



CAPITAL AREA FIRE DISTRICTS ASSOCIATION

BULLETIN

YOUR FIRE DISTRICT NEWS SOURCE

APRIL 1ST, 2023

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If you can't see yourself as a life-long learner, then please do us all a favor and retire.

THE CAPITAL CALENDAR:

WWW.AFDCA.ORG

Thursday April 6th Board of Director's Meeting 7PM

Thursday May 11th Meeting of the General Membership

Thursday June 8th Board of Director's Meeting 7PM

Thursday July 13th Board of Director's Meeting 7PM

August, No Meeting

Thursday September 14th, General Membership Meeting 7PM

Thursday October 12th General Membership/Nominations for Officers & Directors

Thursday November 9th, 7:00pm general membership dinner served at 6PM/Elections

December, No Meeting

Printable Calendar – See Last Page

It's March Already and Dues are Due!!

To date 62 **Fire Districts** have submitted renewal dues for 2023. Those fire districts that have not renewed that were members last year are: Coeymans Hollow, Hemstreet Park, ~~Quaker Street~~, Glenville #7, Hoosick Falls Joint, ~~Schoodack Valley~~, Town of Mohawk, ~~Selkirk~~, ~~Guilderland~~, North Creek, Speigletown, and Petersburg. We are looking forward to hearing from those districts plus any more in the Capital Area that wish to join.

To date most **business partners** have submitted renewals for 2023. Those business partners that have not renewed for 2023 yet are: Ballston Spa National Bank, Fox Pest Control, White Wolf Computer, Salt City Fire Equipment, and The D'Amato Law Group.

Long Way to Travel to Meetings? Join remotely using Zoom!

It's our desire that every member district have the opportunity to attend Capital Area meetings. We know we cover a large area, in 8 counties and beyond and wish to give all of our members a chance to participate in the general membership meetings. You have a voice and we would like to hear it. Join us at our next meeting either in person or via Zoom. The link will be sent via constant contact prior to each general membership meeting. Thank you for being a member and we hope you will join us.

CAFDA FALL WORKSHOP

Saturday, November 4th, 2023 8:00 AM Fall Workshop Verdooy Fire Department

SUBJECTS TO BE COVERED

Harassment Challenges – Discipline in the Volunteer Department

How to SHOP for insurance

Ask the experts: CPA, VFBL, Attorney, Insurance, Candle Stick Maker

We want to thank the Clifton Park – Halfmoon Fire District for allowing us to use their facility for the Capital Area meetings.

You Are Invited to Become a Member of the Capital Area Association!

The Capital Area Association has voted to amend its By-laws to allow both individual and regional or county Fire District Associations to join. The updated By-laws are posted to the AFDCA.org website.

Individual membership fee will be \$50 annually, fire district association fees will be \$300 annually.

Download THE APPLICATION HERE: <https://afdca.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/2022-Application.doc>

Benefits of membership include meeting attendance, receiving the Bulletin, access to legal advice

The Capital Area has logo ware available, long and short sleeve polo shirts. Contact Secretary/Treasurer Tony Hill to purchase shirts.

*****COMMISSIONER TRAINING REMAINING OPTIONS***

HOW MANY PEOPLE ARE INTERESTED IN A POP-UP IN PERSON COMMISSIONER TRAINING IN THE NEAR FUTURE FOR INSTANCE RIGHT AFTER EASTER WHICH IS APRIL 9TH. THE CAPITAL AREA FIRE DISTRICTS ASSOCIATION IS WILLING TO SPONSOR AN IN-PERSON TRAINING AT CLIFTON PARK FD. SO THAT THOSE WHO STILL NEED THE TRAINING CAN PARTICIPATE IN AN IN-PERSON CLASS ROOM ENVIRONMENT. **LET US KNOW YOU ARE INTERESTED BY EMAILING CAAOFD@GMAIL.COM AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.**

§176-e of Town Law: Training requirements for fire commissioners. Each fire commissioner shall attend and successfully complete a commissioner-specific state-approved training course within **two hundred seventy days** of the taking of such office. When approved by the board of fire commissioners in advance of a commissioner attending such training course, the actual and necessary expenses incurred by a commissioner in successfully completing the training required by this section shall be a charge against the fire district. [270 days from January 1st = September 28th, 2023]

A remaining option is the on-line course hosted by the Association of Fire Districts of the State of New York.

On-line Training Opportunity

Cost: \$100 per person

NEW Online Commissioner Training Course

This training is available to both Members and Non-Members.

Questions or further information call 800-520-9594

If you see ** it indicates a must-read article with educational value or leadership qualities.

CAPITAL SHORTS:

- **Be sure to look at this week's ScoreCard for new legislation being introduced including a bill to move fire district elections in May!!**
- The three Commissioner's training classes in Clifton Park, Averill Park and Berkshire were resounding successes. We wish to thank those fire districts that hosted the classes and provided food for the attendees. We will certainly be doing it again next year. Thank you also to instructor Greg Serio and all of the officers and directors who provided the help to accomplish these classes.
- 2023 Tax Savings Generated By New York's Volunteer Fire Service provided by FASNY downloadable HERE: <https://afdca.org/wp-admin/post.php?post=4898&action=edit&classic-editor>
- If you are interested in becoming a State Director to represent Region 1 for the next two years, please contact Tom Rinaldi or any of the Capital Area officers.
- Congratulations to our friends from Erie County in the Town of Cheektowaga as the Bellevue Fire District celebrates its 75th year of service.

- The Capital

If you no longer wish to receive the Capital Bulletin you have the option to “unsubscribe” at the bottom of the introductory email.

MUTUAL AID HELP REQUEST

- The Wilton Fire District is looking for policies regarding Driver Certification, send to Megan Washburn, District Administrator at mwashburn@wiltonfiredept.org. Thank you.
- The Arvin Hart Fire Co is looking to see if anyone has a written swift water mutual aid agreement on top of their county mutual aid agreement, holding the other participants harmless? Reply to tom@rinaldi1.com
- Fire Department Breakfasts are back, Gansevoort Fire Department holds theirs on the 3rd Sunday of each month except for July and August. Clifton Park Fire Department is every other month with the next breakfast on the first Sunday of April. (IF ANY OTHER DEPARTMENT WOULD LIKE TO NOTIFY READERS OF THEIR ACTIVITIES PLEASE LET US KNOW THROUGH THE OFFICERS OR DIRECTORS.)
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ON THE GRANTS FRONT:

Fire Prevention and Safety Grant (FP&S) is Open!

The FP&S grant provides critical resources needed to support a wide array of fire prevention projects that improve the safety of the public and firefighters from fire and related hazards.

The application period is now open and is scheduled to **close on March 31 at 5pm EST.**

STATE ASSOCIATION NEWS:

WWW.AFDNYS.ORG

2023 Annual Meeting & Leadership Summit Expo

Wednesday, May 17 - Saturday, May 20

Turning Stone Resort & Casino

5218 Patrick Road

Verona, Ne 13478

Annual Meeting & Leadership Summit Expo

[Click Here to Register](#)

A link to reserve your hotel room at the Turning Stone Resort & Casino will be included on your confirmation page and in your confirmation email. No call in reservations will be accepted.. 1 room per person

Anyone with hotel reservations in the AFDSNY block that is NOT registered for this event will be subject to your reservation being canceled by the host. Prior notice will be given when possible but is not guaranteed.

The Capital Area Association officers and directors are urging all fire districts who are members of the State Association to at least travel to Turning Stone on Friday Afternoon May 19th no later than 4PM to VOTE in favor of the By-law change which will allow future voting either in person or by Proxy. This would empower all of the members who pay dues to vote on the future of the State Association without having to travel, pay for and attend the annual conference. *If you pay dues to this not for profit Association, you should be enfranchised to vote!*

Fire Districts Announces a move back to a Fall Annual Meeting

The annual meeting in 2024 will be held on October 9-13th at the Crown Plaza-Desmond Hotel in Colonie NY.

TRAINING APPROPRIATE FOR YOUR ENTIRE BOARD/SECRETARY/TREASURER

Mark your calendar for Saturday, November 4th 2023 for the **Capital Area Fall Leadership Workshop**, being held at the Verdox Fire Station on Troy-Schenectady Road. Tentative subjects are Harassment in the Fire Service and Applying Discipline, How to SHOP insurance for your fire district, Expert's Panel.



Protecting Your Organization From Fraud ESIP WEBINAR SERIES

We have seen a large uptick in the number of acts of fraud committed against emergency services organizations. Join us as we discuss ways to protect your organizations from these attempts including theft of funds, computer hacking, and more.

Wednesday, April 5th 2023 at 7:00PM

<https://mcneilandcompany.us8.list-manage.com/track/click?u=03596f243a9d922954ebaf15e&id=3ed014ef53&e=781e9a2c81>



Coffee with Commissioners

Thursday April 6th at 7PM

Join us for another session of Coffee with Commissioners where we talk about how you as fire commissioners can protect the assets of your districts. Join Region 4 Director Dave Denniston as he talks about troubling new schemes arising to defraud fire districts.

CLICK HERE TO REGISTER: https://archcapgroup.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_ffPm4KEgRR-Zf9Vk4Aa12Q

THE LATEST FROM ALBANY

2023 Issues of United Concern – NYS Fire Service Alliance Legislative Initiatives

- **ENSURE VFBL PARITY WITH WORKERS COMPENSATION**
Bring the volunteer firefighters benefit law pay equal to worker's compensation/what career firefighters receive when injured in the line of duty.
Corresponding legislation: S5436 SKOUFIS/A5991 MCMAHON
- **S4120 MAYER/A3992 OTIS---DESIGNATE EMS AS AN ESSENTIAL SERVICE AND EXPAND THE BENEFITS AVAILABLE TO EMS PERSONNEL AND SET STANDARDS FOR EMS**
Recognizes EMS as an essential service, establishes a special district for the financing and operation of general ambulance services, expands access to health insurance and retirement benefits available to EMS providers.
- **ANALYZE FINDINGS FROM THE NYS DHSES RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION TASK FORCE IMPLEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE LEGISLATURE ON:**
(1) RECRUITMENT EFFORTS
(2) RETENTION EFFORTS

PUBLIC SAFETY AND BUILDING CODE COMPLIANCE ISSUES

- **S3458 SKOFUS/A2776 ZEBROWSKI---AMEND PENAL CODE TO ADD ENDANGERING THE WELFARE OF OCCUPANTS AND FIRST RESPONDERS**
- **S2986 KAVANAGH/A4430 ZEBROWSKI---RECOVERY OF 54-G FUNDING TO SUPPORT CODE ENFORCEMENT EFFORTS**
Ensure state funds collected through dedicated fees on each fire policy written in the state go to support local code enforcement activities and not continue to be swept into State General Fund.
Corresponding legislation: S.6970-A (Kavanagh) / A.8802-A (Zebrowski) (2021-2022 Session)
- **S3531 SKOFUS---TIMELY ADOPTION OF UPDATED STATE FIRE AND BUILDING PREVENTION CODE**

Would require that a new building code as published by ICC would be adopted by the NYS Codes Council within specified time frame.

- **ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS** – Ensure the Executive and Legislative prioritization of provision of affordable housing stock through legalization of more residential space is executed in a manner that prioritizes occupant safety and the safety of first responders in emergencies. Ensure a focus on legalizing existing units as well as create new units; advocate for increasing access to housing for first responders as a recruitment and retention tool.

Corresponding legislation: To be determined.

- **LITHIUM-ION BATTERY SAFETY STANDARDS**

Ensure proper registration/permitting, research and standard development, repairing and regulation of products containing lithium-ion batteries, work with stakeholders to raise public awareness around best fire safety practices, and examine solutions proposed from decision makers and opine as a trusted public safety voice.

- **S324 OBERACKER---CONTINUE TO IMPROVE TAX BENEFITS FOR VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS**

Push to allow volunteer firefighters to receive both real property tax exemptions and income tax credit, while continuing to advocate for an income tax credit increase (has been at \$200 since its inception in 2006.) This credit would step increase tied to qualifying years of service up to \$2,500 for 10 or more consecutive qualifying years of service.

ALSO: A165 WOERNER AND S324 OBERACKER

- **A1999 HAWLEY---CANCER COVERAGE COST RELIEF**

Pursue data collection to enable establishment of a funding stream to alleviate fiscal burden on districts/departments providing the coverage.

- *occupational, and other information from firefighters on an ongoing basis to enable public health researchers to learn more about the causes of firefighter cancer in order to better treat and prevent it.*
- **The SIREN Grant**, which is run through the Department of Health and Human Services and helps public and private nonprofit EMS agencies that serve rural areas pay for equipment, training, and staffing.
- Housing Guaranteed Loan Program assists approved lenders in providing loans to low- and moderate- income households to build, rehabilitate, or improve a home in eligible rural areas. **This bill will allow volunteer firefighters to participate in the loan program even if their income exceeds the maximum allowable income level by up to \$18,000.** The Department of Housing and Urban Development's Good Neighbor Next Door Sales Program *gives law enforcement officers, teachers, firefighters, and emergency medical technicians a 50-percent discount from the list price of a home located in a revitalization area.*

THE LATEST FROM WASHINGTON



TAKE ACTION NOW!

This week the Senate is expected to consider S. 870, the Fire Grants and Safety Act. This bill would reauthorize the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA), Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) and Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) programs. The authorizations for these programs end in September.

The NVFC has heard that there may be some amendments added to S. 870 on the Senate floor, which may slow the bill's progress as it moves through Congress. Please urge your Senator via this action alert to support clean passage of S. 870 when it is considered on the Senate floor this week.

Tell your Senator to support AFG/SAFER Grants: <https://www.votervoice.net/NVFC/Campaigns/102129/Respond>

Click the link below to log in and send your message:

<https://www.votervoice.net/BroadcastLinks/1Yr86kYYe9PwGxMwL3ACBg>

Bicameral FIRE STATION Act Introduced To Upgrade Fire, EMS Facilities Nationwide

With a proposed \$750 million grant program, the newly introduced FIRE STATION Act (Facilitating Investment Required for Emergency Services to All Towns in Our Nation Act), put forth by U.S. Sens. Chris Van Hollen (D-MD) and Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), as well as U.S. Rep. Bill Pascrell (D-NJ), pushes for modifications, upgrades and build-up of fire and EMS facilities across the country. "Our firefighters deserve the best possible facilities so they can be ready with everything they need to spring into action when duty calls," Van Hollen said. "Yet nearly half of the fire stations across America require major repairs – with some even posing serious health hazards to the men and women who protect our

communities. *This bipartisan bill will unlock more funding to ensure our fire and EMS heroes have modern, safe, and mission-ready facilities.*"

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

View the final report of the NYS VFF Task Force HERE:

<https://afdca.org/view-the-final-report-of-the-nys-vff-task-force/>

The report can also be downloaded from the Association's website at [AFDCA.org](https://afdca.org)

Volunteer Firefighters Save N.Y. Taxpayers Billions Annually, Study Finds

A COPY OF THE REPORT IS POSTED TO THE WEB SITE AND HERE AT: <https://afdca.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/FASNY-Economic-Study-2023.pdf>

YOUR HUMAN RESOURCES

***The 4 Ps: A Blueprint For Embracing Change In The Fire Service*

Linda Willing

Change can be hard. Everyone knows that. It is especially difficult when it goes beyond merely technical changes, such as replacing one tool with a new one. When making technical change, there will still be some who resist the new way, but in most cases, everyone will agree that the concept of the change is valid – the tool was accepted as necessary before and will still be necessary even in its new form.

Much more challenging are changes that involve identity, culture and history. In his book, "Managing Transitions: Making the Most of Change," change management expert William Bridges calls these kinds of changes "transitions," and cautions that the process for making such transitions effective and lasting requires a thoughtful and deliberate three-step process:

1. Recognize that something must end before the new way is possible.
2. Acknowledge that there will be a period of disruption between endings and new beginnings, which he labels "the neutral zone."
3. Manage the change. Real transition is only possible after the first two steps are complete, but to be successful, the change must be managed.

THE 4 PS TO LASTING CHANGE

Building off Step 3, Bridges calls the four aspects of durable change the four Ps: purpose, picture, plan, and part to play. For example, say a fire department that has been predominantly staffed by volunteers throughout its history is now preparing to move to being a fully paid career department. This is a major change that will trigger many feelings and issues, both personal and organizational.

Wise leadership will be sure to recognize and honor what is ending to begin this process. It should also be prepared to manage the inevitable temporary confusion and disruption that will initially come as the new organizational model is implemented. But if the new way is to be fully embraced and become functional, attention must be paid to the four Ps. Organizational leaders who embrace the four Ps recognize the reality that not everyone sees the change in the same way. For some in the organization, the new way of doing things is obviously good – they are immediately ready to go with it. For others, not so much. Attending to the four Ps will ensure that durable change is implemented consistently throughout the organization.

1. Purpose: First, make sure everyone understands the purpose behind the change. You may need to sell the problem that is triggering the solution before everyone will be open to the new way. Hopefully most of the underlying issues that motivated the change have already been surfaced. But it doesn't hurt to reiterate the sense of purpose. Critically, the purpose must be clear and mean something to everyone in the organization. The best sense of purpose is that which is values and mission-based: We are better able to serve our communities. We can provide new and necessary services. We will keep our members safer.

2. Picture: A shared sense of purpose is the necessary first step, but it is often somewhat abstract. It must be combined with a specific picture of what the new way will look like:

- How will stations be staffed in the new system?
- What kind of shifts will people be working?
- What will the command structure be?

You don't need to have all the answers at this point, but there must be a clear picture that is tangible and logical.

3. Plan: A picture must be accompanied by a plan. Transitioning from volunteer to fully paid is a big task and is best broken down into smaller parts that may be more easily understood and grasped:

- What role will current members have?
- How will officers be selected?
- What is the timeframe for the commissioning of fully staffed stations?)

Bridges offers a reminder:

[A] change management plan starts with the outcome and then works backwards, step by step, to create the necessary preconditions for that outcome. A transition management plan, on the other hand, starts with where people are and then works forward, step by step, through the process of leaving the past behind, getting through the wilderness and profiting from it, and emerging with new attitudes, behaviors and identity."

4. Part to play: The last part of the transition process is perhaps the most important. People must not only understand the plan, but also see what part they will play in its success. There are two ways this will manifest. First, everyone needs to know their own role and their relationship to others in the new scheme of things. But just as important, people must see their role in making the transition process itself successful. This aspect of defining a part to play not only gives everyone a stake in the success of the outcome but creates accountability for individuals during the process as well. Increasing engagement in this way will foster greater understanding and buy-in of the entire transition process.

It is important that everyone feels they have a part to play in the transition process, even those who might feel they are being left behind from the new way. If volunteers cannot be incorporated into the new staffing structure of the department, offer them other meaningful roles, not only through the transition process, but also in the new organizational model. Can they volunteer as advisors or serve as mentors? Can you find other creative ways to conserve their experience and expertise?

Giving everyone a significant part to play in the transition management process also increases knowledge and insight among all members for why the change is needed and what benefits it will bring. Such understanding can be a unifying force where organizational members can align themselves together against the problem rather than fighting among themselves over lesser issues.

THE POWER OF GROUP INPUT

When managing a major organizational transition, those who are leading cannot afford to leave anyone behind. No one is a write-off or incidental to the success of the overall mission. Those who feel they are being treated in this way will find other ways to make their presence known, and it usually won't be in the service of the desired goals. But when people are included, starting with the acknowledgement of loss at both individual and organizational levels and working through to how exactly each person will be instrumental in the success of the new vision, then change can become a winning proposition for everyone.

LET YOUR MEMBERS KNOW ABOUT THIS OPPORTUNITY!



April 15th, 2023

The 2023 Fire and Emergency Services Training Conference is virtual this year! Register for one two, or all three hot topic course offerings:

- Cancer Prevention
- Lithium-Ion Battery Emergencies

- Becoming an Effective Leader

Learn more & register: <http://on.ny.gov/3G018P4>



VFIS Instructor-Level Program Emergency Vehicle Driver Training (EVDT)

EMS Vehicle Operation (EMSVO) Description **This program is a train-the-trainer program** which is designed to teach the necessary instructional methodology in order to successfully deliver the following programs within your own agency. Upon completion, an instructor kit will be provided.

Course Information

4/15/2023 8:30 AM – 5:00 PM

4/16/2023 8:00 AM – 3:30 PM

Wynantskill Fire Department / NGFD#1 511 Church Street Wynantskill, NY 12198



EVDT 12-16hr Instructor Level PDF.pdf

Register online at www.vfis.com

Insured by VFIS \$0 for first 3 seats, \$60 for each additional Not insured by VFIS \$500 per seat

VFIS Instructor-Level Program

Emergency Services Trailer Operations & Safety

Emergency Services UTV/ATV Safety

Woodman's Hall 980 County Route 401 Westerlo, NY 12193

Insured by VFIS Trailer: \$0 for first 3 seats, \$60 for each additional UTV/ATV: \$0 for first 3 seats, \$60 for each additional

Not insured by VFIS Trailer: \$300 UTV/ATV: \$300

REGISTER ON LINE AT: WWW.VFIS.COM

UL FSRI Fire Safety Academy – 1 Hour Web Based Course on Lithium Ion Batteries

This course focuses on foundational research about lithium-ion batteries, thermal runaway and how fire and explosion hazards can develop. The knowledge you gain in this course can help you identify the risks associated with lithium-ion battery products in your personal and professional life.

COURSE ACCESS AT THIS LINK: <https://training.fsri.org/course/035-science-lib>

Available at any time for your members.

REGISTRATION IS OPEN FOR THE NYSAFC 117TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE & FIRE 2023 EXPO!

June 14-17 • The Oncenter • Syracuse, NY With exhibits, fire and EMS classes, Hands-On Training, and networking events for personnel of all ranks, there's something for everyone at the premier fire industry, rescue, and EMS conference and expo in the Northeast!

CLASSROOM EDUCATION

More than **35 classes** will be presented by some of the most respected leaders in the industry from Wednesday – Saturday for Conference Full Term registrants. **EMS CME** classes will be delivered, and special training for **codes** personnel and **commissioners** will be available. The schedule of classes is coming soon!

ATTENDEE REGISTRATION

REGISTER IN ADVANCE or at the door! **New** – online registration is available for single registrants! Those registering groups must use the PDF form.

ONE DAY TICKETS (EXPO ONLY)

Pre-Registration: \$25 (per person, includes three tickets)

On-Site: \$10 (per person, per day)

FULL TERM REGISTRATION (EXPO & CLASSES)

NYS AFC Individual Member: \$100 (per person)

Non-Member: \$175 (per person)

NYS AFC 2023 Seminar Series, “Truck Skills Beyond the Textbooks”

Early in our firefighting orientation, we’re taught basic skills and tactics from textbooks. In addition, we’ll drill and be tested on many of these skills at fire academy buildings to attain our firefighting certifications. It’s a good process, but our learning shouldn’t stop there because we haven’t been exposed to many of the situations we’ll encounter at fires and emergencies. Plus, the buildings in the academy aren’t conducive to allowing us to operate with tools to open the walls and ceilings, pull suspended ceilings, remove baseboard and window trim, or even cut open tongue and groove sheathed roofs. This [interactive lecture](#) strives to go beyond textbook learning and bring alive street skills, tips, and tactics of truck work in: portable ladders, overhaul, forcible entry, roof ventilation, tool use, and more.

Registration (per person):

\$35 – NYS AFC members

\$50 – non-members

Pre-registration encouraged.

Albany Co. 10/23/23, Fulton Co. September/7/23, Rensselaer Co. April/3/23, Saratoga Co. October/24/23

REGISTER AT THIS LINK: <https://www.nysfirechiefs.com/2023seminarseries>

 **University Provides a Wealth of Training Opportunities UPDATED FOR 2023**

VFIS Instructor-Level Program Emergency Vehicle Driver Training (EVDT) EMS Vehicle Operation (EMSVO)

Description This program is a train-the-trainer program which is designed to teach the necessary instructional methodology in order to successfully deliver the following programs. Upon completion, an instructor kit will be provided. Course Information 3/11/2023 8:30 AM – 5:00 PM 3/12/2023 8:00 AM – 3:30 PM Empress Ambulance 740 Nepperhan Avenue Yonkers, NY 10703

Registration Insured by VFIS Not Insured by VFIS \$0 for first 3 seats, \$60 for each additional \$500

VFIS TRAINING AND RESOURCE CATALOG 2023

<https://afdca.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/2023-ETC-Resource-Catalog-VFIS.pdf>

VFIS UNIVERSITY – USERS GUIDE

<https://afdca.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/VFIS-University-User-Guide-3.pdf>

VFIS TRAINING OFFICER USERS GUIDE

<https://afdca.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/VFISU-Training-Officer-User-Guide.pdf>

VFIS RESPONDER HELP FLYER

<https://afdca.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/2023-VFIS-Responder-Help-Flyer.pdf>

Hands-On Training at FIRE 2023 in Syracuse Announced

Registration is open for Hands-On Training at the NYS AFC 117th Annual Conference & FIRE 2023 Expo! HOT will be delivered from Wednesday, June 14 – Friday, June 16 at the Syracuse Fire Department Training Center. Seven courses led by some of the nation’s most knowledgeable and experienced instructors will be available: "Advanced Thermal

Imaging Camera Ops," "Advanced Vehicle Extrication," "Aggressive Interior Fire Attack," "Fire Behavior On the Inside," "First-In Officers' Responsibilities," "Hoarder Fires," and "Truck Company Essentials."

[Learn More and Register At This Link... https://www.nysfirechiefs.com/fire2023hot](https://www.nysfirechiefs.com/fire2023hot)

OUR CHANGING FIRE SERVICE –CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES!

OPPORTUNITIES:

Illinois Fire Departments Could Get a Boost with Firefighter Training Leave of Absence Act

Illinois is facing a shortage of volunteer firefighters, but a new plan from State Senator Patrick Joyce may help address this issue. On Friday, Joyce advanced a plan out of the Senate that would allow for more people to complete firefighter training. Senate Bill 1611, also known as the Firefighter Training Leave of Absence Act, would provide state employees with leave from their job to attend firefighter training courses. This would allow more people to gain proper firefighter training and become experienced volunteers in their communities. "The number of volunteer firefighters has been declining for almost a decade," said Joyce. "From administering first aid to maintaining equipment to responding to calls, volunteer firefighters help out our communities tremendously. It's crucial that we take action to address this shortage to ensure fire departments have enough people and resources to continue protecting our community."

CHALLENGES:

Washinton Bill Would Remove English Language Requirement For City Firefighters, Police

[So much for ICS and a common operating language – what the hell are these nut jobs thinking?]

A bill passed by the Washington state Senate earlier this month would remove the requirement that applicants for city firefighter, police and sheriff's office jobs be able to read and write in English.

SB 5274 reads: "This bill builds off legislation in 2018 to ensure lawful permanent residents have eligibility for civil service and enhances inclusiveness for those applicants. With some adjustments in language, this bill can promote diversification of Washington's public service by encouraging and highlighting bilingualism and multilingualism." *[doesn't that sound sweet, 5 firefighters in a burning building all speaking a different language – Not a good idea.]*

The measure would also remove the language requirement for fish and wildlife officer positions.

Hyundai And Kia To Recall More Than Half Million Vehicles Over Fire Concern

Hyundai and Kia are recalling more than half a million vehicles, mainly SUVs and minivans, ***because of concerns that a tow hitch harness could catch fire when the car is driven, or even parked.*** The Korean automakers, which are affiliated with one another, are recalling about 571,000 vehicles. The vehicles included are the 2019-23 Hyundai Santa Fe, 2021-23 Hyundai Santa Fe Hybrid, 2022-23 Hyundai Santa Fe Plug-In Hybrid, 2022-23 Hyundai Santa Cruz, and 2022-23 Kia Carnival. Hyundai said it identified one report of a fire that could be related to the defect condition of a Santa Fe vehicle, in the U.S., adding there were no confirmed crashes or injuries related to the condition. According to the recall, certain vehicles that are equipped with a tow hitch harness, whether installed as original equipment or purchased as an optional accessory at a dealership.

New Fire Truck for Erin (Canada) Costs \$100K Over Budget

The town of Erin will be buying a new fire truck but they're going to have to pony up a little more dough than anticipated. At a Thursday afternoon meeting, Erin council approved the purchase of a new fire tanker truck at a cost of \$554,000, which is \$104,000 more than it was budgeted for, the report said. A fire official said truck builders have told him the increase in cost is due to the ripple effects from the pandemic impacting the supply chain, according to the report. The budget shortfall will be funded through the emergency vehicle reserve, the report said.

Bellevue (PA) Decertifies Its Fire Department

Brian C. Rittmeyer

Bellevue Council voted Tuesday to decertify the borough's volunteer fire department, Tribune-Review news partner WPXI reported.

"The problems have existed for quite some time that we have not been able to address as a council," Councilmember Sabreena Miller said. "We've not been able to address in general, which has led to this point."

Heidi Cummings, president of the Bellevue Volunteer Fire Company, responded to council's action on the company's Facebook page.

According to Cummings' post, they did not know ahead of time that council would be considering such an action.

"We are reeling. We are completely numb," she wrote. "You want to see big tough men break down and cry? Come swing by our firehouse."

"These community council members need to take accountability for what they do. With zero public safety experience, they use their power to negate resources that they don't even begin to understand the depth of."

HOT TOPIC - LIVING WITH LI-ION TECHNOLOGY

Over 50,000 Hoverboards Recalled Due To Fire Hazard, Two Deaths Reported

According to the Consumer Product Safety Commission, Jetson Electric Bikes recalled their 42-Volt Rogue Self-Balancing Scoots/Hoverboards due to fire hazards **that resulted in the deaths of two Pennsylvania girls**. A 10-year-old girl and her 15-year-old sister died from a fire on April 1, 2022, in Hellertown, Pennsylvania. The hoverboard was the point of origin for the fire, although the cause of the fire remains undetermined. Fire spread from the originating room to other portions of the house. The girls' parents suffered from smoke inhalation injuries, according to the Consumer Product Safety Commission. There have been other reports of the hoverboards burning, sparking, and even melting. Some of these instances involved reports of flames, the Consumer Product Safety Commission stated.

Battery Safety : Top 5 Reasons Why Lithium-Ion Batteries Catch Fire

Jeet Jhaveri

THE IMPORTANCE OF BATTERY SAFETY

Lithium-ion batteries were developed in the 1970s and first commercialized by Sony in 1991 for the company's handheld video recorder. Today everything you see is powered by batteries from smartphones to electric cars to even the International Space Station, which makes increased battery safety all the more crucial.

In 2008, Tesla unveiled the Roadster making it the first car company to commercialize a battery-powered electric vehicle. By 2025, the global lithium-ion (Li-ion) battery market is expected to reach USD 100.4 billion, over 50% of which will be used for the automotive market.

WHY SUCH A CRAZE FOR LITHIUM-ION?

Lithium-ion batteries are popular because of how much power they can put out at a given size and weight. A typical lithium-ion battery stores 150 watt-hours of electricity in 1 kilogram of battery, compared to NiMH Battery pack (100 watt-hours per kg) or Lead Acid Battery (25 watt-hours per kg). It takes 6 kilograms to store the same amount of energy in a lead-acid battery that a 1-kilogram lithium-ion battery can handle.

However, lithium-ion batteries are extremely sensitive to high temperatures and inherently flammable. These battery packs tend to degrade much faster than they normally would, due to heat. If a lithium-ion battery pack fails, it will burst into flames and can cause widespread damage. This calls for immediate measures and guidelines for battery safety.

Recently, there have been a few incidents of fires caused by Lithium-Ion batteries. On January 8, 2019, spontaneous combustion of a lithium-ion battery caused the fire to break out on the COSCO Pacific, a vessel in the Arabian Sea, caused by the. In April last year, a 2MW battery at an APS facility in Arizona exploded, injuring four firefighters.

Hans-Otto Schjerven, head of the Vestfold Fire Department, said that rechargeable lithium batteries can cause "fires that are difficult to extinguish and the batteries emit fire that quickly spreads." As the adoption of electric vehicles grows, these incidents are set to increase.

Before analyzing why lithium-ion batteries catch fire, let's understand [how they work](#).

A lithium-ion battery pack consists of lithium-ion cells stacked together in modules, temperature sensors, voltage tap and an onboard computer (Battery Management System) to manage the individual cells. Like any other cell, the lithium-ion cell has a **positive electrode** (cathode), a **negative electrode** (anode) and a chemical called an **electrolyte** in between them. While the anode is generally made from graphite (carbon), different lithium materials are used for the cathode – Lithium Cobalt Oxide (LCO), Lithium Nickel Manganese Cobalt (or NMC), etc.

When a charging current is provided to the cell, lithium ions move from the cathode to the anode through the electrolyte. Electrons also flow but take the longer path outside the circuit. The opposite movement takes place during discharge with the result that the electrons power up the application that the cell has been connected to.

When all the ions have moved back to the cathode, the cell has been completely discharged and will need charging.

THE LITHIUM-ION CELLS HAVE BEEN DESIGNED WITH BATTERY SAFETY MEASURES LIKE:

A. Pressure-sensitive vent holes

Batteries are pressurized and so they need an outer wall made of metal, which has a pressure-sensitive vent hole. If there's a risk of the battery becoming very hot and exploding from over-pressure (pressure buildup at 3,000 kPa), this vent will release the extra pressure and prevent other cells in the battery pack from catching fire.

B. Separator serves as a fuse

Most lithium-ion cells use a separator made of a material known as polyolefin, which boasts of good chemical stability, excellent mechanical properties and is affordable. It serves as a fuse when the cell heats up. On excessive heat, when the core reaches 130°C (266°F), the separator melts which stops the transport of ions. This action immediately shuts down the cell.

Had this provision not been provided, there would have been a possibility of the heat in the failing cell to give rise to the thermal runaway threshold and vent with flame.

C. Positive Temperature Coefficient (PTC)

This is a switch that prevents the battery from overheating by protecting it against current surges

Lithium-ion cells like all chemistries undergo self-discharge. Self-discharge means the batteries lose their stored charge without connecting the electrodes or the external circuit. This takes place due to chemical reactions inside the cell. Self-discharge of cells increases with age, cycling, and elevated temperature.

Elevated self-discharge can cause temperatures to rise which if uncontrolled can lead to a **Thermal Runaway** also known as '**venting with flame**'. A mild short won't cause thermal runaway because the discharging energy is very low and little heat is generated.

If however due to some damage to the cell, impurities penetrate into the cell, a major electrical short can develop and a sizable current will flow between the positive and negative plates. There is a sudden rise in temperature and the energy stored in the battery is released within milliseconds. Battery packs consist of thousands of cells packed together.

During a thermal runaway, the heat generated by a failed cell can move to the next cell, causing it to become thermally unstable as well. This chain reaction can cause the entire pack to be destroyed within a few short seconds.

NOW THAT WE KNOW WHY LITHIUM-ION BATTERIES CATCH FIRE, LET'S LOOK AT THE SOME OF THE WAYS THIS CAN HAPPEN:

A. Manufacturing Defects

Flaws in production can cause metallic particles (impurities) to seep into the lithium-ion cell during the manufacturing process. Battery manufacturers need to ensure stringently controlled cleanrooms for manufacturing batteries.

Another defect could be the thinning of separators which could prove detrimental in actual use. Cells should undergo strict quality-control tests and validation before being sold.

B. Design Flaws

Car companies want to design their cars as sleek and slim while giving the maximum range and performance. These requirements push battery pack manufacturers to come up with compact designs by packing high-capacity cells into a smaller body, messing with an otherwise well-built battery.

Compromising on the design can cause damage to the electrodes or the separator. Either of which could result in a short circuit. Further, the absence of a proper cooling system or vent can cause battery temperatures to rise as the flammable electrolyte heats up.

If uncontrolled, it could result in a chain reaction of cell failures, causing the battery to heat up even more and spiral out of control.

C. Abnormal or Improper Usage

External factors like keeping the battery very close to a heat source or near a fire can cause it to explode. Penetrating the battery pack either deliberately or through an accident is bound to cause a short circuit and the battery to catch fire. That's why unauthorized disassembly of the battery pack in electric vehicles leads to the lapse of warranty.

Users are advised to only get the batteries checked and repaired from the car maker's authorized service centers. Even high-voltage charging or excessive discharging of the battery could damage it.

D. Charger Issues

Using poorly insulated chargers can damage the battery. If the charger shorts or generates heat near the battery, it can do enough damage to cause failure.

While lithium-ion batteries have built-in protections to stop them from overcharging, using unofficial chargers can damage the battery in the long term.

E. Low-quality components

In addition to manufacturing defects, using low-quality components is one of the highest causes of battery failures. Increasing competition is driving the prices of batteries down, causing battery manufacturers to cut corners where they shouldn't. By skimping on poor quality electronics like the battery management system, the risk of battery failure increases.

The battery management system is critical to battery safety and performance. It protects the battery pack from operating outside of its safe operating area. As batteries form a high-value component of an electric vehicle or energy storage system, it's essential to invest in a smart battery management system that can detect cell failures immediately and prevent the battery from exploding.

WHAT TO DO WHEN A BATTERY CATCHES FIRE?

If you notice the lithium-ion battery overheat, try moving the device away from flammable materials and cutting of the current supply. If you're in an electric vehicle, you should immediately evacuate and never attempt to extinguish lithium battery fires yourself. Your health and safety are far more important, call the emergency services instead.

In case of fire, a standard ABC or BC dry chemical fire extinguisher must be used since these are considered Class B fire. A common misconception is that lithium-ion batteries contain any actual lithium metal. They don't and that's why you shouldn't use a Class D Fire Extinguisher.

There are new and improved methods to douse lithium fires as well. The Aqueous Vermiculite Dispersion (AVD) is a fire extinguishing agent that disperses chemically exfoliated vermiculite in the form of a mist. However, ***larger lithium-ion fires as that of EVs or ESS may need to burn out.*** Using water with copper material is effective but is costly.

Battery Safety experts advise against using water even for large lithium-ion fires. Fires like these may burn for days and it's important to isolate them from flammable materials and prevent them from expanding.

ENSURING BATTERY SAFETY

Battery pack makers should adopt a no-compromise approach to battery safety. Lithium-Ion batteries can be made safer by making them ***'smart'***. By building a layer of intelligence into the batteries, we can not just diagnose but also predict abnormal usage or performance of the battery. This will help us take timely action, prevent damage to the system and ensure battery safety.

PURCHASING APPARATUS

*****Keeping The Wheels On Your Apparatus: Building A Fleet Replacement Program***

Michael Baker

Sharing three lessons learned from the Tulsa Fire Department's current fleet crisis.

Nothing represents the community's fire rescue service like a shiny fire truck. Children are amazed by their size, bright colors and the thrill of seeing them responding to the fire with lights and sirens. Most adults share in this excitement, and it is often the spark that lights the passion for joining the local volunteer fire department or beginning the journey toward becoming a career firefighter.

The National Museum of American History in Washington, D.C., describes the importance of fire apparatus in our nation's culture with this perspective: "Before the 1850s, firefighting in urban America was performed by volunteer fire

companies, [which] purchased their own uniforms and equipment without municipal funding. A fire pumper was often the company's biggest investment and became a source of pride and identity."¹

Today, the apparatus fleet remains a fire department's "biggest investment" outside of personnel, and the management of this investment is an enormous undertaking. After all, our apparatus are an essential tool for our profession, and ensuring their readiness and availability is the bedrock of our work.

An effective fleet management plan requires a coordinated effort among everyone, including the community's residents, fire department members and support staff, and leadership. But what happens when this coordination becomes disrupted? The Tulsa (Oklahoma) Fire Department is a strong example of what can occur when the wheels come off your apparatus plan.

WHAT HAPPENED IN TULSA?

The Tulsa Fire Department serves a community of just over 400,000 in the northeastern portion of the state. The department has 724 members and responds from 30 fire stations across 292 square miles.

Similar to many metropolitan fire departments, the TFD found its apparatus budget weakened by the global needs of the city. Streets, law enforcement and numerous other projects all require a portion of the city's general fund or getting support from infrequent capital funding plans.

The derailment of Tulsa's fire fleet plan occurred in the mid-2000s when the city found itself with a failing street infrastructure that necessitated repairs. The fire department was ultimately required to postpone apparatus purchases for five years to assist in a street bond package. A five-year fleet purchase hold is manageable; however, five years turned into 11 years, with the department unable to purchase fire apparatus from 2007 until 2018.

Now in 2022, the department finds itself managing a fleet crisis.

How can a fire department emerge from a crisis of this proportion with limited funding, manufacturing timelines of close to two (or 3) years, and a frontline fleet that is costing 100 to 150%+ of their original purchase price? It's a monumental task, and the path forward is both complicated and challenging. However, the path can be successfully traversed when department and city leadership come together to solve the problem.

3 WAYS TO TURN THE TIDE

Turning around a failing fleet requires a daily operational and governmental engagement. The dynamic nature of repairing apparatus that unexpectedly fail annual ladder testing, lose air conditioning units due to components that are no longer manufactured, or require engine replacements that exceed the value of the truck, ***is only explained with conversation, data analysis, and a total focus on the solution.***

There are three broad areas that fire departments should focus on to both prevent and recover from a similar situation. These are topics that all members of the department, from firefighter to chief, should keep in mind when considering the status of a department's stable of apparatus. For the Tulsa Fire Department, these lessons have been emerging over the past few years, but many of the lessons are deeply rooted in history.

1. Create a schedule: *One of the most important components of a comprehensive fleet management program is to determine when to replace your apparatus.* Regardless of if you are a volunteer or career department, you will not be able to finance, purchase or conduct any form of planning if you do not know when it is time for a vehicle to move from frontline to reserve or when it is time to simply replace.

The plan should be based on run volume, available funding, and an assessment of the needs within your jurisdiction. Ultimately, it should become a department policy with annual review or revision.

The Tulsa Fire Department is now using a *10-year replacement on engines*. It will take the TFD at least four years to achieve this stability, as some engines are 20 years old.

2. Develop a financial strategy: In addition to a replacement plan, the department needs a financing strategy to ensure that when the time comes for replacement, leaders can engage vendors and begin the design process. This typically comes in the form of a municipal bond, general fund request, or a fundraising plan within a smaller community.

If you have purchased a fire apparatus lately, you know that the sticker price has increased more than 20%+ as the price of metal skyrockets and supply chain issues delay production times to 24 months or longer. Sometimes, you must sacrifice nice-to-have items for essentials.

Your fire board and government leadership will want to know what to expect. This leads to the third area of focus – politics.

3. Connect with the community: Reminding your community and elected officials about your department's fleet replacement cycle and preparing them in advance for the big check that they must write for a purchase is a never-ending process. Combined with the items above, taking this step helps ensure that everyone involved is not only informed, but also able to grab some political clout from housing a new fire apparatus.

The TFD is fortunate to have a mayor and city council that are committed to helping the department ensure that the apparatus fleet is stable. Over the past few years, the department's leadership and municipal leaders have found every available dollar to achieve a comprehensive apparatus replacement plan.

PUSHING THROUGH TO MAKE IT WORK

A fleet crisis is frustrating for everyone involved. We all want the best for the community but find ourselves facing a multitude of obstacles. The situation can impact on the department's culture and the morale of the firefighters who work on aged apparatus every day.

Fortunately, here in Tulsa, we have a great team tackling this issue every day – a team that's passionate about ensuring firefighter and public safety. If there is one positive element of the department's current apparatus issue, it is that the members of the TFD do their best to ensure that the fleet is ready to respond, and that uninterrupted service is delivered to our community members. Yes, they are frustrated, but their passion for professional service and resilience is admirable. This is the only way to move beyond crisis.

EVERYTHING CAN CHANGE IN A MOMENT

We all know that it only takes a moment for the wheels to literally come off your apparatus. But if the situation in Tulsa has taught us anything, it's that it only takes a moment to derail the stability of your fire apparatus fleet, with the wheels coming off the identity of the fire service. Now is the time to prepare and prevent a fleet crisis at your organization.

BUILDING A NEW FIRE STATION

The Increasing Costs of Fire Stations

Janet A. Wilmoth

Several years ago, town officials and city managers were asking why fire stations couldn't be built for less than \$500,000. At the 2022 Station Design Conference, fire chiefs, city managers, and others learned why it could be difficult to build a fire station for less than \$1 million. It's not unexpected and even *community members do not understand the increasing costs to build a new fire station or public safety facility.*

Every year, when the Station Design Award entries are published in the November issue of Firehouse, we hear from several rural departments who have spent less than \$500,000 to build a new station. To keep costs down, rural fire departments frequently opt for manufactured structures or pole barns and often rely on their own skilled volunteers to help build out their new stations, and frequently, without any revenue base.

The costs to build a new fire station are based on four areas: location, construction costs, and response services and call volume.

Since the start of COVID, **shortages and costs have significantly increased across America.** Labor shortages, particularly of trained construction workers, have resulted in delays in most station projects.

A fire chief in a Michigan volunteer department said after the shell of his building was up, the construction firm quit the project for the inability to hire trained employees. Plagued with delays in bay doors and windows, and increased prices for steel and other materials, in final costs, **the department was \$1 million over budget.**

According to Jason Estes, Vice President, Illinois-based FGM Architects shared in the Chicagoland area and much of the Midwest, costs rose normally over the past 2 years. The real increase happened at the beginning of 2022. Wisconsin saw a 25 percent increase from January to June. The Chicago area had a 10-15 percent increase.

Based on their research, Estes explained increases are coming from many factors. "Materials are still going up. Some of this is about availability, and not having enough to support the commercial construction need," he said. "Labor is another issue. Many trades are down workers. We have found out that Wisconsin has a shortage of masons, which makes it difficult to construct apparatus bays if you are looking for long durability."

At the 2022 Station Design Conference, Jeff Katz, principal, COAR Design Group, gave a presentation on "Renovate or Build New" and offered the pros and cons of renovating versus new construction. Renovating has definite costs savings, but still is susceptible to increases. California-based Katz is currently working on a couple of fire station renovation

projects. “Material availability and labor shortages are both contributing to cost increases as well as delays in completion of buildings,” he said. “Of course, we all see this at the gas station or grocery store too but magnified with building products.”

Architects will agree the cost of building any new house, office or fire station are based on location. Patrick Stone, deputy director of emergency services, H2M architects + engineers emphasized the main cost factor is location.

“Although the function of a fire station may be similar from location to location, they are all unique!” he said. “One size does not fit all... meaning every time, a fire station is constructed, it is one of a kind to accommodate that departments SOP’s, apparatus, personnel, administration, culture and more. This means there is no discount for repetition or mass production, and there is certainly cost associated with this.”

Stone shared fire stations are also required to meet or exceed more stringent codes than standard buildings. Defined as “Essential Facilities,” these structures are vital to the socioeconomics of the area they protect and serve. They need to be able to weather the storm. Everything comes with a cost, and these requirements along with hardening of the facility can significantly impact the cost.

Funding is a factor in public safety facilitates and are typically being constructed by way of public funding. Stone said, “In most states, that means there are additional requirements as far as how the building can be constructed. For example, union work or ‘prevailing wages’ may be required. In some cases, apprenticeship programs are included as well. Also, there may be goals to meet MWBE or Veteran Owned business participation.” These are just a few scenarios that can add cost to the project in comparison to a private development that would typically not include these.

Over the past 15 to 20 years, responsibilities for fire departments have grown. While fire calls are down, EMS calls make up over 80 percent of calls for many fire departments. Hazardous material incidents are more frequent and a greater risk to personnel and the community. Numerous and assorted rescue scenarios, response with SWAT teams, and other incidence need not only more certification but advanced training as well. *Each of these scenarios require storage space for an extensive variety of equipment in fire stations.*

Continued research and heightened awareness on firefighter health and safety have had an impact on station designs. Aside from designated fitness rooms in response to NFPA Standard 1580, statistics reveal significant increases in firefighter cancers. One result was the introduction of the Hot Zone design concept in 2015.

The Hot Zone design, defined as a Red (hot) zone, Yellow (transitional), and Green (living spaces), has quickly been incorporated into new fire stations. Designated ‘dirty’, the red zone requires additional space for decontamination of apparatus, gear, equipment, and personnel.

In addition, architects who specialize in fire and public safety design facilities, believe new buildings will last 60-75 years. Flexibility in design, but also the latest in durable exterior and interior materials add to the longevity of a building, as well as costs.

The most recent trend is the “clean” fire station. According to Fire Chief Richard Mikel, Elk Grove Village, IL, “A clean station is as much a philosophy as it is a physical structure. **Personnel need to embrace the idea of keeping contaminants out of their living quarters no matter how the fire station is laid out.**”

Elk Grove Village Fire Station 8 won the 2019 Station Design Silver Award. “When our new firehouses were constructed, we fully embraced that clean station concept and built accordingly,” said Mikel. “The ‘dirty side’ of the apparatus bay, which is furthest from the living quarters, is where SCBA cleaning and maintenance, turnout gear extraction, dive equipment maintenance, and even decontamination of personnel, takes place.”

Being proactive in preventive measures for the physical and mental health of firefighters has resulted in additional costs to fire stations. Mikel responds, “Some may say it is excessive, but many of us have dear friends in the fire service who have suffered and/or died from their exposure to the carcinogens we face.”

Fire departments are evolving into full-service centers for emergency services and with that are costs.

HEALTH – SAFETY & LODDS – TAKING CARE OF OUR MEMBERS!

IN 2022 WE HAVE SADLY EXPERIENCED *14 + 5=19 FIRE FIGHTER LODD’S

*According to FirefighterCloseCalls.com**

In 2022 we experienced 101 LODDs reported nationally.!

Maine Bill Would Allow Some First Responder Suicides To Be Classified As Line-Of-Duty Deaths

A legislative committee on Wednesday endorsed a bill that would give public safety leaders latitude to classify first responder suicides as deaths in the line of duty. The measure would make victims' families eligible for a \$100,000 survivors benefit. L.D. 439 acknowledges that some people will always slip through the cracks, Maine EMS Director Sam Hurley said. The bill could help families of those victims, who are already eligible for a federal benefit, cover expenses such as mortgage or tuition payments even if their private life insurance doesn't cover suicides.

Nine Maine first responders have taken their own lives since 2020, when the state began tracking that data, according to Hurley.

National Vol Fire Council FIRST RESPONDER HELPLINE AVAILABLE FOR MEMBERS AND THEIR FAMILIES

Firefighting and emergency response are stressful, and the holidays can bring added pressures. The [NVFC First Responder Helpline](#) is here for you. NVFC members and their household families can call for assistance with work-life-volunteer challenges, including stress management, relationships, financial concerns, addiction, and more. [Register for this webinar](#) to learn more about the Helpline. If you are unable to purchase an NVFC membership for yourself or someone else who needs the Helpline, use [this form](#) to receive a complimentary membership.

YOU JUST NEVER KNOW...

- Edward Hykel, 60, a West, Texas volunteer firefighter was fatally struck at the scene of a vehicle fire on I-35. firefighters and Texas Department of Public Safety Troopers had shut down the roadway's inside lane using a fire apparatus, traffic control devices, and two patrol units, but a tractor semi-trailer ignored the closure and struck the apparatus and other vehicles killing Hykel.
- Captain Roger Rogalewicz, 54 of the Scranton Fire Department reportedly suffered a cardiac episode while fighting a house fire in Ransom Twp. and is recovering at Geisinger Community Medical Center.
- Oak City North Carolina Volunteer Fire Department Chief Minton "Butch" Beach, 68, died on March 22 from an apparent heart attack suffered during a training exercise on March 13th.
- North Syracuse's longest serving, active firefighter Peter Dromms has died 2 1/2 months after he suffered a heart attack at the scene of a house fire in the village.
- Deptford New Jersey Firefighter Jeff M. Pfeiffer, 66, died, a day after he suffered a heart attack while returning from a call.
- Pembroke New Hampshire Fire Lt. Terrence "Terry" Judge, 64, of Allenstown, died March 24 at the Beth Israel Hospital in Boston after having a heart attack upon returning from a fire call.
- Two Santa Barbara CA, firefighters were injured early Wednesday at the scene of a previous crash on Highway 101, both were transported to a nearby hospital, with one serious but stable and the other released to recover at home.
- Two Santa Fe New Mexico County firefighters told investigators they were shot at Tuesday night while responding to reports of smoke on land administered by the Bureau of Land Management.
- More at: <https://www.firefighterclosecalls.com/>

Reference Material for Use in a Line of Duty Death

- [VFBL Firefighters Guide to Benefits](#), wcb.ny.gov/content/main/vf-vaw/injured-in-lin-of-duty.pdf
- [Survivors Benefit Guide](#), www.firehero.org
- [National Fallen Firefighters Foundation](#) <https://www.firehero.org>

BUILDING & FIRE CODE ISSUES – WHY ARE THEY IMPORTANT TO YOU? WEEKLY FIRE FATALITY DATA AS REPORTED BY THE MEDIA

Home builders and realtors already “drive” legislation with a history of disregard for life safety and a disgusting misinformation campaign about the cost of residential fire sprinklers, deaths are an awfully expensive price to pay to save money. Stop the carnage, install residential sprinklers. Residential sprinklers are a component of the plumbing

system, with approximately 1 head per room. The purpose of residential sprinklers is to allow time for the occupants to escape. Residential sprinklers are designed for quick response and only one at the most two heads may be triggered. With residential sprinklers present, the civilian death rate is 89% LOWER. Residential sprinklers will assist responding firefighters to do their jobs and save firefighters lives also, especially since everyone is short staffed!!

CHIEFS NEED TO SPEAK UP: This fire would not have been as bad if there were residential sprinklers!!

HOME FIRE FATALITIES IN THE NEWS FROM THE US FIRE ADMINISTRATION	
Fire Deaths in 1&2 Family Dwellings in NYS	28+1 = 29
Last fire death 3/25 Holland, Erie Co. 84yo Male	
Fire Deaths in any type of Dwelling in NYS	48+2 = 50
Fire Deaths in 1&2 Family Dwellings Nationally	407 + 33 = 440
Top Three State with the most 1&2 Family Deaths	1 NY = 29
	2 OH = 25
	3 TN = 24
There has been a total of 0728 civilian home fire fatalities in 2023	
There were a total of 2251 residential fire fatalities reported in 2022 in the US media.	
Both the states of Maryland and California require sprinklers in residential dwellings	

In 2022 in New York State 77 residents perished in fires in 1 & 2 family occupancies.

THE ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

[Learn from Other's Mistakes - Woman Sues Delaware Fire Department Over Injuries Sustained in Elevator Incident](#)

A woman who was injured while stepping into an elevator has filed suit against a number of parties, including the local fire department. Michele Oliver filed suit against Holiday Inn Express, Delaware Elevator, Inc., and the Lewes Fire Department over an incident that occurred on March 27, 2021.

Oliver claims that while staying at the Holiday Inn Express in Rehoboth Beach, Delaware, one of the elevators malfunctioned. The malfunction trapped several people inside and led to the response of both Delaware Elevator, Inc., and the Lewes Fire Department. Oliver was injured as she enter the functioning elevator. Quoting from the complaint:

- *During this time frame, Ms. Oliver was advised that the other elevator was operational and when Ms. Oliver began to step into the elevator, she was caused to fall as the elevator floor was not level with the hotel lobby floor.*
- *Upon information and belief, Defendant Delaware Elevator, Inc. was responsible for the installation and the maintenance of the elevators.*
- *Plaintiff Michele Oliver subsequently stumbled and fell into the elevator and sustained the serious injuries hereinafter set forth.*
- *Plaintiff Michele Oliver suffered from injuries including, but not limited to, her neck, back, left shoulder/surgeries, trapezius, left leg/knee/foot, left hip, right hip, right knee, hands/fingers and headaches. Said injuries have resulted in chronic pain and disability which have continued since the accident and may be permanent in nature.*
- *As a consequence of her injuries, Plaintiff Michele Oliver has received in the past, and will continue to incur in the future, wage loss and medical expenses for the treatment of her injuries.*

The complaint alleges negligence by all three defendants, the fire department, the hotel and the elevator company. It is unclear from the allegations in the complaint whether the elevator floor was simply uneven with the landing causing Oliver to stumble, or whether the fire department or the elevator company may have left a hoistway door open and unguarded.

[How well are your firefighters training in elevator rescues and how many rescues do they perform annually?]

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STEP INTO THE CHIEF'S OFFICE:

****7 Keys To Rebuilding The Fire Service Brotherhood And Sisterhood**

John Cuomo

“From tragedy to triumph, an event that galvanized the nation,” one football analyst commented two weeks after the shocking cardiac arrest of Damar Hamlin in the middle of an NFL game.

Fans in the stadium were visibly upset and the announcers were struggling to speak; however, those hardest hit were the players. Not just Hamlin’s fellow Bills players, but the opposing Cincinnati Bengals players as well. They encircled the emergency workers performing life-saving techniques on Hamlin. They remained together, holding hands and praying, even after he was rushed off the field in an ambulance.

Players from all over the sports world tweeted and texted their support. There was no competition, just love. What I saw in the aftermath of this incident was not only beautiful and amazing, it was inspiring. This is the type of love I wish all of humanity had for each other.

So where is the lesson for us?

The decline of the fire service brotherhood and sisterhood

I was listening to a podcast recently in which a Navy SEAL was being interviewed. In the interview, he made the statement that as Navy SEALs, many times “we eat our own, we are our own worst enemy.”

Unfortunately, this same attitude, at times, pervades the fire service as well.

In my first year on the job, the wife of one of the veteran firefighters died. Only five fellow firefighters attended her funeral. Five! I couldn’t believe it. As I watched this man sob, enduring his tremendous loss, I asked myself, what happened to the fire service brotherhood I had heard so much about?

Being in and around the fire service for 30 years now, I have learned that this was not an isolated incident, nor was my department the only one like this. This is not meant to bash the service or its members, but to help it – and that starts with you and me.

The fire service family

How can we help the brotherhood? Following are several ways you can help if your department shows areas of decline in this arena.

- 1. Set the example.** Get to know all the brothers and sisters you work with. Have a kind, friendly and open demeanor. Smile as much as you can. Kindness and happiness are contagious – if you start being this person every day it will catch on with others.
- 2. Model humility.** Humility actually draws people to you, whereas pride pushes people away. It takes great strength to be a humble person, but all should display this attitude in the fire service, especially upon promotion. Where ego and pride build walls up, humility draws people closer. There is no greater way to teach and help others than to do it with a humble attitude.
- 3. Practice acceptance.** Today, U.S. fire departments reflect the great diversity of our nation like never before. We must be completely accepting of every single person and treat them with the same respect, dignity, kindness and care that we would our own family members. By doing this, we make them an extension of our family and bring that bond to the service.
- 4. Be generous with praise.** Some people find it easier to constantly tear others down rather than praise them. Perhaps it’s due to jealousy or their own lack of self-esteem but go against the grain here and be liberal with praise and commendation. Nothing makes a person feel better and like a valued member of a team than recognition for their hard work.
- 5. Offer gratitude.** Be grateful for a job where you are blessed to serve others. Be grateful for your brothers and sisters serving alongside you. Be grateful for the gift of life today. Gratitude will make you a happy person and that happiness will catch on and bring others close to you.
- 6. Extend understanding.** While Hamlin’s collapse during the football game shocked spectators, it was a sight many of us see every day, multiple times a day. In an average year, around 240 million 911 calls are made in the U.S. That averages

out to over 600,000 calls per day. Even though we train and try to be prepared for it, these types of scenes played out in front of us constantly *will* have an effect on us, on top of the other pressures that come with life – raising children, relationships, money issues, health problems, death of loved ones and so much more. Remember, “Be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a battle you know nothing about.” Let’s be that support for others.

7. Spread love. Love is the glue that maintains the family bond. It is the greatest quality and I believe the answer to all of humanity’s problems. Maya Angelo once said, “People will forget what you said. People will forget what you did. But people will never forget how you made them feel.” Show your love for others; let them see it and let them feel it.

Rebuild and strengthen firehouse bonds

The brotherhood and sisterhood bond is often referenced when talking about firefighters. At times, though, it can be lacking in our firehouses. Rumors, backstabbing, politics and other things can break up our family bond. We should be the ones to set the example for our communities by dropping the divisions among us and coming together as one. We start by doing it in our fire service family, in ourselves, and help lead others down the same path.

Let *our* love galvanize the nation, as love never fails.

THE LIGHTER SIDE!

I finally fixed that annoying noise in my vehicle. I just opened the door and pushed them out!!

CLASSIFIED

Position Announcement Greenfield Fire District

The Greenfield Fire District is looking for a professional and highly-motivated person to perform custodial services and maintenance of fire district buildings, grounds and equipment. Must have good communication skills, the ability to manage several projects simultaneously, and be flexible with work hours when necessary. Prior experience preferred and all candidates must have clean driver’s license. Employment application and job description can be found on the district website at www.greenfieldfd.org.

Please send application, cover letter & resume to Joyce Petkus, District Administrator via email at jpetkus@greenfieldfd.org or regular mail to Greenfield Fire District, P.O. Box 103 Greenfield Center, NY 12833 no later than Friday, March 17, 2023.

***Position Announcement
West Crescent Fire District***



The West Crescent Fire District is looking for a professional and highly motivated person to perform custodial services and to maintain fire district buildings, grounds and equipment. Must have good communication skills, the ability to manage several projects simultaneously, be flexible with work hours when necessary. Prior experience preferred and all candidates must have clean driver’s license. Employment application and job description can be found on the district website at www.westcrescentfire.com or by emailing Fire District Secretary Arthur Hunsinger at wcfldsec@nycap.rr.com **Please send application, cover letter & resume to Arthur Hunsinger via email at wcfldsec@nycap.rr.com**

Position Announcement Station Keeper/Maintenance Person

Full Time (40 hours/week) hourly position, commensurate with experience. Benefits available (health and disability insurance, vacation, sick days, holidays, retirement).

Qualifications/Requirements:

- Minimum High School diploma or equivalent
- Relevant work or experience
- Pass District Physical, able to lift objects weighing 70 lbs.
- Preference given to those candidates at least 21 years of age
- Ability to understand and carry out instructions.
- Ability to deal with the public and work successfully with other employees and members of the Fire Department
- Familiarity with equipment found in fire stations.
- Experience with cleaning and light building maintenance.
- Ability to perform minor mechanical repairs.
- Initiative, resourcefulness and good judgement.
- Basic computer knowledge for data entry.
- Hold a valid NYS vehicle operator's license. A CDL-B license will be required within six (6) months of employment, to include Air Brake Endorsement. Driver's license will be enrolled in the NYS License Event Notification Service. License acceptable to Fire District's insurance carrier • Background check for Arson Conviction and Sex Offender Registry.
- Preference may be given to an active SCBA qualified member in a local fire department.
- Need to be CPR/AED Certified

General Statement of Duties and Responsibilities:

- Performs work under the general direction of the Building Committee Chairman and Fire District Secretary, as directed by the Board of Fire Commissioners
- Maintain Fire District buildings, grounds and equipment.
- Provide custodial type services at District Office and firehouse
- Other duties as assigned and approved by the Board of Fire Commissioners
- Within one (1) year of hire date, must be a qualified driver and pump operator on all District vehicles. (Training will be permitted on District time).

Examples of Work to be performed:

- Mowing and trimming of lawns, pruning and mulching, rake and remove leaves/debris as necessary.
- Custodial type services including but not limited to: mopping, vacuuming, washing, scrubbing, cleaning windows, buffing, carpet cleaning, and garbage removal.
- Paint interior/exterior of buildings as needed; power wash exterior buildings as necessary.
- Responsible for maintenance and upkeep of vehicles and equipment provided by the Board of Fire Commissioners to complete duties.
- Assist in the coordination of fire apparatus and equipment. Clean, fuel, maintain and transport apparatus and equipment as necessary.
- Assist in coordination of various equipment testing (i.e. hose, ladder, pump).
- Create written correspondence, generate maintenance records as necessary, enter data into fire district software and create reports as needed.

OFFICERS OF THE CAPITAL AREA ASSOCIATION OF FIRE DISTRICTS

2023 OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

- President: Tom Rinaldi, Commissioner Stillwater/Saratoga*
1st VP: John Meehan, Commissioner West Crescent/Saratoga
2nd VP: Art Hunsinger, Commissioner Clifton Park Halfmoon/Saratoga

Board of Directors: Les Bonesteel Commissioner Burnt Hills/Saratoga, Tom Wood Commissioner Northumberland/Saratoga, Joyce Petkus Treasurer Greenfield/Saratoga, Ed Woehrle Commissioner Niskayuna #1/Schenectady and Mike Podolec Commissioner West Glenville/Schenectady

Secretary/Treasurer: Tony Hill

Sargent at Arms: Tom Wood

Chaplain: Fred Richards

Legal Council: Greg Serio

The Capital Area Association represents fire district officials from the fire districts in Albany, Schenectady, Rensselaer, Warren, Washington, Saratoga, Fulton and Montgomery Counties

Fire District Officials include Commissioners, Treasurers, Secretaries and Chief

All are invited to participate in all of the Capital Area Activities

The Capital Area Association wants to take this opportunity to thank all the Fire Districts who continue to support the local Capital Area Association as members for 2023.

Please advise your secretaries that all correspondence go to the Capital Area Association Mailing Address at:

AFDCA PO Box 242 East Schodack, NY 12063

EMAIL: CAAOFD@GMAIL.COM

518-407-5020

FIRE DISTRICT RESOURCES - -THE BACK PAGE - - FOR YOU TO FOLLOW UP!

What are the duties and responsibilities of a Commissioner?

The Answer is posted on our web site at www.AFDCA.org

Vital Statistics on the State Association Regions – the break out is on our web site.

CAPITAL AREA BUSINESS PARTNER'S

PLEASE SUPPORT THOSE WHO SUPPORT US!!

Business Partner Applications Available At: WWW.AFDCA.ORG

Welcome Back all of our Business Partners for 2023

We invite our business partners to submit educational information to be included in this Bulletin for district commissioners and chief officers

Write me at tom@rinaldi1.com

Please Support Those Who Support Us!!

If you have information on new products you wish to showcase or is educational and informative for fire districts, please submit it and we will use it in this Bulletin under the appropriate heading.

LEGAL SERVICES

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Jack Clark, Fire District Attorney
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The Capital Bulletin is reaching well over 400+ fire district members and now other members of the fire service on a regular basis. Since the Capital Area Association covers an area the size of Connecticut it is difficult to meet in person to exchange information and ideas.

This is a service of the Capital Area Association through the effort of Tom Rinaldi who can be reached at tom@rinaldi1.com for comments or content contributions are always welcome.

MEMBERSHIP IN THE ASSOCIATION OF FIRE DISTRICTS OF THE CAPITAL AREA

Would you like to join the Association of Fire Districts of the Capital Area and join 75 members in 8 counties? Both fire protection districts and Village departments are eligible for membership.

The yearly membership dues (January 1st to December 31st) shall be as follows and shall be based on the annual budget of the Fire District/Organization;

To take effect January 2023:

- \$0 to \$200,000: \$50
- \$200,001 to \$400,000: \$100
- \$400,001 to \$600,000: \$200
- \$600,001 plus: \$300

Business Partners: \$100.00 annual member fee



**association of fire districts
OF THE
CAPITAL AREA, INC.**

2023 Events Calendar

Date	Time	Type	Location
Thursday, April 6, 2023	7:00 PM	Board Meeting	Clifton Park
Thursday, May 11, 2023	7:00 PM	General Membership	Clifton Park
Thursday, June 8, 2023	7:00 PM	General Membership	Clifton Park
Thursday, July 13, 2023	7:00 PM	Board Meeting	Clifton Park
Thursday, September 14, 2023	7:00 PM	General Membership	Clifton Park
October 2023	NO MEETING		
Thursday, October 12, 2023	7:00 PM	General Membership	Clifton Park
Saturday, November 4, 2023	8:00 AM	Fall Workshop	TBD
Thursday, November 9, 2023	7:00 PM	General Membership	Clifton Park
December 2023	NO MEETING		
Saturday, January 6, 2024	9:00 AM	Organizational Meeting	TBD

**For General Membership meetings food is served 1 hour prior to the start time of the meeting,
usually 6pm.**