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TEXAS FIREFIGHTER

The Magazine for Emergency Professionals



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GERALD WENIGER
 MCQUEENEY FD

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Pictured Gerald Weniger (L) and Shawn Snider (R)



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Annual Conference June 23 - 29, 2016

Check for conference updates at www.sffma.org.

JANUARY PLANNING MEETING TENTATIVE AGENDA

Friday, January 15

1 - 5 p.m. SFFMA Executive Board

Saturday, January 16

8:30 a.m. Golf Tournament Committee
8:30 - 10:30 a.m. Constitution and By-Laws Committee
Pumper Race Committee
Fire Marshal Committee
Finance Committee
8:30 a.m. - noon Certification Board
Ladies Auxiliary Board
9 - 10 a.m. Sergeant-at-Arms Committee
11 a.m. - 1 p.m. Poster Committee
Exhibits Committee
Memorial Committee
Driving Contest Committee
EMS Committee
T*Flag Committee
1 p.m. Speaker Selection Committee
1 - 2 p.m. LUNCH (not provided)
2 - 3:30 p.m. District Officers Meeting
3:30 - 4 p.m. June Conference Agenda Review
4 - 4:30 p.m. Site Selection Report

Host Hotel - January

DoubleTree Suites by Hilton
Group rate: \$104 (single/double)+ tax
Rate includes breakfast.
Phone: 956.686.3000

140th ANNUAL SFFMA TRAINING CONFERENCE AND CONVENTION



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S CORNER



The publishing of this magazine officially puts us into the fall season and it finds us getting ready to ramp up for the January planning conference, the international conference and 2016 dues invoicing. Regardless of what we see coming in the next few months, we at the SFFMA office are still working on some important projects that have taken up a majority of our time and efforts that we need to update you on.

SFFMA Online – This is an ongoing project that was supposed to be rolled out to you in January to replace some old programming language used to track department training objectives and progress toward a certification in firefighting. Our software developers had told us that an upgrade was being released in December of last year and we would be on the new system in January 2015. As you can see, that didn't happen so here we are, and they (the software company) haven't made much progress. Unfortunately, we are at their mercy, and even with communications with the CEO of the company, we still don't have a finished product. We keep getting told that "it's coming". We are working with the company to get parts of the new online certification module released. One of the two biggest hangups at this point is the ability to have a class entry page in which a department coordinator can enter one class and then apply those objectives taught to multiple people in the class. The other big project associated with the upgrade is the conversion of our existing data into the new database. We think we have a plan to release some features of the new online program in the near future. We apologize for the inconvenience and will work with you to make sure more than adequate time is given for entering your training objectives, reports, etc.. This situation is beyond our control and we are stuck trying to make it work for our association members.

Texas Firefighter Memorial on capitol grounds – With the legislative session coming to a close earlier this year, we were quite lucky when Representative Drew Springer (a fellow volunteer firefighter) put an amendment on the budget to allow for the state to help fund the expansion of the firefighter memorial on capitol grounds. To our surprise, it passed and the state contributed \$95,000 toward the expansion to the memorial. We were able to completely pay for the monument expansion and the end result is a beautiful expansion to the monument that will last far beyond our lifetimes.

With the firefighter memorial expansion project and building projects behind us we have committed our focus over the next year to our existing programs, updating our online certification program, implementing a new server, assisting our industrial, international and EMS divisions with some updated marketing materials and examining the use and effectiveness of some of the benefit programs we offer to our members. Our new office building continues to serve us quite well and although we had some issues with the closeout of the project, the staff is quite happy working in an environment that yields great productivity, room for growth and the ability to host classes and meetings and parking spaces without having to rent out a facility. THANK YOU to our membership for allowing the by-law change to pass that allows us to afford such a wonderful building!

As always, we welcome and invite your comments or praises on how we are doing! Have a safe and happy holiday season!

Chris Barron
Executive Director

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Greetings to the best firefighting family in the world. I hope everyone had a great and safe summer. It's hard to believe that it's been 3 months since we were in

Galveston; school is back in session and fall is upon us. I am honored and enthusiastic as I begin my term as president of the SFFMA. As I reflect on the rich history of the SFFMA, I am grateful for the tremendous task of helping to shape the future of this great association. The time from my being a candidate for 4th VP to becoming president has gone by so fast. We will turn around a few times and we will be in McAllen for the 2016 conference.

The Executive Board and staff have been very busy taking care of association business. The website upgrade is complete and being tested from one end to the other to ensure it is correct. SFFMA continues to roll out new benefits for members and I encourage each of you to keep our vendors in mind when you need to make purchases. The SFFMA conference would not be possible without the continued support from these vendors and our sponsors.

Another TEEX annual fire school is in the books. Thank you to everyone involved in order to make this school a success. It is great to see everyone

President's FORUM

come together to train our firefighters to do the best job that they can for their communities in the safest manner so everyone gets to go home.

Thank you to each district for submitting committee members to serve your association. The members should be hearing from the chairman of the committee that you asked to serve on in the very near future.

For those who do not know me, here is my story. I was born to Joe L and Bonnie Hamilton in Hereford, Texas. I am the middle child of 3. My older sister Joellen is a nurse in Cookeville, Tennessee and my younger brother John David passed away when I was 12. One set of my grandparents lived on a farm/ranch 24 miles west of Hereford, not too far from Grady, New Mexico. Those of you that know anything about Deaf Smith County know this isn't too far from THE TREE, which is in the middle of nowhere. This area is where I first got involved with grass fires. I stayed at the farm as much as possible while attending Hereford schools graduating in 1970.

My junior and senior year I also worked at McCaslin Lumber Company where I became acquainted with a guy who was a member of the Hereford VFD. On a couple of occasions, I helped deliver plywood and lumber to the scene of a grain accident for the Hereford VFD. I got to know a few more of the members and I became more interested in the fire service.



Front row from L to R: Paul Hamilton, Henry Perry, Harvie Cheshire, Mike Richardson, Tim Smith and Rusty Kattner. Back row from L to R: Rayford Gibson, Chris Barron, F. Jim White, Joe Ondrasek, Ben Kennedy and Macey Kennon.

After graduating from Hereford High School, I moved to Amarillo and attended Amarillo College. I enjoyed college but there were other things on my mind and problems in the world, so I started my adult life in the United States Marine Corp. Just a few minutes after arriving at boot camp I was wondering what I had done, but I wouldn't change that experience for anything. I would even go back in a heartbeat, if needed. In 1973 I was discharged from the USMC and returned to the Hereford area.

I attended Amarillo College and received my Law Enforcement certification. It was at this time that I applied and was accepted as a member of the Hereford VFD where I served for 26 years. I want to thank the City of Hereford, Fire Marshal Jay Spain and all the officers and members of the Hereford Fire Department. I had the opportunity to serve as a rookie all the way to assistant chief receiving many awards including firefighter of the year. The Hereford VFD provided many opportunities for training and I was able to obtain certificates for Basic, Intermediate, and Advanced Firefighting through the SFFMA. I also became an EMT and an EMT Intermediate. During these years I was an instructor at the Canyon and Lubbock area fire schools. These schools are where I met and worked with Joe Rice, Tom Foster, Jim Arnold and Pat Barrett. There was nothing like working a pit fire with Jim Arnold. Thank you my friend.



During my time as a member of the Hereford VFD I was awarded fireman of the year by the American Legion Department of Texas, Meritorious Award for Distinguished Service from the Independent Telephone Pioneer Association, American Legion 18th District Firefighter of the Year and was selected to be a torch bearer for the 1996 Olympics held in Atlanta Georgia. I was also awarded Elk lodge 2269 Elk of the year.

During my time in Hereford, I also served the community as president of the Hereford Noon Kiwanis Club and as a Hereford city commissioner. I would like to say thank you to my employer West Texas Rural Telephone/ WT Services, management past and present, and my wonderful coworkers for their support during my firefighting career.

I am sure I wore out at least three company vehicles responding to fire and rescue calls in Deaf Smith, Castro, Oldham, Parmer and Bailey Counties, and occasionally a trip into New Mexico during the 26 years I was on the department.

I remember on one structure fire I used the spot lights on my company pickup while the fire was being filmed for TV news. The next day my assistant manager called me into the office and he informed me to never have my company vehicle on TV at a fire again that dirty.



Sixteen years ago, my wife and I purchased some land and built a house in Bushland, and I became a member of Potter County Fire and Rescue. This department is quite larger and quite different from a smaller town department. The number of calls ranges close to 2000 per year and is served by six stations with 70 members. This is a great department run by Chief Richard Lake and Assistant Chiefs Pat Fitzpatrick, and George Samples.

Upon completion of my service and when I become a past president of this great association, I will have served on an executive board for 19 years. In 1991, I ran for and was elected 4th VP of the Panhandle Firemen's and Firemarshals' Association and served as president in 1996-1997. Two years later I was asked to fill in as the PFFMA secretary/treasurer until someone could be elected. I served in this position for seven years, stepping down as I decided to become a candidate for 4th VP of the SFFMA. I was elected to the position in Mesquite in 2011. During this time, my wife Jeri served as vice president, president, and historian for the PFFMA auxiliary. In 2010 in Corpus Christi, she was elected 4th VP of the Texas Firemen's Auxiliary and served as president in 2015.



Lauren, our daughter, has also been extremely involved in the firefighting world. She served as the PFFMA sweetheart in 2009-2010, was elected as the TFA sweetheart in 2010 in Corpus Christi, served as the PFFMA Auxiliary historian in 2014-2015, and most recently served as the TFA presidential aide for her mom in 2014-15.

There are many people and departments I owe thanks to. I am unable to list them all for sake of leaving someone out, but I do want to say a special thank you to the Panhandle and Red River Districts of the SFFMA, Chris Barron and the amazing staff of the SFFMA, current and past SFFMA executive board members and the strong and expert advice from all of the past presidents, especially C.H. Boring. The past 5 years and the time traveling this great state running for 4th VP would not have been possible without the support of Past President Kyle Stephens and his wonderful wife Debbie, my wife Jeri and daughter Lauren. I love you all more than you will ever know. This is going to be a great year for our SFFMA family.

Regards,

Paul Hamilton
SFFMA President



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

by Bill Gardner, SFFMA Past President

Session Summary

The 84th Texas Legislature adjourned sine die on Monday, June 1. Unless Governor Abbott calls a special session, which at present looks unlikely, the legislature will not meet again until January 10, 2017.

This session was unique in terms of the number of new faces. The House had an especially large freshmen class of 28 members. In the Senate, there were nine new senators—four members were brand new to the capitol, while the remaining five had previously served in the House. The 2014 Election cycle also saw massive turnover among statewide offices, as Texans elected a new Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Comptroller of Public Accounts, Attorney General, General Land Office Commissioner, and Agriculture Commissioner.

The chart below represents the final statistics for the 84th Legislative Session, compared to those for the 83rd. In absolute terms, 21 percent of the total bills filed this session passed, compared to 24 percent of bills filed during the 83rd Legislative Session that passed. The governor had until Sunday, June 21 to veto bills.

84th Legislative Session Statistics								
	House				Senate			
	84R	83R	Diff.	%	84R	83R	Diff.	%
Bills Filed	4,207	3,950	257	+6%	2,069	1,918	151	+8%
Bills Passed	818	732	257	+12%	504	705	-201	-29%
Bills Vetoes	2*	15	-13	-52%	2	11	-9	-82%
Joint Resolutions Filed	133	130	3	+2%	67	63	4	+1%
Joint Resolutions Passed	2	6	-4	-67%	5	4	1	+25%

*In addition to two HBs, the Governor has also vetoed one HCR.

FY2016-2017 Budget

Texas A&M Forest Service was appropriated \$114.3M for the 2016-2017 biennium (All Funds). Specific riders include:

- \$20.4M (\$5M from General Revenue and \$15.4M from the Insurance Companies Maintenance Tax) for the Texas Wildfire Protection Plan.
- \$2M from the Insurance Companies Maintenance Tax will go to support Texas Intrastate Fire Mutual Aid System (TIFMAS) Grants.
- \$37M from the GR-Dedicated Volunteer Fire Department Assistance Account No. 5064 (HB 2604 Grant) will be used to assist volunteer fire departments and provide for equipment and training needs. The rider caps the administrative costs to 7% of the total appropriation.
- Thanks to the passage of HB 7 (the dedicated accounts spend-down bill), a supplemental appropriation of \$23M from the unexpended balance in GR-Dedicated Volunteer Fire Department Assistance Account No. 5064 (HB 2604 Grant)

will be available for grants to rural fire departments.

Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service (TEEX) was appropriated \$150M for the biennium (All Funds). Specific riders include:

- \$506K in each year to support the operational readiness of Texas Task Force 1.
- \$750K in each year for training to underserved firefighters through extension area schools.

State Preservation Board is appropriated \$95,000 (GR) for the biennium for the purpose of expanding and improving the Volunteer Firemen's Monument on the south lawn of the capitol grounds.

Issues

This session, in addition to appropriations in the budget for grants and the completion of the Volunteer Firemen's Monument, lawmakers also passed many pieces of SFFMA's priority legislation. This was in spite of the low overall pass rate this session. While we did not pass everything we wanted, the list below illustrates a sample of items that did make it to the governor's desk:

Passed Legislation

Tax-free sales (SB 31)—Legislation passed that will allow volunteer firefighter and emergency services organizations to hold up to 10 tax-free sales or auctions per year.

Hazardous chemicals (HB 942)—New legislation makes important changes to the law regarding the reporting and handling of hazardous substances and facilitates fire prevention at ammonium nitrate storage facilities.

Benefits (HB 1094, HB 1278, HB 1707, and HB 1725)—Several bills passed this session that will double the death benefits paid to survivors, allow a surviving spouse that remarries to continue receiving benefits, make it easier for political subdivisions to contribute to TESRS, and allow TESRS boards of very small VFDs to include a surviving spouse as a board member for the purpose of avoiding a vacancy on the board.

Fire prevention (HB 2089 and HB 570)—Lawmakers passed legislation to require the installation of fire protection sprinkler

systems in residential high-rise buildings in Bexar County and to restrict the use of fireworks at TxDOT rest areas.

Disease control and prevention (HB 2646 and HB 1574)—Legislation was also passed to protect first responders who are exposed or potentially exposed to certain diseases and parasites.

A word about grassroots... We could not have had the level of success we did this session without the hard work and efforts of all of you. Many thanks to everyone who attended the First Responder/Legislator Appreciation Day at the capitol this past March. The event was a huge success, and the impact you have on your elected representatives and their staff when you show up in Austin cannot be overstated. Additionally, thank you to those of you who volunteered your time, answering the call to show up at the capitol to register your support for a bill or testify before a committee. The days were usually long and often uneventful, but your testimony is invaluable to the process and your presence truly made a difference. Finally, sincere thanks to everyone who took the time to respond to an alert by calling or emailing their representatives and asking them to take a particular action on a bill. This grassroots support is critical to pushing our legislation over the goal line each and every time!

Looking ahead to next Session... We were disappointed to see SB 289/HB 237 (the "Firefighter Protection Act") fall victim to inter-chamber infighting. Senator Estes and Representative Springer were both effective advocates and we sincerely appreciate their efforts this session. We look forward to working with both offices over the interim and pursuing this legislation again next session. Representative Springer was also instrumental in ensuring the appropriation for the Volunteer Firemen Memorial.

In conclusion, SFFMA continues to support every effort to encourage volunteers to become certified and increase their knowledge and skill level. We will continue to advocate for state programs that achieve these goals. At the same time, we will remain vigilant in our efforts to defeat proposals that harm the volunteer fire service and reduce public safety.

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Dear SFFMA Members,

As you may know, SFFMA has been experiencing software upgrades throughout the last several weeks. One of the things we are hoping to accomplish through the upgrades is faster processing times for membership and certifications. With 2016 invoicing quickly approaching in November, I'm asking you to help me, in an extra effort to speed up processing. Please be sure to **always** send your invoice and/or any accompanying paperwork necessary so we may efficiently complete your submissions. Without proper paperwork we have no way of knowing where to allocate payments. This prolongs tracking down what the payment is for, preventing you and your department from being current and eligible for trainings and certifications needed, as well as membership benefits.

Also, when updating your rosters, please be sure to include all contact information for your members, i.e. first, middle and last names, date of birth, last 4 of social, home address, contact phone number, and email address. This will ensure that we have direct, quick access to any member for any questions, issues or correspondence that we need to relay to you as an individual. As a result of the upgrades, we are currently delayed in membership processing. The goal is to have everything processed by the end of the month. Thank you for your continued patience in this matter.

Be sure you take a look around the website for better navigation, access to your individual account and for the ability to pay your individual dues online!

As for your membership cards: The order has been submitted, proofed, and cleared for production! We should be receiving new membership cards in October. This leaves plenty of time for November invoicing, so keep your eyes peeled for the new and improved design once 2016 invoices are submitted! As always, November through January are busy months here at the SFFMA office so please bear with us as we strive to make sure each one of our members is taken care of!

Membership benefits; I am always actively looking for more beneficial discounts we can offer you! If there is something you think the rest of the association can benefit from, please email me at mgarza@sffma.org and I will contact you about adding it to our benefits list.

Take Care!

Mari Garza
Membership Coordinator

CERTIFICATION UPDATE

By the time you have received your magazine you should have noticed a positive change to the website. Coordinators should now have the ability to review and add training to individuals' records on a person-by-person basis using the 2015 breakdown of objectives.

Due to the significant delays that have beset this project, the Certification Board has pushed the 2016 Progress Report due date back to May 30th. This will allow additional time for coordinators to finish entering training for the year.

The project at present is composed of several different steps, with each providing additional functionality:

1) Add ability for coordinators to add training to individuals. While not perfect, this will meet the needs of the majority of our departments and represents a large chunk of programming changes on the back-end of the system. *should now be completed*

2) Create class-entry solution for larger classes. This should restore functionality similar to the class entry page you're familiar with from SFFMA Online.

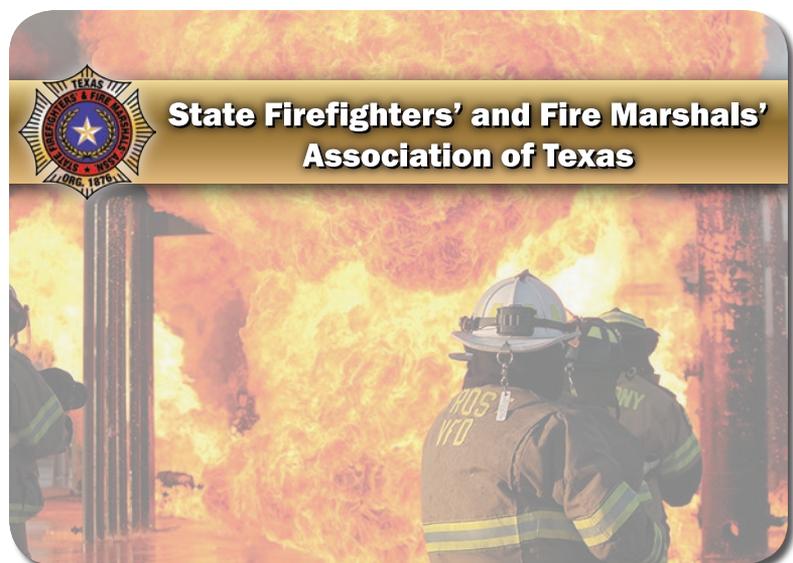
3) Transfer existing training records between 2014 to 2015 databases. This is a much larger task than one might assume because the structure of the databases differ considerably.

4) Re-establish ability for generation of membership renewal invoices ahead of the November dues notices. This includes ability to activate/inactivate records.

Again, Austin staff are working with the programmers to move this project along as quickly (and as inexpensively) as possible. We're in your corner.

Kevin Creamer
Certification Administrator/
Industrial Coordinator

2016 MEMBERSHIP CARD



Above is a new design of the 2016 SFFMA membership card. Special thanks to Texas A&M Engineering Extension Services (TEEX) for providing the background image.

ARE WE TRULY MINDING THE GAP?

by Andy Dexter, Chairman of the Vision 2040 Committee

The State Firefighters' and Fire Marshals' Association of Texas is steeped with a rich and living tradition that provides the identity of the association. As of the last membership report from the 139th Annual Training Conference and Convention, Director Chris Barron reported that our membership is greater than 24,000 strong. Our association's commitment to representing the needs and condition of the volunteer firefighter is one of steadfast devotion and has been the influence in many arenas, including the Texas Legislature. Our association's mission is to "Promote, Unify, Represent, and Educate the Fire Service of Texas" although we know that.

What we have missed is the make-up of our membership. The continuous concern is the declining membership rolls, membership participation, and attendance in the annual training conference and convention. If we are 24,000 members strong, why are these issues even being discussed? The truth is that we are strong in number and poor in participation. The fear is that our traditions and even our very existence are disappearing. The concern is who we will pass our torch of leadership to in the future to continue what has been achieved by so many who have gone before us. Our path is currently uncertain.

The Vision 2040 Ad Hoc Committee was created to develop a vision of what the SFFMA should look like in the year 2040 and provide programs, plans, frameworks, communication, and more in order to achieve the Vision. The committee's goals are to ensure that we do not lose our past, maintain our traditions, and that we find a balance between our traditions and our needed progression in order to remain relevant for the future of the fire service. The committee was formed in January 2015 and has spent our time understanding SFFMA in a different light. We must understand the problem before recommendations can be made. The problem is that we have 24,000 members and poor participation. In March 2015, a survey was sent out by this committee as the first step to collecting information. Concurrently, information from census data, generational studies, population density shifts, and other resources was reviewed. The initial thought was that our generational gap was the root of the problem.

* only less than 1% of total membership attends the annual conference.

The following table depicts a breakdown of the membership of SFFMA as of June 2015:

Age Groupings	Number of SFFMA Members	Percentage of the SFFMA Membership
90 - 99	2	0.1%
80 - 89	77	0.4%
70 - 79	477	2.6%
60 - 69	1,525	8.4%
50 - 59	3,127	17.3%
40 - 49	3,734	20.7%
30 - 39	4,188	23.2%
20 - 29	4,474	24.8%
10 - 19	467	2.5%

Attendance data from SFFMA Annual Training Conference and Convention

Age Groupings	2015 Attendees	2014 Attendees	2013 Attendees
90 - 99	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
80 - 89	1 (0.3%)	2 (0.6%)	1 (0.3%)
70 - 79	20 (6%)	13 (3.9%)	18 (5.1%)
60 - 69	53 (15.9%)	64 (19.2%)	66 (18.7%)
50 - 59	90 (27%)	90 (27%)	106 (30%)
40 - 49	77 (23.2%)	73 (22%)	83 (23.5%)
30 - 39	66 (19.8%)	56 (16.8%)	48 (13.6%)
20 - 29	23 (6.9%)	34 (10.2%)	28 (7.9%)
10 - 19	3 (0.9%)	1 (0.3%)	3 (0.9%)
Totals:	333	333	353

The Generations Defined

	Born Range	Age in 2015	% of Adult Population
The Greatest Generation	Before 1928	88 to 100	2%
The Silent Generation	1928 thru 1945	70 to 87	11%
Baby Boomer Generation	1946 to 1964	51 to 69	30%
Generation X	1965 to 1980	35 to 50	27%
Millennial Generation	After 1980	18 to 34	30%

We, as an association, represent the volunteer firefighters for the state of Texas. However, as you can interpret from the information, we are not meeting the needs of the five generations which make up our association. Furthermore, we know that the millennial generation now makes up almost 51% of our association, but only 28% attended the annual training conference and convention in 2015*. Conversely, the baby boomer generation represents 28% of association membership, but represented 49% of the 2015 conference attendees. Based on this statistical analysis, we, as an association, have not minded the generational gap.

The Vision 2040 Committee still has more homework to do. We will be, and already have in some instances, reaching out to the various committees of the association. Our goal is to continue to collect information so recommendations can be developed that are less based on opinion, but rather based on the facts and condition of the association. Recommendations present in the future will not be taken lightly and will be generated based on what is needed to propel the association forward to address the needs of its membership. We have an opportunity in front of us. Let's understand the issues and move forward for the future of the volunteer fire service.

BURKBURNETT VFD UTILIZES SAFETY, TRAINING & WELLNESS GRANT



Photo (left to right): Division chief Len Nauman, captain Pat Hanlon, fire chief Rodney Ryalls and firefighter Jon Morris.

Burkburnett VFD was one of the many departments in Texas to receive a grant from the 2015 Firefighter Safety, Training & Wellness Grant sponsored by VFIS of Texas and Texas Mutual Insurance Company.

Burkburnett Fire Chief Rodney Ryalls utilized their grant funds to enroll their members into a fitness and wellness program for firefighters through The First Twenty. The program addresses the areas of physical fitness, mental fitness and nutrition through online programs and mobile technology.

"We were looking to do some type of a health screening process," Chief Ryalls said "and we got with The First Twenty which offers an online process where we have all of our members tied to it." Other departments utilized the wellness grant for exercise equipment, gym membership and other health and wellness related programs.

For information on The First Twenty, go to thefirsttwenty.org.

THE FIRST TWENTY.ORG

The First Twenty is a non-profit dedicated to improving the health of the American firefighter. Our mission is to decrease Line of Duty Deaths due to heart attack in today's fire service.

About the Name

The First Twenty is a common expression in the fire service meaning that the first twenty minutes of a fire are the most crucial. It is twenty minutes that define the skill and judgment of a firefighter and often dictate the outcome. This critical and short window of time determines the difference between recovery or loss, as well as life or death for both the firefighter and the victims.

TRUSTED CHOICE VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT GRANT PROGRAM



Independent Insurance Agents of Texas

IIAT formed a relationship with the State Firefighters' and Fire Marshals' Association in 2011 when independent agents donated more than \$200,000 to purchase protective clothing for volunteer firefighters during the worst wildfire season on record.

The Trusted Choice Volunteer Fire Department Grant program awards grants up to \$5,000 to fire departments unsupported by tax revenues for the costs associated with fire safety campaigns in the

community and also for the purchase of new firefighting equipment.

In 2015 the following fire departments were awarded a grant:

Applesprings	New Berlin
Bandera	Ogburn
Campbell	Smithville
Central VFD	Southside
Cottonwood Shores	Tanglewood
Elm Mott	Vashti

CONGRATULATIONS!

IN MEMORIAM

BASTROP FD Otis Drake, Sr.	July 30, 2015
DUBLIN FD Chief James Fritts	September 1, 2015
EL CAMPO FD John Arnold	September 6, 2015
HEARNE FD Roy Crouch	August 4, 2015
INGLESIDE VFD Chief Chadwick Champion	August 21, 2015
RIVERS END FD Retired Chief Jim Welborn	May 28, 2015
SOUTHWEST BELL COUNTY VFD Dennis Manewal	August 11, 2015
TEEX Rosendo Garcia, Jr.	June 6, 2015



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This is a solicitation for insurance. A licensed agent will contact you. Policies have exclusions, limitations, reduction of benefits and terms under which the policies may be continued in force or discontinued. For cost and complete details of coverage call your insurance agent. THE LUMP SUM CANCER, HEART ATTACK AND STROKE POLICY provides limited benefits and should be used to supplement existing medical coverage. THE LUMP SUM CANCER POLICY IS A CANCER ONLY POLICY, which should be used to supplement existing medical coverage. Availability may vary by state.

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www.avis.com

Budget discount code: BCD X925500
Call: 800.527.0700
www.budget.com

Hertz discount code: CDP #1860896
Call: 800.654.2210

TRAVEL



AMBA Travel Perx

AMBA Travel Perx brings the best values in vacations to association members. Special offers are available on fantastic cruises, resorts and escorted tour vacations to the Caribbean, Mexico, Panama Canal, Europe, Alaska, South America, and Asia. **Members can call 1.800.480.4080 or visit www.ambatravelperx.com**



Cheap-O-Air

Save \$10 - \$25 off your airfare. SFFMA members must request a promocode prior to purchase. Promotions vary throughout the year.



Cheap-O-Stay

Save \$10 - \$25 on your stay with a choice of many hotels all over the world. Promotions vary throughout the year. Request a promocode via email.



Government Employee Travel Opportunities

This is a unique space-available vacation, condominium, hotel, and resort program exclusively for current and retired government employees and now open to our association members! Space-available condos are located worldwide and available for \$349.



La Quinta Inn & Suites

SFFMA members can get up to 25% off their nightly rate by providing a unique promocode when presenting their SFFMA ID card at check-in. Offer varies based on location, participation and availability. Check **www.lq.com** for more information.



Six Flags Fiesta Texas (San Antonio)

SFFMA members never have to pay retail again for admission to Six Flags Fiesta Texas. SFFMA general admission is \$34.99. That's 50% off the regular price! Tickets must be purchased ONLINE. Ask us to email you the special link.



Wyndam Hotel Group Code: 8000000406

Includes: Wyndam Garden, Wingate, Hawthorn Suites, Ramada, Days Inn, Super 8, Baymont Inn & Suites, Microtel Inns & Suites, Howard Johnson, Travel Lodge, Knights Inn

SUPPLEMENTAL PLANS**



Air Evac Lifeteam

AirMedCare Network providers can provide financial peace of mind for you and your family while extending this vital service to the community.

Contact: Randy Teague
Phone: 325.501.6278
Email: teaguerandy@air-evac.com
www.airmedcarenetwork.com



Aflac (Supplemental)

Reduce the out-of-pocket expenses caused by hospitalization or accidents. Aflac pays cash benefits directly to you!

Contact: David Espinosa
Phone: 512.535.5683
www.espinosaAgency.com



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Phone: 877.870.4447 Ext.8



Armed Forces Benefit Association (AFBA)

AFBA honors the mission set forth by its founders—to promote the welfare of its members and their families. They offer a free \$5,000 AD&D and LODD policy to SFFMA members' families. Schedule your meeting.

Contact: Jimmy Sewell
Phone: 210.379.0456
Email: jsewell@afbatx.org



Association Member Benefits Advisors (AMBA)

SFFMA Dental & Vision Program, First Diagnosis Cancer Plan, Medicare Supplement Life Insurance, Annuity, Identity Protection Medical Air Services Association
Phone: 800.258.7041



VFIS of Texas

SFFMA's longstanding partner and benefit provider. Any fire department insurance need can be fulfilled with VFIS's extensive coverage packages that include accident and sickness insurance, liability, property, etc.

Phone: 800-252-9435
Fax: 512-448-9929
Email: vfisoftexas@vfistx.com

DINING



myAMBA Dining

Enjoy dining out? Exploring local eateries? AMBA and restaurant.com have teamed up to offer members exclusive dining discount cards for use on restaurant.com. Buy your discounted gift certificate and save big on your next restaurant visit! Buy a \$5 gift card and get \$25 dining credit. Buy a \$10 gift card and get \$50 dining credit. Buy a \$20 gift card and get \$100 dining credit. **www.myambadining.com**

** SFFMA has negotiated a discounted rate on all the supplemental plans. (AMBA, Aflac, AFBA, AirEvac, AmeriDoc, VFIS of Texas). These plans are NOT included in your SFFMA membership.

VFIS OF TEXAS AND TEXAS MUTUAL SPONSOR SAFETY, TRAINING & WELLNESS GRANT

VFIS of Texas and Texas Mutual Insurance Company have once again partnered together to sponsor an Emergency Responder Safety, Training and Wellness Grant for 2016. This is the 3rd consecutive year that VFIS of Texas and Texas Mutual have sponsored this grant in cooperation with SFFMA.

For 2016, this grant can be used for:

- Individual certification dues for departments NOT currently participating in a certification program.
- Course materials and travel costs to attend training for Incident Safety Officer, Leadership or Driver/Operator courses.
- Health and Wellness programs including physicals, health screenings, exercise equipment, gym membership, or anything to do with health and wellness.

For those of you planning to attend the new SFFMA Fire Chief Enhancement Program, this grant can be used to reimburse your transportation costs to attend the training in Austin. Room and board for the program will be included in your registration and is being provided by SFFMA, VFIS of Texas and Texas Mutual.

The grant period is now open and will remain open until **December 31, 2015**. The grant application can be obtained at www.vfistx.com or call the VFIS of Texas office at 800-252-9435.

Don't delay! Submit your grant application before the end of the year!



VFIS UNIVERSITY

In our continuous efforts to improve safety and operations in the Emergency Services through education, training, risk management and insurance programs, VFIS has joined forces with TargetSolutions in the development of a distance-learning program, now available at VFISu.com.

Without question, distance learning is the method of education and training for the future. Courses traditionally taken in the classroom have been converted to a computer-based application, making training more available to your emergency personnel.

Existing VFIS distance learning programs have been revised and re-introduced with the release of VFIS University. These VFIS risk management-based programs are available for use 24/7, 365 days a year.

At this time, the following list of VFIS courses are available from VFIS University:

- 100: Introduction to Distance Learning
- 103: Leadership
- 104: Seat Belt Safety
- 106: Sexual Harassment Prevention
- 108: Reputational Risk for Emergency Service Organizations
- 109: Background Checks
- 110: Ergonomics
- 111: Social Media Issues, Concerns and Remedies for Fire & EMS Agencies
- 112: Financial Management of Fire & EMS Agencies
- 113: Recruitment and Retention of Emergency Service Personnel
- 114: Slip, Trip and Fall Prevention
- 115: Ten Key Issues Affecting Safe Vehicle Operations
- 207: Safe Backing Practices for Emergency Services
- 210: Emergency Vehicle Rollover Prevention
- Drive Safe
- Let's Talk – Sexual Abuse and Misconduct

VFIS University also offers more than 100 programs from TargetSolutions. These quality training programs are known and used throughout the country. In addition, EMS programs offered by TargetSolutions have Continuing Education Coordinating Board for Emergency Medical Services (CECBEMS) accreditations.

The VFIS courses are available to VFIS clients free of charge and the TargetSolutions programs are available for a fee. VFIS will be working diligently with TargetSolutions to jointly develop the type of training programs emergency responders need to help perform their job safely. These programs are currently in research and development and will be released and announced as they become available.



MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

COMPUTERS



Apple Discount

Members qualify for preferred pricing on some of the latest Apple products and accessories. Apple member purchase program benefits include special member discounts on Apple products, quarterly promotions, free standard shipping on orders over \$50, free engraving on iPod, online custom product configuration, and simplified checkout using any combination of credit card, Apple Gift Card and Apple Instant Loan. **Phone: 1.877.377.6362**
<http://store.apple.com/us/go/eppstore/amba>
When calling, use discount code "AMBA"
*Discounts not available on all items. Check with Apple by phone or online to verify discounted items.



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Dell now offers members special pricing under their Employee Purchase program **Phone: 866.257.4711**
www.dell.com/epp
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DISCOUNTS ON SERVICES



Assets-In-Order

This online service is 256-bit encrypted, equal to security levels used by banks. Includes 1 GB of storage of any important information your family might need in case of your passing. SFFMA members get a free 1-year Legacy Lockbox Heritage Membership! **Phone: 888.840.1213**



BAKFlip Tonneau Covers

The BAKflip Tonneau Cover/Truck Bed Cover is the newest generation of hard, folding, multi-panel tonneau covers! Enjoy all the security of a locking hard tonneau cover and have instant access to your entire truck bed! SFFMA members receive \$75 off their purchase. Limited to one per customer. Request a promo code by emailing: membership@sffma.org.



California Casualty

Find the best value in auto insurance with California Casualty. Call now for a free, no-obligation rate quote! Special firefighter program available! **Contact: Brandon Watson**
Phone: 866.477.7423
Email: bwatson@calcas.com



Dignity Memorial

SFFMA Bereavement Program offers savings on funeral/cremation products and services. Discount based on the arrangements made through a Dignity Memorial service provider in your area.



Elite Financing Group, LLC (Real Estate Services)

This Texas based lender goes above and beyond to meet your mortgage needs. They provide professional service and take care of all their clients. Let them be a part of your home loan process and see why people love doing business with Elite Financing Group! Services: Purchase of a home, Conventional Loan, FHA Loan, VA Loans, Refinancing, Down Payment Assistance.
Contact: Jorge Aldrete
Phone: 512-699-5267, Fax: 512-532-0840



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Low-priced legal advice and protection! LegalShield gives you the power to talk to an attorney about any personal legal issue. Whether it's big, small or somewhere in between, your LegalShield-provider law firm will be there to offer advice or assistance on a variety of issues. They offer advice, consultation and representation. Membership even includes attorney fees in trial defense services (see plan for details). This is a monthly membership, \$18.95/month for SFFMA members (and it covers your whole family).
Contact: Mari Garza
Phone: 512.454.3473 Ext.106
Website: www.legalshield.com/info/sffmatx



MedeStat MedeStat

This is a free service that aims to reduce the cost of health care by providing important information vital to the patient's health via specialized QR-code system. If you know you have a special medical condition, take medication, or have food allergies, this free QR program could save your life! It can even store your emergency contact information. SFFMA members are encouraged to use the free basic service to create their own MedeStat label. Medestat also has upgraded products that can be updated remotely.



Monitronics

Get professionally monitored home security for \$10 a month, with a 36-month contract discount on monthly service. **Phone 800.615.4225**



SAVVIK
BUYING GROUP

Savvik Buying Group (formerly known as North Central EMS Cooperative, or some just know us as "the CO-OP"), is one of the largest pre-hospital buying groups in the United States. Our non-profit represents over 4,400 EMS, Fire, Law Enforcement groups in all 50 states, plus some others across the globe. We have been fortunate enough to have national contracts with some of the largest EMS vendors for many years. Vendors like: Grainger, Office Depot, Best Buy, Henry Schein, AT&T, ZOLL, and many many more have been bid out and awarded and ready for you to link and use. By being a part of the SFFMA you are already a member of our buying group and can access our discounts! **Please visit our website <http://savvik.org> and see all of our vendor partner who have access to. Need to talk to someone? Call us at 1-888-603-4426. We will be happy to help.**



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Contact: Ajax Daugherty
Phone 214.766.7056
Email: ajax@ajaxpower.com

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at&t

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Our custom designed 3-story tower sets up at your facility in just a matter of minutes. Combined with our on-line curriculum, your department will have access to everything from a basic refresher to full NFPA compliant training. FD International has the best instructors in the business. We have real world, hands on experience from performing high angle rescues.

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JEFF CLIFTON
jeff@fd-intl.com



KEN HENSON
ken@fd-intl.com



FRANCES ARNOLD
frances@fd-intl.com



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MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

MEMBER BENEFITS CONTINUED



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TRAINING MATERIALS



National Volunteer Fire Council

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SFFMA

SFFMA store offers training materials and SFFMA merchandise. SFFMA members take advantage of the best discount prices available from a variety of publishers.

Contact: Julie Beauchamp

Phone: 512.454.3473 Ext 105

Email: Sales@sffma.org



Target Solutions

Accredited training for EMS continuing education. Track and record hands-on training. There is no software necessary. Receive up to a \$30 discount on Prevention Link professional online training!

Contact: Robbi King

Phone: 713.701.9298

FINANCIAL



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When you compare RBFCU to other local financial institutions, it's easy to see the value that comes with membership in our credit union. RBFCU households save an average of \$432 per year compared to bank customers, and about \$130 annually compared to those other credit unions. Forty-five branch locations throughout south central Texas.



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4TH VICE PRESIDENT**

McAllen 2016



SFFMA

- Firefighter of the Year 2011
- Secretary 2001 - 2010
- Currently serving on Combination Committee
- Past member of the Finance, Credentials, Constitution and By-Laws and Sergeant-At-Arms Committees

North Texas District

- Firefighter of the Year 2010
- Past President and Secretary

Alvarado FD

- Joined in 1977, Fire Chief since 1989

Certifications

- SFFMA Advanced
- TCFP Head of Department

817.538.2313

vanwinkler@cityofalvarado.org



For 61 years strong, and counting, firefighters across the nation have muscled up to fill boots to support the ongoing mission of the Muscular Dystrophy Association. MDA sends out a BIG "Thank You" to all

the firefighters throughout Texas for your support and continued dedication. Some of the services you have helped to fund are support groups, medical clinics, equipment repairs, and summer camps.

In addition, your hard work has helped fund 36 new research and development grants to fight muscular dystrophy, ALS (amyotrophic lateral sclerosis) and related diseases that limit muscle strength and mobility. Eight of these new grants were awarded to scientists conducting cutting-edge research to better understand ALS, and to identify new drug targets aimed at stopping this devastating disease. These new grants are now supporting some of the world's leading ALS researchers as they work to uncover the secrets ALS holds and unlock the pathways to treatments and cures.

None of this is possible without the firefighters who work so diligently on behalf of MDA. Thank you so much for your hard work for our families! You ARE Progress!!



Call Our Confidential Fire/EMS Helpline at:
1-888-731-FIRE (3473)



IF YOU SEE NO WAY OUT
THEN JUST REACH OUT

MAKE THE CALL TO MAKE THINGS BETTER

Talk to someone you love. Talk to a friend or colleague.
Or, talk to counselors trained and experienced in
the firefighter and EMT culture by calling the national
Fire/EMS Helpline: **1-888-731-FIRE (3473)**.

Find resources to Share the Load at www.nvfc.org/help.

PERSISTENT SADNESS • SUICIDAL THOUGHTS • SUBSTANCE ABUSE • WORK/LIFE STRESSES

SUSTAINING MEMBERS

Below is an alphabetical listing of current SFFMA Sustaining Members. Sustaining Membership is available to any company interested in exhibiting at the SFFMA Annual Conference & Convention. Please keep these companies in mind when purchasing new apparatus, equipment and services.

A

Advanced Rescue Systems WILLIAMS, BRYAN
3459 FM 36 S
Caddo Mills, TX 75135-6773
Phone: 903.527.3841
Email: advancedrescue@hotmail.com

AG-Meier, Inc.
HAYS, BILLY
920 East 6th Avenue
Belton, TX 76513-2712
Phone: 979.451.3855
Email: billy@ami-fire.com

Akron Brass Co.
PONTING, SAMANTHA
PO Box 86
Wooster, OH 44691-0086
Phone: 800.228.1161
Email: sponting@akronbrass.com

Allied Breathing Air, LLC
CONGER, JOE
4518 Texana Drive
Baytown, TX 77523
Phone: 713.828.5911
Email: joe.conger@alliedba.com

America's Command Training
COLURCIELLO, JOSEPH
194 Mineral Springs Rd.
Lockhart, TX 78644-4196
Phone: 512.801.2666
Email: joe.conger@alliedba.com

Applied Force Technologies
WATKINS, BOB
2409 Colleen Dr
Pearland, TX 77581-5403
Phone: 832.289.2135
Email: bob@appliedforcetech.com

B

Buckstop Truckware Inc.
HARTFIELD, SHAWN
2734 SW High Desert Dr. Ste 105
Prineville, OR 97754-9412
Phone: 503.554.0001
Email: shawn@buckstop.biz

C

California Casualty
ALMEIDA, LISA
PO Box M
San Mateo, CA 94402-0080
Phone: 800.964.3903 ext. 5920
Email: bwatson@calcas.com

Casco Industries
MURRAY, RAYMOND
607 W 62nd St
Shreveport, LA 71106-2913
Phone: 800.551.8787
Email: raymond@cascoindustries.com

CE Solutions
LUBITZ, LINDA
PO Box 3004
Marble Falls, TX 78654-3076
Phone: 512.715.9333
Email: support@ems-ce.com

Chief Fire & Safety Co. Inc.
PAYNE, RICHARD
927 S 4th St
Chickasha, OK 73018-4655
Phone: 405.224.2596
Email: rpayne@chiefire-safety.com

Consolidated Traffic Controls, Inc.
AYERS, DAVID
1016 Enterprise Place
Arlington, TX 76001-7140
Phone: 817.265.3421
Email: president@ctc-traffic.com

D

Daco Fire Equipment Co
DOBMEIER, GARRETT
PO Box 5006
Lubbock, TX 79408-5006
Phone: 806.763.0808
Email: garrett@dacofire.com

Deep South Fire Trucks, Inc.
TAYLOR, RONNIE
11 Wayne Dr
Woodville, TX 75979-4004
Phone: 601.722.4166
Email: cronnietyaylor@gmail.com

Del Mar College - Regional Fire Academy
THIEME, WALTER
101 Baldwin Blvd
Corpus Christi, TX 78404-3805
Phone: 361.698.1724
Email: wthieme@delmar.edu

Dooley Tackaberry
KRISTENSEN, JESPER
8001 Boat Club Road Ste B
Fort Worth, TX 76179
Phone: 830.480.2485
Email: jesper105@live.dk

E

Elkhart Brass Mfg. Co., Inc.
BENN, RACHELE
1302 W Beardsley Ave
Elkhart, IN 46514-1891
Phone: 574.295.8330
Email: rbenn@elkhartbrass.com

Extraco Insurance
RICE, JUDY
18 S Main Street
Temple, TX 76501-7652
Phone: 254.774.5905
Email: jrrice@extracobanks.com

F

Farrwest Environmental Supply
TARTER, PAUL
108 Commercial Place
Schertz, TX 78154
Phone: 210.566.1857
Email: ptarter@farrwestenv.com

FD International, Inc.
CLIFTON, Jeff
1129 Underwood Rd.
Aledo, TX 76008-2458
Phone: 817.578.1224
Email: jeff@fd-intl.com

Ferrara Fire Apparatus, Inc.
JOHNSON, MIKE
PO Box 249
Holden, LA 70744-0249
Phone: 225.567.7100
Email: mike.johnson@ferrarafire.com

Fire in Texas
GOTHARD, RONNIE
1334 Sharon Ln
Sulphur Springs, TX 75482-5509
Phone: 903.438.0300
Email: dedee@fireintexas.com

FIREHOUSE Solutions - A Xerox Company
ROGERS, MIKE
10051 Barton Cir
Frisco, TX 75035-6667
Phone: 888.941.3473
Email: mike.rogers@firehousesoftware.com

Firehouse Trophies and Gifts
MORGANS, KAY
12525 Skyline Dr
Jenks, OK 74037-4917
Phone: 918.528.6119
Email: morgansk@cox.net

Fires Foundation
15800 Highway 2
Webster, TX 77598-6106
Phone: 754.214.6901
Email: querlyromero@outlook.com

Fisher Sportswear
FISHER, BARRY
6672 Lincoln Dr
Philadelphia, PA 19119-3118
Phone: 215.755.8565
Email: barry@fishersportswear.com

G

Global Traffic Technologies
LOGUE, TRISH
7800 3rd St N Ste 100
Saint Paul, MN 55128-5452
Phone: 214.548.2497
Email: trish.logue@gtt.com

Government Capital Corporation
SANDERS, MICHELLE
345 Miron Dr
Southlake, TX 76092-7826
Phone: 800.883.1199
Email: trade.show@govcap.com

H

Hall-Mark Fire Apparatus Texas LLC
HOLMES, MARIA
2805 Singleton
Rowlett, TX 75088
Phone: 713.962.9708
Email: mholmes@hall-markfire.com

Heavenly Insoles
MCADAMS, CURTISS
116 Silverleaf Dr.
Fort Worth, TX 76112-1129
Phone: 817.673.0543
Email: curtiss@heavenlyinsoles.com

Hoyt Breathing Air Products
HOYT, PETE
PO Box 653
Quinlan, TX 75474-0011
Phone: 903.447.3385
Email: l Hoyt4033@aol.com

I

Industrial Safety Training Council
PHILP, JIM
324 N Memorial Fwy
Nederland, TX 77627-7150
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**NVFC LAUNCHES VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT
PORTAL FOR FIRE DEPARTMENTS TO COMBAT
DECLINING VOLUNTEERISM**

The National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC) launched the department portal component of its new Make Me a Firefighter volunteer recruitment campaign. Departments can now sign up at <http://portal.nvfc.org> to join the campaign and showcase their volunteer opportunities.

Volunteer firefighters make up 69 percent of the nation's fire service, yet the number of volunteers has declined by about 12 percent since 1984. At the same time, call volume has nearly tripled. In addition, the average age of the volunteer fire service is increasing as departments are finding it difficult to reach millennials – those within the 18-34 age range.

To help departments counter these trends and increase the number of volunteers, the NVFC was awarded a SAFER grant from FEMA to conduct a nationwide recruitment campaign. The first component of the Make Me a Firefighter campaign consists of a department portal where volunteer and combination fire departments can register for the campaign and post their volunteer opportunities. This fall, the NVFC will also be releasing resources through the campaign to help local fire departments recruit members. NVFC research has shown that there is strong interest in volunteering among millennials and minority audiences, and helping departments reach these largely untapped markets is a main goal of the campaign.

“Recruitment is a challenge for many volunteer and combination departments across the country,” said NVFC Chairman Kevin D. Quinn. “Yet our research shows that 44 percent of millennials are interested in volunteering with their local department. Many simply don't know the need for volunteerism exists. The Make Me a Firefighter campaign will help build awareness among the public as well as provide departments with the tools and resources they need to recruit to this and other target audiences.”

Register with the recruitment campaign
and post your opportunities now
at <http://portal.nvfc.org>.



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EMPLOYMENT EXAMS: HOW FIRE DEPARTMENTS MAY FAIL THE TEST

by Mark Smith, JD, MBA, SPHR, SHRM-SCP

The practice of using written examinations to qualify candidates for jobs or promotions is common among many fire departments in Texas and throughout the United States. Unfortunately, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (“EEOC”) and the U.S. Department of Justice have recently prosecuted discrimination claims against several large departments who use these exams.

Plaintiffs who file claims with the EEOC related to these tests typically assert a theory of discrimination liability known as disparate impact. Essentially, they claim the employment tests disproportionately affect a particular protected class (i.e. a specific race).

A recent example is the \$99 million settlement the City of New York paid in March 2014 to black and Hispanic applicants to the Fire Department of New York.¹ In the New York case, the Department of Justice alleged the city’s “use of Written Exams 7029 and 2043 ... had an unlawful disparate impact on black and Hispanic applicants and did not adequately determine who was or was not qualified for the job of entry-level firefighter.” Similar cases have occurred in many jurisdictions, including Chicago² and Austin³.

The basis for liability in these disparate impact cases is the EEOC’s Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures⁴. The Uniform Guidelines do not prohibit the use of employment tests. However, they place several criteria on their use.

First, the test must not create an adverse impact on a protected class. This is measured using the 4/5ths or 80 percent rule.

The group with the highest passing rate is compared to the other groups taking the test. If any of the other groups do not have a passing rate of 80 percent or more of the highest group, the EEOC considers this evidence of an adverse impact.

Using the example chart, the white test takers passed with a 72 percent pass rate. This was the highest group taking the test. The black takers passed with a 62 percent rate which was 87 percent of the white pass rate. That means there was no adverse impact using the 80 percent rule for black candidates. However, the Hispanic takers passed with a 57 percent rate and only 79 percent compared to white candidates. This establishes some evidence of an adverse impact.

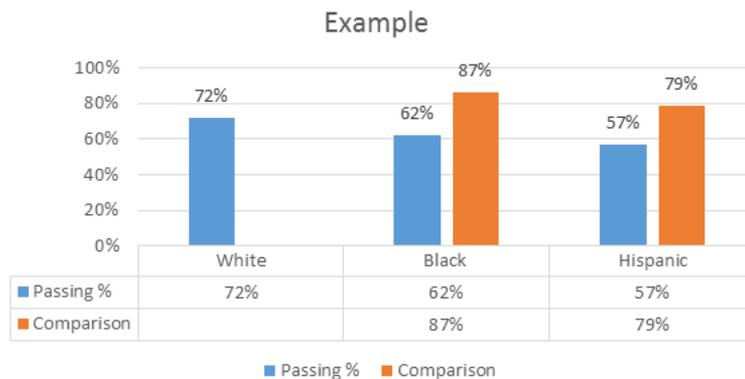
Second, the test must be statistically valid. To be valid, the test must accurately assess the candidate’s capacity to successfully perform the job. This is measured using three types of validity: content validity, criterion validity, and construct validity. Content validity involves justifying selection procedure by showing it representatively samples significant parts of the job. Criterion validity involves justifying selection procedure by a statistical relationship between scores on the test and measures of job performance. In other words, the test helps predict good job performance. Construct validity involves identifying the

The EEOC has provided some examples of tests which must meet the Uniform Guidelines. They are:

- Cognitive tests assess reasoning, memory, perceptual speed and accuracy, and skills in arithmetic and reading comprehension, as well as knowledge of a particular function or job;
- Physical ability tests measure the physical ability to perform a particular task or the strength of specific muscle groups, as well as strength and stamina in general;
- Sample job tasks (e.g., performance tests, simulations, work samples, and realistic job previews) assess performance and aptitude on particular tasks;
- Medical inquiries and physical examinations, including psychological tests, assess physical or mental health;
- Personality tests and integrity tests assess the degree to which a person has certain traits or dispositions (e.g., dependability, cooperativeness, safety) or aim to predict the likelihood that a person will engage in certain conduct (e.g., theft, absenteeism);
- Criminal background checks provide information on arrest and conviction history;
- Credit checks provide information on credit and financial history;
- Performance appraisals reflect a supervisor’s assessment of an individual’s performance; and
- English proficiency tests determine English fluency.

If a fire department uses testing for job candidates, it should implement some of the following best practices:

1. Fire departments should administer tests and other selection procedures without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age (40 or older), or disability.
2. Fire departments should ensure that employment tests and other selection procedures are properly validated for the positions and purposes for which they are used. The test or selection procedure must be job-related and its results appropriate for the employer’s purpose. While a test vendor’s documentation supporting the validity of a test may be helpful, the employer is still responsible for ensuring that its tests are valid under UGESP.
3. If a selection procedure screens out a protected group, the employer should determine whether there is an equally effective alternative selection procedure that has less adverse impact and, if so, adopt the alternative procedure. For example, if the selection procedure is a test, the employer should determine whether another test would predict job performance but not disproportionately exclude the protected group.



¹ See *U.S. v. City of New York (FDNY)*, 637 F. Supp. 2d 77 (E.D.N.Y. 2009) (<http://www.justice.gov/crt-fdny/overview>).

² See <http://abc7chicago.com/news/thousands-of-applicants-take-chicago-firefighters-entrance-exam/435296/>.

³ See <http://www.latipost.com/articles/2567/20131001/austin-fire-department-hiring-minorities-eoc-finds-discrimination-against-black.htm>.

⁴ See 29 CFR 1607.

psychological trait which underlies successful job performance.

Validation includes a thorough job analysis. The job analysis should be tailored to provide the information required for the type of validation strategy selected for the test.

**EMPLOYMENT EXAMS:
HOW FIRE DEPARTMENTS MAY FAIL THE TEST - *continued***

4. To ensure that a test or selection procedure remains predictive of success in a job, fire departments should keep abreast of changes in job requirements and should update the test specifications or selection procedures accordingly.

5. Fire departments should ensure that tests and selection procedures are not adopted casually by managers who know little about these processes. A test or selection procedure can be an effective management tool, but no test or selection procedure should be implemented without an understanding of its effectiveness and limitations for the organization, its appropriateness for a specific job, and whether it can be appropriately administered and scored.

Employment tests can be a good way to select potentially successful candidates for many job positions. However, they can lead to employment discrimination claims if they are not properly validated and implemented. Using the best practices above should keep your department out of the proverbial frying pan. ■

Mark has been a licensed attorney in Texas since 1999. He has worked on both sides of the bar – representing plaintiffs in cases involving employment law, contract disputes, personal injury claims, and other legal matters and businesses as general counsel.

Since 2004, Mark has represented Harris County Emergency Corps (“HCEC”, formerly Harris County Emergency Services District No. 1), a premier EMS agency in Southeast Texas. During that time, he served as Vice President of Administration and General Counsel for the organization of 200+ employees and volunteers and serving more than 400,000 residents of Harris County, Texas.

Since returning to private practice, Mark has added a number of small businesses to his growing practice, including Manvel EMS, Angleton Area Emergency Medical Services, Inc., Art & Kustom Kreations, the Wellness Integration Center, Deep South Builders, LLC, and more. Mark is certified as a Senior Professional in Human Resources (SPHR) and a Senior Certified Professional (SHRM-SCP), which exemplifies Mark’s expertise to help small and mid-size businesses with their employment-related legal and general business issues. He is also a current SFFMA sustaining member.



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WOLFFORTH CHIEF NAMED IAFC VOLUNTEER FIRE CHIEF OF THE YEAR



The International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) and Pierce Manufacturing announced the 2015 winners of the annual IAFC Fire Chief of the Year awards at Fire-Rescue International. Volunteer Fire Chief Dr. Charles Addington II, of Wolfforth (Texas) Fire & EMS, and career Fire Chief Dan Eggleston, of the Albemarle County (Virginia) Department of Fire Rescue, are this year's recipients.

Every year, winners selected by an IAFC-appointed committee are honored for their dedication and leadership in fire and emergency services.

The accomplishments of Chief Charles Addington II reflect a unique individual whose career is epitomized by excellence and a drive to serve his community, region and state as a fire chief, physician, medical director, mayor, teacher and businessman. He joined Wolfforth Fire and EMS in 1996. He is currently in his 20th year with the department and 15th as its fire chief.

A member of the Wolfforth Fire Department since 1996, Dr. Addington was named its Firefighter of the Year in 2001. He is the chief of the Wolfforth Fire Academy, which trains 60+ students each year using the curriculum of the Texas Commission on Fire Protection. Chief Addington is also a member of the IAFC, the Texas Association of Fire Chiefs and the Texas State Firefighters' and Fire Marshals' Association—EMS Advisory Board, as well as many other professional medical organizations.

In 2012, Chief Addington completed the four-year National Fire Academy Executive Fire Officer Program in two and one-half years. He has also completed the Texas A&M Fire Service Chief Executive Officer course.



I would like to take this opportunity and thank everyone for their support during my campaign for the SFFMA State Mascot. I would also like to thank my home department West Carlisle Fire/EMS for their continued support! I look forward to working with the SFFMA Board and all members. Please keep in mind that one of my main goals this year is to raise money for MDA, so please open your heart and your wallet and let's raise money for research and send kids to camp! Thank you in advance for your support in raising money for such a great cause!!

Macey Kennon
State Mascot 2015-2016

MUENSTER VFD

Congratulations to Muenster VFD members for receiving recognition from Representative Drew Springer's office for Firefighter I completion.



Left to right: Jim Koelzer, Representative Drew Springer, Henry Knabe, Mitch Creed, Herbie Knabe, Ben Bindel, Brent Hess, John Yosten, Bert Walterscheid, Shaw Henscheid, Ronnie Felderhoff.



Fellow Firefighters,

I would like to take a moment to thank everyone for their support during my campaign for 4th Vice President of the SFFMA.

During my journey across this great state for the past 2 years of campaigning, I was blessed to meet a large number of firefighters and emergency responders from every corner of the state.

I certainly wish I could remember all the names, but I do recall they all had one thing in common-DEDICATION TO SERVICE. It certainly renews one's faith in the human race when you have the opportunity to meet people driven only by the need to help their fellow man.

I would like to thank my wife Billie, my kids Chris and Emily, my Assistant Chief Rudy Morales, my officer staff and firefighters at West Carlisle Fire/EMS as well as my entire family for their continued support.

I would also like to thank YOU---the firefighters of the great state of Texas. Without your support and dedication all this would be for nothing.

I make the promise that I will work hard for YOU and for the fire service in Texas.

Keep your head on a swivel and always stay safe.

Sincerely,

Tim Smith, RN, BSN, EMT-P
Fire Chief/EMS Director
West Carlisle Fire/EMS
Lubbock, Texas

TEEN DRIVERS AND YOUR INSURANCE RATES



Maybe you've seen the headline, "Teen Drivers Double Family Auto Insurance Rates." It's true, having a teen driver in the family will drive up the price you pay for auto insurance. A new report from insuranceQuotes.com found that adding a teenage boy to a policy resulted in a 92 percent higher insurance premium on average, adding a teen girl driver resulted in a 67 percent increase.

Insurance experts say premium increases for teens make sense; they are inexperienced drivers who often drive riskier and don't recognize hazards associated with driving. Crash rates for teens are three times higher than those who are 20 years of age or older. Since our children are priceless, it is important to make sure we purchase insurance to protect them and others.

If you have a teen driver, here are ways to manage the insurance costs:

- Take advantage of good student discounts
- Purchase cars that have modern safety features
- Consider a monitoring system that tracks your young driver's habits
- Enroll in a defensive driving course
- Try to cut driving miles by carpooling and using mass transit
- Stick to lower horsepower vehicles
- Find an insurer who treats teens as responsible drivers

The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety has a list of recommended used vehicles that are safest for younger drivers which could cost less to insure.

They include:

- Saab 9-5 sedan, 2010 and newer
- Lincoln MKS, 2009 and newer
- Toyota Prius v, 2012 and newer
- Mercedes Benz C-Class Sedan, 2009 and newer
- Acura RL, 2005 and newer
- Mercury Sable, 2009
- Subaru Legacy, 2009
- BMW 3-series sedan, 2006 and newer

The IIHS also urges parents who don't find the suitable vehicle from the list to seek a midsize or larger car, SUV or minivan with the most safety features they can afford.

They also recommend:

- Young drivers stay away from high horsepower vehicles
- Bigger, heavier vehicles protect better in a crash (no minicars or small cars made their list)
- Electronic stability and traction controls should be included

California Casualty has a commitment to the safety of teen drivers. We've partnered with law enforcement agencies, safety groups, educators and concerned parents to create and fund **Impact Teen Drivers**, an intensive campaign to inform young drivers about the dangers of distracted or reckless driving. The nonprofit provides training and powerful tools to help engage teen drivers and change their attitudes behind the wheel.

California Casualty also understands what it is like to have a new driver. We offer some of the best teen driver rates in the industry, along with **good student discounts**. Make sure your student driver is fully protected by calling a California Casualty advisor and talking through your options, 1.800.800.9410 or by visiting www.calcas.com/SFFMA.

Resources for this article:

- <http://www.usatoday.com/story/money/cars/2015/06/15/high-insurance-rates-for-teen-drivers/71150888/>
- <http://www.insurancequotes.com/auto/teen-driver-safety-apps>
- <http://www.dmv.org/insurance/how-to-save-money-on-teen-car-insurance.php>
- <http://www.iihs.org/teenvehicles>
- <http://www.whatdoyouconsiderlethal.com/>

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THE BEREAVEMENT UNIFORM PROGRAM

Taking care of those who took care of us.™

It's about love. It's about linking and it's about 'family'.

The below note was received from a family in a small town in Pennsylvania who recently took advantage of the Bereavement Uniform Program (BUP). It could just as easily been from a small town in Texas. The 'you' being referred to are all who joined the BUP effort and made it possible.

Please help get the word out. One day it will make a difference to someone you know.

"I would love to thank you for the uniform that you graciously donated for my father. My dad started helping at the fire station when he was 10 years old. Then he devoted 57 years to the station. It was very fitting to see my dad in that uniform. I just can't thank you enough". Christian Glenn & Family. (Printed by permission).

The Bereavement Uniform Program (BUP) is a coming together of the Lighthouse Uniform Company and America's Fire Service Community, with the **shared goal of ensuring every firefighter, paid or volunteer, active or retired, has the opportunity to be recognized for their service with a Class A in which to answer their 'last call', at no cost to the family.**

The BUP is a collective effort in the purest form. Departments and individuals donate their surplus Class A uniforms. The Lighthouse cleans, refurbishes and makes them ready and available at no cost to any family or department requesting one and who would otherwise have no means to honor their fallen in such a traditional way. **It does not matter if the death was in the line of duty or years after ending service, every firefighter can receive this ultimate honor.**

A Bereavement Uniform Program Playbook (history, evolution, instructions and tools for getting your department 'linked up') is available upon request. There is neither cost nor obligation. To get your dept. 'linked up', email steve@lighthouseuniform.com and ask for a BUP I.O.U. Playbook.



MISSING MAINTENANCE RECORDS TAINT DEPARTMENT REPUTATIONS

By David Cain

Apparatus and equipment continue to get more and more complex. Couple that with the fact that firefighters are being asked to specialize in more areas than ever before, and it's easy to see why maintenance checks often take a back seat. But incomplete or non-existent maintenance records can – and have – come back to haunt departments across the country.

Just as thieves gravitate toward the most vulnerable targets, so do opportunistic attorneys and reporters looking to dig up some dirt. If your records aren't complete and current, you might as well paint a target across your chest. Even if you're not targeted right now, you sure will be once something goes wrong.

You do everything possible to protect the firefighters in your department. You spend thousands of hours training them so that they're prepared when the alarm sounds. But do you do the same when it comes to their equipment? If your equipment isn't ready when the alarm sounds, your firefighters – and the community you serve – could be in trouble. When it comes to proving compliance with your maintenance inspections, ask yourself these questions:

1. Can you say with certainty that your maintenance checks and corresponding logs documenting those checks are up to date and complete right now?
2. If someone walks in asking about specific items in your maintenance logs, could you find the right information immediately?
3. Do you know without a doubt that all of your maintenance records are where they should be and that absolutely nothing is missing or misfiled? Unless you can answer "yes" confidently to all these questions, you've got a problem. And if you have a problem, what are you going to do about it? In today's high-pressure, overwhelmed work environment, too many times those responsible hide their heads in the sand, hoping they won't get caught. And if something does happen, they have excuses galore at the ready.

Too bad the readiness of excuses doesn't match up with what should be the readiness and relevance of apparatus and equipment maintenance records.

In our personal lives, most of us have become comfortable using digital solutions for everything from paying bills to buying products. But when it comes to using technology in our departments, that comfort isn't as strong. While emergency and incident reporting in the fire industry are mostly logged digitally (due in large part to NFIRS regulations), most departments still use paper logs when it comes to their maintenance records.

While there are programs out there that schedule and log maintenance checks, paper logbooks are still the norm in a majority of fire departments. Paper logs are arduous and time-consuming, not to mention bulky and difficult to search through. By contrast, digital record-keeping systems ensure that everything is being checked and handled in a timely way. Every check is captured in a database, so viewing the maintenance history of a particular vehicle or apparatus can be done quickly and reliably. So if someone comes in asking for proof of a maintenance record, it can be found in a few clicks.

Besides automating the scheduling process, many programs offer the ability to send out alerts when something needs to be fixed. With PStrax.com, for instance, users have the ability to send alerts directly from their system to officers or maintenance shops if they come across an issue during their checks.

Bullet-proof documentation is the greatest benefit of digital systems, should something go wrong. Instead of fumbling around trying to piece together specifics about what happened, personnel have all the information at their fingertips. While this may not eliminate fallout from a problem, it establishes clear accountability so that it can be corrected going forward, and paints the department as proactive, rather than incompetent or defensive.

Other benefits of digitizing maintenance records include:

- Less likelihood of maintenance-related incidents or accidents, safeguarding lives, property and reputation;
- Turning the Achilles Heel of many departments into a shining example of forward-thinking and top-notch organization, in turn enhancing the department's reputation both internally and in the community-at-large;
- Ability to meet challenges posed by those desiring to inspect records quickly, instead of wasting extraordinary amounts of time and energy trying to comply with requests.

In today's lawsuit-happy world, it's critical to reduce risks and exposure. Taking your maintenance checks paperless is one key way to protect yourself and your department.

David Cain was deputy chief with the Boulder (Colo.) Fire Department for 34 years. Since his retirement in 2013, he has worked as a consultant for PStrax.com, a cloud-based service that digitizes fire department apparatus and equipment checks. You can reach Chief Cain at david@pstrax.com or 303-972-9444.



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2nd Place
Xavier Garcia - Pleasanton FD



3rd Place
Xavier Garcia - Pleasanton FD

LIFE SAVING ACTS



1st Place
Xavier Garcia - Pleasanton FD



2nd Place
Lauralee Veitch -
Community VFD



3rd Place
Thomas McDonald - Friendswood VFD

EDUCATION & PUBLIC SAFETY



1st Place
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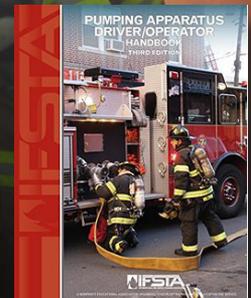
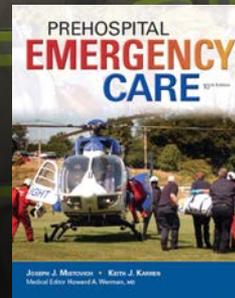
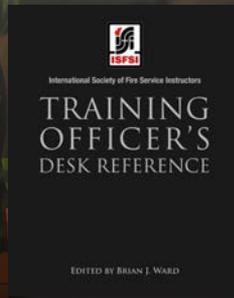
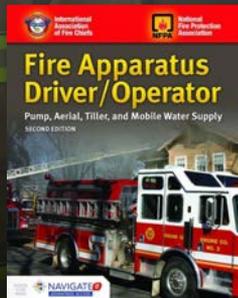
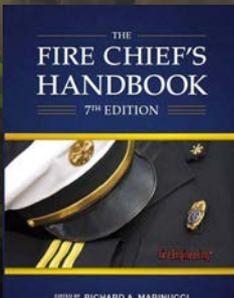
2nd Place
Thomas McDonald
Friendswood VFD



3rd Place
Jim Philp - B.E.S.T. Complex



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A CENTURY OF SERVICE: PREVENTING AND FIGHTING WILDFIRES FOR 100 YEARS

by Jessica Jackson, Communications Specialist - information for this article was gathered from Dr. Ronald Billings' book "A Century of Forestry 1914-2014: Texas Forestry Association and Texas A&M Forest Service"

Texas A&M Forest Service has a long history of protecting Texas from wildfires. Since being established, the main mission of the agency has been to conserve and protect the state's natural resources. Over the past 100 years, the agency has accomplished many feats, including establishing itself as the premier agency in all-hazard response. From the early days of fighting wildfires with fire flaps, to using advanced technology to combat some of the state's most intense fires, TFS has never failed to answer the call to serve.

Texas landscapes are vast and varied, from lush wet forests to sparse plains. These diverse landscapes, coupled with factors such as drought, rainfall and moisture levels all play a role in one of Texas' most destructive natural disasters — wildfire. The threat of wildfire combined with the distressing conditions of the state's forests in East Texas a hundred years ago, sparked a need for a state forestry agency that would monitor and manage Texas' natural resources.

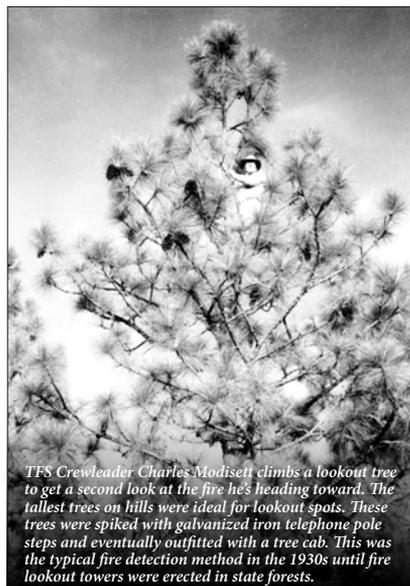
Visionaries such as W. Goodrich Jones, Dr. William Bizzell, Richard Burges and E. O. Siecke were instrumental in the creation and early development of the Texas Forestry Association and a state forestry agency. From the proposal of House Bill No. 9 in 1915, came what is now Texas A&M Forest Service and the beginning of a new era of preventing, preparing for and protecting Texas' forests from wildfire. Once established, the primary objectives of TFS were to create public awareness of wildfire dangers and encourage landowners to practice protecting their forests.



By 1916, six forest patrolmen, like W.E. Wells (pictured) each covered 1.25 million acres of land on horseback in East Texas to educate the public about the importance of wildfire prevention and other forestry practices.

Six fire patrolmen rode their horses from 15 to 25 miles a day to meet residents — communicating the importance of wildfire prevention. They also hung wildfire prevention posters, distributed fire literature and discussed fire protection.

While on patrol, small wildfires were controlled using hand tools. If the wildfire was beyond this capacity, the patrolman would seek aid from local residents. TFS relied on this method until the early 1920s when fire lookouts were introduced. Initially, lookouts were tall trees outfitted with spike-ladders, often with wooden platforms called tree cabs, 80 to 100 feet above the ground.



TFS Crewleader Charles Modisett climbs a lookout tree to get a second look at the fire he's heading toward. The tallest trees on hills were ideal for lookout spots. These trees were spiked with galvanized iron telephone pole steps and eventually outfitted with a tree cab. This was the typical fire detection method in the 1930s until fire lookout towers were erected in state forests.

Due to the increase of wildfires, in 1926 TFS erected Texas' first permanent lookout tower at State Forest #1 — 1,702 acres of cut-over land near Kirbyville — eventually renamed Siecke State Forest. During times of high fire danger a lookout man stayed in the fire tower until smoke was sighted or the sun went down. When a lookout man sighted smoke, a bearing would be made, then relayed to neighboring towers through telephone lines interconnecting the towers. Using triangulation, the fire tower could pinpoint the fire's location, and



Lookout men used firefinder equipment to most accurately pinpoint locations of possible wildfires. The lookouts would plot the direction of the smoke on a map and contact two other adjacent towers to receive the smoke direction from their locations. With these three plots, they triangulated the approximate smoke location and dispatched fire suppression crews.

smokechasers or patrolmen would then respond to the wildfire.

By 1932, TFS had a field force of 167 employees to protect some 8 million acres, using fire rakes, shovels, flappers and backpack pumps to respond to wildfires. That same year President Franklin D. Roosevelt pushed the New Deal through legislation, creating the Civilian Conservation Corps, which employed young men from ages 17 to 28. In Texas, TFS supervised the CCC camps across East Texas. The men's first priority was firefighting, day or night.

By the time the CCC was disbanded in 1942, crews had left their mark across the state having constructed 2,200 miles of telephone line, 81 fire lookout towers and 110 miles of firebreaks. They also conducted 5,300 acres of thinning and improvement cuttings on state forests and spent 115,000 man-days fighting wildfires.

In 1943, TFS equipped five Ford Ferguson tractors with fire plows, each operated by a two-man crew, one to drive and plow a fireline, the other to follow and set backfires.



Back in 1950 new technology and more efficient means were developed to help combat wildfires. TFS crew leaders Surcey Peoples and Bob Williams demonstrate how to use a Jeep equipped with a fire plow. They also used a drip torch to set a backfire and remove any flammable fuel near the plowed fire lane.

During this time — in the middle of World War II — wildfires were considered a threat to national security. To help bring awareness to this issue the War Council designated Smokey Bear as the symbol of wildfire prevention. Since then, TFS has worked with the USDA Forest Service to effectively use Smokey Bear to spread awareness about the risk of wildfires.



TFS Lookout and firefighter Alsey Cromeens holds one of the first talking Smokey Bear dolls. In the early 1950s these dolls came with two Smokey stickers and an application to be a Junior Forest Ranger.

TFS also introduced the use of planes for aerial detection. Proving the superior method to detecting wildfires early, fire towers eventually became obsolete. By 1959, due largely to high maintenance costs, TFS sold its fleet of aircraft and relied on private contractors.

For the first 60 years, TFS primarily focused on protecting the forests of East Texas. This began to change in the 1970s and 1980s with the development of volunteer fire department assistance programs.

In 1973, the 63rd Texas Legislature expanded the agency's duties to include training in the suppression of fires and making fire control equipment available to organized firefighting groups. In 1974, TFS began outfitting and placing brush trucks with small community fire departments across the state under the Rural Fire Defense program. TFS continued to help increase the state's wildfire-fighting capabilities by providing structural clothing, tools and excess federal property equipment to VFDs.

Although TFS assistance programs were used across the state beginning in the 1970s, TFS firefighting resources had only been called to respond to fires outside of East Texas a handful of times before the 1990s. One of the largest of these occurred March 10, 1988, when TFS crews responded to the Big Country Fire near Abilene which burned 353,000 acres — the second largest wildfire in recorded Texas history. This fast-moving wildfire burned through three counties, marking the first use of airtankers by TFS and the first significant use of out-of-state resources. The agency's quick response helped keep losses to a minimum — affirming trained, organized and prepared TFS personnel were well-suited to take on more complex incidents, and no longer limiting its resources to just East Texas. As a result of the agency's performance, TFS became responsible for coordinating



TFS crews responded to the Big Country Fire, March 10, 1988. The wildfire burned 353,000 acres and was the largest fire in recent state history.

responses for each major wildfire and was designated lead agency for conducting training in fighting wildfires by the state Legislature in 1993. That same year, TFS had its first major long-term response in West Texas. It was the beginning of a new approach to fire response, with TFS unveiling an initial attack campaign where resources would be staged for rapid deployment. In the early spring of 1996, TFS once again found itself involved in the most complex

fire season it had seen to date. Adverse weather conditions, dry fuels and an emerging urban sprawl created an active fire season in Central and East Texas. One of the first significant wildfires in the wildland urban interface was the Poolville Fire, west of the Dallas-Ft. Worth Metroplex, which consumed 55 homes and more than 16,000 acres.

On the verge of the next historic wildfire season, the director of TFS challenged



Hurricane Ike, One of the many Reliant Center parking lots where distribution trucks staged before being dispatched to impacted areas. At the peak of the response, nearly 1,200 trucks per day were dispatched out of the Regional Staging Area. (FEMA photo.)

the agency to develop an active wildfire prevention program aimed at reducing the occurrence of wildfire and its associated losses. With an increase in population, changes in land use, and the effects of long-term drought evident across the state in 1998, TFS was faced with a potential wildfire threat never seen before in the state. In the midst of the driest and hottest spring and summer seasons in 100 years, TFS closely monitored the rising drought indices and mobilized fire prevention personnel to develop an extensive campaign educating the public on wildfire prevention. By July, TFS was engaged in the first statewide fire season. By the end of 1998, TFS defined the primary components of the Texas Wildfire Protection Plan — a statewide plan designed to protect the state from wildfires, reduce wildfire occurrence and respond to other natural and man-made disasters — and started using the plan to guide agency operations.

State legislation approved funding for a pilot program of the agency's TWPP in 1999. The five-part plan consists of predictive services, mitigation and prevention, planning and preparedness, local capacity building and rapid response, helping increase the state's resources and improving its response capabilities. TWPP was implemented during several of the state's major fire seasons including 2000, 2005, 2006, 2008 and 2011 — and its use allows the agency to continually refine and improve operations.

In 2001, TFS was again granted funds to help protect Texas from wildfires. The 77th Texas Legislature established the Rural Volunteer Fire Department Assistance and Rural VFD Insurance Programs with HB 2604 and HB 3667, respectively. HB 2604 tasked TFS with operating a grants program to provide training and equipment to eligible VFDs. HB 3667 additionally tasked TFS to provide VFD grants for workers' compensation, and death and disability insurance. To date, these programs have provided 32,588 grants to VFDs totaling \$208 million.

Beyond wildfires, the agency responds to all-hazard incidents, such as the Republic of

Texas Standoff in 1997, Del Rio and Central Texas flooding in 1998, the Houston Medical Center Flood of 2001 and the recovery of space shuttle Columbia — after it was lost over East Texas in 2003. During these incidents TFS proved the effectiveness of its Incident Command System on large-scale events. TFS adopted the ICS model in the late 1980s and used the incident management system when responding to fires, hurricanes, floods and tornadoes.

However, it was in 2003 that the agency showed the nation its aptitude to deal with incidents. The space shuttle Columbia recovery operation was

the first time in history a state agency was named to lead a federal incident. The agency continued to assist on other all-hazard incidents including hurricanes Ivan and Katrina, before being tasked with the operation of the Regional Staging Areas following Hurricane Rita. By late fall of 2005, TFS was back in firefighting mode, with some of the most destructive wildfires occurring in the last few days of the year. Fires raged in North and Central Texas into the new year. The fire season reached its peak in March when the East Amarillo Complex burned more than 900,000 acres in one day, and took its place as the largest wildfire in Texas history. The combined 2005 and 2006 seasons came to an end in mid-September after a record 515 days of continuous response by TFS, with a total of 29,610 fires recorded across the state burning 2.2 million acres.

The tremendous wildfire and hurricane response activity of 2005 and 2006 helped initiate two programs that have become cornerstones of Texas emergency response. Both the Regional Incident Management Team and Texas Intrastate Fire Mutual Aid System began during this period, recognizing the need to make statewide use of local fire and emergency management resources.



In 2005 the East Amarillo Complex burned more than 900,000 acres in one day and took its place as the largest wildfire in Texas history.

These programs were put to use in 2008, when the state experienced 1,553 wildfires for 1 million acres, the Alon Refinery explosion, the Presidio flooding and

hurricanes Dolly and Ike. RIMT and TIFMAS responders played essential roles in TFS and state response, providing hundreds of responders to fill critical roles.

The year 2011 was a turning point for the agency. Texas experienced record-breaking heat causing severe drought, setting the stage for the most destructive fire season in state history.

The long battle began in mid-November 2010 when freeze-cured grass and brush began to burn easily as cold, windy fronts moved in from the north. Over the course of the year, thousands of residents were evacuated across the state and 1,985 homes were destroyed. Texas experienced 31,453 wildfires that burned 4 million acres. In response TFS mobilized 16,690 personnel, 126 crews, 244 dozers, 986 fire engines and 255 aircraft to combat the fires. This includes 1,718 responders and 432 fire engines mobilized under the RIMT and TIFMAS programs.



Image taken by the Moderate Resolution Imaging Spectroradiometer (MODIS) on NASA's Aqua satellite, shows wildfires in Texas on April 15, 2011 – the fires detected by MODIS are marked in red. Most of the fires shown in the image are larger than 10 thousand acres, and many have threatened communities.

After the 2011 wildfire season, TFS launched the Texas Wildfire Risk Assessment Portal, a web-based tool to help homeowners and communities determine wildfire risks and how to best reduce hazards. Developed by TFS, TxWRAP was the first Web portal of its kind, with its foundation in wildfire risk assessment conducted by state forestry agencies across the Southern United States.

For the past 100 years, emergency response has been a main objective for TFS. From fighting wildfires, equipping emergency responders with better training and equipment, giving landowners the tools needed to recognize wildfire risk and managing large-scale incidents — TFS has always been at the forefront, introducing new technologies and ways to better protect the great state of Texas. With a century of service complete, TFS looks to the future for more innovative and efficient ways to serve citizens and protect the state's natural resources. ■

DO YOU SMELL GAS? DEALING WITH DAMAGED GAS PIPELINES

By Scott Finley, Texas811



As a first responder, you're familiar with 9-1-1. But what's your familiarity level with 8-1-1?

In Texas, 811 is the number to call to get underground utilities located before a proposed excavation. It's the reason behind the small multi-colored flags stuck in the ground, or the splashes of spray paint on lawns, fields, streets and sidewalks.

Texas811 is the state's non-profit "call 811 before you dig" entity, and is also the nation's largest such one call center with approximately 1500 member utilities and municipalities. <http://www.texas811.org>

Outgoing tickets issued by Texas811 to notify utilities of digs in 2014 topped 14 million, and inbound tickets were 2.5 million. The call to 811 is free, and so is the utility locating service. Not only that, it's the law in Texas that such a call be made if ground is going to be broken at a depth of 16 inches or greater, but one call centers and utilities generally advise calling for **any** sort of digging, no matter the depth.

No one is exempt from the law – contractors, professional excavators, utility companies, homeowners. And yet, in 2014, the Railroad Commission of Texas recorded over 9,000 hits on gas/hazardous liquid lines in the state. (The RRC keeps tabs **only** on gas/hazardous liquid lines; individual utilities such as telecom, water municipalities, electrical, etc., keep their own records).

Usually, striking a buried utility line results in nothing more than frustration – for both the utility involved and their customers. A cut water main or a telecommunications fiber optic line are cause for concern, but rarely lead to serious property damage, if any, and even more rarely to physical injury.

Striking a buried electrical main or pressurized natural gas pipeline is another story. Any firefighter who has been in the business very long has responded to incidents where underground electricity has been hit, and the results are injury, fire, and many times electrocution fatalities. That's something to bear in mind as you read this refresher from Texas811 and three of its member utilities on dealing with natural gas line strikes.

The natural gas pipeline network in the United States spans 2.4 million miles. It is one of the safest forms of regulated transportation. Warning signs on pipeline rights of way show the product in the pipeline, the operator's name and its

emergency telephone number; however, the signs do not indicate a pipeline's exact location or depth. Gas line operator/representatives can describe their natural gas pipeline facilities in your area, and you are encouraged to develop a good working relationship with your local company.

You can locate natural gas and hazardous liquids transmission pipelines on the National Pipeline Mapping System. Go to <http://www.npms.phmsa.dot.gov/>. The NPMS does not make maps available to the public showing the location of natural gas distribution pipelines; however, government officials can request access to additional NPMS mapping data.

Pipelines experience far fewer accidents than trucks, railroads, ships and airplanes – but accidents will happen.

When a gas line is nicked, scraped or broken, regardless of smelling gas or not, the excavator must first call 911 to report it, and it must also be reported to the Railroad Commission of Texas (AFTER 911 and incident safety is secured).

While first responders are on their way, a call must then be made to 811 to report the incident. This will generate what Texas811 calls a "digup" ticket. This is an emergency ticket that then goes out to the utility in question, alerting them to what happened.

First responders on the scene of a natural gas leak have a lot of work ahead of them. What follows is general information from Atmos Energy that should serve as a refresher for dealing with gas leaks which is applicable to all operators, as well as specifics related to Atmos and two more of Texas811's largest gas utility members, CoServ and Texas Gas Service.

Properties of Natural Gas

Natural gas is:

- composed primarily of methane (70% to 98%), including small amounts of ethane, propane, butane and other gases
- 40 percent lighter than air; it vents upward and dissipates rapidly into the air, but also can travel long distances to a point of ignition and can flash back
- likely to travel the path of least resistance when below ground
- flammable if the fuel-air mixture is from 4 percent to 15 percent natural gas
- odorless in its natural state
- odorized with mercaptan in utility distribution pipelines to indicate a leak
- not odorized in most transmission pipelines and gathering lines from producing wells

- colorless and invisible
- able to ignite between 900° and 1,200° Fahrenheit
- a potential asphyxiant in an enclosed space—natural gas can displace oxygen
- nontoxic and nonpoisonous, unlike products in many hazardous liquids pipelines
- associated sometimes with toxic hydrogen sulfide (H₂S) in producing wells and gas processing plants

Indicators of a Natural Gas Leak

- distinctive, pungent odor of mercaptan added to natural gas as a leak indicator
- roaring, blowing or hissing sound
- dust or dirt blowing from a hole in the ground
- continuous bubbling in wet or flooded areas, creeks or ponds
- dead or discolored vegetation
- white vapor cloud, especially in cold or humid climates; the color dissipates as the cloud disperses
- not all natural gas is odorized. You cannot always detect it by smell alone. In some situations, the odorant may not be detectable. So, always use known, working and calibrated gas monitors

Potential Natural Gas Hazards

- dizziness, fainting or asphyxiation in an enclosed space due to natural gas displacing oxygen
- carbon monoxide (CO) or smoke from incomplete combustion
- fire if an ignition source is present
- potential explosion if the right fuel-air mixture exists
- structure collapse and projectiles if a building explodes
- possible presence of toxic levels of hydrogen sulfide (H₂S)
- non-odorized gas in transmission pipelines and gathering lines from producing wells
- inability to detect natural gas reliably without a calibrated gas monitor
- high-pressure on gas transmission pipelines that, if ruptured, can cause freeze burns, bodily injury or death and can destroy emergency vehicles as well as apparatus far from the incident site

At the Scene of an Incident:

- Establish a safety perimeter, taking into consideration wind direction and keeping in mind that gas can migrate to structures below ground if not fully ventilated to the atmosphere.
- Use evacuation methods that will eliminate or reduce risks to first responders, other emergency responders and the public during an evacuation.
- Position all apparatus well away from the site, avoiding manholes and in-ground valves; determine an egress route if needed.
- Evacuate all nearby residents and the

public inside the safety perimeter—not just those downwind—to a safe distance.

- Evacuate an even larger area if a high-pressure natural gas line is involved (indicated by an audible roar, right-of-way signage or dirt displacement).
- Prohibit any smoking.
- Keep reporters, photographers and videographers outside the safety perimeter behind caution tape for everyone’s protection.
- Be sure the emergency dispatch center has notified relevant utilities. If you are unsure of the pipeline operator, call 811 to have all facility owners in the area notified.
- Approach with extreme caution any natural gas release inside or around a building or structure; these situations pose a greater hazard because of the possibility of an explosion if the natural gas has accumulated in an enclosed space.
- Recognize that, although natural gas is lighter than air and dissipates into the atmosphere rapidly, natural gas trapped in the soil might have migrated from incident into buildings, structures and sewers.

Hazard and Risk Mitigation

- Wear fully protective clothing and positive-pressure, self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA).
- Protect against freeze burn or frostbite caused by blowing gas from a high-pressure pipeline.
- Listen for a roaring, blowing or hissing sound.
- Monitor the atmosphere using previously calibrated multiple gas monitors. Do not attempt to detect a natural gas leak by smell alone; not all natural gas is odorized.
- Determine all possible sources of leaking natural gas; there could be multiple sources, some of which are not apparent.
- Do not ring doorbells or turn electrical switches on or off.
- Eliminate all ignition sources, such as open flames, internal combustion engines, electrical motors, lights and non-explosion proof equipment; prohibit any smoking.
- If equipment is running, leave it on; if it is off, leave it off.
- Do not use non-intrinsically safe gear that could cause an explosion, such as cell phones, radios, pagers, other electronic equipment or ignition devices, such as Tasers, firearms and flares, due to a spark hazard.
- Be careful when making contact with natural gas piping. Impressed current is used to control corrosion on metallic pipelines, and a spark or static electricity, even on plastic lines, could cause ignition. Be aware that ungrounded corrugated stainless steel tubing, if struck by lightning, could be leaking.

Tactical Considerations

- Stop or control a natural gas release at

the appliance or at the meter if the source of the leak is unknown. The “wing” of the shutoff valve on natural gas meters and appliances aligns with the pipe when the valve is open or on. Turn the wing clockwise so that it is perpendicular or crossways with the pipe to close the valve. Some old valves might not completely stop the flow of natural gas.

- When closing a shutoff valve, excessive force can cause the valve to fail. It takes only a one-quarter turn to close the valve.
- Do not reopen any valves closed during an emergency; the pipeline operator must first make a thorough inspection. All closed valves must remain closed until opened by pipeline operator technicians.
- Never close any valves on natural gas mains, regulator stations, city gates or transmission systems. Doing so can cause pressure problems and worsen the situation. Only pipeline technicians should operate these critical valves.
- Note that the pipeline company may need to leave critical valves locked and inoperable. Do not remove any lock.
- Extinguish a natural-gas-fed fire only if the gas flow can be controlled. Wait for pipeline technicians to arrive and shut off the gas to starve the fire safely.
- Do not try to extinguish burning natural gas with water. If you must perform rescue operations, use dry chemicals or a fog spray for protection and safeguard the exposures of other structures to prevent the fire from spreading.

Besides the standard rules for dealing with a natural gas leak, three of Texas’ largest natural gas providers also have some requests to make for first responders.



“Outside of allowing fire departments to turn gas off at an individual residence or business via our meter valve, we typically discourage any other flow control. Our concern is that there may be overreaching implications, which could result in the loss of customers downstream the fire department may not be aware of. In addition, federal regulations requires that anyone who works on the pipeline must meet the qualifications program of the operating company.”

Our recommendation is for the fire department to monitor the area for gas limits and set up perimeters and if necessary evacuate those within the area of hazard. We will send a crew out to determine that the best method to safely stop the flow of gas is followed and work with the fire department to make sure everyone is safe and secure.

Per CoServ’s required liaison program with emergency responders, we conduct annual

meetings with each fire and police chief in the communities we serve. During these meetings, we provide updated maps of our facilities, contact lists for all our supervisors as well as a copy of our emergency plan.

In addition, we discuss any concerns and proactively look for ways to work together to make everyone safe.”



“With the growth in areas such as Austin and El Paso, the need is greater than ever for the public to call 811 to get underground utility lines marked prior to digging (whether it is for simply planting a tree or for a major project). We also see a crucial need for good working relationships and training between the local natural gas company and fire departments.

Texas Gas Service, the third largest natural gas distribution company in Texas in terms of customers, appreciates the relationships with the fire departments in its service areas that work with them on natural gas incidents such as third party hit lines.

“When incidents occur,” said Jim Jarrett, Texas Gas Service Vice President of Operations, “many times our local fire departments are first on scene. Through outreach and training opportunities, we are developing stronger working relationships which benefit us in the field with a more seamless response.”

When the fire department arrives on scene first, Texas Gas Service (TGS) has asked that the responding unit give us as much detail as possible about the incident in order for TGS to expedite the right crew(s). Is it a hit line? A hit meter or a regulator station? Is the line polyethylene or steel? All of this can help TGS respond with the best tools and the proper personnel to get the gas off as safely and as quickly as possible.

Texas Gas Service employees are trained that when a response involves both TGS and the local fire department, TGS employees all operate under the Incident Command structure. This means that Texas Gas Service understands that the highest ranking fire official on the scene is in charge and responsible for public safety and the protection of property, and therefore has ultimate authority.

TGS employees work closely with the Incident Commander (IC) to make sure that the IC is fully advised on natural gas and the gas distribution systems as it applies to each situation so that the IC can make quick, informed decisions. Also communicated are TGS procedures and protocols, including what personal

protection equipment, or PPE, is required in varying conditions.

The Austin Fire Department elaborated on working natural gas incidents. The Austin Fire Department (AFD) and Texas Gas Service have developed a mutually beneficial partnership to increase public safety and improve customer service to the people they serve during incidents involving natural gas. AFD feels it could not accomplish its job as efficiently and productively without this partnership. This partnership has led to a best practices approach to procedures and tactics used during natural gas emergencies.

AFD’s response protocol is based on a tiered response approach depending upon the known, or potential, size of the hazard. All 911 calls, or direct requests for assistance from Texas Gas Service, involving natural gas calls result in the nearest Engine Company and Special Operations Unit (typically a Rescue Unit) being dispatched to the incident address. This call type is designated as a “Hazardous Condition”. Additional information could increase the response to a “Hazardous Materials Taskforce” alarm, which adds one more Engine Company with Special Operations capabilities and the Special Operations Battalion Chief to the complement. Additional resources can be requested by the on scene Incident Commander.

Initial actions of AFD may include: rescuing victims, evacuating people in the area and securing the scene. They may also locate the leak site, determine the size of the line or leak, identify or protect threatened exposures and stop the leak, if possible to be done safely. Additionally, AFD crews take into consideration potential consequences of disruption of supply to the customer and/or adjacent customers prior to stopping a leak. They may also assess the need for temporary CNG supplies.

AFD and Texas Gas Service, through joint education and training, have developed a standardized procedures and best practices approach to responding to, and mitigating, incidents involving natural gas.”



“We operate some 73,000 miles of buried natural gas pipelines—ranging in diameter from one-half inch polyethylene lines delivering natural gas to homes, up to 36-inch steel transmission lines transporting billions of cubic feet of gas over long distances.

Our goal is to prevent any incident, but also to be prepared to safeguard life and property if one does occur.

Atmos Energy uses “H E L P” to direct the actions of our own emergency responders

when they arrive at an incident:

- Hazard Determination
- Extent of the Hazard
- Protect Life (Public and Employee)
- Protect Property

Atmos Energy supports the Incident Command System (ICS) for organizing and coordinating effective responses to emergency events.

Under the ICS command structure, Atmos Energy employees will report to the incident commander when they arrive on the scene and will coordinate with emergency personnel to mitigate any natural gas incident. Our crews will adhere to the safety requirements established in our company’s emergency guidelines, including proper personal protective equipment (PPE) and safe operating procedures. Our media representatives will make only limited comments and will refer reporters’ questions about injuries and damages to the incident commander.

We are happy to visit your location to present more information about natural gas safety and to provide liaison services for our emergency response plan. Our emergency response plan is available on request by contacting 1-888-286-6700.

In addition, if you ever see suspicious activity around our pipeline equipment or smell natural gas, please notify us immediately. In an emergency, call us at 1-866-322-8667.”

First responders need to remember that the most likely cause of a pipeline accident is unsafe digging, boring or drilling. Natural gas pipelines and other underground utility lines exist everywhere. Therefore, state law requires everyone to call 811 well in advance of excavating to have all buried utility lines marked. Excavating without knowing where it’s safe to dig can cause loss of life or injuries, lengthy outages and costly damages.

Please help us spread the message to always call 811 before digging.



Thanks to Atmos Energy, CoServ, Texas Gas Service, The Railroad Commission of Texas and retired Fire Chief Geo. Randy Corbin for contributing their time and expertise to this article.

RUSK COUNTY ESD #1 NEW APPARATUS

By David Chenault, Public Information Officer, Rusk County Office of Emergency Management

For the first time since 2010, Rusk County firefighters have two brand new fire trucks thanks to a recent investment made by the Rusk County Emergency Services District No. 1. Several firefighters from Crims Chapel and Mount Enterprise spent most of Saturday at Lake Forrest Park learning how to operate the new pumper trucks which can carry as much as a 1,000 gallons of water and 50 gallons of foam. The training day marked the end of a nearly 10-month process of creating the trucks' specifications and having them built and delivered.

One of the \$400,000 engines will be housed at the Crims Chapel Volunteer Fire Department, replacing their 1998 truck. "This is going to be so much better than what we've had," said Crims Chapel Chief Marvin Vinson. "It carries more water, delivers it faster and can carry at least five firefighters in the truck." Vinson stood next to the engine as his crew sprayed foam on a brick wall. "If we've got a grass fire, we can roll up to a house and spray foam on it," Vinson explained. "Then we can leave it and go fight fire and let the foam protect the house."

The second engine will be used by the Mount Enterprise Volunteer Fire Department, replacing an engine that is 18 years old. Mount Enterprise's crew got a chance to work with their truck on Saturday as well.

According to commissioners of the Rusk County Emergency Services District, the two engines are just the beginning of district's new financial investment. Two additional pumper/engines are already on order, including one for the Carlisle Volunteer Fire Department and one for the Eastside Volunteer Fire Department.

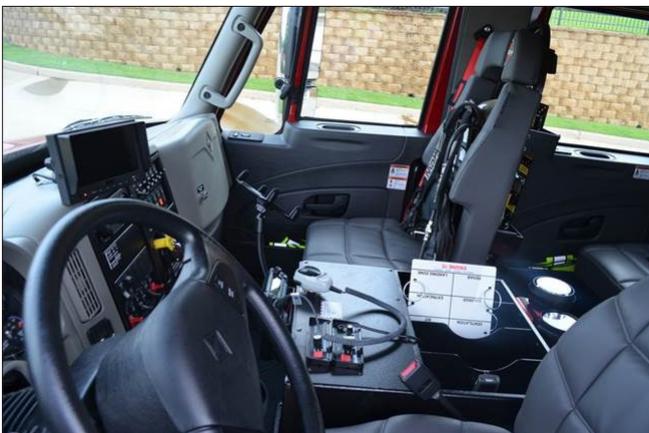
Additionally, the district has also ordered two new brush trucks. One will be placed in Mount Enterprise and the other at Eastside. The district has also recently re-outfitted a pumper/engine stationed at New Salem, which puts their engine back in full service for the county with a new compressed air foam system unit.

The new equipment purchases are a direct result of the additional revenue generated by voter-approved tax increase two years ago. For the first time since the district was organized almost 17 years ago, the

district was able to purchase not only the much needed new emergency vehicles but also bunker and wildland gear, radios, and rescue equipment without depending on grants from the state. The district plans on gradually replacing all outdated emergency vehicles as funds become available.

Rusk County ESD #1 currently supports 11 departments that are all volunteer, two rescue units, one of which is all volunteer, three paid and volunteer departments, and one contractual volunteer department. The ESD departments average 125 volunteer firefighters a year who answer over 150 emergency calls each month in the county. These men and women represent an extremely valuable asset for our county. All departments in the county maintain certified equipment as well as having certified firefighters on their rosters.

Commissioners say they are not only proud to be able to place new equipment in the departments, but are also committed to providing the best possible fire protection and emergency services for all the residents of the county.





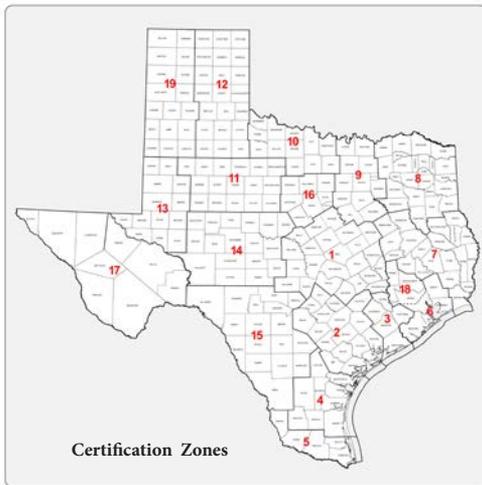
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for the latest and most updated committee rosters visit www.sffma.org

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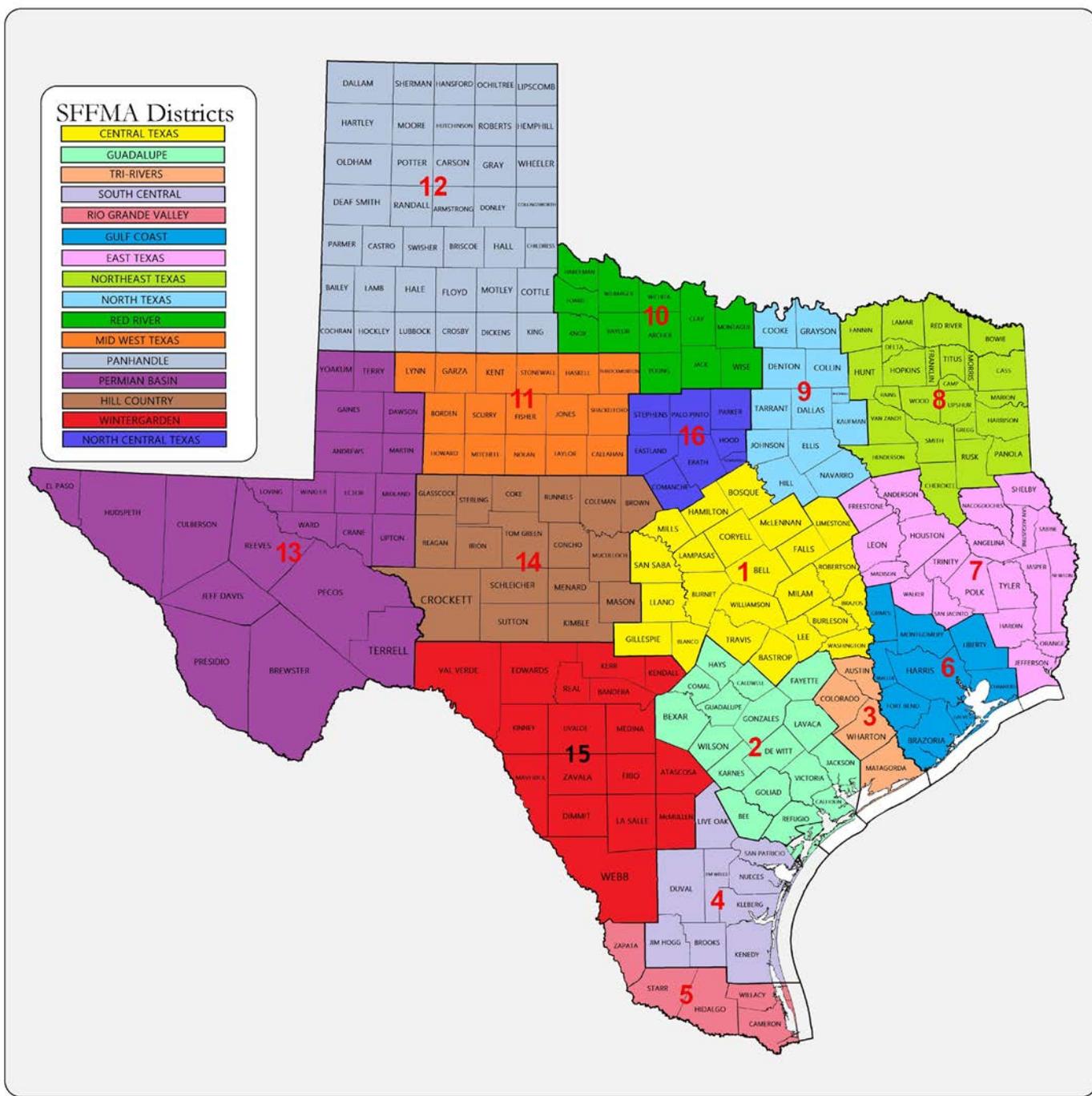
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HOME FIRE SPRINKLER COALITION BOARD WELCOMES NATIONAL FALLEN FIREFIGHTERS FOUNDATION AND NATIONAL VOLUNTEER FIRE COUNCIL



Home Fire Sprinkler
COALITION
Protect What You Value Most™

Frankfort, IL – The nonprofit Home Fire Sprinkler Coalition (HFSC) announced that the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation (NFFF) and the National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC) have joined its all-volunteer Board of Directors. Chief Ron Siarnicki, executive director of NFFF, and Chief Kevin Quinn, chairman of NVFC, will represent the groups on the Board.

“Our Board of Directors is pleased to welcome the NFFF and NVFC to the table,” says HFSC Board President Lorraine Carli. “We look forward to having the benefit of these national groups’ leadership, experience and expertise. The constituents of both these groups recognize the life-saving benefits of home fire sprinklers and are important resources to help educate others.”

The NFFF works to honor and support the families of fallen firefighters, and to reduce firefighter injuries and fatalities. Fire sprinkler advocacy is among the NFFF’s Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives. The NVFC represents the interests of the volunteer fire, EMS, and rescue services nationally, and provides resources and advocacy for first responders.

Other members of the HFSC Board include: American Fire Sprinkler Association, Canadian Automatic Sprinkler Association, FM Global, International Association of Fire Chiefs, National Association of State Fire Marshals, National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), National Fire Sprinkler Association, Phoenix Society for Burn Survivors, State Farm Insurance, Underwriters Laboratories, and U.S. Fire Administration/FEMA.

Since 1996, HFSC has focused exclusively on noncommercial education about the dangers of home fires and the unparalleled life-safety benefits of installing home fire sprinklers. More than 90 percent of all U.S. structure fire deaths occur in the home, and 84 percent are in one- and two-family homes (NFPA). These structures are also most lethal for responding firefighters. Supporting the public awareness activities of the fire service by creating and providing free educational tools remains key to HFSC’s mission.

From its earliest days, the fire service has been a core partner to HFSC and its Board of Directors reflects diverse fire

service perspectives. As the Coalition has grown, this commitment has deepened to include the BUILT FOR LIFE Fire Department (BFLFD) strategy to increase the number of fire departments making home fire sprinkler education a focus in their service areas.

HFSC offers a comprehensive library of teaching tools developed for a wide range of audiences. All HFSC materials are available at no charge at

www.homefiresprinkler.org. Follow HFSC through your favorite social media outlets: on Facebook at www.facebook.com/HFSCorg, on Twitter at @HFSCorg, on Pinterest at www.pinterest.com/hfsc/ and join HFSC’s networking group on LinkedIn.

About the Home Fire Sprinkler Coalition (HFSC): HFSC was formed in 1996 to inform the public about the life-saving value of sprinkler protection in one- and two-family homes. HFSC is a purely educational 501(c)(3) charitable organization and the leading resource for independent, noncommercial information about home fire sprinklers. For more information about HFSC and home fire sprinkler systems, visit www.homefiresprinkler.org.

TEXAS A&M ENGINEERING



EXTENSION SERVICE

The music was missing, but like the Bellagio Fountains, the water display was eye-popping, and a Fire School record was broken. The Advanced Industrial Fire Apparatus Practices class pumped approximately 40,000 gallons per minute (GPM) during a water flow exercise on July 16 at the Brayton Fire Training Field lake.



Class photo by Mark Turvey

Nineteen students attending this year’s course had the opportunity to use the skills they had learned for this capstone exercise at

RECORD-BREAKING 40,000 GALLONS PER MINUTE PUMPED AT BRAYTON FIRE FIELD EXERCISE

the 2015 Industrial Fire School. They had to configure the equipment, assemble the system and operate it to achieve the greatest capacity possible from drafting. The exercise simulated using drafting and pumping to extinguish a large industrial fire.

The record-breaking pump operations exercise was accomplished through the assistance of vendors who brought pumper trucks, aerial platform ladder trucks, trailer pumps, remote-powered hydraulic supply pumps, trailer mounted high-flow delivery nozzles, up to 12-inch diameter hose, high-capacity hose storage and retrieval equipment, and remote foam proportioning equipment for the big flow exercise, said Mark Turvey, guest instructor and assistant fire chief, Lubrizol Corp. Texas Plants.

“The class was pretty exciting, due to the fabulous support from many different vendors who brought equipment to the school for the students to use,” Turvey said. “This year’s class, along with guidance and assistance from the instructors, achieved close to 40,000 GPM, which might be not only a record for the school, but possibly a

world record for total fire flow at one time.” “The exercise was a lot of fun, but also a lot of work,” he added. “We had over a mile and a half of hose on the ground.”



Vendors who brought firefighting equipment for the exercise included Custom Fire Apparatus, Ferrara Fire Apparatus, Hytrans Systems, LyondellBasell Channelview, National Foam, Pierce Manufacturing, Sutphen, Task Force Tips, Training Specialties Incorporated, Williams Fire & Hazard Control, U.S. Fire Pump and others. Watch videos of the exercise on the TEEX YouTube Channel and on Task Force Tips facebook page.

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SFFMA International training in Lima, Peru. Training was provided by ASSA C.A..



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Greetings:

I am really excited and honored to be your president for TFA for the 2015-2016 year. I want to thank everyone for their confidence and support as I begin my year as president. I could never have gotten this far without the support of many people. I am so happy that I have been able to take this journey with my supporting husband, Morris and our two boys, Murray and Blake. I also want to thank West Carlisle Fire/EMS for all their support.

I am looking forward to continuing to work closely with the SFFMA Board, the TFA Board, committees and all members of the organization throughout the rest of my time on the TFA Board.

SFFMA President Paul Hamilton and I are working closely with RC Flores and the Rio Grande Valley District to prepare for a wonderful presidential reception at the SFFMA Conference to be held in McAllen, Texas in June, 2016.

My theme for the year is "Growth and Growing". We are going to think of the TFA organization as a large garden this year. What does it take for a garden to grow and prosper?

My questions to everyone are: How can we grow as individuals? How can we grow in our family lives? How can we grow in our home departments? How can we grow in our districts? How can we grow as an organization? How can we grow our friendships? How does being a member of TFA affect all these areas?

I am really excited about this year. I have a wonderful board around me and am excited to see what all we can do for the SFFMA, all firemen around the state of Texas and TFA. If there is anything that you would like to discuss, if you have any ideas for us, or if there are any questions that I can answer, please contact me. My information is on the SFFMA website under the TFA heading.

Sincerely,

Jerri Locknane
TFA President



PICTURED L TO R: Daisy Svatek, Mary Jane Cargile, Penny Horelica, Brooke Palermo, Kendra Charbula, Jerri Locknane (at the lectern), Donna Svatek, Jeri Hamilton, Anggie Sumrall, Billie Smith



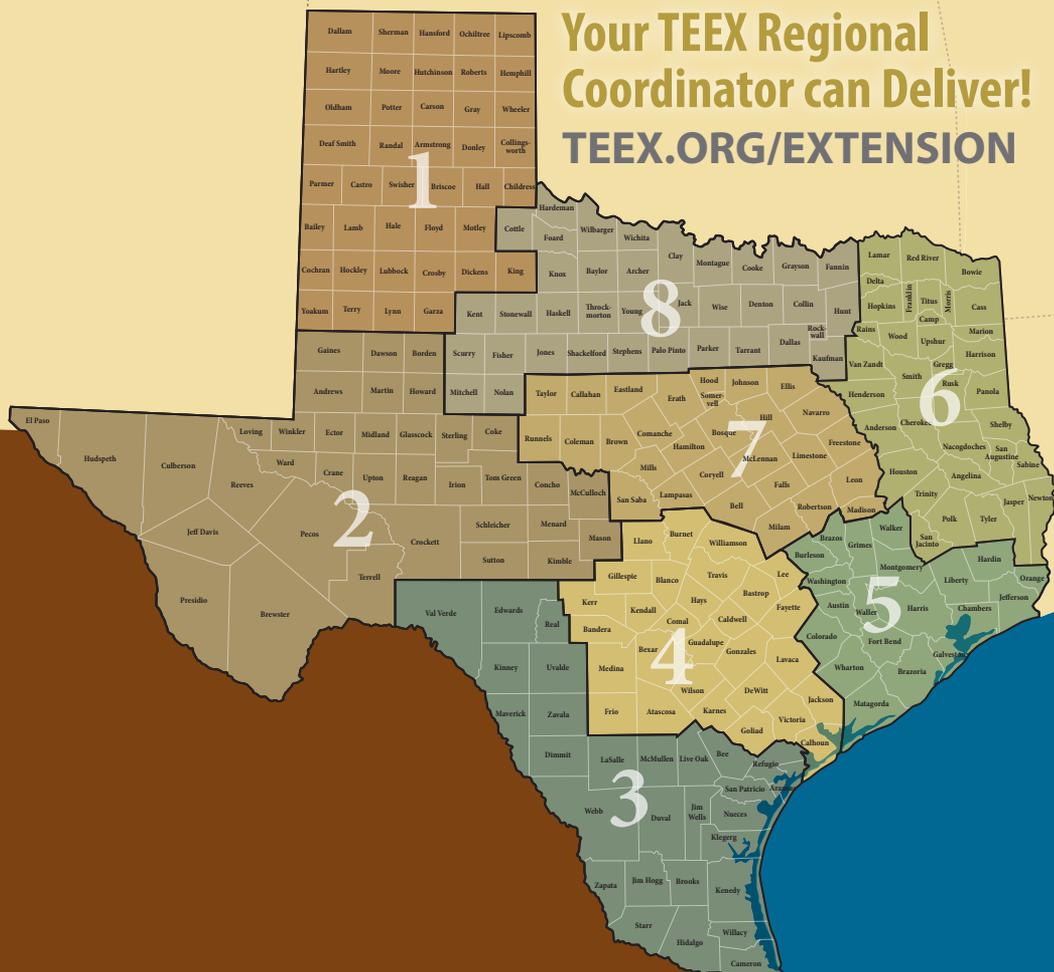
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