

CITY OF SHARON FIRE DEPARTMENT

2024

ANNUAL REPORT



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2024 Annual Report

*Serving the City of Sharon, Pennsylvania
Protecting Life, Property, and the Environment*

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DEPUTY CHIEF'S MESSAGE

As we reflect on the past year, I am incredibly proud to present the 2024 Annual Report for the Sharon Fire Department. This document serves as more than just a summary of numbers and statistics—it is a testament to the hard work, dedication, and resilience of the men and women who serve our community each and every day.

The fire service is constantly evolving, and our department continues to adapt to new challenges while remaining steadfast in our mission to protect life, property, and the environment. Our firefighters train rigorously, not only to enhance their own skills but to ensure the safety of those we serve. Every emergency call, fire prevention program, and public education event is approached with the same unwavering commitment to excellence.

This job demands sacrifice, and I want to take a moment to recognize the dedication of our personnel. Whether responding to emergencies in the middle of the night, spending long hours away from their families, or working behind the scenes to improve operations, their efforts do not go unnoticed. It is because of their passion and professionalism that we are able to provide the highest level of service to our residents.

While this report details our accomplishments, it is also a reflection of the trust placed in us by the community. We do not take that trust lightly. As we move forward, we will continue to strengthen our capabilities, embrace innovation, and remain committed to protecting the lives and property of those we are honored to serve.

ABOUT US

The Sharon Fire Department is a dedicated all-hazards emergency response agency committed to protecting life, property, and the environment. Our team consists of 2 chiefs, 4 captains, 4 lieutenants, 8 full-time firefighters, 12 part-time firefighters, 1 full-time fire inspector, and 1 civilian code inspection coordinator. Together, we deliver exceptional fire suppression and rescue services, hazardous materials mitigation, disaster management, and code enforcement.

While prompt and skillful emergency response is at the heart of our mission, we also place significant emphasis on risk reduction and community safety. Through robust fire prevention programs, strict adherence to fire and building codes, and targeted public education initiatives, we strive to create a safer environment for all citizens and visitors. Our goal is to eliminate or minimize the impact of fires and other emergencies, ensuring the Sharon community remains a safe and thriving place to live and work.

This commitment to excellence reflects the department's core mission: *to protect life, property, and the environment, while fostering a culture of safety and preparedness.*



2024 HIGHLIGHTS

Emergency Response & Operations

In 2024, the Sharon Fire Department responded to a total of 831 emergency calls, demonstrating its continued commitment to protecting the community. Fire incidents accounted for 59 of these responses, including 20 building fires, 10 cooking fires, and 10 brush fires. The department also played a crucial role in rescue and emergency medical services, responding to 198 calls, which included 42 vehicle accidents with injuries and seven extrications. Additionally, firefighters addressed 145 hazardous conditions, such as 19 natural gas leaks and 26 downed power lines. False alarms, an ongoing challenge for the department, accounted for 166 responses, while severe weather and special incidents added another eight to the year's total. The department's efficiency in responding to emergencies remained a priority, with an impressive average response time of just 4 minutes and 22 seconds from dispatch to arrival.

Community Engagement & Public Safety

Beyond emergency response, the Sharon Fire Department played an active role in enhancing public safety and fire prevention. A total of 758 fire inspections were conducted to ensure compliance with safety standards, while firefighters participated in 31 public education and outreach events throughout the year. These events included fire safety talks at multiple schools, firehouse tours for Boy Scouts and other community groups, and participation in major citywide gatherings such as WaterFire, National Night Out, and the St. Patrick's Day Parade. Firefighters also provided essential fire extinguisher training to local businesses and residents at community events, reinforcing the department's dedication to education and prevention. Additionally, in 2024, the department installed smoke alarms in seven homes, ensuring that more residents had access to life-saving early warning systems.

Training & Professional Development

The department remained committed to continuous improvement through an extensive training program. In total, firefighters participated in 70 training sessions, excluding probationary training. A significant achievement for the year was the successful completion of the Blue Card Incident Command Certification by all department personnel, a nationally recognized program that enhances fireground decision-making. Specialized training sessions included a hazardous materials drill, flashover simulation, and truck company operations training. Several members also pursued advanced certifications, including Fire Instructor I and II courses, further strengthening the department's instructional capabilities. Probationary firefighters were immersed in rigorous training, completing 288 hours each to ensure their readiness for full-time service.

New Equipment & Department Improvements

Several key improvements and acquisitions in 2024 enhanced both firefighter safety and operational efficiency. All department apparatus were outfitted with state-of-the-art communication headsets, improving coordination among personnel while also providing essential hearing protection from sirens and other emergency vehicle noise. Additionally, the department implemented a new hose deployment method, the "Modified Flat Load," which aligns with modern best practices and allows for greater versatility in firefighting operations.

A notable initiative this year was the expansion of the fire extinguisher training program, made possible through generous community donations. This training device was utilized extensively at public events, equipping residents and business owners with hands-on experience in fire suppression. The department also played an instrumental role in the completion of an updated city-wide street map, a project that had been in development for over two years. The newly published map was distributed throughout the community and installed in the fire department's alarm room to enhance emergency response coordination.

Recognizing the importance of rapid access for emergency personnel, the department facilitated the installation of 36 new Knox Boxes at key locations, including businesses, churches, and community centers. These secure key storage devices enable firefighters to gain immediate access to buildings during emergencies, significantly reducing response times and minimizing property damage.

Personnel Changes & Achievements

The department experienced several personnel changes in 2024, with the hiring of six new firefighters and multiple promotions within the ranks. Several probationary firefighters advanced to part-time and full-time positions, reflecting their hard work and commitment to the profession. The year also saw the departure of several long-serving members, both full-time and part-time, whose dedication to the department will be remembered.

Grants & Donations

Financial support from grants and community donations played a critical role in funding key department initiatives. In 2024, the Sharon Fire Department secured over \$27,000 in funding, including a \$16,951.99 grant from the Pennsylvania Fire Company & EMS Grant program. Additional contributions came from PA CareerLink, American Legion, NLMK, Aqua, and other organizations, allowing for the purchase of essential equipment such as the fire extinguisher training device. These funds ensured that the department could continue to provide top-tier training and safety resources to both firefighters and the community.

RECOGNITION AND CERTIFICATIONS

The Sharon Fire Department has achieved significant milestones that underscore our commitment to excellence in fire service operations and community safety.

Blue Card Incident Command Certification

In 2024, we proudly became a “Blue Card” department, with all our members obtaining the Blue Card Incident Command Certification. This nationally recognized program ensures that our officers and firefighters are trained to make critical decisions on the fireground using a standardized approach to incident management. By adopting this system, we reinforce our commitment to operational efficiency, firefighter safety, and the protection of the citizens we serve.



ISO Class 3 Rating

The Insurance Services Office (ISO) evaluates and classifies fire protection services across the United States, assigning Public Protection Classifications (PPC) on a scale from 1 to 10, with Class 1 representing exemplary fire protection. As of 2015, approximately 3,056 fire departments nationwide achieved a Class 3 rating, placing the Sharon Fire Department among the top 10% of departments in the country. This classification reflects our department's dedication to maintaining robust fire suppression capabilities, effective emergency communications, and reliable water supply systems, all of which contribute to reduced property insurance premiums and a safer community.

Pennsylvania Participating Department – Gold Level

The Sharon Fire Department is proud to have achieved the Pennsylvania Participating Department Gold Level certification, a distinction that recognizes our commitment to firefighter training, professional development, and continuous improvement. As of 2023, only 42 fire departments in Pennsylvania had earned this designation, placing Sharon among an elite group of agencies dedicated to maintaining the highest standards in fire service. This certification reinforces our leadership in fire service excellence and preparedness, ensuring that our personnel and operations continue to meet the evolving challenges of emergency response.



These recognitions are a testament to the hard work, dedication, and professionalism of our firefighters and staff. We remain committed to upholding the highest standards in fire protection and emergency response, ensuring the safety and well-being of the residents we serve.

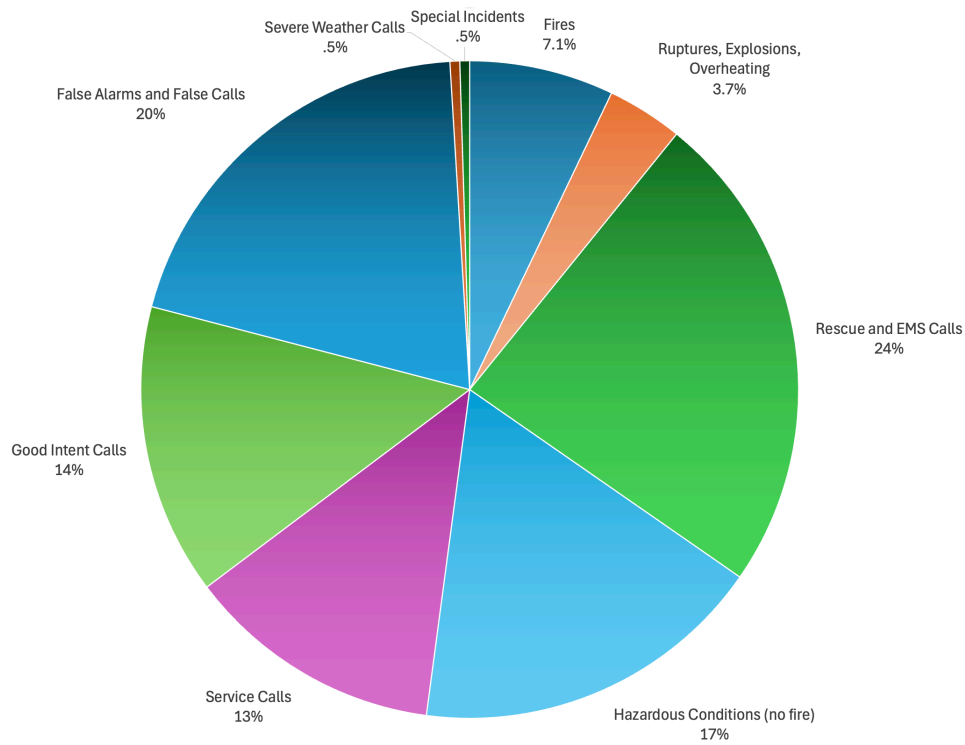
OPERATIONS OVERVIEW

The Sharon Fire Department remains dedicated to providing rapid, effective, and professional emergency services to the community. Each incident we respond to is handled with precision and teamwork, ensuring the highest level of protection for our residents and businesses. From fire suppression and rescue operations to hazardous materials mitigation and public safety initiatives, our firefighters are trained and equipped to handle a wide range of emergencies. The following data provides an overview of our operational activity throughout 2024, highlighting the commitment and readiness of our department in safeguarding the City of Sharon.

| | |
|---|------------|
| Fires | 59 |
| <i>Building Fires</i> | 20 |
| <i>Chimney Fires</i> | 2 |
| <i>Cooking Fires</i> | 10 |
| <i>Trash Fires</i> | 7 |
| <i>Brush Fires</i> | 10 |
| <i>Vehicle Fires</i> | 4 |
| <i>Other Fires</i> | 6 |
| Ruptures, Explosions, Overheating | 31 |
| <i>Explosions</i> | 3 |
| <i>Excessive Heat/Burnt Food</i> | 28 |
| Rescue and EMS Calls | 198 |
| <i>Assist EMS</i> | 113 |
| <i>Vehicle Accident With Injuries</i> | 42 |
| <i>Vehicle Accident Without Injuries</i> | 22 |
| <i>Extrications</i> | 7 |
| <i>Elevator Rescues</i> | 1 |
| <i>Water-related Emergencies</i> | 3 |
| <i>Other Rescue/EMS calls</i> | 10 |
| Hazardous Condition (no fire) | 145 |
| <i>Power Line Down Calls</i> | 26 |
| <i>Carbon Monoxide Incidents</i> | 13 |
| <i>Natural Gas Leaks</i> | 19 |
| <i>Cable and/or Telephone Line Down Calls</i> | 25 |
| <i>Downed Trees</i> | 15 |
| <i>Overheated Motors</i> | 18 |
| <i>Electrical Problems</i> | 12 |
| <i>Other Hazardous Conditions (no fire)</i> | 17 |
| Service Calls | 105 |
| <i>Unauthorized Burning</i> | 25 |
| <i>Water or Steam Leak</i> | 14 |
| <i>Animal Rescues</i> | 13 |
| <i>Assist Police</i> | 15 |
| <i>Other Service Calls</i> | 38 |
| Good Intent Calls | 119 |
| <i>Dispatched and Cancelled Enroute</i> | 40 |
| <i>No Incident Found</i> | 44 |
| <i>Odor or Smoke Investigation</i> | 28 |
| <i>Other Good Intent Calls</i> | 7 |
| False Alarms and False Calls | 166 |
| <i>Fire Alarm Activations (unintentional)</i> | 69 |
| <i>False Alarms (malicious intent)</i> | 2 |
| <i>Fire Alarm Activation (malfunction)</i> | 71 |
| <i>Other Fire Alarm Calls</i> | 24 |
| Severe Weather Calls | 4 |
| Special Incidents | 4 |
| <i>(including investigating complaints)</i> | |
| TOTAL | 831 |



PERCENTAGE OF CALLS BY INCIDENT TYPE, 2024



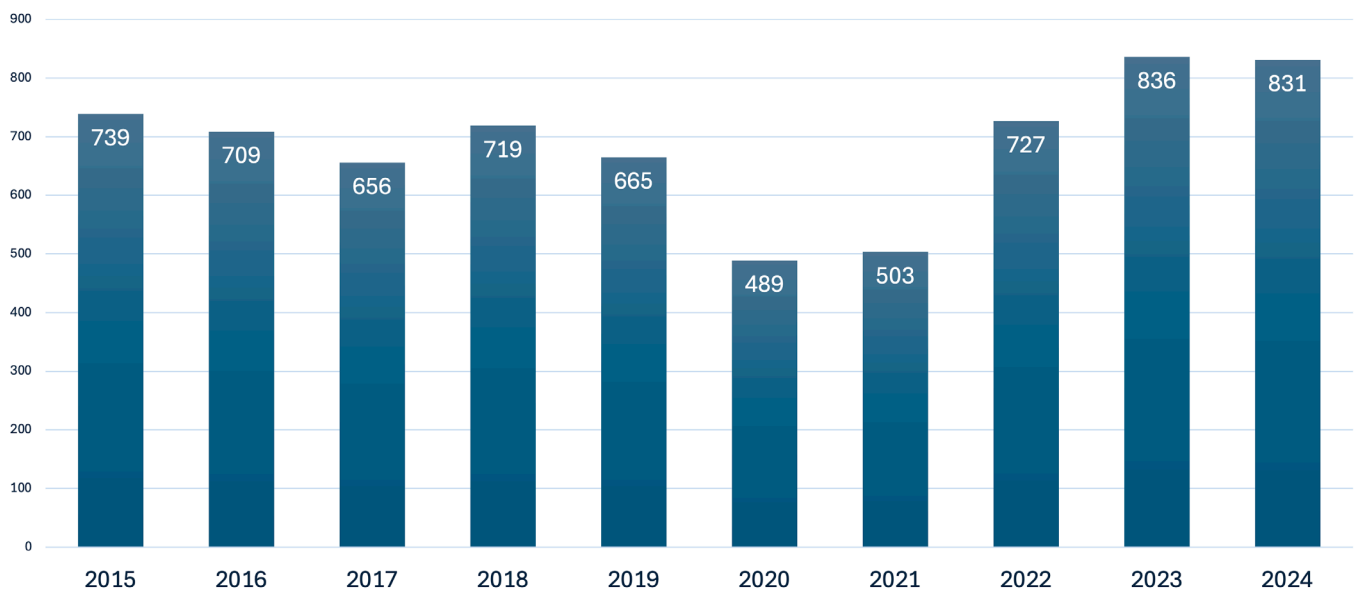
Note: Total does not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Nationally, Rescue and EMS Calls account for 64.2% of all responses, fires account for 3.9% of all responses, and all others incidents account for 31.9%.

Source:

U.S. Fire Administration. (2022). *Fire department overall run profile as reported to the National Fire Incident Reporting System (2020)*. U.S. Department of Homeland Security. <https://www.usfa.fema.gov/downloads/pdf/statistics/v22i1-fire-department-run-profile.pdf>

Total Incidents, 2015-2024



FIRE SUPPRESSION

Fire Suppression utilizes specialized tools and skills to control and extinguish fires, including building fires, vehicle fires, brush fires, hazardous materials fires, and other fire-related emergencies.



Shown above is 1049 Charles St., where Sharon Fire Department personnel saved the life of a victim trapped within the burning building on March 6, 2024.

Building Fires

The Sharon Fire Department responded to 59 fire-related incidents in 2024. 20 incidents were classified as building fires; 12 of which occurred within the City of Sharon.

Staffing

The average number of Sharon firefighters responding to a building fire is six, increasing to eight with automatic aid from Farrell. This falls well below NFPA's recommended staffing levels for structural fires. Despite this, the department maximizes resources through mutual aid and strategic response tactics to ensure effective fire suppression.

Property Saved

The monetary value of property saved in the City of Sharon by fire department intervention during the year 2024 was \$2,134,950.00.

Fire Loss & Community Impact

Fire loss is an important metric in assessing the impact of fire-related incidents on a community. In 2024, the Sharon Fire Department responded to 59 fire incidents, including 20 building fires, 10 cooking fires, 10 brush fires, and 4 vehicle fires. Among these, 33 were structure fires, resulting in a total property loss of \$161,010 and contents loss of \$53,560, bringing the total fire-related financial impact to \$214,570. Based on Sharon's estimated population of 13,000 residents, **the per capita fire loss for 2024 was approximately \$16.50 per person.**

National & Local Trends

According to the latest available data, the national average per capita fire loss has continued to rise in recent years. In 2022, the estimated per capita fire loss in the U.S. was approximately \$58.56. Sharon's per capita fire loss of \$16.50 in 2024 is significantly lower than the national average, reflecting the effectiveness of local fire prevention efforts, rapid response, and public safety initiatives.

Locally, the Sharon Fire Department works diligently to minimize fire losses through proactive fire prevention efforts, rapid response, and public education initiatives. By conducting 445 fire inspections in 2024 and engaging in public safety outreach programs, the department remains committed to reducing the risk of fire in homes, businesses, and public spaces. Notably, several months in 2024 saw no recorded property loss in reported structure fires, demonstrating the effectiveness of early detection, suppression efforts, and community education.

The Importance of Prevention & Community Awareness

Preventing fires is as critical as responding to them. The Sharon Fire Department continues to emphasize fire safety education, smoke alarm installations, and community engagement programs to ensure residents have the knowledge and resources to protect themselves. In 2024, firefighters participated in 31 public education events, reinforcing essential safety practices for all age groups.

While fire loss can never be entirely eliminated, a combination of strong fire code enforcement, community awareness, and firefighter preparedness helps mitigate its impact. The Sharon Fire Department remains dedicated to its mission of protecting life, property, and the environment through prevention, education, and emergency response.

TECHNICAL RESCUE

Technical Rescue utilizes specialized tools and skills for rescue, including vehicle extrication, confined space rescue, rope rescue, trench rescue, structural collapse rescue, ice rescue and swift water rescue.

The Sharon Fire Department continuously trains in specialized technical rescue disciplines to ensure readiness for complex emergencies. Our personnel hold certifications in multiple rescue operations, demonstrating a commitment to ongoing professional development.

Vehicle Extrication & Rescue Operations

- In 2022, all personnel earned National Vehicle Rescue Awareness (NVRA) and National Vehicle Rescue Operations (NVRO) certifications.
- Training covers hydraulic rescue tools (Jaws of Life), stabilization techniques, and extrication procedures for vehicle crashes.

Rope Rescue & Confined Space Operations

- Certified in Confined Space Rescue & Rope/High Angle Rescue I (2018) and Basic Rigging & Rope/High Angle Rescue II (2019).
- Enables personnel to conduct high-angle rescues, confined space extractions, and complex rope-based operations.

Water Rescue & Boat Operations

- Several personnel hold Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission certifications in:
 - Water Rescue and Emergency Response
 - Emergency Boat Operations and Rescue
 - Advanced Line Systems Rescue
 - These certifications support swift-water rescues, flood emergencies, and submerged vehicle incidents.

Dive Rescue Capabilities

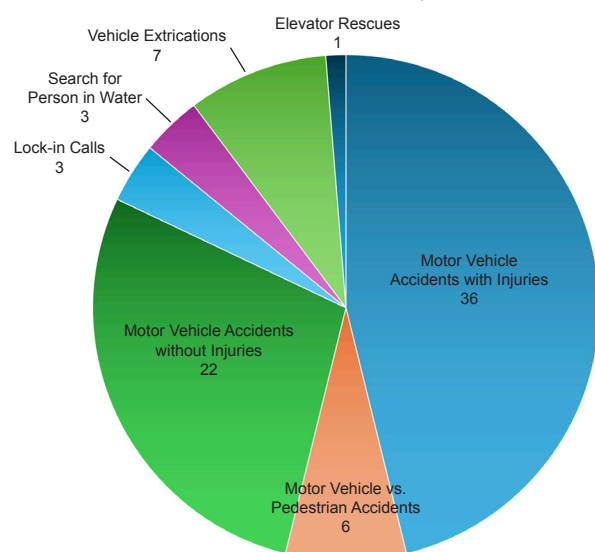
- Some personnel hold PADI Open Water Diving Certifications, allowing them to assist in underwater search and recovery operations.

Hazardous Materials Response

- All personnel complete annual Hazardous Materials Operations Refresher training.
- In 2024, the entire department participated in a Hazardous Materials Incident Drill, satisfying federal training requirements (29 CFR Section 1910.120).
- Several members hold Hazardous Materials Technician-Level Certifications, qualifying them for high-risk hazardous materials incidents.

Through continuous training, specialized certifications, and real-world experience, the Sharon Fire Department remains prepared to handle technical rescues, hazardous materials incidents, and complex emergency situations in our community.

Technical Rescue Calls, 2024



Shown above is the scene of a successful technical rescue effort where Sharon Fire Department personnel saved the life of a victim (who was having a medical emergency) by extricating them from a vehicle submerged in swift moving water in Pine Run following heavy rain on April 12, 2024.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

Emergency Medical Services utilize specialized tools and skills to provide pre-hospital care, including patient assessment, basic life support, CPR, trauma management, and medical assistance at emergency incidents.

The Rising Demand for EMS Assistance

The EMS Assist Calls, 2015-2024 chart shown below clearly illustrates a sharp increase in EMS assist requests over the past three years, coinciding with the growing ambulance shortage crisis in our region. As ambulance availability has declined, the Sharon Fire Department has stepped in more frequently to bridge the gap, ensuring that patients receive timely care when paramedic crews are delayed or need additional manpower.

In 2024, EMS assist calls became the most frequent type of request for service, with the department responding 113 times to support ambulance crews. The majority of these incidents were lift assists, where firefighters provided crucial manpower to move patients safely when ambulance crews could not do so alone. In other cases, firefighters were dispatched because an ambulance had an extended ETA, allowing the fire department to rapidly administer CPR and AED intervention in time-sensitive situations.

The Impact of the Ambulance Shortage

The increasing reliance on fire department EMS support is a direct result of the ongoing regional ambulance shortage. Without fire department assistance, ambulance crews would be forced to call for a second ambulance, further straining already limited EMS resources. This would increase response times for other medical emergencies, potentially delaying critical care for someone experiencing a life-threatening event such as cardiac arrest, stroke, or trauma.

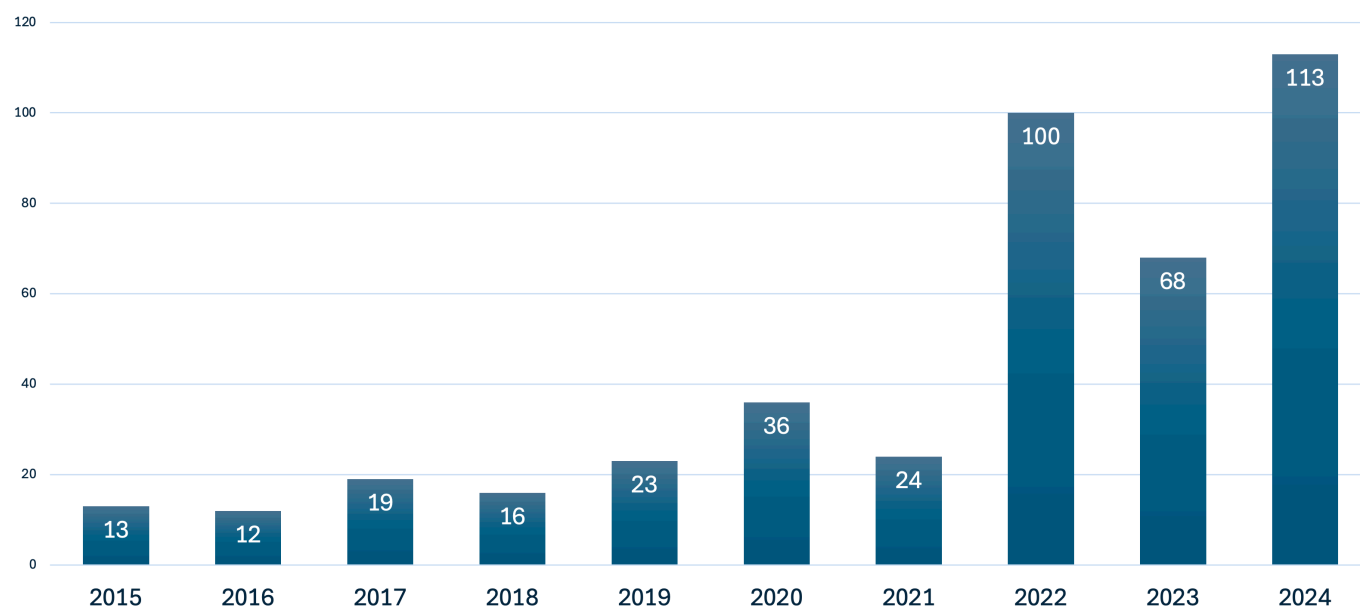
To ensure that firefighters are prepared for these situations, all personnel receive annual training in CPR, AED use, and first aid. This ensures that, when called upon, Sharon firefighters can provide immediate, life-saving care before an ambulance arrives.

As EMS assist calls continue to rise, the Sharon Fire Department remains committed to supporting EMS providers, improving patient outcomes, and ensuring that no emergency goes unanswered due to resource shortages.



Shown above is McGonigle Ambulance Service, one of two EMS providers serving the City of Sharon. The Sharon Fire Department works closely with local ambulance crews to provide essential assistance during medical emergencies. McGonigle Ambulance has also been a valued supporter of the department, sponsoring the annual banquet in 2024.

EMS Assist Calls, 2015-2024



COMMUNITY RISK REDUCTION

Community Risk Reduction utilizes fire prevention, public education, and community outreach to identify hazards, reduce risks, and improve safety for residents and businesses.

The Sharon Fire Department is committed to proactive risk reduction strategies that help prevent emergencies before they occur. Through fire inspections, safety education, and community outreach, the department works to identify hazards, educate the public, and ensure compliance with fire safety standards.

2024 Community Risk Reduction Highlights

- 758 fire inspections completed, including:
 - 581 rental property inspections (82.13% increase from 2023)
 - 174 commercial property inspections (42.62% increase from 2023)
 - 3 other inspections (fireworks, occupancy load, etc.)
- 7 smoke alarms installed in residential properties
- 31 public education and outreach events, including:
 - Fire safety presentations at local schools, senior residences, and businesses
 - Fire extinguisher training for workplaces and public safety programs
 - Participation in community events like WaterFire, National Night Out, and holiday parades
- Launched “Community Connect”, a new program that allows residents and business owners to voluntarily share critical property and safety information with the fire department to improve emergency response.

Fire Prevention & Code Enforcement

Fire prevention remains a core function of the Sharon Fire Department's Community Risk Reduction efforts. Regular fire inspections ensure that rental and commercial properties comply with fire codes, reducing the risk of fires and improving overall public safety.

Public Education & Community Outreach

Educating the public is a critical component of fire prevention. Firefighters engaged in 31 public education events in 2024, reaching schools, businesses, and community groups. Thanks to generous community donations, the department acquired a fire extinguisher training device, which has been widely used to teach fire safety skills.

Community Connect: Improving Emergency Preparedness

In 2024, the Sharon Fire Department deployed “Community Connect,” a voluntary program that allows residents and business owners to share critical property details with first responders. Through this initiative, participants can provide key information about their homes or businesses, such as:

- Occupants with medical conditions or mobility challenges
- Fire alarm and sprinkler system details
- Hazardous materials stored on-site
- Emergency contact information

By using Community Connect, first responders can arrive at an emergency scene with valuable pre-incident data, helping them make faster, more informed decisions to protect lives and property.

By combining fire inspections, public education, proactive outreach, and innovative programs like Community Connect, the Sharon Fire Department's Community Risk Reduction initiatives play a crucial role in protecting lives and property throughout the City of Sharon.

COMMUNITY RISK REDUCTION



TRAINING

Training ensures that firefighters remain highly skilled, prepared, and capable of responding to a wide range of emergencies through continuous education and hands-on experience.

The Sharon Fire Department places a strong emphasis on continuous training and professional development to ensure firefighters are equipped with the latest techniques, tactics, and certifications. In 2024, personnel participated in a wide range of structured training programs, covering fire suppression, technical rescue, hazardous materials response, incident command, and specialized emergency operations.

2024 Training Highlights

- Total Training Sessions Conducted: 70 (excluding probationary training)
- Building Familiarization Tours Conducted: 17

Fireground Operations & Command Training

- *Blue Card Incident Command Certification Simulation Lab* – Full department training to reinforce fireground decision-making, tactical assignments, and overall incident command effectiveness.
- *Truck Company Operations Training* – Five members attended a specialized training session focused on ladder operations, forcible entry, and ventilation techniques.
- *Modified Flat Load Hose Deployment Training* – Full department training to refine hose deployment techniques, improving efficiency and fire attack operations.
- *Flashover Simulation* – One member completed live fire training to enhance survival skills in extreme fire conditions.
- *Truck Academy I – PA State Fire Academy (Lewistown, PA)* – One member completed an advanced truck operations program at the State Fire Academy to improve aerial apparatus operations and rescue techniques.

Technical Rescue & Special Operations Training

- *Response to Bombing Incidents (New Mexico Tech)* – Two members attended a four-day course on responding to explosive incidents and terrorist threats.
- *Training Evaluator Course* – One member completed training to assess and evaluate firefighter skill proficiency.

Hazardous Materials & EMS Training

- *Hazardous Materials Drill* – Conducted a department-wide drill to ensure compliance with 29 CFR Section 1910.120, reinforcing hazmat containment, decontamination, and emergency response tactics.
- *CPR / AED & First Aid Training* – All members participated in training to maintain life-saving medical intervention skills.

Officer Development & Instructor Certifications

- *Incident Safety Officer Training* – Firefighter Amrhein completed two sessions focused on fireground safety, risk assessment, and firefighter accountability.
- *Fire Instructor I Certification* – One member completed four sessions of instructor training, allowing him to conduct certified in-house training.
- *Fire Instructor II Certification* – Two members completed four additional instructor training sessions, further enhancing the department's ability to provide structured training programs.
- *Fire Department Chaplaincy Training* – One member attended two sessions to develop the skills necessary for providing emotional and spiritual support to firefighters and their families.

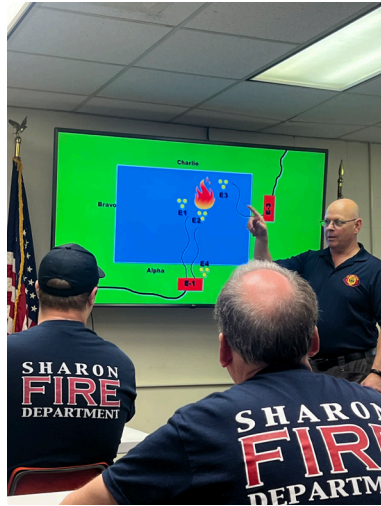
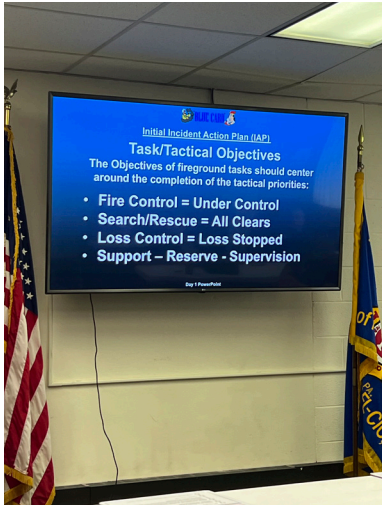
Probationary Firefighter Training

The Sharon Fire Department's Probationary Firefighter Training Program is one of the most rigorous training programs in the department. In 2024, each probationary firefighter completed 288 hours of intensive training, covering: fire suppression, technical rescue, hazardous materials response, vehicle extrication, and operational readiness.

Commitment to Excellence

Training is the foundation of firefighter safety and operational effectiveness. Through continuous education, advanced certifications, and real-world training scenarios, the Sharon Fire Department remains dedicated to ensuring its personnel are fully equipped to respond to any emergency while maintaining the highest standards of fire and life safety.

TRAINING



Sharon firefighters participate in Blue Card Incident Command training, using simulation-based scenarios to enhance fireground decision-making, tactical operations, and incident management.



Sharon firefighters after participating in a Truck Company Operations class at Butler County Community College, where they refined their skills in ladder operations, forcible entry, and ventilation techniques.



Sharon firefighters participate in the Response to Bombing Incidents course at New Mexico Tech, gaining hands-on experience in explosive recognition, blast effects, and emergency response tactics.



Sharon firefighters take part in a Hazardous Materials Incident Drill, practicing decontamination procedures, hazardous material identification, and emergency mitigation strategies to enhance response readiness.

NEW EQUIPMENT AND DEPARTMENT IMPROVEMENTS

2024 brought significant improvements to department operations, including enhanced communication systems, updated fire response mapping, and modernized firefighting tactics.

- **State-of-the-Art Headsets Installed** – Each fire apparatus was outfitted with advanced headsets, improving communication among firefighters while also providing hearing protection from sirens and audible warning devices.
- **City of Sharon Fire Response Map Completed** – After more than two years of development, a new citywide street map was published and distributed. Fire department personnel installed the updated map in the alarm room, improving emergency response coordination.
- **Modified Flat Load Hose Deployment Implemented** – Following extensive research, the department adopted a new hose deployment method that aligns with modern fire service best practices, offering greater versatility and efficiency when deploying attack lines.



Fire Inspector Steve Thompson and Deputy Fire Chief Nicholas Samson stand next to the newly completed City of Sharon Street Map. Both served on the map committee and played a key role in the revision process, ensuring improved accuracy and usability for emergency response.

Improving Emergency Access: Knox Box Installations

In 2024, the Sharon Fire Department oversaw the installation of 36 new Knox Boxes throughout the City of Sharon, allowing firefighters to access secured buildings quickly during emergencies.

Notable locations include:

- Sharon Community Center & Banquet Hall
- Mercer County Housing Authority
- Winner International Distributing Center
- The Salvation Army
- Quaker Steak & Lube
- Community Counseling Center
- Primary Health Network Charitable Foundation
- Numerous local businesses, churches, and commercial properties

By expanding Knox Box access, the department has enhanced its ability to respond efficiently and safely while minimizing property damage during emergencies.

PERSONNEL CHANGES AND PROMOTIONS

New Hires & Probationary Completions

In 2024, the Sharon Fire Department hired six new firefighters as part of its ongoing commitment to strengthening its workforce and enhancing emergency response capabilities. Of those hired, three successfully completed the probationary program, while one remains on track to complete probation in 2025.

Firefighters Who Completed Probation in 2024

The following firefighters were hired in 2023 and completed their probationary period in 2024, officially becoming full members of the Sharon Fire Department:

- T.C. Rollinson
- Christina Boren
- Nick Leech
- Nik Snyder
- Devin Fisher

The following firefighters were hired in 2024 and completed their probationary period in 2024 (or later), officially becoming full members of the Sharon Fire Department:

- Kevin Minamyer
- Matt Martin
- Dillon Winger
- Bruce Minamyer (On track to complete probation in April, 2025)

While not all recruits were able to complete the probationary period, the department remains dedicated to rigorous training and development, ensuring that all personnel meet the high standards necessary to serve the community effectively.

Promotions

The following firefighters earned promotions through competitive examinations and demonstrated leadership and technical proficiency:

- **T.C. Rollinson** – Part-Time Firefighter → Full-Time Firefighter
- **Christina Boren** – Part-Time Firefighter → Full-Time Firefighter
- **Noah Amrhein** – Part-Time Firefighter → Full-Time Firefighter

Separations

In 2024, the department saw the departure of several part-time firefighters, as well as two full-time firefighters who resigned to pursue career opportunities in other geographical areas. While no full-time members retired, the department appreciates the contributions of all who served.



GRANTS AND DONATIONS

In 2024, the Sharon Fire Department secured over \$27,000 in funding through grants and community donations, enabling the department to purchase essential safety equipment and training resources.

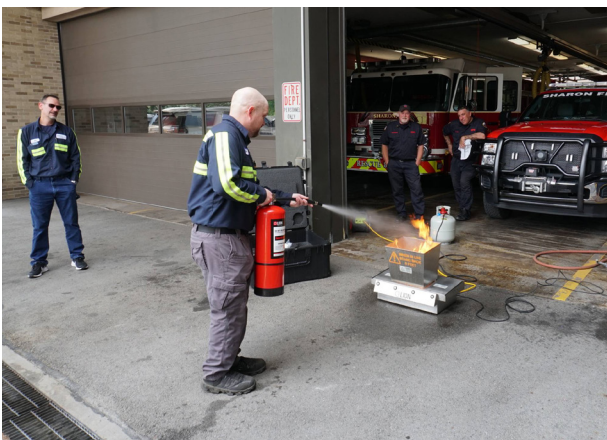
Grants Awarded

- Fire Company & EMS Grant (Commonwealth of PA) – \$16,951.99 (Used for the purchase of fire apparatus headsets)

Community Donations (Used for the Fire Extinguisher Training Device)

- PA CareerLink – \$200
- Gilbert's Insurance – \$500
- American Legion – \$1,000
- PHN Charitable Foundation – \$500
- First Presbyterian Church – \$1,000
- NLMK – \$5,000
- Aqua – \$1,000
- American Industries – \$1,000

These contributions greatly enhanced fire safety education by supporting the department's fire extinguisher training program, which was used at WaterFire, the Father's Day Car Show, and workforce safety training events.



2025 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Sharon Fire Department is committed to continuous improvement through strategic planning, innovation, and operational excellence. In 2025, the department will pursue several key initiatives aimed at enhancing efficiency, firefighter safety, and emergency response capabilities.

Planned Objectives for 2025:

- **Transition to an All-Electronic Truck Check & Asset Management System**

The department will implement a digital solution to streamline daily apparatus checks, equipment tracking, and maintenance scheduling—improving accountability, reliability, and administrative efficiency.

- **Upgrade the Fire Station House Alarm System**

Plans are underway to modernize the station alerting system to ensure faster, more reliable notification of emergency calls, reducing response times and improving firefighter readiness and wellness. This project will be funded through the Fire Company & EMS Grant, which the department anticipates receiving from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

- **Enhance Mid-Rise Fire Response with Rope Drop Hose Deployment**

The department will procure equipment and begin training for a “rope drop” hose deployment method—specifically for use in mid-rise buildings without standpipes. This technique reduces time to fire attack in challenging structures.

- **Revise Run Cards and Streamline Response Procedures**

An overhaul of the department’s run cards and response protocols will be undertaken to consolidate manpower and improve efficiency by shifting from two-apparatus responses to single-apparatus deployment for appropriate incidents.

- **Evaluate Automatic Response to Echo-Level Medical Calls**

The department will begin assessing whether firefighters should be automatically dispatched to echo-level medical calls (i.e., cardiac arrest in progress). This evaluation will include the development of a standard operating procedure to guide rapid, coordinated intervention when seconds matter most.

- **Replace Outdated Turnout Gear**

In compliance with NFPA standards, the department will replace turnout gear for 14 personnel whose current gear will reach the end of its service life in 2025. Ensuring all firefighters have compliant, protective gear is essential to operational safety and performance.

- **Enhance Hazardous Materials Training with Rail-Focused Scenarios**

The department will place a special emphasis on rail-related hazardous materials response during the 2025 annual HazMat Operations Refresher course. This will include coordination with Norfolk Southern Railway to provide access to actual train cars, allowing firefighters to familiarize themselves with railcar design, markings, and hazards, and to practice safe, effective response tactics for rail-based hazardous materials incidents.

These objectives reflect the department’s commitment to innovation, resource optimization, and public safety, ensuring that the Sharon Fire Department continues to evolve with the needs of the community.



A FINAL WORD

The Sharon Fire Department takes great pride in serving the residents, businesses, and visitors of our city. Each emergency call, fire inspection, training drill, and community outreach event is approached with professionalism, compassion, and a commitment to excellence.

This annual report represents more than a collection of statistics and accomplishments—it is a reflection of the hard work, dedication, and teamwork that define our department. We are especially grateful for the continued support we receive from city leadership, council members, community organizations, and residents—whether through financial contributions, grant sponsorships, or vocal advocacy at budget meetings. That support has been instrumental during times when difficult decisions were being considered, and it has helped preserve the services and staffing levels our community relies on.

As we look ahead to 2025, we remain focused on improving our capabilities, strengthening our partnerships, and delivering the highest standard of emergency services to the Sharon community.

Thank you for taking the time to review this report and for your ongoing trust in the Sharon Fire Department.

