



Albany County Sheriff's Office

Critical Incident Emergency Management Unit

June 2023

Critical Incident/Emergency Management Unit

This is the monthly newsletter for the Albany County Sheriff's Office Critical Incident Emergency Management Unit. **If you have events that you would like posted in this newsletter please email them to the Fire Coordinator's office.**



Sheriff Apple Officially opens the County's new 911/EOC Center with County Legislature Chair Andrew Joyce and County Executive Daniel P. McCoy

In this issue

County 911 Grand opening
Trench Training Class
Albany Fire Graduation
Firefighter 1 Class
Haz Mat corner
PFAS free turnout gear outer shells
Training

Office of Emergency
Management

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The new County 911/EOC building was officially opened on May 10th and the Fire Advisory board toured it at their meeting on May 24th.



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A NYS Trench Rescue-Technician Level class was held May 24 and 25 at the Watervliet Arsenal. We want to thank Rich and Laura Szesnat of Constantine Construction for allowing us use of their equipment, fuel and quarry in Halfmoon for the hands on portion of the class.



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Albany Fire Academy Graduation



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Firefighter I Albany County, New York

Spring 2023



Graduates



Altamont F.D.
Robert M. Nopper, Jr.
Aidan D. Toll

Fort Hunter F.D.
Kyle E. Dunagan

Rotterdam F.D. No. 2
Steven Redmond

Berne F.D.
Carleton H. Griffith

Guilderland F.D.
Jonathan Donohue
Amber Lupi

Selkirk F.D.
Robert E. Donnelly
Carl A. Lindmark

Boght F.D.
Kevin Skuse

Latham F.D.
Muthukrishnan Narasimhan

Shaker Road - Loudonville F.D.
Emilie A. DeGroff

Delmar F.D.
Anthony P. Apuzzi

Maplewood F.D.
Kathryn M. Hook

Westmere F.D.
Heather Harris
Olga Kostikova
Kenneth P. Louzier, III

East Greenbush F.D.
Dawson L. Cimijotti

North Bethlehem F.D.
Scott M. Nearing



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Hazmat Corner

Lithium Ion Battery Update

We have an important request for all county fire departments. Please notify the Albany County 9-1-1 Center whenever you have a fire involving lithium ion batteries. They will notify the on-call County Fire Coordinator. There are a couple of reasons for this. First is so we can gather as much information on these fires so we can pass it on to you. Second, the NYS DHSES Grants Unit is going to be asking for statistics on these fires in the next round of Hazmat grants. These grants fund hazmat response in the entire state. The Capital Region receives over \$170,000 annually to help fund the hazmat teams in Albany, Rensselaer, Saratoga and Schenectady Counties. NOTE: The direct phone number for the County 9-1-1 Center is (518) 765-2352.

As a reminder, the Albany County Hazmat Team has the equipment and training to handle lithium ion batteries. A memo regarding this was sent to all fire chiefs on December 19, 2022. If you need a copy of the memo you can request one via email to thomas.remmert@albanycountyny.gov.

We are fortunate that Chief Victor Graves, who is part of our County Hazmat Team, has taken the lead on lithium ion batteries at NYS OFPC. Victor is assistant chief at West Albany Fire Department. He was instrumental in developing the new OFPC course on lithium ion batteries which he has presented to many of our county fire departments. Chief Graves is available to respond to your incidents as part of the Albany County Hazmat Team.

Lithium Ion Battery Fire in Albany Warehouse District

On May 24, 2023 at 12:50PM, the Albany Fire Department received a call for a fire in a trash barrel involving batteries at 962 Broadway at the corner of Tivoli Street.

Engine 2 responded to find the trash on the side of Tivoli Street. The occupants of the building threw the items off a loading dock to get it out of the building. The crew had to connect to a nearby hydrant to extinguish the fire. It was determined that several lithium ion batteries were involved.

At the time, the Rescue Squad, which is one of the lead units in the Albany County Hazmat Team, was out of service for training. A mutual aid request was made to Albany County dispatch for resources from the County Hazmat Team. The Watervliet Arsenal responded with their hazmat unit and an engine.

Hazmat Team members in full PPE pulled apart the debris to isolate the batteries and used metal drums and pails to overpack the damaged batteries to mitigate any further danger. All units cleared the scene at 3:35PM.





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Electric Vehicle Fires on the Interstate Highways

This past February, the Capital Region Hazmat Group held a meeting on Electric Vehicle fires on Interstate Highways. In attendance were representatives from NYS Department of Transportation and the NYS Thruway Authority. Also attending were members of NY State Police Troops G and T as well as NYS Police Emergency Management



All that remains of a burnt EV is essentially an empty shell that shows that many aluminum body panels melted away. The reignition issue because of stranded energy that's inside of the floorpan-mounted battery remains. Photo from Firehouse Magazine.

Topics discussed included:

- The amount of water needed and difficulty of water supply
- Closing a highway in both directions
- Possible hazardous smoke and fumes from the fire
- Potential hazardous runoff from the extinguishment efforts
- Removing the vehicle from the highway
- Letting the fire burn itself out

As we've seen in reports from other parts of the country, these fires can take 20,000 to 40,000 gallons of water to extinguish. This would be difficult in any area but even more so in urban and suburban areas where there are few or no tankers available. Generally, the interstate highways do not have hydrants.

Considerations for closing a highway in both directions included possible exposure to toxic smoke from the fire and making it easier to accommodate a tanker shuttle. Of course, it would depend on what's between the two directions of a divided highway.

Wind conditions will affect decisions on exposure to smoke and toxic fumes from the fire. Other climate conditions will affect this also. You may wish to contact the National Weather Service to let them know what is going on and give them a phone number they can use to contact you. We do this as a normal procedure on hazmat incidents. They can give you a localized forecast and contact you if conditions change such as when a cold front is expected to move through the area.

It was also discussed that it may be better to just let the fire burn itself out. This would depend on exposures, location (urban, suburban, rural), ability to reroute traffic, etc.

Due to the large volumes of water used on these fires, there haven't been any findings of problems with the runoff. Everything is pretty well diluted. Using foam on these fires is not recommended. If foam is used, the foam itself is now considered a hazardous material. More on this in a future article.

Removing a vehicle from the highway when part of the battery is still intact can present problems. The battery

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EV Fires on the Interstate Highways *continued*

will have what is called "stranded energy." This can cause a rekindle when the battery is jostled while hauling it onto the tow truck or transporting it to the tow yard. Once at the tow yard, the car should be placed at least 50 feet from all other objects. It should be placed such that there is access to the battery in the event of another fire. For example, the car may be placed on its side.

Depending on the situation, letting the fire burn itself out may be the best option. This may not take much longer than extinguishing the fire and it certainly requires much less firefighting resources. Exposure issues may preclude this option. Of course, the traffic issues will be a consideration. Thinking out of the box may be needed such as using a large plow truck or bulldozer to push the burning car off the road. In one actual fire, the car was pushed into a drainage ditch and left there for several days. Note that we are not recommending these actions, just pointing out what has been tried in the past. Incident command will have the responsibility to weigh all factors and make the appropriate decisions.

As with any hazmat incident, you can request a consultation with a member of the team. We can also have someone respond to assist you in evaluating options. We ask that you contact the county if you have an EV fire so we can send someone to gather firsthand information for the benefit of all.

As you know, there are no "standard" procedures for handling an EV fire. Many things are being tried such as nozzles that go under a vehicle and pierce the battery case, fire blankets, and other tactics. The Capital Region Hazmat Group as well as NYS OFPC are doing their best to keep up with the latest developments.

If you come across any good resources of information on EV fires, please drop us a note or give us a call so we can pass it on to everyone.

There is a good article on the Firehouse Magazine website at the following link:

[University of Extrication: Electric Vehicle Fire Suppression | Firehouse](https://www.firehouse.com/operations-training/article/21255066/university-of-extrication-electric-vehicle-fire-suppression) or

<https://www.firehouse.com/operations-training/article/21255066/university-of-extrication-electric-vehicle-fire-suppression>

The interim guidance from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) is attached to this newsletter.

Annual Hazmat Training Exercise Held at Watervliet Arsenal

On May 17, 2023 the Capital Region Hazmat Group held the annual Exercise / Training session at the Watervliet Arsenal. This was an all day event attended by over 140 people. Hazmat technicians from all four counties participated in the events. The session opened with an update on lithium ion batteries given by Chief Victor Graves from NYS OFPC. This was followed with a general training session and demonstration of the new "dry decon" systems that are being implemented.

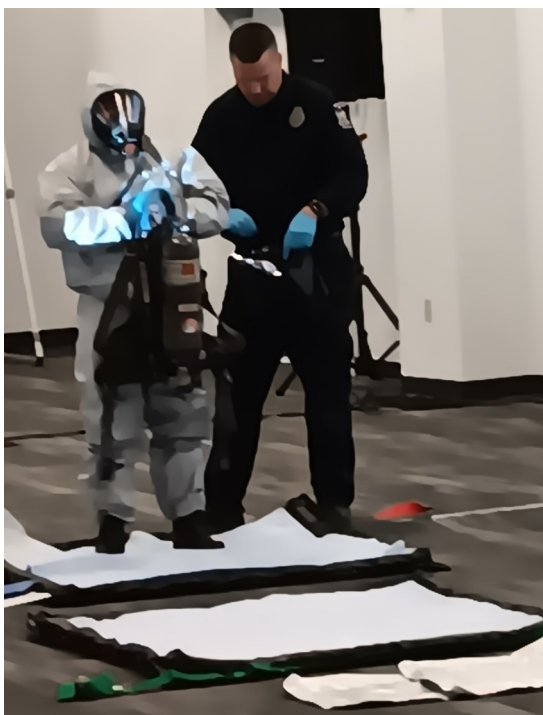
Next the participants were divided into three groups and rotated through several hands on simulations. Stations included chlorine cylinders, leak simulators, a tanker rollover simulator, sample collection for unknown substances, electrical hazards (presented by National Grid) and air monitoring with multi gas and specialized meters. It was a very successful day and there are plans to make it a two day event next year.



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Annual Hazmat Exercise May 17, 2023—Capital Region Hazmat Group



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By Fire Rescue 1 By LEXIPOL

Naperville City Council authorized spending to replace their frontline firefighter PPE with PFAS-free outer shells

May 22, 2023

By Suzanne Baker
Naperville Sun

NAPERVILLE, Ill. — Naperville took steps this week to reduce firefighters' exposure to harmful chemicals within the very suits they wear to shield against contaminants.

The Naperville City Council this week authorized spending up to \$500,000 to replace all its front-line equipment to protect personnel and mitigate any potential risks associated with existing equipment.

Known as turnout or bunker gear, the fire-resistant clothing and accessories — pants, coat, hood, boots, gloves and helmet — are worn by every Naperville firefighter on every fire and vehicle accident response. The suits repel oil and water because they contain per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, or PFAS, a class of fluorinated chemicals.

But due to their oil- and water-resistant properties, PFAS don't break down easily and persist in the body and the environment, which is why they're often called "forever chemicals."

While safety standards prove turnout gear is the best line of defense for limiting exposure to fire contaminants, recent studies show the PFAS in the gear has been linked to increased rates of liver, kidney and other cancers.

A January 2023 report from the director of the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health states cancer is the leading cause of death among firefighters likely due to their exposure to smoke and hazardous chemicals.

The International Association of Fire Fighters and Metropolitan Fire Chiefs Association joined together to urge firefighters to take precautions to reduce exposure to the forever chemicals until PFAS can be removed from turnout gear.

To expedite the removal of PFAS from the Naperville department, fire Chief Mark Puknaitis requested the funding from the council at its Tuesday meeting.

Turnout gear consists of three layers: an outer shell, a moisture barrier and a thermal liner.

Puknaitis in a memo to the council said the shell poses the greatest threat of chemical breakdown because they are directly exposed to light and heat, and manufacturers now are producing PFAS-free shells.

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While the liners still contain the chemicals, the city will need to replace those when PFAS-free alternatives become available, he said.

He added that no manufacturer currently offers completely PFAS-free firefighting gear.

Councilwoman Allison Longenbaugh said she was glad to see the change.

"As we know, cancer is one of the leading causes of death for firefighters, and being able to improve this is such a big deal," Longenbaugh said.

Each member of the Naperville Fire Department is outfitted with two sets of gear to prevent firefighters from reusing dirty gear if they head out on a new call. Studies also show wearing dirty gear raises the risk of exposure to hazardous substances.

Puknaitis said the backup sets will be rotated out following the current rotation.

Although the cost of the gear was unbudgeted, city officials said money is available in the capital projects fund as a result of other project delays.

Puknatis suggested there's a possibility of recouping some of the cost.

"This is not just a Naperville issue. This is an issue not only across the state but across the country because there are many others that purchased turnout gear with this unfortunate result," Puknaitis said.

There are a number of pending lawsuits from individuals and communities that are suing manufacturers and the agency that oversees standards.

"It's not class action yet, but it may turn out to be," Puknaitis said.

In March, the IAFF, the union that represents Naperville firefighters and paramedics and the more than 300,000 fire professionals across the United States and Canada, sued the National Fire Protection Association, accusing the body of establishing guidelines so that gear has to contain toxic PFAS chemicals to meet the voluntary standards.

The union also hired three law firms to push for changes to the national regulatory standards, demand all turnout gear be replaced with PFAS-free alternatives, and assist members and their families to seek compensation for PFAS-related injuries.





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Recruitment and Retention



The Tactical Training trailer as well as the Retention and Recruitment car were at the South Colonie Raider Fest. We would like to thank Chief Degroff for his assistance at this event

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The retention and recruitment car was in the Voorheesville and Maplewood Memorial Day Parades. If you would like to have the car at your Firehouse or at an event in your District please email Robert.Stevens@AlbanyCountyNY.gov



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**Homeland Security
and Emergency Services**

**Fire Prevention
and Control**

Fire and Emergency Services Leadership and Management Conference

SAVE THE DATE

November 3-5, 2023

At the New York State Academy of Fire Science



- **Scope:** Leadership and management. Focused on 'upper level' content such as HR, grant writing, administration, ethics, leadership, program management, health and wellness, etc. Will not contain strategy and tactics related content.
- **Target Audience:** Chief level officers, administrators, staff officers, commissioners, lieutenants, captains etc.
- **Format:** Multitude of 2 – 4 hour breakout sessions where attendees can go to whatever they like. No need to sign up for any specific breakout session ahead of time, just register for the conference itself.

For more information, email FireOfficer@dhses.ny.gov

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NYS AFC 2023 SEMINAR SERIES

NYS AFC's annual Seminar Series provides educational opportunities for fire service personnel of all ranks at sites across New York state. three-hour seminars are conducted by some of the nation's leading fire service instructors at the local level on a variety of timely topics.

[Online Registration](#)

https://www.nysfirechiefs.com/files/Events_Training/2023%20NYS AFC%20Seminar%20Series.pdf

NYS AFC 2023 Seminar Series "Truck Skills Beyond the Textbooks" **With Lieutenant Mike Ciampo, Fire Department City of New York (FDNY)** **Three-Hour Seminar**

Early in our firefighting orientation, we're taught basic skills and tactics from textbooks. In addition, we'll drill and be tested on many of these skills at fire academy buildings to attain our firefighting certifications. It's a good process, but our learning shouldn't stop there because we haven't been exposed to many of the situations we'll encounter at fires and emergencies. Plus, the buildings in the academy aren't conducive to allowing us to operate with tools to open the walls and ceilings, pull suspended ceilings, remove baseboard and window trim, or even cut open tongue and groove sheathed roofs. This interactive lecture strives to go beyond textbook learning and bring alive street skills, tips, and tactics of truck work in: portable ladders, overhaul, forcible entry, roof ventilation, tool use, and more.

Registration Fee:

\$35 per person – NYS AFC Individual and Department Members

\$50 per person – Non-Members

Pre-registration is encouraged. On-site registration will be accepted if space permits.

2023 Dates and Locations:

Registration area opens 30 minutes prior to starting time. Three-hour program.

October 23 – 7:00 p.m. – Albany County

Village of Ravena Fire Department • 116 Main Street • Ravena, NY 12143

October 24 – 7:00 p.m. – Saratoga County

Clifton Park Fire Department • 38 Old Route 146 • Clifton Park, NY 12065

Albany County Training

ALBANY COUNTY FIRE TRAINING SCHEDULE #7 2023 is posted on our website <https://www.albanycounty.com/home/showpublisheddocument/42759>

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ALBANY COUNTY FIRE TRAINING SCHEDULE #7 2023

Pre-Registration Required: Students may register by clicking on the Learning Management System link on the NYS OPFC Home Page ([NYS Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Services - OFPC](#))

Registration opens 45 days before the first class

COURSE	LOCATION	DATE	INSTRUCTOR	PREREQUISITES
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Please Note that a training authorization letter is now required for all courses offered by the New York State Office of Fire Prevention and Control

Firefighter I Certification (BEFO/SCBA Interior Firefighter Operations) IN PROGRESS IFSTA Essentials of Firefighting7th Edition Curriculum		Colonie MTB	January 4th: Orientation: 6:30 pm Chief Officer Must Attend with Student <i>BEFO (W/Hazardous Materials Operations)</i> January 4, 25, 30, February 1, 6, 8, 13, 15, 27, March 1, 6, 8, 13, 15, 20, 21, 27, 29, April 3, 5, 17, 19, 24, 26, May 1 <i>SCBA/IFO:</i> May 3, 8, 10, 15, 17, 22, 24, 31, June 5, 7, 12, 14, 21, 26, 27, 28 1830-2130 Instructor - Collins		At Orientation: Training Authorization Letter Start of SCBA/IFO: Medical Clearance to wear SCBA,
Apparatus Operator-Pump	Selkirk #2	May 9, 11, 15, 17, 23, 25, 31, June 5 1800-2100	Santabarbara	Scene Support Operations/Basic Exterior Firefighter Operations or Equivalent	
NFA: Incident Safety Officer New Dates	Colonie MTB	May 29, June 5, 12, 19, 26, July 10 1830-2130	Clawson	None	

Firefighter I Boot Camp Combined Basic Exterior Firefighting Operations & SCBA Interior Firefighting Operations- Firefighter I – Blended Learning (Internet Based Course)		May 30th Orientation 1830hrs. Westmere FD Note: Chief Officer from student's department must attend orientation. Instructors: Kerr/Gill	Completion of Approved CPR Course, physically capable of wearing an SCBA and Training Authorization Letter. Student must have access to a computer with high-speed internet. ICS100, ICS700, Home Skills – Due Date will be announced at orientation First Aid /CPR- Due Date will be announced at orientation <u>\$40 enrollment fee</u> required at orientation for blended learning program	
NOTE: Sign up on LMS waiting list. Class shows as full. Waiting list firefighters will be assigned to a different course running on the same schedule. Class Schedule Dates: May 30 (1830-2130), June 20 (1830-2130), 26, 27, July 1, 3 (1830-2130), 5, 7, 8, 10, 11, 19 0800-1700				
Apparatus Operator Aerial Device	Stanford Heights	May 31, June 5, 7, 12, 19, 24 Weeknights 1830-2130 Saturday 0800-1700	Molesky	Basic Exterior Firefighting Operations or Equivalent
SCBA Confidence New Dates	Elsmere	May 31, June 7, 14, 21 1930-2130	Clawson	Firefighter I or Equivalent & SCBA Qualified
Refresher Training (Rescue Technician Basic)	Berne	June 7, 8, 10 Weeknights 1830-2130 Saturday 0800-1400	DeGroff	Rescue Technician Basic

Firefighter II Boot Camp Revised Date for Orientation (June 13)	Guilderland Tower	June 13, July 24, 25, 26, 27, 29, August 7, 8, 9, 10, 12 Weeknights 1830 Saturday 0800	DeGroff	Firefighter I or Equivalent
Hazardous Materials First Responder Operations NEW TO SCHEDULE	Fort Hunter	August 22, 29, September 5, 9 Weeknights 1830-2230, Saturday 0900-1300	Flensted	None
Apparatus Operator- Pump	Westerlo	September 7, 12, 14, 19, 23, 26 Weeknight 1830 Saturday 0800-1400	DeGroff	Scene Support Operations/Basic Exterior Firefighter Operations or Equivalent
Fire Police NEW TO SCHEDULE	Fort Hunter	September 12, 19, 26, October 3, 10, 17, 24	Collins	None
Rescue Technician Basic	Berne	October 11, 16, 18, 23, 25, 28 Weeknights 1830-2130 Saturday 0800-1700	DeGroff	None
Tactical Fire Ground Simulations NEW TO SCHEDULE	Westerlo	December 14: 1830-2130 December 16 0900-1700	Flensted	ICS 200
Unless changed by instructor or noted above: All evening classes will be held from 19:00-22:00 hours. All Saturday and Sunday classes will be held from 09:00-12:00 hours and 13:00-16:00 hours			 Fire Coordinator Gerald Paris 	