



STONEHAM FIRE DEPARTMENT

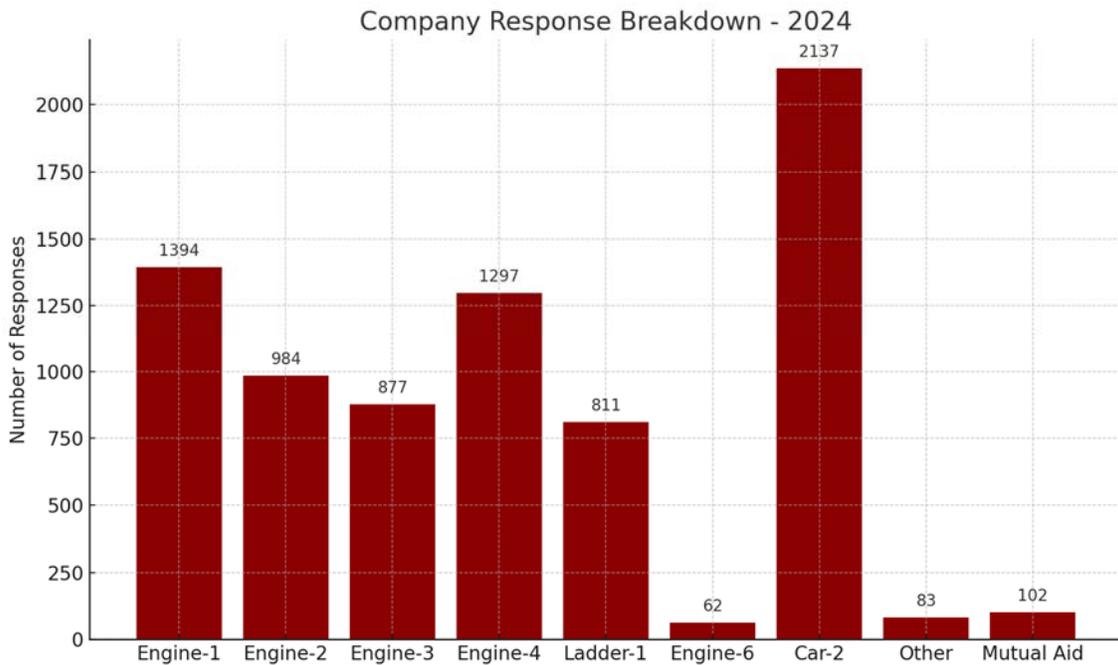
Why the Override Matters

Community Safety & Staffing Update

August 5, 2025

Incident Reporting & Call Volume

2024 Total Responses: 7,747



Incident Calls Based on Types: National Fire Incident Reporting System

- 100 Fires/Explosion: 117
- 200 Over Pressure Ruptures: 25
- 300 Rescue: 2,899
- 400 Hazardous Conditions: 93
- 500 Service: 340
- 600 Good Intent: 439
- 700 False Alarms: 408
- 800 Severe Weather: 7
- 900 Special Type/Complaint: 16
- Total Alarms: 4,344**

Call volume has increased 40.72% since 2000 (from 3,087 to 4,344)

Staffing History & Safety Challenges

- Current Minimum staffing: 8 firefighters per shift, 76% of year
- National standards: 3 FFs + 1 officer per company
- Stoneham: 2 FFs per company (2 Engines/1 Ladder), no officer; with exception of Engine-1
- 2024 average staffing per shift: 8.27
- 2023: 8.51 | 2022: 8.63

Average daily staffing decline following Prop 2 ½:

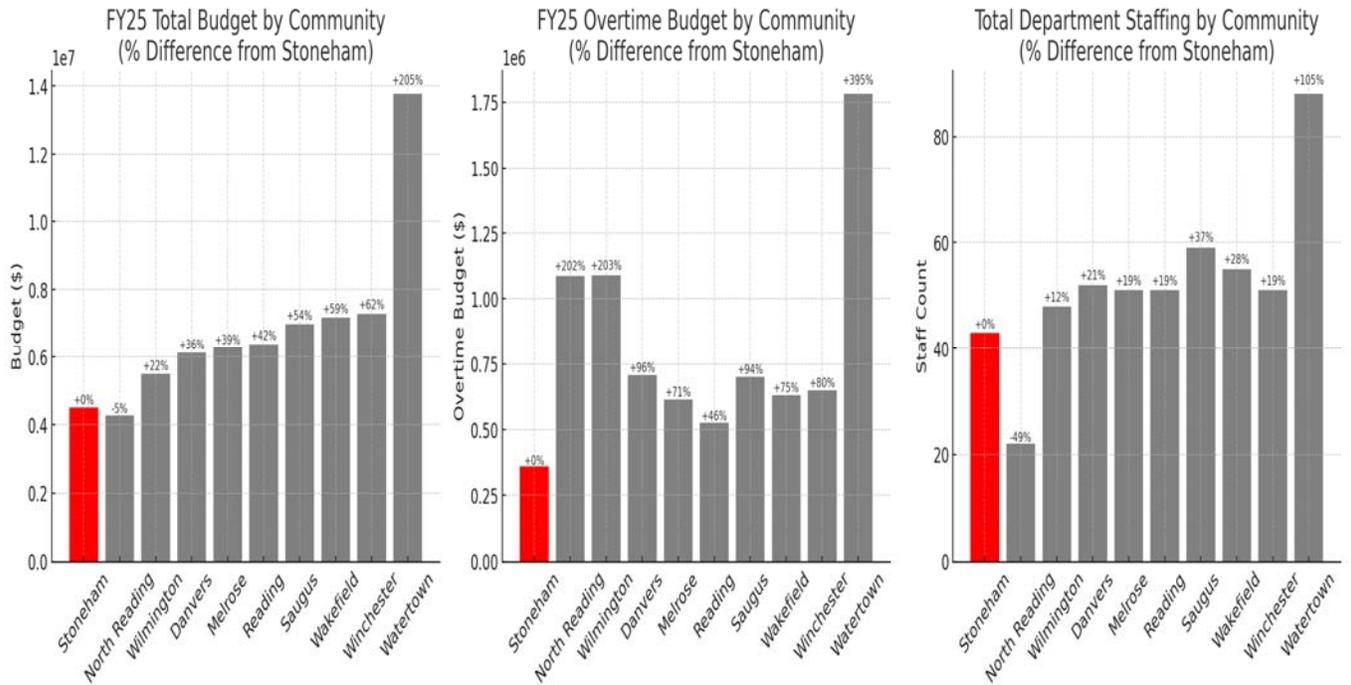
-1987 10.5 | 1988 10.26 | 1989 9.6 | 1990 9.44 | 2012 7.01

- 2025 Department Complement: 42
- 2001 Department Complement: 39 to include Deputy Chief Position

Current staffing is below safety standards and limits effective response.

Community Comparison Snapshot

These tables and charts show how Stoneham compares with surrounding communities in terms of staffing, budgeting, and service levels.



Department Makeups from 2024 Survey

	Community	Asst./Dep Chief	Deputy Chiefs	Captains	Lieutenants	Firefighters
1	Stoneham	0	0	5	5	32
2	Melrose	Just Negotiated 2024	0	7	8	33
3	Wakefield	1	0	5	12	36
4	Reading	1	0	5	8	36
5	Winchester	1	0	5	9	36
6	Saugus	1	0	8	11	38
7	Wilmington	1	0	4	6	36
8	North Reading	1	0	4	0	16
9	Danvers	1	0	4	13	33
10	Watertown	1	4	8	16	58

Community	2023 Calls	Fire Based EMS	Total Dept. Complement
Stoneham	3,985	No	43
Melrose	4,402	Yes-ALS	51
Wakefield	4,325	No	55
Reading	4,484	Yes-ALS	51
Winchester	2,926	Yes-ALS	51
Saugus	5,370	No	59
Wilmington	3,532	Yes-BLS	48
North Reading	2,874	Yes-ALS	22 Fulltime / 5 Paid On-Call
Danvers	6,595	No	52
Watertown	7,411	Yes-ALS	88

*** 1 Firefighter position not funded FY26-Stoneham**

***Melrose ALS 2025 Update**

Response Time and Staffing Matters

105 Marble Street Fire – Nov. 14, 2024

- Resident trapped in a 3rd floor unit.
- Firefighters on scene in minutes.
- Victim rescued 6 minutes after dispatch.
- Victim was able to climb down ladder on their own, not enough Firefighters on Ladder Truck if a victim needed to be carried.
- Another victim with burns able to escape fire on their own.

More firefighters would have ensured a safer, faster rescue.

Overtime Trends

FY24: Budgeted \$340,000 | Spent \$408,311

FY25: Budgeted \$360,000 | Spent \$655,457

FY26: Budgeted \$540,000 | Spent \$74,417 (so far)

Overtime spending is utilized to maintain our minimum response of 8 Firefighters per shift 365; 24/7. We currently operate with 3 Groups of 10 and 1 Group of 9 Firefighters. Officer vacancies are filled by overtime or by floating a fire prevention officer to shift. Firefighter vacancies are left unfilled until over 2 firefighters are out on a shift. Over the last year we have had long term vacancies from 3 military deployments as well as 4 retirement/resignations. Other causes of overtime are vacation, sick, injury, FMLA, military, parental leave, training, and unfilled vacancies.

Senior Housing & Fire Prevention

Senior living complexes and residents have expressed concern after the recent fatal assisted-living fire in Fall River.

- Stoneham Fire has recently been requested to voluntarily assist with fire drills at senior living complexes
 - NFPA 1710 recommends 4 Firefighter per Engine and Ladder including a Company Officer. Also an Incident Commander dedicated to the overall coordination and direction of the scene. Stoneham falls short of these standards, especially when running to 8 Firefighters and the shortage of Fire Officers.
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Fire Station Capacity Issues

- No indoor space to store reserve and support vehicles
- Limited Space for Ladder Truck
- Inadequate space for mechanic

Renting Storage to prevent Exterior Storage Risks:

- Freezing causes \$40,000 damage + 2.5 months downtime
- Exposure shortens vehicle lifespan
- Security risks

Replacement Costs:

- New trucks cost in excess of \$1.2M+ and take up to 4 years for delivery

Picture of a Modern Apparatus Floor



Why It Matters

- Faster response times save lives
- Meets national safety and staffing standards
- Protects firefighters, residents, and equipment
- Supports growing community call volume

Your support helps us provide safer, more reliable fire and rescue services.