

Fire GUARD

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A Publication of the Northern Illinois Alliance of Fire Protection Districts

Spring 2022

What's In A Name?

When I was first approached about changing the organization name, I thought it would be a low priority endeavor which would quickly lose enthusiasm. I had been Fire Chief for thirty days and there were more pressing concerns on my plate. I gave permission to address the Board at their next meeting expecting a lukewarm response. When nearly the entire membership attended the meeting, I realized that the idea was not merely a fleeting suggestion but held deep significance to our members.

On June 1, we will officially change our organization name from Palatine Rural Fire Protection District to Inverness Fire Protection District. While the emphasis of the change was that firefighters were tired of explaining to others that they are, indeed, career firefighters and not volunteers, the history of a change was more complicated.

When the District decided to become its own entity in the mid-90s, several names were considered including: McIntosh Fire Protection District (named after the man who founded Inverness in 1926), Community Fire Protection District, and Citizens Fire Protection District, reflecting the desire to represent the residents of the area, not simply perform firefighting. Ultimately the decision was made to keep the name of the district which had provided service to the unincorporated areas for years previously.

As I began looking through old plans and documents, I found that a name change was not a new idea. The subject has been addressed several times in the past, always with the caveat, "we should consider" attached to it. It was obvious that the time for considering the move had ended and action was required. It was also obvious that the Board was impressed by the show of support by the members and were ready to make the change happen.

Old photos and articles add a depth to our history. While we have been our own district for only twenty-seven years, service has been provided to the area for over one hundred years. Photos were taken out of the drawer and placed on the walls. We agreed that our history was woven into the tapestry of the area and to begin telling our story at 1995 ignored a huge portion of our legacy.

The technical process of the change has been rather simple, in fact, a witness in the Board meeting would have been unaware that such a major decision had occurred. Working on the details has been an exercise in delegation. Members have enthusiastically designed new badges, patches, station signage, and vehicle lettering. The support this change has received has been nothing short of astounding. Sometimes, it can be difficult to find things that get firefighters excited, but this process has been welcomed by everyone involved.

Changing the name will not impact the service we provide and will be invisible to all but the most astute observer. There are some costs involved, some of them fall into the current budget, but most of them were changes we were planning to make. It has been argued that it will do nothing to affect the retention issues we face like so many other departments. But, for an organization working on improving its culture the process has been indispensable.



Richard Kurka is the Fire Chief of Palatine Rural Fire Protection District. He spent 27 years with the Bloomingdale Fire Protection District and is a certified Chief Fire Officer through the Office of the State Fire Marshal. He has an Associate's Degree in Fire Science from McHenry County College, a Bachelor's degree from Iowa State University, and a Master's certificate in Leadership from Aurora University, and is currently enrolled in the Executive Fire Officer Program at the National Fire Academy.



Letter from President Nick Kosiara



January was a full and eventful month for the NIAFPD. Most importantly, we were able to get back together for an in-person Annual Conference like we have all been accustomed to for almost 30 years. A lot of planning and organizing went into making the event educational, safe and nearly flawless. We were able to get over 165 of us together on Friday and well over 200 on Saturday.

I want to thank not only the Conference Committee and our presenters but also all of you who attended for doing such a great job of helping everyone feel safe enough to come together and learn in a controlled but comfortable environment (at least once we got the heat working!). We put additional safeguards in place, and everyone seemed to understand why we asked for masking even where it was not mandated by state and county health departments. It was a true group effort, we all learned a lot and, for quite a few of us, we were able to reconnect with many friends while even making a few new ones.

Also, that weekend we rebuilt our Legislative Committee with new members and tighter focus. I want to welcome Chief Jim Kreher and Deputy Chief Nick Asta from Barrington-Countryside FPD and Trustee Brian Bernardoni from Roberts Park FPD as new committee members. On Saturday, we had a very productive session with NIAFPD Legislative Liaison Ron Kubicki and our Springfield Lobbyist, Liz Brown-Reeves. We reviewed the current list of bills and discussed our possible support decisions. Since that time, we have defined a listing of all bills that we are supporting, not supporting, remaining neutral or needing more information on before deciding the Alliance's positions. We will be sharing the listing and coordinate with the positions of our partner organizations, the Illinois Association of Fire Protection Districts and the Illinois Fire Chiefs Association. The new committee will meet regularly but, more importantly, stay in close communication via email to keep up with changes and rapid evolution of legislation.

Thanks to all and please take good care of yourselves, your districts and all else that is important to our world.

Letter from Executive Director Gina Degleffetti



Happy May! The NIAFPD has been very busy updating, planning and "spring cleaning". We were very happy to see so many familiar faces at the conference in January and are eagerly anticipating the 30th Annual Conference which is moving to the DoubleTree in Oak Brook. It will take place on January 27-28, 2023, so please mark your calendars! Also, the Fall Seminar is scheduled for October 22nd in Lisle, IL where you can earn 3 CEU's.

Although our Legislative Committee was not able to go to Washington, D.C. this year, the NIAFPD still weighed in on several key pieces of legislation thanks to our Lobbyist, Liz Brown-Reeves. Please be sure to update all your member email addresses with us so you receive our updates. As always, if you would like to be more involved with the Alliance, please let us know! We are always looking for new ideas and appreciate your continued support. Last but not least, please send us any announcements of your Fire District so we may share it in our newsletter at admin@niafpd.org. Stay safe!

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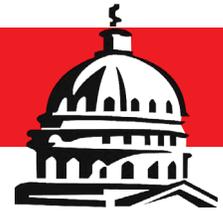
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Springfield Legislative Update



By: Liz Brown-Reeves, NIAFPD Lobbyist

The Spring Session came to an end on April 8th due to the June Primary. For the first time in more than two decades, the current fiscal year budget (FY22) will end with a surplus, which gave the General Assembly a bit of wiggle room when crafting this budget. The estimated revenue for FY23 is just over \$46.54 billion, and the FY23 budget appropriates \$46.45 billion in General Revenue Funds.

Legislative NIAFPD tracked and weighed in on several key pieces of legislation:

HB4461: Legislation deals with disconnection fees and the responsibility of a municipality to pay the fire districts timely. The bill successfully passed both chambers. (Sent to Governor)

HB5502: This bill relates to 9-1-1 statewide access that ensures that calls are redirected and rerouted properly around the state. The bill also laid out the responsibilities for the supervisor of a telecommunicator based upon public safety. (Passed Both Houses)

SB4053: Beginning January 1, 2023, the minimum widow's annuity shall be no less than 150% (rather than 125%) of the Federal Poverty Level for all persons receiving widow's annuities on or after that date, without regard to whether the deceased policeman or fireman is in service on or after the effective date of the amendatory Act. (Sent to Governor)

HB1321: Local law enforcement, fire districts, schools, hospitals, and ambulance services to provide behavioral health services for first responders. (Passed Both Houses)

HB1571: DHS is required to provide grant programs for childcare centers to provide late night case for children of first responders and other late-night workers. (Sent to Governor)

2022 Budget- NIAFPD Areas of Interest

- Office of the State Fire Marshal - **\$28,864,800.**
- Underground Storage Tank Fund - **\$4,763,800.**
- Fire Explorer and Cadet School - **\$65,000.**
- Small Equipment Grant Program - **\$1,500,000.**
- Minimum Basic Firefighter Training Program - **\$700,000.**
- Illinois Firefighter Peer Support Program: - **\$60,000.**
- Community Risk Reduction Program - **\$70,000.**
- Firefighter Online Training Management System - **\$380,000**
- Fire Museum Building located on the State Fairgrounds in Springfield - **\$2,500,000**
- Maintenance and Rehabilitation of the Fire Museum Building and Museum Artifacts - **\$75,000.**
- Medal of Honor Ceremony, Scholarships and Firefighter Memorial Maintenance: **\$200,000.**
- For Chicago Fire Department Training Program local governmental agencies Training Program: **\$4,868,200**
- Grants to ILEAS/MABAS administration: **\$180,000.**

Status of Article 4 Consolidation

By William Atwood, Executive Director, Firefighters Pension Investment Fund

On October 1, 2021 the Firefighters Pension Investment Fund (IFPIF) began the process of transitioning the investment assets of the 296 Article 4 pension funds into a single portfolio at FPIF.

The most recent tranche of investment assets was transferred into the FPIF account in February of 2022, which brought the total number of funds consolidated into FPIF to 253. There are 43 firefighter pension funds yet to transfer, which FPIF plans on transitioning in April, May, and June, so that all Article 4 funds will be transitioned by the June 30, 2022 statutory deadline.

The current value of the FPIF portfolio is \$6.8 billion, and we expect the value of the fund to be about \$8 billion once all funds are consolidated.

As the statutory Transition Period moves towards a close, FPIF is preparing to move forward into what we think of as a business as usual environment. In that context, we are preparing for a normalized environment. In the coming weeks, FPIF will be issuing an RFP for audit services, both for an audit of the transition as required by statute, as well as the regular fiscal year end audit. The investment staff and FPIF's investment consultant, Marquette Associates, are reviewing the permanent asset allocation in anticipation of the issuance of RFPs for fixed income managers, to be issued early this Summer.

FPIF is preparing for the 2022 Trustee Election. Voters will elect a Participant Trustee, a Beneficiary Trustee and an Executive Trustee on December 1, 2022. FPIF has adopted permanent election rules and has issued an RFP for an election vendor. The FPIF Election Committee will be considering an election schedule for the 2022 Trustee Election at its meetings in April. Nominating petition periods will begin this summer.

Finally, we have been working closely with participating pension funds and Northern Trust to ensure that cash movements are executed smoothly and so that those funds are confident in utilizing Northern Trust's secure portal.

Please encourage your active and retired firefighters and your employer representatives to sign up for our newsletter by visiting our website and entering their email address into the subscription feature at the bottom of our home page (ifpif.org).



Growing Inflation Concerns and Interest Rates

By: Thomas S. Sawyer, Managing Partner, Sawyer Falduto Asset Management, LLC

Fed Telegraphs Higher Interest Rates

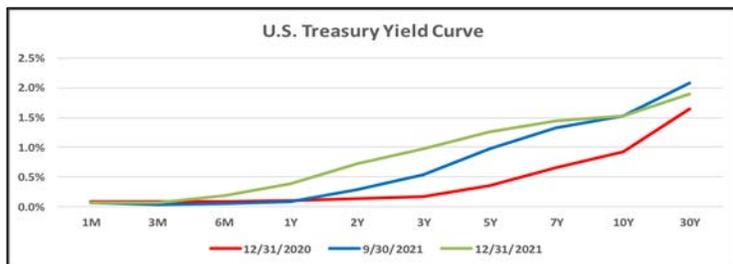
Key Economic Observations

Positive Developments: Strong corporate profits and robust consumer spending provide momentum going into 2022. Increased distribution of Covid vaccines worldwide provides a catalyst for the global recovery as the pandemic eases. The economy seems poised to move toward a more normal pace in 2022.

Potential Headwinds: Covid-19 variants continue to pose risks to a full economic recovery. Elevated levels of inflation could erode consumer confidence and lead to slowing economic growth. Federal Reserve policy guidance, increased market volatility and investor uncertainty pushed bond yields higher. Labor shortages and supply-chain issues continue to keep inflation in the headlines fueling interest rate fears. The Russian invasion of Ukraine has rattled markets causing investors to seek the safety of U.S. Government securities.

Fixed Income Overview - Interest Rates Rise

Bond yields in the intermediate maturity range have risen recently on persistent elevated levels of inflation along with the Fed's comments regarding accelerating the tapering off of asset purchases. Furthermore, the Fed has indicated it will begin to raise interest rates in March.



It has been some time since fixed income investors have actually observed a negative return on a fixed income portfolio. Prices on fixed income securities will fluctuate with changes in interest rates. The security may show an **unrealized** loss for a period of time even though the total return will be **positive** for the life of the security. As many of our **Fire Guard** readers invest in various fixed income securities as allowed under the Public Funds Investment Act, we thought we would take this opportunity to review the "The Life of a Bond." The example in the table that follows is a 5 - Year Treasury Note with a final maturity of 2/28/2022.

The Life of a 5 -Year U.S. Treasury Note

Face Value: \$10,000

Coupon: 1.875%

Semi Annual Interest Payment: \$93.75

Total Value of Position at Maturity: \$10,937.50

	Initial Cost	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Bond Value	\$10,000	\$9,375	\$9,820	\$10,185	\$10,178	10,000
Price Change	Initial Buy	(\$625)	+ \$455	+ \$365	(\$7)	(\$178)
Yield to Maturity	1.875%	2.57%	2.50%	0.94%	0.10%	Maturity
Interest Earned	NA	\$188	\$375	\$563	\$750	\$938
Position Value	\$10,000	\$9,563	\$10,195	\$10,748	\$10,928	\$10,938

As the table exhibits, there may be windows of time when current price of the security is less than the original cost or the prior period ending value. Ultimately the bond matures in Year 5 for the Face Value. The investor receives the Face Value at maturity along with the interest payments throughout the life of the bond realizing a positive total return of \$938. In other words, the investor will earn the Yield-to-Maturity from the initial purchase date. While we used real market data in the example, the timing of purchases and other factors will influence the results.

Portfolio Considerations

Most Fire Protection District portfolios have relatively short-term, conservative structures. This results in frequent cash flows from maturities to be available for re-investment. Rising interest rates provide enhanced opportunities for the reinvestment of maturing securities at higher yields. We will continue to focus on high quality securities that offer best opportunity to generate positive overall returns in a rising interest rate environment.

We always finish with the reminder that most readers of the Fire Guard invest cash reserves in conservative portfolios with limited interest rate, credit and market risk as guided by statute and investment policy. While statutory guidelines allow investment in corporate and municipal securities (within certain parameters), investment policy guidelines are the primary tool for managing risk across economic and interest rate cycles. We welcome the opportunity to review your investment policy and current portfolio structure with you. As always, portfolio diversification and sound policy guidelines provide the foundation for consistent long-term returns and risk management.

"The allocation to all available asset classes should be determined with careful consideration given to factors such as statutory guidelines, investment time horizon, liquidity requirements, diversification and risk tolerance. The resulting asset allocation should be well documented in your investment policy and guidelines. Information contained in this commentary is solely the opinion of the author and obtained from sources believed to be reliable. Accuracy can not be guaranteed. Past performance is not predictive of future returns."



Firefighters' Pension Investment Fund Consolidation

Article by John Perry

As the sole IFPIF Board representative from Illinois Fire Districts, I want to share with you some observations from my first six months on the Board. The Illinois Firefighters' Pension Investment Fund (IFPIF) has completed the transfer of funds from over 80% of the local pension funds in the State. The transition of assets to the consolidated fund should conclude by June 30, 2022. This transition has provided challenges, but so far has been carried out in a very professional way. My impression is that each local fund has received considerable assistance from IFPIF staff to make sure that the process is understood and successful. Since the beginning of the asset transfer last October, the Board has approved some key policies. In December, we approved actuarial assumptions that will guide IFPIF's calculation of the required minimum contribution for each local fund. A key actuarial assumption is the annual rate of return for funds invested. The rate established is 7.125%. Given the recent performance of equity investments, we may find this target hard to achieve in the short-run. If we are able to achieve this target in the long-run, it will mean that we have exceeded the prior target set by IDOI by about 10%. Let's hope that we can achieve this rate of return!

At IFPIF's most recent meeting, we approved a template for the annual actuarial review of each local fund. This review by IFPIF will provide each fund with the minimum required contribution for the fund. This minimum can no longer be reduced through an independent actuarial analysis. Local funds are encouraged to exceed the minimum contribution. Contributions above the minimum will reduce the interest costs for paying off unfunded liabilities for each local fund.

The IFPIF Election Committee established the ground rules and timeline for the election slated Fall 2022. I will be up for reelection. I plan to seek nomination. I look forward to seeing you at the IAFFPD Conference in late June when I will be collecting nominating petitions for reelection. I will be seeking your nominating petition in July and August to get on the ballot for reelection which will be held in October and November. Please take some initiative to get me nominated and reelected. It was our unified effort in 2021 that provided our election victory for Fire Districts. Let me know how I can assist your local fund through my service on IFPIF. Your input and feedback is important to me.

HSA Telehealth Relief Included in 2022 Consolidated Appropriations Act

The Covid pandemic changed our lives. And for many of us, it changed the way we do business, i.e., Zoom, Teams, etc. It also had a big impact on how we utilize services and make choices as consumers.

There is no better example of this than Telehealth. Telehealth affords individuals an opportunity to consult with physicians of various specialties via Zoom, Facetime, or other online tools, without having to leave the comfort of their homes.

During the pandemic, legislation was passed to make these Telehealth tools available at no cost for organizations that have what are considered high deductible health plans, or HSA eligible policies.

This law changed expired at the end of 2021. But recently, there was some good news!

Congress recently passed a new government funding bill, the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2022 ("Act").

The Act extends HSA telehealth relief. This relief allows high deductible health plans ("HDHPs") to provide first-dollar services for telehealth and other remote care. The relief lasts from April 2022 through December 2022.

Previously introduced in the CARES Act, this relief means employers with HDHP plans can waive participant deductibles for any telehealth services without impacting those participant's HSA eligibility. A similar provision in the CARES Act expired on December 31, 2021, so if employers choose to take advantage of this year's relief, they will need to be aware that the provision will not apply retroactively in a calendar year plan. Deductible limits would still apply to any non-preventative telehealth services received between January 1, 2022 and March 31, 2022. As a reminder, the 2022 minimum deductible for a qualifying HDHP plan is \$1,400 for single coverage and \$2,800 for family coverage.

Although this is a COVID era provision, participants can use telehealth for any reason. This new relief is not mandatory for health plans. Self-insured employers should work with their TPA and stop-loss provider if they wish to implement this provision. Fully insured plans should contact their insurance carrier.

AUTHOR Jesse Hansen, JD

If you have any questions about how these guidelines will impact your plan, talk to your carrier and your OneDigital Consultant.

Illinois CRR Stakeholder Taskforce

Promote the importance of Risk Reduction in Illinois by inspiring community ownership and providing coordinated resources Illinois Community Risk Reduction – What Happened in 2021?

In December of 2019, a group of fire service leaders from organizations and agencies across the state of Illinois gathered to discuss what Community Risk Reduction (CRR) should look like in Illinois. Through a SWOT analysis conducted that day, it became apparent that Illinois has 14 state agencies and other state organizations with strong networking capabilities, able to reach out to the state's 1,144 fire departments and the communities they serve. It would take organization, education, and dedication to overcome any existing misconceptions, negative perceptions, and a lack of knowledge about what CRR really is and what it can do for communities. At the end of the day, it was decided to move forward with future plans and coordinated efforts to provide CRR opportunities and resources for Illinois.

Fast forward to March 2020 when everything shut down due to COVID. Everything stopped as the entire state tried to figure out how to conduct business-as-usual, but not-so-usual. During this time the group met just enough to decide that the Illinois Fire Chiefs Association would serve as the state's lead organization for CRR. The OSFM provided grant monies to IFSI to develop basic CRR classes.

By February, 2021, Zoom was a familiar option for many and work began in earnest to regroup and formalize with goals and objectives for IL CRR. It was decided that each of the 14 state fire service organizations would choose one member to represent them on the team at monthly meetings. Other state organizations would be added as auxiliary members once needs were established. The team became known as the Illinois CRR Stakeholder Taskforce. Marketing and outreach were identified as necessary early in the process. IFSI volunteered to handle all marketing needs and introduced Jill Sauer who has handled development of a website, Facebook page, and the IL CRR logo. The website and FB page went live in September, 2021. Visit us at www.illinoiscrr.com! The website continues to grow with relevant notices, links to classes, trainings, downloadable articles for use in your community, and other resources.

In April, 2021 a half day workshop with significant representation from the member organizations, produced the following mission statement: Promote the importance of Risk Reduction in Illinois by inspiring community ownership and providing coordinated resources".

The Illinois Association of Fire Protection Districts (IAFPD) invited the taskforce to present an overview of IL CRR at their June conference in Champaign, IL.



The Illinois Fire Safety Alliance (IFSA) invited the CRR Taskforce to join the 14 state fire association organizations at the annual Fire Prevention Week luncheon to present an overview of CRR work in Illinois over the past year. The IFSA and OSFM were also awarded 1,000 smoke alarms from Vision 2020 for the state's Be Alarmed program.

The Office of the State Fire Marshal and the Chicago Fire Department hosted a successful one-day Community Risk Reduction (CRR) Conference in Springfield, IL in October, 2021. Presentations from national, state, county and community CRR experts provided insight to best practices and the fundamentals of successful implementation of the process. Throughout the day, a common theme became, "CRR is not just another name for Public Education or Fire Prevention".

The above information represents just a few of the highlights that moved CRR forward in Illinois. Behind the scenes, efforts have been underway to mine the state data and produce a state risk assessment document. This will help serve as a rudder for where we need to reach out and invest resources in the future. Illinois is also serving as a model for other states to integrate all branches of the fire service to enable their communities to understand and conduct CRR.

You can find more information, along with free and downloadable CRR planning guides, at Vision 20/20's website www.strategicfire.org.

We invite you to contact our organization at i_ for resources and CRR updates. We welcome your questions, requests, and suggestions.



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Federal Court Upholds Naperville Fire Department's Vaccine Mandate

by Joe Miller and Hayley Loufek; Ottosen DiNolfo Hasenbalg & Castaldo, Ltd.

A federal judge recently upheld the City of Naperville's vaccine-or-test mandate for its firefighters. In *Halgren v. City of Naperville*, several City employees claimed that the vaccination mandate violated their constitutional rights. 2021 WL 5998583 (N.D. Ill. Dec. 19, 2021). The district court did not agree and upheld the City's effort.

The Naperville firefighters in *Halgren* argued that the vaccine-or-test mandate violated their constitutional due process and equal protection rights. To succeed on such claims, they first had to show they had a constitutionally recognized interest.

The firefighters claimed that they had a constitutional interest in bodily autonomy and medical privacy rights. The court agreed that these were liberty interests that fall under the protection of the Fourteenth Amendment. However, the story did not end there.

Next, the court had to classify how important these interests were, which in turn dictated how rigorously the mandate would be reviewed. Laws that curtail lesser interests are only subjected to "rational basis review," where laws are held constitutional if they are rationally related to a legitimate government interest. Indeed, unless the law is completely arbitrary and irrational, it will be upheld. However, laws that infringe on fundamental interests are given "strict scrutiny"—a much more arduous evaluation that requires a law to be narrowly tailored to achieve a compelling government interest.

The firefighters tried to cast their asserted interests as "fundamental." Fundamental interests are rare, as that designation is reserved for rights deeply rooted in U.S. history and tradition. Recognized

fundamental rights include the rights to marry, have children, marital privacy, contraception, bodily integrity, abortion, interstate travel, and to vote. However, the Supreme Court has historically been reluctant to identify new ones.

The *Halgren* court found that the firefighters' rights in bodily autonomy and medical privacy did not fit the mold of a fundamental interest. Therefore, the court undertook a rational basis review of Naperville's vaccination mandate and had no trouble finding a sound reason for it. The City presented enough evidence through health data statistics, scientific studies, public reports, and medical experts to demonstrate that the vaccines might mitigate the transmissibility of COVID-19. This provided at least one rational basis for the mandate. And there were other proper bases, too, such as: using the vaccine to reduce COVID-19 symptoms even for those with natural immunity who might be reinfected with a new variant; and using the alternative testing requirement to achieve early diagnoses of COVID-19 and promote more effective use of treatment. All of this would help reduce the time that firefighters or other healthcare workers would need to take off work and keep them healthy enough to serve the public.

In the end, the *Halgren* court allowed the vaccine-or-test mandate to go into effect. In so doing, it strongly suggested that the constitutional claims will ultimately fail at trial. Shortly thereafter, the firefighters filed an appeal with the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals. To date, the appellate court has not rendered a decision.

In Memorium

Marianne Elizabeth DeBoer, 58, of Beach Park, IL, peacefully passed away on Monday, April 11, 2022, at home in the presence of her family. Marianne was an administrative assistant at Lesser, Lutrey, & McGlynn LLP from 2009 to 2013 and AbbVie from 2013 to 2022. She was a community advocate who passionately helped the young, elderly, and underserved communities. She energetically advocated in support of the 2006 Beach Park Paramedic Referendum, helping the referendum pass after previously failing five times. Marianne committed many selfless hours serving the community as a Pension Trustee and Treasurer, Beach Park Fire Protection District (2007-2021); on the Board of Directors, Northern IL Alliance of Fire Protection Districts (2011-2018); and as a Beach Park District #3 School Board Member (2007-2015). She held certifications and completed training for the Beach Park Fire District, School Board, and Insurance Underwriting. She is survived by her former spouse and cherished friend Paul W. DeBoer and their children Matthew and Ethan.



Jamie Lowe, Lisle-Woodridge Fire District Board of Trustees 2012-2015 passed away suddenly on Saturday, March 5, 2022. Trustee Lowe served as Vice-President of the Board and represented the Fire District on the DU-COMM Public Safety Communications Agency Board of Directors and Executive Committee. Trustee Lowe was a fierce advocate for the Lisle-Woodridge Fire District and active member of the NIAFPD during his service. Jamie is survived by his wife Janet, daughters Jacqueline and Jillian. Rest in Peace, Brother.



BE ALARMED!

Program Overview:

“Be Alarmed!” is a fire safety education and smoke alarm installation program administered cooperatively between the Illinois Fire Safety Alliance (IFSA) and the Office of the Illinois State Fire Marshal (OSFM). The program distributes fire safety education materials and 10-year sealed battery smoke alarms to fire departments in the state of Illinois. The fire departments then deliver the education and install smoke alarms in at-risk homes within their communities while recording data for reporting purposes. Both the educational materials and smoke alarms are provided to fire departments at no cost as a result of funding from both the IFSA and OSFM.

Purpose & Objectives:

The program was developed to educate Illinois residents on the dangers of fire in the home and how to prevent fires from occurring in the home, as well as to ensure there are working smoke alarms properly installed in homes. By providing 10-year concealed battery smoke alarms, it ensures that the power source cannot be removed from the unit and, if properly maintained, will last the life of the device. The program seeks to:

1. Educate Illinois residents, young and old, on home fire safety and prevention methods
2. Reduce the number of fire-related injuries in Illinois
3. Reduce the number of fire-related deaths in Illinois
4. Identify the reason for non-working smoke alarms in Illinois homes

Program Details:

- Only 10-year concealed lithium battery operated smoke alarms will be utilized and distributed to fire departments.
- 24 alarms will be provided to fire departments per request.
- Smoke alarms are required to be installed in resident homes - distributing or giving away the alarms by fire departments is prohibited.
- Smoke alarm informational pamphlets, home fire safety checklists, and home fire escape plans will be provided to fire departments - educational materials which must be provided to the home residents.
- Fire departments will record and submit installation survey data via the Be Alarmed! web portal upon completion of installations.

- Additional requested smoke alarms will not be permitted to fire departments until 20 of the of the previously received 24 alarms have been installed and installation surveys have been submitted.

Eligibility Requirements:

This program is available to fire departments located in the state of Illinois. Fire departments must be able to:

- Provide documentation demonstrating that a smoke alarm installation program is in place upon requesting alarms through this program.
- Acknowledge the program Release from Liability language.
- Record and submit installation survey data within 10 days of completing a home installation.
- Educate the homeowners on smoke alarm maintenance, fire safety, and fire escape planning when installing smoke alarms.

Program Participation:

If the program eligibility requirements can be met by the fire department:

1. Visit www.IFSA.org/alarms/register to complete the program registration form.
2. Fire departments requesting alarms for the first time through this program will be required to provide documentation demonstrating that a department smoke alarm installation program is in place. This documentation will not be required when requesting future alarms.
3. OSFM will ship 24 10-year sealed battery smoke alarms, 12 Smoke Alarm Informational Pamphlets, 12 Home Fire Safety Checklist & Home Fire Escape Plan documents, and 12 generic Installation Survey form documents.
4. Upon installation of alarms in homes and the education on fire safety to residents, the reporter will document the visit using the Be Alarmed! web portal. Complete all the required fields and take detailed notes to ensure that each visit has been successfully documented. Be sure that an Installation Survey Form is submitted for each property where a smoke alarm installation is conducted.
5. The web portal can be accessed at alarms.ifsa.org.
6. The web portal will maintain all records for the participating fire department. Additional detail can be requested from the Illinois Fire Safety Alliance if needed.

(Continued on Next Page)

7. When 20 of the 24 alarms received by the fire department have been successfully installed and the required data has been submitted via the web portal, fire departments will have the ability to request additional smoke alarms and educational materials. Requests will not be processed if previous smoke alarm installation data has not been properly submitted.



Illinois Fire Safety Alliance

Dedicated to Fire Safety, Burn Prevention, and Supporting Burn Survivors

Updated Illinois Smoke Alarm Law

What is the Updated Illinois Smoke Alarm Law?

- Since 1988, all dwellings in Illinois have been required to have smoke alarms.
- In 2017, Public Act 200 was passed to update the Illinois Smoke Detector Act to reflect advances in technology.
- Come January 1, 2023, single and multi-family homes that are still using smoke alarms with removable batteries are required to install new alarms that feature 10-year sealed battery alarms.

Exemptions

- Homes built after 1988 that already have hardwired smoke alarms.
- Homes with wireless integrated alarms that use low-power radio frequency communications, Wi-Fi, or other Wireless Local Area Networking capability.

Retirement Announcement

As the old saying goes...all good things must come to an end. It was honor and pleasure working with you Matt Perez, Illinois State Fire Marshal. Celebrate your accomplishments and always remember what a positive difference you made. We wish you the absolute best in your future endeavors!



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