



NEW HAMPSHIRE ASSOCIATION OF FIRE CHIEFS, INC.

Working Together to Make a Difference

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Minutes of a Meeting of the NH Association of Fire Chiefs

Barnstead Fire Department, Barnstead, NH - Thursday, March 12, 2026

The meeting was called to order at 1842 hours.

After a salute to the flag, a moment of silence was requested for departed members

Welcome from Host: Chief Poulin thanked everyone for attending. He also thanked the crew who cooked and served the meal.

INTRODUCTION OF MEMBERS. Members were asked to introduce themselves and where they were from.

Special Guests: Senator Suzanne Prentiss was introduced and she thanked everyone for the invitation.

Minutes: A MOTION (Fraitzl/Cole) to approve the minutes of the February meeting carried unanimously.

Treasurer's Report: The February reports were presented. A MOTION (Sitar/Cotreau) to approve them carried unanimously.

Communications: n/a

Applications for membership: ED Lemire stated that we have five (5) new applications that have been approved, Chiefs Michael Weden of Lincoln and Jarrod Wheeler of Middleton; Asst. Chief Kevin O'Brien of Merrimack; Dep. Chief Michael Davenport of Goffstown and Mr. Peter Latucky of NESTA NH is a new Advocate member.

Life Membership: The Board of Directors has approved Life Memberships for former Chief Mark Howard and Keene and retiring Chief Jason Lyon of New London.

President's Report: (Watkins) –

- Chief Watkins stated that he had participated in the quarterly DOS informational call on Monday and heard that it extremely important to use your full given names when applying for the cancer screening process (ie James vs. Jim)

Report of the Executive Director: (Lemire)

- The April Annual Meeting will be at the Common Man in Plymouth on the 9th. Our guest speaker is Chief Darryl Jones of the Pittsburg Bureau of Fire. Spouses/guests are welcome and the hotel has a block of rooms for those wishing to stay.
- The May 14 meeting will be virtual.
- The June 11 meeting will be a breakfast meeting at the NH Fire Academy.
- The July meeting will be virtual
- In August, we will again be at the Town and Country Inn in Gorham/Shelburne. The Professional Development Committee has plans for a seminar for that meeting.
- We've deposited the proceeds from our time at the Nash Casino. **(\$140,340.25)**
- Ad book proceeds to date: Total: \$32,815.00 ; Vendor: \$22,970.00; Assn: \$9,844.00.

1st Vice President Report/Professional Development Committee - (Chief LaRoche) - No report

Government Relations – (Schmidt) – *Submitted in writing for the minutes*

The House is scheduled to meet on both Wednesday, March 11 and Thursday, March 12. Over the course of these two days, they will attempt to vote on over 180 individual bills which have been debated and voted upon by various committees. We expect lengthy sessions on both days, perhaps spilling over well into the night. The Senate has a more reasonable schedule of their session on March 12. The deadline for “Crossover” is March 26. By this date, the House must complete their work on bills introduced in the House. The same principle applies to the Senate. Crossover typically serves as the “half time” of the legislation session.

- **HB 1555 (Code Applicability Appeals)** As introduced, the bill would freeze the applicability of the fire code for 20 years on a property after issuance of a certificate of occupancy, allow for the Fire Marshal to hear appeals of decisions by local fire chiefs, enable fire chiefs to grant variances to the state fire code, allow the Fire Marshal to allow exceptions to the state building code, and allow the state Building Code Review Board to hear appeals of decisions by a local fire Chief. At the initial hearing, a number of concerns were brought forward regarding freezing the applicability of the state fire code and the various proposed processes in the bill. Through the committee process, an amendment was adopted which narrows the bill so that it enables the State Fire Marshal to be responsible for hearing appeals of any decision issued by the local fire chief, or the fire chief's duly authorized subordinates. This bill also provides for the State Fire Marshal to have the power to allow exceptions to the state building code.

The bill was recently approved by a House Finance subcommittee and will go to the full committee soon.

- **HB 1004 (Sprinkler Exemption Expansion)** – The bill would expand the existing exemption from sprinklers to include a detached building with up to 4 residential dwelling units. The exemption would apply to new construction and renovations or conversions of detached buildings. At the initial hearing, the supporters argued that expanding the exemption would help make housing units more affordable. After hearing life safety concerns from Marshal Toomey and recognition that the bill would likely conflict with the single stair construction standard passed last year, the House Executive Departments and Administration Committee voted unanimously to send the bill to Interim Study. The House is scheduled to vote on the recommendation this week. If the recommendation is approved, the bill will not move forward.
- **HB 1064 (Government/Government Employee Liability)** – The bill proposes to increase the existing liability caps and create personal liability for government employees. The basis for the bill's return was a tragic accident involving the son of a current lawmaker who's son suffered a severe brain injury while performing school related farm work under the supervision of a school district employee. The Representative who's son was injured testified in support and described in detail the brain injury to her son and the extensive medical costs the family has endured, and will continue to experience for the rest of his life. Current liability protections limit their ability to garner sufficient resources, unlike if a similar instance had occurred outside of the auspices of government. There was support for the bill from plaintiffs' attorneys. Opposition was provided by the NH Municipal Association, NH School Boards Association, and NH Police Association. As written, they expressed the bill lacked sufficient definitions, which would lead to overly defensive practices by governmental employees who are seeking to avoid litigation. Further, they expressed concern that higher judgements could lead to higher property taxes. The House Judiciary Committee voted unanimously to pass the bill. It will head to the House floor this week. If passed, it will go to the Senate.
- **HB 1300 (Local Property Tax Cap votes/State Elections)** – As introduced, the bill would have redrawn NH's congressional districts. Since Governor Ayotte has indicated that she is not supportive of redrawing the Congressional lines, a "replace all" amendment was initially introduced which would have required that during state November elections (even years), voters would be given an opportunity to vote on a cap on local property taxes. A separate amendment was approved by the majority of the House Election Law Committee which would limit the scope of the tax cap to school districts and fixed costs associated with school administration. The House will vote on the amendment during their session this week.

- **HB 1602 (Battery Stewardship)** – Prior to the initial passage by the House, NHAFC prepared a letter in support of the bill and Chief Jay Lyon attended the hearing to testify about the challenges associated with fire caused by lithium ion batteries. The proposal has support from the business community, battery manufacturers, waste haulers, and environmentalists. The House Finance Committee is scheduled to review the bill later this week.
- **SB 564 (prohibiting road length restrictions).** – This bill includes the following provision “...Municipalities shall not limit maximum road length so as to impede development, provided that the proposed roadway or extension thereof fully complies with the state fire code, including but not limited to standards for life safety, property access, asset preservation, emergency vehicle access, and roadway design.” The bill has passed the Senate and will be scheduled for a hearing in the House Housing Committee later this spring.
- **Risk Pools (SB 661/SB 605/HB 1491)** – There are a number of bills which seek to alter the regulation of risk pools. **SB 605** would allow for any special assessments to be paid out over 36 months. The Senate Finance Committee voted 6-1 to recommend that the bill be killed. The Senate will vote on the recommendation this week. **SB 661** appears similar to legislation from last year which provides new requirements on risk pools, which will remain governed by the Secretary of State’s office. The initial hearing was held in February. The bill has not yet gone to the Senate floor. **HB 1491** proposes to carve out “assessment pooled risk programs” from regulation by the Secretary of State’s Office and transfer the regulation to the Insurance Department. HealthTrust testified in favor of the bill. The House Commerce Committee voted 14-0 in favor of the bill and it will head to the House floor this week. It is not yet clear if the House and Senate will be able to align on whether to provide more regulatory powers to the Secretary of State’s office or transfer some of the risk pool regulation to the Department of Insurance.
- **Ambulance Services (HB 1070)** - The bill would have required transports for involuntary commitment to be provided by an ambulance, if ordered by law enforcement on the scene. EMS providers, and a county sheriff, both testified in opposition. They shared concerns regarding the ability of EMS teams to restrain and sedate patients, and their safety as part of a transport. The House Health and Human Service Committee was concerned that EMS providers are not law enforcement and should not be required to transport non-consenting, potentially violent persons to the hospital for a mental health evaluation. They voted 18-0 to kill the bill and it will go to the House floor this week .
- **Notice to Government Employees for suspensions (HB 1109)** – The committee adopted an amendment which would require that any public employee who is suspended receive written notice of the specific reasons for the

suspension within seven days. The Committee believed there was instances in which investigations have extended for months while employees remain on paid administrative leave. The intent of the bill is to create a notification requirement that will promote timely action by human resources departments. The House will vote on the bill this week. If passed, it will go to the Senate.

2nd Vice President Report (D. Chamberlain) – No report

Sgt. At Arms (Fraitzl) – He should have a sample soon of options to purchase for NHAFC merchandise.

Committee Reports

Scholarship Committee – (Marshal Toomey/Chief D. Chamberlain)

- The Scholarship Committee met virtually and completed a framework for a new program. It was presented to the Board on February 4 and pending a wording change, will be approved at the April Board meeting for release at the Annual Meeting.

Division Reports

Fire Marshal: (Marshal Toomey)

ADMINISTRATION:

Personnel:

We have two full-time Fire Protection Specialist positions posted and are currently seeking approval to post a State Building Inspector position. An additional 10 vacancies are presently on hold.

Legislation:

Legislative hearings are underway for the 2026 session. Our priorities for this session include an update to the state fire code to the 2024 editions of NFPA 1 & 101, some clean-up on investigation language, and clean-up on incident reporting to align with NERIS. We continue to provide input on bills when questions arise. We are actively following:

HB 1004 exempting certain dwelling units from automatic sprinkler system requirements

Position: Oppose as introduced.

Status: Interim Study

HB 1159 relative to updating the state building code

Position: Support

Status: Passed House, Passed Senate Executive Departments and Administration

HB 1180 updating the definition of the state building code to include the International Energy

Conservation Code 2024

Position: Monitor

Status: Still in House ED&A

HB 1271 relative to third-party code review and inspection services for building permits

Position: Monitor

Status: Interim Study

HB 1555 relative to the administration and enforcement of the state fire code

Position: Oppose as introduced, Monitor as amended

Status: Pending vote of House, OTP-A

SB 426 repealing the permissible fireworks advisory committee

Position: Support

Status: Passed Senate, Hearing in House ED&A 3/19

SB 494 relative to the state fire code, fire incident reporting and investigations, and the duties

of the state fire marshal

Position: Support

Status: Pending OTP vote in Senate

SB 509 preventing municipalities from limiting dead-end road length if compliant with the

state fire code

Position: Monitor

Status: ITL

Board of Fire Control:

The Board of Fire Control's next regular meeting will be held on Thursday, May 12, 2026, 1:00 pm at the IPOC.

BUREAU OF INVESTIGATIONS:

The Bureau of Investigations has 32 open cases at this time. This includes 8 criminal cases and 8 incidents involving fatalities. Investigators responded to 10 scenes in the month of February. There have been 6 fire fatalities so far in 2026.

New cases:

- On February 2, 2026, investigators responded to Nashua for a building explosion that resulted in several firefighters being injured. All involved

injured firefighters have been released from the hospital and are recovering. Investigators worked closely with the Nashua Fire Department, Nashua Police Department, and the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) throughout the investigation. This case remains open and actively under investigation.

- On February 4, 2026, investigators responded to Pittsfield at the request of the Pittsfield Fire and Police Departments to assist with a fire investigation involving a secondary fire set within a common area of a residential building. Fire debris was collected from the scene and submitted to the State Laboratory for analysis. Investigators will continue to pursue additional investigative leads. This case remains active. The SFMO is leading this investigation with the assistance of the Pittsfield Police Department and Pittsfield Fire Department.
- On February 8, 2026, investigators responded to the University of New Hampshire in Durham, at the request of the UNH Police and the Durham Fire Department for two incendiary fires that had occurred on campus. This case remains active and ongoing. The SFMO is leading this investigation with the assistance of the UNH Police and the Durham Fire Departments.
- On February 13, 2026, an investigator responded to Woodstock to assist the Woodstock Fire Department with a residential building fire. One occupant sustained minor burn injuries. The investigation remains ongoing, though preliminary findings suggest the fire was accidental in nature.
- Also on February 13, 2026, investigators responded to Claremont to assist the Claremont Fire and Police Departments with a small fire within an apartment building. Preliminary information suggests the fire may have been associated with drug paraphernalia. The investigation remains active and ongoing. The SFMO is leading this investigation with the assistance of the Claremont Fire and Police Departments.
- On February 16, 2026, an investigator and an IGL K9 Team responded to Lincoln at the request of the Lincoln Fire Department to provide consultation regarding a fire that occurred beneath an oil-fired hot water heater in a hotel.
- On February 18, 2026, investigators responded to Plymouth to assist the Plymouth Fire Department with an investigation involving two occupants who were transported due to carbon monoxide exposure. Both individuals continue to receive medical care. The investigation determined that the carbon monoxide exposure was likely caused by a faulty furnace that had previously been recalled by the manufacturer, though the occupants were unaware of the recall and associated hazard.
- On February 21, 2026, investigators responded to New Boston to assist with a structure fire investigation. The investigation remains ongoing, though the fire appears to have been accidental in nature.
- On February 27, 2026, an investigator responded to Strafford to assist with a structure fire investigation. The cause of the fire is undetermined at this time but there are no criminal indicators.

Fatal Fire/CO Incidents:

- On February 13, 2026, investigators received an update regarding a *January 29, 2026*, fire in Monroe where a 78-year-old male had previously been transported to the hospital with significant burn injuries. Investigators were notified that the individual subsequently died as a result of those injuries. The SFMO is leading this investigation with the assistance of the Massachusetts Office of the Chief Medical Examiner's Office and Monroe Fire Department.
- On February 26, 2026, investigators and an IGL K9 Team responded to Windsor at the request of the Hillsboro Fire Department for a building fire where a 77-year-old male occupant of the home was deceased. The investigation remains ongoing, and the official cause and manner of death have not yet been determined. At this time, there is no evidence indicating that the fire or fatality was the result of a criminal act. The SFMO is leading this investigation with the assistance of the New Hampshire Office of the Chief Medical Examiner's Office and Hillsboro Fire Department.

Youth Firesetter:

- In February, we received one referral for YFS services.

BUREAU OF BUILDING SAFETY & CONSTRUCTION:

State Building Permit System:

In February, a total of 25 permits were processed through the State Building Permit System:

- Building: 6
- Electrical: 6
- Plumbing: 1
- Fuel Gas: 5
- Mechanical: 5
- Fire Protection: 1
- Fire Alarm: 1

Technical Assistance, Educational & Healthcare Reviews:

During the month of February, the following activities were completed:

- Educational Plan Reviews: 4
- Healthcare Plan Reviews: 7
- Inspections Completed: 201
- Technical Consultations Provided: 74

Variance Requests:

A total of 4 variance requests were processed in February.

Fireworks Safety and Enforcement Program

The Fireworks Safety and Enforcement Program conducted the following in the month of February:

- Proximate Licenses Issued: 0
- Display Certificate of Competency Issued: 0
- Consumer Fireworks Retail Store Licenses Issued: 1
- Explosive Magazine Inspections: 0
- Proximate Audience Inspections: 1
- Technical Assistance: 0

Modular Building Program

The Modular Building Program conducted the following in the month of February:

- Inspections: 14
- Audits of Manufacturers: 0
- Audits of Educational Facilities: 0
- Labels Issued to Manufacturers: 470
- Units Shipped to New Hampshire: 44

Tramway and Amusement Ride Safety

The Tramway and Amusement Ride Safety section conducted the following in the month of February:

- Amusement Registrations: 2
- Amusement Inspections: 2
- Amusement Incidents: 0
- Tramway Registrations: 1
- Tramway Inspections: 58
- Tramway Incidents: 5

BUREAU OF OUTREACH & EDUCATION:

Hazardous Materials:

In the month of February, the hazardous materials section had no incident responses or consultations.

Tier II reporting was due by March 1 for calendar year 2025 and the hazardous materials section answered multiple questions from facilities about how to report and requirements for chemicals that are not clearly defined in the EPA list. Facilities are required to report on the presence of hazardous chemicals stored, used or released in their businesses that meet a threshold established by the EPA. Information concerning hazardous chemicals stored and used by businesses is sent to the state through the hazardous materials section at the SFMO and also to individual jurisdictions. These reports are intended to help with response to a facility due to a fire or hazardous materials incident.

Refer to the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA Sections 311-312) for more information. Contact the SFMO if you know of a facility in your jurisdiction that is not reporting storage, use or release of chemicals. You can contact us at: hazmat@dos.nh.gov.

Incident Reporting:

As of February 28th, there have been over 31,000 incidents reported in NERIS. These incidents represent 59.81% EMS, 2.99% fire, 0.35% Law Enforcement, 0.96% Rescue, 7.06% Hazardous Situation, 12.92% No Emergency and 15.9% Public Service.

There will be NERIS training on June 4th at 10:00 am the NH Fire Academy. Tom Jenkins from UL FSRI will be in attendance to deliver a program on Making Data Work for You.

Please reach out to the state fire incident data team for any incident reporting questions at nhfirs@dos.nh.gov and have your NERIS contact person sign-up for the NH NERIS Newsletter by sending an email to FMO@dos.nh.gov.

Community Risk Reduction (CRR):

Announcing new training opportunity from the **National Association of State Fire Marshals (NASFM) on Best Practices for Addressing Homelessness and Migrant Issues!**

Homelessness and migrant-related displacement continue to create complex fire and life safety challenges nationwide—encampment fires, unsafe temporary shelter conditions, code compliance gaps, and increased risk to responders. To support states and local jurisdictions, NASFM has developed a Comprehensive Guide for Local Jurisdictions: Best Practices for Addressing Homelessness and Migrant Issues, made possible through FEMA's FP&S grant program (Award EMW 2023-FP-00222).

NASFM's Best Practices Guide and Training help communities coordinate a holistic response to homelessness and migrant displacement, improving safety while preserving dignity.

Online - Homelessness & Migrant Issues Best Practices

This online class takes about 1-2 hours to complete and includes modules on: Understanding the Crisis, A Compassionate Response, and Sustainable Systems and Solutions. Receive a certificate of completion after final quiz.

Included are downloadable resources such as the 71-page NASFM Comprehensive Guide for Local Jurisdictions and a Planning Worksheet to guide notes as you complete the course. Afterwards, use these resources to build your own customized local plan.

Register Here: NASFM Training Portal - <https://nasfm-training.org/>

May 5, 2026 * Concord, NH * 9AM - 3PM

We are working with NASFM to bring this training to New Hampshire. Communities need practical solutions that reduce risk, protect dignity, and save lives. NASFM's Best Practices Program equips leaders with guidance and training to strengthen preparedness and response. This 6-hour in-person training will blend lecture and workshop formats with opportunities to network with local resources. Stay tuned for more details!

Register Here: <https://forms.office.com/g/GUu5U84N4U>

Outreach Events:

This February, the NH State Fire Marshal's Office joined the NH Recycles Summit – Solid Waste Safety Program. This program helps communities reduce safety risks at transfer stations and recycling facilities by identifying and addressing common and dangerous materials found in the waste stream, including lithium-ion batteries. We addressed the increasingly urgent issue of Li-ion battery fires at transfer stations and patterns in NH. We recommend this opportunity to any transfer station operator, municipal leader, and fire safety personnel. There will be three more chances to join in March, April, and July. It will be in New London on March 19, online in April and in Keene sometime in July. Learn more and register: <https://www.nhrecycles.org/solid-waste-safety>.

We conducted two K9 demonstrations in February as well.

Are you interested in having the FMO join an event in your community? Please reach out to us as early as possible so we can make every effort to attend your event. We also have [resources and equipment](#) for fire departments to borrow. Send your request to us at FMOpublicEducation@dos.nh.gov.

Public Education:

Our public education theme for March is “[Smoke Alarms](#).” Install smoke alarms in every bedroom, outside each sleeping area, and on every level of a home including the basement. This fire safety precaution is the first defense for residents to escape a home fire. Don’t Wait – Check the Date: make sure your alarms work by replacing them every 10 years. Smoke alarms don’t last forever, check the manufacturer’s date on the back to know when to replace. Test smoke alarms every month and replaces 9-volt smoke alarm batteries at least once every year.



Learn the sounds of safety - if you hear the beep, get on your feet. When you hear a smoke alarm, you may have less than 2 minutes to get everyone outside and stay outside. Some people, especially children and older adults may need help to wake up. Make sure a designated individual will wake them if the alarm sounds. Half of home fire deaths happen between 11pm and 7am, when most people are asleep. Are you hearing a chirp? Replace the battery or unit to ensure your continued safety.

Don't forget that you can help your community through this resource. The American Red Cross [Home Fire Campaign: Northern New England | Red Cross](#) helps save lives through the free install of smoke alarms in homes that don't have them, no proof of need required. While the grant lasts, the American Red Cross in partnership with the New Hampshire State Fire Marshal's Office will also install CO Alarms. During the "Sound the Alarm" events, dedicated volunteers go door-to-door to install these alarms and educate families about escape plans, fire safety and prevention strategies and information.

In-Service Training Opportunities:

Chief Mechanical Inspector Marc Prindiville and Mechanical Inspector Aurelian Ricardo will present information about Heating and Fuel Gas Appliance Inspections and gas-

related codes in several upcoming classes in Bradford, Temple, and Laconia. The date, time, and locations for Bradford and Laconia are not yet confirmed but we will post them as soon as possible.

The **Heating and Fuel Gas Appliance Inspection** training in Temple will be held at the Temple Town Hall, 19 Main Street in Temple, on **March 19** from 6PM to 9PM and is hosted by the Temple Fire Department. They can accommodate up to 100 people. Fire and Building Inspectors are encouraged to attend and there is no cost. Anyone interested in attending can register by emailing Deputy State Fire Marshal Anthony Booth at Anthony.M.Booth@dos.nh.gov.

We are also in the process of scheduling a class in the Conway area sometime in April that will focus on multifamily dwelling code enforcement. We will post details when scheduling is confirmed.

On **April 24** we are offering a free day-long training presentation focusing on **NFPA 1 and 101 for existing occupancies**. It will be held in classrooms 5 and 6 (in the dorm building) on the fire academy campus and run from 8AM to 4PM. We hope to bring that same training to the North Country as well, possibly as an evening class(es) after that. We will post details once scheduling is confirmed. To register, email Anthony.M.Booth@dos.nh.gov before April 22.

The SFMO can present training courses upon request. These training courses are typically two to three hours in length.

Topics include:

- Application of the NH State Fire Code: A Scenario Based Training
- NFPA 1 and 101 2021 Edition Updates
- Inspections of Multi-Family Dwellings
- Tent Inspections
- Commercial Cooking and Food Trucks
- Solar Installations for One- and Two-family Homes
- Display Fireworks Inspection Essentials
- Heating and Fuel Gas Appliance Inspections
- The Basics of LP Installations for One- and Two-family Homes
- Fire Investigation for First Responders
- Collection of Witness Data in Fire Investigation
- Fire Investigation Case Studies
- Air Monitoring
- PEAC Software
- An Overview of the 2024 Emergency Response Guidebook

If you are interested in attending or hosting a future session, or would like to suggest a future training topic, please reach out to us at FMOPublicEducation@dos.nh.gov.

An additional training opportunity offered by the Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management is shared below. The registration deadline is March 25, 2026.

MGT-417 Crisis Management for School-Based Incidents for Key Decision Makers

<https://www.hsem.dos.nh.gov/event/mgt-417-crisis-management-school-based-incidents-key-decision-makers-0>

April 8-9, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

SAU 97 Office Building, 49 School Street, Hinsdale, NH

Start Date: April 8, 2026 - End Date: April 9, 2026

Time: 08:00 AM - 05:00 PM

Location: Hinsdale School District SAU 92 Office Bldg. 49 School Street Hinsdale, NH 03451

Description: MGT 417 is a tuition free, management-level, DHS/FEMA-certified course that provides operational-level details to support many of the topics covered in AWR 148: Crisis Management for School-Based Incidents – Partnering Rural Law Enforcement, First Responders, and Local School Systems. Rural schools, law enforcement, other emergency responders, and community stakeholders are often limited in their access to resources, so it is imperative that all potentially affected parties collaborate in planning, preparation, communication, response, and recovery in the event of a school-based incident. Moreover, these affected parties must come together to practice their interoperable skills through drills and exercises to ensure the strategies in place provide for an effective crisis response and collaborative recovery. With the intent of building upon the foundation of AWR 148 and utilizing an all-hazards approach, this two-day course will provide content instruction, develop concept-specific skills, and provide opportunities for law enforcement, school personnel, and community stakeholders to collaboratively apply the course objectives in scenario-based applications.

Topics include (but not limited to):

- All-Hazards Planning and Preparedness
- Vulnerability Assessments
- Threat Assessment Management
- All-Hazards Response
- All-Hazards Recovery
- Scenario-Based Activities

Who Should Attend:

- All First Responders—especially Law Enforcement
- School Administrators
- School Safety and Security Personnel
- Community Emergency Management Personnel
- Community Mental Health Personnel
- Community Stakeholders

Registration is required through the RDPC website. Register for this course by visiting <https://studentportal.ruraltraining.org/courses/display/259> .

FEMA S.I.D. REQUIRED. Register for your FEMA Student Identification Number by visiting <https://cdp.dhs.gov/femasid>

Fire Standards/Training/EMS – (Director Wholey)

Administration

Personnel

- We continue to work within the hiring process under Governor Ayotte’s Executive Order to receive waivers for position vacancies.
- Thomas Bolton started as the part-time Promotional Testing Program Coordinator on March 6th.
- David Dumas has been promoted to Program Coordinator of the NFPA 1010 rollout.
- There are four series of waiver approvals submitted for EMS Instructors, Fire Instructors, Program Support, and Data Team. Additionally, there are two full-time positions – Program Assistant and RespondNH Coordinator – submitted for waiver approval.

Grants

- We have received notification of the grant award for the 2025 Homeland Security Grant for additional technical rescue equipment.
- The Division has submitted three EMS initiatives to New Hampshire DHHS for federal funding through the Rural Health Transformation Fund:
 1. Expanded Workforce Concepts Initiative
 2. Expanded Mobile Integrated Healthcare (MIH) Concepts Initiative
 3. Expanded Bariatric Capability Upgrade Initiative

Special Projects

- The Firefighters First Cancer Screening Initiative has begun. Information regarding the program may be found on the website: <https://www.firefightersfirst.nh.gov/>
 - Spring 2026 appointments are full. More appointments will open in Fall 2026.

- Cancer screening tests will be held at the Concord Fire Academy Dorm building starting April 6th. We ask anyone entering the building during the testing period to be respectful of the exam-related signage.
- The Raymond S. Burton Fire and EMS Training Facility has reopened for classes. Construction continues on the garage; however, the classroom and training grounds are in use.
- The *Law Enforcement Officers, Professional Firefighters, and Emergency Medical Technicians Career Development, Recruitment and Retention Program* established in New Hampshire RSA 188-F:70 remains active and available. Emergency Service Dispatchers are also eligible.
 - Program details: <https://www.fstems.dos.nh.gov/resources/recruitment-retention>

Legislative/Administrative Rules

- The 2026 Legislative Session is underway with over 1,073 Legislative Service Requests filed for the upcoming session. The Division is working with DOS Leadership to review and strategize for possible fire and EMS service impacts.
- The proposed Trauma Rules are working through the internal DOS process.
- Administrative Rules to make the full transition to ETA's and sunset the former process have been developed and are working through the internal DOS process for submission to JLCAR.

Outreach

- Captain Brunelle traveled to Tuftonboro for a meeting with Ossipee Valley Mutual Aid on February 9th.
- Captain Brunelle mentored the Middleton Fire Department's State Fire Instructors on February 14th in support of their department's On My Time program.
- Chief Bibeau and Captain Graham attended the Kearsarge Mutual Aid Meeting on Wednesday February 18th.
- Captain Brunelle met with the Enfield Fire Department on February 19th to discuss a potential On My Time program there.
- Director Wholey and Captain Ingersoll attended the North Pack Mutual Aid Meeting in Dalton on February 19th.

Mental Health & Resiliency

- *NAMI Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Training* – Antrim – March 9 - 13
- *NAMI Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Training* – Littleton – April 20 – 24

Curriculum

Firefighter

- The curriculum for Firefighter I is being reviewed by the FSTC Curriculum Committee. Following the committee's review, it will go before the full Commission. The Commission will vote to open it up for public comment.
- The development of Firefighter II has begun. The Visiting Committee met on February 18th to discuss the curriculum outcome, the cognitive and practical testing, and project assignments for the program. The next meeting will be on March 18th.

Fire Inspector

- The Inspector instructional cadre has begun lesson planning in preparation for the first delivery of First Responder Inspector.

Driver-Operator

- The Visiting Committee met on February 11th to review the All Vehicles and Pumps curricula. The committee finalized all curricula and voted to recommend them to the FSTC Curriculum Committee for review.
- These curricula are expected to be presented to the Commission during the May meeting and proceed to public comment.

Fire Officer

- Initial curriculum development has begun for Fire Officer I and II.
- A visiting committee for Fire Officer programs was requested during the March FSTC meeting.

Interfacility Transfer (Bureau of EMS)

- Captain Robblee and Rachel Larry are overseeing an EMS Visiting Committee to revise the IFT and PIFT training programs.
- The next meeting on March 9th will review the PIFT thematic analysis.

Future Program Development

- *Fire and Emergency Services Instructor (I, II, & III)*. The new NFPA standards for Instructor professional qualifications (NFPA 1020) were released at the beginning of the year. Development of these programs will begin in summer 2026.

Bureau of Firefighter Training

Courses/Programs

- Firefighter I & II
 - *Bethlehem (FF I & II)* – January 21 - June 28
 - *Lakes Region Community College (FF I & II)* – March 23 - May 8
 - *Spring Recruit School (FF I & II)* – March 30 - June 26
- Technical Rescue
 - *Ice Rescue Technician* – Raymond – March 14 & 15
 - *Trench Rescue Technician* – Concord – May 26 - 29
 - *Confined Space Technician* – Concord – June 15 - 17
- Driver Operator
 - *Driver/Operator All Vehicles w/TIMS* – New Boston – March 26 - April 12
 - All inquiries for these programs should be directed to driveroperator@dos.nh.gov
- Hazardous Materials
 - *Hazardous Materials Operations with PPE & Product Control* – Fitzwilliam – April 18 & 19
 - *Public Safety WMD/CBRNE Response: Sampling Techniques* – Concord – April 28 - 30
 - Hazardous Materials Awareness:
<https://www.nhfaemslearning.org/login/index.php>
- Airport Rescue Firefighting
 - Spring Live Fire Recertifications will begin in March:
<https://www.fstems.dos.nh.gov/training-education/aircraft-rescue-firefighter-training>
- “On My Time” Program
 - We continue to offer guidance to departments participating in this program.
- Instructor Development
 - *Firefighter I Ladders Module* – Concord – March 19
 - *Firefighter I Ladders Module* – Concord – March 20

- *Firefighter I Ladders Module* – Bethlehem – March 21
- *Firefighter I Ladders Module* – Concord – March 22
- Electric Vehicle Training Resources
 - The links for the electric vehicle training resources may be found on the website: <https://www.fstems.dos.nh.gov/resources/firefighter-department-resources>

Apparatus/Equipment

- Engine Three remains out of service as it did not pass Inspection.
- Engine One is out of service for repairs.
- Ladder One is in service with the exception of the water way.
- All other apparatus and Fleet Vehicles are in service.

Facilities, Prop Usage and Projects

- The Milford Fire Department used the mobile Forcible Entry prop February 1st through the 3rd.
- IAFF Fireground Survival Entablement prop traveled to Bristol Fire on February 10th.
- Manchester Fire Department used our “B” Building for hose training on February 12th.
- Two hydrants remain out of service until warmer weather arrives in the Spring.
- We are working with our Maintenance Staff to repair lighting in and around the “B” Building and the Northwest side of the Drillyard.
- Rollout of the Maintenance Reporting database has gone well and provides a good way to track out of service equipment and apparatus and arrange for repairs.
- Captain Tillson and his staff have been performing a great deal of work at the “B” Building, which included the fabrication of steel furniture to withstand the rigors of training, new doorknobs so that the doors function properly, and the repair of one of the controllers that run the fireplaces. The controller arrived on February 26th and was installed on the 27th.
- Our LP Car Prop has been fully repaired and is ready for the Spring Semester classes.
- Other props are being made ready for upcoming classes in Fire Behavior. This includes stockpiling hay and pallets and the construction of demonstration buildings to illustrate how smoke and fire move through a structure.

- New fire bricks have arrived to replace those that have worn out or broken in the Fire Behavior Simulator.
- We delivered four Instructor Workshops on PPE and SCBA: February 19th, 20th, and 21st at the Concord Campus and February 22nd at the Burton Facility.

Bureau of Certification and Support

Courses/Programs

- Instructor I/II/III Programs
 - *Instructor I* – Peterborough – March 3 - April 11
 - *Instructor I* – Bethlehem – April 6 - May 16 **Seeking additional students**
 - *Instructor II* – Virtual – March 24 - April 23
 - *Instructor III* – Virtual – May 4 - July 13
- Fire Officer I/II Programs
 - *Fire Officer I* – Concord – February 2 - March 30
 - *Fire Officer I* – Hampstead – April 2 - May 21
 - *Fire Officer II* – Virtual – May 6 - June 24
- Fire Inspector Programs
 - *First Responder Inspector* – Concord – March 26 - May 7
 - *First Responder Inspector* – Concord – June 4 - July 2
- National Fire Academy & Specialty Programs
 - *Managing Disciplinary Challenges in the Fire Service with Curt Varone, JD, MS, EFO* – Concord – June 3 & 4
 - <https://nhfa-ems.com/scheduled-course/managing-disciplinary-challenges-in-the-fire-service/>
 - If you would like to see a specific NFA program or host an NFA program at your department, please contact Captain Burns at Anthony.T.Burns@dos.nh.gov.

Education Technology

- Moodle (February)
 - User Logins: 3959
 - User Course Enrollments: 1817
 - Course Completions: 1542

- 24 projects and modules are in progress for 2026 course development.
- An additional Cancer Screen Initiative video is in production
- All classrooms are service.

Instructors

- New State Fire Instructor applications are available on RespondNH.
- Applications for renewal will open on April 1, and State Fire Instructors will be sent a notice of the required renewal. State Fire Instructor Renewals are due June 30, 2026.
 - Active/Current New Hampshire State Fire Instructors: 247
 - Active New State Fire Instructor Applications In-progress: 49

Testing & CPAT

- As of March 1, the Division has rolled out an online application for monthly. The monthly testing application has been moved to RespondNH and instructions have been added to the page. Further developments are planned to testing to better support the increasing volume of monthly testing.
 - Monthly testing is the 2nd Tuesday of every month, with Firefighter I physical exams on the following Saturday. Submissions must be entered by the last day of the month prior to the month you wish to test: <https://www.fstems.dos.nh.gov/certification-testing/monthly-testing>
- CPAT tests through August are open for registration:
 - February 2026 stats: 37 exams, 25 passed (68%)
 - April 28 - Merrill Fay Ice Arena - Laconia
 - June 23 - Merrill Fay Ice Arena - Laconia
 - August 6 - Merrill Fay Ice Arena - Laconia
- Department member assistance is needed for CPAT on testing days. Please confirm available personnel to assist with PC Nick Poulin at Nicholas.a.poulin@dos.nh.gov prior to the test date.

Program Support

- The Division is moving to semester-based scheduling to better serve our customers: January 1 - June 30 (the "Spring" semester) and July 1 - December 31 (the "Fall" semester).
- The new Division enrollment policy was released on February 4, 2026. Community outreach and education are in planning. The policy will impact Fall 2026 seating allocation, and registration opens April 15, 2026:

<https://www.fstems.dos.nh.gov/training-education/course-catalog/training-program-enrollment-policy-faq>

- Work has begun in conjunction with the data team to support a RespondNH General Admission application.
- We are waiting on the “Notice of Approval Letter” from the VA from the submission of the application package regarding our status as a GI Bill-approved learning institution.

Bureau of Emergency Medical Services

Boards and Commissions

- The Medical Control Board will meet on March 19th at 0930.
- The Emergency Medical and Trauma Services Coordinating Board will meet on March 19th at 1300.
- The Trauma Medical Review Committee will meet on April 15th at 0930.
- The Privacy Committee will meet on April 22nd at 1300.

Operations

- As of February 2026, the NH EMS System is composed of:
 - Licensed EMS Unit: 303
 - Licensed EMS Providers: 6,587
 - Licensed EMS Vehicles: 472 Ambulances and 11 Helicopters
- There is an increase in provider licensing renewals due to the upcoming recertification and re-licensure periods.
- The state-level suspension of all out-of-state travel has created additional processes for vehicle inspections and Compliance-related investigations.
- Educational Training Agencies (ETA) support and relicensing are ongoing with no observed issues. Since inception, we have seen an average of a 5% increase in NREMT pass rates across all levels of initial training.
 - 22 licensed ETAs with 5 more in-process
 - The Administrative Packet for the application and licensing information can be found on the Division website: <https://www.fstems.dos.nh.gov/licensing/eta-licensing>

Courses/Programs

- EMS Simulation Education

- *Fast & Furious – Tachy-dysrhythmias of the Young & Old (Simulation)* – Concord, March 11th; Tamworth, March 26th; and Bethlehem, April 11th
 - *Human Trafficking in NH for Emergency Medical Services* – Virtual, March 19th
 - *EMS Simulation - Traumatic Emergencies (Medical Simulation)* – New London, April 25th
 - *Bad Pipes – Less Common Types of Shock (Medical Simulation)* – Concord, May 13th; Keene, May 28th; and Bethlehem, June 13th
 - *EMS Simulation - Traumatic Emergencies (Medical Simulation)* – New London, May 20th
- EMS in the Warm Zone
 - Awareness and Operations courses are available free to students through our online training platform:
<https://www.nhfaemslearning.org/login/index.php>
 - The RTF Concepts class is a half-day, in-person training with grant funding opportunities available. Questions regarding the program should be directed to Shawn Croteau at Shawn.A.Croteau@dos.nh.gov.

Clinical Systems

- Work continues Version 10.0 Protocol Development.
- Both the FT EMS Training Coordinator and the PT Initial Programs Coordinator positions remain vacant. The Division will continue to run programs as staffing allows, which will include SIM training, EMS in the Warm Zones training, and continuing education.
- All EMS bulletins may be found on the website:
<https://www.fstems.dos.nh.gov/ems-systems/ems-bulletins>

Data Management

- Under guidance from the U.S. Fire Administration, as of January 1, 2026, all fire response information shall be recorded using the National Emergency Response Information System (NERIS). The Data Management team continues to work closely with the Fire Marshals office on fire incident reporting system.
- For departments using NHESR, the Division's NHESR team continues to work with fire departments to assist with the transition. Questions may be directed to the NHESR@dos.nh.gov team.

Compliance

- There are currently 11 active investigations and ongoing cases.

Preparedness and Special Projects

Staff continue to support AED, MIH, and IFT programs and outreach around the state. There are 14 current MIH programs in the state.

Fire Standards and Training Commission – (Chiefs Clark/Miller) –

- Chief Miller reported that there will be public comment availability for the FF1 curriculum.
- He also spoke of online programs, specifically the technical areas. The Commission voted to “facilitate” delivery of the technical programs but not deliver them. The long-term goal is to bring them back in-house.

Homeland Security and Emergency Management – (Director Buxton) – No report

Division of Emergency Services and Communications – (Director Doyle)

- Laconia facility update: Construction continues, on track and on budget; Interior finishing (paint, tile, flooring, etc.) is underway;
- Genasys Emergency notification platform ([NH Alerts](#)) is up and running, If you are interested in becoming a POC for your community to use the ENS for local messaging, please let us know. The statewide ENS system is offered to local communities at no cost. For more information, reach out to Matt White, matthew.w.white@desc.nh.gov at DESC;
- WEA / Emergency Alert protocol development continues B/T DESC and HSEM...provide guidance on how to disseminate a WEA via IPAWS (for agencies that have authorized access), and how you can request one, if necessary;
- Piscataqua River / High Level Bridge response group meeting last week – discussion related to video access by marrying the DOT system with DOS capabilities...work continues;
- Work with Northern Borders Dispatch continues – reviewing communications plans and potential infrastructure buildout / CAD Interoperability progress;
- Our Trainees are progressing well and are OJT currently / SBS with a Trainer. Should be on their own within a few weeks;

- Community Events / school visits reminder – connect with our Public Outreach / Education Team for more info: Patrick Cavanaugh (603-271-6911), DESCPIO@dos.nh.gov;
- C.A.R.E.S. update is in full swing and the website has been completed. Reach out to our CARES Team for more information (cares.desc.nh.gov) or to include them in any outreach efforts in your community (NH911CARES@desc.nh.gov);
- Reminder of requirement to register AED's – if you would like any information on what is required and how you can spread the word in your communities, visit <https://www.desc.dos.nh.gov/resources/automated-external-defibrillator-aed-registration>
- Social Media / Public Education Updates:
In February, the Division used its social media channels (Facebook, Instagram, and X) to recognize employee milestones and achievements while continuing to reinforce important public safety messaging. Posts celebrated several well-earned promotions and highlighted the dedication and professionalism of team members across the organization. The Division also promoted the use of what3words and emphasized the importance of knowing your location during an emergency, helping residents better understand the tools and capabilities available in an emergency situation. Additional content included reminders about Text-to-911 and other general safety reminders to ensure the public remains informed and prepared. Social media continues to serve as an important platform for highlighting our people, promoting awareness, and supporting the mission of New Hampshire 911.
- Media events:



- 4th Interoperability Roundtable discussion in Belknap County last month – received good feedback. Next one will be in Cheshire county in March @ SWFMA in Keene on March 19... details to follow. More info can be requested from Asst. Director Tim Scott at timothy.c.scott@desc.nh.gov
- Legislative update:
 - Watching:

Bill Num	Title
HB 1055	Granting The State Board Of Education Rulemaking Authority Relative to Student Use Of Cell Phones and Personal Communication Devices In Schools.
HB 1129	Authorizing Superintendents or Their Designee to Allow Limited Use Of Personal Laptops and Tablets In Schools and Establishing That Such Use Is Exempted Under School Cell Phone Use Policies.
HB 1193	Naming A 911 Call Service Center In Laconia In Honor Of Bruce G. Cheney.
HB 1436	Relative to The Classification and Protection Of Personal Digital Information and Cloud-stored Files.
HB 1503	Allowing The Department Of Education to Allocate Funds to Create A Database Of Maps Of Public Schools For Emergency Use Cases.
* HB 1777	Relative to The Enhanced 911 System Fund.
SB 423	Reestablishing The Commission to Study The Incidence Of Post-traumatic Stress Disorder In First Responders.
SB 537	Repealing The Authorization For The Public Utilities Commission to Approve Alternative Forms Of Regulation.

- HB 1777 ITI'd in Committee, Tabled on the floor vote;
- HB 1193 OTP in the House, came out of committee in the Senate, in favor;

- HB 1503 Public hearing / Exec on 3/10;
- Interoperability Roundtable discussions continue, next scheduled on 3/19 at SWMFA for Cheshire and Sullivan Counties...all are welcome to attend;
- Statewide Interoperability Executive meeting on 3/24 at the Fire Academy;
- The annual TERT (*New Hampshire Telecommunications Emergency Response Task Force*) Rally is scheduled for 3/27 at the Sullivan County Complex at 5 Nursing Home Dr., Claremont – for more information on NH-TERT, visit <https://www.nheda.org/nh-tert> ;
- An upcoming COML Class has been scheduled for the week of April 6th, 2026. Class will begin on Tuesday April 7th and run through Friday at Portsmouth Fire Department Station #2 on Route #1 in Portsmouth, NH. For all interested individuals, registration will be through CISA Emergency Coordinator Communications Melissa Nazarro at melissa.nazzaro@cisa.dhs.gov – please let me know if you'd like more information;
- Any question, comments, concerns please reach out: (c) 603-931-2298 / mark.e.doyle@desc.nh.gov

E 911 Commission – (Chief Thomas) –

- 435,000 calls which is a 1.5% increase 32% are Medical
- In January there was a record call volume of 2157
- Call Data for # of Police, Fire and EMS for the past year are available
- Hiring Freeze does not effect E911 staffing
- Nine trainees are out of classroom working along side other dispatchers
- When trainees hit the floor it will help overtime issues
- Working on numbering the 63 buildings at St Anselm College who all have been using 100 Anselm Dr , Manchester
- Preparing for the Seabrook 2 year drill “ Hostile Action Drill” 10 mile radius maps are being supplied
- Radio Maintenance are doing annual site checks
- First Net updates :Improvements to Mount Sunapee Tower Funding has been approved with funding expected to be approved at two other locations in August of 2026
- Laconia Facility is moving along on schedule and within budget
- The northern border tower is waiting for an easement from Quebec Power to power the new tower

- Working on live screening on the Piscataqua River Bridge to monitor incidents
- Still working on maps for private schools
- The Rapid SOS Maps are updated
- Since last meeting 1879 new addressing points and 951 road segments have been entered
- To date NHCARES has 1431 participants

Forests and Lands – (Chief Sherman) – No Report

NH Information Analysis Center – (James Heinz-liaison) –

Commission to study the Incidence of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder in First Responders – (Chief Watkins) – No report

Board of Fire Control – (Chiefs Clark/Emanuel) – No report

NH Emergency Medical and Trauma Services Coord. Board – (Dep. Chief Paquette) – No report

National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC) – (Chief Cathy) – No report

EMS Trauma Medical Review Committee (Dep. Chief Clough) – No report

Building Code Review Board – (Asst. Chief Pouliot/Chief Reinert) – (Submitted in writing for minutes)

- IRC/ IBC Committee reports that the governor is in favor of additional housing but is not willing to compromise on safety. The Department of Safety officially opposes HB1004 so the question of sprinkler requirements for 3 and 4 family buildings will not be addressed by the BCRB. The board has already agreed that any changes should be in the IRC. There was discussion between the differences between 13D and 13R sprinkler systems
- Noah Hodgess, who is the Principal Planner at NH Dept of Business and Economic Affairs, has indicated that having the building code address accessory dwelling units as well as tiny homes, would help clarify things in the field. The
- Chair asked the committee to review Appendix BC and develop a proposed amendment.
- The Board went through a lengthy list of Legislative Bills that are making their way through the process.

- **Website status:** The BCRB Chair has been working with Fire Marshal's Office to update the website. Priority is to separate the building codes from the fire codes.

Manufactured Housing Installation Standards Board: (Chief Blanchette) –
No report

NH Drug Overdose Commission – (Chief Thomas) – No report

New England Fire Chiefs – a Division of the IAFC – (Chief Murray) –

- He reported that this year's Expo will be at Mohegan Sun August 26 to 28 and will include a broader focus on professional development.
- He also reminded members of the \$3.2 m SAFER grant given to the NEAFC for volunteer departments and various clothing items. The will be represented at the NHAFC Annual Meeting in Plymouth April 9.

Old Business –

New Business –

Good and Welfare –

- Chief (ret) Klose reported that he had attended two "Line of Duty Death" classes and urged members to assure that their personnel files contain the appropriate information.
- He also introduced Advocate Member Peter Latucky of NESTA.
- Chief Jason Lyon expressed his appreciation for the Life Membership and thanked the members for their support over the years. He expressed his opinion that the NHAFC is a very important organization to belong to and was grateful to have joined.

Raffle - Counted by Chiefs. \$440 was collected, \$220 was given for prizes and \$220 was forwarded to the Treasurer.

The meeting was adjourned at 1927 hrs.

Respectfully submitted,
Chief Brent T. Lemire, ret.
Executive Director, NHAFC

March 12, 2026