



## **LASALLE FIRE SERVICE**

Annual Report 2017

# Mission Statement

Our pledge to our community.

"We are a caring team dedicated to promoting safety,  
and providing positive outcomes to fellow citizens in a  
time of need"

Our mission is guided by commitment  
to our core values: Respect, Integrity, Teamwork



LaSalle Fire Service

*Our mission is guided by commitment to our core values:*

***RESPECT, INTEGRITY, TEAMWORK***

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In terms of structure fire activity and fire loss, 2017 was a relatively fire-safe year for the Town of LaSalle. There were eight fires in residential structures, and five fires in business or non-residential structures. There were also four vehicle fires resulting in reported loss. The total reported fire loss in the municipality for 2017 was \$506,100.00. There were no fire fatalities, and one recorded fire-related injury resulting from a vehicle fire.

Total call volumes continue to trend upward, with 2017 seeing nearly a ten percent increase in calls for service over 2016. However, annual fire loss figures remain low in comparison to provincial averages. Relative overall operating costs of service delivery remain favourable; however, there is an increasing strain on the current paid-on-call response model. A large measure of the credit for consistently maintaining these favourable performance benchmarks is attributable to our aggressive and proactive approach to public education and inspection programs, with a focus on making residents and building owners aware of their obligations for family and public safety, and assisting them in preventing preventable fires. Influencing public behavior and awareness in relation to fire safety is an on-going primary initiative.

Operational improvements included the purchase and implementation of a new radio communications system. The new system provides enhanced radio coverage for personnel in emergency operations and was necessary to overcome intermittent failures of the previous system. Staff also collaborated on the implementation of the first phase of an ongoing project to utilize mobile technology and tablets to enhance record keeping and improve efficiency in daily station duties; as well as, field applications and emergency operations.

Firefighter training continues to be a significant area of activity to ensure adequate emergency response. A total of ninety three (93) in-house training sessions were conducted and coordinated by our Training Officer and staff, in addition to numerous out-sourced courses, and courses taken by staff at the Ontario Fire College. Through partnerships among area fire services, the OFMEM, and St. Clair College, accredited officer level courses are now also becoming available locally.

A variety of factors, including retirements and promotions, have contributed to a significant turnover in paid-on-call staff positions. Our 2017, recruit class of eight new firefighters continues to progress through Level I and Level II firefighter training and certification. Provincial testing for Firefighter Level I certification is expected to occur in June of 2018, followed by Level II certification. A Company Officer level training program continued for four Captains who were promoted to their positions in 2016. Two additional Captains, who were promoted in 2017 to fill vacancies, have also begun the initial courses in the Company Officer program.

As previously indicated, LaSalle Fire Service is currently in the midst of a predictable, but unprecedented turnover of seasoned and experienced staff at all levels of the organization. In 2017, this evolution included the posting and selection process for the new Captain/Fire Prevention Officer position, in preparation for the retirement of the incumbent in 2018. The selection of a successful candidate in advance of the impending retirement was intended to allow for a period of extensive training, job shadowing and mentoring, to provide a smooth transition of service in this single-incumbent position. This on-going renewal is healthy, and will undoubtedly contribute to a strong and vibrant future, as our organization continues to modernize our response and service models. The resulting infusion of youth and enthusiasm, although encouraging in the long range, presents a number of challenges and pressures on our relatively small organization in the short term. As we continue to adapt our structure and operations to be responsive to the growing and changing needs of the community, maintaining adequate staffing levels, developing opportunities for practical experience, and a significant increase in demand for training at all levels of the organization, are among the operational priorities to be managed in the development of competent emergency response staff.

To assist in these efforts, another collaborative venture among area services resulted in the joint purchase of a Mobile Live Fire Training Unit. LaSalle Fire Service's partnership in this unique opportunity will provide the capability to conduct much-needed live-fire training on site in our community on a regular basis. This training is a vital component in providing practical and realistic firefighting experience for our increasing numbers of new firefighters as well as newly promoted Company Officers.

Resulting from a Ministry of Labour initiative to reduce the prevalence and effects of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder among emergency responders, LaSalle Fire Service also collaborated on a PTSD Prevention Plan which includes education, training and strategies to better cope with the effects of occupational stress. Staff are also committed to the development of a more formalized Health and Wellness Initiative, which will encourage regular medical screening for occupational illnesses and general nutrition and health awareness. A new collective agreement was also successfully negotiated with the LaSalle Professional Firefighters Association. Consistent with the norm in the province, a 42-hour work week will be implemented in April of 2018 requiring the addition of one full-time firefighter position.

Implementation of remaining Master Plan initiatives and recommendations continues to be a priority of the department. Funding for the construction of a second satellite fire station was approved as part of the 2017 municipal budget, subject to approval of a proposed site. A municipally owned site in the western urban area of town was recommended, however following public consultation the site was not approved. A subsequent report on the second station project was referred back to administration. Further consideration of this project to modernize our response model and improve emergency response capability is expected in 2018.

# **LASALLE FIRE SERVICE STAFF ORGANIZATION**

## **FIRE CHIEF**

D. SUTTON

## **DEPUTY FIRE CHIEF**

E. THIESSEN

## **ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT**

S. NANTAIS

## **CAPTAIN / FIRE PREVENTION OFFICER**

M. MAYEA

M. WILEY (Transitional position of FIRE INSPECTOR)

## **CAPTAIN / TRAINING OFFICER**

C. THIBERT

## **FULL-TIME FIREFIGHTERS**

R. BONDY

K. SEMANDE

C. LUSSIER

M. WILEY

R. MOORE

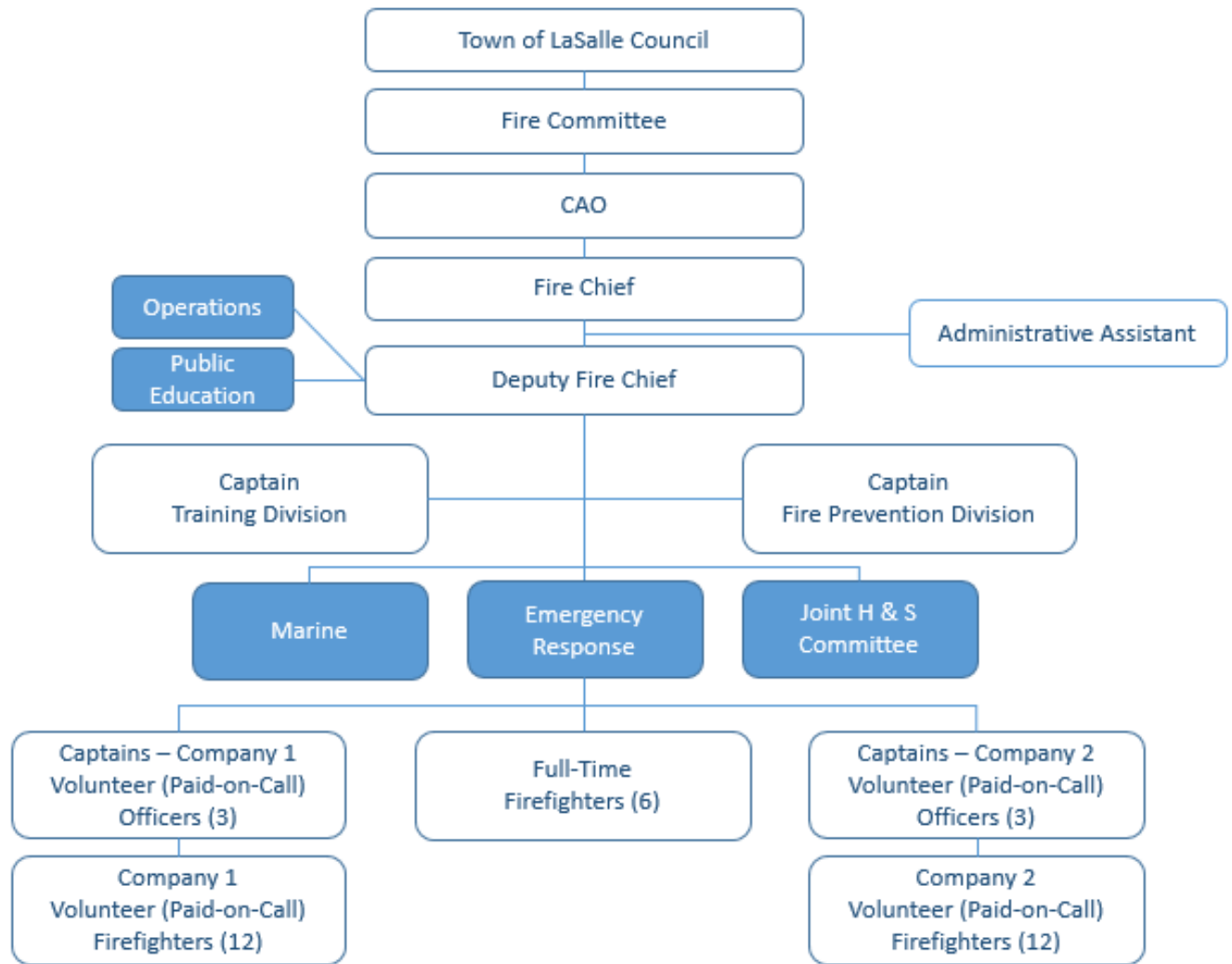
R. CURTIS

## **VOLUNTEER /PAID-ON-CALL FIREFIGHTERS (30)**

(list as of end of 2017)

<b>COMPANY 1</b>	<b>COMPANY 2</b>
CAPTAIN J. TOUSIGNANT	CAPTAIN J. PULLEYBLANK
CAPTAIN T. ANTONUCCI	CAPTAIN J. GRIFFITH
CAPTAIN M. SEGUIN	CAPTAIN J. PRICE
J. CHAUVIN	J. SHINKAR
L. THIESSEN	M. BONDY
B. BARTLETT	D. GIFFORD
C. SEGUIN	N. FIELDS
C. BISSONNETTE	G. LEGOOD
P. HOMENICK	C. DUPUIS
C. CARR	T. CLARKE
M. O'BRIGHT	M. CARLONE
C. FECTEAU	B. THOMAN
L. MELOCHE	R. O'NEILL
VACANT	B. TAYLOR
VACANT	VACANT

# LaSalle Fire Service – Organizational Chart 2018



## PERSONNEL CHANGES

- 1 Full-time firefighter was hired – R. Curtis
- 1 Full-time firefighter promoted as Interim Fire Inspector
- 1 Volunteer Company Officer retired June 2017 – Captain S. Mulligan
- 2 Volunteer (paid-on-call) Firefighters were promoted to Company Officer – J. Price and M. Seguin
- 2 Volunteer (paid-on-call) Firefighter positions were filled

## CONTINUING EDUCATION INITIATIVES & CONFERENCES

<b>D. Sutton</b>	OAFC Conference – Labour Relations FDIC International Conference Provincial Emergency Mgmt. Conference – (via live stream)
<b>E. Thiessen</b>	Fire Inspector I, Ontario Fire College Local Government course – Western University OFMEM Social Media Workshop OAFC Midterm Meeting
<b>S. Nantais</b>	OFMEM Social Media Workshops – April & October 2017 Ontario Fire Chiefs' Administrative Assistants Association Conference
<b>C. Thibert</b>	NFPA 1041 Fire Instructor II – Ontario Fire College FDIC International Conference NFPA 1002 Pump Ops, Ontario Fire College Training Officer Workshop, Ontario Fire College Gas Detection for Emergency Services
<b>M. Wiley</b>	Fire Codes, Part 2 & 6 - Ontario Fire College Courtroom Procedures, Ontario Fire College
<b>R. Moore</b>	NFPA 1041 Fire Instructor I, Ontario Fire College



## PUBLIC EDUCATION

A wide variety of public education programs were delivered to a total aggregate audience of over 1744 persons in 2017. These interactive programs promoted fire-safe behaviors for residents of all ages including presentations to all the area elementary schools with education programs targeted for specific groups of students, public education displays at venues such as events at the Vollmer Recreation Complex, the public library, retirement homes, the Strawberry Festival, and program visits with Scouts Canada and Girl Guides of Canada, daycare facilities, and various adult education opportunities. Fire safety programs specifically designed for seniors, older adults and adults with mobility limitations, living in multi-residential buildings have been developed and delivered by appointment. Public education materials and displays include public fire safety tips and information, as well as emergency preparedness and emergency planning information for families and residents to encourage personal resiliency in the event of large-scale municipal emergencies.



The LaSalle Fire Service also continues to expand our social media presence on Facebook and Twitter. These popular formats provide an opportunity to target specific, and timely public education messages and safety tips to a broad audience. Through frequent interactions with our residents, these platforms also provide a means of directly reaching well over 2000 followers with any important relevant emergency information. The hallmark of our public education program continues to be our Fire Prevention Week activities. In 2017, a targeted program was delivered to all Grade 1 and 2 students in all our elementary schools. Our efforts in educating elementary school students is validated in part by testimonials and examples of children influencing the fire safety behaviors of parents, and reacting appropriately to potential emergency situations.

In addition to fire safety programs provided by the department, our members and the LaSalle FireFighter's Association continue to be active in the community on a volunteer basis supporting numerous organizations & making positive contributions to the quality of life in the community.



## FIRE PREVENTION ACTIVITY

Basic public fire protection in Ontario is regulated by the *Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997*, as amended. The legislation establishes minimal requirements including a community risk assessment, a smoke alarm program with home escape planning, public education program, and fire safety inspections, to meet the needs and circumstances of the community. LaSalle Fire Service continues to meet or exceed the minimal requirements of the legislation with a proactive fire safety inspection program, code enforcement, and public education.



In the 2017 calendar year, ninety (90) regular inspections in commercial, assembly and multi-unit residential occupancies were conducted, providing fire safety advice and successfully resolving

numerous fire code violations to achieve compliance. Additionally, inspections by complaint and request were also completed as required. Enforcement measures including Fire Marshal Orders, Provincial Offence Notices, and charges in relation to Fire Code and municipal by-law violations were conducted, as required.

In the course of routine response activity, smoke alarm and carbon monoxide alarm compliance is confirmed in all homes attended by the fire service. In 2017, 348 smoke alarms were inspected in 129 homes, resulting in the replacement or installation of 30 smoke alarms, and the replacement of 22 batteries. A revision in departmental policy has increased enforcement measures in cases of non-compliance with smoke alarm and carbon monoxide legislation. Options include invoicing for units that are installed, and issuing Provincial Offence tickets, when required.

In addition to education, inspection and enforcement activities, all fires were investigated by the fire prevention division to determine cause and origin. In anticipation of the impending retirement of the long-serving Fire Prevention Officer, a recruitment process was undertaken to select a successful candidate to fill the position. Completing this process in advance of the impending retirement provided an opportunity to begin extensive specialized training and mentoring for this single incumbent position. A by-law revision was also implemented to regulate the safe storage, sale and display of both consumer and display fireworks within the municipality.

A fire prevention representative from the LaSalle Fire Service also participates with other municipal officials on the Special Events Resource Team, to review plans for any festivals or events proposed to be hosted at municipal venues. This participation helps ensure compliance with established codes and standards for the safety of all participants, and also helps to ensure adequate emergency plans are in place for the proposed event.

## **TRAINING ACTIVITY**

A total of ninety three (93) training sessions were conducted “in-house” within the department at various levels in 2017, with the average firefighter receiving approximately 120 hours of internally delivered training, in addition to external courses.

There are three concurrent levels of training provided within the department to meet the needs of personnel at various stages of experience and responsibility. LaSalle Fire Service has traditionally trained and certified all firefighters in accordance with the standards set out by the Office of the Fire Marshal using the NFPA Standard for Firefighter Professional Qualifications and curriculum as the basic foundation of our training program. This “Firefighter Level I and Level II” training is delivered to recruit firefighters

during regularly scheduled training sessions twice monthly. The program of study is a blend of on-line self-directed study, classroom theory, and hands-on practical sessions. Upon completion of the “in-house” training program for each level, independent written and skills testing are arranged through the Office of the Fire Marshal for verification and final certification. The period required to complete this basic level curriculum and achieve certification to Firefighter Level II is typically two to three years. During the period covered by this report, eight recruits hired late in 2016 began this program, with Level certification and I testing scheduled for June 2018.



Upon completion of the basic Firefighter I & II level, firefighters continue regular, on-going “general” level training twice monthly including more advanced proficiency of firefighting skills, and specialized or technical training in areas

such as auto extrication, hazardous materials, ice & water rescue, medical first responder, confined space, etc. They are also eligible for officer level courses as required by the department. The officer level training program includes NFPA Fire Officer Level I and II certification, and Incident Command courses provided externally through the Ontario Fire College, partnerships with third party providers, as well as monthly sessions within the department.

Implementation of a recently established company officer development program is ongoing for current and new volunteer Captains, subject to annual course availability and budget considerations. The program maintains is consistent with provincial standards and department needs. On-going collaboration with area partners is assisting in the availability of officer level training programs. A joint training committee has been established among Windsor & Essex County fire services to assess common needs, and coordinate resources and delivery of common training where practical. In addition, partnerships through St. Clair College, the OFMEM and area fire service partners have begun to provide local access to NFPA accredited officer level courses, in a blended format, which combine on-line self-directed study, classroom, field sessions, and assignments, and finally testing and certification scheduled locally, conducted by the





OFMEM testing unit. Particularly for paid-on-call personnel, this format makes officer level training and certification far more practical and accessible than the alternative of having to travel to the Ontario Fire College to attend one or two week courses.

Collaborative partnerships also allowed our personnel to take advantage of realistic training facilities in the region. Our recruit class as well as our general level group were able to participate in live fire training sessions appropriate for their experience level at a facility hosted in Essex, and developed and operated by St. Clair College. Arrangements were also made to conduct extensive auto extrication training sessions at the Coxon's towing yard in Tecumseh.

In a further example of collaborative partnerships, the LaSalle Fire Service participated in the planning and execution of a joint forces marine emergency exercise and training weekend on the Detroit River, hosted by the Royal Canadian Navy Reserve unit at HMCS Hunter. Participants included LaSalle Police, the Windsor Port Authority, and numerous law enforcement, emergency response, military, and Coast Guard units from the region on both sides of the border. This was an excellent training opportunity for our marine crew, and it also provided a better understanding of the capabilities, roles and responsibilities of the various allied agencies should a significant event occur in our area where interoperability is required.

## **IN-HOUSE ONGOING TRAINING CONDUCTED**

- Recruit training – SCBA, truck familiarization, hydrants, hose lines, ladders, ropes & knots, water supply, communications, fire behaviour, building construction, portable fire extinguishers, salvage & overhaul, vehicle rescue and extrication, forcible entry, size up
- Live Fire training
- Forcible entry training, , parkway hydrant, standpipe, 4 gas monitor
- Acquired structure – mock scenario training
- SCBA endurance drills
- Personal protective equipment, physical agility with SCBA (bi-annual), respiratory program - mask fit testing
- Vehicle driver operator – Tower
- EVO driver course
- Hazmat
- Officer Level Training – pre-planning, incident command, building familiarization, scene assessment
- Curriculum training – classroom, practical and on-line training through LaSalle Systems 24/7 and Target Solutions

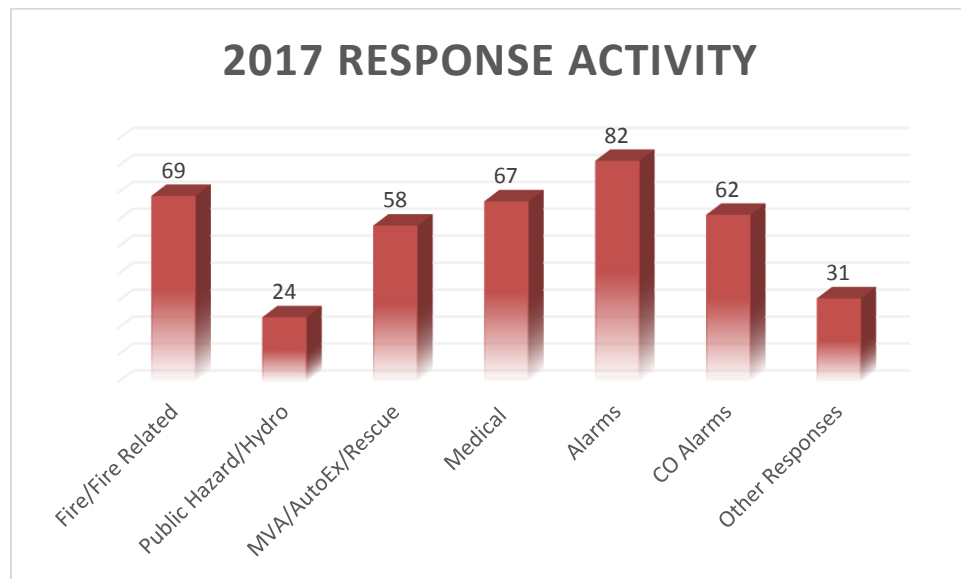
## **SPECIALIZED TRAINING CONDUCTED**

- Train the trainer – CPR/Defib
- PTSD peer support/mental health first aid
- R2MR – Road to Mental Readiness, Primary and Leadership course
- Tower training – tower crew
- Blue Card Incident Command training - for newly promoted Company Officers
- NFPA 1041 Instructor 1 Course
- Marine Operations & regional joint forces marine training exercise

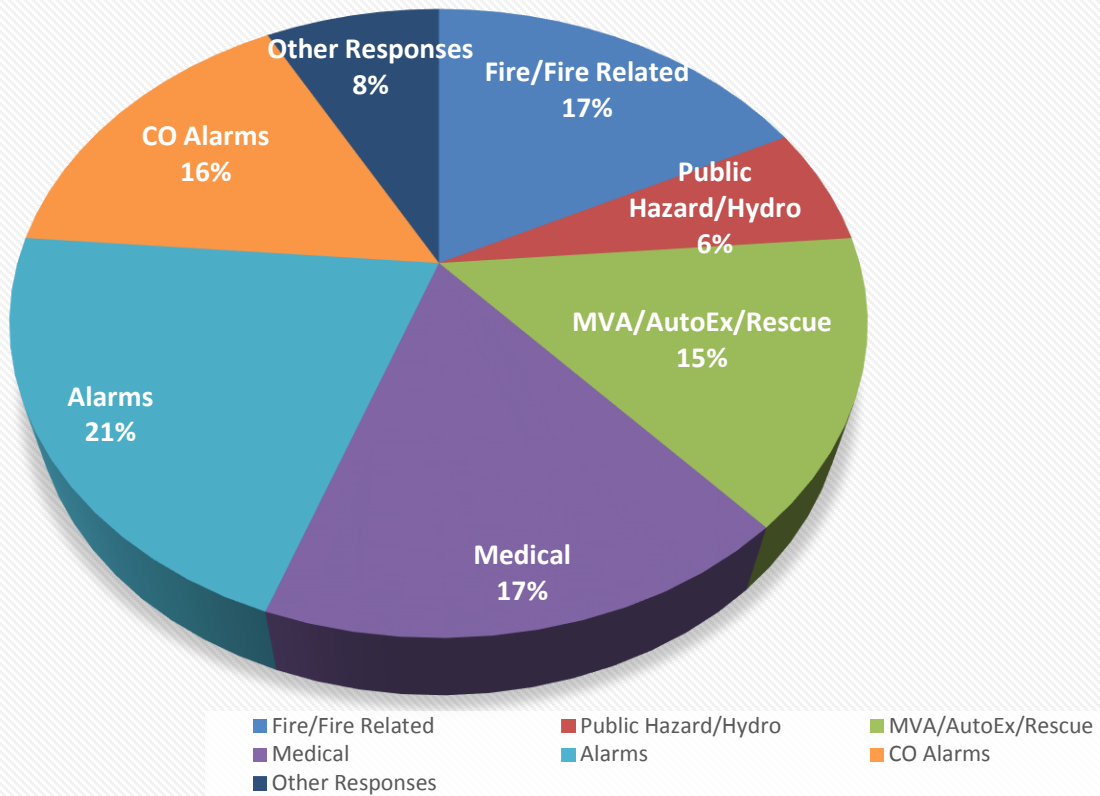
## RESPONSE ACTIVITY

LaSalle Fire Service responded to 393 calls for service in 2017, which resulted in approximately \$500,000 in fire loss. The fire loss consists primarily of fires in single-family homes, as well as, several vehicles, and a suspected arson fire at an assembly occupancy. Although provincial statistics are not yet available for the period covered by this report, the five-year average for 2012-2016 indicates that LaSalle's annual structure fire loss, at \$23 per \$100,000 of assessment is consistent with the provincial average of \$22 per \$100,000. In terms of the number or frequency of fire occurrences, LaSalle has experienced an average of 6 structure fires per 10,000 structures over the same period, well below the provincial average of 13 structure fires per 10,000.

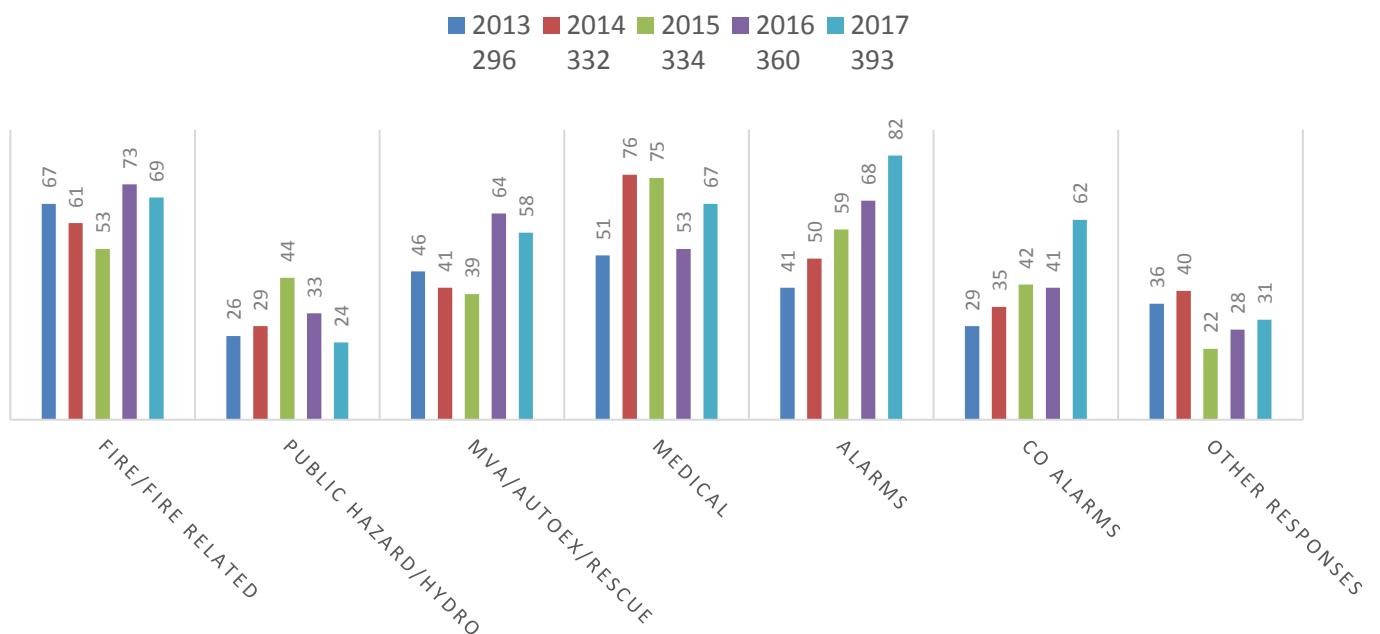
In addition to fire suppression and related responses, LaSalle Fire Service also provides emergency response services that include auto extrication, tiered medical assistance response, ice and water rescue, hazardous materials response, and limited technical rescue capabilities such as confined space, and elevator rescues. A breakdown of response activity by general response category is provided below.



## Response Activity by % - 2017



## RESPONSE ACTIVITY - % OF TOTAL CALL VOLUME 5 YEAR COMPARISON





## **OTHER INITIATIVES**

In addition to emergency response activity, and on-going or routine training, public education and fire prevention activities, LaSalle Fire Service maintains a focus on continuous improvement and planning opportunities to ensure our delivery of services continues to meet the needs and expectations of our community. We continue to work toward implementation of outstanding Fire Master Plan recommendations, and remain current with industry advances and changing standards and legislation as applicable.

In the area of health and safety, part of the implementation of our mental health awareness and PTSD prevention program was achieved with the delivery of the nationally recognized Road to Mental Readiness “R2MR” training program for all personnel. The course was designed specifically for fire service personnel and is provided by the Mental Health Commission of Canada. It is delivered by qualified trainers with a primary course for front line staff, and a separate course for supervisors. A project team continues to work with IT staff to implement progressive stages of electronic technology and tablet-based applications to modernize and improve efficiency field applications for data collection and storage for various routine reports, pre-incident planning, mapping, fire safety inspections and emergency scene management, consistent with current best practices, and available internal and external municipal technology and practices.

In the area of municipal emergency management, an inter-departmental municipal team worked together with the vendor to develop and launch a robust mass notification system for LaSalle residents that will provide an avenue for municipal administration to distribute real-time information and updates on significant emergency events. A public awareness campaign was undertaken and residents continue to be encouraged to register on the system to receive notifications.

At a regional level, LaSalle Fire Service has championed the need for live fire training facilities for some time. A long pursued opportunity became available in 2017 to address this critical need. A pre-owned mobile live fire training unit became available that was completely refurbished by the manufacturer, at a significantly discounted cost. With Council’s support LaSalle Fire Service was able to participate in a joint purchase of this valuable training unit with several other municipal partners and the pre-service fire program at St. Clair College. Use of this facility will provide a convenient and safe environment to conduct live-fire training exercises on a regular basis throughout the year for both entry level recruit firefighters

as well as experienced staff. Multiple configurations and scenarios are available with this unit. The joint purchase of this unit will avoid significant annual costs for rental and travel for a one-day use of a suitable facility out of our region. Importantly, as we, like most municipalities, experience fewer major structure fires, and greater turnover of paid-on-call personnel, it will also provide our firefighters much more frequent exposure to realistic, live-fire training conditions.

Administratively, implementation of the Fire Master Plan recommendations also continue to be a priority. A new comprehensive by-law regulating the safe storage, sale and display of firework was implemented, and two additional paid-on-call firefighters were added, as approved in the 2017 budget. Initiatives to modernize our current emergency response model continue to be an on-going priority.

LaSalle Fire Service remains committed to responsible forward planning and continuous improvement in order to maintain an appropriate level of service, and to meet the changing needs of the community. I welcome the opportunity to further discuss our activities and services, and invite anyone to contact me with any questions, suggestions or concerns.

Respectfully submitted,

Dave Sutton,  
Fire Chief / CEMC