



Annual Report 2015

Grand Junction Fire Department

Taking Care of People and Property

WWW.FIRE.GJCITY.ORG

Our Vision

To be role models for our visitors, the community, and the profession through character-driven leadership in our daily pursuit to uphold the integrity of the fire service, create new and innovative traditions, and leave a legacy for future generations.

Citizen, "We are writing to all the emergency personnel, fire, police, BLM, who responded to a fire just to the west of our home on Chestnut Drive on Saturday, July 4. We are so thankful to each and every one of you for the outstanding job you did of containing that fire and saving our neighbors, their homes and their animals while putting your own lives at great risk. The firefighters went into a field, in the dark, not knowing the lay of the land, in the middle of a huge fire. You demonstrated excellent training and professionalism in doing a very dangerous job. Words cannot express our gratitude for the incredible job you did. We thank you!"

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Cover photo: Firefighter rolling hose after a fire

A message from the
Grand Junction Fire Chief

Ken Watkins

I'm honored to provide you with the 2015 Grand Junction Fire Department Annual Report. Our purpose statement on the cover of the report – Taking Care of People and Property is also on the side of our response units to remind you, and us, why we are here. It's a simple statement but one the men and women of the Grand Junction Fire Department take seriously each and every day as we fulfill our mission.

The department is proud of a number of accomplishments this year and hope that you will also share in our pride. We were recognized by the American Heart Association with a silver award for the quality medical care we provide to cardiac arrest victims. Through training and skill development, quality assurance measures and hospital partnerships, we continue to improve cardiac arrest care. A focus on community CPR was initiated to teach more people CPR so that they can help save a loved one before our arrival. This program is expanding even more in 2016 with a Compression-Only CPR program. Check it out at cprisfree.com.

The City went through an Insurance Services Office (ISO) Public Protection Classification review and received an upgraded rating. The review evaluates fire protection services, 911 emergency communications, and the water system. The improved rating can result in lower insurance costs to businesses and residential properties. With the good work of the Grand Junction Regional Communication Center, the City of Grand Junction Public Works Department, the Ute Water Conservancy District, and the Grand Junction Fire Department our community is rated in the top 2% of communities nationally for fire protection services.

The City completed construction of a new fire station 4 at a new location on B ½ Road. This location provides improved fire and EMS response capabilities on Orchard Mesa and along the 29 Road corridor. Over 50% of the project costs were funded through grants, and the former location was repurposed to provide a satellite location for public works services on Orchard Mesa.

The department received a federal Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response Grant to cover the cost of three additional firefighter-paramedic positions. These positions are critical for keeping our staffing at an adequate level in order to provide the community with the correct number of responders.

Our department family is proud to serve your family as we keep our community safe. We hope you find this report informative and we thank you for your support and the opportunity to serve.



New Fire Station 4
(Hose Uncompling/Ribbon Cutting)

Photo by: Antonio Archuleta

www.fire.gjcity.org

What We Do?

The GJFD is the premier provider of fire and life safety services in Western Colorado. Our team of dedicated professionals serves a population of over 83,000 within a first response service area of 77 square miles and an ambulance service area of over 649 square miles. Annually, the department responds to over 14,000 calls for service. The GJFD is virtually a self-sufficient department and provides a variety of services normally expected of much larger departments.



Fire Suppression

Fire control is a complex process involving a number of activities that need to be carried out simultaneously. In addition to extinguishing the fire, firefighters perform multiple types of rescue and, coordinate the efforts of other agencies during the incident and minimize loss by covering or removing personal property.



Emergency Medical Services (EMS)

Emergency medical and ambulance services are provided for the citizens of Grand Junction, the Grand Junction Rural Fire Protection District and the Glade Park area. All fire engines and ambulances have the equipment and trained personnel to provide basic and advanced life support.



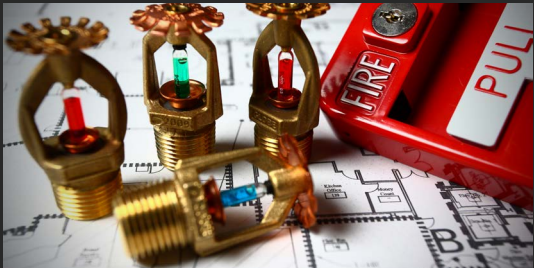
Fire Investigations

The GJFD Investigation Team investigates all fires that occur to determine cause and origin. The Fire Investigation Team works closely with local, state and federal agencies to resolve all incidents identified as arson.



Hazardous Materials Team (HazMat)

Regulated hazardous materials are stored and transported through our community on a daily basis. In the event of an uncontrolled release or spill, the GJFD provides specialized personnel and equipment to the site to mitigate the incident.



Fire Prevention

Services include: consulting, plan reviews, fire protection system inspections, fire and life safety inspections and fire flow evaluations. Business inspections give firefighters an opportunity to become familiar with building layouts in order to plan firefighting strategies. This helps reduce business loss due to fire by increasing efficiency during emergencies.



Training

The GJFD provides the most current and realistic training for all personnel. Skills training and maintaining a high level of physical fitness is the foundation for providing safe and effective emergency response skills. Personnel are required to maintain various state mandated EMT and firefighter certifications.



Public Education and Information

Services include: fire and life safety education programs and information coordination for emergencies and general fire department activities. Preschool and elementary school programs are designed to teach young children the importance of fire safety. In addition, Juvenile Fire-Setter Intervention programs are provided.



Technical Rescue

Confined Spaces: Firefighters are trained to respond when people are trapped in confined spaces. This includes: manholes, tunnels, wells, cellars, tanks, sewers and trenches.

Rope Rescue: The terrain surrounding Grand Junction, along with the varied types of structures within the service area require specialized skills in difficult rescues utilizing the use of ropes and equipment.

Water Rescue: Water related rescue incidents are complicated with the swift currents, cold water and poor visibility due to the muddy condition of the rivers. Your firefighters are highly trained and equipped with specialized gear to respond to this type of event.



Bomb Team

The Bomb Team is jointly staffed with personnel from both the Grand Junction Fire and Police Departments. This team is responsible to render safe all explosives and improvised explosive devices.



Wildland Team

Firefighters are specially trained and certified to control fires in forested or urban interface areas. The GJFD Wildland Team partners with the Bureau of Land Management, the Colorado Division of Fire Prevention and Control and the Mesa County Sheriff's Office. This year the team responded to wildland fires in Washington and California, along with a significant fire on July 4th in the City.

An internal operational assessment was conducted by members of the Service Delivery Task Force to determine if any functional changes were needed in order to provide a more effective and efficient delivery of services. One of the decisions was for the department to transition ambulances from firefighter paramedics and firefighters to solely paramedics and emergency medical technicians. As a result, this service delivery enhancement will improve patient care, provide a synergized staffing pattern and increase employee satisfaction.

Other notable accomplishments in 2015:

- Completed a leadership rotation among line battalion chiefs and captains.
- Completed a moderate organizational change with administrative personnel.
- Improved our Insurance Service Office (ISO) rating from a 4/9 to a 2/2x.
(May result in fire insurance reductions for property owners.)
- Received a federal staffing grant to hire three firefighter paramedics.
- Replaced approximately 85% of our 2-1/2" and 1-3/4" fire hose.

Operations

The GJFD had a record setting year in terms of incident responses. The department finished 2015 having responded to 14,767 calls, an 11.4% increase over 2014. The previous two years, the call volume had been increasing an average of 4%, but in 2015, there was a noticeable spike.

The table below shows incidents types the past three years.

(Note: Other incidents includes rescues calls, hazardous conditions, service calls, false alarms calls and miscellaneous).

Year	EMS Incidents	Fire Incidents	Other Incidents	Total Incidents	Annual % Increase
2013	9,879	270	2,598	12,747	3.9%
2014	10,438	226	2,591	13,255	4%
2015	11,807	223	2,737	14,767	11.4%

Active Shooter/Active Threat

According to the FBI, from 2000 to 2013, there have been 160 active shooter incidents. Columbine, Aurora, Sandy Hook, Virginia Tech, San Bernardino, and others. These locations will always be tied to unforgettable, acts of violence. The term "active shooter" is a common phrase used by the media and responders to describe these incidents. For first responders, these events pose very unique challenges. Public expectations have changed regarding emergency response. Lessons learned from the battlefield and analysis of past incidents pointed to changes needed in our response. Earlier access to patients is making a positive difference in patient survivability.

In partnership with GJPD, the fire department was able to secure funding from the local Law Enforcement Forfeiture Board to purchase safety equipment designed for operating in an "active shooter" environment. Clifton, Lower Valley and Grand Junction Fire Departments all received equipment. In 2015, a full scale training exercise was conducted at Grand Junction High School. New techniques from local exercises and incidents throughout the country are being implemented. This provides enhanced responder safety and improved patient care in these dynamic and dangerous environments.

Emergency Medical Services

Medical incidents continued to trend upward with a total of 11,807 responses and 80% of the total incident volume. A new technique called “Pit Crew CPR” resulted in eight citizens being successfully resuscitated from cardiac arrest. In Pit Crew CPR each team member has a specific role, much like a NASCAR pit crew. The department’s excellence in emergency medical care during cardiac arrest did not go unnoticed as we were presented the silver award from the American Heart Association.

Powered Stretcher Grant

The Colorado Department of Health and Environment, Emergency Medical and Trauma Section awarded the department with a consolidated grant for powered patient stretchers. Eight new power stretchers and stair chairs were purchased through this grant at a 50% cost reduction. This equipment provides safe lifting and movement of patients and reduces back injuries for responders.

position that manages the day-to-day medical operations, including EMS education, training, patient care quality assurance, and long distance non-emergent transports. You can be assured that in a medical event, our EMS responders and supervisors are committed to providing the highest care possible.

Citizen, “We wish to thank you for your help with the medical situation at our home in February. You were all professional and caring. Everything is now well at our house because of your efforts”

EMS Officers

Three firefighter paramedics: Mark McIntire, Jody Hudson, and Sheldon Kier were promoted to Emergency Medical Service Officer. This is a new

Emergency Medical Service Officers

Promoted on April 25, 2015



Mark McIntire



Jody Hudson



Sheldon Kier

Public Information

Citizens attended 137 different events that provided fire and life safety education and information to keep you and your family safe. The department was a lead agency at the annual Mesa County Safety Fair held at the Mesa Mall. This annual event is a great opportunity for the Mesa County Fire Departments to jointly teach young students about fire safety.

The department partnered with Mesa County Valley School District 51 during school lock-down and shelter-in-place drills. The safety of our children is a primary goal of the department and integrating with the school district on this level ensures that we are achieving that goal.

With the help of Colorado Mesa University, a Communications Internship Program was developed and implemented. The program has been successful in providing local college students real life experience while helping the department with increasing communications and public education demands.



Employee of The Year

Shawn Montgomery was selected as the 2015 Fire Department Employee of the Year for his work as the Information Coordinator and for his involvement with local and statewide public information functions. In addition, Shawn was requested by the state to serve as the lead Public Information Officer for the Gold King Mine Disaster near Durango, CO.

Excellence in Service

Through

Integrity

Dedication

Efficiency

Unity

Community

The department is teaming with the Grand Junction Police Department to develop a new public safety volunteer program that will give the community an opportunity to volunteer at the Police and Fire Departments.

“The support of our community is the backbone of our organization and a goal of our Public Information Office is to ensure that our community knows that we take that very seriously.” – Shawn

Fire Prevention

The Fire Prevention Bureau works behind the scene to insure a safe community through education, building engineering, enforcement of fire and life safety codes and the investigation of fires. Plan review and inspection of several projects has kept the staff busy insuring facilities are safe for citizens and firefighters should an emergency occur. These include: the new Community Hospital, build out of existing floors of St. Mary's Century tower, Federal Express, 12th Street City Market and many others. Much of the time is also devoted to upgrades of existing buildings with fire sprinkler systems, fire alarm systems, and other life safety systems.

Fire Prevention Statistics

Type	2013	2014	2015
Crew Inspections	2,394	2,355	2,819
Bureau Fire Inspections	389	460	372
Building Permit Clearances	195	209	215
Operational Permits	172	193	201
Construction Inspections	545	613	702
Development Reviews	206	292	279
Burn Permits	1,574	1,693	1,627

Some fires started by juveniles are referred to the department's Juvenile Fire-Setter Program. This program provides a coordinated effort in assisting juvenile fire-setters and their families receive the help they need through assessments, education and psychological referrals. The goal of this program is to educate and reduce the number of fires and burn injuries caused by children experimenting with fire.



When a fire does happen the department has specially trained firefighter/investigators that determine where and how the fire started. Suspicious fires may result in fire investigators partnering with law enforcement to determine if a crime has occurred and charges are filed.



Emergency Management

The Office of Emergency Management is a new entity for the City and the fire department. Gus Hendricks was selected as the Emergency Manager (EM) to coordinate emergency planning within the city limits. His first task was to finalize the City Emergency Operations Plan and have it adopted by City Council as the disaster preparedness plan for the City. In order to be prepared for possible disasters you need to know what your hazards are. Through a hazard assessment performed for the City, a list of

recommendations was prepared and any gaps in protection will be addressed. The EM works with all departments within the City and partners in the community to ensure consistency and readiness in the planning process. The EM is tasked with providing expertise to businesses in the community in disaster planning which will enhance and coincide with plans already developed in the City. This will help establish consistency and expectations when disasters strike.

Training

The Training section saw big updates in 2015. We doubled our administrative training staffing levels from one to two. This provided an opportunity to strengthen our service to the community. These improvements established a command and control simulation lab for all officers that provide a common and consistent platform for managing incidents. We also provided multi-company drills throughout the year to enhance our preparedness for large incidents. These improvements in turn provide greater protection to the citizens of our community through quick and efficient scene management. We also started to develop stronger relationships with the Colorado National Guard as a training partner

with a desire to build training props for working in an urban setting. In order to keep up with the demand for service, we provided two Emergency Medical Service Academies for new full-time and part-time emergency medical technicians and paramedics. We have a strong commitment to training which allows us to provide a high level of skill to our community. We train every day in order to be prepared for most emergencies. We have trained to provide an understanding of High-Rise suppression systems, commercial building search and rescue of victims, and we provided five days of live fire burns in acquired structures. The categories below show our commitment to training.

Training Statistics

Type	2013 Hours	2014 Hours	2015 Hours
Fire	10,514	8,413	7,837
Emergency Medical	1,882	2,999	4,920
Hazardous Materials	1,120	1,131	1,087
Hazardous Devices	144	185	426
Specialized Rescue	766	1,202	1,171
Investigations	137	102	34
Total	14,563	14,032	15,474

Most Active Fire Units

- 1

Engine 2
4,120 Responses
- 2

Truck 3
2,601 Responses
- 3

Truck 1
2,527 Responses



Citizen, "The crew handled my mom with such grace, speed and care. There was laughter and she loved laughter. The last words she spoke before she passed was to say thank you to your crew. Please let your crew know how much I appreciate them."

Most Active EMS Units

- 1

Ambulance 3
3,329 Responses
- 2

Ambulance 1
3,314 Responses
- 3

Ambulance 2
3,287 Responses



Citizen, "I would like to thank the crews for allowing me the time to pay for my ambulance service. The service at my time of need and your patience and understanding were greatly appreciated."

Statistics at a Glance

2013

Total Incidents:
12,747

Operating Budget:
14.8 (in millions)

2014

Total Incidents:
13,255

Operating Budget:
15.7 (in millions)

2015

Total Incidents:
14,767

Operating Budget:
16.3 (in millions)

2015 By Station

Station 1

Total Incidents:
2,856

Total Responses:
9,177

Station 2

Total Incidents:
5,839

Total Responses:
10,677

Station 3

Total Incidents:
3,853

Total Responses:
6,021

Station 4

Total Incidents:
1,212

Total Responses:
1,967

Station 5

Total Incidents:
758

Total Responses:
1,128

Total incidents assisting other jurisdictions: 249

Administrative Chiefs



Fire Chief
Ken Watkins



Deputy Chief
Bill Roth



Emergency Manager/
Training Chief
Gus Hendricks



EMS Chief
John Hall



Fire Marshal
Chuck Mathis

Ken Brownlee, PRESIDENT OF GJ LIONS

"I wanted to take a moment to say thank you for the Grand Junction Fire Department's support of Grand Junction Lions Carnival Parade. Our theme *American Heroes* made it absolutely appropriate for the Fire Department to be prominently displayed and the use of the Pink Fire Truck honoring Delaney Clements was awesome. The funds raised will go to 16 local organizations."

GRAND JUNCTION FIRE DEPARTMENT

Office: 625 Ute Avenue

Phone: (970) 549-5800

Fax: (970) 549-5810

E-mail: fire@gjcity.org



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Layout & Design: Harmony Ward

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