



The Maine Fire Protection Services Commission

2021 Legislative Initiative LD242

Live Fire & Fire Training Facility FAQ's

Why does Maine need Live Fire Training Facilities?

Firefighters in the State of Maine are required by the Maine Bureau of Labor Standards to train, maintain, and be proficient in tasks before performing those tasks on the fire ground. Maine's firefighters are limited to six locations, primarily in the southern part of the state, that are suitable to conduct live fire certification training evaluations. Prior to 2018, and the successful passing and funding of [Public Law 444, Title 20-A MRSA §9004](#), training facilities were built and maintained by local communities and fire service organizations. These were not built to current National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards, and all became liabilities to the town and those who taught and trained with them. Most were decades old, with the newest being constructed in 1996, and all were in need of substantial replacement, repair, and routine maintenance*.

Why should firefighter training be certified?

Firefighting is not only very challenging physically, it requires that firefighters train with and sustain a vast variety of knowledge and skills. Just a few of the tasks Maine's firefighters need to fully understand include; water supply, hazardous materials, apparatus operation, and how differently constructed buildings react to different fire conditions. NFPA 1001 sets recommended professional standards that all Fire Departments strive to obtain. Training and certifying to NFPA standards not only reduces insurance liability for the communities that insure our firefighters, it reduces Workers Compensation injuries*, and highly increases safety for our firefighters and citizens we protect.

How will LD242 continue to improve firefighter training?

Maine's firefighters need safe & effective regional facilities where they can:

- learn, train, practice, and demonstrate proficiency in live-fire & other essential skills and evolutions,
- effectively & efficiently test for practical skills leading to National Pro-Board Certification, and
- maintain basic skills to protect our citizens and their communities.

LD 242 will guarantee that:

Live Fire Training Facilities are geographically located across Maine providing a network of training opportunities that ensure;

- quality training is readily available throughout Maine.
- equitable training & certification testing is provided by region.
- resources are leveraged to maximize return on State taxpayer investments.

How does LD242 ensure Maine's fire training goals & strategy?

Data from the 2016 Survey of the Maine Fire Service* showed that Maine Fire Chiefs overwhelmingly agreed: sending firefighters further than a one-hour travel time to train **is not efficient**. With apparatus-drive-time analysis, the Fire Commission identified that eleven strategically placed fire training facilities would be required to serve 90% of Maine's fire departments within a one-hour travel time.*

Safe training operations require multiple personnel, equipment, and fire apparatus. Though improvements have been made since 2018, travel times for much of Maine leave communities unprotected when training out of town. Long travel times also add significantly to fatigue factors for firefighters traveling home after training. These factors, along with improved NFPA training compliance, are just a few of the reasons continued funding for strategically located facilities that establish certified fire training capacity will continue to improve fire training in Maine.

How will the funding be administered?

LD242 removes the sunset provision and ensures current annual funding for Live Fire Training Facilities. The funding will continue to be administered by the Maine Fire Protection Services Commission. These funds will further work to expand, establish, compliment, and leverage, local and regional collaborative fire training facility programs in Maine. Continued funding for LD242 will follow the successful 2018 grant program designed by the Fire Commission in conjunction with the Maine Fire Services Institute/Southern Maine Community College. These grants provide for consistent design of Live Fire Training Facilities and are the only available state funding for Maine municipalities that allow for this magnitude of fire training facility.

What are other established benefits?

Studies from the NFPA and the United States Fire Administration (USFA) have shown that access to convenient, professional, and certified fire training and certification: reduces fire losses and injuries, improves moral, and supports recruitment, retention, and re-motivation activities. Communities that establish fire training facilities also note **increased economic benefit** from firefighters who travel to the area for training. Local businesses and fire related corporations are also more interested in helping to leverage training with donations if the training meets NFPA standards and attracts regional firefighters.

How many firefighters are there in Maine?

The Fire Commission's 2016 survey* determined there were approximately 9785 firefighters honorably serving the 1.33 million citizens in the State of Maine; this equals one firefighter for every 135 citizens. These firefighters include full time, per diem, volunteer, and on-call members. Current state provided funding for Live Fire Training Facilities costs only 38 cents annually per citizen!

** For additional information on the Maine Fire Protection Services Commission (MFPSC), our Live Fire and Fire Training Facilities Initiative, and related Maine fire training reports and studies, please visit our webpage at:*

Training Facility Projects in Maine

or contact MFPSC Chair Chief Dan Brooks at 207-462-2631

Link to LD 1242

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