



PROFESSIONAL FIRE FIGHTERS

O F N E W H A M P S H I R E

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Fire Fighters Respond to Impersonation in Newport Arrest

Londonderry, NH – Professional Fire Fighters of New Hampshire President David Lang today issued this statement on the events this week in Newport:

“Public safety professionals face enormous challenges each time we put on the uniform.

“New Hampshire fire fighters will never minimize or understate the unique risks and dangerous conditions that our state’s police officers face. I also know that our police officers understand that fire fighters must cope with life-threatening dangers each time we respond to a call.

“Police and fire fighters across the state also have a history of cooperation when we coordinate our responses for tactical reasons, but on Tuesday in Newport, we believe the system failed.

“Allowing police officers to impersonate fire fighters potentially makes the difficult job of fire fighters even more dangerous because it casts doubt in the public’s mind over who’s responding to a fire or medical emergency.

“Fire fighters have built a trust with the citizens of this state, and we have worked hard to maintain that trust because it’s critical to being able to do our jobs. But if we allow others to co-opt our image and trade on our good names, no matter the circumstances, then we create a breach of that trust with the public that will be impossible to repair. It could place our state’s fire fighters in harm’s way, and the dangers we face are significant enough already.

“I am asking the Commissioner of Safety and the NH Attorney general to call together the leaders of this state’s police and fire organizations to condemn the impersonation of fire fighters by police officers and demand that it stop. The use of the firefighter/paramedic image in this way is inappropriate, should not be condoned and is not negotiable.”

The Professional Fire Fighters of New Hampshire represents approximately 2000 active and retired firefighters and paramedic from 43 local unions.

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