

NORTHWOODS



 **EMS DISTRICT**

NORTHWOODS EMS DISTRICT

2025 Annual Report

Jason Joling - Chief
chief@northwoodsems.org

Message from the Chief

To the residents and visitors of Boulder Junction, Manitowish Waters, Presque Isle, and Winchester:

As the Chief of the Northwoods Emergency Medical Services District (NEMSD), it is my privilege to lead an organization dedicated to providing rapid, compassionate, and high-quality emergency medical care. Since our official launch, we have focused on modernizing our response model from an EMT volunteer system to a 24-hour Advanced Life Support (ALS) system. Our goal remains clear: to ensure "better care faster" for every person who calls for help.

Our greatest asset is our team. Whether it is our full-time staff or our dedicated volunteers, they exemplify our core values of integrity, professionalism, and compassion every day. We are also continuously improving our capabilities through advanced training and standardized equipment across our stations to ensure consistent excellence.

This district was built on the incredible support of the four towns. We are deeply grateful for the trust you have placed in us and remain committed to being responsible stewards of the resources you provide.

Stay safe and know that we are here for you whenever you need us.

Respectfully,

Jason Joling

Chief, Northwoods EMS District

Northwoods EMS District

Mission Statement

To provide rapid, compassionate, and high-quality emergency medical care to our community.

Our Vision

Our vision is to be a leading provider of emergency medical services, recognized for our commitment to excellence, innovation, and community engagement. We aim to continuously improve our services through advanced training, state-of-the-art technology, and a dedicated team of volunteers and paid staff. Our goal is to ensure the highest level of care and safety for all community members and visitors.

Core Values

- **Integrity** - Upholding the highest ethical standards and honesty in all actions.
- **Compassion** - Providing care with empathy and understanding for patients and their families.
- **Professionalism** - Maintaining a high level of competence, skill, and behavior.
- **Accountability** - Being responsible for actions and decisions, ensuring transparency and trust.
- **Dedication** - Committing to the mission of providing excellent emergency medical services.
- **Community** - Fostering a strong connection and partnership with the community served.
- **Innovation** - Continuously seeking ways to improve and advance EMS practices.

Administrative Team

Chief – Jason Joling



Deputy Chief – Jessica Mabie



Medical Director – Dr. Schiller



Chaplain – Nathan Keisler



Primary Duties

Chief	Deputy Chief
Human Resources	Perform all duties of Chief in absence
Finance	Medical supply inventory
Policy / Procedure development	Daily scheduling
Budget administration	Payroll administration
Workers Compensation liaison	Medication inventory / tracking
Quality Assurance / Improvement	Ambulance / Equipment readiness
Protocol development / review	Training Officer
Medical Director Liaison	Infection Control Officer
Dispatch Liaison	Community / Special Event liaison
Training Center Administrator	Website / Social Media management
WARDS Designee	
Protected Health Information Officer	
Regional Emergency Services liaison	

Northwoods EMS District Board of Directors

Phil Harris

President

Presque Isle

Steve Herzberg

Vice President / Liaison

Winchester

John Hanson

Treasurer

Manitowish Waters

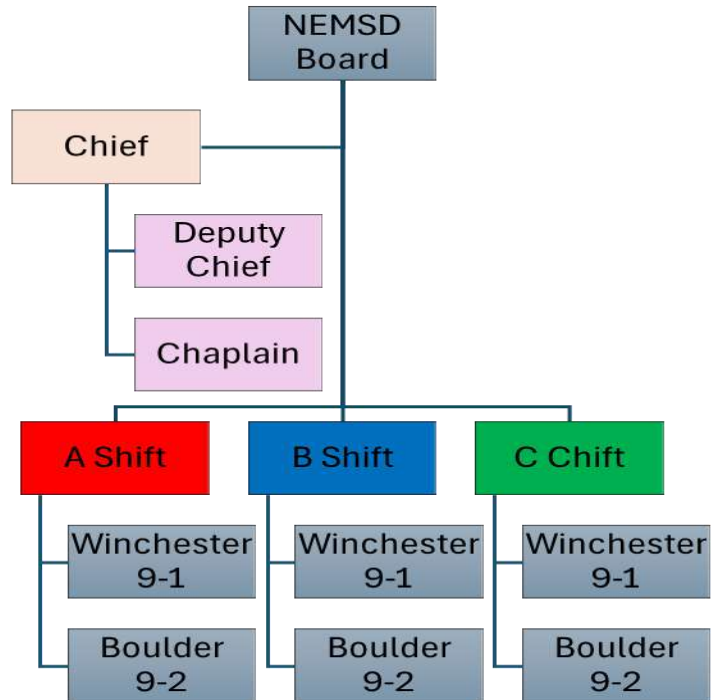
Daniel Wahlgren

Secretary

Boulder Junction



Organization Chart



Full-Time Staff

Jim – Paramedic

Steve – Paramedic

Katie – Paramedic

Tim - Paramedic



Jim – Paramedic

Jessica – Paramedic

John – AEMT

Rennea - AEMT



Adam – AEMT

Julie – EMT

Bobby – EMT

Laura - EMT



Our staff, full and part-time, are proven and highly skilled providers. They serve as the “operational backbone” of the district. We are very fortunate to have this quality in providers that are eager to serve the communities.

Financial Report

Establishment of the Northwoods EMS District (NEMSD) was the result of collective discussions and commitments of the four towns for the purpose of developing a reliable EMS delivery system. This system would entail significant cost to initiate operations with full-time Advanced Life Support (ALS). The budget was developed with educated estimates between the towns, NEMSD Board of Directors, NEMSD leadership and consultant Dana Sechler who has extensive experience in EMS administration.

Revenue

Revenue	2026
Income	\$262,586.00
Town Payment	\$2,106,522.00
	\$2,369,108.00

The revenue was primarily derived from two sources, transport billing revenue and payments from the four towns. Funds had been placed into account in 2024 with an estimated surplus to be carried over into the first year of operations. The FAP funds are received annually from the State of Wisconsin and are to be used for specific expenditures such as education and training. Billing revenue was overestimated and was based upon an estimated 420 responses. Although the responses were almost exact, a portion resulted in “no-transport” which is not billed. Additionally, the collection process did not result in revenue until late spring with average collection starting 60 – 90 days after transport. EMS billing is conducted through a third-party billing service (EMSMC) with extensive experience and staff that are best prepared to stay current with changes to Medicare and Medicaid.

Transport Rates	
BLS	\$1,000.00
ALS	\$1,400.00
ALS 2	\$1,600.00
Mileage	\$24.00

Billing rates were determined based on regional comparatives. Base rates are determined primarily upon intervention and dispatch reason.

BLS – Responses in which BLS treatment, such as bleeding control and oxygen therapy.

ALS – Responses receiving ALS intervention to include IV therapy, cardiac monitoring and some medications

ALS 2 – Responses receiving specialized therapy such as endotracheal intubation.

Expense

Expense	2026
Wage & Benefit	\$1,886,577.00
Operations	\$412,531.00
Vehicle Fund	\$70,000.00
	\$2,369,108.00

Wages include all full-time and part-time employees. Full-time staff receive benefits to include WRS retirement (protective with social security) and a health insurance option through the State of Wisconsin. NEMSD was not “fully staffed” until late spring of 2025.

As this was the first year of operations, there were some expenses identified that were under budgeted as well as some over budgeted. These numbers were considered when establishing the 2026 budget. The 2025 budget had an established Facility Fund, out of which rent was paid for the two station locations. Any funds not used for rent were moved into a Facility Fund to escrow for a future purchase.

The vehicle fund was established in anticipation of future ambulance or staff car purchase. As of today, new ambulance costs are estimated between \$250,000 - \$320,000. The staff car allows administrative staff to conduct normal operations as well as augment crews on high-acuity responses. A third set of ALS equipment is kept in this car and allows administration to staff a third or fourth concurrent response as an ALS unit. In early 2025, NEMSD leased a 2025 Chevy Equinox providing long-term reliability.

The first year of operations identified costs that were not included in the original budget. As the NEMSD leases the ambulances from the towns, it was decided to reimburse \$12 per loaded mile to each respective town / company that provided the ambulance. The ambulances are rotated on an even basis. Stipends are also offered to district volunteers that assist with responses. Often, the volunteers are the first to arrive providing care within minutes of receiving a call. Medical direction is a statutory requirement for any EMS system and oversees all aspects of clinical operations.

Equalized value equivalent is used to assess equal shares by town to support NEMSD operations. This can be broken down by tax assessment based on district home value. The original 2025 budget was constructed based upon educated estimates and resulted in the following equalized value assessment.

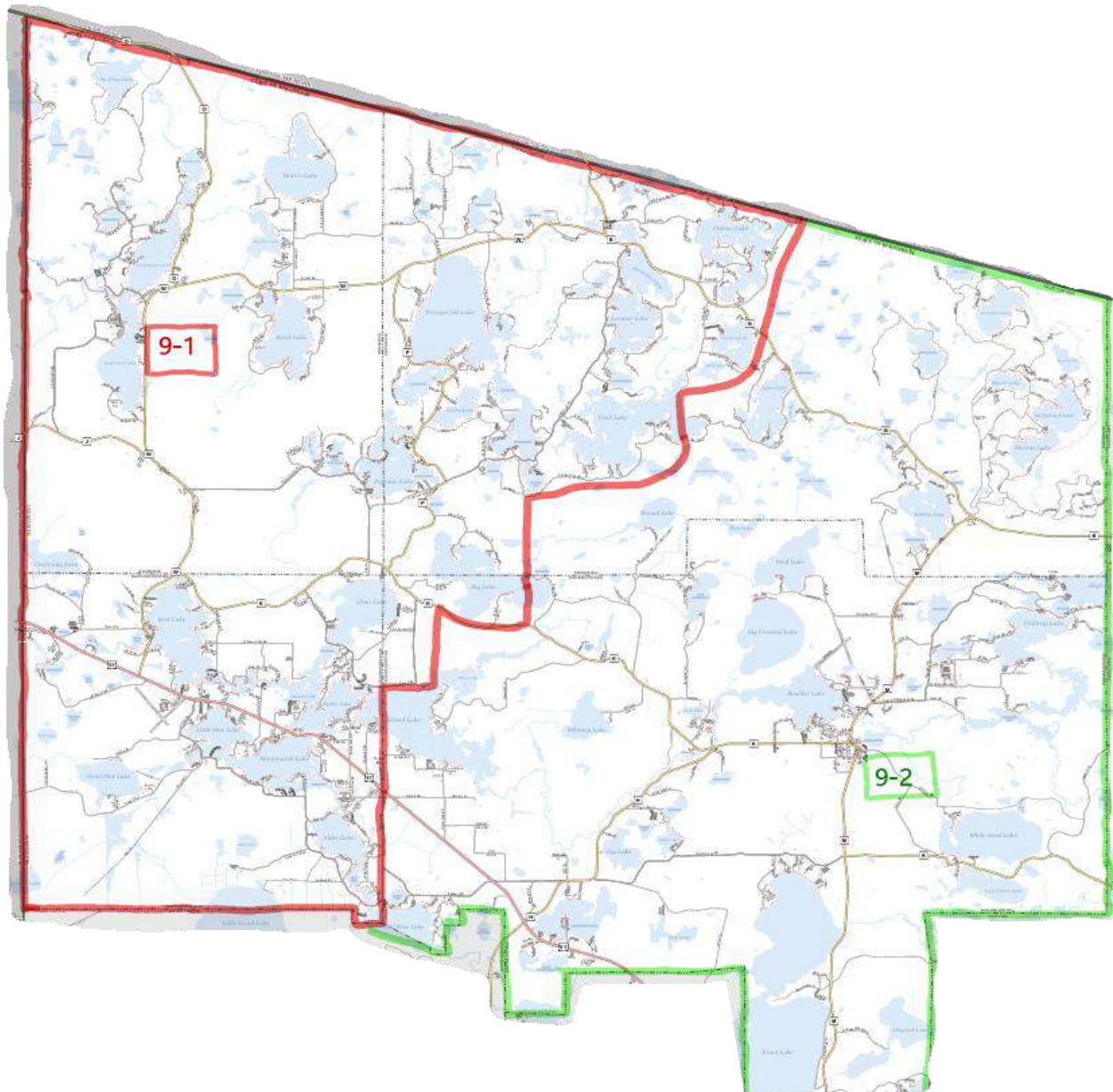
2025 Equalized Value Equivalent (per \$100,000) = \$55.57

Development of the 2026 budget was completed with more specific data; however, some budgetary items only had six months of complete information. This resulted in some adjustments reflecting decreased operational revenue and unforeseen operational expenses. The total budget change from 2025 to 2026 resulting in an increase of **\$6.41** per \$100,000 assessed property value.

2026 Equalized Value Equivalent (per \$100,000) = \$61.98

Operations

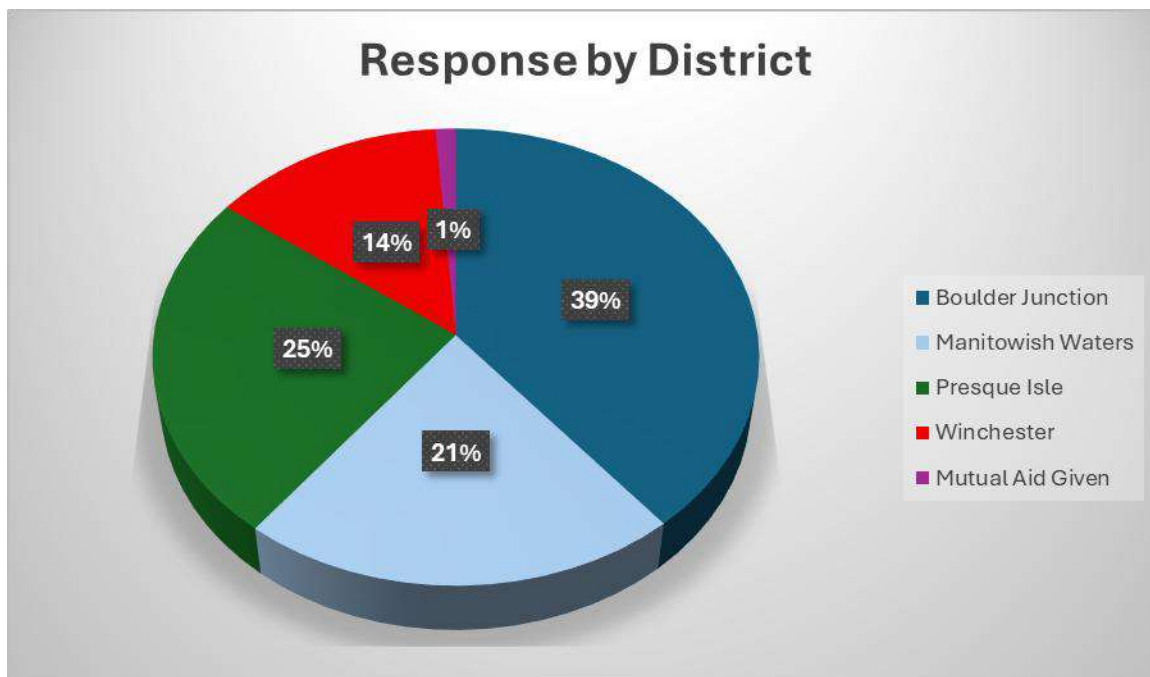
NEMSD maintains two staffed ambulances labeled 9-1 and 9-2. 9-1 is based out of the Winchester Town Hall whereas 9-2 is based out of Boulder Junction. Both crews are staffed with a Paramedic and an EMT or AEMT partner and work the 48/96 schedule. A rough image of response zones is shown in the image below. These zones have been set based upon distance from station.



The combination of Paramedic and EMT provides clinical flexibility during responses. Each license level increases the level of care that can be provided. Paramedic is currently the highest license level for 9-1-1 response. Allowable skill per license level is defined with the “scope of practice” which can be found [Wisconsin EMS Scope of Practice](#) .

Response Data

The NEMSD began operations on January 16, 2025, at 08:00. The first 911 call was received at 08:48. Since the first day, NEMSD has responded to 418 incidents.



As projected, Boulder Junction was the highest volume followed by Presque Isle, Manitowish Waters, and Winchester respectively.

Boulder Junction – 163

Manitowish Waters - 90

Presque Isle – 103

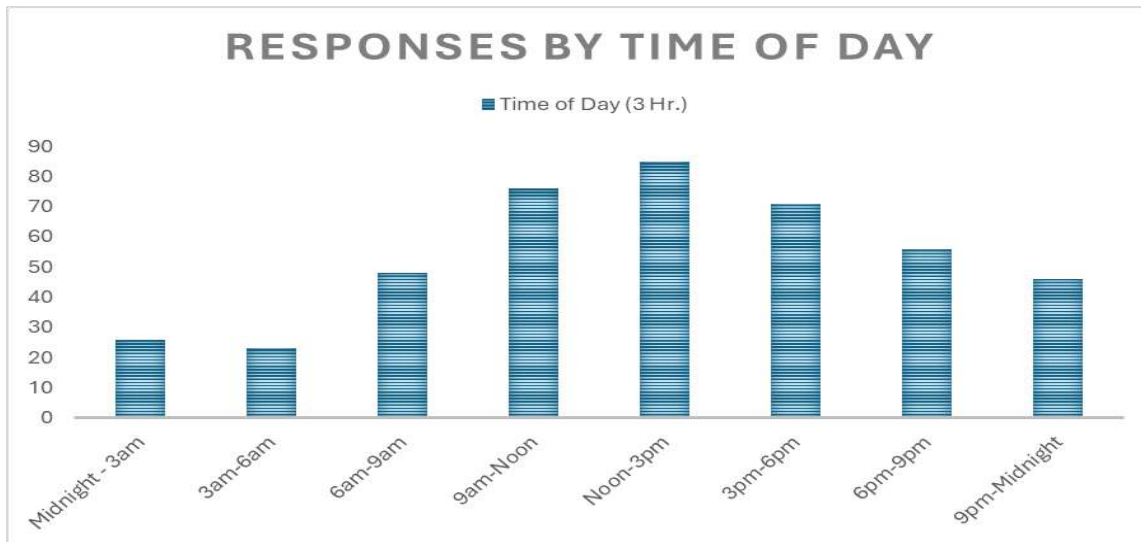
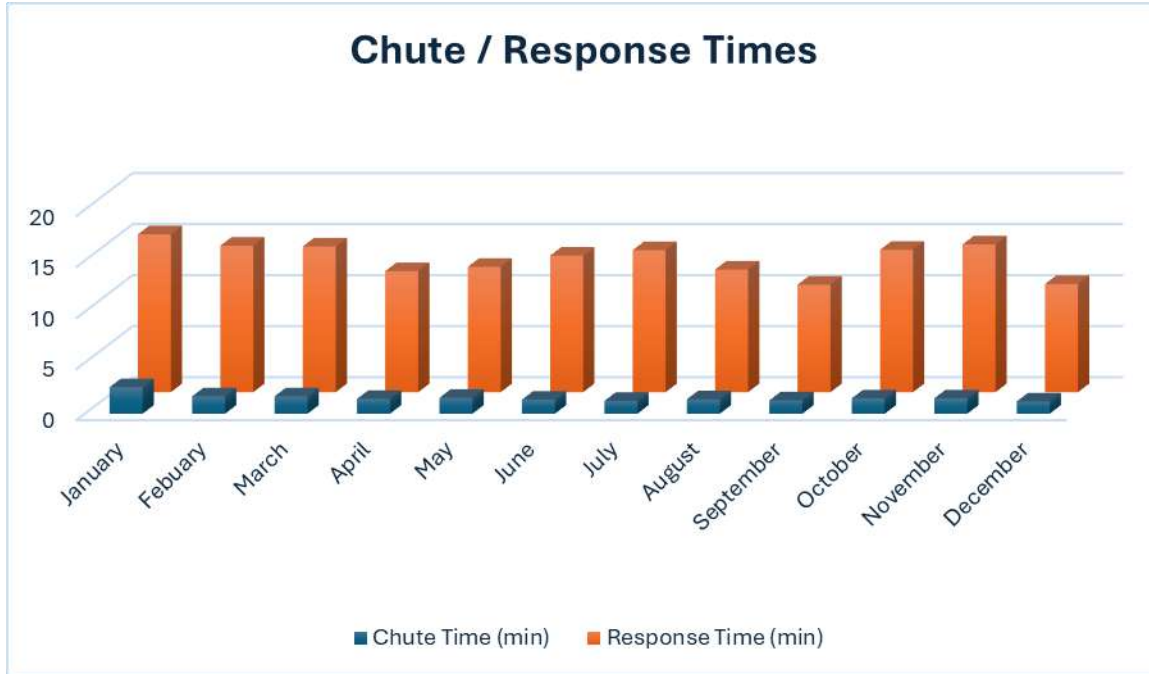
Winchester – 57

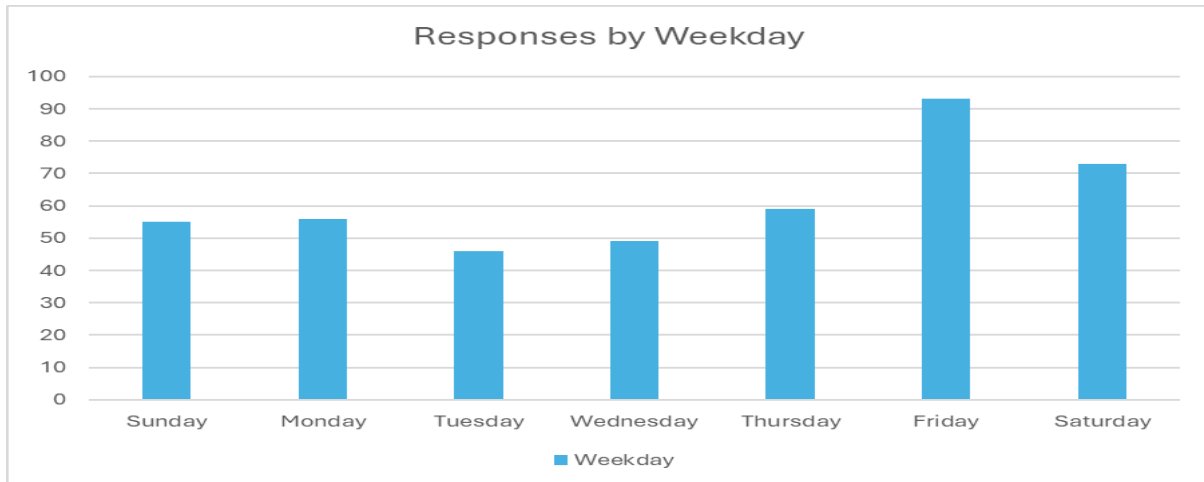
NEMSD also provided mutual Aid for 5 incidents. These responses occurred when there was a third ALS ambulance available within the district.

- Fire Scene Support - 1
- Medical Response - 3
- Motor Vehicle Accident - 1

The NEMSD had a goal of significantly reducing time from 911 call to arrival of an ambulance crew. “Chute Time” describes from when a page is received by the NEMSD crew until the begin the response to scene. Response time describes from when the page is received until the ambulance arrives on scene. These times are obtained from the Vilas County Dispatch Center.

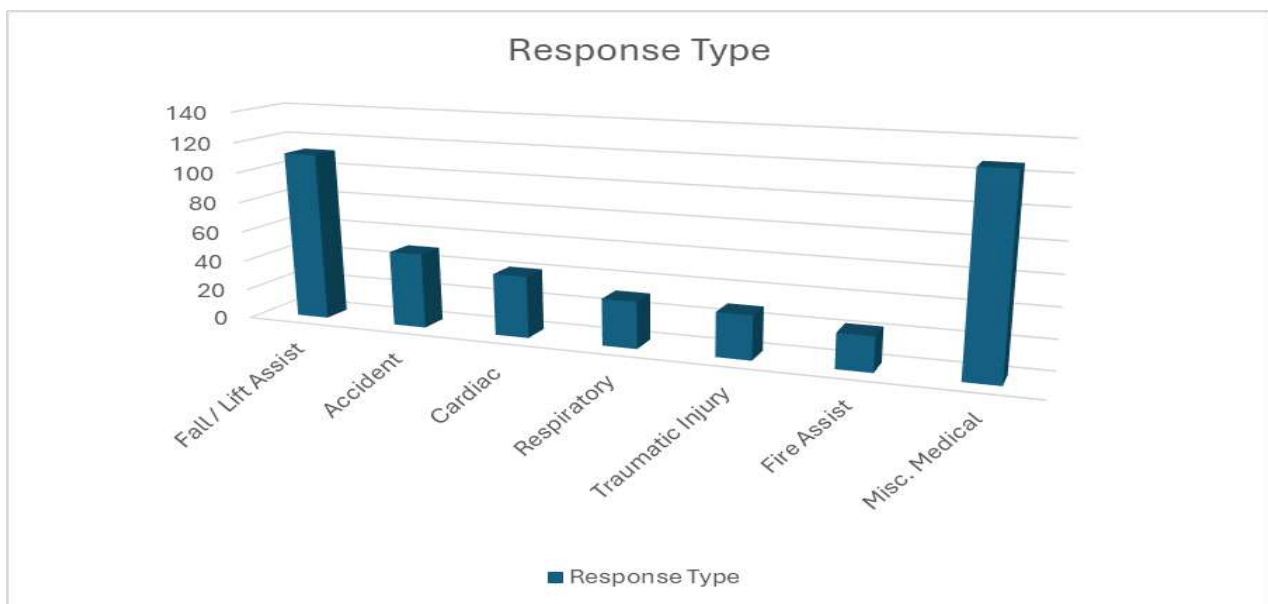
- Average 2025 Chute Time = 1.55 minutes
- Average 2025 Response Time = 13.1 minutes



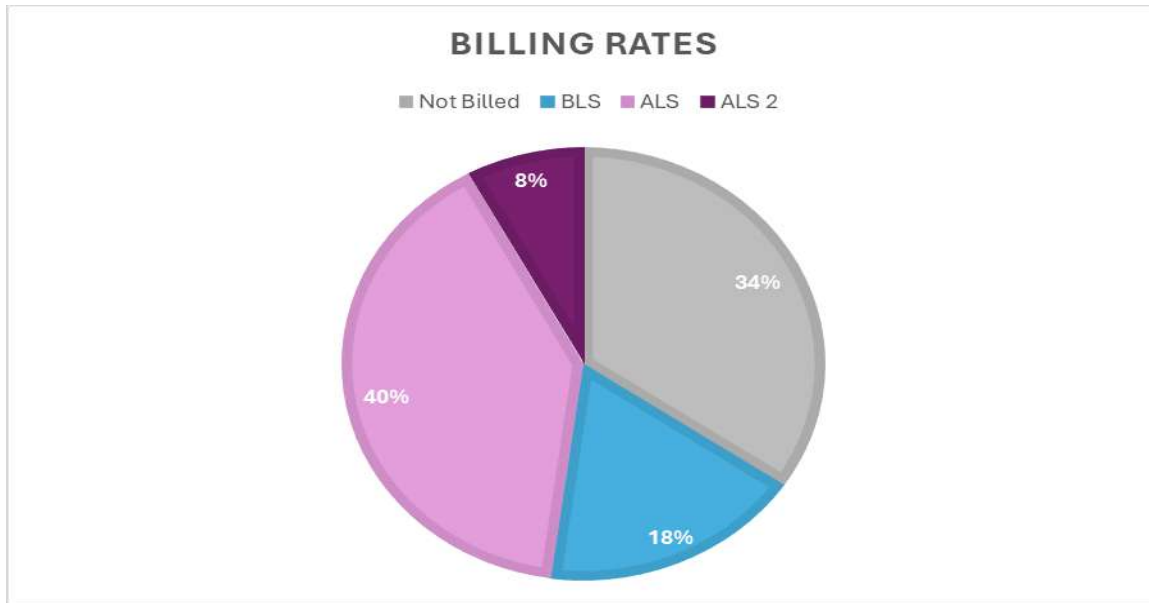


Type of response was placed into 7 categories.

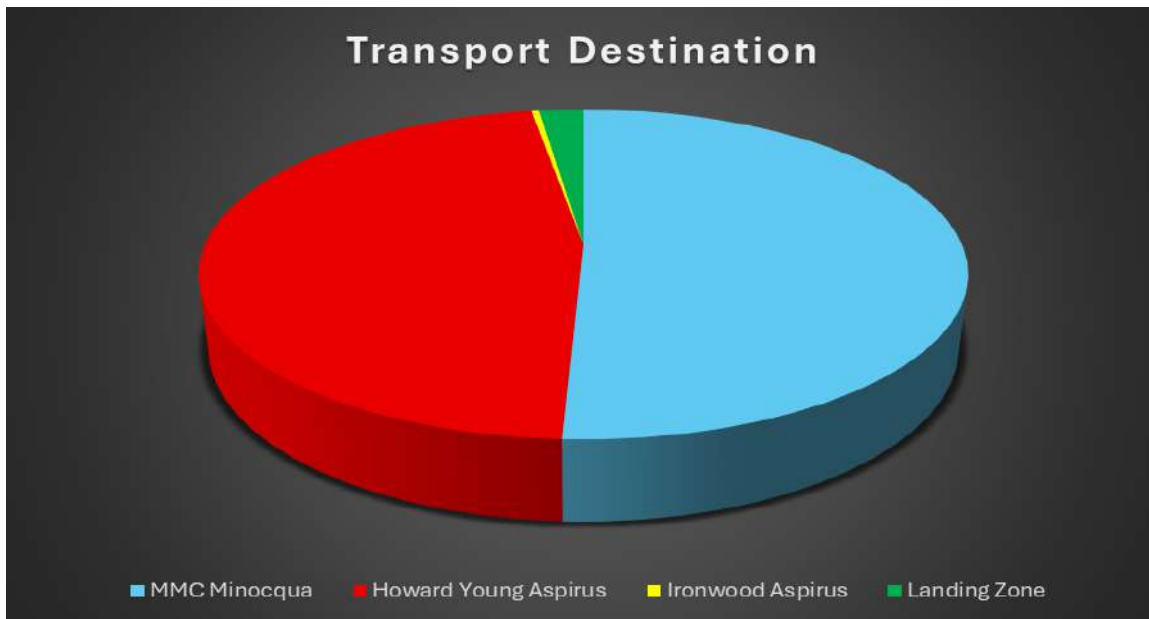
- **Fall / Lift-Assist** – These responses contain majority of the no-transport. This is consistent with state-wide data and accounts for a large majority of all EMS responses.
- **Accident** – This includes motor vehicle, snowmobile, ATV/UTV, watercraft related response
- **Cardiac** – Chest Pain, Cardiac Arrest, Cardiac Rhythm emergencies
- **Respiratory** – Difficulty Breathing, Allergic Reaction
- **Traumatic Injury** – Injury not related to motor related accidents
- **Fire-Assist** – Fire stand-by, gas odor, CO alarms
- **Misc. Medical** – Includes all other medical related complaints (diabetes, seizure, etc.)



Of the 418 responses, 274 were transported. This accounted for 66% of the NEMSD responses.



Of the 274 patients transported, 73% received ALS level care or higher. ALS care is defined as patient treatment beyond Intravenous (IV) initiation and 12-lead ECG. The predominant ALS treatment was pain control.



Patients are given the option of the closest facility for transport, which is predominantly Minocqua / Woodruff. Patient requests to MMC-Minocqua and Howard Young Aspirus are similar. One patient was transported to Ironwood and six were transported via helicopter through a landing zone.

Fleet



- **Boulder Junction** - 2016 Ford F450 4x4 diesel / AEV Ambulance
- **Manitowish Waters** - 2015 Ford E450 gas / Lifeline Ambulance
- **Presque Isle** - 2016 Ford E450 4x4 gas / Demers Ambulance
- **Winchester** - 2022 Ford F450 4x4 gas / Demers Ambulance

As part of the inter-municipality agreement, NEMSD rotates the ambulances owned by the towns and fire company. Typical rotation has been 6 months. The Winchester unit is labeled Northwoods 9-1 while the Boulder Junction unit is Northwoods 9-2. Ambulances with four-wheel drive are placed in-service during the winter months which provides increased response reliability. Reimbursement to the towns/company is provided on a quarterly basis. Loaded mileage (with patient) is recorded and reimbursed at \$12 per mile. The two ambulances that are not being used are placed in reserve status with call signs Northwoods 9-3, and 9-4. These units are readily available as a BLS equipped ambulance and can be staffed with local volunteers.

NEMSD maintains Stryker equipment with all ambulances staffed with power load and cot systems, LP-15 cardiac monitors, and a LUCAS device.

NEMSD Accomplishments 2024

- Registered as Municipal Entity with IRS and WI Department of Revenue
- Obtained Paramedic level service license
- Secured billing contract and completed payer credentialing
- Obtained Medicare and Medicaid registration
- Developed Mission, Vision, and Core values
- Obtained WRS retirement and ETF Health Insurance
- Obtained patient care report software with Wisconsin WARDS integration
- Developed Logo and Patch
- Obtained uniforms for staff
- Created website – www.northwoodsems.org
- Initiated creation of policies and procedures
- Secured temporary quarters in Winchester and Boulder Junction
- Obtained supplies and materials to house staff
- Developed shift scheduling and obtained software
- Developed dispatch tones and guidelines with Vilas County
- Secured vendor contracts and Advanced Life Support Supplies
- Revised clinical protocols
- Interviewed and hired 6 paramedics and 6 EMT / AEMT's
- Established a list of part-time staff
- Developed daily duties and checklists for staff
- Obtained training platform that meets national licensure requirements

NEMSD Accomplishments and Activities 2025

Conducted 17 CPR courses

Conducted First Aid and Stop the Bleed training

Provided EMS support for White Deer Triathlon and Musky Jam

Attended 4th of July parades and Fire Prevention activities

Secured supply and maintenance contract reducing financial burden to the towns

Purchased IV infusion pumps

Membership with Vilas County Chiefs Association

Membership with North Central Chiefs Association

Attended North Central Regional Trauma Advisory Council sessions

Obtained licensure as Northwoods EMS District Training Center

Initiated monthly training sessions for staff and volunteers

Responded to 100% of EMS requests with a paramedic level ambulance

Partners

The Northwoods EMS District would like to acknowledge our partners in emergency services. Our area fire departments provide specialized rescue and support services that are essential for our care delivery. The departments also provide the initial first responder support that sends trained volunteers direct to where they are needed and initiate precise care before ambulance arrival. Our local law enforcement provides protection and bolsters scene safety. Our local hospitals provide sound clinical care after delivery of a patient. And lastly, the helicopter services provide highly trained crews that deliver patients to specialty need facilities to ensure optimal outcomes.

- **Manitowish Waters Fire Company**
- **Winchester Fire / EMS**
- **Presque Isle Fire / EMS**
- **Boulder Junction Fire / EMS**
- **Vilas County Sheriff's Department**
- **Vials County Dispatch**
- **Aspirus Medevac Helicopter**
- **Life Link III Helicopter**
- **Aspirus Howard Young Medical Center**
- **Marshfield Medical Center – Minocqua**
- **Aspirus Ironwood**