

Fire Departments and Emergency Medical Services in Rhode Island

2021/FY21-2024/FY24



Compiled by



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Last Updated: 10/10/25

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INTRODUCTION

Rhode Island towns utilize different types of fire departments: career, call, volunteer, and combination departments. Career fire departments employ their personnel on a full-time basis and receive regular compensation. Call fire departments receive nominal benefits and are paid when called out. Volunteer fire departments receive no compensation. A combination department usually has a limited number of personnel who are paid on a full-time basis that is augmented with a call force. Generally, career departments will be more expensive than combination departments, which will be more expensive than call departments, which will be more expensive than volunteer departments. Career departments are also known as full-time departments. Some fire departments are full-time by day but call by night and/or on weekends.

There are almost 29,452 fire departments in the United States of which only about 18% are full-time departments¹ but protect 2/3rds of the population. Not knowing how many full-time departments there were in RI, I did a little research and put the information in this document. There are about 64 local fire departments in Rhode Island of which about twenty-seven (27) consider themselves to provide 24/7 fire protection. Of that number, about seventeen (17) are true full-time departments (use full-time personnel exclusively) with the other “full-time” fire departments being combination departments.

Rhode Island has 39 incorporated municipalities of which 8 are cities.

- Rhode Island has no unincorporated towns. Rhode Island, Connecticut and Massachusetts are the only three New England States with no unincorporated towns and one of only four States nationwide.

Types of Fire Departments

In Rhode Island, the local fire departments are either municipal fire departments, part of a fire district, or private corporations.

1. Municipal Fire Department

Of the 39 municipalities, 23 have a municipal fire department. A municipal fire department is part of a city or town funded by the city's or town's general fund budget which is paid for primarily through property taxes. The career departments listed in the first table are municipal departments unless it is indicated they are part of a fire district. Some of these career fire departments, however, are assisted by a volunteer fire company.

- The Prudence Island fire department is a private, non-profit volunteer fire department organized in 1942. The majority of their funding comes from the town as part of the municipal fire department budget. The municipal fire department provides assistance to the Prudence Island VFD for ambulance calls as they transport the patient(s) off the island to the hospital. The municipal fire department also responds to any structure fire on the island.

Some of the municipal departments are made up of fire companies or from the merger of fire companies:

- The Bay Spring Fire Department and the Barrington Fire department were formed in 1910. The two fire departments were merged into the Barrington fire department in 1930. The Hampton Meadows VFD was a private, independent fire department that ceased to exist in 2014.
- The Bristol fire department is composed of four volunteer fire companies that form the municipal fire department. The four companies are Defiance Engine & Hose Company (1905), Ever-Ready Engine & Hose Company (1924), Dreadnaught Hook Ladder & Hose (1843), and Hydraulion Engine & Hose Company (1836).
- Cranston was initially serviced by four village volunteer fire departments: Fiskeville Volunteer Fire Company, Meshanticut Park Volunteer Fire Company formed in 1895, Oaklawn Volunteer

¹ U.S. Fire Department Profile Through 2020. September 2022. Rita Fahy, Ben Evarts, and Gary P. Stein..

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Fire Company, and the Pawtuxet Volunteer Fire Company #1 formed in 1891. These volunteer fire companies continued to serve with the career fire department when it was created in 1920. However, the four volunteer fire companies shut down in 1994.

- The East Greenwich fire department became a municipal department in 2013 when the East Greenwich fire district (created in 1797) was dissolved.
- East Providence had at least seven fire districts: Armington Corners VFC (1902) then changed their name to Bayview Hose Company #6, Centre Hose Company #3 (1900), East Providence VFC (1877), Kent's Corners VFC #7 (1930), Narragansett engine company #2 (1878), Phillipsdale Hose Co (1908), Pomham, Rumford Fire company (1907), and Watchemoket (1878). East Providence established a permanent fire department in 1915. The East Providence fire district and Watchemoket Fire District became part of the municipal fire department in 1951. Most of the volunteer fire companies disbanded by 1954. [Special thanks to Joseph Donato, the fire department historian for this information].
- The Jamestown Fire Department started as the District No. 2 Fire Company before changing its name and being incorporated as the Jamestown Fire Department in 1897. The Jamestown EMS service merged with the Jamestown Fire Department to become the Jamestown Fire and Rescue Department in 2011.
- Johnston had four independent volunteer fire departments: Rough and Ready Eagle Fire Company #2 (1886), Johnston Hose Company #3 (1892) in Manton, Johnston Hose Company #2 in Graniteville, Johnston Hose Company #4 (1950), up until March 1970. They all became a unified department at that time.
- The Little Compton Fire Department was formed in 1969 when it assumed the duties of the Little Compton Fire Association which was established in 1938.
- Newport was initially serviced by nine individual fire companies (Steam Fire Engine Company #1, Hook and Ladder Company #1, Steam Fire Engine Company #2, Hose Reel Company #3, Hose Reel Company #4, Protection Engine Company #5, Hose Reel Company #6, Steam Fire Engine Company #7, Redwood Hose Reel Company #8 formed in 1887) which were run by a Board of Engineers in 1822 composed of a "chief" representing each fire company AND all the fire companies reporting to one overall chief. The Newport Fire Department was created in 1858. In 1874, the department became a paid department. The volunteers were no longer used as the sole workforce and most of the volunteer fire companies disbanded, and their stations sold by 1915. Newport's Fire Department maintained a "Call Force" made up of volunteers called "Callmen". The Call Force provided a supplement of firefighters for the City. Originally, the paid Firefighters were those who drove the horses, in addition the Chief of Dept was paid. Initially, several Callmen were assigned to each steamer & hose cart for manpower. These Callmen participated in fire training and often responded to render assistance fighting fires during large fire events. Newport's Call Force slowly diminished in size until the force was eventually abolished in 2005. [Special thanks to Retired Deputy Chief David Egan and George Pennachi, the former Fire Marshal for the City of Newport for the unofficial history of the Newport Fire Department].
- Pawtucket became a paid department in 1874 and grew to 6 engine companies and 3 truck companies (Warwick Aerial Ladder Truck Company #1, Slater Hook-and-Ladder Company #2, Whatcheer Hook and Ladder Company #3, Rhode Island Chemical and Hose Company #1, Rough and Ready Chemical and Hose Company #2, Monitor Hose Company #3, Atlantic Chemical and Hose Company #4, Fairlawn Chemical and Hose Company #5, Darlington Chemical and Hose Company #6).
- Providence was serviced by fifteen volunteer fire companies up until 1854 when the Fire Department was formed to replace the voluntary fire companies that were in existence at the time. The last voluntary company disbanded in 1866. From "History of Providence County,

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Rhode Island Volume 1” by Richard Bates, the volunteer companies were: Eagle Engine Company #1 (1814), Niagara Engine Company #2 (1763), Union Engine Company #3 (1772), Gazelle Engine Company #4 (1791), Phenix (then Fire King) Engine Company #5 (1798), Water Witch Engine Company #6 (1834), Ocean Engine Company #7 (1824), Watcheer Engine Company #8 (1837), Providence (then Gaspee) Engine Company #9 (1837), Atlantic Engine Company #10 (1847), Pioneer Engine Company #11 (1836), Hook and Ladder Company #1 (1820), Hook and Ladder Company #2 (1827), Hydraulion Company #1 (1822), and Hydraulion Company #2 (1832) which became Columbia Engine Company #12 in 1854.

- Smithfield was initially serviced by two fire districts - District 1 was serviced by the Greenville Fire Department (established in 1870) and District 2 was served by the Georgiaville Fire Company. Both were merged into the Smithfield Fire Department in 1966.
- The Warren Fire department started as the Hero Fire Company #1 in 1802. The Warren Fire Department grew to include six more fire companies: Mechanics Fire Company #2 (1834), Hook and Ladder Company (1834) which in 1889 became the Massasoit Hook and Ladder Company #1, Narragansett Fire Company #3 (1846), Rough and Ready Fire company #5 (1903), Central Fire Company #1 (1915), and Touisset Fire Company #6 (1967).
- Warwick was initially serviced by eight village volunteer fire departments: Apponaug Volunteer Fire Company, Lakewood Volunteer Fire Company, Pawtuxet Volunteer Fire Company (1891), Norwood Fire Company (1908), Conimicut Volunteer Fire Company (1911), Oakland Beach Fire Company (1913), Bayside Fire company (1915), and Greenwood Volunteer Fire Company #1 (1924). These volunteer fire companies continued to serve with the career fire department when it was created in 1956. However, the eight volunteer fire companies were shut down in 1970. Oakland Beach Fire company continues today as a social club. The Greenwood Fire Company continues today as a social club and maintains a museum. The rest of the fire companies dissolved.
- The West Warwick Fire Department was formerly established in 1947 and became a unified fire department in 1948 when the Riverpoint Fire Department (1888), Crompton Fire Department (1890), the Natick Fire Department (1872), and the Warwick Fire Department (1889) all merged with the West Warwick Fire Department.
- The Woonsocket Fire Department started as the Woonsocket Fire Corporation in 1836 and officially became the Woonsocket Fire Department in 1885 when the Fire Corporation gave all its assets to the town. Its first Hook & Ladder company was organized in 1839 and its first hose company (Rescue Hose Company) in 1840. Other hose companies came into being such as Hope Engine Company in 1857 and Eagle Hose Company which later (in 1872) became the Woonsocket Steam Fire Engine Company #1.

2. Fire District

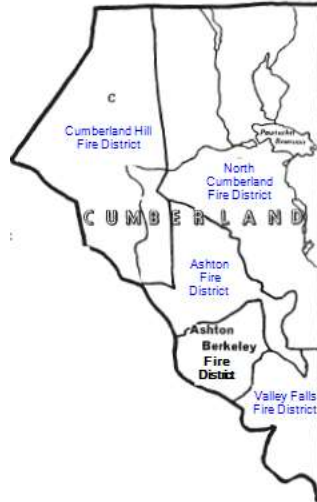
Eleven towns have fire services provided by one or more fire districts. While the other New England States have fire districts, they are far more prevalent in Connecticut and Rhode Island. A fire district is a quasi-municipal corporation. It is an independent governmental entity that exists separately from the municipality in which it resides. They are usually created for specific purposes such as fire, water, lighting, sewer, etc. As such, they have their own taxing authority. Usually, district taxes are included in the property tax bill put out by the municipality and the municipality passes the district taxes on to the district. However, some districts have their own tax collector and those district residents receive two property tax bills, one from the town and one from the district.

However, not all fire districts exist to provide fire services. For example, the Bonnet Shores fire district provides trash collection and recreational services but not fire services while the North Tiverton and Stone Bridge fire districts provide water services only.

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Some fire districts provide more than just fire services. For example, the Hopkins Hill fire district is also responsible for street lighting, and the Harrisville fire district also provides water services. The following discussion on fire districts will show when the fire district was incorporated in parenthesis. The maps that are shown are from John Lenox Master Theses paper “Regional Planning and the Special Purpose District: A Case Study of Rhode Island” unless otherwise indicated. I edited them to put in the fire district names.

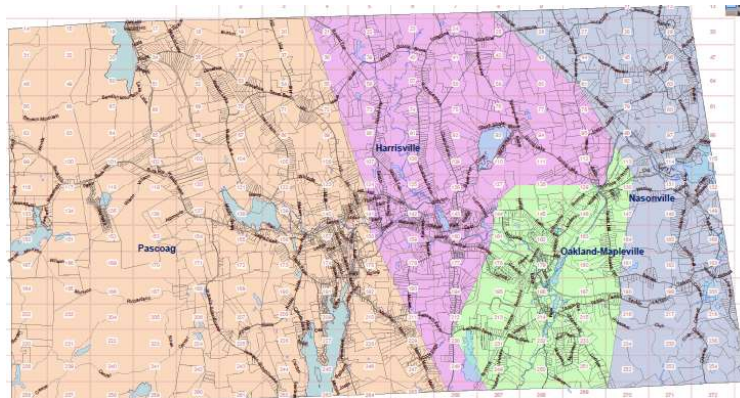
Cumberland is a town with a single fire district providing fire services to the entire town. Cumberland originally had five fire districts as seen in the following map, but over time they got merged into one fire district.



- The Cumberland fire district was formed by the merger of the Ashton (1932) and Berkeley (1904) Fire Districts in 1992.
- The Cumberland Hill (1930), North Cumberland (1959) and Valley Falls (1878) fire districts all officially merged into the Cumberland fire district in 2015.
 - The Valley Falls Fire District operated the Genuine Cumberland Hose Company organized in 1881 and the Originals Cumberland Hose Company.

Towns with multiple fire districts providing fire services to the town include Burrillville, Coventry, Glocester, Hopkinton, Lincoln, Richmond, South Kingston, and Westerly.

- Burrillville had five fire districts based on the villages within the town (Glendale, Harrisville, Mapleville, Nasonville, Oakland, and Pascoag) but it has only four fire districts today. The following map came from the tax-assessor's web site for the town of Burrillville.



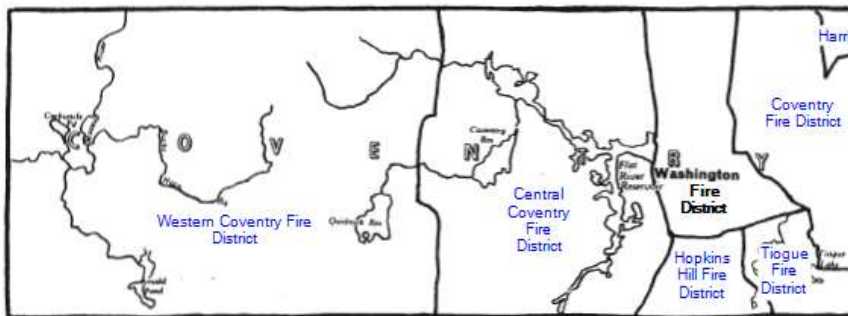
- The Glendale Fire District (1942) no longer exists after it split up the district into the Harrisville and Oakland-Mapleville fire districts in 2002.

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- The Harrisville Fire District (1910) operates the Harrisville fire department which was organized in 1912.
- The Oakland-Mapleville Fire District (1934) operates the Oakland-Mapleville fire department which was organized in 1934.
- The Pascoag Fire District (1887) operates the Pascoag fire department organized in 1903.
- The Nasonville Fire District (1943) operated the Nasonville Fire Department until 2018 when residents rejected the budget and the fire department was shut down. Fire protection is now provided by the Oakland-Mapleville fire department. The Nasonville fire district voted to dissolve in 2019 and merged into the Oakland-Mapleville fire district in 2023 with the new district now called the East Burriville Fire District.
- Wallum Lake is an independent fire department in the Pascoag Fire District.
- Charlestown has four fire districts as shown in the following map:



- The Charlestown fire district (1972) operates two fire departments - the Charlestown/Richmond fire department organized in 1928 and the Cross Mills fire department organized in 1938.
- The Dunn's Corner Fire District (1952) is considered part of Westerly but spans a portion of Charlestown as well. It operates one fire department with a fire station located in each town. The fire department was organized in 1942.
- The Quonochontaug Central Beach (1930) and Shady Harbor (1964) Fire Districts do not have their own fire department but instead contract for fire services from the Dunn's Corner fire department.
- Coventry had seven fire districts shown in the following map:



But there are just four fire districts today.

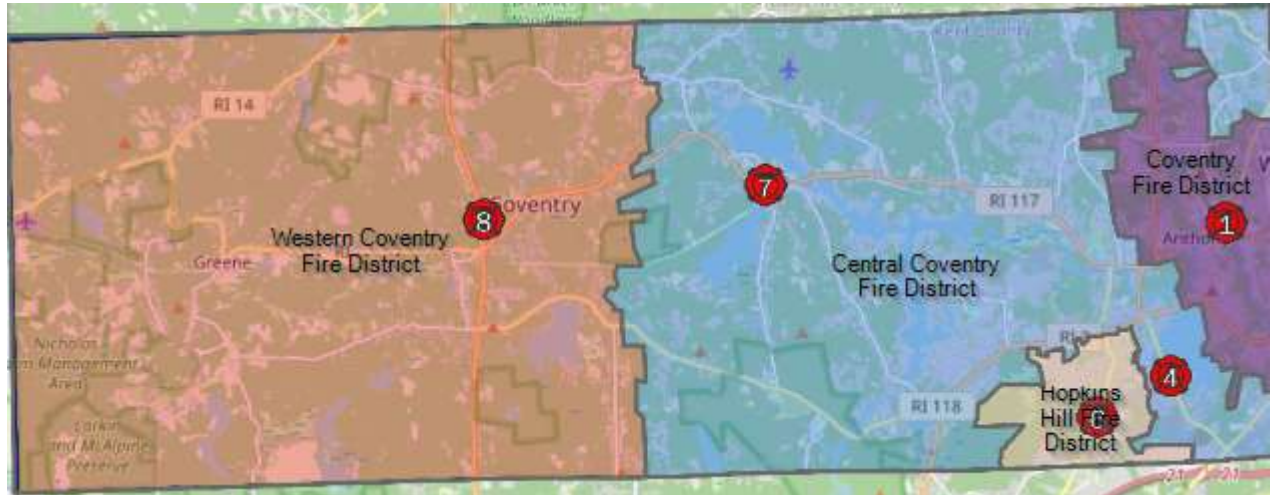
- The Phenix Fire District was renamed to the Harris Fire District in 1947 when West Warwick consolidated its fire districts

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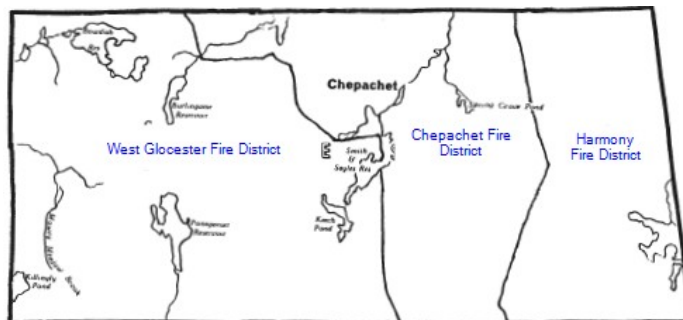
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- The Harris (1872), Tiogue (1954), and Washington (1911) fire districts merged into the Central Coventry Fire District in 2006.
- The Central Coventry Fire District operates the Central Coventry Fire Department organized in 1959. It shares its fire chief with the Hopkins Hill Fire Department.
- Coventry Fire District (1889) operates the Coventry Fire Department organized in 1889.
- The Hopkins Hill Fire District (1955) operates the Hopkins Hill Fire Department which was organized in 1952.
- The Western Coventry Fire District (1942) operates the Western Coventry Fire Department which also organized in 1942.



- Gloucester has three fire districts with each being their own village within the town of Gloucester as seen in the following map:



- The Chepachet Fire District (1912) operates the Chepachet Fire Department organized in 1912.
 - The Harmony Fire District (1945) operates the Harmony Fire Department organized in 1924.
 - The West Gloucester Fire District (1959) operates the West Gloucester Fire Department organized in 1959.
- Hopkinton has two fire districts, created in 1982: Ashaway and Hope Valley/Wyoming with the Hope Valley/Wyoming fire district spanning two towns, Hopkinton and Richmond.

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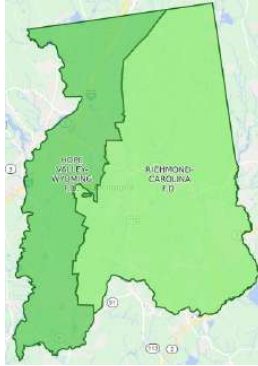
- Lincoln had seven fire districts (as seen in the following map) but it has been reduced to five fire districts today.



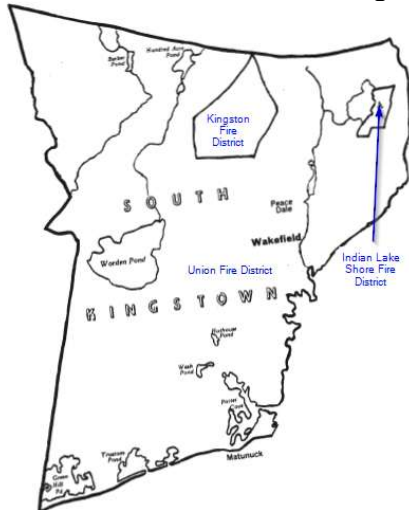
- The Fairlawn fire district (1922) merged into the Saylesville Fire District in 1998, after which the Fairlawn fire district ceased to exist.
- Lonsdale (1882) Fire District merged into the Saylesville fire district in 2018, after which the Lonsdale fire district ceased to exist.
- The Albion Fire District (1941) operates the Albion Fire Department which was organized in 1941.
- The Lime Rock Fire District (1941) operates the Lime Rock Fire Department which was organized in 1950.
- The Manville Fire District (1891) operates the Manville Fire Department which was organized in 1891.
- The Quinnville Fire District (1941) operates the Quinnville Fire Department which was organized in 1928.
- The Saylesville Fire District (1930) covers the villages of Saylesville, Fairlawn, and Lonsdale in the southeastern part of Lincoln. It operates the Saylesville Fire Department which was organized in 1896.
- Albion and Saylesville merged into a newly created Lincoln Fire District in November 2021.

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- Richmond has two fire districts: Richmond-Carolina (1986) and Hope Valley/Wyoming (1982). The Hope Valley fire district spans parts of Richmond and Hopkinton. The following map came from the town of Richmond web site (<http://www.richmondri.com/documentcenter/view/2005>):



- The Alton Volunteer Fire Department in Richmond was organized in 1943 and became part of the Hope Valley/Wyoming Fire District in 1987.
- South Kingstown has three fire districts as seen in the following map:



- Indian Lake Shores (1946) Fire District does not have its own fire department but instead contracts for fire services from the Union fire district.
 - The Kingston Fire District (1923) covers the village of Kingston and the URI. It operates the Kingston Volunteer Fire Company organized in 1923.
 - The Union Fire District (1883) was expanded in 1977 and is composed of eight fire companies: Narragansett Steam Fire Engine Company #1 also known as the Peace Dale Fire Department (1867), Wakefield Fire Company (1895), Snug Harbor Volunteer Fire Company (1952), Forest Fire Company (1956), Tower Hill Fire Company (1962), Tuckertown Fire Company (1978), Matunuck VFC (1978), and West Kingston Fire Company (1978).
- Westerly has seven fire districts as shown in the following map:

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- The Bradford fire department disbanded in 2014 and the fire district (1937) now contracts for fire services from the Dunn's Corners fire district.
- The Dunn's Corner Fire District (1952) spans portions of two towns, Charlestown and Westerly, and operates one fire department with a fire station located in each town. The fire department was organized in 1942.
- The Misquamicut Fire District (1915) operates the Misquamicut Fire Department organized in 1902. It was originally the Pleasant View Beach Fire District but the name was changed to Misquamicut in 1929.
- The Shelter Harbor Fire District (1937) does not have a fire department but instead contracts for fire services from the Dunn's Corners fire district.
- The Watch Hill Fire District (1901) operates the Watch Hill Fire department which was organized in 1902.
- The Weekapaug Fire District (1937) does not have its own fire department but instead contracts for fire services from the Misquamicut Fire District.
- The Westerly Fire Department was organized in 1845 as the Westerly Fire Company #2. When the fire district was incorporated in 1879, its main purpose was to organize a fire department. It added the Alert Hook & Ladder Company in 1884 and the Cyclone Steam engine Company #2 in 1895.

3. Private Fire Department

Five towns do not have a municipal fire department or a fire district. Foster, Scituate, and West Greenwich have multiple private volunteer fire departments, each in a geographic fire district not a taxing fire district. Each has their own fire chief and each receives funding from their town.

- Foster has three private volunteer fire departments: Foster Center Fire Company, Moosup Valley Fire Company, and South Foster Fire Company. Each owns their own fire station but the town owns the fire apparatus. In Foster, all three fire departments respond to any structure fire.

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- Scituate has four private volunteer fire departments: Chopmist Hill Fire Dept., Hope-Jackson Fire Company, North Scituate Fire Dept., and Pottersville Fire Dept. The town owns the Pottersville and Chopmist fire stations and most of the fire apparatus.
- West Greenwich has three private volunteer departments: Hianloland Fire Company, Lake Mishnock Fire Dept., and West Greenwich Fire Company #1. Each fire company owns their fire stations.

New Shoreham and North Smithfield have a single private, non-profit corporation providing fire and EMS services to the town. Each has their own fire chief and each receives funding from their town.

- New Shoreham contracts with the private, non-profit Block Island Fire and Rescue to provide fire services to the town. However, the town owns the fire station and fire apparatus.
- North Smithfield also has no fire department so it contracts with the private, non-profit North Smithfield fire department to provide fire and EMS services to the town. The town owns the fire apparatus but the North Smithfield fire department owns the fire stations. This fire department came into existence in 2002 resulting from the merger of the North Smithfield Volunteer fire department and the Primrose Volunteer fire department.

The Exeter fire district contracts with the two Exeter fire departments, Exeter VFD #1 and Exeter VFD #2 which are private fire departments. The fire district runs funds the ambulance service Exeter Rescue and the Exeter Dispatch Center.

Ambulance Service

In Rhode Island, EMS services are coordinated through the State's Department of Health with the rules and regulations specified by Title 216, Chapter 20, subchapter 10, part 2 – Emergency Medical Services which can be found at <https://rules.sos.ri.gov/regulations/part/216-20-10-2>.

- Rhode Island has five levels of staffing per Section 2.5: Emergency Medical Responder (EMR), Emergency Medical Technician (EMT), Advanced Emergency Medical Technician (AEMT), and Advanced Emergency Medical Technician – Cardiac (AEMT-C), and Paramedic.
- Ambulance services are licensed at three levels: BLS, ALS, and EMR per section 2.7.
- Ambulance vehicles are licensed at 8 different levels per section 2.8, subsection A.
 - ALS transporting ambulance
 - ALS transporting paramedic ambulance
 - ALS non-transporting ambulance
 - ALS non-transporting paramedic ambulance
 - ALS non-transporting AEMT ambulance
 - BLS transporting ambulance
 - BLS non-transporting ambulance
 - ALS Air Medical Services
- The state requires two (2) licensed personnel to be in a transporting ambulance at all times per section 2.8 subsection F. The type of practitioners varies based on the ambulance being ALS or BLS.

There are no commercial ambulance companies providing emergency ambulance service to any of the municipalities as emergency ambulance transports is mostly handled by fire departments.

Most towns with full-time fire departments have an ambulance service provided by the fire department or have a municipal ambulance service.

- Barrington, Central Falls, Cranston, East Greenwich, East Providence, Jamestown, Johnston, Little Compton, Middletown, Narragansett, Newport, North Kingstown, North Providence, Portsmouth, Providence, Smithfield, Tiverton, Warren, Warwick, West Warwick, and Woonsocket have a municipal ambulance service provided by the fire department.

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- Burrillville, Coventry, and Glocester have multiple fire districts with the fire department in each fire district providing ambulance service to that district.
- Cumberland, Lincoln, and South Kingstown may have multiple fire districts but the ambulance service is a municipal service separate from any fire department. In Lincoln, the ambulances are housed in the Albion and Lonsdale fire stations and are supervised by the fire district's fire chief though the ambulance employees are town employees.
 - Cumberland Rescue became a municipal department in 1981. It was originally part of the Ashton Fire district.
 - Lincoln Rescue in the Albion Fire station covers Albion and Manville. Lincoln Rescue in the Lonsdale Fire station covers Quinnville, and Saylesville.
- Charlestown, Exeter, Foster, Hopkinton, Richmond, Scituate, and Westerly have ambulance service provided by a private, non-profit corporation.
- Bristol ambulances are staffed by volunteer personnel who get a small stipend per call. The town also subcontracts with Paramedic Systems Inc. which provides 2 paramedics that respond to all EMS calls when available to supplement the volunteer personnel.

According to the 2020 Annual Report from the Center for Emergency Medical Services, there are 64 ambulance transporting agencies but not all provide emergency transport service. The following table lists the EMS agencies providing emergency ambulance service and the towns they cover.

Ambulance Service Provided by	Municipalities Served
Municipal Ambulance Service Operated by Fire Department	
Harrisville Fire District, East Burrillville Fire District, Pascoag Fire District	Burrillville
Central Coventry Fire District, Coventry Fire District, Hopkins Hill Fire District, Western Coventry Fire District	Coventry
Chepachet Fire District, Harmony Fire District, West Glocester Fire District	Glocester
Hianloland Fire Department Lake Mishnock Fire Department West Greenwich Fire Department	West Greenwich
Municipal Fire Departments	Barrington, Bristol, Central Falls, Cranston, East Greenwich, East Providence, Johnston, Little Compton, Middletown, Narragansett, Newport, New Shoreham, North Kingstown, North Providence, North Smithfield, Pawtucket, Portsmouth, Providence, Smithfield, Tiverton, Warren, Warwick, West Warwick, Woonsocket
Municipal Ambulance Service Independent of Fire Department	
Municipal Rescue Departments	Cumberland, Lincoln, South Kingstown
Non-profit Ambulance Service	
Ashaway Ambulance	Hopkinton (Ashaway Fire District)
Hope Valley Ambulance	Hopkinton (Hope Valley Fire District), Richmond
Jamestown EMS	Jamestown
Charlestown Rescue	Charlestown
Exeter Rescue	Exeter
Foster Ambulance Corps	Foster
Westerly Ambulance	Westerly

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The following table summarizes the number of emergency ambulance providers by category and the number of towns covered. The third column in the table shows the number of emergency ambulance transport providers in Rhode Island and what percentage of providers are in each category. For example, 79% of the transport providers are fire departments.

State	# Providers		Towns Covered	
Fire Department	38	79%	29	74%
Municipal Dept	3	6%	3	8%
Non-Profit Amb	7	15%	7	18%
Hospital	0	0%	0	0%
Commercial	0	0%	0	0%
Total	48		39	

The last column in the above table shows what percentage of towns is serviced by emergency ambulance transport providers in the State. So, while 15% of the ambulance transport agencies are volunteer, non-profit ambulance companies, they service 18% of the municipalities in Rhode Island.

As the above table illustrates, fire departments provide the majority of the emergency ambulance services in Rhode Island. The percentages do not change for paramedic services as all provide both BLS and paramedic service to their municipalities. For more information on EMS calls by day and time, please see the annual reports on the Center for Emergency Medical Services web site (https://health.ri.gov/programs/detail.php?pgm_id=128).

Just as volunteer fire departments have experienced significant decreases in volunteers, volunteer ambulance services have had similar experiences. The NY Times ran an article “Sounding the Siren for Volunteer Drivers” in October 2001 indicating that the lack of volunteers is due to (1) significant training time; (2) yearly recertification; (3) fewer employers being willing to let employees leave; and (4) increases in call volume requiring more time commitments. As a result, many volunteer ambulance service providers are starting to hire daytime personnel as this is considered to be the time period of greatest need.

Estimating Ambulance Service Costs

For towns that don't break out the cost of their ambulance and fire services separately due to having cross-trained personnel, how can one estimate the cost of the ambulance service? A generally accepted costing model on how to estimate the cost of EMS services for such a fire department has the following formula:

- A. Personnel Costs = average on-call time x average hourly labor rate x average number of personnel on the call x number of incidents prior year. (Hourly rate includes benefits)
- B. Vehicle = (Operating cost per mile x annual call miles) + annual cost for ambulance replacement.
- C. Supplies = Actual Cost of Medical Supplies per year + costs of billing service.
- D. Indirect Costs = 25% (A+B+C). 25% is used as a factor to address other benefits and training costs.

Several fire departments in the state use this formula in determining the fee to charge towns contracting for ambulance service. There is some merit to taking the formula in part A and multiplying it by the number of shifts but that is not considered part of the formula at this time.

The ambulance member fees, patient receipts, and paramedic intercepts are significant revenue sources. The fees and patient receipts are revenue deposited in either the General Fund or a special reserve fund. Ultimately, both mechanisms are used to reduce taxes in some form.

Document Organization

The coverage information is provided in three tables. Each table lists the town, when the fire department was established, its last known population and the land coverage area in square miles, who dispatches the fire department, call volume, EMS provider, and the transport agency for the municipality or fire district. The population for the fire districts came from Table 1 in the "Report on the Rhode Island Fire districts" prepared by the Department of Revenue.

The first table lists those fire departments that provide immediate coverage 24/7 and also includes staffing information.

The second table lists those fire departments that provide immediate coverage for some portion of the day. All provide immediate coverage during the weekday because of the difficulty getting call firefighters to respond during the day. The coverage end time varies anywhere from 4PM to midnight.

The third table lists those fire departments that provide 24/7 coverage but it is not immediate coverage as there is no staff in-house when the call first comes in. In other words, it lists the call and volunteer fire departments. NFPA 1720 guides volunteer fire departments on the minimum number of personnel needed for safe and effective firefighting.

While this document will not provide staffing information for the call/volunteer departments, it should be noted that the number of people able to participate as firefighters has dropped significantly in many towns for several reasons: time demands, increased training requirements, increase in call volume requiring more time commitments, changes in sociological conditions, fire leadership problems, and friction between volunteer and career members². As a result, many volunteer or on-call fire departments are starting to hire two daytime firefighters as this is considered to be the time period of greatest need.

National Standards

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) developed a standard, known as NFPA 1710, to guide full-time fire departments on the minimum number of personnel needed for safe and effective firefighting. To provide EMS care (including transport), the State of Rhode Island and NFPA 1710 requires at a minimum 2 personnel. With the majority of the call volume increasingly becoming EMS related, I choose two (2) in-house EMTs and/or firefighters to be the minimum staffing level as the requirement for a fire department to be deemed capable of providing immediate coverage.

Two represents the minimum number of personnel to respond to an EMS call not to a structure fire. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) 29 CFR 1910.134(g)(4) defines a "2-in/2-out" rule for fighting interior structure fires. Responding to a structure fire with less than four firefighters prevents the first responding unit from complying with OSHA's "2-in/2-out" standard, and places the lives of those firefighters in jeopardy. Whether the towns listed in this document comply with this regulation is not known nor is that the purpose of this document.

Staffing Levels

The National Institute of Standards and Technology published a report in 2010 entitled "Report on Residential Fireground Field Experiments". This report found that a four-person crew completed all tasks on the fireground 30% faster than a two-person crew and 25% faster than a three-person crew. Similar results were seen with laddering and ventilation. Interestingly, four person crews completed primary search and rescue operations 6% faster than three person crews but 30% faster than two person crews. Two person crews took almost a minute longer than three person crews to stretch a hose line and almost 90 seconds longer than four person crews. With this in mind, it might be interesting to see what the staffing levels are in Rhode Island fire departments.

² "Retention and Recruitment in the Volunteer Emergency Services". FEMA, May 2023

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The first line in the staffing levels column shows full-time and on-call. Full-time personnel are career firefighters, chief officers, and any full-time civilians (i.e., executive secretary and dispatchers). The second line in the staffing levels column reflects the number of groups or platoons using full-time personnel.

The third line is the shift schedule (for those departments that provide 24/7 immediate coverage). Many full-time fire departments in Rhode Island use a 10/14 shift schedule. This means that a fire fighter works two 10-hour days followed by two 14-hour nights followed by four days off. The cycle then repeats. There are several departments that use a 1-1-1-5 shift which is 1 day on, 1 day off, 1 day on, and 5 days off (where 1 day is 24h).

- The Harrisville fire department staffs its fire station two career firefighters during the weekday and one career firefighter on nights and weekends.
- Jamestown fire department is staffed weekdays with a full-time dispatcher plus the fire chief and deputy chief. The EMS side is staffed with 4 volunteers per 6h shift. Both departments provide property tax abatement for residents in the fire and rescue department and an incentive award.

The fourth line is the number of fire stations in the municipality or district.

Call Volume

Firefighters are trained for firefighting and for EMT duties. Emergency response has been consolidated into many fire departments such that the majority of the call volume for a fire department today is EMS-related not fire. In fact, over the last 20 years, the number of EMS responses has more than tripled while fires have decreased by almost 50%³. It is estimated that 64% of all fire department calls in 2020 were EMS-related⁴. As we have seen with the floods in March 2010, fire departments are expected to respond to natural disasters. With the advent of 9/11, fire departments also are expected to respond to acts of terrorism. So, the role of a firefighter has changed dramatically from years ago. The fire department is also involved in fire prevention activities (such as public education and property inspections) and on-going training of its personnel.

The EMS call volume will be that of the fire department unless the numbers are in green. Any numbers in green represent the call volume of the ambulance provider not the fire department. **Any numbers in red mean they may not be accurate but it was the best I was able to find.**

Keep in mind that the call volume does not reflect the call response time. For example, the call volume may go down by a few calls but the call response time may actually be higher. So, call volume alone is not necessarily the only indicator of measuring the “busyness” of a fire department. Another example is the number of EMS calls. While the number of EMS calls may represent 64% of all calls, it is important to remember that an EMS call typically requires on average about 45 minutes and two or three personnel. Fire calls frequently require most, if not all, on-duty personnel and take many hours to mitigate. When looking at it from this perspective, the number of hours spent performing EMS functions versus fire functions is more like 50% each.

Unfortunately, in at least one municipality, the officials looked at the call percentage and concluded that if the EMS service was privatized, it would reduce workload by 62% and hence, the fire department would not need as many personnel. Therefore, it cannot be stressed enough that call volume alone is not necessarily the only indicator of measuring the “busyness” of a fire department.

A comparison of municipal call volume across the New England States can be found in Appendix A to see if there are any trends in EMS and/or fire calls across New England.

Mutual Aid

An issue of growing concern for some fire departments is the increase in the number of simultaneous calls. This is not an area that much attention has been paid to but it puts additional stresses on a department. When an

³ Effective Fire Protection: A National Concern. A Study by the Insurance Service Office (ISO).

⁴ Fire Department Overall Run Profile as Reported to the National Fire Incident Reporting System (2020). June 2022, Volume 22, Issue 1

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incident or multiple simultaneous incidents occur such that the available local fire department resources are overwhelmed, then additional help is summoned from other nearby fire departments. When fire departments help each other in this fashion, it is called Mutual Aid. In fact, a recent survey conducted for ISO⁵ indicates that over 50% of fire departments call on mutual aid to respond to initial alarms for a structure fire due to lack of responders.

In some communities, a fire department in an adjacent municipality can provide a quicker response than the local fire department. Typically, these fire departments enter into an Automatic Mutual Aid agreement. Automatic Aid provides for a fire department in another municipality to immediately respond to reported fires because it is closer, thus providing the quickest response of manpower and equipment to incidents, and allowing more of the municipality to remain protected at all times. In the same ISO Survey, over 60% indicated that neighboring departments responded due to Automatic Aid agreements.

Automatic Mutual Aid is set up as agreements between participating fire departments. Mutual Aid is set up as Run cards and clearly defines which fire departments are to respond to a fire when requested at different fire alarm levels.

When mutual aid is required, there is a state wide mutual aid response system in place to facilitate this process. There are four regional control centers, each controlling all mutual aid in its respective region. In this way, the municipality does not need to coordinate its own mutual aid. The four regions are the Metro Control Region in Cranston, the Northern Control Region in Smithfield, the Southern Control Region in Exeter, and the East Bay Control Region in Portsmouth.

Fire Dispatch

One of the keys to limiting damage caused by fire is the response time. NFPA 1710 sets a goal for all fire departments to respond to a fire within 6 minutes. Response time is defined as the time from when a 911 call is first received to the time a fire truck arrives on scene. Part of this 6-minute window is 1 minute for dispatch time. All emergency calls first go to a Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) center. There is a single PSAP center in Rhode Island. Basic 911 Service is an emergency telephone system that automatically connects 911 callers to the PSAP center. Enhanced-911 service does the same plus shows the caller's name, street address, and telephone number to the PSAP. This allows the PSAP to identify the caller's location automatically if the caller is unable to communicate this information verbally to the PSAP call taker. Enhanced-911 services are provided by the Rhode Island Enhanced 911 Uniform Emergency Telephone System and are paid for by a monthly user fee on all telephones (land and wireless). As mentioned earlier, there is only one PSAP in Rhode Island which then passes the call to the appropriate local dispatch center shown in the following table.

Agency	Dispatch Center
Central Coventry FD, Coventry FD, Hopkins Hill FD, Western Coventry FD	Coventry PD
Cumberland FD, Cumberland Rescue	Cumberland PD
Lime Rock FD, Manville FD, Quinnville FD, Lincoln Fire District, Lincoln Rescue	Lincoln PD
Harrisville FD, Pascoag FD, Oakland-Mapleville FD	Burrillville PD
Exeter VFD #1, Exeter VFD #2, Exeter Rescue Corps	Exeter EDC
Foster Center FD, Moosup Valley FD, South Foster FD, Foster Amb. Corps	Foster PD
Chepachet FD, Harmony FD, West Glocester FD	Glocester PD
North Providence, Pawtucket	North Providence FDC
Chopmist Hill FD, Hope-Jackson FD, No. Scituate FD, Potterville FD	Scituate PD
Kingston FD, Union FD, South Kingstown EMS	South Kingstown PD
Hianololand FD, Lake Mishnock FD, West Greenwich FD	West Greenwich PD
Ashaway FD, Dunn's Corner FD, Hope Valley FD, Misquamicut FD, Watch Hill FD, Westerly FD, Westerly Amb. Corps	Westerly Dispatch Center

⁵ Fire Chief's Opinion 2008. ISO, September 2008

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Barrington FD, Bristol FD, Charlestown FD, East Providence FD, Little Compton FD, Narragansett FD, New Shoreham FD, North Kingstown FD, Tiverton FD, Warren FD	Town PD
Central Falls FD, Cranston FD, East Greenwich FD, Jamestown FD, Johnston FD, Middletown FD, Newport FD, North Smithfield FD, Pawtucket FD, Portsmouth FD, Providence FD, Smithfield FD, Warwick FD, West Warwick FD, Woonsocket FD	Self-Dispatch

The police department in each municipality in Rhode Island provides its own dispatch service.

The total 911 calls were taken from the “Annual 911 Fee Report to Congress”. The EMS and Fire 911 calls were taken from the Call Volume Report Summary published by the Rhode Island Enhanced 911 Uniform Emergency Telephone System.

Rhode Island	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Total 911 calls	514,926	496,401	460,817	461,218	474,142	463,800	497,930	476,710	496,673
EMS 911 calls	149,149	148,950	144,257	144,574	146,965	142,866	159,357	157,459	156,693
% EMS Calls	29.0%	30.0%	31.3%	31.3%	31.0%	30.8%	32.0%	33.0%	31.6%
Fire calls	21,436	20,518	23,374	20,467	20,507	25,398	23,734	30,807	30,657

Fire Budgets

The budgets for all the municipalities (but not fire districts) can be found on the Cities and Towns budget page on the Municipal Affairs web site.

- All towns and cities in Rhode Island are on a fiscal year. Some fire districts are on a fiscal year, some on a calendar year and others on something in-between.

The state requires all municipalities (but not fire districts) to file the Adopted budget and Employee Benefits form (form 44-5). Some municipalities include employee benefits and pension costs in the fire department budget. Many do not. Therefore, the State tries to have comparable data so the State has the municipalities report employee and pension costs separate from the fire department budget. Without the employee benefit costs, any comparison is really not possible.

Ideally, it would be better to show the true operating costs or full-cost budget which has all costs allocated to each department so it is clear what it costs to run that department. As such, a full-cost budget for the fire department has wages, benefits, insurance, utilities, fuel, pension costs, equipment repairs, and hydrant rentals in its departmental operating budget. I am keeping capital budget (including debt service) separate since most towns do capital outlays as warrant articles. Of the full-time fire departments, only the fire districts provide a full-cost budget and North Smithfield fire department which is a private, non-profit fire company.

- Barrington, Central Falls, Jamestown, North Providence, Providence, Tiverton, Warwick, West Warwick, and Woonsocket do not include pensions in the fire department budget. Cranston includes a portion but the majority of its pension obligation is not in the fire department budget.
- Bristol, Central Falls, Jamestown, Middletown, North Kingstown, North Providence, Portsmouth, Smithfield, and Warren do not include hydrant rentals in the fire department budget.
- Barrington, Central Falls, Cranston, North Kingstown, North Providence, Providence, and Warren do not include some or all utilities (heat, water, telephone, and electricity) in their fire budget.
- Barrington, Bristol, Central Falls, Jamestown, North Providence, Providence, Tiverton, Warren, Warwick, West Warwick, and Woonsocket do not include health and dental coverage in their fire department budget.

Issues Facing Fire Departments in RI:

Aging apparatus and facilities. It is estimated that 39% of all engines in RI fire departments are at least 15 years old⁶. This is close to the national average of 43%⁷. The industry standard for the life span of a fire engine is 15 years followed by 5 years of reserve status. Starting in 2007, the EPA's new emission standards go into effect to which the fire apparatus industry must comply. It is estimated that this will increase the cost of a new engine by as much as 50K. These new emission standards will significantly reduce the amounts of nitrous oxide, particulate matter, and non-methane hydrocarbon (NMHC) emissions.

Roughly 71% of the existing fire stations are estimated to be over 40 years old (compared with 44% nationwide), 3% have no backup power (compared with 35% nationwide) and 8% are not equipped for exhaust emission control per NFPA 1500 2002 9.1.6 (compared with 56% nationwide).

Providing firefighters with proper and up-to-date equipment such as portable radios, SCBA units, Personal Alert Safety System devices, and personal protective clothing. The protective clothing costs about \$7,700 and the SCBA units cost about \$6,300 on average.⁸

Most fire departments are not able to meet the OSHA 2in-2out rule as most departments have the first response engine containing less than 4 firefighters.

CAVEAT EMPTOR

The personnel and number of stations initially came from the Fire Department Census Survey found on the US Fire Administration website and were cross-referenced with information from the town web sites and/or town reports. The population numbers were taken from the US Census Bureau.

The information in this document came from various sources (CAFR, budget documents, fire officials, and NFIRS report) and the information was verified to the extent it was possible. While I tried to be as accurate as possible, there is the possibility for errors. Hopefully, if there are any errors, someone will be kind enough to point them out to me.

⁶ Third Needs Assessment of the Fire Service in Rhode Island. October 2011. NFPA Fire Analysis and Research, Quincy MA

⁷ Fifth Needs Assessment of the U.S. Fire Service. December 2021. NFPA Research, Quincy MA

⁸ National Volunteer Fire Council 2020 Fact Sheet

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Changes in Fire Departments

2011:

Jamestown Fire Department and Jamestown Emergency Medical Services merge.

2013:

East Greenwich Fire District merges with the town of East Greenwich to form a municipal fire dept.

2016:

The Cumberland, Cumberland Hill, North Cumberland and Valley Falls fire districts all officially merged into the Cumberland fire district.

2019:

Barrington changes its shift schedule from 10/14 to 1-2-1-4 with minimum staffing increasing from 5 to 6.
Nasonville residents vote to dissolve the fire district with Saylesville providing fire coverage.

2020:

Pawtucket and North Providence fire departments merge dispatch operations and are now dispatched by new public safety complex in North Providence.

2021:

Albion and Saylesville fire districts merge to become the Lincoln Fire District.

2023:

Oakland-Mapleville and Nasonville fire districts merge to become the East Burriville Fire District.

Fire Departments Providing 24/7 Immediate Coverage

This table lists those towns with full-time fire departments that provide immediate round-the-clock fire protection.

Department	FD Est	ISO Rating	Pop/Cover Area	Dispatch	Staffing Levels FT/Call Shift Schedule	Min Staff Lvl	Total EMS (21-24)	Total Calls (21-24)	EMS Provider	Transport Agency
Barrington	1910	3	16,293 over 15 sq mi	Barrington PD	29/0 4 groups of 7 1-2-1-4 shift 2 stations	6	1588 1542 1559 1412	2201 2354 2438 2644	Barrington FD	Barrington FD
Burrillville – Oakland- Mapleville FD ⁹	1934	4/4Y	8,000 over 22 sq mi	Burrillville PD	2 groups of 2 12h shift 1 station	2	734 760 744 762	990 1095 1067 1084	Oakland- Mapleville FD	Oakland- Mapleville FD
Burrillville – Pascoag Fire District	1903	3/3Y	10,000 over 26 sq mi.	Burrillville PD	8/12 4 groups of 2 1-1-1-5 shift 2 stations	2	1555 1315 1422 1291	1808 1626 1763 1518	Pascoag FD	Pascoag FD
Central Falls	1847		19,416 over 1.3 sq mi	Self-Dispatch	38/0 4 groups of 9 1-1-1-5 shift 1 station	7	3304 3666 3456 3401	4817 4992 4746 4838	Central Falls FD	Central Falls FD
Coventry – Central Coventry Fire District	1959	10	18,900 over 25.3 sq mi	Coventry PD	31/0 4 groups of 7 1-1-1-1-1-4 shift 2 stations	6	3011 3410 3445 3595	4529 4457 4476 4633	Central Coventry FD	Central Coventry FD
Coventry – Coventry Fire District	1889	4/4X	10,000 over 5.5 sq mi	Coventry PD	10/10 4 groups of 2 10/14 shift 1 station	2	1743 1781 1557 1977	2427 2503 2751 2877	Coventry FD	Coventry FD
Coventry – Hopkins Hill Fire District	1952	3/3X	3,400 over 2.2 sq mi	Coventry PD	14/38 4 groups of 2 ¹⁰ 1-1-1-5 shift 1 station	2	801 1034 1135 1453	1343 1688 1821 2216	Hopkins Hill FD	Hopkins Hill FD
Coventry – Western Coventry Fire District	1942	8B	3,640 over 31 sq mi	Coventry PD	5/23 4 groups of 2 1 station	2	540 495 608 883	798 726 885 1137	Western Coventry FD	Western Coventry FD
Cranston	1920		80,566 over 30 sq mi	Self-Dispatch	210/0 4 groups of 45 10/14 shift 6 stations	41	10,283 11,163 11,386 13,690	16,455 17,440 17,788 17,788	Cranston FD	Cranston FD
Cumberland	1930	3	34,055 over 28.6 sq mi	Cumberland PD	54/5 4 groups of 12 10/14 shift 4 stations	12	3476 4314 2891 3161	5019 5394 5403 5599	Cumberland Rescue	Cumberland Rescue
East Greenwich			13,131 over 17 sq mi	Self-Dispatch	40/8 4 groups of 9 10/14 mod shift ¹¹ 2 stations	8	2491 2268 2908 2839	4194 4423 No Data No Data	East Greenwich FD	East Greenwich FD
East Providence	1875	2	47,149 over 17 sq mi	East Providence PD	125/0 4 groups of 27 10/14 shift 4 stations	26	9566 10,370 10,356 10,312	12,803 12,944 13,797 13,650	East Providence FD	East Providence FD

⁹ Oakland-Mapleville employs per diems for each shift.

¹⁰ Hopkins Hill has a part-time firefighter at night to augment the career staff

¹¹ East Greenwich has a 10h day, 10h day, 2 days off, 14h night, 14h night, 4 days off shift schedule

Fire and Emergency Medical Services in Rhode Island

Department	FD Est	ISO Rating	Pop/ Cover Area	Dispatch	Staffing Levels FT/Call Shift Schedule	Min Staff Lvl	Total EMS (21-24)	Total Calls (21-24)	EMS Provider	Transport Agency
Johnston	1970	3/10	29,045 over 24 sq mi	Self-Dispatch	89/0 4 groups of 21 10-10-14-14-96 shift 4 stations	21	5688 6552 6275 6829	7544 8129 8030 8542	Johnson FD	Johnson FD
Little Compton	1938	8B	3,503 over 29 sq mi	Little Compton PD	12/17 4 groups of 3 1-1-1-5 shift 1 station	2	485 533 514 475	1057 986 842 826	Little Compton FD	Little Compton FD
Lincoln – Lime Rock Fire District	1948	3/3X	5,600 over 9.2 sq mi	Lincoln Comm Ctr	25/3 4 groups of 5 1-1-1-5 shift 2 stations		1445 1388 1728 1762	2409 2287 2622 2779	Lincoln Rescue	Lincoln Rescue
Middletown	1922	3/3Y	16,815 over 15 sq mi	Self-Dispatch	36/0 4 groups of 9 10/14 shift 1 station	8	2845 2785 2689 3093	3683 3605 3552 4003	Middletown FD	Middletown FD
Narragansett ¹²	1901	3/3X	14,536 over 38 sq mi	Narragansett PD	44/0 4 groups of 10 1-2-1-4 shift 3 stations	8/10	1810 1873 1978 2002	3063 3591 3778 3912	Narragansett FD	Narragansett FD
Newport	1822	1	24,027 over 11 sq mi	Self-Dispatch	98/4 4 groups of 22 10-10-14-14-96 shift 3 stations	19	3401 4130 4732 4794	6026 6504 7143 7331	Newport FD	Newport FD
North Kingstown	1917	2	26,184 over 58 sq mi	North Kingstown PD	81/0 4 groups of 17 1-2-1-4 shift 3 stations	15	3285 4191 4390 4363	9526 11,156 10,554 11,081	North Kingstown FD	North Kingstown FD
North Providence	1896	1	32,238 over 5.8 sq mi	North Providence Comm Ctr	92/0 4 groups of 20 10/14 shift 4 stations	20	5976 5994 6307 5994	8342 8459 8785 8382	North Providence FD	North Providence FD
North Smithfield	2002	2/2Y	12,178 over 25 sq mi	Self-Dispatch	23/15 4 groups of 5 1-1-1-5 shift 2 stations		2235 2240 2494 2661	2895 2913 3215 3333	North Smithfield FD	North Smithfield FD
Pawtucket ¹³	1874	2	71,172 over 9 sq mi	North Providence Comm Ctr	146/0 4 groups of 34 10/14 shift 6 stations	31	11,847 12,771 13,384 13,072	17,184 17,859 17,591 18,337	Pawtucket FD	Pawtucket FD
Portsmouth	1935		17,383 over 59 sq mi	Self-Dispatch	47/0 4 groups of 10 1-2-1-4 shift 1 station	10	2033 2355 2405 2390	3231 3242 3474 3630	Portsmouth FD	Portsmouth FD
Providence	1854	1	177,994 over 20.5 sq mi	Self-Dispatch	409/0 4 groups of 89 24/48 shift 14 stations	88	32,929 34,716 31,781 23,972	45,701 47,168 47,394 45,750	Providence FD	Providence FD
Smithfield	1870	4/4X	21,410 over 28 sq mi	Self-Dispatch	71/4 4 groups of 15 10/14 shift 3 stations	13	3529 3897 3900 3916	4171 4832 4990 5327	Smithfield FD	Smithfield FD
Tiverton		4/4X	15,858 over 36 sq mi	Tiverton PD	32/0 4 groups of 7/8 1-1-1-5 shift 3 stations	7	2114 2364 2462 2405	3433 3730 3658 3734	Tiverton FD	Tiverton FD

¹² Minimum staffing is 10 during summertime and drops to 8 in wintertime.

¹³ Pawtucket 2020 data is in red because there was a software corruption issue and the numbers are estimates.

Fire and Emergency Medical Services in Rhode Island

Department	FD Est	ISO Rating	Pop/ Cover Area	Dispatch	Staffing Levels FT/Call Shift Schedule	Min Staff Lvl	Total EMS (21-24)	Total Calls (21-24)	EMS Provider	Transport Agency
Warwick	1956	2	81,971 over 50 sq mi	Self-Dispatch	232/0 4 groups of 48 10-14 mod shift ¹⁴ 1 station	45	14,917 15,511 15,047 16,018	18,661 19,597 19,580 20,260	Warwick FD	Warwick FD
West Warwick	1947	2	28,893 over 8 sq mi	Self-Dispatch	74/0 4 groups of 16 1-1-1-5 shift 4 stations	15	5727 5785 5899 5920	7739 8338 8378 8982	West Warwick FD	West Warwick FD
Woonsocket	1836	2	41,026 over 8 sq mi	Self-Dispatch	107/0 4 groups of 25 1-1-1-5 shift 5 stations	21	8741 9299 9729 9886	11,438 12,215 12,880 13,174	Woonsocket FD	Woonsocket FD

¹⁴ Warwick shift is 10h day, 14h night, 2 days off, 10h day, 14h night, 4 days off

Combination Departments Providing Immediate Coverage by Day/On-call Nights (and/or Weekends)

Department	FD Est	ISO Rating	Pop/ Cover Area	Dispatch	Staffing Levels FT/Call	Total EMS (21-24)	Total Calls (21-24)	EMS Provider	Transport Agency
Burrillville – Harrisville Fire District	1912	3/3Y	4,000 over 20 sq mi.	Burrillville PD	9/15 1 group of 6/3 1 station	872 1002 1094 1099	1170 1405 1451 1405	Harrisville FD	Harrisville FD
Lincoln – Lincoln Fire District ¹⁵	1896	4	11,200 over 6.7 sq mi	Lincoln Comm Ctr	12/38 1 group of 12 1 station	1734 1388 1808 2093	3190 3303 3248 3220	Lincoln Rescue	Lincoln Rescue

¹⁵ The numbers from 2019-2021 are the combined numbers of the Albion and Saylesville Fire Departments. For 2022, the numbers are for the merger of the two Fire Districts.

Towns with a Call Fire Department

This table lists those towns with a fire department that provides 24/7 coverage but it is not immediate. In other words, it is a call fire department.

Department	FD Est.	ISO Rating	Pop/ Cover Area	Dispatch	Total EMS (22-24)	Total Calls (22-24)	EMS Provider	Transport Agency
Bristol Defiance Hose Dreadnaught HL EverReady Hose Hydraulion Hose	1905 1843 1924 1836	3/3X	22,385 over 10 sq mi	Bristol PD	3674 3680 3613	4386 4450 4411	Bristol FD	Bristol FD/PSI
Charlestown Fire District	1979		7781 over 32 sq mi	Charlestown PD	1523 1345 1389	258 246 291	Charlestown Rescue	Charlestown Rescue
Exeter – Exeter VFD #1	1944	5	6546 over 58.4 sq mi	Exeter EDC	1222 1240 1455	295 271 302	Exeter Rescue Corps	Exeter Rescue Corps
Exeter – Exeter VFD #2	1944	5		Exeter EDC		141 136 116	Exeter Rescue Corps	Exeter Rescue Corps
Foster – Foster Center Fire Company	1953			Foster PD		246 177 266	Foster Amb Corps	Foster Amb Corps
Foster – Moosup Valley Fire company			4656 over 52 sq mi	Foster PD	736 619 624	260 195 276	Foster Amb Corps	Foster Amb Corps
Foster – South Foster Fire Company	1928			Foster PD		489 327 494	Foster Amb Corps	Foster Amb Corps
Glocester – Chepachet Fire District	1912		5,000 over 26 sq mi	Glocester PD	730 786 853	955 1048 1122	Chepachet FD	Chepachet FD
Glocester – Harmony Fire District	1924		4,100 over 18 sq mi	Glocester PD	530 553 670	693 796 901	Harmony FD	Harmony FD
Glocester – West Glocester Fire District	1959	8B	1,675 over 27 sq mi	Glocester PD	335 318 354	525 483 568	West Glocester FD	West Glocester FD
Hopkinton – Ashaway Fire District	1936	4	2,500 over 20 sq mi	Westerly Dispatch Center	438 684 713	227 251 238	Ashaway Ambulance	Ashaway Ambulance
Hopkinton – Hope Valley Fire District	1982	4	8,000 over 50 sq mi	Westerly Dispatch Center	1582 1436 1474	498 566 501	Hope-Valley Ambulance	Hope-Valley Ambulance
Jamestown	1891	4/4Y	5,472 over 35 sq mi	Jamestown PD	553 690 594	867 917 944	Jamestown FD	Jamestown FD
Lincoln – Manville Fire District	1891	4	3,300 over 1 sq mi	Lincoln Comm Ctr	4634 4992 4539	1194 1160 983	Lincoln Rescue	Lincoln Rescue
Lincoln – Quinnville Fire District	1928	5	1,000 over 1 sq mi	Lincoln Comm Ctr		373 395 348	Lincoln Rescue	Lincoln Rescue
New Shoreham	1925		1,041 over 9.7 sq mi	New Shoreham PD	428 440 394	No Data Avail	Block Island Fire & Rescue	Block Island Fire & Rescue
Richmond- Carolina Fire District	1986	4	4,000 over 20 sq mi	Westerly Dispatch Center	1582 1436 1474	268 255 272	Hope-Valley Ambulance	Hope-Valley Ambulance

Fire and Emergency Medical Services in Rhode Island

Department	FD Est.	ISO Rating	Pop/ Cover Area	Dispatch	Total EMS (22-24)	Total Calls (22-24)	EMS Provider	Transport Agency
Scituate - Hope-Jackson	1924	3	10,433 over 55 sq mi	Scituate PD	436 398 No Data	790 No Data	Hope-Jackson FD	Hope-Jackson FD
Scituate - North Scituate	1928		10,433 over 55 sq mi	Scituate PD	798 777 824	1484 1433 1503	North Scituate FD	North Scituate FD
Scituate Potterville	1948		10,433 over 55 sq mi	Scituate PD	No Data Avail	229 199 No Data	Potterville FD	Potterville FD
Scituate Chopmist Hill	1950	2	10,433 over 55 sq mi	Scituate PD	197 223 230	441 470 310	Chopmist Hill FD	Chopmist Hill FD
South Kingstown - Kingston Fire District	1923	3	5,000 over 3 sq mi	South Kingstown PD	3219 4059 4218	720 760 766	South Kingstown EMS	South Kingstown EMS
South Kingstown - Union Fire District	1883	4/4X	30,000 over 57 sq mi	South Kingstown PD		1209 1239 No Data	South Kingstown EMS	South Kingstown EMS
Warren	1802	3/3Y	10,542 over 8.7 sq mi	Warren PD	2655 2582 2569	3295 3194 3182	Warren FD	Warren FD
W. Greenwich Hianloland Lake Mishnock W. Greenwich	1940 1951 1945		6,105 over 50.6 sq mi	West Greenwich PD	1033 952 1012	1626 1442 1256	West Greenwich Rescue	West Greenwich Rescue
Westerly – Dunn’s Corner Fire District	1942	3/3Y	9,000 over 22 sq mi	Westerly Dispatch Center	6590 6969 6800	446 419 398	Westerly Ambulance	Westerly Ambulance
Westerly – Misquamicut Fire District	1915		1,200 over 3.5 sq mi	Westerly Dispatch Center		131 166 170	Westerly Ambulance	Westerly Ambulance
Westerly – Watch Hill Fire District	1902	2	??? over 1.5 sq mi	Westerly Dispatch Center		174 149 177	Westerly Ambulance	Westerly Ambulance
Westerly – Westerly Fire District	1870		15,000 over 7.5 sq mi	Westerly Dispatch Center		637 663 675	Westerly Ambulance	Westerly Ambulance

Fire Department Trending Data

This table shows the trend in calls in each fire department over a 3 year, 5-year, and 10-year period for 2022.

Municipality	EMS % Inc/Dec (3y)	EMS % Inc/Dec (5y)	EMS % Inc/Dec (10y)	Total Calls % Inc/Dec (3y)	Total Calls % Inc/Dec (5y)	Total Calls % Inc/Dec (10y)
Barrington	-11.1%	-17.7%	-16.9%	20.1%	13.8%	11.0%
Bristol	4.6%	17.5%	38.1%	3.8%	14.5%	20.1%
Burrillville - Harrisville	26.0%	40.9%	72.0%	20.1%	32.7%	56.3%
Burrillville - Oakland-Mapleville	3.8%	23.9%	57.4%	9.5%	36.2%	59.9%
Burrillville - Pascoag	-17.0%	24.4%	57.2%	-16.0%	18.8%	45.4%
Central Falls	2.9%	-1.1%	17.1%	0.4%	-1.3%	7.9%
Charlestown Fire	-13.9%	-11.4%	47.6%	9.8%	6.6%	41.3%
Coventry - Coventry Center	19.4%	26.6%	50.9%	2.3%	25.0%	55.0%
Coventry - Coventry Fire	13.4%	12.2%	72.2%	18.5%	25.5%	51.4%
Coventry - Hopkins Hill	81.4%	78.9%	127.7%	65.0%	63.3%	131.6%
Coventry - Western Coventry	66.9%	82.8%	140.6%	43.7%	82.5%	142.4%
Cranston	33.1%	27.8%	31.1%	8.1%	7.0%	26.5%
Cumberland	-9.1%	-6.4%	45.0%	11.6%	16.1%	77.4%
East Greenwich	14.0%	5.5%	31.1%	7.3%	6.5%	34.7%
East Providence	7.8%	15.0%	45.2%	6.3%	14.2%	30.6%
Exeter #1				36.7%	5.6%	32.5%
Exeter #2				9.4%	6.4%	-6.5%
Foster - Foster Center				1.5%	11.8%	8.1%
Foster - Moosup Valley				-2.5%	30.8%	54.2%
Foster - South Foster				21.1%	35.7%	39.5%
Glocester - Chepachet	28.1%	29.0%	58.8%	29.0%	36.0%	50.2%
Glocester - Harmony	54.7%	82.1%	107.4%	36.9%	49.2%	53.2%
Glocester - West Glocester	29.7%	-9.9%	-16.5%	36.5%	25.9%	2.7%
Hopkinton - Ashaway				-17.6%	-14.4%	-41.2%
Hopkinton - Hope Valley				-16.1%	4.6%	13.3%
Jamestown	-1.8%	13.4%	2.9%	1.4%	24.0%	9.3%
Johnston	20.1%	19.8%	33.4%	13.2%	18.2%	31.0%
Lincoln - Lime Rock	21.9%	12.8%	165.4%	15.2%	14.9%	113.9%
Lincoln - Manville				-2.1%	7.2%	55.0%
Lincoln - Quinville				-13.0%	45.0%	105.9%
Lincoln - Lincoln	152.5%	142.2%	564.4%	103.2%	109.9%	331.1%
Little Compton	-2.1%	10.5%	8.0%	-21.9%	5.5%	13.6%
Middletown	8.7%	11.7%	30.0%	8.7%	14.3%	28.3%
Narragansett	10.6%	15.2%	24.9%	27.7%	40.7%	59.8%
Newport	41.0%	20.9%	25.4%	21.7%	10.7%	13.9%

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North Kingstown	32.8%	30.6%	45.9%	16.3%	74.6%	78.8%
North Providence	0.3%	28.0%	36.6%	0.5%	5.1%	21.1%
North Smithfield	19.1%	25.0%	47.4%	15.1%	18.1%	42.0%
Pawtucket	10.3%	20.9%	19.6%	6.7%	-9.4%	28.7%
Portsmouth	17.6%	5.1%	17.0%	12.3%	12.7%	27.4%
Providence	-27.2%	-28.1%	-17.3%	0.1%	0.9%	12.8%
Richmond-Carolina				18.3%	33.3%	92.9%
Smithfield	11.0%	13.8%	25.4%	17.7%	20.9%	24.1%
South Kingstown - Kingston	35.9%	38.1%	-2.6%	3.4%	22.2%	16.2%
South Kingstown - Union	50.4%	89.6%	227.9%	-6.1%	15.6%	46.9%
Tiverton	13.8%	-6.7%	24.5%	8.8%	5.6%	25.0%
Warren	-3.8%	12.0%	51.1%	-5.1%	11.1%	25.7%
Warwick	7.4%	15.6%	35.4%	8.6%	17.6%	30.6%
West Greenwich	-19.0%	42.9%	27.5%	-12.4%	21.0%	65.7%
West Warwick	3.4%	13.2%	23.4%	16.1%	24.1%	36.9%
Westerly - Dunn's Corner	-77.5%	-86.0%	-74.6%	-39.7%	-55.6%	-39.9%
Westerly - Misquamicut				12.6%	46.6%	25.0%
Westerly - Watch Hill				12.0%	10.6%	58.0%
Westerly - Westerly Fire				-10.8%	-5.1%	12.5%
Woonsocket	13.1%	22.1%	32.9%	15.2%	21.4%	31.1%

Note 1: Oakland-Mapleville started covering the Nasonville fire district in 2018 so the 10y call data will be higher than prior averages.

Note 2: Cumberland merged four fire districts into one district in 2016. Therefore, the 10y increase shown may be high.

Note 3: Saylesville and Albion Fire Districts merged in 2021 to become the Lincoln Fire district so the 5y and 10y averages may be too high.

Note 4: Ashaway Fire, Charlestown Fire, Exeter Fire, Hope Valley Fire, Manville Fire, Quinnville Fire, Misquamicut Fire, Watch Hill Fire, and Westerly Fire do not provide EMS services so no data is shown in the table.

EMS Agency Trending Data

This table shows the trend in calls in each EMS Agency over a 3 year, 5-year, and 10-year period for 2023.

EMS Agency	EMS % Inc/Dec (3y)	EMS % Inc/Dec (5y)	EMS % Inc/Dec (10y)
Block Island RS	-2.5%	-10.0%	23.9%
Charlestown Rescue	1.8%	4.4%	31.9%
Cumberland Rescue	-4.4%	9.0%	14.6%
Exeter Rescue	22.9%	19.8%	73.6%
Foster Amb Corps	-13.6%	0.0%	-0.3%
Hopkinton - Ashaway Amb	18.8%	43.5%	37.1%
Hopkinton - Hope Valley Amb	-4.3%	6.2%	5.3%
Lincoln Rescue	-1.5%	-3.1%	22.6%
South Kingstown EMS	25.4%	26.9%	47.9%
Westerly Amb Corps	8.9%	-5.9%	18.3%

Appendix A - EMS and Fire Emergency Calls across New England

Using information from the State Fire Marshal Office Annual Reports for Vermont, Maine, and Massachusetts; and NFIRS for Connecticut and New Hampshire, we can look at the number of municipal fire and EMS calls to determine if any trends can be observed. Since all the data (including that in the FMO Annual Report) is taken from NFIRS, it is dependent on the number of fire departments entering their data into the system and there is not 100% compliance so the numbers are likely on the low side.

New England State	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	5yr Avg
Connecticut								
Muni EMS calls	225,621	245,978	236,152	190,151	211,591	246,582	214,896	224,225
Fire calls	11,584	11,710	10,925	11,578	9,427	12,152	10,011	10,967
Non-fire calls	121,262	141,532	128,868	116,441	116,635	132,477	115,926	125,313
Total Muni Calls	358,467	399,220	375,945	318,170	337,653	391,211	340,833	360,505
% Muni EMS calls	62.9%	61.6%	62.8%	59.8%	62.7%	63.0%	63.1%	62.2%
% Muni Fire Calls	3.2%	2.9%	2.9%	3.6%	2.8%	3.1%	2.9%	3.0%
Maine								
Muni EMS calls	70,410	95,272	101,614	87,922	107,621	113,464	126,264	105,360
Fire calls	5,623	7,029	6,573	7,404	7,131	7,347	7,615	7,183
Non-fire calls	35,987	40,254	42,260	42,584	43,209	47,222	57,587	45,519
Total Muni Calls	112,020	142,555	150,447	137,910	157,961	168,033	191,466	158,062
% Muni EMS calls	62.9%	66.8%	67.5%	63.8%	68.1%	67.5%	65.9%	66.7%
% Muni Fire Calls	5.0%	4.9%	4.4%	5.4%	4.5%	4.4%	4.0%	4.5%
New Hampshire								
Muni EMS calls	114,796	111,089	112,655	103,247	112,810	133,059	134,313	117,862
Fire Calls	4,121	5,267	4,568	5,183	4,370	5,173	4,910	4,912
Non-fire calls	59,607	59,678	55,953	56,177	60,806	67,148	73,426	62,198
Total Muni Calls	178,524	176,034	173,176	164,607	177,986	205,380	212,649	184,972
% Muni EMS calls	64.3%	63.1%	65.1%	62.7%	63.4%	64.8%	63.2%	63.7%
% Muni Fire Calls	2.3%	3.0%	2.6%	3.1%	2.5%	2.5%	2.3%	2.7%
Vermont								
Muni EMS calls	21,295	25,012	22,439	23,182	28,297	35,325	37,775	28,672
Fire Calls	2,458	2,660	2,274	2,693	2,376	3,106	2,653	2,627
Non-fire calls	17,011	18,199	16,947	18,350	18,605	20,899	21,848	19,141
Total Muni Calls	40,764	45,871	41,660	44,225	49,278	59,330	62,276	50,440
% Muni EMS calls	52.2%	54.5%	53.9%	52.4%	57.4%	59.5%	60.7%	56.8%
% Muni Fire Calls	6.0%	5.8%	5.5%	6.1%	4.8%	5.2%	4.3%	5.2%
Massachusetts								
Muni EMS calls	561,350	563,406	584,336	540,093	632,647	697,723	724,541	623,791
Fire calls	27,895	27,731	25,176	29,461	25,366	29,034	28,882	27,608
Non-fire calls	348,065	353,109	362,953	353,440	372,963	378,275	406,910	371,275
Total Muni Calls	937,310	965,176	972,465	922,994	1,030,976	1,105,032	1,160,333	1,026,163
% Muni EMS calls	59.9%	58.4%	60.1%	58.5%	61.4%	63.1%	62.4%	60.8%
% Muni Fire Calls	3.0%	2.9%	2.6%	3.2%	2.5%	2.6%	2.5%	2.7%
Rhode Island								
Muni EMS calls	120,883	124,107	126,458	117,467	135,623	126,652	126,036	126,057
Total Muni Calls	144,257	144,574	146,965	142,866	159,357	157,459	156,693	151,319
% Muni EMS calls	83.8%	85.8%	86.0%	82.2%	85.1%	80.4%	80.4%	83.3%
% Muni Fire Calls	16.2%	14.2%	14.0%	17.8%	14.9%	19.6%	19.6%	16.7%

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In looking at Connecticut, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire, the percentage of fire and EMS calls relative to the total calls are similar. Of the non-fire calls, false alarms and service calls account for between 25% and 30% of the total emergency calls for the five States in the table above.

- Maine's percentage of fire and EMS calls relative to the total calls are higher than these three States. This may be partly due to the fact that slightly less than half the fire departments report incident data.
- Vermont's percentage of fire calls is higher and the percentage of EMS calls is lower relative to the total calls. The lower EMS percentage may be due to Vermont's reliance on non-profits for ambulance service (although many towns have a first responder squad) and its higher fire call percentage may be due to its small population and smaller density (population per square mile).

Appendix B – Work Shift Schedule Examples

In discussing shift schedules in this document, it may be difficult at times for the reader to understand these different schedules. So, here are examples of the different shifts for those department deploying four shifts. The different shifts are labeled A, B, C, and D.

1 day on/3 days off						
Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
A	B	C	D	A	B	C
D	A	B	C	D	A	B
C	D	A	B	C	D	A
B	C	D	A	B	C	D
A	B	C	D	A	B	C

24/24/24/120 shift						
Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
A	B	A	B	C	D	C
D	A	B	A	B	C	D
C	D	A	B	A	B	C
D	C	D	A	B	A	B
C	D	C	D	A	B	A

24/48/24/96 shift						
Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
A	D	B	A	C	B	D
C	A	D	B	A	C	B
D	C	A	D	B	A	C
B	D	C	A	D	B	A
C	B	D	C	A	D	B

10/14 shift, 11/13 shift, 12/12 shift													
Sun		Mon		Tues		Wed		Thurs		Fri		Sat	
B	A	B	A	C	B	C	B	D	C	D	C	A	D
A	D	B	A	B	A	C	B	C	B	D	C	D	C
A	D	A	D	B	A	B	A	C	B	C	B	D	C
D	C	A	D	A	D	B	A	B	A	C	B	C	B
D	C	D	C	A	D	A	D	B	A	B	A	C	B

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2 days on/1 day off/2 nights on/3 days off													
Sun		Mon		Tues		Wed		Thurs		Fri		Sat	
A	C	A	D	B	D	B	A	C	A	C	B	D	B
D	C	A	C	A	D	B	D	B	A	C	A	C	B
D	B	D	C	A	C	A	D	B	D	B	A	C	A
C	B	D	B	D	C	A	C	A	D	B	D	B	A
C	A	C	B	D	B	D	C	A	C	A	D	B	D