

The mission of the San José Fire Department is to serve the community by protecting life, property, and the environment through prevention and response.

# FIRE

The San José Fire Department provides fire suppression, emergency medical services (EMS), and fire prevention services to residents and visitors within San José’s geographic boundaries, totaling approximately 200 square miles (including some unincorporated areas). Other fire prevention services include regulatory enforcement of fire and hazardous materials codes through inspection activities and construction plan reviews for residents and businesses. The Department provides emergency Advanced Life Support first-response services, and the County of Santa Clara contracts with a private company for emergency ambulance services.

In 2017-18, the Department’s operating expenditures totaled \$218 million. This includes personal and non-personal expenditures. The Department was responsible for additional costs including \$13.9 million in Citywide and other expenses, of which \$7.5 million for was worker’s compensation claims. There were 819 authorized positions in the Department in 2017-18 (excluding five positions transferred to the Office of Emergency Management).

## KEY FACTS (2017-18)

Fire stations	33
Engine companies	33
Truck companies	9
Squad units	3



Source: San José Fire Department, photo of Station 2

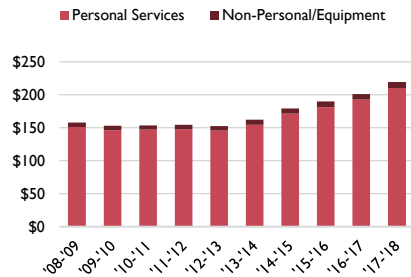


Source: San José Fire Department

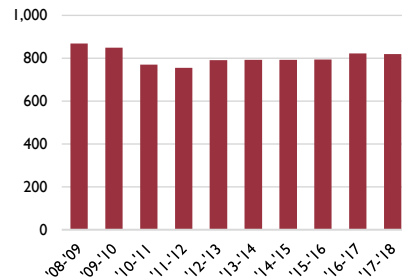


Source: San José Fire Department, photo of Station 8

**Fire Department Operating Expenditures (\$millions)**



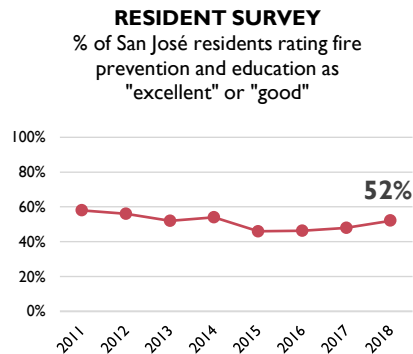
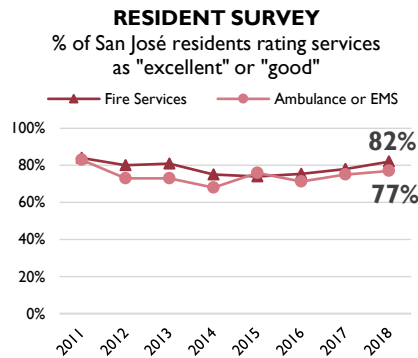
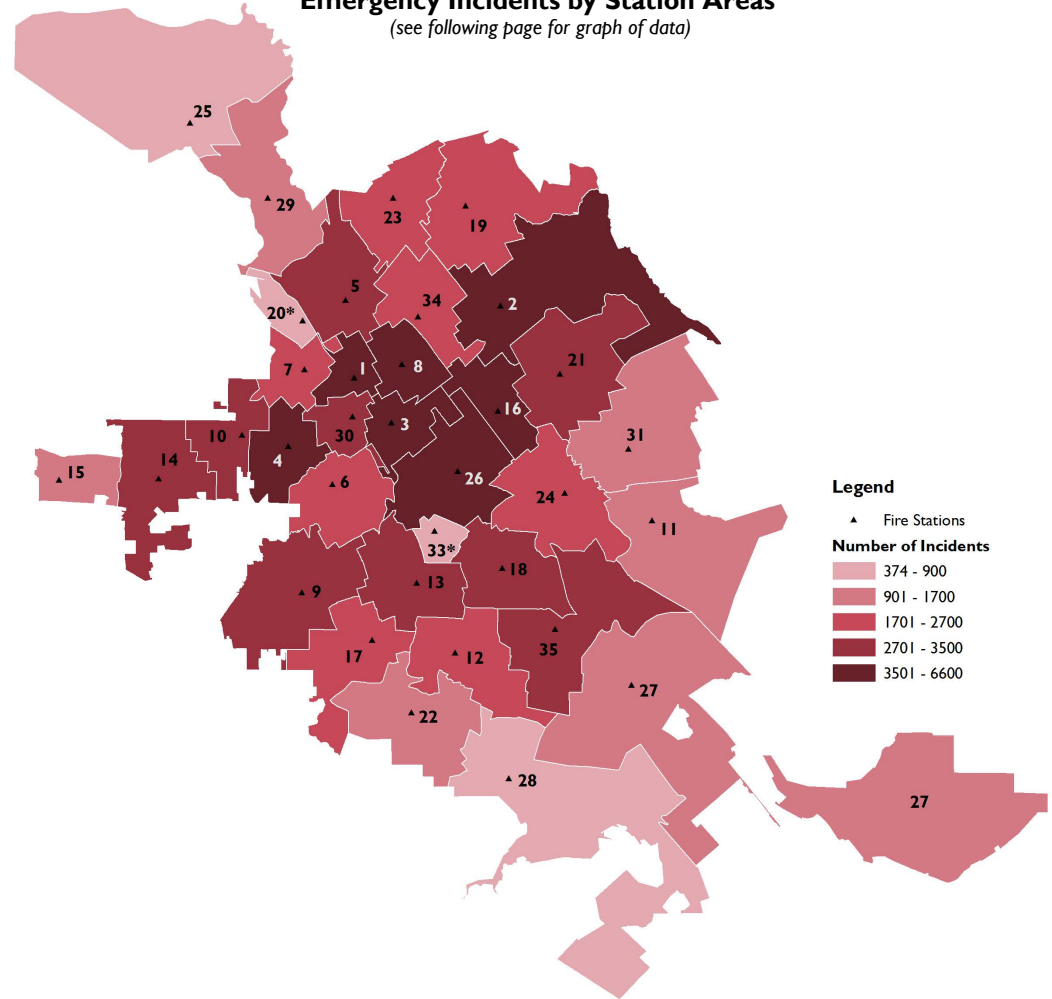
**Fire Department Authorized Positions**



**KEY FACTS (2017-18)**

Emergency incidents	
Emergency medical incidents	57,700
Fires	3,300
Rescue, Haz Mat, and non-fire hazards	6,700
Other (including service requests, false alarms, good intent responses, and canceled en route incidents)	24,900
<b>Total</b>	<b>92,600</b>

**Fire Stations and Number of 2017-18 Emergency Incidents by Station Areas**  
(see following page for graph of data)



Source: Auditor analysis based on incident data provided by Fire Department  
Note: Data shows incidents by geographic area, not by responding unit.

\* Fire Station #20 dedicated to Mineta San José International Airport. Fire Station #33 closed in August 2010. Incidents within the district of Station #33 handled by other stations. Fire Station #32 reserved for Coyote Valley, pending future development.

# FIRE

## EMERGENCY RESPONSE

In 2017-18, the Fire Department responded to about 92,600 emergency incidents. There were 74,100 Priority 1 incidents (red lights and sirens) and 17,900 Priority 2 incidents (no red lights or sirens). Of the total incidents:

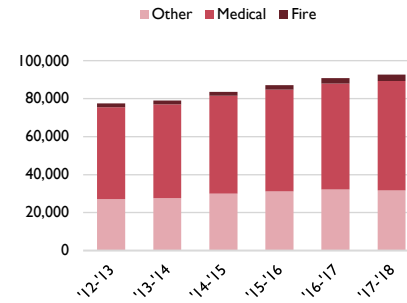
- 4 percent were fires (3,300 total)
- 62 percent were medical emergencies (57,700 total)
- 34 percent were other types of incidents, including good intent calls, rescues, and false alarms (31,600 total).

A breakdown of all incidents by fire station is provided below.

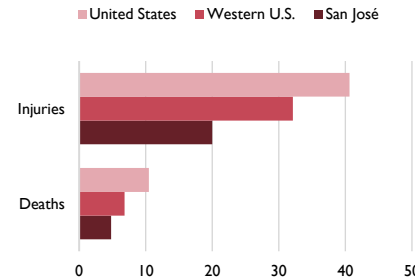
In 2017-18, the Department contained 91 percent of fires to the *structure* of origin (target: 90 percent). The Department contained 70 percent of fires to the *room* of origin (target: 85 percent).

San José has experienced lower fire-related death and injury rates per million population than the national average reported by the National Fire Protection Association. There were 21 civilian fire injuries and 5 civilian fire deaths in 2017-18.

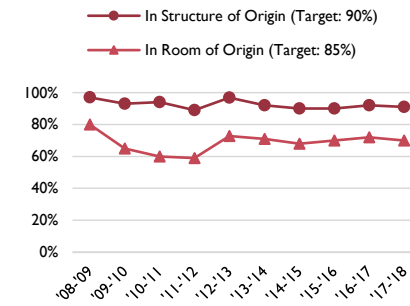
Emergency Incidents



Civilian Fire Injuries and Deaths per Million Population (2017\*)

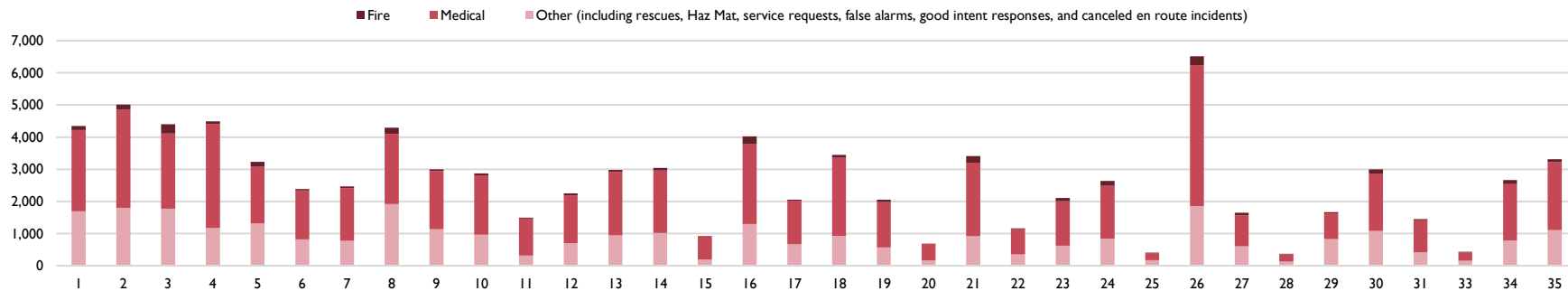


Percent of Fires Contained



Source: National Fire Protection Association, 2017 and SJFD data  
 \*San José data is by fiscal year (shows FY 2017-18)

Emergency Incidents by Station Area (2017-18)



Note: Fire Station #20 dedicated to Mineta San José International Airport. Fire Station #33 closed in August 2010. Incidents within the district of Station #33 handled by other stations. Fire Station #32 reserved for Coyote Valley, pending future development. Breakdowns of incidents and response times city-wide and by fire station are also available on the [SJFD Statistics Website](#).

**EMERGENCY RESPONSE** (continued)

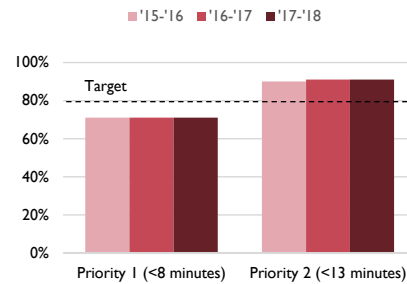
In 2017-18, the Department responded to only 71 percent of Priority 1 incidents within its time standard of 8 minutes (target: 80 percent), which is the same as the last two years. The Department responded to 91 percent of Priority 2 incidents within 13 minutes (target: 80 percent).

The Department disaggregates Priority 1 response time by three time targets: dispatch time, turnout time, and travel time. In 2017-18, the Department met its target for dispatch time. The Department met its turnout time target for 77 percent of Priority 1 incidents (target: 80 percent within 2 minutes) and met its travel time standard for only 44 percent of Priority 1 incidents (target: 80 percent within 4 minutes).

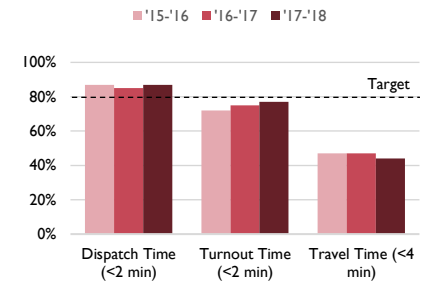
The Department developed a response time work plan which includes strategies to further improve response time performance. This year, the Department rolled out a feature utilizing automatic vehicle location (to provide more accurate data regarding when an emergency vehicle has arrived at an emergency location). Among other projects on its work plan, the Department is expanding traffic signal emergency vehicle preemption (in which traffic signals are equipped to give green lights to oncoming emergency vehicles) and upgrading the fire station alerting system (which will automate some dispatching steps to reduce call processing times.)

A breakdown of Priority 1 response times by fire station is shown below. Two fire stations met the Priority 1 response standard of 8 minutes for 80 percent of incidents in 2017-18 (the same two stations as last year).

**Emergency Response Time Compliance**



**Time Targets of Priority 1 Response Time**



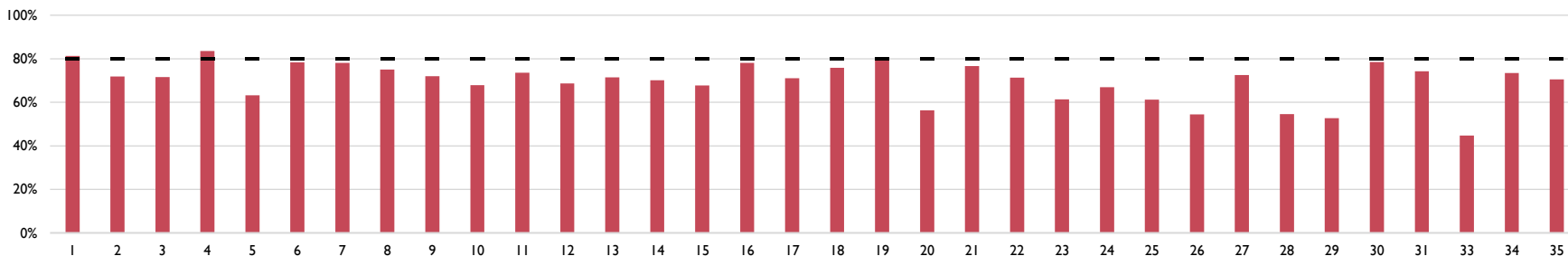
**Emergency Medical Services (EMS)**

The County of Santa Clara contracts with a private company to provide emergency ambulance transportation services to all County areas (except Palo Alto). The San José Fire Department provides Advanced Life Support (paramedic) first-response services primarily within the incorporated City limits through a direct agreement with the County of Santa Clara Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Agency.

The agreement performance requirements specify that the Department must arrive on-scene within 8 minutes 90 percent of the time to qualify for funding, and arrive within 8 minutes 95 percent of the time to receive maximum funding. These requirements apply to qualifying Code 3 EMS calls. In 2017-18, the Department met the County EMS Code 3 performance standard requirements for only 6 of 12 months.

**Priority 1 Response Time Compliance by Station (2017-18)**

% of Time Initial Responding Unit Arrives within 8 Minutes



Note: Fire Station #20 dedicated to Mineta San José International Airport. Fire Station #33 closed in August 2010. Incidents within the district of Station #33 handled by other stations. Fire Station #32 reserved for Coyote Valley, pending future development.

# FIRE

## FIRE PREVENTION

The Bureau of Fire Prevention provides regulatory enforcement of fire and hazardous materials codes, investigates fire cause, and educates the community to reduce injuries, loss of life, and property damage from fires and other accidents. Both fire fighters and fire prevention inspectors conduct initial inspections to check for compliance with fire codes. In 2017-18, the Department performed 11,600 initial fire inspections. Fire fighters conducted 5,200 of these initial inspections and fire prevention inspectors conducted 6,400. About 80 percent of initial inspections conducted were code compliant, and therefore did not require a follow-up inspection.

The Bureau of Fire Prevention also conducts investigations based on complaints received from residents or businesses. In 2017-18, 150 complaints were investigated. In addition, the Department conducted about 350 plan reviews for special events.

In 2017-18, fire prevention inspectors conducted over 350 investigations and were able to determine that about 160 of those investigations were caused by arson.

## FIRE SAFETY CODE COMPLIANCE (DEVELOPMENT SERVICES)

Fire Safety Code Compliance enforces the City's Fire and Health and Safety Codes during the development plan review and inspection processes, in coordination with the Development Services partners in the Permit Center (see *Planning, Building & Code Enforcement Department*). This includes both engineering and hazardous materials reviews. In 2017-18, fire code compliance civilian and sworn staff performed 6,300 fire plan checks and 7,900 inspections for Development Services customers. One hundred percent of inspections in 2017-18 were completed within the customer's 24-hour request for inspection target.

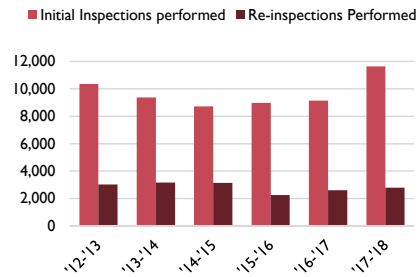
The **Development Services partners** in the Permit Center are:

- Planning, Building & Code Enforcement Department (see *PBCE section*)
- Fire Department
- Public Works Department (See *Public Works section*)

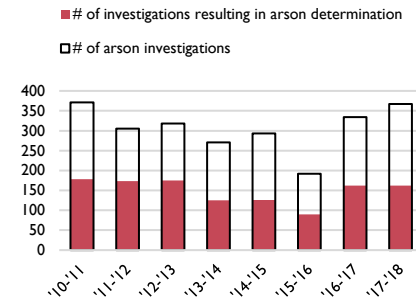
### Fire Safety Inspections

The Department inspects existing buildings and newly constructed buildings to ensure compliance with the fire code. As of June 2018, San José had approximately 12,000 buildings that were eligible for a fire inspection, including 87 high-rises, 650 educational facilities, and 5,000 multi-family residences and hotels/motels. The frequency of the inspection cycle depends on the building use and type. For example, high-rises, schools, and multi-family residences are required by the State Fire Marshal to have annual inspections. In 2017-18, the Department completed 99 percent of state-mandated inspections, compared to 65 percent in the previous fiscal year. The Department attributes the increase to more inspections by fire fighters.

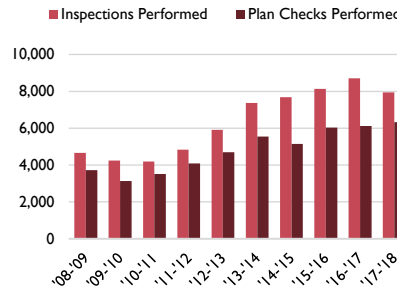
### Fire Prevention Inspections (on existing buildings)



### Arson Investigations



### Fire Safety Code Compliance - Workload (Development Services)



Source: San José Fire Department