



CAPITAL AREA FIRE DISTRICTS ASSOCIATION BULLETIN

YOUR FIRE DISTRICT NEWS SOURCE

APRIL 22ND, 2023

EDITOR - TOM RINALDI

tom@rinaldi1.com

[Information for you and learn from others!!](#)

THE CAPITAL CALENDAR:

WWW.AFDCA.ORG

Thursday May 11th Meeting of the General Membership Zoom Available At:

Join Zoom May Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81219782524?pwd=Z0dJUmVWZEZoUzRiNTRPb29tSTBJQT09>

Meeting ID: 812 1978 2524

Passcode: 834617

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 nearing the end of April 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, ~~Schodack Valley~~, ~~Town of Mohawk~~, ~~Selkirk~~, ~~Guilderland~~, North Creek, Speigletown, ~~Perth VFD~~ 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: Put it on your calendar

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.

IF NOTHING ELSE READ THE ARTICLES PRECEDED BY**

CAPITAL AREA FIRE DISTRICTS ASSOC. NEWS:

WWW.AFDCA.ORG

Welcome A New Secretary to the Capital Area Association

Due to the increased work load the Capital Area Association has chosen to split the Secretary and Treasurer’s positions. We want to welcome Theresa “Terry” Briscoe as our new Secretary. Tony Hill will continue to perform the Treasurer’s duties. Terry is a retired 37 year NYS employee with OMRDD and recently retired as the Secretary to the Board of Fire Commissioners of the Wilton Fire District. Terry will be working to get up to speed as the secretary and will be attending the next General Membership Meeting on May 11th in Clifton Park. Please join me in welcoming Terry to our crazy group.

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.

****IN-PERSON COMMISSIONER TRAINING REMAINING OPTION**

HOW MANY PEOPLE ARE INTERESTED IN A POP-UP IN PERSON COMMISSIONER TRAINING ON **SATURDAY JUNE 3RD?** THE CAPITAL AREA FIRE DISTRICTS ASSOCIATION IS WILLING TO SPONSOR AN IN-PERSON TRAINING AT CLIFTON PARK FD. 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. Cost would be \$85.00 per seat.

The three classes which we hosted were very well received and very interactive with many questions answered. It seems the participants enjoyed the instructor and the new presentation format.

CAPITAL SHORTS:

- The Capital Area Directors and Officers are working on a number of initiatives such as; updating our new logo, updating the By-Laws to reflect our new name and structure, working on a 4th pop-up commissioner training for new/appointed/re-elected commissioners in the area, developing treasurer and secretary training and working to review, revise and streamline the Commissioner’s training now that we have the experience of providing three class sessions. All working toward a better experience for our members.
- 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.
- 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.)

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 Averill Park Fire District is looking for a template for a medical leave policy. Email Commissioner Ron Berti at rberti@nycap.rr.com
- 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?
- The Northumberland Fire District (Gansevoort FD) is looking for a template for a contract between the fire district and the fire company for service. Reply to tom@rinaldi1.com

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, NY 13478

[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. All Turning Stone rooms are sold out, but check for cancellations.

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.

PLEASE LET US KNOW IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN TAKING THE VOTER BUS TO TURNING STONE!!! MAY 19TH IS COMING UP FAST. Pick up Points, Crossgates and Exit 27 Park and Ride

THE CAPITAL AREA FIRE DISTRICTS ASSOCIATION OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS ARE URGING ALL FIRE DISTRICTS WHO ARE DUES PAYING MEMBERS OF THE STATE ASSOCIATION TO TRAVEL TO TURNING STONE ON FRIDAY AFTERNOON MAY 19TH TO VOTE AT 4PM IN FAVOR OF THE STATE ASSOCIATION BY-LAW CHANGE ALLOWING FOR FUTURE VOTING BY YOUR FIRE DISTRICT EITHER IN PERSON OR BY PROXY. THIS WOULD EMPOWER ALL OF THE MEMBERS WHO PAY DUES TO VOTE WITHOUT HAVING TO TRAVEL, PAY FOR AND ATTEND THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE.

This Not For Profit Association If You Pay Dues, You Should Be Allowed To Vote For Officers and By-Law amendments with having to pay for attendance, travel etc.!

[State 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 Verdoy 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.



[Coffee with Commissioners](#)

To be announced.

THE LATEST FROM ALBANY

[LEGISLATIVE ALERT!!](#)

A bill has been introduced in both the Senate and Assembly that would require the election of fire district commissioners to take place on the same date and time as the election of school board members. S6547/Harckham & A5975 Shimsky. We strongly oppose this legislation since it is fraught with problems and conflicts which would have to be addressed. Fire District and School District boundaries are not congruent and identifying the correct voters would be problematic. Additionally fire district commissioners do not assume their positions until January of the subsequent year, requirements for commissioners in current laws would have to be modified. Call your legislator and OPPOSE this proposed legislation!

Due to budget negotiations between the Governor and the Legislature, things have been progressing at a snail's pace in Albany. Once the final budget is in place things will start moving rapidly toward the end of the session on June 8th. That leaves 15 session days in May and 8 days in June, to determine the outcome of over 13,000 bills that have been introduced.

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

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.***"

Fire Grants and Safety Act (S. 870) has passed in the Senate, Now What?

Ken LaSala

Great news for members of the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) and the entire fire service community! The Fire Grants and Safety Act (S. 870) has passed in the Senate with an overwhelming vote of 95-2. This is a significant achievement and deserves to be celebrated.

However, the work is not over yet. The bill must now go through the House of Representatives, where it may face some challenges. This is where the IAFC and its members can play a crucial role in ensuring the bill's passage. We need to stay focused, united, and continue our efforts to get the Fire Grants and Safety Act passed into law.

As a reminder, this legislation would:

1. Extend the authorization of funding for the AFG, SAFER and USFA programs through Fiscal Year (FY) 2030.
2. Increase the authorization for the USFA to \$95 million. (USFA was authorized at \$76.49 million in FY 2023, so that is an almost \$20 million increase.)
3. Delay the termination date for the AFG and SAFER programs to September 30, 2032.

As members of the IAFC, we can continue to support this effort by contacting our representatives in the House of Representatives, educating them on the importance of these programs, and asking other members of the fire service to weigh in on this issue. We can also use social media to spread the word and generate support for the Fire Grants and Safety Act.

Our efforts have already paid off, and we were able to get the bill passed in the Senate through a united fire service effort. Let's continue working together to ensure the Fire Grants and Safety Act becomes law. By doing so, we can ensure that the fire service has the resources it needs to protect our communities and keep our firefighters safe.

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

Volunteer Firefighters Save N.Y. Taxpayers Billions Annually, FASNY 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> 



OSHA Bloodborne Pathogens Update ESIP WEBINAR SERIES

We take a look at the annual proficiency requirement under OSHA 1910.1030. Attendees are reminded that after this review webinar, they are required to review their policies and infection control plans and meet with their appointed leaders to address questions or concerns specific to their agency in order to satisfy OSHA 1910.1030.

Wednesday 5/3/23 at 7:00PM on-line

REGISTER AT THIS LINK:

<https://mcneilandcompany.us8.list-manage.com/track/click?u=03596f243a9d922954ebaf15e&id=545bb91ec3&e=781e9a2c81>



VFIS Instructor-Level Program

Emergency Services Trailer Operations & Safety

Emergency Services UTV/ATV Safety

May 20th, 2023

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 3 tickets)

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

FULL TERM REGISTRATION (EXPO & CLASSES)

NYSAFC Individual Member: \$100 (per person)

Non-Member: \$175 (per person)

[Hands-On Training at FIRE 2023 in Syracuse Announced](#)

Registration is open for Hands-On Training at the NYSAFC 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)

[NYSAFC 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 – NYSAFC members

\$50 – non-members

Pre-registration encouraged.

Albany Co. October/23/23, Fulton Co. September/7/23, 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 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>

OUR CHANGING FIRE SERVICE –CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES!

[OPPORTUNITIES:](#)

[Harrison Township Repurposes Fire Hose Into School Safety Locks](#)

Allison Gens

HARRISON TOWNSHIP, Ohio (WDTN) – An area fire department and school district are giving retired fire hoses a second chance to save lives by repurposing the hoses into door sleeves at Northridge Local Schools.

Northridge Local School District Safety Director Officer Clint Ball approached the Harrison Township Fire Department and asked department could make sleeves used to secure district doors.

“We got some out of service fire hose, cut it up to the specification that we determined would be best suited for the school,” Harrison Twp. Fire Captain Cody King said.

King said Ball got the idea after going through ALICE training, which stands for alert, lockdown, inform, counter and evacuate.

In the event of a lockdown or active shooter situation in at a school, every second counts. The fire hose sleeves can quickly be placed on the door to prevent an intruder as another layer of protection.

“You’re able to take the hose, slip it over the hydraulic mechanism for the door hinge, and if you slide that over, impedes anyone from being able to open it,” King said.

The fire department made around twenty door sleeves and provided an additional roll of hose to the district to make more as needed.

“The teachers were extremely excited to see us,” King said. “We added a layer that allows them to feel more safe as well. We’re doing everything we can to keep the children of this community safe.”

The fire department and Northridge Local Schools were already working together to strengthen the school’s emergency operations plan.



[Lake George Students Learn How To Be Firefighters](#)

Students at Lake George (Warren Co.) Junior-Senior High School know about the village fire department – located just up Ottawa Street from the high school's rear side. On Tuesday, students got to learn about what firefighters go through at departments like their close neighbor. Crews from Lake George, North Queensbury, Bay Ridge, Pilot Knob and Queensbury Central fire departments visited Lake George's high school on Tuesday, giving more than 200 students the chance to get hands-on with equipment and learn what it takes to be a firefighter. Students tried on gear, performed mock drills, swung sledgehammers, and used weights to simulate breaking through the ceiling of a burning building. They also heard about what makes the job worth the danger from John Coccozza-Hill, a Lake George fire chief and former graduate of the high school himself.

[CHALLENGES:](#)

[2 Md. Firefighters Injured In Fire Truck Theft](#)

The Baltimore City FD truck was stolen during a medical call. Police said that a man experiencing a behavioral health crisis got in the vehicle and released the brake, letting it drift. A fire department spokesman said the suspect did not get far with the truck and that two crewmembers sustained minor injuries from the incident.

[Six DC Fire and EMS Members on Leave After Fight Caught on Camera](#)

Not a situation any of us would want to be in....

According to a report from [NBC4](#), six members of DC Fire and EMS were placed on leave after being filmed fighting while responding to an emergency call Tuesday night.

The video, which was posted to social media, shows the members brawling while in uniform.

DC Fire and EMS released a statement saying that the actions depicted in the video “are completely unacceptable and do not reflect the behavior we require of our members.”

The six members are now on administrative leave while under a joint investigation with D.C. police.

Two points: #1 there are two sides to every story and #2 someone always has a camera and is posting to social media, we have only the video and not the full story!

[‘Park Outside’: GM Recalls 40,000 Pickups to Fix Fire Risk](#)

The AP

General Motors is recalling certain Chevrolet Silverado medium-duty trucks for model year 2019 or later, following the discovery of a potential leak in brake fluid that could result in a fire.

Potentially 40,428 vehicles could be affected. They include 4500HD, 5500HD, and 6500HD models with model years between 2019 and 2023, [according to documents](#) posted by U.S. safety regulators on Saturday.

The vehicles may have a brake pressure sensor assembly that allows brake fluid to leak and cause a short circuit. That in turn increases the risk of a fire that could occur when the vehicle is either driving or parked.

GM advises owners with potentially affected models to park outdoors and away from structures until the recall repair is done. Vehicles with model years before 2019 used a different design.

THE LIGHT BULB GOES ON!!

With Fire Departments Struggling for Volunteers, States Respond to the Alarm

Alex Brown

When firefighters show up to a blaze or medical emergency across much of the United States, they most likely are volunteers. It's also likely the department is understaffed, struggling to replace old equipment and facing uncertainty about its next generation of firefighters.

"So much of our country relies on the volunteer fire service," said Kimberly Quiros, chief of communications with the National Volunteer Fire Council, a nonprofit advocacy organization. "Right now, we're seeing less volunteers and more calls [for emergency response], but a lot of communities don't have the tax base and support to switch to a career staffing model."

More than 80% of the nation's fire departments are made up entirely or mostly of volunteers, according to the National Fire Protection Association. **Volunteers comprise 65% of U.S. firefighters overall**. But participation has dwindled, from nearly 900,000 volunteers in 1984 to a low of 677,000 in 2020. Meanwhile, fire departments have responded to more than triple the number of calls over that same period.

With volunteer departments stretched thin, some states have begun their own response. Lawmakers from both parties have advanced bills to provide financial benefits or tax breaks for volunteers or funding for new equipment, in hopes of incentivizing firefighters to join up or stay in service. Without state investments to keep volunteer agencies afloat, the lawmakers say, taxpayers would have to support full-time firefighters or face risks to public safety.

While some departments have brought on full-time paid firefighters to fill the gaps volunteers can't cover, many communities, especially in rural areas, can't afford the cost of a professional fire service. The National Fire Protection Association estimates that the time donated by volunteer firefighters saves communities nearly \$47 billion each year.

"Counties would have to increase taxes to have paid departments out there, or insurance premiums would go up substantially," said Mississippi state Rep. Donnie Scoggin, a Republican. "The amount of money volunteers save us makes a huge difference for the taxpayer, and right now we are not able to recruit and retain enough firemen."

Scoggin sponsored a bill, passed unanimously this session and signed into law, that will establish a Length of Service Award Program for volunteer firefighters in Mississippi. For every year of service, they will receive \$500 placed in an investment fund, eligible to be withdrawn with interest when they retire from the department.

"We see this as a means to recruit new firefighters and encourage retention of the valuable firefighters we already have," said John Pope, president of the Mississippi Firefighter's Association and chief of the Collins Fire Department. "It's going to save lives."

Fire agency leaders say the reasons for volunteer departments' struggles are myriad. Many young people are leaving rural areas, which are more likely to rely on volunteer service. The rise in two-income households means fewer people have available time to volunteer. **Most states now have extensive training requirements, which can be a time-consuming and costly barrier for new recruits.**

At the same time, many fire departments now are expected to respond to medical emergencies, hazmat incidents, active shooter situations and other scenarios that have drastically increased call volumes.

"It seems like there's more and more runs every year, they're almost full-time," said Michigan state Sen. Jon Bumstead, a Republican and former volunteer firefighter. "There's no health care, no retirement. ***If we're going to fully man these departments, we've got to start offering more than what we are now.***"

Bumstead sponsored a bill that would expand worker compensation benefits to volunteer firefighters and part-time police officers. He noted that volunteer firefighters face risks even while training and shouldn't have to pay out of pocket if they're injured or develop a health issue. He also called for future legislation requiring the state to cover the costs of the extensive training programs it requires volunteers to undertake.

The bill is currently before a House committee.

In South Dakota, lawmakers voted this year to allocate \$5 million to ***The Pennsylvania Senate voted unanimously earlier this year to establish three pilot programs at community colleges and universities to offer fire training to interested***

high school students. help volunteer fire departments cover equipment costs. State Rep. Kevin Jensen, the bill's Republican sponsor, said his son had to spend \$600 for boots when he joined the fire service.

"To equip one firefighter can cost anywhere from \$6,000 to \$10,000," Jensen said. "Over 99% of the landmass in South Dakota is covered by volunteer fire departments that get no formal funding. Some departments are using outdated equipment but don't have the money to do anything about it."

The pandemic made it difficult for fire departments to conduct the pancake and chili fundraisers that traditionally had propped up their budgets, Jensen said, setting them back further. **He said some fire agencies have had to turn away volunteers because they can't equip them,** making the state funding an important tool for increasing staffing as well.

Last year, New York lawmakers unanimously passed a measure enabling local municipalities to enact property tax breaks of up to 10% reduction in their assessed valuation for volunteer firefighters and ambulance workers. Then-Assemblyman Kevin Byrne, a Republican, sponsored that bill and now serves as Putnam County executive. The county adopted the 10% tax break earlier this year.

"It's hard to get young members, and it needs to be sustainable so they can justify going to a call at 3 in the morning and leaving their loved ones," Byrne said.

"That's where the property tax exemption is meaningful and makes it easier for people to justify the work," he said. "If we were to shift from a volunteer fire service to a municipal tax-funded fire service, it would cost so much more money than what this exemption is. It pays for itself and then some."

Meanwhile, Wyoming lawmakers enacted a law last month to allocate \$9 million to the state's volunteer firefighter pension fund, replacing money that had been diverted to keep a fund for paid firefighters solvent. State Rep. Sandy Newsome, the bill's Republican sponsor, said the state's current funding surplus made it an opportune time to restore the pension account. She called it a "helpful tool," if not the determining factor, in recruiting volunteers.

Ryan Woodward, chief of legislative and regulatory affairs with the National Volunteer Fire Council, said many leaders are looking at financial incentives to keep volunteer departments in service.

"Volunteers serve a really irreplaceable role within a majority of communities in the United States," he said. "There are a number of people out there who say, 'Hey, it could be good to serve my community,' but may be on the fence and need that extra push."

BUYING A FIRE TRUCK!

Mid-Mount vs. Rear-Mount Aerials: Departments Have Their Favorites

Alan M. Petrillo

While each type of truck has its advantages in certain situations, often the choice of a mid-mount or rear-mount is dictated by a department's geographical location, the operating areas, and the type of tactics likely to be employed.

Robert Triche, aerial sales manager for Ferrara Fire Apparatus, says Ferrara's aerial business is 50-50 mid-mount vs. rear-mount. "Money is sometimes a factor in which type a department chooses because the cost of a mid-mount is higher," Triche notes. "With a mid-mount, you get a better ride and have better visibility out of the cab. We see a lot more mid-mounts on the East Coast because of its shorter travel height where it can clear train trestles, overpasses, low-hanging trees, and older firehouses with short door openings." Triche points out that with a rear-mount, "an operator has the option of backing in and getting every inch out of the ladder.

Placed properly, a rear-mount has more of an operational zone." Tim Burkhart, aerial account manager for Spartan Emergency Response, says the sales numbers there are close to even when comparing mid-mount and rear-mount aerials. "The market seems to be cycling back toward mid-mounts after being weighted toward rear-mounts for a long time," Burkhart says. "With both types, it's all about truck placement and where you place the turntable to get the job done. In open construction with utilities underground, all things are equal with both of them. When you have trees or utility poles in front of a structure, a rear-mount would have to go behind them and back in to get extra reach, while a mid-mount might be able to go in between the trees or poles and hit the structure from the front."

Chuck Glagola, Spartan Emergency Response's regional account manager who handles Smeal and Ladder Tower aerials, says, "We've seen an influx of mid-mount platform orders." He notes that with a midmount, an operator has to be concerned with the tail swing of the platform at the back of the truck and that a rear-mount operator has to be concerned

with the platform in his vision at the front of the truck. “A good rear-mount driver knows how to back in to get 25 to 30 feet more ladder in play instead of nosing in,” he adds, “and a good mid-mount driver knows to take the corner of a building to cover two sides.”

Jason Behler, aerial sales application engineer for KME, agrees that mid-mount aerials are popular with fire departments in cities with tighter streets and older stations that were built for smaller vehicles. “We can get a mid-mount with no pump and tank down to 9 feet 11 inches overall height,” Behler says, “and to 10 feet 6 inches with a pump and tank. Also, a lot of fire departments like an aerial with the turntable in the middle of the truck, which gives them a little more reach as well as more forgiveness in apparatus placement.” On the other hand, he adds, a rear-mount aerial’s 250 degrees of unobstructed operating space gives a fire department a lot more options when operating below grade. “Some departments get concerned about the rear-mount platform being in front of the driver, so we’ve cleaned up the bottom of our platforms to give greater driver visibility,” Behler points out. “And to counter tail swing, we’ve mitered the corners on both our mid-mount and rear-mount platforms.

The access ladders are angled too, which helps reduce the vehicle’s overall footprint as it drives down the road.” Jenny Bloemer, senior manager of business development for aerial products at Pierce Manufacturing, says Pierce’s recent business has been about 75% mid-mount platforms vs. 25% rear-mounts. In terms of ladders, all of Pierce’s straight sticks are rear-mounts. “Below-grade operation is a big deal with a mid-mount aerial because of its shorter setback,” Bloemer says. “A mid-mount has a five-section ladder, which allows for about a 20-foot setback compared to around 40 feet for a three-section rear-mount. And, the midmount can go 15 degrees below grade with a 50-degree scrub zone for the aerial itself, and then the truck can go an additional 5 degrees lower, for a total of minus 20 degrees belowgrade operation.” Bloemer adds that the five-section aerial on a mid-mount also allows the operator to get closer to a building and operate off the side, creating a greater scrub area. “Also, the rear overhang on our Ascendant mid-mount platform is designed so each ladder section retracts beyond the next section with all sections lining up against the cab,” she says. “The basket then comes up to the base section and is able to be pulled back against it, so the tail swing will be the same as on our rear-mount platform.”

Justin Howell, southeast region sales territory manager for Sutphen Corp., says that Sutphen has always been a mid-mount company but that it does build rear-mounts too, even though the majority of its business is mid-mounts. “There are certain times when a rear-mount is better than a mid-mount depending on the scene setup,” Howell says, “but for city streets, the mid-mount is a shorter truck and is better because it is not limited in reach.” He notes that while a rear-mount is better for nosing into a tight alleyway, it is limited in reach when working over the front of the truck but that the two pairs of outriggers that stabilize a rear-mount take up more space than the single set of outriggers on a mid-mount. Zack Rudy, Sutphen’s director of sales, adds driver visibility is much better with a mid-mount because there’s no bucket hanging off the front of the truck. “Also, a midmount has a lower center of gravity with the extra weight off the cab, which helps with both braking and acceleration of the truck,” Rudy says. “In addition, a department can get a true raised roof cab on a mid-mount.

But in the end, the decision on which type of aerial comes down to customer preference where we have to understand their needs and recommend the aerial that’s right for their department.” Justin Rice, North American aerial sales manager for E-ONE, notes that E-ONE is predominantly a rear-mount aerial company, selling upward of 90% of those aerials annually. “In the last four or five years, we’ve seen a push toward mid-mounts from some departments but find that departments usually chose to go with what they already have, whether it be mid-mount or rear-mount,” Rice says. Rice lists the advantages for a midmount as having a lower overall height, a good complement of ground ladders, and being able to position the truck well for almost every situation. He says the advantages of a rear-mount are greater compartment space, less tail swing, a longer wheelbase, and the ability to position and operate in a larger window of space.

Mike Watts, national sales manager for Toyne, says a rear-mount aerial has a larger unobstructed range of operation as it sits higher above a taller body, which means the overall height of the apparatus will be taller than a mid-mount. “Usually, in this configuration, the ladders are stored inside the torque box, and from the rear-mounted pedestal there is a clear 360-degree operating envelope above cab/body height and, in some instances, a lower negative operating envelope to the side and rear for about a 180-degree arc,” Watts says. Watts notes, “Straight stick aerials work very well

in a rear-mounted configuration, as any overhang does not impede the driver and officer's upward view as with a platform. With a mid-mount aerial, the pedestal is mounted right behind the cab and usually sits a foot or more lower than on a rear-mount aerial. This configuration works well in limited height door openings as seen in many older firehouses. Ladder storage on a mid-mount is limited even if available in the torque box, so many mid-mount aerials store the ground ladders outside on top of the officer's side compartments." He points out mid-mount apparatus can be longer from bumper to bumper than a rear-mount, depending on the manufacturing layout. "The mid-mount can have a more limited operational envelope, depending on the initial truck setup and the direction of the incident from the truck," Watts notes. "The length of the rear body affects the offset reach straight back, and the cab can come into play in the forward direction. The biggest operational challenge can be below-grade operations where the body and outriggers can limit the downward movement of the mid-mount aerial in more positions as opposed to the rear-mount. Proper setup is the key to success regardless of the pedestal location. There are challenges with each type of truck."

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

*IN 2023 WE HAVE SADLY EXPERIENCED *24 + 3=27 FIRE FIGHTER LODD'S*

*According to FirefighterCloseCalls.com**

In 2022 we experienced 101 LODDs reported nationally.!

YOU JUST NEVER KNOW...

- North Tazewell Tennessee, Volunteer Fire Department Captain Roy L. Sewell Jr., 27, died Monday afternoon in a fire truck crash. The truck went off the side of a road, into an embankment and overturned, Sewell's injuries were fatal.
- A firefighter with the Asheville (NC) Fire Department (AFD) was hospitalized after calling a mayday call went out during a house fire on Monday. The response took a turn for the worse after a three-member crew lost the hoseline that was guiding them through the home when a flashover occurred. The entire room erupted, trapping the crew inside.
- Pasco County Florida Firefighter-EMT Jason Tucker recently died as a result of brain cancer. Even through his final days, Firefighter Jason Tucker continued to visit with our new-hire classes to teach the importance of cancer prevention.
- Smith County Texas, Emergency Services District Two released video of an April 5 crash that involved two fire trucks that were struck by an 18-wheeler. The wreck occurred on Interstate 20 near the State Highway 155 intersection. The 18-wheeler crashed into an impact attenuator mounted on the rear of the blocking apparatus and side swiped another truck and a police vehicle. A firefighter and police officer were in the vehicles when they were struck, but were not seriously injured.
- According to a report from [NBC5](#), one person was transported to the hospital after a Dallas Fire-Rescue (DFR) apparatus hydroplaned while responding to an emergency call and hit a car during a heavy thunderstorm. The engine was towed away and will be out of service for extensive repair.
- Lake County South Dakota, Firefighter Fred Fedeler, 67, died after suffering a medical emergency at the scene of a structure fire. He was a volunteer with the Chester Fire Department.
- Frederick County Fire and Rescue Department Deputy Chief Chester T. Lauck died after suffering a cardiac event at his home after responding to a wildland fire. Chief Lauck was a life member of Round Hill Community Volunteer Fire and Rescue Company where he served as the Volunteer Fire and Rescue Chief for 14 years and held other leadership roles.
- Three firefighters were injured - one of them seriously - while battling a blaze in Birmingham, Alabama Thursday night. Conditions worsened so crews started to back out," Hicks said. "Unfortunately, on the way out of the fire, the porch gave so we had three firefighters that were trapped up under some debris." A Mayday call went out and "They got them out pretty quick, a couple of minutes maybe," Hicks said. "Crews were right there with them so once they saw them go down, they acted quickly to get them out."

Reference Material for Use in a Line of Duty Death

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

LIVING WITH LITHIUM-ION BATTERIES

First Responders Sound Alarm Over EV Batteries After Electric F-150s Burst Into Flames: 'Totally Different'

Taylor Penley

A shocking video shows a row of electric F-150s bursting into flames after EV batteries overheated and caught on fire in the staging lot at the assembly plant.

"It's a totally different pathway than most firefighters have to deal with," Dalrymple said Wednesday on Fox News Channel's ["Fox & Friends First."](#)

He explained how the overheated batteries inside the vehicles generate a fire that can linger for hours and is next to impossible to extinguish.

"Basically, it's a chemical reaction," he explained. "It's not a normal fire where fire needs oxygen to burn. This is a chemical reaction that makes its own oxygen. It's an exothermic reaction."

O'Brian said he is concerned about first responders who currently lack training and resources to fight these long-burning fires and prevent loss of life when seconds count.

According to O'Brian, gasoline-powered vehicles can often be extinguished within five minutes and the site cleanup time is relatively brief. Electric vehicles, however, can take hours to rein in because of their unique differences.

"We're now dealing with two-plus-hour incidents, and we can't actively extinguish this fire when the battery pack is involved, so fire crews are really forced with two major options – do we actively cool the battery pack, which is trying to stop that propagation within that battery pack, or do we just let it go?" he said.

EV battery fires also increase the need for upticks in fire hydrant installations, particularly in areas near freeways where they are less common, he added.

"There's a lot of change that's going to be happening, and it's not just our electrified vehicles. This discussion is happening in our buildings, it's happening in the recycling market, and you'll see, as we build more batteries, as we produce more EVs, that means more products are going to be on the road as we move to get these to assembly plants... and our fire crews are going to be continually challenged every day." Aside from combustibility, other electric vehicle concerns linger among critics, including cost and worries that charging the vehicles could [overwhelm the power grid](#) in some locations. Fears coincide with an EV push from the Biden administration, including President Biden, Energy Secretary Jennifer Granholm, and the Environmental Protection Agency, who recently proposed aggressive regulations cracking down on gas-powered car emissions, potentially impacting future car models for the years 2027 to 2032.

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

Developed and administered by



FREE CHECKLIST: Assessing your volunteer retention *and* recruitment programs

Volunteer retention and recruitment should be considered ongoing and *separate* processes in your ESO. And while you may need additional personnel—your current roster should be your primary focus as it's less expensive to develop and retain existing personnel than to recruit and train new volunteers.

Evaluate your retention and recruitment programs with this checklist available in full on RESPONDER+HELP

Answer "yes" or "no" to the following questions and tally up how many "yeses" your organization receives. Be honest—and if there's any doubt in your mind, it is suggested to answer "no".

1. Does your ESO conduct exit interviews with any individual leaving your organization?
2. Does your ESO conduct periodic evaluations, at least annually, on a continual basis?
3. Does your ESO have a job description for every position within the organization?
4. Does your ESO have a clear organization structure for both operations and administrative personnel?
5. Does your ESO have a written personnel manual updated within the last 3 years?
6. Does your ESO have both paper and electronic applications available for prospective volunteers?
7. Does your ESO assist individuals that need assistance when completing the application?

8. Does your ESO use multiple communication methods to reach current and prospective members?
9. Does your ESO charge a fee for prospective members to join the organization?
10. Does a prospective member have to wait between the time of a completed application until the VFD "votes in" the applicant?
11. Does your ESO advertise "Volunteers Needed"?
12. Does your ESO have a volunteer awards or incentive program?
13. Is your ESO able to handle the onboarding process for (5) new volunteers at one time?
14. Can your ESO afford to outfit and train 5 new volunteers at one time?
15. Does your ESO have 5 different mentors available that are willing to be assigned 5 new volunteers?
16. Does your ESO know the cost to outfit and train each new volunteer for their respective position?
17. Do you know the attrition rate of volunteers in your ESO?
18. Do you know the retention rate of volunteers in your ESO?
19. Does your ESO match times of training sessions to times when the volunteers are available?
20. Does a chief officer dedicate time to meet with each volunteer periodically, at least once per year?
21. Do you provide a copy of your ESO bylaws to each new volunteer member?
22. Do you provide a copy of department SOPs/SOGs to each new volunteer member?
23. Does your ESO have a quantifiable method to determine how a volunteer completes probationary status?
24. Does your ESO have a quantifiable method to determine how a member is defined as "active" during a given timeframe?
25. Does your ESO have dedicated office hours at your station announced to the public and displayed at each main entrance?

COUNT YOUR YESES AND GET YOUR EVALUATION:

https://www.cfmediaview.com/lp1.aspx?v=31_180864129_12494_2

*****Your Volunteer Retention Playbook: How To Maintain Membership***

Dan Rogers

This was published previously but is worth repeating.

What’s the process for bringing new volunteers into your department? Do you simply provide the new member gear, a pager and a T-shirt and expect them to succeed?

Even for officers who see the clear fault in that approach, some likely find themselves wondering how to meet the needs of the department and their recruits – a lot of work for a volunteer officer, perhaps more than they want to take on. While it does take work, officers must recognize that fostering new members is critical to the future of the volunteer fire service – critical in getting members to stay.

In the accompanying article on recruitment, “Your volunteer recruitment playbook: How to develop the plan and execute,” I touched on firefighter retention and the reasons we *believe* firefighters are leaving the ranks.

The more likely reasons for our retention issues fall into four categories:

1. Lack of quality training and leadership;
2. Culture of cliques that exclude others;
3. Generational differences that cause tension; and
4. Lack of camaraderie or sense of community.

Let’s break down each reason to better understand what we can do to eliminate these issues.

1. LACK OF QUALITY TRAINING AND LEADERSHIP

Just because we were successful in recruiting new members doesn’t mean our job is complete. A recruitment plan must include a path for new members to become fully trained and developed public servants. After all, there is nothing worse than wasting a fully committed volunteer due to lack of training or lackluster leadership. Remember, as department officers, we made a promise to these new recruits to provide them the training they needed to keep themselves and those around them safe. Make sure you have a quality training plan ready. Focus early trainings on what Seattle Captain (ret.) Mike Gagliano calls the “flawless execution of the basics.” Assign them a mentor who will provide continuous coaching for success.

2. CULTURE OF CLIQUES THAT EXCLUDE OTHERS

This is far more common than we think. Chief officers do this subconsciously. Why? Because those members who show up more tend to be given the “better” jobs on the fireground. Why? Because we trust them more. As a result, those members tend to hang within their own group. In addition, generational cohorts tend to stick together.

We must identify cliques within our department and ensure that we are spreading the workload more evenly. Yes, this is easier said than done, especially when safety is involved. However, we must, at a minimum, have a group conversation about expectations; this can help diffuse the situation without hurting anyone’s feelings. Simply explain: “If you want better jobs on the fireground, then show up to more trainings.”

Further, make a solid effort to break up these exclusionary groups by teaming members who might not normally choose to work together. This might also involve having some difficult conversations in private with your veteran members. Explain to them that they are the future of this department, and the responsibility lies with them. Challenge them: “Where will we be in 15 years given our current situation?” We never know day to day who will show up, so forming that brotherhood and sisterhood bond starts with leaders and veterans. It starts with culture.

3. GENERATIONAL DIFFERENCES THAT CAUSE TENSION

When I joined the department, the older “salty” members complained about my generation and called us weak. But 30 years before that, the veteran members of my department also complained about the incoming generation. This type of complaining has been going on since firefighters learned to complain.

It’s time we put our differences aside and focus on what we have in common – our desire to help the community. The sooner we can focus energy on the advancement of the department, the sooner we can work together as a team.

Remind the older members that their family, friends and neighbors will benefit from change, spending money and/or technology. Remind the younger members that everything we do is for the benefit of the community we serve. Remind newer members that the “saltier” members have, in fact, seen and done a few things, and still have a lot to offer the department.

Cohesiveness is achieved by defining specific goals, mixing new and old experiences, and reaching these goals as a team. And when things go right, celebrate your successes together.

4. LACK OF CAMARADERIE OR SENSE OF COMMUNITY

Feelings cannot be forced. We cannot force a member to have pride in the department or a sense of community, or even camaraderie with another firefighter. We can only facilitate an atmosphere that focuses on teamwork, all while moving toward a common goal of providing better service for our community.

Consider the U.S. Army. Despite coming from all walks of life with many diverse backgrounds, soldiers form an unbreakable bond that comes to bear during even the most extreme situations. Why? Because they were trained to depend on each other when their environment gets hairy (similar to ours). When things get tough, they lean on each other, because they trust each other.

This is how we need to train our members. Put members in simulated situations where they are forced to lean on each other. Team members who wouldn’t normally choose each other and facilitate solidarity. A simple Google search yields hundreds of team-building exercises that promote trust and communication that can be carried over to the fireground.

Now that we have touched on the retention issues plaguing our agencies, let’s now consider some solutions to overcome these retention pitfalls.

START A MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

The best way to help ensure retention of newly recruited firefighters is to implement a mentor program.

Each recruit should be assigned their own mentor, typically not an officer, but rather an active firefighter with 5 years or more experience, who would report additional to the chief officer. The mentor serves as a sounding board for recruits, sometimes afraid to talk with their officer.

The mentor should be tasked with overseeing training, answering questions, introducing the recruit to active members, and ensuring that all associated documentation is up to date. The mentor is the go-to person for the recruit. Through this process, the mentor will gain valuable experience in dealing with personnel and equipment issues. What better way to gauge the abilities of a potential future officer?

FORM COMMITTEES WITHIN YOUR DEPARTMENT

I am a huge proponent of committees. I believe wholeheartedly that committees can help halt a downward trajectory and increase morale within your agency.

Start by establishing three to five committees. Assign two to three firefighters per committee, and task them with handling various equipment needs, regulatory compliances, and divisions.

Require them to report at each meeting on needs, updates and improvements made within their committee. Ask to hear from each member and continue to task them with activities that fall within their respective committee. Hold them accountable for these duties and be clear with your expectations.

How do committees fit into retention?

- You're giving members a voice at the meeting. They have ownership and feel like a member of the team.
- You're giving members responsibility within the department. Responsibility = commitment; commitment = pride; pride = retention.
- You're breaking down generational barriers by promoting healthy working relationships among members.
- You're relieving overworked officers of basic tasks.

Some examples of committees:

- *Small equipment:* This committee is tasked with starting, checking and maintaining all small engines and equipment within the department. Repairs and issues should be brought to the membership's attention via the meeting report as well as updates and potential new equipment purchases. Let these folks spec new equipment. Trust them.
- *ISO/NFPA/OSHA compliance:* ISO, NFPA, OSHA compliances can be difficult for small departments to manage. Create a committee to research NFPA/OSHA standards to ensure your agency is compliant. Task the members with not just bringing non-compliance to light but also brainstorming solutions before presenting to the membership.
- *PPE:* This committee is charged with categorizing, inventorying and issuing PPE. It is also in charge of PPE NFPA compliance and developing new gear specs when the time comes to purchase.

Speaking of PPE, here's an example of why it's important to include non-officers on purchasing committees: My department was awarded a PPE grant. We formed a purchasing committee that was ultimately given the responsibility of choosing the gear our department will be wearing for the next 10 years. The committee included interior firefighters, only two of whom were officers and none who worked too closely with department finances. This allowed them to go beyond the bottom line to focus on the equipment.

The committee was tasked with meeting with seven vendors and demonstrating several sets of gear from each vendor. They returned a set of specs that were sent out for bid. Once the bids returned, the chief and I worked with the group on the financial side.

The committee chose a vendor and presented the PPE request of choice to the membership for vote. Members asked several questions, and the committee answered without issue. In the end, the process gave the committee members a sense of responsibility and belonging.

SHOW YOUR APPRECIATION

Most chief officers know that we will never get a formal thank you from the thousands of people we help during our careers. But the "thankless" element of the job should really only relate to interactions with the public.

I know what you're thinking: "No one ever thanked me for running into burning buildings." You're right, me either. But times have changed, members have changed, and if we are serious about the retention, we must adapt. Thank your members for showing up and let them know you appreciate their time.

There are many other ways we can thank our members. Length of service awards, response stipends and training incentives are some of the best ways to show appreciation. These tokens of appreciation can come in the form of a department shirt, plaque, gift card or even monetary payment. I know my department can't afford these things when we can barely cover PPE upgrades, so we apply for funding to help with this. Let's tackle this next.

APPLY FOR GRANTS

The most underrated grant in the fire service is the [Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response \(SAFER\) Grant](#). This grant has a portion of funding dedicated solely to the recruitment and retention of volunteer firefighters.

By developing a recruitment and retention plan, you can apply to have your marketing, training and retention programs funded without matching any funds. This program, as I have experienced myself, is an absolute game-changer when it comes to recruiting and retaining volunteers.

Several retention tools are covered through SAFER grants:

Retention/training

- Tuition for training: Funding for a training to advance members’ careers.
- Basic firefighter training: Funding designed for the recruit to earn a basic level of certification as your department requires.

Retention/acknowledgement

- Length of service awards: Funding to purchase length of service awards for current members and even recruits outlined in your recruitment plan.
- Response stipend: Funding to provide firefighters with a monetary payment or gift card based on response totals (also can be utilized as a recruitment tool).
- Training incentives: Funding to provide firefighters with a clothing incentive when training requirements are met or exceeded. (How many chiefs get nagged about a new department hoodie? Make them earn it.)

When applying for grant funding, especially a SAFER grant, it’s important that you identify the need, research the core issues, and develop a solution. This is referred to as a basic Applied Research Project (APR), and you don’t have to be a scientist to make one.

Grants are all based on the basic premise of needs vs. wants. As a grant writer, I always envision myself at the desk of the peer reviewer considering if this funding request is for an actual need or simply a want. You have to prove to me that there is a need, and a quality APR usually answers this question for me.

If this all sounds a little too much for you to handle, remember that [grant writer fees are 100% reimbursable if awarded](#). There are many grant writers who can help you through each step of the process. Reach out to someone and give your agency the best chance of being successful.

BE THE CHANGE

While there is no single solution to our retention issues, I have seen these tactics work to recruit members, train them, and retain them as quality, volunteer firefighters. I know that if you put in the work, use the resources, and keep up the recruitment and retention work, your agency will maintain a quality membership well beyond your days as the member wearing the white helmet.

The future belongs to those who are willing to make the changes. The true test of a fire department is how well the membership operates in our absence. If you feel like you, personally, must be present for your agency to get the job done, then you have failed at preparing for the future, and it’s time to change that.

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 BY THE MEDIA FROM THE US FIRE ADMINISTRATION	
Fire Deaths in 1&2 Family Dwellings in NYS	31+1 = 32
Last fire death 4/22/23 Brooklyn, Kings Co. Female, 82	
Fire Deaths in any type of Dwelling in NYS	56+1 = 57
Fire Deaths in 1&2 Family Dwellings Nationally	518 + 28 = 546

Top Three State with the most 1&2 Family Deaths	1 OH = 33
	2 NY = 32
	3 TN = 31
There has been a total of 0893 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.

****Fire Departments and Safety Advocates Encouraged to Participate in Home Fire Sprinkler Week Digital Campaign**

In every community, home fires are a severe threat to residents as well as responding firefighters. **Homes account for 97 percent of residential structure fires and 75 percent of all civilian fire deaths.** Today this problem is intensified by the fact that homes with modern furnishings, open spaces and unprotected lightweight wood construction make home fires deadly in two minutes or less. To confront this stubborn public safety burden, fire departments and safety advocates across North America will team up May 14-20 for Home Fire Sprinkler Week. Together, they will amplify the message that **fire sprinklers stop a fire from becoming deadly, protecting residents and firefighters.**

The [Home Fire Sprinkler Coalition \(HFSC\) digital campaign](#) focuses on the home fire problem and the need for better understanding of the life safety benefits of installed home fire sprinklers. Every day there is a different theme and content for social media and websites that focus on key facts about home fire sprinklers. The messages are sized for various social media, so it is easy to share with little time and effort. Everyone is encouraged to visit the website every day during the week and share the messages.

“Educating and increasing awareness about home fire sprinklers can be a challenge,” said Lorraine Carli, NFPA vice president of Outreach and Advocacy and president of the HFSC. “*What thwarts progress is lacking public awareness, rampant myths and the influence of special interests.* **More than 1 million homes are built each year, and less than 10% are protected with fire sprinklers.** Homes without fire sprinklers counter the goals of community risk reduction. During Home Fire Sprinkler Week, we work together to increase awareness,” Carli said.

This year’s Home Fire Sprinkler Week responds with a range of powerful educational tools including HFSC’s virtual reality resource that helps viewers see and believe how fast fire becomes deadly and how important fire sprinkler protection is. These VR videos were created from actual home fire flashover and fire sprinkler activation footage. The footage was shot live as the fires burned. The result is memorable. With user-controlled 360-degree, full-room views, viewers experience the fires as if they were actually in the room, seeing the fires and sprinkler activation from any angle. The VR videos can be watched with 3D glasses or headsets for an immersive experience as well as in 2D on HFSC’s [website](#).

Fire safety advocates know, and every year national fire data reinforces, installed fire sprinklers reduce home fire injuries, deaths and property loss. “That’s why **all national building codes require sprinklers in new construction,**” Carli says. “As a result, every new home built without fire sprinklers is by definition substandard. Today’s homebuyers are savvy about safety and when they learn about fire sprinklers, they want them. The virtual reality, digital and other Home Fire Sprinkler Week resources underscore not just that we can do better; they underscore exactly how to do better.”

THE ATTORNEY’S OFFICE

****Background Checks - - Fire Company and Fire District Responsibilities**

Greg Serio – CAFDA Legal Counsel

As with so much of the law pertaining to the volunteer fire service and fire districts, section 837-o of the state Executive Law (contained within Article 35 relating to the Division of Criminal Justice Services) is rather prescriptive governance over arson and sexual offense conviction (specifically requiring registration as a sex offender) searches for prospective firefighters. Also with respect to the legal labyrinth that fire districts routinely navigate, some practices arising from these legal obligations have strayed from the clear prescriptive language of our statutes, including this provision of law.

Questions routinely arise in fire company meetings, fire district commissioners' meetings and elsewhere about who is specifically responsible for assuring that such searches are done, and when they are to be done. Oftentimes, a candidate is presented to a fire district prior to a background check being done. Other times, a member of a fire company is accepted prior to a search even being conducted. A review of section 837-o is helpful for clarifying the division of labor between fire companies and fire districts, and when exactly such background checks should be completed.

A parsing of the statute provides a convenient and complete process for satisfying the statutory requirement for arson and sexual offense conviction searches to be done. **First, the law requires that a prospective member of a fire company, upon application, to acquiesce to a background check.** That authorization, and the notice that a search is to be made, comes in the form of an application for a search provided by the DCJS. Within ten days of receiving the authorization to the search, **the fire chief** is to send the search request form to the local sheriff or the Office of Fire Prevention and Control. The sheriff and OFPC has ten days to direct the search request to the DCJS.

The chief then is to receive a written response from the sheriff or OFPC within ten days of their receipt of search results back from the DCJS. The response will only say if the applicant has been convicted of either an arson or sex crime, and the response is to remain confidential.

So, up to this point in time of the process, a few things are apparent: an application for membership has been made, but not acted upon pending the background check, the sheriff or OFPC works with the DCJS to get the background information, and the result is sent back to the chief. *Up to this point, the applicant should not have been accepted for membership; they may have been denied, for other reasons.* **If the report is clean, and no conviction is found, then the applicant can be presented for a vote of the fire company for membership.**

Oftentimes, fire companies accept someone for probationary membership and then submit the name for the search. I would argue that that process is not in keeping with section 837-o. What happens to a membership that has been granted prior to a search? Fire companies are then in the uncomfortable position of having to unwind a membership application acceptance. Importantly, subsection (c) of section 837-o specifically anticipates this sequence by speaking about an "ineligibility for membership" if the search comes back with a conviction found. **It is consistent with the statute to not confer any notion of membership until the search is completed.**

If a search does come back with a conviction on the applicant's record, the company has a duty to the applicant to inform them of "rights to challenge and appeal the information contained in the record of conviction....The applicant shall continue to be barred from membership until all administrative and judicial challenges...are ultimately resolved in his or her favor...."

For fire districts, therefore, there should be no entertaining of any notification that the company has accepted a new member for active duty in the fire department and, therefore, under the responsibility of the fire district both as the final arbiter of membership, per section 176-b of the Town Law as well as their employer, unless that member has in fact been cleared of their background check. *Fire chiefs, under the law, are directed to order searches on prospective company members as the head of the fire company and not necessarily as a subordinated officer of the board of fire commissioners.* **Just as we are looking to clean up practices between company and district concerning membership, like making certain that notification of new members is communicated from the company secretary to the district secretary (also provided for in section 176-b), in writing, hopefully this note will help improve practices concerning consideration of prospective members as intended in section 837-o.**



****VFBL Coverage for 16 & 17 Year Old Volunteer Firefighters from Fire Districts Mutual**

As the fire service prioritizes recruitment efforts, many fire districts look to a new, younger generation of members and future leadership development. It is an important tradition and process to ensure that the fire service will continue to evolve and meet the needs of our communities. As the recruitment of young volunteer firefighters develops, we must understand and prepare for the coming challenges. Our friends at FASNY have published a great article and overview on the issues to consider when recruiting younger members (minors) as volunteer firefighters, which you can read by visiting www.fasny.com/magazine_articles/volunteer-firefighting-and-junior-firefighters-what-your-department-should-know.

The purpose of this communication from Fire Districts of New York Mutual Insurance Co. Inc. is to clarify how to ensure your 16- and 17-year-old volunteer firefighters are covered under VFBL. First, for an individual in the fire service to be covered, **they must be categorized as an "Active Member."** Other sub-categories such as Full Members, Probationary Members, Cadets, and Junior Members must be defined as "Active Members" and written into the fire district's bylaws.

They may also have restrictive duties. The fire district bylaws should clearly define and explain their status to have coverage under VFBL.

If 16- and 17-year-olds are NOT defined as "Active Members" in the fire district's bylaws, then they are NOT covered under the VFBL. The NYS Attorney General states that child labor laws apply to all minors (under age 18). However, labor law does not exclude a person aged 16 or 17 from being an "Active Member" of their fire district.

It is also essential that you understand the definition and use of the word "Youth." Across NYS, there are fire districts that successfully maintain well-managed Youth programs. These are considered "Non-Active Duty" volunteer members. These programs are provided for under General Municipal Law section 204-b. They include Explorer scouts and others. These "Youths" must not be permitted to participate in emergencies or any hazardous activities. **"Youths" are NOT covered by the VFBL.** The fire district must be familiar with federal and NYS child labor Laws for compliance. The fire district should check its other insurance policies for any coverage exclusions for "Youths." There may be some medical coverage for "Youths" if the fire district has purchased an Accident policy like many Youth sports teams.

These words and definitions matter in NYS and the Workers' Compensation Board for VFBL coverage to apply. Check your fire district's bylaws for granting appropriate "Active Member" status to your 16- and 17-year-old volunteer firefighters as described above. **Remember, in NYS, any individual NOT categorized as an "Active Member" volunteer firefighter does NOT have coverage under VFBL.**

Fire Districts of New York Mutual Insurance Co. Inc. serves to protect those who protect us! Together with our network of insurance broker partners, we are available to help answer your questions and concerns. Feel free to contact us and thank you for your business and support.

[Woman Charged with Embezzling Funds From North Carolina Volunteer Fire Department](#)

Curt Varone

A woman has been charged with embezzling funds from a North Carolina volunteer fire department. Nicole Manning is facing three counts of stealing from the Stumpy Point Volunteer Fire Department. The charges were brought by the Dare County Sheriff's Office. Manning was required to post \$300,000 bond. Here is a press release from [Dare County Sheriff's Office](#). The press release does not indicate her position with the department. Statistically the most likely source of theft is the treasurer. Kelly Paxton has more on [Pink Collar Crime](#).

For information only and not for the purpose of providing legal advice. The opinions expressed are the opinions of the individual author at the time the facts were presented and based on the law then applicable. The information contained in these opinions is not guaranteed to be up to date. The information provided is not legal advice. Since legal advice must be tailored to the specific circumstances of each case, and laws are constantly changing, nothing on this site should be used as a substitute for the advice of competent legal counsel. The authors assume no responsibility to any person who relies on information contained herein and disclaim all liability in respect to such information. You should not act upon information in this publication without seeking professional counsel from an attorney admitted to practice in your jurisdiction.

GRANTS THAT MAY HELP!

[USDA Community Facility Grants for Rural Development](#)

GRANT WEB SITE: <https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/community-facilities-direct-loan-grant-program>

GRANT GUIDELINES: <https://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app?state=us&agency=rd>

Grant Deadline: This program accepts applications on an ongoing basis.

For Rural Areas and Small Towns up to 20,000 in Population

Community Programs provide grants to assist in the development of essential community facilities in rural areas and towns of up to 20,000 in population. Grants are authorized on a graduated scale.

Grant funds may be used to:

- Assist in the development of essential community facilities.
- Construct, enlarge, or improve community facilities for health care, public safety, and community and public services.
- This can include the purchase of equipment required for a facility's operation.

WHAT THIS GRANT DOES FOR YOUR AGENCY

Applicants located in small communities with low populations and low incomes will receive a higher percentage of grants. Grants are available to public entities such as municipalities, counties, and special-purpose districts, as well as non-profit corporations and tribal governments. In addition, applicants must have the legal authority necessary for construction, operation, and maintenance of the proposed facility and also be unable to obtain needed funds from commercial sources at reasonable rates and terms.

Only a limited number of grants will be awarded.

GRANT ELIGIBILITY

These grant funds are for rural areas and towns of up to 20,000 in population.

STEP INTO THE CHIEF'S OFFICE:

****Diminishing Your Own Command: Yet More Leadership Fails**

P.J. Norwood & Frank Ricci

Below are more leadership “fails” that can undermine any fire department leader’s ability to command.

12. Failing to Dress the Part

You can’t expect your crew to be battle ready if you don’t where your gear and you can’t expect them to be in uniform if you’re not. It seems simple, but more and more chiefs fall into this trap and it tends to spring on two sides. As David Rhodes made famous, some leaders become the T-shirt police due to their own insecurity’s undermining their own command. Firefighters see the small and larger issues getting ignored and instead of fixing them, the chief’s office focuses on ensuring that you have the right T-shirt on.

The second part of the trap is when we see chief officers attempt to enforce a policy they aren’t following. It’s incredible that some individuals lack the self-awareness that they have become a running joke. We’ve heard an anecdote where a chief officer attempted to enforce a uniform policy while he was not following it. The department had a rule that shirts would be 100-percent cotton, but the chief wanted to wear polyester because he thought he looked sharp. Instead of working to change the policy, he decided to write firefighters up for having the wrong shoes on. The union was able to point to the chief officer’s own actions and how he was undermining the chief of department’s orders. The chief had a hard choice—either discipline both offenders or issue no discipline at all. The chief officer may look sharp, but he diminished his command and stands out like a crystal vase that won’t hold water.

Dressing the part goes for fires and emergencies as well. If you are a chief officer and feel you’re so important that you don’t need to shave on the weekend or throw on a proper T-shirt, shoes, or boots, then you have failed to train your members. Showing up in sneakers conveys self-importance and a lack of trust in your team.

13. Failure to Ask for Input

Some officers are so busy talking they forget to ask questions. In negotiations and at the kitchen table the one that talks the least, garnering information, and asking questions is in the power position.

14. Failure to Maintain Passion

Chief officers get pulled in countless directions. They get pulled by the politicians, chief elected officials, citizens, community groups, members, unions, etc. All these individuals and groups are always looking for more. Too often we see chief officers lose their passion because of the proverbial red tape. Every time they turn around, there is another hurdle or bump in the road. Over time, this chips away at the officer’s passion.

We can only control 80% of what happens to us; 20% is always beyond your control. Focus on what you can control. This comes up often with discipline. Some good officers fall into this trap—having written up a subordinate the proper way only to have the powers to be brush it under the rug. While feeling frustrated and unsupported is understandable, remember that in such a situation you did your job and controlled the 80%. Stay the course; the next time someone needs to be written up, write them up. Don’t make excuses or behave like a beaten dog, shrinking away from your responsibility. The 80% you control is documenting the issue, fairly protecting due process, and handing it up the chain of command. That is enough. You are not going to win them all, but doing nothing whatsoever will diminish your own command. Keep your passion, remember your responsibility, and do your job.

15. Failure to Be Creative

In today’s economy we must be fiscally responsibly, which includes looking for ways to stretch the budget. While this is not easy and doesn’t automatically mean service cuts, it does mean looking for new ways to complete the same tasks and do more without cutting, eliminating, or decreasing services. Use professional networks locally and nationally and

listen to our chief officers across the nation; this can stir your creativity to learn and adapt different ways you can do business in your agency.

16. Failure to Control Emotions

Becoming angry and frustrated impedes your ability to work through problems. Don't do anything that feels good when you are angry—you are just looking for trouble. Always work to deescalate a situation, not pour gas on it. As Anthony Avillo says: "Ego and emotion can never occupy the same space as leadership and rank."

17. Failure to Take Responsibility

A leader should not be assigning blame so as not to be held accountable for mistakes. Not taking responsibility is one of the worst sins of leadership. We all make mistakes, and just because you have trumpets on your collar doesn't mean you won't. Own up to them, learn from them, and move on. When you make a mistake, own it, learn from it, and share it.

18. Failure to Focus on the Positive

There are things that occur every day in our organizations that are extremely positive—for the organization, the people, and the customers. Focus on what you and your organization is good at. Too often many will only focus on the negative and forget to look at all the good the organization does on a daily basis. This means not complaining about going to a drill or going to a medical. Leadership has a mirror-like aspect, in which behavior will be reflected the rank and file. Think of interacting with a canine—if you go up to the dog and act normal, the dog will act normal. If you're acting agitated and excited, the dog will mirror you. This is the one time you can treat your members like a dog: convey your passion and get them involved!

If you're a chief officer who must talk to the mayor's office or any other elected official, do not fall into the trap of always telling them what the problems are. Yes, as chief of department, these officials may be over you and concerns may have to be passed up. Any time you bring up a problem, however, make it a rule to also bring up a solution. In every conversation with any elected official, always bring up something your department is doing or that your members have accomplished that shines a light on their great work.

19. Failure to Know Your Personnel

Understand what your firefighters are going through both personally and professionally. Ensure they know how to contact the Employee Assistance Program and that they know you can be trusted not to spread rumors. Employees must know before a problem arises that, as the boss, there is no "off the record" on an issue if you have a responsibility to report. There is a reason they are unburdening themselves of this information. There are issues like a divorce that can be kept in confidence, but there are issues that, once heard, cannot be unheard and require action.

This could be as simple as a member reporting an injury and telling you they don't want to report it. If it wasn't an issue, they wouldn't have told you and action is required. One time, a member told one of the authors that the firefighter had sustained a small burn from training and did not want to report it or have it evaluated. I asked if he was sure and he confirmed it. That night, his burn got infected, causing a major issue; in this case, the author had diminished his own command and failed to do his job.

This could also be something major like a chief officer covering up a crash of a city vehicle or someone being harassed at work. Remember, if everyone did the right thing there would be no need for officers.

20. Failure to Convey What's Expected of Your People

You may have come up through the ranks in your department or you may have come from another organization. The conditions that the responding personnel face may change. These changes are based on policy, procedures, and political decisions, as well as socioeconomic factors. Many of these changes may have occurred while you were busy performing your vital job functions. However, remember that you need to get out with the troops and respond to calls. See firsthand what they are experiencing each day. This will give you a firsthand perspective if your efforts are aligned with what is happening on the street.

21. Failure to Follow Your Department's Policies

This includes working outside of your department's command structure and the incident command system. If a department rule or policy is outdated or doesn't work, work to change it—don't just ignore it.

Equally important, remember that rank cannot override function on the fireground or during emergency operations. We see this quite often when a chief arrives on scene and takes command, establishing the operations position. Next, you may hear them on the radio undermining the operations position. Simply put, if operations are established, then those members are now in command of everything in front of them in the area they are assigned to. Command now is only in

charge of everything behind them, such as calling for resources and dealing with the press and elected officials. If you're a chief and want to stay in the game, take command and assign divisions and groups.

Think about the best and worst leaders you've worked for, and the best and worst teachers or coaches who have had an impact on your life. What traits did they possess to make them stand out on either side? Which of those traits do you share?

*

We can learn something from everyone who crosses our path. We can learn positive leadership traits as well as what not to do and how not to treat employees. Take every, experience new and old, and shape yourself into leader—one who stays focused, has a clear vision of the future, and drives the organization forward to provide a better service to everyone involved. During your tenure as a leader, remember respect is earned, not simply granted because of the rank you wear. The troops will respect the rank but respecting you as a leader must be earned. You are being watched! Every move and every step and your actions are cultivating the future leaders of your organization. Would you want to work for you? We all can learn from looking inward and observing our peers and command officers. Being a good leader is not just doing the right thing when no one is looking. That is easy. If you are ethical, the hard thing about leadership is doing the right thing when everyone is watching. As you review the 21 ways to diminish your own command, note that all of these occur when you fail to lead in plain view. Leading in the front is where the most damage is done. It's where you get to see if the individual is really an officer or merely the highest paid person or the one who collects shiny collar pins.

THE LIGHTER SIDE!

Recent Sign: NOTICE: In Case of Fire, Exit Building Before Tweeting About It!!!

CLASSIFIED

Position Announcement West Crescent Fire District



NEW POSTING

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 wcfidsec@nycap.rr.com
Please send application, cover letter & resume to Arthur Hunsinger via email at wcfidsec@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

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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!!

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.

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

Young, Fenton, Kelsey & Brown, PC

General Practice Matters plus -
Fire Service Attorneys
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Albany, N.Y. 12203
518.456.6767

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The D'Amato Law Group LLP
Gregory Serio, Partner
111 Washington Ave Suite 600
Albany, NY 12210
518.426.3800
Email: gserio@dlgny.com
damatolawgroup.com

Ducharme, Clark & Sovern, LLP

Jack Clark, Fire District Attorney
646 Plank Rd. Clifton Park, NY 12065
518-373-1482
Ducharmeclark.com

BANKING



David Farstad, Municipal Banking Officer
652 Albany-Shaker Road, Albany NY 12211
P/F: 518-730-3120
M: 518-506-0075
farstadd@pioneerbanking.com

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Anthony Hill ahill@fireflyadmin.com
 President (518) 687-1400 (office)
www.fireflyadmin.com (518) 937-6174 (cell)

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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 CAPITAL AREA FIRE DISTRICTS ASSOCIATION (CAFDA)

Would you like to join Capital Area Fire Districts Association along with 75 members in 8 counties? Individuals, fire district associations, fire protection districts and Village departments are all eligible for membership.

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

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

Individuals \$50.00 and Other Associations \$300 annually.

Business Partners: \$100.00 annual member fee



2023 Events Calendar

Date	Time	Type	Location
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.