

# 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 COVID-19 pandemic has created many challenges and changed the Office of the Illinois State Fire Marshal's (OSFM) normal avenues of communication and work functions. The OSFM continues to provide every agency function that can be done safely with public and employee safety in mind. Communication avenues may have changed, but the continued daily functions and communications amongst staff has allowed the agency to continue providing the highest quality of service that the industry has come to expect. OSFM will begin to phase staff back into the Springfield office beginning on Monday, July 13<sup>th</sup>.

OSFM has a phased recovery strategy to bring back operations to normal or at least to meet the needs of the "new" normal during the COVID-19 pandemic. OSFM will continue to review operations to ensure that the agency is providing as many of its normal services as possible and will work closely with all the Illinois fire service organizations in order to keep the State Emergency Operation Center, IDPH and the Governor's office up to date on all issues faced by the fire service as a result of the COVID-19 crisis.

The OSFM's Arson Division has been providing uninterrupted fire investigations in support of local police and fire departments. Although they have had to alter their personal protective equipment (PPE), and how they conduct business, all Arson Division Special Agents have continued to respond to requests for investigations during the COVID-19

pandemic. The division welcomed two new canines to the team, Gunny and Ginger. They will be replacing recently retired canines Dollar and Gemma. Sadly, retired canine Rusty has passed away. "Rusty was one of a kind! He never knew a stranger, worked as hard as any I've seen, mainly because he wanted to make everyone there happy, and loved with everything he had." -Special Agent Arndt. The OSFM's Personnel Standards and Education Division has worked through difficulties to resume certification testing so that the Illinois fire service can still have access to the training that is essential to doing their jobs safely and effectively. Testing resumed as of May 1<sup>st</sup> and examinations that were taken in March have been graded. For the latest information about results or testing, visit the PS&E Web portal. An update to the portal has also been completed and has changed the way roster updates are completed. A tutorial is available by visiting the portal or here: <https://youtu.be/9XkS2XwKZmM>. Make sure to visit the portal and double to check to see if your rosters are current.

The Boiler Safety Division, Fire Prevention Division, Petroleum and Chemical Safety Division, and Elevator Safety Division are resuming many activities with proper PPE, social distancing, and following guidance set by the CDC, IDPH and the Governor's Office. OSFM can halt an inspection if proper criteria aren't met. Everyone needs to wear a mask, even those who are in the building, proper social distancing isn't being followed, occupancy load is over the limit, along with other criteria laid out in the Restore

Illinois Plan. OSFM Fire Service Outreach Divisions continues to provide assistance to IEMA through the state's emergency operations center. Technical Services Division is working remotely and are still responding to requests. They will resume onsite reviews to assist OSFM personnel and will be wearing proper PPE.

"I am very proud of the Illinois fire service for whom we tirelessly work to support. Our firefighters have answered the call at every turn and selflessly put the wellbeing of the public ahead of their own. The State of Illinois will likely see impacts to its budget due to the COVID-19 crisis. OSFM will continue to advocate for the fire service and maintain as much of our submitted budget as possible," said State Fire Marshal Matt Perez.

"Sadly, three Illinois firefighters have succumbed to COVID-19 related illnesses. The bravery and sacrifice of Chicago Fire Department Firefighters Mario Araujo, Edward Singleton, and River Grove Fire Department EMS Coordinator Robert Reisinger exemplify the best of what the fire service is, and we offer our sincerest condolences to their families and fire departments," said Perez.

Information shows that first responders are at risk of contracting COVID in the firehouse or workplace from peer to peer contact due to lack of social distancing. Consider requiring mask use while working in the fire station, consistent cleaning of frequently touched areas, use of single serving food products and eating/exercising in shifts in order to minimize this risk. Stressing

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the importance of the consistent use of PPE, good hygiene and following safety protocols and guidelines will help to limit exposure risks. OSFM encourages firefighters and EMS workers get tested. A link to current testing sites can be found by visiting: <https://dph.illinois.gov/testing>. OSFM continues to keep Governor Pritzker, Illinois Emergency Management Agency, and Illinois Department of Public Health updated daily on the number of firefighters in quarantine or COVID positive. Continue to send your departments/districts latest statistics to Fire Marshal Perez by emailing [Matt.Perez@Illinois.gov](mailto:Matt.Perez@Illinois.gov). These updated statistics allows for resources to be allocated to areas that may need extra assistance.

Unfortunately, this year's Firefighter Medal of Honor Ceremony was cancelled. Recipients of awards will be notified, and members of the committee will personally present the awards to them at their local firehouses. The hope is to reschedule the Fallen Firefighter Memorial Ceremony sometime in the fall to honor the memory of our two fallen brothers Jake Ringering and Kody Vanfossan.

The Small Equipment Grant Program received 540 applications this year, but unfortunately 160 of those applications were ineligible due to not filling out forms correctly or not being NFIRS compliant. There was \$3.5 million awarded to 154 department/districts and EMS providers across the state. The OSFM plans to offer the program again this fall and encourages those who didn't receive funding this time around to apply! If there are any questions while filling out the application, please reach out and the OSFM will be more than happy to answer any questions you might have.

Impacts from the COVID-19 crisis are hitting everyone hard, especially local fire departments. OSFM and IFA are working on a two-year extension on existing Fire Truck Revolving and Ambulance Revolving Loans. This would defer payments for two years and make the next loan payment due in November of 2022.

If there are positive stories that departments are looking to share or

information that the Illinois Fire Service would like to promote, please email [jc.fultz@illinois.gov](mailto:jc.fultz@illinois.gov); OSFM's PIO. Make sure to continue to visit the OSFM facebook and twitter pages, along with the website for agency updates and information.

### State Fire Marshal

## Illinois Fire Chiefs Association

The summer of 2020 is here and so far, it has been a scorcher.

As we passed the July 4<sup>th</sup> Holiday weekend I stopped to reflect on just a few things that relate not only to the IFCA & the IAFF, but perhaps to you who are a part of the Illinois Fire Service Team. Simply entitled "What I Miss" is the short story of just what is lacking.

We have seen the necessary cancellations of many events, conferences, symposiums, classes, fire service-related gatherings, trimmed down events at cemeteries, ball parks, fireworks displays and even restricted religious services and celebrations of life at funerals. When will it end? I asked the mMgic 8 ball and the answer was "ask again"! Frustrating to say the least. What I do look forward to is getting back together in classes, at conferences and just seeing each other. I miss standing for The National Anthem at ball games, cheering on the grandkid's teams, seeing a ball game, visiting our monuments and areas of historical significance, and well, just living the life we used to have. I understand that the new handshake will be the fist bump and that a hug might be forbidden, jury out on that. But most of all I miss is just visiting and talking with my fire service fiends and colleagues. Rest assured we will bounce back as that is who we are as a team and nation. Thank you for listening/reading. If so inclined, take a ride, turn up Lee Greenwood's God Bless the USA, smile and drive -all is well.

Our Executive Branch of our board meets via conference calls and zoom on a regular basis to discuss plans, gather info, ration and share notes with our partners.

I would like to thank the entire IAFF for their partnership as 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 IAFF whenever possible.

While cancelled for this year, our Symposium and Conference will come back strong in 2021. The conference includes a special keynote speaker Chad Williams U.S. Navy Seal and 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.

Did you know that The IFCA assessment team has expanded the delivery to include virtual assessments/testing? I could not be any prouder of our leader Dave Slivinski who has taken 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 your district is currently using our services, we thank you and promise to continue to uphold our professional process. If you have not used our services, I invite you to give us the opportunity to work with your district. Contact Dave Slivinski our Consulting Manager. [dslivinski@illinoisfirechiefs.org](mailto: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](http://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](http://www.eagle-engraving.com)

- IFCA Annual Symposium East Peoria, IL - May 2021
- **IFCA 70th Annual Conference, Peoria IL** - October 2021

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

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partners. Please look at our site to obtain information related to the IFCA and The IFCA Education Research Foundation. [www.illinoisfirechiefs.org](http://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](mailto: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](mailto:Jgrady3@illinoisfirechiefs.org) 1-847-966-0732..

**Jim Grady III**  
**Executive Director**

## Illinois Fire Service Institute



The Illinois Fire Service Institute (IFSI) gradually resumed face-to-face delivery of training and education across the state on May 18. Our team worked diligently to implement institutionalized procedures to mitigate the COVID-19 risk to our students, instructors, and staff.

Our resumption of operations plan allowed IFSI to take a "crawl, walk, run" approach as we gradually returned to our traditional activities. Phase One included the targeted delivery of training for courses that were in progress in March and impacted by the COVID-19 response. This included the Spring Fire Academy, Basic Operations Firefighter Blended programs and select courses that maintained virtual activity during our COVID-19 reduction of activity period. The slow transition allowed students to successfully complete

the course requirements necessary to receive state certification. On June 12, 27 candidates graduated from the Spring Fire Academy. On June 28, 126 candidates graduated from the Basic Operations Firefighter Blended program. We congratulate all students who maintained their commitment to training during the unprecedented times.

IFSI Cornerstone deliveries resumed statewide on July 1. IFSI Regional Representatives are working diligently to schedule training opportunities within their respective regions. Our team is also preparing for our fall course schedule. Seats are still available in select courses. For complete information on our resumption of training plans and future course schedules, visit [fsi.illinois.edu](http://fsi.illinois.edu).

Our team continues to lead the nation with the delivery of virtual training programs. To date, we have offered 20 live broadcasts through our Facebook

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## 2020 OSFM Small Equipment Grants

*Congratulations to the following IAFFD members who are recipients of the 2020 OSFM Small Equipment Grants. This year, a total of \$3.5M was awarded to 154 fire departments and non-for-profit ambulance services to purchase necessary equipment they might otherwise not be able to purchase. According To OSFM, they received 540 applications, requesting around \$12 million in funding during this grant period. In order to be eligible to apply, all fire departments, fire protection districts and township fire departments were required to have participated in the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) for a minimum of two years prior to applying*

Alexis FPD  
Arenzville FPD  
Armington Community FPD  
Ashley Community FPD  
Assumption FPD  
Bath FPD  
Bellmont Area FPD  
Bethany FPD  
Bishop Hill Community FPD  
Bismarck Community FPD  
Bloomington Township FPD  
Blue Mound FPD  
Braceville FPD  
Brocton FPD  
Chadwick FPD  
Cherry FPD  
Chrisman FPD  
Church Road FPD  
Cisco FPD  
Clover Township FPD  
Coffeen FPD  
Compton Community FPD

Coulterville Community FPD  
Cowden FPD  
Cuba FPD  
Dalzell FPD  
Earlville FPD  
Easton Rural FPD  
Elba-Salem FPD  
Enfield FPD  
Farmersville Waggoner FPD  
Forreston FPD  
Franklin Grove FPD  
Green Valley FPD  
Hoffman FPD  
Keyespaort FPD  
Kilbourne FPD  
LaHarpe FPD  
Latham FPD  
Leaf River FPD  
Lovington Community Ambulance  
Maeystown Rural FPD  
Maquon FPD

Maroa Countryside FPD  
Medora Community FPD  
Midway FPD  
Morrisonville Community FPD  
Mt. Hope-Funks Grove FPD  
Murrayville-Woodson EAS  
New Berlin-Island Grove FPD  
New Douglas Community FPD  
North Clay FPD  
North Piatt County FPD  
Oakland Community FPD  
Odin FPD  
Owaneco FPD  
Papineau FPD  
Payson Fall-Creek FPD  
Pesotum Fire Department  
Pleasant Plains FPD  
Pocahontas-Old Ripley FPD  
Polo FPD  
Prophetstown FPD  
Roseville FPD

Randolph Township FPD  
Richwood Volunteer FD  
Sangamon Valley FPD  
Smithboro FPD  
Smithfield FPD  
Staunton Area Ambulance Service  
Steger Estates FPD  
Stillman FPD  
Sugar Creek Ambulance Service  
Tamm's Volunteer FD  
Tilden FPD  
Toulon FPD  
Tower Rock FPD  
Tri-County FPD  
Utica Community Fire and Ambulance  
Waltonville FPD  
Watson FPD  
Wheatfield Township FPD  
Winnebago County FPD #1  
Woodlawn FPD

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page. This platform, the Facebook Forum, has generated over 300,000 video views, received over 50,000 impressions on Twitter, and earned over 10,000 views on Youtube. These training segments have reached audiences from across the USA and international engagements include participants from 30 countries.

Our Virtual Cornerstone Program has offered 12 training sessions hosted through the Zoom. IFSI Regional Representatives received outstanding feedback on these programs. Student participation remains strong despite the online learning platform needs. The free training programs will continue through the fall.

Planning for the 96<sup>th</sup> Annual Fire College is underway. Twenty courses will be offered during the 4-day training event scheduled October 1-4 in Champaign. Registration opens August 1. IFSI will also host the Illinois Firefighter's Association Down and Dirty Firefighting Weekend October 2-3, the same weekend as Fire College. We will parallel these two programs in an effort to offer Illinois firefighters a full spectrum of training opportunities. Thanks to the financial support from the Office of the State Fire Marshal, IFSI is offering free hotel accommodations to Fire College and IFA Down and Dirty Firefighting Weekend attendees.

Finally, we are grateful for the dedication, support, and hard work of our team of instructors and staff in ensuring IFSI continued to support the fire service in Illinois and nationally during these difficult months.

**Jill Sauer, Director of Marketing and Public Relations**

### Illinois Fire Safety Alliance 2020's Camp "I Am Me" Went Virtual



Friends and supporters, as you aware, each year we host our weeklong camp for children that are survivors of burn injuries – Camp "I Am Me." No other IFSA program has received greater attention from the fire service, medical community, general public and the media than burn camp.

[www.iafpd.org](http://www.iafpd.org)

Announced in late-April, it was with great sadness that we had to cancel this year's "physical" camp due to the pandemic. However, we were quickly able to shift our efforts and create a "virtual" Camp "I Am Me," which was held the week of July 19<sup>th</sup>. With more than 25 sessions taking place, our young campers had the ability to interact with one another and our 60+ volunteers who dedicate themselves to a week of camp each and every year! Also, each of the 45 campers who participated received a Camp-in-the-Box to allow them to participate in the many interactive sessions, as the boxes provided them with the supplies they would normally have available to them at camp!

Though we were not able to gather in person, we know that now, more than ever, it is important to stay connected. The past 30 years, the Illinois Fire Safety Alliance has worked together with so many individuals, groups, and fire departments to build an incredibly supportive, fun, and loving burn camp community, and we're thrilled to have had the opportunity to take that community to a virtual camp experience! We were excited to bring this unique camping experience to our campers and look forward to getting back to planning our "traditional" camp for 2021!

### Nominations Being Accepted for Fire Prevention Awards

Each year the Illinois Fire Safety Alliance presents awards for corporate responsibility, life safety, special recognition, as well as the coveted Wayne Luecht Memorial Award at the annual Fire Prevention Week Luncheon in October. If you know of a group or individual deserving of this recognition at one of the largest fire service gatherings in the state, please consider submitting a nomination. Nominations can be received at any time, but must be submitted no later than August 15<sup>th</sup> to be considered for this year. The nomination form can be found at [www.IFSA.org/programs/fpwl/nominate](http://www.IFSA.org/programs/fpwl/nominate).

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

**Philip Zaleski**  
Executive Director

## Illinois Fire Inspectors Association



Sadly, I announce the passing of another longtime member and Past President of the Association, Jim Feit from the Barrington Fire Department. Jim served as president in 1989.

With the quarantine still effecting most plans, we have turned to Zoom for webinar trainings. After a successful pilot, we went from a one hour to a two-hour program on Special Suppressions Systems presented by Orr Protection Systems and was well received.

Our next virtual training is August 27 and 28, offered at no cost and sponsored by the Northern Illinois Fire Sprinkler Advisory Board. We are going back-to-basics for many new inspectors and named the program Fire Sprinklers 101. Each day begins at 0830 and run until noon.

A reminder that all training documentation is to be tracked by the individual. When you submit your recert sheet to the OSFM, it needs to be signed off by the Fire Chief. The obligation is always on the inspector to track and document any fire prevention training. Whatever program you use, you must indicate the subject, number of hours, method of instruction, etc. In the event of an audit, this is the pertinent information and supportive documentation. This same information is suitable for NFPA and ICC recertifications. Just remember that 50% of ICC hours must be Preferred Provider hours.

We still have plans to offer some type of a Fire Prevention Awards luncheon on September 25<sup>th</sup>. While that is still a few months away, now is the time to submit people to be recognized. There is no question that some of your people have gone above and beyond in fire prevention and/or fire and life safety activities – especially in this crazy time we are in. This is your chance to showcase your people for their efforts. A list of awards, and the nomination form, can be found on our website.

Meri-K Appy, formerly of NFPA and the Home Safety Council, has invited the State of Illinois to participate in the next phase

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of a program called Sound Off with the Home Fire Safety Patrol. It is a school-based program to teach students and in grades 3 and 4 and their families - especially those in low-income/high-risk areas about the different sounds a smoke alarm makes and how to be safe from fire. Sound Off is a CRR model program. It combines education with home safety visits to install free smoke alarms provided by the grant. Illinois would join 11 states currently working to implement Sound Off in communities across their states.

The IFIA has two bookcases full of NFPA, IFSTA, Delmar, Jones and Bartlett, and Thompson books that we are

looking to get rid of to free up some space. Some of these are current editions, some only one edition old, and some quite old - going back into the 80s. While the majority are fire related, there are many EMS books.

The cost of the books starts at \$3. 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. If you can pick them up, arrangements can be made for that too. The list of books is on our website.

After 25 years as NFPA Regional Director, Russ Sanders is assuming the role of Executive Secretary of the Metropolitan "Metro" Fire Chiefs Association, and liaison to several other key fire and international organizations.

Meredith Hawes will assume the regional director's duties in the north central region, which includes Illinois. While continuing her public education duties, Meredith will now be your direct contact for all NFPA tools and resources including NFPA codes and standards, training, certification, Fire Prevention Week, Fire Sprinkler Initiative state coalitions, and other key programs.

Finally, stay tuned to our newsletter, weekly blasts, Facebook, and our website. As things change, this would be the way we will connect with you. Membership is by department, and is only \$95. As you might imagine, canceling events, especially our annual conference, impacts the IFIA. We will recover, it will just take some time, as well as your active participation.

New information for Vision 20/20 is the CRR Materials Generator. This contains a series of new social media-ready animations that you can download and use on your own Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn accounts. These animations include...

- Why every home needs working smoke alarms
- Where to put your alarms
- What your smoke alarm sounds mean
- Proper smoke alarm maintenance
- What to do when there's a fire
- How to prevent falls for older adults

Download these, and other free resources at <https://materialsgenerator.strategicfire.org>. ■

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