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The Virginia Fire Chiefs Association, Inc. - July 2023

Chief

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COMMONWEALTH

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Chief

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ALTERNATIVE FUEL VEHICLES IS YOUR DEPARTMENT READY TO DEAL WITH THEM?

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Allen Baldwin
2023 VFCA President
York County Fire and Life Safety

Greetings from the shores of the York River and the Chesapeake Bay in Yorktown. It has been a whirlwind of activity for the Association over the last several months since the Virginia Fire Rescue Conference. The conference had record attendance in both the educational offerings and on the Expo floor. As always, thanks to the Conference Staff and all those that supported them including our external stakeholder partners. They are already hard at work on next year's conference.

The various Association Sections have also been very active and engaged. The Administrative Professionals held a very successful quarterly meeting in April at Stafford County Fire and Rescue Headquarters. Also big thanks for all their help at the conference with running the Silent Auction and staffing the booth. The Women of Fire & EMS section is setting the pace for all of the sections with their high level of activity. The Chaplains Committee was formed after the February Conference and they have hit the street running and have become engaged in various areas of the association, along with setting up committee meetings and training to become further engaged. Chief Good and Chief Willie Shelton are hard at work on getting the Retired Chiefs Committee off the ground. Thanks to Chief Shelton for supporting the effort! The Association is always looking for help and new members for the sections. If you are interested or know of someone, getting involved is easy as a phone call or email.

The Virginia Fire Chiefs Foundation held the 4th Annual 5K in Williamsburg. Several members and board members placed in the race. Several members and their families also participated. Keep an eye on the calendar and come join us next year in the Historic Triangle at the 5K.

The ninth annual Chiefs Summit was held in May and sold out quickly. Thanks to Chief Good and all involved for setting up an excellent and informative program. Speaking of Chief Summits, VP at Large Deputy Chief Matt Fox and Chief Good are working with the Fredericksburg Fire Department and Chief Jones to host a small department Chiefs Summit this fall in Fredericksburg focusing on departments under one hundred members.

The association has been working closely with various stakeholder partners and the Virginia Department of Fire Programs to honor the Commonwealths fallen at the memorial service in Richmond on June 3.

Summer is upon us, it is that time of year again, and we will be back in Richmond. You guessed it; the Virginia Fire Officer Academy and the Virginia Chief Officer Academy are back at the University of Richmond July 16 – July 21, 2023.

Visit the association website to stay up-to-date on all of the association and foundation activities. Several golf tournaments throughout Virginia, that benefit the foundation, are planned for the upcoming months.

The next scheduled Regional Shakers Forum will be in

Front Royal at the Warren County Public Safety Center on November 9 at 6 pm and will include dinner. Stay tuned for more information. We have made a change to the Regional Shakers format and have partnered with the Virginia Department of Fire Programs, Office of EMS, and the Virginia Department of Emergency Management to attend so they will be available to improve communication across the regions. Unfortunately, the Regional Shakers forum scheduled for Blacksburg was canceled due to low registration. We are working to reschedule it for later in the fall.

Even with all this activity, the Board and Executive Officers have been hard at it working on various fronts for the association. Several of the Executive Officers and board members attended the Congressional Fire Services Institute Conference and Dinner. Several members also visited their legislators at the Capital while attending. We have also been leading House Bill 2175 requesting the Funding and Needs Study activities. A workgroup and sub-group have been established and are working on various associated projects. I am serving as the association's representative to these two groups. The workgroup is close to publishing a draft survey and as soon as it is finalized along with other related information, it will be sent out to the membership to keep all informed. We are working with our stakeholder partners heavily on this project.

Several of the Board and Executive Officers have been meeting with our partner stakeholders to improve communication, coordination, and support of House Bill 2175 and other Commonwealth Fire and Emergency Services concerns to keep our Fire and Emergency Services at the front in Richmond and throughout the Commonwealth. Members have already met with the Virginia State Firefighters Association and the Virginia Professional Firefighters. We have been working very closely with these two associations recently on HB 2175 and Cancer Presumption legislation.

Thank you for your continued commitment to the association as we cannot do it alone, we need all of your help and support to keep us on the front lines and moving forward.

On a personal note, as we move through the summer I want to challenge you after reading this issue to take some time from the demands of our chosen profession. Open up that calendar and schedule some time with the family, first the one at home. Without the family at home and without their support, we would be lost. Also, make sure to take care of the family at the station, but also make sure that the fire service family is intact. Without this family we are lost also. As the Phil Vassar song says, don't miss your life! Stay safe and return to quarters!



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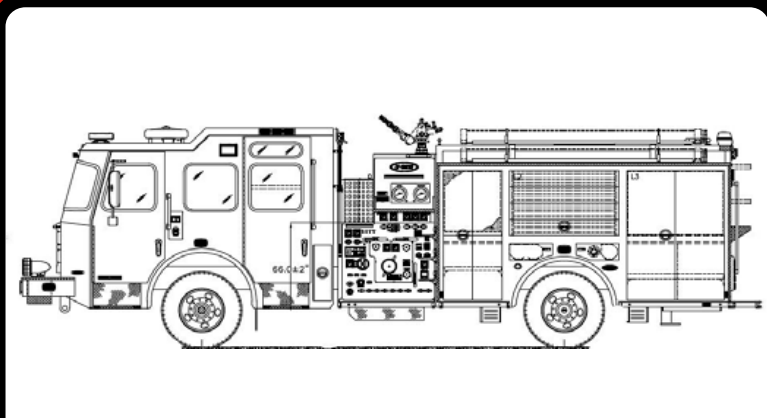
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9TH ANNUAL FIRE CHIEFS SUMMIT HUGE SUCCESS

Kevin Good

The VFCA proudly hosted their 9th Annual Fire Chiefs Summit - the only statewide gathering solely designed for the Chief and/or the Deputy/Assistant Chief (2nd in Command). The event was held May 11 & 12, 2023 at the Courtyard Marriott in Glen Allen, VA. This is the premiere connection for Virginia's Fire and Emergency Services Executives to enjoy a no-pressure, high-value summit with peers. The summit provided opportunities designed to engage the Fire Chiefs in various topics and grew their network both in the classroom and during social time together.

The Summit opened with the Presentation of Colors by the Central Virginia Joint Honor Guard. A special thank you goes to Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security Bob Mosier and Virginia Department of Fire Programs Executive Director Brad Creasy for opening remarks at the sold-out event. Attendees listened to a strong presentation by Arlington County Deputy County Manager & Fire Chief (Ret) Jim Schwartz on Regional Perspectives, where the group focused in-depth on a strategy to apply lessons learned for current operations as well as novel events. The summit annually brings an engaging legislative update by the Two Capitols team where Devon Cabot and Maddy Busse fostered healthy and productive conversations. Leaders across the Commonwealth spending time working together to identify the most critical topics facing the industry, assists the VFCA's legislative committee prioritize topics to advocate for Virginia's fire service and the communities we serve.

After lunch that was graciously provided by First Arriving, NIOSH Investigator Rob Saunders from the Firefighter Fatality Investigation and Prevention Program shared information on the rollout of the National Firefighter Registry for Cancer. Tom Shand with Emergency Vehicle Response presented to the group on one of Fire Chiefs toughest topics...Apparatus. Lots of tough discussions trying to get an idea of "How much longer are we going to be in this world of impacts?" Special thanks to Atlantic Emergency Solutions who joined in after the presentation by offering industry subject matter experts to participate in round table discussions on the topic of apparatus and offer insight for Fire Chiefs to sustain their organization's operational fleet through economic and regulatory impacts.

Day one concluded with a the Fire Chief's reception hosted by Atlantic Emergency Solutions, offering a relaxing environment to meet and learn from Chiefs across the Commonwealth about what's working for them and what is not.

Day two of the #VFCAFCSSUMMIT2023 started with group physical training; sustaining a lifestyle of health and wellness. Dr. Denis Onieal, Deputy United States Fire Administrator (Ret.) opened the final day with a phenomenal presentation on "Leaving the Job". In-depth learning and conversations focused on self-preparation for Fire & Emergency Service Executives careers. The summit closed with Fairfax County Fire & Rescue Department Captain Clay Dickens, Prince William County Fire Chief Tom LaBelle, and Fort Belvoir Fire Chief Kevin Good engaged attendees in an Equitable Service Work Session. This was another opportunity for listening, learning, and collaborating to advance the fire service together through an equity lens focusing on outcomes. Thank you to all that were able to attend and we hope to see you next year.



The VFCA 9th Annual Fire Chief's Summit opened with the Presentation of Colors by the Central Virginia Joint Honor Guard.



Special thanks to Secretary of Public Safety & Homeland Security Bob Mosier and VDFP Executive Director Brad Creasy for opening remarks for the sold out event.



Fire Chiefs warmed up this morning to a strong presentation by Arlington County Deputy County Manager & Fire Chief (Ret) Jim Schwartz on Regional Perspectives-a strategy to apply lesson learned for current operations as well as novel events.



VFCA appreciates NIOSH Investigator Rob Saunders from the Firefighter Fatality Investigation and Prevention Program for sharing information on the rollout of the National Firefighter Registry for Cancer.



Great presentation and engaging Legislative Update conversations by the Two Capitols team Devon Cabot & Maddy Busse. Leaders across the Commonwealth working together to advocate for Virginia's fire service and the communities we serve.



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Dr. Denis Onieal-Deputy United States Fire Administrator (Ret.) opened up the final day of the #VFCAFCSUMMIT2023 with a phenomenal presentation on "Leaving the Job". In-depth learning and conversations focused on self preparation for Fire & Emergency Service Executives careers.

2023 NATIONAL FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES DINNER & SYMPOSIUM

Bill Smith



“Delivering a United Message”

Since 1989, fire service leaders from across the nation have traveled to Washington, DC to attend CFSI’s National Fire and Emergency Services Dinner and Seminars Program.

Each year the Congressional Fire Services Institute (CFSI) has the distinct honor of hosting the annual National Fire and Emergency Services Symposium and Dinner. On May 22-23, 2023, approximately 1,500 fire service leaders from across the nation gathered to interact with peers and share their expertise with federal leaders on the readiness and response capabilities of our nation’s first responders.

The National Fire and Emergency Services Symposium and Dinner is an event like no other in the fire and emergency services. It was an opportunity to develop a better understanding about the federal government’s role in addressing the challenges and concerns of our firefighters, emergency services personnel and the fire service industry. Opportunities abound to interact with members of Congress and federal agency officials to discuss both national issues and local concerns. The knowledge acquired provides an increased understanding of federal programs and legislation, while emboldening one to take a stronger interest in advocating for fire and emergency services on Capitol Hill.

Featuring federal policy makers and national fire service leaders, the program covers a broad array of national issues – issues being considered by Congress and implemented by federal agencies, as well as issues being addressed collectively by national organizations and distinguished fire service officials.

Culminating the two-day event, the 33rd Annual National Fire and Emergency Services Dinner featured leaders of the Congressional Fire Services Caucus and the Administration who paid their personal tributes to the men and women of the fire and emergency services. The program also included several award presentations for individual and organizational leadership in advancing the readiness and response capabilities of our nation’s fire and emergency services.

As in the past, the VFCA sent representatives to the function to help them gain a better understanding of how we can help to obtain support for the Virginia Fire Service. Included were: President Allen Baldwin, 1st VP Vance Cooper, 2nd VP Kevin Good and APS Section President Melissa Heiderman.

Earlier this year the CFSI announced that Senator Jon Tester of Montana will serve as the chair of the Congressional Fire Services Caucus for the 118th Congress. Since joining the Senate in 2007, Senator Tester has been a fierce advocate for the fire and emergency services in Montana and across the country. In 2018, Senator Tester was recognized by CFSI as its Legislator of the Year due to his work and dedication.



VFCA CALENDAR OF EVENTS

July

16-21	Virginia Fire Officer Academy 0800 Hours	U of R
16-21	Virginia Chief Officer Academy 0800 Hours	U of R
18	Executive Officers Meeting 1000 Hours	Virtual

August

15	VFCA Full Board Meeting 1000 Hours	VDFP
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September

20	Executive Officers Meeting 1000 Hours	Virtual
21-22 0800 Hours	Administrative Professionals Retreat	Harrisonburg
22	9th VFCF/VFCA Golf Tournament Kiskiack Golf Club 0900 Hours	Williamsburg

October

3	8th Annual VFCF Golf Tournament 1100 House	Blacksburg
11-13	VFCA Board Meeting & Annual Retreat 1000 Hours	Harrisonburg



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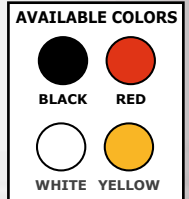
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2023 VIRGINIA FIRE CHIEFS FOUNDATION 5K RUN/WALK

Chris Eudailey

The Virginia Fire Chiefs Foundation held its 4th Annual 5K Run /Walk on April 29th in Williamsburg. The weather cooperated and provided a cool spring morning for our event. We had 160 registered participants although not all of them participated. The sponsors this year were outstanding! We had a total of 21 compared to last year to 18. The 2023 Sponsors included the following:

Event Sponsor – L3Harris

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Silver Sponsors – Chesterfield Insurers, David Nice Builders, Dominion Energy, Williamsburg Honda Hyundai and ECS Mid Atlantic

Bronze Sponsors – Fire and Safety, Fire Protections Equipment Company, Inc. and Firehouse Beds

The VFCF also wants to provide special acknowledgement to Chesterfield Insurers for the donation of bottled water and peanuts for the event. Williamsburg Publix and Earth Fare stores provided refreshments for the participants and volunteers at the conclusion of the event. Also, want to acknowledge the support of the Colonial Road Runners Club members.

Between the generous sponsors and the registered participants, the Foundation raised over \$11K from this year's event! These funds will be used to help support the Robert E. White Scholarship Fund. Since the inception of the scholarship program a total of 365 awards that total just over \$307K has been awarded to fire and EMS providers and/or immediate family members from all across Virginia.

The 5K Planning Team consisted of Pat Dent, Donald Booth, Kevin Duck, Rick Platt and Chris Eudailey. This event would not have realized this level of success without the support, dedication and commitment of these individuals – on behalf of the VFCF BOT our sincere thanks to each of you for a job well done!

SAVE THE DATE

The 5th Annual event is scheduled for March 23, 2024 back in Colonial Williamsburg. Hope to see you there to make this event the largest yet!



CHESAPEAKE FIRE DEPT. OFFERS MULTI-CANCER EARLY DETECTION TEST FOR FIREFIGHTERS

Zak Dahlheimer

Investigators have been staying on top of the issue of cancers in Hampton Roads firefighters. Wednesday, March 29th, dozens of Chesapeake firefighters checked in to get a blood test that's designed to test multiple cancers.

One of those firefighters is Lieutenant David Brock.

Brock has served on the front lines for more than 20 years.

"I think, at the end of the day, you kind of just wanted to have a job that when you went home at the end of the day you kind of did something worthwhile and help people out," Brock told News 3.

That Wednesday, he and other firefighters rolled up their sleeves for their health.

"You don't really think of it at the moment, but you kind of know at the back of your mind there's always a possibility," Brock said.

Brock is talking about cancer.

Last summer, News 3 Investigator Zak Dahlheimer told you about firefighters being at a greater risk for the disease.

According to the Firefighter Cancer Support Network (FCSN), firefighters have a nine percent higher risk of diagnosis and 14 percent higher risk of death from cancer compared with the general U.S. population.

"It's just because of all of the forever chemicals from everything that burns [and] we go into environments like that," Capt. Chris Moore said.

This week, the Chesapeake Fire Department is the first in Hampton Roads to team up with the company, GRAIL, to offer their Galleri multi-cancer early detection test.

GRAIL officials said it's a blood test that can detect more than 50 types of cancers.

It's also a test that doctors like Dr. Tony Cetrone, Chief Medical Officer for Bayview Physicians Group and an occupational health doctor for the Chesapeake Fire Dept., say has high accuracy.

GRAIL officials told News 3 the test looks for signals in your blood that may be linked to cancer.

According to GRAIL, the typical turnaround time for results is usually about two weeks.

"In evaluating that cancer signal, we can locate where that cancer is, hopefully in it's infancy, so we can essentially remove that cancer and cure the individual," Dr. Cetrone said.

Chesapeake Capt. Chris Moore also took the test Wednesday.

"I'm nervous, I'm anxious, but I'm excited because I want to know," Moore said.

While protocols, like cleaning gear, are in place at the department, Moore told News 3 the test is a step towards keeping health top of mind.

"We came across this testing and knew it was something that we needed, with so many members getting diagnosed with cancers," he said. "They know they're doing something

for the better of themselves, for the better of their family, and for the better of their department."

As for Brock, he's staying positive and is thankful to be offered the test by his department.

"The earlier you can find out, the better the treatment can go, and the better outcome for everybody," Brock said. "It's a good thing for us to do."

According to CFD, more than 400 firefighters are expected to be tested through Friday of this week.

Meanwhile, GRAIL officials told News 3 they're collaborating with the Virginia Beach Fire Dept. to offer the test to their firefighters later this year.

STAND TOGETHER, JOIN THE NATIONAL FIREFIGHTER REGISTRY



Why get involved with the NFR?

The NFR is the only national database that members across in U.S. firefighters and will make it possible to investigate the link between firefighting and cancer. By sharing information about the NFR with your network, you play an integral role in helping recruit as many firefighters as possible.

How can I help spread the word?

Use the resources in this Promotion Kit to share the NFR message as widely with your colleagues and encourage U.S. firefighters to sign up. This kit includes talking points, social media posts, email language, and links to posters and other NFR materials.

SHARE THE NFR IN 5 STEPS:

1. USE TALKING POINTS AND DOWNLOADABLE MATERIALS FROM THE NFR WEBSITE

Talking Points

- The National Firefighter Registry is the largest existing effort to understand and reduce cancer risk among firefighters.
- All firefighters – paid or volunteer, active or retired, with or without cancer, and no matter their length of service – can join the National Firefighter Registry. Participation is voluntary.
- By joining the National Firefighter Registry, you can help protect your brothers and sisters in the fire service from developing cancer and pass the way for new health and safety measures to keep the next generation of firefighters safe.

SHARE LINK TO JOIN THE NFR
NFR.CDC.GOV

FOLLOW US NOW ON SOCIAL MEDIA FOR THE LATEST NFR UPDATES

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Posters

- Print NFR posters for your fire stations, offices, or conferences.

Videos

- Share videos and testimonials to help firefighters learn more.

Roll Call Announcement

- Introduce the NFR to your fire department or fire service team.

Enrollment Tip Sheet

- Follow this step-by-step guide to help firefighters join the registry.

Flier Cards

- Hand out this 4 1/2" x 7" card at conferences and events.

National Firefighter Registry (NFR) is the largest existing effort to understand and reduce cancer risk among firefighters. The NFR is open to all U.S. firefighters – paid or volunteer, active or retired, with or without cancer. Studies have shown that firefighters' exposure on the fireground may increase their risk of cancer. When you sign up for the NFR, researchers will match information you provide to cancer diagnosis information from state cancer registries. This will allow them to study the relationship between firefighting and cancer outcomes. Answer the call. Join the NFR today at NFR.cdc.gov

NIOSH LAUNCHES THE NATIONAL FIREFIGHTER REGISTRY FOR CANCER TO UNDERSTAND AND REDUCE CANCER IN THE FIRE SERVICE ALL U.S. FIREFIGHTERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO JOIN

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), through its National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), are pleased to launch the National Firefighter Registry for Cancer online enrollment system for firefighters across the nation. The NFR for cancer is the largest effort undertaken by the nation to support and advance understanding of cancer in the fire service. President Biden has shown strong and enduring support for firefighters for decades and this step will help deliver on his commitment to end cancer as we know it as part of the Cancer Moonshot.

Numerous studies show that firefighters' exposure on the fireground, where smoke and hazardous chemicals are released from burning materials, may increase the risk of certain types of cancer. President Biden has signed two laws that seek specifically to advance firefighter health, safety, and protection from toxic exposures on the job. The National Firefighter Registry (NFR) for Cancer will contribute to these broader efforts by helping scientists better understand the link between cancer and firefighting to ultimately improve firefighter health. The NFR will capture details about firefighters' work and match it with cancer information from state cancer registries.

While participation is voluntary, all U.S. firefighters, with or without cancer, are encouraged to join the NFR for Cancer; these include:

- active and retired firefighters
- career, paid-on-call, and volunteer firefighters
- structural firefighters
- wildland firefighters
- instructors
- fire investigators
- other members of the fire service

Visit [NFR.CDC.GOV](https://www.nfr.cdc.gov) to complete the NFR survey through the secure website. Enrollment takes about 30 minutes to complete. You will:

- Create an account with a personal password and secure login
- Give informed consent to participate
- Create a profile, including contact information and work status
- Complete a questionnaire with demographics, your fire service and health history, and lifestyle choices

Visit the NIOSH NFR for Cancer webpage to learn more about:

- Why the registry was created
- How the registry works
- Data collection, privacy, and data security
- Available materials you can share with firefighters Watch "Join the NFR for Cancer".

John Howard, M.D., the Director of NIOSH, states that "I encourage all firefighters across America to join the NFR for Cancer – the more firefighters who join the NFR, the more researchers can learn about cancer arising from firefighting and how to prevent it. Firefighters are vital to the safety of our communities and their enrollment in the NFR for cancer can help protect them and the next generation of firefighters from cancer."

The NFR Team Lead, Kenny Fent, Ph.D., CIH adds that "with more than 1 million career and volunteer firefighters across the U.S., protecting their health and safety is a top priority for NIOSH. We are excited to raise awareness about this groundbreaking effort to better understand and reduce cancer among all types of firefighters, including those who have traditionally been underrepresented in research, such as women, volunteers, and firefighters from racial and ethnic minority groups."

What's happening here in Virginia?

The Firefighter Cancer Support Network is in partnership with the Massey Cancer Center and has been developing the Virginia Cancer Survey, known as the Virginia Firefighters for Lifelong Health (VAFLH) for some time. Unfortunately the release of our survey fell within the same week as the National Firefighter Registry (NFR) causing some confusion.

Our researchers from the Massey Cancer Center met with Dr Fent and his team to coordinate efforts and compare the studies. The NFR was excited to learn about our work and encouraged continuation and they offered their full assistance. It was determined that the Virginia Survey focused more on the issues, concerns, and beliefs of Virginia Firefighters towards cancer. It also includes an in depth line of questions if the firefighter was diagnosed with cancer. The teams will meet in the future to share data with the intention of determining if National trends correlate with our findings at the state level. Additionally, the survey results from the NFR could take quite a bit of time to be analyzed and released. It is our intention to utilize and share the results of the VAFLH survey to our Virginia stakeholders for the upcoming legislative session.

Our survey is located online and within the next month we will release our APP that will house the survey, research documents, information on health and nutrition.

As confusing as it might be, we encourage all Virginia Firefighters to complete the VAFLH and NFR surveys.

HOW DO I SIGN UP FOR THE NATIONAL FIREFIGHTER REGISTRY?

All firefighters – paid or volunteer, active or retired, with or without cancer – can sign up for the National Firefighter Registry (NFR) on a computer, tablet, or smartphone.

SIGNING UP INVOLVES 4 STEPS:

1. Create your account
2. Give informed consent
3. Create your profile
4. Complete the NFR questionnaire



JOIN THE NFR AT
NFR.CDC.GOV

If you get interrupted during steps 3 or 4, your responses will be saved. Login again to continue.

1. CREATE YOUR ACCOUNT Est. 5 Mins

- Visit NFR.CDC.GOV, confirm eligibility, and click “Login.Gov” to begin. Please be aware that using shared public computers can be less secure than using personal devices.
- Click “Create an Account” or sign in if you already have an account.
 - » *Tip: If you have an existing Login.Gov account and reset your password, go to NFR.CDC.GOV after resetting to sign up.*
- Type your email address and select your preferred language.
 - » *Tip: Use a personal email instead of a work email in case you change employers.*
- Navigate to your email inbox. You will receive an email from Login.gov to confirm your email address. If you do not receive an email within a few minutes, please double check the email address you entered and your internet access.
- Create a password. The password must be 12 characters long. A meter will check your password strength - you will need a green color from the meter to continue.
- Select an authentication method. This is an added level of security to protect your information. You must select at least one method to move forward.
 - » *Tip: You may be most familiar with the “text or voice message” option.*
- Click “Agree and Continue” to be directed to the NFR portal.

2. GIVE INFORMED CONSENT Est. 5 Mins

- Read the informed consent document. The NFR is a voluntary project. You must provide informed consent to participate. Scroll down the page to read the consent form.
- Provide consent if you agree to participate. Do this by checking the box and typing your first and last name. If you decide not to participate you can close the window. If you change your mind in the future, you can visit NFR.CDC.GOV to continue with registration.

Tip: You can download or receive an email copy of your signed Informed Consent for your records.

- Click “Begin” to start to the next step.



NATIONAL FIREFIGHTER REGISTRY

3. CREATE YOUR PROFILE Est. 5 Mins

- **Add your information.** Include your first name, last name, and address.
- **Verify your email.** You can also provide a secondary email address.
- **Choose your preferences for NFR updates.** You can provide a secondary email address and/or opt-in to receive text message updates.
- **Add your work status.** If you are retired or no longer work in the fire service, provide the approximate date when you stopped working.
- **Review your profile and then click “Continue.”** You will then have the opportunity to “Start the Questionnaire.”
 - » *Tip: You can review or update your profile at a later time if anything changes.*

4. COMPLETE THE NFR QUESTIONNAIRE Est. 30 Mins

Demographics

- **Add your demographic information.** Include your date of birth, sex, and race/ethnicity.
 - » *Tip: The two fields marked with an asterisk (*) are required.*
- **Provide the last four digits of your social security number.** Providing this will increase the chance of correctly linking your NFR account to any past or potential future cancer diagnosis information.
- **Click “Save & Continue”** to start to the next step.
 - » *Tip: Responses are saved each time you continue to another page and cannot be changed. This is for data security reasons. However, you can go back to respond to any unanswered questions.*

Work and Exposure

- **Add your fire service history.** Include where and when you worked and what job titles you held. This information will enable the NFR to have a clearer understanding of your experience and potential exposures.
 - » *Tip: Double check your record; records cannot be edited once saved.*

Health History and Lifestyle

- **Add your health and lifestyle history.** Include any health conditions or injuries. This will enable the NFR to have a clearer understanding of factors that may impact cancer risk.

Review and Submit

- **Click “Submit”** to finish signing up for the NFR.
 - » *Tip: Before submitting, you can go back to answer any unanswered questions.*
 - » *Tip: You can access your profile, future questionnaires, and other resources at any time by logging back into [NFR.CDC.GOV](https://www.nfr.cdc.gov).*

NEED MORE HELP?

Review our [Frequently Asked Questions](#) or email the NFR Help Desk: NFRHelpDesk@rti.org.



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health



NATIONAL FIREFIGHTER REGISTRY
Understanding & Reducing Cancer

ARRIVING SOON

INCOMING STOCK INVENTORY
WITHIN 12 MONTHS



ARRIVING
Q1 2024

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LOW-SIDE PUMPER
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ARRIVING
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ARRIVING
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URBAN PUMPER
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Q1 2024



1000 GALLON LOW HOSEBED
URBAN PUMPER
(JOB# 39731)

ARRIVING
Q1 2024



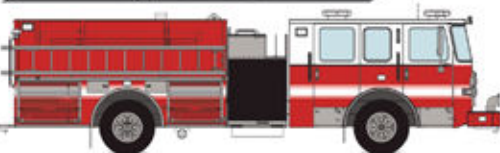
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RESCUE PUMPER
(JOB# 40681)

ARRIVING
Q1 2024



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RESCUE PUMPER
(JOB# 39730)

ARRIVING
Q2 2024



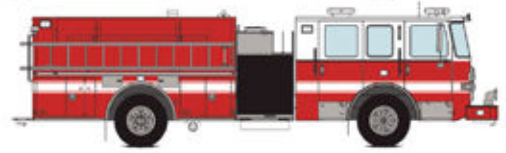
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(JOB# 40682)

ARRIVING
Q2 2024



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CITY OF MEBANE
MEBANE, NC

ARRIVING
Q2 2024



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FIREFIGHTERS: DONATING BLOOD MAY REDUCE PFAS LEVELS IN YOUR BLOOD



According to research on Australian firefighters, per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) levels in the blood can be reduced if a person donates blood every 12 weeks or plasma every 6 weeks.

Why is this important?

PFAS do not break down and can accumulate over time in the environment and in the human body. Exposures to this family of chemicals have been linked to cancer and other health effects.

Why is this important to firefighters?

Firefighters are at higher risk because they are exposed to these chemicals at high levels from multiple sources, including:

- Protective gear (to enhance water resistance).
- Products of combustion (present in many household products that burn in fires).
- Some firefighting foams (to increase fire suppression capabilities).

More study is needed

Researchers at the University of Arizona Health Sciences have started a new study to test the effectiveness of blood or plasma donations in lowering levels of PFAS, and whether lower levels of PFAS reduce the risk of cancer or cardiovascular disease.

The study will build on the Australian firefighter research to determine if firefighters in the United States will see the same benefit as those in Australia. If so, the research will be expanded to see if a reduction in PFAS levels will result in beneficial biological effects.

This study is the latest in a series of research projects by the University of Arizona Health Sciences that contribute to the understanding of how occupational exposures impact firefighters' health. Last year, this research team, in collaboration with the Tucson Fire Department, provided evidence to the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) that occupational exposure as a firefighter causes cancer.

Learn more about the research team and its past and upcoming research on firefighter occupational health in the University of Arizona Health Sciences' "Improving Firefighter Health Through Research."

NEW INFORMATION ON POTENTIAL CARCINOGENS IN FIREFIGHTER GEAR



The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) has released a report on the presence of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in firefighter turnout gear. PFAS are a category of manufactured chemicals linked to cancer and other diseases. They are a growing concern to firefighters who already face increased cancer risk from fire-related exposures such as smoke and soot, as well as vehicle exhaust and other hazardous materials.

The report provides an in-depth examination of a range of textiles used in turnout gear coats and pants, which are constructed in 3 layers: an outer shell, a moisture barrier and a thermal barrier. The research showed that the amount of PFAS present varies widely between manufacturers and layers, with the highest PFAS concentrations observed in the outermost 2 layers. The results of the study suggest that selecting optimal combinations of fabrics for each layer could significantly reduce the amount of PFAS present in turnout gear.

The study detailed in this report is one of many ongoing research projects designed to inform the updating of turnout equipment standards to better protect firefighters.

Why are there PFAS in turnout gear?

The properties of PFAS can impart water and oil resistance to fabrics so they are often used to help firefighter gear meet the safety standards of the National Fire Protection Association Standard on Protective Ensembles for Structural Fire Fighting and Proximity Fire Fighting (NFPA 1971) criteria for resistance to heat, water and other hazards.

USFA Digest: May 26, 2023

RETIRED FIREFIGHTERS HEALTH AND WELLNESS RESEARCH PROJECT

Firefighters provide critical services to our communities. However, due to the dangerous and strenuous nature of their jobs, they experience one of the highest rates of occupational injuries that have the potential to significantly affect their quality of life during retirement. We believe that studying the health status of retired firefighters can be a valuable and untapped resource to help identify improvements in workplace health and safety for current firefighters.

This website is created for and inspired by firefighters to briefly discuss our retired firefighter project. The overall objective of this project is to examine the overall health of retired career firefighters to 1) help identify the current needs of retirees, and 2) inform strategies to improve the health and safety of current active firefighters.

This is a collaborative project between researchers at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Utah State University. Funding for this project was provided by the North Carolina Occupational Safety and Health Education and Research Center through the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) (#T42OH008673). This project was approved by the UNC Institutional Review Board (# 19-3337).

Who's eligible? Any retired U.S. structural career firefighter is encouraged to participate.

What does the survey ask? We ask questions regarding your current health status and behaviors, in addition to your previous work as a firefighter.

How long will it take to complete? The survey will take around 20 minutes to complete.

Any compensation? For your participation, you may wish to be included in a drawing in which you could win a \$20 gift cards (30 total gift cards will be distributed).

Will my responses be secure? The survey is completely anonymous. None of your responses will be linked to your identity.

Can I take this on my mobile device? No, this survey is designed to be completed on a computer or tablet, not your mobile phone.

Study Survey Link: https://unc.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_eFgFQcrf8kG3tkx

Contact: UNC-Firefighter-Research@unc.edu

Thank you! – We sincerely thank the fire departments and state, regional, and national firefighter organizations across the U.S. for their support of this project. We also thank the select firefighters (active and retired) who provided critical feedback on our survey.

SAVE THE DATE

The next scheduled Regional Shakers Forum will be in Division 2, in Front Royal at the Warren County Public Safety Center on November 9 at 6 pm. It will include dinner! Stay tuned for more information. FYI... we have made a change to the Regional Shakers format and have partnered with the Virginia Department of Fire Programs, Office of EMS, and the Virginia Department of Emergency Management to attend so they will be available to improve communication across the regions.

Unfortunately, the Regional Shakers forum scheduled for Blacksburg was canceled due to low registration. We are working to reschedule it for later in the fall.



TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE RE-ENGAGING

The VFCA is re-engaging the Technology Committee and past president Charles Werner has offered to serve as the Chair of the committee. If you have any individuals interested in serving on this committee, please reach out to Charles at charleslwerner@gmail.com

MOVE OVER LAW TO EXPAND IN VIRGINIA

Changes are coming to the Move Over Law in Virginia. Governor Glenn Youngkin signed into law an expansion to include any stationary vehicle on the side of the road that has hazard lights on, or has warning signs, such as an emergency triangle or flares. This means if you see a vehicle like this, drivers will need to slow down and try to make a lane change if it's safe to do so. According to AAA, 28 people were killed in crashes in the Commonwealth while outside disabled vehicles between 2016 and 2020. "Roadside is what we do at AAA, and the one thing that we know is even before our crews are there or before an ambulance or before a fire truck or law enforcement officers get there, the danger starts the moment that vehicle stops on the side. This law helps protect those people too," said Morgan Dean, AAA spokesperson. The expansion of the law will go into effect July 1.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROFESSIONALS HAPPENINGS

Melissa Heiderman

It's hard to believe summer is upon us already! Please let me start by wishing everyone a safe, healthy, and adventurous summer! Your Administrative Professionals Section (APS) has been busy since you last heard from us.

In April 2023, Kellie Dragich with Stafford County Fire and Rescue was kind enough to host our quarterly meeting. VFCA 2nd Vice President Kevin Good (Ft. Belvoir) joined us to discuss how the VFCA Board of Directors is working to support our section and encourage new members to join. There has been some recent discussion about partnering with other VFCA Sections and Committees to help with projects; please stay tuned for more information on how you can help. In early June, members of our section assisted with the Virginia Fire Chiefs Foundation (VFCF, or the Foundation) Annual Golf Tournament in Spotsylvania. It's always a great event and fun to be able to meet new people and catch up with those we haven't seen in a while; all while helping to raise funds for the Foundation. The VFCF supports members of the fire and rescue service in the Commonwealth by providing scholarships, training opportunities, and raising public awareness of the challenges we face.

What's coming up for the APS you may ask? In August we will be accepting nominations for the 2024 APS Board of Directors. According to our bylaws, Vice President Mandy Waybright will automatically become our President. The positions of Vice President and Secretary will be up for nomination(s). Everyone that is eligible to accept a role on the Board, we encourage you to toss your name in the hat. You can absolutely nominate yourself, or you can nominate someone else. If you are interested in a position on the Board, please review the bylaws and ask your current Board any questions you may have. This group has gained much momentum over the past few years and we are excited to see it continue to grow and evolve. More information will be sent to the Section, via email, about

In September, our Section will be welcomed to Harrisonburg for our annual retreat. Mandy and her team in Harrisonburg have some great things planned for us. Information regarding registration will be released soon. We hope to see everyone there! A brief history lesson for the Section, our training used to occur at the annual Conference in Virginia Beach. It was a one-day, Administrative Professionals Day, focused on training for our positions; however, we were also working to raise money. It made attending classes difficult. When the VFCA Board was approached with the concern, they agreed to help our Section create a retreat, separate from the conference that could focus on the training we need and want. In addition, the Board created several of the "Free Registrations" for the conference. The APS needed their support, and we got it. We are grateful not only to the VFCA Board, but the APS Board who rallied for what we needed. It was a great example of our partnership!

We are always welcoming new members to our Section – career and volunteer! If you are interested in joining, or know someone who is, please don't hesitate to reach out. Additionally, if you have questions about running for an APS Board position, please let us know. Let's have a great second half of 2023!

Save The Date



2023 Virginia Fire Chiefs Association Administrative Professionals Retreat

September 21 & 22, 2023
Harrisonburg, VA



Details will be sent out no later than August 1, 2023

For More Information Contact:
Mandy Waybright
Harrisonburg Fire Department
mandy.waybright@harrisonburgva.gov
540-432-7703 office
540-481-0670 cell



ALTERNATIVE FUEL VEHICLES IS YOUR DEPARTMENT READY TO DEAL WITH THEM?

Bill Smith

From electric cars and propane vehicles to natural gas-powered buses and trucks that run on biodiesel, today's options for alternative fuel vehicles are vast. Increasing the use of alternative fuels and vehicles will help reduce consumers' fuel costs, minimize pollution and increase the nation's energy security.



I certainly am not an expert on alternative fuels and admittedly know enough to know that I don't know enough – if that makes sense. One purpose of pre-incident intelligence, however, is to engage in whole-community preparedness to identify response challenges including fixed structures, environmental conditions and/or transportation elements that may move through a community.

For some hazards it is necessary to look outside of your geographic boundaries. Your district may not house a company or fleet that uses alternative fuels (yet). However, most assuredly, alternative fuel vehicles are traversing your jurisdiction daily and the fire department must be prepared to handle incidents involving alternative fuels or be embarrassed by not knowing how to handle the situations when they arise.

Vehicles that operate primarily on gasoline or diesel have historically accounted for over 99% of cars and passenger truck sales. However, sales of cars that operate on other fuels – particularly electricity – are growing. New models of both electric vehicles and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles are entering the market in increasing numbers each year. Other alternative fuel vehicles include those that run on compressed natural gas (CNG) or E85 (a mixture of about 85% ethanol and 15% gasoline) just to name a few.

Many alternative fuels "burn" cleaner than gasoline or diesel so there are fewer tailpipe emissions. The amount of greenhouse gases (GHG) emitted when the fuel is produced

depends on the source of the fuel. These fuels can also be produced domestically, reducing our dependence on imported petroleum. In addition, reducing vehicle emissions and increasing your fuel economy helps the environment and your wallet.

But are you ready

Until firefighters and other first responders know differently, they should not assume vehicles are gas or diesel powered: and treat every vehicle at an incident scene like an alternative fuel vehicle.

Why?

As alternative fuels become increasingly popular, many vehicle owners are opting for professional and home conversions that change fossil fuel-powered vehicles into vehicles that run on alternative fuels. It's important for all first responders to be aware of alternative fuel conversions because vehicles powered by anything other than gasoline or diesel may not react to heat, flames or water suppression efforts in the same way as traditional vehicles. This is a potential threat to the safety of firefighters and other emergency personnel.

Electric vehicles

The most popular conversion is from fossil fuel to battery-powered electric vehicles (EVs). These conversions can be done to almost any car or truck by both professionals and experienced home mechanics.

That sporty 1991 Camaro Z28 muscle car? That classic 1969 VW bus? It could be an EV (there are conversion and modification kits available).

You cannot be sure that a vehicle you assume is powered by gas is an internal combustion engine-powered vehicle. Firefighters need to prepare for the worst and assume all vehicles are alternative fuel vehicles until they are sure. This includes:

- Making all approaches in full turnout gear.
- Having a hose line set up.
- Being ready to call for more equipment, such as containment and additional water resources.
- Considering standby status for a hazmat unit.
- Following your department's EV protocol if applicable.

For additional incident action suggestions, review the IAFC Bulletin: Fire Department Response to Electrical Vehicle Fires PDF.

Are there ways to determine if a vehicle is an EV?

Other than a vehicle being immediately recognizable as an EV – such as a Tesla, Chevrolet Bolt or Nissan Leaf – it is not always easy to identify an EV. The first step, if possible, is to ask the driver or passenger. Other things to look for include:

- Vehicle badging. Some conversions come with decals or emblems to promote the commitment to an alternative fuel. For information on the vehicle manufacturers complying with recommendations for standard display labels and colors to clearly identify a vehicle's fuel/energy, review the emergency response guides for electric vehicles and lithium-ion batteries.
- Check under the hood if it can be done safely. Is there an electric motor? A battery pack?

- Look for a charging port where the vehicle is plugged in to recharge the batteries. Sometimes this is positioned where the fuel tank access was, but it can be in another location or hidden, for example, behind a taillight.
- Look at the instrument cluster. The instrument cluster on an EV will display information such as battery level, range and charging status.
- Check the doors. They may not open due to a loss of power.

Other alternative fuel conversions

Although conversion to EV is currently the most popular, other conversions to be aware of include:

- Hybrid conversion

The gasoline engine is paired with an electric motor and battery, creating a hybrid power system.

- Conversion to hydrogen fuel cell

The gasoline engine is replaced with a hydrogen fuel cell and associated storage and delivery system.

- Conversion to propane or natural gas

The gasoline engine is converted to run on either propane or natural gas.

- Conversion to biodiesel

The diesel engine is converted to run on biodiesel, which is made from renewable resources such as vegetable oil.

- Conversion to ethanol

The gasoline engine is converted to run on ethanol, which is a biofuel made from corn, sugarcane or other crops.

- Dual-fuel (flexible-fuel) conversion

The engine is modified to run on both gasoline and an alternative fuel, allowing for flexibility in fuel choice.

For more information, download free emergency response guides from alternative fuel vehicle and kit manufacturers.

Other vehicles

Cars and noncommercial trucks are not the only vehicles manufactured as, or converted to, alternative fuels. Do not assume that motorcycles, buses, boats, recreational vehicles and commercial trucks are fossil fuel powered.

Prepare now for alternative fuel vehicle incidents

The use of alternative fuels in vehicles is on the rise. Firefighters must prepare now for the changes and challenges that come with this trend. By assuming every vehicle at an incident scene is an alternative fuel vehicle and taking the necessary precautions, firefighters can ensure their own safety and the safety of those they are sworn to protect.

Are you and your department ready to deal with alternative fueled vehicles?

NEW TRAINING REQUIREMENT FOR ALL VIRGINIA FIREFIGHTERS

HB2451 Firefighters; training program on risk of electric vehicle fires- (Del O'Quinn) Provides that the Executive Director of the Department of Fire Programs shall have the power to develop a training program on the risks of fires in electric vehicles and how to safely and effectively manage such fires to be completed by all firefighters, including volunteer firefighters, and requires the Executive Director to make such training program available by July 1, 2024. The bill also requires all firefighters, including volunteer firefighters, to complete such training program. The provisions of the bill requiring all firefighters to complete such training program have a delayed effective date of July 1, 2024, and the bill requires every person engaged in firefighting activities on July 1, 2024, to complete such training program by December 1, 2025. Result: This bill passed the Senate (40-Y 0-N) and the House (99-Y 0-N) unanimously.

FREE TRAINING ON FIRE AND EXPLOSION HAZARDS FROM LITHIUM-ION BATTERIES

A new online course helps firefighters understand how hazards develop during lithium-ion battery incidents.

Underwriters Laboratories' (UL's) Fire Safety Research Institute (FSRI) has created a free online training module, Science of Fire and Explosion Hazards from Lithium-Ion Batteries, to help firefighters better understand the physical phenomena that determine how hazards develop during lithium-ion battery incidents.

Fires involving lithium-ion batteries are increasing rapidly, as they are used in a growing number of applications including:

- Consumer products such as laptops, cell phones and power tools.
- Transportation products such as electric vehicles, electric scooters and other electric mobility devices.
- Power generation within the nation's electric power grid.

The training is supported by video footage from FSRI's lithium-ion battery experiments which illustrate the hazards in action. Firefighters can use this foundational understanding of the hazards to develop strategies to mitigate the associated risks.

The self-paced course takes about 1 hour to complete and offers a certificate of completion after successfully passing a multiple-choice test. Access to the course requires a free account with FSRI's Fire Safety Academy. (<https://training.fsri.org/join>)



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UPDATES FROM THE VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Lauren Opett, Director of Communications & Senior Advisor, VDEM

New VDEM hurricane guides are here!



We've updated our Hurricane Evacuation Guide from the 2020 version, and also have a BRAND NEW version that focuses on the inland impacts of a hurricane for Virginians who don't live along the immediate coast but still have concerns over flooding and wind damage. Download them now and read more about how to prepare for hurricanes at <https://www.vaemergency.gov/threats/hurricanes/>.

Copies of these guides can be requested by emailing PIO@vdem.virginia.gov

Speaking of hurricanes -- the Atlantic Hurricane Season is less than one month away!

What can you be doing now? PREPARING! And leading by example. Show your teammates, congregation, neighbors, employees, clients or customers, and other people you interact with and serve to prepare, too!

Here are a few easy ways to do that:

- Tagline quotes that you can add to your email signature block to direct readers to preparedness sources (you can link them to <https://www.vaemergency.gov/threats/hurricanes/>).
- Tips and key messages. These tips can be posted on bulletin boards, reinforced at meetings, and worked into talking points at public events.
- Social media, graphics, logos, banners and posters. VDEM will be sharing plenty of tips and resources leading up to and throughout hurricane season. You don't need to reinvent the wheel with your social media posts -- just share ours!

- Urge them to start on their emergency plans. It's good to have a plan, because it can help you during any emergency. "My Emergency Plan" is a great place to start, and it is now available for download on our website in English, and the other top 6 languages in Virginia. Get started today at <https://www.vaemergency.gov/prepare/make-a-plan/>.

Students Graduate from VDEM Hazardous Materials Training Program



On April 26, 22 students from fire departments across northern Virginia graduated VDEM's two-week Hazardous Materials Training Program. The classes were hosted by Loudoun County Fire-Rescue.

The primary mission of the Hazardous Materials Program is to provide assistance to local jurisdictions in emergency situations involving hazardous materials and weapons of mass destruction. This assistance can take several forms depending upon the incident severity and the capability of local responders.

Assistance can include an on-scene response by a hazardous materials officer (HMO) and a state-contracted regional HAZMAT response team if needed. Once on scene, these officers can provide technical assistance and response advice and serve as liaison to other agencies or groups. These officers are prepared to conduct offensive-control actions to include hot-zone entry for reconnaissance, stabilization, and product confinement.

Each hazardous materials officer is trained and equipped to assist with the identification of chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear materials. Technical assistance or on-scene response is available on a 24/7 basis from one or more of the HMOs. These officers will work with other state resources, industry representatives, and technical consultants to provide vital information to emergency responders on scene.

For more information on our hazardous materials program, please visit <https://www.vaemergency.gov/divisions/training/hazardous-materials-training-program/>

For the latest news from VDEM, please visit <https://www.vaemergency.gov/news/>

WHY SISTERHOOD IS A GAME CHANGER

HOW TO IMPROVE THE FIRE SERVICE THROUGH THE INVOLVEMENT AND SUCCESS OF WOMEN

Lieutenant Brenda Pamperin, Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department

“What an eye-opening experience it was to see others who look like me (who are) happy with and proficient at the job.”
— Virginia Fire Chiefs Association’s conference attendee

Women have been in the fire service for decades, yet at the station we still have the “only” experience. By sheer number, we are the only woman on shift, the only female officer in the department, the first chief hired in the department’s history, or the first woman to get pregnant. This doesn’t exactly paint an inspiring slogan for your department’s recruitment and retention efforts.

How do you create a sense of inclusion? Leadership training tells us to know your people. So perhaps you develop a relational mindset where you encourage a sorority base to complement the longstanding values of the fire service. We empower our sisterhood through demonstrating they are just as valuable as our brotherhood.

Trust will be earned through small gestures and layering these small moments repeatedly. This is not a one and done. It takes time to build this culture. To help women thrive, it is crucial to be intentional in providing an internal pathway for growth.

In 2019, I was selected as the first State Representative for Women in Fire. Little did I know that on January 25, 2023, the Women of Fire and EMS Section would be voted in as part of the Virginia Fire Chiefs Association (VFCA).

How did we get to this pivotal point for Virginia women firefighters? The journey began when my chief called me to congratulate me on my new role. My first reaction was, “S#%*, this is a big deal.” Throughout my term, he and I met regularly to discuss strategies for a grassroots campaign to open doors for women firefighters.

The first opportunity came when I spoke to the Fire and Rescue Departments of Northern Virginia, the company officers, and the Virginia Fire Services Board. My message focused on the benefits to supporting women firefighters.

In a time when the fire service is struggling to recruit, it only makes sense to focus on 50% of the population that has been overlooked, and not just because it’s the right thing to do. From a business model, the benefits we discussed included increased career satisfaction equals employee retention, training equals confidence, communication equals increased cohesiveness, diversity and inclusion equals promotional advancement, progressive thinking equals proactive changes in the workforce, and collaboration equals shared resources.

According to the 2022 Women in the Workplace report, having complete support and leadership from the top is half the battle. It also suggests, “To make meaningful and sustainable progress toward gender equality, companies should consider focusing on two



broad goals: getting more women into leadership and retaining the women leaders they already have.”

The buy-in was genuine, but the question became how. As it turned out, COVID-19 motivated a plan to host four virtual meet and greets. The topics focused on leadership, women’s health, mentorship, and child care and were not exclusive to women. Chiefs throughout Virginia also participated.

The format included a short presentation by women subject matter experts in key positions within their organizations. The magic happened in the chat groups, where individuals could share real experiences and build a network.

VFCA came on as a partner, and word got out about the Virginia chapter. Suddenly, women were being seen, and the discussions became relevant. They were not alone. My mailing list grew to include people throughout the United States. I believe the topics could be repeated tomorrow with the same outpouring of attendance.

VFCA continued to walk the talk by hosting an in-person meet and greet at their annual conference. Representatives from Women in Fire presented to a full room of women and men. The VFCA network encouraged departments to sponsor women at the conference. This resulted in a day of networking among Virginia women, including the added touch of catered meals during social breaks. Once again, chiefs were in attendance. We shared a common ground of authenticity and trust, creating an honest culture through shared vulnerability.

Word spread of the representation of women at the conference. Virginia chiefs were motivated to identify opportunities for women within their department. I was provided a platform to promote the idea of placing women within positions that build leadership skills and scale women up. Departments can create an internal network when they provide allies as coaches or mentors from both male and female leaders.

The 2023 conference welcomed three Virginia-based presenters who communicated topics we may not have felt comfortable having in the past. The morning session offered a case study on conflict resolution. The afternoon speaker gave a vivid depiction of challenges women face with imposter syndrome. The conference also featured hands-on training classes, which included women instructors.

Young women are paying attention. The Women in the Workplace report states young women care deeply about opportunities to advance. Since the pandemic, 58% of women under 30 say advancement is more important. Also, 67% of them value well-being and diversity and inclusion. The next generation wants and expects organizations to show interest in their career and help them be promoted.

Our department sponsored 10 women at the conference. We were a diverse group of young and experienced firefighters, technicians, and officers.

The three probationary firefighters opted to attend The Art of Reading Smoke class. A newly promoted lieutenant kicked butt as the first in-engine officer in the hands-on training scenarios. Our youngest attendee, who wasn't even old enough to book her own hotel room, was put to work helping the hands-on training class. As one woman wrote, "What an eye-opening experience it was to see others who look like me (who are) happy with and proficient at the job."

With the newly created Women of Fire and EMS Section, Virginia can grow a network to encourage women firefighters to play big. Early connection to career opportunities will empower the next generation to take the spotlight.

By maintaining a progressive interest in our sorority firefighters, Virginia is cultivating leadership throughout the state. Virginia is choosing to change the game and sponsor our sisters so they can be seen.

Brenda Pamperin graduated with a theatre management degree in Wisconsin. In 2003, she joined the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department. She was promoted to Lieutenant in 2020 and served as State Representative for Women in Fire from 2019 to 2022. She is currently the program manager for probationary firefighters. Pamperin is an avid cyclist and rode cross-country to raise awareness for mental health. She plans to retire in August 2023 and hopes to continue to mentor women

The 42nd National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Weekend events held May 6-7, 2023

The 42nd National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Weekend events honoring 144 fallen firefighters; 79 firefighters who died in 2022 and 65 who died in previous years was held Sunday, May 7th in Emmitsburg, Maryland. The event, hosted by the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation (NFFF)

On Saturday, a candlelight service was held at 7:30 p.m.

This is the first time the memorial weekend is being held in May rather than October, as it has been for decades due to the frequent uncertainties of October weather along with potential federal government shutdowns, according to the foundation.



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VFCA'S 5TH SAFER GRANT PRESENTS OPPORTUNITIES FOR VIRGINIA AND YOUR AGENCY

Nick Caputo, VFCA Program Manager

The VFCA is proud to announce that it has received its 5th Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant in the amount of \$960,804.00 from the Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 federal funding cycle. The period of performance for this grant is November 20, 2022, to November 19, 2023.

The grant was approved to fund the following items:

Volunteer Symposium Summits: The goal of the summits is three-fold: (1) deliver specific training related to volunteer recruitment and retention, and leadership training; (2) gather specific information regarding the issues and trends impacting the volunteer fire service; and (3) identify potential solutions and best practices to mitigate or resolve the identified issues and trends. Our goal is to have one summit in each region.

VFOA Blended Delivery Options: In the VFCA's 4th SAFER Grant, we worked with LEAD TRAINING, LLC. to officially formalize the VFOA curriculum to ensure its long-term existence and to seek college accreditation of the program. In this 5th SAFER Grant, we identified funds that will take the formalized VFOA curriculum and develop a blended learning platform so it can be delivered in yet another format. The blended format will make the VFOA more transportable across Virginia and the nation, while making it easier for volunteer personnel to attend.

Basic and Advanced Firefighter Training: The grant allocates funds to basic Firefighter 1 training and advanced firefighter training such as Hazmat Awareness, Hazmat Operations, Emergency Vehicle Operators Course, Basic Pump Operator, Driver Pump Operator, and Vehicle Rescue Awareness and Operations. If your agency has zero funds identified for these programs, please contact us for funding considerations.

Recruitment and Retention Scholarships: The program will offer scholarships to cover travel and registration costs for volunteers to attend national, state, or regional conferences focusing on volunteer firefighter recruitment, retention, and leadership. Examples of state programs include the Virginia Fire and Rescue Conference, VFOA Residential & Modular Programs, Virginia Chief Officers Academy (VCOA), Company Officer Summit, Chief Officer Summit, VA State Firefighters Association Conference, and the Southwest VA Firefighters Association Convention. National conferences may include Fire Rescue International, Firehouse Expo, VCOS Symposiums, and NVFC conferences. If you have zero funds identified for these events, please contact us for funding considerations.

Virginia Fire and Rescue Conference: These funds assist in providing speakers and sessions focusing on leadership, management, supervision, recruitment and retention, basic and advanced firefighter training, and various volunteer-specific issues presented at the Virginia Fire and Rescue Conference.

Leadership, Recruitment and Retention Workshops: These funds can be used for leadership, recruitment and retention workshops, and the Recruitment and Retention Coordinator program training. Examples of classes related to the foundational knowledge needed to

recruit and retain quality volunteer members may include the many areas of leadership, finance, record-keeping, and organizational behavior to mention a few. If your agency has zero funds identified for these types of training, please contact us for funding considerations.

Virginia Fire Officers Academy (VFOA): These funds greatly assist the VFOA Residential and Modular deliveries. The VFCA plans to deliver one residential program (July at University of Richmond) and one modular program (October at Smith Mountain Lake) in 2023 and one residential and two modulars in 2024. These funds provide instructional materials, human resources instruments (Myers-Briggs, CDP), as well as other special recognitions and awards given to students upon successfully completing the program.

PSA Marketing Campaign: During the VFCA's 4th SAFER grant, a professional PSA was funded and created to assist with the recruitment of volunteer firefighters. Now that the PSA (You've Seen Us) has been developed, the VFCA will contract with a professional marketing and branding vendor to effectively distribute the PSA and other recruitment and retention messages across Virginia. These funds will be used to develop and deliver a consistent marketing and branding message.

Public Relations Statewide Campaign: To help augment our recruitment campaign, we will partner with a local public relations firm well versed in the Virginia media market. The firm will assist with monthly press releases, social media posts, coordinate TV and radio interviews as well as offer other media support for our campaign. Based on experience, it is vital to have a local PR firm that knows the statewide media landscape and has existing media relationships. Through their connections and experience with the VA media markets, they will be in a better position to negotiate favorable pricing structures, facilitate wide-reaching coverage, and schedule key interviews. Since Virginia is large and diverse in area, socioeconomic factors and population, the vendor will be tasked to use TV, radio, social media, websites, and other specialized google analytic tools to make our marketing and public relations campaigns a success.

We hope this article provided you with a better understanding of our SAFER Grant award and its deliverables. As mentioned several times, if you feel you have unfunded and unmet needs related to our grant's deliverables, please drop me an email at njcaputo@aol.com to discuss potential funding assistance for you or your agency. Thanks and be safe out there!





COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

L. Brad Creasy
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Virginia Department of Fire Programs

Nicholas Nanna
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

June 5, 2023

SUBJECT: HB 2175 Workgroup Update

Dear fellow firefighters and EMS providers,

The Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security was tasked by legislation from the Virginia General Assembly with convening a workgroup to produce recommendations for fire and EMS in the Commonwealth of Virginia. A component of this requirement is to survey the Commonwealth's fire service to determine current needs in each locality.

The Department of Fire Programs, an agency of the Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security, has been tasked with managing this workgroup. The workgroup referenced above consists of over twenty members representing state government, volunteer firefighters, career firefighters, and EMS providers from across the Commonwealth.

Over the past month this workgroup has met to formulate questions that all localities will receive on June 5th. This survey asks important questions about your fire and EMS capabilities. The intent of this survey is to gain needed information to accurately gauge your locality's needs. I strongly encourage you to reach out to your county administrator, city or town manager, or local official completing this survey to assist them with its completion. Issues with this process should be communicated to the Department of Fire Programs. As the Executive Director of VDFFP, I stand committed to ensuring that all components, both volunteer and career, of Virginia's fire and EMS service are reflected in the final report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brad Creasy'.

Brad Creasy, Executive Director

CC: Office of the Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security
HB 2175 Workgroup Members

Virginia Department of Fire Programs
1005 Technology Park Drive, Glen Allen, VA 23059-4500
Phone: (804) 371-0220 or Fax: (804) 371-3444
www.vafire.com

STATEWIDE FIRE AND EMS FUNDING STUDY

During the 2023 legislative session, the Virginia Fire Chiefs Association championed legislation requiring the Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security to conduct a fire and EMS funding study. The goal is to evaluate the existing fire and EMS needs across the Commonwealth, analyze sustainability of current funding, and review alternative funding models from other states. The study will serve as a first step toward ensuring more sustainable resources for the delivery of fire and EMS services to communities across the Commonwealth. With great success, House Bill 2175, patroned by Delegate Mark Sickles, passed through the House and Senate chambers with unanimous support and was signed by Governor Youngkin in late March. The bill requires the formation of a workgroup to guide the study and report findings along with any recommendations to the General Assembly by October 1, 2023.

The Virginia Department of Fire Programs (VDFP) has been tasked with overseeing the study. A stakeholder workgroup has met twice in the month of May to kickoff the study. The legislation allows for the hiring of a consultant to assist in the efforts of the study, dependent on funding availability. In the meantime, the workgroup adopted a scope of work to guide the study, which includes the following three high-level objectives and strategies to achieve them:

- Objective #1: Study existing fire and EMS needs
 - Distribute a survey to localities to gather data
 - Use past needs assessment reports for additional data points
- Objective #2: Analyze sustainability of current funding
 - Identify current funding sources and any shortfalls and/or gaps
 - Examine trends and sustainability of funding sources
- Objective #3: Review alternative funding models from other states
 - Identify funding sources used in other states for fire and EMS services
 - Determine what funding sources Virginia has available, but may not be fully utilizing

For the first two meetings, the workgroup has focused on the first objective. In order to establish a baseline for current needs across the Commonwealth, the workgroup has written a needs assessment survey for VDFP to distribute to localities, with the support of the Virginia Municipal League (VML) and Virginia Association of Counties (VACO). The questions were carefully crafted to ensure inclusion of all fire and EMS stakeholders: career, volunteer, combination departments, and EMS organizations. As leaders in your local fire and EMS organizations, the workgroup could use your help to ensure full participation in the needs assessment survey. The survey questions are listed below. The survey has a tight turnaround, so please reach out to your city and county administrators to ensure that your particular needs are included in the locality's final submission to the workgroup. As the study continues, Two Caps will continue to keep you up-to-date on the progress the workgroup makes towards the remaining two objectives.

If you have any questions for your legislative team in Richmond, please feel free to contact Devon Cabot (devon@2capconsulting.com) or Maddy Busse (maddy@2capconsulting.com).

SURVEY QUESTIONS

Fiscal Information:

1. What was your locality's operating budget for fire and EMS for FY21-FY23? Please separate by fiscal year.
2. How has your locality funded fire and EMS services in the past three fiscal years (FY21-FY23)? Please include amounts listed separately by fiscal year in the following categories: Federal Grants, State Grants (including ATL, RTL, RSAF, etc), Private Grants, Local Funding, Medicare/Medicaid, Commercial Insurance, Private Payers, Other.
3. Please rate the following statement: My locality receives sufficient funding to consistently provide the amount and quality of fire/emergency medical care that the community needs. Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, Strongly Agree

4. What gaps do you see in fire and EMS funding in the Commonwealth of Virginia? Please rank the following: Apparatus/Ambulance, Facilities, Personnel, Training, Equipment, Other.
5. If the Commonwealth of Virginia could provide additional funding for fire and EMS, where could you use this funding? Please rank with the first choice being the most useful area for funding: Apparatus/Ambulance, Facilities, Personnel, Equipment, Training, Other.

Staffing Questions:

1. How many career fire and/or EMS staff does your locality have?
2. What is the role of the career fire and/or EMS staff? Fire, EMS, Combination.
3. What is the number of volunteer fire and/or EMS providers qualified to ride and deliver emergency service in your jurisdiction? Please separate by fire, EMS, or combination.
4. What role do these volunteer fire and/or EMS providers play? Fire, EMS, Administrative, Support/Administration
5. Has your locality seen a decrease or increase in volunteers over the past three years (FY21-FY23)?
6. Can you identify the reasons there has been a decrease or increase in the number of volunteers in the past three years (FY21-FY23)?
7. Does your locality have a public safety coordinator, chief, or official overseeing fire and EMS?
8. What is the authority of the official overseeing fire and EMS? System-wide Operational Command Authority, Administrative Authority, Other.
9. What percentage of the time can your locality maintain sufficient career staff and/or volunteers to consistently provide the amount and quality of fire/emergency medical care that your community needs?

Fire/EMS Operations:

10. How many fire ONLY stations/departments does your locality have?
11. How many EMS ONLY stations/departments does your locality have?
12. How many combination fire and EMS stations/departments does your locality have?
13. How many other stations/departments does your locality have? (contractor, etc)
14. How many total fire apparatus does your locality have system-wide?
15. How many total ambulances does your locality have system-wide?
16. How many apparatus does your locality have that are 20 years or older? Please do not include ambulances.
17. How many ambulances does your locality have that are 10 years or old?
18. How often does your jurisdiction request mutual aid to meet service delivery demands? Rarely, Daily, Weekly, Monthly.
19. Is your jurisdiction regularly able to provide mutual aid to surrounding jurisdictions?
20. Are you seeing an increase in demand for mutual aid from surrounding jurisdictions?
21. Is your organization seeing an increase in delays during service delivery?
22. NFPA 1710 defines organization and deployment of Fire suppression and EMS for career fire departments. For example, NFPA 1710 requires that engine companies be staffed with four personnel. NFPA 1720 defines organization and deployment of Fire suppression and EMS for volunteer Fire Departments. For example, NFPA 1720 states that in a suburban area, 10 firefighters should be able to respond in 10 minutes 80% of the time.

Please rate the following statement: My agency can maintain minimum fire protection staffing standards established by NFPA. Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, Strongly Agree.

Call Volume:

23. What was the call volume for fire and EMS in FY21, FY22, and FY 23?

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MEET THE CHIEF



Getting to know Ben Ruppert.

In this issue we will meet one of the many fire chiefs who will be spotlighted in Commonwealth Chief this year. Here we take a look at Ben Ruppert, Chief of the Hopewell Fire and EMS Department.

CC: Describe your tenure in the fire service...

BR: I have been working and volunteering in Fire, EMS, and Emergency Management for 26 Years.

CC: Please describe your career journey...

BR: I started in the fire service as a volunteer in Dinwiddie County, at McKenney Volunteer Fire Department, and served in EMS with the Dinwiddie Volunteer Rescue Squad. I loved it so much, that I immediately began to look for full time work in this field. I started my career on the EMS side as a Paramedic with A&B Ambulance in Hopewell and Southside Virginia Emergency Crew in Petersburg. It was while I was serving in Petersburg that I was hired by what was known at that time as Hopewell Bureau of Fire. I have spent the rest of my career with Hopewell serving in a number of roles both on the operations side as a firefighter Paramedic and in administrative roles, including Emergency Manager, and most recently Interim Chief before I was appointed to Fire Chief in April of 2022.

CC: Please describe your Form of Government...

BR: Hopewell operates under a City Council-Manager form of government.

CC: Describe the sources of Funding for Your Organization...

BR: Hopewell Fire & EMS is funded entirely from the general fund of the City of Hopewell. We bring in EMS revenue, under our revenue recovery program, but this funding goes directly to the general fund. We also pursue as many grant opportunities as possible, including State, Federal, and private grant programs, which have been crucial in building and maintaining our current capabilities.

CC: What population does your department serve...

BR: We serve a diverse population of approximately 23,000 citizens.

CC: How many square miles do you cover...

BR: Hopewell Fire & EMS protects 11 square miles.

CC: Describe the department composition...

BR: From our founding in 1916, Hopewell Fire has always been an entirely paid department. We currently have a few EMS volunteers that we inherited from the Hopewell Emergency Crew when they closed last year. They augment our minimum staffing levels on the EMS side when they run.

CC: Describe the department equipment...

BR: We field 2 Engines, 2 Medic Units, cross staff a Ladder/3rd medic, and one Battalion Chief Unit. We also have a number of specialty resources including a Technical Rescue Equipment Trailer, a Hazmat Equipment Trailer, a Flammable Liquids Response Trailer and a Mobile Command unit. We also have a 27 ft. boat that we deploy for calls on the river.

CC: Describe your call summary...

BR: With the exception of 2020, our call volume continues to climb each year. 2022 was our busiest year to date. We logged 5,759 calls for service, with 4,735 of those being for EMS, and the remaining 1,024 being for fire or other hazardous condition

CC: What is the most challenging issue or issues facing your department today?

BR: I don't believe that we are particularly unique from the rest of the fire service, in that we struggle with "usual suspects" including recruitment and retention, apparatus cost, mental health resources etc.. If I had to provide something that is unique to Hopewell, I would say that we are working towards getting more training on industrial firefighting tactics. Local industry has reduced firefighting resources on their sites over the years and they have become more dependent upon us for suppression capability. We are working to fill this gap through partnerships with the industry who is still training a fire brigade, and by developing in-house resources to provide ongoing training in the future.

CC: How would you describe your management style?

BR: I would describe my leadership style as Situational. This is because I see myself using a number of different leadership styles based on the situation.

CC: Does your department have a formal, long-range strategic plan?

BR: We are working on one now. We have held a number of meetings with our staff to start the process of developing foundational concepts such as our mission and vision, as well as identifying challenges and deficiencies, which will all dovetail into our strategic plan.

CC: How have current economic times impacted your department?

BR: Our biggest challenge in this area, like most, is the cost of apparatus and personnel. Supply chain interruptions have caused a significant impact on the down time for apparatus needing repair, due to parts availability, exacerbating the issue of apparatus replacement. In a small department with few apparatus, it has been challenging to keep the minimum number of units on the street. Rising pay in surrounding jurisdictions has also presented us with a challenge from the aspect of employee compensation in order to attract talent and remain competitive.

CC: Are you doing things differently today because of the economy?

BR: The increased cost of apparatus has changed our replacement timeline on a number of pieces of apparatus. Our budget is also not going as far as it used to, and so we've had to ask for increases in next year's budget that are not related to increasing any capabilities or improving service delivery, but simply to maintain status quo.

CC: What challenges do you see facing the fire service today?

BR: There are a number of challenges in today's fire service, some of the obvious include recruitment and retention, rising apparatus and operational costs, rising EMS call volume, cancer prevention, and mental health to name a few. I would like to highlight however, one that may not be on everyone's radar: the application of Unified Command.

We have a new generation of firefighters that are taking the baton from the old guard. Some of these new firefighters were not even born, much less serving in the fire service, on 9/11/01. I was working at the station that day, and we came in from shift training in the burn building to watch live as the second plane went into the World Trade Center in NYC. I remember the thoughts that went through my mind that day, and the prayers that went up for FDNY, those responding to the Pentagon, and indeed all of those affected by the tragedy. Then came HSPD 5, and since then, we have been inundated with ICS courses to teach the principles that helped the responders achieve the most success possible in those responses. Have we succeeded in that goal?

I have taught many ICS classes, evaluated a number of exercises, and have been part of the response on a number of multi-agency, multi-jurisdictional incidents. What I have seen has been a mixed bag of results. This depended primarily on the individuals involved. I have witnessed seamless integration of multiple disciplines, agencies and jurisdictions working together almost perfectly. On the other hand, I have seen multiple command units set up next to each other, but not collaborating on the response, and agencies freelancing on the incident without coordinating with command (dare I call out State Police?). I have witnessed this in large jurisdictions and small, and it begs the question; have we arrived yet when it comes to ICS and unified command?

We value tradition in the fire service, and we like to claim being the "godfather's" of incident command, (even though I would argue that really goes to the military), yet we still have not mastered this capability. The further we get from 9/11/01,

the fewer people we have serving who witnessed the need and value of ICS on that day, and the weeks and months to follow. Don't get me wrong, we have come a long way. We have integrated ICS into every aspect of our training, and we have developed Incident Management Teams. We are arguably much better prepared than we were. However, we must persist, and we must make this part of our evaluation process at every level of our organization, rather than taking it for granted that our people know it after taking a couple online courses and perhaps even sitting in class for a couple days in ICS 300. We need to own ICS in the fire service, not only in our own organization, but also by continuing to be its champion among the other agencies with whom we interface. Are we ensuring it is practiced every day on the smaller incidents so that it will be seamless on the larger ones?

One of the threats that is increasingly facing the fire service today is active threat incidents. The success of the response to these tragedies is predicated on a well-functioning unified command. These incidents are not new, and the public expects that the lessons learned from Columbine, and 9/11 have been implemented at the local level, to ensure an effective and efficient response in their community. With the prevalence of these incidents becoming more of a reality, we must ensure that our people are ready to stand in the gap on what could be one of the darkest days a community can face. This will not happen by acquiesce on the scene when we don't see what we expect of our organizations at a bomb threat at the courthouse, or an accident on the highway at the county line involving multiple agencies. If we allow dysfunction, or marginal performance in this area on a sunshine day with a routine call, we cannot expect it to go well in the heat of battle.

As discussed above, there are many challenges facing the fire service today. Because of that, there are many things competing for the attention of a Fire Chief. In all of that, let us not forget the importance of ensuring that our own organizations, and the organizations we work with, are requiring the highest level of performance when it comes to one of the single things that can make or break an incident response; the application of unified command.

CC: What do you look for in a new recruit?

BR: Character, plain and simple. We see more people in the fire service today who are here just for the job than we used to. They do not share the same passion that some of us have because they do not see it as a calling. There is nothing wrong with that, as long as they are willing to serve with honor and integrity. We cannot expect everyone to have the same passion for the fire service that we have, albeit we should all be working to instill that in them. We can and must, however, expect them to provide the same high level of service to the people we serve, and that takes character. Character is much harder to teach than how to pull a hose line or start an IV, so we would like to hire them with that to begin with.

CC: How do you view training?

BR: Training is a critical component of what we do in the fire service. Today, training is even more important than ever, as the average experience level of our members is not what it was even 20 years ago. That, coupled with emerging threats like the prevalence of Lithium batteries, means that training has to be a priority. Training is the only stopgap that we have for this lack of experience, and knowledge of emerging threats that we face. We must constantly be in pursuit of the best training to ensure our members are as prepared as they can be for the next call.

CC: Do you have a close working relationship with neighboring departments?

BR: The "Crater" area fire departments including the Cities of Hopewell, Colonial Heights, and Petersburg, as well as the Counties of Prince George and Dinwiddie along with Fort Gregg-Adams work well together. We collaborate on two regional response teams (Hazmat and Technical Rescue) and have collaborated, on and off, to conduct recruit schools. We are collaborating on a joint recruit school later this year.

CC: What's in the future for the fire service as you see it?

BR: I can see technology and innovation continuing to change the way we do business. Going forward, the challenge for us will be to embrace change, while still honoring the tradition of the fire service that we hold so dear.

CC: How has being a member of the VFCA helped you become a better chief/leader?

BR: I have participated in the last two VFCA Chief's Summits. These events have had timely information presented, as well as good conversations among the attendees. This information has helped to inform my strategies going forward with my department. These events organized by the VFCA have definitely been a benefit to me in my new role.

PAST PRESIDENT AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR JIMMY CARTER PASSES



James W. "Jimmy" Carter, 77, beloved husband, father and grandfather unexpectedly passed away April 16, 2023.

He is survived by his loving wife, of more than 46 years, Kathy; his son Michael Carter and wife Elisa, of Moyock, North Carolina, his daughter Brianne McConnell and husband Mark of Mclean, Virginia, and five grandchildren, Keira Carter, Skylar Carter, Colton Carter, Delaney McConnell and Avery McConnell. He

is also survived by brothers Jimmy and Jerry Carter and sister, Leda Ray, and many nieces and nephews.

Jimmy served in the United States Army as a Drill Sergeant from 1967 to 1973. He joined the Virginia Beach Fire Department in 1970 as a volunteer and turned that calling and passion into a 32 year career rising to the rank of Deputy Fire Chief and for a period of time as Acting Chief of Department. He was instrumental in the growth of the department. His leadership brought regional and national attention to the department and the City and in part, facilitated the beginning of the Federal Emergency Management Agency's, Urban Search and Rescue Team, Virginia Task Force 2 and the national program of T.R.A.D.E. (Training Resource And Data Exchange). Additionally he earned designation of Executive Fire Officer from the National Fire Academy.

Chief Carter was a member of Virginia Fire Chiefs Association for many years and served in a number of different roles, including two terms as President from 2002-2004. In 2009 he became the Executive Director and remained in that position until 2014. In 1998, Jimmy was instrumental in having the Annual Conference moved to the Virginia Beach Pavilion so that everything could be inside and under one roof. Eventually a 40,000 sq. ft tent was added as we outgrew that facility. In 2005 we moved to the new Virginia Beach Convention Center. The conference remains there today and is a huge success thanks to our old friend. Jimmy was always ready to step up for whatever task that he was asked to take on.

For the past few years, Jimmy has been fortunate to spend time with his close friends, wife, kids and grandkids. Jimmy loved to travel and also enjoyed hanging out in the East Beach Neighborhood where he was very involved with the East Ocean View Civic League and the East Beach Homeowners Association, where he was currently serving as President.

Jimmy was larger than life, charismatic, caring, and a natural leader. He was an icon in the fire service and an excellent father, grandfather, coach, mentor, and husband. He will be sorely missed.

Please keep both the Carter Family and the Virginia Beach Fire Department in your thoughts and prayers as they mourn their loss.

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SPRING WILDFIRE SEASON BUSY AND TRAGIC... LODD REPORTED

"Our hearts are broken," said both the VDOF and the Haysi Volunteer Fire Department, where Rocky S. Wood served as chief

At approximately 8:30 p.m. on March 9th, a Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOF) firefighter battling a wildfire in western Virginia was killed when an ATV overturned, the state Department of Forestry announced.

Rocky S. Wood was killed while fighting a 15-acre wildfire along Lester's Fork Road near the Roseann community in Buchanan County that night, the department said in a news release. Wood was scouting the area to determine where to create a containment line around the perimeter of the fire when the ATV he was riding overturned, said John Miller, a spokesperson for the Department of Forestry.

VDOF reported that they had been working in close coordination with the Virginia Department of Fire Programs and an investigation into the event was underway. The fire was contained as early the next morning.

"Today our hearts are broken as we send our sincere condolences to Rocky's family, friends and fellow colleagues during this difficult time," State Forester Rob Farrell said in a statement.

Wood first worked for the department as a part-time wildland firefighter and joined the department full-time as a forest technician in 2016, working in the western region's Vansant office, the department said. He had also worked for the Virginia Department of Corrections.

Wood was vice mayor of Haysi, a small town in Buchanan County. He joined the town council in 2008, and served as the chief of the Haysi Volunteer Fire Department, the town said in a post announcing Wood's death. "Rocky gave his life as a sacrifice of safety for our community," the town said.

Survivors include his wife, Debbie; daughters, Lindsey (Chase Cooley) Wood, and Lauren Wood, both of the home; bonus children, Jesse (Dove) Goodpaster of Bristol, VA, and Toni (Nate) Long of Wise, VA; his mother, Nina Wood of Haysi, VA; grandchildren, Finn and CeCe Goodpaster, Paislee Fleming and Owen Ramey; father and mother-in-law, Jerry and Joan Deel of Birchleaf, VA, and a host of uncles, aunts, cousins and friends.

Funeral services were conducted 1:00 p.m. Monday, March 13, 2023 at Ridgeview High School Gymnasium with Gary Wayne Owens and Derek Kiser officiating. Burial followed in the JJ Wood Cemetery, Haysi, VA.



IMPLEMENTING A NEW MODEL FOR MANAGEMENT OF LARGE WILDLAND FIRE INCIDENTS



Implementation for a new model to manage large wildland fire incidents is being worked on by the Fire Management Board, National Multi-Agency Coordinating Group and National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) Executive Board.

The model is based on Complex Incident Management Teams (CIMTs) assisting local land management agencies with response to wildland fires of both Type 2 and Type 1 complexity to meet the needs of the incident.

Model objectives

- Stabilize team numbers
- Ensure the overall availability of team members
- Reduce fatigue
- Increase the resiliency of the interagency Incident Management Teams (IMTs) and their members

This systemic change impacts standards, training, qualifications and oversight of the personnel and IMTs. Current interagency Type 2 and Type 1 IMTs are in the process of attaining the personnel qualifications and transitioning team typing ahead of full implementation in 2024.

Specific details on the components of this change include:

Training and qualifications

The NWCG Standards for Wildland Fire Position Qualifications, PMS 310-1 includes a pathway for current responders to transition, as well as a pathway for those seeking to move up from the Type 3 or Unit Leader qualification levels. Changes effective as of January 2023 are explained in the 2023 Transition Plan PDF.

Mobilization and configuration

The National Mobilization Guide establishes the standards for mobilization and demobilization of resources in response to wildland fire and all-hazard events.

Complexity assessment

The NWCG Wildland Fire Risk and Complexity Assessment (RCA), PMS 236, revised in 2023, includes Part D: Functional Complexity to assist agencies and IMTs in identifying the personnel and support needs of the incident.

For information regarding model implementation, visit the Incident Workforce Development Group webpage.

This article is based on content in the March 23, 2023 InfoGram

VDFP FUNDING AND GRANTS



AID TO LOCALITIES (ATL)

Annual reports accepted quarterly

The Aid to Localities funding is an annual allocation to jurisdictions in the Commonwealth authorized by Code of Virginia § 38.2-401. It's derived from an annual assessment against all licensed insurance companies doing business in the Commonwealth writing a Code-defined type of insurance. The Fund is used

to provide an annual population-based allocation to 323 qualifying jurisdictions within the Commonwealth. There are set minimum payments that all Cities, Towns and Counties will receive. Those minimums are as following: no eligible County or City will receive less than \$30,000 and no eligible Town will receive less than \$15,000.

Section § 38.2-401.B of the code requires jurisdictions to complete and submit an annual report and disbursement agreement before the jurisdiction is eligible for their ATL allocation. If, at the end of any annual reporting period, the eligible jurisdiction has not submitted a satisfactory Annual Report and two complete Disbursement Agreement, their ATL funds for the next year shall be forfeited.

The allocation may only be used for fire service purposes and may not supplant or replace locally appropriated funds. ATL funds can only be used for the following items:

- Training volunteer or career firefighting personnel in each of the receiving localities;
- Funding fire prevention and public safety education programs;
- Constructing, improving and expanding regional or local fire service training facilities;
- Purchasing emergency medical care and equipment for fire personnel;
- Payment of personnel costs related to fire and medical training for fire personnel; or
- For purchasing personal protective equipment, vehicles, equipment and supplies for use in the receiving locality specifically for fire service purposes.

LIVE FIRE TRAINING STRUCTURE GRANT

The Live Fire Training Structure Grant Program was established in accordance with §38.2-401-D of the Code of Virginia to provide grants to Virginia localities seeking to construct, renovate, or repair permanent Live Fire Training Structure in accordance with NFPA 1402. A Live Fire Training Structure is a structure specifically designed for conducting live fire training evolutions on a repetitive basis in accordance with NFPA 1001 and 1403. The code provides funding in the amount of \$975,000 annual. The application deadline for renovation and new construction projects are January 1st and July 1st of each year and must be approved for award by the Fire Service Board. Repair applications are accepted throughout the year and are approved for award by VDFP. The funding levels are: New construction \$450,000 plus \$30,000 A&E fees, Renovations \$50,001 up to \$450,000 and Repairs \$50k and below.

Application period for new construction and renovations are due January 1 and July 1, repair applications are accepted year round

GRANTS CONTINUED

REGIONAL FIRE SERVICE TRAINING FACILITIES GRANT

Application period is from July 1 through September 1

The Regional Fire Services Grant Program was established to provide regional fire services training facilities/props to Virginia localities. The code does not specifically provide funding for the training grant. Funding is allocated from any excess funding remaining in the Live Structure fund.

The annual application period is from July 1st through September 1st and must be approved for award by the Fire Service Board. The maximum amount of award is \$50,000 and funds may not be used for any purpose other than acquisition of regional fire services training props as approved in the grant application.

CONFERENCE AND EDUCATION ASSISTANCE GRANT

Applications are due on or before July 1

The Conference and Education Assistance Grant Program was established to provide additional financial assistance for professional development for members of Virginia's fire and emergency services community. The grant program provides needed financial support for training conferences and seminars sponsored by Virginia-based non-profit organizations that further the education of fire and emergency services personnel throughout the Commonwealth. Applicants must be a legally recognized non-profit or governmental entity representing the local, regional, or statewide interest of the fire and emergency services community.

Unlike all the other VDFP grants, the Conference and Education Grant is funded solely by VDFP's budget. The Executive Director of VDFP determines the amount of any financial award as funds are available. VDFP staff reviews and evaluates applications to provide funding recommendations to the Executive Director. Final decisions will be made by the Executive Director of VDFP.

For more information, visit www.vafire.com.



VFCA CHAPLAIN COMMITTEE FORMED

Brian Clingenpeel

February 23, 2023, at the Fire and Rescue Conference in Virginia Beach the Virginia Fire Chief's Association (VFCA) approved a new committee for chaplains across the Commonwealth. This was a historic vote as there has never been a state-wide organization of fire and rescue chaplains.

Fire and rescue chaplaincy training has been picking up speed in Virginia for about the past year as some localities have sponsored classes for chaplains and as Baptist Chaplaincy Relations (BCR) has started to offer more public safety chaplaincy classes to their training schedule. In April of 2022, BCR hosted a class for public safety chaplains in Richmond and the possibility of forming a state-wide group was discussed at the training and began to gain traction.

Fast forward to the morning of April 17, 2023 where at another BCR sponsored chaplain training event, 18 chaplains gathered to start a two-day course from Federation of Fire Chaplains (FFC) called "Essentials of Fire Chaplaincy" taught by Jimmie Duncan, the Executive Director of the FFC. That afternoon in Richmond, the organizational meeting for the new committee that the VFCA had approved took place with 26 chaplains in attendance. Prior to the meeting, 42 chaplains had expressed interest in being a part of this new organization.

It was decided at that meeting that the name of the new group would be the "Virginia Fire and Rescue Chaplains Committee" (VFRCC) whose purpose will be to seek to provide training, fellowship/support, and planning for fire and rescue chaplains in the state of Virginia. The group elected officers to two-year terms to include:

Chair: Brian Clingenpeel, Roanoke County Fire and Rescue; First Vice-Chair: Jim Jones, Loudoun County Combined Fire and Rescue System; Second Vice-Chair: Jeffrey Smith, Spotsylvania County Fire, Rescue and Emergency Management; and Secretary: Chris Brown, Stafford County Fire and Rescue.

The committee also elected regional representatives to match up with VFCA and VDFP regions to include:

- Division 1 (Capital): Mike Woods, Henrico County Division of Fire
- Division 2 (Northern VA): Bobby Eaby, Stafford County Fire and Rescue
- Division 3 (Central): Sean Barrett, Louisa County Fire and EMS (Lives in Fluvanna)
- Division 4 (Southwest VA): Vacant
- Division 5 (Eastern): Sim Frazier, Chesapeake Fire Department
- Division 6 (South Central): Michael Gereaux, Craig County Rescue
- Division 7 (Northern Metro): Paula Miller, Prince William County Fire and Rescue

The VFRCC is looking forward to being present at the VFCA/VFCF 5K Walk/Run in Williamsburg at the end of April as well as having chaplains participate in the Virginia Fallen Firefighter and EMS Memorial Service June 3rd in Richmond. As more VFCA regional Shakers Forums are announced, VFRCC hopes to have representation at those events. The committee is also already looking at future training opportunities including next year's conference in February where they hope to offer some basic and advanced chaplain classes. If you know of other fire and rescue chaplains in the Commonwealth who may be interested in joining the committee, please have them reach out to Brian Clingenpeel at bclingenpeel@roanokecountyva.gov The committee is open to all fire and rescue chaplains! The committee really appreciates the assistance of those groups who have partnered with us to get this group started including Baptist Chaplaincy Relations, the Federation of Fire Chaplains and especially the Virginia Fire Chiefs Association!



Jim Jones, First Vice Chair (L) and Brian Clingenpeel, Chair of the VFRCC (R)



Jimmie Duncan from Federation of Fire Chaplains teaching April 17, 2023 at BCR training event.



26 chaplains gathered for the organizational meeting of the VFRCC on April 17th

THE 2023 VIRGINIA FALLEN FIREFIGHTERS & EMS MEMORIAL SERVICE

The 26th annual Virginia Fallen Firefighters & Emergency Medical Services Memorial Service was held at 12 p.m. on Saturday, June 3, 2023 at the Richmond International Raceway Complex, Main Exhibition Hall. This event was open to the public.

This year's Memorial Service will honor fallen firefighters who have been recognized in the Virginia Line of Duty Act in 2022 for their bravery and dedication to the citizens of the Commonwealth. The memorial service is open to the public.

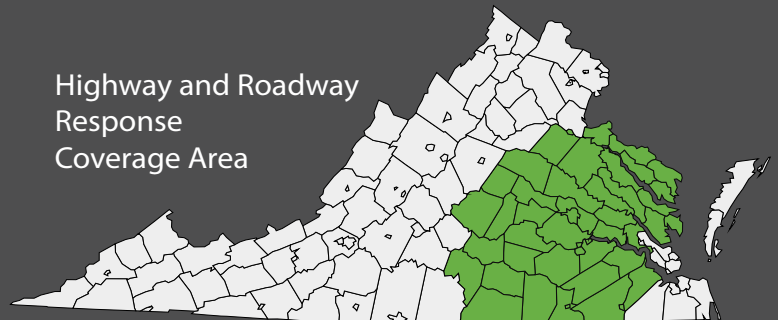
2023 Honorees

- Gary C. Campbell - Spotsylvania County Fire, Rescue and Emergency Management
- Tyvaughn Eldridge - Chesterfield Fire and EMS
- Christopher G. Griffin - City of Norfolk Fire Rescue
- Robert W. Nelms - Fries Volunteer Fire Department
- Jeffrey T. Rizzo - Loudoun County Fire Rescue
- Kimberly A. Schoppa - Fairfax County Fire and Rescue
- James A. Sturgill - Pound Volunteer Fire Department
- Gregory V. Thomas - City of Danville Fire Department
- Michael W. Webb - Callaway Volunteer Fire Department
- Herbert T. Wilcox - Rocky Mount Fire Department

The Memorial Service included a keynote address, a Virginia Fire Services Honor Guard procession, a musical performance, and a fire and EMS apparatus display from departments throughout the Commonwealth. State flags will be presented to the families of the fallen.



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PLAN TO ATTEND THE 2023 ANNUAL VIRGINIA EMS SYMPOSIUM

Marian Hunter, Public Relations Coordinator, Virginia Office of EMSI

Over the last 43 years, the Virginia Office of EMS has been providing an "Education for Life" to EMS providers across the Commonwealth. We hope you are planning to attend this year's Annual Virginia EMS Symposium, Nov. 8-12 in Norfolk, Va.

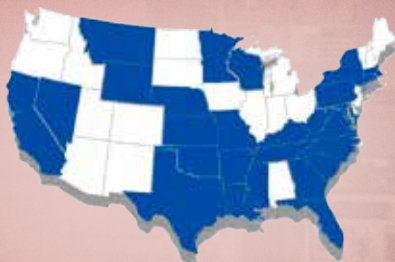
The Virginia EMS Symposium continues to be one of the largest and most comprehensive EMS training events in the nation! The symposium offers more than 350 classes with renowned educators, and various course tracks with hands-on training and lecture-style instruction. Over the course of five days, EMS providers will have the opportunity to fulfill up to 26 hours of continuing education credit.

During this weeklong training conference, we will have special events lined up to help registered attendees relax after a long day of learning. We will also be announcing some exciting information about our new hotel reservation system, which will be launching this year! **Registration for the 2023 Virginia EMS Symposium will open this summer.** Stay tuned as more information will be posted on our website, at: www.vdh.virginia.gov/emergency-medical-services/ems-symposium/.

Become a Symposium sponsor! In order to make the Virginia EMS Symposium program successful and to keep costs low for our EMS providers, we need the support of our sponsors! If you're interested in becoming a sponsor of the Virginia EMS Symposium and helping to provide an "Education for Life," please download the Virginia EMS Symposium Sponsorship Guide. Learn more at: www.vdh.virginia.gov/emergency-medical-services/ems-symposium/symposium-sponsorship/.

For more information about the annual Virginia EMS Symposium, please visit: www.vdh.virginia.gov/emergency-medical-services/ems-symposium/.

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Learn more about becoming a sponsor of the Virginia EMS Symposium and help to provide "An Education for Life."

For more info, scan the QR code below or visit the link: www.vdh.virginia.gov/symposium

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How to recognize a pipeline leak

- **LOOK** for blowing dirt, discolored vegetation or continued bubbling of standing water.
- **LISTEN** for a hissing or roaring noise near a natural gas appliance or line.
- **SMELL** for the distinctive, rotten-egg odor associated with natural gas. Natural gas is colorless and odorless, so we add a chemical odorant called mercaptan for easy detection of a suspected natural gas leak. This odorant has a distinctive "rotten egg" type odor. You should act any time you detect even a small amount of this odor in the air. Be aware that "odorant fade," while uncommon, can occur. Odorant fade occurs when a physical or chemical process causes the level of odorant in the gas to be reduced. This can happen in both existing gas pipe and new installations.

Note: Be aware that "odorant fade," while uncommon, can occur. Odorant fade occurs when a physical or chemical process causes the level of odorant in the gas to be reduced. This can happen in both existing gas pipe and new installations. Be aware that some individuals may not be able to detect the smell of the natural gas odorant because they have a diminished sense of smell, because the scent is being masked by other odors in the area or because the odorant has diminished so that it is not detectable. Some gas lines, due to their unique function, may not have odor at all.

Learn more

For more information about natural gas and emergency response procedures and training, contact us at **800.552.7473**.

To learn about our emergency response plan, which recognizes and mitigates threats and also sustains the integrity of the pipelines. Visit virginiannaturalgas.com/integritymanagementplan.

Help keep everyone safe during a natural gas emergency

Even though natural gas pipeline incidents are uncommon, it is still important to be prepared by knowing the signs of a potential problem.

You should take the following action any time you detect any of the signs of a pipeline leak:

- **DO NOT** try to identify the source to stop the leak yourself.
- **AVOID** using any sources of ignition, such as cell phones, cigarettes, matches, flashlights, electronic devices, motorized vehicles, light switches or landlines, as natural gas can ignite from a spark or open flame, possibly causing a fire or explosion. Natural gas is non-toxic, lighter than air and displaces oxygen. In severe cases, if not used properly, natural gas can also lead to asphyxiation.
- **CALL** Virginia Natural Gas immediately at our 24-hour emergency response line **800.552.7473** with the location and type of emergency.
- **SECURE** the area by establishing a safety zone around the incident and control access. You may need to reroute traffic and evacuate area homes and businesses.

How we respond

Once we are notified of the emergency, we will immediately dispatch trained personnel to the site, keeping you informed of our progress. We will take all necessary actions to correct the problem. We will work together to ensure our community is safe.

Prevention – the best defense against leaks

Emergency officials and first responders do their part daily to prevent natural gas leaks by keeping the following safety tips in mind:

- Understand that natural gas is lighter than air and displaces oxygen. Although natural gas is non-toxic, in extreme cases of oxygen displacement, it may lead to asphyxiation. Natural gas has a risk of ignition near a spark or open flame.
- Know where the pipelines are in your jurisdiction. If you notice any missing or damaged pipeline markers, contact Virginia Natural Gas at **1.877.572.3342** so they can be replaced.
- Virginia law requires all underground utilities be marked before any type of digging or excavation. Be on the lookout for any suspicious activity or unauthorized digging. If the excavator has not notified the state of their intent to dig, they must stop all activity immediately. The excavator is required to present a valid dig ticket number when requested by first responders. Also, no one, including homeowners, should be digging, ditching, drilling, leveling or plowing without having first contacted our state's One-Call number (**811**) to locate underground utilities.
- Remember, pipeline markers, like the sample pictured, indicate only the general area of the pipeline and not the exact location or depth. Pipeline markers may not be present in all areas.
- Information about transmission pipelines operating in your community is available through the National Pipeline Mapping System (NPMS) and online at: npms.phmsa.dot.gov.



Online Survey

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R. Christian Eudailey

The 13th Annual VFCA/Spotsylvania Golf Tournament was held on June 2, 2023 at Lees Hill Golf Club in Spotsylvania. Planning for this year's event started in January 2023 with key committee members that included Dick Singer, Charles Sterne, Deuce Jewell and myself. The committee had set a very ambitious goal to have 132 golfers on the course and to raise \$50,000 from the event this year.

Registration began at 1100 hours and golfers were treated to a Chick-fil-a Chicken sandwich before the start of the event. The Putting Contest was held at noon and there were 51 golfers that participated. Sidney Jenkins, who was a member of the TEC, LLC Golf Team, won the putting contest! Before the golfers hit the course the VFCA made a donation to the Firefighter Cancer Support Network of \$20,000. These funds will be used to help support the VA-FLH cohort which is a product of a collaboration between Virginia Commonwealth University, Massey Cancer Center, Richmond Fire Department and the Virginia Chapter of the Firefighter Cancer Support Network. The study launched at the 2023 VFCA and there were over 330 providers that registered at the conference. The VFCA plans to keep the membership apprised on the progress of this important study as it progresses and the positive impacts it will have for the firefighters in the Commonwealth!

The round of play went well and teams started arriving back at the clubhouse around 1700 hours. The weather this year was a little bit cooler than last year. As the majority of the teams arrived to the clubhouse dinner service was provided by Mission BBQ and as the golfers ate dinner the awards were handed out. The winner of the longest drive was Rosser Wells and the winner of the closest to the pin was Charles Sterne. This year we did two flights and offered a first and second place awards for both. The first-place team in flight 1 with a score of 55 consisted of the following: Thrine Harpring, Devon Curry, Carter Harpring and Josh Apple. The second-place team with a score of 57 consisted of Nicholas Krukowski, Troy Markley, Nate Wise and John Casto. The first-place team in flight 2 with a winning score of 65 consisted of the following: Sten Edwards, Aubrey Amadeo, Phil Warner and Joe Sposa. The second-place team in flight 2 with a score of 66 included Bruce Wright, Lenny Wright, Matt Warren and Brian Frankel.

The event this year was well received and it attracted 119 golfers and generated 62 sponsors and related donations. We had some great sponsors again this year that contributed to the overall success of this event. Some of the top sponsors included Maruca Design and Build, Dick Singer, Atlantic Emergency Solutions, Breg Environmental, AT&T, L3 Harris Technologies, Landivar & Associates, Fraternal Order of Eagles – Fredericksburg, Local 995 Richmond, Loudoun Career Firefighters Association, Cranemasters, Inc., Moseley Architects, Transquip USA, SPEC Rescue International, Brenntag, Two Capitols Consulting and TEC, LLC. In order to appropriately acknowledge all the sponsors, we have included a list on a separate page in this edition that includes the complete list of the sponsors and related donations.

As a result of the combined efforts of the committee the event this year raised just over \$30K that will help support the Robert E. White Scholarship Fund as well as the Virginia Fire Officer Academy and the Virginia Chief Officer Academy. On behalf of the VFCA Board of Trustees and the Spotsylvania Planning Team we want to express our sincere thanks and appreciation to all the sponsors and the 119 golfers that attended the tournament to make it a HUGE success!!! **The 14th Annual Tournament will be held on May 31, 2024 – please pencil in the date and we hope to see you there!**



Photo's: Kevin Good & Administrative Professionals



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The level of support this year from the sponsors and donors was OUTSTANDING!

The Board of Trustees would like to publically acknowledge and say a HUGE THANK YOU to all of our sponsors for your support. Without each of you we could not make this event happen each year.

ON THE MOVE & ODDS AND ENDS

Virginia's public safety and homeland security secretary has resigned.

Gov. Glenn Youngkin (R) announced the resignation of Robert P. Mosier as public safety and homeland security secretary Monday, May 22nd.

A reason for the move was not shared in the announcement, but a Youngkin spokeswoman said that Mosier, who is leaving the post on June 1, made the decision "to pursue a new opportunity that will allow him to live closer to his family and grandchildren."

"Secretary Mosier admirably led our public safety efforts across the Commonwealth, furthering our commitment to reduce violent crime and fight the dangerous influx of illicit drugs such as fentanyl. I thank him for his service to the Commonwealth," Youngkin said in a statement.

Youngkin has picked Terrance C. Cole, who served in law enforcement for 28 years, to replace Mosier, the governor's office said. Cole spent 22 years in the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration.

"With the breadth of his leadership experiences at the Drug Enforcement Administration of the United States, Mr. Terrance Cole is well equipped and incredibly qualified to lead our public safety efforts, ensure safe communities across the Commonwealth, and tackle the scourge of illicit drugs in Virginia," the governor added.

Mosier called his tenure "an incredible journey of service" to Virginia, expressing admiration for the governor and the rest of his cabinet.

"Under the Governor's leadership, we have made tremendous progress in public safety especially with the ongoing reduction in violent crime and interdiction of dangerous drugs," he said in a statement. "It has been my great pleasure to work with the Governor and his cabinet, all of whom share the singular purpose of serving the people of Virginia."

Virginia Beach Fire Department Appoints Battalion Chief Lorna B. Trent to District Chief

The Virginia Beach Fire Department is proud to announce the appointment of Battalion Chief Lorna B. Trent to District Chief. Trent has 24 years of experience in public safety and more than 20 years with the Virginia Beach Fire Department.

Throughout her career, Trent has held both operational and administrative assignments including engine, ladder, and rescue companies, operational Battalion Chief, emergency management, special events, and most recently the first female Fire Marshal. As Fire Marshal she managed the Fire Prevention Bureau that is tasked with fire investigations, fire inspections, life safety education and public information. She is a member of the Virginia Beach Incident Management Team (VBIMT) and the Hampton Roads Incident Management Team (HRIMT), working to support the city and region during disasters.

Trent holds a current certification as a Nationally Registered Paramedic. She graduated Summa Cum Laude from Hampton University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Emergency Medical Systems Management, graduated from Regent University School of Law with a Juris Doctor and is a member of the Virginia State Bar.

Suffolk Fire & Rescue recognized for international accreditation

The Suffolk Department of Fire & Rescue was honored recently after achieving firefighting accreditation given only to a select few at the international level. Fire Chief Michael Barakey and others from the department spoke to city council about the recognition, which has only been awarded to just over 300 fire departments worldwide. Suffolk now joins Newport News, Hampton and Virginia Beach in being accredited by the Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI). There are 11 in total on the municipality side in Virginia, and six with the Department of Defense. Suffolk Fire & Rescue, which currently has 316 members, received the award on February 28, after going through a commission hearing in Orlando, Florida.

Prince William Co. gets new Fire and Rescue System Chief

In early April, County Executive Christopher J. Shorter announced that the Board of Supervisors had approved Tom LaBelle to be the next System Chief, effective May 1, 2023.

Chief LaBelle brings more than 30 years of progressively responsible public safety experience and has a history of working with combination systems to achieve success. He is currently a Deputy Chief in Henrico County and has previously served as the Division Chief for Volunteer Services in Albemarle County, as well as led the New York State Association of Fire Chiefs as their Chief Executive Officer. Chief LaBelle has worked with state and national labor organizations and has more than 20 years of experience in a volunteer department.

In his letter to staff, Shorter asked everyone to please join him on May 1 in warmly welcoming and supporting Chief LaBelle. He went on to say that he was excited about how we will continue moving our System forward.

Thank you, and stay safe.

Governor Appoints Sean Polster as New Chief Deputy State Coordinator of Emergency Management

The Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) is pleased to announce that Governor Glenn Youngkin has appointed Sean Polster as Chief Deputy State Coordinator of Emergency Management for VDEM. Mr. Polster is an emergency management professional with over 30 years of operational readiness and crisis response for both career and volunteer organizations. He most recently served as emergency services/management coordinator for Rappahannock County. Sean succeeds Erin Sutton who departed VDEM in December 2022.

Marion A. Long passes

We were notified in early April that long time VDFP employee Marion Long passed away. Marion worked for VDFP for a number of years where he served as the NFRIS Manager. After 30 years of service with the State of Virginia, he retired and transitioned to the National Fire Academy and served in a similar role, but at the national level.

Marion leaves his devoted wife Brenda, three children and numerous other family members to cherish his memory.

Virginia Beach fire captain dies in "Line of Duty"

A Virginia Beach firefighter died on Monday, 4/17 in what the department has termed a "line of duty" death. Virginia Beach Professional Fire & EMS, Local 2924 said he died from "occupational cancer." The department announced on social media that Captain Matt "Chevy" Chiaverotti had died. It is with deep sadness and a heavy heart that we share the line of duty passing of Captain Matt "Chevy" Chiaverotti. "It is impossible to describe the depth of Chevy's impact on our department and the tragedy of losing him far too soon." Chevy will be sorely missed by all who had the pleasure of knowing him. Please keep the Chiaverotti family and extended family in your thoughts and prayers.

Deputy Chief Stricken, Dies After Wildfire Response

It is with profound sadness that we announce the Line-Of-Duty Death of Frederick County Deputy Chief Chester T. Lauck who passed away Sunday morning April 24, 2023 at 08:09 am at Winchester Medical Center surrounded by family and friends.

Chief Lauck suffered a cardiac event at his home very early Saturday morning several hours after engaging in firefighting operations on a wildland fire on Back Creek Road in Gore, Virginia. Given the circumstances surrounding his death, his passing is being considered a Line-Of-Duty Death with all associated honors and recognitions.

Chief Lauck selflessly served the greater Frederick County community for decades in a variety of roles and his passing is a tremendous loss to his family, friends, our Fire and Rescue Family, and the greater community. In his current position he was responsible for the Emergency Management Division. Chief Lauck completed his Advanced Professional Development Series certifications through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and has been endorsed for his Virginia Professional Emergency Manager certification.

Chief Lauck was a life member of Round Hill Community Volunteer Fire and Rescue Company where he served as the Volunteer Fire and Rescue Chief for 14 years and held other leadership roles throughout his membership time there. He also served as a Patrolman for the Virginia Department of Forestry since 1984 and assisted on numerous wildland incidents and events. He retired from the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority (MWAA) Fire and Rescue Department as a Battalion Chief responsible for the Special Operations Division. He served in various positions as Firefighter/Medic, Lieutenant, Captain, and Battalion Chief over a 22-year period from 1985 to 2007. He worked for Winchester Fire and Rescue Department prior to going to the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority (MWAA). He also served in the military for the 167th Airlift Wing Air National Guard as an Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighter (ARFF).

Please pray for Chief Lauck's family during this difficult time and pray for our Fire and Rescue Family in the hours and days ahead as we honor the service and memory of Chief Lauck.

Newport News Chief retires after 36-year career in fire services and EMS

Fire Chief Jeffrey "Jeff" Johnson, 55, said his decision to retire was so that he could move back to Kansas City, Missouri where his wife, adult children and grandchildren live. He told the Daily Press that spending more time with his family was "the only reason" he wanted to retire, and said he loves Newport News and its staff.

"I love my job here," Johnson said. "I love the fire department and the community. And so I feel like I'm going out on a high point with a great organization. So this will be my last position within the fire service."

Johnson has served as the city's fire chief since February 2019 and has a 36-year career in emergency medical and fire services. Much of his career has been dedicated to implementing cancer prevention tactics and more comprehensive physical and mental exams for firefighters.

Johnson said he's proud of keeping the fire department competitive with pay and benefits, hiring and training quality recruits and modernizing fire facilities.

Last year, the International Association of Fire Chiefs awarded Johnson the Alan Brunacini Fire Service Executive Safety Award for going above and beyond in prioritizing fire service health and safety.

City Manager Cynthia Rohlf announced she would appoint Deputy Fire Chief

Wesley Rogers, who has 19 years with the department, as the interim fire chief until the city could find a long-term replacement.

Johnson said he will leave his position sometime in mid-May.

Happy Retirement Wally!

During the Rockingham Regional Fire School, Mr. William "Wally" Burris announced that he was retiring.

Wally has been in the fire service since 1963, starting in Pennsylvania, as a volunteer. He retired as Captain from the City of Fairfax and has been a State Adjunct Instructor since 1980.

Through the years, he has shared his wealth of knowledge with the younger generations of firefighters.

Joe Bailey and Wally have been a Teaching Team for over 30 years with Incident Command Classes of all types across the Commonwealth.

Thank you Wally for your 40 years of service!

Poquoson fire chief retires after decades of service to the community

Over his years of service, Robert Holloway Jr. transformed Poquoson's fire department from a mostly volunteer, one-station operation into a technologically sophisticated, well-trained and modern firefighting force. Holloway retired as the city's fire chief earlier this month, leaving behind a legacy of service to the Poquoson community. "Robert has served Poquoson for many years in a stellar way," said Stephen Kopczyński, who collaborated with Holloway regularly as the fire chief in neighboring York County. "I've always viewed him as a consummate professional. He is so caring for the city of Poquoson, and he's done so much for them." Holloway describes himself as someone who fell in love with the profession of firefighting and considered it his life's calling. He spent 16 of his nearly 50 years with the department as chief. "I never planned on retiring," he said.

Isle of Wight fire rescue chief announces his retirement

Pat Humphries announced his intention to retire effective July 1, 2023. In his announcement he said "It has been an honor to serve in the fire/EMS service for 37 years in the Hampton Roads area." Greg Parsons will be the interim chief until the position is filled.



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HOW A SWITCH TO EL NIÑO COULD AFFECT HURRICANE SEASON

Nick Bannin, The Hill

As you may have heard by now, La Niña has met its end and we're currently in the neutral phase of the climate pattern El-Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO).

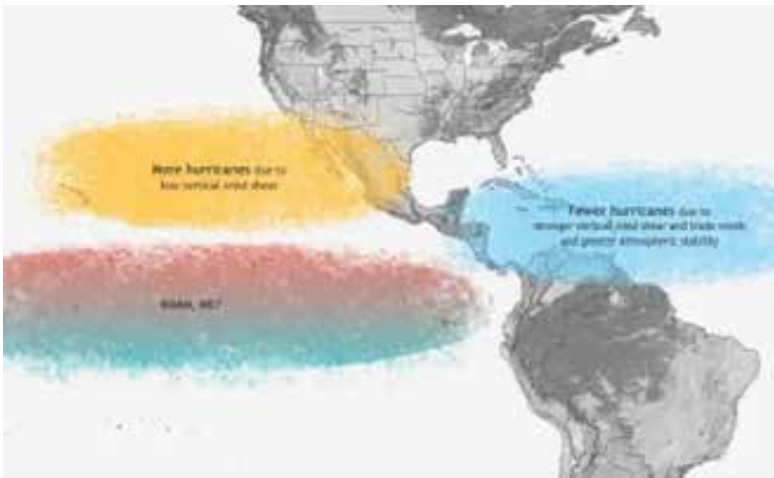
While we're expected to stay neutral through at least spring and possibly a good chunk of summer, a switch to El Niño is expected from late summer into fall. In the Atlantic, El Niño typically leads to fewer hurricanes, although longer term cycles also play a role.

Atlantic Hurricane season began June 1 and lasts through Nov. 30. This means it's likely that quite a bit of Atlantic Hurricane Season 2023 will be spent in an El Niño pattern.

El Niño and hurricanes

El Niño is the warm phase of ENSO, in which the waters of the eastern Pacific are warmer than normal. Less vertical wind shear in the hurricane development zone west of Mexico typically brings more frequent hurricanes to the eastern Pacific basin.

However, in the Atlantic, El Niño typically leads to fewer hurricanes. This is largely due to increased vertical wind shear and more stability in the atmosphere. Wind shear is not good for the development or the sustaining of hurricanes as it rips them apart and a more stable atmosphere prevents the lift required for these storms.

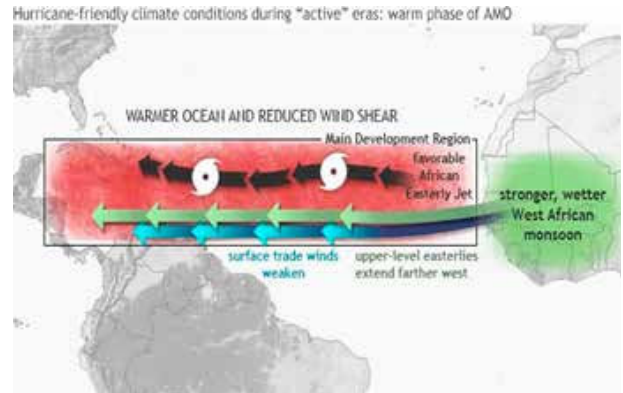


El Niño and Hurricanes (Image: Climate.gov)

What other factors impact hurricane season

While we talk about the changes in the ENSO phase over the course of a few years at the most, there are other longer period climate phases that impact hurricane season and take much longer to switch.

The Atlantic Multi-Decadal Oscillation (AMO) can take decades to flip between cold phases and warm phases. Warm phases, or "eras," lead to increased hurricane activity due to warmer waters, weaker trade winds and less vertical shear. While this doesn't impact the entire tropical Atlantic Ocean, the warm phase of the AMO can offset some of the mitigating circumstances caused by El Niño.



AMO during the warm phase (Courtesy Climate.gov)

According to Climate.gov, the warm phase of AMO during an El Niño hurricane season averages out to bring a near-normal Atlantic Hurricane Season. We've been in a warm phase of AMO since 1995.

We'll start getting 2023 Atlantic hurricane season forecasts from Colorado State University in early April. The National Hurricane Center typically releases its first hurricane season forecast later in May.



VIRGINIA PUBLIC SAFETY UNMANNED AVIATION SYSTEMS WORKING GROUP NEWS

Charles Werner

In January 2023, the Virginia Department of Aviation in cooperation with the Public Safety Innovation Center of the VIPC launched the Virginia Public Safety Unmanned AIRCRAFT Systems Working Group.

If your agency hasn't responded or is interested in learning more about starting a program, please email Charles Werner at Charles.werner@doav.Virginia.gov

U.S. FIRE ADMINISTRATION ANNOUNCES EFFORT TO LAUNCH NEW FIRE INFORMATION AND ANALYTICS PLATFORM

In early May, the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) announces the launch of the modernization effort to develop a new, interoperable fire information and analytics platform, known as the National Emergency Response Information System (NERIS), for the American fire and emergency services. This effort is being carried out as a partnership between USFA and the US Department of Homeland Security's Science and Technology Directorate (S&T). The goal of NERIS is to empower the local fire and emergency service community by equipping them with near real-time information and analytic tools that support data informed decision making for enhanced preparedness and response to incidents involving all-hazards.

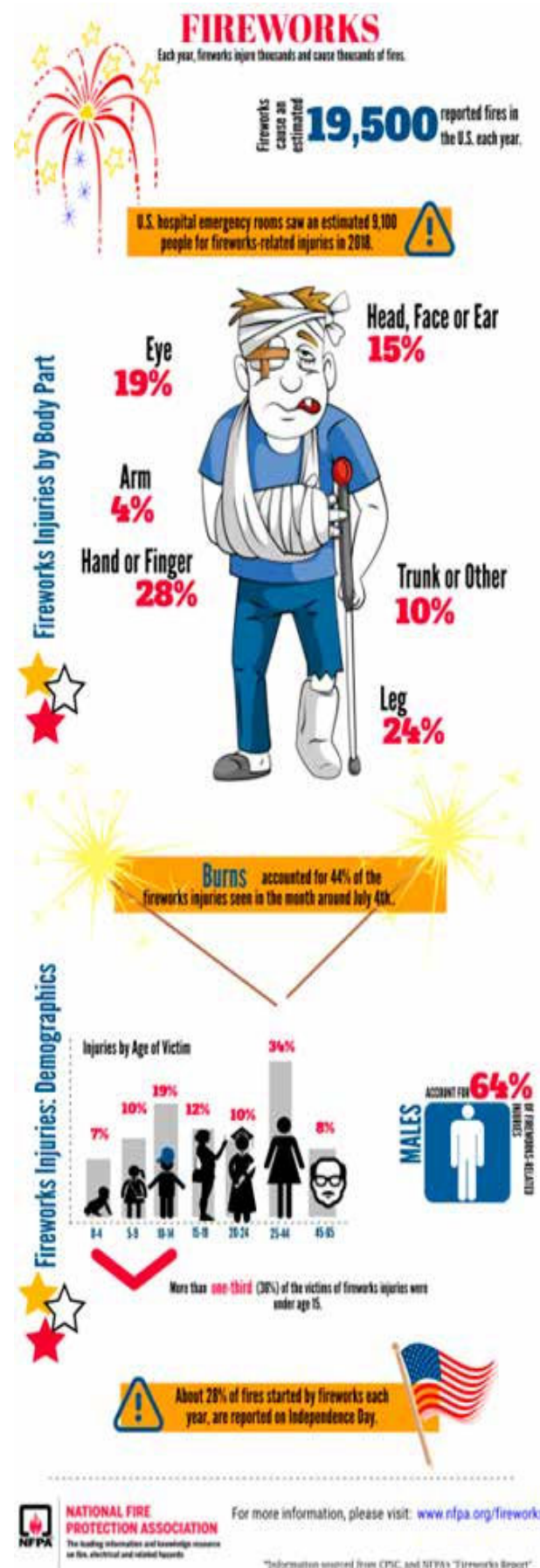
"Once launched, the new NERIS platform will provide capabilities for documenting and introducing community risk reduction efforts, associated resilience and mitigation efforts into the overall preparedness and resilience equation – providing greater insights into vulnerability gaps where resources can be used to harden communities and minimize future emergency and disaster events," said U.S. Fire Administrator Dr. Lori Moore-Merrell.

The platform will integrate data from multiple federal data sets, computer-aided dispatch (CAD) and other authoritative live data sources – to inform community risks including vulnerable populations, the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI), drought areas and flood plains. Further, it will support rapid data capture from hostile event response, including response to structure fires, emergency medical incidents and hazardous materials events.

This project is made possible through a research & development contract awarded through S&T's Long-Range Broad Agency Announcement program awarded to The Fire Safety Research Institute (FSRI). FSRI is a part of UL Research Institutes, the nonprofit safety science organization within the UL enterprise. In collaboration with USFA, DHS S&T and the American fire service, FSRI will develop and provide the new NERIS platform for use by fire and emergency service departments nationwide.

The new NERIS platform will replace the legacy data system (known as the National Fire Incident Reporting System – NFIRS) with a secure, cloud-hosted platform that will fulfill the USFA's National Fire Data Center's (NFDC) obligation under the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 (PL 93-498) – to mitigate the fire problem, reduce loss of life and property and educate the public on fire prevention and protection, as well as effects of all-hazards.

Once NERIS is developed and operational, USFA will work to migrate fire and emergency service departments onto the new platform. The legacy NFIRS will remain operational throughout the transition process so all fire and emergency services departments should continue to use the current NFIRS data system and maintain status quo until migrated to the new platform. For the latest information on NERIS development, visit www.USFA.FEMA.gov/nfirs/Neris.



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COMMUNITY RISK REDUCTION UPDATES

Additional Points Available for Community Risk Reduction During ISO Review

During an ISO assessment, reviewers look into a locality's fire department capabilities which account for 50% of the total score, emergency communications (10%), and water supply availability (40%).

Did you know that extra points are available for Community Risk Reduction programs?

Examples of Community Risk Reduction are fire prevention and fire code enforcement, public fire life safety education and fire investigation programs.

5.5 points are available among the three categories below:

Fire prevention code adoption and enforcement (2.2 points): This section assesses the Fire Prevention Code adoption and enforcement capabilities of a community. Items evaluated include adoption and maintenance of one of the model codes; number and qualifications of fire prevention personnel, including certification and continuing education; and fire prevention programs, such as plan review, certificate of occupancy inspections, quality control, code compliance, inspection of private fire protection equipment, fire prevention ordinances, and coordination with fire department training and pre-incident planning activities.

Public fire safety education (2.2 points): We evaluate the existence of a fire safety education program; the qualifications, training, and certifications of public fire safety educators; and the activities of the various public fire safety education programs, such as residential fire safety programs, fire safety education in schools, juvenile fire setter education programs, and fire safety education in occupancies with large loss potential or hazardous conditions.

Fire investigation (1.1 point): This section examines the fire investigation activities of a community and is based on establishing authority to conduct and enforce fire investigations, the number and qualifications of fire investigators, the activities of the fire investigation staff, and the use of the National Fire Incident Reporting System.

VDFP Weekly Newsletter

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