

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Arizona Fire School</b> <b>Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management</b> <b>Program Summary</b></p>
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**Program Overview**

The Arizona Fire School was created in 1973 to improve the safety and effectiveness of Arizona firefighters by educating and training firefighters. The Fire School operates out of the Office of the State Fire Marshal and is actively managed by the Arizona State Fire Training Committee. In 2016, the Office of the State Fire Marshal and the State Fire School were transferred from the Department of Fire, Building and Life Safety to the Department of Forestry and Fire Management (Laws 2016, Chapter 128).

Typically held yearly in early September, the Arizona Fire School lasts for 5 days. The majority of courses are taught at the Mesa Convention Center, except for courses conducted at an off-site location for safety or space reasons. All participants must be either an employee or representative of the sponsoring department or active emergency service personnel.

Fire School Courses

There are currently 34 different courses offered at the Arizona Fire School, covering material related to Skills Training, Fire Prevention & Investigation, and Fire Leadership.

Most course workshops are 24 hours long and taught over the Fire School's 5-day period. Participation is limited to a single workshop course. All courses cost \$135 for participants, but some courses require additional lab, book or certification fees.

During the week of the Fire School, the Arizona State Fire Training Committee also conducts special presentations for events and honors such as the Firefighter Memorial Service, Firefighter of the Year, and tours of the Arizona Fire Museum.

The Arizona State Fire Training Committee

The Arizona State Fire Training Committee, a volunteer, non-profit organization, assists the State Fire Marshal in developing and implementing statewide fire service training, including the annual Arizona State Fire School. The committee serves as an advisory board that contributes to the planning and operation of fire training programs throughout the state. The committee is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the Fire School has qualified instructors, employs the most current techniques and practices, and meets the standards of the National Fire Protection Association and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration Regulations (A.R.S. § 41-2169.01).

The committee is currently composed of over 40 members, all of whom are required to obtain a recommendation and sponsorship of the agency which they represent. Members are categorized into one of 3 groups according to the agency they represent:

- *State Fire Department Operations* committee members represent municipal operations, fire districts and volunteer firefighting operations.
- *Government Operations* committee members promote the interest of the Federal government, the Federal and State military, the State Land Department, fire investigators, and the State Fire Marshal's Office.
- *Agency Operations* committee members are sponsored by various insurance industries, private fire protection organizations, insurance service offices, fire equipment vendors, and labor industries.

The Executive Board of the Arizona State Fire Training Committee also oversees the day-to-day management of the Arizona Center for Fire Service Excellence (AzCRSE). The AzCRSE was established in 2010 as a part of the Commission on Privatization and Efficiency (CORE) recommendation to have local fire departments conduct training. AzCRSE provides year-round opportunities for fire service training and certification, allowing firefighters to continue to receive training and certifications outside of the Fire School.

**Program Funding**

The Fire School Training Program was originally sponsored by the State Fire Marshal's Building and Fire Safety Fund. The Fire School received \$80,000 annually from the Building and Fire Safety Fund until funding was eliminated in FY 2009. The following year the Arizona Fire Service Institute collaborated with the Arizona Fire Chiefs Association to arrange for the Fire School to be supported through AzCRSE. AzCRSE currently uses tuition and certification fees from the Fire School along with volunteer efforts and the program's various sponsors for support and funding.

In 1986, the Arizona State Fire Training Committee established a scholarship fund to assist departments with funding to promote attendance at the Annual Arizona State Fire School. The support from sponsors has enabled the Arizona State Fire Training Committee to provide various scholarships and stipends to participants enrolled in the Fire School.

A total of \$175,300 General Fund was appropriated to the Fire School for FY 2021. Of that amount, \$100,000 is intended to help subsidize the tuition of firefighters from rural volunteer fire departments. The remaining \$75,300 will be used for the Arizona State Fire Training Committee and other firefighter training activities.

**Cancelation of 2020 Fire School**

In May 2020, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Executive Board of the Arizona State Fire Training Committee announced that the Arizona Fire School will not be held in September 2020. The committee plans to continue the Fire School in 2021. It is not clear whether the monies for tuition subsidies will be used in FY 2021.