

AROUND THE STATE



A Word from our Fire Service Partners

From the Editor: The following column is intended to provide our readers an update on fire service activities from around the state.

Office of the Illinois State Fire Marshal



The OSFM Arson Division: When to Call and What We Do to Assist

The OSFM Division of Arson Investigation is responsible for investigating suspicious fires and explosions throughout the state. Nationally, arson (and suspected arson) is the primary cause of property damage due to fire in the United States and the second leading cause of fire deaths. To combat this serious problem, certified investigators respond to assist fire departments, communities, state and federal agencies 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Arson investigators are sworn peace officers authorized to interview witnesses, collect evidence, make arrests and appear in court. In 2019, OSFM arson investigators conducted 939 arson investigations, 183 of those assisted by a canine, leading to 49 cases being closed with an arrest, and only 18 sworn special agents.



The mission of the Division of Arson Investigation is to provide fire investigation and law enforcement services to the fire service and federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies throughout the State of Illinois through complete and thorough investigations, evidence collection and professional expert testimony in court proceedings. The OSFM can either assist in the investigation, lead the investigation or provide specific duties as specified by the lead agency. "Remember, the OSFM will not take over any investigation unless

asked by the jurisdiction having authority over the fire scene," says Terry Ooms OSFM Arson Division Manager.

There are eight canine teams consisting of a certified arson investigator and a certified ignitable liquid detecting canine. Canines can detect minute traces of ignitable liquids often used in fires and can lead investigators to a specific location where physical samples can be secured, analyzed and confirmed by special laboratories. Arson investigators and canine teams investigate on average over a thousand fires each year. Together with federal, state, county and local law enforcement agencies, many arsonists are arrested annually. Their service to the state is invaluable, especially in the rural areas where fire departments do not have certified fire and/or arson investigators. Dogs and handlers are trained during an intensive five-week session at the New Hampshire Fire Training Academy, in Concord, NH. Paul Gallagher, retired trooper of the Maine State Police Canine Unit and Trainer-Maine Specialty Dogs, provides the instruction and training. The dogs are trained to maneuver around physical obstacles and discriminating scents of various accelerants commonly used to set fires.

At the end of the five-week course, a chemist certifies that each dog is capable of discriminating scents of a variety of substances used to set fires. This certification is crucial because the evidence uncovered by the dog and handler can become a key point in subsequent criminal and civil trials.

After the initial five-week training, the dog and handler become a team. The

dog lives at the handler's residence. After initial certification, each dog must recertify annually.

"Becoming a K-9 handler is a serious commitment. Each individual must assure that they will house and care for their partner, as well as continue the dog's daily training. There is no "off time" concerning the care and training of accelerant detection canines. Our canine teams are based on the food reward method. These canines receive training multiple times a day. These training sessions are how our canines are fed. When a canine locates the training odor, the canine is immediately fed from the hand of the canine handler," Says Arson Special Agent and Canine Handler Ken Arnold.

To learn more about these teams and the arson canine program visit: <https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/sfm/About/Divisions/Arson/Pages/Arson-Canine.aspx>

It's important to know the criteria for when to call for assistance from the OSFM Arson Division:

- There is a death or serious injury, especially if it involves a firefighter or police officer.
- The property involved incurs a large dollar loss.
- The property involved is state property, federal property, or school property.
- Local authorities cannot determine the cause and/or origin of the fire.
- Conducting the investigation by local authorities may be or could be considered a conflict of interest.
- Other unusual circumstances exist.

Continued on page 17

Around the State

Continued from page 16

Law enforcement and the fire service can request an Arson Investigator and/or Canine Team, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, at 1-800-252-2947.



The Youth Fire Setter Intervention Program is a statewide standardized program to provide prevention education/intervention and referrals if warranted for the children and families of Illinois to reduce the frequency and severity of fires set by youths. Partnering with the fire service, this program provides a coordinated referral center for the assessment and treatment of youth fire setters and their families, thereby slowing down the often-devastating results of fire setting.

Ooms says, "Prevention education can quell the youth fire problem, but only when properly targeted, designed, and delivered. The behaviors causing the problem must be considered because what motivates their behavior is the surest clue to solving the youth fire setting problem."

The agency received 88 requests for an interventionist in 2019. The agency conducted three Youth Fire Setter Interventionist training classes throughout the state in 2019 and currently plans to host more trainings in the future. Inquiries about this program can be made by calling the Youth Fire Setter Hotline at (844) 689-7882 or by visiting: <https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/sfm/About/Divisions/Arson/YFSIP/Pages/default.aspx>.

State Fire Marshal

Illinois Fire Chiefs Association

From IFCA President Don Shovelin [2020-2021] Harlem-Roscoe FPD:

I am honored to be the president elect for the Illinois Fire Chief's Association for the upcoming year. We can only hope for a bright end to 2020 and even brighter 2021. As with all the fire service associations in the state we have adapted and adapted well



with the challenges presented before us. We will continue to work with our board and members to assure we represent all departments in the state of Illinois. We will continue to build our relationships with the fire service associations throughout the state. I have been given the opportunity to lead the Illinois Fire Chief's Association which is filled with talented, hardworking individuals. I am committed to continue our forward progress and hold up the mission statement that my previous presidents have done to a high standard.

IFCA Immediate Past-President Greg Earle [2019-2020] Centralia FPD

I would like to thank the members of the IAFFD for their continued support and positive partnership they have with the IFCA. Together our combined teams delivered information to the leadership of both the Chiefs and Districts. We have seen our relationship enhanced over the past few years and I look forward in seeing both associations continue to grow with each other's help. It has been an honor to serve, even during these crazy most unprecedented times of meetings held by zoom and other outlets. I know that when things get back to the newly defined normal, we will continue to operate effectively and with efficiency. In closing I offer this – the incoming and future leadership of the IFCA will continue to work with the goals of enhanced partnerships especially with the IAFFD. Stay Safe and thank you.

Fall is here and for the IFCA it is that time of year for our transition of officers. As the lead into this column you heard for Presidents Shovelin and Earle both men Solid leaders and during these ever-changing times, we have the "right guys, in the right place". But you need to meet or at least know who else is on the IFCA Team: 1st VP John Kachanuk Havana FD, Rich Mikel Elk Grove Village FD, Our Directors are Al Yancey Minooka FPD, Chad Hoefle Stillman FPD, Joe Henning Quincy FD, Bryan Lambel Mount Prospect FD, Tom Styczynski Alsip FD, Tom Deegan retired class, Matt Knott Rockford FD – GLD representative.

Our Area Representatives include; Sid Aurand Dixon Rural FPD, Nick Asta Barrington-Countryside FPD, Tony Huemann McHenry Township FPD, Craig Hanson Batavia FD, Keith Krestan Lisle-

Woodridge FPD, Brian Kolosh South Holland FD, Paul Macaluso Palatine FD, Jim Walters Schaumburg FD, Annette Nance-Holt 1st DC Chicago FD, Greg Hurd Chillicothe FD, John Knapp East Peoria FD, Ed St. Louis Bourbonnais FPD, Damon Schuldt Kankakee FD, Steve Salrin Quincy FD, Chuck Lauss Urbana FD, Mick Hummer Normal FD, James Whiteford Edwardsville FD, Robert Tutko Effingham FD, Shawn Priddy Herrin FD.

As you can see, we have a very diverse team that covers the state of Illinois with a commitment to assisting all who need information related to the fire service. OK what is next? I wish my magic 8 Ball had the answer for me but guess what it just doesn't. so with that said we the IFCA will plan for 2021's symposium and annual conference knowing that there will be changes needed and necessary, but we like the IAFFD are committed to bringing information to our membership that is current, informative and delivered in a safe-professional manner.

One thing is certain we will continue to partner with our fire service friends in 2021 and beyond because together we will all accomplish more. The goals and wishes of our team align with yours -through partnerships we will continue to move the Fire Service in Illinois forward.

I would like to thank the entire IAFFD for their partnership, we look forward to 2021 and co-sponsoring several ventures. I would like to give a special thank you Cheri and Karrie for their professional and personable approach in all aspects and at all levels. Our IFCA board has made a commitment to assist the IAFFD whenever possible.

FYI - Our Symposium scheduled for May12-15, 2021 East Peoria our keynote speaker will be Navy Seal Chad Williams USN proud member of Seal Teams 1 & 7. Chad will draw upon his SEAL Team experiences to communicate an instructive perspective on teamwork resilience, leadership and self-motivation. Chad will share his experience and what lead him to his calling as a Navy SEAL and a man of faith. Our 2021 conference is scheduled for October 17th – 20th, 2021 in Peoria.

The IFCA assessment team has expanded our delivery to include virtual

Continued on page 18

Around the State

Continued from page 17

assessments/testing? We just finished our first delivery and it was very successful. I could not be any prouder of our leaders Dave Slivinski who is taking our services to a new level of professionalism. His team is ready to serve the members of the fire service with promotion testing, new hire interviews and consulting services? If you are currently using our services, we thank you and we will continue to bring you a professional process. If you have not used our services, please give us the opportunity to provide you with our services. We feel we will deliver you quality and professionalism in every aspect. Contact Dave Slivinski our Consulting Manager. dslivinski@illinoisfirechiefs.org

The IFCA Education-Research Foundation will be restarting all levels of classes directly related to The Fire Officer levels. Information will available on our website. www.illinoisfirechiefs.org. If you are interested in IFCA apparel and or

novelties, please look at Eagle Engraving web-site and go to the at the top of the page Chief Corner for IFCA items. www.eagle-engraving.com. Our website operates under the guidance of Maureen Griseto, Chief John Buckley and Chief Larry Moran. We have moved to MemberClicks as part of our transitional operations so we will see several changes that will hopefully make us more in touch with our members and partners. Please look at our site to obtain information related to the IFCA and The IFCA Education Research Foundation. www.illinoisfirechiefs.org. Every month the IFCA sends out a monthly news Hot-Sheet, if you as a Trustee would like a copy please ask your Chief as he/she should be receiving from our IFCA Area Representatives or send me a note and we will make sure you are kept informed. Jgrady3@illinoisfirechiefs.org. If you have any questions or need information, please do not hesitate in contacting me or our IFCA office. Jgrady3@illinoisfirechiefs.org 1-847-966-0732.

Jim Grady III
Executive Director

Illinois Fire Service Institute



The Illinois Fire Service Institute (IFSI) has entered the fall 2020 training season and is busy delivering courses across the state and country. Since the first suspension/postponement of training activities due to COVID-19 on 13 March, and the subsequent resumption of training on 18 May utilizing IFSI Risk Mitigation Procedures, IFSI has served 11,899 students by delivering 412 classes to 893 departments. Through these deliveries, 7,042 first responders have achieved certification.

These numbers include the successful execution of the 96th Annual Fire College. The event, held 3-4 October, was dispersed across the state and hosted by five regional training sites. IFSI welcomed over 300 first responders to Champaign, Swansea, Chillicothe, Cherry Valley, and Plainfield for

Continued on page 20

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Around the State

Continued from page 18

hands-on, live fire and immersive training.

Despite the rigorous and thorough risk mitigation procedures and policies in place for all IFSI course deliveries, risk elimination is not possible. In early October, IFSI observed an increase in COVID-19 cases and exposures in fire departments, IFSI students, and IFSI staff in several locations in the state. Out of an abundance of caution, we elected to stand down all off-site course deliveries for 14 days. This stand down period (10 October – 24 October) allowed us to conduct a rapid review of our already stringent COVID-19 Risk Mitigation Policies and Procedures and ensure all staff were retrained on our protocols.

Our Fire Academy candidates wrapped up their fall training in October. Upon successful completion of the program, candidates spent seven weeks completing the practical and cognitive training needed to operate safely and effectively on the fireground. The Basic Operations Firefighter Blended candidates will continue their essential skills training through November.

Our team is working hard to schedule future course offerings and the initial 2021 course schedule is now open for online registration. We encourage all stakeholders to visit our website, www.fsi.illinois.edu, frequently as classes are consistently added to our schedule as the year progresses. We also post class promotions and announcements on the IFSI social media channels:

Facebook: fsi.illinois.edu

Instagram: [illinoisfireserviceinstitute](https://www.instagram.com/illinoisfireserviceinstitute)

Twitter: IFSI

LinkedIn: [Illinois Fire Service Institute](https://www.linkedin.com/company/illinois-fire-service-institute)

We are grateful to our students, staff, and partners for the continued support in the fulfillment of our mission, *Helping Firefighters Do Their Work Through Training, Education, Information, and Research.*

Jill Sauer, Director of Marketing and Public Relations

Illinois Fire Safety Alliance

Be Alarmed! Smoke Alarm Program Resumes



The Illinois Fire Safety Alliance & Office of the Illinois State Fire Marshal's statewide smoke alarm installation program for fire departments has re-activated from its 5-month Coronavirus-induced hiatus. As of August 18th, Illinois fire departments were able to resume requesting 10-year battery smoke alarms and submitting installation survey data.

While the program was on hold, Be Alarmed! has undergone some aesthetic enhancements, along with the development of a unique web portal that will be the primary platform for all smoke alarm needs going forward. Though none of the existing guidelines and requirements around the program have changed, fire departments will now be required to request smoke alarms and submit installation survey data directly through the portal - emails, faxes, or mailed information will no longer be accepted.

For more information on the Be Alarmed! Smoke Alarm Installation Program, visit the IFSA website – www.ifsa.org/programs/alarms.

Seeking Volunteers to Make a Difference in Young Survivors' Lives at '21 Camp "I Am Me"

The Illinois Fire Safety Alliance's signature program, Camp "I Am Me," provides a special and unforgettable one-week camp experience for children and teenagers who have experienced injuries from burns. 2021's camp will represent the 30th anniversary of Illinois' camp for young burn survivors and the IFSA is looking for compassionate and enthusiastic volunteers to help during the entire week of camp – in the cabins, at the various activities, and having just as great of an experience as each of the nearly 70 campers!

The IFSA's camp provides the setting for child burn survivors to share their common experiences while being able to play and not feel self-conscious about their scars. The benefits to the campers – physical, psychological, and emotional, all begins with the tremendous volunteer

staff during this one special week of the year.

Though the 2021 dates have not yet been set, Camp "I Am Me" has historically started the third Sunday of June and concludes the following Saturday. The program takes place at the YMCA Camp Duncan in Ingleside, Illinois, located in northern Lake County. Volunteers must be 21 years of age at the time of camp to participate and must be able to stay at camp the entire week. To learn more about this opportunity and to complete the Request to Volunteer Form, visit www.ifsa.org/get-involved.

Philip Zaleski

Executive Director

Illinois Fire Inspectors Association



Like most state agencies, a lot of "typicals" for IFIA went away this year. In September we typically would have held our Fire Prevention luncheon to recognize people deserving of awards. While we were not able to meet, and did not want to wait a year to present the awards, we were able to find other ways to personally present two recipients with awards:

The **Horizons Award** is given to an individual who has had under three years on the job and has made significant achievements in their organization. Congratulations to **Jackie O'Hara of the Manhattan FPD.**

The **IFIA Corporate Award** went to **Chicago Dough Pizza of New Lenox**, for the years of support they have shown to the New Lenox Fire District.

While things are different, we are needing to move forward. We successfully presented OSFM Fire Inspector 1 and 2 classes and several virtual programs. Since those have gone well, we will continue to offer more, so watch the monthly blasts and our website for ongoing educational offerings.

November 20th, we present the popular "Did You Know?" seminar virtually. This seminar has multiple speakers present for 15 – 20 minutes on different topics. One can then follow up with the presenter, should that topic be of interest to them.

Continued on page 21

Around the State

Continued from page 20

Additional information and registration is available on our website at www.IllinoisFireInspectors.org.

For those looking at the Fire and Life Safety Educator certification, that will be offered in May in Downers Grove. If you are interested in this class, let the IFIA office know by signing an interest form on the website so we can plan accordingly. As more details are finalized, we will let you know. If you desire a Basic Fire Prevention Officer certification from the OSFM, this class is required.

For the first time, we are partnering with the Romeoville Training Academy. We will begin this partnering with a Fire Inspector 1 class to be held in January.

As a reminder the IFIA has many NFPA, IFSTA, Delmar, Jones and Bartlett, and Thompson books for sale at low prices, starting at \$3.00. Some of these are current editions, some only one edition old, and some quite old – going back into the 80s. While most are fire related, there are many

EMS books as well. If you are interested in any of these books, arrangements can be made to pick them up at the office. If desired, we can ship them to you, with the only additional cost being whatever the shipping fee is. The list of books is on our website.

From Mike Weller, Training Specialist – Program Manager, Community Risk Reduction, National Fire Academy

The NFA announces the addition of the new (and sibling to Introduction to Strategic CRR known as ISCRR) online self-study course on community risk reduction (CRR). When completed in tandem, the courses build an excellent foundation for those new to risk reduction.

This new **self-study course**, “Introduction to Community Risk Assessments” (ICRA) empowers the learner with a foundational understanding of the components, benefits, and process of conducting a basic community risk assessment. The course takes approximately five hours to complete and can be accomplished in segments at the student’s convenience.

Many departments are integrating these courses into recruit academies, station-based training and officer development. These courses are also appropriate for other non-fire service audiences such as law enforcement, educators, allied health professionals, juvenile justice officials, and wildland urban interface partners.

While the two courses can be stand-alone offerings, it is highly recommended that students take the ISCRR course prior to enrolling in ICRA to receive the maximum benefit. Both courses use interactive realistic scenarios to expose students to real-life CRR situations. Continuing Education Units are available.

To enroll in these free training courses, go to: <https://www.usfa.fema.gov/training/nfa/new-self-study-crr-courses.html>

Robert Morris
Executive Director, IFIA

Continued on page 22

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Around the State

Continued from page 21

Northern Illinois Alliance of Fire Protection Districts



COVID-19 Strikes Again

For the first time in over 25 years, the NIAFPD Annual Conference – the highly attended and much anticipated January gathering to exchange ideas, meet new members and network – will have a new adjusted look this year to accommodate social distancing and attendance limits due to COVID-19. With the continued uncertainty of the spread of the illness, the restrictions imposed upon us by the State of Illinois, and much consideration

by your NIAFPD Board of Trustees and the Conference Committee, we have decided to host a hybrid virtual conference on Saturday, January 30, 2021.

Registration will be available in November and at that time you will be given a choice to attend an in-person session with fellow trustees at one of 13 satellite locations spread out over the northern Illinois area with social distancing in place and the educational session streamed to that location for viewing on a big screen in a fire district training room or the alternative choice will be a single Zoom link sent to you to take the training from your home. As always, the speakers will be some of the best from throughout Illinois.

The Annual Conference Committee has chosen topics for the four-hour training that will satisfy both the trustee and pension continuing education requirements for annual certification while also providing important updates to what is happening in the Fire Service today.

The registration fee has been drastically reduced to \$35 for NIAFPD members. This fee will apply for both in-person or online learning. Additionally, be assured that each of the 13 satellite locations will be following the CDC and the State of Illinois guidelines and requirements for safe social distancing.

For NIAFPD Associate Members, there are sponsorship opportunities available and information will be available soon on the NIAFPD website at www.niafpd.org. ■



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