



## Issue Brief Proposed OSHA “Emergency Response Standards”

The proposal to update the OSHA standards will apply to all emergency responses by fire departments. These proposals will affect **all** fire departments in Wisconsin.

The proposed OSHA standards are hundreds of pages long and full of laborious terms and legalese language, but here are some of the more obvious changes affecting WI fire departments.

The OSHA proposal adopts 22 National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards **entirely**. That means that what was once considered a “can do” turns into a “shall do”. The NFPA standards become the LAW and fire departments will be held to comply with all of those adopted standards. Inside those 22 NFPA standards are 1,500 mandatory statements that fire departments will have to follow and comply with. These mandatory statements will involve both administrative and financial efforts to meet those standards.

Some examples:

- Requires mandatory medical physicals every two years for all firefighters
- Requires annual “fitness for duty” evaluations of all firefighters
- Requires a “health and fitness” program with fitness assessments every three years for all firefighters
- Requires multiple mandatory written plans:
  - Emergency Response Program (ERP)
  - Pre-Incident Plans (PIP)
  - Risk Management Plans (RMP)
  - Post Incident Analysis
- Increases training requirements to national standards for:
  - Firefighters
  - Fire Officers
  - Driver/Operators
- Increases training and operational procedures for response to:
  - Wildland Fires
  - Technical Rescue
  - Water Rescue

Furthermore, the proposed standards adopt most of an additional 14 NFPA standards and make them LAW. So, the list can go on and on. The point is that these proposed changes will cost millions of dollars and will cost tens of thousands of hours in administrative and training time for the fire departments. This will be a burden for all Wisconsin fire departments and in effect will be a burden to be passed on to the communities being served.

Thanks for your attention to this important issue. The resources available through the NVFC can help us prepare and inform our communities of these proposed changes to fire department finances and operations. **Comments are DUE JULY 22.**

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