JANET T. MILLS
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
BUREAU OF LABOR STANDARDS
WORKPLACE SAFETY AND HEALTH DIVISION
45 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0045

LAURA A. FORTMAN
COMMISSIONER

KATE BURKHART
DIRECTOR

November 10, 2026

Ron Harford, Fire Chief
Town of Belmont / Belmont Fire Department
613 Back Belmont Road
Belmont, ME 04952

Inspection Number: 1894880

Dear Ron Harford:

Enclosed is the Remediation and Settlement Agreement between the Maine Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Standards and the Town of Belmont resolving the workplace safety and health conditions identified in Inspection 1894880. Also enclosed is the final report that the Bureau of Labor Standards, Workplace Safety and Health Division has submitted to the U.S. Department of Labor Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

The enclosed Agreement constitutes final agency action. As part of reaching this Agreement, the Town of Belmont and Belmont Fire Department expressly waived any right to appeal this action, including an 80C appeal. The Town and Fire Department have acknowledged that this Agreement is a public document and will be posted by the Agency and, possibly, OSHA.

The Agreement suffices to document your actions to abate and remediate the citations identified in this inspection. In lieu of the Abatement Certification Worksheet, please provide of copy of this Agreement to all Fire Department personnel and post a copy of this Agreement in a prominent area available to all fire department personnel for inspection until all commitments made under the Agreement have been fulfilled.

Sincerely,

J. Kate Burkhart
Director, Bureau of Labor Standards

PHONE: (207) 623-7900 (VOICE) TTY USERS CALL MAINE RELAY 711 FAX: (207) 623-7937
OFFICES LOCATED AT: CENTRAL MAINE COMMERCE CENTER, 45 COMMERCE DR., AUGUSTA, ME 04330

Citation and Notification of Penalty

Company Name: Town of Belmont/ Belmont Fire Department
Inspection Site: 506 Main Street South Searsmont, ME 04973

Citation 1 Item 1 Type of Violation: **Willful-Serious**

T.26Ch.6561-A: The employer did not furnish to each employee a place of employment that was free from recognized hazards, that could cause or are likely to cause death or serious physical harm to employees.

On or about May 15, 2026, and at times before, the Town of Belmont Fire Department (BFD) did not activate an accountability system prior to the silo explosion.

Acceptable and feasible methods to correct the conditions as agreed upon include the following:

The Town and BFD have taken the following corrective actions:
1. BFD has augmented its accountability system and now requires personnel to check in for meetings and training as well as at emergency response sites.
2. BFD is in the process of implementing the Passport Accountability System, an evidence-based system of tracking fire service personnel that meets NFPA standards and can be easily implemented without expensive technology.
3. BFD has developed a new standard operating procedure for the use of the Passport Accountability Systems and will train all BFD personnel on the procedure in November 2026.

The Town and BFD commit to the following actions to remediate and abate the hazards identified in the inspection:
1. The Fire Chief and up to four (4) BFD officers will attend the Fire Chiefs Workshop being coordinated by the Agency with MFSI and MFCA to be held in February 2027; and
2. BFD has offered to host the Fire Chiefs' Workshop at the Belmont Town Hall.

Date By Which Violation Must Be Abated:	**February 28, 2027**
Proposed Penalty:	**$10,000.00 – 100% SUSPENDED**

Citation and Notification of Penalty

Company Name: Town of Belmont/ Belmont Fire Department
Inspection Site: 506 Main Street South Searsmont, ME 04973

Citation 2 Item 1 Type of Violation: **Serious**

29 CFR 1910.134(e)(1): The employer did not provide a medical evaluation to determine the employee's ability to use a respirator, before the employee was fit tested or required to use the respirator in the workplace.

On or about May 15, 2026, and at times before, the Town of Belmont Fire Department did not ensure all employees tasked with using a Scott 2.2 SCBA and associated facepiece received a medical evaluation prior to use.

Acceptable and feasible methods to correct the conditions include but are not limited to:

The Town and BFD have taken the following corrective actions:
1. BFD has augmented its accountability system and now requires personnel to check in for meetings and trainings as well as at emergency response sites.
2. BFD is in the process of implementing the Passport Accountability System, an evidence-based system of tracking fire service personnel that meets NFPA standards and can be easily implemented without expensive technology.
3. BFD has developed a new standard operating procedure for the use of the Passport Accountability Systems and will train all BFD personnel on the procedure in November 2026.

The Town and BFD commit to the following actions to remediate and abate the hazards identified in the inspection:
1. The Fire Chief and up to four (4) BFD officers will attend the Fire Chiefs Workshop being coordinated by the Agency with MFSI and MFCA to be held in February 2027; and
2. BFD has offered to host the Fire Chiefs' Workshop at the Belmont Town Hall.

Date By Which Violation Must Be Abated:	**February 28, 2027**
Proposed Penalty:	**$1,000.00 – 100% SUSPENDED**

Remediation and Settlement Agreement between the Maine Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Standards and the Town of Belmont
Inspection 1894880

This Agreement is entered into by and between the Maine Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Standards (hereinafter "Agency") and the Belmont Volunteer Fire Department (hereinafter "BFD") to resolve the workplace safety and health violations identified during Inspection 1894880 and the citation issued on October 5, 2026.

I. RECITALS

Ron Harford is the Chief of the Belmont Volunteer Fire Department and is authorized to bind the BFD and enter into this Settlement Agreement.

The Agency conducted Inspection 1894880 and found that BFD did not deploy an accountability system to account for all employees at a fire scene, which is a willful violation of the general duty imposed by 26 MRSA §561-A subject to a penalty not to exceed $10,000.00.

II. TERMS OF REMEDIATION AND ABATEMENT OF HAZARDS

BFD has undertaken the following actions to remediate and abate the hazards identified in the inspection:

1. BFD has augmented its accountability system and now requires personnel to check in for meetings and trainings as well as at emergency response sites.
2. BFD is in the process of implementing the Passport Accountability System, an evidence-based system of tracking fire service personnel that meets NFPA standards and can be easily implemented without expensive technology.
3. BFD has developed a new standard operating procedure for the use of the Passport Accountability Systems and will train all BFD personnel on the procedure in November 2026.

The Agency commits to coordinate and support delivery of the Fire Chiefs' Workshop by the Maine Fire Service Institute (MFSI) and Maine Fire Chiefs' Association (MFCA) in February 2027 at a location in Waldo County and in a way that is as convenient and accessible to the participants as possible.

MFD commits to further remediation, specifically that:

1. the Fire Chief and up to four (4) BFD officers will attend the Fire Chiefs Workshop being coordinated by the Agency with MFSI and MFCA to be held in February 2027; and
2. BFD has offered to host the Fire Chiefs' Workshop at the Belmont Town Hall.

III. SUSPENSION OF PENALTIES

The total penalty associated with this investigation totals $10,000.00. In consideration for the actions taken by BFD and the commitment to provide additional training to BFD officers and staff and to prevent and mitigate future hazards, the Agency agrees to suspend the full $10,000.00 penalty.

IV. FINAL ORDER, WAIVER OF RIGHT TO APPEAL

BFD acknowledges that this Agreement constitutes final agency action and waive any right to appeal this action, including an 80C appeal. This Agreement constitutes a final money judgment pursuant to 14 M.R.S. § 3138. BFD acknowledges and understands that this Settlement Agreement is a public document and will be posted by the Agency and, possibly, the US Department of Labor Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

BFD acknowledges that, in the event that the terms of this Agreement are not met, the Agency may enforce the entire amount of penalties suspended and may pursue additional penalties under 26 M.R.S. §46 if any citation has not been corrected as provided in this Agreement. If the Agency pursues remedies for breach of this Agreement, BFD retains the right to dispute whether this Agreement has been breached but waives any right to contest the underlying violation and resulting penalties.

V. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The Agency provides formal and informal technical assistance to public employers, including the free, confidential Consultation Program through SafetyWorks!. BFD is invited to contact the Agency for free, confidential technical assistance related to workplace safety and health.

SIGNATURES

J. Kate Burkhart

Date: 11.10.26

J. Kate Burkhart
Director, Bureau of Labor Standards
Maine Department of Labor

Date: 10/28/26

Chief Ron Harford
Belmont Volunteer Fire Department