

To: David Creery, Chief Administrative Officer

From: Jeff Slager, Fire Chief

Re: Woodstock Fire Department Annual Report - 2025

AIM

The purpose of this staff report is to provide Council with an annual summary on the performance of the department. The report summarizes the activities, operations, and successes completed over the course of the year.

BACKGROUND

Ongoing evaluation and training within the Woodstock Fire Department to provide the level of service directed by Council through our regulating bylaw is essential to meet our community's needs.

Preparing an annual summary report is a best practice to inform Council on the performance of the department and new or evolving trends.

In addition to this report, a highlights booklet will be prepared and released to the public through our social media sites when completed.

COMMENTS

This report contains statistics and analysis of key fire service performance indicators summarized here:

- Emergency calls for service decreased by 4% with a total fire loss of \$1,524,000 and 144 fire events (both increases from 2024)
- Fire Prevention completed 428 fire safety inspections. This includes 18 Vulnerable Occupancy inspections, which are multi-day events (inspection & fire-drill observation).
- Fire Prevention staff were also active with sharing safety messaging at 151 educational events as well as utilizing social media to expand our audience. They achieved over 179,807 engagements and 2,915,290 views of the content.

Additional details from each division are shared below.

a) Fire Administration

Fire Administration is responsible for managing all branches of the service. It oversees and directs the day-to-day operations as well as current and long-range strategic planning, employee wellness, labour relations, capital and operating budget development and monitoring, recruitment and succession, as well as facility maintenance.

The division is comprised of a Fire Chief, a Deputy Fire Chief, and an Administrative Assistant.

Accomplishments and milestones in 2025 for the Fire Administration team include:

- The Woodstock Fire Department Fire Master Plan, including Station Location Study, and the City of Woodstock Community Risk Assessment was presented to Council in May 2025.
- Dedication of the Woodstock Fire Department Line of Duty Death Memorial and inaugural installation ceremony recognizing three members.
- Received funding from the Ministry of the Solicitor General – Fire Protection Grant (second year) to be put towards the installation of a dedicated PPE storage room at Station 2 (completion of this project).

Key initiatives for 2026 include:

- Continuation of negotiations for a new collective agreement with WPPFA Local 477.
- Complete design phase of Station 3.
- Finalize purchase of new Aerial apparatus, for delivery in 2nd quarter of 2027.

b) Fire Training

The Training Division is responsible for training new recruits and delivering ongoing training for all operations staff, including technical operations, emergency medical services, officer development, and training on all new apparatus and equipment. This division also has responsibility for employee development opportunities and succession planning initiatives.

This division is comprised of a Fire Training Officer – Captain rank.

NFPA Certifications

- It is required under the Occupational Health and Safety Act that workers are trained, equipped, and can recognize the hazards of the work in which they are engaged. The use of an accredited, neutral third-party standard, such as the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), to verify the purported knowledge and/or skills provides industry-wide credibility to the training program.
- On April 14, 2022, the province of Ontario enacted O. Reg. 343/22: Firefighter Certification. This regulation lays out certification requirements for various roles in the fire service over the next 4-6 years. WFD is well positioned to be in full compliance with the regulation for the requisite compliance dates.
- All staff certifications needed to meet the requirements for July 1, 2026, have been completed.

- Courses for NFPA 1006 Technical Rescue certifications, to be completed by July 1, 2028, continue to be developed and released by the Office of the Fire Marshal & the Ontario Fire College, with scheduling for WFD completion already underway.
- As part of WFD's succession planning, and for continued staff development, we host or enroll various NFPA certification courses throughout the year for staff. A standardized schedule
- The following chart illustrates the certification programs and number of personnel achieving additional qualifications in 2025:

Program	Number of Personnel	Class Hours/Staff
1521 Incident Safety Officer	34	40
1021 Fire Officer I	8	74
1041 Fire Officer II	0	
1041 Fire Instructor I	9	52
1041 Fire Instructor II	1	52

- The costs of training vary depending on such factors as whether it is online or in-person, internally delivered or at a Regional Training Centre (RTC).
- The cost to certify is marginal, as after completion of the training, a fee of \$65 is paid to the Ontario Fire College to take the certification exam.

Medical Training

- Suppression staff completed both Full Standard First Aid training (16 hrs. in class) and their annual Basic Life Safety (BLS) & Medical Delegation training (4 hrs. in class).
- In conjunction with Oxford County Paramedic Services (OCPS), two (2) of our staff completed the Heart & Stroke Instructor Training course for First Aid and BLS. This will enable us to offer this training in-house to our staff without navigating scheduling challenges and costs associated with OCPS. Medical Delegation remains an OCPS training requirement.

Reclassification Exams

- As staff progress through their career, advancements through the ranks require examinations and skills review in order to be successful. The following chart indicates the number of staff:

Reclassification	# of FF	Study Hours/FF	Exam Hours/FF	Total Hours
Lieutenant	1	168	4	172
Acting Officer	1	168	4	172
1 st Class	2	168	4	344
2 nd Class	2	168	4	344
3 rd Class	5	168	4	860
4 th Class	8	168	4	1376

c) Fire Prevention

The Fire Prevention Division is comprised of one Fire Prevention Officer – Captain rank (FPO), one Fire Inspector (FI), and one Public Information Coordinator (PIC). The FPO oversees all aspects of this Division.

i. Public Education

Public Education is the primary focus of the PIC, with focuses on the awareness & education of fire safety and fire & life safety regulations. The delivery of public education and certain components of Fire Prevention is mandated by the Fire Protection and Prevention Act (FPPA) for every municipality in Ontario. In addition, the PIC will provide educational programs to meet the needs identified in the department's Community Risk Assessment (CRA).

A summary of Public Education activities for 2025 includes:

Activity Type	Completed
Public Education Events/Presentations	85
Public Relations Events	15
Social Media (Facebook/Instagram/Twitter/X) posts	506
Station/Truck Tours	25
Public Education Training	12
Encampment Site Visits	13
The Arson Prevention Program for Children (TAPP-C)	1

The use of social media continues to be a valuable tool for the fire service, as it allows us to generate public fire and life safety messaging towards a large audience.

The following table provides a summary of 2025 social media analytics:

Site	Posts/Tweets	Impressions	Engagements	Video Views	New Followers
Facebook	211	2,658,231	172,183	19,473	901
Instagram	162	196,507	4,441	12,547	173
Twitter/X	133	60,552	3,183	1,687	-39

ii. Fire Inspection/Investigation

Fire inspections and investigations are primarily undertaken by the FPO and the FI and are completed to enforce the Ontario Fire Code. The enforcement of the Ontario Fire Code is a critical function in eliminating fires and reducing the loss of life and property due to fire.

The Fire Prevention division is responsible for conducting fire safety inspections in all types of occupancies within the City of Woodstock. Staff are appointed as Assistants to the Fire Marshal under the FPPA and Provincial Offences Officers under the Provincial Offences Act. WFD staff conduct fire safety inspections in all buildings within Woodstock and address violations of the Ontario Fire Code and other fire safety hazards within the authority of the FPPA and accompanying Regulations and Fire Marshal Directives.

Fire Investigations are conducted as required and regulated by the FPPA to determine origin, cause, and circumstances, and may include assisting the Woodstock Police Service (WPS) and the Ontario Fire Marshals Office.

Inspections Completed in 2025:

Inspection Type	Completed
Complaint	84
Request	4
Routine/Vulnerable	90
Re-Inspections	22
Business License Inspections	61
Open-Air Burn Permits / Complaints	131

Occupant Load / Liquor License	13
Home Smoke Alarm Program	23
Total Inspections Completed	428

Other Fire Prevention Activities in 2025:

Activity Type	Amount Completed
File Searches	201
Fire Safety Plan Reviews	21
Fire Investigations	12
Total Other Activities	234

d) Fire Suppression

In 2025, the Fire Suppression division consists of 56 personnel working across 4 platoons. Daily operations of the division are run by 4 Captains. Emergency response crews are deployed from 2 fire stations within the city 24/7, 365 days per year.

Fire Suppression crews respond to emergencies that include fires, rescues, medical emergencies, hazardous materials incidents, vehicle collisions, and other disasters and emergencies. Technical operations include ice/water rescue and auto extrication, with awareness level for confined space rescue and trench rescue.

Incidents by response type from 2022-2025:

OFM SIR Code Category	2022	2023	2024	2025
Property Fires/Explosions/No Loss Outdoor Fire	78	74	86	144
Pre-fire conditions/No fire	50	69	76	83
Burning (Controlled)	96	137	138	136
False Alarms	361	361	446	464
Public Hazard	77	57	90	65
Rescue	296	283	309	272

Medical/Resuscitator Calls	453	1002	898	780
Other Response	80	66	47	55
Year End Call Volume Total	1491	2049	2090	1999

Fire Losses from 2022 to 2025:

Year	Fire Loss Total	# Fires
2025	\$1,514,000	36
2024	\$ 978,256	32
2023	\$ 2,229,552	35
2022	\$ 3,401,600	35

CONCLUSION

In 2025, the Woodstock Fire Department continued to provide reliable emergency response and fire protection services. While call volume may have dipped slightly, there was a marked increase in fire responses. Our Prevention team remains focused on completing all legislative required inspections and investigations, while providing public education based upon any trends noted in our responses. Training is shifting focus to the required technical rescue certifications for services provided within our E&R By-law, to meet the July 1, 2028. compliance deadline.

ATTACHMENTS

N/A

RECOMMENDATION

That Woodstock City Council receive the Woodstock Fire Department Annual Report - 2025 as information.

Authored by: Jeff Slager, Fire Chief

Approved by: David Creery, P. Eng, MBA, Chief Administrative Officer