

Sault Ste. Marie
Fire Services

2015

Annual Report

SAULT STE. MARIE
FIRE SERVICES



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***“Committed to the protection of Life, Property
and the environment within our community in a
responsible and caring manner.”***



FIRE CHIEF'S MESSAGE



In 2015, Sault Ste. Marie Fire Services began a full and all-encompassing review for the first time in over thirty years. Much had changed in the past three decades and this was not reflective in Sault Ste. Marie Fire Services. There was an imperative need to adapt and be more flexible in a dynamic and constantly shifting world that we find ourselves in. What should the modern fire service look like in the service it provides, the equipment it utilizes, the type and methods of training it undertakes, all in the context of a solid cost benefit analysis framework to ensure the right service is provided at an acceptable cost?

In October, a fundamental and significant realignment was approved by Council that addressed the need for change. The amount of fires has decreased steadily over the past thirty years and continues to decrease on a yearly basis with little change to the resources, while the number of calls for emergency medical services has steadily increased over the past ten years with little added resources to manage this increase. Fire Public Education and Fire Prevention, mandated services under the Fire Protection and Prevention Act, have not been at the forefront as intended. Prevention and Education known to pay big dividends in fire safety are not as flashy as firefighting. In this case, an ounce of prevention is worth the pound of cure and needs to be at the fore front of a fire safe community. The role of a firefighter, still valued, has seen change in how it delivers a service with an emphasis on prevention, medical response, specialized rescue, emergency management while maintaining the need to combat real fires, which is only now 3-5% of what they do.

Emergency Medical Services have seen an influx of resources including the addition two fully equipped specialized emergency support vehicles staffed by new Paramedic Supervisors to assist, direct, coach and mentor and provide a 24/7 oversight presence in a complex service environment. The Garden River station has now received full funding from the Province and provides a 24/7 presence. A pilot project to place an additional ambulance in service during the peak day hours has reduced ambulance wait times and ambulance unavailability. An application to the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care to provide the funding for the additional two ambulances has been submitted. These recent, strategic change management initiatives will transform the EMS Division to a modern, fully-equipped service, integrating best practices and benchmarked to the highest standards.

In 2016, the addition of Public Education/Prevention Officers and Training Officers will enhance the ability to identify, evaluate and implement additional programs that are adaptive and flexible to current and future needs. The role of Emergency Management, in light of climate change, aging population and the importance of sharing information and interoperability with the host of agencies in public safety and public health, will take on a more proactive and progressive mandate.

While the future can be daunting and filled with trepidation, it can also be exciting, filled with opportunity and the challenge of creating new and better ways to contribute to a better community in which we live. The best way to predict the future is to create it!

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mike Figliola".

M. R. (Mike) Figliola B.P.Ed., B.Sc., MBA
Fire and Paramedic Chief



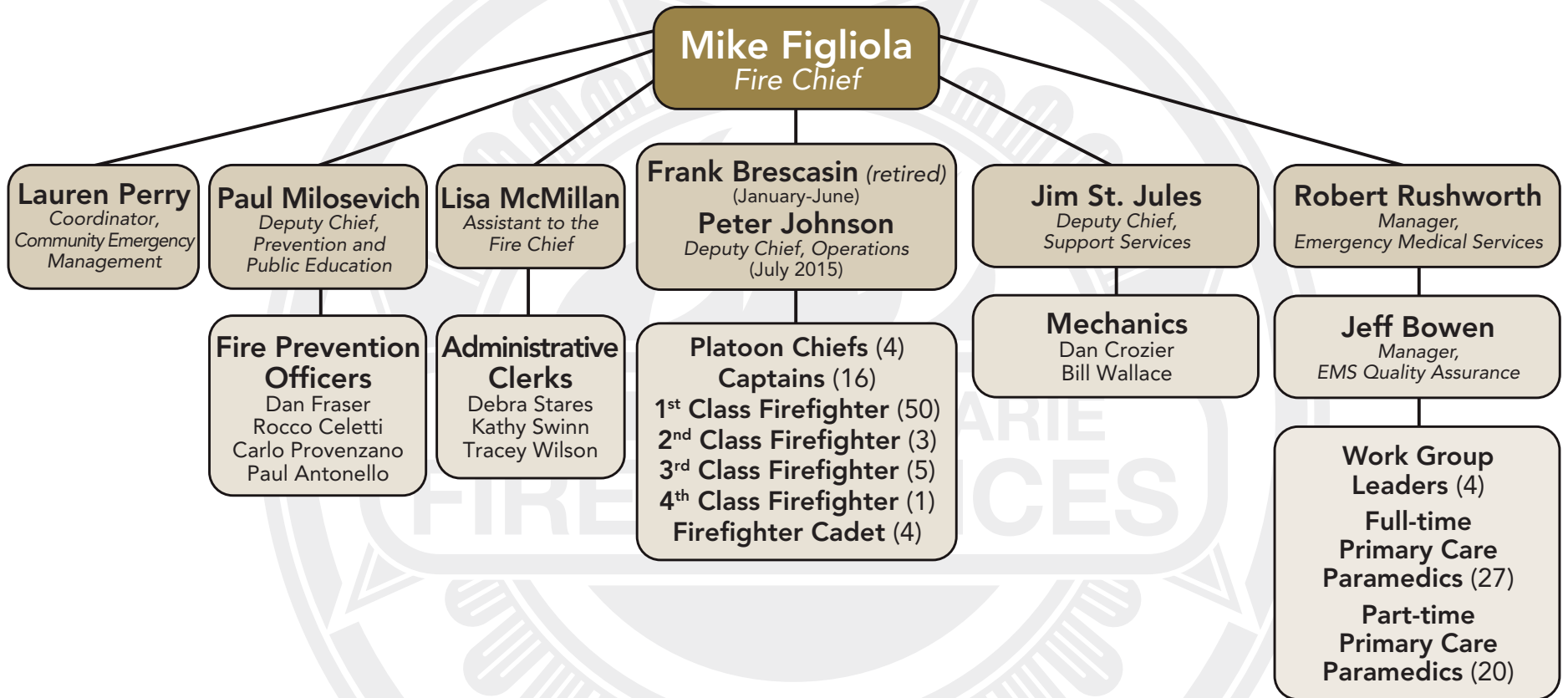
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SAULT STE. MARIE
FIRE SERVICES



SAULT STE. MARIE FIRE SERVICES TEAM



SUPPRESSION



Photo by Kevanna Fine Photography. (Kevanna.com)

The **Fire Suppression/Operations Division** is focused on the delivery of emergency fire protection, emergency medical care and related emergencies to the residents of Sault Ste. Marie. Our goal is to deliver quick and efficient emergency service in a caring and compassionate manner. Our highly trained professional Firefighters are equipped with modern fire apparatus that are strategically located at 4 locations across the municipality. In 2015 the Fire Suppression Division responded to over 2,400 alarms.

The following is a list of the types of alarms Fire Services has responded to in 2015, but not limited to:

MOTOR VEHICLE COLLISIONS
MOTOR VEHICLE FIRES
CARBON MONOXIDE
MEDICAL CALLS
RESIDENTIAL FIRES

COMMERCIAL FIRES
FIRES - (*Burning Complaints*)
GASOLINE/OIL SPILLS
HAZARDOUS MATERIALS
NATURAL GAS LEAKS

In 2015, there were 10 significant fires that resulted in a loss of more than \$100,000. Fire Services primary response objectives are: *Preservation of Life Safety, Fire/Incident Control and Property/Environmental Conservation.*

These primary objectives coincide with our Mission Statement - "*Committed to the protection of Life, Property and the Environment within our community in a responsible and caring manner.*" The quick actions of our emergency crews limited the damage and property loss to these incidents.

Over the course of 2015 we had "zero" fire deaths. Unfortunately, 4 Firefighters and 9 civilians were injured. We strive to reduce the injuries to both Firefighters and Civilians. Moving forward to 2016 our goal will be "zero" injuries.

Achieving the goal of zero fire deaths has been a direct result of our commitment to the In-Service Smoke Alarm Fire Safety Program. This annual program operates in conjunction with our Fire Prevention Division.



Over the spring and summer months our Fire Suppression crews conduct regularly scheduled visits to various residential areas of the community. In 2015 our personnel conducted over 3,700 residential visits. The program runs from May to September. Fire Suppression personnel provide the public with literature and general knowledge of Carbon Monoxide and Home Fire Safety. A smoke alarm check is conducted to ensure that residents are compliant with Ontario Fire Code regulations and requirements.

In conjunction with the Office of the Fire Marshal and Emergency Management (OFMEM) our service completed the National Fire Protection Association Professional Qualifications Standards "grandfathering" process. All members applied through the OFMEM for "grandfathering equivalence". Our personnel applied for equivalency in the following areas; NFPA Firefighter I & II, NFPA Fire Officer I & II as well as NFPA Fire Instructor I & II.

All members have received their results. I am pleased to report the following NFPA equivalency granted by the OFMEM:

- NFPA Firefighter I - All members of the Suppression/Operations division except one (new recruit) are compliant.
- NFPA Firefighter II - All members of the Suppression/Operations division with the exception of 3 (1- new recruit, 1- 3rd Class Firefighter and 1- 1st Class Firefighter) are compliant.
- NFPA Fire Officer I and II - All Fire Officers of the Suppression/Operations division are compliant.
- NFPA Fire Service Instructor Level I - A total of 46 personnel attained compliancy.

Moving forward in 2016 a number of personnel are enrolled in courses at the Ontario Fire College. By the end of 2016 all members will be NFPA Firefighter I and II certified. As well, all Acting Fire Officers will be NFPA Fire Officer I certified. A number of Acting Officers will attend the NFPA Fire Officer II course which is scheduled to take place at the Ontario Fire College in Gravenhurst, Ontario.

Fire Suppression crews are required to maintain their competencies under the direction of the Deputy Fire Chief. The Deputy Fire Chief sets the parameters for the annual training schedule. Officers and Acting Officers were accountable to deliver the following subject topics for 2015:

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS REVIEW

AIRPORT PROCEDURES

ICE WATER RESCUE

PORTABLE PUMPS

FLASHOVER TRAINING

WILD LAND FIREFIGHTING

FIREFIGHTER- SELF SURVIVAL

FIRST AID & CPR HCP

DRIVER TRAINING

IMS 100



Over the course of 2015 Fire Suppression personnel recorded a total of 28,833 training hours, or an annual average of 324 training hours per individual. The hours are accumulated by crews in formal format, group training and individual training.

Four senior members of the Suppression Division attended an annual Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and Explosive (CBRNE) training. Topics that were trained on included: *Radiation Monitoring, Air Detection, Metering Exercise, Chemical Suicides, Dirty Bombs and Mass Decontamination.* The members returned from the Ontario Fire College and passed the materials learned to Suppression personnel.

A forcible entry training door was purchased for crews to practice techniques to gain entry on steel doors. All crews spent time utilizing the training system. Various techniques are taught to personnel utilizing hand tools to force doors open.

Each year all members of the Suppression Division take part in driver/emergency vehicle operation training. This takes place at the RESC Centre. A series of driving scenarios and obstacles are set up and personnel are taught to navigate the course in a safe and effective manner. This promotes effective tactical operations of our emergency vehicles.

All personnel completed an on-line training course- Incident Management System (IMS-100). The course was an overview of Incident Management. It was designed to teach basic functions, concepts and principles of the Incident Management System. This course is also a prerequisite for NFPA Fire Officer Level I.

In August, two personnel attended a training course involving Fire Behavior, Principles of Modern Fire Attack. The outcome of this training is to understand the importance of flow path and cooling during fire attacks. The acronym "**SLICERS**" direct us to conduct the following sequential activities:

Size up all scenes

Locate the fire

Identify & control the flow path

Cool the heated space from a safe location

Extinguish the fire

Rescue and **Salvage** are actions of opportunity that may occur at any time.

Our crews will be trained in this method of modern fire attack. It will provide additional tactics and strategies for Fire Officers and Firefighters to perform on the fire ground.

The Sault Ste. Marie Fire Service will continue to provide efficient and effective fire protection and emergency services to the community.

I want to thank the members of the Sault Ste. Marie Fire Service for their commitment to the Fire Service. Each member of our organization is dedicated to protect the lives and property of the citizens of Sault Ste. Marie.

Respectfully,

Peter Johnson

Deputy Fire Chief

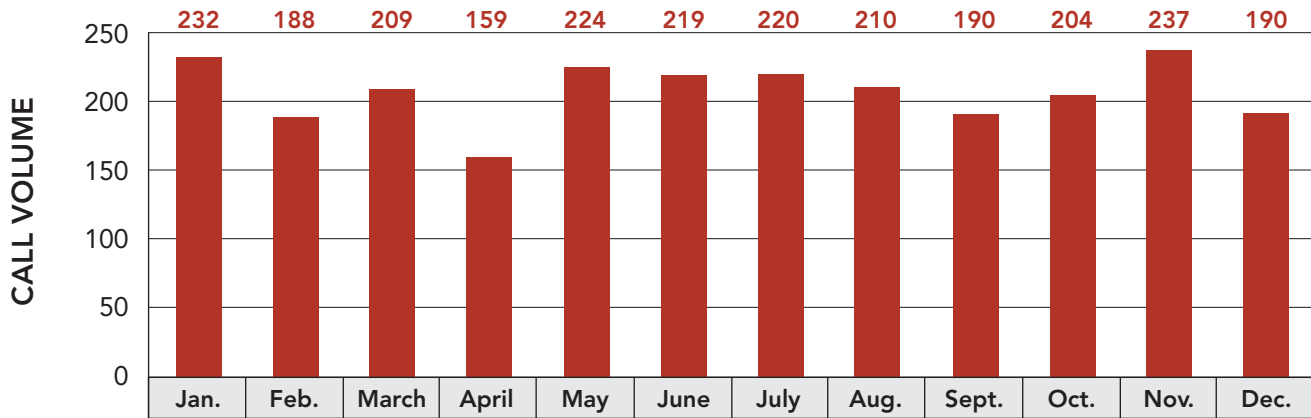
Sault Ste. Marie Fire Services



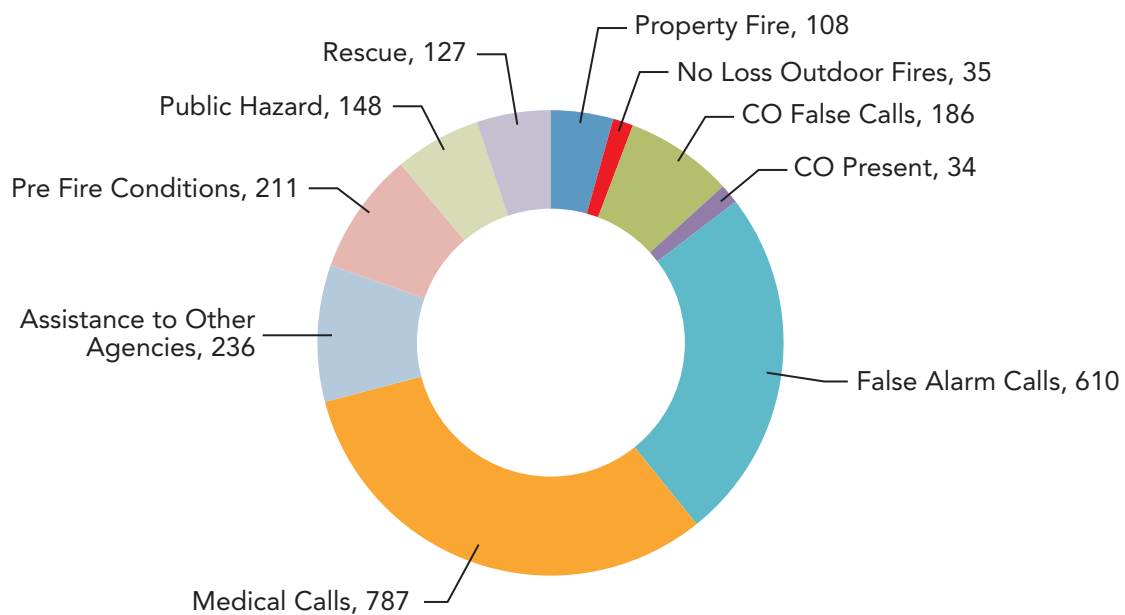
FIRE STATISTICS 2015

2015 CALL VOLUME

TOTAL: 2,482

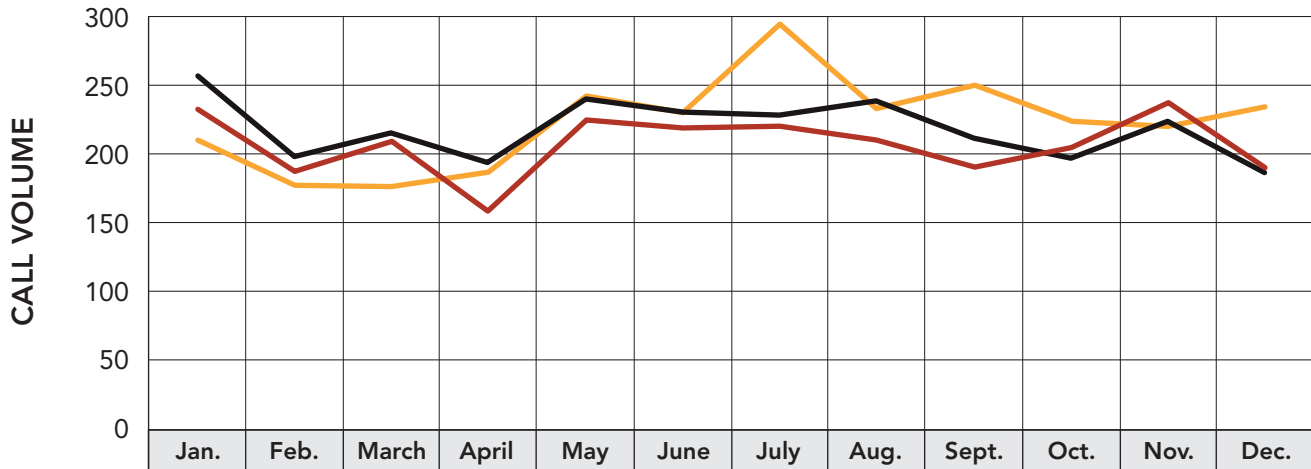


2015 RESPONSE TYPES



FIRE STATISTICS 2015

THREE-YEAR FIRE CALL VOLUME TRENDS



YEAR	2013	2014	2015
TOTALS:	2,675	2,616	2,482



FIRE EDUCATION AND PREVENTION



The **Fire Prevention Division** is responsible for promoting and maintaining fire safety within the community. When advocating fire safety, the division follows the Provincial mandate, primarily described within the “three lines of defense”. These lines of defense consist of, Public Education, Fire Safety Standards / Enforcement and Emergency Response.

As **Public Education** and **Fire Code Enforcement** remain ‘proactive’ functions, the decline of fire related events including property loss, injuries and fatalities, can be directly attributed to the first two lines of defense. The latter of the three, **Emergency Response**, although necessary, is primarily ‘reactive’ and does not function to mitigate risk, nor reduce fire occurrences. As almost all fires are behavioral, education and enforcement doesn’t always prevail. However, they do occur, making the third line of defense necessary.

With the Provincial mandate and the three lines of defense as our reference, the Prevention Division has managed to satisfy the legal responsibilities placed upon the municipality for 2015. This is accomplished by assessing known historical data from the previous year(s) and developing a ‘Simplified Risk Assessment’. Through this process, hazards are identified and risks are mitigated utilizing public education programs and code enforcement methods.

Over the past five (5) years, fire related incident rates continue to decline dramatically. Despite this decrease, our simplified risk assessment continues to identify ‘Class C-Residential occupancies’ as the primary building stock for concern. During the same time frame, this building class also accounts for the largest single property dollar loss at approximately 70% with the next closest classification at 7%, Industrial.

Fortunately, Sault Ste. Marie has not experienced a fire fatality since 2011, but over a broader survey the same cannot be said. Since 1998 our community has experienced sixteen (16) fatalities due to fire. All sixteen (16) fatalities have been within the Class C - Residential sector the majority, without working smoke alarms.



Public Education Programs - The First Line of Defense

Public education is provided in multiple formats throughout the year. In 2015, various methods involving radio, electronic messaging, tv and hanging sign boards were all utilized. Seniors programs, station tours and numerous lectures to various agencies/groups were taken advantage of, all promoting fire safety, to all building class occupants.

Fire Extinguisher training to varying audiences also provides an opportunity to discuss mitigating risks ensuring fires do not happen. Although classified as a reactive tool, extinguishers are primarily utilized by the public and as such they need to be trained on their safe, proper use. Outside of this, Fire Service specifically relies on three (3) primary programs to educate the public at large. They are as follows:

School Programs

Fire Services recognizes our most effective public education initiative is the annual elementary school program. Educating children from JK through to Grade 4 allows the Prevention Division to teach young impressionable children the basics of remaining safe from fire. Over the past several years we have also taken the opportunity to make contact with the Grade 8 class and discuss their role as young adults in fire safety.

At the primary level, in 2015, the Fire Prevention Division presented the "Get out Alive" program to our local Kindergarten through Grade 3 elementary school children.

Approximately 30-40 minutes is spent with each grade level presenting an interactive scenario. Fire Prevention officers walked the students through a potential scenario utilizing a floor layout, illustrated on a painted roll out matt. One student sounds a smoke alarm and other "sleeping" students are instructed to crawl low under smoke and gather at their predetermined meeting place. They are then instructed to proceed to a neighbours house.

The scenario is repeated several times with each student having an opportunity to participate. This program is very well received by the students and has proven to be a valuable teaching asset when covering topics such as, the need to develop, implement and practice a home escape plan, the importance of having a meeting place, the dangers of smoke and how to contact emergency services utilizing 911.

A question and answer period follows to reinforce the topics covered.

Grade 8 classes were shown a video entitled "No Time to Spare", depicting typical fire progression in a home which enforces the importance of both working smoke alarms and home escape planning. Over the months of January to May the Prevention Division managed to educate over 3,000 students.



PUBLIC EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES	
Lectures	236
Films	48
Demos	151
School Presentations	141



As a result of our risk assessment, cooking has been identified as a major cause for property loss, injuries and the majority of community fatal fires. In parallel with the primary grade program, the Secondary level is also educated. Specifically, In 2015, all high school Foods classes along with various life skills and career planning classes were provided safe cooking information. The 'Kitchen Fires or Not' program consists of discussing the root causes and mitigation strategies with young adults who are beginning to be introduced to cooking and the kitchen area. Tips regarding unattended cooking, distractions, kitchen clutter and how alcohol is often times

a contributing factor, are all discussed. Local kitchen fire incidents are discussed via real investigation photos and related narrative. The factors that contributed to the events and opposing views of how the event could have been avoided are discussed. The video "No Time to Spare" is utilized as a teaching medium to also reinforce the importance of smoke alarms and home escape planning when kitchen fires can't be avoided.



In-Service Smoke Alarm Program

Annually, Suppression crews go door to door to ensure smoke alarms are working. Over a ten year period we are proud to state that compliance rates have grown exponentially. The community has realized an increase in smoke alarm compliance from the low 80's to over 95%. This can be attributed to all Fire Service public education efforts and community attitude concerning the importance smoke alarms. Enforcement efforts in this regard have also increased compliance rates via part one offence notices. With legislative changes concerning Carbon Monoxide alarms within the residential sector our education/enforcement efforts will have to be augmented. In 2015, fire service crews again campaigned door to door. Crews engaged homeowners with pamphlet information related to Smoke Alarms, Carbon Monoxide detectors and home escape planning. Over the course of the program, Fire Service crews inspected 2,261 homes with 2,114 homes having at least one working smoke alarm, resulting in 93.5% compliance. For the 7th consecutive year, our community has exceeded the 90th percentile in compliance in this regard. Comparative stats from the inception of this program show considerable increase in compliance.



Clearly, the community is heeding the message, realizing the importance of working smoke alarms and personal fire safety being their responsibility.

Fire Prevention Week

Over the week of October 3rd through to the 10th, "Hear the Beep where you Sleep" was the theme for Fire Prevention Week. Fire Services partnered with local merchants, Home Depot, Walmart, Lowe's and Canadian Tire to assist promoting Fire safety awareness to the community. At these locations, displays consisting of various prevention messages regarding the importance of working smoke and C.O. Alarms were promoted. Patrons of the stores were engaged by Fire Prevention Officers discussing fire related issues, such as knowing two ways out of all buildings and identifying household hazards related to fire. As identified within our risk assessment, public education in this regard is an opportune time to remind home owners the importance of maintaining and testing smoke alarms. A display of smoke alarms, batteries, carbon monoxide alarms was conveniently placed adjacent to each display.



Fire Services Chief - Mike Figliola dropping the ceremonial puck at the October 9th, 2015 Soo Greyhounds game.

In 2015, Fire Services also partnered with the Soo Greyhound organization on October 9th game night. Fire Services Chief - Mike Figliola was on hand to kick off Fire Prevention Week, dropping the ceremonial puck. Sparky the fire dog, along with Dash the Greyhound mascot were also on hand for the kids. Prevention messages over the public address system challenging hockey fans to test their smoke alarms after the game were heard throughout the night. Fire Prevention officers were on hand, manning displays and handing out various fire safety information to game attendees. This ongoing partnership has proven to be invaluable, as this is our largest single collective audience to promote fire safety.



Inspection and Enforcement - The Second line of Defense

Inspection and Enforcement

With significant amendments to the 2015 OFC, Prevention efforts focused primarily on 'Class B' - Care occupancies. Buildings such as: Hospitals, Retirement residences, and Care and Treatment facilities being the focus of these amendments. As a result, Fire Service inspectors reached out to ownership groups within these facilities. With the focus on Fire Safety Plan development / implementation at the forefront, inspectors critiqued scenarios which replicated minimum staffing levels and approved mandatory fire drills under these circumstances. The Fire Prevention division has now added these occupancies to a list of building stock that will undergo annual inspections.

Under the Fire Protection and Prevention Act, the Fire Prevention Division is mandated to follow up on all complaint and request inspections. In doing so, officers routinely discover fire code infractions and issue orders as a result. To remain proactive, the division performs routine inspections in all occupancies throughout the year. This ensures owners remain compliant with the Ontario Fire Code (OFC) regulations within all building stock.

As life safety cannot always be achieved through public education, enforcement methods are often times necessary to achieve compliance. Further amendments to the OFC have resulted in over forty (40) additional ticketable offences to be used when necessary. Set fines for smoke alarm violations and other typical contraventions have increased substantially indicating the Provincial mandate recognizes the need for enforcement in this regard.

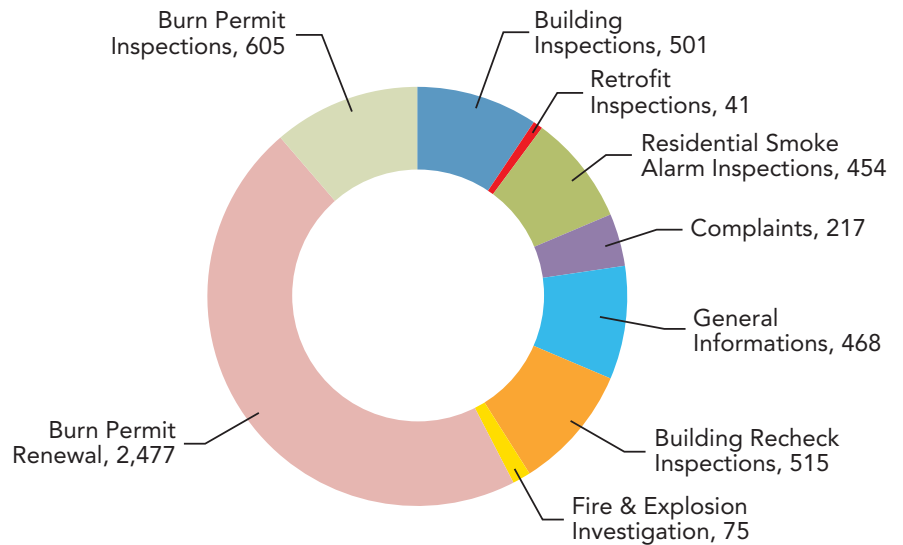
As all open air burning requires approval through the OFC, from Fire Services, Fire Prevention officers dedicate considerable hours during the summer months to this process. With a site visit officers also ensure smoke alarms are present and working within the residence. Annually, FPO's approve on average 600 new applications and perform additional smoke alarm tests in the process. This procedure is mutually beneficial to our efforts concerning working smoke alarms, within the residential sector and further ensures home owners burn safely without disturbing neighbours.

The priority for 2016 will remain the same. The Prevention Division will continue to promote fire safety within the community via public education and enforcement efforts. Adapting to ongoing or newly identified risks over the upcoming year will remain at the forefront.

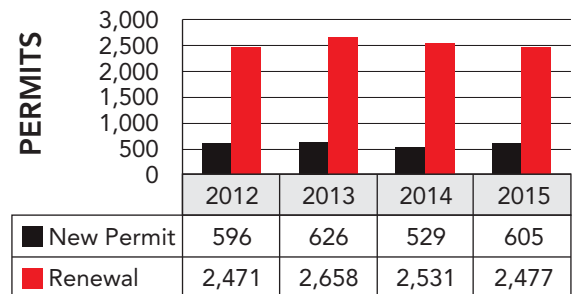


Paul Milosevich
Deputy Chief - Fire Prevention & Education

INSPECTION TYPES



OPEN AIR BURNING PERMITS



EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES



WORKING SAFER AND SMARTER

The paramedic's day is made up of caring for and transporting patients. The standard method for transportation of a patient is on a stretcher or cot. An ambulance call or response for one, relatively light 200 pound patient consists of many lifts and with the added weight of the cot (90 lbs.) a total lifting workload on a simple call is about 2,000 lbs. At the end of 2014 we introduced a power lift assist cot as the primary cot on all ambulances. The reduction in daily work load the assistance these units provide allows the paramedics to perform with less fatigue, a proven injury reduction factor making the introduction and daily use of power assist cots a critical part of our injury reduction program.

Bariatric patients have become an area we are experiencing with increased frequency and have resulted in paramedic injury and lost time incidents. In August the service added another piece of equipment focused on injury prevention to every ambulance, a larger safer and yet more maneuverable stairchair previously only available by request. With every paramedic having immediate access to the new EZ Glide stairchair every call can be handled with reduced risk to themselves and their patient. These stairchairs are used in confined spaces and where stairs are involved. This model is designed to carry heavier loads and descend stairs with minimal effort. Combined with the 700 pound capacity cots every crew will be prepared to safely handle a larger patient's emergency without the delay of waiting for supplemental equipment or assistance to arrive. Along with the added safety for the paramedics and allied agencies the safety and comfort of the patient's movement is an added benefit of these devices.

DEALING WITH WORLD EVENTS AND THOSE IN OUR OWN BACKYARD

Ebola; throughout 2015 continued vigilance, assessment and screening for potential Ebola exposed patients kept paramedics busy with training and review as policy and procedures evolved during the year. Fortunately with the exception of one false scare the service has not had to deal with a potential or actual case of any of the outbreak diseases that occurred elsewhere in the world. One benefit, although hard to appreciate at the time, is circumstances such as this created a heightened awareness of the need for thorough assessment and proper use of all the personal protective equipment paramedics have available to them. Some of the other specialized training undertaken involved awareness and reporting requirements for suspected child abuse or endangerment, unique trauma suffered by injured workers in our many area wind farm projects, IMS Incident Management System and many new directives and changes in legislated protocols. Annually paramedics have many hours of mandatory training in order to maintain certification with the province to provide advanced life support skills and medications to their patients. Sault Ste. Marie offers one of the highest standards of care available to our patients through new protocols and skill advancement supported by our paramedics and the service.

On a much more local level paramedics attended a number of public events, as we are often asked to be part of large charity or community events. For these we set up what is known as a standby situation; an ambulance may be separate from the event but close by and available if needed. Paramedics actively participated in many activities such as the *Kidz Summer Safety Day*, *Emergency Preparedness Showcase*, *ELIM Protectors Night*, *Sault Ste. Marie Science Festival*, *Santa Claus Parade* and other community events. The very successful *Paramedic's Helping the Hungry Food Drive* that took place in December raised almost 3,000 pounds of food and over \$5,000 for the local soup kitchen this year. This is just one of many volunteer activities the paramedics directed in the community.



KEEPING UP WITH THE TIMES

At the request of department management, supported by years of increasing work load data, the District of Sault Ste. Marie Social Services Administration Board (DSSMSSAB) who is responsible for land ambulance delivery agreed to address a growing over capacity situation. They initiated a pilot project starting on June 30th, 2015 using internal funding sources of an additional 12 hour a day paramedic crew. This was a trial project to try and reduce the high number of times current resources were beyond capacity creating delays responding to emergency calls. This was the first additional hours of paramedic service were added since 2002. The ambulance was put into service to cover the peak call volume hours when the service struggled most to meet demand. With six months of pilot project data supporting the need for the additional peak demand day shift the DSSMSSAB agreed to continue funding the project until March 2016. Results for the study period clearly showed the need for this resource and more as the service demand still exceeds resources more often than is an acceptable risk level. Statistics once again show an increase in call volume of 5.6% (684 calls) over the previous year but the added resources of the trial helped to reduce the negative impact on service delivery.

The ambulance service falls under the control of Ministry of Health Long Term Care (MOHLTC) operated dispatch centre and responds wherever sent, regardless of political, municipal or geographic boundaries. The Garden River First Nation (GRFN) Base is operated by the SSMFS EMS Division under agreement with the MOHLTC. In early June a request for additional 100% funding to expand from 12 to 24 hours a day was submitted. This was based on many factors including a 55% call volume increase since December of 2010, limited nighttime resources to respond to this eastern area and that dispatched ambulances from the nearest city or Richards Landing bases provided unacceptable response times. Serving the GRFN community and all surrounding areas east this base is an important part of the districts deployment strategy.

In October, the MOHLTC answered the request for enhanced funding for the GRFN EMS operation allowing for the first time the provision of 24/7 ambulance service in the community and eastern response area. This 100% MOHLTC funded expansion started on November 12th and had a positive impact on resource deployment for both Sault Ste Marie and Algoma paramedic services.

POSITIVE STEPS INTO THE FUTURE

Much of the fall of 2015 was spent planning and designing a new deployment strategy that would see a 1999 Emergency Support Unit and a 2001 response vehicle replaced with two new Emergency Response Vehicles (ERVs). These two pickup style vehicles with modular caps split the extra resources needed for the rare major events as well as are stocked and certified to operate as day to day emergency response to calls of any nature. The newly created role of Paramedic Supervisor will be staffing these once they arrive and are put into service in early 2016. As part of maintaining an operator's license from the MOHLTC having well documented oversight of service delivery from patient care, response to demand, meeting legislated standards and overall operational efficiency of day to day operations is required. The additional support, oversight and assistance the Paramedic Supervisors will provide the crews and management team will have a positive impact on the audit scores when the Inspections and Certification inspectors do their spot checks or full service license review audits.



Sincerely,

Robert Rushworth
Manager, EMS



EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES STATISTICS

2015

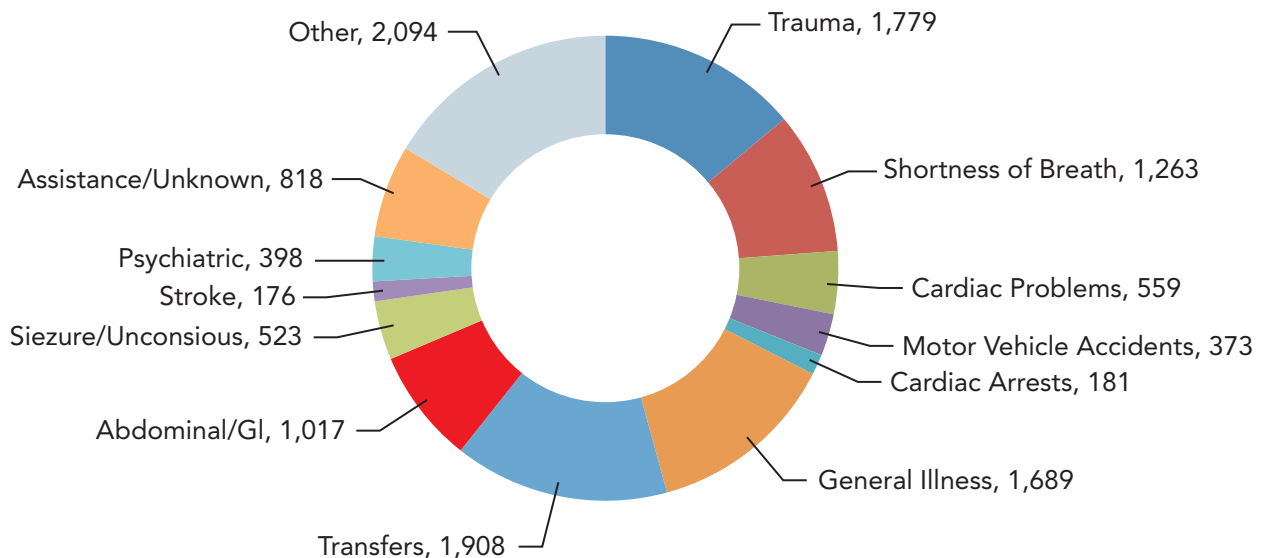


	Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3	Priority 4	Priority 8	2015 TOTAL
DISPATCHED RESPONSE TYPE	Deferrable call potential for up to 24 hours	Scheduled patient transfer	Prompt response, may be delayed for up to 10 minutes or in the event of a Priority 4 call	Urgent, immediate response required; lights and siren used	Stand by as requested at Police or Fire scene	↓
Total	1,430	662	3,056	7,611	19	12,778
Percentage	11%	5%	24%	60%	0.1%	100%

EMS CALL VOLUME TRENDS

2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
10,744	11,188	11,612	12,093	12,778

2015 RESPONSE TYPES



COMMUNITY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

COMMUNITY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

The Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act requires that municipalities in Ontario develop and implement emergency management programs consisting of emergency plans, training, exercises and public education. The aim of the emergency management program in Sault Ste. Marie is to create a disaster resilient community. 2015 saw considerable improvements to preparedness with enhancements in Sault Ste. Marie's emergency management program.

Additionally, with the ever-present threat of natural, technological and human-caused disasters, it is incumbent on all Sault Ste. Marie residents to develop personal, family, and/or business emergency plans. Having a personal disaster plan is the first line of defense against the disasters that may affect the Sault Ste. Marie region.

PUBLIC EDUCATION

Emergency Preparedness Week (May 3rd-9th)

Emergency Preparedness Week (EP Week) is a Canada-wide initiative to increase awareness of individual and family preparedness. Throughout the week, we teamed with Canadian Red Cross to provide preparedness tips at Mill Market, Indian Friendship Centre and Walmart. For the first time, we implemented a social media contest that involved asking emergency preparedness trivia questions on Twitter and asking Saultites to participate for their chance to win a survival kit. Closing EP Week was the annual Emergency Preparedness Showcase which brings together the City's Emergency Response Network. It was again our largest event of the year, attracting residents from all over Sault Ste. Marie and some new partners. Fortunately, we had no rain this year! The Aviation and Forest Fire and Emergency Services Division of Ministry of Natural Resources attended for the first time and brought along Smokey the Bear.

Winter Preparedness Week (November 8th-14th)

Winter weather can be unforgiving in our community, with the possibility of high wind chills, heavy snowfalls, blizzards, freezing rain and extremely cold temperatures. To ensure that residents are prepared for potential winter storms, we created Winter Preparedness Week to provide tips on winter safety and preparedness. We teamed with the Canadian Red Cross to provide presentations & information booths at Lowe's, YMCA and Sault Ste. Marie Centennial Library. We also initiated a social media awareness campaign that highlighted the services provided by Sault Search & Rescue.



High School Culinary Program

In 2015, we continued delivering the emergency preparedness program to high school foods and nutrition classes. The program begins with a lesson on emergency preparedness and what students can do to help their families prepare for emergencies. Sault Search and Rescue then demonstrates for the students how to creatively prepare a delicious meal using only non-perishable items that could be included in a 72-hour emergency kit.



TRAINING AND EXERCISES

Area Maritime Security Table-Top Exercise

The U.S. Coast Guard, with the help of the Emergency Management Division and other Canadian and American partners, held a tabletop exercise in the fall of 2015. The purpose of the tabletop exercise was to ensure readiness of the port community to respond to a Transportation Security Incident (TSI) within the Sault Region. The CN Rail Bridge, International Bridge, and Soo Locks System in Sault Ste. Marie combine to form a critical multimodal node for both the U.S. and Canada. The scenario involved the explosion of a small recreational boat bomb along the St. Mary's River in Sault Ste. Marie and provided a great setting to identify and improve on federal, state/provincial and local preparation and response procedures.



Ice Mass Rescue Table-Top Exercise

The US Coast Guard, in partnership with the Emergency Management Division and other Canadian and American partners, conducted a tabletop exercise in the winter of 2015 to provide an opportunity to evaluate response plans, capabilities and coordination for an aviation based ice mass rescue operation. The scenario involved a Canadian airplane crashing into the ice on the St. Mary's River near Pointe Des Chenes and Waishkey Bay and brought on a discussion regarding ice rescue personnel, mutual aid resources, equipment availability, incident/unified command and public affairs issues. In March of 2016, a full-scale exercise involving this scenario is expected to take place.

Note-taking Training

Recent emergencies throughout the region have highlighted the importance of providing an accurate recount of events. This is only possible if all communications and actions related to the incident are well documented. It is important that all people involved in a disaster learn proper documentation techniques to better help them provide accurate information in instances where an individual may need to be interviewed as part of an investigation, an insurance claim or by an employer. This year, all members of the city's Emergency Management Planning Committee received note-taking training.



SUPPORT SERVICES

Communication

New recruits begin their careers as cadets and work as Communications Operators in the Communication room of the Fire Services. Initial training to understand and handle all facets of the Communications Room is required, including operating the CriSys Dispatch System, the municipal fire alarm monitoring system, the Hazmat computer as well as radio and telephone procedures, all of which are monitored by Support Services.

There was one new cadet hire in 2015.

New enhanced T911 technology was installed in the dispatch area to enable dispatchers to be able to text with registered users that have speaking and hearing vulnerabilities.



Municipal Fire Alarm Monitoring System

The Municipal Fire Alarm Monitoring System includes installation and maintenance of alarm modules for subscribers, 24-hour monitoring, pre-fire planning and data entry for the computer-aided dispatch system. One hundred and sixty (160) subscribers were connected to the Municipal Fire Alarm Monitoring System. This system was near the end of its serviceable life and technologies were quickly making it necessary to investigate upgrading to new technologies or consider discontinuation of the monitoring system. The recommendation to discontinue this service was based on costly upgrades and potential liabilities of system failures was initiated with six month notification to all subscribers in June and advised to find alternate agencies that provide fire alarm monitoring. Fire alarm monitoring was discontinued at Dec 31/2015 and the antiquated system removed.

CriSys Dispatch System

CriSys is a computer-aided dispatch and records management system accessed by all divisions within the department. Ongoing software upgrades are rolled out by the Crisys developers. As the software versions evolve, users are advised of the new changes and assist with problems.

Once again as the system administrator, I attended the User Group Seminar in Toronto for the CriSys System. New functions relative to the system as well as information exchange with other users permits use of the CriSys System to its fullest capabilities. Onsite training for three additional system administrators was also provided in 2015 that will allow for some redundancy.

MECHANICAL

Fire Halls

Support Services conducts the maintenance of the four fire stations. Major renovations to the fire stations included the replacement of three (3) electric garage bay door openers in 2015. There will be three (3) additional openers budgeted for in 2016. The stations ongoing operating deficiencies are managed by this division. Annual spring cleaning includes re-painting of walls and ceilings and floors are completed by on duty shifts assigned specific areas of responsibility.



Vehicles and Equipment

In an effort to extend service life of Fire Services vehicles, regular maintenance and repairs to all vehicles, tools, equipment and annual M.T.O. Mechanical Safety Inspections were completed in 2015. Maintenance and repairs is also provided to the Ambulance fleet and some of the city's Police patrol vehicles.

Annual pump flow testing of all trucks with fire pumps, aerial and ground ladder non-destructive testing for all units that are equipped with ladders is also performed. This insures that the pumps are flowing water according to ULC specifications. Firefighter breathing packs also have flow testing done annually to insure that these self-contained breathing apparatus meet prescribed standards to insure personal safety on the fire ground.



2015 was an exciting year as Fire Services took possession of a replacement Pump/Rescue Unit. This extensive project involved drafting specifications, pre-build and inspection meetings at chassis and body manufacturers in Nebraska, as well as pre-paint and final delivery of the pumper/rescue in early 2016. One surplus unit will be removed from the fleet, thus lowering operational costs.

Training

All personnel maintain "Z" endorsement licenses and are processed through Support Services. Other aspects of training on pumpers and aerial operations, tools and equipment are done in conjunction with the Platoon Chiefs.

Our mechanics attended the Mechanical Officers Seminar, held at the Fire College in Gravenhurst, Ontario as well as Spartan Factory Fire truck seminar in Charlotte, Michigan. These seminars always prove to be beneficial as new products and technology are discussed along with upgrades of maintenance procedures for various fire services equipment. Quarterly diagnostic training seminars are held in our shop in partnership with Auto Aide and other city department mechanics insuring that the latest technological diagnosing is made available to help in the ongoing changes evolving with in the industry.



Occupational Health & Safety

Various testing of Fire vehicles, SCBA and cylinders, cascade systems, fire extinguishers, ground ladders and aerials that are required by NFPA guidelines and ULC regulations are conducted annually. Some of these tests include air quality of the Cascade (breathing air compressor), hydrostatic testing of all SCBA cylinders (five year expiry) and fire extinguishers as required. Other testing involves non-destructive testing of aerial and ground ladders as well pump capacity ratings on all units with a fire pump.

We also arrange for annual load testing of four station back-up generators and the inspections of the two hoists in our repair shop.



I would like to acknowledge the efforts of my staff Dan Crozier and Bill Wallace and the clerical staff that have helped to provide the services to our department throughout the past year.



Jim St. Jules

Deputy Chief - Support Services



OUR SERVICES

Emergency Response Centres



Station 1 - Main Hall
72 Tancred Street



Station 2
363 Second Line West



Station 3
100 Bennett Blvd.



Station 4 - RESC
65 Old Garden River Road



EMS-Garden River
15 Shingwauk Street



2015 ACCOLADES

Retirements

**In appreciation for years of
Dedicated Service with the
Sault Ste. Marie Fire Services**

Congratulations on your Retirement!

Fire Chief Marcel Provenzano
February 1, 1982 - January 31, 2015

Captain Doug Robertson
January 2, 1985 - February 28, 2015

Platoon Chief Dave Lang
April 6, 1981 - May 31, 2015

Platoon Chief Terry Dubois
August 29, 1983 - May 31, 2015

Deputy Chief Frank Brescacin
December 19, 1983 - June 30, 2015

Captain Mirt Pinnell
April 6, 1981 - July 31, 2015

Captain Terry Barrett
January 2, 1985 - July 31, 2015

1st Class Firefighter Tim Gregorini
May 8, 1989 - December 27, 2015



2015 ACCOLADES

Awards

FIRE SERVICES

Provincial Long Service - 30 Year

Doug Robertson

Terry Barrett

*Provincial Fire Services'
Long Service Medals
- 25 Years Service*

George Bumbacco

Fire Services Exemplary

Service Medals

- 20 Year Service

Daniel Coutu

Clayton Breault

James Hachey

Peter Johnson

City of Sault Ste. Marie

25 Year Service Award

George Bumbacco

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

N.H. McNally Award of Bravery

In recognition of actions on July 25, 2014

*Awarded by the Ontario Association of Paramedic Chiefs
- September 24, 2015*

Kevin Van Horne

Jay Ceskauskas



IN THE COMMUNITY



"Get Out Alive" Program



"Annual Rotary Santa Claus Parade"



"Fill the Boot"



"EMS - Ice Bucket Challenge"



"ELIM's Protector Night"



*Terry the Traumasaurus at
"Paramedics Helping the Hungry Food Drive"*

SSIMF'S

