



Fire Marshal's Association of Minnesota

## POST INDICATOR



Quarterly Newsletter

# AMENDED

December 2002

### MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

By Jon Nisja

I am nearing the end of my tenure as the President of this awesome organization. These past almost-six years have been very rewarding for me. At the same time, I see some real challenges ahead of us in the near future.

Writing and publishing messages that were meant as pure entertainment is not something that I have tried to do. I have always tried to challenge people, to get them to think, and to get them involved. When you do this, you run the risk of alienating some people. It has been a risk that I have been willing to take when I see the more positive benefits that are achieved by getting out of our comfort zones. This message will be no different; if this kind of stuff bothers you, please skip to the next bolded discussion point that is more informational in nature.

I was recently involved in some discussions with the International Fire Marshals Association (IFMA) Board of Directors. The IFMA Board is trying to commission a study to show whether fire inspections really work. Dr. John Hall at the National Fire Protection Association did the last study that I am aware of about 25 years ago. It clearly showed the benefits of an on-going inspection program in reducing the number of fires

and the severity of fires when they did occur. But, a lot has changed in 25 years; the subject probably warrants another look.

At any rate, this got me thinking (a dangerous place to be). I paused to consider how many of us in the fire service really believe in fire prevention. It is no secret that some of the suppression-oriented folks are not too keen on fire prevention taking away the “good fires” and the “big ones”. By the way, what is a “good fire”? And if we need a few “good fires”, how about having the next one at your house? But these are people who have made a career or a part-time job out of fire and most are very good at what they do. It is probably like a trauma surgeon; you train and prepare for the worst so that you can do the best job possible.

But then I wondered about fire chiefs. How many really believe in fire prevention? Oh, I know that no fire chief is going to get up and say that they are opposed to fire prevention; that would be blasphemy. But how many **really** believe in it? You would be hard-pressed to find a fire chief that did not believe that public fire safety education works. But how many fire chiefs believe that fire inspections and code enforcement work? Many chiefs view it as too much of a hassle, politically.

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Clearly, we have seen support from fire chiefs in these areas waning in recent years.

Then there are those of us in fire prevention, fire inspections, and code enforcement. How many of us **really** believe in what we do? Or is it simply a decent paying job where we can work in the fire service? I am going to challenge you: is your home sprinklered? If not, why not? Do you practice the same fire evacuation drills with your family that you encourage others to do? If not, why not? Do you have more than single station, battery operated smoke detectors in your house? If not, why not? Are you worth less than the other residents that you protect or are you somehow immune from fire?

I believe that fire inspections work. I have been able to see what has happened in cities like St. Paul where there is an on-going fire inspection program of commercial and multi-residential properties. St. Paul has a fire death rate that is a fraction of the national and midwest averages.

Then we have Minneapolis with a newly developed fire inspection program. Preliminary data seems impressive. Based on what I have been told, the numbers of fires and multiple alarm fires have gone down in properties that are inspected. Coincidence? I don't think so.

The way I look at it fire inspections have a synergistic effect. The presence of fire inspections increases public awareness plus it reduces fire hazards and minimizes the impact of fire incidents. Unfortunately, we have no clear studies or data to prove that. And if the studies show what many believe to be true – that fire inspections work – how many will be willing to take the next steps to implement such programs?

#### **RETIREMENTS:**

By now, this is probably “old news” but there have been some retirements or announced retirements. The first two have been from some long-time colleagues of mine at the State Fire Marshal Division. **Jerry White** has retired after 35 years with the division. Many of us met Jerry years ago when he did the arson training and was an investigator. Jerry spent the past dozen years or so

working as an inspector. It will be hard to find someone with Jerry's commitment, dedication, and loyalty.

Also retiring is **Dick Larson**. Dick has served as an investigator, inspector, supervisor, deputy director, and acting State Fire Marshal (in the late 1980s). Dick has been an active member of FMAM for many years; going back to its inception. Dick's knowledge, experience, and “institutional memory” will be missed. I had the pleasure of working with Dick on the School Inspection Program in the early 1990s; he helped me immensely and I will forever be grateful to him for his assistance.

St. Paul Fire Chief **Tim Fuller** has announced that he will be retiring in April of 2003. Chief Fuller has been an unabashed supporter of fire safety and fire prevention during his twelve years as fire chief. Not only has Chief Fuller directly supported fire prevention, he has encouraged his staff to be involved in organizations like FMAM. Many of us have certainly enjoyed the benefits of his support.

Long-time Anoka Fire Marshal **Doug Freeby** will be retiring soon. Doug probably enjoys more tenure than any of the rest of us. He has seen some real changes in fire prevention over the years and is an excellent source of knowledge and information.

Another seasoned Fire Marshal, **Jim Michel** of Lakeville has also indicated that he will be leaving his job soon. I will always remember Jim for the excellent work he did on a juvenile firesetter intervention project and video a few years back. I have been told that both Doug and Jim intend to continue to be involved in fire safety and fire prevention but on a more part-time basis.

Each of these people brought unique talents and abilities to fire safety and fire prevention. We will never know how many fires they have prevented or how many lives they have saved because of what they did every day over their careers. Best wishes to all of them.

#### **STATE FIRE CODE:**

In case you have not heard, the Minnesota International Fire Code will probably be adopted

soon. No hearing will be necessary. Congratulations to State Fire Marshal Supervisor Bob Imholte for his work on that project. The FMAM Board had approved a letter of support for the fire code to be sent to the hearing officer but this will no longer be necessary.

Both FMAM and the State Fire Marshal Division are planning training for the first months of 2003. I would strongly encourage you to attend all the training that you can get. This code represents the first major shift in fire codes for several years. There are major philosophical and administrative changes, as well as different technical requirements, in this code.

The State Building Code is having hearings the first week in December. It will probably be mid-January before we know the results of the hearings on their documents. We will attempt to notify you through FMAM's e-mailing system when we find out more information.

The FMAM Board agreed to again publish the fire code amendments. These will be available as insertable, loose-leaf pages or as a separate document. That project is being worked on now since there will be no fire code hearing.

None of this would have happened without the work of many FMAM members. I wish to recognize the following persons for their efforts on behalf of FMAM:

- Ed Anderson – Golden Valley – Fire Code Committee
- Scott Anding – Excelsior – Building Conservation Code (Chapter 1311)
- Jeff Howe – Waite Park – Fire Code Committee
- Dave Stringfield – University of Minnesota – Fire Code Committee
- Steve Zaccard – St. Paul – Optional Fire Suppression Systems (Chapter 1306)

**FIRE INSPECTOR CERTIFICATION:**

The certification written exam and practical test have been revised. Phil Owens from St. Paul led the efforts on this project. Thanks to the many FMAM members who assisted in developing test questions or practical/situational problems. Look for more

information from Phil Owens on this.

**BOARD VACANCY:**

FMAM Board Member Kermit Waters recently resigned as he has taken a job in Arizona. Our best wishes to Kermit in his new endeavors. This raised some issues for the FMAM Board. A couple of years ago, the constitution/by-laws were changed to remove term limits for certain officer positions. In the process of doing so, it appears that we inadvertently removed language that allowed the Board to appoint persons to fill vacancies until the annual meeting and election. I had hoped to be able to appoint someone to fill the vacancy but it appears that it will have to wait until the elections in March (see next section).

**ANNUAL MEETING & ELECTIONS:**

The following officer positions will be open for election at the March meeting: President, Secretary (held by Robbie Floyd), and two Directors (one held by Phil Owens; the other vacant). In addition, the FMAM Board is recommending that the constitution/by-laws be modified to allow the Board to appoint persons to fill vacant positions (as it was previously worded).

**HOLIDAY SEASON:**

The upcoming holidays, cold weather, and seasonal fire risks of winter are upon us. This is an excellent time to get the word out on fire safety. The messages are numerous and timely: home heating hazards, fireplace/chimney cleaning, smoke detectors, sprinklers, portable heaters, vehicle refueling, etc.

Minnesota State Fire Marshal Tom Brace is always quick to remind us that this time of year is the most deadly season for fires. These tragedies most often occur in the place where people feel the most safe – their homes – and during a time when they feel the most secure – Christmas season. Let's try to have a holiday season without any fire deaths this year.

On behalf of the FMAM Board, best wishes to you and your families during the Christmas and New Year's Holidays. We hope to see you at the quarterly meeting in Wednesday, December 11<sup>th</sup> at 12:30 pm at Bloomington Fire Station #1.

**Residential Fires**  
**“It will never happen to me.”**  
**Don’t let this happen to you!**

**By Phil Awker – Design Director**

It was a chilly October morning as we drove down to the house. Firefighters were still there, but it was mop-up time as the devastation was already done. My in-laws were standing there being consoled by the Fire Chief, still grieving at the loss. Their home, and all the heirlooms contained within, was a charred memory of what was.

“I never, in my wildest dreams, thought this would happen to me” stated my father-in-law, ironically, a retired firefighter. Half frozen tears crawled down everyone’s cheeks, as irreplaceable items were attempted salvage from the scene. The worst violation extracted was the remnants of my mother-in-law’s original wedding dress from 47 years ago. All plans for holiday gatherings are now in limbo when you are displaced from your home, your castle. It will take a long time, if ever, for my in-laws to mentally and emotionally recover from this tragedy.

Even though this fire loss was from arson, it still could have been prevented or minimized with a home fire sprinkler system. If you think it will never happen to you, think again. With the holiday season upon us, there will be electrical fires, candle fires and other holiday related incidents throughout the area. Please, don’t let your house be the lead story on the ten o’clock news some evening – it’s not worth it.

Smoke detectors do not put out fires – fire sprinkler systems do. I installed a sprinkler system in my last house and in my present home and I sleep better at night knowing it’s there to protect me. The cost for one of these systems works out to approximately 25 cents a day. A lousy quarter! Most people lose that much down in their couch! The carpeting in your home costs more than that, but it won’t save your house – or life. Also, figure on almost a year of relocation inconvenience by the time the insurance company settles and your home can be re-built. Do

you have a year of your life to waste? I don’t.

Minnesota State Fire Marshal statistics (Fire in Minnesota - 1999) for a period of 5 years indicate that there were almost 20,000 residential structure fires. This represents approximately 64% of all structure fires over the same time span, resulting in almost 300 deaths. One in every 525 households experienced a fire loss during that time, many of them a total loss! Is that acceptable to you? Does the phrase “It will never happen to me” ring a little hollow now? Don’t let it happen to you or your loved ones.

One myth about fire sprinklers that should be clarified is only the sprinkler(s) in the fire area actuate, **NOT** all of the sprinklers on the system. Please get fact before the fiction.

Look for more information on residential fires and home fire sprinkler systems. It can be obtained by contacting our office (<http://www.ffcdi.com/>). Other resources are:

- Minnesota Residential Sprinkler Task Force – [www.fmam.org/Res\\_Spri.htm](http://www.fmam.org/Res_Spri.htm)
- Minnesota State Fire Marshal’s Office – [www.dps.state.mn.us/fmarshal](http://www.dps.state.mn.us/fmarshal)
- Home Fire Sprinkler Coalition – [www.homefiresprinkler.org](http://www.homefiresprinkler.org)
- National Fire Protection Association – [www.nfpa.org](http://www.nfpa.org)

**Fire Marshal's Association of Minnesota  
MEMBERSHIP MEETING  
Minutes – September 11, 2002**

**CALL TO ORDER:** President Jon Nisja called the business meeting to order at 1:40 p.m. at the Bloomington Fire Station. Introductions of members were made.

Motion to approve the March 13, 2002 minutes by Jim Popp and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Rick Breeze, motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer John Powers reported the account balance \$1436 with some outstanding debts. Motion to accept the treasurer's report by Mike Post and 2<sup>nd</sup> Jeff Howe.

John reported that we currently have 175 paid members.

**STATE FIRE MARSHAL REPORT:** State Fire Marshal Tom Brace acknowledged all current and past staff attending the meeting today. In particular:

Bob Imholte for all his work on the International Fire Code and Minnesota State Amendments.

Dan Bernardy for his success on yet another Governor's Fire Prevention Day at the State Fair.

The entire Sprinkler Staff

Patrick Sheehan for setup all the training for Day Care Inspections.

Jon Nisja for his proposal for the School Inspection Program funding with DCFL. Projected budget cuts for 2004/05 could be approximately a 10% additional cut. The bottom line is "Nobody loses their job" and every effort will be made to keep position filled if possible. The State Fire Marshal's Division will no longer be doing plan review for above ground tanks.

Fire Marshal Brace reported that the position for Code Specialist has completed the process of justification and will be filled shortly. He would like to remind everyone that the position of Code Specialist is very demanding and strongly suggested that we all check our code books thoroughly before calling.

Don Beckering addressed the membership on a new "Inspection Degree Program". The program is approximately 5 to 10 years down the road and will be "Distance Learning" via E-mail (E-learning). A Bachelor of Applied Science will be the degree earned, consisting of 2-year college degree from Community College and 2 year at MNSCU. A committee is needed to look at the curriculum inspectors will need to know and it should be a balance of geographic areas throughout the State and various levels of service years.

Committee (so far): Steve Zaccard, Marilyn Arnlund, Phil Owens, Mike Post, Jeff Howe.

Other areas of the State that input is needed from Rochester, Mankato, Duluth, Bemidji, Moorhead, etc. If you're interested please contact one of the people above.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**FIRE CODE COMMITTEE:** Jeff Howe reported that the committee has begun to track the 2003 Code.

**LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE:** Bob James reported that the MSFCA Code Committee will be looking at intuitives for the session. We need more membership involvement for legislation. We are paid up for the Joint Legislation with the Chiefs.

**PUBLIC EDUCATION COMMITTEE:** The Governors Fire Prevention Day at the Fair on was yet another success. Anyone that incurred parking and/or admission expenses and needs to be reimbursed see John Powers.

Risk Watch is going well for the pilot cities; an additional 10 cities will be needed to expand the program next year. Anyone interested in implementing Risk Watch in your city, please contact Dan Bernardy. February 8, 2003 at the Kelly Inn in St. Cloud is the Public Education conference. All members are urged to promote and participate in the conference.

**TRAINING AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE:**

Vice-President Bob James stated that anyone with requests for training at the quarterly meetings should contact him.

Upcoming training will include:

December 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> are the scheduled dates for the Pyrotechnic Conference/Education conducted by APA. This is a two-day event that will focus on indoor and outdoor displays, storage, etc of consumer fireworks.

Lake Country in conjunction with FMAM will be conducting IBC/IFC code classes November 19-22 at the Maplewood Inn.

Annual Building Officials Conference will be held in January, brochures will be mailed out shortly. Some of the courses available will be Meth Labs, Fire Code Update, and Inspector Liability.

**ADVISORY COUNCIL ON FIRE PROTECTION SYSTEMS:** No report.

**CERTIFICATION COMMITTEE:** Phil Owens reported the Inspector I skills tests has been completed and Inspector II is still in the works but should be completed by October 15, 2002.

**RESIDENTIAL FIRE SPRINKLER TASK FORCE:** The 2003 St. Paul Home Show will be February 27 – March 2 at the St. Paul Excel Energy Center. The membership discussed contributions toward the Home Show.

At the last FMAM board meeting the board adopted a policy regarding contribution requests. It was motioned (see the 8/14/02 board meeting minutes) that all requests must be made to a board member and they would consult the other board members and the treasurer to determine what if any funds would be available before bring it to the membership. In the past we have made motions without knowing what FMAM funds were available.

**GOVERNOR’S COUNCIL ON FIRE PROTECTION AND CONTROL:** No Report.

**1311 CONSERVATION CODE ADVISORY COMMITTEE:** No Report.

**CONSTRUCTION CODES ADVISORY COUNCIL:** No Report.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

A correction in the Constitutional By-Laws next meeting, an error of deleted language during the last change.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

IFMA is asking for a current Fire Inspection study to be completed.

Please take part in the 911/PSAP Survey.

Dan Bernardy has been appointed to sit on the NFPA 1035 Committee.

Bob Imholte informed the members that the IFC and Minnesota State Amendments have received Approval from the Governor’s Office. George Magdal suggested we (FMAM) send a letter of support to the Administrative Law Judge. Motion by Jeff Howe and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Marilyn Arnlund for President Jon Nisja to send a letter of support for the IFC and Minnesota State Amendments, motion passed unanimously.

The Code Committee was asked to look at the other Rules, specifically 1306 before any action taken.

Patrick Sheehan suggested that we all show local support for the code.

The Post Indicator will be emailed to all members in order to save money and time. Anyone that doesn’t have email will receive a copy in the mail. Anyone wishing a copy by email instead of email should contact Robbie Floyd.

Rich Pehrson will be set up a mini-seminar on Tanks, more information will be available at a later date.

Motion to adjourn by Bob Imholte and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Jim Popp, Motion passed unanimously.

**Public Education Conference 2003  
“Hands on for Fire Safety”**

Expect to come home from this one day conference with the confidence and tools to secure funding for your project, to implement that project, and to truly understand how your efforts are impacting your community. Local and national experts will conduct workshops throughout the day, wrapping things up with a very humorous and inspirational speaker to send you away with tears of laughter and the energy to take on any mission you choose.

Again at the **Kelly Inn in St. Cloud**, the date for the conference is **February 8, 2003** and registration will be at 8:00 AM with the conference to begin promptly at 9:00 AM. There will once again be a fabulous luncheon, the silent auction, and our famous “not so silent” auction of Matches the Fire Dog! If you have not attended one of our conferences in the past, here is a great opportunity to meet the proactive fire and life safety educators from throughout our great state, as well as participate in a day of creative thinking, massive brainstorming, and absorption of valuable lifesaving information.

Come join us for this day of education and networking by filling out the registration form on website at <http://www.fmam.org/current.htm> or ask your Chief for the hard copy of the form received at the State Chiefs Conference in October. For answers to any further questions please feel free to contact Dan Bernardy at the State Fire Marshal Division, 651-215-1754.



**Fire Marshal's Association of Minnesota  
Board Meeting  
August 14, 2002**

Present: Jon Nisja, Bob James, Robbie Floyd, Butch Gervais, Phil Owens, John Powers, George Magdal, Bill Calder and Patrick Sheehan.

Vice-President Bob James called the meeting called to order at 9:10am in the absence of Jon Nisja. Jon will be joining the meeting later this morning.

Motion to approve the May Board meeting minutes by Butch Gervais and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Bill Calder. Motion passed unanimously.

**TREASURER'S REPORT:**

John Powers passed out a copy of the treasure's report. Motion to accept the treasure's report by Robbie Floyd and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Phil Owens, motion passed unanimously.

Membership report from John Powers is 172 paid members and still 43 2001 members unpaid at this time. Membership renewal will be coming up soon and we will be mailing the renewal notice. An updated roster will be ready for the general membership meeting and will be sent around to verify member's information. The board would like to see the membership increase and discussed various ways of recruiting Fire Marshals and Fire Inspectors throughout the State.

**PUBLIC EDUCATION REPORT:**

Bill Calder reported that Fire Prevention Day at the Fair is in full swing, volunteers are still needed for the FMAM booth.

Bill informed the board that the Minnesota State Fire Chiefs Public Education Committee in conjunction with the Independent Hardware Association has implemented a program for Fire Prevention Week for free batteries and Smoke Detector checks. More information will be sent out to Fire Departments around the State.

The Public Education conference will be held on February 8, 2003 in St. Cloud.

Nothing to report on Risk Watch at this time, the board suggested possibly asking Paula Peterson to do a presentation for the membership.

**STATE FIRE MARSHAL’S REPORT:**

Patrick Sheehan informed the board that Tom Brace would be unable to attend today. Patrick reported:

- Rich Pehrson has given the State Fire Marshal’s Division his letter of resignation. Rich will be working for Scott Futrell
- The School Inspection Team contracts with DCFL (Department of Children, Family, and Learning) will be cancelled as of August 21, 2002. The school inspections will continue, however the State Fire Marshal’s Division will be charging the School Districts for those inspections. The State Fire Marshal’s Division has been working with DCFL’s Health and Safety personnel to keep this program operating.
- Daycare Inspections will continue and a fee of \$50.00 will be charged to the providers. Fire Departments interested in doing daycare inspections will be required to complete training offered by The State Fire Marshal’s Office. Dates and Locations will be available shortly.
- Fireworks have caused significant problems since the legalization of consumer fireworks. 81 reported fireworks related injuries so far compared to 19 in 2001. Fire Departments are encouraged send all documentation to Bob Dahm at the State Fire Marshal’s Division regarding false alarms, injuries, fires, etc.
- Budget cuts for 2004/2005 fiscal year will be at least 10%. At this time the SFMD has decided not to fill Rich Pehrson’s position.

Discussion was centered on the fact that the SFMD has not filled the Code Specialist position previously held by Kevin Kelly and now with the loss of Rich Pehrson there will be no Code Specialist. In addition the SFMD will no longer do any tank reviews. The question was raised as to what services will the SFMD be able provide to local AHJ’s. The budget shortfalls on the city levels are a significant concern for AHJ’s and the need to have a code specialist is a very vital resource. Patrick will relay the concerns to Tom Brace.

**TRAINING/EDUCAION:**

Bob will schedule the Pyrotechnic Conference for the December 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> the fee will be \$75.00 for members and \$100.00 for non-members.

Other upcoming training:

Training with NFSA

ICBO training

Lake Country Seminar in November

Fire Code Training

**LEGISLATION:**

Bob James updated the board that Fireworks will be back to expand additional fireworks legalization (i.e. firecrackers, etc). Should our role at this time be regulation instead of hard line – no compromises? Discussion on the public use being you have to be 18 years old to buy but anyone can use, and how we should deal with that.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

State Certification for Inspector I skills exam is done and Inspector II skills exam should be completed soon. Inspector I will not be a take home test. The test taker will be given the information on what books he/she will be required to bring to complete the test. Inspector I has 18 skills completed at this time, we may have to create additional at a later time. The discussion as to how many of the skills will be required. Motion to require 2/3 of the 18 skills, for a total of 12 skills completed by Bob James and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Bill Calder, motion passed unanimously, Patrick abstained. Motion by Bob James and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Butch Gervais that the skills test remains a classroom test, motion passed unanimously, Patrick abstained.

The State Building Codes Division will be training on the Conservation Code and the options for use.

The FMAM Website a members only area was discussed by the board. George updated the board on Front-Page 2000 software and suggested looking at purchasing that in the future.

Letters of appreciation will be sent to volunteers who participated in the NFPA Annual Meeting/Conference.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Merchandise Sales: John Powers reported that we have received a bill for FMAM apparel and need to send that overstock. Motion by Patrick and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Phil to pay 1/2 the bill and make arrangements to pay the remaining portion, motion passed unanimously. Butch will contact the vendor and make arrangements.

Motion to sell apparel at the following prices by Robbie Floyd and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Phil Owens, passed unanimously.

All Polo Shirts - \$15.00

All Sweatshirts - \$15.00

All Denim Shirts - \$20.00

All T-Shirts - \$10.00 or Best offer.

Pins - \$ 2.00

Information regarding the sales will be on the Website, Post Indicator and by email.

Code Hearings will be coming up in September in Fort Worth, Texas. Motion not to allow any travel to code hearings by Phil Owens and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Butch Gervais.

Motion that all money requests and donations must be brought to the board via mail, email, or phone to discuss with other board members and check with treasurer prior to bring the request before the general membership by Robbie Floyd and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Phil Owens, motion passed unanimously.

The Governor Candidate Survey was sent out, we look forward to the responses and will share them with the Minnesota State Fire Chiefs and Minnesota Fire Department Association.

The board would like to see our bank account increase for future expenditures. Suggestions included increased membership, advertising on the website, vendor book, additional seminars/training etc. Bob James will look into a vendor book and will bring information back to the board. Another cost reduction would be emailing the Post Indicator rather than U.S. Mail, saving on printing as well as postage.

Motion by Robbie Floyd and second by Butch Gervais to adjourn, motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 1:30pm.

**1306 Update  
By Nyle Zikmund**

Lasted about 2 hours, Builders Representative and Centex homes testified against town home portion, Rochester, Centennial, SBM, Andover, Chaska, Coon Rapids Building Official and NSA testified in support of rule. More details tomorrow, comment period open until the 23rd, comment to the comment period until December 31.

Comments can be emailed directly to Judge Sheehy at [ksheehy@oah.state.mn.us](mailto:ksheehy@oah.state.mn.us). Copies of comments should be sent to [colleen.d.chirhart@state.mn.us](mailto:colleen.d.chirhart@state.mn.us)

Comments concerns by builders were to remove the option on R-3 and leave only with town home units over 16 units. Current choice is choose those over 8,500 total square feet or over 16 units, whole thing should not be optional, no fire related data to support sprinklering town homes, standard works against uniformity, they don't believe adoption of rule will result in cost savings, town homes have passive fire protection in place, Centex does not experience reductions (in code and zoning) when they sprinkler.

**Committees  
Musical Chairs**

Committee list released late Wednesday. Of import to the fire service;

Rich Stanek is chair of Juciary and Finance, they combined the policy and finance committee

Dauids remains chair of Commerce

Phil Krinkie is now the chair of Capital Investment and Knoblach moves to Ways and Means

Jim Rhodes remains chair of Gov Ops and Ozment moves to Environment finance from policy

# Risk Watch in Minnesota Community Grant Program

For children ages 14 and under, the number one health risk isn't kidnapping, drugs, or disease. It's unintentional INJURIES. To address this problem, your community is invited to apply for a Risk Watch Community Grant. This program is designed to organize community members to plan, implement, evaluate and expand **Risk Watch**, a comprehensive injury prevention curriculum for classroom teachers in preschool through grade eight.

**Risk Watch** was developed by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and is designed to provide fun and interactive lessons that address the highest risk areas for children:

- Motor Vehicle Safety
- Falls
- Choking, Suffocation, Strangulation
- Fire and Burns
- Poisoning
- Water Safety
- Bike and Pedestrian Safety
- Firearms

This grant is being offered by NFPA and the Minnesota Risk Watch Management Team whose membership includes Amy Carroll-Olson, Minnesota SAFE KIDS; Phyllis Braxton, Independent School Forum; Dan Bernardy, Minnesota Fire Marshal Division; Joe Paget, Ramsey County Sheriff Department, and Paula Peterson, Saint Paul Department of Fire and Safety Services. The Risk Watch Management Team is committed to supporting your efforts in bringing RISK WATCH to your community. For more information about Risk Watch, log on to [www.riskwatch.org](http://www.riskwatch.org).

## Here's what you GET...

Each grant award is valued at over \$3200 and will include:

- Training on June 24-25, 2003, in the Twin Cities area for your 5-member Risk Watch Coalition representing a fire department, law enforcement, school administration, classroom teacher, allied public health such as a school nurse, SAFE KIDS representative, or public health representative.
- Lodging and meals during the training workshop.
- Mileage to and from the training workshop.
- 25 Risk Watch curriculum modules - one per teacher and one per Team member.
- 1 set of student workbooks per each K-6 classroom (14),
- A Minnesota Risk Watch Management Team member who will be your personal guide and mentor.

Risk Watch is a registered trademark of the National Fire Protection Association.

## Here's what we're **LOOKING** for...

1. A commitment of your full 5-member coalition to attend the June 24-25, 2003 workshop in the Twin Cities area. List name, address, organization, phone, fax and email for each member. Indicate who will be acting as the primary contact person for your community.
2. A letter of support from the chief of your local fire department, committing the department's support of the Risk Watch Community Grant Program.
3. A letter of support from your local school superintendent committing the school system teachers to the pilot project and future expansion of the program once the pilot has been proven successful. For non-public schools, a letter of support from the school's principal. For preschools, a letter from the director.
4. A letter of support from the sheriff or chief of your local police department committing the department's full support of the Risk Watch curriculum.
5. Commitment of twenty (20) teachers, two teachers from each of the following grade levels: preschool, kindergarten, grade one, grade two, grade three, grade four, grade five, grade six, grade seven, and grade eight. List the names of the proposed pilot project teachers and their grade levels. Teachers must commit to using the Risk Watch program during the 2003-04 school year and submit pre and post test scores (first year only). Teachers must also commit to using the Risk Watch curriculum for at least two consecutive years - school years 2003-04 and 2004-05.
6. A plan to provide each school with AResource Kits@ that contain materials necessary to successfully teach the curriculum. Kits should include items such as a smoke alarm, personal floatation device, bike helmet, gun lock, videos, etc. It is understood that specific contents of the AResource Kit@ will vary from community to community.
7. A plan to expand Risk Watch in your community after the initial pilot phase during school year 2003-04.
8. A statement of understanding that the Risk Watch Community Grant Program is valued at \$ 3200 and that no commitment of cash is being made by the Minnesota Risk Watch Management Team.

## Due Date...

**All applications are due by Wednesday, January 15, 2003** and should be sent to Irene Moore, MN Fire Marshal Division, Town Square, 444 Cedar Street, Suite 145 Saint Paul, MN 55010. If you have questions, call Amy Carroll-Olson, MN SAFE KIDS, 651-228-7314 or Dan Bernardy, 651-215-1754. The 2003 Risk Watch Community Grant Award recipients will be announced the week of February 17, 2003. Good luck - we look forward to receiving your community's proposal!



# Letter: A Firefighter's Wishlist

I wish that you could see the sadness of a businessman as his livelihood goes up in flames, or that family returning home to find their belongings gone for good.

I wish that you could know what it's like to search a burning bedroom for trapped children, flames rolling over your head, your palms and knees burning as you crawl, the floor sagging from your weight, knowing that it's too late, but refusing to give up.

I wish you could comprehend a wife's horror at 3 a.m., as we start CPR on her husband of 40 years.

I wish you knew the unique smell of burning insulation, the taste of soot-filled mucous, the feeling of intense heat through our heavy gear, and the eerie atmosphere to see absolutely nothing in dense smoke.

I wish you could know how it feels to come home in the morning after fighting a multiple-alarm fire, and knowing it may be best not to tell your wife how close that falling beam was, or how near we were to an explosion, or that the fire burned a hole through the floor.

I wish you could be in the emergency room when the doctor pronounces dead the beautiful 5-year-old whom we have been trying to save for the last 25 minutes. She will never go on a first date, learn to drive a car, or say "I love you Mom" again.

I wish you knew how it feels when the alarm sounds in the fire station. Is it a working fire? A false alarm? A chemical spill? Someone having a heart attack? Is someone trapped in a car wreck? Who knows?

I wish you knew that firefighters are the first responders to a terrorist action. Ask the 300 plus surviving families from the FDNY.

I wish you knew the frustration felt in the cab of the fire engine. The siren is wailing, air horn blowing, emergency lights flashing, but drivers refuse to pull to the right and stop. When we arrive, the first question we hear is "What took you so long?"

I wish you could realize the physical, mental and emotional drain of missed meals, lost sleep and foregone holidays and social activities, in addition to the tragedy we've seen.

I wish you could feel the hurt as strangers verbally abuse or belittle us. It increases a thousand-fold when it comes from family and friends.

I wish that someone could explain why at times we have to defend ourselves against our local elected officials. I would hope that we're on the same side.

I wish you could know the satisfaction of saving a life, or someone's property.

I wish you could know the feeling of performing rescue breathing on a motionless infant as a Christmas tree bough scratches your back. There will be no happy holidays in this house.

I wish you could be with me as we wait for the coroner to arrive. If this teen-ager would have worn a seat belt, it may have been his dad who came to pick him up.

I wish that you could have been in any firehouse on Sept. 11. Twenty-year veteran firefighters get wet eyes, too.

I wish you knew how much value a firefighter places on a hug from a child.

I wish you knew that of all the emotions that a firefighter feels, PRIDE is at the top of the list.

**Pete Sponholtz, Green Bay Fire Department**

## **NEW - FMAM Discussion List**

FMAM has a new place in cyberspace to communicate with it's members and friends. The purpose of the list is to discuss or ask questions related to fire prevention, code enforcement, public education or spread FMAM news among fire safety professionals in and around Minnesota, USA. This group is primarily for members of the Fire Marshals Association of Minnesota. It is open to contractors doing business in fire safety in Minnesota. It is also open to the public and other fire safety professionals.

Typical uses of this list would be to ask a question on a code section, ask about how other cities are dealing with a situation or spread news that may be of interest to other FMAM members.

For those that used the FMAM web site discussion section this is either going to replace that or be used in conjunction. The members preference will dictate which method is used.

This is a members (those subscribed) only and moderated list. Yahoo will attach small advertisements. This is in exchange for this list being a free service. If and when FMAM has the resources other alternatives can be considered.

Subscription, posting and canceling is easy. Give it a try for a while.

To subscribe send an email with your name and company to [mnfiremarshals-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:mnfiremarshals-subscribe@yahoogroups.com).

Please pass the word to our friends that may be interested in this new discussion list.

My apologizes to Chris, for not getting this in the 1<sup>st</sup> edition. Robbie

**Meeting**  
**December 11, 2002**  
**12:30pm**  
**Bloomington Fire Station**

### **Education Portion**

**GASEOUS SUPPRESSION SYSTEM INITIAL CHECKOUT AND TESTING**

Presented By:

Thomas J. Schultz

Midwest USA & Canada

Regional Sales Manager

Fike Protection Systems

e-mail [tom.schultz@fike.com](mailto:tom.schultz@fike.com)

Thanks, Bob James - Education Coordinator

**Membership Meeting to Follow**