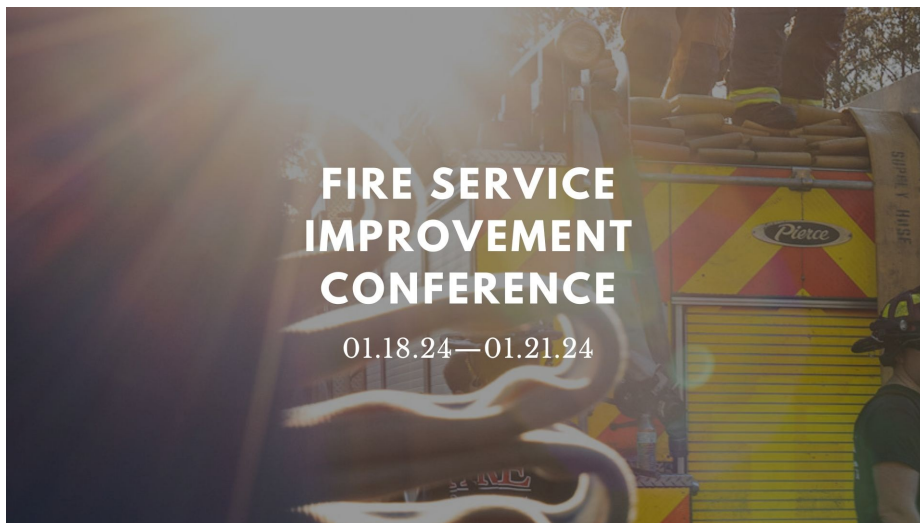




SEPTEMBER 28, 2023 | ISSUE 69

Rattle Watch

Proudly informing South Carolina firefighters.



Registration is open for FSIC

When firefighters from around the state come together to train, share experiences, network, and fellowship, *amazing things happen*.

[Fire Service Improvement Conference](#) is our hands-on-training conference where firefighters from around the state gather to participate in boots-on-the-ground, dynamic training not often offered. It is our hope that the training offered at Fire Service Improvement Conference makes you better today than you were yesterday. While practice may not make perfect, it makes progress.

We've got a fantastic lineup of classes that the T&E Committee selected with the utmost consideration for what's important to South Carolina firefighters.

A few favorites are coming back, and a few new highly requested courses, too.

Thursday, January 18, 2024—Saturday, January 20, 2024

- **Hand in Hand Engine School**, led by Jonah Smith
- **Truck School**, led by Blake Cartee
- **Effective Command Process: Practical Incident Command**, led by Nicholas Ray

Thursday, January 18, 2024—Friday, January 19, 2024

- **Hook Up and Stretch: High-Rise and Mid-Rise Operations**, led by Micah Rains
- **Grain Bin Rescue**, led by Brian Roberson
- **Basic Shoring for the Initial Engine Company**, led by Chad Beam

Saturday, January 20, 2024—Sunday, January 21, 2024

- **Winning on the Fireground: Limited Staffing**, led by Michael Dozier
- **Make the Grab: Creating Aggressive Search Culture**, led by Micah Rains
- **National FARMEDIC**, led by David Dennison
- **School Bus Extrication**

Saturday, January 20

- **Lithium Ion Battery Fires Response**, led by Webster Marshal

All class times are 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Class size is limited and there will be no waiting list; register before classes fill up! Affordability is important to us; the entire weekend is just \$50, regardless of how many classes you take.

Please note that your registration **is not complete** until you have completed and uploaded [State Fire's Liability Form](#).

The DoubleTree by Hilton at 2100 Bush River Road is the host hotel for the weekend; room reservations should be made before December 19, 2023. [Book your stay](#) and we'll see you there!



Last call to apply to speak at Fire-Rescue 2024

The **Training and Education Committee** is looking forward to providing our members with another excellent [Fire-Rescue](#) conference, June 12-15, 2024 in Myrtle Beach. Our goal is to provide our members with a diverse range of perspectives and insights that will help them stay up to date with the latest trends and best practices.

The South Carolina fire service is overflowing with talent, and we strongly believe in the value local speakers bring to conference. We are proud to provide our members with a platform that allows them to continue to progress the fire service as a whole and grow as individuals. Fire-Rescue provides speakers an opportunity to educate, network, and expand their brand.

Make sure to submit your [application](#) by Saturday, September 30, 2023 to meet the deadline.

Health + Safety



Research shows link between firefighting and Parkinson's disease

Fighting fire assumes a certain number of health hazards, and recent research indicates that Parkinson's disease should be added to the list of potential health risks associated with firefighting.

According to the [Mayo Clinic](#), Parkinson's disease "is a progressive disorder that affects the nervous system and the parts of the body controlled by the nerves." The [Cleveland Clinic](#) describes it as a "condition where a part of your brain deteriorates, causing more severe symptoms over time." Parkinson's disease affects nearly a million Americans, and it's the [second most common](#) degenerative neurological disease behind Alzheimer's disease.

["Assessment of Parkinson's Disease symptoms and toxin exposures in firefighters: a cross-sectional survey"](#) was published in February 2021 and details the correlation between firefighting and Parkinson's disease.

The 2021 survey included 200 participants who entered in their number of years as a firefighter, number of working days per week, and number of fires worked. This data showed a large number of entries that included hyposmia, micrographia, and decreased walking pace. The survey ultimately concluded that firefighters have an increased risk for Parkinson's Disease symptoms because of the toxin exposures that are frequently found in fires.

Due to the near-constant high level of exposure, firefighters experience a higher frequency of Parkinson's than the general population.

Retired **North Charleston Deputy Chief Stephanie Julazadeh** has Parkinson's disease. She joined North Charleston in 2010 and her fire service career spans across two decades.

"My first sign of Parkinson's disease was a change in my handwriting," Stephanie said. "I was losing control of the fine motor skills to write neatly with my left hand. I would also randomly have tremors in my left hand and arm. I told my primary doctor during my annual physical, and she referred me to a neurologist, expecting it to be carpal tunnel or a pinched

nerve.”

When the neurologist asked her to make movements with her hands, arms, legs, and feet, he compared the movement from her left side to her right. Stephanie’s left side was slower than her right, and the neurologist diagnosed her with early-onset Parkinson’s.

“I was tested for the genetic marker that identified you as more likely to develop Parkinson’s Disease,” Stephanie continued. “I don’t have the marker, which makes me think my environment caused my disease.”

Stephanie’s proactive approach to her healthcare is a lesson on paying attention to your body and its cues. Like Stephanie, you can go through [free, confidential genetic testing](#) if you have concerns about Parkinson’s. The Parkinson’s Foundation lists the 10 early signs of Parkinson’s as tremor, small handwriting, loss of smell, trouble sleeping, trouble moving or walking, constipation, a soft or low voice, masked face, dizziness or fainting, and stooping or hunching over.

For departments looking for further guidance, [NFPA 1582](#) outlines requirements for a comprehensive occupational medical program to include testing for possible Parkinson’s.

On the legislative level, several state legislatures have taken interest in protecting firefighters diagnosed with Parkinson’s. **Indiana** became the first state to include Parkinson’s in its presumptive law when Code IC 5-10-15-5.5 was enacted in May 2009. **Virginia** established presumption for Parkinson’s in 2017.

Most recently, **New York** enacted a Presumptive Parkinson’s Disease Bill in July 2021 that was created in response to a study that showed firefighters’ susceptibility to the disease. Under the legislation, any New York firefighter who suffers any medical condition related to Parkinson’s that wasn’t present before joining the service will be presumed to be related on-the-job exposure.

New Jersey and **Massachusetts** both failed to pass presumptive Parkinson’s laws in 2022 and 2019, respectively. Bill S2443 in New Jersey would have established presumption for accidental disability retirement in PFRS that firefighter with Parkinson’s Disease has disease as result of employment; Bill S.1542 in Massachusetts was an Act relative to Parkinson’s disease disability and death in firefighters.

[Firefighters from across the world](#) who have been diagnosed with Parkinson’s are sharing their stories to raise awareness. Because of their willingness to talk about their lives post-diagnosis, they share a message of hope and optimism.

While there is currently no cure for Parkinson’s, treatments are available. The disease progresses at different rates in different people, but the earlier you can take action, the better. Physicians may recommend lifestyle changes, physical and speech therapy, and medications as ways to manage symptoms. Read more about [treatment options](#).

Community events



Here's how to prepare for Fire Prevention Week

The **National Fire Protection Association** has been making communities safer through its annual Fire Prevention Week campaign for over a century. The theme for 2023 Fire Prevention Week is **Cooking safety starts with YOU. Pay attention to fire prevention.**

According to the NFPA [news release](#), cooking is the leading cause of home fires and home fire injuries in the United States. Unattended cooking is the leading cause of cooking fires and deaths.

“Year after year, cooking remains the leading cause of home fires by far, accounting for half (49 percent) of all U.S. home fires,” said **Lorraine Carli**, vice president of outreach and advocacy at NFPA. “These numbers tell us that there is still much work to do when it comes to better educating the public about ways to stay safe when cooking.”

Fire Prevention Week is October 8-14, 2023. [View and download resources](#) from NFPA for your department to use during its community education efforts.

You can also find inspiration by tuning into the **National Volunteer Fire Council's** Roundtable Talk on **Fire Prevention Week: Cooking up a Plan for You Department** on Wednesday, October 4 at 2 p.m. State Fire CRR Chief **Josh Fulbright** is a panelist for the Roundtable. [Register](#) for the Roundtable.



Save the dates: FPW events

Fire Prevention Week is more than one week out of the year. Departments across the country capitalize on the momentum of FPW and focus on community risk reductions for the entire month of October.

Many South Carolina communities are hosting Fire Fests and parades in the coming weeks; if yours isn't listed below, email brook@scfirefighters.org to have your event mentioned in an upcoming edition of Rattle Watch.

- Saturday, September 30 beginning at 9 a.m. at the City Arena— [Camden Fire Fest](#)
- Saturday, October 7 beginning at 8 a.m. at Daniel Feed and Seed — [Aiken County Fire Fest](#)
- Saturday, October 7 beginning at 10 a.m. at Charleston Peninsula and Citadel Mall — [Fire Prevention Parade and Family Safety Day](#) hosted by Charleston Fire Department
- Monday, October 9 beginning at 6 p.m. at Midland Parkway — [Fire Prevention Parade](#) hosted by Summerville Fire Rescue and Dorchester County Fire Rescue
- Monday, October 9 beginning at 7 p.m. in Downtown Lake City — [Fire Prevention Parade](#) hosted by South Lynches Fire Rescue and Lake City Fire Department
- Saturday, October 21 beginning at 11 a.m. at Marietta First Baptist — [Slater Marietta Fire Fest](#)



Photo courtesy of Travis Howze, www.travishowze.com

Reminder: Travis Howze coming to Jasper County

Jasper County Fire Rescue is hosting **Travis Howze** for his Post Traumatic Purpose seminar on Wednesday, October 4 from 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. at Operation Patriots FOB (OPFOB) in Ridgeland. Travis, a native South Carolinian, is a U.S. Marine Corps veteran, former LEO, retired firefighter, and speaker and author. The training is [free to attend](#) and lunch is provided.

From our partners



Junior Program starter kit is available from NVFC

The **National Volunteer Fire Council** (NVFC) released a new [Junior Program starter kit](#) for fire departments interested in recruiting young members. Junior Firefighter programs are an excellent way to engage young people in community service and develop the next generation of firefighters.

However, getting started can be intimidating.

The Junior Program starter kit includes a variety of resources, including guidelines for creating a Junior Firefighter Program, recruitment and retention strategies, sample forms and policies, and training resources.

There are many benefits to establishing a Junior Firefighter Program. Not only does it provide a valuable service to the community, but it also helps to develop leadership skills and foster a sense of responsibility and commitment among young people. Additionally, it can help to increase diversity within the fire service by engaging young people from all backgrounds and walks of life.

The NVFC's new Junior Program starter kit is an excellent first-step resource in getting young people through the bay doors. By providing guidance and resources for recruitment, training, and retention, this kit can help departments to create a successful program that benefits both the community and the next generation of firefighters.

Was this email forwarded to you? Subscribe to receive Rattle Watch every Thursday.



- [October 1-6 - Fire Officer Academy: The Company Officer class 23-02](#)
- [October 17 - 1% Regional Training Class: York County](#)
- [October 25 - Quarterly Training + Business Meeting](#)
- [January 18-21, 2024 - Fire Service Improvement Conference](#)
- February 3, 2024 - Firefighter Memorial Service
- [June 12-15, 2024 - Fire-Rescue](#)



South Carolina State Firefighters' Association

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