THE BULLETIN

AUGUST 8TH, 2026

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

CAPITAL SHORT TAKES

- **BUDGET SCHEDULE** PAGE 4 also on CAFDA.net
- **ELECTION SCHEDULE** PAGE 9 also on CAFDA.net
- **The 2027 property tax levy growth will be capped at 2% for local governments that operate on a calendar-based fiscal year, which includes fire districts.**
- The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) and Galanz Americas Limited Company (Galanz Americas) are announcing the recall of Galanz Retro Refrigerators, manufactured by Zhongshan Galanz, of China, and imported by Home Depot and Galanz Americas. CPSC is aware of 34 reports of fire involving the refrigerators, one of which resulted in a fatality according to the local fire department report. About 121,680 refrigerators were sold at Home Depot stores nationwide and online at Amazon.com for between $330 and $520.
- **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.

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, August 13, 2026	7:00 PM	**Board of Directors Meeting**	Clifton Park	
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 FREQUENCY CERTAIN AUTHORIZED ORGANIZATIONS MAY CONDUCT BINGO GAMES	PENDING SIGNATURE
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

WASHINGTON WATCH

📌 Senate passed Stopgap Funding Through December 11. The Senate CR varies from the House version passed last month to extend federal funding through December 4th in more ways than one, but the major difference is the inclusion of language delaying the finalization of OMB's proposal to make drastic changes to the federal grantmaking process. If passed, this delay would set up a major political fight for December when the CR expires. Also, the Senate CR would extend certain authorizations, including surface-transportation which is set to expire on September 30. When the Senate passes their CR, the House will still have to sign off when they return from recess the week of August 31.

📌 U.S. Fire Administration's 2026 Summit on Fire Prevention and Control. The U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) will be hosting its annual Summit on Fire Prevention and Control on September 15. Focused on "Building the Next Generation of America's Fire and Emergency Services", attendees will learn more about the future of training in the fire service by participating in presentations, breakout sessions, and more.

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:

Phone: (518) 474-4037; Email: localgov@osc.ny.gov
Address: Office of the State Comptroller, Division of Local Government and School Accountability
110 State Street, 12th Floor; Albany, NY 12236

NYS-OSC Fire Service Audits

MORAVIA VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY, INC.– TREASURER

Audit Objective

Did the Moravia Volunteer Fire Company, Inc. (Company) Treasurer properly account for all receipts and disbursements?

Audit Period

January 1, 2024 – March 18, 2026

Understanding the Audit Area

A fire company treasurer must properly account for (deposit, disburse, record and report) a fire company's funds to ensure statutory compliance, financial accountability and the public's trust. A lack of oversight can

lead to mismanagement, fraud and a damaged reputation, as well as jeopardize a fire company's funding and its mission.

From January 1, 2024, through July 31, 2025, the Treasurers[1] deposited revenues and redeposited startup cash[2] totaling $619,862 and disbursed funds totaling $612,880.

Audit Summary

The Treasurers did not properly account for all receipts and disbursements. As a result, the Board of Directors (Board) lacked reliable information that was needed to manage the Company's financial activities, and assurance that receipts were properly collected, recorded, safeguarded and deposited and disbursements were adequately supported, properly approved, accurately recorded and made for appropriate Company purposes. *Furthermore, the Company had an increased risk of errors, theft, waste and abuse of Company resources occurring and not being detected.*

From January 1, 2024, through July 31, 2025, **the Treasurers did not**:

- *Prepare bank reconciliations for 2024 and maintain adequate bank reconciliations for 2025.*
- *Maintain adequate supporting documentation for 174 deposits totaling $612,454 and 14 disbursements totaling $9,512.*
- *Properly account for or accurately record 98 transactions totaling $198,290.*
- *Obtain required membership approval for 36 disbursements totaling $22,225, as required by the Company's bylaws.*
- *Obtain dual signatures for 41 disbursements totaling $20,758, as required by the Company's bylaws.*
- *Provide complete, accurate or adequate written monthly reports to the Board and membership.*

Additionally, the Treasurers did not file the 2024 or 2025 foreign fire insurance (FFI) tax proceeds annual reports with the New York State Office of the State Comptroller (OSC) as required.

The report includes 11 recommendations that, if implemented, will improve the Treasurer's performance of their duties and improve accountability, transparency and compliance with Company bylaws.

READ FULL REPORT HERE: https://www.osc.ny.gov/files/local-government/audits/2026/pdf/moravia-volunteer-fire-company-inc-2026-46.pdf

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***Fire Departments Aren't Businesses, Don't Run Them Like One

Tyrral Quinn

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- To apply Fortune 500 principles of productivity to the fire service is to misunderstand what fire departments do: save lives, protect property, serve the public good, seek preparedness.
- Fire departments should define their productivity in terms of readiness, response and prevention. Defining productivity any other way risks turning a department's people into products and its purpose into output.
- Fire department leadership must advocate for the reality of its work. It doesn't create profit. It provides protection.

Productivity: It's a word that you hear often in business, industry and management circles. In Fortune 500 boardrooms, productivity is the bottom line. It's a measure of output per unit of input. Time, money, labor, resources—all of these are scrutinized under a financial microscope. You trim fat. You increase margins. You measure success by what you produce.

It's no surprise that fire departments, particularly municipal ones that are under growing pressure to justify every tax dollar, are being run more and more like businesses. Productivity becomes data: number of calls run, hydrants flowed, inspections completed, car seats installed, smoke detectors distributed. If something can be counted, it becomes the metric. If it can't be counted, it's considered less important.

Here's the problem: A fire department isn't a business. It's an insurance policy.

BUSINESS MODEL DOESN'T FIT

To apply Fortune 500 principles to the fire service is to misunderstand what fire departments are.

Businesses exist to make money. *Fire departments exist to save lives, protect property and serve the public good.* Businesses seek efficiency in productivity. *Fire departments seek preparedness.*

You don't judge the value of your homeowner's insurance by how many times that your house catches fire. You judge the value by the peace of mind that it gives you and by the confidence that, if disaster does strike, you're covered.

The same applies to the fire service. If you only measure a fire department by its call volume, you miss the point. In fact, a department that runs fewer fires might be more effective, because it's done its job in prevention, education and code enforcement.

WHAT DEPARTMENTS PRODUCE, AND WHY IT ISN'T A PRODUCT

Today's administrators and elected officials often evaluate fire departments on metrics that they understand: numbers. They track dollar loss, number of calls, turnout times, number of inspections, number of CPR classes taught, etc. Yes, such things are all important, but ask yourself this: If a department's product is measured only in outputs, what happens when prevention efforts actually reduce those outputs? Do fewer fires mean that a department is less productive? Do fewer pediatric drownings mean that a department's water safety program wasn't worth it? *Does a well-trained crew that sits quietly in a well-staffed engine mean that the department wasted money? Of course not, but that's the trap of applying a business lens to a public safety mission.*

FIRE SERVICE IS AN INSURANCE POLICY

The fire service is readiness. It's staffing and training that's invested before the call. It's money that's spent on apparatus that rarely might leave the bay. It's hours of hose deployments, search drills and EMS refreshers that are done not because they'll be used today but because they'll be needed someday.

If departments aren't funded adequately because they haven't "produced" enough calls, we're gambling the lives of citizens based on the assumption that tomorrow will look like today.

Like some views of insurance, the fire department seems excessive until it isn't.

REAL PRODUCTIVITY: READINESS, RESPONSE AND PREVENTION

How should we define productivity in the fire service? It comes down to three pillars.

Readiness. Readiness is the silent investment. It's firefighters who check their SCBA every shift. It's engineers who train relentlessly on pump operations. It's company officers who drill over and over on search patterns, RIT deployment or mayday calls. It's the culture of repetition that ensures chaos doesn't win on the fireground. Productivity here is invisible until it isn't. It shows up when seconds count and no one has to ask what to do.

Response. Yes, departments are judged by their capability to respond. Turnout times, fireground tactics and patient outcomes all are measurable. However, response is the result of readiness. You can't have excellent response without excellent preparation. If the fire service is to be productive in this category, it must invest upstream in staffing, training and leadership.

Prevention. The most productive department is one that prevents emergencies before they happen. This is where departments should put their metrics: building safety, community risk reduction, education programs, CPR instruction, code enforcement, fall prevention, smoke alarms and car seats. These aren't just public relations. They are productivity of the highest order, because they save lives before the 9-1-1 call ever happens.

RISK OF MISUNDERSTANDING THE MISSION

When fire departments define productivity in business terms, they risk turning their people into products and their purpose into output. They begin to chase numbers for the sake of grant funding, political optics or comparisons with other departments.

Leadership in the fire service must push back against this trend. It must advocate for the reality of its work. It doesn't exist to create profit. *It provides protection, and protection requires investment.*

A well-run fire department doesn't just show up when things go wrong. It ensures fewer things go wrong.

YOU GET WHAT YOU PAY FOR

The phrase is simple, but true: You get what you pay for. Do you want a fast, competent, well-equipped response? Pay for it. Do you want a culture of safety, education and community resilience? Fund it. Do you want a department that can train, retain and remain calm under pressure? Then stop asking it to prove its worth in call volume and station activity.

Productivity in the fire service must be redefined not as output but as capacity. ***We don't measure the value of a parachute by how often it's used. We measure it by confidence that it will work when it's needed. So should it be with us.***

See all local government audits here: https://www.osc.ny.gov/local-government/audits?

THE FIRE CHIEF'S OFFICE

Communicating Truth with Empathy: A Fire Officer's Guide to Honest Encouragement and Constructive Critique

David Stone

In a world where leadership is often mistaken for authority, true leaders understand their role is not to command, but to serve. One of the most powerful ways to serve those whom you lead or mentor is by mastering the art of honest encouragement and empathetic critique.

When I step into a tough conversation, I try to remember this: don't blow smoke on someone's ego, but have the courage to be direct with genuine care so they can get better. When your approach is honest and real, those conversations get easier and a lot more effective.

This is the heart of servant leadership, a philosophy that puts the growth and development of others first. In the fire service, we practice this every day through training, mentorship, and the conversations that shape our people. Done right, these moments strengthen both our communication and our leadership.

ENCOURAGEMENT WITHOUT EGO-STROKING

Encouragement is key. People thrive when they feel seen, valued, and supported. But encouragement that's empty or exaggerated can do more harm than good. It inflates egos, creates blind spots, and ultimately stunts growth. Raising up young firefighters requires us to give critical feedback that develops them without alienating them, a vital balance in effective mentorship.

For encouragement to be truly effective, it must be grounded in truth and intention*. We should consistently highlight strengths, celebrate progress, and affirm potential, but always with authenticity.* The goal isn't just to make someone feel good in the moment, but to help them build confidence rooted in reality.

CONSTRUCTIVE CRITIQUE: A TOOL FOR GROWTH, NOT EGO

The critique, when done poorly, can feel like an attack. But when done with intention and purpose, it becomes a tool for maximizing growth. As leaders we should not shy away from hard conversations. *We must be brave enough to be direct, not to tear down, but to build up*. When we have the courage to confront a situation with emotional intelligence and a clear plan, it's often far less difficult than we initially perceived it to be.

This kind of feedback should be:

- Timely and specific to the task or behavior—try and address as soon as possible for the greatest positive effect
- Focused on tasks and or behaviors, not personal details
- Delivered with empathy and clarity
- Always points toward growth and improvement

Striking the right balance between encouragement and critique is pivotal. My recommendation: lead with encouragement, then offer objective, task-focused feedback, never criticism of personality or character. This keeps the conversation constructive and growth oriented.

Pro tip: Include yourself in the critique. A simple statement like "I've missed this before, too" or "We're all working on this together" shifts the tone from correction to collaboration. It reinforces a sense of team, not blame, and that's where real development happens. Your honesty and vulnerability in these moments communicate both permission to fail and an expectation to grow.

THE POWER OF DELIVERY: BODY LANGUAGE AND TONE

Even the most well-intentioned feedback can be misunderstood if it's delivered poorly. That's why body language and voice inflection are just as important as the words themselves.

- A warm tone can soften a hard truth.
- Open posture and eye contact can signal safety and respect.
- A calm, steady voice can help the listener stay grounded, even when the message is challenging.
- A smile at the appropriate time can be disarming and welcoming. Smile more.

As leaders, we must be mindful of how our message is received, not just how it's delivered. And when someone receives our words in a way we didn't intend, with hurt, defensiveness, or confusion, we must be humble enough to say:
"I'm sorry for how that came across. That wasn't my intention. But I do stand by what I shared, because I believe it's important for your growth."
This is the servant leader's posture: firm in truth, soft in delivery, and always willing to repair relational tension without compromising the message.

THE WEIGHT OF WORDS

Choose your words wisely. They carry the weight of both influence and expectation from a senior members role in an organization (especially the promoted officer and chief position). Firefighters are constantly observing their leaders, intuitively picking up on body language and tone. What we say, and how we say it, especially during moments of correction, leaves a lasting impression. Choosing the right words when offering criticism can make a huge difference in how it's received. The goal is to disarm defensiveness and invite growth, not trigger frustration and resistance.
Coaching through poorly executed tasks and behaviors is my preferred approach. Here are some practical tips to help us communicate more effectively when offering feedback.

Phrases that soften the delivery:

- "One thing I've noticed…"
- "Something that might help next time…"
- "Can I make a suggestion on this?"
- "Have you considered this way of doing/saying…"
- "I've struggled with this too, and here's what helped me…"
- "Let's look at how we can improve this…"
- "This isn't about fault or pointing fingers, it's about getting better."
- "We've all been there before, consider…"

Words That Focus on the Task, Not the Person:

- Opportunity (e.g., "Let's look at this as an opportunity to improve here…")
- Adjustment (e.g., "A small adjustment doing this could make a big difference…")
- Clarification (e.g., " Let me rephrase that to make it clearer…")
- Improvement (e.g., "Even small improvements can make a big difference, it's all about steady progress.")
- Next step (e.g., "The next time let's work on improving…")
- Use "we" instead of "you" when possible (e.g., "We can work on…").

Tone of voice:

- Keep your tone calm and curious, not accusatory.
- Pair feedback with genuine encouragement.
- Be stearn only when the situation demands it.

The volume at which we speak matters. Avoid yelling and be mindful of how your tone communicates both passion and intensity. A calm, steady voice can convey authority without aggression, while a raised voice, even if unintentional, can easily be misinterpreted as frustration or anger. As a leader and a boss, don't be afraid to "be the adult" when it matters. Sometimes that means sounding like a stern parent, using a steady, firm voice to set expectations and correct behavior. It's not something you live in all the time, but when the moment demands it, you can't shy away from it. Good leaders know when to be easygoing, and when to tighten it up.

FEEDBACK THROUGH HONESTY

At its core, this approach is about serving others through truth. It's not about being "nice," it's about being real in a way that uplifts nicely. We should be intentional with our words because we know that honesty can be one of the highest forms of respect. It is part of the foundation of what can make our leadership of our firefighters so impactful.
We must continually ask ourselves:
"How can I help this person grow?"
"What truth do they need to hear, and how can I say it in a way they can receive?"

"Is what I am about to say going to improve this person's abilities?"
We must be willing to provide honest feedback, even when it's difficult, without allowing it to be driven by frustration or personal bias. Be direct, but respectful. Expect nothing in return and remember: business is business.

INTENTIONAL LEADERSHIP

When we lead this way with intentional actions, something powerful happens. Our crews become more resilient and self-aware, reproducing positive behaviors. Trust deepens, because people know feedback is for them, not against them. Knowing your intentions are to improve their abilities, growth accelerates because people are challenged and supported in equal measure

Leadership isn't about being liked, it's about being trusted. And trust is built when people know you'll tell them the truth, even when it's hard, because you care enough to want the best for them. Trust is the most valuable commodity we have as leaders. We should work every day to earn it, build it, and protect it.

One of the most impactful things we can do as leaders is to set the example. Our actions demonstrate the expectations for how others should be treated and model the positive behaviors we want to see in our crews, on the emergency scenes, training grounds, and in the firehouse. Being the example isn't just about leadership; it's about consciously shaping the culture and development of the next generation of firefighters now.

So, lead with courage. Speak with conviction. Serve with honesty. And never underestimate the power of your tone, posture, and presence in shaping how your truth is received. That's the kind of leadership that changes lives.

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

PREVAILING WAGE RATE NOTES OPEN THIS LINK:

https://cafda.net/information-on-the-nys-dol-prevailing-wage-rates-for-fire-districts/

*****FIRE DISTRICT SPECIAL ELECTIONS; LIKE A FINE WINE, THEY TAKE TIME***

Fire commissioners and fire chiefs are no different than everyone in today's society. We are all in a hurry. We want to accomplish everything yesterday. The world has conspired to leave us with no time to accomplish tasks we must accomplish today

There are a number of tasks that fire commissioners seek to accomplish and which chiefs ask the Board to accomplish which require the passage of a mandatory referendum. In layman's terms a mandatory referendum means that the Board passes a resolution to take an action that will require voter approval before the Board is empowered to take the action. A proposition will be submitted to the voters for their approval at the annual fire district election or at a special fire district election.

Town Law §179 gives a Board of Fire Commissioners the flexibility to schedule a special election to submit one or more propositions for voter approval on a Tuesday that is not a legal holiday rather than requiring the Board to wait until the annual election held in December (most fire districts, see Town Law §175).

The Board may desire to pass a bond issue for a construction project or to fund a fire apparatus acquisition. It may wish to obtain voter approval for an installment purchase contract to acquire fire apparatus or equipment. It may seek to amend a LOSAP in a manner that Article 11-A of the General Municipal Law sets a mandatory referendum requirement for. It may wish to obtain authority to sell property valued in excess of $100,000.00. It may seek voter permission to exceed the spending limitation set by Town Law §176. Town Law § 179 provides the basis for special elections to purchase fire apparatus, install or add fire alarm systems, to lease, purchase, construct, reconstruct, alter, repair or equip facilities, to purchase rights to take water, to purchase or construct cisterns, and to authorize annual expenditures.

In each case the time to accomplish a proper election must be provided for. In each case particular statutory requirements for the task may add to the time needed to accomplish it. Fire districts and fire departments are emergency service organizations, but when it comes to obtaining voter approval for these matters they do **not** get to declare emergencies and advance the clock. The transaction that hinges on voter approval does not get to advance the clock. The vendor or purchaser in the transaction does not get to advance the clock. The lender does not get to advance the clock. The time to accomplish a proper election is as follows:

FIRE DISTRICT SPECIAL ELECTION SCHEDULE

At least 61 days before the Special Election Day

Adopt a resolution if you want to change rules related to absentee ballots [permit them for first time or eliminate their use].

At least 40 days before the Special Election Day

Adopt resolutions designating Fire District Board of Elections, including Chairman and Election Inspectors and Ballot Clerks, fixing compensation of the individual members of the District Board of Elections. [Town Law §175-a(6)].

At least 40 days before the Special Election Day

Request County Board of Elections to provide a list of persons registered to vote as of 23 days before the Special Election Day and to provide the list to the district by the 20th day before such election. Also order voting machines [unless using paper ballots]. [Election Law §5-612(6)].

At least 27 days but not more than 34 days before the Special Election Day

Publish Notice of Election in district newspaper designating the dates on which the Inspectors of Election will prepare the register, the place where the registration and election will be held, the hours of the meeting and of the election, and last day for registration. Also publicly post notice in place accessible to public. [Town Law §175(1)].

At least 23 days before the Special Election Day

Last day to register at County Board of Elections to be eligible to vote at the Special Fire District Election [Town Law §175-a(2)(a)].

20 days before the Special Election Day

County Board of Elections to mail lists of registered voters to Fire District Secretary. [Election Law] §5-612(c).

At least 15 days but not more than 20 days before the Special Election Day Commence posting of Notice of Election on district website and signboard, if any, at least 15, but not more than 20 days before date of election. [Town Law §175-c (1)].

At least 15 days but not more than 20 days before the Special Election Day

Send copy of Notice of Election to town clerk for posting on municipal website, if any, bulletin board and signboard, if any. [Town Law §175-c(2)]

These notices [for websites, signboards and bulletin boards] must include time and place of election, and any other details regarding matters to be voted on as well as hours of polls being open for balloting. Suggest using regular Notice of Election published in district newspaper with the exception of an electronic signboard which will require abbreviated information.

[Town Law] §175-c(3).

15 days before the Special Election Day

Suggested meeting date for Fire District Board of Elections to prepare register. Can be any other date you choose after receiving registration books. [Town Law §175-a(3)].

Special Election Day

A Tuesday that is not a legal holiday and a minimum of 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. [Town Law §179].

Within 72 hours after the polls have closed on Special Election Day

File results (Canvass of Election) with Town Clerk. [Town Law §175].

Within 7 days after the Special Election Day

Secretary to deliver a report to the County Board of Elections indicating the persons on the list of registered voters labeled "inactive" who voted at the fire district election. [Election Law] §5-612(7).

This schedule relates to the time to accomplish a proper election. It does **not** address preparatory action required for the particular task you seek to accomplish. The special election provides you with the authority to undertake the task if the proposition is approved. However, each type of objective be it a building project, equipment acquisition, etc., has its own set of requirements unrelated to the requirement to conduct the mandatory referendum. Your schedule needs to take those steps into account.

- What tasks must be undertaken before the election schedule above and after the election for a bond issue?
- What tasks must be undertaken before the election schedule above and after the election for an installment purchase contract?
- What tasks must be undertaken before the election schedule above and after the election for a LOSAP amendment?
- These are all questions which the Board of Fire Commissioners must ask before undertaking the process.
- The steps listed must be completed and documented.

It is important to conduct a proper special election and to document proper completion of the process in order to make certain that a valid election has been held.

Take a deep breath.

This takes time. Slow and steady wins the race. Fast and reckless can have dire consequences.

ADA Title II and Fire Department Websites: What the New Federal Rule Means for the Fire Service

Matthew Reardon

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Fire departments that are part of a municipal government or special district that serves 50,000 people or more have until April 26, 2027, to ensure that their website meets the updated requirements of Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ACA). The deadline is April 26, 2028, for departments that are part of a municipal government or special district that serves fewer than 50,000 people.
- Title II mandates are based on Web Content Accessibility Guidelines Version 2.1 Level AA. Conformance means that website navigation is usable by keyboard without requiring a mouse, images include text alternatives, text and background color contrast meet minimum ratios, and vides include captions, among other requirements.
- Fire departments that delay in conforming to Title II of the ADA risk investigations or legal demands under compressed timelines.

In April 2024, the U.S. Department of Justice finalized a significant update to Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). For the first time, the federal government formally adopted a specific technical standard for digital accessibility that applies to state and local governments. That includes fire departments, and it directly affects the websites that we use to push out emergency information, accept permit applications, recruit new members and communicate with communities.

If your department operates a public-facing website or mobile application as part of a municipal government or special district, the new rule applies to you.

The deadline for governments that serve 50,000 people or more is April 26, 2027. The deadline for governments that serve a population of fewer than 50,000 people is April 26, 2028. The rule doesn't create exemptions that are based on staffing level, volunteer status or budget limitations. Yes, smaller jurisdictions are given more time, but the legal obligation is the same.

Accessibility remediation requires planning, budgeting and technical execution. It isn't something that can be fixed meaningfully in a few weeks. Fire service leaders must understand what this rule requires and begin to prepare now.

WHAT TITLE II REQUIRES

Title II of the ADA prohibits disability-based discrimination by state and local governments. Public entities must provide individuals who have a disability with equal access to their programs, services and activities.

For decades, most Title II compliance conversations focused on physical access: ramps, accessible restrooms, communication accommodations. Those still are critical, but as government services moved online, courts and federal agencies increasingly recognized that websites and digital services are part of a public entity's programs and activities.

Until 2024, no formally adopted nationwide technical standard for digital accessibility under Title II existed. Departments were told that their website must be accessible, but the exact benchmark wasn't defined clearly. The Department of Justice (DOJ) now requires state and local government websites and mobile apps to conform to Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) Version 2.1 Level AA. This internationally recognized technical standard was developed by the World Wide Web Consortium.

Fire departments fall under Title II when they operate as a municipal agency, a department of local government or a special district that was established under state law. There is no exemption for public safety agencies. There is no carve out for small or volunteer departments. If you're a public entity, the rule applies.

WHAT WCAG 2.1 LEVEL AA MEANS IN PRACTICE

WCAG 2.1 Level AA defines how digital content must function to be accessible to individuals who have a disability. This includes individuals who are blind or have low vision, are deaf or hard of hearing, have mobility impairments or have a cognitive disability.

In practical terms, conformance means:

- Website navigation must be usable by keyboard without requiring a mouse.
- Images must include appropriate text alternatives.
- Text and background color contrast must meet minimum ratios.
- Videos must include captions.
- Online forms must be labeled properly and usable with assistive technology.
- Content must function with screen readers.
- PDFs and downloadable documents must be accessible or provided in an accessible format.

This isn't about making a website "look nicer." It's about ensuring that someone who uses a screen reader can navigate a site. It's about ensuring that someone who can't use a mouse can submit a permit application. It's about ensuring that critical safety information is readable and usable by everyone who is in a jurisdiction.

The DOJ selected WCAG 2.1 Level AA because it's widely adopted and technically defined. It provides measurable criteria rather than vague expectations.

WHY THIS MATTERS FOR FIRE DEPARTMENTS

Fire department websites aren't static brochures that sit untouched for years. They distribute emergency alerts. They provide burn permit applications. They publish safety education materials. They list contact information and station locations. They serve as a recruitment tool. For many residents, the website is the primary point of interaction with the department outside of emergency response.

If that website contains accessibility barriers, individuals who have a disability might be unable to access critical public safety information. That isn't a theoretical issue. It can affect real people who are trying to obtain safety guidance, apply for permits or contact the department.

The DOJ clarified that simply offering a phone number doesn't automatically satisfy accessibility obligations if online services are inaccessible. Digital services themselves must be accessible. For the fire service, this isn't just a regulatory box to check. Equal access to safety information aligns directly with our mission. We exist to protect the entire community. That includes residents who have a disability.

ENFORCEMENT AND LEGAL EXPOSURE

The April 2024 Final Rule is a binding federal regulation. After the applicable deadlines pass, failure to conform to WCAG 2.1 Level AA constitutes noncompliance under Title II.

The DOJ has authority to investigate complaints, conduct compliance reviews, negotiate settlement agreements and file civil enforcement actions in federal court.

Individuals also might file lawsuits that seek injunctive relief and attorney's fees.

Enforcement doesn't require a systemic collapse of a department's website. A single inaccessible permit application, a single PDF that can't be read by a screen reader and a single complaint from a resident who can't access safety information is enough to trigger review.

Even when monetary damages are limited, litigation costs and mandated remediation can exceed the cost of proactive compliance significantly. More importantly, enforcement actions rarely happen on a department's timeline. They require corrective action under pressure, often outside of normal procurement and budget cycles. **If remediation hasn't started, leadership should treat this as an operational priority.**

Accessibility no longer is an emerging best practice. It's a defined federal requirement that has an active enforcement mechanism that's behind it.

ASSESSING YOUR CURRENT WEBSITE

Many public entity websites don't conform fully to WCAG 2.1 Level AA. A site might look professional and function well on a desktop browser but still present serious accessibility barriers.

Common issues include missing alternative text on images, insufficient color contrast, inaccessible PDFs, navigation menus that can't be used with a keyboard and improperly labeled form fields. If your department didn't conduct a formal accessibility assessment, you should assume there are issues. Start with an accessibility audit that includes both automated scanning tools and manual testing. Automated tools can detect certain problems, but they don't evaluate real-world usability. Manual keyboard testing and screen reader review are essential. You can't remediate what you haven't measured.

REMEDIATION STRATEGY

If barriers are identified, take a structured and prioritized approach. Start with high-impact content: emergency alerts, permit applications, safety resources and contact information. These are the pages where accessibility failures have the most serious consequences.

Next, address structural issues that are within site templates and navigation systems. *If your department relies heavily on PDFs, those documents must be remediated or replaced with accessible HTML content.*

The DOJ cautioned against relying solely on overlay tools or automated widgets that claim instant compliance. Accessibility must be addressed in the site's underlying code and content. There's no shortcut that substitutes for actual remediation. Remember, too, that testing must be documented and that remediation must be measurable.

After fixes are implemented, test again. Accessibility isn't a one-time project, but the initial compliance push requires focused effort and leadership attention.

PREPARING NOW REDUCES RISK LATER

The deadlines are fixed. The technical standard is defined. The enforcement authority is established. Departments that act now maintain control. They control scope, vendor selection, budget timing and implementation strategy. Departments that delay risk reacting to complaints, investigations or legal demands under compressed timelines.

At its core, this rule ensures that all residents, regardless of ability, can access public safety information on equal terms. The fire service exists to protect the whole community. Digital accessibility is now part of that responsibility. Leadership action should reflect that.

This Article has also been posted on the CAFDA.net website.

POSITIVE OUTCOMES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE FIRE SERVICE

POSITIVE OUTCOMES

- None found this week.

FIRE SERVICE CHALLENGES

- **Arizona Fire District Files For Bankruptcy After Shutting Down Operations.** An Arizona fire district that provided fire and EMS coverage to approximately 2,500 square miles, including several Navajo Nation communities, has filed for Chapter 9 bankruptcy protection after closing its station, laying off its employees, and stopping emergency response operations.

  The Puerco Valley Fire District's closure leaves at least four communities without their usual fire and

medical coverage. Navajo Nation Fire & Rescue, the Navajo Police Department, and the Navajo Nation EMS Incident Response Team began covering calls in the affected area on July 24, 2026, with residents warned to expect longer response times.

Six days after the district closed, it filed for bankruptcy. The case raises an uncommon fire-service question: Can a fire district use bankruptcy to protect itself from creditors, and restructure its debts? The answer is yes, because federal bankruptcy law extends Chapter 9 to qualifying governmental entities, including special taxing districts. We covered that issue several years ago.

The Puerco Valley Fire District filed its voluntary petition today, July 30, 2026, in the US Bankruptcy Court for the District of Arizona. Puerco Valley identifies itself in the petition as a special taxing district with a principal place of business in Sanders, Arizona. The petition lists Puerco Valley Ambulance Service as another name used by the district.

The district estimates that it has between one and 49 creditors, assets between $500,001 and $1 million, and liabilities between $1 million and $10 million. It reported that funds will be available for distribution to unsecured creditors.

According to 12News, the Navajo Nation Division of Public Safety reported that the district closed its doors and stopped providing fire and medical services to several Navajo Nation communities. District employees were reportedly sent layoff notices. The affected communities include Nahata Dziil, Wide Ruins, Houck and Tse' Si Ani.

Navajo Nation Fire & Rescue coordinated with the Navajo Police Department to route fire-related calls to Navajo Nation resources. The Navajo Nation EMS Incident Response Team was assigned to support responses, and additional personnel and resources were activated at the Navajo Police Department's Sanders substation.

The district's financial problems had been discussed publicly for several months. During a January 2026 meeting of the Apache County Board of Supervisors, James Watchman Jr., president of the Navajo Nation's Houck Chapter, told supervisors that the district lacked funding to pay its personnel. Navajo Nation Council Delegate Arbin Mitchell asked the county to assist the Puerco Valley and Ganado fire districts with funding that he said had been frozen.

Michael Halliwell, community service coordinator for the Wide Ruins Chapter, told the supervisors that closing the district would "drastically affect the area." Representatives from the Navajo Nation Office of the President also attended the meeting to discuss the district's financial problems and their effect on communities within its service area.

According to the US Courts web site:

The purpose of chapter 9 is to provide a financially-distressed municipality protection from its creditors while it develops and negotiates a plan for adjusting its debts. Reorganization of the debts of a municipality is typically accomplished either by extending debt maturities, reducing the amount of principal or interest, or refinancing the debt by obtaining a new loan.

Chapter 9 is not limited to incorporated cities and towns. Taxing districts and other special-purpose governmental districts can qualify. Federal law also requires the entity to be specifically authorized to file under state law, be insolvent, desire to adjust its debts, and meet one of several statutory requirements concerning negotiations with creditors.

Arizona provides the required state authorization. Arizona Revised Statutes § 35-603 states:

Any taxing district in this state is authorized to file the petition provided for in the federal bankruptcy statute and to incur and pay the expenses thereof and any and all other expenses necessary or incidental to the consummation of the plan of readjustment contemplated in such petition or as it may be modified from time to time.

Arizona law also requires the taxing district to adopt a resolution authorizing the filing and its representation by an attorney before the petition is filed.

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 water tender belonging to Coulee Basin, Washington Fire Services was mysteriously found overturned on private property north of Nespelem, Washington, after apparently moving about 30 feet from where it had been parked. According to Coulee Basin Fire Services Facebook announcement, the unoccupied truck had been left at the property Friday under a private water-hauling contract. When security cameras came back online Saturday, the vehicle was discovered on its roof. It flipped after climbing a steep embankment. The department said the truck was no longer in gear, its parking brake was disengaged and the driver's door was open. Officials suspect someone may have entered the military-style vehicle, which does not require a key to start, and attempted to drive it before fleeing. A police report is being filed, and the incident remains under investigation.
- Crews in New Orleans are working to figure out how to get a fire truck out of a sinkhole. The fire truck is stuck at the intersection of Oretha Castle Haley Boulevard and Clara Street in Central City.
- Members of a firefighting crew suffered minor injuries Sunday afternoon, Aug. 2, after their Type 3 brush engine overturned near the Feliz Fire outside of Hopland, California. All 5 members were treated at a hospital before being released, said Sherri Wise, a spokesperson for the Cal Fire Mendocino Unit.
- Two firefighters were critically injured Thursday when their rig overturned while they were returning from a call. After the front steering tire suffered a 'catastrophic failure,' the tanker crashed through a guardrail, rolled over several times and came to rest in a wooded area about 10 miles from Stillwater, Oklahoma. One firefighter was transported by helicopter, and the second was transported by ambulance under emergency conditions to a Level I Trauma Center in Tulsa.
- Hartley, Iowa– A Melvin girl was taken to the hospital and a 1999 Chevrolet Melvin fire truck was totaled after an accident near Hartley on Saturday, August 1, 2026. The fire truck drove partially up the side of a pickup and landed on its side in the west ditch. The pickup was pushed sideways into another nearby pickup. The Hartley Ambulance took *a girl who was a passenger in the fire truck, 11-year-old Lylia Krogman*, to Sanford Sheldon hospital.

Firefighter Deaths, Injuries, in the News

- The Eau Claire, Wisconsin Fire Department is mourning the loss of a firefighter who suffered a medical emergency after completing his shift. On July 26, firefighter Bryce Jungbluth suffered a sudden medical emergency after he completed a shift.
- A firefighter experienced a medical emergency at a working house fire in Sarasota on Sunday. The unidentified Sarasota County firefighter was treated by co-workers at the incident before being transported to a local hospital where he is awake and responding well.
- A sergeant in the Lincoln Park, Michigan Fire Department is being remembered as someone who always took the time to help others. Sgt. Adam Amrozi, 52, died Sunday, July 19, less than 24 hours after finishing a busy shift, said Fire Chief Michael Prinz and is being treated as a LODD.
- While driving a brush truck, Adrian, Texas Firefighter Gary Wayne James, *80* who *was not wearing a seatbelt* was ejected when the vehicle rolled over and pronounced dead at the scene.
- Bil Rosen, the Neptune Township, New Jersey EMS Chief died on the job from a suspected heart attack.
- The Quincy, Massachusetts Fire Department is mourning the death of active-duty firefighter Brian Snow, 47, of Quincy who died unexpectedly on August 2nd.

NIOSH: Wrong Tactic at Deadly Searsmont, ME, Lumber Mill Blast not Uncommon

Susan Nicol

When NIOSH investigators started their probe of an explosion at a Searsmont lumberyard that claimed the lives of two firefighters, a common mistake quickly emerged.

"Over the past 40 years, NIOSH investigated several incidents ***where firefighters directing water into an oxygen-limiting silo unintentionally caused explosions***," authors wrote in a report released Thursday.

Morrill Firefighter Andrew Cross, 27, was found amid debris and pronounced dead at the scene while Searsmont Assistant Fire Chief Wayne Woodbury, 76, and a mill worker died a month later of their injuries.

NIOSH investigators determined:

- Firefighters around the silo heard a "whoosh" noise as smoke began to quickly emanate from the air material separator on the top of the silo.
- The silo launched into the air followed by a large plume of fire at the bottom as it rose.
- The explosion threw surrounding facility employees, firefighters, and EMS providers away in a blast of pressure and fire.
- The burning contents of the silo covered the area and those thrown by the blast.

Investigators determined through interviews that firefighters were unaware that Cross was missing until a state fire marshal conducted a full personnel accountability report two hours after the explosion.

Authors recommend that incident commanders use:

• Tactical worksheets
• Command boards
• Company responding boards
• Electronic bar-coding systems
• Accountability passports or keys

Among the factors listed in the report include silo fire tactics, lack of incident command, lack of pre-planning for lumber yard fires that would have identified associated dangers.

"Facility employees and firefighters were unaware that the silo was oxygen-limiting or that its contents were a combustible dust hazard," investigators concluded

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
7/31/26 Orchard Park, Erie Co., female 65	
Fire Deaths in any type of Dwelling in NYS	101
Fire Deaths in 1&2 Family Dwellings Nationally	712
Top 3 States with the greatest 1&2 Family Deaths	#1 PA 58
	#2 NY 52
	#3 OH 44
Civilian home fire fatalities in 2026: 1125 = 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?	

Insurance Company Files Lawsuit Claiming Fire Code Violations in Roanoke, VA, Fire

Laurence Hammack, The Roanoke Times

An insurance company that covered some of the losses from a massive fire at the Riverdale project in southeast Roanoke is suing to get its money back, *claiming that an RV business destroyed in the blaze and its landlord violated the city fire code.*

Progressive Advanced Insurance Co. paid nearly $300,000 to the owners of six vehicles — including Winnebagos, travel trailers and vans — that were being customized by Noke Van Co. when its building went up in flames the night of April 4, 2025.

In a subrogation claim, Progressive is seeking to recover that money from Noke Van and Riverdale Southeast LLC, which leased the now-leveled building that sat on its property. A former rayon factory, the site is being repurposed into a community of businesses, homes and recreational attractions.

Both Riverdale and Noke Van violated the city's fire code by failing to maintain an adequate fire protection system, according to the complaint filed Friday in Roanoke Circuit Court.

Progressive is claiming that the water supply to a sprinkler system had been turned off long before the fire started. The lawsuit faults both Riverdale and Noke Van for failing to maintain the system in accordance with its original installation standards.

The fire was an accident, the Roanoke Fire Marsal determined, that originated from an electrical problem with one of the vans at the business off Ninth Street Southeast. Damage to the building and its contents was estimated to be $4.25 million.

Workers at the development had turned off all the valves that supplied the system because it was inoperable, Riverdale said, adding that it had made plans with city officials for emergency services in the event of a fire.

In its complaint, Progressive says the city cited Riverdale in February 2024 — about 14 months before the fire at Noke Van — for some of the same code violations that existed afterward.

"The injuries suffered by the insureds were a direct and proximate result of Defendants' violations of the Fire Prevention Code and failure to remediate the same," the complaint states. In seeking a total of $293,096, Progressive is accusing Riverdale and Noke Van of failing to make repairs to the building's fire suppression system and neglecting to warn customers of the risks that posed.

The lawsuit also says highly combustible materials were stored in the building, making it harder for firefighters to put out the blaze and adding to problems caused by an inadequate water supply in the Riverdale development.

And, it claims, Noke Van was negligent in using a charger in a way contrary to the manufacturer's recommendations when it plugged it into the battery of the van where the fire started.

RETENTION AND RECRUITMENT

We Will Be Alright

Tom Merrill

You've heard it all before: "The volunteer fire service is in deep trouble. In a few more years, we'll have no more volunteer fire service." The target of the pessimists and naysayers predicting the demise of the volunteer fire service is often the "new" generation of firefighters. They're frequently portrayed as lazy, incompetent, and outspoken, with little interest in learning. It's been said that soon the volunteer fire service will be a thing of the past because these new "kids" coming into departments today just don't get it. They are just too different from us. Sound familiar?

No doubt, today's fire service faces some very serious challenges. Chief among them is a general decline in the number of local citizens willing to step forward and volunteer. And while it may be true that we have a noticeable lack of younger members stepping forward to join, *I make the case that the problem does not lie within those young members who are stepping forward to serve, but rather with those of us leading them and the approach we take in doing so.*

A RECENT EXPERIENCE

Recently, I had the opportunity to interact with several young individuals: some active in the volunteer fire service and others with no direct involvement at all. What stood out was their behavior, professionalism, and impressive level of engagement. It truly caught my attention.

On a cold winter night in February, I attended my department's weekly in-house training drill. The evening drill consisted of several stations encompassing our annual bailout training, a self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) confidence maze, and a review and practice with some new headsets we had purchased for our heavy rescue truck. All routine stuff.

As I went from drill station to drill station, I watched in amazement as the young men and women competently completed the tasks at hand, asked intelligent questions, and gave the instructor their undivided attention. One young firefighter even helped *this* fumbling author with his SCBA when he became confused while he reset the purge valve.

After the drill, we sat down to enjoy a post-drill meal. The youngsters sat and talked with the senior members and really enjoyed listening to the "war stories" and soaking up the bonds of brother- and sisterhood. They started asking questions and before I knew it, they had me asking questions and telling stories as well.

When I went home that evening, I remarked to my wife how impressed I was with this young group and how I hoped they would be able to stay with us in the coming years so the department could benefit from their continued membership and all they have to offer.

A POSITIVE SIGN

Just three days later, I attended the Missouri Winter Fire School Conference in Columbia, Missouri. I presented three classes over the three-day event and was happy to see a fair number of younger firefighters in attendance. In fact, from my perspective, more young people were in attendance than I had seen in a long while. Hopefully this trend continues.

During the classes, the young firefighters were attentive, engaged, and respectful. They asked pertinent, intelligent questions. But it was what happened later that night that really impressed me. The conference instructors were all gathered at an instructors' social when the conference director summoned me to come meet a group of young firefighters who showed up at the banquet room door looking for me. In their hand, they all had copies of my book, *The Professional Volunteer Fire Department* (Fire Engineering Books).

The conference organizers arranged to provide each student who attended my class with a copy of the book. These young students came to see me and respectfully asked me to sign their books. I was happy to oblige. I thought maybe I would sign each book, and they would be on their way. But I was wrong. We began making small talk, and I could immediately sense just how into it they were. The small talk led to all of us sitting down together for more in-depth discussions concerning the fire service.

MEANINGFUL EXCHANGES

The conversation was not limited to their individual departments but included the fire service as a whole. The students were eager to learn about the past and talk about their experiences and plans and ideas for today's fire service world. ***They showed respect for veteran members and appreciation of fire service history***. They loved hearing the stories of how it used to be. After a while, other instructors joined in the conversation and offered their own stories and words of wisdom. When the social was over, the group of us left the room and went into the hotel lobby to continue the discussion. More veteran members and instructors joined in.

It was clear the instructors, senior members, and younger members appreciated the entire experience. After they had seemingly retired for the evening, they returned to take some photos. It was a great night. As the night ended and I went back to my room, I thought to myself, *These "kids" definitely get it.* They *are not the problem with the volunteer fire service.*

PERSONAL EXAMPLES

Last summer, I visited my daughter who lives in San Diego. As you are probably aware, San Diego is a military city. My daughter introduced me to many young military men and women. Each of these 20-somethings was polite, respectful, and engaging. And they were all 100% dedicated to their profession.

On another front, my niece is married to a U.S. Marine who is now a drill instructor, committed to training the new generation of Marines. I spoke with him a few months ago, and while I was not surprised at the pride he had for the Corps, because most Marines I know are indeed very proud, I was amazed at the knowledge he had for the legendary individuals who served through generations and their accomplishments. His knowledge was emphasized when I mentioned the name John Basilone, a Marine killed in World War II. I happened to be reading a book that discussed his story and wanted to share it as I assumed this 28-year-old was not likely to know of Basilone's sacrifice more than 80 years ago. I barely got the name John Basilone out when he started telling *me* all about Basilone and what he did. In detail, he outlined Basilone's heroics, including how he earned the Medal of Honor for his actions during the Guadalcanal campaign. I was shocked at his level of detailed knowledge. When I asked him how he knew so much, he said Basilone's exploits were explained to all the

recruits coming through the ranks. ***They hear these significant stories and are reminded that they stand on the shoulders of those who served before them.***

COMMITTED TO THE MISSION

The veterans and leaders not only train the new members coming into the ranks about the mechanics of their work. They are also sure to tell them their own stories and who contributed to them. This builds pride that spans the generations and stays with them forever. All the aforementioned experiences became my way of reaffirming that we are in great hands. The younger generation is just as committed to the mission as we, the veterans, are. They maintain a deep appreciation for the past when the time is taken to properly explain it to them. What they need is good, solid leadership from the veterans in the organization.

They need leaders who appreciate what this next generation offers and who take the time to effectively communicate with them. And they need leaders who are not quick to discount their enthusiasm and passion for the work. These are leaders who understand there is no alternative life force coming in to their liking. They must work with, learn to understand, and appreciate the new members and all they offer. ***Do it right, and the new members will learn to appreciate the leaders, the organization, and the mission***. Are they different? Yes! And they may not know how to change oil or the difference between a Phillips head screwdriver and a flathead, but they are smart. And they're very eager to learn. So be prepared to explain the "why."

While we often hear how bad these new kids are, I am here to say they are great. ***While we may not be getting as many to join our ranks today, let's treat the ones who are joining the right way. Let's take the time to explain our story while teaching them to master the craft and explain the "why." I can assure you they are eager to learn.***

These "kids" get it. We will be alright.

FIRE APPARATUS

*****Is Your Apparatus Fit for Duty?***

Your station tones alert: "Engine 86, Engine 260, Ladder 29, Car 32: Respond to 15 Smith Street. Report of a fire in a private dwelling with multiple calls reporting people trapped." You have trained your body. You have trained your mind.

Up to this point, you have attended training and performed drills to prepare for this very emergency. But, how often do you think about the readiness of your apparatus? Without a properly maintained, fully functional, and safe apparatus, you will fail to meet the mission statement of the fire service to protect lives and property. The best trained firefighters and officers will quickly be rendered useless if they cannot safely and effectively respond to the given emergency. If their apparatus does get them to the scene, will it be able to pump the water correctly, power the aerial device, or power the rescue tools they need to accomplish their mission? By now, you are hopefully asking yourself, is my apparatus fit for duty?

Fire apparatus are some of the most complex, customized, and expensive vehicles on the road today, with so many different systems and components that all require regular maintenance to operate correctly at a moment's notice. Let's not forget the fact that they live a life of mostly hard miles, hard acceleration, hard braking, responding and returning, and endless hours of stationary running time with the constant loads of numerous onboard systems to run on scene.

After reviewing National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1911, *Standard for the Inspection, Maintenance, Testing, and Retirement of In-Service Emergency Vehicles* (now NFPA 1910, *Standard for the Inspection, Maintenance, Refurbishment, Testing, and Retirement of In-Service Emergency Vehicles and Marine Firefighting Vessels), you will need to implement a system to maintain your fleet with preventive maintenance schedules and regular checks to recognize problems before they leave you unexpectedly out of service*. Ensure pumps, aerial devices, and portable ladders receive the necessary annual testing. The nature of the fire service is to be always ready, always alert. Establish measures to ensure your apparatus are always ready for the next response.

To be an effective fleet manager, you must be proactive. You need to ensure you have regular and thorough apparatus checks that are documented. ***Use a repair facility specializing in fire apparatus and implement at least a six-month and annual preventive maintenance schedule to have the vehicle inspected from bumper to bumper.*** If your call volume warrants it, you may have to implement a three-month preventive maintenance

schedule based on engine hours and response volume. All apparatus components should receive preventive maintenance and inspection service according to the manufacturer's recommendations for that given component. Brakes, tires, steering, suspension, lights, and all other safety components must be inspected for defects to ensure firefighter safety. If you are not already doing so, consider issuing an apparatus safety inspection annually by your respective state's heavy vehicle inspection station, the same as every other truck on the road. Fire departments may not be required to complete this, but it gives you an extra measure ensuring the vehicle has been inspected for safety.

No matter how much preventive maintenance you do, problems will arise that will require repair outside of your regular maintenance schedule. *Two of the most common difficulties in reporting the defects include members not seeing anything getting fixed and giving up and not having a good system of reporting problems.* Often, members will not want to lose their front-line apparatus and must change over to a spare or be down an apparatus. As a fleet manager, come up with a system that is efficient and easy for you and your members. Address reported problems in an effective manner so members don't feel like their reports are falling on deaf ears. When members see progress, they are more likely to help with solutions.

I always like to use the three Cs when dealing with repairs: complaint, cause, and correction. Have an efficient means of reporting complaints: email, software, paper, or phone call. Have a good means for documenting and tracking information like fire department/fleet management software or email. Verify the complaint before you send it to the repair center so you don't waste time and money if there is no real problem or if the problem can be easily corrected in house. When verifying the complaint, you should work to determine the cause of the problem. This may not happen until the apparatus is at the repair facility. Gather as much information as possible and speak with the person making the repair request or other familiar apparatus operators. *When addressing intermittent or condition-specific defects, the more information you supply the service writer, the more efficient he can be at pinpointing the condition and cause.*

P*rioritize your repairs and address the most important ones first. Safety-related items such as a brake lining worn past specification will take priority over a scene light that may be out*. Lastly, there is the plan of correction, which is usually determined by the recommendation of the repair facility or in-house technician. Formulate a plan and determine lead times for parts and any other special considerations or recourses that may be needed for the repair. Often, apparatus can sit for weeks waiting for a part that would not put the apparatus out of service. This can be avoided with planning, prioritization, and good communication with repair facilities.

Every department will have different means of handling fleet repairs and maintenance. Some have in-house mechanics. Others send everything to an independent repair shop or apparatus dealer. Some use their local department of public works highway garage. ***When dealing with any of the above repair facility options, use technicians who are National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) and emergency vehicle technician (EVT) certified***. Firefighters are required to maintain set levels of training; apparatus technicians should be no different.

Quality repair shops will always want the trucks to come to the shop for complete preventive maintenance and big repairs. If possible, save the road service for emergencies and minor repairs. Access to all the heavy shop equipment, vehicle lifts, tools, parts, and resources needed to repair fire apparatus is limited when working out of a service truck. Have a plan in place to send trucks to repair centers when needed or scheduled. The department usually pays for the travel time the technician spends driving to and from the apparatus location. It is far more beneficial to pay the same labor rate to have your apparatus repaired vs. the technician driving. There is a major benefit to working with a repair facility that is also a dealer for the apparatus you are operating. Warranty claims are handled more efficiently, and the facility and technicians are much more familiar with your brand of apparatus and have access to factory resources. Parts accessibility, lead time, and inventory are far better. This results in a much more efficient process because you are working with the people who best know your product.

I have three fundamental rules when dealing with any repair shop: (1) I don't want to be misled or misinformed, (2) I don't want to be sold anything I don't need, and (3) I expect a shop to stand behind its work. This, unfortunately, is not always the case, so do your research on the repair facilities you are considering. Repair facilities' reputations are very similar to those of the firehouse. It takes years to build a

good reputation and a second to ruin it. Establish a repair contract with a quality shop so prices are set ahead of time, and you can minimize any surprises. This also makes billing easier for purchasing policies.
It is no secret that today's fire apparatus are the most expensive pieces of equipment departments will have to purchase. Therefore, it should not come as a surprise that they are expensive to repair and maintain. The "pay now or pay a lot later" adage applies to maintaining and repairing fire apparatus. You must constantly invest the time and money in your fleet to make sure it is always operating at peak efficiency. If you take shortcuts, you will have shortfalls. There is no time to call AAA roadside assistance for your fire truck when responding to an emergency.
If you have an apparatus failure because you neglected to perform the correct preventive maintenance or repair, you have failed your firefighters and your community. Firefighters depend on functional and safe fire apparatus to be operationally effective and accomplish their mission of protecting lives and property.

GREEN ENERGY AND THE IMPACT ON THE FIRE SERVICE

NY Village Officials Want Battery Plant Review Paused

William Kemble, Daily Freeman

Village trustees are siding with opponents of Key Capture Energy's 100-megawatt lithium-ion battery proposal and are asking for a town moratorium to determine if siting rules can be developed to prevent a "catastrophic failure."
During a meeting on Monday, Aug. 3, *Village Board members voted 4-0 to request that the town Planning Board halt its reviews.*
Key Capture Energy's proposed facility would be located on the edge of the village.
"The potential consequences of a catastrophic failure include temporary evacuation of village residents, evacuation of schools located in the village, disruption of local businesses, impacts on wildlife habitats, stress on domestic animals and livestock, smoke impacts to vegetation, and significant burdens on volunteer fire, ambulance and other emergency responders," Mayor Bill Murphy said.
Key Capture is seeking to use about 11 acres of a 59.8-acre site next to the Central Hudson substation on Tomsons Road. *The nearest residential properties would be some 1,200 feet away, with houses to the south on Saugerties Manor Road and Country Meadows apartments to the east.*
On Wednesday, July 15, Key Capture representatives emphasized that meetings have been conducted with local fire officials to discuss training. Village Board members, however, are not assured that anything but an extensive state environmental quality review process can determine if Key Capture will be accountable for their representatives' safety assurances.
"The village of Saugerties urges … no approvals for the proposed battery energy storage system by Key Capture on Tomsons Road unless and until a positive declaration is issued," trustees wrote.
Included in the resolution is a request for a comprehensive independent quantitative risk assessment, modeling of potential evacuation zones and smoke dispersion under worst-case weather conditions. Also requested are fire department certification that equipment and training allow for a safe response to any fire or emergency, and financial assurances covering emergency responses and remediation.
Before the village trustees approved the resolution, opponents said it was the first time they felt their concerns mattered to elected officials, after what they described as dismissive treatment from Key Capture Energy officials.
"I think the first thing (of importance) is the fact that they're actually standing up and making a statement," said Elizabeth Reece, who opposes the project. "They are officially an interested party, so the fact that they're saying to at least have a positive SEQR determination …what it means to me is at least our voices are heard. At least we feel like we're not just being ignored."
In an email sent Tuesday, Aug. 4, Key Capture Energy Development Director Paul Williamson wrote, "KCE looks forward to continuing to work in good faith with the town, the Planning Board and the community to address the concerns that were raised at the Village Board meeting last night, including sound and safety."

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Hoags Corners VFD

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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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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

Social Media Is Not the Death of the Fire Service

James Migliaccio

In an era where social media dominates nearly every aspect of our lives, it's easy to view it as a double-edged sword. For the fire service, a profession rooted in tradition, camaraderie, and hands-on skills, social media can feel like an outsider. Critics argue that it fosters a culture of "keyboard warriors," inflates egos, and shifts the focus away from what really matters: serving the community.
Those concerns aren't wrong. But they don't tell the whole story.
Used the wrong way, social media causes problems. Used the right way, it becomes one of the strongest tools the fire service has for growth, education, and connection.

BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN GENERATIONS

One of the most significant challenges in the fire service today is the generational gap. Veteran firefighters often say that younger recruits seem more focused on their phones than the job, while newer members sometimes struggle to connect with old-school methods of communication and learning.
I've sat through more kitchen table conversations about this topic than I can count, and both sides usually walk away thinking the other just doesn't get it.
Social media, however, can serve as a bridge between these generations.
Platforms like Instagram, YouTube, and Facebook, and TikTok have become repositories of knowledge, allowing seasoned firefighters to share their experiences with a broader audience. Younger firefighters, who are accustomed to learning online, can absorb this information in ways that resonate with them.
Social media doesn't replace mentorship. It needs to expand it and keep lessons from getting lost between generations.

A PLATFORM FOR TRAINING AND EDUCATION

Social media has reshaped training and education in the fire service. Not long ago, learning something new usually meant waiting for a conference, a visiting instructor, or hoping someone in your own department picked it up elsewhere.
Today, a wealth of free and paid content is available at the click of a button. Platforms like Instagram and TikTok are filled with short, impactful videos demonstrating everything from forcible entry techniques to firefighter safety and survival.
Moving toward online training doesn't mean hands-on work should be ignored. Online training supplements traditional training methods. A rookie firefighter can watch a video on hoseline management and then apply what they've learned in a drill ground scenario or directly on the fireground. Experienced firefighters can keep up with evolving tactics and technology, helping them stay sharp.

VOLUNTEERISM NEEDS SOCIAL MEDIA MORE THAN EVER

While every department benefits from a strong digital presence, the volunteer fire service stands to gain the most. Volunteerism across the country is shrinking, and pretending it isn't happening helps no one. Departments are struggling. Recruitment and retention are constant battles. People today are busier than ever, and the firehouse is no longer the automatic destination for young people looking to give back.

This is where social media stops being optional.

People don't join volunteer departments the way they used to. They aren't walking into firehouses because they saw an advertisement or heard something from a friend. They find their information online. They form impressions based on what they see in their feeds. When a department shows up online consistently and with purpose, people notice.

Departments that ignore social media may think they're just staying traditional. In reality, they're quietly losing a competition they don't even realize they're in.

SEA BRIGHT FIRE RESCUE: A CASE STUDY IN DOING IT RIGHT

Sea Bright Fire Rescue in New Jersey is a clear example of a volunteer agency using social media with purpose. Their recruitment program doesn't rely on chance or word of mouth. They go straight to where people spend their time and attention. Sea Bright uses social media to do four things extremely well:

1. Show what volunteer firefighting is really about.

They break down the mystery of the job. Their posts show members drilling, real responses, fireground footage, and moments that highlight the impact and responsibility of serving the community.

2. Highlight the camaraderie of their members.

Their content shows friendships, teamwork, and the shared grind that holds a firehouse together. When people see that, joining feels less intimidating.

3. Share fire footage through GoPro and helmet cams.

Their helmet cam videos are raw. They demonstrate the pace and the skill involved in firefighting. It proves volunteers are trained, ready, and capable.

4. Show how invested their members are in the job.

Sea Bright broadcasts pride and work ethic. Their firefighters train consistently, take the job seriously, and care about getting better.

The result? People reach out. People who never considered volunteering start to picture themselves in a firehouse. Sea Bright's success is not an accident. They document the job in a way people can understand. They show the value, the culture, and the purpose behind their doors. That visibility has translated into new recruits and a stronger department.

Fire departments everywhere can learn from this. If you don't tell your story online, no one will hear it.

Silence doesn't do anything for tradition. It makes it invisible.

PROMOTING ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY

There's another side to this conversation that doesn't get talked about enough, accountability.

Videos posted from incidents, training evolutions, or apparatus responses can spark constructive conversations. Transparency can feel uncomfortable, but it often pushes the fire service to improve.

Social media also provides a platform for highlighting everything that's right about the job. Stories of rescues, community outreach, and acts of brotherhood and sisterhood remind both the public and firefighters why this work matters. Sharing those moments helps counter negativity and misconceptions.

STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY TIES

The fire service has always been about serving the community, and social media provides an unmatched opportunity to strengthen those ties. Departments can use their digital presence to share safety tips, announce events, and celebrate milestones. These posts build trust and show the public the value of its fire department. For volunteer departments, this connection is critical. Communities support, donate to, and join agencies they feel connected to.

NETWORKING AND BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

One of the most underrated benefits of social media in the fire service is its ability to connect firefighters from all over the world. Ideas get shared. Techniques get refined. People help each other solve problems they've struggled with for years.

A firefighter in a small rural town can learn from someone in a major city. Someone running a volunteer company can swap ideas with a large career department. Those connections push ideas forward and remind firefighters they're part of something bigger than their own company.

THE DOUBLE-EDGED SWORD

It would be dishonest to ignore the downsides. Ego-driven posts, misinformation, and pointless arguments can drain the value out of any platform. Those problems don't come from social media itself. They come from how people choose to use it.

Approaching social media with professionalism, honesty, and respect keeps it useful. Firefighters who use it to educate, uplift, and document the job with integrity usually add something valuable to the profession.

THE FUTURE OF THE FIRE SERVICE

Social media isn't killing the fire service. It reflects both the best and worst parts of it. Rejecting it doesn't solve anything. Using it with purpose does.

From the bucket brigades of the past to today's technology-driven operations, the fire service has always adapted without losing its identity. Social media is simply another step in that evolution.

For volunteer agencies, it could be the difference between surviving and fading away.

If firefighters commit to using social media as a tool for education, connection, and community, the job stays relevant while protecting the traditions that still matter.

The fire service has always moved forward. There's no reason to stop now.

TAKE A MOMENT TO SMILE

To steal ideas from one person is plagiarism. To steal from many is research.

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.

WHO ARE YOUR CAFDA OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS FOR 2026?

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President, Tom Rinaldi, Commissioner, Stillwater Fire District
1st Vice President, Ellen Martin, Deputy Treasurer Clifton Park Fire District

DIRECTORS:

Les Bonesteel Past Commissioner, Burnt Hills/Saratoga,
Skip Smith, Commissioner, West Crescent/Saratoga
Joyce Petkus Treasurer Greenfield/Saratoga,
Ed Woehrle Commissioner Niskayuna #1/Schenectady
Art Hunsinger, Ex-Officio Member Clifton Park Fire District.
We would consider expanding the number of Directors if individuals from other counties would volunteer to participate!!

APPOINTEES

Secretary Molly Jenkins, Region 1 Director, Assoc of Fire Districts, NYS
Treasurer: Tony Hill
Sargent at Arms: Tom Wood, Commissioner, Northumberland Fire District
Chaplain: Dane Fagan

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 join in!
If your Fire District is a member, you are a member!!

Please advise your secretaries that all correspondence should be mailed to:
All correspondence & Capital Area Fire Districts Association Mailing Address should be directed to:
CAFDA PO Box 242 East Schodack, NY 12063 or EMAIL: SECRETARY@CAFDA.NET
Financial issues should be addressed to: TREASURER@CAFDA.NET
518-407-5020

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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The Weekly Capital Bulletin is reaching well over 700+ 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.