MONTEREY FIRE DEPARTMENT: OVERDUE FOR OVERHAUL

Downtown Monterey Fire Station 11 on Pacific Avenue
Source: Photograph taken by Civil Grand Juror

SUMMARY

In July 2023, the Monterey County Civil Grand Jury (CGJ) received a complaint regarding leadership, promotions, operations, vehicle and facility safety, low morale, and mental health support at the Monterey Fire Department (MFD). After receiving the complaint, the CGJ launched an investigation.

By December 2023, low morale prompted the MFD Union Local 3707 to pass a vote of no-confidence in its leadership, followed by the resignation of the Monterey Fire Chief at year-end. An interim Fire Chief was appointed in early 2024.

The CGJ discovered that despite the firefighters' commendable job maintaining protection and exceeding national response standards, the MFD lacks support, advocacy, and funding for its current and future needs. This chronic neglect has resulted in an aging infrastructure and substandard working and living conditions. The issues requiring immediate attention include administration of policies and training programs, aging fire apparatus, outdated fire stations, communication systems such as the 911 dispatch and Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD), and mental health services for MFD personnel.

The MFD has initiated changes to address several of the issues in this report. The CGJ maintains that its recommendations are relevant to present and future MFD Administrations.

BACKGROUND

The MFD was established in 1882. In 2008, Monterey, Pacific Grove, and Carmel-by-the-Sea merged their fire departments to improve efficiency. A few years later, Sand City, the Naval Postgraduate School, La Mesa Village housing, and the Monterey Peninsula Airport joined the merger.

The MFD operates six fire stations employing 85 people across a 24-square-mile area, serving approximately 55,000 people. Strategically located, the MFD's six stations ensure quick emergency response. This was confirmed in 2022 when the City of Monterey commissioned an independent firm (Citygate Associates) to conduct a comprehensive Community Risk Assessment and Standards of Cover for the MFD. Table 1 shows the call categories which the MFD responded to.

Table 1: Number/Types of Service Calls Made to MFD

Call Type	2020	2021	2022
Rescue & Emergency Medical	4,232	4,657	5,297
Good Intent	1,350	1,392	1,569
Public Service Assistance	1,205	1,230	1,320
False Alarms	677	685	732
Hazardous Condition Standby	278	294	315
Fires & Explosions	152	137	155
Other Types of Incidents	15	27	17
TOTAL INCIDENTS	**7,909**	**8,422**	**9,405**

Source: Citygate 2022 Community Risk Assessment and Standards of Cover Study - Vol 1

Most calls were for Rescue & Emergency Medical services, comprising 56% of the responses. Good Intent Calls occur when firefighters arrive at a call and find no threat or problem. Public Service Assistance means firefighters were requested to provide non-emergency services such as helping people who have fallen and need assistance.

In 2022, an average of 25 calls/day were spread among the six fire stations. At this level of activity, both personnel and equipment must be in top-notch condition to provide effective service and response.

The Citygate report states "*In Citygate's more than 20 years of conducting fire service deployment studies, very few client agencies have met all the key best practice response performance measures to the same degree as the Monterey Fire Department*." While consistently achieving above-average response times, the department grapples with challenges stemming from aging fire apparatus. This results in an augmented maintenance workload and staff frustration as they respond to emergencies. Constructed more than 70 years ago as places for fire personnel to live and work, the fire stations have undergone no significant renovations. Additionally, the process to access mental health support for traumatic incidents is not clear to all staff.

METHODOLOGY

The CGJ conducted multiple interviews with individuals familiar with the operations of fire departments in both Monterey and Salinas and toured facilities to gain a wider perspective of overall fire operations. The CGJ also interviewed members of various City of Monterey departments that provide services and administration for MFD.

The MFD and the City of Monterey websites were reviewed as sources of information to supplement the interviews and provide historical context. Information about the maintenance of the fire apparatus owned by the MFD and contracts, logs, policies, and procedures were obtained and reviewed.

The CGJ also examined third-party reports on MFD response and operations as well as National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards, a U.S.-based international nonprofit organization devoted to eliminating death, injury, property, and economic loss due to fire, electrical, and related hazards.

DISCUSSION

To ensure public safety, firefighters use physical stamina and compassion to combat fires and handle hazardous situations. Their duties include using equipment to extinguish fires, rescuing people, and assisting with cleanup at the scene of a car accident or natural disaster. Firefighters work in teams, requiring strong communication and quick decision-making, often under pressure.

As of 2023, the MFD comprises 85 paid personnel across six fire stations with seven companies. Firefighting companies work a 48-hour shift and take 96 hours (4 days) off between shifts. A minimum of 22 personnel work per shift across the Department.

Administrative roles include Fire Chief, Assistant Chief, three Division Chiefs, a Training Captain, a Deputy Fire Marshal, two Part-Time Fire Inspectors, a Senior Administrative Analyst, a Fire Prevention Technician, and a Fire Inspector. Fire apparatus include seven pumping engines, two aerial tiller trucks, and various other specialized fire vehicles such as command vehicles, a fire boat, and wildland fire apparatus.

Administration

Source: Photograph taken by Civil Grand Juror

Organization

Each MFD fire company is comprised of at least three individuals: a firefighter, engineer, and captain. The firefighter lays hoses and fights the fire, the engineer drives the fire apparatus and runs the pumps and engine, and the captain oversees each incident. Each fire station is staffed 24 hours per day and may have one or more fire companies. The Division Chief (DC) is responsible for administrative duties and day-to-day operations. All the DCs report to the Assistant Fire Chief who reports to the Fire Chief.

Unlike most workers, who go to work and then go home, the fire companies live and work in the same building. They eat, exercise, study, train, and respond to calls throughout the 48 hours they are on duty.

Policies

The MFD follows policies that provide guidelines to perform its duties. These policies are constantly reviewed and revised based on best practices, state mandates, and other performance guidelines.

The MFD policies are stored in various places including paper binders, file shares, and Lexipol – an online platform that provides policy manuals, training bulletins, and consulting services to law enforcement agencies and public safety departments nationwide.

Despite selecting Lexipol as the main source for MFD policies years ago, there has not been a focused effort to centralize where all policies can be found and compliance tracked. The MFD staff expressed confusion regarding the location and correctness of policy updates.

Training

The MFD staff must be able to train effectively, not only for the day-to-day operations necessary to run the fire apparatus and address different emergencies, but also to qualify for promotions within the Department.

Certain fire apparatus requires specialized training to operate. The Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting (ARFF) engines used at airports are critical to airport emergency response, mitigation, evacuation, and rescue of passengers and crew involved in accidents and incidents. Operating an ARFF requires specific knowledge regarding aircraft fires and hazards. The MFD also operates a fire boat out of Monterey Harbor that has its own specialized equipment requiring training to operate properly.

Additionally, as technology continues to advance, so must the techniques and technologies for dealing with emergencies. A prime example is the recent shift in automobiles from internal combustion engines (ICE) to electric vehicles (EV). ICE fires are different from EV fires, and firefighters must learn new techniques to address these emergencies safely and appropriately.

Ongoing training programs are inconsistently delivered due to the lack of funding and resources. As noted in the Citygate report, the MFD has been understaffed in administration areas, including its training personnel.

Apparatus

Engine 6473 Tiller Truck at the Downtown Monterey Fire Station 11 on Pacific Avenue
Source: Photograph taken by Civil Grand Juror

The MFD provides staffing for all six fire stations but only owns the equipment, stations and fire apparatus for the three stations geographically located in Monterey. The other stations (Carmel, Pacific Grove and the airport) own their fire equipment, facilities and apparatus.

Some fire apparatus are designed for pumping water, others for aerial rescue, and still others serve as command centers without firefighting capabilities. The primary types of fire engines seen by the public are pumper trucks and aerial tiller trucks. While the MFD operates other apparatus like wildland fire vehicles, ARFF engines, fire boats, and command vehicles, this report focuses on pumper and tiller trucks, as they are more commonly used in emergencies. Pumper trucks are equipped with onboard water and chemical tanks for direct firefighting, stand-alone ladders, and other equipment. Aerial tiller trucks feature hydraulically assisted, extendable ladders capable of reaching high-rise buildings or assisting in cliffside rescues. The MFD owns two aerial tiller trucks and seven pumper trucks.

Fire apparatus is designated as primary or backup. A primary fire apparatus is the vehicle used first with the backup apparatus generally being an older vehicle that is only used when the primary is on-site at an emergency or in the shop for repairs. Fire vehicles have three ways to measure their age: year, mileage, and engine hours, often referred to as PTO (Power Take Off).

- Years are measured by the manufacture date
- Mileage is the number of road miles traveled
- Power Take Off (PTO) is the length of time the engine has run

A pumper truck arriving at the scene of a fire may be parked, but its engine is left running to provide power (PTO) to drive the water pumps and floodlights. An engine may only travel short distances, but if its engine is constantly running to fight fires, it wears down.

The National Fire Protection Agency (NFPA) provides guidelines determining when fire apparatus should be replaced and states that fire apparatus:

> *Should respond to first alarms for the first 15 years. For the next 5 years, be in reserve status for use at major fires or as a temporary replacement for out-of-service first line apparatus.*
>
> *Be retired at 20 years of age, unless the apparatus meets the recommended annual, service and acceptance level tests and has been deemed in excellent mechanical condition.*

The City of Monterey maintains its own Vehicle & Equipment Replacement Policy with guidelines as to when vehicles should be replaced. The policy states that vehicles with Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR) of 16,001 – 26,000 (which includes all the fire apparatus) should be replaced at:

- Trucks, Vans, and SUVs: greater than 15 years old or 100,000 miles
- Tractors, Backhoe, Equipment: greater than 20 years old or 4,000 PTO Hours

Table 2 lists the year, mileage and PTO of the MFD-owned pumper/tiller apparatus as of Nov 2023.

Table 2: Fire Apparatus Age/Mileage/PTO

Engine	Make	Type	Year	Age	Mileage	PTO	Replace
235	Pierce	Pumper	2010	14	136,804	15,843	Y
6411	Pierce	Pumper	2015	9	83,159	10,414	Y
6412	Hi-Tech	Pumper	2001	23	150,334	14,657	Y
6413	Hi-Tech	Pumper	2002	22	138,604	15,843	Y
6416	Pierce	Pumper	2008	16	85,389	7,303	Y
6418	Pierce Enforcer	Pumper	2020	4	19,423	2,120	N
6420	Pierce Enforcer	Pumper	2020	4	27,070	2,648	N
6471	KME	Tiller	2008	16	11,6814	13,076	Y
6473	American LaFrance	Tiller	1998	26	25,679	3,082	Y

Source: Compiled from City of Monterey Fleet Repair Records

Table 2 does not include the specialized apparatus such as the Wildland Fire Engines or the 19-year-old fire boat. For the nine MFD fire apparatus engines listed above, the average is 15 years old with 87,000 miles and 9,400 engine hours. The oldest vehicle in use is 26 years old. Only two of the current vehicles in service are less than five years old.

By either the City of Monterey Vehicle & Equipment Replacement Policy or the NFPA Standards, nearly three-quarters of the MFD apparatus fleet meet the requirements for replacement.

Additionally, the fire apparatus for Monterey Peninsula Airport District (MPAD), Carmel, and Pacific Grove not owned by the MFD are also beyond the NFPA standards of 15 years as a primary vehicle and 20 years as a backup.

The MFD has two new fire pumper engines and a new tiller truck on order, but they are not scheduled for delivery for the next one or two years, due to supply chain and backorder issues. When they are eventually delivered, the MFD will still own several apparatus well beyond their recommended lifespan. The CGJ found no line items exist in the FY2023-24 budget to continue the replacement of aged fire apparatus.

Even after the new fire apparatus arrive and are certified, the MFD will need to replace additional fire apparatus to bring the fleet up to NFPA standards. Fire companies are often forced to respond with the backup apparatus due to safety or repair issues with the primary equipment. The City of Monterey fleet repair yard maintains a 1-6 priority scale to rate the severity of an issue with a vehicle. “Priority 1” repairs take the fire apparatus completely out-of-service. The apparatus cannot be used until the Priority 1 repair is completed.

Table 3 shows the frequency of repairs over the last three years on the Monterey Fire Apparatus specifying total repairs requested and the number of repairs that were designated as Priority 1.

Table 3: Service/Repair Calls for Monterey Fire Apparatus

Year	All Repairs	Priority 1 Repairs
2021	23	3
2022	60	7
2023	152	25
Grand Total	**251**	**35**

Source: Compiled from City of Monterey Fleet Repair Records

These figures reflect a fleet that is suffering from an increasing rate of breakdowns due to age and wear. This leads to increased response times and/or calls for mutual aid from surrounding jurisdictions. Mutual aid refers to emergency calls that require assistance from non-MFD fire stations based on proximity.

At the time of this report, one-quarter to nearly half of all fire apparatus were out of service or in some state of disrepair. Additionally, only one certified mechanic in Monterey’s Public Works Department can repair specialized fire apparatus. Other mechanics, in addition to MFD engineers, can assist and perform minor maintenance (adding oil, fixing light bulbs, etc.), but only one certified fire mechanic is on staff. This mechanic also works on other Public Works vehicle repairs issues but does not receive a classification revision or additional compensation reflecting this specialized workload.

As vehicles age, more repairs are needed to keep them safe and roadworthy. Between having a single certified mechanic, as well as supply chain issues, some of these repairs can take weeks or even months. The supply chain problem is exacerbated as specialized fire vehicles require unique, vendor-specific parts with long delivery lead times.

Monterey Fire Stations

From Left: #11 Pacific Street, #12 Hawthorne Street, and #13 Del La Vina
Source: Photograph taken by Civil Grand Juror

The CGJ toured the three fire stations owned by the City of Monterey and the recently opened MPAD fire station. The MPAD fire station is a new, state-of-the-art facility owned by the airport. At all three fire stations, the City of Monterey needs to strive to provide functionality and cleanliness similar to the MPAD fire station.

The three MFD stations located in the City of Monterey were built in the 1950s. Station 11 (600 Pacific Street) was built in 1959. Stations 12 (582 Hawthorne Street) and 13 (501 Dela Vina Avenue) were built in 1951.

No major remodeling of any of the Monterey stations has taken place since they were built. The stations are the living and working quarters for the fire companies 24 hours a day. With groups of people rotating through, living and working together in the same facilities for seven decades, the facilities are in dire need of major renovation and/or replacement.

The City of Monterey has inspected certain areas of the buildings for asbestos piping, but no comprehensive assessment for potentially hazardous building materials in the three fire stations has been performed. Building codes have evolved considerably since

the fire stations were constructed as have the fire vehicles and their storage and maintenance requirements.

Many issues are not only cosmetic but potentially hazardous:

- peeling, flaking, possibly lead-based paint on windowsills, walls, and ceilings
- bubbled paint on freshly painted walls due to water leaks
- and outdated or malfunctioning heating ventilation (HVAC) systems that need to be supplemented by numerous electric space heaters.

Station 13 has an attached rotted, unsafe training tower that has been unusable for years. The fire stations often house workout equipment in the same space as the fire engines. Any aerosol chemicals left on the engines can potentially contaminate that equipment and harm the firefighters as they exercise. In conclusion, all the Monterey-owned fire stations are profoundly outdated and pose significant health risks.

Monterey Airport Fire Stations

Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting (ARFF) Engine AR16 at the new North Side MPAD Fire Station
Source: Photograph taken by Civil Grand Juror

The Monterey Peninsula Airport District (MPAD) owns and manages the newly constructed airport fire station and its fire apparatus and equipment. The MFD only provides personnel to work the fire apparatus.

The MPAD fire station serves the airport with specialized ARFF equipment to fight aircraft fires and handles emergencies inside the terminal and on airport grounds. At the time of this report, some vital communication systems (the 911 alert system and “crash phone”) were not fully operational.

The MPAD fire station, built in late 2023, is on the north side of the airport. The old fire station was on the south side of the airport, close to Garden Road and Highway 68. It was demolished to make room for the new terminal project, a component of the overall Monterey Regional Airport Safety Enhancement program.

Since 2014, the MFD has used a cost-sharing service model with the airport whereby the MFD uses the airport fire station to respond to fire and emergency calls both on-airport and off-airport grounds.

Engine 16 at the MFD South-Side modular trailer
Source: Photograph taken by Civil Grand Juror

When the airport fire station was relocated to the north side and the former south side fire station demolished, the MFD was left without a 24-hour fire station to serve the Fisherman’s Flats/Ryan Ranch/Hwy 68 neighborhoods quickly.

This situation was partially addressed by relocating the airport fire company to a modular trailer set in a side parking lot across from the upper short-term parking area on the south side of the airport. The MFD owns the trailer and MPAD owns the parking area.

Per the contractual agreement to provide fire services between the City of Monterey and MPAD, the south-side modular trailer is staffed by the MFD between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 7:59 p.m. When the south-side modular trailer is closed, the MFD personnel and fire apparatus are relocated to the new north-side station.

Emergency responses at night to Fisherman's Flats, Ryan Ranch, Highway 68, and other areas are dispatched from the new north-side station or other MFD stations. This adds an additional 4-8 minutes to any emergency call. Delays of several minutes put the public at risk and can lead to serious medical complications or potentially loss of life. The CityGate report also noted that the north-side station "*...will impact the Department's response capacity and related response performance to the eastern areas of the City outside the airport grounds.*"

Besides the slower nighttime response, other major issues with this modular trailer setup exist. While MFD personnel at the modular trailer have access to the new north-side station for repairs, sleeping, showering and some changing, it is a 20+ minute round trip between the two sites, reducing the time that fire company is available.

The MFD personnel who work daytime hours at the modular trailer lack many of the necessities to perform their jobs. No fire apparatus shelter, no potable water, and no decontamination changing or storage areas for turnout gear outside the trailer. Turnout gear is heavy, chemically treated, fire-retardant outer clothing that firefighters wear when they are called to duty. The south-side modular trailer:

- Provides no indoor decontamination changing area forcing the male and female firefighters to change into and out of their gear outside in public view
- Has no provision for a dry storage area to store it except in the apparatus or in the living area

This is a violation of the NFPA standard which states that turnout gear must "*… not be worn or stored in the living areas of fire department facilities.*"

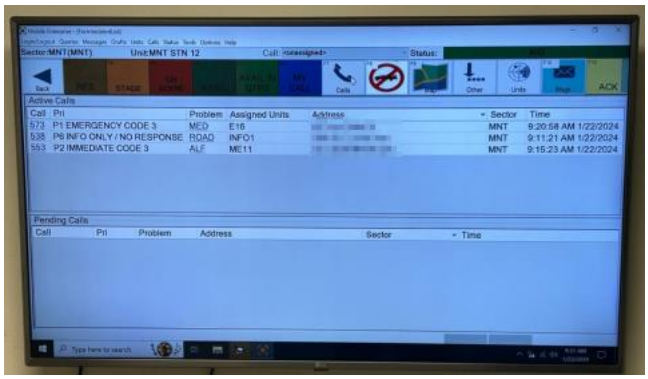
Most important to the MFD personnel stationed at the airport, the modular trailer is a temporary solution with no permanent solution in sight. This situation further demoralizes the MFD personnel.

CAD/911 Dispatch Systems

Computer Aided Dispatch alert system in Monterey Fire Station 12
Source: Photograph taken by Civil Grand Juror

The MFD is dispatched to emergency calls via the 911 Dispatch Center run by the County of Monterey. As the 911 Center is notified of an emergency, a radio-link communication system is activated to alert the fire stations of an incoming call. These alerts play a series of tones. When a specific station is being dispatched, a specific set of tones is played over loudspeakers to alert that fire station's personnel. This process is referred to as being "toned out."

The Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system that operates out of the 911 Center determines where the emergency call is geographically located and then dispatches the closest fire company to respond to the emergency. The CAD system is aware of the location of all fire apparatus and their current state (on a call, ready, out-of-service, etc.). Each fire station has one or more CAD system display screens that describe all MFD emergency calls. Each fire apparatus is also equipped with a dashboard computer screen that displays information emanating from the CAD system. Responding engines get further updates, traffic guidance, and communications from the 911 Center such as calls for additional aid.



Station mounted CAD system display ***Vehicle mounted CAD system display***

Source: Photographs taken by Civil Grand Juror

The CAD system mounted in the apparatus frequently malfunctions, forcing firefighters to rely on radios and handheld GPS devices to provide updates to emergency calls.

During daytime hours, all MFD stations hear all alerts for the Monterey area – but only dispatch if their specific station's tone is used. When a station company hears its tone over the loudspeaker, followed by an often-inaudible announcement, they spring into action. They alert the 911 Center that they are responding, suit up, open the bay doors, take their places in the vehicle and roll out of the station – generally in under one minute. As previously noted in the Citygate report, MFD is onsite for the emergency in under 7½ minutes, putting them above the best-practice response time.

The communication between the 911 Center and the fire stations is over a radio-link communication rather than a modern digital system. When multiple stations are required to respond, each station must be toned out one at a time, causing a delayed response as all stations are toned out prior to the announcement. If the current radio-link to the station alert system fails, dispatch reverts to using a telephone call to the station to alert them of an emergency.

According to members of both the Monterey and Salinas Fire Departments, a modernized network dispatch system would be far more efficient than the current radio-link network. The County already has such a system called NGEN (Next Generation).

The current radio-link with telephone backup system for alerting fire stations functions but is several decades old and slows response times and dispatch-to-station

communications. The MFD fire station dispatch and alerting system currently lacks the interface to utilize the County NGEN system. Tying the dispatch alert system into the NGEN system would provide the capability to alert multiple fire stations simultaneously and shorten response times.

Mental Health

Sign inside Fire Station 11 on Pacific Street, Monterey
Source: Photo taken by Civil Grand Juror

Firefighters are expected to be calm, level-headed, and able to face even the most challenging situations with courage. However, this expectation can take a toll on their mental health. Research indicates that many firefighters have experienced mental health issues such as PTSD, anxiety, depression, and suicidal thoughts. Therefore, it is critical to provide mental health resources and suicide prevention initiatives for all firefighters. Early detection, access to culturally competent, trauma trained mental health specialists, and proper screening can help reduce the effects of post-traumatic stress. Fire service leaders note that some firefighters believe that they are expected to "tough it out." They ignore personal issues because asking for help may indicate weakness or put their jobs in jeopardy. Therefore, raising awareness of mental health in the fire service is crucial to encourage firefighters to seek treatment at the first sign of a problem.

In a 2018 nationwide survey of 7,000 firefighters, 95% felt incredibly stressed, and 81% said they feared being seen as weak or unfit for duty if they asked for help. To combat these alarming numbers, several fire departments in California (Los Angeles, El Cajon, Santa Rosa, among others) have worked with agencies to provide specially-trained therapy dogs to accompany officers and live at the station. The Salinas Fire Department uses facility dogs to provide mental support for its firefighters, and the program has proven quite effective and popular.

Mental health services are made available to MFD through the City of Monterey's Human Resources Department, the County of Monterey's Behavioral Health Services, and a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT) contracted with the City of Monterey. Although MFD staff were generally aware that mental health services existed, most were unaware of how to receive them.

After Action Reviews (AARs) are intended to analyze intended outcomes versus actual outcomes at an incident and identify ways to improve. After a fire company responds to an emergency, producing an AAR helps the firefighters analyze their techniques and knowledge by documenting lessons learned.

When MFD responds to an emergency that is particularly traumatic (vehicle accident involving minors, firefighter injury, etc.) fire departments use their Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) policy to help the firefighter company cope with the post-traumatic stress brought on by the incident.

At the time of this report writing, both the MFD AAR and CISM policies are in a draft format in Lexipol. These policies need to be finalized and adopted throughout the department so that all firefighting staff understand the processes designed to support them.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This report has been prepared to identify issues and to offer recommendations. The CGJ is aware that some of its findings are currently being addressed by the City of Monterey and the MFD.

FINDINGS

Administration

F1. During its interviews and tours, the CGJ found that firefighters are uniformly committed to the mission of public safety.

F2. The City of Monterey has not addressed the issues of aging facilities, increasingly failing fire apparatus, and timely follow-through on mental health services all leading to low staff morale and public endangerment.

F3. The transition to a consolidated set of policies has not been a priority of the MFD Administration, leading to confusion among staff.

Apparatus

F4. The MFD is not adhering to its Vehicle & Equipment Replacement Policy as three-quarters of the fire apparatus is at or beyond its lifecycle replacement. This has resulted in a doubling of the repair frequency over the past three years, increasing the workload of the City's Public Works Department, and affecting apparatus availability for emergencies, thus endangering the public.

F5. The MFD's primary tiller truck has been out-of-service for nearly a year and the 25-year-old backup tiller truck has frequent breakdowns often leaving the MFD without an operable 100-foot ladder causing the need to call for mutual aid from other fire departments.

F6. Having only one certified fire apparatus mechanic serving the Monterey fleet hampers quick repairs and puts the MFD at risk of not having the proper equipment in service to respond to emergencies thus endangering the public.

Monterey Fire Stations

F7. All Monterey-owned fire stations are in a significant state of disrepair. Years of neglect and normal wear have resulted in unsafe and unsanitary living and working conditions and contribute to the low morale for MFD personnel.

F8. Station 13 and the daytime airport south-side modular trailer currently rely on audio alerts with no visual information on 911 calls unlike other Monterey Fire stations limiting available information on the emergency.

F9. The extent of the deterioration of the Station 13 training tower is a danger to the station, its firefighters, and the parking area immediately adjacent.

F10. Most MFD firefighter companies work and live in 70-year-old facilities that have not been thoroughly tested for hazardous building materials potentially endangering their health and safety.

F11. Responding from the new airport north-side station increases the response time to serve the Fisherman's Flats/Ryan Ranch/Hwy 68 neighborhoods putting public safety at risk.

F12. Firefighter companies at the airport south-side modular trailer do not have access to safe inside changing and storage areas for their turnout gear, violating NFPA standards and causing potential harm and distress for firefighters.

F13. Fire engines at the airport south-side modular trailer are exposed to the weather hastening deterioration and increased costs for repair or replacement.

F14. No potable water is available inside the south-side modular trailer, compromising the health and safety of the firefighters who work there during daytime hours.

CAD/911 Dispatch Systems

F15. The MFD currently relies on an outdated two-tone paging system for alerts. Upgrading to a modern Fire Station Alerting system would enhance response times for multi-station emergency calls and bolster public safety.

F16. Unreliable CAD software and hardware in the fire apparatus and stations forces firefighters to rely on less comprehensive systems to respond to calls efficiently.

Mental Health

F17. The MFD does not utilize facility dogs that have been successfully used to enhance wellbeing for first responders and build positive relationships in the community.

F18. Some MFD staff are unaware of the process to access a City-contracted Licensed Marriage Family Therapist or County Behavioral Health Department personnel which compromises their mental wellness.

F19. The MFD policies for After-Action Reviews and Critical Incident Stress Management are in draft form leading to confusion or misinterpretation by MFD personnel.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Administration

R1. No recommendation needed.

R2. The City of Monterey formalizes its multi-year strategic plan for the MFD that addresses: updating facilities, replacing apparatus, training firefighter staff, and ensuring that the mental health service policy is clearly defined by December 31, 2024.

R3. The MFD Administration consolidates all MFD policies into a single unified system by September 30, 2024.

Apparatus

R4. The MFD Administration aligns its Monterey Vehicle & Equipment Replacement Policy with NFPA Standards for apparatus replacement by September 30, 2024.

R5. The City of Monterey funds the repair of the primary MFD aerial ladder making it operational by October 31, 2024.

R6. The City of Monterey develops a hiring plan or internship program to maintain sufficient certified and appropriately compensated fire mechanics commensurate with the number of fire apparatus by October 31, 2024.

Monterey Fire Stations

R7. The City of Monterey develops a schedule to begin upgrading, renovating, or replacing the MFD fire stations by December 31, 2024.

R8. The City of Monterey ensures that all visual 911 Center alert system boards function at all MFD stations, including the south-side modular trailer by August 31, 2024.

R9. The City of Monterey immediately red-tags and develops a plan to repair or demolish the Station 13 training tower by October 31, 2024.

R10. The City of Monterey performs a comprehensive assessment to identify potentially hazardous building materials in all MFD fire stations by December 31, 2024.

R11. The City of Monterey creates a plan for a permanent fire facility to provide faster, 24-hour emergency response coverage for the communities near the Highway 68 corridor by December 31, 2024.

R12. The City of Monterey, MFD and MPAD Administration collaborate to provide safe and private decontamination changing and storage areas for turnout gear at the airport modular trailer to comply with NFPA standards by October 31, 2024.

R13. Until a permanent facility is constructed, the City of Monterey collaborate with MPAD to provide a protective structure for the fire apparatus at the south-side modular trailer by October 31, 2024.

R14. The City of Monterey provides a potable water source for the south-side modular trailer by November 30, 2024.

CAD/911 Dispatch Systems

R15. The City of Monterey and MFD Administration collaborate with the County of Monterey to implement a plan and timeline for upgrading to a modern Fire Station Alert system by December 31, 2024.

R16. The City of Monterey ensures all CAD software/hardware is consistently operational in all fire apparatus and stations by November 30, 2024.

Mental Health

R17. The MFD Administration conducts a study to gauge the interest and feasibility of MFD personnel obtaining one or more facility dogs by August 31, 2024.

R18. The City of Monterey posts at each fire station information regarding the availability of the contracted Licensed Marriage Family Therapist by July 30, 2024.

R19. The MFD Administration finalizes and distributes the AAR and CISM policies ensuring that every critical incident is reported, and after-action mental support services are made available by October 31, 2024.

REQUEST FOR RESPONSES

The following responses are required pursuant to Penal Code sections 933 and 933.05:

From the following governing bodies within 90 days of the publication of this report:

- Monterey City Council
  - Findings: F1 to F19
  - Recommendations: R1 to R19
- Monterey Peninsula Airport District Board
  - Findings: F12 to F13
  - Recommendations: R12 to R13
- Monterey County Board of Supervisors
  - Findings: F15
  - Recommendations: R15

INVITED RESPONSES

From the following individual:

- Monterey Fire Chief
  - Findings: F1 to F19
  - Recommendations: R1 to R19

Reports issued by the Grand Jury do not identify individuals interviewed. Penal Code section 929 requires that reports of the Grand Jury not contain the name of any person or facts leading to the identity of any person who provides information to the Grand Jury.

GLOSSARY & ACRONYMS

Acronym / Phrase	Definition
AAR	After Action Review
Aerial ladder truck	A fire apparatus with a self-extending ladder used for high-rise rescues and able to extend a hose over a roof to fight fires from above
ARFF	Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting

Apparatus	Any vehicle that has been highly customized for use during firefighting operations (aka “fire truck” or “fire engine”)
Automatic aid	Assistance dispatched automatically by contractual agreement between two communities or fire districts to all first alarm structural fires
CAD	Computer Aided Dispatch Computer system utilized by dispatchers, call-takers, and 911 operators to prioritize and record incident calls, identify the status and location of responders in the field, and effectively dispatch responder personnel
Captain	A member of a fire company that is in overall charge
CGJ	Civil Grand Jury
CISM	Critical Incident Stress Management
Citygate Associates	A public sector consultancy dedicated to “The Business of Better Government”
Crash phone	Direct alerting phone from airport tower to the airport fire station
DC	Division Chief The commander in overall charge of administrative duties of a single shift of multiple fire companies
Engineer	A member of a fire company that drives the apparatus and manages the apparatus’ pressures and gauges
EV	Electric Vehicle
FAA	Federal Aviation Administration
Fire chief	The commander in overall charge of the entire Fire Department
Fire company	A Captain and one or more Engineers and Firefighters organized and equipped to extinguish fires and respond to Public Safety emergencies

Fire engine / fire truck	A generic term for any fire apparatus
Firefighter	A member of a fire company that manages the hoses and fights the fire and sometimes used as a generic term to mean any fire department emergency responder
GVWR	Gross Vehicle Weight Rating
HVAC	Heating, ventilation, and air conditioning
IAFF	International Association of Fire Fighters
ICE	Internal Combustion Engine
Ladder truck	A fire apparatus that carries ladders and is also called an aerial ladder truck
LMFT	Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist
MFD	Monterey Fire Department
MPAD	Monterey Peninsula Airport District
Mutual aid	Assistance that is dispatched, upon request, by the responding fire department
NFPA	National Fire Protection Association
NGEN	Next Generation radio network
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment (aka turnout gear) Chemically treated clothing designed to protect firefighters from the heat, fire, smoke and chemicals encountered during a fire emergency
PTO	Power Take Off Equipment that diverts power from the fire apparatus wheels to the pumps and hydraulics onboard

Pumper truck	An apparatus that pumps water and carries hoses and has an internal water tank or can connect to a fire hydrant for water

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APPENDIX

Appendix A - Supplemental Fire Station Photos

Appendix B - City of Monterey 2023-24 Facility Facts

DISCLAIMER

One Civil Grand Juror recused themselves from all meetings and discussions regarding this report and abstained from voting on its approval.

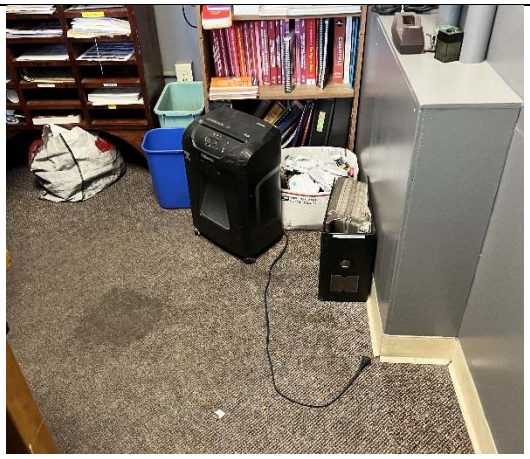
Appendix A - Photos Illustrating Conditions in Monterey Fire Stations

The following photos were taken by Civil Grand Jury members during Monterey Fire station tours. They are meant to better illustrate the condition of the fire stations in which the firefighting companies work and live.

Station 11 (Pacific Street)

Old stove/countertop damage

Exercise gear used and stored in fire engine garage



Worn out carpeting

Chipped/worn out kitchen cabinetry

Appendix A - Photos Illustrating Conditions in Monterey Fire Stations

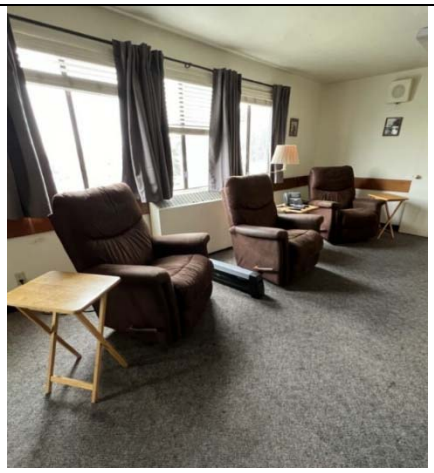
Station 12 (Hawthorne)

Bubbling paint after two weeks

Poor condition of fire pole landing pad

Window sill paint peeling

Kitchen area windowsill



Living area

Kitchen paint flaking/peeling

Appendix A - Photos Illustrating Conditions in Monterey Fire Stations

Station 13 (DeLa Vina)

Abandoned training tower

View inside abandoned training tower

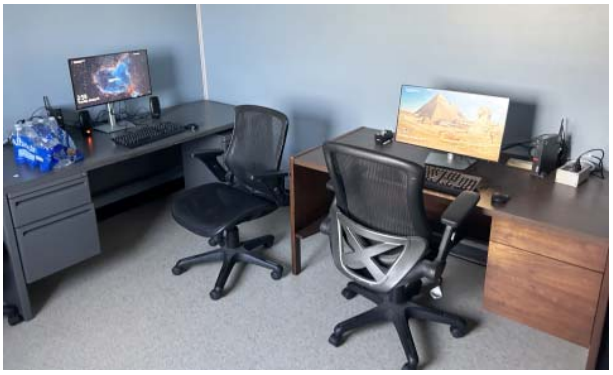
View inside abandoned training tower

Workout equipment in vehicle storage area

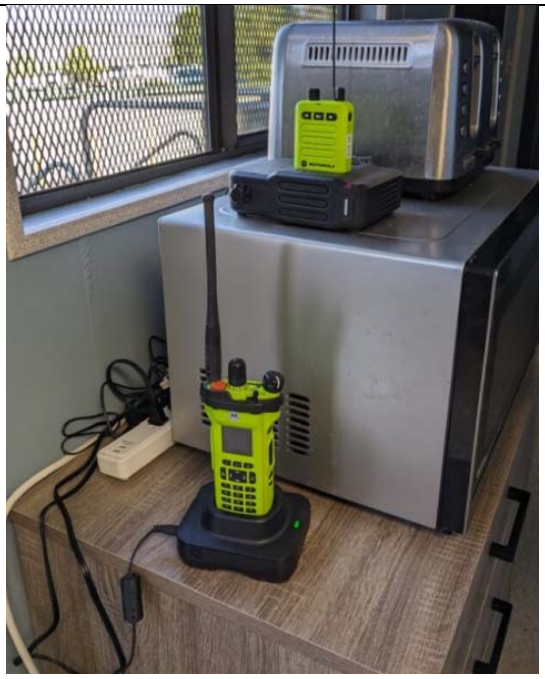
Appendix A - Photos Illustrating Conditions in Monterey Fire Stations

Station 16 (Airport) Modular Trailer

Modular trailer “fire station” at airport



Working area inside modular trailer



Alert system in modular trailer

Non-potable water supply

Sign above sink

Septic system for modular trailer

CITY OF MONTEREY, 2023 -2024

FACILITY FACTS

COST EXCEEDS $130 MILLION

AVERAGE AGE OF CITY FACILITIES = 60 YEARS

UPGRADE NEEDS

City Hall Campus - 580 Pacific St.

BUILT: 1934

5 Community Centers - built:

1947, 1955, 1958, 1962, 1992

Fire Stations 12 & 13

BUILT: 1951

Monterey Public Library

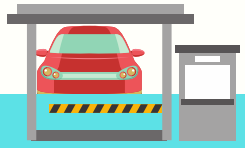
BUILT: 1952

Public Safety Facility - Police and Fire

BUILT: 1959

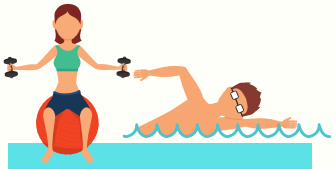
Lighthouse Tunnel

BUILT: 1967



4 Parking Garages - built between:

1971 & 1979



Monterey Sports Center - rehab reserve needed

BUILT: 1992

Monterey Conference Center

REHAB RESERVE NEEDED

Storm Water System

REPAIR/REHAB/ REGULATORY MANDATES

Harbor Office Seawall Wharves I & II

1970's - 1980's WHARVES: 1913 & 1926

monterey.org/budget

Brought to you by the City of Monterey Fiscal Health Response Plan

Information as of June 2023