

NIAGARA COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES

APRIL-JUNE 2026

VOLUME 30



Keep the Sparkle, Skip the Risk!

Fourth of July Safety Tips



Fireworks Safety

- Use legal fireworks only
- Keep a safe distance.
- Have water nearby
- Never relight duds

Grilling Safety

- Check gas connections
- Keep grill clear of flammables
- Watch kids & pets



Emergency Preparedness

- Call 911 in an emergency
- Keep a first aid kit ready
- Be alert & report fires

In an Emergency, Call 911

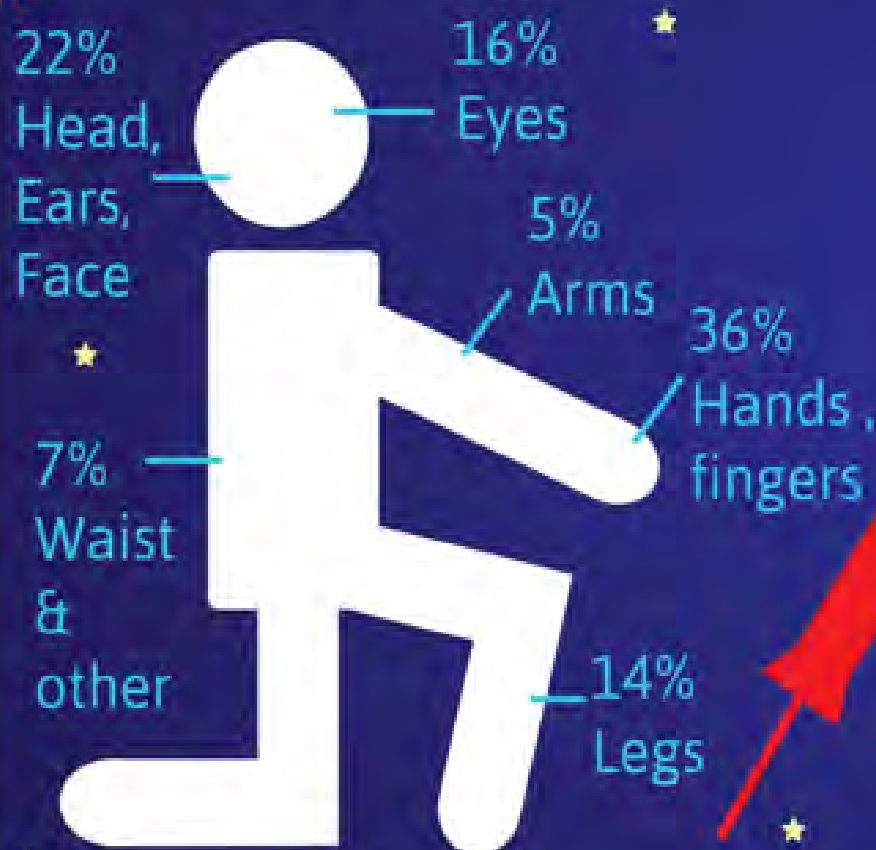


★ ★ ★ ***Celebrate Safely. Enjoy the Holiday!*** ★ ★ ★

Fireworks Safety

Have a blast while staying safe
this Independence Day!

Body parts most
commonly injured
by fireworks :



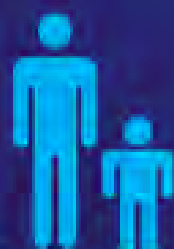
There are
2X
as many fires reported on
July 4th than any other
day of the year

Sparklers can
burn up to

2,000 °F
making it one of
the most
dangerous
fireworks

Safety Tips

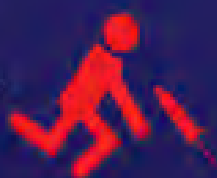
Adults should always supervise



Keep a bucket of water close



Never have any part of your body over
the firework when lighting it



Keep your pets inside



Move back a safe distance
after lighting a firework



Never relight a firework

Niagara County Leaders Join Volunteer Firefighter Recruitment Effort

Niagara County Fire Coordinator Jon Schultz, along with Niagara County Legislators David Godfrey and Chris McKimmie, took part in an event Tuesday hosted by the Firefighters Association of the State of New York (FASNY) in support of their Recruitment and Retention campaign, RecruitNY. Hosted at Frontier Fire Hall, a 100 percent volunteer fire company, Director Schultz and FASNY Leadership addressed the crucial need for recruitment within the Volunteer Fire Service.

Fire Coordinator Schultz assessed the current state of recruitment efforts as a challenge, and not a new one. “Today, I stand before you to speak about a struggle that is not new,” said Schultz. “Once again, I speak to you about a challenge that never seems to disappear. The continuous obstacle of recruitment and retention to the Volunteer Fire and EMS Services.” Citing increasing call volumes and cumbersome and ever-evolving training requirements, the demands on personal time for our members of the Volunteer Fire Service has never been greater.

“Niagara County has a proud tradition of volunteerism,” said Schultz. “For generations, our Fire Service has been built from within- neighbors protecting neighbors, families serving side by side, and communities stepping up when it matters most. That tradition is still strong- but is under pressure.”

Schultz and Legislators Godfrey and McKimmie agreed, the Volunteer Fire Service must do a “better job at telling their story,” by conveying the opportunity that “comes along with the commitment to serve, to learn, to lead, and to be part of something bigger than themselves.”

The Fire Coordinator also touched on the importance of retention of those currently serving in the Volunteer Fire Service. “Retention starts with respect- and it continues with support.” “To the Firefighters of Niagara County: your work matters, your sacrifice is seen, and your dedication is noticed. I stand behind you and your community stands behind you.” Schultz went on to thank Niagara County’s local elected Leadership and local state elected leadership for their continued support of the Volunteer Fire Service within Niagara County, noting that their continued support is not just appreciated, but essential.

“Together, we will meet this challenge. Together, we will move forward. And together, we will ensure that the Volunteer Fire Service remains a source of pride, strength, and protection for every resident we serve.”



NCES HOSTS ORLEANS/NIAGARA BOCES FIRE SCIENCE AND EMS CLASS

Director Schultz and EMS Manager Tom Eggert had the opportunity to host the Orleans/Niagara Career and Technical Education Centers EMT Class in May. The visit was both informative and interactive, giving students the opportunity to learn about emergency response coordination, and how the pieces come together between Fire, EMS, and Law Enforcement.

The experience gave students a greater understanding of careers in emergency services, teamwork during emergency responses, and the importance of preparedness and public safety within the community.

We hope to see them all amongst the ranks of Emergency Responders in the Future!



THIRD ANNUAL FIRST RESPONDER APPRECIATION COOKOUT MAY 19TH







A HUGE THANK YOU TO OUR ANNUAL COOKOUT SPONSORS



**Thank you for all the generous
donations**



NY CARES UP 



TOPS



NCEMS AT NCDOH COMMUNITY HEALTH FAIR

Director Schultz and Team joined [Niagara County Sheriff](#) and our Partners at [Niagara County Department of Health](#)'s Free Community Health Fair on June 3rd.

The event brought together a number of healthcare providers, public agencies, educational institutions, and community organizations to offer resources for residents of all ages.

The Health Fair, Co-Sponsored by Legislator Tony Nemi, helped to ensure that Niagara County residents are aware of the resources and programs available to them.

EMS Division Manager, Tom Eggert, was on site to give our residents first-hand tours of one of our Ambulances and a fly-car, along with some of the critical tools utilized by our EMS Professionals responding to medical emergencies.



HAZ-MAT TEAM AT NIAGARA COUNTY SOIL AND WATER FIELD DAYS

The Niagara County Haz-Mat Team participated in the Niagara County Soil and Water Field Days, where area school's 3rd graders arrived to learn about various topics involving conservation, our environment, and water.

Captain James Volkosh lead an interactive experiment involving litmus paper to determine if substances (in this case, vinegar and water), were acidic or basic by testing its pH via Litmus Paper. The samples of the vinegar and water were then vialled and placed into our Ahura substance recognition machines for identification. Students awaited the vial results while our Haz-Mat Technician, Joe Homesberger, utilized our Chempro meter as another means of detection to determine what each substance was.

Students were engaged, respectful, and asked questions in regards to how the litmus paper and machines worked to identify substances, and received education on how our County Team utilizes them as tools in Emergency Response.

Captain Volkosh encouraged students to pursue excellence in Math, Science, and English, and to always keep learning!

Thank you to the Niagara County Soil and Water Department for having us! We look forward to next year!





A visit to Albany



On Wednesday, May 20th, Director Schultz and Miranda Hayes attended the CARES UP Community of Practice in Albany at the Suicide Prevention Center of New York. This is an annual conference facilitated by the CARES UP Team and a requirement of all CARES UP grant awardees, which Niagara County Emergency Services was a recipient of in 2026.

The objective of this Community Practice is to build connection, communication, and resilience across all agencies to provide support to uniformed personnel. One powerful presentation, led by Dr. Erin Crow, touched on navigating challenging conversations and best practice for effective communication to enhance support and promote relationship maintenance. All in attendance, received a confidence boost on how to connect with someone in distress using direct and open conversation while offering compassion and non-judgement support.

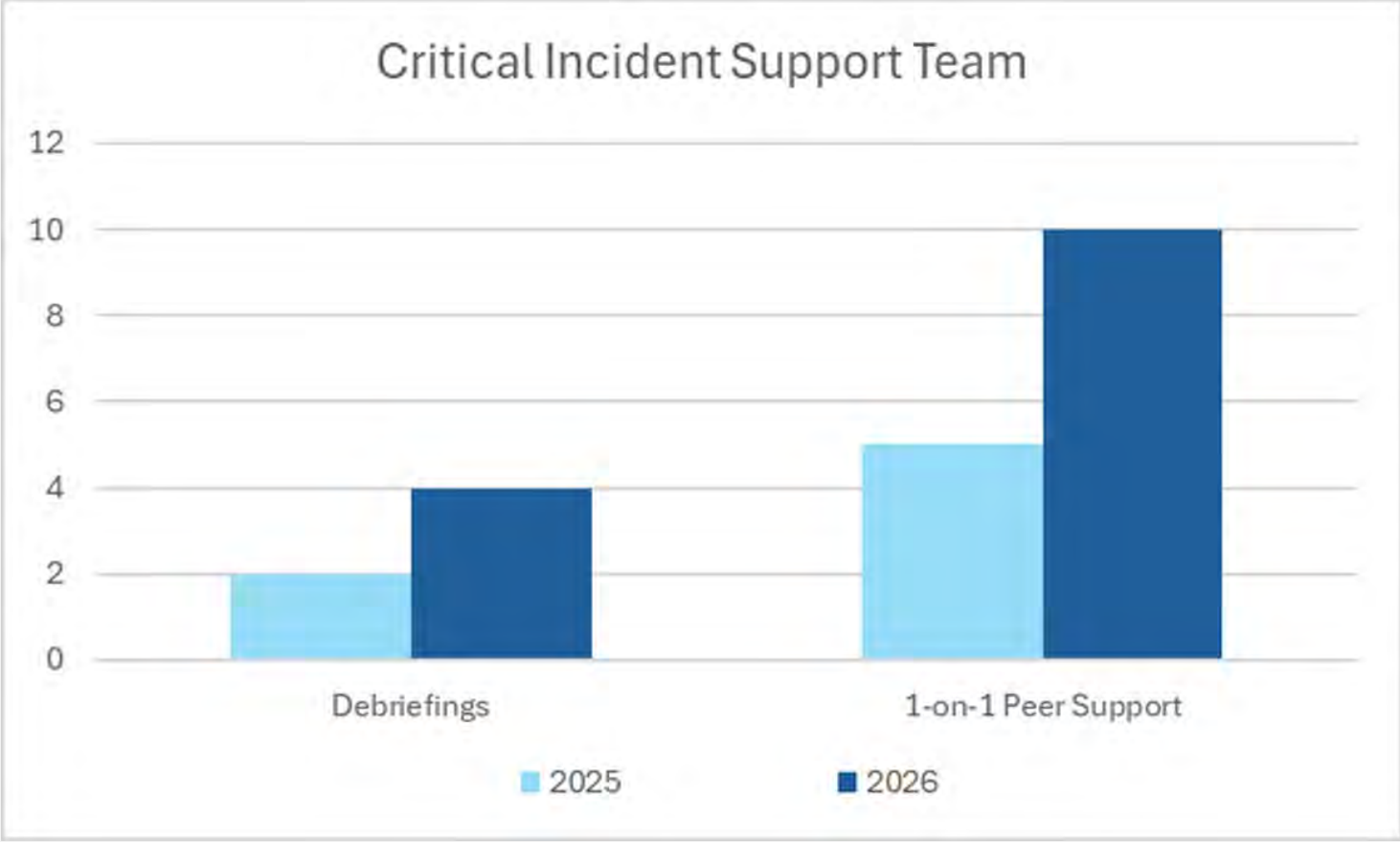
Through networking and breakout groups, Jon and Miranda gathered valuable insight and created relationships to drive the mission they've started with the Critical Incident Support Team. We would like to thank Stephanie Lao, Director of Workplace Initiatives, and Garra Lloyd-Lester, Coordinator of Community and Coalition Initiatives (pictured above) for all their guidance and support through this grant to better Niagara County mission!

WHAT'S NEW?



The county Critical Incident Support Team (CIST) is happy to announce we have grown in membership. After hosting a recent ICISF course, we now have 30 trained members. Early in the team’s inception, we set a goal to have one representative from each Fire Company and are excited to announce that we are just over the half way point to achieving that goal. As of June, 2026, 17 out of 32 Fire Companies have a representative serving on our County CIST Team.

2026 has seen many unfortunate and traumatic 9-1-1 responses, doubling the utilization of our Team in the first half of 2026 which included 3 back-to-back debriefings May 28th - 30th.



Other great things happening, please take a look at the team’s section on the Emergency Services [website](#). We have added resources and FAQs. Additionally, we have added a fillable Request for Peer Support under the [contact us](#) section for your convenience. Through the recently awarded NY CARES UP grant, we have purchased business cards that feature our website and QR Code for easy access, in hopes that First Responders will tuck that away in their pocket for a day they or one of their peers may need it. CIST Team Member faces are becoming more familiar as we continue to attend “Area Meetings” throughout Niagara County’s Four Fire Districts, aiming to provide support, updates, and dissemination of resources as they become available.

We have gained tremendous support from the fire service and are very grateful for that. A recent comment made from a firefighter, ***“I quickly went from skeptic, to a believer”***. Thank you for advocating for us as we continue our mission of breaking the stigma. With each encounter, our team witnesses the positive effects of just simply talking with one another. Together, we will continue to encourage all First Responders to ask for help when in need.



OTR

OPOVERWATCH TRAUMA RESTRUCTURE

An *unstructured conversation* that restructures your
understanding of *trauma*

Upcoming Meetings:

6/17 @ 10:30am	7/22 @ 6:00pm
6/24 @ 6:00pm	7/29 @ 10:30am
7/1 @ 10:30am	8/5 @ 6:00pm
7/8 @ 6:00pm	8/12 @ 10:30am
7/15 @ 10:30am	8/19 @ 6:00pm

THE OPOVERWATCH
CORRAL

7209 RAPIDS RD.
LOCKPORT, NY

Questions? Email us at opo@opoverwatch.org

**LEOs, COs, Dispatch, Military,
Fire, & EMS Only**

FIRST RESPONDERS ONLY

**OPOVERWATCH
FAMILY FARM DAY
at WISDOM FARM**



JUNE 27TH : 11AM - 2PM

10795 MILAND RD,
CLARENCE CENTER

FREE EVENT

BARREL TRAIN RIDES, PAINTING
WITH HORSES, CORNHOLE,
ARCHERY, BINGO IN THE BARN,
HOT DOGS & THE PINK COW
ICECREAM TRUCK



Big Lakes Regional EMS Council's Advance Life Support Provider of the Year!

Our very own Brent Ast was recognized as the winner of the Big Lakes Regional EMS Council's Advance Life Support Provider of the Year!

Brent joined NCEMS at its inception in December 2023 as a Critical Care Provider as no stranger to Emergency Response. Brent has been active in the field of EMS as a Volunteer at [Rapids Volunteer Fire Company](#) since 2009.

This year, Brent completed his bridge course from CC to Paramedic, re-affirming his dedication to providing excellent and empathetic care to our County and Communities, serving as a Paramedic on our Night Shift. On behalf of all of our team here at NCES, Congratulations, Brent - we're so proud of you!



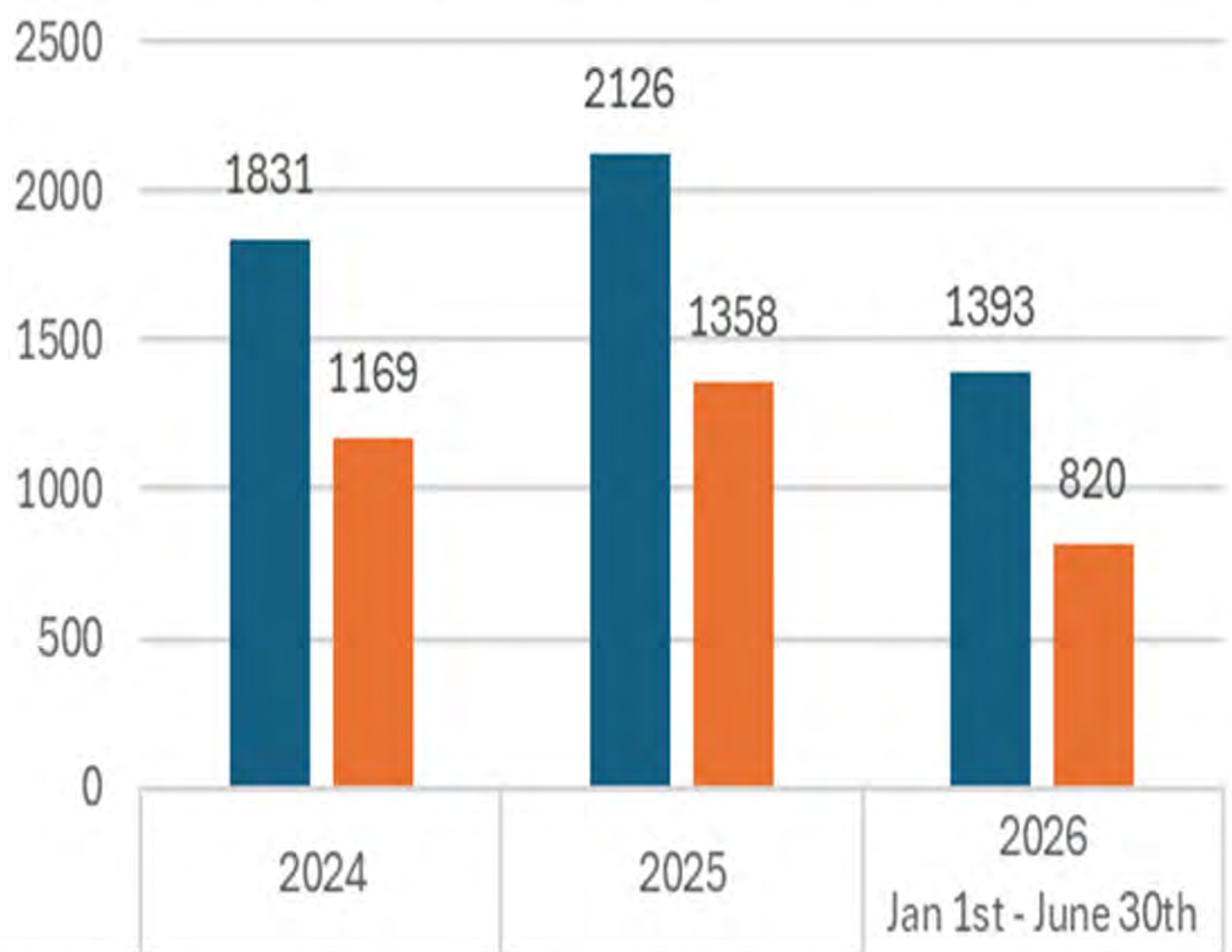
Welcome, Jalisa!

NIAGARA COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES & 911 CENTER



Niagara County EMS is happy to welcome a temporary paramedic to our team! Within just a few weeks, Jalisa Carson has completed all necessary training to officially join her platoon on July 5th as we begin the summer season. Jalisa has a background in commercial EMS and volunteer fire/EMS.

Niagara County EMS Response Data



Total Requests	1831	2126	1393
Total Transports	1169	1358	820

REMEMBERING K-9 EMRICK

K-9 Emrick of the Niagara County Technical Rescue team passed away peacefully at age 10 in the arms of his handler after a long, courageous battle with cancer.

He was acquired from Bohemian K-9 in early 2017 and began his career shortly thereafter, earning his first human remains detection certification in May of 2018.

Emrick completed over 436 hours of training seminars all over the east coast, as well as thousands of hours training with his trainer and handler.

Along with his annual HRD certification, he earned 10 other titles, including all of the canine good citizen titles, farm dog, therapy dog, spot-on, rally and trick dog titles, among others.

His most recent accomplishment was locating the long lost grave of a man who perished in the Incline Railway fire of 1910 in Niagara Falls and a marker was placed on his grave in November 2023.

He is sadly missed by his family, his partner and handler, Kyla, who said “how lucky I was to have a partner that makes saying goodbye so hard.”

K-9 Emrick, end of watch, (04-22-2026)

Run free, goodest boy.



Upcoming Events:



AUGUST 5TH-9TH

COME SEE US AT THE FAIR! NCES WILL BE THERE AGAIN THIS YEAR IN THE MERCHANTS BUILDING WITH OUR FRIENDS OVER AT NCSO! COME AND SEE US FOR YOUR CHILD ID'S, FUN WITH OUR "FIND SPARKY" SCAVENGER HUNT, AND TO FIND OUT HOW YOU CAN VOLUNTEER TO HELP YOUR COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT!



Upcoming Events:

Pirates Festival

Krull Park Olcott, NY July 10th, 11th & 12th, 2026

JOIN US FOR OLCOTT FIRE COMPANY'S ANNUAL FIELD DAYS!

Midway, rides, pony rides, games, vendors & beer tent for ages 21+

Band Schedule:

Fri. 8pm-12am	Wasted Whiskey
Sat. 12pm-4pm	Nuthin But Time
Sat. 4pm-8pm	The Hitz
Sat. 8pm-12am	That 80's Hair Band
Sun. 12pm-5pm	Steel Horse

Band Sponsors:



HEINRICH
A better way to Chevrolet.



ONTARIO SHORES
FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

Friday Events:

5pm-9pm	Midway rides & games (\$25 ride wristbands)
6pm-9pm	Vendor fair (Sunglasses, clothing, crafts & novelties)
6pm-12am	Refreshments & live music

Saturday Events:

7am-10am	Car show parking
12pm-6pm	wnycruiser.com car show with many awards & 50/50
3pm	Car show awards
12pm	Parade (The intersection of RT18 & RT78 closes traffic north, east & west bound at 11:45am for parade route)
12pm-9pm	Vendor Fair
12pm-9pm	Midway rides & games (all day wrist bands \$25) *Weather Permitting
12pm-12am	Refreshments & live music
1:30pm-3:30pm	Live pirate acts & treasure hunt (time is subject to change)
3:30pm	Pirate costume contest (at the pirate show) for 3 groups kids, teens & adults

Sunday Events:

12pm-6pm	Vendor fair
12pm-6pm	Midway rides (\$25 ride wristbands available from 12pm-3pm) *Weather Permitting*
1pm-5pm	Refreshments with live music
1:30pm-3:30pm	Live pirate acts & treasure hunt (time is subject to change)
3:30pm	Pirate costume contest (at the pirate show) for 3 groups kids, teens & adults

**** Ticket Pricing for midway rides: \$2 each / \$20 for 10 / \$30 for 20 / \$40 for 30 ****
Each ride is 2-4 tickets



Upcoming Events:

A vibrant poster for the 'Summer Sizzler 2025' event. The background is black with a pattern of yellow stars and musical notes. At the top, a stylized orange and yellow sun is partially visible. The title 'SUMMER SIZZLER' is in large, bold, orange and yellow letters with a 3D effect, and '2025' is in teal below it. The event is a two-day show with free admission. The left side details the Friday show on July 18th, with gates opening at 6pm, featuring the 90 West Band. The right side details the Saturday show on July 19th, with gates opening at 4pm, featuring The Strictly Hip 30th Anniversary Tour and the band Covershot. The poster also mentions food trucks, live music, a beer tent, and raffles.

SUMMER SIZZLER
2025

TWO DAY SHOW • FREE ADMISSION

**FRIDAY
JULY 18TH**
**GATES OPEN
AT 6PM**

**90
WEST
BAND**

WWW.90WEST.COM

**SATURDAY
JULY 19TH**
GATES OPEN AT 4PM

The Strictly Hip™
30th Anniversary Tour

COVERSHOT
THAT 80'S HAIR BAND

FOOD TRUCKS • LIVE MUSIC
BEER TENT • RAFFLES

Upcoming Events:



Rumble On The Ridge Truck and Tractor Pull

Main Event Starts at 6:00PM
Stock Pulls Starts at 11:00AM



July
25th
2026

Pull what you brought at 11AM
Western New York Pro Pullers at 6PM

Concession will be available

8945 Ridge Rd
Gasport, NY 14067

\$20 per Adult

12 and Under Free

See Facebook event for
more information
Rumble On The Ridge
Tractor Pull

Upcoming Events:



From the desk of the Fire Coordinator

Here we are, half way through 2026. The WNY summer weather has been at a snail's pace, but like many years in the past, it's coming at us full swing during this transition to July. Stay hydrated and find shade when you can as many of us go out to celebrate the 250th Anniversary of America!

The Department of Emergency Services has certainly been busy and now that summer is here, I'm most certain it will continue. I want to thank the County Manager and Niagara County Legislators for approving a resolution to allow us to hire a temporary Paramedic. Filling this position gives us comfort and readiness to continue to provide the upmost best level of care to our citizens.

We were recently faced with the shock of a drastic decrease in one of our grants. As the department looks for ways to sustain some key components to emergency operations, we will always make sure we never come short in providing the best for our community and tourists to one of the most beautiful wonders of the world, Niagara Falls.

I couldn't be prouder of our Critical Incident Support Team as they have faced some very tragic loss; of which some were right within the fire service community. Sadly, we suffered the sudden loss of two local volunteer firefighters, one due to a suicide. Our team supported fellow first responders in a quick turnaround by facilitating debriefings. We all came together, reminisced, cried, and leaned on each other for support. It was extremely touching to hear that our team turned a skeptic into a believer. We won't stop the mission we've started. Remember, you are not alone. It's okay, to not be okay, but please don't hide it or cover it up. We are here for every first responder.

I would like to end with, Happy Independence Day! As we celebrate a historic moment, marking the 250th anniversary of signing the Declaration of Independence, remember we are all in this together. We got this! Thank you to our first responders for all you continue to do in your dedication to Niagara County. Be Safe!



Total App users 8,337 (and counting)



DOWNLOAD TODAY and share with friends and family

PREPARE NIAGARA



An app developed by our office to help communicate to the Niagara County community in the event of an emergency to keep the public safe and informed.

<https://apps.myocv.com/share/a58414094>

Our next newsletter will be going out on October 1st, 2026. If you would like to have an article published please feel free to get into contact with us at NCEM@niagaracounty.gov and we will get everything put in accordingly. We kindly ask that all articles be received no later than **two week's prior** to the next newsletter (date listed above).

Thank you for all that you do.

Stay safe out there!



NIAGARA COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES

5574 NIAGARA STREET EXT
LOCKPORT, NY 14094

716-438-3171

NCEM@NIAGARACOUNTY.GOV

[HTTP://WWW.NIAGARACOUNTY.GOV/FIRE](http://WWW.NIAGARACOUNTY.GOV/FIRE)

