AFSA45
STARTED FROM THE BOTTOM
Panelists: Hunter Brendle, Rod DiBona, Chris Johnson, Wayne Weisz
Moderator: Sanjay Oudi
SAN ANTONIO, TX
AFSA
American Fire Sprinkler Association

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Hunter Brendle
Brendle Sprinkler Company, Inc.
AFSA's At-Large Director Hunter Brendle is president of Brendle Sprinkler Company, Inc., based in Montgomery, Ala. He began working in the shop as a teenager, working in the field as a helper and apprentice, and later transitioning into the office. Brendle is a proud third-generation in fire protection. He is past president and current board member of the Alabama Fire Sprinkler Association, board member for the Tony Bice Memorial Golf Tournament, and serves on AFSA's National Convention, Membership, NextGen, and Public Education & Awareness committees. He holds a NICET Level III in Water-Based Systems Layout, Florida Fire Protection Contractor II, and is a graduate of AFSA's Apprenticeship Training Series.
HBrendle@brendlesprinkler.com | 334-270-8571

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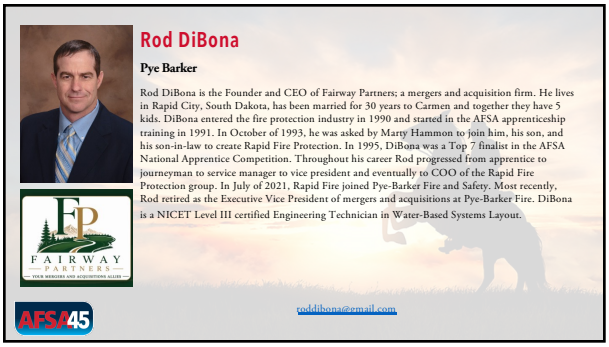
Rod DiBona
Pye Barker
Rod DiBona is the Founder and CEO of Fairway Partners; a mergers and acquisition firm. He lives in Rapid City, South Dakota, has been married for 30 years to Carmen and together they have 5 kids. DiBona entered the fire protection industry in 1990 and started in the AFSA apprenticeship training in 1991. In October of 1993, he was asked by Marty Hammon to join him, his son, and his son-in-law to create Rapid Fire Protection. In 1995, DiBona was a Top 7 finalist in the AFSA National Apprentice Competition. Throughout his career Rod progressed from apprentice to journeyman to service manager to vice president and eventually to COO of the Rapid Fire Protection group. In July of 2021, Rapid Fire joined Pye-Barker Fire and Safety. Most recently, Rod retired as the Executive Vice President of mergers and acquisitions at Pye-Barker Fire. DiBona is a NICET Level III certified Engineering Technician in Water-Based Systems Layout.
FAIRWAY PARTNERS
AFSA45
roddibona@email.com

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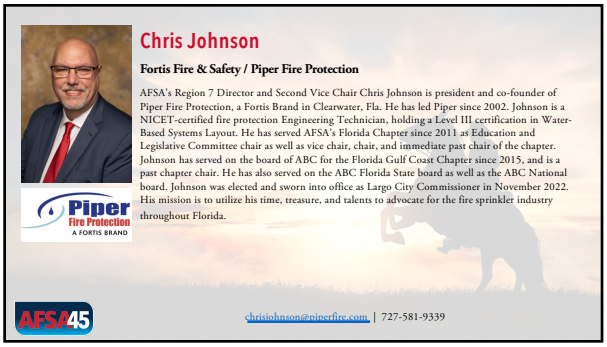
Chris Johnson
Fortis Fire & Safety / Piper Fire Protection
AFSA's Region 7 Director and Second Vice Chair Chris Johnson is president and co-founder of Piper Fire Protection, a Fortis Brand in Clearwater, Fla. He has led Piper since 2002. Johnson is a NICET-certified fire protection Engineering Technician, holding a Level III certification in Water-Based Systems Layout. He has served AFSA's Florida Chapter since 2011 as Education and Legislative Committee chair as well as vice chair, chair, and immediate past chair of the chapter. Johnson has served on the board of ABC for the Florida Gulf Coast Chapter since 2015, and is a past chapter chair. He has also served on the ABC Florida State board as well as the ABC National board. Johnson was elected and sworn into office as Largo City Commissioner in November 2022. His mission is to utilize his time, treasure, and talents to advocate for the fire sprinkler industry throughout Florida.
Piper Fire Protection
A FORTIS BRAND
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chrisjohnson@piperfire.com | 727-581-9339

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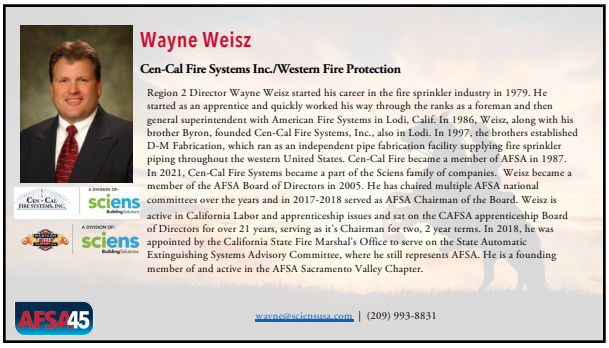
Wayne Weisz
Cen-Cal Fire Systems Inc./Western Fire Protection
Region 2 Director Wayne Weisz started his career in the fire sprinkler industry in 1979. He started as an apprentice and quickly worked his way through the ranks as a foreman and then general superintendent with American Fire Systems in Lodi, Calif. In 1986, Weisz, along with his brother Byron, founded Cen-Cal Fire Systems, Inc., also in Lodi. In 1997, the brothers established D-M Fabrication, which ran as an independent pipe fabrication facility supplying fire sprinkler piping throughout the western United States. Cen-Cal Fire became a member of AFSA in 1987. In 2021, Cen-Cal Fire Systems became a part of the Sciens family of companies. Weisz became a member of the AFSA Board of Directors in 2005. He has chaired multiple AFSA national committees over the years and in 2017-2018 served as AFSA Chairman of the Board. Weisz is active in California Labor and apprenticeship issues and sat on the CAFSA apprenticeship Board of Directors for over 21 years, serving as it's Chairman for two, 2 year terms. In 2018, he was appointed by the California State Fire Marshal's Office to serve on the State Automatic Extinguishing Systems Advisory Committee, where he still represents AFSA. He is a founding member of and active in the AFSA Sacramento Valley Chapter.
Cen-Cal Fire Systems, Inc.
A DIVISION OF sciens
Golden State Fire Protection
A DIVISION OF sciens
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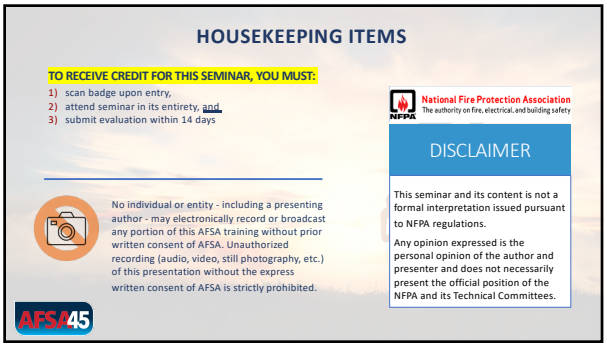
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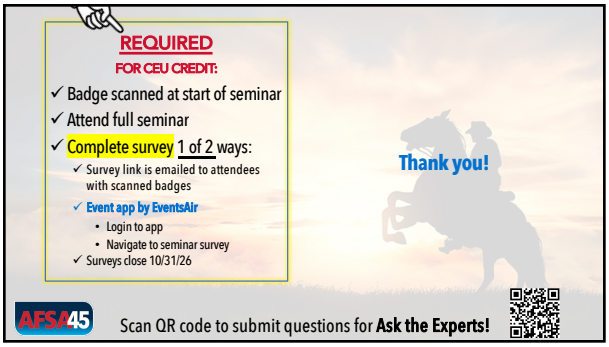
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• Login to app
• Navigate to seminar survey
✓ Surveys close 10/31/26
Thank you!
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Scan QR code to submit questions for Ask the Experts!

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2027 Training Schedule

WEBINARS

1/6	Updates to NFPA 20
1/20	Calculating Pressure Reducing Hose Valves
2/3	Consumer Alert: Nitrogen in Sprinkler Systems
2/17	Reviewing Hydraulic Calculations
3/3	Updates to NFPA 13, 2028 Ed.
3/17	Updates to NFPA 13R & 13D, 2028 Eds.
4/7	Topic Coming Soon
4/21	NFPA 25: Roles & Responsibilities
5/5	Standpipe Flow Test Procedures
5/19	Storage 101
6/2	NFPA Technical Meeting - Voting Guide
6/16	Topic Coming Soon
6/30	Topic Coming Soon
7/7	Updates to NFPA 14, 2027 Edition
7/21	Adjacent Hazards & Design Methods
8/4	Acceptance Testing
8/18	Modifications to Existing Systems
9/22	Topic Coming Soon
10/6	Seismic 101
10/20	Proposed Updates to NFPA 25, 2029 Ed.
11/3	Evaluating Fire Pump Flow Tests
11/17	Top 10 Tech Reviews
12/1	Designing Water Storage Tanks
12/15	Pump Room Layout

PROGRAMS

Feb 9 - Mar 5 Apr 20 - May 14 Aug 3 - Aug 27** Oct 26 - Nov 19	Beginning Design School*
Apr 26 - May 7 Nov 1 - 12	Intermediate Design School*
Feb 8 - 10** Apr 12 - 14 Jul 12 - 14 Oct 11 - 13	Sprinkler Hydraulics Calculations Workshop
Apr 19 - 21 Oct 18 - 20	Advanced Hydraulics Calculations Workshop
Feb 11** Apr 30 Jul 23 Sep 24	Introduction to the Fire Sprinkler Industry
Mar 1 - 3 May 17 - 19 Aug 16 - 18 Oct 18 - 20**	NFPA 25 Essentials Workshop
Jun 7 - 10 Sep 20 - 23	Experienced Inspector Skills Lab
Mar 4 - 5 May 20 - 21 Aug 19 - 20 Oct 21 - 22**	NFPA 25 Fire Pump Workshop
Spring Summer Fall	ITM Inspector Development Program* *This program is 20 months.*

** Hybrid course **At General Air Products Lab, Exton, PA*

AFSA46

September 8-11	Manchester Grand Hyatt San Diego, CA

For More Details Visit:
firesprinkler.org

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Dates subject to change. Programs subject to minimum registrations.

rev 9/14/2026

Virtual Instruction Path (VIP)

for Sprinkler Fitting Apprentices

Level 1 - Begins January 2027

Level 2 - Begins February 2027

Level 3 - Begins January 2027

Level 4 - Begins March 2027

www.firesprinkler.org/VIP

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HANDS-ON WORKSHOPS FOR 2027

FEATURING AFSA'S TRAINING LAB

NFPA 25 Essentials Workshop

Mar | May | Aug | Oct

Description: Understand roles, responsibilities, and NFPA 25 ITM procedures through hands-on testing of wet systems, dry systems, and fire pumps.

NFPA 25 Fire Pump Workshop

Mar | May | Aug | Oct

Description: Develop practical NFPA 25 fire pump ITM skills, including no-flow and full-flow testing, water supply graphing, and performance evaluation.

Introduction to the Fire Sprinkler Industry

Feb | Apr | Jul | Sep

Description: This course is designed for those new to the industry. An introductory, wide-ranging 8-hour course that provides a broad overview of core fire sprinkler industry concepts for those new to the field.

Experienced Inspector Skills Lab NEW

Mar | Sep

Description: Take your ITM expertise beyond the basics. Designed for experienced technicians, this course combines focused classroom instruction with hands-on system lab training to strengthen your application of current NFPA 25 inspection, testing, and maintenance requirements. Refine fire sprinkler testing practices, improve documentation, deliver more consistent service, and help reduce liability while reinforcing knowledge commonly covered on certification exams.

Learn more about AFSA's fire sprinkler lab featuring functional risers, a spray room, fire pumps, and an interactive classroom.

firesprinkler.org/lab