



Minooka Fire Protection District
"A Culture of Excellent Service"



Annual Report
2023

INTRODUCTION

The following is presented as the 2023 Annual Report for the Minooka Fire Protection District. This report summarizes the activities of the Minooka Fire Protection throughout the 2023 year. The statistical data contained within the report provides members of the community a snapshot of the activities and operations of our organization.

ORGANIZATION

HISTORY:

In 1966, following a statutory required election procedure and judicial certification of the election procedure Minooka Fire Protection District was deemed an organized fire protection district under the statutes of the State of Illinois. The legal organization of the Minooka Fire Protection District followed a long history of fire department operations that dates back to the late 1800.

Records and documents reflect that the first organized group of people forming a fire brigade was around the 1890's. Local farmers, business owners and town people constituted the local volunteer fire department. Historical documents and accounts from local people indicate the original fire department was organized following two major fires that destroyed most of downtown section of Minooka.

In the 1800's fires were extinguished by bucket brigades, as well as horse and people drawn fire apparatus. In the lobby of the headquarters fire station you can view one of the original hose carts used by the Minooka Volunteer Fire Department. Today's fire service is much different in terms of fire apparatus and the way we extinguish fires as well as the expanded services offered by the modern fire protection district.

TODAY:

Minooka Fire Protection District personnel are equipped with some advanced apparatus, equipment and skills available. Advanced technology in emergency medical service field equipment helps firefighters provide patients with the highest level of care while enroute to the hospital. Rescue and firefighter equipment is advancing regularly as well to provide for improved rescue operations of people trapped in vehicles, as well as technical rescue such as water, below grade, confined space and high angle.

Minooka Fire Protection District is rated a public protection Class 1 Fire Department by the Insurance Service Office (ISO). Class 1 is the best rating possible.

Response Area:

The Fire District services a 38 square mile area, with an estimated population of 16,000. The response area includes heavy industrial, logistics warehousing, commercial and residential (single, and multifamily units). The District includes responses to areas of Interstate 80, the Illinois River, and multiple railroad systems.

The Fire District protects all of the incorporated area of Village of Minooka, with the exception of one residential subdivision. The Fire District also is responsible for protection of the Village of Channahon within Grundy County. The Fire District lies over portions of three counties (Grundy, Kendall and Will).

GOVERNING AUTHORITY

Board of Trustees:

Minooka Fire Protection District is governed by a Board of Trustees under Fire Protection District Act of Illinois with board members representing the three counties of the Fire District proportionate with the population in those counties within the Fire District. The following are the 2023 Board of Trustees:

- Dan Roberts, President (Kendall County)
- Raymond Underhill, Vice President (Grundy County)
- David Clark, Secretary (Grundy County)
- Angela Robinson, Treasurer (Grundy County)
- Jason Baron, Trustee (Will County)

By statute, each trustee is appointed to his/her position by the county board within the county they reside and therefore represent. Trustees serve three-year terms. The Board of Trustees are responsible for creating policy for administration of the fire district, as well as setting the budget for fire district operations. The board adopts ordinances and resolutions for purposes of fire code, and operations of the fire district.

Fire Commissioners:

In addition to the Board of Trustees, the Fire District has an appointed Board of Fire Commissioners. The commissioners are responsible for the establishing of eligibility lists for firefighter hiring, as well as promotional lists for the promotion of fire officers at various ranks. The Board of Commissioners is responsible to conduct disciplinary hearings and recommendations as necessary by the Illinois Firefighters Disciplinary Act. Commissioners are appointed by the Board of Trustees and must reside within the boundaries of the Fire Protection District. The following are the 2023 Fire Commissioners:

- George Lindemulder, Chairman
- Al Skwarczynski, Secretary
- Jeff Hanley, Commissioner

Firefighter Pension Fund Board of Trustees:

The Firefighters of Minooka Fire Protection District participates in the Illinois Article 4 Pension code, commonly known as the Downstate Firefighters Pension Fund. The pension fund board is a five-member board consisting of two members appointed by the president of the fire district board, one is a retired firefighter who is a participant in the fund, and two active members of the pension fund who are elected by the pension fund participants.

The pension board is the fiduciary of the pension fund. The Board is responsible for conducting hearings and making decisions related to firefighter pensions, fund actuarial, and disability determinations; all within the authority of the Illinois Article 4 Firefighter Pension Fund Statute.

The following are the 2023 pension board members

- Al Yancey, President
- Gerald Nellessen, Secretary
- Angie Robinson, Treasurer (District Treasurer)
- Eric Larson
- Ken Briley
- Brad Sprague

ADMINISTRATION

The administration of fire district includes the fire chief, a deputy chief, executive assistant and a part-time clerk. The administration is primarily responsible for budget and finance, planning, and human resources and applying the ordinances and policies set by the Board of Trustees, carrying out the duties directed within the fire commission authority as well as daily administration/operations of the organization.

Al Yancey, Jr., Fire Chief
Brad Sprague, Deputy Chief - Operations
Sheri Gresham, Executive Assistant
Brandy Malone, Clerk/Reception

Facilities:

The administration of the Fire Protection District is operated from Fire Districts Headquarters – Station 1, located at 7901 E. Minooka Rd. The headquarters serves as the home to our administrative offices of the fire chief, deputy chief and administrative staff, fire prevention & education and training programs and EMS coordinator. The station also provides residential facilities for firefighter/paramedics working 24 hours shifts. Station #1 includes our training classrooms that can seat up to 60 people.



MINOOKA FIRE STATION #1- HEADQUARTERS

Station #2 is located at 28200 E. Rt. 6, Channahon, near the industrial plants on U.S. Route 6. Station #2 serves as a response facility for the southern areas of the fire district, including the U.S. Route 6 industrial corridor and is equipped with an ambulance and engine. The facilities house no administrative or support offices and serves as a response station only.

All stations are supplied with emergency back-up power to operate in the event of a power failure. Both stations have residence facilities (bunkrooms, kitchen, and locker room) for the staff working 24/7 from the station. Each station also has an exercise facility for firefighters to maintain their cardiovascular and muscle strength. All stations are secured for the safety of the staff as well as the readiness of the Fire District to respond.

In 2023, the Board of Trustees authorized a concept study for a new fire and EMS training facility that will be located at 1001 Twin Rail Drive, Minooka. The fire district hired a construction manager to manage the project. Phase one of the project including site work, utilities and completion of a training tower is scheduled to be completed in the fall of 2024.

Budget and Finance:

The fire district operates under Illinois Statute as a special form of government for the purpose of fire protection, rescue and emergency medical services. The Board of Trustees pass an annual budget for the operation of the fire protection district and emergency medical services. The Fire District passed a FY2023 Budget The board is also the levy authority for determine the amount of levy necessary to support the operations of the fire district. Other income to the fire district beyond taxes includes ambulance user fees, federal Medicare/Medicaid, corporate and federal grants and various educational and pre-building review fees.

63% of revenue is from property taxes with 15% from EMS Billing, and 10.5% through Tax Increment Financing (TIF). The remaining percentages are distributed across grants, interest, and fees.

Revenue for FY2023 revenues were \$9,736,778.00. Operating expenditures for FY2023 were \$6,190,247.00 with capital expenditure at \$1,605,876 of which \$362,285.00 was debt service. The District transferred \$766,112.00 to capital fund for capital project funding.

The fire district maintains a six-month fund reserve as recommended by the Government Accounting Standards Board (GASB), to provide sufficient funds for operations of the district should revenue not become available or be delayed. Funds are also invested into capital expenditure account for future fire station construction and apparatus purchases.

Operating Expenses by distribution:

Salaries & Benefits:	80.4%
Office Expense:	0.5%
Contractual Expense:	3.3%
Building & Utilities:	2.3%
Fire & EMS Ops:	9.1%
Education & Training	1.0%
Other:	3.2%

Accounting practices and financial health of the fire district are reviewed annually by an independent auditor as required by statute.

Pension Funds

In 2022, under the mandate by the State of Illinois, Minooka Pension Funds we transferred to the State of Illinois Fire Pension Investment Fund (IFPIF). IFPIF was created by statute and consolidated all downstate fire pension funds into one large fund. The local pension boards were required by law to transfer funds to the IFPIF and as such relinquish control of funds are invested and dollars are managed. The local pension board maintain control over local pension decision and review of fund disbursements; however, have no control over the investment process, which is now handled by the IFPIF group.

Pension Fund accounting practices are reviewed annually by an independent auditor. The pension fund board utilizes a third-party actuary to assess funding requirements. Minooka Firefighter Pension Fund is one of only a few pension funds in the State of Illinois that is 100% funded and has been for several years. Our local pension board provided excellent fund management for almost 25 years prior to funds being transferred to the IFPIF.

OPERATIONS:

A significant event occurring in 2023 surrounding operations was an audit by the Insurance Service Office (ISO). ISO evaluates the capability of a community to protect properties against fire. It has been six years since ISO last visited Minooka when the community became a Public Protection Classification One; the best rating available for a community. In September of 2023 ISO evaluators visited the community and reassessed our community. There are many aspects to an ISO evaluation, including fire department operations, community water supply capability (Minooka and Channahon), telecommunications/dispatch, community risk reduction (inspections & education).

The process for completion and maintenance of Public Protection Classification One continues into 2024 as some of the water supply features are continuing to be assessed. This project is expected to be completed in mid-2024. ISO classifications have an effect on property insurance rates; the better the number, one being the best, the better the insurance rates for property owners.

Personnel

Minooka Fire Protection District is comprised of a combination of career, part-time firefighter/paramedics, as well as volunteer recruits and cadets. We also have a combination of full-time career and part-time support/office staff. The Board of Trustees along with command staff continue our volunteer and part-time program to offer opportunities to those who are interested in a career in the fire service. The fire district provides opportunities for volunteer recruits to attend the firefighter academy and become a certified firefighters. Part-time firefighters are provided opportunity for additional EMS training and on-the-job training to be prepared for a career position within the Fire District. Many of these part-time employees come from our volunteer recruit program or are career firefighters in other organizations looking for opportunities near their hometown.

The fire district offers opportunities for 15 – 17 year olds as well through the cadet firefighter program. Cadets participate in many of the training opportunities as the firefighters who are over 18. This is a great opportunity for kids who are thinking about the fire service. Cadet service gives them the opportunity to experience the fire service, and make an educated decision about their career path.

Line personnel are part of the operations of the District. Lieutenants and firefighter/paramedics are the personnel making the daily responses to emergencies. Our daily staffing target is eleven shift personnel on duty; however, with vacation days and sick leave these numbers can fall to eight. Operations personnel are responsible for daily readiness of facilities, apparatus and equipment to be ready to respond whenever called upon.

In addition to the administrative roles, the fire chief and deputy fire chief are considered command staff. Chiefs respond to incidents to provide command and incident management to the emergency, especially those incidents that include multi-department response or a complex incident. The incident commander is

responsible for managing the overall incident so that the proper resources are assigned to effectively control the incidents and meet the objectives of the strategies set by the command staff.

The Deputy Chief serves as the immediate supervisor to the six lieutenants and lead the daily operations to insure readiness to response. Each lieutenant is the immediate supervisor to the firefighter/paramedics assigned to the station and shift. Two stations are staffed 24/7/365 with an average daily staffing of ten personnel with the deputy chief and chief responding to escalated incidents. In addition to responding to emergency calls, the personnel on duty participate in training exercises, safety inspections of businesses, cleaning, and inspection, as well as minor maintenance on stations, apparatus and equipment, as well as physical fitness.

In 2023 the Board of Trustees authorized the administration to begin the process of selecting and appointing the first battalion chiefs to the organization. As the organization grows it is necessary for the command and organizational structure to grow and provide effective management of daily operations. Battalion chiefs will be assigned one to each shift and serve as the shift commander and incident commander on many of the incidents the fire district responds.

Creation of the battalion chief position creates vacancies in other positions within the organization as promotions occur. The number of applications for firefighter positions has been extremely low across the country following COVID and Minooka Fire District is no exception. Prior to COVID we would have an average of 30 applicants. Since COVID we have averaged 6 – 8; a dramatic shift. Some of this is due to no paramedic classes during COVID and a slow to return rate of students. Further, Illinois requirement of National Registry Paramedic Testing and “streamlined” processes has made it difficult for people to get into programs and successfully accomplish paramedic licensing.

Our firefighter/paramedics are the personnel that are working at the tactical level of each incident; operating the apparatus, handling the hose, rescue tools, and delivering medical care at the scene of incidents and in the ambulance. Our firefighter/paramedics are trained in many levels of medical care, fire suppression and rescue. All of our firefighters are State of Illinois certified firefighters and the majority of shift personnel are paramedics, some at EMT-B level.

The Fire District has a collective bargaining unit with the Illinois Association of Firefighters (IAFF) Local 4685. This collective bargaining unit contract includes career firefighters and lieutenants. In 2022, the Board of Trustees settled a contract with Local 4685. The term of the contract is 2021 – 2024.

As a special note, retired firefighter/paramedic Ted Overcash was inducted into the Firefighter Combat Challenge Hall of Fame. Ted was a longtime volunteer firefighter for Minooka Fire District and a grand champion for the National Firefighter Combat Challenge. Ted overcame cancer to compete and become the grand champion. Ted is a constant supporter of fitness and wellness and was instrumental in developing annual firefighter physicals for Minooka Firefighters in the 90’s when many fire departments were not doing regular medical physicals. Ted was also the driving force behind the District providing quality fitness

equipment and facilities for firefighters to stay healthy. In 2016 The Board of Trustees by resolution named Fire Station #1 fitness room the “Ted Overcash Fitness Room”.



Many of our firefighters also have advanced rescue certifications in specialized rescue to participate in one or more of specialized teams of the Fire District. Minooka Fire District is a member of the following regional teams:

- MABAS 15 Water Rescue (surface, ice, swift, and underwater)
- MABAS 15 Technical rescue (confined space, trench, collapse, and high angle)
- MABAS 15 Hazardous Materials
- MABAS 15 Incident Management
- MABAS 15 Fire Investigations

EMS OPERATIONS

EMS operations are a large part of what the Fire District does. More than 65% of our responses are medical or rescue driven activities. Our EMS Operations falls within the Operations Division of the Fire District. The Fire District Emergency Medical Services Coordinator is responsible for the coordination of EMS between the EMS system hospital and the Fire District. Lt. Brian Mellen serves as our EMS Coordinator. Our coordinator is responsible for coordinating training, equipment, orientation, implementation of new standard medical orders, and overall general EMS operations.

The Fire District EMS operations are directed through Morris Hospital Emergency Medical Services System. Our paramedics operate under the guidance and direction of a Medical Doctor at Morris Hospital. Paramedics use standing medical orders (SMO) established by a Regional EMS System designated by the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) to deliver medical services on a daily basis. While in the field our paramedics are able to contact the emergency department physicians for additional guidance, as needed. Beyond the initial licensing of paramedic, Minooka Fire District Paramedics also receive specialty certifications in Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) and Pediatric Trauma Life Support (PTLS) and several other levels.



Minooka Ambulances are equipped with state-of-the-art life support equipment; including cardiac monitors connected to local hospital emergency departments where doctors can immediately read patient conditions and prepare the emergency room to begin treatment of the patient once the ambulance arrives. We also carry automatic cardiopulmonary resuscitation devices that are automated to perform CPR while paramedics work at providing additional medical care for a patient who is in cardiac arrest.

The Fire District works with other neighboring fire departments and police departments for Rescue Task Force (RTF) operations. Our organization has participated in past year drills to evaluate the ability of local fire, ems and police in a response to a mass casualty/active shooter events. Deputy Chief Sprague sits on a regional committee to formulate guides and operating procedures for RTF responses.

The fire district continues to wait for a new ambulance ordered in 2022.

TRAINING

Minooka Firefighters conduct training each week while on shift. Our volunteers and cadets conduct their training on Wednesday nights.

Training includes emergency medical care continuing education, rescue, fire suppression, driver training, hazardous materials, technical rescue operations, and incident command. Much of our training is provided by our fire officers and firefighters who are trained in technical operations; however, we also use outside instructors from FEMA, Illinois Fire Service Institute and other training organizations.

TOTAL HOURS OF TRAINING FOR DEPARTMENT MEMBERS			
Total Classes	355	Total Cumulative Training Hours	19,305.5

In addition to personnel training a lot of focus has been on the development of the new training center that is scheduled for construction in 2024. A committee spent considerable time researching and developing concept plans for props. A large part of the time was spent designing the modular training center that will be constructed on site in the fall of 2024.

Congratulations go out to our administrative assistant, Brandy Malone. In 2023 Brandy completed the Illinois Fire Service Administrative Professionals (IFSAP) Executive Support Program. This program provides administrative staff with more detailed knowledge of the fire service and aspects of the fire service. Brandy participated in auto extrication, self-contained breathing apparatus training, fire behavior and other informative topics related to the fire service.

SUPPORT SERVICES – FLEET

The fire and rescue operation of the Fire District is accomplished using multiple types of vehicles. Our fleet of vehicles includes ambulances, fire engines, ladder truck, heavy rescue, water tender, specialized rescue vehicles, and staff cars.

All of our fleet is maintained by a fire apparatus mechanic known as an “Emergency Vehicle Technician (EVT). Ben Petro serves as the EVT. Minooka Fire District partners with Morris Fire Protection District and Troy Fire Protection District to maintain our own in-house EVT. The EVT is responsible for service and repair of all of the fire apparatus and vehicles owned by the Fire District.



Our fleet service center is located in Morris and is a facility shared by the three fire districts. This facility is equipped with the necessary tools and technology to properly service fire apparatus and get it returned to service in an efficient amount of time.

PREVENTION

Inspection Services:

The Fire District employs one fire inspector who is responsible for routine inspection of businesses and commercial facilities as well as fire alarm and sprinkler plan review and approval. In 2023 the fire inspector position was part-time. Due to increased development in the fire district the position was approved in the 2024 budget to become full-time.

Our inspector conducts fire and life safety inspections on commercial and industrial facilities within the incorporate and unincorporated areas of the fire district. Our inspector also offers courtesy home fire safety

surveys. The inspector is responsible for overseeing our compliance software and following up on annual commercial cooking hood/duct extinguishing system. The inspector is also responsible for final inspections of new installed fire alarms and sprinkler systems and for occupancy inspections alongside the Village of County building officer to make sure the facility is in compliance with fire code.

Our home fire safety survey is a courtesy program. These are conducted at the request of the homeowner and provides homeowners with valuable tips on how to protect their family and property from fire. We encourage homeowners to call the Fire District to schedule a home fire safety survey. Low income families who cannot afford a smoke detector or carbon monoxide detector can contact the Fire District for assistance with detectors and installation.

In 2023 the following activities occurred within the inspection division of the fire prevention bureau:

Annual Inspection	Re-inspections	Code Enforcement(fines) Village	Plan Review	Occupancy	Unground Flush Test
276	289	4	32	12	5
Hydrostatic Sprinkl	Fire Alarm Acce	Hood acceptance test	Not Inspected		
5	11	4	42		

Many of these annual inspections are conducted by our station staff which we refer to as “company inspections”. A “company” is a fire service term for “group of firefighters working together”. The company conducts the initial inspection and then any deficiencies are then handled by the fire inspector for follow-up and compliance.

Fire & Life Safety Education:

The F&LS Specialist is a shared employee with Channahon Fire Protection. The Fire District thanks the Channahon and Minooka School District for their continuing partnership that allows us to provide valuable fire and life safety education to children. This education comes back into the homes through children reminding parents to check smoke detectors, practice escape plans, establishing safe meeting places and understanding the need to prepare. It has also resulted in lives saved through educating children who know how to react during a medical emergency either through first aid or by simply calling 911.



2023 EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM ACTIVITIES – MINOOKA SCHOOL DISTRICT

Note: Firefighter Cindy also teaches in the Channahon School District which includes many students who reside within the Minooka Fire Protection District Boundary. Educational Statistics for Channahon School District are recorded through Channahon Fire Protection District.

<u>Type Class</u>	<u>Attendance</u>	(Channahon)
CPR Students:	22 classes 174 adults	149 adults 26 classes
Car seats installation:	10 seats 11 adults	13 seats 15 adults
Babysitter Training:	3 classes 32 students	1 class 12 students

Schools Visits:

Jan-May (2022-2023 school year)

Aux Kindergarten:	6 classes – 130 students
Aux 1st grade:	6 classes – 120 students
Aux 2nd grade:	6 classes – 130 students
MES Kindergarten:	5 classes - 90
MES 1st grade:	5 classes – 100 students
MES 2nd grade:	6 classes – 120 students
MPC Pre-K:	AM/PM - 290 students

Sept-Dec (2023-2024 school year)

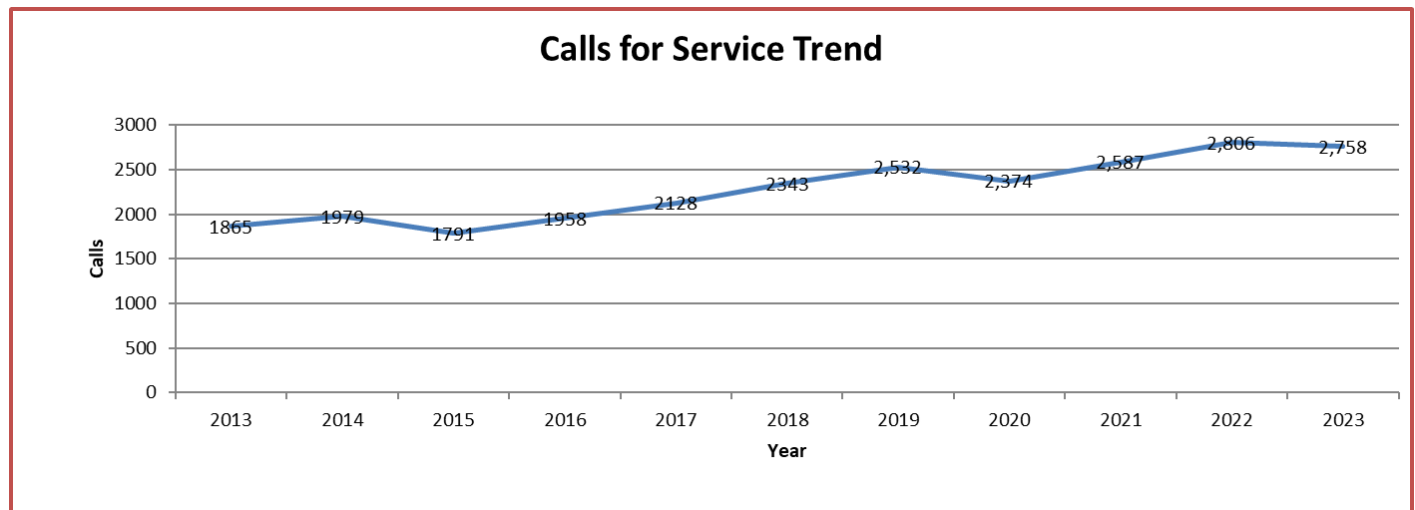
Aux Kindergarten:	6 classes – 120 students
Aux 1st grade:	6 classes – 120 students

Aux 2nd grade:	6 classes – 130 students
MES Kindergarten:	5 classes - 90
MES 1st grade:	5 classes – 100 students
MES 2nd grade:	5 classes – 100 students
MPC Pre-K:	AM/PM - 290 students

RESPONSE STATISTICS

Minooka Fire Protection District responded to 2,758 calls for service in 2023. This represents an 1.7% decrease in calls for services over 2022. This is an anomaly in the call volume statistics. With the exception of COVID 2020 our calls generally increase an average of 8 – 10% annually. The organization has experienced a 48% increase in calls for service over the past ten years.

10 Year Historical Call Trend



Breakdown of calls-for-service in 2023:

Calls by Day of Week (Incidents by Day of Week/Shift)			
Monday	384	Friday	444 (Busiest)
Tuesday	410	Saturday	342 (Slowest)
Wednesday	404	Sunday	349
Thursday	414		2747

Calls by Station and District (Firehouse Codes 1 – 6 Out = Districts below) Monthly Incident County by Station and Incidents by District (Summary)							
Station 1	1429	Station 2	1035	Station 1 & 2	282	NA	2747
District 1	1101	District 2	991	District 3	90		
District 4	8	District 5	62	District 6 (I-80)	54		
Out	518						
Not Reported	1		2747				

District	Fire	StrucF	Medical	Hazard	Service	Good	Alarms	
	100s	111s	300s	400s	500s	600s	700s	
1	18	3	766	33	26	73	182	
2	3	1	796	10	25	20	57	
3	7	3	61	1	1	8	9	
4	0	1	4	1	0	1	1	
5	2	0	38	1	3	2	15	
6 (80)	3	0	31	0	1	18	0	
Out	7	32	80	7	44	345	3	
Total	39	40	1776	53	100	467	267	2743

Busiest month was June at 244 calls for service

Least busiest month was February at 159 calls for service

Busiest time of the day was 3:00 p.m.

Least busiest time of the day was 2:00 a.m.



Minooka Fire Protection District continues to progress in service advancements as demands for service increase. We continue to plan for the future to provide proper staffing, training for the staff, as well as apparatus and equipment to continue to deliver excellent service to the citizens of Minooka Fire Protection District.

-END