire service continues to face increasing challenges related to the rising cost and delayed delivery of fire apparatus. Global supply chain disruptions and increased demand for specialized components have significantly extended manufacturing timelines and driven prices to historic highs. These lengthy build times complicate fleet replacement planning, placing added pressure on maintenance budgets and operational readiness.

Inflationary pressures and manufacturer price escalations have further reduced purchasing flexibility. In collaboration with Fleet Services, we are continually reviewing and adjusting replacement strategies and engaging early with manufacturers to manage risk and maintain reliable emergency response capabilities.

Opioid Epidemic

Alberta overall has been dealing with an opioid epidemic leading to an increase in overdose-related emergency calls. Medicine Hat Fire Services responded to many overdose calls in 2025. Firefighters are trained to administer naloxone, an opioid overdose reversal medication.



The fire in this photo was caused by a vape being charged under a pillow in a bed. Lithium-ion batteries can overheat quickly when they don't have airflow. Charge devices on a hard, open surface – never on beds or under pillows.

Lithium-ion Batteries

Lithium-ion batteries present significant challenges to Fire Services due to their unique properties and potential hazards. These batteries are powering our lives and are found in smartphones, laptops, power tools, kitchen appliances, electric vehicles, and renewable energy systems. They can ignite and burn in extremely high temperatures and release toxic gases, posing explosion risks when exposed to heat or damage. Firefighters must manage the volatility of lithium-ion batteries.

Increase in vacant, encampments, and homelessness

Like many communities across Alberta, Medicine Hat has seen an increase in vacant properties, encampments, and homelessness. These challenges have continued to contribute to a rise in emergency calls in 2025, including fires in vacant structures, encampments, and outdoor fires. Medicine Hat Fire Services responded to these incidents prioritizing both safety and compassion while addressing these emergencies.



34

encampment fires



1 in 3

MFR cardiac arrests were drug related

LOOKING AHEAD

MHFES is committed to being a data-driven, outcome-focused, and modern fire service that is strategically aligned, properly resourced, and customer-focused, while fostering an inclusive and diverse workplace. Each branch has identified key priority areas through 2026 to ensure we continue to meet the evolving needs and expectations of our community.

Administration

- Manage and expand our long-term Mental Health and Wellness program to proactively support every member of our team.
- Enhance data collection and analysis to evaluate operations, track performance, and support informed long-term planning.

Community Safety

- Expand fire and life safety public education through in-person presentations, targeted community events, and the strategic, safe use of social media, guided by data and emerging fire trends.
- Strengthen partnerships with City departments and community organizations to increase the reach and visibility of fire and life safety education.
- Integrate APX software to include fire investigation reporting, improving efficiency, consistency, and workflow across prevention and investigation activities.



Training & Suppression

- Advocate for the development of a regional training facility to support emergency response training, partner organizations, and multi-agency operations.
- Integrate APX software into incident management reporting to improve efficiency, accuracy, and data consistency.
- Continue Hazardous Materials Technician-level training to ensure specialized response capability and operational readiness.
- Train and certify members on an ongoing basis to uphold the highest standards of service, safety, and professionalism.

911 Communications

- Implement and operationalize the Next Generation 911 (NG911) call handling system, interoperability, and emergency response capabilities.
- Leverage existing communications infrastructure to expand partnership opportunities with neighbouring municipalities and regional partners.

OUR PARTNERS





125
Years
OF SERVICE

CONNECT
WITH US

 403-529-8282

 fireprevention@medicinehat.ca

 medicinehat.ca/fire

    Social Media