

Firefighting Content for Maryland & Beyond



VOLUME XIII: ISSUE V

VOLUNTEER TRUMPET

MARYLAND STATE FIREMEN'S ASSOCIATION

SPECIAL EDITION: 2023 RECAP



**Maryland State House
Annapolis, MD**



Event: Fallen Heroes
Photographer: Joe Andrucyk, Amy Hager, David Iden
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Message from the Editor-In-Chief

I want to express our sincerest appreciation to our partners, colleagues, and legislators in Annapolis. The volunteer firefighters and EMS personnel across the great state of Maryland greatly appreciate your hard work during and after the general session.

I wanted to take this time to provide some educational tidbits. Did you know that replacing a new fire engine costs over \$800,000? Many volunteer fire departments can afford the rising cost of equipment and apparatus and often are forced to use outdated equipment that exceeds the industry standards. This creates unnecessary risks to our volunteers and can affect how they respond to incidents in your neighborhoods.

Not only are costs rising for equipment, but we also need more volunteers across the state, with many fire departments' median ages surpassing 40 years old and even 50+ In some cases. Recruitment is at an all-time low. Volunteerism has dramatically decreased from what it was in the 1980s and 90s. Family demands and the burdens of increased costs force members of families to work second jobs, not allowing time to give back to community service. Childcare costs are also rising, and families must stay home with their children. I urge legislators to look at ways to increase the recruitment of volunteers in the state. I also recommend that the recommendations in the Commission to Advance and Strengthen Fire Fighting and Emergency Medical Services Within Maryland report be taken with significant consideration. We know that our volunteers save the taxpayers millions of dollars every year. Decreased volunteers mean higher taxes and increased financial burden on local communities.

Sincerely,
Jonathan Dayton, DrPH(c), MS, NREMT, CNE, Editor-In-Chief

Volunteer Fire Departments across Maryland participate in National Fire Prevention Week





A MESSAGE FROM THE MARYLAND STATE FIREMEN'S ASSOCIATION LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

Our main goal is to work with our partners to secure new and ongoing funding for the MEMSOF. This fund provides funds for MIEMSS, MFRI, MSPAC, Shock Trauma, and the MSFA (The Amoss 508 fund). Revenue projections show the fund being insolvent during FY 2025. These funds are necessary for us to see a significant breakdown in the Maryland medical system as we know it.

We will again look for an increase in the income subtraction for the qualified volunteer firefighter in Maryland. This subtraction is now at \$7000.00 dollars, and we are looking for an increase to 10,000.00 dollars. This is an excellent tool in our toolbox for retaining our volunteers. The last fund we will be working on will be the VCAF Fund. This fund assists volunteer fire companies with purchasing fire equipment such as engines, ladders, tankers, etc., protective gear such as coats, helmets, pants, breathing apparatus, communication equipment, and any other equipment necessary to carry out firefighting and rescue activities. The funds can also be used to purchase, rehab, or refurbish facilities used to house firefighting, EMS, and rescue equipment.

This last year, we have been working with MACo to support 2023 SB-414, "Commission to Advance and Strengthen Fire Fighting and Emergency Medical Services Within Maryland." This study looked at the volunteer and career fire and EMS service in the state and recommended actions that can be taken to enhance and improve the recruitment and retention of fire and EMS first responders in the state. In the 2025 session, we will be again working with MACo and our other partners to pass legislation that will provide an environment that brings new members into the ranks of the fire and EMS first responder ranks. As with the other goals, this will also bring a financial note to be covered. We are working to find new funding sources and possibly increase other existing ones.

The members of the MSFA Legislative Committee have already begun making plans for the upcoming session. We have met with the President's office to discuss the goals and lay out schedules for working in the Annapolis office. We are optimistic about this year and welcome all inquiries from our member companies and their members.

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DID YOU KNOW?

"The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) estimates a 65 percent reduction in firefighter injuries per 1,000 home fires when sprinklers are present. The power of residential sprinklers is that they stand ready 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to extinguish fires before they can become a threat to civilians, firefighters, and homes. The number and severity of injuries to civilians and firefighters can be significantly reduced with residential sprinkler systems."

Frattaroli, S., Pollack, K., & Somers, S. (2015, October 6). Research shows residential sprinklers save lives. Firehouse.

firehouse.com/home/article/12096404/research-shows-residential-sprinklers-save-lives

December Executive Committee Meeting

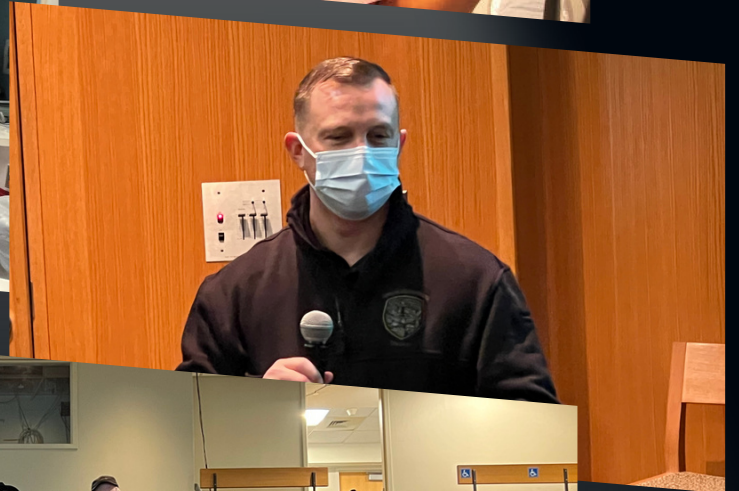
hosted by Westminster Fire Department

The Maryland State Firemen's Association Executive Committee recently met for its December meeting in Carroll County. If you didn't know, the Executive Committee shall have the power to call Special Conventions and Conferences through the MSFA President.

The Executive Committee shall make an annual report to the MSFA and look after its general interests. A majority shall constitute a quorum at all its meetings, and a majority of those present shall decide all questions.

We welcome you to attend these meetings to learn all about what's happening in the state with emergency services.





This year, the Maryland State Firemen's Association Safety Committee visited the R Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Center at the University of Maryland. Shock Trauma is dedicated to treating the critically sick and severely injured and employing groundbreaking research and innovative medical procedures with one goal in mind: saving lives.



Do I Need a Fire Investigator?
Brian S Geraci
State Fire Marshal

Many times the unit or incident commander automatically calls for a fire investigator to check that box off of the incident command tactical sheet. Unit or incident commanders should not feel intimidated or overwhelmed by determining the origin and cause of a fire incident. All it takes is a clear and concise look at the scene and to speak to the homeowner or witness to see if the two match up and that what you are seeing and hearing makes sense.

Recently OSFM investigators have been called to trash fires, vegetation fires and other smaller incidents where the unit officer could have made the call regarding the origin and cause of these fires. Even larger incidents where a recent storm has passed through the area involving lighting and the fire in the house is located within the attic space of the structure. It just takes a little amount of time to piece the picture together.

The OSFM is now sending two fire investigators to all residential and commercial building fires. The fire investigator if needed should be requested once you are on scene and can verify what was on fire and that you are unable to determine the origin and cause of the incident or an injury or death has occurred. I have instructed our investigators not to initiate any contact with the incident commander as to not interrupt the commanders overall control of the incident scene. If you need to speak with an investigator I ask that you initiate that call.

As part of your officer certification as noted in NFPA 1021, Fire Officer Professional Qualifications, Fire Officer II, Section 5.5. you as the unit or incident commander are required to determine the origin

and cause of the fire. Getting back to the smaller fire incidents if there is no evidence of a set fire, no witnesses and the fire has not caused any damage to a structure or injured an individual there is no need to have a fire investigator respond to that scene. A simple notification to the on call investigator is needed for these incidents.



Clearly if there is any doubt please reach out and contact the on call fire investigator and speak about what is there and what you are seeing on the scene. If an investigator is needed, please make sure that every step is being made to preserve that fire scene. Preserving the fire scene is a critical first step in our investigation and should be a priority for the incident commander and personnel on the scene knowing an investigator is on their way.

OSFM personnel are more than willing to attend company, association meetings and training to provide education and information in helping company and command officers on origin and cause determination, requests for assistance and scene preservation. Included with this article is a flow chart to help company officers and commanders when a fire investigator should be requested. Please make copies of this and place in your command vehicles and front line apparatus. Please reach out to your regional OSFM commander with any questions.





"Maryland State Police, Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems (MIEMSS), and the University of Maryland Medical Center (UMMC) announced a new public-private collaboration for lifesaving trauma response for Marylanders. Whole blood is used for emergency transfusions when minutes are critical and is now available on board MSPs fleet of "Trooper" helicopters used in prehospital air response for critically injured patients."



Maryland State Fireman's Association hosted its annual legislative session at the Calvert House in Annapolis with emergency service partners Maryland State Police Aviation, Maryland Fire Rescue Memorial, Office of the Maryland State Fire Marshal, Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems, and R Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Center. Be on the lookout for 2024 details.



Maryland State Fireman's Association hosted its annual convention in Ocean City in June 2023. Thousands of Maryland firefighters, EMTs, paramedics, emergency medical responders, dispatchers, auxiliary members, families, and supporters were in attendance. Our annual business meeting occurs during the convention and our joint memorial services, honoring the lives of many who gave countless years of service to this great state. We hope you can join us next year.



Congratulations Jasmine, Samantha, and William (not pictured) on receiving the 2022 Pat Bowser Emergency Services Memorial Scholarship valued at \$1,200 each.



The Washington County Fire and Rescue Association is pleased to announce the delivery of our brand new state of the art Safety Trailer. This unit focuses mainly on the subject of kitchen safety and prevention of kitchen fires. (across the United States there were approximately 170,000 kitchen fires reported in 2021) This trailer has several other unique features to teach home safety to all ages. Keep an eye out at your local community events to stop in and learn something that could save your life.

MIEMSS honored 11 individuals whose hard work and dedication significantly improved emergency medical care systems in Allegany and Garrett Counties during a ceremony held July 20, 2023, at Garrett College Performing Arts Center in McHenry, Maryland. Honorees included Barry Beal; Steven Kesner; Dwayne Kitis; Diane May; Al Ward; Cheryl Rexrode; Linda and Rob Rase; John Henry Frank, III; Anna Lea McCormick (posthumously); and Francis Mowbray (posthumously). Dwayne Kitis, MIEMSS Director of Mission Support, and Alex Kelly, MIEMSS Acting Region I and II Coordinator, officiated the honorees' induction into the Region I EMS Hall of Fame before an audience of colleagues, family, and friends. Each inductee received a plaque of recognition and a MIEMSS commemorative challenge coin, as well as a Certificate of Appreciation from the Allegany and Garrett County Volunteer Fire and Rescue Association.





Thank you, Fire Marshal Brian Geraci, for your ten years of dedicated and selfless service to the citizens of Maryland. Your leadership and outstanding effort to reduce fire deaths across the state will leave lasting impacts. We wish you well in your retirement.



The Volunteer Trumpet

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Support Maryland Volunteer Firefighters!



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THE MISSION OF THE MARYLAND STATE FIREMEN'S ASSOCIATION IS TO SERVE, PROMOTE, ADVOCATE AND REPRESENT THE INTERESTS OF THE VOLUNTEER FIRE, RESCUE AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES OF MARYLAND.