



City of Lake Geneva Fire Department
730 Marshall St, Lake Geneva, WI 53147
Phone: (262)248-7228 • Fax: (262)248-2264
www.lakegenevafire.org

Attn: Chiefs and Members of the Assisting Fire Departments and Task Forces from MABAS Divisions 4, 5, 101, 102, 103, 104, 106, 107, & 118

July 17, 2026

Subject: Appreciation for Response to July 3, 2026 MABAS Disaster Box – Greater Lake Geneva Area

On behalf of the City of Lake Geneva Fire Department and the residents of the City of Lake Geneva, Town of Geneva, Town of Linn, and the surrounding communities, I extend our deepest appreciation for your outstanding response and assistance during the severe storm event on Friday, July 3, 2026.

Shortly after noon on July 3, a sudden and destructive line of storms swept through southern Walworth County, producing hurricane-strength winds, extensive property damage, widespread power outages, and tragic loss of life. The greater Lake Geneva response district sustained massive damage, including hundreds of downed and uprooted trees, collapsed and damaged structures, blocked roadways, and significant impacts to homes, vehicles, and shoreline properties.

In addition to this wide-area destruction, our community faced a major water emergency on Geneva Lake when a recreational boat capsized in the storm, resulting in multiple victims in the water and the deaths of three children despite extensive rescue efforts. At the same time, our responders were addressing downed power lines, occupants trapped in vehicles and under fallen trees, gas and electrical emergencies, and numerous medical calls related to storm impacts throughout the region.

Because of the volume and severity of incidents, we activated our MABAS Disaster Box, requesting a large-scale mutual aid response to support operations in the City of Lake Geneva, the Town of Geneva, and the Lake Como area. Between approximately 12:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m., with the assistance of responding agencies and task forces, our department handled more than 75 calls for service, including a dive rescue, vehicle entrapments, two individuals trapped under a tree, ambulance requests, a gas emergencies, fire alarm activations, two toddlers located wandering in a roadway, and dozens of incidents involving downed wires and electrical hazards.



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Your departments answered this call without hesitation, sending personnel, apparatus, specialized equipment, command staff, and support resources from across Walworth County and multiple counties in Wisconsin and Illinois. The cooperative effort you provided allowed us to conduct rapid hazard assessments, secure dangerous scenes, support ongoing search and rescue and medical operations, and begin stabilizing impacted neighborhoods even as conditions remained unstable and access routes were compromised.

We recognize that many of your communities were also dealing with storm impacts and local emergencies of their own at the time of this incident. Your willingness to deploy companies, task forces, and command resources under these circumstances exemplifies the spirit and strength of the MABAS system and the fire service tradition of mutual aid.

The professional conduct, strong incident management, and tireless work of your personnel were evident throughout the event—from staging and task force coordination, to systematic canvassing of damaged areas, to door-to-door hazard assessments for downed lines, gas leaks, and unsafe structures. Your efforts directly contributed to life safety, protected property, and helped our community begin the long process of recovery after an unprecedented storm.

Please share this message of thanks with all firefighters, paramedics, officers, and support staff who responded to our MABAS Disaster Box on July 3, 2026. Their dedication, professionalism, and compassion in the face of tragedy and large-scale destruction will not be forgotten by the Lake Geneva Fire Department or the residents we serve.

If there is any information, feedback, or documentation we can provide in support of your post-incident reviews or training efforts, please do not hesitate to contact me. We look forward to continuing our strong partnership within MABAS and working together to enhance preparedness, response, and resilience across our shared region.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "John Peters", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

John Peters

Fire Chief

City of Lake Geneva Fire Department

jpeters@cityoflakegeneva.gov