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Mayor Rahm Emanuel

## FIRE

CFD promotes fire safety, provides emergency care, and extinguishes fires

### Operations

The Bureau of Operations is the CFD's largest bureau, with a personnel strength of more than 4,500 uniformed firefighters and paramedics, many of whom are "cross-trained" in the use of nearly 250 pieces of equipment and apparatus, including fire engines, fire trucks, ambulances, squads, helicopters and marine equipment. The Bureau receives more than 500,000 calls per year for emergency assistance, and responds to fires, medical emergencies, hazardous material incidents and other emergency situations, to ensure the safety and well being of Chicago residents and the 28 million visitors who pass through Chicago's airports.

The Bureau of Operations consists of four divisions: Fire Suppression and Rescue, Emergency Medical Services (EMS), Special Operations and the Office of Fire Investigations (OFI).

#### **Fire Suppression and Rescue Division**

The Fire Suppression and Rescue Division is responsible for the day-to-day operation of all fire suppression companies in the 100 firehouses dispersed throughout the city of Chicago. When those companies are not fighting fires, they are responsible for conducting daily fire drills, school inspections, and fire hydrant inspections within their districts. The division oversees the department's 96 engine companies and 61 truck companies, which are divided into seven (6) geographic regions.

#### **Emergency Medical Services Division**

The goal of the EMS Division is to ensure that the citizens of Chicago receive the best pre-hospital emergency care from competent and knowledgeable paramedics and emergency medical technicians. EMS personnel, trained in both basic life support (BLS) and advanced life support (ALS) measures, provide on-scene care, stabilization, and transport of patients to the nearest and appropriate medical facility. The EMS Division uses the best equipment available and receives continuing education to ensure their preparedness to meet the challenges of today's ever-changing advanced pre-hospital care.

The EMS Division has 60 ALS ambulances and 15 BLS ambulances. Their apparatus are equipped with emergency medications, intravenous fluids and other primary emergency supplies and equipment, including portable electro-cardiac monitor and defibrillators available for patients who may suddenly go into cardiac arrest. All ALS and BLS ambulances, and ALS engines, are equipped with state-of-the-art telemetry radio

equipment, which allows emergency medical responders to radio important information from the scene of the incident, directly to a nearby hospital, where physicians can review the patient's condition and provide further medical instructions and transport information.

The CFD's EMS Division is also an integral part of the Chicago Trauma Care Network, that provides victims of traumatic accidents with the most rapidly available treatment and transport to specialized trauma centers throughout the city. Ambulances are strategically deployed throughout the city to provide an optimum 4-6 minute response from dispatch to arrival on the scene of an incident. These ambulances are part of the largest EMS system in the world and many lives are saved each year by this well-integrated health delivery system.

The EMS Division also maintains an Office of Medical Oversight that works closely with the department's medical advisor who is the liaison with local, state and federal hospitals and medical organizations. The Office of Medical Oversight ensures CFD's compliance with the Emergency Medical Services Act and its rules and regulations, and also ensures that the EMS System Plan remains current. In addition, the medical advisor develops, conducts and oversees medically related educational programs, and evaluates the EMS system's standing medical orders, the EMS system policies, and its medical equipment.

EMS' Support and Logistics Unit is a customer service-based unit that is responsible for ensuring the medical accountability of the EMS and Fire Suppression companies, including ALS and BLS ambulances, first responder/AED engines, first responder/AED trucks, ALS engines, mass casualty units, ALS special events ambulances, carts and trailers, and several administrative locations. Medical accountability is accomplished through the re-supplying and re-stocking of all medical equipment and supplies, performing preventative maintenance on all vital medical equipment, conducting thorough inspections of all medical equipment and supplies, and re-licensing all ambulances.

The Support and Logistics Unit is the primary EMS resource to the City of Chicago for summertime festivals and provides EMS equipment and support to many notable events, including the Chicago Gospel Festival, Chicago Celtic Festival, Taste of Chicago, Chicago Blues Festival, Venetian Night, Mayor's Soccer Festival, Chicago Air and Water Show, Viva Chicago Festival, Chicago Jazz Festival, and many more.

## **Special Operations Division**

The Special Operation Division is the "special rescue" branch of the CFD that is intricately involved in homeland security activities. It currently includes the Hazardous Materials Unit, the Air Sea Rescue Unit and the Technical Rescue Unit.

## **Technical Rescue**

The firefighters assigned to this core group of four heavy rescue companies are responsible for rescuing victims in extreme situations that include high-angle and trench rescues, confined space and building collapse rescues, vehicle extrication, dive rescue, deep tunnel and urban search rescues, where rescue workers seek victims in urban disasters. The members of this unit are highly skilled in these unique rescue techniques, and are also part of the Illinois Technical Rescue Teams and IL-Task Force I, an aggressive urban search and rescue team operating within the State of Illinois.

## **Hazardous Materials**

The Hazardous Materials Unit, specializes in mitigating and containing hazardous and toxic material. The primary mission of the unit is to isolate, identify, notify, mitigate, and terminate hazardous incidents. Currently the hazardous incident units 5-1-1 and 5-1-2 are the CFD's primary units for all hazardous

incidents. The Unit responds to a wide array of incidents, ranging from industrial accidents, crimes against nature, and terrorist incidents and works closely with local, state, and federal agencies in securing hazardous material incidents. All members of this unit are selected for their skill and ability to effectively operate in extreme, out of the ordinary, incidents. Each member must be certified as a hazardous materials technician and Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) operations specialist. This unit also facilitates the formulation and implementation of the department's hazardous materials policies and operations, in conjunction with city, state and federal environmental agencies.

## **Air Sea Rescue**

The Air Sea Rescue Unit was established in 1965, where they provide search and rescue services for 37 miles of lakefront, an extensive river system, numerous lakefront venues, and the largest harbor system in the U.S. Chicago's busy lakefront offers the Air Sea Rescue Unit unique emergency challenges including, assistance to boats in distress, water rescues and air search missions. Divers assigned to the Air Sea Rescue Unit are trained under public safety rescue diver guidelines specific to Chicago's needs and particular environment. Our air pilots are trained in helicopter search and rescue, and hoist rescue techniques patterned after nationally recognized standards. The Air Sea Rescue Unit uses two (2) Bell 412 EP helicopters to aid in their efforts. This equipment is used for multi-mission roles, which include administrative, law enforcement, and primarily search and rescue flights. The unit also has dive rescue vehicles equipped with the latest available communications devices, full facemask and dry suit dive equipment, and lighting for night operations. They also have a dedicated swimming pool for training the members.

## **Office of Fire Investigation Division (OFI)**

The Office of Fire Investigation Division (OFI) is mandated by state law and municipal ordinance to determine the cause and origin all fires, within the limits of the City of Chicago. OFI reports annually on fire related incidents under five (5) general classifications: incendiary fires, accidental fires, undetermined fires, special investigations and no services. OFI staff is specially trained firefighters who utilize the most up-to-date techniques in fire investigation, in conjunction with local and federal law enforcement agencies. The OFI has five (5) 24-hour response units, as well as a Major Incident Response Unit (MIRU) that is outfitted with tools and supplies to compliment the 24-hour vehicles sent to investigate major incidents.

### Facts

#### Department:

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