



BERRIEN COUNTY
FIRE CHIEF'S ASSOCIATION
BERRIEN COUNTY, MICHIGAN



Call to Order: 0830-0942

Date: April 15, 2026

Old minutes: Old minutes emailed out. Motion to accept old minutes by: Chief D. Flick. Seconded by: Chief Dwan. Motion passed. None opposed.

Agenda Changes: None

Presentation: In communications committee report

Treasurer's Report: March 2026: Beginning balance: \$5811.14. Deposit: Sale of accountability app: \$3000.00. Ending Balance: \$8811.14. Motion to accept treasurers report by: M. Phelps. Seconded by: E. Steinke. Motion passed. None opposed.

Bills: None.

Communications:

General Communications:

RTF: Had meeting with PD/EMS. Things are moving forward. Working on guidelines and equipment needs.

Boxcard Updates: REMINDER: Boxcard updates due by July 31, 2026. Please start working on any updates you may have now. F. DeLaTorre advised Chief Connel has asked him to update the boxcard book for Niles Fire. If you have Niles Fire on your boxcards please email a copy to Frank. Aswell Frank has sent out the Niles Fire boxcards for your records.

New Chief: None.

Visitor: Med Flight has a new Outreach Representative. Rob Rose. He is the new contact for Med Flight. If need/interested in LZ class/training. Contact him: 574-876-7372: rrose@beaconhealthsystem.org

EMS: (Great Lakes Drone: Medic-1: S.M.C.A.S.: Med Control:) None

Dispatch/911: Dispatcher appreciation week. Thank you for the food. Dispatch is decorated as jungle for the theme welcome to the jungle. LT DeLaTorre asked if the talkgroups in the INCMD zone of out 800 radios are monitored in dispatch and can they be used for training. Caitlin stated she did not believe they are monitored. Dave did not believe there would be an issue to use them in training.

Communications Committee: Presentation on the change of unit designators. Our current county numbering system for fire apparatus is old and outdated, and has many overlaps with PD. Suggested to follow the NIMS/NFPA apparatus typing, use plain English, and use station numbers. Example. A brush truck, 4160, from North Berrien under the new system would be: Brush-41. Presentation attached. Please feel free to contact a member of the communications committee if you have questions. Communications committee members are willing to answer questions and help you with the new apparatus typing. We are **NOT** requiring any agency to change the numbers on the side of your apparatus. Just know your apparatus will now be identified in CAD as Apparatus type-Station(venue) Number. Department can start making the change to new apparatus typing BUT must notify dispatch with the changes before they start using them, so Dispatch can update in CAD. Plan is to have the new apparatus typing change go live August 01, 2026.



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CAD: CAD should be going live by end of summer. Discussion on if CAD committee is still needed. At this time CAD is now in hands of county IT and felt committee is no longer needed. CAD committee is closed.

Guideline: None

HAZMAT: Chief Weich stated waiting on lawyer consult.

BCFA: Next meeting June 02, 2026 at New Buffalo Twp. Car show is moving forward. 2-t-shirts for each fire truck that attends the car show. New time for car show: 0900-1500. Extended by one hour. Continue to work on sponsors.

Training: May 03, 2026: Arches to Ashes. Restaurant Fires. July 01, 2026: EV fires. Both are certificate classes. Weesaw training tower is almost complete. When completed it will be open for all agencies to use. Fees for use still to be determined.

Emergency Management: Keep an eye on rivers, streams, and waterways.

Sheriff: Nothing

MABAS: Review of agency contacts and agreements taking place.

Other Comments: None

Old Business:

ByLaws: Bylaws with new wording for filling vacancies was sent out last month. Some did not receive. Chief Myers to resent. Vote at May 2026 meeting.

New Business:

Accountability Tags: Reminder to Chiefs, firefighters need to have accountability tags with their name and department. At a recent training in Niles some firefighters did not have personal accountability tags. This is in our Mutual Aid agreement.

Fire Support Role: Chief Myeas stated he is working on creating a Fire support Role with in his department. Chief Myers stated he has been in touch with MIOSHA and the state and it is allowed in NFPA 1010 fire support role. Do not call them firefighters or they will be subject to the firefighter rules and regulations. More to come.

Question on a previous discussion on virtual option. Discussion lead to keep it in person.

Next Meeting: May 20, 2026, Berrien County Conference Center, 0830.

Adjourn: Motion to adjourn by: B. Dwan. Seconded by: J. Starbuck. None opposed. Meeting adjourn: 0942

New World CrewForce™
Extending the Power of Mobile and CAD



BC Fire Dept Radio/CAD Unit Designators

When first responders, command staff, and firefighters have real-time and mission-critical data available in the palm of their hands, agencies and communities benefit from improved safety.



April 15th, 2026
Fire Chiefs Communication Committee

Current Radio Unit Designator Scheme

Agency Codes

2 Baroda Twp	3 Benton Twp	5 Bertrand Twp	6 Buchanan Twp	7 Chikaming Twp
9 Galien Twp	11 Lake Twp	13 New Buffalo Twp	14 Niles Twp	17 Royalton Twp
18 St Joseph Twp	19 Sodus Twp	20 Three Oaks Twp	21 Watervliet Twp	22 Weesaw Twp
30 Eau Claire- Berrien/ Pipestone	39 Berrien Springs- Oronoko	40 Bridgman City	41 North Berrien	42 Lincoln Twp
45 Great Lakes Rescue	46 Buchanan City	47 New Buffalo City	66 Benton Harbor City	67 Niles City
		68 St Joseph City		

Red: Direct Numbering Conflict
Yellow: FD/PD use different venue #s
Blue: No Numbering Conflict

Challenges

1. PD & FD conflicting radio designators
 - Confusion when monitoring multiple talkgroups
 - Safety concern!!
2. Confusion- Must know TWO different codes:
Agency & Unit Type
3. Apparatus match multiple type codes
 - Current type codes fail to accurately represent modern apparatus
 - Majority of “reserved” codes in each range are unused or are not applicable
4. Not scalable
 - Adding/removing stations
 - Agency merging/splitting

Proposed Radio Unit Designator Scheme

Unit Description – PLAIN LANGUAGE

Station

Station	Engine	2	3 / 3-2	5 / 5-2	6	7
Chief	Pumper-Tanker	Baroda Twp	Benton Twp	Bertrand Twp	Buchanan Twp	Chikaming Twp
Fire Marshal	Tanker	9	11	13 / 13-2	14 / 14-2	17
Battalion	Squad	Galien Twp	Lake Twp	New Buffalo Twp	Niles Twp	Royalton Twp
Captain	Rescue	18-1/ 18-2	19	20	21	22
Lieutenant	Ladder	St Joseph Twp	Sodus Twp	Three Oaks Twp	Watervliet Twp	Weesaw Twp
Firefighter	Tower	30 / 16	39	40	41 / 10	42
	Brush	Eau Claire- Berrien/ Pipestone	Berrien Springs- Oronoko	Bridgman City	North Berrien	Lincoln Twp
	UTV	45	46	47	66	67
	Support	Great Lakes Rescue	Buchanan City	New Buffalo City	Benton Harbor City	Niles City
	Utility					
	Foam			68		
	Boat			St Joseph City		
	MFR					

**Firefighter IDs can continue to be used with in your department*

Proposed Radio Unit Designator Scheme

Currently

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Proposed

- Clear unit description using plain language without duplication
- Removes confusion between disciplines and departments
- Clear unit representation following NIMS/ICS/NFPA type naming
- Fully scalable- allows for growth or change
- Allows for dispatch by apparatus type

You do **NOT** you have to change numbers on
your apparatus.....

We suggest you put a note on your
dashboard/radio to remind staff of the
updated unit designation.



Keep CAD informed of your status
directly from the field

The new unit designation:
APPARATUS TYPE-STATION NUMBER

Purpose

This document provides references and justifications for a new standardized emergency apparatus designator system proposed to Berrien County Public Safety 911 as part of the fire services regionalization initiative in the SW portion of the County. The proposed designators are grounded in national best practices, including relevant NFPA standards and FEMA/NIMS resource typing guidance.

Overview of Radio Designator System

Each fire apparatus across the County will be assigned a unique identifier composed of an apparatus type (abbreviations provided for CAD quick entry; predominant units in Berrien County use a single letter abbreviation) followed by a unique numeric identifier which ideally represents the venue of the apparatus' primary response area. This approach enhances clarity, reduces redundancy, and ensures compatibility with mutual aid and countywide incident management operations.

This naming convention is consistent with:

- **NFPA 1225 (2022 Edition):** Standard for Emergency Services Communications Systems, which mandates clear, standardized, unambiguous, and interoperable communication practices.
- **NFPA 1561:** Standard on Emergency Services Incident Management System and Command Safety, emphasizing clear unit identification.
- **FEMA NIMS Resource Typing Definitions:** FEMA 508/509 guidelines for consistent unit classification and dispatching during all-hazards incidents.

Referenced Standards and Documentation

- **NFPA 1225 (2022)** – Standard for Emergency Services Communications Systems
- **NFPA 1561** – Standard on Emergency Services Incident Management System and Command Safety
- **NFPA 1901** – Standard for Automotive Fire Apparatus
- **NFPA 1906** – Standard for Wildland Fire Apparatus
- **NFPA 1917** – Standard for Automotive Ambulances
- **NFPA 1006** – Standard for Technical Rescue Personnel Professional Qualifications
- **NFPA 450** – Guide for Emergency Medical Services and Systems
- **NFPA 11** – Standard for Low-, Medium-, and High-Expansion Foam
- **FEMA NIMS Resource Typing Definitions** – Including FEMA 508 & 509 Series
- **FEMA Resource Typing Library Tool (RTLTL)** – Web-based reference for resource typing

Apparatus Typing Justifications

Below is a summary of each apparatus type used in the county designator plan, with references to supporting NFPA and FEMA standards.

ENGINE (E)

- **Definition:** 750+ gpm pump, 300+ gallon tank, 3+ seats, NFPA/ISO compliant equipment
- **FEMA Match:** Engine Types 1–5
- **NFPA Reference:** NFPA 1901
- **Justification:** Meets structural fire suppression capabilities outlined in FEMA engine typing and NFPA apparatus standards.

TANKER/TENDER (T)

- **Definition:** 1500+ gallons, portable tank, 2 seats
- **FEMA Match:** Water Tender Types 1–3
- **NFPA Reference:** NFPA 1901
- **Justification:** Supports mobile water supply per FEMA resource typing and NFPA water tender design.

PUMPER/TANKER (PT)

- **Definition:** 750+ gpm pump, 1500+ gallon tank, 3+ seats, portable tank, NFPA/ISO compliant equipment
- **FEMA Match:** Engine (Types 3–6) / Water Tender (Types 2–3)
- **NFPA Reference:** NFPA 1901
- **Justification:** Combines fire attack and water supply functions consistent with NFPA apparatus standards and FEMA capability-based resource typing.

SQUAD (S)

- **Definition:** Engine with rescue tools (Hydraulic rescue tools [spreader, cutter, ram], saws, lighting, cribbing, etc.)
- **FEMA Match:** Multi-function Engine or Light Rescue Unit
- **NFPA Reference:** NFPA 1901, 1006
- **Justification:** Provides suppression and light rescue functions as outlined in FEMA/NFPA guidance.

RESCUE (R)

- **Definition:** Carries rescue equipment but lacks pump
- **FEMA Match:** Heavy or Technical Rescue Unit
- **NFPA Reference:** NFPA 1901, 1006
- **Justification:** Serves technical rescue functions consistent with FEMA and NFPA vehicle categories.

LADDER (L)

- **Definition:** 75'+ aerial climbing device, saws, tools
- **FEMA Match:** Aerial Apparatus Type 1 or 2
- **NFPA Reference:** NFPA 1901
- **Justification:** Meets aerial ladder requirements per FEMA and NFPA design standards.

TOWER (TW)

- **Definition:** 75'+ aerial platform with bucket
- **FEMA Match:** Platform Truck (Aerial with Bucket)
- **NFPA Reference:** NFPA 1901
- **Justification:** Complies with FEMA typing for tower ladders and NFPA aerial device specs.

BRUSH (B)

- **Definition:** 4x4 wildland suppression unit
- **FEMA Match:** Wildland Engine Types 3–7
- **NFPA Reference:** NFPA 1906
- **Justification:** Complies with wildland fire suppression unit typing in FEMA and NFPA standards.

UTV (UTV)

- **Definition:** Utility task vehicle for wildland or EMS support
- **FEMA Match:** Specialized Medical or Wildland Transport Unit
- **NFPA Reference:** NFPA 1906 (indirect), general utility support
- **Justification:** Enhances operational access in remote or austere environments; consistent with FEMA special resource classification.

SUPPORT (SP)

- **Definition:** Rehab or command support vehicle
- **FEMA Match:** Mobile Command, Logistics, or Rehab Unit
- **NFPA Reference:** NFPA 1225, 1561
- **Justification:** Enables on-scene command and operational support consistent with national standards.

UTILITY (U)

- **Definition:** General purpose transport
- **FEMA Match:** Support/Transport Vehicle
- **NFPA Reference:** NFPA 1901
- **Justification:** Aids logistical movement and non-emergent support functions.

FOAM (F)

- **Definition:** Trailer or vehicle for foam and delivery appliances
- **FEMA Match:** Foam Task Force or Specialized Apparatus
- **NFPA Reference:** NFPA 11, 1901
- **Justification:** Provides foam suppression capability per NFPA 11 and FEMA equipment guidelines.

BOAT (BT)

- **Definition:** Marine unit used for fire suppression, rescue, or EMS on navigable water
- **FEMA Match:** Maritime Vessel – Fire/Rescue (Type 1–3 depending on size/equipment)
- **NFPA Reference:** NFPA 1925
- **Justification:** Design and deployment of marine response units meet FEMA maritime resource typing and NFPA 1925 standards for marine fire-fighting vessels.

MFR (MFR)

- **Definition:** Medically licensed (at any level) non-transport EMS first responder vehicle
- **FEMA Match:** EMS Response Unit (Non-Transport, ALS/BLS based on staffing)
- **NFPA Reference:** NFPA 1917, 450
- **Justification:** Aligns with NIMS EMS resource typing for non-transport response units and supports patient care delivery consistent with NFPA guidance for EMS systems.

Conclusion

The countywide adoption of a standardized apparatus typed designator system is both operationally sound and nationally supported. By aligning designators with FEMA and NFPA definitions, the system ensures clarity, interoperability, and compliance with best practices for regional fire service integration and mutual aid response.

Apparatus Typing Quick Reference

E – ENGINE

T – TANKER

S – SQUAD

R – RESCUE

L – LADDER

TW – TOWER

B – BRUSH

UTV – UTV

SP – SUPPORT

U – UTILITY

F – FOAM

BT – BOAT

MFR – MFR

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MEDFLIGHT

✦ BEACON HEALTH SYSTEM

beaconhealthsystem.org



Berrien County Firefighters Association & Sheriff's Department



BENEFIT CAR SHOW

Saturday June 27th, 2026 - 9 AM to 3 PM

Maiden Lane Park Gates open at 7:00 AM

1051 Maiden Lane, Saint Joseph, Michigan 49085 (The Soccer Fields)

FREE ADMISSION TO THE PUBLIC

Cacklefest

NITRO CARS FIREUP

12:00 Noon

Bounce Fire Truck

Featuring Corvettes this year

Door Prizes throughout the day

Donations Appreciated



CAR SHOW ENTRY FEE: \$10 PER VEHICLE (at the gate)

Free SWAP MEET* SPACES 20' x 20' - SILENT AUCTION

FOOD VENDORS - MUSIC by Live DJ Hunter Wright

Pancake Breakfast (Starts at 7:30 am, hosted by the St Joseph Masonic Lodge #437)

FIRE TRUCKS & POLICE CARS - Event T-Shirts available

Firefighters & Sheriff AWARDS

Opening Ceremony at 9:30 AM

CONTACT INFORMATION

Show Chairman: Steve Wright (269) 876-7454 wrightsarmynavy@gmail.com

Vehicles: John McLellan (269) 580-2770 jmclellan75@comcast.net

Or Chuck Carpenter (269) 861-2259 ccar944@yahoo.com

Swap Meet: Bob Basselman (269) 861-6078 robert49085@gmail.com

Fire & Police: Gerry Kabelman, President BCFA (269) 208-9352 gerrykabelman@mail.com

Or Bruce Cole (269) 208-0686 colemotorcar@ameritech.net

A special thank you to
St. Joseph Charter Township
for use of the Maiden Lane Park.

* = Donations Appreciated from ALL



All proceeds to be equally divided between the Sheriff's department
and the Firefighters Association both have 501C3 status

Make Checks Payable To: Berrien County Firefighters Association

PO Box 214, 4411 E. Snow Road Berrien Springs, Michigan 49103

BCFA Website:

mi-BCFA.org

No Pets Please.
(Service dogs welcome)

CAR SHOW INFO

mi-BCFA.org/CarShow.htm



Berrien County Firefighters Association and Sheriff's Department



2026 Benefit Car Show

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More 2026 Donors will appear here soon!

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 thrivent Saint Joseph, Michigan	 CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH & SCHOOL Stevensville, Michigan	 Whiteford <i>Wealth Management, Inc.</i> South Haven, Michigan	 Signature Dealer Group Benton Harbor, Michigan	 STIFEL Saint Joseph, Michigan	 BOELCKE <small>HEATING - AIR CONDITIONING - PLUMBING</small> Stevensville, Michigan
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