

# *The* **Bulletin**



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

**Volume 77, Number 1**

**January - February 2023**

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

## ***Former IFA Chaplain Reverend Al Weidlich Passes***



## The Bulletin

January - February 2023      Volume 77 Number 1  
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



Since January is National Firefighters Cancer Awareness Month and February is National Cancer Awareness Month I want to share the story of a friend of mine. He is a firefighter who has been battling cancer for over a year. His story, unfortunately, is not unique because there are many firefighters throughout the US with basically the same story. The difference is he has shared his journey with the firefighter community. Not so we would feel sorry for him, but because he wants to get the word out about protecting ourselves through early detection, periodic testing and decontamination at the earliest possible time. This is his latest email to his firefighter friends:

**Ron Roy**

*I started my volunteer career in 1973 in Wenatchee Washington. I was asked by a local Chief while walking through the county fair if I had ever thought about being a volunteer firefighter. I joined Chelan County Fire District 1 and served until 1991 at the rank of Lieutenant. I moved across the river and joined Douglas County Fire District #2. I was promoted to Lieutenant and Division Chief. I was asked to be Division Chief for both departments. Then in 2022, those 2 departments merged into the Wenatchee Valley Fire Department and I am currently the Division Chief. I was elected as a board member of the Washington State Fire Fighters' Association in 2002. I have served as president for 3 of my years on the board. Currently I am 1 of the 2 Directors to the National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC) representing the volunteers of Washington State on the national level and chaired the Wildland Committee for the NVFC for 10 years. I also helped start and moderated the National Benefits Summit.*

*My life changed in a hurry when I was diagnosed with leukemia on March 21<sup>st</sup> 2022. I will retire from the fire service at the end of this year with 50 years of volunteer service to my community.*

*On Jan 6, 2023, at 1:14 PM, Ron Roy wrote*

*Back in chemo this week for another round. I had another bone marrow biopsy at the end of December. Once again it had no cancer cells in the marrow and my chromosomes are normal as well. Having a little trouble with my iron levels being a little high and neutrophil being low. Both are being watched and addressed for the future. It was so wonderful to be able to celebrate another Christmas and New Years with loved ones. It has a whole new meaning after the cancer diagnosis. I never even gave it a thought that someday I would be looking at life one day at a time. When they said that I had 6-16 months to live, I started making plans, very short-term plans. Stop and think about not looking beyond 16 months of life. You start eliminating considering what you will do for the next round of birthdays, anniversaries and holidays with family and friends. Your main focus is at night when you end your day and lay down your head is "if I awake in the morning I will be blessed with having another day to make a difference for those I interact with for a day." I pray to be blessed with 1 day at a time.*

*Cancer awareness month for the fire service is a time that has much more significance than ever before for me. It can't be expressed enough to utilize the policies and procedures that have been identified for cancer prevention. You have to be an engaged participant to help preserve your health so you can continue to share yourself with family, friends and coworkers. It is hard enough to be told that you have cancer, but think about telling your parents, significant other and your children that your time is limited to share life with them because you didn't do your best to prevent exposure. Care for yourself the best you can. Not just 'good enough' but always the BEST that you can. Your efforts will be rewarded with time to live your life.*

*It is interesting that everyone in the fire service is looked at different when it comes to presumptive medical and cancer. Most states are different when it comes to which cancers qualify and who is qualified. Past service, administration, investigators, paid and volunteer. I don't know if in my lifetime that it will be equal for all of us because we are exposed. In my opinion, the federal government needs to be the lead in making that unilateral coverage. In the meantime, keep working for coverage for all. If not for you, for the ones that are coming into the service after you.*

*Have a safe healthy and a Happy New Year*

*Get screened for cancer!*

*Ron Roy*

*Terry Ford, President IFA*



# LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

By Margaret Vaughn, IFA Legislative Lobbyist

## IFA Honors Fire Caucus Chair Rep. Kathleen Willis



IFA was very fortunate to have Rep. Kathleen Willis (D-Addison) fighting for us in the General Assembly for the past 10 years. As Chair of the Fire Caucus, she sponsored many bills on our behalf including the 10-year smoke detector act, legislation to make sure all areas covered by a FPD were paying property taxes to them, and raise fire sprinkler standards and went to battle for us on many initiatives, such as fireworks expansion that would have been detrimental to the fire service. Because of how the legislative remap was redrawn, Rep.

Willis was forced to run in a much different district and did not win the primary. IFA wanted to be sure to honor her for all hard work and dedication and coordinated a luncheon in her district on December 7<sup>th</sup> with the other members of the IL Fire Services Association.



*Pictured left to right: IFA Lobbyist Margaret Vaughn, Rep. Willis and IFA President Terry Ford.*



*IFSA Group Willis: Seated" Dawn Dillon, IFSA President Chair Mike Dillon; Standing: IFCA Legislative Director & Retired Chief John Buckley, IFCA Lobbyist Chip Humes, Rep. Willis, Margaret Vaughn, IFA President Terry Ford and OSFM Legislative Liaison Kathryn Nunes*



*City Hall Press Conference Pic: Chicago 36<sup>th</sup> Ward Alderman Gilbert Villegas, IL Fire Safety Alliance Executive Director Phil Zaleski, IFA Lobbyist Margaret Vaughn and State Fire Marshal Dale Simpson.*

## 10 Year Smoke Detector Press Tour Continues

Working in conjunction with the Illinois Fire Safety Alliance, IFA Lobbyist Margaret Vaughn coordinated additional press conferences on the 10- year smoke detector law at local fire departments, Washington, Signal Hill, Decatur and Chicago's City Hall. IFA would like to extend a special thanks to Fire Marshal Dale Simpson for traveling to all the press conferences and his dedication to educating the public on the new law.

## New General Assembly Sworn In January 11<sup>th</sup>

A brand new General Assembly was sworn on Jan 11<sup>th</sup> including over 40 brand new legislators. This will take of networking and education to familiarize them with the needs of the fire service. We hope to work with the IL Fire Services Association to hold a Fire Caucus Breakfast at the Capitol as we did pre-Covid.



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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 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.)

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

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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:*

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**If you have not received your registration email from SAVVIK, contact Secretary/Treasurer Kerry Federer at 618-882-4783 or by email at [editor@illinoisfirefighters.org](mailto:editor@illinoisfirefighters.org).**



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# Coming Soon: Local Government Efficiency Act Decennial Committees

by John Motylinski & Hayley Loufek  
DiNolfo Hasenbalg & Castaldo, Ltd.

## Introduction

Beginning June of this year, local governments (excluding counties and municipalities) will need to form committees to study the issue of efficiency. This requirement stems from the newly enacted Decennial Committees on Local Government Efficiency Act (the “Act”). This Article overviews the Act and previews what fire protection districts have in store later this year.

## Committees

The Act requires that once every ten years, local governments must form a committee to study local efficiencies and report recommendations regarding efficiencies and increased accountability to the county board in which the governmental unit is located. 50 ILCS 70/10(a). The inaugural committee must be formed by June 10, 2023.

The committee must include the elected or appointed members of the governing board of the governmental unit, at least two residents of the governmental unit appointed by the chair of the board of the unit with the advice and consent of the board, and any chief executive officer or other officer of the governmental unit. The chair of the committee should be the president or chief of the governing board of the governmental unit, who may appoint additional members to the committee. 50 ILCS 70/10(b).

For a fire district, this means the committee must include the members of the district’s board of trustees, two residents of the fire district as appointed by the board president, the fire chief or any other officer of the district, and any other members appointed by the board president.

## Committee Meetings

Once formed, the Efficiency Act committee must meet at least three times. These meetings may occur during a regularly scheduled meeting of the governmental unit if (1) separate notice is given in conformance with the Open Meetings Act, (2) the committee meeting is listed as part of the board’s agenda, and (3) at least a majority of the committee members are present at the meeting. Committee meetings must be public, conform to the Open Meetings Act, and provide any person to be heard at public hearings for at least three minutes.

The committee’s purpose is to study its “governing statutes, ordinances, rules, procedures, powers, jurisdiction, shared services, intergovernmental agreements, and interrelationships with other governmental units and the State” with an eye toward becoming more efficient. The committee will ultimately prepare a written report that summarizes its findings and includes recommendations in respect to increased accountability and efficiency. The committee should provide the report to the county board in which the governmental unit sits no later than eighteen months after the formation of the committee and make the report available to the public.

After the report is finalized, the committee is dissolved. However, a decade later, it must be reestablished and repeat its task.

## Conclusion

The Efficiency Act’s motive appears benevolent—after all, it is in everyone’s interest to improve efficiency overall. But at the same time, the Act poses logistical challenges, in that local governments now must bear the brunt of additional meetings, accounting, legal services, and support for the efficiency committee and its report. If you have any questions about how the Efficiency Act impacts your local government, we recommend you contact your attorneys.

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## Insurance 101: How to Easily File a Claim

You slow down for the yellow light but the car behind you does not. Bam! It wasn't your fault but now you have to get your car fixed. Or maybe a storm knocks out a window in your house. Now you need to get it repaired. Accidents happen. Washing machines overflow; things are stolen or vandalized. That's why you have insurance. Your policy protects your vehicle, your home, and your belongings, taking some of the financial stress away to help you repair and replace those necessary items. Here's an overview of the insurance claims process so that you can do it easily.

### When to File a Claim

Every policy has a deductible, an amount that you are required to pay out-of-pocket before insurance kicks in. The general rule is to file a claim when the payout is greater than the deductible and you cannot cover it on your own. You also should file a claim whenever someone is injured and when it's not clear who is at fault. That way, the insurance companies can get together and determine the outcome.

### How to File a Claim

Let's say you were in a car accident. Here are the steps to take to file a claim. (You also can refer to the back of your California Casualty insurance card. It lists the steps to follow in the event of a loss.)

#### Step 1: Call the police if needed.

- - Call 9-1-1 if anyone is injured or you suspect drugs or alcohol are involved.
  - Call the non-emergency police number to report the accident. An officer may show up and take a police report. While you don't necessarily need one, it will make the claims process easier. If the police are not needed, or available, you may file an accident report online, by mail, or at the police station.

#### Step 2: Get the other driver's information.

- - You feel bad so it may be tempting to say the accident was your fault. Whether or not it was, don't take the blame. Don't apologize.
  - Exchange information. Get the other driver's name. Take a photo of the other driver's license, insurance card, and registration. Alternatively, you can write down the information. Make sure you have the year, make, model, license plate number, and color of the other car.

#### Step 3: Write down facts and take photos. Look for witnesses.

- - Take photos of the scene, license plates, traffic signs, and anything else that may help you to remember the details of the accident.
  - Include the direction the cars were traveling, your speed, weather, road conditions, and what happened.
  - Use your phone to make detailed notes.
  - There may be witnesses. Look around and ask for the contact information of those individuals. They may later be contacted by your insurance company or police, if needed, to support your rendition of the accident.

#### Step 4: Call your insurance company.

- - Report the accident. The adjuster will ask questions. Answer them honestly and thoroughly. If you don't know the answer, say so.
  - Your adjuster will share the process of getting your car repaired. They will send you paperwork to fill out.
  - Let them know if there is a police report.
  - Don't sign anything from the other person's insurance company. Let your insurer take the lead.

### Step 5: File your claim.

- - Most insurance companies allow you to file your claim online. That means you'll fill out the necessary paperwork online or by email.
  - To complete the filing of your claim, you'll need to fill out the forms that you are sent.
  - You may have to get a repair estimate and include that information.
  - Then, you'll wait for approval. Once the repair is authorized, you'll be able to proceed with the repairs. Either you or the repair shop will receive payment from the insurance company, so check with your adjuster.

### The Difference with a Homeowner's Claim

A homeowner's, renter's or personal property claim follows a similar process. The main difference is that you need to provide a Proof of Loss statement. That's a list of items that were damaged or stolen and how much it costs to replace them.

### Can you wait to file a claim?

You should not wait. Your insurance contract specifies your specific Duties After Loss. You must give prompt notice to the insurer; notify the police in case of loss by theft; protect the property from further damage, prepare an inventory of damaged personal property; and cooperate with the investigation.

So, the next time that life throws a wrench into your plans, remember that you have insurance. The claims process is an easy way to get the help you need.

### *This article is furnished by California Casualty.*

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## Reverend Al Weidlich, Former IFA Chaplain



Albert William Weidlich of Decatur was greeted by God on January 13, 2023.

He was born in Chicago on September 5, 1929, to parents William Weidlich and Emma (Horn) Weidlich. He married Judith Linnea Holmgren on August 27, 1953.

He is survived by his loving children and their spouses: Ruth (Dale) Nihiser, Beth (Jack) Roegner, Jonathan (Shawn Smith) Weidlich, Mary (Michael) Wolf, and Sara (Gregory) Nave; along with ten grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his parents; his wife, Judith; and his brothers and sisters.

Albert served God and others for nearly 70 years as a Lutheran minister, and was known to many as Pastor Al. He served churches in Michigan and Illinois, was Pastor Emeritus of First Evangelical Lutheran Church in Decatur, and after retirement served as visitation pastor at St. John's Lutheran

Church in Bloomington, and as an interim pastor in churches throughout central Illinois.

He also put his faith into action and shared his compassion as a fire chaplain, volunteer firefighter, member of the Decatur Human Relations Commission, and Lt. Colonel in the Civil Air Patrol.

Al was generous, supporting numerous organizations, churches, and individuals.

Most importantly, he cared for his family and showed them how to love and serve others.

A Visitation and Funeral Service celebrating Albert's life was held Friday morning, January 20, 2023. Visitation from 9:30 - 11:00 a.m. Service at 11:00 a.m. at First Lutheran Church (250 West Decatur St, Decatur, IL). Burial at North Fork Cemetery, Decatur, IL.

Tanzys and Logan Funeral Service and Care in charge of the arrangements.

Memorials to First Lutheran Church of Decatur, 250 W. Decatur, 62522 or AMELCA Food Bank c/o First Lutheran Church.



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

**This program combines fire prevention education and action to help keep Illinois citizens safe.**

**Help make your community safer by becoming a partner for local smoke alarm installation today.**

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



Illinois Fire Safety Alliance



## DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE WITH AN ALCOHOL OR DRUG PROBLEM?



24-Hour Helpline | 877.505.4673 (HOPE) | [GatewayFoundation.org](https://www.GatewayFoundation.org)

### YOU'RE NOT ALONE

Almost half of adults have a close friend or family member who's been addicted to drugs.<sup>1</sup> Fortunately, there is help. Gateway Foundation has been the solution for those suffering from substance use disorder for over 50 years.

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We are committed to providing a variety of programs to meet the needs of our patients and families including:

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- Medication-Assisted Treatment
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# Being a firefighter or EMS provider is tough. Remember that you're not alone.

Most people are aware of the physical demands that emergency responders face. But it's important to realize the impact on your mental wellbeing, too.

Taking care of your mental health is just as important as managing your physical health. The National Volunteer Fire Council is here to help with resources to Share the Load.

## Share the Load™ Program

### [nvfc.org/help](https://nvfc.org/help)

A program that provides access to critical resources and information to help emergency responders and their families manage and overcome personal and work-related behavioral health challenges.

## Directory of Behavioral Health Professionals

### [nvfc.org/phfd](https://nvfc.org/phfd)

A listing of local providers who are equipped and ready to help emergency responders, rescue workers, dispatchers, and their families with their behavioral health needs.

## Psychologically Healthy Fire Departments Toolkit

### [nvfc.org/phfd](https://nvfc.org/phfd)

A comprehensive toolkit designed to help fire department leaders promote and support mental wellbeing among their members and create a successful, high-performing department.







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Present first responder verification in store (or if activating by phone/online at [promotions.t-mobile.com/FirstResponder](https://promotions.t-mobile.com/FirstResponder)) & re-verify when requested. If not verified within 45 days, your plan will become Magenta at an additional cost of up to \$20/line per month. First responder must be account holder & account must maintain valid first responder line. We may ask for additional information or documentation. First responder plan for eligible state & local law enforcement, firefighters, emergency medical response personnel, pensioned retirees, & parents, children, or spouses of first responders killed in the line of duty; not available to federal employees. Confirm your organization considers you eligible. Limited time offer; subject to change. At participating locations. Credit approval, deposit, \$10 SIM card, and, in stores & on customer service calls, \$20 assisted or upgrade support charge may be required. May not be combined with other promotions/discounts and features; existing customers who switch may lose certain benefits. U.S. roaming and on-network data allotments differ: includes 200MB U.S. roaming. Unlimited talk & text features for direct communications between 2 people; others (e.g., conference & chat lines, etc.) may cost extra. Unlimited high-speed data US only. In Canada/Mexico, up to 5GB high-speed data then unlimited at up to 128kbps. Not available for hotspots and some other data-first devices. Capable device required for some features. **Video streams** at up to 1.5Mbps. Optimization may affect speed of video downloads; does not apply to video uploads. **Tethering:** 3GB high-speed data then unlimited on our network at max 3G speeds. Smartphone usage is prioritized over tethering usage, which may result in higher speeds for data used on smartphones. **AutoPay Pricing** for lines 1-8. Without AutoPay, \$5 more/line. May not be reflected on 1st bill. **Int'l Roaming: Not for extended international use; you must reside in the U.S. and primary usage must occur on our network.** Device must register on our network before international use. Service may be terminated or restricted for excessive roaming. Usage may be taxed in some countries. Calls from Simple Global countries, including over Wi-Fi, are \$.25/min. (no charge for Wi-Fi calls to US, Mexico and Canada). Standard speeds approx. 128Kbps without Plus; with Plus approx. 256 Kbps. **Coverage** not available in some areas; we are not responsible for our partners' networks. **Network Management:** Service may be slowed, suspended, terminated, or restricted for misuse, abnormal use, interference with our network or ability to provide quality service to other users, or significant roaming. During congestion the small fraction of customers using >50GB/mo. may notice reduced speeds until next bill cycle due to data prioritization. On-device usage is prioritized over tethering usage, which may result in higher speeds for data used on device. See [T-Mobile.com/OpenInternet](https://www.t-mobile.com/OpenInternet) for details. **See Terms and Conditions (including arbitration provision)** at [www.T-Mobile.com](https://www.T-Mobile.com) for additional information. T-Mobile and the magenta color are registered trademarks of Deutsche Telekom AG. ©2019 T-Mobile USA, Inc.

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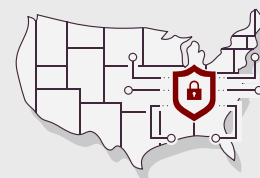
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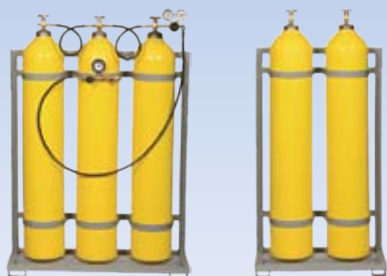
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# FM Global



## Fire Prevention Grants

Mark Blank, and Jed Bowen from FM Global worked with NIFSI during our fire safety classes with the AFFI in our pilot classes on “Fighting Fires in Fire Sprinkler Protected Buildings” classes earlier this summer. They are encouraging our Illinois Fire Service friends to apply for the fire service grants from FM Global. Take a little time to think of items, products, or systems that can help improve your fire prevention efforts in your community. Hope you can give it a try!

Tom Lia NIFSI

**Because FM Global believes that the majority of fire can be prevented, FM Global is pleased to offer financial support to organizations working to combat fire. Through our Fire Prevention Grant Program, fire departments and brigades, as well as national, state, regional, local and community organizations can apply for funding to support a wide array of fire prevention, preparedness and control efforts, including pre-incident planning, fire prevention education/training and arson prevention/fire investigation.**

To fill out an online application follow this link  
<https://fs20.formsite.com/fmglobal/form14/index.html>

[For Questions firepreventiongrants@fmglobal.com](mailto:firepreventiongrants@fmglobal.com)

# From the Chaplain's Rack

IFA Chaplain Josh Ehrler



Recently I was sitting in a chaplain training that included social workers. It was a nice cross pollination of resources that opened my mind to new techniques and ideas. We chappies learned what social workers offer in crisis situations (connections to resources, longer follow-ups, facilitation of mental and other organizations) and we were able to articulate our role.

What was interesting, and a good reminder for us fire chaplains, was the assumption that our primary role is to pray with people. That we are arriving on scene to reflect our religious backgrounds and be a religious presence. I suspect that for many, this is the going assumption. I very much suspect this is a prevalent assumption within the fire service. Hence resistance in some houses to creating a fire chaplain role in the department. By far not the only reason, but definitely one.

Let's talk about that cross on my badge. I can tell you about psychological and spiritual first aid, CISM and defusing work, resilience skills, all that. Still, sometimes all anyone will see is that cross. Or, if you are fortunate to serve in a larger population, it might be a Star of David. Or a crescent moon. Or any symbol of the chaplain's faith affiliation. Not all chappies are Christian.

I am Christian. Specifically Lutheran Christian. My full time gig is to be the Lutheran pastor of a great congregation in this town I serve. They have allowed me to disappear out the door when the tone drops and this church is supportive of our fire department.

My chaplaincy is oriented by my faith in God and my belief in Christ. With that said, I cannot remember the last time I prayed at a scene. As in, intentionally gathered up a family and prayed with them. I will absolutely do that if asked, but I have never offered it on my own.

We live in a world of high skepticism, and rightly so. People have used the cross (my religious symbol) as a weapon, a pry bar to force people to move a certain way, as a sign of guilt, and as an excuse to use a tragic event as an opportunity to invite people to a church. I have seen it on scene. Maybe you have, too. If not at a scene, maybe during some other moment of fragility and social/emotional weakness.

Skepticism is what keeps us safe physically and emotionally. It is absolutely rational to not want some do-gooder preacher type wandering the bays looking for ways to get more people into their church. Or any church.

I am sorry if that has been your experience of so-called fire chaplains. Speaking for colleagues of mine who have been doing good work with that title, we wish it wasn't that way. Yes, we carry a faith in our God in the form that shapes us. Yet, that is not our primary job in a department. Our responsibility is to keep up our training, to keep seeking quality resources for firefighters and residents in crisis, to listen with confidentiality, and fundamentally to serve our fellow fire and EMS personnel. I would argue an effective fire chaplain makes their religious orientation secondary. Not irrelevant or unnecessary, but not ahead of the needs of who we are called to encounter and aid. My faith gives me the freedom to not have to worry or care what religious affiliation-including atheism-another person has. My faith, and my training, frees me up to focus on the task at hand-to respond to someone or a group that is in crisis, and offer every skill and resource I've gained to give them even a slight sense of balance in the midst of chaos.

**Safe Call Now** (24-7 crisis hotline for first responders)

**206-459-3020**

**National Suicide Prevention Hotline**

**988**

**Chaplain Josh's Phone**

**608-234-3793**

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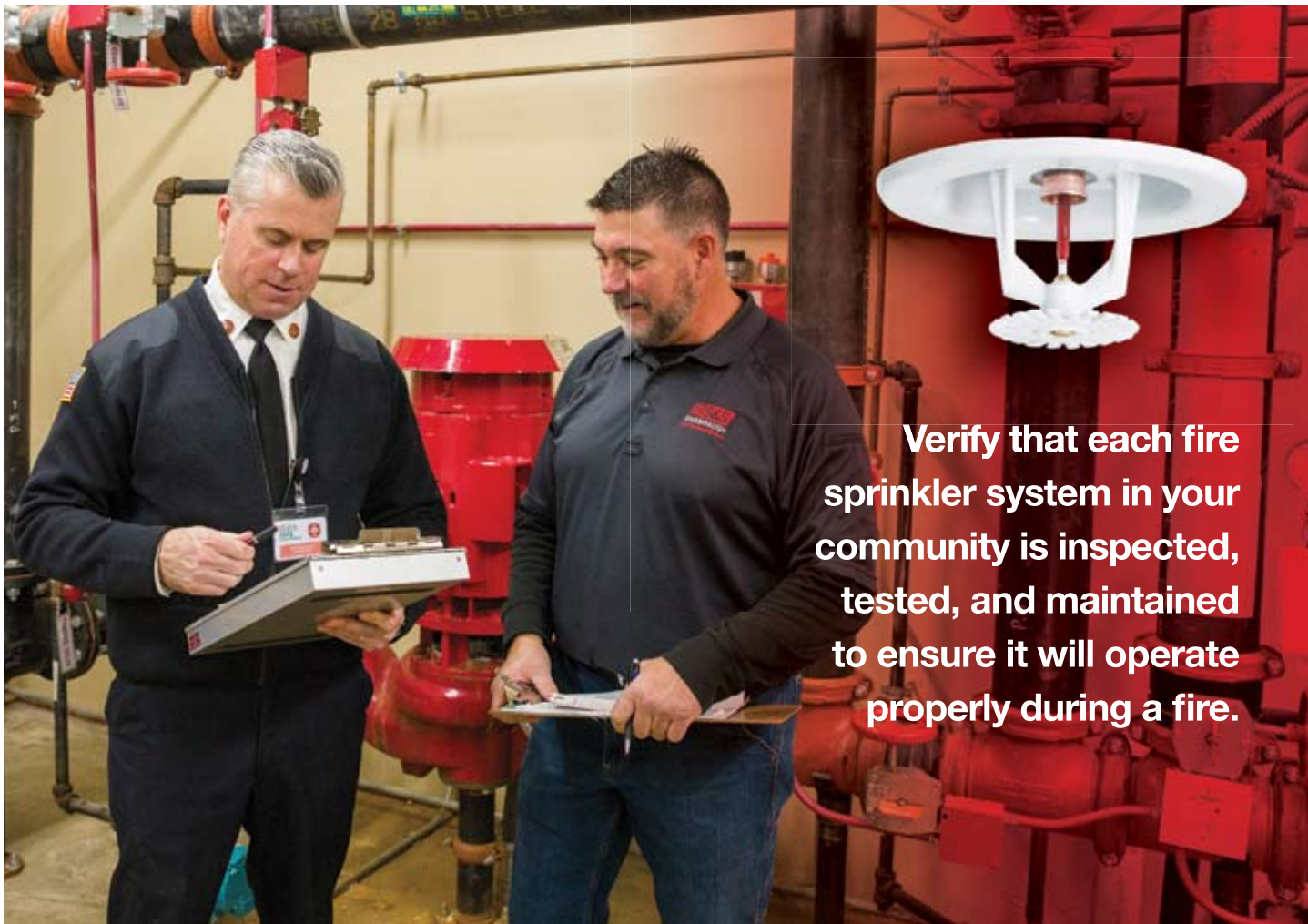
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**Verify that each fire sprinkler system in your community is inspected, tested, and maintained to ensure it will operate properly during a fire.**

# INSPECT TO PROTECT

Fire sprinklers provide the greatest fire protection for buildings in your community. They control a fire while it's still small and allow occupants to safely escape.

However, just like other systems in a building, it's essential that a fire sprinkler system is inspected, tested, and maintained (ITM), especially since lives are dependent on it.

Don't let a devastating fire happen in your community. Ensure your local building owners and managers comply with state requirements by incorporating fire sprinkler system ITM programs in their buildings.

Illinois state code, NFPA 101: Life Safety Code (2015 edition), requires all automatic fire sprinkler systems, standpipe systems, and fire pumps to follow ITM procedures according to the NFPA 25 standard.

And in accordance with state law (225 ILCS 317/17), **building owners must utilize an inspector who is employed by a state-licensed fire sprinkler contractor and has appropriate credentials** through completion of a certified sprinkler fitter apprenticeship program approved by the U.S. Department of Labor and/or certification through NICET III or ASSE 15010.



**Northern Illinois Fire  
Sprinkler Advisory Board**  
*Save Lives. Protect Property.*

**For more information:**

**[FireSprinklerAssoc.org/itm](https://firesprinklerassoc.org/itm)**

**(708) 403-4468**



**SAVE** *the* **DATE** → **JULY 27-30, 2023**



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this Spring!**



**SAVE THE DATE**



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## Office of the State Fire Marshal



The OSFM wants to remind everyone to save the date for the 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Fallen Firefighter Memorial and Medal of Honor Ceremony that will be held in Springfield on May 9<sup>th</sup>. The Fallen Firefighter Memorial will begin at 10 AM at the memorial on the grounds of the Illinois State Capitol with the Medal of Honor Ceremony to follow at the Bank of Springfield Center. Check our website for more details as the event gets closer.

The OSFM is accepting nominations for the Fire Prevention & Life Safety Award. This award is in recognition of the extraordinary efforts performed by individuals in furtherance of fire prevention and life safety. Applications are due by March 1<sup>st</sup> and can be found by visiting our website at [www.sfm.illinois.gov](http://www.sfm.illinois.gov).

In 2022 according to National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS), Illinois Fire Departments responded to 18,018 calls about carbon monoxide and were able to determine a CO lead at 8,447 of those locations.

Unlike smoke, carbon monoxide is a colorless and odorless gas only detectable by special devices and CO alarms. The Office of the State Fire Marshal (OSFM) encourages residents to have their furnaces checked, change furnace filters and to make sure carbon monoxide (CO) and smoke detectors are functioning properly. Also, test and inspect all smoke and CO alarms in your home monthly. If you find broken or expired alarms, don't wait, replace them immediately.

Symptoms of CO poisoning are very similar to the flu and include headache, fatigue, shortness of breath, nausea and dizziness. Other signs of possible CO presence include condensation on walls and windows, house pets becoming sluggish and chronic odors from malfunctioning appliances.

According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), heating is the second leading cause of home fires and home fire injuries, and the third leading cause of home fire deaths. Local fire departments across the country responded to an estimated average of 48,530 fires involving heating equipment per year in 2014-2018, accounting for 14% of all reported home fires during this time. These fires resulted in annual losses of 500 civilian deaths, 1,350 civilian injuries, and \$1.1 billion in direct property damage. Most home heating fire deaths (81%) involved stationary or portable space heaters. The leading factor contributing to home heating fires (25%) was failure to clean, principally from solid-fueled heating equipment, primarily chimneys. Half of the home heating fire deaths were caused by having heating equipment too close to things that can burn, such as upholstered furniture, clothing mattresses or bedding. Nearly half of all home heating fires occurred in December, January, and February.

Space heaters lead to countless fires due to improper use during the winter months. It's important to plug space heaters directly into wall outlets and not extension cords. Keep space heaters at least three feet from curtains, clothing, furniture or bedding. Purchase units with an automatic shutoff in case the unit tips over or you forget to shut it off.

Here are some tips to keep in mind when it comes to winter heating safety:

- Have heating equipment and chimneys cleaned and inspected every year by a qualified professional, change furnace filters frequently.
- Have a qualified professional install stationary space heating equipment, water heaters or central heating equipment according to the local codes and manufacturers' instructions.
- Keep interior and exterior air vents clear of blockages or obstructions.
- Keep anything that can burn at least three feet away from heating equipment, like a furnace, fireplace, wood stove, or portable space heater.
- Make sure the fireplace has a sturdy screen to stop sparks from flying into the room. Ashes should be cool before being placed into a metal container. Keep the container a safe distance away from your home.
- Create a three-foot "kid-free zone" around open fires and space heaters.
- Test smoke and CO alarms at least once a month and be familiar with the sounds they make.
- Never use an oven or range to heat your home.
- Remember to turn off portable or space heaters when leaving the room or going to bed.
- Install carbon monoxide and smoke detectors on each floor of your home and within 15 feet of each sleeping area.
- CO detectors have a limited life span, check the manufacturer's instructions for information on replacement.





# Funding & Grants Workshops

## Free Funding Events with Chief Jeff Bryant

Chief Jeff Bryant has been successful in obtaining over 20 million dollars in grants and funding opportunities for his and surrounding departments. Jeff has built up a vast amount of knowledge on the subject over more than 30 years and wants to pass on and share his knowledge, tips, and tricks with all those that want to learn. During these events, Jeff will talk through local, state, and federal funding opportunities and the excess property program. The goal is to help your department or organization determine the next steps to take to gain funding for the equipment you need to protect your citizens and district.

There is no cost to attend these trainings, and enrollment is open to anyone wanting to learn more about ways to help their department obtain funding.



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IT'S  
OCTOBER!



Is your 2022 fire sprinkler testing nearing completion in your businesses?

**Begin the last quarter of 2022**

by ensuring fire code and ISO compliance and sending notices to building owners as to what is required. A 3rd party inspection compliance management company like Brycer and IROL can help you carry out your fire sprinkler testing program at no cost to the fire department.



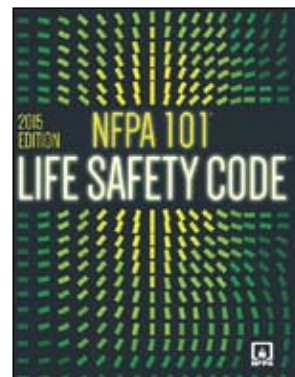
**Regular Fire Sprinkler Testing is Required by the International Fire Code**

Chapter 9, Fire Protection Systems of the 2018 International Fire Code requires water based fire protection systems to be inspected, tested and maintained at regular intervals in accordance with NFPA 25: Standard for the Inspection, Testing and Maintenance of Water-Based Fire Protection Systems.

**Regular testing is also required through the Illinois Office of the State Fire Marshal's adoption of NFPA 101: Life Safety Code, Section 9.11.1 (2015 edition).**

All automatic fire sprinkler systems, stand-pipe systems and fire pumps must be inspected and maintained in accordance with NFPA 25.

**Beginning in January 2023, be ready to enforce the NICET III minimum requirement by showing the legislation to your contractors who work in your town.**



For more information:



Any company must be licensed by the State Fire Marshal and anyone testing a fire sprinkler system, standpipe or fire pump must have **(1)** satisfactorily completed a certified sprinkler fitter apprenticeship program approved by the U.S. Department of Labor, or **(2)** have current ASSE 15010 certification in inspection, testing, and maintenance for water-based fire protection systems by ASSE, or **(3) current NICET II (NICET III by Jan 2023) certification or equivalent nationally recognized program.** Are you checking these items before work begins? Stop any job violating this state law and/or call the state fire marshal.





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