

SUMMIT FIRE & EMS 2021 ANNUAL REPORT



Dedicated and compassionate professionals providing all-hazards solutions to the community through education, prevention and response





The Knorr Meadows Fire near Green Mountain Reservoir in April kicked off a busy wildfire season and one of the early tests of a new seasonal wildfire team pilot program that bolsters the Summit Fire & EMS response, training and mitigation efforts to reduce the threats of destructive wildfires in our community.

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FIRE & EMS



Greetings! I'm pleased to offer this annual report detailing the proud work performed by the professional crews and staff of Summit Fire & EMS for 2021.

Once again we were challenged by the COVID-19 pandemic, affecting everything from protecting the public and ourselves on emergency calls to maintaining adequate staffing when our crews or their families had exposures to how our administrative staff adapted. I'm happy to say that our professionals performed admirably throughout.

Meanwhile, we have built out each of our three shifts with 26 full-time response-crew members who provide 24-hour coverage from our fire stations in Copper Mountain, Dillon, Frisco and Keystone. Overseen by a battalion chief and an EMS coordinator, each station is staffed with a minimum of three crew members on an engine/truck along with a two-person medic crew on an ambulance.

As our organization has grown to meet community needs, we welcomed about a dozen new staff members in 2021 represented in every department.

Regrettably, we bid adieu to several members of the former Summit County Ambulance Service who left to pursue other opportunities, and we dissolved our longstanding volunteer Fire Corps with our deep gratitude and appreciation for years of on-site crew support efforts.

On an exciting new front, we implemented a Wildfire Specialist pilot program headed by a full-time Wildfire Coordinator aimed at providing an enhanced level of preparedness, response-crew training and mitigation here at home. We anticipate seeing that program grow and pay great dividends to our community in the future, based on lessons learned from devastating wildfires across the West.

In November, we were gratified that voters by a 3-to-2 margin passed a 4 mill property-tax increase which dramatically improves our long-term financial standing in light of reductions in out-of-county ambulance transports and other changes in medical billing. We offer our assurances that we will continue to be good, transparent stewards of your tax dollars and will maintain the trust and faith that our community has placed in us.

For 2022, we are forging ahead with the design and development of a new response station in Silverthorne, preparation for the renewal of our international professional accreditation, implementation of a cybersecurity policy and implementing our new strategic plan that was guided by a dedicated group of external (public) stakeholders.

Finally, as I have settled into my role here at Summit Fire & EMS, I have had the great pleasure of seeing many of our staff members grow into new responsibilities and help establish the new management team. I'm impressed by their energy, creativity, innovation and forward-thinking abilities and have great confidence that we are providing you with an exceptional all-hazards emergency-response agency. Thank you for your support!

- Chief Travis Davis

OPERATIONS



**Deputy Chief
John Wilkerson**

Summit Fire & EMS crews endured another busy year in 2021, responding to 4,357 emergency calls, a 5.3 percent increase over the previous year.

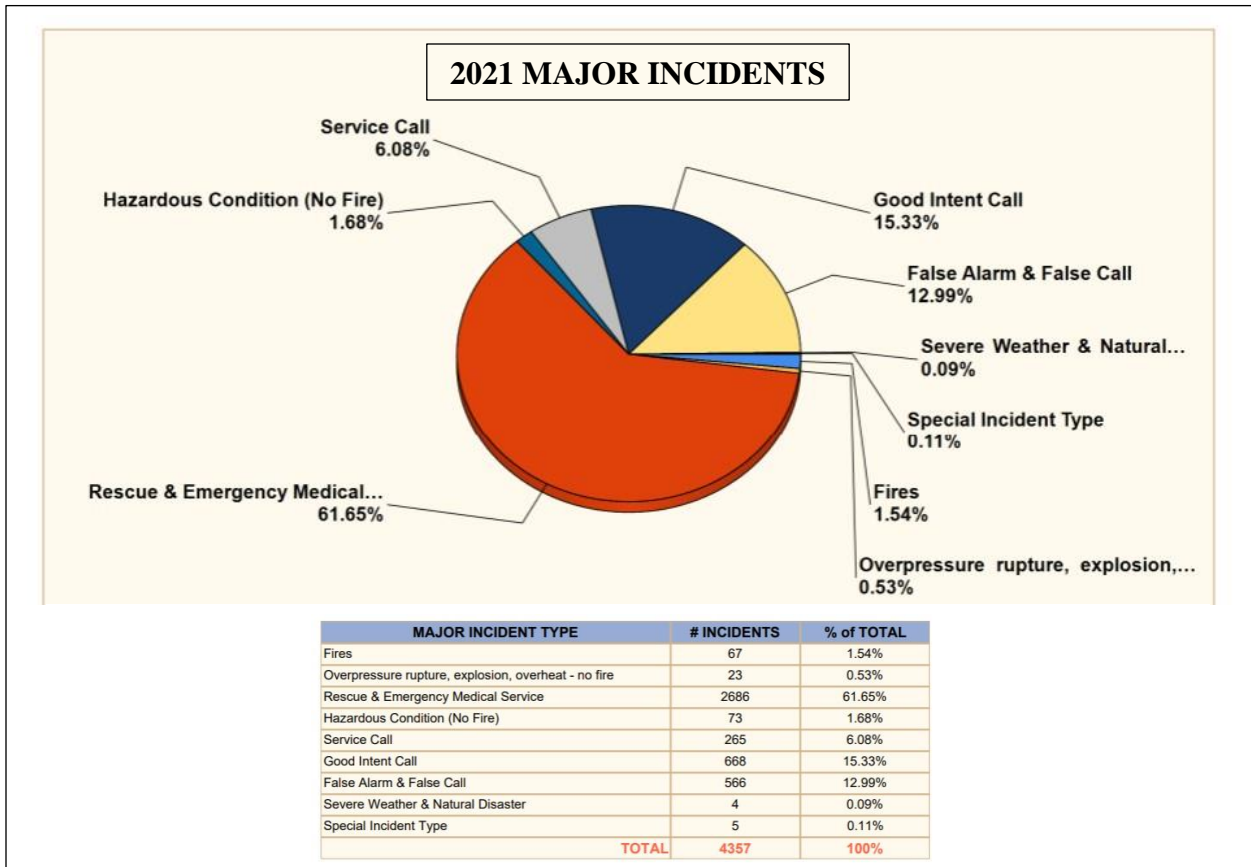
Significant incidents included an elevated number of motor-vehicle fatalities and a particularly active and high profile wildfire season, starting in April with a fast-moving grass fire near Heenev and another blaze at the shooting range, followed by the Straight Creek Fire along Interstate 70 in June and ending with the Ptarmigan Fire just east of Silverthorne in late September and

early October.

As always, the preponderance of our emergency response calls were medical issues, when every second counts, so I'm pleased to report that our average response time for all calls from dispatch to arrival was 9 minutes and 13 seconds. Our crews typically are out the door of their fire stations in under two minutes.

We responded to 43 fire calls in 2021, resulting in \$1.2 million of lost value out of \$15.6 million of property at risk. We are gratified to be able to report that there were no losses of life due to fires.

Our all-hazards first responders completed more than 8,000 hours of training over the year, allowing them to react professionally to any emergency situation that arises.



EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES



Summit Fire & EMS medical crews and firefighters pride themselves in providing attentive, high-quality, compassionate care and have received “excellent” ratings from 98 percent of our patients.



**Division Chief
James Woodworth**

Despite the on-going pandemic, Summit Fire & EMS realized an 11 percent increase in EMS call volume in 2021 – even though out-of-county transports declined after Summit Medical

Center implemented a contract with Stadium Medical to provide those services as a dedicated agency.

As part of our “new normal” way of conducting business, SFE assisted Summit County Public Health and partner agencies in mitigating the COVID-19 pandemic through implementing best practices and

adhering to guidelines from the federal Centers for Disease Control and state and local health agencies.

Among other advancements, SFE was awarded a 50 percent matching grant from the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment to support a new controlled-substance monitoring system and hardware for a new electronic patient-care reporting platform launching in 2022.

Lastly, Summit Fire & EMS received a Silver Award from the American Heart Association Mission: Lifeline for our commitment and success in implementing a higher standard of pre-hospital care by ensuring that heart-attack patients receive treatment according to nationally accepted recommendations and standards.

WILDFIRE



The Straight Creek Fire broke out in June adjacent to Interstate 70 east of Dillon Valley and potentially jeopardized Dillon's water supply, a power line and highway travel. A fast response from Summit Fire & EMS, the U.S. Forest Service and numerous other public and private cooperators helped fight the blaze.

Summit Fire & EMS always has played an active role in responding to local and national wildfires, but due to declining forest health, larger, more destructive fires and community expectations, the organization in 2021 created a dedicated Wildland Division as a trial program, enlisting two firefighters and a seasonal specialist to focus on response, training and mitigation.

With the strong support of the SFE Board of Directors, the 2022 budget includes one full-time employee for the team, and a long-term plan is being built to add staff and projects each year.

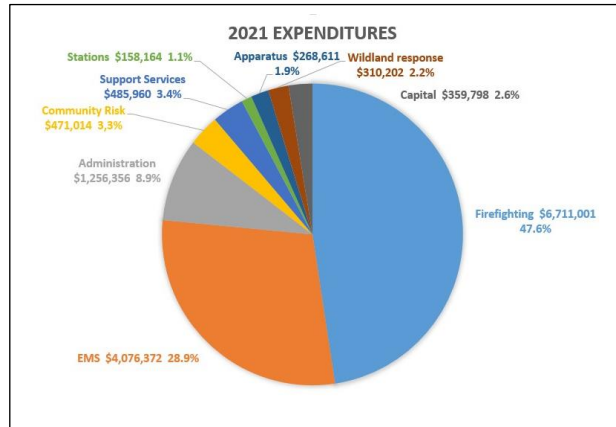
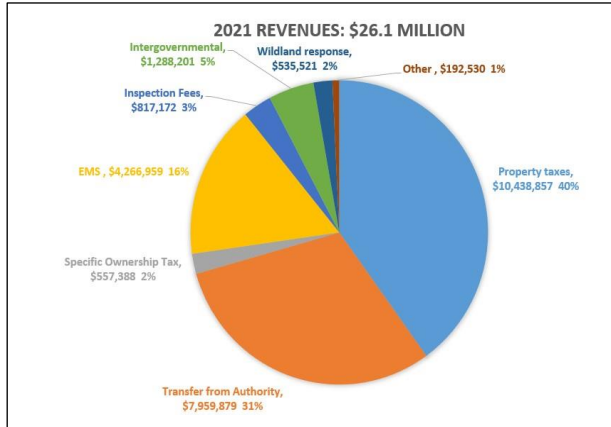
SFE firefighters were deployed for four weeks on the Crater Ridge Fire in Wyoming and six weeks on the Dixie Fire in California, gaining valuable experience and

training that they bring back to the district with the costs covered by the management of those fires.

Locally, Summit Fire & EMS responded to the Straight Creek Fire on June 10 and the Ptarmigan Fire on Sept. 27. Because they occurred in the White River National Forest, both fires ultimately were handed over to federal fire-management teams, but our crews remained involved with the suppression and structure-defense efforts throughout.

Finally, SFE is integrally involved in the prevention and preparedness efforts of the Summit County Wildfire Council and works with property owners and builders on mandatory wildfire-mitigation efforts for new construction.

FINANCE/BUDGET



**Finance Manager
Mary Hartley**

In 2021, 58 percent of the funding for Summit Fire & EMS was generated by property taxes, 22 percent from EMS revenues and 20 percent from intergovernmental

income, permit fees and revenues from sending firefighters to assist in fighting wildfires across the region.

The district ended the year with a reserve fund of \$18.3 million, of which \$781,695 is restricted for emergencies, \$24,625 is restricted by donors, and \$2.5 million is restricted for capital expenditures.

In November, voters in the newly formalized Summit Fire & EMS Fire Protection District (which replaced the Lake Dillon Fire Protection District) approved a mill-levy increase from 9 mills to 13 mills. Along with a rise in property values, that has resulted in a

61.8 percent increase in tax revenues, which is being used to offset the expiration of Summit County tax funding of the ambulance service approved by voters in 2011.

The 2022 budget includes salaries and benefits for 78 first responders and 22 administrative and command/executive positions.

In addition to the annual operating funds, SFE has budgeted \$1.3 million in capital expenditures for 2022, including routine apparatus and equipment replacement, station maintenance and funding for the design of a new fire station in Silverthorne.

District finances are audited annually.

A copy of the budget as approved by our publicly elected board of directors is available upon request at the Summit Fire & EMS administration building at 0035 County Shops Road in Frisco in the County Commons complex.

FIRE PREVENTION



Fire-extinguisher training for business staff is among the community services offered for free by the Community Risk Division, which also conducts courtesy wildfire assessments for homeowners and car-seat inspections for parents and caregivers.



**Division Chief
Kim McDonald**

Under the direction of the division chief/fire marshal, the SFE Community Risk Division protects lives and property through planning and inspections.

With four full-time inspectors, the division issued 328 permits in 2021 for projects such as new construction, life-safety systems, business remodels and tents and special events. That generated \$793,772 in fees.

Additionally, the Community Risk Division conducted 2,665 construction meetings, annual inspections, plan reviews,

field inspections, hydrant and standpipe tests and fire drills.

Finally, Summit Fire & EMS issued 156 defensible-space permits for wildfire mitigation around new homes and expansions, generating \$23,400 in fees.

Among the larger construction projects in 2021 were the Clearwater Lofts in Keystone and the Arapahoe Basin ski area office remodel; a new transit center and marina office building in Frisco as well as remodels of the 911 dispatch center and Summit County library; the Vail medical office building and Homewood Suites in Dillon; the Bluebird Marketplace, Hotel Indigo, TJ Maxx/Sierra Trading and multiple multi-family projects in Silverthorne; and Copper Mountain's Sky Chutes employee housing and A-lift development infrastructure.

ADMINISTRATION



**Deputy Chief
Brian Schenking**

The Summit Fire & EMS Administration Division has undergone some major changes in the past year, among them launching a department-wide modernization and

process improvement.

At the top, a prominent change came when the last of the organization’s old guard, SFE Support Services Deputy Chief Bruce Farrell, retired in 2021 after 37 years in the Summit County fire service, opening the door for the promotion of longtime fire-crew officer Brian Schenking to that role.

The responsibilities of the position were modified, and the title of the division was changed to Administrative Services, responsible for oversight of communications, technology, fleet services, facilities and community risk reduction, as well as systemic planning and process improvement.

Summit Fire & EMS has embraced the process of continuous improvement, required as an accredited agency with the Commission for Fire Accreditation International. A major component of that model was development in 2021 of a new community-based strategic plan through a process in which community representatives expressed expectations and helped prioritize our efforts for the

future. SFE will be seeking renewal of its five-year accreditation in 2024 and has been submitting annual compliance reports and updating progress and goals regularly to meet those standards.

Guided by that feedback, staff members refined the language of the organizational mission, values, vision and goals for improvement. The strategic plan was then adopted by the SFE Board of Directors, and the organization will begin deploying it in 2022, as staff members throughout the organization take part in task forces examining all aspects of how we operate.

On another front, SFE joined the county-wide emergency services migration to a 800-megahertz digital-radio system, a significant enhancement over the dated VHF system in use for years. These improvements will enhance operations, provide for system safety redundancy and improve communication with neighboring jurisdictions.

Spurred by social-distancing needs amid the COVID-19 pandemic, the Community Risk Division worked to modernize and digitize the permit-application process, allowing for online submissions and electronic communication to substitute for traditional face-to-face interaction.

Improved data management adopted by the Community Risk Division also will provide the emergency-response crews with critical information accessible in the field such as details about life-safety systems in commercial buildings.

HUMAN RESOURCES



Summit Fire & EMS crews love to take part in community events such as the annual Safe Summit Kickoff, the Frisco Spontaneous Combustion and parades including the now-annual celebration for Summit High



HR Manager
Matt Scheer

In a year of significant turnover, Summit Fire & EMS welcomed the following new employees in 2021:

Firefighters
Justin Boyd,
Justin Briggs,

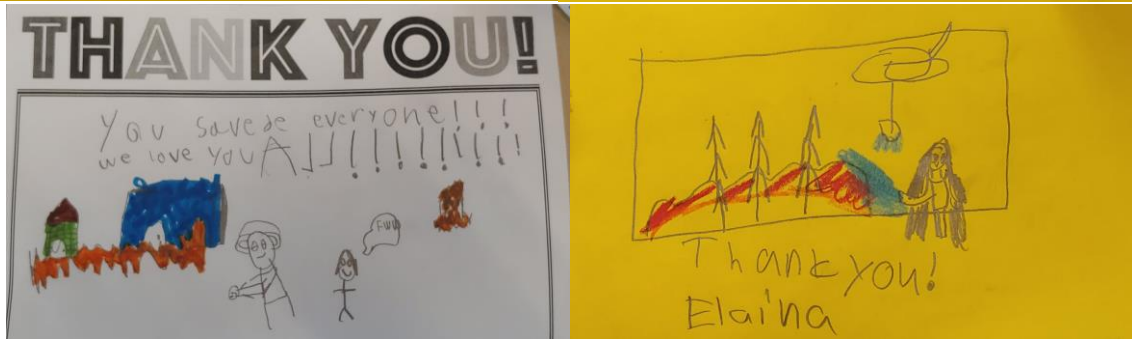
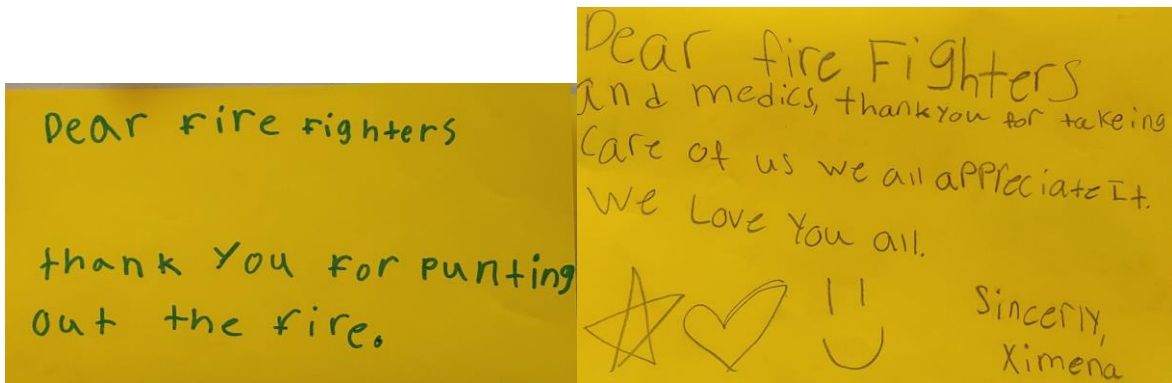
Jordyn Butler, Greg Gibbons, Trevor Rafferty, Travis Sirek and Gerald Tofferi; Firefighter/Paramedics **Shayne Dombrowski and Talon Edwards;** Community Risk Division Fire Inspectors **Meghan Layfield** and

Richard Maturino; and Fleet Technician **Landon Wagner.**

Additionally, the following Summit Fire & EMS members promoted to new positions in 2021:

Accounting Supervisor **Jessica Fuller,** Capt. **Casey Humann,** Lt. **Greg Isaacson** and Lt. **Paul Lawrence,** Wildfire Coordinator **Kyle Iseminger,** Firefighter/Paramedic **Eric Paradis,** Deputy Chief for Administrative Services **Brian Schenking,** Engineer **Jenna Watson** and EMS Coordinator **Jason Kennedy.**

Retirees included Board President **Jim Cox,** Training Division Chief **John Hall,** Deputy Chief for Support Services **Bruce Farrell** and Lt. **Tim Schlough.**



Some of the outpouring of love that Summit Fire & EMS received from the community after the Ptarmigan Fire in late September and early October forced evacuations and drew everyone's attention. Fortunately, no structures were lost in the fire, which burned 83 acres just east of Silverthorne.



Summit Fire & EMS takes pride in its work as an all-hazards emergency-response agency, trained, equipped and capable of handling everything from chemical exposures and medical emergencies to wildfires and vehicle crashes.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Summit Fire & EMS is governed by a five-member, publicly elected Board of Directors charged with representing the community interests in setting policy, establishing fiscal responsibility and guiding the philosophical direction of the organization. The current Board includes President Lori Miller, Vice President Jen Barchers, Treasurer Ben Broughton and Directors Linda St. John and Jim Lee.



Miller



Barchers



Broughton



St. John



Lee

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