

# *The* **Bulletin**



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

**Volume 73, Number 6**

**November - December 2019**

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

## **New IFSI Director of Science and Research**



**IFSI Director Colonel Royal Mortenson, New IFSI Director of Science and Research Dr. Farzaneh Masoud and IFA President John Swan**

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

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## Table of Contents

Avoid Holiday ID Theft.....	15
Chaplain's Corner.....	13
Conference Vendors.....	19
Disabled FR Medicare .....	12
Donate IFA Pac .....	7
Legislative Update .....	4
OFSM Keep Family Safe .....	8
President's Message .....	3
Scenes from the 2019 Conf.....	20

## Index of Advertisers

Alexis.....	13
Amboy Fire School.....	6
American Lung Assn. FF Challenge .....	5
California Casualty .....	9, 10, 18
Conference Sponsors 2019..	21
Illinois Fire Safety Alliance ....	16
NIFSAB .....	17
SCBAS.....	14
VFIS.....	10

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## Mission Statement

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

## President's Message



Dear Fellow Firefighters:

The Annual Conference is now over and everything went quite well. We had to cut a few classes because of the lack of registration. But I'm amazed that more firefighters have not taken advantage of the FREE training that we provide. There will always be a time frame that Firefighters will not be able to attend. I still believe the word is not getting out to all of the fire departments around the State. This year, like last year, it was free tuition and free hotel rooms for those that took the training, only a small registration fee. This wouldn't have happened if it wasn't for the grant our State Fire Marshal secured for us and the help IFSI contributed from the Cornerstone Program.

For those that attended, all I heard was the great things about the classes and Conference activities.

We also recognized a few people this year that have contributed to our Fire Association mission. Katie Dunn with California Casualty and Sean Burke, Director of Firefighting Programs, were recognized during the Conference. Katie has been very active with California Casualty providing an insurance benefit for firefighters needing that special insurance coverage. Not only has Katie has been a great asset to California Casualty, she has been an advocate for the Illinois Firefighters Association, spreading the word about the benefit belonging to the IFA. Katie was presented a white Chief's helmet and a resolution supporting our Association for her work she has done on our behalf. Sean is stepping down as Program Director from IFSI and will continue to work with training at IFSI. We have recognized him also with a resolution in appreciation for his work in our behalf.

Dr. Gavin Horn has stepped down as Director of Science and Research at IFSI, but will continue to work remotely. He and his wife moved to Washington State. IFSI has been in the search of a new Director and has now selected Dr. Farzaneh Masoud as new IFSI Director of Science and Research. We want to welcome her to her new appointment and look forward to the work that she will do in our behalf. The work that is done at the Science and Research goes well beyond Illinois, it has a major impact on the Fire Service Nationwide. We can be very proud of the work and findings that come out of IFSI.

Our Association has been very active all over in this state and national activities. Our board has representatives on the Terrorism Task Force, NVFC, Fire Marshal's Advisory Commission and the IFSI Advisory Commission. Our positions on these boards extend your voice to State and National issues that affect you as a Firefighter. Terry Ford and I just got back from the Iowa Firefighters Association Midwest networking meeting. There were six States that attended this year. Many different issues were brought to our attention and one of the most important issues that was brought up was Firefighter suicide. We discussed this issue and recognized we are losing more Firefighters to suicide than line of duty deaths. This has been a silent killer of Firefighters and we are now bringing it to the forefront. We are very proud of our Illinois Fire Marshal for recognizing this and he is appropriating the funds to address this vital issue. These funds will be used to help bring awareness and available treatment to Firefighters needing help with the stresses we face every day. You will hear more in the near future on his programs to help fight fire cancer in the Fire Service and to combat the Firefighter suicide in Illinois. In closing, we must all work together in a partnership to reach our goals in saving more lives and property.

*So, "Train Smart, Be Safe"*

*God Bless*

*John Swan President*





# LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

By Margaret Vaughn, IFA Legislative Lobbyist

## PENSION CONSOLIDATION PASSES in VETO SESSION

The Legislature returned for a busy fall Veto Session. While there was no movement on the police and fire pension consolidation issue the first week of Veto Session, it flew out of the House and Senate in two days in the form of SB 1300 as the Veto Session wrapped up on November 14<sup>th</sup>. Since it was Governor Pritzker's top priority, he will be signing it for sure.

## SENATE PRESIDENT CULLERTON RETIRING

After 40 years of service in the General Assembly (22 years in the House and 18 years in the Senate), President Cullerton announced his retirement. Members of his caucus are scrambling and will be returning to Springfield in early January to vote on his replacement.

## 10 YEAR BATTERY EDUCATIONAL TOUR CONTINUES

I have continued my "10 City Tour" to various fire departments throughout the state this fall to educate the media and local officials on Illinois New 10 Year Smoke Detector Law. Working with the IL Fire Safety Alliance, I coordinated press conferences at fire departments in Aurora, Belvidere, DeKalb, Elgin, Evanston, Kankakee, Joliet, LaSalle-Peru, Lisle and Springfield. Local legislators and county health department officials also participated. First Alert donated 100 smoke detectors and 10 installation kits to each fire departments. Because of all the media coverage and the fact that it is been brought to more people's attention that Chicago was exempted from this legislation, Alderman Gilbert Villegas introduced an ordinance on Nov. 13<sup>th</sup> to bring Chicago in line with the state law by January 2023.



Peru FD 10-Year Battery Press Conference Oct. 17th Pictured: Left to right Peru Firefighter Rick Abbott, LaSalle Fire Chief Andy Bacidore, IL Fire Safety Alliance Executive Director Phil Zaleski, IFA Government Affairs Director Margaret Vaughn, Peru Fire Chief Jeff King, State Rep. Lance Yednock (D-Ottawa), and LaSalle County Public Health Educator Leslie Dougherty



Elgin FD 10 Year-Battery Press Conference Oct. 23rd: Left to right: State Senator Cristina Castro (D-Elgin), State Rep Anna Moeller (D-Elgin), IFA Government Affairs Director Margaret Vaughn, Elgin Fire Chief Dave Schmidt, State Fire Marshal Matt Perez, and IL Fire Safety Alliance Executive Director Phil Zaleski



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## **2 Day Workshop Offerings**

### **Coordinated Fire Attack – Hands On & Live Fire**

**Instructor: Jeff Bryant Jr. – Aurora FD & Fire Factory Staff**

### **21<sup>st</sup> Century Fire Officer Workshop**

**Instructor: Tim Leidig**

## **Saturday Offerings:**

### **Truck Company Operations - Hands-On**

**Instructor: Lt. Mike Ciampo – FDNY**

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

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

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

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

### **Rapid Task Force – Hands-On and Lecture**

**Instructor: Mercy Health Prehospital and Emergency Services**

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

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

### **555 Fitness - Hip Boots to Bunkers, Recliners to Rowers, the motivation to create a fit fire service. (Bring Reasonable Workout Clothing)**

**Instructor: Pip - 555 Fitness**

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

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

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

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

### **Managing the Risk (TK) & Aggressively Positive (RP) - Lecture**

**Instructor: Lt Tim Klett - FDNY & Ryan Pennington – Charleston, WV**

# **Sunday Offerings**

**Engine Tactics- Hands-On**

Instructor: Lt Tim Klett - FDNY

**Command Tactical Priorities - Hands-On (Recommended Day 2 of Strategic Planning for Creating Future Excellence and Juggling Hats)**

Instructor: Chief Craig Haigh

**Pride and Ownership (Recommended Day 2 of First Rung)**

Instructor: Chief Rick Lasky

**Large Vehicle Extrication- Hands-On**

Instructor: Captain Mike Hoffman - Auto X

**EMS the WOW- Lecture Only**

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

**Taking Care of Ourselves - PTSD, - Lecture Only**

Teresea Milton, Thin Bent Line

**Firefighting in Hoarder Conditions – Lecture Only**

Ryan Pennington, Charleston – Charleston, WV

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

## **PLEASE DONATE IFA PAC FUND**

**Please support IFA's advocacy efforts by donating to our Political Action Fund. We need to continue to strengthen our voice at the Capitol but can only do so with your help.**

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**Thanks for your generosity!**



## Office of the State Fire Marshal



## Keep Your Family Warm and Safe this Winter

Cold temperatures mean Illinoisans will be turning up their thermostats to stay warm this winter. The Office of the State Fire Marshal encourages residents to have their furnaces checked and to make sure carbon monoxide (CO) and smoke detectors are working.

According to the National Fire Protection Association, heating equipment is a leading cause of fires in U.S. Homes. Local fire departments responded to an average of 52,050 fires involving heating equipment each year in 2012-2016, accounting for 15% of all reported home fires during that time. Annually, these fires lead to the loss of 490 civilians' lives, 1,400 civilian injuries and account for around \$1 Billion in direct property damage. Half of home heating fires are reported during the months of December, January and February.

Fossil fuels like natural gas are used to heat a vast majority of Illinois homes, and malfunctioning heating equipment leads to accidental carbon monoxide deaths. These can include your home's furnace, improperly vented gas appliances, kerosene or propane space heaters, charcoal grills and Sterno-type fuels.

"Carbon Monoxide is a colorless and odorless gas which means it's important that you install and maintain CO alarms in your home," says State Fire Marshal Matt Perez. "Carbon monoxide fatalities rise during the winter months and these alarms, when working, will give you a warning and let you know to leave your home when levels are too high. Never use a gas generator, grill, oven or range to heat the inside of your home."

In 2018 according to National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS), Illinois Fire Departments responded to 8,965 incidents related to carbon monoxide.

Symptoms of CO poisoning are very similar to the flu and include headache, fatigue, shortness of breath, nausea and dizziness. Other signs of possible CO presence include condensation on walls and windows, house pets becoming sluggish and chronic odors from malfunctioning appliances. If you suspect you may be experiencing these symptoms, smell natural gas leaking in your home, or if your CO alarm activates, if you can evacuate the building, do so immediately. You may or may not open windows as you leave but get out. If someone is unable to leave the building, or unconscious, open doors and windows to the outside in the area the person is located and stay as near to the open window/door as possible until first responders arrive. Close any doors that open to other areas of the building to isolate the room the person is in. Turn on any exhaust fans that may be present. Once you evacuate, then call 9-1-1 from outside your home or at a neighbor's house.

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

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

- Have heating equipment and chimneys cleaned and inspected every year by a qualified professional; change furnace filters frequently.
- Have a qualified professional install stationary space heating equipment, water heaters or central heating equipment according to the local codes and manufacturers' instructions.
- Keep interior and exterior air vents clear of blockages or obstructions.

(continued on next page)



## The Bulletin

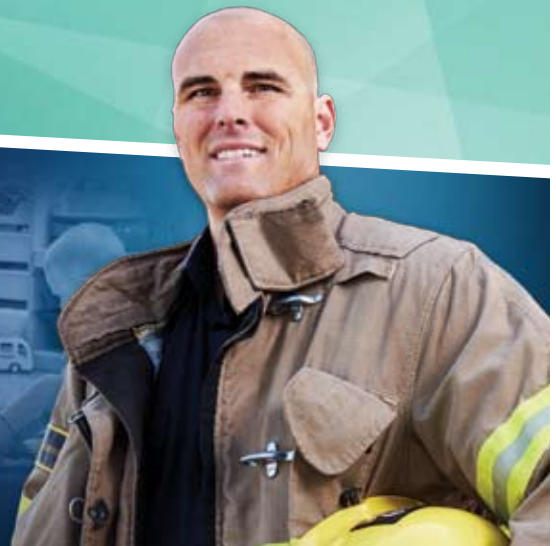
- Keep anything that can burn at least three-feet away from heating equipment, like a furnace, fireplace, wood stove, or portable space heater.
- Make sure the fireplace has a sturdy screen to stop sparks from flying into the room. Ashes should be cool before being placed into a metal container. Keep the container a safe distance away from your home.
- Create a three-foot “kid-free zone” around open fires and space heaters.
- Test smoke and CO alarms at least once a month and be familiar with the sounds they make.
- Never use an oven or range to heat your home.
- Remember to turn off portable or space heaters when leaving the room or going to bed.
- Install carbon monoxide and smoke detectors on each floor of your home and within 15 feet of each sleeping area.
- CO detectors have a limited life span, check the manufacturer’s instructions for information on replacement.



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## **Chaplain's Corner**

*On Behalf of the Officers and Directors  
of the Illinois Firefighters Association  
I wish you all a very  
Merry and Blessed Christmas Season*

**May God bless you,  
your fire departments, and your families.  
May you unwrap and experience His powerful  
gift of faith by which your soul will find grace and  
strength to carry out His purposes and fulfill His  
calling upon your life. All of this comes to us in and  
through Jesus...  
who, of course, is the Reason for the Season!**

**Kevin Coffey  
Chaplain, Illinois Firefighters Association**

## Potential federal legislation would allow retired or disabled first responders ages 50 to 64 to buy in to Medicare

by Michael B. Weinstein  
Ottosen Britz Kelly Cooper Gilbert & DiNolfo, Ltd.

A Senator and Congressman have recently introduced legislation that would provide an option for qualified “first responders” to buy in to Medicare (Parts A, B and D), as well as Medicare Advantage Plans that provide qualified prescription drug coverage (MA-PD). The two pieces of proposed legislation, each entitled the “Expanding Health Care Options for Early Retirees Act” (S. 2552 and H.R. 4527), were simultaneously introduced by Senator Sherrod Brown (D-OH) and Congressman Tom Malinowski (D-NJ) on September 26, 2019.

Each bill defines a qualified “first responder” as a firefighter, police officer, or EMT (as defined by the United States Code) between the ages of 50 and 64 who has separated from service as a result of retirement or disability. More specifically, the proposed legislation provides that an individual who is a citizen or alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence; who is not otherwise eligible to be enrolled in Medicare; between the ages of 50 and 64; and is a “first responder” as defined by the legislation, shall be allowed the opportunity, pursuant to rules to be established by the Secretary of Health and Human Services, to buy in to Medicare (Parts A, B, and D).

Beginning one year after the enactment of the proposed law, the annual premium to be charged for enrollment would be determined using a formula that estimates the average, annual per capita cost for benefits and administrative expenses for all individuals who are enrolled under this provision. The monthly premium would then be equal to 1/12 of the annual premium. If an individual chose enrollment in a Medicare Advantage Plan or a prescription drug plan that requires an additional premium, the individual would be responsible for paying the additional premium.

The proposal also addresses the relationship between the Affordable Care Act (i.e., ObamaCare) and the requirements contained in the legislation. Medicaid beneficiaries would generally not be allowed to apply for coverage under the proposal. Employers would be allowed to pay or reimburse covered individuals for premium costs and such payment or reimbursement could be excluded from gross income for federal income tax purposes.

Additional sections in the proposed legislation address outreach and enrollment activities; monitoring and implementation of the proposal; premium assistance and cost-sharing reductions under the Affordable Care Act; and a requirement that regulations be promulgated only after consultation with interested parties, including groups representing beneficiaries, health care providers, employers, insurance companies, and organizations representing first responders.

Obviously, if this proposed legislation were to become law it would greatly enhance the health care options for retired and disabled first responders in Illinois. Note, however, that the proposal does not define the term “disabled” so it is unclear whether it would apply to non-duty disabilities. Additionally, there is no guarantee that this legislation will be adopted by Congress and signed into law by the President. Indeed, the fact that the current congressional session will largely be pre-empted by the election season suggests that passage is unlikely, at least in the coming year. Nevertheless, lobbying one’s Congressperson or Senator to support this legislation is encouraged.

**Michael Weinstein** is of counsel with the law firm of Ottosen Britz Kelly Cooper Gilbert & Dinolfo, Ltd. in the firm’s Naperville office. Mr. Weinstein has over 40 years of municipal law, public pension law and appellate law experience representing local governments and public pension funds.



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## Avoid Holiday ID Theft

More of us will be using smartphones and laptops for our holiday shopping. While it may be more convenient than a drive to the mall, online shopping presents dangers to your credit and personal data. Cyber-Grinches are looking to steal your identity and get into your bank and credit card accounts. As you tap in and surf for deals, be cautious where you go and the information you give others – one-in-five Americans have been a victim of identity theft.

### Facts

- There were 1.4 million fraud reports in 2018, resulting in \$1.48 billion – Federal Trade Commission (FTC)
- 16.7 million reported identity fraud in 2017, resulting in \$16.8 billion stolen – Javelin Strategy and Research
- Robocall and phishing scams continue to rise – FTC
- One-in-five adults have never checked their credit report – CNN Money

### Be Secure

Here are some important internet shopping safety tips to remember:

1. Don't open suspicious or unsolicited emails often taking you to dangerous sites
2. Shop with familiar companies, looking for the secure "https" in the URL, and beware of copycat sites with slight misspellings
3. Use strong, unique passwords for online accounts
4. Avoid using debit cards for online shopping
5. Refrain from shopping or banking while using free or public Wi-Fi
6. Be aware of fake charity, pet adoption and lonely-hearts solicitations
7. Check your credit card, bank and other accounts often for suspicious or fraudulent charges

Find more ID theft protection information <https://mycalcas.com/?s=cyber+crooks>.

If you or a family member becomes a victim, The Illinois Attorney General's office has created the first-ever Illinois Identity Theft Hotline, 1-877-844-5461.

IFA members insured with California Casualty have another layer of ID theft protection. Every auto and home/renters policy from California Casualty comes with free ID theft resolution services from CyberScout. Learn more at [www.calcas.com/identity-theft](http://www.calcas.com/identity-theft) or call 1.800.800.9410.

**This article furnished by California Casualty, providing auto and home insurance to firefighters since 1974 and to IFA members since 2012. Get more information at 800.800.9410 or [www.calcas.com/IFA](http://www.calcas.com/IFA).**

**Get your department involved with the Be Alarmed! smoke alarm installation program to install 10-year battery smoke alarms in homes 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**





# IT TAKES TWO...

## TO PROTECT OCCUPANTS & FIREFIGHTERS FROM FIRE.



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

NEED FIRE SPRINKLERS FOR YOUR  
PUBLIC RELATIONS OUTREACH?



Please call 708.403.4468 or email  
NIFSAB@NIFSAB.org to request one at no cost.



HomeLifeSafety.com



FireSprinklerInitiative.org



HomeFireSprinkler.org



FireSprinklerAssoc.org

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## To-Do List

Get everything ready  
for tomorrow

Eat a healthy breakfast

Set alarm for  
tomorrow morning

# Boost Your Health: Start a Morning Routine.

For more tips just for firefighters  
visit [www.MyCalcas.com/Fire](http://www.MyCalcas.com/Fire)



# 2019 Conference Vendors



Brownfield Sports  
(IFSI Apparel Sales)



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Office of the State Fire Marshal



Illinois Association of Fire Prot Dist.



Hazard Control Technologies

**Dinges Fire Safety**

**California Casualty**



# Scenes from the 2019 Conference



Updates from the Office of the State Fire Marshal and the Illinois Fire Service Institute at Annual Meeting



Making Katie Dunn from California Casualty an honorary Chief for her service to the IFA



Provided a number of hands-on classes at a very reduced cost.



Longhorn the Comedian, Saturday Night Entertainment and Raffle - Comedian & Comediennes with IFA Board



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