

SPRING 2026

Inside THE Diamond

AMEREX

INNOVATING
TODAY.
PROTECTING
TOMORROW.

Quality is Behind the Diamond®



A Letter from Harrison Bishop

A forward-thinking company should always be evolving—strengthening capabilities, anticipating customer needs and setting the pace for the industry. If you have spent time at our Trussville headquarters, you have likely seen that commitment firsthand. Innovation at Amerex is not a project; it is a discipline woven into how we design, build and support products. Our teams continue to examine our processes, elevate our technology and expand our product road map with purpose and clarity.

This focus has only grown stronger with the addition of Garth Legvold, Engineering Director (page 13). Garth stepped in with a history of technical expertise, problem-solving and a dedication to Amerex-level quality. His fresh perspective and new ideas build on our foundation—sharpening processes, improving alignment across product categories and supporting the team as we scale and modernize.

products and processes to meet the highest expectations for safety and quality.

Darcy Davidson's approach (page 18) reminds us that innovation is not limited to equipment and engineering. It is equally powerful when applied to how we show up through education and outreach. Darcy's work in Carlsbad, California, is redefining what prevention-focused leadership can achieve. Her award-winning model reinforces a truth we deeply value at Amerex: Strong safety practices begin long before an emergency ever occurs.

Another example of that people-forward mindset is United Fire's long-standing dedication to meeting customer needs with integrity (page 20). Its story underscores how staying grounded in purpose and focused on people can create meaningful, lasting impact in any community.

This issue also highlights Amerex teams doing what they do best: showing up with heart, leading with



Harrison Bishop
PRESIDENT AND CEO

We are equally proud of the work our team is doing within our own community. Gidget Yeager was elected President of the Executive Women International Birmingham Chapter (page 5), and Team Amerex supported conservation efforts with the spirit and camaraderie that define this company at the Cahaba River Frydown (page 7).

The work we do is stronger because of our team members, our partners and the commitment we share to advancing fire protection. We hope we will have the opportunity to connect with you at one of the upcoming NAFED conferences.

As we look ahead, our focus remains steadfast: to innovate responsibly, serve with excellence and build solutions that meet the moment. We are grateful for you and look forward to all 2026 has to offer. 🌟

“ ... our focus remains steadfast: to innovate responsibly, serve with excellence and build solutions that meet the moment. ”

Grounded in responsibility, every improvement must also reflect our commitment to environmental stewardship. In this issue, you will read about the environmental team and the standards guiding how we operate (page 10). Their leadership ensures progress and sustainability move forward hand in hand—shaping

confidence and representing our brand with excellence (page 4). From showcasing our EN 17446-certified kitchen system at HostMilano to strengthening key partnerships at the Association of the United States Army Annual Meeting & Exposition in Washington, D.C., our team continues to make an impact on the global stage.

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SPRING 2026



Tad Halcomb showcases the high-performance Z-Series fire extinguishers during the filming of our latest product video. Watch the full demo on the Amerex YouTube channel—QR code at right.



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Amerex Showcases Innovation at HostMilano 2025

In October 2025, members of the Amerex team traveled to Milan, Italy, to participate in HostMilano—a premier global exhibition for the catering and hospitality industry. The event provided an excellent opportunity to connect with professionals from around the world, exchange ideas and highlight the capabilities of the Amerex kitchen protection system.

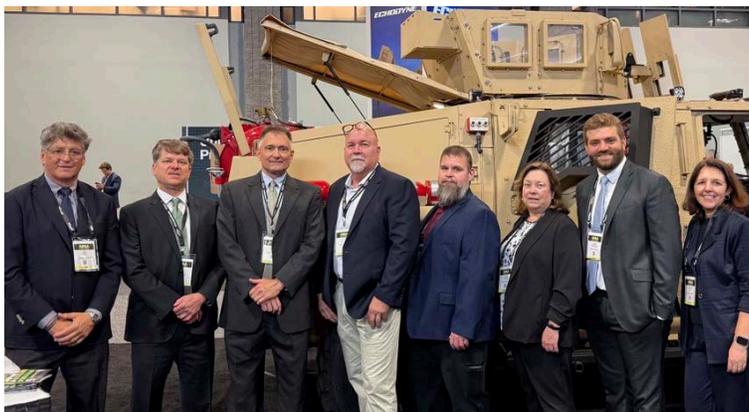
A major point of conversation throughout the show was Amerex's recent achievement of the EN 17446 certification for our KP systems—an exciting milestone that underscores our commitment to innovation and safety.



LEFT TO RIGHT: Jay Ghelani, Austin Shiver, Ben Pitts, Jacob Johnsey, Harrison Bishop, Susan Ray, Mark Fenton and Steve Wilkinson

Connecting With Key Defense Partners at AUSA in D.C.

Last fall, the Amerex team attended the Association of the United States Army (AUSA) Annual Meeting & Exposition in Washington, D.C., representing Amerex as a National Partner exhibitor. The event offered a valuable opportunity for our team to engage with key contacts, explore ongoing initiatives and discuss potential new projects across the expansive 300,000-square-foot exhibit hall.



LEFT TO RIGHT: Ben Pitts, Chris Nichols, Ken Mier, Tad Halcomb, Dan Besaw, Angie Littleton, Conner Feemster and Susan Ray

CalSafe 2025

Garth Embree and Jamie Knowles represented Amerex at CalSafe 2025, engaging with a wide range of customers throughout the event. The show provided valuable opportunities to strengthen existing relationships and connect with new partners in the fire protection industry. Their participation helped reinforce Amerex's commitment to supporting industry safety and innovation.



LEFT TO RIGHT: Garth Embree and Jamie Knowles

Gidget Yeager Named President of EWI Birmingham Chapter

Gidget Yeager, Executive Assistant and Sales Administrator, was recently named President of the Executive Women International (EWI) Birmingham Chapter for the 2025–2026 term. Gidget was nominated by the chapter and graciously accepted the role, continuing her remarkable journey of leadership within EWI.

From her time as Programs Director to Vice President and now President, Gidget has consistently demonstrated what true leadership looks like—serving others, lifting people up and advancing the mission of EWI. She leads by example, with integrity, humility and a genuine commitment to making every space better for those around her.

“Having served together in the organization with Gidget for several years, I couldn’t be prouder of her for stepping into this role,” says Amerex Credit Manager and EWI member Linda Cordor. “Her dedication, compassion and ability to lead with heart inspire everyone around her. She will make an incredible impact as President and continue to elevate the mission of EWI.”

Looking ahead, Gidget’s focus is clear: EWI is more than a network; it’s a community built on integrity, excellence, respect and partnership. Her goals for the year include strengthening member engagement, supporting professional and personal development, and expanding programs like the Reading Rally and scholarship initiatives that create a lasting impact. As Gidget says, this year is about cheering for each other’s success, lifting as we climb and creating a ripple effect that brightens the world for everyone.



Gidget Yeager and Kelli Nutting

Amerex Engages With Industry Leaders at Annual Meeting



LEFT TO RIGHT: Susan Ray, Derek Wester, Harrison Bishop, Ben Pitts, Jamie Knowles and Brayden Banks

Amerex participated in the Fire Equipment Manufacturers’ Association annual meeting in Phoenix last fall, joining industry colleagues to discuss key regulatory and legislative issues shaping the fire protection sector. Conversations included updates from the General Services Administration (GSA) on Department of Defense (DoD) and National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) implementation, along with developments in state fire codes.

The group also reviewed Vermont’s new Household Hazardous Waste Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) program and explored updates to educational materials to ensure stakeholders have access to the most current resources.

During the event, the organization recognized Darcy Davidson with the Fire Equipment Manufacturers’ Association Fire Safety Advocate Award for her contributions to fire safety leadership (see page 18).

Stan Vining Receives 2025 IT Excellence Award

Amerex IS Security Administrator Stan Vining was recently honored with this award by parent company McWane, recognizing his outstanding contributions and long-standing dedication to the organization. His leadership, professionalism and commitment to excellence have made a meaningful impact across teams and initiatives. This achievement reflects both his personal accomplishments and the company's continued pursuit of high standards. We congratulate Stan on this well-deserved recognition.



Secret Agent Giveaways



What started out as a desire to create something fun in anticipation of Halloween has grown into a social media giveaway for Amerex. Nancy Heard created an orange extinguisher with the agent being "Pumpkin Spice" and secretly placed it on the Amerex front desk counter in mid-October. However, within 10 minutes the secret was blown, as folks figured out it must have been Nancy.

A photo was posted to social media, and it received quite a few "I want one!" comments. Next came an eggnog extinguisher for the Christmas holiday, and a chocolate extinguisher for Valentine's Day turned into a social media giveaway in February. What agent will come next? Stay tuned to find out! Who will win the giveaways? Keep checking Amerex social media and follow directions for your chance to win one! 



The chocolate Valentine's Day extinguisher created social media excitement.

Team Amerex Serves Up a Winning Catch at the Cahaba River Frydown

Last fall the Amerex team reeled in another successful year at the 2025 Cahaba River Frydown, held at Cahaba Brewing Company. This annual event, hosted by the Cahaba River Society, brings together local teams, businesses and community members for a friendly (and tasty) competition, all in support of protecting one of Alabama’s most biodiverse natural treasures.

The Amerex Frydown crew began practicing six weeks before the big day, meeting weekly to test catfish recipes and side dishes. After plenty of taste-testing and teamwork, the winning menu featured a golden, crispy fried catfish paired with freshly cut potato chips with a signature twist that helped them stand out from the crowd.

That twist? The homemade cilantro chutney, affectionately nicknamed “Green Magic.” This flavorful creation earned them the “Fish with an Attitude” award, recognizing the most creative and imaginative dish of the event. But

the excitement didn’t stop there! The fish was also voted “Crowd Favorite” by attendees, who cast their votes throughout the day.

In addition to serving up great food, the Amerex team found a fun new way to raise money for the Cahaba River Society. Visitors to the Amerex booth could try their luck at a “Flip-A-Flame” human slot machine, where matching three icons meant taking home a prize. The game was a hit and created countless laughs and smiles, all while supporting a cause close to our hearts.

The Cahaba River Society, now part of the Cahaba River Coalition, continues to lead important work to preserve, protect and educate the public about the river’s ecological importance.

From frying fish to flipping flames, the Amerex team is always honored to be part of events that celebrate community, creativity and conservation.



ABOVE: “Hook, Line & Tater”
BELOW: Jay Ghelani, Riley-Kate Justice, Nancy Heard and Angie Krumtinger manning the Flip-A-Flame booth



BELOW RIGHT, LEFT TO RIGHT: Alex Hydrick, Jay Ghelani, Jacob Johnsey, Mexi Green, Riley-Kate Justice, Brayden Banks, Regina Lewis, Brett Partain, Tiffany Hull, Lanika Johnson, Kendall Pate, Mike Krumtinger (in back), Angie Krumtinger, Roderick McIntyre and Nick Dalton
NOT PICTURED: Gidget Yeager



Amerex Honored for Community Service

Amerex was recognized for community service by the *Birmingham Business Journal* (BBJ) at its 2025 Manufacturing Awards. Honorees are selected through an independent editorial review based solely on their achievements and contributions to their organizations and local communities, without influence from commercial interests.

Earlier in 2025, with support from Chairman Phillip McWane, Amerex partnered with the city of Trussville to build an inclusive sports field, donating \$500,000 to ensure children and adults of all abilities have a space to play. Their commitment to protecting lives extends beyond fire safety to investing in projects that strengthen and uplift the community. Amerex employees also volunteer with organizations such as Habitat for Humanity, Arc, the Cahaba River Society, local schools and more.

Amerex accepted the award at the Manufacturing Awards luncheon, where several team members who actively participate in community service proudly represented the company. Their presence underscored Amerex's ongoing dedication to making a meaningful impact in the Birmingham area.



LEFT TO RIGHT: Eric Reed, Jacy Whitaker, Joel Welker, (Publisher and President—BBJ), Gidget Yeager, Linda Cordor, Nancy Heard and Chris Thomas

Amerex Holiday Toy Drive

In December, Amerex celebrated the season by hosting a festive holiday breakfast where employees were encouraged to wear their tackiest holiday sweaters and bring a toy to share in the spirit of giving. Amerex employees collected new toys for children of all ages in support of the Trussville Fire and Rescue Christmas for Kids program. In addition to the toy donations, Amerex made a monetary contribution to further support the program and the families it serves.



Community Cheer

The Amerex team helped make the season bright in Trussville over the holidays with a festive booth at the Chamber of Commerce's annual



Christmas parade. Representing Amerex with holiday spirit, Chris Thomas—better known as “Rex”—and Riley-Kate Justice greeted families along the parade route.

With big smiles and plenty of energy, they handed out candy and cheerful Amerex coloring pages to excited kids. Their enthusiasm showcased Amerex's commitment to being an active, positive presence in the Trussville community. 



Amerex Welcomes New Vehicle Systems Sales Manager

Amerex recently welcomed Evan Cupples as our new Sales Manager of Vehicle Systems. The role brings together deep technical knowledge and customer-focused communication.

Based just outside of Charlotte, North Carolina, Evan began his career in motorsports. Growing up around engines and racing, he supported race teams at the track, often serving as the point person responsible for engine performance at the NASCAR level. The work required calm decision-making, technical confidence and accountability—skills that seamlessly translate to Amerex vehicle fire suppression systems.

As Evan's family grew, he began looking for an opportunity that would continue to challenge him technically while allowing him to be more present at home. Eventually, that search led him to Amerex.

"Evan brings a rare combination of understanding complex systems at a fundamental level and knowing how to talk about them clearly and confidently," says Bill Jolbert, Director of Sales, Amerex Vehicle Systems. "His background, mindset and work ethic make him a great fit for our team."

Evan quickly recognized how this industry isn't one someone can just step into. He credits the patience, mentorship and genuine investment in his success as key factors in a smooth transition into this niche market. "It's clear people here want me to succeed, not just for the company, but for myself," he says.

Outside of work, Evan channels his competitive drive into motocross, a passion he shares with his family. The discipline and preparation required mirror the values he brings to his role: showing up ready, taking pride in presentation and putting in the work to perform at a high level.

We're excited Evan is part of the team and look forward to what he will bring to our vehicle systems partners.



New Northwest Territory Manager

From the start of his career, Kyle Watson's approach to every job has been shaped by hard work and hands-on expertise. Now joining Amerex as Northwest Territory Manager, he brings practical industry knowledge, field experience and a people-first mindset to supporting customers across the region.

Raised in Oregon, Kyle learned early what it means to show up and do the job right. His grandfather built houses, his father worked for the city of Eugene and his mother served as a dealer investigator with the Oregon DMV. That environment instilled a strong work ethic—one that followed him from college baseball into a career rooted in fire protection and life safety.

Kyle began on the service side of the industry, gaining familiarity with extinguishers and suppression equipment before moving into a customer-facing role. That transition sharpened his ability to communicate clearly, solve problems in real time and build trust with customers. Honing these skills naturally led him toward sales and territory leadership.

Based out of Springfield, OR, Kyle recently worked as a Fire Suppression Sales Technician for National Extinguisher Service. In addition to providing customers with on-site product education, he evaluated business opportunities for growth throughout Oregon.

His interest in Amerex was driven by product confidence. Having worked with Amerex equipment early in his career, Kyle knew he could stand behind the brand's reliability, performance and long-term value.

Outside of work, Kyle and his wife are raising a growing family, with a second daughter arriving this summer. When time allows, he enjoys being outdoors, including hiking, fishing and hunting.

At his core, Kyle wants partners to know they can rely on him. "Kyle will be a great addition to the team," says Ben Pitts, Vice President – Sales & Marketing. "Just like it is for Amerex, hard work isn't just a talking point for him. It's a standard." 

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

*Built Into
Every Process
at Amerex*

In fire protection manufacturing, performance and reliability are nonnegotiable. At Amerex, another standard guides each decision:

environmental responsibility. From the earliest design conversations to daily production on the floor, our teams take a deliberate and disciplined approach to minimizing environmental impact while meeting the rigorous demands of compliance, safety and quality.

That responsibility is led by a small but highly specialized team whose efforts touch every corner of our operations: Chuck Freind, Environmental Manager; Hunter Williams, Environmental Engineer; and Angie Keith, Environmental Technician.

A PROACTIVE APPROACH TO ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE

Chuck has spent nearly two decades ensuring the company remains ahead of evolving regulations while helping team members understand how their daily work—and their daily life—affects the world beyond the facility walls.

“My role is really about awareness,” he says. “Not just that we’re compliant with laws and regulations, it’s also about helping all of our employees think about and make choices that benefit the environment both outside and inside of the walls of Amerex. My team and I are here to help them understand how what they do here at our facility every day affects the environment. Air emissions, waste streams, recyclability, all of it.”

Amerex products are subject to global regulations such as Europe’s REACH regulation (Registration, Evaluation, Authorization and Restriction of Chemicals) and Restriction of Hazardous Substances Directive (RoHS), as well as California’s Proposition 65. These guidelines shape how materials are selected, tested and documented. For distributors and end users, the goal is confidence in products designed with foresight rather than reactive fixes.

KEEP IT CLEAN

“My role is really about awareness. Not just that we’re compliant with laws and regulations, it’s also about helping all of our employees think about and make choices that benefit the environment both outside and inside of the walls of Amerex. My team and I are here to help them understand how what they do here at our facility every day affects the environment. Air emissions, waste streams, recyclability, all of it.”

CHUCK FREIND

Hunter sees that foresight play out every day. “I’ve been here for about three years, and the biggest improvement I’ve experienced is the outreach both to our internal community and our external communities,” he says. “Environment is part of the conversation here, not just an afterthought.”

The McWane Way, the compass guiding the McWane family of companies, places “Environment” and “Safety” firmly in the north quadrant, signaling their role as foundational priorities instead of secondary thoughts.

“We work really hard to conduct ourselves in all of those eight different principles of the McWane Way every day,” Chuck says. “It means the world to me and my team that environment is thought of as a part of every decision, every process and every product we make.”

SUSTAINABILITY BACKED BY MEASURABLE ACTION

Amerex’s commitment isn’t built on aspirational language alone. It’s supported by tangible outcomes.

Since its founding in 1971, the company has prioritized recycling as a core operational practice. Today, it recycles more than 450 tons of aluminum, brass, stainless steel, steel and cardboard every year. This includes fire extinguisher components—cylinders, valves and packaging—which are designed to be 100% recyclable to reduce waste at the end of life and for simple disposal by distributors and customers.

Equally important is what not used. Amerex products are free of chlorofluorocarbons, cadmium, mercury,



LEFT TO RIGHT: Chuck Freind, Hunter Williams and Angie Keith

heavy metals, solvents or volatile organic compounds in the powder coating process. Leak detection during manufacturing is performed using helium gas, which eliminates the need for environmentally harmful alternatives.

“All of our extinguishing agents are listed under the EPA’s SNAP program,” Chuck says. “They are water-soluble, nontoxic and designed with environmental impact in mind.”

As sustainability becomes a larger part of purchasing decisions, this approach provides distributors with clearer guidance on recyclability, disposal and compliance.

AUTOMATION, INNOVATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL GUARDRAILS

Like many manufacturers, Amerex continues to invest in automation and process improvements. Those updates enhance efficiency and consistency while introducing new environmental considerations.

“Our product engineers are innovators,” Chuck says. “They’re always pushing for better throughput and smarter ways to do things. Our job is to help them understand the environmental implications like permits, emissions and waste. Our goal is to have innovation happen responsibly.”

Today,
Amerex recycles
more than
450 TONS
of aluminum,
brass, stainless
steel, steel and
cardboard
EVERY YEAR.

KEEP IT CLEAN

Automation, Hunter adds, plays a critical role in reducing waste and human error—meaning fewer mistakes, less rework and ultimately less environmental impact. Collaboration ensures compliance isn't a roadblock. For Amerex, it's a design parameter built into the process from the start.

The company's environmental leadership is formally recognized through ISO 14001 certification, which it has maintained since 2004. Notably, it was the first fire extinguisher manufacturer to achieve this certification and remains certified to the current ISO 14001:2015 standard.

“ The goal is to keep refining every individual process so its environmental impact is as close to zero as possible. ”

HUNTER WILLIAMS

LOOKING AHEAD: THE CHALLENGE OF ZERO WASTE

While Amerex has already achieved a remarkably small environmental footprint, the team is always pushing themselves. “One of the initiatives I would love to do is go to zero-waste,” Chuck says. “It's a difficult challenge for us because of our off-spec powder. Once it's contaminated, there's currently no viable outlet for reuse, and that accounts for about three-quarters of what we send to the landfill.”

Even so, Amerex generates only five to 10 pounds of specialized disposal waste per month, an exceptionally low amount for a manufacturing operation of its scale. “That tells us we're doing a lot right,” Hunter says. “The goal is to keep refining every individual process so its environmental impact is as close to zero as possible.”

The company's efforts provide more than peace of mind—they offer a clear competitive advantage. Compliance documentation, recyclable components, environmentally responsible agents and proactive regulatory alignment give distributors confidence in connecting customers with our products.

In an industry where trust, performance and accountability matter, Amerex continues to prove environmental stewardship and manufacturing excellence are inseparable. 🌿

Garth Legvold

A man with a beard and short hair, wearing a dark blue zip-up sweater over a collared shirt and light-colored trousers, stands in an open-plan office. He is smiling and leaning on a cubicle wall. The office has modern lighting, including several black dome-shaped pendant lights. In the background, there are cubicles, a desk with a computer monitor, and a calendar on the wall.

BUILDING FOR WHAT'S *NEXT*

**HOW AMEREX'S ENGINEERING EVOLUTION
DELIVERS REAL-WORLD RESULTS**

Amerex has long been recognized for manufacturing reliable fire protection equipment trusted in industries from commercial facilities and transportation fleets to industrial and defense applications. But as markets evolve and customer expectations grow more complex, product excellence requires more than experience alone. It requires intentional structure, disciplined execution and leadership focused on performance.

That mindset is at the heart of recent changes within Amerex's engineering department. The shift was driven, in large part, by the addition of Garth Legvold, Engineering Director, and a reimaged organizational model designed to better serve customers.

A LEADER SHAPED BY MANUFACTURING AND DRIVEN BY RESULTS

Garth brings more than 15 years of manufacturing and engineering leadership experience to Amerex, with a background spanning food production, tire manufacturing and automotive interiors. Raised in southeast Iowa and the son of a chemical engineer, he developed an early appreciation for how products are made and why process matters.

After earning his degree from The University of Alabama, Garth began his career at Schreiber Foods, where he helped scale legacy manufacturing processes into modern, high-capacity operations. That early exposure to project execution—building teams, developing standard operating procedures, coordinating vendors and managing

timelines—set the foundation for a career focused on turning ideas into reality.

He later spent more than a decade in the automotive industry leading complex, multiyear product programs for global original equipment manufacturers, including Mercedes, BMW, Volkswagen and Volvo. In that environment, success was defined by precision: meeting strict regulatory requirements, coordinating cross-functional teams, managing projects to meet customer deadlines and ensuring products perform flawlessly in the real world.

“ You can't just design something that looks good on paper or takes a lifetime to develop. It has to deliver value to the customer when they need it. ”

GARTH LEGVOLD

“I've spent most of my career in industries where execution is everything,” says Garth. “You can't just design something that looks good on paper or takes a lifetime to develop. It has to deliver value to the customer when they need it.” That experience made Amerex a natural fit. “When I learned that Amerex wasn't just looking for another strong engineer but someone to help guide the project execution to keep programs on track, on budget and aligned with what the market demands, that's where I do my best work.”

FROM A FLAT STRUCTURE TO FOCUSED LEADERSHIP

When Garth joined Amerex, one of his first priorities was listening. Through one-on-one conversations with the engineering team, a clear theme emerged: Talent was strong, but pathways for growth were unclear.



Harrison Bishop, President and CEO of Amerex, tasked Garth with developing a new organizational model designed to recognize management readiness and create clarity around roles, responsibilities and career progression. “Several people on the engineering team were already effectively doing leadership work without the formal structure to support it,” says Garth. “Amerex leadership recognized the same opportunity within our department, and it’s exciting to see how much progress we’ve already made toward this goal.”

“The changes we’re making aren’t about adding layers; rather, our goal is to enable people to succeed here while delivering better outcomes for our customers.”

HARRISON BISHOP

Harrison says, “Bringing Garth into the organization was very intentional. We have an exceptionally talented team, and he brings the leadership and execution focus needed to align talent with structured project management, accountability and long-term product strategy. The changes we’re making aren’t about adding layers; rather, our goal is to enable people to succeed here while delivering better outcomes for our customers.”

STRENGTHENING LEADERSHIP ACROSS PRODUCT CATEGORIES

The updated framework establishes clear leadership across the diverse Amerex product portfolio:

- **Beau Wilson**, Senior Engineering Manager, oversees the handheld, portable, wheeled unit and defense product categories, recognizing his proven leadership and forward-thinking approach as Engineering Manager.
- **Kyle Clemons** has been named Senior Engineering Manager, responsible for kitchen, vehicle and industrial systems. His expanded role reflects exceptional ownership, deep product knowledge and experience managing complex system-based solutions.
- **Nick Denton** now serves as Engineering Manager, leading development within the electronics product category while also managing Amerex’s fire testing



department. His promotion highlights the high-impact results and strong cross-functional collaboration in his previous role as Electrical Engineer.

Additional role enhancements further strengthen the team:

- **Brandon Smith**, Senior Product Development Engineer, leads large-scope projects within the handheld, portable, wheeled unit and defense categories, applying strong problem-solving skills while mentoring within the team.
- **Derrick Luker**, Fire Test Supervisor, now leads the Fire Test team on-site in Trussville, using his leadership and passion for continuous improvement to ensure testing is conducted on time and to specification.

“These roles weren’t created arbitrarily,” says Garth. “They reflect the strengths already present within the team and give us clearer ownership from early concept through testing, certification and launch.”

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR DISTRIBUTORS AND THEIR CUSTOMERS

For Amerex distributors, the value of these changes is straightforward: timely execution of better products, delivered even more reliably. With defined leadership

“ We aim to measure progress, manage scope and control budgets—these regular ‘health checks,’ allow for course-correction at set milestones instead of waiting until the end of the project. For Amerex, that translates into healthier, more controlled projects. For customers, it means new products delivered with the right specs at the right time. ”

GARTH LEGVOLD

across product categories, the engineering team can move faster, identify risks more easily, and ensure new products and enhancements align with real-world needs. The structure supports consistent ownership, clear communication channels and disciplined development processes.

One of the most significant initiatives is the improvement of the product development lifecycle. “We’re building structured checkpoints into every phase,” says Garth. “We aim to measure progress, manage scope and control budgets—these regular ‘health checks’ allow for course-correction at set milestones instead of waiting until the end of the project. For Amerex, that translates into healthier, more controlled projects. For customers, it means new products delivered with the right specs at the right time.”

“ Our goal isn’t change for the sake of change. It’s building a foundation that allows us to deliver consistent, high-quality solutions now and in the future. ”

HARRISON BISHOP

A CULTURE BUILT TO SUSTAIN IMPROVEMENT

Beyond structure and process, Garth points to Amerex’s culture as a key differentiator. “What surprised me the most when I joined the team was the combination of experience and agility,” he says. “You have people who have been here for decades alongside younger engineers in a modern and collaborative environment. The team isn’t afraid of change. We’re focused on continuous improvement and winning together.”

That mindset supports the company’s long-term commitment to innovation while maintaining the reliability customers expect.

“Our goal isn’t change for the sake of change,”

Harrison says. “It’s building a foundation that allows us to deliver consistent, high-quality solutions now and in the future.”

LOOKING AHEAD

With clarified leadership roles, defined development pathways and strengthened processes, the engineering team at Amerex is positioned to do what it does best—turn expertise into dependable fire protection solutions.

“At the end of the day, winning isn’t just about closing projects,” Harrison says. “For us, it’s making sure our products perform exactly as they should when they’re needed most. It’s our hope that translates into customers’ confidence in the products, the process and what’s coming next from Amerex.” 🌟



LEFT TO RIGHT: Brandon Smith, Garth Legvold and Beau Wilson

INDUSTRY RELATIONS *Update*

JAMIE KNOWLES, INDUSTRY RELATIONS MANAGER, SHARES KEY UPDATES TO THE NEW EDITION OF NFPA 10



The 2026 edition of NFPA 10 was recently released, introducing an important change regarding the inspection of fire extinguishers. NFPA 10 specifies that an inspection, defined as a quick check, must be conducted by the owner or their representative at least every 30 days. Maintenance is required at intervals not to exceed one year and shall be

performed by persons who are certified.

This new edition introduces the 7.2.5 Performance-Based Inspection Program, offering an alternate means to comply with the monthly inspection requirement when specific criteria are met.

PERFORMANCE-BASED INSPECTION PROGRAM

This program is subject to AHJ approval. To qualify, it must establish clear goals to ensure the fire extinguishers are maintained in good operating condition. It also requires evaluation by a third party acceptable to the AHJ and submission to the AHJ in writing with technical justification. There must be technical justification for each individual site, building or environment, and inspections cannot exceed 90 days. Finally, any performance-based inspection program will be reviewed every three years or sooner if there is a change in hazard, occupancy or ownership to verify it continues to meet the established goals.

At its core, this program is not intended to reduce accountability or eliminate oversight. It is designed to offer flexibility while preserving the AHJ's authority and responsibility to protect public safety.

COMMITTEE REPRESENTATION AND PROCESS

While I am honored to represent Amerex on the NFPA 10 Committee, my comments reflect my personal views, not those of the committee. My intention is to provide constructive insight into the nature of committee debates and to acknowledge the dedication of the volunteers who contributed to responsible solutions based on public input.

NFPA committees consist of a diverse group of professionals with different perspectives on a given discipline or subject. The NFPA 10 Committee reflects that diversity and is made up of end users, AHJs, manufacturers,

engineers and fire equipment distributors. This balance is intentional and critical to ensuring no single interest dominates decisions impacting public safety.

The public input and supporting data that prompted this debate and subsequent change to the standard came from end users in the health care industry. Therefore, the discussion largely centered on hospitals and other health care facilities, where operational complexity and patient safety concerns intersect.

From an end user's perspective, the monthly inspection requirement can be expensive, especially for large, multilocation facilities with light-hazard occupancies. These organizations presented data showing a low number of discrepancies and failures with their extinguishers, to extend the monthly inspection periodicity.

From a fire equipment service provider perspective, they are often called in by the end users to maintain and repair the fire extinguishers before inspections occur. This proactive maintenance, while beneficial, can keep discrepancy and failure rates artificially low, making it difficult to isolate the effectiveness of inspection frequency alone.

Large and diverse facilities such as hospitals also require many types of extinguishers. Ensuring the correct extinguisher type for each hazard is critical. One example is protecting MRI rooms, where using a nonmagnetic fire extinguisher agent is essential for public safety. In environments like these, the frequency of inspection remains a reasonable and necessary expectation.

From an AHJ's standpoint, egress may not be possible at hospitals. Patients involved in medical procedures or who are not ambulatory may have to remain in place in the event of a fire. Any AHJ would have to consider these scenarios when evaluating and approving a Performance-Based Inspection Program.

MOVING THE CHANGE FORWARD

The new Performance-Based Inspection Program approved by the committee respects the concerns of end users while providing responsible safeguards for AHJs, allowing them to make informed, site-specific decisions grounded in data and risk assessment rather than convenience.

When applied thoughtfully, this program demonstrates how NFPA 10 can evolve, maintaining its commitment to public safety while recognizing the operational realities of complex spaces. 🌸

The **POWER** of **PREVENTION**

Inside Fire Marshal Darcy Davidson's Award-Winning Community Initiative

Fire Marshal Darcy Davidson is redefining what fire prevention looks like in Carlsbad, California—and the results speak for themselves. Through a collaborative, education-based restaurant safety initiative, Darcy helped raise awareness during the program's first year, earning both statewide and national recognition for her prevention-focused leadership. At the center of her work is a simple belief: **Keeping people safe starts long before an emergency ever occurs.**



That prevention mindset has shaped Darcy's entire career. She originally trained as a registered dietitian and exercise physiologist, where she worked closely with her community's wellness needs. It was through the San Diego Sports Medicine & Family Health Center Firefighter Wellness program that she recognized how naturally her desire to serve aligned with the mission of the fire service. Both are rooted in education, preparedness and long-term behavior change.

Darcy's journey in fire prevention and community safety took root in the city of San Diego in 2007, where she served as a Firefighter and Supervising Deputy Fire Marshal. Early mentors recognized her leadership potential and encouraged her to step into roles that would shape her future. A supportive chief first opened the door into fire service, and a supervisor introduced her to code development, which would become foundational to her career. Later, Carlsbad Fire Marshal Randy Metz challenged

her to expand her leadership scope, ultimately bringing her to Carlsbad in 2019 as Assistant Fire Marshal.

When Darcy transitioned into her role in Carlsbad, she identified a growing concern within restaurants, one of the city's higher-risk industries. Without a regular business inspection program beyond state-mandated health requirements, many commercial kitchens were falling behind on equipment maintenance and routine safety practices. Employees often lacked training to recognize hazards or respond appropriately during an emergency. Rather than leading with enforcement, Darcy and her team designed a collaborative, educational initiative aimed at empowering owners and staff. Her philosophy was clear: "We're here to help you stay safe—and keep your business open."

Inspectors partnered directly with restaurant teams, walking them through common hazards, key maintenance priorities and what to monitor during daily operations.



They paired this with hands-on fire extinguisher training using propane fire props to give employees the rare opportunity to discharge an extinguisher. Staff were also trained on locating and using pull stations and when to use Class K versus ABC extinguishers.

To reinforce the training, Darcy's team produced a four-part instructional video series covering the most common risks in commercial cooking operations. Restaurants could show the videos during onboarding or preshift meetings to ensure every employee, no matter how experienced, shared a consistent baseline of safety knowledge.

Another key element of the program was communication and branding. "Doing things the Carlsbad way" meant bringing everyone to the table. The initiative became a citywide priority, aligning the fire department, communications team and city leadership around a shared goal: fostering a proactive safety mindset and elevating the importance of prevention.

The results have been positive. During the program's first year, none of the participating restaurants experienced a fire, compared with several incidents in prior years. Owners praised the supportive approach, the clarity of training and noticeable improvements in employee behavior. Many proudly displayed their "Fire Safe Carlsbad" window decals, signaling their commitment to safety. Instead of issuing violation notices, the city awarded certificates of completion to encourage positive change and celebrate success.

Internally, the initiative strengthened Darcy's team.

Each inspector wrote and starred in one of the training videos, creating a sense of ownership and making them recognizable faces within the community. That visibility built trust with restaurant owners and reinforced the department's role as a partner in safety, not just an authority. Carlsbad's communications team supported the effort with professional branding and promotion, cementing the program as a true city-level priority.

“ Our goal is to create a safety mindset. Prevention isn't just a checklist—it's a belief system. ”

DARCY DAVIDSON

The impact of Darcy's work soon gained statewide and national attention. In 2024, California Building Officials named her Fire Official of the Year for "fostering collaboration and unity within the code enforcement community." In 2025, her restaurant safety initiative earned Fire Equipment Manufacturers' Association's Fire Safety Advocate Award, recognizing her innovative approach to community risk reduction and life safety education. Both honors underscore how Darcy is setting a new standard for prevention-focused leadership.

Today, the program continues to evolve—rooted in the belief that lasting change comes from understanding rather than compliance alone. "Our goal is to create a safety mindset," she says. "Prevention isn't just a checklist—it's a belief system." 🌟



ABOVE LEFT: A restaurant employee uses digital training tool to reinforce selecting the correct fire extinguisher and effectively performing P-A-S-S. ABOVE RIGHT: Darcy Davidson, Rebecca Valdes, Lola 55 Restaurant Manager, Medi Maldonado, Jarrod Robinson

“Built to Serve, Built to Last”



For more than four decades, United Fire has focused on a simple but enduring mission: taking care of people.

Based in Portland, Oregon, United Fire has grown steadily by staying committed to service, relationships and doing the work the right way—day in and day out.

What began as a three-person operation has grown into a team of more than 50, not through rapid expansion or bold claims, but through consistency and trust. For owner Ed Wallace, success has never been measured by size alone. “If we take care of people,” he says, “everything else tends to follow.”



Ed Wallace



Qwill Chrinchton

A FAMILY LEGACY THAT STARTED WITH A LEAP OF FAITH

United Fire’s roots trace back to 1969, but the Wallace family stepped into leadership in 1981, when Ed’s parents purchased the business. With no prior fire protection experience, they relied on hard work, humility and the guidance of the previous owner. “Our family had owned a drive-in restaurant, and my dad worked at Carnation Dairy,” Ed recalls. “He went in without a roadmap, but he had good support—and that mattered.”

Ed joined the company around that time but initially found the demands challenging and stepped away. He returned in 1988, when a desire to be closer to home brought him back to the family business. “I was driving trucks then, and my son had just been diagnosed with diabetes,” he says. “I wanted to be present. My brother offered me a position, and it felt like the right move.”

Starting as a service manager, Ed learned the

business from the ground up. In 1999, he and his brother purchased the company from their parents, and in 2016, Ed assumed full ownership. That transition allowed United Fire to focus fully on service, where Ed felt most at home. “Service is what I know,” he says. “It’s what I care about.”

A COMPANY SHAPED BY ITS PEOPLE

When asked what has sustained United Fire through decades of change, Ed’s answer is straightforward: the people. “We’re in the people business,” he says.

That philosophy is reflected in how the company approaches its team—through competitive compensation, meaningful benefits and flexibility when life happens. “There have been times when someone needed to focus on family,” Ed says. “We’ve always tried to respond with understanding. That’s just part of who we are.”

A LONG-STANDING PARTNERSHIP WITH AMEREX

United Fire specializes in fire equipment sales, inspection and service, including fire extinguishers, kitchen suppression systems and industrial applications. Amerex has been a partner in that work for decades.

“When we took over the business, Amerex was already United Fire’s fire extinguisher vendor,” Ed says. “We’ve worked together ever since.”

Over the years, the relationship has extended beyond product quality alone. “They’ve consistently supported the industry,” he adds.

“ Amerex shows up, they participate and they advocate for fire protection professionals. ”

ED WALLACE

Ed points to Amerex’s involvement in industry associations and code development as a meaningful part of that partnership. “Amerex shows up, they participate and they advocate for fire protection professionals,” he says.

He also values Amerex’s commitment to technician training, helping ensure systems are installed and

Ed recalls customers specifically requesting Amerex products by name.

“That level of trust says a lot.”

ED WALLACE

maintained with confidence. During the supply chain challenges of the pandemic, Ed recalls customers specifically requesting Amerex products by name. “That level of trust says a lot,” he says.

LOOKING AHEAD, STAYING GROUNDED

As United Fire looks to the future, the company remains

focused on steady, thoughtful growth. Ed’s sons, Jason and Jeff, are stepping into leadership and ownership roles, working alongside the existing leadership team to help guide the next chapter while staying true to the company’s foundation.

“We’re continuing to invest in our people and our capabilities,” Ed says. “The goal isn’t to change who we are—it’s to make sure we can keep serving our customers well.”

For Ed, that mindset has always been personal. “I used to take emergency calls myself,” he says. “If I couldn’t find someone to help, I’d go do it. I just wanted people to know we cared.”

That same sense of responsibility continues to guide United Fire today—quietly, consistently and with purpose. 🌹



ABOVE LEFT: The United Fire team together after their Annual State of the Company meeting, aligned and ready for 2026! TOP RIGHT: Justin Crager
 BOTTOM RIGHT: Lane Labonte and Chris English

HT Series and Data Center Webinar Recap

Amerex recently hosted an engaging webinar focused on clean-agent fire protection for data centers. The session was led by Jamie Knowles, Industry Relations Manager; Kendall Pate, Business Development Manager; and Brayden Banks, Product Manager – Portable Extinguishers.

A highlight of the webinar was the discussion around the Amerex HT Series, designed specifically for protecting sensitive environments. The team compared its performance to Halotron, noting advantages in operating pressure and discharge characteristics, as well as its alignment with modern fire protection standards. Just as important, the HT Series fits seamlessly into standard wall cabinets, making it an easy upgrade for facilities needing clean-agent capability without modifying existing installations. 



Brayden Banks



Jamie Knowles



Kendall Pate

events 2026



EVENT DESCRIPTION	LOCATION	DATES
VS Training Class	Las Vegas, NV	March 10–11
NAFED	Las Vegas, NV	March 12–13
GAFSED	Atlanta, GA	March 17–19
NAFED	Atlantic City, NJ	April 9–10
KP/IS Training Class	Orlando, FL	April 14–15
VS Training Class	Orlando, FL	April 16–17
NAFED	Cleveland, OH	May 14–15
ORFED	Portland, OR	May 17

Continued on next page

events 2026 Continued



EVENT DESCRIPTION	LOCATION	DATES
KP/IS Training Class	Chicago, IL	May 19–20
VS Training Class	Chicago, IL	May 21–22
INTERSCHUTZ	Hamburg, Germany	June 1–6
Edison Electric Institute	Las Vegas, NV	June 2–4
AIA Conference	San Diego, CA	June 11–13
FFEDA Annual Conference	Howey-in-the-Hills, FL	June 11–13
NFPA	Las Vegas, NV	June 22–24
KP/IS Training Class	Tacoma, WA	July 14–15
VS Training Class	Tacoma, WA	July 16–17
GAPT	Jekyll Island, GA	June 14–18
KP/IS Training	Cincinnati, OH	June 16–17
KP/IS Training	Piscataway, NJ	June 24–25
KP/IS Training	Denver, CO	August 4–5
VS Training	Denver, CO	August 6–7
KP/IS Training Class	Austin, TX	August 22–23
VS Training Class	Austin, TX	August 24–25
CalSafe	Carlsbad, CA	October 2–3
APTA	Chicago, IL	October 4–7
KP/IS Training Class	Harrisburg, PA	October 6–7
VS Training Class	Harrisburg, PA	October 8–9
AUSA	Washington, D.C.	October 13–15

why AMEREX?

QUALITY

Amerex didn't become a global market leader overnight.

Our business has grown year after year based on our products' reputation for performance and durability in even the most rugged environments.

INNOVATION

Because Amerex is independently owned and forward thinking, we are continuously innovating and investing for the benefit of our customers and those they serve.

SERVICE

Amerex was founded on a mutual appreciation for premium quality in products and customer service and the importance of interpersonal relations.



Quality is Behind the Diamond®

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