



Capital Area Fire District's Association
THE WEEKLY CAFDA

BULLETIN

July 26th, 2025

Editor, Tom Rinaldi, Tom@rinaldi1.com
Serving the fire service community since 2004

CAPITAL SHORTS:

- The State Comptroller has announced that the Tax Cap will remain at 2% for 2026.
- See the latest update from Dave Denniston on the OSHA Emergency Response standard in the OSHA Supplement.
- This week, Elise Stefanik delivered over \$1.5 million in federal funding to make a long-overdue EMS facility a reality in Montgomery County. This groundbreaking marks a major investment in public safety and in our heroic first responders. The funding was delivered through the U.S. Department of Agriculture.
- Coming up, Day at the Races, join us at historic Saratoga raceway for a relaxing day.

STUFF FOR YOUR BENEFIT, NEED TO KNOW!

WWW.CAFDA.NET

DAY AT THE RACES FRIDAY AUGUST 8TH, lunch, snacks, permitted beverages included 11:00 am entry, tickets at "will call", fire district officials including Chiefs invited, bring a guest along, enjoy the day. Gates open at 11am. Reservations should be emailed to secretary@cafda.net.

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

SAVE THE DATE: CAFDA FALL TRAINING SEMINAR, Saturday November 1st at Verdoz Fire Department

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

A Proposed Federal Budget Would Eliminate Funding For Over Half Of FEMA's Emergency And Homeland Security Grant Programs, For Training, Equipment And Readiness Efforts

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is proposing nearly \$1 billion in cuts to critical grant programs that fire, EMS and emergency management agencies rely on to strengthen disaster preparedness and homeland security.

CNN reported that, according to internal memos and FEMA officials familiar with the plan, the proposed budget would eliminate funding for more than half of FEMA's current emergency management and homeland security grant programs.

These include funds used by departments across the country to improve readiness, upgrade equipment, train personnel and bolster security against threats such as terrorism, natural disasters and cyberattacks.

The proposal is part of a broader effort by the Trump administration to restructure FEMA and shift greater responsibility for disaster preparedness and response to state and local governments. The Department of Homeland Security, which oversees FEMA, has played a key role in exploring ways to reduce the agency's financial footprint, with grant funding identified as a significant area for cuts.

The Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI), FEMA's largest grant program targeted for elimination, provides over \$500 million to help major cities prepare for catastrophic emergencies. According to the memo, cutting the program would result in "a less secure nation, especially at the border and in some of the nation's most targeted cities, including Miami, Washington, D.C. and Dallas."

Other impacts outlined in internal memos include poor wildfire preparedness, increased risks at 120 U.S. ports, reduced homeland security training for cities hosting World Cup events, and a greater threat of terror attacks on passenger rail.

FIRE DISTRICT FINANCES

Local Government and School Accountability Contact Information:

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

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

NYS OSC Audit results

Hyde Park Fire and Water District – Procurement

BACKGROUND

The District provides fire protection services within a portion of the Town of Hyde Park (Town), which is located in Dutchess County. The elected five-member Board governs the District and is responsible for its overall financial management.

The Chairman of the Board (Chairman) also serves as the Treasurer of the Department.

The District Secretary assists the Board with the District's day-to-day operations and serves as the Board-appointed purchasing agent.

AUDIT OBJECTIVE

Determine whether the Hyde Park Fire and Water District (District) Board of Trustees (Board) procured capital assets, goods and services in a cost-effective and transparent manner.

KEY FINDINGS

The Board did not always procure capital assets, goods and services in a cost-effective and transparent manner. Specifically, the Board did not:

- Seek competition when entering into a contract to purchase a ladder truck for \$1.9 million or maintain written support to demonstrate that the District properly used an exception to the competitive bidding requirements set forth in General Municipal Law (GML), Section 103(16) and the District's procurement policy (Policy).
- Obtain quotes when purchasing six goods and services totaling \$41,316 and did not request proposals for one professional service contract totaling \$19,043, as required by the District's Policy.

Also, one Trustee did not publicly disclose, in writing, his interest in a contract when the District purchased property from a separately incorporated Fire Department (Department) for \$160,000.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Comply with competitive bidding requirements and the Policy when making purchases, or maintain documentation when using an exception to competitive bidding requirements.
- Publicly disclose, in writing, interest in contracts when approving transactions between the District and the Department.

The Complete Report is at this link: <https://www.osc.ny.gov/files/local-government/audits/2025/pdf/hyde-park-fire-and-water-district-2025-31.pdf>

Roosevelt Fire District – Length of Service Award Program

BACKGROUND

The District provides fire protection and emergency services to the Town of Hyde Park in Dutchess County. An elected five-member Board is responsible for the District’s overall financial management, including oversight of the LOSAP, ensuring it aligns with regulations and meets the District’s goals. The District Secretary maintains all LOSAP documentation, records volunteer service points, and ensures compliance with filings and reporting requirements.

The third-party administrator handles day-to-day LOSAP administration, such as managing participant records, calculating benefits and preparing necessary reports for the Board. The investment manager is tasked with managing LOSAP funds, including selecting and monitoring the performance of investments, and advising the Board to ensure that the LOSAP remains financially sound.

AUDIT OBJECTIVE

Determine whether the Roosevelt Fire District (District) Board of Fire Commissioners (Board) properly monitored the District’s length of service award program (LOSAP).

KEY FINDINGS

The Board did not effectively monitor all aspects of the District’s LOSAP. Specifically, the Board did not ensure that the LOSAP was annually audited in accordance with New York State General Municipal Law (GML) Section 181-b, or in the alternative, ensure LOSAP disclosure notes were included in the District’s annual audit.

During the audit period, the value of the District’s LOSAP assets declined. As a result, the District’s annual contributions to the LOSAP had to steadily increase to ensure that there were enough assets to cover all benefits paid to the LOSAP participants and beneficiaries.

By obtaining an annual LOSAP audit or alternatively ensuring LOSAP disclosure notes in a timely manner, the Board increases its ability to thoroughly monitor the LOSAP. Prudent management of LOSAP assets can help minimize costs to taxpayers, as well as protect the “pension-like” benefits earned by the volunteers. Given that most LOSAP plans require investment and actuarial expertise, it remains important that the plans be reviewed by the Board, as part of the annual audit process, to help protect the benefits earned by the volunteers for service to their communities.

The Board also could not demonstrate that the procurement of LOSAP investment management services was made in accordance with the District’s procurement policy.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Ensure that the District obtains an annual audit of the LOSAP, or in the alternative, include LOSAP disclosure notes in the District’s annual audit.
- Comply with the District’s procurement policies and procedures when seeking to contract for LOSAP investment management services.

The full audit report available here: <https://www.osc.ny.gov/files/local-government/audits/2025/pdf/roosevelt-fire-district-2025-40.pdf>

STEP INTO THE CHIEF’S OFFICE

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

Derrick Phillips

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.

Ex-Fire Chief Accused Of Groping Paramedic During Emergency Call

Roger Hannigan Gilson

Under the heading of what the hell where you thinking.....!

The former chief of a fire department that serves parts of Columbia and Rensselaer counties was charged with forcible touching and official misconduct Sunday for allegedly groping a paramedic while the two were responding to an overdose call.

Ricardo DeGross Jr. was arraigned in front of New Lebanon Judge Monte Wasch for Chatham Town Court and released without bail after pleading not guilty, according to Ann Pazera, a spokeswoman for the Columbia County District Attorney's Office. DeGross was suspended from the Tri-Village Fire Department when the allegations came to light and was terminated at the end of an internal investigation, Gordon Ross, the president of the Tri-Village Fire Department's board of directors, said Wednesday.

DeGross could not be reached by the Times Union. Phone numbers listed for him in a database appeared to be disconnected and Ross declined to share his phone number. DeGross on Wednesday could not be reached at his job with a local retailer. It was not immediately clear if he had retained an attorney.

The arrest has not been previously disclosed.

Carolyn Fleming, a paramedic with the Chatham Rescue Squad, described what allegedly happened to her in an interview with the Times Union.

During the alleged incident on June 5, Fleming said she was on duty at the home of a person who had overdosed and was unresponsive. The Tri-Village Fire Department and DeGross, the fire company's chief, also responded, as did the State Police.

After the patient was taken out of the trailer, Fleming stayed back to double-check what medications the person had taken, she said. DeGross also stayed back.

Fleming was between the kitchen table and the wall of the home when DeGross walked towards her, she said. Assuming the fire chief needed to get something on the table or get past her, Fleming squeezed herself against the table so he could get by, saying, "I'm sorry, let me let you get through," she recounted.

"At the exact same moment I say that, I feel something touch me, and I look down, and I can see his hand on my hip, kind of on my inner hip, closer towards my groin, and he is moving past me, behind me," Fleming said. "He's kind of pushing himself up against me, pushing his groin into my butt. And as he moves past me, he runs his hand along the side of my hip, up towards the in-between spot between your lower back and where your butt starts and is caressing me there, and then, as he makes his way past me, he says, 'It's OK baby, you don't need to apologize, you know I love you.'"

Fleming said she froze for a moment, trying to decide what to do: "I need to decide between prioritizing myself and prioritizing the patient ... I have a very sick man who is at very high risk of crashing outside this residence." Fleming decided to focus on the patient. She went back to checking the medications.

When she was preparing to leave in the ambulance, DeGross approached again, Fleming said.

"Hey, do you need anything else from me, kiddo?" she recalled DeGross saying. Fleming said she did not, after which DeGross tapped the back of the ambulance and said, "All right, if you need anything else, you know where to find me," Fleming recalled him saying. "Love ya, babe."

Gunnar Grethen-McLaughlin, an EMT with the Chatham Rescue Squad, said Wednesday he heard DeGross calling Fleming "baby" and asking if she needed anything before the two squad members left in their ambulance. He said he found this odd, since he had never heard DeGross speak to her in that way.

Grethen-McLaughlin, who also worked alongside DeGross as an EMT with the Tri-Village Fire Department, said he had not seen the chief act like that before.

At first, Fleming questioned whether she was making too much of the situation. But eventually she came to feel "very concerned on a greater level for the community" about DeGross's alleged behavior.

"As a fire chief ... he has access to people during their most vulnerable periods of time," she said, adding: "If he was brazen enough to do this to me ... an on-duty paramedic on scene with a critical patient, what is he going to be doing to a 20-year-old girl who's incapacitated and on the ground when he's the first one there?"

Fleming reported the alleged incident to Esperanza Sanchez, chief of operations for the Chatham Rescue Squad. Sanchez, who has worked in EMS in the area for 15 years, said Wednesday that the rescue squad investigated the report, taking statements from members of the rescue squad and sending them to the Tri-Village Fire Department, which then took over.

The fire department “took the matter seriously,” Sanchez said.

Ross, the president of the fire company’s board of directors, said the board was informed of the allegations on June 11 and immediately suspended DeGroff to investigate. DeGroff was terminated on July 9 after the investigation’s conclusion, Ross said.

The members of the fire department were kept informed of the situation, he added.

Propane Worker Found Guilty in VA Explosion that Killed Firefighter

Dan Landrigan

A jury convicted a propane company tech of involuntary manslaughter in connection with a 2024 house explosion that killed a firefighter and injured 13 others in Northern Virginia.

Roger Bentley, previously a technician with Southern States Cooperative, was found guilty Monday after a week-long trial, NBC 4 reports.

The February 2024 blast in Sterling destroyed a home and killed Trevor Brown, a 45-year-old father of three, and fourth-generation volunteer firefighter.

Firefighters were called to investigate an odor of gas at 7:50 p.m. on Feb. 16, 2024. Technicians had been investigating a gas leak at the property earlier in the day, and had pumped 130 gallons of propane into the tank. [*Bentley was the last technician on-site before the blast.*](#)

At 8:15 p.m., as firefighters were in the home investigating the source of the odors, an explosion occurred, killing Brown.

Jurors deliberated for three days before convicting Bentley of involuntary manslaughter and three hazardous materials misdemeanors. Prosecutors argued Bentley was negligent in dealing with a leaking underground propane tank. His defense claimed he was unfairly blamed for the tragedy.

Fire Fishers Fire District Dissolution Saga Continues

Evan Bouris, News 10NBC

Town of Victor leaders are working on a plan to make sure that fire services will continue without interruption if the Fishers Fire District dissolves.

A letter from the Victor town supervisor says several volunteer fire departments in the area have “expressed apprehension” about taking on more responsibilities if the district were to dissolve. The letter also says the town board has “serious concerns” about ensuring fire protection for people living along I-490 and the Thruway, which Fishers serves.

As **News10NBC has covered**, the board of fire commissioners is seeking to dissolve the district because of financial challenges. Fishers covers 26 square miles, including Eastview Mall. Other departments would fill the role if Fishers dissolves.

Town Supervisor Jack Marren said the town “recognizes the significance of this decision and its potential impact on our community” and that “a thoughtful and well-structured plan is necessary to ensure public safety.” The town is requesting that, if the fire commissioners do move forward in dissolving, the dissolution would begin on Dec. 31 instead of Aug. 31.

[From Gio Battaglia, WROC](#)

Many organizations supporting the Fishers Fire District are releasing statements ahead of a meeting Wednesday for the possible dissolution of the entity.

The reasoning behind the push from the Board of Fire Commissioners to dissolve is rooted in tax costs for the professional firefighter service. If the plan does go through, the Town of Victor would be responsible for securing protection for the gap in the district.

News 8 spoke with the Victor town supervisor last week about the plan in place should the Fishers Fire District go away. He said the town is working with partnering agencies.

Town Supervisor Jack Marren also sent a letter to the Board of Commissioners asking for more time. If the vote favors in dissolving the fire district, it would do so at the end of August. Town leaders are asking for an extension to the end of December.

Ahead of Wednesday's meeting and expected vote, Fishers Fire District Assistant Chief Michael Koch released a statement Tuesday evening, stating for the past few weeks, he has been "fearing the devastating impact that will be imposed upon [the] community."

FULL STATEMENT FROM ASSISTANT CHIEF MICHAEL KOCH:

"For the past several weeks, I have been fearing the devastating impact that will be imposed upon our community if the fire commissioners take an action that will eliminate our current emergency response services.

Despite the concerns regarding the obvious vulnerability and associated life-threatening consequences that have been expressed countless times by operational staff, as well as District citizens and businesses, the fire commissioners appear to be prepared to demonstrate a gross error in judgement.

The vision, view and actions of the commissioners, sworn public officials, has been at best obscured, and more accurately completely steered, by an agenda that is not in line with public safety interests, but rather some other motivation or priority.

This decision is nothing other than reckless and is not about an allocation of resources, but rather a grievance. When those privileged to serve and protect the community's well-being abuse their authority and abdicate their responsibility, they should resign as they are no longer able to execute sensible judgment.

My perspective is an informed one. As a chief officer serving our community, I know that any one of the more the 1,300 calls for service represent an important need; those needs are all treated with urgency.

While I am a member of the volunteer cadre myself, the ability to respond with anything less than what we currently provide as a career combination department, carries the very real likelihood that responses will be operationally delayed, tactically flawed, or technically inadequate.

While a volunteer's responsibility to provide this critical community service reflects a sustained love for their neighbors there is an unvarnished truth: in the absence of full-time career fire fighters in the Fishers Fire District, we will not be safer, we will be compromised.

A vote in favor of dissolution of the Fishers Fire District shows lack of transparency and abandonment of logic. If this is the planned action of the commissioners they should stand down, as they have walked away from their post."

Assistant Chief Michael Koch, Fishers Fire District

The Board of Commissioners for the Fishers Fire District also released a statement Tuesday, saying the district is financially stable now, but rising long-term costs—especially retiree healthcare—could make it unsustainable without major tax hikes.

FINANCIAL BACKGROUND AND COMPARISONS

- The Town of Victor has two fire districts, the Fishers District and Victor District.
- Over the last 10 years, the Fishers Fire District tax levy has more than tripled: moving from \$1.6 million in 2015 to \$5.3 million in 2025. This reflects staffing of 26 full-time firefighters and others.
- In 2025, a \$400k house in the Fishers Fire District would pay \$1,439 a year in fire taxes. A similar home in the Victor Fire District would pay \$636 a year.
- The Victor Fire District budget is \$1.6 million, with 3 full-time firefighters.
- The City of Canandaigua Fire Department budget is \$3.7 Million for 2025. This includes 20 full-time firefighters who cover the entire City and a portion of the town.
- Although not exact comparisons, it begs the question of why Fishers costs are so high.

Looking ahead at future costs

- Although difficult to predict future costs, if the District continues to operate as currently structured, the tax levy is projected to triple again within 15 years.
- The District will also be responsible for providing healthcare coverage for all future retirees and their families. For each of our 26 positions, the district could be paying healthcare costs for both current employees and multiple sets of retirees – as firefighters can retire after 20 years with lifetime healthcare for themselves and their families.

- In the next several years, the district will begin incurring permanent obligations that will lead to annual retiree healthcare expenses that will exceed \$5 million per year— an amount that would double our current tax burden, even before accounting for other rising costs.

A QUESTION OF FAIRNESS

- The Town of Victor has a contract with Victor Farmington Ambulance to provide Emergency Medical Services (EMS) for the entire town. The costs for these services are already included in the town tax paid by residents of both the Fishers and Victor Districts.
- We have requested that an ambulance be stationed at one of our stations, or on the north side of Victor, to help ensure similar response times across the entire town.
- It is also worth noting that Fishers residents pay the costs to provide EMS support for the Eastview Mall and the Route 96 retail corridor, even though all of Victor—and even Ontario County—benefit from the sales tax revenue generated there.
- We believe there is a cost-effective and equitable solution for the Town of Victor and Victor Farmington Ambulance to address these EMS concerns in the near term. This should be funded through a Town of Victor and Ontario County cost-sharing approach as discussed with the Town Supervisor.

BOARD ACTIONS

Given the above, the current Board of Commissioners has explored numerous options, including consolidation and cost reductions, to avoid potentially dissolving the District.

Although a previous Fishers Board rejected a merger with Victor in 2018, this Board has strongly supported efforts to combine our district with others in order to share our high service levels, reduce overlapping equipment needs and spread costs over a larger area.

Specifically:

- We have approached the Victor Fire District twice over the past two years, but requests for discussions with two different Board Chairmen have been rejected.
- We actively participated in a regional merger attempt with Mendon and Honeoye Falls. Despite our support for consolidation, this effort was not successful.

From a cost perspective, this Board has been very diligent throughout the budget cycle and thoroughly reviews all proposed expenses. One of our key challenges is the high cost structure associated with the current organization and operation of the department. We have attempted to address this issue in previous discussions, including as recently as June 11, 2025, but our efforts have been declined.

We believe it is important for all stakeholders to understand the background and rationale that has brought the Fishers Fire Board of Commissioners to this point.

The District wishes to address misinformation that is being shared with residents:

- It is falsely being stated that 911 calls will go unanswered. The Town of Victor has a plan in development to ensure Fire and Rescue coverage is maintained district wide as is required by NY State law.
- Emergency Medical Services (EMS) is not going away. Residents within the District will continue to receive services through the Town of Victor contract with Victor Farmington Ambulance, which the residents pay for as part of their Town taxes.
- The District is in strong financial condition, with reserves, cash balances and zero debt. The District is independently audited with the results publicly available. Firefighters have not been prevented from going to EMS calls when requested by
- Victor Farmington Ambulance or other agencies seeking mutual aid. The only change is that we no longer automatically respond to low priority EMS calls when VFA also responds.
- The Board did not receive any offers by the Union to address staffing levels in 2023
- All Commissioners are residents and taxpayers in the Fishers Fire District.

Ontario County Sheriff David Cirencione also weighed in on the conversation, expressing “concern” and highlighting the experience of the firefighters and officers that respond to calls.

Finger Lake Ambulance released a statement in support for the Fishers Fire District to continue, and are voicing “serious concern regarding any proposal to dissolve this essential agency.”

The public hearing takes place Wednesday, July 16 at 7 p.m. at 380 High Street in Victor.

[Spectrum News Staff](#)

Hundreds turned out Wednesday evening to a public hearing for the Fishers Fire District Board of Commissioners.

The hearing comes after a proposal was made to dissolve the fire district in the Ontario County hamlet, citing future financial instability as a main concern.

Arguments on both sides of the proposal were made during the packed meeting.

"Do you wanna wait 10 minutes for a firetruck to respond if you have an emergency? How much damage do you think a fire can cause to a home in 10 minutes?" asked one woman in attendance.

"Please, stop panicking," another woman pleaded. "Stop letting them scare you and do this. Let the town do their job."

If the plan is voted in, the dissolution would not take effect until the end of August.

The Victor Fire District would take responsibility for the residents in the Fishers Fire District, as well as its fire stations and equipment. The district says it's talking regularly with the town of Victor about what changes this could mean for coverage should Fishers dissolve.

The Fishers Fire District has been around since 1921.

Webinar: Fire Apparatus Operator Liability

Join Curt Varone as he examines litigation data and raises awareness on criminal charges brought against fire apparatus operator.

Date: Tuesday, August 5, 2025

Time: 1:00 PM

Duration: 1 Hour

REGISTER AT THIS LINK:

https://endeavor.dragonforms.com/loading.do?omedasite=FH WC_VectorSolutions_08052025

A certificate of attendance will be offered.

Operating emergency vehicles is one of the biggest areas of fire service liability. This webinar will focus on lawsuits brought against fire departments and firefighters personally for apparatus accidents. Fire chief and attorney Curt Varone will also examine the most common criminal charges brought against apparatus operators, including manslaughter, reckless driving, DUI, speeding, and red light/stop sign violations — the factors which are often overlooked in apparatus crashes. Whether you're an engineer, on the promotion list or an officer/chief, this session will review litigation data and examine numerous case studies to help you understand the important issues you could face the next time the bells ring and how to prevent them. Bring your questions to the live session on Aug. 5

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

POSITIVE OUTCOMES

Tough week.

FIRE SERVICE CHALLENGES

[\\$500K Fire Engine Likely Ruined After Stalling Out In Maryland Floodwaters](#)

Paul Wagner, News 4

A fire engine that cost more than a half million dollars was likely ruined in floodwaters over the weekend, and the firefighter who drove it is under investigation.

Firefighters on the engine were trying to rescue people from a partially submerged car at Washington Avenue and East-West Highway in Silver Spring, Maryland, Saturday night, according to the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service.

As floodwater surrounded the car, good Samaritans rushed to help, pulling one person out of a passenger window while trying to calm others who were still inside the car.

The firefighters drove into the deep water, sending water gushing up onto its windshield. Its wake appeared to rock the partially submerged car.

Everyone was safely removed from the car, but the firefighters on the engine knew they were not going to be able to drive back out. The engine stalled, and the crew called for a tow.

The engine most likely is ruined, Fire Chief Corey Smedley told News4. As with all incidents with fire apparatus, the firefighter driving the engine has been placed on a non-driving status but has not been placed on administrative leave, and the incident is under review.

Mechanics are looking to see if the engine can be salvaged, but Smedley said that's unlikely.

[PERHAPS A COURSE IN COMMON SENSE SPONSORED BY THE IAFF IS IN ORDER]

Strike at Sutphen Forces Columbus, OH, to Switch to Pierce for Aerial

Susan Nicol

Columbus is purchasing a ladder truck from Pierce not from Sutphen as originally planned.

Due to an ongoing strike at Sutphen, city officials made the switch and withdrew its contract during a meeting Monday night.

They then inked a deal with Atlantic Emergency Solutions to buy one made by Pierce Manufacturing, The Columbus Dispatch reported, adding that the cost is now \$2,589,077 instead of \$2,515,613.

"The most important thing to this City Council is getting equipment to our firefighters," Councilmember Emmanuel Remy, chair of council's Public Safety Committee said.

Likewise, City Council President Shannon G. Hardin explained: "Given the urgent needs raised by our Division of Fire, we must move forward with a new contract to ensure our firefighters have the equipment they need to protect our growing city as soon as possible." Sutphen officials wrote in a statement: "At Sutphen, our mission remains building the safest, most reliable fire apparatus in the world – not engaging in politics." "...We are proud of our long-standing relationship with the Columbus Division of Fire and will continue to support the maintenance and readiness of their existing fleet. If and when the City of Columbus decides to purchase another fire apparatus from Sutphen Corporation, they know how to reach us."

Two Fired After GA FD Ladder Truck Crash

Jonathan Miller

A Walker County (GA) Fire Rescue ladder truck tipped over and caught fire recently, newschannel9.com reported.

Georgia State Patrol (GSP) cited the driver of the apparatus, a mechanic, for not having the proper license to drive the rig. The driver and his supervisor were fired after the crash, the news report said.

According to newschannel9.com, a Georgia State Patrol report states that the Director of Fleet Management in Walker County, Ricky Carr, said he gave mechanic John Chance Pendergrass permission to take the fire apparatus out for a test drive that day. Carr told investigators that he believed Pendergrass had the correct license to drive the fire truck.

Pendergrass was test driving the vehicle, wanting to clear up a brake issue, according to the GSP report. As the rig approached train tracks, the driver attempted to stop at a stop sign but the brakes failed. The driver lost control of the truck going over the railroad tracks, dropped off an embankment, and the vehicle turned over on its side and caught fire.

RETENTION AND RECRUITMENT



NVFC Webinar - Fire Up Your Recruitment Game: Harnessing Digital Tools for Recruitment Success

Thursday, Aug 7, 2025 02:00 PM

In today's challenging recruitment landscape, volunteer fire departments face unprecedented hurdles in attracting and retaining dedicated volunteers. In this webinar, presenter Katie Bulla will discuss a variety of free and cheap online tools that can significantly simplify recruitment efforts and the application process. Harness the technology of today to overcome the recruitment challenges of our times, ensuring your department continues to serve the community effectively. Learn how these digital solutions can help you bridge the gap between potential volunteers and your department's needs, ultimately strengthening your team and ensuring the safety of your community.

REGISTER AT THE FOLLOWING LINK:

https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_wWLe0KGBRyGp4PZ6O5K3cA#/registration

FF HEALTH AND SAFETY – TAKING CARE OF OUR MEMBERS!

*IN 2025 WE HAVE EXPERIENCED **47** FIRE FIGHTER LODD'S*

*According to FirefighterCloseCalls.com**

In 2024 we experienced 64 LODDs reported nationally.!

New Research From University Of Arizona Uncovers Gene Impacts Of PFAS Exposure In Firefighters

A new paper provides evidence of how PFAS, often called “forever chemicals,” correspond to epigenetic changes that can lead to cancers, neurological disorders and autoimmune conditions. Researchers at the University of Arizona Mel and Enid Zuckerman College of Public Health found that certain kinds of long-lasting chemicals firefighters are exposed to may affect the activity of genes linked to cancer and other diseases. The findings appear in the journal Environmental Research.

The study is among the first to connect common industrial chemicals called PFAS – per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances – to changes in microRNAs, or miRNAs, which are molecules that act as guardrails to help control gene expression.

PFAS are found in a wide range of products, including upholstery, insulation, electronics, cleaning products, fabrics, non-stick cookware – and firefighting foam and gear. Firefighters can be at higher risk for certain cancers, and exposure to toxic chemicals may be one reason why.

“Firefighters tend to have higher PFAS levels due to their occupational exposures,” said first author Melissa Furlong, PhD, an assistant professor of environmental health sciences at the Zuckerman College of Public Health and a member of both the University of Arizona Cancer Center and the Center for Firefighter Health Collaborative Research. “Gene activity can be affected by changes in the environment. We wanted to see the imprint of PFAS exposure on miRNAs and evaluate which ones might be associated with diseases.”

The scientists analyzed blood samples from 303 firefighters from six locations across the U.S. to measure levels of nine PFAS and corresponding miRNA activity. Changes in miRNAs can play roles in a range of different diseases, including cancers and neurological disorders.

They found that blood levels of certain PFAS in this group of firefighters were associated with changes in specific miRNA activity. The latter were connected to disease pathways for several cancers, neurological disorders and autoimmune conditions.

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

- Firefighter/Safety Officer Amie Lee, 61, was working in the fire station on July 1 when she fell and suffered a serious knee injury. On July 14, she experienced trouble breathing at her home. She was treated and transported to a hospital where she died, according to the U.S. Fire Administration. A pulmonary embolism related to her knee injury is believed to be a factor in her death..
- The St. Lucie County, Florida Fire District is honoring firefighter/paramedic Jarius Hodge with full line-of-duty honors following his death after a medical emergency while on shift

FIRE APPARATUS ACCIDENTS FOR THE WEEK

- A second Columbia-Richland Fire Department truck collision in recent days occurred Thursday morning near Harden and Lady streets in downtown Columbia. The Thursday crash resulted in the two occupants of the other vehicle being sent to a nearby hospital by EMS. They were sent “just as a precaution to be checked out,” the Columbia-Richland Fire Department said. No one in the firetruck was injured, the department said. The firetruck was not responding to a call at the time of the collision.
- According to the North Las Vegas Police Department, officers responded to East Cheyenne Avenue and Civic Center Drive just before 11:10 a.m. for a single-vehicle rollover crash that involved a fire truck. According to police, officers learned that the fire engine was responding to a house fire on the 2400 block of Salt Lake Street. Three firefighters suffered minor injuries and were transported to University Medical Center for evaluation, police said.

FIRE APPARATUS

Why Does A Fire Truck Cost \$2 Million?

Katherine Laidlaw

This past Valentine’s Day, a firefighter behind the wheel of an enormous ladder truck felt his brakes give out. He was driving in the heart of Chicago, on a busy city street, about to lose control of a truck that was supposed to help him save people’s lives. He looked around, panicked. The 25-year-old truck — and the nightmare — picked up speed.

He had three choices: drive into traffic, hit a local grammar school, or plow into the side of a church on the corner. He swerved, narrowly avoiding a pole, and picked the church.

“It was pretty tragic,” says **Pat Cleary**, president of the Chicago Fire Fighters Union Local 2. “We were just happy no one got injured.”

It wouldn’t be the last time something like this happened to one of the departments’ 96 rigs. Weeks later, another truck dropped a rear axle responding to a medical emergency. And in January, the department threw a mock 30th birthday for one of its trucks — it was older than many firefighters on the force.

For years, the Chicago fire department has struggled to repair and replace its aging fleet of trucks, the priciest of which now come at a cost of **\$2m+**.

And it’s not just in Chicago: Across the fire truck industry, *increased consolidation has led to spikes in demand, production delays and sky-high prices*, leaving departments nationwide scrambling to provide life-saving services to their citizens.

“There’s a monopoly in the business. They’re taking over,” Cleary says. “Civilians are going to suffer.”

HOW DID WE GET HERE?

Emergency vehicles didn’t start out as the custom builds driving down our streets today. Back in the 1950s, they were largely just trucks outfitted with special add-ons — ladders, pumps — to differentiate them from the vehicle that might deliver your furniture. Family-owned businesses sprung up across the country to serve a region’s specific needs, and competition kept prices low.

Fast forward 60 years, and those businesses were contending with aging founders, depleted municipal budgets, and declining fire-truck orders. Sensing an opportunity, a private equity group called American Industrial Partners (AIP) began to roll up the industry.

Wait: what's a roll up? It's when a company buys up a spate of smaller businesses and merges them together to create a conglomerate.

*AIP took its bundle and called it the **REV Group**, now one of the three leading manufacturers of fire trucks in the U.S. REV captures about a third of the country's \$3B in annual fire truck sales, with runner-up Oshkosh reporting revenue of \$767m (~26%) and Rosenbauer International at \$254m (~9%).*

After AIP's acquisitions, the company closed some manufacturing plants. They encouraged brands to share designs, limiting available options. And in the meantime, exacerbated by COVID, the production bottleneck grew, which gave the companies more control over prices and supply.

What does that mean for the industry?

- **Rising prices:** by the mid-2010s, the average engine truck cost **\$300k to \$500k**. Today, they cost more than **\$1m**. Ladder trucks, now mostly built custom, are even more expensive: as high as **\$2m**.
- **Production backlogs:** New vehicles are taking two to 4.5 years from order to delivery.
- **Shifting contracts:** "Here's the real crime: now they have what they call floating prices," says Ed Kelly, general president of the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF). *Because of production backlogs, companies have included clauses in contracts that mean they can change the price of an order long after it's been placed.*

The result has left departments across the country struggling. In 2023, Evanston, Illinois, spent \$2.3m on their latest rig to replace an 18-year-old reserve truck. Storm Lake, in Iowa, recently committed \$2.8m over ten years to replace a ladder truck that's 35 years old. When an audit last year found Atlanta firefighters were using pick-up trucks because so many of their rigs were out of service, the city earmarked \$18m to bolster its fleet.

When Ann Arbor, Michigan, approved spending \$2.4m on a new truck, the fire chief told reporters: "the price of fire trucks has become bonkers."

It also means fire departments are now competing against one another for the vehicles, leaving municipalities and the public to pay the price.

In January, as wildfires ravaged L.A., its fire chief appeared on national news to explain that **100+** of its ~200 fire trucks were sitting out of commission on a nearby lot. They'd fallen into disrepair, or were too old to keep on the road, and the department couldn't afford to fix or replace them.

Later that month, Texas anti-trust lawyer Basel Musharbash asked "Did a private equity fire truck roll-up worsen the L.A. fires?", and it thrust an issue, departments across the country were contending with into the national conversation.

BROTHERS HELPING BROTHERS

Nick Magoteaux, a retired Ohio firefighter who runs Brothers Helping Brothers (BHB), an organization that raises money and donates equipment to small and rural fire departments across the U.S., sees how detrimental the shift in prices has been, particularly on volunteer departments without the funding of bigger municipalities.

In the U.S., **~70%** of fire departments are volunteer-run. "Our department was pretty strapped for cash. A lot of times we'd be trying to make ends meet, trying to find equipment for our team," he says. When his friend and fellow firefighter, Art Springer, passed away, he founded BHB in his honor.

Magoteaux serves departments that typically have budgets of under **\$100k/year** and says that the grants those teams once relied on now seem increasingly uncertain as government cuts persist. Instead of buying new, he says, many of those departments are turning to used trucks that cost between **\$50k and \$200k**. (The National Fire Protection Association guidelines say fire trucks should be no more than 15 years old.)

But it's a patchwork solution that tends to end the same way: with a department taking out hundreds of thousands in financing to fund a new rig.

"Every department is facing these issues," he says. "Departments are struggling." And, he says, it's not just trucks that are being affected. Dispatch software, vehicle parts and repairs, and personal protective equipment manufacturing are all being consolidated, leading to rising prices and scarcity across the industry.

ANTI-TRUST ACTION?

Ed Kelly was one of those kids who always dreamed of being a firefighter. As a boy, he looked up to his grandfather, father, and uncle who all did the job. Today, in addition to his work at Boston's Fire Department, he's the general president of the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF).

He sees the issue from the boardroom and on the ground working shifts at the fire station. *In Boston, for example, Kelly says they've run out of spare fire trucks to swap in when an apparatus ages out, so they've taken to riding around in pickup trucks with masks, hoses, and ladders piled in the back.*

"If you're hanging out the window on the fifth floor, we can't get you on a ground ladder," he says. "You're jumping."

Back in May, the IAFF co-authored a strongly worded letter to the Department of Justice, alongside the American Economic Liberties Project, urging them to investigate what it called an aggressive consolidation effort over the last decade.

Kelly says they've seen some progress: Senator Elizabeth Warren got on board, and so did Senator Josh Hawley across the aisle, sending a letter requesting more information from the big three manufacturers.

REV Group told *The Hustle* that inflation, COVID backlogs, and labor shortages have all contributed to rising prices and increased demand.

Orders were up 43% from 2011 to 2023, a REV Group spokesperson pointed out, and they've introduced new training and modular build options to lessen the load. "Our team has worked hard to overcome these obstacles and are making good progress," she said.

In the meantime, departments from Atlanta to Seattle to Los Angeles are contending with fleets that threaten to endanger the firefighters and the public they aim to serve.

"The industry will say, 'Oh, it's all supply chain,'" Kelly says.

"That's all B.S. It's about consolidation."

BUILDING CODE ISSUES AND REPORTED FIRE FATALITIES

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

An awfully expensive price to pay to save money. Stop the carnage, install residential sprinklers.

Residential sprinklers are a component of the plumbing system, with approximately 1 head per room. The purpose of residential sprinklers is to allow time for the occupants to escape.

Residential sprinklers are designed for quick response and only one at the most two heads may be triggered. With residential sprinklers present, the civilian death rate is 89% LOWER. Residential sprinklers will assist responding firefighters to do their jobs and save firefighters lives also, especially since everyone is short staffed!!

CHIEFS NEED TO SPEAK UP: Our fire problem would not be as bad if there were residential sprinklers!!

HOME FIRE FATALITIES REPORTED BY THE MEDIA FROM THE US FIRE ADMINISTRATION FOR 2025	
Fire Deaths in 1&2 Family Dwellings in NYS	44
Last fire death 7/8/25 Hopewell, Ontario, Co. Female, 70	
Fire Deaths in any type of Dwelling in NYS	76
Fire Deaths in 1&2 Family Dwellings Nationally	613
Top 3 States with the greatest 1&2 Family Deaths	#1 PA/49
	#2 NY/44
	#3 IL/36
Civilian home fire fatalities in 2025: 1247	
2046 civilian home fire fatalities in 2024	
Week 30 of 2025, fire has claimed on an average 41 lives PER WEEK.	

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?

MA Assisted Living Facility Sprinklers Checked Five Days Before Fire that Killed 10

Grace Zokovitch, Boston Herald

The owners of the Gabriel House Assisted Living Facility said their sprinklers and fire suppression system were last checked just five days before a tragic blaze trapped and killed 10 people.

"One focus of the investigation has been the status of the building's fire suppression system, or sprinkler system, and investigators have taken several sprinkler heads for further investigation," said George Regan, spokesperson for the Gabriel House, on Monday. "Among the information we have provided is documentation of regular tests of the sprinklers by the vendor, the most recent of which was performed on July 8 of this year. That test found the sprinkler system to be in working order."

Nine residents of the Fall River facility died in the fire on the night of Sunday, July 13, and another resident died of her injuries in the hospital on Friday, marking the deadliest fire in Massachusetts in over 40 years. Over 30 residents were injured in the blaze.

No result of the state and local investigation into the cause of the fire have been released as of Monday. Advocates have pointed to a number of concerns regarding the incident, including staffing levels at the fire department and the building's safety citations from the state.

On Monday, the Bristol County DA announced a press conference scheduled for Tuesday afternoon "related to certain preliminary findings of the Gabriel House Assisted Living Facility fire investigation."

The DA's office said the "fire investigation remains active and ongoing."

"Ensuring the safety of our residents has always been our paramount responsibility since our purchase of Gabriel House in late 1999," said Regan, noting the fire suppression system underwent "quarterly inspections." The owners said they have worked closely with state and local fire investigators and provided all records related to the building's safety.

Gov. Maura Healey also announced a Fire and Life Safety Initiative on Friday, ordering the state's 273 assisted living facilities to issue letters with safety details within five business days and complete state fire safety assessment survey.

The Gabriel House owner's statement said their "hearts are broken for the victims and their families; their losses will never be forgotten."

The facility ownership is providing temporary housing to displaced residents, the statement said, adding they have been proud "knowing that we make assisted living possible for many community members in need who might not otherwise be able to obtain that assistance."

Gabriel House was home to 70 residents, and firefighters arrived at the scene to find many hanging out of the windows of the three-story building, screaming for help.

"We will continue to provide investigators with whatever assistance they need," Regan's statement said. "We, like them, realize the importance of knowing exactly what caused this catastrophe, and if there were factors that made it worse. Our community, our residents, and most of all, the families who have suffered these unimaginable losses deserve nothing less."

****Smoking, Oxygen Tank Eyed as Possible Causes of Deadly Fall River, MA, Fire**

Charlie McKenna

The exact cause of the fire at the Gabriel House assisted living facility in Fall River may never be known, but investigators have narrowed the cause down to two possibilities, officials announced Tuesday afternoon.

The fire, which killed 10 people and injured at least 30, began in the second-floor room of a resident and was caused by either an electrical or mechanical failure of an oxygen concentrator in the resident's room or the improper use or disposal of smoking materials. Since investigators could not pinpoint one specific cause, it will remain undetermined, State Fire Marshal Jon M. Davine said Tuesday.

It is clear, though, that the presence of medical oxygen inside the assisted living facility contributed to the severity of the fire, believed to be the deadliest residential fire in Massachusetts in four decades.

“There’s truly no safe way to smoke, but smoking is especially dangerous when home oxygen is in use,” Davine said. “No one should smoke around medical oxygen.”

“We have oxygen throughout that building, so that contributed to the speed of that fire,” he added.

Home oxygen is responsible for about 20 fire deaths in Massachusetts over the past decade, and roughly three dozen injuries, Davine said, though it is suspected in more. Smoking materials are the leading cause of fatal fires in Massachusetts and nationwide.

Inside the room where the fire broke out, which is on the left side of the left wing of the building, investigators found a damaged battery-powered scooter, which is not believed to be the cause. Investigators found no evidence of an intentionally lit fire and no evidence that cooking, lighting, heating, electrical outlets or other appliances contributed.

There was no evidence of candles or incense inside the room, Davine said.

Investigators won’t reveal which room the fire broke out in but confirmed that the resident who lived there was one of the 10 victims of the fire. Officials declined to answer Tuesday when asked if the deaths were contained to one side of the building.

Jeffrey Bacon, the city’s fire chief, has said previously that victims were found throughout the building, but particularly on its east side.

The fire broke out around 9:40 p.m. on July 13 at the assisted living facility at 261 Oliver St. in Fall River. More than a week after the fire on Tuesday, numerous candles lined the chain link fence erected outside the facility as part of a makeshift memorial to the victims.

It is still not clear if the sprinklers inside the building worked as designed. Davine, Bristol County District Attorney Tom Quinn and Fall River Fire Chief Jeffrey Bacon said that was part of the ongoing investigation into the fire.

Multiple residents have claimed the sprinkler system was working inconsistently during the fire, and police body camera footage seemed to back up those claims. The building’s owners said the system was in working order just days before the fire.

“Nothing will undo what happened at Gabriel House, but we can do everything in our power to understand it and prevent it from ever happening again,” Davine said Tuesday.

Quinn would not answer questions on whether smoking was banned at the facility. Family members told MassLive some residents smoked in their rooms.

Many of the residents at Gabriel House had mobility issues, further complicating firefighting efforts. When some first responding firefighters arrived, residents were screaming out their windows for help.

Sanitary and safety issues plagued the building, including cockroaches and a perceived absence of emergency planning, which were detailed by residents, family members and documents provided by the city.

Neighbors of the assisted living facility told MassLive that they heard residents screaming for help on the third floor of the facility and rushed to the building with ladders. They helped firefighters pull a man out of a room through a window.

A spokesperson for the Gabriel House ownership issued a statement on Monday.

“There are no words to adequately convey the depths of our grief and shock over the devastating events of July 13 at the Gabriel House. Indeed, to call what occurred that night a tragedy is an understatement. Our hearts are broken for the victims and their families; their losses will never be forgotten,” the statement reads.

A lawsuit filed Monday accuses Gabriel Care of negligence. Steven Oldrid, who lived in a studio apartment at the Fall River assisted living facility, said in the lawsuit that he’s had additional expenses for his hospitalization and treatment, and his ability to engage in daily activities has been affected.

A spokesman for Gabriel House, which is owned by Dennis D. Etzkorn, did not immediately respond to a request for comment regarding the lawsuit.

Earlier in the day on Tuesday, the state announced it intends to provide Fall River a grant worth \$1.2 million to help boost staffing levels in its fire department. The money going to the city is coming out of a pool of \$5.7 million allocated for 10 communities across the state through its Municipal Public Safety Staffing Program.

“We’re expediting this in light of the tragedy, again, with significant funding going to Fall River as well as going to nine other communities that are eligible by law,” Healey said. “All of us ... are of the deep view that no family, no resident, no community, should ever have to suffer or live with fear that something like this could happen to them or to their loved one.”

GREEN TECHNOLOGY & THE FIRE SERVICE

Tesla Charging Unit Sparks Massive Inferno In Texas Garage, Severely Damaging Home

Danielle Wallace, Bonny Chu, Fox News

The city of Lewisville, Texas, confirmed Tuesday that a Tesla charging unit sparked a massive garage fire that caused extensive damage to a home.

The two-alarm fire broke out around 12:30 p.m. on Monday, a city spokesman told Fox News Digital.

"The fire on Monday, July 21, in Lewisville, Texas, was started by the car charger device in the garage," spokesman Matt Martucci said, adding that the "intense" flames primarily damaged a second vehicle — a Lexus parked inside the garage — and the upper floors of the home. Footage from the scene shows the Lexus pulled out onto the driveway completely burned and a charred home with visible holes in the roof.

The homeowner said she had just returned home when she plugged in her Tesla and saw her charging unit catching on fire, according to Martucci.

She quickly moved the Tesla out of the garage and parked it down the street, where it remained undamaged, Martucci added.

However, the flames from the charging unit continued to spread rapidly — engulfing the nearby Lexus, climbing upward into a game room located above the garage and finally extending into the attic and upper portions of the home. No one was injured, and firefighters had the blaze under control by 1:15 p.m., Martucci said.

Investigators are working to determine what caused the charging unit to ignite.

RECRUITMENT IS EVERYONE'S JOB

5 Recruiting Lessons Fire And EMS Can Borrow From Rotary International

Greg Friese

Retention of existing members and recruitment of new firefighters and EMTs is a top challenge facing nearly every volunteer fire department and EMS agency in the United States. Fire and EMS are not alone in the need for new members. Community groups, like Rotary clubs, are facing challenges in retaining and recruiting new members.

Tom Gump, a longtime Rotarian and aide to the Rotary International president, presented the approach Rotary International is taking to help its 46,000 clubs around the world retain current members and recruit new members at the 2023 Rotary TriCon conference in La Crosse, Wisconsin. Rotary's 1.4 million worldwide members take action on our world's most persistent issues, including promoting peace, fighting diseases like polio, supporting education and making sure people have access to clean water.

Gump delivered an information-packed session to Rotarians from throughout Wisconsin and Michigan's upper peninsula. Here are five recommendations from Gump's presentation that are applicable to recruitment of volunteer firefighters and EMTs.

FOCUS ON IMPACT, NOT OUTCOME

Putting out a fire is an outcome of an all-volunteer fire department responding to a residential structure fire, but the department's community impact far exceeds extinguishing the fire. The impact of response, search, rescue and suppression can include saving and prolonging lives; returning valued members of the community to work, school and service; and the intangible and immeasurable timeless value of neighbors helping their neighbors.

As your department **creates and delivers recruitment messages**, always focus on the department's community impact and make sure it aligns with the top reasons people serve in public safety, which are making the difference in the lives of others and serving their communities. Those are noble impacts, not outcomes.

Tell compelling stories about impact

Are you telling stories about your agency's impact on your social media page and website? How do you explain the department's impact during stakeholder meetings and community events?

Look at your recent social posts and assess if they showcase outcome or impact. A post showing EMTs practicing their CPR skills demonstrates an outcome of training, learning and retaining CPR skills. A post about a cardiac arrest survivor and their family reuniting with the 911 dispatcher, EMTs, firefighters and police officers who responded shows impact. Showcase your personnel making an impact in the community to recruit other members of the community who want to make a similar impact.

CREATE OPPORTUNITIES PEOPLE WANT TO BE A PART OF

The first step to strengthening and growing your department is to retain current members. Gump encouraged attendees to shift their focus from gaining new members to delivering value and engaging current members. One way to do this is to create position descriptions which increase transparency and give people opportunities to aspire to. A position description should include training or education requirements, as well as the pathway to reach that position.

Of course, your department needs firefighters and EMTs, but your department also needs mechanics, marketers, accountants and fundraisers. Does a mechanic need to be cross trained as a firefighter? Can you create an opportunity for a social media expert to be part of your department without responding to 911 calls? Successful all-volunteer organizations create opportunities for involvement by matching volunteers' skills with the department's needs. An accountant can achieve the outcome of auditing and tracking the department's finances while also contributing to the department's impact of community service and lifesaving.

Beyond application of their professional skills, these members can help plan and run fundraisers, serve on committees and deliver public education programs. It is also possible that once these members feel like they belong in the organization and are making an impact, that they will choose to complete Firefighter I or EMT training.

CULTURE IS CRITICAL TO VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT, RETENTION

Gump explained the findings of a recent Rotary International survey of tens of thousands of Rotarians. According to Gump, the top reason people leave Rotary isn't the organization's mission, but because they feel like they don't fit with the club's culture and are missing a sense of belonging.

Volunteer or paid, firefighters and EMTs don't quit organizations; they quit bad leaders and bad culture. Department leadership needs to be mindful of creating a culture that is welcoming, gives members an opportunity to make an impact and celebrates contributions from all members. Department leaders should also encourage new recruits to bring a friend or family member to the department. The more people who can affirmatively answer, "this department has people like me," the better for the health and success of the department.

MAKE SURE PEOPLE ARE HAVING FUN

"Offer a good experience that people want to be a part of," Gump said. "If the experience isn't enjoyable ... people will leave."

Fire calls and EMS runs are rarely type 1 fun, which is fun in the moment. A child giggling on a swing is having type 1 fun. A department softball team competing against a neighboring department team is likely having type 1 fun as the game is played.

Responding to a fire or EMS call at 2 a.m. is more likely to be type 2 fun, which is when you look back on an experience that was physically or mentally challenging in the moment, but, with distance and reflection, your memories are of having fun. Moving a patient from their bed to the ambulance is rarely fun at the moment, but the teamwork, sense of accomplishment and making a difference for the patient's health often result in type 2 fun.

Station clean-up, rig checks or drills shouldn't make people miserable. Instead, when appropriate, add some music, good-natured competition or a change of routine to add type 1 or type 2 fun to the experience. If members of your department, especially new members, aren't having fun and feeling energized as they volunteer, they are going to be difficult to retain. More importantly, do you want to retain people that find department membership to be miserable, soul-sucking and exhausting?

LOOK OUTSIDE FIRE AND EMS

Fire and EMS can learn from other organizations, like Rotary, who are looking for volunteers. Don't consider other community groups as competitors, but potential collaborators for recruitment drives, fundraisers and

public education events. When your mission, in part or in full, overlaps with another organization, they are a potential partner to help your fire department or EMS agency create meaningful opportunities for community members to serve others and give back to the community.

STUFF FOR YOUR OFFICERS AND MEMBERS!



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>

National Fire Protection Association Webinar

A Comprehensive View of Renewable Energy Installations Through the Lens of the Electrical Cycle of Safety

Tuesday, July 29, 2025

12:00 PM Eastern Daylight Time

1 hour

REGISTER AT THE FOLLOWING LINK:

https://event.on24.com/wcc/r/4893775/4727F8AA54981A958884C7D552CF3CFD?partnerref=email&utm_source=email&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=email0344&utm_content=webi&order_src=e811



Webinar - Fire Up Your Recruitment Game: Harnessing Digital Tools for Recruitment Success

Aug. 7 at 2pm ET

Presenter: Katie Bulla



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>

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

NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS

Gansevoort Fire Department Breakfast

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

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, thanks.

GENERAL INTEREST

Specifying Single vs. Combination Fire Apparatus

Mark Miller

Often, the only metric that's considered by an apparatus purchasing committee in determining whether a single-role or combination fire apparatus is needed is the availability of staffing. Although significant, several other items must be taken into account to ensure that you purchase the correct apparatus for your response area.

BEYOND STAFFING

Fire department staffing varies greatly across the country. Staffing can comprise volunteers, paid on-call, part-time and/or career. You must be realistic with current staffing and deployment models, because most staffing numbers likely never will increase over what they are today. Many major urban centers successfully run combination apparatus, while many suburban organizations successfully run single-role apparatus.

Additional metrics that are utilized in the specification of single-role versus combination fire apparatus are regional geography, previous incident data and department capabilities.

REGIONAL GEOGRAPHY

Regional geography begins with the community's setting, such as urban, suburban and rural. The metric also includes population density, development densities and station distribution.

Urban departments typically are afforded the luxury of specifying task-specific apparatus. This includes traditional engines and trucks and special service apparatus. Because of increased population and development densities, closer fire station distribution generally plays a role in regional geography, too. In other words, the appropriate aid (apparatus) generally isn't that far away.

To close gaps in coverage, it isn't uncommon for combination apparatus to be specified by an urban department to become part of a tiered response system. This includes rescue-engines (squads) and quint apparatus of all types.

The regional geography of suburban departments can vary greatly, and in many metropolitan regions, the line for the suburban/urban interface is becoming blurred, because the major metropolitan centers are running out of available land for development.

Often, the infrastructure of the suburban region, including fire station density and fire company staffing levels, lags behind development. This "maturity" of the region can dictate how fire apparatus is designed. More mature regions often are capable of utilizing single-role apparatus, whereas newer regions can tend to rely on combination apparatus.

Rural fire departments arguably have the most difficult time ensuring adequate daily staffing levels. They also lack the substantial population density and development densities to support 24-hour on-station staffing. To this point, it normally isn't feasible for rural departments to purchase single-role apparatus. Rescue-engines (squads) and engine-tenders are becoming the norm in many of these communities because of the daily fluctuation of staffing and the increased distance that's at play in the distribution of fire stations. Often, only a single unit might be available to respond during normal work hours.

POPULATION DENSITY

Population density is the concentration of individuals in a defined geographical area. This figure can be measured by the square mile or, for smaller developments, by the square acre.

A community's current and projected population densities have a direct correlation to a company's call volume. The population's density can either increase, decrease or remain relatively static. Gathering this information for the apparatus that the members of the apparatus purchasing committee are specifying is essential. Most municipal zoning departments can generate real-time information relatively quickly.

Conversely, development density is measured by the number of dwelling units that are in a defined geographical area, again measured by the square mile or square acre.

In the context of planning, municipalities often set density limits to control the intensity of a development, such as its height, bulk and setbacks. The fire department should know these density limits and ensure that its response apparatus have the capability to protect all occupancy types in a response area.

STATION DISTRIBUTION

Having a grasp on station distribution allows you to know what resources are available and where any gaps and/or overlaps in coverage and by service type exist. Utilizing [*NFPA 1710: Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the*](#)

[Public by Career Fire Departments](#) and [NFPA 1720: Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Volunteer Fire Departments](#) aids the apparatus purchasing committee greatly regarding station distribution.

Given that we all should be operating under seamless borders at this point no matter our regional geography, neighboring communities' stations and apparatus should be taken into account by the apparatus purchasing committee. An unbiased look at mutual-aid response times to specific target hazards and developments within your community, including the closest, most appropriate companies to an incident scene, must be analyzed.

The correlations to specification from a community's regional geography, associated densities and station distributions are many. The farther that your response district is from an urban center the more that the likelihood of purchasing combination apparatus increases. This is significant, too, when determining water tank sizes for pumping apparatus.

Population densities have a direct correlation to call volumes for both fire and EMS responses as well as infrastructure congestion. Development densities correlate to the size of the apparatus, wheelbase, turning radius, hoseline and portable ladder packages as well as aerial length, types and outrigger configurations.

INCIDENT DATA

The four main areas that should be considered for data from previous incidents for both response zones/districts and individual fire companies are: quantity of annual responses; types of responses; actions that are taken at these responses; and average annual miles and hours per company.

The quantity of annual responses for your individual response zones/districts is important to extract. Average response times into each district should be included. The average response times for the first-in engine, truck and special service companies must be separated and documented accordingly. Furthermore, the average response time for the entire first-alarm complement to arrive must be documented as well based on response package to structural fires. These combined data give you an accurate look into your department's actual coverage and exposes any overlaps and/or deficiencies by service type.

Of course, the types of responses vary greatly among individual response zones/districts and fire companies, so these data must be extracted and analyzed. Response out of multiple fire stations has a direct correlation to population and development densities. This is particularly true when an organization provides EMS to its community. As well, the consultation can change drastically by a zone/district's occupancy types.

DEPARTMENT CAPABILITIES

Actions that are taken by fire companies at emergency incidents is another data point that must be considered. It's important to ensure that company officers enter these data into the [National Fire Incident Reporting System](#) (NFIRS) accurately. To me, this is the way by which a department truly shows its worth as critical infrastructure in its community. Listing most actions that are taken as "investigation" makes it difficult for the administration to justify expenditures.

Data that derive from tracking the annual mileage and hours that are placed on fire companies greatly aid in the justification of increasing, decreasing or relocating a fire station and/or fire company. These same statistics also play a significant role in apparatus replacement and procurement cycles.

Placing complicated combination apparatus in busy fire stations has the propensity to drastically increase the vehicles' out-of-service time. Therefore, ensuring that you track and benchmark all of your apparatus' in-service time (uptime in fleet management) is imperative. There is a direct correlation between the complexity of an apparatus specification and the apparatus' annual in-service time throughout the vehicle's life cycle. In addition, this aids the members of the apparatus purchasing committee in their decision-making process.

The correlation to specification of previous incident data also is significant. Response quantity and type give you clear insight to the current and future needs of your apparatus. The actions that are taken by individual fire companies provides invaluable information about the specific duties that regularly are performed by fire companies. We have seen single-duty apparatus replaced by combination apparatus and vice versa.

Tracking fleet annual miles and hours over the life of apparatus provides accurate information on annual usage. Generally speaking, the busier that a company is the less complicated that the specification becomes. Again, there's a direct correlation between the complexity of a specification and a unit's out-of-service time.

DEPARTMENT SERVICES

Fire department services vary greatly across the United States and Canada: fire suppression, rapid intervention, EMS, wildland, vehicle extrication, technical rescue disciplines and hazmat mitigation, to name just a few.

Each service that's provided by a department (refer to your previous incident data) requires a very specific equipment package to ensure efficient and effective operations at the task level. The equipment package doesn't change if your apparatus-needs analysis steers you toward some type of combination apparatus. The equipment must meet the specified duties of the apparatus, because the equipment that's carried on the apparatus often is more important than the apparatus itself.

Defining an equipment package is fairly straight forward if you are specifying single-duty apparatus for any of the aforementioned disciplines. When specifying combination apparatus, early decisions must be made on which disciplines are to be covered by the apparatus.

No one apparatus type can carry all of the equipment that's required to mitigate each hazard that's encountered in the public-safety arena. In other words, a department only has a finite amount of storage capacity and weight around which to develop your equipment package.

It isn't uncommon to see the size and weight of an apparatus get away from the apparatus purchasing committee when it attempts to cover as many disciplines as possible with combination apparatus.

I'm a huge proponent of the division of labor on the fireground. However, we know that isn't always possible, and personnel and apparatus must wear many hats. This undoubtedly complicates things. Ensuring that you carry the needed equipment to efficiently and effectively complete the duties of the apparatus at the task level is essential. The last thing that you want as an administrator is for personnel to have to compromise the safety of an operation because you attempted to specify "all-in-one" apparatus—which isn't possible.

QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE

The goal of the apparatus purchasing committee is to ensure that apparatus will have a long, usable life. This not only increases the efficiency and effectiveness of personnel but their safety as well.

Specifying an apparatus is both qualitative and quantitative, and a department likely will have specific metrics that are required to aid in the decision-making process that aren't noted above. The process shouldn't be taken lightly.

LAUGH OUT LOUD!!

Remember when we used to laugh at the commercial, "I've fallen and I can't get up"? Ain't so funny anymore is it??

CLASSIFIED EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Greenfield Fire District is Hiring

The Greenfield Fire District is looking for a professional and highly-motivated person to perform a wide variety of functions relating to the material needs and possessions of the Greenfield Fire District. Must have good organization and communication skills, the ability to manage several projects simultaneously, and be flexible with work hours when necessary. Prior experience preferred and all candidates must have a clean driver's license. Individuals residing within Fire District Boundaries preferred. Employment application and job description can be found on the district website at www.greenfieldfd.org. Applications, or cover letters & resumes, will be accepted until the position is filled, and should be sent to Joyce Petkus, District Administrator via email at jpetkus@greenfieldfd.org or regular mail to Greenfield Fire District, P.O. Box 103 Greenfield Center, NY 12833.

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

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

CAFDA PO Box 242 East Schodack, NY 12063

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

518-407-5020

EMAIL SECRETARY: SECRETARY@CAFDA.NET

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

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..

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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 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	Fort William Henry Hotel & Conference Center, Lake George — Thurs-Sat. April 10-12, 2025
ANNUAL FALL SEMINAR	Verdoy Fire District — November 1, 2025 — 988 Troy-Schenectady Road, Latham

SOCIAL EVENTS

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

MEETINGS – CLIFTON PARK FIRE DISTRICT & ZOOM

General Membership Meeting	Saturday, January 4, 2025
General Membership Meeting	Thursday, February 13, 2025
General Membership Meeting	Wednesday March 5, 2025
Board of Directors Meeting	Thursday, April 3, 2025
General Membership Meeting	Thursday, May 8, 2025
General Membership Meeting	Thursday, June 12, 2025
Board of Directors Meeting	Thursday, August 14, 2025



General Membership Meeting	Thursday, September 11, 2025
General Membership Meeting	Thursday, October 9, 2025
General Membership Meeting	Thursday, November 13, 2025

FOR MORE REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Website	www.CAFDA.net
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OSHA INFORMATION SUPPLEMENT

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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. By working together, we can help build a fire service that will serve us well for years to come.