



Capital Area Fire District's Association  
*THE WEEKLY CAFDA*

# BULLETIN

August, 9th, 2025

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Serving the fire service community since 2004

## CAPITAL SHORTS:

- Nice time was had by all who attended the Day At The Races, the weather was perfect, and the food was plentiful. It was nice to see many old friends and some new friends. We'll plan on doing it again in 2026.
- The Fire District Budget development schedule is in the General Interest section of the Bulletin.
- Both the election schedule and the budget development schedule are posted to the web site at [www.CAFDA.net](http://www.CAFDA.net)

## STUFF FOR YOUR BENEFIT, NEED TO KNOW!

[WWW.CAFDA.NET](http://WWW.CAFDA.NET)

**NEXT GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING** Thursday September 11th, in person or Zoom in. 7PM.

**SAVE THE DATE: CAFDA FALL TRAINING SEMINAR**, Saturday November 1<sup>st</sup> at Verdoy Fire Department

CAFDA is happy to announce the dates for **Conference '26** in historic Lake George, April 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>, 2026 plan on joining us.

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

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Financial issues should be addressed to: [TREASURER@CAFDA.NET](mailto:TREASURER@CAFDA.NET)

**WHEN YOU SEE \*\* IT'S A RECOMMENDED READ, TAKE THE TIME TO INFORM YOURSELF!!**

## THE LATEST FROM THE STATE CAPITAL

### Legislative Commentary

To see what the fire service accomplished during this legislative session go to the following LINK:

<https://cafda.net/what-did-the-fire-service-accomplish-during-the-2025-legislative-session/>

Now that the legislature is out of session, the ScoreCard will be reviewed for activity monthly.

## THE LATEST FROM WASHINGTON

### What Federal Funding Is Important To You?

Chief, Marc Bashoor

The United States federal deficit has long plagued administrations on both sides of the aisle. In my lifetime, a balanced budget has only been achieved twice — first in 1969 under President Richard Nixon, then again from 1998 to 2001 under President Bill Clinton. The deficit steadily increased in the 29 years between those presidencies, and it has done so again since 2001.

The following represents the deficient at the end of each term of presidents since 9/11, according to the U.S. Treasury:

- President George W. Bush (R): 2001-2009 — \$1.4 trillion

- President Barack Obama (D): 2009-2017 — \$665 billion
- President Donald Trump (R): 2017-2021 — \$2.77 trillion
- President Joe Biden (D): 2021-2025 — \$1.83 trillion
- President Donald Trump (R): 2025 — TBD

To be fair, the deficit is not solely the result of presidential actions. Congress develops legislation to support and fund each budget proposal before the budget bill heads to the president's desk for signature.

*Bottom line: Deficit spending upon deficit spending is not sustainable, particularly because, as a simple matter of economics, a deficit will become harder to overcome as it exponentially rises. I know this. You know this. We've been saying it for years, and yet, here we are.*

To grasp our current economic predicament, it's important to understand our modern history of both spending and attempts to reduce spending — and ultimately the impact on the fire service.

## 9/11 CHANGES EVERYTHING

Setting aside the politics of it all, I believe it was the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, that set the stage for where we are today. Following 9/11, our public safety posture under President George W. Bush transitioned to homeland security, bringing forward massive shifts in government spending, organization, operational practices and personnel assignments. The product of such a shift in spending was a \$1.4 trillion deficit.

## THE U.S. DIGITAL SERVICE (USDS)

In 2014, under President Obama, the U.S. Digital Service (USDS) was established to improve digital service efficiency. In theory, this was an attempt to improve government efficiency through the organization and modernization of digital data collection and processing across government systems. The USDS reported \$285 million in savings through an improved Social Security Administration website as well as a modernized Veterans Administration Caseflow system for appeals. It was my observation that the USDS operated with little fanfare in the shadows, and I still agree with this July 2024 statement from the Federal News Network: "The impact of the U.S. Digital Service is difficult to measure in real numbers or data sometimes." Obama left office in 2017, having enacted policies that reduced the deficit to \$665 billion.

## DOGE — THE NEW USDS

In 2025, President Trump renamed the USDS the United States DOGE (Department of Government Efficiency) Service by Executive Order, with staff that was working at the USDS now working at DOGE. DOGE's mission was very similar to the USDS: "... modernizing Federal technology and software to maximize governmental efficiency and productivity."

While the stated purpose centers on technology, the primary public policy presentation from DOGE has been twofold:

1. Reduce the federal workforce through "early-outs," involuntary separations and funding reductions.
2. Reduce federal budget expenditures through multiple methods: "claw back," the recovery or return of previously allocated or disbursed funds, typically by the government reclaiming money that has not been spent or that was allocated but is no longer justified; cancellation of grant programs; consolidation of office space; and other means as necessary to produce savings.

Before we look at where we are with DOGE today, let's gain some perspective from the most recent balanced budget.

While campaigning for the presidency in 1992, then-Arkansas Governor Bill Clinton pledged to balance the budget:

"We can no longer afford to pay more for — and get less from our government. The answer for every problem cannot always be another program or more money. It is time to radically change the way government operates — to shift from top-down bureaucracy to entrepreneurial government that empowers citizens and communities to change our country from the bottom up. We must reward the people and ideas that work and get rid of those that don't."

Similar to President Trump's most recent election, the case was made that President Clinton's election was a mandate from the people to reduce the federal deficit. When Clinton came into office, the federal budget deficit had grown to about \$300 billion.

Adding some fire service context, in 1993, the U.S. Fire Administration was positioned under FEMA, whose administrator reported directly to the president. Back then, the USFA's budget was approximately \$44 million for base operations. Most of the grant programs the fire service benefits from today did not exist in 1993. It's important to note that it is nearly impossible to draw parallels between now and then, as the USFA budget was previously a patchwork of underfunded appropriations on top of the base operations budget, highly influenced by FEMA's other missions. We do know that overall government spending shrank by more than 22% under President Clinton; however, FEMA funding was static. FEMA funding and expenditures are impacted by the ever-changing number of natural disasters — so much more than the USFA alone.

Clinton's 1993 initiative to balance the budget was labeled "Reinventing Government." Although reducing the deficit would be difficult, it was something the administration wasted no time attacking. Clinton made significant and controversial reductions in federal spending and raised certain taxes to achieve the balance:

- Defense spending reduced (riding the wave of cessation of the Cold War). Although \$26 billion was cut initially, defense spending slowly rose over the years, regaining all of those reductions and more by 2000 [but the budget was still balanced until 2001?].
- Corporate and high-income taxes increased. The revenue increase was projected to be \$123 billion over five years (approximately \$25 billion annually). A 2006 U.S. Treasury analysis reported the actual revenue increase over that period was \$210 billion (\$42 billion annually).
- Federal government reduction in force (RIF): 400,000 positions cut for a reduction of \$146 billion.

During the Clinton terms, the RIF of approximately 400,000 jobs was primarily achieved through buyouts and early retirements, similar to Trump's recent reductions.

### **"ELIMINATING WASTE, FRAUD, AND ABUSE" IN 2025**

President Trump has repeatedly stated that his desire to reduce the size of the federal government part of a broader plan to "return power to the states." I wish I could put my hands on a roadmap to further help articulate "the plan," however, I cannot find such a roadmap.

Let me be clear that I appreciate the desire to eliminate waste, fraud and abuse in ANY organization, especially one using my own tax dollars! I challenge you to show me one ethically disciplined person who would not support such an effort, *with a plan*.

Acknowledging that I have been accused at times of being a proverbial "bull in a china shop" under certain operational circumstances, it is my observation that DOGE has been like a herd of bulls in the same china shop, indiscriminately recommending or directing the slashing of jobs and functions without regard for or understanding of their national security significance. Multiple RIFs were later reversed when it was learned that critical positions had been cut. Trying to quantify actual reductions (as opposed to proposals) that are the result of DOGE recommendations or presidential action has been clouded by the bevy of lawsuits filed following the announcement of proposed cuts. It has been widely reported that over 200 lawsuits were filed against the administration in its first 100 days, many of these lawsuits a direct result of the RIF attempts.

Setting aside their tactics, DOGE does claim billions in savings, available to review here. With an original goal of reducing spending by \$2 trillion in just 18 months. DOGE currently reports savings of \$199 billion. As for the RIFs, the best information I can find places the current number of actual job reductions between 59,000 and 150,000. It is believed that the administration desires to reduce the force by hundreds of thousands more. And remember, Clinton's RIFs achieved a cut of 400,000 positions.

Now, back to the USFA. In FY 2025, the USFA was budgeted at \$65 million for base operations. Additionally, \$95 million was allocated for operations over the five-year authorization (FY 2023-2028) of the Fire ACT grant. Fire ACT grants have already been under attack, with SAFER funding reduced by 10% (\$36 million) from FY 2023 to FY 2024. While there has been some streamlining and incremental progress, the USFA budget continues to be a patchwork of underfunded appropriations.

### **FUNDING REDUCTIONS SO FAR**

While some agency funding has simply been slashed, other savings are being achieved through the reduction of grants. As many of the fire service grant opportunities and some of the emergency management grant opportunities were created after the 9/11 attacks, a significant or wholesale reduction in federal grants stands to adversely impact our emergency services. There have also been "claw back" efforts from some grant programs, taking back money that was already allocated. Specifically, it is reported that \$3.6 billion of

previously approved grants were revoked when the “Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities” (BRIC) program was eliminated — these were projects benefiting communities as well as emergency services. Furthermore, recent proposals for \$1 billion in FEMA grant funding cuts included a significant amount of funding for programs that directly involve fire departments.

Then, only days later, FEMA made the same amount of disaster preparedness and homeland security funding available to communities nationwide. As has been the case with many decisions, this chaotic shift of proposals, halts and starts gives us some pause that we should use for some planning and reflection. As we’ve seen these proposals come, go and come back again, we must consider the potential impact: *Are efforts born out of and supported by the Fire ACT program, like Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER), Assistance to Firefighter Grants (AFG) and Fire Prevention & Safety (FP&S) important to you?*

The proposed FEMA cuts would have impacted those programs and more:

- Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI) — \$500 million in cuts
- Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) and Homeland Security Grant
- Next Generation Warning
- Emergency Food and Shelter Program (EFSP)
- The National Domestic Preparedness Consortium
- Rural Development Community Facilities Grant and Loan program
- Community Development Block Grant program

## WHAT CAN WE DO?

Understanding the scope of our country’s budget is important to forging a strategy forward. In 1993 and today, the USFA budget accounts for approximately one ten-thousandth (yes, 1/10,000) of 1%, of the entire U.S. budget (\$7.8 trillion x 0.00001 = \$78M). Add the bevy of grant appropriations, and the USFA total still only accounts for about one one-thousandth (1/1,000) of 1%. If we’re talking about cutting, we’re certainly not talking about a gold mine in cut possibilities at the USFA. Any cuts in such a thin margin will impact you as a firefighter, directly or indirectly.

No level of fire service is free. Volunteer, paid or a combination thereof, a community will receive the level and quality of service it is willing to accept and pay for — period. (Many FireRescue1 readers shared similar sentiments recently following the news of more FEMA cuts.). I would never suggest that the fire service be immune from helping reduce the federal deficit, but the public’s safety and firefighter safety should be immune from federal budget cuts. How do we achieve savings without cutting our programs? There’s the question.

It is prudent to consider what you could do without. This is where I’m asking you to decide what’s important enough to fund in support of balancing the federal budget. If that means “no cuts” for you, fine, then fight the political fight for it. If you see the opportunity for cuts, then ask yourself how it would impact you. For example, “If SAFER were cut, how would it impact us?” Here’s how I see it: SAFER has bridged a gap across the country; however, all hiring of firefighters has always been local, and local governments should find that funding. So, if I was faced with that do-or-die decision, I’d find a way to save there, gradually and temporarily.

Then there’s UASI. That’s where I draw that line. The originally proposed UASI cuts would adversely impact the urban search and rescue (USAR) programs that many of you support and for which some of you are even part of task force teams. The money that supports those programs fills gaps across state borders and are programs the federal government should fund. Is that important enough to save and to do something about? I think so.

*To be clear, I am not suggesting the USFA’s one one-thousandth of 1% of the federal budget should be considered for reductions. I am, however, trying to be a realist in today’s political environment, and I recognize that sometimes we need to be prepared to help the greater good.*

So, when you’ve answered these questions for yourself, then do something about it. Reach out to your legislators, many of whom are currently home during the congressional summer recess. Let them know how any proposed cuts will affect your fire department and our fire service. At a minimum, I implore you to reach out via email. You can find your representatives’ information and much more from the Congressional Fire Services Institute. And for some of you, maybe it’s time to consider a run for office — we need that advocacy from within!

Whether you believe the process to be chaotic or not, our best efforts may be to make our voices heard loud and clear through your legislators. Call it the “squeaky wheel” or “the right thing” or whatever else you want

to call it, but these proposed reductions will have long-lasting and dynamic effects on emergency services across the United States. And if we believe these are adverse cuts, but we simply sit back and do nothing, then we will be complicit in the outcome.

*We have underfunded the fire service for so long that we now have people that really believe we can do anything with nothing.* They believe that there is widespread waste, fraud and abuse in the fire service. There is not. Yes, there will be bad apples here and there, but the problem is far from *widespread*. I am quite sure we could *all* point to things we could do more efficiently in our lives, not to mention waste that we'd like to reduce. Throwing the baby out with the bath water will quickly erode our capabilities and the public's trust in our ability to do our jobs.

I have not been a fan of DOGE's process. And while not targeting DOGE specifically, House of Representatives Budget Committee Chairman Jodey Arrington (R-TX) addressed budget reconciliation during the May 2025 "Fiscal State of the Nation," stating: "What we're lacking in Washington is courage to do what is necessary." I would add, "what's right." After all, the haphazard way DOGE has gone about its expanded mission has been neither necessary nor right — and emergency services are too often caught in the crosshairs.

There is 99% of the federal budget beyond the USFA — let's make sure we've reduced where public safety isn't impacted before we cut the bone. Difficult decisions will need to be made, and what's right and what's necessary are not mutually exclusive. *Contact your elected officials today. Choose wisely. Our future depends on it.*

## FIRE DISTRICT FINANCES

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

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

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

## STEP INTO THE CHIEF'S OFFICE

### **\*\*Building A Culture Of Excellence In The Fire Service Starts At The Top**

Derrick Phillips

Empowered firefighters, visionary leaders and a shared mission define high-performing departments.

Fire service organizations are mission-driven institutions with high stakes, and the margin for error is slim. *Excellence in operations, leadership and service delivery is not a luxury but an absolute necessity.* However, many struggle with entrenched cultures that resist change, reward mediocrity and lack the vision necessary for sustained high performance.

As fire service executives, fostering a culture of excellence is one of the most impactful leadership responsibilities, ensuring personnel are empowered, engaged and aligned with the department's strategic vision. Furthermore, it's important to remember that a culture of excellence is not merely about skills training or leadership coaching — it's about fundamental shifts in mindset, accountability and organizational purpose. Without this foundation, skill development efforts often fail to yield lasting results.

### **THE FOUNDATIONS OF A CULTURE OF EXCELLENCE**

Let's explore the key components of cultivating excellence in the fire service and how leaders can drive meaningful, long-term change.

#### **1. Compelling vision and clear purpose**

A high-performing fire service organization starts with a well-defined and communicated vision. *Every firefighter, officer and executive must understand the department's mission and how their roles contribute to it.* A compelling vision fosters a sense of purpose and belonging, which is essential for engagement and retention. As such, leaders must move beyond generic mission statements and develop clear, actionable goals that inspire personnel. This means ensuring that firefighters and staff see their work as not just a job but a meaningful service to the community.

#### **2. Accountability and high standards**

Excellence does not emerge from a culture that tolerates mediocrity. *Unfortunately, many fire departments spend significant time and resources addressing underperformance rather than nurturing high-achievers.* The result is an environment where competent personnel disengage and leave, while subpar performance is inadvertently rewarded.

To counteract this, fire service leaders must:

- Establish clear performance expectations and enforce them consistently.
- Recognize and reward strong performers through mentorship, leadership opportunities and professional development.
- Implement a structured approach to coaching and accountability for those struggling to meet standards.
- *Foster a “move up or move out” mentality, where employees are encouraged to improve or transition out of the organization.*

### **3. Resilience to change and operational challenges**

The fire service operates in a dynamic environment where change is constant. New technologies, evolving community risks and shifting policy landscapes all demand adaptability. However, many organizations fall into a reactive problem-solving cycle rather than embracing change proactively. In a culture of excellence, personnel develop the mindset and resilience to face challenges without losing sight of the mission. Leaders play a critical role by:

- Creating psychological safety, where employees feel empowered to voice concerns and propose solutions.
- Encouraging a mindset of continuous improvement rather than complacency.
- Ensuring consistent alignment between daily operations and long-term strategic goals.

### **4. Collaboration and breaking down silos**

Fire departments often struggle with siloed operations, where divisions (e.g., suppression, prevention, training and administration) operate independently rather than cohesively. This hinders efficiency and erodes trust within the organization. A high-performing fire service prioritizes collaboration at all levels. Leaders must:

- Foster cross-functional teamwork by encouraging knowledge-sharing and joint problem-solving
- Ensure that all divisions and ranks understand their interdependencies
- Recognize and reward collective success rather than simply individual achievement

### **5. A pioneer mentality and commitment to innovation**

Fire departments that achieve excellence do not settle for the status quo; they constantly seek to innovate and improve. Whether through new training methods, technology integration or leadership development, these organizations embrace a forward-thinking approach. Executives must encourage:

- A growth mindset, where personnel see challenges as opportunities
- Investment in continuous education and professional development
- A culture where taking calculated risks in pursuit of improvement is accepted and encouraged

## **LEADERSHIP’S ROLE IN DRIVING A CULTURE OF EXCELLENCE**

Buy-in starts with those in charge. If leadership isn’t on board with a culture of excellence, then don’t expect rank-and-file members to run with the concept. Here are three ways leadership can engage firefighters and raise standards.

### **1. Lead by example**

*A culture of excellence starts at the top. Fire service executives and command staff must embody the values they wish to see within their organization.* This means demonstrating:

- Unwavering commitment to high standards
- Accountability by admitting mistakes and continuously improving
- Transparent communication to build trust at all levels

### **2. Make leadership development a priority**

*Many fire departments promote from within, often elevating top firefighters to leadership roles without formal training in people management, coaching or strategic thinking. This results in leaders who may excel operationally but struggle with personnel management and organizational leadership.*

To counteract this, fire service organizations must:



- Implement structured leadership development programs that emphasize both technical and interpersonal skills
- Provide mentorship and coaching to newly promoted officers
- Foster a leadership culture that prioritizes team success over individual status

### 3. Align culture with strategy

Organizational culture is often seen as intangible, but it's a measurable factor that directly impacts performance. *Studies have shown that organizations with strong, well-managed cultures achieve significantly higher financial and operational success than those without.* Fire service executives must take a strategic approach to culture-building by:

- Measuring and assessing the current cultural strengths and weaknesses
- Aligning departmental values, leadership practices, and performance expectations
- Ensuring that every significant decision reinforces the desired culture

### Sustaining excellence: A long-term commitment

Building a culture of excellence is not a one-time initiative — it requires ongoing reinforcement. Too often organizations see short-term gains from training or leadership programs, only to revert to old habits when attention shifts elsewhere.

To ensure long-term success, fire service executives must:

- Integrate cultural excellence into daily operations, not just periodic training
- Hold leaders at all levels accountable for upholding cultural standards
- Regularly assess and adjust organizational goals and strategies to maintain momentum

### FINAL THOUGHTS

For fire service executives, fostering a culture of excellence is not just about operational efficiency but organizational survival, firefighter safety and public trust. A department that values vision, accountability, resilience, collaboration and innovation will outperform its peers, attract and retain top talent and effectively serve the community.

Fire service leaders must take proactive, deliberate steps to instill and sustain this culture. They can transform their departments into high-performing, mission-driven teams by prioritizing mindset shifts over short-term fixes, investing in leadership development and embedding excellence into every facet of the organization.

## STEP INTO THE ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

### *Long Island Fire Chief Accused Of Storming State Lawmaker's Office In ICE Feud Now Facing Trespassing Charge*

Brandon Cruz

A Democratic Long Island lawmaker is pressing charges against a local fire chief who he claims barged into his office and traumatized his staff after the duo feuded over the fire department's participation in ICE raids earlier this month.

State Assemblyman [Phil Ramos](#) has issued a trespass against East Brentwood Fire Chief [Bryant Figueroa](#) — meaning he can't go near the office again without being arrested — and formally pressed charges against the volunteer firefighter after a July 10 stand-off following days of public feuding.

"Figueroa's actions represent a clear violation of New York State Penal Law," Ramos said in a statement announcing that charges against the chief were filed. "His aggressive and unannounced entry created an atmosphere of fear and uncertainty in what should be a safe and respectful workplace."

A spokesperson for Ramos said the charges have been officially handed over to the DA, but since the violation isn't criminal, Figueroa will only receive a court summons and will not be arrested.

The DA did not respond to a request for confirmation, but Suffolk County police told The Post that charges have not been officially filed, and that the department is still investigating the lawmaker's claims.

But Figueroa shot back at Ramos after learning of the charges, accused him of using his political influence to pressure cops into pursuing baseless charges.

"Assemblyman Phil Ramos filed charges against me — first by approaching the New York State Police in a confrontational manner — when informed that no crime had been committed, he then went to the local precinct, applying pressure in what appears to be a clear abuse of his title and influence," Figueroa said.

“This behavior is deeply troubling, particularly from someone who once wore a badge.”

The political rivalry started in early July, after unmarked [ICE agents](#) and vehicles were confirmed to be operating a makeshift base out a local firehouse’s parking lot — sparking anger from Ramos who led a protest accusing local fire officials of aiding the feds in their local immigration raids.

*East Brentwood’s fire officials told The Post they had no prior knowledge of ICE using the fire station’s parking lot as a base, adding that as a state entity, it can’t stop a federal agency from using the site, **which they also said is public property.***

After days of public chastising from Ramos, Figueroa showed up to his office “visibly angry” and “intent on confrontation,” adding the chief ignored staff and charged toward his private office and forcibly entered, the assemblyman said. Ramos was not present at the time of the incident, but said his staff is still traumatized from Figueroa’s actions. Local firefighters, however, believe the “petty” public spat between the pair has gone on far too long and needs to come to an end.

“If I’m honest, neither person is correct in the situation,” one firefighter told The Post under the agreement on anonymity. “It’s very childish from both people involved,” they added.

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

### **POSITIVE OUTCOMES**

#### **Summer Camp In Gloucester County, New Jersey Brings Firefighting To The Next Generation**

Water fights and relay races may seem like features of any ordinary summer camp, but at Almonesson Fire Company, those activities are used to train the next generation of firefighters. The Almonesson Fire Company began their three-day Fire Camp on Monday, Aug. 4, inviting children to come and learn the basics of firefighting free of charge. The camp hosted 18 campers between the ages of 12 and 15. This is the first year the Fire Company has hosted a camp like this, which is meant to address the shortage of new and younger firefighters in the area. Additionally, fire departments across the country are struggling to meet staffing needs, according to the National Volunteer Fire Council. “I want these kids to love firefighting like I love firefighting,” said Andy Cunard, a firefighter at Almonesson Lake Fire Department who taught the campers.

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### **FIRE SERVICE CHALLENGES**

#### **Around \$10,000 Worth Of Radio Equipment Stolen From Oakdale, PA Assistant Fire Chief’s Truck**

Around \$10,000 of radio equipment was stolen from the Oakdale Hose Company’s assistant fire chief over the weekend. The fire department said that a Motorola APX 8000 radio and a Motorola APX 6000 radio were stolen.

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#### **After 117 Years Of Service, Meriden Connecticut’s Volunteer Fire Department Will Be Shutting Down.**

“Today is not a day that I saw coming when I became mayor,” Meriden Mayor Kevin Scarpati (U) said. Scarpati announced on Thursday that the South Meriden Volunteer Fire Department will be disbanded. The decision was made due to low volunteer numbers and the \$70,000 it would take to sustain the volunteer program. “Alright, well, we don’t have the money, how can we make this happen?” Scarpati said. “Working with the city manager and the fire chief, it was. Listen: if we can sustain a program with volunteers, a viable program, we’ll find the money. But that plan never came to fruition, which is why we’re standing here today.”



*While there are four volunteer firefighters left in South Meriden, the city says they will keep Station 6 staffed with enough career firefighters to not change response times and to not change services to the people in the community.*

"This is a great place of good solid roots," Fire Chief Cristina Schoeck said. "This should not be a reflection of the members that have volunteered here. We do know that across the nation there is a decrease in volunteerism and unfortunately the city of Meriden has also experienced it." Since 2017, volunteers in Meriden decreased 63%. By 2019 the city moved a full-time engine company to Station 6 to support the volunteers.

"As you're growing up, you're growing up as a family member," volunteer Tom Stange said. "When you come down as a fireman it's a whole different thing. You're running out there to help someone, you don't know what you're getting into. That never phased us." Stange was a Meriden volunteer for 41 years. "I might not drive by for a long time, because it's going to hit home," Stange said. "It's a void. It's a big void." *The volunteers will stay active in South Meriden until Dec. 31 when the volunteer department will officially shut down.*

## RETENTION AND RECRUITMENT

### 3 Ways To Recruit More Volunteer Firefighters

Robert Rielage

Despite rising call volumes and training requirements, more volunteers can be recruited and retained with effort and forethought.

Recently, there have been a number of stories in the national media regarding the need for more volunteer firefighters.

I was especially impressed with an interview done by Fox News with a representative of the [National Volunteer Fire Council](#) and an FDNY fire officer on a cooperative program to attract returning or former military personnel into the fire service – both career and volunteer. The program uses the [Make Me a Firefighter website](#) to match former military personnel with opportunities to become a firefighter in their hometown.

As a former Air Force officer and fire chief, my experience in hiring returning military personnel has been well worthwhile, to both the individual and the department. These men and women are accustomed to teamwork and they understand the need for discipline, the chain of command and continuous training.

*While the dwindling number of active volunteer firefighters is not new, there now appears as well to be a growing shortage of quality firefighter candidates in the part-time and career ranks.*

#### WHAT ARE THE VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT CHALLENGES?

Let's start with the volunteer recruitment challenges. The facts would show that the number of volunteer fire and EMS personnel throughout the United States has stayed about the same for the last 15 to 20 years.

Meanwhile, the call volume faced by these departments, especially for EMS, doubles approximately every 5 years – meaning a seven-fold increase over the same 20-year period.

Volunteer departments cover over 70 percent of the area in the United States. Although few of them cover major population areas, the overall increase in the population of the US has not given them a corresponding increase of dedicated volunteer personnel.

This is not a new problem. In fact, the [U.S. Fire Administration](#), as far back as the 1990s, made a concerted effort to assist volunteer fire departments with recruitment, retention and finances with the publications "Recruitment and Retention of Volunteer Firefighters" and "Alternative Finances for Fire and EMS."

Several factors also contribute to the lack of a corresponding increase in volunteer firefighters:

- *A lack of marketing on the part of the department leads to the perception that the local fire and EMS department is staffed full-time.*
- A weakening sense of community among the population in part because the department may not adequately reflect the diversity of people it serves.
- The ratio of men versus women in the fire service gives a misconception that a department is a "good old boys club."
- A lack of available or convenient entry-level fire and EMS training opportunities.

## **HOW TO RECRUIT MORE VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS**

How does a department – and you, as the chief of the department – handle these firefighter recruitment issues? It can be done through marketing, community connection and training.

### **1. Fire department marketing**

Marketing a fire department does not require hiring a firm to set out an elaborate plan for reaching a target market. Most marketing can be free.

For example, if you need additional personnel, put a sign outside the station announcing you're taking applications and post the contact information.

Have an official department Facebook and web page. List your future activities and training and invite residents to drop in to see how the department operates.

Show your monthly statistics; use pictures from both training and actual incidents. Constantly remind the Facebook viewers that you are volunteers and there is always a need for more people to come forward to help. Make presentations or awards to fire personnel and residents for their outstanding service or actions during the town council meetings and invite the media to cover the story.

Contact area religious and community groups and ask them to distribute flyers announcing your needs and that you are taking applications.

Consider starting a fire cadet program for high school students. Understand this takes both planning and consistent opportunities for them to interact and learn about the value of fire and EMS in the community.

If you are or are near a college or junior college, recruit those students with the idea that they would remain on station for a certain number of hours per week to help answer calls, but in their downtime provide them with a WIFI connection to work on their college assignments in a quiet part of the station.

If their dorms are close to the station, they can also be available between classes to help as well. Even if they leave you after two or four years of college, you've trained an individual who can be of great value to their hometown volunteer department.

### **2. Community connection**

It's hard to pinpoint how, when or why we lost a sense of community. Some sociologists believe it started when homes were built without a front porch where residents could regularly sit outside to meet and greet their neighbors.

Whatever the reason, the volunteer fire department can be a melting pot for a community to come together, and learn about one another, while serving the common good. I am also a believer that not every member of a volunteer department has to be a firefighter or EMT – there is a job for everyone who wants to volunteer.

When I was starting out, my first volunteer department had a member nicknamed "Bubba." He was out of shape and never made a fire run, but he was an excellent accountant who kept all the financial records. And he literally knew everyone in a community of 10,000.

If we needed something fixed or the best price on a piece of equipment, Bubba knew just who to contact and how to negotiate.

I've also seen how a department's neighbor would come over to close all the bay doors and watch the station when everyone was out on a call. Or the grandmother who volunteered at the station to take care of young children while their parents trained or went out on a call.

That service alone allowed a department to add several new men and women as members, especially those needing two incomes to support themselves.

Lastly, as the demographics of any community change, so too must the demographics of the fire department. There is no better way for someone to feel a part of the community than to be accepted as a volunteer firefighter.

### **3. Volunteer firefighter training**

Perhaps the hardest thing to accomplish for new volunteer recruits is to find a convenient time to offer training, especially at the entry-level. A few states have initiated training programs to help bridge that time convenience.

For example, the Ohio State Fire Marshal's office and the Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation have combined to offer free Firefighter I training in all of its 88 counties.

A class needs a certain number of enrollees to qualify, but these students can come from across one county or multiple counties. These classes and the written and practical examinations must be successfully completed in one year.

Several states are testing or considering online training instead of the traditional classroom setting for the textbook portion of fire classes. This allows the student more flexibility in fitting the bookwork into their busy schedule.

When the class comes together, it is to test their knowledge of the assigned material and to do the hands-on exercises. The standards for passing both the knowledge-based and practical training remain unchanged, so it places the responsibility to learn the content squarely on the new firefighter.

This concept is already working for continuing education requirements for firefighter and EMS recertification in many states.

It is time for the fire service to become more creative in meeting the challenge of adequate staffing in volunteer departments. But rest assured that many career and part-time departments are also facing personnel shortages; I'll address that in the near future.

In the meantime, stay safe.

## ***FIREFIGHTER HEALTH & SAFETY; PROTECTING OUR OWN***

# ***51***

### ***LINE OF DUTY FIREFIGHTER DEATHS FOR 2025***

***In 2024 we experienced 64 LODDs reported nationally.!***

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*Overall, 2024 was one of the safest years on record for U.S. firefighters with 64 on-duty deaths recorded, down from 74 in 2023 and reflecting a steady decline in annual fatalities in recent decades since a high of 174 in 1978. (The trend calculations don't include the 340 firefighters who died in the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001.)*

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

- The most recent LODD was 60 year old volunteer firefighter Ray Moreau of the Plainville CT fire department on July 27<sup>th</sup> at the scene of a structure fire.

### ***FIRE APPARATUS ACCIDENTS FOR THE WEEK***

- One person is dead and another is critically injured after a car collided with a Seattle Fire Department ladder truck. The ladder truck was returning from a call at the time of the crash. No firefighters were injured.
- Greenville police have charged the EMS provider operating an ambulance when it crashed with unsafe movement of a vehicle. Andrew Tribula faces the charge after a collision between a Greenville Fire-Rescue ambulance and an SUV. Police say the ambulance was responding to a call with lights and sirens activated. After reviewing footage from a nearby camera, investigators said that Tribula failed to properly clear the intersection and did not stop for oncoming traffic before proceeding through the red light.
- A traffic accident involving a Winston-Salem Fire Department truck and a passenger vehicle resulted in two people being sent to the hospital. A 2014 Nissan pulled into an intersection and into the path of a fire truck with emergency lights and siren activated. The fire apparatus was unable to stop and collided with the Nissan in the intersection. The driver and passenger of the Nissan were taken to a medical facility with serious but non-life-threatening injuries. No firefighters were injured.
- After finishing up its response to a highway crash a St. Louis Fire Department pumper was rear-ended by a Jeep. The driver failed to slow down and move over. The driver of the Jeep and two firefighters were taken to the hospital with minor injuries. The firefighters were released from the hospital by around noon.

## FIRE APPARATUS

### *Specifying A New Apparatus: Don't Waste Money On Unnecessary Items*

Jeffrey D Gaskin

Consider this: An apparatus committee convenes for the first of what will be numerous meetings to assemble specifications for a new apparatus. It was made clear to the committee that costs for new apparatus are at an all-time high and that the committee members absolutely must keep the cost of the department's new apparatus as reasonable as possible. Historically, the volunteer side of the fire service has more flexibility when it comes to the matter of budgeting. However, with the cost for funding public safety these days, that's situation is changing. This isn't an easy directive to follow, given the complexity of today's apparatus. How does an apparatus committee accomplish this task?

#### **MULTIPLE CONSIDERATIONS**

It often is at least 15–20 years that passed since a piece of apparatus that's to be replaced was put into service at a department. In what ways have the various aspects of the fire protection district changed over those couple of decades? Don't downplay the importance of the answer to this question. Districts change over such a period of time, sometimes more than apparatus committee members realize.

Next, move to the apparatus that's being replaced. My recommendation is that all of the members of the committee do this on their own, because each of them will have different answers to questions.

- What on the apparatus works and what doesn't for the department's current operations?
- What functions/features/components must be carried forward to the new apparatus?
- What functions/features/components shouldn't be carried forward to the new apparatus?
- What is lacking on the current apparatus that must be incorporated into the new apparatus?

Be brutally honest going through these steps. The answers to all of these questions are going to have a big effect on developing a specification that serves the needs of the protection district today and throughout the life of the vehicle.

#### **STAY FOCUSED**

Multiple apparatus salespeople/representatives will (or should) visit to discuss their company's products and offerings. These meetings can be a valuable source of information. Exploit that.

Two different classifications of items will become apparent quickly: needs and wants. Needs are features and components that should be included in the apparatus. Wants are things that somebody desires but have little value operationally and add to the overall cost of the vehicle. Some committee members will pitch their wants as "needs."

How do apparatus committee members navigate through this process successfully? Understand your responsibilities. From the sales side, this is a business. Make no mistake about that. Salespeople are friendly, engaging and knowledgeable about their product, as it should be. However, their responsibilities and loyalties are to their dealership, also as it should be. The members of the apparatus committee must remember that they also are in a business transaction and, therefore, must maintain a professional relationship with all of the people who are involved from the beginning of the process to its end. That said, the committee is spending taxpayer dollars and, therefore, is involved in a legal process that has protocols and procedures that are detailed in state, county and local procurement laws.

Staying on point is difficult. As they move through the specification development process, apparatus committee members can do several things to ensure that their department gets the apparatus that serves its needs and to assist in keeping costs from running away. Keep in mind that every decision that the apparatus committee makes and every line that its members put into a specification have a cost associated with them. Furthermore, every decision can create a domino effect on other factors.

Looking back on budgeting, municipalities that are served by volunteer departments tend to be more lenient on their department than municipalities that are served by career departments are on theirs, but that creates challenges. Below are the most common ones that I encounter. Although volunteer departments certainly

don't have the market cornered on these items, experience has taught me that these challenges are more prevalent with volunteer departments and can affect the cost of new apparatus significantly.

### **'THAT'S WHAT IT'S ALWAYS BEEN'**

This viewpoint isn't limited to any one aspect of a piece of apparatus, and it's something that many apparatus committees seem to latch onto.

There are times when it's appropriate to consider the reasons to hold on to some department traditions, but planning the functional and operational aspects of new apparatus isn't one of those times.

What the department protects, how many members turn out to respond, how and on what the members train, and the amount and types of responses all change. Along with those changes are the changes in and capabilities of apparatus. Is a two-stage fire pump being specified because the department always had one? The department might not need one with today's single-stage pumps and diesel motors. Two-stage pumps are more expensive than a single-stage version. Further, two-stage pumps have more internal moving parts and require more maintenance, and pump operators need a higher level of training. So, not only does the specification of a two-stage pump cost more initially, it costs more every year that a department owns that pumper. Extrapolate that mindset over the entire vehicle.

### **MUTUAL AID**

It isn't an apparatus committee's responsibility to design and equip new apparatus or to spend taxpayer dollars to protect another community. The committee's responsibility is to design and specify apparatus for its department's protection area. That said, this changes when a signed intermunicipal agreement for shared services is in place.

### **WHAT IF ...?**

An apparatus committee can "what if" itself into countless situations, and this has cost many fire departments lots of money, with no real return on investment and plenty of headaches.

You must understand and accept that a department never can prepare for every incident that it will encounter. Along those lines, if an incident is unusually large and/or complex, one piece of apparatus probably won't make a difference operationally or in the outcome.

Say an apparatus committee insists on a Type B foam system that delivers 3 percent concentration at 1,000 gpm. Why? "We have a tire wholesaler who has a warehouse in town that's stacked floor-to-ceiling with tires." Getting past the fact that tires are a Class A fire, the committee offers up a second reason: "The train yard has a diesel repair shop on the property." OK, but does the railroad have a Type B foam on the property for the department's use? "No, we asked them to do that, but they refused."

The "what ifs" could go on for pages and include stories about hugely oversize electric generators that are used to power certain buildings in a power failure. There might be more foam stories and discussion about complex HRT systems on heavy rescues and items on tool lists that are questionable. All of this doesn't address the operational challenges.

What's more, the department relies on its county's training center to supply the additional foam for "what if" scenarios. It takes 60–90 minutes to reach a scene, and they can make foam at maximum flow for 2 minutes and 20 seconds.

Be realistic about what's requested on apparatus and whether it can be supported operationally. Unless all of the secondary requirements that are needed for the "what if" scenario to be successfully managed and mitigated are considered and planned, putting a "what if" into operation and supporting that operation until the completion of the incident probably won't be possible.

### **THREE AREAS OF LIGHTING**

Operational lighting (headlights, turn signals, marker lights, cab interior lights and all other Department of Transportation (DOT)-required lighting) is the first area of apparatus lighting. As the purchaser, a department has options as to the make and model of different fixtures as long as they meet DOT requirements.

More time and energy is spent on the second area of apparatus lighting—emergency lights—than on any other part of the apparatus.

Is a \$ 7,000 light bar needed? Backed up by two minibars over the cab crew doors?

How many lights must be on each side of the apparatus? Is the back of the apparatus so well-lit that drivers who arrive after the new apparatus is on scene are blinded?

Educate yourself. Take the lighting supplier catalogs away from members or members who want everything that's in the book.

The third area of apparatus lighting is scene lighting. It has improved in the past several years and took a giant leap with LED lights.

Do product research. Several lighting manufacturers make excellent products that are competitively priced and are backed by good warranty programs.

Recently, I compared two competitors' models of a particular 12-volt scene light. There was about a 1,600-lumen difference between the two fixtures. The level of output of the fixtures was negligible. What wasn't negligible was the \$1,800 per fixture price difference between the least expensive and most expensive fixture. Specify two of the more expensive fixtures on each side of a vehicle and two on the back and a committee costs its department \$10,800.

### TRENDS IN APPARATUS

The blackout package has been one of the biggest trends over the past few years. Put another way, it's a fad, and fads fade. In addition, like so many other decisions, specifying a blackout package might have unintended consequences. A blackout package weighs about 0.75 lbs./sq. ft. when applied at a thickness of ⅛ inch.

### BIGGER ISN'T ALWAYS BETTER

*Does the department need that 15-liter motor on the new apparatus? It might for certain applications in the fire service, but those applications are more exceptions than the rule.*

*That 15-liter motor weighs about 1,000 lbs. more than its 12-liter cousin. That's a big load difference on the front axle of the apparatus.*

Is the 8- or 10-man cab still being considered despite the fact that it rarely, if ever, is full?

Each of the considerations that are noted above are expensive. Furthermore, any one of them could push a specification into heavier axles, bigger brakes and bigger tires because of the weight that's added to the vehicle. Besides adding even more to the cost of the apparatus, the additional weight can change the way that the vehicle drives.

### IN THE KNOW

Review the department's responses over the past 20 years, so the types and quantities of calls are known. Specify and build to what's needed to serve and support the department's operations.

## 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!!**

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*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!!**

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HOME FIRE FATALITIES REPORTED BY THE MEDIA FROM THE US FIRE ADMINISTRATION FOR 2025	
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Fire Deaths in 1&2 Family Dwellings in NYS
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48
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Last fire death 8/6/25 Cheektowaga, Erie Co Female 64	
Fire Deaths in any type of Dwelling in NYS	80
Fire Deaths in 1&2 Family Dwellings Nationally	640
Top 3 States with the greatest 1&2 Family Deaths	#1 PA/51
	#2 NY/48
	#3 IL & TX/36
Civilian home fire fatalities in 2025: <b>1295</b> 2046 civilian home fire fatalities in 2024	
<b>Week 32 of 2025, fire has claimed on an average 40 lives PER WEEK.</b>	
Both the states of Maryland and California as well as Wash. DC require sprinklers in 1&2 family dwellings. According to realtors and builders only old homes burn, so sprinklers are not needed in new homes: so when does a new home become an old home?	

### **PRO CODES ACT: Take Action To Protect The Building Safety Codes ICC Members Created**

Right now, what you and your colleagues have built to create world-class safety codes and standards is under attack. That's why a bipartisan group of Members of Congress is at work to pass the Pro Codes Act, H.R. 4072. Your help is urgently needed. Click [HERE](#) to let your Member of Congress know your work deserves to be protected. You'll be joining a broad coalition of building and fire safety organizations to defend our work. This legislation aims to protect the code development process and to prevent unauthorized and erroneous copies of codes from being published.

#### **WHY SUPPORT THE PRO CODES ACT?**

America's codes and standards are vital to ensuring public health and safety and are developed by and for building safety professionals. The Code Council reinvests the revenue generated from the sale of the codes in technical staff, IT infrastructure, code development committees and to fund in-person hearings. Each element is essential to ensure top quality codes.

This model also allows the Code Council to invest in the future of building safety by providing scholarships, chapter support and educational benefits, career development opportunities and more.

#### **WHAT SPURRED THE PRO CODES ACT?**

In recent years, companies that contribute nothing to the code development process have been profiting from the efforts of Code Council staff, members and contributors. To protect the code development process and prevent unauthorized and erroneous copies of the codes from being published, a bipartisan group of lawmakers, supported by a coalition of standards development organizations, introduced the *Pro Codes Act*. The *Pro Codes Act* ensures that the public will have free access to codes and standards while preserving the ownership rights of the code and standard developers.

#### **HOW TO TAKE ACTION**

Last Congress, the U.S. House Judiciary Committee overwhelmingly advanced the *Pro Codes Act* by a vote of 19 to 4. We're confident that with the support of the codes and standards development community across the country, this Congress will pass the *Pro Codes Act* and send it to the President's desk for his signature.

Join this effort by filling out [this form](#) to ask your Members of Congress to support this legislation.

## **GREEN TECHNOLOGY & THE FIRE SERVICE**

### **\*\*The Latest in EV Lithium-Ion Battery Fire Mitigation for Firefighters**

Ryan Baker

#### **Key Takeaways**

- *There is not a single solution on how to mitigate fires from lithium-ion batteries in electric vehicles.*
- Strategies and concerns will continue to change as car manufacturers continue to release different electric vehicles.

- Tools and knowledge from Ziamatic, Bridgehill, EV Rescue App, Turtle Fire Systems and Toxic Suppression can help mitigate li-ion incidents.

*The lithium-ion (li-ion) battery fire discussion has been at the forefront of the fire service for nearly a decade now, and there still isn't a clear solution.* The complexity of li-ion batteries and incident mitigation has companies and people going back to square one time and time again.

Considering that these batteries have emerged as a popular power source for automobiles, power tools, smartphones and numerous other consumer products, it makes it even more difficult to find a one-off solution for when the batteries catch fire.

The risks of the chemical composition and the gases that get released, the batteries' ejection from a battery pack, the risk of reignition and the thermal runaway are all things to be contemplated when dealing with a li-ion battery fire.

Then, there are many solutions that have gone to market or are being proposed. Under-vehicle nozzles, fire blankets and direct water suppression are just three that have been hot topics of late. For example, the Fire Protection Research Foundation, which is the research affiliate of NFPA, and Fire Safety Research Institute (part of UL Research Institutes) recently released a statement about the hazards that come with utilizing a fire blanket. The organization's experiments showed that despite denying oxygen to a li-ion battery fire, thermal runaway continued to be an issue. This and the risk of explosion when re-exposing the fire to oxygen are concerns when it comes to using a blanket.

*There also is the issue of money and personnel. Each fire department is different in how many people that it can have on scene and how much money that it can give to training and various tools to mitigate those incidents.*

Thus, mitigation of li-ion battery fires is an ongoing battle. Different tools will be developed, and different strategies and tactics will be conceived.

## **FIRE BLANKETS**

Bridgehill, which is based in Norway, jumped into the fire blanket game 11 years ago. Because of the heavy commitment to electric vehicles (EVs) in the country, this was a necessary mitigation strategy. Eventually, it led to Bridgehill's Car Fire Blanket and Lithium Fire Blanket.

One of the big things that Bridgehill emphasizes is that the weak point of any blanket is its coating, which is why the company continues its development efforts in that area. Additionally, its blankets include a center stripe, so first responders can place the blanket over the fire in the best position.

Also, all four of the handles that are on the blankets are a different color, so it's easier for the firefighters to maneuver the blanket. Important as these design matters seems to be, there are opinions on both sides of whether to use just a blanket, to use a combination of a blanket and water, or to just use water.

## **WATER SYSTEMS**

Different water solutions for automobile li-ion battery fire mitigation come from Turtle Fire Systems, with its regular and Mini Turtle Fire Systems, and Ziamatic, with its Vehicle Cooling Unit (VCU).

The Turtle Fire Systems were created by Founder/CEO Howard Hayes and the company's team based on personal experience. COO/head of sales Matthew Faden and few other team members belong to the Jersey City, NJ, Fire Department.

The catalyst for them creating the dome-shaped nozzle was a fire at an automobile manufacturer that didn't go as smoothly as people would've thought, because there was a recognition that EV fires with the li-ion batteries weren't something the fire service was used to. The team took to the drawing board. Numerous tools were prototyped and tested. Being capable of having the most efficient water coverage and having a nozzle that wouldn't break under pressure were two major focuses in continued development of the products.

*Faden believes that fire departments are mistaken when they expect to find one end-all-be-all solution.* "There are multiple tools," he tells Firehouse, "and you have to find out what makes them all useful and whether they're useful for your department." Then comes the training, he explains.

The dome-shaped structure of Turtle Fire Solutions' devices allows for continuous flow of water underneath a vehicle. Hole size and placement are to deliver the right amount of water and direction for suppressing the fire as safely as possible. A steel pipe that's connected to the nozzle provides leverage for deployment and a

heat barrier to help to protect the hose and firefighter and ensures that the water flow is maintained should the tires fail and the vehicle drop.

The Elizabeth, NJ, Fire Department (EFD) utilizes the Turtle Fire System. The agency's response district includes Newark Liberty International Airport. The airport's parking structure has multiple floors of EV charging stations.

EFD Battalion Chief Patrick Wirkus is impressed with the system's durability and potential for high GPM flows. "We really like the fact that not only could it be used for EV fires but also for exposure protection as well as commercial occupancy," Wirkus adds. "The versatility, ease of use and durability were big reasons the members chose it."

The Mini version of the system came to be after an automobile manufacturer asked to shrink the dome of the original device and remove the slide plate and handles to allow mounting in the ground in the parking bays at one of its EV manufacturing facilities.

Ziamatic's Vehicle Cooling Unit has seven different models. The VCU-36-NH can be utilized to cool the li-ion battery during an EV fire.

The 36-inch unit can be lengthened to 72-inches via a connecting adapter. It has a 140-degree spray pattern, 83 holes per 3-foot section and a 5½-inch ground clearance.

The VCU-36-NH recently was tested by the Waterbury, CT, Fire Department (WFD). A live burn was conducted with two vehicles, started with hay and wood. The VCU-36-NH was placed underneath the two vehicles at two different positions and angles—first, directly underneath the passenger area, and second at a 45-degree angle from the front of the vehicle underneath the engine.

Before the VCU-36-NH was moved into position, a thermal imaging camera showed intense heat in the engine area. Within minutes of spray commencing, the thermal imaging camera showed much less heat.

## **PROTOCOLS AND KNOWLEDGE**

The Spartanburg-Pruitt Protocol was developed by equipment maker Toxic Suppression and former Spartanburg, SC, Fire Department Battalion Chief Matt Pruitt. In a nutshell, the protocol for EV fires says to knock down the fire, apply a fire security blanket and insert an under-the-vehicle nozzle.

Pruitt and Toxic Suppression connected in 2023 over their mutual concern for parking structures and EV fires. "I started to think, if I was out on the on the street back in the day, what would I do?" Pruitt explains. "Why are we doing it the way we're doing it? Why don't we just deal with what we know how to deal with, and that's the vehicle itself."

Pruitt worked with Toxic Suppression to tweak the products that already were in use. That resulted in something that differentiates the Toxic Suppression nozzle from others, given that it can turn into a door-hanging nozzle.

Of course, none of these tools that are noted above can be used without proper knowledge. That's where the EV Rescue App comes into play.

Scott Saal and Phil Scarfi developed the app in 2021 as a place where first responders can access information about EVs, from emergency response guides to the placement of the battery.

*Going to an automobile manufacturer's website can take a lot of time when time is of the essence. The free app puts all of the information involving EVs and hybrid vehicles, bigger rigs, charging stations, heavy equipment and Amazon vans in one place.*

The app is updated nearly every week, and about 15,000 departments utilize it. One of those is the Wilmington, NC, Fire Department (WFD).

"There's nothing like it," Capt. Vance Casey tells Firehouse. "It's all at your fingertips. I was blown away when I first started looking at it. It's amazing that it's a free app."

Casey is in the process of getting the app downloaded onto all tablets on every WFD apparatus. He recalls a situation where a car ended up half-submerged in a pool after crashing. Members quickly accessed the emergency response guide that's within the app to get the situation under control quickly.

## **THINGS WILL CHANGE**

As results from research that is being conducted by the NFPA, Fire Safety Research Institute and other organizations comes out later in 2025, strategies will evolve and products will be tweaked or developed to be

entirely new. Department's focus should be on acquiring that knowledge, doing what's best for the community and continuing to understand that adaptation is a necessity.

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### **FDNY Responds to e-Bike Battery Fire**

Maura Grunlund , Jan Somma-Hammel – Staten Island Advance, N.Y.

The FDNY responded to a battery fire for an electric bike in Port Richmond on Wednesday morning.

The incident was called at 7:13 a.m. at a home at 60 Avenue B near Bennett Street, according to a spokesperson for the FDNY/EMS.

The Hazmat unit was assigned to remove the battery and the incident was closed at 8:21 a.m., according to the FDNY spokesman.

FDNY Commissioner Robert Tucker announced in January the progress in the struggle against lithium-ion battery-related fires and released data on 2024 fatalities and emergency response figures.

In 2023, 18 people in New York City died due to fires related to lithium-ion batteries; in 2024, there were six, a 67% decrease, Tucker announced.

The FDNY credited the drop in such fatalities to safety messaging, inspections, community outreach and a \$1 million ad campaign.

Over the course of 2024, the FDNY Lithium-ion Battery Task Force inspected 585 e-bike shops, a 25% increase from 2023. Over the course of these 12 months, the task force issued 426 FDNY summonses, 138 violation orders, 32 criminal summonses, and issued seven vacate orders with the Department of Buildings.

## **RECRUITMENT IS EVERYONE'S JOB**

### **Pa. Fire Chiefs Call For Youth Outreach, Regional Collaboration To Combat Recruitment Crisis**

Jade Campos

*Lancaster County first responders want greater collaboration with their communities and school districts to grow the ranks of young recruits and address declining membership at local fire departments and police stations.*

East Hempfield Township fire Chief John Kottmyer told a panel of state legislators during a Senate Democratic Policy Committee hearing in West Earl Township on Wednesday that recruitment tactics haven't changed much since he began volunteering decades ago. Strategies need to modernize to attract younger people, he said, as membership numbers dwindle.

"It's kind of a different era, a different time, and I think we need to look at some of the ways that we're thinking about recruitment or retention," Kottmyer said. *"How do we keep these people?"*

Lancaster County's problem is not unique. First responders across Pennsylvania and the nation have struggled to recruit new members, particularly in volunteer fire companies, for years.

A 2018 report by the state House of Representatives found that the number of volunteer firefighters statewide fell by about 260,000 over 40 years. Many local fire officials attribute the sharp decline to the long hours that come with volunteerism due to intensive training and fundraising.

### **YOUTH PROGRAMS**

Jamie Rohrer, chief of East Petersburg Fire Company, encouraged legislators in attendance, including county lawmaker Sen. James Malone, to put *more money into public safety education programs*. He said volunteer fire companies like his can't afford to do the heavy lifting on their own.

"Once (youth) get a little bit of the emergency services in their blood, it catches on quick," Rohrer said.

A bill currently circulating in the Senate, co-sponsored by Lehigh Valley Sen. Nick Miller, chair of the Democratic Policy Committee, would *provide more funding to community colleges for public safety training*.

Pennsylvania Fire Commissioner Thomas Cook said his office is *engaged with 28 school districts across the state to implement public safety training programs that have proven successful*. Similar programs are likely to start up in other districts in the future, he said. Cook encouraged first responders to be active in their communities to promote interest.

Jerry Ozog, public safety specialist for the Pennsylvania Association of Township Supervisors, said successful community collaborations happen when school districts work directly with fire departments. The Senate committee expressed interest in aiding those discussions.

A study by the International Association of Chiefs of Police last year found that 70% of agencies surveyed reported more difficulties recruiting officers compared to five years ago. Northern Lancaster County Regional Police Chief Josh Kilgore attributed the low numbers of prospects to a negative perception of policing and called on state officials to publicly support their local police.

Like firefighters, Kilgore said, police officers want to reach people when they are young. He said it's necessary for police to have a presence in schools so children can develop a positive relationship with them.

Malone, who represents the northern half of Lancaster County and is a member of the Senate committee, said he supports [more state funding for public safety recruitment](#). He said a social media ad campaign funded by the state, suggested by Rohrer, could be a possible solution to target young people.

In a phone interview Tuesday, Republican state Rep. David Zimmerman, who represents the 99th district, said more state dollars should support recruitment programs that target young people. He praised Garden Spot Fire Rescue's [annual summer camp cadet program](#), which introduces children aged 10 to 14 to fire services. Zimmerman said he volunteered with Blue Ball Fire Company as a teenager, which later merged with New Holland Liberty Fire Company to create Garden Spot.

Pennsylvania State Police also host an annual camp cadet program for Lancaster County children to learn about law enforcement.

## REGIONAL SOLUTIONS

Officials Wednesday also emphasized the need for different agencies and municipalities to work together to improve recruitment rates.

Kilgore praised the regional police model, saying it saves money for local governments and attracts new members. A regional police department is bigger than a municipal police force, he said, and can offer more desirable benefits, including career development opportunities.

Lancaster County currently has three regional police departments.

Ephrata police Chief Chris McKim said contracted police services, when a police department agrees to provide coverage to surrounding municipalities, offers a similar benefit. The state needs to offer more incentives to encourage regional contracts, he said. Ephrata covers the borough, Ephrata Township, West Cocalico Township and Adamstown Borough.

Kottmyer said [regionalization could be the future for volunteer fire companies, too, to share equipment and costs as fire trucks become more expensive. Several local fire companies have merged in recent years, a process West Hempfield Township and Mountville Borough are currently undergoing.](#)

"We have to figure out a better model and a better way to do this, and it's not just buy and buy and buy," Kottmyer said.

## STUFF FOR YOUR OFFICERS AND MEMBERS!



The fire service is entering a transformative chapter in personal protective equipment (PPE) and self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) management with the consolidation of NFPA 1851 and NFPA 1852 into the newly released NFPA 1850 standard. Join us for an in-depth webinar designed to prepare fire departments, safety officers and PPE managers for the changes ahead.

In this free on-demand webinar presented by FireRescue1.com and MSA, you will:



- **Discover new approaches to PPE and SCBA selection and service life**, including updated selection criteria, the continuing importance of the 10-year rule for turnout gear and how SCBA serviceability is now more tightly linked to compliance and equipment upgrades.
- **Explore practical improvements** such as increased wash temperatures and enhanced procedures for SCBA decontamination.
- **Understand the direction NFPA 1850 sets** for a more standardized, health-focused approach to PPE selection, care and maintenance across the fire service.
- **Learn the updated verification methods** for gear cleaning, including simplified protocols, optional chemical assessments and insights into how cleaning practices influence gear longevity.

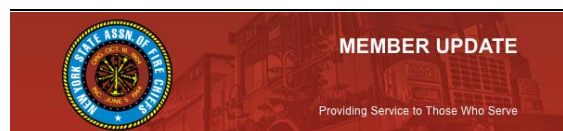
Watch now to learn how program roles are evolving, including the introduction of the PPC Manager and PPE Technician, new interim qualification paths and specific responsibilities for managing contaminated gear and reporting safety concerns.

**WATCH NOW AT THIS LINK:**

<https://tracking.police1.com/t/9320633/187515077/7196883/1/1006865/?f5d63f87=MTE0MTczX0dsb2JlX0ZSMV9GdWxsTGltZDf8zNTY4XzI2MzIxLjZfOC04LT11&b44ed14b=YmY5NWQ4NzktNWRmOC00MWJkLTkzMdctNzg0Y2VhZTNjMzYy&x=b12372ef>

### **Attend an NVFC Training Near You!**

The NVFC hosts in-person trainings at locations across the country on topics including hazardous materials response, electric vehicle response, leadership, fire service culture, and much more. View upcoming courses [here](#). Don't see a training near you? Consider hosting a training at your department or regional event. View a listing of available courses and request a training [here](#).



### **New York Yankees Firefighter Appreciation Special**

Join the **New York Yankees** at Yankee Stadium as they show their appreciation to the dedicated members of the fire and emergency services!

This [special event](#) runs from **September 5-7** (vs. the Toronto Blue Jays) and on **September 9** and **September 11** (vs. the Detroit Tigers).

All purchased tickets will include a \$15 meal and beverage voucher, and a Yankees firefighter trucker hat.

Questions? [Email](#) Jess Tragale, New York Yankees Account Executive, Group Sales & Service, for assistance!

**LEARN MORE AND PURCHASE TICKETS AT THE FOLLOWING LINK:**

<https://www.gofevo.com/group/Firefighterappreciation33?ref=Tragale>



### **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):**

Cortland (October 28) • Erie (October 8) • **Fulton (September 9)** • 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) • Suffolk (April 2) • Westchester (September 3)

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

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

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**ASSOCIATION OF FIRE DISTRICTS OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK**

Coming Attractions:

- **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



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

LINK TO THE VIRTUAL CLASSROOM: [https://virtualclassroom.nvfc.org/featured\\_courses](https://virtualclassroom.nvfc.org/featured_courses)

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**NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS**

**Gansevoort Fire Department Breakfast**

The fire company thanks you for your support!! Breakfast will resume in September.

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**Clifton Park Fire Department Breakfast**

See you in October when we start up again. **Thank you for your support!**

---

**Asking for a Friend**

**Help needed**, is there a District/Company that accepts EMS applicants only. What are your requirements for those members that respond to EMS calls only, but are still considered firefighters for VFBL or LOSAP purposes? Contact me at my email address, asking for a friend. If you have a written policy and are willing to share please send to [tom@rinaldi1.com](mailto:tom@rinaldi1.com), thanks.

---

**GENERAL INTEREST**

**The Following Schedule Applies If Your Election Is Scheduled For December 9th.**

The Board of Fire Commissioners is required to appoint a separate Board of Elections to conduct the election. The Board of Elections must include registered voters who are residents of the fire district and **may not include members of the Board of Fire Commissioners or an elected Fire District Treasurer**. On December 9th the

Board of Elections conducts the election and the Board of Fire Commissioners waits for the election to be completed and the result to be certified by the Board of Elections.

The Board of Fire Commissioners and the Fire District Secretary must maintain records regarding each fire commissioner in office to make certain that it has an accurate listing of the terms of office so that the proper office is placed on the ballot each year and the fire commissioner whose office is expiring knows that he or she must run for re-election to remain in office.

Although this may seem like a straightforward matter, errors occur annually in fire districts across the state when the Board of Fire Commissioners and the Secretary become confused about which commissioner's five-year term is expiring and must be placed on the ballot. If the wrong commissioner runs for reelection, they are not eligible to serve the new five-year term, resulting in a vacancy. Meanwhile, the commissioner whose term actually expired and who did not run for re-election will leave office at the start of the new year. Elected offices that are rendered vacant during the year may need to be added to the ballot. The Board of Fire Commissioner must make certain that an office which becomes vacant on October 1st or before is placed on the ballot for the December election regardless of whether a person has been appointed to fill the vacancy.

### **FIRE DISTRICT ELECTION SCHEDULE 2025**

#### **October 9th, 2025**

Last day to adopt resolution permitting absentee ballots at the Annual Election. Absentee ballots are optional for fire districts. If previously approved, does not have to be redone.

#### **October 24th, 2025**

Request County Board of Elections to provide a list of registered voters as of November 17th and to provide the list to the district by November 18th and order voting machines or other equipment and telephone coverage for the night of the election, if desired and available.

#### **October 30th, 2025**

Last day to adopt resolutions designating Fire District Board of Elections, including Chairman and Election Inspectors and/or Ballot Clerks, fixing compensation of the individual members of the District Board of Elections

#### **November 5th - 12th, 2025**

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

#### **November 17th, 2025**

Last day to register at County Board of Elections to be Eligible to vote on December 9th, 2025 in Annual District Election.

#### **November 18th, 2025**

County Board of Elections to mail lists of registered voters to Fire District Secretary.

#### **November 19th, 2025**

**Last day to file petitions for candidates for office, if required, or notify secretary in writing of intent to run for office if petition not required.**

#### **November 20th, 2025**

If absentee voting is permitted, mail absentee ballots to any registered voter whose registration record is marked "permanently disabled" on receipt of list from County Board of Elections. Ballot must be finalized to complete this task.

#### **November 19th - November 24th , 2025**

Post Notice of Election on district website and signboard, if any, at least 15, but not more than 20 days before date of election. Remains on website until December 9th, 2025.

#### **November 19th - November 24th , 2025**

Copy of Notice of Election to town clerk for posting on municipal website, if any, bulletin board and signboard, if any, at least 15, but not more than 20 days before date of election.

These notices [for websites, signboards and bulletin boards] must include time and place of election, officers to be elected, term of office and any other details regarding matters to be voted on as well as hours of polls being open for balloting. Suggest using regular Notice of Election published in district newspaper.

#### **November 24th, 2025**

Suggested meeting date for Fire District Board of Elections to prepare register. Can be any other date you choose after receiving registration books.

#### **December 2nd, 2025**

If absentee voting is permitted, last day to receive application for absentee ballot if the ballot is to be mailed

#### **December 8th, 2025**

Last day to receive application for absentee ballots if it is delivered personally to the voter or his/her agent.

#### **December 9th, 2025**

Election Day- 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. minimum may be additional consecutive hours prior to 6:00 p.m.

#### **December 12th, 2025**

File results (Canvass of Election) with Town Clerk.

#### **December 16th, 2025**

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

## **LAUGH OUT LOUD!!**

**You know you're getting old, when you barely do anything all day...but still need a nap to continue to do barely anything.**

## **CLASSIFIED EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

None at this time that we are aware of.

## **CAFDA OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS**

### **OFFICERS**

*President, Tom Rinaldi, Commissioner, Stillwater Fire District*

*1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, John Meehan, Commissioner West Crescent Fire District*

*2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President, Ellen Martin, Deputy Treasurer Clifton Park Fire District*

### **DIRECTORS:**

*Les Bonesteel Commissioner Burnt Hills/Saratoga,*

*Fred Richards Commissioner Harmony Corners/Saratoga,*

*Joyce Petkus Treasurer Greenfield/Saratoga,*

*Ed Woehrle Commissioner Niskayuna #1/Schenectady*

*Art Hunsinger, Ex-Officio Member Clifton Park Fire District*

### **APPOINTEES**

*Secretary Molly Jenkins, Region 1 Director, Assoc of Fire Districts, NYS*

*Treasurer: Tony Hill*

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

*Chaplain: Fred Richards, Commissioner, Harmony Corners Fire District*

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

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

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

***CAFDA PO Box 242 East Schodack, NY 12063***

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

***[518-407-5020](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.*

# CAPITAL AREA BUSINESS PARTNER'S

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

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

*We want to thank all of our Business Partners for renewing their partnership for 2025. You are invited to our monthly membership meeting and to any of our social events..*

## FIRE SERVICE LEGAL SERVICES



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Alyssa B. Snyder, Partner  
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*The Weekly Capital Bulletin is reaching well over **650+** subscribed fire district members and now other members of the fire service on a regular basis. This is a service of CAFDA through the effort of Tom Rinaldi who can be reached at [tom@rinaldi1.com](mailto:tom@rinaldi1.com) for comments and content contributions are always welcome.*

### 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 100 members in 14 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 — Thurs-Fri. March 13-14, 2025 — 2805 State Hwy. 67, Johnstown
FINANCIAL TRAINING FOR FIRE DISTRICT OFFICIALS	Brighton Fire District — Tues-Wed. March 25-26, 2025 — 3100 East Avenue, Rochester
CAFDA CONFERENCE	<b>Fort William Henry Hotel &amp; Conference Center, Lake George</b> — <b>Thurs-Sat. April 10-12, 2025</b>
<b>ANNUAL FALL SEMINAR</b>	Verdoy Fire District — <b>November 1, 2025</b> — 988 Troy-Schenectady Road, Latham

### SOCIAL EVENTS

OFFICER INSTALLATION DINNER	Century House, Latham — Saturday, March 8, 2025
<b>ANNUAL DAY AT THE RACES!</b>	<b>Saratoga Race Course, Saratoga Springs — Friday, August 8, 2025</b>

### MEETINGS – CLIFTON PARK FIRE DISTRICT & ZOOM

General Membership Meeting	Saturday, January 4, 2025
General Membership Meeting	Thursday, February 13, 2025
General Membership Meeting	Wednesday March 5, 2025
Board of Directors Meeting	Thursday, April 3, 2025
General Membership Meeting	Thursday, May 8, 2025
General Membership Meeting	<b>Thursday, June 12, 2025</b>
<b>Board of Directors Meeting</b>	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	<a href="http://www.CAFDA.net">www.CAFDA.net</a>
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# 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*

### By Dave Denniston NVFC OSHA 1910.156 Taskforce Chair

The NVFC continues to meet with the IAFC and IAFF as we wait for next steps from the Department of Labor and OSHA. There have been significant changes in leadership at these organizations. We are under the belief that they continue to digest the large volume of information and feedback offered during the process and are modifying the proposed standard into something that is much more agreeable. The proposed standard as written does not work for anyone, volunteer, combination, or career departments. All three organizations agree significant changes are needed from the proposal. *We anticipate that they will craft a new standard that is technically and economically feasible using what is referred to as logical outgrowth from the process.* The representatives from the IAFC, NVFC, and IAFF all agree that the best of all worlds would be to remove the NFPA standards by reference, bring a lot of the regulations back to the control of the home state and authority having jurisdiction, and make logical requirements that will help protect our first responders. We continue to monitor progress and are ready to pursue the next steps if the process does not yield a document that we can all live with. *We have also voiced our opposition to a pure exemption of volunteer firefighters as we feel that the move would be counterproductive and further divide the two major factions of our emergency services.* We have long fought for parity in items such as presumptive heart, cancer coverage, workers compensation benefits, equal representation, and firefighter safety. To simply exempt the volunteer fire service would be a huge disservice to these initiatives and leave combination departments in an extremely awkward, if not unmanageable situation. It would also be extremely difficult for municipalities to manage with two different sets of rules.

The three organizations are also hard at work building resources to support emergency services organizations moving forward. These resources include training, sample emergency action plans, risk management plans, community assessment forms, sample policies, and advocacy materials. The right tools will aid everything from a small rural volunteer department with a \$50K budget all the way up to the large municipal all-career city department, and everything in-between. We are very excited by the working relationship being built by these national organizations and all involved in the process feel we are seeing ground-breaking results. If you have any questions or concerns about the process, we encourage you to reach out and get involved in the discussions. I can be reached at 607-423-1636 or [ddenniston@afdsny.org](mailto:ddenniston@afdsny.org). By working together, we can help build a fire service that will serve us well for years to come.

### [Link to Dave Denniston's Article Re: OSHA in the NYSAFC News](https://www.nysfirechiefs.com/blog_home.asp?Display=147)

[https://www.nysfirechiefs.com/blog\\_home.asp?Display=147](https://www.nysfirechiefs.com/blog_home.asp?Display=147)