



Deferred by the Budget Standing Committee at the meeting  
of November 15, 2017

## Memorandum

**To:** Budget Standing Committee

**Cc:** Shelley Chemnitz, CAO; Kristine Douglas, Director FMS

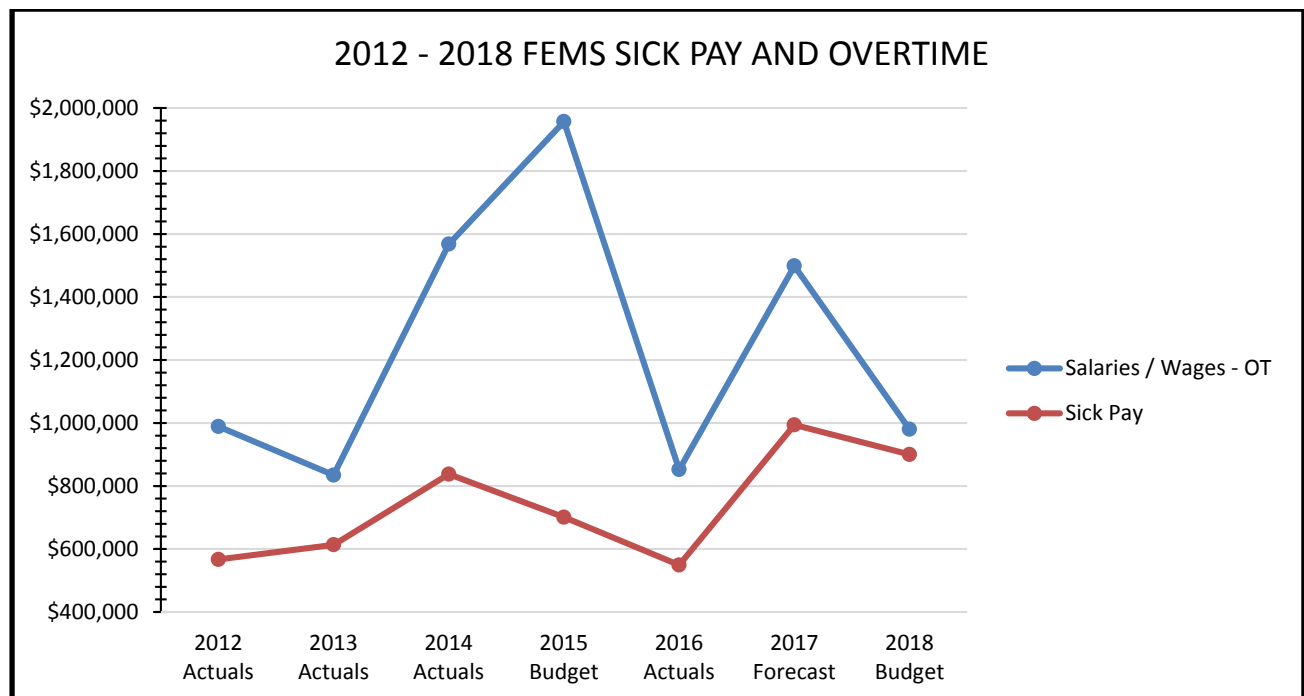
**From:** Jeff McCormick, Acting Fire Chief, Director of Fire and Emergency Management Services

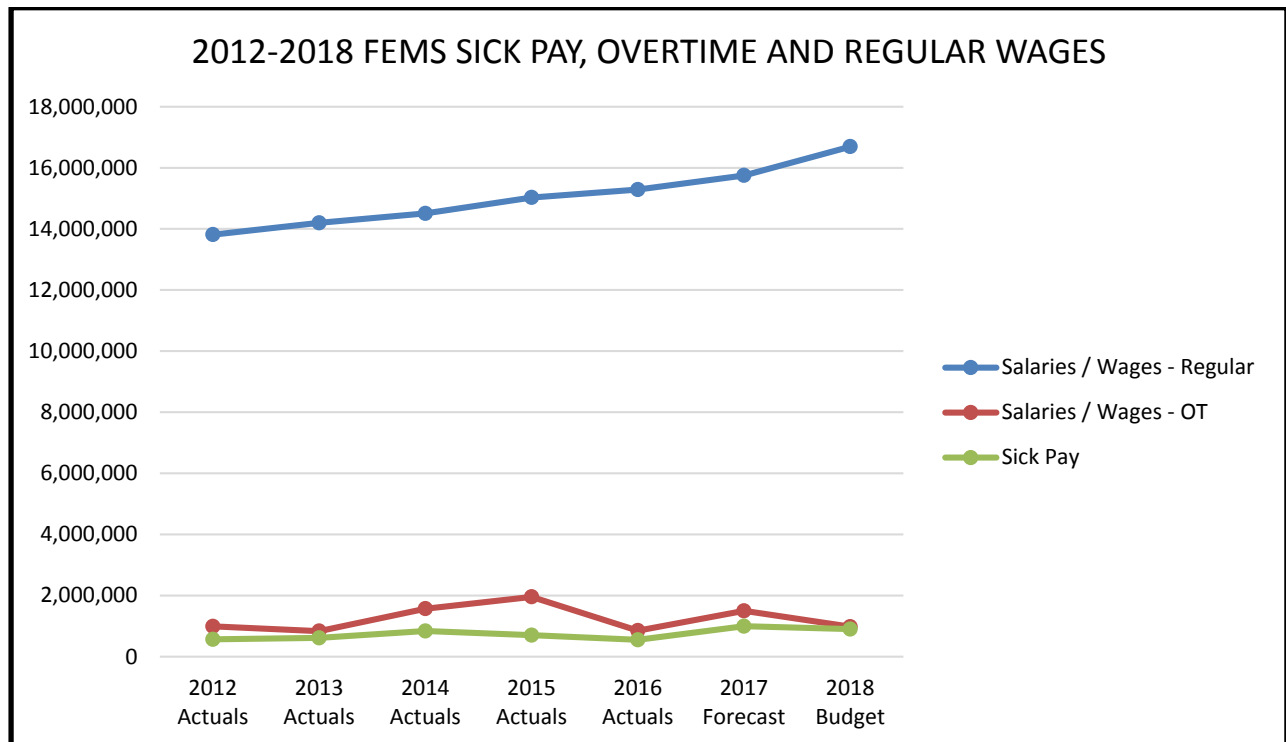
**Date:** November 8, 2017

**Subject:** Overtime and Sick Time Costs

Please accept this memo as further information to a concern that arose as part of the FEMS 2018 budget presentation on November 6, 2017.

Below you will find two separate graphs depicting FEMS overtime costs and sick pay.





While I wish to acknowledge that the committee requested a graph to show the overtime and sick time costs, I thought that a table would allow for a more fulsome overview of these costs. The table below depicts the percentages of annual overtime costs from 2014 - to Nov 3, 2017, that are incurred to ensure minimum staffing levels in the suppression and communications divisions. Personnel who are scheduled off duty agree to cover additional shifts and are paid at 1.5% of the daily rate of pay.

Additionally, the table shows the percentage of over-time costs that are incurred for when staff report to work on their normally scheduled time off for the purpose of training, fire investigations, emergency callback and fire investigations. They are also paid a 1.5% of the daily rate.

Finally, the table also depicts the total amount of annual sick time, in terms of hours for suppression division personnel, who have been working the twenty-four hour shift since January of 2016.

## Breakdown in FEMS overtime Costs

Year	OT costs for Suppression min. Staffing	OT costs for Communications min. staffing	OT Costs for training/fire investigations/emergency recall	Sick Hours – Suppression staff only
2014	80%	3%	17%	15,341
2015	81%	5%	14%	13,956
2016	84%	4%	12%	13,048
2017 - 11/3	88%	2%	10%	15,161

When looking at the chart it would appear as though our overtime costs relating to hiring back personnel in the suppression division, to ensure minimum staffing levels has ebbed and flowed over the four years, 2017 is certainly tracking up. That can be correlated to the sick time hours which are also tracking up in 2017 as well after seeing a two year decline.

This year has seen a significant rise in sick time and overtime in the suppression division attributed to some unusual circumstances. There have been an inordinate number of longer term illnesses than previous years, there has also been a larger number of suppression employees who have spent time on modified duties as a result of illness or injury. In order to keep our staffing levels consistent off duty personnel have worked extra shifts to make-up for this shortfall, and are paid at 1.5% of the daily rate while doing so.

The suppression divisions has also seen a larger number of personnel on parental leave in 2017, which also has an effect on the overtime budget as we must staff the trucks in their absence.

The suppression division has seen itself operate with three less persons for a significant period of time in 2017 due to a retirement (position not replaced) and the secondment of one person to the training division and another to the administration division. This too has resulted in additional overtime costs.

In summary, the salary and wages lines are being managed under the funding envelope despite the peaks and valleys of both overtime and sick time costs.

Respectfully submitted

*Jeff McCormick*

Jeff McCormick,  
Acting Fire Chief, Director of Fire and Emergency Management Services