



Racine Fire Department
810 Eighth St, Racine WI 53403

September 3, 2020

Honorable Members of the
Racine Police & Fire Commission

Dear PFC,

With new Commission members in place we believe it is an opportune time for us to provide you with background information on the department, our capabilities, and where we are at today. The fire department is an *ALL HAZARDS* agency dedicated to being a multi-versatile tool you can depend on when emergencies strike your community. A Swiss army knife if you will.

The following capabilities of the Racine Fire Department are fully available to the citizens of Racine:

Fire Suppression Services The Racine Fire Department employs a rapid response strategy for reported fires, drownings, natural gas leaks, carbon monoxide hazards, motor vehicle accidents and other hazards within the community. Calls include reported structure fires, vehicle or dumpster fires, natural gas leaks, carbon monoxide leaks, motor vehicle accidents involving personal injury or entrapment, drownings, and emergency assistance requiring an emergent response.

The Racine Fire Department is fully capable of providing the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1710 recommended response of apparatus and personnel on the initial and subsequent fire calls with on-duty personnel without requesting mutual aid. This includes two engine companies, two truck companies, a paramedic rescue squad, scene safety officer and the incident commander. For any reported structure fire, we initially send 17 firefighters and paramedics to handle the situation. Additional internal resources can be requested by the incident commander without the need to implement mutual aid which results in reduced emergency response times for upgraded alarms.

Emergency Medical Services The Racine Fire Department has three front-line paramedic rescue squads. Additionally, three reserve crossed-staffed rescue squads giving us the capability of fielding six fully staffed rescue squads at one time if needed. The reserve rescue squads are cross-staffed by a companion fire engine company which is exceptionally efficient in terms of the annual budget. You are getting two companies, a fire pumper and rescue squad, for the price of one. The fire department has been cross-staffing rescue squads for 30 plus years.



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Paramedic level skills are exercised on calls including severe trauma, amputations, pulseless non-breathers, heart attacks, congestive heart failure (CHF), chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), strokes and drug overdoses. Annually these paramedic level calls account for about 10% of the total call volume. The more often paramedics can exercise their high-level skills the higher their proficiency and competency.

Non-Traditional Emergency Calls

Hazardous Materials Response and mitigation capabilities. The department is a local and state regional hazardous materials team capable of dealing with the most serious, Level A, chemical and biological emergencies that can occur. We have 40 members, or 13 on-duty members per shift, who are specially trained to provide this service with monthly in-service competency training and semi-annual full-scale exercise testing.

Surface and Sub-surface Dive, Water and Ice Rescue capabilities. For over 50 years the department has and continues to provide water rescue capabilities from both first responder fire and paramedic companies equipped with Mustang water rescue suits to fully equipped underwater divers. We have 34 members, or 11 on duty members per shift, who are ready to go at a moment's notice. Our Fire Station 2 on Northwestern Avenue houses all water rescue equipment including our 20-foot Zodiac style rescue boat. This Zodiac boat can be launched from virtually any location.

Collapse and Trench Rescue capabilities. The department provides highly skilled technical rescue personnel who specialize in structural collapse and sub-surface trench rescue capabilities. The department has technical expertise to deal with anything from a building being struck by a car or truck to construction crews being trapped in a sewer or water main project. We have 18 members, or 6 on-duty members per shift, that can provide the expertise in this area.

High and Low Angle Rope Rescue capabilities. All members of the department have received training in high and low angle rope rescue capabilities. This can be something as simple as hoisting a patient up a lakeside cliff to climbing a cellular tower or elevated water storage tanks to rescue trapped or injured patients.

Confined Space Rescue capabilities. Confined space can be anything from a sewer to a limited access tank or a basement with limited access. Typically, these are OSHA permit required spaces. Our Haz Mat team members are cross-trained in confined space rescue and have all the appropriate equipment to effect rescues from permit required spaces. Again, we have 40 members or 13 members per on-duty shift that are fully capable of providing this service.



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Fire Prevention and Fire Safety Education. The Racine Fire Department provides for a full-time Fire Prevention Bureau. The Fire Prevention Bureau is directly responsible for over 3,200 semi-annual fire inspections in accordance with Wisconsin State Statutes. Our fire inspections cover a broad range of issues in each building. The more common issues covered include proper fire extinguisher, lighted exit signs, and general housekeeping. More specialized issues include looking at electrical systems, heating and air conditioning systems, hot water heaters, boilers, enclosures, flammable liquids storage, proper chimney flue connections, sprinkler system operation, fire alarm system operations, and clear aisle access to exits to name a few.

In addition to fire inspection duties, the Fire Prevention Bureau officers issue code enforcement letters, review building construction plans for new and existing structures for fire safety issues, pre-fire planning, and post-fire cause and origin investigations. These services prevent fires and other problems from happening through routine enforcement and engineering.

What does our fleet of apparatus look like?

- **Racine Engine 1 and Engine 5** Pierce Quantum 1500 GPM pumper with 1200 feet of 5" LDH hose, 500 gallons water, three 1-3/4" cross lays (200') with transitional nozzles, One 2-1/2" heavy water (300') attack line with a straight bore nozzle, 20 feet of hard suction with floating strainer, FLIR TIC and Rescue Task Force/Active Shooter gear. WI-FI capable on FirstNet, miscellaneous other equipment meeting NFPA 1901 standards. (Minimum of 3 Firefighter/EMT's or Paramedics per unit)
- **Racine Engine 2 and Engine 6** Pierce Quantum 1500 GPM pumper with 1200 feet of 5" LDH hose, 500 gallons water, 70 gallons Alcohol Resistant AFFF Foam, three 1-3/4" cross lays (200') with transitional nozzles, One 2-1/2" heavy water (300') attack line with a straight bore nozzle, 20 feet of hard suction with floating strainer, cam lock fittings for filling tenders, FLIR TIC and Rescue Task Force/Active Shooter gear. WI-FI capable on FirstNet, miscellaneous other equipment meeting NFPA 1901 standards. (Minimum of 3 Firefighter/EMT's or Paramedics per unit))
- **Racine Ladder Truck 1** Pierce Dash CF 100' aerial platform. 30,000 watt generator, 9000 pound winch with multiple mounting points on the vehicle, TNT rescue tools – cutters and spreaders (for boron steel) with electric & gas powered pumps, stoke basket, two battery operated smoke ejectors, two gas powered smoke ejectors, Hurst Jaws air shore for vehicular extrication, RTF gear, two Mustang Commander water rescue suits, three chain saws, one K-12 rescue saw with steel and concrete blades, FLIR TIC, Sawzalls, fixed and portable scene lighting, 40 pieces of composite cribbing including step blocks. WI-FI capable on FirstNet, miscellaneous other equipment meeting NFPA 1901 standards. (Minimum of 4 Firefighter/EMT's on the unit)



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- **Racine Quint 3 and Quint 4** Pierce PUC 75' Pumper/Aerial 1500 GPM fire pump with 1000 feet of 5" LDH hose, 500 gallons of water, three 1-3/4" cross lays (200') with transitional nozzles, One 2-1/2" heavy water (300') attack line with a straight bore nozzle. 10,000-watt generator, TNT rescue tools – cutters and spreaders (for boron steel) with electric & gas powered pumps, stoke basket, two battery operated smoke ejectors, two gas powered smoke ejectors, Hurst Jaws air shore for vehicular extrication, RTF gear, two Mustang Commander water rescue suits, two chain saws, one K-12 rescue saw with steel and concrete blades, FLIR TIC, Sawzalls, fixed and portable scene lighting, composite cribbing including step blocks. WI-FI capable on FirstNet, miscellaneous other equipment meeting NFPA 1901 standards. (Minimum of 4 Firefighter/EMTs on the unit)
- **Racine Paramedic MED Units (MED 1, MED 3, MED 4)** Ford/Horton. Full Paramedic capabilities, full firefighting capabilities including SCBA, full Rescue Task Force/Active Shooter gear, Power Cot, Lucas Device, splinting packages, trauma packages, two longboards, scoop stretcher and stair chair. WI-FI capable on FirstNet. (Minimum of 3 Firefighters/Paramedics on each unit)
- **Racine BLS/ALS MED 2, MED 6, MED 21** Ford/Horton/Medtec. Cross-staffed from an engine company. Paramedic capabilities, no firefighting capabilities, full Rescue Task Force/Active Shooter gear, Power Cot, splinting packages, trauma packages, two longboards, scoop stretcher and stair chair. MED 21 is equipped for bariatric patient movement, loading and transport. WI-FI capable on FirstNet. (Minimum of 3 Firefighters/EMTs or Paramedics on each unit)
- **Racine Tactical Command 1** Two separate work areas for command and control, four computers, LaserJet printer, mast mounted PTZ camera, SAM weather monitoring station, computer monitoring of weather, VTAC 36 repeater, VHF-UHF-800 MHz analog, digital and WISCOM capable radios with spare batteries, JPS Raytheon ACU-M crossband device, eighteen cache VHF WISCOM capable radios, air monitoring equipment including radiological capabilities, Drager sampling capabilities, TV monitors, area WI-FI capability on FirstNet and US Cellular. (Cross-staffed as needed)
- **Racine Special Teams 1** Pierce Arrow. 25,000 watt generator, light tower, fixed and portable lighting, two K-12 saws with steel and concrete blades, chain saws, Sawzalls, pneumatic air nailers, line throwing gun, two complete sets of Air Shores with all accessories including multiple foot plates, two confined space blowers of which one can also provide heated air, Fin Form marine grade plywood for trench rescue, Stokes basket, 9000 pound tripod, ropes and harnesses, 4-1 rope Z-rig rope kits, 9000 pound winch with multiple mounting points on apparatus, hand winches, TNT rescue tools including cutters and spreaders (for boron steel) with electric and gas powered pumps, extensive collection of hardwood cribbing, twelve various sized air powered lifting bags with different weight capacities, twelve 45 minute SCBA units with spare 45 minute bottles, 600 feet of hardline air supply with comms and air distribution cart, extra water rescue dive gear, complete selection of Level A & Level B hazardous materials suits for dress out, booming material, diking material, absorbent pads for hydrocarbon spills,



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plugging material for container breaches, tent shelters, decon tents, inflatable tents, AreaRAE and MultiRAE air monitoring equipment, WI-FI hotspot capable on FirstNET and two computers (WDA & Internet access). Cross-staffed as needed.

- **Racine Boat 1 / Dive Team** 25' Zodiac boat equipped with VHF radio and night lighting, dive gear to equip six rescue divers including surface supplied air and comms capability along with ten on duty water rescue qualified divers daily (24/7/365). Initial response is with a crew of three divers.
- **Racine Foam Trailer** 550 gallons of Alcohol Resistant AFFF foam, 500 gpm foam deck gun nozzle, 300 feet of 2-1/2 inch foam line, two 200 foot 1-3/4 inch foam hand lines. Water supply connection is two 5 inch LDH connectors. Cross-staffed as needed.
- **Racine Lumber Trailer** 3000 pounds of lumber ranging from 2x4 to plywood.
- **Racine Boom Trailer** 400 feet of hard boom for lakes and river spills with skirting that extends 18 inches below the waterline. Smaller 10 foot booms and pigs for culverts, creeks and storm water sewer inlets.
- **Racine UTV Vehicle** All wheel drive with VHF radio and night lighting. Rescue insert capable of handling stokes rescue basket and a Paramedic. Storage for common first aid supplies. Can carry four firefighter/EMTs or Paramedics at a time.

All members of the department with five or more years of service have the following qualifications: State certification as Firefighter 1, state certification as Firefighter 2, state certification as Driver/Operator Engine, state certification as Driver/Operator Truck, state certification as Company Officer. All Company officers have NIMS 100, 200, 300 and 400. Chief Officers have NIMS 700 and 800. All Divers have PADI open water certification. Divers also have additional certifications in swift water rescue and ice water rescue.

All members of the Fire Prevention Bureau are qualified Fire Inspectors in addition to being qualified for fire investigations into the origin and cause of all fires.

Additionally, as earlier mentioned the Racine Fire Department fulfills NFPA 1710 standard for personnel on the initial fire alarm without resorting to Mutual Aid. This entails two Engine Companies (6 to 8 members), two Truck Companies (8 members with one functioning as a rescue Rapid Intervention Team), paramedic rescue squad with 3 members, one Battalion Chief and one Safety Officer all on the initial dispatch of a call.

Mobile Integrated Health (MIH) program. Two years ago we partnered with Ascension All Saints hospital to seek out ways to reduce hospital re-admissions once a patient is discharged. We work with patients who have heart related issues, breathing issues, and strokes to make the transition from the hospital to home a safer event that promotes healthier lifestyles at home. The process involves meeting with the doctor and patient prior to discharge. Once the patient is at home we work with that patient on following their discharge instructions. We also conduct, at the request of the patient, home safety inspections looking



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for the obvious like working smoke detectors and CO detectors and the less obvious things that impact patient safety like loose throw rugs, grab rails in strategic locations, access to telephones or life alert devices, etc. We also have a coordinator who schedules appointments and periodically checks in on discharged patients during the week. The goal is to prevent hospital re-admissions for at least 32 days after discharge. We have been highly successful at meeting that goal.

COVID-19 Research and Testing Project. The fire department partnering with the Medical College of Wisconsin and Cornell Medical School/Cornell University in New York are conducting field research and testing on a new COVID-19 test that yields results in less than two hours using a saliva sample. Our current involvement is testing city employees to refine the system and eventually pushing this out to community testing. This would be a future benefit to citizens of your community.

What do our calls look like?

What follows is a report from the Computer Aided Dispatch System (CAD) showing the various calls for January 1 through September 1, 2020. The call volume has remained somewhat steady with the largest decrease associated with the Mobile Integrated Health Care (MIH) calls. Due to COVID-19 the department discontinued in-person home visits and is doing follow up care by telephone for now. Once the COVID-19 restrictions relax or end we will then resume home visits. They by far are the most productive and helpful way of following up with patients discharged from the hospital.

Red text color represents mainly a fire response, blue text represents mainly an emergency medical assistance call and black text represents other calls.



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CFS Code - Description	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	Difference
	01/19 - 09/19	01/20 - 09/20	
ACCPI - Accident Personal Injury	292	317	25
ACCPT - Accident - Persons Trapped	24	42	18
ALS - Advanced Life Support	1579	1682	103
ALS1 - ALS with First Responder	2940	2847	-93
BLS - Basic Life Support	1449	1231	-218
CRBMON - Possible Carbon Monoxide	107	110	3
DROWN - Drowning/water Accident	11	4	-7
EMERAS - Emergency Assist	1	29	28
FIRE - Structure Fire	201	218	17
FIREA - Fire - Supervised Alarm	176	187	11
FIREO - Single Engine Response	189	202	13
HAZMAT - LOCAL HM RESPONSE	1	1	0
HMRRT - REGIONAL HM RESPONSE	2	0	-2
INVASS - Invalid Assist	270	270	0
MABAS - Mutual Aid Box Alarm	0	1	1
MIH - Mobile Integrated Healthcare	594	200	-394
NGLEAK - Reported Natural Gas Leak	64	69	5
PNB - Pulseless, Non-Breathing	107	147	40
RAI - Recip Aid to Municipality	1	1	0
RAO - Recip Aid Out of Municipality	5	10	5
Total :	8013	7568	-445

Other Fire Department Activities

On January 6, 2020, the fire department hired four new firefighters. Private Andrae Nash, Private Charlotte Fernandez, Private Jay Mesina, and Private Jesse Leneave now have completed eight months on the job and are doing extremely well. This is a good group of firefighters that will serve the Citizens of Racine well.

Recruitment is currently ongoing. We stopped accepting applications on July 31, 2020, and now are in the process of moving forward with written testing. That testing will occur on Friday, September 11, 2020, and will be conducted virtually. After the results of the written test are provided back to us we will evaluate individuals to determine who moves on in the process. Next step would be insuring the candidates have their "Candidate Physical Ability Test" (CPAT) successfully completed. Also during this time, we will assess all submitted credentials for review. Finally, we will conduct background checks. We are looking at



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interviews with the Police and Fire Commission in November. Exact date and time to be determined.

As of September 11, 2020, the fire department will have seven open entry level firefighter positions. Mayor Mason has implemented a hiring freeze until after the budget process is completed. At that time a determination will be made if we can fill the seven open positions from an existing hiring list already approved by the Police and Fire Commission.

Upcoming Retirements – As of September 1, 2020, the fire department has 24 members eligible for retirement. Minimum criteria for retirement is attaining the age of 52 with 25 years of service to be eligible for retirement benefits. We anticipate at least ten to twelve members will take advantage of retirement in December or January.

There have been no disciplinary issues to report.

Respectfully submitted,

Steve Hansen, Fire Chief