

Madam Chairman and members of the City Council, my name is José Santiago, Commissioner of the Chicago Fire Department (CFD).

Please allow me the opportunity to introduce my staff and please stand when I call your name:

Sitting to my right is:

- Anastasia Walker, Chief Administrative Officer for the CFD
- Anthony Vasquez, Deputy Fire Commissioner for the Bureau of Administrative Services
- Renee Mayden, Assistant Director of Finance
- Adrienne Bryant, Deputy Commissioner for Personnel

In the box to my right is:

- Larry Langford, Director of News Affairs
- Richard Ford, First Deputy Fire Commissioner
- Don Hroma, Deputy Fire Commissioner, Bureau of Logistics
- Richard Edgeworth, Deputy Fire Commissioner for the Fire Prevention Bureau
- Mary Sheridan, Assistant Deputy Fire Commissioner for EMS
- Patty Wood, EMS Commander in the MARC Division

In the second row is:

- Mark Nielsen, Deputy Fire Commissioner of Operations
- Michelle Cullerton-Conforti, Assistant Commissioner, Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness
- Janice Hogan, Deputy Chief in Labor Relations
- Wally Schroeder, Coordinator of Fire Awareness
- Josh Dennis, Executive Assistant in the Fire Commissioner's Office

At this time, I would also like to introduce the Assistant Deputy Fire Commissioner and District Chiefs:

- Tim Sampey, Assistant Deputy Fire Commissioner for Airport Operations
- Brian Helmold, Chief of the 1st District, which includes the Central Business District, Gold Coast, Kenwood and Bridgeport
- Daniel Cunningham, Chief of the 4th District, which includes Austin, North Lawndale, Brighton Park and Clearing
- Rosalind Jones, Chief of the 5th District, which includes Ashburn, Chatham, Englewood and Hegwisch

Thank you.

Ladies and gentlemen, the Chicago Fire Department is pleased to be here today to discuss its 2018 budget request.

Under the leadership of Mayor Emanuel and with your support, CFD continues to make the most of technology, training, and personnel to safeguard the residents and visitors of our great city.

As always, the core mission of the CFD is to protect the lives and property of the residents and visitors of Chicago from fire, disasters, emergency medical issues and hazardous materials incidents.

While even one fire death is one too many, I'm proud to say that fire deaths in Chicago remain among the lowest of any major city in our nation.

This is due in part to our extensive, external programming that instructs our residents on the basics of fire safety, including the care and use of smoke and carbon monoxide detectors and how to escape if a fire does occur. Programming is held for single family homes, apartment buildings, high-rise structures and dormitories in our city to promote the critical message that smoke detectors save lives. We also strive to make sure every residence is equipped with a working smoke and carbon monoxide detector, as required by law.

This year, the CFD's Public Education Unit has interfaced with 225,000 people for drills, training, and education on fire escape and safety, conducted more than 5,000 safety programs and distributed over 6,150 smoke detectors, free of charge.

It is the charge of the Public Education Unit to educate and train people on life safety strategies by using our department's Survive Alive House and the mobile Survive Alive Truck.

Both of these important training tools provide realistic and safe simulations so children, adults and senior citizens can learn the proper way of escaping an actual house fire.

As always, we make it an ongoing effort to seek out grant funding that can help us achieve our goal of reaching the public and ensuring smoke detectors are available to those who need them most.

And while the Public Education Unit promotes life safety, warning and escape, the CFD's Fire Prevention Bureau ensures that our commercial buildings and high-rise structures are in compliance with safety codes. These codes make the structures as safe as possible, protect occupants in case of fire, and allow CFD to inspect fire suppression systems that will hold fire in check until fire personnel can arrive on the scene.

The CFD also continues to ensure that we are equipped to handle the increasing number of medical calls that are dispatched to us.

The entire CFD ambulance fleet is now rated and certified for advanced life support, which is the highest level of care a municipal ambulance service can provide.

Nearly half of our fire engines and trucks – 73 of 161 (not including our specialty vehicles) – are staffed with firefighters who are certified paramedics and contain the same equipment as is on our daily fleet of 75 ambulances.

In addition to our daily fleet of suppression and EMS apparatus, we have 10 Advanced Life Support (ALS) ambulances in reserve that are fully stocked and ready for service, in case we have a sudden need for even more EMS presence on the street for any reason - including weather, planned events or unexpected disasters.

We exceed the requirements of the State of Illinois by having two fully licensed paramedics on every ambulance 24 hours per day.

Thanks to the hard working men and women of this department, I am very proud to share that for the first time the CFD has received a Public Protection Classification 1 Rating from the Insurance Services Office (ISO). This ranking reflects the City's superior ability to protect from, respond to and fight residential and commercial fires. The ISO provides the information it collects to insurance companies, which may use these ratings to determine property insurance rates across the city.

The Chicago Fire Department has responded to over 664,000 calls for service so far this year. We always make it a priority to respond to each one with the highest level of professionalism.

Through its training in tactical and EMS command and mitigation, the CFD continues to strengthen its role as a public safety partner in Chicago and the surrounding region in partnership with the Chicago Police Department. Chicago is as prepared as any metropolitan area for incidents that require a large scale response from Police, Fire and EMS.

I pledge to continue to make the most efficient use of personnel and equipment, in order to meet our commitment to public safety as a local and regional resource.

In addition, it is my personal commitment to do all I can to ensure that our CFD leaders reflect the makeup of our great city, to ensure that we have a diversity of views, backgrounds and experiences that will make this Department even better in the years to come.

In closing, I assure you that I will continue to lead the Chicago Fire Department in delivering unparalleled fire suppression and emergency medical services in every neighborhood of this city.

My staff and office are always available to discuss how our services can continue to meet the needs of every community in Chicago.

I, along with key members of my staff am prepared to answer your questions. Thank you.