



CAPITAL AREA FIRE DISTRICTS ASSOCIATION



BULLETIN



OCTOBER 19, 2024

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

CAPITAL SHORTS:

- NEW OSHA INFORMATION IS PRECEDED BY THE [RED ARROW](#)
- [I have signed up to testify before OSHA in November, WHAT POINTS WOULD YOU LIKE ME TO MAKE DURING MY 5 MINUTE TESTIMONY? NOTIFY ME AT TOM@RINALDI1.COM](#)
- Page 2, Fire District Election Schedule for 2024
- News for those who intend to testify on the OSHA proposed standard, See the OSHA Supplement Section for updates.
- **We wish the best to John Cuttita who has stepped down after an incredible 27 years as a fire commissioner. We also wish the best to John Wasielewski who was sworn-in to fill Johns unexpired term at the Clifton Park – Halfmoon Fire District #1.**
- **WORKSHOP 24 Vendor Space Available, see below.**
- It is with profound sadness to announce the passing of Speigletown Fire District, Past Chief, Past Commissioner and Life Member J. Paul Gagnon “Grandpa Gagnon” as the members called him, with over 65 years of service. Paul would show up to daytime calls to drive the trucks at 80 years old. Paul would always be there to lend a hand no matter what was needed, Even if it was the 50th time being asked to be someone’s Notary.

CAFDA NEWS AND OPPORTUNITIES:

WWW.CAFDA.NET

General Membership Meetings - - In person and Zoom

NEXT DINNER MEETING AND ELECTION THURSDAY NOVEMBER 14TH, Dinner at 6, meeting starts promptly at 7PM

Letters due for nominations for the November Election including all officers and 5 directors.

Printable 24/25 Activity 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.

ZOOM MEETING LINK FOR NOVEMBER 2024:

Topic: CAFDA Membership Meeting Time: Nov 14, 2024 07:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82585732921?pwd=aJOla49nx7ichi2RgnlXABjTXRSqfl.1>

Meeting ID: 825 8573 2921

Passcode: 464618

Dial by your location

- 646 558 8656 US (New York)

Prelude to the 2025 Elections, Nominations

Nominations were held at the October 2024 Meeting and Elections will be held at the November 2024 Meeting. Nominations resulted in the following: Tom Rinaldi – President, John Meehan – 1st Vice President, Art Hunsinger – 2nd

Vice President, **Directors:** Joyce Petkus, Ed Woehrle, Les Bonesteel, Fred Richards, Ellen Martin and Skip Smith. Because there are only 5 director positions and 6 nominations there will have to be a run off at the November election.

[Planning for CONFERENCE '25 – Lake George](#)

The Education Committee has begun planning for the 2025 Conference to be held in April at the Fort William Henry Conference Center in Lake George. Are there any topics you would like to hear about? Please let John Meehan know at jmeehanafd@gmail.com

WORKSHOP '24

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 2ND

VERDOY FIRE STATION, 988 Troy Schenectady Road, Latham
Per-Attendee Cost is \$20 for Member Districts, \$30 for non-Members

7:00-8:00 Registration & Continental Breakfast
8:00-8:10 Pledge to the Flag & Welcome: Capital Area Association Officers
8:10-9:15 Presentation Topic: Media Relations for Fire Districts Having a Bad Day – Art Hunsinger
9:15-9:30 Networking Break
9:30-10:15 Presentation Topic: OSHA Proposed Standard Update – Dave Denniston
10:30-11:45 Human Resource Challenges for the Volunteer Fire Service – Past Chief, Greg Serio
12:00-2:00 Lunch with the Experts – A panel of experts has been assembled to answer your questions about a broad range of important topics. Joining us will be Attorney, Alyssa Snyder, CPA, Bob Gramuglia, VFBL & LOSAP, Keith Brandstedter, Insurance, Pat Daglio, Apparatus Maintenance & Refurbishing, Marc Mazza.

Everyone is invited to attend, not limited to Commissioners
ADVANCE REGISTRATION IS VERY HELPFUL FOR PLANNING PURPOSES
HELP US PLAN - Please Respond by Friday, October 25th, 2024

Return to:
CAFDA
PO Box 242
East Schodack, NY 12063
Or by email to secretary@CAFDA.net

WORKSHOP 24 REGISTRATION FORM AT THIS LINK

<https://cafda.net/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/2024-Fall-Workshop-Registration.pdf>

WORKSHOP 24 SCHEDULE AT THIS LINK:

<https://cafda.net/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/Fall-Workshop-Schedule-2024.pdf>

REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN!!!

You are able to go on-line at our Website at CAFDA.net and pay with a credit card under the pull-down tab **EVENTS/event registration**

Workshop Benefit for Business Partners

As a benefit for your membership ½ tables are available at no charge for WORKSHOP 24, space is limited. Contact Art Hunsinger at arttv19@gmail.com

Upcoming CAFDA Educational Event for Fire District Officials

Save the Date: Thursday March 13th and Friday March 14th, 2025

**Fire District Financial Training
Presented by the NYS-Office of the State Comptroller
To be held at Fulton Montgomery Community College, Johnstown, New York
Supported by Mohawk Fire District
Commissioners, Treasurers and Chiefs are cordially invited to attend
More Information to Follow**

*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*

Fire District Election Schedule 2024

October 10th, 2024 Last day to adopt resolution permitting absentee ballots at the Annual Election. Absentee ballots are optional for fire districts. If previously approved, does not have to be redone. TL§175b(1).

October 31st, 2024 Request County Board of Elections to provide a list of registered voters as of November 18th and to provide the list to the district by November 22nd and order voting machines or other equipment and telephone coverage for the night of the election, if desired and available. EL§5-612(6).

October 31st, 2024 Last day to adopt resolutions designating Fire District Board of Elections, including Chairman and Election Inspectors and/or Ballot Clerks, fixing compensation of the individual members of the District Board of Elections TL§175-a(6).

November 6th - 13th, 2024 Publish Notice of Election (and publicly post) in district newspaper stating the date, place and hours of election; listing offices and propositions, if any, on the ballot; whether candidate petitions are required; the last day for voter registration; the procedure for absentee ballots, if any, and optionally designating the date(s) on which the Inspectors of Election will meet to prepare the register, where the meeting will be held, and the hours of such meeting TL§175(1).

November 18th, 2024 Last day to register at County Board of Elections to be Eligible to vote on December 10th, 2024 in Annual District Election TL§175-a (2) (a).

November 19st, 2024 County Board of Elections to mail lists of registered voters to Fire District Secretary. EL§5-612(c).

November 20th, 2024 If absentee voting is permitted, mail absentee ballots to any registered voter whose registration record is marked "permanently disabled" on receipt of list from County Board of Elections. Ballot must be finalized to complete this task. TL§175-b(2)(g)

November 20th, 2024 Last day to file petitions for candidates for office, if required, or notify secretary in writing of intent to run for office if petition not required. TL§176(7).

November 20th – November 25th, 2024 Post Notice of Election on district website and signboard, if any, at least 15, but not more than 20 days before date of election. Remains on website until December 10th, 2024. TL§175-c (1).

November 20th - November 25th, 2024 Copy of Notice of Election to town clerk for posting on municipal website, if any, bulletin board and signboard, if any, at least 15, but not more than 20 days before date of election. TL§175-c(2) These notices [for websites, signboards and bulletin boards] must include time and place of election, officers to be elected, term of office and any other details regarding matters to be voted on as well as hours of polls being open for balloting. Suggest using regular Notice of Election published in district newspaper. TL§175-c(3).

November 25th, 2024 Suggested meeting date for Fire District Board of Elections to prepare register. Can be any other date you choose after receiving registration books. TL§175-a(3).

December 3rd, 2024 If absentee voting is permitted, last day to receive application for absentee ballot if the ballot is to be mailed TL§175-b(2).

December 9th, 2024 Last day to receive application for absentee ballots if it is delivered personally to the voter or his/her agent. TL§175-b(2).

December 10th, 2024 Election Day- 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. minimum may be additional consecutive hours prior to 6:00 p.m. TL§175

December 13th, 2024 File results (Canvass of Election) with Town Clerk. TL§175.

December 17th, 2024 Secretary to deliver a report to the County Board of Elections indicating the persons on the list of registered voters labeled "inactive" who voted at the fire district election.

THE LATEST FROM THE STATE CAPITAL

ScoreCard

- Just waiting for bills that passed the Assembly and Senate to be sent to the Governor for signature.

Governor Hochul Announces Major Investments for Long Island Volunteer Firefighters' Facilities and Training

Governor Kathy Hochul today announced significant new investments in Long Island's volunteer firefighter community during an event honoring their service. Governor Hochul highlighted a series of initiatives aimed at enhancing firefighter training, facilities and mental health support, underscoring the critical role volunteer firefighters play across New York State.

New Funding To Support Volunteer Firefighters

\$300,000 for Capital Improvements at Suffolk County Fire Academy: Governor Hochul announced \$300,000 in funding for capital improvements at the Suffolk County Fire Academy. These funds will be used to upgrade training equipment, ensuring that firefighters have access to state-of-the-art facilities as they prepare to serve their communities.

\$1.85 Million for South Floral Park Fire Department Training Center: Governor Hochul also announced nearly \$2 million to expand the South Floral Park Fire Department's training center. This fire department, which transformed from a struggling unit with 20 members to a thriving organization of 51 volunteers in just a decade, will now have facilities that match its impact and service to the surrounding communities.

\$3 Million for the Deer Park Volunteer Fire Department Museum: In a significant investment aimed at preserving and sharing the stories of firefighters past, present and future, Governor Hochul announced \$3 million to repurpose a rundown local motel in Deer Park into a new Volunteer Fire Department Museum. This museum will not only honor the legacy of volunteer firefighters but also serve as an educational and community gathering space, inspiring future generations of local heroes.

In addition, launching the State's first mental health needs assessment to address the challenges they face. This initiative, part of a broader effort in partnership with SUNY New Paltz's Institute for Disaster Mental Health and Benjamin Center, aims to enhance mental health services for firefighters, EMS workers and other public safety personnel. Additionally, the Governor has signed legislation to address mental health and addiction issues, developed a disaster mental health response team, and expanded peer-to-peer training to ensure first responders receive both the physical and emotional support they need and deserve.

[EDITOR'S COMMENT: WELL THAT IS A SNUB TO STRUGGLING UPSTATE VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENTS. A NEW MUSEUM WILL GO A LONG WAY TO HELP STRUGGLING VOLUNTEERS, GUESS WE KNOW WHAT VOTER BASE SHE IS SEEKING SUPPORT FROM DON'T WE?]

OTHER FIRE SERVICE ORGANIZATION NEWS

Watch on PBS Stations This Month!

The volunteer fire service documentary *Odd Hours, No Pay, Cool Hat* is airing on PBS stations across the country this fall, and new dates have been announced for October. In total, the film will air on over 200 PBS stations in 48 states. Many of these airings are in conjunction with Fire Prevention Week in October and National First Responders Day on October 28, 2024. About the Film *Odd Hours, No Pay, Cool Hat* takes audiences behind the lines of America's volunteer fire service community by sharing the stories of volunteer responders as they face challenges and triumphs in their

service to others. The original 90-minute film was released in 2023, and nearly 300 local fire departments hosted screenings of the film to engage their community, boost recruitment and retention, and raise donations. Stream or purchase the full-length film here.

Odd Hours, No Pay, Cool Hat is presented by John Deere in association with the National Volunteer Fire Council, HoldFast Features, and Vignette. **Program will air on PBS WMHT Albany on Tuesday, Oct. 29th at 8 PM.**

Save The Date: 1st Annual FASNY Training & Educational Weekend

May, Friday the 16th through Sunday the 18th, 2025

Fort William Henry , Lake George, NY

An array of Speakers on many subjects including Chief Tom Richardson, Chief Tom Basher, D/C Tim Cowan, Brian McQueen, Chief Stefano Napolitano, Chief Doug Cline, Chief Justin Bailey and Ed Mann..

More information to come.

ASSOCIATION OF FIRE DISTRICTS OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK

2024 Annual Meeting and Leadership Expo

From Sunday October 20- Ending on Wednesday October 23, 2024 at Turning Stone Resort and Casino

REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN AT THIS LINK:

https://mms.afdsny.org/members/evr/reg_event.php?orgcode=FDNY&evvid=40809591

IF NOTHING ELSE READ THE ARTICLES PRECEDED BY **

THE LATEST FROM WASHINGTON

Now we can't wait until the election is over. Please Vote, not for the party but for the person who will lead America into the future for next four years with strength, honesty and dignity.

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FIRE DISTRICT FINANCES

****Budget Hearing, Do It In The Correct Order- Held over from last week!!**

Remember, the main purpose of the budget hearing is to gather public input before finalizing the budget. It is crucial to take this feedback into account before making any decisions about exceeding and overriding the tax levy cap.

Please remember that anyone can attend your budget hearing; attendance cannot be restricted to residents or property taxpayers of your district. Additionally, any attendee has the right to request an opportunity to speak, and you cannot limit speakers to just district residents or taxpayers.

A resolution to override the cap passed before the budget hearing is invalid.

The resolution to override the real property tax levy cap must be adopted after completion of the budget hearing and before you adopt the final budget to be effective. A resolution to override the cap, if adopted after the Board has approved the final budget, will not accomplish the goal of overriding the cap. The sequence in which you adopt the resolution to override the cap and the resolution to approve the final budget is critical. If done out of sequence, the override will be invalid, and the Board will not be allowed to use the funds exceeding the cap in 2025. Instead, those funds must be placed in a special escrow account and used to reduce the 2026 budget.

To support Boards planning to exceed the real property tax levy cap in 2025, sample resolutions are available for your use: one for approving the override and another for approving the final 2025 budget.

The resolutions are numbered intentionally (No.1 and No. 2); please adopt them in the correct order.

#1 Resolution To Override The Tax Cap

_____ FIRE DISTRICT RESOLUTION NO. 1 : OVERRIDE REAL PROPERTY TAX CAP FOR THE 2025 BUDGET

WHEREAS, the Board of Fire Commissioners of the _____ Fire District must adopt a proposed budget for 2025 and estimate of fund balances in preparation for the annual fire district budget hearing and did so in preparation for the budget hearing, and

WHEREAS, the Board of Fire Commissioners of the _____ Fire District held the annual fire district budget hearing on notice to the public on October ____, 2024, and

WHEREAS, the Board has considered the proposed budget and received comments on the proposed budget on October ____, 2024 at said budget hearing, and

WHEREAS, the Board has determined that the financial needs of the fire district and fire department for fiscal year 2025 cannot be supported by a budget that would comply with the real property tax cap established pursuant to Section 3-c of the General Municipal Law as the proposed budget for 2025 calls for a real property tax levy that will exceed the real property tax cap permitting only a 2.00% increase in said tax levy; and

WHEREAS, Section 3-c of the General Municipal Law provides as follows: A local government may adopt a budget that requires a tax levy that is greater than the tax levy limit for the coming fiscal year, not including any levy necessary to support the expenditures pursuant to subparagraphs (i) through (iv) of paragraph g of subdivision two of this section, only if the governing body of such local government first enacts, by a vote of sixty percent of the total voting power of such body, a local law to override such limit for such coming fiscal year only, or in the case of a district or fire district, a resolution, approved by a vote of sixty percent of the total voting power of such body, to override such limit for such coming fiscal year only.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Fire Commissioners hereby approves a determination to override the real property tax cap for the 2025 budget to permit an annual real property tax levy that will exceed the real property tax cap with an increase in said tax levy over the two (2%) percent limit and result in a final annual fire district budget in the amount of \$_____, and The adoption of the foregoing resolution was duly put to a vote and upon roll call the vote was as follows:

Chairman

Commissioner

Commissioner

Commissioner

Commissioner

The resolution was thereupon duly declared to have been adopted.

Dated: _____, New York

October _____, 2024

#2 Resolution To Approve The Final Budget

_____ FIRE DISTRICT RESOLUTION NO. 2 : APPROVE FINAL BUDGET FOR 2025

WHEREAS, the Board of Fire Commissioners of the _____ Fire District must adopt a proposed budget for 2025 and estimate of fund balances in preparation for the annual fire district budget hearing and did so in preparation for the budget hearing, and

WHEREAS, the Board of Fire Commissioners of the _____ Fire District held the annual fire district budget hearing on notice to the public on October ____, 2024, and

WHEREAS, the Board has considered the proposed budget and comments received on the proposed budget on October ____, 2024 at said budget hearing, and

WHEREAS, the Board has determined that that financial needs of the fire district and fire department for fiscal year 2025 cannot be supported by a budget that would comply with the real property tax cap established pursuant to

Section 3-c of the General Municipal Law as the proposed budget for 2025 calls for a real property tax levy that will exceed the real property tax cap permitting only a 2.00% increase in said tax levy; and

WHEREAS, Section 3-c of the General Municipal Law provides as follows: A local government may adopt a budget that requires a tax levy that is greater than the tax levy limit for the coming fiscal year, not including any levy necessary to support the expenditures pursuant to subparagraphs (i) through (iv) of paragraph g of subdivision two of this section, only if the governing body of such local government first enacts, by a vote of sixty percent of the total voting power of such body, a local law to override such limit for such coming fiscal year only, or in the case of a district or fire district, a resolution, approved by a vote of sixty percent of the total voting power of such body, to override such limit for such coming fiscal year only.

WHEREAS, previously at this meeting this Board of Fire Commissioners passed a resolution to override the real property tax cap for the 2025 Budget.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Fire Commissioners hereby approves the Final Budget for the _____ Fire District for 2025 attached hereto and made a part hereof in the amount of \$ _____. The adoption of the foregoing resolution was duly put to a vote and upon roll call the vote was as follows:

Chairman
Commissioner
Commissioner
Commissioner
Commissioner

The resolution was thereupon duly declared to have been adopted. Dated: _____, New York October _____, 2024

[Register "NYS GOVBUY 2024" events@ogsgovbuy.info](mailto:events@ogsgovbuy.info)

Save the date: November 21-22, 2024 Empire State Plaza Convention Center REGISTER NOW AT THIS LINK:

https://eventdex.my.site.com/BLN_RegistrationDym?id=a19Nt000001xfZdIAI

[FIRE DISTRICT BUDGET CALENDAR FOR 2024 CAN BE FOUND AT THIS LINK ON THE CAFDA WEBSITE:](https://cafda.net/fire-district-budget-calendar-for-2024/)

<https://cafda.net/fire-district-budget-calendar-for-2024/>

Local Government and School Accountability Contact Information:

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

Address: Office of the State Comptroller, Division of Local Government and School Accountability
110 State Street, 12th Floor; Albany, NY 12236

IN EMS NEWS

As EMS Evolves in New York State

The Buffalo News. Stephen P. Watson

The Town of Tonawanda's paramedics unit costs about \$2.6 million a year in salaries, benefits, equipment and supplies, far more than the revenue the service brings in.

A consultant, however, projects the town could shrink the cost to taxpayers to just over \$2 million by combining its paramedics division with a new ambulance corps, thanks to a surge in insurance payments for medical transports the town would begin to collect.

Twin City Ambulance, the town's current provider, said the Fitch & Associates report is based on inaccurate or incomplete information.

The company said the town would take in less revenue and spend far more to operate its own ambulance service than the study anticipates.

Representatives of the town and Twin City will meet Friday, two weeks after the company said it was blindsided by Tonawanda's ambulance announcement. A top Twin City executive said he hopes to persuade town officials to reassess the viability of a municipal ambulance corps.

"This is a disaster in the making," Terry Clark, the company's president, told The Buffalo News.

Town Supervisor Joseph Emminger and other town leaders on Oct. 3 announced a plan to purchase four new ambulances and hire 20 EMTs to staff them. The town also would hire two additional full-time paramedics to add to its roster of 16 full- and seven part-time paramedics, who would continue to serve on the town's paramedic fly cars.

"Why it was done was not because of Twin City, OK?" Emminger said in an interview. "It was done because we believe that we can provide a better service to our residents in a more cost-effective way."

Two of four ambulances would be in service around the clock, with one operating 12 hours a day and the fourth available as a backup.

The service, which would also cover Kenmore, should start early next year and reach full capacity by the end of 2025, Emminger said.

He said the town began to explore launching its own ambulance corps after hearing concerns about how long officers and paramedics have waited at emergency scenes.

Emminger, at the public announcement, said crews wait as long as 30 to 60 minutes for an ambulance to arrive, though he didn't say the words "Twin City."

Clark, following the news conference, called the supervisor's description of the company's response times "absolute fiction."

The average response time was just over 10 minutes for Twin City's 10,600 dispatches in the town over the previous 12 months, Clark said. No call had a wait time of more than 40 minutes, he said.

The town's announcement prompted questions about whether the move would make fiscal sense.

Emminger said the Fitch & Associates report showed the town could see improved response times without busting its budget from forming its own ambulance corps.

Officials had not previously made the study public but released it after The News filed a public-records request.

The financial section of the report noted the town spends \$1.85 million annually on its paramedics division, a figure that doesn't include fringe employee benefits. Emminger said the cost rises to \$2.6 million yearly with the benefits included; after taking into account the \$96,000 the town receives annually in paramedic service income.

Keeping paramedics and adding ambulances would increase the town's costs but also its income, the report found, because the town would receive payments from private insurers, Medicaid or patients for emergency transports to hospitals.

Revenue for the combined operation would rise to \$2.7 million, according to Fitch, while total expenses, including EMT fringe benefits and annual depreciation on the ambulances, would rise to nearly \$4.8 million yearly.

So town taxpayers who now pay \$2.6 million a year for a paramedic service would pay about \$500,000 less annually to receive both paramedic and ambulance services, the report projected.

"I don't think it's conservative. I think it's a realistic number," Emminger said.

He also said he's convinced the town's pay rate and benefits package would make the positions attractive at a time when private ambulance companies have difficulty hiring and retaining EMTs.

Twin City's Clark, for his part, predicts the town would end up receiving closer to \$2 million – not \$2.7 million – in annual insurance payments.

The bigger problem with the projections, Clark said, is it would cost much more to operate the service.

He said the town would need more ambulances and more EMTs to staff the ambulances than assumed in the report.

He pointed to one part of the report that addressed average "wall times" at several of the hospitals where town residents are taken by ambulance. That's a reference to the period of time between an ambulance's arrival at a hospital and when the hospital takes responsibility for the patient, allowing the ambulance crew to leave.

The report acknowledged wall times have risen at those hospitals, but Clark said Fitch vastly understated them, perhaps because it tracked when a town paramedic was cleared to leave.

For example, the Fitch report indicates an average wall time of 18 minutes at Erie County Medical Center for 2023. But Clark said the average wall time at ECMC for Twin City ambulances carrying patients from throughout its coverage area was over an hour during September.

"They're greatly underestimating how long their ambulances are going to be tied up," Clark said.

The News also obtained a letter sent to Twin City after Clark objected to how the town supervisor characterized ambulance response times in Tonawanda.

Clark issued a “cease-and-desist” letter that demanded the town retract those statements.

In his Oct. 7 reply, Emminger declined to apologize for statements he made to the press but in a conciliatory tone said the town looked forward to working with Twin City in the future.

Emminger noted, however, that Twin City found in a review of its own data that the company reported delays of more than an hour on three occasions since 2021, including one call during the 2022 blizzard.

Clark said the other two hourlong delays may have been data-entry errors.

Clark said he hopes the town at Friday’s meeting will agree to pause its shift to a municipal ambulance service and allow Twin City to provide data to Fitch for a more accurate study of this proposal.

“It would be great, but I don’t think it’s going to happen,” Clark said. “But we feel an obligation to the citizenry here. And I hate to see what’s going to happen here if they go ahead with this plan.”

STEP INTO THE CHIEF’S OFFICE

Good Leaders Know The Power Of Good Policy

Jon Dorman

The “What Firefighters Want” in 2024 survey revealed some concerning stats about the state of leadership in the American fire service. The good news: There are also many bright spots that deserve a further drilldown – one such spot involving the priorities and values of fire chiefs and direct supervisors.

Approximately 76% of the respondents agree that their fire chief prioritizes and values firefighter safety. An additional 10% neither agreed nor disagreed, leaving about 13% who disagreed. We see similar results related to chiefs prioritizing training.

So, what’s the secret that most chiefs are implementing? It’s really no secret at all.

- ***Chiefs who prioritize firefighter safety and training are generally doing so through strong policy and procedure implementation.***
- ***They see the value in encouraging their personnel to attend training outside the department to gain different perspectives.***
- ***They recognize that meaningful training leads to a safer environment on the emergency scene and in the station. They understand that budget funds must be earmarked for training and safety initiatives.***

However, the chief can only do so much. ***Policies and procedures are only useful if they are followed.*** That’s where the supervisors come into the picture. The good news here is that 83% of the respondents report that their immediate supervisor prioritizes firefighter safety, and 73% agree their supervisor prioritizes firefighter training. In many cases, the supervisor is the most influential person in the firehouse. Based on these responses, it appears as though supervisors are doing their jobs and projecting that influence in a positive manner.

We also see high scores in the categories of fire chiefs exhibiting competence in their position, remaining calm under pressure, and treating members with respect. Likewise, the percentages for direct supervisors are high in those same categories. Again, these traits have a trickle-down effect. Personnel who see their leadership as knowing their jobs well, remaining calm on emergency scenes and treating members with respect are much more likely to mirror that behavior. So, where do policies and procedures fall into these things?

TRAINING TIME

When most personnel think about training, they don’t put too much thought into policy. But policy plays a vital role. ***A solid training policy lays out the plan for the year.*** It will also clearly indicate the “who” and “what” of the training program. When things like this are laid out well, they tend to instill confidence in the personnel.

Beyond the “big picture” annual training plan, modern training policies allow for personnel to attend training that is not directly sponsored by the department but is approved by department leadership. This type of training is critical in two ways. First and foremost, it helps expose personnel to different ideas, techniques and ways of thinking. ***There are several versions of an old saying that goes something like, “You’re never an expert within 20 miles of home.”*** If personnel only attend training close to the house, they’re likely to miss out on some really interesting and helpful

topics, or even just being exposed to a little different method of instruction or seeing how others are successfully or even unsuccessfully navigating various challenges.

That being said, it is crucial the training is approved by department leadership. Leaders should vet any training that is not sponsored by the department before signing off on attendance by personnel. The last thing leaders want is to have personnel attend some new-fangled training that puts the members at undue risk or is not going to be beneficial to the department's mission.

Beyond creating training opportunities, true fire service leaders are cultivating a training culture. Those who are successful most often find that department leaders can't take a "do as I say, not as I do" stance when it comes to training. While we don't have concrete numbers, it's safe to assume that most of those department leaders and officers who make safety a priority, are doing so through training. Here's the caveat, though. They aren't just scheduling training. They're active participants in that training. **If you're a fire service leader and you haven't been in a training class with your personnel in some time, there's a good chance you're going to teeter between that 23% of leaders that aren't seen as prioritizing safety.**

The good news is there is a quick fix. Get out of the office once in a while. Put on your gear and head to the training ground. Attend a classroom course the department is sponsoring. Show your personnel that training on safety topics is important to you. A positive attitude can be infectious.

CAREER ADVANCEMENT

Career advancement is another one of those areas that doesn't always make people think about policy. But consider some additional statistics from the survey. ***Nearly 60% of the respondents agree that their chief exhibits competence in their position.*** Close to another 14% are on the fence. However, only about 28% disagree that their chief is competent. The overwhelming story here is that for every respondent who doesn't have faith in their chief's competence, there are two others that are comfortable with the aptitude of their department's leader.

The numbers are even more compelling when we look at fire service supervisors. Over 71% of the respondents agreed that their immediate supervisor exhibits competence in their position. About 12% neither agreed nor disagreed. Only 15% reported that they disagree that their supervisor is competent. So, at this lower level of department leadership, for every one respondent who was not confident in their supervisor's competence, we saw five that believe their supervisor has the necessary abilities to do the job.

Looking at these percentages, we're seeing that fire service leadership is in a solid position when it comes to competence with the necessary job functions. So, what does that have to do with policy? Well, we need to consider a few things.

First is the correlation between career advancement policies and leader competence. Departments that develop competent leaders generally have several policies in place, including those dealing with the agency's performance evaluation and promotional processes as well as detailed position descriptions and career tracks for aspiring leaders to follow. Policies regarding officer development, educational incentives and tuition reimbursement are also powerful tools to engage personnel throughout their climb up the proverbial career ladder.

Next, we need to contemplate enforcement of those policies. Granted, when most of us consider "enforcing" policies, the first thing that comes to mind is some type of corrective action. While that can be true for many policies, those that address career advancement should be regarded a bit differently. When it comes to enforcement of these policies, we're talking about consistency.

Take a career track policy, for instance. Let's say the department has adopted a set of requirements to be eligible for promotion to a company officer position. These are usually going to include various course or education prerequisites and time in grade obligations. Enforcing those minimum requirements builds consistency and trust. Allowing some candidates to bypass some of the eligibility conditions because they are "so close" destroys that trust of other personnel.

So, what's the correct answer when someone is a day short of the minimum time in grade to qualify? That person isn't eligible for promotion. How about when someone is in the process of completing a prerequisite certification but hasn't finished the course? Again, that person shouldn't be eligible for promotion. But what if the chief thinks that person is a great candidate? Well, they'll still be a great candidate the next time around, as long as they meet all the requirements.

This discussion brings us to another bright point in the What Firefighters Want in 2024 Survey.

HONESTY, HUMILITY, FAIRNESS AND RESPECT

Over a decade ago, the National Society of Executive Fire Officers published the Firefighter Code of Ethics (USFA, 2012). While the document encourages fire service members to pledge several points, three of them stick out as relevant for this discussion:

- Accept responsibility for my actions and for the consequences of my actions.
- Support the concept of fairness and the value of diverse thoughts and opinions.
- Be respectful and conscious of each member's safety and welfare.

These statements have had an impact on fire service leadership over the years, as evidenced by the responses concerning direct supervisors. Survey participants overwhelmingly agreed that their supervisors exhibit humility, and treat members with fairness and respect.

This is great news for the future of the fire service. As previously stated, direct supervisors, who often hold the rank of a company officer, are often the most influential people in the department. Seeing the vast majority of survey participants agreeing that their supervisors exhibit these tenets means they are likely influencing their subordinates to demonstrate those same principles. Likewise, a company officer who conveys these traits is prone to taking them on their career journey to higher positions within the department.

Just as training and career advancement fall under the policy umbrella, we see a policy correlation to these personal attributes as well. Policies that specifically address uniform regulations, use of various types of leave, conduct and behavior, and grievances encourage fairness. Supervisors who exhibit fairness among their subordinates are more likely to be respected. This tends to become a two-way street at that point, with supervisors returning that respect to their personnel.

The trait of honesty can also be enhanced by solid department policies. Agencies that have a policy that prescribes an oath or affirmation of office put members on notice from the start that honesty is a requirement of the department. Policies explaining the department's stance on conflicts of interest, petty cash and physical asset management can help reinforce honesty expectations among the members. As we continue to evolve technologically, policies concerning drones, body-worn cameras and helmet cameras can help encourage honest interactions between department members and the public.

While creating policies that require humility among department members probably isn't practical, it's possible to develop policies that encourage this trait. Policies that explain ADA compliance and services available for people who are limited in their English proficiency, while required for FEMA grant compliance, can help members understand more vulnerable populations. This is especially true if these policies are required reading for a promotional exam. The same is true of policies related to line-of-duty deaths, funerals and department liaisons to family members during those events.

Believe it or not, a policy on post-incident analysis (PIA) can help encourage humility among the members of the department. PIAs should be designed to identify both strengths and weaknesses that occur during an operation. These events can help members understand they might not be the most important person in the room.

FINAL THOUGHTS

While the What Firefighters Want survey revealed concerning statistics, it also highlighted great news related to the positive personality traits and attitudes that so many members see in their immediate supervisors. That group of personnel can influence their peers and their subordinates. They are also the future upper echelon of the fire service. As long as they keep honing their skills and encouraging others to do the same, the future of the fire service looks bright.

OUR CHANGING FIRE SERVICE –CHALLENGES & POSITIVE IDEAS!

POSITIVE OUTCOMES

**Does your FD have an S-2?

Bill Carey

Lighten the duties of your officers and chiefs using skilled administrative members who want to help but not respond to calls.

The volunteer fire service continues to look for ways to encourage the public to invest in its operations while also working to solve recruitment and retention problems. Many departments offer administrative or non-operational positions for those who want to help but do not want to respond to EMS calls or fight fire.

One administrative member position that can be an interesting option for the public, while helping lighten the workload of training officers, is the fire department S-2 or intelligence officer.

DEFINING THE ROLE

In the Army, the S-2 officer is responsible for intelligence at the battalion or brigade level. The S-2 section is crucial for collecting, analyzing and disseminating information regarding the enemy and the battlefield. Their work helps commanders make informed decisions about operations.

In the fire service, this could cover new construction, new hazards and future developments that can affect a department's operations and personnel. It could also include ongoing training requirements and recent advancements in fireground operations, apparatus and equipment.

While career fire departments can have uniform and civilian staff assigned to gather, review and disseminate all of this information, it is harder for a volunteer department where its members may already be overtasked. Having an invested administrative member focused on crucial information can ensure that the membership is properly informed without having an added burden placed on officers or members responsible for other tasks.

Here's a breakdown of the responsibilities of a fire department S-2 officer:

- **Intelligence collection.** The S-2 can collect information on new building construction, changes in traffic and roadways, and the planning of large-scale or mass-gathering events in the response area.
- **Security operations.** In this area, the S-2 can assist the department leadership with ensuring its policies and procedures are up to date with special attention toward preventing possible incidents regarding harassment and discrimination.
- **Planning and advising.** Here the S-2 can assist chief officers with developing information for use with elected leaders and civic organizations. Working with a department treasurer, the S-2 can help prioritize future expenditures for department operations and provide chiefs with justification for the expenses.
- **Training and supervision.** In partnership with the training officer, the S-2 can assist with preparing and distributing written training materials. The S-2 can also work with chief and company officers to create and distribute after-action reports as well as highlight good and bad trends in emergency operations.
- **Coordination with other units.** It is not unusual for volunteer departments to not have a public information officer. Most leave it to chief officers to address the public and reporters. The S-2 can assist chiefs with presenting incident details to the media as well as preparing and delivering information to schools, police and EMS departments and civic groups, freeing the chief officers for other tasks.

While it looks like the S-2 duties are already covered in some departments by training officers, secretaries and other members, this position is one where the focus is on information vital to the operation of the department. Having one person with an eye for detail in these tasks can make work easier for others focused on their responsibilities.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN AN S-2?

The primary requirements should be a desire to help the department and an eagerness to learn. Basic skills include attention to detail, quality record-keeping and strong writing. Additional skills and abilities involve proficiency in creating documents, spreadsheets, email and graphic design. The S-2 could also be taught how to navigate your department's pre-planning software or other programs related to response, incident reports and training certifications. Laying out an actual fire department intelligence officer or S-2 job description listing regular and as-required duties can help recruit someone from your community who has the required skills as well as the desire to help. Bringing this administrative member on board will be a recruitment and public relations win as well as a needed relief to your volunteer chiefs and company officers.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Don't neglect the value of building up the administrative ranks in your department. Your community has many people with the skill sets mentioned here who want to help but believe the only way they can is to go through months of training and only respond to emergency incidents. Bringing these volunteers into your department can reveal other areas outside of emergency operations that members of your community can invest in.

[FIRE SERVICE CHALLENGES](#)

[Crumbling Richford, NY, Fire Station Held up by Jacks](#)

Susan Nicol

Firefighters are used to thinking quickly to grab the right tools for the job.

For Richford firefighters, they are using jacks -- to hold up the station's walls after it was hit by a vehicle.

"We are out here, giving our all every day that we can," Fire Chief Tracy Keener told [WBNG](#). "We're called in at 3 a.m. and we're there. All we want to do is right by our community and help protect our citizens and those who pass through our communities and right now, we're limited."

The 84-year-old station is crumbling and there's not enough room to properly store and clean equipment. The chief is concerned about the ongoing health threat to firefighters.

They applied for a federal grant in 2019, but were turned down.

The chief said they got the same response when they applied again noting that they don't have space for a ladder truck to "Really, we're looking toward the future, the next 100 years because this building has served us almost 100 years..We want to make sure that we can serve today, tomorrow and the future."

Congressman Marc Molinaro said he will do what he can do to help the department apply again.

"Communities like the ones I represent often get overlooked...and know what it's like to get beat out by big cities," Molinaro said.

[Colsen-Branded Tabletop Fire Pits Sold Nationwide Recalled After 19 People Burned, Some Quite Seriously](#)

Nearly 90,000 Colsen-branded tabletop fire pits sold by major retailers nationwide are being recalled after dozens of alarming incidents left 19 people with burn injuries, some requiring surgery and others permanently disfigured. The products are a burn and fire hazard in that alcohol flames can be invisible and lead to flame jetting when the pit reservoirs are filled, causing fire to flash back to the alcohol containers, unleashing burning alcohol onto people nearby, according to a notice posted on Thursday by the Consumer Product Safety Commission. "Use of the recalled fire pits can lead to injury quickly and unexpectedly, causing burns in less than one second that can be serious and deadly," CPSC stated. The federal agency said it has received 31 reports of flame jetting and flames escaping from the product's concrete container, burning 19 people.



[Md. County Considers Changing Training Classes, Schedules To Improve Recruitment](#)

Matt Hubbard

Harford County officials are working to counter both burnout and boredom in their efforts to recruit more volunteers. Since Harford County government took over emergency medical services two years ago, recruitment and retention of volunteers has been impacted, according to John Gallagher, president of the Harford County Fire and Emergency Medical Services Association.

"Participation of volunteers was weak before then and has dropped off significantly since then," he said.

Gallagher outlined current staffing, plans and challenges for the association during his annual update to the Harford County Council Tuesday night. Across the 12 volunteer fire companies in the county, Gallagher said the association has 1,536 members — 933 of whom are active.

The association tracks calls for service on an annual basis that ends Sept. 30.

The most recent report states that there were 10,965 total fire calls and 3,741 EMS calls in the year that just ended. The association also received 232 calls for box fires — 72 of which turned out to be actual fires.

In Bel Air, the association found that fire companies get an average of 7.1 fire calls per day. In other parts of the county like Norrisville, Gallagher said there are only about 0.04 calls per day, which poses a challenge for volunteer retention. "Slower companies have an issue trying to keep members engaged because there is just not enough activity for them," Gallagher said. "Members want to go on calls, not sit around the firehouse for days at a time."

Gallagher said busy companies also have challenges. More than 45% of their calls are "nuisance calls" for things such as automatic alarms, vehicle accidents, false alarms, gas alarms and EMS assistance.

"It is hard to keep 20- and 30-year-olds engaged when you are just running multiple calls a day doing lift assist for overweight patients or gas leaks," Gallagher said.

Before volunteers can ride out to calls, they need to complete training. For Firefighter 1, volunteers are required to complete 135 hours. For EMS, volunteers need 207 hours.

Scheduling classes and the time commitment required by volunteers before stepping foot in an emergency vehicle has posed a challenge for the association, according to Gallagher.

To overcome the challenge, the association is working with the Harford County Department of Emergency Services to offer more classes and create a flexible schedule that wouldn't pose as much of a time challenge for volunteers.

Once volunteers complete training, they are entitled to numerous benefits including a \$7,000 state income tax deduction, health, life and disability insurance, discounts on education and housing and more. The incentives have been a major benefit to the association in retention and assistance, Gallagher said; however, the funding received this year for the program will not be enough to cover the entire year.

Gallagher speculated that the association will be \$120,000 to \$150,000 short on funding by the end of the fiscal year. Part of the association's multi-faceted plan for recruitment and retention will be to request that the county fully fund the program during the next fiscal year.

The association is hosting open house events every weekend in October at the Whiteford Volunteer Fire Company, Susquehanna Hose Company and the Darlington Volunteer Fire Company. Find the schedule at <https://harfordvolunteer.com/events>.

[Carroll County MD. Department Of Fire And Emergency Medical Services Is Out Of Money](#)

The Carroll County Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services is out of money and is unable to staff three stations with paid county employees.

As of Oct. 1, the county does not have enough money to provide full-time paid personnel at the Lineboro Volunteer Fire Department, the New Windsor Fire Department and the Union Bridge Fire Department, Ken Kiler, president of the Board of Carroll County Commissioners, said in an interview Friday. ***Those locations will still have volunteers available.*** "We budgeted the money through September, but we exhausted the money," said Kiler, who represents District 2. "It's frustrating. We should have been fully staffed by now for county employees."

In the \$545 million Carroll County operating budget for fiscal 2025, which started July 1, the fire/EMS department was allocated \$27,964,750. That number could grow to \$28,216,630 in fiscal 2026, county documents show.

Neither Fire/EMS Department Chief Michael Robinson Sr. nor Ted Zaleski, the county's finance director, responded to questions Friday about why the money has run out.

The department has been able to staff the county's other 11 fire departments.

The push to create a combination paid and volunteer county fire service began in Carroll County more than a decade ago. In 2018, the Maryland General Assembly passed legislation allowing the county to establish the new department and in October 2020, commissioners unanimously voted to pass an ordinance creating it. The county has been building the department since then.

Robinson said in the past that he is working to hire up to 240 employees within the next two years. Kiler said Friday that the department is about 50 people short of that goal.

Robinson announced the department's financial struggles during an Oct. 7 meeting of the Carroll County Volunteer Emergency Services Association. He told members that the three stations will be "unstaffed at this time," according to meeting minutes.

As of the meeting, there were 30 people in the hiring process, and Robinson hoped to have them hired by November. "As of October 1st, the money is out," Robinson said. "There is no money to staff the remaining three stations. We're asking everyone to please continue to keep track of costs. If there's no money to staff, we need to find a way."

Robinson also asked members not to tell the media of the situation as it would anger the Board of County Commissioners. "Please hold off another week while I try to resolve this," he said, according to the minutes.

Robinson did not respond to a request for comment on Friday.

District 4 Commissioner Michael Guerin asked at the county's weekly meeting Thursday for a discussion on financial issues with the department to be added to the agenda for the Oct. 24 County meeting.

"We've got a funding issue to discuss regarding our Department of Fire and EMS, and several volunteer fire stations," Guerin said. "We're going to have that discussion and hopefully some resolution."

Guerin did not go into further detail, but the statement was made in open session.

The department has seen an exodus of employees and violations related to the safety and health of firefighters, paramedics and emergency medical technicians at the Manchester Volunteer Fire Company, and high budgetary costs in the last year.

At the Oct. 7 meeting Robinson announced the resignation of five employees, according to the minutes.

Kiler said he's not concerned about turnover within the department. "I spent my whole life in construction," he said. "People move around. A lot of that is normal. I think it's the nature of the business."

Robinson said that commissioners do not want to take unallocated money to fund the three stations, due to the amount of overtime staff is working. Commissioners will also not allow money generated from EMS billing for staffing, he said. "[We're] working on fixing the problem and will be fixed as soon as it can be," he said.

Crafting the county's current operating budget was a frustrating process for commissioners as they worked to eliminate a \$12.4 million deficit. Funding fire and EMS was part of the frustration.

According to the county's adopted budget summary: "For years Carroll County has been served by 14 volunteer companies, with 13 providing EMS. For more than two decades, the volunteer companies have paid employees to provide EMS, with the county providing significant funding toward these services. ... This transition is a huge change, increasing the number of commissioner employees by more than 20% and involves substantial new funding. ... The new ongoing costs associated with this effort are projected to cost more than \$20 million per year.

"A total of 230 new positions are planned to staff the County Fire/Emergency Medical Services function. Momentum on the transition began in FY23 with 98 positions, with another 60 approved and in the process of being filled in FY24. An additional 72 employees are included in FY25. As with any of our long-range planning efforts, the projections will continue to be refined as more information becomes available, but we're closer to capturing the full cost of implementation."

APPARATUS MAINTENANCE

Choosing a Fire Apparatus Mechanic or Service Center

Michael Huber

Given the increasing costs associated with fire apparatus, it is crucial to prioritize maintaining existing equipment to extend its operational lifespan and ensure continued readiness.

Selecting a fire apparatus dealer as a repair facility or a technician is a crucial decision, as it impacts the quality, reliability, and support of your emergency response equipment. Here are some key factors to consider:

1. **Research and recommendations:** Start by asking for recommendations from friends or colleagues who have experience with apparatus technicians. Check with surrounding departments.
2. **Customer service:** Evaluate a facility's responsiveness to your inquiries and its willingness to provide detailed information. Ascertain through references how it handles post repair support.
3. **Check certifications:** Look for technicians who are certified by reputable organizations, such as the National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) or Emergency Vehicle Technician (EVT) Certification Commission. This ensures they have the necessary skills and knowledge.
4. **Experience with your apparatus:** Ensure the technician has experience with the specific make and model of your apparatus. All apparatus have unique systems and parts, so experience with your make of vehicle is important.
5. **Visit the shop:** Visit the repair facility to assess its cleanliness, organization, and equipment. A well-maintained shop often reflects the quality of work.

6. **Geographic location:** Consider the dealer's location relative to your department. A local facility may offer quicker service and support.
7. **Ask questions:** Inquire about the technicians' experience, specialties, and the types of repairs they handle. Discuss any specific issues your apparatus has, to see how they approach diagnosis and repair.
8. **Check warranties:** Ask about warranties on parts and labor. A good dealer and mechanic should stand by their work and offer some form of warranty.
9. **Communication:** Choose a dealer or technician who communicates clearly and keeps you informed about the status of repairs. Good communication helps build trust and ensures you're aware of what's being done to your apparatus.
10. **Trust your instincts:** If you're uncomfortable or feel pressured, it's okay to seek out another dealership or technician.
11. **Trial run:** If possible, start with a smaller job or maintenance task to test the technicians' service quality before entrusting them with more significant repairs.
12. **Discuss emergency repairs:** Since fire apparatus are critical in emergencies, ask about a shop's/ technician's ability to handle urgent repairs and turnaround times for critical issues. Check if the dealer/ technician offers 24/7 support or emergency assistance.
13. **Long-term relationship:** Think about the potential for a long-term partnership with the dealer. A good dealer/technician will be a trusted partner in your emergency response efforts.
14. **Network and partnerships:** Dealers with strong industry connections and partnerships can offer better insights, support, and resources.

Regardless of the amount of research you perform, conflicts regarding fire apparatus repairs can arise for several reasons, often stemming from communication issues, contractual misunderstandings, or technical problems. Here's how to identify and potentially address common conflicts:

1. **Clear communication:** Establish and maintain clear, written communication with repair services to ensure all parties understand the scope, cost, and expectations.
2. **Detailed contracts:** Use detailed contracts or service agreements that outline the work to be done, costs, timelines, and warranty terms.
3. **Regular maintenance:** Implement a routine maintenance schedule to catch potential issues early and reduce the need for major repairs.
4. **Regular inspections:** Schedule regular inspections to address minor issues before they become major problems.
5. **Feedback and review:** After repairs, provide feedback and reviews on the service. This helps improve future interactions and provides valuable information to other departments.

By addressing these potential conflict areas proactively and maintaining thorough documentation and communication, you can manage fire apparatus repairs more effectively and minimize disruptions to your department's operations.

Finding a reputable fire apparatus dealer or technician involves a combination of research, checking credentials, and personal judgment. Ensuring that the dealer/technician is experienced with fire apparatus and provides excellent service is key to keeping your apparatus in optimal working condition.

As we all know, effective fire apparatus maintenance is vital for ensuring the safety, reliability, and longevity of this critical equipment. As fire departments face mounting financial pressures and rising costs, a proactive approach to maintenance not only maximizes the value of existing assets but also enhances operational readiness and safety. By investing in routine maintenance, embracing strategic planning, and exploring cost-effective solutions, departments can better navigate the challenges of fire apparatus management and continue to provide essential services to their communities.

BUYING NEW APPARATUS?

Advances in Emergency Vehicle Lighting Technology

Alan M. Petrillo

Jon Sestrom, product manager for Whelen Engineering Co., says the company's CenCom Core® control systems enhance first responder safety by offering advanced automation, remote connectivity, and true system synchronization through WeCanX., a CAN-based communication system. "The Core system allows us to control what the products that have LEDs can do," Sestrom points out, "by creating scenarios for the LEDs to communicate to the public."

He notes that the Core system features Situation-Based Integration and Events. With Situation-Based Integration, scene-specific functions can be created and automated by using various vehicle components and signals, like automatically turning off a siren when a vehicle arrives on scene. With Events, multiple user-defined rules can be created for specific situations depending on the state of your vehicle, like automatically switching to Dynamic Variable Intensity™ (DVI) light patterns when the vehicle is in Park.

Sestrom says that a calm scene is a safe scene. Using Whelen's V2V Sync, the Core system will automatically synchronize lights and tones on vehicles within any proximity to aid approaching motorists, and when on scene it will synchronize emergency lighting on all the vehicles that have responded.

"Illumination is another big issue with LEDs," Sestrom says. "Our photometric design team has designed optics and reflectors that take the light output from LEDs, collect it, reorganize it, and direct it, focusing the light where it's needed whether it be near field, far field, or a combination of the two." He adds that the Core system can ramp up how LED lights turn on, turning them up slowly so there's no shock to the eyes. That technology is used in Whelen's M series and 100 series scene lights, says Sestrom.

Jason Witmier, director of education and technology for Safe Fleet, says its FRC division introduced a new generation of its Focus line. The Radiant Max and Radiant Lux bend light through the fixture's lens toward the ground directly in front of an apparatus and then gradually drop down to as far as 100 feet away. "It's not about putting out the brightest light; it's about getting the light into the area that's most effective," Witmier says. "It's all about what you want to achieve with the number of lumens you're using. You have to think of the application of the light, whether it's to light up the ground around the rig or the distance down a street."

Lou Zara, FRC product manager, says that FRC's Signature series includes the Radiant Lux, a CAN-Bus-controlled LED that can be controlled by FRC's OmniPlex multiplex system. Using OmniPlex, the operator can turn on spotlights individually, floodlights individually, or both simultaneously; control their intensity by dimming or making them brighter; and flash the lights in different patterns, Zara says. "We have amber integrated into our LEDs that gives us a warm function—a combination of white and amber LEDs that can be changed from low to medium to high intensity," he adds.

Sam Massa, president of HiViz LED Lighting, says customers have asked his company how to reduce the lighting chaos on fire scenes, inquiring about syncing, modes, brightness, and flashing patterns. "Today we're seeing a transition back to central controllers," Massa points out. "So, we designed a smart system that uses distributed electrical architecture and the existing J1939 CAM electrical system on the apparatus to carry light data. We chose to give the configuration control back to the end user and created five color parts that have a single part number per size. This reduces complexity, speeds up install time, and allows apparatus makers to standardize on hardware while giving the customer infinite configurability in software after the sale."

HiViz Connect™ is a communication protocol that enables smart features in HiViz's new HVC warning lights, such as advanced flash pattern programming, multivehicle synchronization, active load management that dims lights if the electrical system capacity is exceeded, automatic systemwide night mode, and integrated digital alerting that transmits data into the HAAS Alert Safety Cloud®.

Massa says HiViz also makes the FireTech OMEN™ warning light bar that's designed with a modern exoskeleton and multicolor modules to reduce complexity and eliminate the need for a department to configure the light. OMEN uses two optical sensors to calculate daylight and nighttime light modes and is global to all fixtures connected to the system so all are set automatically.

Gabe Casucci, national manager of fire and EMS for Sound Off Signal, says his company's patented line of silicone lights is a big advance in lighting technology. The mpower™ family LED lights are one-piece units molded with a silicone housing, optic, and weather seal to provide extreme durability, a compact design, and improved reliability by reducing the number of separate parts, Casucci says. "Additionally, mpower products are equipped with up to tricolor capability," he continues. "Their higher heat point makes them great for use in high-temperature and high-humidity areas, and they are highly resistant to ultraviolet (UV) light and most hard chemicals, actually becoming clearer when exposed to sunlight."

Casucci says the mpower lights can be controlled through Sound Off Signal's blue- PRINT® Control System, which can be run off a multiplex screen or programmed into point-to-point contacts. The system can synchronize lighting on all emergency vehicles at a scene, slow down the pattern of lights to bring firefighter adrenaline down, and adjust the intensity of the lights.

Charlie Gerds, national sales manager for TecNiq Inc., notes his company makes the K series of LED emergency lighting. "The series has great heat dissipation and are very thin lights that fit flush against the side of an apparatus," Gerds points out. "Using our AutoSynch technology, all the flashers are synchronized without requiring a separate control box." The lights have a durable impact-resistant lens and offer excellent UV resistance. K series lights are made in 5- by 3.3-, 5- by 2-, 6- by 4-, 7- by 3-, and 9- by 7-inch sizes.

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Situational Awareness: Not Just for Crime Calls Anymore ESIP WEBINAR SERIES

Every day crews respond to all manner of requests for help. We are finding, that on every call for service, we need to maintain an awareness of the risks and hazards when we arrive and while we are on the scene. We will discuss what some of those hazards are and how we can maintain an awareness to improve safety for us and all others around us.

Date: WEDNESDAY 11/6/2024 Time: 7:00 PM EST

REGISTER AT THIS LINK:

<https://mcneilandcompany.us8.list-manage.com/track/click?u=03596f243a9d922954ebaf15e&id=ffd53ba5b1&e=781e9a2c81>



NATIONAL VOLUNTEER FIRE COUNCIL – TRAINING TIMES – COURSES/WEBINARS/EVENTS

LINK TO THE VIRTUAL CLASSROOM: https://virtualclassroom.nvfc.org/featured_courses

Webinar - So You're a Training Officer: Now What? Incorporating Adult Learning Theory into FD Training Programs

Nov. 13 at 2pm ET Presenter: Rachel Buczynski

REGISTER AT THIS LINK:

https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_iITmpyf-S8qeMO_-3YEIFA#/registration



Webinar - Finding Future Firefighters: Recruiting and Retaining Gen Z

Move over millennials, there's a new kid in town. Generation Z - those born between 1997-2012 - are becoming young adults. Harnessing the energy and potential of Gen Z volunteers is crucial for organizational success. This session will explore the unique characteristics, motivations, and communication preferences of Gen Z individuals to equip you with the tools necessary to attract and retain this dynamic demographic. From leveraging social media platforms to understanding their passion for purpose-driven initiatives, participants will explore innovative strategies tailored to effectively recruit and empower Gen Z volunteers.

REGISTER AT THIS LINK: 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.

REGISTRATION FEES:

\$35 – NYS AFC members • \$50 – non-members (per person)

Pre-registration is encouraged. New – online group registration is available for fire departments!

REGISTER HERE:

https://r20.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=001QZWPfjYZRP6tAYnVrgg36Z_YE6vp89dymWfQQD1d7q4ZRwVDbNdE8ByVmF5_856f_UrB-yGihYJigwEPzCbQfCVeEoEALHRXrk_M-dbDWBRYRtkiko1vLice_oi1AFseMKfN01xTmCmiyzyMWYur-39p1T1V2_yCHo2C2F1_fJn94LviwwZ3Aag==&c=AmhECQ6uFruSlwrKRKspNlivi3NWEIzhZOrf3KrfnUls83Dp1Q1JdQ==&ch=AqMwftSnQsSjoeldoQJ-cfc_GyhBFLqV23YaEp7HU-kr9WoEr9kSg==

7:00pm **STARTING TIME**

Rensselaer (Tuesday, October 29)



NYS AFC Hands on Series

FIRE BEHAVIOR ON THE INSIDE

• **Schenectady County – October 19-20**, East Glenville Fire District #3 REGISTRATION:

<https://www.nysfirechiefs.com/firebehavior>



The fall leg of the 2024 Seminar Series kicks off in September!

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.

SEMINARS ARE COMING TO THESE COUNTIES (7:00 P.M. STARTING TIME):

Cortland (October 22) • **Monroe** (November 5) • **Oneida** (October 23) • **Rensselaer** (October 29)

REGISTRATION:

\$35 – NYS AFC members • \$50 – non-members (per person)

Pre-registration encouraged!

REGISTER AT THIS LINK:

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University Provides a Wealth of Training Opportunities UPDATED FOR 2023

VFIS TRAINING AND RESOURCE CATALOG 2023

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

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

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VFIS RESPONDER HELP FLYER

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

FF HEALTH AND SAFETY – TAKING CARE OF OUR MEMBERS!

MVC #2 Cause of FF LODDs

Two Memphis Fire Department apparatus crashed into each other in downtown Memphis Wednesday, Oct. 9, Memphis Police said. The crash happened around 7:30 p.m. at an intersection. No one was hurt in the accident, according to police, the report said.

****Review of Firefighter LODDs**

Robert Tutterow

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) released its annual report on the 2023 fatal firefighter injuries this past June. There were 89 reported line-of-duty deaths (LODDs), which is fewer than the 98 reported in 2022. However, it was the second highest number in the past 10 years.

It is important to note that the report does not include cancer deaths. Of the 89 LODDs, 48 were volunteer firefighters (which includes paid part-time) and 30 were career firefighters. The other 11 were either wildland or military.

While many (especially non fire service personnel) might suspect that well over 90 percent of deaths occurred on the fireground, the percentage was 36 percent. The second highest percentage, based on type of duty, was responding to/returning from a call at 21 percent. The other double-digit percentages for type of duty were non fire emergencies and training with each at 11 percent. Station duties comprised 8 percent, while EMS was at 6 percent. Maintenance and other on-duty were each at 3 percent.

The NFPA started tracking LODDs in 1977 when there were more than 150 reported. In fact, in the second year of its reporting in 1978, there were 174 firefighters who lost their lives.

Through the mid-1980s, the average was around 125 annually. From the mid-1980s to 2000, the average was around 90. I think it is no coincidence that it was in the mid-1980s that the fire service started talking about firefighter safety and the first edition of NFPA 1500, *Standard on Fire Department Occupational Safety, Health, and Wellness Program*, was published. A huge amount of gratitude must be extended to those pioneers who led the firefighter health and safety initiatives during this time, especially the late Phoenix (AZ) Fire Department Chief Alan Brunacini. The first 10 years of the new millennium saw a rise to just under 100 LODDs annually. In retrospect, I think a bit of complacency set in after the initial impact of NFPA 1500. From around 2010 to 2020, the average number dipped to around 70, with 2019 being the lowest at 48. The 2020s have seen another uptick with an average of above 80. Is it time for a renewed focus on firefighter safety? (Please note that these numbers do not reflect the 343 firefighters lost in the World Trade Center.)

In examining the type of duty deaths, the responding/returning category of 21 percent is totally unacceptable. Many of these are single-vehicle accidents, and if not, very few are the fault of the other driver. Is the issue driver training? Or, adrenaline induced? Or, competition with other responding apparatus? Or, pure driver/occupant negligence—i.e., failure to be buckled in? I suspect the answer to each of those is “yes.”

I do not recall any of the events being mechanical failure of the apparatus, even though there are some poorly maintained, aging rigs making responses. Regardless, it is highly recommended that all fire departments focus on ways to minimize the risks associated with responding to and returning from incidents. A pet peeve of mine is seeing so many departments putting so much black on their apparatus—especially the retro-reflective striping. It is the most inconspicuous color, and it shows the world that your department values the “trendy appearance” of the apparatus over the safety of its members. The European fire service has decades of experience (and data) proving the validity of having conspicuous apparatus as a component of its safety programs.

Other key points of the report show that sudden cardiac arrest was the cause of 40 percent of the deaths. This was followed by trauma/crushing at 35 percent. Of note is that 3 percent were from burns. When comparing the cardiac events to the burn events, perhaps the question we should explore is one about our personal protective equipment (PPE) causing more heat-stress-related deaths than necessary. Are we overprotected? Would reducing the thermal protective performance (TPP) of our gear result in an adverse impact on burn injury and fatalities? These are debatable questions that need further study and examination.

It is so important to keep this type of LODD in mind as we continue the needed focus on cancer risk reduction and behavioral health issues—i.e., suicide. When cancer deaths and suicides are factored into the LODD numbers tracked by the NFPA, we have a problem. In the mid-1980s, the focus was on safety. For the past few years, the focus has been on health. We must address both.

IN 2024 WE HAVE EXPERIENCED 47 FIRE FIGHTER LODD'S

*According to FirefighterCloseCalls.com**

In 2023 we experienced 82 LODDs reported nationally!

DOES'NT HAVE TO BE A FATALITY-JUST A DIBILITATING INJURY!

- The St. Charles County (MO) Ambulance District announced the line-of-duty death of Paramedic Michael Clarke, 27, a two-year veteran of the department.
- Two firefighters with Summit Fire and Rescue in Blountsville, Alabama were injured in an apparatus roll over. No cause was given for the rollover which resulted in the apparatus landing on its roof.
- A Charlotte (NC) firefighter was rescued after calling a mayday at the scene of a three-alarm fire in a single family home. The firefighter sustained minor injuries and was treated and released.
- A Philadelphia Fire Department medic was seriously hurt but is expected to recover after being stabbed in the chest by a patient. The 40-year-old medic was treating a male stabbing victim Thursday morning when the patient suddenly sat up and stabbed the medic at least twice—once in the chest and once in the hand.

BUILDING CODE ISSUES AND REPORTED FIRE FATALITIES

FDNY Shuts Down 'Death Trap' Haunted House

Natalie Demaree Merced Sun-Star

Officials shut down a two-story house in New York that was illegally converted into a haunted house. The New York City Fire Department said the family-owned haunted house, "A Haunting in Hollis", posed a "serious fire danger" in an Oct. 10 Facebook post.

"We want everyone to enjoy Halloween—it's a great holiday—but we want them to do it safely," the department said. "That is a death trap that we came upon, and the members notified our Bureau of Fire Prevention and action was taken swiftly to shut it down." The New York City Department of Buildings called the haunted house a "real horror show," in an Oct. 10 post on X, formerly known as Twitter.

According to the DOB, inspectors found three illegally built staircases, fireproofing material removed and blocked exit routes. We inspected a real horror show in Queens last week DOB and @FDNY personnel were called to conduct a joint inspection to investigate reports that a 2-story residential building had illegally been converted into a commercial haunted house, with a literal maze inside.

A Haunting in Hollis said it would issue refunds to any customers that ask in an Oct. 10 post on Instagram. "We whole heartedly care about the safety and well-being of our guests," the haunted house's staff said. "We are expeditiously working on meeting the safety requirements."

Honolulu (HI) Council Considers Fire Sprinkler Tax Credit Measure

Ian Bauer

A measure allowing owners associations at existing high-rise residential buildings to apply for tax credits for installing automatic sprinkler systems is under Honolulu City Council review.

Introduced by Council member Andria Tupola, Bill 57, as drafted, would allow condominium HOAs on Oahu to file an application for a tax credit with the city Department of Budget and Fiscal Services.

The proposed request would be no later than 24 months after installation of the automatic sprinkler system is completed, in accordance with applicable building and fire codes. The application must be filed on or before Sept. 30, preceding the tax year in which the credit is claimed. Applications are on behalf of eligible owners within the existing high-rise, the measure states.

If adopted, those credits apply to tax years beginning July 1, 2026, and thereafter, the bill states.

But Hawaii Kai resident Natalie Iwasa was skeptical of this tax credit bill and questioned how an HOA actually would determine which owners are eligible for such credits.

“How does that work with BFS, who has to go through these applications and determine that a homeowner hasn’t filed already individually, and then also under the HOA application ?” I was asked, during the Council’s meeting Tuesday. “Seems like a lot of administrative work.”

In 2023 local condo associations lobbied Council Chair Tommy Waters to repeal the 2018 building sprinkler retrofit law, arguing costs can be in the millions of dollars and result in thousands of dollars in assessments for owners of individual units. After the meeting, Waters suggested it would be counterproductive to repeal that city law. “With the tragedy that happened at the Marco Polo building still fresh in our minds, it’s difficult to imagine that the Council would choose to go in any direction other than to strengthen fire safety for buildings and apartments that house multiple residents and families,” he told the Honolulu Star-Advertiser via email. He said he’s met with owner associations regarding such retrofits and that he’s also supportive of Bill 57.

If we had sprinklers in 1 & 2 family homes by now the death toll of 700+ would be a hell of a lot less and fewer firefighters would be injured. But because builders and realtors make big contributions to politicians, sprinklers have been negotiated out of the Code!!

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	49
Last fire death 10/16 Schenectady, Schenectady Co. Male, 63	
Fire Deaths in any type of Dwelling in NYS	93
Fire Deaths in 1&2 Family Dwellings Nationally	981
Top 3 States with the greatest 1&2 Family Deaths	#1 PA/76
	#2 TX/61
	#3 CA/53
There has been a total of 1586 civilian home fire fatalities in 2024	
There were a total of 2127 residential fire fatalities reported in 2023 in the US media.	
We are in Week 42 of 2024, fire has claimed on an average 37 lives PER WEEK, perhaps OSHA should examine that death toll.	
Both the states of Maryland and California as well as Wash. DC require sprinklers in residential dwellings	

LIVING WITH NEW GREEN TECHNOLOGY

FDNY Commissioner Robert S. Tucker Provides An Update On Deadly Lithium-Ion Battery Fire In Brooklyn

At a Public Information Briefing on Wednesday, Oct. 16, 2024, FDNY Commissioner Robert S. Tucker provided an update on a **deadly overnight fire in Brooklyn that started due to a lithium-ion battery inside an apartment that killed a 69-year-old resident**. The fire happened shortly before 4 a.m. in Brooklyn at Box 3606. "Today is an unfortunate reminder that unregulated, lithium-ion batteries kill people," Fire Commissioner Tucker said. "They also threaten the lives of our firefighters and first responders who have to go into these fires which, as we saw earlier this morning, are quite dangerous. As often as possible, we are messaging that lithium-ion batteries that are unregulated—if you're buying in places that are unregulated—kill people. We appreciate the public hearing us, and we will not stop messaging."

[EDITOR'S COMMENT: I GUESS ALL THOSE NEW LAWS DIDN'T SAVE THESE LIVES, I TOLD YA SO, ALL THE PREVENTION WILL COME AFTER THE FIRE!!!]

FDNY Chief Fire Marshal Dan Flynn said the investigation determined **the micromobility device was blocking an exit when the unregulated lithium-ion battery failed and ignited.**

"Do not put these devices between you and the front door," Chief Flynn said. "Do not try to extinguish these fires. Call 911 and let us get out there as quickly as possible. You will not be able to put these fires out on your own."

The FDNY offers this reminder: When possible, keep micromobility devices outside and do not let them obstruct exits. Make sure homes are equipped with a working smoke and carbon monoxide alarm. Through the [New York City "Sound the Alarm" program](#), residents can request to have a smoke alarm installed in their home for free.

Proposed IN Battery Energy Storage System Runs into Opposition

Tyler Juranovich - Kokomo Tribune, Ind.

A proposed battery energy storage system station for Kokomo's southeast side ran into a brick wall of neighborhood opposition and unease from the city planning board. Spearmint Energy, a Miami-based renewable energy company, is seeking to build a 100MW to 400MW battery storage system station **on approximately 25 acres of vacant land** near the intersection of Lincoln and Goyer roads. The BESS would be anywhere from a \$115 million to \$450 million investment, generate more than \$1 million of tax revenue a year, depending on the size and the amount of energy of the system, and could power anywhere from 80,000 to 270,000 homes for four hours, Mike Reed, director of development for Spearmint Energy, said.

The type of batteries used in the proposed BESS would be lithium ion, and the proposed project would have a lifespan of approximately 20 years, Reed said.

Anywhere from 60-100 temporary construction jobs would be created, with minimal permanent jobs created during operation.

The BESS would likely have a small onsite operations and maintenance building, Reed said, though it would be able to be monitored 24/7 remotely.

BESS is a type of energy storage technology that takes excess generated energy, such as energy generated from solar or wind power, stores it and then, when there's a shortage or need for additional energy, sends it out to the electric grid.

Proponents say a BESS helps reduce electric grid volatility.

"We're entering a period of load growth," Reed said. "The U.S. population is using more energy for the first time in a long time. That's expected to continue in the next decade or so. So battery energy storage is important for grid stability."

If it moves forward, Reed said it would be a couple of years before the BESS would be operational. The company needs rezoning and development plan approval now, though, because it has significant down payments coming up next year with the Midcontinent Independent System Operator, the regional transmission operator for this area.

The proposed project, though, faced opposition from a handful of neighbors. Three nearby residents spoke at Tuesday's Kokomo Plan Commission meeting stating their opposition .[People are getting wise to the dangers]

Concerns largely centered around the fear of one, or many, of the batteries catching fire and posing a safety risk to buildings and residents nearby. Lithium ion battery fires are notoriously difficult to put out as the salts in the batteries are self-oxidizing, which means that they can't be "starved out."

Spearmint Energy said Tuesday it would have a safety plan and provide safety training with the Kokomo Fire Department. Reed said the company briefly met with KFD to start the conversation.

Assurances aside, the proposed project faced some uneasiness from the Plan Commission.

Jon Pyke, a Plan Commission member and the city of Kokomo's director of engineering, said he would like more time to research.

"Since this is an emerging technology, it's difficult for any of us to anticipate, like it is for a factory or distribution center," he said. "This is a little new for everyone. ... I can anticipate drainage, but as far as how far these things need to be away from everyone, I can't."

Ultimately, Spearmint Energy chose to continue their rezoning request to a later date. An unfavorable recommendation from the Plan Commission would've meant the company having to wait six months before reapplying for a rezoning.

HAPPEN'N IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Gansevoort Fire Department Breakfast

Sunday **October 20th** at the Gansevoort Fire Station 1870 Route 32N, Gansevoort, NY
All you can eat, these folks provide a great breakfast, something for everyone!!

LAUGH OUT LOUD!!

**I THOUGHT THE DRYER MADE MY CLOTHES SHRINK.
...TURNS OUT IT WAS THE REFRIGERATOR!**

MY STOMACH IS FLAT, THE "L" IS JUST SILENT.

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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)

518-407-5020

[EMAIL SECRETARY: SECRETARY@CAFDA.NET](mailto:SECRETARY@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

½ Tables available at no charge at Workshop '24, Sat November 2nd at Verdoj, FD

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.

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The D'Amato Law Group LLP
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 1881 Western Ave. Suite 140
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 Mary Megyeri – Office Manager
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Architecture/Engineering/Code Services
 Melissa Smith
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850 State Route 50
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www.bstco.com
 Brendan Kennedy ext 356



BRYANS & GRAMUGLIA
 CPAs, LLC

Robert V. Gramuglia, CPA
 1 Pine West Plaza Suite 107, Albany NY
 12205
 518.452.8055 or 518.859.5851cell
 Email: rgramuglia@BGCPA.net



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 11 British American Blvd, Latham, NY 12110
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 Heather R. Lewis, CPA hlewis@mmb-co.com



Accounting, Consulting & IT Security
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 Kyle Brengel, Managing Partner
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kbregel@gblny.com

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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@rinaldi.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, July 11, 2024	7:00 PM	Board of Directors Meeting	Clifton Park	
Friday, August 9, 2024	1:00 PM	SARATOGA DAY AT THE RACES	Saratoga Race Course	NYRA Day at the Races! Picnic Tables at the Paddock
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 CAFDA CALENDAR

Capital Area Meetings/Seminars/Trainings/Conference Dates (As of 9/12/2024 - Subject to Change)				
Day/Date	Time	Type	Location	Notes
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	
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 6, 2025	7:00 PM	General Membership Mtg.	Clifton Park	
Thursday, March 13, 2025	8:00 AM	Financial Training for Fire District Officials	Fulton-Montgomery College	The Allen House
Friday, March 14, 2025	5:00 PM			
Saturday, March 29, 2025	8:00 AM	Commissioner Training	Berkshire FD	Snowdate - Sunday, March 30, 2025
Thursday, April 3, 2025	7:00 PM	Board of Directors Meeting	Clifton Park	
Saturday, April 5, 2025	8:00 AM	Commissioner Training	Warrensburg FD	Snowdate - Sunday, April 6, 2025
Thursday, April 10 - Saturday April 12, 2025	All Day	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	General Membership Mtg.	Clifton Park	
Thursday, July 10, 2025				
NO MEETING				
Friday, August 8, 2025	1:00 PM	Membership Activity	Saratoga Race Course	NYRA Day at the Races!
Thursday, August 14, 2025	7:00 PM	Board of Directors Meeting	Clifton Park	
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	
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
Thursday, April 23 - Saturday April 25, 2026		CAFDA Conference	Fort William Henry Conference Center	Lake George

OSHA INFORMATION SUPPLEMENT

PROVIDED AS A SERVICE FROM THE CAPITAL AREA FIRE DISTRICT'S
ASSOCIATION - CAFDA

NEWEST INFORMATION ALWAYS AT THE TOP WITH RED ARROW

CORRECTION: *In The United States There Are Approximately 675k Volunteer Firefighters, Yet There Have Been Only Approximately 3000+ Comments To The OSHA Portal!!!!*

****THIS WEEK'S NEWEST ITEMS PRECEDED BY THE RED ARROW**

- 4,000 comments have been entered in the OSHA Comment Portal to date.
- The last 40 pages is the meat and potatoes of the proposed federal standard.

On July 22, OSHA concluded the public comment period on their proposed Emergency Response Standard. This proposed standard would impose numerous requirements that would be infeasible for many volunteer fire departments to comply with and could cause these departments to shutdown.

Don't worry if you did not submit a public comment on how damaging this standard would be before the July deadline! **There are still two very important things you can do to make your voice heard right now. The first, is to use this Action Alert to tell your Member of Congress and Senators about OSHA's proposed Emergency Response standard and how it will harm volunteer fire departments.**

The second and most important thing you can do is submit a notice of intention to appear (NOITA) before OSHA's virtual public hearing regarding the proposed Emergency Response Standard, taking place in November. Anyone can submit an NOITA and submitting one does not require you to testify at the public hearing.

CONTACT YOUR MEMBER OF CONGRESS AND SENATORS AT THIS LINK:

<https://www.voterveice.net/NVFC/Campaigns/118064/Respond>

News For Those Who Intend To Testify

On behalf of OSHA's Emergency Response rulemaking team, thank you for expressing an interest in testifying at the upcoming hearing, which is **scheduled to begin on November 12, 2024. We anticipate that this hearing will last between 2 and 4 weeks, with no planned testimony occurring during the week of Thanksgiving.**

At the time of registration closure, **OSHA received more than 500 registrations but has since received feedback that not everyone who registered intends to provide testimony.** If you intend to testify at the hearing, you do **NOT** need to reply to this email. **However, if you do not intend to testify, please reply to this email at osha.emergency.Response@dol.gov so that we do not add you to the schedule as a speaker.**

If you would prefer to provide a written comment or additional information on the proposed rule without providing spoken testimony, this option will be made available to all interested members of the public following closure of the hearing.

In the coming weeks, OSHA will be sending out the hearing schedule with your appointed date and time to provide testimony, as well as additional instructions for hearing participants.

Thanks,
Katy

Company Commander Blog Entry

Fighting fires has evolved, but federal safety regulations haven't changed for nearly half a century. Now the Occupational Safety and Health Administration has proposed new safety standards. It's great news for professional firefighters, but volunteer departments say the new rules could bog them down with expensive and irrelevant regulations.

Hundreds of US firefighters die every year, and job-related cancer is far and away the biggest killer, according to Sean DeCrane with the International Association of Fire Fighters union. He places some of the blame on outdated federal

safety rules that protect firefighters, enacted in 1980. **[EDITOR'S NOTE: ANNUALLY THE LODD RATE IS LESS THAN 100 AND THE NUMBER 1 CAUSE IS HEART RELATED INCIDENTS ACCORDING TO THE STATISTICS FROM THE US FIRE ADMINISTRATION, UNFORTUNATELY CANCER IS NOT COUNTED]**

"It's long past due that the firefighters that are out there responding every day are provided some protection by the federal government when it comes to workplace safety," said DeCrane.

That protection could come in the form of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's new Emergency Response standard, a proposal still under review.

"If these regulations had been in place 40 years ago, we would have saved hundreds, if not thousands, of firefighter lives," DeCrane said. "Just from early detection of cardiovascular disease, or understanding of exposure to toxins and carcinogens, proper training, proper equipment."

But while all of that sounds great to the professional firefighters DeCrane represents, **most fire departments in the U.S. are not professional**. According to the National Fire Department Registry, more than 4 out of 5 departments are all volunteer, or mostly volunteer.

And for volunteer firefighters, the added money and time necessary to comply with OSHA's new proposals are not welcome.

OSHA's proposal is huge — 608 pages. **The agency wants to increase training requirements, require more pre-planning for emergency situations, set stricter limits on the lifespan of some firefighting equipment, and impose more rigorous health screenings for fighter fighters**. Most of it would be expensive for volunteer fire departments to implement.

Take training: the proposed regulations demand 80 hours of training for firefighters. For volunteers, that means two full weeks of work, squeezed in here and there, for no money.

"If I tell some of them younger guys that, 'Hey, you can't spend the night with your wife and kids. You got to go to training tonight,' they might tell me to go pump sand," said Joel Cerny, chief of the Linwood, Nebraska, volunteer fire department.

The stepped-up inspections OSHA proposed would mean that all of Cerny's 20-year-old fire trucks would need an annual checkup from a certified mechanic. Another big problem.

"That means I have to take the fire truck out of my district because we don't have anybody living in our district that's a certified mechanic. So then I'm taking the truck out of the district for the whole day, leaving my district unprotected," said Cerny.

Many volunteer departments use old "turnout gear" — the helmets, jackets, pants, and boots that firefighters use — and, depending on how often a particular volunteer shows up to fight fires, that gear may not get much use. But OSHA's proposed rule would require replacing that \$4,000 suit every 10 years.

Replacing all that gear would take half a year's budget, said Cerny.

"There's some of them guys that maybe only put that gear on once a year and, for small towns like ours, it just doesn't make sense," he said.

OSHA is also calling for extensive annual physicals for firefighters, the kind that include thousands of dollars' worth of tests, according to Dave Denniston, chief of the Virgil Fire Department in upstate New York.

Add up all the costs, and Denniston figured the new regulations would require a 42% budget increase for his volunteer department. He said if the rules take hold some fire departments will fold.

"There's a lot of folks that have said we'd have to close our doors," said Denniston. "We've looked at it and said we would have to do one of two things: We would either have to greatly increase our taxes, or we would have to ignore it and just hope that something didn't happen."

Denniston believes that if any volunteer fire departments end up governed by OSHA's proposed regulations, trial lawyers will argue that all volunteer departments should be governed by it, and small departments will be exposed to litigation.

"There's a ton of confusion," said Denniston. "But that all goes, again, to the 608-page document that they put out," he said. "One of our fears is where these things are going to get decided — they're going to get decided in courtrooms further down the road when someone gets injured or killed."

OSHA officials have said they never intended the proposed regulations to cover all volunteer fire departments. And, after some bi-partisan pushback led in part by Kansas Republican Sen. Jerry Moran, the agency has promised to revisit the proposal with an eye toward protecting volunteer departments from burdensome or superfluous regulations.

But Denniston is still anxious about the sweeping proposal.

And volunteer firefighters aren't the only ones concerned. ***Some larger professional departments will spend hundreds of thousands of dollars to comply with the new OSHA standards, and Yucel Ors, with the National League of Cities, said municipalities and counties will have to pick up the bill.***

"In a nutshell, they are an unfunded mandate on local governments," Ors said.

The forced spending, he noted, could come just as the House of Representatives passed legislation that would lop 10% off federal grants for local fire departments.

[OSHA Issued The Following Statement Regarding Its Emergency Response Rulemaking And Volunteer Emergency Responders:](#)

OSHA's rulemaking on Emergency Response is focused on providing long overdue protections to emergency responders. The agency has tremendous respect for both the work that emergency responders do and their unique role providing essential public safety services to every community in America. This statement describes the rulemaking's applicability to volunteer responders.

On February 5, 2024, OSHA published the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM), Emergency Response Standard. ***While OSHA does not directly cover volunteer emergency responders, some OSHA State Plans treat volunteers as employees under state law, which is how a federal proposed standard could affect volunteer responders in those State Plan states.***

In the NPRM, OSHA preliminarily determined, based on the limited evidence available to it at the time, that the proposed rule would be economically feasible for volunteer organizations. *OSHA had sought information about the potential impact of the rule on volunteer organizations, but it did not have sufficient evidence to show that the rule would be infeasible for these organizations.*

Therefore, in accordance with the requirements of the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, the proposal did not provide special allowances for the volunteer organizations that could be affected in some states. At the same time, the agency requested commenters' input on whether the proposed rule would be feasible for these entities. OSHA received that input during the extended comment period from February 5, 2024 through July 22, 2024.

OSHA has received comments in response to the NPRM from many stakeholders, including volunteer emergency responders, fire chiefs, trade organizations, and members of Congress, which raise serious concerns about the economic feasibility of the proposed standard for volunteer fire departments. OSHA takes these concerns seriously. The comments submitted to the rulemaking docket provide crucial information that the agency did not have earlier in the rulemaking process. This new information will help the agency make the necessary determinations about whether the proposed standard is feasible for volunteer organizations.

OSHA is committed to taking steps in any final standard, consistent with the rulemaking record, to assess and minimize detrimental effects on volunteer fire departments. ***if supported by the record, this may include excluding voluntary emergency response organizations entirely based on these feasibility concerns.***

[\[EDITOR'S NOTE: IN OTHER WORDS, YOU STILL NEED TO MAKE THE CASE AS TO WHY THIS PROPOSED STANDARD WILL NEGATIVELY AFFECT YOUR FIRE DEPARTMENT OPERATION!!!!\]](#)

While the initial comment period has closed, OSHA strongly encourages stakeholders to continue to provide information and data relevant to this question at the public rulemaking hearing scheduled to begin on November 12, 2024, and during the post-hearing comment period. Instructions for how to participate in the hearing are available on the Emergency Response rulemaking webpage, www.osha.gov/emergency-response/rulemaking. Once the rulemaking record is complete, OSHA will review all the information received and determine the appropriate approach to take with respect to volunteer organizations.

OSHA created an advisory committee working group to help the agency craft a proposed standard so that stakeholders would have a direct hand in the process. That working group included representatives from labor and management; career, volunteer and industrial responders; as well as several other important stakeholder communities. OSHA included both career and volunteer responders in the working group because some OSHA State Plans treat

volunteers as employees under state law, and a federal proposed standard could affect both groups in those states. The agency's intention has always been to work collaboratively with the emergency response community to find win-win solutions that ensure both responder safety and public safety.

[EDITOR'S NOTE: ALTHOUGH THE NVFC WAS REPRESENTED ON THE WORKING GROUP MANY OF THE PROPOSED CHANGES CAME FROM INDUSTRY AND LABOR, WITH MANY OF THE SUGGESTIONS BY OTHER MEMBERS OF THE GROUP BEING DISCARDED OR IGNORED! TIME FOR YOU TO GET ANGRY AND SPEAK UP.]

Statement from Dave Denniston on OSHA's Latest Response as Printed Above

As you may have seen, OSHA issued an unusual statement on Monday about the proposed 1910.156 rule. Many are asking what this all means. Having been involved in this process now for months, I offer my opinion on the statement. This is purely my opinion and may not reflect that of any organizations that I am currently working with. OSHA is feeling a great deal of pressure from our elected officials. They have been questioned on their process, their proposal as written, and their understanding of what they have created. ***OSHA is attempting to defend what they have produced and preparing for the battle ahead. They have basically thrown down the gauntlet here and challenged us to engage. They will use this to either make the needed changes in the proposal, or to defend that they have asked us for details, and we have failed to deliver.***

Please sign up to testify. We have got to deliver on this. Every department that will be impacted by this needs one person to tell your story. It is easy to tell your story and we can help you with that.

- Tell why the standard as written is economically infeasible.
- Tell them to remove the incorporated NFPA standards and replace them with plain text that we can follow and understand.
- Tell them your officers will no longer meet the qualifications to be officers.
- Tell them that weekly and 24 hours following a run truck checks are difficult for our organizations.
- Tell them NFPA 1582 physicals are concerning in price.
- Tell them you don't have qualifications for physical trainers.
- Tell them you don't have time to complete the required documentation, preplans, and community assessments.
- Tell them there is a lot we can do to provide emergency responder safety, which they have failed to even address.
- Tell them they failed to use the full negotiated rulemaking process.
- Tell them our communities cannot support or afford this proposal as written.
- Tell them we are willing to work with them to develop a standard that will be good for all of us.

There are many organizations working overtime to get this message across, but OSHA needs to hear from **YOU**. **There are also organizations lined up to tell OSHA why this is the greatest thing since sliced bread. They have already provided both written and verbal testimony. If we fail to tell our story, theirs will overshadow us.**

We are all for reasonable, necessary, well negotiated, changes to emergency service. It is time we roll up our sleeves, do some serious work, and make things safer for everyone. What is currently on the table is a good foundation to start from, but it needs modifications to have the desired outcome.

We cannot stress the importance of taking this opportunity to be heard.

The deadline to sign up to testify during the OSHA informal hearing in November is quickly approaching. You only have until September 27th to reserve your spot. Many concerns have been expressed by the nearly 4000 written comments that were submitted during the written comment period. So, if the concerns are already on the table in writing why is it important for us testify virtually? It is important because written words are just that, written. **We now have the opportunity to add faces and emotions to the words. We need OSHA to look us in the eyes and understand we are real humans, and these are real concerns. We are asking every fire department, EMS agency and municipality to sign up at least one person to give either 5 or 10 minutes of testimony.** Surely each of us has one person in our organization that is well spoken and can speak on your behalf. Find that person and get them registered. We will be hosting a number of webinars prior to November to help them organize their thoughts, but they can't testify if they don't sign up by September 27th.

Here are some major concerns:

1. OSHA believes this will have limited impacts on the volunteer fire service. That is not true.
2. OSHA feels this will have only minor financial impacts on local organizations. That is not true.
3. OSHA feels incorporating the NFPA standards by reference is necessary, Again, not true.
4. OSHA believes all the stakeholders had adequate representation during the process. Were you represented?
5. OSHA feels the one size fits all approach is reasonable. Do you operate like all other emergency response organizations?
6. OSHA believes their data sources were statistically significant. They were not.
7. OSHA feels each item in the proposal is attached to significant risk. They are not.
8. OSHA feels the recommendations are technologically feasible. This is not true for all of them.
9. OSHA feels they have covered all significant risks faced by emergency responders. Many risks have been left out of this proposal.
10. OSHA feels this process is fair and lets us voice our concerns. Yet major concerns that have been voiced all the way back to 2016 have not even been acknowledged, let alone addressed.

Please sign up to testify and let OSHA know that we are we are 100% in favor of emergency responder safety, but we feel that as written, this proposal is not the answer and we are willing to help produce a better alternative,

SIGN UP AT THIS LINK:

<https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=GpBvzoA6h0mmhZ1NlvHxgMQsVuNB08VPk33J3ZMRGTZUMEpOMDIIWjFSMVRGNEIKRzZTlIxOVFBTi4u>

[Notice in the Federal Register Regarding the Public Hearing-Your Opportunity to Testify!!](#)

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR Occupational Safety and Health Administration 29 CFR Part 1910 [Docket No. OSHA–2007–0073] RIN 1218–AC91 Emergency Response Standard

AGENCY: Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), Labor.

ACTION: Proposed rule; notice of informal hearing.

SUMMARY: OSHA is scheduling an informal public hearing on its proposed rule “Emergency Response Standard.” The public hearing **will begin November 12, 2024, at 9:30 a.m. Eastern Time (ET)**. The proposed rule was published in the Federal Register on February 5, 2024.

INFORMAL PUBLIC HEARING:

The hearing will be held virtually and will begin November 12, 2024, at 9:30 a.m. ET. If necessary, the hearing will continue from 9:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m., ET, on subsequent weekdays.

Additional information on how to access the informal hearing will be posted at <https://www.osha.gov/emergencyresponse/rulemaking>.

To testify or question other witnesses at the hearing, interested persons must electronically submit a Notice of Intention to Appear (NOITA) on or before September 27, 2024.

In addition, those who request more than 10 minutes for their presentation at the informal hearing and those who intend to submit documentary evidence at the hearing must submit the full text of their testimony, as well as a copy of any documentary evidence, no later than October 18, 2024.

ADDRESSES:

Notice of Intention to Appear (NOITA). A NOITA must be submitted electronically at: <https://www.osha.gov/emergency-response/rulemaking>. Follow the instructions online for making electronic submissions.

Those who file NOITAs must also submit electronic copies of all documents that they intend to use or reference during their testimony.

Information about how and when to submit these materials will be provided at the time of registration.

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 <https://www.regulations.gov>. Therefore, OSHA cautions commenters about submitting information they do not want made available to the public, or submitting materials that contain personal information (either about themselves or others), such as Social Security Numbers and birthdates.

[NOTE: YOU CAN TESTIFY VIRTUALLY AS AN INDIVIDUAL, AS A DEPARTMENT, OR AS AN INTERESTED ORGANIZATION]

[Tell Congress About Your Concerns Regarding OSHA's Proposed Emergency Response Standard](#)

August 27, 2024

The effort to spread awareness about how the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) proposed Emergency Response Standard could harm volunteer fire departments continues. In addition to encouraging volunteer responders to submit public comments and testimony to OSHA regarding this standard, the National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC) has been active in alerting Congress to the issues.

With the NVFC's support, Congress has taken a number of actions to weigh-in on the proposed standard, including the following:

- The House Homeland Security Committee's Subcommittee on Emergency Management and Technology held a hearing on OSHA's proposed Emergency Response Standard on June 4. The NVFC had a witness testify at this hearing.
- The House Education and Workforce Committee's Subcommittee on Workforce Protections held a hearing on OSHA's proposed Emergency Response Standard July 24. The NVFC had a witness testify at this hearing.
- In May, Rep. Golden and Rep. Desposito co-led a letter with 40 other members of Congress (29 Republicans, 13 Democrats total) asking OSHA to make the proposed standard more scalable for volunteer firefighters.
- In June, Education and the Workforce Committee Chairwoman Foxx led a letter with 23 other Republican Members of Congress asking Acting Secretary of Labor Julie Su to exempt volunteers from the emergency response standard.
- In July, the Senate and House Members from the Arkansas Congressional delegation sent a letter to Acting Secretary Su requesting that OSHA rescind the proposed rule.
- In August, Sen. Moran and Sen. Coons led a letter with 7 other Senators (7 Republicans, 1 Democrat, 1 Independent total) asking Acting Secretary Su to exempt volunteers from the Emergency Response Standard.
- Senator Boozman sponsored an amendment that was included in the mark-up of the Senate's FY 25 Labor, Health, and Human Services Appropriations Bill that encourages OSHA to conduct listening sessions and outreach with stakeholders to fully understand the impact of new requirements on volunteer fire departments.

Though OSHA's proposed Emergency Response Standard is an Executive Branch action and Congress does not vote on the adoption of the final standard, it is important to continue to make Congress aware of the potential negative impacts of this standard due to their function of overseeing and funding OSHA. **Share the NVFC's [advocacy one-pager](#) with your Senators, Representative, or their staff so that they understand the issues and impact.**

Visit the NVFC's [OSHA Standard landing page](#) for additional resources to assist you with understanding the proposed Emergency Response Standard and information about testifying during OSHA's November public hearing.

[NEW WEEK OF AUGUST 24TH!!](#)

OSHA has been slowly adding the comments to the portal. It has become clear that they are filtering these comments and adding them in groups. Some have been labeled as "mass mailings" and other that also contain similar language have not. *Organized labor has contributed several comments as well as groups that would benefit financially from the rule. **The biggest smoking gun to me has been the comment from NFPA asking that the incorporated by reference standards be removed.*** Also, of particular interest to this group would be the comment posted by DHES and OFPC. We will schedule a Zoom meeting for next week.

I am attaching a number of comments that I feel you should be aware of and may not have the time to plow through 3K comments to see them.

The common themes that I am gathering from these comments so far are:

1. The process was flawed in how it was conducted and communicated.
2. The rule is arbitrary and capricious, convoluted, and exhaustive. Therefore, it is not understood.
3. THE NFPA standards should not be incorporated by reference.
4. Large, **Unfunded mandates.**

5. Not economically or technically feasible.
6. **Overreach by OSHA.**
7. Did not follow the full negotiated rule making process.
8. **Will have several legal challenges.**
9. Will treat workers differently because of geographic location instead of common hazards faces.
10. **Process was unfairly supported and driven by organized labor groups**
11. Will force some organizations to close their doors leaving the community at risk.
12. **Is primarily supported by those that will benefit financially from it.**
13. The consensus is that we applaud the efforts of improving safety but the current document, as written, is not the answer.
14. We would be stronger as one voice moving forward.



NYS Homeland
Security.pdf



Illionois Fire
Dsitricts.pdf



IAFF Final
Comments.pdf

COMMENTS FROM NFPA..HIGHLIGHTED SECTIONS OUT OF AN 11 PAGE LETTER!!

NFPA applauds OSHA for opening this national dialogue on how to protect first responders from a variety of occupational hazards. NFPA shares that goal and has played a significant role in advancing first responder safety over the last century. Nevertheless, it is important to note that as a general policy, **NFPA does not request incorporation by reference of any of our codes and standards.** While NFPA has been involved with OSHA over the course of many years and through several Administrations considering rulemakings, NFPA had no specific recent role in putting this Notice of Proposed Rulemaking together, and NFPA did not suggest to OSHA that it should undertake this activity.

NFPA understands that OSHA has proposed to reference NFPA's codes and standards because they are widely recognized as the best in the world and thus are widely used in the United States and elsewhere. Our technical committees, comprised of 9,000 volunteer members, consider every submitted input to prepare standards that address the latest in technology, research, and other relevant information. We are proud that our codes and standards serve the safety goal of protecting emergency responders. The NFPA Fire & Life Safety Ecosystem (<https://www.nfpa.org/about-nfpa/nfpa-fire-and-life-safetyecosystem>) identifies the components that must work together to minimize risk and help prevent loss, injuries, and death from fire, electrical, and other hazards. We are confident that, throughout the years, our world-class codes and standards have saved firefighters' lives, prevented injuries, and enhanced first responders' effectiveness in aiding their communities. The development, use, and adherence to current codes and standards is a key part of the Ecosystem. The Ecosystem also relies on prepared first responders. The process of preparing first responders depends on continuous recruitment, training, and supplies of the best equipment. This is one of the reasons that NFPA strongly supported the reauthorization of the Assistance to Firefighters (AFG) and the Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grants managed by the Federal Emergency Management Administration, which was recently enacted as Public Law 118-67. We continue to advocate for expanded funding for both critical grant programs. A decision made by a government, or by a for-profit or non-profit entity, to use a particular code or standard furthers the goal of enhancing safety. In the case of this Emergency Response Standard, as in the case of so many others, the entity making the incorporation decision must consider the appropriate implementation schedule and compliance plan. **We are sensitive to the concerns that many in the fire service, especially smaller volunteer fire companies, have expressed about the expense of meeting the OSHA proposal and how quickly the requirements would be mandated. At the macro level, we know that investments in safety are almost always worthwhile. We trust that OSHA will determine the appropriate implementation schedule should this proposed rule be finalized. Parallel to whatever OSHA decides, our nation must continue to invest in AFG, SAFER, and other efforts to fund our volunteer and career first responders.**

However, recent legal developments create a risk that OSHA's continued use of incorporation by reference could frustrate NFPA's ability to continue developing world-class safety standards. NFPA therefore requests (1) that OSHA refrain from incorporating NFPA's standards by reference in the proposed rule and that OSHA instead provide in the text of the rule that NFPA's standards are a benchmark for gauging compliance with the regulations and do not impose any binding legal obligations; (2) that OSHA explicitly acknowledges, in the rule, NFPA's copyright interests, knowing those interests also serve the agency and the public by ensuring the independence and sustainability of standards

development; and (3) ensure through the rule that the public knows that NFPA posts its standards online for free read-only access.

The recent court decision, and the importance of NFPA's copyrights to OSHA's work, necessitate a different approach to OSHA's use of NFPA's standards. **NFPA requests that OSHA not incorporate by reference its standards in the proposed rule. Instead, NFPA requests that OSHA refer to its standards in the text of the proposed rule as one benchmark of compliance with the regulations and *expressly provide in the rule that NFPA's standards are guidance and not binding.***

NFPA requests that OSHA use a similar approach for the NFPA standards it currently proposes to incorporate by reference in its rule. For example, the proposed rule incorporates by reference NFPA 1910, Standard for the Inspection, Maintenance, Refurbishment, Testing, and Retirement of In-Service Emergency Vehicles and Marine Firefighting Vessels. The proposed rule requires organizations and employers to "[i]nspect, maintain, and service test aerial devices on vehicles, to ensure they are safe for use, as specified by the manufacturer, or to a standard at least as equivalent to NFPA 1910 (incorporated by reference see § 1910.6)." 89 Fed. Reg. at 8,019. **OSHA could instead draft this rule to require that there be inspection, maintenance, and servicing of the devices "to ensure they are safe for use." OSHA should then further expressly provide in the text of the rule that NFPA 1910 is one way of ensuring safe use of test aerial devices on vehicles but does not create any binding obligations.** This approach would ensure safety, while preserving NFPA's copyright in NFPA 1910. For each standard that OSHA's proposed rule incorporates by reference, NFPA would welcome the opportunity to work with OSHA on ways to ensure that the rule achieves the agency's safety objectives without using incorporation by reference.

PUBLIC HEARING SCHEDULED TO BEGIN ON NOVEMBER 12TH

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has published a Notice in today's Federal Register (see, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2024-07-23/pdf/2024-16126.pdf>) announcing that it is **scheduling an informal public hearing on its proposed "Emergency Response Standard."** The public hearing will be held virtually and is scheduled to begin Tuesday, November 12, 2024, at 9:30 a.m. (ET) and will continue on subsequent weekdays (as necessary). (Note: Monday, November 11, 2024, is a federal holiday.)

OSHA's proposed Emergency Response rule was published in the Federal Register on February 5, 2024 (see, [2023-28203.pdf \(govinfo.gov\)](https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2024-02-05/pdf/2023-28203.pdf)), and the public comment period closed yesterday, July 22, 2024.

Additional information on how to access OSHA's informal hearing will be posted on OSHA's Emergency Response webpage at <https://www.osha.gov/emergencyresponse/rulemaking>.

To testify or question other witnesses at the hearing, interested persons must electronically submit a Notice of Intention to Appear (NOITA) to OSHA on or before September 27, 2024. In addition, those who request more than 10 minutes for their presentation and those who intend to submit documentary evidence must submit the full text of their testimony, as well as a copy of any documentary evidence, to OSHA no later than October 18, 2024.

Please see OSHA's Federal Register Notice and Emergency Response webpage for full information. We will plan to discuss this issue at our next regular Small Business Labor Safety (OSHA/MSHA) roundtable, that is tentatively scheduled for Friday, September 20, 2024.

From Dave Denniston – What's Next?

Thank you for participating in the efforts to voice our opinion over the proposed OSHA 1910.156. Now that the comment period has ended, the need to meet weekly has passed. I am 100% convinced that the efforts we put forth as a group made an impact. When you look at the comments posted in the portal, they had our fingerprints all over them. If we had not done what we did here in NY, I firmly believe the comment period would have ended back in May with very little input and OSHA would be full speed ahead with the final rule. At least now we opened the door for further comment, in person, and then again written, and have alerted our elected officials to the concerns.

I would like to propose that we push our meeting schedule back to the first Thursday of every month at noon to discuss any updates. If there is a need in-between the regular meeting date, we could call a special meeting.

SOME STATS FROM OUR EFFORTS:

We had 2006 live webinar views with another 464 watching the recordings.

We received 4116 signatures on the petition submitted to OSHA.
We held 6 in person sessions with over 700 participants.

NEXT STEPS:

1. We need to pull the blue-ribbon panel together to discuss the proposed rule and offer alternatives. I have only received two candidates and believe we should have around 10-12 people in that group.
2. We need to prepare material to help guide people on how to deliver an effective in-person testimony and start looking for people to participate.
3. I believe we should ask every department to elect or appoint someone to participate as a representative of their department. These folks would attend a few web meetings to learn more, understand the process and share information with their department.
4. We need to stay engaged with our elected officials and keep them involved in this process.
5. Is there anything else that we are missing here?

Again, Thank you for your help and interest on this important topic. I look forward to our next conversation on Thursday, August 1ST AT 12pm. By then we should have a good feel for what the public comment response looked like.

[The New OSHA Rule You Must Pay to Learn](#)**

The Center for Individual Rights

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has proposed a new rule that would impose steep compliance costs on local volunteer fire departments around the country and make them pay substantial fees just to learn what the regulations require. The Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSH Act) created a federal agency with an extremely vague mandate to establish nationwide workplace safety standards with almost no congressional guidance. Yet OSHA's most recent proposal, the Emergency Response Standard (ERS) manages to extend this already broad power even further with sweeping workplace standards that even reach volunteer organizations.

If adopted, the ERS would impose federal safety standards for emergency response services, including local, volunteer fire departments, that purport to preempt and displace existing state-enforced safety regulations. **Many of the affected volunteer fire departments lack adequate funding (relying as they do upon voluntary support) and cannot afford to overhaul their standards to comply with new federal rules, which larger departments in metropolitan areas can more easily manage.**

UNCONSTITUTIONAL REGULATION

CIR filed a comment with OSHA explaining that the ERS likely violates both federal law and several different provisions of the Constitution. To start, the OSH Act provides such broad discretion to OSHA as to amount to an unconstitutional delegation of legislative authority. Moreover, the sweeping reach of the ERS, a nationwide overhaul of safety regulations for such a wide swath of emergency responders, vastly exceeds the limited guidance Congress did provide.

Worse yet, even fire departments that do not object to complying with the rule will have to pay substantial fees just to learn what it actually requires. Rather than clearly articulating the new safety standards on a freely accessible website, OSHA has incorporated by reference more than 20 consensus standards published by different private organizations. Just to download, print, or copy these standards, organizations must pay steep fees. But to synthesize them will require hiring expert consultants.

This approach violates federal law—the Freedom of Information Act component of the Administrative Procedure Act, which requires that an agency make all substantive rules of general applicability available to the public. It also violates the Due Process Clause of the Constitution, which guarantees citizens the right to fair notice about governing law.

The text of the OSH Act poses another problem; it does not apply to volunteer organizations at all. The terms of the law are expressly restricted to employees, i.e. people who are paid to work. **Yet due to complex state regulations that treat some volunteers as employees for the purpose of certain state benefit programs, the ERS is unlawfully sweeping in volunteer organizations.**

This case is a vital reminder of the importance of establishing firm limits on federal power to the defense of individual rights.

TO READ CIR'S 15 PAGE COMMENT TO OSHA OPEN AT THIS LINK:

<https://cafda.net/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/CIR-comment-OSHA-ERS.pdf>

[This is a Link to the 18-page letter to Douglas Parker, Assistant Secretary for Labor for OSHA](https://cafda.net/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/NYS-United-Concerns-OSHA-Response-FINAL-07.16.24-DD.docx)

<https://cafda.net/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/NYS-United-Concerns-OSHA-Response-FINAL-07.16.24-DD.docx>

This is a must-read item for all concerned about the proposed update to the OSHA Standard for Emergency Response. This was filed on behalf of the NYS United Concerns Group who participate in the zoom meetings on a weekly basis. **Please take the time to read this important document.**

[Excellent Docket Response from South Carolina Firefighters Association](https://cafda.net/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/Docket-Comment-7-8-SCSFA-Response.docx)

[Open the Document at This Link:](https://cafda.net/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/Docket-Comment-7-8-SCSFA-Response.docx)

<https://cafda.net/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/Docket-Comment-7-8-SCSFA-Response.docx>

[Joint Letter to OSHA from NYS Association of Counties, NYS Conference of Mayors, and the NYS Association of Towns](https://cafda.net/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/NYCOMNYSACAOTjointletter.pdf)

[Open the Document at This Link:](https://cafda.net/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/NYCOMNYSACAOTjointletter.pdf)

<https://cafda.net/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/NYCOMNYSACAOTjointletter.pdf>

[What Are Your Pain Points](#)

[PAIN POINT FINANCIAL....](#)

OSHA's Proposed Rule:

OSHA's proposed rule would require NFPA 1582 Medical Exams be administered to all firefighters either annually or bi-annually. OSHA estimates the cost of a required medical exam to be \$620 each.

The Pain Point: A small-town fire department with two dozen members would have to find funding for a dozen medical exams each year for a total cost of \$7440.

Tell OSHA: Tell OSHA what your annual budget is and how you would have to raise \$7440. For example, if your department relies upon fundraising, tell OSHA how many extra spaghetti dinners you'd need to sell each year to raise \$7440.

Assuming a profit of \$8 per dinner, you need to sell 930 spaghetti dinners each year to pay for medical exams. How many people live in your town – does everyone need to buy two dinners? Explain this to OSHA.

[OSHA PAIN POINTS – ADDITIONAL, OSHA'S PROPOSED RULE:](#)

The proposed OSHA rules incorporate by reference twenty-one NFPA standards. This adds about 3000 pages of text to the rules.

The Pain Point: Small fire departments don't have the legal or administrative capabilities to read, interpret, and comply with this much new regulation.

Tell OSHA: Tell OSHA that there is no administrative or legal staff available at your fire department to read, interpret, and comply with 3000 pages of NFPA standards. Tell OSHA how small or non-existent your administrative staff and budget is.

OSHA's Proposed Rule:

The proposed OSHA rules will require all fire chiefs to have NFPA Fire Officer 3 training.

The Pain Point: Half of the state fire training academies don't offer Fire Officer 3 training and there is no practical way to get the training. Even in states that offer the training, it will typically require unpaid volunteer chiefs or part-time chiefs to take classes on weekdays when they have to take time off from their full-time jobs or travel long distances to night and weekend classes.

Tell OSHA: Tell OSHA that Fire Officer 3 training isn't available or readily available to your department and why.

OSHA's Proposed Rule:

The proposed OSHA rules incorporate by reference twenty-one NFPA standards.

The Pain Point: NFPA standards are not readily available, and this makes commenting on them difficult. You have to purchase them for \$149 each or purchase a subscription to access them for \$12/month.

Tell OSHA: Tell OSHA that before they close the comment period and make these standards law, OSHA needs to provide free copies of the these standards to the public.

OSHA's Proposed Rule:

The proposed OSHA rules will require all fire chiefs to have NFPA Fire Officer 3 training.

The Pain Point: Half of the state fire training academies don't offer Fire Officer 3 training and there is no practical way to get the training. Even in states that offer the training, it will typically require unpaid volunteer chiefs or part-time chiefs to take classes on weekdays when they have to take time off from their full-time jobs or travel long distances to night and weekend classes.

Tell OSHA: Tell OSHA that Fire Officer 3 training isn't available or readily available to your department and why.

OSHA's Proposed Rule:

The proposed OSHA rules use the 2022 Firehouse Magazine Run Survey as the basis for defining the scale and financial resources of the volunteer fire service.

The Pain Point: The Firehouse Magazine Run Survey is created for entertainment purposes and should not be used the way OSHA has used it to create regulations. The Firehouse Magazine Run Survey is a small set of data without knowing who or why the data was created, except for fun and to see your department named in the magazine.

The Firehouse Magazine Data says that the average volunteer fire department:

- Has a budget of \$
- Responds to ____ emergency calls per year
- Has ____ volunteer members

Tell OSHA: Tell OSHA that it's data about the size and financial resources of volunteer fire departments is wrong. Tell them about your department budget, the size of your town, how many calls you go to, and why this is so different than the Firehouse data. Tell them about the other departments in your area.

OSHA's Proposed Rule:

The proposed OSHA rules will incorporate by reference twenty-one NFPA standards.

The Pain Point: NFPA standards are not required to be based upon data or scientific evidence. NFPA standards are the collective opinions of the committees that write them. Unlike OSHA, NFPA standards are not required to address only significant risks to the health and safety of firefighters. Making these standards into law reaches way beyond the mission of OSHA.

Tell OSHA: Tell OSHA that their use of NFPA standards is arbitrary, because many of the standards themselves, or parts of the standards are arbitrary.

1. "Have you had time to completely read and analyze the new proposed OSHA standard 1910.156 rule and the effects it would have on your organization? If not, click here and tell OSHA that 165 days has not been adequate to review a document that took them years to write."
2. "Do your captains and lieutenants hold Fire Officer I training? Do your assistant chiefs hold Fire Officer II training? The new proposed OSHA 1910.156 rule would require this. Click here and tell OSHA why this would be problematic for your organization."
3. "Does your fire department have an annual budget of less than 1.7 million dollars? OSHA is under the assumption that the average fire department budget for volunteer or combination depts is 1.7 million dollars. If your budget is less, click here, and tell OSHA what your budget is and that you believe their data is inaccurate."
4. "OSHA believes the impact of the proposed 1910.156 rule would be less than 1%. Is this true for you? Several fire departments have analyzed the proposal and this would increase their budgets by over 40%. Click here and tell OSHA why a substantial tax increase is not feasible"
5. "Does your organization do weekly vehicle inspections or within 24 hours of each run? That's what the proposed OSHA 1910.156 rule would require. Click here and tell OSHA why that is problematic for your organization."
6. "Do you clearly mark control zones for every emergency incident to establish a cold zone, warm zone, hot zone and no entry zone? The proposed OSHA 1910.156 rule would require this. If this would be problematic for your organization, click here and tell OSHA why this is not feasible."
7. "Do you provide annual physicals for your firefighters that include comprehensive behavioral health evaluations, skin cancer screenings, and bi-annual mammograms for firefighters over 40? The Incorporation of NFPA 1582 in the proposed OSHA standard 1910.156 rule would require this. If you are not currently performing physicals at this level, click here and tell OSHA why that would be problematic for your organization."

Commented [PL1]: To be consistent with NFPA I would use "Fire Officer I and "Fire Officer II"

Commented [PL2]: The fire chief in me dozed off during this one. Too wordy. I took a shot at more concise approach.

Commented [PL3]: Tried cleaning this one up too

Commented [PL4]: This one is not accurate so I cleaned it up

Commented [PL5]: Not accurate re-worded it

8. "Does your organization have \$620 per member for annual or bi-annual medical exams? If not, click here and explain to OSHA what your budget is for medical exams."
9. "Did you know the proposed OSHA rule incorporates by reference twenty-one NFPA standards, which are NOT free to comment on. Click here to tell OSHA to give free copies of these standards to the public."

Pain Points to Address

PAIN POINT #1

OSHA's Proposed Rule: All Emergency Service Organizations shall conduct a community or facility vulnerability and risk assessment for its service area, for the purpose of establishing its standards of response and determining the ability to match the community or facility's risks with available resources.

The Pain Point: Does your fire department conduct hazard assessments (or pre-plans) to all commercial businesses? Does your department conduct hazard assessments to all vacant structures? Does your department pre-plan facilities that are subject to reporting requirements under the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA)? Does your department have an incident plan for each of the hazard assessments for an emergency incident? If not, then you will not be compliant with the OSHA Proposed Ruling.

Tell OSHA: This is economically infeasible and there is no local funding for the hazard assessments of all buildings in your area. Let OSHA know what the cost would be to add one or more employees to be able to comply with conducting the yearly assessments. Be blunt – tell them you have no administrative staff to do this.

PAIN POINT #2

OSHA's Proposed Rule: OSHA's inclusion of NFPA 1582: Standard on Comprehensive Occupational Medical Program for Fire Departments, which requires annual medical evaluations proving fit for duty.

The Pain Point: The pain point comes in finding a doctor who can perform and meet the requirements of the standard, the cost to the fire and emergency services department, extra time requirements for a volunteer, and the administrative burden of scheduling and tracking exams.

Tell OSHA: This is economically infeasible. Tell OSHA what your budget is and if you don't have administrative staff to schedule and track medical exams. Tell OSHA if you are in a rural area with poor access to occupational medical care or are unable to find a doctor who can perform all the requirements found in NFPA 1582 or that are willing to sign off. Tell OSHA about volunteer firefighters traveling hours out of their way to get the physicals or the added costs of having an organization come to the department to perform the physicals. The cost of a NFPA 1582 physical for each member can range from several hundred to several thousand dollars. Tell OSHA what this would cost your department. Tell OSHA about the time constraints with NFPA-compliant physicals – are they only available during the workday when volunteers are working their primary jobs?

PAIN POINT #3

OSHA's Proposed Rule: OSHA is seeking guidance on whether an action level of 15 exposures to combustion products within a year trigger medical surveillance consistent with NFPA 1582 is too high, too low, or an appropriate threshold.

The Pain Point: After each incident, in addition to an incident report, do you record what level of smoke or exposure to combustion products is experienced by every firefighter or officer who responded? If the number per year exceeds 15, or whatever number OSHA determines, are you prepared or capable of placing them under medical monitoring against a baseline physical also required meeting NFPA 1582?

Tell OSHA: There is no defined number of exposures that are determined to be the right number, so just as requiring annual exams is arbitrary and not based on science, so is the number of exposures. Tell OSHA that "exposure to combustion products" is not defined. Ask OSHA does it mean any smoke, such as from a brush fire or burnt bacon on the stove, or does it have to be an IDLH atmosphere?

PAIN POINT #4

OSHA's Proposed Rule: OSHA's Proposed Rule is seeking input on whether the proposed rule should specify retirement ages for personal protective equipment (PPE). Current NFPA standards call for 10 years.

The Pain Point: Are all your firefighters using gear under 10 years of age? Can you afford to replace gear older than 10 years of age?

Tell OSHA: While 10 years seems reasonable for firefighters actively engaged in structural firefighting, do we rule out or discard gear 11 years of age even though it shows minimal signs of wear? How about others who perform support functions, or extrication, etc.? Some firefighters wear the same structural fire helmet for their entire career spanning

20 – 30 years. Is there statistical evidence by OSHA that helmets over 10 years of age are causing head injuries or burns? Gear that is used to run 600 calls per year doesn't have the same wear and tear as gear that is used to run 85 calls per year.

PAIN POINT #5

OSHA's Proposed Rule: If approved, the new OSHA rules would require your fire department to conduct annual fitness for duty testing, essentially an annual physical ability test that includes dragging dummies, hitting targets with axes, and forcing a door or breaching a wall.

The Pain Point: Most small fire departments have no training props. They have no facility for conducting a fitness for duty test, especially one that meets many legal requirements of consistency and fairness for all participants. This means hiring vendors to do the test or having firefighters drive hours to a test.

Tell OSHA: If your fire department can conduct a physical ability test each year. Tell them how far away the nearest facility for a test is. Tell them what props or facilities you have and don't have. Tell them your budget and what this will cost.

PAIN POINT #6

OSHA's Proposed Rule: The proposed OSHA rules will require all personnel treating a patient in the back of an ambulance to wear a harness so they are belted and can move around.

The Pain Point: Harness systems for EMS in the back of the ambulance are rare. These systems have not been perfected and there is no standard for them. Ambulances would have to be retrofitted.

Tell OSHA: If you have an ambulance, tell OSHA if you have a harness system, or if your seatbelts don't allow for treating patients. Tell OSHA that there is no industry standard or agreed-upon technology for a harness that allows freedom of movement for treating patients. Tell OSHA how long it will be before you can purchase a new ambulance with a harness (when they become available), or what it would take to retrofit your current ambulances.

PAIN POINT #7

OSHA's Proposed Rule: At least 21 NFPA standards are incorporated in OSHA's proposed rules.

The Pain Point: While NFPA standards are available to view for free online, printed copies of these standards are not free. An \$11.99 a month NFPA membership would be required to print these standards, plus the cost of ink and paper. The NFPA also sells printed copies of their standards. For example, a printed copy of NFPA 1021 costs \$149.00. This limited access to printed NFPA standards is particularly problematic since many volunteer fire departments in rural areas lack reliable internet access or funding to purchase printed copies.

Tell OSHA: Let OSHA know what your department budget is and the burden it would be to purchase NFPA standards. Also let OSHA know if your department does not have reliable internet access to view these standards. It is wrong for OSHA to mandate standards that are not reasonably available to view for free.

PAIN POINT #8

OSHA's Proposed Rule: The proposed OSHA rules incorporate by reference 21 NFPA standards. This adds about 3000 pages of text to the rules.

The Pain Point: Small fire departments don't have the legal or administrative capabilities to read, interpret, and comply with this much new regulation.

Tell OSHA: Tell OSHA that there is no administrative or legal staff available at your fire department to read, interpret, and comply with 3000 pages of NFPA standards. Tell OSHA how small or non-existent your administrative staff and budget is.

PAIN POINT #9

OSHA's Proposed Rule: All fire officers/chiefs must be trained to NFPA 1021, Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications.

The Pain Point: Much of the required information in NFPA 1021 courses is well beyond the scope of the small department. Can your fire department provide this level of training to all your current and future officers? Does your budget support this? Are there classes available on nights and weekends? How far will your officers have to travel?

Tell OSHA: This training is a one size fits all approach and contains material that is often not relevant to small volunteer fire departments. Due to the time constraints and pressures volunteers face, any additional training must be tailored to the risks small volunteer departments face. Additional training that is not relevant would create additional burdens

on volunteers and additional barriers to joining and remaining in the fire service, exacerbating ongoing recruitment and retention issues in the fire service.

PAIN POINT #10

OSHA's Proposed Rule: All fire chiefs must receive NFPA 1021 Fire Officer III training.

The Pain Point: The Fire Officer III certification is only offered in approximately 25 states. Chief officers would face significant hardship in getting the required training and certification. Unpaid volunteer chiefs or part-time chiefs would be required to take classes on weekdays when they have to take time off from their full-time jobs, or they would have to travel long distances to night and weekend classes.

Tell OSHA: The cost of accessing NFPA 1021 Fire Officer III training will place a financial burden on volunteers. In most cases, this class is not offered on a schedule that is friendly for volunteers. Many volunteer officers will be required to travel to a state where they can receive training, taking time away from their primary job and requiring funds that are often not available. All required training must be widely accessible and, when possible, virtually available.

5 MORE PAIN POINTS TO ADDRESS

Let OSHA know how the proposed Emergency Response Standard will impact your department! Here are five 'pain points' that you can address in your comments.

PAIN POINT #16

OSHA's Proposed Rule: The proposed OSHA standard uses the 2022 Firehouse Magazine Run Survey as the basis for defining the scale and financial resources of the volunteer fire service.

The Pain Point: The Firehouse Magazine Run Survey data is not a proper reflection of the fire service because of its small sample size, and it likely presents an inflated view of the financial condition of the volunteer fire service because departments with the least resources are typically not the departments that are going to take the time to submit their budget data to a magazine. According to OSHA per the Firehouse Magazine Run Survey data, the average volunteer department's annual revenue is \$291,703.

Tell OSHA: Tell OSHA that its data about the size and financial resources of volunteer fire departments is wrong. Tell them about your department's budget, the size of your town, how many calls you go to. Be aware that comments you submit to OSHA are publicly available.

PAIN POINT #17

OSHA's Proposed Rule: OSHA estimates that the annual cost for a volunteer fire department to comply with this standard would be approximately \$14,000.

The Pain Point: Due to the costs of physicals, needed administrative staff, and equipment, among other provisions within the proposed standard, the NVFC believes the cost of compliance would be much greater.

Tell OSHA: What your department's budget is and whether you could absorb this expense. If possible, tell OSHA what you think it would cost your department to implement this proposed Emergency Response Standard. You can use this one pager to assist you in understanding some of the requirements in OSHA's proposed standard.

PAIN POINT #18

OSHA's Proposed Rule: In accordance with manufacturer recommendations for apparatus maintenance, personnel who are certified Emergency Vehicle Technicians would be required to perform daily, weekly, monthly, semi-annual, and annual inspections on apparatus. Annual inspections include weight verification, an inspection of all chassis components, and brake systems.

The Pain Point: Does your department have the personnel to adhere to manufacturer recommended daily, weekly, monthly, semi-annual, and annual inspections on apparatus. Do you have the capacity to take your apparatus offline for such inspections? Do you have access to equipment that could weigh your apparatus annually?

Tell OSHA: Explain to OSHA the apparatus and staffing that your department has and whether you have the capacity or access to equipment to comply with recommended manufacturer inspections, like annual truck weight verification.

PAIN POINT #19

OSHA's Proposed Rule: This proposed standard would require fire departments to create, annually review, and annually update a written community emergency response plan, pre-incident plans for all high or special risk properties, and a written risk management plan for the department. OSHA estimates that one-time setup of these various administrative requirements would take about 92 hours and an additional 43 hours to review annually.

Pain Point: The NVFC believes much more time would be needed to comply with these requirements. Additionally, does your department have the administrative capability and expertise to fulfill these requirements? Are OSHA's estimated hours needed for compliance correct?

Tell OSHA: Whether your department has any administrative staff. Explain to OSHA how many hours it would take your department to fulfill these administrative requirements and whether it would be possible for you to do so at all.

PAIN POINT #20

OSHA's Proposed Rule: The proposed standard would require the establishment of control zones at every emergency incident to identify the level of risk to team members and responders and the appropriate protective measures needed, including PPE. These zones should be no-entry, hot, warm, and cold. These zones would need to be marked in a conspicuous manner, with colored tape, signage, or other appropriate means, unless such marking is not possible.

Pain Point: The establishment and marking of control zones may not be possible at every incident due to the scope of the incident and the personnel available. According to OSHA, what would make such labeling impossible?

Tell OSHA: If it makes sense to establish and label control zones at every incident and if you have the available personnel to do so.

PAIN POINT #21

OSHA's Proposed Rule: OSHA expects that the affected community would be able to allocate the very small additional share of their revenue necessary to permit their fire department to comply with the proposed Emergency Response Standard.

Pain Point: Many departments won't have much of a budget available to comply with this standard. If the department is affiliated with a municipality, it would have to pay a large share of the compliance cost. Most volunteer fire departments serve rural communities with very small budgets that would lack the funds to assist their fire departments with compliance of this standard. Additionally, there are nonprofit departments and departments that self-fundraise that lack access to municipal funds.

Tell OSHA: What your department budget is and whether it would be feasible for your municipality to assist with the funding needed to comply with OSHA's proposed Emergency Response Standard. Explain to OSHA how your department is structured and funded and whether you are affiliated with a municipality.

[Long Island \(NY\) Volunteer Firefighters Push Back on OSHA's New Regulations](#)

LINK TO TV COVERAGE

<https://www.fireapparatusmagazine.com/fire-apparatus/long-island-ny-volunteer-firefighters-push-back-on-oshas-new-regulations/>

[House Subcommittee Testimony](#)

House Homeland Security Subcommittee on Emergency Management and Technology held a hearing on Tuesday morning (June 4, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. ET) on OSHA's proposed Emergency Response rule.

LINK TO THE TESTIMONY GIVEN BY THE WITNESSES HERE:

<https://cafda.net/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/2024-06-04-EMT-HRG-Testimony.pdf>

[OSHA's Move to Improve Safety to Firefighters, EMS Providers, and Technical Search and Rescue Members](#)

LINK TO MOST RECENT ARTICLE IN FIREHOUSE MAGAZINE:

[https://www.firehouse.com/safety-health/article/55056294/oshas-move-to-improve-safety-to-firefighters-ems-providers-and-technical-search-and-rescue-members?o_eid=6778E0229656H9A&oly_enc_id=6778E0229656H9A&rdx.ident\[pull\]=omedal6778E0229656H9A&utm_campaign=CPS240530030&utm_medium=email&utm_source=FH+Newsday](https://www.firehouse.com/safety-health/article/55056294/oshas-move-to-improve-safety-to-firefighters-ems-providers-and-technical-search-and-rescue-members?o_eid=6778E0229656H9A&oly_enc_id=6778E0229656H9A&rdx.ident[pull]=omedal6778E0229656H9A&utm_campaign=CPS240530030&utm_medium=email&utm_source=FH+Newsday)



NVFC CONTINUES TO SOUND ALARM ON PROPOSED OSHA STANDARD AND CLARIFIES IMPACT ON NON-OSHA STATES

May 21, 2024

The National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC) continues to raise awareness on the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) proposed Emergency Response Standard and offer resources to help first responders take action. On February 5, OSHA published a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) to replace 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.

While many of the proposed provisions would be helpful and improve the safety of emergency responders, the proposed standard contains multiple new requirements that would be very burdensome, and in many cases impossible, for volunteer fire departments to comply with. Nothing in this proposed standard is final and this public comment period is your opportunity to explain to OSHA what you believe should be changed in the proposed standard and why. The NVFC has launched a landing page to assist volunteers in understanding and commenting on this proposed standard, which can be accessed [here](https://www.nvfc.org/osha-standard/): (<https://www.nvfc.org/osha-standard/>)

In addition, the NVFC has held several webinars, including two over the past two weeks, to break down the concerns regarding the proposed standards and help responders formulate their comments. These webinars may be viewed [here](https://virtualclassroom.nvfc.org/webinars): (<https://virtualclassroom.nvfc.org/webinars>) The NVFC is hosting a Roundtable Talk on May 23 at 2pm ET with the National League of Cities and the National Association of Counties to highlight areas of mutual concern and provide recommendations on how volunteer departments can collaborate with their local government to express these concerns to OSHA. [Register here](#):

(https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_JXLQL0c5S3acTz9c6US0dA#/registration)

The NVFC has also been raising attention for the proposed OSHA standard in Congress. During the last week, a letter supported by the NVFC has been circulating around the House of Representatives urging OSHA to consider exempting volunteer fire departments from some or all parts of the proposed standard, identify additional areas where financial and logistical burdens could be reduced, and extend the proposed standard's public comment period. The letter is expected to be sent tomorrow, and so far approximately 40 Members of Congress have signed it.

One of the most frequent questions the NVFC has received is how the proposed standard would impact non-OSHA states (refer to [this map](#): at this link <https://www.osha.gov/stateplans> to see which states are OSHA states). The answer is this proposed standard would impact non-OSHA states if adopted as written. The immediate impact on non-OSHA states would be related to volunteer fire departments that are nonprofits and unaffiliated with municipalities. Reading through the NPRM on this proposed standard, it appears OSHA is unaware that such departments exist. It is possible that firefighters in these departments would be covered by this standard if they receive any compensation, regardless of the state they live in.

In addition to the immediate impact, the proposed standard would likely have secondary impacts on non-OSHA states. It could be used as a baseline of compliance for the purpose of seeking insurance and judgements in civil liability in every state.

CONTACT YOUR REPRESENTATIVE AT THIS LINK:

<https://www.voterveice.net/NVFC/Campaigns/115571/Respond>

Additionally, the public comment period for OSHA's proposed standard is ongoing and concludes on June 21. The NVFC encourages all departments to submit comments. Please visit NVFC's OSHA landing page for guidance on submitting comments and other resources at this link: <https://www.nvfc.org/osha-standard/>.

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.

NVFC LANDING PAGE LINK HERE:

<https://gma5qspab.cc.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=001L6aLm-Ax7THBUrMdNSMphNIFj1WWWXRRzYxdUshoNVzVUkCq2FlyoxhE-Ayblw8OnamjN0BiBpzyC-pPzLiiYEvhxQ9sAxH0UIN-rMeW-UojESkWKkPDdMRzXK8VXBp->

[Sh4YQDWc0PJekSA9BGQCOh6Io_AGI2vqw1b4iSBqWLS=&c=LauWWHLcf9ha42GymhqekGbW4yikuTH862UfuVJahY7fFHeGl_qUJw=&ch=lefmM7sGv75CYvgpTK9dENyqA1Rv5PwzXZ1xlkZP-JITscwLK8iGsQ==](https://cafda.net/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Final-Draft-SC-FF-Assoc-OSHA-Response-Letter.docx)

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>

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 OSHA 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-WTKil-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.

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, except 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 use 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.

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.

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/>

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>