

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 2018-19, the Department's operating expenditures totaled \$224 million. This includes personal and non-personal expenditures. The Department was responsible for additional costs including \$14.7 million in Citywide and other expenses, of which \$6.7 million was for workers' compensation claims. There were 823 authorized positions in the Department in 2018-19.

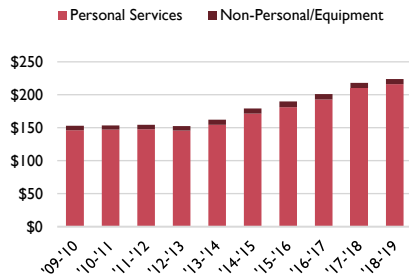


Source: San José Fire Department, photo of Communications staff

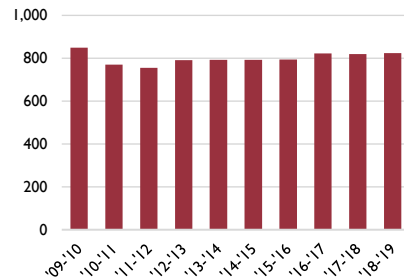


Source: San José Fire Department, photo of Engine 13

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

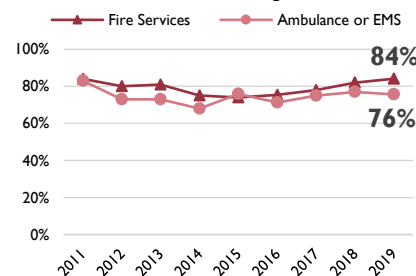


**Fire Department Authorized Positions**



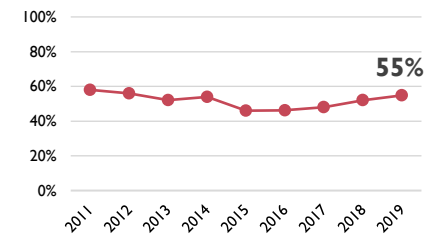
**RESIDENT SURVEY**

% of San José residents rating services as "excellent" or "good"

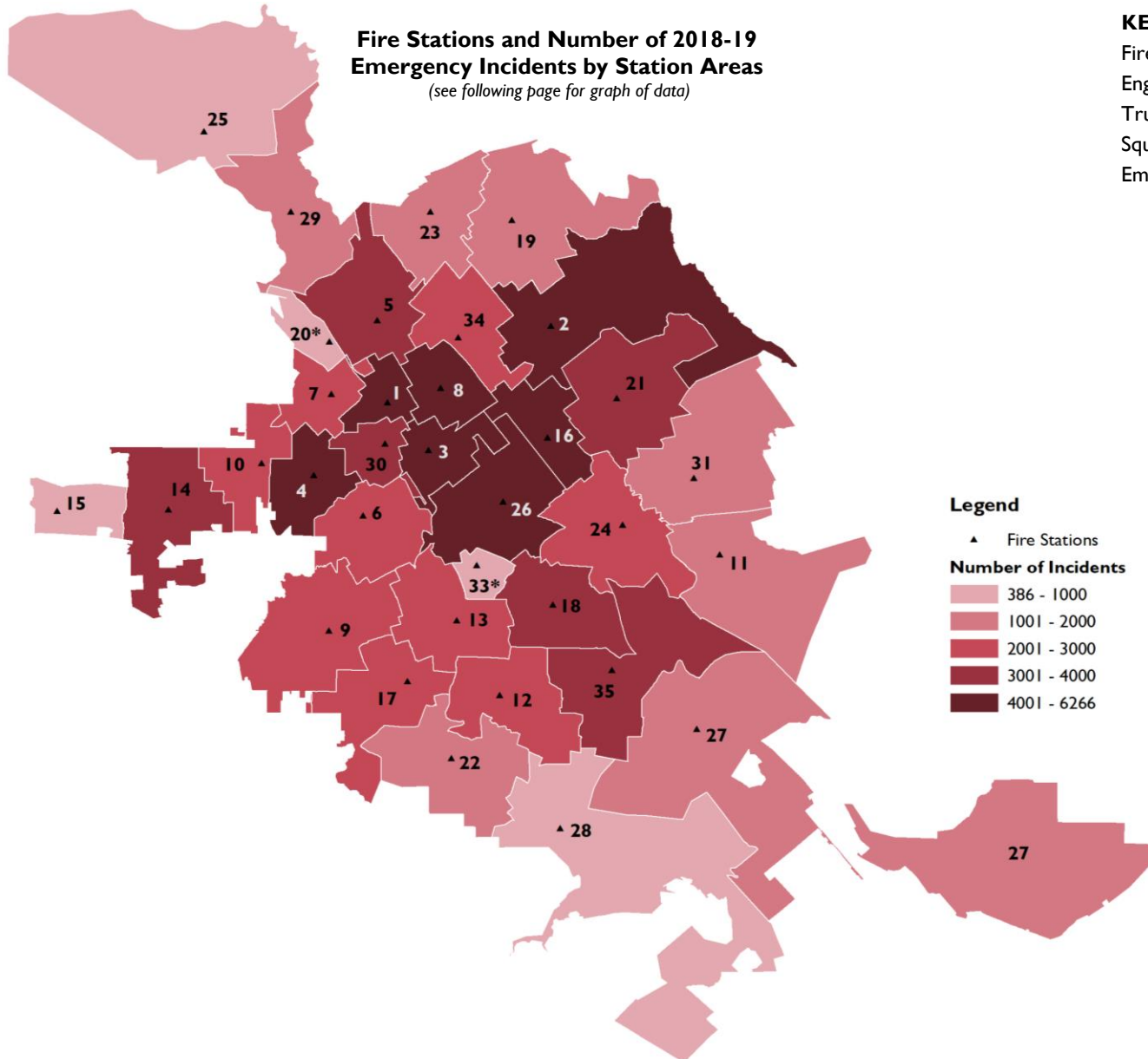


**RESIDENT SURVEY**

% of San José residents rating fire prevention and education as "excellent" or "good"



**Fire Stations and Number of 2018-19  
Emergency Incidents by Station Areas**  
*(see following page for graph of data)*



**KEY FACTS (2018-19)**

Fire stations	33
Engine companies	32
Truck companies	9
Squad units	3
Emergency incidents	
Emergency medical incidents	57,500
Fires	3,100
Rescue, Haz Mat, and non-fire hazards	6,700
Other	24,600
Total	91,900

*Other category includes service requests, false alarms, good intent responses, and canceled en route incidents*

**Legend**

▲ Fire Stations

**Number of Incidents**

- 386 - 1000
- 1001 - 2000
- 2001 - 3000
- 3001 - 4000
- 4001 - 6266

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. The Department has reserved the numbering of Fire Station #32 for future use.

# FIRE

## EMERGENCY RESPONSE

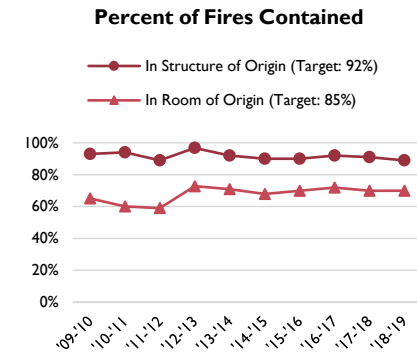
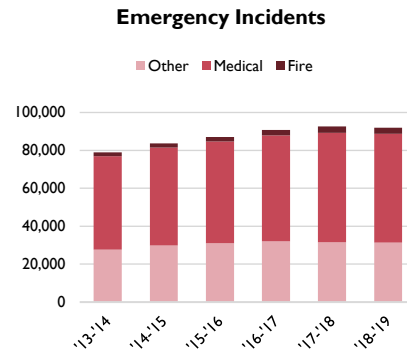
In 2018-19, the Fire Department responded to about 91,900 emergency incidents. There were 73,100 Priority 1 incidents (red lights and sirens) and 18,100 Priority 2 incidents (no red lights or sirens). Of the total incidents:

- 3 percent were fires (3,100 total)
- 63 percent were medical emergencies (57,500 total)
- 34 percent were other types of incidents, including good intent calls, rescues, and false alarms (31,300 total).

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

In 2018-19, the Department contained 89 percent of fires to the *structure* of origin (target: 92 percent). The Department contained 70 percent of fires to the *room* of origin (target: 85 percent).

There were 12 civilian fire injuries and three civilian fire deaths in 2018-19.

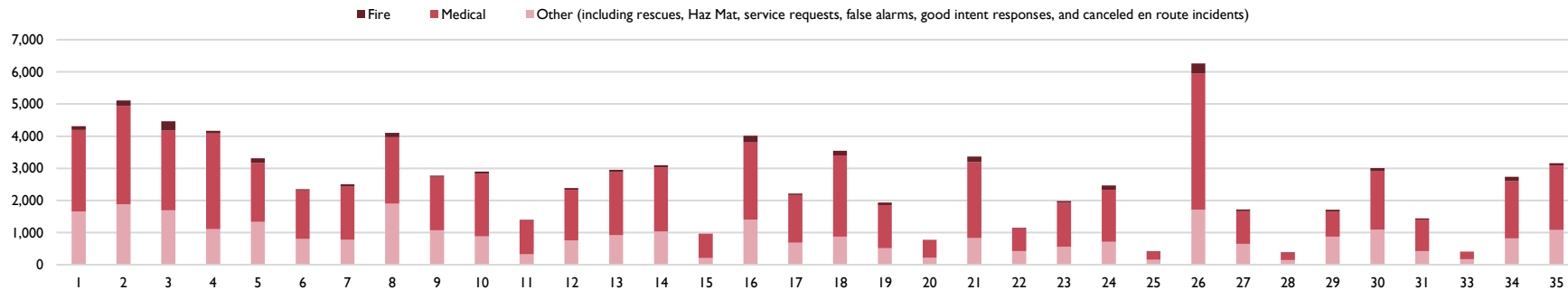


## Emergency Medical Services (EMS)

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 eight minutes 90 percent of the time to qualify for funding, and arrive within eight minutes 95 percent of the time to receive maximum funding. These requirements apply to qualifying Code 3 EMS calls. In 2018-19, the Department met the County EMS Code 3 performance standard requirements of 90 percent for all 12 months.

## Emergency Incidents by Station Area (2018-19)



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. The Department has reserved the numbering of Fire Station #32 for future use. Breakdowns of incidents and response times city-wide and by fire station are also available on the [SJFD Statistics Website](#).

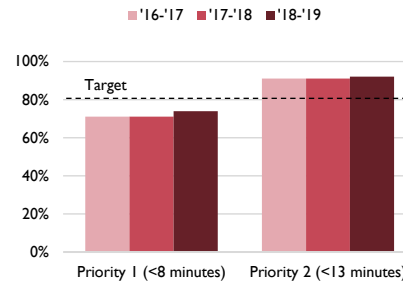
**EMERGENCY RESPONSE** (continued)

In 2018-19, the Department responded to 74 percent of Priority 1 incidents within its time standard of eight minutes (target: 80 percent), which is an improvement from the last two years. The Department responded to 92 percent of Priority 2 incidents within 13 minutes (target: 80 percent).

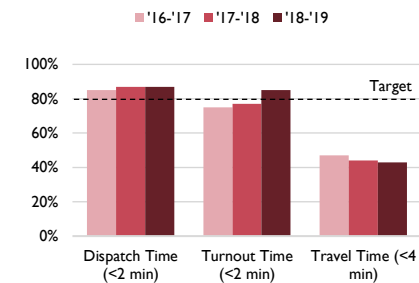
The Department disaggregates Priority 1 response time by three time targets: dispatch time, turnout time, and travel time. In 2018-19, the Department met its target for dispatch time. For the first time in several years, the Department also met its turnout time target (target: 80 percent within 2 minutes). The Department reports that continued messaging during training sessions has contributed to the improvement in turnout time. It met its travel time standard for only 43 percent of Priority 1 incidents (target: 80 percent within 4 minutes).

A breakdown of Priority 1 response times by fire station is shown below. Five fire stations met the Priority 1 response standard of 8 minutes for 80 percent of incidents in 2018-19, an increase from two stations last year.

**Emergency Response Time Compliance**



**Time Targets of Priority 1 Response Time**



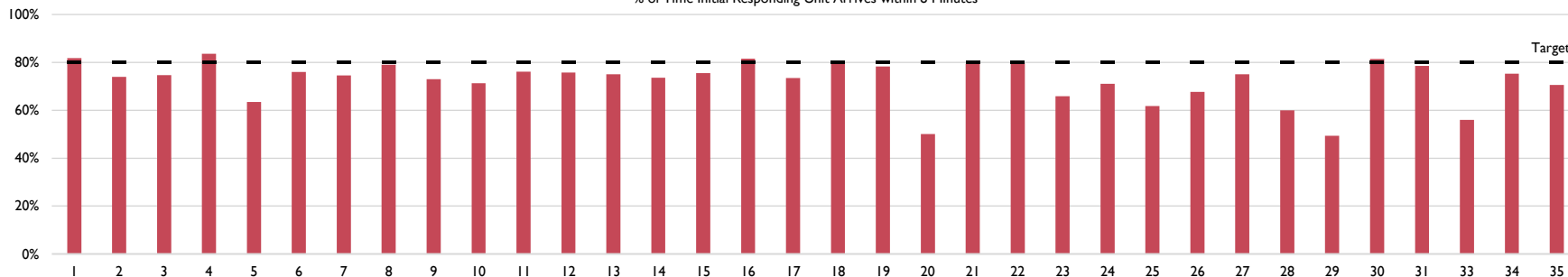
**Improving Emergency Response Times**

The Department developed a response time work plan which includes strategies to further improve response time performance. This fiscal year, the Department deployed traffic signal emergency vehicle preemption (in which traffic signals are equipped to give green lights to oncoming emergency vehicles) for Priority 1 responses.

The Department continues to work on automatic vehicle location data collection (which provides more accurate data on when a vehicle has arrived at an emergency location), fire station alerting systems (which will automate some dispatching steps to reduce call processing times), and data management solutions. Additionally, the Department is implementing new call-taking procedures at the Fire Communication Center.

**Priority 1 Response Time Compliance by Station (2018-19)**

% of Time Initial Responding Unit Arrives within 8 Minutes



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# 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 2018-19, the Department performed 11,700 initial fire inspections. Fire fighters conducted 5,400 of these initial inspections and fire prevention inspectors conducted the remaining. About 81 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 2018-19, 200 complaints were investigated. In addition, the Department conducted about 370 plan reviews for special events.

In 2018-19, fire prevention inspectors conducted over 250 investigations and were able to determine that about 120 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 chapter). This includes both engineering and hazardous materials reviews. In 2018-19, Fire Code Compliance civilian and sworn staff performed 7,100 fire plan checks and 7,900 inspections for Development Services customers. Fire plan reviews were conducted within established time targets for 80 percent of projects in 2018-19.

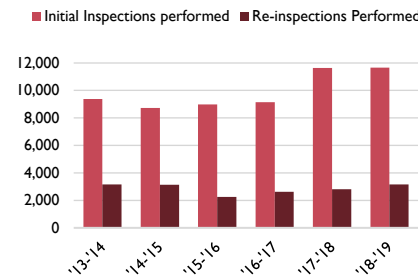
The **Development Services partners** in the Permit Center are:

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

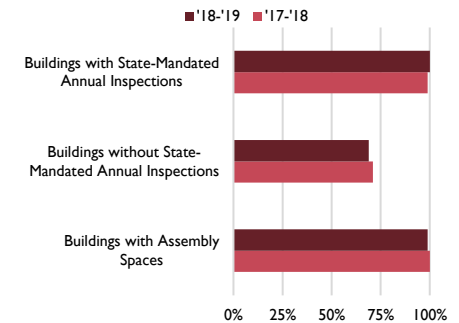
## Fire Safety Inspections

The Department inspects existing buildings and newly constructed buildings to ensure compliance with the fire code. As of June 2019, San José had approximately 12,000 buildings that were eligible for a fire inspection, including 87 high-rises, 670 educational facilities, and 5,300 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 2018-19, the Department completed 100 percent of state-mandated inspections.

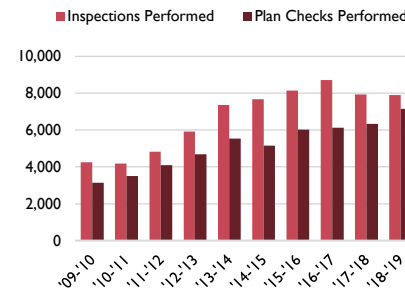
**Fire Prevention Inspections (on existing buildings)**



**Completion of Initial Fire Inspections**



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



**Arson Investigations**

