



Dear Anne Arundel County Residents,

Our firefighters are proud to serve this community, and we believe you deserve transparency about the challenges facing your Fire and EMS system. A recent independent study — the **2024 Community Risk Assessment and Deployment Analysis**, conducted by Emergency Services Consulting International (ESCI), evaluated how well our Fire Department is positioned to protect the County today and into the future.

The results make one message very clear: **Anne Arundel County has outgrown our current Fire and EMS staffing and deployment model.** As calls for service increase and our population continues to grow, the system that protects our residents is being stretched beyond safe limits. While we have made significant progress in increasing our staffing over the past seven years, we still have more work to do.

One of the most significant issues identified in the report is the County's reliance on **cross-staffing**, where a single crew is responsible for staffing multiple pieces of emergency apparatus in the same station. While this system may appear efficient on paper, it often leaves critical equipment unstaffed and unavailable during emergencies. This delays response times and reduces the resources arriving on scene when every second matters.

The report also notes that most fire engines and ladder trucks in the County do **not** meet the nationally recognized **NFPA 1710 standard** of at least **four firefighters per apparatus**. Proper staffing is essential not only for effective emergency response, but also for the safety of the firefighters who enter burning buildings, respond to medical emergencies, and provide rescue services.

The study recommends several key improvements, including:

- Ending the cross-staffing model and ensuring each emergency unit has a dedicated crew.
- Implementing four-person staffing on every fire engine and ladder truck.
- Establishing updated response benchmarks for both urban and rural areas.
- Improving fleet reliability and ensuring that fire stations in high-demand areas are adequately staffed and equipped.
- Establishing independently staffed tankers in rural areas as outlined in the report.
- Strengthening paramedic recruitment, training, and fire inspection staffing to keep pace with community needs.

These recommendations are not about luxury — they are about restoring the level of protection our community expects and deserves. When an emergency happens, whether it is a fire, medical crisis, or rescue situation, minutes and effective staffing save lives. We can assure you that we meet the proper staffing levels on scene to mitigate your emergency, but we know we can do it more efficiently and effectively if we increase our staffing on apparatus.

As your Anne Arundel County Professional Fire Fighters, Local 1563, our commitment is to advocate for a Fire and EMS system that meets national standards, protects residents, and ensures that every firefighter goes home safely. We will continue working with County leadership, community partners, and residents like you to move these recommendations forward.

Fire Chief Trisha Wolford is committed to working with the union to find solutions. "The safety of our County residents and our firefighter/EMS clinicians has always depended on strong partnerships. By working collaboratively, we can build a fire and EMS system that reflects the needs of our growing County and ensures our crews have the staffing, equipment, and support they need to respond safely and effectively", said Chief Wolford.

We thank you for your continued support of the Anne Arundel County Fire Department.

Fraternally,



Joe Addivinola
President
Anne Arundel County Professional Fire Fighters



Trisha L. Wolford
Fire Chief
Anne Arundel County Fire Department