

# Minnesota Department of Public Safety



## **Fire Safety Account** *Financial Report for Fiscal Year 2022*

January 2023



## **Fire Safety Account — Fiscal Year 2022**

### **Overview**

The 2006 Minnesota State Legislature established a fire safety surcharge on homeowner and certain commercial insurance policies. The Fire Safety Account (FSA) was created to hold revenue generated by that surcharge. The 2006 Legislature simultaneously abolished the fire insurance tax that had been in law for decades, the proceeds of which went into the state general fund. State statute requires insurance companies submit surcharge collections quarterly to the Minnesota Department of Revenue on or before May 15, Aug. 15, Nov. 15 and Feb. 15.

MN Statute 299F.012 directs the Fire Service Advisory Committee (FSAC) to make recommendations to the commissioner of public safety on how to spend FSA money. These revenues may be allotted only to:

1. The Minnesota Board of Firefighter Training and Education (MBFTE).
2. Programs and staffing for the Minnesota Department of Public Safety State Fire Marshal Division (SFMD).
3. Fire-related, regional response-team programs and other fire service programs that have potential statewide impact.

The FSAC is made up of representatives from state fire service associations, local units of government and the insurance field. The FSAC meets quarterly to review the account's status and funding allotments. It creates biennial budget recommendations for the commissioner.

### **Fiscal Year 2022 (FY22) Base Budget**

Transfers from the FSA as established in the FY22 base budget:

- SFMD \$8,574,000.
- MBFTE \$5,792,000.

## FY22 Activity Summary

<b>Fire Safety Account</b>	<b>FY 2022 (x 1000)</b>
<b><u>Resources</u></b>	
Balance Forward From Prior Year	7,803
Receipts and Transfers In	17,723
<b><i>Total Resources Available</i></b>	<b>25,526</b>
 <b><u>Expenditures</u></b>	
Fire Marshal Base	8,574
MBFTE Base	5,792
FY22 Allocations	2,349
FY23 Allocations - MNFIRE	1,000
<b><i>Total Uses</i></b>	<b>17,715</b>
<b>Balance Before Reserves</b>	<b>7,811</b>
<i>60 day operating reserve</i>	<i>2,362</i>
<b>Budgetary Balance</b>	<b>5,449</b>

### One-Time Appropriation for Fiscal Year 2022

Commissioner of Public Safety John Harrington approved the \$2,348,803.21 one-time appropriation. The committee recommended funding the following:

#### \$ 748,515 to SFMD

- Web-based permit processing and record management software (\$211,500)
- Specialized Detection and Decontamination equipment (\$477,015)
- Contracting with Management Analysis and Development (MAD) to develop a 5-year strategic plan (\$35,000)
- Sprinkler Trailer upgrades (\$25,000)

#### \$ 1,193,265.21 to MBFTE

- Funds for Fire Chief Boot Camp through SFMD (\$24,000)
- Funds for MBFTE to increase the per firefighter award amount for fire department training

#### \$ 327,023 to Arrowhead Regional USAR

- Increase staffing from 13 up to 30 members
- Conduct trench rescue technician class
- Conduct structural collapse technician class
- Purchase required personal protective equipment (PPE)

#### \$ 20,000 to MBFTE

- To manage funds for FSAC's Strategic Planning through Ethical Leaders in Action®

#### \$ 60,000 to MBFTE

- To manage funds for MnFIRE hosting National Conference

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**\$ 2,348,803.21 Total**

## **MBFTE**

In FY22, a base budget appropriation of \$5.792 million and a \$1.35 million one-time appropriation from the FSA were available to Minnesota fire departments. The MBFTE awarded departments a per-firefighter rate of \$205 for training. Based on that rate, the average training reimbursement per fire department in FY22 was \$7,715. Of Minnesota's 775 fire departments, 687 requested more than \$5.3 million in training reimbursements. All fire departments that submit a request receive a training reimbursement; no formal application is required.

Other FY22 highlights:

- The MBFTE provided reimbursement for National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1001, Firefighter 1, Firefighter 2 and Hazardous Materials Operations training. There was \$1.7 million available to Minnesota fire departments to pay for this training — enough to fund more than 1,000 firefighters.
- The MBFTE provided more than \$66,000 in reimbursement grants to local, regional and statewide fire service organizations for unique training events. These awards helped nearly 20,000 firefighters attend 17 different training opportunities at a significantly reduced rate.
- Approximately \$145,000 funded 97 live-burn training events across Minnesota. Live-burn training is conducted in accordance with NFPA 1403 standards, which ensured all burns were conducted safely and met both a nationally recognized standard and the statutory requirements of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.
- The MBFTE provided more than \$38,000 to fund two Fire Service Leadership Development courses held at Camp Ripley. Each 32-hour course helped a cross-section of fire service leaders from across the state — at no cost to them or their department — develop skills and address key leadership issues specific to the Minnesota fire service. 80 firefighters completed this course in FY2022.

The MBFTE continues educating fire departments, fire training providers and fire service organizations across Minnesota on the resources available to them from the FSA. The MBFTE continues to maintain a simplified website and reimbursement process that allows for online management of training reimbursements for all departments.

## **SFMD**

Approximately 70 percent of the SFMD budget comes from the FSA. The remaining 30 percent comes from fees and contracts for health care, daycare, school and motel inspections.

FY22 monies provided operational funding to the SFMD for the following:

- Health Care and Department of Corrections Facilities Inspection Team.
- Public and Charter School Inspection Team.
- Residential Care and Lodging Inspection Team.
- Fire Protection Systems Plan Review and Inspection Team.
- Fire Investigation Team.
- Administrative, management and other support services (such as fire service specialists).
- Fire and life safety education.
- Youth Firesetter Prevention & Intervention (YFPI)

- Fire incident data collection and analysis.

FSA funding has helped the SFMD significantly improve training opportunities for local fire marshals, inspectors and firefighters. One example is the upgrading/renovation of the Fire Protections Systems Demonstration Trailer, a mobile training prop containing seven complete, working fire protection (sprinkler) systems in a variety of configurations.

Another training aid is the Fire Code Training Trailer. This unit contains a variety of training props, including a working fire alarm system, kitchen hood fire protection system, several fire doors and egress devices, escape window, and other fire safety and protection features commonly found in buildings. This unit will give fire marshals and inspectors — particularly those new to the job — hands-on experience with the props, and a functional understanding of their operation and purpose.

During FY22 the Fire Protection Team used FSA funding to purchase software to enhance and expedite sprinkler plan reviews online.

### **Training Efforts**

Since the implementation of the FSA, the SFMD has been able to provide fire investigation, fire code, fire protection system, and fire safety education training to the Minnesota fire service at no cost. This has augmented local government budgets, especially training dollars that are often in short supply on a local level. In FY22, the SFMD provided a weeklong fire code academy at Camp Ripley to focus on fire code training for code officials from across the state. The fire code training, along with room and board at Camp Ripley, was provided free of charge to 32 attendees.

### **Records Management**

One of the first purchases made with FSA funding was an online records management system accessible to any of Minnesota's 775 fire departments. The system was developed by ImageTrend out of Lakeville, Minn.

Although primarily developed as a fire reporting tool for fire departments, the system also includes modules for training, personnel, payroll, inventory, inspections and investigations. A significant software upgrade called ImageTrend Elite was initiated by the company in FY17 and FY18. The system was used by 89 percent of the state's fire departments in FY22.

The state emergency response teams were transferred over to the SFMD in May 2019. Since then, the SFMD has continued its focus in FY22 on upgrading and sustaining equipment for the 11 hazardous materials response teams and Minnesota Task Force-1; an Urban Search and Rescue Team (USAR) primarily based out of the twin cities metro area. In FY2022, a second USAR team was formed in northern Minnesota. This team is known as Minnesota Task Force-2 (MNTF-2) and is primarily made up of members from the Duluth, Virginia and Hibbing fire departments. Funds from the FSA have assisted both Minnesota Task Force-1 (MNTF-1) and MNTF-2 in conducting required training, and purchasing necessary technical rescue equipment.

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