SAN MARINO FIRE DEPARTMENT

ANNUAL REPORT 2024

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CITY OF SAN MARINO

The City of San Marino is governed by a City Council consisting of five members elected by the residents of San Marino. The Fire Department would like to thank the City Council as well as the Public Safety Commission for their guidance and support. Most importantly, we would like to thank the residents of San Marino. It is through the support of our community that we are able to continue to provide excellent services and a quality of life that makes San Marino a unique residential community.

Gretchen Shepherd Romey
Mayor

Tony Chou
Vice Mayor

Hunter Chang
Council Member

John Chou
Council Member

Calvin Lo
Council Member

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMISSION

Chair Jeff Boozell, Vice Chair Eliot Hodges, Commissioner Brian Davis, Commissioner Elizabeth Feffer, and Commissioner Charles Martinson

MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF

Dear Community Members, Colleagues, and Partners,

As Fire Chief, it is my honor to present the 2024 Annual Report for our department. This past year has been one of resilience, and unwavering dedication. I am incredibly proud of the brave firefighters who serve in our ranks and of the progress we've made together in advancing safety, service, and community trust.

In 2024, our department responded to 1,924 calls for service — a testament to both our readiness and the needs of the community we protect. From structure fires to medical emergencies, hazardous material responses to community outreach, our personnel consistently demonstrated professionalism, courage, and compassion. Our firefighters ensure that every resident is treated "the San Marino Way."

We continued to prioritize training, equipment modernization, and coordination with our local and region partners to better collaborate and prepare ourselves for the challenges our community faces. We launched new initiatives aimed at preparing for wildfire risk, improved our life saving emergency medical care through rigorous training, and deepened community engagement through educational programs and events.

I want to thank the elected officials, city staff, partnering agencies, and, most importantly, the residents of our community for their continued support. Your trust empowers us to do this critical work, and we remain deeply committed to earning that trust every day.

As we look toward 2025, our focus remains clear: protect life and property and be of service to the residents of San Marino.
With gratitude and respect,

Fire Chief Rueda

ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT

The City of San Marino was incorporated in 1913 and is home to more than 12,000 residents. Since 1923, the San Marino Fire Department has proudly served the community, delivering highly skilled emergency response services to residents and visitors alike. The San Marino Fire Department is staffed daily in accordance with the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Standards for Fire Suppression, and hte Los Angeles County Emergency Medical Services Agency for emergency medical responses.

The department provides a comprehensive range of services, including fire suppression, emergency medical services, rescue operations, fire investigation, fire prevention, public education, and emergency management. It operates on a 48/96 schedule with three rotating shifts. Each shift is staffed by one Division Chief, one Captain, one Engineer, and four Firefighter/Paramedics.

The San Marino Fire Department cooperates with the City of South Pasadena through a shared command agreement to provide Division Chief responsibilities for both jurisdictions. Overall operations and administration are managed by the Fire Chief. The department also employees one non-sworn Management Analyst to support administrative duties.

INTEGRITY

QUALITY

SAFETY

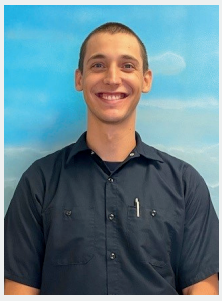
21 Personnel

5,736 Training Hours

1,924 Incidents

1,116 Inspections

2024 Probationary Firefighters



James Jarboe

Max Kovshilovskiy

Andres Serrano

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

SELF CONTAINED BREATHING APPARATUS

Completed purchase, implementation and training for all personnel on the operation of the new Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) and SCBA Air Compressor.

PROMOTIONAL EXAM

Completed a Fire Engineer's promotional examination and established a promotional list of five eligible employees.

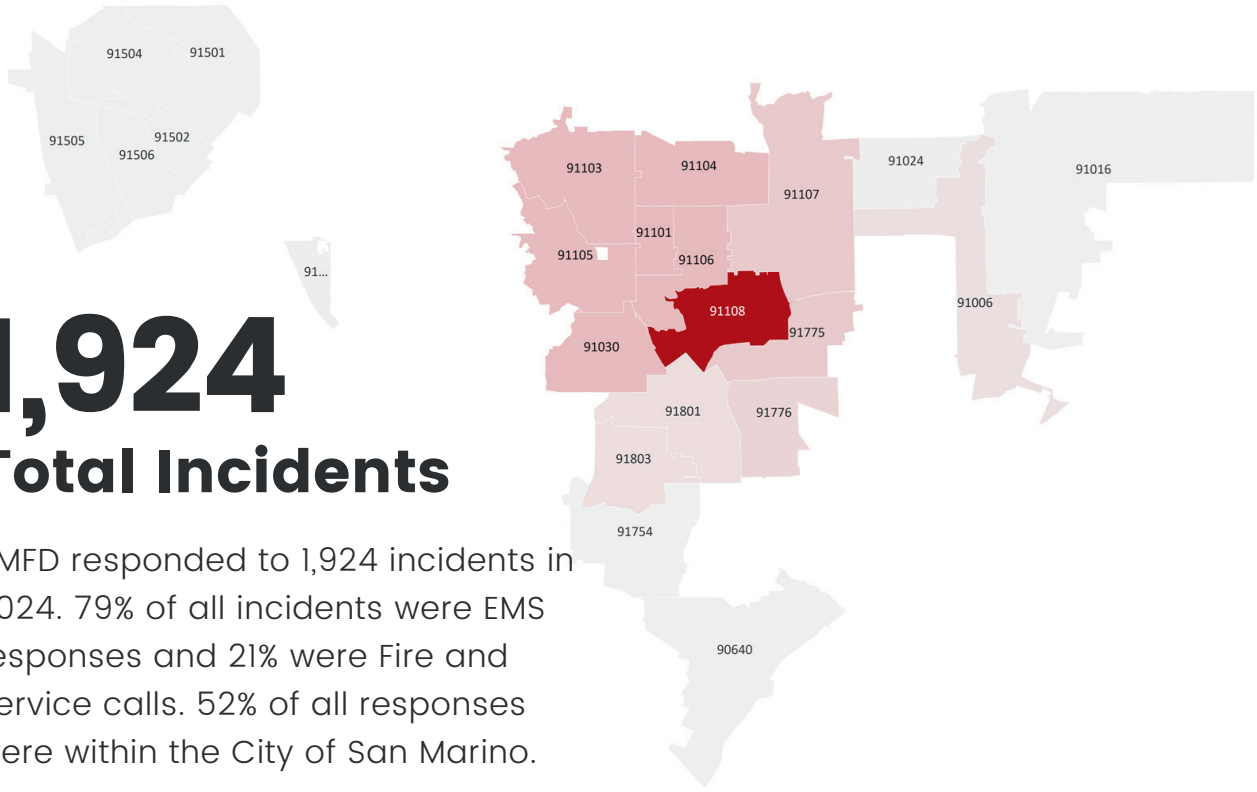
FAMILY ASSISTANCE CENTER

Submitted the Family Assistance Center annex to the Emergency Operations Plan to the Disaster Council and City Council for approval and adoption. Conducted training with the LA County Office of Emergency Management and Community Services Department to ensure personnel are trained and prepared to support the operation of a Family Assistance Center.

LOCAL HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

Completed the draft Local Hazard Mitigation Plan and submitted the plan for review and approval by Cal OES and FEMA

INCIDENT RESPONSE



1,924
Total Incidents

SMFD responded to 1,924 incidents in 2024. 79% of all incidents were EMS responses and 21% were Fire and Service calls. 52% of all responses were within the City of San Marino.

Mutual Aid is the exchange of emergency assistance across jurisdictional borders when an emergency response exceeds an agency's resources. The San Marino Fire Department participates in Mutual-Aid with neighboring agencies through our Verdugo dispatch partners as well as through an agreement with the Los Angeles County Fire Department. The Fire Department also participates in the California Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) Mutual Aid System. The Cal OES Mutual Aid System provides for systematic mobilization, organization, and operation of available fire and rescue resources on a local, area, regional, and statewide basis. In 2024, San Marino responded to 3 Cal OES incidents: The Boone Fire, the Line Fire, and the Mountain Fire.

CalOES Mutual Aid Response

Boone Fire	Line Fire	Mountain Fire
Fresno County	San Bernardino County	Ventura County
Personnel: 1	Personnel: 1	Personnel: 1
101.5 Hours	240 Hours	168 Hours
Total Reimbursement: $8,545	Total Reimbursement: $17,806	Total Reimbursement: $13,750

FIRE SUPPRESSION

The San Marino Fire Department responded to 346 fire incidents in 2024. 62% of incidents were in the City of San Marino. San Marino received aid from outside agencies on 10% of fire incidents. Engine 91 responded to 75 fires that were extinguished with one, two, or three fire engines. Six incidents occurring in San Marino required a full mutual aid response from neighboring agencies. Following every fire incident, firefighters canvas the surrounding neighborhoods to provide homeowners with smoke alarms and fire safe home inspections.

In October 2024, the National Fire Protection Association released its annual Fire Loss in the United States report, summarizing data for calendar year 2023. According to the report, local fire departments across the country responded to an estimated 1.39 million fires, which resulted in approximately 3,670 civilian fire deaths and 13,350 reported civilian fire injuries. These incidents caused an estimated $23 billion in property damage. On average, a fire department responded to a fire somewhere in the U.S. every 23 seconds. Home structure fires were reported every 95 seconds, with a home fire death occurring every three hours, and a home fire injury every 52 minutes. Although less than 25% of all reported fires occurred in home properties, they were responsible for a disproportionate share of casualties, contributing to 79% of all fire-related deaths and 77% of injuries. These findings highlight the ongoing risk posed by residential fires and the critical need for prevention, preparedness, and rapid emergency response.

The San Marino Fire Department is committed to making community safety its highest priority. Fire Department personnel engage in on-going fire suppression training, which includes live fire exercises, multi-company drills with neighboring agencies, and annual wildfire preparedness training to ensure they remain ready to respond to any emergency.

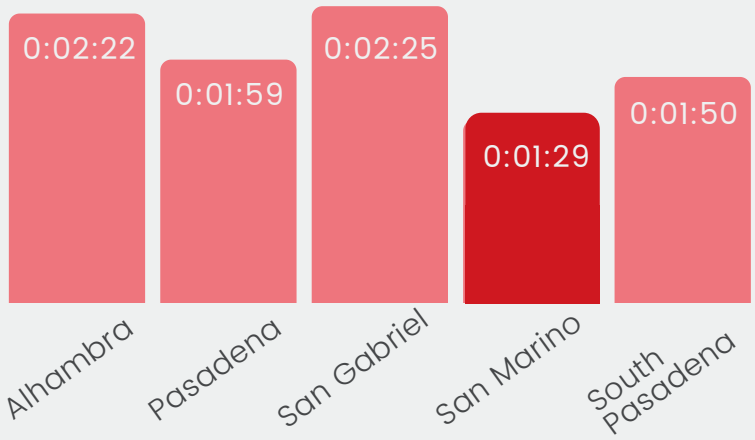
Fire Incidents by Type

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) establishes organizational standards for fire turnout and response time reporting. For 90% of incidents, the NFPA recommends a turnout time goal of 80 seconds (1 minute, 20 seconds) and a response time goal of 320 seconds (5 minutes, 20 seconds). While these standards are aspirational benchmarks rather than mandated requirements, they serve as valuable performance targets for fire service organizations. By measuring turnout and response time using percentile-based analysis, the Fire Department can more accurately evaluate the effectiveness and reliability of its emergency response operations.

01:29
Turnout Time

06:04
Response Time

Fire Turnout Times by City



JANUARY 7 WINDSTORM

Although this disaster occurred in 2025, the significance of this disaster bears mentions in this Annual Report. As a result of warnings from the National Weather Service (NWS) of the potential for significant "Life Threatening" winds impacting the San Gabriel Valley. The City of San Marino Fire Department activated the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) the morning of January 7, 2025 to coordinate the City's preparations, augmented staffing plans, and providing warnings to residents.

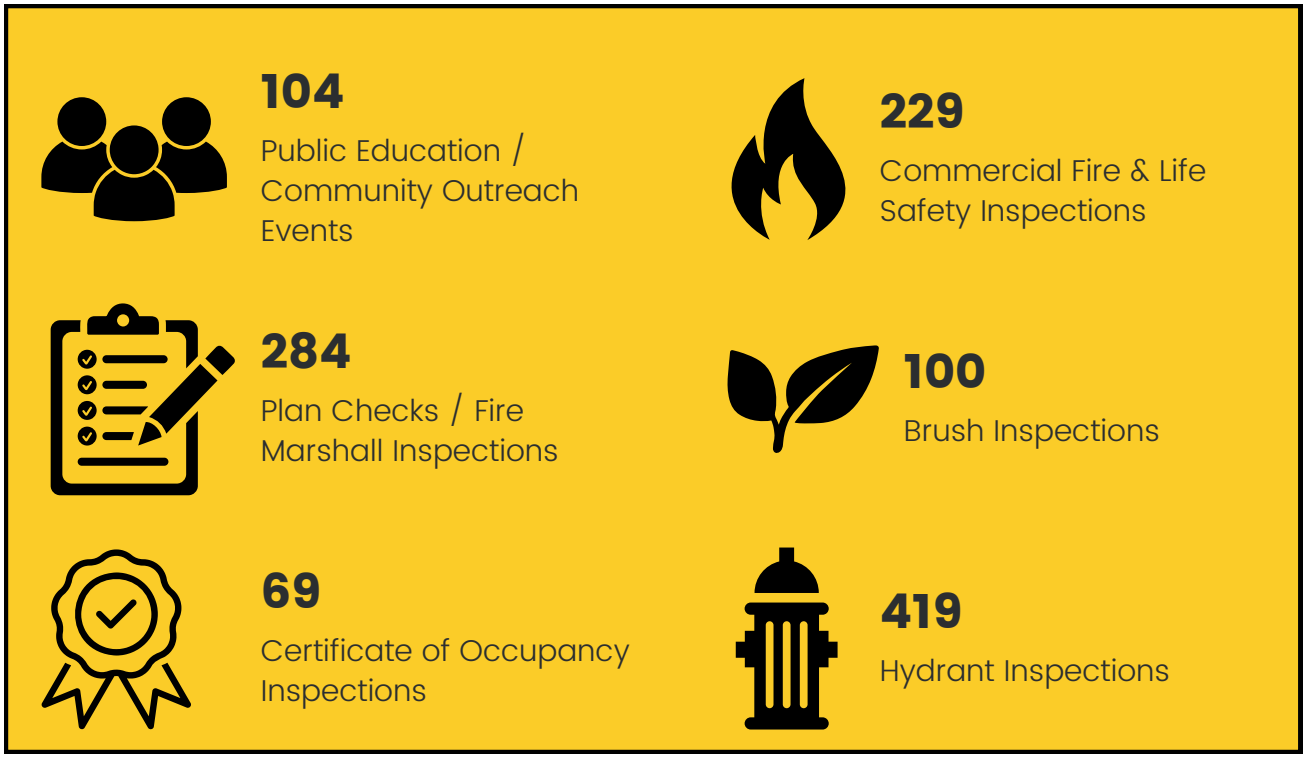
At 6:15 PM Engine 791 was dispatched to a reported vegetation fire in the City of Pasadena. Engine 791 was immediately assigned numerous homes to protect from impingement from the flaming front. San Marino Firefighters were assigned to rescue residents and protect homes in the Altadena area for the next 30 hours.

In the City of San Marino, the Fire Department with the assistance from South Pasadena and San Gabriel Fire Departments responded to 7 fires, numerous hazard calls related to downed high voltage wires and large trees down on homes and blocking roads, traffic accidents, and medical emergencies. The Fire Department efficiently assessed and responded to life safety risks and worked with the Police and Public Works Departments to prioritize and mitigate these hazardous events. Fire Department resources responded to 160 calls for service, along with Police and Public Works Department personnel, from 6:00 PM on January 7 to 6 AM January 8 related to windstorm activity and other calls for service.

FIRE PREVENTION

The primary goal of fire prevention is to reduce the risk of injury, loss of life, and property damage by providing education and inspection services to San Marino residents, business owners, and community groups. The Fire Department conducts annual inspections of all commercial properties, including business, schools, churches, and the Huntington Library, to ensure compliance with local, State, and national fire codes. In 2018, the department began conducting annual brush inspections of properties in the City's Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone. These inspections ensure clearance of hazardous vegetation in an area that is at higher risk for ignition and spread of wildfire. This preventative approach, combined with the continued efforts of residents residing in the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone, plays a critical role in helping firefighters defend homes in the event of a wildfire.

The department places a strong emphasis on fire prevention education. Firefighters regularly engage with schools, youth organizations, and residents to provide training on fire safety practices and emergency preparedness. These outreach efforts help ensure that everyone in the San Marino community is informed, equipped, and prepared to reduce fire risk and respond effectively in the event of an emergency.



EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

San Marino Firefighter/Paramedics responded to **1,518 EMS incidents** and provided treatment to **1,015 patients**. Among patients that Paramedic personnel treated, 778 were transported to local area hospitals by RA91. 236 patients that received treatment were not transported, with 101 refusing transport against medical advice

In 2024, the Fire Department partnered with the Community Services Department, to host a Senior Living Series seminar focused on fall prevention. The event aimed to educate older adults, caregivers, and community members on practical strategies to reduce fall risks in the home and daily life. Topics included home safety modifications and how to recognize common fall hazards. The most common EMS incident type in 2024 were falls. According to a 2016 study by the National Center of Biotechnology Information, falls remain the leading cause of injury-related death and the most frequent reason for emergency department visits. Among patients aged 65 and older, falls accounted for 20% of all EMS calls, underscoring the significant impact of fall-related injuries on older adults and the ongoing need for prevention efforts and rapid emergency response.

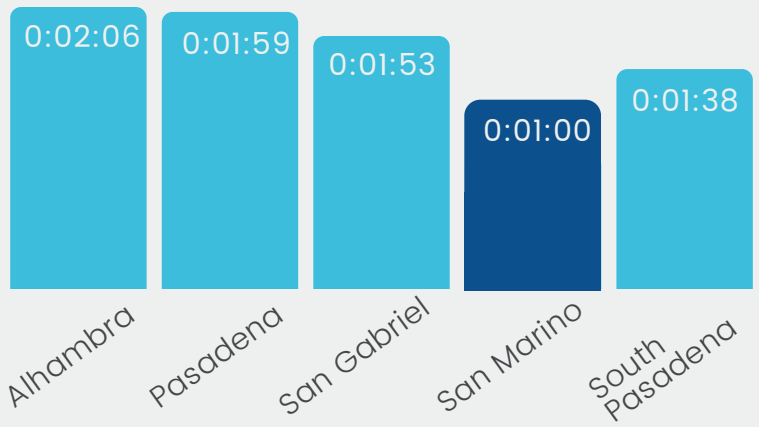
Top 5 EMS Incidents by Type

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) establishes organizational standards for emergency medical services turnout and response time reporting. For 90% of incidents, the NFPA recommends a turnout time goal of 60 seconds (1 minute) and a response time goal of 300 seconds (5 minutes). While these standards are aspirational benchmarks rather than mandated requirements, they serve as valuable performance targets for fire service organizations. By measuring turnout and response time using percentile-based analysis, the Fire Department can more accurately evaluate the effectiveness and reliability of its emergency response operations.

01:00
Turnout Time

05:51
Response Time

EMS Turnout Times by City



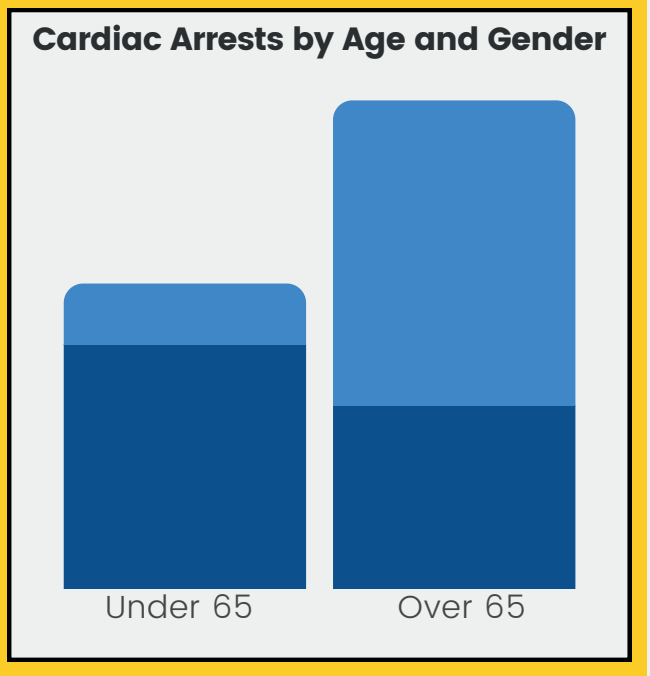
CARDIAC ARRESTS

Cardiac arrest occurs when the heart suddenly and unexpectedly stops beating, resulting in the immediate cessation of blood flow to the brain, lungs, and other vital organs. This medical emergency can happen without warning and often leads to unconsciousness and death within minutes if not treated promptly.

According to the American Heart Association, approximately 90% of individuals who suffer a cardiac arrest outside of a hospital setting do not survive. Immediate intervention—such as cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and the use of an automated external defibrillator (AED)—can dramatically increase the chances of survival. Rapid response from bystanders is often the critical difference between life and death, highlighting the importance of widespread CPR training and public access to AEDs.

All San Marino Firefighter/Paramedics are certified to administer Advanced Life Support (ALS) care. This includes critical interventions such as cardiac life support, advanced airway management, and the administration of intravenous medications. ALS-level care is essential in responding to life-threatening emergencies such as cardiac arrest, stroke, heart attacks (myocardial infarctions) and other serious conditions that require immediate and skilled medical attention.

RA91 and Engine 91 are both outfitted with the AutoPulse Resuscitation System, a mechanical chest compression device that delivers consistent, high-quality, and uninterrupted CPR to patients in cardiac arrest. Unlike manual compressions, the AutoPulse maintains optimal depth and rhythm, improving the effectiveness of resuscitation efforts. Clinical studies have shown that the use of the AutoPulse can increase the survival-to-hospital-discharge rate for cardiac arrest patients to 10.2%. Proper training and equipment gives San Marino residents the best chance of survival during a cardiac arrest.

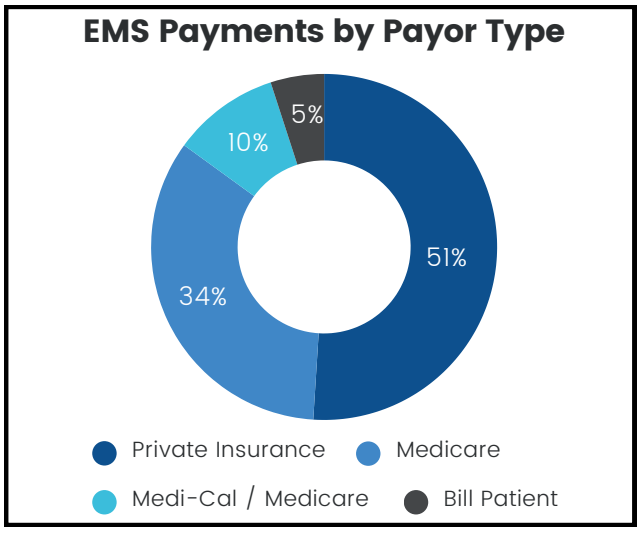


REVENUE

Fire Department operations are partially funded by the City of San Marino's Public Safety Parcel Tax, which generates approximately $3.5 million annually to support both Police and Fire services. This funding source accounts for about 21% of operating costs for the Fire Department; the remaining portion of Fire funding comes from other functional revenue sources and transfers from the City's General Fund. In 2024, San Marino residents voted to renew the Parcel Tax for an additional four years, ensuring continued support for essential public safety services.

The Fire Department also receives supplemental revenue for services provided outside the scope of routine Department operations. These include Strike Team deployments, Fire Safety Officer assignments, fire permit fees, and Emergency Medical Services. EMS service fees are based on rates established by the Los Angeles County Emergency Medical Services Agency.

The San Marino Fire Department contracts ambulance billing services to Wittman Enterprises, LLC. In 2024, Wittman processed billing for 810 patients who received care from San Marino paramedics, resulting in net charges totaling $869,640. As a benefit of the Public Safety Parcel Tax, San Marino residents are not responsible for any remaining EMS charges after their insurance has been billed.



Los Angeles County Response and Reimbursement

In 2017 the San Marino Fire Department entered into an agreement with the Los Angeles County Fire Department to provide paramedic services within the jurisdiction of Los Angeles County Engine 5. In 2024, the Fire Department initiated negotiations with the County to amend the agreement and ensure cost recovery for services provided by the San Marino paramedics.

In 2024, the department responded to 155 incidents, generating $85,585. In comparison, in 2023 the department responded to 138 incidents generating $35,959 in revenue.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

The City of San Marino's Local Hazard Mitigation Plan identifies seven major hazards that pose potential risk to our geographic region, based on historical data and probability of future events. The hazards include earthquakes, windstorms, wildfire, extreme heat, human-caused hazards, flood, and landslides. The Plan serves as a strategic guide for reducing risk and aiding in disaster recovery.

The San Marino Fire Department is responsible for maintaining the City's Emergency Operations Center, which is activated in emergencies to coordinate response efforts. The City's Emergency Operations Plan outlines procedures and responsibilities for City staff, ensuring a structured and effective response to disasters and other critical incidents.

To maintain preparedness, all executive and management staff participate in annual Emergency Operations training, which includes tabletop exercises designed to simulate realistic disaster scenarios affecting the City.

The San Marino Fire Department has developed a variety of emergency preparedness resources for the community. These include survival guides, emergency supply checklists, first aid kid recommendations, and home safety checklists. Residents can access these guides, the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, and the City's Emergency Operations Plan online at www.SanMarinoCA.gov/DisasterPrep.

TRAINING

The San Marino Fire Department is dedicated to delivering the highest standard of service to residents of San Marino. Each day, San Marino firefighters commit a minimum of two hours of training, focusing on the skills and knowledge essential for the safe and effective delivery of emergency services in the community.

San Marino firefighters completed a cumulative total of 5,736 hours of training, including fire suppression, rescue, HAZMAT, vehicle extrication, and EMS continuing education. In addition, all firefighters are required to maintain current paramedic certification with the State of California and County of Los Angeles.

In 2024, a significant portion of training time was focused on the development of probationary firefighters. San Marino firefighters undergo a rigorous probationary period that includes evaluations at the 4-, 8-, and 12-month marks, covering a wide range of critical competencies such as life-saving techniques, rescue operations, and firefighting skills, and both written and practical paramedic and fire exams. After successfully completing the twelve-month examination, each probationary firefighter is assigned a special project that supports departmental operations, to be completed by their eighteen month. In total, probationary firefighters completed 1,141 hours of training, reflecting the department's strong commitment to preparedness, professional growth, and service excellence.

COMMUNITY PREPAREDNESS

The Fire Department provides community education and preparedness through a variety of free public safety programs. The department hosts quarterly First Aid and Disaster Preparedness workshops that are open to all San Marino residents. These hands-on workshops cover essential life-saving skills, including first aid, bleeding control, CPR, utility shutoffs procedures, and fire extinguishment. The Fire Department's goal is to instruct participants on how to respond effectively in emergencies at home, work, or in the community.

The Fire Department engages with our schools, community groups, and non-profits year-round through fire safety presentations and station tours. Customized first aid and emergency preparedness training is also available to any San Marino resident, school or organization upon request.

The department maintains a strong presence at community events, including block parties and Neighborhood Watch meetings, where firefighters provide fire prevention tips, home safety guidance, and disaster preparedness resources. These outreach efforts are essential to building a well-informed, emergency-ready community.

In 2024, the Fire Department expanded its community preparedness efforts by partnering with the Huntington Library to conduct an emergency preparedness tabletop exercise. This collaboration helped enhance emergency response coordination and planning for one of the City's most highly visited properties.

OPERATION: FIRE SAFE

Operation: Fire Safe is a voluntary fire prevention inspection program for San Marino residents, designed to educate San Marino residents about common fire hazards and practical steps to reduce the risk of fire in their homes. The program's primary objectives include preventing accidental residential fires, enhancing home safety, helping residents recognize and address fire risks, installing smoke alarms, and increasing firefighter awareness of residential conditions within their response area.

As part of each Operation: Fire Safe inspection, firefighters assess homes for common fire hazards, such as portable heaters, cooking appliances, and the improper storage or use of ignitable materials like lighters or matches. In addition, they test existing smoke alarms and will replace non-functioning units on the spot if necessary, ensuring that every home has working early-warning systems.

San Marino Fire Department
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San Marino, CA 91108
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Fire@SanMarinoCA.gov

Courtesy in Service