



CAPITAL AREA FIRE DISTRICTS ASSOCIATION BULLETIN



FEBRUARY 1ST, 2025

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



CAPITAL SHORTS:

- Does anyone have any expertise in CANVA, I have a fire prevention project that needs some expertise, my email is in the header.
- Sponsors are already starting to line up for the Spring 2025 Conference being held in Lake George in April. Sponsors at any level are welcome.
- We are inviting you to our next CAFDA General Membership Meeting, at Clifton Park FD, **Thursday February 13th at 7PM**. Dinner will be served prior to the meeting. Zoom Link at: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86850960957?pwd=TqQVH3alnicvJqNabISKLfDU5GOrYP.1>

CAFDA NEWS AND OPPORTUNITIES:

WWW.CAFDA.NET

Best Of Luck To All Those Elected for the Coming Year

Hope your elections went well and congratulations to the winners and losers, the winners for their future contributions and to the losers for your past contributions, many times it's a thankless job.

Local Training for New/Appointed/Reappointed Commissioners will be held in the following locations by CAFDA:

- **Saratoga County, CLIFTON PARK FIRE DISTRICT: Saturday, March 1, 2025** Snow Date: Sunday, March 2, 2024
- **Fulton County, BERKSHIRE FIRE DISTRICT: Saturday, March 29, 2025** Snow Date: Sunday, March 30, 2024
- **Warren County, WARRENSBURG FIRE DISTRICT: Saturday, April 5, 2025** Snow Date: Sunday, April 6, 2024

Classes begin at 8am and end at approximately 3pm. Continental Breakfast and Lunch are included.

\$85 per attendee for Member Districts and \$95 per person for non-member districts.



THIS QR CODE TAKES YOU TO THE CAFDA WEBSITE FOR REGISTRATION

PLANNING FOR CAFDA CONFERENCE '25 - LAKE GEORGE

The Education Committee has been hard at work on the 2025 Conference to be held in April at the Fort William Henry Conference Center in Lake George. Topics have all been determined and sponsors are lining up to attend. We are excited to announce that vendors and participants will be in the Conference Center Carriage House, for displays and cocktail hour.

Save the dates for April 10-11-12, 2025 & see you there. Schedule and Registration at the end of this Bulletin.

Upcoming CAFDA Educational Event for Fire District Officials

WHEN: **Thursday March 13th and Friday March 14th, 2025**

WHAT: Fire District Financial Training, Presented by the NYS-Office of the State Comptroller

WHERE: 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

THE LATEST FROM THE STATE CAPITAL

Bills are being Introduced for the 2025/26 Legislative Session check the latest ScoreCard and keep up with pending legislation.

Issues of United Concern 2025

- Posted to The CAFDA web site at CAFDA.net

Governor Hochul Unveils Proposals to Support First Responders

- Posted to The CAFDA web site at CAFDA.net

WHEN YOU SEE ** IT'S A RECOMMENDED READ!!

THE LATEST FROM WASHINGTON

USFA: Tracking Changes At The Agency During A Presidential Transfer Of Power

As a new administration prepares to move into the White House, a cascade of changes is already underway across various federal agencies. And while legislative efforts and policy priorities are still coming into focus for the second Trump administration, the leadership shakeups have started and will continue for several months, as new agency leads are named and confirmed. The U.S. Fire Administration is one such agency currently navigating this post-presidential election transition period. Following is a quick guide to understanding the transition and the interim roles that support the USFA throughout the process.

WHAT IS THE U.S. FIRE ADMINISTRATION?

The [U.S. Fire Administration \(USFA\)](#) is a federal agency under the [Federal Emergency Management Agency \(FEMA\)](#) within the [Department of Homeland Security \(DHS\)](#). The USFA is a critical federal agency, with a primary mission to enhance public safety and support fire and EMS across the United States; as such, it is essential to ensure continuity of operations during the transition between administrations following a presidential election. Such transition typically involves the appointment of a new U.S. fire administrator to oversee the USFA.

WHO IS THE U.S. FIRE ADMINISTRATOR?

Dr. Lori Moore-Merrell. Prior to her service with the USFA, Dr. Moore-Merrell served nearly three years as the president and CEO of the [International Public Safety Data Institute](#), which she founded after retiring from a 26-year tenure as a senior executive in the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF).

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE FIRE ADMINISTRATOR?

The fire administrator is tasked with reducing fire and life safety risks, supporting the professionalization of fire services, and ensuring the readiness of the nation's fire and emergency medical response systems. The position is critical for advancing public safety and protecting communities across the United States.

HOW IS THE U.S. FIRE ADMINISTRATOR POSITION APPOINTED?

The U.S. fire administrator is appointed by the president of the United States. While the position once required Senate confirmation, the 112th Congress, S. Rept. 112-180 – United States Fire Administration Reauthorization Act of 2012 removed the U.S. fire administrator from the list of positions requiring Senate confirmation.

The position typically requires someone with extensive experience in fire service, emergency management and public safety, as the administrator is responsible for providing leadership and oversight to national fire prevention and safety initiatives.

Dr. Moore-Merrell was appointed by President Joe Biden as the U.S. fire administrator on Oct. 25, 2021.

WHAT HAPPENS TO THE SITTING FIRE ADMINISTRATOR WHEN A NEW PRESIDENT IS ELECTED?

When a new president is elected, all appointed positions, including the fire administrator, are subject to change. Typically, the fire administrator may be asked to step down, resign or continue serving temporarily until a replacement is nominated and confirmed. This depends on the priorities of the new administration.

Dr. Moore-Merrell resigned her position as U.S. fire administrator, and her last day will be Jan. 20, 2025. Following her departure from the USFA, the deputy U.S. fire administrator will serve as interim fire administrator.

WHO IS THE DEPUTY U.S. FIRE ADMINISTRATOR?

Fire Chief Donna Black. Chief Black is a nearly 30-year fire service veteran, serving as the fire chief for the Town of Duck, N.C. She is a past president of the International Association of Fire Chiefs and champion of #FireServiceOneVoice collaboration for the National Fire Strategy.

[Chief Black began her role as deputy fire administrator on Dec. 15, 2024.](#) On Jan. 20, 2025, Black will start her service as the interim U.S. fire administrator until a new fire administrator is appointed by the president. During this time, the superintendent of the National Fire Academy will serve as the interim deputy U.S. fire administrator.

WHO IS SUPERINTENDENT OF THE NATIONAL FIRE ACADEMY?

Eriks Gabliks. Gabliks was named to this position in November 2020. As superintendent, Gabliks provides leadership for the NFA, which focuses on enhancing the ability of fire and emergency services and allied professionals to deal more effectively with fire and other emergencies.

Gabliks will serve as interim deputy U.S. fire administrator until Chief Black returns to the role following the appointment of the new U.S. fire administrator.

WHEN WILL THE NEXT U.S. FIRE ADMINISTRATOR BE SELECTED?

As of now, there have been no official announcements regarding the selection of a new U.S. fire administrator. The process often takes several months to complete, from vetting to announcement and ultimately confirmation.

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

FIRE DISTRICT FINANCES

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

Financial Training by the Office of the State Comptroller – Specifically for Fire District Officials

Thursday March 13 and Friday March 14, 2025 At **Fulton Montgomery Community College**, the Alan House, co-sponsored by Mohawk Fire District, consult our website at CAFDA.net for more information.

Tuesday March 25 and Wednesday March 26, 2025 At **Brighton Fire District, Monroe County**, co-sponsored by the Monroe County Fire District Officer's Association, consult our website at CAFDA.net for more information.

NYS-OSC Fire District Audits

Fairview Fire District – Payroll and Leave Accruals

BACKGROUND

The District provides fire protection and emergency medical services within the Town of Poughkeepsie and a portion of the Town of Hyde Park in Dutchess County.

The District is governed by the elected five-member Board, which is responsible for managing and controlling the District's financial operations. The Board-appointed District Chief (Chief) is responsible for assisting the Board with the District's day-to-day operations.

The Board-appointed District Secretary (Secretary) is responsible for handling all human resource functions, processing payroll and maintaining all nonunion employees' leave accruals. The Board-appointed "timekeeper" is responsible for managing all union employees' leave accruals.

AUDIT OBJECTIVE

Determine whether Fairview Fire District (District) officials ensured employees' payroll payments and leave accruals were accurate, monitored, properly approved and supported.

KEY FINDINGS

District officials did not ensure all employee payroll payments and leave accruals were accurate, monitored, properly approved and supported. This occurred because the Board of Fire Commissioners (Board) did not provide adequate oversight, segregate payroll duties or develop compensating controls or develop written policies and procedures for these duties. As a result, we determined that District officials made payroll calculation errors totaling \$8,936 and potentially:

- Overpaid 11 employees by a total of \$44,301 for leave accrual payments that were inaccurate and unsupported.
- Paid five employees \$55,407 in overtime payments that could have been avoided or reduced.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Ensure employees are paid only for hours worked and leave time to which they are entitled.
- Review payroll errors identified in this report and, if appropriate, consult with the attorney for the District to possibly recover overpayments made to employees.
- Ensure that all leave requests are properly approved and supported and that employees take leave time only to which they are entitled.

District officials generally agreed with our recommendations and have initiated or indicated they planned to initiate corrective action

STEP INTO THE CHIEF'S OFFICE

Overcoming Conflict with Personnel in the Fire Service

Jake Miceli

When someone takes a promotion, arguably, they take it hoping to contribute for the better to both the role and their department. Knowing that people take the role with the aspiration to do well, why is poor leadership cited so often in departments across the nation?

THE EAR MODEL

The EAR model is a practice that ideal officers utilize frequently within their own leadership style. The name serves as a reminder to officers that they should be listening. It's the job of officers to take in all information unbiasedly and process it, followed by making a plan of action, implementing the plan, evaluating the results, and either changing the course of action or, hopefully, having a resolution. It also is called the EAR model as an anagram for engagement, advocate and respect. The EAR model is a great way to overcome conflict with your personnel.

ENGAGEMENT

A bored firefighter is dangerous. When firefighters get bored because of lack of calls, training, whatever the case may be, the boredom begins to produce an environment in which negativity can grow.

Engaging firefighters is simple. It starts with talking to them. Learn their interests, what they believe must be changed within the department, what training sounds interesting. By utilizing a laissez-faire style, officers can give members, for

example, the ability to determine in what order the station chores need to occur. Is there a different way to deploy a hoseline that they're interested in trying? Is there a new construction in town that everyone could tour?

Firefighters who feel as though their company officer communicates well with them and engages them often have a sense that the officer buys into the crew. It's important for the company officer to not hide in the office and to be part of the team.

ADVOCATE

All too often, leaders are gatekeepers of information. Nevertheless, one of the largest complaints across fire departments is lack of communication. Now, there absolutely are times when retaining information is appropriate, but much of the time, information should flow freely from the top of the organization down to the rank and file. This keeps rumors to a minimum and helps morale.

Frequently, leaders don't advocate for their people as part of this gatekeeping. The leaders might believe that a member's idea is inadequate or that it goes against their own belief. It's possible that they just don't want to say the wrong thing to their own supervisors. This is where it's imperative that leaders remember that they are in their position to serve their personnel.

Try to share members' ideas or suggestions with supervisors as much as possible. If something doesn't seem like the best idea, talk it through with the firefighter and, maybe, come up with an alternative. This would get buy-in from the firefighter, because you engaged and now will advocate a collective idea that the member helped contribute to.

At the end of the day, officers' responsibility is to the people who they serve. That means the public and the firefighters that work for them.

RESPECT

Respect is the simplest yet one of the most overlooked portions of the EAR model and in leadership.

Respect each other. This is as simple as officers not being on their phone when a firefighter is talking to them or taking the time to help firefighters clean the kitchen after dinner. Although an officer might have his/her own work to complete, doing these types of things show members that the officer still is one of them and is willing to do the work.

ISSUES THAT LEADERS FACE

Poor communication is a large issue. Some of this is because of size of the department, but often it's just a lack of free-flowing information.

One thing that I've seen that's helpful is a "Chief's update" or "Station update," where information is passed down either departmentwide or on a station level, so all crews are on the same page with anything that's occurring. This could be new pieces of equipment in service, budget information, hiring, etc.

Another issue that's difficult to combat is the rise of online training. Online training certainly is the way of the future and is here to stay. There are numerous benefits to online training. Finding the appropriate balance is key.

Ensure that for every hour of online training that occurs, there's an hour of hands-on training. Online training shouldn't be the be-all and end-all, for departments.

OWNERSHIP

Above, it was noted that poor leadership is voiced as an issue nationwide. Why is this so common? It's because the negative folks are always the loudest. Every department has them. This is why it's important for officers to engage them, to see what they think the issues are, to ask how they would fix them, to advocate for some of the fixes when they are reasonable and actionable.

Lastly, leaders should ensure that they always work to fix a problem that they come across. True, the officers might not have resources, but then the onus is on them to figure it out. Pass the problem along to the right person for the fix. Don't be the person who leaves the mess for the next person to clean up.

The fire service requires ownership. Although NFPA standards change continually, roles and responsibilities are increasing. It's paramount that fire officers strive to improve and lead from the front.

THE ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

The Fire Scene: Do You Have Written Procedures?

John J. Salka Jr.

Maintaining written operational procedures establishes the specifics of the procedures in written form as they were developed and intended to be followed. *Without the written word, even if the procedures were developed and agreed upon and members are expected to follow them during operations, variations can result easily.*

Even more important: Operational procedures that aren't established in writing allow or even promote freelancing. If a firefighter is accused of freelancing, the excuse can be, "Where does it say that?"

The bottom line: Well-established and written operational procedures are a solid guideline for firefighters to follow and encourage solid team operations.

ACCOUNTING FOR VARIATIONS

Written operational procedures lay out to all members how they are expected to operate in various situations. Certainly, every fire operation has variations and rapidly changing conditions. For that reason, many procedures include options for firefighters to select or follow. Establishing procedures in written form allows firefighters, officers and chiefs to study all of the procedures, which is reflected in more synchronized and coordinated firefighting operations.

The fact that the procedures are written allows reviews and after-action discussions where performance variations can be identified and dealt with.

TRAINING

We all know that training is the key to successful and coordinated firefighting operations. Without operational procedures in writing, training and company officers can end up teaching incorrect or even dangerous operational skills to their firefighters.

Using written procedures results in the same exact procedures being explained and taught—and, thus, performed during operations.

NEW AND REVISED PROCEDURES

Written operational procedures allow for more rapid and accurate modifications, deletions and improvements. When a new procedure is approved for use, the department can find the appropriate location in the written material and have the new procedure inserted. Additionally, any outdated or revised procedures can be deleted or modified, and updated pages can be inserted simply into the existing written procedures.

PROMOTIONS

Many departments have testing procedures for promotions. When such a department has written operational procedures, they can be used for promotional examinations. This situation allows firefighters and officers to study and fully understand their own department's procedures rather than the tactics and procedures from a published text book that was written by someone from another department or profession.

LEGAL ISSUES

Another benefit of written operational procedures is the advantage that a department gains when there's a legal challenge against the department.

Many departments and members have had to deal with legal issues and the results of fire operations and other emergencies. It's quite difficult for firefighters and departments to defend themselves concerning field operations without having a written document to cite. Also important is the fact that the procedures were written and developed by the department rather than an author or other fire service person from elsewhere.

HOW TO START

Departments that are interested in developing written operational procedures should know that there's a vast amount of written procedural material online. Hundreds of departments published their own procedures, and those can be used as a jumping off point rather than starting from scratch. Changes and modifications can be made, to personalize the procedures to department staffing and other technical standards.

If you are in the process of establishing operational procedures for your company or department or just thinking about it, make sure that you go online and remember all of the benefits of establishing written procedures.

OUR CHANGING FIRE SERVICE –CHALLENGES & POSITIVE IDEAS. LEARNING FROM OTHERS

POSITIVE OUTCOMES

Wallingford (CT) Fire Department Rolls out Early Warning System for Drivers Passing Emergency Vehicles

WALLINGFORD — The Wallingford Fire Department has a new way to alert oncoming drivers of fire engines and ambulances on the road, using a warning system to keep both drivers and first responders safe.

The system is called Safety Cloud, developed by HAAS Alert, which provides notifications to vehicles' dashboard navigation systems to alert drivers of approaching emergency vehicles. The system is integrated into a cloud network to automatically connect with the dashboards of vehicles and on mobile devices.

Currently the system works with Chrysler, Dodge, Jeep, Ram, and Volkswagen-branded vehicles, as well as through Waze and Apple Maps.

It offers up to 30 seconds of warning to the driver, giving them enough to either pull over when vehicles are passing or to slow down when approaching an accident scene ahead. It also allows emergency vehicles to be aware of their own locations when approaching intersections, to prevent any potential accidents.

The manufacturer claims that the technology has helped prevent upwards of 12 million incidents last year and is continuing to add more auto manufacturers to the network. Their data states that the alerts offer increased awareness and reduce collisions by 90 percent, and hard breaks at accident sites by 80 percent.

According to Wallingford Fire Chief James Buck, the technology hasn't been implemented into all of their vehicles yet, but will be soon as ambulances and fire trucks are brought in for routine maintenance with the Public Works department.

Buck said that the new technology would be a boon not only for the drivers and their safety, but for first responders responding to scenes along busy roadways. He also said it prevents operational nightmares for the department should an accident occur, as engines being out of service reduces their capabilities but are also extremely expensive to repair. "We have our firefighters, our EMTs, our police officers, and in some cases we have public works crews, we have tow operators. They are all at risk, and this is just one way to get that message out there that, hey, there's emergency traffic ahead, slow down," said Buck.

He added that the advanced warning is especially useful in a state like Connecticut, where in the winter season severe weather and ice reduce braking distances. Having the alert can enable drivers to safely reduce speed far sooner and prevent further accidents around emergency vehicles.

Buck said that he had experience working with the technology when he worked as deputy chief of operations in Stratford in 2022. He noted that, even in such a short time frame the technology has evolved considerably and that it has been an effective tool in ensuring drivers slow down on the road.

"What they are able to show is in the vehicle data they have when these alerts go out that vehicles are, for the most part, obviously it's never universal, vehicles are heeding these alerts, they're slowing down, moving over, and that's the important thing," Buck said.

He added that the alerts often compel people to be less likely to engage in risky behavior, noting that some people try to use passing emergency vehicles as a means to get ahead in traffic.

"Sometimes people are following emergency vehicles because that will be their quickest way through, and that's really shortsighted and can lead to some disastrous consequences. ***So if people are getting the message that, hey, there's an emergency vehicle ahead, and that instantly triggers for them a slowdown, then that is, that's the desired outcome.*** We want our responders to be safe and all people working at those emergency scenes to be safe."

Mayor Vincent Cervoni, who approved the use of the technology, stated that it was a positive investment in the emergency services. The Safety Cloud investment also comes as the department brings online its third ambulance earlier this month, further bolstering its municipally-provided EMS services.

He also added that the alerts might also give drivers advanced warning and give them a chance to reroute around the area, decreasing traffic congestion around accident and emergency areas.

"Anything that provides more information, people is a positive thing," Cervoni said. "So this provides near real time alerts, and allows residents to know how incident response is going to impact their travel throughout town. That will allow people to either be aware and alert as they approach a situation or to potentially reroute, so it's a situation where there's a dual benefit. Rerouting means they can avoid the accident area, and it's also a benefit for responders with less traffic."

FIRE SERVICE CHALLENGES

Trump EPA Official Scraps Plan for Stricter Rules on PFAS



Amanda Sullender, The Spokesman-Review

As cleanup continues in the West Plains, the federal governments' plans to strictly regulate PFAS was scrapped last week by the new administration of President Donald Trump.

Known as "forever chemicals," perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances, abbreviated PFAS, are a set of man-made chemicals used in thousands of products over the decades. High levels of them have since been linked to cancers, heart disease, high cholesterol, thyroid disease, low birth weight and other diseases.

New federal regulations were enacted last year limiting the amount of PFAS in public drinking water to less than four parts per trillion. Former and current Trump administration officials had sent mixed signals on whether the federal government would maintain the Biden administration's strict PFAS regulatory framework or lessen their requirements. But the new direction became clear only a couple days after Trump took office when the Environmental Protection Agency announced it scrapped plans to regulate PFAS being discharged by corporations in wastewater. These draft guidelines had been sent to the White House last year before they were released for public review.

PFAS regulation also was targeted by the writers of Project 2025, a Heritage Foundation document outlining potential policies for a second Trump administration. The new president and his allies distanced themselves from the controversial document in the fall campaign but has since nominated Russ Vought, one of the document's authors, as Office of Management and Budget director.

Project 2025 calls for the federal government to "revisit the designation" of PFAS as a hazardous substance.

Environmental advocates have indicated they will take legal action against the Trump administration to prevent PFAS regulations from weakening.

"It's clear that nobody voted for more PFAS in their drinking water, or more in their air or to have more PFAS waste disposed of in their community," said Natural Resources Defense Council Senior Director for Health Erik Olsen. "People are learning more about the health risks from PFAS that they're being exposed to without their consent. There will be more and more pressure on Congress and on the administration to do something about this problem."

Under the new administration, Olsen believes PFAS regulation will ultimately be decided at the Office of Management and Budget, which likely will be led by Vought.

"That nominee there has been pretty clear that he wants to basically shut down most regulatory action or protections. So even if the EPA wanted to do something, it's an open question as to whether the White House would let him do anything," he said.

Olsen predicts the administration will be less successful in rolling back protections already in place.

"There's an anti-backsliding provision in the Clean Drinking Water Act that prohibits rules from being weakened. So I don't think that they will be successful in trying to weaken those standards administratively. But other rules in the pipeline that haven't been issued yet, they certainly could just sit on them and not allow them to go forward," he said. Local efforts to remove PFAS will not immediately be affected. Cleanup at Spokane International Airport is governed by state laws. The state also has its own drinking water standards — though they are generally higher than the new federal rules. Efforts at Fairchild Air Force Base will be under the purview of the federal government.

On Thursday, toxicologist Nancy Beck was appointed by Trump to the EPA Office of Chemical Safety as a senior adviser — a position she held in the first Trump administration. In that first stint Beck fought against stronger regulations for PFAS and other chemicals.

In early 2020, the EPA under guidance from the White House Office of Management and budget rewrote regulations related to PFAS. The proposed rules added a "safe harbor" to PFAS regulations, which allows importers to avoid enforcement if they were unaware that their products contained PFAS. They also exempted some products from PFAS regulation altogether.

According to communications between the EPA and White House, these changes were opposed by the EPA and pushed by White House officials. This included Beck, who at the time was on the White House National Economic Council.

In January 2020, the EPA wrote that the agency "opposes proposing a safe harbor provision" because doing so would disincentivize importers from investigating whether their products contain PFAS. The White House also requested the EPA institute a numeric limit below which PFAS would not be subject to regulation, which was not a requirement of the legislation that authorized the EPA to regulate PFAS.

While seeking Senate confirmation to serve as chair of the Consumer Product Safety Commission in 2020, Beck denied she played any part in watering down PFAS safety rules.

"I can assure you I did not weaken or delay any PFAS rules," she said.

When asked at the hearing if she supports a ban on PFAS firefighting foam, Beck said she supports a "transition away" from the foam "in the market" but not an outright ban.

Republican Sens. Shelley Moore Capito, of West Virginia, and Susan Collins, of Maine, voiced their opposition to Beck's appointment and her nomination was never brought up for a vote. Her new role in the administration does not require Senate approval.

Before her stint in the first Trump administration, Beck was an executive at the American Chemistry Council, a lobbyist group advocating for policy on behalf of chemical manufacturers. Since leaving the White House, Beck has worked for a law firm where she advised companies on chemical regulation. At the Hunton Andrews Kurth law firm, Beck authored an online blog that frequently discussed PFAS policy. Since the announcement of her return to the federal government, these articles have been removed from the law firm's website.

APPARATUS ADVICE

+ FF HEALTH AND SAFETY – TAKING CARE OF OUR MEMBERS!

IN 2025 WE HAVE EXPERIENCED 6 FIRE FIGHTER LODD'S

*According to FirefighterCloseCalls.com**

In 2024 we experienced 64 LODDs reported nationally.!

DOES'NT HAVE TO BE A FATALITY-JUST A DIBILITATING INJURY, YOU JUST NEVER KNOW!

- A Big Elm Volunteer Fire Company firefighter suffered a medical emergency while responding with a tanker and was found by others at the fire station. Captain Roger Lathrop, died in the line of duty on Jan. 23.

Firefighter Hospitalized With Serious Injuries After Driver Runs Over Fire Hose

Nydja Hood, Gray News Staff

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (Gray News) - A Kansas firefighter faces months of rehabilitation after he was hospitalized with a fractured leg. The injury happened when someone drove over a fire hose, according to the fire department.

The Kansas City, Kansas, Fire Department responded to an active fire at a Subway restaurant just before 7 a.m. Monday. A resident drove over what firefighters describe as a lifeline: the hose supplying water from a fire hydrant, KCTV reports.

Firefighters say the hose got caught underneath the driver's car. As they left, it uncoiled, and the metal coupling of the hose struck a firefighter, fracturing his left leg.

The department is now urging other drivers not to make the same mistake.

THE FIREFIGHTER SHORTAGE – ITS EVERYWHERE!!

Fewer Volunteers Concern OH Fire Departments

The "help wanted" ad for the Cridersville Volunteer Fire Department in Auglaize County is as honest as it can be. "Odd hours, no pay, cool hat," it shared in a Facebook post.

It's one of a few different advertisements out there for Cridersville's volunteer firefighters, chief Rick Miller said, with hopes of boosting its 31-person roster of volunteers that answered 823 ambulance calls and 137 fire calls in 2024.

"We're always looking for members," Miller said. "Any volunteer department in the area that says they're not and they're full, they're not telling you the whole story. Everybody's struggling with the same issue. *You have to find the right people.*"

From 2018 to 2021, there was a 6.5% decrease in the number of volunteer firefighters, all while there was a 9% increase in calls between 2018 and 2020, according to the Ohio Department of Commerce's Division of the State Fire Marshal. That's meaningful statewide, as 74% of fire services provided in Ohio came from volunteer fire departments.

It's a game of dwindling numbers of how many people might answer the call when those tones go out, summoning the volunteers to a fire or accident scene. Many volunteer departments struggle to get crews out for fires, car accidents or ambulance runs to homes and nursing homes during the daytime, when many volunteers have full-time jobs.

While a handful of new recruits come in, more could be on their way out at any time, said Ryan Kerner, chief of the Kalida Volunteer Fire Department in Putnam County.

"There are guys who've helped for 25 to 30 years in here. They've done their time, and they could leave at any moment," said Kerner, who said his department has 33 volunteers but works best in the high 30s. "If that should happen, we'll be under serious duress."

IDENTIFYING THE PROBLEM

Ohio issued a 31-page report two years ago following the work of the Ohio Task Force on Volunteer Fire Service. It identified volunteers paying for their own training or personal protective equipment as barriers for volunteers.

Several area departments said those weren't factors here, as their villages, townships or fire districts paid for both the training and equipment. The trick is finding the right person, said Craig Fischer, chief of the Pandora-Riley Township Volunteer Fire Department in Putnam County.

"When they do join up, they do tend to stick around for a good, long while," Fischer said. "It's all up front, spelled out for them essentially. What we're requiring from them is a two-year commitment to us, to pay for their training."

It's a national problem that must be solved locally, said Scott King, bureau chief of the Ohio Fire Academy in Reynoldsburg. He noted in 1984, there were 897,000 volunteer firefighters registered nationally, with that number dropping to 676,000 in 2020.

"You're helping support your community, which is one of the drivers to be a volunteer firefighter," said King, who has 35 years experience in fire-related service. "It's a time commitment and time away from family and things of that nature."

It's a tough commitment, Miller said.

"A lot of it is about what kind of volunteer this is," Cridersville's chief said. "It's a guy who goes to work for a 40-hour-a-week job, then he may be out all night on a house fire, get home at 6 a.m. and go back to work at 7:30 on an hour and a half of sleep."

Some departments do pay a per-run stipend, but it can work out to below minimum wage when you're on the scene for a complicated accident or a fast-burning house fire.

While it's easy to point fingers at the youngest members as being the least reliable, Kerner noted he fears losing experienced volunteers.

"We have those in that 10- to 15-year range of service, when their lives pick up and their kids are more involved in things," Kerner said. "It's a cycle of life. At that point, they kind of feel like they're not providing the service they want to personally provide, so they back away."

He said he urges those firefighters to keep volunteering as much as they can in that stretch of life, as they're still valuable volunteers when their children are grown up and they have more free time.

FINDING A SOLUTION

Like any organization with vacancies, a little imagination goes a long way for area fire chiefs.

On Tuesday night, Kerner received permission to create a junior cadet program in Kalida. It would bring 16- to 18-year-olds to the fire station to help at work nights and be part of the trainings. They wouldn't go to active accident or fire scenes yet.

"The plan is to keep them in a controlled environment and buddy them up with active personnel in a one-to-one scenario and get that exposure to see what it's all about," Kerner said. "It gives them a taste to see if they should choose to volunteer for us."

To become a firefighter, someone must be 18 years old and receive a certification as a firefighter or emergency medical provider. Most departments help provide the necessary training.

The region is particularly lucky to have Apollo Career Center to help feed the pipeline of potential firefighters, Miller said, noting the popularity of the fire training program there, which is run by firefighters.

There are also a slew of advertisements on social media, including Facebook, to recruit. A website also exists to recruit firefighters, with 16 volunteer departments within 30 miles of Lima listing their needs on MakeMeAFirefighter.org.

“Volunteer firefighters wanted,” reads one notice, for the St. Marys Township Fire Department in Auglaize County. “Little to no pay.” Then it offers contact information for the department’s chief and a standing invitation to stop out at the state, 10752 state Route 364, St. Marys, at 7 p.m. any Wednesday to take a tour.

The state also hired a statewide volunteer coordinator, Josh Lewis, who tries to share the best ideas statewide on how to recruit the next generation of firefighters, King said. The Ohio Fire Academy had nearly 14,000 firefighters, EMS personnel and first responders go through its trainings last year, but there are also “close-to-home” trainings to limit the stresses on volunteers.

“We’ve been building out recruitment and retention programs to help find ways for each department locally to recruit more firefighters and even volunteers outside firefighters,” King said. “People from the outside public can come in and help that local fire department, whether it’s with social media, help with general budgeting and bookkeeping or even ... something like providing Gatorade and water to support firefighters during an emergency.”

LOVING THE REWARD

The reward changes as you grow through different stages of life, the fire chiefs agreed.

“When you’re in your 20s, it’s the greatest thing in the world, with all the lights and sirens and everybody looking at you,” Miller said.

As you grow older, it becomes part of your family, Fischer said.

“It’s a great way to give back to your community,” he said. “At the fire station, we’re like a family. Everybody knows everybody, and everybody’s treated with respect. It’s a brotherhood, essentially.”

You’re also providing a service when people need you most, Kerner said.

“It’s about helping and being there for people when they’re having their worst moment,” he said. “It’s knowing you can’t completely fix or erase their current situation, but you can at least help make it better.”

Recruiting and Retaining Volunteers for Harford (MD) Fire and EMS Has Become More Challenging

Matt Hubbard, The Baltimore Sun

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 ending Sept. 30.

The most recent report states 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 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](https://harfordvolunteer.com/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>.

SC County's Growth Puts Strain on Firefighters

Nick Sullivan, The Charlotte Observer

Calls for fire service used to trickle into Lancaster County at about 1,200 a year, or 3 per day.

That volume has exploded nearly tenfold since the turn of the century, according to Darren Player, the county director of fire rescue and emergency management.

The challenge became keeping pace despite a growing population, dwindling fire forces and limited funding.

And Lancaster has five years or less before its fire services reach crisis levels under current trends, according to County Administrator Dennis Marstall's estimates. Residents will notice pockets of pain due to "woefully inadequate response times."

"You will see the tragedies of a full house burning down before anyone gets there. You'll see insufficient response if you have commercial or retail fire," Marstall said. "That pain point is only increasing every day countywide when you have an increasing population."

His job is to make sure these doomsday scenarios don't come to pass.

County leaders are exploring solutions, but it's a delicate balancing act that will require community buy-in.

FIGHTING FIRE WITH A DEPLETED VOLUNTEER FORCE

Twenty years ago, Lancaster County had more than 600 volunteers ready to respond to a fire. Its population sat just under 66,000 in those days, according to U.S. Census Bureau data.

Charlotte and its surrounding areas have since experienced a surge in growth that brought Lancaster County to 110,000 residents. Thousands more outside travelers are expected to pass through the area, too, with developments like Costco and Target on the horizon.

The volunteer firefighter force hasn't kept up. It's shrunk to just 243 people, Player said, tracking with a sharp national decline.

"The call volume is just much more than the volunteer system can handle," said Greg Nicholson, chief of the Indian Land Fire District.

Indian Land's two fire stations received about 3,500 calls for service in 2024, representing more than a third of the county's total across 19 stations. Most stations received fewer calls than there are days in a year.

Nicholson's department serves the most populous region in Lancaster County and is the first to shift toward a career firefighter model with mostly full-time workers instead of volunteers. It will soon have 56 full-time employees who can staff the unincorporated community's two stations at all hours of the day, Nicholson said. Its force ran on volunteers until recently.

The county also employs 15 career firefighters who travel in teams across Lancaster County each day as well as one who is stationed in Kershaw. The roaming firefighters primarily serve rural areas without full-time workers, but their shifts run only from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. That leaves mornings and evenings without coverage.

Marstall said he is talking to Lancaster County Council about tweaking their schedules to run in 12-hour shifts so a full-time countywide worker is always on the clock. That request has not yet been approved.

Marstall is also researching a plan to divide the county into four service areas, each with a fully staffed station that could assist volunteer departments in their region. He anticipates the county moving toward this model.

But volunteers are still needed. Data from the National Volunteer Fire Council shows about 65% of the nation's firefighters remain volunteers today. Changing labor demographics just mean they can't be the only responders when fire alarms ring.

"It's hard to respond to a call at 3 in the morning if you have a job that's not flexible and you have to be at work at 8 o'clock," Marstall said. "It's just the changing economy and way of life. It doesn't lend itself for people to be able to want to be firefighters."

EXTRA FEES COULD BE THE SOLUTION?

The county gave each fire department about \$7,900 this year to spend at their discretion. For larger purchases like trucks, which can cost more than \$1 million, the county borrows money through voter-approved bonds.

Marstall said the county is working on a resolution for council consideration that would add a separate fire services tax for residents. For now, few supplemental funding avenues exist.

Departments can apply for a competitive one-time grant from a larger pot of county money, but just one is awarded a year. Volunteer departments rely on fundraising to generate additional money.

Indian Land and Van Wyck are the exceptions.

The two panhandle communities established their own fire districts in the early 2000s to help pay for more expenses as the county's fastest growing region. In exchange for more robust services, residents pay an annual fee that has increased over time.

Residents pay \$90 per rooftop in Van Wyck, but Marstall said the town might soon look to increase the fee so it can hire more full-time support like Indian Land. Van Wyck only has one paid firefighter.

Indian Land residents pay \$240 per rooftop, with businesses paying more based on square footage.

"We kept running into issues where our needs were growing, and the county's philosophy was kind of like, 'We're going B to buy 10 hoses for every station,'" said Brian Endres, the president and longtime member of the fee board that oversees Indian Land's fire budget. "Does that station down there that only had 10 calls last year need 10 hoses? We could use 15."

Endres said he asked the County Council to change Indian Land's flat fire services fee to a millage, which would tie residents' payments to their individual property values. The county hasn't made any formal plans to do this, but Endres said he will continue pushing for the change as an equitable solution to keep pace with growth.

PAID VS VOLUNTEER

Quicker response times are one benefit of a fee-paying district, Nicholson said. His firefighters respond in 6.2 minutes on average because they are stationed at all hours of the day, he said.

Volunteers take several minutes to drive to the station, then get ready before taking off. On weekends and nights when volunteers might not be readily available, dispatchers sometimes call up to three departments before somebody heads to a scene.

There can be tension between the panhandle and the rest of the county since Indian Land tends to receive more resources, Marstall said. But they're also paying more and have more calls.

Indian Land's two fire stations received more calls last year than 13 other stations combined, county data shows.

"If you go to the southern part of the county, they'll say, 'Oh, Indian Land wants everything new. They want new.' And they don't see it as a need," Endres said. "You've got to control and protect your dense area in order for your rural area to be able to survive."

Indian Land's next battle is to secure a third station, which Endres and Nicholson said is a necessity. They've been asking for years, they said, and the price tag only continues to climb.

"The county has to understand if you're going to allow all these rooftops and commercial businesses, you've gotta have a plan," Endres said. "We built way too fast without a plan, and now we're paying the price, but we've got a lot of great people who are willing to work with us and help to make it work."

BUILDING CODE ISSUES AND REPORTED FIRE FATALITIES

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 FOR 2025	
Fire Deaths in 1&2 Family Dwellings in NYS	15
Last fire death 1/30/25 Bay Shore, Suffolk, Female,, Unk	
Fire Deaths in any type of Dwelling in NYS	15
Fire Deaths in 1&2 Family Dwellings Nationally	109
Top 3 States with the greatest 1&2 Family Deaths	#1 TX/12
	#2 PA/11
	#3 CA/9
Civilian home fire fatalities in 2025: 228 2046 civilian home fire fatalities in 2024	
We are in Week 2 of 2025, fire has claimed on an average 29.5 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 1&2 family dwellings.	

****Fire Rips Through N.Y. Apartment Attic Leaving Sprinklers Inactivated**

Darian Stevenson

BALDWINSVILLE, N.Y. — ***A huge fire that ripped through two buildings in a Baldwinsville apartment complex Friday started in the attic, away from smoke alarms and sprinklers, according to a fire official.***

The flames in the attic area spread quickly due to the wide open space over the buildings, according to North West Fire District Chief Tony McIntyre. Most of the fire — about 95% — was in the space above the top floor and below the roof, he said.

McIntyre said the smoke alarms and the sprinklers inside the New Legacy Apartments complex were working, but they weren't activated because the fire was in the attic. The fire sprinklers and the smoke alarms were below the attic, he said.

"If there's no fire, they're (the sprinklers) not going to be activated," McIntyre said. "They're all heat activated and there was no heat on the first, second and third parts of the living space."

One sprinkler was activated due to heat, but McIntyre said others, located on the side of the building, where the fire did not spread, were not activated due to the lack of heat.

McIntyre said he believes the fire may have gone undetected in the attic for quite some time, but he cannot be certain. When they arrived on scene after the 911 call, heavy flames were coming from the roof, he said.

The fire, which was reported at around 9:45 p.m. Friday, ripped through two buildings in the New Legacy Apartments complex off Meigs Road. The roofs collapsed at one point.

Firefighters and police officers went into the buildings to rescue people, carrying some residents down several flights of stairs, firefighters said.

An 80-year-old man was taken to a hospital for smoke inhalation, McIntyre had said.

In all, 24 apartments were damaged or destroyed. So many were left homeless the American Red Cross set up a shelter at Onondaga Community College.

Firefighters from multiple departments battled the blaze for more than nine hours in freezing conditions. McIntyre said there were over 100 firefighters working on the scene.

McIntyre said firefighters were on scene within three minutes of receiving a 911 call. Fire crews immediately started to work to put out the fire, while others helped residents evacuate the building.

Fire crews were drawing so much water from a 10-inch water main that they had to use water tankers to transport more water to the fire, McIntyre said.

The freezing weather also made it difficult for firefighters, McIntyre said. "Everything froze over," McIntyre said. "The ground itself was covered with ice, firefighters were slipping, sliding and the 10-degree weather — it's taxing on the firefighters, taxing on the fire equipment."

GREEN TECHNOLOGY & THE FIRE SERVICE

Torrance, CA, Police Unable to Save Tesla Driver Due to Burning Battery

Karen Garcia

A driver in Torrance is dead after police say they were unable to save the person from their Tesla because of its burning lithium ion battery.

Torrance police responded to a single-vehicle collision involving a Tesla at the intersection of Madrona Avenue and Plaza Del Amo on Tuesday at about 10:15 p.m., according to a Police Department news release.

A 2025 Tesla Model Y was southbound on Madrona Avenue when, for unknown reasons, the electric car swerved to the right, collided with a traffic pole and caught fire with the driver trapped inside, authorities said.

Officers tried to get into the vehicle to save the driver, but, "due to the intensity of the flames and heat, they were unable to rescue the occupant," the department said.

The fight to put out the fire was then further complicated by "challenges associated with the vehicle's lithium-ion batteries," officials said.

The driver, who was the only occupant, was pronounced dead at the scene.

The incident is the latest example of the safety risks emergency crews can face when responding to incidents that involve high-voltage lithium ion batteries that power electric vehicles, according to a [National Transportation Safety Board report published in 2020](#).

Tesla Cybertruck Fire Took Over An Hour To Put Out; Local Fire Department Speaks About Challenges With EV Fires

Marsha Augustin

In light of the recent **Cybertruck explosion** in Las Vegas, News10NBC spoke to a local fire department about their preparedness for electric vehicle fires. According to the National Fire Protection Association, firefighters need more education and better tools to manage the unique risks posed by EV fires.

News10NBC's Marsha Augustin spoke with Battalion Chief Dodson from the Henrietta Fire District about the challenges presented by lithium-ion batteries in electric cars.

"We are not dealing with a traditional car fire. This is going to take some time especially if we can't get our ground monitors closer to the vehicle and we have to have firefighters on handlines which is more labor-intensive," said Chief Dodson.

One of the biggest struggles is not having specific instructions and not knowing the proper procedure for fighting an EV fire.

"Unfortunately in the industry, there hasn't been a defined, this is what we are going to do in every situation. There's been training classes that has been developed both at the state and national level and different conferences you can go to." Dodson explained.

When it comes to extinguishing car fires, firefighters at the Henrietta Fire District use about 500 gallons of water which is what they have access to on their fire trucks. However, putting out electric car fires would require 20,000 to 30,000 gallons of water.

“The battery packs in EVs are made up of thousands of individual cells, making it challenging to get water directly on the affected areas. The only way to stop the fire is to cool the battery pack, which requires significant time and effort.” Dodson said.

Another challenge for firefighters is identifying an electric vehicle during a fire. He explained with an EV that was parked in the firehouse. “At first glance, when first responders pull up to this vehicle in the middle of the night, all we see is a typical Ford pickup truck. As we inspect a little closer, we notice in the front there’s no engine,” Dodson said.

The department is not equipped with a Fire Blanket, which can be one of the most effective ways for controlling and isolating an electric car fire without using water. However, Dodson demonstrated with one of the devices they have, how firefighters get water directly into the electric cars’ battery during a fire. “Move it up to the vehicle and try to concentrate the stream underneath the chassis of the vehicle under the battery pack,” he explained.

The National Fire Protection Association states there is no current evidence suggesting EVs are more likely to be involved in fires than gas-powered cars. They offer free electric vehicle community preparedness [online training](#) for **Residents**

An off-the-books e-bike battery repair shop in the basement of a Queens home sparked a massive Friday morning blaze that left a firefighter and three building residents hospitalized, FDNY officials said.

The fire broke out on the first floor of the three-story home on 60th Ave. near 146th St. in Flushing just before 5:30 a.m., said FDNY Chief Christopher Paolicelli, who explained that a frozen hydrant delayed the emergency response.

“The first companies got there and they had heavy fire coming out the first floor,” Paolicelli said on X. “When they stretched their hose, they had a frozen hydrant in front of the building, so they had to go up and find another hydrant up the road, so there was a delay in water. We have water in the fire engine, the booster, so they were able to use that water until the chauffeur was able to secure a working hydrant that was further up the block.”

When firefighters entered the building they were “faced with heavy fire,” the chief said.

At the same time, two building residents were found escaping out of the back of the home, suffering from smoke inhalation.

It took firefighters about an hour to put out the blaze. Three residents and a firefighter were taken to area hospitals with minor injuries.

As the smoke cleared, firefighters “saw that it was multiple e-bikes and lithium-ion batteries that had been on fire,” Paolicelli said.

One of the tenants in the building, FDNY fire marshals later learned, was running an e-bike repair shop on the first floor and basement of the home, where the e-bikes and batteries were found.

Fire Marshals found both lithium-ion batteries, as well as traditional lead acid batteries, a source with knowledge of the case said. Marshals later determined that one of the lithium-ion batteries sparked the fire.

The Queens blaze comes as the FDNY has seen significant progress in the fight against lithium-ion battery fires.

[NO MATTER HOW MANY LAWS THEY PASS IN ALBANY THESE ARE THE ONES THAT HAPPEN ANYWAY AND SLIP THROUGH THE CRACKS.]

Plane Fire ‘Caused By Passenger’s Portable Battery’ Leaves Seven Injured

The Telegraph

Seven people have been injured in a fire which forced the emergency evacuation of a plane on a runway in South Korea. The blaze occurred moments before take-off and may have been caused by a portable battery stored in an overhead bin, local media reported.

The Air Busan plane, an Airbus A321, was due to fly to Hong Kong from Gimhae International Airport in Busan on Tuesday night. But the flight was halted after the fire broke out in the rear section of the aircraft, officials said.

A total of 169 passengers and seven crew members managed to escape via inflatable slides.

Authorities initially reported three injuries but revised the number to seven on Wednesday, with one victim still in hospital.

The accident left almost half of the aircraft’s fuselage burnt, although its wings and engines on both sides were undamaged, officials said. The cause of the fire is under investigation.

Dramatic images and footage broadcast by local media showed the aircraft engulfed in flames, with thick smoke billowing from its interior.

Images of the aftermath from Wednesday morning revealed that the upper half of the fuselage had burnt away, leaving large holes and exposing the cabin.

"It is unclear when we will be able to disclose the investigation findings on the cause of last night's fire," a transport ministry spokesman told the AFP news agency.

However, Yonhap News Agency reported that *the fire spread after black smoke was seen coming from an overhead compartment in the back row of the plane.*

Citing an Air Busan source, local daily JoongAng Ilbo reported: *"It seems that a fire broke out when a passenger's portable battery, stored in the overhead bin as carry-on luggage, became compressed."*

A passenger quoted by Yonhap said: "As the smoke filled the cabin, a passenger seated near the emergency exit opened the door, and the flight attendant opened the opposite one, allowing others to start evacuating."

FIRE SERVICE EDUCATION SO THAT OTHERS MAY LEARN



Workplace Violence ESIP WEBINAR SERIES

We sometimes think the dangers in our workplace are a part of what we do, but what about when it goes too far? This presentation will review the ways we can be prepared for the dangers in our work environments how to recognize hazards before they are threats, and how to respond when it occurs. The content of this webinar will address requirements of many AHJs for annual training

Wednesday February 5th, 2025 at 7PM

REGISTER AT THIS LINK:

https://archcapgroup.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_jC5wllBpQaqqXwpDDIJLig?utm_source=ESIP+Risk+Management+Mailing+List&utm_campaign=e375048a04-

EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2020_04_21_04_23_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_f653b3c566-e375048a04-278064383#/registration

NATIONAL VOLUNTEER FIRE COUNCIL

TRAINING TIMES

COURSES WEBINARS EVENTS

Webinar - Essentials of Volunteer Retention & Recruitment

Thursday, Feb. 13 at 2pm ET

Presenter: Tom Merrill

REGISTER AT THIS LINK:

https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_VHqUYcZbRGKOy0SJ8K2Atw#/registration

Roundtable Talk - Safety in Action: Educating Drivers on Emergency Scene Awareness

Feb. 27 at 1pm ET

Presenters:

Jack Sullivan, Todd Leiss, Joel Feldman, and Joe Tebo

REGISTER AT THIS LINK:

https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_NiRAuc7fTe6i2ravvaqHkA#/registration



2025 Seminar Series, Short-Handed Firefighting

34 years ago, this class was developed by Firefighter Andrew A. Fredericks. At that time, the fire service was starting to suffer from a shortage of members, especially but not limited to the volunteer ranks. Today, as we all know, departments across the nation have experienced a large drop-off in membership. With today's hotter, faster-moving fires, it is imperative that we get on the road ASAP and are ready to mount an aggressive interior attack – especially where life-saving attempts must be carried out. This class will look at new apparatus and equipment designed to make our jobs less labor-intensive. In many places, where it used to take one or maybe two departments to handle the job at a single-family residence, now up to six departments are necessary due our diminished ranks. We must protect our residents and, just as important, our members and make sure everyone goes home.

Mike Healy has been a member of the Rockland County fire service for 54 years, serving with the Blauvelt F.D. for 14 years, followed by the Central Nyack F.D. for 40 years. He has served as a chief for three terms. Healy is currently the coordinator of education for the Rockland County Fire Training Center. **Jeff Daniels** is a 23-year fire service veteran. He served with the Air National Guard as a crash rescue firefighter for 17 years and was a member of the West Haverstraw Volunteer F.D. for 14 years. In 2002, he was hired as a NYS DMNA firefighter and served for over four years before being appointed to the FDNY. Daniels was assigned to Ladder Co. 39 for 12 years and was later an instructor for the FDNY Fire Academy. Currently, he is a member of Squad 61. He also teaches at the Rockland County Fire Training Center.

Coming to These Counties in 2025 (7:00 p.m. Starting Time):

Albany (February 24) • Cortland (October 28) • Erie (October 8) • **Fulton (September 9)** • **Herkimer (April 14)**
• Jefferson (October 15) • Monroe (September 30) • Nassau (November 5) • Niagara (March 12)
• Oneida (September 24) • Onondaga (February 18) • Orange (April 29) • Otsego (September 15)
• **Rensselaer (October 20)** • Rockland (April 23) • St. Lawrence (March 24) • Steuben (February 12) • Suffolk (April 2)
• Westchester (September 3) • Wyoming (March 4)

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

REGISTER AT THIS LINK: <https://www.nysfirechiefs.com/2025seminarseries>

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

May, Friday the 16th through Sunday May 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 at the following LINK: <https://fasny.com/training/1st-annual-firetraining-symposium/>

SAVE THE DATE

FASNY
Firefighters Association
of the State of New York

1ST ANNUAL FIRE TRAINING SYMPOSIUM
FORT WILLIAM HENRY HOTEL
CONFERENCE CENTER • LAKE GEORGE, N.Y.
MAY 16-18, 2025

Start your weekend with a Golf Scramble at Cronin's Golf Course, then hear from top national leaders as they prepare you to tackle the challenges of today's volunteer fire service.

CHECK OUT SOME OF THE SPEAKERS WE ARE WORKING WITH

Chief Tom Richardson Chief Tom Basher
Deputy Chief Tim Cowan Chief Douglas Cline
Chief Tom Miller Chief Stefano Napolitano

ASSOCIATION OF FIRE DISTRICTS OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK

Coming Attractions:

- Mini Summit in White Plains, Sonesta Hotel, **Friday March 28 & Saturday 29 2025**
- **October 2-4, 2025, Thursday - Saturday**, Annual Meeting and Vendor Expo at the Saratoga Hilton and City Center, Saratoga Springs

- **October 8-10, 2026**, Annual Meeting and Vendor Expo at the Saratoga Hilton and City Center, Saratoga Springs



Regional Hands-On Training – Fire Behavior From the Outside

Two-Hour Program Overview

Understanding fire behavior and building construction as it relates to the fire service is arguably the most important aspect of our job. In this program, firefighters will observe changes in fire behavior from the outside while typical fireground actions are simulated. Firefighters will recognize the vast difference in fire dynamics with the synthetic fuels used in homes today versus the fuel the fire service is using in training towers. This two-hour training includes a classroom presentation, followed by an interactive demonstration using a 10-square-foot dollhouse prop. The unit provides a safe, inexpensive way to discuss fireground strategies/tactics to improve firefighter safety and victim survivability.

Course Prerequisites (or Equivalent)

None

PPE Requirements

None. Members of the fire suppression team designated by the host agency must wear OSHA compliant full PPE with SCBA.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS:

Programs are open to host organization's members and invited guests only.

Monday March 3, 2025 – 7:30 p.m.

Rockland County

Host: Hillcrest Fire Company/Moleston Fire District

Monday April 28, 2025 – 7:00 p.m.

Sullivan County

Host: Roscoe Rockland Fire Department

How to Host a Program in Your Region

Complete and submit a [Regional Hands-On Training – Fire Behavior From the Outside Request Form](#), which outlines all host responsibilities. This course can be delivered on any day of the week at any time and is ideal for a fire department drill. Training will be provided in New York state only. Programs will be scheduled throughout the year based on availability of NYSAFC instructors. [Email](#) NYSAFC with questions regarding Hands-On Training.



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

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

HAPPEN'N IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Gansevoort Fire Department Breakfast

Sunday **February 16th** at the Gansevoort Fire Station 1870 Route 32N, Gansevoort, NY

ALL YOU CAN EAT BUFFET! , Eggs made to order, omelets, pancakes, French Toast, scrambled eggs, bacon, sausage, biscuits with sausage and gravy, Fried Potatoes, toast, cereal, milk, coffee and orange juice. \$12 adults, \$10 seniors & military, \$8 children 6-12.

ALSO: March 16th, April 20th, May 18th, and June 15th. The fire company thanks you for your support!!

Clifton Park Fire Department Breakfast

All You Can Eat: Sunday **February 2nd** from 8 til 11, all you can eat, eggs, bacon, toast, sausage, pancakes, OJ, Coffee, Hot Chocolate \$10 adults, \$6 children 6-13

LAUGH OUT LOUD!!

From the Laws of Life; Law of Mechanical Repair-Your hands become coated with grease, your nose will begin to itch and you'll have to pee!

CAFDA OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

OFFICERS

President, Tom Rinaldi, Commissioner, Stillwater Fire District

1st Vice President, John Meehan, Commissioner West Crescent Fire District

2nd Vice President, Ellen Martin, Deputy Treasurer Clifton Park Fire District

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Treasurer: Tony Hill

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

Chaplain: Fred Richards, Commissioner, Harmony Corners Fire District

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

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

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

CAFDA PO Box 242 East Schodack, NY 12063

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

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

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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8 Southwoods Blvd Suite 207
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nmeeker@penflexinc.com

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516-472-7345*

kbregel@gblyn.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@rinaldi1.com for comments or content contributions are always welcome.

YOU CAN BECOME A MEMBER OF CAFDA!

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/>

CAPITAL AREA FIRE DISTRICTS ASSOCIATION

SAVE THE DATES!

CAFDA has been busy, and 2025 is shaping up to be a great year!

COMMISSIONER TRAINING

AVERILL PARK FIRE DISTRICT	Saturday, February 1, 2025	Snow Date: Sunday, February 2, 2025
CLIFTON PARK FIRE DISTRICT	Saturday, March 1, 2025	Snow Date: Sunday, March 2, 2025
BERKSHIRE FIRE DISTRICT	Saturday, March 29, 2025	Snow Date: Sunday, March 30, 2025
WARRENSBURG FIRE DISTRICT	Saturday, April 5, 2025	Snow Date: Sunday, April 6, 2025

OTHER TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

FINANCIAL TRAINING FOR FIRE DISTRICT OFFICIALS	Fulton-Montgomery Community College 2025 2805 State Hgwy. 67, Johnstown	Thurs-Fri. March 13-14,
FINANCIAL TRAINING FOR FIRE DISTRICT OFFICIALS	Brighton Fire District 2025 3100 East Avenue, Rochester	Tues-Wed. March 25-26,
CAFDA CONFERENCE	Fort William Henry Hotel & 2025 Conference Center, Lake George	Thurs-Sat. April 10-12,

ANNUAL FALL WORKSHOPVerdoy Fire District
2025 988 Troy-Schenectady Road, Latham

Saturday, November 1,

SOCIAL EVENTS**OFFICER INSTALLATION DINNER**

Century House, Latham

Saturday, March 8, 2025

DAY AT THE RACES!

Saratoga Race Course, Saratoga Springs

Friday, August 8, 2025

MEETINGS – CLIFTON PARK FIRE DISTRICT & ZOOM**General Membership Meeting**

Saturday, January 4, 2025

General Membership Meeting

Thursday, February 13, 2025

General Membership Meeting

Thursday, March 6, 2025

Board of Directors Meeting

Thursday, April 3, 2025

General Membership Meeting

Thursday, May 8, 2025

General Membership Meeting

Thursday, June 12, 2025

Board of Directors Meeting

Thursday, August 14, 2025

General Membership Meeting

Thursday, September 11, 2025

General Membership Meeting

Thursday, October 9, 2025

General Membership Meeting

Thursday, November 13, 2025

**FOR MORE REGISTRATION INFORMATION****Website****www.CAFDA.net**



FINANCIAL TRAINING FOR FIRE DISTRICT OFFICIALS

**THURSDAY, MARCH 13 -
FRIDAY MARCH 14, 2025**

BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND!

CAFDA, together with our friends from Mohawk Fire District, are again partnering with the Office of the State Comptroller (OSC) to bring you this Fire District focused event!

Topics to Include:

- Duties/Responsibilities of Fire District Officials
- Governmental Accounting Overview
- Policies & Procedures
- Understanding Financial Reports
- Multi-Year Capital/Financial Planning & Budgeting
- Fraud Prevention & Detection
- AFR and Common Filing Errors
- Common OSC Audit Findings
- Municipal Accounting Software
- Q&A with the OSC Staff

**This Training is Not Just for
Fire District Treasurers!**

***ALL COMMISSIONERS and
OFFICERS are INVITED and
ENCOURAGED to ATTEND!***

**Join OSC Thursday after the
last session for a social mixer,
great conversation & lite fare!**

**Take Advantage of this Unique
Opportunity to ask OSC Questions!!!**

Event Location:

Allen House located at
Fulton-Montgomery Community College
2805 State Highway 67, Johnstown

Conveniently located approx. 8 miles off
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Officials Training

CAFDA

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East Schodack, NY 12063

www.CAFDA.net

Secretary@CAFDA.net



FINANCIAL TRAINING FOR FIRE DISTRICT OFFICIALS

**TUESDAY, MARCH 25 -
WEDNESDAY MARCH 26, 2025**

ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITY!

Join CAFDA and our friends from Monroe County and Brighton Fire District for a second chance at Financial Training with the Office of the State Comptroller (OSC)!

Topics to Include:

- Duties/Responsibilities of Fire District Officials
- Governmental Accounting Overview
- Policies & Procedures
- Understanding Financial Reports
- Multi-Year Capital/Financial Planning & Budgeting
- Fraud Prevention & Detection
- AFR and Common Filing Errors
- Common OSC Audit Findings
- Municipal Accounting Software
- Q&A with the OSC Staff

**This Training is Not Just for
Fire District Treasurers!**

***ALL COMMISSIONERS and
OFFICERS are INVITED and
ENCOURAGED to ATTEND!***

**Join OSC Tuesday after the
last session for a social
mixer, great conversation &
lite fare!**

**Take Advantage of this Unique
Opportunity to ask OSC
Questions!!!**

Event Location:

Brighton Fire District
3100 East Avenue
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Need Overnight Accommodations?

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(ENTIRE URL must be copied/pasted to work properly)

CAFDA

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Secretary@CAFDA.net

CAFDA Conference Attendee Registration Form

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For payment inquiries, please contact Treasurer@cafda.net



Conference Attendee

Name/Title: _____

Fire Organization Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Are you or your organization a member of CAFDA? YES NO

Attendee Conference Registration (Check One):

- One Day Registration:** CAFDA Member \$75 Non-Member \$95
I will be attending (Choose one): Thursday Friday Saturday
(includes continental breakfast & lunch, Friday Night Welcome Reception if attending Friday)
- Two Day Registration:** CAFDA Member \$150 Non-Member \$190
I will be attending (Choose two): Thursday Friday Saturday
(includes continental breakfast & lunch x 2 days, Friday Night Welcome Reception if attending Friday)
- Full Conference Registration:** CAFDA Member \$150 Non-Member \$200
Thursday 4/25 – Saturday 4/27/2024 (includes continental breakfast & lunch x 3 days, Friday Night Welcome Reception)

Guest Meal Registration, if applicable (Check One):

Guest Name: _____

- \$25 One Day Meals:** I will be attending (Choose one): Thursday Friday Saturday
(includes continental breakfast & lunch, Friday Night Welcome Reception if attending Friday)
- \$50 Two Day Meals:** I will be attending (Choose two): Thursday Friday Saturday
(includes continental breakfast & lunch x 2 days, Friday Night Welcome Reception if attending Friday)
- \$50 Three Day Meals:** Thursday 4/25 – Saturday 4/27/2024
(includes continental breakfast & lunch x 3 days, Friday Night Welcome Reception)

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**

Facebook Post from Dave Denniston 1/21/25

As we awake this morning, the flags, the moon, and the glass are half full. Late yesterday an executive order was put in place to pause any proposed legislation and no new orders can be put in place until the current administration approves them. This is a huge win.

So why half full you ask? While this is a pause, it is not a removal of the proposed rule. We now must switch our focus from OSHA and back to our elected officials and the new administration. It will be imperative that we hit the opportunity full force.

Please collect your thoughts, dig out your old letters, testimonies, and ideas and be ready to share them with your elected officials. This next step is as important as anything we have done so far.

Without all your efforts and hard work to date, this new rule would be in place today. Your voices slowed this down enough to get us to this opportunity. This was 100% grassroots to get us this far. We now have the opportunity to help craft a new rule that is economically and technically feasible that we can live with.

My friends the fight is not over, it has just begun. It's halftime of the championship game. Time to regroup and come out ready to play and come out victorious! We will begin calling plays as soon as this halftime show is over. Warm up my friends, it's almost time to take the field again.

Recent E-mail from OSHA

Good morning,

Everyone here at OSHA would like to thank all of the people who participated in the Emergency Response public hearing, which ended on December 4. Your testimony has provided OSHA with valuable insights and points of view that will be critical in helping us continue through the rulemaking process.

Finalizing the daily hearing transcripts is underway, and we anticipate that they will be uploaded to [Regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov) in the coming weeks, following review and approval by the Chief Administrative Law Judge.

In the meantime, the docket is open for submission of post-hearing comments at [Regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov). OSHA welcomes and encourages any additional comments, information and data from hearing participants and members of the public, which can be submitted until **docket closure on January 17, 2025**.

Thanks, and have a wonderful day!!
The OSHA Emergency Response team

Public Hearing After Action Comments

Dave Denniston

As we conclude the informal hearing on the proposed 1910.156 standard, I wanted to recap what has stood out to me from all the comments.

1. The proposal was drafted in a vacuum without equal representation of all of, or the majority of, emergency responders.

2. Almost all expressed that the current standard was outdated and warranted changes.
3. All agreed that responder safety was a major concern.
4. Strong opposition was voiced as to the technical and economic feasibility of the proposal.
5. There were mixed feelings as to if volunteers should be exempt or not.
6. Despite claims that the proposal was flexible in nature, most felt it was too rigid and designed as a one size fits all solution and that it shouldn't be
7. Emergency services are delivered in a vastly different nature and organizations function at various levels across the country.
8. That workplace response agencies and community response agencies are not the same.
9. That the delivery of emergency services would be severely impacted by the proposal as written.
10. **Outside of the unions, consultants, and those that wanted to weaponize the standard to demand more money from municipalities, no one came forward to say the proposal as written was the best option available.**

HERE ARE WHAT I SEE AS THE CHALLENGES MOVING AHEAD.

1. OSHA has invested a lot of time and money into the process to date. They will be looking to save face and not blow this up.
2. Changes to the existing standard are needed and warranted.
3. Exempting volunteers entirely will be difficult at best because of combination departments, definitions of volunteers, different laws in different states, the reduction of volunteer numbers across the country.
4. Only exempting volunteers will still have major financial impacts on our economy and municipalities that have any career staff.
5. The appointment for Secretary of Labor is known to be pro-labor and unions.
6. ***Even if we get a political "stay" on this for now, when the political landscape changes back in 2 to 4 years, we will be fitting this battle all over again.***
7. ***OSHA has now repeatedly asked for data and input to ideas of what would work and be acceptable.***
8. Any solution will have pain for some and there is no way to keep everyone completely happy here.
9. **This is not just going to go away.**

So please hear me out. In an effort to come up with a workable solution, I have taken the proposal rule and made some substantial edits. I am proposing a standalone standard that only applies to first response agencies (fire departments and ambulances). I have removed the incorporated NFPA standards and made them as reference material. I have adjusted the wording to put more power back in the hands of the AHJ. I have made it much cleaner and easier to read and understand. While there will still be some lift for local organizations and some pain points, I truly believe these edits would make it workable for the majority of organizations across our diverse country. ***I believe if we are not willing to be part of the solution, we are in fact part of the problem.***

Please read my attached draft version and see if you think this is something we can live with. If it is (with any suggested edits) I would like to do a mass distribution of this and see if we can get enough support for it to give OSHA a way out and help improve the safety of our responders at the same time. I ask you to view this with an open mind and only object to portions that you feel would cause major disruption to your organization.

Folks, we asked OSHA to listen, and they are listening. Our elected officials repeatedly said we needed to work with OSHA to find a solution. This is a solution. While the courts may provide us with some relief, that will be a lengthy and time-consuming process with no guarantee for success. I have read this draft for the 4th time and do not see anything here now that I could not live with as a compromise.

<https://cafda.net/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/OSHA-1910.156-Denniston-Edits-Clean-Version.docx>

[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.]

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.

[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.**

[Joint Letter to OSHA from NYS Association of Counties, NYS Conference of Mayors, and the NYS Association of Towns](#)

Open the Document at This Link:

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

CONTACT YOUR REPRESENTATIVE AT THIS LINK:

<https://www.votervoice.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-Sh4YQDWc0PJekSA9BGQCOH6lo AGJ2vqw1b4iSBqWLS=&c=LauWWHLcf9ha42GymhgekGbW4yjkuTH862UfuVJahY7fFHeGl_qUJw==&ch=lefmM7sGv75CYvgpTK9dENyqA1Rv5PwzXZ1xlkZP-JITscwLK8iGsQ==

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.

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 \(oshaedne.com\)](#)
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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>