



# New England Association of Fire Chiefs

2024 Conference and Expo

Mohegan Sun Uncasville, CT

## PROGRAM

[WWW.NEWENGLANDFIRECHIEFS.ORG](http://WWW.NEWENGLANDFIRECHIEFS.ORG)

Friends, Vendors, and Colleagues,

On behalf of the New England Association of Fire Chiefs, a division of the IAFC Welcome to the 2024 Exhibition and Professional Development Conferences at Mohegan Sun Casino. Over the next 3 days, there will be several professional development opportunities covering many of today's hot topics. Of course, there will also be apparatus and equipment on display in the 125,000-square-foot Earth Expo & Convention Center!

For those who enjoy golf, Tuesday kicks off this year's expo at Norwich Country Club. Enjoy this beautiful course and network with colleagues.

Wednesday evening, join us on the exhibit floor beginning at 1700. This provides an opportunity for volunteer departments or those otherwise unable to attend during the day to check out the latest and greatest equipment and apparatus. Stay for a while and celebrate our exhibitors during the Vendor Appreciation hour from 1830-2000!

Thursday, choose from several different professional development opportunities, meet with vendors on the exhibit floor, attend the memorial service, and enjoy the Presidential celebration and welcome the new NEAFC President! All members of the NEAFC are encouraged to attend the annual membership meeting at 1730.

This conference will provide you with opportunities to meet with colleagues from all over the New England region and leading fire service vendors displaying the most advanced equipment/ services available today. Without the support of our vendor partners, this conference would not be possible, so please visit their booths and show your appreciation!

Throughout the conference, members of the NEAFC will be available to assist with any questions you may have. Please feel free to stop by the registration desk with any questions or concerns. All of us at The New England Association of Fire Chiefs hope you enjoy the 2024 Exhibition and Development Conference.

Thank you from your NEAFC officers,  
Chief Robert Bradley, President (Rhode Island)  
Chief Ken Jones, 1st Vice President (New Hampshire)  
Chief Peter Starkel, 2nd Vice President (Connecticut)

# CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

## Wednesday October 16, 2024

**1700—2000** Exhibit Floor opens for Volunteer & Combination departments.

**1830—2000** Vendor Appreciation Reception on the exhibit floor

## Thursday October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024

**0800—0845** Opening Ceremonies and Keynote Speaker

**0900—1100** Professional Development Programs

**0900—1600** Exhibit Floor Opens

**1100—1300** Lunch and Visit the Exhibit Floor

**1300—1500** Professional Development Programs

**1500—1600** Visit the Exhibit Floor before it finishes at 1600!

**1630—1730** Join us for our annual service of remembrance for all departed members. All are welcome to attend.

**1730—1830** Annual Membership Meeting

**1830** Presidential Celebration

## Friday, October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024

**0900—1500** Exhibit Floor Open

**0900—1100** Professional Development Programs

### Conference Ticket Options

- **Wednesday Exhibit Floor and Vendor Appreciation Reception - \$10**
- **Thursday Professional Development Programs & Expo - \$125**
- **Friday Professional Development Programs & Expo - \$75**
- **General Admission Exhibit Floor Only - Thursday - \$10**
- **General Admission Exhibit Floor Only - Friday - \$10**
- **General Admission Exhibit Floor Only - 2 Day Pass- \$18**
- **Full Conference Package (Wednesday –Friday)- \$200**

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## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

**Thursday 0900 - 1100**

### **How Mass Gathering Events Can Aid Your Response to an Active Shooter Event**

***Chief John Oates***

Every community hosts mass gathering events. From the county fair to a high school football game, mass gathering events provide us with an opportunity to prepare for future incidents. This program will share three case studies in which mass gathering events were used to train responders, and how that training played a role in an event that occurred in 2019.

### **Lithium-ION Battery Fire Awareness**

***Vermont Fire Academy***

Lithium-ion batteries are becoming commonplace on the roads, in industrial settings, and in the residential fire environment, posing unique challenges to the fire service. This course introduces students to how lithium-ion battery systems work, how they fail, and how they burn. It provides students with tactical guidance for safely and effectively dealing with fires in electric vehicles, energy storage systems, e-mobility devices, and other applications of lithium-ion battery technology.

### **Fit for Duty**

***McNeil & Company***

When the call for help goes out to our departments, we need to be confident that our responders are ready to meet the challenges they may face. However, we increasingly find our members eager to respond but unable to perform due to temporary or chronic medical issues, not being trained and equipped to do the job, or by being impaired by fatigue, medications, or recreational substances. At the same time, our leaders find it difficult to restrict members when the impairment is not evident until the “bell rings.” In this session we will discuss a strategy for developing a culture of readiness in your organization, recognition of “reasonable suspicion” of an inability to work when a member is reporting for duty, and having a policy in place to empower the supervisor or leader to safely remove a person from duty to ensure everyone’s safety.

### **Employee Development**

***Chief Michael O'Brian***

This course will jump into one of the most important aspects as leaders: developing those we get to work with! This class will provide real-world examples on how to transform your agency so your staff can succeed and provide the best service to your community.

**Thursday 11:30 am, EXPO Floor**

### **NERIS: Changing Data-driven Decision Making**

***Chief Tom Jenkins***

The National Emergency Response Information System (NERIS) changes the way data is collected and utilized by the fire service. Learn the latest about this project and get your questions answered about how your department can prepare.

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# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

**Thursday 1300 - 1500**

## **Community Risk Reduction: The Intersection of Tradition and Transformation**

***NFPA***

Does the saying “200 years of tradition unimpeded by progress” make your skin crawl? Are you excited to hear how data is finding its footing in the fire service? Does strategizing about firefighter safety keep you up at night? If so, the time is right for you to consider adding Community Risk Reduction to your department’s toolbox. In this session, Karen Berard-Reed and Chelsea Rubadou, the NFPA CRR team, will guide you through the Community Risk Reduction process. Attendees will develop a solid understanding of the “WHY” behind CRR’s value and acquire practical insights on “HOW” to implement this process within your department. The session will cover actionable strategies that will help you elevate traditional approaches to integrate CRR into your department’s operations and help participants identify practical entry points to initiate change. Be part of the transformation and equip yourself with the knowledge and strategies necessary to lead your fire department into a brighter, data-driven future.

## **Ten Fingers/Ten Toes: How to Survive Fire Chief-ing in 2024**

***Chiefs John Oates & Tom Jenkins***

Drawing on the lived experience of fire chiefs from several different communities, this presentation will discuss 10 things that can enable your success as a fire chief—as well as 10 things that will disable it. The discussion will be based upon the real experiences of actual fire chiefs. Learn from the good (and the not so good) as we all work to serve our community and department in a way that allows us to end our tenure as fire chief honorably, respectfully, and with positivity.

## **Beyond the Sirens “Rethinking Emergency Response”**

***McNeil & Company***

As emergency vehicle operators and officers, we are trained to safely operate apparatus to get us to an incident and back. However, crashes do occur, and when they do, 70% of the people hurt in those crashes are the occupants of other vehicles—members of our community that we are harming instead of helping. Despite efforts to make emergency vehicle operations safer, we still see many crashes that are preventable. This course is designed to refresh the emergency vehicle operators and leaders of first response agencies on the best practices that should be followed to prevent crashes from occurring. We will discuss the importance of being an attentive, defensive operator and examine specific circumstances where crashes often occur. We also discuss the mounting evidence regarding the need to change our culture to reduce the unnecessary use of red lights and sirens when called upon to help our communities.

## **Developing the EV Response**

***Chief Michael O’Brian***

The fire service work environment is changing quickly with the addition and adoption of electric vehicles (BEV). Understanding the new challenges and developing our staff are key ingredients as we work to adapt to our changing communities. This class will look at various factors from the built environment to understanding resources available to assist our fire service.

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## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

**Friday 0900 - 1100**

### **Preparing for the Promotion**

***Chief William Perez***

This presentation will help you identify the variables you can control that will increase your chances of getting promoted in public safety. The discussion will include information on different types of promotional processes, tips and strategies for study habits, as well as oral presentation techniques.

### **What puts the "A" in AI?**

***Chief John Oates***

The terms Machine Learning and Artificial Intelligence are becoming ubiquitous in discussions about how we apply data for the fire service in 2024. But what does that really mean? How does AI work? What can it do to improve service delivery to our citizens? This presentation will increase your understanding of this powerful tool and the many questions it bring up. How 'artificial' is the intelligence? What drives it? How can we ensure that what we are seeing on Chat GPT is accurate? Can we free up staff time by applying machine learning to important yet monotonous tasks? Can we improve our apparatus usage, predict maintenance needs, and gain a better understanding of how our apparatus and tools work together at an incident scene? As this technology continues to advance, more questions will arise, but it cannot be ignored, and we cannot pretend that it won't be impactful. Learning the basics of the technology will help form your efforts now and into the future.

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## Speakers Biographies

**Karen Berard-Reed, M.Ed.**, is a Senior Strategist leading the Community Risk Reduction initiative at the National Fire Protection Association. Karen develops innovative tools and resources to assist stakeholders who are focused on data and standards-driven processes to improve community safety. Her contributions include training, partnership-building, and critical tools to support CRR efforts such as CRAIG 1300™, the NFPA Community Risk Assessment Insight Generator, and the CRR Kitchen Table, a monthly virtual gathering of prevention-minded professionals. Karen previously managed NFPA's high-risk outreach activities and created safety education materials for young children, older adults, and underserved communities. Karen serves on the IAFC Fire and Life Safety Section Board of Directors, the NASFM Core CRR Team, and the Vision 20/20 steering committee and has served as an instructor at the National Fire Academy. Before coming to NFPA, Karen worked in the health promotion field in K-12, higher education, and community settings.

**Tom Jenkins** serves as a Senior Advisor / Research Manager for UL Fire Safety Research Institute on the NERIS project. Before joining the NERIS team, he was the Fire Chief for the City of Rogers (AR). In that capacity he led over 160 career firefighters and successfully attained accreditation from the Center for Public Safety Excellence and the Commission on Accreditation of Ambulance Services. Chief Jenkins was asked by Governors Beebe and Hutchison to serve on several state commissions and groups, including the Trauma Advisory Council, Firefighter Cancer Benefit Review Panel, and the Safe Schools Commission. He has served as a professor for Drury University, Northwest Arkansas Community College, Tulsa Community College, and Oklahoma State University. In 2015, Chief Jenkins was elected to serve on the Board of Directors for the International Association of Fire Chiefs as the Second Vice President. In 2017 and 2018, he served as President and Chairman of the Board of the IAFC.

Jenkins completed his master's in public administration from the University of Oklahoma and obtained his bachelor's degree in Fire Protection and Safety Engineering from Oklahoma State University. He has completed the Executive Fire Officer Program at the National Fire Academy and is a designated Chief Fire Officer and Chief Emergency Medical Services Officer from the Commission on Public Credentialing. He currently serves on multiple boards and committees, including: NFPA Standard on Organization and Deployment of Career Fire Departments Standard 1710, International Fire Service Training Association Board of Directors, PulsePoint Advisory Board, and National Fallen Firefighters Foundation Advisory Board. His service also includes appointments to the Homeland Security Advisory Council, where he served from 2020-2021, and the FEMA National Advisory Council where he has served since 2023.

**Robert Morlino** is a Lead Instructor with the Vermont Fire Academy. He instructs classes from the Firefighter 1 level through Fire Officer I/II. He has 26 years of experience in emergency service with 13 years in EMS and an equal number in the fire service. Additionally, he is a Hazardous Materials Technician with the Vermont Hazardous Materials Response Team where his 35+ years of experience in the chemical industry has proven helpful in rapid identification of chemical hazards. He is an Assistant Chief with the Pawlet (VT) Volunteer Fire Department.

## Speakers Biographies

**John Oates** is the President and CEO of the International Public Safety Data Institute, the fire service's leader in data and analytics. As CEO, he is responsible for the growth, adoption, and continuous improvement of the NFORS Analytics, Exposure Tracker, and FireCARES programs.

Prior to being appointed I-PSDI CEO in November 2021, John served as Chief of the East Hartford, Connecticut Fire Department for 13 years. Before that, he served in West Hartford, CT for 20 years, reaching the rank of Battalion Chief. John has a BS from Franklin Pierce University, an MS from Oklahoma State University, is a graduate of the National Fire Academy Executive Fire Officer Program, and holds numerous professional certifications. He has been an Advocate for the NFFF's Everyone Goes Home Program since the inception of the 16 Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives. He serves the First Responder Center for Excellence as a member of the Behavioral Health Advisory Committee. Chief Oates serves as a member of the NFPA 3000 Active Shooter/Hostile Event Response Technical Committee and the Technical Committee for Safety at Motorsports Venues (NFPA 610) where he served as Chairman from 2005 until 2016.

**Michael O'Brian** is the Fire Chief for the Brighton Area Fire Authority (MI). The combination department is responsible for fire protection over 74 square miles with five fire stations. He is also the managing director for Code Concepts Group, a leading consulting company that aids communities in navigating technical projects. Chief O'Brian serves on the board of directors for the International Association of Fire Chiefs as the International Director of the Fire and Life Safety Section and served as President of the Michigan Association of Fire Chiefs from 2013-2017. Chief O'Brian has a Bachelor of Science degree in public safety administration from Eastern Michigan University, where he serves as an adjunct instructor with Fire Staff and Command. Fire Chief O'Brian serves on multiple ICC technical committees, NFPA Technical Committees, as well as the past chair of the Fire Code Action Committee with the International Code Council. Chief O'Brian is a leader in fire service preparedness on lithium-ion batteries and is a passionate advocate for firefighter health and wellness throughout the country. Contact Information Michael D. O'Brian 810-459-0116 [mobrian@me.com](mailto:mobrian@me.com)

**Dr. William Perez** is a 25-year retired Assistant Fire Chief of the East Hartford Fire Department and is currently serving as the Chief of the University of Connecticut Fire Department. Chief Perez started his public safety career in 1987 as an EMT in Bridgeport. In 1990, he became a licensed paramedic. Chief Perez began his teaching career in 1991 by teaching ACLS, PALS, and CPR for Bridgeport Ambulance. He became a CT EMS-I in 1992.

Over the years, he had the opportunity to use his medical expertise while working as a Fleet Marine Force Navy Corpsman during Operation Noble Eagle, Enduring Freedom, and Operation Iraqi Freedom. Chief Perez has an Associate of Science with a Paramedic concentration, a Bachelor of Science with a concentration in Public Safety, a Master of Public Administration with a concentration in Fire Administration and obtained his Doctorate in Education at the University of Hartford. His research and doctoral dissertation focused on student engagement at the Connecticut Fire Academy.



## Speakers Biographies

Since 1995, Chief Perez has been a member of the adjunct faculty at Capital Community College in Hartford, where he taught fire science, and emergency management, and continues to teach paramedic. In 1995, he also began teaching for St. Francis Hospital and still currently teaches ACLS, PALS, and CPR for them. Additionally, Chief Perez has taught fire science as an adjunct professor at the University of New Haven. Chief Perez is an active instructor at the National Fire Academy where he taught the Executive Fire Officer Program, and currently teaches the Managing Officer Program and hazmat classes.

During his career, Chief Perez has earned awards and recognitions from the US Navy, East Hartford Fire Department, and the UConn Fire Department. Chief Perez holds the following professional credentials: Chief Fire Officer (CFO), Executive Fire Officer (EFO), Member Institution of Fire Engineers (MIFireE), and Certified Emergency Manager (CEM).

**S. Lee Price**, a 35-year veteran of the fire and emergency services, is currently a Risk Management Training Manager for McNeil & Co. in Cortland, NY. He began his career as a volunteer FF and EMT then worked for several ambulance services in central New York, became a paramedic in 1994, served as a full-time fly-car medic and operations supervisor, then was hired as a career firefighter by the City of Cortland in 1997. During his tenure at Cortland, Lee served many department leadership roles including Truck Company and Rescue Company Captain, Captain in the Code Enforcement office as well as EMS Officer. In 2019, Lee retired from the Cortland Fire Department and has returned to the volunteer ranks. Having been a New York State Certified Instructor Coordinator for more than two decades, he has been an EMS training program director and has served on regional committees and executive boards.

**Chelsea Rubadou** is an Engineer for the NFPA and currently works as a staff liaison and subject matter expert for standards dedicated to community risk reduction, data analysis, and fire prevention programs. Her goal is to develop contemporary resources and materials for stakeholders in these important spaces. Previously at NFPA, she co-developed an innovative community risk assessment tool designed to help CRR professionals implement high-quality CRR without the need of a local data science team. Chelsea earned her master's degree in Fire Protection Engineering from WPI.

**Dave Snyder** is a Risk Management Program Specialist with McNeil & Company. Dave has a diverse background as a long-time first responder as well as a past business owner. Dave has been a volunteer Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) For 30 years in NY State and is a Past Chief of SOMAC Ambulance in Hamilton, NY. For over 20 years, Dave had served on his county's EMS training team to help get new EMTs on the streets by assisting with skills development and mentoring. Dave has spent many years on county and regional committees and has been twice named the BLS Provider of the Year by the Mid-State Emergency Medical Services Region. Currently, Dave volunteers with the Eaton Fire District in Upstate NY, where he has held the positions of Captain and Rescue Captain while maintaining an active role in protecting his community

## Speakers Biographies

Currently, Dave is the 2<sup>nd</sup> Assistant Chief for his fire district. During his 9 years as a Program Specialist with McNeil & Co., Dave has been tasked with working hands-on with clients in the field to identify loss hazards and offer recommendations for risk reduction. Dave has traveled all over the country meeting with fire and EMS agencies providing risk management solutions, learning what is working and not working within the industry, and spending much of his time as an educator speaking on varying topics to help promote a culture of safety.

**Jonathan Weiss** is a lead instructor for the Vermont Fire Academy, where his focus is on the delivery of basic firefighter training at the Firefighter 1 level. This work has included developing and leading innovative hybrid programs, leveraging his professional background as a graphic artist to deliver the curriculum in more impactful ways. He has 14 years of fire service experience and currently serves as the Chief of the Pawlet (VT) Volunteer Fire Department.

## DIRECTIONS

# Mohegan Sun Casino

### DIRECTIONS

#### FROM BOSTON AND POINTS NORTH:

Take Mass Pike to I-395 South. Exit 9 (old 79A) off I-395 in Uncasville, CT.

#### FROM HARTFORD:

Take I-84 East to Route 2 East to I-395 South. Exit 9 (old 79A) in Uncasville, CT.

#### FROM NEW YORK CITY

Follow I-95 through New York and into Connecticut. Stay left on I-395 North towards Plainfield/Norwich. Take Exit 9 (old 79A) on CT-2A East toward Ledyard/Preston. Then take Exit 6/Mohegan Sun Boulevard in Uncasville, CT.

#### FROM PROVIDENCE

Take Route 6 West to I-395 South. Exit 9 (old 79A) in Uncasville, CT. or  
Take I-95 South to Exit 84N/Route 32. Follow Route 32 North to I-395. Exit 9 (old 79A) off I-395 in Uncasville, CT.

### PARKING

With more than 13,000 on-site guest parking spaces, parking at Mohegan Sun is never a hassle, whether you are visiting Casino of the Earth or Casino of the Sky. Entrances to Casino of the Earth are themed by the seasons Winter, Summer, and Autumn. Once inside, the casinos are connected by the Spring Gateway so you never have to leave the building. If you are interested in reserved parking, click on the link below.

### [RIVERVIEW RESERVED PARKING](#)

### HOTELS AND LODGING

Lodging reservations are the individual responsibility of each attendee. Some, but not all, lodging options are listed below.

## Reservations for hotels are now open!

*RESERVATION PROCESS: Rooming List/Individual Call-In*

*Should guests prefer to call in their guestroom reservations, group delegates should use group code:  
NEAOFCC via toll-free phone number 1-888-226-7711.*

**You must mention the NEAFC Conference for these rates!**

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