BLACKSTONE VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

318 CHURCH STREET ◆ BLACKSTONE, VIRGINIA 23824-1602

September 23, 2026

Mayor Lafayette Dickens
Town of Blackstone
100 West Elm Street
Blackstone, Virginia 23824

Dear Mayor Dickens and Town Council,

I am requesting that you approve updating the Sole Source document that you adopted dated August, 2025 for work on the Burn Building at the Blackstone Fire Training Grounds. The current sole source document covers all thermal protection and temperature monitoring systems for the building.

In December, 2025, the National Fire Protection Association updated NFPA 1400 which provides guidelines for construction, repairs, and maintenance for all Fire Training Structures. The new standard expands its coverage from individual components to looking at the building as an entire system. It includes not only the thermal protection and temperature monitoring system components but also adds ventilation flow paths, doors, and compartmentation of the entire building. It also highly recommends using only engineers/contractors who have live fire training structure experience and expertise.

SRG, Inc. has been doing a majority of the work on the Blackstone Burn Building for the last twenty years. When we have bid projects, they are usually the low bid. They are one of the few engineers/contractors in Virginia who have the necessary live fire training experience and expertise. The last time we submitted an RFP, they were almost $5000 cheaper than the next closest bid (3/2026). For the current project we are working on, their bid is at least $10,000 cheaper than the next closest bid (oral). SRG, Inc. does work all over Virginia, North Carolina, and Virginia and they specialize in Burn Buildings. I have talked with other fire departments across the state including South Hill, Farmville, Buckingham, Gloucester, Blacksburg, Fauquier County, Henry County, and Loudoun County. Their work is always very satisfactory.

Please approve this Sole Source Document at the next Town Council Meeting so that we can insure we are using a qualified engineer/contractor for our Burn Building projects.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to a favorable reply.

Sincerely,

Lee Williams,
Assistant Fire Chief

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Sole Source Documentation for Repairs and Maintenance for the Blackstone Fire Training Burn Building (Lee Williams)

- The 2026 edition of NFPA 1400, Standard on Fire Service Training was prepared by the Technical Committees on Fire Service Training and Facilities for Fire Training and Associated Props. It was issued by the Standards Council on November 19,2025 and approved as an American National Standard on December 9, 2025.
- A global change to all NFPA documents will be the amendment to the term "Fire Behavior." This is being replaced with "Fire Dynamics" to reinforce that fire does not behave, rather it is influenced by the dynamic relationship between the influences of fuel, heat, ventilation and compartmentation.
- New minimum requirements for training structures and props are updated to ensure safety and ensure any necessary retroactive compliance. These include building classification of structures specifically built for fire training, along with roof loading requirements are now addressed.
- The new standard addresses minimum design, construction, and maintenance requirements for fire training centers, fire training structures and props. Repairs and maintenance should be supervised by an engineer/contractor with live fire training structure experience and expertise.
- A Fire Training Structure is a structure that is utilized for conducting fire, rescue, hazmat, or related training evolutions on a repetitive basis whether including live fire or not.
- The Building Code does not address the unique and specific requirements for specialized fire training structures, props, and systems.
- Structural components in burn rooms and all structural components supporting, enclosing, and bracing burn rooms and structural components outside burn rooms that are exposed to flame impingement, fire extension, and heat from training fires shall be constructed of noncombustible materials.

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- Live fire training structures shall be designed by a licensed design professional to meet the structural requirements of the building code for materials, vertical loads, lateral loads, long-term loads, permanent foundations, and stability.
- All components in burn rooms and in areas outside burn rooms that are exposed to flame impingement, fire extension, and heat from training fires shall be designed for exposure to high temperatures, high volumes of water, thermal shock, steam, expansion and contraction, and other project and site-specific design considerations.
- Load bearing structural elements that will be exposed to temperatures exceeding 350 degrees, whether in or out of a burn room shall be protected with a thermal lining or other thermal protection system to keep temperatures at the face of the structural elements at or below 350 degrees.
- If visible structural defects are found such as but not limited to cracks, rust, spalls, or warps in structural floors, columns, beams, walls, or metal panels, the AHJ shall have a follow up evaluation conducted by a licensed professional engineer with live fire training structure experience and expertise.
- An interlocked temperature monitoring system that measures temperatures within the live fire training structure shall be installed in each burn room.
- The Temperature Monitoring System in the Blackstone Fire Training Facility is designed as a system in coordination with the CMU walls, Thermal Linings, Doors, Windows, and Vertical Ventilation shafts which make up the thermal flow paths of the building itself.

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To Lee Williams:
Blackstone Fire
08/23/2026

The DAQ100 temperature monitoring system is a proprietary temperature monitoring system installed in live fire training structures solely by SRG Inc. The system is not for sale to the public, contractors, or municipalities. SRG only offers the DAQ series with installation, testing, and training Any modifications to the system by anyone other than SRG Inc., including the recorder, control panel, wiring, or sensors, will jeopardize the system integrity, warranty, and existing calibration. In addition, proprietary inspection and testing procedures are used to ensure that each sensor is reading properly prior to use. The inclusion of live burn testing for newly installed systems and upgrades adds to the overall system reliability and is part of the offering. Extensive training on the complete DAQ-100 system is only performed by SRG. Using the DAQ-100 system without our proprietary training course is not recommended. The system shall be tested and verified in proper working order by SRG Inc. after any other building repairs are made. Scheduled testing and maintenance are essential to achieving useful measurements and high reliability. Training without a minimum of annual service is highly discouraged. Any work performed on the system, including the thermal lining by anyone other than SRG Inc. nullifies existing warranties and calibrations. Please consult SRG Inc. about further service, repairs, upgrades, or ongoing training requirements.

Sincerely,

Kenneth C. Sloneker

Kenneth C. Sloneker, Pres. M.E