

About Oskaloosa:

Oskaloosa is the county seat and is located in southeast Iowa. It is sixty minutes from Des Moines, the state capitol, and sixty minutes from Iowa City, home of the University of Iowa. The city is a diverse, micropolitan community offering big-city amenities. It is the home of William Penn University, a private liberal arts university, and, multiple national and international industrial exporters and family owned businesses. Visit the City's website at www.oskaloosaiowa.org or the Chamber at www.oacdg.org for additional community information.

The Fire Department:

The Oskaloosa Fire Department was established in 1871 as a paid fire department when city leaders determined that the need for fire protection for the citizens related directly to public safety and security. These early firefighters utilized horse-drawn, steam-fired water pump wagons. In 1909 a new fire station was built. This station has been staffed 24-7 for the past 108 years and still operates as part of the primary fire station for the city of Oskaloosa. During FY2018 a 10,500 square foot expansion was completed and placed into operation in addition to a renovation of the existing fire station. This expansion and renovation project has made a noticeable impact on all operations of the fire department.

Day-to-day operations of the Department are conducted by regular staff working a rotating schedule consisting of a Shift Officer and one shift firefighter both working a 24-hour shift, and two dayshift firefighters working a nine-hour schedule from 7:30 am until 4:30 pm Monday thru Friday. After 4:30 pm Monday - Friday, on holidays, and weekends the station decreases staffing to the two shift employees. Duty staff rely on reserve paid-on-call (POCs) and off-duty staff for any required additional support.

The Department provides fire response services to residents within the city limits of Oskaloosa, Beacon, University Park, and Lake Keomah. The Department also covers all, or part of, Madison, Adams, Scott, Garfield, Lincoln, Spring Creek, Jefferson, and Harrison Townships, within Mahaska County. The services provided by the Department includes:

- Fire suppression
- Fire investigation
- Fire inspection
- Fire prevention
- Hazardous material response
- Rescue operations; and
- Nuisance enforcement operations (only within Oskaloosa).

The Fire Department has a \$1.06 million annual budget. The Department is authorized to have a total of 33 (8FT/25POC) employees as follows: Full time fire chief, three captains, three firefighters, one nuisance enforcement officer/firefighter, and up to 25 POC response employees.

The Fire Department is well-equipped as follows:

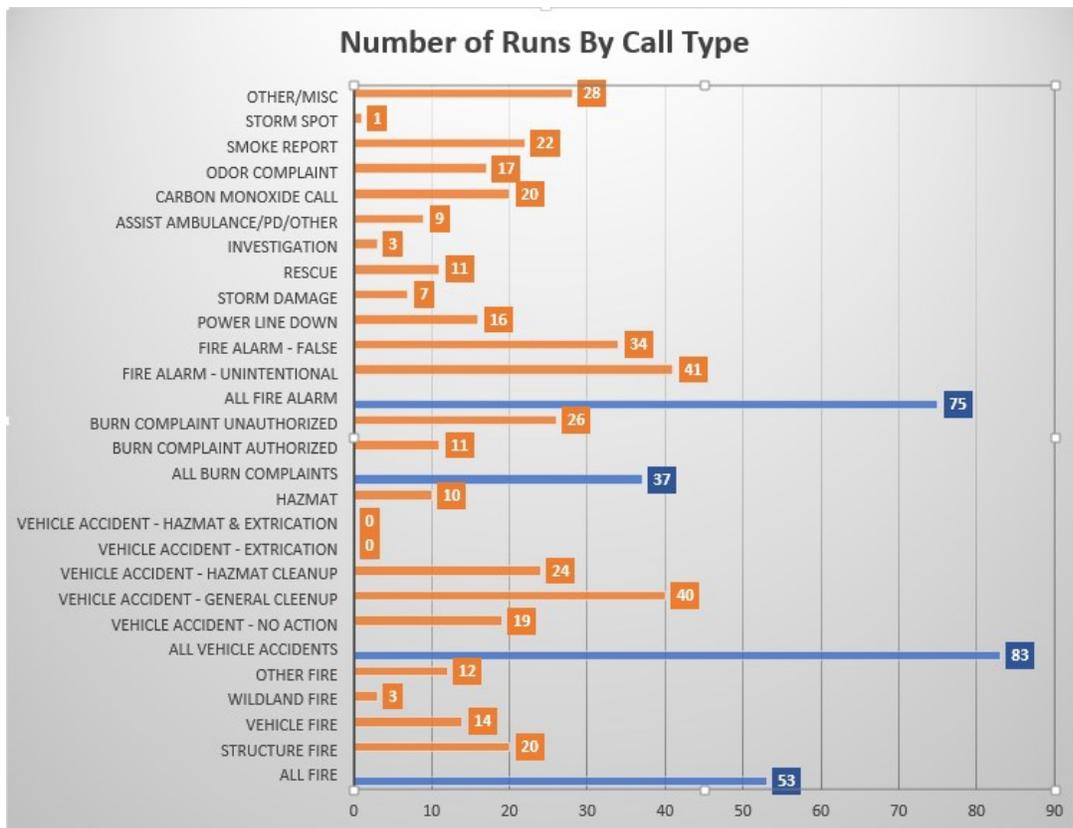
- 100' aerial ladder;
- One pumper/tanker;

- One rescue engine;
- One water tender;
- One reserve pumper;
- Two quick attack units (one equipped with UHP system);
- One rescue boat;
- One staff vehicle; and
- One nuisance enforcement vehicle.

The equipment along with a good water supply and a well-trained department has allowed the city of Oskaloosa to obtain an ISO rating of 3 in 2018. This rating leads to reduced premiums for Oskaloosa businesses and residents. The city expects to maintain this rating and worked hard to reduce it from an ISO rating 6.

Calls for Service:

According to the Department’s Fiscal Year 2019 Annual Report, the total number of alarm calls responded to by the Department was 388. The total number of alarm incidents decreased from the previous year by 86 calls, however calls increased by four calls from the previous three-year average of 384. The fire department responded to total of 183 fire calls in FY2019 which includes false alarms and burning complaints. This translates to 47% of the total call volume. The fires resulted in estimated losses of \$608,350. The chart below and subsequent pages breakdown the calls for service by type and runs by percentage of total volume.



Opportunities:

1. *Staffing and Command Structure*

The existing staffing and command structure has remained in place since the 1930s and needs refinement. The current structure was a carryover from when the city council approved transferring EMS services to the County hospital, Mahaksa Health, in 2001. Mahaksa Health continues to provide EMS/transport service and the city does not anticipate assuming this service in the future. The next fire chief will need to strategically review this structure and ensure it is nimble to address future changes in fire service provision, funding, or service area(s) served. The chief position although expected to work a standard Monday-Friday schedule, is a “working Chief” and will also need to take this into consideration when reviewing department staffing and command structure. The previous chief worked shift with a rotating schedule like the captains, this practice will discontinue with the hiring on the next chief.

2. *Professional Development and Succession Planning*

There are regular training sessions available to employees at the Department which keeps them current and up to date on changes in the industry and satisfies continuing education requirements to maintain Fire certification. Department employees are interested in growing professionally and are looking for the Chief to be a mentor and coach for them.

In addition, there is a need to continue to further develop leadership within the department and prepare the Department for future staffing flexibility, including the development and additional use of POCs for providing services to the community more routinely. There is an interest among some of the staff in assisting the Fire Chief with administrative matters such as budget preparation.

3. *Nuisance Enforcement Program Development*

The nuisance (code) enforcement program for the city is managed by the Department. Staffing currently includes one full-time day shift firefighter, and the Chief. While the department has accommodated this service into the Department’s operations, Department pride and ownership could improve. The next Chief needs to strategically evaluate and manage the program as the City Council is committed to keeping the community clean, and ensuring minimum standards continue to rise.

4. *Communications with the Community and Internally with Staff*

The Department is widely supported by the community for the services provided. The next Chief will need to continue to earn the public’s trust and support that go beyond the city’s corporate boundaries. Additional emphasis should be placed on communicating with the public, developing regular opportunities to do so, and using multiple platforms to accomplish this task. Inside the Department there is a desire for being involved in the planning and operation of the organization. The desire to know what is going on, and what is coming, requires continuous communication within the Department. This could involve meetings and briefing with the Chief or supervisors or posting information on an internal electronic forum. Outside of the Department the Chief will need to continue to grow relationships in the community (possible source of POCs), other area departments, and townships served by the Department.

Compensation:

The compensation for Fire Chief is competitive with the starting salary dependent on the selected individual's qualification and match with the attributes being sought by the city. The proposed hiring range is \$65,000 - \$82,500. Benefits for the position currently include:

- Paid Vacation, Holiday Leave (11 days), Sick Leave (8 hours per month)
- Health, Disability, and Life Insurance, Flexible Benefits Account
- Municipal Fire and Police Retirement System of Iowa (MFPRSI – 411)

To Apply:

The position is open until filled. Please send your resume and cover letter with current salary to michael.schrock@oskaloosaiowa.org. The first review of resumes will occur on **July 9, 2020** with interviews, community tours and a public presentation scheduled on **August 6 and 7, 2020**. For additional information about this opportunity, please contact

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