

Eileen Franko
Division of Safety and Health, Director

Department of Labor
W. Averell Harriman State Office Campus
Building 12, Room 522, Albany, NY 12240
www.labor.ny.gov

April 14, 2015

Dear Chief:

The Department of Labor (DOL) has worked with the Office of Fire Prevention and Control (OFPC), the Firemen's Association of the State of New York, the New York State Association of Fire Chiefs, the Association of Fire Districts of New York State, and the County Fire Coordinators Association of the State of New York to put together this letter and enclosed information. We hope it will help to clarify the levels and types of training required for firefighters in New York State.

This Federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulation 29 CFR 1910.156(c)(1), applies to all fire departments in New York State. However, the specific training requirements are not described in this Federal regulation, and many questions have come up regarding what is required and/or recommended.

The regulation requires that fire department members must be provided with training and education "associated and consistent with the duties and functions that such fire department members are expected to perform". This regulation is intended to ensure the safety of firefighters. It requires fire department leaders and training instructors to receive training and education which is more comprehensive than that provided to the general membership of the fire department.

Required training for firefighters includes:

- Initial training
- Annual OSHA refresher training

The attached document from the Office of Fire Prevention and Control entitled, "Recommended Best Practices for Fire Department Training Programs" describes the

initial training. The core competencies detailed are examples that satisfy compliance with the 29 CFR 1910.156(c)(1) standard. We realize that training may come from various sources, such as those offered by OFPC; vendors; in-house department training and from the fire service associations. We are interested in the competencies achieved by firefighters and their leaders not the specific source of the training. Training received from any source must be properly documented.

The annual OSHA refresher is also addressed in the enclosed document entitled "Fire Department Annual Refresher". This document identifies the required topics that must be covered and the applicable standard, as well how to identify additional topics specific to your department and your firefighters.

Please note that this is a change from the previously described initial and refresher training for the eight and fifteen hours. As you will see in the memo there is no longer a requirement that you provide a specific number of hours of annual refresher training (8) but rather that you must provide and document annual safety training in 6 specific areas as well as additional training from the suggested areas that apply to your department. This training does not have to occur in one single class, but must occur each year.

Thank you for your service to the communities of New York State and please feel free to contact your District Public Employee Safety and Health Bureau (PESH) office for additional assistance or to assist you in meeting the regulatory compliance. If you have any other questions please feel free to contact me at (518) 457-3518.

Sincerely,



Eileen Franko, DrPH
Director, Division of Safety and Health

Enclosures



NEW YORK STATE
ASSOCIATION
OF FIRE CHIEFS



COUNTY FIRE COORDINATORS' ASSOCIATION
OF THE
STATE OF NEW YORK



Association of Fire Districts
of the State of New York, Inc.



NEW YORK STATE
Fire Prevention
and Control