



# ANNUAL REPORT

2020



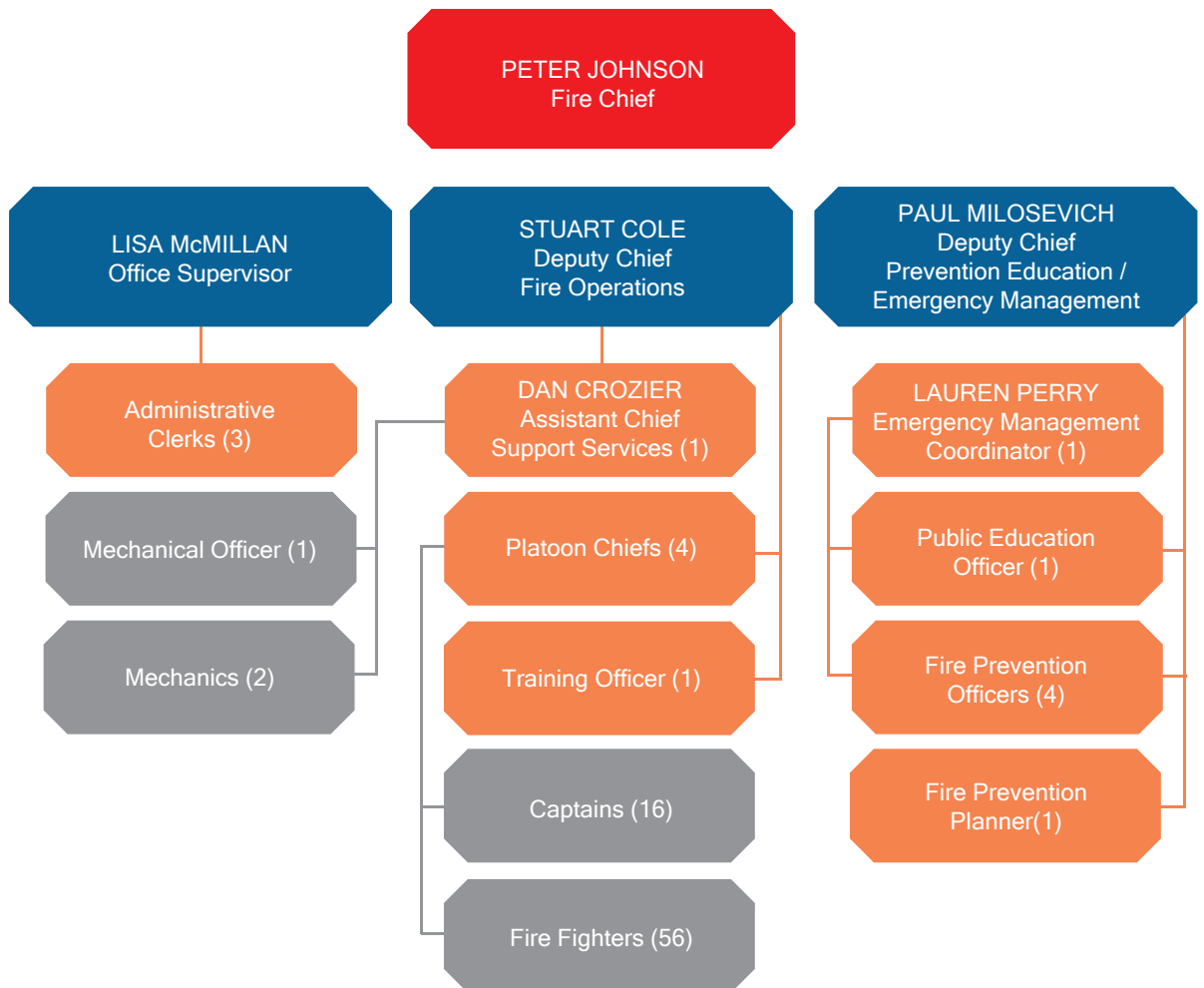


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# SAULT STE. MARIE FIRE SERVICES ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



## FIRE CHIEF'S MESSAGE



On behalf of the Sault Ste. Marie Fire Service, it is my pleasure to present the 2020 Annual Report. Each day our committed team of professionals deliver exceptional emergency service to our community by following the City Council mandated level of service. We take pride in serving our residents and creating a fire safe community.

For everyone, the year 2020 presented unique and uncertain challenges. Members of our Fire Service met and overcame these challenges. Delivering all of our services to the community during COVID-19 was not easy. Ensuring the safety of our staff was imperative, while they continued to serve the community. I want to personally thank all members of our service for their tremendous efforts throughout this pandemic. Our Service has learned a lot and I have no doubt that we have expanded our knowledge and ability to adapt to change.

Maintaining training, education and professional development for staff is critical to ensure our goals and objectives are met. Following the "Three (3) Lines of Defense" remains at the forefront of our strategic direction. The key performance objective is to reduce the loss of life and loss of property in our community. This starts with enforcing and ensuring fire code compliance. Bringing the fire safety message to the community educates everyone on the dangers of fire and the importance of being compliant with the Fire Code.

It takes all members of our organization to make a difference in this community. We are all committed to our core values: Public Safety, Staff Safety, Customer Service, Integrity and Honesty. Our values are at the forefront of everything we do. As Fire Chief, I am honored to lead this exceptional team. The employees here at Sault Ste. Marie Fire Services are our greatest asset. Thank you all for your continued support to me as your Fire Chief.



A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Peter Johnson".

**Peter Johnson, CMM III**  
Fire Chief



### VISION

*“Committed to Provide Effective and Efficient Emergency Service in a Caring Manner to Create a Safe Community”*

### MISSION

*“A Proud Partner within Our Community That Provides Exceptional Service through Prevention, Education, Protection and Wellness”*

### VALUES

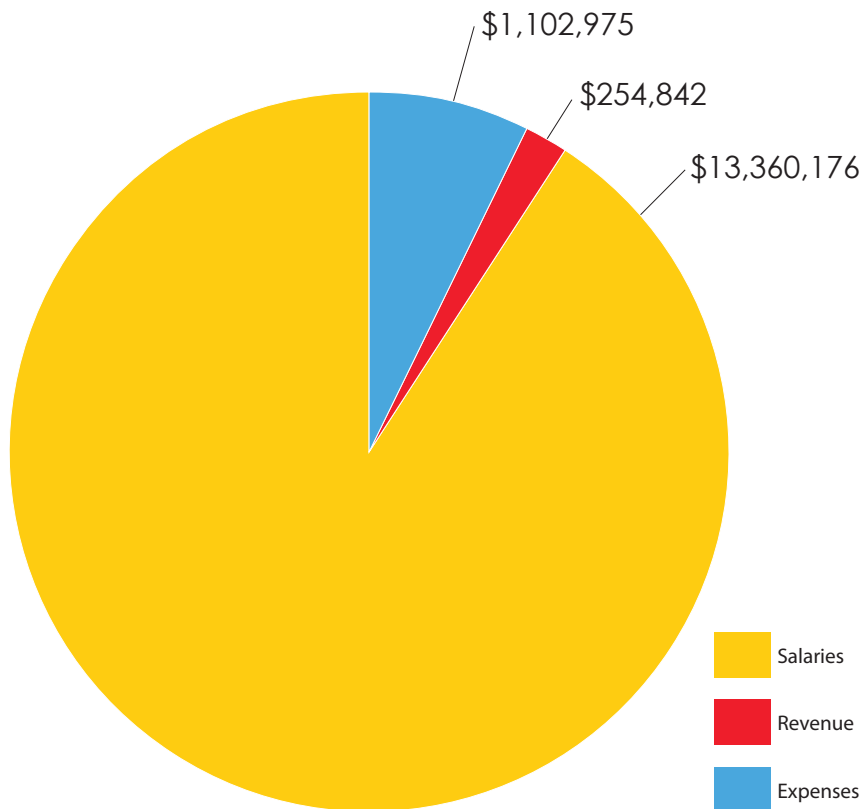
*Public Safety,  
Employee Safety,  
Customer Service,  
Integrity and  
Honesty*



## FIRE ADMINISTRATION

The Fire Administration team is responsible for managing all divisions of Sault Ste. Marie Fire Services. It oversees and directs the day-to-day operations including current and long range Strategic Planning, Capital and Operational Budgets, Fleet Management, Labour Relations and Policy Development. Sault Ste. Marie Fire Services continues to implement the approved Comprehensive Risk Assessment (CRA) and Fire Master Plan (FMP). The FMP was developed to provide the Mayor and Council a strategic framework for the delivery of fire protection services. The FMP contains legislative responsibilities and industry best practices which are accompanied by recommendations to enhance the delivery of fire protection services for the community of Sault Ste. Marie.

### 2020 Fire Services Budget





## 2020 FIRE STATISTICS

2020 Emergency Call Summary		Total Calls	1708
Injuries Reported	Civic		6
	Firefighter		3
Estimated Loss	Outdoor		\$7,250
	Structure		\$2,658,585
	Vehicle		\$205,124
<b>Response Type</b>		<b>FIRE Calls</b>	<b>116</b>
Loss reported	Outdoor		10
	Structure		66
	Vehicle		13
No Loss reported	Outdoor		10
	Structure		17
Outdoor - No Loss			51
<b>Response Type</b>		<b>NON FIRE Calls</b>	<b>1541</b>
	Burning		134
	CO False Calls		141
	False Fire Calls		423
	Medical Calls		167
	Other		246
	Pre Fire/no fire		186
	Public Hazard		139
	Rescue		105
<b>Emergency Response in other Municipalities</b>			
	MacDonald, Meredith & Aberdeen Add'l		1
	Prince		5
	Rankin		25



## Major Fires In 2020 (Loss Over \$100,000)

Date	Location	Structural Type	# of Firefighters on Scene
February 17, 2020	Moody Street	Residential	15
March 23, 2020	McCrea Street	Residential	16
April 25, 2020	Panoramic Drive	Residential	15
May 23, 2020	Wellington Street East	Residential	15
June 9, 2020	Dablon Street	School	19
August 12, 2020	Third Line West	Commercial	15
August 23, 2020	McFadden Avenue	Residential	16
November 6, 2020	Central Street	Residential	16
November 23, 2020	Trunk Road	Residential	21





## FIRE PREVENTION & PUBLIC EDUCATION

The Sault Ste. Marie Fire Prevention Division prides itself in providing a proactive approach to Fire and Life Safety for our community. Remaining visible and active in this role continues to be our top priority. The Fire Prevention Division takes advantage of every available opportunity to educate the public concerning fire life safety and to provide a fair and consistent approach to Fire Code enforcement across all building stock.

Challenges with COVID-19 affected all aspects of the Fire Service. The Prevention Division was specifically challenged, as our “day to day” function is direct public interaction concerning Fire Code enforcement and Public Education engagement, which was clearly limited. Despite these challenges, the Fire Prevention Division managed to maintain Fire Protection and Prevention Act (FPPA) mandated inspections (complaint / request) and utilized virtual formats, where possible, regarding several public education programs.

With COVID challenges in 2020, we remained diligent adhering to the Provincial mandate and the three lines of defense. With that, the Division met the legal responsibilities placed upon the municipality by 2.(1).(a) of the Fire Protection and Prevention Act (FPPA).

### Public Education Programs – The First Line of Defense

Public education was limited to several formats throughout the year. In 2020, various methods involving radio, electronic messaging, social media, billboards and hanging sign boards were utilized. Of the many education opportunities the prevention division utilizes, we typically rely on the following primary programs to educate the public at large. They are as follows:

- **Primary School Program**

As our Primary School program runs from January through March, the Fire Prevention Division managed to get through 75% of our community schools prior to the COVID-19 shutdown. A program titled “Not Every Hero Wears a Cape, Plan & Practice your Escape” was the 2020 theme.

In this very interactive program, the students entered a pretend house (as illustrated on our printed floor mat). Once inside they pretend to sleep while one participant sounds the smoke alarm. Students are awakened, crawl low under smoke and gather at the predetermined meeting place. They then proceed to the neighbor’s house where a call is made to the Fire Service via our giant telephone - (9-1-1). The response utilizes “Squirt” - the remote-controlled fire truck who responds with two students dressed as firefighters to assist as necessary.

Over 3200 Primary grade students received this life safety information.

- **Secondary School Program**

Similarly In 2020, the five (5) main programs delivered to local high school students where complete prior to the COVID-19 crisis. These programs included ‘Kitchen Fire Safety in Foods & Nutrition Courses’, ‘Fire Service Recruitment’ for careers courses, the ‘Science of Fire’ for grade 9 science classes, ‘Fire & the Law’ for grade 11 & 12 law courses, as well as fire Safety for ‘Life for Outdoor and Family Living’ courses. These programs were delivered both first and second semesters, and had a combined total of over 600 students participate in our local secondary schools.



- **Fire Prevention Week / C.O. Awareness Week.**

The theme for Fire Prevention Week in 2020 the Fire Prevention Week theme was, “Serve up Fire Safety In the Kitchen”. Community engagement was primarily via various types of media. Our Community Partner “Rome’s Grocery Store” was utilized to film various CTV commercials and radio promotions. Social media was extensively used during this week to great advantage.

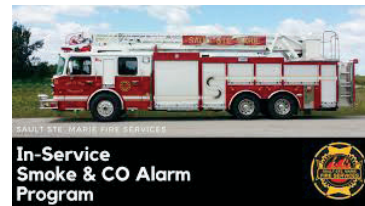
- **Project ASAP**

A top priority from 2019 into 2020 was continued focus on our aging population. Our newest seniors program, “Project ASAP” (Assisting Seniors Awareness Program) remained active during the COVID-19 crisis with over 15 personalized visits, (when safe with protocols) and continued use of all media opportunities. Through the pandemic crisis and moving into 2021, this program will continue to gain momentum.



- **In-Service Smoke & Carbon Monoxide Alarm Program**

A critical program performed jointly with the Suppression division is our annual “Door to Door” effort concerning Smoke / CO alarms. With class C occupancies being our most important focus, having and maintain working smoke alarms on all levels of the home cannot be overstated to personal fire safety. History continues to show that working smoke alarms can make a difference between life and death, should a fire occur in the home.



With COVID-19 SSMFS could not perform this very important mandated program in a traditional way. With this challenge came opportunity. For the 2020 campaign, the Fire Prevention Division collaborated with our local PUC services to insert over 33,000 fire safety pamphlets in monthly electrical billing. This proved to be an effective and efficient way to transfer fire safety information to the residential sector while ensuring SSMFS met the mandated requirement under the FPPA. If the pandemic continues into 2021 this partnership opportunity remains. Despite the challenges of COVID-19, the community is heeding the fire safety message. Compliance rates remain high, as the public has realized that personal fire safety is their responsibility.

## **Inspection and Enforcement – The Second line of Defense**

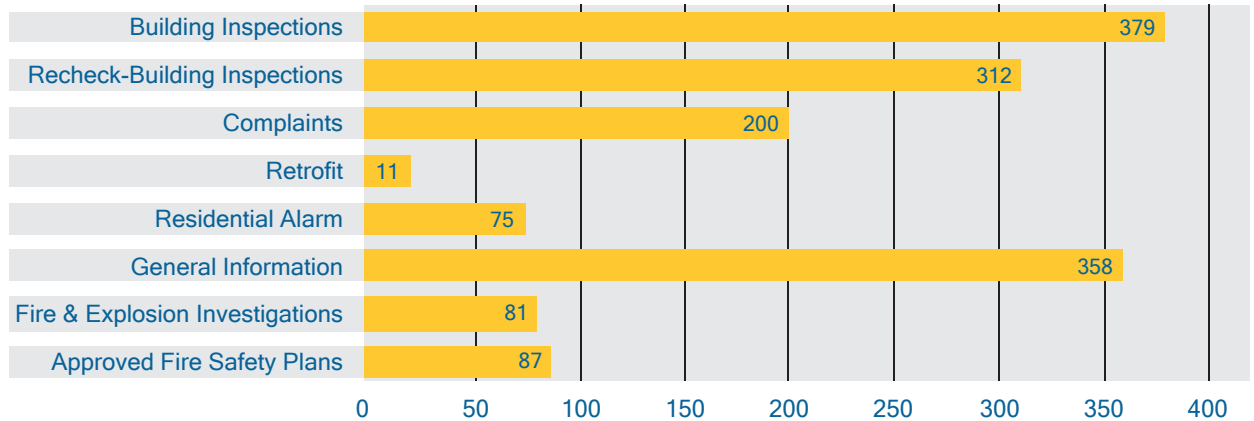
Under 2.(1).a of the FPPA the Fire Prevention Division is mandated to follow up on all complaints / requests and perform comprehensive inspections / drills and In doing so, officers routinely discover Fire Code infractions and issue compliance orders as a result. As life safety cannot always be achieved through public education, enforcement methods are often times necessary to achieve compliance.

The COVID -19 pandemic had a profound effect on the way we enforced the fire code. Not only did we have to ensure compliance remained in occupied buildings the challenge remained that most buildings were not accessible. With that, we narrowed our focus to essential life safety inspections in the residential sector, which included smoke and CO alarms, vulnerable occupancies and primary /secondary schools. We continued to follow up on all mandated inspections as well as all real estate transaction inspections. Early on during the pandemic, backyard recreational burning became very popular as individuals were staying home. Within the first three (3) months, Fire Prevention Officers inspected over 900 homes for smoke alarm compliance and issued Open Air Burn Permits.

As the restrictions eased during the summer months, we returned to a somewhat normal schedule and performed all typical FPO functions.



## 2020 Fire Prevention & Education Statistics



## Looking Forward

With the hopeful end to the COVID-19 pandemic, the priorities for 2021 will remain the same. When performing routine inspections, risk based enforcement efforts across all building stock, will continue to be the norm. Special focus and attention will continue on 'Vulnerable Occupancies', but not at the expense of the remaining classifications. Our annual SRA clearly shows the path that Education and Enforcement efforts need to take. New, exciting programs are currently being developed and partnerships are being formed. Social media is being utilized to its fullest, engaging younger demographic in a more current medium. With an aging population, we will continue to foster and grow our recent program 'Project ASAP' specifically designed for our senior demographic.

All of these efforts have contributed, and will continue to contribute well into the future, to greater community safety.

*Paul Milosevich*

Deputy Chief - Fire Education, Prevention & Emergency Management

## FIRE OPERATIONS

The **Fire Operations Division** is focused on the delivery of Emergency Fire Protection, Emergency Medical Care and related emergencies to the residents of Sault Ste. Marie. The Fire Operations Division is comprised of Suppression, Training, and Support Services personnel. Our goal is to provide quick and efficient emergency service in a compassionate manner.

Our highly-trained professional Firefighters are equipped with modern fire apparatus and equipment. Suppression Division Firefighters are located at four (4) stations throughout the municipality. In 2020, the Fire Suppression Division responded to 1,708 alarms, nine (9) of which were significant fires that resulted in a loss of more than \$100,000. The Fire Suppression Division responses were down by approximately 40% below 2019 responses. This is almost exclusively due to response adjustments resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Sault Ste. Marie Fire Services' (SSMFS) primary response objectives coincide directly with our Mission Statement - "The Sault Ste. Marie Fire Service is a proud partner within our community that provides exceptional service through Prevention, Education, Protection and Wellness".

The quick actions of our Fire Operations crews limited the damage and property loss to these incidents. The Sault Ste. Marie Fire Service strives to meet the NFPA Standard of responding in four (4) minutes or less 90% of the time in order to mitigate the property loss to the community.

In 2020, we had zero fire fatalities. There were three(3) Firefighters and six (6) civilians with injuries reported. I am pleased to report that this is a reduction in fire fatalities and well as both civilian and firefighter injuries over the previous year. Moving forward to 2021, our goal will be to continue our efforts to achieving zero deaths again and fewer injuries.

Achieving this goal of zero fire-related deaths and fewer injuries is directly related to our commitment to the "In-Service Smoke Alarm Fire Safety Program" in addition to our preparedness through training. The annual program





is conducted by Firefighters as part of the SSMFS Public Education Program in conjunction with our Fire Prevention Division. Over the spring and summer months, our Fire Operations crews conduct regularly scheduled visits to various residential areas of the community. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19 restrictions the Fire Prevention Division was forced to modify the program. Fire Suppression crews were not permitted to conduct in person visits. Fire Suppression personnel provide the public with resources and information on carbon monoxide and home fire safety. In addition, smoke and carbon monoxide alarm checks are conducted to ensure that residents are compliant with Ontario Fire Code regulations and requirements.



In 2020, only two (2) of Fire Services personnel were able to attend courses at the Ontario Fire College (OFC) located in Gravenhurst, Ontario. All other courses were cancelled in mid-March due to COVID-19 closures. Unknown at the time, was that these would be the last courses held at the Ontario Fire College in Gravenhurst. The Ontario Government made the discussion to permanently close the college in January 2021. SSMFS was able to conduct two (2) weeks of OFC classes in Sault Ste. Marie. This permits a large number of students to complete courses in a cost-effective manner. Fire Operations crews are required to maintain their competencies under the direction of the Deputy Fire Chief who sets the parameters for the annual training schedule.

### **Ontario Fire College - Gravenhurst**

NFPA 1021 Fire Officer II (2 Staff)

### **Ontario Fire College – Sault Ste. Marie**

Fire Code Div B Parts 2 & 6 - (10 Staff)

NFPA 1031 Fire Inspector I - (10 Staff)

Over the course of 2020, Fire Suppression personnel recorded a total of 23,389 training hours or an annual average of 308 training hours per individual. These hours are accumulated by crews in within a formal training format, group/crew training, and individual training.

The following, are just some of the areas that Fire Operations personnel trained on:

- Ice/Water Ice Rescue
- Officer Training
- Vehicle Extrication
- Operating Guideline and Notice Review
- Fire Dynamics and Modern Fire Behaviour
- Occupational Health and Safety
- Firefighter Rescue
- Pumper Operation
- First aid and CPR Training
- Fire Apparatus Driver Training

## Changes in 2020

2020 saw several changes and advancements within the Operations Division. Some of the highlights are:

### Retirements and New Hires

Four (4) Firefighters retired and were replaced in 2020.

### COVID-19 Pandemic

All three (3) Sub-Divisions comprising the Operations Division of Sault Fire Services maintained their full staffing capabilities throughout 2020. This was in part due to the diligent adherence to public and workplace safety measure by all staff.



### Firefighter Recruitment

Firefighter recruitment was completed between August and November. At the completion of the process, a Firefighter Recruit List was developed. When a firefighter position becomes available the firefighter recruit is drawn from this list.

## Looking Forward

Looking ahead to 2021, the Fire Operations Division will take part in several new initiatives. While in-house training continued throughout the year, Firefighters will pick up on certification courses that were required to be paused due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Fire Services will be completing the design and tender process for a new Rescue Truck.

Fire Services will seek council approval to move forward with developing an agreement with the Office of the Fire Marshal for the locating of a Regional Training Center in Sault Ste. Marie.

I would like to welcome all the new recruits and thank all members of the Sault Ste. Marie Fire Services for their commitment and dedication to protecting the lives, property, and environment for the citizens of Sault Ste. Marie.

*Stuart Cole*

Deputy Chief - Fire Operations

## SUPPORT SERVICES

### Communications

This area of Fire Services saw some important upgrades during 2020 and regular maintenances issues as well as:

- All portable and mobile radios undergo annual tune-ups. A number of older no- serviceable hand held radios were replaced in an effort to continue to upgrade the radio system in a cost effective fashion.
- Information and initial discussion regarding a Hall PA system upgrade is brought in to the budget process.
- Support Services worked in conjunction with personnel from Bell 911, CriSys, Algoma Telephone and Sault Ste. Marie Police Service in the budgeting, mechanical and engineering design aspects of the rapidly approaching NG911 system implementation target date. A back up dispatch room for use by Sault Ste. Marie Police Services if they are displaced from their main hall was built in the south end of the quiet room at the Main Fire Hall. This room will also house the equipment Sault Ste. Marie Fire Services will use as we transition away from the current 911 systems to the Next Generation 911 system that is being brought on line. COVID 19 related delays continue to set the go live date of this project back
- Personnel received training from CriSys employees to better understand the many aspects of the CriSys system.

### Mechanical, Vehicle & Building Maintenance

The Support Services Division is involved in many aspects of the daily running of Fire Services. A few of the major projects worked on during 2020 were:

- A tender was awarded to a local contractor to begin the removal of the aged, decaying exterior of the east storage building at the RESC. In addition, eliminating a noted health and safety concern, the installation of the engineered exterior wrap should decrease heating cost at that location. This project was completed in the spring of 2020;
- In an effort to comply with industry standard best practices and increase the health and safety wellbeing of all Sault Ste. Marie Fire Service personnel, the first wave of mechanical lockouts with electrical interlocks were placed on approximately ten (10) overhead doors at various locations in Fire Service buildings. This process was expanded to include additional overhead doors at the RESC. More user friendly remote overhead door openers were installed at the RESC EMS used doors;
- The living quarters outdated electrical based HVAC systems at #2 Fire Hall and #3 Fire Hall were replaced with more cost effective natural gas systems;





- The Sault Ste Marie Fire Services Respiratory Protection Program was completely updated to reflect the purchase of the MSA SCBA System.;
- The roof at # 2 Fire Hall which had reached its end of life service was replaced;
- A 24-foot self-contained vehicle towed Rehabilitation trailer was brought into service. This unit is equipped with separate Command Operations Centre and Rehabilitation area. Its purpose is to provide a staging and rehab area for personnel during various fire ground operations. It is heated and includes washroom facilities;



- Support Services personnel continue to work at ensuring both Fire & EMS fleets and all equipment used throughout Sault Ste. Marie Fire Services is ready 24 hours a day. A preventative maintenance program ensures the regular servicing of all equipment and buildings are completed to control costs and ensure equipment availability;
- Fuel pump stations at the RESC and the Main Fire Hall received mandated safety upgrades and were painted and inspected as required by law;
- Support Services designated “Government” Motor Vehicle Inspection station licence was renewed to allow for vehicle inspection/certifications and repairs;
- The mechanical shop at the RESC was subject to a MTO inspection audit and passed with no infractions;
- Annual safety inspections were completed as per MTO guidelines;
- ULC/NFPA guidelines were used to test all aerial and ground ladder equipment as well as to complete the annual pump testing of all fire trucks with pumping capabilities;
- Efforts continued towards the design in the pursuit of the new tanker that is badly needed by Sault Ste. Marie Fire Services. Support Services is grateful for the patience, support and input from members of the Suppression group.

## Training

- Support Services works in conjunction with the Training division to ensure all personnel are up-to-date with the huge variety of equipment & tools;
- Support Services monitors all employee government required licenses are current;
- Support Services staff regularly attend skills upgrading training courses from the Ontario Fire College and Spartan Technical Emergency Vehicle Technicians Training, as well as an ongoing Advanced Automotive electronics program provided by Auto Aide of Barrie Ontario.

I would like to thank everyone employed at Sault Ste. Marie Fire Services for their assistance and patience while Support Services completes its work. Thanks again Mike Brock, Paul Charron and Matt Depatie. Gentlemen, your skills and dedication are greatly appreciated and are a very necessary component to the success of Sault Ste. Marie Fire Services.

*Dan Crozier*  
Assistant Fire Chief



# EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT



While 2020 began with many normal operations for the emergency management division including in person school presentations, hazard planning meetings and community outreach.



The first week of March quickly saw a shift in operations like many organizations adapting to COVID 19 occurred rapidly. Weekly teleconference meetings with health partners, district emergency managers, provincial partners and the City's Municipal Emergency Control Group which continue to occur 16 months later. These ongoing meetings allowed the opportunity to share information, resources, best practices and respond to the challenges of COVID 19.

With new restrictions in place for training, here in the Sault we worked diligently with provincial stakeholders at Emergency Management Ontario to adapt traditional in person training to a virtual setting. This offered a unique opportunity to create additional diversity in our virtual classroom with participants coming from across ON as well as internationally. Our EM division was able to pilot and lead two of the first ever virtual Incident Management and Basic Emergency Management Courses. Moving forward these adaptations will create a more engaging hybrid model allowing for guest instructors and additional opportunities for participants to access training.

The Emergency Management Division also spearheaded efforts behind the Community Hotline, the intent of which was:

- To provide information and direction to accurate information sources
- To provide referrals to service providers who could meet requests and
- To provide services for cases that could not be achieved through other methods



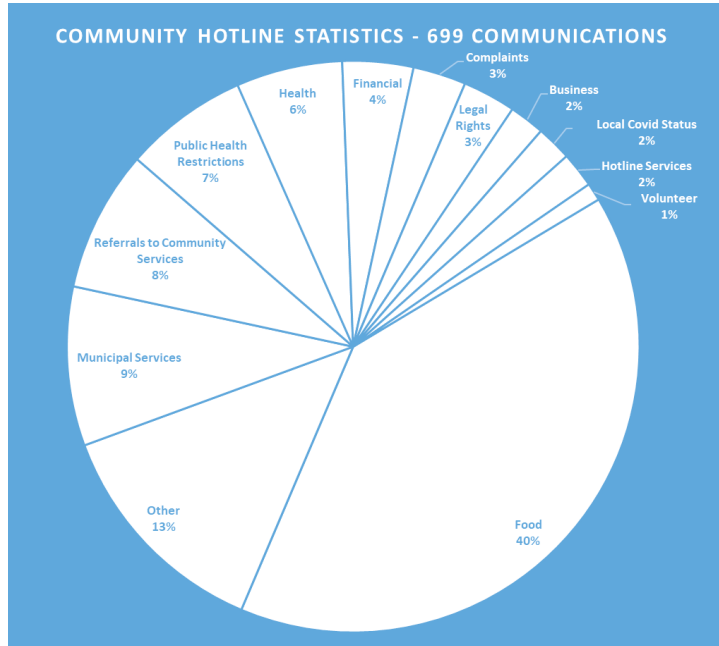


Figure 1 -Breakdown of Community Hotline Communications



Community Hotline Staff

The one major service noted in the early days of the community hotline centre that could not be achieved through other methods was access to food for older adults (70+), people with disabilities and people who were immunocompromised with no social networks and living on fixed incomes who at the time were directed to stay home to stay safe. One of our long standing partners Sault Search and Rescue not-for-profit organization had its volunteers delivering lunch bags, food boxes and essential supplies, to those most in need.

The Community Hotline which ran for approximately 5 months helped to deliver food and toilet paper, arrange emergency shelter, direct people to accessing financial assistance and mental health services. COVID 19 has reinforced that a whole community response plays a critical role to achieve an effective response, as emergencies become more complex and impact a greater percentage of our population this will become even more evident. Humans are resilient. We come together in times of crisis to ensure the safety of our communities and it will be our ability to work together that will enable us to rise to the challenge and persevere. It is with tremendous gratitude that we thank our many community partners for their continued efforts in creating a safe and resilient community.

*Lauren Perry*

Community Emergency Management Coordinator

## HONOURS AND AWARDS 2020

Congratulations to the following  
Sault Ste. Marie Fire personnel who have  
achieved Special Recognition in 2020



SAULT STE. MARIE

### City of Sault Ste. Marie Service Award 25 Year Award

**Peter Johnson**  
**James Hachey**

**Daniel Coutu**  
**Clayton Breault**

### Federal Exemplary Service Bars and Medals 20 Year Medal

**Jason Webb**

**Mark McLean**



### Provincial Long Service Bars and Medals 25 Year Medal

**Peter Johnson**  
**James Hachey**

**Daniel Coutu**  
**Clayton Breault**



## Fire Service Retirements

**Captain Paul Makkonen**

February 2020

**Captain Frank Mancuso**

April 2020

**Platoon Chief Jeffrey Lajoie**

August 2020

**Platoon Chief Chris Gillespie**

November 2020

**Fire Prevention Officer Daniel Fraser**

December 2020

## Firefighter Recruits and New Employees

Welcome to Sault Ste. Marie Fire Services

**Lance Stewart**

February 2020

**Scott Hudson**

April 2020

**Brandon Hayes**

September 2020

\*\* Due to COVID-19 restrictions, SSM Fire Services Annual Awards Reception could not held as in past years, therefore photographs are not available.



## SAULT STE. MARIE RESPONSE CENTRES

Main Fire Hall, Station 1



72 Tancred Street

Station 2



363 Second Line West

Station 3



100 Bennet Blvd.

Station 4 - RESC



65 Old Garden River Road



SAULT  
STE. MARIE





**SAULT STE. MARIE**

**SAULT STE. MARIE FIRE SERVICES**

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