
Fire chiefs report

From Rick Reichkitzer <firechief@townoflapointewi.gov>

Date Mon 1/13/2025 6:52 PM

To Max Imholte <administrator@townoflapointewi.gov>; Alex Smith <clerk@townoflapointewi.gov>; isg@cheqnet.net <isg@cheqnet.net>

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1000008474.jpg;

Officer Lucas Montagne has taken on the flooding of the ice rink this winter. In the absence of Alan Hardie who was our main pumper operator Lucas has trained hard to become a good operator. With his assistant Jack Nelson they have put many thousands of gallons onto the rink area. They have used tanker 3 with its on board pump for the most part. I suggested using engine #1 to get some traing with that apparatus and spraying water from hose lines. Upon checking on the progress I noticed some antifreeze under the truck. Since purchase we have smelled antifreeze when working it. Reporting this to Brian Nelson our lead engineer Ist summer hin and Tyler spoke with vendor that put this engine/pumper together. We were told to monitor this and chalked it up to a "new truck smell" this time it was reported to the public works director and the lead engineer. This on-going issue prompted me to bring in the big guns. Calling Steve Adamski from big water apparatus on a Wednesday he showed up the next day. Looking over the coolant system he found numerous hose clamps that needed attention. All this is documented if it turns into an issue down the road. Steve also looked into an ongoing issue with the chiefs truck and also met with our new town administrators. BIG Water Apparatus has a great track record with previous administrators including Lisa Potswald and Michael Kutchta. I'm sure he and Max will also work well together.

...upcoming training.

January 18 we have been invited by the united states Coast Guard to participate in a multijurisdictional ice rescue training. Washburn, Bayfield and Red Cliff will join the Coast Guard in practical joint training. When Coast Guard chief Kyle Love called me he appreciated the history I shared of training and actual calls. He didn't fully realize our role. We are the premiere ice rescue team north of Washburn and our jurisdiction includes the Apostle Islands. We have 4 wind sleds at our disposal, the largest team of fire fighters/ice rescue specialists in the area fully equipped. Jay wiltz is a certified instructor so we can do our own certification on the island. On the 18th we will fly our drone to the souix River sloughs and make sure we have enough ice for the fire departments husky rescue sled. If so we will put 6 in the sled and the rest will have to go by ferry if they wish to participate.

...January 22nd we have a joint training with EMS were we will practicing vehicle extraction with "the jaws of life" I'm always thrilled when the two services train together.

Be safe
Chief Reichkitzer

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Initial: dg

FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT

FEB. 10, 2025

Training:

In January we had a joint training exercise with La Pointe Fire and the EMS. We ran through scenarios of vehicle extraction where an accident has occurred, and occupants are trapped inside. The Fire Department has a Genesis extraction tool known as the "jaws of life". These tools are battery operated and very effective. The last time we used this tool it was to save a young man's life after an accident near Town Park. Without the tool, proper training to use it as well as the assistance of the EMT's this accident could have been much worse. At this call the newer EMT's were amazed that we had this extraction tool and were able to use it effectively. This training session in January was valuable and will pay off going forward. A big thank you to the MIRF for letting us train with old vehicles waiting for disposal.

Ice Rescue:

Every winter our FD focuses on training for ice rescue. So far this winter we have responded to two calls from the Ashland/Bayfield Dispatch Center for possible ice rescue events. These calls were on the heels of the snowmobile driver found deceased in open water in Ashland's jurisdiction. The day before this tragedy there was a large multijurisdictional training session run by the Coast Guard. Ashland Fire, Washburn Fire, Bayfield and Red Cliff fire as well as our own department participated.

The following week we responded to a call involving a report that an ice skater had gone through the ice. Both Lake Assault sleds responded to the call which was determined to be a false alarm.

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FEB 10 2025

Initial: dg

Several fire department personnel are awaiting certification by Windsled Inc. so that these two sleds could be operated by the FD used for rescue missions if needed. In the meantime, the Fire Department will continue to use their own ice rescue "Husky" windsled.

We are proud of our elite, well trained ice rescue team and certified instructor, Joseph Wiltz. The rules for joining ice rescue are strict. First, you must be a member in good standing of the FD, then you need to be trained and certified by our instructor.

Be Safe,

Chief Reichkitzer

Fire Department Report April 2025

This is one of those springs when the grasses and vegetation on the forest floor were not flattened down by snow. This scenario increases the chance of wildfires until the forest “greens up”. We had our official refresher with Ciara from the Washburn DNR office. We have also invested in lighting/sirens and high visibility reflectors to bring our brush truck up to NFPA standards.

PUBLIC REMINDER: any fires bigger than a recreational 3’x3’x3’ needs a burning permit unless there is 100% snow cover. Any non-permitted fire is subject to a \$500 fine.

Any permitted fire that the Fire Department responds to and is found to be non-compliant with permit rules are also subject to a \$500 fine. If you are fined by the town for illegal/dangerous burning you most certainly will also hear from the DNR. If you’ve been watching the news lately you know how devastating wildfires can be, especially during dry conditions.

Below is information submitted by Jack Nelson who, with Jay Wiltz, helped develop our own Search and Rescue Personal Watercraft program. Our new personal watercraft will arrive on Saturday, April 5th.

...

Over the last year Jay Wiltz and I, Jack Nelson, spearheaded the establishment of a Search and Rescue Personal Watercraft (SAR PWC) program for the La Pointe Fire Department. This program was developed after recognizing the need for a fast, maneuverable water rescue operation of Madeline Island and surrounding waters. With input from other firefighters in the Department and Sarah Schram, our Ambulance Director, equipment was selected, and response strategies

were developed that would ensure a coordinated and effective approach to water rescue.

Thanks go to the Town Board for approving the funding and for the donors to the Fire Department who provided financial support.

Thanks to the teamwork of many, the Fire Department will now be better equipped to respond to water emergencies.



April Chief's Report

No calls to report during the month of April.

Regular monthly training for April included our annual Wildland Fire Training with a representative from the DNR present. Also, we reviewed our future SOG for use of our new EV car fire blanket and proper firefighting foam techniques.

We will begin training for near shore, open water rescue with our new PWC (personal water craft). It is in the firehall, we are geared up and awaiting proper paperwork to train.

There will be a much needed Fire Inspector Training during our June monthly training. This will be put on by Rick Sommerfeld with the WI DSPS.

We have several small specialized teams that meet and train separately, on their own time. These teams include Ice Rescue, Dive Team, Drone Pilots and now a Water Rescue Squad.

An Apparatus Committee has been formed to bring the purchase of a replacement tanker to fruition. This is a small group of select fire fighters that meet monthly and keep up with fleet management. Including purchase reviews, repairs & maintenance.

We are exploring options for another large water source (pond) to supply year around, drawable water near the middle of the island. This is in order to provide effective & consistent coverage for the entire island.

Our First Responder ID cards have been processed and received. This is a nation wide identification system for anyone involved with EMS. We are happy to have this completed & thanks to Jack Nelson on that.

Respectfully,
Tyler Andreas FF #02
Assistant Chief & Training Officer
Dedicated Since '94



May Chief's Report

Two calls to report this month:

1. False alarm on Chippewa Trail, common occurrence. We responded, nothing to report.
2. High angle rope rescue at the State Park off of Overlook Trail near the maintenance garage. We deployed our ropes team and successfully pulled an injured young lady from the shore, up approximately 50' of very steep incline.

-Regular monthly training for May was an in house class, Fire Inspection Basics, put on by Rick Sommerfeld, director of Wi. Dept. of Fire Safety. It was very informative and well received. The entire department was involved. In the past, the task of fire inspections was performed by only a few members, which can be overwhelming. We have changed our tactic and now have a room full of potential fire inspectors.

-We have received all the proper paperwork and secured all the correct equipment for our new PWC (personal water craft) Team and will begin training immediately. They will work in conjunction with our Dive Team & Drone Team for near shore rescue.

-The Apparatus Committee, put together to manage our fleet, had to postpone their May meeting due to a scheduling conflict. Nothing to report, will update next month.

-Our annual SCBA mask fittings will be performed during June. This test is put on by on our equipment supplier to be sure our equipment is up to proper standards. This involves each firefighter visiting the firehall for 20 minutes throughout the day and sitting down to perform a breathing test with a mask while hooked up to their monitors to ensure proper fit. They also perform annual service & testing on our heavy rescue tools.

Respectfully,
Tyler Andreas FF #02
Assistant Chief & Training Officer
Dedicated Since '94

From: Rick Reichkitzer <firechief@townoflapointewi.gov>

Sent: Tuesday, July 8, 2025 7:56 AM

To: Max Imholte <administrator@townoflapointewi.gov>; tylerandreas@me.com; wiltz32@gmail.com; isg@cheqnet.net

Subject: Chief Report June,

I want to start this report by sincerely thanking my assistant chiefs Tyler Andreas and Joseph "J" Wiltz for taking on some of my duties during a bumper of a spring with the passing of little Ricky and an ongoing health issue with myself. Assistant chief Wiltz took on our 2% dues audit with Rick Summerfield from the Department of Safety and Professional Services. We passed our audit to insure our 2% dues monies that has been around 7k.

Assistant chief Andreas as well as being an over the top training officer wrote the last two monthly reports and im going to encourage him to keep writing a training report.

A lot of activities happening surrounding the fire department as is normal with a busy summer. Thanks to the town getting our jet ski insured we can begin a well thought through training regiment.

The Dive Team has been in the water and setting up their compartment in emergency vehicle Dale for rapid response. One of the chiefs donated a under water drone to help with under water search rescue or recovery.

Our star member of the lapointe volunteer fire department youth program cracker Jack Nelson turns 18 soon so he will be a full fledged fire fighter as he already completed all the training needed to be called a fire fighter.

We've had a number of powerlines compromised by trees and our job is to provide safety measures until Excell Energy arrives. July 5th had us rerouting a lot of traffic due to a tree on line by the oasis on big bay road. Big thanks to the lapointe PD for assistance.

I want to take a moment to express my condolences on the passing of Hugh Mattson as he was a big advocate of our department, not only did he donate a lot of money he was on apparatus committees to help with the planning and building process of key apparatus. When we first met on madeline Island he asked if I was related to Raymond Reichkitzer from Stillwater Minnesota. We'll that was my grandpa and he also new my dad and Uncle Jack. Small world 🌍

Be safe and follow those Burning permits to the letter.

Chief Reichkitzer

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

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(S) TB, TA, A, Clerk, Public



Monthly fire reports

From joseph wiltz <wiltz32@gmail.com>

Date Tue 12/2/2025 9:51 AM

To Alex Smith <clerk@townoflapointewi.gov>; Max Imholte <administrator@townoflapointewi.gov>

Monthly Fire Department Report – Town of LaPointe

Acting Fire Chief Wiltz,

Below is the monthly report for the Town of LaPointe Board:

Town of LaPointe Fire Department
Monthly Report
From the Office of the Fire Chief

First, I would like to extend our deepest gratitude to Chief Reichkitzer for his dedication, mentorship, and commitment to the Town of LaPointe and our fire department. We also offer prayers and support to Chief Reichkitzer and his partner Joan as they continue their recovery from recent health challenges and personal loss.

Incident Report:

This month, the Dunn family suffered a tragic loss due to a structure fire. LaPointe Fire was dispatched and arrived on scene nine minutes after dispatch, finding the residence and nearby vehicles fully engulfed. Despite considerable efforts from responding crews, the structure was a total loss. The Dunn family was able to escape with minor injuries.

Training:

The department trained with EMS on EVOC (Emergency Vehicle Operations Course), focusing on safe driving procedures and emergency vehicle operations.

Fire Prevention and Compliance:

The department has been conducting commercial fire inspections throughout town. These inspections are required for state funding and also help prevent fires before they occur.

Administrative Updates:

Points for good standing and compensation for calls and meetings have been entered and recorded with the town.

The town has approved funding for a used tanker to replace our existing unit, which has a failing tank. We are currently pursuing options within our budget and will keep the board updated as information becomes available.

Respectfully submitted,
Acting Fire Chief Jay Wiltz
Town of LaPointe

Dorgene Goetsch

From: Max Imholte
Sent: Tuesday, January 13, 2026 9:19 AM
To: Dorgene Goetsch
Subject: FW: Monthly Fire Department Report

From: joseph wiltz <wiltz32@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, January 2, 2026 12:48 PM
To: Max Imholte <administrator@townoflapointewi.gov>; Liz Brown <accounting@townoflapointewi.gov>
Subject: Monthly Fire Department Report

Town Board of La Pointe,

Please find the Fire Department's monthly report highlights below:

- Pwc has been winterized and put away for the season
- Monthly training by Asst. Chief and training officer Andreas included : Winter operations refreshers and airpack use and maintenance
- We have found a potential used tanker and are in the preliminary investigation portion of a possible purchase.
- Payroll & Member Status: Payroll has been fully reconciled and submitted. All department members are in good standing for the current year.
- Call Tracking Improvements: Jamie and I are developing a new system to tabulate calls for service and special assignments on a monthly basis, rather than compiling this information only at year's end. This will improve reporting accuracy and efficiency.
- Budget Updates: Budget preparation for 2026 has been completed. Additionally, last-minute purchases for the 2025 budget year have been submitted for approval.
- Community Ice Rink: Pete Wiggins, along with members of the Town Crew and Fire Department, has been diligently flooding the ice rink at the ball park in preparation for community skating in the near future.
- Grant Application: We are collaborating with Rich Kula, EMS, and the Police Department on a \$50,000 grant application to acquire WISCOM-capable radios.
- Equipment Purchases: The department has purchased a new gas/carbon monoxide detector to assist with gas leak responses, as well as new stabilization equipment to enhance safety during vehicle extrication operations for both rescuers and patients.

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[Handwritten signature]

- Ice Rescue Preparation: We are preparing for ice rescue operations by completing equipment inventories and readying the wind sled.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or if additional information is needed.

Respectfully submitted,
Chief Jay Wiltz
La Pointe Fire Department