

January 12, 2022

Honorable Mayor Dan Agnew
City Manager Russ Behrens
Grinnell City Council



Contained herein is the annual Report of the Grinnell Fire Department for the year 2021.

Listed below is a breakdown of all incidents responded to, by the Grinnell Fire Department, in 2021.

Type of Call	Number
Fires	
<i>Building Fires</i>	40
<i>Car/Truck Fires</i>	18
<i>Rubbish Fires</i>	18
<i>Grass/Crops/Brush Fires</i>	17
<i>Outside Equipment</i>	1
Total Fires	94
Rescues	
<i>Motor Vehicle Crashes</i>	91
<i>MVC W/Extrication</i>	8
<i>Special Rescues</i>	12
<i>Medical Assists</i>	353
<i>Operated 2nd Ambulance</i>	35
Total Rescue Calls	499
Hazardous Materials	37
Hazardous Conditions	12
Special/Public Service	50
Burning Complaints	25
Investigation	38
Fire Alarms	70
Storm Spotting	1
Total Calls 2021	825

Of the 825 calls for service 675 were in the City District, 134 were in the Rural District, and 16 were Mutual Aid calls. There were 0 fire deaths, 5 civilian fire injuries and 3 firefighter injuries this past year. The total dollar loss to fire was estimated at \$1,222,125.00

The Grinnell Fire Department is comprised of 5 full-time, 3 part-time and 25 volunteer firefighters, and the following is a list of them all;

Daniel Sicard	Chief	Full-time
Dave Byers	Assistant Chief of Operations	Volunteer
Brian Paul	Assistant Chief of Training	Volunteer
Todd Pollock	Captain	Volunteer
Mike Groves	Lieutenant/Safety Officer	Volunteer
Carl Eggermont	Lieutenant	Volunteer
Jason Pollock	LT Safety Officer/Vol Assoc Pres	Volunteer
Dave Thompson	Driver/Firefighter	Part-time
Scott Sieck	Firefighter	Volunteer
Rob Vest	Firefighter	Volunteer
Craig Sieck	Firefighter	Volunteer
Todd Zell	Driver/Firefighter	Full-time
Jed Petersen	Driver/Firefighter	Full-time
Curtis Sieck	Firefighter	Volunteer
Kyle Esrey	Driver/Firefighter	Part-time
Doug Ernsperger	Firefighter	Volunteer
Wade Robeson	Firefighter	Volunteer
Merlyn Schakel	Firefighter	Volunteer
William Gruman	Vol Assoc Treasurer/FF	Volunteer
Kyle Smith	Firefighter	Part-time
Brent Smith	Vol Assoc VP/ Firefighter	Volunteer
Christian Williams	Driver/Firefighter	Full-time
Brent Nickel	Firefighter	Volunteer
EJ Rolfes	Vol Assoc Secretary/Firefighter	Volunteer
Oswaldo Carrillo-Torres	Firefighter	Volunteer
TJ Pinkerton	Firefighter	Volunteer
DJ Beck	Firefighter	Volunteer
Dustin Briggs	Firefighter	Volunteer
Kelly Fosse	Firefighter	Volunteer
Brandon Merrill	Firefighter	Volunteer
Blake Pearson	Firefighter	Volunteer*
Benjamin Boch	Firefighter	Volunteer*
Vince Lukehart	Firefighter	Volunteer*
Keagen Richmond	Firefighter	Volunteer*
Joshua Stepanek	Firefighter	Volunteer*
Mathew Innis	Firefighter	Volunteer*
Zared Sittig	Firefighter	Volunteer*

*new in 2021

The following firefighters retired in 2021;

Rob Vest retired as a full-time firefighter and has remained on the volunteers.
Don Ellis retired with 20 years of volunteer service.

Notable Calls in 2021

Below are some of the notable calls from 2021, it should be noted that we are many times assisted on scene by Grinnell Police Department, Poweshiek & Jasper County Sheriff's Office and/or Midwest Ambulance;

February 8th

No one was home when a fire started in the kitchen. The kitchen was heavily damaged and firefighters were able to contain the fire in the walls that had extended to the 2nd floor.



February 16th

On a night with below 0 temperatures, Grinnell was called mutual aid to Kellogg to assist with a house fire where one person was injured. While still working at the Kellogg fire the remaining Grinnell firefighters responded to a barn fire on 400th Ave. The barn contained several old tractors and was a total loss. One dog was rescued by firefighters.



April 29th

Responded to I-80 in Malcom to assist with extrication of a victim from a car accident.

May 4th

Responded mutual aid to Sully for a large machine shed fire on E 132nd St N.

June 10th

Responded to I-80 for a two-vehicle motor vehicle crash with both cars on fire. No injuries were reported.



June 24th

Responded mutual aid to Brooklyn for about 60 hay bales and a building on fire. Assisted with our foam trailer.

June 28th

Three separate incidents required an all call this day.

Responded with Malcom Fire Department to I-80 for a multiple vehicle accident with fire. A semi ran a pickup pulling a camper and a U-Haul pulling a car off the highway into a ditch. The pickup caught fire spreading to all the vehicles. All people escaped with minor injuries. The fire extended to the propane tanks on the camper causing explosions on scene.



A small electrical fire caused smoke to fill a commercial building on West Street.



One person was seriously burned in a commercial building fire caused by gasoline being ignited while working on an ATV.



June 30th

A crane crashed off of I-80 causing a fuel leak, no was injured.



July 3rd

Firefighters extinguished a grease fire at Hardees and had to put out a fire in a 1st Ave shed caused by illegal fireworks.



July 31

Grinnell firefighters helped for almost 3 hours overnight extinguishing a house fire in Gilman.

August 28th

One person was extricated in a semi roll over that blocked traffic on I-80.



September 17th

A family, alerted by smoke detectors, barely escaped an overnight house fire on T-38 N.



September 19th

Firefighters responded to a small fire under a trailer home on 1st Ave and a motor vehicle crash on I-80. The vehicle on I-80 rolled over, caught fire, then was hit by a passing semi-truck. The lone occupant of the vehicle received serious injuries.



September 27th

Firefighters responded to I-80 to assist Malcom and Brooklyn Fire Departments with a person heavily entrapped in his vehicle. A medical helicopter landed at the scene for the seriously injured driver.



A second accident that night required firefighters to remove a victim who became trapped underneath his overturned car on Highway 6.



October 14th

A high-pressure gas line leak at the rear of Wal-Mart required the store to be evacuated. Firefighters made sure the area was clear of gas and people as Alliant shut down the line.

November 3rd

Poweshiek County Dispatchers assisted Grinnell Fire, Midwest and Poweshiek County Deputies in locating a hunter who fell from his tree stand. Due to his injuries, the rough terrain and distance to any road; a medical helicopter was landed in a nearby clearing for transport.



November 8th

Two simultaneous major incidents occurred in Grinnell. The first was an apartment fire on East Street. Firefighters were able to keep the fire damage to one unit and rescued a service animal. While the fire was going on a person was hit by a vehicle on I-80 and had to be searched for. Her injuries were considered serious. Kellogg Fire & Gilman Fire Departments assisted.



November 30th

Grinnell responded mutual aid to Malcom to assist with a grass fire that had extend to a structure. Also assisting were Toledo, Tama and Brooklyn Fire Departments.

December 6th

Firefighters responded to I-80 for just one of the 18 vehicle fires this year.



December 15th

Strong storms rolled through Iowa. Firefighters responded to 8 calls for service that day including one for a semi blown over on I-80

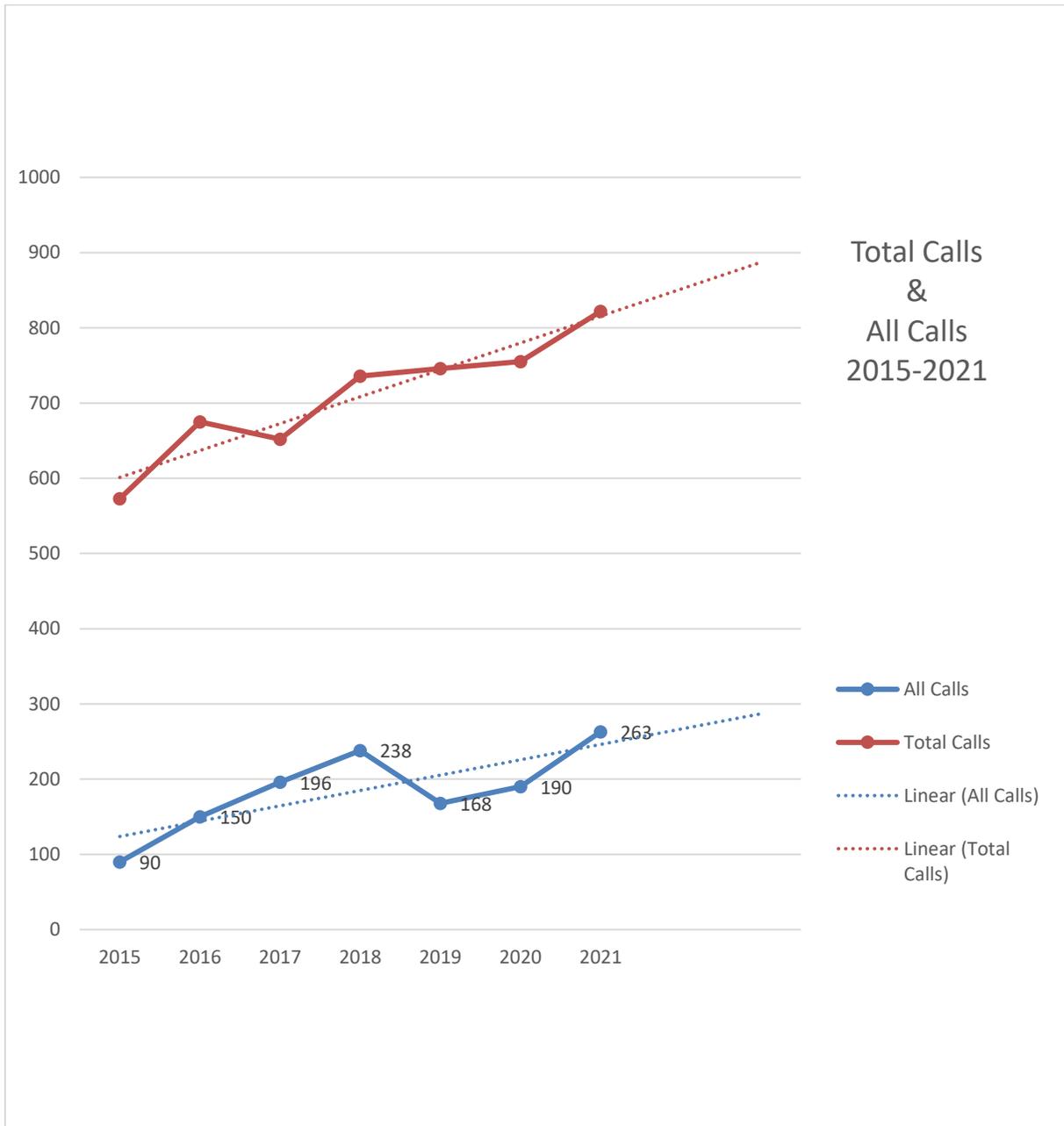


December 31st

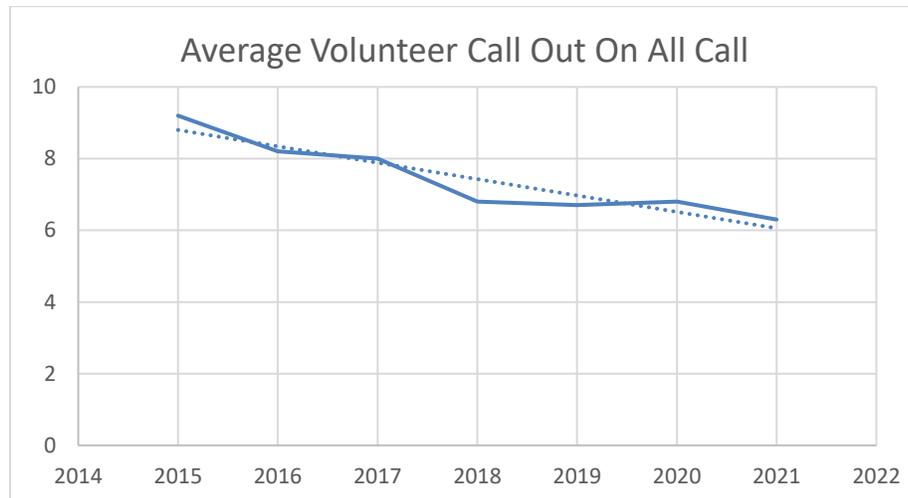
Two people were injured, one serious and requiring extrication, at a motor vehicle accident on Highway 146 @ Newburg Road.

Increasing Calls

Calls for service continue to increase on a steady pace. This year the department added the responsibility to staff and operate the Midwest' ambulance when a 2nd ambulance was needed. This occurred 35 times last year. Grinnell continues to rely heavily on their volunteer firefighters. While many of the calls are handled by the on-duty firefighter, the need to do an 'All Call', which calls in the volunteers, continues to increase. The chart below shows the growth for the last 6 years of total calls and 'All Calls';



Most alarming is the number of times we need to call in extra help. As the number of call outs increase, the number responders per call decreases. We have already seen a marked decrease in time available from the volunteers. Employers and families will only allow them to be gone so much. The National Fire Prevention Agency (NFPA) recommends a minimum of 14 firefighters responding on a possible fire in a single-family home. As the size of the buildings increase that number does as well. Below is a chart which shows the average number of volunteers responding on an 'All Call' over the past 6 years;



This decrease in volunteer response is a national issue. We have done better than most with this issue, but are starting to see the negative effect. The issue is not directly tied to the number of volunteers, or their commitment level, but the time they have available vs. the amount of time we need them. One big factor is the inability for business to allow their personnel to leave. As business work on tighter staffing restraints, they are less likely to allow their people to leave work to respond. Thus, we have less response from volunteers during the work day. Compounding the issue, the fire service industry continues to increase the training hours needed, requiring more of our firefighters. What was once a hobby for many is now treated like a full-time position.

Convention 2021

Along with everything else the volunteers do, they spend just as much time fund raising for equipment and training. This past year the Volunteer Fire Association hosted the Iowa Firefighters Association for their week-long Convention in September. A campground for over 2000 people with shower trailers and the Grinnell Mutual Insurance event tent was constructed just west of the High School. The week-long event included firefighter games downtown, entertainment on site, a craft fair at the Eagles, the IFA's yearly meeting, a firetruck parade, golf and bowling tournaments and a whole lot more. Fire departments came from all over the State of Iowa to participate and spend their money here in Grinnell. Below are a few pictures of the even;

Awards

An awards ceremony was held this year and the following awards were given out for actions and anniversaries in 2020 + 2021;

Jed Petersen was given the “Life Saver Award” for, while on vacation in Florida, helping rescue a young girl caught in a rip tide.

Brent Smith was given the “Life Saver Award” for, while camping out of town, helping rescue a kayaker over turned in the water.

Scott Schmidt was recognized for his 40 years of service.

Craig Sieck was recognized for his 20 years of service.

Curtis Sieck was recognized for his 10 years of service.

Brian Paul was recognized for his 5 years of service.

Merlyn Schakel was recognized for his 5 years of service.

The Grinnell Fire Department strives to continue protecting life and property to the highest standard. We also plan on continuing our efforts to contribute to, and be a part of, what makes the Grinnell Community a special place to live.

Respectfully submitted,



Daniel J. Sicard
Fire Chief
Grinnell Fire Department