

Conference Program

All Times are in Eastern Time (ET) Program is subject to change



SFPE 2026 Annual Conference & Expo

Society of Fire Protection Engineers (SFPE), the world's leading professional society for fire protection and fire safety engineering, welcomes you to the SFPE Annual Conference & Expo, being held in Atlanta, GA, from October 6-8, 2026.

Participate in two days of live education spotlighting the latest trends, research, solutions for emerging challenges, and technologies transforming the fire protection engineering profession. Join industry experts and enjoy many networking opportunities to connect with your peers. Exhibitors will showcase the latest technologies, products and services currently offered within the industry.

Registration		Expo Hall Hours	
Tuesday, October 6, 2026	12:00 – 7:00 p.m.	Tuesday, October 6, 2026	5:00 – 7:00 p.m.
Wednesday, October 7, 2026	7:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.	Wednesday, October 7, 2026	9:35 a.m. – 4:45 p.m.
Thursday, October 8, 2026	7:30 a.m. – 3:10 p.m.	Thursday, October 8, 2026	10:10 a.m. – 1:25 p.m.

Pre-Conference

Monday, October 5, 2026

9 a.m. - 5 p.m.	SFPE Pre-conference Seminar: Fire and Life Safety Design of Very Tall Buildings: Challenges and Strategies. (Day 1 of 1). Instructors: Carl F. Baldassara, PE, FSFPE, and Ray A. Grill, PE, FSFPE (A separate registration is required)
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Tuesday, October 6, 2026

12:30 - 3 p.m.	Chapter Leadership Forum and ACE Awards This workshop is designed for current and future chapter leaders to connect, network and enhance their communication and leadership skills. SFPE will also recognize SFPE Chapters that demonstrated excellence in contributing to the needs of their members and the Society in the past year.
1 - 3 p.m.	Pre-Conference Seminar: SFPE Ethics Series and Peer Review for Fire Protection Engineers This seminar covers ethics for fire protection engineers, provides an overview of ethics, and explains how engineering practice relates to ethics. It will also explain the ethical obligations of an engineer, the SFPE Code of Ethics, and typical ethical challenges faced in the field. There will also be an exploration of the practices and principles involved in the independent evaluation of engineering work products. All registered attendees will also receive access to the SFPE online on-demand course on this topic and earn a separate Certificate of Attendance for the course. (Registration Required) Instructors: Carl F. Baldassarra, PE, FSFPE, and Ray Grill, P.E., LEED AP, FSFPE
3 - 3:30 p.m.	NETWORKING BREAK: ICE-CREAM SOCIAL (<i>Open to All Attendees</i>)
3:30 - 5 p.m.	Pre-conference Session James Milke, PhD, PE, FSFPE: Smoke Control Challenges in Tall Atria (<i>Open to All Attendees</i>) When the Marriott Marquis in Atlanta was opened in 1985, the atrium was iconic, being one of the highlights of the property. A smoke exhaust system for the atrium and stairwell pressurization was included in the design of the building. These types of systems, now commonplace in such buildings of this type and size, were relatively new developments in the 1980's. Atrium smoke management has changed appreciably over the last 40 years. This presentation will review the changes in the engineering design of atrium smoke management systems. The review will describe how those changes provide opportunities to link the smoke management design with design goals related to the risk profile for these spaces.
5 - 7 p.m.	President's Welcome Reception and Expo Opening (<i>Open to All Attendees</i>)

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SFPE 2026 Annual Conference – Day 1

Wednesday, October 7, 2026

8:00 – 8:20 a.m.	Opening Session Welcome Remarks: Shamim Rashid-Sumar, PE, FSFPE, SFPE President & Chris Jelenewicz, PE, FSFPE, SFPE Chief Executive Officer SFPE 2026 Awards Ceremony: SFPE Bryan Mentoring Award (TBA) SFPE Ahearn Award (TBA) SFPE Lund Award for Professional Recognition (TBA) SFPE Nelson Award for Inspired Service (TBA)
8:20 – 9:05 a.m.	Opening Keynote Chief Roderick M. Smith, Atlanta Fire Rescue Department
9:05 – 9:35 a.m.	General Session: Firefighter Air Replenishment Systems David Rhodes, VP Education FDIC / Group Editor Clarion Fire Rescue Editor in Chief Fire Engineering Standpipes bring water for firefighting throughout buildings however the firefighter air supply is limited to a small cylinder of air carried on their back that only last 15-20 minutes. Moving spare air cylinders require additional dedicated personnel and time to bring to the fire floor. Firefighter Air Replenishment Systems work just like a water standpipe and allow firefighters to quickly refill their air cylinders in the protected stairwells. This technology keeps the firefighters in the fight without losing critical situational awareness and a constant rotation of crews. For engineers, these systems introduce important considerations around pressure regulation, material compatibility, redundancy, and integration with existing life-safety systems, ultimately enhancing building resilience and supporting more efficient emergency response.

9:35 – 10:05 a.m. NETWORKING BREAK IN EXPO HALL

Breakout Tracks (30 minutes)

	Track A Industrial/ Infrastructure	Track B Smoke Control/ Performance-based Design	Track C Adaptive Reuse/ Retrofits	Track D Sponsored
10:05 – 10:35 a.m.	John LeBlanc, FSFPE, FM: Identifying and Mitigating Explosion Hazards in Buildings, an Insurance Perspective	Invited: Pierce Lushinsky, Adam Reis: Design and Commissioning Challenges of Elevator Pressurization Systems: Improving Coordination and Performance	Virginia Charter, PhD, PE, FSFPE & Haejun Park, PhD, PE, Oklahoma State University: Design Considerations for Sprinkler Retrofits: Design Considerations for Sprinkler Retrofits: An Evaluation of Limited Area Sprinkler Systems by Large-scale Burn Tests	SIEMENS
10:40 – 11:10 a.m.	Invited: Jack Poole: Fire Protection and Hazard Mitigation Analysis for Mission Critical Facilities	Madison Di Vico, Simpson Gumpertz & Heger: Selecting Critical Fire Scenarios For Cantilevered Buildings	Karl Wallasch, Dip.-Ing. CEng, MIFireE, PMSFPE, & David Bostelmann, MEng (Hons) CEng MIFireE, Trigon Fire Safety: Challenges and Benefits of a Fire Safety Portfolio Approach	
11:15 – 11:45 a.m.	Andrew Grenier, PE, FSFPE, & RJ Petrey, Coffman Engineers, Inc.: Fire Protection and Life Safety Analysis of an Existing Roadway Tunnel	Invited: Shannon Alvarez: Analysis of Stage Smoke Control Requirements: Evaluating the IBC Vent Area Approach Through FDS	Warren Bonisch, PE, FSFPE & Ervin Cui, PE, PhD, WJE Fire & Life Safety: Rehabilitation of 40-Year-Old Super High Rise	ARMSTRONG 

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Wednesday, October 7, 2026 (cont.)

11:45 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. NETWORKING LUNCH IN EXPO HALL

1:00 – 1:15 p.m.	General Session SFPE 2026 Awards Ceremony SFPE Jensen Award for Committee Service (TBA) SFPE Lucht Award for Contributions to Education (TBA) SFPE Trailblazer Award (TBA) SFPE Spotlight Award (TBA) SFPE Fire Protection Person of the Year (TBA)
1:40 – 2:10 p.m.	General Session: Beyond the Consensus Process: The Evolving Landscape of Single-Exit Stairway Multifamily Code Development Multifamily Code Development Nicholas Ozog, PE, PMSFPE, MS, Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates, Inc. & Kyle Christiansen, PE, PMSFPE, Senez Co. States and jurisdictions are addressing outside pressures and public comment code changes in a manner of different ways. Without passing judgement on a preferred approach, we will present our findings of a comparative review of North American building code requirements for single-exit stairway (SES) multi-family dwelling unit (MFD) buildings in the context of how they came to be. For additional context some governments are addressing code changes specific to SES MFD by making legislative changes outside the typical consensus code development process; while others like the State of Minnesota are commissioning studies to evaluate both the current 'level of safety' in their codes to provide comparative context for any proposed amendments. Since no building can be considered 100 percent safe the decision makers need to make societal risk decisions when amending codes, whether through legislation or an established code development process. Through the SES MFD context, this presentation will show the different adopted code language of these methods and how a data supported risk informed approach (RIA) can provide decision makers with additional information and context.

★ TOP ABSTRACT AWARD ★

Breakout Tracks (30 minutes)

	Track A Case Studies/ Carparks	Track B Cladding/PBD	Track C SFPE/Modeling	Track D Sponsored
2:20 – 2:50 p.m.	Paulina Mejia, & Amelia Pludow, PhD, Jensen Hughes: Integrating Stakeholder Engagement into WUI Fire Engineering: A Regional CWPP Case Study from the San Gabriel Valley, Los Angeles County, California	Gaurav Agarwal, PhD, & Timothee Rodrique, PE, FM: Fire Performance of BIPV Façades and the Impact of Passive Protection Systems	Invited: Michael Crowley, Robert Libby: From 1950 to Now-Has SFPE Made a Difference? SFPE Major Contributions in the Past 75 years.	
2:55 – 3:25 p.m.	Justin Fletcher, PE & Warren Bonisch, PE, FSFPE, Wiss Janney, Elstner Associates, Inc.: EV Charging Station Retrofits in Existing Buildings: Lessons from a Fire and Life Safety Case Study	Haonan Chen, PhD Student, University of Science and Technology of China: Large-scale Experimental Investigation of Fire Spread between Floors with Glass Façade	Olivia Hunt MS, EIT, Jensen Hughes: Estimating the Heat Transfer from an Electric Vehicle Fire using Fire Dynamics Simulator	
3:30 – 4:00 p.m.	Jonathan Hodges, PhD, PMSFPE, UL Research Institutes FSRI: Probabilistic Evaluation of the Structural Consequences of Multi-Vehicle Fires in Carparks	Invited: Sahar Dorosti: Performance Optimization of Foam Fire Suppression Configurations for Industrial Solvent Extraction Operations	Tao Lai: Catastrophe and Risk Solutions: Physics-Based, Extensively Validated Modeling of Large-Scale Urban Fire Spread in the United States	

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Wednesday, October 7, 2026 (cont.)

4:00 – 4:45 p.m.

NETWORKING BREAK IN EXPO HALL & POSTER PRESENTATIONS

4:45 – 5:45 p.m.

General Session

Panel Discussion – *Evolving Fire Protection Strategies for Modern Data Centers*

As data centers continue to grow in scale, complexity, and power density, fire protection approaches are evolving to meet new operational and reliability challenges. This panel will bring together representatives from across the fire protection industry to discuss current trends, lessons learned, and emerging strategies for protecting mission critical facilities. Topics will include suppression system selection, lithium-ion battery considerations, high-density computing environments, water usage concerns, detection technologies, and balancing life safety with business continuity. Attendees will gain practical insights into how the industry is adapting to support the next generation of data center design and operation.

5:45 – 6:30 p.m.

General Session

SFPE 2026 Fellows Award Presentations (TBA)

6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

SFPE Fellows' and Awardees' Reception (Open to All Attendees)

Thursday, October 8, 2026

8:00 – 8:15 a.m.

Welcome & SFPE Foundation Awards

Frederick W. Mowrer Global Scholar Award (TBA)

Student Scholar Awards (TBA)

The Dr. Guylène Proulx, OC Scholarship (TBA)

The Jack Bono Award for Engineering Communication (TBA)

The Arthur B. Guise Medal (TBA)

8:15 – 8:50 a.m.

General Session

SFPE Foundation – 2026 Guise Medal Winner Keynote (TBA)

8:50 – 9:30 a.m.

General Session

Your SFPE Foundation: Donor Recognition, Impact, and Opportunities to Engage in Research, Education, & Outreach

Leslie Marshall, PhD, SFPE Foundation

9:30 – 10:00 a.m.

General Session

Narrowing the Gap: Smaller Aisles and Flue Spaces Under Taller Ceilings

Phil Friday, PE, FSFPE, The Reliable Automatic Sprinkler Co. Inc.

Advances in ceiling-only protection for storage of plastic commodities continues to evolve. This presentation will provide an update to what is state-of-the-art in this important area of fire protection. Although warehouses continue to become more expansive, height is often limited by available ceiling-only Early Suppression Fast Response (ESFR) fire sprinkler protection options. In addition, end-users and developers desire the ability to maximize available storage space inside the building. This presentation explores how the selection of ceiling-level automatic fire sprinkler systems directly influences peak roof deck height, clear height, maximum allowable storage height and overall volumetric storage capacity in warehouse occupancies. Special attention will be given to ESFR (Early Suppression Fast Response) sprinkler systems, which are often the key to unlocking the highest storage potential without the need for in-rack sprinklers. Attendees will gain practical insights into how strategic sprinkler system choices can optimize fire protection while maximizing usable space—all while complying with currently published installation standards.

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Thursday, October 8, 2026 (cont.)

10:00 – 10:30 a.m. NETWORKING BREAK IN EXPO HALL

Breakout Tracks (30 minutes)

	Track A Emerging Technologies	Track B Structural Fire Engineering	Track C SFPE Foundation	Track D Sponsored
10:45 – 11:15 a.m.	Juan Cuevas R, PhD, FM: Thermal Runaway and Fire Dynamics in Lithium-Ion BESS: A Multi-Scale Experimental Study	Tyler Dallas, EIT, & Ata Anvari, PhD, PE, Wiss Janney, Elstner Associates, Inc.: Old Buildings, New Tricks: Structural Fire Engineering in Existing Buildings	Bono Award for Engineering Communication – Winner presentation (TBA) <i>Supported by the SFPE Foundation</i>	
11:20 – 11:50 a.m.	Haejun Park PhD, PE, & Ruiqing Shen, PhD, Oklahoma State University: Assessment of Fire Risk and Extinguishment Protocol of Lithium-Ion Battery Fires in Commercial Aircraft	Young-Geun You, PE, PhD, UL Solutions: Effect of Wood Species on Charring Rate and Firestop System Performance in Cross-Laminated Timber Assemblies	WUI Fire Engineering: Updates from SFPE Foundation & Partners Daniel Gorham, PE, Fire Safety Research Institute & Leslie Marshall, PhD, SFPE Foundation	
11:55 a.m. – 12:25 p.m.	Christian Vogt, MS, UL Fire Safety Research Institute: Performance and Fire Risk of Overpack Materials for Defective, Damaged and Recalled Lithium-Ion Batteries	Zishanul Hussain, PhD Student, University of Maryland, Code Consultants Inc.: Conditions Governing Self-Sustained Smoldering of Timber in Wall Corners of Compartment Fires	A Fire Protection Engineer's Role in Fire Investigations: Past, Present, and Future David Icove, PhD, University of Tennessee – Knoxville and Co-Chair, GCI DAIC Working Group & Leslie Marshall, PhD, SFPE Foundation	

12:10 – 1:25 p.m. NETWORKING LUNCH IN EXPO HALL

1:25 – 1:50 p.m.	General Session 5 under 35 Award Winners Presentations (TBA)
1:50 – 2:50 p.m.	General Session Panel Discussion: Fire Protection Strategies for Retail & Big Box Occupancies Retail and big-box stores present a uniquely challenging fire protection environment—massive floor plates, high ceilings, dense and varied commodity storage, complex egress patterns, and ever-changing layouts driven by merchandising demands. This panel brings together experts to examine how these factors intersect and what it takes to design, evaluate, and maintain effective fire protection systems in these dynamic spaces.

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Thursday, October 8, 2026 (cont.)

2:50 – 3:10 p.m.

NETWORKING BREAK

Breakout Tracks (30 minutes)

	Track A Fire Safety Systems - Industrial	Track B Human Behavior	Track C Fire Safety Topics	Track D SFPE Resources
3:10 – 3:40 p.m.	Invited: Mark Hopkins: Detection for Automated Storage and Retrieval Systems	Raeshawn Kennedy, PE, Goodhead Consulting Engineers: The Influence of Geographic Location and Building Typology on Movement Evacuation Times in Computational Simulation Modeling	Invited: Shangkun Jiang, Xilei Zhao: Wildfire Evacuation Analysis Using Facebook Data: Evidence from Palisades and Eaton Fires	Jonathan Hodges, PhD & Joshua Reichert, PE: Research, Tools, and Methods Standing Committee Update
3:45 – 4:15 p.m.	Invited: Paul Rivers, Nick Johnson: Performance Validation of SF 1230TM Clean Agent Systems in Aviation Hangar Environments: A Methodology for Asset-Centric Fire Protection	Bryan Hoskins PE, PhD, Oklahoma State University: Movement Speeds for Different Stair Geometries	Michael Drury PE, PhD, AISC: Structural Insights for the Design of Passive Fire Protection in Steel-Framed Buildings	Jimmy Jönsson, PE, FSFPE: On-demand Principles of Fire Protection Engineering Course Introduction
4:20 – 4:50 p.m.	Joseph McIntyre, PE, PhD: Fire Detection in Industrial Peanut and Cottonseed Warehouses: Determining Pre-combustion and Combustion Gas Species and Measuring Gas Flow Dynamics in Scale Model Warehouses	Gabrielle Peck PhD, MRSC, FCIA: The Impacts of Smoke Toxicity on Human Behaviour and Decision Making and its Effects on Egress and Performance Based Building Design	Brian O'Connor PE, PMSFPE, NFPA: NFPA 800: A Lifecycle Approach to Battery Safety	Stephen Dale, PE & Randy Day, PE: SFPE PE Exam Review Course and Resources
4:55 – 5:25 p.m.	Closing Keynote <i>Invited</i>			
5:25 – 5:30 p.m.	Invitation to 2027 Annual Conference in Minneapolis <i>SFPE President and a SFPE Minnesota Chapter Representative</i>			