



Staff Report

File #: 22-136

Version: 1

Date: 4/11/2022

Item #: 3.3c.

TO: Mayor and City Council

THROUGH: Kristin Retherford, Interim City Manager

FROM: Mike Niblock, Fire Chief

SUBJECT:

Adoption of national standard for Fire Department emergency response time.

Ward(s): All Wards

Councilor(s): All Councilors

Neighborhood(s): All Neighborhoods

Result Area(s): Safe Community

SUMMARY:

The Salem Fire Department is requesting City Council adopt the National Fire Protection Association's 1710 response time standard to better align reported call statistics based on national standards.

ISSUE:

Shall the City Council adopt the National Fire Protection Association's 1710 response time standard of 5 minutes 20 seconds from dispatch to arrival of the first unit 90% of the time for all emergency fire and special operations, and 5 minutes from dispatch to arrival of the first unit 90% of the time for all emergency calls other than fire and special operations?

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt the National Fire Protection Association's (NFPA) 1710 response time standard of 5 minutes 20 seconds from dispatch to arrival of the first unit 90% of the time for all emergency fire and special operations, and 5 minutes from dispatch to arrival of the first unit 90% of the time for all emergency calls other than fire and special operations.

FACTS AND FINDINGS:

On October 2, 1995, based on the Fire Services Subcommittee recommendation, the City Council

adopted the current 5 minutes and 30 second response time standard for all emergency responses.

The current 5 minute and 30 second response time standard is calculated based on the following:

1. 30 seconds from receipt of alarm and dispatch (call processing);
2. 60 seconds from receipt of dispatch to enroute (turnout time); and
3. 4 minute drive time.

Established in 1896, the NFPA is an organization which recommends national standards regarding response time and other fire protection issues. The NFPA 1710 response time standard has two distinct response time measures: (1) emergency fire and special operations, and (2) emergencies other than fire and special operations (medical).

The response time for emergency fire and special operations is calculated based on the following:

1. 80 seconds from receipt of dispatch to enroute (turnout time); and
2. 4 minute drive time.

The response time for emergencies other than fire and special operations is calculated based on the following:

1. 60 seconds from receipt of dispatch to enroute (turnout time); and
2. 4 minute drive time.

The recommended response time standard does not include the call processing measure, which is separately evaluated, and provide a more accurate turnout time measure based on call type.

BACKGROUND:

The NFPA 1710 Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Career Fire Departments was initially issued in 2001. Since then NFPA 1710 has been revised in 2004, 2010, and 2016.

During the update of the Salem Fire Department's Standards of Cover in 2018, one of the improvement goals identified was to consider the aligning the response performance goals to national standards. The advantages of adopting the NFPA 1710 standard related to response time goals are two-fold. First, this standard provides more detail for each phase of the incident response. Second, it facilitates more accurate performance comparison with similar agencies in the country.

If adopted, the department will have the ability to evaluate performance based on the new response time standard immediately and will have the ability to report historical call data based on the new standard for previous calendar years.

Mike Niblock
Fire Chief

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Attachments:
1. None.