

Volunteers Wanted

When Disasters Strike, You Can Be Part Of The Solution



Americans from all backgrounds have discovered they can help others, learn new skills and feel good about themselves by volunteering to be first responders.

(NAPSA)—Every 24 seconds, somewhere in America, a fire department responds to a fire and firefighters are on the job, saving life and property. What many people may not realize is that most of these firefighters are volunteers. Seven out of 10 firefighters and emergency responders are volunteers, protecting their communities from a variety of hazards and saving taxpayers nationwide an estimated \$140 billion a year. They come from all backgrounds, professions, ages, genders, races and ethnicities.

The Problem

Many local departments are struggling to meet staffing needs. Call volume has tripled in the last 30 years as fire departments' roles in communities continue to expand, making the need for volunteers greater than ever. Yet many community members are unaware of this need. A survey by the National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC) 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.

An Answer

Volunteering in the fire service

provides a unique way for people to give back to the community while developing skills and experience that can contribute greatly to many aspects of their personal and professional life. It also provides camaraderie, a sense of purpose, and community impact to those who serve in this extraordinary way.

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 and other public service calls. Certain departments may have specific requirements, such as a high school degree, a physical and 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.

Learn More

For further information and to find a fire service volunteer opportunity, visit www.MakeMeAFirefighter.org.