



SOUTH WHIDBEY FIRE & EMS

2024

WHAT WE DO

We serve people on Whidbey Island South of Mutiny Bay Road. We serve approximately **15,000** residents, **10,000** visitors and **533** businesses over **66 square miles**.

We rely on full-time and volunteer emergency personnel who respond to an average of **2,600** calls a year.



WHAT DO WE DO?





WHO WE ARE

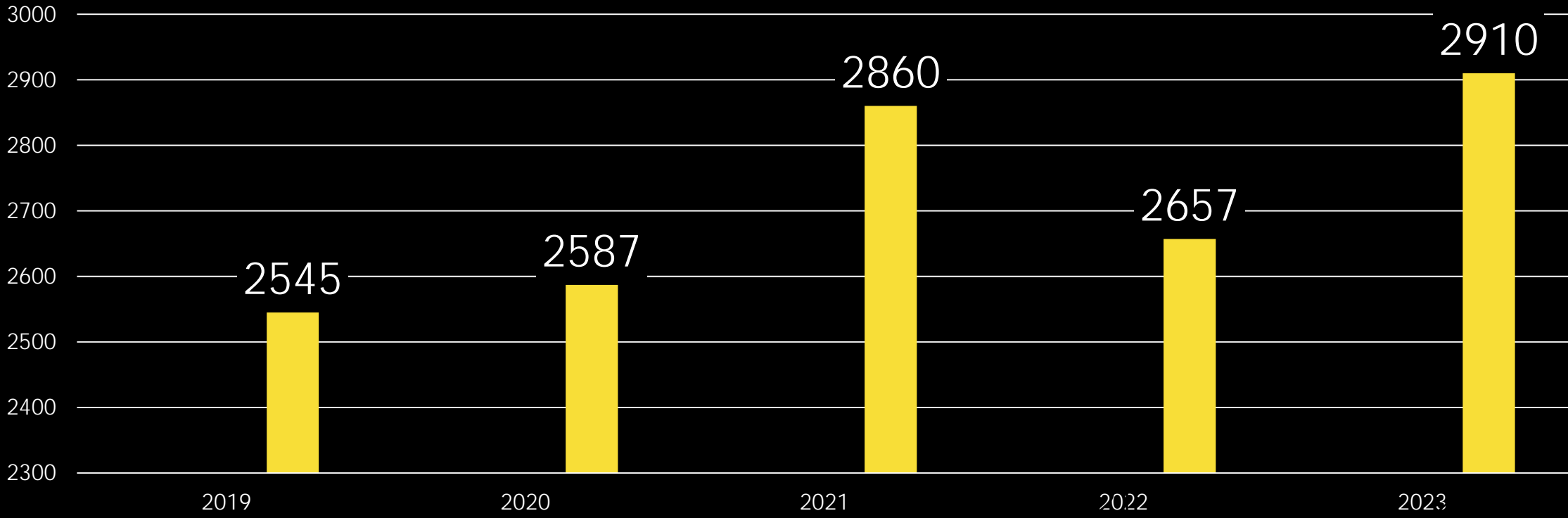
Our firefighters and EMTs are highly trained to provide the following services:

- **Educating** you on how to prevent fires
- **Putting out fires** when they occur
- Responding rapidly to **vehicle accidents**
- Serving you with first response **medical services**
- Providing marine and cliff side **rescue services**
- Responding to **hazardous material** spills
- Serving you with life safety **education** programs

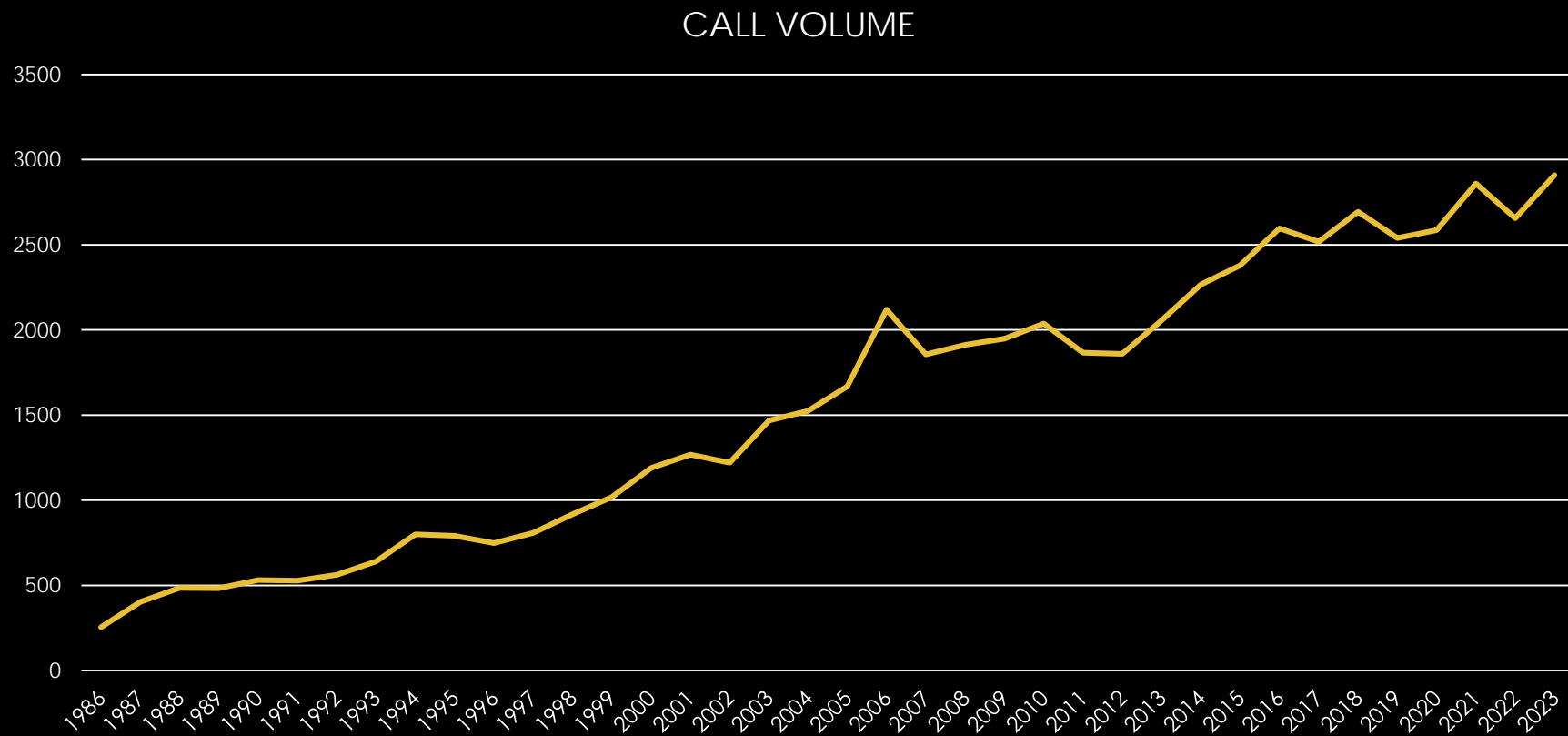


CALL VOLUMES

Total Calls for Service

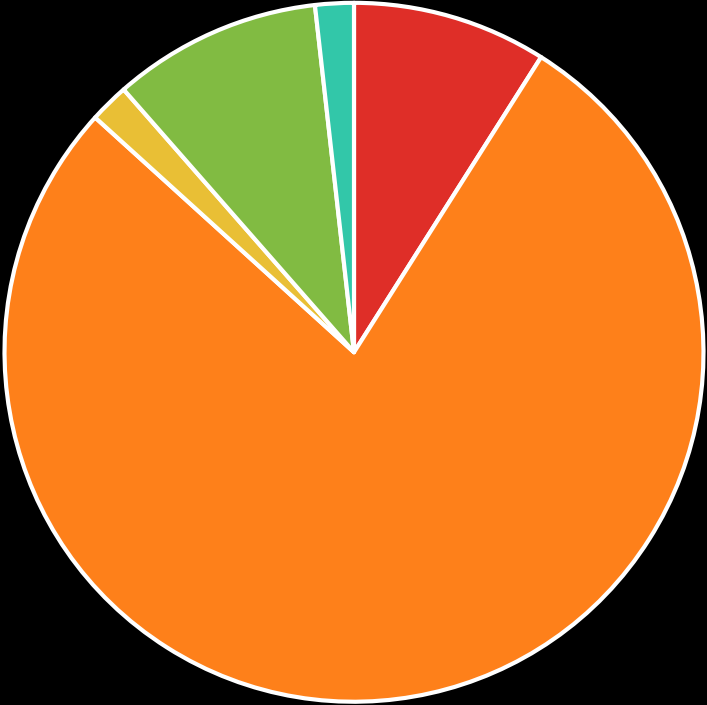


LONG TERM CALL TREND 86-24



CALL BREAKDOWN FOR 2023

Call Volume



FIRE/ALARMS EMS HAZ MAT OTHER WEATHER

HOW WE FUND EMERGENCY SERVICES

Our daily operations are funded by a fire levy.

In 2021, voters approved a fire levy rate of **\$0.95**. Since that time, the rate has dropped to **\$0.81**.





WHAT IS THE ISSUE?

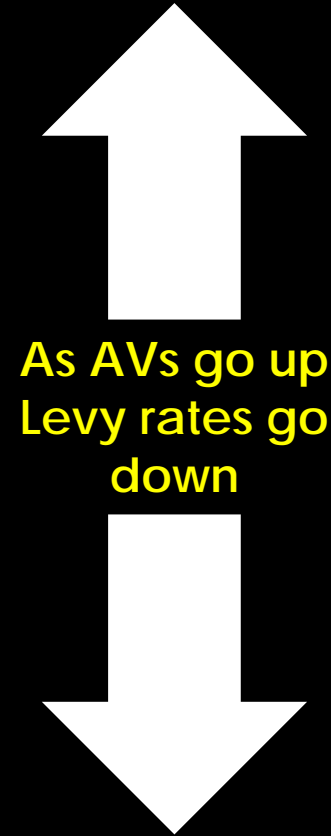
Revenue from the fire levy is not keeping up with costs to provide emergency services and respond to calls.

THE LEVY RATE DROP?

Each year we are allowed to collect a set amount of revenue. **State law limits us** to that amount plus a small annual increase approved by voters.

Our revenue does not increase at the same rate as property values. This means the fire levy rate falls as property values rise to limit our budget to the approved amount each year.

As a result, our fire levy rate dropped from **\$0.95** in 2021 to **\$0.81** in 2023.



This is called “levy compression” and impacts our ability to provide emergency services.

OUR CHALLENGES

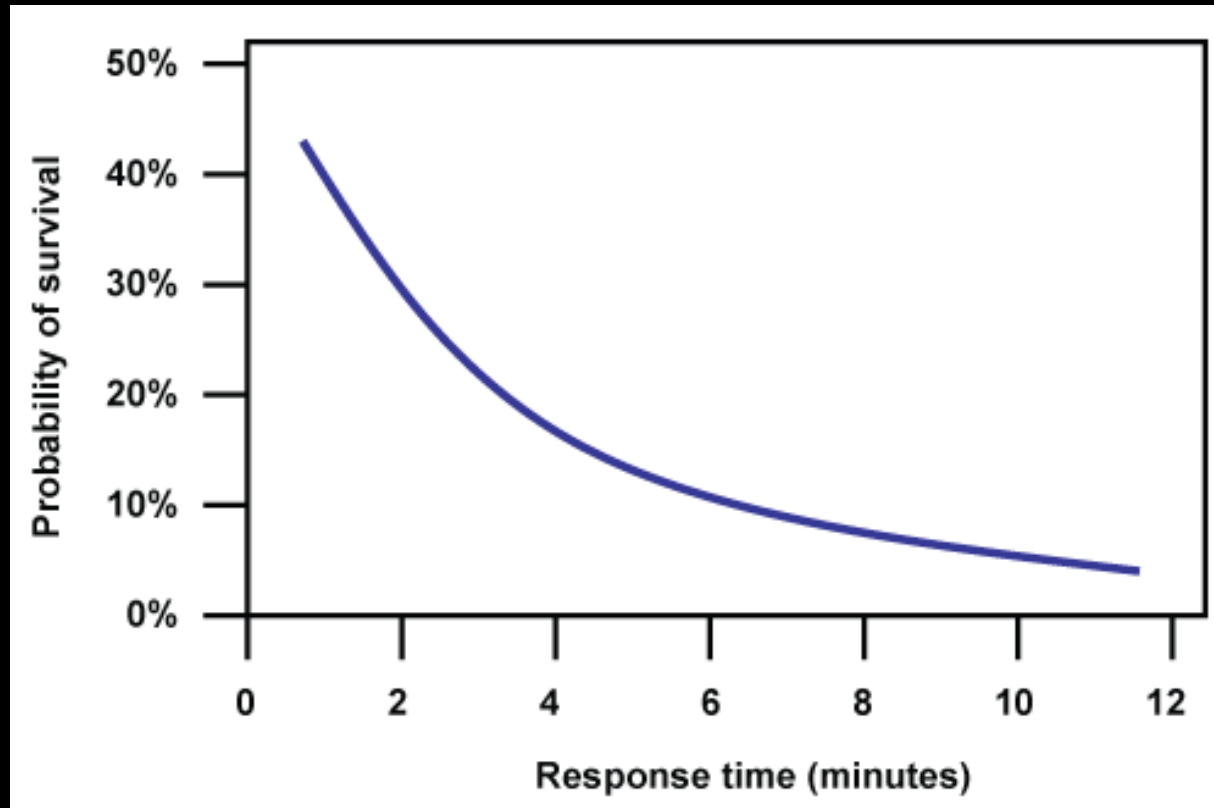
We're struggling to **recruit and retain new volunteers**, which is a nationwide problem. Our community requires **full-time personnel** to respond to calls.

Some of our apparatus have reached the end of their usable lives. We aggressively maintain our fire engines, but parts for our **fire engines that date back to the 1990s** cannot be found.

CHALLENGES



CARDIAC ARREST: MINUTES COUNT!

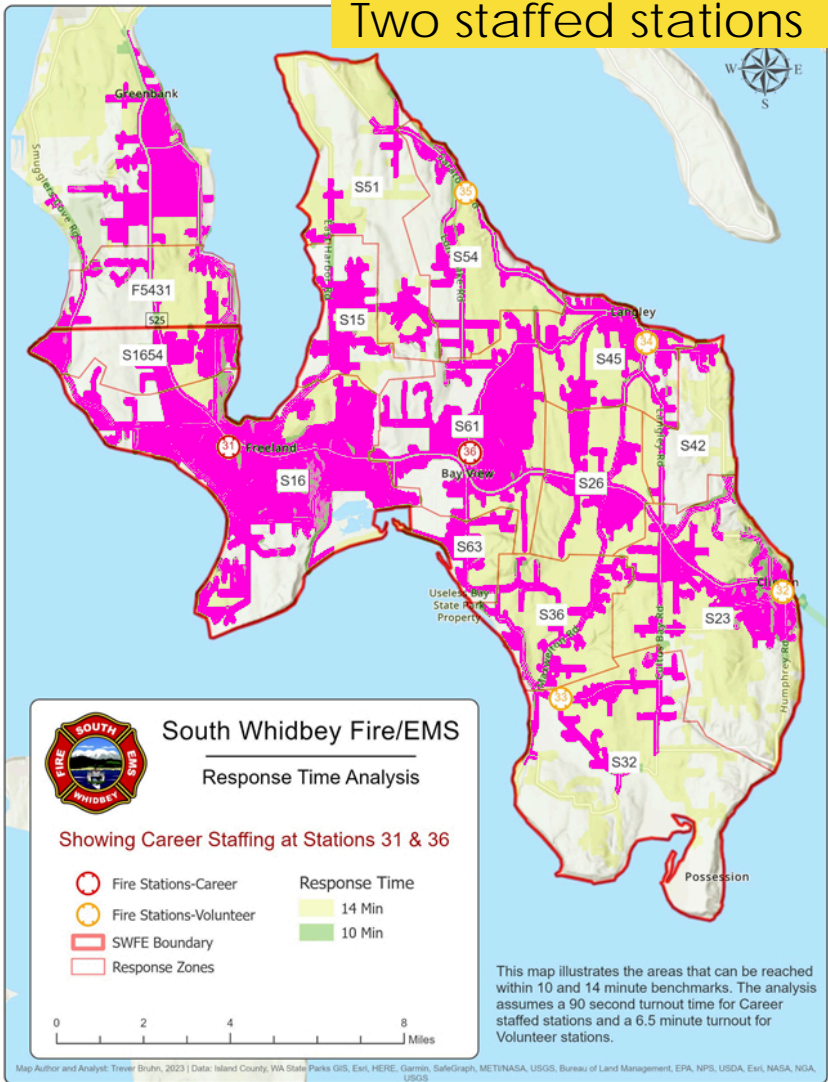


Patient safety network 2024

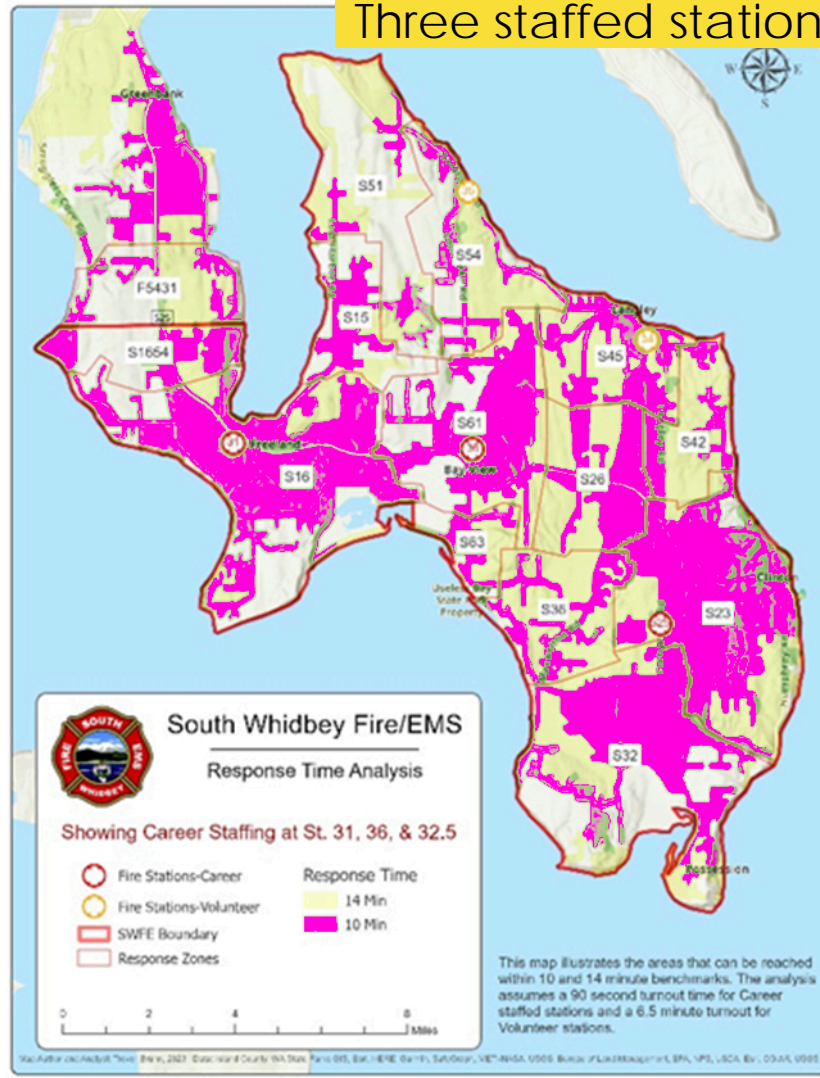
OUR AVERAGE: 15 MINUTES **GOAL: 10 MINUTES OR LESS**

STANDARDS OF COVER: RESPONSE TIMES

Two staffed stations



Three staffed stations



Left: Response times with staffing at **two stations**

Right: Response times with staffing at **three stations**

The goal is to reduce response times from **15 to 10 minutes on average.**

WHAT IS A LEVY LID LIFT?

From time to time, **we must ask voters to reset our fire levy** to help keep up with costs to provide service.

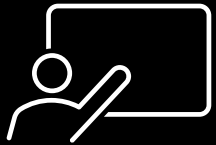


WHAT WILL THE LID LIFT FUND?



Two firefighters per day to reduce response times from an average 15 minutes to 10 minutes

Staffing at a third fire station in the southeast part of the district to decrease the amount of time it takes to arrive on scene by an average of five minutes.



Firefighter training programs to ensure high quality emergency response.



Replacement of aging fire engines and equipment/apparatus to ensure service reliability when responding to calls.

WHAT WILL THIS COST?

We are considering asking voters to reset the levy rate from **\$0.81 to \$1.20** per \$1,000 of assessed property value in the August 2024 primary election.

The **\$0.39** lid lift would cost the owner of a \$600,000 home an **additional \$19.50 per month.**



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Learn more at www.swfe.org