

# VETERAN NEWS & NOTES

## Volunteer Opportunity For Veterans

(NAPSA)—The nation's nearly 22 million veterans may not be aware of a volunteer opportunity that continues on the tradition of purpose, camaraderie and service to the country and community: becoming a volunteer firefighter.

### Why Volunteer in the Fire Service

Many veterans find joining a local fire department involves values they can uniquely appreciate, such as loyalty, honor, courage, discipline, teamwork and respect.

Plus, the need is great. Seven out of 10 firefighters and emergency responders are volunteers, and volunteer firefighters save communities nationwide an estimated \$140 billion a year. However, many local departments are struggling to meet staffing needs as call volume has tripled in the last 30 years and departments' roles in communities continue to expand. Many community members are unaware of this need. A National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC) survey found 41 percent of respondents did not know that their department used volunteers and 79 percent did not know their department was looking for more volunteers. The NVFC is the leading nonprofit membership association representing the interests of the volunteer fire, EMS and rescue services.

### How To Volunteer

Fortunately, anyone can become a volunteer firefighter—they come from all types of backgrounds and professions and encompass all ages, genders, races and ethnicities. Veterans are especially well equipped to volunteer as emergency responders, and it provides a sense of purpose, commitment, and lifesaving service to the community that few



**Many veterans find that a great way to continue to enjoy camaraderie and a sense of purpose is to become volunteer firefighters.**

other volunteer opportunities can offer. Certain departments may have specific requirements, such as a high school degree, a physical or a background check, but when it comes down to it, volunteering as a first responder is all about having the heart and drive to make a difference where it's needed most. And who can understand that better than a veteran?

New recruits are trained by the department. Skills to learn vary based on the department's response requirements, but training may cover a wide array of emergency situations such as fires, emergency medical incidents, terrorist events, natural disasters, hazardous materials incidents, water rescue emergencies and other public service calls.

### Where To Learn More About Becoming A Volunteer

For further information and to find a nearby fire service volunteer opportunity, visit [www.MakeMeAFirefighter.org](http://www.MakeMeAFirefighter.org).