

James, Karen

From: Elizabeth Law <bettybob1758@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 25, 2025 3:12 PM
To: County Executive; Murray, Patrick; Council Members; Planning Commission; Victoria Venable
Subject: FERC Conference on Load Information from Data Centers

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

County Executive Jessica Fitzwater and all,

You may be interested in watching an upcoming FERC conference on determining load flow on Oct. 21. There have been news stories that load requirements from data centers have been inaccurate, leading to an overestimation of need. Generation will also be discussed. This should be an interesting conversation. See link below.

In another article in this newsletter, FERC provides the electricity costs per state in a graph.
Thanks,
Betty Law

[September 2025 Highlights | FERC insight | Volume 8 | Federal Energy Regulatory Commission](#)

James, Karen

From: Anuradha Mohanty -MDE- <anuradha.mohanty@maryland.gov>
Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 9:52 AM
To: AC Malinak
Cc: Planning Commission; Council Members; Fitzwater, Jessica; Simpson, Arthur; Peter Resh -MDE-; Barbara Krupiarz -MDE-; Tate Stevens -MDE-; jessica.shulman@maryland.gov
Subject: Re: Quantum Project -- Obvious ongoing violations of Environmental Covenant and EMPs at Quantum Maryland Project

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Dear Ms Malinak,

My apologies for the delay in responding. Following your email, LRP personnel (Jess S) conducted a site visit on 9/25 and inspected for the source of mud observed on the roads including Mountville Road, and Manor Woods Road near the Church. The roads were clean at the time of the visit with several street sweepers operating on the road. The areas adjacent to the roads are currently owned by the Rowan Bauxite 1 and 2(Bauxite properties). The truck traffic observed on the road are also anticipated to be working for Bauxite properties. These Bauxite properties lie outside of the Environmental Covenant(EC) and so LRP has no EMPs and/or EC oversight at this time to manage the soil generated at these sites. However, I am ccing Mr Peter Resh,Environmental Compliance Specialist with MDE's Water Science Administration (WSA) and Mr Arthur Simpson,Environmental Compliance Inspector Frederick County, who are the current site inspector/managers at the Bauxite properties , overseeing implementation of sediment erosion control(SEC) and other permit compliance. They may be able to address your inquiries re SEC and dust control issues during construction at the Bauxite properties.

The areas currently under the EC and owned by QL, continue to be under LRP oversight. All soil management activities in these areas are being conducted in accordance with the approved EC/EMP. MDE LRP staff has been conducting weekly site visits since the Summer of 2024 and have not encountered any violations regarding the management of contaminated soil on site. In addition, MDE personnel also reached out to the QL site managers on 9/25 and confirmed no construction or soil movement activities are currently taking place within the EC areas. QL/GEI is also in conformance with the dust control requirements during site activities. We have updated our website to include the compliance information in response to LRP's inquiry letter dated April 7, 2025. LRP is aware of the citizen's concern regarding activities on the QL sites. We are committed to proper dust and soil management during the implementation of the EMP within the EC areas through regular site visits and regular communication with QL.

Finally, LRP has oversight over part of Rowan Bauxites Property which lies within the EC area(Rowan BAuxite 3). Rowan's environmental consultant for that site is Ms. Lyndsey Colburn, ERM, who can be reached by Lyndsey.Colburn@erm.com and may be able to provide details on site work and sampling results in remainder of the Bauxite properties(Bauxite 1 and 2).

Hope that helps.

With regards

Anu

James, Karen

From: Bill Steigelmann <bsteig@aol.com>
Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 11:38 AM
To: Council Members; Elizabeth Law; Planning Commission
Cc: Jim Ballard
Subject: Re: AI Boom Fuels Data Center Fire Risks, Urging Enhanced Safety Measures

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Council Members and Planning Commission members,

Please recall the Planning Commission Hearing for Rowen Data Centers, when the applicant was asked how much diesel fuel will be stored at each site. The applicant's representatives were caught off-guard and were unsure who should respond. After they huddled for about a minute, a senior official responded with the statement, "We haven't decided yet -- the only thing I can say at this time is that it will be less than 300,000 gallons." For the past few years Betty and I, and other speakers at PC and CC hearings, have been urging the County to strengthen the CDI Ordinance to protect the public from the consequences of a major data center conflagration. Jim Ballard has sent you emails containing information about past fires at data centers in several different states. It is your obligation to take action on this information and protect ALL the innocent individuals -- from infants to the elderly -- who are within a mile or so of a large data center in Frederick County that starts to burn.

A fire may already be a roaring inferno when County firefighters arrive from the new large and expensive fire station to be built at Adamstown. The logical solution is to require all data centers to disclose in their applications for Site Plan Approval the identities and volumes of all inflammable materials that will be present at the site, especially those like diesel fuel whose combustion results in the presence of chemical compounds that are especially harmful to children's lungs, and to also require data centers to install sufficient number automatically actuated fire-fighting systems to prevent a small fire from escalating into an inferno before County firefighters arrive and deploy their equipment. Remember the ancient wisdom: An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure! The answer to the possibility that a major fire that can harm infants, children and the elderly may occur is to **require that it cannot occur**. It is less costly to prevent a major fire than to deal with one that is underway!

Bill Steigelmann

On Monday, September 29, 2025 at 09:34:48 AM EDT, Elizabeth Law <bettybob1758@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear Council Members,

Please speak with our fire safety experts and devise legislation to protect us. Consider the 10,000 gallons of diesel that will sit in the belly of each diesel generator housing. Consider the 20,000 gallon tank that will sit at each data center. What could go wrong?

Thank you,
Betty Law, P.E.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Jim Ballard <comusmail-yahoo@yahoo.com>

Date: Mon, Sep 29, 2025 at 6:50 AM

Subject: AI Boom Fuels Data Center Fire Risks, Urging Enhanced Safety Measures

To: wesley.moore@maryland.gov <wesley.moore@maryland.gov>

Cc: gabriel.acevero@house.state.md.us <gabriel.acevero@house.state.md.us>, christopher.adams@house.state.md.us <christopher.adams@house.state.md.us>, nick.allen@house.state.md.us <nick.allen@house.state.md.us>, tiffany.alston@house.state.md.us <tiffany.alston@house.state.md.us>, marlon.amprey@house.state.md.us <marlon.amprey@house.state.md.us>, steven.arentz@house.state.md.us <steven.arentz@house.state.md.us>, lauren.arikan@house.state.md.us <lauren.arikan@house.state.md.us>, vanessa.atterbeary@house.state.md.us <vanessa.atterbeary@house.state.md.us>, heather.bagnall@house.state.md.us <heather.bagnall@house.state.md.us>, terry.baker@house.state.md.us <terry.baker@house.state.md.us>, ben.barnes@house.state.md.us <ben.barnes@house.state.md.us>, sandy.bartlett@house.state.md.us <sandy.bartlett@house.state.md.us>, harry.bhandari@house.state.md.us <harry.bhandari@house.state.md.us>, adrian.boafo@house.state.md.us <adrian.boafo@house.state.md.us>, christopher.bouchat@house.state.md.us 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From <https://frederickcountymd.gov/24/Division-of-Fire-Rescue-Services-DFRS>

and

<https://user-cl4h9az.cld.bz/2024-ANNUAL-REPORT-Final>

The only apparent prep for Adamstown data center development I can find is a new fire and rescue station planned at the intersection of Route 85 and Adamstown Road, with "data center" fire and rescue otherwise unmentioned in the linked report or anywhere else I could find on the Frederick County website.

From <https://www.webpronews.com/ai-boom-fuels-data-center-fire-risks-urging-enhanced-safety-measures/>

AI Boom Fuels Data Center Fire Risks, Urging Enhanced Safety Measures

The AI boom is fueling rapid data center expansion, posing unprecedented fire risks due to lithium-ion batteries, dense electrical systems, and resource demands. Firefighters face intense blazes, toxic smoke, and infrastructure disruptions, prompting calls for specialized training, advanced suppression tech, and collaborative policies to enhance safety and resilience.

Written by Sara Donnelly

Sunday, September 28, 2025

As the artificial intelligence boom accelerates, data centers—those hulking warehouses of servers powering everything from cloud computing to generative AI—are proliferating across the U.S. and beyond. But this rapid expansion is presenting unprecedented challenges for firefighters, who are increasingly called upon to battle blazes in these high-tech facilities. Recent incidents highlight how the sheer scale and complexity of

data centers are straining emergency response systems, forcing a reevaluation of tactics and training.

In regions like Northern Virginia and Silicon Valley, where data centers cluster densely, fire departments are adapting to hazards unique to these structures. Lithium-ion batteries, dense electrical systems, and vast arrays of cooling equipment create environments prone to intense, hard-to-extinguish fires. A report from the International Association of Fire Fighters, detailed in their publication [IAFF](#), notes that the building boom driven by AI demands is reshaping urban and suburban landscapes, compelling first responders to develop specialized protocols.

The Hidden Dangers Lurking in Server Farms: As data centers grow in size and number, the risks of catastrophic fires escalate, with potential for toxic smoke and structural failures that traditional firefighting methods can't easily handle.

Politicians and experts are sounding alarms about the broader implications. In California, for instance, officials have linked water scarcity during Los Angeles fires to the water-intensive cooling needs of AI data centers, as reported by [Futurism](#). This isn't just about flames; it's about resource competition in fire-prone areas. Firefighters must now contend with facilities that consume massive amounts of electricity, heightening the risk of electrical faults that can ignite infernos.

Globally, the issue is intensifying. A recent fire at a data center in South Korea crippled government online services and networks, exposing vulnerabilities in digital infrastructure, according to coverage in [Prokerala](#). Such events underscore how a single blaze can disrupt national systems, prompting calls for enhanced fire suppression technologies like advanced sprinkler systems or inert gas deployments tailored to sensitive electronics.

Adapting Tactics in an AI-Driven World: Fire departments are investing in new training programs and equipment to combat data center fires, but the pace of industry growth often outstrips these preparations, leaving gaps in readiness.

Industry insiders point to the energy demands as a core problem. Generative AI tools, particularly those converting text to video, have staggering power usage, contributing to overloaded grids that can spark fires, as explored in a [Futurism article](#) on carbon footprints. Firefighters report that these centers' fires release hazardous materials, requiring hazmat suits and specialized ventilation strategies.

In the U.S., first responders are being overwhelmed, with data centers described as an "invasive species" that strains local resources, per a piece in [Yahoo News Canada](#).

Communities near these facilities face not only fire risks but also noise, water usage, and power draws that complicate emergency planning. The [Daily Kos](#) has likened the AI gold rush to a modern myth, where “fire bringers” symbolize the dual promise and peril of this tech surge.

Strategic Shifts for Future Resilience: Policymakers and tech firms must collaborate on fire-safe designs, integrating AI monitoring to predict and prevent blazes before they start, ensuring that innovation doesn’t come at the cost of public safety.

Looking ahead, organizations like The Future Society, focused on AI governance as outlined on their site [The Future Society](#), advocate for policies that address these risks. Firefighters are pushing for federal standards, including mandatory fire-resistant materials in data center construction. As AI integrates deeper into society, the firefighting community must evolve, blending traditional bravery with tech-savvy strategies to safeguard the digital backbone.

Yet challenges persist. A War on the Rocks analysis, available at [War on the Rocks](#), frames data centers as critical infrastructure akin to military assets, vulnerable in conflicts or disasters. For industry leaders, this means investing in resilient designs, while firefighters train for scenarios where a server farm fire could cascade into widespread outages. The intersection of tech expansion and emergency response is a frontline battle, one that demands innovation to match the pace of AI’s relentless advance.

On Sunday, September 28, 2025 at 07:41:44 PM EDT, Jim Ballard <comusmail-yahoo@yahoo.com> wrote:
Re: First Responders Are Being Overwhelmed by Data Center Fires

I apologize for the annoying thumbnails that were in my last email and removed below for easier reading.

I took the opportunity to ask Duck Duck Go AI about Frederick County's fire safety preparations related to data centers. If I lived in Frederick County, I would be interested in the details and how the effort is being funded. Here is my query and the reply:

What is the Frederick County, Maryland plan to increase its fire fighting capability in response to the planned data center campus in Adamstown, MD?

Search

Frederick County's Plan to Enhance Firefighting Capabilities

Frederick County, Maryland, is actively addressing the potential increase in demand for firefighting services due to the planned data center campus in Adamstown. This initiative is part of a broader strategy to ensure that emergency services can adequately support the growing infrastructure and population associated with the data center development.

Key Elements of the Plan

Increased Funding for Fire Services: The county is allocating additional resources to enhance firefighting capabilities. This includes funding for new equipment, training, and possibly hiring more personnel to ensure that fire departments can respond effectively to emergencies related to the data centers.

Infrastructure Improvements: Plans are underway to upgrade existing fire stations and possibly construct new facilities closer to the data center campus. This will reduce response times and improve overall service delivery.

Collaboration with Data Center Operators: The county is working closely with data center developers to understand their specific needs and risks. This collaboration may include fire safety assessments and the implementation of advanced fire suppression systems within the data centers themselves.

Community Engagement and Training: There will be efforts to engage the community in fire safety education, particularly focusing on the unique challenges posed by large data centers. Training programs for firefighters will also be enhanced to prepare them for potential incidents at these facilities.

Emergency Response Planning: The county is revising its emergency response plans to account for the increased scale and complexity of operations associated with the data centers. This includes conducting drills and simulations to ensure readiness.

Challenges and Considerations

Resource Allocation: Balancing the budget to accommodate these enhancements while addressing other community needs is a significant challenge.

Environmental Concerns: The data centers are expected to have substantial energy and water demands, which could impact local resources. Firefighting strategies will need to consider these factors, especially in terms of water supply for firefighting efforts.

Public Sentiment: There is ongoing public debate regarding the impact of data centers on the community, including concerns about urban sprawl and environmental sustainability. Engaging with residents and addressing their concerns will be crucial for the success of the plan.

Overall, Frederick County is taking proactive steps to ensure that its firefighting capabilities are robust enough to meet the demands posed by the new data center campus in Adamstown. This comprehensive approach aims to safeguard both the infrastructure and the community.

On Sunday, September 28, 2025 at 10:28:56 AM EDT, Jim Ballard <comusmail-yahoo@yahoo.com> wrote:

You all should be happy that I am starting a fresh thread. Well, maybe considering the subject you shouldn't be. There is a bit of an introduction and other articles before the subject article at the bottom.

Data center fire: 10 hours battling battery blaze to salvage data

<https://www.koreaherald.com/article/10585058>

Data center blaze started during safety work: reports

<https://www.koreaherald.com/article/10585063>

Why have there been 4 fires at data center in 1 year? Chesterfield, Chirisa investigating

<https://www.progress-index.com/story/news/local/2025/09/10/chesterfield-fires-chirisa-data-center-cause/86048927007/>

If they cannot find a cause - harmonic resonance is the likely culprit (IMO). I have a solution, but as usual, no one will like it, and I'd rather see them burn anyway.

NSA's Bumblehive in Utah had similar problems (My [un]professional speculation).

"Toward the end of the project's construction it was plagued by electrical problems in the form of "massive power surges" that damaged equipment. This delayed its opening by a year."

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Utah_Data_Center

<https://worldstopdatacenters.com/nsa-bumblehive/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XqoPnwLZm60>

That should be enough links to creep you out.

Here are more interesting data center fire references. It seems to me that a large campus like in Adamstown should have its own self funded fire department, and not rely on county services.

<https://internationalfireandsafetyjournal.com/data-centre-fire-safety-under-scrutiny-after-multiple-incidents/>

<https://www.iaff.org/news/data-centers-are-booming-and-fire-fighters-must-adapt-to-new-challenges/>

<https://dgtlinfra.com/data-center-fires/>

You all have experienced harmonic resonance when you hear someone step in front of a sound speaker with their microphone or acoustic instrument and it creates screeching feedback. When that happens on a power system, things go "boom" instead of "screech."

Here is a good definition from <https://voltage-disturbance.com/power-quality/harmonic-resonance-in-power-systems/>

HARMONIC RESONANCE IN POWER SYSTEMS

May 18, 2019adminPower Quality

Harmonic currents produced by non-linear electronic loads are injected in to the power system grid. The effect of injecting large magnitude of harmonic current in to the grid depends on the response of the power grid to the various injected harmonic frequencies. Depending on the response of the grid, the injected current could simply flow in to the grid harmlessly or create electrical power system resonance resulting in damaging overvoltage or overcurrent conditions.

- Jim

Finally, here is the subject article

From <https://futurism.com/future-society/fire-fighters-data-centers>

First Responders Are Being Overwhelmed by Data Center Fires

"We're not a huge fan of the data centers."

By [Joe Wilkins](#)

Published Sep 28, 2025 7:30 AM EDT

In the race to dominate the AI industry, tech giants are planting data centers across the US. But for many Americans, silicon valley's cash crop feels more like an invasive species — one which, when it takes root, begins to overwhelm everything around it.

For one thing, the facilities are [incredibly noisy](#), their cooling systems likened to a "distant jet that never leaves." Their collective energy demand is so high that they're [driving up utility prices](#) throughout the country, in some cases prompting insufferable CEOs to resort to [methane gas generators](#), choking local communities with noxious fumes. Their water intake is so enormous that taps in nearby homes can [stop running](#), while their excessive [pollution](#) has been linked to a [growing cancer risk](#).

That's before we even get into the [massive financial problem](#) with the AI data center gold rush, which in many ways is now holding up the stagnant [US economy](#).

As if all that weren't enough, one community is now learning about another obnoxious data center trait: their tendency to burst into flames.

The fire department in Jerome Township, Ohio, an exurb northwest of Columbus, has grown increasingly annoyed at two Amazon data centers over the last four years. Since the first site was approved by [local officials](#) in 2021, first responders have answered a combined 84 emergencies between the two facilities, a rate of about two calls a month, [according to The Columbus Dispatch](#).

That's on top of regular safety inspections. Whenever they arrive, fire officials and EMS workers say they're met by [facility security](#), who can make them wait as long as an hour for Amazon's authorization to enter (data centers are critical to [US national security](#), after all.)

In April, local news reported a [two-alarm fire](#) at one of the facilities, which caused more than \$50 million in damages and tied up first responders for over 24 hours. It's a cushy deal for Amazon, which papered in a 100 percent property tax abatement lasting ten years for each site, meaning local residents are fronting the bill every time the fire department goes on a data center run.

"That taxes our resources every time we go," the township's fire chief, Douglas Stewart said.

Jerome Township isn't alone. In 2025, Amazon had 56 data centers planned or in operation throughout Ohio, some of which are on pause following local pushback, [the Dispatch reported](#) earlier this year. That's just a fraction of the [179 data centers](#) Ohio is host to as of this month.

The Columbus suburb of Hilliard, for example, has a population of 37,000 residents who are surrounded by three separate [data center campuses](#), each of which contains as many as five data centers. Though township residents might object to their tax dollars being drained by, those decisions have already been rubber stamped at the local level — [easy targets](#) for deep-pocketed tech corporations.

"We're not a huge fan of the data centers, but Hilliard controls economic development, and data centers bring in business," the township's fire chief David Baird told the [Dispatch](#). He noted that since the first data center campus [began construction](#) in Hilliard circa 2015, they've diverted some \$2 million in tax revenue away from the township's emergency services.

Since 2020, the data center market has doubled in size. The US built 137 brand new [hyperscale data centers](#) — facilities 10,000 square feet or larger — [in 2024 alone](#), a number that's expected to rise dramatically as time goes on.

All that rapid growth has fueled [global concerns](#) over the fire risk inherent to these often hastily constructed facilities, and the question of who pays the cost.

James, Karen

From: DIANE & BRUD BICKNELL <bicknell0104@comcast.net>
Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 11:44 AM
To: Planning Commission
Cc: Council Members; Gaines, Kimberly; Knapp, Renee; McKay, Steve; Donald, Jerry; Carter, Mason; Keegan-Ayer, MC; Duckett, Kavonte; Young, Brad; County Executive
Subject: Proposed CDI Overlay - Option B?

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Dear County Leaders,

We received our notice of public hearing regarding the proposed CDI Overlay as our neighborhood is adjacent to the northern boundary of the current map. I am writing today to offer comment and another option that takes the data center growth away from Adamstown and long-established northern neighborhoods and moves it west towards existing industry and Route 15.

1) To be clear, I think that data centers in Frederick should be limited to JUST the Eastalco Community Growth Area for all the reasons residents have given about the detrimental quality of life issues that come with data center development.

2) It is highly unfair to ask the residents of a single district to bear the entire burden of a huge data center complex while the rest of the county only reaps the rewards.

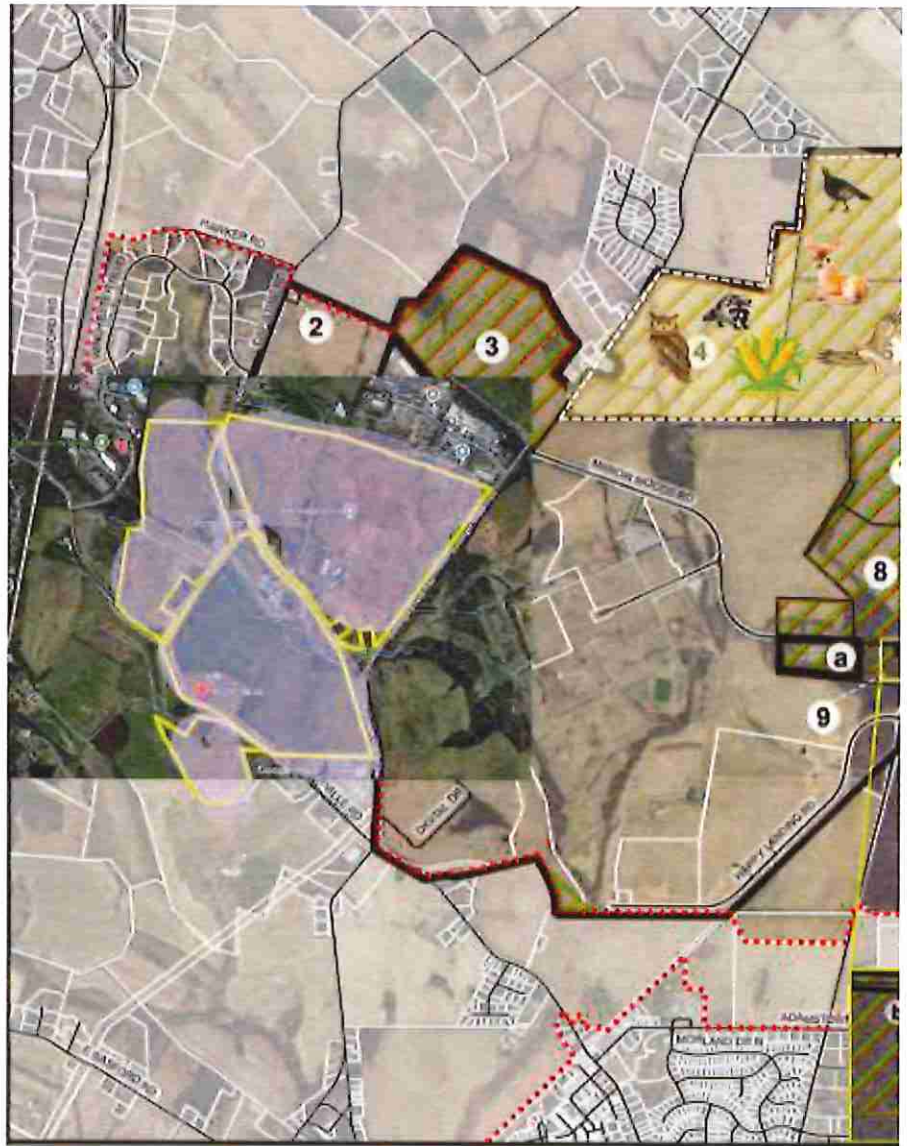
3) If county leaders are hell-bent on allowing massive data center development, I'd like to offer an alternate map that takes the sprawl away from neighborhoods and towards busy Route 15.

**Alternate Option Suggestion
for
CDI Overlay**
*that moves growth toward industry
and Rte. 15, NOT long-established
neighborhoods.*

Remove from CDI



Replace, *if you must*, with
these properties



This suggestion removes the current lots 4, 5, 6 in the overlay and replaces them with acreage next to the Eastalco site. The three suggested lots are farms owned by people who have asked to be included in the overlay (Windridge, Geisinger and Stup*) as their bucolic farmland quality of life has already been destroyed by the data centers across the street.

*As I understand it, data center development must wait until land has public water and sewer services. Per the maps in the "Amendment of the Livable Frederick Comprehensive Plan", water and sewer will not be available to current lots 4, 5, 6 for another 11-20 years. This gives the Stup farm time to go through the process of terminating its MALPF agricultural land preservation easements.

Thank you for hearing my comments and considering the suggestion. If anyone would honor me with a reply, I would be grateful.

Diane Bicknell

James, Karen

From: Jim Ballard <comusmail-yahoo@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, September 29, 2025 3:41 PM
To: Council Members; Elizabeth Law; Planning Commission; Bill Steigelmann
Subject: Re: AI Boom Fuels Data Center Fire Risks, Urging Enhanced Safety Measures

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Please note that the Jerome Township data centers that are an ongoing fire service problem, reported on in the Columbus Dispatch are Amazon - as will be Rowan's three approved campuses. These electrical fire issues tend to haunt bad power system designers. Hopefully Quantum Frederick's Amazon Rowans will use better designers than Amazon Jerome Township's.

I was the US Navy's shipboard power quality engineer for three years when Reagan was building out his 600 ship navy. This project's acronym was EPIC - Electric Power Interface Compatibility, but we often preferred the acronym that makes a complete list of power quality problems - Spikes Harmonics Interruptions Transients.

- Jim

On Monday, September 29, 2025 at 11:38:28 AM EDT, Bill Steigelmann <bsteig@aol.com> wrote:

Council Members and Planning Commission members,

Please recall the Planning Commission Hearing for Rowen Data Centers, when the applicant was asked how much diesel fuel will be stored at each site. The applicant's representatives where caught off-guard and were unsure who should respond. After the huddled for about a minute, a senior official responded with the statement, "We haven't decided yet -- the only thing I can say at this time is that it will be less than 300,000 gallons." For the past few years Betty and I, and other speakers at PC and CC hearings, have been urging the County to strengthen the CDI Ordinance to protect the public from the consequences a major data center conflagration. Jim Ballard has sent you emails containing information about past fires at data centers in several different states. It is your obligation to take action on this information and protect ALL the innocent individuals -- from infants to the elderly -- who are within a mile or so of a large data center in Frederick County. that starts to burn.

A fire may already be a roaring inferno when County firefighters arrive from the new large and expensive fire station to be built at Adamstown. The logical solution is to require all data centers to disclose in their applications for Site Plan Approval the identities and volumes of all inflammable materials that will be present at the site, especially those like diesel fuel whose combustion results in the presence of chemical compounds that are especially harmful to children's lungs, and to also require data centers to install sufficient number automatically actuated fire-fighting systems to prevent a small fire from escalating into an inferno before County firefighters arrive and deploy their equipment. Remember the ancient wisdom: An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure! The answer to the possibility that a major fire that a major fire that can harm infants, children and the elderly may occur is to **require that it cannot occur**. It less costly to prevent a major fire than to deal with one that is underway!

Bill Steigelmann

On Monday, September 29, 2025 at 09:34:48 AM EDT, Elizabeth Law <bettybob1758@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear Council Members,

Please speak with our fire safety experts and devise legislation to protect us. Consider the 10,000 gallons of diesel that will sit in the belly of each diesel generator housing. Consider the 20,000 gallon tank that will sit at each data center. What could go wrong?

Thank you,
Betty Law, P.E.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Jim Ballard** <comusmail-yahoo@yahoo.com>

Date: Mon, Sep 29, 2025 at 6:50 AM

Subject: AI Boom Fuels Data Center Fire Risks, Urging Enhanced Safety Measures

To: wesley.moore@maryland.gov <wesley.moore@maryland.gov>

Cc: gabriel.acevero@house.state.md.us <gabriel.acevero@house.state.md.us>, christopher.adams@house.state.md.us <christopher.adams@house.state.md.us>, nick.allen@house.state.md.us <nick.allen@house.state.md.us>, tiffany.alston@house.state.md.us <tiffany.alston@house.state.md.us>, marlon.amprey@house.state.md.us <marlon.amprey@house.state.md.us>, steven.arentz@house.state.md.us <steven.arentz@house.state.md.us>, lauren.arikan@house.state.md.us <lauren.arikan@house.state.md.us>, vanessa.atterbeary@house.state.md.us <vanessa.atterbeary@house.state.md.us>, heather.bagnall@house.state.md.us <heather.bagnall@house.state.md.us>, terry.baker@house.state.md.us <terry.baker@house.state.md.us>, ben.barnes@house.state.md.us <ben.barnes@house.state.md.us>, sandy.bartlett@house.state.md.us <sandy.bartlett@house.state.md.us>, harry.bhandari@house.state.md.us <harry.bhandari@house.state.md.us>, adrian.boafo@house.state.md.us <adrian.boafo@house.state.md.us>, christopher.bouchat@house.state.md.us <christopher.bouchat@house.state.md.us>, regina.boyce@house.state.md.us <regina.boyce@house.state.md.us>, jason.buckel@house.state.md.us <jason.buckel@house.state.md.us>, jon.cardin@house.state.md.us <jon.cardin@house.state.md.us>, mark.chang@house.state.md.us <mark.chang@house.state.md.us>, lorig.charkoudian@house.state.md.us <lorig.charkoudian@house.state.md.us>, brian.chisholm@house.state.md.us <brian.chisholm@house.state.md.us>, barrie.ciliberti@house.state.md.us <barrie.ciliberti@house.state.md.us>, luke.clippinger@house.state.md.us <luke.clippinger@house.state.md.us>, frank.conaway@house.state.md.us <frank.conaway@house.state.md.us>, brian.crosby@house.state.md.us <brian.crosby@house.state.md.us>, charlotte.crutchfield@house.state.md.us <charlotte.crutchfield@house.state.md.us>, bonnie.cullison@house.state.md.us <bonnie.cullison@house.state.md.us>, debra.davis@house.state.md.us <debra.davis@house.state.md.us>, eric.ebersole@house.state.md.us <eric.ebersole@house.state.md.us>, mark.edelson@house.state.md.us <mark.edelson@house.state.md.us>, elizabeth.embry@house.state.md.us <elizabeth.embry@house.state.md.us>, kris.fair@house.state.md.us <kris.fair@house.state.md.us>, jessica.feldmark@house.state.md.us <jessica.feldmark@house.state.md.us>, diana.fennell@house.state.md.us <diana.fennell@house.state.md.us>, mark.fisher@house.state.md.us <mark.fisher@house.state.md.us>, linda.foley@house.state.md.us <linda.foley@house.state.md.us>, catherine.forbes@house.state.md.us <catherine.forbes@house.state.md.us>, david.fraser.hidalgo@house.state.md.us <david.fraser.hidalgo@house.state.md.us>, jeff.ghrist@house.state.md.us <jeff.ghrist@house.state.md.us>, robin.grammer@house.state.md.us <robin.grammer@house.state.md.us>, mike.griffith@house.state.md.us <mike.griffith@house.state.md.us>, michele.guyton@house.state.md.us <michele.guyton@house.state.md.us>, pam.guzzone@house.state.md.us <pam.guzzone@house.state.md.us>, kevin.harris@house.state.md.us <kevin.harris@house.state.md.us>, andrea.fletcher.harrison@house.state.md.us <andrea.fletcher.harrison@house.state.md.us>, wayne.hartman@house.state.md.us <wayne.hartman@house.state.md.us>, anne.healey@house.state.md.us <anne.healey@house.state.md.us>, terri.hill@house.state.md.us <terri.hill@house.state.md.us>, jim.hinebaugh@house.state.md.us <jim.hinebaugh@house.state.md.us>, jennifer.white@house.state.md.us <jennifer.white@house.state.md.us>, marvin.holmes@house.state.md.us <marvin.holmes@house.state.md.us>, kevin.hornberger@house.state.md.us <kevin.hornberger@house.state.md.us>, seth.howard@house.state.md.us <seth.howard@house.state.md.us>, tom.hutchinson@house.state.md.us <tom.hutchinson@house.state.md.us>, julian.ivey@house.state.md.us <julian.ivey@house.state.md.us>, carl.jackson@house.state.md.us <carl.jackson@house.state.md.us>, jay.jacobs@house.state.md.us <jay.jacobs@house.state.md.us>, andre.johnson@house.state.md.us <andre.johnson@house.state.md.us>, steve.johnson@house.state.md.us <steve.johnson@house.state.md.us>, adrienne.jones@house.state.md.us <adrienne.jones@house.state.md.us>, dana.jones@house.state.md.us <dana.jones@house.state.md.us>

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From <https://frederickcountymd.gov/24/Division-of-Fire-Rescue-Services-DFRS>

and

<https://user-cl4h9az.cld.bz/2024-ANNUAL-REPORT-Final>

The only apparent prep for Adamstown data center development I can find is a new fire and rescue station planned at the intersection of Route 85 and Adamstown Road, with "data center" fire and rescue otherwise unmentioned in the linked report or anywhere else I could find on the Frederick County website.

From <https://www.webpronews.com/ai-boom-fuels-data-center-fire-risks-urging-enhanced-safety-measures/>

AI Boom Fuels Data Center Fire Risks, Urging Enhanced Safety Measures

The AI boom is fueling rapid data center expansion, posing unprecedented fire risks due to lithium-ion batteries, dense electrical systems, and resource demands. Firefighters face intense blazes, toxic smoke, and infrastructure disruptions, prompting calls for specialized training, advanced suppression tech, and collaborative policies to enhance safety and resilience.

Written by Sara Donnelly

Sunday, September 28, 2025

As the artificial intelligence boom accelerates, data centers—those hulking warehouses of servers powering everything from cloud computing to generative AI—are proliferating across the U.S. and beyond. But this rapid expansion is presenting unprecedented challenges for firefighters, who are increasingly called upon to battle blazes in these high-tech facilities. Recent incidents highlight how the sheer scale and complexity of data centers are straining emergency response systems, forcing a reevaluation of tactics and training.

In regions like Northern Virginia and Silicon Valley, where data centers cluster densely, fire departments are adapting to hazards unique to these structures. Lithium-ion batteries, dense electrical systems, and vast arrays of cooling equipment create environments prone to intense, hard-to-extinguish fires. A report from the International Association of Fire Fighters, detailed in their publication [IAFF](#), notes that the building boom driven by AI demands is reshaping urban and suburban landscapes, compelling first responders to develop specialized protocols.

The Hidden Dangers Lurking in Server Farms: As data centers grow in size and number, the risks of catastrophic fires escalate, with potential for toxic smoke and structural failures that traditional firefighting methods can't easily handle.

Politicians and experts are sounding alarms about the broader implications. In California, for instance, officials have linked water scarcity during Los Angeles fires to the water-intensive cooling needs of AI data centers, as reported by [Futurism](#). This isn't just about flames; it's about resource competition in fire-prone areas. Firefighters must now contend with facilities that consume massive amounts of electricity, heightening the risk of electrical faults that can ignite infernos.

Globally, the issue is intensifying. A recent fire at a data center in South Korea crippled government online services and networks, exposing vulnerabilities in digital infrastructure, according to coverage in [Prokerala](#). Such events underscore how a single blaze can disrupt national systems, prompting calls for enhanced fire suppression technologies like advanced sprinkler systems or inert gas deployments tailored to sensitive electronics.

Adapting Tactics in an AI-Driven World: Fire departments are investing in new training programs and equipment to combat data center fires, but the pace of industry growth often outstrips these preparations, leaving gaps in readiness.

Industry insiders point to the energy demands as a core problem. Generative AI tools, particularly those converting text to video, have staggering power usage, contributing to overloaded grids that can spark fires, as explored in a [Futurism article](#) on carbon footprints. Firefighters report that these centers' fires release hazardous materials, requiring hazmat suits and specialized ventilation strategies.

In the U.S., first responders are being overwhelmed, with data centers described as an "invasive species" that strains local resources, per a piece in [Yahoo News Canada](#). Communities near these facilities face not only fire risks but also noise, water usage, and power draws that complicate emergency planning. The [Daily Kos](#) has likened the AI gold rush to a modern myth, where "fire bringers" symbolize the dual promise and peril of this tech surge.

Strategic Shifts for Future Resilience: Policymakers and tech firms must collaborate on fire-safe designs, integrating AI monitoring to predict and prevent blazes before they start, ensuring that innovation doesn't come at the cost of public safety.

Looking ahead, organizations like The Future Society, focused on AI governance as outlined on their site [The Future Society](#), advocate for policies that address these risks. Firefighters are pushing for federal standards, including mandatory fire-resistant materials in data center construction. As AI integrates deeper into society, the firefighting community must evolve, blending traditional bravery with tech-savvy strategies to safeguard the digital backbone.

Yet challenges persist. A War on the Rocks analysis, available at [War on the Rocks](#), frames data centers as critical infrastructure akin to military assets, vulnerable in conflicts or disasters. For industry leaders, this means investing in resilient designs, while firefighters train for scenarios where a server farm fire could cascade into widespread outages. The intersection of tech expansion and emergency response is a frontline battle, one that demands innovation to match the pace of AI's relentless advance.

On Sunday, September 28, 2025 at 07:41:44 PM EDT, Jim Ballard <comusmail-yahoo@yahoo.com> wrote:
Re: First Responders Are Being Overwhelmed by Data Center Fires

I apologize for the annoying thumbnails that were in my last email and removed below for easier reading.

I took the opportunity to ask Duck Duck Go AI about Frederick County's fire safety preparations related to data centers. If I lived in Frederick County, I would be interested in the details and how the effort is being funded. Here is my query and the reply:

What is the Frederick County, Maryland plan to increase its fire fighting capability in response to the planned data center campus in Adamstown, MD?

Search

Frederick County's Plan to Enhance Firefighting Capabilities

Frederick County, Maryland, is actively addressing the potential increase in demand for firefighting services due to the planned data center campus in Adamstown. This initiative is part of a broader strategy to ensure that emergency services can adequately support the growing infrastructure and population associated with the data center development.

Key Elements of the Plan

Increased Funding for Fire Services: The county is allocating additional resources to enhance firefighting capabilities. This includes funding for new equipment, training, and possibly hiring more personnel to ensure that fire departments can respond effectively to emergencies related to the data centers.

Infrastructure Improvements: Plans are underway to upgrade existing fire stations and possibly construct new facilities closer to the data center campus. This will reduce response times and improve overall service delivery.

Collaboration with Data Center Operators: The county is working closely with data center developers to understand their specific needs and risks. This collaboration may include fire safety assessments and the implementation of advanced fire suppression systems within the data centers themselves.

Community Engagement and Training: There will be efforts to engage the community in fire safety education, particularly focusing on the unique challenges posed by large data centers. Training programs for firefighters will also be enhanced to prepare them for potential incidents at these facilities.

Emergency Response Planning: The county is revising its emergency response plans to account for the increased scale and complexity of operations associated with the data centers. This includes conducting drills and simulations to ensure readiness.

Challenges and Considerations

Resource Allocation: Balancing the budget to accommodate these enhancements while addressing other community needs is a significant challenge.

Environmental Concerns: The data centers are expected to have substantial energy and water demands, which could impact local resources. Firefighting strategies will need to consider these factors, especially in terms of water supply for firefighting efforts.

Public Sentiment: There is ongoing public debate regarding the impact of data centers on the community, including concerns about urban sprawl and environmental sustainability. Engaging with residents and addressing their concerns will be crucial for the success of the plan.

Overall, Frederick County is taking proactive steps to ensure that its firefighting capabilities are robust enough to meet the demands posed by the new data center campus in Adamstown. This comprehensive approach aims to safeguard both the infrastructure and the community.

On Sunday, September 28, 2025 at 10:28:56 AM EDT, Jim Ballard <comusmail-yahoo@yahoo.com> wrote:

You all should be happy that I am starting a fresh thread. Well, maybe considering the subject you shouldn't be. There is a bit of an introduction and other articles before the subject article at the bottom.

Data center fire: 10 hours battling battery blaze to salvage data

<https://www.koreaherald.com/article/10585058>

Data center blaze started during safety work: reports

<https://www.koreaherald.com/article/10585063>

Why have there been 4 fires at data center in 1 year? Chesterfield, Chirisa investigating

<https://www.progress-index.com/story/news/local/2025/09/10/chesterfield-fires-chirisa-data-center-cause/86048927007/>

If they cannot find a cause - harmonic resonance is the likely culprit (IMO). I have a solution, but as usual, no one will like it, and I'd rather see them burn anyway.

NSA's Bumblehive in Utah had similar problems (My [un]professional speculation).

"Toward the end of the project's construction it was plagued by electrical problems in the form of "massive power surges" that damaged equipment. This delayed its opening by a year."

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Utah_Data_Center

<https://worldstopdatacenters.com/nsa-bumblehive/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XqoPnwLZm60>

That should be enough links to creep you out.

Here are more interesting data center fire references. It seems to me that a large campus like in Adamstown should have its own self funded fire department, and not rely on county services.

<https://internationalfireandsafetyjournal.com/data-centre-fire-safety-under-scrutiny-after-multiple-incidents/>

<https://www.iaff.org/news/data-centers-are-booming-and-fire-fighters-must-adapt-to-new-challenges/>

<https://dgtlinfra.com/data-center-fires/>

You all have experienced harmonic resonance when you hear someone step in front of a sound speaker with their microphone or acoustic instrument and it creates screeching feedback. When that happens on a power system, things go "boom" instead of "screech."

Here is a good definition from <https://voltage-disturbance.com/power-quality/harmonic-resonance-in-power-systems/>

HARMONIC RESONANCE IN POWER SYSTEMS

May 18, 2019adminPower Quality

Harmonic currents produced by non-linear electronic loads are injected in to the power system grid. The effect of injecting large magnitude of harmonic current in to the grid depends on the response of the power grid to the various injected harmonic frequencies. Depending on the response of the grid, the injected current could simply flow in to the grid harmlessly or create electrical power system resonance resulting in damaging overvoltage or overcurrent conditions.

- Jim

Finally, here is the subject article

From <https://futurism.com/future-society/fire-fighters-data-centers>

First Responders Are Being Overwhelmed by Data Center Fires

"We're not a huge fan of the data centers."

By [Joe Wilkins](#)

Published Sep 28, 2025 7:30 AM EDT

In the race to dominate the AI industry, tech giants are planting data centers across the US. But for many Americans, silicon valley's cash crop feels more like an invasive species — one which, when it takes root, begins to overwhelm everything around it.

For one thing, the facilities are [incredibly noisy](#), their cooling systems likened to a “distant jet that never leaves.” Their collective energy demand is so high that they’re [driving up utility prices](#) throughout the country, in some cases prompting insufferable CEOs to resort to [methane gas generators](#), choking local communities with noxious fumes. Their water intake is so enormous that taps in nearby homes can [stop running](#), while their excessive [pollution](#) has been linked to a [growing cancer risk](#).

That’s before we even get into the [massive financial problem](#) with the AI data center gold rush, which in many ways is now holding up the stagnant [US economy](#).

As if all that weren’t enough, one community is now learning about another obnoxious data center trait: their tendency to burst into flames.

The fire department in Jerome Township, Ohio, an exurb northwest of Columbus, has grown increasingly annoyed at two Amazon data centers over the last four years. Since the first site was approved by [local officials](#) in 2021, first responders have answered a combined 84 emergencies between the two facilities, a rate of about two calls a month, [according to The Columbus Dispatch](#).

That’s on top of regular safety inspections. Whenever they arrive, fire officials and EMS workers say they’re met by [facility security](#), who can make them wait as long as an hour for Amazon’s authorization to enter (data centers are critical to [US national security](#), after all.)

In April, local news reported a [two-alarm fire](#) at one of the facilities, which caused more than \$50 million in damages and tied up first responders for over 24 hours. It’s a cushy deal for Amazon, which papered in a 100 percent property tax abatement lasting ten years for each site, meaning local residents are fronting the bill every time the fire department goes on a data center run.

“That taxes our resources every time we go,” the township’s fire chief, Douglas Stewart said.

Jerome Township isn’t alone. In 2025, Amazon had 56 data centers planned or in operation throughout Ohio, some of which are on pause following local pushback, [the Dispatch reported](#) earlier this year. That’s just a fraction of the [179 data centers](#) Ohio is host to as of this month.

The Columbus suburb of Hilliard, for example, has a population of 37,000 residents who are surrounded by three separate [data center campuses](#), each of which contains as many as five data centers. Though township residents might object to their tax dollars being drained by, those decisions have already been rubber stamped at the local level — [easy targets](#) for deep-pocketed tech corporations.

“We’re not a huge fan of the data centers, but Hilliard controls economic development, and data centers bring in business,” the township’s fire chief David Baird told the [Dispatch](#). He noted that since the first data center campus [began construction](#) in Hilliard circa 2015, they’ve diverted some \$2 million in tax revenue away from the township’s emergency services.

Since 2020, the data center market has doubled in size. The US built 137 brand new [hyperscale data centers](#) — facilities 10,000 square feet or larger — [in 2024 alone](#), a number that’s expected to rise dramatically as time goes on.

All that rapid growth has fueled [global concerns](#) over the fire risk inherent to these often hastily constructed facilities, and the question of who pays the cost.