

The **Bulletin**



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November - December 2015

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

IFA Testifies for support of the Fire Prevention Fund and the importance of the Cornerstone Program



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The Bulletin

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Mission Statement

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

President's Message



Dear Fellow Firefighters,

It seems that every time I write an article for the Bulletin, I am discussing something about the Fire Prevention Fund. As you all know by now, the Fire Prevention Fund has been held up in the budget process. No Cornerstone Program classes are being taught and the Fire Institute is holding its doors open financially by the University. Leaders of the Illinois Fire Service and I testified in front of the full House of Representatives a couple of weeks ago. We discussed the importance of that fund and the burden that been put on all of us. It has been pretty clear since the first of October, that no one has been receiving Cornerstone training. Now, as of November 16th, there may be a little indication that talks could bring some kind of an agreement after the first of the year. Whatever happens after this is all over, we need to take a look at legislation that could keep these funds flowing even if a budget deadlock develops again. These funds are dedicated for one purpose and that is to support the Fire Service and the people and property that we protect. It has been a struggle for all of us just to do the job we're required to do, let alone not having the support from programs that keep us safe.

Our 125th Annual Conference has now passed and it was another big success. I want to thank everyone that was involved that made it happen. Without our sponsors and partners, it would have been a far less special event. Chief Craig Haigh was our Keynote Speaker after our General Session Friday morning and he did a great job with his presentation. Craig and I go back a few years and it was nice to see him share his knowledge and views of the Fire Service. After the general session, he went to the Institute and helped with the Down & Dirty Training.

Over the last few years, I have been answering the calls for the 1- 800-FireLine. This line helps potential firefighters that are looking to find a fire department to get on as a member. This is just one way we are trying to recruit new firefighters. Now, there is a new way that all fire departments can use to recruit new firefighters. The Nation Volunteer Fire Council has developed a "Make Me A Firefighter" portal that you can use. This is the first national campaign of its kind and features messaging and materials that have been tested to resonate with target audiences. And best of all, it is completely free. Make Me A firefighter campaign will reinvigorate your recruitment efforts, expand your target audiences, and access materials and resources to make your local campaign a success. To get started go to the NVFC site <http://portal.nvfc.org>.

I have also been notified that Illinois has a very low membership with the National Volunteer Fire Council. IF you want AFG grants and Safer grants to continue, you need to join this volunteer fire service association. They have been a striking force keeping this funding alive for all of us. You can go online and join on their web site, so please take the time and do so. Vice President Terry Ford and I just returned from the Mid-West Networking meeting in Des Moines, Iowa. We exchanged ideas and benefit information with each other. There were seven states attending and we all were able to discuss each others operational problems and concerns, along with potential benefits that we may be able to address. In this new upcoming legislative year, the Illinois Firefighters Association will be introducing legislation. This piece of legislation will allow volunteer firefighters to buy one set of tires on their personal vehicle, under the state group bid purchase plan. I will keep you informed as time goes on with the progress in this effort.

So, "Train Smart, Keep Safe" and God Bless

John Swan President IFA



Legislative update

By Margaret Vaughn, IFA Legislative Lobbyist

LEGISLATION TO RESTORE CORNERSTONE PASSES HOUSE

HB4305 passed the House on November 10th with bipartisan support of 115 votes which appropriating \$3,494,200 to IFSI, \$625,000 which will be used for Cornerstone. The bill also included an appropriation of \$950,000 for reimbursements to local governments which participate in state training and \$2,544,200 for training for the City of Chicago, and \$125 to ILEAS/MABAS. The Governor has indicated he will support it but the bill still has to go to the Senate but as of press time, a motion was filed in the House to reconsider the vote which is a maneuver used to hold up the bill so hopefully the partisan infighting can stop so it will be signed into law so fire service training can get up and running again.

FIRE SERVICE TESTIFIES at CAPITOL ON BUDGET FREEZE

On October 10th leaders from the fire service including IFA President John Swan were called to the Capitol to testify before the full House of Representatives about the horrific impact on public safety the funding freezes were having. Chief Swan focused on the impact of the cancellation of Cornerstone classes was having in communities across the state especially those with volunteer departments.

Pictured on the cover - left to right: IFSA Chair Chief George Mavrogeorge, Col. Royal Mortensen, MABAS Chief Officer Jay Reardon, IFA President John Swan and IFCA Executive Director Tim Sashko, and Chicago Fire Department 1st Deputy Commissioner Charles Stewart.

IFA PARTICIPATES in FIRE SERVICES ASSOCIATION SUMMIT

On October 28, IFA joined the leadership from the IL Fire Services Association at their Annual Legislative Summit at IFSI to decide which legislative initiatives had unanimous support to move forward as a "Fire Caucus Bill".



The Fireman's Rule

by William R. Thomas

Ottosen Britz Kelly Cooper Gilbert & DiNolfo, Ltd.

Prior to 2003, the "Fireman's Rule" was created by common law (as opposed to a statutory creation) to limit the extent to which firefighters or other public officers could recover damages for injuries that were incurred when entering into private property and discharging their duties. The common law Fireman's Rule was a doctrine based upon an assumption of the risk that firefighters and other public officers exposed themselves to on a day-to-day basis.

An Illinois Supreme Court case that embodies the common law Fireman's Rule is *Washington v. Atlantic Richfield*, 66 Ill.2d 103 (1976). Washington stood for the proposition that defendant property owners would not be liable for injuries suffered by firefighters as a result of a cause that was independent of the fire itself. The Illinois Supreme Court stated in Washington, "The duties of a fireman expose him to risk of harm from fire: this is a reasonable risk of his occupation. The landowner owes a fireman, as well as an invitee, a duty not to expose him to an unreasonable risk of harm – that is, a duty to remove hidden, unusual or not to be expected dangers from the premises, or to give adequate warning thereof."

The Illinois Supreme Court also stated in Washington, "[S]ince most fires occur because of negligence, to hold a landowner liable to a fireman would impose a heavy and unreasonable burden upon the owners." Notwithstanding this common law rule, owners or occupiers of land still had the affirmative duty to exercise reasonable care in the maintenance of the property and its safe condition to prevent injuries firefighters might sustain from a cause independent of the fire.

That all changed in 2003 when the Illinois legislature amended the Fire Investigation Act which codified the Fireman's Rule (425 ILCS 25/9(f)). Section 9(f) of the Act states in part:

The owner or occupier of the premises and his or her agents owe firefighters who are on the premises in the performance of their official duties conducting fire investigations or inspections or responding to fire alarms or actual fires on the premises a duty of reasonable care in the maintenance of the premises ... The owner or occupier of the premises and his or her agents are not relieved of the duty of reasonable care if the firefighter is injured due to the lack of maintenance of the premises in the course of responding to a fire, false alarm, or his or her inspection or investigation of the premises. (425 ILCS 25/9(f))

As a result of this statute, numerous cases following its 2003 enactment had the courts focusing on the degree of maintenance of the premises to which firefighters are responding and the acts of the firefighter in using care to avoid open and obvious dangers. For example, in *Sears v. Atkins*, 2011 IL App. (1st) 102817-U, a firefighter was injured as he walked on a garage roof while fighting a fire. In this unpublished opinion, the First District Appellate Court had to decide whether or not the firefighter's injuries were caused as a result of the negligent construction of the garage as he alleged, or whether the fire caused the garage to be damaged which then resulted in the firefighter falling and causing his injuries as alleged by the property owner.

In reviewing both the common law version and the statutory version of the Fireman's Rule, the court sent the matter back to the trial court for further review because the firefighter's pleading did in fact raise the issue of the negligence of the property owner in the construction of the garage. Further findings were necessary

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to determine if the cause of the roof collapse was independent of the fire damage in the garage. The court acknowledged the need to balance putting an unreasonable burden on the property owner versus the new expansion of the Fireman's Rule through the statute. The court stated:

[T]hat while a landowner owes a duty of reasonable care to maintain his property so as to prevent injury occurring to a fireman from a cause independent of the fire, a landowner is not liable for willful and wanton conduct in causing the fire itself because imposing such liability is a heavy and unreasonable burden upon the owner.

Another good discussion and analysis of the statutory Fireman's Rule is found in *Olson v. Williams All Seasons Company*, 2012 IL App (2d) 110818. During the morning hours of October 20, 2006, Olson was called to the scene to investigate a "trouble fire alarm" while acting in the scope of his employment as a Highland Park firefighter. Reporting as a non-emergency, Olson and other firefighters entered into this commercial building to find it to be extremely dark. While walking through the interior of the building without a flashlight, attempting to locate a light switch, Olson fell through an unlatched gate, falling more than 11 feet on to a cement surface causing spinal injuries. The respective parties attempted to argue common law Fireman's Rule versus the statutory version.

The appellate court again went through an analysis of the application of the common law Fireman's Rule versus the statutory version and sent the matter back down to the trial court for further proceedings. The trial court was directed to review the complaint to analyze if under the statutory obligation that the property owner is not relieved of the duty of maintaining this property with reasonable care which might lead to injury of the firefighter.

Citing to the statutory section, the appellate court further explained that "the owner or occupier of the premises and his or her agents are not relieved of the duty of reasonable care of the firefighter who is injured due to a lack of maintenance of the premises in the course of responding to a fire, false alarm, or inspection or investigation of the premises." Citing Section 9(f), the appellate court acknowledged that while this firefighter was not responding to an active fire, he was within his employment capacity of investigating a fire alarm, and pointed out that this statutory obligation of the property owner extends to inspections or investigations of the premises.

Based upon the 2003 enactment of the statutory Fireman's Rule, expect to see continued analysis of these cases to determine whether or not a firefighter's injury was potentially caused because of the fire itself or because of an independent cause associated with the care and maintenance of the premises. If it was an independent cause, the analysis the courts will apply will determine whether or not the owner or occupant left his or her premises in a reasonable condition so as to not cause injury to the firefighter, or whether the owner or occupant has exposure due to his or her negligence.

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Five Auto Insurance Mistakes You Should Know About

Nobody is expected to know everything, but there are things about auto insurance you should know. Insurance policies are complicated, and spending just a few minutes to purchase one may not be enough time; you need to know about the fine print. Here are five “did you know?” that could save you from paying out of pocket if you have a claim:

- 1. Did you know you have to disclose everyone in your household?** If grandma came to live with you or any of your children moved back home after college, you need to inform your automobile insurance company. If you don't, and they have an accident while driving one of your cars, payment and coverage could be affected or denied.
- 2. Did you know using your vehicle for business might not be covered?** Many policies exclude using your car for a commercial venture. If you drive others for profit (Lyft or Uber), deliver pizzas, or routinely use your car as a delivery service, you may need a commercial auto insurance policy.
- 3. Did you know most insurance policies exclude vehicles over 10,000 pounds GVW?** If you rent a U-Haul truck or an RV, you may need to purchase the insurance offered by the company renting you the vehicle because your auto insurance may not cover you driving it.
- 4. Did you know a claim could be denied if there was a criminal act while driving?** An accident caused while street racing or driving under the influence may not be covered under some insurance policies.
- 5. Did you know that excluded drivers means excluded at all costs?** While you can save money by excluding someone you live with who has a bad driving record, when you put a named-driver exclusion on your policy, that person is not covered to drive your vehicle under any circumstance. If they do and cause an accident, even in an emergency situation, you will be stuck paying for the costs.

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That's why it's important to understand what's in your insurance policy. When you talk with a California Casualty advisor about auto or home insurance, they will take as long as necessary to explain all the coverages and make sure you have the protection you and your family need. They will also make sure you get all the professional discounts, not available to the general public, that you qualify for. Call today for a policy review or comparison at 1.800.800.9410 or visit www.calcas.com/IFA.

Resources for this article: www.naic.org/documents/consumer_alert_understanding_auto.htm

This article is furnished by California Casualty, providing auto and home insurance to firefighters for over 40 years. Get a quote at 1.800.800.9410 or www.calcas.com/IFA.

East Dubuque Opens the Chief Joseph M. Heim Training Grounds



The formulation of the building of the training site was started in our first strategic plan that we did back in 2012-2015. We identified it as a weakness that we were unable to train all of our personnel in live fire or a regular place to train. We set a timeline for completion and figuring out how to fund.

* Discussed the Strategic plan concept with all fire department personnel and received excellent feedback that this was the appropriate way forward.

* Spring, 2013, met with the City Manager and explained why there was a need for a facility - he was in agreement.

* Summer, 2013, set up another meeting with the City Manager to drive around town and find city property that would be the correct location to put a facility.

* Site was selected in an industrial area under the water tower - this location was the best area since it was remote from a residential area and was a secured area due to the water tower.

* September, 2013, held discussion with department members on how we were going to fund the project - called a couple of companies that deal in shipping containers to get pricing.

* October, 2013, decision was made to use money that was left to the department from our retired chaplain to purchase first two containers for \$5,000.



* October, 2013, contacted BNSF Railroad and requested the donation of 13 railroad ties to set the containers on - railroad donated ties and delivered.

* December, 2013, Railroad ties delivered and set in place, two containers ordered and set in place, local contractor brought donated machine and labor to set in place.

* December, 2013, three fire department personnel went to various training facilities in the state that utilized shipping containers for training, asked questions, took pictures of props and brought back ideas.

* Winter, 2014, asked local contractors and other people we knew that if they were remodeling if we could have the doors they were taking out, also contacted Menards to see what the cost of a damaged door would be. Menards only charged us approximately \$20 for damaged doors.

* Spring, 2014, planned first work day at the site, cut in openings for 2 doors, placed PVC piping for smoke machine, built control room door, and built the movable walls.

* Spring, 2014, received results from our ISO Inspection and found out that we were 1.2 points away from and ISO Class 4 - discussion was held on purchasing 3 more containers, along with constructing a burn room in one of the containers to help lower our ISO to a 4 - note this was not the only thing we had to do to make this happen, but it did help.

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- * May, 2014, held first training session.
- * June, 2014, discussion on funding the 3 containers and building the props and burn cell - it was decided that we would use money from our cost recovery program to purchase two of the containers and the third would come from our budget. We would also use the cost recovery program money to purchase supplies for burn prop, other props and paint for exterior. Total price for 3 more containers was \$7,500.
- * June, 2014, we also requested a grant from the IFA Foundation to assist with purchasing a power jamb prop for forcible entry - received the grant and purchased the prop.



- * June, 2014, three containers were ordered, delivered, and set in place.

- * July, 2014, met with local excavator on what the cost was to purchase recycled black top to put around the containers, he figured up how much we would need - came back to us a week later and told us he had talked with a company that was tearing up a street and that the recycled black top and the labor to put it down would be donated - all we needed to do was be on site the day it was laid down to wet down the recycled material as it was laid down.

- * August, September, October, 2014, one Saturday each month was dedicated to working on the facility, we divided up personnel, some built walls, some continued

placing piping for smoke machine, put up stairs to the 2nd floor along with put down landing and railing around, and some worked on building the burn cell - burn cell was a 10x12 area in one of the containers, and constructed out of 1/2" cement board on the floor, with walls and ceiling made out of steel studs and 2 layers of 5/8" Type X drywall. Also during this whole process we had personnel working on their own time to help move the process along. During this process we continued to train at the facility.



- * Spring, 2015, first live fire training conducted, constructed ventilation prop, and added another forcible entry door.

- * Spring, 2015, held first area training on Basic Engine Company Operations with IFSI.

- * Summer, 2015, made final preparations to the facility, painted, attached signage.

- * 2015-2017 Strategic Plan identified to continue improving on the facility, adding props and up keep.

This process is still ongoing, we have windows to put in and we are going to order one more container to make a second floor burn cell.

I truly believe this was only made possible by utilizing a Strategic Plan. For a long period of time many of us talked about building a training facility, but had no idea on how to go about doing it, where the money would come from and where to find the containers.

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The take aways from this is:

- * Empower you personnel - all of our members in one way or another contributed to the process, whether that be assisting in constructing props, figuring out training props, painting, or just adding ideas for props - we built and fabricated everything.

- * You don't need to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars into a training facility - see what you need as a department and go from there - the total for our project was approximately \$20,000.

- * Set timelines - we set a timeline of start to finish in our first plan - we were able to execute the start to the dedication of the facility to the quarter it was planned.
- * Engage your political governing bodies, whether that is a village board, city council, city manager, mayor, or fire district board - educate them on the benefits of doing this.
- * Talk with your local business people, contractors, excavation companies, etc. - this helps protect their business also.

Any questions let me know, I am more than willing to share what we did.

Chief Joseph M. Heim, East Dubuque Fire Department



Illinois Fire Service - Institute Updates

Jim Keiken, Deputy Director

With Thanksgiving behind us and the New Year's just ahead I just wanted to provide some brief updates to classes and issues. As everyone knows by now without a state budget in place the Cornerstone program is on hold. In spite of no Cornerstone class being conducted IFSI is still open for business and has many classes ongoing not only at IFSI but also around the state. Any class that is grant funded or has a fee is still an option. Please feel free to contact IFSI if you have any questions on available classes and what opportunities there are for classes.

The Leadership Development and Decision Making (LDDM) pilots are set for March 14-18, May 23-27 October 3-7, 2016.

If you are part of the fire service who is willing to embrace the challenge of personal and professional leadership development, the Leadership Development and Decision Making (LDDM) program provides a one-of-a-kind training experience.

As a student you will be immersed in topics through a Socratic teaching style that features highly-interactive, small group discussions, ethical and moral discussion groups/decision games, tactical decision games, sand table exercises/discussions, and practical application exercises. Each student is challenged to reach outside of their comfort zone through discovery learning, rather than the classic lecture and directed learning format. Students work with their own rank levels - firefighter, company officer or chief officer - for the first four days. On the fifth day, the three rank levels come together for a live-burn exercise.

The class is five days and 40 hours long and has limited enrollment to allow a balanced attendance of the three rank levels: firefighters, officers and chief officers. Each level experiences a totally-interactive learning environment. The class encourages students to learn from their peers, as well as their instructors. The LDDM Program incorporates seven "lines of education" in each rank level:

Leadership and followership - History and traditions - Communications - Morals and ethics - Professional development/tactics, techniques and procedures - Decision-making and critical thinking - Command climate and culture

The last day of class includes eight hours of practical, hands-on application of what was learned.

Tuition for the week long program is \$500.00

For more information about the LDDM program, contact: James P. Moore

Program Director – Leadership Development and Decision Making - 217-300-3463

The 2016 IFSI Calendars should be available and as always the most up to date information can be found at the IFSI web site. Winter Fire School is scheduled for January 23rd and 24th, 2016. Once again there are three hands on sessions with Basic Engine Company Operations, Forcible Entry and Self Contained Breathing Apparatus. All these programs will be utilizing a variety of props on the IFSI grounds and are a perfect opportunity to fine tune your hands on skills. In addition we have a number of terrific classroom program from the "Common Scene" Building Construction for the Street Smart Firefighter to a Canadian Pacific Responding to Locomotive Emergencies.

In addition this year we have a great Saturday night event we are calling "Tailboard talk" this interactive fire station table discussion included Ed Enright, Chicago FD (retired), Bobbie Hoff, Chicago FD (retired) and Carol Stream FD, Mac McCastland, Oak Lawn FD (retired), Greg Earle, Centralia FPD, Steve Gambrell, Harristown FPD and is moderated by Jim Grady, Frankfort FPD. This program by Fire Service leaders should be a lively and entertaining evening.

As we move into 2016 at IFSI I know the budget issue will be resolved and not only will Cornerstone programs be back in full force but a wide range of new and updated programs will become available through the year based upon your requests. We will be rolling out a Blended Weekend Fire Academy, a new Search and Rescue program as well as updates and revision to various existing programs. Don't miss out on your chance to improve and increase your firefighting knowledge and skill.

Just a reminder, if there is something you think IFSI would be providing or you have ideas for the next great program please feel free to contact me at the institute.

The Illinois Fire Service Institute Regional Representative can be your important link to bringing State Fire Academy training to your Fire Department.

Helping Firefighters do their work through Training, Education, Information and Research

“Advocacy must be strengthened for the enforcement of codes and the installation of home fire sprinklers.”



Today's fire service is complex, with many competing aspects. In 2013, U.S. fire departments responded to 1.24 million fire calls and over 21.3 million medical aid calls (NFPA 2014). There were over 2.34 million false alarms reported. These selected call data illustrate the increasing public safety challenge faced by communities. Too often emergency response becomes the sole focus of a fire department and community fire prevention and education are forgotten.

A “systems approach” to fire department services. In his book series, *When in Doubt, Lead!*, Chief Dennis Compton (retired from Mesa, Arizona) uses the analogy of a three-legged stool to explain the importance of a balanced department fire and life safety mission (the seat of the stool). The three “legs” support the mission: Fire Prevention, Emergency Response, and Public Education. “Managers today must pay attention to all components of the fire and life safety equation, avoiding the temptation to focus only on areas within which they have expertise or interest, or that are politically popular.”

The goal to increase awareness of home fire sprinklers should be a focus of every fire department. The installation of fire sprinklers in new one- and two-family dwellings saves lives of civilians and first responders and improves the overall quality of a community's housing stock. Starting with fire service leadership, all department personnel need to be able to explain the benefits of home fire sprinklers to the public.

Code enforcement/advocacy and prevention education should be recognized as core competencies of the U.S. fire service. The “Fire Service Needs Assessment” survey from NFPA documented the problem of lacking code inspections (nearly 7,000 departments) in rural communities. According to a national survey of fire chiefs (Home Safety Council/Johns Hopkins 2007), 85% of fire departments spend fewer than 10 hours on fire and life safety education and only 12 percent have personnel assigned exclusively to public education.



Only 6 percent of those doing public education reported making home fire sprinklers a focus of local outreach.

Fire service personnel charged with education and prevention/code activities require training. It's not sufficient to endorse the concept of fire department support of prevention and education activities. Fire service leadership should recognize the importance of specialized training throughout all phases of a career and empower personnel to obtain it. The National Fire Academy has free online distance learning covering a wide range of fire service topics.

Each department must emphasize fire and life safety education within the community. Progressive departments will make awareness of home fire sprinklers a focus of their outreach. Public educators in the fire service should create partnerships with educational agencies and institutions to deliver realistic information about fire sprinklers to both children and adults – especially homeowners. The Home Fire Sprinkler Coalition's Built For Life Fire Department specifically aims to increase the number of fire departments teaching about sprinklers. The program balances department recognition with outreach, tools and training – all at no cost.



Ralph Webster, Woodstock Fire Chief
& Illinois “Everyone Goes Home” Advocate

Resources abound to help fire departments improve public safety through fire sprinkler education and awareness efforts. It starts with the understanding and acceptance that home fire sprinkler systems are the fire department's partner in fire suppression.

No other technology can protect first responders like fire sprinklers can. Fire sprinklers decrease the number and severity of structural and residential fires, creating less dangerous working conditions on the fire ground and preventing civilian and firefighter injuries and fatalities.

A bit of fire sprinkler history. The landmark *America Burning* report published in 1973 recognized the tremendous potential that fire sprinkler technology has to reduce the nation's fire death problem. In that same year, NFPA's Committee on Automatic Sprinklers appointed a subcommittee to prepare the *Standard on the Installation of Sprinkler Systems in One- and Two-Family Dwellings and Mobile Homes*, which was adopted in 1975. The standard has evolved to become the current NFPA 13D.

Support for fire sprinkler technology. The U.S. fire service has long played an important role in advocating for fire sprinkler protection. This unified support was evident in 2009 when a strong fire service contingent helped vote for a requirement for fire sprinklers in townhouses and one- and two-family dwellings in the International Code Council's (ICC) International Residential Code. The fire service voted to ensure the requirements remained in 2012 and again in 2015.



“Advocacy must be strengthened for the enforcement of codes and the installation of home fire sprinklers.”

TEACHING POINTS

CHALLENGE

The onus is on the fire service. We must take responsibility for improving our knowledge of fire and building codes within the community, as well as the roles codes play in protecting civilians and firefighters. It's also our job to help the public understand the importance of these codes, just as we educate about home fire safety basics (early detection, escape planning and practice, and most importantly, fire sprinklers). This challenge is complicated by the aforementioned budget and personnel restraints that affect most fire departments coupled with an aggressive anti-sprinkler requirement contingent which has been at work at all levels to undermine the progress made in sprinkler ordinances and codes. Myths and other inaccurate information may impact the opinions of homeowners, business owners and builders who are concerned about the costs of installing fire sprinklers. Education must be consistent and ongoing to overcome these misconceptions.

DISCUSSION

- Does your department's mission statement include Fire Prevention, Emergency Response, and Public Education? Are home fire sprinklers considered a shared value among department personnel?
- What are your fire district's/municipality's fire and building codes? Do all members of the fire service understand those codes?
- Does your fire district/municipality have a residential and/or commercial fire sprinkler ordinance?
- Are there any sprinklered homes in your community? Do the owners of those sprinklered homes receive information that describes the fire sprinkler system and how it works?
- Are fire sprinklers a topic of discussion within community fire safety and prevention programs as well as fire department public relations?
- Do you reach out to the homebuilding community to overturn myths and increase awareness? Do you also contact real estate and home insurance professionals?
- Does your fire district/municipality use its newsletter, website or other media to promote fire sprinkler messaging?
- Is there a fire safety program being offered for children in local schools? Does it include a basic understanding of fire sprinkler technology?

- What fire sprinkler demonstrations does your fire department conduct within the community?

- ☐ Fire sprinkler trailers (made available by the Illinois Fire Inspectors Association and Northern Illinois Fire Inspectors Association)
- ☐ Side-by-side demonstrations
- ☐ Fire sprinkler demonstrations in firefighter training homes
- ☐ NFPA 13D Home Fire Sprinkler System Simulator (made available by the Northern Illinois Fire Sprinkler Advisory Board)

RESOURCES

NFPA Fire Sprinkler Initiative:

www.firesprinklerinitiative.org



Visit the NFPA Fire Sprinkler Initiative website for home fire sprinkler education statistics. Subscribe to the blog for the latest home fire sprinkler advocacy and legislative news from across the U.S.

Illinois Fire Sprinkler Coalition:

www.homelifesafety.com

Sign up your fire department to become a supporting member of the IFSC.



Home Fire Sprinkler Coalition:

www.homefiresprinkler.org



Sign up your fire department for HFSC's free "Built For Life" Fire Department program to receive the latest home fire sprinkler education resources.

Throughout the 16 Firefighter Life Safety initiatives there are opportunities for both organizational and personal change. As your department moves toward adopting a safety-minded culture, use the tools offered in the 16 initiatives as guiding documents.



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Recruit Volunteers to Your Department with Help from 'Make Me A Firefighter' Campaign

By Chief Kevin D. Quinn, Chairman of the National Volunteer Fire Council

If your department is like most volunteer or combination departments in the U.S., you struggle to maintain the staffing needed to provide the adequate level of service to your community. The numbers are clear. The National Fire Protection Association reports that in 1984 there were 897,750 volunteer firefighters, and that in 2013 there were 786, 150. This is a 12 percent decrease. In that same time period, call volume has tripled, largely due to increased medical emergency calls.

Why are we having problems recruiting new members? There are a lot of factors, including increased demands on people's time, increased training requirements, and geographical shifts as people move away from smaller communities for job opportunities.

But there is another challenge as well – lack of awareness among the public about the need for volunteer firefighters and EMTs. The National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC) conducted a national survey last year that found that 41% of respondents didn't know if their local department utilized volunteers. Perhaps even more telling was that 79% of respondents did not know their department was seeking volunteers. It is hard to expect people to step up and serve if they don't even know the opportunity is available.

The survey did uncover some promising news. It found that 29% of the U.S. population is either “definitely interested” or “might be interested” in volunteering as a responder in the fire and emergency service. Among under-represented audience, the numbers were even higher. 44 percent of Millennials (those aged 18-35) expressed at least some interest in volunteering, which is encouraging for an industry whose population is aging and needs new blood to secure its future. In addition, 36 percent of minorities expressed interest in volunteering, shedding light on what has to date been a largely untapped recruiting market.

What do we do to bridge this gap in awareness to get new members in the door, diversity in our ranks, and attract the next generation of responders? It is a challenge for many departments to focus on recruitment when they are already short-staffed and under-funded. That is why the NVFC has launched a new volunteer recruitment campaign to help.

Funded by a federal SAFER grant, the Make Me A Firefighter campaign aims to connect departments with potential volunteers and provide personnel with the resources and training to successfully recruit new members. This is the first national campaign of its kind and features messaging and materials that have been tested to resonate with target audiences. And best of all, it is completely free.

Here are the steps you can follow in order to take full advantage of this new recruitment campaign.

Access these resources at <http://portal.nvfc.org>.

The public web site at www.MakeMeAFirefighter.org contains information to help potential volunteers learn what it means and what it takes to be a volunteer in the fire and emergency services. It also contains a search engine to help these individuals connect with your department. Let your community know about this web site. If you have contacts in other departments, you can also share the campaign with them and let them know the resources that are available to help them recruit new members. Find tools to promote the campaign at <http://portal.nvfc.org>.

Get started today at <http://portal.nvfc.org>.



Chaplain's Corner

A Faithful Manager

I know as well as anybody how quickly our normal human ambitions can erode the purity of our fire service calling. Contentious personal pride, self-promotion, over-possessiveness, and political power drives are some of the wrong and harmful motives that I have had to honestly recognize and deal with in my own heart. But our faith informs us – and our best hearts confirm it – that everything we have to accomplish the fire service calling belongs to God: our position/rank, our equipment, our rigs, our stations, our finances, and especially our relationships. To remind us that we are managers and God is the owner, Jesus told a parable

like this:

There was a newly appointed Fire Marshall that was going off on a long journey to the state capital. So he called together the members of his fire department and entrusted all the equipment and operations to them. One of them he appointed to be a firefighter, and one of them he appointed to be an officer, and one of them he appointed to be the chief. Then he left on his journey.

After a long while the Fire Marshall returned and required each of them to give an account of how they had managed their appointment. The first one said to him: "You had appointed me as a firefighter. See, I have attended every training, built my skill set, and have even gained a number of required certifications. I have kept the tools and rigs clean and in optimal condition. I have responded to all the alarms I was available for. I have been a positive influence on my fellow firefighters and now – look – I have even influenced several of my friends in the community and they have also become firefighters". The Fire Marshall replied, "Well done, good and faithful firefighter. You have been faithful with a few things. I will put you in charge of many things".

The second one said to him: "You had appointed me as an officer. See, I have led and mentored a company of firefighters. I have provided resources and relevant experiences for firefighter training, encouraged their progress, and held them accountable to meet timely targets. I have tried to always be a model of selfless community service to them. I have provided direction and monitored their safety on every alarm. And now – look – several of them are applying for the next open officer position themselves!" The Fire Marshall replied, "Well done, good and faithful officer. You have been faithful with a few things. I will put you in charge of many things".

The third one said to him: "You had appointed me as the chief. See, I have provided leadership according to our mission and have set goals that have stretched us and promoted our growth and effectiveness into the future. I have managed positive relationships with the community and the trustees. I have coordinated and strategized with the neighboring fire departments concerning mutual aid needs for an endless number of emergency contingencies. I have provided for fire prevention and public safety education in the community. I have taken the responsibility of being Incident Commander on the scene of alarms. I have monitored constant technological advances in the fire service. I have kept current with endless paperwork requirements. I have unceasingly addressed the current and future training needs of every member of the fire department. And now – look – I have delegated tasks to my officers and have mentored them so that now there are several that aspire to be department chief someday. The Fire Marshall replied, "Well done, good and faithful chief. You have been faithful with a few things. I will put you in charge of many things".

The most important "well done" is the one that we get from the Lord for being faithful managers of His resources in the fire service. Perhaps the most powerful and plain faith-building Bible statement concerning our motives in the fire service is this: **"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving."** A heart inclined to believing that one truth will take any firefighter a long way toward the faithful managing of what God has given to fulfill his/her calling.

Merry Christmas to you, your family, and your fire department!

Kevin Coffey, Chaplain (815-457-2007) kc9526@yahoo.com

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Calling All Firefighters: Stay Fit & Make a Difference in Fight for Air Climb Firefighter Challenge



The American Lung Association in Greater Chicago is urging all firefighters to join the fight against lung disease while staying physically fit, having fun and competing against other departments in the Fight for Air Climb in Oak Brook (February 14, 2016) and Chicago (March 6, 2016).

“Any fire department, station or base will tell you how important it is to have cohesion among the crew. The Fire Fighter Challenge helps build that cohesion by making a team, setting a goal for fundraising and setting a physical goal as well,” said Michael John Bittner, Senior Fire Fighter, USDA Forest Service, Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie/Midewin Interagency Hotshot Crew, from Wilmington, IL.

Last year, his team, “Midewin Hotshots,” came in first place as the fastest fire department in the Fire Department Challenge and in second place in fundraising. This year, they will defend their titles.

An overwhelming number of past participants agree that they take part in the challenge to stay conditioned for the job. The Climb hits a little closer

to home for Fireman Bittner though.

“I climb because of my uncle Dallas Pemberton. He’s a lung cancer survivor who is still fighting through the effects today. Watching his strength and positive attitude through all the treatments is what makes me push through any of the pain on the Climb. In my mind, every step I take is one more step for him,” said Bittner.

“We know a lot about lung disease, but there is so much we do not know. So it feels good to raise the funds necessary to provide life-saving education, research, and advocacy, so we can beat lung disease and find a cure,” said he said.

Together, Illinois’ fire departments have raised more than \$100,000 in the last 10 years. Almost 90 cents of every dollar raised goes directly into research, education and advocacy right here in Iowa.

This is especially important because: 390,000 Americans die of lung disease every year; seven million children suffer from asthma in the U.S.; 33 million Americans live with chronic lung disease; and every two-and-a-half minutes someone is diagnosed with lung cancer, half of which die within a year. Lung cancer continues to take the most lives associated with any form of cancer.

“We like to help raise awareness of these issues that are very prominent in our society. It’s a great opportunity to be involved in a competition closely aligned with our careers,” said Bittner.

More than 100 fire fighters from two dozen different Illinois fire houses participated in the Climb last year. The Fight for Air Climb is one of the American Lung Association’s signature fundraising events. Individuals and teams stair climb the suburb’s tallest building in the Climb at Oakbrook Terrace Tower and the country’s biggest stair climb at Presidential Towers in Chicago. Visit FightForAirClimb.org to learn more about the Fight for Air Climb and to register your team. Your department could bring home the trophy in 2016!





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