



# State Fire Marshal News

John R. Kasich, Governor    Andre T. Porter, Director of Commerce    Larry Flowers, State Fire Marshal    Spring 2014

## New Training Grant Initiative a Success



The Division of State Fire Marshal is proud of the overwhelming success of a new training initiative for Ohio's fire service. \$500,000 in funding was provided to fire training schools across Ohio to train new firefighters or to bring volunteer firefighters up to a more advanced level. Nearly 500 first responders received this training as a direct result of this program.

This inaugural grant program was offered by the State of Ohio as a means to offset costs to the local governments where these firefighters live and work. Funding for this program was provided for in the state budget passed in June, 2013, by the Ohio General

Assembly and signed by Governor John R. Kasich as part of his initiative to encourage shared services in Ohio.

This program will continue to be offered to fire departments and fire training schools throughout the state in the coming fiscal year, beginning in July. An additional 500 firefighters should benefit from the accessibility of free training closer to home.

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Innovative programs such as this allow Ohio's fire departments to receive the training necessary for first responders to better protect our citizens. Firefighters must have the level of training necessary to perform their jobs so that each responder will be able to serve fully and return home safely at the end of an emergency. This program significantly enhances their ability to do that.

When we embarked upon our 'Listening Tours' of Ohio fire departments and communities beginning in 2012, the goal was to gather information so that the Ohio Department of Commerce Division of State Fire Marshal could provide better customer service to Ohioans. After hearing concerns regarding the level of training in the more rural areas of the state, we responded by working with Governor Kasich and the state legislature to secure funding for this training initiative so that the Division can do more to keep Ohio communities safe.

*Continued on page 3*



## *A message from...* **State Fire Marshal Larry Flowers**

Earlier this year, it was my great pleasure to announce that Ohio had fewer fire-related deaths in 2013 than in any single year over the last 27 years. The number of fire-related fatalities dropped for the third consecutive year, continuing a trend that first responders and those of us here at the Division of State Fire Marshal are determined to build upon. There was no single magic bullet that drove this accomplishment, but rather a confluence of efforts at the state and local level. Let's look at the numbers:



During the 2013 calendar year, 103 fire-related fatalities were recorded by the Division of State Fire Marshal through reports from Ohio's fire departments, the State Fire Marshal's Fire & Explosion Investigation Bureau and the media. The previous low of 106 fire-related fatalities occurred in 2012. There were 128 fire-related fatalities in 2011 and 155 fire-related fatalities in 2010.

My staff and I have analyzed the data and attribute the reduction in fire fatalities to enhanced fire safety education programs, the heroic actions of first responders, innovative training for Ohio's firefighters at the Ohio Fire Academy and other fire training schools across the state and the efforts of legislators and state officials. The state budget passed last year by the Ohio General Assembly and signed by Governor John R. Kasich contained many new provisions to help Ohio's first responders safeguard Ohioans' lives and property.

Governor Kasich has shown his full support of this Division by partnering with us to encourage shared services and to enhance the grant and loan programs already being offered. With his blessing, we were able to secure additional funds for our revolving loan program that allows local governments to secure interest free loans used to purchase major firefighting, rescue or EMS equipment. Just last year, the village of Deshler, in northwestern Ohio, secured a \$300,000 loan to purchase a much needed fire engine to replace an outdated model.

Additionally, a new training grant initiative was added to the budget which provided \$500,000 in funds to fire training charters across the state with the objective to bring first responders in Ohio's smaller communities to a more advanced level of certification. The inaugural rollout of these dollars has been an overwhelming success, as nearly 500 first responders benefited from this training. Seventy percent of Ohio's fire departments are staffed by volunteers, and this program has accomplished the dual objectives of making these communities safer while saving costs to the local governments where they live and work.

But there is still much to do. These achievements can in no way be viewed as 'Mission Accomplished.' While it is clearly a positive step in the right direction, 103 deaths is still 103 too many. All of us in the fire service, related industries and in state and local government must look at ourselves and ask, 'What more can I do?'

We are still concerned the message about working smoke alarms hasn't reached everyone. Many of Ohio's fire-related fatalities occurred in homes with no confirmed working smoke alarms. It is the job of everyone in the community, first responders and citizens alike, to make sure that message is being driven home.

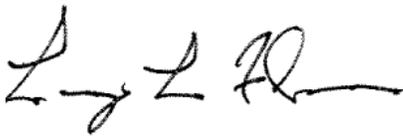
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## Message from Marshal Flowers continued....

We know that smoke alarms save lives. The efforts of Ohio's first responders, educators, journalists, citizens and elected officials are paying off, but we have to keep up the push to let people know that working smoke alarms and an escape plan with at least two ways out will reduce fire deaths.

The Division of State Fire Marshal recommends working smoke alarms on every level of the home and inside each sleeping area. Smoke alarms should be tested monthly and alkaline batteries should be replaced twice a year. Smoke alarms should be replaced every 10 years or according to the manufacturer's specifications. In addition to smoke alarms, families should have and practice a home fire escape plan with multiple exit routes and should establish a safe meeting place outside the home.

Fire safety is a team sport. Everyone here at the State Fire Marshal's office and in state government will continue to work hand in hand with local governments so that next year at this time I can hopefully report that we have reduced the number of fire-related deaths even further. That is the outcome to which we all aspire.



Larry L. Flowers  
State Fire Marshal

## New Training Grant Initiative a Success continued....

Approximately 70% of Ohio's fire departments are staffed by volunteers. All firefighters, career or volunteer, are required to have the same level of basic training for state certification. This grant program allowed firefighters to go beyond the basic level of training to provide more advanced, nationally recognized training.

These local communities now have more firefighters trained at a higher level that will better enable everyone to go home safely at the end of the emergency call or shift. Additionally, the grant lessened the impact on the budgets of these fire departments.

We here at the Division of State Fire Marshal continue to look for innovative ways to provide the most advanced level of training possible, while limiting the impact to budgets at the local level. By working with fire training schools, other agencies within state government and fire departments throughout Ohio, our mission to protect the citizens of this state and provide the highest level of customer service to the fire service continues.

## Revolving Loans Offered to Help With Cleanup

The Division of State Fire Marshal Bureau of Underground Storage Tank Regulations (BUSTR) will be offering zero-interest loans to any political subdivision, including Community Improvement Corporations, for the purpose of beginning, continuing, or completing the removal, assessment, or corrective action related to underground storage tanks located within that political subdivision's geographic boundaries.

Applications for the loans will be available in the near future for these entities to utilize. There will be no interest on the loans and they will be for 10 years or less. The repayment terms will be established in the loan agreement. An additional note, the political subdivision awarded the loan will have to commit to spend an amount, from its own funds, equal to 5% of the loaned amount for any funded activities.

BUSTR officials hope this program aids political subdivisions in addressing and rehabilitating blighted properties, encouraging economic development, and promoting job growth.

Once the application becomes available, it will be posted on the State Fire Marshal's website [www.com.ohio.gov/fire](http://www.com.ohio.gov/fire). If you have any questions about eligibility or the program overall, you can call David Sauer at (614) 752-7096. If you have a financial question, you can contact Kimberly Hodnett at (614) 752-7122.



## Listening Tours Continue with Great Success

State Fire Marshal Larry Flowers and his team continue to travel throughout the state to talk with local fire departments on a “Listening Tour” to open the lines of communication. Marshal Flowers wants to brainstorm with fire service members to make sure the Division of State Fire Marshal is providing the best possible support to local departments.

The needs of fire departments are fluid and Marshal Flowers wants to make sure his office is flexible enough to meet those changing needs. He hopes to take suggestions made during the Listening Tour and implement better practices both at the Division of State Fire Marshal and within local departments.

In addition to hearing concerns and sharing ideas, Marshal Flowers has had the opportunity to award several grants and loans to departments based on their needs.

The Lowell-Adams Volunteer Fire Department received a check for \$10,000 for an equipment grant for protective clothing during a recent Listening Tour stop. The purpose of the program is to help offset the costs to local governments, while providing firefighters the best training and equipment possible, so they can effectively protect our citizens. They are awarded based on several criteria, including the fire department’s annual budget, annual number of fire incidents and the resident population served by the department. Marshal Flowers plans to present more grants and loans on upcoming stops to continue the partnership with local departments and governments.

The Listening Tour began in November 2012 and Marshal Flowers has visited scores of fire departments across Ohio. He’s eager to continue to meet firefighters, leadership and elected officials in every corner of the state. To schedule a tour, contact Lindsey Burnworth, the Division of State Fire Marshal’s Public Information Officer, at 614-752-7179 or via email at [lindsey.burnworth@com.state.oh.us](mailto:lindsey.burnworth@com.state.oh.us). Marshal Flowers wants to know how he can help and how the fire service can build even stronger partnerships.



*From left to right: Firefighter Bob Kubota, Captain Kreig Worsetll, State Fire Marshal Larry Flowers, Chief Josh Harris, Lt. Jill Treadway and Firefighter Terry Snow.*

### Reminder: Update Your Contact Information

Just a reminder to update your contact information when you have changes. Currently the Fire Prevention Bureau is updating its records and contact information. The information is vital to sending out any correspondence to your department.

You can send your changes to [OFIRS.OFIRS@com.state.oh.us](mailto:OFIRS.OFIRS@com.state.oh.us) or by fax at 614-752-7213. Or you can mail the information to the Division of State Fire Marshal, Fire Prevention Bureau, 8895 East Main Street, Reynoldsburg, Ohio, 43068.

# Hall of Fame Nominations Open

Nominations are being accepted for the 34th year of the Ohio Fire Service Hall of Fame and Awards. You can nominate someone for the Ohio Fire Service Citizen Award, the Ohio Fire Service Distinguished Service Award, William L. Howard Public Service Award or the Ohio Fire Service Valor Award.

For the Ohio Fire Service Citizen Award, a member of the general public qualifies for nomination if he or she, at great personal risk to themselves, is credited with directly saving or attempting to save a life or lives during an extreme fire or other emergency rescue situation. This award can be given to a resident of any state for an event that occurred in the state of Ohio or to any resident of the state of Ohio for incidents occurring in any state. The nominee must not have been a member of the same household as the victims, or in which the incident occurred. In addition, the nominee must not have been a member of the career or volunteer fire services in Ohio at the time of the incident. The incident shall have occurred between January 1, 2013 and December 31, 2013.

The Ohio Fire Service Distinguished Service Award is for outstanding individuals, whose contributions to and leadership of the fire service within the State of Ohio, has been a milestone in the development of those services; whose actions have served not just their community, but have contributed significantly to the fire service on a regional, statewide, and/or national basis; and, whose leadership and accomplishments in these areas are widely recognized and respected in the Ohio fire service.

The William L. Howard Award is for citizens of Ohio, who are not members of the fire service, but who have during the course of their career or their lives, made significant contributions toward the furtherance of the fire service on a regional, statewide, and/or national basis; and, whose leadership and accomplishments in these areas are widely recognized and respected in the Ohio fire service.

To qualify for the Ohio Fire Service Valor Award a nominee must be a fire service member, who at great personal risk to themselves, are credited with directly saving or attempting to save a life or lives during an emergency situation above and beyond the normal line of duty. The nominee must also have been a member of a career or volunteer fire service in the state of Ohio at the time of the heroic act. The incident shall have occurred between January 1, 2013 and December 31, 2013.

Nomination forms can be found at:  
<http://www.com.ohio.gov/fire/default.aspx>.

If you have any questions about the nominations, you can call Tonia Smith at (614)-752-7161. The deadline for nominations is June 23, 2014.



## 2013 Honorees

**Ohio Fire Service Valor Award:** Firefighter A.J. Green (Lindsey Vol. Fire Dept.), Captain Joseph Camerato, Firefighter Robert Thomas, Firefighter Rachel Doran, Firefighter Jared Davis, Firefighter Christopher Mrkva, Firefighter, Jason Hart, Firefighter Claudia Rodriguez, Lt. Kathy Zeller, Lt. Ronald Murd, Firefighter Holly Bennett, Firefighter Daniel Desmond, Firefighter Kristin Limmer, and Firefighter Jason Ziemke (Toledo Fire & Rescue Dept.)

**Ohio Distinguished Fire Service Award:** Firefighter Paul Riedel (Colerain Twp. Fire Department)

**Citizens Award:** Jared Cox (Cincinnati, Ohio), Gary Magers (Tiffin, Ohio)

Ohio Department of Public Safety Division of EMS Awards:

**Ohio Fire Educator Lifetime Achievement Award:** Tom Beatty (Springfield Fire Rescue Division)

**Ohio Fire Officer of the Year Award:** Captain Charles Joseph (Champion Twp. Fire Department)

**Fire Service Instructor of the Year Award:** Chief Brent Gates (New Concord Fire Department)

**Fire Prevention Educator of the Year Award:** Karla Nevel (Canton Twp. Fire Department)

**Volunteer Fire Department of the Year:** Reily Township Volunteer Fire Department

## Firefighter I & II Students Learn Valuable Lessons During Time at the Academy

Before the Firefighter I & II graduation ceremony for Class 0049-2014-005 at the Ohio Fire Academy (OFA), several students shared some insight into their seven weeks of training. From the first time they ever had to put on gear to their first live burns and more, the members of the class spent a lot of time learning the ropes.

But that could have been difficult without one of the main factors of a successful class: the instructors. One student, Jacob Warner, said he could tell the instructors cared about the class as well as the lessons they were teaching. Fellow classmate, Mason Wilkins of the Granville Township Fire Department, said he agreed with Warner. Wilkins said the instructors were always there to help, which made his training an even better educational experience.



*Firefighter I & II Class 0049-2014-005*

The instructors weren't the only positive for these students. Deborah Smith, of the Lima Fire Department, said her eyes were opened a lot by the situations she faced during the class. Smith and Warner said the ladder carries surprised them. Both said they were challenged during the class, but showed themselves they could do more than they ever thought was possible.

All three students said it was one of the best decisions of their lives to attend the OFA's class. They said it is where you will become the best of the best and receive some of the most crucial training for your career. Smith said she feels the education during her time here is a great foundation for the rest of her career, and that it will help her for years to come.

If you are interested in finding out more about the OFA's courses, you can visit their course catalog at: [https://www.comapps.ohio.gov/sfm/fire\\_apps/fmac/course\\_reg/CourseList.aspx](https://www.comapps.ohio.gov/sfm/fire_apps/fmac/course_reg/CourseList.aspx).

## Basic Fire Investigations Class Helps First Responders Become 'First Investigators'



Fire and Explosions Investigation Bureau (FEIB) members recently conducted a Basic Fire Investigations Class for local first responders to learn more about how to determine the cause of a fire.

FEIB investigators said this gives them an opportunity to educate fire service members and other first responders on how to figure out what has transpired at the scene of a fire. Investigators said this helps them if they're called in as well.

The class taught both firefighters and police officers how to recreate a scene and gather clues to help them determine a cause. For the final lesson, students were taken to a fire scene and asked to investigate the incident from start to finish. They were tasked with interviewing the structure's occupants and landlord, as well as taking pictures of the scene and gathering

evidence. The following day, they presented completed reports to the instructors.

The purpose of the class is not only to help local departments serve their communities better, but to help them have a better understanding of what the FEIB does. Students can take their knowledge back home and convey the importance of securing a scene, conducting a preliminary investigation, and completing a correct incident report to their fellow firefighters.

If you are interested in learning more about future investigations classes, you can call the FEIB at (614) 752-7106.

# Making Sure Ohioans Have Safe Homes

As part of a nationwide safety campaign, State Fire Marshal Larry Flowers is working with the National Association of State Fire Marshals (NASFM) to make sure homeowners understand the importance of proper bonding of yellow corrugated stainless steel tubing (CSST) due to the potential risks associated with a lightning strike.

CSST is flexible metal tubing that has been installed in homes across the United States. It is used to supply natural gas or propane to furnaces, water heaters and other gas appliances.

There is a fire risk for homes and businesses that had CSST installed. Marshal Flowers noted that Ohio implemented new standards pertaining to the installation of CSST in 2011 that reduces the risk. The NASFM recommends “A bonding device installed on a gas piping system to reduce the likelihood of electrical arcing to or from other bonded metallic systems in the structure. Proper bonding and grounding of metallic systems can reduce the risk of arcing and damage from lightning strikes on or near a structure.”

Marshal Flowers strongly recommends homeowners and business owners who had CSST installed prior to 2011 contact a licensed electrician or plumber to determine if the existing CSST system has been bonded in accordance with the current building codes and manufacturer’s instructions. Additional information may also be found at [www.CSSTSafety.com](http://www.CSSTSafety.com).

As summer weather takes hold, Marshal Flowers asks everyone to do their part to ensure their homes and businesses are safe from this potential risk. This is a problem that has occurred in Ohio and fire departments have been working to address this concern.

Fire departments that have identified a lightning strike involving CSST that resulted in a fire should report the incident in the Ohio Fire Incident Report System as follows:

- Within the Fire Module:
- Heat Source = 73 (lightning)
- Type of Item = 64 (flammable gas in pipe)
- Type of Material = 11 (natural gas) or 12 (LP gas)



# Remember Summer Fire Safety

After what seemed like a never ending winter, the warm weather has arrived. That means people will be heading into the great outdoors. However, that comes with some safety risks. Being prepared can make a world of difference when it comes to summer safety.

Here are some tips as you and your loved ones enjoy all that summer has to offer:

## Firework Safety:

- Handle and discharge trick and novelty devices only under adult supervision.
- Appoint one adult to be in charge. This person should know the hazards of each type of firework being used.
- Carefully read and follow the label directions on the trick and novelty device packaging.
- Light only one sparkler at a time and hold it away from your body and others.
- Sparkler wires, which can burn up to 1800 degrees, should immediately be placed in a bucket of water to void injury as they remain hot for a few minutes after burnout.
- If someone gets burned, run cool water over the wound for two or three minutes and seek medical attention when necessary.

## Grilling Safety:

- All propane and charcoal barbecue grills must be used outdoors to avoid fire hazards and toxic gases such as carbon monoxide.
- Keep grills clear from overhanging branches, house siding and deck edges and railings. Also, position the grill far from foot traffic.
- Before using a grill, check the connection between the propane tank and the fuel line.
- Wear well-fitted clothing when barbecuing. Loose articles and flammable material, such as nylon, should be avoided.
- Be careful when using lighter fluid. Do not add fluid to an already lit fire - the flame can flashback into the container and explode.
- Supervise children around outdoor grills. Announcing a three-foot 'safety zone' around the grill is an effective way to keep both children and pets at a distance.
- Keep all matches and lighters away from children. Teach your children to report any loose matches or lighters to an adult immediately.
- Dispose of hot coals properly - douse all of them, not just the red ones, with plenty of water and stir them to ensure that the fire is out. Never place them in plastic, paper or wooden containers.



*State Fire Marshal Larry Flowers and Chief Deputy Jeffrey Leaming cook at an Operation Feed event at the State Fire Marshal's Office.*

## Campfire Safety:

- Build campfires where they will not spread, away from dry grass and leaves and never under overhanging trees.
- Keep campfires small, and don't let them get out of hand.
- Keep plenty of water and a shovel around to douse the fire when you're done. Stir it and douse it again with water.
- Never leave campfires unattended.
- It is important to follow the park's rules for the use and extinguishing of campfires.

# 2014 SPAAMFAA National Summer Convention to Highlight Fire Expo and Muster

The annual Fire Expo and Muster is less than two weeks away- June 28th to be exact – but anticipation for the event is bigger than ever this year. That’s because the Central Ohio Antique Fire Apparatus Association (COAFAA) will be host to the 2014 Society for the Preservation and Appreciation of Antique Motor Fire Apparatus in America (SPAAMFAA) National Summer Convention.

As always, the Fire Expo and Muster will be jam packed with exciting events from the Fire Safety Expo to a parade showing off the hand and horse drawn apparatus. There will be several displays set up throughout our campus, including residential sprinkler demonstrations, grain bin rescue demonstrations, and much more. A flea market and fire muster will also be highlights during the day.

The event is a way to bring together fire service members and families in the community. It serves as a way to educate the public and have fun at the same time. Those in attendance have several opportunities to learn about the apparatus, both new and old, and fire safety.

The event will be held Saturday, June 28, 2014, rain or shine, at the Division of State Fire Marshal, 8895 East Main Street, Reynoldsburg, Ohio. It will run from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Anyone interested in attending is encouraged to come out.



## SFM Employees Recognized For Years of Service

During National Public Service Employees Recognition Week May 4-10, 2014, 25 SFM employees received pins for their years of public service (a combined 445 years):

5 Years: Thomas Gulch and Raymond McCarthy.

10 Years: Jason Corwin, Richard Harris, Robert Heising, Douglas Lane and Gina Monk.

15 Years: Jeffrey Anderson, Dustin Buell, Holly Johnston-Cook, Sue Kist, Terry Marabito, Michael Stellfox and Deborah Storts.

20 Years: Lynne Caughell, Deborah Liffick and Christa Rajendram.

25 Years: Deborah Carter, Lynn French, Edwin Maglott and Richard Palmer.

30 Years: Brad Beck, Martha Fullenmann, Gerald Robinson and Scott Walker.

Congratulations and thank you for your service!



### The Division staff is available to help you:

General Information  
Phone Number: 614-752-8200  
Toll Free: 1-888-252-0803  
Email Address: [websfm@com.ohio.gov](mailto:websfm@com.ohio.gov)  
TTY/TDD: 1-800-750-0750  
[www.com.ohio.gov/fire](http://www.com.ohio.gov/fire)

Mailing Address:  
The Ohio Department of Commerce  
Division of State Fire Marshal  
8895 East Main Street  
Reynoldsburg, OH 43068

Our hours of operation are: 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.  
Eastern Time Zone, Monday through Friday

Follow us on Twitter:  
State Fire Marshal @Ohiofire  
Ohio Fire Academy @Ohiofireacademy

Follow the Academy on Facebook:  
[www.facebook.com/OhioFireAcademy](http://www.facebook.com/OhioFireAcademy)

Sign up to receive the quarterly newsletter:  
[karen.bowman@com.ohio.gov](mailto:karen.bowman@com.ohio.gov)

## Come Visit Us at the 2014 Ohio State Fair!!

### July 23 - August 3, 2014



*These kids learned how to "Stay Low and Go"  
at last year's fair booth!*