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# SALINE AREA FIRE DEPARTMENT

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## COMMUNITY PROFILE – FIRE CHIEF SEARCH 2021



**“On behalf of the Saline community, we thank you for your interest in leading one of the nation’s premier fire departments.” Fire Board Chair Brian Marl**



**Apply: Send cover letter, resume, and five (5) professional references to:  
[walshmuni@gmail.com](mailto:walshmuni@gmail.com)**

# WELCOME TO SALINE AND THE SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES

**National Prominence. Vibrant Downtown. Excellent Schools. Clean. Safe. The Celtic Festival. Sister Cities. The Arts.**

The City of Saline, Saline Township, Lodi Township and York Township welcomes your interest in serving as our next Fire Chief. Serving a population of nearly 30,000, the Saline Area Fire Department provides fire protection to a tight-knit community in Washtenaw County. Located adjacent to Ann Arbor and the University of Michigan, in 2005, 2007 and 2009 Saline was rated as “One the Top 100 Places to Live in America”. Also, our bustling community was recently named by CNN as “One of the Best Places to Retire in the United States”.



Many wonder what makes the Saline area so special.

Young families flock to Saline and the surrounding area, especially because of our excellent school system. In the U.S News 2017 Survey, Saline High School ranked as Michigan’s fifth-best high school, and within the top 400 nationwide. It’s not surprising that in 2013, Business Week named Saline as “Michigan’s Best Town for Raising Children.”

Along with the academic success, the arts community is thriving in Saline. Just for starters, check out the Saline Fiddlers, Salt Valley Arts, Saline Area Players, Summer Music Series and Saline’s Harvest of the Arts. Public Art is also a part of our community fabric. The Saline Sculpture Walk is a great way to get to know our community.

Downtown Saline attracts architecture buffs from all over the country. Some of Saline’s most interesting history is featured in the Saline Depot Museum, the Rentschler Farm Museum and the Weber Blaess One-Room Schoolhouse.

The Saline Area Fire Department offers their next Fire Chief a talented command and support staff and an excellent record of performance. Our Fire Chief is retiring after an exemplary 43 years of service with the last 22 as Chief. The Saline Area Fire Department is interested in a public servant who exudes confidence, strong leadership and understands that open communication is the key to success.

This is an unparalleled opportunity to lead one the nation’s premier fire departments.

## **SALINE AREA'S RICH HISTORY AND OLD MAUDE**

Before the 18th century, native Americans traveled to what is now Saline area to hunt wildlife and gather salt from the salt springs they found nearby. French explorers canoed up to the area from Lake Erie and harvested the salt. They named the local river "Saline" which means salty in French.

The start of the settlement occurred when Orange Risdon was attracted to this part of the Territory of Michigan while surveying a military road from Detroit to Chicago. He was working for the federal government. The road was subsequently known as Chicago Road, later called U.S 12 or Michigan Avenue. Risdon was so impressed with the area, he recruited settlers to the area for the "fertile ground." On April 25, 1825, Risdon purchased 164 acres from the government. He built a house, and the first town meeting was held. In 1832, Risdon was instrumental in Saline being platted.

The town was officially named Saline in 1832. In 1870, the railroad service, provided by Detroit-Hillsdale & Indiana Railroad, first reached Saline. The town continued to grow, and in 1931 the Village of Saline became the City of Saline. The Saline Fisheries Research Station was built on the site of the pioneer grist mill.

Interestingly, the area almost became two towns. In 1845, Schuyler Haywood of Barnegat, New Jersey built a flour mill on the west side of the Saline River. Other settlers soon added a sawmill, blacksmith shop, copper shop, stores and a windmill factory. For a time, local residents considered platting under the name Barnegat. Eventually, in 1848, the west side of the river became Haywood's addition to the Village of Saline.



As the turn of the century loomed on the horizon, an electric interurban trolley operated between Detroit, Ann Arbor, Jackson and Saline. Saline's car was named Old Maude. The trolley operated for 25 years and was powered by a transformer whose tower building is long gone.

Saline's rich history is a testament to the current day splendor. Historians will tell you that Old Maude was the favorite trolley from Detroit to Jackson.

## OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Plan accordingly for the current and future growth trends with an eye on a second fire station.

Use all available resources to supplement the current nine full-time and 12 paid-on-call professional firefighters by adding three additional full-time slots.

Bring a demonstrated, collaborative communication style to enhance the current teamwork philosophy among the staff and regional leaders.

Seize the opportunity to lead one of America's most desirable Fire Department.

Don't accept the status quo, be creative and lead.

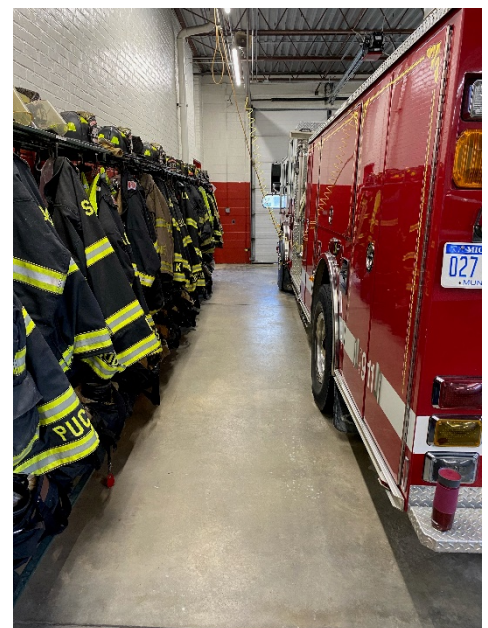
Be a champion in promoting the Department's Diversity, Inclusion and Equity goals.

Be a community leader throughout the Saline region. Be visible and support the community as one.

Work with the Fire Board, the team and community to develop a short- and long-term vision for fire and medical services.

Bring a demonstrated track record of successful fleet management including scheduled apparatus replacement.

Have a demonstrated ability to provide respectful, professional leadership during contract negotiations.



## WHY SALINE AREA FIRE DEPARTMENT?

- A thoughtful, dedicated and talented group of Fire Fighters
- A Fire Board that highly desires a strong, visionary leader
- A thriving and welcoming Saline Farmers' Market
- The city-owned Saline Recreation Center
- The opportunity to work with regional leaders that strongly support the Saline Area Fire Department
- Longevity.....our retiring Chief served for 43 years
- A City named nationally as "The Best Small Town in Michigan"
- A City named three different times nationally as "One of the Top 100 Places to Live in the United States"
- Our nationally acclaimed Saline Area Schools
- The Saline District Library
- A new nexus for arts and cultural events.....Saline's 109 Cultural Exchange
- The Saline Depot Museum
- Saline's beautiful 200-acre park system
- Close proximity to Ann Arbor and the University of Michigan



# THE RIGHT FIT FOR SALINE AREA FIRE DEPARTMENT

The Saline Area Fire Board and Leadership Team are searching for an ideal candidate that will not only bring a wealth of experience, but also the right skills to be successful leading our four community Fire Department. The Saline Area Fire Department is a premier community service provider, and we expect to hire a premier Fire Chief to lead the department.



## **The ideal candidate will offer the following principles and traits:**

- Strong, confident and professional
- Visionary: don't wait for the Fire Board to direct you
- Excellent listener and unparalleled communication skills
- Have a sense of humor
- Be bold, Be creative
- Be engaged as an ambassador for the Saline community
- Collaborate with the Saline Area Schools, Saline Social Services, and surrounding communities
- Be respectful of our small-town charm
- Make decisions based on the good of all member communities

## **UNMATCHED PUBLIC SERVICE**

The Saline Area Fire Department is proud of the high quality of services we provide on a daily basis to our four communities. Community service is a point of pride for the members of the department.

Under the current leadership of Chief Craig Hoeft, the Saline Fire Department covers a total of 98 square miles. Their service area includes Lodi Township, Saline Township, York Township and the City of Saline. The estimated population of the service area is 30,000.

The fire department consists of 9 full time and 12 paid on-call firefighters. The Fire Chief has three Lieutenants, one Sergeant and five full time firefighters.

This small cadre of firefighters responds to over 1500 calls on an annual basis. These firefighters provide fire suppression, rescue, medical emergency response, and public education.

### Department Mission

The Saline Area Fire Department's mission is to provide fire suppression, rescue, and fire prevention to the citizens of Saline, Saline Township, York Township, and Lodi Township. To achieve this mission, the department's responsibility is to preserve and protect life and property from fire and other catastrophes, and to provide education and training to the public in the area of fire prevention.



## TOP 10 WORDS SALINE RESIDENTS USE TO DESCRIBE OUR AREA



1. WELCOMING

2. SAFE

3. CLEAN

4. PREMIER

5. FRIENDLY

6. CHARMING

7. EDUCATED

8. FAIR-MINDED

9. BUSTLING

10. QUAIN

*We expect our new Fire Chief to embrace our quality of life. The Saline Area is a community of choice.*



## THE SALINE AREA FIRE CHIEF PROCESS

**DEADLINE TO APPLY: February 19, 2021**

Please submit a cover letter, resume, and five professional references to Frank L. Walsh, Walsh Municipal Services, LLC. Applications will be received at [walshmuni@gmail.com](mailto:walshmuni@gmail.com). Please indicate on your cover letter whether you desire confidentially as allowed under the Michigan Open Meetings Act. The Saline Area Fire Department encourages diversity, equity and inclusion and is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

