



CAPITAL AREA FIRE DISTRICTS ASSOCIATION BULLETIN

JANUARY 18, 2025

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

CAPITAL SHORTS:

- Its Firefighter Cancer Awareness month, clean your gear, clean your apparatus, clean yourself and be aware, if you suspect something – say something don't let it go!!
- 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=TqQVH3alnicvJqNablSKLfDU5GOrYP.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:

- **Rensselaer County, AVERILL PARK FIRE DISTRICT:** Saturday, February 1, 2025 Snow Date: Sunday, February 2, 2025
- **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. More details will be released soon.

[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

Nothing this week

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](#)

The NYS Fire Service Alliance kicked off the 2025 legislative season today by meeting in Troy to discuss the issues of united concern. In attendance were Districts, Chiefs, FASNY, Fire Police, Coordinators and a number of other interested parties including CAFDA and our fire service lobbyists. The following are legislative items for the coming session:

Top Five:

- Make permanent Heart and Lung presumptions
- Adoption of Residential Sprinklers in the State Building Code (Lobby to insure that sprinkler provisions currently in the ICC Building Code remain there)
- Amend the VFBL regulations to insure parity with payments made to workers compensation recipients for volunteer firefighters.
- Increase the income tax credit to \$800 annually, and if possible include ability to collect on the property tax incentive for recruitment and retention.
- Make permanent the EMS cost recovery provisions

Also Discussed:

- Recovery of 54g funding to support local government code enforcement efforts, former funding was folded in with State Funding in the General Fund. (These funds come from the insurance industry)
- Amend the mental hygiene law in support of the "First Responder Peer Support Act"
- Designate EMS as an "Essential" Service and expand the benefits available to EMS personnel and set standards for EMS.
- Create the local option for the AHJ to provide pay per call stipends for volunteer firefighters with the needed amendments to VFBL to allow pay per call without penalty.
- Cancer coverage relief by having the State pay for the cost of coverage
- Exempt the Fire/EMS services from the EV mandates set by the state.
- Continued focus on illegal conversions which circumvent the requirements of the Building Codes.
- NYS retirement credit for employees who volunteer as fire or EMS members. For example 1 year of credit for every 5 years as a volunteer with a maximum of 3 years additional credit.
- Secure a sales tax exemption for home use life safety products such as detectors or extinguishers.
- Phase out PPE containing PFAS chemicals.
- Redirect 911 fees to the local government directly instead of to the State General Funds and then a subsequent grant program. These funds are needed to fund NEXT-GEN 911 upgrades.

[Governor Hochul Unveils Proposals to Support First Responders](#)

Governor Kathy Hochul today unveiled a series of proposals aimed at protecting first responders, expanding resources for training and recruitment and supporting veterans and victims of crime as part of her 2025 State of the State. The Governor proposed new initiatives to increase the number of first responders serving our communities and supporting them with training and mental health resources.

LAUNCHING A FIRST RESPONDER COUNSELING SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

First responders face unique mental health challenges, but a shortage of counselors familiar with the responder community creates gaps in care. Financial barriers often deter first responders from pursuing counseling degrees, limiting the availability of culturally competent mental health professionals. To address this, Governor Hochul will launch the First Responder Counseling Scholarship Program through the State University of New York (SUNY). This initiative will support first responders pursuing counseling degrees and offer micro-credentials in areas like trauma-informed care and peer support leadership. In return for scholarship support, recipients will commit to serving as counselors in New York State, creating a sustainable pipeline of mental health professionals uniquely equipped to support the responder community.

SECURING ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR VOLUNTEER FIRE INFRASTRUCTURE AND RESPONSE EQUIPMENT GRANT PROGRAM

Volunteer fire services protect over 45 percent of New Yorkers, yet many departments lack the tools and infrastructure required for modern firefighting. Outdated equipment and aging facilities put both firefighter safety and operational readiness at risk. Governor Hochul will secure additional funding for the V-FIRE grant program, allowing departments to renovate or construct compliant fire stations equipped to meet the needs of a diversifying workforce.

KEEPING FIREFIGHTERS SAFE WITH BETTER PROTECTIVE GEAR

Our brave firefighters selflessly risk their lives to protect our communities, facing immense heat and hazardous conditions. To safeguard these heroes, they rely on specialized protective gear designed to withstand extreme temperatures and repel water and oil. For years, this essential equipment has unfortunately contained the emerging contaminant per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). Evolving evidence has revealed the potential dangers of PFAS exposure, raising concerns about the long-term health and safety of our firefighters even as we continue to work to limit the release of this contaminant into New York's air, lands and waters. Recognizing the need to protect both our firefighters and the environment, Governor Hochul will introduce legislation to ban the sale of firefighter gear containing PFAS in the state. This measure will help ensure our firefighters have access to the highest quality and safest protective equipment available while mitigating the potential public health and environmental impact of these chemicals. The legislation will take effect in 2028.

DEFINE EMS AS AN ESSENTIAL SERVICE

Governor Hochul will introduce legislation defining EMS as an essential service and requiring counties to ensure all residents have adequate access to these services. Such legislation will also require counties to develop a county EMS mapping that will allow New York to identify and fill gaps in coverage, coordinated statewide by the State EMS Task Force, which was established by Governor Hochul in 2022.

[REMEMBER THIS IS A PIE IN THE SKY WISH LIST THAT NEEDS FUNDING AND SUPPORT BY LEGISLATORS TO BE PASSED IN BOTH THE SENATE AND ASSEMBLY CHAMBERS]

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

THE LATEST FROM WASHINGTON

[Congressman Mike Bost to Chair the Congressional Fire Services Caucus in the 119th Congress](#)

The Congressional Fire Services Institute is pleased to announce that Congressman Mike Bost (R IL-12) will serve as the chair of the Congressional Fire Services Caucus for the 119th Congress.

Congressman Bost has represented the 12th District of Illinois since 2015. During his time in Congress, Congressman Bost has worked tirelessly to support America's fire and emergency services. The Congressman has a strong history with the fire service, serving as a firefighter for the Murphysboro (IL) Fire Department. He graduated from the University of Illinois' Certified Firefighter II Academy in 1993 and worked with the Murphysboro Fire Department even while serving as a state representative. The Congressman also served in the United States Marine Corps from 1979 to 1982.

"With his fire service background, Congressman Bost understands the importance of Congressional support for America's fire and emergency services. During his time in Congress, he has been a steadfast champion for the fire and emergency services, demonstrating a deep commitment to ensuring our first responders have the resources they need to keep their communities safe," said Jim Estep, President of CFSI's Board of Directors.

"As a former firefighter, I know firsthand the dedication our first responders show to the communities they serve," said Bost. "I'm honored to stand shoulder to shoulder with my firefighter brothers and sisters who put their lives on the line for their communities. I'm humbled by this opportunity to be a leading voice for them in Congress through the Fire Services Caucus."

The Congressional Fire Services Caucus leadership is composed of eight members – four each from the Senate and House. Maintaining the bipartisan spirit of the Caucus, leadership is split evenly between party lines with four Democrats and four Republicans. The chairmanship rotates between a Democrat and a Republican every Congress. Congressman Bost takes over the chairmanship following the leadership of former Senator Jon Tester (MT), who chaired the caucus in the 118th Congress.

The Fire Caucus is among the largest caucuses in Congress. Members join to learn more about our nation's fire and emergency services and the federal government's role in addressing the needs of our nation's fire and emergency services. [A list of current members is located on CFSI's website.](#) If your member is not on the list, please [ask them to join!](#)

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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.

STEP INTO THE CHIEF'S OFFICE

******Discharging Discipline: An Officer's Guide To Employee Counseling***

Trevor Frodge

[THIS IS A MUST READ AND TAKE NOTES ARTICLE]

Every fire officer wants to lead that perfect crew – the crew that always does the right thing, never causes issues, and never had any disciplinary problems. The problem with the perfect crew is that it doesn't exist. Even for the best crews,

there will likely be a disciplinary issue. Perhaps a firefighter will say something stupid on a run, or maybe they run a red light in the apparatus. It could be that a member shows up late to work, or maybe they get a little bit heated at the kitchen table about that other unit or the underperforming firefighter at the other station.

These types of issues occur in every firehouse across the country, but little time is actually devoted to training the fire officers who have to manage various administrative issues and discharge discipline. I've found that it is easy to follow the three Ds – Document, Discover and Discharge.

Before we dive into the general principles of discipline, followed by a review of the three Ds, it should be noted that each situation is different because we are all different. We are human beings, and as such, we are going to bring very human emotions and ideas to various situations. As officers, it would be amazing if we could just simply ride the right front seat of the rig, give size-ups and lead crews on the fireground all day long. And while we have those days, *we also have the responsibility to lead our team and uphold our department's standards, policies, rules and regulations* – and to keep order in the firehouse. The company officer must be the constant leader, and it is what we tolerate that will ultimately shape the crew.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF DISCIPLINE

There are some general principles to discharging discipline that officers, especially new officers, should know:

- **Understand the overall purpose of the discipline process.** The process is not to simply yell or berate a subordinate for a decision that they made but rather *to correct a behavior*. For whatever reason, our firefighter has strayed from the normal course of action and violated some type of rule or standard. Yelling does little to solve the problem. Therefore, *discipline is always aimed at correcting the issue*, not to exude power over our firefighters.
- **Keep your emotions in check.** When officers react emotionally to a situation, it can be very easy to stop thinking strategically on how to correct the issue. Emotions are inevitable during a discipline process, but when you as an officer are angry and upset, the strategic goal of correcting behavior turns more into a personal attack, leaving you as the officer open for liability and perhaps a hostile work environment claim. Conversations are rarely productive when tempers flare, not to mention that points and counterpoints are missed. Simply put, when emotions are high, we stop listening. Regardless of how angry or upset you are, you must control your emotions and calm down, consider the situation, and work the process.
- **Check your ego.** *Just because you have been promoted does not make you automatically right.* Ego can be a powerful motivator and an even greater destroyer. Discharging discipline requires empathy, which runs counterintuitive to arrogance and ego-driven behavior. It is not the job of the company officer to humiliate or prove that they are better than anyone, but rather to show the offending firefighter the error of their way and walk hand in hand to bring them back on track.

Now let's dig into the three Ds – Document, Discover and Discharge.

****DOCUMENT****

One of the biggest drawbacks to the discipline process in many organizations is the lack of documentation. If you counsel an employee, even informally for something, write it down. This may seem counterintuitive to the brotherhood and sisterhood of the fire service, and I'll admit it even sounds somewhat sneaky. But the truth is, similar to an EMS patient care report, *if you don't write it down, it didn't happen*. Take for instance an example of a firefighter speeding while driving non-emergent. You tell the firefighter to slow down, they do, and then several shifts later they do it again. At what point does the discipline process progress? The allegations of policy violations carry more weight when it shows that you have warned the firefighter two or three times before writing them up.

Documentation can also be positive. When one of your firefighters does something well, write it down. If they perform an action that is above and beyond their normal job duties, such as going out of their way for public education or showing the truck, write it down. Perhaps they did a superb job on a run – write that down.

In this way we have a running document of positive and negative experiences that will help to shape our annual employee evaluations. The likelihood of anyone remembering what occurred at the beginning of the year versus the end of the year with all of the other stuff that occurs in the fire department is a heavy lift for any officer; therefore, the more you document, the more you have to reference.

Informal documentation does not have to go beyond the company officer's desk. A simple running word document or journal is all that is necessary to record conversations and a brief synopsis of the topic. It also serves as a layer of protection for the officer to show when and what was discussed if any legal issues were to ever arise.

DISCOVER

Once an offense has occurred, it is up to the company officer to do some digging into the alleged offense. The first step is to determine if a rule or policy was even broken. ***In some organizations, the discipline process can fall flat because of a lack of documented policies and procedures. It would be very difficult, if not foolish, to write somebody up for a rule that doesn't exist.***

Simultaneously, you must gather the facts. If you witnessed the offense directly, write down what you observed. Note the date, time, other parties involved, and what was said or what occurred. This helps to keep emotions out of the decisions and to channel normal emotions such as frustration into factual accounting. If there were witnesses to the offense, note that as well. Sources to check facts include run logs, time logs, schedules and dispatch notes. Sometimes the offense is simply a rumor – the proverbial firefighter A told firefighter B about what happened to firefighter C. This is where the officer has to dig deep and discover facts from fiction. Do not be lazy during the discovery time. Reflect on the offense and what you would do in a similar circumstance. Consider the firefighter's experience level, training, circumstances, and policies to make an informed and fair judgment.

You may have to do some research back on your existing documents to see if the firefighter has been breaking the same rules. This helps to establish a pattern of behavior that may be the cause of the issues. For instance, if you've documented that a firefighter has been late three times in the last six months, you'll want to know why. Perhaps the firefighter has a newborn child at home, or maybe they have a sick relative they are caring for. While the firefighter should be at work on time and ready to go every shift, there could be a reasonable and human element as to why that isn't occurring. Similarly, if a firefighter is having angry outbursts at work, when normally they are a highly productive, responsible and respectable subordinate, that should cause you to ponder what is going on. Could they be going through marital or financial issues? Could there be stress from the department or outside of the firehouse causing problems? Could the firefighter simply be burned out and need a reset?

DISCHARGE

Once all facts have been gathered and examined, it is your duty to discharge just and appropriate discipline. This is the least fun part about being a fire officer but it's one of the most important aspects of the job. Similar to parenting, no father or mother wants to discipline their kids, but eventually it is inevitable. It is how you react that your children, and your subordinates, will remember.

Most departments have some type of formal progressive discipline process. It is imperative that you understand that process and what authority you actually hold as a fire officer. For instance, company officers in my organization cannot suspend firefighters; they can only recommend higher discipline to the chief officer to discharge. ***If you are unfamiliar with your discipline process, consult your policies and procedures or speak with a chief officer.*** Also, you must know what the discipline process looks like with collective bargaining agreements to ensure that you are not discharging discipline against the union contract.

Set up a time and place to discharge discipline. Call your employee into the office and have a private meeting. Remember, praise in public and discipline in private. Eliminate distractions such as emails and cell phone calls and give your full attention to your firefighter. This is a sign of respect and goes a long way in achieving trust, collaboration and a willingness to correct poor performance or behavior.

You as the officer control the meeting. Identify the policies violated, how you reached your conclusions, and what you recommend. Allow the firefighter to speak, but do not let them derail your judgment. If there were extenuating circumstances, then that should have been uncovered in your discovery portion of your investigation.

Keep in mind that not all discipline has to involve written reprimands and suspensions, and that not all discipline has to be equal. A firefighter who is chronically late or is a sick time abuser should not be treated the same as a firefighter who overslept one time in 10 years. The punishment must be fair. Use good judgment and temper favoritism. If your best firefighter is late multiple times, then they are late multiple times and must be treated as such.

For "lesser" issues, one option for discipline is to assign a job that nobody wants to do. Scrubbing showers, dusting cobwebs or similarly "messy" jobs are good tools to motivate a firefighter to not re-offend. Another option is to assign a teaching topic to them based on what they did wrong. For instance, if a firefighter is habitually speeding when driving

non-emergent, assign them to lead a company training on the vehicle operations policy. This is an effective tool to educate them on the policy while simultaneously being productive for everyone.

We want the best for our firefighters, and we are simply holding them to that standard. Ensure that they know the consequences for further poor performance and that progressive discipline can warrant suspensions, reassignments, demotions and perhaps termination in extreme circumstances. If you have a culture of trust built into your crew, then the likelihood of re-offense is low.

[Conclude your discipline on a positive note.](#) While nobody likes being disciplined, your firefighters should be affirmed that the purpose of discipline is to curtail poor performance and to correct bad behavior. End the meeting with a firm shake and agreement to be better. This is a relationship, in that the firefighter will follow the established rules and the officer will monitor their progress and the progress of other firefighters to ensure that rules are applied consistently and fairly.

FINAL THOUGHTS

[Disciplining our firefighters is not a fun job but it is a necessary one.](#) Our firefighters take on tremendous responsibility every day, and sometimes they mess up. As officers we cannot fly off the handle at every inconvenience or minor screw up; we must remain a calm and consistent voice of reason. Pursue official discipline when it is necessary and understand that discipline is not a power trip but rather an opportunity to coach, mentor and direct a firefighter back onto the correct path. That, in itself, is leadership.

THE ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

[Parade Canceled After Financial Secretary Embezzled The Funds](#)

Jeff Edwards

WALKILL, NY — This parade wasn't rained out, but instead, a trusted official raided the rainy day fund.

Orange County District Attorney David M. Hoovler announced that 43-year-old Lynn T. Simpson, of Wallkill, pled guilty on Friday to third degree grand larceny in connection with the theft of \$17,947 from the Parade Fund of the Washington Heights Fire Company in Wallkill.

Simpson admitted to embezzling the funds while acting as the financial secretary of the fire company, and co-chair of the parade committee. As part of the plea agreement, she will repay all of the stolen funds.

According to court documents, the Washington Heights Fire Company was scheduled to host a parade on September 23, 2023, which was to include the participation of 35 other fire companies. As a result of Simpson's embezzlement, the parade had to be canceled eleven days prior to the event.

A New York State Police investigation found that between August 29, 2022, and September 8, 2023, Simpson was a member of the Washington Heights Volunteer Fire Company, located at 10 Ohio Place in Middletown. She previously trained as an exterior firefighter and had also been with active fire police. In her role as the fire company's financial secretary, Simpson had access to the fire company's bank accounts and ultimately stole around \$17,947 in cash. She stole the funds from the fire company's parade bank account by using a debit card to make 83 unauthorized ATM cash withdrawals.

[Former Central NY Fire Chief Is Charged with Forging FAA Drone License](#)

Central Square, N.Y. — A former Central New York fire chief was arrested this week on charges he forged an FAA license to operate his department's drone, troopers said. Michael J. Leonelli, 46, of Central Square, was arrested Wednesday following a complaint from the Caughdenoy Fire Department according to the State Police.

While working at the fire department, Leonelli operated the fire department's drone. Leonelli was asked by the department to provide them with his FAA Part 107 UAS Certificate, or drone license. Leonelli gave the fire department a forged document that represented himself as having a Part 107 certificate.

He has been charged with second-and-third-degree forgery and criminal possession of a forged Instrument. The volunteer fire department operates two stations that serve the communities of Hastings, Central Square and Schroepel in both Oswego and Onondaga counties, according to the department's website.

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

POSITIVE OUTCOMES

Windber, Scalp Level-Paint Fire Companies (PA) Merging to Create New Regional Department

WINDBER, Pa. – Windber Fire Department and Scalp Level-Paint Volunteer Fire Company are merging to create a new regional fire department. Both departments' boards met separately Wednesday night, and each voted to approve the move, department officials told The Tribune-Democrat after the votes were tallied.

When a new fire tanker is delivered in March, it will carry the name Northern Regional Fire Department, said Windber's deputy fire chief, Bob Statler.

"We're looking to the future," said Scalp Level-Paint member Marty Washko, who served on a joint merger committee that has explored the idea for the past nine months. Windber Fire Department serves its home Windber Borough, Ogle Township and half of Paint Township. Scalp Level-Paint's territory is the product of a previous merger nearly two decades ago. Its coverage zone includes the other half of Paint Township, Scalp Level Borough, Paint Borough, Benson Borough and part of Quemahoning Township.

The three fire stations in Windber, Paint and Benson that serve the now-combined territory will continue sending out crews when emergencies occur, department officials said.

"People can rest assured that when incidents happen (the fire department) will show up, just like we always did," Washko said.

CHANGES, CHALLENGES

Changing times steered the move, Statler and Scalp Level-Paint Chief Mike Horvath said. [Fire departments nationwide are struggling to find active members and raise funds.](#)

In most areas across Cambria and Somerset counties, firefighters are leaning on communities with shrinking populations for the support needed to cover monthly bills and hefty costs for equipment and gear.

[Year after year, it gets harder to maintain and replace six-figure vehicles in communities where growing percentages of residents are retirees on fixed incomes, Windber and Scalp Level-Paint officials said.](#)

"We're doing pretty good on manpower," said Washko, referring to Scalp Level-Paint's active membership. "But people don't realize income is just as important as people when it comes to running a department."

SAVINGS, STRENGTH

Statler and Washko said the merger will create one stronger and more cost-effective department.

"One of the hardest things is finding members willing to give their time for fundraisers," Statler said. "And before now, we had a gun raffle and Scalp Level had their own gun raffle. We were basically competing against each other. ... Now we'll just have one big raffle, and we won't have to worry about having enough volunteers."

With the department's current fleets of vehicles and equipment merged, there will be opportunities to save costs, too, they said. [Statler cited insurance and workers' compensation costs as examples.](#)

The merger could eventually avert the need to replace as many vehicles in the longer term, while certain equipment costs could decrease in the near future, he added.

"We have five or six sets of hydraulic rescue tools that cost each department \$5,000 a year to have them tested," he said. "We don't need that many. And when the time comes that some of them reach the end of their lives, we won't need to replace them."

[The Scalp Level-Paint department typically handles about 700 calls per year, with a dedicated group of volunteers that is often as large as 35 members when structure fires and other serious incidents occur, Washko said.](#)

The number is closer to 500 calls yearly for Windber, Statler said. He said Windber was down to about 10 firefighters who often answered the call for significant incidents. But many times, both departments responded to the same call.

Now, when an emergency requires multiple units to respond, Northern Regional Fire Department will send out two or more units, instead of Windber and Scalp Level-Paint each sending one, said Horvath, a longtime firefighter who will be the new department's first fire chief.

If the call is a minor issue, one station will send out whichever apparatus is the right one to respond. That will save "wear and tear" on the rest of the regional department's fleet, Horvath said.

Efforts were underway to reach out to county 911 agencies to alert them to the changes and to update the alarm cards that are used to notify stations of incidents, he said.

During the early stages of the transition, the group agreed to form a 10-member board of directors to oversee the department, Washko said. Five will come from each preexisting fire department.

Over the next five years, that number will slowly decrease, by design, and eventually a five-member board of community members will oversee Northern Regional Fire Department, Washko and Statler said.

Merging each department's corporation is a more complex process, Washko said.

'WE'VE GOT TO ADAPT'

The merger is one of several involving local first responders over the past 12 months. Somerset's and Friedens' volunteer fire companies voted last summer to merge to create the new Somerset Regional Volunteer Fire Department while keeping both companies' stations in operation. Windber's Northern EMS ambulance service merged with Conemaugh Township EMS last fall.

Local responders have seen the alternative occur statewide, too – [departments closing up shop overnight due to financial or membership shortages](#), Washko said.

"You look at the studies," he said. "Back in the 1970s, there were 300,000 volunteer firefighters in Pennsylvania. Today, it's 30,000. We've got to adapt."

Windber Borough Manager Ron Allison said borough officials recognize the challenges that fire departments face.

"We know the money just isn't there for most departments these days," he said.

Windber Fire Department's members kept Windber Borough Council informed in recent months as talks with Scalp Level-Paint progressed, Allison said. Windber Borough officials saw it as a priority to keep the borough's Somerset Avenue fire station occupied. "If a merger is what it would take, then we're for it," he said.

[Still, Allison cautioned that communities can't sit back now and assume the region's fire department issues went away overnight. Local residents need to keep supporting fundraisers, and boroughs and townships need to provide support too, he said.](#)

Windber Township dedicated \$21,000 in tax dollars to the fire department this year, plus \$45,000 toward a fire truck payment. Another \$23,483 is being directed for ambulance service to support the recently expanded Conemaugh Township EMS, he said.

"We all need to step forward to keep our emergency services in place," Allison said. "We all need to do our part because, if not, a few years down the road we could be facing the same issues again."

[Spartanburg 911 Rolls Out New Robot Voice To Quickly Deliver Information To First Responders](#)

Scarlett Lisjak

During an emergency it's the job of a 911 operator to determine who to send and where to send them. That process is becoming more efficient in Spartanburg County thanks to a new computer system. If you've ever listened to a police scanner before, you hear the static sounds of voices delivering information. Last week that changed in Spartanburg County, when Spartanburg 911 started using a new robotic voice. "This is a PURVIS Automated Voice Dispatch System, it is a station alerting system for fire departments and ems," Clinton Morgan, shift supervisor at Spartanburg 911, said.

The dispatchers are still there, answering every call. But once the operator collects information from the caller and is ready to send first responders, the robot does the talking. "She's now live and talking," Morgan added. "It is simply a button pressed, the services are in route, notified that they need to be in route." The new system is meant to save time in a profession where every second is critical.

"Seconds do save lives, taking a few extra seconds to second do a double check, taking a few extra seconds to tell a caller you need to hold on while you dispatch a fire department or EMS unit, this is just provides better service in those areas because we no longer have to say to that person, whether it be emergency or non-emergency, hold on for just a moment," Morgan said. No matter the emergency, the information is delivered the same way.

"She's a clear consistent volume, so we don't have to worry about one person's microphone being too close to their mouth, someone else's being too far away. I think it allow responders to dial in and focus on just receiving the information instead of trying to understand what is being said," Morgan said. Dispatchers can still make manual

announcements over the radio if they need to and are in complete control of the system. Spartanburg 911 said this technology is utilized in bigger cities across the country.

FIRE SERVICE CHALLENGES

Triangle Volunteer Fire Company Searches For More Volunteer Firefighters, EMS Personnel

Erin Lawlor

Like many other fire departments across New York State, Triangle Volunteer Fire Company, in Broome County is searching for volunteers.

After receiving a record number of calls in 2024, the Triangle Volunteer Fire Company made a Facebook post stating they need more people to improve their community and keep up with the number of calls they receive.

The Triangle Fire Chief, Jason Hewett, explained that joining the fire service was one of his most fulfilling choices.

“The morale around here, the camaraderie, and the brotherhood and sisterhood are the biggest things. We are like a family here, and when times get tough, it’s good to go and come here and have a second family you can come to that’s gonna have your back.” The department is searching for volunteers 16 years of age or older. Hewett added that any High School interested in joining can gain all their community service hours by volunteering at the station.

The department added that it is also searching for EMS personnel. **It currently has only 18 members.**

If you’re interested in joining the department, you can call 607-692-3623 to speak to a volunteer, or the department said you can stop by and talk to a volunteer.

Chockless Providence, RI, Fire Engine Rolls Away

Providence firefighters have been disciplined after their engine rolled away and hit a building.

Firefighters discovered the rig was missing when they came out of an assisted living building following a call on Nov. 7.

They found that Engine 9 had rolled down a hill and came to rest against a building, [WPRI](#) reported.

There were no injuries. Both the rig and the building sustained minor damage.

An internal investigation revealed the firefighters had not used chocks after parking the engine.

“The firefighters assigned to the incident received discipline for their actions. As always, all protocols are expected to be followed to ensure the safety of firefighters and constituents,” Lindsay Lague, a fire department spokesperson said. The details of the discipline were not released.

North Hornell (NY) Voters Reject Purchasing \$683K Pumper for VFD

Jonathan Miller

North Hornell, Steuben County voters rejected a referendum that would have authorized the Steuben County, New York, village to buy a Spartan FC-94 rescue-pumper for the volunteer fire department for \$683,000, [eveningtribune.com](#) reported.

The results of the referendum, held Monday, Jan. 6, were 111 “no” votes to 56 “yes” votes.

The department was seeking to replace its 23-year-old Engine 85 pumper. Village officials said the pumper has incurred nearly \$40,000 in repairs over the last few years. And Engine 85 is in line for an additional \$53,000 to have its pump system rebuilt to keep the vehicle in service, the report said.

If the referendum had passed it would have triggered the sale of up to \$648,000 in bonds to finance the rig, according to the report. The village also planned to use \$35,000 from reserves for the new pumper, the report said. With the proposition going down, the path forward is unclear, according to a North Hornell village official.

APPARATUS ADVICE

****What Type of Light Tower Works Best for your Fire Apparatus?**

Jerry D. Gaskin

A light tower added to your apparatus can add valuable nighttime flexibility and safety to your operations. Several decisions must be made to ensure the addition works well for your department, meets your needs, and enhances your operations.

[Command Light](#) and [Will-Burt](#) are the two leading manufacturers of vehicle-mounted light towers. Command Light's design utilizes a pantograph-type cradle assembly and Will-Burt's is a mast-type device. Both designs, while having different operational characteristics, are well-made, durable, and have proven track records in the fire service.

DESIGN OPTIONS VARY

Light towers are offered with two to eight light heads in various configurations. This will be the first of many decisions you will make regarding a light tower, and it is not as easy as you might think. Bulbs, do you choose halogen or LED fixtures? Both are available and halogen is less expensive, initially. *LED light fixtures, which is everything I have seen used for lighting in the past few years, is more costly and weighs much more than halogen fixtures*

The weight can come into play with the number of light heads you want and other components, such as adding a thermal imaging camera or a video camera on your light tower. The overall weight of the desired components can affect your light tower choices in the long run.

UNDERSTANDING POWER REQUIREMENTS

Power options for light towers include 12-volt DC, 120-volt AC and 240-volt AC. I have covered the LED power draw misunderstanding in a previous article, and it is important that you understand it. *The comment, "Well, we don't need a generator anymore because LED lights don't draw much" is both true and false.* Generally speaking, LED lights draw less power than their incandescent, strobe, or halogen predecessors. That is true. But this changes as the fixture output increases. A 28,000-lumen 120-volt AC scene light will draw approximately 2.8 amps, and the 12-volt DC version will draw approximately 21 amps, with slight amperage variations between different light manufacturers. *A six-head, 12-volt DC light tower will draw roughly 126 amps, just for the lights.*

The 12-volt DC electrical system in today's fire apparatus is very capable of passing the testing protocol required in *NFPA 1900: Standard for Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting Vehicles, Automotive Fire Apparatus, Wildland Fire Apparatus, and Automotive Ambulances*, and its predecessor *NFPA 1901: Standard for Automotive Fire Apparatus*. *However, something many do not understand is that scene lighting is not part of the mandated test load.* You can add it to your testing specifications, even NFPA has cautionary language in NFPA 1900 Annex A: "The purchaser needs to understand, however, that there is a limit to the output capacity of an alternator system on the apparatus's engine." Depending on the alternator in your vehicle, the output at idle would be between 160 and 180 amps.

During testing, we checked the alternator output with the DOT-mandated lights (headlamps on high beam) on, emergency warning lights on, and the air conditioner on with the truck idling, at the engine's operating temperature. We found that pumpers draw between 83 and 105 amps at idle, depending on their emergency lighting package and other outfitting and that is well within the capabilities of the vehicle's 12-volt DC electrical system. Add to that the 126-amp draw of six, 28,000-lumen, 12-volt DC scene lights, and the amp draw is between 209 and 231 amps, well beyond what the electrical system can produce at idle. In that case, the high idle switch is your friend.

The apparatus will go into load-shedding fairly quickly with a high probability that the first thing you will lose is the 12-volt scene lighting. Understanding what you are asking for and, more importantly, what you are getting and how it works, and what the limitations and ramifications are, is critical. *And, maybe you need that generator after all. You may not need a 10- or 12-kilowatt generator anymore, a 6- or 8-kilowatt unit may do the job.*

SELECTING EFFECTIVE LIGHT HEADS

To support the light towers, Command Light, Fire Research Corp., FireTech, Whelen and Will-Burt represent light fixture manufacturers in the fire market. When considering light heads, pay attention to the optics, which more than anything will dictate how well the lighting will perform. How the output of the light is utilized and directed are the most important factors. You will see two terms: raw lumens and effective lumens. Raw lumens is a mathematical calculation based on the components used in the light fixture, effective lumens usually about 30 percent less than raw lumens is a measurement of the light fixture output. *Focus on making your purchasing decision based on effective lumens and optics.*

When a light tower is specified, the apparatus manufacturer designs and builds and structural support into the vehicle at the light tower mounting location. This is done to properly support the weight of the light tower when it is deployed and nested and to make sure it has the needed stability to meet wind resistance requirements. If you are considering retrofitting an existing apparatus with a light tower, please keep this in mind.

LIGHT TOWER FUNCTIONALITY

Command Light and Will-Burt offer a large selection of light towers with different deployment heights, rotational capabilities, opposable lighting, aiming to light up both sides of a scene, auto-deploy and auto-stow models and both wired or wireless controls.

The Fire Apparatus Manufacturers Association publishes a wide variety of Buyer's Guides and one of them covers light towers. I would suggest you review this prior to specifying a unit for your fire apparatus.

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

IN 2025 WE HAVE EXPERIENCED 2 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!

- An Arenac County, Michigan firefighter is continuing to fight for his life after being struck by a vehicle on Interstate 75. The impact pinned Hartwick between the striking vehicle and a fire truck, he remains in serious but stable condition.
- A Montgomery County, Maryland firefighter died after battling a house fire in Laurel on Saturday night. The firefighter was identified as 47-year-old Chris Higgins, a 22-year veteran with Montgomery Fire & Rescue Service, by Chief Corey Smedley. Higgins also served as a volunteer firefighter with Anne Arundel County's Earleigh Heights Volunteer Fire Company.
- In 2006 Worcester Firefighter Mark Stomski was injured at the McKeon Road fire station when the brakes on a parked fire truck failed, causing the truck to roll backward and a door to slam into his chest. Mark was injured at the McKeon Road fire station when the brakes on a parked fire truck failed, causing the truck to roll backward and a door to slam into his chest. A medical examination later revealed blood clots in his lungs, requiring him to use oxygen to assist with breathing. He was also diagnosed with secondary pulmonary hypertension, a lung blood vessel disorder, Stomski died on Jan. 11.
- A firefighter with the Kansas City, Kansas Fire Department was "severely injured" Monday morning after being hit by the coupling on a fire hose while battling a fire at a Subway sandwich shop. As that person drove away, it created a tremendous amount of tension on that supply line, uncoiled off that hydrant, and the coupling, as a result, hit the firefighter in his lower leg at such a force that it created an open tibia fibula fracture on his left leg that caused a significant amount of bleeding

Push Underway In NJ To Mandate Cancer Screenings For Volunteer Firefighters, Already Required For Career Firefighters

CLINTON TWP., N.J. -- Work is underway to better protect New Jersey's tens of thousands of volunteer firefighters. Marc Strauss wears a lot of hats, including president of the Annandale Hose Company #1, fire director of Ewing Township, and Hunterdon County's legislative representative to the New Jersey State Firemen's Association. As both a volunteer and a career firefighter, he has a unique perspective.

"You get the same exposure, so they're equally important," said Strauss. "Many people have succumbed to 911-related cancers and other exposures from that tragic day." Over the summer, Gov. Phil Murphy signed a bill into law that mandates periodic cancer screenings for career firefighters.

Strauss says the legislation initially included volunteers too, but was split up, since career firefighters have access to state health benefits.

Now, there are companion bills in the state Senate and Assembly that would require the same screenings for volunteers, *though the state has to put aside money to cover them.*

That's something volunteers across New Jersey happens as soon as possible.

"Fires burn differently now. There are more chemicals. There's more plastics and other carcinogens. It's been on the forefront of everyone's mind," said Strauss. Both bills have been in committee for months.

The increase in access to screenings could have an immense impact, as 75% of the Garden State's firefighters are volunteers. "The more access we can have, and the more frequency we can have that checked, better off will be health-wise to hopefully catch something," said Strauss.

NIOSH Releases Report on Fatal Clinton, IA, Silo Blast

Susan Nicol

Fire departments should educate and train firefighters on the hazards associated with different types of silos as well as the appropriate tactics needed.

This was one of the recommendations NIOSH officials made after investigating the 2019 death of a Clinton, IA firefighter killed in a grain silo explosion.

Lt. Eric Hosette, 33, was killed and Firefighter Adam Cain was seriously injured when a grain storage silo exploded at the Archer Daniels Midland plant in Clinton.

NIOSH conducted interviews and reviewed radio transmissions and policies as part of their probe.

They determined that Hosette and Cain were on top of the silo to flow water. When they moved the hose to saturate more of the burning product, an explosion occurred.

Hosette fell 85 feet from the edge of the silo, landing on a fiberglass awning below, and then onto the ground. Cain was catapulted into the air who then fell into silo #2, landing on the still smoldering pellets.

Hosette was pronounced dead at a hospital while Cain was hospitalized for several weeks following the incident.

The authors of the report determined contributing factors included:

- Smoldering propagation due to chemical reaction/self-ignition of silage
- Emergency planning at corn processing facility
- Fire suppression tactics and pre-incident planning • Explosion due to application of water through the top hatches of silo

NIOSH investigators also suggested fire departments develop a pre-incident plan for all high-hazard occupancies in their jurisdictions.

In addition, they recommended that federal, state, county and local officials should ensure the applicable fire and life safety codes are enforced at high-hazard occupancies.

Also, processing plants also need to properly operate and maintain their silos and implement the applicable requirements of NFPA.

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	3
Last fire death 1/9/25, Lindenhurst, Suffolk Co. Female unk age	
Fire Deaths in any type of Dwelling in NYS	3
Fire Deaths in 1&2 Family Dwellings Nationally	60
Top 3 States with the greatest 1&2 Family Deaths	#1 TX/CA/8
	#2 LA/7
	#3 AL/5

Civilian home fire fatalities in 2025: 113
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.

Report: Fire Inspection Failed to Catch NY School's Missing Carbon Monoxide Detector

Jeremy Boyer, Maggie Hicks – Syracuse.com

Six weeks ago, the Syracuse fire marshal gave the Syracuse Academy of Science High School passing marks during an annual safety inspection. The marshal is tasked with ensuring schools have working carbon monoxide detectors, among other things.

But this week, firefighters chanced upon a carbon monoxide leak in the same school's kitchen while tending to a custodian found dead in the building. Five other staffers were sent to the hospital with symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning. The custodian's cause of death is under investigation.

School officials initially said there was a carbon monoxide detector in the kitchen. Wednesday afternoon, they reversed course, and said there was a smoke detector only.

School and fire officials thought that smoke detector was a 2-in-1 device that also signaled for carbon monoxide, according to the school. That assumption was enough to sail through the fire safety inspection in November.

The mishap raises questions about the diligence of the fire inspections in charter and private schools, and about the school's attention to detail on safety.

A city spokesperson said Wednesday the fire department is "reviewing the schedule" for inspections of other non-public schools, but wouldn't say if schools will be re-inspected. The city so far is deflecting questions about how the November inspection was handled.

Charter schools, which are run privately but receive public funding, must obtain annual fire safety inspections and report them to the state Department of Education. The Syracuse Fire Department is the agency with jurisdiction to do those inspections in the city.

The most recent report the Syracuse Academy of Science filed with the state shows an inspection at the 1001 Park Ave. school took place on Nov. 26. It found no issues related to carbon monoxide monitoring.

The state fire code requires any rooms in a commercial building with fuel burning appliances, such as those used in a school's kitchen, to have a carbon monoxide detector. Syracuse Academy of Science officials said a malfunctioning food warmer caused higher carbon monoxide levels discovered Tuesday.

When asked why the city's November inspection, conducted by Fire Marshal Michael Raymie, erroneously found the kitchen area was in compliance, Syracuse officials deferred to the Syracuse Police Department's ongoing investigation of the incident. "SPD will provide future updates," said Brooke Schneider, spokesperson for Mayor Ben Walsh's office. Schneider said the fire department's prevention bureau has ensured that all Syracuse City School District building inspections have been properly conducted and that the district's facilities are all in compliance.

But for private and charter school inspections, the fire prevention bureau is reviewing the schedule for annual inspections considering this week's incident at Syracuse Academy of Science High School, Schneider said. It's not clear if that review will result in re-inspections.

The situation at Syracuse Academy stemmed from the SFD's response Tuesday morning to a person reported to be in cardiac arrest in the cafeteria. That person was a custodian, who was pronounced dead at the scene. **Carbon monoxide detection equipment on the responding firefighters' uniform alerted to high levels of the gas, which can be deadly.**

The city fire and codes staff ordered the school closed until additional carbon monoxide alarms are installed and approved. In addition, kitchen equipment must be inspected and certified safe to use by a licensed professional.

The school said it is "diligently working with its relevant contractors to promptly complete this review and implement any resulting recommendations." Remote instruction is being provided while the school building is closed.

The school also said that security video footage shared with authorities indicates that the person found dead was not affected by carbon monoxide issues. He was found before the food warmer was turned on Tuesday morning, the school said.

The school employees taken to hospitals Tuesday with symptoms of carbon monoxide exposure were all released later that day, the school said.

Students at the school were not exposed to elevated carbon monoxide, the fire department said. State education department records show the school's enrollment last year was 367 students. The charter school opened in 2003. Its high school building on Park Avenue was formerly the Sacred Heart School.

Carbon monoxide is colorless, odorless and tasteless and results from incomplete combustion. In 2022, more than 600 people in the United States died from accidental carbon monoxide poisoning, according to U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Eight People Taken To Hospital With Carbon Monoxide Poisoning In Medina

Evan Bourtis-News 10NBC

MEDINA, N.Y. — Eight people at an apartment building in the Village of Medina, Orleans County were taken to the hospital with carbon monoxide poisoning.

First responders arrived around 6:30 a.m. on Sunday after getting a call about a 15-year-old girl being unconscious. When crews arrived, the teen was conscious but had symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning.

The caller reported that the building smelled of natural gas the night before. Crews evacuated the building and determined that all residents had carbon monoxide poisoning. Two people had carbon monoxide levels over 25%.

The Medina Fire Department determined that a power vent pipe from one of the building's furnaces got disconnected, leaking carbon monoxide into the basement. The department ventilated the building and contractors are working on repairs. *The department is also installing carbon monoxide detectors.*

The fire department says this is at least the fourth mass carbon monoxide poisoning that they've responded to in the last 14 years. They're reminding people to check their carbon monoxide detectors.

[SECTION 915.1 OF THE NYS BUILDING CODE STATES: New and existing residential buildings and commercial buildings shall be provided with carbon monoxide detection and notification in accordance with this Section 915 WITH SOME COMMONSENSE EXCEPTIONS]

GREEN TECHNOLOGY & THE FIRE SERVICE

EV Charging Station May Have Sparked North Attleboro (MA) House Fire

Dan Landrigan

A fire that broke out early Sunday morning on John C. Porter Way in North Attleboro may have been caused by an electric vehicle charging in the home's garage, WPRI reports.

The fire, which began around 12:30 a.m., destroyed two vehicles – an electric car and a hybrid vehicle – and caused significant damage to the home.

The fire started in the garage and quickly spread to the main house, but firefighters managed to bring the fire under control within 45 minutes, WPRI reports. The fire went to 2 alarms bringing mutual aid from Plainville, Attleboro, Cumberland, Foxboro and Mansfield. Wrentham, Norton and Pawtucket covered North Attleboro Fire Stations. The Providence Canteen and Mansfield MEMA provided rehab for the firefighters.

Adding to the challenges for firefighters were solar panels installed on the roof, which complicated their efforts to extinguish the flames. Crews remained on-site for several hours to ensure that all hot spots, including blown-in insulation in the attic, were fully extinguished.

Evacuation Orders Remain In Effect Due To Moss Landing Battery Plant Fire

Ricardo Tovar

A fire was confirmed at the Vistra Power Plant in Moss Landing on Thursday, forcing evacuations and closing roads in the area. The Vistra battery plant in Moss Landing is the largest in the world. The facility, owned by Vistra Corp., stores lithium batteries. Lithium-ion batteries are notoriously difficult to extinguish. The fire was reported shortly after 3 p.m. The building was evacuated when the fire started. All Vistra employees, law and fire personnel are safe, per the County of Monterey.

Firefighters are not engaging the fire and are waiting for it to burn out on its own. It is unknown how long the fire will last.

KSBW's Joyce Kim said that as of early Friday morning, the flames have died down considerably, compared to Thursday afternoon, but there is still smoke and the fire is still burning in the area.

County officials informed the public on Friday morning that a local emergency was declared. This was announced at an emergency meeting Friday. The plume of smoke coming from the fire is considered toxic but has gone up high enough that it is currently not a concern for residents, per officials at the meeting.

A total of 11 families, 37 people, stayed at the emergency shelter overnight.

Emergency responders are staged in the area.

County officials said on Friday morning that 75% of the battery plant had burned.

FIRE SERVICE EDUCATION SO THAT OTHERS MAY LEARN



Radio Communications & Etiquette ESIP WEBINAR SERIES

One of the most common tools we use are our radios. When we understand how they work and use them correctly, they can make the difference in successfully accomplishing our mission. This webinar will discuss the various type of systems that are out there and review the best communication practices for their use.

Wednesday January 22nd, 2025 at 7PM

REGISTER AT THIS LINK:

[https://mcneilandcompany.us8.list-](https://mcneilandcompany.us8.list-manage.com/track/click?u=03596f243a9d922954ebaf15e&id=96546ba9eb&e=781e9a2c81)

[manage.com/track/click?u=03596f243a9d922954ebaf15e&id=96546ba9eb&e=781e9a2c81](https://mcneilandcompany.us8.list-manage.com/track/click?u=03596f243a9d922954ebaf15e&id=96546ba9eb&e=781e9a2c81)



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 the 18th, 2025

Fort William Henry, Lake George, NY

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

More information at the following LINK: <https://fasny.com/training/1st-annual-firetraining-symposium/>

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 NYS AFC instructors. [Email](#) NYS AFC 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

Plan Ahead to Attend the NYS AFC 119th Annual Conference & FIRE 2025 Expo. Attendee Registration is Open!

We'll be seeing you a little earlier this year – June 4-7 in Syracuse.

The premier fire/EMS expo and educational event in the Northeast will include three days of exhibits and four days of classroom education at The Oncenter.

More than 500 students completed Hands-On Training last year at the Syracuse Fire Department Training Center. 10 courses are available to choose from in 2025: Advanced Thermal Imaging Camera Ops, Advanced Vehicle Extrication, Engine Company Ops, Fire Behavior On the Inside, Firefighter Rescue: Do You Have What It Takes?, First-In Officers' Responsibilities, Hoarder Fires, Truck Ops: Forcible Entry/Ground Ladders, Truck Ops: Roof/Saws, and Truck Ops: Search and Rescue.

We'll be rolling out more event details soon!

REGISTER HERE AT THIS LINK:

https://ygc8ha5ab.cc.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=0011_6pzO8w_LxyKiwSb-jel-jvEc0995vt5hpwMAo3r9VXO8cg2O_5QKVogtZXz-BIF3M06cXG52eeETPrYf4DLvy-BpF17hQWDyiTa6wkfj9XcYCchOGKFGUR2C6qLhbJSE8UEw_sHb_pUOrRCHQFs4q-s28YGKii5B4fSonvTMU=&c=GxfoNhkWcpIYjeQYn9YR4byM2rpxdGKDCXq-V8SfC5O6WIENoISXw==&ch=acrNejb3ZIGQfiYHWU9ubM81bZLDePCNEB-75qFuskV7bNERTdbQA==

HAPPEN'N IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Gansevoort Fire Department Breakfast

Sunday **February 9th** 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.

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

Be decisive. Right or wrong, make a decision. The road is paved with flat squirrels who couldn't make a decision.

LIGHT READING

Sound The Alarm: New York State Museum Unveils Updated Fire Engine Hall Exhibit With “Fear Not, We Come”

JP O'hare

The New York State Museum is proud to announce the opening of “Fear Not, We Come,” an exciting new update to its beloved Fire Engine Hall—first opened in 1978. This revitalized, long-term exhibition now showcases additional artifacts from the Museum’s renowned firefighting collection, tells new stories of people who changed the course of firefighting history, and features updated visuals—including a **custom mural**—to celebrate the unbreakable spirit of New York State’s fire service across generations.

Carrie Ross, Director of Exhibitions said, “Fear Not, We Come” is both a rallying cry for firefighters and a statement of the Museum’s commitment to illuminating the remarkable heritage of New York’s fire service. We want children, families, and visitors to leave with a deeper understanding of how these brave men and women have tirelessly served—and continue to serve—communities across the state.”

Featuring refreshed signage and newly displayed objects, the updates to Fire Engine Hall are the first to be made to the exhibition in decades. Upon entering the gallery, visitors will encounter a striking, illuminated 1890 fire alarm box lantern, setting the tone for the recent enhancements. “Fear Not, We Come” tells the evolving story of firefighting technology, from hand- and horse-drawn engines to powerful motorized apparatus.

In a nod to the people behind the hoses and helmets, this exhibition goes beyond the machines themselves. Visitors can view the badge of retired FDNY Captain Brenda Berkman and learn about how her actions led to a pivotal step forward for women in diversifying the firefighting ranks. Rare historical images, drawn from the New York State Library’s Manuscripts and Special Collections, offer additional insights into how firefighting has shaped—and been shaped by—New Yorkers’ tireless dedication to public safety.

From the colonial era through the mid-20th century, New York State led the way in developing and manufacturing fire protection gear and apparatus. By exploring how fire engines have evolved, and how fire companies have fostered civic pride, “Fear Not, We Come” honors those who have battled blazes to save lives and property for centuries.

Behind the scenes **footage** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x9RzvwejSSY> , available on the **Museum’s website**, offers a peek at the custom mural created by Museum staff in 2024 to illuminate this new chapter of Fire Engine Hall. This visual centerpiece underscores the Museum’s commitment to telling the ever-burning story of New York’s firefighting heritage in bold, engaging ways.

“Fear Not, We Come” is now open as a long-term exhibition in Fire Engine Hall at the New York State Museum.

CAFDA OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

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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](tel: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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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
Exits 27 or 28 of the NYS Thruway

Need Overnight Accommodations?

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Group Code: FDO

Block Name: CAFDA Fire District
Officials Training

CAFDA

P.O. Box 242
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
Rochester, NY 14610

Need Overnight Accommodations?

Hampton Inn, Rochester-Penfield
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Reservations: by phone 585-249-0601
or online at:

<https://www.hilton.com/en/book/reservation/rooms/?cityhocr=ROCPNHX&arrivalDate=2025-03-24&departureDate=2025-03-26&groupCode=CHH902&room1NumAdults=1&cid=OM%2CWW%2CHILTONLINK%2CEN%2CDirectLink>

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

CAFDA

P.O. Box 242
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CAFDA Conference Attendee Registration Form

Please complete & return this form with your check made payable to:

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OR pay by credit card at: <https://cafda.net/event-registration/>

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)

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 **\$85** Non-Member **\$105**

I will be attending (Choose one): Thursday Friday Saturday
(includes meals as noted in schedule & Friday Vendor Show/Cocktail Reception if attending Friday)

- Two Day Registration:** CAFDA Member **\$170** Non-Member **\$210**

I will be attending (Choose two): Thursday Friday Saturday
(includes meals as noted in schedule & Friday Vendor Show/Cocktail Reception if attending Friday)

- Full Conference Registration:** CAFDA Member **\$170** Non-Member **\$210**

Thursday 4/10 – Saturday 4/12/2025
(includes meals as noted in schedule & Friday Vendor Show/Cocktail Reception if attending Friday)

Guest Meal Registration, if applicable (Check One):

Guest Name: _____

- \$30 One Day Meals:** I will be attending (Choose one): Thursday Friday Saturday
(includes meals as noted in schedule & Friday Vendor Show/Cocktail Reception if attending Friday)

- \$60 Two Day Meals:** I will be attending (Choose two): Thursday Friday Saturday
(includes meals as noted in schedule & Friday Vendor Show/Cocktail Reception if attending Friday)

- \$60 Three Day Meals:** Thursday 4/10 – Saturday 4/12/2024 (includes

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**

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>

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.voterveice.net/NVFC/Campaigns/115571/Respond>

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

Landing Page with Resources

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

NVFC LANDING PAGE LINK HERE:

https://gma5qspab.cc.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=001L6aLm-Ax7THBUrMdNSMphNIFj1WWWXRRzYxdUshoNVzVUkCq2FlyoxhE-AybLw8OnamjN0BiBpzyC-pPzLiiYEvhxQ9sAxH0UIN-rMeW-UojESKwKkPDdMRzXK8VXBP-Sh4YQDWc0PJekSA9BGQCOh6lo_AGJ2vqw1b4iSBqWls=&c=LauWWHLcf9ha42GymhgekGbw4yjkUth862UfuVJahY7fFHeGl_qUJw==&ch=lefmM7sGv75CYvgpTK9dENyqA1Rv5PwzXZ1xIkZP-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>