

ASSOCIATION UPDATE



By Cheri Breneman
Association Administrator

20 Years of Service

It was in Summer 2005 that I wrote my first article for this magazine. That year, the Annual Conference theme was *Get Fired Up!* Seventy-eight issues later, and as I look back on the past 20 years of service to this incredible Association, I find myself filled with a deep sense of gratitude and pride. I stepped into this new role with enthusiasm, a desire to learn about the fire service and a deep respect for the mission of our organization. Today, those feelings remain just as strong—thanks to the unwavering support of our dedicated members and the visions of the board of directors.

This work journey has been marked by professional growth and transformation for the Association and me. We have weathered change, celebrated milestones, and raised to meet challenges with creativity and resilience. Whether navigating shifts in the fire service as an industry, adopting new technologies, or expanding our reach and relevance, our community's collective strength and spirit have made it all possible.

To our members—you are the heartbeat of this Association. Your commitment and feedback have shaped our direction and driven our success. I have always believed that the best ideas come from listening closely to those we serve. Your commitment to our work has continually inspired me.

To our board of directors—your vision and leadership have been instrumental in steering us forward. Each of you brought your fire district experience and your passion to the table. Your governance has challenged us to think bigger, act boldly, and remain focused on the long-

term impact of our work. It has been a pleasure to partner with you in bringing strategic goals to fruition and ensuring the continued strength and sustainability of the IAFFD.

While this reflection is rooted in the past, my focus remains on the future. The landscape continues to evolve, and so must we. I remain enthusiastic about the road ahead and committed to supporting this Association's next generation of leaders.

Thank you all—for the opportunities, the productive partnerships, and the support during this time. As we embark on what is going to be my 20th conference with IAFFD and a theme that speaks volumes about to what we, the IAFFD are about: ***Building Success Through Education***, I urge you to take full advantage of the benefits that come with attending this conference and your membership with this great Association.

As you read through this publication, you will discover it is packed with conference details, important reminders, relevant feature articles for your Board meeting conversation, and a decent amount of industry partner ads that are intended to keep you informed on the latest products and services. We are fortunate to have the support of these companies in this publication as associate members and supportive vendors at our events.

I look forward to the continued work with the IAFFD Board and Committees that support the upcoming events, announce new educational resources, and promote good work for our members. ■

A Few Notable Successes For IAFFD 2005-2025:

- ✓ Sustaining a 90% Member Retention Rate
- ✓ Invested in Association Management Software
- ✓ Expanded Use of Digital Communications Technology
- ✓ Launched 12-hour Essential Trustee Training
- ✓ Invested in an Office Building/ Permanent Headquarters
- ✓ Began Presenting a Southern Illinois Winter Conference
- ✓ Started Online Learning Program & Continued Education Library
- ✓ Developed Trustee's Years of Service Awards Program
- ✓ Joined Community Risk Reduction Task Force
- ✓ Created Promotional Video
- ✓ Established & Maintaining a Social Media Presence
- ✓ Expanded the Educational Offerings to Include Public Pension Board Training
- ✓ Developed a Digital Map of Fire District Members

At-a-Glance Conference Agenda

THURSDAY JUNE 19	TOPIC
7:00 am – 5:00 pm	Registration Open
7:00 am	Continental Breakfast
7:30 am – 11:30 am	Essential Trustee Training Part 1: FPD Organization & Administration
9:00 am – 10:00 am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ethics & Discipline in The Fire Service Tier 2 & Public Defined Benefit Challenges & The Impact on Recruiting Firefighters Trustee Elections & Refereda
10:00 am – 10:15 am	Refreshment Break
10:15 am – 11:15 am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AI & The Fire Protection Industry Non Career Firefighter Financial Incentives, Comp Programs How Not To Screw Up A Meeting—OMA Compliance Today
11:15 am – 12:30 pm	LUNCH & AWARDS
12:30 pm – 1:30 pm	Building Success through Education (General Session)
1:30 pm – 1:45 pm	Refreshment Break
1:45 pm – 2:45 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 11K Purchasing Issues & New Construction/Station Renovations Case Law Update The New NERIS Platform Rollout that Replaces NIFIRS Effective in 2026
2:45 pm – 3:00 pm	Refreshment Break
3:00 pm – 4:00 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowing When & How to Bring Ambulance Service or EMS into the District Funding Pensions: New Thoughts on Approaching Actuarial Valuations Managing Chaos
4:00 pm – 4:15 pm	Annual Membership Meeting
4:15 pm – 5:00 pm	Pre - Conference Meet & Greet
5:00 pm – 6:00 pm	Open Forum with Panel of Attorneys
5:00 pm – 6:00 pm	Outdoor Vendor Move In Option
6:30 pm – 9:00 pm	Social Event with Vendors at Rigg's Brewery
FRIDAY JUNE 20	TOPIC
7:00 am – 4:00 pm	Registration Open
7:00 am	Continental Breakfast
7:30 am – 9:00 am	Indoor & Outdoor Vendor Move In
8:00 am – 8:45 am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grant Writing Workshop
9:00 am – 10:30 am	Opening w/Keynote & State Agency Updates
10:45 am – 11:00 am	FLAG RAISING
11:00 am – 5:00 pm	Exhibits Inside/Outside Open
12:00 pm	Lunch with Vendors
12:30 pm – 4:30 pm	Essential Trustee Training Part 2: Finances, Procurement & Legal Liability
2:00 pm	Industry Partner Special Recognition
5:00 pm	Reception
6:00 pm – 8:00 pm	Dinner on Your Own
8:00 pm – 10:00 pm	Parrot Head Party with The Boat Drunks
SATURDAY JUNE 21	TOPIC
7:00 am – 11:30 am	Registration Open
7:00 am	Hot Breakfast
8:00 am – 8:30 am	FIRE SERVICE MEMORIAL
8:30 am – 12:30	Essential Trustee Training Part 3: Personnel & Human Resources
9:00 am – 10:00 am	Annual Legislative Update
10:00 am – 10:15 am	Refreshment Break
9:00 am – 12:00 pm	Managing The Mission CTE 2025 (trustee refresher)
10:15 am – 11:15 am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More than Smoke: Understanding the Changing Environment with Lithium-Ion Batteries Transitioning: Moving from Volunteer to Part Time/Career & Back Again
11:15 am – 11:30 am	Refreshment Break
11:30 am – 12:30 pm	How to React to Solar Energy Farms

General Information

Conference Venue & Tradeshow Facility

The I-Hotel Conference Center is located on the University of Illinois campus near the State Farm Center and Illinois Fire Service Institute.



Registration

All attendees must register online at IAFPD.org no later than June 16. Discount rates are offered for registrations received prior to June 9. If you need assistance with online registration, please contact IAFPD at 217-525-6620. Attendees will receive an email confirming their registration and other important details about their participation.

Registration includes a name badge that allows admission to all educational sessions the tradeshow, door prize drawings and special events. Registration also includes breakfast each morning, lunch on Friday. Thursday lunch is a ticketed event. .

	Before June 9	After June 9
Full Conference (Member)	\$140	\$190
Full Conference with ETT	\$220	\$270
One Day Registration (One day must select which day)	\$75	\$125
Guest Registration Fee	\$45	\$45

ETT Registration

This registration category includes the conference registration plus admittance to the 3-part (12-hour) Essential trustee Training, session handouts, the 2025 Handbook for Trustees and the 2025 Edition of the Text of Laws and admittance to the online presentation of IAFPD Opening Meetings Act training (to be held via live webinar in July)

Guest and Spouse Registration

The IAFPD Conference welcomes family and/or guests to walk the tradeshow and take part in the social gatherings being offered. Guests can register separately or be added to the fire districts registration but must be affiliated with fire protection district and not a commercial business.

ADA and Services for the Hearing Impaired

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, the IAFPD will make all reasonable efforts to accommodate persons with disabilities. If you have special needs, contact Cheri Breneman at 217-525-6620.

Parking

Ample free parking is available at the I-Hotel Conference Center and at each of the hotels for hotel guests. A portion of the I-Hotel parking will reserved for vendor displays and vehicles but should not impact conference attendee parking options.

Hotel Information

I-Hotel

1900 S. First Street, Champaign, IL 61820

Group Code: IAFPD

217-819-5000

www.StayAtTheI.com

\$159.00/night - 2-night minimum required to book

Room Block deadline: May 18

Additional lodging is available within a mile of the conference center with a discounted rate of \$165 per night using **Hilton online Reservation Code IFS**. Discounted rate are available until May 18th. Rooms booked after this date are not guaranteed the discount. Attendees should limit their booking to only those who have confirmed their travel plans. Cancellation penalties may apply.

- Hilton Garden Inn, 1501 S Neil Street, 217-352-9970
- Homewood Suites by Hilton, 1417 S Neil St., 217-352-9960

Tradeshow

The tradeshow is open on Friday from 11:00 am to 5:00 pm.

Name badges are required for entry onto the tradeshow floor. A one-day exhibit hall pass may be purchased for \$20 but must be done no later than June 16 and may have limited access.

Online Registration Tips

- If someone else is registering for you, be sure they know whether you need ETT or continuing education (CE) hours.
- You'll need your Members Only login credentials to register. If you've forgotten your password or don't yet have an account, use the links on the Home or Conferences pages of iafpd.org to request or reset your login info before starting.
- Choose the correct registration option—full conference attendance or Essential Trustee Training. *Note: You must be registered for ETT to receive certification.*
- Your individual email address is your key to all conference-related communication.
- Guest registration is available! Family and friends are welcome at all social events, and we encourage guests who won't be attending sessions to explore local businesses offering exclusive deals for conference attendees.

For questions, please call IAFPD at 217-525-6620 or email Karrie Beneky at karrie@iafpd.org.

What to Wear?

Business casual dress is suitable for the conference. It is recommended attendees bring a sweater to cope with cooler room temperatures. Friday night encourages flip flops and Hawaiian shirts to coincide with the Jimmy Buffet Parrot Head themed event.

Essential Trustee Training (ETT)

Essential Trustee Training This is an IAFFPD exclusive 12-hour training program highly recommended for all members of the Board of Trustees, but open to anyone with a desire to learn the roles and responsibilities of fire protection district administration. Trustees who complete the entire ETT Program under 70 ILCS 70/6 are entitled to additional compensation. This program curriculum is developed and presented by attorneys who specialize in local and municipal government.

Pre-registration and additional fee is required to attend.

- Part 1** Organization & Administration of the FPD
Thursday, 6/19/25 - 7:30 am – 11:30 pm
- Part 2** Finances, Procurement, Legal Liability
Friday, 6/20/25 - 12:30 pm – 4:30 pm
- Part 3** Personnel and Human Resources
Saturday, 6/21/25 - 8:30 am – 12:30 pm

TRU\$TEE Grant\$



The IAFFPD Foundation Scholarship program has a Trustee's Grant Program that is available to assist trustee members of the Association who are interested in attending the Annual Conference but may have financial constraints hindering their ability to participate.

The vision of the program is simple:

- to promote education for those serving as an elected or appointed trustee,
- to present opportunities for networking with others tasked with the same role, and
- to provide a venue to learn from the experts who provide resources, specialty services, and fire equipment utilized by the fire services.

The Foundation's Trustee Grant may award up to \$500.00 in reimbursements per recipient for the 2025 Annual Conference. Some restrictions apply and all applications will be considered. For more details and application, visit IAFFPD.org.



Continuing Education Hours

Fire Protection District Trustees (A) Public Act 95-0799 requires trustees who have completed the Essential Trustee Training Program to fulfill a 3-hour annual continued education requirement. **All** sessions presented at the IFSC satisfy this legal training requirement.

Pension Fund Trustees (P) The IAFFPD Conference program offers **8 hours** of qualified pension training credit to fulfill the in ethics and pension fund administration. Some of the educational programs.

Guest Program Opportunity

Explore Champaign County: A Self-Guided Tour with Exclusive Offers for Conference Guests

Welcome to Champaign County! While you're here for the conference, we invite you to step out and experience the vibrant local scene through our *Self-Guided Business Tour*. Discover the best of what our community has to offer—at your own pace.

From cozy coffee shops and award-winning restaurants to unique boutiques, galleries, and wellness spots, participating businesses across the county are rolling out the red carpet with **special offers and discounts exclusively for conference attendees**.

Simply show your conference badge at any of the listed locations to enjoy:

- Complimentary treats and samples
- Exclusive discounts and promotions
- Chances to win prizes from local favorites

Whether you're looking to unwind after sessions, pick up a locally made souvenir, or get a taste of what makes Champaign County special, this self-guided tour is your passport to exploring like a local.

Pick up your IAFFPD Conference Guest brochure at registration to plan your route and make the most of your time in the area.

Top 10 Reasons to Attend:

- Earn Continued Education Hours
- 3-Part Essential Trustee Training Offered
- Dynamic Speakers Presenting Timely & Relevant Topics
- Interactive Tradeshow
- Demonstrations
- Entertaining Networking Events
- Fire Service Memorial
- Recognition Awards
- Guests Welcome!
- Meet the President!