

MEADOW LAKE FIRE DEPARTMENT

Annual Report For 2015



Introduction

It is my pleasure to submit the City of Meadow Lake Fire Department's Annual Report for the year of 2015.

The following pages are a summary the fire department's activities and some of the highlights of the last year.

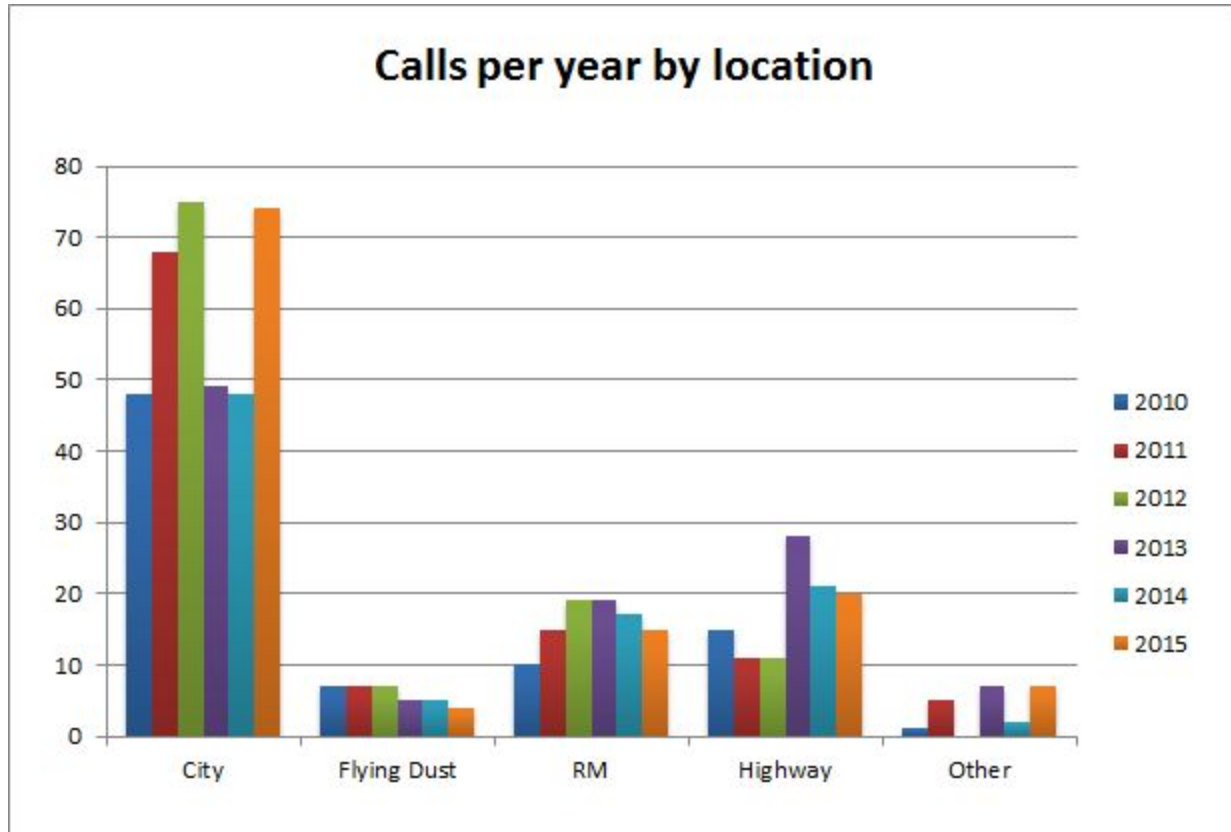
Respectfully submitted,

Neil Marsh
Fire Chief

Incident Summary

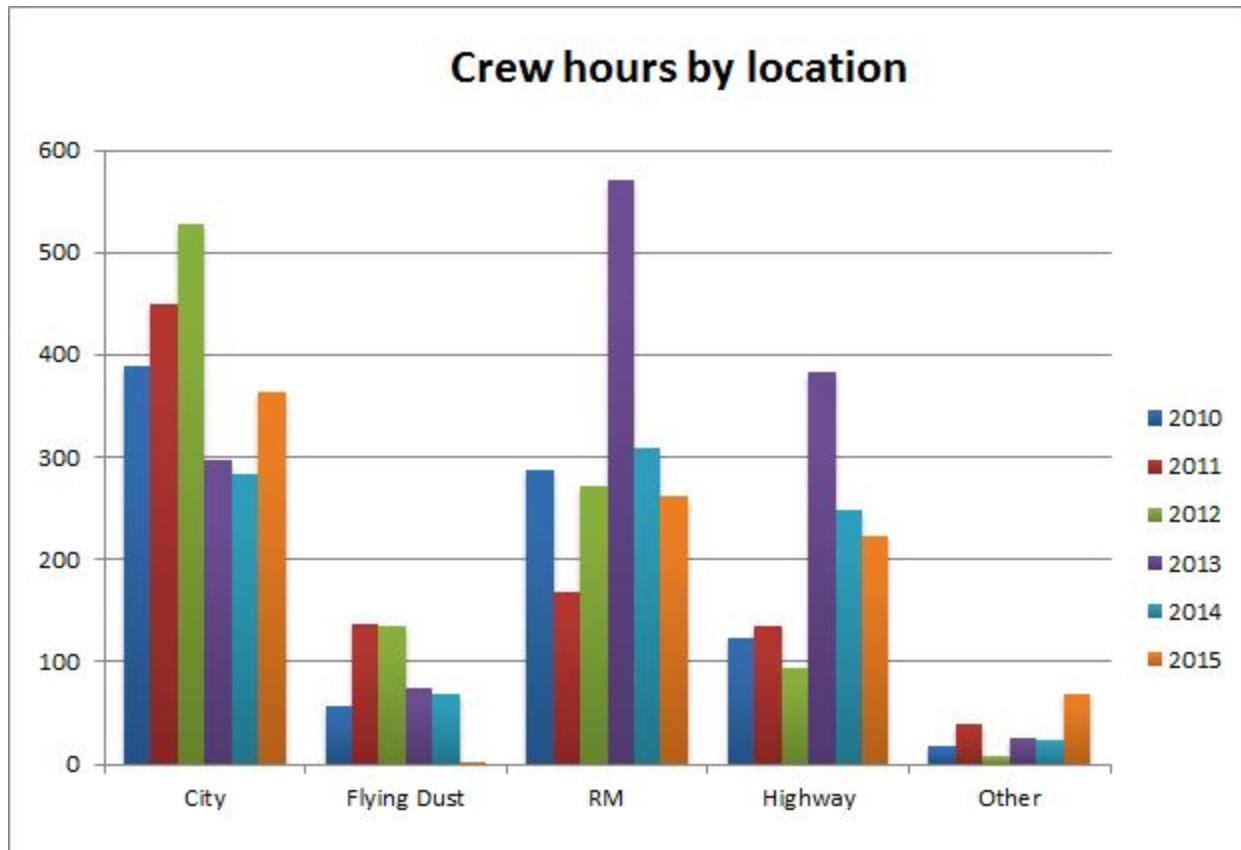
The Fire Department responds to fires within the City of Meadow Lake, the RM of Meadow Lake, Flying Dust First Nation, Dorintosh and some parts of the Meadow Lake Provincial Park. We respond to rescue calls for a slightly larger area, most often along provincial highways.

The number of responses to each of these locations is as follows for the last six years.



| Totals | Calls | | | | | | Crew hours | | | | | |
|-------------|-------|------|------|------|------|------|------------|------|------|------|-------|------|
| | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 |
| City | 48 | 68 | 75 | 49 | 48 | 74 | 389 | 449 | 528 | 298 | 284 | 364 |
| Flying Dust | 7 | 7 | 7 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 57 | 136 | 135 | 74 | 68.5 | 2 |
| RM | 10 | 15 | 19 | 19 | 17 | 15 | 288 | 169 | 272 | 570 | 308 | 261 |
| Highway | 15 | 11 | 11 | 28 | 21 | 20 | 124 | 134 | 94 | 383 | 248 | 222 |
| Other | 1 | 5 | 0 | 7 | 2 | 7 | 18 | 39 | 8 | 26 | 23 | 68 |
| | 81 | 106 | 112 | 108 | 93 | 120 | 876 | 927 | 1037 | 1351 | 931.5 | 917 |

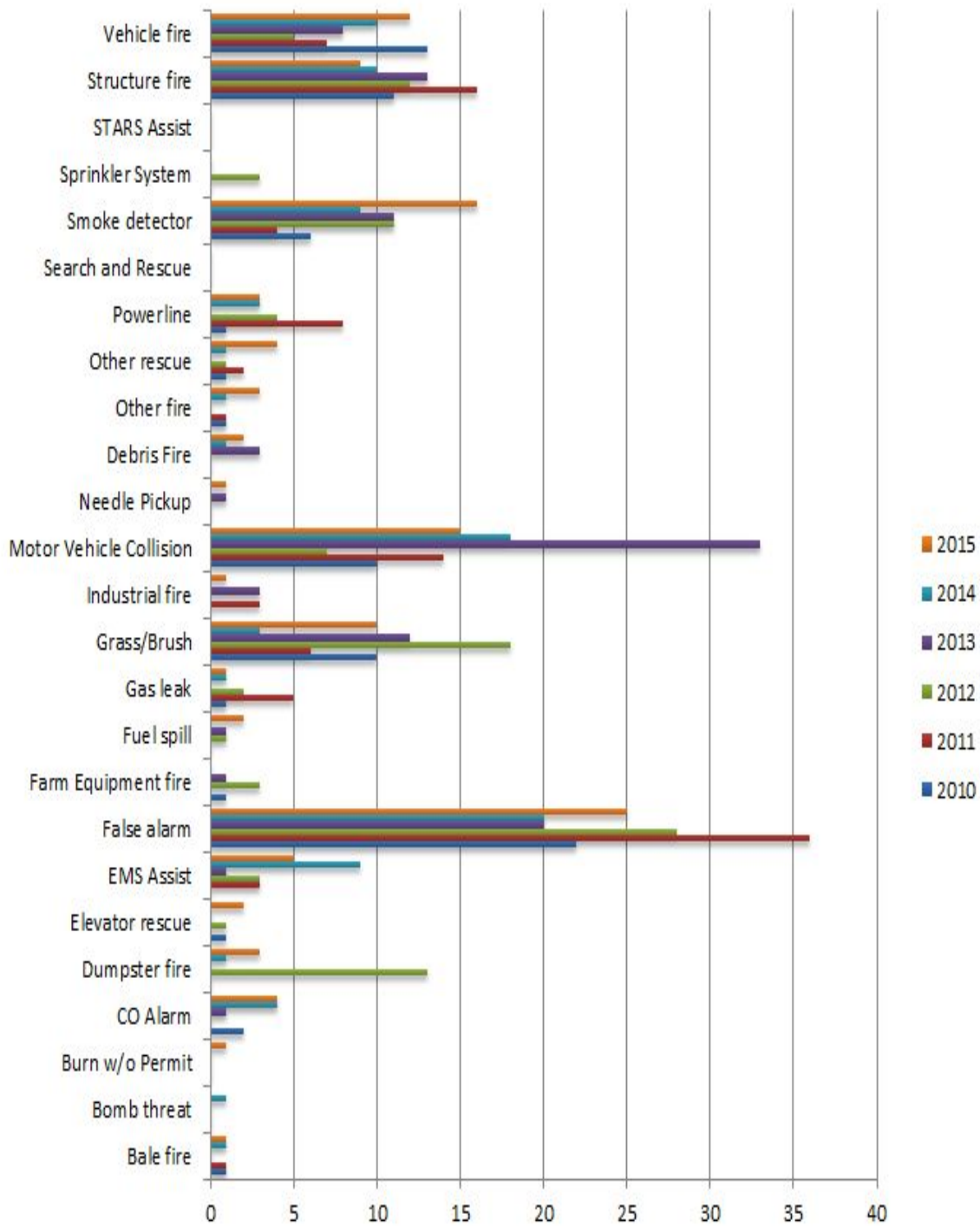
It is useful to consider the person-hours spent at incidents, as crew wages are a significant part of the cost of firefighting.



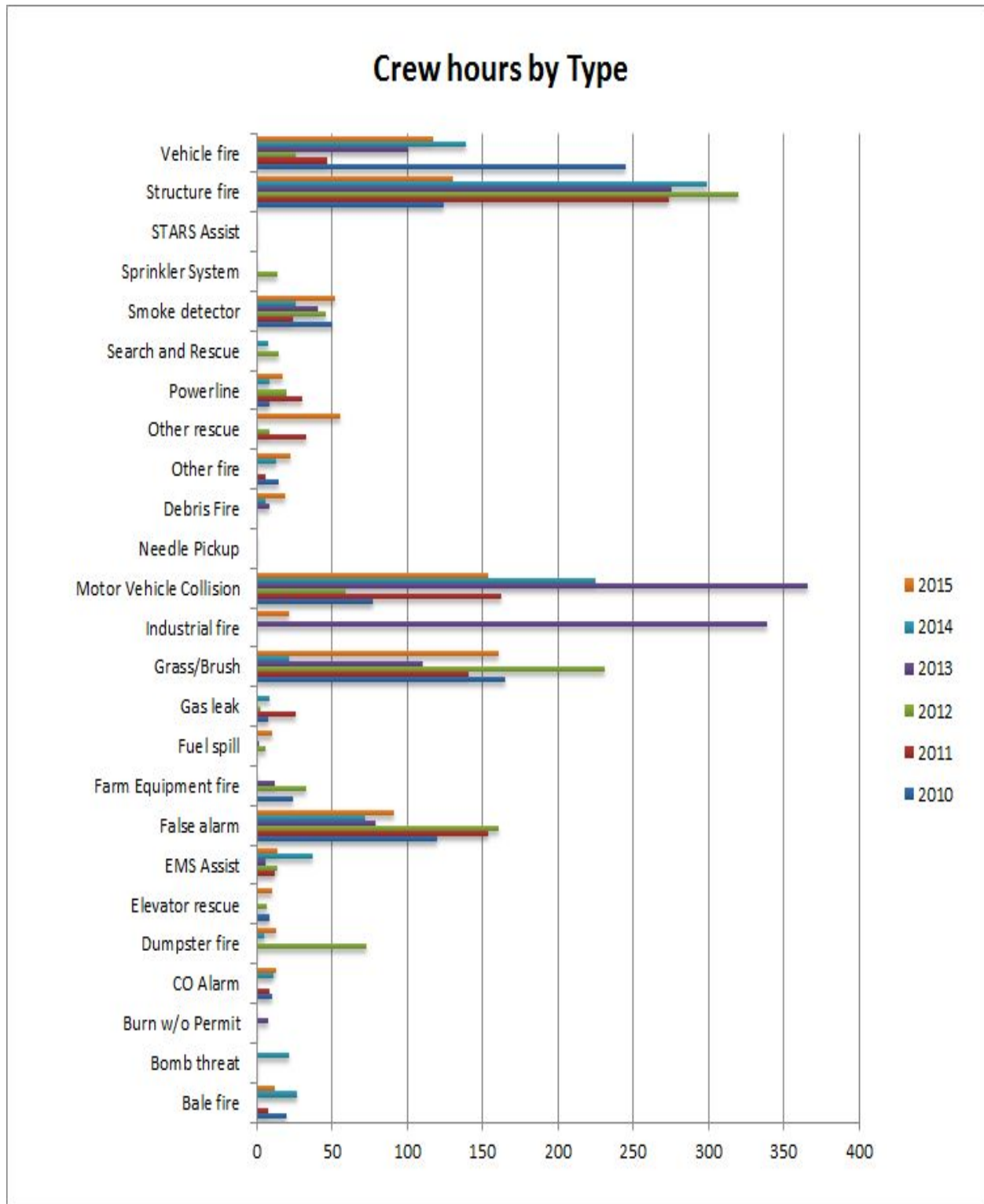
Historical note: The large spike in hours in the RM in 2013 was due to three industrial fires. Similarly, the spike in highway numbers in 2013 is due to an unusual number of vehicle extrication calls, many of them involving transport trucks.

As the chart on the next page shows, we respond to a wide variety of incident types. Structure fires, vehicle fires, wildland fires and motor vehicle rescues continue to be major demands for service.

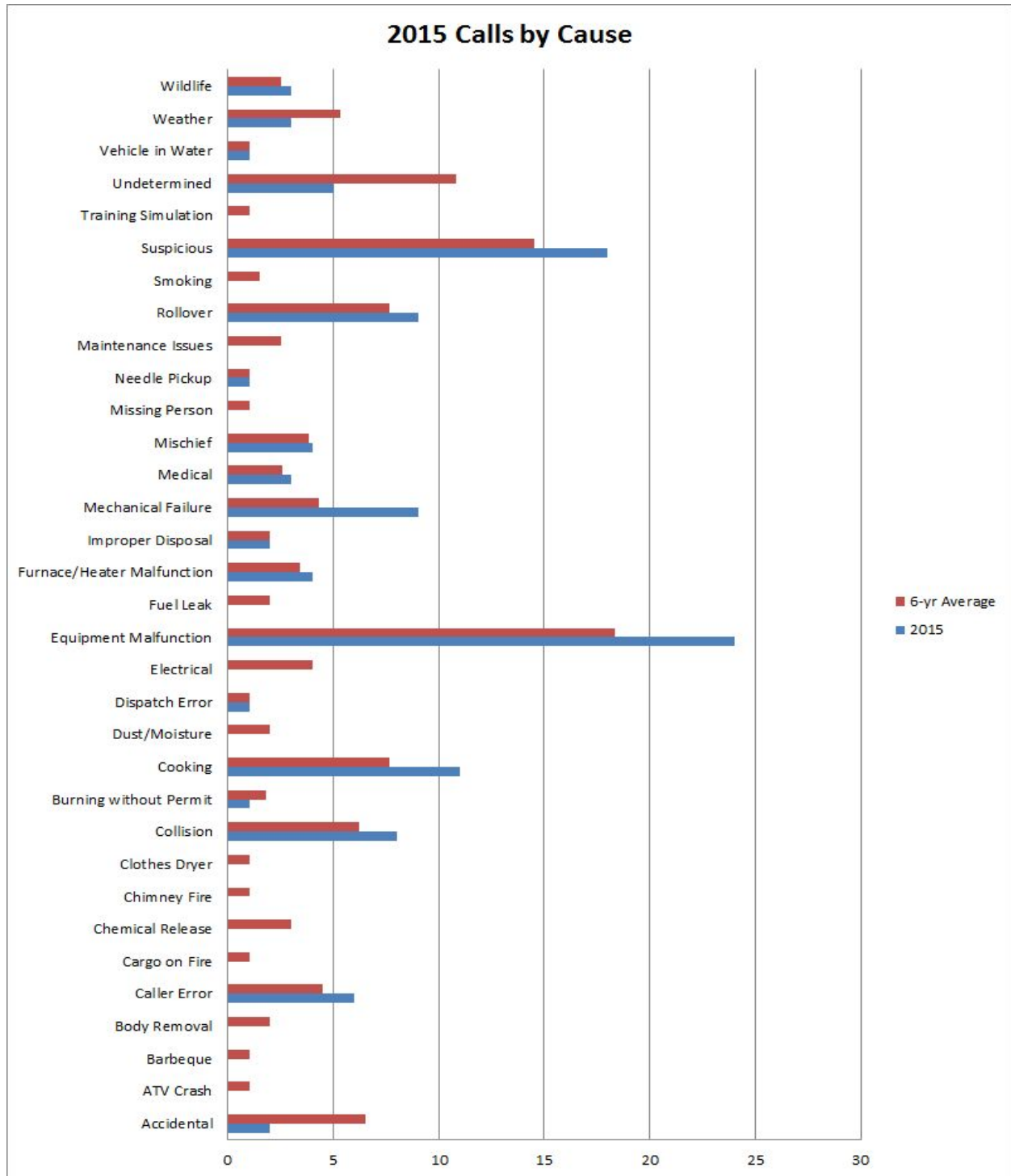
Number of Calls by Type



The labour cost of various types of incidents provides a different perspective. Structure fires, vehicle extrication, industrial fires and grass/brush fires are among the most labour-intensive types of calls.



Finally, determining the cause of fires and other emergencies provides valuable insight which can be used for future prevention strategies. Suspected arson remains a common cause of fires, as does malfunctioning or poorly maintained heating, electrical and alarm systems. (The majority of the “Equipment Malfunction” line below is related to false alarms.)



Providing Services that Meadow Lake Relies On

As the preceding information illustrates, the Fire Department is called to assist at a wide variety of incidents, not limited to putting out fires. We expect to be called on for any of the following events:

- Fires - structural, vehicle, industrial, brush and grassland
- Rescues - Motor vehicle collisions, farm, ice, elevator, embankment, industrial
- Disasters - including extreme weather events, mass casualty, building collapse, evacuations, large-scale fires, and seemingly simple incidents such as extended power outages
- Hazardous Materials incidents, including chemical spills involving transport trucks or at farm or industrial sites, natural gas leaks and Carbon Monoxide.
- Medical - firefighters trained in advanced first aid can assist EMS personnel with patient care when needed
- “Other” - the fire service is an “All Hazards” service, and we are sometimes called upon in unconventional ways

We continue to add new skills in an effort to keep up with changing risks and community needs.

The fire department is also tasked with Fire Code inspections and enforcement, fire prevention education, burning permits, fire pit permits and fireworks permits. We participate in fire prevention education opportunities as much as possible, including school tours and presentations to interested groups.

Employers

The employers of our firefighters deserve recognition, and these include

| | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| City of Meadow Lake | Prairie North Health Region |
| Meadow Lake Co-op | Meadow Power & Equipment |
| Meadow Lake Mechanical Pulp | Meadow Lake OSB |
| Department of Highways | Northwest School Division |
| Home Hardware | Thomas Funeral Home |
| Multiworks | |

Several firefighters are self-employed

The support of community-minded employers is invaluable. A viable fire service is possible only when employees can leave work, without penalty, to attend to emergencies in the community.

Our Motivated and Talented Membership

The crew roster, at the time of this writing, is:

Officers

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Neil Marsh, Fire Chief | Joe Grela, Deputy Chief |
| Doug Bennett, Assistant Deputy | Kim Sawatzky, A-Crew Captain |
| Michael Wagner, A-Crew Lieutenant | Chris Warren, B-Crew Captain |
| Cheryl Dodds, B-Crew Lieutenant | Brad Arial, B-Crew Lieutenant |
| Rick Burnett, C-Crew Captain | Scott Chuckrey, C-Crew Lieutenant |

Firefighters

| | | |
|------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| Ian Kosokowsky | Frank Richardson | Yannis Karambetsos |
| Dustin Thomas | Chris Gill | Ashton Filkowski |
| Clinton McCallum | Peter Schalm | Chad McCord |
| Sam Dawson | Joe Hallahan | Cordell Allen |
| Matt Cessford | Lyndon Shryko | Keenan Gill |
| Ed Berry | | |

Retired but still involved

Louis Gratton

Qualifications

Among our membership we currently have

First Aid instructors

First Responder/EMR instructors

Fire Service Instructors, Levels 1 & 2

Firefighter II professional qualifications (NFPA 1001)

Fire Investigator (NFPA 1033)

Fire Inspectors (NFPA 1031)

Paramedics

First Responders & Emergency Medical Responders

And a wide variety of other skills, certifications and competencies

Our Fleet

- **First-line Pumper:** 1999 Fort Garry fire engine, which carries 900 gallons of water, a 5-person crew, SCBA, ground ladders and other equipment
- **Second-line & Rural Pumper:** 1987 Fort Garry fire engine, which carries 900 gallons of water, a 2-person crew, ground ladders and other equipment
- **Highway Rescue:** 2000 GMC 1-ton with custom box, which carries a 5-person crew, our hydraulic rescue tools ('Jaws of Life'), scene lighting, basic rope rescue gear and other equipment
- **Rapid Response:** 2015 Ford 1-ton mini-pumper, expected to fulfil a wide variety of uses at fires, rescues and other calls
- **Utility:** 2003 Ford ambulance, donated in 2011 by the Prairie North Health Region. This carries most of our first aid equipment and is used as a support vehicle at numerous incidents
- **Chief's vehicle:** 2005 GMC pickup, used by the fire chief for weekday work, and by the chief or on-call officer for after-hours on-call duties. In the process of being equipped to carry tools and supplies for inspections, incident command, and fire investigations.

We are looking forward to an important addition to the fleet in 2016:

- A fully equipped fire tanker, which will be a significant improvement in our water delivery capability, which is greatly needed not only for rural fires but also for fires in many parts of the City. Ordered in 2015, delivery is expected in early 2016

Financial Summary

In 2015 we continued our long-term plan of continual improvement, ensuring that our equipment and training are well matched to the anticipated needs of the community.

Purchases of note included:

- 1-ton rapid response vehicle (see previous section)
- 300-gallon tanker (see above)
- Equipment and training for fire hydrant flow-testing
- Gas detection equipment
- Radios
- Scene lighting
- Vehicle repairs & maintenance
- SCBA repair
- Small trailer for storing and hauling training equipment

With continued support, we will be able to maintain what we have achieved and advance further toward our goals.

Looking Ahead

Challenges

- With growing awareness about rapid climate change and its far-reaching effects, we must try to be as prepared as possible for the various scenarios that may unfold in coming years. These include severe storms, prolonged utility disruption, pandemics and supply chain interruptions, to name a few. The fire service has a leading role to play in disaster preparedness and we hope to make progress in the coming year.
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder has become well known in recent years and is widely acknowledged to be a major concern for all emergency responders. Education and resources are still limited, but the Saskatchewan Association of Fire Chiefs and other organizations are working to change that.
- Recruiting and retaining firefighters is a constant challenge. Many communities have difficulty maintaining a viable fire department. In Meadow Lake we are more fortunate, and the fire service is well supported by the City and the community as a whole. Continuing to provide quality training, excellent equipment and a wide variety of opportunities for service will help ensure the continued existence of the Meadow Lake Fire Department.

Opportunities

- The hydrant flow-testing program will give our fire response planning abilities a large boost. This program was delayed at the request of the water plant manager, but now that system upgrades are complete we plan to start this program in earnest in the spring of 2016.
- The Saskatchewan Volunteer Firefighter Association holds weekend Fire Schools twice a year, hosted by various communities around the province. These events typically bring in several hundred people, including students, instructors and trade show exhibitors. We are considering hosting such an event in 2018, and a committee has begun work on the planning. Support from the community is very much hoped for.
- Many people are unable to be active firefighters for various reasons, but would still participate and contribute, given the opportunity. We would like to re-define and expand the role of the fire department Auxiliary, with the aim of providing better service to the community in a variety of ways.
- We must increase our fire code inspection rate. This is the most reliable and cost-effective way to prevent fires and fire-related injury, death and economic losses. Deputy Chief Grela and myself are now certified Fire Inspectors. With these certifications, together with the much-improved Fire Safety Act (2015), and

possible bylaw changes, we should be better able to provide fire code inspection and enforcement service in Meadow lake. Available time remains the toughest challenge to this important initiative,

In summary, I would like to express my appreciation to the firefighters and officers of the Meadow Lake Fire Department, and especially to their families and employers. It is a privilege to serve with such fine people. The continued support of City Council, and the citizens of of Meadow Lake and surrounding communities, will ensure that our fire department continues to be progressive, competent and engaged.

Respectfully submitted,

Neil Marsh
Fire Chief