

New Bedford Firefighters Union leadership responds to fatal Coffin Ave fire and “blackouts”

CORRECTION: Engine 8 was blacked out, not Engine 9.

The following was posted on New Bedford Firefighters Local 841's Facebook page:

“On Tuesday, October 22nd a fire occurred at 354 Coffin Avenue which resulted in a fatality. The members of the New Bedford Firefighters Local 841 are saddened by the loss of any life. Our thoughts and prayers at this time remain with the family of Louisa Barboza.

The origin and the cause of the fire are still under investigation by the New Bedford Fire Prevention Bureau along with other local and state authorities.

In response to media and public inquiries and the lack of local media coverage on this incident we are providing the following information in relation to Black Outs:

The First Due apparatus were Engine 8 and Ladder 4 from Station 8 located at the corner of Acushnet Avenue and Davis Street. On this day Engine 8 was the “blacked out” (closed) apparatus for a 24-hour shift.

The daily “Blacking Out” of fire apparatus has been an ongoing practice not endorsed by the members of Local 841. It has been a budgetary managing tool forced in place by a failure to fully fund an already understaffed department. The allocation and assigning of funding lies solely in the corner office of City Hall.

The City of New Bedford has 7 Fire Station and 10 Fire Apparatus. We strongly stand behind maintaining a full and functional Fire Department.” – Tom Carreiro, President.