



# Meadow Lake Fire & Rescue Year End Report 2022



## **Introduction**

2022 was a busy year! As the following pages illustrate, we had the second-busiest year on record for numbers of calls for assistance. We made progress on a number of projects, some of which have been in development for some time. Some faces have changed, but fortunately we have a strong core of experienced firefighters and officers to train new members.

Like everyone else, we began to emerge from “pandemic mode” as various operational restrictions and extra precautions were lifted. However, many valuable lessons were learned during this experience over the last two years, and we hope that these can become part of a “newer, better” fire department, for the benefit of our wider community.

The best news of all in 2022 was that our long-serving Deputy Chief, Joe Grela, would be our new Fire Chief starting in 2023. Joe comes to the job with excellent qualifications and experience, and is sure to provide great leadership to our fire department in the coming years.

I also congratulate our new Deputy Chief, Scott Chuckrey. Scott has been with our department since 2010, has been active in the fire service for 25 years, and brings a wealth of experience and expertise to his new role.

Once again, I would like to thank the City of Meadow Lake for the opportunity to serve as your Fire Chief for these past 11 years, and I wish Chief Grela every success in the years to come.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Neil Marsh  
Fire Chief 2011-2022*



## 2022 Review

Perhaps one of the most noticeable changes to the Meadow Lake Fire Department was the search for a new fire chief after the role of fire chief and building official was divided in March 2022. It was a year of wrapping up projects and getting things ready for the transition to the new Chief.

The compound located along Madill Avenue was finished which provides a designated location for various fire department training exercises such as vehicle extrication and live burns. This space is shared with Bylaw Enforcement for impounded vehicles. Further developments include the installation of propane-fired training props, confined-space training simulators and more.



A progress photo of the compound prior to completion



Medical first responder skills, Z-rig, patient packaging training May 17, 2022



The fire trucks lined up prior to departure for the 2022 Stampede Parade

Much-needed new Radios were supplied by the Province, replacing older radios in fire department vehicles, along with radios used by EMS, Bylaw Enforcement, Wildfire Management, and other government agencies. The ability to communicate effectively between emergency response agencies should be significantly improved once this rollout is complete.

A turnout gear washer was installed at the fire hall. This machine gives firefighters the ability to keep their protective clothing clean and free from toxins that have been shown to cause cancers and other health concerns. Clean gear also lasts longer, and we will no longer have to send turnout gear elsewhere for professional cleaning.

## Training

Members of Meadow Lake Fire and Rescue undergo various types of training. This ensures everyone is kept educated when responding to a wide variety of calls. In addition to each Tuesday being a regular fire practice night, here are some extra training sessions completed in 2022.

- Ice Rescue – March 11 and 12, 2022
- SCBA and Rapid Intervention Team skills – May 14, 2022
- Airport mock aircraft disaster – September 21, 2022
- First Responder Course - October 3 to 6, 2022
- Emergency Medical Responder – October 7, 11 to 14, 2022
- Vehicle extrication basics – October 15, 2022
- Vehicle extrication scenarios – October 16, 2022
- Court testimony training – December 10, 2022



Right and Left:  
Skills  
development,  
building search  
and firefighter  
rescue.

May 14, 2022







Medical first responder skills, Z-rig, patient packaging training May 17 2022



Aircraft mock disaster training September 21, 2022

**Public Interactions**

Interacting with the public is both educational and enjoyable. The Meadow Lake Fire Department often attends public events to spread fire safety awareness and assist in volunteer roles.

Sparky has made numerous appearances this year at events such as school tours, slip and slide events, the annual Stampede Parade, Lion’s Park Emergency Management Event, Load a Log, firework displays and Christmas events. Sparky is a well-known mascot within our community that children gravitate to.



Left: sparky strikes a pose on R61R during a school tour at Lakeview Elementary. October 12, 2022.

Below: T61R (our tanker) was festively equipped for a Christmas Eve parade, along with police and EMS vehicles.



## 2023 Plans

ICS 200 course for all Officers

Concluding the Fire Officer NFPA 1022 certification

Continue working towards offering NFPA 1001 professional Fire Fighter qualifications for newer members

Continue developing technical rescue capabilities

Installation of the new breathing air compressor system

Completion of the air cascade Trailer

Re-surfacing of the concrete apron in front of the fire hall

Purchase of one or more shipping containers for development as training props.

Increased emphasis on fire prevention inspections.

Further training with the **Resort Village of Turtle View's fire brigade**. These "Fire First Responders" act under the direction of MLFD and provide valuable first-on-scene assistance to this remote part of our large fire protection area. This pilot project is entering its third year, and has to date resulted in at least one house saved from otherwise certain destructions, and have assisted with a variety of other incidents.

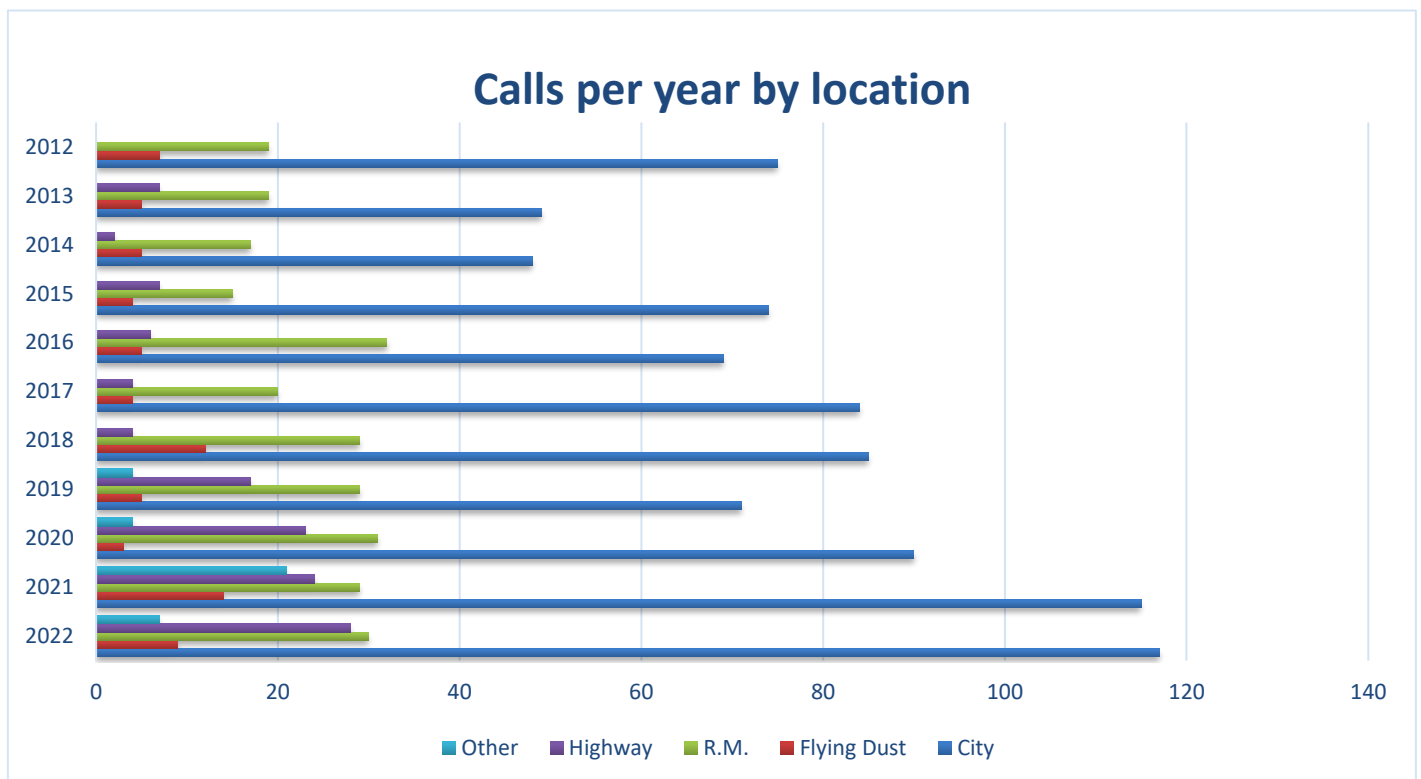
## Statistics

2022 saw a slight decrease in call numbers and response hours compared with 2021. That year was the busiest on record, partly because it was a very dry year and grass-and-brush fires were plentiful.

### Calls Per Year by Location

The chart below illustrates the number of calls received for each region in Meadow

Lake’s call zone for the past 10 years. The “other” call category includes resort villages, forest lands and park locations.



### Crew hours by location

Below we can see the response hours spent by the crew divided by location. As is evident, the hours of response have decreased from 2021's stats.

|               | 2019          | 2020        | 2021        | 2022          |
|---------------|---------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|
| City          | 374.5         | 541.5       | 1114        | 540           |
| Flying Dust   | 28            | 50          | 240         | 66.5          |
| R.M.          | 579.5         | 536         | 941         | 399           |
| Highways      | 139.5         | 290.5       | 246         | 301           |
| Parks / Other | 91            | 196         | 425         | 65            |
| <b>TOTALS</b> | <b>1212.5</b> | <b>1614</b> | <b>2966</b> | <b>1371.5</b> |



A shed fire, March 2022. (This shed was found to be the "home" of a homeless person)

### Call Type Hours

We can see in the chart below how many hours were spent on different types of responses.

| Call Type              | Hours Dedicated |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| Dumpster Fire          | 14              |
| Elevator               | 7               |
| EMS Assist             | 75              |
| Extrication            | 7               |
| False Alarm            | 207             |
| Gas Leak               | 5               |
| Good Intent Call       | 32              |
| Grass & Brush Fire     | 112             |
| MVC                    | 352.5           |
| Needle Pick- up        | 1               |
| Other                  | 19.5            |
| Powerline & Power pole | 10              |
| Structure Fire         | 362.5           |
| Unauthorized Burning   | 38              |
| Vehicle Fire           | 130             |
| <b>Total</b>           | <b>1372.5</b>   |

2021 was undoubtedly a significant year which saw the Meadow Lake Fire Department dedicate 2966 hours towards responses.

2022 did not quite reach that threshold with a total of 1372.5 response hours. This is a decrease of 1593.5 response hours.

2022 only had 12 less calls than 2021, but fewer large-scale events.



## Call Type

The chart below shows the call numbers for different call types. A few notable differences when comparing both years includes an increase of 36 false alarms in 2022 from the previous year; and a decrease of 22 grass/brush fires in 2022 compared with 2021.

| Call Type               | Call Total |
|-------------------------|------------|
| Dumpster Fire           | 1          |
| Elevator                | 4          |
| EMS Assist              | 19         |
| Explosion               | 0          |
| Extrication             | 1          |
| False Alarm             | 71         |
| Gas Leak                | 1          |
| Good Intent Calls       | 3          |
| Grass & Brush Fire      | 9          |
| Motor Vehicle Incidents | 42         |
| Other                   | 5          |
| Powerline & Power pole  | 2          |
| Structure               | 15         |
| Unauthorized Burning    | 4          |
| Vehicle Fire            | 13         |
| Needle Pick up          | 1          |
| <b>Total</b>            | <b>191</b> |



An excavator fire that spread to surrounding trees on June 9, 2022



A structure fire, April 20, 2022



A car fire response in the early morning hours of July 4, 2022

## Calls by Service Area

Below, we can see the total number of calls per location separated by call type. MLFD responds to a wide service area. Response times can be up to 90 minutes in some remote areas.

| Call Type               | City       | RM        | HWY       | FDFN     | Parks    | Other    | Total      |
|-------------------------|------------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|------------|
| Dumpster fire           | 1          | 0         | 0         | 0        | 0        | 0        | 1          |
| Elevator                | 4          | 0         | 0         | 0        | 0        | 0        | 4          |
| EMS assist              | 15         | 1         | 0         | 2        | 0        | 1        | 19         |
| Explosion               | 0          | 0         | 0         | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0          |
| Extrication             | 0          | 1         | 0         | 0        | 0        | 0        | 1          |
| False alarm             | 58         | 10        | 0         | 3        | 0        | 0        | 71         |
| Gas leak                | 1          | 0         | 0         | 0        | 0        | 0        | 1          |
| Good intent calls       | 2          | 1         | 0         | 0        | 0        | 0        | 3          |
| Grass and brush fire    | 0          | 6         | 0         | 2        | 1        | 0        | 9          |
| MVC                     | 15         | 0         | 26        | 1        | 0        | 0        | 42         |
| Needle pick-up          | 1          | 0         | 0         | 0        | 0        | 0        | 1          |
| Other                   | 4          | 0         | 0         | 0        | 0        | 1        | 5          |
| Power line & Power pole | 0          | 1         | 0         | 0        | 1        | 0        | 2          |
| Structure fire          | 7          | 7         | 0         | 1        | 0        | 0        | 15         |
| Unauthorized Burning    | 4          | 0         | 0         | 0        | 0        | 0        | 4          |
| Vehicle fire            | 5          | 3         | 2         | 0        | 1        | 2        | 13         |
| <b>Total</b>            | <b>117</b> | <b>30</b> | <b>28</b> | <b>9</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>191</b> |

## Permits

In 2022, 33 fire pits permits applied for. When a fire pit permit application is received, an inspection is booked to ensure the fire pit follows the regulations defined in the Outdoor Recreational Fire Bylaw No. 15/2015. Pits undergo a re-inspection every 5 years to ensure the pit has not deteriorated into a state that is unsafe.

# Our Crew

## Senior Officers

Joe Grela, Fire Chief  
Scott Chuckrey, Deputy Chief  
Doug Bennett, Assistant Deputy  
Neil Marsh, Captain  
Chris Warren, Captain  
Rick Burnett, Captain

## Lieutenants

|                |                    |
|----------------|--------------------|
| Ian Kosokowsky | Yannis Karambetsos |
| Chris Gill     | Joe Hallahan       |
| Keenan Gill    |                    |

## Firefighters

|                    |                   |                 |
|--------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Lyndon Shryko      | Andrew Toews      | Abdul Araga*    |
| Arron Toews        | Brandon Lacendre* | Dilawar Maan    |
| Clint Ruston       | Renee Stevenot    | Jeremy Toews    |
| David Goertzen     | Zouhair Malaeb    | Amanda Bacher   |
| Basil Paul         | Lyndsay Stevenot  | Dipak Chaudhari |
| Billie-Jean Abbott | Shanice Gervais   | Brad Buxton*    |

## Recruits, Trainees & Auxiliary

|                |                    |
|----------------|--------------------|
| Justin Bear    | Krista Gill        |
| Sherwin Jamero | Christine Sawatzky |

*\*No longer active as at this writing*





## **Employers**

*Without community-minded employers such as these, firefighters would be unable to respond to emergencies! We thank the following for their support and understanding:*

**City of Meadow Lake**

**Meadow Lake CO-OP**

**Extra Foods**

**Northwest School Division**

**AgMPower Services**

**Northwest Safety Training**

**Shkopich Enviro**

**Ace Lumber**

**Saskatchewan Health Authority**

**Tolko Industries**

**Department of Justice**

**CB Custom Contracting**

**Eagle Creek Motor Products**

**Giant Tiger**

**Alta Sask Wellness**

**Northern Diesel Services**

Several firefighters are self-employed

*“An effective fire service is possible only when employees can leave work, without penalty, to attend to emergencies in the community.”*

## **Qualifications**

Among our membership, we currently have:

- Firefighter II professional qualifications (NFPA 1001)
- First Aid instructors
- First Responder/EMR instructors
- Fire Service Instructors, Levels 1 & 2
- Driver/Operator professional qualifications (NFPA 1002)
- HazMat Operations-level responders (NFPA 472)
- Fire Investigators (NFPA 1033)
- Fire Inspectors (NFPA 1031)
- Paramedics
- First Responders & Emergency Medical Responders
- Ice Rescue technicians
- Technical Rescue technicians
- Search and Rescue practitioners
- Critical Incident Stress Management practitioners



***In summary***, I would like to express my profound appreciation to the members of the Meadow Lake Fire Department, and especially to their families and employers.

We endeavour to provide the best possible service to the citizens of Meadow Lake and our wider response area. Everyone deserves to live in a safe community, and the fire service has an important role in both preventing emergencies and responding effectively when they do occur. With the support of residents, employers and Councils, we will do our best to provide continued excellent services.

I am excited and privileged to be leading this dynamic and dedicated group of men and women.

Respectfully submitted,

Joe Grela  
Fire Chief



*Proud members of the Saskatchewan Association of Fire Chiefs and the Saskatchewan Volunteer Firefighters Association*