

# 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 use of barricade devices on school doors has become a hot button issue and the subject of Illinois Senate Bill 1371. When the OSFM contemplates the issue of school security, we considered not only how to provide increased safety during an active shooter situation, but also how to provide this added security without creating other risks. As school administrators know, the people most likely to commit violence on school grounds are the students themselves. Students are also much more likely to be the victim of a violent assault than to be involved in a school shooting. (<https://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/iscs18.pdf>)

Allowing barricade devices that do not meet NFPA or Illinois State Board of Education requirements could give any student the ability to lock a room with potential victims inside and prevent school staff or first responders from entering the room. Promotional videos for some barricade devices even depict law enforcement officers, using currently assigned tools, who cannot breach the doors to which they are applied. When looked at in this context, that is a frightening image and, ironically, this knowledge could actually aid in the planning of an assault.

The desire to react quickly, and within budgetary restrictions, can lead to choices that may solve one problem but inadvertently create others. The demand for increased security precautions needs to

be balanced with requirements for egress, fire protection, and accessibility. Code compliant locking mechanisms provide increased safety, would be cost effective to install, would not impede egress, could easily be opened from the outside by school staff or first responders with no special tools or knowledge, and could be engaged simply and quickly to eliminate any delay in securing the room. This is an option I am willing to stand behind in the effort to protect Illinois residents from the dangers they are most likely to face.

This code compliant option was also supported by the Illinois Terrorism Task Force - School Safety Working Group established in 2018. This group consisted of representatives of law enforcement from local, county and Illinois State Police, local and state fire service, the Illinois State Board of Education, the Chicago Public School District, the Illinois Law Enforcement Training and Standards Board, regional superintendents, assistant superintendents, the Illinois Association of School Administrators and the Illinois Association of School Boards. The final recommendations document from this working group, which takes a much larger scale view of safeguarding our schools, can be found at: <https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/sfm/SFMDocuments/Documents/ITTFSchoolSafetyWorkingGroupRecommendations.pdf#search=illinois%20terrorism%20task%20force>

I would encourage you to read through the document as it contains many recommendations designed to curtail school violence and, more specifically, I would draw your attention to "Recommendation #7 – Priority List

Currently acceptable locking mechanism under the Illinois State Board of Education Rules:

#### SAFE DOOR LOCKING

##### What is code-compliant door locking?

There are many misconceptions around what constitutes safe door locking in schools. In the most recent edition of NFPA 101, *Life Safety Code*, there is one option provided for locking classroom doors from the inside.

The hardware for this option is sometimes called an interconnected latch or lock and is similar to what you might see in a hotel room.



In some cases, it has been reported that retrofitting classroom doors with this type of device and meeting its installation requirements can be cost-prohibitive for local jurisdictions.

Alternative we have suggested in our State Fire and Life Safety Code update:

##### What are alternate options for existing doors?

If your jurisdiction has determined that a retrofit to NFPA 101 compliant locking is prohibitive, they should work with local code officials (also called the authority having jurisdiction, or AHJ) to identify other acceptable, alternative locking arrangements. The following should be considered when evaluating such arrangements:

- Having doors that can be locked without opening them.
- Having locks that do not require special knowledge, a key, or tool to engage or disengage from the classroom side of the door.
- Installing locks at an acceptable height.
- Having doors that have the ability to be unlocked and opened from outside the classroom with the necessary key.
- Ensuring that staff has been drilled in the engagement and release of locks.

Here is one example of an alternate door locking option; it's called a dead bolt lock with a thumb turn.



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for Hardening of School Facilities" which in part recommends installation of a uniform, interior door locking system that is compliant with applicable codes. The use of barricade devices was thoroughly discussed in the working group and it was decided they should not be part of the recommendations.

**Matt Perez**  
State Fire Marshal

### Illinois Fire Chiefs Association

Hello – on behalf of the IFCA welcome to Spring. A time for Baseball, mowing the lawn and relaxing with family & friends. I would like to start by saying Thank You to the IAFFPD Team for allowing us to partner with them over the past few months delivering a shortened version of Recruitment & Retention along with some background about the IFCA. Karrie did a great job lining up the locations, making copies of the programs and making sure we always ready to present. Cheri the winter conference in O'Fallon was great. Once again thank you for your organizational skills and professionalism.

The IFCA continues work on two projects: #1 is the Ground Emergency Medical Transport funding enhancement that will hopefully bring to all EMS Providers within the fire service some additional funding. President Mark Puknaitis is our lead man on this and would be happy to explain this program to you and the benefits of this.

Our next program is the Community Risk Reduction Program, this program is being designed as a state program initiative where inclusion of public and private entities works together to prevent, to support, to educate and to reduce hazards when & wherever possible. Dave Slivinski is our liaison to the national team which has reached out to Dave for his assistance in developing a national program that can be fitted to any state and or fire department/district. We met in March where a planning session addressed national, state and local delivery options. Much more to come on this project.



Trainings and information series: if you are looking for some help or for a shoulder to lean on give us the IFCA a try. We have several trained and energetic professionals that possess skills that just might be able to help or at least give you things to think about. We are very cost conscious and will work with you to help.

Training opportunities: IFCA Annual Symposium in East Peoria starting May 15-17, 2019. The complete program guide is posted on our web-site. We will have some great speakers, and this is a great venue to visit with fellow professionals. If possible we would like to see you in East Peoria this May.

In September, we will hold our annual VCOE conference which is directed at volunteer and combination departments. Please watch for information as this one is not only a big hit but filled with helpful information for small to mid-size districts.

The IFCA assessment 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. We have had conversations with several Trustees from small volunteer FPD's and are trying to help them with a service that will assist them into the future. If you have not used our services, please give us the opportunity to provide you with our services. We feel we will deliver quality and professionalism in every aspect. Contact Dave Slivinski our Consulting Manager.

The IFCA Education-Research Foundation continues to host a variety of Fire Officer Class and new Chief Officer programs. The Foundation received over 150 applications for scholarships this year and the review committee will be meeting to review and award several scholarships. A detailed list of recipients will be out that will show the release of approx. 70 scholarships that will be awarded.

The Fire Service Blue Ribbon report has been updated and revamped thanks to Deputy Director Jim Keiken from IFSI where he offered his time, talents and observations with this update. The report is being turned over to Chiefs Yancey and Swan for further review & distribution. I want to Thank Jim for his help and volunteering of his time to complete this update.

2019 will be a busy year with legislation as we will see a major turnover in Springfield. The Fire Services Associations

is voice of the Illinois Fire Service as well as our individual organizations pressing issues that promote the Fire Service in Illinois. Success and recognition start at the local level, so visit those who represent you!

The Illinois Fire Chiefs are holding the following events:

**49th Annual Symposium, East Peoria IL**  
May 15-17, 2019

**69th Annual Conference, Peoria IL**  
October 2019

We have updated our website with the help and direction of Chief John Buckley, Chief Larry Moran and Maureen Griseto. I am sure you will find it useful and very informative. [www.illinoisfirechiefs.org](http://www.illinoisfirechiefs.org)

If you have any questions or need information please do not hesitate in contacting me or our IFCA office. [jgrady3@illinoisfirechiefs.org](mailto:jgrady3@illinoisfirechiefs.org) 1-847-966-0732.

**Jim Grady III**  
Executive Director

### IL Fire Inspectors Association



A large thank you to all who attended last month's Fire and Life Safety Conference in East Peoria. Almost 110 people registered to attend – including some from Kentucky and Wisconsin. Twenty-one vendors participated and there were many sponsors. Thank you to all who helped make this possible. The highlight of the conference had to be Shawn and Alvaro telling about their experience surviving, and sustaining severe burns, from the Seton Hall dormitory fire in 2000.

At this Conference, the ICC stated their most asked question was on ICC and OSFM Fire Inspector Certifications. Their response follows:

"The #1 question I received this week revolved around IL Fire Inspector I & II and their relationship to ICC's certifications. I talked with our Certification Department this morning and received the following answer. Based on their information, I think now is a great time for your members to get their certificates over to ICC for acceptance. Here is the answer I received: "For the rest of this year, we are honoring Pro Board certifications for the Fire Inspector I and Fire Inspector II certifications. A person that holds one of

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these can submit a transition application with payment and Pro Board accredited wall certificates throughout the rest of this year. We do not have a transition program for the Certified Fire Marshal program."

If anyone has questions, they can contact:

Timothy Schmitz, Lead Senior Reg. Manager Gov. Relations - International Code Council

tschmitz@iccsafe.org

C: 630.774.9008

Plans are being made for the 2020 Fire and Life Safety Conference. If you would like to present a topic, go to our website [www.illinoisfireinspectors.org](http://www.illinoisfireinspectors.org) and fill out a form for consideration.

Do you have a code related question that you are having trouble getting an answer on? If so, check out our website. We have created a spot to ask questions to two people who have a great deal of fire safety expertise. Their answers are not

"official" from NFPA, ICC, or any company, but it may provide you with direction to the question(s) you are dealing with.

In March, two members of the IFIA met in Springfield regarding a fire alarm bill that we introduced. The bill would require fire alarm personnel to have certifications for the level of work that they perform. We met with the bill sponsor, Sen. Cullerton, the IBEW – who supports us, and representatives from the alarm industry. While we did not come away with an agreement on language, everyone's concerns were voiced and, knowing more, we will continue with our efforts.

GOOD NEWS! We just received notice that we have been approved from the ICC to offer Preferred Provider CEUs for monthly our classes, and the Fire and Life Safety Conference. For those with ICC certifications this is very important, as it will help you in recertifying due to the requirement of 50% of con ed points coming from preferred provider classes.

The IFIA is looking to acquire a couple wireless lapel and handheld mics. If you know anyone who has any that they would

be willing to donate, we would certainly appreciate it. The donation can be a charitable contribution for them, as we are a 501(c)3 organization. Contact Executive Director Robert Morris with any questions at [rmorris464@comcast.net](mailto:rmorris464@comcast.net).

Have you ever thought about sharing your knowledge to new fire inspectors? The IFIA is looking to add instructors for the Fire Inspector 1 and 2 classes. These are the classes that are needed to obtain certification from the OSFM. Please contact our certification chair, Jamie Brown, at [james.brown@illinoisfireinspectors.org](mailto:james.brown@illinoisfireinspectors.org), if that is of interest to you.

Looking for more resources for knowledge sharing? Connect with the Fire Marshal Interchange. The U.S. Fire Administration is having a soft launch of the new Fire Marshal Interchange (FMI), a secure information platform allowing fire marshals from across the United States to share knowledge and information outside jurisdictions. By sharing information on the FMI with others in your profession, you

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# We Respond Because You Do.

Firefighters and EMS teams are dedicated to protecting those in need; saving lives and property.

And while you protect others, we respond with **Fire & Rescue Pro**, an insurance and risk management program designed for the unique needs of Fire Protection Districts and EMS operations.

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phone: 800-322-3391 | [info@blissmcknight.com](mailto:info@blissmcknight.com)

This insurance is underwritten by continental National Fire and Casualty Company and other fine companies, and provided through Bliss McKnight, Inc. and local independent insurance agents.



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will help bring awareness to – and learn about – problems and trends threatening the lives of those you have sworn to protect from fire and life safety issues. The world of the fire marshal is ever changing. The FMI provides you with a resource to collaborate with other like-minded professionals to discuss basic and oftentimes complex situations that arise throughout the nation. Interactions here can allow for better mitigation planning when confronted with significant life safety concerns.

The FMI controlled access page provides:

- Training & Resource List Calendar and Links Section.
- Contacts list for fire marshals nationwide.
- Discussion Boards to share information.
- Reference Libraries with topical categories to share documents.
- A Multimedia section to share pictures and videos.

The FMI website resides on the Homeland Security Information Network (HSIN). Email [bruce.bouch@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:bruce.bouch@fema.dhs.gov) to request access to the FMI. You will receive an invitation with details on enrolling. After we vet you into HSIN, we'll notify you of your access to the FMI.

### Check the website for the following upcoming events:

- May 31 – ONE WEEK LATER – *Understanding performance based design and IFIA meeting*
- June 28 – *IFIA mini seminar and meeting*
- July/August – *No membership meeting.*

**Robert Morris**  
Executive Director, IFIA

### Illinois Fire Safety Alliance 2019 Camp "I Am Me"

The 29<sup>th</sup> annual Camp "I Am Me" will be held June 16-22. Since 1991, the IFSA has been hosting this week-long, life-changing event for young burn survivors, originally known as "Burn Camp." The Fire Apparatus Parade and Appreciation Day events are scheduled



for Wednesday, June 19<sup>th</sup> and departments from across the entire state are encouraged to attend and participate! Visit [www.IFSA.org](http://www.IFSA.org) for details.

### Support Those You Save!

For nearly 30 years, Boot Day for Burn Survivors has helped provide much needed support to those that have been affected by burn injuries. As a result of Illinois fire service support, the IFSA has expanded upon its signature program, Camp "I Am Me," and has further developed new programs and events to support burn survivors of all ages!

Join the members of the Illinois Fire Service by signing up, schedule dates and locations, grow community support, and enjoy your event while shaking your boots! Information on the IFSA's Boot Days can be found at [www.IFSA.org/bootday](http://www.IFSA.org/bootday).

### Dates to Remember

- Family Day (Peoria) – May 18
- Camp "I Am Me" (Ingleside) – June 16-22
- Camp "I Am Me" Fire Apparatus Parade – June 19
- IFSA Day at the Illinois State Fair (Springfield) – August 16
- IFSA Day at the Ballpark (Schaumburg) – July 13
- Fire Prevention Week Luncheon (Woodridge) – October 10

Information on all IFSA events, programs, and services can be found at [www.IFSA.org](http://www.IFSA.org).

**Philip Zaleski**  
IFSA Executive Director

### Illinois Fire Safety Institute

Annual Fire College offers four days of innovative and top quality training for first responders. Fire College courses are designed for all skill levels, challenging even the most seasoned veterans.

The 95<sup>th</sup> Annual Fire College will offer a large variety of course topics and flexible scheduling. Select from twenty-nine courses to create a training schedule that meets your personal and professional needs. Each course will deliver information at the forefront of national training standards.



Regardless of selection students will have access to the top fire service professionals in the industry. Our dedicated and talented instructor team will quickly engage, motivate, and inspire them to develop and refine their skills.

Fire College training is premier but the registration fees are affordable. Classes fill quickly and enrollment is on a first-come, first-served basis. Do not delay in registering for this elite training event!

### Free Housing Offer:

Fire College attendees may receive up to 3 nights of hotel accommodations for FREE! The Illinois Fire Service Institute has received a grant from the Office of the State Fire Marshal to cover a portion of the hotel rooms for the 95<sup>th</sup> Annual Fire College. Funded hotel rooms are limited and available to registrants on a first-come, first-served basis.

### Lodging Details:

IFSI will pay for hotel room and hotel room taxes only. Registrants may reserve rooms only after registering for Fire College courses. Hotel block information is provided by IFSI in registration confirmation emails. Rooms must be booked in the registrants' name and a personal credit card is required to cover incidental expenses. Registrants must reserve rooms under the designated Fire College room block to receive the funded accommodation. Rooms not reserved under the Fire College block will be subject to the current hotel rate and charged to the individual registrant. Two attendees per room is preferred, if possible, to make the free rooms available to as many departments as possible. Individuals must attend all registered training sessions for the room expenses to be covered by IFSI.

### Room Coverage Eligibility:

Thursday night accommodations will only be covered for registrants who attend both Friday morning and Friday afternoon sessions. Friday night accommodations will only be covered for registrants who attend both Saturday morning and Saturday afternoon sessions. Saturday night accommodations will be covered for registrants who attended both Saturday sessions or registrants who attend Sunday sessions.

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### Mutual Aid Box Alarm System

This year brings about a number of changes at MABAS. We have just concluded our 2019 MABAS Command and Dispatchers Summit in Bloomington/Normal and have already started planning for next years Summit in February 2020. We are always looking for speaker presentations from departments/divisions who would like to share their best practices or lessons learned from incidents with attendees at the Summit. Feel free to contact MABAS for more information. Another change in 2019 is the retirement of Chief Jeff Macko after serving 9 years as MABAS President. Don Davids was elected to the position of President at the February MABAS Executive Board meeting. Don was previously the MABAS 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President. We thank Jeff for his years of service to



MABAS and wish Don well in his new position. April 1<sup>st</sup> also saw the retirement of Section Chief – Operations Dave Haywood after many years of service. Dave was one of the original Operations Branch Chiefs and we will certainly miss his knowledge and dedication to MABAS. Chief Don Mobley, retired Fire Chief of the Grayslake Fire Protection District and most recently FEMA, was selected to replace Dave in the Section Chief – Operations role. We are excited to have Don on-board and will benefit greatly from his experiences with FEMA, exercise development and disaster responses.

MABAS has been able to build a very robust and well-equipped statewide emergency response capability by utilizing Federal Homeland Security Grant funding in an organized manner while maintaining the vision of supporting all 69 MABAS Divisions throughout the State. After the 9/11 disaster Federal funding allowed MABAS and Illinois to build this capability which we continue to enjoy. However, since then Federal funding has leveled off to the point where we can just maintain the system, but the warning signs are there. The Federal Government has proposed

major cuts to the Homeland Security Grant programs in the past and the future is unsure at best. The State of Illinois provides little financial support for the statewide MABAS capabilities, so our primary future goal is to continue the effort to establish a secure and long-term funding source. We already have had to make some hard decisions in not replacing expiring response equipment due to the lack of replacement funds. Hopefully we will be able to secure additional funding before a drastic downsizing of the MABAS network becomes necessary.

Now that the weather is getting better, MABAS is supporting a number of regional response exercises in Rock Island, Mt. Vernon and others along with the first ever hands-on dispatchers exercise at the Fire Service Institute in October. We are always looking to support regional, multi-jurisdictional exercises which improve the readiness of local responders. Your local MABAS Operations Branch Chief will be able to help with any exercise request.

Thanks to the IAFFPD as MABAS looks forward to supporting the mission of fire protection districts throughout Illinois. ■

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