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MESSAGE FROM BRIAN TAYLOR - NC STATE FIRE MARSHAL



As I look at everything happening across the North Carolina Office of State Fire Marshal, one thing stands out: there is a lot happening—and a lot to be proud of. From training firefighters at ETC and helping communities reduce their risks, to supporting code officials, protecting children and advocating for the health and safety of firefighters, the OSFM team continues to show up every day for North Carolina.

This issue of the Fire Marshal Journal highlights just some of that work. You'll read about new opportunities for code officials, important changes coming to OSFM, investments in our volunteer fire departments, firefighter health, community risk reduction, and resources available when a department needs us most. You'll also see OSFM beyond the office and the firehouse. Our team is representing North Carolina on the national stage, welcoming national media to ETC, participating in fire safety campaigns, and even taking on a few personal challenges along the way.

David Rittlinger's incredible ride through the French Alps is proof that determination—and maybe a little bit of crazy—can take you a long way! As we move forward, there will be changes and challenges. But there will also be opportunities. Our job is to keep finding ways to make North Carolina safer, strengthen our fire service, and make sure the men and women who protect our communities have the resources and support they need.

And we can't do that alone. OSFM is strongest when we work together—with fire departments, code officials, emergency responders, community leaders, and the people we serve. Thank you for everything you do for North Carolina. Stay safe, stay connected, and, as always, keep answering the call.

Brian Taylor
North Carolina State Fire Marshal



NORTH CAROLINA GENERAL ASSEMBLY: STRENGTHENING OSFM TODAY AND PREPARING FOR TOMORROW

The 2026 legislative session brought significant changes and investments for the North Carolina Office of State Fire Marshal (OSFM)—including greater administrative independence, new resources and continued support for programs that strengthen North Carolina's fire service.

The decisions made by the General Assembly this year will help shape how OSFM operates and delivers services to communities across North Carolina for years to come.

As OSFM moves forward, the mission remains the same: ensure NC is a safe place to live, work, and play, proactively identify and manage risk, provide rapid, effective and coordinated emergency response and cultivate an atmosphere where team members are recognized as valued, trusted and empowered professionals.



MORE INDEPENDENCE. MORE ABILITY TO SERVE.

One of the most significant outcomes of the 2026 legislative session was legislation providing OSFM with greater control over its internal administrative functions.

Under the new law, OSFM will continue to be an office within the Department of Insurance but will exercise its powers and duties independently of the department. The Department of Insurance will continue to provide clerical and professional services to OSFM when requested, including support for financial and procurement functions, information technology, and legal services.

The legislation also provides OSFM with greater control over specified budget codes beginning July 1, 2026. This change gives OSFM more of the internal infrastructure it needs to operate efficiently, respond quickly, and better support the fire service and communities it serves.



TAKING CARE OF THOSE WHO TAKE CARE OF US

North Carolina has also continued its commitment to firefighter health. The North Carolina Firefighter Cancer Benefit Program transitioned from a pilot program to a permanently funded program beginning July 1, 2025. The program provides benefits at no cost to eligible active and qualifying retired firefighters diagnosed with covered cancers, and OSFM administers the program.

Protecting firefighters means more than providing the equipment they need to respond. It also means recognizing the long-term occupational risks associated with firefighting and providing support when firefighters face serious health challenges.

INVESTING IN OUR FIRE DEPARTMENTS

The Volunteer Fire Department Fund remains one of the state's most direct investments in local fire protection. More than \$12 million was awarded to 463 volunteer fire departments, helping departments address equipment and capital needs. For volunteer departments, these investments can mean new equipment, improvements to facilities and the ability to continue providing dependable emergency response in communities across North Carolina.



NOT EVERY CHANGE IS EASY... THE 2026 SESSION ALSO BRINGS ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGES THAT WILL REQUIRE CAREFUL ATTENTION.

The Building Code Section will transition to the North Carolina Department of Labor in January 2027. OSFM and the Department of Labor are working to support a smooth transition and keep code officials, builders, contractors, design professionals and other stakeholders informed.

Another challenge is the loss of four positions within OSFM's Community Risk Reduction (CRR) program. CRR is a critical part of preventing fires and injuries before they happen. CRR professionals work with communities to identify local risks, develop prevention strategies, and provide education and resources designed to save lives and protect property. Restoring and strengthening the CRR team must remain a priority. Effective fire prevention does not begin when the fire department receives the call—it begins by identifying risks, educating the public, and working with communities before an emergency occurs.





OSFM IN THE NATIONAL NEWS REPRESENTING NORTH CAROLINA ON THE NATIONAL STAGE

The North Carolina Office of State Fire Marshal continues to make an impact well beyond the borders of North Carolina. From national media appearances and fire service leadership to public safety campaigns and personal accomplishments, OSFM team members continue to represent the agency and the state on the national stage.



BRIAN TAYLOR ELECTED PRESIDENT OF NASFM

Our very own State Fire Marshal Brian Taylor has been elected President of the National Association of State Fire Marshals (NASFM), bringing a strong North Carolina voice to a national organization dedicated to fire prevention, public safety and the protection of communities across the country.

Taylor assumed the leadership position during NASFM's Annual Symposium in Garden Grove, California, where state fire marshals and fire service leaders from across the nation gathered to share ideas, address emerging challenges and strengthen fire prevention and life safety efforts.



ETC DRAWS NATIONAL ATTENTION FOR FOAM AND ARFF TRAINING

In September, ETC hosted ABC for a visit focused on the center's specialized foam and Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting (ARFF) training. The visit provided an opportunity to showcase the hands-on training and expertise available through OSFM and highlight the important work being done to prepare firefighters for some of the most challenging emergencies.

Good Morning America is scheduled to visit ETC in October to film, providing another opportunity to showcase OSFM's training resources and the work being done to prepare firefighters and emergency responders.





TRAINING, TOOLS AND SUPPORT

FIELD TRAINING **UPDATES**

The NC Office of State Fire Marshal's Field Training Division has a busy fourth quarter ahead, with specialized training opportunities for North Carolina's fire and rescue community.

2026 EXTRICATION SCHOOL: **FULL / WAITLIST AVAILABLE**

Interest in the 2026 Extrication School is strong! Registration is full, and a waitlist has been established due to the overwhelming response. The school provides firefighters with hands-on training focused on the skills and techniques needed to safely and effectively manage complex vehicle extrication incidents.

NC TECHNICAL ROPE SCHOOL **NOVEMBER 13-15**

The NC Technical Rope School is held in cooperation with Rowan-Cabarrus Community College, the NC Association of Rescue & EMS, and Charlotte Motor Speedway. Designed for rescuers who are certified and experienced in NC Technical Rescue, the school will provide hands-on training focused on advanced rope rescue techniques and equipment.

Training options include:

Portable High Directionals and Single Rescuer Movements. Participants should be highly proficient in knots, anchors, mechanical advantage systems, and belays. The Single Rescuer Movements course is physically demanding and will include repeated ascending and descending.





TRAINING, TOOLS AND SUPPORT PT. 2

DIRECT DELIVERY CERTIFICATION CLASSES

- HazMat Technician — October 19–30 | Central Piedmont Community College / Charlotte Fire Department
- Fire Officer III — November 2–20 | Wake Technical Community College / Fairview Fire Department, Apex
- Fire Investigation Technician (FIT) — November 16–December 3 | Rowan-Cabarrus Community College, Concord

These courses provide firefighters, officers and fire service professionals with opportunities to expand their knowledge, earn certifications and strengthen the skills needed to serve their communities.

NEW CFI-APPROVED COURSE: "THE PAPER TRAIL"

The OSFM Fire Investigations Unit has developed a new training course, "The Paper Trail," which has been approved by the CFI Board for CFI credit.

The course focuses on the systematic approach to documentation and report writing for fire investigations, emphasizing the importance of thorough, accurate, and effective investigative documentation.

The first offering of "The Paper Trail" was held September 22 at the NC Fire Marshals Institute in Greensboro. The course is approved for six hours of CFI credit.

Fire investigation professionals interested in hosting "The Paper Trail" in their area are encouraged to reach out to any member of the OSFM Fire Investigations Unit for additional information.





2026 QUALIFIED INSTRUCTOR UPGRADE – WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

All currently qualified North Carolina Fire and Rescue Commission instructors, regardless of the certification program or programs they are qualified to teach, are required to complete the 2026 Qualified Instructor Upgrade.

The 2026 Qualified Instructor Upgrade (Course Code 04B1000) is being offered in person from October 1 through December 31, 2026, as a direct delivery by OSFM staff. Qualified instructors must complete one session during this period to meet the 2026 upgrade requirement.

Who is required to attend?

The upgrade is required for individuals who are currently qualified to instruct a North Carolina Fire and Rescue Commission certification program.

If you are currently qualified in multiple programs, you do not need to attend multiple 2026 sessions this Fall. Completion of one session satisfies the 2026 Qualified Instructor Upgrade requirement.

What will the upgrade cover?

The three-hour upgrade will provide qualified instructors with important information regarding upcoming changes affecting North Carolina Fire and Rescue Commission certification programs and instructor requirements.

There is no written test or practical skills evaluation associated with the upgrade.

When and where are sessions available?

More than 140 sessions are being offered at locations across North Carolina between October 1 and December 31, 2026.

Qualified instructors may attend any available session statewide, regardless of where they live, work or normally teach. This allows instructors to select the date and location that best fits their schedule.

Additional sessions may be added to the OSFM Training Schedule as they are finalized.

How do I register?

Preregistration through OSFM 24 is required.

To register:

1. Log in to OSFM 24
2. Select Fire and Rescue Training Registration under the Personal Records tile
3. Select an available date, time and location for 04B1000 – Instructor 2026 Upgrade
4. Submit your registration

Seating varies by location, and registration is limited to the available capacity of each session. Instructors are encouraged to register early.



2026 QUALIFIED INSTRUCTOR UPGRADE – WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW PT.2

Do I need a FEMA SID?

Yes. A FEMA Student Identification (SID) number is required for the 2026 Qualified Instructor Upgrade.

Instructors should ensure their FEMA SID is entered correctly on the Account Information page in OSFM 24. FEMA SIDs must contain 10 digits, including any leading zeros.

If you do not have a FEMA SID or need assistance locating your existing FEMA SID, additional information is available at ncosfm.gov/FEMASID

What happens if I do not complete the upgrade?

All currently qualified instructors must complete the required upgrade by December 31, 2026.

Beginning with any upgrade required after October 1, 2026, failure to attend a required upgrade will result in the inability to requalify through future Qualified Instructor Upgrades. An individual may be required to meet current prerequisites and successfully complete applicable written and practical qualification testing requirements to regain qualified instructor status.

Find a Session and Register

With more than 140 opportunities across the state, qualified instructors can select the session that works best for their location and schedule.

For the complete statewide schedule, registration instructions, frequently asked questions and additional information, please visit

ncosfm.gov/InstructorUpgrades





THE CODE CORNER

COQB Moves to Remote Online Proctored Examinations

The North Carolina Code Officials Qualification Board (COQB) is transitioning to a remote, online, live-proctored examination process for individuals seeking certification as code officials in North Carolina. Beginning September 1, 2026, applicants may choose to take their COQB examination remotely through QUEST or in person at a PSI testing location. The transition will eventually move all COQB examinations to remote online testing.

Choose Your Testing Method Carefully

Applicants must receive authorization from the North Carolina Code Officials Qualification Board before scheduling and taking a COQB examination.

- QUEST — Remote, online, live-proctored examination
- PSI — In-person examination at a PSI testing location

The testing method selected during the application process cannot be changed. Applicants who choose PSI for their first attempt must use PSI for their second attempt. Applicants who select QUEST must use QUEST for both attempts.

IMPORTANT DEADLINE

If an applicant selects PSI on or before April 30, 2027, both examination attempts must be completed by June 15, 2027. Beginning June 16, 2027, all COQB examinations will be administered remotely through online live-proctored testing.

Questions About Eligibility or Certification?

Before scheduling an examination, applicants must obtain authorization from the North Carolina Code Officials Qualification Board and complete the application process.

Terri Tart, Certification Administrator | 919-647-0031 | terri.tart@ncdoi.gov

Sarah Shannon, Certifications Specialist | 919-746-1415 | sarah.shannon@ncdoi.gov





FRIDAY OPEN MIC: BRING YOUR QUESTIONS

OSFM is providing code officials across the state with a regular opportunity to ask questions, discuss issues, and stay informed through weekly "Open Mic" sessions.

Open Mic is held every Friday from 8:30–9:00 a.m., unless otherwise posted. Sessions are not held when they conflict with COQB board meetings or state holidays. The informal virtual sessions provide an opportunity for code officials to connect with OSFM staff, ask questions, and discuss topics that affect their work in the field.

JOIN US

WebEx Meeting Number: 2438 294 2804 | Password: mxVjaGsX648 | Phone: +1-415-655-0003 (U.S. Toll)

Join online: <https://ncgov.webex.com/ncgov/j.php?MTID=m81dcf98b6e937b701c329c8c942c8532>

To receive Open Mic and COQB updates, join the COQB Listserv:

NC.Code.Officials.Qualifications.Board-join@ml.nc.gov

Can't make Friday's session? Archived Open Mic presentations, files and other resources are available online:

<https://share.articulate.com/OIX9cv4CUZpBf875sh3ep>



OSFM FIRE INVESTIGATIONS UNIT SUPPORTING "UP IN SMOKE" CONFERENCE

The OSFM Fire Investigations Unit (FIU) will once again assist the North Carolina Conference of District Attorneys with its annual Up In Smoke Conference, scheduled for January 21–22 in Kitty Hawk, NC.

As part of the conference, OSFM FIU will oversee the construction of the burn cells and the burn cell demonstration, providing attendees with valuable hands-on insight into fire investigation and fire behavior. Additional information about the Up In Smoke Conference will be available on the North Carolina Conference of District Attorneys website as details are announced.

The new system will help local fire marshals, fire departments, and related agencies share fire protection system information more efficiently and consistently. It also supports documentation of local fire prevention activities, inspections, staffing, and oversight efforts that contribute to safer communities.

The initiative is expected to enhance fire safety compliance, strengthen emergency response capabilities, and potentially improve insurance outcomes for property owners and businesses through more complete fire protection data.



**SCAN QR TO JOIN
FRIDAY OPEN MIC**



FEMA SID NOW REQUIRED FOR OSFM 24

October 1, 2026, all fire and rescue personnel using OSFM 24 will be required to have a valid 10-digit FEMA Student Identification (SID) number associated with their account.

OSFM is implementing the FEMA SID requirement to strengthen the way individual training, certification, qualification and testing records are identified and maintained within OSFM 24.

A FEMA SID provides a unique identifier for each individual. Unlike information such as a name, address, email address or agency affiliation—which can change throughout a person's career—the FEMA SID remains associated with the individual. This helps ensure records can be accurately matched to the correct person, even as personal or professional information changes.

WHAT FIRE & RESCUE PERSONNEL NEED TO DO:

All OSFM 24 users should locate their existing FEMA SID or register for one if they do not already have one. FEMA SIDs entered into OSFM 24 must contain exactly 10 digits. If you have an older FEMA SID that contains fewer than 10 digits, add zeros to the beginning of the number until it reaches 10 digits.

If you already have a FEMA SID but do not remember the number, do not create a new SID. Use FEMA's SID lookup tool to retrieve your existing number.

October 1, OSFM 24 users who do not have a FEMA SID associated with their account will be directed to the Account Information page. Users will be required to enter a valid, unique 10-digit FEMA SID before they can continue using the system. For step-by-step instructions, FEMA SID lookup and registration links, and answers to frequently asked questions, visit: ncosfm.gov/FEMASID



BIRD'S-EYE VIEW LEADS TO A SAFE RESCUE - OSFM DRONE HELPS LOCATE MISSING ELDERLY MAN

Sometimes, the right technology at the right moment can make all the difference.

On August 4, 2026, the Columbus County Sheriff's Office responded to the Clarendon area after receiving a report of a missing elderly man. Lieutenant Dustin Fowler coordinated the search, and deputies discovered footprints leading from the man's residence toward a nearby field.

Recognizing the need for an aerial search, Lt. Fowler requested assistance from the Columbus County Drone Task Force. The Columbus County Fire Marshal's Office then reached out to the North Carolina Office of State Fire Marshal (NCOSFM) for additional support.

Jeffrey Bell of the OSFM Fire Investigations Unit and Drone Unit responded with drone assistance. Working alongside the Columbus County Fire Marshal's Office, Bell deployed the drone near the location where the footprints had last been observed.

The aerial search quickly provided a critical breakthrough: the missing man was located lying in a nearby field. (cont. on next page)



WHEN A DEPARTMENT NEEDS US MOST

A RESOURCE FOR FIRE AND RESCUE DEPARTMENTS FACING A LINE-OF-DUTY DEATH

A line-of-duty death is one of the most difficult moments a fire or rescue department will ever face. In the immediate aftermath, department leaders and members are faced with an overwhelming number of responsibilities while also supporting their members, the fallen responder's family, and the community. During this difficult time, the North Carolina Office of State Fire Marshal is available as a resource to help departments navigate the process. OSFM encourages fire departments and rescue squads to contact the office immediately when a member dies in an on-duty incident. Early notification allows OSFM personnel to begin providing assistance and coordinating the appropriate response.

FIRST STEP:

Immediately complete the Report an On-Duty Death form. If you are unable to complete the form, call 800-634-7854, press 0, and ask the operator for On-Duty Death assistance.

OSFM has personnel available regionally to assist departments following an on-duty death. A response team consisting of two OSFM personnel can be at the department's location within 24 hours.

For assistance, contact Deral Raynor at: 919-538-5696.

(cont.) OSFM was able to guide Columbus County Sheriff's Office personnel directly to his location. Deputies safely reached the man, removed him from the field, and transferred him to a nearby ambulance for further care.

The successful rescue was a true example of agencies working together, technology being put to work, and local expertise making a difference when it mattered most. From the Columbus County Sheriff's Office and Columbus County Fire Marshal's Office to the NCOSFM Drone Unit, the coordinated response helped bring a worried search to a safe ending. One search. One drone. One life safely found.

That's the kind of story worth celebrating.

NEXT: Have Important Information Ready

Your name, department, and a phone number where you can be contacted.

The time, date, and location of the fatal incident.

A brief description of the incident, such as a structure fire, vehicle accident, medical emergency, or other event.

No department expects to face the loss of one of its members in the line of duty. When it happens, knowing where to turn can make an overwhelming situation a little easier to navigate.

Departments should save OSFM's Line-of-Duty Death information and contact numbers now, before they are needed. Taking a few minutes to become familiar with the process can help department leaders respond quickly and confidently when every minute matters. Report an On-Duty Fire Department or Rescue Squad Death:

<https://www.ncosfm.gov/index%2Ephp/fire-rescue/line-duty-death/report-duty-fire-department-or-rescue-squad-death>



KEEPING NORTH CAROLINA'S CHILDREN SAFE



STRENGTHENING CHILD PASSENGER SAFETY ACROSS THE STATE

Every trip is an opportunity to protect a child—and North Carolina's Child Passenger Safety (CPS) program is helping families across the state make every ride a safer one. Through a statewide network of nationally certified Child Passenger Safety Technicians (CPSTs), parents and caregivers can receive hands-on education about car seats, booster seats, seat belts, and proper installation and use.

WHAT IS A PERMANENT CHECKING STATION?

A Permanent Checking Station (PCS) is a location where parents and caregivers can meet with certified Child Passenger Safety Technicians to learn about child passenger safety and have their child restraints and seat belts checked.

- Choosing the right child restraint.
- Properly installing a car seat.
- Correctly securing a child in the restraint.
- Knowing when a child is ready to move to the next stage.
- Proper use of booster seats and seat belts.
- Avoiding common mistakes that can reduce the effectiveness of a child restraint.

The goal isn't simply to install a car seat for a parent. It's to teach caregivers how to properly use and install their child's restraint every time they travel.

A RESOURCE FOR FAMILIES—AND AN OPPORTUNITY FOR FIRE DEPARTMENTS

Permanent Checking Stations connect families with trained child passenger safety professionals right in their communities. A single PCS can include multiple service locations. A fire department, for example, could establish a PCS with seat-check locations at several stations, making it easier for families throughout the community to receive assistance.

For fire departments and other agencies, becoming a PCS is also a great way to expand community risk reduction efforts and build relationships with families before an emergency ever occurs.





**SAFE
KIDS**
NORTH CAROLINA

THINKING ABOUT BECOMING A PERMANENT CHECKING STATION?



IDENTIFY YOUR PRIMARY AND SECONDARY CONTACTS

Each PCS should have a Primary and Secondary Contact. The Primary Contact must be a currently certified CPST. Both contacts serve as administrative contacts and their information is not displayed publicly. Both contacts can update PCS information, add service locations, submit quarterly reports and add events to the calendar.

ESTABLISH YOUR SERVICE LOCATIONS

Determine where your agency will offer child passenger safety services and establish public contact information, hours of operation, physical location and available seat-check services. Remember: one PCS can have multiple service locations.

KEEP YOUR CPSTS CERTIFIED

Identify the CPSTs who will staff your PCS. Anyone teaching caregivers how to properly use or install child restraints must maintain current CPST certification.

Join the Child Passenger Safety Network

Whether you're a fire department, health department, hospital, law enforcement agency or another organization, becoming an NC-recognized Permanent Checking Station is an opportunity to make a difference in the lives of children and families in your community.

GET STARTED

Interested in becoming a Permanent Checking Station or have questions about the application process? Contact Buckle Up NC at info@buckleupnc.org.

 **buckleupnc.org**
Securing North Carolina for Life



BUILDING CODE: A NEW CHAPTER AHEAD

BUILDING CODE SECTION TO TRANSITION TO THE NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

The North Carolina Office of State Fire Marshal is preparing for an important organizational transition as the Building Code Section will transfer to the North Carolina Department of Labor (NCDOL) in January 2027.

The transition represents a change in where the Building Code Section will be housed within state government, while maintaining the important work of supporting North Carolina's building code system, code officials, and the construction industry.

OSFM and the Department of Labor are working to ensure that the transfer is as seamless as possible for code officials, design professionals, contractors, builders, and other stakeholders who rely on the Building Code Section for information and assistance.

The goal is continuity. OSFM will continue communicating important information as additional details become available, including information about contacts, processes, online resources, and other changes that may affect code officials and industry professionals.



WHAT THIS MEANS FOR CODE OFFICIALS AND THE INDUSTRY

The Building Code Section plays an important role in supporting North Carolina's statewide building code system. Its work includes providing technical assistance, interpretations and other resources that help code officials and industry professionals understand and apply the North Carolina State Building Code.

The transition to the Department of Labor is an administrative change in the organization responsible for these functions. Stakeholders should continue to monitor official communications from OSFM and NCDOL for information about the transition and any changes to procedures or points of contact.

LOOKING AHEAD

The January transition marks a new chapter for the Building Code Section. OSFM appreciates the dedication of the employees who have served North Carolina through the section and recognizes the important role they play in supporting safe, code-compliant construction across the state.





OSFM FIRE MARSHAL BRIAN TAYLOR JOINS KIDDE AND FDNY IN NATIONAL CAUSE FOR ALARM IN NEW YORK CITY

OSFM recently joined Kidde and FDNY in New York City as part of an iHeartRadio, Cause for Alarm, campaign that focused attention on the importance of working smoke alarms and the role they play in giving families the critical warning they need when a fire occurs

DAVID RITTLINGER TAKES ON THE TOUR DE FRANCE CHALLENGE

OSFM's national and international presence isn't limited to fire service activities. Our very own David Rittlinger recently took on an extraordinary personal challenge in France.

On July 19, 2026, David participated in L'Étape du Tour 2026, an amateur cycling event that follows Stage 20 of the 2026 Tour de France route from Le Bourg-d'Oisans to Alpe d'Huez.

David completed 105.2 miles with more than 16,709 feet of elevation gain, tackling four legendary climbs: three Hors Catégorie climbs—Col de la Croix de Fer, Galibier and Sarenne—along with the Category 1 Col du Télégraphe. The ride required more than eight hours on the bike. David trained for 13 months, building on years of riding and focusing on steady Zone 2 endurance work. He shared the road with more than 12,000 cyclists and took in the scenery of the French Alps along the way. Then, as he approached the finish, he sprinted toward the line. The result? A finish, tears of joy and a moment he won't soon forget: "Dreams do come true! I completed a Tour de France stage!"



KIDS IN MOTION BRINGS NATIONAL ATTENTION TO WILMINGTON

North Carolina also welcomed the Kids in Motion National Conference in Wilmington, bringing professionals from across the country together to focus on children's safety and injury prevention. Hosting national conferences like Kids in Motion gives North Carolina an opportunity to share its expertise while learning from professionals and organizations from across the nation. It also reinforces OSFM's commitment to protecting North Carolina's youngest residents through education, prevention, and partnerships.



CELEBRATING STRONGER ISO RATINGS

Several local fire departments are celebrating improved Insurance Services Office (ISO) ratings this past quarter. Higher ratings reflect investments in training, modern equipment, and stronger coordination with neighboring agencies. For communities, those improvements can also contribute to lower insurance costs for homeowners.

Fire Department	Previous ISO Rating	New ISO Rating
Aquadale Rural Vol Fire Dept.	6/9E	5
Big Marsh Vol Fire Dept. of Robeson Co.	5/9E	4/9E
Cotton Vol Fire Dept.	3/9E	2/9E
Cruso Vol Fire Dept.	9E/10	5/9E
Granite Falls Fire Dept.	4	3
Macclesfield Rural Vol Fire Dept.	6	5
Murphy Fire Dept.	3	2
Valleytown Rural Fire & Rescue Dept.	5	4
Britts Township Vol Fire Dept.	5/9E	4/9E
Enka Candler Fire & Rescue Dept.	3/9E	2/9E
Sand Hill Vol Fire Dept.	9/10	5/9E
Union Vol Fire Dept. of Vale	4/9E	3
Vann Crossroads Fire Dept.	5/9E	4
Whitsett Fire Dept.	4	3
The Ammon Vol Fire Dept.	9/10	6/9E
White Marsh - Welches Creek Community Vol Fire Dept.	9/10	5/9E
The South Fork Vol Fire Dept. of Lincoln Co.	4/9E	3
Woodlawn-Sevier Vol Fire Dept.	9E/10	5/9E
Draper Volunteer Fire Dept., Inc.	5/9E	4/9E



SOCIAL MEDIA TOPICS TO SHARE WITH YOUR COMMUNITY

To help make public safety messaging easier and more consistent across the state, we've put together a 4th Quarter Social Media Communications Plan that local fire departments can use, share, or tweak to fit their communities. These monthly topics line up with seasonal risks, national awareness campaigns, and key fire service events.

OCTOBER

- Fire Prevention Month
- Fire Prevention Week
- Smoke alarm safety
- Home escape planning
- Lithium-ion battery safety
- Halloween safety

NOVEMBER

- Thanksgiving cooking safety
- Firefighter appreciation
- Carbon monoxide safety
- Heating safety
- Move Over Law
- Holiday travel safety

DECEMBER

- Holiday decorating safety
- Christmas tree safety
- Candle safety
- Heating safety
- Winter weather preparedness
- Safe holiday travel
- New Year's Eve fire safety

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