



Post Indicator

Quarterly Newsletter

December, 2005

President's Message – Phil Owens

This is my first message to you as President of FMAM.

As many of you are aware, Bob James has resigned as Fire Marshal of Bloomington to accept a position with Underwriters Laboratories. Bob and his family will be relocating to Tampa, Florida in the near future.

Please join me in thanking Bob for his long service to FMAM and wishing him much luck as he begins his new job with UL. Bob's dedicated support of this organization and the fire service in Minnesota will be greatly missed.

In preparation for his move to UL and Florida, Bob asked to be relieved of his duties as President of FMAM and the Board of Directors regretfully accepted his resignation.

In special session, the Board voted for me to fill the position of President until our March general meeting at which time you will elect a President to fill the remaining one year of Bob's term in addition to other officer positions which were due for election. Members interested in any of these positions should contact Secretary Robbie Floyd.

I very much appreciate the confidence of the Board and will strive to stay the course during this interim period as President.

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There are a number of things on the horizon in which FMAM will be interested including, Movement by Public Safety Commissioner Michael Campion to take a leadership role in moving our proposed State Fire Marshal funding legislation to a vote, adoption of the new Fire Code and a number of training opportunities in 2006. More information will be provided as these issues develop.

Phil Owens

Financial Report: 2005 FMAM Budget

The following is the 2005 Budget and Income / Expenses as of 11/8/2005:

Income:	Budget-2005:	As of 11/8/05:
Membership:	\$7,500	\$7,885.00
Interest	100	240.14
Merchandise	1,000	382.08
Seminar/Education	5,000	4350.00
Social Event	1,000	808.50
Total Income.....	<u>\$14,600</u>	<u>\$13,665.72</u>

Expenses:	Budget-2005:	As of 11/8/05:
Merchandise	\$ 400	\$542.84
Postage	200	277.97
Professional Services	900	595.00
Web	1,000	650.00
Publications	300	0.00
Pub. Ed.	1,000	3,256.06
Code Development	3,000	1,912.10
Awards/Gifts	200	0.00
Meeting Exp.	500	128.55
Advertising	1,000	1,354.44
Office	500	0.00
Legislation	1,500	1,000.00
Seminars	2,500	90.00
Social Events	1,000	962.50
Misc.	600	0.00
Total Expenses.....	<u>\$14,600</u>	<u>\$10,769.26</u>

Balances

Checking:	\$10,303.79
Savings:	<u>\$20,398.14</u>
	<u>\$30,701.93</u>

2006 Proposed Budget

Income:	Proposed Budget-2006:
Membership:	\$7,500
Interest	100
Merchandise	200
Seminar/Education	5,000
Social Event	1,000
Total Income.....	<u>\$13,800</u>
Expenses:	
Merchandise	\$ 400
Postage	200
Professional Services	900
Web	1,000
Publications	300
Pub. Ed.	1,000
Code Development	3,000
Awards/Gifts	200
Meeting Exp.	500
Advertising	1,000
Office	100
Legislation	1,500
Seminars	2,500
Social Events	1,000
Misc.	100
Total Expenses.....	<u>\$13,800</u>

**Fire Marshal’s Association of Minnesota
MEMBERSHIP MEETING
Meeting Minutes – September 14, 2005**

No minutes were received from the September 14, 2005 Membership Meeting as this edition of the Post Indicator went to press.

**Fire Marshal’s Association of Minnesota
BOARD MEETING
Meeting Minutes – November 9, 2005**

No minutes were received from the November 9, 2005 Board of Directors Meeting as this edition of the Post Indicator went to press.

2006 Minnesota Fire Education Conference

February 18 & 19, 2006
Arrowwood Resort & Conference Center –
Alexandria, Minnesota

Please plan on attending our Annual Minnesota Fire Education Conference to be held at

Arrowwood Resort & Conference Center on Lake Darling in Alexandria, Minnesota February 18 -19, 2006. We are offering a strong educational program with lots of opportunity to share ideas and get hands-on experience. Our program includes an incredibly inspirational keynote speaker, six different educator tracks, an educator networking reception, and certification testing.

The \$250 conference package includes lodging for Friday and Saturday nights, Saturday breakfast buffet, morning break, lunch, afternoon break, the educator networking reception, Sunday breakfast buffet, morning break, and all educational tracks. If you are not staying at Arrowwood, you may choose the training and meals only fee of \$100 on the registration form. Certification testing is an additional \$55 and needs to be addressed on the attendee registration form.

New this year is the Educator Networking Reception where we will gather information from the exhibitors and share local community programs. This promises to be a huge learning opportunity while meeting other fellow educators and enjoying a super snack buffet. There will be door prizes as well, so think of what you are going to showcase from your community programs and get signed up on the “Exhibitors Registration” page in this booklet.

We hope to have conference schedules and registration materials at the 12/14/2005 FMAM Membership Meeting.

Meet the New FMAM President

Interim FMAM President Phil Owens was interviewed for this edition of the Post Indicator. He describes his background and experience in the fire service and shares some of the vision he has for fire prevention and FMAM.

Post Indicator Editor Jon Nisja (PI): *Can you describe your fire service experience for the members of FMAM?*

FMAM President Phil Owens (Owens): I’ve been in the fire service since 1972. I have held several positions from Firefighter and Inspector to Assistant Chief and Fire Marshal while serving on four different fire departments. I was Fire Marshal of the City of Murray, Kentucky for 10 years prior to coming to Saint Paul Fire where I have served for

17 years. I am presently a Fire Inspector II and Supervisor of both the Commercial Inspection and Fire Protection Engineering units for Saint Paul Fire Prevention. I have an AAS Degree in Fire Science and a BS Degree in Criminology. I hold certification as a Certified Fire Protection Specialist (CFPS) as well as several other professional certifications.

***PI:** It sounds like you are one of the more experienced fire inspectors in the state; what do you view as the big fire prevention challenges of the near future?*

Owens: Jon, I think one of the major challenges will be keeping up with changing technology. Fire service people are often traditionalists who don't readily accept change. The use of computer technology in design, and inspections, constantly upgraded fire alarm and protection systems and performance based design will all require that the 21st Century fire inspector keep up with the changing technology and think out side the box.

***PI:** How have you seen fire prevention and inspection activities change over your years in the fire service?*

Owens: Some things have changed quite a bit and others really have not. The code book is certainly larger. The technology in fire protection systems has changed greatly, and fire inspectors have generally evolved into recognized technical professionals. Still, fires are killing and injuring people, and unfortunately it is usually failures in the same things that were killing and injuring them fifty years ago. Failures in means of egress, interior finish, notification and evacuation.

***PI:** What is your advice to new fire inspectors or people who may be coming into this line of work?*

Owens: I think in one word, education. As I said earlier, the technology in the fire protection business is changing rapidly. Inspectors will be dealing with this technology in the form of advanced fire protection systems, performance based design and other advancements. Inspectors will be dealing more directly with design professionals in these areas and must be able to understand and communicate. From the heart, I would say never forget why you are doing this work. You won't be racing across town to answer an alarm, you won't be on the 6 o'clock news unless you mess up, but everyday, you are saving

lives. Be knowledgeable, fair, firm and compassionate.

***PI:** You have been active in FMAM as a member and a Board Officer for many years; what do you view as the strengths of the organization?*

Owens: That's an easy one, the diversity of our membership. Each of us doing the same work in different places, in different ways, with different ideas. We each bring something important and useful to the table that our fellow members may be able to use to improve their own programs.

***PI:** What do you see as the challenges for FMAM during the next few years?*

Owens: Jon, as you know, FMAM has for several years been moving from its position as a rather closed membership organization, to one of state and national importance in fire prevention, fire safety education and code development. We are now recognized as leaders in these areas, our opinions are sought out by decision makers. This is a position of which we can be justly proud. FMAM must challenge itself to continue the active participations which have brought it to the position of respect which it now holds. This didn't just happen. It is the result of long, hard work and to maintain this position will require input and participation by all members, each of whom have special talents to offer.

Event Commemorating Austin's 25th Habitat For Humanity Home With Fire Sprinklers Was A Big Success!

Austin, TX — On Saturday, December 3rd, the Austin-San Antonio Chapter of the Society of Fire Protection Engineers (SFPE), in cooperation with Austin Habitat for Humanity (AHFH) and the Austin Fire Department (AFD), held a special dedication ceremony to commemorate the 25th Habitat home in Austin equipped with a residential fire sprinkler system. The residential sprinkler program for Austin Habitat homes, which reflects a cooperative effort among SFPE, AHFH and AFD, just had its first anniversary, and Austin now boasts the second largest group of voluntarily sprinklered Habitat homes in the United States.

Nearly 50 people and two television news crews attended the event, which coincided with the dedication of Austin Habitat's 17th home built in 2005. The event included a full-scale demonstration of the destructive effects of a residential fire using the Austin Fire Department's burn demonstration trailer and distribution of a media fact sheet on residential sprinklers.

News8Austin, Austin's 24-hour news channel, repeatedly ran a special segment on the event for almost two days, and they published an article with video from the event on their web site at http://www.news8austin.com/content/top_stories/default.asp?AriD=151129.

Jeffrey Shapiro, PE, with the Austin-San Antonio Chapter of SFPE, says "This was an excellent opportunity for the Society of Fire Protection Engineers to educate the community and local media on the importance of fire sprinklers in the home. We're grateful to Austin Habitat for Humanity and the Austin Fire Department for their support of the Habitat sprinkler initiative."

The event also included presentation of a \$500 donation by SFPE to Austin Habitat, which will help offset the cost of reconstructing a unsprinklered Habitat home that was destroyed by an exposure fire in July of 2005.

Also at the event, SFPE member Andre Garabedian was presented with the 2005 Chapter President's Award for his contribution in designing 15 Habitat sprinkler systems.

Others valued contributors to the Austin Habitat sprinkler initiative include Austin Fire Department, International Code Consultants, Legacy Fire Systems, Protection Development Inc., Reliable Automatic Sprinkler Company, Tyco Fire Products, Victaulic Company, Viking Corporation and Western States Fire Protection.



Fire in demonstration trailer (no sprinklers)



Sprinklered bedroom fire at time of sprinkler activation

New Type of LP Gas Cylinder is Now on the Market

A Deputy State Fire Marshal encountered a new style of composite propane cylinder. These lightweight propane (or LP Gas) cylinders have been in use in Europe for a number of years and there has been a push to use them in the U.S.

Composite cylinders offer some advantages over the traditional steel cylinders:

- They are resistant to corrosion,
- Somewhat more resistant to rupture in a fire,
- Lighter weight (10-12 lbs. vs. 19 lbs. for standard grill size cylinder),
- Some evidence that they may reduce the chance of an unexpected product release due to "stretching" of the cylinder.

There is some testing going on in an attempt to allow these inside buildings, especially residential occupancies. This is a major departure from the traditional LP Gas cylinder requirements that pretty much discouraged their use in buildings. The composite cylinder itself is a polymer wrapped in fiberglass. An outer casing protects the pressure cylinder (see photos below).

This message is to make you aware that these devices have been appearing and you may encounter them on inspections or at cylinder exchange locations. At this time, the same restrictions exist for these as for steel cylinders (but that may change in the future).

In many cases the cylinder itself may be translucent (i.e. you can see the liquid). One of the concerns is that under pressure conditions, these cylinders leak

or weep small amounts of gas into the adjacent space.



Fire & Life Safety: All the Bad Fires Happened Decades or Centuries Ago – Right?

I recently had the opportunity to make a presentation at the Florida Fire Marshals and Inspectors Association Annual Conference. My topic was *Back to Basics: What Works & What Doesn't in Fire Prevention*. In putting together the presentation, I used some fire loss data from the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA).

Here is NFPA's list of 20 Deadliest Structure Fires in the United States:

- | | |
|---|-------|
| 1. The World Trade Center
New York City, New York
September 11, 2001 | 2,666 |
| 2. Iroquois Theater
Chicago, Illinois
December 30, 1903 | 602 |
| 3. Cocoanut Grove Night Club
Boston, Massachusetts
November 28, 1942 | 492 |
| 4. Ohio State Penitentiary
Columbus, Ohio
April 21, 1930 | 320 |
| 5. Consolidated School (gas explosion)
New London, Texas
March 18, 1937 | 294 |
| 6. Conway's Theater
Brooklyn, New York
December 5, 1876 | 285 |

- | | |
|---|-----|
| 7. Rhythm Club
Natchez, Mississippi
April 23, 1940 | 207 |
| 8. Lakeview Grammar School
Collinwood, Ohio
March 4, 1908 | 175 |
| 9. Rhodes Opera House
Boyertown, Pennsylvania
January 12, 1908 | 170 |
| 10a. Ringling Bros Barnum & Bailey Circus
Hartford, Connecticut
July 6, 1944 | 168 |
| 10b. Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
April 19, 1995 | 168 |
| 12. Beverly Hills Supper Club
Southgate, Kentucky
May 28, 1977 | 165 |
| 13. Richmond Theater
Richmond, Virginia
December 26, 1811 | 160 |
| 14. Triangle Shirtwaist Company
New York, New York
March 25, 1911 | 146 |
| 15. Eddystone Ammunition Co. (explosion)
Eddystone, Pennsylvania
April 10, 1917 | 133 |
| 16. Cleveland Clinic Hospital
Cleveland, Ohio
May 15, 1929 | 125 |
| 17. Winecoff Hotel
Atlanta, Georgia
December 7, 1946 | 119 |
| 18. The Station Nightclub
West Warwick, Rhode Island
February 20, 2003 | 100 |
| 19. Our Lady of the Angels School
Chicago, Illinois
December 1, 1958 | 95 |

20. Happy Land Social Club 87
New York, New York
March 25, 1990

Some people argue that we have eliminated the fire problem (at least from a life safety perspective), I beg to differ.

In looking at the list a few things came to my mind.
Of the 20 deadliest fires:

- Six were during my lifetime (I am 49 years old),
- Five occurred during my fire service career (I started as a firefighter in 1978),
- Four have occurred since 1990.

Here is where the 20 deadliest fires have occurred:

- 5 occurred in bars / clubs / drinking establishments,
- 4 occurred in theaters,
- 3 occurred in schools,
- 2 occurred in factories / manufacturing,
- 2 occurred in office buildings,
- 2 occurred in institutional,
- 1 occurred in a circus / carnival tent,
- 1 occurred in a hotel.

If you ever were wondering where you might want to consider focusing your limited fire prevention resources, consider this list as a guide. But this list also needs a little analysis:

- The two office buildings were terrorist attacks,
- The four theater fires occurred 100 or more years ago; most of the causes involved open flames or lighting (which was fairly primitive at the time).

After removing these two types of occupancies (office buildings and theaters), bars, schools, factories, institutional, and hotel occupancies were left along with outdoor tents.

Largest Dollar Loss Fires:

Here is NFPA's list of the 25 largest dollar losses from fire in U.S. history (in 2003 dollars):

1. The World Trade Center \$34,689 mill.
September 11, 2001 New York City, New York
Loss in year it occurred: \$33,400 million
2. San Francisco Earthquake and Fire \$7,132 mill.
April 18, 1906 San Francisco, California
Loss in year it occurred: \$350 million

3. Great Chicago Fire * \$2,568 mill.
October 8-9, 1871 Chicago, Illinois
Loss in year it occurred: \$168 million

4. Oakland Fire Storm \$2,024 mill.
(wildland/urban interface)
October 20, 1991 Oakland, California
Loss in year it occurred: \$1,500 million

5. Great Boston Fire \$1,146 mill.
November 9, 1872 Boston, Massachusetts
Loss in year it occurred: \$75 million

6. Polyolefin Plant \$1,113 mill.
October 23, 1989 Pasadena, Texas
Loss in year it occurred: \$750 million

7. Wildland Fire (Cedar) \$1,060 mill.
October 25, 2003 Julian, California
Loss in year in occurred: \$1,060 million

8. Wildland Fire \$1,068 mill.
May 4, 2000 Los Alamos, New Mexico
Loss in year it occurred: \$1,000 million

9. Baltimore Conflagration \$1,019 mill.
February 7, 1904 Baltimore, Maryland
Loss in year it occurred: \$50 million

10. Wildland Fire (Old) \$975 million
October 25, 2003 San Bernardino, California
Loss in year it occurred: \$975 million

11. Los Angeles Civil Disturbance \$744 million
April 29 - May 1, 1992 Los Angeles, California
Loss in year it occurred: \$567 million

12. Power Plant (auto manuf. plant) \$717 million
February 1, 1999 Dearborn, Michigan
Loss in year it occurred: \$650 million

13. "Laguna Beach Fire" \$672 million
(wildland/urban interface)
October 27, 1993 Orange County, California
Loss in year it occurred: \$528 million

14. Textile Mill \$603 million
December 11, 1995 Methuen, Massachusetts
Loss in year it occurred: \$500 million

15. U.S.S. Lafayette \$598 million
February 9, 1942 New York, New York
Loss in year it occurred: \$53 million

16. S.S. Grandcamp & Chemical Plant \$552 million
 April 16, 1947 Texas City, Texas
 Loss in year it occurred: \$67 million

17. Petroleum Refinery \$513 million
 May 5, 1988 Norco, Louisiana
 Loss in year it occurred: \$330 million

18. Cargo plane in-flight fire \$463 million
 September 5, 1996 Near Newburgh, New York
 Loss in year it occurred \$395 million

19. Great Fire of New York \$461 million
 December 16, 1835 New York, New York
 Loss in year it occurred: \$26 million

20. Wildland Fire \$445 million
 May – June, 1998 Florida
 Loss in year it occurred \$395 million

21. One Meridian Plaza (high-rise) \$439 million
 February 23, 1991 Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
 Loss in year it occurred: \$325 million

22. Forest Fire \$426 million
 October 12, 1918 Cloquet, Minnesota
 Loss in year it occurred: \$35 million

23. Apollo Spacecraft Cabin \$413 million
 January 27, 1967 Cape Kennedy, Florida
 Loss in year it occurred: \$75 million

24. Chemical Company Plant \$348 million
 November 14, 1987 Pampa, Texas
 Loss in year it occurred: \$215 million

25. Nuclear Power Plant \$342 million
 March 22, 1975 near Decatur, Alabama
 Loss in year it occurred: \$100 million

Out of these 25 largest dollar loss fires:

- 17 of the 25 have occurred in my lifetime,
- 15 of the 25 have occurred during my fire service career,
- 11 of the 25 have occurred since 1990.

For those that argue that we have eliminated fires so we can back off from our “restrictive and onerous” fire codes, I am not sure that I agree. Hopefully, this gives you something to think about when determining your inspection priorities.

Jon Nisja

FMAM Meeting Notice & Calendar

Wednesday, December 14, 2005

New Brighton Public Safety Center - 785 Old Highway 8

12:30 p.m. – Education Program: Tom Antal of the MN Automatic Fire Alarm Association

1:30 p.m. – Business Meeting

Other Important Dates:

Thursday & Friday, January 12 & 13, 2006 – Annual Building Official Institute – U of MN

Wednesday, February 8, 2006 – FMAM Board – 9:00 am

Saturday & Sunday, February 18 & 19, 2006 – Public Education Conference

Wednesday, March 8, 2006 – Training/Education – 9:00 am – New Brighton

Wednesday, March 8, 2006 – Membership Meeting – 10:30 am – New Brighton (Annual Meeting)

June 4-8 – NFPA Annual Meeting – Orlando, Florida

Wednesday, June 14, 2006 – Quarterly Meeting

Wednesday, September 13, 2006 – Quarterly Meeting

Wednesday, December 13, 2006 – Quarterly Meeting

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