

SOUTHEASTERN CONNECTICUT COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

5 Connecticut Avenue, Norwich, Connecticut 06360

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Municipal COVID-19 Survey #8:

Methods for, and Success with, Encouraging Fire Department Volunteerism

Questions:

- 1) Has the municipality had difficulty or success with recruiting volunteer fire fighters?
- 2) What methods has the municipality used to encourage volunteerism among fire fighters?
- 3) Other information.

Responses are current as of March 30, 2021. Some information may be out-of-date.

Member Municipalities:

Bozrah * Colchester * East Lyme * Franklin * Griswold * Borough of Jewett City * City of Groton * Town of Groton * Lebanon * Ledyard * Lisbon * Montville * New London * North Stonington * Norwich * Preston * Salem * Sprague * Stonington * Stonington Borough * Waterford * Windham

*If language assistance is needed, please contact SCCOG at 860-889-2324, office@seccog.org
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TOWN OF BOZRAH

- 3) Bozrah supplements volunteer staff with paid staff during the week.

TOWN OF FRANKLIN

- 1) Notes that it is difficult retaining volunteer fire fighters.
- 2) Franklin offers a property tax abatement to volunteer fire fighters.
- 3) Franklin has discussed hiring part-time paid staff for day shifts.

TOWN OF GRISWOLD

- 1) Notes that it is difficult retaining volunteer fire fighters.
- 2) Griswold has a volunteer retention program for the tow volunteer fire departments, funded \$50,000 per department.
- 3) The First Selectman offered to share the Town's funding template upon request.

CITY OF GROTON

- 3) The City of Groton has a volunteer-only fire department.

TOWN OF LEDYARD

- 1) Ledyard notes that volunteerism is declining only slightly.
- 2) Ledyard offers volunteer stipends: \$6,000 per two fire chiefs and \$28,500 per two fire departments, distributed on a performance (number of calls) basis.
- 3) Ledyard has 39 active volunteers, plus two volunteer chiefs, across two departments. Ledyard also has five career fire fighters that work day shifts on weekdays. Ledyard offers training opportunities to all volunteers on a regular basis, and that helps keep volunteers engaged.

TOWN OF MONTVILLE

- 2) Montville offers cash stipends for volunteers because many younger volunteers do not have use for a property tax abatement. The cash stipend is paid quarterly, rather than annually, to encourage consistent volunteerism.
- 3) The Mayor shard a copy of the Town's relief fund ordinance.

CITY OF NORWICH

- 2) Norwich offers a property tax abatement and a small pension fund for volunteers with at least 25 years of continuous service. To qualify, volunteers must respond to 20% of all call each year.

BOROUGH OF STONINGTON

- 1) Struggles to recruit and retain new members.
- 2) The Borough of Stonington offers a small pension fund. Depending upon length of service, recipients may receive up to \$300 per month after the age of 65.

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