



# 2019 ANNUAL REPORT



## Cedar Area Fire & Rescue

8907 Railroad Ave.  
PO Box 208  
Cedar, MI 49621

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF

I am grateful for the tremendous amount of support given to Cedar Area Fire & Rescue by our staff, the four representing township boards, residents, community members, and neighboring fire departments. This support has been instrumental in building a solid foundation for our fire department.

In 2019, after many ups and downs, we ended the year stronger than ever. Our full-time staff, with over eighty years of experience, consistently demonstrate professionalism and swift responses. Coupled with the tremendous amount of experience amongst our part-time staff, our citizens and visitors have experienced many positive outcomes.

In 2018 and 2019 the four township boards (Centerville, Cleveland, Kasson, and Solon) infused Cedar Area Fire & Rescue with \$360,000 in capital improvement funds. With those funds, we have developed a twenty-year capital replacement plan that will continue to grow as we purchase new equipment for the fire department. Since that infusion was given to the department, we have been able to purchase a wildfire brush truck, an ambulance, and a fire engine to replace aging equipment. We also added a command vehicle to our fleet. The new ambulance was delivered and placed into service in August 2019. The new engine was ordered in December 2019 with a scheduled delivery date of September 1, 2020.

Our staff is dedicated to serving the community through public education. Throughout the year, our duty crew installed smoke detectors upon appointment. Every full-time member, and several part-time members, have been trained by the Department of Natural Resources on Wildland Urban Interface prevention. This training is extremely important as we live in a growing community that continues to expand into the beautiful landscape around us. We will be providing this prevention service for all residents throughout the years to come. Finally, I would like to boast about the education that our staff provides to Glen Lake School every October during Fire Prevention Week. We now teach a progressive education plan that builds on itself as the kids move from kindergarten through fifth grade.



As the year closes out, I am thankful for the generosity Cedar Area Fire & Rescue has seen through donations and grants. Our department was awarded fourteen new Scott

Air-packs and twenty-eight new bottles from an Assistance to Firefighters Grant through FEMA. This saved the Department over \$100,000. In November 2019, I wrote to the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians for a 2% grant that would offset the cost of new vehicle extrication tools (Jaws of Life), as our tools are over twenty years old. We were awarded \$20,000 from the Grand Traverse Band for these tools in early 2020. I would also like to thank the anonymous donor who purchased for our department a washing machine that removes the cancer-causing chemicals our staff are exposed to in fires from their fire gear. Last but not least, thank you to the Cedar Fire & Rescue Association for all the support and donations you make to the fire department. This year they provided our department with a set of tracks for our all-terrain Kubota. This allowed us to remove the snowmobile from service and gave our staff a safer mechanism to remove accident victims from the wilderness.

I look forward to another productive year in 2020. It is an exciting time at Cedar Area Fire & Rescue with the department growing and possibly transitioning from basic life support to advanced life support medical licensure in the next several years. We are always looking for new members, so if you have an interest in serving the community please come in and meet with me. My door is open to everyone and the coffee is always hot.

Stay Safe,

Christopher M. Comeaux  
Chief of Department

## FIRE DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

Cedar Area Fire & Rescue is located in the heart of beautiful Leelanau County. Our single fire station is situated next to Victoria Creek in the Polish historical town of Cedar. On April 1, 2016, the Solon/Centerville Fire Department, owned by Solon and Centerville Townships and serving Kasson and Cleveland Townships by contract, was reorganized as Cedar Area Fire & Rescue. This new department is governed by an interlocal agreement that includes Solon, Centerville, Cleveland, and Kasson Townships as equal partners. This new interlocal agreement permits a five-member Fire Board to provide guidance to the department and includes one representative from each partner township and a citizen at large.

Your 2019 Cedar Area Fire & Rescue board:

Greg Julian, Chairman – Kasson Township  
Rick Royston, Vice Chairman – Cleveland Township  
Dave Wurm, Treasurer – Centerville Township  
Dan Leach, Secretary – Solon Township  
John DePuy – Member at Large

Cedar Area Fire & Rescue is a combination department with full-time and part-time staff that provide all levels of firefighting, emergency medical services and technical skills to our community twenty-four hours a day 365 days a year. With our two-person duty crew, we are able to provide Basic Life Support ambulance transport for EMS calls. For those calls that require a higher level of care than we can currently provide, we receive Advanced Life Support through contracts with North Flight EMS and Leland Township Fire & Rescue. Fire responses in our jurisdiction are handled with a multitude of specialized equipment including a fire engine, water tanker, wildfire truck, and a Kubota UTV. These vehicles carry specialized equipment which allow us to handle incidents including structural and wildland fires, vehicle accidents, ice and water rescues, wilderness and other types of technical rescues and Hazardous Materials incidents. Our department has an International Organization for Standardization (ISO) rating of 9-10. This rating reflects a multitude of criteria that we use to better provide service to our community.

As of the 2010 Census, Cedar Area Fire & Rescue serves 5,531 citizens throughout our four townships. Summer residents and a healthy local tourism industry boost our population greatly from Memorial Day to Labor Day which results in our busiest time of the year. Centerville, Cleveland, Kasson and Solon Townships account for 25.42% of the total population of Leelanau County. We cover 121.1 square miles of land and 45.8 square miles of water totaling almost 167 square miles of response area (72.5% land & 27.4% water). This area equates to 21% of Leelanau County, and is the largest coverage area of any department in the area. CAFR receives the second highest calls for service with the lowest operating budget in the county.

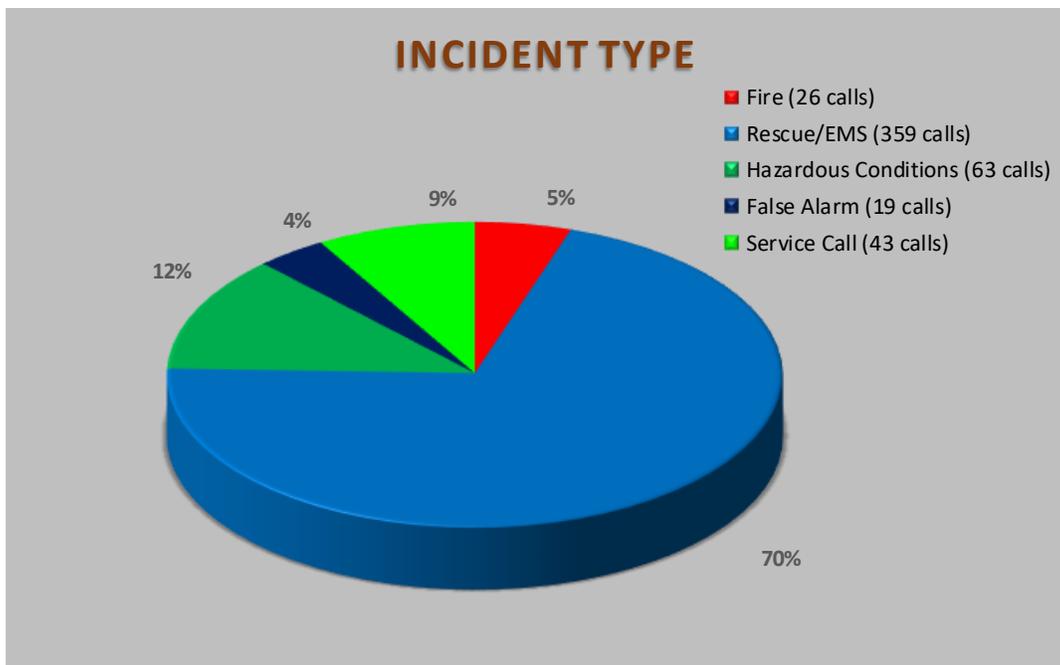
[Our Station is open to the public everyday from 8am-4pm and we welcome everyone to stop in and take a tour and meet your firefighters!](#)

## STATISTICAL SUMMARY

In 2019, Cedar Area Fire & Rescue responded to 510 calls, a slight decrease from the 513 calls run in 2018.

### INCIDENT RESPONSES BY TYPE

Incident Type	# of Incidents	% of Total
Fires	26	5.10
Rescue & Emergency Medical Service	359	70.39
Hazardous Conditions (No Fire)	63	12.35
Service Calls & Good Intent Calls	43	8.43
False Alarm & False Call	19	3.73
Total	510	100%

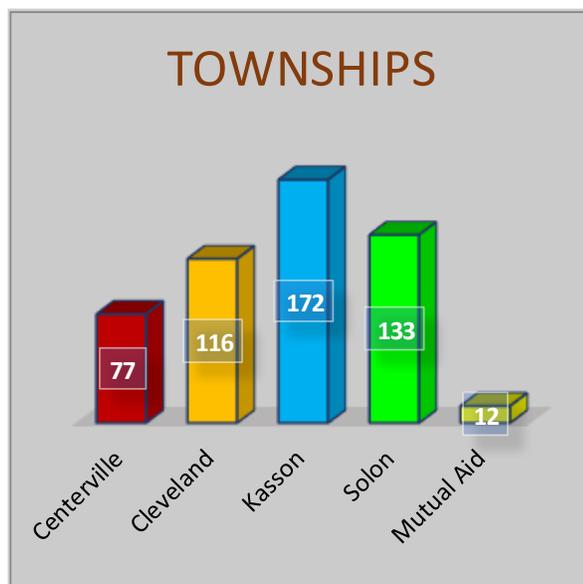


## INCIDENT RESPONSES BY TOWNSHIP

Township	# of Incidents	% of Total
Centerville	77	15.10
Cleveland	116	22.75
Kasson	172	33.72
Solon	133	26.08
Mutual Aid Calls	12	2.35
Total	510	100%

Cedar Area Fire & Rescue responded to a wide range of calls in 2019. The majority of the calls were EMS and rescue calls, throughout the four townships. There were a substantial number of motor vehicle accidents in 2019, including 3 in Cleveland Township, 4 in Centerville Township, 15 in Solon Township, and 9 in Kasson Township. Overall, fire calls were down throughout the service area, with 2 in Cleveland Township, 8 in Centerville Township, 3 in Solon Township, and 4 in Kasson Township. In addition, CAFR responded to 9 in other service areas through mutual aid. This included a regional-level response to a large understory fire near Karlin, where multiple personnel and apparatus from CAFR and other Leelanau departments responded with departments from five counties and a federal firefighting team.

In 2019, CAFR responded to fires involving property with a pre-incident value of \$848,500. In total, losses totaled only \$44,500.



## STAFFING AND TRAINING

Cedar Area Fire & Rescue is led by full-time chief Chris Comeaux, assisted by part-time assistant chief Andy Doornbos. The department operates with a full-time staff of six firefighter/EMTs, providing 24/7 coverage to the service area. The full-time staff are represented by the International Association of Fire Fighters Local 4953. The department ended 2019 with seven part-time personnel, who assist the department by filling open shifts and responding to calls that need additional personnel.

CAFR conducts training in several ways, including online, in-station, in cooperation with other local departments, and by sending personnel to training facilities in and out of state. In 2019, two firefighter candidates passed the exams for Firefighter I and II, adding two more firefighters to the department roster. These candidates attended classes in all aspects of firefighting, including HazMat Operations and Vehicle Extrication. One of these members also passed the Emergency Medical Responder (EMR) course. Both candidates began their Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) training in October 2019 and are expected to complete this training in mid-2020.

Two members of the department completed a Rope Operations course at the Regional Training Center in Grand Traverse County, along with members of several other local departments. In early 2019, members of CAFR participated in ice rescue training with Glen Lake Fire Department. Later in the year, members of CAFR and other local



departments were able to complete training in forcible access, ventilation and roof operations at the shuttered Sugarloaf Resort. The entire department participated in training for inspections of property to reduce wildland fire risk, which was utilized during inspections completed in late 2019. The department also completed in-house training in several subjects during 2019, including vehicle fires, vehicle stabilization and extrication, and familiarization with local hiking trails and recreation areas.

Chief Comeaux attended the International Association of Fire Chiefs annual symposium, where he attended seminars on “Challenge to be the Leader for the Community”, “Managing Your Liability”, and “Community Risk Reduction – Unique Characteristics of Your Community”, among others. Cedar’s unique characteristics include the aging population, large economic disparity, and wildland urban interface. He also received his certification as a CPR instructor. There are now two certified CPR instructors on staff in Cedar, which will allow the department to offer CPR trainings for staff, the public, and local schools.



## FIRE PREVENTION AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH

In 2019, Cedar Area Fire & Rescue continued a smoke alarm inspection and installation program in homes throughout the four-township service area. In collaboration with the American Red Cross, which provided free smoke alarms to the fire department, CAFR was able to install 79 alarms in 30 houses over the course of the year.



During the year, CAFR continued planning and training for a wildland-urban interface public education program. This program educates our citizens about property management methods that can help protect their homes, outbuildings, and property in case of wildfires. In 2019, all CAFR full time staff and other department members attended training in property surveys and inventories. This allowed them to begin inspecting properties in the four-township area at the request of local residents and assisting those residents with making their homes and properties more resistant to wildfires.

Every October is Fire Prevention Month. This year, the fire department continued door-to-door smoke detector inspection and installation in parts of the service

area. In addition, CAFR continued its outreach program at Glen Lake School, teaching students in grades K-12 about fire safety. The theme for 2019 was “Plan and Practice Your Escape”.

## APPARATUS

Cedar Area Fire & Rescue operates with the following apparatus:

- Two Basic Life Support Ambulances
- One 2,000 gallon water tanker
- One 1,000 gallon, 4 wheel drive fire engine
- One wildland brush truck
- One echo unit/mobile command vehicle
- One ORV with firefighting and rescue capability

All apparatus is maintained and inspected weekly by the full-time duty crew. These inspections ensure that the apparatus and equipment is functioning and ready for any emergency at any time of the day. All employees train and operate the apparatus extensively for proficiency in emergency situations.

## NEW APPARATUS

In 2019, Cedar Area Fire & Rescue purchased one new piece of equipment, ordered a second, and sold two older pieces of equipment.

A new ambulance, meant to replace the 1997 unit currently used as a backup, was ordered in late 2018. It was delivered and put into service in August 2019. Once the new ambulance was received, the 1997 ambulance



was sold, and the 2012 unit previously used as a primary response vehicle by the department was moved to backup status.

In late 2019, a new engine was purchased, which is expected to be received by September 1, 2020. This engine will serve as the primary fire response vehicle for the department. The existing engine was originally planned to be put into backup status, but inspections in late 2019 showed extensive frame damage. This piece of apparatus will likely be sold in 2020, and a loaned apparatus from Glen Lake Fire & Rescue will be used until the new engine is delivered.

The department also sold its 2002 snowmobile, which was rarely used on calls, in 2019. In replacement, tracks were placed on the ORV, which will allow it to travel in many places it was previously unable to on wheels.

## GRANTS

CAFR frequently applies for grants to purchase needed and useful equipment, both large and small.

In 2019, grants and donations received included:

- An Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG), through FEMA, was received after a group application by CAFR, Leland Fire & Rescue, Blair Township Fire & Rescue, and Leelanau Fire & Rescue. This grant will result in the purchase of new air packs, bottles and masks for all four departments. This will save Cedar over \$100,000, at a cost of under \$10,000 to the department.
- An anonymous donation of a gear washing machine. This allows fire gear dirtied in fires, vehicle accidents, medical calls and other incidents to be properly cleaned, reducing the amount of cancer-causing chemicals and bodily fluids to which department members are exposed.
- A donation from the Cedar Fire & Rescue Association purchased tracks for the ORV, which will let it travel in many more areas than it could using wheels, and allowed the sale of the snowmobile.

Grants and donations are a vital source of equipment funding for the department, and we will continue to apply for new grants as they become available.

**DEPARTMENT ROSTER**  
(As of 12/31/2019)

**ADMINISTRATION**

Chief Chris Comeaux  
Assistant Chief Andy Doornbos  
Administrative Assistant Dana Boomer

**FULL-TIME STAFF**

Lt. Tim Johnson  
Lt. Kevin Mikowski

FF/EMT Jake Garris  
FF/EMT Avery Pucelik  
FF/EMR Matt Maus

**PART-TIME STAFF**

FF/EMT Joe Voiles  
FF/EMT Peter Bean  
FF/Paramedic Jeff Friend  
FF Brent Garvin  
FF/EMT Don McMullen  
FF Austin Novak  
FF/EMT Kyle Monteith



FF/EMT Herb Sudemann retired in December 2019. We would like to thank him for his dedication to Cedar Area Fire & Rescue over the years!

Thank you for your service!