



Albany County Sheriff's Office Critical Incident Emergency Management Unit

November 2025

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.**



Turkey Fryer fire

In this issue:

Haz-Mat Corner

Training

Recruitment and Retention

Office of Emergency
Management

P.O. Box A
58 Verda Ave.
Clarksville, NY
12041

Ph: (518) 720-8025
Fax: (518) 720-8031



Albany County Sheriff's Office Critical Incident Emergency Management Unit

November 2025

Hazmat Corner



New Member of Albany County Hazmat Team

We are pleased to report that the Albany International Airport Rescue and Fire Fighting Department (ARFF) is now part of the Albany County Hazmat Team. All ARFF personnel are NYS certified Firefighters, NYS certified Emergency Medical Technicians, Hazardous Materials Technicians, and CPR/AED instructors. All personnel meet all FAA requirements for Airport Firefighters. The ARFF department joins Albany FD, W. Albany FD, Watervliet Arsenal FD, Guilderland FD, Colonie EMS and Albany County Fire Coordinators as members of the team.

County Hazmat Plan revisions underway

We are in the process of updating the County Hazmat Plan. Our main focus at this time is updating the various levels of response. We will be discussing this at our meeting scheduled for January, 2026 and we hope to have the revisions complete by March, 2026.

Once the revisions are complete we will forward copies to all fire departments in the county.

Hazmat Response Familiarization Training

Starting late Spring, 2026 we will have training available to familiarize your personnel with the County Hazmat team, our capabilities and how we can assist you with responses to various types of incidents. We will bring some of our equipment so people can see it first hand. This can be done on a drill night when it is convenient for your department. More information on this will be sent out as we develop the training curriculum. We will be able to provide training certificates.

Lithium-Ion Battery Fires

Our thanks to those who responded to our data request on the lithium ion battery fires. It was needed for the Regional Hazmat Grant Applications.



Albany County Sheriff's Office

Critical Incident Emergency Management Unit

November 2025

Be sure to visit the NYS DHSES OFPC website for additional public education resources!

<https://www.dhses.ny.gov/general-public-resources>

ALBANY COUNTY FIRE TRAINING SCHEDULE #16-2025 is attached.

<https://www.albanycountyny.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/55635/638973266222270000>

There is now a link on our website with instructions on how to get an LMS sign-on ID . We recommend that all new members should register as soon as they join so they have access to training opportunities.

Office of Emergency
Management

P.O. Box A
58 Verda Ave.
Clarksville, NY
12041

Ph: (518) 720-8025
Fax: (518) 720-8031



Albany County Sheriff's Office Critical Incident Emergency Management Unit

November 2025

Recruitment and retention



Office of Emergency
Management

P.O. Box A
58 Verda Ave.
Clarksville, NY
12041

Ph: (518) 720-8025
Fax: (518) 720-8031

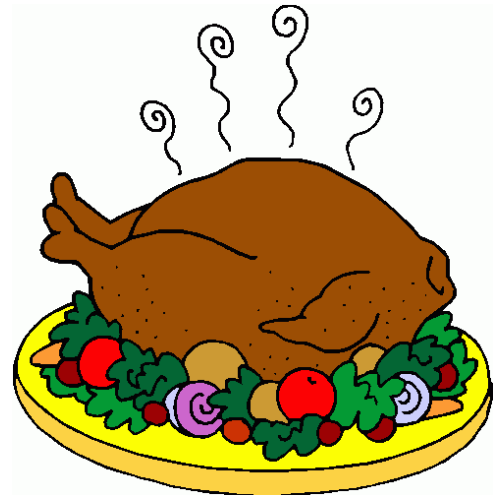


Albany County Sheriff's Office Critical Incident Emergency Management Unit

November 2025

Fire Rescue 1 by Lexipol

Firefighters warn of the dangers of deep-frying a turkey



Laura French

November 18, 2025 02:44 PM •

Office of Emergency
Management

P.O. Box A
58 Verda Ave.
Clarksville, NY
12041

Ph: (518) 720-8025
Fax: (518) 720-8031

The risk of cooking accidents often increases during the holiday season, and several fire departments have demonstrated the common mistakes and catastrophic results that can come from deep frying a turkey.

Community awareness about the do's and don'ts of cooking during the holidays can play a part in preventing fires and injuries, and social media is a useful tool for spreading this safety message. Here are five fire departments that demonstrated the mishaps to avoid on Thanksgiving this year; be sure to share these videos and consider how you can spread awareness to your community.



Albany County Sheriff's Office

Critical Incident Emergency Management Unit

November 2025

Colorado Springs Fire Department

Firefighters with the Colorado Springs Fire Department shared some turkey frying expert tips:

1. If your turkey isn't thawing yet, it's probably too late to fry it (trust us).
2. If your turkey is out and thawing great job you can move onto the next step: never fry a turkey in a covered area and always place the fryer away from any combustibles, keep it clear of children and pets, too.
3. Do not over fill your turkey fryer.
4. Water and hot oil don't mix, if a fire breaks out on the stove or in the oven smother the fire with a lid or cookie sheet instead of trying to put it out with water.
5. Have a fire extinguisher handy.
6. When using the stove make sure to turn all pots/pans handles in to refrain from hot food spilling or pots/pans getting bumped
7. Keep the kitchen clear of combustibles, people and pets.
8. Stay in the kitchen while cooking.
9. As always, ensure you have working CO and smoke alarms in your home.
10. In the event a fire breaks out always call 911.

Office of Emergency
Management

P.O. Box A
58 Verda Ave.
Clarksville, NY
12041

Ph: (518) 720-8025
Fax: (518) 720-8031



Albany County Sheriff's Office Critical Incident Emergency Management Unit

November 2025

2026 LONG ISLAND METRO FIRE/EMS EXPO



JANUARY 30 – FEBRUARY 1, 2026
NASSA

The **New York State Association of Fire Chiefs** and the **Islip Town Fire/EMS Museum Educational Center** partner to deliver this annual emergency services exposition and educational event on Long Island. In addition to 150+ vendors displaying apparatus, tools, equipment, and services, the event includes seminars for responders of all ranks presented by prominent leaders in the fire/EMS field, Hands-On Training, accredited codes and EMS programs, and activities for junior firefighters.

This event benefits the [association](#) and the [museum](#), supporting their shared mission to serve the fire and emergency medical services personnel of Long Island and New York state. **Questions?** [Email](#) NYSAFC for more information. Check out photos from past expos [here](#).

Office of Emergency
Management

P.O. Box A
58 Verda Ave.
Clarksville, NY
12041

Ph: (518) 720-8025
Fax: (518) 720-8031



Albany County Sheriff's Office

Critical Incident Emergency Management Unit

November 2025

GENERAL INFORMATION

Exhibit Hours

Friday, January 30: 12:00 – 5:00 p.m. *NEW*

Saturday, January 31: 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Sunday, February 1: 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Vendor Listing *COMING SOON*

Education Hours

Friday, January 30: 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. *Codes Training Only*

Saturday, January 31: 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. *Seminars Only*

Sunday, February 1: 9:30 a.m. – 12:45 p.m. *Seminars Only*

Seminar Schedule and Descriptions *COMING SOON*

EXHIBITOR INFORMATION AND REGISTRATION

[Exhibitor Application](#) (PDF)

ATTENDEE INFORMATION AND REGISTRATION

\$25 per person, per day (includes entry to the expo and seminars on Saturday and Sunday). **Free parking**. **Tickets can be purchased at the door only.** Cash, voucher, and credit card (service fees will be applied).

If paying by voucher – departments can provide NYSAFC with the voucher and a registrant roster in advance. Submit the voucher and use a sign-in sheet on-site. NYSAFC will bill agencies at the conclusion of the event. A voucher for payment will **receive a 10% discount** on the purchase of 50 or more entry tickets. [Email](#) or call NYSAFC at (518) 477-4430.

Office of Emergency
Management

P.O. Box A
58 Verda Ave.
Clarksville, NY
12041

Ph: (518) 720-8025
Fax: (518) 720-8031



Albany County Sheriff's Office

Critical Incident Emergency Management Unit

November 2025

Codes Training

Friday, January 30

\$125 per person (includes lunch and expo ticket).

Students will earn seven in-service codes hours by completing this full-day course.

*Special pre-registration required by January 23.

[Registration Form and Full Program Details](#)

Hands-On Training:

Suffolk County Fire Academy Thermal Imaging Camera Class – “The TIC”

Saturday, January 31 and Sunday, February 1

Presented in partnership with the Suffolk County Fire Academy.

\$175 per person (includes expo ticket).

*Special registration (by January 23) and PPE required.

[Registration Form and Full Program Details](#)

Junior Firefighter Zone *DETAILS COMING SOON*

Office of Emergency
Management

P.O. Box A
58 Verda Ave.
Clarksville, NY
12041

Ph: (518) 720-8025
Fax: (518) 720-8031



Albany County Sheriff's Office Critical Incident Emergency Management Unit

November 2025

“‘I’m fine’ is the biggest bullsh*t statement”: A call for honesty around behavioral health

Dr. Nicole Sawyer urges fire service leaders to confront the roots of chronic stress and model accountability for their crews

August 25, 2025 10:48 AM •

FireRescue1 Staff

“Why is everybody so f*cked up now?” That was a common question from veteran firefighters during Dr. Nicole Sawyer’s early days delivering workshops to public safety agencies about behavioral health challenges facing first responders. To the veteran firefighters, it was a new issue, but as many others already understood, stress and trauma have always existed in the fire service; they were simply hidden: “We buried it. We just didn’t call it what it was,” Sawyer said.

During her keynote address at Fire-Rescue International 2025, Sawyer, a licensed clinical psychologist and public safety mental health consultant, detailed how survival instincts, chronic stress and generational expectations impact firefighters on and off duty. Her message was clear: Leaders must understand the biology behind firefighter behavior, acknowledge the emotional toll of the work, and model accountability. A key first step, though, is understanding the origin of our stress response.

Office of Emergency
Management

P.O. Box A
58 Verda Ave.
Clarksville, NY
12041

Ph: (518) 720-8025
Fax: (518) 720-8031



Albany County Sheriff's Office

Critical Incident Emergency Management Unit

November 2025

The amygdala and survival responses

Sawyer explained how our amygdala — the part of the brain involved with the experience of emotions — drives fight, flight or freeze responses. Firefighters, by nature and training, lean toward “fight.” These instincts, while useful in emergencies, can complicate everyday life when stress is interpreted as threat: “When we’re interpreting threat in today’s society, that means stress,” Sawyer explained. “Your people are responding to survival instincts.”

On top of professional stressors, expectations for the workforce have changed. Sawyer contrasted her fire chief grandfather’s ability to “box up” emotions with today’s expectation that firefighters be emotionally available spouses and parents. “My grandfather could walk in that door from the worst day of his life ... and he could box that sh*t up,” she said. But now, emotional demands on firefighters — and leaders — are greater than ever: “We have an expectation now that fathers will come home and be involved in the nurturing and development and emotional life of their children.”

This further adds to the stress piling onto firefighters.

Chronic stress as a job hazard

Sawyer labeled chronic stress a job hazard. The constant novelty, challenge and potential loss of control in firefighting create a baseline of anticipation that wears down the body and mind. “Those three factors are what contribute to the development of chronic stress in your body,” she said. “Biologically, your body has discovered that the only way to operate is at a level of anticipation of response. It makes us really good at our jobs, but it also contributes to all kinds of health problems.”



Albany County Sheriff's Office

Critical Incident Emergency Management Unit

November 2025

Specifically, Sawyer broke down the roles of cortisol and adrenaline in the body's stress response. While necessary for survival, repeated exposure means firefighters' brains and bodies experience every call as if it were their own emergency, leading to wear and tear. "No human body, no brain, was designed to tolerate that kind of stress," she said.

Today, many firefighters normalize aches, irritability and fatigue. Sawyer explained that many of these are direct consequences of prolonged stress chemistry. For example, "Arthritis aches and pains; inflammation is a side effect of excess cortisol in our bodies If you are in a low grade level of activation for 20-plus years, if you're prepared to respond, well that means you have just a little bit of fluid hanging out in those joints, prepared to respond ... your joints were not designed to maintain that level of inflammation ... so what happens? We get wear and tear; we get injured more often. It takes longer to recover."

Additionally, Sawyer explained, the anger that was once a survival instinct, responsible for keeping us alive, combined with excess amounts of cortisol, trigger that primitive part of the brain to remain at a constant level of irritability and grumpiness so that in the event we are faced with a threat, we can respond and we can turn it right on.

"Now that makes you really good at your job; makes you not so great at home," she said. "Suddenly you're pissed off about something really minor. You snap about things, and it feels particularly worse when we have particularly challenging days."

That's a problem, she explained: "This is a job hazard. This is not something that we can prevent. This is not something that we can eliminate. This is a reality that we have to accept, and this is where accountability comes in. This is not an excuse to be a grumpy a**hole, but [we have to] make a call and say, hey, this is



Albany County Sheriff's Office

Critical Incident Emergency Management Unit

November 2025

a thing that's going to evolve in your body over the course of your career. That edginess is real, and it's our responsibility to do something about it, to manage it, to own it."

For example, when minor inconveniences like traffic or parking become overwhelming under chronic stress, recognizing these reactions as stress-related is key to managing your response, Sawyer said.

Burnout and compassion fatigue

Sawyer also spoke to the causes and impact of burnout — a state of physical, emotional and mental exhaustion caused by emotionally demanding situations. Burnout is unavoidable in meaningful, emotionally demanding work, Sawyer said, explaining that it's not so much the challenging calls but the day-to-day frustrations that fuel burnout.

"It's all that other bullsh*t — working with each other, living with each other, dealing with politics. ... Feeling underappreciated and overworked — that's the key to burnout." Further, when firefighters can't climb out of it, they risk compassion fatigue and loss of purpose, she shared: "Compassion fatigue is when we don't come out of burnout. It's when we get stuck."

From cultural denial to open dialogue

The good news: We are making progress, Sawyer said. She shared an example from her own family history to highlight firefighters' mindset shift around behavioral health issues. Sawyer recalled how her fire chief grandfather lost two



Albany County Sheriff's Office

Critical Incident Emergency Management Unit

November 2025

firefighters to suicide. "Those two firefighters died by [air quotes] 'gun cleaning accidents' in the backyard," she said. "Every single person was in on it — the family, the department, the neighbors." Today, more open conversations and data collection reveal the longstanding scope of the problem: "Now we're talking about it. We're calling it what it is."

Accountability and leadership

Sawyer concluded with a call for accountability that starts with skipping the go-to "I'm fine" answer, which dismisses concern and damages relationships. "'I'm fine' is the biggest bullsh*t statement that we say to each other over and over again," she said. "What is wrong with saying to our spouses, to our loved ones when we get home, 'This sucks. I'm not OK'?"

Instead, firefighters and leaders must own their stress, communicate it and take responsibility. Leadership means modeling this behavior for others, she said: "That's leadership — owning our sh*t, being accountable for our psychological health, and asking [your members] to do the same. It's that simple."

Office of Emergency
Management

P.O. Box A
58 Verda Ave.
Clarksville, NY
12041

Ph: (518) 720-8025
Fax: (518) 720-8031