

# *The* **Bulletin**



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

**Volume 77, Number 3**

**May - June 2023**

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

## **IFA Go Green Clean Truck On Display at FDIC**



The IFA Go Green Clean truck on display at FDIC promoting firefighter cancer awareness and prevention.

## The Bulletin

May - June 2023

Volume 77 Number 3

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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



The Board members of IFA have been very busy with activities and events these past few months.

In April, board members met with PhelpsUSA to discuss creating an online store to market IFA t-shirts, polos, mugs, keychains and a number of other items. Watch our website for the “grand opening” of our new store.

The WEBSITE is currently being updated to make it easier to navigate and the updates should be completed soon.

At FDIC, the IFA made its National debut of their GO GREEN CLEAN firetruck. It was on display near the Firehouse of the Future. The GO GREEN CLEAN INITIATIVE for Firefighter Cancer Awareness and Prevention is an important initiative of the IFA to make firefighters aware of the dangers of not decontaminating their gear and equipment after incidents. Firefighter cancer was the number one cause of firefighter deaths in 2022. We want to prevent as many deaths and injuries from cancer as possible and proper decontamination procedures is one way to reduce cancer.



Look for our GO GREEN CLEAN firetruck at the combined Fire Districts/Chiefs Conference in Peoria this June. Stop by the truck and pick up literature and decon posters that could save your firefighters lives. Dinges Fire Equipment and Bullard are sponsoring the space for our truck this year.

The GO GREEN CLEAN firetruck will also be displayed at the state fair in August to make the public aware of the cancer crisis facing our firefighters.

The Medal of Honor Ceremony was held in Springfield on May 9. The highlight of the event was the fact that there were no firefighter deaths reported for the previous year. This is only the third time that there have been no deaths reported since the beginning of the ceremony in 1989.

THE IFA DOWN & DIRTY TRAINING BROCHURES HAVE BEEN MAILED AND SHOULD BE IN YOUR MAILBOXES VERY SOON, IF NOT ALREADY! Please plan on attending the Down & Dirty training on October 27-29, 2023 at IFSI. There will be training available for everyone with many different classes. The complete class listings can be found on the IFA website, in the brochure, and on our social media pages. We have included the Active Shooter class which has been sought after by many departments after the multiple school shootings and other mass shootings over the past year. Come learn common practices to keep firefighters safe during these incidents.

Remember that this is YOUR organization, founded by firefighters in 1889, so that firefighters throughout the state could share information. We want to hear your ideas, thoughts, suggestions and complaints so that we can better serve the firefighters in our state. Together we can make a difference!

Stay safe!

*Terry Ford, President IFA*





# Legislative update

By Margaret Vaughn, IFA Legislative Lobbyist

## IFA HOSTS CAPITOL PRESS CONFERENCE TO HONOR DUST STORM VOLUNTEERS

On May 7<sup>th</sup> IFA Lobbyist Margaret Vaughn organized a bi-partisan Capitol press conference press conference at the Capitol to honor the volunteer departments that comprise MABAS 56, headed by IFA Legislative Chair Kevin Schott, who heroically responded to the I-55 Dust Storm and continue to press for the passage of legislation for a \$500 state income tax credit for volunteers. Special thanks to Senators Belt,

Turner, Anderson, Bennett, McClure, Harriss and Cervantes and Representatives Canty, Stuart, Lily, Swanson, Vella and Kelly who joined us.



## EXEMPTION RAISE FOR COMPETITIVE BIDDING

**HB 1626** – Sponsored by Rep. Dan Swanson (R-Woodhall) . The bill is an initiative of the IL Association of Fire Protection Districts and supported by IFA. The bill would raise the exemption for competitive bidding for FPD contracts from \$20,000 to \$30,000. **Status: The bill passed the Senate but got stalled in the Senate.**

## YOUTH FIRESETTER INTERVENTIONISTS

**HB 2372** –Sponsored by Rep. Natalie Manley (D-Crest Hill) & SB 1421 sponsored by Sen. Patrick Joyce (D-Essex) –The bill is supported by IFA. Amends the State Fire Marshal Act. Creates the position of Youth Firesetter Interventionist Coordinator within the Division of Arson. Sets forth applicant requirements for the position. Provides that the Youth Firesetter Interventionist Coordinator shall be compensated at a rate that is comparable to the rate of compensation for a State arson investigator and shall be provided benefits similar to those of a State arson investigator. Provides that the Youth Firesetter Interventionist Coordinator shall also be provided similar means and resources as those supplied to a State arson investigator. Describes the responsibilities of the Youth Firesetter Interventionist Coordinator. Provides that a volunteer certified youth firesetter interventionist may receive a \$250 stipend for a case only if the volunteer certified youth firesetter interventionist is not being otherwise compensated by another employer or entity for that case. Specifies that a Youth Firesetter Interventionist Coordinator shall receive mileage reimbursement for any necessary travel. Effective immediately. **Status: The measure passed both Chamber and will be sent to the Governor.**

## LEAVE for STATE EMPLOYEES for FIREFIGHTER TRAINING

**SB 1611** – Sen Patrick Joyce (D-Essex) and Rep. Dan Didech (D-Buffalo Grove) Supported by IFA. Creates the Firefighter Training Leave of Absence Act. Provides that a State employee shall be granted leave from his or her State employment for firefighter training as follows: (1) on one occasion, for up to 200 hours, to participate in training necessary to obtain Basic Operations Firefighter certification from the State Fire Marshal while attending a State Fire Marshal-approved fire academy; and (2) special or advanced training annually, not to exceed 80 hours, after obtaining Basic Operations Firefighter certification from the State Fire Marshal for



## The Bulletin

courses that will lead to additional certification by the State Fire Marshal. Provides that, during leaves for basic, special, or advanced training, the State employee shall continue to receive his or her regular compensation as a State employee, but, if the State employee receives compensation for basic, special, or advanced training, the State employee shall receive his or her regular compensation as a State employee minus the amount of his or her compensation for basic, special, or advanced training. **Status: An amendment was added d to set a timeline for requested leave. The measure passed both Chambers and will be sent to the Governor.**

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The advertisement features a photograph of five firefighters in full gear, including helmets and jackets, standing in front of a large, multi-story building. The firefighters are looking towards the right side of the frame. The background is a clear blue sky with some light clouds.

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# Save The Date



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## Down & Dirty Firefighter Weekend

October 27-28-29, 2023

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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.)

#### **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 618-882-4783 or by email at [editor@illinoisfirefighters.org](mailto:editor@illinoisfirefighters.org).**

# AUBURN NOTICE

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# Watchdog Group Not Entitled to Attorneys' Fees Under FOIA

by Meganne Trela  
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A municipality recently avoided the Edgar County Watchdogs' attempt to recover attorney fees, costs, and civil penalties following the conclusion of a Freedom of Information Act ("FOIA") lawsuit.

In *Edgar County Watchdogs v. Joliet Township*, 2023 IL App (3d) 210520, the Third District Appellate Court reviewed the standard for an award of attorney fees, costs, and civil penalties in FOIA disputes travelling through the courts. There, the Edgar County Watchdogs requested a copy of "the hard drive contents" of a specific Joliet Township computer under FOIA. They additionally requested the records be returned electronically. The township supervisor responded that, to make a copy of the hard drive, it would require two hours of I.T. time from an outside company at \$150 per hour, plus the cost of the device chosen for the information (\$50). Three days later, the township sent the invoice from the outside IT company for \$350.

The Watchdogs and the township went back and forth about the costs and eventually, the group asked for the statutory basis for the fees. The Watchdogs then filed a lawsuit alleging the township violated FOIA by willfully and intentionally failing to comply with FOIA. The trial court determined there was confusion about what the Watchdogs were actually requesting. It was not clear whether the group wanted just the documents, or the metadata contained within the documents. The group clarified that they just wanted the documents. Thus, the court ordered the township to provide the documents on the computer within 28 days.

After receiving the documents, the Watchdogs filed a petition seeking attorney fees, costs, and civil penalties under the prevailing party provision found in Section 11 of FOIA. This Section provides that an individual who "prevails" in a proceeding for failure to provide information under FOIA may be awarded attorney fees and costs. Further, if a court determines that the public body willfully and intentionally failed to comply, the court can also assess a civil penalty between \$2,500 and \$5,000.

The trial court determined that the Watchdogs failed to make it clear to the township that they only needed the *documents* and not the actual hard drive itself. As a result, the lawsuit was unnecessary and the judge determined that "if [the group] would have made a reasonable attempt to clarify [their] request before bringing it, we wouldn't be here today."

The appellate court agreed. In its decision, the court reasoned that the fee-shifting provision contained in the law was not meant as a reward for success, but to avoid unnecessary litigation. In addition, there were four requirements to meet the definition of "prevail": (1) a lawsuit against a public entity; (2) the document's production; (3) the lawsuit caused the production of the document; and (4) the lawsuit was necessary to obtain the documents. The Watchdogs failed to meet the fourth requirement because they failed to clarify their FOIA request before bringing their suit. The court determined the group could have avoided litigation all together by clarifying their request before resorting to the court system.

With respect to the request for civil penalties, the appellate court determined there was no evidence of any willful or intentional conduct on the part of the township. The township sought the resources to provide the requested information and was ready and willing to turn it over once the fees were paid. That request for fees was likely reasonable under Section 6 of FOIA, as that provision allows for the assessment of fees to reimburse for the actual cost of reproducing public records. Accordingly, there was no need to assess any civil penalty.

Unfortunately, miscommunication can result in a costly legal battle in the world of open records laws. Public bodies are reminded to seek legal counsel when dealing with unusual FOIA requests that might result in the assessment of fees or require special technical assistance. While the township in this case was not required to pay any fees, costs, or penalties; a simple clarification from either party could have avoided several thousand dollars in legal costs. Therefore, it is imperative to take FOIA requests seriously and to involve counsel where appropriate.

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## 5 Driving Experiences Your Teen Needs

Teen drivers are the most accident-prone of all drivers because of one major factor: inexperience. In fact, their first 6-12 months of solo driving is the most dangerous stretch of their lifetime as a licensed driver.

Because they've logged far fewer hours compared to other drivers, they are less able to predict – and properly respond to – hazards, sudden changes in traffic and erratic behaviors by other drivers. They also typically haven't made a habit of defensive driving techniques, leaving them vulnerable to making wrong decisions in the moment.

If you have a young driver (or soon-to-be licensed driver) in the house, as a parent, your years of driving experience are an invaluable asset. Here are some ways you can leverage that knowledge and expertise to help boost your teen's safe driving know-how.

### The Learning Permit Phase: A Golden Opportunity

Many new teen drivers complete their learner's permit training lacking important real-world driving skills. You can help your teen shore up that deficit by serving as co-pilot in a range of driving scenarios and situations during the permit phase. By exposing them to – and coaching them through – diverse experiences behind the wheel, you will help them become a confident, safe and independent driver.

Although you may feel more secure behind the wheel, here are some driving scenarios that teens need to experience.

#### 1. Bad weather

There's a big difference between answering driver test questions about how to handle bad weather and how to actually do it in the moment. When possible, have your teen drive you during the following weather events.

- Snow
- Wind
- Heavy rain
- Sleet

#### 2. Different roads

Different roadways (and intersections) call for different driving skills and techniques. Ditto for traffic situations. Expose them to as many as you can, including:

- One-way roads
- Two-lane roads with high speed limits
- Peak commute traffic
- Multi-lane highways and interstates
- Congested roads in urban centers
- Residential streets

#### 3. Day, night, and everything in between

Bright light at dawn and sunset, as well as low light at dusk, affects drivers' visibility and also influence traffic patterns and behaviors. Practice driving with your teen at different times of day and night. Coach them on the adjustments they need to make in terms of following distance and defensive driving, as well as personal adjustments with visors, sunglasses, headlights and more.

#### 4. Switch up passengers

For a new driver, devoting their full attention to driving and the road is incredibly important. Knowing that your teen won't be driving alone forever, why not invite another family member or friend along so your teen can start strengthening their "focus muscles"? Distractions are a major cause of accidents among teens, so the sooner they can begin successfully managing distractions while driving, the better.

### 5. Different cars

If your family has multiple cars, have your teen practice in each of them. Sedans drive much differently from SUVs, and stick shifts from automatics, etc. – all are good for them gaining familiarity with a variety of vehicles.

### Teen Drivers' Most Common Errors

In addition to exposing your young driver to a range of on-the-road experiences, be sure to also help them cultivate good driving habits. Here are the top errors that inexperienced drivers make – keep an eye out for them and coach your teen along the way.

1. **Lack of scanning** – Inexperienced drivers typically detect hazards later than more experienced drivers and may be unsure how to react. Left turns are especially dangerous for them.
2. **Distractions** – No matter whether they come from inside or outside the vehicle, distractions are a common reason for teen crashes.
3. **Speeding** – This includes driving too fast for road conditions or weather as well as inadequate braking. This error commonly ends in rear-end events.
4. **Tailgating** – Inexperienced teens haven't yet gained a feel for safe cushion distances and can easily follow other vehicles too closely.

Teens need extra time and experience to master good driving skills. By accompanying them in a variety of driving settings and conditions – as well as lending your years of expertise – you'll help them develop critical skills for more safely navigating our roadways. For more teen driver safety tips, visit: [://mycalcas.com/2019/10/teen-driver-safety-tips/](http://mycalcas.com/2019/10/teen-driver-safety-tips/).

### ABOUT CALIFORNIA CASUALTY:

Headquartered in San Mateo, CA, with Service Centers in Arizona and Colorado, California Casualty provides auto and home insurance to educators, higher education employees, firefighters, law enforcement and nurses members across the country. To learn more about California Casualty, call 866.680.5142 or visit <http://www.calcas.com/ifa>.

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**California Casualty**  
AUTO AND HOME INSURANCE



# Save The Date

## Down & Dirty Firefighter Weekend October 27-28-29, 2023

**CEU's Available FOR ALL CLASSES**

### Classes Offered:

- Tactical Emergency Casualty Care/Rescue Task Force Training (ACTIVE SHOOTER)
- Down & Dirty Firefighting Skills
- First-In Operations with Limited Staffing
- Live Line Demo and Natural Gas Emergencies
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Registration Opens Soon, Go to:  
[FSI.Illinois.EDU](http://FSI.Illinois.EDU)

**[Illinoisfirefighters.org](http://Illinoisfirefighters.org)**



## 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.

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](http://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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- Virtual Outpatient Treatment
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- Withdrawal Management (Detox)
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- Family Involvement & Support
- Treatment for Co-Occurring Mental Health & Substance Use Disorders
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OCTOBER 27-29, 2023

# DOWN & DIRTY

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[FSI.ILLINOIS.EDU](https://FSI.ILLINOIS.EDU)  
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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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**Use promo code PERKSIL2**

During congestion, the small fraction of customers using >50GB/mo. may notice reduced speeds until next bill cycle due to data prioritization. Video typically streams on smartphone/tablet at DVD quality (480p). International data at 2G speeds.

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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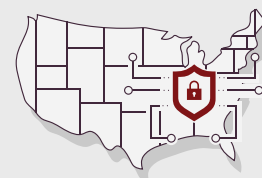
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# FM Global



## 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



My first job out of college was working as a landscaper. On any given day, I could be trimming shrubs, installing a design, doing tree work, or applying pesticides. No matter the task, I came home with residue, dirt, and sawdust. My wife and I quickly worked out an agreement that my work clothes were not to mingle with the regular stuff. Which meant, when my day was done, I took off my work gear in the garage and hauled them straight to the washing machine. We did our best to keep all that debris and those soaked in toxins separate from everything else in the house.

In the fire service, we are getting better at cleaning our gear after a call. We are seeing more and more reminders that even a simple fire scene can leave unknown toxins on our turnout coats and pants. Those chemicals and residues have an accumulating effect on our fabrics and more importantly, on our skin and lungs. The IFA has started our Go Green Clean campaign because keeping our gear clean is about preventing occupational cancer and creating more old timers.

With all this in mind, what about the mental debris that we carry? How do you unload those burdens and thoughts, especially at home?

I've heard it: "I don't want to burden my wife/husband/partner/kids with this stuff. They don't need to imagine what I've seen." Fair enough. Fire and EMS personnel have an innate drive to protect. It's one of the key factors that motivates us to sign on and put in the hours. We want to serve, respond, and keep others from danger. Makes sense that we'd want to do that for our families, too.

There is a phrase for what we are trying to avoid: secondary trauma. In essence, it is a traumatic response that happens to people who are in relationship with, or proximity to, an individual who has endured a traumatic event, but they did not endure it directly. It's real, and can be considered part of the unspoken cost of being in relationship with fire personnel and EMS responders.

If the responder DOES NOT have good communication with their partner. A study published in 2022, "The mental health and wellbeing of spouses, partners and children of emergency responders: A systematic review," found that responder relationships suffered more when the responder withdrew from their family, minimized communication, and/or experienced PTSD symptoms without explanation. To counter this, the study found that talking openly can improve individual and family stress.

Your family, in whatever form it takes, is part of your network of protective factors, those aspects of you that support, love, and make you whole. Sure, keep the gross stuff for the firehouse. But, it is for your mental health, and your family's, if you remain open and talk about what you're carrying. They see it anyway. They're putting up with your shenanigans when you're not being yourself. If there is no explanation or open dialogue, your family will fill in the gaps with their own stress-filled assumptions. Lighten the load, and show your trust in your partner by speaking your thoughts. They can handle it. They are a firefighting family after all.

If you need help with this, call your chaplain. Or call me. Take care of yourself and take care of your company.

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

**206-459-3020**

**National Suicide Prevention Hotline**

**Text 988**

**Chaplain Josh's Phone**

**608-234-3793**



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With FirstNet MegaRange, Illinois firefighters can experience improved connectivity and uplink data speeds—particularly at the edge of signal coverage.



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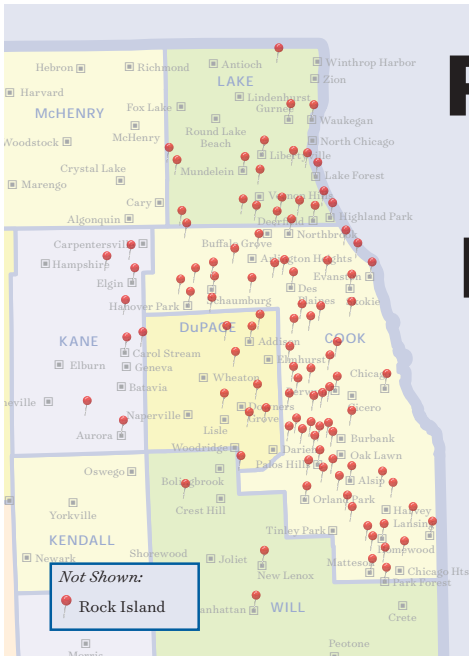
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# Put Your Community on the Map with Home Fire Sprinklers

Join more than 110 fire-safe communities in Illinois that protect the lives of residents and firefighters with fire sprinklers in new homes.



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Alsip	Forest Park	Lisle-Woodridge FPD	Prospect Heights
Aurora	Glen Ellyn	Long Grove	River Forest
Barrington	Glencoe	Long Grove FPD	Riverdale
Barrington Countryside FPD	Glenside FPD	Manhattan FPD	Riverside
Barrington FPD	Glenwood	Matteson	Riverwoods
Bedford Park	Green Oaks	Mount Prospect	Rock Island
Bellwood	Gurnee	Mundelein	Rolling Meadows
Berkeley	Hanover Park	New Lenox FPD	Roselle
Berwyn	Harwood Heights	Newport Township FPD	Roselle FPD
Bloomington	Hazel Crest	Niles	Schaumburg
Bloomington FPD	Hickory Hills	Norridge	Skokie
Blue Island	Highland Park	North Maine FPD	South Holland
Bridgeview	Highwood	Northbrook	St. Charles
Brookfield	Hodgkins*	Norwood Park FPD	Streamwood
Burlington Community FPD	Hoffman Estates	Oak Brook	Sunnycrest FPD (Flossmoor)
Carol Stream	Homewood	Oak Forest	Vernon Hills
Central Stickney FPD	Huntley FPD	Oak Park	Warren-Waukegan FPD
Chicago	Island Lake	Orland FPD	Wauconda
Chicago Ridge	Indian Creek (Countryside FPD)	Palatine	Wauconda FPD
Clarendon Hills	Justice	Palatine Rural FPD	West Dundee
Country Club Hills	La Grange Park	Palos FPD	Westchester
Countryside	Lake Barrington	Palos Heights FPD	Western Springs
Countryside FPD	Lake Bluff	Palos Hills	Westmont
Crestwood	Lake Forest	Palos Park	Wheeling
Deerfield	Lake Zurich	Park Forest	Wilmette
Deerfield-Bannockburn FPD	Lake Zurich Rural FPD	Park Ridge	Wood Dale
Des Plaines	Lansing	Plainfield FPD	
Elgin	Lemont FPD		
Elk Grove Village	Libertyville		
Elmwood Park	Libertyville FPD		
Evanston	Lincolnshire-Riverwoods FPD		

FPD – Fire Protection District

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**Northern Illinois Fire  
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**UNIQUE, NO COST  
TRAINING**

**VETERANS**  
IN THE FIRE SERVICE

**NOVEMBER 4-5, 2023**  
IFSI TRAINING GROUNDS, CHAMPAIGN

**TWO DAY, CHALLENGING TRAINING EVENT**

**An Opportunity for Firefighters Past, Present, and Future**

This annual event is a unique, personal and professional development program designed for US Armed Forces Veterans who have also served, are serving, or may be interested in serving as a member of the fire service.

**The Veterans in the Fire Service Weekend will offer two training schedules for students: future firefighters and current firefighters.**

All Veterans (whether currently in the fire service or looking into a future with the fire service) will benefit from a day of hands-on, live fire training activities. Students will engage with an elite group of IFSI instructors who will introduce essential firefighting skills while participating in rigorous training rotations.

❖ **NO COST TO ATTEND**

❖ **PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

❖ **INCREASED ESPRIT DE CORPS FOR VETERANS IN THE FIRE SERVICE**

❖ **MEALS AND LODGING ARE PROVIDED**

Loaner firefighting personal protective equipment and self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) will be available to students. **Advance reservations for gear are preferred.**

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## Office of the State Fire Marshal

### Governor Pritzker and State Fire Marshal Rivera Honor Illinois Firefighters for their Heroic Efforts



The 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Fallen Firefighter Memorial and Medal of Honor Ceremonies were held on Tuesday, May 9, 2023, in Springfield. Governor JB Pritzker and State Fire Marshal James A. Rivera joined firefighters to honor and remember fallen firefighters and recognize those who went above and beyond their duties.

"From the July 4th Highland Park massacre to intractable lithium-ion battery fires to last month's devastating tornadoes, our firefighters respond to our most daunting emergencies with resolve and selflessness—mitigating disaster, reuniting families, and saving countless lives, while putting themselves in harm's way," said Governor JB Pritzker. "Congratulations to our Firefighter Excellence Award, Firefighter Excellence 'Unit Citation' Award, State Fire Marshal Life Safety Award, Medal of Honor, and Medal of Valor awardees. On behalf of the State of Illinois, thank you for your service—we couldn't be more grateful."

"Firefighters serve their communities with pride, honor and loyalty and share a deep bond with their brothers and sisters they serve next to. This memorial stands as a reminder that we shall never forget those who made the ultimate sacrifice doing what they loved while selflessly helping those in need," said Illinois State Fire Marshal James A. Rivera. "Today, we honored those true heroes while paying respect and gratitude to their service and to their families."

Six firefighters were awarded the Medal of Honor. This is the highest award given by the State of Illinois to a firefighter for an act of outstanding bravery or heroism, by which the firefighter has demonstrated in great degree the characteristics of selflessness and personal courage above and beyond the call of duty, under adverse conditions, with the possibility of extreme personal risk. Recipients include:

- Engineer/Driver Ryan Mahoney, Belleville Fire Department
- Probationary Firefighter Alexander Kuhl, Belleville Fire Department
- Firefighter/Paramedic Kyle Haemker, Bradley Fire Department
- Firefighter Jason Warner, Collinsville Fire Department
- Firefighter/EMT Juan Gonzalez, Chicago Fire Department
- Firefighter/Paramedic Matt Mullins, Plainfield Fire Protection District

Twenty-three firefighters were honored with the Medal of Valor award. The award is given by the State of Illinois to a firefighter for an act of heroism or bravery that clearly demonstrated courage and dedication in the face of danger while in the performance of duty. Recipients include:

- Engineer John Eachus, Belleville Fire Department
- Battalion Chief Dan Wagner, Elgin Fire Department
- Fire Chief Joseph Schrage, Highland Park Fire Department
- Deputy Fire Chief Frank Nardomario, Highland Park Fire Department
- Lieutenant John Brens, Highland Park Fire Department
- Lieutenant Paul Grzybek, Highland Park Fire Department
- Lieutenant Albert Lopez, Highland Park Fire Department
- Lieutenant Erik Mocogni, Highland Park Fire Department
- Lieutenant Eloy Salazar, Highland Park Fire Department
- Firefighter Kevin Best, Highland Park Fire Department
- Firefighter Peter Caruso, Highland Park Fire Department
- Firefighter Peter Goss, Highland Park Fire Department
- Firefighter Christopher Gottschalk, Highland Park Fire Department
- Firefighter Brian McDonald, Highland Park Fire Department
- Firefighter Michael Miniscalco, Highland Park Fire Department
- Firefighter Trevor Mount, Highland Park Fire Department
- Firefighter Beneiamin Oros, Highland Park Fire Department
- Firefighter Michael Pacocha, Highland Park Fire Department
- Firefighter Michael Schmidt, Highland Park Fire Department
- Firefighter Andrew Seibel, Highland Park Fire Department
- Firefighter Micah Swislow, Highland Park Fire Department
- Firefighter Peter Tameling, Highland Park Fire Department
- Firefighter Nicholas Traske, Highland Park Fire Department

## The Bulletin

Twenty-three firefighters received the Firefighter Excellence Award for an act of service in the line of duty, demonstrating excellence and professionalism in service to their fellow Illinoisans. Recipients include:

- Captain Joseph Garland, Belleville Fire Department
- Probationary Firefighter Michael Schwent, Belleville Fire Department
- Firefighter John McClement, Blue Island Fire Department
- Firefighter Anthony Parillo, Blue Island Fire Department
- Battalion Chief William Brennan, Highland Park Fire Department
- Battalion Chief Ryan Hughes, Highland Park Fire Department
- Lieutenant Kevin Maslon, Highland Park Fire Department
- Lieutenant Matthew Stanley, Highland Park Fire Department
- Lieutenant Griffin Van Black, Highland Park Fire Department
- Firefighter Nathan Abbott, Highland Park Fire Department
- Firefighter Richard DiSalvo, Highland Park Fire Department
- Firefighter Jacob Emmerson, Highland Park Fire Department
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- Firefighter Jacob Flosi, Highland Park Fire Department
- Firefighter Matthew Grasso, Highland Park Fire Department
- Firefighter Kevin Lavazza, Highland Park Fire Department
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- Firefighter Thomas Richards, Highland Park Fire Department
- Firefighter Michael Shimanski, Highland Park Fire Department
- Firefighter Steven Urban, Highland Park Fire Department
- Firefighter Jeffrey Wilmot, Highland Park Fire Department
- Firefighter/Paramedic Paul Ortiz, Huntly Fire Protection District
- Assistant Chief Raymond Scott, Sesser Fire Protection District

In addition, two units received the Firefighter Excellence "Unit Citation" Awards for an act of service in the line of duty, demonstrating excellence, teamwork, and professionalism in service to Illinois residents. Recipients include:

Incident #22—00642 Blue Island Fire Department

- Lieutenant Joseph Olson
- Firefighter John Duffy
- Firefighter Angel Maschietto
- Firefighter Bennett Scott
- Firefighter Matthew Sutkus

Incident #22—5470 Plainfield Fire Protection District

- Lieutenant Eric Jensen
- Lieutenant Patrick Murphy
- Firefighter/Paramedic Robert Underhill

The State Fire Marshal Life Safety Award is given in recognition of the extraordinary efforts performed by individuals in furtherance of fire prevention and life safety. Three Life Safety Awards were presented. Recipients include:

- Matt Hedges, Woodstock Fire Rescue District
- Tom Andryk, OFSM Personnel- Administration
- Tom Manis, OSFM Personnel- Operations

The awards presented recognized heroic actions during 2022. Nominations were reviewed and winners selected by the Illinois Fire Fighting Medal of Honor Committee.





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# Natural Gas Detection From a Safe Distance



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Half the year is  
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**Begin the third quarter of 2023**

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.



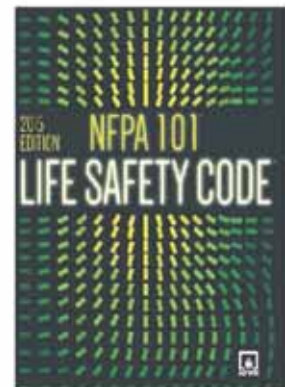
## Regular Fire Sprinkler Testing is Required by the International Fire Code

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.

Help educate the contractors working in your town or district by giving them a copy of the state contractors licensing act.

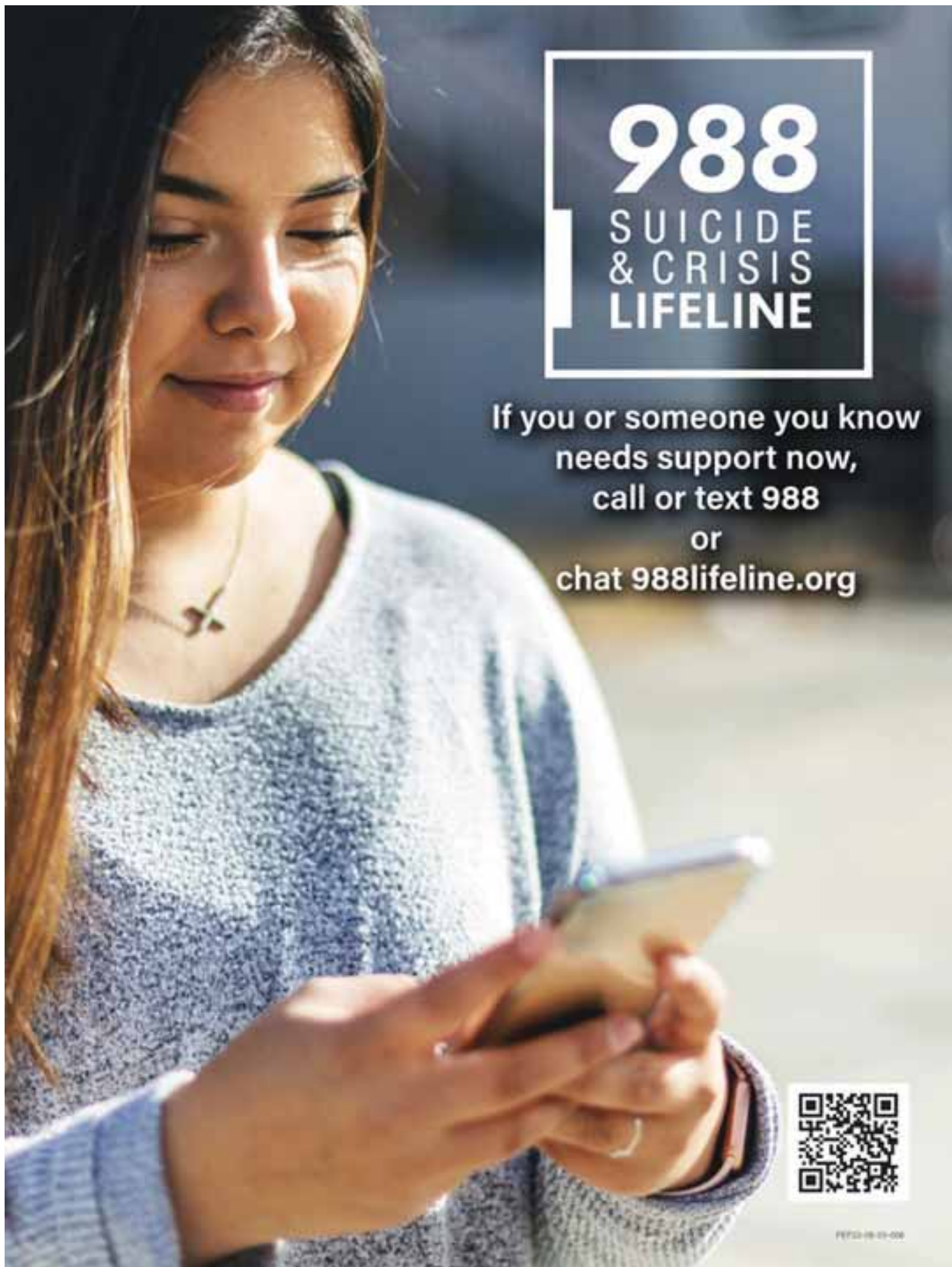


For more information:



**Is your fire sprinkler testing program for your commercial and residential occupancies in progress? Any company must be licensed by the State Fire Marshal and anyone testing a fire sprinkler system, fire pump, or standpipe 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 III 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.**






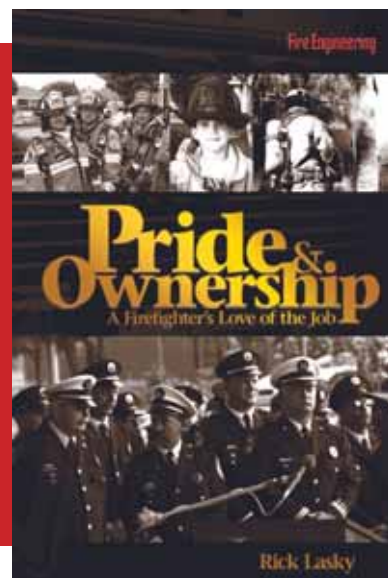
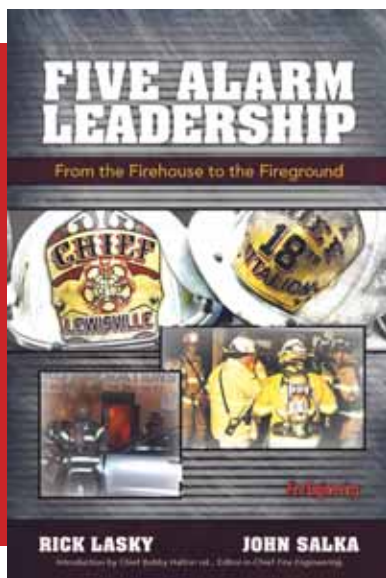
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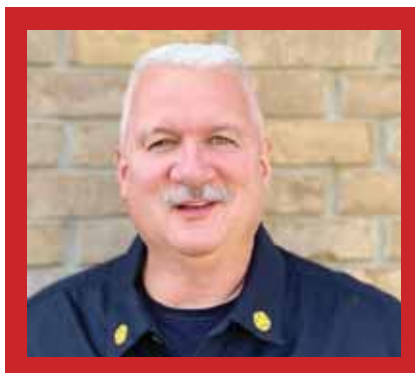
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chat [988lifeline.org](https://988lifeline.org)



PEP20-08-03-006



Chief Rick Lasky (ret.) a 40-plus year veteran of the fire service, served as chief of the Lewisville (TX) Fire Department for 12 years, prior to that as Fire Chief in Coeur d'Alene Idaho. Rick followed in his father's footsteps beginning his career as a firefighter in the suburbs on the southwest side of Chicago and while in Illinois received the 1996 International Society of Fire Service Instructors "Innovator of the Year" award for his part in developing the "Saving Our Own" program. He served as the co-lead instructor for the H.O.T. Firefighter Survival program at FDIC for over 10 years, is a long-standing editorial advisory board member for Fire Engineering Magazine and also serves on the FDIC advisory board. Rick is the author of the best-selling books "Pride & Ownership: A Firefighter's Love of the Job" and "Five Alarm Leadership: From the Firehouse to the Fireground" published by Fire Engineering Books and is the co-host for the podcast "The Command Post" heard on FireEngineering.com as well as the podcast "Old School." Rick has served as both a career and volunteer firefighter and in 2017 was the



recipient of the Tom Brennan Lifetime Achievement Award.

# CHIEF RICK LASKY

Did you ever wonder what it takes to be THAT fire department? The fire department that others wish they worked for? The fire department that gets it right? With a foundation built upon core values, passion, strong leadership and a love for the job, the only result can be greatness. This program looks at what's needed to achieve this and what it takes to stay on top.

## WHAT MAKE A GREAT FIRE DEPARTMENT?

Program with Chief Rick Lasky

Course Location:  
Amboy Fire Station  
25 N. East Ave  
Amboy, IL 61310

Date: December 9, 2023  
Time: 8a-5p

Cost: \$100 per Student  
Register 5, Get 1 Free

To Register, Email:  
info@dingesfire.com





# TIM KLETT

Retired Lt. FDNY, Fire Department  
Training Network Lead Instructor, Author



Amboy Fire Department  
25 N East Ave | Amboy, IL 61310



## **ENGINE COMPANY OPS** FROM ENTRY TO EXTINGUISHMENT

\*Full PPE & SCBA required  
Hands-On Training

October 21 | 8am-4pm  
\$100 per person | lunch included

Email to register: [info@amboyfire.com](mailto:info@amboyfire.com)





# AMBOY FIRE SCHOOL

## SAVE THE DATE - APRIL 6, 2024



**COST \$100**

Amboy Community Building  
Includes (Fri) Vendor Dinner,  
Training, (Sat) Lunch, and  
Brotherhood Event with Live Music

*FRIDAY, APRIL 5*  
*VENDOR DINNER*

NO COST DINNER FOR  
ATTENDEES AND CHIEFS

## CLASSES

KEYNOTE SPEAKER  
FRIDAY & SATURDAY  
Cody Trestrail

- Fire & EMS Lectures
- Hands-On Training
- Equipment Utilization

- SCBA
- LODD/RTB
- HAND TOOLS
- FIRST-IN ENGINE
- WHAT IF, IN EMS
- HYDRAULIC TOOLS
- SEARCH WITH FORCIBLE ENTRY
- ELECTRIC VEHICLE EXTRICATION
- HEAVY VEHICLES / BUS EXTRICATION
- BACK TO THE BASICS IN EXTRICATION
- HIGH PERFORMANCE CPR AND AIRWAY MANAGEMENT
- FLOWING WATER TO THE MAX AND RURAL WATER MOVEMENT SUCCESS

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

Facebook  
"Amboy Fire & Extrication School"

# SUPPORT UKRAINE

*Firefighters*

## Please Help!

There is still a long road ahead in Ukraine and we feel passionate about directing efforts toward the Ukrainian nation. The men and women of Ukraine have shown us how strong and determined they are to protect their land and all we can do to help is support and pray.

Again this quarter, Amboy Fire Department and Dinges Fire Company will be doing a collection at Amboy Fire Department through July 1st.

Your donation will provide vital assistance to Ukrainian firefighters. Below is a list of items we are collecting that will be sent directly to Ukraine through Ukraine Firefighters in Need.



## Needed Supplies:

- 1) Structural Fire PPE
- 2) Fire protective hoods.
- 3) Firefighter protective helmets.
- 4) Firefighter structural jackets.
- 5) Firefighter structural pants.
- 6) Firefighter structural boots.
- 7) Firefighter structural gloves.
- 8) Firefighter structural goggles.
- 9) Fire Resistant Suit Thermal Radiation 1000 Degree Heat Resistant
- 10) Portable scene lighting.
- 11) Individual flashlights.
- 12) Analog and digital UHF radios and base stations.
- 13) Safety Harnesses.
- 14) Climbing equipment: systems, carabiners, ropes, blocks, descending devices, belaying devices, and lifting devices.
- 15) Hand tools: Hooligans, fire axes, "American" scoop and bayonet shovels, crowbars.
- 16) SCBA complete set Scott/ MSA/ Drager-PSS 4000.
- 17) Rescue chainsaw.
- 18) K12 Rescue saw.
- 19) Battery-operated cutting tool.
- 20) Battery-powered and hydraulic rescue tools: spreaders, rescue cylinders (RAMs), cutters, and combi tools.
- 21) Rescue struts.
- 22) Rescue airbags.
- 23) Heavy machinery: Crane manipulator, heavy tow truck.
- 24) Fire apparatus and ambulances.

*Watch  
Video* →



To make arrangements for a donation,  
contact Jeff Bryant at  
[jeffbryant@amboyfire.com](mailto:jeffbryant@amboyfire.com)  
or (815) 994-6184.

