

*Central Elgin Fire Rescue Services*

**2025**

# ANNUAL REPORT

Delivered by: Fire Chief Jeff VanRybroeck



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## A MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR



I would like to express my gratitude and appreciation to the dedicated members of Central Elgin Fire Rescue Services for their efforts throughout 2025. Their dedication to public safety continues to make a meaningful difference in our community.

In 2025, the Fire Rescue team continued to build strong connections across Central Elgin while delivering important fire safety education through community events and outreach initiatives. From school visits and fire safety demonstrations, to participating in parades and station breakfasts, the team has remained visible and engaged. These efforts not only promote fire prevention and emergency preparedness but also build positive relationships with residents across Central Elgin and give back to the community. The vital fire safety messaging and learning opportunities give residents the knowledge and confidence to better protect themselves and their families.

I would also like to recognize the work of the Beach Rescue team at Port Stanley's Main Beach. With approximately 2,000 daily visitors during peak season, the responsibility of monitoring beach and water activities is significant. Guarding from the end of June through the beginning of September, the team worked diligently to provide water safety education, first aid, enforce regulations and respond quickly to emergencies. Their presence ensures that beachgoers can safely enjoy the best beach on Lake Erie.

On behalf of Council and the entire Municipality, thank you for your continued service, leadership, and commitment to keeping Central Elgin safe.

Mayor Andrew Sloan  
Municipality of Central Elgin



## A MESSAGE FROM THE FIRE CHIEF



It is my honour to present the 2025 Annual Report for Central Elgin Fire Rescue Services.

This report reflects the dedication and professionalism of the men and women who proudly serve our community. In 2025, our focus remained clear: delivering reliable emergency response, strengthening firefighter training and certification, and expanding proactive fire prevention and public education.

Our Operations Division continued to provide dependable response across the municipality, while our Training Division advanced member certifications aligned with provincial legislation and nationally recognized NFPA standards. This commitment ensures our firefighters are prepared to respond safely and effectively to today's increasingly complex emergencies.

Prevention efforts remained a priority, including fire inspections, support of the Short-Term Rental Accommodation licensing program, and expanded public education initiatives. Our Beach Rescue Service also played a critical role in protecting thousands of seasonal visitors, supported by strong regional partnerships and water safety initiatives.

Beyond emergency response, our firefighters remained active in community events and outreach programs, reinforcing the trust and relationships that are foundational to public service.

As we look ahead to 2026, we remain committed to continuous improvement, operational readiness, and responsible stewardship of municipal resources.

It is a privilege to serve the residents of Central Elgin.

Jeff VanRybroeck  
Director of Fire Rescue Services  
Central Elgin Fire Rescue Services



# CENTRAL ELGIN RESPONSE STATIONS



**Station #1 – Port Stanely**



**Station #2 – Union**



**Station #3 – Yarmouth**



**Station #4 – Belmont**



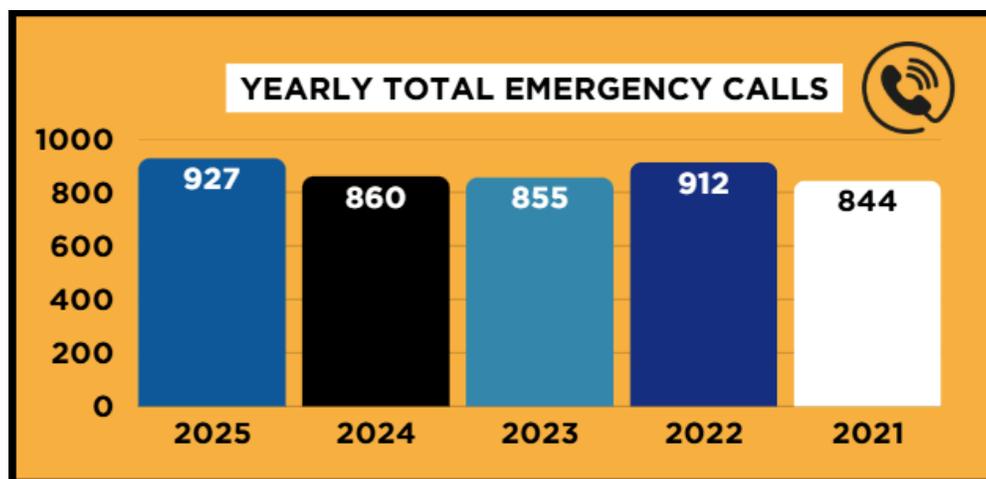
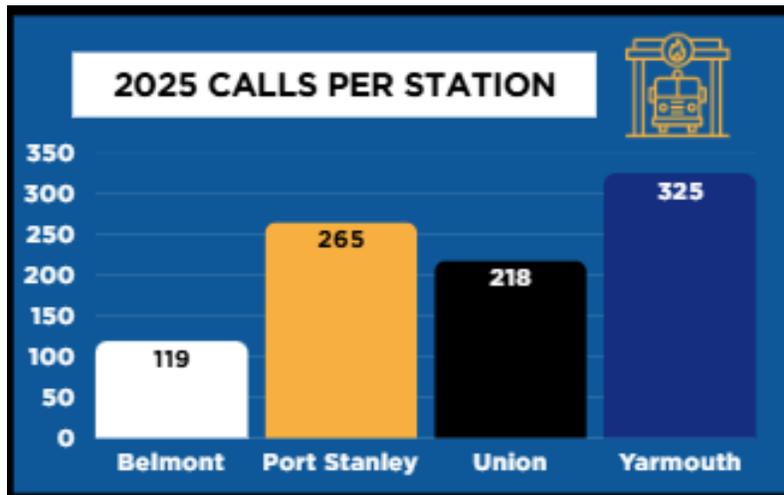
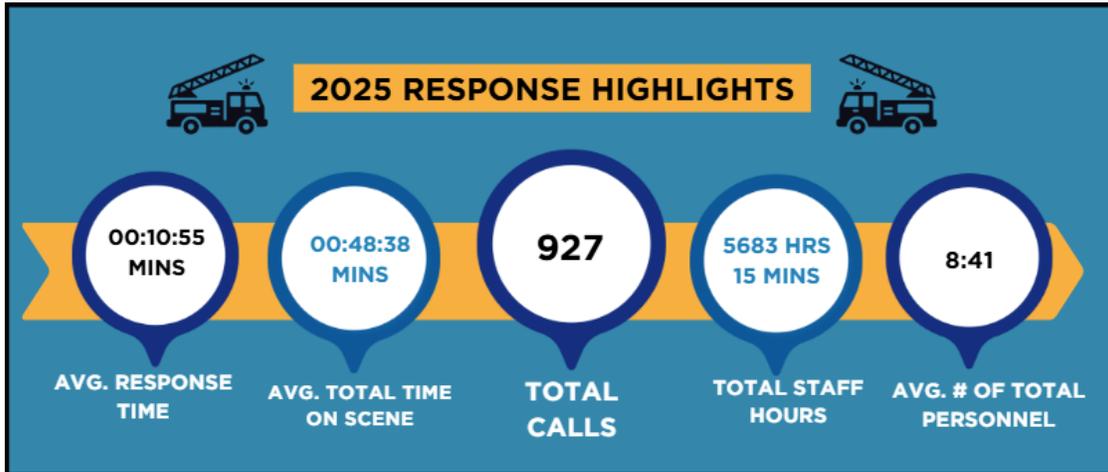
**Beach Tower / Patrol**



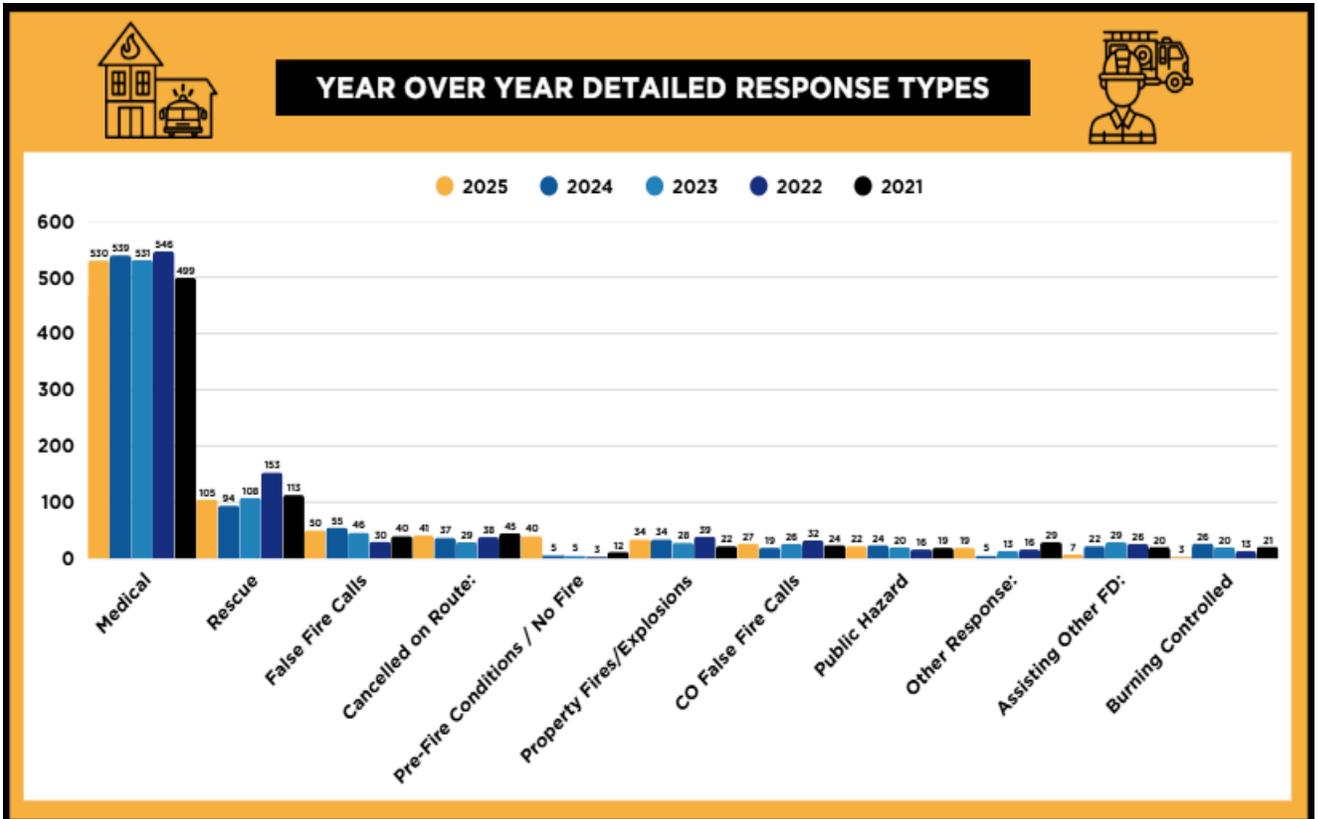
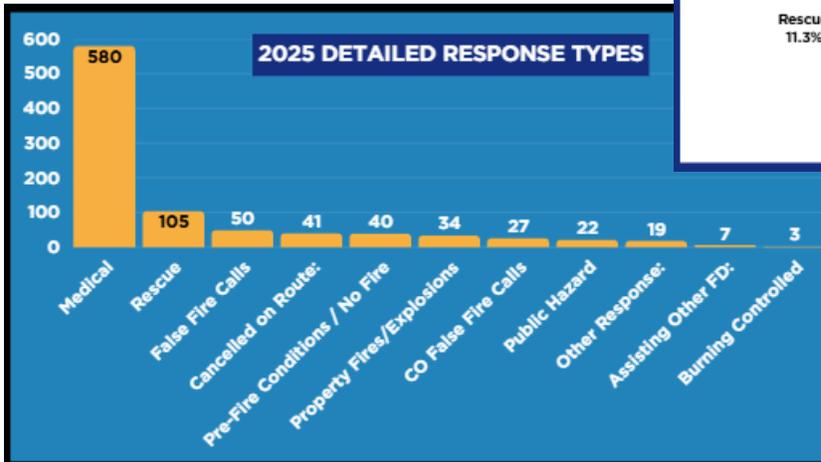
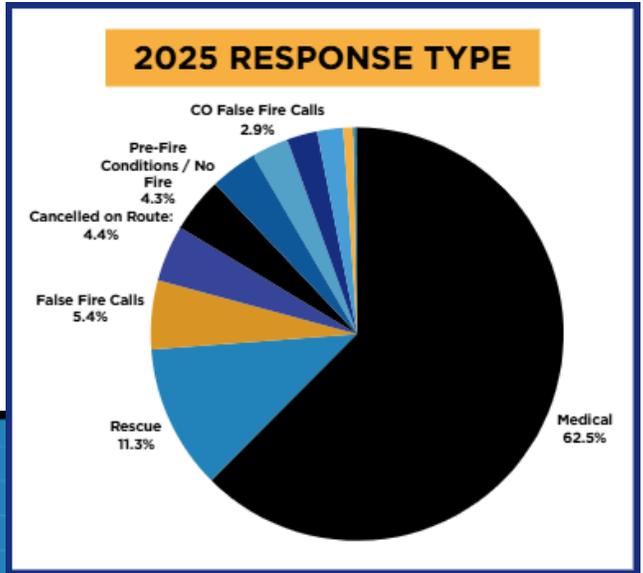
**Boat House**



# EMERGENCY RESPONSE



# EMERGENCY RESPONSE



# TRAINING DIVISION

## Regular Training



### Subjects included:

- Aerial
- Agility Testing
- Airbags
- Auto Extrication
- Chainsaw
- Confined Space
- Emergency Vehicle Driving Training
- Emergency Medical Care
- Fire Behavior & Control
- Fire Department Organization
- Fire Hose/Appliances/Steams
- First Aid/CPR/AED Certification & Recertification
- Forcible Entry
- Ground Ladders
- Health & Safety
- Hose Testing
- Ice Water Rescue
- Personal Protective Equipment Inspections
- Portable Tanker Operations
- Pre-Fire Planning
- Propane Tanker Operations
- Pump Operations
- Radio Communications
- Response to Hazmat Incidents I & II
- Ropes
- Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA)
- Smoke Alarm Education
- Surface Water Rescue
- Tanker Shuttle and Drafting
- WHMIS



# TRAINING DIVISION

## Course & Certification Achievements

Additional fire courses and certification courses that were completed in 2025 in house or through the Elgin-Middlesex Regional Training Centres includes:

### ***Subjects included:***

- Community Risk Assessment
- Courtroom Procedures
- Fire Code Division B, Part 2 & 6
- Fire Code Division B, Part 4
- Hazmat Awareness
- Legislation
- Rope Rescue Operations
- Surface Water Rescue Operations & Technician
- NFPA 1002 Pump Operator
- NFPA 1006 Chapter 5, Rope Rescue Operations Level (2021 Edition)
- NFPA 1006 Chapter 20, Ice Rescue Operations
- NFPA 1006 Chapter 20, Ice Rescue Technician
- NPFA 1021 Fire Officer Level I
- NFPA 1031 Fire Inspector II
- NFPA 1033 Fire Investigator
- NFPA 1035 Public Information Officer
- NFPA 1035 Fire & Safety Educator Level I
- NFPA 1041 Fire Instructor Level I



# BEACH RESCUE SERVICE



Our dedicated Beach Rescue team consists of 28 members and are all certified through the Lifesaving Society and tested annually on waterfront rescues. The team is stationed throughout five lifeguard towers and operates in one of our most active and heavily visited areas, with Port Stanley main beach having approximately 2,000 daily visitors during the peak season. Beach Patrol season runs from July to Labour Day weekend.

Beach rescue team completes foot patrols, constantly monitoring the waters for potentially weak or troubled swimmers, enforces rules, provides public education and responds to emergencies. As beach attendance continues to increase year over year, the Beach Rescue division continues to be an instrumental part of Central Elgin Fire Rescue Services by ensuring our waterfront remain safe and welcoming for residents and visitors.



In August, an exciting partnership between the Municipality of Central Elgin & Elgin County Drowning Prevention Coalition and Lifesaving Society Ontario, established a program aimed to make water safety easier and more accessible for everyone visiting the waterfront. Visitors can now borrow lifejackets for free.

One of our Lifeguards, Briar McCaw and Co-Founder/Co-Chair of the Elgin County Drowning Prevention Coalition had the exciting opportunity to attend the World Conference on Drowning Prevention in Sharm el Sheikh, Egypt, presenting her research and regional drowning report covering Elgin, London, Middlesex and Oxford Counties. Briar highlighted how Elgin County is leading the way by using regional data to drive into meaningful change, including initiatives like our Lifejacket Loaner Program.



# FIRE PREVENTION, INSPECTIONS & PUBLIC EDUCATION



In 2025, 49 Inspections were completed. This number certainly increased with the implementation of the new Short-Term Rental Accommodation (STRA) licensing bylaw that came into effect January 1, 2026. STRA's are required to have a fire inspection completed, to ensure that smoke and carbon monoxide alarms are installed and working, proper documentation is located on the premises and sufficient means of egress.

Throughout Central Elgin the department engaged with the community in a variety of education opportunities. We provided Fire Safety demonstrations and messaging at our Station Breakfasts, attended events such as Belmont Little monster walk and Pop-Up tent at Little Beach. We also had a water safety information table at Main Beach during Drowning Prevention Week. In addition to in-person, we utilized social media to promote "Save by the Beep" day September 28 and Fire Prevention week.



# COMMUNITY EVENTS, COLLABORATION AND SUPPORT

2025 was another successful year for the Central Elgin Fire Departments proudly strengthening our community connections through public community events, including school visits, public education demonstrations, parades and open houses and attending community events. With being active in the community this allows us to promote fire prevention and emergency preparedness, while maintaining positive relationships with Central Elgin residents of all ages.

## ***Community events in 2025 Included:***

- Aylmer Fair Fire Muster
- Canadian Blood Donations
- Touch a Truck
- Tim Horton's Camp Day
- Belmont Swans Little Monster Walk
- Belmont, Port Stanley Santa Clause Parade
- Sparta Family Fun Day
- Sponsor Youth Hockey – BMHA – Belmont Rangers
- Supporting Local Food Banks
- Mistyglan Creamery – Auto Extrication Skills
- Belmont Minor Soccer Association
- Port Stanley & Area Community Cupboard
- Port Stanley Fish Fry
- Rip Current Information Project
- Remembrance Day Ceremonies
- Elgin County Drowning Prevention Week



# COMMUNITY EVENTS, COLLABORATION AND SUPPORT



## EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Emergency management is a legislated responsibility under Ontario's Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act (EMCPA). The Act requires municipalities to maintain an approved Emergency Response Plan, conduct annual training and exercises, complete a Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (HIRA), and formally review their emergency management program each year.

In 2025, Central Elgin implemented a newly updated Municipal Emergency Management Program and Emergency Response Plan to ensure full provincial compliance and alignment with current best practices. The updated plan clearly defines the roles and responsibilities of the Emergency Control Group, strengthens coordination with Elgin County and regional response partners, and enhances preparedness for complex incidents such as severe weather events, infrastructure disruptions, hazardous materials emergencies, and public health situations.

Municipal leadership and key stakeholders participated in training and tabletop exercises to support implementation of the revised plan and reinforce decision-making processes during emergencies.

Through proactive planning, inter-agency collaboration, and continuous improvement, Central Elgin remains committed to protecting residents, supporting community resilience, and ensuring essential municipal services can be maintained during times of crisis.



## LOOKING AHEAD TO 2026

2026 will be a busy and progressive year for Central Elgin Fire Rescue Services as we continue building capacity, strengthening compliance, and enhancing service delivery to our community.

A key focus will be onboarding and training eleven (11) new Firefighters. Through a structured training schedule and monthly training layout, we will ensure consistent development while continuing mandatory certification training to meet provincial legislative requirements. Investing in our members remains essential to maintaining operational readiness and long-term sustainability.



We also anticipate the delivery of the new Rescue Truck for Belmont in June or July, which will enhance our emergency response and technical rescue capabilities. Alongside this addition, we will update our technical rescue protocols and provide comprehensive training to ensure safe and effective implementation.

In 2026, we will expand public education and prevention efforts while continuing the implementation of our departmental re-organization. With ongoing improvements across Operations, Training, Prevention and Administration, we remain committed to continuous growth, responsible stewardship, and delivering the highest level of service to the residents of Central Elgin.



## CONNECT WITH US



### CENTRAL ELGIN FIRE RESCUE SERVICES



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