



Capital Area Fire District's Association
THE WEEKLY CAFDA

BULLETIN

August, 23rd, 2025

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

CAPITAL SHORTS:

- The Fire District Budget development schedule is in the General Interest section of the Bulletin.
- Both the election schedule and the budget development schedule are posted to the web site at www.CAFDA.net
- Spartan Emergency Response a unit of the REV Group officially broke ground Wednesday, Aug. 13, 2025, on a transformative \$20 million expansion project at its Brandon, South Dakota, facility. The event marked the beginning of a three-phase project that will significantly increase and enhance the company's production capabilities, furthering its commitment to innovation in emergency response solutions. When asked about the

expansion's impact on production time, Vernig said, "If I had to guess, 25% increased throughput of the S-180s. The rest of the increase we're going to see, 75% of that, will be for the custom units we build."

- Despite what had been interpreted from previous news reports, the Fishers Fire Department will cease to exist on October 1st at 0700hrs. Fire response will fall to the Victor Fire District who will have to contend with staffing issues and the burden of additional responses. That's two fire departments out of service this month, Fishers and Poland.

STUFF FOR YOUR BENEFIT, NEED TO KNOW!

WWW.CAFDA.NET

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

SAVE THE DATE: CAFDA FALL TRAINING SEMINAR, *Saturday November 1st at Verdoy 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:

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

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

THE LATEST FROM THE STATE CAPITAL

Legislative Commentary

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

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

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

Annual Cancer Reporting Requirements Reminder

New York State's Office of Fire Prevention and Control (OFPC) requires volunteer fire departments to submit annual reports on cancer disability claims under the Volunteer Firefighter Enhanced Cancer Benefits Law (General Municipal Law § 205-CC), including the number and types of cancer claims, and the number of claims paid, by December 1st each year. Departments must also file an "Annual Roster of Interior Firefighters" by December 1st annually to report their interior firefighters and obtain necessary OFPC Student ID numbers for

reporting.

Annual Claims Report

- What to report: The total number of cancer disability claims made, the types of cancers reported, and the number of claims paid within the reporting calendar year.
- Due date: **Annually**, by December 1st.
- How to report: Use the annual claims report form provided by OFPC.
- Verification: This report must be signed by the head of the department or company, sworn to as true under penalty of perjury, and notarized.

Annual Roster of Interior Firefighters

- What to report:

A complete list of all interior firefighters in the department for the reporting year.

- Due date:

Annually, by December 1st.

- Requirements:

Each firefighter listed must have an OFPC Student ID Number. If they do not, your department needs to complete and submit an "EOSB-601" Student Data Sheet request form to obtain one.

- How to report:

Forms can be submitted online, or a printed, scanned, and emailed version can be sent to ofpc.training@dhses.ny.gov.

Where to Find Forms and Information

- Forms and detailed information can be found on the [New York State Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services \(DHES\) website](#).
- Reports can be submitted by emailing the completed forms to vfecdb@dhses.ny.gov or by mailing them to: 1220 Washington Avenue, Building 7A, Floor 2, Albany, NY 12226, Attn: Volunteer Firefighter Enhanced Cancer Disability Benefit Law.

THE LATEST FROM WASHINGTON

Entire National EMS Advisory Council Eliminated

Peter Matthews

A letter sent to all 25 members of the National Emergency Medical Services Advisory Council (NEMSAC) informed them that their appointments were terminated.

"As of the date of this letter, your appointment has been terminated," Office of EMS Director Gamunu Wijetunge wrote on Aug. 13.

The NEMSAC was established in 2007 by Congress, under the Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. In addition to the Federal Interagency Committee on EMS, NEMSAC was to provide recommendations for patient care and EMS operations.

"NEMSAC provides a forum for the development, consideration and communication of information from a knowledgeable and independent perspective," according to a statement on the NEMSAC website. "NEMSAC does not exercise program management or regulatory development responsibilities and makes no decisions directly affecting the programs for which it provides advice."

Board members were appointed by the Secretary of the Department of Transportation and came from EMS systems, health and hospital organizations, fire-based EMS and other local and national organizations. They were appointed to two-year terms.

"The work of NEMSAC is essential. The 25 industry experts who volunteer their time to serve dedicate hundreds of hours each year to conceiving, researching, and developing import advisories and letters that support the essential work of EMS and the patients they serve," Brenden Hayden, outgoing chair NEMSAC said in a statement to Firehouse.com.

"NEMSAC is apolitical and members are not paid federal employees. *There has been an assertion that this body has become stagnant and focused more on DEI and climate change rather than EMS.* That is just is not the case," Hayden added.

He expressed that the work by the advisory council was on patient care, supporting the resiliency of EMS agencies and ensuing EMS agencies are properly funded.

Hayden said: "A quick review of NEMSAC advisories will show that the Council's work is focused on delivery of care, recruitment and retention, funding, support of EMS as an essential service, pediatric and trauma care, resiliency, and much more. NEMSAC also produced more advisories and letters in the past 2 years than in any time prior. By termination 13 council members who would have served as mentors and allow the work of NEMSAC to continue in an uninterrupted fashion when 12 new members were appointed, any new council will undoubtedly spend at least the first year of their term having to learn the role, how to navigate the federal architecture, and be blind to the past work of the Council including at least 8 advisories and letters that were in development. This all comes at a time when EMS is in dire need of support nationwide. ***NEMSAC is the only voice that is empowered by charter to speak directly to the federal government on issues impacting EMS.***"

Washington Watch from the CFSI

New Executive Order Aimed at Federal Grantmaking Processes

On August 7, the White House issued an executive order (EO) titled "[Improving Oversight of Federal Grantmaking](#)." Notably, the EO is intended to provide for review of grant awards by a senior agency appointee even after peer review processes have occurred. The EO also expressly directs said appointees to exercise independent judgment and not just "routinely defer to the recommendations" of other reviewers. The EO does note that the process should function "consistent with applicable law."

FEMA Announces Nearly \$1 Billion in Federal Funding

- On August 1, 2025, FEMA [published](#) Notices of Funding Opportunity for 15 grant programs. The programs including: Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP) Urban Area Security Initiative, Port Security Grant Program, State Fire Training Assistance, and more. [Click here to see the full list](#).
- On August 7, 2025, FEMA announced \$40 million available to states and tribal nations under the Next Generation Warning System Grant Program (NGWSGP) to "identify capability gaps and implement solutions for alerts and warnings to deliver timely public emergency information to the public and to protect critical infrastructure." [Click here to learn more](#).

FEMA Review Council to Hold Third Meeting

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Review Council ("Council") has a meeting upcoming at the end of August. The meeting will be led by the Secretary of Homeland Security and the Secretary of Defense and the intent is to provide updates from the Council Members. members of the public will be able to attend the meeting virtually.

FIRE DISTRICT FINANCES

Local Government and School Accountability Contact Information:

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110 State Street, 12th Floor; Albany, NY 12236

STEP INTO THE CHIEF'S OFFICE

****Speaking Up for the Fire Service: Advocacy, Education, and the Fight for Our Future**

Nicholas Palumbo

The fire service is built on a foundation of bravery, sacrifice, and an unwavering commitment to the safety of our communities. *Yet, beyond the flames and smoke, there is another battle that firefighters must be willing to fight—the battle for proper resources, safer working conditions, and policies that reflect the realities of the job.* Educating a politician, talking to a chief, or expressing concerns to a company officer should not be a challenge for firefighters; rather, these should be the easiest and most natural conversations we have.

However, ensuring that these conversations are meaningful and productive requires preparation, knowledge, and the courage to engage.

Advocacy within the fire service is not about trivial complaints or personal convenience; it is about ensuring that outdated standard operating procedures (SOPs) are revised, that personal protective equipment (PPE), apparatus, and equipment is up to standard, and that firehouse living conditions promote health and safety. These are not mere luxuries but necessities—ones that directly impact our ability to perform our duties effectively and to return home safely at the end of a shift.

THE REALITY OF THE FIRE SERVICE

Firefighting will never be a white-collar profession. It is a trade that demands physical endurance, mental fortitude, and the ability to perform under the most extreme conditions. The nature of the job means that firefighters will always be exposed to dangerous environments, suffer injuries, and, tragically, some will make the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty. These are not possibilities; they are certainties.

This is precisely why those who operate on the front lines—the ones dragging the hose into burning buildings, conducting searches in unbearable heat, and rappelling from ropes as thick as their fingers—must be involved in shaping the future of the fire service. No one understands the job better than those who do it, and our firsthand insights are critical to developing policies, equipment standards, and operational strategies that make the job safer and more effective.

Firefighting will always be a hands-on, high-risk profession. Because the dangers are certain, not just possible, we on the front lines—who face the heat, the hazards, and the hard work—must have a voice in our future. As the saying goes, “Let no man’s ghost return to say his training let him down.”

THE ROLE OF FIREFIGHTERS IN POLICY AND STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT

The fire service does not operate in a vacuum. Numerous organizations—government agencies, regulatory bodies, and manufacturers—play a role in shaping the way firefighters work. Organizations like the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC), and Underwriters Laboratories Fire Safety Research Institute (UL FSRI) develop standards and guidelines that directly impact firefighters. While these organizations provide invaluable research and guidance, they must be informed by the realities of fireground operations.

This is where firefighters must step up. By actively participating in these organizations, firefighters can ensure that decisions are made based on operational realities rather than financial concerns, legal interpretations, or manufacturing limitations. Firefighters must advocate for proper staffing levels, high-quality PPE, reliable apparatus, and living conditions that support long-term health. *If we fail to engage in these conversations, we allow individuals who have never carried a hose or searched a burning building to dictate how we do our jobs.* When the NFPA updates its standard on PPE, input from firefighters who regularly use this vital equipment ensures the requirements address real-world functionality, durability, and protection, rather than being based solely on laboratory tests or cost savings. Firefighters’ firsthand experience with how gear performs under extreme conditions—such as high heat, limited visibility, and prolonged exposure to hazardous environments—is invaluable in shaping standards that truly meet operational needs. Fortunately, getting involved in standard development is easier than many think. Firefighters can participate in public comment periods, join technical committees, or collaborate with professional organizations like the IAFC. By stepping into these roles, firefighters help ensure that the standards governing our safety are grounded in practical realities, not just theoretical best practices.

THE POWER OF ADVOCACY: SPEAKING TO LEADERS

Many firefighters hesitate to engage in discussions with politicians, fire chiefs, or company officers, often fearing that their concerns will be dismissed or that they will face professional repercussions. However, avoiding these conversations can have dire consequences. If firefighters do not speak up in the conference room, they will be forced to speak up on the front steps of a fallen brother or sister’s home.

Advocating for the fire service is not about confrontation; it is about education. Politicians, administrators, and decision-makers often lack firsthand knowledge of fireground operations, and it is the responsibility of firefighters to bridge that gap. Here are key strategies for engaging in effective advocacy:

1. Know your facts

- When advocating for change, firefighters must be well-versed in the issue at hand. Whether it's a request for new PPE, changes to SOPs, or improved staffing levels, providing data and research strengthens the argument.
- Cite studies from organizations like UL FSRI, NIST, or NFPA to support claims. For example, if advocating for additional personnel on an engine company, reference NFPA 1710, which outlines recommended staffing levels.

Effective advocacy requires the seamless integration of practical experience, fact-driven knowledge, and formal data. Practical experience provides firsthand insight and credibility, allowing advocates to understand real-world challenges and craft relevant solutions. Fact-driven knowledge ensures that arguments are grounded in accurate, contextual information, while formal data offers objective evidence to support claims, influence stakeholders, and guide decision-making. When combined, these elements create a compelling narrative that resonates with diverse audiences, bridges the gap between theory and practice, and drives informed, sustainable change.

2. Present solutions, not just problems

- *Simply complaining about an issue is not enough. Firefighters should approach leadership with well-thought-out solutions that consider logistical and financial constraints.*
- If the department is struggling with aging apparatus, propose a phased replacement plan rather than just demanding new rigs.

My father always instilled in me a lesson passed down from his own father: *never raise your hand with a complaint or problem unless you're prepared to offer insight on a solution or volunteer to fix it.* This principle emphasizes the importance of accountability and proactive problem-solving. Rather than simply pointing out issues, it encourages taking ownership and contributing to positive change. It's a mindset that fosters responsibility, collaboration, and leadership—reminding us that anyone can criticize, but it takes character and commitment to step up and be part of the solution.

3. Frame the issue in terms of safety and efficiency

- *Administrators and politicians respond to arguments that emphasize public safety, liability reduction, and operational effectiveness.*
 - Instead of saying, "We need better gear because ours is old," say, "Outdated PPE increases the risk of cancer and injuries, leading to higher long-term healthcare costs and increased firefighter injuries and fatalities."
- Framing the issue in terms of safety and efficiency is essential for making sound decisions on the fireground. Safety ensures that firefighters can operate in hazardous environments with minimal risk, while efficiency focuses on achieving tactical objectives swiftly and effectively. When leaders and firefighters prioritize both, they create an operational mindset where actions are not only fast but also calculated and coordinated. For example, ventilation tactics must balance the need to release heat and smoke quickly with the timing of interior attacks to prevent worsening fire conditions. By consistently presenting challenges through the dual lens of safety and efficiency, fire service professionals can make informed decisions that protect lives, preserve property, and maintain operational integrity.

4. Build relationships before a crisis arises

- The best time to advocate for change is before a major issue arises. Firefighters should take the time to build relationships with decision makers and industry leaders so that when critical issues do emerge, they have an open line of communication.
- *Attending city council meetings, participating in labor-management committees, and engaging in community outreach all help establish credibility.*

The late Chief Alan Brunacini of the Phoenix (AZ) Fire Department was a pioneer in emphasizing the importance of creating and maintaining strong relationships between firefighters, officers, community leaders, and the community they serve. Recognized for his groundbreaking approach to customer service in the fire service, Brunacini championed the concept of treating everyone—both inside and outside the organization—with respect, compassion, and professionalism. His [*"Be Nice" philosophy*](#) underscored that effective emergency services depend not only on technical skills but also on trust and cooperation among all stakeholders. In Phoenix, Brunacini's leadership fostered a culture where firefighters felt supported by their officers, officers worked collaboratively with community leaders, and the public viewed the fire department as a reliable, caring partner. This approach enhanced operational effectiveness during emergencies and built long-term community resilience. By prioritizing relationships, Brunacini demonstrated that fire departments

thrive when they are integrated into the fabric of the community, ensuring safety, understanding, and mutual respect.

5. Maintain professionalism

- *Emotional appeals are powerful, but they must be balanced with professionalism and respect. Firefighters should approach advocacy with the same discipline they bring to the fireground—focused, strategic, and mission-driven.*

- Avoid confrontational or defensive tones; instead, emphasize collaboration and shared goals.

Trust me, I understand maintaining professionalism in the face of confrontation can be difficult, but it is essential for effective leadership and fostering respect. When tensions rise, it can be tempting to respond with equal force, but professionalism requires composure, respect, and thoughtful communication. The old saying, “You catch more flies with honey than with vinegar,” reminds us that a calm and courteous approach is far more effective than hostility. By staying professional, you not only de-escalate conflicts but also set a positive example for others. Respectful dialogue opens the door to resolution and understanding, while an unprofessional response can damage relationships and undermine authority. Ultimately, professionalism in tough moments builds trust, credibility, and a stronger team dynamic.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF SILENCE

History has shown that when firefighters fail to advocate for ourselves, the results can be tragic. Firefighters have died because of inadequate staffing, outdated equipment, and poor fireground tactics that could have been corrected had someone spoken up.

Consider the impact of the 1972 Vendome Hotel fire in Boston, where nine firefighters were killed when a building collapsed due to unrecognized structural instability. Or the Charleston Sofa Super Store fire in 2007, where nine firefighters lost their lives in part due to outdated tactics, lack of adequate water supply, and insufficient command oversight. These incidents serve as stark reminders that firefighter safety cannot be an afterthought—it must be the foundation upon which all decisions are made.

When firefighters remain silent, policy decisions are made without their input. Fire departments are forced to operate under outdated standards, using insufficient resources, and facing unnecessary risks. The cost of inaction is measured not just in dollars, but in shortened careers and lost lives.

THE FIREFIGHTER’S DUTY BEYOND THE FIREGROUND

As firefighters, we pride ourselves on our ability to act decisively under extreme pressure. Yet, advocacy and education require a different kind of courage—one that demands patience, persistence, and the willingness to engage in difficult conversations. It is not enough to be skilled on the fireground; we must also be skilled in the meeting room, in the legislative chamber, and in the public arena.

The words of Sir William Wonka—“We are the music makers and we are the dreamers of the dreams”—apply just as much to the fire service as they do to any other Oompa Loompa. Firefighters are the ones who understand the harsh realities of the job, who know the necessary risks, and who envision a safer yet practical and effective future for the fire service.

If we do not take an active role in shaping the future of this profession, someone else will. And if that someone lacks the firsthand experience of what it means to battle fire, to rescue victims, and to put their life on the line, then the fire service will be left to the mercy of those who see it as numbers on a spreadsheet rather than a calling built on courage, sacrifice, and service.

THE TAKEAWAY

As I said earlier, “educating a politician, talking to a chief, and expressing concerns to a company officer should be the easiest conversations we have in the fire service”—because the stakes are too high for them to be difficult. We cannot afford to be silent. We cannot afford to be passive. We cannot afford to let those who do not walk in our boots dictate the conditions under which we operate.

The fire service is ours to protect, to improve, and to pass on to the next generation. That responsibility extends beyond the fireground and into every discussion, every meeting, and every decision that affects how we do our jobs. Speak up, educate, and fight the fight—not for personal gain, but for the safety, effectiveness, and future of this noble calling.

STEP INTO THE ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

Are the rules regarding LOSAP programs determined by each fire district or dictated by the state. For example, our current program does not allow for a fully vested and former member under the age of 62 to roll their balance over to an IRA and we would like to offer that as an option. We currently have 15 former members who are vested in the program and we have to continue to report on these accounts. Can we change the rule locally to allow distributions for vested former members?

LOSAP programs are governed by State and Federal Statutes. There is no statutory authority to roll vested LOSAP benefits into an individual's IRA. LOSAP plans are not considered to be a qualified pension plan.

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

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

POSITIVE OUTCOMES

Unfortunately, I am unable to find any this week.

FIRE SERVICE CHALLENGES

How New York's Volunteer Fire Departments are Dealing with Shortages

Jeremy Sodergren, Times Union

Ninety-four percent of the state's departments are at least mostly volunteer.

Thirty-six-year-old Justin Elliot has been involved with the Hudson Fire Department for more than half his life. At 14, he joined the department's Explorer Program, which brings in future firefighters between the ages of 14 and 17 for training, parades and other department functions. When he graduated at 18, he became a full-fledged firefighter — a role he still performs proudly.

Elliot comes from a long line of firefighters; at one point, 13 of his family members worked in the Hudson department, which is New York's oldest volunteer firefighting agency. Volunteer departments can act as a community hub, attracting people, regardless of identity, who want to help their neighbors.

But over the years, the Hudson department's decline — from a peak of 130 members to 45 currently — mirrors a troubling trend: Over the past three decades, New York has seen a 32% decrease in volunteers, according to the Firefighters Association of the State of New York.

Elliot said that since he began volunteering, the responsibilities have increased.

"It's no longer just fighting fires," he said. "Now they've added medical calls to it, vehicle accidents. They've added water rescue, rope rescue, trench rescue; the list goes on and on."

The incorporation of these types of alarms into the regular response of fire departments increases the physical stress on the department as a whole, according to Elliot. Since 1990, national call volume has increased 167%, according to research conducted by the National Fire Protection Association. The majority of calls are for medical situations.

Hudson responds to about 550 calls annually, according to its most recent estimates. That number a few years ago was around 400 calls. *It's a shrinking, overworked volunteer force that responds.*

THE ROLE OF VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS

There are 1,647 fire departments registered with the U.S. Fire Administration in New York. Ninety-four percent of them are at least "mostly volunteer," according to the administration. A 2023 study conducted by the Firefighters Association of the State of New York found that the volunteer fire service saves state taxpayers \$4.7 billion annually. Much of that is in property taxes, which would rise by 28% statewide if a switch from

volunteer to career were made. In the Hudson Valley alone, 3,000 firefighters would need to be hired full-time to make that switch, a figure that jumps to over 30,000 statewide.

Some departments in New York state are beginning to pay firefighters to bolster declining volunteer numbers. Ithaca Fire Department, Fayetteville Fire Department and Scarsdale Fire Department are all combination departments with varying numbers of career members, ranging from 20 to 40 firefighters.

However, communities outside larger metropolitan areas, such as New York City and Buffalo, are unlikely to convert entirely to a professional model due to the costs associated with hiring and maintaining a fully professional department.

RETAINING WHO'S THERE

Increased call volume and a broader range of alarms mean more training. The amount of training required of a volunteer has increased drastically in recent decades, *since New York began mandating minimum requirements for firefighters in the 2000s*. **[EDITOR'S NOTE: NYS DOES NOT MANDATE TRAINING, THEY ONLY PROVIDE THE PATHWAY TO THE TRAINING]** Before then, all training was done department by department. Someone looking to volunteer today needs to pass "Firefighter 1," a course that is both hands-on and classroom-based. It takes about six months to complete. But the National Volunteer Fire Council and FASNY, along with a number of individual volunteer firefighters, said these increased demands on their time are partly to blame for the decline in volunteers. Those organizations advocate for legislation at the federal and state levels that balances the need for training and the time interests of volunteers.

Ryan Woodward, chief of legislative and regulatory affairs for the National Volunteer Fire Council, said his group has worked on tax credit legislation to help volunteer firefighters in the past and is considering expanding its Good Neighbor Next Door program to include volunteers. The program already offers half off the list price of a home in areas considered "economic development zones" to career firefighters, police officers and teachers as long as the buyer commits to living there for at least three years. The Department of Housing and Urban Development, which takes on the cost, has a list of properties that qualify for the program. But some problems cannot be addressed through policy. Michael Karashay, the Ulster County director of FASNY, said the main motivation for volunteer firefighters is to help their communities — something fewer people have today. "One thing I don't think we've addressed, really, is the mindset — the why? Why do you want to volunteer? Why is this good for your community?" Karashay said.

Lower rates of volunteerism, particularly in volunteer fire departments, reflect general declines in civic engagement and volunteerism that extend back decades. And the fading of certain values associated with volunteers — showing up for one's community based on commitment to helping and serving — is acutely felt in smaller communities, Karashay said.

"Let's face it: Firefighting is a lot of work," he said. "I think that people look at it from a training standpoint, and see there's a lot of hours involved just so you can put on turnout gear."

CREATIVE SOLUTIONS

At a minimum, 17 firefighters are needed to extinguish a fire in a single-family home, according to the National Fire Protection Association. That means at any given moment, more than one-third of Hudson's entire department needs to be on site. It's why flexibility is so important for staffing volunteer fire departments.

Some departments are coming up with creative ideas to replenish their staff. Tarah Gay works as a lieutenant at the A.B. Shaw Fire Company in Claverack. Since her antique auction business is located in Hudson, she sometimes responds with Hudson's department as a ride-along member. "The responsibilities are similar, but different. (In Claverack) I might be the highest-ranking officer at a call and will run command, whereas in Hudson I would not," she said. "I would try to always go and study the trucks. As a ride-along, you might have to have (the layout) of eight trucks in your mind versus only two or three normally." Ride-along programs have expanded in the Hudson Valley, allowing people eager to commit more time to firefighting to do so. Ride-along members do not become official members of a second department; rather, they remain members of their home district while training and, eventually, assisting with the other department's calls.

Many rural upstate departments also have "weekenders," members who can only commit to responding on weekends. Some are career firefighters in New York City who volunteer on weekends off. Some departments have turned to mutual aid to ease their constraints. The Margaretville Fire Department and five neighboring

departments in the town of Middletown recently approved an agreement to automatically respond to each other's alarms that involve structure fires.

Retention incentives are also being used to help recruit volunteers. New York state has offered a Length of Service Awards Program for volunteer firefighters since 1998. The program operates as a tax-exempt financial reward system, akin to pension benefits. LOSAPs are entirely funded by either the fire department or the municipality where the department is located. A firefighter will receive a percentage of the department's LOSAP fund based on years served. Most allow a firefighter to withdraw their money once they reach retirement age. Hudson adopted its LOSAP program in 2018 through a referendum. "It had to go to a vote to the public in an important election year," Elliot said. "We had to convince everybody to flip the ballot over and look for the propositions on the back." Firefighters must accrue 50 "points" in the LOSAP system to be credited for a year of service. There are several ways to earn points, including attending training and serving as an elected officer of a chief, but responding to calls is the main one.

At times, Elliot said, the work of volunteer firefighters can feel thankless: long hours training for situations that rarely, if ever, arise, answering calls where he witnesses the worst that could happen to a member of his community. But he still described his tenure with the Hudson Fire Department as rewarding. "A lot of times you don't see the benefits of what you're doing right away," Elliot said. "If you're at a fire and somebody just lost their house, it's a somber time. It's tough and we work through that, but it's those times afterwards where we've had people come back to us a week later, a month later, a year later and simply stop in and say, 'Thank you.'"

Poland Board Cuts Contract With Village Fire Department

The future of the Poland Volunteer Fire Company in Herkimer County is in question after Poland Joint Fire District board members voted Tuesday night to cut ties with the agency, according to officials with the fire board.

"We're not confident in their ability to provide support to the members of the district," said District Commissioner Chair Andrew Topham Wednesday morning.

"This decision was made due to extended response times, low membership, poor membership retention issues, repeated lack of fire company cooperation with the district in providing documents to secure insurance for responding firefighters, failure to provide firefighter training and physical qualification records, as well as other personnel issues presenting liability concerns," Topham added.

Officials said the district's monthly meeting took place at 6 p.m. on Tuesday, Aug. 19, where they voted to stop using the volunteer fire department for fire protection services as of midnight that night.

The board did not shut down the fire department, officials noted. The board has instead temporarily secured fire protection services from neighboring departments, who were already responding to calls through the mutual aid system, officials said. These include the Newport, Barneveld, Remsen and Deerfield volunteer fire departments.

"The surrounding fire companies have provided timely response times, robust personnel, equipment numbers and decision making that is what our district residents expect and deserve," Topham stated.

"Our district board, which has over 140 years of combined fire and first responder experience, is confident that those companies and their leadership will continue to protect our district as always, with the highest level of service and professionalism," he added,

Poland is a village located in the town of Russia in Herkimer County, located on the border with Oneida County, northeast of Utica. The agency covered roughly 470 square miles.

Poland Fire Chief Michael Galluzzo said he was advised by his department's attorney not to comment at this time.

Poland Volunteer Fire Company Shuttles at Midnight

NEWSChannel 2 has learned that following a meeting on Tuesday evening, it was determined by the Poland Joint Fire District notified the Poland Volunteer Fire Company that the District would no longer be contracting with them to provide fire protection as of midnight Tuesday.

The Poland Fire Company said that it covers 470 square miles.

The company added that it will now be up to Newport Volunteer Fire Department or Barneveld Fire Department to respond to calls.

NEWSChannel 2 reached out to District Commissioner Chair Andy Topham for comment.

He said, "This decision was made due to extended response times, low membership, membership retention, lack of cooperation in providing documents to secure insurance for responding firefighters and failure to provide firefighter training records."

Poland's Fire Chief said that they are consulting with their legal team on how to proceed from here.

[Fire station in Hardin County Kentucky Destroyed in Blaze](#)

A firehouse in Hardin County caught on fire overnight Wednesday.

It happened to the Vine Grove Fire Department Station No. 3 at the corner of Crutcher and North Mill Streets. The station was severely damaged, including equipment inside the building. Department vehicles were almost unrecognizable inside the station where the roof was completely gone, exposing the extensive interior damage.

Some equipment was scorched, melted or completely destroyed. The department lost three apparatus, including an antique 1941 engine used for parades and firefighter funerals and a 3,000-gallon tanker, along with extensive supplies and equipment. The cost of the fire is estimated to be close to \$1.5 million.

Vine Grove Fire Department has three fire stations so this fire leaves the department with two active stations. There is no word at this time on what caused the fire and how long it took to put out.

[N.J. Volunteer Firefighters Oppose Town's Plan To Add More Career Firefighters](#)

Stone Harbor's plan would promote four firefighters to captain and hire four more to staff four shifts, but volunteers warn the move could sideline their role.

Members of the Stone Harbor Volunteer Fire Company worry that a proposed restructuring of borough fire services will sideline them and potentially end their company.

Lou Donofrio, a lieutenant with the volunteer company, read a letter on behalf of the members at a recent meeting of the Borough Council, outlining a July 31 meeting with borough officials.

"At this meeting, to our surprise and dismay, we were presented with a proposed plan outlining the restructuring of the fire department," Donofrio said. "As it stands, the proposal would significantly reduce the presence and role of the volunteer fire company — and conceivably, eliminate it entirely."

The move is part of an extensive restructuring of Stone Harbor's municipal operations as the borough struggles to stay within state limits on spending increases.

Council plans to take a referendum to the voters seeking approval to exceed the state cap next year and enact changes that council members say will allow operations to continue in the future.

The plan would include promoting four current paid firefighters to captain and hire four new firefighters to replace them in the rank and file. That would allow the paid crews to work in four shifts. There are currently nine firefighters in the budget, and eight on the job, with a proposal for 12. That includes the four captains.

New Stone Harbor Administrator Joseph A. Clark said at the meeting that volunteer and paid firefighters endorsed the plan, including a unanimous buy-in from the four candidates for promotion to fire captain.

Clark said the plan would include the volunteer company, not eliminate it.

But it did not sound as if the volunteers were on board.

"To state it plainly, we are firmly opposed to this plan and to any other restructuring plan without a collaborative and transparent process that includes both the borough and the fire company," Donofrio said.

Mayor Tim Carney came in on the side of the volunteers. In Stone Harbor's form of government, he does not have a vote on council but can be heard at meetings.

"I tend to agree with the volunteers," Carney said. "It ain't broke, so why are we tinkering with it?"

He said the current system works just fine, with some of the best response times in the state. Carney also argued the plan would increase borough spending on fire services from more than \$800,000 to about \$2.6 million, numbers that council members called into question but Carney stood behind. He said if the borough can't operate within the state's budget limits, spending more won't help.

"I would just ask that we think this through, not force this through," Carney said. "I think it's fine just the way it is."

But it won't be for long, responded council President Jennifer Gensemer. *Like other volunteer companies around the county and state, Stone Harbor is having increasing difficulty attracting volunteers, even with the implementation of a stipend.*

And to take a budget referendum to the voters, the borough needs to have an exact number for the cost by which the cap will be exceeded, including the cost for fire services.

The borough has already undertaken a restructuring of the Police Department and merged its construction office with Wildwood Crest, Gensemer said, and has been working with the state Division of Local Government Services, which has been advising the borough on budget issues.

"Are you concerned at all that the fire department in its present form is not sustainable?" Gensemer asked Carney. Without major changes, Stone Harbor would just come in over cap again next year, and the year after that, and on into the future, she said.

"We're going to have to do things differently in Stone Harbor eventually," Gensemer said. "Whether you're going to kick the can down the road, whether you're going to deal with it three years from now, five years from now, unfortunately we've been handed this, and we have to deal with it."

Carney and Donofrio believed the council planned to vote on the restructuring before the end of the month, but council members said the timeline would not be that tight. There was also talk of a nonbinding ballot question in November and a referendum on exceeding the state cap in February, but the current plan calls for a borough referendum in April, after the budget for 2026 is approved.

The volunteers had raised concerns about a falling number of new members who live in Stone Harbor and recommended creating a paid department to work with the long-running fire company.

Council member Frank Dallahan said the proposal makes much more sense for emergency services and for sustaining a fire company. The current system does not work, even in terms of the shifts for the paid crews.

"To get somebody into a program where you're on 24 (hours), then you're off 24, then on 24 hours again is stupid," Dallahan said. "It's a stupid idea, but we've been doing that for the past years."

N.C. Town Ends Volunteer Firefighter Program Amid Low Turnout, Shifts Focus To Full-Time Staffing

Bill Carey

Mocksville will end its volunteer firefighter program at the end of August.

The town manager said the decision, made with the fire chief, follows a sharp decline in volunteer turnout on calls. Career firefighters handled about 1,000 runs in 2024 while only a small share of the program's six volunteers responded. The town is working to increase daily staffing and prioritize training for its full-time firefighters. "The Town is fully committed to public safety and the safety of its team members," Town Manager H. Lee Rollins said in a statement. "This requires taking continued steps to increase daily staffing on apparatus to ensure the Mocksville Fire Department has a safe and effective response."

[Mocksville is a town in Davie County, North Carolina, United States. The population was 5,927 at the 2020 census. I-40 leads west to Statesville and Hickory, and east to Winston-Salem and Greensboro. Route 64 heads east to Lexington, and west towards Statesville and Taylorsville. It is the county seat of Davie County]

RETENTION AND RECRUITMENT

****5 Signs Of Toxic Culture That Impact Fire Department Retention**

Tony Haden

I previously shared a **three-step model for culture change called "Un-Re-New,"** which can be used by leaders to identify and correct issues in their organization's culture:

- The "Un" phase involves identifying and addressing any negative attributes like an unhealthy work environment, untrusting relationships, an uninformed workforce or an unforgiving atmosphere.
- The "Re" phase centers on ideas like reviewing, reestablishing, reevaluating and restoring.

- The final step in the process is to actively make things new. This may involve implementing new commitments, creating additional policies and establishing innovative processes that align with the desired cultural shift.

Let's now take a deeper look into what we can glean from research about organizational culture, specifically when culture fails. These are the environments where a culture change plan, like Un-Re-New, is needed the most.

YES, WE CAN LEARN FROM OTHER INDUSTRIES

A significant amount of research on organizational culture has been conducted in other industries, and while some may argue that corporate models don't align with fire service life, the fact is that so many of the lessons learned in other settings can absolutely apply to our culture challenges. Fire service leaders must be open to heeding the lessons learned from other industries as we work to make our departments and stations healthy places for our crews to work and live.

Let's start by evaluating the formative work conducted by CultureX researchers Donald Sull, Charles Sull and their team (MIT Sloan, 2022), then applying it to the fire service. The CultureX studies focus on toxic elements in organizational culture and how they contributed to attrition during the Great Resignation that began in 2021. The research can provide fire service leaders important insights as to why individuals become dissatisfied with their employer and offer some key areas of improvement for fire department culture.

Toxic culture and the Great Resignation

In America, more than **24 million people quit their jobs between April and September 2021**. While the fire service was not affected as much as many other industries, the fire service has experienced an unprecedented staffing crisis over the past few years. So, what drives resignations across industries? Toxic culture.

This is not new information. Decades ago, *Harvard Business Review* published "**Skills of an Effective Administrator**," which focused on the need for administrators to address human skills in themselves and their teams. This is all about the ability to work well with others. It requires leaders to understand the relationships that exist with their peers, supervisors and subordinates. This, I believe, is the foundation of trust and a healthy culture.

Furthermore, while many of us believe the fire service to be the best job in the world, we must remember that an individual's personal commitment to service alone is not enough to prevent a department from losing good firefighters. We cannot assume we know what is driving members away. For example, some firefighters may identify pay as the main reason for employee dissatisfaction; however, **compensation ranked 16** in the list of reasons individuals reported for leaving a job. In fact, employees are more than 10 times more likely to resign due to a toxic culture than they are for pay and benefits.

FIVE TOXIC CULTURE TRAITS

Many of us have witnessed firsthand the saying, "firefighters hate two things – change and the way things are." There will always be rules or policies that not everyone in your department likes, but that is not a culture issue.

What makes a culture toxic? CultureX reviewed negative comments employees gave for leaving their job. These five toxic attributes, which fit into the "Un" part of the Un-Re-New model, will destroy morale and sink your culture: disrespectful, non-inclusive, unethical, cutthroat and abusive.

1. Disrespect

In your culture, at the department or crew level, respect is needed up and down the chain of command to build trust. A disrespectful culture has the highest negative impact on how your employees feel about where they work. As leaders, we need to make sure we create relationships that show genuine respect for our teams.

2. Non-inclusive

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) is in place to prevent discrimination because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age or genetic information. Non-inclusive actions toward these groups not only negatively impact the individual harmed but also every member of your department when they see the unfair treatment. *In the fire service, we also must be aware of non-inclusive actions like the creation of cliques that exclude others and officers playing favorites in the selection of members for teams or promotions rather than selecting the most qualified candidates.* As leaders, we need to include everyone on our team and make them feel welcome in our departments.

3. Unethical

We all hope that fire service leaders consider ethics in their decision-making. However, in reading the keywords that were identified in the unethical category, I can see how a typical fire department culture could be deemed unethical based on the actions of some members. Words like “shady” and “dishonest” are often heard in the fire service when communication models fail. Even though there may be no intent to be deceptive or to mislead, if your firefighters feel like you lack transparency, you could be facing a workforce that perceives an unethical element in the department culture. As leaders, we must be careful to avoid actions that can be seen as unethical and explain why we cannot discuss certain items at times (legal issues, HR matters, etc.) to avoid this critical issue.

4. Cutthroat

A cutthroat culture is typically described very vividly by employees when they see it with phrases like, “thrown under a bus,” “stabbed in the back” or “sabotaged.” They are describing an unfair culture. Be aware of anyone in your organization that actively undermines people on your team. This is more than just the occasional uncooperative individual in a committee, or a single failure of a department initiative due to poor coordination. As leaders, we need to be aware of environments that allow people to work the system to harm others.

5. Abusive

Abusive management is sustained hostility, not a one-time issue the employee has with their management. It’s unprofessional. Not every conversation will be good, and issues need to be resolved by officers at all levels in a department. Abuse behaviors that impact culture include bullying, yelling at and belittling subordinates. As leaders, we need to make sure we handle personnel items professionally and refuse to allow abusive actions to be used in discipline.

If we fail to address these five toxic traits, then we should expect issues with attrition. We can also expect greater difficulties in finding new firefighters, as the department will likely develop a reputation for being toxic. The firefighters who stay may experience lasting issues with trust in your department, even when the culture is corrected. Tax dollars keep our departments running. A toxic culture has financial implications in the hiring and training of new firefighters and in increased healthcare costs for members that struggle with stress, anxiety, depression or even physical disease from the cultural issues.

CULTURE CHANGE SOLUTIONS

Changing culture is a big, challenging task, so where can you start? Start with the leader. To improve department culture, leaders must hold themselves accountable. This includes both chief officers and the frontline officers who handle day-to-day issues. Identify and review (the “Re” part of the Un-Re-New model) the social norms in place in your department or crew. What types of activities and behaviors are accepted in your social interactions? Do you talk about respect in your department but then allow members of the team to be ignored or pushed to the side? Our actions as leaders create these social norms for our teams. Model the new (“New”) behaviors you expect to see from your department, coach other leaders in healthy leadership methods, and hold your department to the standard you set.

Australian Army Lieutenant-General David Morrison gave a speech on unacceptable behavior. The speech captures the ownership of leadership and the understanding of social norms well with the key point to the audience: “The standard you walk past is the standard you accept.” As leaders, we need to be like Lieutenant-General Morrison when we address our culture. See the general’s comments here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=azbRhVCt8Rw>

FIREFIGHTER HEALTH & SAFETY; PROTECTING OUR OWN

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LINE OF DUTY FIREFIGHTER DEATHS FOR 2025

In 2024 we experienced 64 LODDs reported nationally.!

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

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

- It is with a heavy heart the [#LACoFD](#) share the active-duty death of Fire Fighter Paramedic (FFPM) Jerry W. Guzman on Friday, August 15, 2025.
- Nearly two weeks after Past Chief Ed Margavich from the Third District Volunteer Fire Company, in Bucks County, PA was injured at a fire, he succumbed to his injuries. While directing traffic at the scene, Margavich returned to the firehouse to gather equipment, inside the station, he fell and broke his femur, despite treatment his condition worsened.
- Northwood New Hampshire, firefighters are mourning the loss of captain Chris Brown, 42, who died the day after a forcible entry training exercise. Captain Brown called an ambulance after experiencing back pains, he was transported to a local hospital where his conditions worsened rapidly. Despite life-saving measures, Brown could not be revived.
- A New Orleans paramedic is recovering from serious injuries after he was hit by a vehicle outside a station Wednesday morning. WWLT reported the medic was headed to a vehicle and unable to get out of the way to avoid being struck. The paramedic is in fair condition at the local trauma center.

FIRE APPARATUS ACCIDENTS FOR THE WEEK

- A motorcyclist is dead after a collision with a Durham, NC, fire truck at an intersection. The rig was headed to a fire alarm in Durham when it collided with the motorcycle.
- Two people are in the hospital after a tractor-trailer crashed into a Monroe County (GA) Emergency Services fire apparatus Thursday morning while crews were responding to another tractor-trailer fire.
- A fire truck from Staten Island, Ladder 78 was involved in a minor multi-vehicle accident in Stapleton on Wednesday while responding to a call about a tree leaning on electrical wires, according to the FDNY.
- An East Wallingford Connecticut, Volunteer Fire Department pumper was rear-ended while conducting an blocking operation Saturday, Aug. 16, 2025. Fortunately the crew only sustained minor injuries resulting in one firefighter being transported by ambulance to a local hospital for evaluation while the other two personnel remained on scene.

Stair Climbing with Common Sense

Jim Burneka

I absolutely fire service traditions. There is nothing like pushing a brand-new engine into the bay; getting ice cream when the new driver hits a curb; having steaks when somebody gets off probation or promoted; and my all-time favorite tradition, darting for dishes. Those were some of the *good* traditions that I encountered throughout my career.

However, not all fire service traditions are good. The most glaring and obvious annual tradition that frustrates me to no end is firefighters wearing their gear at 9/11 memorial stair climbs. Let me clear—I'm not against the stair climbs. I love how they honor our fallen. The reality is that more firefighters have succumbed to 9/11-related illnesses than died on September 11, 2001. *It feels a little ironic to honor our fallen wearing cancer-causing gear (don't you think).* There are many exposures throughout our career that we can't avoid. This is an unnecessary exposure that we are choosing to take.

You must understand that the gear that you are wearing to honor the fallen is **full** of carcinogens. PFAS-free personal protective equipment (PPE) has finally become available, but fire departments are being slow about transitioning over. Chances are that your PPE came brand-new out of the bag...full of carcinogens. I also see a plethora of firefighters wearing soiled gear. Whenever I ask about their gear, I'm usually met with, "relax, I

washed it before I came.” I’m sorry to play the MythBusters, but I must inform you that a gear extractor only cleans about 50% of the contaminants off your gear. From the moment your gear is born until it reaches its end life, it is full of a variety of chemicals and carcinogens. Every time you put on your gear, you are exposing yourself to multiple chemicals and carcinogens. You may inhale some of the contaminants as they become airborne. The largest route of exposure is through absorption. Your rates of absorbing these chemicals/carcinogens are going to be multiplied because as you sweat, your pores open, allowing these contaminants into your body. Please keep in mind that the scientists who research our PPE wear gloves and a mask each time they analyze it.

I’m not asking to stop the stair climbs. I’m 100% a proponent of our stair climbs. I’m simply asking you to consider the risks involved in doing the climbs wearing gear. The concept is valiant, but the grim reality is that putting your own health at risk is not honoring our fallen brothers and sisters. Instead of wearing full PPE, consider wearing a weighted vest. Another safe option is training bunker gear that mimics structural bunker gear—sans the PFAS. The training gear retails for approximately \$1,500, and is a solid option for stair climbs, exercise, and non-live fire training.

Lastly, I would like to formally request that all stair climb organizers stop allowing participants to wear their PPE as they climb. I encourage you to make a new tradition that is healthy for all firefighters and allow them to safely honor the fallen.

FIRE APPARATUS

****New EPA Engine Standards: What Fire Departments Need to Know About the 2027 Transition**

Chris Mc Loone

The upcoming EPA emissions standards slated for 2027 are set to reshape the landscape of fire apparatus engines. This article discusses what these new guidelines mean for engines, cab and chassis design, and apparatus bodies, drawing on expert insights to help fire service professionals navigate this transition.

WHY ARE THE EPA STANDARDS CHANGING?

For several decades, engine emissions standards have been steadily tightened to reduce pollutants, particularly nitrogen oxides (NOx). Since 1988, regulations cut NOx emissions by approximately 80%. In 2027, the EPA and California Air Resources Board (CARB) are aligning on a further 80% reduction target within just four years. Such a dramatic drop—from 200 mg to 35 mg of NOx emissions per horsepower-hour—represents a steep technical challenge.

Chris Crowel, Emergency Vehicles Lead at Cummins, explains the magnitude of this change. The first drop in emissions was costly but achievable. Now, pushing that second 80% reduction requires completely new engine designs. Additionally, these standards extend warranty periods for emissions components from five to ten years and impose stricter compliance requirements. Engines must meet emissions across the entire operating range rather than relying on emissions averaging.

ONE ENGINE MANUFACTURER’S APPROACH

Cummins is responding with a \$2 billion investment in research, development, and manufacturing enhancements to deliver a new generation of fire apparatus engines. Existing engines like the B6.7, L9, X12, and X15 will be replaced with all-new platforms, including the AB7.2 (a 7.2-liter displacement engine) and the X10 (a 10-liter engine replacing the L9 and X12).

Several key technological innovations are driving these new engines:

Dual SCR Catalysts in One Module: To meet the low emissions thresholds, the after-treatment system will feature two Selective Catalytic Reduction (SCR) catalysts housed together, sometimes called a “snowman” or “infinity” design, increasing reaction surface area while managing packaging constraints.

Advanced After-Treatment Heaters: New heater elements before the Diesel Particulate Filter (DPF) and SCR catalysts will help engines meet emissions standards earlier after startup, but these require significant electrical power. Therefore, Cummins will add a belt-driven 48-volt alternator dedicated to generating this heat.

Clean-Sheet Engine Design: Leveraging computer-aided design (CAD), engineers have optimized material placement, improving cooling, oil flow, and block stiffness. For example, moving the gear train from the front to the rear reduces potential oil leaks and enhances durability.

Weight Management: Despite adding emissions hardware, the new X15 engine system will be roughly weight-neutral compared with current setups. The X10 engine will be about 300 pounds heavier than the L9 but similar to the current X12, which is itself lighter than most mid-bore engines in the market.

Improved Engine Performance: The X15 will maintain familiar horsepower and torque ratings, including the 605-hp/1,850 ft-lb rating popular in fire service applications. The X10 will cover all previous L9 ratings with a new high-torque family offering up to 1,650 ft-lb, close to the X12's current capability.

Environmental Improvements: Moving to canister-style oil and fuel filters, replacing steel housing and elements separately, supports environmental sustainability through reduced waste.

Cummins plans to launch the new X15 as early as April 2026, ahead of the 2027 mandate, giving manufacturers time to prepare. However, the last date to build with the current L9 engine frame will be December 31, 2026.

Impact on Cab and Chassis Design

Jason Witmier, Director of Education and Technology for Safe Fleet, emphasizes that while every OEM will face unique challenges, the anticipated design impacts share some common themes:

Weight Considerations: The good news is that weight changes will be minimal. This is crucial since front steer axle weight limits are often more restrictive than the rear axle, and balance is a constant design concern.

Engine Footprint and Cooling: *The new engines and aftertreatment systems, including larger radiators or additional cooling requirements, may slightly enlarge the engine "doghouse" (engine tunnel). Since cab width is heavily regulated by Department of Transportation standards (typically 96 to 102 inches), manufacturers have limited room to expand sideways, so any growth in engine or radiator size affects the available space inside the cab.*

Seating and Ergonomics: Potentially lost cab space could slightly impact seating configuration, particularly rear-facing seats located beside the engine tunnel. The NFPA's minimum requirements for seating width and operability remain protected, so OEMs will have to innovate around those constraints.

Crash Testing Considerations: OEMs are working diligently to avoid significant changes in the doghouse's structural design, which would trigger costly and time-consuming crash testing.

Witmier observes that OEMs are already integrating prototype engines and computer-aided models to ensure the new powertrains fit into existing frames and doghouses as seamlessly as possible.

EFFECTS ON PUMP PANELS AND BODY COMPARTMENTS

Behind the cab, pump panel design and body configurations may face subtle but important changes due to aftertreatment placement and heat management considerations.

Pump Panel Location: Aftertreatment devices typically reside near the pump house, requiring plumbing and panel layouts to accommodate their size and heat output. This may result in relocation of auxiliary suction lines or changes in the size or door configuration of pump panels. While no fundamental changes to pumping capabilities are expected, departments might see slight reconfigurations of access or compartment arrangements.

Body Compartments: For aerials, rescues, or other apparatus without a pump house, the sizable aftertreatment devices may occupy space traditionally reserved for compartments. Consequently, front body compartments might be reduced or reshaped. Given the fire service's familiarity with fitting equipment efficiently and creatively, these adjustments can be incorporated with minimal disruption.

Space Trade-offs and Wheelbase Length: In some cases, extending the apparatus wheelbase slightly can provide additional space to fit the engine and after-treatment package without sacrificing compartment volume. However, keeping wheelbases short often means stacking systems more tightly, so some compartment space might be sacrificed to accommodate emissions hardware.

Preparing for the 2027 Transition

The consensus from Cummins and Safe Fleet representatives is clear: fire departments and apparatus manufacturers need to stay informed and proactive. The timeline is set:

- *Engines meeting the new EPA standards will be available in early 2026.*

- *The deadline for installing older-model engines on new apparatus is effectively March 2027, with only limited exceptions granted by the EPA.*
- *OEMs have been designing around these requirements for more than two years, leveraging CAD models, fuel and thermal testing, and prototype installations.*

Apparatus purchasers should engage early with their manufacturers and ask detailed questions about engine selection, emissions equipment placement, and how these affect cab, chassis, and body design. Since differences between OEMs' approaches will exist, direct communication ensures that departments avoid surprises.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR FIRE DEPARTMENTS?

The transition to cleaner engines comes with unavoidable costs and engineering complexities. The additional emissions hardware means careful packaging, potential minor sacrifices in compartment space or cab layout, and possible weight distribution adjustments. While no radical design changes are expected, departments should approach apparatus spec'ing with new engine technology in mind. This includes:

- *Verifying engine options and emissions compliance timelines with manufacturers.*
- *Evaluating potential impacts on seating, compartment volume, and pump panel accessibility.*
- *Considering operational implications, such as heat management around aftertreatment components.*
- *Planning for potentially extended lead times due to new production requirements.*

Advanced computer modeling and prototype testing at the OEM level reduces the risk of last-minute surprises, but the decision to specify and accept new engine models must be deliberate.

Fire departments should monitor developments, engage with suppliers, and prepare their purchasing processes accordingly.

FIRE STATIONS

Developing and Building Community Support for New Fire Stations

Dennis A. Ross

When a public safety agency needs to purchase new property, relocate, expand, renovate, or construct a new station, where does the funding come from? Some districts or municipalities may use bonds, capital improvement budgets, or commercial borrowing as funding avenues. A bond is a funding mechanism used by municipalities or other taxing authorities to raise money for capital projects. For bond funding, the borrower asks taxpayers for permission to borrow money using future tax revenue as collateral.

INITIAL QUESTIONS

Financing a capital project, buying land, or utilizing municipality-owned land raises key questions. How do we plan the process or obtain public support and approval for funding? What steps do you take to minimize possible defeat at the ballot box?

Start by organizing a small committee to provide leadership and establish a consulting relationship with a qualified architectural firm, which can help define the project's scope, size, probable cost, and schedule. Professional services may include an analysis of a current facility, conceptual design of a renovated or new facility, or a land search for new property.

Project budgeting and cost estimation will help identify the amount of money needed for the facility and ancillary costs. Leveraging public opinion is a powerful way to engage the community, influence commissioners, and gain political support for funding approval. However, losing public support is almost always a fatal blow to a project.

PREPARATION

Once your project is defined enough to illustrate its purpose, size, scope, and budget, it's time for public engagement. It's vital to get your own department members in favor. Internal dissent will not help convince your community a project is viable, and unanimous internal support is a strong starting point for any project. Throughout the process, committee members should hold information-gathering meetings and make regular progress presentations to department stakeholders, elected officials, and the public. A qualified architect experienced in garnering support can work with your committee in numerous ways. In addition to holding informational meetings, producing action plans, generating timelines, and developing budgets, your technical

experts should also help you create infomercials, generate press releases and articles, develop a blog or website section, and more, depending on the best mediums in which to reach your community.

The key to the entire support process is accurate, consistent communication. This means squelching the rumor mill before it has a chance to get started. Market the project to your taxpayers early and don't hide what you're planning. Anticipate questions regarding costs and need. How will this affect my taxes? Why do we need this? Why move?

As an architect, I have hosted many public presentations where the attendees didn't know the extensive responsibilities and training required for all types of responders or even that their firefighters were volunteers.

When using future taxes for project payment, you must prepare pertinent information for your taxpayers, including:

- *Current total tax rate*
- *Current fire or public safety tax rate*
- *Future fire or public safety tax rate*
- *Total fire or public safety taxes collected during the last fiscal year*
- *Total taxable assessed value for the taxing district*
- *Average assessed value for residences and businesses*

Adjusting the amount borrowed, interest rate, and payback period changes the financing criteria and how taxes will be affected. When planning to use bonds or capital budgets for future funding, be sure to account for project cost escalation to avoid budget shortfalls during the design or construction phases.

COMMUNICATING THE NEEDS

To help keep information consistent, create an information package with talking points to help department members speak knowledgeably and keep the facts straight. This information can also be given to the local newspaper or television station as a press release, or included on a website or blog. *Create a task list for those willing to help:*

- *Meet with reporters for an article*
- *Set up interviews with local radio or TV*
- *Provide informational pamphlets at public events and spaces*
- *Give station tours to raise awareness of some of the existing problems*
- *Write letters to the editor to help them understand the need*

All these tasks should be controlled and approved by the committee for accuracy. When disseminating project information, identify supporters and detractors. Meet with detractors to discuss their issues, as they may become supporters simply by hearing straight answers to their questions. Meet with supporters to ensure that they'll attend public meetings and vote.

Letters or interviews by citizens who have been aided by the department can be very effective, as can the support of key community figures, religious leaders, and politicians.

EDUCATION AT PUBLIC MEETINGS

For public meetings, compile additional background data:

- *The history of your department/district*
- *The history of your current facility*
- *Site location rationale, if applicable*
- *Response times*
- *Comparable tax rates for surrounding communities or districts*
- *Data concerning the amount of time required by responders for training, drills, and emergency calls*

Invite the media and plan for a minimum of two public informational meetings, which your architect can coordinate and moderate. If the first meeting raises questions or generates negative reactions, regroup, plan, and use the second meeting to address the issues.

Develop an agenda to ensure that all important matters are covered. Present the architectural plans, budget, timeline, value engineering ideas, and tax information.

HOLD THE VOTE

If possible, do not schedule your vote too close to another major community bond vote or tax issue. Avoid holding your vote close to Tax Day (April 15) or a federal holiday.

Once a bond or municipal vote is approved, you have both financial backing and public authorization to move forward with your project. *However, if voters reject it, don't lose faith. Begin the process again. Don't automatically assume that you must reduce the scope or budget of the project. Carefully search out and analyze the reasons why voters turned down the project.*

Then, revise your approach to address and incorporate specific issues and objections. Let the public know that you'll try again with specific alterations on the pertinent issues. If you address these concerns, you may still be able to realize the original scope. Continue to educate voters and encourage supporters to show up.

After a successful public vote, use the momentum to your advantage. Don't disband the committee. Continue to advocate the project to the community and work with your architect to create the final design and documents necessary to build your facility. You've got your support and financing approved – now get that project underway!

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	49
Last fire death 8/21/25 Odessa, Schuyler Co Male 22	
Fire Deaths in any type of Dwelling in NYS	83
Fire Deaths in 1&2 Family Dwellings Nationally	673
Top 3 States with the greatest 1&2 Family Deaths	#1 PA/53
	#2 NY/49
	#3 IL & TX/37
Civilian home fire fatalities in 2025: 1364	
2046 civilian home fire fatalities in 2024	
Week 34 of 2025, fire has claimed on an average 40 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?	

GREEN TECHNOLOGY & THE FIRE SERVICE

EPA Issues Battery Energy Storage Guidelines Amid Growing Safety Concerns

Jessica Jones-Gorman, Staten Island Advance

Community residents fighting the rise of battery energy storage systems near their homes and places of business now have some additional support. Lee Zeldin, administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, is voicing his concerns about the deployment of the lithium-ion facilities in densely populated areas throughout New York state.

“Many New Yorkers, especially in New York City and on Long Island, have made their voices clear – they do not want Battery Energy Storage Systems built in their neighborhoods,” noted Zeldin during a press conference in Hauppauge. “Residents are looking across the country where dangerous lithium battery fires at BESS facilities have caused widespread damage, and they are concerned with New York’s partisan push to fill yet another delusional ‘green’ goal, which the state itself admits it cannot meet.”

Zeldin, a Republican who mounted a failed bid for governor of New York in 2022, said the state “continues to put the safety and well-being of New Yorkers second to their climate change agenda.” He used the press conference to announce that he will soon introduce EPA guidance in Long Island to help municipalities there evaluate such dangers.

“Given its expertise, EPA is the only federal agency with standardized procedures for safely deactivating and disposing of lithium batteries after incidents,” the agency noted in a press release. “While local fire departments struggle with these complex fires, EPA has developed specialized protocols through responses to major incidents nationwide. The agency’s new BESS safety guidance represents the first comprehensive federal resource addressing the complete project lifecycle—from siting through emergency response.”

A technology that uses a group of batteries to store electrical energy, allowing the energy to be released later when needed, the storage system sites — commonly referred to as BESS — essentially act as backup power sources for homes or the grid, particularly during peak demand or power outages. They are often used in conjunction with renewable energy sources like solar power.

Under the direction of Gov. Kathy Hochul, New York is currently pursuing an ambitious goal of six gigawatts of battery storage capacity by 2030. The state has connected 6,000 storage projects to its electric grid since 2019, the EPA noted in a press release, generating about 440 megawatts of capacity, with an additional 1.3 gigawatts in development.

Dozens of BESS sites are currently under construction on Staten Island — many in extremely close proximity to homes and businesses. And over the past two years, borough residents and local officials have voiced concerns about their siting. Community Boards voted against their proximity to bakeries, and storefronts and elected officials issued a moratorium on applications filed within residential districts. In one instance, an energy developer retracted plans to place batteries in a Bulls Head church parking lot.

And Zeldin noted that a new act included in the 2025 state budget, will help accelerate the growth of BESS sites — even if they are opposed by the community.

“In support of developing this infrastructure, New York state most recently enacted the Renewable Action through Project Interconnection and Deployment (RAPID) Act as part of the fiscal year 2025 state budget,” Zeldin’s office noted in a press release. “The RAPID Act and its predecessor, the Accelerated Renewable Energy Growth and Community Benefit Act, dramatically expanded state power to override local opposition for major renewable projects, including battery storage facilities of 25 MW or larger — even when communities raise safety concerns.”

Staten Island Borough President Vito Fossella applauded the EPA’s efforts.

“The stance that EPA Administrator Lee Zeldin and President Trump have taken on battery storage systems is very welcome news,” the BP noted in a statement. “We are thankful that finally, even the Federal Government agrees with what we have been saying for three years — that volatile, dangerous, and unproven lithium-ion battery storage systems do not belong in populated residential areas, next to people’s homes and gas stations.” Fossella also suggested that the Federal Government consider establishing a national standard for siting the facilities relative to residential areas, places of worship, and public spaces. He also noted that a moratorium on the siting and approval of BESS units should be considered until safe and reasonable standards are implemented.

“We request that the State of New York work with the EPA on adopting new policies based on these findings and federal guidelines for BESS,” Fossella concluded.

STUFF FOR YOUR OFFICERS AND MEMBERS!



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 to 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>

This Is An On Demand Webinar, Do It Anytime That Is Convenient To You.



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

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

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

- **Learn the updated verification methods** for gear cleaning, including simplified protocols, optional chemical assessments and insights into how cleaning practices influence gear longevity.

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

WATCH NOW AT THIS LINK:

<https://tracking.police1.com/t/9320633/187515077/7196883/1/1006865/?f5d63f87=MTE0MTczX0dsb2JlX0ZSMV9GdWxsTGlzdF8zNTY4Xzl2MzIxLjZfOC04LT11&b44ed14b=YmY5NWQ4NzktNWRmOC00MWJkLTkzMDctNzg0Y2VhZTNjMzYy&x=b12372ef>

Attend an NVFC Training Near You!

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



New York Yankees Firefighter Appreciation Special

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

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

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

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

LEARN MORE AND PURCHASE TICKETS AT THE FOLLOWING LINK:

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

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

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

The 2026 Budget Calendar and the 2025 Election Schedule are posted to our Website at CAFDA.net

The Critical Importance of Choosing the Right Body Shop for Fire Apparatus Repair

Michael Huber

Fire apparatus are more than just vehicles—they are lifelines for communities that perform under extreme conditions while ensuring the safety of firefighters and citizens alike.

When damage occurs, whether from an accident, wear and tear, or operational stress, selecting the right body shop for repairs is crucial. Cutting corners or choosing an unqualified facility can result in delayed response times, compromised safety, and increased long-term costs.

As someone who has had the opportunity to “clean up” after a bunch of accidents, I can confirm that each one proves to be a challenge. From parts availability to scheduling to poor workmanship, it never fails to lead to frustration. The impact of losing the use of the apparatus is immediate depending on the severity of the damage, but the cleanup can take weeks, months, and sometimes years.

Undoubtedly emergency apparatus is involved in a higher rate of accidents than a civilian vehicle when you compare miles driven. This rate is higher because of a number of factors, including the following:

1. **High-risk driving conditions:** Lights, sirens, and urgency lead to fast responses through traffic.
2. **Large, heavy vehicles:** More difficult to control or stop.
3. **Limited visibility and turning radius.**
4. **Public reaction:** Civilian drivers often don’t yield correctly or panic.

The most common incidents are in intersections during red lights, rollovers (especially with ladder trucks and tankers), and backing into objects or other vehicles.

Choosing a body shop to repair fire apparatus after an accident requires more due diligence than selecting one for personal vehicles because of the size, complexity, and critical role of the equipment. Following is a step-by-step guide to help you choose the right repair facility.

Step 1: Check the repairer for emergency vehicle specialization. Ensure the shop has a proven track record repairing fire trucks or similar emergency vehicles. Look for emergency vehicle technician (EVT) certifications or National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) heavy truck certifications, as well as any affiliations with fire apparatus manufacturers.

Fire apparatus have unique systems (e.g., pumps, aerial ladders, sirens, and emergency lighting) and configurations not found in typical vehicles. A specialized shop understands these intricacies and can service them properly.

Step 2: Assess the repairer’s equipment and capabilities. The facility must have the capacity to lift, accommodate, and repair large apparatus, including aerials and tankers. Verify that it can handle custom bodywork, frame straightening, electrical systems, and refinishing.

Step 3: Look for manufacturer approval or warranty work. Check if the shop is authorized by the original manufacturer of your fire truck. This ensures warranty compliance and access to genuine parts. If repairs fall under warranty, only approved shops will be eligible.

Step 4: Check the shop’s references and reputation. Reach out to nearby fire departments to see who they use and trust. Look for red flags or consistent praise in reviews, particularly about commercial or municipal work.

Step 5: Confirm insurance and compliance. Confirm the shop has the appropriate liability and workers' compensation insurance. The repairer should be familiar with applicable department of transportation standards. Repairs must meet National Fire Protection Association standards. A reputable shop ensures compliance and uses materials and methods that stand up to heavy duty use.

Step 6: Determine turnaround time and ensure communication. Ask how the shop handles estimates, scheduling, and progress updates. Shops with good supplier networks or in-house parts fabrication can reduce downtime.

Step 7: Determine the shop's warranty on workmanship. Quality shops stand by their work with written warranties.

Step 8: Perform an on-site evaluation. If possible, visit in person to assess cleanliness, organization, and professionalism. Fire trucks must perform under extreme conditions. A quality body shop ensures all repairs and modifications meet strict safety and performance standards to protect firefighters and the public. Every minute a fire truck is out of service impacts emergency response. A reliable shop works efficiently to get the vehicle back in service quickly without compromising quality. High-quality repair and maintenance help extend the lifespan and maintain the value of the fire apparatus, which is a significant investment for any municipality or department.

Step 9: Ask key questions, including the following:

- What's the estimated time for repairs?
- Will you use OEM or aftermarket parts?
- Is there a warranty on the repairs?
- Do you offer a written estimate and itemized invoice?
- Do you have loaner units available?

Picking the right body shop for fire apparatus repair isn't just about fixing dents or scratches in paint—it's about maintaining operational readiness, ensuring firefighter safety, and protecting the communities these vehicles serve. Departments should vet their repair centers carefully, prioritize expertise over convenience, and insist on strict quality control to guarantee their apparatus is always ready for the call.

MICHAEL HUBER is a fire apparatus driver/ operator and fire apparatus fleet manager for the Baltimore County (MD) Fire Department.

LAUGH OUT LOUD!!

Answer me this, how come there's enough asphalt for speed humps but not enough to fill potholes?

Bored on a Saturday? Just go to an unknown wedding and shout, "I still love you" and just wait for the drama.

CLASSIFIED EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

None at this time that we are aware of.

CAFDA OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

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

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

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

CAFDA PO Box 242 East Schodack, NY 12063

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

518-407-5020

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 Hgwy. 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 — Saturday, 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



OSHA INFORMATION SUPPLEMENT

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

NEWEST INFORMATION ALWAYS AT THE TOP WITH RED ARROW

By Dave Denniston NVFC OSHA 1910.156 Taskforce Chair

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

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

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

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