



# OFFICE OF THE ILLINOIS STATE FIRE MARSHAL

JB Pritzker, Governor  
Matt Perez, State Fire Marshal

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
Tuesday, May 14, 2019

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## State Fire Marshal Honors Fallen Firefighters

*Firefighters gather for the 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Illinois Fallen Firefighter Memorial  
and Fire Fighting Medal of Honor Awards*

SPRINGFIELD - Firefighters from across the state gathered in Springfield to remember fallen firefighters who have given their lives in the line of duty. The 26th Annual Illinois Fallen Firefighter Memorial and Fire Fighting Medal of Honor Awards Ceremony also honored firefighters for heroically serving their communities with courage, pride, and honor.

"Our firefighters face great danger each time they respond to the scene of an emergency," said Fire Marshal Matt Perez. "Today, we remember those we have lost and recognize the courage and dedication of those firefighters who went above and beyond to keep the residents of Illinois safe."

Firefighter Juan Bucio of the Chicago Fire Department, who died in the line of duty, was honored during the ceremonies for his heroic sacrifice as his family was presented with the Duty Death Gold Badge by Fire Marshal Perez.

Eight firefighters were honored with the Medal of Valor award. It is given by the state of Illinois to a firefighter for an act of heroism or bravery that clearly demonstrated courage and dedication in the face of danger while in the performance of duty. Recipients include:

- Firefighter/Paramedic Bryan Lowery, Calumet City Fire Department
- Firefighter/EMT Daniel Ramos, Chicago Fire Department
- Lieutenant Daniel Manning, Dolton Fire Department
- Firefighter Aaron Cavender, Momence Fire Protection District
- Firefighter Adrian Cavender, Momence Fire Protection District
- Deputy Chief Michael Vissering, Northern Tazewell Fire Protection District
- Firefighter/Paramedic Eric Watkins, Plainfield Fire Protection District
- Captain Darin Peterson, St. Charles Fire Department



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Three firefighters received the Firefighter Excellence Award for an act of service in the line of duty, demonstrating excellence and professionalism in service to the citizens of the state of Illinois. Recipients include:

### *Libertyville Fire Department*

- Lieutenant Mike Hall
- Assistant Fire Chief Bob Key
- Deputy Fire Chief Mike Pakosta

In addition, four units received the Firefighter Excellence "Unit Citation" Awards for an act of service in the line of duty, demonstrating excellence, teamwork, and professionalism in service to the citizens of the state of Illinois. Recipients include:

### *Dolton Fire Department, Incident #18-3344*

- Engineer Jermel Brim
- Lieutenant Jeremy Cole
- Lieutenant David DuVall

### *Dolton Fire Department, Incident #18-3555*

- Firefighter Anton Downing
- Engineer Robert Triemstra

### *McLeansboro Fire Department, Incident #18-78*

- Firefighter/Police Officer Mathew Bryson
- Firefighter Lukas Dale
- Assistant Chief Jim Morris
- Firefighter Walter Rexing
- Firefighter Nathan Taylor

### *Momence Fire Protection District, Incident #18-59*

- Engineer Mike Keen
- Lieutenant Jordan Lee
- Engineer Matthew Sharkey



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Five firefighters received the Certificate of Recognition which acknowledges those nominated for their dedication to the principles and traditions of the fire service, to the state and the community, with honor and integrity. Recipients include:

*Centralia Fire Department*

- Captain Michael Calabrese
- Lieutenant Michael Gelsinger
- Lieutenant Chad Gormann
- Chief John Lynch
- Firefighter James Sneddon

The awards presented today recognized heroic actions during 2018. Nominations were reviewed and winners selected by the Illinois Fire Fighting Medal of Honor Committee.

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