

# *The* **Bulletin**



*Publication of the Illinois Firefighter's Association, Inc.*

**Volume 71, Number 2**

**March - April 2017**

**FIRE LINE - DO NOT CROSS FIRE LINE - DO NOT CROSS FIRE LINE - DO NOT CROSS FIRE LINE - DO NOT CROSS**

## **IFA Welcomes First Female Board Member**



## The Bulletin

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### **Table of Contents**

Chaplain's Corner.....	8
Exclusive Insurance Benefits ....	12
IFA's First Woman Board Memb .	9
Legal Issues - Maintaining Public Records.....	15
Know Before You Go .....	11
Legislative Update .....	4
Paramedic "Hero" .....	10
President's Message .....	3
Welcome New Members .....	13

### **Index of Advertisers**

AEC .....	20
Alexis.....	6
California Casualty .....	14
Conference Sponsors.....	18&19
Continental Western Group...	16
IFA Discount Drug Card .....	17
NIFSAB .....	7
SCBAS.....	5
VFIS.....	18

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## **Mission Statement**

Dedicated to the advancement of the Fire Service by providing leadership. The Association will proudly support the community of firefighters in Illinois through education, training, benefits and information networking at the local, state and national levels.

# President's Message



Dear Fellow Firefighters,

As I am writing the article for this issue of the Bulletin, I have always started out stating dear fellow firefighters. I want to make it clear what a fellow firefighter is in the terms of the meaning. A **fellow** is a member of a group of people who work together in a **fellowship** pursuing mutual knowledge or practice. I consider all firefighters, whether male or female, a fellow firefighter. In this article of the Bulletin, we are recognizing a fellow firefighter, Rosemarie Malone. She is the first female firefighter that is serving on the executive of the Illinois Firefighters Association in the 127 year history of this organization. We are proud to have her on the Board of Directors and we know her quite well. She is a firefighter on the Midlothian Fire Department. Rose has

been very active over the years assisting in organizing our Conference with our Executive Board. She will be an asset to this Association and a mentor for other female firefighters to follow. We have come along way in the last twenty years in the recognition of female firefighters. Some of our older firefighters will remember when our Association was called the Illinois Fireman's Association. Those old days of a men's only organization is over. We know female firefighters have taken their place in the Fire Service and should be well respected. As a firefighter, the duties are physically strenuous and female firefighters have shown they can meet this challenge. In my own department, I have three female firefighters, none of them, would I want to arm wrestle with. There are also different types of strengths, mental and physical, that firefighters face everyday. Remember the Fire Service is a team effort, no one should work alone and all firefighters should back each other up during operations. In the social world, it is a Brotherhood/Sisterhood mix that no one understands unless you are one. We "walk the walk and talk the talk" most people would not understand. Today, we need more firefighters than any other time in history, it should not be an all male club.

Retention and recruitment is at a all time low point and we may not be reaching out to the answers of some of the problems that we are facing today, the mitigation of the emergencies we face today. It has nothing to do with male or female. It should be, are you and your partner capable, as a team, to mitigate the emergency event. Training is the key to mitigation and to do that the firefighter needs the knowledge, experience and skill levels to handle that emergency situation. This falls right into our mission as an organization. Dedicated to the advancement of the Fire Service by providing leadership, the Association will proudly support the community of firefighters in Illinois through education, training, benefits and information networking at the local, state and national levels. To accomplish this task, our executive committee fills working committees to execute our mission. Our training committee has been working hard to finish this year's training schedule for the conference and we have supported regional training.

The Officers of our organization have been very active working with state officials securing funding and supporting the Fire Marshal's budget. If his budget gets passed, we may see the reinstatement of programs that were cut last year. We all know that the Fire Service in Illinois is supported at a local level, but that support we get from the Fire Marshal's Office is a big portion of education, training, prevention and investigations. The impact on not having these programs available to us has life safety issues for us and the people we protect. As far as legislation, there are many pending bills out there for the Fire Service. Some of the them are very beneficial and some of them will hurt us. Our legislation committee has been working hard for your benefit. As we go into a second year with no state budget, all agencies are in fear of cuts or sweeps in their funding. As I told you before, I would be happy just to maintain the Fire Prevention Fund with the dollars we receive. In the past, those dollars were not fully appropriated and programs were cut. Let's hope again, that our legislators and administration will recognize our need to have those dollars spent on what they were generated for. I truly believe most legislators do not understand that the Fire Prevention Fund does not come out of general revenue. I will be sending a letter out to all legislators and the administration explaining how those funds are generated and for what purpose they are for.

*In closing, again "Train Smart, Be Safe"*

*God Bless*

*John Swan President IFA*



# LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

By Margaret Vaughn, IFA Legislative Lobbyist

## FIRE OFFICIALS LEGISLATIVE DAY HELD MARCH 8<sup>th</sup>

Once again IFA partnered with other fire service organizations for Illinois Fire Officials Legislative Reception. The reception was held at the Abe Lincoln Hotel. Thanks to all the IFA members and legislators who attended.



OSFM Legislative Liaison George Korda, IFA President John Swan, IAFFPD Executive Director Cheri Breneman and State Fire Marshal Matt Perez.



State Rep Brad Halbrook (R-Shelbyville), former Representative and Deputy Director of Agriculture Don Moffitt, State Fire Marshal Matt Perez, IFA President John Swan, State Dan Swanson (R-Woodhull), Margaret Vaughn and Springfield Fire Marshal Chris Richmond.



Sen. Sue Rezin (R-Morris), NIFSAB Executive Director Tom Lia, Margaret Vaughn, Sen. Kyle McCarter (R-Lebanon), IFSA Director Mike Mavrogeorge.

## DISCOUNTED TIRE PURCHASE BILL

HB 771 sponsored by Rep. Terri Bryant (R-Murphysboro) which will allow volunteer firefighters to purchase tires at the state discounted purchasing rate, passed the House unanimously on February 23<sup>rd</sup>. 17 additional state representatives became co-sponsors. The measure is being sponsored in the Senate by Sen. Paul Schimpf also of Murphysboro and is an initiative of IFA.

## FIRE PROTECTION IN UNPROTECTED AREAS

Rep. Dan Swanson (R-Woodhull) sponsored legislation for IFA in the form of HB 2778 to address the problem of areas of the state which have been assigned coverage by 911 system but are not on the tax roll of either a fire protection district or municipal department. The legislation would make it easier for Fire Protection Districts to get these unprotected areas into their tax code so that everyone is paying their fair share.

## SPERIAN FIRE

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- Hydro-testing cylinders
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At Alexis Fire Equipment, each and every fire apparatus that rolls out of our facility is uniquely designed and built for our customers. No standard options or cookie cutters to choose from. It's putting you in the driver's seat and being part of the experience, the process and the design of your fire apparatus. From pumpers and aerials to tankers and refurbished apparatus. We have you covered. Incredible service, exceptional quality, and the bragging rights to say it's not only yours, but you brought it to life.



## TECHNICAL SPECS

- Freightliner M2 106 4-Door Chassis
- Cummins ISL, 350-HP Diesel Engine
- Allison 3000 EVS Automatic Transmission
- Five (5) Man cab seating with four (4) SCBA seats
- Heavy Duty Stainless Steel Body with ROM painted Roll Up Doors
- 1000-Gallon Poly Tank
- One (1) 2 1/2" Tank Fill, rear
- One (1) Newton 10" square electric dump with 36" manual extension
- Waterous CXS, 1250-GPM Pump with pump operator's controls across top
- Six (6) 2 1/2" Discharges, two (2) each side and two (2) rear
- One (1) 2 1/2" Gated Suction, left side
- One (1) 3" Discharge, over pump for deck gun
- One (1) Akron Apollo Deck Gun with stream shaper, stacked tips and mounts
- Two (2) 1 1/2" Mittydale Preconnects, front of pump module
- Two (2) Pump module compartments, one (1) each side under walkway
- One (1) free floating hose well, right side running board
- Four (4) Dual bottle Air bottle compartments, two (2) each side wheel well
- One (1) Swing out tool board, left side
- Zico Hydraulic Ladder Rack with Suction hose and pike pole storage, right side
- One (1) Suction hose storage gutter, left side
- Progressive Dynamics on-board battery charger with Vlair Air compressor
- Floor mounted console for emergency switches with map/binder storage
- Whelen Electronic Siren with 100-watt Whelen speaker
- Five (5) Akron Revel LED Scene lights, two (2) each side and one (1) rear
- One (1) Akron Revel LED Brow light
- Weldon LED Warning Light Package
- Diamond Grade Chevron pattern striping, rear
- 10' 1" Overall height
- 33' 10" Overall length
- 266" Wheelbase
- 153.2" Cab to Axle
- 14,600 FAWR
- 30,000 RAWR
- 44,600 GVWR



# Support the Illinois Fire Sprinkler Coalition



## Become a Built For Life Fire Department for Free Home Fire Sprinkler Advocacy Resources

More than 2,500 U.S. Fire Departments have been recognized as Built For Life Fire Departments by the Home Fire Sprinkler Coalition (HFSC). Each has made home fire sprinkler education a focus of their community outreach and have received free tools to help get them started. With the right information and tools, more fire departments can teach about this life-saving technology. To help, HFSC has developed free resources to simplify any department's sprinkler outreach.

Every Built For Life Fire Department will receive a Fire and Sprinkler Burn Demo Kit, educational outreach materials, a certificate of participation, Built For Life Fire Department window decals, Built For Life baseball caps and much more.

Being recognized as a Built For Life Fire Department can be as simple as adding fire sprinkler messages and materials to existing outreach, or as comprehensive as establishing an education program for local builders and developers. Fire departments must simply agree to implement at least one community outreach activity in: (1) Public Awareness and Public Education, (2) Targeted Outreach to a Key Audience, and (3) Evaluation.

Become educated about the current status of home fire sprinkler issues in Illinois by visiting **[www.HomeLifeSafety.com](http://www.HomeLifeSafety.com)** and then become an HFSC Built For Life Fire Department at **[www.HomeFireSprinkler.org](http://www.HomeFireSprinkler.org)** for home fire sprinkler advocacy resources.



*Scan with your smartphone to sign up your fire department for the Home Fire Sprinkler Coalition's Built For Life Fire Department Program*



For more information go to:



[www.HomeLifeSafety.com](http://www.HomeLifeSafety.com)



[www.HomeFireSprinkler.org](http://www.HomeFireSprinkler.org)

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# Chaplain's Corner

## PTSP: Post-Traumatic Stress Prayer

Because our calling to the fire service is a dynamic redemptive drama, Jesus is the ultimate model of the heart and soul of the firefighter. And that is never so obvious as in the case of the traumatic stress that we inevitably experience as we respond to the emergency needs of our communities. The Gospels give us a bird's-eye view of the most stressful time of Jesus' life as he faced unimaginable trauma:

*He took Peter, James and John along with him, and he began to be deeply distressed and troubled. "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death," he said to them. "Stay here and keep watch with me." Going a little farther, he fell to the ground and prayed that if possible the hour might pass from him. "My Father," he said, "if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not my will, but yours be done." An angel from heaven appeared and strengthened him. And being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground.*

In this brief article allow me to just highlight a couple of vital truths that are sometimes overlooked in our traumatic incident debriefing and stress management:

**The stress response/reaction – physical, mental, emotional, chemical – that we experience as we respond to, operate at, and return from traumatic events has been created by God and is His gift to enable us to fulfill our calling.** The Psalms tell us plainly that "we are fearfully and wonderfully made" by the hand of God. The mental/emotional stress that Jesus was enduring was accompanied by physical/chemical reactions in his body so that his sweat was like drops of blood. We know today that science confirms the reality of these types of built-in reactions as well as the danger of long-term activation of these stress responses within us.

**The act of debriefing – verbalizing and expressing our experience and emotion – is a gift that finds its ultimate value as we look upward and express ourselves to God.** Jesus himself was overwhelmed with emotional heaviness so that all he could see was darkness and death. He surrounded himself with several of his closest firefighters – those who had been through thick and thin with him – so that he could debrief with them and unload some of his sorrow. But the relief found with them was limited as even they fell asleep at a crucial time of his internal crisis. But when he lifted his eyes upward and spoke to God his Father he found the faith to abandon himself and the situation to the will of God. And he was literally strengthened by an angelic response to his prayer! It is God who created the stress response within us and it is God to whom we are invited to turn that we may find faith for accepting His will and strength to return to a created balance to continue serving. I offer you and your fire department the following Post-Traumatic Stress Prayer...please use it, or something like it, as often as needed:

*O God, You have called us to the fire service where on any day we will see and handle trauma and its associated stress. And You have created the gift of stress response/reactions within us so that we can faithfully carry out that calling. We trust that You have a redemptive purpose for us to have been involved in responding to this recent traumatic event (name the situation here). We cast our cares upon You for You have promised to carry them and bring us to peace and rest in Your time. Thank You that You have given us our fire service family so that we can verbalize and express our experience and emotions in safety and understanding. Though we have been changed by this in some way, we ask You Lord to bring our hearts, minds, souls, and bodies back into Your created balance that we may continue to love and care for our fellow firefighters, families, and friends. Amen*

Kevin Coffey, IFA Chaplain (815-457-2007) [kc9526@yahoo.com](mailto:kc9526@yahoo.com)



# A Little About IFA's 1st Woman Board Member

## Rosemarie Anne Arvia-Malone

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### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

**CALUMET PARK FIRE DEPARTMENT**, Calumet Park, Illinois

January 2006-July 2007

#### **Administrative Assistant**

- Provide administrative support to the fire chief and officers of the department
- Record and maintain daily response report
- Assist in planning and executing meetings, educational programs and special events
- Plan meetings and agenda for Mutual Aid Box Alarm System (MABAS) Division 22 Chiefs Association and Second District Chiefs Association
- Maintain inventory of office supplies and office equipment
- Upkeep of office records and filing system
- Compose correspondence from written materials provided
- Take, screen and place telephone calls
- Receive visitors, members and guests
- Provide other services as assigned
- Able to interact with individuals from various backgrounds and professions
- Capable of managing multiple priorities and activities

**MIDLOTHIAN FIRE DEPARTMENT**, Midlothian, Illinois

August 1993 - December 2005

#### **Administrative Assistant/Firefighter**

- Developed the Emergency Disaster Plan for the Village of Midlothian
- Assisted in the development of the emergency response guide and standard operating procedures for the department
- Chair for the Illinois Fire Service Administrative Professionals Mobile Administrative Support Team/ Incident Management Team and developed the box card response system for deployment of Administrative resources during natural disaster and other high profile emergency situations
- Provided logistical and financial analysis and support to the fire chief during emergency responses
- Coordinated emergency response training and drill exercises for department members
- Developed debriefing sessions, lessons learned and improvement documentation
- Provide administrative support to the fire chief and deputy chiefs
- Assist in planning and executing meetings, educational programs and special events
- Perform routine bookkeeping tasks, including keeping current the accounts payable and receivable for Mutual Aid Box Alarm System (MABAS) Division 22 Chiefs Association and

#### **Second District Chiefs Association**

- Maintain inventory of office supplies and office equipment
- Upkeep of office records and filing system
- Compose correspondence from written materials provided
- Take, screen and place telephone calls
- Receive visitors, members and guests
- Provide other services as assigned
- Able to interact with individuals from various backgrounds and professions
- Capable of managing multiple priorities and activities
- Familiarity with basic accounting principles and practices

(continued on next page)

## CERTIFICATIONS

- Firefighter II
- EMT-B
- Fire Service Executive Support
- Fire Apparatus Engineer
- Juvenile Firesetter Intervention Specialist
- Illinois Fire Inspectors Association Public Fire & Life Safety Educator
- Technical Rescue Awareness
- Fire Service Instructor I
- University of Illinois -Illinois Fire Service Institute Hazardous Materials First Responder/Operations
- Illinois Terrorism Task Force/illinois Fire Service Institute Unified Command Course
- Incident Command System (FEMA)
- Incident Command System for Single Resources and Initial Action Incidents (FEMA)
- National Incident Management System (FEMA)
- National Response Plan (FEMA)

## AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

Recipient of the Illinois Fire Inspectors Association Fire Achievement Award

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# Highland Paramedic recognized for lifesaving effort, despite great danger

Todd Zobrist, a paramedic with Highland EMS, was named “a hero” by local law enforcements agencies and local and national news agencies. The Highland EMS paramedic was first to arrive on the scene after a call of a vehicle in Highland’s Silver Lake with a person possibly inside. When Zobrist arrived, he found the described vehicle to be partially submerged in the lake, approximately 50 to 75 feet from the shore. In 45-degree water temperatures and below freezing air temperature (around 25 degrees), Zobrist was able to shed most of his clothes and get into 45-degree water temperatures, then swam out 50-75 feet into the water and was able to do a full sweep inside the vehicle of seated areas and find a 3-month old floating in a vehicle full of water. The vehicle only had six to eight inches of air space above where he located an unresponsive infant male child in the passenger compartment of the vehicle. The paramedic pulled the lifeless child from the vehicle and immediately began administering cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), on the roof of the partially submerged vehicle. The infant was revived at the scene by the paramedic, was airlifted to a St. Louis hospital. The infant was released from the hospital the next day.

The mother’s was found later that day in the lake. The father’s body was found at the family home with a gunshot wound in the head and the home was set on fire. A neighbor’s surveillance video shows the family’s other 6 children running away from the home after the mother’s car was seen leaving and flames coming from the home.



# Know Before You Go: Response Area Risk Analysis

By Kenn Fontenot

Tones drop at 0230 for a structure fire alarm at the local bulk fuel distribution facility. You are responding with one pumper, one tender/tanker, and a rescue vehicle. Upon arrival you have fire involvement for a transfer pump extending to a large storage fuel tank. NOW WHAT?

Having previously done a thorough response area risk analysis of the facility, you know that this is beyond your capabilities to handle with your department's equipment. You immediately go into the defense posture, evacuate the pre-determined area as set forth in the risk/response plan, protect the exposures that are not in the no-go zone, and let the event play itself out.

You may ask, "Why bother responding at all if all we are going to do is watch?"

Our nature of being aggressive as firefighters is one of traits we are most proud of. However, a critical culture change we need to make is to stop risking firefighter death or injury for an incident we cannot handle.

Conducting a realistic response area risk analysis is one of the best tools we have to avoid a disaster such as the event in West, TX. Departments that conduct good response area risk analysis and develop operational plans based on the results will have the advantage of not needing to come up with a plan when arriving at the scene.

First, departments must evaluate the department's personnel. Questions such as training, certification, experience, decision-making capabilities, and other criteria have to be honestly examined. Do you have enough personnel? Are they trained and certified? What is their experience level? (*Important note – certification does not equal experience!*)

Next is the fire department equipment. Can your department establish and maintain sufficient water supply for the event. For example, if you have limited pumping capacity or limited water supply for the emergency, an offensive attack is out of the question. Once water supply is established, can the fire department maintain the fire flow needed to control the event?

Mutual Aid companies may be able to help fill any gaps discovered in either personnel or equipment. Consider what these companies can provide and how long it will take them to arrive once dispatched. For high-hazard or high-risk occupancies, consider Automatic Aid versus Mutual Aid.

While having a discussion with Chief Alan Brunacini before a lecture, he suggested this in regards to being aggressive: **"Beware of the command officer with a firefighter mentality. We must learn to be more pessimistic rather than being overly optimistic as operation managers."** Command officers must be realistic about the department as well their own ability to handle this emergency.

A complete and thorough risk assessment of the hazard is the final part to complete the process. High hazard facilities are those which may have the potential for a large loss of life or a catastrophic fire or explosion. The assessment should include but not be limited to: life safety concerns (occupants and firefighters), building construction, occupancy type, materials stored or manufactured, water supply, needed fire flow, protection systems, and utilities.

Once the data has been gathered and stored for easy access, training based on the findings should be done. Using the pre-incident information, drills should be conducted on how to control any type of emergency at these high hazard locations.

Completing a risk analysis for your first due area and drilling with the information gathered will enable a more coordinated and effective response to any emergency at these locations. Additionally the risk of loss of life of occupants and responders will be greatly reduced. It is far better to **Know Before You Go** than to **Learn Once You Get There**.

*Kenn Fontenot is Chair of the NVFC Health, Safety, and Training Committee. He is also a Charter Member and First Fire Chief of the LeBlanc Volunteer Fire Department as well as Captain/Safety Officer for the Milton Volunteer Fire Department. Kenn is a Principal Member on the NFPA 1001 standards committee and Alternate Member of NFPA 1021, is the Chief of Training for St. Landry Fire District #3, served for 14 years as the Regional Fire Training Coordinator at the Louisiana State University Fire and Emergency Training Institute, and is a past-President of the Louisiana State Firemen's Association. He holds an Associate Degree in Fire Science.*



California Casualty

## ***7 Exclusive Insurance Benefits for Firefighters from California Casualty***



Being an Illinois first responder takes dedication, time and training. You shouldn't have to worry whether you have the right auto and home insurance. That's why the IFA has worked with California Casualty since 2012 to provide IFA members auto and home insurance with exclusive benefits that are not available to the general public.

**1. Waived Deductibles.** California Casualty reduces the deductible up to \$500 if your vehicle is vandalized or hit when parked where you work or volunteer as a firefighter.

- 2. Personal Items in Your Vehicle.** California Casualty includes \$500 coverage for personal property (including turnout gear and safety equipment) stolen from or damaged in your vehicle.
- 3. Fallen Hero Benefit.** California Casualty waives the insurance premium for the current year and the following year for the surviving spouse or partner of an insured firefighter who dies in the line of duty.
- 4. Identity Protection.** Each policy with California Casualty comes with FREE ID Theft protection and resolution services from CyberScout.
- 5. Flexible Payment Options.** Whether you like to pay one bill or do monthly installments, California Casualty lets you choose what works best for you. They also offer summer or holiday skips so you can maximize your budget for the times when you need the money for other things.
- 6. Insurance for Your Pets.** Every auto insurance policy also provides up to \$1,000 pet injury protection for your pet riding in your vehicle. California Casualty's partner, Pets Best, also offers reduced rates for pet health insurance.
- 7. Custom Parts and Accessories.** California Casualty covers up to \$2,000 for things you've added to your truck or van like custom rims, roll bars and furnishings (excluding pickup bed liners and covers).

IFA partnered with California Casualty because they have auto and home insurance policies tailored to firefighters and first responders. Be sure that you have all the coverage you need with the exclusive discounts you deserve, contact a California Casualty advisor for a no-hassle policy review today, 1.800.800.9410 or [www.calcas.com/IFA](http://www.calcas.com/IFA).

**This article is furnished by California Casualty, providing auto and home insurance to firefighters for over 40 years. Get more information at 1.800.800.9410 or [www.calcas.com/IFA](http://www.calcas.com/IFA).**

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for tomorrow

Eat a healthy breakfast

Set alarm for  
tomorrow morning

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# **Public records: The basics of properly maintaining and destroying fire district and department records**

by Brian J. O'Connor

Ottosen Britz Kelly Cooper Gilbert & DiNolfo, Ltd.

Fire districts and departments receive and create many documents. This variety of documents includes (1) budget and appropriations, and property tax levy ordinances; (2) prevailing wage resolutions or ordinances; (3) meeting notices, agendas, and open and closed session meeting minutes; (4) invoices and bills approved for payment; (5) audits, and financial reports and statements; (6) contracts for materials or goods, as well as professional services; and (7) correspondence from other federal, state and local governmental agencies. In addition, fire districts and departments create and maintain personnel files and records for officials, officers, and employees, as well as fire call and EMS records. These, and many other documents are made, produced, or received by the fire district or department, or its officials and officers pursuant to law or in connection with the transaction of district or department business.

These documents, collectively, memorialize the organization, function, policies, decisions, procedures, and activities of the district and department, and as such are to be preserved. This is the foundation of the Local Records Act (50 ILCS 205/1 *et seq.*) which declares that efficient and economical management of local records will promote economy and efficiency in the day-by-day recordkeeping activities of local governments and will facilitate and expedite governmental operations. (50 ILCS 205/2)

## **Why retain and organize documents?**

Put quite simply, local governments have a legal obligation to properly maintain public records. Public records made or received by or coming into the custody, control, or possession of any officer of a district or department "shall not be mutilated, destroyed, transferred, removed or otherwise damaged or disposed of, in whole or in part, except as provided by law." (50 ILCS 205/4(a)) Any person who knowingly, without lawful authority and with the intent to defraud any party, public officer, or entity, alters, destroys, defaces, removes, or conceals any public record commits a Class 4 felony. (50 ILCS 205/4(a))

Many documents are subject to routine use and review by the district and department staff in the normal course of business. Review of other documents is provided by law, such as employee's review of personnel file under the Personnel Records Review Act (820 ILCS 40/0.01 *et seq.*) or more broadly review by a member of the public under the Freedom of Information Act (5 ILCS 140/1 *et seq.*).

## **Free help is available – State Archivists**

All districts and department have records; the key to avoid being overwhelmed by these records is to comply the Local Records, Act and either maintain the recent records on site or transfer custody of more dated records appropriate for storage. There is help available.

The Illinois State Archives serves by law as the depository of public records for fire districts and departments in Illinois for permanent administrative, legal, or historical research values. The State Archivist comes under the purview of the Illinois Secretary of State, with its website at <http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/archives/home.html>. The website offers useful information including a review of the Records Management Section which will assist fire districts and departments with documenting policies for the proper storage and disposal of records (see its webpage for further details: [http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/archives/records\\_management/home.html](http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/archives/records_management/home.html)).

The Records Management Section contact options included mail, phone and email, and are listed on its webpage. This webpage offers additional helpful links including a 14-page pamphlet "Managing Your Records and the Local Records Act: A Quick Guide for Disposing of Local Records" (link [http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/publications/pdf\\_publications/Ir34.pdf](http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/publications/pdf_publications/Ir34.pdf)) and "Frequently Asked Questions for Local Government Agencies" ([http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/archives/records\\_management/faqlocal.html](http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/archives/records_management/faqlocal.html)).

## The Bulletin

### Organizing files and documents

The Records Management Section of the Office of the State Archivist will assist fire district or department staff in its review of its documents and files to create a plan for document organization. That plan will identify documents and files by type, those requiring local document storage and retention and the term for such retention, identification of documents that must not be destroyed but rather be stored with the State Archives (most likely at one of the Regional Archives Depositories). The State Archivist will also help determine those documents which may be destroyed after compliance with the organizational plan and written permission (in the form of a certificate) for destruction from the local records commission of the State Archives. This includes "public records" that are electronic in nature.

If you need it, ask the State Archives for help with district and department documents and files. We need to ensure logical organization and maintenance of documents and files to enable routine staff access, as well as access required by law. In doing so we can avoid the improper destruction of documents which should be retained even if they are to be retained by the State Archivist.

**Brian O'Connor** has been an attorney with Ottosen Britz Kelly Cooper Gilbert & DiNolfo, Ltd. since 2004. Mr. O'Connor works closely with Bob Britz, who is the current general counsel for the IFA. Mr. O'Connor has presented at various fire service events such as Illinois Alliance of Fire Protection Districts and the Northern Illinois Alliance of Fire Protection Districts conferences and training sessions, as well as to a variety of local fire service related organizations. Additionally, he has authored many articles for various fire service publications and organizations. Mr. O'Connor can be contacted by email at [boconnor@ottosenbritz.com](mailto:boconnor@ottosenbritz.com).

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## Illinois Firefighters Association

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