



NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD  
**Investigative Hearing**

Norfolk Southern Railway general merchandise freight train 32N  
derailment with subsequent hazardous material release and fires,  
in East Palestine, Ohio, on February 3, 2023

<b>GROUP</b>	<b>A</b>
<b>EXHIBIT</b>	
7	

Agency / Organization

**East Palestine Fire Department**

Title

**Biography of Keith A. Drabick**

# East Palestine Fire Department

Keith Drabick  
Fire Chief

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## BIOGRAPHY OF FIRE CHIEF KEITH DRABICK

Keith A. Drabick currently serves as the Fire Chief for the Village of East Palestine Ohio. Chief Drabick has 37 years' experience in the Emergency Services field. Originally from rural Western Pennsylvania, he started his career in a small volunteer fire department. He began taking classes to further his career in both EMS and Fire related categories. In the early 1990's he obtained his EMT, ProBoard FFI & FFII along with becoming a Pennsylvania Fire Instructor. He went on to obtain his Paramedic and continued to obtain certifications in the technical rescue and haz-mat fields. He progressed his way through the ranks with experience and education to hold the position of Assistant Chief for a local fire department and Chief for a local EMS service. During his tenor as Chief, the volunteer EMS service was transitioned to a fully staffed career EMS service. He also served as a member of the PA Regional 4 EMS Strike team. In 2009 he left Western Pennsylvania to pursue a position as a career firefighter/paramedic with Horry County Fire Rescue (HCFR) in South Carolina, where he progressed through the ranks to the position of Captain assigned to the Special Operations Division Heavy Rescue 2. He was a member of the County's Haz-Mat team for his entire career at HCFR. He transitioned to the Training Academy for the last 5 years of his career there, along with holding the rank of Acting Battalion Chief. Chief Drabick oversaw multiple career recruit academies along with teaching multiple specialized and technical rescue courses to recruits and career members assigned to the special operations teams.

During his time at HCFR he went back to college to obtain an Associate's Degree in Emergency Medical Technology, a Bachelor's Degree in Fire Science and Administration, and a Master's Degree in Public Administration with an emphasis on Emergency Management. He attended the Coastal Carolina University Officers Development program with successful completion along with graduating from the South Carolina Firefighters Association Leadership Institute in 2019. Chief Drabick became a member of the South Carolina US&R Team going on several deployments throughout his time there. He also became an adjunct instructor for the South Carolina State Fire Academy and for Horry Georgetown Technical College as an EMT and Paramedic instructor. Training has always been a passion and means of satisfaction for him. The reward in sharing knowledge and watching students' progress into successful careers has been the driving force behind him.

In February of 2022, Chief Drabick accepted the position of Fire Chief with the Village of East Palestine Ohio. East Palestine is a small community of approximately 4700 residents. The department covers approximately 37 square miles and approximately 9000 residents between the village and other contracted coverage areas, providing both fire and EMS coverage, averaging approximately 1500 calls per year. The East Palestine Fire Department is a combination department, primarily volunteer paid per call, with 38 members and two stations.

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*DO YOUR JOB\*TREAT PEOPLE RIGHT\*GIVE ALL OUT EFFORT\*HAVE ALL IN ATTITUDE*