



**Summit Hose Company Volunteer Fire Department, Station 282**

**321 West 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Tarentum Pennsylvania**

**Station: (724)-224-2555 Fax: (724)-224-4898**

*"Running The West Side Since 1906"*

**Fire Chief: Joshua Fox**

**President: Matt Hensel**



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# For Release to The Public: 2024 Year-End Report

*Respectfully Submitted and Prepared By:*

**Joshua H. Fox, Chief**



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### Introduction

On behalf of Summit Hose Company, I am pleased to present to you our 2024 Year-End Report. In 2015, Summit Hose enrolled in the ECM2 service, which has greatly streamlined reporting, as well as communications for our membership. This year end report relies heavily on data collected from the ECM2 software and reporting service, which exports our reports to the National Fire Incident Reporting System ("NFIRS"). Reporting through NFIRS is vital, should fire departments request grant monies or other state and federal assistance. Some of the statistics you will see have also been compiled by hand, I am happy to present you with these figures.

The Summit Hose Company is one of three fire departments within the Borough of Tarentum. Each department- Highland Hose, Eureka Fire-Rescue, and ourselves- all primarily serve specific roles within the fire service. When combined, the Borough is provided with nearly every fire department service that a town would require for quality assistance to our residents. At Summit Hose, we are the smallest of the three departments, in terms of station size and fleet of vehicles. Our primary responsibility is fire suppression & water supply, utilizing our 2012 Sutphen Monarch fire engine. Our members take tremendous pride in our engine, and for having a reputation of being a good, reliable group of interior firefighters. When you belong to a small station such as ours, and have primarily one main objective, you can better focus your attention and training, being able to better "hone in" that craft.

Our members' dedication, commitment, and discipline has not gone unnoticed either. In 2024, we ended the year with an all-time record high of 299 incidents. In addition, 3-4 times a month we had company training to keep our skills sharp and to keep our membership active. We regularly meet once a month to hold a company meeting. This does not include committee meetings for various fundraisers we hold throughout the year. In addition, this year we are proud to announce we had 4 members challenge themselves to help make our department better. Four members tested for their Firefighter I Certification, and 1 member completed both Firefighter I & II. These are professional Certifications and are recognized internationally. My goal for 2025 is to have every interior firefighter certified at the Firefighter I level by the end of the year.

As a result of new changes, as well as a few other factors, Summit Hose had its busiest year on record. As I stated above, we responded to 299 incidents, with 208 calls alone in the borough: 58 calls in the 1<sup>st</sup> ward, and the 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> ward tied at 75. To help keep our residents safe, the three fire departments in town teamed up this year and started to run most of our calls in tandem, together as one. It is no secret our departments are hurting for new volunteers and we are grateful for the ones we have that continue to respond no matter the time nor day.

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## Membership

In 2024, firefighters and officers regularly respond to alarms and attend company trainings and meetings. On average, we have 12 "active firefighters". These are the people that the public will see on a regular basis when Summit Hose responds. Excluded from this list are life members, and other auxiliary members who do not regularly answer alarms, however their assistance with fundraising events, and many other "behind the scenes" things at Summit Hose are greatly valued, and we thank them for their continued assistance with keeping the department operating. We are happy to announce that our new recruit at the end of 2023, Robert Jones, was just recently voted in as our newest "Regular Member", making him our youngest member certified at Firefighter I. We are also happy to announce the recognition of firefighter Tarek Masaoud for his 20 years of service, now making him a our newest "Life Member". Tarek served as 1<sup>st</sup> Asst. Chief for several years and held various positions throughout. Each member serves a vital role to Summit Hose, many have special niches and specialties, that when combined, make for a well-functioning department. Our 2024 active members were:

### Officers:

Joshua Fox, Fire Chief

Michael Harpster, 2<sup>nd</sup> Assistant Chief, Secretary

Samuel Johnson, Lieutenant, Vice President

Scott Mulhern, Safety Officer

Ryan Siminski, 1<sup>st</sup> Assistant Chief

Steven Milisits, Captain

Matt Hensel, Chief Engineer, President

### Firefighters:

Blake Bowser

Robert Jones

Javon Thorpe

Ben Bowser

Jesse Sieminski

We would also like to congratulate the following members. These individuals were our top 3 responders in 2024. We thank these gentlemen for their dedication to serving their community, and their department. When the alarm sounds, we know we can always count on you to make every effort to come and lend that helping hand.

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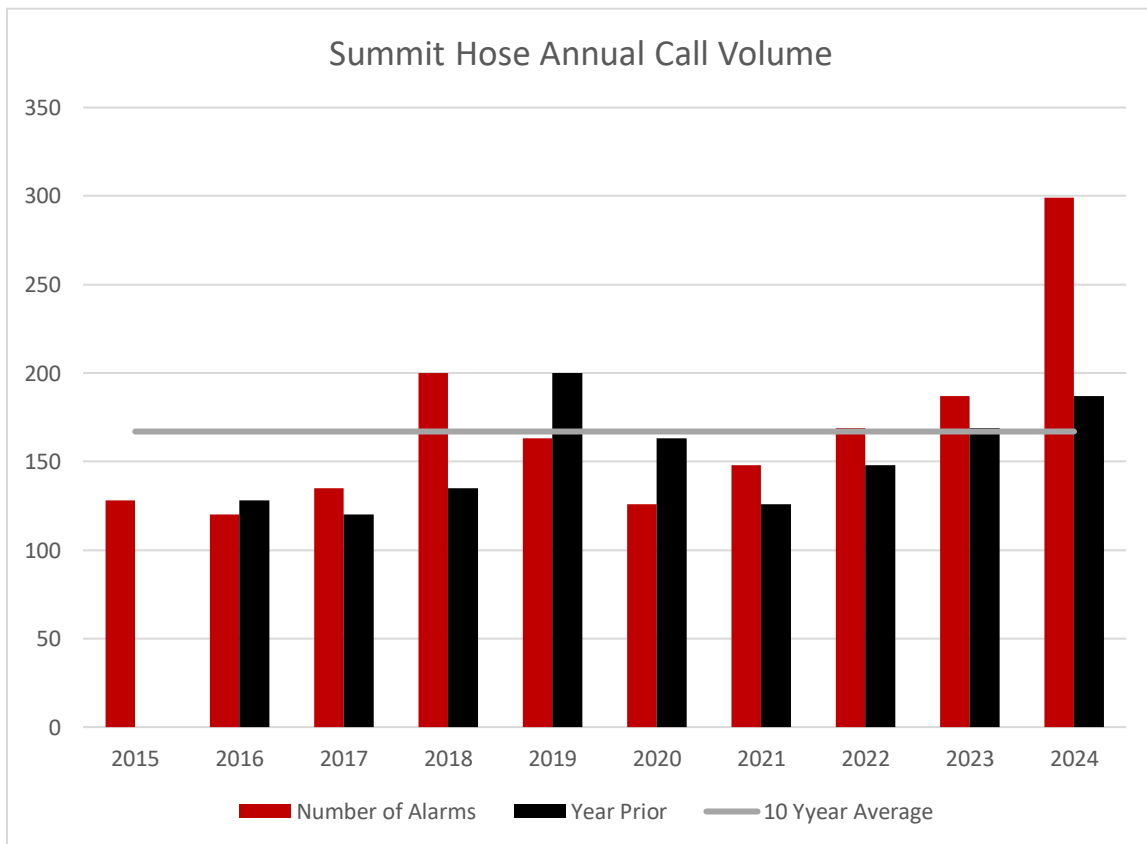
**1st Place: Firefighter Robert Jones, answering 83% of all alarms**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Place: Chief Josh Fox, 71%**

**3rd Place: 2<sup>nd</sup> Assistant Chief Michael Harpster, 57%**

## 2024 Report and Statistics

In 2024, Summit Hose was alerted for calls **299** times, 112 times more than 2023. This has been our busiest year since 2018. Below you will find a chart comparing years back to 2015 when we first began using ECM2 reporting software. Since 2015, our average annual number of alarms is 167, represented by the grey line in the chart. With 299 alarms in 2024, we are above our average, and busier than the prior year. As explained in the introduction, we anticipate our numbers to continue to increase.



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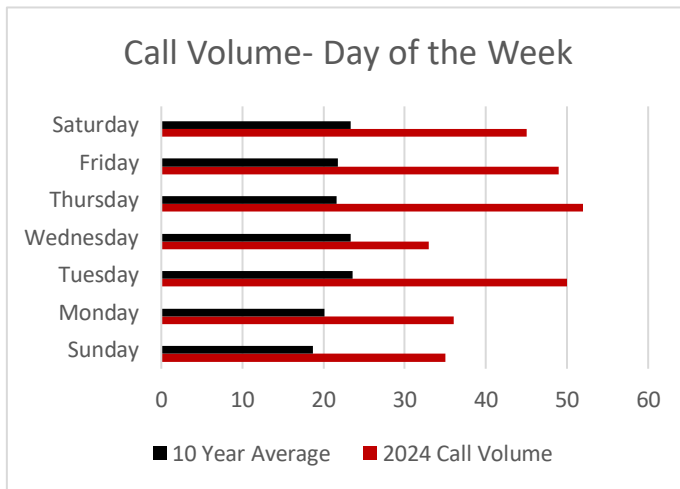


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## Statistics Continued

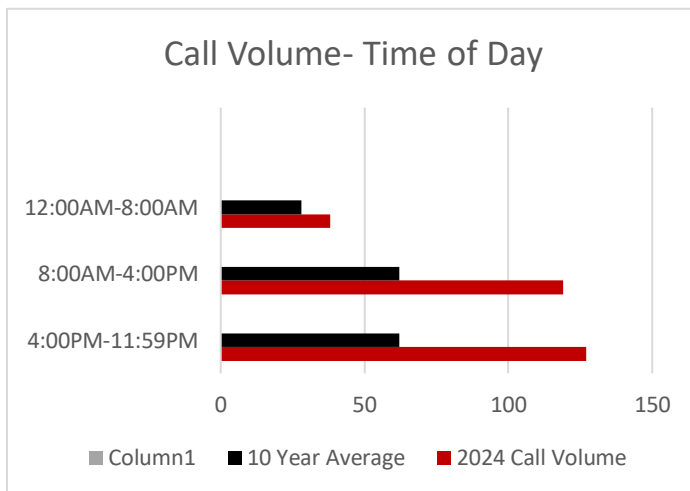
With 2024 having 299 alarms, this averages out to just shy of 1 call a day. As explained in the introduction, there is obviously no rhyme or reason as to when a call will arrive, but we can take the data ECM2 provides us to find out which days and times were the busiest for us.

### Day of the Week



Our busiest day of the week in 2024 was Thursday, with 52 alarms. Wednesdays were the slowest, with 33. Our 10- year average shows that our busiest day is Tuesdays, with 24 alarms, and slowest is Sundays, with 19 alarms.

### Time of Day



Our busiest time of the day is the "evening" hours, or between 4:00PM-11:59PM, with 127 calls in 2024. "Overnight" hours, or 12:00AM-8:00AM is the slowest, with 54 calls. Our 10- year average shows the busiest time is essentially tied, both "daylight" and "evening" hours averaging 62 calls per timeframe, and overnight still the slowest, averaging 28 calls.

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### Nature of Calls

While Summit Hose had 187 alarms, this number obviously doesn't fully explain exactly *what* types of calls these were. Naturally, fire suppression is the main objective of a fire department, however, we can often be alerted for calls that may not involve fire at all. When a call for service happens, we are often the first ones to respond. Flooded basements, chemical spills, someone reporting a strange odor outside, trees falling on the road, and yes, even sometimes a cat up a tree, the fire department will be called.

In the 21st century, more and more homes and businesses are becoming "smart". Connected devices have become mainstream, offering added convenience, and safety to many homes and businesses. From smart thermostats, doorbell cameras, Amazon's "Alexa", the list goes on. Home security and fire alarms have never been more user friendly and accessible. With this increase in home security devices, this has also resulted in an increase in false alarms for the department. The vast majority of what we call "automatic alarms" are false in nature. A homeowner may be preparing a meal in the kitchen, and it came out a little more "well done" than they had hoped. This may trigger their home security system's fire alarm, which automatically dispatches the department. Several other minor events like this can trigger these "automatic alarms". Generally, these types of calls are cleared in a matter of minutes. Dispatch often reports back to us that the homeowner/businesses alarm was set off accidentally, or due to a minor issue not requiring our assistance. One of our officers will still respond regardless, as the old saying goes: "trust, but verify". Not only that, but it can make for good public relations as well, showing the homeowner/business that we are here and happy to help.

The National Fire Incident Reporting System ("NFIRS") has 8 categories of incident types that nearly every fire department call can fit into. While these categories do not tell the complete story of every incident, they certainly paint a good picture of the variety of incidents. The following page contains all 299 calls, and their NFIRS classification.

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## 2024 Alarms by NFIRS Classification

### Class 100- Fire

Any structure, vehicle, vegetation, or other object on fire, or previously on fire requiring fire department services.

2024 Total: **46**

### Class 200- Ruptures, Explosions, Overheats

Ruptures involving steam, air, or gases, excessive heat calls, explosions (accidental and intentional)

2024 Total: **0**

### Class 300- Rescue & EMS

Vehicle accidents with injuries and/or entrapment, search parties, victim extrications/rescues, or EMS requesting assistance.

2024 Total: **54**

### Class 400- Hazardous Condition (No Fire)

Gas/oil/chemical spills, electrical issues (malfunctions/shorts, power lines down), Carbon Monoxide alarms

2024 Total: **29**

### Class 500- Service Calls

Person in distress, water conditions (severe leaks, flooded basements, etc.), animal rescues, requests from police or public works, fires found to be recreational/under control, standby in station.

2024 Total: **18**

### Class 600- Good Intent Call

Dispatched, but canceled while enroute, no emergency found, steam/fog/grill mistaken for smoke/fire.

2024 Total: **105**

### Class 700- False Alarm/False Call

General false alarms (system malfunction, malicious or child pulling the alarm), sprinkler malfunctions, smoke/CO detector false activations, bomb/biohazard scares.

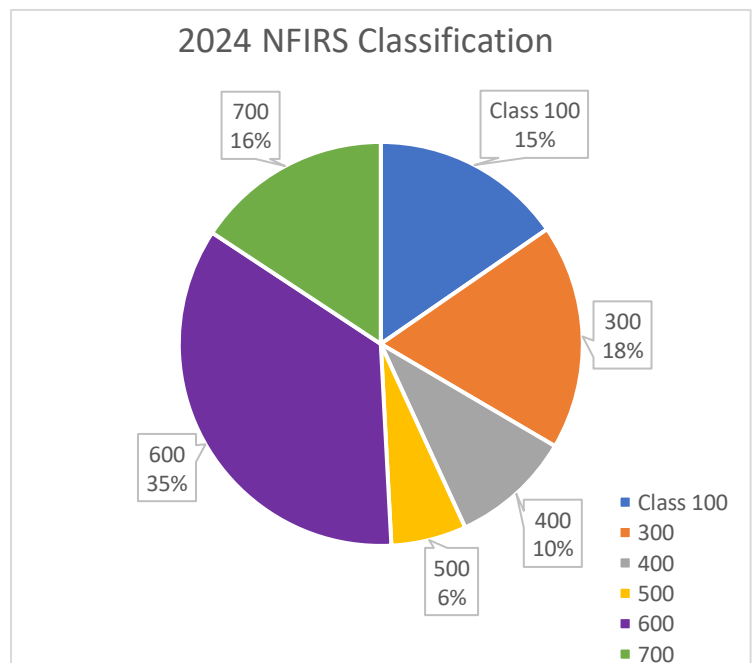
2024 Total: **47**

### Class 800- Weather/Natural Disaster

Assessing earthquake, flood, lightning strikes, or tornado damage, or department being placed on standby due to impending severe weather.

2024 Total: **0**

2024 NFIRS Classification



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### Membership Participation & Response Times

While the active membership at Summit Hose is small, we are extremely proud of our members and their continued dedication to community service. When an alarm is received, our members are out living a normal life just like everyone else. They may be relaxing in their homes, or fishing with friends, maybe out to dinner with the family, or several towns away picking up their groceries. When our members are available to take a call, they will do everything in their power to make it to our station to respond, and we cannot thank them enough for quite literally putting their personal lives on pause, so that they may perhaps risk it, to help complete strangers. It takes a certain individual to want to do this, it certainly isn't for everyone, so we are very grateful for each and every one of them.

From the time the alarm is received, until all units clear the scene and return to their stations, this time can be tracked through our ECM2 software, as well as data accumulated from Allegheny County 9-1-1's reports. In 2024, Summit Hose members spent a combined **657 man hours** on the scene of incidents. This number *does not* include any time spent after an alarm, which may include washing equipment, light repairs, and preparing the fire engine to be ready for the next incident. Sometimes, that time can take upwards of an hour after each incident. 657- man hours are the equivalent of 28 days of continuous service, or 2 hours of each day of the year.

Taking the total number of personnel who responded to each call, divided by the total number of calls, our average number of personnel for alarms in 2024 is **6 members per alarm**. Again, this does not give a complete picture but does show that our staffing levels for the vast majority of our calls are sufficient. Our fire engine has seating for 6, which is standard for most engines, so our average personnel of 6 is what we would call a "full crew" on our engine. Some major structure fires we responded to in 2024 saw nearly a complete response from our membership, with 10- to 12-members present. Other alarms, often occurring during those "daylight" hours (8A-4P) we may see 1 or 2 members respond, this is due in part that most of our members all have traditional "9 to 5" employment. Daylight responses have been an issue for many volunteer departments, this is not a problem specific to Summit Hose alone.

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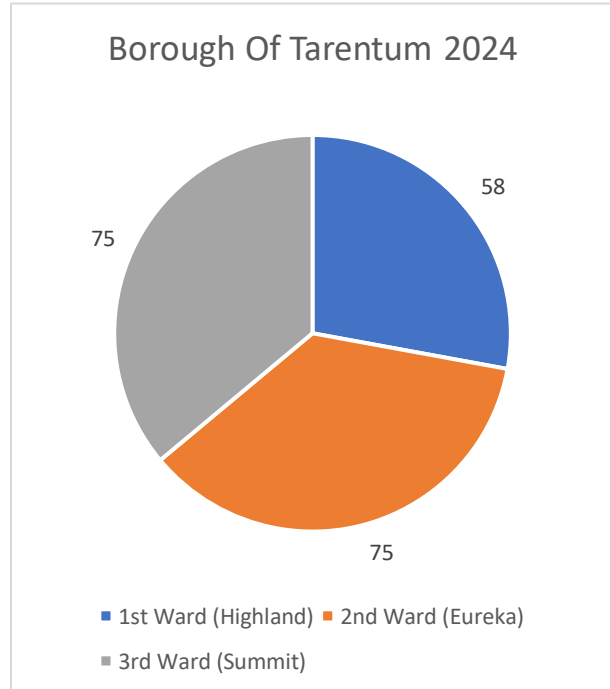
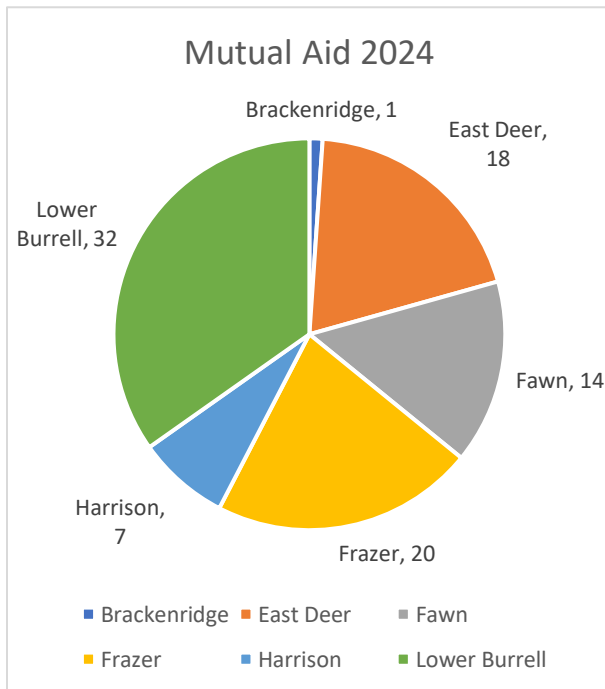
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## Geography/Mutual Aid

Tarentum Borough has 3 wards, and currently, each ward has its own fire department. When an alarm happens in the Borough, the location of the alarm will dictate who is to be in command of the incident, this is a nationwide standard. In the fire service, this is often referred to as a department's "first due", or their home territory. When an incident occurs within the 3<sup>rd</sup> ward, the highest-ranking officer of Summit Hose will be in command of the incident. Highland Hose commands the 1<sup>st</sup> ward, and Eureka has the 2<sup>nd</sup>.

In 2024, some changes were made to our "run cards". As previously stated all three fire companies in town run just about every call in tandem together. Due in part to diminished staffing levels across the board, nearly every incident that occurs in Tarentum will now dispatch all 3 companies, regardless of the type of incident. This change occurred approximately halfway through 2023, and so far, we are finding results to be positive. Most times for smaller incidents/false alarms, one department can typically handle it, and the incident commander will often hold the other 2 departments in their station, that the staff will be available if needed, essentially.

Below is a chart showing the geography of all alarms Summit Hose responded to in 2024:



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## **Conclusion**

Our hope is that this 2024 report has done a good job of explaining some of the ins and outs of our year. We try to maintain as much transparency as possible, and hope that these details meet your needs. Our doors are always open to the public, and we would be more than happy to share any additional information someone may request. Our ECM2 software has been a major game changer with reporting, many of the facts and figures you've just read were effortlessly pulled from this software. We thank you for your time and hope you have enjoyed reading this report.

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