THE BULLETIN

AUGUST 15TH, 2026

The Voice of CAFDA since 2004
Editor, Tom Rinaldi – tom@rinaldi1.com since 2014
When you see **, highly recommended article

CAPITAL SHORT TAKES

- **We pay tribute this week to 99-year-old past chief T. Joseph Dugan a 79 year member of the Mechanicville Fire Department, founding member of the John Ahearn Rescue Squad (today Malta-Stillwater EMS) and former OFPC staff member. Our sympathies to his family and many friends.**
- **BUDGET SCHEDULE** PAGE 4 also on CAFDA.net
- **ELECTION SCHEDULE** PAGE 9 also on CAFDA.net
- **You're Invited! Firefighter's Home Open House September 26**
  Join us on Saturday, September 26th, for The Firefighter's Home Open House. Enjoy family-friendly activities, live music, delicious FREE food, ice cream, waterslides, cornhole, dunk tanks, raffles, local school band performances, and guided tours of the historic Home.
  When: Saturday, September 26th from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.
  Where: Firefighter's Home, 125 Howard Ave., Hudson, N.Y.
  All proceeds support The Firefighters' Home and its mission to care for New York's volunteer firefighters.
- Does your department need PPE designed for technical rescue and EMS responses? Ricochet and the NVFC have partnered to provide five volunteer emergency service departments with five sets each of Ricochet Out Front™ Technical Rescue Gear. Designed to deliver dual-certified (NFPA 1950 – 1951/1999) protection, lightweight comfort, and the mobility responders need, this gear is built for the real-world demands of extrication, EMS, and technical rescue operations. **Apply** at https://www.nvfc.org/ricochet/by August 31 at noon ET.

TRAINING OPPORTUNTIES:

From CAFDA

- This year's day at the races was a rain free enjoyable day with friends from the fire service. It's sad that so few people are taking advantage of being with fellow friends of the fire service at one of the premier locations in the Capital area. We hope more of you will join in our next adventure.

1 ***Join us at the NEXT GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING on Thursday September 10 features dinner for attendees. Please join us.***

ZOOM LINK FOR THE SEPTEMBER MEETING at 7pm:
https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89275151494?pwd=H9Wzo77bprmGQd5beFEjODUJxebjJC.1

3. Mark your calendar for the CAFDA Conference '27, Lake George NY, April 9-10-11, dinner/vendor show Friday April 10th Fort William Henry Carriage House. Sponsored Mixer the evening of Thursday April 9th at the Holiday Inn Resort, food, games, beverages. The response has grown each year and we are in the process of identifying the subjects for 2027.

4. Mark your calendars now, CAFDA Fall Seminar, Saturday November 7th, at Guilderland Fire Department, 2303 Western Ave. (US Route 20), Guilderland, NY. The Education Committee has identified the subjects including the ever popular "Experts Panel".

5 CAFDA Commissioner Training for 2027 will be held in Averill Park, Thomas Corners, Clifton Park, Schoharie and Warrensburg.

CAFDA TRAINING AND EVENT DATES				
Day/Date	**Time**	**Type**	**Location**	**Notes**
FY 2026				
July, 2026	**NO MEETING, See next month's Day at the Races**			
Thursday, September 10, 2026	7:00 PM	**General Membership Mtg.**	Clifton Park	
Thursday, October 8, 2026	7:00 PM	**General Membership Mtg.**	Clifton Park	Officers/Director Nominations
Saturday, November 7, 2026	8:00 AM	**Annual Fall Workshop**	Guilderland FD	2303 Western Ave.
Thursday, November 12, 2026	7:00 PM	**General Membership Mtg.**	Clifton Park	Officer/Director Elections
DECEMBER 2026	**NO MEETING**			
FY 2027				
Saturday, January 2, 2027	9:00 AM	**General Membership Mtg.**	Clifton Park	Organizational/Morning Meeting
Thursday, April 8 - Saturday April 10, 2027		**CAFDA Conference '27**	Fort William Henry Conference Center	Lake George
Thursday, April 6 - Saturday April 8, 2028		**CAFDA Conference '28**	Fort William Henry Conference Center	

From Other Organizations

NYSAFC is Bringing Hands-On Training to Your Area!

Open enrollment is available for NYSAFC Regional Hands-On Training this fall. The eight-hour **Fire Behavior On the Inside** course is scheduled for **Albany** (November 14-15), Ontario County (November 7-8), and **Schenectady** (October 17-18) Counties.

The three-hour **Flashover** program is coming to **Albany** (September 26-27), Ontario (October 10-11), and Orange (November 21-22) Counties.

View the Calendar and Register...

2026 Seminar Series with Chief Mike Lombardo Resumes in September

https://www.nysfirechiefs.com/2026seminarseries

Chief Mike Lombardo (Buffalo Fire Department) will present "**Dangerous Spaces: Challenges and Tactics When Dealing with Garage and Basement Fires**" at 16 sites through November. Registration is $35 (NYSAFC members) and $50 (non-members) per person. Registration will be available at the door, but pre-registration

is encouraged. Join NYSAFC in Chautauqua, Chemung, Cortland, Dutchess, Erie, **Fulton**, **Greene**, Monroe, Nassau, Oneida, Onondaga, Oswego, Otsego, **Rensselaer**, Rockland, and **Saratoga** Counties.

Requirement for Fire Police that has Statewide Implications

Hazardous Materials First Responder Operations (HMFRO) is now a required prerequisite for the Fire Police class. Fire police candidates who have not taken Basic Exterior Firefighter Operations (BEFO) will need to take this standalone course in order to register for the Fire Police course in the future.

LEGISLATIVE HIGHLIGHTS

From Albany

The New York State Legislature passed the volunteer firefighter tax credit, which would increase the annual credit from $200 to $800, and provides meaningful relief to the 80,000 volunteer firefighters who serve communities across New York, helping offset the rising costs of service, including fuel, training, and equipment. This is an important step forward in advancing FASNY's 14-Point Volunteer Firefighter Recruitment and Retention Plan and strengthening the future of New York's volunteer fire service, but we still need your support!

The bill is currently awaiting delivery to Governor Hochul's desk; we are hopeful she will recognize its importance, and we're asking for your help.

Contact Governor Hochul's office today, through FASNY's VoterVoice, and urge her to sign this essential bill!

Let the Governor Hear You through VoterVoice at this link.

Waiting for the governor to call for the bills that were passed by both Chambers so that she can sign them into law. Technically she has until December 31st.

- Law passed and signed to require mandatory recycling program for e-scooters/e-bikes.
- The use of "Piggyback Purchasing" extended one more year until June 30, 2027.

S8832 KAVANAGH (D)	**A9504 GLICK (D)**	**1/2/126 PASSED SENATE 2/10/26 PASSED ASSEMBLY**	**THE PURPOSE OF THIS CHAPTER AMENDMENT IS TO FACILITATE THE INCLUSION OF E-BIKE AND E-SCOOTER BATTERIES IN THE RECHARGEABLE BATTERY RECYCLING PROGRAM AND TO PROMOTE CONSUMER SAFETY, CONVENIENCE, AND AWARENESS**	**2/13/26 SIGNED CHAPTER 87**
S10075 SOLAGES (D)	**A11162 ZELLLNER**	**6/2/26 PASSED SENATE 5/29/26 PASSED ASSEMBLY**	**EXTEND THE PROVISION OF THE COMPETITIVE BIDDING STATUTE [GENERAL MUNICIPAL LAW §103] WHICH PERMITS PIGGYBACK PURCHASING. THE STATUTE HAD A SUNSET PROVISION MEANING THAT IT WOULD EXPIRE ON JUNE 30, 2026. THE BILLS PROPOSE TO AMEND THE STATUTE TO EXTEND THE SUNSET PROVISION UNTIL JUNE 30, 2027**	**6/26/26 SIGNED CHAPTER 147**
S6368B SKOUFIS (D)	**A3126B LUNSFORD (D)**	**4/22/26 PASSED SENATE 3/30326 PASSED ASSEMBLY**	**AN ACT TO AMEND THE EXECUTIVE LAW, IN RELATION TO REQUIRING THAT WHEN A COMPLAINT IS MADE TO LOCAL CODE ENFORCEMENT OF A VIOLATION OF THE UNIFORM FIRE PREVENTION AND BUILDING CODE OR LOCAL BUILDING CODES WHICH RESULTS IN THE ISSUANCE OF A COMPLIANCE ORDER, THE COMPLAINANT SHALL ALSO BE PROVIDED A COPY OF SUCH ORDER**	**PENDING SIGNATURE**
S9502A MARTINEZ (D)	**A10885B STERN (D)**	**6/2/26 PASSED SENATE 6/1/26 PASSES ASSEMBLY**	***TO AUTHORIZE* LOCAL GOVERNMENTS TO ADOPT A PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION FOR SURVIVING SPOUSES OF PAID FIREFIGHTERS WHO ARE KILLED IN THE LINE OF DUTY.**	**PENDING SIGNATURE** PENDING PASSAGE BY EACH LOCAL GOVERNMENT BY RESOLUTION
S7316 HINCHEY (D)	**A8008 LUNSFORD (D)**	**5/18/26 PASSED SENATE 6/1/26 PASSED ASSEMBLY**	**REQUIRES THE FORFEITURE OF BENEFITS TO BE PAID PURSUANT TO A SERVICE AWARDS PROGRAM TO VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS WHO HAVE BEEN CONVICTED OF FELONIES COMMITTED AGAINST A VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT, VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY, FIRE DISTRICT, OR FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT.**	**PENDING SIGNATURE**
S5614 ADDABBO (D)	**A3681A WOERNER (D)**	**6/2/26 PASSED SENATE 1/28/26 PASSED ASSEMBLY**	**AN ACT TO AMEND THE GENERAL MUNICIPAL LAW, IN RELATION TO REMOVING RESTRICTIONS ON THE**	**PENDING SIGNATURE**

			FREQUENCY CERTAIN AUTHORIZED ORGANIZATIONS MAY CONDUCT BINGO GAMES	
S4675 JACKSON (D)	A688 BUTTENSCHON (D)	5/6/26 PASSED SENATE 4/29/26 PASSED ASSEMBLY	AN ACT TO AMEND THE EXECUTIVE LAW, IN RELATION TO PROVIDING MINIMUM BASIC TRAINING RELATED TO HANDLING EMERGENCY SITUATIONS INVOLVING INDIVIDUALS WITH ANY PHYSICAL AND/OR DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY TO ALL FIRE-FIGHTERS	PENDING SIGNATURE REQUIRES ADDITIONAL TRAINING
S6233A MARTINEZ (D)	A6790A MCMAHON	6/1/26 PASSED SENATE 5/14/26 PASSED ASSEMBLY	THIS BILL INCREASES THE VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS' AND AMBULANCE WORKERS' PERSONAL INCOME TAX CREDIT FROM $200 TO $800 FOR ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS AND FROM $400 TO $1600 FOR ELIGIBLE MARRIED JOINT FILERS. ALSO ALLOWS FIRST RESPONDERS TO TAKE THE PROPERTY TAX CREDIT ALSO.	PENDING SIGNATURE

From Washington

Gillibrand And Ted Cruz Get A First Responders Bill Through The Senate

U.S. Senators Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) and Ted Cruz (R-TX) applauded the Senate's unanimous passage of their bipartisan Officer John Barnes and Chief Michael Ansbro Public Safety Officers' Benefits Program Expansion Act, *which would help first responders and their families receive their federal disability and death benefits quicker. Currently, it can take years for applicants to learn whether they qualify for payments*. "This is a major win for our public safety officers, who put their lives on the line every day to protect our communities," said Senator Gillibrand. "Today, we are one step closer to fixing a slow and broken process that keeps first responders and their families in limbo for years on end, including those who risked and lost their lives on 9/11. It is time to bring them the relief they deserve. ***I am proud that the Senate has passed this bill, and I now urge the House to do the same."***

"The Public Safety Officers' Benefits Program was created to ensure that our first responders receive the benefits they deserve and need. We owe it to our first responders and their families to ensure they receive timely and fair support, and I am grateful to have worked with Senator Gillibrand to advance this bill through the Senate. I urge my colleagues in the House to pass this legislation without delay," said Senator Cruz.

The Officer John Barnes and Chief Michael Ansbro Public Safety Officers' Benefits Program Expansion Act would amend the *Bureau of Justice Assistance's (BJA)* Public Safety Officers' Benefits (PSOB) Program to improve processing times and reduce delays in benefit determinations. The PSOB Program provides death benefits to survivors of first responders who have died in the line of duty, as well as disability benefits to officers catastrophically injured in the line of duty. Specifically, the senators' bill would:

- Require the BJA to complete a death or disability eligibility determination within 270 days of receiving a complete claim
- Require the BJA to use its subpoena authority if a public agency fails to provide requested documentation in relation to a claimant's case
- Expedite processing for officers already certified for benefits through the World Trade Center Health Program (WTCHP) or the September 11th Victim Compensation Fund (VCF)
- Direct BJA to implement GAO recommendations to establish updated program processes and administrative procedures

This legislation is endorsed by over 30 public safety officer organizations and unions, including: the Sergeants Benevolent Association of NYPD, National Association of Police Organizations (NAPO), Fraternal Order of Police, FDNY EMS Local 2507 Uniformed EMTs Paramedics & Fire Inspectors Union, Firefighter's Association of the State of New York, NYLEAP, Nassau County Superior Officers Association, Voices Center for Resilience, Town of Brighton Police Department, NYPD Captains Endowment Association, Port Authority Police Lieutenants Benevolent Association, Police Benevolent Association of the New York State Troopers, New York State Association of Chiefs of Police, Port Authority of NY & NJ Detectives Endowment Association, Peace Officers Research Association of California, Pittsford Volunteer Ambulance, Inc., United States Deputy Sheriff's Association, California Association of Highway Patrolmen, Uniformed Firefighters Association of Greater New York, Friends of Firefighters, Police Chiefs' Association of Orange County, City of Syracuse New York Fire Department, Village of Tuckahoe Police, National Narcotic Officers' Associations' Coalition (NNOAC),

City of Utica Fire Department, Riverside Sheriffs' Association, Major County Sheriffs of America, City of Syracuse Police Department, Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association, International Association of Chiefs of Police, American Federation of State County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), Austin Police Association, City of Utica Police Department, Orange County Sheriff's Department, San Diego Police Officers Association, and Town of Hyde Park Police Department.

Senate Confirms New FEMA Head

Gabriela Aoun Angueira

The Senate on Friday confirmed Cameron Hamilton as head of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, returning the former Navy SEAL to the embattled agency he led temporarily last year only to be fired after he publicly opposed eliminating it.

Hamilton was among a group of 74 nominations approved by the Senate, including President Donald Trump's pick to lead the Transportation Security Administration, David Cummins, and his choice for ambassador to Brazil, Daniel Perez.

Upon his swearing in, Hamilton will take over an agency whose future has been uncertain since Trump threatened to get rid of it days into his second term. Hamilton's nomination signaled that Trump may be moving on from that idea, but his Republican administration is still promising drastic changes in how the government handles disasters.

FEMA HAS BEEN AN AGENCY UNDER SIEGE

Hamilton will take over in the middle of a busy summer disaster season that has already brought destructive wildfires and dangerous flooding and as FEMA manages more than 1,000 open disaster declarations. He will be FEMA's first permanent administrator in Trump's second term, overseeing an agency eager for stability.

More than 4,300 employees separated from FEMA in the 2025 budget year, more than 1,500 through voluntary reductions, resulting in a "loss of institutional knowledge and experienced personnel," according to a Government Accountability Office report.

Since replacing Noem in March, Mullin has rehired for some eliminated positions and rescinded a rule that any expense greater than $100,000 needed to be approved by the secretary's office — a requirement that backlogged billions of dollars in disaster aid.

But DHS has also introduced policies stirring up new controversy. Twenty-five states and the District of Columbia sued the Trump administration last month over new election security requirements in FEMA counterterrorism grants to states.

The Trump administration and lawmakers are advocating for sweeping changes to federal disaster response. At a meeting of governors last weekend, Mullin called FEMA "bloated."

"The biggest reform you're going to see is more responsibility is going to go back to your states," Mullin said, with "FEMA there for worst of the worst, not every storm."

In May, a Trump-appointed FEMA Review Council recommended major changes to how the federal government supports states, tribes and territories during disasters. That could speed assistance but might reduce how much and how often FEMA helps. Many of the suggested changes require congressional action.

Gaynor told the AP he expects that Hamilton will work quickly to make changes within his authority. "I think his biggest priority in general is making the whole recovery system simpler for disaster survivors, for states and locals to navigate, to make it less of mystery, and cut out red tape," Gaynor said.

From Federal DOL/OSHA

When we hear something, we'll post it here.

FIRE DISTRICT FINANCIAL NEWS

*****FIRE DISTRICT BUDGET PROCESS SCHEDULE 2026 available on the CAFDA.NET website. CAFDA.net***

Local Government and School Accountability Contact Information:

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Address: Office of the State Comptroller, Division of Local Government and School Accountability
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NYS-OSC Fire Service Audits

ISCHUA FIRE DISTRICT, CATTARAUGUS CO. – CLAIMS AUDITING AND ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORTS

Audit Objective

Did the Ischua Fire District (District) Board of Fire Commissioners (Board) properly audit claims prior to payment and did the District Treasurer (Treasurer) file Annual Financial Reports (AFRs) in a timely manner?

Audit Period

January 1, 2024 – January 6, 2026

Understanding the Audit Area

A proper audit of claims is often the last line of defense for preventing unauthorized, improper or fraudulent claims from being paid. When a fire district has a strong claims auditing process, the control consciousness of its staff is enhanced because officers and employees are aware that a careful review of claims will occur prior to public funds being disbursed. Because it is the board of fire commissioners' (board) responsibility to ensure tax dollars are spent properly, efficiently and in the best interest of taxpayers, the board should generally conduct a thorough and deliberate audit of claims prior to directing a fire district treasurer to pay them.

A fire district board should ensure that the treasurer files the district's AFR with the Office of the New York State Comptroller's (OSC) office because it is both a legal requirement and a fundamental accountability tool. The AFR provides transparency to taxpayers, supports sound financial oversight and helps protect public resources.

The District's 2025 budgeted appropriations totaled approximately $62,000. During the audit period, the District paid 252 claims totaling approximately $132,000.

Audit Summary

The Board did not properly audit claims prior to payment and the District's AFRs have not been filed with OSC for more than 15 years. Without a thorough and documented audit of claims, the District had an increased risk for improper or unauthorized expenditures to be paid and that errors, irregularities, or misuse of District funds could go undetected and uncorrected. As a result, transparency over the District's financial operations was diminished, the Board's ability to effectively monitor the District's financial operations was impaired, and *District residents and taxpayers could not independently assess the District's financial standing.*

We reviewed 88 claims totaling approximately $54,000 and determined that the Board did not perform a thorough and complete audit of any of the claims. Therefore, the Treasurer should not have paid any of these claims until they were properly audited and approved by the Board. Although we determined that all 88 claims were for a proper District purpose, the Board did not have this assurance when the Treasurer paid these claims. The report includes six recommendations that, if implemented, will strengthen the Board's oversight, improve the audit and approval of claims and increase accountability and transparency over the District's financial operations. District officials generally agreed with our findings and indicated they will initiate corrective action.

SEE THE FULL REPORT HERE

https://www.osc.ny.gov/files/local-government/audits/2026/pdf/ischua-fire-district-2026-47.pdf

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HOPKINTON FIRE DISTRICT, ST LAWRENCE CO. – CLAIMS AUDITING

Audit Objective

Did the Hopkinton Fire District (District) Board of Fire Commissioners (Board) ensure claims were adequately supported, for proper District purposes and authorized before payment?

Audit Period

January 1, 2025 – May 18, 2026

Understanding the Audit Area

An effective claims audit is often the last line of defense to prevent unauthorized, improper or fraudulent payment of claims. A fire district with a strong claims auditing process ensures that a careful review of claims will occur before public funds are disbursed. Because it is the Board's responsibility to ensure tax dollars are spent properly, efficiently and in the best interest of taxpayers, the Board should conduct a thorough and deliberate audit of claims before directing the Treasurer to issue payment.

From January 1, 2025, through April 30, 2026, the Treasurer paid 162 claims totaling $278,589.

Audit Summary

We reviewed 47 claims totaling $145,549. ***Except for minor discrepancies, which we discussed with District officials, the claims were adequately supported, for proper District purposes and authorized before payment.***

There were no recommendations as a result of this audit.

READ THE COMPLETE REPORT HERE

https://www.osc.ny.gov/files/local-government/audits/2026/pdf/hopkinton-fire-district-2026-68.pdf

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FORT JOHNSON VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY, INC., MONTGOMERY CO. – BOARD OVERSIGHT

Audit Objective

Did the Fort Johnson Volunteer Fire Company, Inc. (Company) Board of Directors (Board) provide adequate oversight of financial operations?

Audit Period

March 1, 2024 – August 31, 2025.

We extended the audit period back to January 1, 2022, to review the Company's Crisis Advance (loan) program.

Understanding the Audit Area

The Board, responsible for the general management and control of the Company's financial operations, must provide adequate oversight of the Company's financial operations to ensure public funds are managed with accountability, transparency and integrity. This critical function can help maintain public trust, prevent mismanagement, waste, fraud and legal non-compliance.

For the period March 1, 2024, through August 31, 2025, the Company's deposits totaled $522,784 and disbursements totaled $434,512.

Audit Summary

- The Board did not provide adequate oversight of financial operations.
- *It did not adopt comprehensive bylaws and written financial policies and procedures* to help ensure financial transactions were properly authorized, recorded and reported.
- *In addition, the Board did not review and approve disbursements before payment, implement an effective claims auditing process, regularly review financial reports or provide guidance to the Treasurer on maintaining accounting records.*
- *The Board also did not maintain Board meeting minutes, file required foreign fire insurance (FFI) tax proceeds reports with our office or monitor the Company's loan program*. As a result, the Board lacked assurance that financial activities were properly managed and that Company assets were adequately safeguarded. These weaknesses increased the risk that errors, irregularities, unauthorized transactions and waste or misuse of Company resources could occur and remain undetected.

For example:

- *We tested 71 disbursements totaling $315,682 and determined that they were not always properly supported, recorded accurately, or reviewed and approved before payment.* Additionally, because supporting documentation was not available, we could not determine whether 186 credit card charges totaling $19,470 were for proper Company purposes.
- *The Board did not ensure the loan program was administered in accordance with Company bylaws or Not-for-Profit Corporate Law (NPCL) Section 716*. As a result, the Treasurer issued four loans totaling $5,773 to two Company officers in violation of NPCL. In addition, the Board wrote-off outstanding loan balances totaling $20,736 after determining the borrowers were unable to repay their loans, resulting in a loss of Company resources.

The report includes eight recommendations that, if implemented, will strengthen the Board's oversight of financial operations, improve accountability and transparency, and better safeguard Company resources from errors, misuse and unauthorized activity. Company officials generally agreed with our findings and indicated they plan to initiate corrective action.

READ THE COMPLETE REPORT HERE

https://www.osc.ny.gov/files/local-government/audits/2026/pdf/fort-johnson-volunteer-fire-company-inc-2026-10.pdf

THE FIRE CHIEF'S OFFICE

Tips on Fire Service Leadership and Influence

Denis O'Nieal

Fire service leadership is a unique topic because of the wild swings in the environments in which teams are led. The fire station is more of a social environment, with prescribed duties and responsibilities for training, maintenance of equipment, building inspection, and area familiarization. They're certain and predictable events. Leadership on the fireground is a completely different situation, requiring rapid decision making in a dynamic, dangerous environment with little time for input or discussion.

Additionally, trying to write a one-size-fits-all discussion on fire service leadership is nearly impossible. If you've seen one fire department, well, you've seen one fire department. Each of the 30,000 or so other fire departments are different—in size, culture, organization, rank, and a thousand other ways. So in an attempt to make this article "fit" as many as possible, I'll use the generic term "team" to represent companies, battalions, divisions, and departments; and 'leader' to represent ranks from firefighter to chief of department. From the rookie to the senior, from lieutenant to chief, good or bad—we're all leaders.

INFLUENCE

Leadership is not a position or a title; it's a responsibility, a relationship and an agent for improving the group that you lead. At its core, leadership is about influence: good leaders guide, inspire, and elevate others toward a shared purpose. Whether in the fire station, the corporate boardroom, classroom, or community, the quality of leadership directly shapes the morale, performance, and cohesion of the team. Good leaders don't just manage tasks; they cultivate trust, foster growth, and create environments where members thrive.

True leadership begins with self-awareness and a commitment to service and focus on the mission. It's something you decide to do, and the operative word is "do." Leadership is an action word, a verb. Successful leaders balance vision with empathy, decisiveness with humility, and authority with approachability. Good leaders understand that they're constantly "on stage" and their actions ripple outward, affecting not only the mission but also the behavior of their team. You see it every day in the fire service—some companies, some battalions, some divisions are the kinds of places that people want to work. There are others they avoid like the plague.

Leadership is situational and social. It adapts to context (the fireground is different than the fire station) and evolves with experience. The best leaders are those who listen first, communicate clearly within the context of the situation, and act with integrity—especially when no one is watching. Great leaders understand that they're never "there," that leadership is a constant process of learning and adapting. When leadership is strong, teams flourish.

THE IMPACTS

Here are some of the most profound effects good leaders have on their teams:

1. **Increased trust:** Good leaders are trusted. They create environments where team members feel safe to speak up, share ideas and admit mistakes without fear of ridicule or punishment. This feeling of safety is the bedrock of trust, innovation and collaboration. If they trust you, they will bring their problems to you. When they stop bringing problems, you're no longer their leader; you're the boss and they'll do what you tell them to do.
2. **Motivation and engagement:** Leaders recognize contributions, celebrate wins, and connect work to a larger purpose. They ignite a deep-seated motivation in the team. Members become more engaged, committed, and willing to go the extra mile. They work to develop new and better ways to improve the team.
3. **Improved communication and clarity:** Effective leaders ensure that expectations are clear, feedback is constructive, and communication flows both ways. It reduces confusion and sets the team on a focused, coordinated path.
4. **Stronger team cohesion:** By modeling respect, full participation and shared accountability, good leaders build unity. Teams become more resilient, cooperative, and supportive of one another.

5. **Personal and professional growth:** Leaders who mentor, coach, and challenge their team are the ones who help members grow. They identify potential in individuals, nurture their talent, and support any opportunities for advancement. Great leaders help get their team members promoted to higher ranks.
6. **Higher performance and productivity:** When team members feel valued and empowered, they perform better. Good leaders focus on results, not activities. Team members are encouraged to participate and innovate.
7. **Reduced turnover and burnout:** Supportive leadership reduces stress and increases job satisfaction. Team members are more likely to stay, contribute meaningfully, and avoid burnout.

TIPS FOR THE NEW OFFICER

Stepping into a leadership role can be daunting for the new fire officer. Here are 10 practical tips to help new leaders build confidence, credibility and impact:
1. **Listen more than you speak:** Active listening is a superpower. It shows respect, builds trust, and helps you understand the needs and concerns of your team. Ask open-ended questions and truly listen to the answers. When the discussion quiets down, encourage more discussion with simple statements—"tell me more" or "go on." If something is unclear, ask questions in the form of curiosity rather than criticism: "Can you help me understand…?"
2. **Lead by example:** Your behavior sets the tone every day. What you say or do determines the group's values. Demonstrate the standards you expect from others—integrity, accountability, empathy, and professionalism. These values are not something you turn on or off depending upon circumstances. Consistency is what earns respect.
3. **Communicate with clarity and purpose:** Avoid ambiguity. Be clear about goals, expectations, and feedback. Tailor your communication style to your audience and ask questions to ensure that your message is understood.
4. **Cultivate emotional intelligence:** Understand your own emotions and those of others. We all have "triggers" that cause an emotional response—rehearse calming your response to even the most egregious events. Practice empathy, manage stress, and respond—don't react—to challenges. Emotional intelligence is the key to successfully leading a team. If you overreact to a situation or a statement, people will shy away from you, and you're no longer the leader.
5. **Empower your team:** Delegate responsibility, trust your team's capabilities, and encourage teamwork. Empowered team members take ownership and feel more invested in outcomes. Once in a while you may have to trust someone whose skills may not be fully up to the task; trust them if you can. They'll probably surprise you.
6. **Seek feedback and reflect often:** Leadership is a journey of continuous improvement. Ask for feedback from peers and team members and reflect on your decisions and interactions. Growth comes from honest self-assessment. Be willing to admit mistakes.
7. **Celebrate wins and acknowledge effort:** Recognition fuels morale. Celebrate both big achievements and quiet contributions. A simple thank-you or public acknowledgment can have a lasting impact.
8. **Stay curious and keep learning:** Leadership is not static. Read widely, attend workshops, and learn from mentors. Stay open to new ideas and adapt to changing circumstances. Good leaders are probably reading two to three books a year on leadership and attending at least one national conference and two or three local training sessions a year. It is critical to remain current.
9. **Navigate conflict with grace:** You're a fire officer—conflict is inevitable. Address it promptly, fairly, and constructively. Focus on solutions, not blame, and maintain respect for all parties involved.
10. **Build trust:** Trust is earned through transparency, consistency, and fairness. Be honest about challenges, admit mistakes, and follow through on commitments.

THE COACH

In developing this article, I was trying to paint a picture of the ideal fire service leader; but of course, there's no such person. We all have our talents and our weaknesses. One individual did come to mind, but it wasn't a fire service leader—it was a coach. Coaches do two things: they develop players' skills and they teach and enforce the rules. Coaches focus on the performance of the team and the outcome of the game, not necessarily the individual player. Coaches remain positive even when the score is against them. Coaches review

the previous games, pointing out strengths and weaknesses and how to improve for the next game. Sometimes players need some additional help when they're struggling, and the coach will step in with either performance suggestions or refer them to outside help when it is indicated.

Great leaders and coaches leave more than results—they leave a legacy. They shape culture, inspire future leaders, and create ripple effects that endure long after their tenure. In public safety, leadership is not just about operational excellence— that's a given. You better be good at that. The most successful fire service leaders also focus on the nonoperational facets of the fire department culture. Like sports teams, it's not a solo act. It's a shared journey, a collective endeavor and a daily choice to elevate others. Whether you're leading a firehouse, a sports team, or a startup, your impact is measured not just by what you achieve, but by how you make others feel, grow, and believe in themselves.

THE ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

Fire District Election Schedule for 2026 available on the CAFDA.net website.

CAFDA.net

Click on this PDF to see notes from DOL related to Prevailing Wage Rates for Construction, Article 8

POSITIVE OUTCOMES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE FIRE SERVICE

POSITIVE OUTCOMES

A Jackson County judge has confirmed an arbitrator's order that the Kansas City firefighter driving the pumper truck involved in a 2021 multi-fatality crash in Westport get his job back and receive back pay.

Jackson County Circuit Court Judge Jalilah Otto issued the decision on Monday, rejecting the city's attempt to override the arbitrator's order that Dominic Biscari be reinstated and serve a three-day suspension without pay.

The city had argued that arbitrator Leland Shurin overstepped his authority in his ruling.

"The Court finds the Arbitrator did not exceed his delegated authority, and therefore, it is hereby ordered that the modified arbitration award is confirmed," Otto wrote.

Raymond Salva Jr., attorney for the International Association of Fire Fighters Local 42, which represents most firefighters, said he wanted to make one thing clear.

"There is an issue that overshadows everything in this case, and that is that three people lost their lives in a terrible and tragic collision back in 2021," Salva said. "Throughout this litigation, Local 42 and its members have never minimized or diminished that, and nothing about this ruling changes anything about the loss suffered by those families."

The legal question before the court, Salva said, was whether the city had a duty to honor the collective bargaining agreement and the grievance and arbitration processes that it negotiated with Local 42.

Biscari pleaded guilty in February 2023 to three counts of involuntary manslaughter, avoiding a criminal jury trial in which he faced the possibility of being convicted and sentenced to up to 12 years in prison. He instead was sentenced to three years' probation and 40 hours of community service.

The city is reviewing the decision to determine its next steps.

Enter for Your Chance to Win an MSA Cairns® 1836 Fire Helmet

NVFC members who are active volunteer firefighters have until August 31 at noon ET to enter for the chance to win an MSA Cairns 1836 fire helmet. The helmet is lightweight, has a low ride height for comfort, and is quick and easy to disassemble and assemble for cleanability. This is the third of four entry periods, with one recipient selected after each entry period. **Learn more and enter**. Not an NVFC member? **Join here** to be eligible for this and other special opportunities.

East Meadow Fire Department uses virtual reality to train volunteer firefighters

East Meadow Fire Department has introduced a mixed reality firefighter training system designed to help volunteer crews prepare for live-fire conditions while reducing the risks associated with traditional burn training.

The department, based on Long Island, recently unveiled the FLAIM FTS system after receiving a $65,000 grant secured by Nassau County Legislator Tom McKevitt. East Meadow is the first fire department on Long Island to use the training device.

During a demonstration, Firefighter Joseph D'Alessandro of Engine Company 4 showed how the system works before McKevitt tested the equipment using virtual reality goggles to experience simulated fireground conditions.

The FLAIM FTS platform replicates core elements of firefighting, including the feel and handling of a high-pressure hose. A heat vest increases in temperature as a trainee moves closer to simulated flames, while audio and scenario elements respond in real time to the trainee's actions and water flow.

Instructors can use an accompanying tablet to set learning objectives, monitor live performance data, and conduct post-training reviews. The system also records analytics and reporting data to support future training plans.

McKevitt said he was "truly impressed" with the technology and said the grant-funded investment would help firefighters better protect the community. "This investment in innovation ensures our firefighters are even better prepared to protect and serve our community," he said.

John J. Priest, chairman of the Board of Fire Commissioners, said the department introduced FLAIM Trainer as part of its commitment to fiscal responsibility and firefighter safety. Chief of Department Michael Wood said advanced training supports firefighter safety, situational awareness, teamwork, confidence, and leadership among East Meadow's volunteer firefighters.

- Bloomfield, New Jersey elementary and middle school girls stepped into the role of firefighters during the Girls on Fire summer camp, taking part in hands-on training designed to introduce them to careers in the fire service. Camp participants navigated smoke-filled rooms using a fire hose for guidance, searched for potential victims, and worked through obstacle-filled scenarios that simulated challenges firefighters face on the job. Avery Cintron said the experience gave her a new understanding of the profession. "When I was little, I didn't really know anything about firefighters, but going to this program, it actually shows what you actually do," Cintron said. The girls learned from members of the Bloomfield Fire Department, including the first women to become Bloomfield firefighters. "As a mom, as a female firefighter, it means the world to be able to show girls that they can do this and that there's an opportunity for them," said Claudia Astudillo of the Bloomfield Fire Department.

FIRE SERVICE CHALLENGES

Caldwell, ID, Considers Scrapping Fire Department, Creating District

Noah Daly

Caldwell leaders are considering creating a new fire district to replace the city's fire department.

City Council members on Aug. 3 voted down a proposed public safety levy and instead decided to pursue the creation of an independent fire district.

City officials say a new state law makes the move the best long-term solution to keep pace with the city's rapid growth.

"This is our path toward sustainability as an entity," Fire Chief Bryan Daniels told the Idaho Statesman.

The proposal would allow the department to capture property tax revenue that cities cannot collect under Idaho's current budget laws while giving the fire department its own governing board and taxing authority, Daniels said.

The proposal comes after discussions to have the Caldwell Fire Department annexed into the Caldwell Rural Fire District stalled. Daniels said rural fire district commissioners believed the city was moving too quickly and that absorbing an 83-person department with a budget of roughly $14 million was too large an undertaking in the proposed timeframe.

City officials also recently decided against asking voters this fall to approve a public safety levy that would have funded additional police and fire services. Daniels said there was not enough time to educate residents before absentee ballots are mailed ahead of the November 2026 election.

Instead, city leaders are now studying the creation of a new fire district that would serve residents inside Caldwell's city limits.

Unlike the proposed merger between the Nampa and Kuna fire districts, Caldwell's plan would create an entirely new taxing district rather than combine existing agencies. The new district would operate independently of City Hall with its own elected commissioners and budget authority.

A merger between Caldwell City Fire and the Caldwell Rural Fire District was floated during City Council meetings in July but was rejected.

"If we annex the city's fire department, we're not going to be able to maintain the level of funding that they're currently getting from the city," Administrative Fire Chief for the Caldwell Rural Fire District Mark Wendelsdorf said. "That loss of revenue has to be made up somewhere because we have to have a balanced budget, so both (the rural fire district and the department) would have to cut back our services."

Daniels said the proposal to create a new district is largely driven by House Bill 959, approved by the Idaho Legislature earlier this year. ***Under the law, fire and EMS districts can collect revenue tied to growth beyond the traditional 8% (up to 15%) annual budget cap that applies to cities***.

"The city, by retaining their city fire department, is leaving money on the table for fire protection services," Daniels said.

"*Mayor Eric Phillips said creating a fire district would also allow firefighters to focus solely on fire protection instead of competing with other city departments for funding.*

In a city like this, they have to compete with police," Phillips said. "They'll still be our Caldwell Fire Department. They'll just be their own entity."

Fire protection has become an increasingly significant budget issue as Caldwell continues to grow. Increasing volumes of calls have placed a strain on the department's three active stations, according to Daniels and Phillips.

Daniels said the department operates on a budget of about $14.7 million. The city's initial proposal for fiscal year 2026-27 would have increased that to about $17 million, largely to fund staffing for the city's new Fire Station 4 and other capital needs. Portions of that request have since been reduced during the budget process, he said.

Phillips said staffing Fire Station 4 has become a top priority because opening a station without firefighters could affect emergency response and potentially increase homeowners' insurance costs.

"If we get it built, and there's no one to staff it, now we've got to backtrack," Phillips said.

Daniels said Caldwell's firefighters are already responding to high call volumes while covering a city that's grown just under 30% since 2020. In some parts of Caldwell, response times are approaching eight minutes, well above the department's goal of arriving within four minutes, he said.

Without additional funding, Daniels said the city could eventually face difficult decisions.

"The men and women of the Caldwell Fire Department are some of the busiest in the Treasure Valley," he said. "We're not in a position to have a reduction in service, and if we continue on this trajectory, we're talking about layoffs or not being able to staff an entire fire station. Creating a new fire district is a way to prevent that."

If the proposal moves forward, county commissioners would first need to approve placing the measure on the ballot. Caldwell voters would then decide in May 2027 whether to create the new fire district.

If approved, the city would reduce the portion of property taxes it collects for fire protection while the new district would levy taxes to operate independently, Daniels said, adding that officials have not yet calculated what that shift would mean for the average homeowner's tax bill.

SATISTICS FOR THE FIRE SER1VICE

FIREFIGHTER HEALTH AND SAFETY – PROTECTING OUR OWN

FIREFIGHTER FATALITIES IN THE UNITED STATES

In 2025 we experienced 78 LODDs reported nationally.!

- **Data from US Fire Administration on LODD:** https://apps.usfa.fema.gov/firefighter-fatalities/
- **Information on FF injuries and deaths from the Secret List:** https://www.firefighterclosecalls.com/
- **Information of Fire Apparatus MVCs:** https://www.emergencyvehicleresponse.com/

Apparatus Accidents in the News:

- A motorcyclist and his passenger suffered serious injuries Tuesday, Aug. 11, in a collision with an Olive Township, Michigan fire truck, state police said. The motorcyclist, a 34-year-old Wyoming man, was airlifted by Aero Med helicopter from the scene in Olive Township and taken to Corewell Health Butterworth Hospital. The passenger, a 17-year-old Grand Rapids male, was taken to Holland Hospital then Helen DeVos Children's Hospital. The crash happened around 8:45 p.m. at Tyler Street and 136th Avenue. The fire truck, driven by an 18-year-old West Olive man, was traveling west on Tyler Street when the driver turned left in front of the eastbound Honda motorcycle.
- A driver was injured Monday evening after a passenger vehicle collided with a fire engine that was helping protect firefighters battling a vehicle fire on SR 17 north of Moses Lake, Washington, authorities said. The driver of the vehicle was transported by ambulance to Samaritan Hospital for treatment, according to Svilar. The extent of the driver's injuries was not known at press time. All firefighters and other emergency responders at the scene were uninjured.
- No one was injured Friday when a New London, Connecticut fire truck struck a fence and a tree while responding to an emergency call. No injuries were reported and damage to the truck is being assessed.
- A Spokane County Fire District 10 engine was destroyed while at the Old Trails Fire after its front tire went into a ditch. Heavy smoke reduced visibility at the time of the accident. Firefighters attempted to get the engine back onto the road, but the apparatus became stuck, and fire quickly overtook it. Firefighters escaped safely. The district is now looking for funding options to replace the destroyed fire engine, a Rosenbauer custom.

Firefighter Deaths, Injuries, in the News

- Two helicopter pilots assigned to the Widemouth 2 Fire in Utah, died after a helicopter crash, according to the Sevier County sheriff and interagency partners of the Great Basin Geographic Area.
- A Klamath Falls, Oregon man, 47-year old Jason Ensign was killed Thursday after fast-moving flames overtook the bulldozer he was operating while battling the Wrights Spring fire in central Klamath County. Ensign's escape route became cut off from the designated safety zone.
- 66-year-old George Mullins Jr., a fire police officer for the Shaler Township, Pennsylvania Fire Police and Shaler Villa Volunteer Fire Company, suffered a medical emergency on Sunday while working at a Community Car Cruise at the Shaler Area Elementary School.
- An "individual from Alaska assigned to" the wildfires in Minnesota and around the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness has died following a "medical emergency," the U.S. Forest Service announced Tuesday.
- Two Ingalls, Oklahoma Fire Department firefighters were critically injured when their tanker rolled over while returning from a mutual aid response to a grass fire. A failure of a front tire caused the fully loaded apparatus to leave the roadway, travel down an embankment, and roll multiple times into a wooded area, the tanker was totaled, both firefighters were reported to be in critical condition.
- A College of the Sequoias fire cadet suffered a medical emergency and died earlier this week. The unidentified cadet was treated by fellow students until the on-site paramedic arrived. The cadet died at a nearby hospital the following day. No cause of death has been determined

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Firefighter Suffers TBI When Hydrant Breaks off During Fire; Aging Two-Bolt Hydrants Faulted

A decades-old fire hydrant failed during a 2025 house fire in St. Petersburg, leaving firefighters without water and injuring a firefighter, according to an investigation by 10 Tampa Bay News.

The Oct. 20, 2025, kitchen fire grew after crews were forced to retreat because they had lost their water supply. ***The hydrant broke off at its base and struck St. Petersburg firefighter Tyler Vilimek, causing a traumatic brain injury.***

The hydrant dated to the 1970s and had a two-bolt base. St. Petersburg Fire Rescue subsequently warned crews about an undetermined number of similar hydrants. The failed hydrant was replaced with an eight-bolt model.

10 Tampa Bay News found aging and corroded hydrants throughout the Tampa Bay area, including some dating to the early 1900s. Florida has no statewide requirement to replace hydrants based solely on age, although hydrants must be inspected annually. Pasco County inspected all 336 hydrants of the same design after the incident, finding several that required repairs or removal from service.

Meanwhile, Vilimek has had to take the department to court to fight for the medical treatment he needs, which has been denied by the city's workers compensation system.

THE BUILDING AND FIRE CODE ISSUES – WEEKLY REPORT ON FIRE FATALITIES

- **Home Fire Fatalities in the News**: https://apps.usfa.fema.gov/civilian-fatalities/

Fire Deaths in 1&2 Family Dwellings in NYS	52
8/7/26 Buffalo, Erie Co. Female, unk age	
Fire Deaths in any type of Dwelling in NYS	104
Fire Deaths in 1&2 Family Dwellings Nationally	736
Top 3 States with the greatest 1&2 Family Deaths	#1 PA 58
	#2 NY 53
	#3 OH 44
Civilian home fire fatalities in 2026: 1160 = 35.1 weekly	
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 my question to you is; when does a new home become an old home?	

RETENTION AND RECRUITMENT

What the New Recruitment Research Is Really Telling Us

Walter A. Campbell

Not long ago, a fire chief said to me, "Walt, nobody wants to volunteer anymore."

I asked him one question.

"How many people in your community know you're looking for volunteers?"

He smiled and admitted, "Probably not many."

I've had that conversation more times than I can count. It's also one of the reasons the National Volunteer Fire Council's new research on recruitment and retention caught my attention. If you haven't had a chance to read it yet, I encourage you to do so. As I read through the findings, one thought kept coming back to me.

Many departments don't have a recruiting problem. They have a communication problem.

For years, we've blamed recruiting challenges on changing generations, busy schedules, social media, or the economy. Those factors certainly play a role, but the research points to something much more encouraging. People still want to serve. What they're looking for is clarity.

One of the most significant findings was that more than half of prospective volunteers didn't know they could volunteer as firefighters in their communities, and nearly two-thirds weren't sure whether their local departments were looking for volunteers.

Think about that for a moment.

We tell ourselves recruitment is getting harder, yet many of the people we hope to recruit don't even know the opportunity exists. That's not a recruiting problem. It's an awareness problem.

Departments spend thousands of dollars on apparatus, equipment, and training, yet many spend very little time making sure their own community knows they're looking for volunteers. If people don't know you need help, they can't answer the call.

I also can't tell you how many departments have told me they're worried people won't volunteer because the commitment is too demanding. I don't think that's the issue.

People aren't asking for less commitment. They're asking for fewer surprises. They want straightforward answers.

How much time does this really take?

What does training look like?

Can I volunteer if I work full-time?

What happens if I miss a call?

Those aren't objections. They're reasonable questions. Yet many departments expect someone to submit an application before answering them. *The research found that uncertainty about the time commitment and day-to-day responsibilities is one of the biggest barriers to people taking the next step.*

Another finding made me think less about prospective volunteers and more about ourselves. Many people questioned whether they were physically strong enough or emotionally prepared for the job.

So I asked myself, what message are we sending?

If every recruitment photo, every video, and every social media post only shows firefighters crawling through smoke or stretching hose lines, we're unintentionally telling many good people they don't belong.

The reality is very different. Every department needs firefighters and EMTs, but they also need drivers, instructors, administrative volunteers, fundraisers, community educators, and countless others who simply want to serve. When we recruit for only one role, we overlook people who could become outstanding volunteers.

The research also reinforced something I've believed for years. People don't volunteer simply because they want excitement. They volunteer because they want to make a difference, learn valuable skills, and become part of something bigger than themselves.

That's why our message matters.

Too often, our recruitment message is, "We need volunteers." That's about us.

Instead, tell people what they'll gain. Tell them what they'll learn. Show them how they'll make a difference. Help them picture themselves wearing your department's T-shirt, serving alongside neighbors, and becoming part of something meaningful.

Recruitment starts long before someone fills out an application. It starts the moment someone thinks, I can see myself doing that.

To me, that's the biggest takeaway from this research.

The National Volunteer Fire Council's research confirms something I've believed for years. The people we're looking for are already in our communities. They're coaching Little League, volunteering at schools, serving in churches, mentoring kids, and looking for meaningful ways to give back.

Our job isn't to convince them to care. They already do.

Our job is to communicate the opportunity clearly enough that they can see where they fit.

That's how recruitment starts.

FIRE APPARATUS

Designing Pump Panels

Tom Shand

During the design and specification process for new pumpers, members often focus on the concepts that are important to them depending on their riding assignments and on-the-job experience. One of the challenges for members who sit on the apparatus committee is to consider all of these concepts without losing focus on the mission of the vehicle. Many of these ideas will appear to benefit the apparatus design, until the initial blueprint is completed and someone on the committee comments on the vehicle dimensions and remarks,

"We can't access some points of our first-due area now. How are we going to improve if the new pumper is 33 feet, 9 inches long, with a 212-inch wheelbase?"

Numerous questions must be answered when developing baseline requirements for a new pumper. Depending on the personnel on an apparatus committee, there might be a wide range of interests in what those folks believe is important from an operational perspective. A driver/engineer might focus on interior dash panel layout and windshield visibility. The officer might have concerns about the amount of space on the right side of the cab, the location of the radio and mobile data terminal (MDT) hardware, and access to his forcible entry tools. Crew members might have opinions on the arrangement of rear cab seats, locations of handrails to permit safe access, and the height of crosslay and rear-body attack lines.

Three distinct areas affect a pumper's wheelbase and overall length. *Apparatus positioning and placement on the fireground largely depends on the size of the apparatus and of the training and experience of drivers/engineers*. If the design of a new pumper appears to be quite large on paper, I can assure you that the rig won't be any smaller or more maneuverable once you take delivery of it.

The size of the cab and the desired seating arrangement affect front-axle-to-rear-of-cab dimensions, ranging from 54–84 inches from most custom chassis builders. The length of the apparatus body depends on the water tank size and the desired compartment configuration and hose load, with this area having the greatest degree of options to accommodate the department's requirements.

After the criteria for the cab and body are determined, the design of the pump panel and the required width to accommodate the pump, intakes, discharges, gauges and instrumentation along with foam systems and components, which must be housed over the pump, all have an effect on the final design. ***The layout and design of the pump panel is one of the most important pieces of real estate on the apparatus but often is overlooked during the specification and design process.***

OPTIONS OTHER THAN STANDARD

Although many manufacturers have a standard pump panel design, to include piping runs and termination points for discharges, the apparatus committee should specify the location of certain pump instrumentation, suction and discharge valve controls, and other components. The pump panel design on a pumper should be laid out in a logical fashion that meets the operational needs and standard operating guidelines of the department.

As a committee reviews pump panel layouts at trade shows or during inspections of different manufacturers' new deliveries, it will become apparent that there are numerous concepts as to how pump panels should be designed. The location of major controls, such as the governor, throttle, tank-to-pump, tank fill and master gauges, often are in different locations, as determined by the manufacturer's engineering staff based on manufacturing efficiencies and predetermined standard locations. Some of these designs might work for your department. *However, understand that the layout of the left- and right-side pump panels, along with the piping runs and placement of gauge lines, are based on ease of manufacturing and might not consider a department's desired flow and friction loss through the piping, particularly with large-diameter and rear-body discharges.*

The preconstruction conference is the time to review how pump panel gauges, intakes and discharges will be laid out, considering the width of the pump panel and the degree of complexity of the pump system, including foam systems. ***The department should include requirements with its bid for the successful manufacturer to provide a detailed layout of the pump panel at the preconstruction conference for review and approval.*** This documentation isn't provided as standard. In some instances, there's a cost to provide this level of detail prior to the start of production.

PUMP PANEL WIDTH

The width of the pump panel affects the wheelbase and overall length of the vehicle and can range from 38–60 inches, depending on the make and model of fire pump, piping arrangement, number of crosslay hosebeds and foam system components. On aerial devices, room for the cradle support also is a factor. Although the concept should be to keep the pump width as compact as possible, consideration should be given to pump access for repairs and maintenance. This can be accomplished in several ways, including by providing removable panels for the left-side panel discharges, a full-height, vertically hinged door on the right side above where the drain valves are positioned, and front access on custom chassis that are equipped with a tilt cab. Depending on the amount of fixed equipment that's used as booster reels, hydraulic generators and electric

cable reels are located above the fire pump; removable floors can be provided to gain access to valves and piping.

ELECTRIC VALVE CONTROLLERS

When compared with manual pull rod controls or gear-operated valves, which require straight-line runs from the panel to the valve, the use of electric valve controllers can reduce the size of the pump panel. Depending on which valves are outfitted with electric controllers, *consideration should be given to providing access points to manually override the valve in the event of an electrical malfunction*.

Although electric valve controllers generally have proven to be reliable, wherever possible, manual controls should be utilized, particularly for tank-to-pump, tank fill and discharges where preconnected lines are utilized.

PEDESTAL-STYLE PUMPS

One current trend is to utilize pedestal-style fire pumps that have compact suction and discharge manifolds. This can shrink the size of the panel and, when combined with electric valve controllers, can require less than half of the space of the traditional pump panel. If this design permits your department to carry more equipment or to reduce the overall length of the apparatus, this design might have some merit.

When evaluating this style of panel design, pay attention to the location of intakes and discharges and their capability to support large-capacity fire flows with multiple large-diameter intakes and a minimum of 4-inch full flow valves and piping for large-diameter-hose discharges.

The position and size of intake and discharge gauges should be given consideration by the committee. Although the apparatus industry largely has standardized on 2½-inch gauges with a pressure range of 30-0-600 psi, master gauges are available in 4½- and 6-inch sizes with different pressure ranges. There is a nominal cost difference to specify the larger 3½-inch gauges, which might be beneficial for a department's operations.

HOSEBEDS' AFFECT

If a department utilizes crosslay or transverse hosebeds, the height from the ground and clear width of each hosebed should be detailed in a specification.

Transverse hosebeds should be no more than 62–64 inches from the ground to permit safe and rapid deployment.

How a department loads attack lines has an effect on how the transverse beds should be arranged, along with the position of the discharge piping. Consider having the transverse bed discharge terminate directly under the respective hosebed, which permits rapid extension of the line when needed and reduces the friction loss in the chiksan swivel.

LARGE-DIAMETER INTAKES

The pump piping and valve size for attack line should be determined based on a department's desired gpm target flows for both small- and large-caliber streams. These flow rates and desired pressure loss must be called out in specifications and then verified at the final inspection.

To develop its rated pump capacity, a pumper should be designed with multiple large-diameter intakes to supply the fire pump. *Front-, side- and rear-suction inlets should have the capability to control at least two of these intakes from the left-side pump panel area. Using a power-operated valve that has an air bleeder and manual override enables the pump operator to control the water supply without having to run around the apparatus.*

The location and length of attack lines depend on a department's response district and the standard staffing for the engine company. Some departments rely on multiple preconnected attack lines that range in length from 100–400 feet, with static bulk beds or 2½- or 3-inch hose to fill out extended hose lays. If an organization has a standard attack line complement, this can be integrated easily into the vehicle design. (The dimensions of existing apparatus can be replicated for use on the new rig.)

CONSIDER THE DRIVER/ENGINEER

One of the greatest challenges for an apparatus committee is to determine the desired panel configuration that will meet the operational and training needs of the organization—as opposed to just throwing all of the components into the smallest available space. ***The engine company driver/engineer has one of the most***

important jobs on the fireground. Anything that can be done to make this person's job safer and easier enhances the overall operation greatly to ensure success.

PUMP PANEL LIGHTING

The pump panel area should have more than adequate panel lighting to illuminate both the left- and right-side panel areas. This lighting should extend to the top area above the pump, particularly when the unit is equipped with a deck gun or wagon pipe. Depending on the width and layout of the panel, the manufacturer's standard lighting configuration might not be sufficient to illuminate all of the working area.

GREEN ENERGY AND THE IMPACT ON THE FIRE SERVICE

Flames Consume Tesla in Front of ME Fire Station

Christopher Burns, Bangor Daily News, Maine

Firefighters aren't accustomed to the blaze being brought to them. But that's exactly what happened in Tremont on Monday when the driver of a Tesla stopped the sedan in front of the fire house before its battery ignited. The driver of the late model Tesla hit debris in the road, which punctured the underside protective skid plate, according to the Tremont Volunteer Fire Department.

Recognizing the seriousness of the situation, the driver stopped the Tesla in front of the fire station. The high-voltage battery then ignited. The department luckily had a good-sized arsenal for dealing with electric vehicle fires and extinguished the blaze, but not before it did a number on the sedan. No one was injured in the fire.

NEIGHBOR'S HELPING NEIGHBORS, thank you for your support!!

Hoags Corners VFD

All you can eat breakfast buffet, 1st Sunday of each month. $15.00 8am to 11am.
7237 NY-66, East Nassau, NY 12062

Gansevoort Fire Department Breakfast

See you in the fall, September 20th to be exact.

Clifton Park Fire Department Breakfast

Next Breakfast will be held in October at a date to be announced.

Speigletown Fire Department Breakfast 2nd Sunday of each month

Sunday October 11th from 7:30 to 11:30, $10 adults, $5 children, under 5 free

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You're Invited! Firefighter's Home Open House September 26

Join us on Saturday, September 26th, for The Firefighter's Home Open House.
When: Saturday, September 26th from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

We salute all of the kitchen help who hustle, giving up their Sunday mornings, to make these events
special for all the attendees and work hard to support their fire company's. Thank you for your tough work and dedication.

GENERAL INTEREST TO ALL

The Evolution of Two-Piece Engine Companies & Combination Apparatus in the Fire Service

Good reading for fire history buffs and apparatus geeks.

Tom Shand

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The Syracuse, NY, Fire Department's (SFD) revised strategy for its engine companies in the mid-1970s proved to be very effective, and departments from across the United States traveled to Syracuse to review operations and apparatus designs that were associated with the SFD's two-piece engine company concept.
- In the late-1970s, staffing issues prompted the Rochester, NY, Fire Department to deploy nine quint-midi companies. The rigs were staffed with four members on the ladder and two on the midi-pumper and handled minor incidents, to save wear and tear on larger quint apparatus.
- Following American LaFrance's introduction in 1979 of 75-foot quint, other apparatus makers, including Ladder Tower, Pierce Manufacturing and Seagrave, added such rigs to their product line.

Dating back to the era of horse-drawn steamers and hose wagons, it was common for engine companies to operate with two units to supply fire streams at structural fires. As motorized apparatus replaced the horses, some departments continued to operate two-piece companies. These consisted of a wagon and a pumper, using primarily 750–1,000-gpm rigs and five- or six person staffing. Following World War II, two-piece engine companies were prevalent in departments, including the departments of the District of Columbia, the city of Los Angeles and New York City, with each adapting operations to meet its needs.

In the period of the War Years during the 1970s, when civil unrest resulted in heavy fire activity, the two-piece companies frequently split, with additional staffing to increase the number of units that were available for responses. Over time, the budgetary effect of operating and staffing two-piece companies in large departments caused changes in apparatus deployment and alarm assignments.

The District of Columbia Fire Department operated two-piece engine companies until early 1992, but in the heyday, all 33 engine companies operated with a wagon and pumper using rigs that were built by Hahn, Peter Pirsch and Ward LaFrance.

Historically, the National Board of Fire Underwriters recognized the importance of hose wagons and two-piece companies when it reviewed municipal fire defenses. A 1922 report for the city of Syracuse, NY, included recommendations for an additional hose wagon to be paired with existing engine companies along with establishing a new ladder company.

The Boston Fire Department operated five double-pumper companies. These units were assigned two fully staffed engine companies as well as 11 companies that were assigned a pumper and hose wagon. Several 1947 Mack Type 85 hose wagons were outfitted with a booster pump, a 150-gallon tank and two Eastman deck guns. Several of these rigs served into the early 1970s and weren't replaced until 1979 with Ford C-8000 Sutphen units that were equipped with a 1,250-gpm pump and a fixed heavy stream appliance. These wagons were paired with 1970 Hahn 1,250-gpm pumpers for two-piece engine companies that served into the early 1980s.

During the 1970s, several departments, including those of Syracuse and Rochester, NY, introduced two-piece companies, although each department used widely different operational procedures to address increasing fire activity.

In February 1973, Syracuse Fire Department (SFD) Chief Thomas Hanlon III unveiled a reorganization of the department that entailed building seven new stations to address aging firehouses that dated back to the horse-drawn era.

Over a few years, each engine company was assigned a mini-pumper that was built on an International chassis and was equipped with a 300-gpm pump, a 200-gallon tank, two crosslay hosebeds, a pump manifold, a remote control 500-gpm monitor and 3½-inch supply line.

The minis operated with maxi-pumpers that were outfitted with a 2,000-gpm pump, a 500-gallon tank, four crosslay hosebeds, a 50-foot Telesqurt, a Rapid Water system, and fixed and portable heavy stream appliances. The rigs were outfitted with automated pump controls from Fire Research Corp. in conjunction with the SFD's training division.

The department's fleet at that time consisted of 11 pumpers, 6 trucks, and squad and rescue companies, with a first-alarm assignment that provided a response of 26 personnel plus the district chief.

The use of two-piece engine companies proved to be most effective. Departments from across the United States traveled to Syracuse to review the SFD's operations and innovative apparatus designs.

During Hanlon's tenure, the SFD acquired at least 58 new apparatus along with innovations, including remote control hydrant valves, automatic nozzles and Rapid Water-equipped pumpers.

A little farther west, during the late 1970s, the Rochester Fire Department (RFD), which was under the leadership of Chief Leonard Huether, reorganized to address staffing issues. This resulted in the deployment of nine quint-midi companies that were supplemented by eight engine companies.

Unique among department apparatus fleets, the Rochester Maintenance Shops produced 30 apparatus for the RFD, including several GMC 630 model open-cab pumpers and seven Mack B model 1,000-gpm pumpers, all of which were designed and built by Deputy Chief Louis Vogt. These rigs were complemented by tractor-drawn and midship aerial ladders that were built by Peter Pirsch.

The first two quints to enter service in Rochester were built by Ward LaFrance and included 100-foot Maxim rear-mount ladders. These prototype rigs were followed by what would become the standard configuration: an E-ONE Hurricane tandem-axle chassis that was equipped with a 110-foot aluminum ladder, a 1,500-gpm pump and a 300-gallon tank. The quint midi companies were staffed with four personnel on the ladder and two on the midi-pumper. They handled minor incidents, to save wear and tear on the larger quint apparatus.

The RFD's engine company apparatus during this time consisted of a mixture of American LaFrance 900 series rigs, which were built with an aluminum treadplate roof to accommodate a Stang gun, and Ward LaFrance units.

The midi-pumpers were larger in size than the SFD's minis, having a two-door cab commercial chassis and equipped with a 1,000-gpm pump, a 500-gallon tank, two crosslay hosebeds and full height body compartments. The RFD quint-midi deployment system remained until around 2008, when the department transitioned back to a traditional engine truck operation, which took several years to fully implement.

As a result of magazine articles that covered the changes at the RFD and the SFD and the effect on their operational procedures and fireground tactics, a number of departments took notice, with a resulting increase in the number of mini-pumpers and quints that were placed into service. The fire apparatus industry took notice and began to offer different models of these vehicles.

Along the way, combination apparatus, including quints, rescue-pumpers and other variants, entered the marketplace.

FLEET ADJUSTMENTS BASED ON CALLS

In 1976, FDNY recorded more than 400,000 incidents, responding to more than 153,000 fires, including a substantial number of arson-related fires. Fire duty in busy companies was near an all-time high. Engine Company 45 handled about 7,800 runs; Ladder Company 124 handled more than 4,000 incidents.

Although these numbers are staggering, for a six-year period, Engine Company 82 in the Bronx was the busiest FDNY engine company, answering more than 9,000 runs in 1968.

This level of fire activity was similar in other larger cities and created deployment problems to handle the increasing number of calls and working fires.

Although many departments retained a traditional approach, using heavily staffed engine and ladder companies, the effect of reduced funding in financially strapped municipalities increased the need to adapt vehicle fleets to meet these needs. Larger departments continued to utilize both tractor drawn and rear-mount aerial ladders, in addition to a variety of mid-mount tower ladders that were being produced by the apparatus industry.

One of the first manufacturers to address the quint concept was American LaFrance, with the introduction in 1979 of a single-axle, 75-foot vehicle that was built on a pumper chassis and typically equipped with a 1,500-gpm pump, a 500-gallon water tank and a small complement of ground ladders. Other builders, including Ladder Tower, Pierce and Seagrave, added these short wheelbase, 75-foot aerial quints to their product line.

In some cases, these 75-foot quints were placed into service as engine companies that provided aerial capability. Others embraced the quint concept for use as a ladder company, providing enhanced fireground functions.

APPARATUS LIFE CYCLES

The chassis component technology of the time limited the gross vehicle weight ratings for the front and rear axles, with some units experiencing overweight conditions and poor braking and handling. This was similar to

the initial acquisitions of mini-pumpers in Syracuse: Because of the availability of commercial chassis weight ratings, the first two units, with their steel body construction and fixed components, proved to be overweight. Few departments have the opportunity to acquire prototype apparatus to discern the capabilities of vehicles. However, in Syracuse, after two years of front-line service of the busiest engine companies, future vehicle specifications were modified to provide for aluminum body material, changes in the front bumper layout and removal of one of the two booster reels.

Over the years, the anticipated life cycle for fire apparatus was 20 years, which probably was rooted in some of the National Board of Fire Underwriters recommendations. Fortunately, where vehicle fleet replacement programs were developed with adequate financial support, some departments are capable of replacing front-line apparatus at 10 or 15 years. One thing that hasn't changed over the past 50 years is that apparatus life cycle benchmarks require a combination of well-developed specifications, enhanced preventative maintenance and testing programs as well as station crews that take care of their units, providing regular daily and weekly inspection practices. As is the case in many areas of fire service history, "what is old is new again."

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CLASSIFIED

CAFDA IS SEEKING A TREASURER FOR OUR FIRE SERVICE NOT-FOR-PROFIT ASSOCIATION.

Our current excellent treasurer has announced that he will be giving up the position as soon as we find a replacement due to increased workload with his own business. Any candidate should be familiar with Quick Books and the structure and operation of a not-for-profit organization as well as some familiarization with the operation of fire districts in New York State. CAFDA offers a stipend which won't make you rich, but you get to hang out with some great people, get free meals prior to meetings and trying to provide a service to fire district officials. The Association requires our treasurers to be bonded. If you are interested let us know by providing a resume and cover letter to secretary@cafda.net.

Duties of the Treasurer:

I. Shall collect all dues, be the custodian of all funds of the Association, and shall keep all Association funds in such bank accounts as may be designated by the Board of Directors

II. Shall send to all member organizations the Membership Forms and Dues Invoices for membership

III. Shall pay the bills of the Association, keep accurate financial records of all transactions and shall present a brief report at each meeting

IV. Shall submit a detailed financial report to the Board of Director's at year's end, which is to be audited by the Auditing Committee and approved at the March General Membership meeting

V. Shall be bonded at the expense of the Association in the amount of $100,000.

VI. Shall transfer money into and out of investment accounts upon approval of the Board of Directors.

VII. Shall be paid a salary as determined by the Board of Directors

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We would consider expanding the number of Directors if individuals from other counties would volunteer to participate!!

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The Capital Area Association represents any fire district that wishes to join CAFDA. Fire District Officials include Commissioners, Treasurers, and Deputy Treasurers. Secretaries and Chiefs are also invited to join in!
If your Fire District is a member, you are a member!!

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All correspondence & Capital Area Fire Districts Association Mailing Address should be directed to:
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Wish to become a member of CAFDA, go to CAFDA.net/membership to apply.

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 2026. You are invited to our monthly membership meeting and to any of our social events..

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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.