



**"SERVING FIREFIGHTERS
FROM THE WESTERN HILLS
TO THE EASTERN PLAINS"**

WWW.SDFIREFIGHTERS.ORG

OCTOBER 2026 • VOL. 19 - NO. 8

REACHING MORE THAN 6,900 SOUTH DAKOTA FIREFIGHTERS EACH MONTH

2026 SOUTH DAKOTA FIREFIGHTERS ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE

OCTOBER 2-4, 2026

**PETE LIEN & SONS SHOOTING SPORTS COMPLEX
PIEDMONT, SD**



JOIN US THIS OCTOBER!

Connect with firefighters from across South Dakota at the 2026 South Dakota Firefighters Association Annual Conference this October in Piedmont, SD!

The 2026 SDFA Annual Conference is the premier event for South Dakota's fire service, bringing together firefighters, officers, EMS personnel, and industry partners for several days of education, networking, and camaraderie. Attendees can expect high-quality fire and EMS training sessions, informative exhibits, and opportunities to connect with departments from across the state.

Be sure to mark your calendar for October 2-4, 2026, and plan to join us. Registration information, conference details, and lodging accommodations will be available soon, so watch for updates and be sure to register early once registration opens.

We look forward to seeing you this October at the 2026 South Dakota Firefighters Association Annual Conference!



Meet the NEW FLIR K95 Firefighting Thermal Imaging Camera, featuring an expansive 95° × 74° field of view paired with high-resolution 640 × 480 thermal imaging.



The K95's industry-leading 95° field of view gives firefighters a wider perspective in every sweep—helping locate victims, identify hazards, and make faster, more informed decisions.

APPARATUS | BRUSH TRUCKS | PPE | RESCUE | SERVICE

 800-223-0792

QUALITY FIREFIGHTING PRODUCTS SINCE 1994

mtfiresafety.com 



Rockervilled
responds to
Berretta Fire

The Berretta Fire, which started on Sept. 13 north of Silver Mountain, was listed as controlled on Sept. 16. Rockerville Fire Department was one of the agencies to respond. These photos are from the Rockerville Volunteer Fire Department Facebook page.



**MACQUEEN™**

OUR RESPONSE
**SUPPORTS
YOURS**

MacQueen delivers
comprehensive fire and
EMS solutions.





For ADDRESS CHANGES CONTACT:
Taylor Moore
605-501-2162
info@sdfirefighters.org



Published monthly by Blaze Publications Inc.

NEWS & ADVERTISING DEADLINE:
15TH DAY OF EACH MONTH
Email: jeff@southdakotafirefighter.com
P.O. Box 122, Humboldt, IA 50548

Advertising Rate Card available upon request.
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.



Structure fire reported in Aberdeen

On September 15, at approximately 6:48 p.m., Aberdeen Fire Rescue responded to the 300 block of Park Ave SE for a reported structure fire. Fire crews arrived on scene to find smoke coming from the roof vents. Crews found fire in the kitchen but were able to quickly extinguish the flames using a portable water can fire extinguisher and hose line. The residence sustained fire damage in the kitchen and smoke damage throughout the home. There were no injuries and multiple pets were safely removed from the residence. The exact cause of the fire remains under investigation.

Aberdeen Fire Rescue Responding Units – Truck 1, Rescue 2, Rescue 3, Medic 1, Medic 3, Medic 4, Battalion 4, Fire Marshal 1. Other Responding Agencies – Aberdeen Police Department, Brown County 911, Northwestern Energy.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Email your Upcoming Event by the 10th of the previous month (ex. Aug. 10 for the September issue) to jeff@ne-braskafirefighter.com. There is no charge.

OCT. 2-4, 2026: SDFA Fall Conference, Rapid City, featuring Tom Merrill "Forged in Fire."

OCT. 3, 2026: Pheasant Country Fire Conference, Yankton.

OCT. 17, 2026: South East District Fall Fire School, North Sioux City, SD, North Sioux City Community Center, 205 Sodrac Drive, contact Jim Christenson, North Sioux City Fire Department, nscfd@nscfd.org, or call the station at 605.232.4286.

NOV. 7, 2026: Battle of the Blades, Woonsocket.

DEC. 4-6, 2026: SD Fire Chiefs Annual Leadership Conference, Deadwood, SD.

MARCH 12-14, 2027: 39th annual Northwest Iowa Regional Fire School, Sergeant Bluff-Luton (IA) High School. nwiowafireschool.org

JUNE 10-12, 2027: South Dakota Fire School, Watertown, SD.

ACTION FIRE PHOTOS NEEDED!

Please send them to jeff@southdakotafirefighter.com along with information to explain the photo.

IF YOU'RE FIRST TO RESPOND, BE FIRST TO REPORT NATURAL GAS LEAKS.



REPORT MAKE THE RIGHT CALL FAST

Report a natural gas emergency to the First Responder Hotline: **1-800-275-5743**

- For additional questions and information on emergency coordination, contact MidAmerican Energy at publicawareness@midamerican.com.

RESPOND TAKE CONTROL OF THE SCENE

If you encounter blowing gas from a pipeline:

- Approach from upwind
- Keep all ignition sources away from the gas
- Set up a perimeter to keep people at a safe distance

When responding to a gas leak inside a building:

- Evacuate the building immediately
- Move people to a safe distance
- Eliminate all ignition sources
- Check all nearby buildings for a gas presence

If you need to shut off gas:

- At the meter, turn off the service valve to a horizontal position
- DO NOT** reopen the valve yourself; only MidAmerican can restore service

PREPARE TRAIN FOR REAL-LIFE SCENARIOS

MidAmerican offers free, in-person pipeline emergency training for first responders. Learn how to identify, respond to and report a natural gas emergency before it happens.

Learn more at:
sd.pipeline-awareness.com



U.S. Fire Administration Firefighter Fatality Notification

STEVE E. WOHRLE, 65, Piseco (NY) Fire Department, passed away on July 20. Chief Steve Woehrle suffered a cardiovascular event while responding to an accident involving jet skis. Chief Woehrle was transported to a hospital where he was pronounced deceased.

NICHOLAS DALE, 56, Helicopter Express, Chamblee GA, passed away on July 12. Pilot Nicholas Dale was killed while conducting firefighting operations on the Gold Mountain Fire when his helicopter crashed in the Silver Jack Reservoir located in southwestern Gunnison County, Colorado. Investigation into the incident continues.

ROBERT HUGHES, 49, Meaux-Nunez Volunteer Fire Department, Abbeville, LA, died on August 21. On August 21, 2026, at approximately 3:00 p.m., Firefighter Robert Hughes was responding to a motor vehicle collision in Nunez, Louisiana. Firefighter Hughes' personal SUV left the roadway while navigating a curve and crashed in a ditch. Firefighter Hughes was ejected from his vehicle. Emergency personnel responded to the scene and transported Firefighter Hughes to a hospital where he was pronounced deceased.

WILLIAM GEORGE, 74, Aquashicola (PA) Volunteer Fire Company, passed away on July 4. On July 3, 2026, at 7:05 p.m., Chief William "Bill" George was dispatched to an emergency call for trees and wires down after a storm. While on scene, Chief George and his fire department closed the roadway by placing multiple barricades and signage to prevent access to the road until utility companies could respond. Early the following morning, Chief George went back to check on the scene. Then, at 10:58 a.m., Chief George suffered a cardiovascular event at home. Chief George was transported to a local hospital where he was pronounced deceased.

LESLIE R. WASHINGTON, 41, U.S. Wildland Fire Service, Fort Wainwright, AK, passed away on Aug. 11. Firefighter Leslie Washington passed away after suffering a medical emergency while responding to the Bear Trap Fire in eastern Minnesota.

RANDY LUPE, 62, U.S. Wildland Fire Service, Phoenix, AZ, died on Aug. 23. Camp crew member Randy Lupe passed away after suffering a medical emergency while working the Frijoles Fire in northern New Mexico.

JUAN ANTONIA SMITH II, 26, Rockdale County Fire Rescue, Conyers, GA, died on June 12. Firefighter Juan Antonia Smith II was responding with the Rockdale County Fire Rescue to a residential structure fire in a ladder truck. During the response, the truck overturned onto its passenger side as it was attempting to make a left turn. Firefighter Smith, who was riding in the rear jump seat, was ejected and pinned underneath the vehicle. Firefighter Smith suffered fatal injuries and was pronounced deceased at the scene.

ERIC PHILLIPS, 44, Raymond (NH) Fire Department, died on Sept. 4. Firefighter Eric Phillips suffered a medical emergency while at the scene of a fire alarm activation. Other first responders administered life-saving measures to Firefighter Phillips and transported him to a hospital where he was later pronounced deceased.

ERIC HANDLIN, 53, Odessa, TX, Fire Rescue, died on Sept. 4. While on duty from August 20 to August 21, Firefighter/Paramedic Eric Handlin responded to six emergency calls, the last one being a reported trash fire at 12:39 a.m. on August 21. At 4:08 a.m., another emergency call came in. When Firefighter/Paramedic Handlin did not report to the apparatus floor, fellow first responders searched and found him unconscious in the station bathroom. Aid was immediately rendered. Firefighter/Paramedic Handlin was then transported to a hospital where he received additional medical care and underwent surgery. Despite these efforts, Firefighter/Paramedic Handlin passed away on September 4, 2026, from a reported stroke.

JOE FLAKE, 65, Wellston, OK Fire Department, died on Sept. 7. Firefighter Joe Flake responded with the Wellston Fire Department to a grass fire with a structure involved. While using an ax inside the structure to ventilate, Firefighter Flake suffered a medical emergency. Aid was rendered immediately and Firefighter Flake was transported to a hospital where he was pronounced deceased.

SDFA OFFICER REPORTS

By now most of us have seen the movie, Crocodile Dundee, at least once. There is a line in the movie that came back to me recently when thinking about mental health. This is the line: "People go to a psychiatrist to tell 'em their problems. The psychiatrist tells 'em to someone else. For money. In Walkabout Creek, if you've got a problem, you tell Wally. And then Wally tells everyone. It's free." Simple, straight forward example of peer support. The problem we encounter as first responders is that paying someone to listen is often an exercise in frustration. Why? Mainly because most therapists are not ready or trained to hear what we have been through, and I wonder what would happen if we had a few more "Wally's" in our lives? Not that our problems should be broadcast, but what if we had someone, we knew who would listen?

As you know, I am the guy who raises the uncomfortable topics. Maybe because I have been in my share of uncomfortable places. One of those places I have found myself in over the years is with families or people who have experienced the death of a loved one. One of my mentors over the years is a man named Joseph Bayly. Bayly, writes about grief and loss not as a clinician, but as someone who has lived through the pain of the death of a loved one. The book he wrote is entitled, *The View From A Hearse*. (Not exactly the book you would pick to pass the time.) In this book he relates an experience of comfort that he received when one of his children died. "I was sitting," he remembers, "torn by grief. Someone came and talked to me of God's dealings, of why it happened, of hope beyond the grave. He talked constantly; he said things I knew were true. I was unmoved, except to wish he'd go away. He finally did. Another came and sat beside me. He didn't talk. He didn't ask leading questions. He just sat beside me for an hour and more, listening when I said something, answered briefly, prayed simply, left. I was moved. I was comforted. I hated to see him go." I read those words as a young preacher, what seems to be eons ago. However, I have never forgotten them. I have often combined them with the wisdom attributed to Abraham Lincoln, "Better to remain silent and be thought a fool than to speak and to remove all doubt."

What prompts this kind of reflection today? Two unconnected situations. First one of our west river communities recently lost a friend, neighbor, family member, fire fighter to suicide. As the kind of guy who rushes in where angels fear to tread, I answered the call to come alongside this grieving community with the arsenal of "Critical Incident Management Tools". As an aside, I wonder here if at times our SOPs and SOGs become ways to dodge the losses we encounter. Just thinking out loud. However, I have been able to as-



Rodney Veldhuizen, Chaplain

"As you know, I am the guy who raises the uncomfortable topics. Maybe because I have been in my share of uncomfortable places. One of those places I have found myself in over the years is with families or people who have experienced the death of a loved one."

semble a "hodge podge" of skilled responders who know how to listen and how to tailor a response to assist in healing and not just following a script. At the end of the evening, you would not have recognized what we did as a formal debriefing, because we mainly sat and grieved with the community. You see sometimes we hide behind protocols and never sit and grieve with those who grieve. Let me expand on this a bit more. There is a story about a little girl who was sent on an errand by her mother. She took much too long in coming back. Mother, therefore, demanded an explanation when she finally did return. Whereupon the little girl explained that on her way she had met a little girl friend who was crying because she had broken her doll. "Oh," said the mother, "then you stopped to help her fix her doll?" "Oh, no," replied the little girl. "I stopped to help her cry." I wonder if we would stop trying to "fix" the problems our friends face and sit and cry with them, if we wouldn't be more effective?

What am I driving at? The same thing I have been haranguing you about for years. When it comes to preventing the suicides, the premature retirements and other losses in the realm of first responders, it is time to take on that responsibility for ourselves. Too often when we have a pain, whether physical or emotional, we turn to the docs of the world for a pill. If you are old enough you will recall the song by the Rolling Stones, "Mother's Little Helper". The song goes like this: "What a drag it is getting old "Kids are different today", I hear every mother say; Mother needs something today to calm her down, And though she's not really ill, There's a little yellow pill. [Chorus] She goes running for the shelter of her mother's little helper, and it helps her on her way, Gets her through

her busy day..." The song ends with this refrain, "Doctor, please some more of these" Outside the door, she took four more, What a drag it is getting old..." So even in the 1960's people were turning to pharmaceuticals to help them get along and with the invention of Prozac, things have only gotten worse.

However, research indicates that most people will benefit from "Talk Therapy", and for that you don't need a license to listen. What you need is a willingness to sit and listen, not fix, not offer advice, just sit and be present. In "Chaplainese" it means the ministry of presence. Maybe, just maybe if we had more Walkabout Creek and less New York City mindset, we just might be able to support our friends in their grief and loss better than any paid professional could do. Once more the disclaimer, there are a lot of good professionals out there who are doing a tremendous job and if you find yourself out of your depth, don't be afraid to reach out. If you find yourself outside your depth, or above your paygrade, don't be afraid to find a "professional". However, don't just send your friend, take them and stay with them if needed. Why? I was once the guy who needed help! Even, for this guy, who has too many initials after his name, it is scary to admit that I needed help. If someone like me is afraid to seek help, imagine your friend finally admitting they have reached the point of seeking help?

Until we have no suicides in the world of First Responders you can be assured, I will circle back on this one again. If you get tired of hearing my harangue, then do something about it! Don't be afraid to admit you have struggled with this stuff too!

CHAPLAIN RODNEY

Cardiac events

By DAN GARLAND

For the tight-knit crew of the Fort Pierre Fire Department, rural emergency response demands elite readiness, but members are confronting an invisible threat that statistics prove is far more dangerous than the high-stakes rescues they execute: sudden cardiac arrest.

Recent national data underscores the urgency, with sudden cardiac events accounting for 45 percent of all on-duty firefighter fatalities.

The tragedy hit home locally when volunteer firefighter Joe Meligan suffered a severe heart attack while responding to an emergency incident in which a driver drove into the Missouri River. A member of law enforcement jumped into action and was able to save his life. It was an AED that saved his life. This incident ignited a local wake-up call, prompting the Fort Pierre Fire Department and regional organizations to raise awareness concerning AEDs and heart health.

2027 NORTHWEST IOWA REGIONAL FIRE SCHOOL
MARCH 12TH - 14TH, 2027
SERGEANT BLUFF, IA

FEATURING KEYNOTE SPEAKER/INSTRUCTOR
ROB BACKER

FOR MORE INFORMATION
SCAN THE QR CODE OR VISIT US AT
WWW.NWIOWAFIRESCHOOL.ORG



DEPARTED FIREFIGHTERS

Colby Lee Crago 1980-2026

Colby Lee Crago Butte & Vale Volunteer Fire Departments

Butte Volunteer Fire Department Assistant Fire Chief, Colby Lee Crago was born January 30, 1980 in Mile City, Montana. He was the son of Linda (Simons) and Bruce Crago.

Colby grew up near Belle Fourche, where he graduated from high school with the Class of '99. On September 22, 2002, Colby was united in marriage to Tanya Giannonatti. Together they were blessed with almost 24 years of marriage.

Colby was a rancher all his life. For more than 20 years he owned and operated Crago Outfitting. For over 20 years he was also a volunteer firefighter, serving most recently as Assistant Fire Chief for the Butte (SD) Volunteer Fire Department.

He also served as a volunteer Firefighter for the Vale Volunteer Fire Department.

Colby excelled at team roping, attending many rodeos and roping events throughout his life. In 2013 he achieved one of his greatest rewards, winning a horse trailer at the Wrangler Team Roping event in Buffalo WY, when he won the Rope-Off competition. Colby also won several ranch rodeos with his teams.

One of the things on Colby's "Bucket List" was shooting a Zebra in Africa, and that just happened last month. Colby enjoyed traveling and he and Tanya enjoyed several trips throughout the world, including Africa (last month), Dubai, and Cancun where he loved to sip on pina colodas. Attending the National Finals Rodeo was enjoyed many times as well.

Family was the most important things to Colby. He loved his girls



so much. As the girls got older, competing in team roping became less important to Colby, because he wanted to coach his girls, and take his girls to area rodeos to compete. He was their number one fan for sure. Nothing could make him prouder than his daughters. Colby was a wonderful husband and father. So many memories were made with him. His smile will never be forgotten, and his loving spirit will be missed forever.

Colby went home to heaven at the age of 46. He is survived by his wife, Tanya; daughters, Chloe (and Katie), Lainey (and Drew), and Brylee. He is also survived by his son, Logan (Tori) Nelson of Canton SD; mother, Linda Johnson of Belle Fourche; father, Bruce Crago of Belle Fourche; sisters, Stephanie (Robbie) Kazi of Atlanta GA, Sentel (Nathan) Schreier of Belle Fourche; brothers, Barry (Kristen) of Kaycee WY, Justin (Stephanie) of St. Onge; and numerous cousins, nieces, and nephews.

Services were held 10:30am Monday, August 31, 2026 at the [Belle Fourche Community Rec Center](#) Auditorium, (1111 NATIONAL ST BELLE FOURCHE SD 57717-1900) with Pastor Stephen Carson officiating. Visitation was held 4pm to 7pm Sunday August 30th, at Leverington Funeral Home of the Northern Hills in Belle Fourche (715 National St, Belle Fourche, SD 57717).

Interment took place at Rosehill Cemetery in Spearfish. Friends may leave written condolences online, and view the funeral service on Colby's obituary page located on the funeral home's website: www.LeveringtonFH.com

In lieu of flowers, memorials are preferred to the Butte (SD) Volunteer Fire Department.

Francis M. Bierman 1982-2026

Former Ellsworth Airforce Base Fire Department Firefighter & Rapid City Firefighter/Paramedic Francis Michael Bierman passed away on Wednesday, August 26, 2026, in Black Hawk, SD, at the age of 44.

Francis was born on July 6, 1982, in Storm Lake, Iowa, to Michael Bierman and Roberta Peterson. He graduated from Chaska High School in 2001 and shortly after graduation joined the United States Air Force, beginning a lifelong commitment to service and helping others.

While stationed in Grand Forks, ND, Francis met his future wife, Amber Waters. After a brief courtship, Francis proposed, and the two were married in December 2004. Shortly after their wedding, Francis deployed to Iraq for six months. Upon his return, Francis and Amber moved to Rapid City, SD, where they made their home and built their life together.

Francis's commitment to learning and serving others was evident from the beginning of his military career. While serving in the Air Force, he earned an associate degree in Fire Science in 2005 and became a certified Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) in 2004. His desire to continue learning and challenge himself remained constant throughout his life. In August 2005, Francis began pursuing a bachelor's degree in business management. Although he completed 142 of the 180 required credits, Francis eventually realized that business was not the path he wanted to pursue and began looking toward a career that better reflected his passion for helping others.

Following his separation from the Air Force in 2009, Francis returned to his passion for emergency services. He enrolled in the Associate of Science Paramedic program at Western Dakota Technical Insti-

tute while working for the Rapid City Fire Department, completing the program in December 2010. Just one month later, Francis and



Amber welcomed their son, Evan Michael Bierman, in January 2011, beginning a new and exciting chapter in their lives.

As Francis embraced his role as a father, he continued to grow both personally and professionally. In 2013, he was accepted into the Associate

of Science in Nursing program at the University of South Dakota, earning his degree in May 2016. His passion for learning did not stop there. Francis went on to earn his Bachelor of Science in Nursing in 2020, followed by a master's degree as a Nurse Practitioner through South Dakota State University, which he completed in May 2024. Along the way, Francis was always eager to take on new challenges and explore new opportunities. He obtained his real estate license and entered a partnership with his best friend, pursuing the sale of custom-built homes.

Francis spent many years working in the Rapid City Emergency Room, where he became deeply respected for his knowledge, dedication, and compassion. Over the course of his career, he served in nearly every role—from ER technician and paramedic to registered nurse and, ultimately, nurse practitioner. His experience gave him a unique understanding of every aspect of the emergency department, and he took great pride in the work he did and the people he cared for. More than just a workplace, the ER became a second home to Francis, and he cherished his "ER family" and the friendships he built there throughout the years.

Alongside his career, Francis cherished the time he spent with his family. They loved making memories together through camping, hiking, ice skating, fishing, and attending sporting events, including professional baseball games. Their home was often a gathering place for family and friends, where they

enjoyed backyard barbecues, yard games, and Sunday football. He also enjoyed training his Labrador retriever, Gauge, and competing in retriever hunt tests.

Francis also had a deep love for coaching and working with young people. He spent countless hours coaching hockey and baseball and was an active member of the youth sports community for more than 10 years. For Francis, coaching was about much more than the game itself. He loved teaching kids, encouraging them to work together, and helping them learn the importance of teamwork, sportsmanship, perseverance, and having fun.

Francis's love of hunting took him many miles and led to many lasting friendships along the way. Hunting was also something he enjoyed sharing with his son, Evan. The time they spent together provided opportunities to teach and reinforce the importance of safety, sportsmanship, and responsibility while enjoying the outdoors. Francis also enjoyed mountain biking and skiing with Evan and friends, always making time for the activities and people he enjoyed most.

Grateful for having shared his life are his wife, Amber Bierman; son, Evan Bierman; mother, Roberta Bierman (Dan LaForge) of Chaska, MN; Siblings; Matthew Bierman of Chaska, MN; Luke Bierman (Jasmine Bierman) of Minneapolis, MN; Clint Bierman (Anya Mityushina) of Chanhassen, MN; Tanya Aby (Daniel Garcia) of Rapid City, SD; Ian LaForge (Kevin Meyer) of Minneapolis, MN; Joey LaForge of St. Paul, MN; and several aunts, uncles, and cousins. He was preceded in death by his father, Michael Bierman; son, Owen Bierman; aunt, Judy; uncle, Charles, and his grandparents, Francis and Florance Bierman; Gus and Lois Peterson.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be directed in support of the family.

www.supportnow.org/the-bierman-family

A Celebration of Life service was held on Wednesday, September 2, at Rushmore Thunder Dome (5611 Old Folsom Rd, Rapid City).



Rockerville called to vehicle fire

Around 3:20 p.m. on Sept. 15 Rockerville Volunteer Fire Department responded to a vehicle fire on Hwy 16 in front of Old McDonalds Farm. Given that some of our resources were tied up on the Berretta Fire, RK Chief requested RC Fire Truck 6 to assist us. The fire had spread into the mowed grass in the ditch, but that wasn't going to go far. The vehicle was fully involved upon arrival. Thankfully all occupants were able to escape the vehicle without any injuries. Truck 6 knocked down the fire. RK E1-6 and Tender 2-3 supplied Truck 6 with water. Thank you to our friends at RC Station 6 as well as Medic 8 for your response. From the Rockerville Volunteer Fire Department Facebook page.

SDFA OFFICER DIRECTORY

PRESIDENT CHARLIE KLUDT

P.O. Box 606
Viborg, SD 57070
605-326-5072 Home
605-940-1087 Cell
Pres@sdfirefighters.org

VICE PRESIDENT DON WARD

1202 Union St.,
Belle Fourche, SD 57717
605-645-2689 Cell
vpres@sdfirefighters.org

DIRECTORS:

SOUTHEAST DAVE JORGENSEN

501 NE 2nd St.
Colton, SD 57018
605-446-3980
SEDir@sdfirefighters.org

NORTHEAST MARK STOKS

901 13th Ave. SW
Aberdeen, SD 57401
605-380-9817 Cell
NEDir@sdfirefighters.org

CENTRAL RICHARD GEORGE

39604 227th St,
Woonsocket SD 57385,
605-461-9190,
CenDir@sdfirefighters.org

NORTHWEST CHAD BAUMGARTEN

PO BOX 599
Lemmon, SD 57638
374-5868 Home
222-9702 Cell
NWDir@sdfirefighters.org

BLACK HILLS CHERISE EVANS

4555 Candlewood Pl, Apt. 308
Rapid City, SD 57702
605-393-7801 Cell
BHDir@sdfirefighters.org

BADLANDS JASON MOSTERD

526 Franklin St,
Burke, SD 57523
605-840-0252
BLDir@sdfirefighters.org

SOUTH CENTRAL RICK GUSTAD

PO BOX 33
Platte, SD 57369
605-337-9629 Home
605-680-2637 Cell
SCDir@sdfirefighters.org

NVFC DIRECTOR JEREMY WALLA

6408 Prestwick Rd
Rapid City, SD 57702
605-484-3911 cell
Jeremy.walla@gmail.com

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TAYLOR MOORE

605-501-2162
info@sdfirefighters.org



SDFA OFFICER REPORTS



Charlie Kludt, President

"I want to congratulate longtime fire service sales representative for Key Fire Hose, Jay Fredrickson, on his retirement. Jay has been coming to state fire schools for decades and provided fire departments with miles and miles of various fire hose and appliances. He told me at fire school this year, it was his final one on the job."

Fall Activities in Full Swing

I want to congratulate longtime fire service sales representative for Key Fire Hose, Jay Fredrickson, on his retirement. Jay has been coming to state fire schools for decades and provided fire departments with miles and miles of various fire hose and appliances. He told me at fire school this year, it was his final one on the job. Congratulations and Thank You for all your years of providing for the fire departments across our state and the country.

If you are looking for a quick session of fire services ideas and discussions, the SDFA Fall Fire Conference is 2-4 October at the Pete Lien & Sons Shooting Sports Complex just north of Rapid City. For full details and register at the events link on the SDFA website. October is Fire Prevention and Home Safety month. "Charge into Fire Safety™: Safe Charging is a Superpower," is the slogan for this year.

Emphasizing the proper ways to safely use, store, and recharge all of the many rechargeable, battery powered devices we have in our homes, cars, and on ourselves every day.

Check out the NFPA's Fire Prevention Week website, www.FPW.org, for more public safety announcements and information.

Harvest season is upon. Silage cutters have finished up most of the acres for this year, but the combines, trucks, tractors, and various implements will be travelling the roads for the next several weeks.

Let's hope for the best, but prepare and review for the possibilities. Simple fire extinguishers or weed sprayers with water can be a million dollar fire stopper.

Hunting seasons have started, as well. A simple public service announcement in the local newspapers or posters with reminders of having extinguishers or extra water in case of a fire may be in order. Remind hunters to be careful where they park. Vehicle exhaust systems can easily start tall grass on fire.

Hopefully, we all make it through with a slow fall fire season.

Dan Hodge and I will have a report from the fall NVFC Conference. We had several pre-conference committee meetings in September. One of the topics talked about was Community Risk Reduction (CRR) plans.

CRRs are preparedness and prevention plans for communities of all sizes. Just like we have an escape plan from our house in a fire, shelter in place locations for storms and tornadoes, and winter survival kits for our personal planning, communities need to have basic plans for the normal or likely to happen events that could strike. Play the "What if.?" game of scenarios. But keep it simple and solutions that are locally solvable.

Major disasters are the usual thought process.

If a wildfire is spreading across the cornfields or pastures on the edge of town, who is checking for spot fires inside the city limits? Have you done a walk-a-bout



Jay Fredrickson

of your property to see what is a fire hazard or catch point for those little satanic butterfly embers floating into that little pile of leaves on your roof or untrimmed grass by your garage?

Are those batteries charged or extra ones still in the drawer? Do you run your portable generator on a monthly basis? To borrow from the Boy Scouts, be prepared.

The SDFA Board will be meeting on 2 October prior to the Fall Conference. If you have something to discuss or for the board to consider, let your district director

know.

The Fall Fire Conference will also have a membership meeting to discuss current fire service happenings and looking forward to the 2027 state legislative session. An open forum for discussion will take place after the speaker sessions. Updates and brainstorming for fire service related ideas.

Hope to see you there.

Stay safe,

CHARLIE KLUDT
SDFA President

Hello South Dakota Firefighters:

As I write this, the temps outside have come down from the blistering heat we had this summer, but in the west the conditions for wildland fire are high.

By the time this newsletter is delivered to you, we will have had our Fallen Firefighter Memorial service in Pierre. We added a name to the memorial this year and that always makes for an emotional time.

This past month also was the 25th anniversary of 9/11. There were many memorial services held throughout the country. I was traveling in South Dakota on non-interstate highways and saw

many departments that had placed engines close to main roads with American flags attached, just some of the memorial things I saw.

It is good to remember the people listed on the memorial in Pierre and the 343 firefighters who lost their lives doing what we do on 9/11.

This newsletter should arrive before Fall Conference being held at the Pete Lien & Sons Shooting Sports Complex. Remember if you are coming, the address says it is in Piedmont but to get there you go north from Exit 61 on Interstate 90. Hope to see you there.

DON WARD, VP SDFA



Don Ward, Vice President

"This newsletter should arrive before Fall Conference being held at the Pete Lien & Sons Shooting Sports Complex. Remember if you are coming, the address says it is in Piedmont but to get there you go north from Exit 61 on Interstate 90."

SDFA OFFICER REPORTS

From SE South Dakota:

Events are happening this fall, lots of things to do,

Fall Conference is October 2-4 at the Pete Lien and Son Shooting Complex, 11 miles north of Rapid City, off exit 61. 3 great speakers will be teaching, explaining how the fire service is. Lots of great information to absorb. Register on the SDFA website and to see list of those speaking and schedule.

Fall school will be October 17th at North Sioux City. 205 Sodrac Drive, North Sioux City, 57049

See flyer at "sdsouthdakotafiredistrict.com/se-district-fire-schools".

A comprehensive listing about Fall Fire School.

Spring School 2027 will be hosted in Beresford, classes are being lined up, look for another great SE District spring school.

Dues notices will be coming out in November for the SDFA and SE District dues. Any questions on these dues notices, feel free to contact any of your district representatives. You can also refer to the SDFA web page on what your dues can get you.

100% member: \$25.00 per rostered member, Digital newspaper for rostered members, AD&D in-

surance, voting at SDFA schools, sponsor high school student for scholarship, posting on the SDFA webpage.

Department only: \$100.00 annually, one copy of newspaper, some discounts may be available for sponsored events,

With fall comes changes, school sports, harvesting, weather changes. As we move closer to fall, we still need to be diligent in our training for all these events. Sports injuries, many of us, place a vehicle outside the football games, have EMT's inside at other games, always good to refresh on these before games start.



Dave Jorgenson,
Southeast Director

"As we move closer to fall, we still need to be diligent in our training for all these events. Sports injuries, many of us, place a vehicle outside the football games, have EMT's inside at other games, always good to refresh on these before games start."

Harvesting time, another good time to be aware of the types of scenes you may be responding to, what equipment or help you need, whether fire or rescue, be prepared. And of course the weather, we always respond no matter what the weather

is, practice safe driving, dress accordingly, drive to arrive, then drive home safely.

Stay Safe and train

DAVID JORGENSEN
SESD director

Would I join today's fire service? This is something that I have asked myself lately. When I joined in 1984 things were simpler. Some of the members, instructors, and mentors were Vietnam veterans and even some from Korea remained. The life experiences from these men bled through to the fire house. New members had to earn their respect and trust; you didn't automatically get it when you signed on. As a new member the fire service owed me nothing, yet I was expected to give it everything. One big thing I remember is we didn't talk trash about others. Sure,

we had arguments, but it stayed inside the firehouse walls. When the alarm came in, we were one team, regardless of our differences. Fast forward to 2026. People have multiple things to do. They are busy with work, family, kids and every type of hobby imaginable. Social media is everywhere. Seems like everyone has a podcast to voice their opinion. There is a nonstop assault on leadership, small departments, volunteers and pretty much anyone doing something different than the keyboard warriors. Next time you are on social media look at it as if you were thinking about

joining your local department. Would you want to be part of the chaos, backstabbing and personal attacks? Too many people think the entire fire service should work as they do with no knowledge of the department or individual they are commenting on. Young people spend an incredible amount of time on social media. How can we expect the younger generation to want to be part of this great career if we are airing our grievances online? I understand there is a difference in how generations learn and expect to be treated. But I often wonder if some of the recruitment



Rick George,
Central District Director

"One big thing I remember is we didn't talk trash about others. Sure, we had arguments, but it stayed inside the firehouse walls. When the alarm came in, we were one team, regardless of our differences. Fast forward to 2026."

and retention issues we have start with us. Thanks for reading.

RICK GEORGE,
Central District Director

CLASSIFIEDS

CLASSIFIED ADS FOR THE NEBRASKA 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@nebraskafirefighter.com to place your personal or departmental ads.



FOR SALE: 2003 Ford F-550 Super Duty Brush Rig, 6.01 Power Stroke Diesel, 1250 GPM Pump-front nozzle, 400-gallon poly tank, 8,200 miles, excellent condition, Located: Columbus, NE. Price: \$35,000. **Columbus (NE) Rural Fire Department**, contact Ted: (402) 910-1403.



FOR SALE: Blair Volunteer Fire is selling a 1999 Freightliner E-One walk in rescue. It has 14,228 miles and 1,774 hours. **For more details please email chief@blairvfd.com.**

**Don't need it?
SELL IT!**

South Dakota

Firefighter Classifieds...
jeff@southdakotafirefighter.com

Thoughts From the Tailboard

"Where were you when the world stopped turning." The lyrics in Alan Jackson's song. We all know it. We all sing along. It has different meanings for each and every one of us. September 11 is behind us, but the memories still linger. The Rapid City Fire Department along with Ellsworth AFB Fire Department organized a fitting tribute to the day. A speaker pointed out that many of the firefighters and police officers were not even born on 9-11. I wonder if another generation had the same thoughts on the 25th Anniversary of the end of World War II? For whatever reason, each generation seems to have their defining event that marks their memories. For those of us who live in Rapid City, one of those defining moments, was the 1972 flood that claimed 238 lives and changed the city forever.

Fall has now officially arrived, but the fire season is still here. As I compose this month's ramblings, I am reminded that on October 16, 2016, we had a grass fire east of Wall. In a little over an afternoon and evening we blackened over 50,000 acres. We all know that this can be just as dangerous as mid-July. Grass is dry, cured, days are warm and generally windy. All the ingredients for a fast-moving fire. Hopefully as night falls, temperatures drop, humidity goes up, we then catch it and are left with the mop up. But I'm not telling any of you something new. Just a reminder to be



Denny Gorton,
Retired Treasurer/Past President

"As you read this month's SD Firefighters Newspaper, the Fallen Firefighters Memorial Service will have just been concluded. The Fall SD Firefighters Conference will be happening. There have been a number of district fire schools, and more coming along. I hope you are able to attend one of these. It is so important to support and learn all the time."

safe and go home to your loved ones.

As you read this month's *SD Firefighters Newspaper*, the Fallen Firefighters Memorial Service will have just been concluded. The Fall SD Firefighters Conference will be happening. There have been a number of district fire schools, and more coming along. I hope you are able to attend one of these. It is so important to support and learn all the time.

I just looked at the calendar. I see that Mid-term fall elections are November 3. Now I am not saying who to vote for. I'm saying make sure you go and vote for the candidate you feel best reflects your views and ideals. We all have our opinions, and the ballot box is the best place to make your opinion known. There, was that right in the middle of the road?

A final thought just popped into my pea picking brain. In 2016 the Pennington County VFD's received an AFG grant to replace 253 SCBA's. We were super excited, of course. They were so needed. However, now the SCBA's are reaching their 10-year life, and we have to look at replacing all

of them. Not complaining, but ten years ago seemed so far into the future. I know a number of fire departments over the past several years have replaced their SCBA's. My point is start now building your reserve funds or whatever, as one day you will need to buy new.

That seems like about all for now. Take care, hope to see you at the Fall Conference.

DENNY GORTON

**ACTION
FIRE
PHOTOS
NEEDED!**

Please send them to
jeff@southdakotafirefighter.com
along with
information to
explain the photo.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 2, 2026

- 8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. SDFA Board of Directors Meetings
- 1:00 - 3:30 p.m. Joint Council of Emergency Services Meeting
- 5:00 - 7:00 p.m. Registration Desk & Vendors Open

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2026

- 7:30 - 8:00 a.m. Registration Desk Opens
- 8:00 - 8:30 a.m. General Membership Meeting & Discussions
- 8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Bridging the Gap: Connecting, Training, and Leading Every Generation in the Fire Service - *Calen Maningas*
- 12:00 - 1:30 p.m. Lunch (provided with registration)
- 1:30 - 3:00 p.m. Through the Smoke: A Family's Journey After Line-of-Duty Death - *Shawn Fischer*
- 5:00 - 7:30 p.m. Conference & Dear Old Timers Social (*hors d'oeuvres & cash bar*)

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2026

- 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Forged by Fire - *Tom Merrill*
- 12:00 p.m. SDFA General Membership Meeting & Discussions

REGISTER TODAY!

Scan the QR Code below to register or visit www.sdfirefighters.org for more information!

Registration Fee: \$75
Lifetime Members: Free
Exhibitor/Vendor Fee: \$25



LODGING OPTIONS

The South Dakota Firefighters Association does not have an official room block for the 2026 Annual Conference. Attendees are encouraged to make reservations directly with one of the nearby hotels listed below.

Residence Inn by Marriott Rapid City
581 WaTiki Way
Rapid City, SD
(605) 791-9600

Conference Inn & Suites Conference Center Rapid City
1333 N. Elk Vale Road
Rapid City, SD
(605) 608-8576

La Quinta Inn & Suites by Wyndham
1416 N. Elk Vale Road
Rapid City, SD
(605) 718-7000

Baymont by Wyndham Rapid City
4040 Cheyenne Boulevard
Rapid City, SD
(605) 5036104

SPEAKERS & SESSIONS



CALEN MANINGAS

As a Battalion Chief and 19-year member of the Rapid City Fire Department, Chief Maningas leads 46 personnel across seven stations while serving as a contract instructor for the National Fire Academy's Executive Fire Officer Program. He is a member of the South Dakota State Fire Marshals Advisory Board, a nationally published author and speaker, and has presented at Fire Rescue International and the CPSE Excellence Conference on strategic leadership and visionary planning. Holding a master's degree in executive leadership and the Chief Fire Officer (CFO) designation, Chief Maningas believes the example you set should always surpass the authority you are given.

Bridging the Gap: Connecting, Training & Leading Every Generation in the Fire Service

Today's fire service is the first in history to have as many as four generations serving side by side, each bringing different experiences, communication styles, and expectations to the firehouse. This interactive course helps fire service leaders understand generational differences, separate stereotypes from reality, and develop practical strategies to build trust, improve communication, and strengthen team culture. Participants will learn how to effectively train, mentor, and lead firefighters across generations while preserving the traditions and standards of the profession. Whether supervising a single crew or an entire department, attendees will leave with actionable tools to foster accountability, increase engagement, and create a unified team focused on serving the community with excellence.



SHAWN FISCHER

Shawn Fischer has dedicated more than 20 years to serving others through emergency services and healthcare. A member of the Sturgis Volunteer Fire Department since 2012, she is a paramedic, nurse, EMS educator, and healthcare leader. Following the line-of-duty death of her husband, Assistant Fire Chief Dave Fischer, in 2018, Shawn has continued to honor his legacy by advocating for firefighter safety, resilience, and rural healthcare. She currently serves as Administrator of Heartland Home Health & Hospice while remaining active as a nurse, paramedic, and supporter of the first responder community.

Through the Smoke: A Family's Journey After Line-of-Duty Death

Passionate about supporting first responders and their families, Shawn speaks from both her professional experience and her personal journey. Her presentation reflects on losing her husband in the line of duty while also exploring resilience, healing, and the strength found in the fire service family. Through her story, she hopes to inspire others to embrace hope, honor those we have lost, and remind every first responder and their loved ones that they never walk the journey alone.



TOM MERRILL

Tom Merrill is a 43-year fire service veteran with the Snyder Fire Department in Amherst, New York, where he served 26 years as a department officer, including 15 years in the chief officer ranks. A former chief of department and current Fire Commissioner for the Snyder Fire District, Tom is a nationally recognized speaker, regular FDIC presenter, podcast host, and author of *The Professional Volunteer Fire Department*. He has delivered fire service programs and keynote presentations across the country, sharing his expertise in volunteer fire service leadership and organizational excellence. Tom also serves full time as the Senior Fire Dispatcher for the Town of Amherst Central Fire Alarm Office, bringing decades of leadership and operational experience to the fire service.

Forged by Fire

The American fire service is built on a rich tradition of honor, sacrifice, and hard-earned lessons that continue to shape the profession today. This engaging presentation explores the pivotal events, historic fires, and influential leaders that every firefighter should know, preserving the stories and lessons that must never be forgotten. Participants will gain a deeper appreciation for the fire service's heritage while learning how history can strengthen decision-making, leadership, and safety for future generations. By honoring the past, attendees will leave better prepared to carry its traditions and lessons forward.

EXPERIENCE, THE BEST TEACHER, PASS IT ON

By JERRY KNAPP

Someone a lot smarter than I said this, "Experience is the best teacher, it is also the most expensive." Every FD has members of varying ages and experience level. We all have experiences that need to be shared with other members: very valuable experiences. This is not only the gray hairs and the no hairs to the young guys. Anyone in the Fire Service for even a short time has experiences. For the probies, it maybe how they were intimidated by strength needed to operate a hose line. For more experienced members it maybe a close call on the fire ground with important lessons learned. It maybe a new tool they tried or a unique way to use a tool that was successful.

The question is how do you use this experience to help make your members better, safer and more ef-

fective Firefighters?

The answer is simple: STORY TIME. Pick a drill night when you expect bad weather, like the dead of winter or the stifling heat of summer and plan story time. Invite a couple of your more experienced members to share an experience with one or more lessons learned with those at drill. It is a round table type drill. Set up the chairs in a circle or some other comfortable set up.

Rules for story time include the following:

- Anyone can tell a story
- The story should have one or more lessons learned
- Others cannot criticize the story but can ask questions
- Stories need to be brief but complete

We were called mutual aid to a well involved strip mall fire with several stores involved. As a sec-

ond due pumper we were assigned to lay a supply line from the hydrant to the rear of the building, force the back door and get water on the fire. As a young firefighter, I saw glory....pushing the hose line in the back door coming out the front in victory and advising the chief we got it for you.

It was winter and when I stepped off the engine at the hydrant I slipped on the ice and went down hard. Lesson 1. We laid in our supply line and stretched the 2 1/2 to hit the fire. Truck guys got the door for us after lots of cussing, grunting and groaning. Lesson 2: Lots of locks on the back doors of strip malls. At FDIC I took a forcible entry class showing how to cut the bottom third of the door creating a "doggie door" (usually no locks there) with a saw, crawl in and unlock the door from the inside. Lesson 2A.

We pushed the line in, ahh sweet success, the vision of us coming out the front flashed thru my head, then something really heavy knocked me off my feet. Damn those light fixtures that were in the drop ceiling come back at you after you hit them with a hose line! Lesson 3 you cant see swinging fixtures in dense smoke.

We pressed in sensing success. Suddenly a large thud on our right side, the floor shakes, we retreat. Everyone is ok, lets go get it! Lesson 4 When something that dramatic happens, you need to investigate and figure out what it was. We dust ourselves off, back in.

About halfway thru the store big thud on our left side. We retreat (practice makes perfect), everyone is ok, the smoke is starting to lift in the store and we see two large HVAC units that fell on either side of us. Lesson 4...unprotected steel

roof assemblies (metal web bar joists or steel I beams) soften and lose their strength at 900 degrees F, deflect and dropped the HVAC units that would have killed us. We operated our hose line from the door way the rest of the night. Lesson learned, risk a lot to save a lot...the building was a total loss before we even got there. Bill Gustin recommends "intelligent firefighting."

Scientists tell us we learn best from stories. The US Marine Corps in their basic officer class set aside hundreds of hours for more experienced officers to share stories with up and coming officers. Maybe we should make STORY TIME part of our training as well.

Fire crews respond to lightning-sparked tree fire near Reptile Gardens

Emergency crews extinguished a small wildfire sparked by lightning in the Spring Creek drainage area behind Reptile Gardens near Rapid City, following a joint search effort on Sunday afternoon.

The Rockerville Volunteer Fire Department was paged to the scene around 3:50 p.m. after receiving reports of visible smoke in the area following a storm that brought significant lightning activity. State and federal resources joined local firefighters to locate the source of the fire in the terrain behind the popular tourist destination just south of Rapid City.

Search efforts were hindered briefly by a second passing rain storm, which knocked down the smoke and made pinpointing the exact location challenging for responders. Following a 30-minute hike into the drainage area, firefighters located a tree that had been struck by lightning, along with a small spot fire burning on the ground beneath it.

Crews quickly extinguished the flames and monitored the area to ensure all heat sources were completely suppressed. Firefighters then hiked back out of the area to their response vehicles. State forestry resources are scheduled to monitor the site in the coming days to check for potential hot spots. No injuries or property damage were reported.

(KBHB-AM 810 Sturgis, SD, August 25, 2026)

FELD FIRE™
"We've got you covered."

Type 1

Pumper

seek thermal

3M SCOTT Fire & Safety

Your equipment specialists, since 1945.

Exclusive regional dealer.

smear SPARTAN Wheeled Coach

YOUR SINGLE SOURCE APPARATUS / SERVICE / EQUIPMENT

GRAIN VALLEY | 1330 NW Jefferson St. • Grain Valley, MO 64029 • P800-568-2403

ST. LOUIS | 10403 Baur Blvd., Ste. E • Olivette, MO 63132 • P314-396-9745

CARROLL | 113 N. Griffith Rd. • Carroll, IA 51401 • P712-792-3143

GUTHRIE | 1736 Red Oak Ln. • Guthrie, OK 73044 • P800-568-2403

Visit us online at:
FeldFire.com

Rethinking the “Volunteer Fire Department” Title

Has the title “Volunteer Fire Department” lost some of its original meaning? Traditionally, it describes firefighters who serve without pay, giving their time, training, and skill to protect their communities. In everyday use, however, the phrase can create an uneven comparison: the Your Town Volunteer Fire Department is defined by its unpaid personnel, while the Large City (paid) Fire Department is often known simply as the Fire Department.

MORE THAN A TYPICAL VOLUNTEER ROLE

The word “volunteer” applies to many people who support services, organizations, and events without pay. Firefighters who serve without compensation do donate their time, but their responsibilities often extend far beyond the usual understanding of volunteering.

Many volunteer fire departments are largely self-regulated, self-managed, and at least partly self-funded. Some operating money may come from taxes through a budget line item, but that support rarely covers the full cost of operations. As a result, members often raise additional funds through community events, grants, and donations—sometimes several times a year.

Training is also essential and ongoing. Members must keep pace with changing demands, tactics, equipment, and safety expectations. They attend scheduled training, respond when called, and are on call around the clock without the predictability of regular days off. Staffing needs can also vary

widely by call volume, geography, and community size.

PROFESSIONALISM AND PUBLIC RECOGNITION

Pay status alone does not define professionalism. A firefighter is professional through training, readiness, discipline, and service—not simply because the position is compensated. In the same way, serving without pay does not make a firefighter less committed, capable, or deserving of recognition.

If the word “volunteer” were removed, the work itself would not change. Historically, volunteer firefighters served without pay, and that history shaped the title’s meaning. Even so, an unpaid, certified, and trained firefighter is still a firefighter.

“Volunteer” remains an accurate description but pairing it with a stronger subtitle could better reflect the department, its members, and the community that supports them. Possible wording might include; Volunteer Certified Fire Department or Volunteer Trained Fire Department.

SHARED COMMITMENT ACROSS COMMUNITIES

Many compensated firefighters also serve in volunteer departments where they live. Their service shows that paid and unpaid firefighters can share the same commitment to public safety, community protection, and one another.

Food for thought,

T. A. “TARZ” MULLINIX,
Lifetime Member of the SDFA.

Custer County Search and Rescue responds to three emergencies in one day

It was a busy weekend for Custer County Search & Rescue volunteers as they responded to three emergencies across the southern Black Hills on Saturday, including an injured horseback rider, a hiker suffering suspected heat exhaustion and a lost hiker.

The first call came at 10:56 a.m. for a horseback rider injured after falling from a horse south of Custer. The rider was airlifted to Rapid City by Life Flight. Search and Rescue crews secured a helicopter landing zone, while Argyle Fire Department helped identify access routes.

At 2:13 p.m., crews responded to a hiker experiencing suspected

heat exhaustion on Trail 9. The hiker was near the end of the loop, allowing rescuers to drive to the location despite much of the trail being in federally designated wilderness.

The day’s final call came at 7:59 p.m. in Wind Cave National Park for a lost hiker. The hiker’s direct 911 call provided GPS coordinates that helped ground crews quickly find the person. Search and Rescue officials credited those involved for carrying adequate water and supplies and calling for help early.

(KOTA-TV ABC 7 Rapid City, SD, September 1, 2026)



Extraordinary emergency for Rapid City firefighters

One call can change a life forever. In December of 2025, Rapid City firefighters responded to an extraordinary emergency. They safely received a newborn baby from a vehicle after the infant was born and experiencing breathing difficulties. Their quick actions helped ensure the baby was safely transferred into the care of medical professionals. Today, we’re happy to share an incredible update: that baby has been adopted by a loving family and is thriving. The adoptive mother wanted to express her heartfelt gratitude to everyone who played a role in saving her child’s life that day. She credits the first responders and medical teams with giving her family the greatest gift imaginable. Stories like this remind us why we do what we do. From the Rapid City Fire Department Facebook page.

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!

Wells drying up at homes and ranches due to heat and drought

Each morning this summer, Gordon and Connie Howie have awoken on their cattle ranch in central Pennington County and turned on the kitchen faucet, unsure if any water will

come out.

"We can't do laundry or dishes or take showers other than with a little trickle," said Connie Howie, 76. "Other times we have a little water

because it seems to come and go."

Like many ranchers and residents in rural areas of western South Dakota, the Howie family relies on a well to provide them with water for

their lives and livelihood.

But this year, perhaps the worst in recent memory, many shallow wells are running slow or have gone completely dry, forcing people to go to great lengths and expense to provide clean water for themselves or their livestock.

Experts say several consecutive years of limited winter snow pack and a shortage of rainfall have combined with increased consumption of water to cause a decrease in the levels of some underground aquifers that are a main source of water for a large swath of the Black Hills region. The problem is most acute in areas outside the reach of pipes from municipal and rural water systems.

High heat during the summer of 2026 has exacerbated the problem as people, crops and animals all require more water than usual to survive.

"We have a well at the house, but it's just not keeping up because the aquifer is dry," said Gordon Howie. "For 20 years you could trust that well 24/7, and it never quit on us, but now it's not providing enough water for everything we need."

The Howies are buying bottled water for drinking and positioning jugs of fresh water throughout the house for daily uses.

On a recent day in late August, the couple hauled a trailer to a public-access water station in Rapid City and spent \$17 to fill a 1,300-gallon tank they use to keep their 150 Texas longhorn cattle alive on their ranch in Caputa, about 10 miles southeast of Rapid City Regional Airport.

"I've lived here my whole life and I've never seen it this dry, this hot, this long," said Gordon Howie, who served in the Legislature from 2009-2011 and ran for governor in 2010. "We've seen some drought, but this is the worst one I can remember, and I'm 77 years old."

All across the plains of western South Dakota, residents who rely on shallow wells — generally 1,000 feet deep or less — are being forced to find alternative water sources.

Some are utilizing a somewhat obscure system of obtaining water in which users insert quarters or bills into a vending machine that triggers a hanging water spout to provide fresh water that is collected in tanks in pickups or on trailers. Such water stations are available in Black Hawk, Deadwood, Piedmont, Rapid City, Spearfish and Sturgis.

Those self-serve water stations are much busier than usual this summer, particularly in Rapid City, where the spout at J&J Asphalt is the only bulk water available in town and is often accessible only after a long wait.

"Everybody is hauling water these days," said Nick Randall, shop foreman at J&J Asphalt, whose shop and water station are located in an industrial area off Dyess Avenue.

Randall said the asphalt company built the water station for its own trucks that use water on paving jobs but decided to make a few extra bucks by selling it through the self-serve system. Until this year, there were three or four places to buy bulk water in Rapid City. But now J&J — which provides water it obtains from the Rapid City municipal

system — is the only public-access spigot still flowing.

Lately, the long line of trucks and trailers at the spigot has caused some inconvenience for the business, Randall said. "Some days, there's so many people lined up that we can't get our own trucks in and out," he said.

Ralph Bifulco, 62, drives his pickup with a water tank in the back to J&J Asphalt every day to spend \$7.50 to fill most of the 550-gallon tank with drinkable water.

Bifulco lives in the Ashland Heights community southwest of Ellsworth Air Force Base, where soil, surface water and groundwater have been contaminated by toxic chemicals produced by base activities.

The area has been declared an Environmental Protection Agency Superfund site. Despite significant cleanup and remedial activities, drinking water wells near the base were found in 2016 to be contaminated with per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), the so-called forever chemicals used in firefighting foam, according to the EPA.

Bifulco said he needs the water from J&J for all everyday activities. "We've got no clean water for anything," said Bifulco. "If you can't drink it, why would you shower or wash your clothes in it?"

Many rural residents have clean water delivered by truck, which requires planning and expense.

Businesses such as Frontier Water in Rapid City are extremely busy this summer.

It uses three trucks to carry up to 2,500 gallons per load to residences and ranches across the Black Hills region.

"With all these shallow wells going dry, it's really boosted my business," said Darin Klapperich, the owner of Frontier who also ranches northwest of Rapid City.

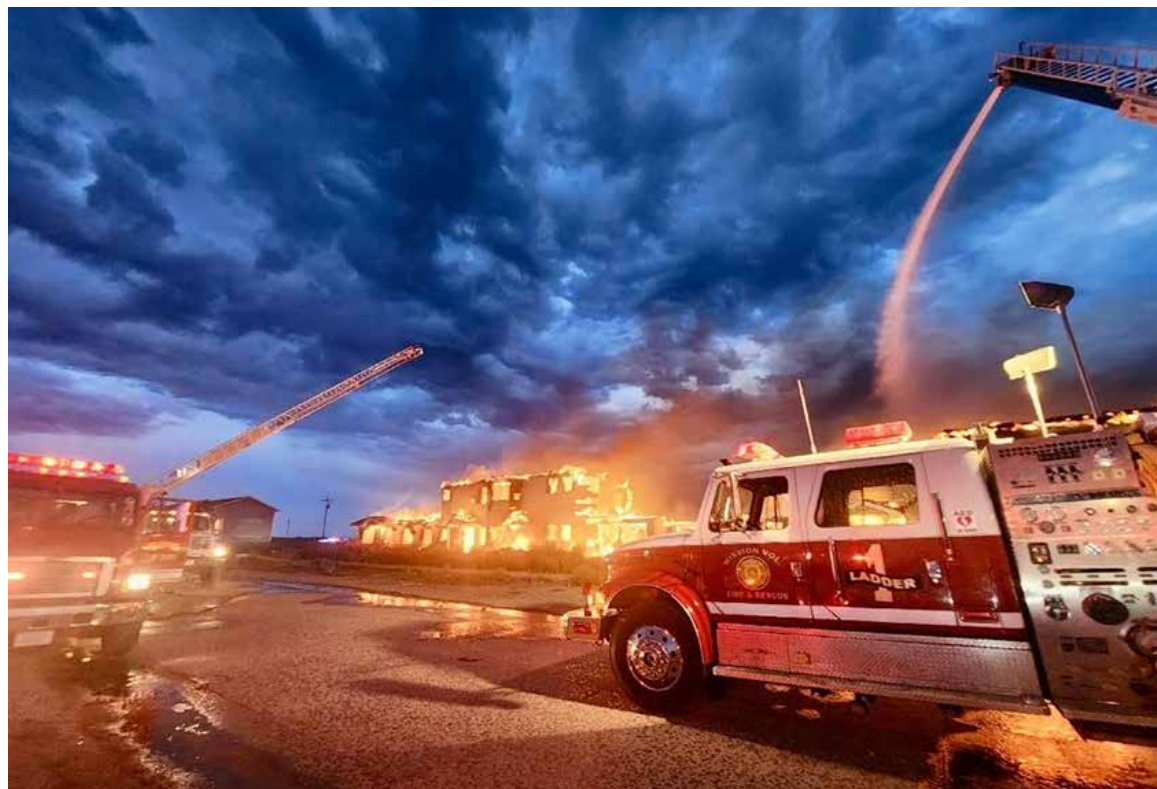
Klapperich gathers purified fresh water from municipal systems across the Black Hills and delivers it to anyone for any reason.

"From swimming pools to hot tubs to cattle to cisterns, if you want to pay the freight, then I'm your man," he boasts. But this summer, the majority of his runs are to provide drinking water for people and cattle.

On arrival, the water is dumped into a cattle tank or a holding tank for household use. At some locations, he fills underground concrete cisterns people use to store water on their properties and occasionally drains the water into a well to fill it part way, Klapperich said.

An average household uses about 150 to 200 gallons of water per day, but many rural residents are finding ways to reduce daily usage during the drought, Klapperich said. "If you have a shallow well, your kind of in trouble. But it's been amazing to see all the tricks people are using to conserve water right now," he said.

Concerns over long-range aquifer depletion, while large, deep-water Black Hills aquifers such as the Madison, Minnelusa, Inyan Kara are lower in volume but still providing



Apartment fire called into Mission

At approximately 5:44 a.m. on Sunday, September 6, Mission Volunteer Fire & Rescue received a call from the Rosebud Sioux Tribe Ambulance Service reporting a structure fire at Sunrise Apartments in northwest Mission. An ambulance crew in the area reportedly came upon the fire and a crowd of onlookers. Firefighters arrived at the 200-numbered block of apartments and found a working fire in three apartment units, along with smoke coming from the roof eaves indicating attic space involvement. Information indicated that the block was abandoned. Incident Command ordered searches of the adjoining apartment units before transitioning to a defensive strategy, which pulled all crews back from the building for safety. Incident Command requested mutual aid from the Valentine Volunteer Fire Department, which responded across the state line with an engine, aerial ladder, and manpower to supplement the Mission crews. At one point during the incident, passing thunderstorms and lightning forced aerial ladders to be temporarily lowered for firefighter safety. Firefighters remain on scene at this hour, mopping up and managing hotspots with the assistance of a backhoe from the city's maintenance department. Agencies that responded to this incident include Mission Volunteer Fire & Rescue, Valentine (Nebraska) Volunteer Fire Department, Rosebud Sioux Tribe Ambulance Service, Rosebud Sioux Tribe Law Enforcement Services, City of Mission Maintenance Department, and Cherry-Todd Electric. Mission firefighters previously responded to this apartment block in the early morning hours of August 1, extinguishing a small fire in that incident. Later that day, the 700-numbered block of apartments would burn as covered in a previous press release. From the Mission Volunteer Fire and Rescue Facebook page.

2026 SOUTH EAST DISTRICT FALL FIRE SCHOOL

October 17, 2026 | North Sioux City, SD

MORNING CLASSES:

Buttons, Bells, and Valves: Understanding Firefighter Systems – 3 HR

This interactive introductory course gives firefighters a practical, hands-on understanding of fire alarm systems, fire sprinkler components, and Phase I/Phase II elevator controls. Students will learn how these systems function on the fireground and will actively operate alarm panels, manipulate sprinkler system valves and components, and place an elevator into both Phase I recall and Phase II firefighter service. Designed for all experience levels, this engaging class strengthens foundational knowledge, improves situational awareness, and builds confidence in managing critical building systems during emergency operations
Chief Anthony Gaul, Sargent Bluff Fire Department

Lead the way for personal, Professional & Organizational change/ Training for failure 3 HR

Chief Doug Koopman, South Sioux Fire Department

Low water supply and Drafting Operations

Chief John Hoggard, North Sioux City Fire Department

AFTERNOON CLASSES:

Knock, Knock... We're coming In

Three hours, one mission stay safe!

Three hours of practical, hands-on training covering everything from selecting the right tools to controlling the door after entry- with a take-home door chock you make yourself.

Skills: Tools of the trade; Conventional Forcible Entry; Through-the-lock techniques; Door Control; Pulling ceilings

Build your own Door Chock to Take Home

Firefighter Rehab and Paramedic Madi North North Sioux City Fire Department

SCHEDULE

7:30 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.

8:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

9:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon

12:00 p.m. – 12:30 p.m.

12:30 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.

1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Registration North Sioux City Community Center

-- 205 Sodrac Drive, North Sioux City, SD

Opening Statements

Classes

Lunch and Vendors at Community Center

Business Meeting

Classes

There is no cost for registration. Meal tickets will be available at the registration desk.

Contact Person: Jim Christenson- North Sioux City Fire Department

nscfd@nscfd.org 605-232-4286 Station

Southeast District Board Members:

President: Paul Scherschligt – Lesterville, 605-661-4289

Vice President: Jayme Adrian – Harrisburg 605-759-4238

Treasure: Bob Mier – Dell Rapids, 605-370-3563

Secretary: Kevin Frangenberg – Lesterville, 605-660-0721

Director: Bruce Cramer – Colman, 605-530-2919

Director: Brian Schmidt – Tea, 605-941-3430

Director: Aaron Mullinix– Beresford, 605-595-4230

SE State Director: Dave Jorgenson – Colton, 605-351-5051

Wells FROM PAGE 12

sufficient supplies of water, many smaller, shallower aquifers tapped by individual users of the aquifer are dry or getting close.

Even some wells that don't go deep enough into the large aquifers could be seeing reduced flows.

Mark Anderson, an adjunct geology professor at South Dakota Mines and a former director with the U.S. Geological Survey, said the Black Hills region is in the midst of a precipitation shortage that is preventing underground aquifers from recharging as fast or as much as usual.

Combined with the large number of wells being drilled, the lack of rain and snow is causing concern about the long-term ability of aquifers to recharge enough to meet the needs of a growing population, Anderson said.

As reported by SD News Watch that concern was highlighted in a recent USGS study showing that water use within some of the six "sub-aquifers" in the Black Hills is outpacing the rate at which the aquifers are refilling.

Anderson, who now serves as a water consultant, said he is working with a client who recently drilled two new wells up to 1,000 feet deep and did not find sufficient water to justify completion of the well.

It is unknown if drought or poor location was the cause, but Anderson noted that some monitoring

wells around the Black Hills are indicating lower levels in recent years. "When we've had years of successive below average precipitation, wells have demonstrated significant water level decline,"

Anderson said. "This past year has been remarkable with the warm temperatures in the Black Hills with very little snow or rain."

To avoid future dry spells, the Howies plan to drill a new, deeper well to replace the 30-foot well that has run dry. The couple will continue to use a reverse osmosis system in the house to purify the well water for drinking and other uses.

Before picking a site for the new well, the couple has hired a "witcher" who will use divining rods in hopes of identifying underground water in a process known as dowsing.

Gordon Howie said he expects a sizable bill for the project, with well drilling costing about \$100 per foot and possibly a new pump ranging from \$20,000 to \$50,000.

Until then, he'll continue his twice-weekly water-gathering ritual, positioning his trailer below the J&J spigot, climbing a ladder to connect an extension pipe to the spout, unfurling bills into the payment slot and filling the tank on his trailer.

"I let every last dribble go in, because those cattle have got to have water," he said.

SOUTH EAST DISTRICT

FALL FIRE SCHOOL

MASTER THE BASICS. OWN THE FIREGROUND!

BUILT BY FIREFIGHTERS. FOR FIREFIGHTERS.

SCAN TO LEARN MORE!

SOUTHEAST FIRE DISTRICT

Map of Southeast Fire District showing counties: Deuel, Kingsbury, Brookings, Miner, Lake, Moody, McCook, Minnehaha, Turner, Lincoln, Yankton, Clay, Union.

- ✓ HANDS-ON TRAINING
- ✓ EXPERIENCED INSTRUCTORS
- ✓ REAL-WORLD SKILLS
- ✓ HIGH IMPACT
- ✓ DON'T MISS IT!

SATURDAY OCTOBER 17TH 2026

NORTH SIOUX CITY FIRE DEPARTMENT

HANDS-ON TRAINING. REAL SKILLS. REAL IMPACT.

Groundbreaking Ceremony Held for New Rapid City Fire Station

The City of Rapid City celebrated the groundbreaking of a new fire station, August 24th 2026. The new station will be located near the intersection of Homestead Street and Neel Street and will provide expanded fire, ambulance to one of Rapid City’s fastest growing areas. Rapid City Mayor Jason Salamun, Fire Chief Jason Culberson, were joined by city staff, firefighters, first responders and community members for the groundbreaking ceremony. Members of the public and media also attended.

The area surrounding Homestead and Neel Streets represents a high call volume for both the Rapid City Fire Department. The new station will improve response times and provide additional public safety resources to the surrounding community as development continues along Rapid City’s east corridor.

“Having both fire and police services in one facility is a tremendous benefit for this growing area of Rapid City,” said Fire Chief Jason Culberson. “This station will put additional public safety resources closer to the people who live, work and travel in this part of our community. It also demonstrates the strong partnership between our fire and police departments and our commitment



to working together to provide the best possible service.”

Police Chief Don Hedrick said the new station will strengthen the City’s ability to provide police services as the east corridor continues to grow.

“Station 9 marks a historic milestone in our partnership with the Rapid City Fire Department, and I am thrilled to see it take shape,” said Police Chief Don Hedrick. “As our city grows, we must be proactive about how we protect and serve. Co-locating our public safety resources allows us to collaborate more effectively with our fire partners while placing officers right in the heart of our neighborhoods, ensuring faster responses and stronger, proactive community connections.”

NEW CITY PARK
The new station will be developed alongside a new city park

as part of the City’s Homestead Street Overlay initiative. The park will provide green space, walking paths and recreational areas that will connect surrounding housing developments and create additional opportunities for residents to enjoy the area.

“The new city park will provide great opportunities for relaxation and recreation for one of Rapid City’s fastest-growing areas,” said City Parks and Recreation Director Jeff Biegler. “Parks staff are very excited to be working on this project and look forward to adding a new City Park into our parks system.”

The combined development of

the new fire station, the police substation and city park represent a significant investment in the future of the surrounding community, providing public safety services, green space and recreational opportunities in an area experiencing continued residential growth. Earlier this year, the Rapid City Common Council approved \$9.1 million for the new station and adjacent city park and also approved a design amendment last month. Construction of the new public safety facility and park is expected to begin August 2026, with completion anticipated in December of 2027.



What’s an inch tall & can move a fire truck?

A classified ad in the South Dakota Firefighter!

Email jeff@southdakotafirefighter.com to get your truck moving fast!



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.

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

Officer’s Name:	Office:
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Should You Flow Water on Smoke?

By COLE KLEINWOLTERINK

For years, many firefighters were taught a simple rule: don't open the nozzle until you see fire.

That idea was usually based on two concerns. First, applying water too early could upset the "thermal balance," pushing heat and steam down onto victims and firefighters. Second, flowing water before reaching the seat of the fire could cause unnecessary water damage.

Fire behavior research has given us a much better understanding of what actually happens when water is introduced into a hot fire environment. This article will reference a study conducted by the UL Fire Safety Research Institute (UL-FSRI), *Impact of Fire Attack Utilizing Interior and Exterior Streams on Firefighter Safety and Occupant Survival: Full Scale Experiments*. Their findings challenge both of these traditional concerns.

So the question becomes: If we have hot, turbulent smoke in front of us, do we really need to wait until we can see flames before opening the nozzle?

Remember, smoke is fuel. It contains unburned products of combustion that, given the right mixture of heat and oxygen, can ignite. Rapidly moving, dark, turbulent smoke should get our attention. It tells us that the envi-

ronment contains a large amount of heat and potentially flammable gases.

Cooling that environment removes one of the key ingredients needed for continued fire growth: **heat**.

But let's be clear: this does not mean blindly opening the nozzle every time we see smoke. It means recognizing that the reach of our stream can be used to cool a dangerous environment while we continue advancing toward the fire.

The research gives us some important reasons why.

MYTH #1: WATER WILL PUSH HEAT AND STEAM ONTO VICTIMS

One of the biggest arguments against flowing water before seeing fire was the concern that doing so would upset the "thermal balance." Firefighters were taught that water introduced into the hot gas layer would turn to steam, pushing heat downward and potentially burning trapped occupants.

We know water expands significantly when it changes from liquid to vapor. In the fire service, we commonly teach that water expands approximately 1,700 times when converted to steam. On its own, that sounds like a good reason to be cautious.

But that is only part of what is happening.

When water absorbs heat, the

gases around it cool rapidly. As those gases cool, they contract. During one UL-FSRI experiment, temperatures dropped from more than 1,500°F to below 300°F after water was applied. Although some of the water expanded as it became steam, the hot gases contracted by an even greater amount resulting in a net effect of contraction.

Researchers could see this effect at the openings of the structure. As temperatures dropped, gas flow at the window and doorway briefly changed from an outward flow to an inward flow. In other words, cooling the compartment caused the gases inside to contract.

UL-FSRI also measured moisture levels to determine whether suppression water was creating dangerous steam conditions for trapped occupants. In a bedroom outside the flow path, researchers found no significant increase in moisture near the one-foot level after suppression began. It is also important to remember that the fire itself is already producing water vapor as part of the combustion process.

This does not mean steam does not exist or that nozzle technique does not matter. It means properly applied water is not simply creating a wave of heat and steam that gets pushed down onto victims.

In fact, the bigger effect is the opposite:

Water absorbs energy.

Temperatures drop.

Hot gases contract.

Conditions improve.

For both trapped occupants and firefighters operating inside, removing heat from the environment is a good thing.

MYTH #2: EARLY WATER APPLICATION CAUSES UNNECESSARY WATER DAMAGE

The research suggests that cooling while advancing can be accomplished without using an excessive amount of water. UL-FSRI measured water use throughout its experiments. Depending on the fire conditions and tactic, total water use ranged from approximately 30.6 gallons to 257.2 gallons. The researchers were also very clear that these experiments were not designed to prove that one attack method used less water than another.

That distinction matters.

This research should not be twisted into an argument that exterior attack is always better, interior attack is always better, or that one specific tactic will always save water. Instead, one of the important findings is that firefighters were able to use the reach of the stream to cool conditions while advancing toward the fire with a relatively low amount of total water.

Water used to cool your path is

not necessarily wasted water. It can make conditions around the advancing hose team more tenable while firefighters work toward the seat of the fire. That does not mean the nozzle firefighter should stop every ten feet and dump hundreds of gallons into a hallway. The goal is still to get water onto the burning fuel.

UL-FSRI explains that until the nozzle reaches a position where water can effectively enter the fire room, much of the cooling during the approach is localized around the nozzle team. Heat and smoke may continue to rebound until firefighters gain line-of-sight access to the fire room and begin cooling the burning contents.

Think of it as progression. Take forcible entry as an example. We may gap a door before we force it completely. Gapping the door is not our final objective. It is one step that helps us accomplish the larger goal of gaining entry.

Cooling while advancing is similar. The hallway is not where we want to finish flowing water. It is part of the path that eventually gets the nozzle into a position where the stream can reach the burning fuel. The key is not to confuse using water on the approach with losing sight of the objective. The objective remains the same: move toward the fire, gain line of sight to the fire area, and put water on the burning fuel.

THE TAKEAWAY

Firefighters should understand the why behind using the reach of the stream to cool a dangerous environment while advancing. If you have hot, turbulent smoke overhead, you do not necessarily have to wait until flames appear before water can be useful. When conditions indicate significant heat in the gas layer, properly applied water can begin removing energy from the environment before the nozzle ever reaches the fire room.

The process is simple:

Water absorbs energy.

Hot gases cool.

Cooling gases contract.

Conditions improve.

Then we continue moving toward the fire.

None of this means we should blindly flow water into every smoke-filled space. Nozzle discipline, stream placement, movement, and reading conditions still matter.

Maybe the better question for today's nozzle firefighter is: What are the conditions telling me, and can my stream make those conditions better while I continue toward the fire?

Cole Kleinwolverink is a member of the Wauke Fire Department, Van Meter Fire Department, and Fire Science instructor at Des Moines Area Community College. Feel free to reach out to him at kleinwolverinkc@gmail.com with any questions, comments or inquiries.

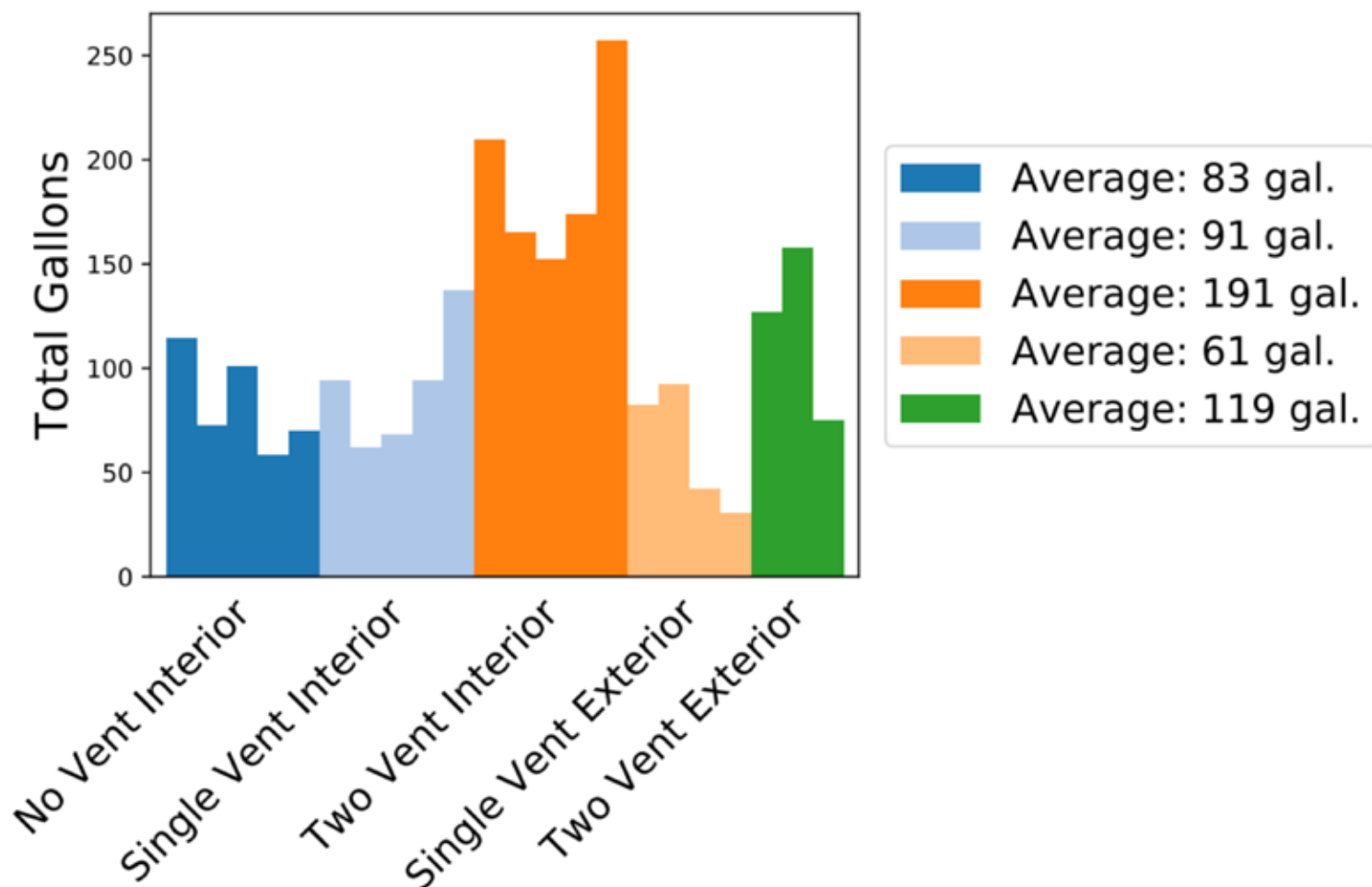


Figure 6.48: Water flow during all experiments grouped by ventilation type and attack method.



Johnson Siding wildland firefighting training

Saturday, September 12th was focused on water operations in wildland firefighting for the Johnson Siding Volunteer Fire Department. There was a focus on operating engines in different capacities, whether supplying a primary pumping engine or secondary engine, or sending water to the main trunk line. On a volunteer department it is important to know how to perform many different functions because you never know where you will be assigned. Firefighters rotated between Tender 1-4 and Engines 3-3 and 3-9 to gain as much knowledge as possible. When training was over our personnel had barely had time to get home when JSFD was paged for a medical call on a trail off the beaten path. Rescue 8 was tasked with getting the patient back to a safe location to be placed in the waiting ambulance for transport to the hospital. Pennington County Sheriff's Office also had Deputies on scene to assist where needed. From the Johnson Siding Fire Department Facebook page.



Wind and Fire raises funds

Wind and Fire motorcycle group raised \$3,380 on August 5 for Black Hills Children's Home. On September 13, another \$1,539 was donated to the Home. The group members raised some with other monies coming from boot donation collections. Wind and Fire Motorcycle Group started 1991 in California with Firefighter Motorcyclists. The mission is to support children's functions like burn camps and/or homes. They mostly exist in USA and Europe with almost 200 chapters and over 4,000 members. Started attending the rally back in 1992, with the first official national rally here in 1995. With the Black Hills Chapter bringing awareness to needy children here back in 2013, raising minimal funds to start with much larger amounts for 13 years now. Local chapter (Black Hills) can be contacted by email at wnfire@rocketmail.com.

Lookout Fire in Spearfish

On Monday, September 7, at 2:33 p.m. Deadwood Fire & Rescue was paged for mutual aid to the Lookout Fire in Spearfish. Deadwood sent Brush 6 and The Hawk (tender) with a total of seven firefighters. One Deadwood firefighter from Brush 6 was assigned to Spearfish Engine 3 for structure protection, while Brush 6 moved to another structure for protection. The Hawk worked to replenish other units with water closer to the fire line. All Deadwood crews were released around 12:30 a.m. and returned to Deadwood. Deadwood Tender 9 was on scene this morning at 7 a.m. with a crew of three to assist with continued firefighting efforts through the day. Photos are from firefighters on scene. From the Deadwood Fire Department Facebook page.



Rapid City Woman Arrested After Stealing Rapid City Fire Department SUV During Police Pursuit

A Rapid City woman was arrested Friday morning after allegedly stealing a Rapid City Fire Department Mobile Medic SUV from an active call and leading officers on a multi-agency pursuit. At around 10 a.m. on Sept. 25, officers were dispatched to an apartment at 235 Curtis Street for a report of an assault. On arrival, police made contact with several individuals in an apartment, and a Rapid City Fire Department Mobile Medic Unit was dispatched to evaluate an injured party. While RCFD crews were treating the injured party, a female subject, identified as 26-year-old Mahpiya Red Feather of Rapid City, entered the driver's seat of the Mobile Medic SUV. Red Feather placed the vehicle into gear and drove off. Police on scene quickly caught up to the vehicle, pursuing it after it turned eastbound on Interstate 90.

The SUV exited the interstate at Exit 63 and continued eastbound along Highway 14/16. Spike strips were successfully deployed by a Pennington County Sheriff's Office deputy prior to the vehicle coming to a stop in the area of South C Avenue and W. Elm Street in New Underwood, where Red Feather was detained. Law enforcement determined Red Feather is on parole. She was placed under arrest for Aggravated Assault on Law Enforcement, Eluding, Grand Theft, and a Parole Hold, with additional charges likely pending as the investigation into the incident continues. The Rapid City Police Department extended its "appreciation to the Pennington County Sheriff's Office and the South Dakota Highway Patrol for their assistance in the pursuit."





First Responders, their spouse, and dependents are eligible for **FREE & CONFIDENTIAL** services.

CONFIDENTIAL, FREE, THERE FOR YOU!

CONNECTIONS INC

First Responders Assistance Program | First Responders & Family Solutions

info@connectionseap.com
www.connectionseap.com
Call today: 800-779-6125

Helping Your Family Find solutions:

- Stress
- Emotional Problems
- Post Traumatic Stress
- Anxiety & Depression
- Mental Health
- Chemical & Substance Abuse
- Marriage & Family Issues
- In-person Counseling or Telehealth

ONE SKID. MORE JOBS THAN **JUST FIRE.**



TTI SLIP-ON SKID FOR UTVS



CHECK IT OUT YOURSELF

NOW AVAILABLE.



We build this one differently. The tank is a TTI rotationally-moulded poly shell – 79.2 gallons, UV-stabilized, fully drainable, carrying a 25-year warranty. We mate it to a WATERAX® high-pressure pump on a genuine Honda GX270, plumb the pressure-relief bypass, fit the reel and frame, and wet-test the assembled unit before it leaves the Sioux Falls warehouse. It arrives primed, proven, and ready for the bed of the truck.

- Honda GX270 - 8.5 HP, 270cc
- WATERAX® Pump
- 79.2-Gal TTI Poly Tank
- Hose Reel
- 100 ft (30 m) of red Gates Plant Master 300 hose
- Lexan® polycarbonate combination fog nozzle, ¾ in GHT – straight stream to fog
- Galvanized Mount & Skid
- Pressure-Relief Bypass

Contact your Heiman Fire Partner for more info!



WHEN PROTECTION MEANS EVERYTHING.



Chris Bornitz
Eastern South Dakota
605.530.8210
chrisbornitz@heimanfire.com



Randy Hook
Central & Eastern South Dakota
605.254.1791
randy.hook@heimanfire.com



Brian Gaalswyk
Western South Dakota
605.769.0376
briang@heimanfire.com

View Trucks & Shop for Fire Equipment online at **HEIMANFIRE.COM** 