

ANNUAL REPORT

2024

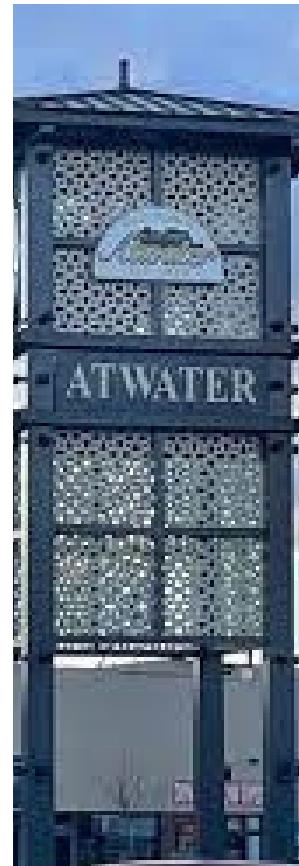


Atwater City Fire Department



<https://www.atwater.org/departments/fire/>

ATWATER CITY FIRE
DEPARTMENT WOULD LIKE
TO THANK THE CITY OF
ATWATER, CALIFORNIA FOR
THEIR UNCONDITIONAL
SUPPORT THROUGHOUT 2024
AND MANY YEARS TO COME.



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QR CODE FOR A
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MISSION STATEMENT



The primary mission of the Atwater City Fire Department is to provide a range of services and programs aimed towards protecting the lives and property of the citizens of Atwater City and the surrounding communities from the adverse effects of fires, medical emergencies, exposure to hazardous materials, and or other dangerous conditions as an all risk emergency response department.

These programs include comprehensive fire protection planning, fire suppression, emergency medical response, rescue, hazardous materials response, fire prevention and education, as well as fire code enforcement. The Atwater City Fire Department also provides mutual and automatic aid to neighboring agencies while being part of the statewide fire rescue mutual aid system.

OBJECTIVES



Provide efficient levels of fire protection services to the citizens of Atwater. Encourage the continuance of the existing contractual arrangement between the City of Atwater and the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection for cooperative fire protection services.



Continue to bring forward recommendations for the Department's facilities, personnel, and technology as required to meet the changing conditions and increased demands for services.



Maintain and manage fire impact fees in order to provide a supplemental source of funding for capital equipment. This will allow the Atwater Fire Department to expand fire protection service into areas of significant new growth as the need arises and keep equipment up to date to meet the ever changing all risk emergency response environment.



Seek opportunities, where feasible, to conduct joint operations, share responsibilities, or construct joint facilities with municipalities in order to avoid duplication of effort or cost in the provision of basic fire protection services. Pursue meaningful automatic and mutual aid agreements with other adjoining fire entities.



Continue to update the Atwater Fire Department's Master Plan with guidance from the Atwater City Council and members of City Staff.



Pursue grant funding through local, State and Federal agencies to obtain needed support for various programs.

2024 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Outfitted two new Command Vehicles and put them in service
- Ordered new Type I fire engine
- Supported state mission incidents by sending equipment out of county and accruing additional revenue for the City
- Received new grant funded Self Contained Breathing Apparatus' (SCBAs) and placed them in service
- Progression made on Public Safety Master Plan
- Expansion of annual ladder truck academy
- Remain heavily involved in public education



2025 GOALS

- Outfit and put new Type VI fire engine in service
- Completion and adoption of Public Safety Master Plan
- Continue to expand supporting state mission by sending fire apparatus out of county and bring additional revenue into the City.
- Progress with Station 41 Improvements/Bathroom/ADA project
- Maintain interagency relations with neighboring entities

Fire Fighter of the Year



FF Taylor Holden



MIKE VAN LOBEN SELS

Fire Chief

As the Chief of Atwater City Fire Department, I am privileged to share this year's annual report, a reflection of our department's dedication to service amid both challenges and achievements. This year has brought hurdles, yet it has also been a year of considerable progress and resilience. Despite facing some adversity, we have strengthened our operational readiness and continue to serve our community with the highest standards of safety and commitment. Despite these constraints, we have continued to maintain our three personnel on duty 24 hours a day, seven days a week, at our stations. This has not only improved our response capabilities over the last year and a half, but has also enhanced safety for our firefighters and the community we serve.

In addition to these operational improvements, we are proud to announce the expansion of our training center, which is a vital asset for advancing the skills and readiness of our team. The expansion enables us to conduct more in-depth training across various scenarios, improving our preparedness for complex incidents. Our ongoing integration with CAL FIRE continues to bring positive changes that will have lasting impacts on our department and the community. This partnership has strengthened our operational capabilities, provided greater access to resources, and created more opportunities for shared knowledge and development. Despite the challenges, our commitment to Atwater City remains the same: to protect and serve. We are dedicated to meeting each challenge with determination, embracing each opportunity for growth, and continuing to serve Atwater City with integrity and professionalism. Thank you for your support as we work together to build a safer, stronger Atwater City.



Mike Van Loben Sels 5



MARK PIMENTEL

Assistant Fire Chief

As someone that was raised in Merced County, where my family lives and my kids are growing up, my commitment to the Atwater City Fire Department goes beyond a job title—it's a promise to protect and serve the place we all call home. Every decision we make reflects the responsibility I feel toward my neighbors, friends, and family who rely on us every day. Completing my fourth year in this role, I'm proud to say that each year we've set higher goals and achieved them together. My dedication to this department and to our shared mission pushes me to continually move us forward, providing the protection, care, and response that our community deserves. Fiscal responsibility is a priority, and we're committed to managing our budget carefully, finding thoughtful solutions, and building partnerships that strengthen both our department and the community we're here to serve.

This year has not been without its challenges. Knowing how much our decisions affect the community, we always approach each one thoughtfully, with a genuine sense of responsibility. Even in the face of this year's challenges, our commitment to serving Atwater City and supporting our community has only grown stronger. We are committed to finding new, resourceful ways to achieve our goals responsibly, allowing us to strengthen our mission and better serve Atwater City both now and for the future. Each year, I am inspired by the dedication of our team and the support of our county staff, community partners, and residents, which have led to successes that far outweigh the challenges. Your trust in us fuels our commitment to constantly improve and serve with genuine dedication.



Mark Pimentel

BOBBY AYUSO

Battalion Chief - Operations

Bobby Ayuso was appointed as the Atwater City Fire Battalion Chief in January 2021. He is the 6th Battalion Chief since Atwater City entered into an agreement with CAL FIRE in 2008. Under the leadership of Fire Chief Mike van Loben Sels and Assistant Chief Mark Pimentel, Chief Ayuso oversees the operations of the Atwater Fire Department. He manages two fire stations, a fleet of four fire apparatus, and a dedicated team of 18 professional firefighters, along with one reserve firefighter.

Chief Ayuso leads Battalion 14, which spans approximately six square miles. Due to its strategic location, the Battalion frequently assists Merced County through automatic and mutual aid agreements. It is also responsible for protecting a section of State Highway 99 and two major railways—Union Pacific and Santa Fe Railroad.



In addition to his responsibilities within the City, Chief Ayuso plays a critical role in the Madera-Mariposa-Merced Unit's scheduling program, managing all Battalion Chief scheduling for the Merced Division. He also oversees several key programs within his Battalion, including the unit-wide ladder truck program, social media engagement, the Every 15 Minutes high school program, training, pre-plans, Insurance Services Office (ISO) reviews, ladder testing, and more.

With over ten years of service in the Atwater Fire Department, Chief Ayuso has also worked at several other Merced County stations. As a local resident, his deep connections with the community are reflected in the strong relationships he has built in Atwater. He considers it a privilege to serve the city he calls home.

Outside of work, Bobby enjoys camping, riding motorcycles and off-road vehicles, and spending quality time with his family and friends. He receives steadfast support from his wife, Kylie, of 13 years, and their two children, Makennah (14) and Cayden (11).

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bobby Ayuso". The signature is fluid and cursive, with "Bobby" on the top line and "Ayuso" on the bottom line.

ROBERT CARVALHO

Battalion Chief - Fire Marshal

Meet Battalion Chief Robert Carvalho, with 24 years of fire service experience and currently assigned as the Fire Marshal for the City of Atwater. Dedicated to public safety, Robert oversees fire protection planning, hydrant maintenance, weed abatement, and specialized safety systems. Collaborating with City Council Members, the Planning & Building Department, and developers, he ensures safety remains a key priority in Atwater's growth. His responsibilities also include enforcing fire codes, inspecting schools, businesses, and public assemblies, and serving as a Public Information Officer during emergencies.

Robert began as a Merced County Paid Call Firefighter, advancing to Firefighter - Fire Captain with CAL FIRE/Merced County Fire Department. He currently serves as a Merced County Hazmat Team member and contributed to firefighter training.

Robert managed engine and truck operations at various stations. He outfitted new fire engines and command vehicles for Battalion Chiefs at the Merced County Fire Shop. He was assigned as the Administrative Captain at Mt. Bullion CDCR Camp and Deputy Director of Administration for Merced County OES, coordinating emergency operations. In 2023, Robert was promoted to Battalion Chief of Communications at CAL FIRE Headquarters in Sacramento, where he acted as a department spokesperson and built strong relationships with stakeholders, media representatives, and the community. Additionally, he serves as the Lead Public Information Officer on CAL FIRE Incident Management Team 6.

Beyond his operational roles, Robert oversees the Unit's Peer Support team, supports Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM), serves as a State Fire Marshal and CSTI Outreach Instructor, and is a Cadre Member for Public Information Officer Classes. Off duty, Robert cherishes time with his wife of 20 years, Liz, and their children, Juliana (15) and Jackson (11). He gives back to the community as a youth football coach, volunteers for Portuguese cultural events, and enjoys camping and riding his Harley.



Robert Carvalho

CAPTAINS



Armando Aguilar
Captain
Station 42



Josh Anderson
Captain
Station 42



Matt Bernard
Captain
Station 41



Mike Perez
Captain
Station 41



Daniel Webb
Captain
Relief



Marc Wong
Captain
Relief

ENGINEERS



Matt Gomes
Engineer
Relief



Richard Heilmann
Engineer
Relief



Donovan Iverson
Engineer
Station 41



Erik Long
Engineer
Station 42



Julio Maldonado
Engineer
Station 42



Brock Pisacco
Engineer
Station 41

FIRE FIGHTERS



Taylor Holden
Firefighter II
Station 41



Marco Meraz
Firefighter II
Relief



Daniel Reyes
Firefighter II
Station 42



Madalyn Schiffel
Firefighter II
Station 41



Nicholas Wong
Firefighter II
Station 42



Jennifer Espinosa
Office Technician

COMMUNITY RISK REDUCTION

Fire Safety Inspections

City of Atwater S/B 1205 Fire Inspection Compliance Report Calendar Year 2024

APARTMENTS

Total Apartments – 221
Completed in 2024 – 221
Percentage – 100%
Compliance – 205

SCHOOLS

Total Schools – 15
Completed in 2024 – 15
Percentage – 100%
Compliance – 15

ASSEMBLIES

Total Assemblies – 21
Completed in 2024 – 21
Percentage – 100%
Compliance – 21

HOTELS

Total Hotels - 2
Completed in 2024 - 2
Percentage – 100%
Compliance – 2

Businesses – 192

Weed Abatement – 116

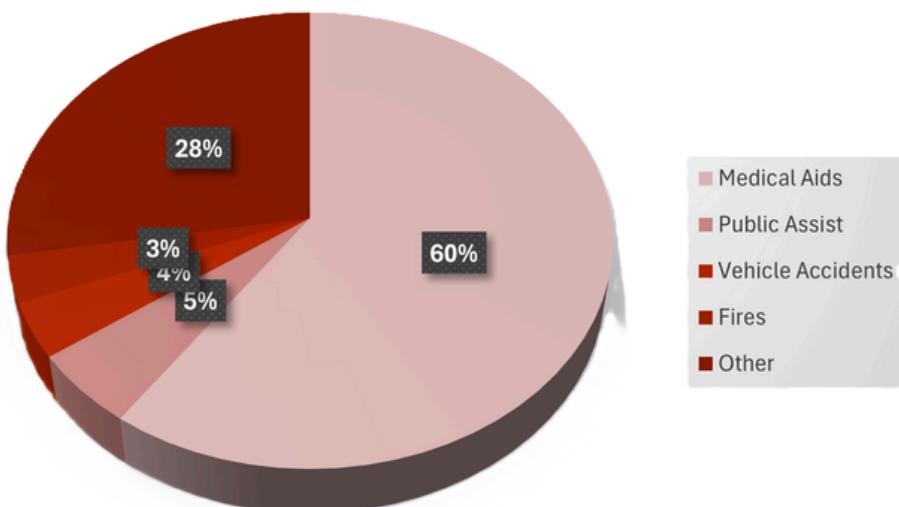


STATION 41

Daily Staffing: 1 Fire Captain, 1 Fire Apparatus Engineer and 1 Firefighter

Incidents

Medical Aids	1633
Public Assist	146
Vehicle Accidents	107
Fires	90
Other	753
Total Incidents	2729



Initial Response Area: 3.6 sq. mi of West Atwater

Assigned Apparatus:

Battalion 14
Engine 41
Engine 241 (Reserve Engine)
Utility 41
Air Supply Fill Station Trailer
Training Trailer
Public Education Trailer

Accommodations:

Battalion Chief 14 Office,
Headquarters Station for Atwater
City Fire, Antique Fire Engines
Display, Radio Supply, Rehab
Supply, Breathing Support for the
City



STATION 42

Daily Staffing: 1 Fire Captain, 1 Fire Apparatus Engineer and 1 Firefighter

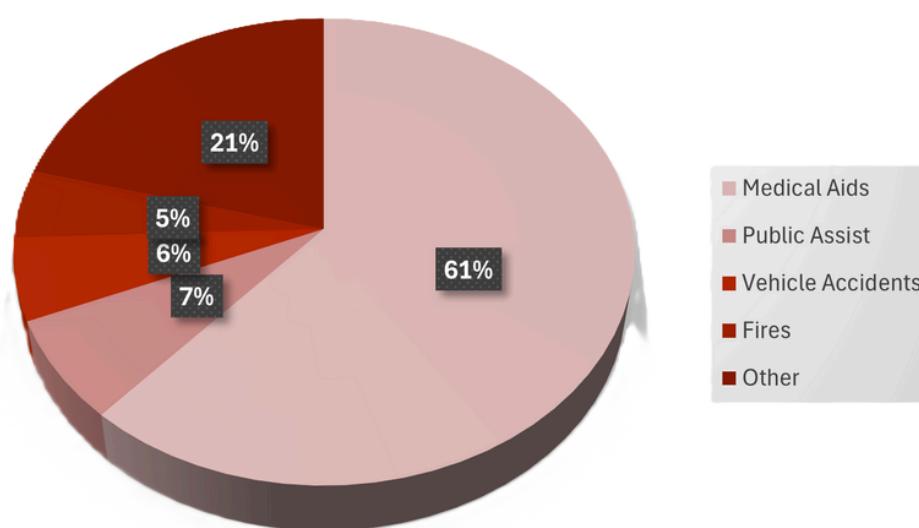
Incidents

Medical Aids	1070
Public Assist	123
Vehicle Accidents	99
Fires	82
Other	362
Total Incidents	1736

Initial Response Area: 3.0 sq. mi of East Atwater

Assigned Apparatus:

Battalion 24
Truck 42
Engine 42
Utility 42
Admin 14



Accommodations:

Training grounds and class room for Atwater City Fire Fighter Reserve program, SCBA Testing and Service Station, PPE Supply/Decontamination and Service Station, Fire Administration Offices

APPARATUS



Engine 41
2020 Rosenbauer

Battalion 14
2023 Chevy Silverado



Engine 241
1999 Spartan

Utility 41
2017 Chevy Silverado



APPARATUS



Truck 42
2014 Rosenbauer

Battalion 24
2023 Chevy Silverado



Engine 42
2010 Ferrara Fire
Apparatus



Utility 42
2017 Chevy Silverado

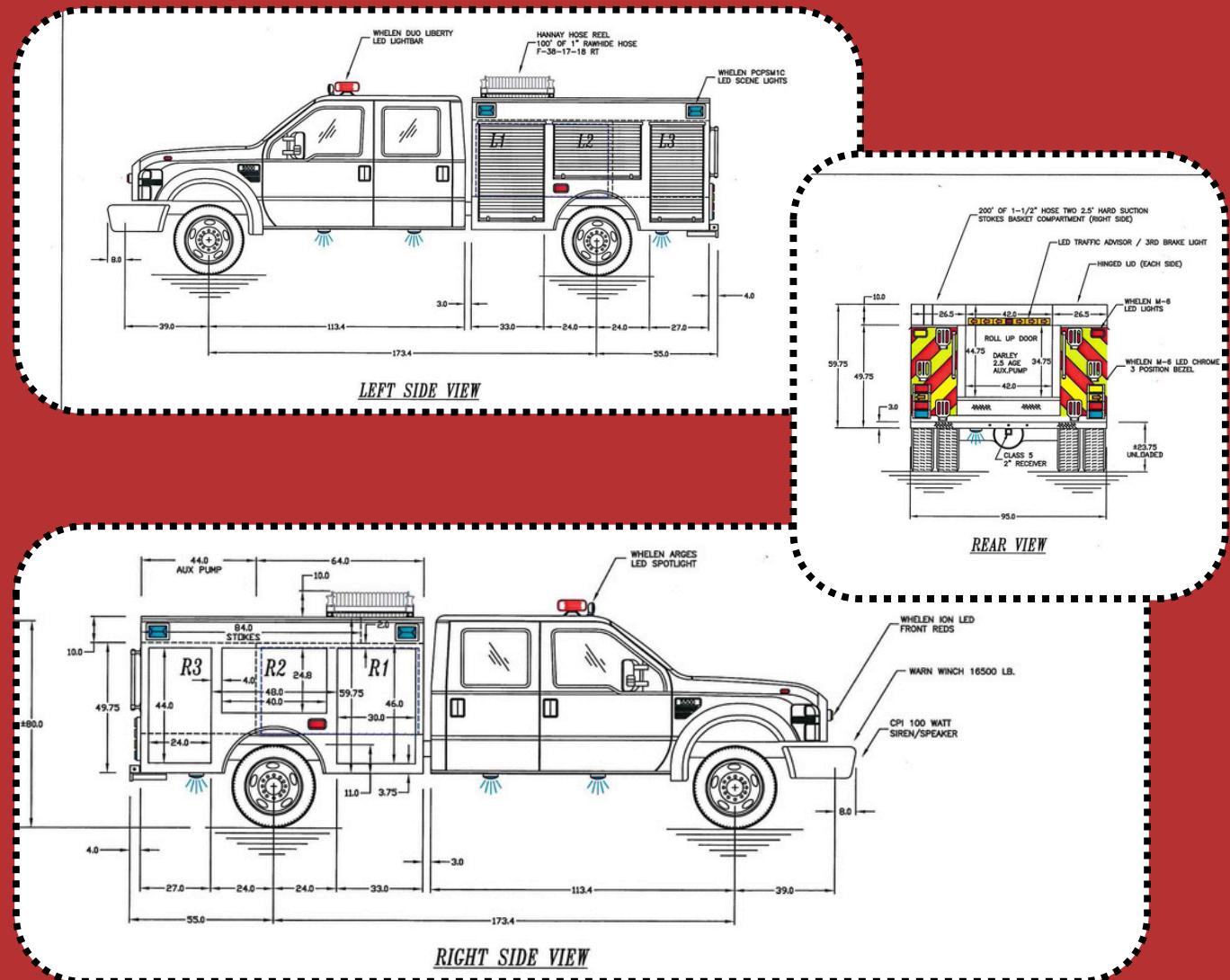


APPARATUS



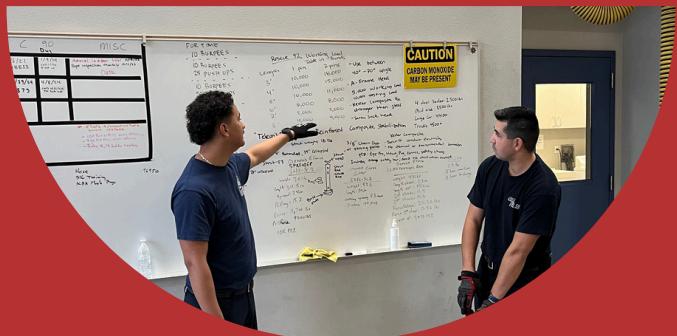
Type VI Engine 5500 Dodge Ram Crew Cab

Coming Soon to Atwater City 2025



FIRE TRAINING & RESERVE PROGRAM

The environment of public safety changes daily which is why Atwater City Fire Department is committed to making every day a training day. We are dedicated to training the personnel to meet all current professional standards of our industry.



Lead host of:

- × Advanced Wildland Firefighter
- × Aerial Apparatus Operations
- × Auto Extrication
- × Big Rig & Mass Transit Rescue
- × Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation
- × City and County EMS/CPR Instructor
- × Confined Space Rescue Operations
- × Emergency Medical Technician
- × Fire Command 1A & 1B
- × Fire Control 3 Structural Firefighting
- × Fire Control 5 Aircraft Rescue
- × Fire Management
- × Fire Prevention 1A & 1B
- × Firefighter II On Boarding
- × Firefighting Rescue Systems 1 & 2
- × Hazardous Materials Decontamination
- × Hazardous Materials Operations
- × Hazardous Materials Specialist
- × High Angle Rope Rescue
- × Intermediate Firing Methods
- × Low Angle Rope Rescue
- × Lucas Chest Compression Device
- × Rapid Intervention Crew Tactics
- × Rope Rescue Technician
- × Structural Ventilation Operations
- × Trench Rescue



RESPONSE PLANS

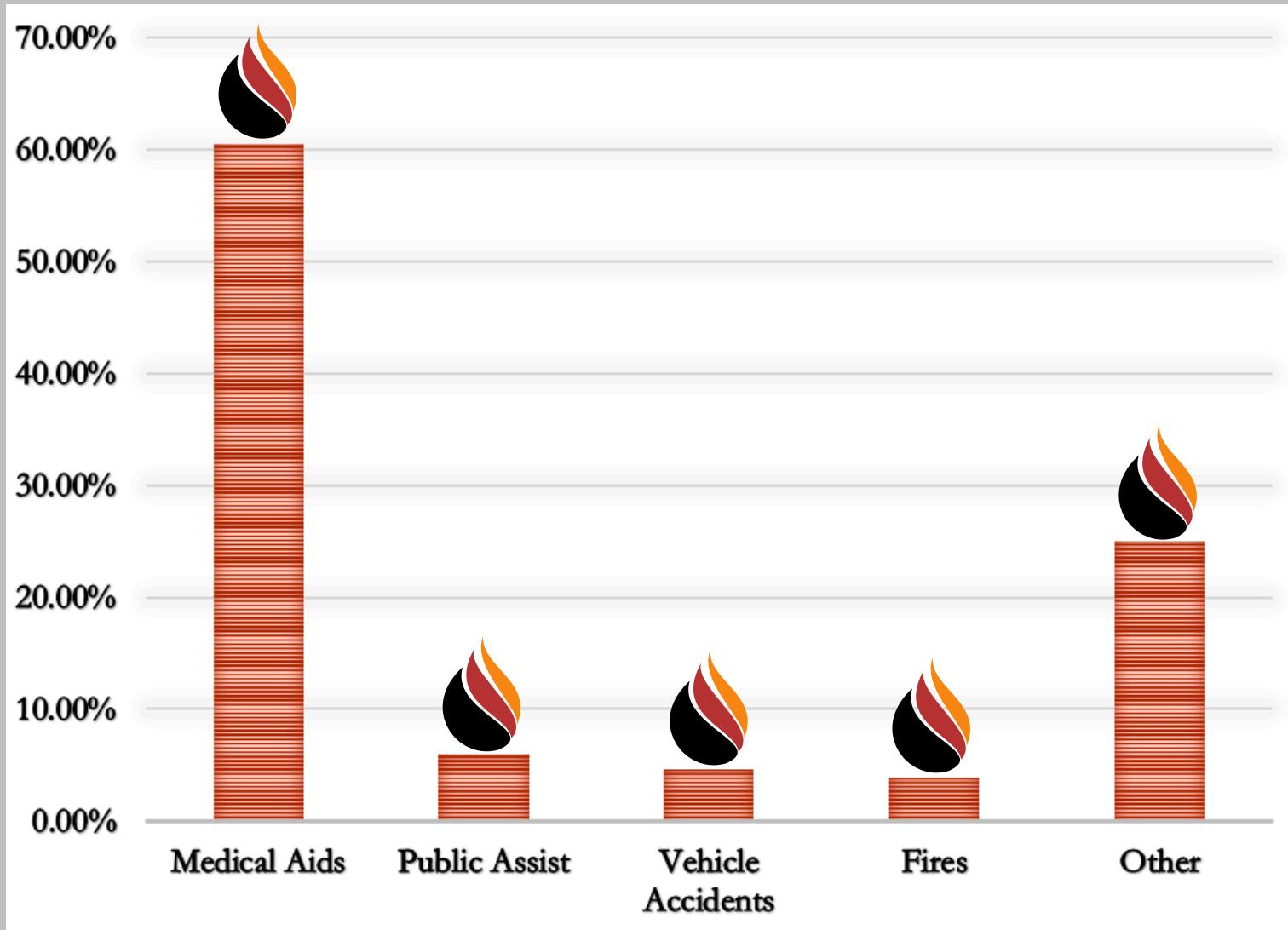
Type of Response	Battalion	Engine	Truck
Fire, Commercial Structure	2	4	1
Fire, Commercial Multi-Family			
Fire, Aircraft			
Fire, Structure Other			
Fire, Residential Structure	1	2	1
Fire, Industrial Vehicle, Train			
Fire, Other			
Fire, Commercial Vehicle			
Traffic, Accident w/ Pin-In	1	1	1
Traffic Accident w/ Rescue			
Fire, Grass/Vegetation			
Fire, Lightning Plan		2	
Medical Aid, Code Blue			
Alarm Sounding			
Fire, Vehicle Passenger	1	1	
Traffic Accident			
Fire, Check Smoke			
Fire, Report Out			
Fire, Assist Other Agency			
Fire, Debris			
Fire Menace Standby			
Hazard, Bomb Threat			
Hazard, Electrical			
Hazard Gas	1		
Hazard, Carbon Monoxide Detector			
Medical Aid			
Medical Aid, EMS Extended			
Medical, Assist			
Medical, Rescue			
Public Assist			



Atwater City Fire Department's response plan provides a list of equipment and appropriate personnel that will be deployed when a particular type of an emergency is called. Atwater City Fire Department's priority in an emergency situation is to save lives, minimize injuries and reduce damage to property

ANNUAL CALL STATUS

PERCENTAGE OF CALLS RECEIVED FOR THE YEAR OF 2024



TOTAL CALLS: 4,465

Call Types	Percentage	Quantity
Medical Aids	61%	2703
Public Assist	6%	269
Vehicle Accidents	5%	206
Fires	4%	172
Other	25%	1115



In the Community

The Atwater City Firefighters play a vital role in strengthening community bonds by actively participating in local events, such as the annual Fire & Police Toy Drive and Tri-Tip Dinner. In addition to their community engagement, they are committed to educating the public and promoting fire safety awareness.









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