



Gary L. West

Gary West is the director of field operations for the National Fire Sprinkler Association (NFSA), based in Baltimore, Maryland. The association's mission is "To protect lives and save property from fire through the widespread acceptance of the fire sprinkler concept." West has served in this role since April 2018.

West was appointed Tennessee state fire marshal and assistant commissioner for fire prevention in March 2011. In July 2014, he was promoted to deputy commissioner for the Department of Commerce and Insurance (TDCI) and continued to oversee the State Fire Marshal's office as well as the department's human resources, fiscal, and communications divisions until his retirement in April 2018.

West has spent his entire career in public service and has dedicated his life to helping others. He has been active in emergency services for the past 43 years with extensive experience in managing business operations. His vast knowledge and passion for saving lives through fire prevention efforts and advocacy has made him a leader and visionary for reducing deaths, injuries, and property loss from fire.

As the deputy commissioner overseeing one of the largest state departments, he has experience managing complicated and sometimes difficult situations. West utilizes a servant leadership style while working closely with management to advance the mission. He is a respected strategic thinker and a master planner. West has developed, implemented, and evaluated many projects. With his leadership skills, he has provided direction for coordinating the operations of the agencies where he has worked.

West's experience includes serving at almost every level of the fire service, and in several large business organizations. Prior to coming to the State Fire Marshal's Office, he was employed as a municipal fire and emergency services management consultant with the University of Tennessee. Through this position, he worked with most cities of various sizes across Tennessee. His success has earned him many awards, but one of his most recognized accomplishments has been in the development of a state mutual aid system for deploying fire resources to disasters. He has also worked on the national level with FEMA and the International Association of Fire Chiefs to develop mutual aid systems across the country. He is a recipient of the prestigious H.D. Crossnine Award from the Southeastern Association of Fire Chiefs and received a Vice Presidential Citation from the University of Tennessee. This past year, he was awarded the National Association of State Fire Marshals' Olin Greene Outstanding Fire Prevention Service Award.

West has a bachelor's degree in organizational management from Tusculum College and a master's degree in business administration from Lincoln Memorial University. He holds many professional certifications including chief code analyst, certified building and fire inspector, fire investigator, ambulance service administrator, instructor-trainer, and hazardous materials specialist. West is also a graduate of both the Tennessee Government Executive Institute and LEAD Tennessee. He presently serves as vice-chair on the International Code Council's Fire Membership Committee, is a former Board Member for the Tennessee Fire Chiefs Association, Past President of the Tennessee Chapter of the International Association of Arson Investigators, and has previously served on the Board of Directors and as Secretary/Treasurer for the National Association of State Fire Marshals.