Town Hall Meeting

Agenda

Introduction of Staff Members

The City of Lambertville Fire Department

The Future of operations

Why we need your support

How much does this all cost?

Questions?

What we are asking of you

1. To approve the Fire District's acquisition of 3 new fire trucks and capital improvements to the Fire House.
   Referendum Election on **Tuesday, November 3, 2026**.
2. To approve an increase in the Fire District's budget to provide for hiring of fire fighters to bring staffing up to national standards.
   Referendum Election on **Saturday, February 20, 2027**.

Our Aging Fleet

Our current frontline apparatus is aging and severely impacting our budget due to costly repairs and frequent breakdowns. To address this issue, we acquired RE17 and Engine 17 as used trucks to provide temporary support until we could allocate funds for their replacement. Unfortunately, the replacement schedule was not adhered to, leading to an unexpected situation where we must replace all of them simultaneously.

Rescue Engine 17

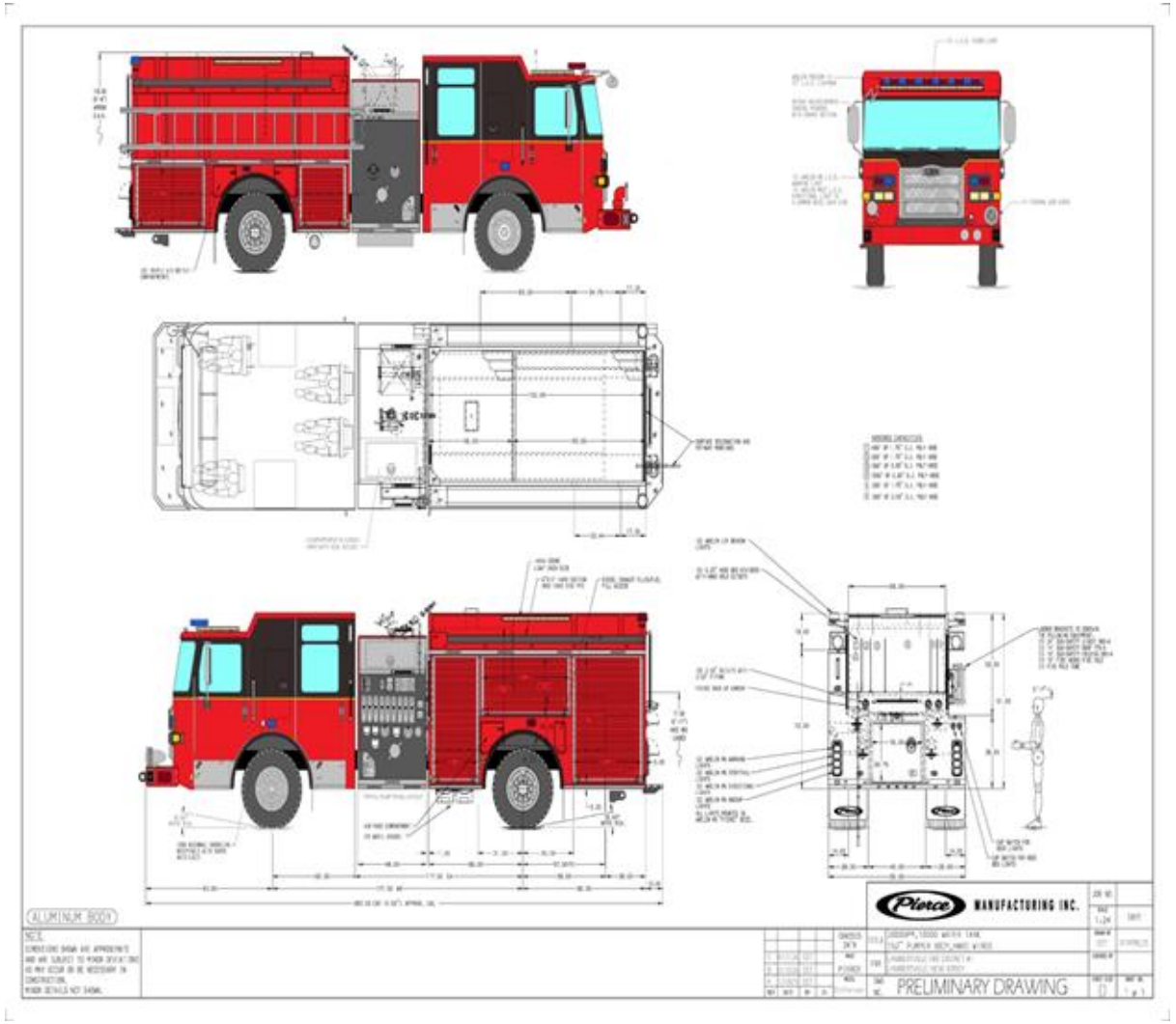
This 16-year-old (purchased used in 2010) serves as the workhorse of the fleet. It has a capacity to carry 500 gallons of water and a pumping capacity of 1500 gallons per minute. The unit is equipped with various rescue equipment and can accommodate five firefighters. However, its age has led to an increasing yearly maintenance cost of $25,000.00. According to NFPA 1900 (formally 1901), this vehicle should be placed in reserve status and removed from frontline duty at the age of 15.

Engine 17 Tanker

Formerly known as Bucks County Tanker 46 (Eagle Fire Company), this 36-year-old vehicle was donated by Veolia Water. It has a water capacity of 3000 gallons and can pump 2000 gallons per minute. The open cab design accommodates two firefighters. **Primarily, it's used in areas of the city not connected to the city water system, such as the Hills, Blair Tract, and South Main Street**. The annual operating cost is $15,000, which is expected to increase due to the growing difficulty in finding replacement parts. **According to NFPA 1900 (formally 1901), this vehicle should be decommissioned.**

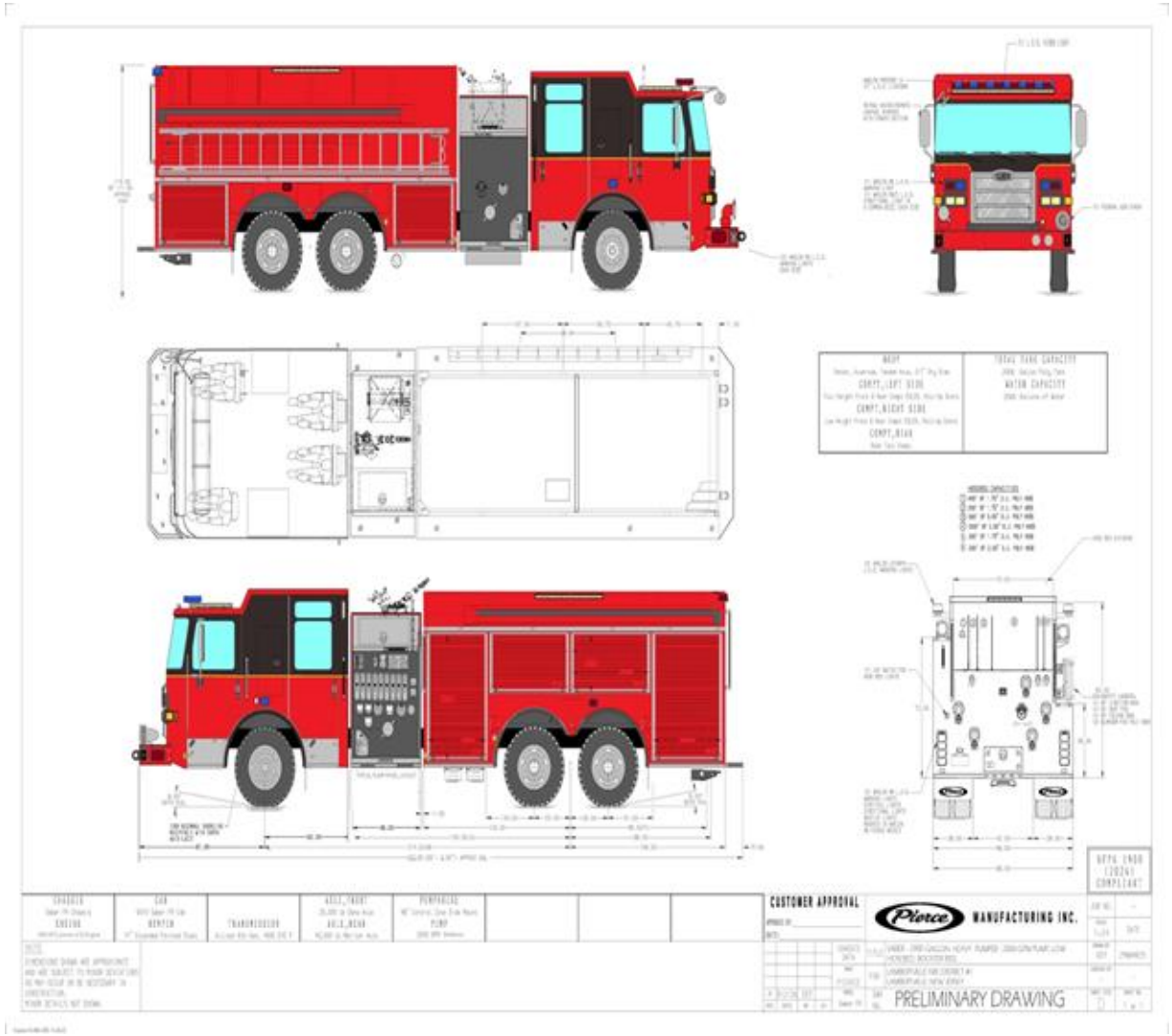
17 Ladder Truck (Goliath)

The 100-foot Tower Ladder, manufactured in 2014, boasts a water capacity of 300 gallons and a pumping rate of 2000 gallons per minute (gpm). It can accommodate six firefighters and is primarily used for structural assignments. However, its effective rate within the city is only 30% due to its size and design. The annual operating cost ranges from $30,000 to $40,000. A major component needs repair, and is on "borrowed time," the cost to replace its major component is $175,000. This replacement will render the unit out of service for at least six months. Regrettably, we lack the funds in our bank account to make the necessary repairs.



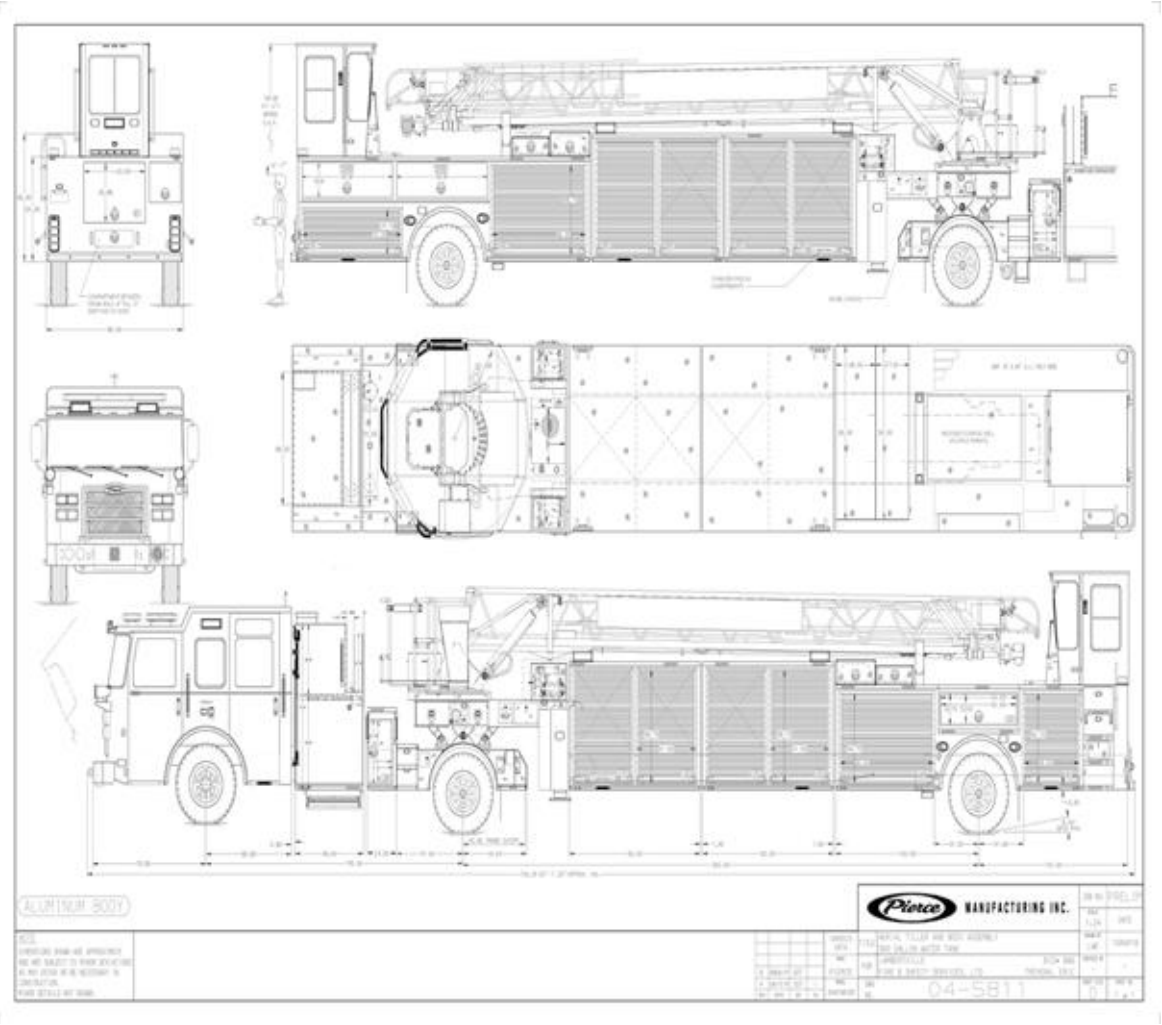
New Engine 17

- Compact Agile Engine:
- Carries 1000 gallons of water.
- Pumps 2000 gallons per minute.
- Seats four firefighters.
- Will be the department's workhorse.
- No frills: no electric valves, fancy gauges, shiny bells and whistles, or gold leaf lettering.
- Simply "PLAIN JANE."



New Engine Tanker 17

- Carries 2000 gallons of water.
- Pumping capability of 2000 gpm
- Seating for 4 firefighters.
- Modern Enclosed cab.
- An exact clone of engine 17 with a larger tank.
- No frills unit (no electric valves, fancy gauges, shiny bells and whistles, no gold leaf lettering)
- “PLAIN JANE”



New 17 Truck

- Carries 200 gallons of water.
- Pumping capability of 2000 gpm
- Seating for 4 firefighters.
- Modern Enclosed cab.
- SUPREME MANEUVERABILITY.
- OUTPERFORMS THE CURRENT TOWER LADDER.
- 94 % EFFECTIVENESS IN THE CITY.
- CAN EASILY PLACE AERIAL THRU WIRES FOR ROOF OPERATIONS.
- COST LESS THAN REPLACING THE CURRENT LADDER.

Apparatus Cost and Delivery Trends

2021

ENGINE $725-900K 13-18 Months

Pumper Tanker $850-1 Million 9-13 Months

Rescue $925-1.2 Million 16-18 Months

Ladder $1.1 – 1.3 Million 12-14 Months

Platform $ 1.3-1.9 Million 9-11 Months

TDA $ 1.7-2.1Million 14-18 months

2026

Engine $1Million- $1.4 48-54 Months

Pumper-Tanker $ 1.1-1.6 48-50 Months

Rescue $1.3-2 Million 50-54 Months

Ladder $ 1.4-1.9 Million 58-60 Months

Platform $ 2.6-3.4 Million 62-64 Months

TDA $ 2.4-3.0 Million 62-64 Months

Lambertville Fire District
New Engine Apparatus Costs

New Engine 17	$1,130,241.00
New Engine 17 Tanker Heavy Engine	$1,235,216.61
New Engine 17 Ladder Truck	$2,459,168.52
Outfitting for all 3 Apparatus	$500,000.00
TOTAL NEW ENGINE APPARATUS COSTS:	**$5,324,626.13**

Lambertville Fire District # 1

Our current facility needs repairs and upgrades to support current operations.

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Capital Improvement Costs

Addition	$750,000.00 - $850,000.00
Reno. Existing Bays	$100,000.00 - $150,000.00
Site Work	$150,000.00 - $200,000.00
2nd Floor (unfinished)	$150,000.00 - $200,000.00
Painting	$50,000.00 - $75,000.00 (inside & out)
Updating of HVAC	$100,000.00 - $150,000.00
New asphalt, curbing, sidewalks	$75,000.00 - $100,000.00
TOTAL CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT COSTS	**$1,750,000.00**

SUMMARY OF NOVEMBER 3, 2026 VOTER REFERENDUM APPROVAL

APPARATUS COST:		**$5,324,626.13**
Engine	$1,130,241.00	
Heavy Engine	$1,235,216.61	
Ladder Truck	$2,459,168.52	
Outfitting for all 3 Apparatus	$500,000	
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS:		**$1,750,000.00**
Addition	$750,000.00 - $850,000.00	
Reno. Existing Bays	$100,000.00 - $150,000.00	
Site Work	$150,000.00 - $200,000.00	
2nd Floor (unfinished)	$150,000.00 - $200,000.00	
Painting	$50,000.00 - $75,000.00 (inside & out)	
Updating of HVAC	$100,000.00 - $150,000.00	
New asphalt, curbing, sidewalks	$75,000.00 - $100,000.00	

Referendum Election on November 3, 2026

BALLOT QUESTION

Shall The Commissioners of Fire District No. 1 in the City of Lambertville, County of Hunterdon, New Jersey be authorized to expend the amount of $7,500,000 to (i) acquire three fire engines and all related apparatus equipment and (ii) undertake various capital improvements to the Lambertville Fire House located at 230 North Main Street, Lambertville, NJ, and issue bonds and bond anticipation notes and/or enter into lease purchase financing to fund such capital projects?

- A **"yes" vote** will authorize the Fire District to spend **not to exceed** $7,500,000 to (i) acquire the three fire trucks described above and (ii) undertake the various capital improvements to the Lambertville Fire House described above.
- A **"no" vote** means the Fire District will **not** be permitted to acquire the three fire trucks or complete the capital improvements to the Lambertville Fire House.

The current real estate value in the city that requires protection.

$1,028,452,619.00

HOW ARE YOU FUNDING THIS ???

Fire Apparatus and Capital Improvements:

Issuance of low interest rate tax exempt bonds and notes

Bond repayment schedule that matches useful life of improvements

Only borrow the exact amount needed to complete all improvements

Ladder borrowing over time as funds are needed to complete each improvement, providing interest rate savings

Ensures future residents who will benefit from the improvements also pay their fair share

Requires Approval by Voters at Referendum Election on November 3, 2026

Additional Staffing:

One-time increase in Fire District budget

Requires Approval by Voters at Referendum Election on February 20, 2027

Referendum Election on November 3, 2026

PROJECTED TAXPAYER IMPACT - NOVEMBER 3, 2026 REFERENDUM						
	2027	**2028**	**2029**	**2030**	**2031**	**2032**
November Referendum - Capital Budget Increase	$ -	$ 124,750	$ 121,725	$ 119,700	$ 117,675	$ 530,275
# of Ratables	2,055	2,055	2,055	2,055	2,055	2,055
Tax Levy per Average Ratable	$ -	$ 60.71	$ 59.23	$ 58.25	$ 57.26	$ 258.04
Per day:	$ -	$ 0.17	$ 0.16	$ 0.16	$ 0.16	$ 0.71
Per week:	$ -	$ 1.17	$ 1.14	$ 1.12	$ 1.10	$ 4.96
Per month:	$ -	$ 5.06	$ 4.94	$ 4.85	$ 4.77	$ 21.50

Staff Members

Who are we and what do we do for you.

I THOUGHT YOU WERE THE SAME, BUT WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

UNION FIRE COMPANY

The Union Fire Company is an independent, private 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. It operates without taxpayer funding and relies primarily on donations and fundraisers for its financial support. The public has no authority over its operations, funding, or governance.

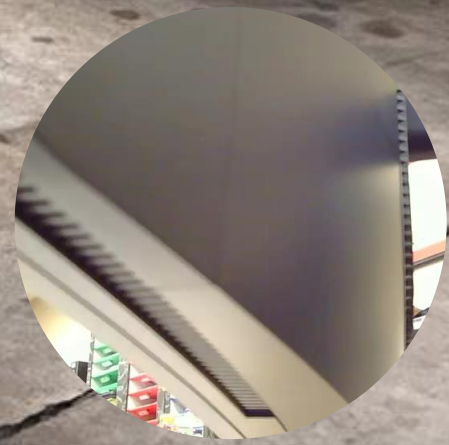
LAMBERTVILLE FIRE DISTRICT 1

Is funded solely by taxpayers, encompasses all necessary equipment, apparatus, tools, salaries, gear, and more. It is governed by a board of five elected commissioners representing the community.

WE ARE NOT 501(C)(3)

The City of Lambertville Fire Department

Protecting what matters most, YOU !



Lambertville Fire Department Profile

2 Full - Time Firefighters

56 Per-Diem (part-time) Firefighters

1 volunteer Firefighter

1 Per diem (part-time) Fire Marshal

1 Per Diem (part-time) Deputy Fire Marshal

26 Inspectors/officials

5 Fire Commissioners

What do you do all day ?

The City of Lambertville Fire Department serves as the primary agency responsible for all Fire and Rescue services within the city, including fire suppression and extinguishment, technical rescue (rope, trench, confined space), water rescue, automobile rescue, and hazardous materials response.

Emergency Medical Response QRS Unit (quick response service) assisting LNHARS

Fire Prevention Training & Education

Animal Rescue

Missing Persons searches

Code Enforcement

Public Education

Public assistance requests

What hours do we work?

CONTINUOUS COVERAGE

24 Hours a Day

365 Days a Year

Including Holidays & weekends

WE ARE A CAREER PROFESSIONAL DEPARTMENT.

1. Comprised of (3) 8-hour shifts.

SHIFT 1 00:00-08:00 ***2***

SHIFT 2 08:00-16:00 4

SHIFT 3 16:00-24:00 4

*****We Lack the funding to properly staff the minimum requirements as outlined in the International standard NFPA 1710.*****

How Much does everyone make ?

CURRENTLY

Firefighter (2) full-time $25-27.13/ hr.

Per Diem (56) part-time $16-20.00/ hr.

Secretary (1) part-time $18.00/ hr.

Fire Marshal & Deputy (1) part-time $21/hr.

Commissioners $ 0.00

NATIONAL AVERAGE

Firefighter $ 28.66/ hr.

Per-Diem $ 23-26/ hr.

Secretary $ 19-20/ hr.

Commissioners 105k-109k yearly

What does it take to be a firefighter in 2026 ?

228 hours for firefighter 1 (4 hours per night + 1 hour travel time 2 nights a week + weekends Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday, Sunday 18.5 weeks to complete)

24 hours first-aid / CPR.

32 hours of HAZ-MAT training. (operations level)

8 Hours of Blood-borne pathogens training.

64 Hours of Confined space awareness training.(operations level)

32 hours of auto extrication (operations level)

ICS 100 & 200 **16** hours.

EVOC **36** hours (emergency vehicle operators' course)

TOTAL 432 hours to complete in its entirety 3 hours a night x 4 nights = 12 hours plus travel another 4 a week 16 hours total, 30.6 weeks for the state mandated basic firefighter 1 program.

What does the future hold for the LFD ?

The current operational platform can no longer be sustained without an increase in funding. The rise in operational costs, including salaries, equipment, benefits, and other expenses, has significantly surpassed the fire district's levy cap of 2%. This issue has persisted since the 2023-24 budget cycles. We have managed to delay the referendum for as long as possible, but unfortunately, we can no longer continue.

How does this impact me?

Without the necessary funding increase, a rapid and severe decline in services will commence on January 1, 2027. This includes a reduction in staff per shift and a decrease in the services provided across the board. Many public services that are currently offered will cease due to the lack of staffing, posing a safety concern for everyone involved.

Consequently, staff members will seek other high-paying opportunities with a guaranteed stable environment. Our staff members have been patient in waiting for “better days,” but we live in a society that values compensation for time.

Fire Departments that no longer exist.

Winslow Township NJ 3 stations (closed) Albion, Elm, & Tansboro road stations.

East Landsdowne (closed)

Stockton First Aid Squad (closed 2012)

Stockton Fire Company closed 2025

Franklin Township (closed)

Six South Jersey fire chiefs have reported that the ongoing shortage of volunteer firefighters has reached a critical level. This shortage could result in delayed response times to emergencies and, potentially, departments being unable to respond to any urgent calls.

Source: CBS News

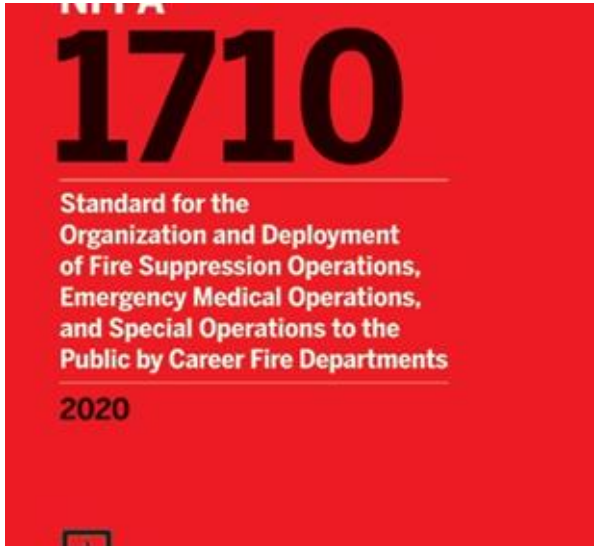
What is happening around us ?

Logan Township Fire Chief Scott Oatman recounted a fire incident that occurred in January 2019 at an industrial building. Notably, the first fire truck arrived 27 minutes late.

Oatman expressed concern about the extensive property damage caused by the fire. This incident prompted the business association to raise questions about the adequacy of the fire service. They questioned why they were not adequately funded, considering their significant tax contributions.

All six chiefs acknowledged the need for decisive action from lawmakers, community leaders, and the chiefs themselves to address the decline in fire service quality. However, they cautioned that some of these decisions could be financially burdensome.

Source CBS NEWS

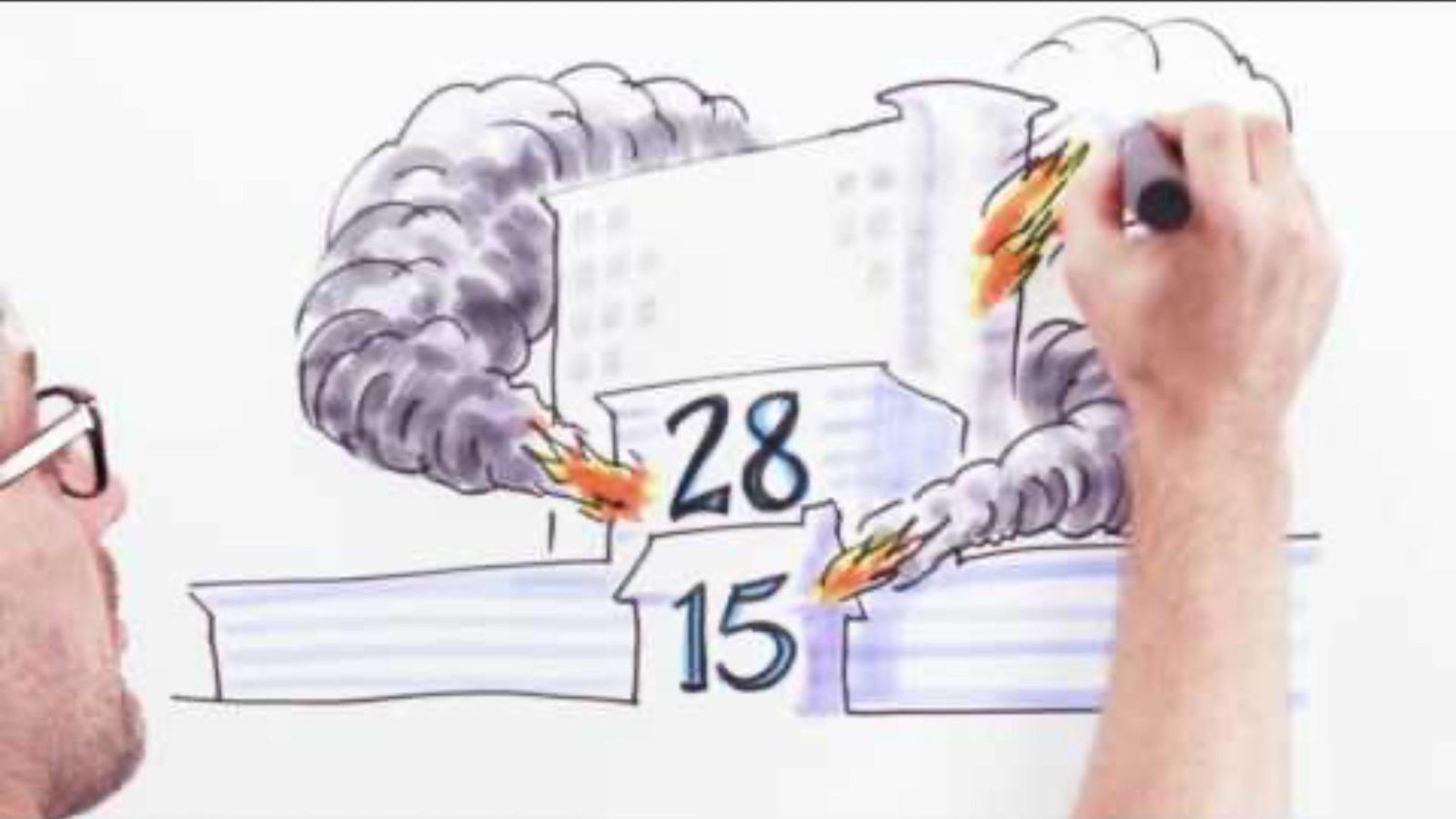


NFPA 1710

What is it, and how does it pertain to me ?

The minimum requirements for provision of emergency services by career fire departments can be found in NFPA 1710, *Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Career Fire Departments.*

NFPA 1710 addresses the structure and operation of organizations providing such services, which include fire suppression and other assigned emergency response responsibilities such as EMS and special operations.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Referendum Election on February 20, 2027

PROJECTED TAXPAYER IMPACT - FEBRUARY 20, 2027 REFERENDUM						
	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032
February Referendum - Operating Budget Increase	$ 604,053.68	$ 616,134.75	$ 713,409.45	$ 727,677.64	$ 742,231.19	$ 757,075.81
# of Ratables	2,055	2,055	2,055	2,055	2,055	2,055
Tax Levy per Average Ratable	$ 293.94	$ 299.82	$ 347.16	$ 354.10	$ 361.18	$ 368.41
Per day:	$ 0.81	$ 0.82	$ 0.95	$ 0.97	$ 0.99	$ 1.01
Per week:	$ 5.65	$ 5.77	$ 6.68	$ 6.81	$ 6.95	$ 7.08
Per month:	$ 24.50	$ 24.99	$ 28.93	$ 29.51	$ 30.10	$ 30.70

THANK YOU !!!!

"The public must either pay with their time by joining the fire department, or with their money in taxes to hire career personnel, and pay for needed equipment. It's a very simple, but often emotionally complicated solution where the needs and facts often get clouded"

Billy Goldfeder.

Deputy Chief Loveland-Symmes FD