

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

West Central Fire Protection District to Honor New Tanker with Traditional Wet-Down and Push-In Ceremony

ARCOLA, IN – July 10, 2025 – The West Central Fire Protection District (WCFD) is proud to announce a special ceremony to welcome its newest apparatus, a 2025 Freightliner tanker truck, into service. Fire Chief Gale Stelzer II and members of the WCFD will host a traditional wet-down and push-in ceremony on August 2, 2025, at 10:00 AM, honoring a fire department tradition that dates back to the 1800s.

The event will begin with the new tanker, to be known as Tanker 84, being ceremonially sprayed by the existing Tanker 83, symbolizing a "passing of the torch." This "wet-down" ritual originates from the 19th century, when horse-drawn pumpers were washed alongside their horses before being manually pushed back into the firehouse bay by firefighters. Following the wet-down, Chief Stelzer, WCFD members, and local community members will participate in the push-in, guiding the new apparatus into its bay for the first time.

"We are proud to have this new piece of equipment to help us better serve the citizens of Aboite and Lake Townships," said Fire Chief Gale Stelzer II. "But it takes more than a shiny new fire truck. It takes the men and women who make up our department, who give of themselves so selflessly, to protect our community."

The new \$424,912 tanker, which boasts a 3,000-gallon water tank, meets the newest emissions standards, and features the latest in crew safety innovations, was funded through a federal grant secured by the Arcola Volunteer Fire Department. It will be permanently housed at the Arcola Fire Station. Fire engines traditionally have a 25-year lifespan, with 15 years on active duty and 10 years on reserve status.

"I think it's important to introduce the community to the new apparatus as ultimately they own it," Chief Stelzer added. "We want to ensure they understand the value and improved service they'll receive from this piece of equipment."

The public is cordially invited to join this traditional push-in ceremony at the Arcola Fire Station, located at 11329 Railroad Street, Arcola, IN.

Event Details At A Glance:

- What: Wet-Down and Push-In Ceremony for New Tanker Truck (Tank 84)
- When: Thursday, August 2, 2025, at 10:00 AM
- Where: Arcola Fire Station, 11329 Railroad Street, Arcola, IN

- Who: West Central Fire Protection District, Fire Chief Gale Stelzer II, and Community Members

About West Central Fire Protection District:

The West Central Fire Protection District is dedicated to providing fire suppression, emergency medical services, and public safety education to the citizens of Aboite and Lake Townships. Comprised of selfless men and women, the department is committed to protecting life, property, and the environment through rapid and professional response.

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