

# *The* **Bulletin**



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

**Volume 75, Number 1**

**January - February 2021**

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

**PLAN NOW TO ATTEND THE  
DOWN & DIRTY FIREFIGHTING TRAINING CONFERENCE  
SCHEDULED FOR NOVEMBER 11-14, 2021 AT IFSI**



# **DOWN & DIRTY**

**FIREFIGHTING WEEKEND**

**November 11 - 14, 2021**

**ILLINOIS FIRE SERVICE INSTITUTE  
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN**



The Bulletin is published digitally every other month and placed online at [www.illinoisfirefighters.org](http://www.illinoisfirefighters.org).

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## Bulletin Deadlines:

**January 15, March 15, May 15, July 15,  
September 15, and November 15**

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## Mission Statement

Dedicated to the advancement of the Fire Service by providing leadership. The Illinois Firefighters Association will proudly support the health and welfare of 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

Let's start out with your health and welfare, I hope everyone that was able to get the first round of vaccinations, were able to get it done. Some may still be waiting for that vaccination and some may not want that vaccination at all. I hope you make the right decision for everyone's benefit. If this vaccine works according to our health experts, its my hope it will be contained and we can get back to some normalcy. This pandemic has been the number one cause for alarm this whole past year, affecting every aspect of our lives. We lost some great Firefighters last year due to Covid and others became positive with some becoming very ill. With this being said, the Fire Service leadership pulled together and did our part to mitigate some of those stresses. By the time I write my next letter to you, its my hope that we will be on the downhill side of this virus.

No matter what has happened in the past, we must look forward to the new year. We will continue to support training all over this state and draw new partnerships with others in meeting our mission statement. The small equipment grant program has opened up and I hope everyone was able to apply. Looking back at last year, many fire departments were left out automatically, only because they did not have their NFIRS (Nation Fire Incident Reporting System) reports up to date. These reports are very important in keeping track of all kinds of incidents. This reporting tool allows fire service leaders and other officials to gather information that will help in mitigating problem areas. It will also show the need for funding and equipment necessary to do our job. If we are going to ask for more funds, equipment or personnel this statistical information will help in documenting those needs.

We cancelled our fire conference last year and instead held the annual meeting by Zoom in its place. Our Association is still sitting financially strong and we are continuing to support training and the health and welfare of our Firefighters.

In closing, I would like to discuss faith. Siri just told me the meaning of faith, the answer that I already knew. 1. Complete trust or confidence in someone or something. 2. A strong belief in God or in the doctrines of a religion, based on spiritual apprehension rather than proof. As Firefighters, I know you all have faith, why wouldn't you have faith in your training and your fellow firefighters everytime you go into a burning building? You rely on your training and the guidance from your fire leadership that the outcome brings mitigation to the fire scene. That pretty much covers number one meaning and number two: That's between you and your creator with the will of your fellow Firefighters praying that all will be resolved with everyone's help.

This brings me to why I am bringing this up at the end of my letter. I want to thank our spiritual coach and chaplain Kevin Coffey for his long stint being chaplain of this organization. Chaplain Coffey emailed me last week and announced his retirement from this organization. He has been an aspiration to all of us with his spiritual leadership, not only at our Conference Memorial Services but throughout the years with letters and spiritual support to Firefighters and their families. We wish him and his family well and best wishes. Is there really a true end? or just new beginnings?

*So "Train Smart, Be Safe"*

*God Bless*

*John Swan President IFA*





# Legislative update

By Margaret Vaughn, IFA Legislative Lobbyist

## Lame Duck Session Update

With veto session being cancelled due to COVID, the legislature returned for a lame duck session on Friday, Jan 8<sup>th</sup> through the crack of dawn Jan 13<sup>th</sup> when the new 102<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly was sworn in. The lame duck session literally went all night Jan 12-13<sup>th</sup> with the House adjourning at 5 am. and the Senate at 6:30 am and then returning a few hours later for the noon Swearing in of the 102<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly. Unfortunately, it was during these red eye period at about 4:00 a.m. that a 750 page amendment was filed in the Senate to the anti-law enforcement legislation HB 3653 and passed within the hour with a close vote of just 2 over the minimum needed for passage in the Senate and in the House with the bare minimum of 60 votes needed for passage. Because there was not time for an adequate review of the bill, several legislators who voted yes were not happy with the they realized the full content of the bill and its horrific impact on law enforcement's ability to protect the public. The bill has now been sent to the Governor and because it passed during a lame duck session, he cannot make corrective changes in the form of an amendatory veto, he must either sign the whole thing or veto it in it's entirety. The only good thing about the last minute senate amendment is that it did push the effective date back for many of the bill provisions so it is no longer immediate but would be phased in starting in July some parts in 2021, etc. Please call Governor's office at 217-782-6830 or by email [Voice an Opinion - Contact Us \(illinois.gov\)](mailto:Voice an Opinion - Contact Us (illinois.gov)) and urge him to veto HB 3653. Also contact your legislator and let them know if the Governor does it the bill, it is imperative that a follow-up trailer bill must get passed to correct the damage to law enforcement's ability to protect the public.

## MAJOR PROBLEMS with ANTI-LAW ENFORCEMENT LEGISLATION

Call Governor's Office at 217-782-6830 Urge Veto

- Not allowing officers to review their body camera tape when writing incident report and then charging them with Class 3 felony if something in the incident report is not correct, which leads to their decertification.
- While current law makes it a misdemeanor (and mandatory sentence of 48 hours or not less than 100 hours of community service) for resisting or obstructing police, fire or correctional institution employee, this bill does not allow suspect to be arrested for this offense *UNLESS* there is an additional underlying offense for which the suspect person initially subject to be arrested for. So, unless the person can be arrested for another offense, this bill basically cancels out the offense of resisting or obstructing officers. This not only puts the public who the first responders are trying to render service to at risk but puts first responders in direct harm's way of the suspect and makes it impossible for them to carry out their job duties. There were 100 fires in 36 hours during the Chicago riots and mobs fought against first responders as they were trying to respond and in Springfield, they surrounded hospital when first responders trying to transport patients inside. If anything, this should be made a felony instead of enabling the offense.
- Restrictions on taser, pepper spray and crowd control, and clarification needed on use of force. Too easily sets officers up for decertification.
- Anonymous complains component to this bill and the removal of the required sworn affidavit requirements with no limit or accountability, nor statute of limitations for these complaints, has a great potential to get officers fired unjustly. You can have street gangs calling in complaints as soon as one of them sees an officer's name on their badge trying to get them decertified.
- One component of bill requires officer not to go after a suspect if they think they can arrest them at a later time.

## **The Bulletin**

If they don't apprehend the suspect during the crime (and have to wait to try to arrest them later), there is great potential for innocent people that get injured or killed as a result.

- Officers too easily decertified without due process and no regard for their civil liberties. They can be decertified as a result of anonymous complaints and criminal allegations they were never prosecuted for.
- Make up of IL Enforcement Certification Review Panel – The Panel has way too much authority over stripping officers of their certification without due process and it is impossible for a volunteer board to logistically be able to thoroughly investigate anonymous complaints and determine employment outcomes impacting Illinois' 34,000 law enforcement officers. Only requirement for 2 of the members is residency in high crime area with no professional or community credentials or exemption if they themselves or family have had criminal record, etc. Nothing in law to prevent gang members from being appointed to take revenge on law enforcement.

### **New Speaker Chris Welch (D-Hillside) Elected to Illinois House**

Because of the indictments of several of former Speaker Madigan's close associates over the COM ED scandal the lame duck session began with 19 House Democrats vowing not to vote to re-elect him Speaker though he still had the backing of the Black and Latino Caucuses, three female legislators threw their hat in the ring: Rep. Stephanie Kifowit (D-Aurora), Rep. Kathleen Willis (D-Addison) and Rep. Ann Williams (D-Chicago). A preliminary vote was taken during a marathon closed door Caucus meeting during the Sunday of lame duck session and Madigan will still quite a few votes short of the required 60. The next day Speaker Madigan, temporarily suspended his campaign to see if any other member could get 60 votes. On Tuesday longtime Metro East legislator Jay Hoffman threw his hat in the ring along with Rep. Chris Welch, who now had gained the backing off the Black and Latino Caucuses and was getting closer to 60 votes. Ultimately the others dropped out and gave their support to Rep. Welch, who became the first Black Speaker of the Illinois House.

### **Spring Session Deadlines**

Bills are starting to be introduced now that the 102<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly has officially started. Now that the House finally has a new Speaker, they just released the House spring session calendar. Bear in mind these are deadlines, but amendments to the thousands of bills that will be introduced can be drafted and introduced are always a lot of moving pieces to keep track of.

1. Bill drafting deadline: Jan. 29<sup>th</sup> House and Feb 5<sup>th</sup> Senate.
2. Bill introduction deadline: Feb. 11<sup>th</sup> House and Feb 19<sup>th</sup> Senate
3. House/Senate (originally chamber) Committee Passage Deadline: March 26<sup>th</sup>
4. House/Senate 3<sup>rd</sup> Reading Deadline: April 23<sup>rd</sup>
5. House/Senate (second chamber) Committee Deadline: May 14<sup>th</sup>
6. May 28<sup>th</sup> – Final 3<sup>rd</sup> Reading Deadline passed both Chambers.



IFA has partnered with SAVVIK Buying Group to provide our members with access to equipment, supplies, apparel and even vehicles at group buying prices. We have sent SAVVIK a list of our members and their contact information and once SAVVIK has set up the list, our members will be receiving a notification like below. You will not be able to register your account until you receive this notice. The notice is being sent to the main contact the we have on file for our member departments.

If you do not receive your notification or if you are having problems creating your account, contact Secretary Treasurer Federer at 618-830-3961 and he will assist you in setting up your SAVVIK account.

Once you are signed up with SAVVIK, there is another benefit for your members at SAVVIK Perks. SAVVIK Perks provides discounts for your members on entertainment, food, travel and many other personal discounts.

#### **Illinois Firefighters Association- IFA Member**

#### **Welcome to the Savvik Buying Group!**

#### **Savvik Member # 28828**

(Please note, the above Savvik member # 28828 is exclusive to the Association record only. Each member will have their own unique number. This is how we track vendor sales for revenue share back to the Association.)

#### **Savvik Membership:**

Your agency is a new member of the Savvik Buying Group through the IFA. This membership is FREE as a benefit from your association.

Savvik is a Public Safety GPO with over 13,000 agency members who have access to volume discount pricing on various products and services. Our vendor programs are competitively bid and publicly awarded. As a Savvik member you now have access to over 80+ vendor programs.

Savvik will give back 1/3 of your association sales revenue to the IFA

#### **Member Login Instructions:**

Go to <https://savvik.com>

Click on LOGIN, follow the instructions to set up your personal username and password.

## About SAVVIK Buying Group

### Our Beginnings

The Savvik Buying Group, formally known as the North Central EMS Corporation, is a non-profit organization owned by its members and formed to reduce the financial impact of the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 within the EMS industry. Our mission is to provide members with a mechanism to achieve cost reductions, which has evolved into a group-purchasing program. Savvik values quality supplies and equipment for the members, at the industry's best prices.

The phrase "at the industry's best prices" plays an even more important role today than in previous years as the Medicare Fee Schedule took effect on April 1, 2002. Ambulance services across the country have seen a drastic reduction in their Medicare reimbursements which accounts for up to 75% of their revenue. This drastic reduction in revenue decreases their capital budgets and curbs their purchases if not determine their entire existence.

### Where We're Going

Membership is comprised of ambulance services, fire departments, first responder groups, police/sheriff departments, industrial emergency response teams, and other organizations related to the EMS industry. Savvik is proud to focus on membership nationwide. Our intent is to offer the Electronic Patient Care Reporting and Data Collection contract to all Savvik members regardless of their physical location.

An amazing result of our success was the formation of The Savvik Foundation in 2000. Savvik invests back into the industry! A portion of our excess revenues are returned to regional, state and national EMS associations as well as being donated to The Savvik Foundation so that it can complete its mission of leading industry efforts in such areas as safety, efficient operations, education, research and national consensus building.

We're dedicated to improving the general wellbeing of the public safety industry as a whole. Our effectiveness increases with commitments from our vendor partners to provide Savvik members with quality products and services at the industry's best prices.

Savvik has enjoyed significant growth over the last few years by developing partnerships (including revenue sharing relationships) with regional, state and national EMS associations. Savvik has fifty-one group affiliates that include membership to the Savvik Buying Group as part of their group dues structure. The associations that participate in our group membership program receive quarterly reports and payments from our office. Payments reflect a portion of the contract management fee of the total sales their members purchased from our vendors.

### *Membership Includes:*

Access to National Public Bids – you can piggyback for free!

Large vendor contracts – save time and money!

Online marketplace – 5.11 Gear at the lowest prices!

Individual savings programs – benefits you can share with everyone in your agency

**All of this for FREE!**

**If you have not received your registration email from SAVVIK, contact Secretary/Treasurer Kerry Federer at 618-830-3961 or by email at [editor@illinoisfirefighters.org](mailto:editor@illinoisfirefighters.org).**



# special PROJECT #S767:

# BRUSH HOUR

300-GALLON HAWKEYE FLATBED BRUSH TRUCK



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(In Coordination with Bi-Annual BFFA Fire School)

**May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021**

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**Contact : Sr - [jbryant9962@gmail.com](mailto:jbryant9962@gmail.com) or Jr - [jbryant@firenuggets.com](mailto:jbryant@firenuggets.com)**

**Engine Ops – Beyond The PreConnect - Hands-On**

**Instructor: Brothers In Battle – Cody Trestrail**

**Truck Company Operations - Hands-On**

**Instructor: Lt. Joe Solcani – Chicago Fire & BC Jason Demas – Aurora Fire**

**Search & Rescue Essentials - Hands-On**

**Instructor: Nick Ledin – Eau Claire Fire & Jeff Rothmeier – Milwaukee Fire**

**Auto X Extrication Training-Hands-On**

**Instructor: Captain Mike Huffman – Harlem-Roscoe Fire**

**1<sup>st</sup> Rung Recruit Training - FF for the newbie- Hands-On**

**Instructor: Lt. Kucaba - Northwest Homer FPD**

**Large Vehicle Extrication- Hands-On**

**Instructor: Bill Puckett - Auto X**

**Strategic Planning for Creating Future Excellence and Juggling Hats- Lecture**

**Instructor: Chief Craig Haigh, Hanover Park Fire**

**EMS Topics for the next generation- Lecture**

**Instructor: Retired Chief of EMS Operations, New Orleans Ken Bouvier**

**Thermal Imaging & Max Firebox Demonstration- Hands-On**

**Instructors: Andy Starnes - Insight Training & John Schott - Max Fire Training**

**To Register - [www.firenuggets.com](http://www.firenuggets.com)**

## Office of the State Fire Marshal



"The Office of the Illinois State Fire Marshal (OSFM) has worked hard to ensure that all Illinois First Responders will have prioritized access to COVID vaccinations, and I am glad to see that firefighters are beginning to get their first and second round of shots. I would encourage you to contact your resource hospital, local health department or personal physician to arrange vaccinations for your IDPH licensed firefighters/paramedics who are included in phase 1a and then for the remainder of the firefighters who will be in Phase 1b," said Illinois State Fire Marshal Matt Perez.

The IDPH issued a proclamation, which is available in the OSFM's December newsletter(<https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/sfm/SFMDocuments/Documents/OSFMNewsletter%202020-12.pdf>), and on the Illinois Department of Public Health and OSFM websites. The

intent is to invoke emergency powers to modify the professional scope of proactive for Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs). These emergency powers will allow for certain qualified EMT's to administer the COVID and Flu vaccines after receiving proper training. The hope is this will allow more people to be vaccinated in a quicker and more efficient manner.

"We will get through this, one team one fight! The OSFM will continue to fight to supply you with the PPE, tools, equipment and training you need to safely perform your jobs," Perez said.

Governor Pritzker proclaimed January 18<sup>th</sup> through 24<sup>th</sup>, 2021 as Community Risk Reduction (CRR) Week in Illinois. This year's theme was helping the nation's fire service learn more about CRR and how to get ahead of the call! The goal is to raise awareness among the fire service about the role of CRR and how any department, no matter what type or where it is located, can use the concepts of CRR to make your community and department safer. CRR is a data-driven process to identify and prioritize local risks, followed by the integrated and strategic investment of resources (emergency response and prevention) to reduce their occurrence and impact.



The OSFM helped established a task force in Illinois to identify risks and ways to help the fire service mitigate impacts on personnel and residents in their communities. OSFM encourages local departments to utilize the concepts of CRR and identify the needs and challenges that face their communities. A \$50,000 grant to help support local efforts has been established for developing and implementing CRR through the OSFM.

CRR planning can be done in your community by working together with community partners, to build healthy, safe and resilient communities. The goal is to reduce the occurrence and impact of emergency events for both members of the community and emergency responders. The OSFM encourages all departments and districts to actively engage in this planning today. More information about CRR can be found by visiting [www.crrweek.org](http://www.crrweek.org).

The OSFM is proud to announce that our very own Cathy Stashak has been appointed to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Standards Council for 2021! Cathy's extensive knowledge, judgment and ability to work with members from the industry make her a great fit for this position.



The NFPA Standards Council, appointed by the NFPA Board of Directors, is comprised of 13 members. The responsibilities of the Council include overseeing NFPA standards development activities, ensuring compliance with the NFPA Regulations and Rules, appointing members to NFPA Technical and Correlating Committees, and serving as the appeals body over matters related to standards development. The Council conducts meetings three times annually, as well as serving as Presiding Officers for the yearly NFPA Technical Meeting.

"I am very honored to represent OSFM on this council. OSFM is an amazing agency; we do so much for Illinois in so many ways and I am proud to be a member of the OSFM team," says Cathy Stashak.



# KNOW YOUR **LOVED ONES** WILL **REMAIN PROTECTED.**

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## SPECIFICATION SHEET



# MARQUIS XT GEL HAND SANITIZER



## General Description:

- Flip Top on the 2oz Gel Bottle
- Twist top on 12oz Gel Bottle
- Manufactured right in the Chicago-land area.  Hennepin, IL.
- Items have UPC's on them for easy set up in a stores system.
- Here are the current sizes they come in.

### Container Type      Size

2 oz	59 ml
12 oz	355 ml
1 Gal	3785 ml

**IN STOCK AT  
OFFICE READY  
TO SHIP ASAP**

### Sold by Cases ONLY

**2oz 24/cs - 12oz 40/cs - 1 Gal 4/cs**

- Active Ingredient: Alcohol 70% in 2oz
- Active Ingredient: Alcohol 80% in 12oz
- Active Ingredient: Alcohol 80% in 1gal
- Inactive Ingredients: glycerin, isopropyl myristate, methacrylic acid, propylene glycol, purified water USP, tetrahydroxypropyl ethylenediamine, vitamin E



One Gal Pump now  
available w/Gals



Dinges Product Code	UPC	Size	Qty/Case	DFC Unit Selling Price	DFC Case Selling Price
Marquis-GelSanitizer2oz	850016876201	2oz Gel	24	\$0.93	\$22.40
Marquis-GelSanitizer12oz	850016876386	12oz Gel	40	\$2.40	\$96.00
Marquis-GelSanitizer1gal	850016876379	1gal Gel	4	\$16.00	\$64.00

**Call Your Dinges Fire Rep for pricing and availability**

Rep Name:

Cell Phone:

E-Mail:



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## The Bulletin

Get your department involved with the Be Alarmed! smoke detector installation program to install 10-year battery smoke alarms in home in your community.

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Details are available at: [www.ifsa.org/programs/alarms](http://www.ifsa.org/programs/alarms)



Illinois Fire Safety Alliance



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# FINDING VOLUNTEERS JUST GOT EASIER

Recruiting and keeping volunteers is a challenge, but the National Volunteer Fire Council is here to help with the Make Me A Firefighter campaign. Use the FREE online department portal to help recruit and retain fire service volunteers.

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Go to [portal.nvfc.org](https://portal.nvfc.org) to:

- Advertise your department's volunteer opportunities
- Create customizable, ready-to-use recruitment materials
- Access training and resources specifically for recruiting new members
- Plan recruitment events and create personalized invitations
- Track and keep in touch with prospective volunteers

Remember to add your department's volunteer opportunities to the national Make Me A Firefighter database so that potential recruits can find you!

**FIND THE  
FIGHTER IN YOU**



# IT TAKES TWO...

## TO PROTECT OCCUPANTS & FIREFIGHTERS FROM FIRE.



Fire Marshal Mary Kay Ludemann & Fire Chief Jon Stratton  
of the Plainfield Fire Protection District

### **BOTH SMOKE ALARMS AND HOME FIRE SPRINKLERS SHOULD BE PART OF PUBLIC EDUCATION OUTREACH**

There is no better opportunity to have an effective educational impact than at the fire scene or immediately post fire to explain the impact of both fire sprinklers and smoke alarms working together to prevent fire deaths and injuries. Be prepared to educate the media by keeping a fire sprinkler in your command vehicle and hand it to them to reinforce the message.

Following fatal residential fires, fire officials of the past would often talk about smoke alarms with the media and say, "Smoke alarms could have prevented the fire death." Those types of statement generally get the full attention of the public, but doesn't fully describe the other combined potential.

Smoke alarms are important because they alert occupants of a fire, reducing the chances of dying in a fire by half. Fire sprinklers actively work to control or extinguish the fire while it is small and provide occupants with the time to escape. The life and property protection benefits of fire sprinklers cannot be ignored.

Now imagine the impact if the fire officials also held up a fire sprinkler and stated, "When smoke alarms are combined with fire sprinklers, the risk of dying in a home fire is decreased by 80 percent."

Smoke alarms and fire sprinklers together are the perfect fire protection duo. Keep both in your command vehicle.

**NEED FIRE SPRINKLERS FOR YOUR  
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## Preventing and Thawing Frozen Pipes

Winter isn't just rough on us, it really batters our homes. While we might shiver, severe cold fronts can cause major damage to your home or apartment.

While we think about keeping our families warm when a polar vortex or a Canadian cold front hits, we also need to prepare our homes and plumbing for winter's icy assault.

The last thing you want to deal with when it thaws is a burst pipe, which can lead to [substantial damage in your home](#).

All that water can eat through drywall, destroy carpets and fry electronics. The Federal Emergency Management Agency estimates that just two inches of water can cause more than \$20,000 in repairs and replacement of flooded items. Six inches of water can add up to more than \$30,000.

**Before the thermometer plunges, here are things you can do to [prevent pipes from freezing](#):**

- Disconnect outside hoses from faucets
- Insulate water pipes, especially along exterior walls and unheated areas
- Add insulation to walls and attics where pipes may run
- Know where the shutoff valve is to your home

**Once the sub-zero weather hits you should:**

- Let faucets drip to prevent freezing
- Keep the thermostat above 55 degrees
- Make sure garage doors are closed
- Open kitchen and bathroom cabinets to allow warm air to circulate around plumbing

**So you've prepared and kept as much heat as possible going to cold areas, but the cold air still froze a pipe; what now? Stay calm but act as quickly as possible to:**

- Locate where the pipe is frozen
- Open the nearest faucet to relieve pressure when the ice thaws
- Slowly warm the pipe with a heating pad, hair dryer, space heater or wrapping it with hot towels – never use a blow torch or open flame

If the pipe has cracked or broken, immediately turn off water at the main water valve and call a plumber. Shutting off the water will prevent further damage.

**And if you have damage from a broken water pipe:**

- Turn off the water to prevent further damage
- Contact your insurance company as soon as possible
- Take photos or video of the damage
- Don't make permanent repairs until the insurance company adjuster inspects the damage
- Keep all of your receipts for emergency repair work or temporary housing if you are forced out of your home or apartment

**Once a pipe freezes, odds are it will happen again. Here are some tips to prevent it in the future:**

- Hire a plumber to relocate the pipe to a warmer area
- Add more insulation in walls, attics and crawl spaces
- Wrap the pipe with electric heat tape, when temperatures drop, plug it in

Remember, if a burst pipe sends water into your home, contact your insurance company as soon as possible; we can help get you started on the clean-up.

And before the next cold front hits, make sure you're protected; call a California Casualty advisor today for a free homeowner or renters insurance policy comparison or review at **1.877-411-3419** or visit [www.readyforquote.com/katelyn](http://www.readyforquote.com/katelyn).

Sources for this article:

<http://home.costhelper.com/water-leak.html>

<http://www.redcross.org/prepare/disaster/winter-storm/preventing-thawing-frozen-pipes>

<http://www.houselogic.com/home-advice/plumbing/prevent-freezing-pipes/>

**Katelyn Hoffman**, California Casualty Local Representative



Katelyn Hoffman is excited to serve Illinois First Responders as a California Casualty Representative. She is an advocate to your members, making make sure they have access to all of the benefits they qualify for as an IFA Member. She has been serving Firefighters in Southern Illinois since 2018 and is looking forward to continuing to serve members during this unique time. [Khoffman@calcas.com](mailto:Khoffman@calcas.com).

This article furnished by California Casualty, providing auto and home insurance to firefighters for over 40 years.



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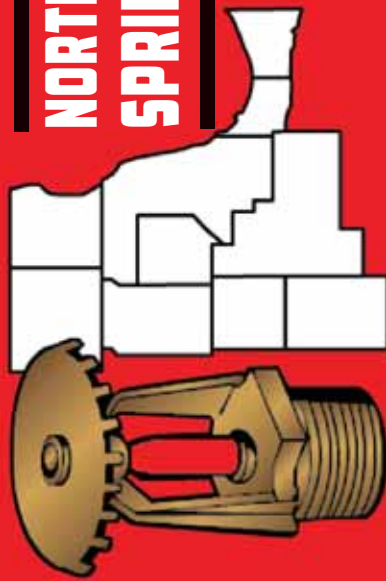




Illinois Firefighters  
Association, Inc.

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May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021

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\$100 per class per student for non BFFA Member

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Instructor: Lead Instructor: John Schott, Carlinville Fire Department

This class delivers Hands on Live Fire Training in several different scenarios based on the student's experience level. Rotations will include basic SCBA, Hose Handling & Advancement, Ground Ladders and Search & Rescue. Fire Behavior and Flashover. Instructors from several departments will bring different ideas and solutions for each evolution so the firefighter can sharpen and/or learn new skills. This will be an Intensive Hands-on class.

*Full PPE and SCBA with spare bottle needed*

### Auto X Extrication Training- Hands-On

Instructor: Captain Mike Huffman – Harlem-Roscoe Fire

### Large Vehicle Extrication- Hands-On

*Including School Bus*

Instructor: Bill Puckett - Auto X

### Strategic Planning for Creating Future Excellence and Juggling Hats- Lecture

Instructor: Chief Craig Haigh, Hanover Park Fire

The job of managing a volunteer, combination or small career department is not easy. Customer expectations and call volumes continue to increase while leaders are faced with more and more unfunded mandates, flat or declining revenues, greater training and certification demands, staff availability, recruitment and retention concerns, vision casting and organizational succession planning. Chiefs and command officers tackle all of these issues while often trying to juggle a “real job” and family demands. This course will address the multiple management demands in an attempt to better equip the chief or command officer with tools to help address some of these concerns.

The class will be taught using a combination of lecture and facilitated group dialog. The students will also be provided handouts that can be used as development templates for many of the items discussed

### EMS Topics for the next generation- Lecture and Hands on

Instructor: Retired Chief of EMS Operations, New Orleans Ken Bouvier Responding to Motor Vehicle Collisions, Basic Incident Command, Managing School Bus Incidents, School Bus Drill

### Taking Care of Ourselves - Lecture Only

Instructor Sara Gura, Selfcare Path

*Anxiety, and Panic Attacks, healthy grieving*

**How to Enroll:** email: [jbryant9962@gmail.com](mailto:jbryant9962@gmail.com) (email department name, attendee names and class choice)



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Proximity Fire Glove	Alm Foil	Long Cuff	Md-2, Lg-4, XL-3, XXL-2	\$1.00 Each 50 Pair Minimum Order
Intra-Fit Glove	Alm Foil	Tight Fit Mechanic	Md-1, Lg-1, XL-2, XXL-2	\$1.00 Each 50 Pair Minimum Order
Intra-Fit Glove	Alm Foil	Tight Fit Mechanic-Long cuff	Md-2, Lg-4, XL-3, XXL-2	\$1.00 Each 50 Pair Minimum Order
Work Glove	White	Dinges Item# DFC-INF-9011	Sm-10, Md-882, Lg-370 XL-466, XXL-25	\$1.00 Each 50 Pair Minimum Order
Work Glove	Light Brown	Lt Brown Work Glove	Sm-20, Md-21, Lg-20, XL-20	\$1.00 Each 50 Pair Minimum Order
Work Glove	Dark Brown	Dk Brown Work Glove	Sm-39, Md-25, Lg-24, XL-16	\$1.00 Each 50 Pair Minimum Order
Work Glove	Dark Brown	Dk Brown Work Glove W/Design on Top	Md-34, Lg-33, XL-13 Womens Md-6, Lg-11	\$1.00 Each 50 Pair Minimum Order
KONG Glove	Yellow/Gray	DFC - KONG Glove	Sm-3, Md-8, Lg-5, XL-31, XXL-5, 3XL-14	\$10.00 Each
First Aid Kit	Orange	DFC-First Aid Kits	N/A	Sale Price \$5.00

# Unemployment Fraud and the Fire Service

by John E. Motylinski

Ottosen DiNolfo Hasenbalg & Castaldo, Ltd.

Fraudulent unemployment claims have skyrocketed. According to the Illinois Department of Employment Security, more than 297,000 fraudulent claims for unemployment benefits have been made since March 1, 2020. According to its director, the Department "is experiencing fraud in an order of magnitude" previously unseen. The fire service is not immune, nor are departments without full-time or part-time employees. This article details the boom in unemployment fraud and what to do about it if you or your department is affected.

## *Background: Unemployment Compensation*

All employers—including fire protection districts and municipalities—are subject to the Unemployment Insurance Act (820 ILCS 405/100 *et seq.*). The Act provides eligible employees with up to 26 weeks of unemployment compensation during a 12-month period. (820 ILCS 405/403)

The unemployment claims process is straightforward: if an employee loses their job through no fault of their own, they may file an application online with the Illinois Department of Employment Security. Assuming the employee is otherwise eligible, they will begin to receive temporary assistance while they look for other work.

These benefits are paid for through employer contributions. Public employers have the option of making these contributions in two ways. First, public employers can pay an unemployment insurance tax based on a calculation that tracks claims made by former employees. (820 ILCS 405/1506.1E) Second, and alternatively, public bodies can "pay as they go" by reimbursing the state for all benefits paid. (820 ILCS 405/1405) Either way, fire departments are damaged by fraudulent employment claims.

## *The COVID-19 Unemployment Boom*

COVID-19 has devastated segments of the economy. Correspondingly, the unemployment rate in April 2020 jumped to levels not seen since the 1930s. Unemployment has remained high at 6.7% nationwide as of November 2020. In the week ending December 19, the United States Department of Labor computed approximately 5.5 million people were receiving unemployment benefits. This is a staggering increase from the 1.7 million unemployed from the year prior. Of that 5.5 million sum, Illinois accounted for almost 350,000.

## *Unemployment Fraud*

Unemployment fraud has correspondingly risen with the increase in unemployment claim volumes. This uptick has been fueled by additional benefits granted through the CARES Act, as well as states allowing claims to be back-dated to March 2020.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation has stated that unemployment fraudsters are using people's names and personal information to apply for unemployment benefits through IDES. Once the benefits are approved, they exploit a security flaw in IDES' systems and request the money be sent to another account. A telltale sign that an individual has been the victim of unemployment fraud is if they receive a debit card in the mail from IDES and have not filed a claim for benefits.

If an employee suspects they are the victim of unemployment fraud, they should be encouraged to report it to IDES and the authorities as soon as possible.

## *Unemployment Fraud from the Fire Department's Perspective*

Not only is unemployment fraud damaging to employees, the fire department can also be harmed—especially those that reimburse the state for all benefits paid. If your department receives a Notice of Claim informing you that an active employee has filed a claim for benefits, swift action is required.

At the outset, it is important to forward the Notice to your department's lawyer to determine the proper course of action. Thereafter, IDES recommends filing a timely protest to the Notice of Claim and providing as much information as possible. This will ensure the department is not placed on the hook for any illegitimate benefits paid by the state. Finally, it is important to inform the person who is allegedly unemployed, who should take appropriate steps of their own to ensure their identity is protected.

While many examples of unemployment fraud involve imposters, sometimes a district is implicated merely because a firefighter became unemployed at some other job. The individual is required to list other employers, and sometimes fire districts are named even if the "employee" is actually paid-on-call. This can be rectified, but it still requires contacting IDES (by letter and phone) and specifically explaining why the claimant is not an actual employee. The best way to prove that is by presenting evidence of the firefighter responding to calls and being paid for those calls during the alleged unemployment period.

## *Conclusion*

Unemployment compensation can be invaluable for individuals down on their luck. Regrettably, scammers are taking advantage of this benevolence. This has led the IDES to be inundated with claims, resulting in mistakes slipping through. If you or your department experiences unemployment fraud, take it seriously. Partner with counsel immediately and report the matter as soon as possible to ensure your department is not damaged by external fraud.

*John E. Motylinski is an associate with the law firm of Ottosen DiNolfo Hasenbalg & Castaldo, Ltd. in Naperville. John graduated from the University of Illinois College of Law in May 2015 and holds an undergraduate degree in political science from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He focuses in the areas of local government, municipal, public pension, and public labor and employment law. He has also presented at the Northern Illinois Alliance of Fire Protection Districts and has written many articles for fire service publications.*

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## Illinois Fire Safety Alliance

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IFSA and Camp “I Am Me” community,

On the morning of January 25th, the Illinois Fire Safety Alliance suffered another terrible loss. Longtime volunteer, advocate, and Board Member, Dottie Ahbe, passed away after dealing with non-COVID, health-related issues.

Dottie’s passion for the IFSA, fire safety, and Camp “I Am Me” over the past 30+ years was unmatched. She has impacted so many lives over that time at camp, across the state, as well as across the country. She will be sorely missed. Please keep her family and her many friends in your thoughts and prayers.

Any additional details will be provided through the IFSA Facebook page.



Illinois Fire Safety Alliance  
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