

# South Dakota FIREFIGHTER

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JUNE 2025 • VOL. 18 - NO. 4

REACHING MORE THAN **6,900** SOUTH DAKOTA FIREFIGHTERS EACH MONTH

## SOUTH DAKOTA STATE FIRE SCHOOL SCHEDULE



### JUNE 12-14, 2025

Most events will be at the Lake Area Technical College (LATC), 1201 Arrow Avenue

\*schedule may be subject to change; be aware of updates\*



#### Thursday, June 12th

9:00 - 3:00 - Tradeshow set-up - LATC Student Services Center (SSC)  
3:00 -- Registration & Vendor Show open  
5:30 - Registration & Vendor Show closes  
5:30 -- Instructor Meeting - LATC (TBA)  
6:00 - Watertown Thursday Night Live Events - Downtown  
Supper on your own - 3rd St SE, E Kemp Ave intersection

#### Friday, June 13th

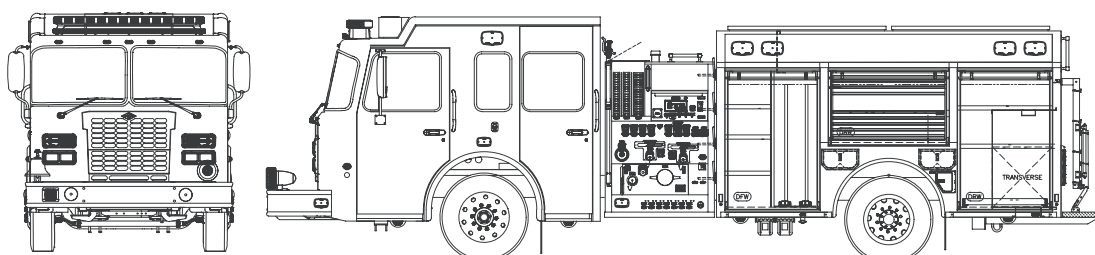
7:00 -- Registration Opens - LATC  
7:30 - Opening Remarks & Membership Mtg - LATC SSC Events Center  
8:00 - Tradeshow Opens  
8:30 - Classes begin  
After 11:30 -- Dinner - (schedule may vary by class)  
- food on-site - SSC Commons  
1:00 - Classes Resume after dinner  
5:00 - Registration and Tradeshow Closes  
5:30 - Firefighters Memorial Service - LATC Even  
Supper on your own

#### Saturday, June 14th

7:30 - Registration & Vendor Show Opens  
8:30 - Classes Begin  
After 11:30 - Dinner -  
12:00 -- Tradeshow closes  
1:00 - Classes resume after dinner  
2:00 - Election polls close  
Upon completion of last class  
- Closing Ceremonies / Membership meeting / Awards  
LATC Events Center (approx. 430pm )



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# Advance Your Education: Apply for the 2025 NVFC Scholarship to Columbia Southern University

Two NVFC members will each be awarded a scholarship covering up to 60 credit hours

Volunteer first responders balance demanding schedules, making it challenging to pursue personal goals like higher education. Fortunately, online learning offers greater flexibility, helping emergency services personnel advance their education while maintaining a healthy work-life balance.

To support volunteer responders in reaching their academic goals, the National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC) and Columbia Southern University (CSU) are once again partnering to offer two educational scholarships. Now in its 17th year, the

program will award two NVFC members a scholarship covering up to 60 credit hours towards any one online CSU degree program of their choice. The scholarship will be applied directly to tuition and is valid for up to three years or until degree completion, whichever comes first. To be eligible for the scholarship, applicants must:

- Be a current member of the NVFC. Learn about member benefits and join for just \$24 at [www.nvfc.org/join](http://www.nvfc.org/join).
- Be a volunteer responder. Complete the scholarship application.
- Submit a 500-word essay on the impact this scholarship will have in your emergency services role.
- Provide at least one letter of recommendation from a teacher or someone at the fire department

you reported to directly.

- Have a high school diploma or equivalent (GED) and be able to provide a transcript.
- Be able to begin coursework within 90 days of the date of the award.
- Maintain a 2.0 undergraduate GPA or 3.0 graduate GPA.
- Remain in good standing with CSU and the NVFC throughout the degree program.
- Maintain continuous enrollment in the CSU degree program for the duration of the scholarship.
- Already meet these requirements to be considered if you are a current CSU student.
- Not be a previous CSU scholarship recipient.

Scholarship recipients can select from CSU's wide range of degree programs, including fire science, fire administration,

emergency medical services, emergency management, occupational safety and health, organizational leadership, and more. Degree options include associate, bachelor's, and master's programs. CSU is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges.

The scholarship application period is open from May 15 through August 17. An NVFC Scholarship Committee will review applications and select the recipients. Winners will be announced in October 2025, and all applicants will be notified of the decision by email.

Learn more about this scholarship opportunity and apply on the CSU web site. For questions, please email the scholarship liaison at [Scholarships@ColumbiaSouthern.edu](mailto:Scholarships@ColumbiaSouthern.edu) or call 888-785-

3006.

## ABOUT COLUMBIA SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY

As an innovator in online education for 30 years, CSU was established to provide an alternative to the traditional university experience. CSU offers online associate, bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees such as business administration, criminal justice, fire administration, and occupational safety and health. Visit [ColumbiaSouthern.edu](http://ColumbiaSouthern.edu) or call (877) 347-6050 to learn more. NVFC members and their families receive a 10% discount on tuition.

## ABOUT THE NVFC

The National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC) is the leading nonprofit membership association representing the interests of the volunteer fire, EMS, and rescue services. The NVFC serves as the voice of the volunteer in the national arena and provides critical resources, programs, education, and advocacy for first responders across the nation. Learn more at [www.nvfc.org/join](http://www.nvfc.org/join).



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## UPCOMING EVENTS

Email your Upcoming Event by the 10th of the previous month (ex. Aug. 10 for the September issue) to [jeff@southdakotafirefighter.com](mailto:jeff@southdakotafirefighter.com). There is no charge.

**JUNE 8-10, 2025:** 2025 South Dakota Highway Patrol Association Fishing Tournament, Headquarters - Izaak Walton League, 1200 Izaak Walton Road, Pierre. Contact Rob Mayer 770-1940 or Austin Schmitz 830-6682 for details.

**JUNE 12-14, 2025:** South Dakota State Fire School, Watertown.

**SEPT. 22-24, 2025:** NVFC Fall Conference and Meeting, Rapid City.

**OCT. 10-12, 2025:** South Dakota Firefighters Association Fall Conference, Spearfish Convention Center, Spearfish.

## ACTION FIRE PHOTOS NEEDED!

Please send them to [jeff@southdakotafirefighter.com](mailto:jeff@southdakotafirefighter.com) along with information to explain the photo.



# Black Hawk structure fire escalates to two alarms

Black Hawk Volunteer Fire Department, responded to a reported structure fire in the 9000 block of Willow St, Un-incorporated Meade County, SD on Apr. 23, 2025 at 6:39 p.m.

First arriving firefighters found a free burning fire with a heavy smoke condition, issuing from the single story, residential structure with fire extending into the ceiling and roof assembly and immediately struck a second alarm.

Rapid attack by firefighters contained the fire to the structure of origin, stopping the spread of the flames to nearby structures, infrastructure and other improvements. The fire did spread to adjacent trees and grass before being contained.

The American Red Cross Serving Central and Western South Dakota, family and neighbors are assisting the residents.

No injuries to civilians, firefighters or domestic animals were reported.

Agencies responding included Pennington County 911, Meade County Dispatch, Meade County Sheriff's Of-



fice, Meade County Emergency Management, Black Hawk Volunteer Fire Department, Black Hawk Fire Corp, Piedmont Fire and Ambulance Service, North Haines Volunteer Fire Department, Rapid City Fire Department, Box Elder Volunteer Fire Department, United States Air

Force 28<sup>th</sup> Bomb Wing/Ellsworth Air Force Base Fire Department, Doty Volunteer Fire

Department, Whispering Pines Volunteer Fire Department, Rapid Valley Volunteer Fire

Department, Black Hills Energy, and Montana Dakota Utilities.

## SPLIT ROCK FIRE DEPARTMENT AWARDED GRANT FOR EQUIPMENT PURCHASE

A Firehouse Subs Public Safety Foundation grant has awarded the Split Rock Fire Department a grant in the amount of \$35,247. The grant award will go toward the purchase of a piece of lifesaving equipment, the Jaws of Life.

The Foundation's mission is to impact the lifesaving capabilities, and the lines, of local heroes

and their communities.

Established in 2005 in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, Firehouse Subs founders, Chris Sorensen and Robin Sorensen, traveled to Mississippi where they fed first responders as well as survivors. As they traveled back to Florida exhausted and exhilarated, they knew they needed to do more and the Founda-

tion was born.

The Foundation provides funding for lifesaving equipment, prevention education, scholarships and continued education, disaster relief and support for members of the military.

(Brandon Valley Journal, Brandon Valley, Apr. 23, 2025)

## CLASSIFIEDS

### CLASSIFIED ADS FOR THE SOUTH DAKOTA FIREFIGHTER NEWSPAPER

Classified ads run \$10 for the first 10 words, and 25 cents a word after that. A photo is \$10 additional. Rates are the same in each state (Iowa, Minnesota, South Dakota, Nebraska and Kansas). Email the ad to [jeff@southdakotafirefighter.com](mailto:jeff@southdakotafirefighter.com) to place your personal or departmental ads.

**FOR SALE:** 2007 Freightliner / Toyne Pumper, CAT C7 Dsl., Allison Auto, Hale 1250 gpm Pump, 1250 gal. Tank, 16,360 miles, 372.6 hrs. Asking \$160,000. Contact Beatrice Rural Fire Chief Matt Langley for more details and photos, 402-806-2747. Email: [malangley@hotmail.com](mailto:malangley@hotmail.com) FF-1



**BRUSH TRUCK FOR SALE:** 1997 Ford 350XL, 33,400 miles, gas, 300 gal. water, foam cell, Darley pump, 2 hose reels with hose, lights and siren. North Haines VFD Info 605-390-7752 FF-1

**Don't need it...  
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Firefighter Classifieds...  
[jeff@southdakotafirefighter.com](mailto:jeff@southdakotafirefighter.com)

**For ADDRESS CHANGES CONTACT:**  
**Samara Erickson**  
**605-940-1795**  
**[Samarajo1982@gmail.com](mailto:Samarajo1982@gmail.com)**



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We welcome your views, opinions, news tips and questions. Letters to the editor must be accompanied by a name and daytime telephone number, and may be edited for space.

## Benefits of being a 100% Department Member

*When you pay your department dues, there are many advantages for your firefighters. Below is just one of the many.*

### INSURANCE

**100% Membership provides the following:**

- Basic \$10,000 of Accidental Death & Dismemberment (AD&D) insurance — 24 hrs/day
- Purchase up to \$250,000 additional AD&D
- \$10K of Line of Duty Health and AD&D, fire related health incidents, i.e. heart attack, stroke, other.

**If you haven't paid your dues, it's not too late!**



# U.S. Fire Administration Firefighter Fatality Notification

The following are U.S. Fire Administration Firefighter Fatality Notifications of firefighters who have died from across the United States. The South Dakota Fire Service extends its thoughts to the family and friends of these firefighters.

• **DAVID MEYER**, 54, Chicago, IL, died Apr. 23, 2025. David was a captain with the Chicago Fire Department and had attained 28 years of career service. As members of the Chicago Fire Department began salvage and overhaul after extinguishing a garage fire, Captain David Meyer was critically injured when the garage collapsed. A mayday was called immediately. Captain Meyer was then transported to Stroger Hospital where he later passed away from the injuries he sustained.

• **CORBAN SUMMERS**, 49, South Jordan, UT, died Apr. 21, 2025. Corban was a career firefighter with 24 years of service and the current rank of senior firefighter. Senior Firefighter Corban Summers was found unresponsive in his room at Station 61 of the South Jordan Fire Department. Fellow crew members immediately began lifesaving measures and then transported Senior Firefighter Summers to Jordan Valley Hospital where he was pronounced deceased. The cause of death has not yet been determined.

• **SCOTT ADAMS**, 46, Milton, IN, died Apr. 25, 2025. Scott was a volunteer firefighter/EMT with 18 years of service with the Milton-Washington Township Fire Department. At approximately 5:30 p.m. on Apr. 24, 2025, Firefighter/EMT Scott Adams responded to an emergency call for a motor vehicle accident. Afterwards, Firefighter/EMT Adams returned home. The following day, Firefighter/EMT Adams was found unresponsive at his home and pronounced deceased at 12:49 p.m. The cause of death has yet to be determined.

• **GRAHAM HOFFMAN**, 29, Kansas City, MO, died Apr. 27, 2025. Graham was a career firefighter/medic with the Kansas City Missouri Fire Department with 3 years of service. Firefighter / Medic Graham Hoffman was stabbed in the chest by a patient he was transporting to a local hospital. Immediately after the stabbing, additional personnel from the Kansas City Missouri Fire and Police Departments were dispatched to the scene.

Kansas City Missouri Fire Department crews worked to save Firefighter/Medic Hoffman's life while they transported him to North Kansas City Hospital. Lifesaving efforts continued in the hospital emergency room before Firefighter/Medic Hoffman was moved into surgery. Despite all these lifesaving efforts, Firefighter/Medic Hoffman passed away from the injuries he sustained. The patient who stabbed Firefighter/Medic Hoffman was taken into custody.

• **CHARLES "CHARLIE" SHAW**, 78, Campbellsville, KY, died Apr. 20, 2025. Charles was a volunteer firefighter with the Taylor County Fire Department and had attained 60 years of service. While responding in his personal vehicle to an emergency call of a motor vehicle accident, Firefighter Charles Shaw was involved in a vehicle accident and sustained injuries. Five days later, Firefighter Shaw collapsed and passed away at home. An autopsy determined that Firefighter Shaw's death was related to the injuries he sustained in the vehicle accident. In addition to being an active firefighter for Taylor County Fire Department, Firefighter Shaw was retired from serving many years as the Chief of the Campbellsville-Taylor County Rescue.

• **JOHN SAUNDERS**, 41, Greenwich, OH, died Apr. 16, 2025. John was a volunteer firefighter with the Greenwich Fire Department and had attained 15 years of service. Firefighter John Saunders suffered fatal injuries while battling a house fire. The cause of death has yet to be determined, and the fire remains under investigation.

• **MARK KELLER**, 59, Mesa, AZ, died May 6, 2025. Mark was a career Firefighter/Paramedic with the Mesa Fire and Medical Department and had attained 35 years of service. The Mesa Fire and Medical Department received an early morning emergency call. When Firefighter/Paramedic Keller did not get on the truck, crews went to wake him and found him deceased on the floor.

• **LESLIE "LES" ROGER LEATHERMAN**, 57, London, KY, died May 16, 2025. Leslie was a volunteer firefighter the rank of major for the Laurel County Fire Department. Amid severe weather including a reported tornado, Major Leslie Roger Leatherman was fatally injured while responding to an emergency call for a residential fire. The cause of death has yet to be determined.

• **SYMEON WILLIAMS**, 39, Cleveland, OH, died May 16, 2025. Symeon was a career firefighter with 5 weeks of service and was listed as a cadet with the Cleveland Division of Fire. During his fifth week at the Cleveland Fire Training Academy, Cadet Symeon Williams suffered a medical emergency while performing physical training. Cadet Williams was transported to a nearby hospital, but resuscitation efforts were not successful, and he was declared deceased. The cause of death is yet to be determined.

## SDFA OFFICER REPORTS

"Firemen are going to get killed. When they join the department, they face that fact. When a man becomes a fireman his greatest act of bravery has been accomplished. What he does after that is all in the line of work." *Chief Edward F. Croker, FDNY, speaking upon the death of a deputy chief and four firefighters in February of 1908.* If you have been around me long enough you have heard that quote before. For most of us, we accept that fact, and we face death with a certain amount of professional distance, and really don't worry too much about it. On the other side of the equation, we really don't pay too much attention to our emotional health either. Now be honest, you still think you can handle all the stuff you deal with, and not let it bother you. Yeah, you know what I am talking about, and I did it too, for far too long. I hope that by now, we realize most of us will not go in a blaze of glory in a LODD, but we will all have to deal with the trauma we have seen and live with.

Melanie Boyack (February 25, 2025; Fire Fighter Nation), knows our responses too well. Melanie teaches on dealing with mental health and this is the situation she describes: "I often present to first responders, whose response to my presence is all too familiar. In presentations across the nation, I watch groups of first responders and healthcare professionals funnel into conference rooms, occupying the seats furthest from the front. Police departments typically have little trust in outsiders, whereas military groups dread yet another meeting. Nearly every time, the group's arms are crossed—a non-verbal sign they are determined there is nothing to gain." However, Melanie is not just some "mental health professional" who has read the book, she has lived the life and worked with responders that she describes this way: "I have sat with countless individuals haunted by images and plagued by the belief that life as a responder means living with insufferable trauma and nightmares, requiring significant effort to suppress." Because she has this background the session ends with a long line of responders with the same phrase, "I think I need help."

Why is that? We have training after training on how to handle emergencies. Look at our Fire School Class listing. Great classes on managing emergency situations, but where is the mental health focus? This year we doubled our offering, but generally, one class or none. I am not disparaging the Fire Fighter's Association, after all this is what we signed up for. However, until we start to train on how to handle suicides, murders, motor vehicle accidents that claim innocent lives, death by fire, explosion, etc. The results will be measured: "...in burnout, exhaustion, breakdowns, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anger issues, isolation, and fragmented relationships at home with those whom they love most." (Boyack)

Why is this? First you need to understand what happens when you are confronted with trauma. "When individuals encounter trauma, their bodies release cortisol,



Rodney Veldhuizen, Chaplain

"For most of us, we accept that fact, and we face death with a certain amount of professional distance, and really don't worry too much about it. On the other side of the equation, we really don't pay too much attention to our emotional health either."

the stress hormone. This causes the brain to shut off the parts responsible for decision-making and rationalizing, conserving energy for survival." (Boyack). Now this is fine for most of the population's once in a lifetime situation. However, you are a first responder and this happens repeatedly to us over the course of our careers. As a result, 85% of us will develop symptoms of trauma, like poor performance, difficulty concentrating, or memory loss. You might become irritable (just ask my wife), others of us will begin to doubt our abilities and question our self-worth. "Some develop a cynical worldview, believing the world is dangerous, while others experience self-doubt, feeling they should have done more to help." (Boyack)

If what you just read wasn't enough good news, Boyack continues to the long-term effects of trauma. Trauma leaves an imprint on the soul, deteriorating relationships and leading to disconnection, avoidance, and ultimately divorce. Then add to this, recurring memories and symptoms manifest as bodily sensations and health issues like obesity, diabetes, and heart disease. First responders have a 73% higher risk of mortality than the general population. By now you are wondering, why didn't someone spell this out for me at the beginning?

However, all is not lost. There is hope and healing. But keep in mind, this is where it gets tricky. Our trauma response will not be solved by offering the latest psychology has to offer, it means a change in the culture. It means that leadership needs to go beyond hanging up a poster. Leaders need to become knowledgeable about effective (not just who is our EAP) mental health treatments and set an

example by seeking out that support themselves. (I wish I could be a better example, but I waited for over 30 years before I admitted I had a problem). There are tools that help, but knowing who to seek for that help is vital. The tools we have available can effectively address severe traumas, such as witnessing burning bodies, child homicides, and horrific car accidents.

That is not the end yet, because another symptom of prolonged exposure to trauma is substance abuse. High rates of substance abuse and sex addiction are the by-products of living in chronic fight-or flight states, without knowing how to return to the baseline of peace and calm.

The good news is you don't have to live with the nightmares and haunting images. With the right tools and the right professional provider there is a way to restore the peace that you need in your life. However, this means: "Leadership, peer support, and individuals must prioritize addressing workplace trauma proactively. Employers should review protocols and processes to identify potential issues, such as long hours, sleep deprivation.... Open discussions about emotional regulation and the complexities of transitioning between work and home life are crucial." (Boyack)

At the end of the day, you do not need to be a statistic, you don't need to sacrifice everything and everyone around you to be a first responder. If your leaders are unable to point you in the right direction, feel free to reach out to me. I may not know all there is to know, but I know people who know people. Somewhere along the line, we will find the help you need.

CHAPLAIN RODNEY V.


**National Volunteer Fire Council**  
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The NVFC First Responder Helpline is here when you need it - from assistance in a crisis, to confidential counseling and stress management coaching, to referrals to assistance for a range of issues such as child or elder care. And it's free for NVFC members and their families! Learn more at [www.nvfc.org/helpline](http://www.nvfc.org/helpline).





# DEPARTED FIREFIGHTERS

## Shannon Rasmussen

1952-2025

Shannon Thomas Rasmussen, age 72, of Kimball, SD was called home to the Lord on Monday, April 21, 2025, at Sanford Chamberlain Medical Center in Chamberlain, SD. Mass of Christian Burial was held Friday, April 25, at St. Margaret's Catholic Church in Kimball. Burial was at St. Margaret's Catholic Cemetery in Kimball. Arrangements by Bittner Funeral Chapel.

Shannon was born on Dec. 6, 1952, in Chamberlain, SD to Raymond and Clara (Draphal) Rasmussen. He was the youngest of four boys. (You can imagine the amount of mischief that was had between four brothers.) Growing up on the family farm north of Kimball, SD, Shannon knew what hard work was from a young age – milking dairy cows multiple times a day and feeding and tending to them. He attended grade school in Pukwana, SD and graduated from Kimball High School in 1972.

God definitely had Shannon in the right place at the right time when he met and dated Bonnie Bely, the ultimate love and light of his life, for 2½ years in high school before they were wed in December 1972. Side by side and inseparable, these two joined as one, worked hard and built a home and life for themselves and their family. To this strong union, three wonderful daughters were born and raised in Kimball – Angelia, Shelly, and Shandra. Shannon was happy to be outnumbered and was the best girl dad.

After high school he worked at Cahill's Gas Station for a while before moving into what would be his lifelong career at the Brule County Highway Department for 45 years. Through those years, he rose to eventually become the Highway Superintendent in 2003 and retired from this position in 2018. He also worked part time at Midway Truck Stop, John's

Tire Center, and cleaning offices at Midstate Communications. With not a lazy bone in his body, Shannon also drove bus for the Kimball School District from 2018 to present. He drove truck for Bosworth Farms and Dan Overweg, took care of their rental properties and serviced many yards with the Rasmussen Yard Service and at one time had 30 yards to take care of. He did all this while after retirement.

With a big heart for helping others, Shannon was a part of the Kimball Fire Department for 43 years, was voted as Fireman of the Year in 1982 and had the privilege of serving as Fire Chief from 1983-1987. He was also an EMT for the Kimball Ambulance Department for 40 years. He was a member of the Fr. O'Gorman Knights of Columbus through his church for 43 years and was once recognized for his love and service by receiving the Knight of The Year award. He helped to spearhead the creation of the T-Ball program in Kimball. Shannon also served on the Kimball School Board for 6 years. For all of this and more, he was honored to receive an award for Conscientious Dedicated Community Service from Modern Woodmen of America. Shannon considered himself lucky to be able to give back to the community and the people he loved.

Even with all this hard work and giving back, Shannon still had spare time to enjoy fishing, camping, and bird watching right in his own yard with the many bird feeders. Most importantly and above all else, he enjoyed spending time with his grandchildren and family. His wife, children, and grandchildren were

his ultimate prize in life.



Shannon is survived by his wife Bonnie of 52 years; daughters, Angelia (Jamie) Bosworth of White Lake, Shelly (Cale) Westendorf of Plankinton, and Shandra (Derek) Koch of Plankinton; brothers, Mike Rasmussen of Kimball and Dennis (Darla) Rasmussen of Mitchell; and sisters-in-law, Julie Rasmussen of Ponca City, NE, Crystal Bely of Pukwana, Deb Bely of Madison, WI, LeAnn (Jeff) Birkeland of Murdo, and Vickie Hines of Huron. He is also survived by his grandchildren: Brandon (friend Madison) Bosworth, Mason (friend Summer) Bosworth, Taylor (Dane) Rihanek, Jordan (friend Kolby) Westendorf, and Aubrey, Bennett, and Chelsey Koch. Shannon was especially excited for and will now be looking down on his first great-grandbaby boy due in July to granddaughter Taylor and Dane. Shannon will forever be #1 in each of their hearts. As well as many nieces, nephews and friends.

Preceding him in death were his parents, Raymond Rasmussen, Clara Rasmussen-Clark, stepfather Don Clark; brother Russell Rasmussen; grandchild, Cayla Westendorf; parents-in-law, LeRoy and Wilma Bely; brothers-in-law, Burl Bely, Terry Bely, and Larry Hines; sisters-in-law, Kathy Rasmussen and Rosemary Rasmussen; and nephew, Dalton Bely.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to the Angel Fund at Kimball School District. The Rasmussen family would like to thank family, friends, and the community for their compassion and support.

## Michael Maier

1954-2025

Michael "Mike" Maier, a beloved husband, father, grandfather, brother, mentor, and friend, passed away peacefully at the age of 70. Mike will always be remembered for his gentle spirit, his patient heart, and his unwavering love for his family. He was a man who gave without asking for anything in return, whose presence brought comfort and strength to those around him.

Mike was born in 1954 in Sidney, MT, the youngest of three children. He grew up on a farm where his parents worked. From a young age, he learned the importance of hard work, responsibility, and the joy of spending time outdoors. Mike spent his youth between Montana and South Dakota, where he attended Sidney Elementary School until 1966 and graduated from Rapid City Central High School in 1972.

Mike worked various construction jobs after high school when he met his future wife Cindy. Mike and Cindy married in 1977 and together, they had two daughters, Heidi and Megan. Throughout his life, Mike cherished and provided for his family. He took great pride in being a nurturing father to his girls, and a loving husband to Cindy for 47 years.

In 1979, Mike began working at the South Dakota Cement Plant, where he built a successful career and cultivated many lifelong friendships. His dedication to his job and dependability made him someone people could always count on. He worked at the cement plant until his retirement in 2018.

In addition to his family and work, Mike devoted over 37 years of service as a volunteer firefighter with the North Haines Volunteer Fire Department. Mike was a qualified Engine Boss, Firefighter 1 & 2 and numerous other qualifications. Mike went on out of state fires several times. Mike was the Treasurer of the department and always committed to help wherever he could. His commitment to helping others,

mentoring, and making a difference in his community reflected his selflessness and giving nature. Mike will be missed as a friend and firefighter.

After retiring, Mike embraced the freedom to pursue the things he loved most. He spent his days traveling with Cindy, exploring new places. He was guided by a deep sense of curiosity and a spirit of adventure. One of his greatest joys was spending time at the

Koenig Ranch in eastern Montana. Whether lending a hand during cattle sales or simply soaking in the quiet beauty of the prairie, Mike found peace and purpose in every moment.

Mike's passion, dedication, and love were evident in everything he did. He liked spending time in his garage, always tinkering, building, or fixing things. Whether it was crafting something new or repairing something broken, Mike found joy in the process. He was also an avid lover of the outdoors, enjoying fishing, golfing, hunting, and camping with his family. He cherished his time in nature, finding peace in the beauty of the Black Hills of South Dakota.

Mike is survived by his devoted wife, Cindy; his daughters, Heidi (Andre Shackett) and Megan Ernst (William Ernst); his sisters, Gloria Zmuda (Denny Zmuda) and Rose Sampson, and his grandson, Theodore Ernst. His mother-in-law, Joyce Eggleston, and two brothers-in-law, Danny and Randy Eggleston. Many nieces and nephews, Dale Zmuda (Heather Zmuda), Troy Zmuda (Ally Zmuda), Jeff Sampson, Jody Henderson (Bryan Henderson), Olivia Eggleston, Misty Eggleston, Dylan Eggleston; as well as many family members and friends.

He was preceded in death by his father, Ruben (Pete) Maier; his mother, Ella Maier; his father-in-law, Clinton Eggleston and his brothers-in-law, Tom Sampson and Stan Eggleston and many loved dogs.



# Watertown Fire spends five hours battling grass fire near Lake Kampeska

More than 5 acres of land was burned in Watertown on Wednesday.

At around 12:15 p.m. on Wednesday, April 16th, 2025, Watertown Fire Rescue was

dispatched to the area of 44622 170th St. for a grass fire. The property is 1-1/2 miles west of Lake Kampeska.

Before WFR arrived, the fire started on the south side of Codington County Road 10 and spread across the asphalt highway to the north, according to the WFR release. WFR requested the help of both the Henry and Florence volunteer fire departments.

The fire spread through a row of trees along the roadway before being contained, the release stated. Many of the old Ash trees ignited as the fire passed through

causing a labor intensive process to extinguish the fire. Multiple trees had to be cut down as the fire quickly spread upward through the trunks of the trees.

The property owner was able to provide machinery to help contain the fire and move trees. The fire spread to about 5 acres in total, according to the release. Fire crews were on the scene about five hours. The Codington County Sheriff's Department was focused on traffic control.

(Watertown Public Opinion, Watertown, Apr. 19, 2025)

## NEW DELIVERY



Colome Volunteer Fire Department has a new addition to the fleet. It's a 2019 F550 4x4 mini pumper. The truck has a 1,250-gpm pump and will carry their rescue equipment.

**Don't need it...  
SELL IT!**  
South Dakota  
Firefighter  
Classifieds...

jeff@southdakotafirefighter.com



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# SDFA OFFICER REPORTS



### Charlie Kludt, President

**"State Fire School is a great opportunity to learn some basic and advanced ideas. No matter what level you are in the service. If you think there is nothing for you to learn, then you should come and find out what you didn't know."**

## Past, Current, Return

What you learned long ago, may not hold true today. But a return to the past, might be for the better.

A simple set of statements that covers so many topics. Farming, food, grocery bags, cars, communicating, family values, education, on and on. Especially in the fire and emergency services.

Look at all the different changes in what the fire and rescue service has adapted to or dealt with in the last few decades. Trucks, nozzles, gear, building construction changes, furnishings in homes and offices, car components, communications, firefighting tactics, just to name a few.

The basic premise is still there. Customer service to the safest, best of our ability, with what we have available.

An old farmer was asked about his old tractor and equipment. It still gets my crops in and out of the field. And it's paid for. That works for me.

Change is usually intended for the better. Modern fire trucks have

seen some great strides. Air actuated control valves instead of pulling a handle; computer pump pressure control instead of twisting a throttle; bigger pump capacity to push more water; air packs in our cab seats to get ready quicker.

Like so many adaptations, we thought they were better and needed to adjust. But, many times or over time, some changes have challenges of their own.

Can you adjust those control valves as easy? Do you still know how to run a pump if the computer isn't working? Can your water supply use that big of a pump? Are you buckled up while travelling? What hazardous items are you bringing into your cab after a call?

Is that new, energy efficient house on fire more or less dangerous to enter?

What you learned long ago, isn't the same, because it ISN'T the same.

Should we vent with windows or get on the roof? Research is going back to windows. But areas with hurricane resistant windows were having trouble breaking the glass.

But then, today's roof trusses and sheathing fail faster than a 75-year-old house. New roof coverings are trapping heat and fire without showing evidence of it.

Most importantly, our gear that is protecting us can create a false sense of security. I don't feel the heat, but the heat may already be damaging my equipment. We have all heard the issues with the PFAS/PFOS and forever chemicals in our foam and gear. But field tests without it have reported a definite change in firefighters sensing high temperature. So, is that bad?

I was involved in a discussion about required training for fire departments. The topic of structure fires was brought up. Some said their departments don't have structural equipment, so why require structural training? Then base your training and tactics off of what you have, and what you would do if a structure was on fire. If all you would do is cover exposures or stop the spread of fire from turning into a wildfire, then that's what you train to do.

Training does not have to be hot and sweaty. There are plenty of topics, strategies, laws and regulations, and changes in what we may be dealing with that can be learned in a classroom or online session. It is easier, today, to find ideas that might be just what your department is looking for to fit your needs.

State Fire School is a great opportunity to learn some basic and advanced ideas. No matter what level you are in the service. If you think there is nothing for you to learn, then you should come and find out what you didn't know.

Jeremy Walla and I went to

Washington DC for the NVFC Spring Conference. A review report is in the paper. We always spend a day "going to the hill" to talk to our congressional delegation.

We got caught in a morning traffic issue, which led to a rescheduling of our visit with Senator Mike Rounds' staff. We were fortunate to maintain our personal time with Senate Leader John Thune and Representative Dusty Johnson to discuss fire service issues that directly impact South Dakota departments. We expressed the value of the various grant programs, especially the wildland volunteer fire assistance grant, that are utilized by small VFDs each year. They all had questions concerning changes to gear and foam products.

They expressed new found interest when we informed them of the Soybean Association fire foam product, availability, and continued testing. Seen as a direct benefit to South Dakota agriculture and the fire service, it was a topic they wanted to know more about.

The SFA will be hosting the NVFC Fall Conference in Rapid City on Sept. 21-24. Anyone may register to attend. Check the NVFC website and watch for more information.

Father's Day is coming. For all of you that have the privilege of being a father, dad, papa, pops, the Old Man, or whatever nomenclatures you go by, Happy Father's Day.

Looking forward to seeing you in Watertown for State Fire School. Stay safe,

**CHARLIE KLUDT,**  
President

Hello South Dakota Firefighters, here it is graduation season already. With Mother's Day, Memorial Day, state fire school and Father's Day all in 5 weeks, it is a busy time of year. Crops and gardens get planted, haying equipment is made ready, calves get branded then moved to summer pastures with their mommas. Then you have summer vacations, this could be camping trips or flying to some far away place. Fire departments are making sure equipment is ready for wildland fires. Like I said, busy time of year.

Registration for fire school is open and some of the classes are filling up fast. Get yourself

registered and get the classes you want. This year there will be more classrooms toward the south end of the building and it will be a shorter walk to the vendor/food area.

Speaking of vendors, make sure you visit their booths and support them. They sponsor many things during the year so thank them. Also visit the South Dakota Fire Auxiliary booth and purchase your raffle tickets, they always have great prizes.

Everyone is invited to the business meetings Friday before classes and Saturday after classes finish. Come find out what is happening and voice your opinion. Lastly, we invite you to the



### Don Ward, Vice President

**"...we invite you to the Memorial Service. Each year at fire school we honor those firefighters that have died in the previous year. These are not line of duty deaths but those who were firefighters currently or at some point in their lives and has passed away."**

Memorial Service. Each year at fire school we honor those firefighters that have died in the previous year. These are not line of duty deaths but those who were firefighters currently or at some

point in their lives and has passed away.

See you at fire school.

**DON WARD,**  
Vice President

## 2025 SDFA AUXILIARY BOARD

### PRESIDENT TONI SCHMIDT

Tea

### VICE PRESIDENT CARMEN KAST

Alcester

### TREASURER CHERYL ANDERSON

Belle Fourche

### SECRETARY COURTNEY WALKER

Sturgis

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Whitewood

### AMY HORN

Brandon

# SDFA AUXILIARY REPORT

## Jessica Carmichael, Auxiliary

**"as we begin the summer remember to stay hydrated! Many of us struggle to stay hydrated, and the aim to drink at least 8 glasses of water a day can be daunting. It is recommended that you sip water throughout the day, even if you don't feel thirsty, so carrying a water bottle with you can be a big help."**

ry Annual Meeting and Luncheon  
• Saturday Afternoon - Grant Writing

Also, as we begin the summer remember to stay hydrated! Many of us struggle to stay hydrated, and the aim to drink at least 8 glasses of water a day can be daunting. It is recommended that you sip water throughout the day, even if you don't feel thirsty, so carrying a water bottle with you can be a big

help. Some foods have high water content (watermelon, cucumbers, lettuce, and tomato) and can contribute to fluid intake. Remember: not all fluids are the same. Drinks like alcohol, sugary drinks, and caffeinated beverages can actually dehydrate you. So take this as your reminder to refill your water bottle and take another sip.

**JESSICA CARMICHAEL**

# SDFA OFFICER REPORTS

## Thoughts For Fire School

Ok, it's never too late to register and attend fire school this month. There is always room for one more firefighter who desires to increase their knowledge and abilities. I have no doubt there will be at least two classes you will be able to attend. Don't hesitate, go online, look, do whatever. Don't miss the chance, you won't regret it.

Some of you may have heard of Paul Harvey. Paul Harvey was a radio news commentator a number of years ago. He was quite well known for his, "The Rest of the Story" stories. He

also created a three-minute narrative on Fireman. Go to Google, or whoever you use, and search Paul Harvey Fireman. I'm sure it will pop up. Take a listen, remember this was from several years ago, overlook the comments about some items, but it is one of those that you will enjoy.

As we are all preparing for the full summer activities, be it vacations, sports, travel, whatever, don't forget those summertime fires. Try to stay hydrated, (not with beer) as the day goes along. Have some type of snacks in your truck or pocket or wherever. How many times have you said to someone as you went out the door, "this won't be long, doesn't sound like much." Only

to be there for hours on end. I know I'm preaching to the choir, but sometimes a little reminder helps. Which tells me I need to check my pack for some beef sticks that are vacuum packed.

I hopefully have included several financial reports that will be presented at fire school membership meetings. These reports will need to be accepted by the general membership. Please read them over, I will not be making copies to hand out. An item or two of note: The General Fund for 2024, expenses exceeded income by \$74,809. Is this anything to be alarmed about, I don't think so, we have to spend funds and sometimes those expenses overlap from one year to the



Denny Gorton,  
Treasurer/Past President

"I hopefully have included several financial reports that will be presented at fire school membership meetings. These reports will need to be accepted by the general membership. Please read them over, I will not be making copies to hand out."

next. In the State Fund we are in excellent financial shape. Several years ago, when the amount the Association received from insurance premium tax rebate was increased, that helped so very much. It put that fund in the black for the first time in many years. The overall net worth at this time of year is right on track as in previous years. So, in gen-

eral your South Dakota Firefighters Association, Inc. is in solid shape.

With all this I'll close and I'm looking forward to seeing you in Watertown.

DENNIS GORTON

General Fund 2024 Inc/Exp - Last year 1/1/2024 through 12/31/2024		
Category	1/1/2024- 12/31/2024	OVERALL TOTAL
<b>INCOME</b>		
DOT Income	270	270
Fall Conference Income	4,740	4,740
Fallen Fighters Memorial	521	521
INTEREST	1,717	1,717
MEMBERSHIP-MEMBERSHIP INCOME	80,557	80,557
SDFA Auxiliary Income	744	744
State Fire School	27,671	27,671
FROM Gen Fund 6 Month CD 1038930...	5	5
FROM GENL FUND MONEY MARKET ...	29,416	29,416
FROM GF Sav DSFCU 1038930 A	1,961	1,961
FROM MEMORIAL FUND SAVINGS D...	674	674
FROM REG FUND SAVINGS 1056040 A	44,704	44,704
FROM SCHOLARSHIP FUND CHECK ...	5,763	5,763
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>198,744</b>	<b>198,744</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Uncategorized	0	0
Board Travel Expenses	6,885	6,885
Contract	12,420	12,420
DUES-NVFC,CongFireSer,Jt Count	0	0
Fall Conference Expense	8,134	8,134
FALLEN FIREFIGHTER MEMORIAL-E...	3,555	3,555
INSURANCE-INSURANCE (ROBOT, B...	69,848	69,848
Membership Drive	1,211	1,211
Membership Software	16,444	16,444
MISC	31	31
Mobile Fire Trailer #1 - Expense	148	148
Mobile Fire Trailer #2 - Expense	40	40
NEWSLETTER	40,950	40,950
NVFC-NVFC EXPENSES FOR 1 MTG.	5,220	5,220
OFFICE EXPENSE	3,436	3,436
PRINTING	32	32
Scholarship	1,000	1,000
SD FIRE SCHOOL-FIRESCHOOL EXP...	27,689	27,689
SD Joint Council	750	750
VOIDED	0	0
TO Gen Fund 6 Month CD 1038930-9/...	31,377	31,377
TO GF CHECKING DSFCU 1038930 7	45,379	45,379
TO GF Sav DSFCU 1038930 A	5	5
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>274,554</b>	<b>274,554</b>
<b>OVERALL TOTAL</b>	<b>-75,809</b>	<b>-75,809</b>

State Fund 2024 Inc Exp - Last year 1/1/2024 through 12/31/2024		
Category	1/1/2024- 12/31/2024	OVERALL TOTAL
INCOME		
INTEREST	864	864
State Fund Budget	218,045	218,045
FROM STATE FUND MONEY MARKE...	122,908	122,908
TOTAL INCOME	341,817	341,817
EXPENSES		
District Fire Schools-DISTRICT FIRES...	9,933	9,933
Fall Conference Expense	12,007	12,007
Mobile Fire Trailer #1 - Expense	12,972	12,972
Mobile Fire Trailer #2 - Expense	4,782	4,782
OFFICE EXPENSE	126	126
SD FIRE SCHOOL-FIRESCHOOL EXP...	85,633	85,633
VOIDED	0	0
TO STATE FUND CHECKING DSFCU ...	122,908	122,908
TOTAL EXPENSES	248,361	248,361
OVERALL TOTAL	93,457	93,457
Net Worth 2024 YTD - As of 12/31/2024 (Includes unrealized gains)		
Account	12/31/2024 Balance	
ASSETS		
Cash and Bank Accounts		
Gen Fund 6 Month CD 1038930-9/22/05		38,395.78
GEN FUND SCHOLARSHIP CD1027050D 10-7-27-Matures 10/7/27, 1.8...		39,212.29
GENL FUND MONEY MARKET DSFCU103890M-Dues Interest Bearing ...		3.38
GF CHECKING DSFCU 1038930 7		35,782.66
GF Sav DSFCU 1038930 A		5.06
MEMORIAL FUND SAVINGS DSFCU 1027050 A-Membership Acct.		4,449.95
REG FUND SAVINGS 1056040 A		25,911.58
STATE FUND CHECKING DSFCU 1039100 7		2,100.88
STATE FUND MONEY MARKET DSFCU 1039100 M		228,651.03
STATE FUND MEMB ACCT SAV DSFCU 1039100 A		5.08
TOTAL Cash and Bank Accounts		374,517.69
Other Assets		
TOTAL Other Assets		0.00
TOTAL ASSETS		374,517.69
LIABILITIES		
Credit Cards		
TOTAL Credit Cards		0.00
Other Liabilities		
TOTAL Other Liabilities		0.00
TOTAL LIABILITIES		0.00
OVERALL TOTAL		374,517.69





## Pierre Rescue/Dive Squads Train with Fishing Pro

The Pierre Fire Department would like to extend a huge shout out to Tom Huynh Fishing, Shawn Grams and Curt Underhill-The Fishing Crew for their assistance and expertise in our recent Rescue & Dive Squad Training. Once the weather rolled through, we were able to place mannequins in the water at Down's Marina and simulate emergency situations in which we may be called on. Tom Huynh is an expert on forward facing sonar and just happened to be in town to show us some tips and tricks on locating targets in the water. This new technology can not only help us locate a target in the water quickly but also assist us in getting a diver on that target to retrieve it without having to conduct search patterns. We greatly appreciate these gentlemen taking the time out of their day give us some pointers! Also, thank you to Jason at Down's Marina for being very accommodating in letting us use the Marina to train in. - Submitted by Trevor Lightfield, Rescue Captain.





# Fire School Happenings

Who is ready for state fire school? I hope everyone is! We have a great line up this year with a mix of national and local talent. Some familiar names and some brand new to South Dakota. You will notice some classes directly related to small volunteer departments. This was a common request we found on the student surveys last year and we hope to build off that theme in the future. There seems to be a national trend towards the training needs of small town departments and we will keep our eyes open for future classes.

Building construction and smoke reading are two things that are applicable to any size

department and we have two of the leading instructors coming this year so take advantage of that. Both FOOLS groups are returning with their high energy classes. Water supply officer, grant writing, SCBA confidence, chaplain training and more will be offered. Don't forget about the ropes classes. Both basic and advanced so there is something for everyone there also.

Something new for after hours on Friday is the Pints and Perspectives Roundtable discussion happening downtown. This event is put together by the Watertown base training group Firefighter Skills Mastery and will feature some big names on

the instructor's panel. This will be a unique opportunity to ask questions directly to top level instructors. Watertown Fire Rescue, Lake Area Technical College and the city of Watertown are great hosts and are super accommodating.

All your favorite vendors will be back this year bringing the newest products to check out. Be sure to put your wish list together and visit all of them as they are an important partner in putting on fire school.

Looking forward to seeing everyone again this year and looking forward to meeting new friends. See you soon!

# Selby area departments respond to large fire

Drought conditions along with high winds made a perfect storm for wildfires this weekend and throughout the week.

Fire departments from the area responded to a call for a fire located southwest and west of Selby near the WEB water plant on Highway 1804 on Sunday afternoon.

Selby Fire Chief Curt Rawstern was one of the first to arrive at the scene of the fire. He said the fire started at about 12:23 p.m., and they left the scene a little after one in the morning. Rawstern said the fire affected approximately 860 acres of primarily pasture land.

In addition to the Selby Fire Department nine other fire departments responded to the call including Akaska, Java, Glenham, Pollock, Herreid, Mobridge, Mound City, Trail City and Bowdle. Law enforcement and county help included Walworth Sheriff's Office, Walworth County Emergency Manager, Walworth County Commissioners, South Dakota Highway Patrol and Campbell County Sheriff's Office. A federal aircraft based in Mobridge currently also joined the effort and dropped water and foam on the fire. The county commissioners were needed to make a request

for federal help.

Walworth County Sheriff Josh Boll said the fire stayed south of the railroad tracks and there was no structure damage or fatalities, but there was a lot of infrastructure damage to fence lines and power poles. This resulted in a loss of power to areas, but power lines were never fully downed. The power was turned off resulting in loss of power to Eureka, Bowdle, Roscoe, Tolstoy and Java. He said evacuations were necessary and included both people and livestock.

According to both Rawstern and Boll the cause of the fire has not been officially determined as the investigation is still ongoing, but they speculate it came from a trash pit belonging to the workers of the WEB water pipeline.

Boll also commented on the amount of community support they received. Local farmers were some of the first on scene to help combat the blaze and discs were used to control the fire and stop the spread.

"We received huge support from the area," Boll said. "It's amazing what people can do even in dangerous situations."

Rawstern said he wanted to thank the public for food donations and water used to combat the fire, Thorsten- sons for the

use of their shop, Campbell Co Sheriff's Office, Walworth Co Sheriff's Office, SD Highway Patrol and the crew stationed in Mobridge responsible for the use of the air tanker.

*(Mobridge Tribune, Mobridge, May 14, 2025; written by Clare Schoelerman, staff writer.)*



## Beresford new recruits

Beresford Fire and Rescue recruits Brian Williams, Mark McCubbin and Jon Ferguson are pictured with Assistant Chief Andal after achieving certification as firefighters upon completion of the SD FF-One and FF-Two training programs, as well as successful passing of the skills assessments and live fire training. The fire department is staffed by 40 certified personnel.

# 2025 STATE FIRE SCHOOL CLASSES

- Truckless Truckie - 16 Hours
- MLFTU Train The Trainer - 16 Hours
- Chaplain's Essentials - 16 Hours
- Crisis Informed Peer Paracounseling - 16 Hours
- Building Construction/Walking Tour - 8 Hours
- Basic Vehicle Extrication - 8 Hours
- Advance Vehicle Extrication - 8 Hours
- Emergency Vehicle Operations - 8 Hours
- Water Supply Officer - 8 Hours
- Grain Entrapment - 8 Hours
- Rural Firefighting Tactics - 8 Hours
- No Gimmick Handline Management - 8 Hours
- Basic Rope Rescue - 8 Hours
- Advance Rope Rescue - 8 Hours
- Flashover Simulator - 8 Hours
- SCBA Confidence - 8 Hours
- The Art of Reading Smoke - 8 Hours
- Certified FF Tasks and Practical Skills - 8 Hours
- Pump Ops - 4 Hours
- Gas Leak Emergencies - 4 Hours
- Rural Success: Winning With the Engine You Have Not the Engine You Want - 4 Hours
- Volunteer Fire Department Need to Know - 4 Hours
- Fire & the Media: What to Say When You're In the Hot Seat - 4 Hours
- Bad Leaders, Inherited Teams, and the Wrong People in the Right Positions - 4 Hours
- Traffic Incident Management - 4 Hours
- Modern Strategies and Tactics for House Fires - 4 Hours
- AFG Strategies for Success - 4 Hours
- NERIS Incident Reports - 4 Hours
- Limits: Leadership Lessons Command And Control Won't Teach You - 4 Hours
- Building the Fire Officer - 4 Hours
- SDFA Updates and Happenings - 4 Hours

Check [sdfa.org](https://sdfa.org) for more information and class descriptions.

# SDFA General Membership Meeting Agenda

Lake Area Technical College – Watertown, SD

**FRIDAY, JUNE 13 7:30 P.M. – SATURDAY, JUNE 24, 2025 4:30 P.M.**

- Call to order @ 0730am CT – Friday, 13 June 2025
- Pledge of Allegiance
- Moment of Silence for Fallen Firefighters
- Invocation
- Parliamentary
- Introduce SDFA Board Members
- Welcome Comments from Guests
- Approval of agenda (motion to approve)
- Minutes of 2024 Annual General Membership Meeting minutes
  - as printed in SDFA paper (motion to approve)
- Treasurer's Report – Gorton – as printed in SDFA paper (motion to approve after audit)
  - Establish Audit committee

## BUSINESS

1. Comments and Questions from General Membership
2. Newly Certified Firefighters to State Fire School
3. Legislative Report
4. NVFC - Spring meeting report;
5. Future SDFA Events
6. Firefighters Memorial Service
7. Newspaper - Questions or comments for publisher – Jeff Gargano
8. Comments & Announcements
  - Recess until 430pm on Saturday;

## RECONVENE

**SATURDAY, 14 JUNE 2025** Membership Meeting and Closing Ceremony –

11. SDFA Updates and Happenings
12. Audit Committee Report – (motion to approve)
13. Recognitions: a) New Certified FFs; b) Scholarship winners; c) Service Longevity
14. Final Comments & Benediction
15. Motion to Adjourn 2025 State Fire School General Membership meeting

## NEXT MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS:

- Fall Fire Conference, 10-12 October 2025, Spearfish, SD





**Semi fire near Beresford**  
On May 16, Beresford Fire and Rescue responded to a fully involved semi-tractor trailer fire on I-29 at the 53-mile marker. The call was received at approximately 10:35 pm and BFD responded with 5 units with 13 personnel to the scene. Due to traffic being stopped at the location of the burning vehicle, fire crews had to utilize the 53mm off-ramp and travel down the on-ramp to bypass several stationary vehicles between two sets of guard rails. Additionally, small grass fires that had ignited from the semi fire were promptly extinguished. Centerville Fire Department aided BFD with water. Totally approximately 8,000 gallons used during the firefighting efforts. A few hours later, BFD was paged for another grass fire, this time located south of town on I-29 at the 39-mile marker. Submitted by Tarz Mullinix, BFD.



YOU SHOULD HAVE YOUR DEPARTMENT FEATURED!



Just fill out the attached form and send it back with a group photo and we'll feature your department in an upcoming issue of the South Dakota Firefighter Newspaper.

Submitter's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Submitter's Phone # \_\_\_\_\_  
Department Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Total Number of Members: \_\_\_\_\_  
# Volunteer \_\_\_\_\_ # Paid \_\_\_\_\_ Year Department Established: \_\_\_\_\_  
# Fires Per year \_\_\_\_\_ # Rescue/Extrication Calls Per Year \_\_\_\_\_ Is Your Dept. Fire & EMS Combined? \_\_\_\_\_  
# Pumpers \_\_\_\_\_ # Tankers \_\_\_\_\_ # Rescue \_\_\_\_\_ # Ambulance \_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Names in picture: (on separate form please)

*Please type the names as they appear in the photo. For best reproduction, please send or e-mail the actual photo and not a photocopy or scanned copy.*

Officer's Name:

Office:

Mail to: South Dakota Firefighter Newspaper,  
PO Box 122, Humboldt, IA 50548  
E-mail to: jeff@southdakotafirefighter.com



# First Responders Prepare for Electrical Hazards

When an emergency strikes, first responders put themselves on the front lines to protect their communities, often facing hidden dangers like downed power lines and damaged electrical equipment. Preparing for electrical risks is an essential step in keeping others safe when approaching the scene of an accident or a fire.

In an effort to educate emergency personnel, Central Electric Cooperative hosted safety training at its headquarters west of Mitchell on April 23. Participants included firefighters and EMTs from Armour, Brandon, Canova, Carthage, Centerville, Chancellor, Corsica, Delmont, Ethan, Fedora, Mount Vernon, Plankinton, Rosedale Colony, Sioux Falls, Wagner, White Lake and Woonsocket.

Central Electric's Manager of Operations, Brian Bultje, led the session by sharing examples of common electrical meters and explaining protocols for safely disconnecting power during emergencies.

Bultje said, "When there's a structure fire, power typically needs to be disconnected. Unlike emergency vehicles, we can't drive with lights and sirens."

He also emphasized that pulling a meter does not guarantee the power is off. "Take that extra step and call dispatch. We can send crews to help ensure the scene is safe," Bultje said.

Mark Johnston of Regions



Mark Johnston of Regions Hospital Burn Center speaks about electrical burns during first responder training on April 23.

Hospital Burn Center in St. Paul, MN, discussed electrical burns from a medical perspective. He explained how electrocution can affect the human body and treatment methods for burn patients.

The training concluded with a high-voltage demonstration, highlighting the destructive power of electricity and the damage it can cause. By the end of the session, attendees gained insight and knowledge to help keep themselves and others safe during emergencies.



A high-voltage demonstration highlights the dangers associated with power lines.

## RF-DASH Training

The Rural Firefighters Delivering Agricultural Safety and Health (RF-DASH) program was formed in response to a major problem impacting rural America: Farm-related injuries and deaths. People working on farms are 5 times more likely to die on the job than the average U.S. worker, and nonfatal farm injury rates are some of the highest across all occupations. The total cost of farm injuries in the U.S. is \$11.32 billion per year, with most of those costs negatively impacting rural communities.

Ensuring safety on farms is a challenge, and many safety advocates lack the knowledge and trust necessary to adequately provide farmers with safety advice. However, researchers at the National Farm Medicine Center found that farmers view rural firefighters as trusted sources of safety information.

RF-DASH aims to equip rural first responders with agricultural health and safety knowledge to prevent farm injuries and improve emergency preparedness in rural communities. The central idea is that *safer farms build safer communities*. RF-DASH introduces rural first responders to agricultural emergencies and trains them in preplanning for agricultural operations, farm hazard awareness, and how to deliver a

farm-specific first aid course.

From June 2025 to June 2026, the RF-DASH program has funding to provide at least **15 full-day trainings**. Trainings can take place anywhere in the U.S. and Canada, though there will be a special emphasis on the U.S. Grain Belt.

RF-DASH Lead Trainer Tim Zehnder is available to conduct training activities. Tim has over 30 years of experience as a firefighter and educator and has instructed numerous first responders across the U.S. and Canada.

Tim is also the Director of Safety & Education at ExEnvironmental, Inc., a safety and rescue training company based in Hudson, WI. Thus, in addition to leading RF-DASH trainings, Tim and the ExEnvironmental team can also provide a variety of services related to safety, rescue, and compliance, including grain bin safety & rescue.

Are you interested in an RF-DASH training? Get in touch.

**TIM ZEHNDR**  
Lead Trainer, RF-DASH  
Director of Education &  
Safety, ExEnvironmental  
tim@exenvironmental.com  
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# NVFC Board Elects Officers, Tackles Strategic Plan at 2025 Spring Conference

The National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC) Board of Directors met on May 8-10 in Alexandria, VA, for its annual spring conference. The board is comprised of up to two representatives from 48 state fire associations and meets as a whole twice a year to conduct business, hold committee meetings, and steer the direction of the organization.

Sixty-five directors from 43 state associations were in attendance, including South Dakota Directors Jeremy Wall, Whispering Pines VFD, Rapid City, and Charlie Kludt, Viborg VFD. The jam-packed event featured officer and Executive Committee elections, a strategic planning session, and an awards banquet.

### NVFC ELECTIONS

Elections were held to select the NVFC's officers and Executive Committee members for the 2025-2027 term. The results are as follows:

- Chair:** Steve Hirsch (KS)
  - First Vice Chair:** Dallas Renfrew (TX)
  - Second Vice Chair:** Reid Vaughn (AL)
  - Secretary/Treasurer:** Bob Guthrie (CT)
  - Executive Committee:** Quentin Cash (NC), Steve McClintock (NV), Brian McQueen (NY), Sheri Nickel (OK), Bill Offerman (IL), Pat Thompson (KY, chair of the Legislative Committee); Eric Quinney (WY, chair of the EMS/Rescue Section)
- The NVFC EMS/Rescue Section also held elections, with the

following results:

- Chair:** Eric Quinney (WY)
- Vice Chair:** Jules Scadden (IA)
- Secretary/Treasurer:** T.J. Nedrow (WA)
- Directors-at-Large:** Brian Foley (NJ), Brian Moon (SC), Ed Mund (WA), Curtis Shirley (AL), Marv Trimble (IA)
- NVFC Board Representative:** Ken Brown (VA)

### NVFC BUSINESS

Several committees met to discuss a range of issues, from legislation and standards and codes, to wildland, recruitment and retention, and health, safety, and training.

Walla serves on the Wildland, Recruitment & Retention, and legislative committees. Kludt serves as Vice-Chair of the Wildland committee.

The EMS/Rescue Section also held its bi-annual meeting.

In addition, the board conducted a strategic planning session as the first step to developing the strategic plan that will guide the direction of the organization for the next five years.

### AWARDS CELEBRATION

On May 9, the board gathered to celebrate and honor the recipients of the NVFC's 2025 achievements awards:

- David Denniston**, William J. Darley Lifetime Achievement Award, sponsored by Darley
- Jeremy Sonenschein**, Chief James P. Seavey Sr. Health & Wellness Leadership Award, co-



NVFC Directors Rob Ingram, Arkansas, Sheri Nickel, Oklahoma, Jack Kirlin, South Carolina, and Charlie Kludt, South Dakota socialize before Awards ceremony.

sponsored by VFIS and Ward Diesel Filter Systems

- Jiya Jadhav**, Junior Firefighter of the Year Award, sponsored by California Casualty
- West Virginia University Fire Service Extension Junior Firefighter Camp**, Junior Firefighter Program of the Year Award, sponsored by California Casualty

- Brian McQueen**, E. James Monihan Director Award, sponsored by Provident

South Dakota Director Charlie Kludt received his 10-year Directors pin from Chairman Steve Hirsch.

### SPRING CONFERENCE SPONSORS

The NVFC thanks the following sponsors for their support of the NVFC Spring Conference: AES, Anheuser-Busch Foundation, Clarion UX's Fire & Rescue Group, Columbia Southern University, ESIP, F.I.E.R.O., First-Net Built with AT&T, National Fire Protection Association, Provident, State Farm®, Tesla, Wendell's Mint

### FALL CONFERENCE

The next NVFC board conference will take place Sept. 22-24 in Rapid City, SD.

Walla and Kludt gave a quick overview of the fall activities to include an evening supper hosted by area local VFDs. Followed by a trip to Mount Rushmore for group photos at the night lighting



2025 Executive Board: Brian McQueen, New York; Bill Offerman, Illinois; Sheri Nickel, Oklahoma; Quentin Cash, North Carolina; Steve McClintock, Nevada.



2025 Officers: Chair Steve Hirsch, Kansas; 1st Vice-Chair Dallas Renfrew, Texas; Reid Vaughn, Alabama; Bob Guthrie, Sec-Treas, Connecticut.

### ABOUT THE NVFC

The National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC) is the leading nonprofit membership association representing the interests of the volunteer fire, emergency medical, and rescue services. The NVFC serves as the voice of the volunteer in the national arena and provides critical advocacy, resources, programs, and education for first responders across the nation.

Anyone, family members, friends, neighbors, and even business owners, can be a member of the NVFC. Learn more and join at [www.nvfc.org](http://www.nvfc.org).

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# 2025 South Dakota Highway Patrol Association Fishing Tournament

**JUNE 8 - 10, 2025**  
**QUESTIONS? CALL...**  
**ROB MAYER - 770-1940**  
**AUSTIN SCHMITZ - 830-6682**

## WELCOME

This event is for fun, fellowship, and bragging rights. We hope you have a great time! Sunday, June 8, there will be a social, meal, and final registration from 4-6 p.m. at the Izaak Walton League, in Pierre. There will be a, mandatory, rules meeting at 6 p.m. Participants must be at the rules meeting. This tournament is extremely popular and will be limited to the first 50 teams paid in full. Registration must be no later than two weeks before the event, for us to obtain a correct count for meals.

## ELIGIBILITY

The event is open to retired and active law enforcement officers and those working in related fields—judges, court services, state's attorneys, jailers, motor carrier, homeland security, ambulance, fire, etc.—and their appropriate guests.

## LOCATION

The tournament headquarters will be at the Izaak Walton League, 1200 Izaak Walton Road, Pierre SD. The Izaak Walton League will have full bar service available on site. Tournament check-in times will be discussed at the Sunday rules meeting and after Monday's supper. Boundaries are South Dakota waters connecting with Lake Oahe and Lake Sharpe. Teams must be present and checked in at the tournament headquarters for weigh-in, by the specified time for each day. No exceptions!

## FISH

Only walleye and sauger will be counted in the tournament. All GFP rules must be followed. Only eight fish will be weighed per team. The minimum size is 15 inches with two fish allowed over 20 inches. Only one team allowed per boat. Teams may fish up to four people per boat. Teams may catch a full limit, with exception to the four-man teams who are only allowed to catch a three-man limit. Only eight fish may be brought to the weigh table on ice. No exceptions! No fishing is allowed after the rules meeting until the tournament.

## ENTRY FEE

Cost is \$75 per person which includes tournament entry fee and two free meals. Only tournament entrants are entitled to the free meals.

## OPTION POTS

There will be biggest walleye and biggest other fish option pots. Also, all registered teams have the option to buy themselves in three different option pots- \$25, \$50, and \$100.

The option pots are 90%

payout. Shortly after the rules meeting concludes, teams will have the opportunity to buy other teams who did not purchase themselves in the option pots. If you have questions on how the option pots work, contact one of us or ask at the rules meeting Sunday night.

## SOCIAL

There will be a raffle drawing following the meal on Monday night. If you know of a sponsor who would like to donate a prize,

food, or money, please let us know. We also encourage you to stick around for the awards ceremony immediately following the weigh-ins on Tuesday.

## LODGING

There are several options for camping and cabins a short distance from the tournament headquarters. You can contact them for availability. Farm Island and Oahe Downstream Rec areas are nearby. Reservations can be made 90 days in advance at South

Dakota State Park reservations (1-800-710-2267). There are various hotels available in the Pierre-Ft. Pierre area as well. Please make your own reservations, as soon as possible, at the lodging of your choice. List Team Captain's Phone and E-mail

Checks can be made payable to: SDHP Fishing Tournament

Mail entry forms to: South Dakota Highway Patrol, Attn: Robert Mayer, 5316 W. 60<sup>th</sup> ST N., Sioux Falls, SD 57107



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# Brady Rothschadl follows his dream as a firefighter

By BECKY TYCZ, Publisher  
Tyndall Tribune & Register

## Travels With SDWF To Battle California Wildfires

Fighting wildland fires wasn't, at first, Brady Rothschadl's intention when he moved to the west side of South Dakota. Let alone being assigned to assist in the wildfires in California.

As a student in the fire science program at Western Dakota Tech in Rapid City, Brady interned with South Dakota Wildland Fire for part of a semester. During that time, he became aware the agency was hiring for that summer. He agreed to give it a try for a season. Brady was amazed and fell in love with fighting wildland fires. This blew his plans of pursuing a job with Sioux Falls Fire and Rescue and being close

to his hometown of Tyndall right out the window.

Brady's mom, Paulette Peters remembers when he was little and always fascinated watching the fire trucks go down main street. He did join the local volunteer fire department in his hometown which was a huge accomplishment for Brady.

Receiving his basic training needed for firefighting at Western Dakota Tech, Brady continues to attend classes through his employment as needed to further his career.

The State of South Dakota is Brady's actual employer but works for the Division of Wildland Fire (SDWF) under the Department of Public Safety.

On a typical day when not fighting a fire, Brady keeps busy in the shop where the division workers upfit all their own trucks. What this means is they build their own wildland fire engines and command rigs with



Firefighting vehicles are in place and ready in the event a fire start-ups in the California.

the appropriate equipment to make them fire ready. SDWF's main dozer operator title goes to Brady as well. In the event one of SDWF's two dozers are needed, Brady jumps in whichever one is requested and heads out to do his job. Brady explains "This dozer allows us to cut the fire line wider and deeper than the line that can be cut by hand crews. The goal of fire line is to help control a fire by clearing a line right down to mineral soil which a fire cannot burn. Fire needs fuel to burn, and once we remove those fuels like grass, shrubs and trees, the fire has no fuel to burn in that direction." As needed, he fills in on fire engines as well.

Back in January, the South Dakota Wildland Fire was contacted to assist with the wildfires in California. Initially, the State of California contacted the regional wildland fire dispatch in Rapid City (Great Plains Dispatch) and then transfers the call to the duty officer. Following the proper channels, the request then went to SDWF's Operation Chief Jason Rodriguez. A discussion within the division determines whether the assistance request can be granted. First and foremost is to make sure enough staff and engines are available here in South Dakota to provide service before firefighters are sent out-of-state. Once it's determined that South Dakota can provide assistance, a call goes out to the fire management officers at four

fire districts in search of available firefighters. According to Rodriguez, "Based on availability, which positions are requested and if we are sending an engine, we ensure the most qualified personnel is selected to staff the engine for the National Wildland Fire Coordinating Group." Personnel responding to the request are selected by staff throughout all four districts to avoid leaving one district short-handed. The timeframe firefighters and equipment assist in out-of-state fires is based on the situation and current needs at the time. Typically, time is allowed for travel to get to the location, 14 days on duty and travel time to return home. As said before, every assignment is different and could be less than 14 days or up to 16-18 days.

SDWF resources, including Brady Rothschadl, started off January 13 on their two-day drive to California. The division's assignment was based at the Eaton Fire in Los Angeles County, CA. When referring to the January fires in California, a wide variety of duties is carried out, some of which may not include close contact with the flames. Rodriguez stated, "At times, the South Dakota firefighters were staged to respond to potential new fire starts. While the firefighters were ready to respond, there were no new starts during their assignment requiring them

to directly fight flames." South Dakota firefighters patrolled the area in search of hot spots already burned and assist in the mop-up if needed. The firefighters were ready to respond immediately in the event of new starts.

A task force comprised of two SDWF engines and one from each of the volunteer fire departments in Black Hawk, Fairburn and Whispering Pines made the trip to California. Eighteen South Dakota firefighters (six of which were from SDWF) comprised the crew in California as well as a task force leader from North Dakota.

Rodriguez added "Daily briefings were held at the Rose Bowl stadium in California due to the large number of firefighters and other fire-related staff who were part of the effort."

When comparing a fire between one location to another, Brady felt the terrain in California had some similarities to the Black Hills. Each fire is unique, no matter where it is. No two fires are alike. Brady's focus in California was to work towards goals set for each day. As part of a task force, a firefighter wants to make sure he is contributing everything possible to support their team while also being mindful of the surroundings and safety.

The wild fires in California have not been the biggest fires

SEE ROTHSCHADL, PAGE 15



Wildland firefighters scout for pop-up fires in the California canyons.



Monty Bollock and Brady Rothschadl are in the shop upfitting a truck with the appropriate equipment to make them fire ready.



Prince Harry, Duke of Sussex, far right, visits with firefighters during the California fire.



## Rothschadl

FROM PAGE 14

that Brady has fought during his career, but one of the more destructive when it comes to structure loss. One thing that really stood out while in California was the size of the Incident Command where lots of extra activity was going on since it was such a destructive fire in the community.

As the fires progressed, California resident, Prince Harry, Duke of Sussex, asked California Fire if he could go out and talk to the firefighters assisting with the fire. The department's staff brought Prince Harry to the staging area which happened to be the same area where Brady was assigned. "Prince Harry was very interested in our mental health, asking us how we deal with being gone and seeing the things that we do," stated Brady.

The SDWF resources were released January 24 and arrived home in the Black Hills January 25.

Whether it's in the Black Hills or another state fighting a fire, parents are always worried about their child entering into an area of possible danger. With Brady's love for his job, a degree in fire science, many training hours and many hours on the job, it has become easier for Paulette and Shannon Peters, but there's still that "what if" in the back of your mind. The Peters feel confident that Brady will be safe with the good men and women in his team as they have each other's backs. Before heading out to a big fire, the Peters will tell Brady to be safe, send up a prayer and tell him they love him. "It's all a parent can do," concluded Paulette.

Even though Brady's parents were aware of his departure to California early on in the process, it wasn't any easier. "Watching the news coverage and knowing what challenges the firefighters were already facing, made it a little more concerning, but

again we have to put it in God's hands," remarked Paulette.

Anyone in the younger generation contemplating whether to become a wildland firefighter, Brady urges them to experience the duties and highly recommends firefighting as a career. According to Brady, "It is a great way to meet a lot of people and see a lot of new areas. There is also a lot of room for growth."

Even though it's worrisome to parents, "following his dreams and we are so proud of him," commented Paulette. There are not many people who can say they love their job like Brady.

Reflecting back on Brady as a firefighter, his parents stated "We are so proud of the man he has become in his career and family. He is dedicated to the job and looks to improve his skills whenever given the chance. We envision Brady becoming a leader in his field, doing training for others and putting the new equipment on grass firetrucks for other departments to be able to battle grass fires across the state. We also know he is very lucky to have a supportive wife, he couldn't follow his dream to help others without her support back home."

South Dakota Wildland Fire offers wildland fire training that is open to interested persons all across the state. Folks interested in learning more can contact South Dakota Wildland Fire's Training and Aviation Program Manager, Tamara Dierks at 605-393-4229 for information on how to become a wildland firefighter, what training is required and where to find it. It is also recommended to join a local volunteer fire department as they assist firefighters in getting wildland fire training. For more information about SDWF you can also visit their website at [wildland-fire.sd.gov](http://wildland-fire.sd.gov).



Nick Mallon and Brady Rothschadl on top of a mountain with their firefighting gear in hand.

## Mitchell fire responds to rural grass fire late Wednesday afternoon

Fire officials estimated the fire to be about a mile long

A fire got out of hand on Wednesday afternoon, requiring additional response from area fire departments.

The Mitchell Fire Department responded to a call around 4 p.m. Wednesday for an out of control grass fire at the corner of 412th Avenue and 248th Street, about 5 miles northeast of the Mitchell Regional Airport.

"Enroute you could see it from the fire station," Chief of Fire and EMS Dan Pollreis said.

The fire burned for about 15 minutes before mutual aid was called for from the Ethan and Letcher fire departments. By

that time, the fire spanned nearly a mile in length and firefighters reported issues with visibility near the issues of the flames.

"The fire crossed the north side of that abandoned road (248th Street) and then also crossed to the west of 412 Avenue, which is the north to south road, so at one point we had fire in three different sections," Pollreis said.

A farmer with a tractor made fire line breaks for the fire crews using a disc implement.

"One of the only ways that we can get some of these out is to have those discs come out," Pollreis said.

As of 5:30 p.m. Wednesday, there were no reported injuries related to the fire. There was no property damage to the farmhouse at the corner of 412 Avenue and 248th Street, according

to Pollreis.

At 6 p.m., additional support crews were being sent home, and Pollreis said that the fire was under control, and was hopeful that the fire would not reignite.

"We are making really good progress with our existing line so hopefully that doesn't happen, but there's always a chance," Pollreis said.

Pollreis said that the cause of the fire was yet unknown.

Water trucks from the Agtegra Cooperative also assisted, as well as Hanson and Davison counties sheriff departments.

Weather conditions saw temperatures top out at 78 degrees on Wednesday afternoon, with gusts of nearly 30 mph.

(*Mitchell Daily Republic*, Mitchell, Apr. 18, 2025)



Brady Rothschadl, second from the left, and his team, Seth Stevens, Carissa Wheeler, Nick Mallon, Jacob Bays, who traveled to California to assist in the wildfires.



# Finding The Fire Glove For Better Fit, Function And Safety

By JERRY KNAPP

Firefighting is a life and death business. We spend tons of time designing our engines and trucks so they are the most efficient for us on the fireground. We carefully select tools, nozzles, hose, saws, thermal imagers, halligans, hooks, explosive gas detectors all so we can be the best and safest at emergencies. One of the most important parts of any of our tools is how well we can manipulate them with our gloved hands.

When we buy turnout gear, we get measured so it fits properly giving us the best protection and the most mobility. But when we buy gloves, we only get to pick from small, medium and large and extra large sizes. Then we complain that they have no dexterity, ability to grip critical tools or for important tactical functions like switching radio frequencies. This is because they are not sized or selected properly.

When you buy a pair of shoes, what do you need to know to get a proper fit? Length and width are the key measurements. Then you try them on just to be sure they are a good fit and will work for you, not against you. When you buy gloves you need the same measurements, finger length and hand width for a proper fit.

Poorly fitting gloves cause injuries. Fortunately, most fire glove manufacturers now have cadet sizes for finger length. A cadet size is half an inch shorter, so you don't have excess material in the finger tips. This increases dexterity and grip strength. But when the palm of your hand has excess material on the side, you lose dexterity and grip strength. Most women firefighters and about half of male firefighters have this issue with their fire gloves: it fits properly in the finger tips but not in the hand width.

In my over 40 years as a firefighter, I wore every glove made. Recently I found

a glove maker that fits me in both finger length and width. These gloves are designed and built for hand width and finger length just like our boots. There may be more glove makers that do this but I have not been able to find any.

According to NFPA 1970-1971 these glove size groupings use a couple of key measurements. First the index finger length in millimeters. Second, hand width. As above, you then match your measurements to the best combination of the 7 options available.

The new NFPA standard requires a minimum of 7 sizes: 64N, 70N, 70W, 76N, 76W, 82N and 82W as shown above. Some manufacturers have chosen to only provide 7 choices of sizes, others have as many as 36 different sizes.

How do you get 36 sizes of gloves? Firecraft Safety Products does it this way.

There are 9 sizes from XXS to 4xL: XXS, XS, S, M, L, XL, XXL, XXXL, XXXXL. They make a regular width, regular width with shorter fingers, a slimline width regular length fingers and a slim line with short fingers. So, 9 sizes times 4 separate widths and finger lengths equals 36 different size gloves.

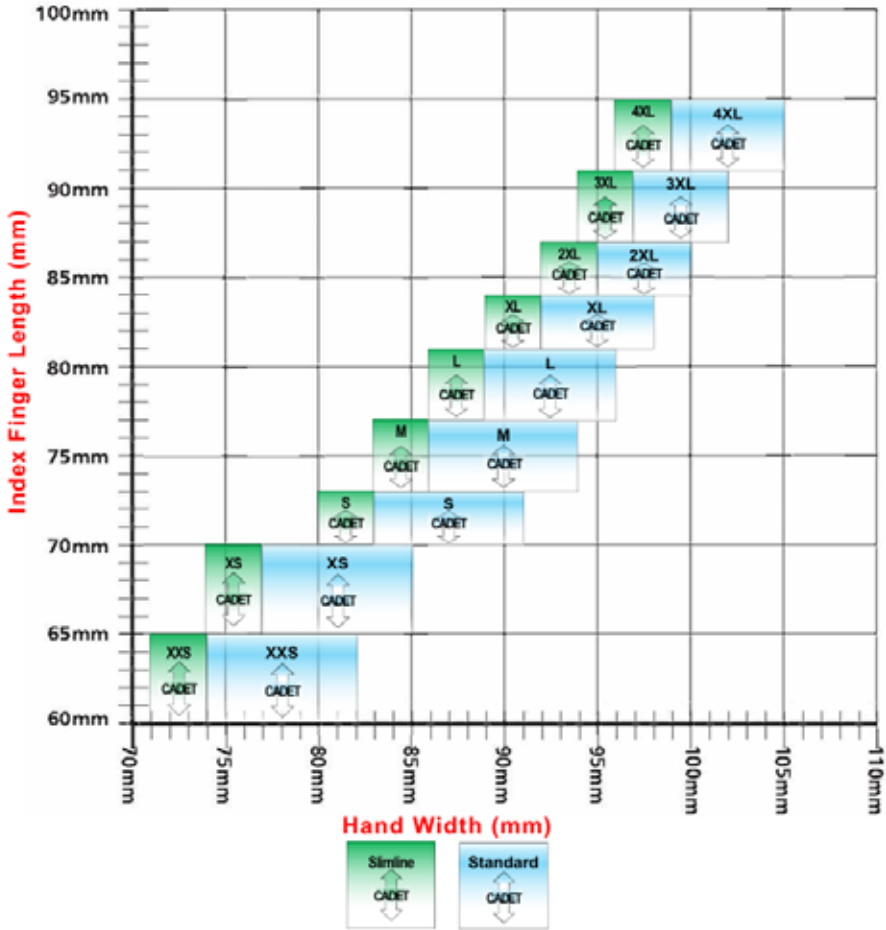
Take a look at the pics below that explain proper glove sizing.

Now that you have the proper size, consider how you will use the glove. A glove with a good gripping surface on the palm will help you maintain positive controls over tools and hose. Conversely if your gloves are slipping it will cause you more fatigue and less control over your tools. Certainly important especially with power tools like chain or circular saws. We often use our gloves when they are wet. Consider how well you can hold a nozzle, hoseline, halligan tool if the surface of your gloves are

## FIND YOUR SIZE [NOTE: THIS CHART IS NOT TO SCALE]

Determine finger length and hand width using the guide on the other side. On the chart below, find the approximate intersection where the two measurements meet.

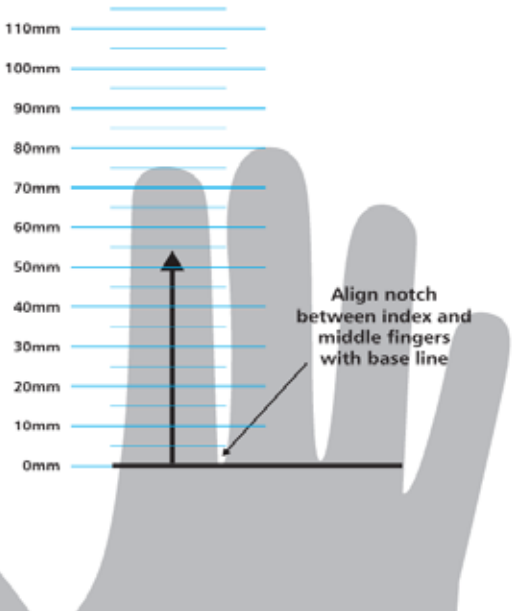
- If your measurement lies in the shaded portion of the box, your best size is shown at the top of the box.
- If your index length falls between two boxes, select the lower box.
- If your hand width falls between two boxes, select the box to the right.
- If your measurement lies at or very near the bottom portion of the box, select a cadet length.



### Step 2

Determine your index finger length using the chart below. Finger length is crucial for dexterity.

#### Index Finger Length

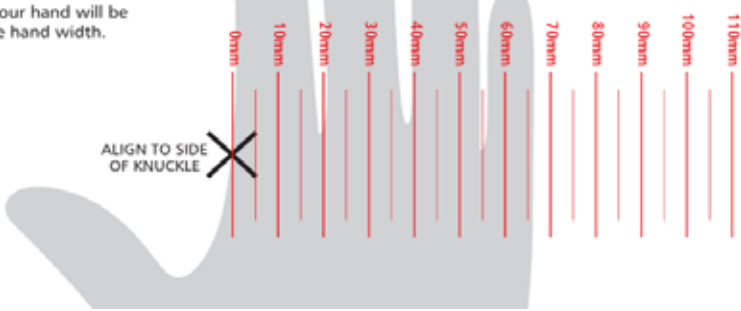


### Step 1

Determine your hand width using the chart below.

#### Right Hand Width

Place your right hand on the glove chart so the left side of your index finger knuckle lines up with the X. The measurement closest to the right edge of your hand will be the appropriate hand width.



This glove is too wide resulting in a mass of fabric outside the wearers hand hampering flexibility, feeling and creating unnecessary fatigue. Obviously, the glove fingers are too long as well.



This glove's finger is too long. Note how it bends creating a loss of feeling and dexterity.



This glove fits properly. The forefinger goes all the way to the end of the end. It also has a cap on the tip that will allow you to push radio buttons etc. It does not crush and become a non-feeling mass under your finger.



# Watertown brush fires extinguished quickly

Wichita Fire Rescue put out multiple rubbish fires on Tuesday.

WFR responded to a grass fire that was being attended by the residence owner on 10th St. Northwest in the 1300 block, as well as multiple piles of leaves that were being burned by a resident on North Pelican Lane. Both fires were extinguished before WFR left the scene, the release

stated.

WFR reminds everyone of the City of Watertown's burn policy. Open burning is not allowed within one mile of city limits without a permit.

However, recreational fires are allowed in the City of Watertown. A recreational fire must be contained in a pit, fireplace or device capable of containing the

fire. A means of extinguishment should also be readily available. Recreational fires should not be within 10 feet of a structure and should be no larger in diameter than 3 feet and no higher than 2 feet.

Only commercial firewood, cut trees and charcoal should be burned in a recreational fire. WFR also warns everyone of the

dry conditions that the city is currently experiencing that could increase the likelihood of grass and

brush fires.

(Watertown Public Opinion, Watertown, Apr. 18, 2025)

## Gloves

FROM PAGE 16

soaking wet. Look for gloves that have a good gripping surface on the palms and underside of the fingers.

Dexterity is another key component to look for. Some gloves have a cap (thimble) like cover on the finger tips. This will be a huge help to you when operating smaller parts like the choke lever on a saw or button on your radio. A mussy mass on the end of your finger will not work for you.

Decontamination is also an important criteria. You may never be exposed to harsh or deadly chemicals but consider how to clean your gloves from routine spills like gasoline, oil and bodily fluids.

We have not discussed heat protection (a basic safety factor for your gloves) but if your gloves meet NFPA 197-1971 you can be assured of the best hand protection available in gloves you can function wearing on the fire ground.

Being a firefighter is a tough job, finding gloves that make our job easier and safer is easy to do. Gloves are the most important part of our ppe. Make sure you are wearing the proper size and they have the characteristics you need at every alarm.

*Jerry Knapp is the Chief of the Rockland County, NY Hazmat Team, and is a 49 year veteran Firefighter/EMT with the West Haverstraw NY Fire Department. He served on the technical panel for the UL residential fire attack study. Knapp is the co-author of two books: House Fires and Tactical Response to Explosive Gas Emergencies published by Fire Engineering. He is the owner of Suburban Tactical Inc specializing in fire officer and firefighter training.*

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# Fire School Evolution Teams

By RICK CRONIN

Fire school is racing towards us, and this is a reminder to those that would like to participate in the evolutions. There is a sepa-

rate team entry form in the paper with more details as well. Any 3-person team(s) that would like to participate, note the date; insurance requirements; entry fee; etc noted on the entry form. It's

the typical normal stuff, unless you are new to participating, then take a look at what is required. This activity is very good friendly rivalry amongst departments, but is also a good team

building activity. Teamwork; coordination; hose lays; hose streams; focusing on topic, and more are beneficial to all teams, plus its very fun! Hope to see you there. Give Larry Nick-

les or myself an email or call if you have any questions. We will also be happy to help new teams with set up and tips the night of the evolutions. Hope to see you there!!

## 2025 South Dakota State Fire School – Watertown SD

### Evolution Registrations Form

Please Print

Fire Department: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Evolution Team: \_\_\_\_\_ 3 Person \_\_\_\_\_ Auxiliary

TEAM CAPTAIN: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Yrs of Service: \_\_\_\_\_

Team Member: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Yrs of Service: \_\_\_\_\_

Team Member: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Yrs of Service: \_\_\_\_\_

Team Member: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Yrs of Service: \_\_\_\_\_

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Team Member: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Yrs of Service: \_\_\_\_\_

**Evolution Insurance Policy:** To participate in any evolution event at State Fire School, the participating department or person ***MUST*** submit proof of insurance. This insurance may be workmans compensation; declaration page; personal insurance card, or other that will provide coverage for the participant(s) in the event of an injury to the participant. NO ONE will be allowed to compete in the evolutions until this proof of insurance is provided. Proof of insurance and team entry form: Just bring the entry form & entry fee with you when you enter. Also, please give a courtesy email to the below email addresses so that we have an idea you are entering & for corresponding with. **\*\*Teams may enter up until the Team Captains meeting prior to the evolutions, as long as last minute teams can provide proof of insurance and pay all entry fees. ALL new and existing teams are welcome!!**

Any competing department and team member shall be on a South Dakota fire department/auxiliary & be members of the SDFA (or state auxiliary); be a member or retired member of a South Dakota fire department, and must pay a team entry fee. **Entry fee is \$50 per team.** (If your department has more than one team, a separate entry fee must be included to each team, and members cannot be on both teams.) Only South Dakota departments may participate in the evolutions. Please make checks for Evolutions to SDFA and bring to the Team Captains meeting prior to evolutions. ABSOLUTELY NO REFUNDS!! All team members must be at least 18 yrs of age and be a member of a department; auxiliary or a retired member of a SD department. **Any new team that hasn't participated in the evolutions in the past will have their entry fee waived.** **Evolution date is Friday, June 13<sup>th</sup> after classes get out – TBD. Location: TBD**

Evolutions will be run as illustrated in the current evolutions rule book. A copy can be emailed to your team if you let us know – Rick Cronin of Fort Pierre Fire – cell: 605-280-3185 or email: [fpfireman1@hotmail.com](mailto:fpfireman1@hotmail.com) or Larry Nickles – Retired Yankton FD – cell: 605-661-2785 or email: [merc.harley@yahoo.com](mailto:merc.harley@yahoo.com).

At LEAST 2 members from each team are required to help set up & tear down. **Team Captains Meeting will be TBD. Start time: TBD – sometime after classes Friday evening. Location: TBD.**



# Air Entrainment:

## A Vital Variable in Water Application

By COLE KLEINWOLTERINK

If you were to ask a police officer about their service weapon, they would not only be able to demonstrate competence in handling it but also describe its features in detail. They know their weapon intimately because they understand it can be the difference between life and death. In the fire service, our weapon is the nozzle, and it deserves the same level of familiarity and respect. Arriving on scene of a structure fire is a lot more than just “putting wet stuff on the red stuff.” Whether you’re paid or volunteer, as professional firefighters we must go beyond simply knowing how to open and close the bale; we must understand how to apply water with intention, because like a firearm, the nozzle can have life-or-death consequences for firefighters and the citizens we serve.

This article is a follow-up to “Water Mapping During the Interior Fire Attack,” published in July 2024. That article intentionally left out a crucial part of water application: air entrainment. This article explores that topic and explains why it matters.

In short, air entrainment occurs when water moves through air and pulls air along with it. But why does this happen? As water droplets travel, they compress air in front of them and create a low-pressure zone behind them. This combination of low pressure and turbulence causes air to be drug along in the direction of the water flow. The extent to which this occurs depends largely on how much the fire stream breaks up. Firefighters can increase air entrainment by breaking-up the stream into smaller droplets, or conversely, they can minimize it by keeping the stream as intact as possible. Depending on the tactical objective—whether it is to hydraulically ventilate a structure or to suppress a fire while improving conditions for potential victims—firefighters must tactfully control how much air is entrained by manipulating the stream pattern, length, and movement.

### STREAM PATTERN

The stream pattern selected plays a major role in air entrainment. A tightly held stream, such as a solid or straight stream, remains relatively cohesive and entrains very little air. As the stream pattern becomes wider and more broken—such as with a fog pattern—the stream breaks into more droplets and significantly increases the amount of air entrained. (Picture 1 – A straight stream is being flowed down the hallway. Notice that the orange streamers remain still, indicating minimal air movement.) This can be visualized as a continuum, with solid and straight streams on one end producing minimal air movement, and widest possible fog patterns on the other end creating the most air entrainment. (Picture 2 – A wide fog stream is being flowed down the hallway. Note how the orange streamers are

now being drawn into the hallway due to the air entrainment created by the fog pattern.)

### STREAM LENGTH

As water exits the nozzle, it immediately begins to lose momentum due to air resistance and gravity. Over distance, the stream begins to break apart into smaller droplets. The farther the stream travels, the more it fragments and the more air it entrains. This means that air entrainment is much lower near the nozzle and higher farther downrange, where the stream has significantly broken up.

### STREAM MOVEMENT

When the nozzle is moved during operation, the stream once again is broken up even, thus, once again increasing the volume of entrained air. The faster the stream is moved, the greater the air entrainment becomes.

On the other hand, there are three factors that have no significant effect on air entrainment: nozzle type, movement pattern, and flow rate or pressure. Although a fog nozzle operating in a wide fog pattern will entrain more air than a smooth bore operating in a solid stream, when the fog nozzle is set to straight stream, it will entrain the same amount of air as the solid stream produced by the smooth bore. While movement increases entrainment, the specific pattern—whether O, Z, or inverted U—has no measurable impact on how much air is entrained, assuming the speed of movement is the same. Finally, changes in flow rate or nozzle pressure have negligible impact. A 1½” hose line flowing 160 gpm at 50 psi through a ¾-inch smooth bore tip entrains the same amount of air as it would if the pressure was increased to 70 psi flowing 190 gpm.

This information has real consequences for how firefighters apply water during fire attack. A nozzle firefighter who understands these principles can use them to meet tactical goals, while one who does not may unintentionally create dangerous flow paths, and worsen conditions for potential victims.

One practical example of using this knowledge to minimize air entrainment is during an exterior water application (i.e. transitional attack). When operating from outside the structure, the nozzle firefighter should position themselves as close to the opening—typically a window—as safely possible. Using a solid or straight stream, they should aim the water toward the ceiling of the fire room, keeping the line as stationary as possible while flowing. This technique maximizes surface cooling and water coverage within the compartment while minimizing the amount of air being pushed into the structure. By limiting air entrainment, this approach avoids forcing hot fuel gases or smoke into adjoining hallways or rooms while still allowing gasses to vent out the exterior opening. Using in-

terior and exterior camera views, the YouTube video “Pushing Fire” by the Firefighter Safety Research Institute visually illustrates the implications of both fog and straight/solid streams being applied from outside the structure.

“Put the fire out and everything gets better” is true for the firefighters wearing an SCBA. However, for the victim with an unprotected airway, things don’t truly get better until the structure is ventilated (or they are removed from the smoke-filled environment). Therefore, coordinated ventilation is critical, and few methods are more coordinated than the nozzle firefighter hydraulically ventilating the fire room immediately following suppression. In this case, the nozzle firefighter can use the air entrainment principles to move as much air from the interior through an exterior opening. To do this they should position themselves as far back from the exterior opening as practical while remaining in the fire room. They should direct their stream through the window or opening and move it rapidly in a deliberate pattern. If using a fog nozzle, the pattern should be opened as wide as possible while

still projecting water through the opening. Although not as effective as a fog nozzle, the smooth bore nozzle can be used to hydraulically ventilate by partially closing the bale to effectively break-up the stream into droplets. Listening to the sound of the water exiting the nozzle can help maximize the effectiveness of this technique—slowly opening the bale until the stream sounds most turbulent (i.e. sounds the worst), indicates maximum stream breakup, signaling optimal air entrainment for ventilation. Additionally, if the smooth bore nozzle has a break-apart tip, removing the tip can further disrupt the stream and enhance air entrainment.

In the end, knowledge of air entrainment isn’t just academic. It’s a tool that can help you control conditions on the fire ground. Understanding how and when to increase or decrease air movement through nozzle technique is a vital part of mastering the craft. Firefighters who understand how to manage their stream can improve survivability for victims, increase tactical effectiveness, and reduce risk to themselves and their crews.

Know your weapon.



### CLASSROOM TRAINING:

Using the Firefighter Safety Research Institute’s YouTube video “Pushing Fire,” analyze the interior and exterior effects of applying fog versus straight/solid streams when applying water from the exterior. Emphasize how nozzle selection and technique impact air entrainment, fire spread, flow path, and victim survivability.

### HANDS-ON TRAINING:

Conduct a hands-on drill where firefighters flow water from one end of a hallway, adjusting stream pattern, length, and movement to explore how each affects air entrainment. While changes in airflow can be felt, hanging streamers at hallway openings offers a clear visual reference. This drill can also be modified for exterior water application through a window.

*Cole Kleinwolverink is a member of the Waukee Fire Department, Granger Fire Department, and Fire Science instructor at Des Moines Area Community College. Feel free to reach out to him at [kleinwolverinkc@gmail.com](mailto:kleinwolverinkc@gmail.com) with any questions, comments or inquiries.*





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