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April 2017

## Firefighting & EMS



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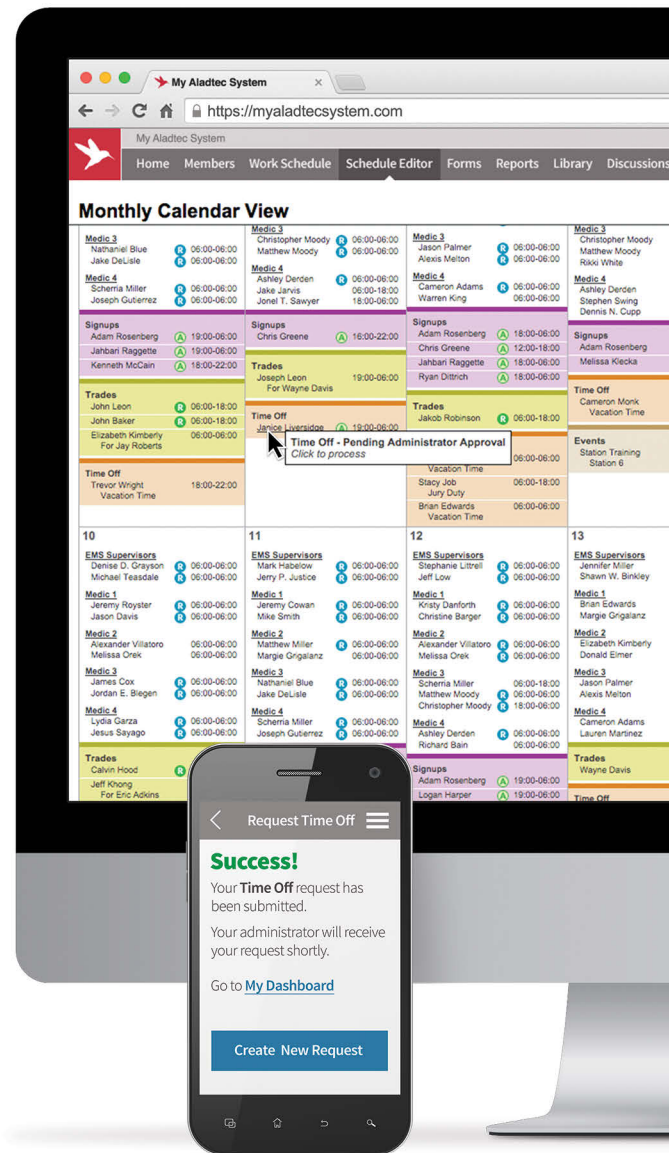
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*adjective* \ worthy of being chosen above others : of highest quality

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### ON THE COVER

Husky Portable Containment has strove to be the best at everything it does, leading to a series of one-of-a-kind innovations that continue to shape the fire industry. Providing innovative and quality products, strong customer service, fair pricing and lead times has allowed Husky Portable Containment to expand into its third facility in 12 years, thanks to constant and steady growth.







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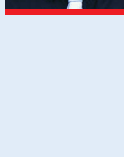
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# Departments



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# Fire, EMS continue to adapt to changing demands



Sarah Wright | Editor

**O**NE OF THE MOST NOTABLE headlines in our coverage area in 2016 was the Gatlinburg fires in Tennessee. Starting at the top of the Chimney Tops Trail, it left a path of destruction, destroying homes and businesses in addition to claiming the lives of 14 people. Tennessee Emergency Management Director Patrick Sheehan noted in a press release: “The Sevier County wildfire is the most catastrophic wildland-urban interface fire event in the history of Tennessee and the most devastating fire in the state since the 1916 East Nashville fire.”

Writer Denise Fedorow relays more about the “perfect storm” of circumstances that aided the fires’ spread; additionally, she highlights the Herculean efforts the Gatlinburg Fire Department — and the many other fire departments assisting in the response — had to undertake to fight the blaze. As Fedorow

noted in her article, “Gatlinburg recovering from massive fires,” there will be a lot to be learned from the Gatlinburg fires when it comes to wildland-urban fire response once all the data and details are sorted out and Fourth Judicial District Attorney General Jimmy Dunn’s gag order ends after the currently impending trial of two juveniles accused of starting the fire.

In an uncertain world, fire and EMS agencies are having to adapt to many different scenarios, and as writer Elisa Walker found, some are also engaging and training citizens to save lives during incidents prior to the arrival of medical personnel. Bystanders, after all, played a major role in saving lives during the Boston Marathon bombing. First Care Providers is a new program reaching out to individuals with experience in pre-hospital medicine, Tactical Emergency Casualty Care, EMS or trauma to join it as instructors for civilians. Learn more about the program on page 28.

On a similar note of involving the community, our guest columnist Fire Chief Jon Cohn with Greenfield Fire-Rescue in Wisconsin, highlights his own agency’s shift from being reactive to connecting with area hospice organizations and reducing unnecessary — sometimes unwanted — transports to the emergency room. Greenfield is also taking

steps toward more preventative community EMS programs — an angle already used by many fire departments to prevent fires.

Cohn writes, “Simple programs can make a difference, even in patient and family satisfaction. Hospice programs are just one example. Providers could consider a fall prevention program, home assessments for falls, home safety checks and collaborating with other agencies to direct patients to more appropriate care providers and services than an emergency room.”

Additionally, this month we are looking at staffing concerns impacting fire and EMS departments of all makes and sizes across the U.S. In particular, volunteer departments, which have served as the backbone of our country’s fire service, are struggling to recruit and retain volunteers, leading to delays in responses and concerns about their futures. Despite those concerns, many are taking steps to ensure they last and can continue serving their communities for generations to come as shown in Catey Traylor’s article on page 24.

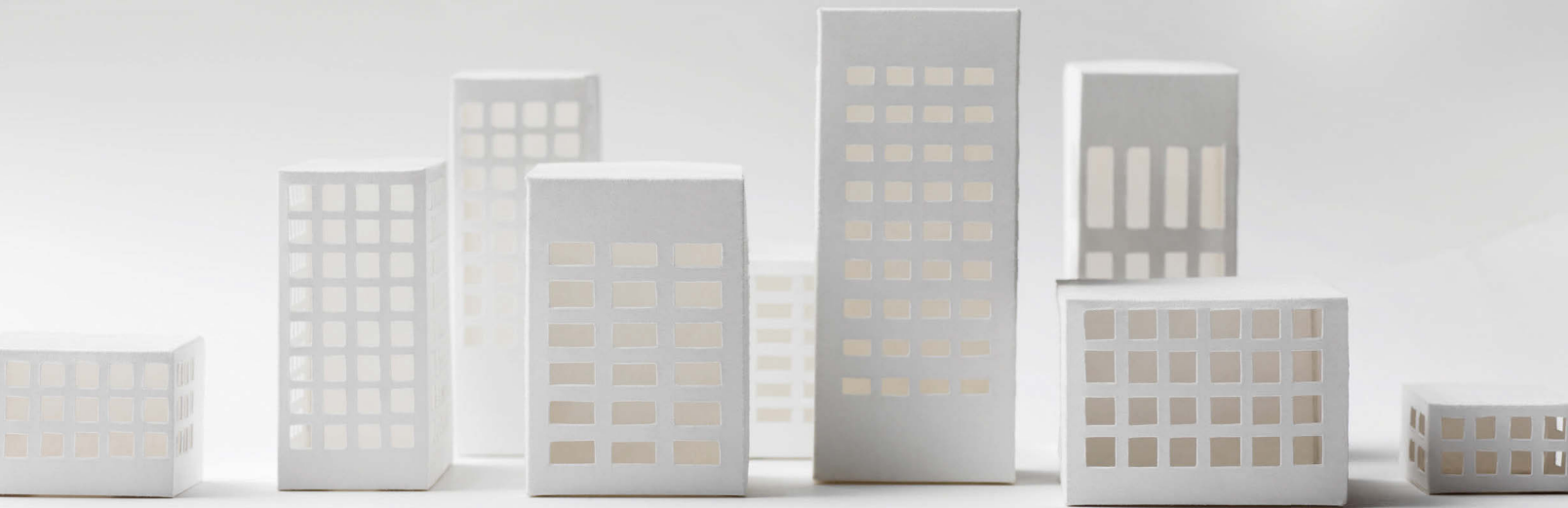
I hope you find these articles to be helpful. Also, don’t miss out on Nicholette Hodgson’s article on the Edward M. Cotter fireboat — talk about a boat with a lot of history, and it looks like it’s not going to stop anytime soon! **M**

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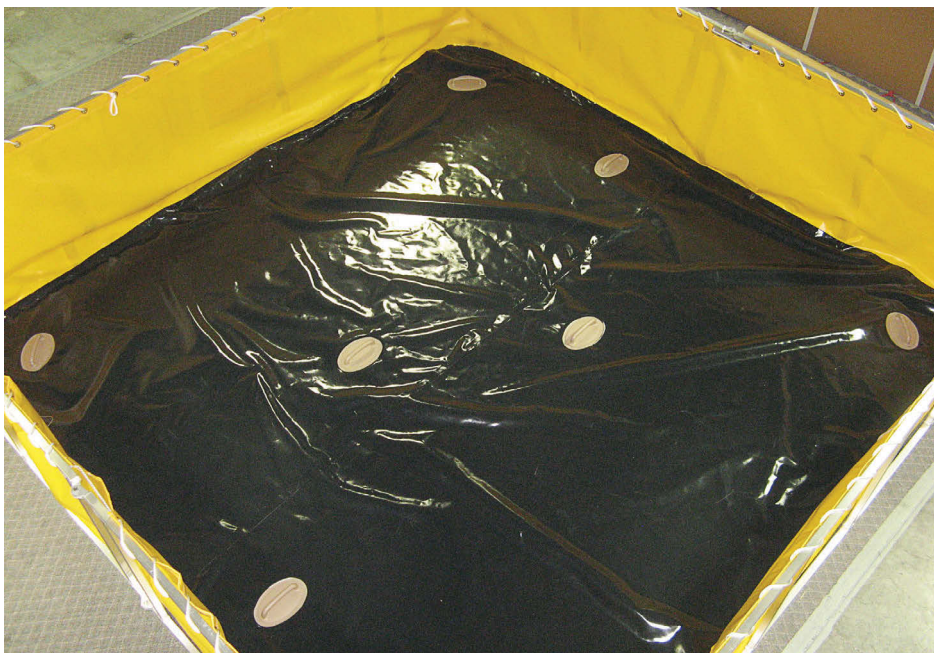


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*Pictured are the patented Easy Lift Handles' standard locations. Husky® also offers extra handles as an option. (Photo provided)*



*Beyond firefighting products, Husky Portable Containment also offers other solutions. Pictured is the field test of a 50,000-gallon bladder tank being used as a drinking water supply while a small town had its water tower repaired. (Photo provided)*

# Innovation remains key to Husky's success

by SARAH WRIGHT | The Municipal

**Since its founding in December 2004, Husky Portable Containment has strove to be the best at everything it does, leading to a series of one-of-a-kind innovations that continue to shape the fire industry. Innovation, however, is only one of several categories that remain at the forefront of Husky's priorities, with the others being quality, customer service, price and lead time. Excelling in these categories has allowed Husky Portable Containment to expand into its third facility in 12 years after years of constant and steady growth.**

Husky® is well known for its firefighting products, which include folding frame tanks, self-supporting tanks, salvage covers, strainers and many other items related to the water shuttle industry. Husky® also manufactures environmental safety products that are designed to protect

the environment by containing spills and storing harmful liquids. These products include spill containment berms, bladder or pillow tanks, de-con pools and showers along with many other products to help keep the environment safe against fuels, chemicals and other toxic materials.

Husky® is devoted to offering the best materials available. Its EXLON®, a 22-ounce-per-square-yard material, was developed exclusively for Husky® as a lightweight but very strong and durable material — capable of withstanding the worst of conditions. EXLON® has proven itself in the field time and time again being used for everything from firefighting water tank applications to bladder tanks and spill containment berms. To top it off, EXLON® is manufactured in the U.S.

Unsurprisingly, Husky® also holds several patents with other patents pending. Innovation is forefront with Husky's design team, and custom-designed products are commonplace for the company.

Jay Claeys, president and co-owner of Husky Portable Containment, explained,





*Firefighters take advantage of Husky Portable Containment's Easy Lift Handles, which make removing leftover water a breeze. (Photo provided)*



*Husky Portable Containment's PRO500® tank undergoes testing to ensure the product meets quality standards. The quality control team is constantly evolving to suit the needs of customers while maintaining the highest levels of quality. (Photo provided)*

"We work with customers closely to help them reach their goals for any project. We continuously look for the best solutions to improve the firefighting water handling industry along with the environmental primary and secondary containment markets."

For instance, Husky Portable Containment's "Easy Life Handles," U.S. Patent No. 8,746,478 and other patents pending, propelled the company to its place as the leader in firefighting folding frame tanks. This revolutionary first in the folding frame tank market changed how tanks are handled. These grab handles are RF welded to the floor of the tank in the corners, helping remove standing water, and through the center positioned in a zigzag pattern, which helps fold the liner up in the frame.

"Easy Lift Handles eliminate sending the 'rookie' underneath the tank liner trying to lift and push all of the leftover water out," Claey's said. "Any attempts by other manufacturers to infringe on our patent or copy our handles has been futile at best. We did our research with local departments and came up with the best locations for the handles keeping the costs in check."

Another new innovation, according to Claey's, has been Husky Portable Containment's latest portable tank, the PRO500® folding frame tank — patent pending, published Aug. 11, 2016. It is an expandable liner designed with mega capacity versatility and safety in mind.

"Our standard version of the PRO500® has four 'bags' or bladders coming off two opposite sides of the liner. They can be deployed or left in the folded position," Claey's said, explaining that there is a strapping system that allows the bags to remain folded and against the side of the tank. "One or all bags can be deployed. We can also add bags or build them different sizes."

Claey's also cautioned, "What I don't recommend is what another company is doing to copy us and that is adding a very


large bladder off of one end to make an attempt at max capacity. What this design does is weaken the frame to a point where it can and will fail, and also the bag is so big if it is on unlevelled ground or near a ditch it can get 'pulled' into that area, dragging the tank with it creating a safety hazard for everyone around it.

"We have done the testing and came up with the correct and safest design to get mega capacity out of a smaller tank frame." Claey's added, "This liner design is perfect for the fire department that already has a folding frame tank and portable tank rack on its truck that matches in size. Add the PRO500® liner and get more capacity without changing everything else."

Throughout the design process, Husky's quality control team ensures that customers receive quality products. To meet this standard, the team has evolved over the years, working with the end user while also continuing to review the company's processes.

Additionally, Husky Portable Containment's customer service team remains available to answer any questions or address any concerns during the design process and long after the customer has received their product.

"Our customer service is second to none," Claey's said. "We have a friendly, knowledgeable staff to take care of you when you call. We treat all our customers as we would want to be treated. Every situation is handled with professionalism and courtesy for the best results for our customers."

Husky® will continue to innovate, bringing forth new features and new products, with Claey's stating, "We look forward to further expansion in the coming years." 

For information, visit Husky Portable Containment's website at [www.huskyportable.com](http://www.huskyportable.com), or contact its customer service team at (918) 333-2000 or (800) 260-9950.



# Le Mars, Iowa

**BELOW:** As the "Ice Cream Capital of the World," it isn't surprising that Le Mars, Iowa, has more than 50 colorful 6-foot ice cream cone statues dotting its landscape. (Photo provided)

## 'Ice Cream Capital of the World'

By RAY BALOGH | The Municipal

When Fred H. Wells opened a milk route in Le Mars, Iowa, in 1913, little did he know the iconic globally renowned landmark his humble enterprise would spawn.



Wells bought a horse, delivery wagon and a few cans and jars for \$250 from a local dairy farmer and launched his dairy delivery service. The business grew, and in 1925 Wells and his sons began manufacturing ice cream and marketing it in nearby towns, including Sioux City, 25 miles to the southwest.

Three years later another company purchased Wells' Sioux City distribution system and the right to use Wells' name.

In 1935 the Wells family decided to resurrect their ice cream sales efforts in Sioux City again but lacked a company name.

So they held a "name that ice cream" contest in the Sioux City Journal. One resident submitted the winning entry after noticing how much his son enjoyed an Easter display in a department store window.

Thus Blue Bunny — and the "Ice Cream Capital of the World" — were born.

Dominating the Le Mars skyline, Blue Bunny's 900,000-square-foot ice cream plant boasts a 12-story refrigeration tower. The block-long unit can chill more than 50,000 pallets of ice cream at 20 degrees below zero.

Le Mars' largest employer, the company staffs more than 1,000 workers and

### LEFT:

*The Blue Bunny Ice Cream Parlor and Museum features an old-fashioned parlor with an antique soda fountain and souvenir shop. The museum on the second floor details the history of the ice cream industry in Le Mars. (Photo provided)*



produces 150 million gallons of frozen goodies every year, including dozens of flavors of ice cream, tricolored Bomb Pops, ice cream sandwiches and other novelties.

According to the "Hacks 'n Facts" page on [www.bluebunny.com](http://www.bluebunny.com), the company annually uses:

- 8 million pounds of chocolate coating
- 865,000 pounds of strawberries
- 396,000 pounds of pecans
- 150 million chocolate bunnies for its Bunny Tracks ice cream
- 130 million sticks for handheld treats

The manufacturing facility has been hailed as the largest single-location producer of ice cream novelties in the world. The company is also thought to be the world's largest family-owned and managed dairy processor.



The town of just under 10,000 was designated “Ice Cream Capital of the World” in 1994 by the state’s general assembly — and Le Mars will not let anyone forget it.

The Blue Bunny Ice Cream Parlor and Museum features an old-fashioned parlor with an antique soda fountain and souvenir shop. The museum on the second floor details the history of the ice cream industry in Le Mars.

The parlor and museum, located at 115 Central Ave. NW, is open from 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. Monday through Saturday and noon to 10 p.m. Sunday. Hours are somewhat seasonal, so call (712) 546-4522 to verify the business hours before visiting.

More than 50 colorful 6-foot ice cream cone statues dot the city. Murals and alley art harken to the halcyon days of romantic strolls, unspoiled greenery, carefree living — and, of course, the simple pleasure of enjoying ice cream.

The annual four-day Ice Cream Days festival includes 10,000 free servings of ice cream to the thousands of revelers who descend on the town every June.

Festival activities include a parade; outdoor movie; classic automobile cruise-in; historical and preservation tours; rubber cow races; arts exhibits; grill and barbecue competitions; toy show and auctions; live entertainment; fishing derby; and a downtown scavenger hunt.

The 2017 festival is slated for Wednesday, June 14, through Saturday, June 17. For information, visit [www.lemarsiowa.com](http://www.lemarsiowa.com).

The whole town gets into the act, according to Brad Pick, a member of the Ice Cream Days organizing committee and president of the local chamber of commerce.

“There are so many groups of people that are sponsoring events, putting them together and organizing activities,” he said. “The entire community goes out to make it a great event.”

He also noted the festival is designed to highlight the town’s attractions other than ice cream.

“Ice Cream Days is a festival when we celebrate ice cream but also our community and what we offer here,” he said.

Those attractions include a host of restaurants, taverns, bakeries and drive-ins; convention center and banquet hall; barn quilts and public art; playhouses and movie theaters; a 27-hole golf course; more than a dozen parks featuring ball diamonds, disc golf courses and swimming pools; miles of hiking and biking trails; and the Plymouth County Fair.

Not content to rest on its laurels, Le Mars this year adopted a 139-page comprehensive plan detailing implementation of its vision statement:

“Le Mars, the Ice Cream Capital of the World, is a thriving community of choice with opportunity for everyone. It is a community that:

- embraces growth and development to increase opportunity for present and future residents
- is a place of choice for people of all ages and backgrounds and a destination for visitors
- promotes a high quality of life with excellent educational, recreational, and health services
- supports its downtown as the economic and social hub of the community
- maintains Midwest values by being welcoming to all people, progressive, hardworking and family-friendly
- encourages sustainability

For these reasons and more, Le Mars’ vision for the future is to grow as a place where life is sweet.” **M**



*An outdoor movie is one of the highlights of Le Mars’ annual four-day Ice Cream Days festival. (Photo provided)*



*Beyond ice cream, Le Mars has plenty of other draws going on, too, including The Postal Playhouse, which houses the Le Mars Community Theatre. (Photo provided)*



*Blue Bunny, Le Mars’ largest employer, put the city on the map as the “Ice Cream Capital of the World.” Pictured is the company’s Ice Cream Days float. (Photo provided by Nancy Brechler Photography)*

# Abraham Pickering:

## *Pickerington, Ohio*

Pickerington, OH



**Having your neighbors and friends name a town in your honor shows a lot of respect — especially when they displace the name of a war hero to do so.**

Abraham Pickering (1776-1833) earned that respect.

Pickering was born in New Market, Va., four days after the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

He married Ann Looker, his first cousin once removed, in 1799. Seven years later they migrated to Ohio with their young son and daughter and settled in Fairfield County, southeast of Columbus.

In 1815 Pickering acquired the land that would later become his municipal namesake. He purchased the parcel from his father-in-law, cleared the land and platted out the town, reserving three lots for a cemetery, an education building and a church.

He sold the other lots and soon log houses were built and a trading post was established.

For some time, though, the settlement remained unnamed.

That changed the day Pickerton caught word of General Andrew Jackson's decisive victory over the British in the Battle of New Orleans, whereupon he dubbed the village Jacksonville "after the fighting son of a gun, Old Hickory."

The name and first plat of the town were recorded at the Fairfield County courthouse Sept. 15, 1815. By 1820, 49 people resided in Jacksonville.

The town, surrounded by woods abounding with wildlife, continued to grow, with Pickering a central figure to its success. He generously donated land

to accommodate communal amenities. His last donation,

made the year he passed away, was a lot for

building the First Methodist Church, the first church in the township.

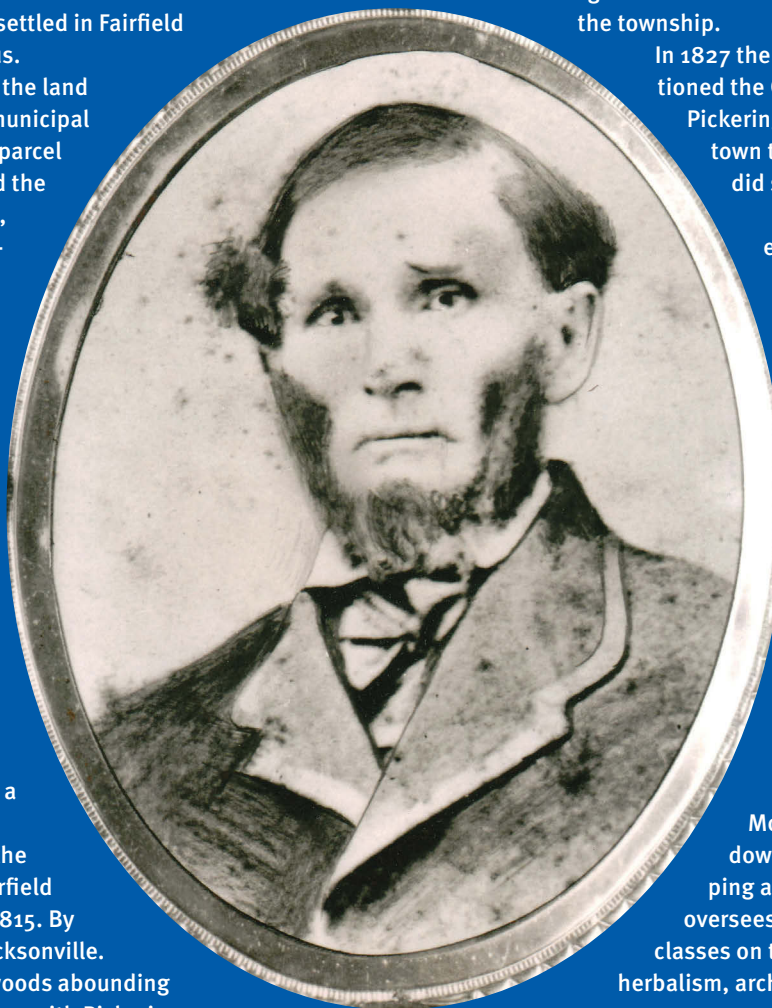
In 1827 the townspeople collectively petitioned the Ohio state legislature to honor Pickering by changing the name of their town to Pickerington. The legislature did so by special act.

Postal service arrived in Pickerington March 3, 1831, with the mail initially delivered on horseback.

Pickering lived in his namesake town until his death in 1833. He and Ann had eight children, six of whom survived to adulthood.

Now a suburb of Columbus, Pickerington was incorporated as a village in 1881 and certified as a city in 1991. The municipality of 19,000 was designated the "Violet Capital of Ohio" by the state legislature in 1996.

Pickerington hosts the Motorcycle Hall of Fame and its downtown features a historic shopping area. The parks department oversees the city's 10 parks and offers classes on topics such as jewel crafting, herbalism, archaeology and engineering. 📍



*Abraham Pickering (photo provided)*



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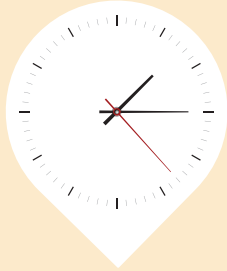
# Firefighting & EMS





# 1,345,500

The total number of fires reported during 2015 in the U.S., a 3.7 percent increase from 2014. These fires resulted in 3,280 civilian fire deaths and 15,700 civilian fire injuries; additionally, they amounted to \$14.3 billion in property damage. In fact, a fire department responded to a fire every 23 seconds in 2015.



Source: [www.nfpa.org/news-and-research/fire-statistics-and-reports/fire-statistics](http://www.nfpa.org/news-and-research/fire-statistics-and-reports/fire-statistics)



# 2,400

The number of structures affected by the Tennessee wildfires, which were first reported on Nov. 23. Of those structures, 1,765 were totally destroyed. Fourteen lives were lost due to the fires.

Read the article on page 38.

# 116 years

The Edward M. Cotter fireboat has been serving Buffalo, N.Y., for this length of time and shows no signs of stopping anytime soon.

Read more about the Cotter on page 34.



# 70%

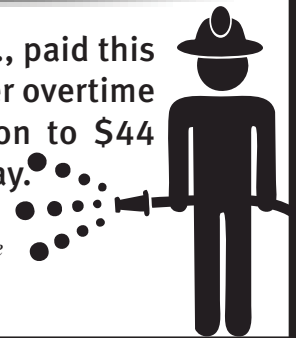
Volunteers make up this percentage of firefighters in U.S., saving the nation about \$140 billion per year.

Read more on page 24.

# \$13 million

Sacramento, Calif., paid this amount in firefighter overtime in 2015, in addition to \$44 million in regular pay.

Read more about overtime or new hires on page 20.



# 100,000

The "Get Alarmed Tennessee" program is responsible for distributing 100,000 smoke alarms for free through the Tennessee State Fire Marshal's Office since its launch in November 2012. More than 450 fire service partners have worked to install the 10-year battery alarms in homes statewide.

These smoke alarms are credited with saving more than 129 Tennesseans from fire danger; thirty-six of those direct saves occurred in 2015 alone.

Source: [www.usfa.fema.gov](http://www.usfa.fema.gov)





*Cities and towns vary on overtime versus new hires, often based on budgetary concerns or state legislature, which might make new hires more appealing. (Shutterstock.com)*

# Cities and towns weigh overtime vs new hires in fire service

by SARAH WRIGHT | The Municipal

**In a perfect world, staffing decisions — particularly whether to continue with overtime or hire new — would be easily reached; however, in a world with budgetary concerns and only a finite amount of time humans can operate at their best, tough decisions are required based on the information available and what a city or town can afford. Across the country, cities and fire departments are facing this age-old conundrum: do we continue with overtime, or do we hire new?**

In 2016, Elgin, Ill., determined paying overtime was saving the city 15 to 20 percent in the long run — after factoring in legacy costs like insurance and pensions. Meanwhile on

the West Coast, an auditor found overtime was no longer a cheaper option in San Diego, Calif., as it found one firefighter had been paid \$210,500 in overtime in 2014; the city's

fire department has instead, according to The San Diego Union-Tribune, begun to slowly train and hire more staff.

Similarly, the Sacramento Fire Department, also in California, spent more than \$13 million on overtime in 2015, in addition to \$44 million in regular pay. City auditor Jorge Oseguera, in an article by The Sacramento Bee, reported two employees alone each worked more than 6,000 hours, which amounted to “almost 70 percent of the time they are living and breathing.” With increased funding post-recession, the city has added about 60 firefighters and plans to hire 60 more this summer, returning the department to full staff.





While city responses vary based on individual circumstances, one thing both sides of the debate can agree on is the importance of maintaining safe staffing levels not only for employees' sake, but also for the city and its residents.

"A NIST (National Institute of Standards and Technology) study measured various outcomes to different fire events and made recommendations to get to victims quickly and safely," said Pat Devaney, president of the Associated Fire Fighters of Illinois, an association dedicated to education and legislature advocacy for its members.

The study utilized scientific methods to investigate "the effect of varying crew size, first apparatus arrival time and response time on firefighter safety, overall task completion and interior residential tenability using realist residential fires." It was the first of its kind and used an array of stakeholders and high-caliber technical experts to provide results and conclusions that the National Fire Protection Association 1710 Technical Committee could use to develop industry deployment standards.

Prior to the study, Devaney said, "The general approach to staffing was arbitrary."

With these standards available, fire agencies and their towns and cities can

better balance staffing decisions based on increasing the safety of their citizens and fire service members. Of course, town and city council members also have to maintain budgets, which leads to decisions that vary from local jurisdiction to local jurisdiction when vacancies arise. Devaney noted both options — new hires and overtime — offer perks and downsides.

"When relying on overtime too regularly, the safety factor becomes involved," Devaney said, adding, "When you have a firefighter who's been up all night at an incident, do you want them on the scene? They could have been up for 48 hours and not slept." He stressed the need for staffing at regular intervals. "You want to make sure they are at their best."

There is also another human component beyond fatigue to consider, with Devaney saying fire service professionals should be allowed to spend adequate time with their families, too. Still, when it comes to overtime, "members are willing," Devaney said; however, he cautioned overtime might not be a long-term solution.

State legislation, however, might make new hires more attractive to cities and towns. Devaney explained in Illinois the General Assembly created a new tier of

*A National Institute of Standards and Technology study used an array of stakeholders and high-caliber technical experts to provide results and conclusions that the National Fire Protection Association 1710 Technical Committee used to develop industry deployment standards. (Shutterstock.com)*

pension benefits for public safety employees in Illinois hired after Jan. 1, 2011, that lowers employment and pension costs.

Devaney said, "Changes in legislation have helped employers overcome hesitation to hire new and to fill vacancies."

When it comes to actually making staffing decisions, Devaney recommended taking a comprehensive view of the situation from the mathematics, overall impact in the workplace and employees in addition to unintended consequences, such as additional accrued leave. He noted this approach often brings a better outcome.

### **Opportunities waiting to be snagged**

Grants can be one avenue to alleviate hiring and retention woes. The Department of Homeland Security's Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response, or SAFER, grant in particular is sought by departments across the country to assist with funding staffing for a finite period of time.

"We had a definite need," Fire Chief Gary Ludwig, with the Champaign Fire Department in Illinois, said, noting his department had experienced operational shortcomings when it came to meeting national response time standards due to being short on personnel. This need led the department to seek out the SAFER grant. "It was an excellent opportunity for us."

The fire department documented its need and pressed its case, with Ludwig commenting, "We won the day." ►

## **On the Web:**

View the NIST's "Report on Residential Fireground Field Experiments here:

[www.nist.gov/sites/default/files/documents/el/fire\\_research/Report-on-Residential-Fireground-Field-Experiments.pdf](http://www.nist.gov/sites/default/files/documents/el/fire_research/Report-on-Residential-Fireground-Field-Experiments.pdf).

To learn more about the SAFER grant, visit [www.fema.gov/staffing-adequate-fire-emergency-response-grants](http://www.fema.gov/staffing-adequate-fire-emergency-response-grants).

SAFER funds — \$1.3 million total — which were awarded in 2016, will allow the department to maintain safe staffing levels for its Ladder 164 with the addition of six firefighters this year. The funds will last for two years, with the department and city of Champaign in the interim formulating a continuity plan to keep the firefighters after the grant period without reducing city services. As it was, whenever the station was short-staffed, firefighters were called back on mandatory overtime. This, over several years, cost the department an additional minimum of \$300,000.

Other departments across the country have also benefited from the SAFER grant and other grants available in the fire service. Some departments, for various reasons, are not pursuing grants, which have gotten very competitive in recent years; however, with a solid plan and clearly outlined need, grant success could be in the wings. **M**



*Grants are available to help fire service agencies maintain safe staffing or purchase needed supplies. The Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response, or SAFER, grant is sought by departments across the country to assist with funding staffing for a finite period of time. (Shutterstock.com)*

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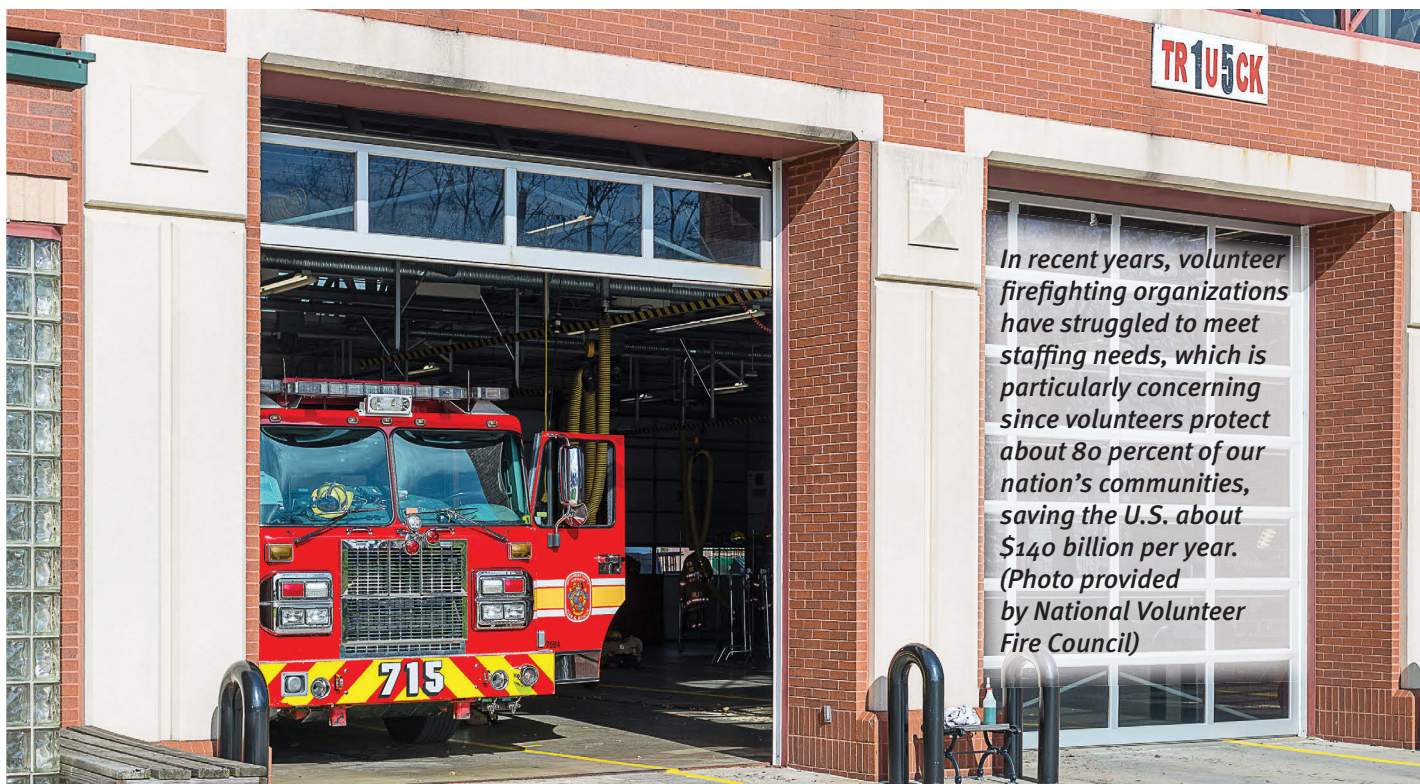
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*In recent years, volunteer firefighting organizations have struggled to meet staffing needs, which is particularly concerning since volunteers protect about 80 percent of our nation's communities, saving the U.S. about \$140 billion per year. (Photo provided by National Volunteer Fire Council)*

# Volunteer fire departments face challenges with recruitment and retention

by CATEY TRAYLOR | The Municipal

**Volunteers comprise 70 percent of firefighters in America, yet with low recruitment and retention rates, some departments have had to get creative to stay afloat.**

At Inver Grove Heights Fire Department in the city of Inver Grove Heights, Minn., Fire Chief Judy Thill has devised a 24-hour, year-round rotating schedule to make the workload more manageable for her on-call firefighters.

"We were receiving over 1,000 calls per year," she said. "It got to be a lot on the volunteers. Between training requirements, weekly meetings, public education visits and their

full-time jobs and family commitments, we're asking a lot of them."

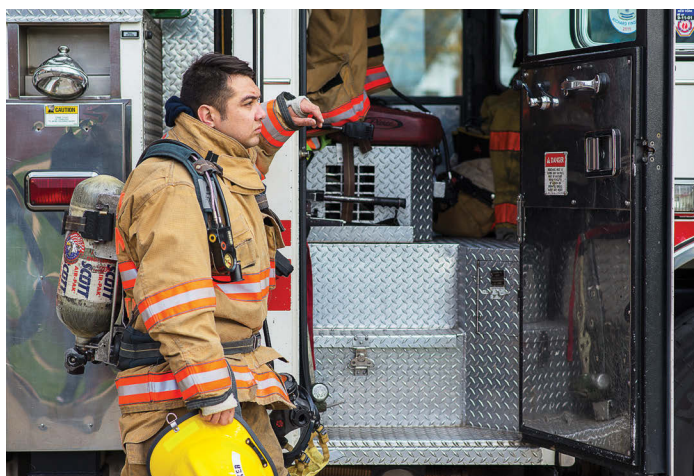
Thill estimated a basic volunteer firefighter would spend around 10 hours per week working for the station. Add to that their additional firehouse duties, plus emergency calls, and it's more like a part-time job of 20 to 25 hours per week.

To combat burnout amongst her team, Thill created a program called Duty Crew. Instead

of each of her volunteers being paged every time a call comes in, the firefighters sign up for four- or eight-hour shifts. They're required to be in the firehouse, but can use that time to complete online or hands-on trainings, make public education visits or fulfill equipment checks while waiting for a call to come in. Once their shift is up, a new duty crew takes over. This is how the station operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year.

"Knowing it takes an average of three years to become a basic firefighter and also knowing we lose an average of four to five firefighters per year, we decided to get out in front of the retention issue we're seeing





According to the National Volunteer Fire Council, increased time demands, more rigorous training requirements and the proliferation of two-income families whose members do not have time to volunteer are major factors contributing to recruitment challenges faced by fire departments. (Photo provided by National Volunteer Fire Council)



The Inver Grove Heights Fire Department in Minnesota celebrates its first day of Duty Crew, a program launched to help retain volunteer firefighters. (Photo provided)

**“Volunteers protect about 80 percent of our nation’s communities.”**

nationally,” Thill said. “If we waited until something drastic happened and we lost more firefighters per year, we would never be able to catch up. We try to make it as easy as possible on their schedules while still maintaining the high level of service the fire department supplies.”

While this system works for Thill’s 65 volunteers, some organizations across the country can’t even bring enough volunteers in the door to dream of something like that.

In recent years, volunteer firefighting organizations have struggled to meet staffing needs, which is particularly concerning given the importance of volunteers in the firefighting system.

“One of the key struggles of many departments is to get enough volunteers,” said Kimberly Quiros, National Volunteer Fire Council chief of communications. “In the last decade or so, volunteer numbers have fallen but call volume has tripled. The challenge is making sure departments have enough staffing to do what is asked of them from their community.”

The NVFC cites increased time demands, more rigorous training requirements and the proliferation of two-income families whose members do not have time to volunteer as the major factors contributing to recruitment challenges.

Chief Jeff Cash of the Cherryville Fire Department in Cherryville, N.C., faces an

uphill battle with recruitment of volunteers in his rural community.

“We went through an economic downfall, so people started finding jobs in neighboring cities,” Cash, who also serves on the NVFC’s executive committee, said. “After a commute to a large city, plus working eight-hour days, they don’t have time for me anymore. Plus, college-aged students who leave for school often don’t return to this community to live and work, so I lose out on them, too.”

In addition to a lack of availability, Cash said the shift of the fire department to take a wider range of emergency calls contributes to his roster issues.

“Back when we first started, businesses and industries in town would allow volunteer firefighters to leave their jobs to respond to a fire. Now that we respond to a variety of special incidents, employers can’t let their people off every time there’s a call. The volume is too high,” he said.

Cash compared the struggles of his department to a roller coaster — sometimes the roster is full, sometimes it’s not. He noted the loss of volunteers usually happens when people can’t maintain their hours for certifications.

“We’re holding our own right now,” he said. “But things are definitely worse than they were 10 years ago. We’re just not able to recruit and retain people. We used to have a waiting list

of people wanting to serve our community as a volunteer firefighter and now we don’t.”

Cash is fortunate to be located in an area with four volunteer fire departments nearby to help. He’s never worried about a shortage of personnel response or, even worse, no response, but not all departments are so lucky.

The Eagan Fire Department, located in Eagan, Minn., came under heat last year when it took 18 minutes to respond to a call for a house fire. The National Fire Protection Association sets a six-minute standard for response time and recommends that goal be met 90 percent of the time.

Eagan Fire Chief Mike Scott told TwinCities.com that the department’s response time was too slow and a consequence of manpower shortage.

“In volunteer fire departments, the one driving force is that you need volunteers,” he said.

After decades of thriving, many volunteer firefighting departments are having to revamp their model, hiring career firefighters to ensure there is always somebody on staff to respond to calls.

Cash employs eight full-time people while Thill employs five and runs her volunteer organization under a paid-on-call model. This means firefighters get paid each time they respond to an emergency. ▶



After an economic downturn sent people to find jobs in neighboring communities, Cherryville Fire Department in North Carolina has struggled to keep volunteers, with Fire Chief Jeff Cash noting, "After a commute to a large city, plus working eight-hour days, they don't have time for me anymore. Plus, college-aged students who leave for school often don't return to this community to live and work, so I lose out on them, too." (Photo provided)

The Wilkes-Barre Township Fire Department was on the brink of disbanding following the discovery of a fire chief who neglected to pay the department's bills and instead embezzled money.

After being discovered in 2014, former Chief John Yuknavich was found to have stolen at least \$45,000 from the company, leading to a six-month sentence in jail.

Facing mortgage foreclosure and stacks of unpaid bills, the group of volunteers was ready to fold the department until the municipality came to the rescue.

According to The Citizen's Voice, Wilkes-Barre's local newspaper, Wilkes-Barre Township absorbed the \$77,000 that was remaining on the mortgage of the firehouse and invested \$25,000 in new gear for firefighters. It also loaned the department \$68,000 that was missing

"Most volunteer stations have career firefighters now," Cash said. "It used to be out of the ordinary, but you're seeing it more and more these days."

#### A story of success

While most volunteer organizations face challenges in recruitment and retention, one Pennsylvania station had a whole different set of worries to combat: corruption within leadership.

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*Cherryville Fire Department is holding its own as it struggles to recruit and retain volunteer firefighters. Fortunately, it is located in an area with four volunteer fire departments nearby to help if needed. (Photo provided)*



from the fireman's relief association and paid \$65,000 to help purchase a new ladder truck.

"These guys came a long way after we got the thief out of there," Wilkes-Barre Township Mayor Carl Kuren said in an interview with The Citizen's Voice.

Things are going so well now that a paid firefighter is stationed at headquarters 14 hours a day.

Having the municipality's support and especially the unwavering commitment of the town's mayor played a major role in the rebirth of the organization, according to an interview with Fire Chief Rich Hart in The Citizen's Voice.

"If it wasn't for (Mayor Kuren), we would have wrapped it up," Hart said. "A lot of people were ready to throw the towel in."

While the story of corruption within Wilkes-Barre is unique, what isn't unique among departments is the necessity of passionate, committed volunteers in keeping departments operational. While volunteer organizations across the nation face staffing struggles, Quiros of the NVFC wants citizens to remember one thing:

"Volunteers protect about 80 percent of our nation's communities. They're a critical component of our fire safety organizations," she said.

Cash encourages people to at least take a look at whether volunteering may fit into their lives, for both personal satisfaction and financial protection of our nation's cities.

"At the national level, we encourage people to give their local volunteer small departments a look and see if it would fit with their lifestyles," he said. "If we don't, it forces taxpayers to pay career firefighters and rural communities like mine can't afford that. Believe it or not, volunteers save the nation about \$140 billion per year — money that people don't have to pay career firefighters." **M**

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# Citizens morphing into first care providers

by ELISA WALKER | The Municipal

**When more and more violent incidents become a common occurrence in communities, it's imperative for municipalities to take initiative to educate citizens over basic medical and trauma care. Educated EMS agencies, firefighters and police officers are not the first to arrive on the scene of an incident. Everyday people are. So why not train them?**

## **Preparation to save lives**

First Care Providers is a fresh new program that originated on the West Coast in the last few years. FCP reaches out to fire and EMS agencies across the country to help them learn how to train regular civilians. The program was founded by Dr. Joshua Bobko, a national leader in the development of medical responses and an international lecturer over emergency medicine, and helped developed by Bill Harris, a retired US Navy veteran, with over 20 years of experience in combat deployments, and an active instructor.

FCP has all the information, training materials and expertise to help agencies create a successful outreach program within the community. The program emphasizes what is important for bystanders to look for in the injured and how to function with basic

medical knowledge in order to take control of a chaotic situation.

Appropriate training will address immediate injuries such as bleeding out, hemorrhage control, trauma injuries and much more. FCP's goal is to have civilians educated on how to properly treat and stabilize the critically wounded until professional medical assistance can arrive. Providing life-saving training to regular people will make communities aware and better prepared for potential violent incidents.

"It has only been fairly recently that EMS and fire agencies across the United States have started to embrace their role in active violence incidents," commented Chief Rob Wylie, a retired volunteer and career firefighter with the Cottleville Fire Protection District in Missouri. "In the past we waited for law enforcement to clear an incident and then we go in to pick up

the pieces. Our focus has changed. We now emphasize getting to victims earlier and performing lifesaving interventions as quickly as possible but sometimes that isn't quick enough. The bystanders who are there when the incidents occur are in the best position to provide that first care."

In the best of situations, first responders will still take minutes to arrive on the scene. Unfortunately, those few minutes would still be a deciding factor in the outcome of a victim's life. By taking the logical step of training citizens, the victim faces better chances of surviving.

"Proof that these skills save lives was evident during the Boston Marathon bombing," explained Wylie. "Civilians as well as professional rescuers dove right in and applied tourniquets, pressure dressings and helped evacuate the injured to hospitals. Those bystanders saved lives. Civilians who are there when the incident occurs can, with very modest amount of training, step in and make a difference."

## **Taking initiative and proving the importance**

From natural disasters to car accidents to shootings, FCP has the ability to not only



***“When communities take initiative to work and learn together, they grow stronger together.”***

prepare citizens with knowledge, but to create mental preparedness. Being empowered with knowledge can prevent the fight-or-flight instinct that can take over during an adrenaline rushing situation.

Being afraid is natural, but overcoming the fear to do what needs to be done is the recipe for bystanders transforming into heroes. There is a large amount of over reliance on the EMS structure, which puts communities into a state of content when they should be ready to provide basic medical care when the occasion occurs. When communities take initiative to work and learn together, they grow stronger together.

“One aspect of the program that I think is critical is the focus on mental preparedness,” elaborated Wylie. “Encouraging people to first and foremost believe that they can be the victims of a violent incident and, secondly, prepare themselves to respond. We teach ways to develop a survival mindset. That, coupled with common sense techniques, they can save not only their own lives, but the lives of the friends and family of a complete stranger.

It’s not magic. These are proven techniques that anyone can learn and master. That’s empowering. Being empowered moves people from a fear-driven reaction in a bad situation to a process and a method to deal with the aftermath. People want to know what to do in an emergency. It’s awareness versus fear.”

By being taught what to look for and care about first, individuals can avoid being hesitant in times of emergency. The public must be taught to utilize the resources available to them through the program when medical supplies aren’t always readily available. This will create independence for civilians during hectic and disastrous situations.

Change is difficult but unwillingness to adapt in today’s world will create a barrier between the ability to save a life or not. Over reliance on medical personnel must ►



*First Care Provider is welcoming individuals with experience in pre-hospital medicine, Tactical Emergency Casualty Care, EMS or trauma to join the program as instructors. To become an instructor, visit <https://firstcareprovider.org/instructor-1/>. (Photo provided)*



*By learning alongside others as well as helping others learn, a community can feel more secure and knowledgeable in case of a natural or human-made disaster. (Photo provided)*



be addressed so communities can move beyond being helpless bystanders.

"There are many municipalities as well as state EMS and health systems looking into the First Care Provider program," stated Wylie. "Our goal is to bring this training to as many people as possible to build resilient communities that are aware of the potential for violent incidents and prepared to make a difference in their communities. FCP is the next logical step following in the tradition of CPR and the use of AEDs (automated external defibrillators) by the general public."

America isn't the only place trying to incorporate FCP into local communities and everyday people. France is another country that has started taking initiative so local residents in Paris can help during terror attacks. The training in Paris follows the same path that training in America walks. While knowledge may not prevent disastrous and harmful situations from occurring, it will help save lives when needed. **M**



*First Care Provider's website has a blog and also links to various social media sites. This keeps everyone up to date on ongoing activities and situations that arise that can continue to prepare FCP for any incident. The blog is at <https://firstcareprovider.org/blog/>. (Photo provided)*

An advertisement for National Rent-A-Fence. The background is a chain-link fence with a blue sky and white clouds visible through it. On the left side, there are green ivy leaves and a yellow and black butterfly. In the center, there is a large white sign with the text "NATIONAL RENT-A-FENCE®" in bold red and blue letters. Below the company name, the phone number "800-352-5675" is written in large red digits, and the website "rentnational.com" is written in smaller blue text at the bottom of the sign.



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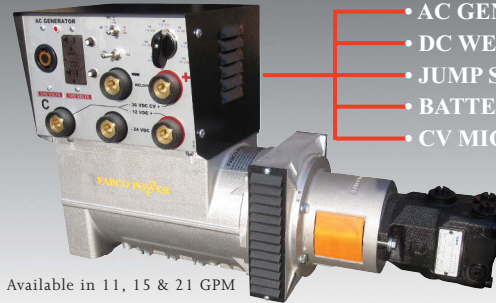
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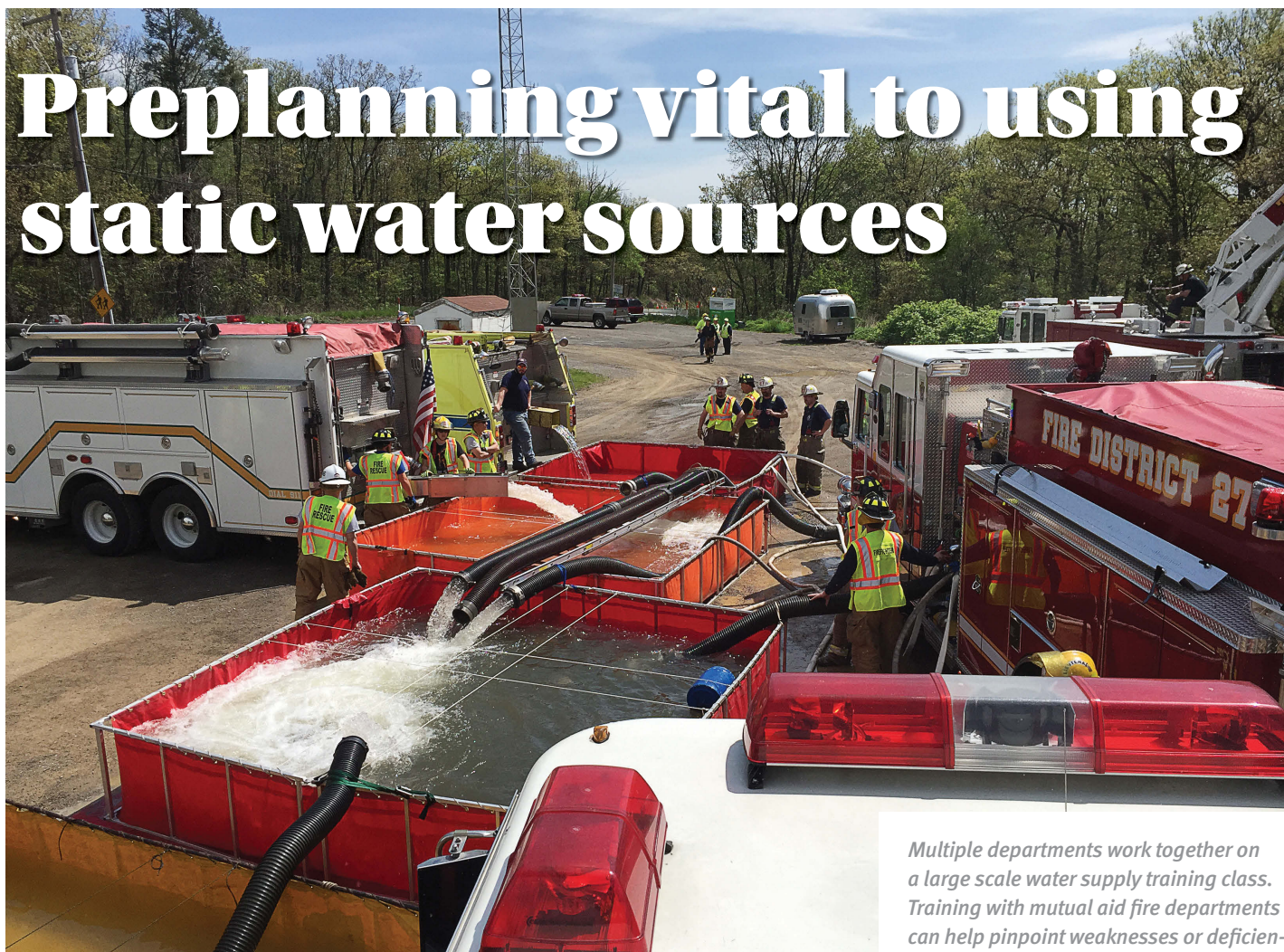
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# Preplanning vital to using static water sources



*Multiple departments work together on a large scale water supply training class. Training with mutual aid fire departments can help pinpoint weaknesses or deficiencies in equipment or personnel. (Photo provided by Henry Lovett of TurboDraft)*

by LAUREN CAGGIANO | The Municipal

## Rural firefighting calls for a different and streamlined approach, including the access to and use of static water sources.

Henry Lovett, a veteran volunteer firefighter and product manager for the TurboDraft Fire Educator, described the lay of the land.

"Rural firefighters are faced with many challenges, including a drastic decline in volunteers, extended response times, lack of funding and resources as well as the absence of municipal water supply systems," he said.

Such factors mean that rural fire departments and firefighters must engage in preplanning activities. According to Lovett, that means evaluating all possible firefighting water supplies within their response areas before a fire occurs.

"Once these static water sources are identified, a detailed plan should be developed

as to the appropriate equipment and techniques needed to utilize the resource," he said. "This can be accomplished by setting up and testing the equipment configuration as well as documenting the available flow rates in a water supply playbook." Such documents should be shared with all mutual aid departments to cover all bases, he added.

Planning is only as good as the training, however — which Lovett points out can often be a weak area. "A lot of (departments) talk about it, but don't train," he said. However, this "muscle memory," as he called it, is critical to success.

There's no substitute for knowing your equipment and regular practice. Lovett

recommended that firefighters explore training opportunities outside of the "normal" training routine. There's also a power in collaboration. "Reach out to the mutual aid fire departments and invite these folks to train and work together," he said. "The day of the fire is not the time to discover the weaknesses or deficiencies in the equipment or personnel."

He also cautioned against accepting status quo as the only option.

"(M)any departments get bogged down in the 'that's the way we always have done it' mentality and are resistant to change or new ideas," he said.

Lovett said the recent residential fire in Fairfax County, Va., is a prime example of what could go wrong in this scenario. There was no water supply or proper training,



which proved to be a deadly combination. Along with the size of the blaze, the location of the house made the fire difficult to contain. Crews had to string long lines of water hoses because there weren't any fire hydrants near the structure.

Such circumstances have led firefighters to turn to a variety of solutions, including the TurboDraft Fire Eductor, which fire companies use to tap into static sources such as lakes, ponds, streams and swimming pools up to 250 feet away from the apparatus. TurboDraft can be deployed in a matter of minutes, using standard 2 1/2-inch hose line and a 5-inch large-diameter hose, to generate usable flows up to 670 GPM.

While Lovett backs the product, he stressed that the operational component is just as critical, if not more, to the outcome. Battalion Chief Robert Avsec — retired — underlined this point. He served with the Chesterfield Fire and EMS Department in Virginia for 26 years. He is an instructor for fire, EMS and hazardous materials courses at the local, state and federal levels, which included more than 10 years with the National Fire Academy.

He offered a case study from his own former department. One of the stations had a large response area with no municipal water supply, and they took an innovative approach to this situation. According to Avsec, they made arrangements with the regional law enforcement aviation unit to photograph all the potential static water sources in their district. Then the potential sites were disseminated among the three sites for follow-up visits from which they were able to draw multiple conclusions, particularly factors related to water supply or lack thereof and the nature of land ownership.

In such cases where the site was located on private land, and the owner was amenable to allowing departmental access, Avsec said a written agreement was executed between the two parties. Each of the identified viable drafting sites was then assigned a unique numerical identifier and entered into a dispatch system. They were also entered on the map cards carried aboard the station's apparatus. Lastly, aluminum signs were posted on the roadway to demarcate the site's location.

The lesson here? A coordinated approach makes all the difference — and that begins with having the knowledge in the first place.

"Rural fire departments that rely on static water sources for their water supplies during



*Training exercises provide a means to enhance fire ground operations, particularly in rural communities where static water sources come into play. (Photo provided by Henry Lovett of TurboDraft)*



*Departments must be open-minded to creative water supply techniques and be willing to break away from the status quo. (Photo provided by Henry Lovett of TurboDraft)*

firefighting operations must have personnel who are knowledgeable, skilled and practiced in conducting rural water supply operations," he said.

To that end, he recommends that rural fire departments seek rural water supply training classes from the authority having jurisdiction for their state. **M**



# Oldest working fireboat still serves Buffalo, N.Y.

by NICHOLETTE HODGSON | The Municipal

**Before Theodore Roosevelt was inaugurated as president the oldest working fireboat had already begun serving the city of Buffalo, N.Y. In November 2016, the Edward M. Cotter fireboat turned 116 years old. Even today it is still used as a functional fireboat as well as an ice breaker on the Buffalo River. John D. Sixt III is currently in his second season as the Cotter's captain.**

## History of the Edward M. Cotter

Although currently named the Edward M. Cotter, the fireboat was christened in September 1900 as the William S. Grattan in honor of the first paid fire commissioner of Buffalo, N.Y. Construction of the vessel began in March 1900 in New Jersey as Buffalo's third fireboat. The Grattan was built twice as big as the other boats with twice the horsepower so that it could work as the city's ice breaker. The boat is 118 feet long, 24 feet wide and cost the city \$91,000.

The Grattan switched from steam power to oil boilers when it had to be rebuilt after catching fire in 1928. While assisting at the Cahill oil barge fire, the Grattan caught fire and was burned to the hull after contact with the barge, causing the boilers to quit and the fireboat to become trapped on a sand barge. The Grattan sat for 18 months while the city decided to replace the fireboat completely for \$225,000 or rebuild it for \$99,000.

Ultimately, they chose to rebuild the boat with some modifications. According to Sixt, "The rebuild took the pilot house from the main deck to the upper deck for a better vantage point for firefighting, which is also why the tower ladder was added at the stern of the vessel." Two foam tanks were also added, which could each hold 230 gallons of foam.

In the 1950s, the oil boilers were beginning to wear down, and so the Grattan was sent to Wisconsin for its second rebuild. This time they chose to use diesel fuel instead of oil boilers. This rebuild added two pumping and propulsion caterpillars and two pumping caterpillars to increase the fireboat's pumping capacity as well as two generators. The fireboat's pumping capacity was increased to 15,000 gallons per minute overall.

With this rebuild also came a name change. The Grattan was re-christened the Firefighter. However, the Firefighter only lasted for six months before the fireboat was re-christened for a third time. This



*The Edward M. Cotter fireboat spends the majority of its time docked at its firehouse in Buffalo, N.Y. Captain John D. Sixt III and Jack Kelleher, the marine engineer, are the ones who care for the boat full time. (Photo provided by the Edward M. Cotter Conservancy)*

time the fireboat was named the Edward M. Cotter for the first Buffalo Fire Department union president.

## The Cotter's job

The fireboat was built to act as an icebreaker during the winter as well as fighting fires whenever called upon. As an icebreaker, Sixt teams up with the public works department. He stated they need to "wait for the thaw after the freeze. Since three tributaries run into the Buffalo River, the ice breaking helps to flush them out when the creeks start to run."

In order for the Cotter to get called in to assist with a fire, it has to be rather large, such as a major grain elevator fire, a large vessel fire or an apartment building fire, since it can pump out as much water as seven land pumps. Currently, the fireboat uses water from the river and lake to put out fires.

In 1960, the Cotter traveled to Canada and became the first boat to cross international waters to assist in fighting a fire when Port Colborne's Maple Leaf Mill caught fire. In 1972 the fireboat was called in when the Pillsbury flour mill exploded. Its most recent call was in 2013 when it was called in to assist with the Concrete Central grain elevator fire. ►



*The addition of the tower ladder at the stern of the Edward M. Cotter fireboat helps to give a better vantage point to the firefighters. (Photo provided by the Edward M. Cotter Conservancy)*





Sixt mentioned the Cotter “has assisted with a few small fires since then but nothing of spectacular or catastrophic proportions.” However, it can also act as an assist for the city by using supply lines to hook up the trucks to the boat and feed the land pumps.

Since its last rebuild, the main concerns are simply routine maintenance. Since much of the equipment is still from the 1950s, it is beginning to need replaced, and replacement parts can be difficult to find. Sixt works with marine engineer Jack Kelleher to not only maintain the equipment on the fireboat, but also perform preventative maintenance so that any problems can be avoided. Patching leaks and painting every year is also a necessity after a winter of ice breaking. However, everything on the fireboat is still fully functional. Sixt maintained that the Cotter is “just as vital today with the current waterfront development of apartments and restaurants.”

The Cotter also works in a public relations and charity role during the summer as a part of ceremonies. Each year the Cotter also ventures back to Canada as part of the annual Colborne Canal Days as a thanks for its help in 1960. In 1996 the Cotter was deemed a national historic landmark. Recently, the Edward M. Cotter Conservancy was established to help raise money for the upkeep of the fireboat.

Unless called out on duty, the Edward M. Cotter remains docked at its firehouse. At 116 years old, this fireboat will remain on active duty for the foreseeable future. **M**



signed by Chris Collins, a member of Congress. (Photo provided by the Edward M. Cotter Conservancy)

On Saturday, Nov. 12, 2016, the Edward M. Cotter fireboat received a certificate of commendation from the U.S. House of Representatives for its 116 years of service to Buffalo, N.Y. The commendation was

## On the Web:

To learn more, visit these links:

- A trip on the Edward M. Cotter - Jay Burney  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=XIXXB9ZzaLs](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XIXXB9ZzaLs)
- Buffalo fireboat turns 116-years-old - WIVBTV  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=3HrJTH6QBxQ](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3HrJTH6QBxQ)
- Wild Buffalo on the Edward M. Cotter Fireboat - vidiot4u2  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=LODFBrx\\_2pg](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LODFBrx_2pg)
- [www.emcotter.com](http://www.emcotter.com)

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# Gatlinburg recovering from massive fires



By DENISE FEDOROW | The Municipal

**The city of Gatlinburg is “mountain tough” and is fighting its way back from a massive fire that started at the top of a trail in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park and literally blew into the city limits and residential areas.**

Two teenagers have been charged with allegedly starting the fire at the top of the Chimney Tops Trail on Nov. 23, 2016. The fires claimed 14 lives. Nearly 2,400 structures were affected by the widespread fires, which totally destroyed 1,765 of them before it was done.

According to the Knoxville News Sentinel and other sources, the blaze was an acre and a half when it was discovered on Nov. 23. Because of the treacherous terrain near

the top of Chimney Tops 2, National Park Fire Management Officer Greg Salansky decided it was too dangerous for the firefighters to directly attack the slow-burning fire and instead designed a 410 acre containment area. By Nov. 26 the fire had spread to between 6 and 8 acres, but then started jumping ridges — some a half mile to a mile away. By the time the first aerial attacks were attempted on Nov. 27, the fire had spread to 35 acres.

But on Nov. 28 winds reaching 90 mph picked up burning embers and carried them miles away to Gatlinburg — a distance of 5.5 miles — and when the embers landed, they started fires. In less than an hour, 20 structures in an area of town caught fire and that was just the beginning.

Gatlinburg Fire Chief Gregory A. Miller called it a “perfect storm.”

“This perfect storm, created by an existing fire in the Great Smoky Mountain National Park, extreme drought conditions, hurricane-force winds, falling trees and power lines and blowing embers, resulted in a challenging foe that required numerous resources and tons of resiliency to battle,” he said.





**LEFT:** A motel complex lies in ruins after a major forest fire roared through Gatlinburg, Tenn., and a large section of the Smoky Mountains in late December 2016. (Carolyn Franks/Shutterstock.com)

**ABOVE:** A staging area was set up for first responders and emergency personnel who were battling what is being called the worst fire of the century. Winds reaching up to 90 mph caused embers from a forest fire in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park to jump ridges and travel miles, starting fires all along the way. (Photo provided)

Houses and businesses in several surrounding neighborhoods were completely destroyed, including structures along Orchard Road near the park, Ski Mountain area, Wiley Oakley area, Hemlock Hills and Pittman Center, leaving mounds of blackened ash and bits of people's lives and livelihoods.

The city's main street, Parkway, where all the tourist attractions and shops are, mainly suffered smoke damage. The city of Gatlinburg, home to approximately 4,100 people, attracts more than 11 million tourists each year, many of whom visit during the holiday season. But many businesses didn't escape without fire damage and some, like the Riverhouse Motor Lodge and others, were completely destroyed. Churches, chapels and schools — like the Arrowmont School of the Arts — had some structure loss in this mega-blaze.

Fires were burning on both sides of Highway 441 between Gatlinburg and Pigeon Forge on Nov. 28, making driving difficult through the thick smoke — creating an apocalyptic scene. A total of 17,140 acres burned in the Chimney Tops 2 fire, 10,964 acres of which were in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. The Cobbly Nob Fire burned 764 acres — a national park spokesperson said that fire was started by sparks from downed power lines in the high winds.

Not only did these firefighters have multiple blazes to deal with, in the early hours of fighting the fire, The Tennessean reported hydrants were intermittently running dry — reportedly because of the power outages created by the high winds causing pumps to quit and, in some cases, because flames had reached pumping stations.

A press release from the Tennessee Emergency Management Director Patrick Sheehan released on Jan. 25, stated, "The Sevier County wildfire is the most catastrophic wildland-urban interface fire event in the history of Tennessee and the most devastating fire in the state since the 1916 East Nashville fire."

Damages were estimated to be between \$5 and \$8 million — but the final cost has not yet been released.

A park official said on their end during the peak suppression activity they utilized 780 firefighters from 40 states and D.C., 61 engines, seven helicopters and five bulldozers. ▶

### Ongoing process

Because of the widespread area of these fires, after the major fires were doused, firefighters continued to battle blazes.

Fire Chief Miller explained, "After the initial fires were extinguished, crews continued to respond to rekindled fires for several days. Large trees, snags, stumps and homes with timber construction would smolder for days."

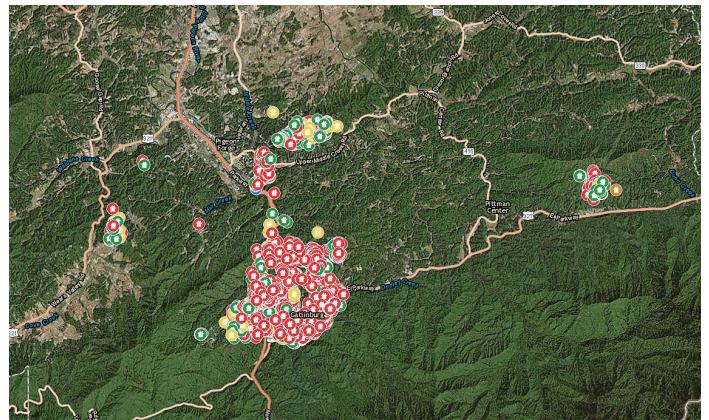
He said 11 fire departments from Sevier County, plus an additional 154 from throughout Tennessee, helped battle the blaze, bringing more than 270 apparatuses and over 1,200 responders.

"These responders worked around the clock for eight days until all resources were finally demobilized on Dec. 5," he said. "Amazingly, despite the extreme hazards faced, only two minor injuries were reported (among the firefighters), neither of which required hospitalization."

### Recovery efforts

Despite the devastation, the citizens of the area have been picking up the pieces. Fire Chief Miller said, "The town and citizens are in the recovery process. The rebuilding phase has begun for many property owners and the tourists are returning to our mountain community."

Miller added, "We've established the 'Mountain Tough Recovery Team,' which is responsible for assisting the victims of the wildfires to secure housing and other necessities."



Nearly 2,400 structures were affected by the widespread fires, which totally destroyed 1,765 of them before it was done. This GIS map highlights a portion of the damage, with the red markers signifying structures that had been "destroyed." Orange markers represent structures with "major" damage while yellow means "minor" damage and green "affected." (Photo provided by Gatlinburg, Tenn.)

As for how his department is recovering, Miller replied, "The fire department personnel have not missed a beat. They have continued to display the utmost resolve and dedication to their beloved community."

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"The response to this fire was epic — the largest assembly of first responders in the history of Tennessee. Firefighters from Gatlinburg, Sevier County and throughout Tennessee as well as law enforcement personnel and military men and women worked tirelessly through dangerous conditions to combat this unprecedented fire storm," Miller said.

The Gatlinburg Fire Department received a Class 2 ISO rating in April of 2015. The department has three stations and 90 members who also provide emergency medical services and advanced life support services. Members are trained in vehicle rescue, swift water rescue, high angle rescue, HAZMAT response, confined space rescue and woodland firefighting. Several members are solely responsible for fire inspections, fire prevention and arson detection.

#### Lessons learned?

Officials from all agencies are still sorting through the details of the fire and the



*Smoke from the Gatlinburg/Sevier County fires could be seen from the Dave and Leigh Kirk home 15-20 miles away. (Photo provided by Leigh Kirk)*

response to determine what can be learned from the tragedy.

TEMA Director Patrick Sheehan stated in that Jan. 25 press release, "A major disaster such as this can take months to complete.

"Additionally, any release of an after-action review will be subject to the requirement currently in place from the Sevier County District Attorney to hold records subject to Rule 16 of the Tennessee rules of criminal procedure due to the ongoing criminal investigation into the wildfire. This action has been coordinated with the Tennessee Attorney General's Office."

Fire Chief Miller said, "We believe there will be a significant opportunity to learn from this tragic fire once the after-action review is conducted. Until then, we have already realized the importance of mutual aid agreements. Tennessee has an excellent statewide fire mutual aid program. This enabled multiple resources to mobilize swiftly to offer aid to the city and Sevier County." M

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# “Aha moment” leads to a million-dollar invention

By BARB SIEMINSKI | The Municipal

**William K. “Ken” Blocker of Lexington, S.C., may soon be in the enviable position of having firefighters all over the nation doffing their heavy helmets to him for an invention that makes firefighting easier and safer.**

Blocker, however, was employed by the city of Columbia Fire Department in South Carolina as a training cadet for only six weeks. But that short stint led to something huge; however, it took some experimentation to reach that point.

A baseball scholarship first sent Blocker to Jackson State University, but he ended up dropping out of school and dabbling in a variety of jobs — furniture moving, tree trimming by contracting with the phone company to trim and cut trees around its lines — and finally into corrections.

“That path showed more of what I didn’t want to do and I knew that I needed to have something more stable with benefits,” said Blocker. “That’s how I got into corrections because they’re always hiring due to the turnover. I didn’t have a criminal record, and it seemed ideal for me at the time. Surprisingly, I stayed in that field for almost 10 years. I also worked as a security officer at a hospital for nine years and with the South Carolina Department of Mental Health for five years. I resigned last August to pursue my business (KBLOCK Tools LLC) full time after the TV show had aired.”

Backing up a bit, after several years in his corrections career, Blocker thought it was time for a career change and thought he’d enjoy being a firefighter.

“It is ironic that my employment ended in six weeks as a cadet; I was told that my safety and the safety of others was of utmost importance,” said Blocker, adding that because of his



*Ken Blocker wears Aqua Blaster, which is pointed straight out, as if it were in use it. (Photo provided)*

short stint with the fire department, he never had the opportunity to actually fight a real fire.

However, in the days following his exit from the fire department, a seed began to germinate in his mind.

“As a cadet trainee, I realized how difficult it was to handle a charged fire hose. From that experience, I had an epiphany that there had to be an easier way to manage a charged fire hose, something revolutionary,” said Blocker, who returned to his law enforcement career after leaving the fire department, though he has since retired.

Long story short, the enterprising would-be firefighter’s “aha moment” — 16 years in the making — led to an amazing invention, a cool million dollars and TV fame.

“Like many inventors, I didn’t have a clue as to how to start pursuing my invention so I went through a consulting company and spent thousands of dollars for little or nothing,” said Blocker.

“On the bright side, I managed to get an idea on a design, and I was awarded my first patent, so even though I spent a lot of money, it was a lesson and part of the process that has led up to this moment. I’ve learned to be optimistic in every experience of this endeavor. As far



*Pictured is the front of the Aqua Blaster. (Photo provided)*





**ABOVE LEFT AND RIGHT:** Blocker's invention has found a wide span of use outside of the fire service, including within the military. (Photo provided)

*Aqua Blaster is used for dust control elsewhere; however, there are several industries that could use this device, including construction, mining and demolition control. (Photo provided)*

as the tooling and the overall development of this product, I had machine shops assist me with designs as I provided sketches on modifications that were made throughout the years of pursuing this concept."

All of his efforts paid off, with Blocker stating, "My product, the Aqua Blaster fire hose carrier, was on CNBC's 'Make Me a Millionaire' inventor season two, where I secured a \$1,000,000 investment. I'm in the process of launching my product to the various industries that use fire hoses and firefighting nozzles to carry out and accomplish a specific task. My manufacturer is also in the process of modifying the flow control part of my product that will reduce the weight even more and further enhance the capabilities of the mechanical functions that will exceed the standard requirements to ensure the merit of this concept."

As for his experience with the show, he said, "The way they orchestrate the show is by searching throughout the country looking for inventions that didn't make it to the marketplace but had the potential they believed to be successful.

After contacting you, they ask questions concerning your invention and the process as far as how you came up with the idea and your experiences pertaining to the process of your journey while pursuing it. After that, they get a feel for you and your family structure, and in my case, they had me get some fire service professionals to say how my idea would be beneficial to the fire service industries. After reviewing your information, they narrowed it down to 16 inventions that would be featured on the show.

"When my invention was chosen, they came to my home and did a taping of my story as well as a taping of my prototype that I had with a local fire department, which gave its input on my idea. Then we went out to Los Angeles, Calif., where they did more taping and demonstrated a model—that the show had made for us—with a fire department there and had the firefighters talk about my invention and how it could be used within their profession."

After that stage, Blocker said, "A few weeks later we went back to California where they had set up a meeting with an investor for you to pitch your idea for a potential investment to help get your product to market. The investor really liked my idea and the business plan that (my wife) Nevetta created and countered offer of \$500,000 for 25 percent to \$1,000,000 for 30 percent. We were the only ones on the

show out of the 14 inventors who secured an investment for \$1,000,000. My investor, Manny Fernandez, the co-founder of Dream-Funded, is located in San Francisco."

Blocker has several visual aids, videotapes and sketches, and if readers would like more information, he invites them to email him at [wkbblocker3@gmail.com](mailto:wkbblocker3@gmail.com).

During the years of working on his invention, Blocker took breaks by spending time with family—including his and Nevetta's two sons, Ryan and Caleb—and friends. He also enjoys fishing, with his biggest catch to date being a 9-pound largemouth bass. He plans to go again soon, and while Nevetta "hates fishing, she will often grab a book and come along" while he catches their dinner—mostly catfish—and dreams up more inventions.

A very big part of this whole process has been the continuing enthusiasm and vital support of Nevetta, said Blocker, adding that it was his wife who came up with the winning idea of introducing the Aqua Blaster to the "Make Me a Millionaire" TV show. So, the firefighters at the beginning of this article also owe a gallant tip of the helmet to Nevetta for her persistence in encouraging her husband to follow his dream. **M**

*Ryan Blocker, Ken Blocker's son, drew this sketch of what a firefighter looks like, from the front, using the Aqua Blaster. (Photo provided)*

## On the Web

Two videos of Blocker's device in use can be found at <https://youtu.be/rGufCkMfsxo> and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZVqv1gyeGdE>.



# New draws keep municipal golf courses in the green

By BARB SIEMINSKI | The Municipal

**Picture it: A golf course on a warm spring day, rolling in a sea of restful green on a lovely weekday morning when the day is young and the sun is still burning off the last wisps of fog from the hollows. Its breathtaking beauty is enough to bring on a “sudden migraine” that compels you to call the office and take a sick day. A very sick day that might, um, carry over to the following day, too. You might even feel guilt when your boss sympathetically bids you to “Feel better soon.”**

As golf course managers, you live for days like this, knowing that this ideal weather will entice many customers to the course and put a nice jingle in your cash register.

Those, however, are prime conditions. For those who operate where bad winters abound, a game plan is needed to keep money rolling in. And if Lady Luck is with you, some really dedicated die-hard golfers are gonna come out anyway, even in a driving summer storm, if for no other reason than to just be near the magic of the clubs and accessories in your shop.

Richard Singer, senior director of consulting services of the National Golf Foundation in Jupiter, Fla., gave a presentation titled “Improving the Profitability of Municipal Golf” at the 2014 Charlotte, N.C., National Recreation & Park Association Congress, which covered ideas on how to generate more cash flow in municipal leaner times.

In his seminar he addressed tips of increasing revenue not only for municipal golf courses, but also for mini-golf courses. He discussed the use of economic loyalty programs and third-party tee time wholesalers as well as how to attract minorities

and those who had only a mild interest in the game.

How a municipal golf course can improve its economics involves so many answers and no correct answer, said Singer.

“A golf course is a business like any other, so the best methods to improving profitability generally relate to increasing activity, growing new customers and increasing customer spending per visit,” said Singer. “There may be some things overly ‘bloated’ courses can do to reduce expenses, but most municipal golf courses struggle more with low revenues as opposed to high expenses.

“Golf courses are difficult businesses because they are a high fixed-cost business — greens need to be maintained regardless of whether you host one round or 200 rounds. You are also at the mercy of things you cannot control like weather and the price of gas. Growing and maintaining turf is a challenge — and expensive. Golfers are also a fickle group of customers. Beginners tend to react positively to engagement



**LEFT:** With the right approach, municipal golf courses can turn a profit utilizing innovative ideas to pull in new golfers or people who normally wouldn't visit a golf course or clubhouse. (FloridaStock/Shutterstock.com)

**RIGHT:** A footgolf course in Jupiter, Fla., draws in people who might not have visited before. (Photo provided by Richard Singer)

and programs, rather than just 'show up' at a golf course."

Some golf courses have footgolf courses and specialty-built courses, depending on what space is available, so that is another outlet for more revenue.

According to Tony Cotter, director of Napoleon Parks and Recreation Department in Napoleon, Ohio, the city's golf course is just nine holes with its operation season from April 1 through Nov. 15.

"Our golf course utilizes various methods to improve profitability and increase revenue," Cotter said. "We implement special greens and cart fee rates to boost play during non-peak hours. We also offer discount cards for both greens fees and cart rentals. Individuals can purchase 10 pre-sale greens fee rounds and 10 nine-hole rentals at a 20 percent discount of the normal price."

He added, "In the summer months, we offer a junior program to attract new, younger players to the golf course and to teach them the game. During the slower months in the fall, we offer our 'fall rates' that typically lower fees by 25 percent. Our course is closed during the winter season. We do not have a restaurant so our clubhouse remains closed."

Chris Davis, superintendent of Parks and Recreation of the city of Nappanee, Ind., keeps his golf course pro shop open in the winter for merchandise sales.

"We also have a golf simulator that is open for indoor golf and golf lessons," said Davis.

Meanwhile Steve Grimes, director of Parks and Recreation in Bettendorf, Iowa, has fashioned a unique solution for his Palmer Hills Golf Course in winter.

"We are constantly looking at ways to enhance the experience at Palmer Hills Golf Course," said Grimes. "Recently we have completed a number of enhancements to the physical aspect of the course ►



Richard Singer spoke at the 2014 NRPA conference in regards to increasing the profitability of municipal golf courses. (Photo provided by Richard Singer)



that include a new modified tee system that better accommodates players of all ability levels; renovated bunkers and additional forward tee boxes; and we are looking at other potential improvements that will attract new users to the golf course and keep expenses down. We are also planning some upgrades to our clubhouse restaurant, the 'Palmer Grill.' We're also constantly trying to improve our levels of customer service.

"One of our biggest challenges for our operation at Palmer Hills, besides the weather, is attracting new people to the course and shedding the image that it is a difficult course to play," said Grimes. "We have a plan to add a short course with four to six holes in the 100-yard range or less and a large putting green area that would have new challenges built into it. We have also added sledding and cross-country skiing (including rentals) for the winter months. We hope this will also enhance the Grill's revenues and value as a recreational amenity to the community as a whole."



*Pictured is the sixth hole at the Napoleon golf course in Napoleon, Ohio. (Photo provided by Tony Cutter)*

As for the plan to create a short course and large putting green area, Grimes said, "The challenges at the putting green will be the extreme size and undulation of the putting surface that will make it fun for all ability levels. We will be able to set up an 18-hole putting course for fun and competition as well."

Then when it comes to improving customer service, Grimes said, "We are remodeling the Grill area itself and will be enhancing the deck area as well. We're modifying the menu, too, and working with staff training to enhance our service standards." He continued, "We're planning more special events and will be adding more TVs in the Grill and one for the deck area."

As for advertising that attracts novices, women and less-traditional golfers, Grimes concluded, "We are planning to use a variety of marketing sources, including a heavy blitz with social media, to get the word out on these new opportunities to new potential users as well as our traditional markets. We will offer some new and unique events to draw people in, too."

There you have it — so very soon plan to say "Hello!" to your first spring customers with new attractions, events or upgrades. Convince folks on their morning commutes to think better of it and come play golf on your beautiful courses instead. **M**



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*Henderson, Ky., has reached its goal of having 85 percent of its total combined sewer overflow captured and treated before its release — a goal it has reached a year ahead of schedule. (Photo provided)*



*Tearing up the downtown area proved to be one of the most challenging aspects of Henderson's combined sewer systems separation project; however, the end result has sparked economic development while eliminating sewer odor. (Photo provided)*

## Henderson, Ky.,

# *reaps benefits of an early start*

By ANNE MEYER BYLER | The Municipal

**D**URING THE LAST CENTURY, the U.S. had combined sewer systems that fed both storm-water and wastewater into the pipes. During heavy rains, the overflow of water would carry sewer into rivers through combined sewer overflows. These began to create serious pollution problems in the country's rivers. The Environmental Protection Agency's Clean Water Act of 1972 led them to begin working on this problem. There were about 1,150 cities in the U.S. with CSSs that the EPA needed to start working with. Henderson, Ky., was one of them, but not the biggest by far with a population of about 27,000. Chicago; Milwaukee, Wis.; Lexington, Ky.; and other larger cities were at the top of the list and regulators started working with them in the 1980s and

1990s, in regards to their processes for their projects.

Henderson was built on the Ohio River and its Canoe Creek tributary. Henderson Water Utility General Manager Tom Williams said, "We started about 1994 when guidelines were just a draft on how to deal with the CSOs. We are the first city of any size under the long-term control plan. These plans are under the consent decree or agreement



*Tom Williams, Henderson Water Utility general manager*

that the regulators designed to comply with guidelines in order to limit CSO discharge or control it."

A consent decree comes from the state of Kentucky, in this case from the Frankfort Circuit Court via state regulators. An administrative order comes from the state by the EPA. The consent decree is by a judge and the administrative order by a bureaucrat. The EPA agreed that a city sufficiently controlled CSO discharge if it captured and treated 85 percent of the sewage that would otherwise overflow.

Henderson didn't actually sign the consent decree until 2007 when it entered into this arrangement with six other Kentucky cities. The plans were to be completed in 10 years. Since Henderson has reached 85





**ABOVE LEFT:** While installing new water lines in Henderson, workers also addressed sewers that already took stormwater, lining them with in situ form. (Photo provided)

**BELOW LEFT:** Getting an early start to the sewer separation process has saved Henderson, Ky., money as it was able to finance its bonds at a lucrative time. (Photo provided)



Some places are prohibitively expensive to get to. The Ohio River at Henderson is a mile wide with a lot of water flowing through, so the discharges that are left have a small impact on the river, according to Williams. The EPA realizes that it can't require complete and total separation. The majority of the work done was after they were in conversations in early 2000.

Since Henderson started its work before it was really forced to, the state of Kentucky realized that the city was making an effort and negotiated a deal that didn't "break the bank." It took a team effort to do the negotiating with the city for the bonding and the department to oversee the work, especially with Kentucky regulators — Division of Water — and the EPA looking over its shoulders.

"We spent about \$43 million," said Williams. "We knew we were starting this going into the early 2000s so we had raised rates in 2000 and built up a reserve of \$11 million when we started the projects. We issued bonds three times over the last six or seven years. We issued general obligation bonds through the city at very low rates after the 2008 financial crisis. At that point we could borrow money in 30-year bonds at 2 to 2.2 percent — which is very cheap money."

Williams added, "In order to clear a consent decree, some of the requirements have to be folded into our environmental permits. Your long-term control plan tells about projects and says how they will comply with law. There are things about the future (like the 85 percent limit on CSO) the state wants folded as obligations into an environmental permit (such as the National Pollution Discharge Elimination permit) for the state consent decree to be considered done. Tying up these ends with a consent decree ►

percent CSO, it has reached its goal a year ahead of schedule.

A general manager by the name of Bobby Gish had been the one to realize what was coming down the path and had helped Henderson get started before the town was really forced to. The town did a model that showed

the plan would treat 91 percent of the CSO. Williams said, "We will still have some projects that will take (place in) a small area of town during some other stormwater work and go in and separate that off to get us toward an ultimate goal of 100 percent separation. But that is difficult to get to."



## ***“The best thing to do is to get started as soon as possible.”***

hasn't been done before in Kentucky yet. We're talking to them to agree on how that project will work so what we end up with is something we know we can do. There's a lot of give and take in what we're going to do since we want to get it right. It will set a kind of template for other cities who'll go through the same process.”

Henderson's work entailed three really big projects in order to do the job right. The biggest, and hardest, part, according to Williams, was tearing up streets in an 18-block section of the downtown. This took about two years to accomplish. He said, “We would section off the streets block by block to install new water lines (because it was already torn up and they were 100 years old) and the sewer. There were already sewers there that took stormwater so we lined them with in situ form — fabric liner with a resin that's cured and turns into a pipe on the inside of the pipe and seals it off, extending its life. These then don't have to be dug up.

“Tearing up the downtown was difficult since we needed to maintain traffic to businesses after closing the streets. This process ended up with all new utilities downtown plus freshly paved streets. Also,

because the downtown had had CSS odor issues with sewer odors coming up through the street storm drains, finishing the project made the downtown much more pleasant, and there's been growth there recently, helping out from an economic development standpoint.”

Another small example of an improvement is that the downspouts now go straight through to the river without going through the sewer first.

Williams had several points of suggestion to towns dealing with CSS and CSO problems:

- “The best thing to do is to get started as soon as possible. Because we were proactive we were able to get it done in a timely manner with a minimum of disruption. Just bite the bullet and get started. You can also manage things more effectively if you are going at your own pace.”
- “Another piece of advice would be to have good communication with the residents and business owners involved. The downtown was the most visible and important part of the whole process. We had a liaison to deal with individual businesses. Communication was key to that project working.”

Henderson itself has been very lucky in its process in part because of its early start. The time in history when the city financed its bonds was also fortunate because it ended up getting cheaper money for the project. **M**



The advertisement features a large white Henderson liquid application truck with a large tank and multiple spray nozzles, driving on a snowy road. In the top left corner, the Henderson logo is displayed. Below it, a circular inset shows a close-up of the BrineXtreme Pro machine, with text describing its capabilities. The LAS - Liquid Application System is also highlighted with a description of its uses. The main headline is in large, bold, red letters. At the bottom, contact information and a note about NJPA contract availability are provided. The 'The Dependable Ones' logo is in the bottom right corner.

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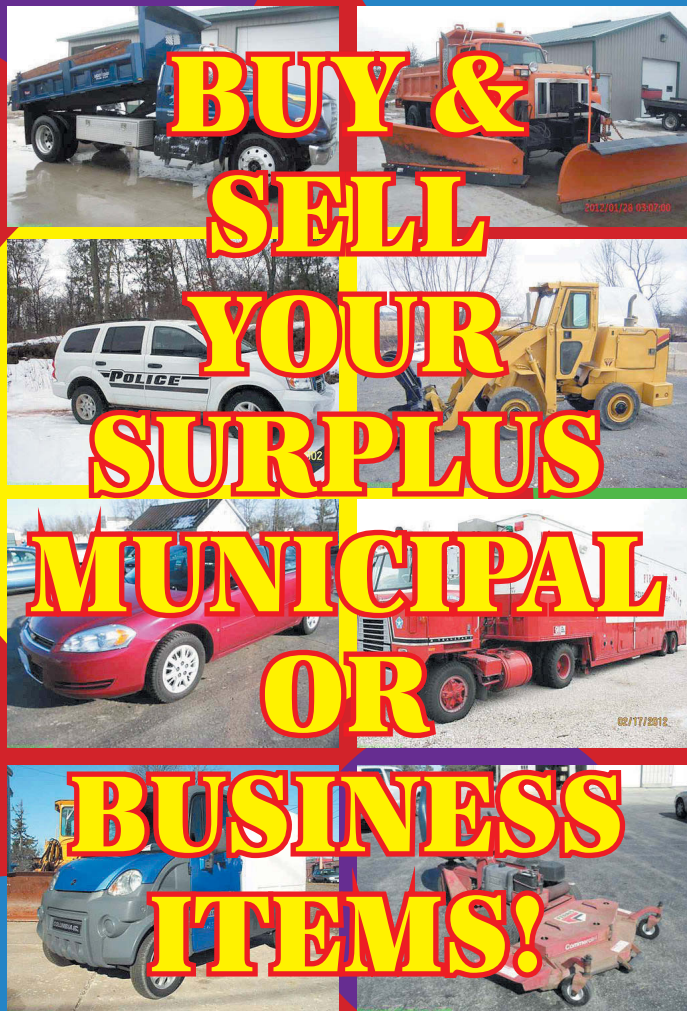


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# Enforce idling ordinances by making them known

Shutterstock photo

by ELISA WALKER | The Municipal

**Public safety has always been meant to keep citizens from dangerous situations. It's no question on whether or not it's legal and safe to park in a fire zone or to pull a U-turn when there are signs implicating its dangers. But what about laws that citizens don't know about?**

## **Avoid controversy, inform civilians**

In January 2017, a man in Roseville, Mich., was issued a \$128 fine for idling his vehicle in his driveway. In Michigan, there is a state law that says vehicles cannot stand idling at all, the car must be parked, locked and have no key in the ignition. The man took to social media to express his personal feelings over the matter, which caught the attention of national media who questioned the importance of idling laws.

The controversy of the fine created an uproar, and while these laws may be well known by municipalities, it's important to make it known to the citizens. While not knowing the law isn't a defense, municipalities can take steps to prevent another controversy by posting to social media

or running awareness on public access channels. Most idling happens during the winter, which means that the reminders would only be needed to be posted seasonally. At that point, the municipality has approached the topic as possible to bring awareness to the law.

Idling ordinances vary from place to place with some cities allowing as much as 10 minutes in 20 degree weather and others not allowing it at all. Roseville's Chief of Police James Berlin has recalled many dangerous accidents that have occurred because an idling vehicle was stolen. Even if a vehicle was left alone for a few minutes while the owner ran into their home to grab something, a few minutes is all a thief needs.

"People park their bikes and lock it to a rack, so why would you leave a thousands of dollars car unattended?" questioned Berlin. "Often times when the police are involved in high-speed chases for a stolen car, it ends critically. It can create chaos and tragedy."

While the controversy was relatively irritating for Roseville, Berlin added that he believes it educated more people and caused them to look into the idling laws that would impact themselves. Since it is a state law and Roseville can't do much to alter it, Michigan citizens will have to withstand the cold weather while their vehicles warm up.

Illinois also maintains a state law regulating idling ordinances, but there are many exemptions for civilians and truck drivers. Truck drivers have available resources thanks to the Illinois Truck Enforcement Association, an organization composed of police officers. ITEA teaches police officers how to do truck enforcement while also helping truckers avoid tickets and stay up to date on ever-changing regulations. They create clarity of the law so that if an issue arises, truck drivers will understand why



ITEA has an abundance of resources available to police officers and truck drivers while partnered the legal community to have an open dialogue about laws. By taking the initiative to properly understand the complexity of truck enforcement laws, the open and positive discussion with attorneys helps provide police officers with higher credibility. Visit <http://illinoistruck-cops.org/> for more information on ITEA.

Pictured, from left, are Marc Fisher, Brian Cluever, Jeff Moos, Chris Maxwell, Bryce Baker, Jim Harris and Rick Dickens. (Photo provided)



there is an issue and how they can best avoid it in the future.

"It's important for the government to get the information out there so the law is known," commented ITEA President Marc Fisher. "It's (idling) one of those laws that has changed. Every situation is different and should be dealt with accordingly. There should be a clear guidance and a solid reason for having an idling law. It's important to know who will be impacted, such as truck drivers. If the law is too strict, it could possibly steer business away from the municipality."

### Environmental impact

Idling laws are important not just for public safety, but for environmental awareness. Burning fuel and releasing emissions largely impacts the environment by contributing to air pollution and the overuse of natural resources. The use of cars has significantly contributed to global warming by sending greenhouse pollutants into the ozone.

While idling during traffic can't always be helped, taking the correct steps to avoid and control unnecessary idling can still help prevent environmental harm. The unnecessary idling would not only waste money, but fuel. Just by idling during stalled traffic, a person can waste upwards of 26 million tons of extra gas emissions a year.

At that point, car emissions wouldn't just impact the environment but human health as vehicles are the biggest contributors to smog and carbon monoxide. While the quality and technology of vehicles have come a long way and the air quality is much better than the 1970s due to the Clean Air Act everyone should be cognitive of the effects of idling, no matter how big or small.



While Roseville bounces back from controversy regarding the enforcement of a state idling regulation, the police department plans to spread awareness of idling ordinances when cold weather approaches again by taking to social media and public access channels. Due to the idling regulations being set by the state, the police department can't change the law, only make it known. (Photo provided)

### Modern times

Car starters have been observed, but it remains uncertain if using a car starter in some cities would be considered a violation of idling ordinances. Most ordinances address a car being locked, parked and with no key in the ignition while some specifically reference no running engine.

As with most laws, idling laws may change as city and town councils move to address certain technological advances. When new technology may impact the subject of a law, it's important that the law be revisited. When times change, laws should

change with them so they remain relevant. The law should remain as clear as possible and acted out by officers with good judgement.

Unlike 50 years ago, a car no longer needs to run for five minutes for the engine to warm up since those have also improved with time. There will still be a need for the windshield to defrost, but the car engine itself shouldn't need more than 30 seconds to warm up. Today's technology has improved so much so that a vehicle from the past few decades will actually become warmer while it's driven. **M**





# It's not the size of the city that counts

By JULIE YOUNG | The Municipal

**When you think of cities leading the way in transportation innovation, Seneca, S.C., is hardly the first place that comes to mind. However, nestled in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains, this Oconee County community of 8,207 became the envy of larger municipalities everywhere when it was the world's first to launch an all-electric bus fleet in February 2015.**

Admittedly, it is a small fleet with only six buses, but it's not the size of the fleet that counts, or the city behind it. What matters is that these electric, battery-powered buses are the future of mass transit and Seneca is on the cutting edge of it. By proving its success in a small community, Seneca is showing larger municipalities how to scale their program in order to meet individual needs.

"We are saving money, saving the environment and we have saved millions of pounds of carbon dioxide emissions," said

Al Babinicz, CEO and general manager of Clemson Area Transit, which operates the public transportation system in Seneca as well as four other cities, and four college campuses across three counties. "Seneca's electric fleet is a compelling success story and we are excited to share it with others."

## Understanding the mechanics

Babinicz said the city of Seneca made the decision to convert to an all-electric fleet in 2014 thanks in part to nearly \$6 million in grants from the U.S. Federal Transit

Administration, \$540,000 from the South Carolina Department of Transportation as well as over \$500,000 of the city's own resources. The city contracted its new vehicles through Proterra, a leader in the design and manufacturing of zero-emission electric buses that not only reduce operating and maintenance costs, but also eliminate dependency on fossil fuels and produce less noise while rolling along the city streets. Although each bus costs \$900,000, Babinicz said it is a cost that the community can expect to recoup in 12 years or less.

"In the last two-and-a-half years of passenger service, we have not purchased a single gallon of gas. Our electric buses have traveled over 263,445 miles, our maintenance costs are very low and we are getting approximately 17 miles to the gallon comparatively speaking," he said. "The previous vehicles averaged five."



**LEFT:** *Seneca, S.C., has drawn visitors from all over the world and U.S. with its all-electric, battery-powered fleet of six buses — the first in the world. The buses have also brought sizable savings when compared to diesel buses. Pictured is one of the buses at Clemson Area Transit. (Photo provided)*

If those numbers alone aren't enough to make electric well worth considering, Babinicz reported that in addition to tripling mileage, the costs to achieve that mileage is significantly less as well. Seneca was used to paying approximately \$.66 per mile in diesel fuel, but only \$.26 per mile in electricity. A diesel vehicle costs approximately \$1.53 per mile in maintenance while electric vehicles cost \$.55 per mile, nearly a dollar less.

"If you are operating at 250,000 miles per year, you can save so much in just maintenance alone," Babinicz said. "Not only that, but a diesel bus has about 3,700 moving parts while an electric bus only has 70. That saves a lot of time and energy as well."

### Reliability

They are also very reliable. In March 2016, Proterra announced that its national fleet surpassed 2 million miles of revenue service, including routes in Texas, California, Massachusetts, Kentucky, South Carolina and more. However, 11 months later, CAT hit another milestone when its bus that operates between Seneca and Clemson University reached a national milestone of 100,000 miles of uninterrupted service.

Babinicz said that the reason the buses can stay on the road is because they are on fast chargers that can have the bus up and running in six minutes and travel 30 miles before needing to recharge. As technology improves, he suspects buses will be able to go 150 to 300 miles per charge and will be able to run all day, but for now, they are aided with solar panels, which have been installed on the tops of the buses as well as on the CAT bus facility so that they can charge them with as much sunshine as possible.

"I don't know that we will be able to get off the grid completely, but we are hoping to get pretty close to the edge of the map," he said.

Matt Horton, chief commercial officer with Proterra, said he is very happy about the partnership with CAT, especially because it is geographically close to the manufacturing facility in Greenville, S.C., which allows it to use local engineering talent from area universities.

"With Seneca being the first to convert to an all-electric fleet, it remains an important customer for us, and it was great that we were able to help it with some of the startup challenges it had in converting to a new system."

Babinicz said that Seneca is very happy with CAT, its all-electric fleet and dozens of countries have visited to see how these buses function, including Canada, France, China and multiple cities right in the U.S.

"They are a huge benefit to small cities, and they are something that can easily be scaled for larger ones. If it works for six in Seneca, it will work for 600 in Chicago, and the savings will be directly proportionate. It is a bold decision to move forward on an electric fleet, but people are realizing that it is the future of the industry," he said. "We are literally changing the world." **M**



*The bus that operates between Seneca and Clemson University reached a national milestone of 100,000 miles of uninterrupted service. The electric buses can stay on the road longer because they are on fast chargers that can have the bus up and running in six minutes and traveling for 30 miles before the next recharge. (Photo provided)*



# Township hopes to benefit from a 'FIT' force

By **JERRY A. ANDREE**, manager, Cranberry Township, Pa.

**A novel fitness initiative, created to benefit local police in this suburban Pennsylvania township, overcame a series of obstacles that for years have impeded the spread of police fitness-oriented programs in municipalities throughout the country. It offers a model that other communities can follow as well.**

Police departments are valuable assets for any municipality. Often the largest single budget item, law enforcement requires trained personnel to perform under less than ideal conditions and under circumstances that are counterintuitive to those of us with desk jobs. Encouraging a fit lifestyle makes practical sense. But it's difficult to find common ground to promote fitness and wellness programs that address the unique set of physical demands that apply to local police officers whose work frequently involves transitioning from a sedentary task, seated at a desk, to a flat-out sprint in response to an emergency

call. Combine that with unconventional shifts, often unhealthy eating habits and stress from all the above, and your workforce is rowing upstream to a fit lifestyle, much less a lifestyle prepared for the unplanned rigors of police work.

Recognition of those risks is nothing new. But addressing them proactively has been elusive. Mandatory fitness standards for police are rarely achieved through collective bargaining. Beyond that, anti-discrimination laws, while well intended, make adopting

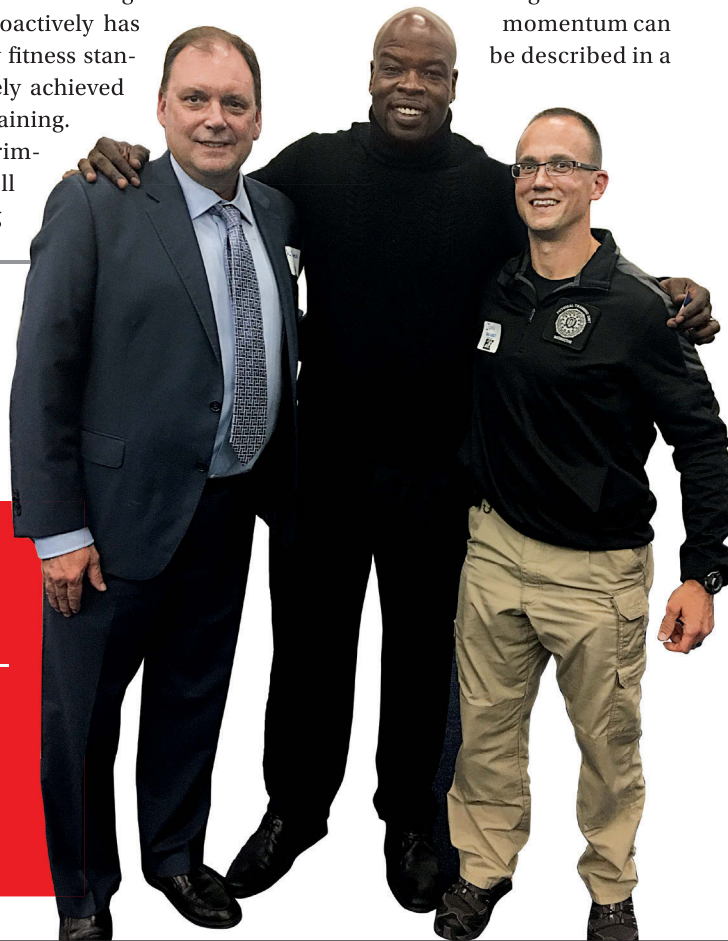
fitness programs that apply to men and women on a police force, regardless of their ages, largely unattainable.

## Creating a police fitness program

As a result, until last year, Cranberry Township — a municipality of 31,000 — was unable to move forward with a fitness program that was truly appropriate to its 28-member police department, despite the township's support for a healthier community and workforce. That was when the elements of a meaningful fitness/wellness program began coming

together. The momentum can be described in a

**RIGHT:** From left are Al Thomson, owner of Thomson Park; Darnell Dinkins, owner E.T.H.I.C. Training, the location where Cranberry Township police officers train; and John Van Vorst, health and fitness instructor within the Physical Training Unit at the FBI Academy at the Cranberry Township's Elite Police FIT kick-off event. (Photo provided)



## Successful elements behind Cranberry Township's police fitness program:

- Articulate the goal and secure municipal management support.
- Identify an inside champion — leadership from the top down.
- Make it completely voluntary, and don't ask for medical information.
- Provide meaningful incentives.
- Create individualized program goals, normed for gender and age.
- Welcome outside partners.



word: leadership. Chief of Police Kevin Meyer was committed to creating fitness opportunities for the officers, even as simple as purchasing new equipment for the township's employee fitness areas.

The union's leadership recognized, focused and collaborated with the chief in creating a program that is 100 percent voluntary, with diverse fitness and wellness opportunities for all officers interested in participating. And those efforts were championed by our governing body, the Cranberry Township Board of Supervisors, which lent its full support to the program, now known as Elite Police Fitness Incentive Training.

The FIT program adopts approved fitness norms and includes township collaboration with a nearby fitness facility — owned and operated by a retired NFL player — and a nationally owned, locally headquartered nutritional supplement company. The program emphasizes core fitness and wellness concepts, with incentives that matter to the officers — time off and recognition.

### Initial results

Elite Police FIT officially kicked off Dec. 8, 2016. Fully 90 percent of the police officers had signed onto the program by the time of its launch, and training to meet the first set of assessment metrics began almost immediately. On their own time, officers are coming into the gym at all hours to improve their strength, agility and endurance. Program participants also sign on to at least two options from a menu of wellness programs covering topics such as weight loss, smoking cessation and healthy snacking.

Already, the program has lifted morale, built camaraderie and enhanced the physical comfort of our officers. Over time, we look forward to having a more tactically effective police force with fewer sick days and lost-time injuries as well as lower insurance costs. Beyond that, as the program develops, we could even consider extending the program to the rest of the township's staff — employees who can realize the same sorts of benefits that our Elite Police FIT participants currently enjoy.

Jerry Andree has served as the township manager of Cranberry Township, Butler County, Pa., since 1991. Prior to his service



*Cranberry Township police officers with Super Bowl champion — with the New Orleans Saints — Darnell Dinkins and former Cleveland Browns and Philadelphia Eagle football player Anthony Griggs, who trained the officers at a 5 a.m. training session at E.T.H.I.C. Training. (Photo provided)*



*Cranberry Township police officers participate in a 5 a.m. training session at E.T.H.I.C. Training. (Photo provided)*

with Cranberry Township, he served as the township manager for Hampden Township, Cumberland County, Pa.; director of parks and recreation for Bensalem Township, Bucks County, Pa.; and director of adult education/recreation for the Derry Area School District in Westmoreland County, Pa.

Andree is a graduate of Penn State University, where he earned both his bachelor's degree and a master's in public administration. He also serves on a number of community and governmental boards and has been recognized by numerous local, state and national organizations for his efforts in municipal management. **M**



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To list your upcoming conference or seminar in The Municipal at no charge, call (800) 733-4111, ext. 2307, or email the information to [swright@the-papers.com](mailto:swright@the-papers.com).

## APRIL

### April 12–14 NAVIGATOR Conference

New Orleans, La.  
[navigator.emergencydispatch.org](http://navigator.emergencydispatch.org)

### April 23–25 Fire Department Training Network Live-Fire Training Camp

Indianapolis, Ind.  
[www.fdttraining.com](http://www.fdttraining.com)

### April 23–26 North American Snow Conference 2017

Iowa Events Center, Des Moines, Iowa  
[www.apwa.net/snow](http://www.apwa.net/snow)

### April 24–29 FDIC International 2017

Indiana Convention Center & Lucas Oil Stadium, Indianapolis, Ind.  
[www.fdic.com/index.html](http://www.fdic.com/index.html)

### April 25–28 NAFA 2017 Institute & Expo

Tampa Convention Center, Tampa, Fla.  
[www.nafainstitute.org](http://www.nafainstitute.org)

### April 26–28 Parking Association of Georgia Annual Conference & Trade Show

Lanier Islands Legacy Lodge, Buford, Ga.  
[parkingassociationofgeorgia.com](http://parkingassociationofgeorgia.com)

### April 27–29 “The Summit” Conference

The Coeur d’Alene Resort Hotel, Coeur d’Alene, Idaho  
[emsassociates.com](http://emsassociates.com)

### April 28–29 Minnesota Mayors Association 2017 Annual Conference

Madden’s on Gull Lake, Brainerd, Minn.  
[www.lmc.org](http://www.lmc.org)

## MAY

### May 1–4 ACT Expo 2017

Long Beach, Calif.  
[www.actexpo.com](http://www.actexpo.com)

### May 7–9 NYCOM Annual Meeting & Training School

Gideon Putnam Hotel, Saratoga, N.Y.

### May 8–11 WasteExpo

Ernest N. Morial Convention Center, New Orleans, La.  
[www.wasteexpo.com](http://www.wasteexpo.com)

### May 19–21 Lancaster County Fire Association Annual Fire Expo

Pennsylvania Farm Show & Expo Center, Harrisburg, Pa.  
[www.lcfa.com](http://www.lcfa.com)

### May 20–24 Fire-Rescue Med 2017

Green Valley Ranch, Henderson, Nev.  
[events.iafc.org](http://events.iafc.org)

### May 21–24 2017 International Parking Institute Conference & Expo

New Orleans, La.  
[www.parking.org/meetings-events/ipi-conference-expo/](http://www.parking.org/meetings-events/ipi-conference-expo/)

### May 22–25, 2017 AWEA Windpower 2017

Anaheim, Calif.  
[www.windpowerexpo.org](http://www.windpowerexpo.org)

## JUNE

### June 4–7 National Fire Protection Association Conference & Expo

Boston Convention & Exhibition Center, Boston, Mass.  
[www.nfpa.org](http://www.nfpa.org)

### June 4–7 Electric Utility Fleet Managers Conference

Williamsburg Lodge & Conference Center, Williamsburg, Va.  
[www.eufmc.com](http://www.eufmc.com)

### June 4–7 Public Risk Management Association 2017 Annual Conference

Phoenix, Ariz.  
[conference.primacentral.org](http://conference.primacentral.org)

### June 6–8 Intelligent Community Forum Summit 17

New York City, N.Y.  
[www.intelligentcommunity.org/summit\\_17](http://www.intelligentcommunity.org/summit_17)

### June 10–13 Tennessee Municipal League 2017 Annual Conference

Murfreesboro Convention Center, Murfreesboro, Tenn.  
[www.tml1.org](http://www.tml1.org)

### June 11–15 Community Transportation Expo

Detroit, Mich.  
[web1.ctaa.org](http://web1.ctaa.org)

### June 12–15 Government Fleet Expo & Conference (GFX)

Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center, San Antonio, Texas  
[www.governmentfleetexpo.com](http://www.governmentfleetexpo.com)

### June 14–17 New York State Association of Fire Chiefs 111th Annual Conference & FIRE 2017 Expo

Turning Stone Resort, Verona, N.Y.  
[www.nysfirechiefs.com](http://www.nysfirechiefs.com)

### June 15–18 International Hazardous Materials Response Teams Conference

Hilton Baltimore, Baltimore, Md.  
[www.iafc.org](http://www.iafc.org)

### June 19–22 Safety 2017 Professional Development Conference & Exposition

Colorado Convention Center, Denver, Colo.  
[safety.asse.org](http://safety.asse.org)

### June 20–23 Snow & Ice Management Association 20th Annual Snow & Ice Symposium

Montreal, Quebec, Canada  
[www.sima.org/show/symposium-home](http://www.sima.org/show/symposium-home)

### June 23–27 Georgia Municipal Association Annual Convention

Savannah, Ga.  
[www.gmanet.com](http://www.gmanet.com)

### June 27–28 Police Security Expo 2017

Atlantic City Convention Center, Atlantic City, N.J.  
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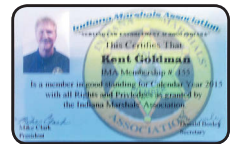
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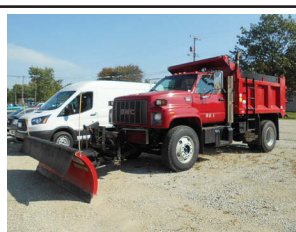
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## Upcoming Editorial Calendar



## ChemSpec USA launches new website

**ORRVILLE, OHIO** — ChemSpec USA LLC is excited to announce the launch of its new website. The company is encouraging its customers and guests to visit [www.chemspecpaint.com](http://www.chemspecpaint.com) today and look around. The site includes information about the company, its products and offers a user-friendly experience that is faster and easier to navigate.

ChemSpec manufactures a wide array of collision repair products for the automotive, fleet, OEM and industrial markets. As a manufacturer, it's important to make the information about your company and its products easily accessible for customers and website visitors, providing a much more customer-centric experience.

"We wanted to provide a better way for both our customers and website visitors to get to know our company, its associates and to familiarize themselves with all the products that we have to offer," said Tammy Anderson, marketing communication manager for ChemSpec USA. "The new website allows us to provide accurate information in a more, timely manner."

A few website features include:

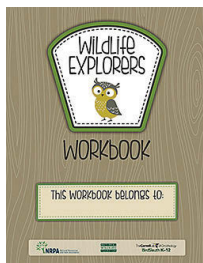
- Mobile Responsive
- Convenient forms to request product information as well as product demos or assistance from various departments.
- ChemSpec USA news and events, including trade show, product features and announcements.
- Employment portal accessing worldwide job opportunities within ChemSpec USA LLC. and parent company Axalta Coating Systems LLC.
- Product Selector, which allows customers and visitors to easily filter and locate products even if they are not familiar with the companies' branded products.



## NRPA awards grant funding for new nature discovery program

**ASHBURN, VA.** — In today's increasingly digital society, the need to educate children on the importance of connecting with nature is apparent, especially in underserved, low-income areas where there aren't a lot of opportunities for kids to explore the natural world around them. That's why the National Recreation and Park Association has selected these four park and recreation agencies to receive funding for its new Wildlife Explorer's program:

- Omaha Parks and Recreation, Omaha, Neb.
- City of Tukwila Parks and Recreation, Tukwila, Wash.



- Mooresville Parks and Recreation Department, Mooresville, N.C.
- Augusta Recreation and Parks, Augusta, Ga.

Wildlife Explorers, which aims to reach 200,000 children over the next three years, encourages hands-on learning outdoors and inspires children ages 5–10 to explore nature in their local parks. The program leverages existing out-of-school programming happening at local park and recreation centers and was designed to be implemented in any outdoor space and by anyone regardless of their experience facilitating environmental or conservation programming.

To learn more about Wildlife Explorers, visit [www.nrpa.org/wildlifeexplorers](http://www.nrpa.org/wildlifeexplorers).

## New guide outlines steps purchasers can take to stop buying products with bee-harmful pesticides

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** — Friends of the Earth and Responsible Purchasing Network released a new report, "Buyers Bee-ware: Municipal Purchasers' Guide to Protecting Pollinators," which outlines how government agencies and institutions can change their purchasing policies and practices to protect honeybees and other pollinators. Actions include:

- Adopting a pollinator protection policy that includes a commitment to avoiding the purchase of pesticides and plants that contain neonics and other systemic pesticides.
- Creating a list of approved or prohibited pesticides that restrict pesticides that can negatively impact honeybees and other pollinators.
- Negotiating commodity contracts and service agreements that prevent suppliers from offering products containing neonics or other pesticides that are harmful to pollinators.
- Creating pollinator-friendly habitat by planting wildflowers along rights-of-way, installing green/vegetative roofs and transitioning to an organic land management system.
- Buying certified-organic agricultural products such as produce, coffee and cotton textiles.

More than 100 businesses, cities, universities, state and countries worldwide have passed policies to restrict pesticides contributing to pollinator decline.



For information, visit Responsible Purchasing Network's website at [www.responsiblepurchasing.org](http://www.responsiblepurchasing.org) or Friends of the Earth's website at [www.FoE.org](http://www.FoE.org). 

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## 2008 IH 4300

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**Thanks again, Brent Imel, Imel Motor Sales, Inc.**

# Simple programs can make a difference



**Jon Cohn** |  
Guest columnist  
*Fire Chief  
Greenfield  
Fire-Rescue,  
Greenfield, Wis.*

**A**S THE UNITED STATES CONTINUES to age combined with a health care system that is difficult to navigate and reliant on emergency rooms as primary care providers, agencies that deliver medical services continue to see a steady rise in calls for service and transports to hospitals. Fire/EMS departments in many communities are responsible for operating ambulances, and the challenges are mounting.

Fire agencies that provide medical services are predominantly just that, medical providers. Medical calls account for more than 75 percent of the call activity in most communities. Fires have been reduced with decades of emphasis on fire prevention, education and outreach. Agencies must use similar prevention/intervention tactics to address the growing need for medical services and ambulance transports. Programs centered around community paramedics, community EMT's or cumulatively Community Emergency Medical Services—or CEMS—are attempting to do just that.

Traditionally, ambulances would respond to medical calls and be faced with two options: treat and transport to an emergency room or evaluate, treat, have the patient sign a release and stay home. CEMS is opening other lanes of options for medical responders. One such program is collaborating with hospice agencies. Located in Wisconsin, Greenfield Fire-Rescue saw hospice as an opportunity within CEMS.

Hospice programs and their services are relatively unknown unless someone has had a personal family experience. Under the direction of Greenfield's medical directors and the



*Chief Jon Cohn of Greenfield Fire-Rescue, center, stands with the department's first four community paramedics at their graduation at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. (Photo provided)*

hospice medical director, several opportunities to enhance understanding have occurred.

- First, all members have been trained in a "Hospice 101" course. Greenfield paramedics and EMTs learned about hospice, the dynamics of caregiving and patient/family decisions.
- Second, patients within Greenfield's service area have been noted in our dispatch system so medical responders have access to initial contact information for hospice staff and family. This not only makes responders more situationally aware of the patient's hospice status, but gives responders information to connect to hospice staff quickly and directly.

In an environment where medical responders are usually rushing to get patients to the hospital, the understanding of hospice has increased medical responders' awareness to slow down and contact hospice staff to confer on next steps instead of whisking hospice patients to the emergency room. Greenfield has seen several actual instances where our members have slowed down, contact with hospice was made and a hospice representative responded. Whereas, we typically would

have transported despite the hospice plan of the patient and family.

The last program is an agreement between hospice and our city. If the hospice evaluates one of their patients and they are coded as high potential to revoking hospice, we will dispatch one of our five trained community paramedics to the home. Other programs have shown that these introductory visits and knowing that the hospice and local medical responders are working together lowers hospice revocation. In return, the city receives a capitated payment per month per patient for these services.

While there are many unknowns surrounding community EMS programs, providers must address the growing demands on medical services and ambulances. Simple programs can make a difference, even in patient and family satisfaction. Hospice programs are just one example. Providers could consider a fall prevention program, home assessments for falls, home safety checks and collaborating with other agencies to direct patients to more appropriate care providers and services than an emergency room.

The current system is unsustainable for medical providers and the medical system, so we must attempt new initiatives to alleviate the





Greenfield firefighters/paramedics out doing Community Risk Reduction by installing smoke detectors with partner organization, Safe Kids. (Photo provided)

strain and even improve satisfaction for all. We need to stop being reactive and responding and move to a model of medical prevention.

Jon Cohn currently serves as the chief of Greenfield Fire-Rescue in Milwaukee County, Wis., and emergency management director for Greenfield. Cohn will

also become president of the Wisconsin Fire Chiefs' Association in June 2017.

He has worked in a couple of fire departments throughout his career, including as a charter member of a consolidated department. Cohn continues to hold a paramedic license, although not a regular practitioner.



Children get to check out an ambulance during a meet-and-greet event featuring a touring paramedic unit. (Photo provided)

He believes the challenges facing public sector services are immense but also exciting and an opportunity to change, reinvent and modernize these systems. Despite the focus on fire suppression and emergency handling, the primary mission remains prevention; however, we must broaden our focus and prepare our organizations for a more holistic approach: Community Risk Reduction. **M**

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**M****TOP  
10**

# Best and worst states for careless and reckless driving behaviors

Utilizing the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's Fatality Analysis Reporting System, Auto Insurance Center composed its second study of America's fatal crash causes, breaking the data down by state. These reports revealed states with the most unsafe and care-

less driving; drunk driving; and speeding and racing. Additionally, Auto Insurance Center broke down various causes of fatal car crashes — such as road rage, improper lane changes, failure to keep in the proper lane and police pursuit — and fatal car crashes caused by different types of weather.

When it came to careless and reckless driving behavior, Auto Insurance Center's website notes, "Montana had the greatest number of fatalities due to this type of driving—108 fatalities per 100,000 residents. A common behavior cited in crash deaths in Montana was a lack of seatbelt use, in addition to speeding and alcohol consumption."

Here is the complete list of the worst states for careless and reckless driving behavior, based on car crash fatalities over an 11-year period. We've also included the states with the least.

**#1**Virginia  
1.42Montana  
108.12**#2**New York  
2.01Arkansas  
86.44**#3**Indiana  
2.14Louisiana  
65.21**#4**California  
2.84New Mexico  
51.62**#5**Alabama  
4.03North Carolina  
50.46**#6**Georgia  
4.16Florida  
43.17**#7**Iowa  
4.39Kansas  
40.99**#8**South Dakota  
4.66New Jersey  
39.72**#9**Connecticut  
5.11Colorado  
37.79**#10**Oregon  
5.40Tennessee  
29.07

Source: [www.autoinsurancecenter.com/fatal-crash-causes.htm](http://www.autoinsurancecenter.com/fatal-crash-causes.htm)

Photos: Shutterstock.com



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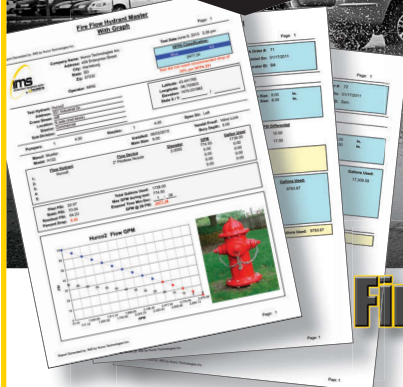
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