



AUSTIN FIRE

Public Safety Commission Meeting
FY24 Q1

Chief of Staff Rob Vires



Winter Weather in January

Saturday, January 13 through Wednesday, January 17, 2024

- Total Dispatched Medical Calls: **957**
- Total Dispatched Fire Calls: **178**
- Total Found Fires: **99**
- Dispatched Box Structure Fires: **21**
- Found Structure Fires: **9**
 - **5** single family or duplex and **4** multi-family dwellings
 - **77.8%** confined to the Room of Origin.
- Dispatched Fire Alarms (including Midrise and High Rise): **770**
- Dispatched Carbon Monoxide Alarms: **41**
- Dispatched Broken Water Pipes: **141**
- Fire Protection Systems impacted: **225**
 - About 155 cleared as of January 29, 2024





Winter Weather Preparations

- Rental generators began arriving in early December. They will stay for several months and be available for severe weather. Building Services will provide a power manifold, which will allow AFD to power some things in the stations via extension cords or relocating.
- All frontline fire apparatus, brush trucks, and Battalion Chief trucks have a set of tire chains and all members have received communication on proper tire chain operation.

Text to 911

- The Current system allows users of 911 system to exchange text messages with AFD dispatchers.
- The current system is scheduled to change with the implementation of new 911 software. No date has been established at this time.
- Representatives of the future system, Text to 911, have indicated that it their system include a multimedia service.
- CAPCOG is the lead in implementation of the new 911 software.





New Fire Station 53 at Goodnight Ranch

Located in Council District 2 and will be a shared facility with ATCEMS Medic 42.

Opening soon!

- New Engine 53 went into service January 28 operating out of Station 24.
- New Station 53 set to open around February 11 with an Engine and Brush Truck.

Improvements and features in the new station:

- 15,000+ sq ft with 4 pull-through bays, 15 dorms, day room, kitchen, and gym.
- LEED Silver Designations
- Individual bedrooms and gender-neutral bathrooms
- Technological advancements include Advanced Alerting for multi-company fatigue reduction, Solar Power, EV Charging Stations, Noise Reduction Insulations and Environmentally Sensitive Landscapes.



RENDERING: VIEW FROM INTERSECTION



CITY OF AUSTIN
GOODNIGHT RANCH FIRE/EMS STATION





New Fire Station 54 at Canyon Creek

Located in Council District 10 and will be a shared facility with ATCEMS.

Expected completion: Winter 2024

- New Station 54 and new Engine 54 will go into service in Winter 2024.

Recent updates:

- Broke ground on January 30, 2024.
- Abatement work and demolition completed mid-January 2024.





Deferred Maintenance at Station 1

Address: 401 E. 5th St. **Expected completion:** May 2024

Station 1 is usually staffed 24/7 with two engine companies and a ladder company. It is one of the busiest stations in the city, responding to 20+ incidents per day.

Recent Updates:

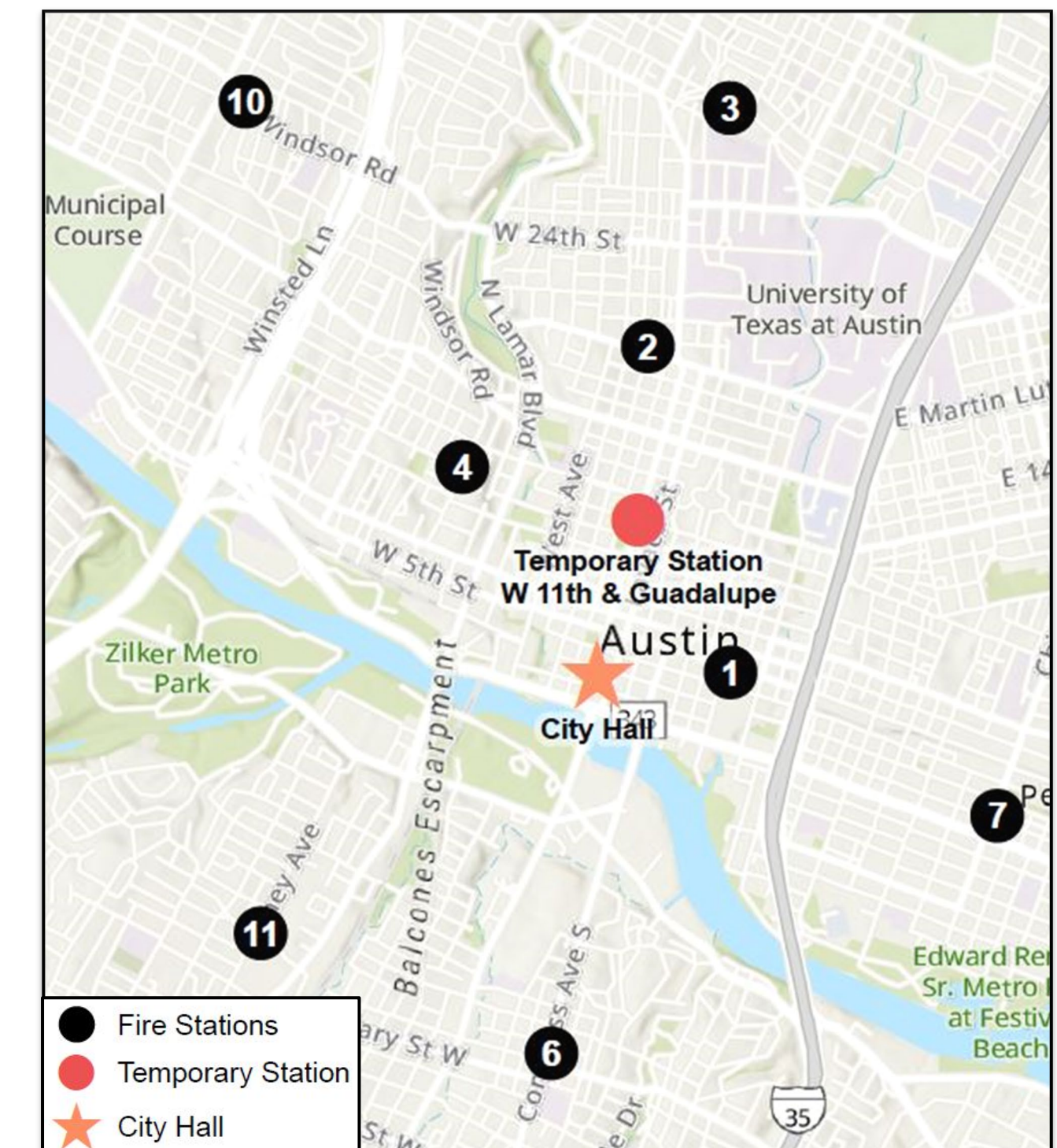
- Electrical complications arose during the Phase 1 work and the Fire Marshal recommended vacating the building until corrections and electrical upgrades could be made. Crews vacated Station 1 on October 13, 2023.

Coverage during renovation:

- Engine 1 and Ladder 1 are at a temporary site at West 11th Street and Guadalupe Street to provide continued response to the downtown area.
- Engine 13 has been relocated to Station 6 at 1705 S. Congress Ave.

Improvements to this station:

- Upgrades to utilities, technology, and living spaces
- Individual bedrooms and gender-neutral bathrooms
- Advanced Alerting for multi-company fatigue reduction, EV Charging Stations, and Noise Reduction Insulations.





Deferred Maintenance at Fire Stations 8, 23, & 25

Expected completion: Fall 2024

Coverage during renovation: Crews remain nearby.

- Engine 8 is on-site; Ladder 8 is at Station 30.
- Engine 23 is in a trailer at 8700 Cameron Road.
- Engine 25 is at Station 44.

Improvements to these stations:

- Complete renovation with upgrades to utilities, technology, and living spaces
- Will seek to achieve LEED Silver Designations
- Individual bedrooms and gender-neutral bathrooms
- Technological advancements include Advanced Alerting for multi-company fatigue reduction, EV Charging Stations, and Noise Reduction Insulations



Station 8



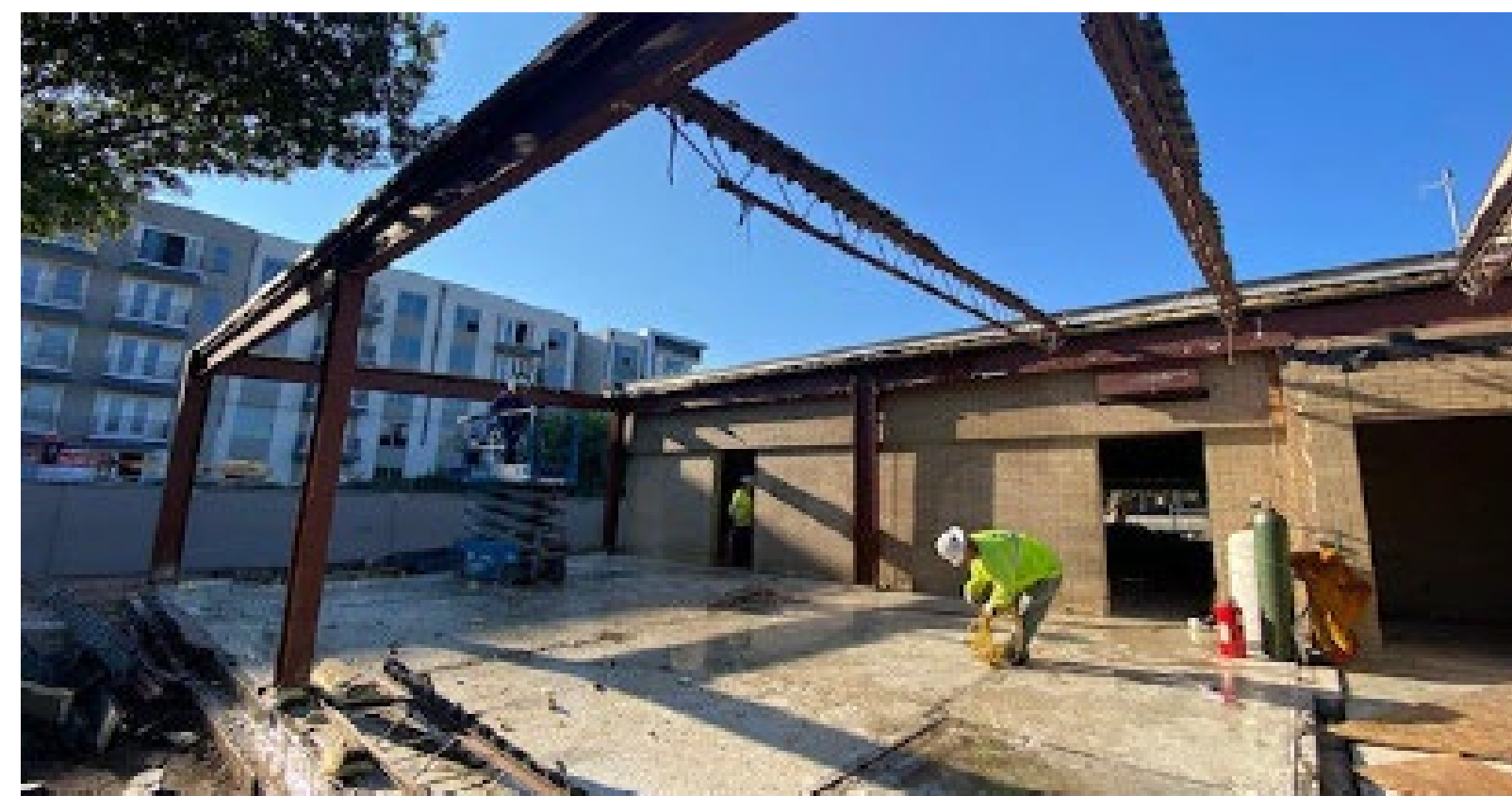
Station 23



Station 25



Trailer housing the crew at Station 8



Construction at Station 8



Automatic Aid

Automatic Aid: Interlocal agreement to dispatch the closest unit to a 911 call regardless of department or jurisdiction.

Auto Aid Successes:

- Auto Aid occurs multiple times per day and greatly contributes to decreased response times for our citizens of Austin and Travis County.
- In early January, AFD and ESD 9 (Westlake) responded to a working residential structure fire on Stratford Drive. The fire cause was ruled accidental, with the wood assembly around the flue igniting to cause the fire. Occupants were able to reoccupy the home afterwards.

Auto Aid Challenges:

- No current Auto Aid agreement with Round Rock, ESD 2 (Pflugerville), or ESD 12 (Manor).
- No Auto Aid agreement with departments south of Austin, such as Buda and Kyle. Lack of funding is preventing the expansion of Tellus to improve Auto Aid.

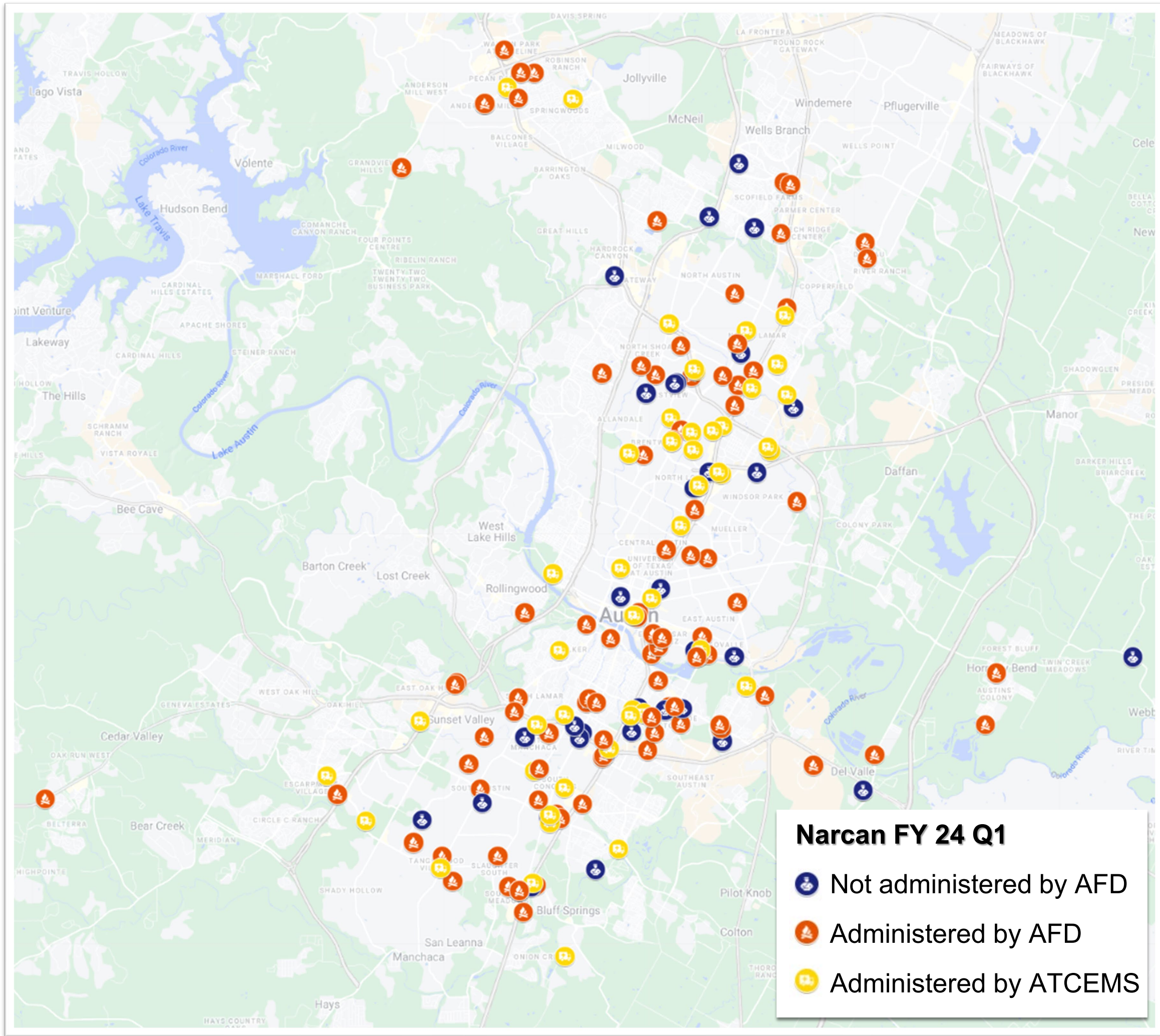
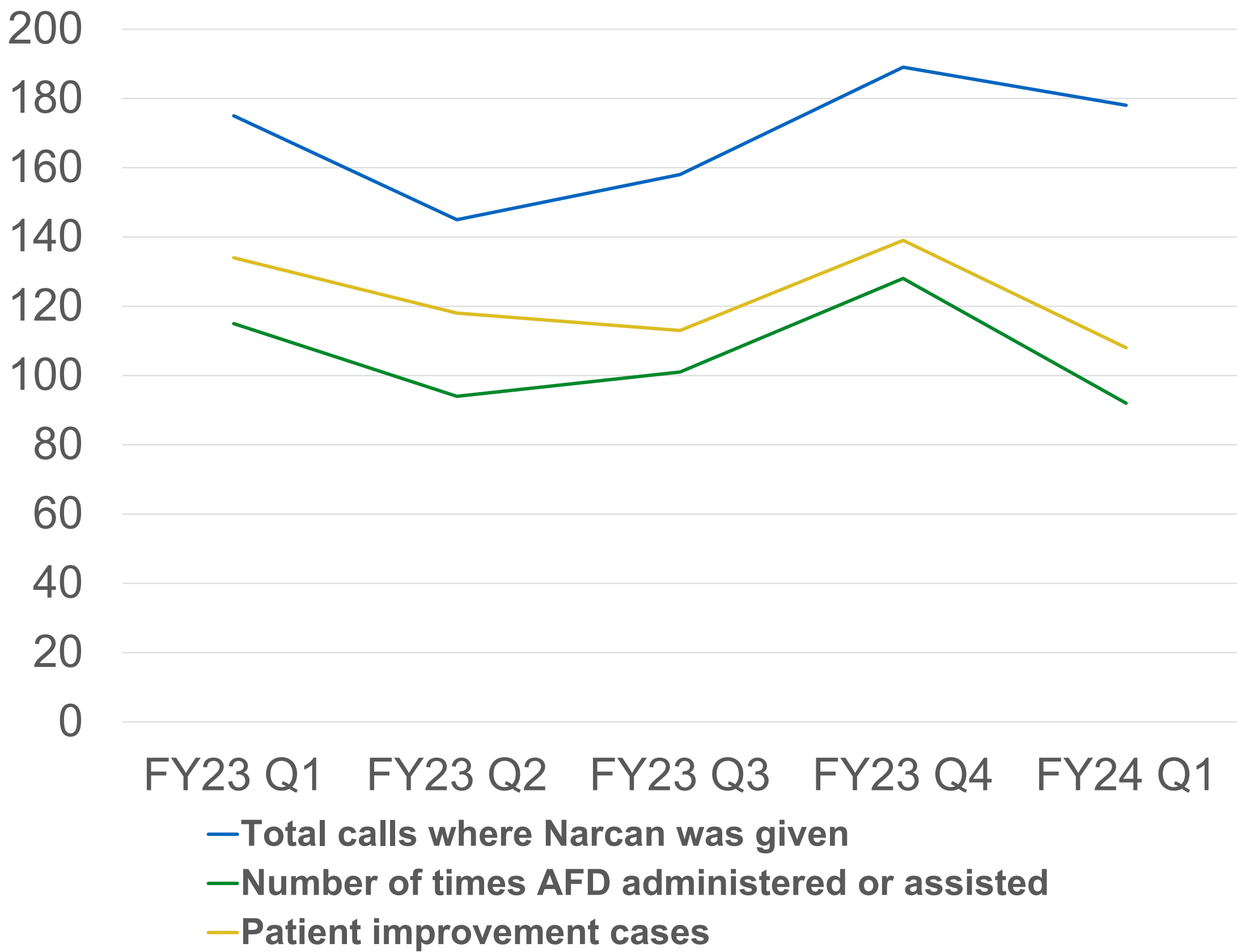


Austin and Westlake Fire Departments on-scene together at a structure fire.



Overdose Response

In December 2021, all AFD personnel received hands on training for Naloxone administration and each unit received a stock of the medication.

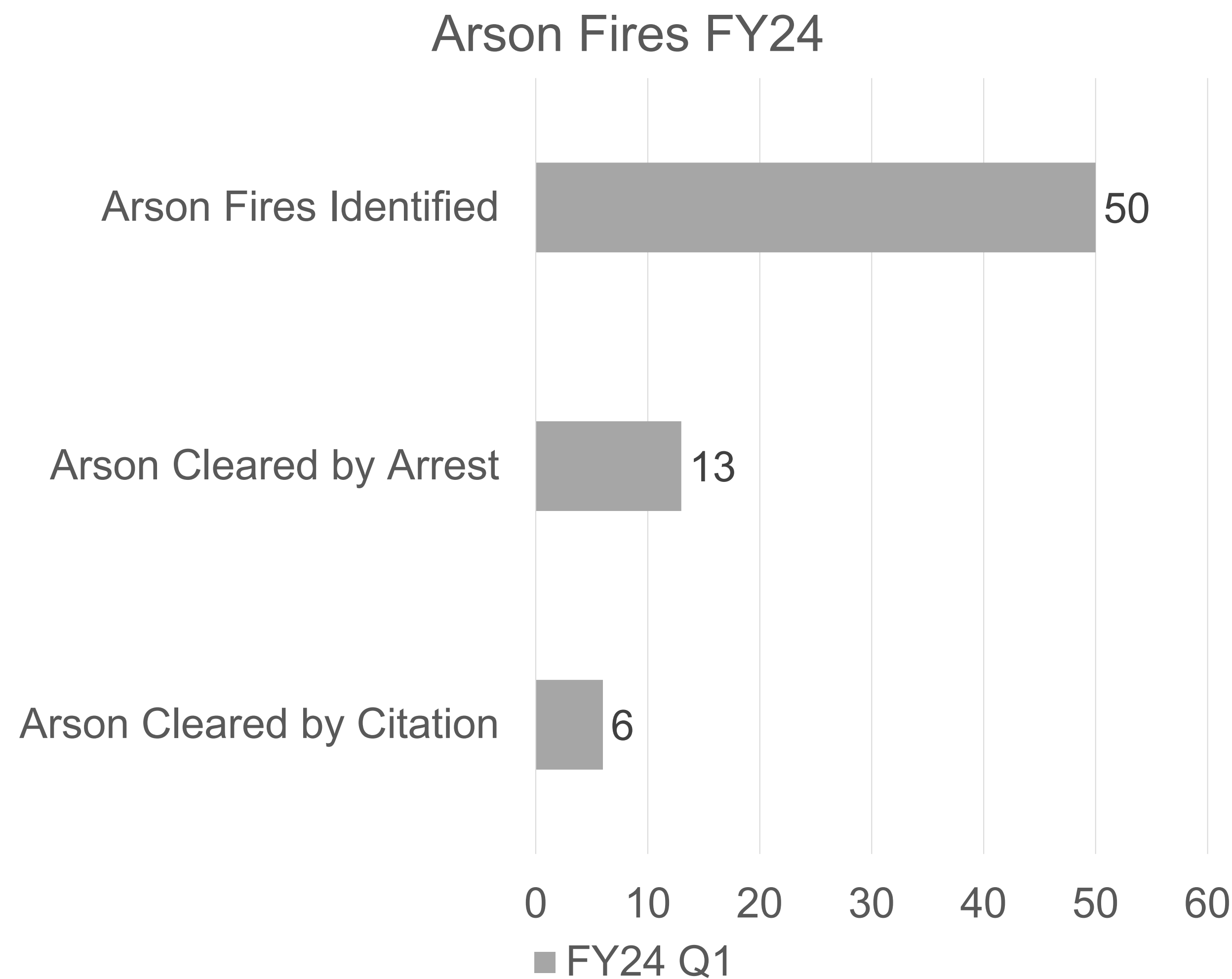




Investigations

- Percent of Arson Fires Cleared:
- **FY 24 Q1: 38%**

National Clearance Rate: 22%





AFD Recognized by Department of Justice for Role in Arson Investigation

From the U.S. Department of Justice Press Release, November 29, 2023:

A Texas man was sentenced on November 29, 2023 to 10 years in prison and three years of supervised release and ordered to pay \$470,000 in restitution for a hate crime and arson in which he set fire to the Congregation Beth Israel Synagogue in Austin, Texas, on Oct. 31, 2021.

The night of the arson, Sechriest drove to the synagogue and was seen on surveillance video carrying a five-gallon container and toilet paper toward the synagogue's sanctuary. Moments later, multiple surveillance videos captured the glow of a fire from the direction of the sanctuary. A security camera captured Sechriest jogging away from the direction of the fire and toward the open driver's side door of a vehicle. A concerned citizen reported the fire, and the Austin Fire Department responded quickly to extinguish it. In Sechriest's journal, in an entry dated Oct. 31, 2021, he wrote "I set a synagogue on fire."

The FBI San Antonio Field Office and Austin Fire Department investigated the case.

At the sentencing hearing, the federal judge said if it wasn't for "the wonderful work of the Austin Fire Department", this incident could have been a lot worse.



Wildfire Division

Progress on Wildfire Mitigation:

- Total homes with reduced wildfire risk: 825
 - These are attributed to WUI inspections conducted by AFD Prevention.
- Current Firewise Communities: 23
- Currently Engaged Communities: 64
- Number of wildfire presentations conducted by Wildfire Division: 4
 - Division has hired a new Fire Adapted Communities coordinator in January 2024, to help increase community engagement.
- Number of prescribed burns permitted in City of Austin: 2
 - Drought impacts resulted in any planned burns for Q1 to be outside of allowed prescription. Favorable weather conditions in Q2 so far have allowed for more prescribed burns.
- Training hours: 1,346

The Austin Travis County Wildfire Coalition has received a grant from the Texas A&M Forest Service to update the City/County Community Wildfire Protection Plan. AFD will be requesting a Council action Item to accept the funding and initiate the update.

The Austin Fire Department is in the process of updating the Wildland Urban Interface Code to the 2023 version, to include additional measure that will reduce structural ignitability measures.





Office of the Fire Marshal: Special Events

Special Events in FY24 Q1 – October to December 2023

- 2 Weekends of Austin City Limits with 75K attendance each day
- 1 Weekend of F1 Race at Circuit of the Americas with 432K attendance (total)
- 3 games for Austin FC Soccer at Q2 Stadium
- 10 Outdoor Concerts at Moody and Gia Amphitheater
- 9 Large Outdoor Event- including things like; Trial of Lights, Congress Book Fest, Domain Fall Fashion, Electrify Expo at Circuit of the Americas, AfroTech.
- 3 UT Home Football games
- Several teams for Night Inspections
- West Campus Inspections along with FireWatch for Frat Parties
- 5 Aerial Firework displays, including Austin NYE's Event downtown

Special Event is currently working with Event Organizers to prepare for busy Spring season- SXSW23, NASCAR, MotoGP etc..





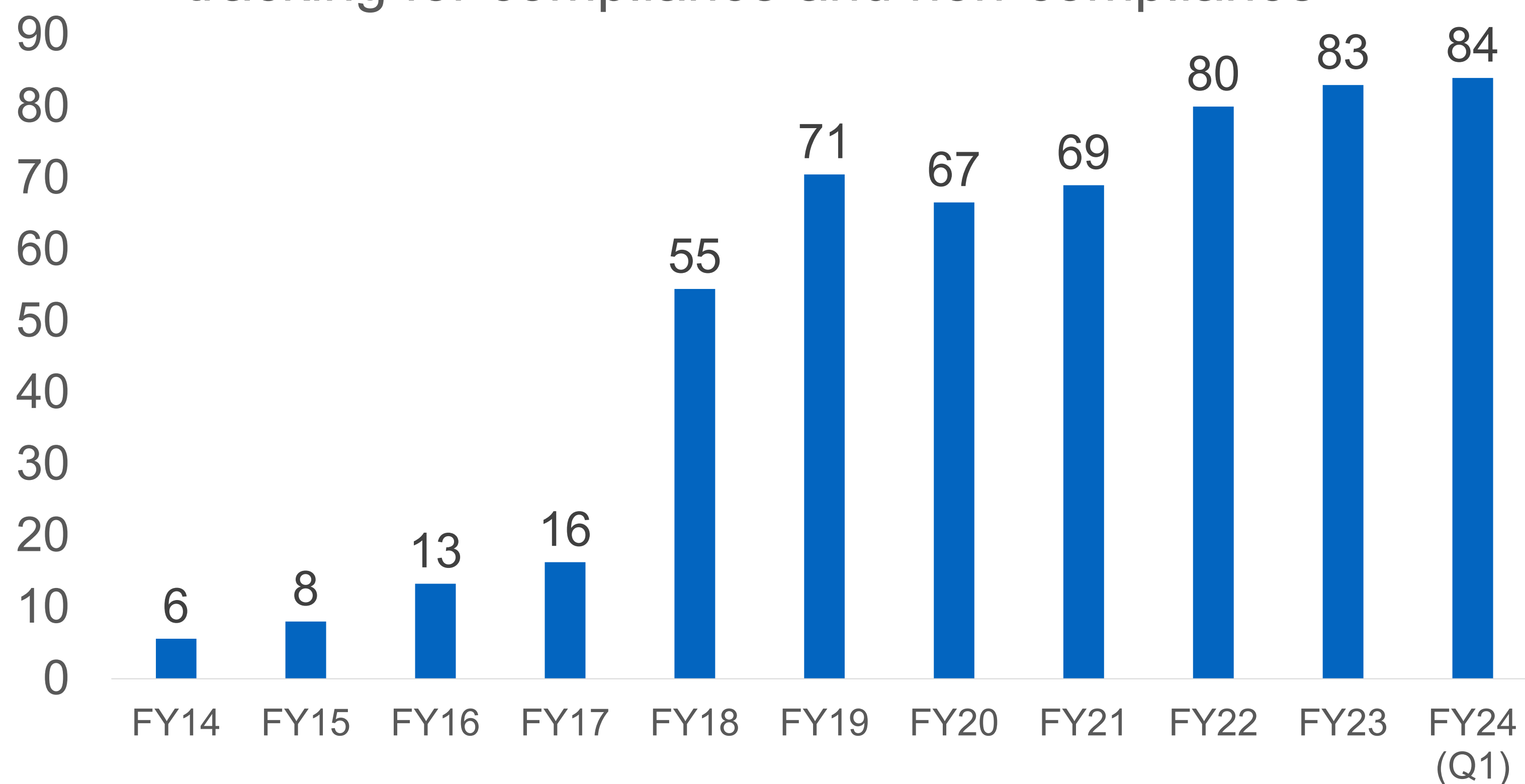
The Compliance Engine

The Compliance Engine (TCE) database tracks compliance and non-compliance for all fire protection systems in commercial properties across the City of Austin.

This allows the Austin Fire Department to track annual fire systems reports, deficiencies and repair reports and receive immediate notification of system impairments.

FY24 Q1: 84%

Percentage of City of Austin fire system tracking for compliance and non-compliance



Prior to The Compliance Engine

After implementation of The Compliance Engine



Community Outreach

The Austin Fire Department has a vision that residents be fire safe in their homes by providing free smoke alarms and fire safety educational training through Outreach Programs:

- **Free Smoke Alarms** – The Austin Fire Department offers/installs free smoke alarms to homeowners that live within AFD's Jurisdiction. Number of Smoke Alarms installed:
- **FY 24 Q1: 84**
- **Fire Safety Training** – The Austin Fire Department provides vital “hands-on” fire extinguisher training and home fire safety awareness demonstrations.
- **FY 24 Q1: 130**
- **Red Angels Program** – The Austin Fire Department works in collaboration with Austin Community College's nursing program, we provide “in-home” basis health wellness checks (blood pressure, glucose, temperature, heart rate) and conduct home hazard safety assessments.
- **FY 24 Q1: No events this quarter**



**To request smoke alarms call the
Free Smoke Alarm Hotline:
(512) 974-0299**



AFD Sworn Separations

2022:

44 retirements
11 resignations
4.58 per month

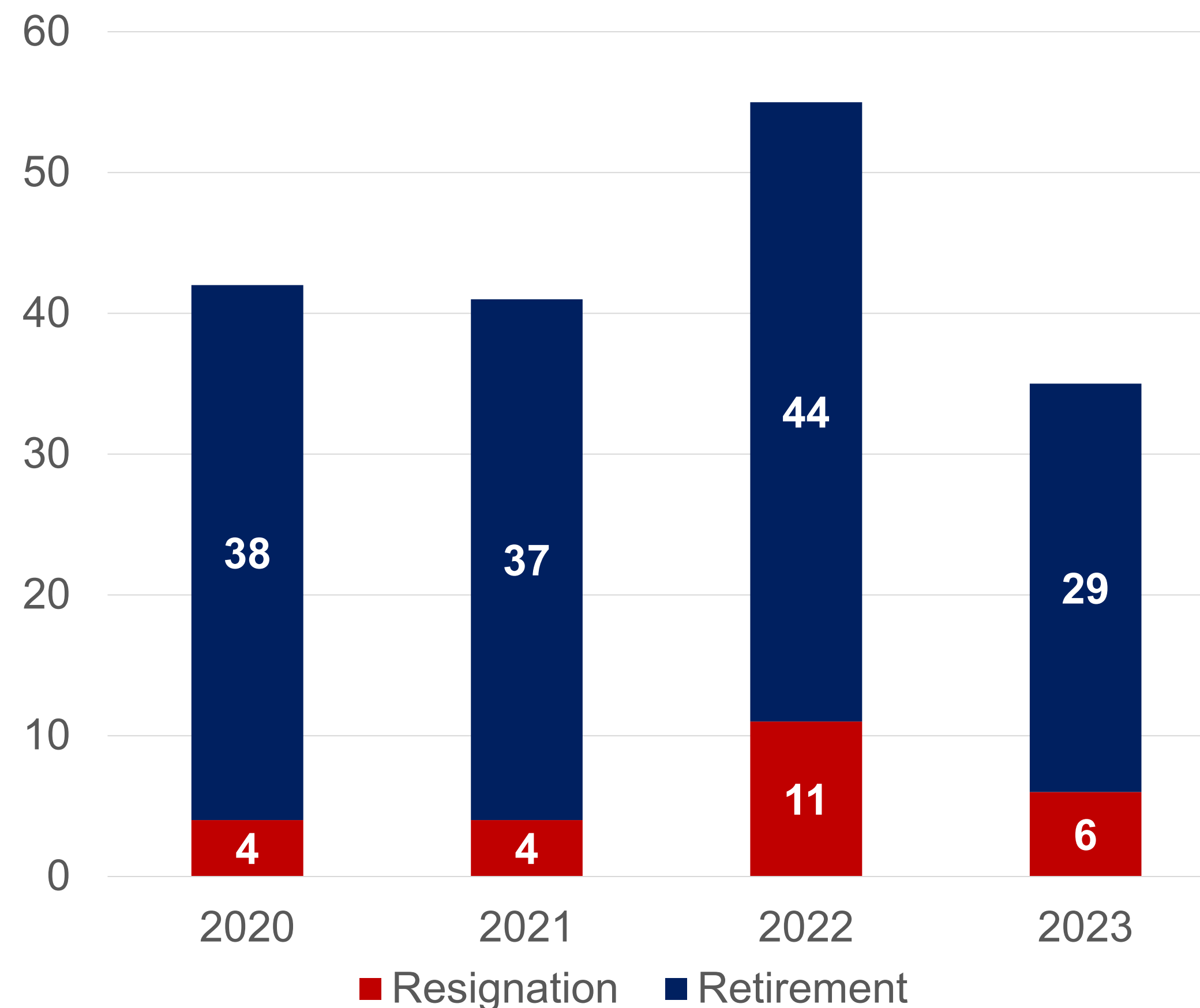
2023:

29 retirements
6 resignations
2.91 per month

- Average Years of Service:
 - Retirements: **25.73** Years
 - Resignations: **4.49** Years
- Current sworn vacancies: **39**



AFD Sworn Separations
through January 1, 2024





AFD Civilian Vacancies

Civilian vacancies as of January 1, 2024: **16**

Divisions with Civilian Vacancies Include:

- Office of the Fire Chief (Program Manager, Public Info & Marketing)
- Engineering (Supervisor, Engineer A, Engineer C, Plan Examiner B)
- Operations Support (Inventory Control Specialist II)
- Safety Support (Environmental Compliance Spec Sr)
- Wellness (Fitness Safety Specialist II, Physician)
- Wildfire (Mitigation Specialists, Mitigation Specialist Sr)

Additional Efforts to Fill these Vacancies:

- Recruitment efforts encompass a multifaceted approach, primarily centered around posting job positions on the city's eCareer ATS (applicant tracking system). This centralized platform serves as a hub for job listings, ensuring seamless dissemination to various external job boards.
- Recruitment strategies extend to professional and collegiate organizations' job boards. This targeted approach allows for specific targeting of candidates with relevant skills and interests. Collaborating with such organizations provides a direct channel to engage with professionals and graduates who align with each position's requirements.
- AFD also actively participates in job fairs to connect with potential candidates face-to-face. Moreover, employee referrals are encouraged and welcomed, contributing to a collaborative recruitment process.





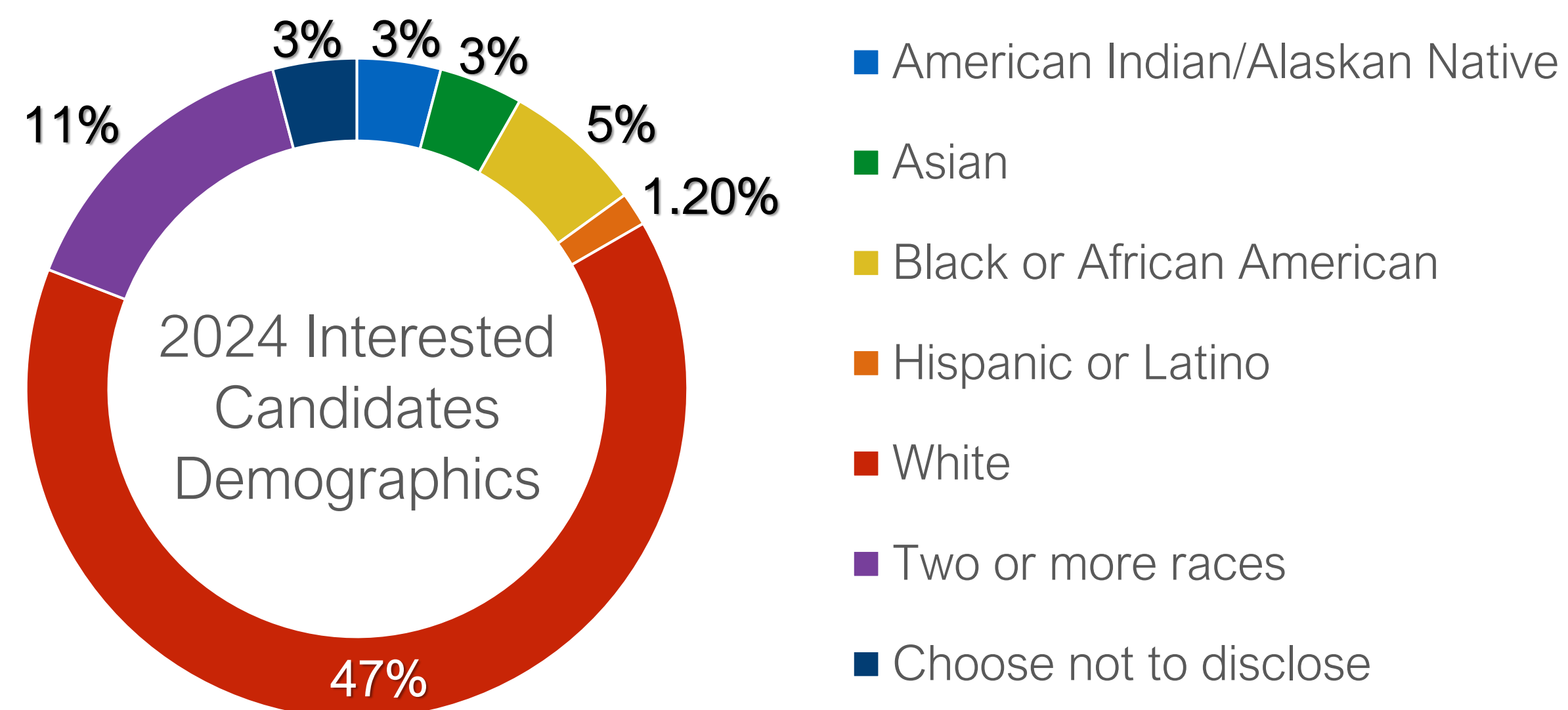
Cadet Hiring Process

2023 Hiring Process Applicant Update:

- AFD received applications from March 15-29, 2023.
- We reverted to Civil Service on July 1, 2023.
- The list from the Civil Service Written Exam given on August 1, 2023 will be good for one year.
- Cadet Class started January 29th with 39 cadets, with a second class of 30-35 cadets planned for April.

2024 Hiring Process Applicant Update:

- As of January 29, there were 1,681 Candidate Interest Cards filled out for the next hiring process





Recruiting

Q1 Updates:

- Our marketing team will begin sending out a series of emails that help explain each step of the Hiring Process. These will go out to anyone who has filled out a Candidate Interest Card from our website: JoinAFD.com.
- We will continue to run Google and Meta ad campaigns leading up to the open application period.
- We hope to draw more interest to our site through Webpage banners made in partnership with “V Digital Services”. These ads will run on the most trusted websites with the most activity from our target demographics.
- Recruiters continued to attend job/career fairs at colleges and other organizations throughout Central and South Texas.





Pass the Torch

Participants (ages 18-35) engage in real fire service activities under the guidance of experienced firefighters to get a glimpse into the cadet academy and a first-hand feel for a career in the fire service.

Q1 Update:

Fall 2023 condensed class was a success

- 23 participants graduated on December 2. All are planning to apply with AFD in spring.
- Difficult to run concurrent with an AFD hiring process; Planning an after-action meeting to discuss sticking with a full spring class and not run a fall class for 2024 while in a hiring process year.

4 previous Pass the Torch graduations have accepted their offers for AFD Cadet class 137 scheduled to begin January 29th.

Fire Explorers Post 370

The Explorers (ages 14-20) meet once a month and learn about careers in the fire service directly from members in the Austin Fire Department.

Q1 Update:

- Have interest from parents and members from AFD
- Planning meeting was in January.
- Goal is the have Explorers ready to compete in Rowlett in April at the DFW Fire Games.





AFD strives to recruit and retain a diverse workforce.

If you or anyone you know is interested in joining the Austin Fire Department, please visit:

JoinAFD.com