

SORRENTO FIRE DEPARTMENT

The Sorrento Fire and Rescue department responded to 95 calls from July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023. The calls ranged from structure fires to water rescues, car accidents, chimney fires, electric fires, brush and grass fires, false alarms and alarms sounding to mutual aid. The department also had many work sessions for the year in and around the fire station or vehicles that involved countless numbers of man hours. The number of man hours spent on paperwork and phone calls are not included in this figure.

Mutual aid calls give the department an opportunity to utilize the skills that have been learned in other than a training scenario. The department's membership and mutual aid agreements with the departments of the Schoodic Region Emergency Services Association (SRESA) consisting of Aurora, Eastbrook, Franklin, Gouldsboro, Hancock, Sullivan, Winter Harbor and now Steuben, provide a way to address critical manpower shortages experienced throughout 24 hours. SRESA continues to provide a forum to discuss upcoming mutual trainings, equipment updates, NFPA requirements, and issues involving fire/EMS training, equipment compliance, etc. at both the state and federal level.

Routine equipment and apparatus maintenance is critical to insure their operation in times of emergency. This maintenance keeps personnel familiar with the operation of the equipment and apparatus, but also serves to catch problems early enough to have less effect on their use and the budget. Periodic oil changes, lubrication, and the correction of problems that surface as the apparatus or equipment is used are all part of this maintenance. In addition, the fire station is maintained and repaired as needed.

Keeping track of the paperwork from the various governmental agencies and the insurance companies that keep the department current and compliant is part of the responsibilities of Deputy Chief Brian Clement. Constant updating of department records to avoid possible fines during a spot check by one of the agencies is required. He also tracks equipment purchases, deliveries, and payments. His efforts are behind the scenes, but are time consuming and essential.

The finance committee continues to maintain the delicate balance of keeping expenses in check but also keeping the department's equipment updated and in good condition. The committee is well aware of the economic realities of today and will continue to try not to significantly impact the overall town budget. Unfortunately, occasional unexpected repairs are necessary which throws our budget off. Donations from town residents provide the department with additional funds that continue to supplement the annual

budget. The careful management of the budget funds and the donations has given the department the opportunity to offset costs.

Grant monies are sought yearly. The grants, such as the FEMA Assistance to Fire Fighters Grant, Forestry Grants and Maine Municipal Association grants, if obtained after competition with hundreds of the applicants, provide the department with help to offset costs of mandated equipment or obtain equipment otherwise not able to be afforded. Forestry grants and Maine Municipal Association grants when received help purchase necessary and needed firefighter protective gear.

As winter approaches, the department would like to remind everyone that access to your property as the snow piles up is essential for both the fire department and emergency medical services to be able to make a timely entry. The better the access is the better the chance should be of a good outcome if help is needed. The use of alternative heat sources brings a reminder of more awareness of home fire safety.

Please remember that portable generators should not be run inside of your home or in a structure such as a garage or shed. The consequences can be deadly.

We would like to thank the residents of the Sorrento community for their cooperation in practicing fire prevention and fire safety. Remember, burn permits are required and must be obtained before you burn. Please help us help you to have yet another fire safe year.

New members are always welcome to join the special group of men and women who are the Sorrento Fire Department! We will be glad to answer any questions you might have. There are plenty of things that must be done to keep the fire station and department running and you just might find out you would like to help us. We also encourage residents to stop in when you see us at the station. We will be glad to show you around!

We appreciate the support given to the department by the residents of the town and will continue to strive to fulfill our mission to serve and protect.

Have a happy and safe upcoming holiday season 2024.

The Sorrento Fire Department