



SOMERSET REGIONAL VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

PO Box 121, Somerset, PA 15501

(814) 445-4343

sfd@somersetfire.com

STATION 601 & STATION 603



May 28, 2026

The Somerset Regional Volunteer Fire Department is a 100% volunteer department located in Somerset, Pennsylvania. We cover all of Somerset Borough, as well as portions of Somerset, Quemahoning, and Stonycreek Townships, including portions of the Pennsylvania Turnpike and State Route 219. We run an average of 800 calls per year, ranging from trees down to structure fires, and also provide and receive mutual aid to and from other neighboring departments.

Our goal for replacing the apparatus is to replace the unit when it reaches 20 years of age. In early 2024, we started the process of replacing our rescue engine, which is a 2007 Pierce Quantum. FF1 had a Ferrara truck that fit our specifications, so we had paid them \$750,000.00 to start production, and we were told that it would be finished and delivered by September 2024. In November of 2024, we had a phone call with the representatives inquiring about the delay. FF1 indicated that trucks were being moved around due to profitability, and they were willing to return 90% of our payment. They also stated that the truck would be completed and delivered by September 2025. As of today, the delivery date has been pushed back to June 2026, and we still do not have the truck as promised. During this time, we also replaced our tanker unit at the Friedens station, and that process started in February 2025, with Pierce, and the truck was delivered in September of that year at a cost of \$649,332.00.

The rising cost of new fire apparatus has become a serious concern for fire departments across our communities. Volunteer and combination fire departments are facing unprecedented financial challenges as the price of purchasing a new fire truck continues to increase dramatically year after year. For many volunteer fire departments, these costs create a tremendous burden. Departments rely heavily on local tax revenue, fundraising events, donations, and grants to provide emergency services. Unfortunately, community fundraising alone can no longer keep pace with the rapidly escalating price of emergency vehicles and equipment.

Just a decade ago, many departments could purchase a fully equipped pumper truck for a fraction of what the same apparatus costs today. Currently, new fire engines, tankers, ladder trucks, and rescue units often exceed hundreds of thousands — and in many cases over one million — dollars depending on specifications and safety requirements.

Fire trucks are not luxury items; they are essential tools used to protect lives, homes, businesses, and infrastructure. Departments cannot simply delay replacing aging apparatus indefinitely. Older trucks become more expensive to maintain, may fail to meet current safety standards, and can jeopardize the reliability of emergency response operations.

The financial strain caused by these rising costs places many departments in difficult positions.



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Some are forced to extend replacement schedules far beyond recommended service life, while others must take on significant long-term debt.

We encourage local leaders, legislators, businesses, and community members to recognize the growing financial challenges facing emergency services today. Supporting fire departments through funding initiatives and public partnerships is an investment in the safety and well-being of the entire community.

Thank you,

Jim Clark – Chief

**Somerset Regional
Volunteer**



Est. 2025

Fire Department