

January 12, 2021

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 2020.

Listed below is a breakdown of all incidents responded to, by the Grinnell Fire Department, in 2020.

Type of Call	Number
Fires	
<i>Building Fires</i>	24
<i>Car/Truck Fires</i>	15
<i>Rubbish Fires</i>	11
<i>Grass/Crops/Brush Fires</i>	21
Total Fires	71
Rescues	
<i>Motor Vehicle Crashes</i>	70
<i>MVC W/Extrication</i>	7
<i>Special Rescues</i>	12
<i>Medical Assists</i>	278
Total Rescue Calls	367
Hazardous Materials	41
Hazardous Conditions	23
Special/Public Service	52
Burning Complaints	35
Investigation	64
Fire/CO Alarms	71
Weather Issues	31
Total Calls 2020	755

Of the 755 calls for service 625 were in the City District, 121 were in the Rural District, and 9 were Mutual Aid calls. There were 3 civilian fire deaths, 1 civilian fire injury and no firefighter injuries this past year. The total dollar loss to fire was estimated at \$681,605.

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
Carl Eggermont	Assistant Chief of Training	Volunteer
Todd Pollock	Captain	Volunteer
Mike Groves	Lieutenant/Safety Officer	Volunteer
Jason Pollock	Vol Assoc President/Lt/SO	Volunteer
Doug Ernsperger	Vol Assoc Vice President/Lt	Volunteer
Dave Thompson	Driver/Firefighter	Part-time
Scott Sieck	Firefighter	Volunteer
Rob Vest	Driver/Firefighter	Full-time
Craig Sieck	Firefighter	Volunteer
Don Ellis	Firefighter	Volunteer
Todd Zell	Driver/Firefighter	Full-time
Jed Petersen	Driver/Firefighter	Full-time
Curtis Sieck	Firefighter	Volunteer
Kyle Esrey	Driver/Firefighter	Part-time
Jenifer Smith	Vol Assoc Secretary/FF	Volunteer
Brian Paul	Firefighter	Volunteer
Wade Robeson	Firefighter	Volunteer
Merlyn Schakel	Vol Assoc VP/FF	Volunteer
William Gruman	Vol Assoc Treasurer/FF	Volunteer
Kyle Smith	Firefighter	Part-time
Brent Smith	Firefighter	Volunteer
Christian Williams	Driver/Firefighter	Full-time
Brent Nickel	Firefighter	Volunteer
EJ Rolfes	Firefighter	Volunteer
Oswaldo Carrillo-Torres	Firefighter	Volunteer
TJ Pinkerton	Firefighter	Volunteer*
DJ Beck	Firefighter	Volunteer*
Dustin Briggs	Firefighter	Volunteer*
Toby Harris	Firefighter	Volunteer*
Kelly Fosse	Firefighter	Volunteer*
Brandon Merrill	Firefighter	Volunteer*

*new in 2020

Special notes for our roster in 2020 include;

Scott Schmidt retired from the Fire Department after 40 years of dedicated service. Ben Barr retired after 15 years of dedicated service.

Below are some of the notable calls from 2020, 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;

January 17th

Responded to assist Kellogg Fire on I-80 with a car crashed into a guardrail. Several extrication tools were required to safely remove the driver from the vehicle.

January 22nd



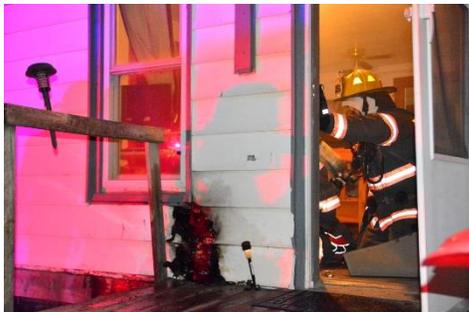
Grinnell Ladies Fire Auxiliary received training from Red Cross on how to set up and administer the operations of an emergency shelter. This training was latter put to use following the August Derecho.

February 8th

Firefighters extinguished a car fire on 75th Ave E. People were heard arguing around the vehicle and taking off in another vehicle. Fire appeared to be suspicious in nature, no vehicle owner could be found. Jasper County Sheriff Office to handle.



March 8th



Firefighters extinguished a small fire in the wall of a house on 320th Street. The fire caused minor damage.

March 21st

Firefighters quickly contained a 2 acre field fire on 20th Street.

March 30th

Responded to assist Gilman with several fires along the railroad tracks north of Gilman.

March 31st



While conducting a controlled burn on T-38, a Grinnell fire truck was hit from behind. 2 firefighters working near the vehicle dove out of the way, the firefighter driving was transported to the hospital with injuries. The driver of the other vehicle was uninjured. Both vehicles were totaled.

April 9th

A fast moving grass fire on Garfield Ave extended to a barn before being brought under control.



May 15th

Assisted Jasper County and Iowa State Patrol in corralling a loose horse near I-80.

May 23rd

An ammonia leak from the large storage tank on West Street S was secured by Grinnell firefighter/hazardous materials technicians. The leak appeared to have been caused by someone messing around with the valves on the tank.

May 30th



An outside fire extended to the building at the rear of the Hy-Vee. The fire appeared to have started in a plastic storage tote by smoking materials. One person, who drove through the fire scene, was charged by Grinnell Police of interfering with the firefighters.

June 5th

A lightning strike caused minor damage to both sides of a duplex. Firefighters used thermal imaging to determine the units were safe to be occupied.

June 12th



Firefighters responded to a single vehicle accident First & High. A pickup truck struck a fire hydrant, a tree and a pole. Firefighters worked around downed powerlines to extricate the driver of the vehicle.

June 24th

Grinnell Fire was paged to assist Malcom Fire with two separate incidents at the same time. L53 responded to assist with a grain bin rescue. Subject was rescued as we arrived on scene. E53 and B58 responded to 430 Street to assist with a police stand-off where the party has light several cars, out buildings and hay bales on fire. Subject lit house on fire and was apprehended by Sheriff's Dept. Assisted in extinguishing the fires.

July 13th



Firefighters extinguished a car fire in the Theisen's parking lot.

July 20th

Firefighters paid tribute to and laid to rest retired firefighter Ed Sanders.



August 7th

A City of Grinnell trash truck rolled over on Lang Creek Crossing. The driver's arm was pinned underneath the truck. Firefighters used rescue air bags to lift the truck and free the driver. Two employees were treated for injuries.

August 10th



A Derecho moved through Grinnell. Grinnell firefighters responded to 131 emergency calls over the next 7 days. Some of those calls included extricating people from damaged houses, people trapped by downed powerlines, natural gas leaks, small electrical fires, damaged structures and several carbon monoxide incidents from running generators. Along with responding crews of firefighters worked around town cutting and moving downed trees to open the road ways. Firefighters offered a charging station for residents without power and the Grinnell Ladies Fire Auxiliary manned the shelter for the Poweshiek County Emergency Manager. Firefighters along with several other organizations assisted in providing community

August 23rd



Responded for a report of a truck in the water at Jacob Krumm Preserve. The vehicle was completely submerged under water, it was determined the vehicle had been under for at least 3 hours. Fire crews secured a boat from DNR and spread petroleum catching booms in the water to collect leaking fuel and oil. Crews worked with Rick's Towing to recover the vehicle and confirm no one was inside. The vehicle was empty and checks found it to have been reported stolen out of Poweshiek County. Assisted on scene by Jasper and Poweshiek County Sheriff's Departments, Ricks Towing, Iowa DNR, Jasper County Conservation Officer and Midwest Ambulance.

Responded to assist Brooklyn Fire at the scene of a house fire. Unfortunately two people passed away in the fire.

September 22nd



Firefighters extinguished a shed fire that had extended slightly to a mobile home on Washington Ave.

September 23rd

A combine caught fire on 80th Street and spread to the bean field. The fire was extinguished, but the combine was a total loss.



October 5th



Firefighters responded to an alarm and found smoke in the building at Grinnell Mutual Reinsurance. The problem was found in a heating unit.

October 24th



Firefighters responded to a house explosion and fire south of town on 20th Street. Two victims received severe burns, were rescued by neighbors, treated and transported, but latter died from their injuries. The fire is still under investigation but appears to have been caused by a propane gas leak.

November 11th

Firefighters responded to assist in helping a resident who was stuck on his roof. The resident was helped down uninjured.

November 23rd



Firefighters trained on grain bin rescues. During that training a pickup truck with ammunition burned on Main St. The driver and his dogs made it out safely.



December 10th

Firefighters received a call for two grass fires at the same time. One was on I-80 the other was on E 140th St N. Firefighters made quick work of the fire on I-80 but the one on E 140th Street grew to about 20 acres. Firefighters were hampered by limited manpower as only 6 firefighters were available to respond at the time. Gilman Fire was requested but were unable to respond. Kellogg fire was able to respond with 3 firefighters.



December 18th



Since the firefighter's children were unable to have their annual fire department Christmas party, Santa performed some social distance visits to their homes.

December 25th

One person was discovered deceased in an early Christmas morning mobile home fire on Washington Ave. The fire appeared to have been caused by smoking materials and medical oxygen.

COVID-19

The novel coronavirus of 2019 made for a lot of changes for the Grinnell Fire Department. Early on the Fire Department took steps to help protect ourselves, and the public, with educating our members as well as equipping them with proper safety gear. Special procedures were put in place to deal with medicals involving known or suspected cases of COVID-19. Luckily our training on hazardous materials made the learning curve on these procedures easier to handle. The fire department felt we needed to look beyond just our calls and think about what we are doing off duty or at their regular jobs. In order to get compliance of mask wearing when not working, early on we had masks produced with our local for use by our members. The Public Safety Building was closed off to the public, the fire department stopped meetings and trainings for a short time until a procedure could be set up for them to be done safely. Cleaning and sanitizing of the station, trucks and equipment was brought to a new level. Especially early in the pandemic protocols were reviewed and updated sometimes on a daily basis. While several of our members have tested positive, none of these have been traced to exposures at the station or due to a response.

The Volunteer Firefighters Association's finances have been hit hard by this pandemic. The Firefighters Dance, The Annual Fire Prevention Breakfast and the State Iowa Firefighters Association Convention all had to be canceled. The financial loss to our organization is over \$100,000.

The department continues to work through the issue created by the pandemic and was able to get vaccines for the firefighters who were also EMTS at the end of the year. We will continue to work with the Poweshiek County EMA and Poweshiek County Public Health to get all of our members vaccinated as soon as possible.

Convention 2021

As mentioned above, Convention 2020 was canceled. Members continue to work hard on making arrangements to host the Convention in September of 2021. One obstacle they are working through is the destruction of two semi-trailers outfitted as shower trailers. Both of these trailers were blown over in the Derecho and totaled. We continue to work with the Iowa Firefighters Association and Iowa Falls Fire Department (2022 Convention hosts) on the building of two new trailers.

Awards

An awards ceremony was not held this year, but the following awards were given out for actions and anniversaries in 2019;

Rob Vest and Christian Williams were given the “Life Saver Award” for their performance in helping revive a citizen in cardiac arrest by performing CPR.

Jed Petersen and Dan Sicard were given the “Life Saver Award” for their performance in helping revive a citizen in cardiac arrest by performing CPR.

Chief Dan Sicard was awarded a certificate for 15 years of service in Grinnell.

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