

Good Afternoon,

I am pleased to be here today to review The Chicago Fire Department's budget,

I would like to thank the mayor for his continued support of my leadership and the nearly 5,000 paramedics, firefighters and civilians who serve our residents and visitors to Chicago.

Since I was appointed to lead this department just over two years ago, CFD continues its efforts to modernize our programs and enhance our efforts to ensure CFD remains trained, prepared, and able to respond to all incidents that may occur in all of Chicago's 77 neighborhoods.

While the public may know us best in responding to fires and medical emergencies, there is so much more that we do to ensure the safety and protection of everyone in the city.

In addition to responding to fires and medical emergencies; CFD's Fire Prevention Bureau performs ongoing fire inspections, our HazMat teams monitor our City's special events, our Homeland Security programs help our city prepare for all the various threats we face today, our Public Education Division continue to educate our citizens on fire safety – reaching 62,000 individuals this year through 540 interactive presentations, promoting fire awareness and how to respond to and escape from fires.

It is a proven fact that smoke detectors save lives, which is why we continue to focus our efforts to educate residents and landlords to comply with the ordinances requiring installation and maintenance of approved detectors. A new state law went into effect January of this year, requiring new 10-year smoke detectors, which cost 400 percent more. In compliance with the new law, CFD has been purchasing and distributing the new 10-year smoke detectors. Our efforts help protect residents who have not been able to purchase them, and so far this year we have passed out over 10,000 10-year smoke detectors and over a thousand carbon monoxide alarms.

I am proud to report this year Chicago has once again secured the highest classification from the Insurance Service Office with a rating of one. This rating is based on CFD's response times, training, water supply, and staffing available to respond to reported structure fires. The insurance industry uses this rating as part of their decision-making when deciding the cost of commercial and personal property insurance. CFD's success in maintaining a "1" rating means Chicago's residents and business can continue to enjoy lower costs for property insurance.

Also in 2023, for the 5th year in a row, CFD Paramedics received the American Heart Association's highest recognition, the Mission Lifeline Gold Award. This award is determined using criteria for applying the most up to date treatment and guidelines for improved care and outcomes for patients suffering from suspected cardiac or stroke emergencies.

I am happy to report that we have just completed a renovation of our Survive Alive House Public Education Section, located at 1010 Clinton Street. The Survive Alive House provides fire safety training for thousands of young people. And the best part of this project is the zero cost to the taxpayers, as all the funding for the renovations has been provided by the corporate generosity of Home Depot and Roy's Furniture through the Survive Alive Foundation. These donations provided the nearly \$25,000 needed to cover the cost of improvement.

So far this year alone we have had nearly 5,000 young people go through our Survive Alive House to learn firsthand how to survive and escape a fire using harmless but effective simulation of a real house fire scenario. Our Survive Alive Truck has provided similar experiences for an additional 22,000 individuals this year alone.

As part of our outreach, we continue to make our staff available for pop up events where we come directly to neighborhoods, with “Hands Only” CPR, “Stop the Bleed” and recruitment information.

Speaking of recruitment, we are now starting entry classes from the list which resulted from the CFD entrance exam held by the Department of Human resources late last year. We will continue to work with DHR to fulfill the city commitment to offer entrance exams more often.

And while CFD has no direct involvement with selecting, testing, and scoring applicants, we will continue to do our part to make sure neighborhoods especially south and west, are aware of upcoming exams and the process needed to prepare and pass all requirements for employment with CFD.

CFD also continues to work very closely with the Chicago Police and Fire Training Academy. This spring, 94 students graduated from the program representing 60 schools from across the city. This rigorous program is an opportunity to expose our youth to careers in public safety. This summer, CFD provided 16 students with an internship in various bureaus within the department.

We all know that we, as a city, are affected by budget concerns as are so many other municipalities across our nation today. CFD is doing all it can to get the most efficient performance with the resources available to us. As an example, we continue to explore expansion of our Mobile Integrated Health Unit to better serve segments of our population that could benefit from efforts to close the health care and equity gaps in our neighborhoods, reduce the use of our 911 system for non-emergencies, and reduce emergency room visits which in turn decreases the overuse of our ambulances, and provides resources for people with chronic conditions. Over the last year, the MIH pilot program has demonstrated remarkable outcomes, including showing a 95 percent reduction in 911 usage, in some cases.

Our experiences navigating the peak and length of the COVID Pandemic have allowed CFD to learn several valuable lessons. While working collaboratively with the Department of Public Health, we have incorporated these lessons into our everyday medical responses, employing safer and more efficient practices for CFD’s responses to all variations of medical emergencies.

With your approval, we will implement our 2024 budget plan and continue the level of preparation and response that has exemplified this department as a model of firefighting and self-contained EMS response.

I will be happy to answer your questions, thank you.