



# THE REVIEW

Central Arizona Fire and Medical - 8603 E. Eastridge Dr., Prescott Valley, AZ 86314 – **June 2, 2023**

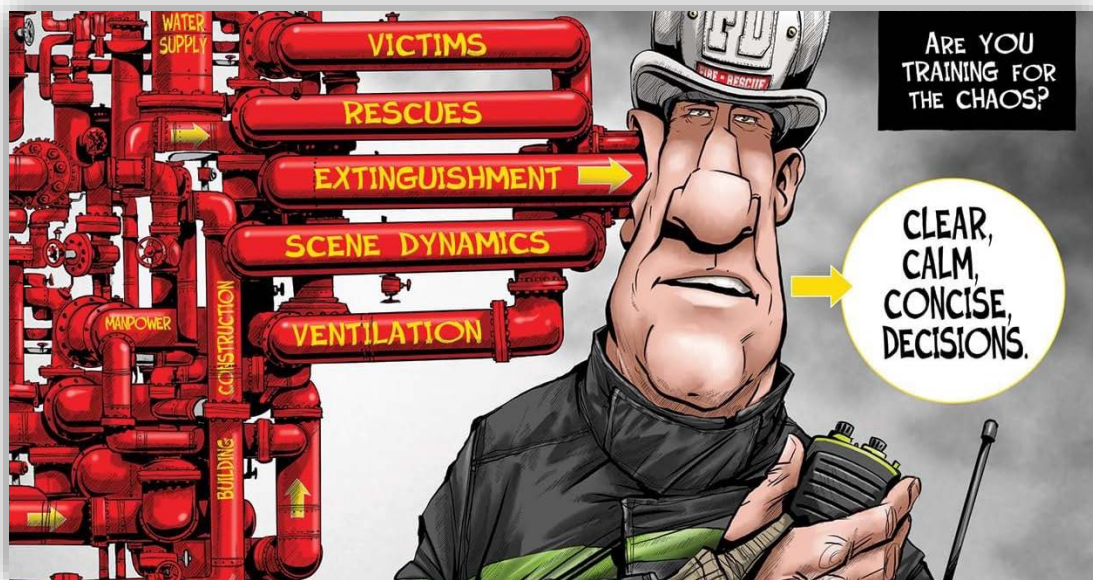
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**"Change does not roll in on the wheels of inevitability, but comes through continuous struggle."**

**Dr. Martin Luther King Jr**

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## The Chief's Desk

I've had the privilege of being in Tucson this week for the opening of the Professional Firefighters of Arizona (PFFA) convention. You might ask yourself, why's the chief at the union convention? The easy answer is – to crash the party 😊 However, that's not really the story. Last year was the first time that some of the Arizona Fire Chiefs Association (AFCA) Executive Board members attended the opening day of the convention. Our intention was to show support from the AFCA for the PFFA and to build relationships. We were also able to visit with some of our local labor leaders in small groups for some really engaging conversations. We were well received, so we decided to make it an annual trip.

Last week I mentioned that we, CAFMA, may have an opportunity to participate in a research study supported by a federal grant. The purpose of the study is to consider different approaches for developing the next generation of firefighter/paramedics/EMTs, as well as preserve our current staff. In short, we'd be challenging everything we ever thought about recruitment and training. Mind-blowing stuff, especially in a Fire Service culture that embraces the idea of change – for anyone but us.

We've made great strides in the Fire Service in a multitude of different areas, but some still need work. I'd say we continue to be a work in progress, which is not a bad thing, as long as we recognize areas that need work and then put in the work to make the change.

The question we're asking ourselves today is, do we need to make changes in the way we recruit and train new firefighters? I'm not talking about random changes; I'm talking about strategic changes in our approach based on scientifically based studies in the field.

Think about recruitment and retention. Our motto today is, "Be a firefighter? Yes, you'll likely get cancer and die, or you'll definitely end up with a mental or behavioral health issue, but it's all good!" Great slogan – not...

We need to change our approach altogether. During the academy, are we physically exhausting folks in the morning and then sticking them in a classroom expecting them to learn? Have we screened recruits for baseline resiliency? We need to shift the narrative from the reactionary – "Here's what's likely to happen to you," to "Here's the great rewards of this career and what we've accomplished to mitigate the impacts".

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### Upcoming Events:

June 5 – Senior Staff Meeting, Facilitated Strategic Planning Session, Meet with YC Fire Students  
June 6 – Labor/Management, Meet with NAU via Zoom  
Firefighter Recruitment and Retention Survey, PT  
June 7 – FRI Program Planning, Record Podcast  
June 8 – Do stuff

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### Board Meeting:

Board Meeting: June 26  
CVFD – 1600-1630  
CYFD – 1630-1700  
CAFMA – 1700-1830

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## **Mega-warehouse fires: We can't throw the baby out with the sprinkler water**

By: Steve Lohr

Forty-nine years ago, I enrolled in one of my first college-level fire protection courses – Building Codes and Construction. As part of that course, we studied two large-loss fires involving the near destruction of buildings that were both unusually large in size and had been considered essentially fireproof, immune to such large losses as the result of fire.

The first fire occurred at a GM Transmission Plant in Livonia, Michigan, in 1953. Approximately 4,200 people evacuated the 1.5-million-square-foot flat-roof building. Six individuals were killed. The building was only 20% sprinklered, and fire walls were absent in this four-year-old building. Unprotected steel roof trusses collapsed in minutes, allowing melted roofing materials to drip and feed the larger fire.

Subsequent code changes included limits on combustible tar in built-up roofs, assignment of hazardous operations to separate buildings, increased sprinkler use in industrial occupancies (hallelujah!), fire coating of steel framing, the introduction of automatic fire doors and, ultimately, the development of NFPA 204: Guide for Smoke and Heat Venting.

The second fire occurred at the McCormick Place Convention Center in Chicago in 1967. One individual was killed. Constructed six years earlier, the building lacked sprinklers yet was considered to be fire resistant by industry standards at the time. The open-space building included a tremendous fuel package from a home furnishings trade show that was set to open to the public about one hour after the fire ignited.

Chicago firefighters arrived within six minutes after discovery of the fire and were unable to stop the blaze, which ultimately resulted in a total loss of this unique structure. It was later determined that high-ceiling sprinklers would have likely controlled the fire. The replacement building included 40,000 sprinkler heads (again, hallelujah!). Note: I do not mean hallelujah as sarcastic or tongue in cheek. I assure you there is no bigger supporter of sprinklers in our profession. However, we should not throw the baby out with the bath water or, in the case of mega-warehouses, the sprinkler water.

[FireRescue1](#)

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## **Resilience: Build skills to endure hardship**

By: Mayo Clinic Staff

When something goes wrong, do you tend to bounce back or fall apart?

When you have resilience, you harness the inner strength that helps you rebound from a setback or challenge, such as a job loss, an illness, a disaster or a loved one's death. If you lack resilience, you might dwell on problems, feel victimized, become overwhelmed or turn to unhealthy coping mechanisms, such as substance abuse, eating disorders or risky behaviors.

Resilience won't make your problems go away — but resilience can give you the ability to see past them, find enjoyment in life and better handle stress. If you aren't as resilient as you'd like to be, you can develop and learn skills to become more resilient.

#### Adapting to adversity

Resilience is the ability to adapt to difficult situations. When stress, adversity or trauma strikes, you still experience anger, grief and pain, but you're able to keep functioning — both physically and psychologically. However, resilience isn't about putting up with something difficult, being stoic or figuring it out on your own. In fact, being able to reach out to others for support is a key part of being resilient.

#### Resilience and mental health

Resilience can help protect you from various mental health conditions, such as depression and anxiety. Resilience can also help offset factors that increase the risk of mental health conditions, such as being bullied or previous trauma. If you have an existing mental health condition, being resilient can improve your coping ability.

[mayoclinic.org](https://www.mayoclinic.org)

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## **The Chief's Desk Cont.**

Our goal is to create a next generation of firefighters that have resiliency built into their initial training. This also means engaging their families before the Partner's Academy. When should that happen? Sometime midway through the academy? One day only or multiple days? What should be covered? We know what needs to happen, but we don't know the how. That's where we will need your help, and the help of your families.

We have the privilege of working in the best career in the world! That said, we're not doing a great job of marketing the fire service to the next generation of firefighters. Yes, there are issues that have plagued our profession for years, and yes we were slow to embrace the changes necessary to address things like cancer, mental and/or behavioral health. We've now responded and are creating some very robust cancer prevention programs, as well as engaging counseling services as we work to change the stigma. Now that we've started to handle the reactive work that needed to be done, it's time to start the proactive work e.g., creating programs that build resiliency as a tool early in someone's career.

If it's the best career in the world, how do we market ourselves to improve recruitment and retention? It's not schedule. It doesn't seem to matter what schedule people are on, there are those that are not happy. Is it pay? Not from what I've seen... There have been people, including me, that have taken significant pay cuts to be part of this profession or to advance our careers. Is it benefits? To a certain extent, maybe.

Think about it... Why are you willing to put your life at risk every day for those you serve, including your fellow firefighters? It's a higher calling. It's not just a job, it's an adventure! For some reason that sounds familiar — maybe a tagline someone already uses as part of their recruitment. While I'm not on the street everyday doing what you're doing, my calling is to serve every member of CAFMA both Ops and

Non-Ops as well as serving our community. There's a satisfaction in trying to secure the best service and benefits for everyone.

So, how do we best create the next generation of folks to serve the Fire Service? That's a question we will answer together.

On a final note, we received our notice of hearing regarding our CON application on Wednesday. Stay tuned for more as we start the next part of the process.

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