

Summit Fire & EMS



2025 Annual Report



From the Chief's Desk



Acting Chief
Brian Schenking

Summit Fire & EMS Fire Protection District is honored to present this annual report, reflecting another year of dedicated service to the residents, visitors and partners in our community.

Our personnel provide compassionate, all-hazards emergency response, delivering high-quality care and operational excellence in handling every type of incident.

Summit Fire & EMS maintains comprehensive, highly trained Community Risk Reduction programs that include Fire Suppression, Emergency Medical Services, Technical Rescue, Hazardous Materials Response, Wildland Fire Suppression and Mitigation, Fire Prevention, Fire Investigation and Public Education. These specialized capabilities — along with a range of other essential public safety functions — strengthen the overall resilience and preparedness of the community we serve.

These services are delivered in close coordination with many valued partners, including the Red, White & Blue Fire Protection District, Summit County Sheriff's Office, Frisco, Silverthorne and Dillon-Keystone Police Departments, Summit County 911 Dispatch, Summit County Search and Rescue, and our regional healthcare providers. These partnerships are essential to maintaining a coordinated and effective emergency-response system across Summit County.

Summit Fire & EMS is proud to be an

internationally accredited agency through the Center for Public Safety Excellence, demonstrating our commitment to continuous improvement and adherence to nationally recognized industry best practices.

The district also maintains an Insurance Services Office rating of 2/2X, placing SFE among the highest-performing fire departments nationwide for fire protection.

Additionally, our personnel were recognized this year with national-level lifesaving awards, highlighting the skill, professionalism and dedication demonstrated by our crews daily.

As a public entity, Summit Fire & EMS remains firmly committed to the responsible stewardship of taxpayer resources. We maintain transparent financial practices, including open budgeting processes and comprehensive annual audits, to ensure accountability and trust in how public resources are managed.

Summit Fire & EMS continues to build upon a strong foundation of professionalism, service and operational excellence established over many years. Our leadership team remains committed to supporting our personnel, strengthening partnerships across the county, and ensuring the organization continues to evolve to meet the needs of the community.

Our organization takes great pride in fulfilling our mission: **To be dedicated and compassionate professionals providing all-hazards solutions to the community through education, prevention, and response.** Through the accomplishments detailed in this report, we hope you will see that commitment clearly demonstrated.

OPERATIONS



Under Operations Chief Rick Ihnken, Summit Fire & EMS staffs 87 first responders based out of five fire stations – in Copper Mountain, Frisco, Dillon, Silverthorne and Keystone – for round-the-clock emergency coverage.

The SFE response area includes the towns of Frisco, Dillon, Keystone, Montezuma and Silverthorne, hundreds of square miles of national forest and three ski areas plus the nation’s most treacherous stretch of interstate highway, from the Eisenhower Tunnel to Vail Pass, as well as Loveland Pass over the Continental Divide.

In 2025, Summit Fire & EMS responded to 4,427 calls for assistance, a 3.6 percent increase over 2024. Emergency medical service response remains our top demand, accounting for 53.8 percent of our calls, followed by motor-vehicle accidents, which make up about 10 percent of total call volume.

YEAR	TOTAL CALLS	EMS CALLS
2025	4,427	2,382
2024	4,237	2,496
2023	4,322	2,599
2022	4,268	2,204
2021	4,357	2,686

Summit Fire & EMS works closely with our partners at Breckenridge-based Red, White & Blue Fire-Rescue to assist each other through automatic-aid requests, accounting for 102 responses. Additionally, SFE responded to 31 mutual-aid requests from neighboring counties.

SFE and RWB jointly operate the High Country Training Center in the Frisco County Commons, offering state-of-the-art in-house training for all-hazards emergency response and emergency medical services.

Finally, through a continual on-the-job advancement program, all crew members have the opportunity to train for promotions.



Every Summit Fire & EMS first responders on either an engine or an ambulance crew maintains at least an EMT certification, and many are paramedics. The organization operates five ambulances around the clock.

As part of its continuous-improvement and staff-development efforts, two SFE emergency responders completed paramedic school in 2025 and three additional staff members were accepted for that training, allowing them to take on the advanced dual role of firefighter-paramedic.

Through the High Country Training Center and internal initiatives, SFE crew members participate in monthly medical training and perform continuous quality improvement reviews of all significant cases to help patient outcomes and efficiency. All told, SFE crew members completed 3,702 hours of EMS training.

Out in the community, the new PulsePoint app went live in Summit County, notifying trained community members of CPR in

progress nearby and enlists their help. This is part of a community-wide and emergency responder emphasis on high-quality CPR that has seen save rates in cardiac arrest climb from 8 percent to 23 percent in Summit County over the past five years. Among the new tools available on SFE ambulances are high-tech Lucas devices that provide mechanized chest compressions for patients en route to the hospital.

Opened in June, the new Station 10 in Silverthorne is staffed 24/7 with first responders, reducing response times to Silverthorne and points north.

At the end of the year, Summit Fire & EMS began carrying whole blood in the field to emergency calls as part of a grant-funded coalition with Common Spirit and Breckenridge-based Red, White & Blue Fire. This new capability puts SFE at the national forefront of field-based medicine that will save lives of patients with transfusions before they arrive at the hospital.

WILDFIRE



The Summit Fire & EMS Wildland Division oversees staff wildfire training and response to wildfires locally and nationally, as well as the management of community wildfire risk.

With wildfire standing as the single most likely existential threat to our way of life here, every firefighter in the agency maintains a “red card” certification for fighting wildfires, and the department serves as the initial-attack response to wildfires within the district and in the surrounding White River National Forest.

In 2025, the four-person division issued 33 new “backyard campfire” free permits and 105 renewals, conducted 119 courtesy wildfire mitigation assessments for property owners, completed 15 neighborhood/HOA assessments and conducted 123 mandatory defensible-space inspections for new construction.

The division coordinated firefighter response to seven out-of-district wildfires during a busy fire season nationally,

bolstering SFE’s qualifications and experience. In all, 22 crew members were out for 115 work days responding to fires throughout the West.

Summit Fire & EMS also works with partners at the U.S. Forest Service, the Colorado State Forest Service, Summit County and Breckenridge-based Red, White & Blue Fire to conduct large-scale wildfire-mitigation efforts, including piling and burning of wood left from logging efforts to create defensible space around developed areas.

The SFE Wildland Division prioritizes public engagement as a way to educate and prepare residents for potential wildfires.

Finally, with support from SFE, the Mesa Cortina development above Silverthorne became the latest neighborhood in the district to attain a national Firewise designation, marking a commitment to continually reducing the threat of wildfires to property.

COMMUNITY RISK DIVISION



The SFE Community Risk Division, operating under the fire marshal, protects lives and property through planning, education and inspections.

With a staff of seven full-time inspectors including supervisors, the division conducted 471 inspections for new construction and safety systems and another 1,022 annual fire-safety inspections of existing commercial properties, generating \$1.5 million in fees.

Besides conducting 70 fire drills at local schools, SFE staff members led 40 grade-specific classroom sessions on fire safety that reached 1,063 students from pre-K through fifth grade at each of the district's four public elementary schools.

In 2025, SFE established a new Community Risk Reduction Division that focuses on statistics-based analysis to target common hazards and collaborate with community organizations to minimize their threat and frequency. This work dovetails with the

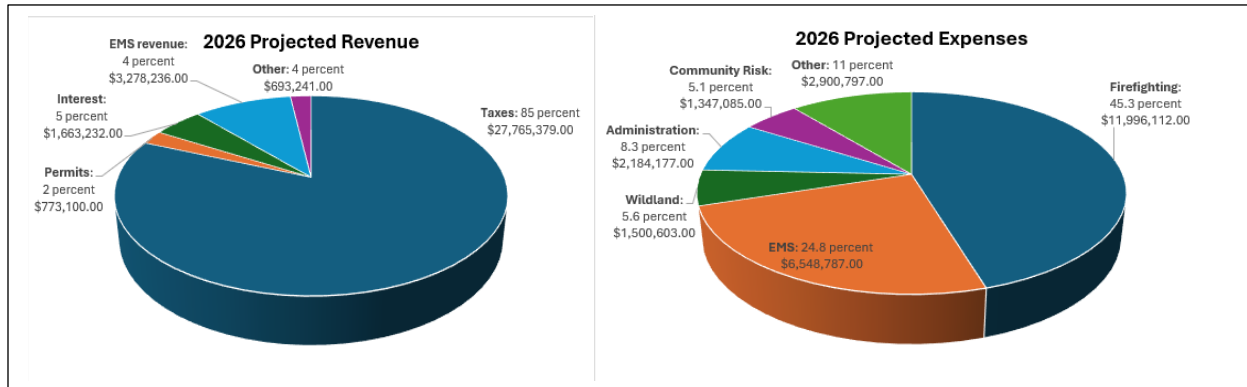
department's philosophy that the best way to help the public deal with emergencies is to avoid them in the first place.

Among the initiatives that three-person team promoted were injury prevention lessons at civic gatherings, wildfire preparation at farmers' markets, "Stop the Bleed" trainings and car-seat safety at back-to-school gatherings, engaging more than 1,900 members of the public over the year.

A new fire-extinguisher recycling program backed by the Summit County Bright Futures Fund employed a part-time staff member and processed nearly 500 extinguishers and diverted more than 3,100 pounds of metal from the landfill.

Additionally, the department regularly participates in on-demand school and civic group engagement such as hosting station tours, supporting special events, leading lessons on fire science and our role as community helpers and engaging in other activities in and out of the classroom.

FINANCE



Summit Fire & EMS operated with a staff of 110 full-time employees in 2025, including 87 line-level first responders and 25 administrative, command and executive staff positions. The district operates five 24-hour response stations, an administration building and two auxiliary stations serving as bases for the SFE Wildland Division and a U.S. Forest Service wildfire crew.

The fire district serves approximately 25,500 full-time residents and a seasonal population of more than 100,000.

The district’s financial philosophy emphasizes maintaining a highly trained, well-equipped, and experienced professional staff. This approach ensures the resources to respond effectively to all hazards while focusing on emergency prevention.

Funding and Taxation

Property owners in the district contribute 13 mills annually in taxes, equivalent to \$468 for every \$500,000 of property value. The district has a longstanding policy of operating debt-free, paying up front for new vehicles and capital projects to avoid using tax dollars for debt service.

The budget and each month’s expenditures are reviewed and approved by a publicly elected five-member Summit Fire & EMS

Board of Directors, and the budget is audited annually to ensure transparency and accountability. The budget is prepared using the accrual method of accounting and includes a general fund, capital-expenditures fund and a fund for the in-house fleet services enterprise.

Revenues for 2025 totaled \$28 million, exceeding the budgeted expenditures of \$26.8 million by \$1.5 million. This surplus was allocated toward capital expenditures, which totaled \$5 million in 2025. The ending fund balance of approximately \$27 million includes \$849,000 set aside as an emergency reserve and \$7 million reserved for future capital expenditures.

The approved 2026 budget of \$26 million reflects key priorities to ensure the district has the necessary resources to fulfill its mission and respond to all calls effectively, as well as a continued commitment to responsible financial management.

Summit Fire & EMS strives to pay its employees salaries competitive with similar departments in Colorado in an effort to retain staff and attract new recruits.

The 2025 financial information provided is unaudited and subject to change. A copy of the 2026 budget is available upon request at the district’s administration building.

SERVICES



Summit Fire & EMS offers a number of services to the residents and visitors of our district at no cost, including:

- Child car-seat installations, available by appointment, to show caregivers how to properly position and install infant and child seats that are required by state law.
- Backyard campfire permits for residents who apply through the Community Connect link on the website. Fire pits must have ember screens and a method for extinguishing the flames.
- Courtesy home wildfire assessments, scheduled with the SFE Wildland Division, offer residents one-on-one on-site discussions about best practices for protecting structures and personal preparedness. Neighborhood and HOAs also are encouraged to plan large-scale assessments, particularly as a first step toward gaining FireWise designation.
- Station tours for small groups, school classes and civic organizations reveal the facilities and apparatus used by our 24-hour response crews and always incorporate fire-safety lessons. Although best scheduled in advance, our staff are happy to accommodate drop-in visitors when they are available.
- Fire extinguisher recycling first was offered in 2025 as a way to dispose of expired extinguishers ecologically and divert scrap from the landfill. Old extinguishers may be dropped off in front of the SFE Administration Building at any time. Currently we are unable to offer recharging of extinguishers.

Looking Ahead: 2026 Priorities



As Summit Fire & EMS looks toward the coming year, the organization will continue building on its strong operational foundation while focusing on strategic initiatives that strengthen service delivery, workforce development and community resilience.

Several key priorities will guide the department's efforts in 2026:

Strengthening Community Risk Reduction

Summit Fire & EMS will continue expanding its Community Risk Reduction initiatives with a focus on fire prevention, wildfire mitigation and public education. These efforts help reduce the likelihood of emergencies while strengthening community preparedness across the district.

Maintaining Excellence in Emergency Medical Services

Emergency medical response remains the largest portion of the department's workload. Summit Fire & EMS will continue enhancing clinical training, quality assurance programs and partnerships with our healthcare partners to ensure patients receive the highest level of care possible.

Supporting Professional Development and Leadership Growth

Investing in personnel remains a core priority for the organization. Summit Fire & EMS will continue supporting leadership development, training opportunities and mentorship programs that prepare members to meet the evolving demands of the fire service.

Preparing for Future Growth and Infrastructure Needs

The district will continue evaluating long-term facility and operational needs to ensure emergency services keep pace with growth across Summit County. Careful planning and responsible stewardship of public resources remain central to these efforts.

GOVERNANCE



Summit Fire & EMS opened its newest response station in Silverthorne on June 3 with a public celebration. The state-of-the-art facility is 8,700 square feet and cost \$9.5 million to build. It features an independent station alerting system and graduated night lighting, as well as an isolated gear-storage area, all designed to protect the long-term health of staff members.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Summit Fire & EMS is governed by a five-member publicly elected board of directors, who generally serve three-year terms. The board is responsible for governance, financial oversight, policy setting and oversight of the fire chief. The current board is comprised of these volunteers:



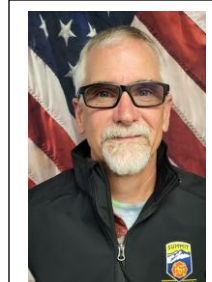
JoeBen Slivka
President



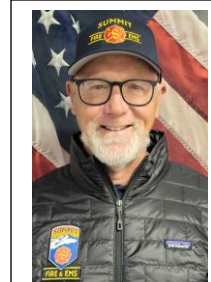
Dan Johnson
Vice President



John Piotti
Treasurer



Jonathan Sinclair
Director



Chuck Tolton
Director