



News Release

VDOF 18012
May 24, 2018

Contact:

Prior to May 30: Michelle Stoll 434-220-9098 (o); 434-282-4014 (c) Michelle.stoll@dof.virginia.gov
Or Fred Turck 757-334-2695 fred.turck@dof.virginia.gov
From May 30 – June 2: Incident Information Officer 434-547-3421

Note to Editors and Reporters: If you're interested in visiting the Virginia Wildland Fire Academy and following up on this story or any other aspects of the Academy, please contact Patrick Murphy, lead PIO, 434-547-3421.

Virginia Department of Forestry Hosts 18th Virginia Interagency Wildfire Academy

Firefighters and emergency responders will begin arriving at Longwood University Wednesday, May 30, for the annual Virginia Interagency Wildfire Academy, hosted by the Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOF). During the training academy participants will learn – both in the classroom and the field - how to combat wildfires and complex, large disasters. The training will familiarize emergency responders with the Incident Command System, which is the framework used to respond and manage disasters.

"The training academy allows wildland firefighting professionals from across the state and many other states the opportunity to develop the skills needed to keep Virginia and their home states and communities safe from wildfire," said VDOF Fire and Emergency Response Branch Director John Miller.

The nine classes offered through the Academy are accredited by the National Wildfire Coordination Group and are taught by many instructors from many federal and state agencies.

-more-

The Academy hosts approximately 300 students from six states. They come from various agencies and bring diverse experience to the event. Students include emergency responders from paid and volunteer fire departments, as well as state and federal agencies from Virginia and from around the nation.

“Preparation is key when it comes to wildfire,” says Miller. “There is an old saying, ‘Train as you fight, fight as you train,’ and that is very true. Safety is paramount in wildfire and emergency response. Safety of those we are protecting and safety of the responders themselves.” Safety begins with training, and it is for that reason VDOF, its resources and many partners are committed to this valuable training opportunity.

-end-

The Virginia Department of Forestry protects and develops healthy, sustainable forest resources for Virginians. Headquartered in Charlottesville, the Agency has forestry staff members assigned to every county to provide citizen service and public safety protection across the Commonwealth, which it’s been doing now for more than 100 years. VDOF is an equal opportunity provider.

With nearly 16 million acres of forestland and more than 108,000 Virginians employed in forestry, forest products and related industries, Virginia forests provide an overall economic output of more than \$21 billion annually.