"Got Your Back Talk"

MABAS Illinois

Volume 25.1

From the President:

by Chief Don Davids

Greetings to all MABAS Members,

It finally seems like we got through the tornado season for the first part of the summer, setting a record for the number of tornados is probably not a record anyone really wanted. Hopefully the remainder of the year is a little calmer. As we begin to approach colder weather, please check that any MABAS issued equipment is ready for the winter.

MABAS held a deployment and skills evaluation for six state supported Hazmat teams at Cherry Valley FPD on October 6 and 7, the deployment and skills evaluation went very well, and teams performed six different skills very successfully.

If you are a recipient of an OSFM-MABAS issued 4 gas monitor, you should be calibrating the monitor at least once every six months. Please contact the nearest supported Hazmat team to calibrate your monitor. MABAS will have calibration available at any of our yearly meetings also. As a last resort, you may invite your Operations Branch Chief to a scheduled division meeting and they can arrange calibration. Branch Chiefs should not be calibrating monitors at individual agencies unless they were there for other reasons.

The most recent MABAS executive board meeting was held on October 14, 2026, in conjunction with the Illinois Fire Chiefs conference and four remote sites. We had good attendance at all sites and the technology worked very well. Thank you to everyone that participated. Our next executive board meeting is in Bloomington on February 23, 2027, during the MABAS Command Training Summit. Information about the Training Summit should be out in the near future, so please consider attending.

Please stay safe and keep up the good work of protecting your communities.

Respectfully,

Don Davids

President, MABAS-IL

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Save The Date:
MABAS Training Summit
February 21-26, 2027

10 Tips to Get Your House Ready for Winter

https://www.consumerreports.org/home-garden/home-maintenance-repairs/tips-to-get-your-house-ready-for-winter-63886384/

Projects like protecting pipes, cleaning gutters, and trimming trees now can save money and prevent hassles when the temperature drops. Here's your winter-prep hit list.

Single-digit temperatures and freezing water can wreak havoc on your house and yard. The first thing to know is that water damage—particularly damage linked to frozen and burst pipes—accounts for the lion's share of homeowners insurance claims.

If you're worried about damage from freezing temperatures during the winter months, wrap your pipes and keep the heat at 65° F or above. It's also essential to know the location of your home's water shutoff valve so that you can quickly shut it off in an emergency, minimizing damage.

Burst pipes aren't the only concern, either. I can tell you, firsthand, that water damage is no fun. While I've never had a pipe burst, several years ago an ice dam formed on my roof, forcing water up under my roofing shingles and into my house. Standing in my kitchen, watching water cascade in from above, I pondered how many times I'd advised others to clear their gutters annually for this very reason. Neglecting my own gutters meant that as the snow melted from my roof, it had nowhere to drain. Nowhere, that is, except for my kitchen.

Below, I highlight the 10 key tips to follow to prep your house for winter, all of which will help you stave off the worst of what the season can bring.

5. Clean and Inspect Gutters

"Leaves, water, and debris can clog the gutters, which are meant to protect our home's foundation and siding," says Kyshawn Lane, who provides home improvement advice through his "Weekly Home Check" accounts on TikTok and Instagram. Keeping gutters clear, and making sure they aren't coming loose from your roof, can help ensure that winter rain and melting snow runs off your roof and through downspouts. "It's best to address this at least twice a year," Lane says.

You can hire a local professional to check and clean your gutters—a wise choice since falls from an extension ladder can cause serious injuries. If you do the job yourself, use a ladder that extends 3 to 5 feet above your roof, and make sure it is



securely planted on the ground.

6. Repair Patios and Pavers

A loose patio or paving stone will only get worse over the winter as the natural freeze and thaw cycle of the soil lifts it farther out of place in a process called "frost heave." Have a mason or handyperson reset the loose stones in the autumn.

7. Look for Ailing Tree Limbs

A dead branch covered in ice or snow can easily snap, endangering people below and potentially causing thousands of dollars' worth of damage. Falling limbs are also a major cause of power outages.

"If you can reach the limb safely, check for flexibility and healthy-looking wood by scraping back the bark, " says Matt Schimmenti, who oversees CR's chainsaw testing. "If you cannot reach the limb safely to check, it's best to call a professional who can inspect and provide an estimate for safely removing the limbs." Contact a properly insured and reputable tree service, landscape contractor, or arborist.

8. Secure Outdoor Water Sources

Drain and store any garden hoses or sprinklers before the first frost to eliminate the chance that they'll freeze and burst. For hose bibs, turn off the water supply valve inside your house or basement that feeds the line, then open the outdoor spigot. Any water trapped inside will drain out. (If you don't open the spigot, trapped water can freeze and cause a burst pipe inside.)

9. Mark Garden Beds, Paths, and Driveways

After a heavy snowfall, it can be tough to see where driveways, flower beds, or walkways end and your lawn begins. That makes it hard to clear snow—and more likely you'll end up damaging something, especially if you or a contractor will be using a snowplow. Line the edges of those areas with fiberglass snow poles or driveway markers. (You can also check out our recent snowblower test results.)

10. Prep for Wildfire Season

It may seem contradictory to think about wildfires during the winter season, but it's never too early to start safeguarding against disaster—especially since we've seen an uptick in fires over the last two years. We advise planning more than one escape route at home, keeping your smoke detectors up to date, and installing escape ladders, among other tips.

Continued on page 4



A Message from MABAS-Illinois

By: Chief Officer Bernie Lyons

On behalf of the MABAS staff, I would like to extend our deepest condolences to the family, friends, and colleagues of Rutland-Dundee Firefighter Greg Witt. Firefighter Witt tragically passed away following a medical emergency that occurred during a scheduled training exercise on Wednesday, October 21st.

As heartbreaking as this loss has been, it was equally heartwarming to witness the tremendous outpouring of support from across the Illinois fire service during the October 30th funeral services. The representatives from fire service organizations throughout the state, the area filled with fire apparatus, and the seemingly endless lines of firefighters paying their respects were a fitting tribute to a man who served his country as a United States Marine and his community through the Rutland-Dundee Fire Protection District with dignity, honor, and distinction. His service and sacrifice will not be forgotten.

After many months of legal challenges and uncertainty, our partners at the Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA) have successfully secured this year's Homeland Security grant. While this is certainly welcome news, the reality is that both Illinois and Cook County received significantly less funding than in previous years. As a result, MABAS and other subawardees will also experience reduced funding.

Despite these delays and funding reductions, MABAS has remained committed to its mission. Training programs and exercises have continued as planned, and we have worked diligently to prioritize essential equipment purchases to ensure our teams remain prepared and capable of responding when called upon.

Looking ahead, with additional delays and reductions in federal grant funding anticipated, MABAS has made adjustments to the reimbursement procedures for certain specialized team training. Effective January 1, 2027, MABAS will no longer reimburse Operations-level courses. Additionally, reimbursement will be limited to two individuals per department, per class.

These changes were not made lightly. Given the limited funding available for training reimbursements, we felt it was necessary to manage costs proactively rather than risk having departments commit personnel to training, only to discover that reimbursement funds were no longer available. Our goal is to ensure that available resources are distributed responsibly and that departments can plan accordingly.

I am confident that, with these adjustments in place, MABAS will be able to maintain funding for eligible training reimbursements throughout the remainder of the current grant cycle, which concludes in June. If you have questions regarding these changes, please contact your local Branch Chief or feel free to reach out to me directly.

Lastly, as many of you know, last spring MABAS pursued several legislative initiatives aimed at securing a stable and sustainable funding source for our organization. Although those efforts were not initially successful, they provided an important opportunity to establish relationships with legislators and lay the groundwork for future discussions.

Those efforts are beginning to show promise. Serious discussions are currently underway regarding the possibility of including MABAS in a 911 fee structure. While many details remain to be negotiated and finalized, this represents a potentially significant opportunity to establish the long-term, sustainable funding that MABAS needs to continue serving the Illinois fire service.

As discussions progress and potential legislation takes shape, we will need the collective support and involvement of our membership. A coordinated effort to contact local legislators, encourage co-sponsorship, and advocate for the proposed legislation will be essential to its success.

Opportunities like this do not come along often. This is an excellent opportunity to finally secure the reliable and sustainable funding MABAS needs to fulfill its mission well into the future.

Stay tuned. More information will be forthcoming as these discussions continue.

Continued from page 2

Key Questions About Winter Prep

What Temperature Should Your House Thermostat Be Set to in the Winter?
During the winter months, we recommend a setting of 68°F as a sweet spot during waking hours. If you have a programmable thermostat, you can set the temperature to drop down to 62°F overnight to save a bit on heating bills. And when you travel, you can drop the temperature all the way down to 55°F—just don't go any lower or you'll risk bursting a pipe.

Should You Let Fresh Air in Your House in Winter?
We found that opening your windows for as little as 5 minutes a day in the winter could improve the air quality of your home by letting out stale air and decreasing the concentration of indoor air pollutants. Cooler air also has a soothing effect on our nasal lining. That said, it's not a necessity. If you can't stomach the thought of cracking a window during winter, an air purifier can improve air quality without letting cold air in.

How Can You Warm Up Your House in the Winter?
If you've already prepared your home for winter and are looking for easy new ways to warm up, consider adding a space heater or a fireplace—even an electric fireplace insert can help.



What Are the Best Generators for Backup Power in the Winter?
A portable generator is a great way to run lights and, refrigerators, lifesaving medical equipment, and electronic devices. It won't provide as much power as a home standby generator, but a home standby generator can cost twice as much (excluding installation, which can increase the price to nearly four times that of a portable generator). We've compiled a list of the best portable generators.

What Are the Best Flashlights for a Winter Power Outage?
If the lights are out, flashlights are a must-have safety item for hooking up a generator, accessing gear, or even evacuating. We've tried the best flashlights, which included options from Energizer and Husky.

https://www.consumerreports.org/home-garden/home-maintenance-repairs/tips-to-get-your-house-ready-for-winter-a1063886384/



Survivor Support Group (Maywood)
November 17, 2026

Winter Gathering (Chicago)
December 5, 2026

Survivor Support Group (Maywood)
December 15, 2026

Volunteer Award Nomination Deadline
December 31, 2026

Camp Encourage Family Camp (Gurnee)
April 23-25, 2027

36th Annual Summer Camp (Ingleside, IL)
June 13-19, 2027

CAMP I AM ME
ILLINOIS FIRE SAFETY ALLIANCE

MABAS-IL Change-of-Quarters Knox-Box® System



#3202

Fire departments anticipating being tied up for a length of time on a multiple alarm fire or other large or complicated incident often (and should) include Change-of Quarter (COQ) companies on their MABAS Box Alarm Cards in order to have Mutual Aid departments move into their station(s) to provide response protection for other possible incidents in their village, municipality or district. In "the old days" the hosting department could simply leave their station unlocked so incoming companies could walk right in. But these days, fire stations are advised not to leave their stations open.


#3275

In early 2002 MABAS-IL, through the Knox Company, instituted a unique COQ Knox-Box® system to facilitate ease of entry by incoming COQ companies to an otherwise empty station. This a voluntary participation program available to all MABAS-member fire departments in Illinois.

Here's how it works: Dealing with the MABAS-IL Knox-Box Program Coordinator, a member fire station purchases a small key safe for mounting on the exterior of their station. Once the box is securely mounted, they lock their station key/card/fob/entry code inside the key safe. Incoming COQ companies participating in the program then use their MABAS-IL key to open the key safe to get the key, etc. to then access the station. The simplicity of the program is that participating fire departments have to carry just one statewide COQ program key on their outgoing COQ vehicles to gain access to any and all participating fire stations.

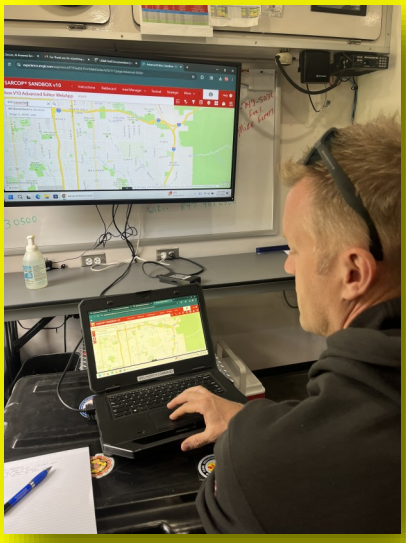

#3264

Want to know more about the program? Contact Chief (ret.) Harry Tallacksen via email at tallacksen@mabas-il.org or via phone at 815-262-4374.

MABAS Division 1 State Deployment Drill

By: Lt. Andy Laird

On Wednesday May 13th 2026, the MABAS Division 1 Water Rescue State Deployment Team conducted a training exercise to better prepare themselves for an actual deployment. The team started at their point of departure, Elk Grove Village Fire Station 8. The first part of the exercise was a briefing to go over all the ICS forms that may be used on a deployment. All of these forms are important, but emphasis was placed on the ICS214



Activity Form. The team leader is responsible for filling out this form to document the days activities in a time-line fashion. This form is also used to document any lost/damaged equipment to assist in reimbursement. Once the team was done going over the forms, team members conducted vehicle checks on the rigs that were being deployed. This also included the trailers that were being pulled. We don't know when a roadside emergency will occur, but we always want to be prepared if needed. The drill then moved to buses Woods in Elk Grove Village. The team set up the Western Shelter Tent, light tower, and generator. MABAS IL provided a Mission Support Unit for the training. The command post was set up in here with the laptop, TV screen and radio.

For the search portion, 50 markers were



placed in the woods. Some were near shore and some were inland. Some were on the ground. Some were in the trees. Three mannequins were used for the drill. A floating mannequin was also placed in the water near the dam. A rescue mannequin was placed on an island. A third mannequin was placed in the grassy field.

The deployment teams was broken into two land search teams and a boat team. We were joined by the Elk Grove Village Fire Department and Wheeling Fire Department drone teams.



Dressed in swift water gear, the land teams made their way into the woods and began their search. The boat team did a quick recon of the area and shoreline in search of victims. The drone team started their search from the sky. They managed to find the mannequins on the island and in the grassy area. The EGVFD drone has the capability to get GPS coordinates of the target and relay those to the command post. The command post can then relay those coordinates to a land team, who can then plug them into a phone and walk directly to the target. The boat team did find the floating mannequin in the



water and recovered it. They then assisted the land teams in recovering the mannequin on the island and in the grassy area. Each land search team located all 25 markers that they were responsible for. During the search, the boat and land teams utilized the SARCOP Sandbox tracking app. For every marker and mannequin found, a picture was taken of the target, GPS coordinates were documented, and sent to the command post. The targets, as well as the search pattern for each team, can all be viewed on the tv screen in the command post. Search teams can also document any hazards that they find on the app.

Once the search was complete, the tent was broken down and all equipment was put away. We concluded with a debriefing that allowed the IC and search team leaders to discuss their roles in the training.



MABAS Call for Speakers Email

Call for Speakers: 2027 MABAS Summit

The **2027 MABAS Summit Call for Speakers is now open.**

The Mutual Aid Box Alarm System (MABAS) is a mutual aid organization that brings fire departments and other emergency response partners together to provide organized assistance when an incident exceeds local capabilities. Built around cooperation, standardized response, and shared resources, MABAS helps communities access additional personnel, equipment, and specialized capabilities when they are needed most.

Each year, the MABAS Summit brings together fire service leaders, emergency responders, and public safety partners to share experiences, strengthen relationships, and improve readiness.

Our 2027 theme, **Stronger Together. Ready Together**., reflects what mutual aid is built on: strong organizations, capable people, effective training, and relationships established before the call comes.

We are looking for presenters who can bring practical experience, lessons learned, and innovative approaches to three areas:

Leadership – People – Preparedness

Do you have a successful program to share? Lessons from a challenging incident? A new approach to recruitment or retention? Training practices that have strengthened operational readiness?

If so, we want to hear from you.

We are especially interested in presentations that provide real-world lessons, practical solutions, and ideas attendees can take back to their departments and organizations.

The **2027 MABAS Summit** will be held **February 22-26, 2027**, **in Bloomington-Normal, Illinois.**

Submit your speaker proposal at: https://www.mabas-il.org/call-for-speakers/

Not interested in presenting yourself? Please consider forwarding this email to someone who has a program, experience, or lesson worth sharing.

Stronger Together. Ready Together.

Strengthening the people and partnerships that make mutual aid work.





Purchase your 2026 MABAS Training Summit Charcoal-Zip NOW!!!!!

For ordering purposes please note:

PLACE YOUR ORDERS NO LATER THAN NOVEMBER 23RD TO RECEIVE IN TIME FOR THE IL MABAS CONFERENCE IN FEBRUARY AND TAKE 10% OFF YOUR ORDER.

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Diane@Eagle-Engraving.com

The Yard Foundation

WHO WE ARE

Founded in 2021, The Yard Foundation provides grants to catastrophically injured or ill firefighters, long-term hospitalized children, as well as cancer research and treatment. In 4 years, we've given nearly **4 million dollars** to those in need.

WHY WE HELP

It feels good to do good. We have a large network of firefighters and other supporters willing to "pass the hat" for people in need.

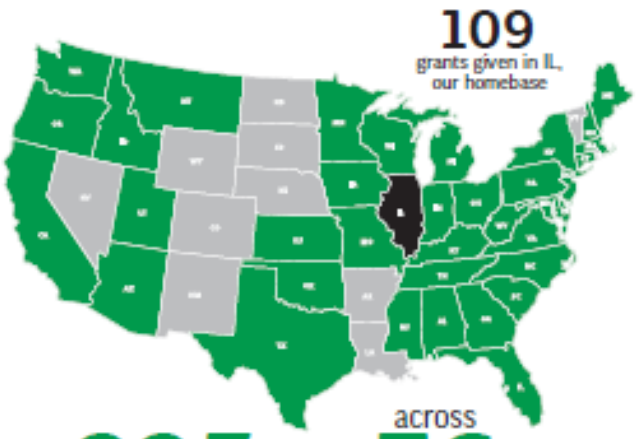
HOW WE DO IT

Fundraising Events
Online Fundraising
The Yard Card Membership
The Swag Shop

WHAT'S NEXT

We are developing relationships with larger donors and corporate sponsors to expand the Giving Tuesday program. Additionally, we are working with fire departments across the country to provide more financial assistance.

OUR 2025 IMPACT



225 grants given

across **36** states

TOTAL AMOUNT GIVEN

$1,700,000

AVERAGE GRANT GIVEN $7,500

LARGEST GRANT GIVEN $150,000

WHO WE HELPED

61 Line-of-Duty Related Donations

213 Grants given to support Firefighters

71 Mayday Campaigns

Learn more: theyardfoundation.org

MABAS-IL.ORG

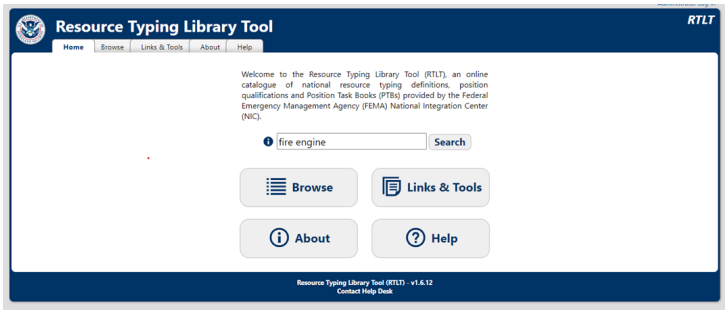
EMAC Readiness: Preparing MABAS Resources for Interstate Deployment

As the frequency of large-scale disasters across the nation continues to increase, interstate deployments have become more common for the Illinois fire service. Following the deployment of IL-TF 1 and Fire Engine Strike Teams to Louisiana for Hurricane Ida in 2021, IL-TF 1 and IL-WR 1 to North Carolina for Hurricane Helene followed by Fire Engine Strike Teams to Florida for Hurricane Milton in 2024, and IL-TF 1 to Texas in 2025, MABAS has continued to evaluate and improve its interstate deployment readiness. These deployments reinforce the importance of maintaining deployable resources that can rapidly integrate into another state's emergency response system using the National Incident Management System (NIMS) Resource Typing process.

Through the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC), states request assistance using standardized NIMS resource typing. Rather than simply requesting firefighters or fire engines, requesting states identify the specific resource type needed to accomplish the mission. FEMA's National Integration Center (NIC) maintains the National Resource Typing Library Tool (RTLT), allowing agencies to search resource definitions, staffing requirements, equipment lists, and position qualifications. Division leaders are encouraged to become familiar with the resource typing applicable to their deployable capabilities. The Resource Typing Library Tool is available at:

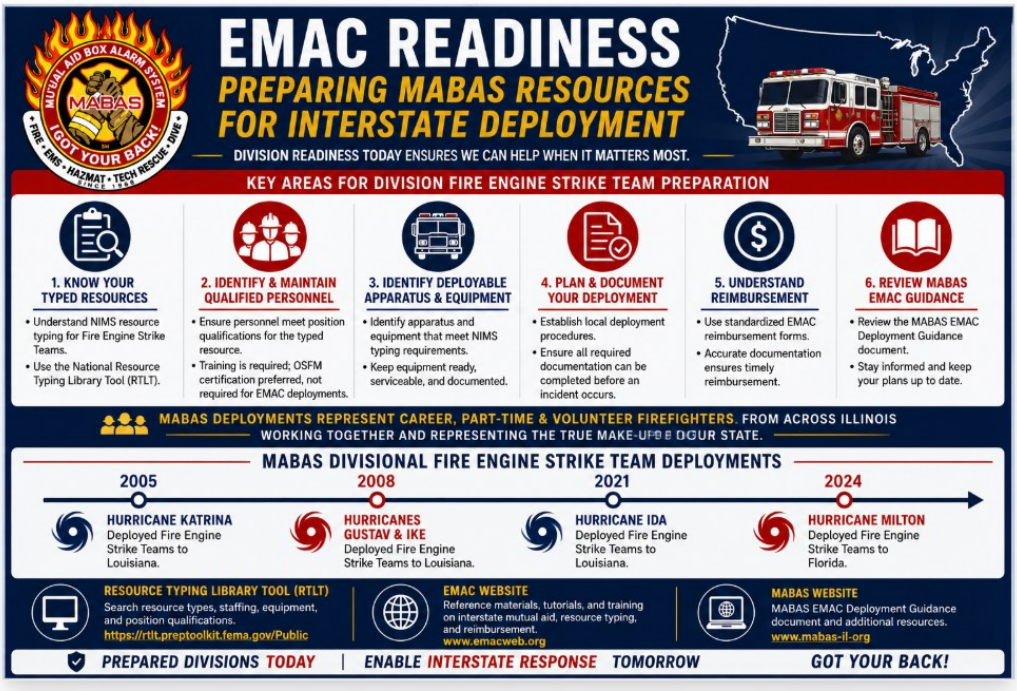
https://rtlt.preptoolkit.fema.gov/Public

Once in the Resource Typing Library Tool, users can search a resource description (such as **Fire Engine Strike Team**) to view the applicable typing criteria and position qualifications. Personnel deploying out of state are expected to meet the qualifications identified for their assigned NIMS resource type. While Illinois Office of the State Fire Marshal certifications are preferred, they are not required for interstate deployments. MABAS will continue working with the Office of the State Fire Marshal to verify personnel qualifications and training records for deployment rosters.



To support future EMAC requests, MABAS has developed an **EMAC Deployment Guidance** document for Division leadership outlining recommended pre-event planning, deployment considerations, and reimbursement expectations. The guidance encourages Divisions to periodically review their ability to assemble NIMS-typed Fire Engine Strike Teams, identify deployable apparatus and personnel, establish local deployment and reimbursement procedures, and ensure documentation requirements can be met before an incident occurs. Recent updates also incorporate the use of standardized EMAC reimbursement forms, improving documentation consistency and streamlining reimbursement following interstate deployments.

Preparedness begins well before the next deployment request is received. Divisions are encouraged to evaluate their Fire Engine Strike Team readiness and become familiar with available EMAC resources. The EMAC website (www.emacweb.org) provides valuable reference materials, online tutorials, and training related to interstate mutual aid, resource typing, and reimbursement. Additional information, including the **MABAS EMAC Deployment Guidance** document, is available on the MABAS website www.mabas-il.org) or through your Regional Operations Branch Chief.



MABAS Illinois

NOTIFICATION SYSTEMS

MABAS utilizes three different types of systems to notify Dispatch Agencies, Divisional Executive Boards, and members for situational awareness and escalating events. These systems are redundant to reduce failures in sending out notifications. Please see below of a description of each.

Constant Contact is used for general non-emergent notifications for MABAS Illinois and the MABAS Foundation.

OnSolve is used for deployment and operational messaging for MABAS Illinois

Regroup is used for deployment and operational messaging for MABAS Illinois

MABAS Divisions 4 & 5 SRT Technical Rescue Team Response





MABAS Divisions 4 & 5 SRT Technical Rescue Team was called to Wonder Lake on 9/16/26 a little after noon for a man that climbed an antenna tower having a mental health crisis.

The TRT staged, formulated a plan and readied gear while law enforcement talked the subject through his crisis. After more than 2 hours, the TRT was given the go to climb the tower and rescue the man. Two rescuers climbed the tower, placed the victim in a harness and he was lowered to the ground safely.

30+ TRT Members responded
TRT 5
Mechanics





A Sincere THANK YOU to all of our Vendors for your past support during our 2026 MABAS Training Summit!

Looking forward to seeing you in 2027

Diamond level Sponsors

AT&T

ZOLL

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Gold Level Sponsor

SAG

FROM SPEC TO MISSION READY

ONE PARTNER

Executive Happy Hour Sponsor

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Copper level Sponsors

MOTOROLA SOLUTIONS

blacklinesafety

CONWAY SHIELD™

Silver Level Sponsor

SALAMANDERLIVE™

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3G Safety Supply

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CONWAY SHIELD

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DINGESFIRE COMPANY

EMS|MC EMS MANAGEMENT & CONSULTANTS

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PUBLIC RISK UNDERWRITERS

VFIS/Midwest

first due

SAG

MACQUEEN EQUIPMENT

MACQUEEN EMERGENCY

RESTORE Disaster Restoration Experts

railsidecitrus INSURANCE AGENCY a fresh approach to insurance

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stryker

Vector Solutions

PUBLIC RISK UNDERWRITERS

VFIS/Midwest

WESTERN SHELTER

The Yard Foundation

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Looking forward to seeing you in 2027

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A CSE Crosscom Company

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Eagle Engraving, Inc.

DLX Rapid Deployment Redefined.

GENESIS RESCUE SYSTEMS

DL SHORTLINE

TC Tablet Command

ThermoFisher Scientific

eso®

FARRWEST

FIRST LINE TECHNOLOGY

INdigital

SENTINEL EMERGENCY SOLUTIONS

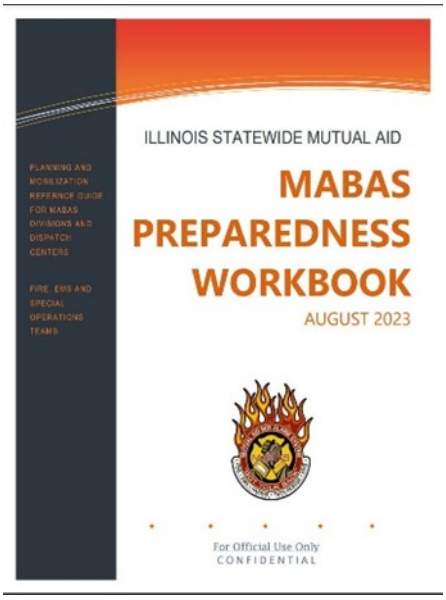
LDV CUSTOM SPECIALTY VEHICLES

E-ENVIRONMENTAL SOLUTIONS
YOUR SOLUTION TO HAZMAT MITIGATION

Jefferson Fire & Safety

Does your Dispatch Center have the updated Preparedness Workbook?

(Dated August 2023)



Go to www.mabas-il.org, and click on the 'MABAS INFORMATIONAL UPDATES' tab on the main page;



Select the '2023 Preparedness Workbook' to download!

Contact your Operations Branch Chief with any questions!

IL TF – 1 NEWS

ILTF – 3rd. Quarter Newsletter

IL-TF1 Participated in Training and Events

July 31 – Prairie Voice Search/Swiftwater/Comms Exercise

August – Training at Lombard Concrete – Alsip, IL 8/12 and13

September - Canine Test Site Preparations

Cook County Preparedness Day – 9/15

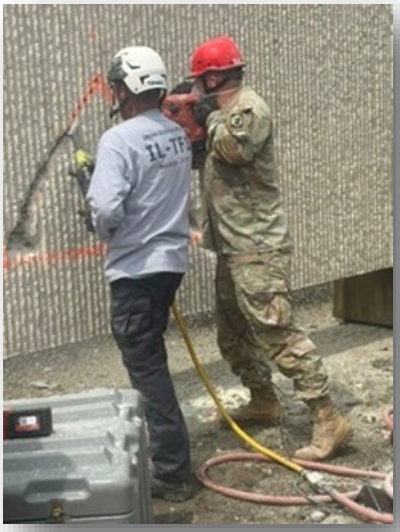
SARCOP Training 9/29 and 9/30

Equipment Calibration Day – 9/30

October – Canine Testing – 10/3 and 4

August Concrete Training (with the Illinois National Guard)









SARCOP Training at the Gateway Building by Childers in Peoria, IL



IL TF – 1 NEWS

SUSAR and SDF Canine Testing – October 3 and 4, 2026

19 USAR Canines tested over two days for Live Find and Human Remains Certification at the Romeoville Fire Academy.

19 participants are one of the largest state Urban Search and Rescue testing groups.

Great work by IL-TF1 Canines, IL-TF1 Logistics, the Romeoville Fire Department, and the Search Dog Foundation for providing a challenging testing site.

Site Prep Work – August and September 2026

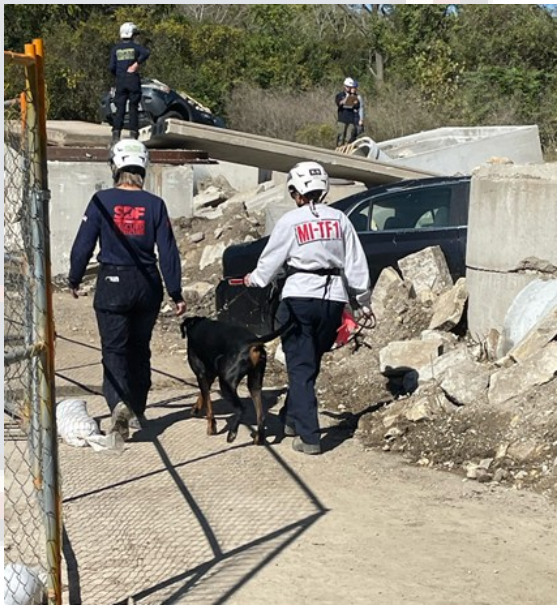






Search Dog Foundation Evaluators and Day 2 Canine Evaluation



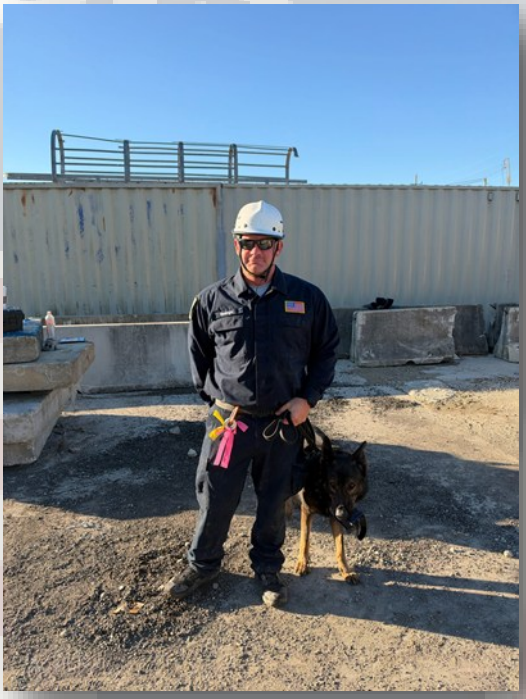


IL TF – 1 NEWS

Successful IL-TF1 Canine Certification Testing on October 3, 2026.



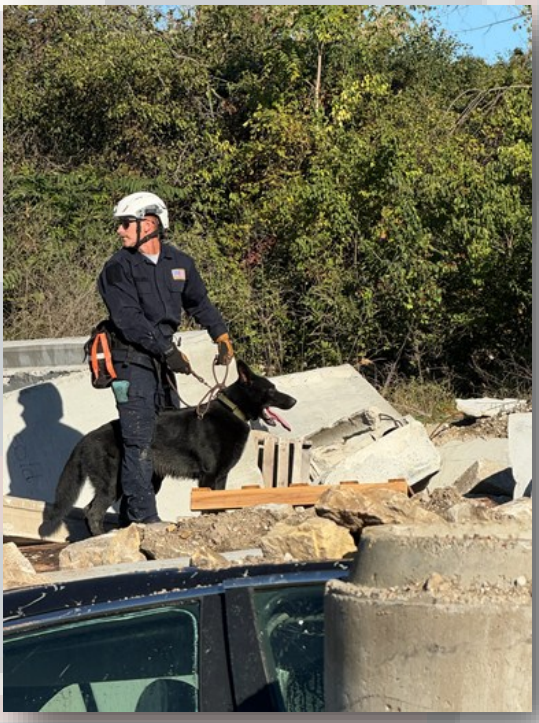
Katie Boeke and Fable



Todd Bassegio and Thor



Bill Murray and Roy



Ryan Mars and Shadow

Congratulations to ILTF1 and all Canines who successfully passed the Canine

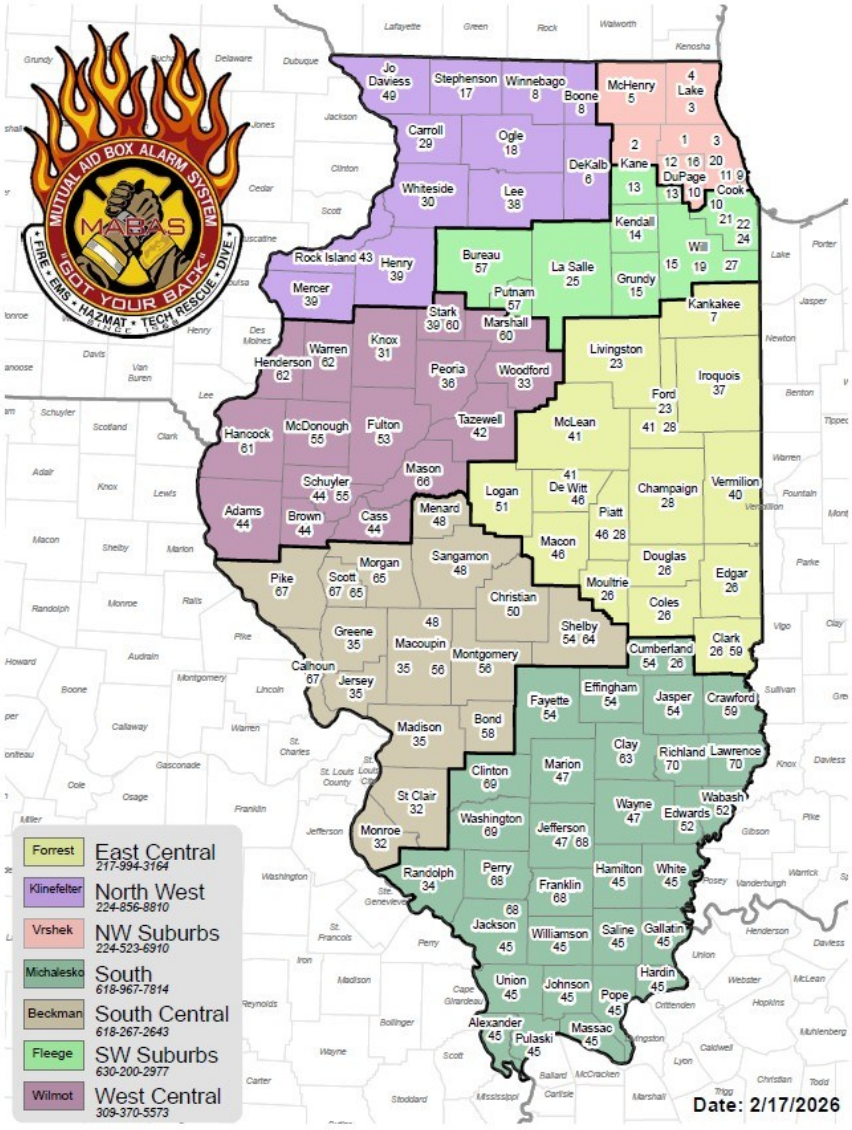
Fun Facts



Fact:
Your eye can see a million different colors

Our bodies are made up of some bizarre features! According to the American Academy of Ophthalmology, humans can distinguish approximately 10 million colors. That's thanks to the cone cells in your retina, the back part of your eye that senses light and sends signals to your brain. These alerts allow you to perceive different colors. Some people who have a rare condition called tetrachromacy have an extra eye cone that enables them to see *hundreds of millions* of colors.

MABAS Division Map
With Operation Branch Chiefs



For More Information

MABAS, Illinois

847-403-0500

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Questions/Comments

If your Department or Division has responded to a call or had a big event and you would like MABAS to add it to this newsletter, please feel free to email or call us. We look forward to any and all suggestions or comments.

Email—*Littlefield@mabas-il.org* Phone—847-403-0511



American Red Cross | Disaster Action Team

Emergency Response Guide to Working with the American Red Cross

For Red Cross Disaster Assistance 24/7/365, please call 833.583.3111.

Why call the Red Cross?

When individuals experience a disaster, they face many new unknowns. We can help with the immediate disaster-caused needs of individuals, families and communities. You should call us when those impacted by disasters are in need of:

- A safe place to stay
- Food and clothing replacement
- Assistance with lost eyeglasses, medications and medical equipment
- Mental health and/or spiritual care support

Red Cross services can be helpful for anyone who has experienced a home fire; the home doesn't have to be a complete loss. We will quickly respond to assess their immediate needs and provide help. This includes facilitating access to community resources and financial assistance when eligible, and stepping in as an advocate for families/individuals on their road to recovery.

What to Expect

Red Cross Disaster Action Teams are available 24/7/365, in person or virtually. Please call us *any time* a family/individual has a home fire. We will dispatch the closest available Red Cross Disaster Action Team to meet with them and assess their immediate needs. The following information will help us expedite our assistance:

- Household information: address; household members (including adults, children, pets); names
- Current status: information regarding injuries or fatalities; extent of damage to the home; whether or not they have a safe place to go
- Contact information: phone number for member of household; contact info for on-scene responder

Red Cross services are free and available to everyone who has experienced a disaster including a home fire. As part of our humanitarian mission, we provide support regardless of race, religion or citizenship status.

IL-WR1 Highland Park Search Pattern Drill Summary



On October 22, 2026, IL-WR1 conducted a search pattern training drill along the Lake Michigan shoreline between Evanston and Lake Forest, Illinois, utilizing the Highland Park boat ramp as the base of operations. The exercise integrated tabletop instruction on U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) search methodologies with practical on water search operations, focusing on site selection, staging, launch coordination, sector assignment, and operational execution. Personnel reviewed Track Line Return, Track Line Single Unit, Parallel Line, and Creeping Line search patterns, including their tactical applications and deployment configurations based on known vessel routes, search area geometry, and probable subject location. Boat teams applied the appropriate patterns to assigned sectors to locate shoreline targets, with all targets successfully identified and marked in the Search and Rescue Common Operational Platform (SARCOP). SARCOP provided real-time visibility of team positions and target locations, maintaining a common operating picture across the extended search area. The drill achieved a 100% target detection and marking rate, demonstrating the team's capability to plan and execute coordinated maritime search operations, assign appropriate USCG search patterns, and maintain operational coordination from a centralized base of operations.

Oct 22, 2026 ·

IL WR1 established a base of operations at the Highland Park boat ramp, reviewed USCG search patterns in a tabletop session, then located and marked every target placed between Evanston and Lake Forest using SARCOP.

Item	Detail
Date	October 22, 2026
Location	Highland Park boat ramp, Highland Park, IL
Search area	Lake Michigan shoreline, Evanston to Lake Forest
Attendance	18 members, 144 total hours
Category	Skills development and search planning

USCG Search Patterns Reviewed

Members discussed when each pattern applies, how it is laid out, and how it is assigned to boat teams.

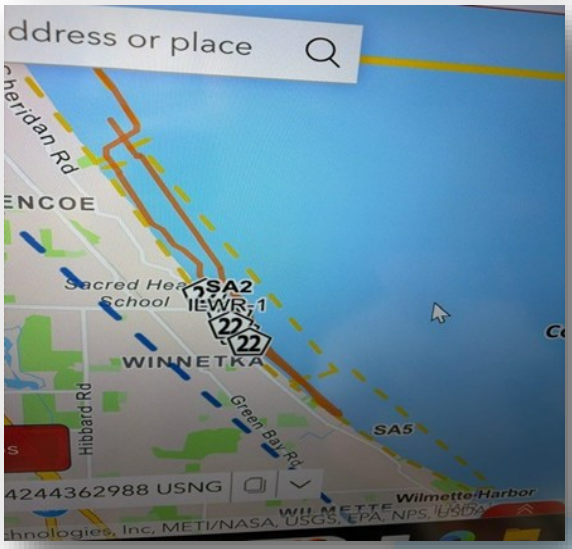
Pattern	When it is used
Track Line, Return	Missing vessel's route is known. Unit searches along one side of the route and returns along the other. Fast first search.
Track Line, Single Unit	Same purpose, one pass along the route without returning. Used with one unit or when the search continues past the endpoint.
Parallel Line	Large area, subject location uncertain. Legs run parallel to the long side for even coverage.
Creeping Line	Subject more likely at one end of the area. Legs run parallel to the short side, advancing along the long axis.

Target Search and Marking

Targets were placed along the shoreline from Evanston in the south to Lake Forest in the north. Boat teams applied the reviewed patterns to search their assigned sectors. Every target was found and marked in SARCOP, giving the base of operations real time visibility of team positions and target locations throughout the drill.

Outcome

- 100% of targets placed between Evanston and Lake Forest were located and marked in SARCOP.
- Confirmed the team's ability to plan a search, assign USCG patterns to boat teams, and execute on open water.
- Maintained a common operating picture across an extended search area from a single base of operations.







OUR MISSION

We are firefighters who offer support to children fighting critical illnesses. Their battle will not be fought alone!

Project Fire Buddies is a beacon of hope for every family we have the honor to serve.

HELP US CREATE GOOD DAYS.



OUR STORY

In 2016, Project Fire Buddies was initiated based on Kurt DeGroot's vision while serving at a fire department in the south suburbs of Chicago. With the collaboration of Ryan Ballard, steadfast support from his wife and children, and the dedication of other team members, the organization's influence has expanded significantly, driving its ambitious goals.

WHAT WE DO

Project Fire Buddies brings joy to kids struggling with critical illnesses. We believe that no child should fight their battle alone. Since it's inception PFB has been steadily growing and expanding.

Project Fire Buddies ranks in the top 4% of non-profit organizations worldwide. Each day, new chapters are joining our mission, helping to spread joy to even more children.

OUR CHAPTERS



Our chapters prioritize cultivating connections with their Fire Buddies. Members of PFB pay visits to Fire Buddies at their homes, often times arriving in a parade of fire vehicles with flashing lights and blaring sirens. They bring presents for birthdays and holidays, engage in games, offer tickets to concerts and special occasions, and participate in significant events in the children's lives. PFB has also assisted families in obtaining essential medical equipment and supplies. Fire Buddies even drop by the firehouse occasionally for meals with the crew, station tours, and to see the rigs.



Do you know a child who is struggling with a critical illness and in need of a reason to smile? Project Fire Buddies is here to help. While healthcare privacy laws are crucial, they can make it challenging for us to reach the children who require our support.

Visit our website today to complete our contact form and help us make a positive impact on a child in your life.

GET INVOLVED

YOUR SUPPORT MAKES A DIFFERENCE

Project Fire Buddies has expanded to include more than 140 chapters across 12 states. To find out if a fire department in your area is connected with Project Fire Buddies, please visit our website at projectfirebuddies.org.

Follow Us!

Project Fire Buddies is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that relies on the support of kind donors. We gladly accept cash and check donations all year long, and you can also contribute through our website.

Has your Dispatch Center gone through a consolidation.....

Have you had personnel changes in management....

Is your Dispatch Center information Up to Date?

Go to www.mabas-il.org, and click on the 'MABAS INFORMATIONAL UPDATES' tab on the main page;



Select the 'Primary and Secondary Dispatch Centers' document to review your centers information.

Please notify your Operations Branch Chief, or send updates to Linda Cruz at cruz@mabas-il.org

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We are using department logos for Tier II cards.

Please send your logo to littlefield@mabas-il.org

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Each month on 'Inside Darley' Paul Darley highlights industry trends, new products, best practices, thought leadership and more. The videos typically last about 4 minutes and are supplemented with insightful articles and resources. We invite the MABAS community to watch our October series here and if you want even more content, we hope you'll subscribe.

The latest video can be found here https://darley.com/about/entry/inside-darley-october-2020

People can sign up for newsletters here: https://darley.com/about/newsletter-signup

Founded in 1990, Air One Equipment, Inc. is a family owned and operated full-line fire and safety equipment distributor. Our sales and service staff work out of a modern 8,000 square foot facility located in South Elgin, Illinois. Our second location is operated out of a 3,500 square foot facility in Menomonee Falls, WI. In both locations, we have a warehouse full of best in class products available for our first responders.

At Air One Equipment, Inc., "You know us by the company we keep". We offer our customers quality equipment at competitive prices from the leading manufacturers in the industry. We pride ourselves in continuing to provide exceptional service after sale, both on the products we sell and the way we treat our customers. With over 400 years of combined experience in the fire service industry, our sales consultants and factory trained service staff are able to assist you in choosing and maintaining the equipment you need to safely perform your job. Contact "The House That Service Built!" to see how we can serve you in the future. 888-247-1204

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