

# Elected officials should make transparency their New Year resolution

**BY PAUL WOLF, ESQ.**

President  
New York Coalition For Open Government

In January, many will start the New Year with goals to exercise more, eat better, lose weight, etc. January will also be when newly elected public servants or incumbents starting another term take office across New York state.

Old habits are hard to change in people and especially hard to change in government. Elected officials should begin 2022 by conducting the public's business in an open and transparent way. To show their commitment to open government, elected

officials serving on a village board, town board, city council or a county legislature should introduce and pass a New Year resolution stating they will:

✓ Post timely notice of all meetings at least one week prior to a meeting.

✓ Post meeting agendas and all meeting documents online, at least 48 hours before a meeting.

✓ Post draft meeting minutes online, no more than two weeks after a meeting.

✓ Allow members of the public to speak at the beginning of a meeting regarding agenda items and non-agenda items whether

attending in person or remotely.

✓ Support livestreaming of meetings by video and posting the video recording online afterward.

✓ Only conduct private executive sessions on rare occasions in accordance with the New York State Open Meetings Law. We understand that a motion to hold an executive session to discuss "litigation," "personnel" or "collective bargaining" is not sufficient, as the Open Meetings Law requires motions to state more information when holding an executive session.

✓ Support having our elected

members complete and post an annual financial disclosure form on our government website. (Just as state elected officials do.)

✓ While private political party caucus meetings are allowed under the law, we agree to not hold such meetings. There is no reason at the local level to hold private political party caucus meetings to discuss political business or public business.

✓ We support the public's right to obtain records and will ensure that information regarding the Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) is posted in a visible

place on our website. We will proactively post documents online as much as possible so that the public can access information without having to file a FOIL request. We will also post an easy, fill-in-the-blank form that assists the public in filing a FOIL request by email on our website.

✓ We are committed to having all FOIL requests responded to in a timely manner and will, on a quarterly basis, request a status report regarding FOIL requests from an appropriate staff member to monitor compliance with the law.

## FASNY applauds governor for signing chemical flame retardant ban legislation

Law Protects all New Yorkers by removing cancer-causing chemicals from new household furniture, mattresses & electronic enclosures

**GUEST EDITORIAL BY THE FIREMEN'S ASSOCIATION OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK**

The Firemen's Association of the State of New York (FASNY) applauds Gov. Kathy Hochul for signing legislation that bans carcinogenic flame-retardant chemicals in household items, furniture, and electronic enclosures.

FASNY has made this legislation part of its proactive agenda for the last eight years. The legislation, sponsored by Sen. Todd Kaminsky and Assemblyman Steve Englebright, passed both houses of the legislature earlier in 2021.

Flame retardants are in everyday items such as TVs, phones and mattresses because it was believed that they slowed or prevented the start or growth of a fire. Despite their stated purpose, these flame retardants are not effective at preventing or slowing fires. Further, when burned, they emit extremely toxic smoke and fumes, which endanger both firefighters and the people they are working to save as they inhale them. In infants and pregnant women – who ingest these chemicals through normal everyday dust – links have been found to serious health effects, from cancer and reproductive issues to developmental disabilities.

"Firefighters are regularly exposed to flame-retardant toxins in the line of duty, resulting in far higher cancer rates than those in the general population," said FASNY President John P. Farrell. "By signing this legislation, Gov. Hochul is protecting both the state's citizens and firefighters. We are pleased to see New York state take an important step forward in eliminating harmful and hazardous chemicals from the environment."

Kaminsky, chair of the Senate Environmental Conservation Committee, said, "Nothing is more important than protecting the health of our children and firefighters from cancer-causing chemicals. By banning these toxic substances from everyday items in our homes, such as furniture and mattresses, we will be taking a major step in keeping our communities safe. I was proud to lead the fight to put our families and first responders' lives ahead of corporations' profits – and that is precisely what this law will do."

Englebright said, "This new law will help protect first responders from exposure to harmful chemi-

icals. Flame retardants produce toxic chemicals such as hydrogen cyanide that, when inhaled, contributes to the No. 1 cause of fire-related deaths, which is smoke inhalation. This is especially dangerous for firefighters. Additionally, the presence of these dangerous chemicals in household furnishings endanger our families, as the chemicals leach out of products into household dust causing chronic exposure when we breath and play with our children in our homes. These chemicals are known to cause adverse health effects including cancer, infertility, and damage to our immune systems. I wish to thank FASNY for working closely with me to create and support this lifesaving new law."

"We applaud Gov. Hochul, Sen. Kaminsky, Assembly member Englebright, and the State Legislature for supporting this important bill," said Leonardo Trasande, M.D., M.P.P., the Jim G. Hendrick, MD Professor of Pediatrics, and Professor of Population Health at NYU Langone Health. "This is an important step forward in not only improving our environment and safety standards but, more importantly, ensuring the well-being of our firefighters who work tirelessly to protect us."

Under the Family and Firefighter Protection Act, the use of certain flame-retardant chemicals in furniture and mattresses and the use of certain flame-retardant chemicals in electronic casings is banned. Similar bans have been enacted in states such as California, Massachusetts, Maine and Rhode Island. The European Union has banned them from electronics.

### FASNY Kicks Off 150th Anniversary Year With Update to Name

In 1872, a group of firemen gathered in upstate New York and founded the Firemen's Association of the State of New York. As FASNY prepared for the 150th anniversary of the association in 2022, the association's leadership not only looked back at its history, but also began planning for the next 150 years.

"FASNY and the volunteer fire service have changed dramatically since our humble beginnings in 1872. We are very proud of our

history," Farrell said. "The presidents and the board of directors view this special anniversary as an opportunity to honor our past, while simultaneously positioning FASNY for an even better future."

Over the years, FASNY's logos and symbols have evolved with time, but one thing remained a constant – the association's name. At the December meeting of the board of directors, a motion was passed unanimously to update the association's name from its historical 1872 origins to The Firefighters Association of the State of New

York.

"We all felt it was time," Farrell said. "The volunteer fire service has grown and changed greatly from the late 19th century. While our original name was based on the fire service of 1872, our new name positions us for the 21st century."

First Vice President Edward Tase added, "We did not make this change lightly. We know and respect the great history of our association. We also know that our name, like our logos, symbols and

actions, must represent today's volunteer fire service."

The association has already begun the process of updating its logos and signage to reflect the new name. As with any major change of this nature, it may take some time before it is in place in all applications.

*Founded in 1872, FASNY represents the interests of the 85,000 volunteer firefighters in New York state. For more information, visit [www.fasny.com](http://www.fasny.com).*



**SYROS**  
GREEK RESTAURANT  
869 CAYUGA ST.  
LEWISTON • 754-1900  
MON.-SAT 7AM-9PM  
SUN 7AM - 8PM  
LUNCH & DINNER • DAILY SPECIALS  
BREAKFAST SERVED ALL DAY

HOME OF SOUVLAKI & WRAPS

ORDER TAKEOUT FROM OUR FACEBOOK PAGE OR PICKUP AND DELIVERY THROUGH DOORDASH.

*Happy New Year*  
**WINE, BEER AND MIMOSAS AVAILABLE**  
**WEEKEND SPECIALS:**  
BABY BACK RIBS  
LAMB SHANK  
**10% OFF BILL**  
With This Ad. Good Until 1/31/22  
Not valid on holidays.  
**FRIDAY FISH FRY**  
BROILED • BREADED • BAKED

**COPPINS SERVICE CENTER, INC.**  
Jay & Rich Coppins  
Full Service Auto Repair Since 1937

Is It Time? Check Today!

**\$10 Back**

Claim a Prepaid Visa® Card with qualifying purchases:  
\$10 on NAPA Legend Battery • \$20 on NAPA Legend Premium Battery • \$20 on Qualifying Starter or Alternator

**\$20 Back**

**\$20 Back**

Offer valid from January 1 - February 28, 2022

**754-7020**

550 Center St., Lewiston  
Web: [Coppinsservice.com](http://Coppinsservice.com) • E-mail: [Coppinsservice@roadrunner.com](mailto:Coppinsservice@roadrunner.com)

**DICAMILLO BAKERY**

All Stores Open 7 Days

**NIAGARA FALLS**  
811 Linwood Avenue  
Daily 7am-7pm • 282-2341

7927 Niagara Falls Blvd.  
Daily 7am-7pm • 236-0111

**LEWISTON**  
535 Center Street  
Daily 8am-7pm • 754-2218

**WILLIAMSVILLE**  
5329 Main Street  
Daily 7am-7pm • 635-6504

**ALL PRICES VALID UNTIL JANUARY 31, 2022**

**Large Homestyle Cookies**  
**\$1.50 off**  
A Dozen  
Eight Varieties

- Oatmeal Raisin
- Chocolate Chip
- Peanut Butter
- Sugar
- Chinese Chocolate
- Chocolate Walnut
- Snickerdoodle
- Molasses

Coupons may not be combined with any other offer or discount. Expires January 31, 2022.

**Classic Pizza**

Order in Advance **\$3.00 off** 1/2 tray

**\$5.00 off** full tray

- Mozzarella Cheese
- Romano Cheese
- Pepperoni
- Mushroom
- Broccoli

Coupons may not be combined with any other offer or discount. Expires January 31, 2022.

**Dessert Cakes**

**\$1.50 off** All 7" Cakes

7" Round • Gold • Chocolate  
Banana 1/2 & 1/2 • German  
Chocolate • Black Forest

Coupons may not be combined with any other offer or discount. Expires January 31, 2022.

**Fresh Dough**

Perfect for making pizza, bread or rolls

**50¢ off** one pound package

Coupons may not be combined with any other offer or discount. Expires January 31, 2022.

**Donuts**

**\$1.00 off** A Dozen

Old fashioned, large donuts, made fresh daily

Coupons may not be combined with any other offer or discount. Expires January 31, 2022.

**Scalletta "Curly Style"**

**Italian Bread**

Regular Loaf - 50¢ Off  
Double Loaf - 75¢ Off

Hand rolled, hand formed, split & slowly hearth baked.

Coupons may not be combined with any other offer or discount. Expires January 31, 2022.