



CAPITAL AREA FIRE DISTRICTS ASSOCIATION BULLETIN

MAY 11, 2024

EDITOR - TOM RINALDI tom@rinaldi1.com
Serving the fire service community since 2004

CAPITAL SHORTS:

- **Put it on your calendar for next year, April 10th, 11th and 12th of 2025**, we will return to the FWH Hotel and Conference Center in Lake George, NY, bigger and better for all the fire departments and Vendors in the Capital Area and beyond.
- **AN OSHA INFORMATION SUPPLEMENT HAS BEEN MOVED TO THE END OF THE BULLETIN AND PROVIDES ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND LINKS TO IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS. STAY INFORMED!!**

CAFDA NEWS AND OPPORTUNITIES:

WWW.CAFDA.NET

[Welcome Greenville Fire District of Greene County, New York](#)

[General Membership Meetings - - In person and Zoom](#)

[Next General Membership Meeting, Thursday June 13th, dining at 6 Meeting at 7.](#)

[Printable Calendar with much more – See End of Bulletin](#)

[Thank you to the Clifton Park – Halfmoon Fire District for allowing us to use their facility for the CAFDA meetings.](#)

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

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

Financial issues should be addressed to: TREASURER@CAFDA.NET

OTHER FIRE SERVICE ORGANIZATION NEWS



[Roundtable Talk: Answering the Call - Volunteer EMS Recruitment & Retention Strategies](#)

May 22 at 2pm ET

Presenters:

Dr. Candice McDonald (moderator), Eric Quinney, Jules Scadden, and Joseph Schmider

[Webinar: Managing Combination Departments - Leadership Challenges](#)

May 29 at 2pm ET

Presenter:

Quentin Cash

Sponsored by [Amazon Business](#)

[Webinar: Advancements in Utility-Scale Battery Energy Storage Safety Features, Standards, and Practices](#)

June 5 at 2pm ET

Presenter:

Mike Simpson

Sponsored by [AES](#)

Roundtable Talk: Proposed OSHA Standard Update and What It Means for Volunteer Fire Departments

May 16 at 1pm ET

Presenters: Dave Denniston, Bruce Lundegren, and Ryan Woodward

On February 5, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) published a proposed rule revising its emergency response standard. This is the first time OSHA revised this standard since 1980, and the public has until June 21 to provide comments. If enacted as is, this proposed rule would bring immense challenges to volunteer departments, and some may even be forced to shut down. It is important that the volunteer fire service understand how this rule would impact them and provide their comments to OSHA before June 21. This NVFC Roundtable Talk will highlight some of the biggest concerns with the proposed revised emergency standard, discuss which volunteers will be impacted, explain the NVFC's strategy for addressing the proposed revision, and suggest best practices for departments wishing to comment on the revisions.

The text of the proposed revised OSHA emergency response standard, information on how to submit comments, and supporting resources can be found [here](#)

REGISTER AT THIS LINK:

https://gma5qspab.cc.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=001QgijJ0VQLrxoJOVXQuNzwQXUGd6iwCILMjODLAEkF8mB9dVo0B0B4iLC-pqjvoqPDqKhhL9421x6MPikFDtQOwu89yLrMDy2EQF33gN3G3Qal_OUdiKS3f6qCjW2GZnrvmMAjsIfU11DT74Xscpsd6BdfW-2KdQKXByM5vDZfuz2gLxJ16uAL_nzprWOywlw-bc1XYNnlWqOeR6aVrZGFA==&c=njemGLFFFRKLehXZL7NP50JG4cjM-QYuvzEh2qgYWZRU6aef1sh1Sg==&ch=CQGZanOfgDqGncicjMetLTABs114Qu9JEP8RrKLP79lcyL_myG8NgQ==

IF NOTHING ELSE READ THE ARTICLES PRECEDED BY **

THE LATEST FROM THE STATE CAPITAL

THE SCORECARD IS BEING UPDATED EACH WEEK WHILE

THE LEGISLATURE IS IN SESSION

PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTIONS

It is important to note that the "taxable status date" in most towns was March 1. See more information at: <https://fasny.com/resources/county-index-numbers/>

THE LATEST FROM WASHINGTON

MEMBERS OF THE NY CONGRESSIONAL FIRE SERVICE INSTITUTE

- [SENATOR KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND](#)
- [SENATOR CHARLES SCHUMER](#)
- [CONGRESSMAN ANDREW GARBARINO \(NY-2\)](#)
- [CONGRESSMAN ANTHONY D'ESPOSITO \(NY-4\)](#)
- [CONGRESSWOMAN NYDIA VELAZQUEZ \(NY-7\)](#)
- [CONGRESSWOMAN NICOLE MALLIOTAKIS \(NY-11\)](#)
- [CONGRESSMAN RITCHIE TORRES \(NY-15\)](#)
- [CONGRESSMAN PAT RYAN \(NY-18\)](#)
- [CONGRESSMAN PAUL TONKO \(NY-20\)](#)
- [CONGRESSWOMAN CLAUDIA TENNEY \(NY-24\)](#)
- [CONGRESSMAN BRIAN M. HIGGINS \(NY-26\)](#)

Update on AFG and SAFER Funding and Reauthorization

This week, the house of representatives will vote on s. 870, *the fire grants and safety act*, which would reauthorize the assistance to firefighters grants (AFG), staffing for adequate fire and emergency response (safer) grants, and the U.S. fire administration. It is critical that AFG and safer are reauthorized before their statutory sunset. Use the NVFC's action alert to tell your representative to vote for s. 870 BY USING [THIS ACTION ALERT](#) FROM THE NATIONAL VOLUNTEER FIRE COUNCIL (NVFC). Unfortunately, congress cut both AFG and safer funding by 10% in FY 2024, from

\$360 million per program to \$324 million. The NVFC is working hard to restore and increase funding for these critically important programs. The NVFC is asking congress to provide \$405 million in FY 2025 funding for each program. The battle for this funding is off to a good start, with 123 members of congress cosigning a letter last month supporting the NVFC's funding request.

THE ATTORNEY'S OFFICE – HARD TO MAKE THIS UP!

Pink Collar Theft in Pennsylvania VFD

Curt Varone

The treasurer of a volunteer fire department in Pennsylvania is facing criminal charges for stealing over \$90,000 from the department. Patricia Susan Tuttle, 41, has been charged with forgery and theft by unlawful taking following a lengthy investigation by the Pennsylvania State Police.

[The Daily Review](#) has an unusually detailed description of the way the funds from the Franklin Township Volunteer Fire Department were stolen, as well as how the investigation unfolded. Among the more interesting points in the interesting article:

- Tuttle was hired in 2021 to serve as secretary and treasurer
- Her responsibilities included “paying bills, making deposits, reconciling bank statements, and making purchases via debit card.”
- The chief told PSP that the annual audit disclosed that the department’s bank account had been reduced to zero.
- Tuttle had falsified bank statements, removing ATM withdrawals from the statements.
- \$77,630 in ATM withdrawals in \$500 increments had been removed.
- When the chief confronted Tuttle she initially claimed she withdrew the funds to put it in a high-yield fund, but was unable to document that.
- She provided the department with a check for \$76,200, and an apology for “removing the funds” and further that “she has sought counseling for mental health, and she has enrolled in a theft impetus control prevention class.”
- Upon further investigation it was discovered that she used the department credit card for personal purchases, forged the signatures of two department officials on two separate occasions in order to request “an extension of the loan agreement to allow for an interest only payment and a change in the payment date,” which in turn prevented the department from discovering the lack of funds sooner.

The totals Tuttle is accused of stealing are as follows:

- \$3,184.36 in unauthorized debit purchases
- \$77,630 in ATM withdrawals
- \$1,913 regarding cash sales of equipment not deposited in the bank account
- \$7,840 regarding cash paid for filled swimming pools.

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FIRE APPARATUS PURCHASING!

*****Multijurisdictional Apparatus Group Works to Improve Apparatus and Equipment***

Michael Huber

[EDITOR'S NOTE: What a concept, forward thinking idea.]

Decision makers; logistics leaders; safety representatives; and, most importantly, skilled mechanics shared knowledge and experiences relative to apparatus and equipment. From coolant hoses that commonly fail to fleet design and

management, members from several jurisdictions came together to share the good, the bad, and the ugly of one of the most critical tools we have—apparatus.

The initial invite was sent to jurisdictions near Baltimore County, including agencies in Maryland; northern Virginia; and Washington, D.C., to have various jurisdictions in the same room to discuss experiences with manufacturers and vendors; share information on apparatus and equipment design, repair, and maintenance; and open jurisdictional boundaries in an effort to increase global awareness in the industry by fostering communication that would allow all stakeholders to be part of a problem-solving experience.

After the initial ice-breaker introduction, the room loosened up and the chatter began. Topics included the following:

■ Acquisition.

- Who is buying what and why?
- What purchases are upcoming?
- How will this will impact other jurisdictions?

■ Apparatus manufacturers and vendors.

- Problems/good experiences.
- Dealer facilities.
- Warranties.

■ Maintenance/repair.

- Intervals.
- Parts: inventory/acquisition/ problem solving.
- Trends in repairs.
- Resolutions to common problems.

■ Fleet management.

- What is the fleet?
- Apparatus to technician ratio.
- How is the fleet managed relative to maintenance and repair?
- Reserve storage.
- Field accountability.
- Apparatus life cycle.

■ Telematics.

- What is available?
- Is it worth the cost?

■ EVTs.

- Who requires certification?
- How do mechanics obtain new and updated training?

■ National Fire Protection (NFPA) 1900, Standard for Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting Vehicles, Automotive Fire Apparatus, Wildland Fire Apparatus, and Automotive Ambulances, series. °

- Jurisdictions that take exceptions and why. °
- Speculation on revision information. °
- How does the NFPA impact the authority having jurisdiction's inspection, maintenance, testing, and retirement of in-service emergency vehicles for primary and reserve fleets?

A few hours later, MJAG was no longer just an acronym or an idea. It was formally established as a productive apparatus and equipment task force. Currently, MJAG comprises multiple jurisdictions from North Carolina to New York and as far away as Utah. The group welcomes new agencies that are interested in joining the MJAG team, where apparatus and equipment knowledge is shared, networks are built, problems are solved, and voices are heard.

The importance of jurisdictions working together, whether on a local, national, or global level, cannot be overstated. Collaboration among jurisdictions fosters a range of benefits that contribute to overall fire department well-being. Effective networking provides numerous advantages that contribute to the success and growth of fire mechanics in their careers. Here are some key reasons networking is important:

- Knowledge sharing: Networking allows us to exchange information, best practices, and industry updates with peers.

- Professional development: Connecting with professionals in the field provides opportunities for continuous learning and professional development.
- Access to resources: Networking expands the pool of resources available to mechanics and fleet managers. This can include access to specialized tools, equipment, materials, and contacts.
- Collaborative opportunities: Building a network opens doors to collaborative opportunities. Industry insiders encounter projects or challenges that require a multidisciplinary approach, and having a network of professionals with diverse skills can lead to successful collaborations.
- Industry visibility: Active participation in professional networks enhances your visibility within the industry. Being known and respected by peers and vendors can contribute to career enhancement and business success.
- Problem solving and support: Having a group of peers allows you to seek advice and support when facing complex technical challenges. Problem solving within the group can lead to innovative solutions and improved service delivery.

MJAG meets quarterly. The platform is usually a Zoom meeting, and the duration is about an hour. Agency representatives who are primarily responsible for the management, maintenance/repair, and design who would like to participate can e-mail mlhuber@baltimorecountymd.gov for more information.

FIRE DISTRICT/COMPANY FINANCES!

Md. FD Out \$220K After Online Scammers Hit Transfer Of Funds During Ambulance Purchase

Bill Carey

The Rockville Volunteer Fire Department recently fell prey to online scammers who intercepted a financial transaction during the purchase of two new ambulances, successfully stealing \$220,000.

President Eric Bernard mentioned that while working with a longstanding vendor, they were deceived during email exchanges and bank interactions related to wiring instructions for the down payment, WTOP reported. ***They were provided with fraudulent account details to transfer the funds. Bernard noted that now, all they know is that an individual, apparently located in London, has illicitly obtained a significant amount of money.***

Bernard explained that there were no signs of trouble until a week after initiating the purchase when the vendor reached out to inquire if the RVFD intended to finalize the transaction. This caught the department off guard, as they believed the purchase had already been completed.

One of the banks managed to recover \$100,000. However, the remaining \$150,000 is still missing.

****Annual Financial Report (AFR) FOR 2023 Due to State Comptroller by April 29th**

Annual Financial Report (AFR formerly AUD) filing deadlines are 120 days after the end of the fiscal year, or Monday April 29th 2024. Extension requests can be submitted by the CFO in the [Annual Financial Reporting application](#) or in a letter signed by the CFO and emailed to AFRFILE@osc.ny.gov, faxed to (518) 486-3146 or mailed to Office of the State Comptroller, Data Management Unit, 110 State Street 12-8-C, Albany NY 12236. Fire Districts will also be required to report their statutory spending limit.

File it even if its late. This is a typical finding during an OSC audit and the audit will ask that up to date reports be filed. **Better late than never.**

Fiscal Oversight Responsibilities of the Governing Board

The governing board's oversight role can touch virtually every aspect of a local government's operations. This session will discuss some key functions including budget responsibilities, interim reporting, the audit of claims, and the annual audit requirements. We will also provide resources available to assist in these oversight activities.

DATE: 2024-01-24 LENGTH: 46:53 TAKE THIS ANYTIME AT THIS LINK: [On Demand Slide Show Presentation \[pdf\]](#)

Local Government and School Accountability Contact Information:

STEP INTO THE CHIEF'S OFFICE

*****The Four Pillars of Leadership: Fire Chief Joanne R. Rund***

As the head of the Baltimore County (MD) Fire Department since 2019, Fire Chief Joanne R. Rund has driven her tenure with a steadfast commitment to health, safety, inclusiveness, and teamwork. With more than three decades of experience in the fire service, she roots her leadership style in service-oriented principles and a genuine concern for the well-being of her personnel.

Having spent 32 years with the Howard County (MD) Department of Fire and Rescue Services before assuming her current role, Rund's leadership journey began under the mentorship of a captain who instilled in her the values of succession planning and servant leadership. This early guidance laid the groundwork for Rund's approach to leadership, emphasizing the importance of nurturing talent and fostering a culture of support and mentorship within the organization.

Rund's leadership philosophy is characterized by empathy, humility, and a dedication to serving others. She believes in empowering her team members by providing them with the necessary tools and resources for success while fostering a collaborative and inclusive environment where every voice is heard and valued. Rund recognizes that effective leadership requires adaptability and situational awareness, drawing inspiration from the situational leadership principles proposed by Ken Blanchard.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Leadership demands holding oneself and others accountable for actions and outcomes. Chief Rund underscores the necessity of setting clear expectations and ensuring team members understand their responsibilities. Through mentorship and education, she fosters a culture where individuals take ownership of their work and learn from mistakes. By leading by example, she reinforces the importance of accountability in achieving the department's mission.

RESPECT

Respect is fundamental to effective leadership. Chief Rund recognizes that earning respect requires respecting others first. She emphasizes genuine engagement with team members, actively listening to their perspectives, and valuing their contributions. By demonstrating empathy and understanding, she builds trust and creates an inclusive environment where every voice is heard and respected.

RESPONSIBILITY

Leadership entails taking responsibility for the well-being and success of the team. Chief Rund emphasizes the importance of building trust through competence and integrity. She continuously seeks opportunities for self-improvement and encourages her team members to do the same. Through education, mentorship, and personal growth, she cultivates a continuous learning and development culture, ensuring everyone can effectively fulfill their responsibilities.

SERVANT LEADERSHIP

Servant leadership is about prioritizing the needs of others and empowering them to succeed. Chief Rund embraces this model by positioning herself at the bottom of the hierarchy, serving her team members, and providing them with the support and resources they need to thrive. By fostering a culture of collaboration and mutual respect, she creates a cohesive team capable of achieving collective goals. Through her commitment to servant leadership, she inspires trust, loyalty, and dedication among her team members.

Under Rund's guidance, the Baltimore County Fire Department has prioritized the health and safety of its personnel, implementing policies and procedures aimed at minimizing risks and promoting a culture of well-being. Additionally, Rund has worked tirelessly to cultivate a sense of inclusiveness and teamwork within the department, recognizing that diversity and collaboration are essential for success in challenging and dynamic environments. Overall, Joanne R. Rund's leadership approach is characterized by a steadfast commitment to service, a dedication to the well-being of

her personnel, and a belief in the power of inclusiveness and teamwork. Through her experiences and insights, she offers invaluable lessons for aspiring leaders across diverse domains. By prioritizing her team members' health, safety, and empowerment, Rund embodies the essence of effective leadership—inspiring others to lead with compassion, integrity, and purpose

OUR CHANGING FIRE SERVICE –CHALLENGES & POSITIVE IDEAS!

POSITIVE IDEAS THAT MIGHT WORK FOR OTHERS:

Driving Simulator Placed in Service for Kissimmee, FL, Firefighters

Firehouse.Com, News

Firefighters in Kissimmee now have a driving simulator to help members get comfortable behind the wheel of large vehicles before they hit the streets in one of the city's fire apparatus or ambulances.

"It's very authentic to what a real fire engine would look like," Deputy Chief Joe Leone told WESH.com. "With the instructor sitting over here, what he will do, is he will design different scenarios based on the needs of that individual student and his history of driving."

Leone said the drivers will encounter numerous scenarios, including driving during the night and day with various weather scenarios. The instructors can also add in pedestrians, vehicles that force the emergency vehicle driver to react quickly.

One scenario simulates a flat tire on the emergency vehicle.

Leone said it's important to use the simulator before putting his firefighters at the wheel of an expensive resources.

"We have new firefighters that come on that are less than 21 years of age, maybe 6, 7 months ago, working at a fast food restaurant and now they're driving an ambulance rescue with lights and sirens and I don't think it's fair to them to be put in that situation so quickly, with just X amount of hours of on the road training," he said.

The \$200,000 technology will be expanded for other vehicles in the city's fleet.

Horseheads Fire Department Hiring Paid Driver For First Time Ever To Support Increase In Calls

For the first time in department history, the Horseheads Fire Department has created a paid position. With the increasing number of calls the department is facing every day, the need for a paid driver has become more pressing. The Horseheads Fire Department is volunteer based. They responded to 820 calls in 2023, a record-breaking year. As of May 7th, there have been 279 calls in 2024. At that pace, the department is set to break another record. "With the increasing demand calls, the increasing responsibilities of the firefighters, and we don't have as many volunteers coming out to help us anymore, so we need this the paid driver. We've been asking the village for several years now. They afforded us the opportunity to put the paid driver on from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., 10 hours a day," said First Assistant Chief Ryan Wheeler.

Most of the volunteers at the department have day jobs, so the new part time position will help fill those daytime gaps that volunteers aren't always able to. Assistant Chief Wheeler says the trucks go out every day, whether its on EMS, fire, emergency, or natural disaster calls. Driving a 20,000 pound fire truck takes a lot of skill, and this job requires three years of experience, hazmat, and EMT certification. According to the fire department, the pay is \$18/hour, and NYS retirement is available. The hours are 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday - Sunday, with no more than 20 hours per week.

How a 'Green' Foam Vehicle Helped Quell a Fiery I-95 Crash in CT

Katherine Lutge, The Hour, Norwalk, Conn.

With its foam-spraying vehicle, a local specialty chemical company answered Norwalk Fire Department's call for aid to help put out the massive fire caused by a tractor-trailer full of gasoline that was involved in a Thursday crash on Interstate-95.

Retired Norwalk Fire Captain Tim Morrisette received the call from his friend Ed McCabe, assistant chief-operations for Norwalk Fire Department, on his way to work at King Industries early Thursday morning.

“The vehicle is readily available for whenever it’s needed,” Morrissette explained. “Ed had given me a call... and I literally parked my vehicle and got in our quick response vehicle and headed to the highway, so under five minutes, we’re able to get the vehicle on scene.”

King Industries worked alongside Norwalk fire to contain the fire using their foam-spraying technology.

“We also had to call in our partner from King Industries, which has a brand new foam fighting vehicle,” said Gino Gatto, chief of Norwalk Fire Department, during a press conference at Norwalk’s City Hall Thursday morning. Foam is the best way to put out this type of fire, he said.

CHALLENGES:

Study Recommends Consolidated Fire Departments, One Fire District

Susan Smallheer, Brattleboro Reformer

A fire department study by the AP Triton Consulting has recommended Rockingham's three fire departments be consolidated into one, and a town wide fire district created.

The report, which was publicly discussed Tuesday night during a joint meeting of the Rockingham Select Board, the Bellows Falls Village Trustees and the Saxtons River Village Trustees, laid out several options and discussed several thorny perennial issues.

No action was taken after the lengthy presentation by John Stouffer of Triton, who appeared remotely to a roomful of firefighters and others in the Rockingham Town Hall Lower Theater.

Under the "one station" model outlined by Stouffer, firefighting costs would double, to about \$761,000 a year, largely due to hiring two fulltime firefighters.

The three boards voted to refer the study to the Rockingham Fire Equipment Committee, with the suggestion that the committee get back to the three boards at their next joint meeting at the end of June, if they can. But Saxtons River Village Trustee Matt Brennan, a member of the committee, said there was a lot of information in the report to digest to come up with a response by the end of June.

The fire committee, as it is sometimes called, is made up of the three fire chiefs — BF's Shaun McGinnis, Rockingham's Kevin Kingsbury and Saxtons River's Art Smith — as well as a representative from each of the three boards, along with Rockingham Town Manager Scott Pickup.

Another option outlined by Stouffer was to have the Rockingham and Saxtons River fire departments merge and build a new station at the Saxtons River Recreation Area on Pleasant Valley Road, with the station also serving as a community center.

Mike Furgat said his grandfather had given the land to the village for the recreation area, and he said he wasn't sure his grandfather's deed would allow a fire station on the land.

The report said that the Saxtons River station should be abandoned immediately, as its second story is in danger of collapse, although Stouffer only cited word of mouth as his source of information.

Amy Howlett, chairwoman of the Saxtons River Village Trustees, who chaired Tuesday night's meeting, said she had nothing "officially in writing" about the condition of the fire station. Saxtons River has been talking about building a new station for several years, citing its too-close location to the actual Saxtons River and its tight quarters.

"The AP Triton report is a thorough compilation of facts and figures about the three municipal fire departments. Given the financial challenges of purchasing fire equipment spread out through the town of Rockingham, the recommendations are helpful. I don't underestimate the emotional toll of bringing change to the many volunteers who have staffed local fire service for years," Howlett said Wednesday, after the meeting.

The various scenarios outlined in the Triton report would have the most dramatic effect on the Rockingham Volunteer Fire Department and the large section of rural Rockingham it serves, with response times growing dramatically.

One scenario would maintain the three fire stations, but with limited equipment in the outlying stations. The report also recommended hiring two fulltime firefighters to be based at the Bellows Falls station, with those new employees possibly sharing duties on the highway department as well.

Currently, both Rockingham and Saxtons River are staffed by volunteers, with the Bellows Falls department headed by a paid chief with paid on-call firefighters. A few years ago, Bellows Falls did away with its paid, fulltime fire department.

Rockingham Deputy Fire Chief Tim Jeffrey said the Rockingham department was founded in 1970 by a group of Rockingham residents because of the lack of firefighting response from Bellows Falls, noting that some homes burned as a result. He said the Triton report and recommendations would hurt rural Rockingham.

Stouffer said that both the Rockingham Volunteer Fire Department and the Saxtons River emergency response team (separate from the fire department) are non-profit entities that have no legal connection to the town of Rockingham. If the decision is made to form a fire district, the town must divorce itself from the Rockingham Volunteer Fire Department, he said.

None of the three fire chiefs could be reached Wednesday to comment on the lengthy report, which will be posted on the town's website, according to Pickup.

Career Departments Also Face Staffing/Funding Challenges

Stacy Parker, The Virginian-Pilot

An increase in overtime shifts has led to burnout for Virginia Beach firefighters, costing \$3.7 million last fiscal year, all the while more employees are leaving the department.

Fire Chief Ken Pravetz shared the struggle with the City Council last month. He **requested 140 new full-time positions** divided into two tiers including an initial immediate need of 60 positions for operations and training. **The salaries for all 60 positions would cost approximately \$5 million a year**, according to a February fire staffing assessment. “We cannot continue to force our employees to work these unreasonable hours,” Pravetz said at the April 2 meeting. “We’re at a breaking point.”

City Manager Patrick Duhaney has proposed adding 17 new firefighter recruits — an increase of \$1.7 million from the previous year — in the fiscal year 2025 budget. But after hearing from Pravetz and seeing the assessment, Mayor Bobby Dyer said Wednesday the number will be increased to a total of 30 firefighter positions in the new budget and more could be added at a later date.

Without a significant amount of new full-time positions, some of the Virginia Beach’s 21 fire stations will not be available to respond to emergencies, according to the city’s Office of Performance and Accountability assessment. **Virginia Beach uses voluntary and mandatory overtime to keep 130 firefighters working on any given day**, which is a standard based on the city’s population. Normal shifts are 24 hours. But in recent years, the fire department has seen more resignations and retirements and an increasing amount of overtime hours worked. **A total of 33 uniformed staff resigned from the department between fiscal year 2021 and 2023, which was 10 more than the previous three years combined**, according to the staffing report. Overtime costs have more than tripled over the last three years and are expected to top out at \$4.6 million in fiscal year 2024. Hiring more firefighters, compared to paying time-and-a-half for overtime, will ultimately save money, according an October report sent by Pravetz to the city manager. **Pravetz estimated hiring 35 firefighter recruits would save roughly a million dollars.**

One of the issues the department is facing is the transition to a younger workforce with the retirement of seasoned employees. It has led to mandatory overtime for the limited pool of firefighters who have experience driving apparatus. Also, there are not enough employees to cover shifts when people take vacation or sick leave, Pravetz said. The fire department’s \$80 million-plus budget is supported predominately by the General Fund. Federal and state aid cover roughly \$3.4 million. **The city employs 553 fire personnel including 375 firefighters**, according to the department’s 2023 annual report.

“It’s not enough,” Pravetz told the council during his departmental budget presentation April 2. “Staffing our apparatus has become a major challenge.” The City Council is poised to add more funding than originally proposed in the fiscal year 2025 budget to hire new firefighters. But the council’s recent rejection of collective bargaining for city employees — a vote that was prompted by fire department employees who wanted to negotiate better wages and working conditions — could make the recruitment process more challenging.

The city plans to conduct a market salary survey to see where Virginia Beach lands in terms of employee pay and enhance existing employee committees to require communication with the City Council, Dyer has said. “Maybe we’ll see some positive impact,” Pravetz said by phone Friday. “If we stay status quo, people may look other places.” The fire chief noted in the October report to the city manager that the department recently allowed employees to work up to 72 hours straight to offset the growing demand for mandatory overtime. He said the increased workload is “not sustainable.”

“If no one is coming to relive you, you’re getting forced to stay,” Pravetz said in an interview. “I’m just concerned about my firefighters’ health and well-being.”

From August 2022 to September 2023, 14 fire department employees worked more than 1,000 overtime hours. One logged more than 2,300 hours.

The long shifts are taking a toll. A fire department survey found that 58.9% of employees strongly agree they have missed important family or personal events due to overtime requirements. And 34% strongly agreed that working an increased number of overtime hours has negatively affected their work-life balance.

“As far as retention and the health and safety of the firefighters, 48-hour shifts are bad enough, but 72-hour shifts are absolutely unacceptable,” said Councilwoman Barbara Henley at a meeting April 23. “And this isn’t just being on-call; this is being on the job.”

Additional funding for the fire department and a host of other last-minute budget add-ons will be announced at Tuesday’s City Council meeting. A vote to adopt the final budget will held May 14.

[Carbondale \(PA\) City Council Votes To Outsource Paid Firefighters to Staffing Agency](#)

City firefighters opposed a decision Thursday night to outsource Carbondale’s paid firefighters to a staffing agency while city officials asserted the current system is unsustainable.

City council voted 5-2 during Thursday’s special meeting to enter into an agreement with the nonprofit Cottage Ambulance Foundation to provide Carbondale with an anticipated eight full-time and two part-time paid firefighters, although the foundation still has to vote to approve its end of the agreement Tuesday.

Unlike other towns in Lackawanna County, Carbondale uses both paid and volunteer firefighters. The city pays the drivers of its fire apparatus stationed at the Carbondale Fire Bureau next to City Hall at South Main Street and Sixth Avenue, and volunteer firefighters supplement the paid drivers when responding to emergencies. Carbondale would approve all firefighters before they work their first shifts, but Cottage has the sole ability to hire, discipline and terminate personnel. The firefighters would earn \$25 per hour.

Fire Chief John Chervanka, who spent 30-plus years as a volunteer firefighter in Carbondale before becoming chief in January, said his four remaining paid firefighters are working 36-hour shifts, which is “completely unsustainable.” However, he also has concerns about the agreement.

BEEFING UP THE RANKS

[***Pennsylvania Firefighter Campaign Aims To Recruit 100 Junior Firefighters In 7 Months*](#)

Maddie Seiler-The Sentinel

HARRISBURG, Pa. — At 16 years old, Nicholas Silcox volunteers as a junior member at Hampden Township Volunteer Fire Company, and the Capital Region Council of Governments is looking for 100 others like him. The organization kicked off its 100 Teens-to-Lifesavers Challenge at HACC Wednesday evening.

This initiative is designed to recruit 100 new junior members between 21 participating fire companies in the capital region by November of next year. The 100 Teens-to-Lifesavers Challenge comes as part of the council’s larger four-year firefighter recruitment campaign **funded by a \$2.2 million Federal Emergency Management Agency SAFER grant** that kicked off in 2022 and will run through 2025.

Pennsylvania Fire Commissioner Thomas Cook said he’s spent the last year traveling across the state to speak with fire and EMS agencies and believes fire services are “in a crisis.” **“Whether I’m talking to a volunteer organization, career organization or combination department, the most common themes I hear relate back to lack of resources, lack of resources to replace or repair outdated equipment, turnout gear, provide adequate training and more, and of course I hear about the lack volunteers,”** he said. **“One of the biggest challenges facing fire departments today is recruitment.”**

Each year, the campaign hopes to recruit 50 new volunteers, for a total of 200 new members by the time it concludes. [EDITOR’S NOTE: this program has a defined, realistic goal]

“Today, I’m happy to report that we have met and exceeded the original goal thus far in the grant program,” SAFER Grant Program Manager Scott Ryno said Wednesday. Since the campaign’s April 27, 2022, start, 129 volunteers have stepped up at the participating departments, he said.

With a prior recruitment competition between West Shore and East Shore companies and additional media campaigns, the council's newest initiative focuses on bringing more teens into the service, aided by Act 155 which passed last year. Nate Silcox, Nicholas' father, president of the Hampden Township Board of Commissioners and chair of the council's advisory committee, said the approval of the new state legislation ***allows junior firefighters to be trained on live fire burns at the age of 17 under the supervision of a credential state fire instructor*** and with the permission of their parents and fire chief.

"Up to this point, junior firefighters were ... able to take all firefighter one training except for live burns and this served as an impediment to completing their training," he said. The change will enable teens to get a head start on the certification process, allowing them to be trained and ready to help save lives by the time they turn 18, the council said in a news release. Nicholas said since joining Hampden Township's fire department, he's learned how to set up ladders and arrange hoses.

Caleb DuBose, 18, of New Cumberland, initially joined the New Cumberland Fire Department as a junior member last May as a joke after a friend recommended getting involved. After almost a year of service, he plans to go career. "It's a lot of work, but all the work that you put into it is super rewarding," he said. "It doesn't matter how big or small that reward is, the simple waves, the hellos, the thank you, it's so awesome to interact with everybody."

Nino Naurer, 17, a junior member with Progress Fire Company in Dauphin County, sees the value of recruiting more junior members through the campaign. "The older generation is phasing out, and with that, we're losing a lot of great knowledge and experience," he said. "We're struggling to get numbers, so if you're about it and you want to learn, it's definitely a great idea."

While the 100 Teens-to-Lifesavers Challenge targets junior members, departments continue to seek volunteers of all ages.

New Kingstown Fire Company benefited from some of that variety when dad and daughter Joden and Callie Yohn joined the department about three months ago. Joden Yohn said he wanted to join two years prior but Callie, 16, worried he'd get hurt. Then Callie started dating one of the members. "She decided she wanted to join," Joden Yohn said. "I wanted to already, so we kind of made that step together." Now, it's his turn to worry about her. "She can't go inside yet, but whenever we both decide we are able to go inside and she's able to, I know the father in me is going to come out and if it's gets too scary, too hairy in there I'm going to end up probably pulling her out and saying you're sitting this one," Joden Yohn said. Callie said it's "pretty meaningful" volunteering alongside her dad. "I'm really close to my dad," she said. "He knows basically everything about me, so it's great. I love working with him." Joden Yohn said the two do everything together from hunting to fishing. Now, they've added firefighting to the mix. "Just get out there and do it," Callie said.

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With Lieutenant Mike Scotto, Fire Department City of New York

Searching tactics are primarily thought of as an offensive action – moving in, checking behind doors, in closets, and numerous other areas. As we search, our concerns are focused on the search. Defensive tactics involve our escape plans, which are needed as we complete our search, but more importantly under extreme or emergency conditions. To make these tactics work, we must always have our strategy front and center. Both sides of the coin are in play all the time. In this three-hour program, students will examine strategy and tactics to gain a more concise understanding of the training necessary for search.

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- Saratoga County – September 14-15, Jonesville Fire District, REGISTRATION:
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VFIS TRAINING AND RESOURCE CATALOG 2023

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

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FF HEALTH AND SAFETY – TAKING CARE OF OUR MEMBERS!

IN 2024 WE HAVE EXPERIENCED 25 FIRE FIGHTER LODD'S

*According to FirefighterCloseCalls.com**

In 2023 we experienced 82 LODDs reported nationally.!

YOU NEVER KNOW!

- A Cleveland (OH) firefighter sustained serious injuries in a fire Monday, May 6, 2024, after a porch collapse. Multiple victims were also reportedly rescued from the fire in the 3600 block of West 102 street.
- Two firefighters from Prince William County, VA were hospitalized Thursday night following a collision resulting in an overturned ambulance in Woodbridge, fortunately, there were no patients onboard at the time.
- A Union City, GA firefighter was transported to the hospital after being shot late Wednesday night, according to officials. The shooting occurred just before midnight at Fire Station 2, officials have not disclosed the circumstances leading up to the shooting or provided an update on the condition of the injured firefighter.
- Capt. Derrick L. Nester, 43, responded to numerous calls on Sunday while he was working an overtime shift. The last one was a structure fire. He went home when his shift was over. When he did not show up for his regular tour of duty on the Monday evening, fellow firefighters were unable to contact him. The fire chief went to Nester's home and tragically found him deceased from a likely heart failure.

*****5 Firefighter Safety Issues We Shouldn't Still Be Talking About***

Robert Avsec

It's time to put these issues to rest once and for all – and start doing the right thing. What do you think sent up the red flags to OSHA?

[“A Little Less Talk and a Lot More Action”](#) was a popular 1993 song by country music performer Toby Keith. Hard to believe that it’s been 30 years.

It’s also hard to believe that there are still firefighter health and safety issues of roughly the same age that garner so much discussion even today. ***During the 30 or more years that some of the problems listed below have been on the fire service radar, how many firefighters have been killed or injured?*** How many firefighters have had their lives or careers ruined? How many millions of taxpayer dollars have been used to settle lawsuits?

It’s time we take definitive action on each of the following issues so we can finally, once and for all, stop debating and instead focus our energy on emerging safety issues.

5. SEATBELT USE IN FIRE APPARATUS

Why are firefighters still not buckling up 100% of the time when the vehicle they’re in is in motion? I don’t get it and neither does Dr. Burt Clark, who first began championing the effort to get firefighters to buckle up back 2006. Clark created the National Fire Service Seatbelt Pledge following the death of Firefighter Brian Hunton, who died after falling from his fire truck on the way to a call.

4. ON-SCENE ACCOUNTABILITY

Firefighter accountability has been a key component of NFPA 1500: Standard for Fire Department Occupational Safety and Health Program since its initial adoption in 1988 (currently in its 2021 edition). I wrote about this issue [back in 2017](#), arguing that, “Changing from an active to a passive system might solve the persistent issue of lack of accountability as a contributing cause to firefighter LODDs.”

Six years later, why are so many fire departments still not using a personnel accountability system? Why are many fire departments still using manual (i.e., active) personnel accountability systems that require the incident commander and individual firefighters and officers to act (e.g., bringing a “cow tag” or “passport” to the IC) when they arrive at an emergency? Haven’t we passed such antiquated methods?

Automation has played a crucial role in optimizing various processes for practically every industry. While many of these are meant to streamline business tasks and cut costs, there are some that provide even more intangible value, seeing as they have the potential to save lives, like those of firefighters! Cloud-based accountability systems bypass the first failure point of active systems by ensuring every firefighter is automatically entered in the system without disrupting the normal flow of activity on scene.

3. WEARING PROPER PPE

It’s still relatively commonplace to see pictures and videos on social media, and even in print, where firefighters are not wearing all their PPE, wearing it improperly, or not wearing it at all while actively engaged in emergency scene tasks. Why are incident commanders not unyielding in their enforcement of contaminant exposure control (CEC) measures once firefighters exit the hazard area?

In an article earlier this year, [“Risk a little to save a lot’: A new look at an old mantra,”](#) I posed the question: Is it time to reconsider the levels of risk in light of everything we now know about the exposure risks we face on the fireground? Six months after that article was posted, I submit that we are long past the time to “reconsider” the efficacy of CEC – it’s time to act.

2. CONDUCTING 360 SIZE-UPS AT STRUCTURE FIRES

We continue to see firefighters initiating an aggressive interior fire attack before the first-arriving firefighter or officer has completed a size-up of all four sides of the building using a thermal imaging camera. Why?

For too many fire departments, the default mode of fire suppression is an aggressive interior fire attack. Yet, the fire behavior research that’s been conducted by UL and NIST should have already influenced fire departments to replace that paradigm with one that focuses on controlling the flow path and employing a transitional fire attack, as promoted by the [International Society of Fire Service Instructors \(ISFSI\)](#), 9 years ago.

1. FIRE SERVICE CULTURE

Surprised? You shouldn’t be. Apologies to political strategist James Carville who coined the slogan, “It’s the economy, stupid!” when serving as a presidential campaign advisor. For today’s fire service, this might sound like this: “It’s the culture, stupid!”

If you look back over the previous four items, it should be clear that the persistent state of the fire service culture is the common denominator. It’s why firefighters don’t wear seatbelts, it’s why fire departments don’t use personnel

accountability systems, it's why incident commanders don't enforce CEC, and it's why 360 size-ups are not conducted on all structure fires before fire suppression operations begin.

In 2004, representatives of the of the major fire service constituencies gathered in Tampa, Florida, for the first Firefighter Safety Summit. These leaders recognized the power of culture when they made Culture Change #1 of the [16 Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives](#). So, why do we still have so many issues rooted in fire service culture approximately 20 years later?

Dr. Clark wrote in his 2016 book, ["I Can't Save You But I'll Die Trying: The American Fire Culture"](#):

Society needs to change how it thinks and feels about fire death. When a civilian is killed by fire, it is not an act of God, and when a firefighter is killed, it is not part of the job. When there is a fire death something went wrong. We must change to an Automatic Fire Protection Culture in the 21st century."

Dr. Clark later changed the title of his book in a subsequent printing. The new name: ["I Can't Save You And Don't Want to Die Trying: American Fire Culture."](#) When asked why, he explained:

It has taken me six years to find the courage to change the title of my book. It may not be courage; it may be coming to grips with my own mortality. The reality is I have fewer years in front of me than behind me. Being brave and courageous is not in my control. Telling my truth is."

Dr. Clark also changed the original cover photo, which showed the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial. "I struggled with that image then, what message does it send?" Clark said, adding, "Most people, even in the fire service, will not recognize the picture on the cover of this new edition. It is the rock to commemorate the National Fire Academy campus dedication on Oct. 8, 1979, in Emmitsburg, Maryland. The inscription on the rock is a phrase from Public Law 93-498-Oct. 29, 1974, creating the NFA, "to advance the professional development of fire service personnel and others engaged in fire prevention and control."

In my mind, Dr. Clark is a microcosm of the larger macro shift needed in fire service culture. Like the good doctor, we can change on an individual level. But research has shown that true cultural change happens when a large enough group adopts a new "normal" that replaces the current "normal." And how does that happen?

In a study from 2016, *Situational Pressures that Influence Firefighters' Decision Making about Personal Protective Equipment: A Qualitative Analysis*, Maglio and colleagues found two factors that heavily influence a firefighter's ability to adopt a new normal: individual will and organizational solidarity. When fire department leaders regularly provide good training and education regarding acceptable safety practices and the potential risks associated with firefighting, they strengthen a firefighter's individual will. They also found that **organizational solidarity** was a powerful tool for showing that a firefighter's leaders promote and embrace the organization's safety policies.

FINAL THOUGHTS

This list, though not all-inclusive—is about the common safety issues that should be no-brainers at this point. We've been talking and writing about these five safety issues for too many years. That reality is borne out by how many times these issues continue to show up in media reports, on social media, and in NIOSH LODD reports – even though we have identified the problems and developed solutions and have had them for many years. We just don't act on them.

NIOSH Offers Suggestions after Probe of Deadly Incident on Lubbock, TX, Interstate

Firehouse.com News

NIOSH has made several recommendation's following a probe into a highway incident in 2020 that left two Lubbock firefighters and a police officer dead.

On Jan. 11, 2020, crews were on the scene of a collision when a vehicle spun out of control and struck two firefighters and a police officer.

Lubbock Officer Nicholas Reyna, 27, was pronounced dead at the scene while Fire Lt. David Eric Hill, 39, died at a hospital shortly after the incident. Firefighter Paramedic Matthew Dawson, 30, died on Nov. 27, 2023.

NIOSH investigators spoke with firefighters who also were on the scene of the crash as they compiled their report.

Among their recommendations include

- **Fire departments should develop pre-incident plans regarding deployment for highway/roadway incidents.** These pre-incident plans should include establishing a temporary traffic control zone, maintaining scene safety, and proper traffic control for highway/roadway emergency work zones

- Fire departments should ensure that a **continuous scene size-up and risk assessment is conducted** and are continuously assessed and managed throughout a highway/roadway emergency incident. This creates and ensures a functional incident action plan.
- Fire departments should **ensure incident commanders forecast the direction of the incident early on**, in order to build an incident action plan (IAP). **Forecasting should be a continuous process until all resources have cleared the incident scene**
- *Fire departments should ensure that incident commanders utilize traffic incident management (TIM) procedures. Fire departments should participate in local, regional, and state TIM response protocols with law enforcement, public works departments, and state department of transportation*
- Fire departments should ensure that all members **receive annual training for conducting emergency operations at highway/roadway emergency incidents**. Training should include identifying the lack of median barriers and the potential for crossovers.
- Fire departments should ensure that incident commanders **appoint a safety officer when operating at a highway/roadway emergency incident**
- Fire departments should utilize a digital alerting system to notify civilian drivers by vehicle navigation applications that they are approaching both enroute and on-scene emergency vehicles.
- Governing municipalities (federal, state, regional, and local) should consider installing median barriers that separate opposing traffic on a divided highway that are prone to crossovers or frequent crashes. Fire departments should support this process based upon their deployment and response to divided highways.

NIOSH Releases Probe of '20 Fatal Incident at Mount Holly Springs, PA

Susan Nicol

On March 9, 2020, a Pennsylvania firefighter was killed when a porch collapsed on him.

Citizen's Fire Company Firefighter Jerome Guise, 34, was pronounced dead at the scene after he was struck and pinned by heavy timbers.

Investigators with NIOSH determined that a chief, after hearing a noise, heard a noise in the front yard, walked to Side Alpha. He noticed the porch roof had collapsed and saw a handline sticking out. He immediately called a Mayday at 1:44 a.m. for a firefighter down.

"The porch roof was made of heavy timber and could not be lifted by hand. The columns supporting the porch roof were made of powdered aluminum. The fire caused the columns to melt and split, which led to the columns failing.

Firefighters immediately started removing debris and putting the fire out around the front porch to locate the trapped firefighter," according to the [report](#).

Some crawled under the debris and located his hand. He was pulled out at 1:56 in cardiac arrest. Despite resuscitate efforts, he was pronounced dead at 2:20 a.m.

Following an investigation, NIOSH officials have determined several factors that contributed to the incident.

Also included in the report are a number of recommendations.

- **Fire departments should ensure the strategy and incident action plan, based upon the scene size-up and risk assessment, are communicated to all responding resources by the first arriving fire department resource. This includes communicating any hazard zones and defined collapse zones or exclusion zones at defensive fires**
- **Fire departments should ensure that company officers and firefighters maintain crew integrity during fireground operations**
- **Fire departments should ensure that all members utilize the principles of operational risk management at all incidents**
- **Fire departments should ensure that firefighters are trained to understand building performance under fire conditions and the potential for structural collapse**
- **Fire departments should train fire officers and firefighters on the principles of situational awareness**
- **Fire departments should ensure that incident commanders incorporate command safety into the incident management system during fireground operations**
- **Fire departments should ensure that all companies are operating based upon the assignment given by the incident commander. The Task-Location-Objective assignments should be communicated over the radio**

- Fire departments should review their personnel accountability system standard operating procedure (SOP)/standard operating guideline (SOG) to ensure that accountability is maintained at each operational level
- Fire departments should provide a Mayday tactical worksheet for incident commanders in the event of a Mayday
- Fire departments should require all members engaged in fireground operations participate in annual proficiency training and evaluation. This verifies essential qualifications and competencies of its members to operate on the fireground.

Students Hospitalized After Carbon Monoxide Incident at CA Middle School

Robert Salonga, Bay Area News Group

Emergency personnel were dispatched to a middle school Wednesday morning when several students and at least one adult experienced respiratory distress after encountering “elevated levels” of carbon dioxide in a classroom, according to the San Jose Fire Department.

The medical call was made at 9:03 a.m. and involved Sunrise Middle School on East Julian Street, the fire department said.

SJFD spokesperson Jake Pisani said that several rescuers went to the school to examine and treat the patients, who were in a science classroom containing the elevated carbon dioxide levels, **which might have been produced by an unspecified chemical mixture**. The exposure caused some students at least one adult to report symptoms including difficulty breathing and an itchy throat.

The source of the carbon dioxide was removed from the classroom, and at 10:24 a.m., the fire department said that most of the patients’ symptoms were “resolving,” but that two children were taken to a hospital for further evaluation. The other affected children were released to their parents or guardians.

The department added that its hazardous materials team “also checked for numerous other airborne contaminants, all of which were negative,” and examined an adjacent classroom and found no contaminants. Pisani said there should be no lingering effects from the morning incident.

Nassau County Fire Service Academy Instructor Survives After Training Session Goes Up In Flames

An instructor is recovering from some serious burns after an accident during a training exercise at the Nassau County Fire Academy. The fire, which happened Thursday morning, is considered an accident. It happened at the Nassau County Fire Service Academy during a set up for a training exercise on a mock boat-like ship. Fire officials say that combustible liquids that are used to spark fires during their live exercises ignited too soon. "As they were setting up to get ready for the live fire portion of that training, there were combustible liquids that were ignited causing a flash fire," Nassau County Chief Fire Marshal Michael Uttaro said. The good news is that the fire service academy instructor is expected to survive. He was transported to Nassau University Medical Center in East Meadow, which is the primary burn center, immediately after the incident.

BUILDING & FIRE CODE ISSUES – WHY ARE THEY IMPORTANT TO YOU?

SNAPSHOT WEEKLY FIRE FATALITY DATA AS REPORTED BY THE MEDIA

****The Case Against Single-Exit-Stairwell Buildings**

Greg Rogers, Sean DeCane

In the ongoing discourse that surrounds fire safety standards, allowing single-exit stairwells for mid-rise buildings has emerged as a contentious issue. Advocates argue for adopting this approach to streamline construction and reduce costs, particularly in the realm of affordable housing. However, **the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) and the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) stand in staunch opposition to this proposal, asserting that it compromises the safety of both occupants and firefighters.**

What follows are the multifaceted implications of single-exit stairwells, drawing upon research, practical considerations and the experiences of fire service professionals.

AESTHETICS OVER SAFETY

At the heart of the debate lies the tension between aesthetic design and public safety. **Currently, numerous states are considering legislation that would permit an end-around on the safety requirements in the national consensus building code process. (Including New York State)** This would permit residential occupancies, hotels, motels, condominiums and dormitories, among others, to incorporate one stairwell instead of a minimum of two and raise building height to six stories. **The current safety standards require two means of egress when these occupancies are built taller than three stories.**

Proponents of single-exit stairwells argue that the concept offers a solution to high housing prices and promotes innovative architectural design. However, fire service organizations contend that such concessions never should come at the expense of public safety. Although creativity in construction is commendable, it must not compromise the fundamental principle of protecting human life. ***The fire service emphasizes that aesthetics should complement, rather than supersede, life-safety requirements that are outlined in established building codes.***

FIREFIGHTING OPERATIONS

Central to the IAFC and IAFF's opposition to single-exit stairwells is the single-exit stairwell's detrimental effect on firefighting operations. Dual staircases are pivotal in facilitating efficient firefighting strategies, including staged hose deployment and controlled evacuation routes. In contrast, single-exit stairwells present formidable challenges to firefighters, including hindering their ability to combat fires effectively and to evacuate occupants safely. This potentially places firefighters in a very challenging position. Do they delay fire suppression operations to evacuate occupants? Do they remove occupants via ground and/or aerial ladders and commence suppression operations? Do they ask residents to remain in place? Each of these options increases risks to the occupant and to firefighters, **because fleeing occupants and firefighting operations won't occur safely or efficiently in the same stairwell.**

Single-exit stairwells only introduce unnecessary risks and significantly jeopardize the safety of both responders and those who they seek to protect: the people who are the occupants of the building.

Proponents of the single stairwell have highlighted the capability of the fire service to evacuate occupants through the deployment of ground and aerial ladders as an option for a secondary means of egress. However, as firefighters, we understand that deploying and using any ladder on an emergency scene increases risks. Even firefighters who trained on and used ladders throughout their career are at risk of falling from the ladder and at increased risk of being struck by falling debris from the building that's on fire. *Introducing onto a ladder an occupant who has no training, who is under duress and who potentially is compromised by exposure to high levels of carbon monoxide invites disaster.*

SPACE OF STAIRWELLS

Claims that are made that single-exit stairwells offer substantial space savings are debunked on closer examination. Practical assessments reveal that the space that's required to incorporate secondary staircases is minimal compared with the footprint of the overall building. ***Arguments that suggest significant space gains to be used for additional dwelling units haven't been substantiated with comparative design proposals.*** The negligible effect of exit stairwells on usable floor space should be underscored, and the importance of prioritizing safety over short-term cost considerations should be emphasized.

PREVIOUS RESEARCH

Previous research and articles provide valuable insights into the importance of dual staircases for effective emergency response. Designating one stairwell for evacuation and the other for firefighting operations enhances efficiency and safety during emergencies. Single-exit stairwells lack this crucial capability, compromising both occupant evacuation and firefighting efforts. Relying on ground and aerial ladders as a second means of egress also further delays the ability of occupants to egress safely under emergency conditions.

This kind of proposal also fails to consider the fire load and types of fires that the fire service sees today (e.g., large amounts of plastic materials, lithium-ion batteries and micro mobility devices).

History has demonstrated the hazards when an occupancy has a means of egress that's compromised. ***On 9/11, efforts by FDNY to ascend stairs were challenging as the building's occupants utilized a narrowed stairwell to evacuate the building.***

London's Grenfell Tower was built with a single stairwell. With the failure of multiple building safety designs, the stairwell served as the fire brigade's point of operations and the primary means of egress for occupants who couldn't use a protection-in-place strategy. Seventy-two people died.

These are examples from high-rise buildings, but incidents in Philadelphia and New York City also highlight loss-of-life incidents that involved one stairwell in mid-rise buildings.

A nonfire event in Chicago resulted in 21 deaths when the occupants of a nightclub tried to exit using one stairwell after a security guard used pepper spray. This caused panic throughout the crowd.

Fire and other emergencies can result in loss of life if there is only one exit, but an additional lesson is that building systems fail. Buildings can't be designed with a reliance on one protection feature. Buildings must be designed with secondary safety features to protect the occupants and responders.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The fire service unequivocally should oppose the adoption of single-exit-stairwell buildings. The IAFC and IAFF urge state governments and legislators to uphold existing fire safety standards, which mandate multiple means of egress for mid-rise buildings. Retaining secondary exits is essential to ensure firefighter safety, occupant evacuation and effective fire response. ***Furthermore, the IAFC and IAFF advocate for adherence to established building codes, which follow a consensus process that's recognized by the American National Standards Institute that emphasizes the importance of public safety in all decision-making processes.***

Further discussions should highlight the potential consequences of proposed legislative changes. Although aimed at reducing housing costs, such changes inadvertently could increase construction expenses and compromise fire safety standards. The need for informed decision-making and collaborative engagement with stakeholders to safeguard community welfare should be emphasized.

By advocating for measures that balance the need for fire safety and appropriate building design, stakeholders can ensure the well-being of both occupants and emergency responders.

LESSONS LEARNED

The IAFC and IAFF reaffirm their unwavering commitment to advocating for fire safety standards that prioritize the protection of lives and property. Single-exit stairwells represent a dangerous departure from established norms, with far-reaching implications for occupant and firefighter safety.

By upholding rigorous building codes and resisting the allure of expediency, stakeholders can ensure that buildings stand as bastions of security, safeguarding the welfare of all who inhabit them.

Let us heed the lessons of the past and prioritize safety above all else, for in doing so, we honor the legacy of those who have dedicated their life to protecting others.

We urge all fire service members and representatives to send a strong message to their state legislators that compromising safety for dubious gains isn't acceptable.

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: Our fire problem would not be 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	22
Last fire death 5/7/24 Ossining, Westchester Co. 35yo Male	
Fire Deaths in any type of Dwelling in NYS	50
Fire Deaths in 1&2 Family Dwellings Nationally	550
Top 3 States with the greatest 1&2 Family Deaths	#1 PA/44
	#2 TX/32
	#3 NC/25
There has been a total of 0919 civilian home fire fatalities in 2024	
There were a total of 2127 residential fire fatalities reported in 2023 in the US media.	
Both the states of Maryland and California require sprinklers in residential dwellings	

HAPPENING IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Gansevoort Fire Company Breakfast

Sunday May 19th and Sunday June 16th Father's Day from 8am to 11am

LAUGH OUT LOUD

In general, I don't believe in child labor. But sometimes they're the only ones who can figure out what's wrong with my computer!!

and one more:

Thinking back to the 70's when "a new hip joint" meant a cool place to go on a Friday night, now it has a whole new meaning.

CLASSIFIED – FOR SALE – JOB OPENINGS

CAFDA OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

2024 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, Fred Richards Commissioner Harmony Corners/Saratoga, Joyce Petkus Treasurer Greenfield/Saratoga, Ed Woehrlle Commissioner Niskayuna #1/Schenectady and Mike Podolec Commissioner West Glenville/Schenectady

Secretary Lisa Diemer, Deputy Treasurer, Northumberland Fire District

Treasurer: Tony Hill

Sargent at Arms: Tom Wood, Commissioner, Northumberland Fire District

Chaplain: Fred Richards, Commissioner, Harmony Corners Fire District

Legal Counsel: Greg Serio, Safety Officer, Verdoy Fire District

The Capital Area Association represents any fire district that wishes to join CAFDA. Fire District Officials include Commissioners, Treasurers, and Deputy Treasurers. Secretaries and Chiefs are also invited to participate!

Please advise your secretaries that all correspondence should be mailed to:

CAFDA PO Box 242 East Schodack, NY 12063

[EMAIL TREASURER: TREASURER@CAFDA.NET](mailto:TREASURER@CAFDA.NET)

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.

CAPITAL AREA BUSINESS PARTNER'S

PLEASE SUPPORT THOSE WHO SUPPORT US!!

Business Partner Applications Available At: WWW.CAFDA.NET

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

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

LEGAL SERVICES



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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.

YOU CAN BECOME AN INDIVIDUAL 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.

FOR A MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION OR A BUSINESS PARTNER APPLICATION GO TO THE FOLLOWING LINK:

<https://cafda.net/membership-info/>

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

CURRENT CAFDA CALENDAR

Capital Area Meetings/Seminars/Trainings/Conference Dates (As of 1/3/2024 - Subject to Change)				
Day/Date	Time	Type	Location	Notes
2024				
Thursday, April 25 - Saturday April 27, 2024	Per Schedule	CAFDA Conference	Fort William Henry Conference Center	Lake George
Thursday, May 9, 2024	7:00 PM	General Membership Mtg.	Clifton Park	
Thursday, June 13, 2024	7:00 PM	General Membership Mtg.	Clifton Park	
Thursday, July 11, 2024	7:00 PM	Board of Directors Meeting	Clifton Park	
Friday, August 9, 2024	1:00 PM	Membership Activity	Saratoga Race Course	NYRA Day at the Races!
AUGUST				
NO MEETING				
Thursday, September 12, 2024	7:00 PM	General Membership Mtg.	Clifton Park	
Thursday, October 10, 2024	7:00 PM	General Membership Mtg.	Clifton Park	Officers/Director Nominations
Saturday, November 2, 2024	8:00 AM	Fall Workshop	Verdoy	
Thursday, November 14, 2024	7:00 PM	General Membership Mtg.	Clifton Park	Officer/Director Elections
DECEMBER				
NO MEETING				
2025				
Saturday, January 4, 2025	9:00 AM	General Membership Mtg.	Clifton Park	Organizational/Morning Meeting

2025 DRAFT CAFDA CALENDAR

Capital Area Meetings/Seminars/Trainings/Conference Dates (As of 5/8/2024 - Subject to Change)				
2025				
Saturday, January 4, 2025	9:00 AM	General Membership Mtg.	Clifton Park	Organizational/Morning Meeting
Saturday, February 1, 2025	8:00 AM	Commissioner Training	Averill Park	Snowdate - Sunday, February 2, 2024
Thursday, February 13, 2025	7:00 PM	General Membership Mtg.	Clifton Park	
		Financial Training for Fire District Officials		TBD
Saturday, March 1, 2025	8:00 AM	Commissioner Training	Clifton Park	Snowdate - Sunday, March 2, 2025
Saturday, March 8, 2025	5:00 PM	Officer Installation	Century House	
Thursday, March 13, 2025	7:00 PM	General Membership Mtg.	Clifton Park	
Saturday, March 29, 2025	8:00 AM	Commissioner Training	Berkshire FD	Snowdate - Sunday, March 30, 2025
Saturday, April 5, 2025	8:00 AM	Commissioner Training	Warrensburg FD	Snowdate - Sunday, April 6, 2025
Thursday, April 3, 2025	7:00 PM	Board of Directors Meeting	Clifton Park	
Thursday, April 10 - Saturday April 12, 2025		CAFDA Conference	Fort William Henry Conference Center	Lake George
Thursday, May 8, 2025	7:00 PM	General Membership Mtg.	Clifton Park	
Thursday, June 12, 2025	7:00 PM	Board of Directors Meeting	Clifton Park	
Thursday, July 10, 2025	7:00 PM	Board of Directors Meeting	Clifton Park	
Friday, August 8, 2025	1:00 PM	Membership Activity	Saratoga Race Course	NYRA Day at the Races!
AUGUST				
NO MEETING				
Thursday, September 11, 2025	7:00 PM	General Membership Mtg.	Clifton Park	
Wednesday, October 8, 2025	7:00 PM	General Membership Mtg.	Clifton Park	Officers/Director Nominations
Saturday, November 1, 2025	8:00 AM	Fall Workshop	Verdoy	5 Saturdays in November
Saturday, November 8, 2025				
Thursday, November 13, 2025	7:00 PM	General Membership Mtg.	Clifton Park	Officer/Director Elections
DECEMBER				
NO MEETING				
2026				
Saturday, January 3, 2026	9:00 AM	General Membership Mtg.	Clifton Park	Organizational/Morning Meeting

OSHA INFORMATION SUPPLEMENT

NEWEST INFORMATION ALWAYS AT THE TOP IN RED

NVFC TACKLES OSHA PROPOSED STANDARD

The National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC) held its annual board of directors meeting on April 25-27 in Arlington, VA. Sixty-eight directors from 43 states were in attendance. The board conducted Council business, held committee meetings, heard from guest speakers, and honored its achievement award recipients. A pressing issue addressed during the meeting was the proposed OSHA Emergency Response Standard.

Committees and Sessions

Several of the NVFC's committees met on a range of issues including hazmat response, wildland, recruitment and retention, legislative, membership, and health, safety, and training. The EMS/Rescue Section also held its bi-annual meeting. In addition, general sessions were held with the full board to discuss matters of national and state interest, vote on issues before the board, and provide input and strategic direction for the organization.

OSHA Task Force

The NVFC board created a task force to address concerns around the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) proposed Emergency Response Standard, which is intended to replace the 44-year-old Fire Brigade Standard. If enacted in its current form, the standard will place new requirements on fire and emergency services that will be burdensome, and in many cases impossible, for volunteer departments to comply with. This would have a devastating impact on local volunteer departments, forcing many to close or else operate outside of the federal standard, leaving them open to fines, citations, and huge civil liability exposure.

The board adopted a "call to action" statement on the issue and directed the newly formed task force to create a landing page with resources and tools to help responders understand the issue and submit a comment to OSHA during the public comment period. The NVFC is also working on developing its comment prior to the June 21 deadline. Learn more, read the statement, and access the public comment guide at <https://www.nvfc.org/osha-standard>

*****Important Update from Dave Denniston...Please Read...Please Act!!**

Extremely important status update. May 1, 2024: My friends through the hard work and dedication of several individuals and our friends in Congress, I am happy to report that we have put an initial knock on this fire and we ARE being heard. Having said that, ***we have a long hard fight ahead.***

OSHA has now agreed to extend the comment period. Only 45 days, but it is a start. They have also agreed to in-person hearings. Virtual format, but it is a start. There will also be an additional written comment period after the hearings. It's a start.

We have our seat at the table! We can now roll up our sleeves and eat this beast one bite at a time, or we can dribble gravy down the front of our shirts and look like idiots hoping someone else will do it for us, the choice is yours.

This fire will quickly rekindle if we fail to do some immediate salvage and overhaul.

- 1) We need to flood the portal! You need to read the rule and make meaningful comments. What is doable, what needs to be tweaked? You NEED to tell YOUR story. What will the cost be? What is not possible? Where are the pain points? What can and can't you do? June 21st is not far away. WE NEED YOUR HELP NOW!
- 2) We need to take a serious look at how we do business. We are doing stupid and dangerous things. The days of the "wild west" fire department are behind us. The days of misplaced pride, tradition, and sacred cows are over. Period. What can each of us do today to reduce injuries and deaths? Here is a novel idea, stop at negative right of way intersections. Stop driving these million-dollar rigs like they are stock cars. They are not! Grow the hell up and understand that. Sorry, I'll get off the soap box, but much more on that later.
- 3) *One message was clear from Congress and our state officials over the last 90 days. We heard over and over how we need to look at our structure. We need to offer alternatives and suggestions. We are not delivering fire service in a completely effective manner. I am not talking about closing firehouses and hiring all paid people. However, we do need to look at cases where we have 10 separate entities in one small town. Folks this is not effective, efficient, or sustainable. It's time to wake up and smell the coffee.*

4) We need to have uncomfortable conversations. We need to think outside of the way we have always done it. We need to, oh my god he is going to say it, "CHANGE".

Here we are kids. We raised our voices, and we were heard! This thing, however, is not going away. Be part of the solution. Roll up your sleeves and climb on board. Those just sitting in the corner throwing grenades are NOT the answer. We have gotten to this point, we are being heard, but we have so much work to do in a short period of time. We have never turned our backs and walked away from a fire, don't walk away from this.

I hope you will join me in taking the next steps. If you're not willing to help, do us all a favor. Pop open a beer and go join your local cornhole league. Have fun and enjoy life.

If you truly call yourself a firefighter, let's get in there and tackle this beast together. We have way too much invested to not finish this project!

Are you in? I am 110% invested. Are you willing to help? Please share with others.

Upcoming Webinars & In-Person Informational Sessions regarding the Proposed OSHA 1910.156 Regulations

WEDNESDAY, May 15th: OSHA 1910.156 Information Session (Cortland)

Please join us for an in-person seminar where we'll be discussing what we know about the proposed OSHA 1910.156 Regulations. This is an opportunity for you to come and engage in discussion and ask your questions regarding the proposed legislation.

Registration Required

REGISTRATION LINK: <https://forms.office.com/r/ZyA3zzdaVu>

Location: McNeil & Company Hub, 11 Main St. Cortland, NY **Time:** 7:00 to 9:00 pm **Register:** [Click Here](#)

WEDNESDAY, May 29th: OSHA 1910.156 Update: What You Need to Know (Westchester & Rockland)

The proposed new OSHA standard will bring significant changes in how we deliver fire and EMS services in NYS. In this session we will discuss the history of OSHA 1910.156. We will look at what changes this could mean for your department and talk about how to formulate a public comment and file it. *Open to all.*

Location: Rockland County Fire Training Center, 35 Firemen's Memorial Drive, Pomona, NY **Time:** 7:00pm

MONDAY, June 10th: OSHA Regulations Seminar (Herkimer)

The Herkimer County Fire Chief's Association is sponsoring an OSHA Regulations Seminar. Our speaker will be David Denniston, 2nd Vice President, AFDSNY, Past Chief of Cortlandville Fire Dept., Commissioner of Virgil Fire District. And he was just appointed to the National Volunteer Fire Council Task Force on OSHA. *Registration Required*

Location: Herkimer College, Stribel Auditorium Lou Ambers Blvd. Herkimer, NY **Time:** 7:00 to 9:00

EMAIL REGISTRATIONS TO: herkcofirechiefs@gmail.com Please include: Agency Name, Contact Person, Phone Number, and number of personnel attending.



OSHA Proposed Standard: NVFC Issues Statement, Offers Resources for Comments

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration is replacing its 44-year-old Fire Brigade Standard with the proposed new Emergency Response Standard. While the National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC) agrees that several of the proposed provisions would be helpful and improve the safety of emergency responders, we are opposed to the implementation of the rule in its current state as it will place new requirements on emergency service organizations that would be impossible for many volunteer departments to fully comply with.



Call To Action

We are sounding the alarm **for all firefighters, EMS providers, and their communities** to flood the public comment portal by the **June 21 deadline** to let OSHA and our elected officials know that this proposal would have disastrous effects on your communities.

READ CALL TO ACTION AT THIS LINK:

https://gma5qspab.cc.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=001L6aLm-Ax7THBUrMdNSMphNIFj1WWWXRRzYxdUshoNVzVUKCq2FflyoxhE-AybLw8OQP-7Of7SifLSRFvxOG1pzfa46MOPTNHZxVkiIPFFyQdJ1Lkq2V9HXaUgH_YlP9bEtfHvUbVwU0bhcy8DITVXSz27f0x6RhFUNtscpAU2su0YeJYoyFolrdVsp2bKB1RrfDRym88iw1NtivKoA2pfmQvhQeH9ZII69XWoimKiMyqUiS_ISqiZAT6WXuAU6hG6oPq4Y0wMwp2XOp63z9-mTl8umAAUIbUG&c=LauWWHLcf9ha42GymhqekGbW4yjuTH862UfuVJahY7fFHeGl_qUJw==&ch=lefmM7sGv75CYvgpTK9dENyqA1Rv5PwzXZ1xIkZP-JITscwLK8iGsQ==

Landing Page with Resources

The NVFC has created a landing to provide resources to help members of the fire and emergency services and the public better understand the issue and submit a public comment by June 21. This includes an outline of the proposed standard, comment guide, and recorded webinars. This page will be updated periodically with new resources and information.

LANDING PAGE LINK HERE:

https://gma5qspab.cc.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=001L6aLm-Ax7THBUrMdNSMphNIFj1WWWXRRzYxdUshoNVzVUKCq2FflyoxhE-AybLw8OnamjN0BiBpzyC-pPzLiiYEvhxQ9sAxH0UIN-rMeW-UojESkwKkPdMRzXK8VXBP-Sh4YQDWc0PjEksA9BGQCOh6lo_AGJ2vqW1b4iSBqWLS=&c=LauWWHLcf9ha42GymhqekGbW4yjuTH862UfuVJahY7fFHeGl_qUJw==&ch=lefmM7sGv75CYvgpTK9dENyqA1Rv5PwzXZ1xIkZP-JITscwLK8iGsQ==

Webinar: Update from OSHA on the Proposed Emergency Response Standard

Attend this NVFC webinar on **THURSDAY, May 9 at 2pm** ET to hear from OSHA staff about how volunteers would be impacted by this standard and what you can do to make your voice heard.

REGISTER FOR WEBINAR HERE:

https://gma5qspab.cc.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=001L6aLm-Ax7THBUrMdNSMphNIFj1WWWXRRzYxdUshoNVzVUKCq2FflyoxhE-AybLw8OuorDrXr2IToZDLtXqpO8jsPZsEcNvhceAz6IsYRrWvFAAI7rjBUnQ2hQGeGyb0V4He5RmF33sfa_ISNcaU7P2gLBcAzgTzDbk1eBGzvvAR_PY-0LZ1K2ctTDKtJ6RU55CcB0qOezxEUzSwfS0B6zCbXYwlkMEiqBaJPyeY0Lu2s=&c=LauWWHLcf9ha42GymhqekGbW4yjuTH862UfuVJahY7fFHeGl_qUJw==&ch=lefmM7sGv75CYvgpTK9dENyqA1Rv5PwzXZ1xIkZP-JITscwLK8iGsQ==

More States Coming On Board!

Its important to note that we are finally seeing some breakthrough with other states being aware of the proposed changes to the Standard and moving toward comment; including South Carolina, Maine, Illinois, Michigan, and Texas.

The following is an excellent read and something to ponder:

POSITION PAPER AND FORMAL RESPONSE TO OSHA FROM THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE FIREFIGHTER'S ASSOCIATION: CLICK THE LINK HERE:

<https://cafda.net/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Final-Draft-SC-FF-Assoc-OSHA-Response-Letter.docx>



OSHA NEEDS TO HEAR FROM YOU REGARDING THEIR PROPOSED EMERGENCY RESPONSE STANDARD

On February 5, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) published a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) to modernize the agency's "Fire Brigades" standard with a proposed new "Emergency Response Standard." This NPRM's publication triggered the beginning of a public comment period that is scheduled to conclude June 21, 2024.

Anyone, organization or individual, is encouraged to **submit**

comments (<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2024/02/05/2023-28203/emergency-response-standard>)

to OSHA during this this public comment period (ignore the May 6 deadline as it has been extended to June 21).

Reading through the NPRM, it is clear OSHA does not have an accurate understanding of the nation's volunteer fire service and there are several new requirements that would be very burdensome, and in many cases impossible, for

volunteer fire departments to comply with in this proposed standard. Nothing in this proposed standard is final at this stage, and now is your opportunity to explain to OSHA what you believe should be changed in the proposed standard and why.

As of April 22, there have been 692 comments submitted to OSHA regarding the proposed Emergency Response Standard; however, many of these comments are ineffective and will likely not do anything to encourage OSHA to change this proposed standard. The reason for this is many of the submitted comments are form letters or simply state that the proposed standard is too burdensome with no information or context explaining why.

To be effective, your comments need to explain to OSHA exactly what provisions in the proposed standard are too burdensome and why. Your comments should also describe your department to OSHA: How many people are in your department? What's your budget? What's the area you serve like? Do you have the funds to comply with this proposed standard? Do you have the staffing to comply with this proposed standard? How would your area be negatively impacted if your department had to shut down due to this standard? Does your department rely on fundraising for much of your income? If so, how many pancake breakfasts, raffles, or spaghetti dinners would you need to hold to comply with this proposed standard? Would your municipality be able to assist you in covering the costs of this proposed standard? If not, why? What alternatives to this proposed standard should OSHA consider to improve the safety of volunteer departments? Is your department a nonprofit department?

The National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC) understands that this NPRM is long and very time consuming to understand, that is why we have assembled a [comment guide](https://www.nvfc.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/NVFC-Comment-Guide-OSHA-Standard.pdf) (chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.nvfc.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/NVFC-Comment-Guide-OSHA-Standard.pdf) and accompanying [outline](https://www.nvfc.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/OSHA-Emergency-Response-Outline.pdf) (chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.nvfc.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/OSHA-Emergency-Response-Outline.pdf) to provide you with guidance on how to draft effective comments. The comment guide also contains links to other helpful resources like a [Roundtable Talk](#) the NVFC did regarding the proposed Emergency Response Standard.

Additionally, the NVFC is in the process of drafting our own comments on OSHA's proposed Emergency Response Standard. Please fill out [this survey](#) so we can submit the most informed comments possible to OSHA.

Template to present to your County Board of Supervisors: A Resolution Advocating Against OSHA Reforms for NYS Firefighters

Make the corrections and replacement where you see the blue text.

<https://cafda.net/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Draft-OSHA-Reform-County-Resolution-20240417.doc>

Federal Legislation Introduced Mandating a Phased In Approach

A BILL

To amend the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 to clarify the clarify the process that the Secretary shall use in promulgating and implementing regulations containing more than five individual directives and govern fire or emergency services.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Emergency Response Standard Implementation Reform Act of 2024."

SEC. 2. PHASED IN IMPLEMENTATION OF STANDARDS WITH FIVE OR MORE DIRECTIVES GOVERNING FIRE OR EMERGENCY SERVICES.

Section 655(b) of the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 (29 U.S.C. § 655) is amended –

(1) By designating paragraph (5) as subparagraph (5)(A);

(2) By inserting, in paragraph (5), after subparagraph (A), as so designated, the following:

“(B) In promulgating any standards amending five or more sections of a regulation governing fire or emergency services, the Secretary shall utilize a phased-in implementation of such standards, based on prioritization schedule of such sections issued by the Secretary, under which the effective date of each successive section of a regulation shall not take effect until at least 180 days after the effective date that such previous standard took effect. Further, and in furtherance of the above, the Secretary shall conduct an assessment of the systems and resources in place at federal, state and local government levels, including funding programs, to determine the level of preparedness of

subject agencies to comply with any such promulgations, and shall base the prioritization schedule provided for herein upon the finding of such assessment.”

Hopefully this will be passed quickly by the House and the Senate, but the speed of legislation in Washington lately will make a snail blush!



ESIP Emergency Services Insurance Program

We have received several requests for a 30,000-foot view of what would be required for an AHJ to comply with the proposed 1910.156 standard. We've put together a FAQs & Fact Sheet that helps break down all of the information into bite-sized chunks. While this list is not comprehensive, it is our best understanding of what would be required under the standard if adopted, as written, today.

DOWNLOAD HERE: https://www.afdsny.org/docs/OSHA_1910.156_Fact_Sheet.pdf

FASNY Urges Members to Take Action!

April, 2024

Dear FASNY Member,

I wanted to provide you with an update regarding the proposed rulemaking by the Federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) impacting the fire service. While a primary concern of the fire service is always firefighter health and safety, many aspects of this proposed rule would put additional stress on both volunteer and career departments to comply. Worse, in some case it would be impossible to achieve compliance.

FASNY has been very active in responding to this rulemaking. In addition to working with other fire service associations, we have filed preliminary comments with OSHA. We have also reached out to our Federal representatives and are scheduled to meet with several of them at the end of the month. Due to our efforts with other organizations, OSHA has granted an extension to the comment period until June 21. **It is imperative** that your department review the proposed rule and file a comment as to how it would affect them. Comments can be filed at:

<https://www.regulations.gov/docket/OSHA-2007-0073/document>

Our goal is to make this rulemaking effective but achievable. If departments cannot meet this new standard then it is just words on paper. If this is the case, it could wind up reducing firefighter health and safety and cause many current members of the fire service to leave.

We will continue our efforts, but we need your help. The only way the rule that is finally adopted will benefit the fire service is if we all provide input now.

Fraternally,

Edward Tase Jr.

President

LINK TO FILE COMMENT HERE: <https://firefightersassociationofthestateofnewyork.cmail19.com/t/y-l-xutuhiy-ikjuyhjliy-j/>

--The heart of the proposed regulation is here: [Section 1910.156, Emergency Response \(osha.gov\)](https://www.osha-slc.gov/1910.156)

SIGN THE PETITION, GET YOUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY TO SIGN THE PETITION

The purpose of the petition is to gain a seat at the table for a negotiated Standard, please sign the petition, get each of your Board members to sign and each of your members and your member's family members, the goal is more than 10,000 signatures.



<https://www.change.org/p/call-to-action-osha-1910-156> :LINK TO THE PETITION AT CHANGE.ORG:

[NOTICE: Once you sign the petition the Change.org site directs you to their website asking for donations, the donations do not benefit this petition, it benefits the Change.org platform and you could be fooled into donating each month read carefully!!!]

Meeting with NYS-DOL/PESH

Dave Denniston Writes: We had a great meeting with PESH at the end of last week. They are willing to work with us, but admit that their hands are tied some. The NY PESH Officials have stated we have to get in front of OSHA and get a seat at the table. They could not stress enough that the head of OSHA needs to know our names and concerns. I have also been contacted by one of our congressional friends that said they are behind us, but we have to get in front of OSHA and a seat at the table. They fear legal options are our only other remedy. NVFC is looking at that angle now.

I have attached my comment to OSHA that will be submitted today. **Along with this one we are going to have an online petition with a goal of 50K signatures. More details to follow. SEE DAVE's LETTER AT THIS LINK**

:[<https://cafda.net/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/OSHA-1910.156-REQUEST-FOR-ACTION-1.docx>]

Lee and I will be doing a more detailed bulleted dive of the specifics of 29CFR 1910.156 on Thursday night at 7 PM. The good news, as of this morning Zoom has us up to 1000 log in capacity. Over half of that is registered now, but let's fill it up. Most webinars have a about 60% hit ratio. These OHSA ones have been exceeding that hit ratio which is awesome. Please share the registration link with your email lists and organizations. There is also a link for one more geared to Ohio in a couple weeks.

This is being run as a ESIP webinar on **Thursday 4/4 at 7pm**. Here is the registration link, **PLEASE SHARE:**

https://archcapgroup.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_9GtqnblySa-WTKII-F5Sqw

Tom Miller and I are doing a similar webinar on **Wednesday Dec. 10th for the Ohio State Firefighters**. All are welcome to that one if the date is better. That one is a little more geared to a state where the volunteers are not "employees" but the main message is the same.

Register for OHIO Webinar Here: https://archcapgroup.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_ae-TdGcUR3SDQJzuEaG_aQ

We cannot stress enough, our message is not that we oppose changes, and that in fact the fire service needs to embrace this and make serious changes in how we do business for firefighter safety. This has been our message since day 1, and some continue to ignore it. We need change and we need to do better for our people. What we do want is a seat at the table and some simple tweaks in the logistics of how this should be delivered, so it is in fact usable and will save lives and reduce injuries. WE CAN DO BETTER! There are still folks out there claiming we are trying to kill this thing. That could not be further from the truth, and we need to make sure that message is heard loud and clear.

OSHA IS EXTENDING THE PERIOD FOR SUBMITTING COMMENTS BY 45 DAYS (Until June 21st) TO ALLOW STAKEHOLDERS INTERESTED IN THE NPRM ON EMERGENCY RESPONSE ADDITIONAL TIME TO REVIEW THE NPRM AND COLLECT INFORMATION AND DATA NECESSARY FOR COMMENT.

WRITTEN COMMENTS: You may submit comments and attachments, identified by Docket No. OSHA–2007–0073, electronically at www.regulations.gov, which is the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal. Follow the online instructions for making electronic submissions. The Federal e-Rulemaking Portal at www.regulations.gov is the only way to submit comments on this NPRM. Instructions: All submissions must include the agency's name and the docket number for this rulemaking (Docket No. OSHA–2007–0073). All comments, including any personal information you provide, are placed in the public docket without change and may be made available online at www.regulations.gov.

Some Facts About the NFPA Standards Adopted as Part of The OSHA Emergency Response Standard

7 Page analysis of the NFPA Standards Included in the Proposed Emergency Response Standard

- [NFPA 1910/2024 \(263 page document\)](#)

Standard for the Inspection, Maintenance, Refurbishment, Testing and Retirement of In-Service Emergency Vehicles and Marine Firefighting Vessels.

- This standard defines the minimum requirements for establishing inspection, maintenance, refurbishment, retirement and testing program for in-service emergency vehicles and marine firefighting vessels.
- This standard shall provide minimum requirements for marine firefighting vessels.
- This standard also identifies the minimum job performance requirements (JPRs) for emergency vehicle technicians.
- The purpose of this standard is to specify the minimum requirements for the construction of new marine firefighting vessels or for the conversions of existing vessels to become marine firefighting vessels and...
- To specify the minimum JPRs for service as an emergency vehicle technician.
- 106 additional reference standards
- This standard establishes a check list of items to be checked and maintained by the personnel placed in charge of said equipment.

- [NFPA1001 \(35 page document\)](#)

Standard for Fire Fighter Professional Qualifications

This standard identified the minimum job performance requirements for FF 1 & FF 2 professional qualifications. [references 9 additional standards]

List of skills needed in Chapter 4 also refer to Table C.1 *Overview of JPRs for Fire Fighters*.

- AHJ shall have written policies and procedures in compliance with the standard and distributed to all, with instructions on execution.
- *Prior to entering training to meet the requirements of Chapters 4 & 5 of this standard the candidate shall meet the following requirements:*
- *Minimum educational requirements established by the AHJ*
- *Age requirements established by the AHJ*
- *Medical requirements of NFPA 1582 (106 page document) (this standard clearly references a career FF setting, job duties and performance)*

- [NFPA1407 \(23 page document\)](#)

Standard for Training Fire Service Rapid Intervention Crews

This standard specifies the basic training procedures for fire service personnel to conduct firefighter rapid intervention operations as specified in 1710 and 1720. [references at least 7 additional NFPA standards, in part.]

- Program shall be developed for all suppression personnel
- Written policies which shall address entry level requirements for crew members, training objectives, basic skills, equipment and training evolutions contained in the standard.
- Comprehensive training program
- Requirements for instructors
- Training shall be documented
- All RIC leaders shall be minimal Fire Officer 1
- AHJ shall have written policies and procedures in compliance with the standard and distributed to all, with instructions on execution.

- [NFPA 1002 \(30 page document\)](#)

Standard for Fire Apparatus Driver/Operator Professional Qualifications

- Outlines requisite skills and knowledge
- References in part 16 other NFPA standards.
- AHJ shall have written policies and procedures in compliance with the standard and distributed to all, with instructions on execution.
- **While not specifically stated, is it the intent that this standard applies to volunteer fire Drivers, it is not stated in the Scope nor in the Explanatory Material.**

- [NFPA 1021 \(41 page document\)](#)

Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications

- References 10 other NFPA Standards in part.
- 17 Pages of requirements
- Requisite skills and knowledge for Fire Officer 1 through Fire Officer 4
- **While not specifically stated, is it the intent that this standard applies to volunteer fire Officers, it is not stated in the Scope nor in the Explanatory Material.**

- [NFPA 1140 \(124 page document\)](#)

Standard for Wildland Fire Protection

Purpose is to specify the minimum requirements for fire protection and emergency services infrastructure in wildland, rural and suburban areas; wildland fire management practices and policies; methods of assessing wildland fire ignition hazards and job performance requirements for wildland fire positions.

- 44 pages of requirements
- 30 referenced NFPA publications in part, plus 12 ASTM standards in part, plus others.
- **While not specifically stated, is it the intent that this standard applies to volunteer fire fighters who occasional respond to wildland fires, it is not stated in the Scope nor in the Explanatory Material.**

- [NFPA 1006 \(171 page document\)](#)

Standard for Technical Rescue Personnel Professional Qualifications

- This standard references in part 10 additional NFPA Standards.
 - The Scope of this Standard identifies the minimum job performance requirements for technical rescue personnel. The intent is to ensure that individuals serving as technical rescue personnel are qualified.
 - There are 92 pages of requirements including several specialty rescue scenarios.
 - **While not specifically stated, is it the intent that this standard applies to volunteer fire fighters who *occasional* respond to Technical Rescues, it is not stated in the Scope nor in the Explanatory Material. Would those occasional volunteers have to be trained to the entire standard or to a portion of the standard?**
- [NFPA 1005 \(28 page document\)](#)

Standard for Professional Qualifications for Marine Fire Fighting for Land Based Fire Fighters

- The purpose is to specify the minimum job performance requirements for Land-Based Fire Fighters operating at marine fire-fighting incidents.
 - There are an additional 7 NFPA standards reference in part.
 - There are 11 pages of requisite skills.
 - To meet the requirements for Marine Fire Fighter, the Fire Fighter II shall meet the JPRs in Sections 4.1 through 4.5 of this standard and the requirements defined in Chapter 5 of NFPA 1001 or Chapters 5 & 6 of NFPA 1081
 - **While not specifically stated, is it the intent that this standard applies to volunteer fire fighters who *occasional* respond to Marine Fires, it is not stated in the Scope nor in the Explanatory Material. Would those occasional volunteers have to be trained to the entire standard or to a portion of the standard?**
- [NFPA 1951 \(68 page document\)](#)

Standard on Protective Ensembles for Technical Rescue Incidents

Scope: minimum design, performance, testing and certification requirements for technical rescue protective ensembles for use by emergency services personnel during technical rescue incidents.

Shall also specify the minimum requirements for various elements of the technical rescue protective ensembles, including garments, helmets, gloves, footwear and eye and face protection.

This standard shall apply to the design, manufacturing, testing and certification of new technical rescue protective ensembles and new ensemble elements. i.e. for the manufacturer of such equipment.

Deals with: certification, inspection and testing, annual verification of product compliance, manufacturers' QA program.

- References 44 other technical documents.

The job of the AHJ is to perform a risk assessment to identify the hazards present and to determine the suitability of protective ensembles specified by this standard.

The AHJ would need to create a matrix and document the evaluation of such equipment.

- [NFPA 1952 \(76 page document\)](#)

Standard on Surface Water Operations Protective Clothing and Equipment

Scope: Shall specify the minimum design, performance, testing and certification requirement for protective clothing and equipment items, including full body suits, helmets, gloves, footwear and personal flotation devices designed to provide limited protection from physical, environmental, thermal and certain common chemical and biological hazards for emergency services personnel during surface water operations.

Purpose: to **establish minimum levels of protection** for emergency services personnel assigned to or involved in surface water and rescue operations or other surface water incident operations.

- References 38 additional technical standards

Mostly for the manufacturer of such equipment, **the job of the AHJ is to perform a risk assessment to identify the hazards present and to determine the suitability of protective ensembles specified by this standard. The AHJ would need to create a matrix and document the evaluation of such equipment.**

- [FPA 1953 \(59 page document\)](#)

Standard on Protective Ensembles for Contaminated Water Diving

Basically, this standard shall specify requirements for protective clothing and protective equipment used during operations in contaminated water dive operations. The purpose of this standard shall be to establish minimum levels of protection for emergency service personnel assigned to or involved in performing search and rescue activities in and below the surface of contaminated water. This standard shall apply to the design, manufacture, and certification of new contaminated water dive operations protective clothing and equipment.

This standard applies to the manufacture of such equipment and not to the persons, using the equipment or the operations related to the equipment.

- References 33 additional technical standards

- [NFPA 1971 \(198 page document\)](#)

Standard on Protective Ensembles for Structural Firefighting and Proximity Firefighting

This standard shall specify the minimum design, performance, testing and certification requirements for structural fire fighting protective ensembles and ensemble elements that include coats, trousers, coveralls, helmets, gloves, footwear, and interface components.

The purpose of this standard shall be to establish minimum levels of protection for fire fighting personnel assigned to fire department operations including but not limited to structural firefighting, proximity firefighting, rescue, emergency medical and other emergency first responder functions.

In Chapter 8, 8.1.12 there are **procedures to be followed** for Washing And Drying Procedures For Garment, Gloves And Glove Pouches.

*This standard applies to the manufacture of such equipment and not to the persons, using the equipment or the operations related to the equipment, accept for **Chapter 8** which includes procedures for washing and drying protective equipment.*

- 74 additional reference technical documents.

- [NFPA 1977 \(118 page document\)](#)

Standard on Protective Clothing and Equipment for Wildland Fire Fighting and Urban Interface Fire Fighting

This standard shall specify the minimum design, performance, testing and certification requirements for items of wildland firefighting and urban interface fire fighting protective clothing and equipment, including protective garments, helmets, gloves, footwear, goggles and protective chain saw protectors; and for load-carrying equipment.

This standard shall establish minimum standards for the equipment used by wildland and urban interface firefighters and does not apply to the personnel themselves or the operations of said firefighters.

- 45 additional referenced technical standards.

- [NFPA 1981 \(81 page document\)](#)

Standard on Open-Circuit Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus for Emergency Services

This standard shall apply to all open-circuit SCBA and combination SCBA/SARs used by emergency services organizations for respiratory protection of its personnel during firefighting, rescue, hazardous materials, terrorist incident, and similar operations where products of combustion, oxygen deficiencies, particulates, toxic products or other IDLH atmospheres exist or could exist at the incident scene.

This standard establishes minimum standards for the design, performance, testing and certification of new SCBA and SCBA/SARs and for the replacement parts, components and accessories for these respirators.

- 22 additional referenced technical standards

[NFPA 1982 \(70 page document\)](#)

Standard on Personal Alert Safety Systems

This standard shall specify minimum requirements for the design, performance, testing and certification for all personal alert safety systems (PASS) for emergency services personnel.

Shall apply to the design, performance, testing and certification of PASS or RF PASS devices certified to an earlier edition of this standard that incorporate replacement parts, components and or software to be certified to this edition of the standard. PASS should be worn on protective clothing or protective equipment, or as an integrated part of another item of protective clothing or protective equipment and used whenever the member is involved in fire suppression or similar activities, regardless of whether SCBA is worn.

Note that NFPA 1500 requires that each person involved in rescue, firefighting or other hazardous duties be provided with and use a PASS.

This standard applies to the manufacturer of PASS devices.

- 18 additional referenced technical standards.

- [NFPA 1984 \(39 page document\)](#)

Standard on Respirators for Wildland Firefighting Operations and Wildland Urban interface Operations

This standard shall specify the minimum design, performance, testing and certification requirement for respirators to provide protection from inhalation hazards for personnel conditioning wildland firefighting and or wildland urban interface operations.

This standard shall apply to the design, manufacturer, testing and certification of new wildland firefighting or wildland urban interface operations respirators.

This standard does not mandate the use nor prescribe the use of approved respirators for use by firefighting personnel.

- 12 additional referenced technical standards

- [NFPA 1986 \(70 page document\)](#)

Standard on Respiratory Protection Equipment for Tactical and Technical Operations

This standard shall specify the minimum requirements for the design, performance, testing and certification of (1) new compressed breathing air open-circuit self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) and compressed breathing air combination open-circuit self-contained breathing apparatus and supplied air respirator (SCBA/SAR) and (2) replacement parts, components and accessories for those respirators.

This standard does NOT deal with the used of such respirators by emergency personnel.

- 17 additional referenced technical standards

- [NFPA 1987 \(98 page document\)](#)

Standard on Combination Unit Respirator Systems for Tactical and Technical Operations

- 71 additional referenced technical standards

This standard shall specify the minimum requirements for the design, performance, testing and certification of new combination unit respirator (CUR) systems and for the replacement parts, components and accessories for such respirators.

This standard is for the design and manufacture standard for such respirators NOT with the use by personnel.

- [NFPA 1990 \(152 page document\)](#)

Standard for Protective Ensembles for Hazardous Materials and CBRN Operations

- 59 additional reference technical standards

This standard shall specify the minimum design, performance, testing, documentation, and certification requirements for the following PPE which is used by emergencies and CBRN terrorism incidents:

1. Vapor protective ensembles and ensemble elements for hazardous materials emergencies and CBRN terrorism incidents.
2. Liquid splash-protective ensembles and ensemble elements for hazardous materials emergencies.
3. Hazmat/CBRD protective ensembles and ensemble elements for hazardous materials emergencies and CBRN terrorism incidents.

The purpose of this standard shall be to establish a minimum level of protection for emergency responders during hazardous materials emergencies and CBRN terrorism incidents.

The standard deals with the equipment not the operations by personnel.

- [NFPA 1999 \(94 page document\)](#)

Standard on Protective Clothing and Ensembles for Emergency Medical Operations

- 60 additional referenced technical standards

The purpose of the this standard shall be to establish a minimum level of protection from contact with blood and body fluid-borne pathogens for personnel performing patient care during emergency medical operations.

Shall specify the minimum design, performance, testing, documentation and certification requirements for new single-use and new multiple-use emergency medical operations protective clothing, including garments, helmets, gloves, footwear and face protection devices used by emergency medical responders prior to arrival at medical care facilities during emergency medical operations and used by health care workers providing medical and supportive care.

The Standard deals with the equipment not the operations by personnel.

- **ANSI 107 High-Visibility Safety Apparel**

- Performance requirements of high-visibility safety apparel, or HVSA, help with providing visibility to the user under any light conditions by day or night. This is particularly crucial for hazardous conditions, as well as any situation where threats can be presented. The performance requirements include color, retroreflection, the recommended configuration of the materials, and more. Please note that ANSI/ISEA 107-2020's specifications may be applied to many occupational HVSA, but it is not for firefighter turnout gear.
- The updated ANSI/ISEA 107-2020 standard includes changes vs. the 2015 edition such as:
 - Removing the criteria for high-visibility accessories in favor of continuing to emphasize the configurations and design requirements that contribute to the Type-Performance Class designation.
 - Adding accommodating scenarios since garments can become soiled easily because of the work environment. This edition includes specific criteria for a single-use disposable coverall, which complies with the requisite minimum material amounts and color requirements imposed on all compliant HVSA, and emphasizes that the associated material integrity requirements are only applicable to single-use disposable coveralls, for which unique marking is applied.
 - Updates to the tests methods in an effort to align more closely with other material integrity tests and to recognize current versions used for evaluating the materials.
 - Introducing the concept of measuring the overall nighttime luminance of a garment by including optional language that allows a manufacturer to test a garment according to ASTM E1501.

In Total that is more than 1838 pages of additional document pages not including the thousands of pages of referenced documents within the NFPA Standards which the emergency response services would be legally liable for.

OSHA's Proposed Emergency Response Standard Presents Challenges to Fire Departments

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) is proposing an extensive new safety and health standard, titled "Emergency Response," to replace the existing "Fire Brigades Standard." The Notice of Proposed Rulemaking for the "Emergency Response Standard" was [published in the Federal Register](#) on February 5, with the public comment period open until May 6.

This proposed updated standard would issue hundreds of new requirements that may be very burdensome, and in many cases impossible, for volunteer fire departments to comply with. The National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC) encourages volunteer departments and associations to [submit comments](#) on this proposed rule and request a public hearing so OSHA can have the best possible understanding of how this proposed rule would impact volunteer departments. We also encourage you to send a letter to OSHA requesting a 90-day extension to the public comment period on this proposed rule.

Additionally, please [fill out this survey](#) to assist the NVFC in collecting department data as we formulate our own comments on the proposed rule.

To assist you in developing your comments and public comment period extension letters, the NVFC has put has assembled [this comment guide](#). This guide provides guidance on:

- Where to find the text of the proposed standard
- Where and how to submit your comments on the proposed standard
- How to evaluate if your department is covered by the proposed standard
- How to develop your comments
- What part of the proposed standard will impact volunteer departments the most

The NVFC's comment guide also links you to a map of states with OSHA plans, a template for your comment extension letter, and webinars to further assist you in understanding whether or how the proposed rule would impact your department.

The NVFC recently hosted a Roundtable Talk on this issue, which you can watch [here](#). View some of the questions and answers resulting from the live discussion [here](#).

The NVFC has also put together [this outline of the proposed standard](#) to further highlight important language and provide additional context to the comment guide.

SBA Submits Request for Extension

The SBA Office of Advocacy has just submitted to regulations.gov recommending that OSHA extend the comment period for its **proposed Emergency Response rule** by ninety days and plan for a post comment hearing on the rule.

*****Paperwork Nightmare? OSHA Inks Emergency Response Proposal That Piles It On!***

JJ Keller Compliance Network

[EDITOR'S NOTE: REMEMBER THAT JJ KELLER MAKES A LIVING OFF OF TRAINING FOR FIRE DEPARTMENTS AND INDUSTRIAL CUSTOMERS, THIS CHANGE WILL PROVIDE MORE BUSINESS OVER A LONG PERIOD OF TIME FOR THEM!]

If you like paperwork, you'll "love" the upcoming Emergency Response proposed rule. According to the fine print, OSHA proposes to toss out three paperwork burdens. Yet, it will tack on over 25 new ones! While the proposal is not in the *Federal Register* yet, you can read the unofficial version on OSHA's website. Be sure to peek at the "Proposed Information Collection Requirements" starting on page 544.

NEWS UPDATE: The ["Emergency Response Standard" proposed rule](#) appeared in the February 5, 2024, *Federal Register*, on pages 7774 to 8023 of the pdf version. The "Proposed Information Collection Requirements" section of the preamble to the proposal begins on page 7999 in the third column. OSHA seeks comments on the proposed rule by May 6, 2024, for [Docket No. OSHA-2007-0073](#). The agency also says it will schedule an informal public hearing on the proposal if requested during the comment period, and, if such a hearing is requested, further notification will be announced in the *Federal Register*.

On December 18, the Office of Management and Budget gave OSHA the green light to publish the proposal in the *Federal Register*. Days later, OSHA issued a news release announcing that the proposal would appear in the *Federal Register* in January. At the same time, the agency posted a pre-publication version of the proposed rule on its ["Emergency Response Rulemaking"](#) webpage.

Stakeholders will have 90 days to comment in [Docket No. OSHA-2007-0073](#), when the proposal appears in the *Federal Register*.

SCOPE OF PROPOSED 29 CFR 1910.156

"Emergency responders are critical workers in all of our communities, and they deserve protections that keep up with today's industry practices," said OSHA head Doug Parker. "We are proposing much-needed updates that will expand protections for emergency workers and bring our standards closer to common industry procedures."

The proposal, if finalized, would modernize [1910.156](#), Fire Brigades. The standard would be renamed "Emergency Response" and expand coverage to emergency responders, such as:

- Firefighters,
- Emergency medical service providers, and
- Technical search and rescue workers.

The new 1910.156 would not apply to:

- Employers performing disaster site cleanup or recovery duties following natural disasters;
- Activities covered by [1910.120](#), Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response (HAZWOPER); or
- Activities covered by [1910.146](#), Permit-Required Confined Spaces.

The scope of OSHA's standard would:

- Be expanded to include a range of hazards that emergency responders encounter,
- Align the standard with the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA's) National Response Framework, and
- Modernize the standard to bring it in line with consensus standards issued by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA).

For more background, please see our earlier article, ["OSHA's Responder Proposal May Pop Up by End of January,"](#) dated November 17, 2023.

OTHER REGULATIONS IMPACTED

In addition, the proposal pulls other regulations into the fold:

- [1910.6](#), Incorporation by Reference;
- [1910.120](#), Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response;
- [1910.134](#), Respiratory Protection;
- [1910.155](#), Scope, Application and Definitions Applicable to This Subpart;
- [1910.157](#), Portable Fire Extinguishers;
- [1910.158](#), Standpipe and Hose Systems; and
- [1910.159](#), Automatic Sprinkler Systems.

PAPERWORK BURDENS

Despite concerns raised years ago by small business about the cost and time commitments of the *draft* standard, the latest proposal would remove three but add over 25 new “information collection requirements.” Specifically, OSHA proposes to eliminate existing language under:

- [1910.156\(b\)\(1\)](#) that requires employers to develop and maintain an organizational statement;
- [1910.156\(b\)\(2\)](#) that requires employers to obtain a physician’s certificate of certain employees’ fitness to participate in fire brigade emergency activities; and
- [1910.156\(c\)\(4\)](#) that requires the employer to inform fire brigade members about special hazards to which they may be exposed during fire/emergencies.

In place of these information requirements, OSHA’s proposed rule builds in collections for:

Category:	Paperwork:
Emergency/risk planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A facility vulnerability assessment • A written emergency response program • An annual evaluation of the emergency response program • Keeping previous versions of emergency response programs • A written comprehensive risk management plan • Identifying the location of each fire hose valve
Vehicle procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies and procedures for operating certain vehicles • Policies and procedures if responders cannot be seat belted in a vehicle • A procedure for vehicle operator training
Incident planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-incident plans for locations within the facility • Pre-incident plans for the facilities where incidents may occur • Pre-incident plans for each facility subject to EPA 40 CFR 355 within the primary response area • A comprehensive and ongoing size-up of an incident scene • A risk assessment for an incident scene • An incident action plan • Established, marked, and communicated control zones • Standard operating procedures for emergency events • Post-incident analyses
Medical/health records	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum medical requirements for team members and responders • Keeping confidential records for each team member and responder related to duty restrictions, work illnesses and injuries, and exposures

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A medical evaluation program • A record of each responder’s exposure to combustion products • Behavioral health and wellness resources • A health and fitness program
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team members and responders to report safety and health concerns • Posting your procedures for reporting safety and health concerns • A hazard assessment for personal protective equipment selection

OSHA estimates that the proposed paperwork burdens will: **[EDITOR’S NOTE: IT IS GENERALLY FELT THAT THIS IS A SERIOUS UNDERESTIMATE, BUT REAL NUMBERS NEED TO BE DEVELOPED, REASON MORE TIME BEYOND THE 90 DAY COMMENT PERIOD IS NEEDED.]**

- Impact 22,551 entities,
- Take 3,896,719 hours in total each year to complete, and
- Cost a total of \$106,502,463 annually.

That averages to 173 hours and \$4,723 per year for each entity.

KEY TO REMEMBER

OSHA proposes to remove three but add over 25 paperwork burdens amounting to 173 hours per year per entity. The move is part of an upcoming Emergency Response proposal.

[EDITOR’S NOTE: NATIONAL STUDIES HAVE PREVIOUSLY FOUND THAT THE ONE THING VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS DON’T HAVE IS TIME. IS THIS NEW IMPOSITION BEING DONE ON PURPOSE TO SATISFY UNION ACTIONS TO CRIPPLE THE VOLUNTEER FIRE SERVICE? IF THEY WOULD BE PAITIENT THE IAFF WILL GRADUALLY MAKE IN ROADS AS THE VOLUNTEER FIRE SERVICE CONTINUES TO ERODE. REMEMBER THE IAFF PROVIDES CONTRIBUTIONS TO A SLEW OF POLITICIANS THROUGH THEIR CAMPAIGN PACS, VOLUNTEERS PROVIDE VERY LITTLE CAMPAIGN FUNDING.]

Formal Comment Submitted by CAFDA on Your Behalf!

<https://cafda.net/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Extension-Request-from-CAFDA.docx>

Posted to the CAFDA.net website.

Where To Go To Upload A Formal Comment To The Proposed Emergency Response Standard

https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2024/02/05/2023-28203/emergency-response-standard?utm_campaign=subscription+mailing+list&utm_medium=email&utm_source=federalregister.gov

OSHA Takes Action To Limit Emergency Responder Injuries And Fatalities

Michael Fraley – Fire Rescue One

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) recently announced plans to update the outdated and scope-limited Fire Brigades Standard, 29 CFR 1910.156. The proposed new standard will be titled “Emergency Response” and aims to include emergency responders, including fire departments, EMS agencies, and technical search and rescue teams. It will also govern responders who work other jobs in commercial or industrial settings but are activated as part of a Workplace Emergency Response Team when an incident occurs in the facility.

This article is a brief overview of many of the standards mentioned in the proposed rule and is not meant to be an exhaustive analysis of each section. The highlighted segments are included to portray the variety of areas the rule would cover and the significant work that may be required of some services to comply.

This article also will not explore the details of who is legally obligated to comply with OSHA standards. This varies from state to state and is complicated by a variety of factors. It should also be noted that in some circumstances, volunteer agencies may be covered by OSHA standards. Regardless of whether OSHA has legal authority over a particular state

or service, there is an argument that they set a standard that could be indirectly applied to everyone. This may be particularly true after an incident has occurred and no other standard exists.

The general purpose of the proposed rule is to reduce emergency response team member injuries and fatalities. The NPRM document begins with an impressive section of statistics highlighting the dangers emergency responders face and the need for standards to reduce the impact of these injuries and deaths. The rule is specific to protecting responders and does not directly apply to medical care, outcomes or safety as they relate to patients.

SOME OF THE SPECIFIC SECTIONS OF THE PROPOSED STANDARD INCLUDE:

- **Emergency response plan (ERP).** Agencies *will be required* to have a *written* program to ensure they are prepared to respond to, and operate safely in, the emergency and non-emergency situations that are likely to occur in their primary response area. The ERP is intended to provide for the occupational safety and health of team members and encompass all aspects of emergency response, many of which are outlined below.
- **Vulnerability assessment of hazards.** Agencies *must assess* their primary response area *to identify the types calls they may respond to*. Resources in the plan must be matched to these hazards and the plan should identify mutual aid resources to be called when the agency cannot mitigate a particular hazard.
- **ERP tiers, types and levels.** The agency must identify the various tiers, types and levels of responders covered by the ERP. *Several sections of the proposed standard require the agency to identify training, evaluation, qualifications, duties and capabilities of responders based on these terms*. One size does not fit all.
- **Team involvement with the plan.** The Emergency Response Plan should be developed, implemented, reviewed and updated with involvement from team members. OSHA identifies that front-line responders have valuable insight into the work process particularly as it relates to safety.
- **Medical and physical requirements.** The proposed standard specifies that ***responders will be required to meet medical and physical requirements based on their type and level of service***. This section is extensive and pays particular attention to cardiovascular health.
- **Behavioral health and wellness resources.** Agencies *would be required* to offer team members services that include diagnostic assessment, short-term counseling, crisis intervention and referral to additional resources. Records arising from any use of these resources must be kept confidential.
- **Health and fitness program.** Team members should have access to health and fitness programs that help them maintain fitness for duty and to prevent work-related illness.
- **Training program.** *A comprehensive training program must be in place* to include initial and ongoing training as well as *skills checks* at appropriate intervals. All training and assessments will be based on tiers, types and levels of providers employed. The program must detail instructor qualifications, member evaluation methods, and assurances that team members will not be tasked with duties until they demonstrate the skills and abilities to safely complete them.
- **Facility safety.** OSHA understands that fire and EMS responders spend significant time in stations between calls and requires that these facilities also be safe. The section details the need to provide adequate spaces to decontaminate, maintain and store PPE and other equipment separate from living quarters. It also lists requirements for fire alarms, sprinkler systems, carbon monoxide detectors and equipment to prevent vehicle exhaust from entering sleeping and living areas. And yes, they even set standards for fire pole safety.
- **Personal protective equipment (PPE).** Significant attention is paid to the provision of PPE to responders as well as training, testing, maintenance, cleaning and disposal of the supplies and equipment.
- **Vehicle safety.** Highlighting the high numbers of fire and EMS responders injured and killed in vehicle crashes, OSHA proposes broad-reaching standards related to maintenance, inspection and testing of vehicles. The standards also outline important benchmarks in training and operation of vehicles, and the policies that should be in place to cover both. OSHA even settles the debate about the proper name of a legendary fire prevention character when it highlights the need for procedures to ensure the safety of occupants that are not able to be belted in a seat. OSHA notes that mascots such as *Smokey Bear* may not be able to be seat belted in when riding on a vehicle in a parade! (Note they did not call him Smokey the Bear?)
- **Incident Management System.** To align with the National Response Framework, OSHA will expect Emergency Response Plans to contain language about implementation, training and use of the Incident Management System. An emphasis is placed on provider safety monitoring and reporting during incidents.

- **Respiratory protection.** Training, equipment and policies related to responder respiratory protection have long been a major area of concern for OSHA and the proposed Emergency Response standard will continue that emphasis.
- **Communication.** Language in the proposed rule encourages reliable communication between dispatch centers and responders including monitoring of on-scene radio transmissions to maintain safety and respond to any on-scene responder emergencies. The rule also calls for interoperability between mutual aid resources.

TWO OPPORTUNITIES

EMS agencies and fire departments have two important opportunities right now.

- Review the proposed standard, whether OSHA rules directly apply to you or not, and provide comments to help shape the document into something that will improve safe practices in our industry.
- Review your department's current responder safety program and take steps to build the program so it will meet or even exceed the standard that this rule will bring.

Tailboard Talk: The OSHA Fire Brigade Standard from Fire Engineering

https://www.fireengineering.com/podcasts/tailboard-talk-the-osha-fire-brigade-standard/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=fe_daily_newsletter&utm_campaign=2024-02-26

OSHA Proposes Major Changes to Regulations for the Fire Service

Insight from Curt Varone

<https://www.firelawblog.com/2024/02/15/osha-unveils-major-changes-it-proposes-for-the-fire-service/>

OSHA'S EMERGENCY RESPONSE STANDARD UPDATE THREATENS VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENTS

National Vol Fire Council

On December 21, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) announced that it will issue a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) to modernize the agency's "Fire Brigades" standard. This standard was first published and last updated in 1980.

This proposed updated standard would issue several new requirements that would be very burdensome, and in many cases impossible, for volunteer fire departments to comply with. Specifically, there would be prohibitively restrictive standards on physical exams, the purchase of new equipment, and the formation of emergency plans that exceed the staffing capabilities of many volunteer departments.

The proposed updated standard was published in the Federal Register on February 5, and public comments are being accepted until May 6. The National Volunteer Fire Council will be filing comments on this proposed rule and encourages members of the volunteer fire service community to submit their own comments and request a public hearing on this proposed standard.

Access the text of this rule and instructions on how to file comments [here](#). Additionally, OSHA Region 1 Training Institute Education Center recently conducted a [webinar](#) providing an overview of what's in the standard and some of the impacts it would have on volunteers.

We all know that whatever a bunch of bureaucrats in Washington put on paper will make all the difference in the world, this is the same federal government that told us everything was safe after the Twin Towers fell.

LINK TO THE PROPOSED OSHA STANDARD, NO FLUFF:

<https://cafda.net/proposed-changes-to-the-osha-standard-comment-period-opens-february-5th/>

Here are the links for the resources as Dave promised:

1. [Webinar: Emergency Response Rule | Oshaedne](#)
2. [OSHA's NEW Proposed Rule 1910.156 Emergency Response rule on Vimeo](#)
3. [Microsoft PowerPoint - 1910.156 Webinar 1-31-2024 draft 2.pptx \(oshaedne.com\)](#)

OSHA PROPOSED UPDATE TO THE BRIGADE STANDARD COMPLETE TEXT: <https://cafda.net/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/ER-NPRM-Unofficial-WORD-VERSION.docx>

LINK TO MY SYNOPSIS OF THE PROPOSED UPDATE: <https://cafda.net/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/SYNOPSIS-OF-THE-PROPOSED-UPDATED-OSHA-FIRE-BRIGADE-STANDARD-1.docx>