

Wausau Fire Department Quarterly Report

Quarter 1 –2026



(Battalion Chief Becker Retires after 22 years of service to the City of Wausau)

Fire Chief Report by Chief Jeremy Kopp

This report covers the period from January through March 2026. The start of the year has been both busy and exciting for the Wausau Fire Department. Key highlights include filling critical positions and the successful passage of the referendum to retain 12 firefighter/paramedic positions following the expiration of SAFER grant and ARPA funding.

In February, we celebrated our members and their families at the annual Firefighters Ball, organized by Lieutenant Brian Bauknecht. This important event provides an opportunity to recognize accomplishments and present awards, while strengthening camaraderie within our department.

In January, we filled the third Fire Prevention Division position with Firefighter/Paramedic Kyle Lech. We also welcomed Matthew Tormohlen as our new EMS Division Chief. Additionally, following the retirement of Battalion Chief Mike Becker, Cody Wiesman was promoted to Battalion Chief to fill the vacancy. We currently have two open positions and anticipate two additional retirements later this year. We are actively working with Human Resources to initiate a hiring process to address these needs.

To improve operational efficiency, the Fire Prevention Division was relocated to Station 2 at the beginning of the year. This move has helped alleviate overcrowding and parking challenges previously experienced at Station 1.

This quarter presented significant weather-related challenges. We responded to one of the largest snowstorms in over 60 years, with approximately 30 inches of snowfall within a 24-hour period. Despite these conditions, our personnel maintained a high level of preparedness through extensive training focused on cold-weather operations, spring storm response, and water-related incidents. It is also important to note that falls continue to be one of the leading causes of 911 calls, with a noticeable increase during winter months due to icy conditions.

We are excited about the arrival of new extrication equipment delivered in March. This purchase was made possible through the efforts of an internal committee that conducted thorough research and testing of multiple vendors before selecting Hurst tools using CIP funding.

Overall, the first quarter of 2026 brought both challenges and successes. The Wausau Fire Department remains committed to enhancing operational readiness, strengthening community partnerships, and improving our facilities to ensure we continue providing the highest level of service to our residents.

On behalf of the department, I extend our sincere appreciation to the City of Wausau, our community partners, and the residents we serve. Your continued support enables us to meet the evolving needs of our community with strength and resilience.

Please do not hesitate to contact my office with any questions or for additional information at 715-261-7901.

Thank you for your continued support.

Fire Operations Report by Deputy Chief Justin Pluess

Operational and Organizational Report by Deputy Chief Justin Pluess

The Wausau Fire Department remains focused on delivering high-quality emergency services while strengthening partnerships, improving internal systems, and honoring the legacy of those who have served.

Community Engagement and Public Outreach

During the first quarter, the Wausau Fire Department hosted eight community listening sessions leading up to the spring referendum. These sessions were designed to educate residents, provide transparency, and answer questions regarding fire department operations, staffing, and service delivery.

These engagements provided valuable two-way communication, allowing the department to better understand community concerns while ensuring residents had accurate information and a better understanding of fire department operations. The strong participation and constructive dialogue reinforced the importance of continued public engagement.

Major Training Initiative

The Wausau Fire Department recently hosted the Wisconsin Emergency Management W422 Multiple-Casualty Incident (MCI) Responder Training at Fire Station 2 in partnership with Wisconsin Emergency Management and Marathon County Emergency Management.

This course provided exceptional training experience focused on preparing for a large-scale emergency incident and ensured that personnel capable of managing high-risk, multi-casualty incidents.



Promotions and Professional Achievement

The department continues to prioritize professional growth and excellence among its members.

Promotions: Jared Koss and Adam Rahn were promoted to the rank of Lieutenant.

Advanced Training Achievement: Firefighter/Paramedic Dylan Shifflett successfully completed the Indiana Smoke Diver Course, widely recognized as one of the most physically and mentally demanding training programs in the fire service. Out of the 45 participants, only 14 completed the program. This accomplishment reflects dedication and resilience, and brings valuable advanced skills back to the department.



Technology and Operational Efficiency Improvements

Significant progress has been made in collaboration with City-County Information Technology staff to modernize scheduling and workforce management systems.

Extensive work has been completed to develop a Request for Proposal (RFP) and evaluate demonstrations for a new scheduling software. This system is expected to:

- Improve operational efficiency and accountability
- Enhance compliance tracking and workforce management
- Provide advanced data capture and reporting capabilities
- Automate vacancy filling through SMS and app-based notifications

Department Traditions

The 5th Annual Wausau Firefighters Ball, “The Walls Still Speak,” was a major highlight of the first quarter. This event celebrated the legacy, tradition, and family culture of the Wausau Fire Department.



The evening featured an opening by the Honor Guard, a keynote address from Mahlon Mitchell, recognition of firefighter years of service and core value awards, formal recognition of retired members, and appreciation for the spouses and families who support department personnel.

The Firefighters Ball continues to serve as an important tradition that honors the department’s history while strengthening its future.

Grant Funding and Equipment Modernization

The Wausau Fire Department continues to pursue external funding opportunities to maintain frontline equipment despite ongoing budget constraints.

Lieutenant Matt Brockman successfully secured an Impact Grant through the Community Foundation of North Central Wisconsin in the amount of \$16,896 to support the replacement of outdated thermal imaging cameras.

This funding will allow the department to purchase three new, modern thermal imaging cameras—critical life-saving tools used during fireground operations. These cameras enable firefighters to see through smoke and low-visibility conditions, improving their ability to locate victims, identify fire extension and hidden hazards, and operate more safely and effectively in high-risk environments.

The Wausau Fire Department extends its sincere appreciation to the Community Foundation of North Central Wisconsin for their support and investment in public safety. Their partnership plays a vital role in ensuring our personnel have the tools necessary to protect both themselves and the community they serve. A full press release will be issued once the thermal imaging cameras are received and placed into service, formally recognizing this important investment.



Department Retirements



The first quarter marked the retirement of Battalion Chief Michael Becker, who served the City of Wausau for over 22 years. Throughout his career, Battalion Chief Becker demonstrated a deep commitment to both the community and his fellow firefighters.

His retirement represents both the conclusion of a distinguished career and a reminder of the strong foundation built by those who have served before.

Closing

In closing, the Wausau Fire Department remains committed to strengthening leadership, expanding training and preparedness, improving operational efficiency, and maintaining transparency with the community to ensure we are well-positioned to meet both current demands and future challenges.

Significant incidents:

January 8th, WFD responded to a structure fire at Northwestern Avenue. The fire was quickly brought under control, preventing further damage to the structure. The early activation of the residential sprinkler system was instrumental in containing the blaze. All residents and pets were safely evacuated and no injuries were reported. The sprinkler system played a crucial role in limiting the fire's spread.

January 26th, WFD Truck 1 responded to a mutual aid request for a structure fire on Rose Avenue in the Village of Rib Mountain. Upon arrival, SAFER Command requested WFD personnel to enter the building to perform a primary search while suppression efforts were ongoing. They initially entered through the A side on the first floor and then proceeded to search the basement, finding no occupants or animals. Once overhaul operations commenced inside the building, SAFER Command advised that 88 Truck 1 was no longer required, and the crew remained at the pumping engine until the scene was cleared and they returned to service.

January 27th, the WFD responded to a structure fire in the Village of Maine to assist the Maine Fire Department. Upon arrival, the Village of Maine Deputy Chief requested assistance with extinguishing the fire and investigating the incident, which was determined to be a chimney fire. Inside the building, WFD crew observed a light haze of smoke and noticed burning embers further up the flue. WFD personnel extinguished the fire, conducted a thorough investigation, and effectively removed any remaining embers from the cleanout area.

February 3rd, WFD Truck-1 was dispatched for mutual aid fire in Weston. Upon arrival, the Incident Commander determined that the truck was needed primarily for manpower rather than aerial operations. The WFD crew shut off the gas supply to the building and then conducted an exterior attack. Next the WFD crew entered the interior to undertake an offensive attack in a first-floor bedroom using a 2.5-inch line, successfully extinguishing the fire. During their efforts, they located and removed a cat from the living room. The crew exited, replaced their air packs with fresh cylinders, and later re-entered to assist with salvage and overhaul on the second floor before exiting the structure. The IC then relieved 88T1 of duty, and the unit returned to service.

March 11th, WFD responded to a residential structure fire on Elm Street. Upon arrival, heavy smoke was visible from the gable end vent of the two-story home. Fire attack was initiated on the alpha side; firefighters quickly located and extinguished the fire, achieving knockdown within minutes of arrival. A thorough search of the second floor revealed only light smoke, and gas was shut off. Animal rescue efforts resulted in the safe removal of three dogs, though two cats and a lizard were found deceased; one dog required medical attention and was in critical condition. The fire damage was confined to the first floor, and the scene was ultimately turned over to the inspection bureau for further investigation.

March 15th, the WFD responded to a structure fire at 400 block of Stewart Avenue. Upon arrival, Ladder 2 experienced difficulty approaching the scene due to snow. During investigation, personnel heard yelling from

Apartment, which prompted a response to that location. They found smoke coming from a couch and helped the occupant exit safely. The couch extinguished was carried outdoors, and air quality checks showed no residual smoke or harmful gases. During questioning by Wausau police, the occupant admitted the fire was caused by his cigarettes, leading to a citation. A neighboring resident, who attempted to assist, complained of smoke inhalation and was evaluated and treated by WFD paramedics.

March 21st, the WFD responded to a structure fire in the 800 block of Ross Avenue, where flames were present in one room and the rest of the building was filled with smoke. En route, dispatch confirmed that all but one occupant had evacuated, and BA1 prepared for rescue efforts. Upon arrival, BA1 noted heavy smoke. WPD officers were attempting to prevent the homeowner from re-entering the house to rescue his dog. Firefighters quickly extinguished the fire and conducted a primary search with no victims found, and ventilated the home. The cause of the fire was deemed electrical in nature.

March 25th, WFD Truck-1 was dispatched to Carter Avenue in the Village of Weston for a reported structure fire. All occupants had already evacuated. Crews coordinated with Incident Command and were tasked with performing a primary search of the building. The first-floor search revealed no findings. Upon entering the second floor, Truck-1 crew observed heavy smoke and temperatures exceeding 150 degrees, with no ventilation active at that time. The crew exited and set up ventilation. Additionally, Truck-1 placed a ground ladder on the B side gable end and cut a hole to investigate the attic space connected to the garage. Water was applied to suppress any potential heat or fire remaining. With no further assignments, the team retrieved tools and completed scene clearance, returning to service after IC confirmation.

March 26th, multiple WFD units responded to Zimmerman Street for a reported structure fire. Engine 1 arrived first and observed heavy smoke coming from the second-floor windows on the A side. The occupant reported an electrical fire in a second-floor bedroom. Engine 1 crew entered through the C side with a 1¾" hose line and water can. Inside, a light smoke was present on the first floor, with heavier smoke on the second floor. A search was conducted on the second floor, where a noticeable heat increase and flames were discovered in the ceiling above. Water was applied to extinguish the flames, with a thermal imager guiding the effort. During overhaul, drywall was pulled in both the affected bedroom and an adjacent room to check for extension; fire was found in the second bedroom ceiling and put out. Engine 3 assisted with overhaul in the first bedroom. By approximately 3:39 AM, the fire was declared extinguished.

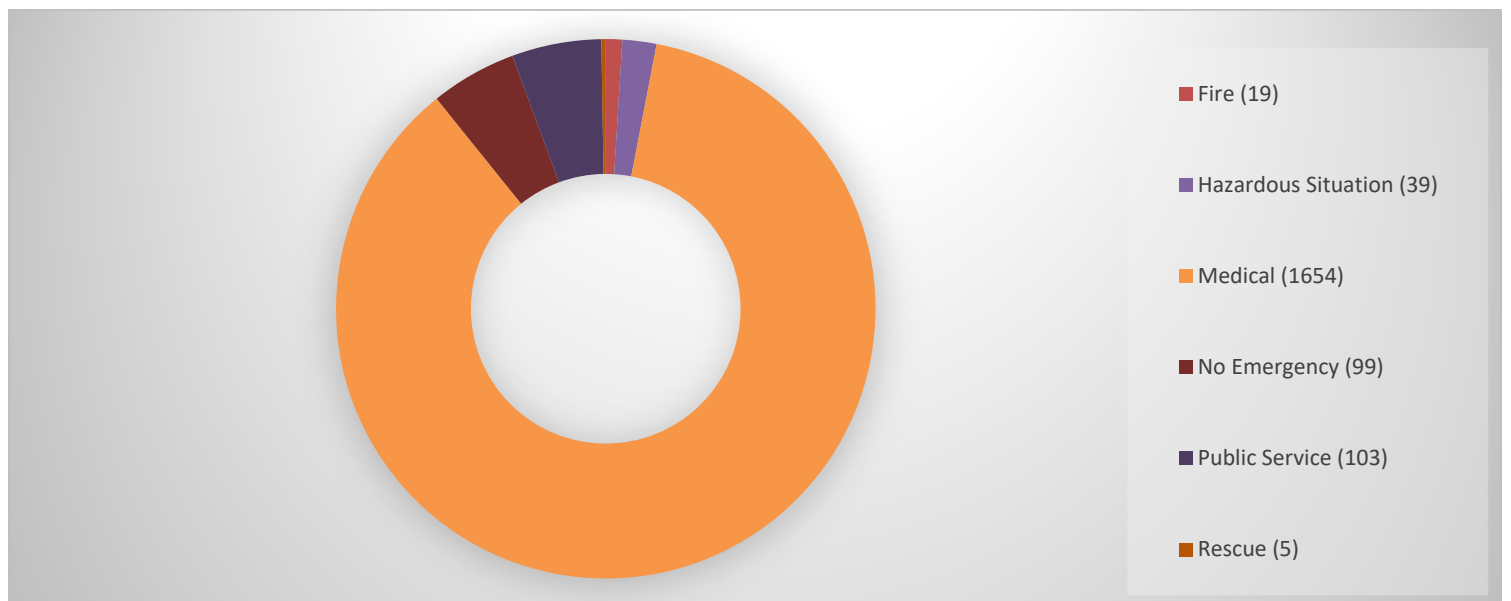
Significant Fire Events:

Date	Address	City	Incident #	Type
1/8/2026	1523 Northwestern Avenue	City of Wausau	F26000045	Fire - Structure Fire - Room and Contents Fire
1/25/2026	1010 Grand Avenue Unit 102	City of Wausau	F26000152	Fire - Structure Fire - Confined Cooking / Appliance Fire
1/26/2026	224120 Rose Avenue	Rib Mountain	F26000165	Fire - Structure Fire - Structural Involvement
1/27/2026	2617 Bayshore Drive	Rib Mountain	F26000169	Fire - Structure Fire - Chimney Fire
1/28/2026	231752 Twin Fawn Trail	Wausau	F26000174	Fire - Outside Fire - Trash / Rubbish Fire
1/28/2026	100 Sherman Street	City of Wausau	F26000180	Fire - Outside Fire - Trash / Rubbish Fire
2/3/2026	8711 Callon Avenue	Weston	F26000221	Fire - Structure Fire - Chimney Fire
2/23/2026	5803 Packer Drive	City of Wausau	F26000334	Fire - Structure Fire - Room and Contents Fire
2/25/2026	Packer Drive	City of Wausau	F26000352	Fire - Transportation Fire - Vehicle Fire - Passenger
2/27/2026	1611 Maple Hill Road	City of Wausau	F26000368	Fire - Structure Fire - Structural Involvement
3/4/2026	805 Flieth Street Unit 1	City of Wausau	F26000392	Fire - Structure Fire - Room and Contents Fire

3/11/2026	South 12th Street	City of Wausau	F26000451	Fire - Transportation Fire - Vehicle Fire - Passenger
3/11/2026	416 Elm Street Unit 1/2	City of Wausau	F26000453	Fire - Structure Fire - Room and Contents Fire
3/15/2026	1006 North 7th Street	City of Wausau	F26000479	Fire - Transportation Fire - Vehicle Fire - Passenger
3/15/2026	4105 Stewart Avenue Unit 16	City of Wausau	F26000485	Fire - Structure Fire - Room and Contents Fire
3/21/2026	801 Ross Avenue	City of Wausau	F26000527	Fire - Structure Fire - Room and Contents Fire
3/25/2026	3311 Carter Avenue	Village of Weston	F26000551	Fire - Structure Fire - Room and Contents Fire
3/26/2026	1911 Zimmerman Street	City of Wausau	F26000560	Fire - Structure Fire - Structural Involvement
3/31/2026	209 Seymour Street	City of Wausau	F26000601	Fire - Structure Fire - Confined Cooking / Appliance Fire

Monthly NERIS Incident Comparison:

	2026	2025	2024	2023	% Of Change from 2025 to 2026
January	662	677	646	579	-2.22%
February	553	590	597	506	-6.27%
March	704	561	555	551	25.49%
April		555	541	527	
May		646	605	574	
June		570	578	553	
July		638	585	679	
August		615	581	571	
September		597	547	548	
October		542	564	616	
November		582	556	624	
December		633	606	623	
TOTAL		7206	6961	6951	



Responses by Municipality (All NERIS Reports):

City	# of Runs	% of Runs	# of Runs - YTD
City of Abbotsford	0	0.00%	0
City of Antigo	0	0.00%	0
City of Colby	0	0.00%	0
City of Merrill	0	0.00%	0
City of Mosinee	1	0.05%	1
City of Schofield	0	0.00%	0
City of Wausau	1,805	94.06%	1,805
Clark County	0	0.00%	0
Lincoln County	0	0.00%	0
Oneida County	0	0.00%	0
Rosholt	0	0.00%	0
Taylor County	0	0.00%	0
Town of Bergen	0	0.00%	0
Town of Berlin	5	0.26%	5
Town of Bern	0	0.00%	0
Town of Bevent	0	0.00%	0
Town of Cassel	1	0.05%	1
Town of Easton	0	0.00%	0
Town of Elderon	0	0.00%	0
Town of Emmet	0	0.00%	0
Town of Frankfort	0	0.00%	0
Town of Franzen	0	0.00%	0
Town of Halsey	0	0.00%	0
Town of Hamburg	1	0.05%	1
Town of Harrison	0	0.00%	0
Town of Hewitt	6	0.31%	6
Town of Hull	0	0.00%	0
Town of Johnson	0	0.00%	0
Town of Knowlton	0	0.00%	0
Town of Marathon	0	0.00%	0
Town of Mosinee	0	0.00%	0
Town of Norrie	0	0.00%	0
Town of Plover	1	0.05%	1
Town of Rib Falls	3	0.16%	3
Town of Rietbrock	1	0.05%	1
Town of Ringle	0	0.00%	0
Town of Stettin	1	0.05%	1
Town of Texas	11	0.57%	11
Town of Wausau	25	1.30%	25
Town of Weston	0	0.00%	0
Town of Wien	3	0.16%	3
Village of Athens	0	0.00%	0
Village of Brokaw	1	0.05%	1
Village of Edgar	2	0.10%	2
Village of Hatley	0	0.00%	0

Village of Kronenwetter	0	0.00%	0
Village of Maine	28	1.46%	28
Village of Marathon City	7	0.36%	7
Village of Rib Mountain	9	0.47%	9
Village of Rothschild	0	0.00%	0
Village of Stratford	0	0.00%	0
Village of Weston	8	0.42%	8
Wittenberg	0	0.00%	0
Wood County	0	0.00%	0
Total	1,919	100.00%	1,919

Activity/Incident Hours Committed:

Category	Time Committed
NFIRS Incidents	457:14:12 Hours
EMS Incidents	2682:04:12 Hours
Non-Incident Activities (Station Maintenance, Vehicle Check-off/Fire Pre-plan, Hazmat Outreach, Administration duties, Public Education, Committee and Staff Meetings)	2585.25 Hours
Training (including Wellness)	2833.11 Hours

Aid Responses:

Type of Aid	# of Runs
Aid Given – Acting as Another Entity – EMS	53
Aid Given – Acting as Another Entity – Fire	0
Aid Given – In Support of Primary Entity - EMS	19
Aid Given – In Support of Primary Entity – Fire	9
Aid Given – In Lieu of Primary Entity – EMS	4
Aid Given – In Lieu of Primary Entity – Fire	1
Aid Received – In Support of Primary Entity - EMS	6
Aid Received – In Support of Primary Entity – Fire	8
Aid Given - Non-Fire Department	2
Request for EMS from Other Agencies to the City of Wausau (where City did not respond)	2
Request for Fire from Other Agencies to the City of Wausau (where City did not respond)	0

EMS Division by EMS Division Chief Matthew Tormohlen

It has been almost a year since the last quarterly update from the Wausau Fire EMS division. For most of 2025, the EMS division operated without a full-time Division Chief, which presented a myriad of training/logistical difficulties for our staff to overcome. A huge thank you to Deputy Chief Justin Pluess, Mindy Walker and EMS Lead Adam Rahn for “keeping the ship on course” during this interim period. Additionally, the entirety of the Wausau Fire department’s front-line staff deserve recognition for stepping up and continuing EMS training activities independently within their respective crews to ensure we maintain the high level of EMS care this community deserves. Our EMS run volume continues to increase annually, with our medics responding to a total of 1727 runs in Q1 2026, an increase of 7.27% over Q1 2025.

I entered as EMS Division Chief in mid-January 2026 and hit the ground running. We had tight deadlines to meet for Continuing Education (CE) hours to maintain National Registry Paramedic certifications, a benchmark of professional EMS services. To accomplish this, in the first Quarter of 2026, following an in-depth review of WFD

internal training records, our Paramedics completed over 750 hours of CE's through online and interactive self-study modules to meet the National Registry Continuing Education requirements. Additionally, in February, we implemented a monthly Critical Case Review process. Each month several high-acuity EMS runs recently completed by Wausau Fire Paramedics are selected. The Medical Director and I review each of these runs in detail and develop an hour-long presentation, highlighting specific disease or trauma processes, what went well, what could go better in the future, protocol implementation, medication and intervention success and final patient disposition.

Following the successful completion of the department's National Registry recertification, we initiated the first steps in closing a gap in our current medical protocols; resuscitation skills for our tiniest patients; newborn babies. Newborn babies, up to 28 days old, require a different set of resuscitation skills, focusing on proper oxygen concentrations, ventilation ratios, and fluid resuscitation. To address this, five of our Paramedics volunteered to be the first in the state of Wisconsin to gain Neonatal Advanced Life Support (NALS). Following the completion of this comprehensive course, these five also gained certification as NALS Instructors and will begin training the remainder of the Fire Department later this spring. Proud of our Medics and how well they adapted their knowledge base during this course.

Another area we are working on improving is our process of airway management. Invasive airway management is the most advanced and high-risk procedure we perform as paramedics. Airway management must be consistent in all areas of its application; replicable training program, equipment use, implementation process and post-incident Quality Assurance. We recently applied for and were successful in gaining almost \$50,000 in grant funding to upgrade all our video laryngoscopy equipment to the most advanced, state-of-the-art equipment available on the market today. We will track the impact these program changes and equipment have on our service through an enhanced Quality Assurance program. This program will focus on maintaining key metrics which improve the entire process of airway management; pre, peri and post-intubation.

Throughout first quarter, Wausau Fire has been forced to maintain our current level of emergency services while operating without two of our front-line ambulances. Due to significant production-related delays, both our newest ambulances remain at the manufacturer's facilities, having design flaws modified and correcting electrical issues identified by our personnel. Because of this, our front-line staff have worked tirelessly to maintain three front-line ambulances, often having to switch between ambulances multiple times within a 24hr period to ensure the maintenance needed can be completed to keep our ambulance fleet running safely.

Moving into second quarter, we will be focusing on renewing State of Wisconsin Paramedic certifications. Additionally, we will be revising and updating our medical protocols and procedures as part of a new operational plan, which will be submitted to the WI State Department of Health Services for approval.

Our Community Care Paramedicine program continues to be instrumental in meeting the needs of a unique subset of Wausau's patient population. Over the last 14 months, the Community Care Program has developed and implemented unique care plans for 10 patients in our community, which has resulted in 194 fewer 911 calls. Our Community Care Paramedic focuses the correct resources on these patients, when they are needed most, which has resulted in both increased quality of life for the patients and a reduction of non-emergent EMS run volume. This allows our front line ALS ambulances to be more readily available for high-acuity EMS runs.

Our Tactical Emergency Medical Service (TEMS) team has been maintaining operational readiness alongside our SWAT team partners from the police department. We've conducted over 100 hours of TEMS related training in the first quarter of 2026, including coordinated field training with multiple neighboring SWAT/TEMS teams. Ensuring our Medics are continually refreshing their tactical skills allows them to perform at the advanced level required for the high-threat environments they face when activated.

Responses by Municipality (EMS Patient Care Reports):

City	# of Reports	% of Reports	# of Reports – YTD
City of Abbotsford	0	0.00%	0
City of Antigo	0	0.00%	0
City of Merrill	0	0.00%	0
City of Mosinee	1	0.06%	1
City of Schofield	0	0.00%	0
City of Wausau	1,625	94.09%	1,625
Clark County	0	0.00%	0
Oneida County	0	0.00%	0
Other	0	0.00%	0
Town of Bergen	0	0.00%	0
Town of Berlin	5	0.29%	5
Town of Bevent	0	0.00%	0
Town of Bern	0	0.00%	0
Town of Cassel	1	0.06%	1
Town of Elderon	0	0.00%	0
Town of Emmet	0	0.00%	0
Town of Frankfort	0	0.00%	0
Town of Franzen	0	0.00%	0
Town of Halsey	0	0.00%	0
Town of Hamburg	1	0.06%	1
Town of Harrison	0	0.00%	0
Town of Hewitt	6	0.35%	6
Town of Hull	0	0.00%	0
Town of Johnson	0	0.00%	0
Town of Knowlton	0	0.00%	0
Town of Marathon	0	0.00%	0
Town of Mosinee	0	0.00%	0
Town of Norrie	0	0.00%	0
Town of Plover	1	0.06%	1
Town of Rib Falls	3	0.17%	3
Town of Rietbrock	1	0.06%	1
Town of Ringle	0	0.00%	0
Town of Stettin	0	0.00%	0
Town of Texas	11	0.64%	11
Town of Wausau	25	1.45%	25
Town of Wien	3	0.17%	3
Village of Athens	0	0.00%	0
Village of Edgar	1	0.06%	1
Village of Hatley	0	0.00%	0
Village of Kronenwetter	0	0.00%	0
Village of Maine	28	1.62%	28
Village of Marathon City	7	0.41%	7
Village of Rib Mountain	5	0.29%	5
Village of Rothschild	0	0.00%	0
Village of Stratford	0	0.00%	0
Village of Weston	3	0.17%	3
Wittenberg	0	0.00%	0
Wood County	0	0.00%	0
Total	1,727	100.00%	1,727

Type of Training	# of Hours	% of Hours	# of Hours -YTD
Company Training	1145.61	62.90%	1145.61
Driver/Operator Training	180.75	9.92%	180.75
Facilities Training	19	1.04%	19
Hazardous Materials Training	41.75	2.29%	41.75
Misc Training	2	0.11%	2
Officer Training	64.25	3.53%	64.25
Specialty Training	368	20.20%	368
Total	1821.36	100.00%	1821.36

Training Categories:

Company Training – General firefighting training

Officer Training – Included leadership, management, supervision, and tactical considerations

Driver/Operator Training – Operation of fire apparatus

Hazardous Materials Training – How to mitigate the leak or spill of hazardous substances

Specialty Training – Rope, confined space, trench, collapse, ice, water, and other special rescues.

Facilities Training – Training at a live-burn facility (may include off-duty time)

Misc Training – Any other training category such as software, administrative, etc.

Type of Training	# of Hours	% of Hours	# of Hours -YTD
Admin Training	15.5	1.53%	15.5
EMS Training	782.5	77.34%	782.5
Fire Instructor Training	45.75	4.52%	45.75
Fire Prevention Training	45	4.45%	45
Investigation Training	123	12.16	123
Total	1011.75	100.00%	1011.75

Fire Prevention Division by Fire Prevention Division Chief Shahn Kariger

Inspections: Throughout the first quarter of 2026, we inspected 787 public buildings and places of employment. We performed 619 inspections that passed, and we had 168 properties with fire code violations. 129 of the 787 were re-inspections from previous violations. The failed inspections were primarily overdue fire extinguisher annual maintenance, failed emergency lighting, and fire alarm annual service and deficiency issues. These properties will require continued follow-up inspections to confirm compliance. We conducted 21 consultation inspections for the quarter. These include consultations for Fire Alarm and Sprinkler Systems, Knox Box updates, and new construction or remodeling. We also received and reviewed 426 reports through the Compliance Engine for services and maintenance of Fire Protection Systems at various businesses.

Investigations: The Division investigated 5 fires during the first quarter of 2026. The first fire originated inside a residential property, caused by combustible materials intentionally placed too close to the open flame of a stove top. The second was classified as accidental involving an extension cord at a commercial property. The third was accidental and involved a heating lamp in a residence which was too close to combustible materials. The most recent two occurred in private residences and were the result of an electrical circuit failure, both accidental. Fortunately, there were no significant injuries because of these fires.

Public Outreach: We leveled up on new smoke alarm and CO detector installations. Totals are- 9 private residences positively affecting 23 citizens, placing 36 smoke alarms and 8 CO detectors. We also provide a home safety survey, education regarding cooking safety, and encourage fire escape planning or options to shelter in place depending on the residents abilities or limitations.

Education: Division Chief Kariger attended Symposium 9 in North Carolina during mid-February. This is the best Community Risk Reduction training and networking event in the nation and is held every two years. The focus is Fire and Life Safety education programs for the community we serve. The Prevention Division also used the first few weeks of January to train our new FF/Inspector who started on January 5th. All personnel successfully

completed paramedic refresher courses and continuing education in compliance with state licensure requirements. Wisconsin paramedics are required to complete 60 hours of continuing education or a refresher course every three years to maintain licensure. This training is in addition to the 40 hours each of inspector and investigator continuing education. We take additional courses as available to stay current in best practices and industry standards.

Promotions: With the retirement of Fire Marshal Brian Stahl on December 20, 2024, the Division experienced a vacancy throughout much of 2025. The department was fortunate to hire Kyle Lech, who joined us from NTC where he served as a Fire Instructor. Kyle brings strong attention to detail, extensive knowledge, and valuable experience as a teacher, evaluator, firefighter, paramedic, inspector, and company officer, all of which will benefit the Prevention Division. He is already making significant progress and demonstrating excellent potential as he transitions into his new role.

SPRING

Along with spring cleaning, lets take the time to make sure our homes and family are safe from the threat of fire.

Here is a check list you should go over with your family:

⇒ *Working smoke alarms cut the risk of dying in reported home fires in half*

- Ensure smoke alarms are installed inside every bedroom, outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home, including the basement
- Test them at least once a month by pushing the test button
- Replace the batteries in all smoke alarms. Best way to remember is when you change your clocks, change your batteries.

⇒ *The leading cause of home clothes dryer fires is failure to clean them.*

- Clean the lint filter before or after each load of laundry. Remove lint that has collected around the drum.
- Keep the area around your dryer clear of things that can burn, like boxes, cleaning supplies and clothing.

⇒ *Most cooking fires in the home involve the stovetop.*

- Keep anything that can catch fire - oven mitts, wooden utensils, food packaging, towels, or curtains - away from your stovetop.
- Always stay in the kitchen when frying on the stovetop.

⇒ *Extension cord fires outnumbered fires beginning with permanent or detachable power cords by two-to-one.*

- Check electrical cords to make sure they are not running across doorways or under carpets. Extension cords are intended for temporary use.
- Have a qualified electrician add more receptacle outlets so you don't have to use extension cords.



Prevention Division Activities:

Inspections Completed	Quarterly	Year to Date
Routine Fire Inspections	637	637
Re-inspections	129	129
All other Inspections (Consults/burn complaints,etc)	21	21
Community Paramedic Home Inspection	0	0
Total Inspections	787	787
Fire Investigations	5	5
Inspection Department Activities	Quarterly	YTD
Public Engagement Activities	16	16

