



# State Firefighters' & Fire Marshals' Association of Texas

*Promote, Unify, Represent and Educate Fire and EMS responders*

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## NEWS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Hot Topics, Cool Games, Great Speakers in Store for SFFMA June Conference**

AUSTIN, Texas -- When the annual SFFMA Training Conference & Convention comes to San Marcos this June 27-30, things are going to heat up even more than the normal Central Texas summer temps.

The keynote speaker for Saturday, June 29, is none other than Assistant Deputy Chief Frank Leeb with the New York Fire Department (FDNY). He will share his leadership philosophy over a more than 30-year career as a firefighter. Leeb is the author of the best-selling book "Cornerstones of Leadership - On and Off The Fireground".

SFFMA Executive Director Dan Kramer said having a heavy hitter like Leeb at the conference is a home run for the association.

"We are thrilled about bringing Frank Leeb to our conference and know his session is going to be one of the best of the weekend," Kramer said. "More importantly, our attendees will benefit from the wealth of his experience - including his time as a volunteer firefighter."

Leeb understands the challenges of leadership. His career has been defined by an unwavering commitment to fostering growth through training and development. In addition to his career with FDNY, Leeb has been a volunteer with the East Farmingdale Fire Department on Long Island since 1983.

The 2024 SFFMA conference keynote speaker is **sponsored by BELFOR USA**, which provides disaster restoration services for both commercial and residential clients.

Leeb said, "I am happy to be part of a training conference that will deliver so many relevant fire service topics. Training is the heart and soul of every organization, regardless of your position as a career or volunteer firefighter."

Executive Board President Donny Boggs said he is impressed by the overall lineup of presenters this year, who are discussing timely, relevant topics of critical importance to firefighters across the state.

"Our goal with this year's conference is to offer our attendees, whether they are from paid or volunteer fire departments, a range of topics and speakers who can help all of us improve the fire service in Texas," Boggs said. "Having someone of Frank Leeb's caliber for our general session is just the cherry on top."

Another well-known presenter is Chief Michael Stanley with the Oshkosh, WI, Fire Department.

"Chief Stanley is an excellent addition to our speaker list," said Mark Wobus, SFFMA Executive Board 2nd Vice President and chair of the Speaker Selection Committee. "The chief recently presented at the TEEX Leadership Symposium in San Marcos and we were so impressed, we asked him to come back to Texas for our event."

The conference takes place at the San Marcos Convention Center. A sold-out vendor show with plenty of reasons to visit the exhibit hall is just one of the many event features.

According to SFFMA Events Coordinator Heather Lundy, this year is all about aiming for the fences.

“This year we’re offering live training including forcible entry, victim window rescue and hose operations,” she said. “We will have opportunities for about 100 firefighters to get hands-on training experience – all of which is covered in the conference fee.”

As much of the hands-on training will take place in the parking lot early Saturday morning, it’s also an excellent opportunity for the public to come watch the firefighters.

Other events where SFFMA welcomes the public are the Pumper Races (a team sport) and the Firefighter Gauntlet (individual effort), both of which are popular with conference goers.

“These are excellent opportunities to showcase the kinds of skills needed to be a firefighter,” Lundy said. “The driving contest happens Saturday morning. The races and gauntlet take place Saturday afternoon. The full conference schedule is on our website, and will be shared on our social media pages.”

Lundy said the fun doesn’t stop there.

“We are hosting several meals with our vendors and offering tons of door prizes,” she said. “But one of our most fun activities is a modeling show with real firefighters who will show off items from our vendors while walking the catwalk.”

The public is welcome in the exhibitor shows on Friday and Saturday. The modeling show takes place Friday just after the ribbon cutting, which is at noon.

Boggs said to expect fun, laughter and a good time for all ages throughout the conference weekend but stressed the importance of attending training sessions.

“Our conference is all about helping to train firefighters and provide the skills and experience needed to serve their communities,” he said. “We’re proud to offer a wide variety of training sessions and believe each one will be beneficial to our attendees.”

Find the full conference schedule, registration and hotel information, exhibitor list, event sponsors, contest rules and more on the [SFFMA website](#).

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*About SFFMA: The State Firefighters’ and Fire Marshals’ Association of Texas proudly serves more than 16,000 members, from individual firefighters and departments to industrial facilities. Founded in 1876, it is the oldest and largest fire service association in Texas. The organization also promotes volunteerism and aids in the recruitment and retention of members. The Annual Training Conference and Convention provides training for hundreds of firefighters each year. This year’s Fire Chief level sponsor is VFIS of Texas. Learn more at [www.sffmatx.org](http://www.sffmatx.org).*