



2025 ANNUAL REPORT



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**“Excellence Through Commitment, Courage, and
Compassion.”**



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Who We Are

West Manatee Fire Rescue District is an independent special taxing district established to provide fire protection, emergency medical services, and all-hazards response to the community we serve.

As an independent district, we operate with a focused mission and a direct responsibility to our residents and visitors. Our funding is derived from local tax revenues, and with that comes a clear obligation to deliver efficient, effective, and accountable emergency **services** that protect life, property, and the overall well-being of our community.

We are a full-service, all-hazards response agency. Our responsibilities extend beyond fire suppression to include advanced life support emergency medical care, technical rescue, marine response, disaster preparedness, and community risk reduction. Whether responding to daily emergencies or preparing for large-scale incidents such as hurricanes and flooding, we are committed to being ready for whatever our community may face.

At our core, we are a service-driven organization. We exist to serve others, and that responsibility shapes every decision we make, from how we train and equip our personnel to how we engage with the public and steward the resources entrusted to us.

We are defined not only by what we do, but also by how we do it, guided by our commitment to excellence, our courage to act, and our compassion for those we serve.



“Excellence Through Commitment, Courage, and Compassion.”



Our Vision

Our vision is for the West Manatee Fire & Rescue District to be widely recognized as a dynamic emergency services organization and to be viewed by internal and external stakeholders as well-trained and professional. Internally, we will have proven fiscal prudence through effectively managed resources, while embracing efficiencies through innovation. Externally, we will have demonstrated pride in providing outstanding service to the community.

In order to exceed the expectations of the community that places their trust in us, we will hold one another accountable for carrying out our mission, living our values, and seeing our vision become reality.

Our Mission

West Manatee Fire Rescue is committed to providing professional services essential to the safety and well-being of the community. This is accomplished through quick, prepared responses, life safety education, prevention, and other related services.



“Excellence Through Commitment, Courage, and Compassion.”



Our Values

Our organization is defined not only by what we do, but by how we do it. At West Manatee Fire Rescue, our actions, decisions, and expectations are grounded in a clear set of core values, Commitment, Courage, and Compassion. These values are not just words; they are the standard by which we operate, the lens through which we lead, and the expectation we hold for every member of this organization.

Excellence:

We pursue the highest standards in service, training, and professionalism, striving to continually improve as individuals and as an organization.

Commitment:

We are dedicated to our mission, our team, and the community we serve, fulfilling our duties with integrity and responsibility.

Courage:

We demonstrate both physical and moral courage, facing danger, adversity, and difficult decisions with integrity, determination, and resolve, always prioritizing the safety and well-being of others.

Compassion:

We serve with empathy, kindness, and understanding, recognizing the dignity and needs of all people, including both our peers and the general public, and providing care with respect in every interaction.

“Excellence Through Commitment, Courage, and Compassion.”



Opening Message

To the Members of West Manatee Fire Rescue and the Community We Proudly Serve,

This past year has been one of purpose, reflection, and intentional progress. As an organization, we made the conscious decision to look inward, to evaluate who we are, where we are strong, and where we must improve. That process is not always easy, but it is necessary. It requires honesty, discipline, and a willingness to embrace change. It also requires trust, trust within our organization and trust from the community we serve.

Because of that effort, we are a stronger, more unified organization today.



“Excellence Through Commitment, Courage, and Compassion.”



To Our Personnel

To the men and women of West Manatee Fire Rescue, this progress is because of you.

You have embraced higher expectations in how we operate, how we train, and how we communicate. You have leaned into change, even when it challenged long-standing habits or required you to step outside of your comfort zone. You have strengthened our organization by committing not just to doing the job, but to doing it better.

We have made measurable improvements in uniformity, communication, and operational consistency. You have adapted to clearer expectations, a more disciplined use of the chain of command, and a more structured approach to information sharing. These changes have reduced confusion, improved efficiency, and strengthened our ability to operate as one cohesive team.

Our operational performance reflects that commitment. Every call you respond to, every patient you treat, and every fire you mitigate demonstrates the level of professionalism that defines this organization. The continued development of our personnel, including the addition of new Paramedics in Charge, the implementation of NFPA 1410 performance-based training, and the expansion of scenario-driven drills, shows that we are not satisfied with maintaining standards, but are actively working to elevate them.

We have also made significant investments in you, through new apparatus, equipment, and expanded operational capabilities. These tools are only as effective as the people who use them, and you have proven time and time again that you are capable, disciplined, and ready.

At the same time, we are not where we want to be yet, and that is by design.

We still have work to do. We must continue to improve how we communicate across the entire organization, ensuring that all members feel informed, connected, and valued. We must do a better job recognizing one another's contributions and sharing information in a timely and consistent manner. We must continue to take ownership of recruitment and marketability, ensuring that we are actively representing this organization and attracting the next generation of firefighters and paramedics.

Succession planning remains a critical priority. It is not enough to identify future leaders, we must actively develop them. That means mentoring, investing time, and building people up across the entire organization. It means fostering growth without favoritism and ensuring that opportunities are based on capability, effort, and potential.

Equally important is our responsibility to take care of one another.

The work we do is demanding. It requires strength, not just physically, but mentally and emotionally. Our continued focus on peer support and overall wellness reflects our commitment to ensuring that every member of this organization has the resources and support they need to be healthy, resilient, and ready. Taking care of each other is not optional, it is part of who we are.

**“Excellence Through Commitment, Courage, and
Compassion.”**



What stands out most to me this year is the culture we are building.

You show up for each other. You show up for this community. Whether it is on emergency scenes, during training, or through events that bring us together, you continue to demonstrate what it means to be part of something bigger than yourself.

I am proud of the work you have done. I am grateful to serve alongside you. And I am confident in where we are going, because of you.



“Excellence Through Commitment, Courage, and Compassion.”



To Our Community

To the community we are honored to serve, you are the reason we exist.

West Manatee Fire Rescue is more than an emergency response agency. We are your neighbors, your partners, and your commitment to safety when it matters most. We recognize the trust you place in us every time you call for help, and we do not take that responsibility lightly.

Our organization is built on three core values: Commitment, Courage, and Compassion.

Commitment means we are prepared. It means we invest in our people, our training, and our equipment so that when you need us, we are ready to respond with professionalism and precision. It means we are dedicated not only to responding to emergencies, but to preventing them, through education, outreach, and proactive engagement within the community.

Courage is demonstrated in our actions. It is the willingness to face uncertainty, to act decisively in critical moments, and to continuously improve how we serve. It is both physical and moral, found not only on emergency scenes, but in the decisions we make to move this organization forward.

Compassion is at the heart of everything we do. We understand that every call for service represents someone's moment of need. Whether it is a medical emergency, a fire, or a time of uncertainty, we approach every interaction with empathy, respect, and a genuine desire to help.

As your fire district, we are committed to providing:

- Rapid, professional emergency response
- Highly trained personnel equipped with modern tools and technology
- Preparedness for all hazards, from daily emergencies to large-scale disasters
- Community risk reduction and public education
- Transparency and accountability in how we serve and utilize public resources

We are also committed to evolving alongside the needs of our community. As our area grows and changes, so too must our approach to service delivery, preparedness, and engagement. This requires thoughtful planning, responsible investment, and a continued focus on resilience.

**“Excellence Through Commitment, Courage, and
Compassion.”**



Moving Forward

This past year represents a strong step forward, but it is not the end of the journey.

We will continue to evaluate ourselves honestly. We will continue to invest in our people, our equipment, and our systems. We will continue to strengthen our organization, internally and externally, so that we are prepared not just for today's challenges, but for those that lie ahead.

To our personnel, thank you for your dedication, your professionalism, and your commitment to this mission.

To our community, thank you for your trust and continued support. It is an honor to serve you.

We will continue to move forward with purpose, guided by our values and committed to excellence in all that we do.



“Excellence Through Commitment, Courage, and Compassion.”



Agency Background

West Manatee Fire Rescue District (WMFR) is an independent special fire control district located in western Manatee County, Florida. The District provides all-hazards emergency response, fire suppression, advanced life support (ALS) services, and community risk reduction to a diverse and highly dynamic coastal jurisdiction.

The service area includes the Cities of Anna Maria, Bradenton Beach, and Holmes Beach, as well as the unincorporated communities of Cortez, Tidy Island, Palma Sola, West Bradenton, and Northwest Bradenton. WMFR serves a permanent population of approximately 27,700 residents, which expands significantly due to seasonal residency and tourism.

Manatee County experiences roughly 4 million visitors annually, with nearly 2 million of those visitors staying on Anna Maria Island and within the District's response area. During peak periods, particularly holiday weekends, the population within the District can swell to as many as 40,000 people at any given time. This fluctuation creates a complex and demanding operational environment, requiring scalable response capabilities and a high level of preparedness.

The District's coastal location presents unique challenges, including increased traffic congestion, limited access points, vulnerability to severe weather and flooding, and a diverse risk profile that includes residential, commercial, marine, and environmentally sensitive areas.

WMFR operates as a combination all-hazards response agency with a strong emphasis on advanced life support emergency medical services, which make up a significant portion of the District's call volume. The organization is staffed by 55 full-time personnel, including 42 suppression personnel assigned across three shifts. These members operate on a 24-hours on / 48-hours off schedule, providing continuous emergency response coverage.

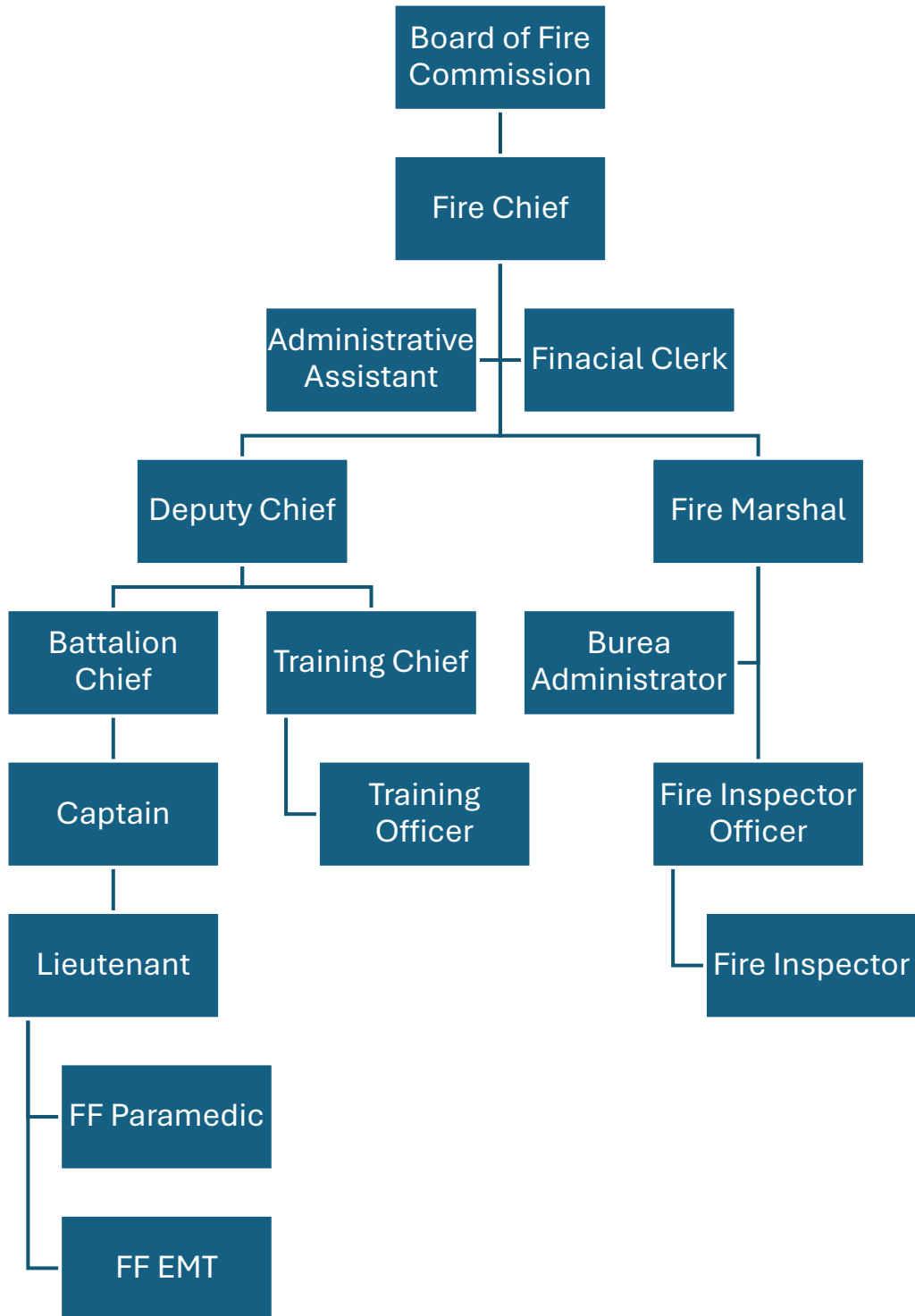
The remaining personnel include the Fire Chief, Deputy Chief, Fire Marshal, Training Chief, Training Lieutenant, Fire Inspectors, and administrative staff, all of whom support operational readiness, prevention efforts, training, and organizational management. These positions operate on a standard 40-hour workweek and are based out of the District's administrative offices.

WMFR remains committed to delivering high-quality, professional emergency services through a balanced approach of response, prevention, training, and community engagement. As the community continues to grow and evolve, the District remains focused on adaptability, operational excellence, and maintaining the trust placed in us by those we serve.

“Excellence Through Commitment, Courage, and Compassion.”



Organization Chart



“Excellence Through Commitment, Courage, and Compassion.”

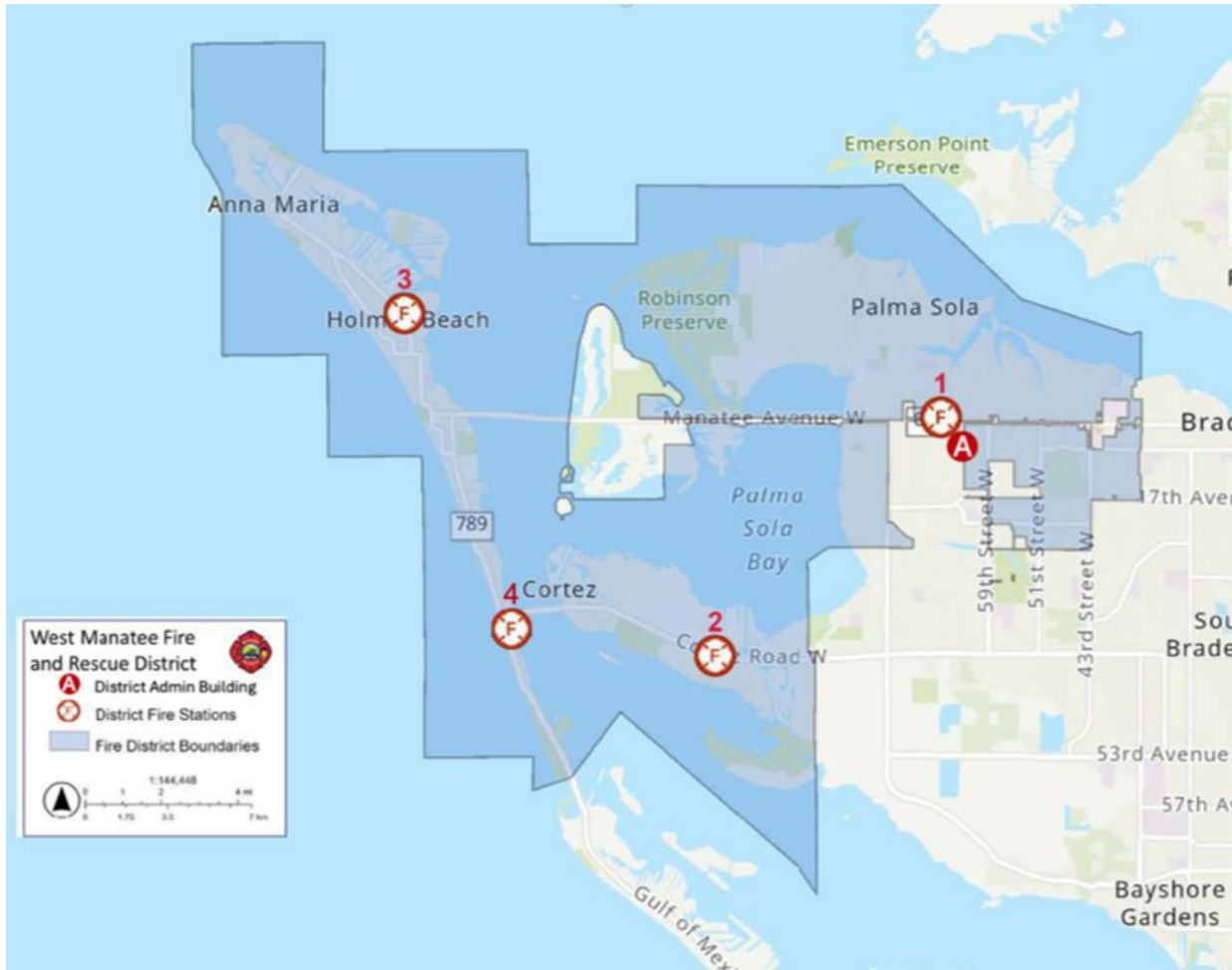
WMFR District Boundaries:

Northern Boundary: Manatee River and Tampa Bay.

Eastern Boundary: The area of 32nd Street West along the city limits of Bradenton.

Southern Boundary: A line that borders the City of Bradenton, Cedar Hammock Fire District, and The Town of Longboat Key.

Western Boundary: The Gulf of Mexico.



West Manatee Fire Rescue District

Financial Stewardship & Strategic Investment

Throughout this fiscal year, the West Manatee Fire Rescue District remained focused on aligning financial resources with our strategic objectives—ensuring that every dollar invested directly supports our mission of protecting life, property, and the well-being of our community.

A primary objective over the past year has been the continued development of our operational capabilities, with a deliberate emphasis on strengthening our equipment, enhancing our training programs, and preparing our personnel for the evolving risks within our response area. We have seen an increase in storm intensity, as well as a rise in flooding-related emergencies, both of which present complex and hazardous operational challenges. In response, we have made targeted investments to ensure we are properly equipped and trained to meet these demands.

Significant resources were allocated toward high-water and rescue capabilities, including the acquisition of additional Zodiac vessels, our current total is three, which has greatly enhanced our preparedness for Swiftwater and flood response operations. These investments ensure that we can respond effectively in environments where traditional apparatus access is limited or compromised.

At the same time, we remained committed to maintaining the reliability of our foundational equipment. Investments in new hose, tools, and essential operational equipment ensure that even our most basic resources meet the high standards required for safe and effective emergency response.

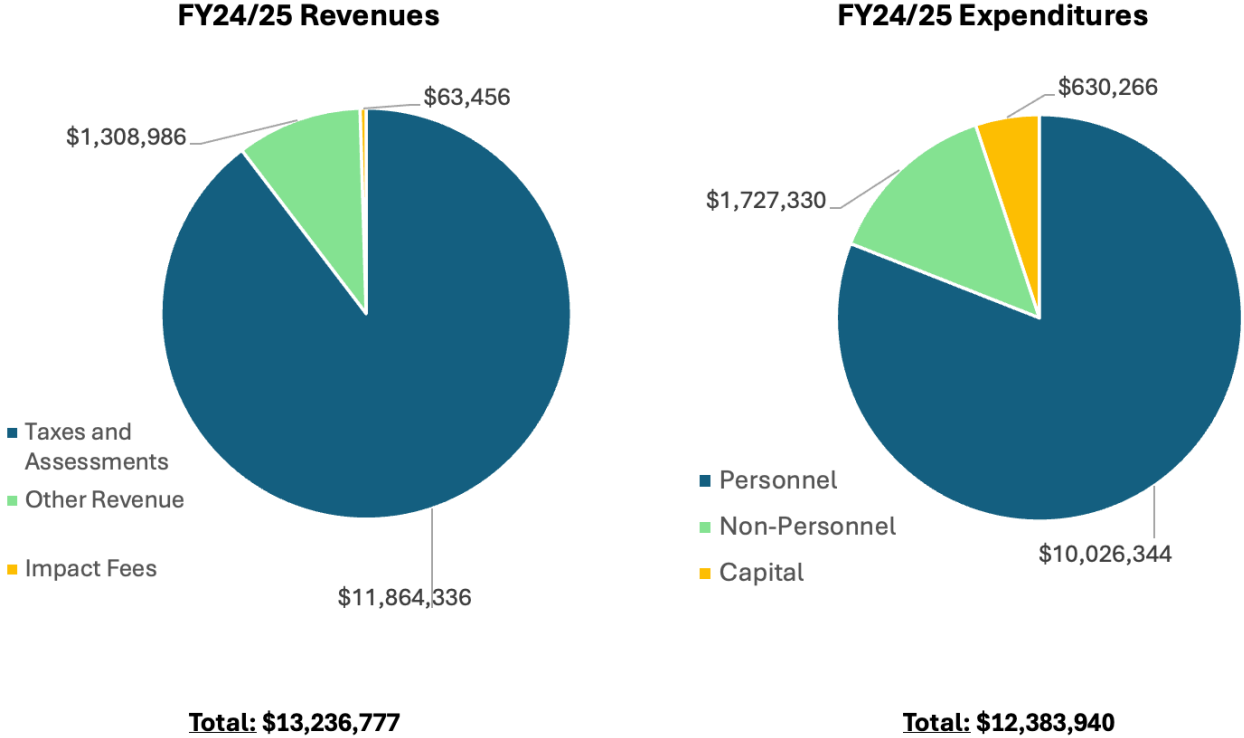
Financially, the District allocated approximately:

- **\$111,492 (\$32,000 of it toward Special Operations) toward training initiatives**, reinforcing our long-term commitment to developing highly skilled, capable personnel
- **\$72,593 toward equipment purchases**, ensuring operational readiness across all response types
- **\$330,000 toward capital investments**, strengthening our fleet and specialized response capabilities

Over the past several years, the District has maintained a strategic focus on developing our personnel to effectively respond to increasingly technical and complex emergencies. This investment in people, through training, certification, and hands-on experience, has been critical in building a workforce that is adaptable, resilient, and prepared for the demands of modern emergency services.

This focus continues into the current fiscal year, as we remain committed to investing in our people as our most valuable resource. As this phase of development matures, the District will begin to shift a greater portion of its focus toward infrastructure improvements, ensuring that our facilities are resilient, secure, and capable of supporting long-term operational readiness, particularly in the face of severe weather and coastal hazards.

Our approach to financial stewardship is intentional and forward-looking. Every investment is made with a clear purpose: to strengthen our organization, support our personnel, and ensure we are fully prepared to serve our community, today and into the future.



As this report reflects, our largest investment is in our personnel. We firmly believe that investing in our people translates directly into better service for our community, ensuring every response is delivered with excellence, professionalism, and care.

Operations Report – Operations Division

Advancing Excellence

Over the past year, the Operations Division remained focused on deliberate, mission-driven improvement aligned with the District’s Strategic Plan. Our efforts centered on addressing identified organizational weaknesses while advancing key strategic priorities. This approach ensured that progress was not only measurable, but meaningful—strengthening operational readiness, organizational cohesion, and service delivery to our community.

From an operational standpoint, the District responded to 2,842 emergency incidents this year, representing a notable decrease from the previous year’s 3,400 calls for service. While this reduction provides some relief in system demand, early indicators for the current year suggest an upward trend in call volume—particularly within the Station 1 response area. Additionally, there has been an apparent increase in working structure fires. While this observation remains anecdotal at this stage, a comprehensive data review will be conducted at year’s end to validate trends and inform future planning.

4 Million

Our county welcomes nearly 4 million visitors each year, with approximately 2 million of those visitors staying on our island. This significant influx creates a dynamic and complex operational environment, presenting a diverse range of hazards that our personnel must be prepared to navigate.

6 Minutes

Our average response time is just over 6 minutes, reflecting our commitment to rapid, effective emergency response throughout our community.

56%

With a 56% ROSC rate, compared to the national average of 22%, our personnel continue to deliver exceptional outcomes in critical moments where every second counts.

16% ↓

The District experienced a 16% decrease in call volume this year. While this reduction is encouraging at first glance, it is important to recognize that much of the year was impacted by reduced population levels as the community recovered from recent storm events. As such, this decrease is not expected to represent a sustained trend.

Strategic Goals and Addressing Organizational Weaknesses

Strategic Goals

The Operations Division's efforts this year directly supported the District's Strategic Plan:

- **Goal 1 (Internal Communication):** Improved through structured meetings, enhanced chain-of-command utilization, and standardized information flow
 - **Goal 2 (External Communication):** Advanced through increased community engagement and planned expansion of social media outreach
 - **Goal 3 (Resiliency):** Strengthened through apparatus replacement, equipment acquisition, and facility improvements
 - **Goal 4 (Community Risk Reduction):** Supported through enhanced operational readiness and improved service delivery capabilities
 - **Goal 5 (Succession Planning):** Progressed through mentorship, evaluation improvements, and development of formal training programs
-



Addressing Organizational Weaknesses

The Strategic Planning Committee identified key areas of weakness through the SWOT analysis, and the District has made focused, deliberate efforts to address those areas over the past year.

Uniformity

A major focus this year has been enhancing organizational uniformity across personnel, equipment, and operations. Under the leadership of Battalion Chief Brunner, the District significantly narrowed and standardized uniform components, including shirts, hats, boots, and belts. This initiative reinforces a consistent professional identity and strengthens team cohesion.

Operationally, uniformity has been further advanced through the acquisition of two new identical fire engines. These apparatus are configured the same way and carry equipment in standardized locations, ensuring personnel can operate seamlessly regardless of assignment or station. This directly improves efficiency, safety, and response effectiveness.

Additionally, the hiring of a dedicated Training Officer has allowed for consistent training delivery across all shifts, ensuring that expectations, skill development, and operational performance standards are uniform throughout the organization. Communication processes have also been refined to standardize how information is distributed across shifts, reducing variability and improving clarity.

These efforts extend beyond the District, as we continue to strengthen partnerships with neighboring agencies to promote interoperability and regional consistency.



Marketability for Recruitment

The District has increased its visibility through social media engagement and community interaction; however, this remains an area requiring further development. While word-of-mouth continues to be a strong recruitment tool, there is a recognized need for more proactive leadership involvement in recruitment efforts.

Moving forward, a greater emphasis will be placed on direct engagement with fire academies and prospective candidates to better communicate the value, culture, and opportunities within West Manatee Fire Rescue. Strengthening this presence will be critical to attracting and retaining high-quality personnel in an increasingly competitive environment.



Communication

Communication has seen significant improvement and remains a priority area for continued refinement. The District has reinforced the use of the chain of command, ensuring information is disseminated in a structured and effective manner. This has reduced misinformation, improved comprehension, and enhanced operational coordination.

The establishment of bi-monthly Operations meetings, bringing together the Deputy Chief, Battalion Chiefs, and Captains, along with alternating shift-level officer meetings, has improved alignment, continuity, and leadership engagement across all shifts.

Opportunities for improvement remain in organization-wide communication, particularly in the timely dissemination of major announcements such as promotions, retirements, and organizational updates. To address this, a commitment has been made to distribute such information within a 48-hour window to all personnel.

Additionally, the District will expand its external communication efforts through a more structured social media presence, leveraging community partnerships to enhance outreach and transparency.



Aging Apparatus and Equipment

Significant progress has been made in addressing the challenges associated with an aging fleet. The District successfully placed two new fire engines into service, enhancing operational capability, reliability, and safety. These engines provide increased water capacity—nearing 1,000 gallons—improving response effectiveness in areas with limited hydrant access.

Additionally, the District expanded its special operations capabilities through the acquisition of three Zodiac boats, two staff vehicles, and the planned purchase of a side-by-side unit. These resources significantly enhance our ability to operate in flood conditions, post-disaster environments, and geographically challenging areas such as beaches, preserves, and remote locations.

These investments directly support operational resilience and preparedness in a coastal environment where environmental factors accelerate equipment degradation.



Training Facility

Progress in developing a new or enhanced training facility has been limited due to funding constraints and competing priorities. Despite these challenges, the Training Division has maximized the utility of the existing facility.

Through the leadership of Chief Tuttle and Lieutenant O’Kelly, the current training environment has been optimized to its fullest capacity. Improvements and adaptations have allowed the District to continue delivering effective and meaningful training despite infrastructure limitations.

This remains a long-term strategic priority requiring Board direction and sustainable funding solutions.



Operational Facilities

The District has made meaningful improvements to its operational facilities, focusing on functionality, efficiency, and readiness. Key accomplishments include:

- Construction of a Battalion Chief office and bunkroom at Station 1
- Development of dedicated training and medical supply spaces at Station 2
- Ongoing facility upgrades and maintenance improvements across all stations
- Resolution of longstanding infrastructure issues, including critical leak repairs

Looking ahead, several facility needs have been identified, including exterior maintenance, structural repairs, kitchen upgrades, and station alerting system enhancements. These improvements are being incorporated into upcoming budget planning and coordinated efforts with the County.



Conclusion

The past year represents a deliberate and focused effort to address internal weaknesses while advancing the District’s strategic priorities. While challenges remain, the progress achieved demonstrates a strong commitment to continuous improvement.

Through disciplined leadership, targeted investments, and a unified organizational approach, the Operations Division continues to move forward in pursuit of excellence, ensuring that West Manatee Fire Rescue remains prepared, resilient, and dedicated to serving its community.



Emergency Medical Services

West Manatee Fire Rescue remains committed to delivering compassionate, patient-centered care with a strong focus on outcomes. Every patient encounter is treated with professionalism, empathy, and a dedication to providing the highest level of service when it matters most.

As highlighted earlier, the District has achieved a 56% Return of Spontaneous Circulation (ROSC) rate, significantly exceeding the national average of approximately 22%. This reflects not only the clinical capability of our personnel, but also their commitment to excellence in patient care and continuous improvement.

To further enhance our clinical performance, our providers are actively expanding their knowledge base through advanced training opportunities, including the University of Miami ECG and Comprehensive Stroke courses, as well as the University of Florida Clinical Care Paramedic Program. These programs strengthen our ability to rapidly recognize and treat time-sensitive conditions such as cardiac events and strokes, directly contributing to improved patient outcomes. This continued investment in education ensures our personnel remain aligned with current best practices and are equipped to deliver high-quality, evidence-based care—supporting strong clinical performance, including our above-average ROSC rates and overall patient care delivery.

We are also evaluating opportunities to strengthen coordination with our local transport partners to ensure seamless, efficient patient care from initial contact through definitive treatment. This collaborative approach is critical to optimizing outcomes and resource utilization across the system.

Our Advanced Life Support (ALS) delivery model provides the community with rapid access to high-level, nationally recognized standards of care. Beyond speed, our ALS providers play a critical role in system efficiency, assessing patients, determining the appropriate level of care, and ensuring the right resources are deployed.



This includes the ability to:

- Activate trauma alerts and coordinate helicopter transport when necessary
- Utilize Basic Life Support (BLS) transport when appropriate to maintain ALS unit availability

- Manage patient refusals when no transport or intervention is required

This level of decision-making ensures that patients receive the right care at the right time, while also preserving system capacity for the most critical emergencies.

Through compassion, clinical excellence, and thoughtful resource management, West Manatee Fire Rescue continues to provide a high standard of emergency medical care to the community we serve.

98

The District documented 98 patient refusals this year. While this number may appear minimal, it represents 98 instances where our personnel were able to thoroughly assess patients, provide appropriate guidance, and determine that transport was not necessary. This process allows us to clear and reallocate ALS transport resources more quickly, ensuring they remain available for higher-acuity medical emergencies

3 Min

The District maintains an average time of under four minutes from patient contact to 12-lead ECG acquisition in chest pain patients. This reflects a high level of clinical efficiency and supports early recognition of time-sensitive cardiac emergencies.

7

The District recorded 7 lives saved this year, patients who were clinically deceased, resuscitated by our personnel, and ultimately discharged from the hospital. Each represents the impact of rapid response, clinical excellence, and the opportunity for more time with loved ones.

Training Division

Year in Review

This Year in Review report provides a comprehensive overview of the training programs, annual certification requirements, and specialized professional development activities completed and tracked throughout calendar year 2025. The intent of this report is to present the Board with a clear and concise summary of the District's training efforts, highlighting the key focus areas that support operational readiness, regulatory compliance, professional competency, and the continued development of our personnel.

Throughout 2025, the Training Division maintained a deliberate and structured approach to workforce development, ensuring a broad and balanced training portfolio. Training efforts encompassed core operational disciplines, ISO-related officer and driver/operator requirements, technical rescue and water rescue preparedness, fire inspection functions, emergency medical services training, and wellness-focused instruction.

Annual training continued to support preparedness in boat operations, swift-water response, technical rescue, company officer development, driver/operator readiness, and firefighter/inspector functions. In addition to operational competencies, personnel development included advanced emergency medical training, paramedic-related disciplines, and mental health and wellness instruction, reflecting a comprehensive approach to workforce readiness. These efforts ensure that our personnel are not only technically proficient, but also prepared to lead, adapt, and perform in high-stress environments.

The inclusion of specialized programs such as Rescue Swimmer II and Technical Rescue Team (TRT) training hours highlights the District's continued investment in advanced response capability. These programs strengthen our ability to effectively manage complex incidents, including water-based rescues and technical rescue scenarios that are increasingly relevant within our response area.

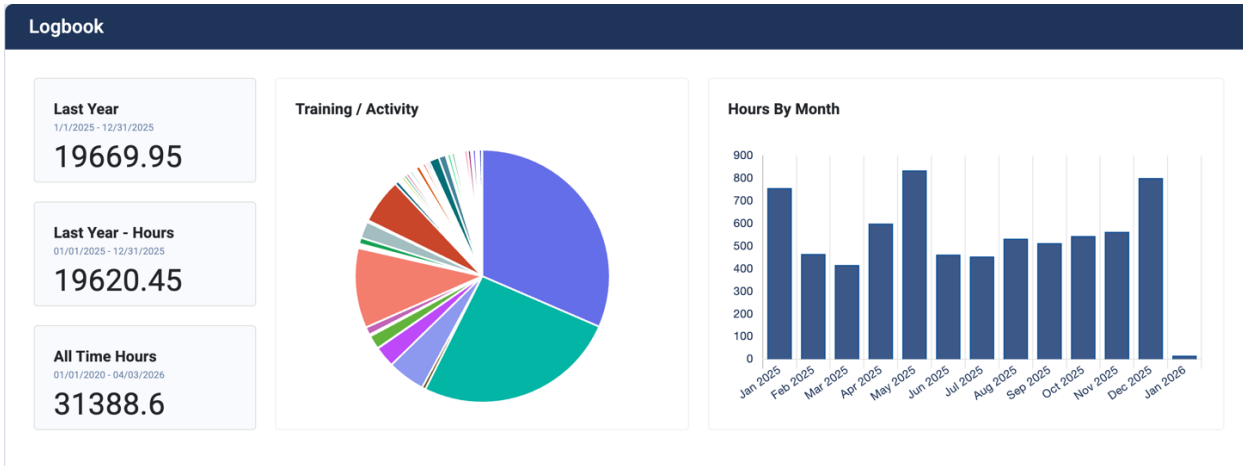
Significant progress was made in advancing the District's special operations capabilities. During the year, three personnel achieved designation as FLUSAR Specialists, while an additional nine personnel progressed to within one course of completing the program. This continued pipeline of development ensures sustained capability and depth within our urban search and rescue operations.

In addition, the District further enhanced its water rescue readiness, with 13 personnel obtaining Swiftwater Technician certification and another 13 personnel completing Small Boat Operator training. These advancements directly support our ability to safely and effectively operate in flood and high-water environments, an area of increasing operational demand.

These training achievements directly support and demonstrate the District's previously identified fiscal objectives for 2025 and 2026, specifically, the strategic investment in personnel development to enhance technical capability, operational readiness, and response effectiveness.

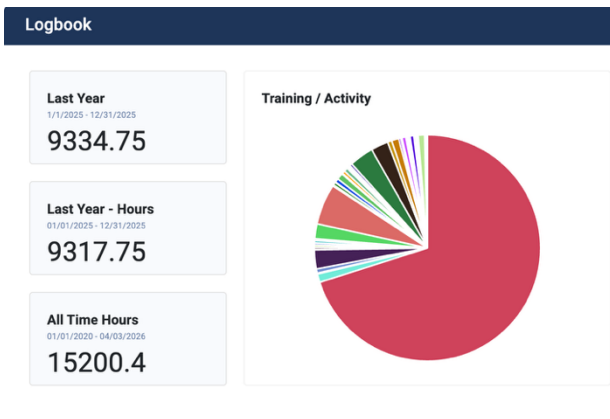
Collectively, these efforts reflect the District's ongoing commitment to building and sustaining a highly capable workforce, one that is prepared to meet the demands of an increasingly complex operational environment while maintaining the highest standards of safety, performance, and professionalism.

TOTAL ANNUAL TRAINING HOURS



COMPANY TRAINING HOURS

SPECIALTY TRAINING HOURS



Recommendations for the Board

To support continued improvement in annual training reporting and program management, the following actions are recommended:

- Standardize training category titles across all annual records
- Ensure each annual training requirement is consistently labeled by calendar year
- Continue supporting specialized rescue, EMS, and wellness training initiatives
- Maintain annual reporting practices that provide clear summaries for board review

- Begin strategic planning and allocation of funding toward the development or enhancement of a dedicated training facility, ensuring the District has the infrastructure necessary to support current and future training demands

Conclusion

The 2025 training year reflects the department's continued commitment to operational excellence, safety, leadership development, emergency medical readiness, and specialized rescue capability. The range of training categories documented during the year demonstrates an ongoing investment in personnel competency and organizational preparedness.

As the District continues to advance its personnel capabilities, it is equally important to ensure that our training infrastructure evolves alongside these efforts. A dedicated and properly resourced training facility will be critical in sustaining long-term growth, improving training consistency, and supporting increasingly complex operational requirements.

Conclusion

The 2025 Annual Report reflects an organization that is not standing still. West Manatee Fire Rescue continues to grow with purpose, evaluating itself honestly, investing strategically, and preparing deliberately for the demands of the community it serves.

Throughout this year, the District remained focused on strengthening its people, improving its capabilities, and addressing the operational realities of a complex coastal response environment. From enhanced training and specialized rescue development to strong emergency medical outcomes, targeted equipment purchases, and continued attention to infrastructure and organizational improvement, the work completed this year demonstrates a clear commitment to readiness and responsible stewardship.

Most importantly, this report reflects the value of the people behind the mission. The professionalism, compassion, discipline, and resilience of West Manatee Fire Rescue personnel remain the foundation of everything the District is able to accomplish. Investments in training, equipment, and facilities matter because they strengthen the ability of our personnel to serve others with excellence. That service is seen not only in emergency response, but also in prevention, education, technical preparedness, and the day-to-day commitment to community well-being.

As West Manatee Fire Rescue moves forward, the District will continue to build on this momentum, remaining focused on operational excellence, personnel development, infrastructure resiliency, and service to the public. The challenges ahead will continue to evolve, but so will this organization. With a clear mission, strong values, and a dedicated workforce, West Manatee Fire Rescue remains prepared to meet those challenges and continue providing the high level of service this community deserves.

Excellence Through Commitment, Courage, and Compassion.



ANNUAL REPORT 2025

Fire & Life Safety Bureau

"Excellence through Engineering, Education and Enforcement"





Message From The Fire Marshal



The West Manatee Fire Rescue Fire & Life Safety Bureau continued its commitment to **“Excellence through Engineering, Education, and Enforcement”** throughout 2025 by advancing proactive prevention strategies, strengthening community partnerships, and ensuring compliance with fire and life safety codes across the district.

The Bureau’s work in 2025 produced measurable outcomes that enhanced safety for residents, visitors, and first responders alike. Through a balanced approach of code enforcement, public education, and engineering review, prevention personnel played a key role in reducing fire risk and improving system reliability across the community.

Key accomplishments for 2025 include:

- **574 plan reviews and permits completed**, supporting safe construction, development, and system installations throughout the district.
- **3,604 inspections and re-inspections conducted**, ensuring businesses and occupancies remained compliant with fire and life safety codes.
- **198 permit-driven inspections**, verifying the proper installation and performance of fire protection systems.
- **2,534 inspections of Transient Public Lodging Establishments (TPLEs)**, addressing life safety risks associated with short-term vacation rentals and supporting one of the district’s most significant community risk reduction initiatives.
- **Expanded public education and community outreach programs**, including youth engagement, water safety campaigns, fire safety training, and professional education for fire service personnel across Florida.

These efforts contributed to encouraging trends in emergency incident data. Fire incidents classified within the **NFIRS 100-series decreased by 31%**, dropping from 93 incidents in 2024 to 64 incidents in 2025. Additionally, **fire alarm responses within the NFIRS 700-series declined by 18%**, reflecting improvements in system reliability, prevention education, and code compliance.

Beyond operational outcomes, the Bureau also continued to advance professional leadership within the fire service. In 2025, bureau members achieved significant professional milestones, contributed to statewide training and education initiatives, and represented West Manatee Fire Rescue in regional and national fire prevention efforts.

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Together, these accomplishments reflect a Bureau committed not only to enforcing fire codes, but to **reducing risk before emergencies occur**, strengthening community resilience, and supporting the overall mission of West Manatee Fire Rescue.

Through continued investment in **engineering, education, and enforcement**, the Fire & Life Safety Bureau remains dedicated to protecting lives, property, and the first responders who serve our community.

Respectfully,

Rodney Kwiatkowski

Rodney Kwiatkowski, MS, CFPS, CFO, FM, MIFireE

Fire Marshal

West Manatee Fire Rescue District

701 63rd St W

Bradenton, FL 34209

Cell 941-201-7904

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Engineering

The Bureau conducted numerous plan reviews and issued permits to ensure compliance with fire prevention codes and safety standards. Below is the detailed breakdown:

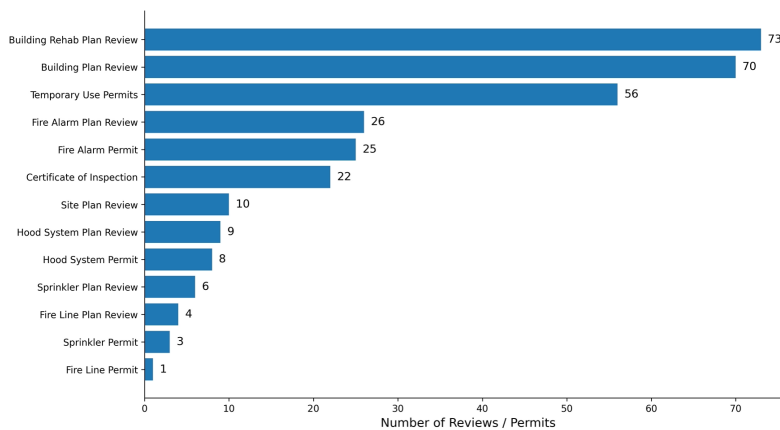
Plan Review and Permitting:

- Building Plan Review: 70
- Building Rehab Plan Review: 73
- Certificate of Inspection: 22
- Consultation: 261
- Fire Alarm Plan Review: 26
- Fire Alarm Permit: 25
- Fire Line Plan Review: 4
- Fire Line Permit: 1
- Hood System Plan Review: 9
- Hood System Permit: 8
- Site Plan Review: 10
- Sprinkler Plan Review: 6
- Sprinkler Permit: 3
- Temporary Use Permits: 56
- **Total Plan Reviews and Permits: 574 (up 50% over 2024)**

574

Total Plan Reviews & Permits
50% Increase Over 2024

Plan Review & Permitting Activity - 2025



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Education

In 2025, the Fire & Life Safety Bureau advanced its mission of “**Excellence through Engineering, Education, and Enforcement**” by delivering impactful fire and life safety education programs throughout the community and beyond. Through a wide range of initiatives, including fire safety presentations, hands-on training, community outreach events, specialized education on emerging hazards such as lithium-ion batteries, and professional training for fellow fire service personnel, the Bureau increased awareness, preparedness, and risk reduction among residents, businesses, community partners, and industry peers.

These efforts extended beyond traditional programming through meaningful partnerships, including collaboration with **Big Brothers Big Sisters** as part of the *Bigs with Badges* mentorship program, where fire inspectors are paired with local students to serve as mentors and positive role models.

Together, these initiatives demonstrate the Bureau’s commitment to proactive prevention, professional leadership, and community engagement while helping build a safer, more informed, and resilient community.



Mentorship – 2025

Four members participate in a routine mentoring program.

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Child Passenger Safety – 2025

5 car seat installations coupled with education on child passenger safety.

Water Safety – 2025

Based on West Manatee Fire Rescue’s data, pediatric drowning and near-drowning incidents were identified as a significant community risk requiring targeted prevention efforts. In response, WMFR has continued its comprehensive drowning prevention campaign focused on education, visibility, and community engagement. These efforts include an annual spring break sign-waving awareness event, beach outreach on high-traffic weekends to distribute Water Watcher badges and provide rip current and swim safety education, and direct door-to-door outreach to residents with access to swimming pools. Through these initiatives, WMFR aims to reduce preventable water-related incidents and promote a culture of water safety throughout the community.

Public Education – 2025

The Bureau conducted **50 public education events** reaching residents, schools, and community organizations throughout the district. The following are a sample of the events:

Mount Vernon Health Fair	1/9/25
Stewart Elementary	1/28/25
Anna Maria Elementary	1/29/25
Palma Sola Elementary	2/5/25
Open House	2/8/25
Cortez Fish Festival	2/15/25
Drowning Awareness Campaign	3/15/25
Florida Tourist Development Tax Association (FTDTA) Conference Presentation	7/24/25
Faithful Friends Love and Care	7/24/25
Day 4 Hope event	7/26/25
Gulf Dr Café Firewatch/Extinguisher Training	7/31/25
Villas of Hollybrook Pub Ed	8/13/25
Carlisle Inn Lunch and Learn	10/3/25
Sundown Get Down	10/11/25

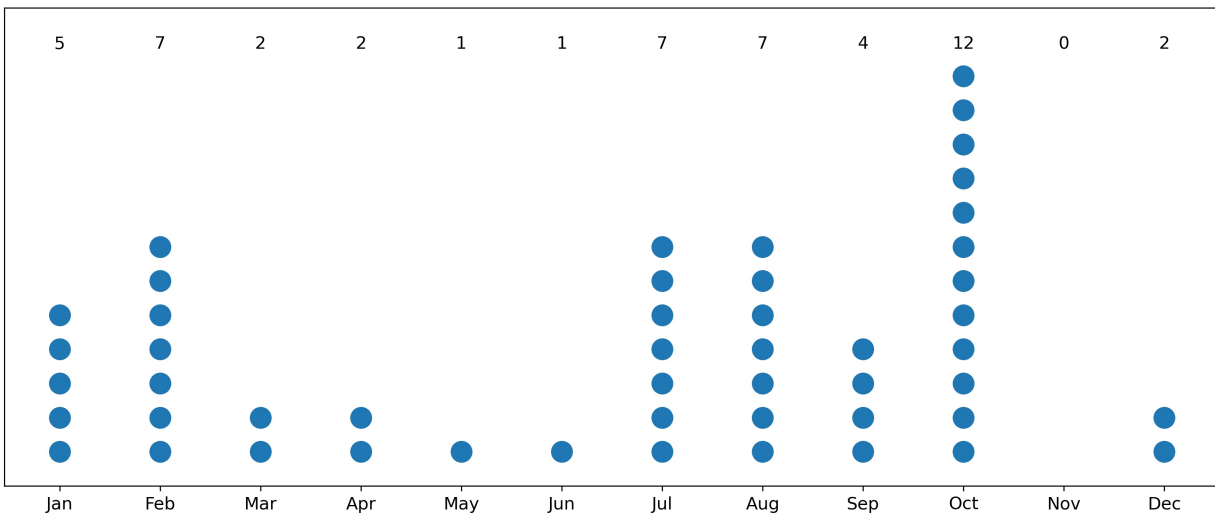
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The Bureau 2025

Toad Hall Presentation	10/15/25
Bayfest	10/18/25
City of Holmes Beach 75 th Anniversary Celebration	12/5/25
Christmas Processional Parade at Palma Sola Park	12/13/25

Public Education Events - 2025
Each Dot Represents One Outreach Event



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Local Peer Education - 2025

Board of Appeals Training	4/3/25
Calendly Training with Holmes Beach Staff	7/23/25
Manatee County Safety Coalition Meeting	11/19/25
Manatee County Risk, Resources, Results Course	12/3/25



Conclusion:

In 2025, the Fire & Life Safety Bureau’s education efforts demonstrated a comprehensive and forward-thinking approach to prevention, combining community outreach, youth engagement, and professional training to reduce risk and strengthen preparedness at every level. By investing in public education, cultivating meaningful partnerships, and sharing expertise with fellow fire service professionals statewide, The Bureau reinforced its role as both a trusted community resource and a leader in fire and life safety education. These efforts not only enhanced safety awareness today, but also helped build a more informed, resilient, and prepared community for the future. Total education outreach initiatives increased over 2024 by 260%.

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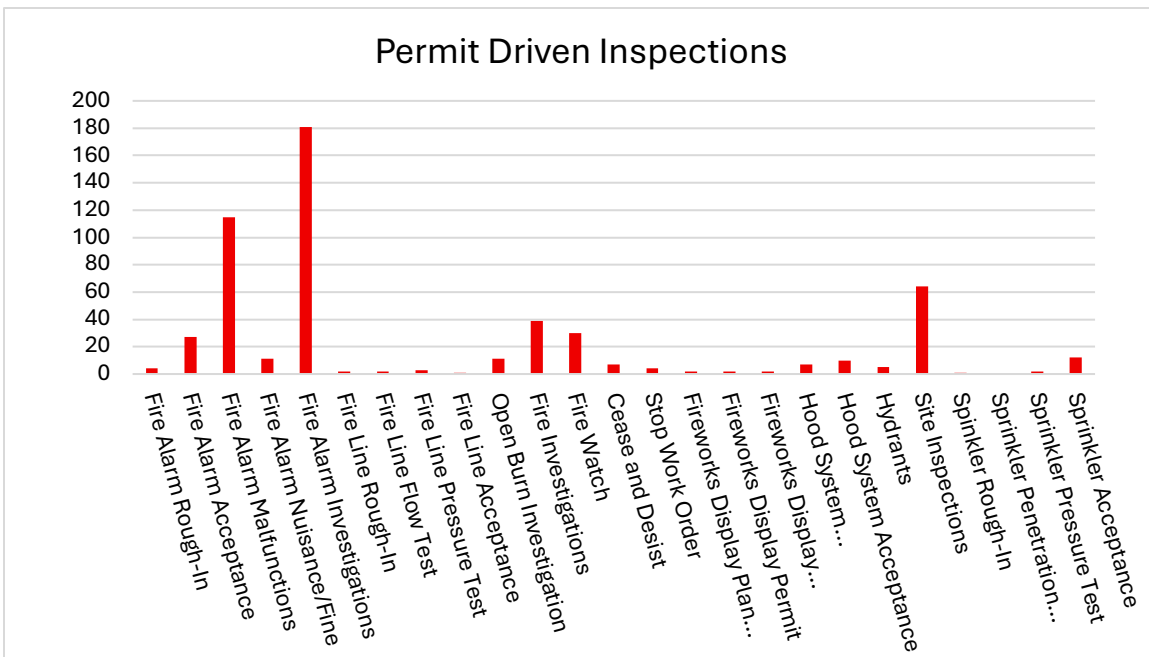
Enforcement

Annual Inspections:

- Annual Inspections: 1,070
- Re-inspections: 447
- Annual TPLE inspections completed: 2,534
- TPLE Re-inspections performed: 800
- Total Inspections: 4,851

Permit-Driven Inspections:

- Fire Alarm Rough-In: 4
- Fire Alarm Acceptance: 27
- Fire Alarm Nuisance/Fine: 11
- Fire Line Rough-In: 2
- Fire Line Flow Test: 2
- Fire Line Pressure Test: 3
- Fire Line Acceptance: 1
- Fire Watch: 30
- Cease and Desist: 7
- Stop Work Order: 4
- Fireworks Display Plan Review: 2
- Fireworks Display Permit: 2
- Fireworks Display Inspection: 2
- Hood System Light/Smoke Test: 7
- Hood System Acceptance: 10
- Hydrants: 5
- Site Inspections: 64
- Sprinkler Rough-In: 1
- Sprinkler Pressure Test: 2
- Sprinkler Acceptance: 12
- *Permit-Driven Inspections Total: 198*



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Transient Public Lodging Establishments

Fire Activity in TPLEs

NFIRS Code	Incident Type	Total Calls (2025)	Calls in TPLEs	% Occurring in TPLEs
111	Building Fire	18	2	11%
113	Contained Cooking Fire	4	2	50%
120	Fire in Mobile Property (Fixed Structure)	2	0	0%
130	Fire in Mobile Property (Vehicle)	4	0	0%
134	Water Vehicle Fire	1	0	0%
140	Natural Vegetation Fire	17	1	6%
150	Outside Rubbish Fire	13	5	38%
160	Special Outside Fire	5	1	20%
TOTAL		64	11	17%

Of the 64 fire incidents recorded in these categories during 2025, 11 occurred in Transient Public Lodging Establishments (17%). Contained cooking fires showed the highest concentration within TPLE properties.



Report Overview

Throughout the year, West Manatee Fire Rescue remained committed to conducting Transient Public Lodging Establishments (TPLE) inspections as a key component of our prevention and community risk reduction efforts. While the total number of inspections completed was slightly lower than the previous year, this variance is largely attributable to the impacts of hurricane activity, which temporarily paused rental activity and caused reconstruction that stalled inspection progress. Despite these challenges, inspection activities continued at a steady pace, ensuring that life safety concerns remained a focus in TPLEs even during periods of disruption.

In addition to maintaining inspection coverage within our district, this year included an increased emphasis on education and collaboration beyond our jurisdiction. Prevention staff dedicated time to educating neighboring districts and partner agencies on their responsibility to conduct TPLE inspections and the critical role these inspections play in identifying and mitigating risk. This outreach reinforced consistent life safety practices in TPLEs and strengthened regional understanding of code compliance obligations.

Collectively, these efforts reflect an adaptive and proactive approach to fire prevention, balancing immediate community needs with long-term risk reduction goals, while continuing to support safer buildings and more resilient communities.

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Looking Ahead

Looking forward, West Manatee Fire Rescue will continue to build upon the foundation established through our TPLE inspection program. Efforts will focus on maintaining inspection momentum while expanding education, consistency, and collaboration across districts. By reinforcing the importance of TPLE inspections and sharing best practices, we aim to support a more unified approach to life safety in rentals throughout the state. These efforts will help ensure that life safety risks are identified early, addressed effectively, and reduced before they escalate, strengthening both community resilience and public trust in the years ahead.

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Investigation

100 Series

This report offers an analysis of fire calls received by West Manatee Fire Rescue District for National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) 100 series codes for the years 2024 and 2025. The intent of this report is to understand the variance between the two years to recognize potential trends, identify areas of concern, and properly allocate resources.



1. Building Fire (Code 111)
 - In 2024, there were 30 building fires, decreasing to 18 in 2025.
 - Variance: -12
 - % Variance: -40%

2. Contained Cooking Fire (Code 113)
 - In 2024, there were 12 cooking fires, decreasing to 4 in 2025.
 - Variance: -8
 - % Variance: -66%

3. Fire in Mobile property (Fixed Structure) (Code 120)
 - In 2024, there were 2 building fires, remaining consistent at 2 in 2025.
 - Variance: 0
 - % Variance: 0%

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4. Mobile Property (Vehicle) (Code 130)
 - In 2024, there were 10 Vehicle Fires, decreasing to 4 in 2025.
 - Variance: -6
 - % Variance: -60%

5. Water Vehicle Fire (Code 134)
 - In 2024, there were 6 water vehicle fires, decreasing to 1 in 2025.
 - Variance: -5
 - % Variance: -83%

6. Natural Vegetation Fire (Code 140)
 - In 2024, there were 15 natural vegetation fires, increasing to 17 in 2025.
 - Variance: +2
 - % Variance: +13%

7. Outside Rubbish Fire (Code 150)
 - In 2024, there were 8 outside rubbish fires, increasing to 13 in 2025.
 - Variance: +5
 - % Variance: +63%

8. Special Outside Fire (Code 160)
 - In 2024, there were 10 special outside fires, decreasing to 5 in 2025.
 - Variance: -5
 - % Variance: -50%

9. Overall Summary
 - The total number of fire calls for the specified code numbers decreased from 93 in 2024 to 64 in 2025.
 - Variance: -29
 - % Variance: -31%

Summary

Overall fire incidents across the specified NFIRS codes decreased by 31% from 2024 to 2025.



700 series

This report offers an analysis of fire alarm calls received by West Manatee Fire Rescue District for National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) 700 series codes for the years 2024 and 2025. The intent of this report is to understand the variance between the two years to recognize potential trends, identify areas of concern, and properly allocate resources.



1. Malicious Calls (Code 710)
 - In 2024, there were 16 Malicious Calls, Decreasing to 1 in 2025
 - Variance: -15
 - % Variance: -94%

2. Malfunction (Code 735)
 - In 2024, there were 197 malfunction calls, Decreasing to 139 in 2025
 - Variance: -58
 - % Variance: -29%

3. Two Malfunctions within 48 Hours (Code 730)
 - In 2024, there were 11 48-hour Malfunctions, Decreasing to 6 in 2025

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- Variance: -5
 - % Variance: -45%
4. Unintentional Transmission of Alarm (Contractor Activated) (Code 740)
 - In 2024, there were 122 Contractor Activated calls, decreasing to 97 in 2025
 - Variance: -25
 - % Variance: -20%
 5. Alarm System Activation, No Fire- Unintentional (Code 745)
 - In 2024, there were 94 Unintentional No Fire calls, increasing to 116 in 2025
 - Variance: 20
 - % Variance: +23%
 6. Carbon Monoxide Detector Activation (Code 746)
 - In 2024, there were 16 CO calls, decreasing to 13 in 2025
 - Variance: -3
 - % Variance: -19%
 7. Overall Summary
 - The total number of fire alarm calls for the specified 700 codes decreased from 456 in 2024 to 372, resulting in 84 less overall responses in 2025.
 - Variance: -84
 - % Variance: -18%

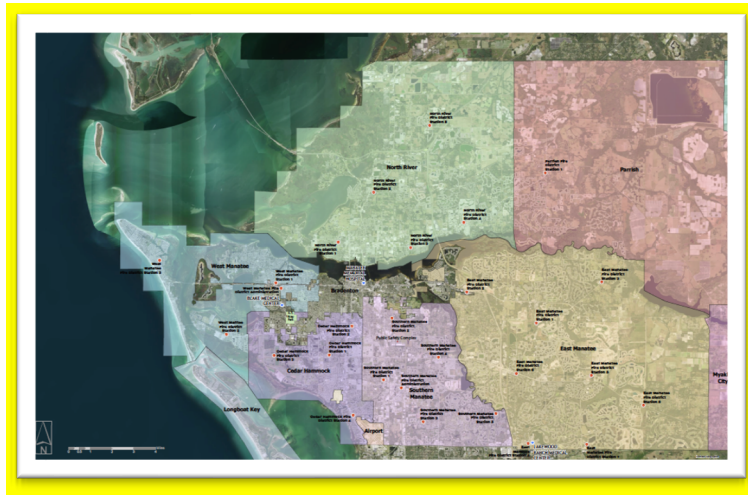
Summary

Overall fire alarm incidents across the specified NFIRS 700 series codes decreased by **18%** from **2024 to 2025**, dropping from **456 responses to 372**. Most categories saw a decline. These trends will continue to be monitored to identify opportunities for education, prevention, and improved alarm system reliability.



Mutual/Automatic Aid Given 2025

This report provides a more detailed analysis of fire calls received by West Manatee Fire Rescue District for National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) 100 series codes for the year 2025. The intent of this report is to differentiate between calls that originate in West Manatee Fire Rescue's district and the calls that originate out of district.



1. Building Fire (Code 111)

- In 2025, there were 11 building fires located in West Manatee Fire Rescue District with 7 mutual/automatic aid given, which is a total of 18 building fires.
 - 61% of building fires were located in West Manatee Fire Rescue District and 39% of building fires were mutual/automatic aid given.

2. Contained Cooking Fire (Code 113)

- In 2025, there were 4 cooking fires located in West Manatee Fire Rescue District with 0 mutual/automatic aid given, which is a total of 4 cooking fires.
 - 100% of contained cooking fires were located in West Manatee Fire Rescue District and 0% of contained cooking fires were mutual/automatic aid given.

3. Fire in Mobile property (Fixed Structure) (Code 120)

- In 2025, there were 2 fixed structure fires located in West Manatee Fire Rescue District with 0 mutual/automatic aid given, which is a total of 2 fixed structure fires.
 - 100% of fixed structure fires were located in West Manatee Fire Rescue District and 0% of fixed structure fires were mutual/automatic aid given.

4. Fire in Mobile Property (Vehicle) (Code 130)

- In 2025, there were 4 vehicle fires located in West Manatee Fire Rescue District with 0 mutual/automatic aid given, which is a total of 4 vehicle fires.
 - 100% of vehicle fires were located in West Manatee Fire Rescue District and 0% of vehicle fires were mutual/automatic aid given.

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5. Water Vehicle Fire (Code 134)

- In 2025, there was 1 water vehicle fire located in West Manatee Fire Rescue District with 0 mutual/automatic aid given, which is a total of 1 water vehicle fire.
 - 100% of water vehicle fires were located in West Manatee Fire Rescue District and 0% of water vehicle fires were mutual/automatic aid given.

6. Natural Vegetation Fire (Code 140)

- In 2025, there were 14 natural vegetation fires located in West Manatee Fire Rescue District with 3 mutual/automatic aid given, which is a total of 17 natural vegetation fires.
 - 82% of natural vegetation fires were located in West Manatee Fire Rescue District and 18% of natural vegetation fires were mutual/automatic aid given.

7. Outside Rubbish Fire (Code 150)

- In 2025, there were 13 outside rubbish fires located in West Manatee Fire Rescue District with 0 mutual/automatic aid given, which is a total of 13 outside rubbish fires.
 - 100% of outside rubbish fires were located in West Manatee Fire Rescue District and 0% of outside rubbish fires were mutual/automatic aid given.

8. Special Outside Fire (Code 160)

- In 2025, there were 5 special outside fires located in West Manatee Fire Rescue District with 0 mutual/automatic aid given, which is a total of 5 special outside fires.
 - 100% of special outside fires were located in West Manatee Fire Rescue District and 0% of special outside fires were mutual/automatic aid given.

9. Overall Summary

- In 2025, there were 54 fire calls located in West Manatee Fire Rescue District with 10 mutual/automatic aid given, which is a total of 64 fire calls.
 - 84% of fire calls were located in West Manatee Fire Rescue District and 16% of fire calls were mutual/automatic aid given.

Mutual aid is a vital component of firefighting and emergency response. It refers to the practice of sharing resources and personnel between surrounding fire departments and emergency services organizations in order to respond to a large or complex incident. Mutual aid agreements are in place to ensure that West Manatee Fire Rescue District has the necessary resources, personnel, and equipment to respond to incidents that are beyond the scope of the department's capabilities.



Professional development & recognition



Professional development remains a cornerstone of the Fire & Life Safety Bureau’s commitment to excellence, leadership, and continuous improvement. In 2025, Bureau personnel pursued advanced education, professional certifications, and leadership opportunities while also contributing expertise at the state and national levels through teaching, publications, and professional appointments. These accomplishments reflect a sustained investment in knowledge, credentialing, and service that strengthens the Bureau’s operational effectiveness, elevates its influence within the fire service, and ensures the highest level of fire and life safety for the community we serve.

Awards:

- Florida Fire Chiefs Association (FFCA) Fire Marshal of the Year (2025)
- Florida Fire Chiefs Association (FFCA) Fire Inspector of the Year (2025)
- Florida Fire Marshals & Inspectors Association (FFMIA) Fire Marshal of the Year (2025)
- 2 Unit Citation Awards- Florida’s 16th Congressional District (2025)
- Pat Glass First Responder Leadership Award – Manatee Tiger Bay Club (2025)
- Fire Safety Commendation Medal – (Sons of the American Revolution)

Professional Development:

- NFPA Certified Fire Protection Specialist (CFPS) – (2025)
- 2 NFPA Certified Fire Plans Examiner (CFPE) – (2025, 2022)
- Fire Officer IV- FL Division of State Fire Marshal (2025)
- Master of Science, Fire Executive Leadership & Public Administration – Columbia Southern University (2025)
- Fire & Life Safety Educator Certification (2025)
- Fire Inspector II Certification (2025)
- Instructor III Certification (2025)
- Associate of Science – Fire Science (Columbia Southern University)

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- National Association of Fire Inspectors (NAFI)
- Fire Officer 1
- Emergency Medical Services Management
- Florida Incident Safety Officer
- Bachelors Degree in Fire and Emergency Services (University of Florida)

Statewide Classes Taught:

- Florida Tourist Development Tax Association Conference– Cocoa Beach, FL (2025)
- Miami-Dade Education Conference – FFMIA- Miami, FL (2025)
- FFMIA Sponsored State Education Seminar at Ocala, FL (2025)
- FFMIA Sponsored State Education Seminar at Charlotte County, FL (2025)
- FFMIA Sponsored State Education Seminar at Volusia County, FL (2025)
- FFMIA Sponsored State Education Seminar at Bonita Springs, FL (2025)

Publications:

- Florida Fire Service Magazine (October 2025)-*Evolving the Mission: From Fire Prevention to Community Risk Reduction* – Pages 14-15
- Florida Fire Service Magazine (May 2025)-*Transforming Safety in Vacation Rentals, An Innovative Approach to Transient Public Lodging Establishments* – Page 22

Appointments:

- Florida Fire Marshals Inspector Association (FFMIA) Board of Directors-West Central Regional Director (2025-2027)
- Technical Panel Member- “Fires in the Shadows-Literature and Expert Insights on Short-Term Rental Fires.” Fire Protection Research Foundation-National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) (2025-2026)
- FFMIA Community Risk Reduction Conference Planning Task Force (2025)