**CAPITAL AREA FIRE DISTRICTS ASSOCIATION (CAFDA)**



**Bulletin**

**your fire district news source**

**November 4th, 2023**

***Editor – Tom Rinaldi***

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***Something for everyone in the Fire Service!!***

**Capital shorts:**

* Today’s workshop was a great success with many attendees, great presentations and good conversation during the “experts” panel. The highlight of the day was CAFDA’s gift to Bill Young for his year’s of support to our organization and all the members. We wish Bill the best in his retirement.
* Thank you to the sponsors at our workshop, Safety First, VFIS and Fire Districts Mutual.
* As we start posting more to our new website at **CAFDA.net** the site becomes more valuable to our members!!
* **ZOOM LINK** **for the November 9th CAFDA member’s meeting at Clifton Park Fire:**
  + Topic: CAFDA MEETING Time: Nov 9, 2023 06:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)  
    **Join Zoom Meeting**  
    <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84294054498?pwd=zjXCyYTmybgcqcHT5BZLlptxLTPJee.1>
  + Meeting ID: 842 9405 4498  
    Passcode: 215417  
    One tap mobile  
    +16465588656,,84294054498#,,,,\*215417# US (New York)
* Toyota is recalling roughly 1.9 million RAV4 sport utility vehicles in the U.S. because the batteries can shift during sharp turns and potentially cause a fire.

**Capital area member activities:** [**www.CAFDA.NET**](http://www.CAFDA.NET)

***All correspondence & Capital Area Fire Districts Association Mailing Address* should be directed to:**

**AFDCA PO Box 242 East Schodack, NY 12063 or EMAIL: SECRETARY@CAFDA.NET**

**Thursday November 9th**, **7:00pm General Membership Meeting,** dinner served at 6PM with Elections

**December**, ***No Meeting enjoy the holidays!***

**Saturday, January 6th** **General Membership Breakfast** Meeting 9am, 2024 Organizational Meeting

***Printable Calendar with much more – See End of Bulletin***

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

**CAFDA news:** [**www.cafda.net**](http://www.cafda.net)

##### Nominations for 2024 Officers & Directors

The following nominations were made at our October General Membership meeting:

* President Tom Rinaldi
* 1st Vice President John Meehan
* 2nd Vice President Art Hunsinger
* Directors: **Les Bonesteel** Commissioner Burnt Hills/Saratoga, **Fred Richards** Commissioner Harmony Corners/Saratoga, **Joyce Petkus** Treasurer Greenfield/Saratoga, **Ed Woehrle** Commissioner Niskayuna #1/Schenectady and **Mike Podolec** Commissioner West Glenville/Schenectady. [Note that Fred Richards was nominated by current Director Tom Wood]

##### The New CAFDA Website Is Live, Same Happy People, New Name!!

Go to [www.CFDA.net](http://www.CFDA.net) and request a member log on. You are going to see a better layout, easier navigation and we will be posting additional resource documents as we continue to grow the site. You will need a member logon to access the Bulletin archives and other features reserved for members.

##### Effective September 23, 2023, the Secretary and Treasurer email addresses have changed to:

[secretary@cafda.net](mailto:secretary@cafda.net)

[treasurer@cafda.net](mailto:treasurer@cafda.net)

**fire district officials…training for you!**

##### PREPARE FOR ANOTHER EXCITING LOCAL OFFERING – FEBRUARY 2024

##### Join Us for “Its Not Your Money” Fire District Financial Management Pile of American dollar banknotes

Mark your 2024 Calendar for a two-day seminar**, February 29th & March 1st** to be presented by **The Office of the State Comptroller** and held at the Waterford-Halfmoon Fire Station at 315 Middletown Road. An in-depth look at fire district finances with direction from OSC. This will be a great opportunity to learn about fire district finances for Treasurers and Commissioners.



Stay tuned to future presentations.

***If nothing else read the articles PRECEDED by* \*\***

**state association news:** [**www.afdnys.org**](http://www.afdnys.org)

##### State Fire Districts Announces A Move Back To A Fall Annual Meeting

***The State Association has announced that a*** Fall Conference for 2024 will be held at Turning Stone with a Sunday - Wednesday time frame October 20 – 23 in 2024.

**local cafda training appropriate for your entire board/secretary/treasurer**

##### The First Annual CAFDA Regional Conference - Spring 2024

**For Fire District Officials, Coming April 25, 26 & 27th 2024 the CAFDA Spring Conference, a three-day conference to be held in Lake George and will be chocked full of information for Fire District Commissioners, Secretary’s, Treasurers and Chiefs. An affordable conference at a local destination in the Capital Area. Watch for more Information as planning progresses.**

**THE LATEST FROM ALBANY**

##### 2024 Fire Service Alliance Issues of United Concern

On Saturday December 2nd representatives from the State’s fire service organizations will be meeting at the Hilton Garden Inn in Troy, New York to present their slate of legislative initiatives for the 2024 legislative session. Because of the lack luster 2023 legislative agenda, many of last year’s bills will be on the list of initiatives for the coming session.

Issues such as; *timely adoption of up to date building codes, cancer coverage cost relief, increased tax credits for volunteers, VFBL payments on parity with worker’s compensation, designation of EMS as an essential service, strengthening the penal codes for illegal building conversions, restoration of the 54g code enforcement financial support, advocate for accessible housing for first responders and continue the work of the recruitment & retention task force*.

The Officers and Board of CAFDA has voted to back a bill creating the crime to punish instances of stolen valor by those posing as first responders, read more….

##### CAFDA Board Votes to Back a Bill Creating the Crime of Stolen Valor

**DRAFT BILL TO BE INTRODUCED IN THE SENATE AND THE ASSEMBLY IN THE 2024 SESSION**

Section 1. Section 10.00 of the penal law is amended by adding two new subdivisions 22 and 23 to read as follows:

*22. "Member of the military or reserves" means (a) a member of the United States army, navy, air force, marines, coast guard, army national guard, air national guard and/or reserves thereof or (b) a member of the New York guard or the New York naval militia.*

*23. "Veteran" means a person who was a member of the military or reserves as defined in subdivision twenty-two of this section, but who has since been discharged from such services.*

*24. “First Responder” means a firefighter, law enforcement officer, paramedic, emergency medical technician, emergency services dispatcher, or other individual, including an employee of a legally organized and recognized volunteer organization, whether compensated or not, who, in the course of his or her professional duties, responds to fire, medical, hazardous material, or other similar emergencies.*

*25. “First Responder Agency” means a state or local district, municipality, or other political subdivision that employs a first responder, to provide fire protection, paramedic, law enforcement, emergency services, or rescue or recovery services, or a recognized volunteer organization that provides fire protection, paramedic, law enforcement, emergency services, or rescue or recovery services.*

*A person is guilty of stolen valor when he or she pretends to be a member of the military or reserves as defined by subdivision twenty-two of section 10.00 of this chapter, or pretends to be a veteran as defined by subdivision twenty-three of section 10.00 of this chapter****, or pretends to be a first responder*** *as defined by subdivision twenty-four of section 10.00 of this chapter,* ***or wears or displays without authority, any uniform, badge or other insignia or facsimile thereo****f, by which such member of the military or veteran or first responder is lawfully distinguished or expresses by his or her words or actions that he or she is acting with the approval or authority of any department of defense branch or the United States Coast Guard, or first responder agency, for the purpose of fraudulently obtaining money or other benefits.*

*Stolen valor is a class A misdemeanor.*

*(vi) a person convicted of any offense pursuant to section 190.28 of this chapter shall, in addition to a mandatory surcharge and crime victim assistance fee, pay any other fee required by this article, and pay a stolen valor fee in the amount of two hundred fifty dollars.*

##### Consult the Score Card for the status of current fire service-related legislation.

**THE LATEST FROM WASHINGTON D.C.**

##### [National Fire Service Organizations Urge Congress to Protect America's Fire and Emergency Services](https://www.dailydispatch.com/DDR/index.aspx?st=NY&ddv=1&ddid=180252&typ=1&it=978281)

National organizations representing America's fire and emergency services are ***calling on Congress to ensure that vital fire service grant programs are reauthorized before they face a permanent sunset.*** The Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) and Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) programs are the primary mechanism for the federal government to support local fire departments. ***These critical programs will sunset on September 30, 2024***, if they are not reauthorized. This would have a detrimental impact on the ability of the nation's fire and emergency services to protect communities. To raise awareness, the event scheduled on Thursday, October 12 in Washington, D.C., is hosted by the Congressional Fire Services Institute, International Association of Fire Chiefs, International Association of Fire Fighters, National Fallen Firefighters Foundation, National Fire Protection Association, and National Volunteer Fire Council. \*\*Ask Congress to Adequately Fund and Reauthorize AFG and SAFER

**CONTACT YOUR SENATORS AND REPRESENTATIVE:** <https://www.votervoice.net/NVFC/Campaigns/98446/Respond>

**JUST FILL IN YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS AND HIT SEND MESSAGE AT THE BOTTOM, EASY!!**

**The attorney’s office**

##### \*\*Preparation for The Fire District Organizational Meeting

Greg Serio

It’s barely November, but it’s never too early to start thinking about your fire district’s organizational meeting coming up in January. Sure, we are barely out of the budget process and we have elections yet to go and finishing up the business of the current year will be on the collective minds of commissioners right through the end of the year. The organizational meeting, though, will set the tone for an entire year, and it is important to use it effectively.

*The first official meeting of the district’s year is not just a look-forward exercise; it is also the opportunity to look back on the previous year, examining what went well, what did not go so well, and what needs to be clarified, verified or modified*. The organizational meeting can also be that time…and maybe the only time…to do those things that perhaps should be done as part of the district’s obligations to its taxpayers, its firefighters and itself.

Some districts already take the organizational meeting to meticulously review the district’s policies, set the tone for the year to come and *assiduously establish the expectations for the commissioners and those who serve or may serve the district as officers, including the treasurer, secretary and chiefs*. **There are also specific acts that the board must take in the days and weeks leading up to and during the organizational meeting**. Others take the organizational meeting as a perfunctory exercise, without delving particularly deeply into the operations and affairs of the district, either in retrospect or prospectively. For those in the latter category especially, now is the time to rethink the approach to this important gathering.

***Today and over the next several weeks, this column will delve into some those things district commissioners may want to consider for the 2024 organizational meeting agenda no matter how the first meeting of the year has been handled in years past***. Among the issues we will discuss are: appointment of chief officers; appointing and bonding of district treasurers; appointment of the official firefighting and rescue force to provide service on behalf of the district; establishing of the annual district calendar; compliance with the cancer insurance and reporting requirements, review of policies, and other critical (read that as either statutorily-required or best business practices) steps for the board to take to get 2024 off on the right foot.

**BEFORE THE YEAR STARTS**

**A close reading of the law requires a couple of things to be done prior to the start of the year, much less before the scheduled organizational meeting.**

1. **Cancer Insurance**: State law, General Municipal Law section 205-cc and 9 NYCRR 210 of the regulations of the Office of Fire Prevention and Control/Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services, *requires that by January 1, 2019 and annually thereafter each fire district must have in place cancer insurance on its eligible members, or a commitment to cover cancer care as an alternative to insurance*. As most insurance coverages are written on a 12-month basis, the likelihood for many districts is that this coverage comes up for renewal on January 1 (or more precisely, December 31 of the coverage year, as does the district commitment in lieu of the coverage. **It is imperative that the board of fire commissioners make certain no later than its final meeting in December that the insurance for cancer risks is renewed or place with a new insurer for effect on January 1st of the next year**. The fire district also must file an attestation of such coverage, by whichever means it is provided, to OFPC no later than January 1, including a copy of the declarations page of the insurance policy or the attestation of self-insurance by the fire district. The organizational meeting is the first opportunity for the board to confirm that the cancer coverage has, in fact, been placed. More information about the cancer program, including other filing requirements, may be found at the following website address: [Volunteer Firefighter Enhanced Cancer Disability Benefit Program | Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services (ny.gov)](https://www.dhses.ny.gov/volunteer-firefighter-enhanced-cancer-disability-benefit-program). A letter that all fire districts should have received from the Division in mid-October details all the various filing requirements of the program: [vfecdb\_0.pdf (ny.gov)](https://www.dhses.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2023/10/vfecdb_0.pdf)
2. **Treasurer Bond**: Town Law section 176 states that:

*“Such board of fire commissioners…shall require the fire district treasurer, before entering upon the duties of his office, to give an official undertaking, conditioned for the faithful performance of his duties and that he will well and truly keep, pay over and account for all moneys and property belonging to the fire district and coming into his hands as such treasurer, in such form, in such sum and with such sureties as the board of fire commissioners shall direct and approve and such approval shall be indicated upon such undertaking, and when approved such undertaking shall be filed in the office of the town clerk of the town in which such fire district is located*. If such district is situated in more than one town, a duplicate original of such undertaking, approved by the board of fire commissioners, shall be filed in the office of the town clerk of each town in which such district is located. The fire district commissioners may by resolution determine that such undertaking shall be executed by a surety company authorized to transact business in the state of New York and that the expense thereof shall be a charge on the fire district.

***Many fire districts, with the encouragement of some district insurance advisors, believe that this obligation of the treasurer is satisfied through the insurance policy of the fire district***. *A straightforward reading of the statute, together with the legislative history of this section of law, would suggest otherwise*. In addition to clearly putting forth the requirement being on the treasurer to provide the surety, it, importantly, says that the undertaking needs to be secured “before entering upon the duties of his (or her) office.” **This would expect the undertaking to be secured prior to or as of January 1**. The conditions of the surety should be established by the board sufficiently prior to January 1 to allow the treasurer or proposed treasurer to secure the undertaking in a timely manner.

***At the organizational meeting, the board should be sure to make certain that the undertaking has been secured before it allows the treasurer to commence management of any taxpayer funds. Further, the meeting should document when the treasurer’s bond was or will be filed with the town clerk.*** ***The undertaking is considered part of the treasurer’s oath of office and must be filed with the town clerk within thirty days of taking office***. Filing just the oath without the undertaking will obviate the oath and the position will be considered vacated by operation of law (meaning, no one has to do anything, including the board, to effectuate the vacancy).

1. **Notice of the Organizational Meeting: This meeting is no different than any other meeting of the board of fire commissioners. Therefore, it is required to be noticed in the same manner as the other, regularly scheduled meetings of the board. Website and station sign/front door postings, along with the other public notice provisions need to be followed. In the crush of the end-of-year business (like those things above) the notice for the organizational meeting in the following year (which may not even involve some of the people around the table at the December meeting) can get lost or ignored. The board must make certain that the district secretary has secured the proper notice.**

***Stay Tuned in the Next Issue: setting the tone with chiefs and fire companies.***

##### Ware County (GA) Firefighter Charged with DUI in Apparatus Accident That Killed Co-Worker in June

A Ware County firefighter is facing charges of vehicular homicide in the first-degree, DUI, driving too fast for conditions, and failing to maintain lanes, in a traffic crash that killed his coworker in June, according to jail records.

Luke Zimmerman, 26, was arrested Friday, Oct. 27 and has since been released on a $30,750 bond after spending three days in jail, records indicate. According to the Georgia State Patrol and the Georgia Department of Public Safety, Zimmerman was driving the county fire truck south on Manor Millwood Road at 12:16 p.m. June 22 when the truck traveled off the roadway onto the shoulder and lost control. The truck then spun counterclockwise as it flipped across the roadway before hitting a tree and landing on its passenger side in the ditch, the report said.

Bobby “Blue” Smith, 24, who was the front-seat passenger, was partially ejected and pinned under the fire truck, the report said. Smith died at the scene, according to the report.

Zimmerman told the GADPS officer that he and “Blue,” were out checking fire hydrants when Zimmerman said he “may have taken the curve too fast causing him to lose control,” the incident report states. Zimmerman was taken to a local hospital where he consented to a blood draw, according to the report. ***Toxicology reports revealed that Zimmerman’s blood alcohol level was .216, almost three times the legal limit.***

**[Unacceptable especially in 2023.]**

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.

**STEP into tHE CHIEF’S Office:**

##### \*\*The Do’s And Don’ts Of Commanding Your First Fire

Chris DelBello

Whether you’re a newly promoted chief or a company officer who will have to “ride-up” as a chief, the day will come – the day that you have to command your first fire.

Are you really ready? Are you comfortable with that idea?

**TRAINING TO RUN THE SHOW**

Only you know at the moment, but soon enough everyone else will know, too.

The ideal scenario would be to have all officers who could potentially command a fire receive some type of department or third-party certification or formal training prior to being placed in such a position. Sadly, this is not reality for the fire service. [**Download a copy of this guide**](https://www.firerescue1.com/preparing-new-officers-be-incident-commanders/articles/the-dos-and-donts-of-commanding-your-first-fire-TkmYAF3smuWVNREH/?utm_source=FireRescue1&utm_campaign=e9f149236a-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2023_11_03_05_39&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_1d76c7ca1b-39c78eb5c1-%5BLIST_EMAIL_ID%5D#download-guide)for yourself or to give to the new commander in your department**.**

I know in my own department, more often than not, a newly promoted captain will often find him- or herself “riding-up” in the position of a district or battalion chief’s job for the day, many times on their first day of being promoted.

When we prepare for promotions, we study the books, watch the videos, listen to and watch our chiefs as they do their jobs. We study the guidelines, and we take a test. This goes a long way in preparing us, **but real experience will play the bigger factor in how comfortable we are in the incident commander (IC) position, and real experience takes time**.

To help guide a company officer or newly promoted chief, I put together a few lists of do’s and don’ts for running incident command on your first fire.

**BEFORE THE FIRST FIRE: STEPS FOR NEW COMMAND OFFICERS**

* **Share your expectations** with your firefighters. Call the other stations in your district as well. A district meeting early in the shift will do wonders for eliminating any confusion later, include mutual aid companies.
* **Expect a fire!** If you’re “riding up” in a command position for the first time in your career, expect something to happen that will test your knowledge and ability to command an incident.
* **Find a pen** and keep it on you. As a company officer, I rarely find the need to have a pen, but as a command officer, I need one regularly. A pen will always be needed for documentation, accountability and tracking crews on the fly, writing down names and numbers of building personnel.
* **Review any command worksheets** that other chief officers use in the car. See if you like them and, if not, create your own. Keep it simple and become familiar with it.
* Spend free time during the day studying **guidelines**. This is not a day you want to “take it easy.” If you are not busy learning about your firefighters’ abilities, spend time better understanding your guidelines and tactics.
* **Review your territory** to understand its potential as well as what apparatus will be responding and are available.
* **Practice your size-up and radio reports** in the privacy of your office. A strong command presence on the fireground goes a long way in maintaining control of the scene – and it starts with your size-up.
* **Question your firefighters** on their job knowledge. This will give you a good idea of their abilities and understanding of the fireground. It will also allow you to feel more comfortable when giving high-risk orders.

**AT THE FIRST FIRE: STEPS FOR NEW COMMAND OFFICER ON THE FIREGROUND**

* Provide a good size-up and announce command, immediately followed with orders to the initial-incoming companies. Again, your command presence begins with your size-up.
* Maintain a strong command presence throughout the incident, but also allow your members to do their job in the manner they know how. You must allow knowledgeable officers to make decisions. You will want to share the success of the incident with your company officers.
* ***Park out of the way of additional incoming apparatus. It’s not necessary for you to be in the front yard or have the perfect view.*** That’s what division officers are for.
* **Give orders, not directions.** Don’t be the command officer who micromanages or gives step-by-step directions to individual companies. Tell them to vent and let them vent. Tell them to search and let them search. The only communications that should follow is the vent crew telling you that the assignment is complete, and they are ready for reassignment.
* **Listen to your company officers and division officers** and take or use their information as a request or advice. This is where knowing your firefighters’ abilities comes into play. If you know they are aggressive and capable, yet restrained and mature enough to make smart decisions, it would be reasonable to go with what they are requesting or advising. If you do not know the crew or you know the crew is weak, you may want to take some precaution and get a second opinion from a division officer.
* **Use crews that are staged for Vent-Enter-Isolate-Search (VEIS).** If an incident comes in with people trapped, use multiple crews to initiate VEIS. This can complement the interior search as well. The only crew that should be staged is your rapid-intervention team (RIT). And even they can assist in VEIS by softening the building. If crews are not needed for VEIS, assign them to a division officer. The division officer should always have relief crews or replacement crews staged in their division area.
* **Ventilate when conditions call for it.** Ventilate to save the lives of the occupants. Ventilate to protect your crews and make their job safer. Do not be afraid to use vertical ventilation. Do not be afraid to use it often. Vertical ventilation with backdraft conditions is literally the only safe option in regard to ventilation.
* **Require a coordinated attack.** Hold that first line until ventilation is near completion. Do not send your first line down the barrel of a loaded gun.
* **Request Conditions, Actions, Needs (CAN) reports** **frequently** if conditions are bad or not improving. CAN reports should be requested from all divisions, interior attack, ventilation, search, etc.
* **Use aerial devices to the fullest potential.** A firefighter at the tip ensures that water is always being applied directly on the fire. A firefighter on the tip is also the best set of eyes you have on the fireground. Finally, a firefighter on the tip can tell you if the roof is still intact and aerial operations are not called for at the time or an additional aerial would be required.
* **Assign division officers** to additional incoming chiefs as soon as possible.
* **Use chief’s aides** to provide additional 360 views and size-up later in the event.
* **Consider your firefighters’ needs during extended incidents.** Hydration, food and shelter are basic needs of every human, including your firefighters.
* **Use the equipment you have** on scene at your disposal – everything! Allow your firefighters to use everything they have at their disposal as well.

**DON’T DO THIS: NEW COMMAND OFFICERS SHOULD AVOID THESE MOVES ON THEIR FIRST FIRE**

* **Don’t be timid.** This can create an atmosphere where officers feel that they can walk around your orders or freelance.
* **Avoid being too restrictive.** Give your orders, but allow the officers to do the work their way.
* **Do not move around.** *Stay at your command post until the incident is declared under control*, then you can browse the scene.
* **Never yell.** Never yell at the individual company officers. Never yell over the radio. Never show or display a loss of self-control.
* **Don’t assign the wrong crew to a high-risk task.** If you happen to know your district or battalion’s abilities, utilize that to your advantage to ensure that the assignment gets accomplished. If you know you are dealing with a weak crew or a crew that rarely trains, do not assign them to search, ventilation or rescue in an extreme environment. Use crews that you know are capable of getting the job done.
* **Do not flow water onto intact roofs or into holes that burn through the roof.** This does little in the way of extinguishment and only prolongs the inevitable complete loss.
* **Do not stage companies in or around the command post.** Do not leave them staged in their apparatus either. Utilize them in a productive and proactive manner.
* **Do not change modes multiple times.** This is a sure sign of a lack of confidence in yourself and your companies. Commit to an operation and go with it. Unless conditions are extreme, when you choose an offensive mode, continue in that mode until your division officers advise otherwise. I have seen all too often where command officers are timid on the fireground. Switching from offensive to defensive modes three or four times in one incident will raise a red flag. Commit to the crews and let them work. Listen to their reports. Let them tell you what the conditions truly are. This includes the use of division officers on the exterior.
* **Do not disregard additional companies or mutual-aid companies too early.** Again, a large void space could be concealing a rather large and potentially explosive fire. Make sure your officers have confirmed the absence of such possibilities first.
* If you have a three-alarm working fire, **do not worry about stickers on a firefighter’s helmet or other trivial issues.** This is a time to prioritize fireground tactics, not enforce a uniform or equipment guideline.
* **Do not get discouraged** when things do not go well. This is, after all, your first fire. This is your wake up, your eye-opener. You just realized you have a long way to go and a lot of work to do with your crews. Understand and use this as a learning opportunity.

**AFTER THE FIRST FIRE: KNOW YOUR ROLE**

* **Give credit where credit is due!** There is nothing worse than a chief officer who feeds off the success of his officers and firefighters and then leaves them looking for crumbs.
* If you have to give a post-incident interview, include all the typical interview information, but remember to **note how well your firefighters performed.**
* **Take the hit.** When your firefighters screw up, that’s on you. Own it. However, you will need to correct it with additional training and perhaps disciplinary actions at times.

**EXPECT A FIRE – AND BE READY!**

As you can see, there is quite a lot to consider for a first fire. Be mindful that this is actually a short list of recommendations. There are many more that will come across the radio during your first fire. Some will be more important than others, but all will require some degree of attention, consideration and action on your part.

Come to work expecting fire. Do your best to prepare for fire. Prepare for fire. You have expectations of your companies. Your companies have expectations of you. And the people who called 911 have high expectations of everyone during the worst time of their lives.

A final note: Remember who you are and what your function is. You are a facilitator and an enabler. Your job is to give assignments. The individual companies make it all happen, not you. Remember that.

**our changing fire service –challenges & opportunities!**

##### OPPORTUNITIES:

##### CHALLENGES:

##### [Volunteer Fire Department In Tennessee Proves Age Is Just A Number](https://www.dailydispatch.com/DDR/index.aspx?st=NY&ddv=1&ddid=180927&typ=1&it=981533)

The Tellico Village Fire Department is unique in a few ways. First, they say they serve a unique community of people that is growing in age and growing older. ***Second, they have one of the fastest response times in the state*** with an average of 4 minutes, compared to a national average of 6 minutes. The Tellico Village Fire Department is ***made up of retired volunteers, all of whom are over the age of 50. The median age for these firefighters is 68***, about 30 years older than the average. "There hasn't been a single 911 call in the last five years that trained personnel have not shown up at the door to help," Assistant Chief Bill Ballinger said. "That is not the norm and every volunteer fire department across the country. I've seen people park their boat, walk off the golf course in the middle of a round a golf."

The department credits a wide array of past careers ranging from military, law enforcement, business and engineers to their success. They also said working out and an emphasis on health is crucial to being able to complete a physically taxing job.

"We support all the other fire departments in the county also," Brad Ward said. "We go in the fires with the 30-year-olds and 20-year-olds. They normally try to give us a little joking grief about being our age, but when we leave the fire after five hours, they're hurting as bad as we are."

The Tellico Village area has grown since Ballinger and Ward joined the department. ***They expect to have answered 1,400 calls by the end of 2023.*** They said that's about a 75 percent increase in five years.

Even so, Ballinger said being a firefighter has rewired his brain, and he has a duty to help others.

"People call us on their very worst day," he said. "There is chaos in their life. They've been hurt, they've been injured, they've been in a traffic accident, their house is on fire. And I get the privilege to go help them. It is a privilege that there is no other occupation I think that offers that."

##### [Thefts Targeting First Responders Have Become 'Cost Of Doing Business' In Seattle](https://www.dailydispatch.com/DDR/index.aspx?st=NY&ddv=1&ddid=181040&typ=1&it=981828)

**Let this be a lesson!**

A Seattle Fire Department crew was inside the Ballard Fredmeyer grocery when a security guard rushed to warn them about people rummaging through their fire truck in the parking lot. The firefighters noted the guard was "shaking" as he told them he had just been chased by a group of men after yelling at them in an attempt to interrupt the theft. By the time the crew got back to their ladder truck, the thieves had made off with a generator, two chainsaws and two circular saws. In an email about the incident, a deputy chief noted that it appeared the thieves "know exactly which compartments to go to." "This robbery is a disappointing occurrence that has been repeated three times in recent months," an assistant chief wrote in an email about the thefts.

##### Fire Engine Destroyed in Massive VT Lumber Yard Fire; Clothespin Factory Threatened

Fire tore through the RK Miles lumber yard in Montpelier Wednesday night and threatened a nearby clothespin factory. The first fire engine on the scene was lost in the fire, as a wind shift pushed flames over it and destroyed it.

##### Former Treasurer Pleads Guilty to Stealing More Than $16K from NY Department

Cindi Perkins, former treasurer for the Morley Volunteer Fire Company, pleaded guilty in St. Lawrence County Court to fourth-degree grand larceny, the state comptroller’s office announced Wednesday. Perkins admitted to stealing more than $16,000 from the company over three years, according to a news release. Perkins worked for the fire department from 2016 to 2019 and made unauthorized cash withdrawals, did not deposit fire company funds, made unauthorized purchases and wrote unauthorized checks to herself, the comptroller’s office says.

The comptroller says that the money was a combination of payments from the town of Canton and the Morley Fire District in addition to fundraising dollars. The investigators found that she made more than $16,000 in personal cash deposits after similar amounts were paid to the Morley Volunteer Fire Company.

TRAINING FOR YOUR MEMBERS AND OFFICERS: PASS IT FORWARD!!

A black background with red text

Description automatically generated

##### ESIP WEBINAR SERIES Responding to Hunting Emergencies

It's the time of year for people to take to the outdoors in search of wildlife. Join us as we discuss what we can expect when the call for help comes if hunters find themselves in trouble. Tom Miller will be our guest presenter for this webinar.

**WEDESDAY, NOVEMBER 8TH AT 7PM**

**REGISTER AT THIS LINK**:<https://mcneilandcompany.us8.list-manage.com/track/click?u=03596f243a9d922954ebaf15e&id=594affd21a&e=781e9a2c81>



##### NVFC Webinar on Junior Firefighter Programs

**Wednesday, November, 15TH AT 4:00pm**

Presenter, Ellen Yarborough

**REGISTER AT THIS LINK:**

https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\_gI282apYTCaRU5ndyF6kqg#/registration

##### [Bring NYSAFC Training to Your Area](https://selligenttier.naylorcampaigns.com/track?type=click&enid=ZWFzPTEmbXNpZD0mYXVpZD0mbWFpbGluZ2lkPTYzMjE1MSZtZXNzYWdlaWQ9NjMyMTUxJmRhdGFiYXNlaWQ9NjMyMTUxJnNlcmlhbD0xNjg1MzEwMCZlbWFpbGlkPXRvbUByaW5hbGRpMS5jb20mdXNlcmlkPTE4ODA1MjUmdGFyZ2V0aWQ9Jm1uPSZmbD0mbXZpZD0mZXh0cmE9JiYm&&&2053&&&https://www.nysfirechiefs.com/documents)

Fire departments and county agencies or associations that are interested in hosting classroom-based programs or Regional Hands-On Training are invited to submit host request forms. The forms outline the specific host responsibilities and logistical considerations for each NYSAFC program. Sites are now being considered for programs in 2024.

##### 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>

**the safety officer – taking care of our members!**

IN 2023 WE HAVE SADLY EXPERIENCED70FIRE FIGHTER LODD’S

***According to FirefighterCloseCalls.com\****

***In 2022 we experienced 101 LODDs reported nationally.!***

##### You Just Never Know!

* A regionally well-known and very popular volunteer Firefighter Paramedic Willis Sands, 69 who was walking to his house after a Halloween event at the Gardner Lake Volunteer Fire Company, was struck and killed by a vehicle in Salem (north of New London, Connecticut).
* We regret to pass on the Line-of-Duty Death of 39 year old Firefighter Regina Huffman of Coon Creek Fire & Rescue in Wooten, Kentucky. Regina’s son was injured in the same incident.
* City of Whitesburg, Kentucky have announced the death of Whitesburg Fire Department Assistant Fire Chief Joe Back. According to Letcher Volunteer Fire Department Fire Chief Wallace Bolling, Back became unresponsive during an EMS call and it was determined he suffered a heart attack. He was later taken off life support.
* Prairieton Indiana Firefighter David Phelps had died of a heart attack while inside a fire truck at the scene of a house fire.

##### \*\*Line-Of-Duty Deaths: Is EVERYONE Listening

Chief Marc Bashoor

In the past 25 days, the fire service has seen a surge in the number of firefighter deaths and significant injuries reported in the line of duty. I am very sensitive to allowing time for families, crewmembers and departments to grieve and for patients to heal. I am also very sensitive to not allowing a surge of deaths and serious injuries to go unnoticed. These incidents have NOT occurred during widespread bad weather or times of unique circumstances, nor are they apparently related individually in any way.

While there are a few commonalities, each incident warrants its own analysis and *should* give pause for fire departments across the United States to evaluate how these incidents could apply in their own jurisdictions.

* Here's what we know: In the first 25 days of October, 10 firefighters and one firefighter candidate died while performing or immediately after performing fire department duties: Structure firefighting – 2
* Vehicle wreck – 4 (two of these in separate POV incidents)
* Medical condition on duty – 3
* Medical condition immediate after duty – 1
* Medical condition pre-employment – 1

***PLEASE take a moment to consider your policies, procedures and protocols related to each of these incidents. The calls don’t stop coming in, and our need to continue covering responses doesn’t stop. We don’t need a NIOSH report to take a breath, to take a few moments of reflection for our own safety. We must ensure that we’re examining what we know and taking all prudent steps to make sure we’re not next. EVERYONE needs to listen to what these deaths are telling us.***

**OCT. 25 AND OCT. 19**

* *LODDs:* Lt. Dillon Rinaldo (Oct. 25) and Apprentice Firefighter Rodney Pitts III (Oct. 19), Baltimore Fire Department
* *Injured:* Three additional firefighters – released from the hospital
* *Circumstances:* Rowhouse fire – rapid fire growth, no other “unusual” circumstances reported to date
* *Reflections:* This fire comes on the very raw heels of the January 2022 South Stricker Street fire that resulted in the deaths of three Baltimore firefighters. This was also a rowhouse fire, albeit apparently significantly older construction, vacant and the scene of a previous fire. While recommendations from the South Stricker report are still in the process of implementation, there will undoubtedly be more to learn here.
* *Learn more:* Fatal mayday at Baltimore 2-alarm rowhome fire; 1 FF dead, 4 injured

**OCT. 22**

* *LODD:* Firefighter Tony Hoffman, Ionia Volunteer Fire Department, Iowa
* *Circumstances:*While responding, both units attempted to pass a slow-moving tractor. One of the units was reported as a UTV, converted for firefighting, while the other was some type of traditional firefighting unit. There are various reports of which vehicle hit which, however the lone occupant/driver of the UTV was thrown from the UTV and succumbed to their injuries.
* *Reflections:* Any time two pieces of firefighting equipment crash into each other, there MUST be lessons to learn, not just problems to identify. Based on the details reported, that will most certainly be the case here.
* *Learn more:* Iowa firefighter dies in collision between responding apparatus

**OCT. 20**

* *LODD:* Firefighter Colin Reedy, West Whiteland Fire Company, Pennsylvania
* *Injured:* Firefighter Emily Gindele
* *Circumstances:* Responding in POV. The vehicle left the road during a heavy rain downpour. Both firefighters joined the company as volunteers within the past year.
* *Reflections:* Fire departments MUST use this opportunity to examine the practice of response in privately owned vehicles. We MUST, again, look at the training provided to firefighters who may be expected to respond, whether in POVs or marked organizational vehicles.
* *Learn more:* Pa. FF killed in crash en route to call, 1 FF injured

**OCT. 19**

* *LODD:* Firefighter Cameron Craig, Abington Fire Department, Virginia
* *Injured:* Driver hospitalized
* *Circumstances:* The engine was responding to a fire scene, when the driver lost control of the vehicle, which left the road and ended up on it’s side down an embankment. Craig was a passenger in the vehicle.
* *Learn more:* Va. firefighter killed, another injured in apparatus crash

**OCT. 17**

* *LODD:* Chief Timothy “TJ” Johnson, Pleasant Volunteer Fire Department, Pennsylvania
* *Circumstances:*Chief Johnson responded to an EMS call on Oct. 16, returned home and within 10 minutes became distressed and called 911 himself. He passed away at the hospital on Oct. 17.
* *Learn more:* Pa. fire chief dies after responding to EMS call

**OCT. 15**

* *LODD:* Firefighter Brody Hanna, Nettie Volunteer Fire Department, West Virginia
* *Circumstances:* Responding in POV. This was a VERY complex and dynamic incident involving a felon stealing multiple vehicles, leaving multiple crash scenes, breaking into homes before ultimately being arrested by police – not before hitting Hanna’s vehicle head-on.
* *Reflections:* While the details of this incident will likely be tied up in multiple law enforcement investigations, fire departments MUST examine POV response policies and ensure proper training and any needed certifications are provided.
* *Learn more:*W.Va. man on violent crime spree kills volunteer firefighter

**OCT. 5**

* *LODD:*Battalion Chief Earl Dyer, Richmond Fire Department, Virginia
* *Circumstances:* Chief Dyer suffered a medical condition while on duty, was transported to the hospital and died a short time later.
* *Learn more:* Veteran Va. battalion chief dies after on-duty medical emergency

**OCT. 5**

* *LODD:* Captain Adam Wayne Hart, Hurlbert Field Fire and Emergency Services, Florida
* *Circumstances:* Captain Adam Wayne Hart was found unresponsive on the floor inside his bunkroom during his 48-hour shift. CPR was immediately initiated. He was pronounced dead approximately one hour later. The cause of his death has yet to be determined.
* *Learn more:* Fla. fire captain found unresponsive during 48-hr. shift

**OCT. 4**

* *LODD:* Firefighter Troy Thompson, Seven Springs Volunteer Fire Department, North Carolina
* *Circumstances:* Chief Dyer suffered a medical condition while on duty, was transported to the hospital and died a short time later.
* *Learn more:* N.C. firefighter suffers fatal medical emergency at accident scene

**OCT. 3**

* *LODD (pre-hire):* Alexander Griffin, FDNY
* *Circumstances:* While participating in pre-hire physical testing, specifically the pre-hire run, the prospective hire experienced an undetermined medical condition and was pronounced dead.
* *Reflections:*The FDNY commissioner stated the department is “looking at our process to make sure it is as safe as possible.” Fire departments should use this as an opportunity to examine their own processes to ensure all proper and prudent pre-employment checks are completed and processes are being followed.

**FINAL THOUGHTS**

***It’s important to note that nine of the 11 deaths detailed above are NOT related to structural firefighting actions***. That said, this list represents the fourth and fifth deaths for the Baltimore Fire Department in a structure that appears to have been very similar to the January 2022 incident that took three firefighters’ lives. While the Baltimore fire will take on enhanced scrutiny as a repetitive occurrence, EVERY ONE of these incidents deserves the reflection and introspective look within ourselves.

Please don’t allow your thoughts and prayers to be the end of your consideration of these incidents. ***We MUST NOT allow any LODD to be a life lost in vain. Every one of these incidents will likely have lessons learned listed in a follow-up report or analysis.*** Even the medical causes deserve this analysis. Don’t allow “lessons learned” to be relegated to “problems identified” that simply lie on the shelf in a report.  Is EVERYONE listening to what these LODDs are telling us?

##### Never too Late to Start Thinking About the NYS Volunteer FF Cancer Benefit Program

See the post on our website at CAFDA.net

**District finances**

##### OSC Audit - Fine Fire District – Board Oversight

**BACKGROUND**

The District is located in the Town of Fine in St. Lawrence County. The Board consists of five elected members, with one member being appointed as Chairman. The Board is responsible for the District’s overall financial management.

The Board-appointed Secretary-Treasurer is the chief fiscal officer and is responsible for receiving, disbursing and accounting for District funds, preparing financial reports and keeping the minutes of Board meetings.

**AUDIT OBJECTIVE**

Determine whether the Fine Fire District (District) officials adequately monitored financial activity and ensured appropriate records and reports were maintained.

**KEY FINDINGS**

***District officials did not adequately monitor financial activities or maintain appropriate records and reports***. As a result, more taxes were levied than needed to fund operations each year and there was an increased risk for errors and irregularities. ***The Board of Fire Commissioners (Board) did not:***

* ***Ensure basic accounting records were maintained, it received written financial reports to manage operations or that the District’s required annual update documents (AUDs) were filed.***
* ***Conduct an annual audit of the Secretary-Treasurer’s accounting records.***
* ***Hold required public hearings on the proposed 2022 and 2023 budgets or formally adopt the budgets, as required by New York State Town Law Section 181.***
* ***Approve realistic budgets for 2019 through 2021 – appropriations were overestimated by an average of $43,300, or 40 percent.***
* ***Develop and adopt written multiyear financial and capital plans.***
* ***Adequately audit claims prior to payment. For example, claims were approved without a quorum of the Board, not supported, not audited or they resulted in overpayments.***

***[EDITOR’S NOTE: why not, were they not trained sufficiently or were they willfully negligent?]***

**KEY RECOMMENDATIONS**

* Maintain sufficient accounting records and prepare and file financial reports.
* Audit and approve claims prior to payment and annually audit the Secretary-Treasurer’s records.
* Develop and adopt realistic budgets, hold public budget hearings, and develop and adopt written multiyear financial and capital plans.

**FULL REPORT AT THIS LINK:** [**https://www.osc.state.ny.us/files/local-government/audits/2023/pdf/fine-fire-district-2023-81.pdf**](https://www.osc.state.ny.us/files/local-government/audits/2023/pdf/fine-fire-district-2023-81.pdf)

##### Local Government and School Accountability Contact Information:

**Phone**: (518) 474-4037; **Email**: [localgov@osc.ny.gov](mailto:localgov@osc.ny.gov)

**Address**: Office of the State Comptroller, Division of Local Government and School Accountability

110 State Street, 12th Floor; Albany, NY 12236

##### It’s a First - - Financial Training for Fire District Officials

#### *Get ready for local day and a half fire district financial management training, February 29th, March 1st, 2024 at the Waterford-Halfmoon Fire Station, including input from OSC-NYS and other Fire District Financial management resources. Sponsored by CAFDA.*

##### NYS EnCon Grant Opportunity for Fire Service

**Agency:**, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation

**Division:** Division of Forest Protection & Fire Management

**Contract Number:** TBD

**CR Number:** 2102666

**Date of Issue:** 10/10/2023

**Due Date/Time: 11/15/2023 5:00 PM**

**County:**All NYS counties

Applications will be accepted through November 15, 2023.

Pursuant to the Agriculture Appropriations Act, Section 7(b)3 of P.L. 95-313 (Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978), the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation hereby gives notice of the following:

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (The Department) will administer the 2023 Volunteer Fire Assistance (VFA) Grant program to assist eligible rural fire departments in the purchase of eligible wildland firefighting suppression equipment. VFA applications will be accepted through November 15, 2023.

The Department received a federal appropriation of $976,622 to award fire assistance grants.  Fire departments eligible to apply ***may receive grant funding up to $2,500*** for the purchase of eligible wildland fire suppression equipment.  Fire departments ***are required to equally match (50/50) the amount of the award***. Grant funding is based on federal guidelines ***for use in fire districts serving a rural area or a rural community with a population of 10,000 or le***ss.  A fire department serving a population greater than 10,000 and not providing protection to a rural area or rural community is not eligible for VFA financial assistance.

Applications are scored based on established rating criteria including: population, the I.S.O. Fire Prevention Insurance rating, the presence of Native American communities in the district and the date of the last VFA grant received.

Applications are available on-line at <http://www.dec.ny.gov/regulations/2364.html>.

*For further information, contact:* Lynne Korona, NYS DEC Division of Forest Protection, 625 Broadway, 3rd Floor, Albany, NY 12233-2560, (518) 402-8835 or email questions to [vfagrant@dec.ny.gov](mailto:vfagrant@dec.ny.gov)

**Living with new green technology - - hOT tOPIC!**

##### Lithium-Ion Battery Suspected in Fire at Pittsburgh (PA) Garage

Ryan Deto, The Tribute-Review

A commercial fire burned through a vehicle repair shop Friday evening in Pittsburgh’s Bloomfield neighborhood. Pittsburgh firefighters were dispatched to the 800 Block of Gross Street at about 6:15 p.m., according to the Pittsburgh Public Safety Department. No injuries were reported.

Officials said it appeared that an *electric vehicle’s lithium-ion battery had ignited*, but the exact cause of the fire is still to be officially determined by the Fire Investigation Unit. ***The one-alarm fire took about 45 minutes to extinguish***.

***However, the entire operation took over seven hours as firefighters followed procedures to ensure the vehicle did not continue to reignite, according to public safety officials.***

##### New Westchester Legislation Takes Steps To Prevent Lithium-Ion Battery Fires

Veronica Jean Seltzer

Westchester County Executive George Latimer signed legislation Wednesday that only allows graded batteries for electric mobility devices to be sold in the county. It also requires every electric mobility device seller to post a safety notice.

The Department of Consumer Protection will enforce the new law with fines of up to $1,000 for violations.

"In signing this legislation, we are taking a significant step in protecting Westchester County from the dangers of lithium-ion battery fires. Our comprehensive Lithium-Ion Battery Safety Program, featuring safe disposal options, point-of-sale warnings, firefighter training and robust education efforts, demonstrates our commitment to public safety. We're dedicated to ensuring that these batteries are used responsibly, safeguarding the lives and property of Westchester County residents," Latimer said. "The Board of Legislators passed the new law unanimously."

Because the global micro-mobility market is projected to grow from about $40 billion today to $215 billion by 2030, due in large part to the sale and use of battery-powered electric devices of all types, the time to act on regulating lithium-ion batteries is now.

"We are glad to be on the same page as the County Executive in identifying and acting on this increasing threat to public safety," Board Chair Vedat Gashi said.

"As Chair of the Public Safety Committee, I am pleased to announce this new local law to protect residents and first responders from fires and explosions caused by faulty lithium-ion batteries. The law regulates the use, sale, and lease of E-bikes and other electric mobility devices. Retail outlets will now be required to post warning signs about lithium-ion battery fire risk," Legislator Terry Clements said.

"Lithium-ion batteries are increasingly found in devices that the public and first responders interact with every day, including cars, scooters, laptops and electric bikes. As a volunteer firefighter, I have witnessed firsthand the damage that these devices can cause. This legislation is a starting point to help protect lives and property, and provides the necessary framework to help prevent devastating battery-related incidents," Minority Leader Margaret Cunzio said.

"As the use of these items has greatly increased over the past several years, so too has the incidence of damage to both personal safety and property. In some cases, improper use has even caused some fatalities. This law not only regulates the sale of lithium-ion battery devices, but requires retailers to post conspicuous warnings regarding the potential dangers associated with them, as well providing for a robust public information campaign aimed at educating consumers of the risks posed by their use," Legislator Colin Smith said.

The law is part of a new comp comprehensive Lithium-Ion Battery Safety Program.

"Westchester County's comprehensive Lithium-Ion Battery Safety Program is a crucial step in safeguarding our community from the relentless threat of lithium-ion battery fires. As first responders, we've witnessed the devastating consequences of these incidents. The program's focus on education, safe disposal, and point-of-sale warnings aligns perfectly with our mission to protect lives and property in New Rochelle and throughout the County and we thank County Executive Latimer and the Board of Legislators for their efforts," New Rochelle Fire Chief Andy Sandor said.  The county has put together a video with tips on how to prevent lithium-ion battery fires and how to safely dispose of the batteries. [**https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hjeZc81BZx8**](https://nam12.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.youtube.com%2Fwatch%3Fv%3DhjeZc81BZx8&data=05%7C01%7CAdolfo.Carrion%40news12.com%7C4c418de2a98848013e3808dbdb3675e8%7Ccf535dc073fc41eaa17417f37ced7fe7%7C0%7C0%7C638344799167202913%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=E6S%2FY1tZ8nIqyTOfOC24CAK4lJfvEeX7WL7AlvGjJCA%3D&reserved=0)

##### Schenectady (NY) Lawmakers Call for Moratorium on Battery Energy Storage Systems

Chad Arnold, The Daily Gazette

A pair of Schenectady County Republican lawmakers are calling for a countywide moratorium on the construction of battery energy storage systems, citing the potential for emergencies at the facilities that they say local fire departments are unprepared to handle.

Legislators Eric Hess and Josh Cuomo of District 4 are calling for a 12-month moratorium on the construction and siting of battery energy storage systems as a way “to protect and ensure the health, safety, and wellbeing of Schenectady County residents and first responders.”

Safety around the systems — which store excess energy captured by renewable sources like solar arrays and wind turbines — has been a topic of discussion throughout New York in recent months after four of the systems caught fire earlier this year throughout the state. Gov. Kathy Hochul, in July, announced an inter-agency fire safety working group that will be tasked with investigating the fires and developing recommendations.

“There is a presumption of industry safety compliance,” Hess, the legislature’s minority leader, said in a statement. “The fact of the matter is that this technology changes rapidly, muh faster than regulation. We need to do something now to protect our first responders and the citizens of Schenectady County.”

In a news release, Hess and Cuomo, the lone Republicans on the 15-member legislature, said they presented a legislative initiative form last month in hopes that the topic would be added to the legislative agenda for discussion, but that never happened.

Instead, the pair say they were told that local emergency responders were offered training and resources to respond to emergencies at battery energy storage system facilities in the county.

***But Hess said he recently learned that volunteers at th Pattersonville Volunteer Fire Department were unaware that a battery storage system located alon Rynex Corners Road that’s been operational since 2021 was equipped with lithium-ion batteries until they toured the facility in August. The volunteers, Hess said, have had no training on fighting burning lithium-ion batteries — which have the potential to overheat, explode and can be challenging to extinguish.***

Pattersonville Volunteer Fire Department could not be reached for comment.

Hess said failing to discuss the topic “is another example of bad policy by Democrat administrations” and said it’s time for the Legislature to “start being proactive and not reactive.”

***“Most towns and municipalities do not have adequate solar-related BESS code and stand-alone BESS code is virtually non-existent,”*** Hess said. “Our volunteer fire departments are ill prepared to handle the potential emergencies this equipment presents. They’re asking for our help.”

Anthony Jasenski, chairman of the Schenectady County Legislature and a District 4 representative, said the county’s fire coordinator and emergency management office has been gathering information on battery energy storage systems since the legislative initiative was submitted in September, and lawmakers will make a determination on whether a moratorium is necessary from there.

“They’re doing their due diligence as we speak and as always, they will advise the county Legislature on what they believe is the best path forward so we can make a good decision,” he said.

Jasenski said the topic could come up for discussion as early as next month, though he did not have an exact timeframe.

He added that the county’s hazmat team undergoes monthly training on lithium-ion battery fires, and the county’s emergency management office is working to develop a pre-plan alongside local fire departments. The county has also held a seminar on battery fires earlier this year and is seeking funding to cover the cost of an additional seminar in the future.

Battery energy storage systems have been a topic of discussion locally, particularly in Rotterdam and Duanesburg, where some residents have voiced safety concerns around the systems.

**Rotterdam recently approved a six-month moratorium on the construction of battery energy storage systems as a way to give the town’s Energy Advisory Committee time to draft new regulations around the systems.**

In Duanesburg, battery energy storage systems are regulated under a solar energy law approved earlier this year, though some residents continue to raise concerns about the systems.

Jasenski said local municipalities can adopt moratoriums on the systems, noting that local municipalities have.

“The Legislature meets once a month. We’re gathering information and we’ll make our decision based on what the professionals tell us what is needed,” he said.

But Cuomo said a moratorium is necessary, and failing to act puts lives in danger.

“We need to take steps before a potentially life-threatening or fatal emergency happens”, he said.

**BUILDING & FIRE CODE ISSUES – Why are they important to you? WEEKLY FIRE FATALITY DATA AS REPORTED BY THE MEDIA**

##### UNATTENDED COOKING LEADS TO UNINTENDED FIRES

***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 REPORTED BY THE MEDIA FROM THE US FIRE ADMINISTRATION** | |
| **Fire Deaths in 1&2 Family Dwellings in NYS** | **56+2 = 52** |
| **Last fire death 10/30 Verona, Oneida Co. UNK pending investigation** | |
| **Fire Deaths in any type of Dwelling in NYS** | **120+2 = 122** |
| **Fire Deaths in 1&2 Family Dwellings Nationally** | **1040 + 42= 1082** |
| **Top 3 States with the greatest 1&2 Family Deaths** | **1 PA = 67** |
|  | **2 NY = 58** |
|  | **3 CA & TN = 51** |
| **There has been a total of 1731 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.**

**PURCHASING APPARATUS? What to know**

##### TANKER OR TENDER APPARATUS

This buyer’s guide will focus on the tanker/tender area of your fleet. “Tenders” are more commonly known as “Tankers” in the Midwest and Eastern portions of the country, while on the West coast they are considered “Tenders.” In either case, they are vital to your operation for transporting water to the scene of a fire.

The intent of this Tanker or Tender Apparatus Buyer’s Guide is to provide an overview of requirements and available options to consider when specifying and purchasing a new tanker/tender. The guide is separated into the major categories of topics that should be evaluated, considered, and thoroughly researched prior to purchasing an apparatus.

**DOWNLOAD COMPLETE BUYER’S GUIDE AT THIS LINK:**

<https://www.fama.org/fire_service/tanker-or-tender-apparatus/>

##### [What Wildland And Urban Interface Apparatus Can Do For Your Community.](https://www.cfmediaview.com/lp1.aspx?v=31_213456816_14772_3)

**WEBINAR**: [November 14, 2023 | 12 PM EDT A certificate of attendance will be offered. Free to Attend – Save My Seat!](https://www.cfmediaview.com/lp1.aspx?v=31_213456816_14772_4)

Interest in wildland and urban interface apparatus has increased significantly over the last two years in North America. During this webcast we will explore the origin story of wildland and urban interface apparatus, what that lineup looks like today, what needs a wildland / urban interface apparatus fulfills for a community, and the unique features that make up a Rosenbauer wildland / urban interface apparatus (Timberwolf, Timber Warrior, Maverick, RTX…). Join us as we discuss, ‘what wildland and urban interface apparatus can do for your community.”

**REGISTER AT THIS LINK**: <https://clarionevents.zoom.us/webinar/register/8316680031488/WN_h75AigJ7Q5StSG9G3Z-nyg#/registration>

**THE LIGHTER SIDE!**

**Remember when we were kids, we wanted to grow up and be big?**

**What were we thinking…?**

**Happen’n in the neighborhood!!**

##### Bernie’s Blue Line Barbecue

East Greenbush Fire Company, Friday November 17 from 4 to 6PM. Drive through Chicken and Pulled Pork Dinner. Tickets $20 and includes:

Pulled Pork- 5oz  
Chicken Piece  
Salt Potatoes with a Tuscan Herb Butter  
Coleslaw  
Southern Style Cornbread  
2 Cookies  
Packaging and Cutlery Kit  
Beverage

**TICKETS CAN BE PURCHASED USING THIS LINK**: [https://square.link/u/vyrsVtBK](https://square.link/u/vyrsVtBK?fbclid=IwAR2Q6SWJu1OYRG12hGXdVhwX4GLLXagBIIPU5iABegpIVB_E0Otkup7N-18)

**Officers of the capital area association of fire districts**

***2023 OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS***

***President: Tom Rinaldi, Commissioner Stillwater/Saratoga***

***1st VP: John Meehan, Commissioner West Crescent/Saratoga***

***2nd VP: Art Hunsinger, Commissioner Clifton Park Halfmoon/Saratoga***

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

***Secretary: Vacancy***

***Treasurer: Tony Hill***

***Sargent at Arms: Tom Wood***

***Chaplain: Fred Richards***

***Legal Council: Greg Serio***

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

***Fire District Officials include Commissioners, Treasurers, and Deputy Treasurers***

***Secretaries and Chiefs are also invited to participate!***

***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 TREASURER: TREASURER@CAFDA.NET***

***518-407-5020***

##### Long Way to Travel Zoom into the General Membership Meetings!

***It’s our desire that every member fire 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.***

**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.CAFDA.net***

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

##### Membership Audit

CAFDA, currently has **80-member Fire Districts** in Albany, Schenectady, Fulton, Montgomery, Rensselaer, Warren, Washington and Saratoga Counties. **We are also accepting memberships from Schoharie and Essex counties. Other counties will be considered on an as needed basis.**

We currently have **20 fire districts that are NOT currently member**s, they are: Berne, Delmar, Elsmere and McKownville in Albany County; West Charlton in Saratoga County; Glenville #2, Rotterdam #4 and Duanesburg in Schenectady County; Northville Joint in Fulton County; Bolton, Luzern-Hadley, and Pottersville in Warren County; and Best Luther, East Schodack, Schodack Center, Schodack Landing, Eastern Pittstown, Nassau #1 and Stephentown in Rensselaer County.

***Are we missing anyone?*** Sometimes there is confusion between the State Association and regional associations such as CAFDA. CAFDA is not a branch or subsidiary of the State Association, we are not in each other’s reporting chain or organizational structure. ***We exist solely as a not for profit for the benefit of the member fire districts in and around the Capital District.***

**Capital Area BUSINESS PARTNER’S**

***PLEASE SUPPORT THOSE WHO SUPPORT US!!***

**Business Partner Applications Available At:** [**WWW.CAFDA.NET**](http://WWW.AFDCA.ORG)

***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.***

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ENENGINEERS

LEGAL SERVICES

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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**

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3 Lear Jet Lane, Suite 205

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Dennis Ross, Dir of Emergency Services Market

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**Haughey Insurance Agency**

850 State Route 50

Burnt Hills, NY 12027

518-399-1583

www.haugheyagency.com

**Ducharme, Clark & Sovern, LLP**

**Jack Clark, Fire District Attorney**

646 Plank Rd. Clifton Park, NY 12065

518-373-1482

Ducharmeclark.com

****

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Description automatically generated**Contact Linda Flanagan**

**110 Main Street**

**Poughkeepsie, NY 12601**

**845-331-2255 X2768**

*“Insurance for First Responders”*

*https://marshallsterling.com/linda-flanagan*

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518.363.8119

Deborah.oconnor@bsnb.com



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**518-479-2004**

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**bob.dignum@nfp.com**



David Farstad, Municipal Banking Officer

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farstadd@pioneerbanking.com

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Pat Daglio

[pdaglio@vfis.com](mailto:pdaglio@vfis.com)

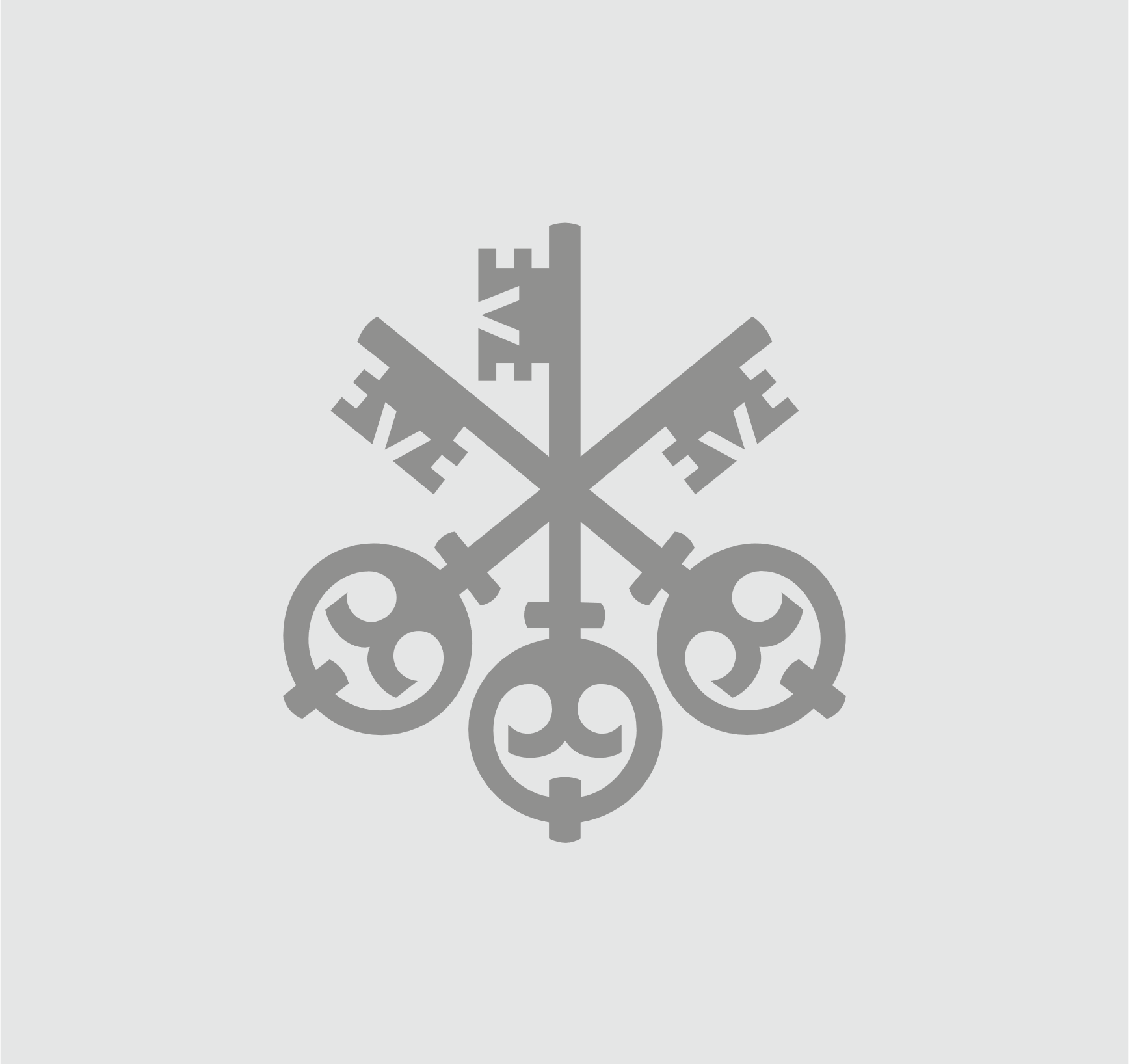
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Manager of Business Development & Accts

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nmeeker@penflexinc.com

**FIRE COMPANY FUND RAISING**

**FIRE STATION PEST CONTROL**

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**Lloyd Fox, Account Executive**

**34 Garner Road, Averill Park, NY 12018**

[**Lfox8@nycap.rr.com**](mailto:Lfox8@nycap.rr.com)

**518-810-7819**

**www.funddrive.com**

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**431 New Karner Rd Suite 170**

**Albany, NY 12205**

**https://foxpest-albany.com**

**FIRE DISTRICT CPA/AUDITS/FINANCIAL SERVICES**

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Zoriana M. Stawnychy

973.283.0024

zoriana@stawnychyfinancial.com

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[**www.bstco.com**](http://www.bstco.com)

**Brendan Kennedy ext 356**

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**Robert V. Gramuglia, CPA**

1 Pine West Plaza Suite 107, Albany NY 12205

518.452.8055 or 518.859.5851cell

Email: rgramuglia@BGCPA.net

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11 British American Blvd, Latham, NY 12110

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Queensbury Office 518-792-6595

<http://www.mmbaccounting.com>

Alan W. Clink, CPA [aclink@mmb-co.com](mailto:aclink@mmb-co.com)

Heather R. Lewis, CPA hlewis@mmb-co.com

**Business Partner Opportunity!**

**Thank you for your continued support of the Capital Ara Fire Districts Association. Included as part of your annual dues, you have the opportunity to have vendor space at our November 4th training event, at no additional cost. We have several excellent presentations lined up, which we believe will attract many of our member districts. Last year we had over 50 fire district officials in attendance! The training is at the Verdoy Fire District 988 Troy-Schenectady Road, Latham, NY from 7:00AM to 1:00PM. Lunch will be served. Attached are additional details:**

* **Each Business Partner will be given 5 minutes to present something of educational value to those in attendance..**
* **The Board is also seeking two sponsors for the event - one to sponsor breakfast and one to sponsor lunch. The cost is $500 per sponsorship. The sponsoring Business Partners will have signs displayed noting the sponsorship, and have an extended, dedicated time for their presentation.**

**Please reply by October 20, 2023 if:**

* **You would like a vendor table for the event**
* **You are interested in sponsoring the training**

**We need your reply by October 20 to plan for space.**

***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***](mailto:tom@rinaldi1.com) ***for comments or content contributions are always welcome.***

##### You Can 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 CAFDA.NET website.**

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

**Download THE APPLICATION available on the home page at CAFDA.NET**

***MEMBERSHIP IN THE CAPITAL AREA FIRE DISTRICTS ASSOCIATION (CAFDA)***

Would you like to join Capital Area Fire Districts Association along with 76 members in 10 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** or Other County or Regional Associations $300 annually.  
***Business Partners: $100.00 annual member fee***

##### If You, Your Fire District or Department is not a Member of CAFDA You Can be?

Individuals can be members of CAFDA. The annual membership fee is $50, which will provide you access to this Bulletin, attendance at meetings and social gatherings. Provides networking with other fire district officials and a source of the constant barrage of information related to today’s fire service.

**Capital Area Association of Fire Districts**



**Membership Application/Renewal**

**Fire District □ Fire Protection District □ Village Fire Department □ EX-Officio □ Associate/Individual □**

**Associate Regional Fire District Association □**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

County: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Fire District: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Primary Contact Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**IF FIRE DISTRICT OR ASSOCAIATION TWO POINTS OF CONTACT WILL SHARE INFORMATION**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Fire Company if Different: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**FIRE DISTRICT OFFICERS WHO WOULD LIKE TO BE ADDED TO OUR EMAIL DISTRIBUTION LIST**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Email: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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

Annual budgets up to and including $200,000 $50.00

Annual budgets more than $200,001 up to including $400.000 $100.00

Annual budgets more than $400,001 up to including $600.000 $200.00

Annual budgets more than $600,000 $300.00

Associate/Individual membership fee $50.00

Regional or County Fire District Association $300.00

Business Partners membership fee $100.00

Please submit payments to: Capital Area Fire Districts Association

CAFDA Treasurer

PO Box 242

East Schodack, NY 12063

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

IF VOUCHER IS REQUIRED, PLEASE MAIL IT AND I WILL SIGN IT AND MAIL IT BACK

***CAFDA UPCOMING TRAINING AND MEETING CALENDAR***

***The following calendar, while tentative, provides our members and participants some insight into the planned activities to be provided locally to our membership and other fire district participants for ’23, ’24 and ’25. We hope you will join us on this journey to provide reasonably priced, quality training in a local setting for your convenience.***

**For General Membership meetings food is served 1 hour prior to the start time of the meeting, at 6pm, meetings begin promptly at 7PM**



##### CLICK ON PDF TO OPEN FIRE DISTRICT BUDGET SCHEDULE

**There was previous difficulty in opening this document, it should be corrected.**

**Click on this link, or go to our website at afdca.org**

[**https://cafda.net/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Fire-District-Budget-Schedule.pdf**](https://cafda.net/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Fire-District-Budget-Schedule.pdf)

##### CLICK ON PDF TO OPEN FIRE DISTRICT ELECTION SCHEDULE

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