

OFFICE of the STATE FIRE MARSHAL

December 2009 Report

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- 2009 Training Officers Symposium
- Fire Instructor of the Year Award
- Training Instructor Capstone Testing



*Acting State Fire Marshal
Tonya L. Hoover*

December Message from the Chief:

The month of December brings about thoughts of closure for the year and the opportunity to reflect on the challenges and accomplishments of the months past. This month is the chance to say thank you to our partners, friends, and family for their support, wisdom and guidance.

In January of 2009 the State Fire Marshal's message was about the top two fire and life safety issues that set the priorities for the Office of the State Fire Marshal...the installation of fire sprinklers in all new residential structures and a comprehensive approach to addressing wildland-urban interface fires. These two focus points have long been the avenue for an efficient and effective method of reducing fire deaths and mitigating fire losses. As 2009 comes to a close, those two priorities continue to move successfully through the planning and implementation stages. We are confident that the decisions made at the Building Standards Commission meeting in January 2010 will bring about a successful adoption of the SFM code package that include these two priorities that strengthen fire and life safety for visitors and citizens of California.

All of the OSFM efforts and forward progress would not have been possible without the dedication of our fire service, building officials, industry and other partners. The sharing of your time and dedication will make California a safer state and will continue to provide a logical and systematic approach to our building and fire codes.

Another group of individuals that deserve special recognition is the staff at the Office of the State Fire Marshal. They are steadfast in their dedication to the citizens of California by addressing difficult situations through a cooperative and collaborative manner. The challenges of being a public agency are enormous; and the OSFM staff meet those challenges daily by providing safe buildings in which our citizens work and live; safer buildings for our firefighters to respond to; better training and education for our emergency responders; better information to assist in making tactical decisions through the use of mapping and statistical



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information; assisting in addressing the hazards associated with hazardous material pipelines; and working with local fire investigators to determine fire origin and cause.

2009 has been a year of challenges and economic struggles but we adapt, overcome, reach out and strengthen our partnerships. Let us not forget what we can and have accomplished together and what each of us bring to our communities and our department. I take this moment to reflect on challenges, changes, and opportunities and to say "thank you" to all of you who have walked the halls of the OSFM, taken the time to participate in a phone call, shared an email or continue to carry the fire safety movement forward. May you have a peaceful holiday season!

Be safe!

Tonya L. Hoover
Acting State Fire Marshal

Fire Engineering Division

This year updated information regarding limited/general flame retardant applicators for fire department use has been posted at the following link:
http://osfm.fire.ca.gov/licensinglistings/licensinglistings_flameretardant.php

Staff are participating in the Fire Safety, Flame Retardant Chemicals and New Public Health Initiatives in California that is organized by the California Department of Public Health. This is an interdepartmental workgroup to address the related problems of indoor fire safety and of widespread exposures to chemical flame retardants. Both issues are of great public health importance: to develop appropriate responses will require the application of multidisciplinary skills from the departments represented in the proposed workgroup.

A Special Thanks...

As this year comes to a close, on behalf of the Acting State Fire Marshal Tonya L. Hoover, the Fire Engineering Division would like to take this opportunity to thank the Automatic Extinguishing Systems, Fire Alarm, Fire Extinguisher, Flame Retardant, General Fireworks, and Special Effects Advisory Committees for their dedication and hard work.

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These committees have assisted the Fire Engineering Division in accomplishing several projects related to the Fire Engineering's programs, have revised many sections of Title 19, California Code of Regulations and have developed information bulletins and code interpretations.

Thanks to their on-going support, we can continue to strive for excellence.

Pipeline Safety Division

One of the duties of the Pipeline Safety Division is to ensure that pipeline operators have personnel who are qualified to do any operations task or maintenance and repair of pipelines. Pipeline operators are required to have and maintain a written operator qualification program that covers operators' employees, contractor personnel, subcontractor personnel and other entities that may perform tasks on a pipeline. Personnel doing work on pipelines must be qualified and be able to recognize and respond to any abnormal operating condition. These personnel must go through a documented and detailed evaluation process that includes written examinations, oral examinations, work performance history, observation of work and on-the-job training or simulations.

The Pipeline Safety Division has reviewed the written Operator Qualification programs of all 54 jurisdictional hazardous liquid pipeline operators in California and periodically does field reviews. As you drive along city streets or freeways and you see personnel performing work on high pressure pipelines, you can feel comfortable knowing that they have undergone a thorough evaluation of their work and are qualified to do the job.

For further questions please contact Adriana Crasnean at (562) 627-0054.

Code Development and Analysis Division

The Office of the State Fire Marshal (SFM), along with other state agencies, is nearing the end of the process for the approval and adoption of the 2010 California Building Standards Codes. The general purpose is to update and codify a new edition of the California Building Standards Code (California Code of Regulations, Title 24) that adopt by reference more current editions of the model codes.

- Part 2 2010 California Building Code (2009 IBC)
- Part 2.5 2010 California Residential Code (2009 IRC)
- Part 3 2010 California Electrical Code (2009 NEC)

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- Part 4 2010 California Mechanical Code (2009 UMC)
- Part 5 2010 California Plumbing Code (2009 UPC)
- Part 9 2010 California Building Code (2009 IFC)
- Part 12 2010 California Referenced Standards Code

The objective is to develop an adoption package that includes model code language and current applicable California amendments. The intent is that the final adoption package will include amendments necessary to reasonably maintain a substantially equivalent level of fire and life safety in California. This proposed action will:

- Repeal the adoption by reference of the model code and incorporate and adopt by reference in its place more recent model codes for application and effectiveness in the 2010 California Building Standards Code.
- Repeal certain amendments to the model codes and/or California building standards not addressed by the model code that are no longer necessary.
- Adopt new building standards or necessary amendments to the model code that address inadequacies of the model codes as they pertain to California laws.
- Bring forward previously existing California building standards or amendments, which represent no change in their effect from the 2007 California Building Standards Code.
- Codify non-substantive editorial and formatting amendments for the format based upon the more recent edition of the model codes.

Parts 2, 2.5, 9 and 12 are scheduled to be heard by the California Building Standards Commission (CBSC) January 12 and 13, 2010. Parts 3, 4 and 5 have approved and adopted by the CBSC November 18, 2009. Publication of all Parts is anticipated July 2010 followed by an effective date of January 1, 2011.

For additional information please visit the SFM Code Development web page at: http://osfm.fire.ca.gov/codedevelopment/codedevelopment_title24development.php

Or visit the CBSC web page at: http://www.bsc.ca.gov/prpsd_chngs/pc_09_annual_cycle.htm

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Fire and Resource Assessment Program

Fire Hazard Severity Zone Update

During 2009, recommendations by the CAL FIRE Director for Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZ) in Local Responsibility Areas (LRA) have been made for all but a few counties and a number of cities. Recommendations are still being developed for a few county unincorporated areas and a number of cities in Riverside, Los Angeles, Ventura, Mono, Mendocino and Orange Counties. These are targeted for completion by early 2010. The 2009-10 Budget Bill defers the state mandate for local agencies to consider and adopt the VHFHSZ recommendations until next fiscal year, but some jurisdictions still are proceeding with VHFHSZ designations.

Incident Reporting Update

Under State law, fire protection agencies report a variety of incident reporting statistics to the State Fire Marshal's Office. The reporting system staff compiles the statistics and electronically transfers the information to the U.S. Fire Administration to ensure compliance with the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS). Compliance with NFIRS is required for federal grant and emergency fund reimbursement eligibility. Currently, CAL FIRE is completing an analysis of the incident collection and reporting system to define possible short-term and long-term statistics reporting improvements. The first phase of implementing improvements is completion of a needs survey. Staff recently conducted an internal survey that highlighted some of the areas that can be improved upon under the current state contract. The next phase will include identifying long-term state contract needs and areas that need to be addressed in partnership with local fire agencies.

Forest Assessment

During 2009 and on into 2010, the Fire and Resource Program (FRAP) of the Office of the State Fire Marshal is completing an assessment of California's forest resources. The assessment is required by the 2008 Federal Farm Bill. It is intended to analyze trends in forest resources, including those in urban areas, and to identify areas where federal and other investments should be considered to address issues delineated in the analysis. Examples of issues being developed are:

- Wildfire threat to ecosystems and community safety
- Forest pests and other threats to ecosystems and community safety
- Planning for and reducing wildfire risks
- Urban forestry for energy conservation and air quality
- Climate change impacts

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Based on the assessment, FRAP is also developing a Forest Strategies document that discusses possible approaches to address these issues.

For further details and public outreach on the assessment see FRAP program at the CAL FIRE website at <http://frap.cdf.ca.gov/assessment2010.html>.

Fire and Life Safety Division

Requesting A Code Interpretation

The California State Fire Marshal (SFM) is mandated by several statutes to adopt regulations. Building standards adopted by the SFM are found in Title 24 of the California Administrative Code, and non-building standards adopted by the SFM are found in Title 19. The adoption process for both building standards and non-building standards is carried out by the SFM Code Development Division. The SFM has a long history of utilizing public participation and considers it to be a vital part of the adoption process. Regulations adopted by the SFM serve as California's minimum reasonable level of fire and life safety and generally are enforced by the local fire and building officials. Regulations adopted by the SFM are also utilized by design professionals and the various affected industries that serve SFM-regulated industries.

While every effort is made to ensure regulations are written in a manner that will facilitate their use, invariably questions regarding application or intent arise. Whether a question arises from a design professional or an enforcement agency, the SFM, as a proponent of California's fire and life safety program, has the responsibility of providing code interpretations when requested.

Section 2.05, Title 19, California Code of Regulations, provides that any person may request a code interpretation from the State Fire Marshal relative to the intent of any regulation or provision adopted by him. When the request relates to a specific project, occupancy or building, the State Fire Marshal must review the issue with the appropriate AHJ prior to rendering an interpretation.

You may request a code interpretation from the SFM by following the instructions outlined on our website: <http://osfm.fire.ca.gov/codeinterpretation/pdf/howto.pdf>

After SFM staff have reviewed your request and developed an appropriate answer, a DRAFT interpretation will be posted on the SFM web site for a ten-day comment period. Comments will be accepted by e-mail directly to ernie.paez@fire.ca.gov or by mail to the above noted address.

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Due to the amount of code interpretations that are received by the committee and the time needed for researching each issue, please allow 60 to 90 days for a draft interpretation to be posted.

There is a significant difference between a code interpretation question and a code application question. Code interpretations provide the context and background of specific code sections, whereas a code application question provides information regarding the application of the codes to a specific facility or project. Code application questions are directed to the Fire & Life Safety Division. Specific questions regarding SFM regulated programs, for example fire extinguishers, fireworks, or building materials listings, will be directed to the specific program staff. If you should have any questions regarding this process please feel free to contact the SFM Monrovia office at (626) 305-1908.

Law Enforcement Division

In the following 6 months CAL FIRE's newest group of Peace Officers will begin their training. The training they are required to complete is the Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) Regular Basic Course. It is a 20 week training program and CAL FIRE hosts its own certified course at the CAL FIRE Academy in Lone California. All of the participants are at the Fire Captain rank, or above, before they begin the training. Each of them have undergone an extensive background check as well as physical testing and psychological screening that go above and beyond what is required for our Fire Fighters. Once they have passed their Regular Basic Course they will then take part in their Field Training Program; a 10 week on the job training program designed to help them take what they have learned in an Academy setting and apply it in real life law enforcement situations and calls for service. We are proud of these men and women who have decided to direct their career path towards law enforcement and take part in what promises to be one of the most rewarding experiences of their careers.

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State Fire Training Division

2009 Training Officers Symposium:

The 2009 Fire Training Officers symposium sponsored by the California Fire Chiefs Association, Training Officers Section was attended by over 450 firefighters and was supported and attended by State Fire Training staff including; Chief Mike Richwine, Mary Wilshire, Administrative Manager; Alicia Hamilton, Fire Services Training Specialist III (FSTS III); Linda Menchaca, Instructor Registration; Rodney Slaughter, DSFM III; Ken Vollenweider, DSFM III; Ramiro Rodriguez, DSFM III and Mike Garcia, DSFM III.

California Fire Service Training and Education System (CFSTES) and Fire Service Training Education Program (FSTEP) courses were offered by State Fire Training during this annual event and included:

- Deputy Vollenweider presented the final Fire Control 3(A&B) instructor update class. To date, 225 registered instructors have taken this important update course.
- Deputy Slaughter presented the Emergency Response to Alternate Fuel Vehicles program. The program was presented at the Fresno Area Express with a variety of alternative fuel vehicles. This course was very informative and may be included in Auto Extrication courses as an addendum in the future. Deputy Slaughter also presented an "AFG" grant writing course to interested attendees.
- Deputy Rodriguez presented the "Training Mandates" course. This course provided information on various governmental laws and codes related to personnel training and potential liabilities to all fire departments.
- There were two Regional Instructor Orientation (RIO) courses presented by FSTS III Hamilton with Linda Menchaca, and Deputy Vollenweider. Both one day courses were filled to capacity with a total of 60 students.
- State Fire Training also provided an information booth, staffed by Linda Menchaca, who provided informational handouts and answered questions from attendees. One of the most frequent questions was regarding the new Training Instructor courses.



Linda Menchaca

Other State Fire Training courses were provided by the members of the Training Officers association and Registered State Fire Training Instructors; which has proven to be an invaluable method of training current and future instructors.

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Be sure you don't miss the conference next year! The tentative date is November 15 – 19 at the same location in Fresno. Check "Training Officers" at: <http://www.calchiefs.org> for updates and courses to be presented.

Photographs of other "hands on" training events at various locations within the City of Fresno.



Auto Extrication



Rescue Systems 1



Low Angle Rope Rescue Operations

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Fire Instructor of the Year Award

Congratulations to Fire Service Training Specialist III, Alicia Hamilton of OSFM State Fire Training! She is the recipient of the 2009 Ed Bent award which was presented to her at the statewide California Fire Chiefs Training Officers Symposium. This award was created many years ago on behalf of Ed Bent for his contribution as a founding father of Statewide Training and Curriculum for the Fire Service in California. The award is presented annually at the symposium in recognition of the outstanding Fire Instructor of the year. Alicia was awarded this honor because she is a training specialist that conducts classes (Instructor Orientation and EMT Instructor) throughout the state of California which have an affect on all of the fire service instructors throughout the state. In addition to this she has been part of every State Fire Marshal curriculum rewrite during her 25 years with State Fire Training. It is safe to say that every Training Officer or instructor in the state who is involved with any training outside of their department has interacted with Alicia. She is admired for her corporate knowledge and they way she always puts her heart and soul into the curriculum because she wants it to be current and the best. The Training Officers could see that it is not just a job for her and this is why it was important for her to be recognized. The Ed Bent award brings special meaning to Alicia. She worked with Ed Bent early in her career and is personally aware of his efforts and contributions to the fire services training standards. Both Ed and Alicia are the only OSFM staff to be recipients of this award. When asked what this means to her, she said it helps her to realize that she is making a difference to the fire service community.



*Fire Services Training Specialist III,
Alicia Hamilton*

Training Instructor Capstone Testing Begins January 2010

The State Fire Training Capstone Program is a "performance based" system. It starts with a Position Task Book of qualifying individual performance and culminates in a comprehensive summative test. The summative test covers the topics included in the required State Fire Training courses for the position.

The Training Instructor Capstone Task Book contains the "approved standards" in the form of tasks, which have been established by State Fire Training and support the 2007 NFPA 1041 Standard for Fire Service Instructor Professional Qualifications. Before its publication, the Statewide Training and Education Advisory Committee (STEAC) and the State Board of Fire Services (SBFS) recommended this task book for adoption by the State Fire Marshal (SFM).

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The Capstone Task Book

The Training Instructor Capstone Task Book serves as a guide and record of what needs to be completed for certification.

How is a Task Book Started?

The task book can be downloaded from State Fire Training's website. Any section of the task book that must be completed in a specific order will be clearly identified within the section.

Completing the Task Book

The Training Instructor Capstone Task Book can be started after completing Training Instructor 1A and 1B. Any change in certification requirements taking place while a candidate's task book is open will necessitate initiating a new task book and meeting all current certification requirements.

The Capstone Test

The Training Instructor Capstone Test can be taken after the task book has been completed as long as the task book is still valid and no certification requirement changes have occurred.

Scheduled Dates and Locations:

- January 6 or 7, 2010, Modesto
Gail Campbell - (209) 549-7028 John Sola - (209) 549-7030
- January 12 or 13, 2010, San Jose
David Churchill - (408) 277-8350
- January 26 or 27, 2010, Santa Fe Springs
Tracy Rickman - trickman@riohondo.edu

Retaking the Capstone Test

If the candidate fails the capstone test, the test can be retaken after 30 days. A retake fee is required. There are no retake limits for the capstone test as long as the candidate's task book remains valid.

