FROM THE DIRECTOR
FIRE MARKS
DEPARTMENT IN FOCUS
VIEW FROM THE HILL
ACADEMICS
HOMELAND SECURITY HUMAN TRAFFICKING
THE BIG ONE JUST HAPPENED... NOW WHAT?
LESSON LEARNED: FIRE IN A HOARDER’S HOUSE
THE DISASTER PRESS CONFERENCE
FIREFIGHTER RECERTIFICATION PROGRAM
WILDLAND PREDICTIONS OR NOT
BACK AT THE RANCH: TRACTOR EXTRICATION
ATTACK FROM THE UNBURNED SIDE?

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BACK AT THE RANCH: TRACTOR EXTRICATION
ATTACK FROM THE UNBURNED SIDE?

INDEX
13
14
22
24
44
DEPARTMENTS
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July - September 2012 | 1
FROM THE DIRECTOR

The book has a chapter that discusses work ethics. It points out that over the past 20 years many young people entering the work force aren’t willing to “pay their dues” (even though after one year they think they have); instead they seek instant success without putting in the required time and effort. As part of the authors’ research, they interviewed many of our nation’s most successful CEO’s, wanting to know the secrets to their success. As you can imagine, most spoke about hard work, long hours, commitment to the company, and sacrifice. One of the more successful CEO’s said something that caught my attention. He said that the secret to his success was that he never stopped trying to be qualified to lead his organization (Page 44). As Rodger and I continued to discuss this topic and how we, in the business of education and training, deal with these issues Rodger stated:

“The essential nature of a certification, hiring, or promotional testing process involves the inclusion-exclusion dichotomy. That means that the pass is the very minimum standard of knowledge, skill, and ability to achieve the new status. What this means is that all who pass have been included while the others are excluded due to not meeting the minimum. In fact, it is the nature of the testing methodologies that makes it only possible to test for one’s overcoming the failure threshold. Therefore, the newly certified, hired, or promoted represents one who is merely meeting the minimum standard but is never truly a ceiling.”

Why do you think physicians and attorney’s refer to their businesses as a “practice”? It’s because they will never truly master their profession, and neither will we. But that does not mean we shouldn’t try.

This conversation with Rodger seemed timely, considering that the Academy is trying to promote the Fire Officer Designation Program. However, the CEO’s statement mentioned above takes the issue of minimum effort and minimum testing one step further. Although the Fire Officer Designation Program will provide a “road map” to promotion from Company Officer through Chief of Department, it was never intended to be the end of learning. When considering the qualifications and competency of Fire Officers, the spectrum is broad. On one end there are those officers who take education, training, and personal development seriously. They go to school, they attend training (sometimes even off-duty and uncompensated...go figure), and they are constantly drilling with their crews and/or shifts. They, like the CEO, are constantly trying to improve themselves and those around them, knowing they will never master their profession. They want to make sure that they are giving “their” firefighters the best chance for survival during emergencies, while also providing a great role model along the way.

At the other end are officers who consider themselves qualified the minute they are promoted, regardless of their education and training or lack thereof. These are the officers whom you find worrying more about their off-duty job than progressing in their primary one (that would be the fire department). Have you ever wondered why those officers who dismiss education and training are typically those who don’t have it? These are the folks whom you want to distance yourself from because if they don’t poison your spirit of progression, they just might get you hurt...or worse! Most fire officers fall somewhere in the middle of the spectrum, hopefully more towards the progressive end than the other.

Maybe the time has come when fire academies and other training organizations stop creating and/or revising courses that target the “average” and begin targeting...wait for it...the EXCEPTIONAL! Maybe we provide written certification tests that truly challenge the students. Maybe we offer comprehensive manipulative tests that assess a student’s competency in all areas of study and not just a random sampling. Can you imagine going to your family practice physician with shoulder pain and have him/her tell you, “You know, I never was tested on shoulders, but I can do feet!”...not good. Now I know, depending on where you sit within the system, you are worrying about the impact on students, testers, instructors, and/or budget. I’m not suggesting there won’t be a price to pay, including an impact on people and budgets, but consider the possibilities: more educated and highly trained fire officers who never stop trying to be qualified to lead their organizations!

None of us should be satisfied with achieving mediocrity. In your business (firefighting), mediocrity is not what the public expects or deserves. In our business (training and certification), mediocrity is not what you should expect or deserve. In the end it’s the public’s obligation to demand an exceptional level of service, and your obligation to demand courses and certification tests that truly challenge your and your teammates’ knowledge, skills, and abilities to insure the public’s expectations are met.

Remembering what Rodger said, I think we should spend less time in the basement and more time trying to find the ceiling, don’t you?

Stay safe!

Hugh
House Bill 33, Fireworks Amendments, sponsored by Representative Dunnigan, passed the legislature with a couple modifications. The bill shortens the discharge days from 30 days back to 14 days, and establishes a curfew on those 14 days from 11 AM to 11 PM each day. The legislature amended the original bill to also allow that on the two holidays, July 4th and 24th, the discharge time will be extended until midnight.

House Bill 45, State Fire Code Amendments, also sponsored by Representative Dunnigan, redeline the mixture of antifreeze that will be used in automatic fire sprinkler systems to try and prevent ignition upon fire sprinkler activation. This bill will also extend the Fire Marshal’s authority to restrict smoking, fireworks, lighters, matches, etc. in the wildland-urban interface areas. The legislature made two amendments to the bill; omitting refilling antifreeze systems and the term “other designated areas” from the wildland-urban interface allowances.

Senate Bill 57, Issuance of Blasting Permits, sponsored by Senator Okerlund, with regard to the issuance of blasting permits, the bill easily passed the legislature. This will allow my office to assist the volunteer fire agencies in the issuance of blasting permits, if they do not have the necessary forms or expertise to do so. It would also allow my office to issue a blasting permit for blasters who have a project that will be moving through multi-jurisdictional boundaries. Our office will issue the blasting permit, and then the blaster will have to present it to the affected community. There will be no fee assessed by the State Fire Marshal’s office to complete these blasting permits. Blasters do not like to blast without a permit because if they do, they are illegally blasting and set them up for considerable liability.

Senate Bill 140, Liquefied Petroleum Gas Amendments, sponsored by Senator Bramble, amended the LP Gas Act so that the end user was exempted from a license. This amendment has made it much easier for the Utah LP Gas Safety Act to be enforced by our office and come into compliance with the desires of the LP Gas Board.

The legislature appropriated a one-time funding of $650,000, to add to the training props at the Fire Academy. Currently we have one set of props that has struggled to get around the state. We now will have at least two sets, and there are rumors that we might have several FAST (Fire Attack Skills Training) training props to be placed across the state. The legislature also appropriated a $350,000 on going funding to be given to the Fire Academy, so the Academy can teach for a full 12 months each year and not have to stop teaching at 11 months due to lack of funding. Training request’s from the fire departments, for classes from the Fire Academy have continued to increase year for the last several years. We can only stretch a dollar so far until it can’t be done anymore.

As I mentioned in the last Straight Tip article, we need to change the definition of “line-of-duty” in the fire retirement so it fully applies to all in the fire service. I tried to put the necessary changes in House Bill 256, Retirement Modifications, sponsored by Representative Ipson, but it created quite a concern at the Utah Retirement Systems Office. Representative Ipson, along with the support of Representative Menlove, were in favor of changing the “line-of-duty” definition and to update it. The retirement office felt that there might be a cost to enact a change to the issuance of blasting permits, if they do not have the necessary forms or expertise to do so. It would also allow my office to issue a blasting permit for blasters who have a project that will be moving through multi-jurisdictional boundaries. Our office will issue the blasting permit, and then the blaster will have to present it to the affected community. There will be no fee assessed by the State Fire Marshal’s office to complete these blasting permits. Blasters do not like to blast without a permit because if they do, they are illegally blasting and set them up for considerable liability.

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State Fire

Message from Utah Chiefs Association
by Mike Mathieu, President, Utah State Fire Chiefs Association

Greetings from the Utah State Fire Chiefs Association. With the relatively dry winter conditions we have experienced across the state, my hope is that the wildland fire season and fireworks-related fires will not overwhelm Utah’s resources this summer. A true test regarding the changes to firework legislation may occur this year, as last year the fuel moisture content was still quite high in the first of July. I encourage all fire departments to track fireworks-related incidents and specifically, if possible, by three categories: illegal fireworks, pre-2011 legal fireworks (safe and sane fountains), and new post-2011 legal fireworks (aerials). One challenge that we heard during the 2012 legislative session was that the new aerial fireworks generated roughly $8 million in new sales, while also bringing in approximately $500,000 of new sales tax revenue. Cost/benefit discussions without accurate measurable data regarding public safety versus public revenues are generally some of the most challenging, when trying to inform and persuade elected officials toward the firefights’ position; speculative and emotionally based information does not achieve results in any measurable change.

At the January winter meeting, many asked for the PowerPoint discussion by Dr. Jericko, an IHC Work Med physician, regarding cardiovascular effects upon firefighters. He had planned to make the information available on the Utah State Fire Chiefs Association website and Work Med’s website, but upon review of the information that was assembled from many sources and copyright legal issues, this will not be possible. However, Dr. Jericko is going to meet with the executive board of the State Chiefs, to scope out some recommendations for fire departments to use as a template for department matters. Stay tuned, I will continue working with Dr. Jericko to get something regarding cardiovascular effects upon firefighters out through the Utah State Fire Chiefs Association.

Recently, Chief Rampton and I attended the Western Fire Chiefs forum and received some good information for our group. Here are some of the highlights:

Renaming the Fire Rescue GPO (Group Purchasing Organization) to the “Public Safety GPO” is being considered, so that EMS and law enforcement services would feel welcome to use this purchasing avenue. The GPO was developed by the Western Fire Chiefs Association to help drive costs down and have contracts for government purchasing already in place. Apparatus tenders will soon be added to the GPO list and, following this, a mid-range pumper will be specified. The Western would like us to consider allowing automatic membership to the GPO just by becoming members of our State Association.

Fire Service Bookstore

Improvements to the website’s navigation will be made. In addition, we are encouraged to contact Heidi Chimes, the GPO manager, to assist her in getting other vendors on the list.

NFPA

Ray Bixal and Crosby Grindle stated that one can now go online to register with NFPA and be allowed to view only NFPA documents without paying any fees. However, the option to cut/paste or print language is not available without paying fees. Also, NFPA is still looking for people to serve on their committees. They currently have over 100 vacancies, and are now covering up to 80% of the traveling costs (airfare and lodging) for committee meetings. To be eligible one needs to be a full-time public employee or serve in enforcement capacity within a volunteer service.

ISO

A new rating code will be released within the next 60 days. Butch Cobb is the new director of ISO and has an extensive background in the fire service. The new FSRS (Fire Service Rating Schedule) will now take into consideration many new items that were never before considered. For example: items such as awards from SAFER and Fire Act grant correlation will occur, such as value from water tankers/tenders; APCO standards and NFPA 1221 will be used for the communications standard; analysis for deployment will reference NFPA 1710-2010; fire officer certification will come into play; 100% credit will be given for automatic aid; operational SOPs, SOGs, and ICS will be given credit; and following NFPA 1521, for safety officers, will also be included. Training on the new schedule will be available free to the fire service from ISO. The review will become more of a community classification program, rather than just a fire department rating. Instead of reviewing the ISO rating system every 25-30 years, ISO’s new intention will be every 3-5 years.

2010 Diesel Emissions Standard

The new DEF (diesel emissions fluid) and particulate filter that regenerates at a high heat to self-clean are causing problems, especially for urban settings where units do not have a chance to run for 30-45 minutes at a high RPM level. Long haul truckers do not have the problem of having a regeneration cycle on the freeway to clean their filters. Some fire departments are pulling their engines out onto apparatus aprons and running them for 30-45 minutes at 1600-2000 RPMs with no interruption for the high heat to clean these filters. When the computer senses that cleaning is needed and is not done, the engine shuts down. There is usually no prediction of when this cycle comes on. It was reported that some busy urban engine companies are facing this cleaning process 2-3 times per week. The mechanism intended to decrease the carbon footprint is not working effectively in fire service vehicles. We are wasting fuel and running these engines at high RPMs to clean filters. The Western is hopeful to get involved with the IAFC to find out if the fire service can receive some kind of exemption to this requirement similar to the military. We are also seeing vehicle manufacturers return to top mount exhaust systems, to help manage this issue. Stay tuned on all these issues, as I am sure more information will be coming.

As always, be smart, professional, and stay safe!
Human trafficking is a crime and a human rights abuse involving commercial sexual exploitation of a child or the use of force, coercion, or fraud to compel someone into labor, servitude, or commercial sexual exploitation. Thousands of men, women, and children are trafficked in the United States every year. Many of these victims are lured from their homes with false promises of well-paying jobs; instead, they are forced into prostitution, involuntary domestic servitude, farm or factory labor, or other types of forced labor.

Utah is not exempt from this modern-day slavery. In 2010 a number of Thai workers complained that the contractor who was employing them at large farms in central Utah, was not paying the workers even though the farms had paid the contractor. An investigation showed that the contractor, Global Horizons, had allegedly used false and misleading information to lure workers into labor contracts that amounted to indentured servitude. Federal criminal charges against Global Horizons and its executives followed with even more accusations. The Thai workers are likely just the tip of an ugly iceberg involving workers in a variety of legal and illegal Utah businesses.

A press release from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) states that approximately one-third of human trafficking victims are treated by medical providers. As a part of the DHS “Blue Campaign,” Secretary Napolitano hopes that first responders will be alert for signs of trafficking. They may be the only people who observe the signs and are in a position to do something about it. Similar to observing patients for signs of abuse, fire, and emergency medical services (EMS) responders should be aware of the following signs of human trafficking:

### Trafficking Indicators
- Is the victim in possession of identification and travel documents? If not, who has control of the documents?
- Was the victim coached on what to say to law enforcement and immigration officials?
- Was the victim recruited for one purpose and forced to engage in some other job?
- Is the victim’s salary being garnished to pay off a smuggling fee? (Paying off a smuggling fee alone is not considered trafficking.)
- Was the victim forced to perform sexual acts?
- Does the victim have freedom of movement?
- Has the victim or family been threatened with harm if the victim attempts to escape?
- Has the victim been threatened with deportation or law enforcement action?
- Has the victim been harmed or deprived of food, water, sleep, medical care, or other life necessities?
- Can the victim freely contact friends or family?
- Is the victim a juvenile engaged in commercial sex?
- Is the victim allowed to socialize or attend religious services?

When observing patients or incidents with these signs of human trafficking, responders should notify local law enforcement or call (866) 347-2423 anytime. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has a variety of human trafficking resources, including specific resources for the fire and EMS community. To request these materials, visit the DHS Web site at www.dhs.gov/humantrafficking.
EDITORIAL - THE BIG ONE JUST HAPPENED… NOW WHAT?

by Jon Stone, Firefighter/Paramedic, South Jordan Fire Department

On April 17, 2012 at 10:15 a.m., the Wasatch fault line released the energy it had been holding for the past 350 years. A 7.0 magnitude earthquake shook many communities located along the Wasatch Front. However, this particular earthquake was unique in that it was planned and we knew when it was coming. The scenario described above is what we now know as the Utah Shakeout; more than 940,000 residents, businesses, schools, emergency responders, and government agencies participated. Residents reviewed skills such as drop, cover, and hold on, and gained knowledge of the need for survival kits and other emergency essentials.

According to the Utah Shakeout website (2012), 80% of Utah’s population lives and/or works in the affected region; 10,000 buildings will collapse; 285,000 buildings will be damaged; 2,300 fatalities will occur; 30,000 injuries will be sustained; over 160 fires will happen, with some turning into conflagrations; tens of thousands of aftershocks will occur in the following months; 350,000 individuals will find themselves homeless. With this information regarding the destruction and chaos that will surround the valley, one must ask oneself, “As an individual, what will my role be; and how can I prepare for these roles and responsibilities?”

With these statistics it is not hard to see that finding enough resources, equipment, staff, and other necessities to do our jobs will be difficult, if not impossible to achieve. Therefore, in order to accomplish the most good, we must prioritize our objectives and strategies. This may mean that the evaluation of schools and other high occupancies should take priority over other 911 calls. Our resources will, without question, be taxed, but it is up to us to ensure that the limited resources we do have will be used most advantageously.

As emergency responders, our roles can vary greatly; from fire suppression to law enforcement, from medical care to search & rescue, and hazardous materials operations. It is essential that one be completely competent in the various roles one assumes. Not only should an individual be able to confidently perform the role he/she has on a day-to-day basis, he/she should also understand the roles and responsibilities of others around him/her. Large disasters are very taxing on the limited staffing that exists in departments; therefore you may find yourself being moved from an ambulance to an engineer position, from the back seat of the truck to an officer position, or from a combat position to filling a role in the Emergency Operations Center (EOC). It is for this reason that all personnel should understand the chain of command so that he/she will be better prepared for the staffing changes that are almost sure to take place.

The time to prepare for these changes in day-to-day operations and staffing is now. After the shaking has begun it is too late to try and find the EOC or to draft response plans to high hazard occupancies. It is also too late to learn how to pump a hoseline or fill the role of a group supervisor. Each of us should sit down today with our crews, officers, and administration, to determine what our response plan will be. Our role as emergency responders is much different from the civilian role of drop, cover, and hold on. It is our job to keep the statistics to a minimum through prevention, to guard our friends and neighbors, and protect their property.

Resources:

Launch of ESMG 3600

Utah Valley University’s Departments of Emergency Services and Criminal Justice are launching a new course this fall semester: ESMG 3600 Emergency Services Psychology. Emergency responders are involved in the most critical and immediate issues of human existence. From some of humanity’s greatest triumphs to our worst tragedies, firefighters, EMTs, paramedics, and police officers are actively engaged in work that has important impacts. Therefore, this course will discuss personality theory; social psychology; family dynamics; cognitive models of crisis decision making; organizational culture; adult development in the career context; the roles of anxiety, stress, and trauma; and the available treatment strategies for those who might need support. Most importantly, we are going to consider the “normal” responses to “abnormal situations” [read: horror] that all emergency personnel experience, but do not have in-depth discussions about. Moreover, we will examine posttraumatic growth in comparison to posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and what factors might make us stronger from living through intense and disturbing calls, and what might indicate a responder is vulnerable to PTSD.

This course is designed and taught by UVU’s emergency services psychologist, Dr. Rodger Broomsé, who is a 24-year veteran of police, fire, and emergency medical service, and also holds a PhD in clinical psychology. His research has focused on the lived-experiences of emergency responders and welcomes emergency services, criminal justice, and behavioral science majors of all levels. The class will meet on Wednesday nights in the Department of Emergency Services located at 3131 Mike Jense Parkway, Provo, UT 84601. If you have questions for Dr. Broomsé, email contact is the best: broome- ro@uvu.edu or try his office phone at: 1-801-863-7739 or toll free 1-888-548-7816. Everyone working as or with emergency responders would benefit from participating in this course.

EMLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Anna Crutchfield

Anna Crutchfield began her employment with Utah Valley University at the Utah Fire & Rescue Academy in January 2012, as a part-time Administrative Assistant in the certification office. Her main responsibilities will be to receive and process exam and certification requests, distribute test results, and to provide support for the Certification Program Manager and other certification office staff. Anna recently transitioned to the Academy from the insurance industry, where she worked for various insurance companies over the last ten years. Most recently, she worked for Liberty Mutual in Orem. Anna earned her General Associate degree at Brigham Young University-Idaho, with an emphasis on English. She lives in Springville with her husband, Matt, and their nine-month-old daughter, Gracie.
The Salt Lake Valley Fire Training Alliance, with assistance from the Utah Fire and Rescue Academy, just concluded six consecutive days of a valley-wide Truck Company Operations Course at the UFA Fire Training Center. Each platoon attended for two days, focusing on the strategies, tactics, and philosophy of truck functions, emphasizing ventilation and forcible entry/egress. Rave reviews were received from all who attended. Special thanks goes to the Salt Lake Valley Fire Training Alliance Officers, SLCFD Fire Training, and especially Lead Instructor Chris Bluth.

Two disaster scholars joined faculty and students for a conference, held at Utah Valley University Thursday and Friday, April 5 and 6, to discuss emergency preparedness and disaster response. The conference titled “2012: Anticipating and Responding to Future Disasters,” brought two keynote speakers to UVU. Both Dr. Mark Yang and Dr. David McEntire are scholars in the fields of emergency and disaster relief.

Dr. Yang, a licensed clinical psychologist with expertise in grief and bereavement counseling and cross-cultural psychology, spoke about “Spiritual and Existential Themes in Disaster Relief Work.” He said responders often feel survivors’ guilt or a sense of helplessness when their comrades die or suffer injuries, while they are left unharmed. In these circumstances, the best thing fellow responders can do is listen without judgment. “Run with them, until they are tired and ready to talk,” he said.

Dr. McEntire, a professor of emergency administration and planning in the Department of Public Administration at the University of North Texas, spoke about myths and realities related to disasters. He said we can mitigate disasters by dealing appropriately with some of the social conditions that affect natural and man-made emergencies such as population growth, poverty, urbanization, land use, and poor construction practices. Other factors are culture denial, ineffective government policies, and lack of preparedness.

The conference was sponsored by Utah Valley University’s Institute of Emergency Services and Homeland Security. Other speakers included faculty members in the Criminal Justice and Emergency Services Departments at UVU including Rodger Broomé, Andy Byrnes, Ken Crook, Matt Duffin, John Fisher, Jeff Maxfield, and Gary Noll.
Ron Russell passed away on April 16, 2012, at the age of 67. Russell had retired from the Salt Lake County Fire Department/Unified Fire Authority after 37 years of service.

46-year-old Todd Neal Tompkins and 42-year-old Ronnie Edwin Chambless, both from Boise, Idaho, were killed on June 3rd, 2012 as they bravely battled the White Rock wildfire on the Nevada-Utah border. Tompkins and Chambless were flying a P2V Lockheed Martin tanker plane, dropping retardant on the fire, when they crashed in the Hamblin Valley area in Iron County, Utah. We are so grateful for the service and dedication of Tompkins and Chambless and we send our deepest condolences to the loved ones of these heroes.

Awards:
Captain Bob Kladianos of Unified Fire Authority received the award for State Paramedic of the Year.

Appointments:
The Fire Service Standards and Training Council has appointed these nine members to the newly formed Commission on Fire Officer Designation:
Chief Kevin Ward, Layton FD; Chief Niel Coker, Sunset FD; Fire Marshal Scott Adams, Park City FD; Deputy Fire Marshal Bryan Thatcher, USFMO; Rodger Broome’, Utah Valley University; Chief Paul Bedont, Price FD; Deputy Chief Paul Sullivan, Weber FD; President Jack Tidrow, PFFU; Greg Chamberlain, Odgen FD (retired). This Commission will oversee the new Utah Fire Officer Professional Designation Program.

Retirements:
Chad Tucker retired on May 15, 2012. Tucker’s career as a firefighter with Ogden City began in June 1991. In August 1993 he was assigned to be a Paramedic, and then promoted to Captain in August 1997; which was followed by a promotion to Medical Captain in August 2005. Tucker’s career concluded with a promotion to Deputy Fire Chief this past February.

Deaths:
Craig Mart Anderson passed away on May 18, 2012. Anderson was a member of the Garland Fire Department for 43 years, and served as Fire Chief for several years.

Monroe Moth Iversen passed away at the age of 95, on May 9, 2012. Iverson became a member of the Salt Lake City Fire Department in the early 1940’s and retired in 1979. He was also a lifetime member of the Utah State Firemen’s Association.

Chad Tucker

Craig Mart Anderson

Michael Barfuss

Ronnie Edwin Chambless

Todd Neal Tompkins

Ideas for many of the tools and appliances used in the fire service came from firefighters themselves, in an attempt to make firefighting better, faster, and/or safer. It was Monroe Iverson who had the innovative idea to create a turret gun for water. His vision was to have the ability to immediately attack fires from an engine, without the use of bulky hoseline, by way of a booster tank. This also added additional protection for crew and equipment who/that might be exposed to fire.

The first model ever made cost Iverson $45.00 in parts and was made up of two 2” Chickson joints and one 2” pipe. Iverson later met with engineers at the California based, Chickson plant to educate these engineers on how to assemble his turret gun.

Like most firefighters who invent industry worthy apparatus, he shared this idea willingly and never got rich from the fruits of his innovation. The reward goes to firefighters everywhere who use his idea every time they charge their deck gun. Iverson’s legacy will continue to save property, provide the best way for getting a lot of water onto a fire – very quickly, and keep firefighters safer.

LEAVING A LEGACY – The Turret Gun

by Andrea Hovers and Steve Lutz

14 | UFRA Straight Tip

July - September 2012 | 15
July - September 2012

LESSON LEARNED: THE IMPLICATIONS OF FIGHTING FIRE IN A HOARDER’S HOUSE

by John Hauze, Battalion Chief, South Davis Metro Fire Agency

On March 17, 2012 South Davis Metro Fire crews responded to a structure fire in central Bountiful just after 2300 hours. The homeowner noticed smoke in the area as she walked up the street from a bus stop nearby. When she reached her house she saw smoke coming from the chimney. She found this odd, as she had not burned in the fireplace for years. Approaching the door she could see the windows were dark, stained, and had condensation running down them. She did not open the door and called 911 from her cell phone.

The house was a typical Bountiful brick rambler with a basement. The incident commander reported smoke coming out of the chimney and light smoke coming from the “bravo” side of the house. Although the house appeared to be typical from the outside, inside was anything but typical. We had responded to the residence of a hoarder. The fire load and lack of housekeeping in a hoarder’s house causes unique problems for firefighting operations that are normally not encountered. This fire load was out of the ordinary as the fire load extended all the way from the floor to the ceiling. Potentially, the fire was that much hotter and darker; as you are now in what would normally be the upper thermal layer. Potentially, the small space between the ceiling and layer of “stuff,” coupled with an extreme fire load fueling the fire, may shorten the time before flashover conditions.

The fire attack crew was ordered through the front door to enter and (more important) to exit the basement, crews went downstairs repeatedly to foam and overhaul the basement until they were confident the fire was out. With the help of an engine company from Farmington and Salt Lake City, the fire was extinguished and everyone went home safely.

We took many important lessons home with us from this fire, as we should on every fire. Here are some of the main considerations that I feel are worth sharing:

LESSONS LEARNED:

1. Have your RIT team in place and ready to go as early as possible from the exterior while a four-man crew was assigned to clear the stairs of all the piled debris. Once it was safe to enter and (more important) to exit the basement, crews went downstairs repeatedly to foam and overhaul the basement until they were confident the fire was out. With the help of an engine company from Farmington and Salt Lake City, the fire was extinguished and everyone went home safely.

2. Know your “mayday” procedures and practice these. If you are lost, trapped, separated, entangled, injured, low, or out of air; don’t waste time wondering; what you should do is call a “mayday,” even if you think self-rescue might be possible. Remember to give your Location, Unit, Name, Air status, and Resources, which will be needed for your rescue (LUNAR).

3. Make personal safety a top priority. When having equipment problems, especially with PPE, exit the building. If you are injured, inhale smoke, or feel sick, exit the building. No building is worth turning a slight injury or illness into something potentially life threatening. You and your crew deserve everyone inside to be functioning at 100%.

4. I mentioned earlier, a hoarder’s house comes with a unique set of problems - these house fires are labor intensive. Call for extra manpower early. Crews will use more energy entering and exiting the structure than normal, and overhaul work will be extensive. These fires are similar to landfill fires in that they are hard to extinguish.

5. When crawling around in a house fire approximately four feet above the floor, you find conditions to be much hotter and darker; as you are now in what would normally be the upper thermal layer. Potentially, the small space between the ceiling and layer of “stuff,” coupled with an extreme fire load fueling the fire, may shorten the time before flashover conditions.

6. Manage your air! It is going to take longer to get out of this type of house. Everything you do in a hoarder’s house is going to take longer. If the low air alarm has gone off, you are breathing reserve air, reserved for emergencies only, not for you to use while trying to make your way out of the building.

7. Know the exits and make them safe. In this house a four-man crew was assigned to clear the stairs, making the entry and exit of the basement safe. Make exiting the building safely a priority. Allocate time and resources, as needed, so crews can exit easily in an emergency.

In this case, a fall and smoke inhalation could have easily turned into a firefighter down and mayday call. I will conclude this article with a quote from Jim Crawford regarding RIT, “Remember, no one is coming for us, but us! We have to be good at this!” “Everyone goes home” doesn’t just happen; it is up to each of us to make sure everyone goes home. Be safe!
Most public officials (and emergency service personnel) fear and tremble when they hear the words “press confer- ence.” Yet, the press conference is one of the best tools available for reaching the public in an emergency situation.

Officials in public safety and emergency management are responsible for ensuring that the public receives accurate and timely information during an emer- gency. Armed with good information, people are better able to make good decisions; and by doing so contribute to the overall response goal of saving lives and protecting property. One of the primary ways for emergency management officials to provide this vital information to the public is through the media.

The most frequently televised press conference is the pres- idential press conference, which Reagan is press spokesman Larry Speakes compared to a “Roman Circus.” No wonder ordinary executives, including those at the city or county level, find the press conference intimidating. However, with training this doesn’t need to be the case.

**Good examples of press conferences**

Part of the reason for concern about press conferences is a growing trend towards adversarial questioning in news interviews. Journalists formulate their questions in an increasingly challenging or ‘hostile’ manner, which was rarely seen decades ago.

At the local level, where emergencies occur and disasters happen, the press is generally committed to serving their audience in the best way possible. This means provid- ing the public with information they need, to make good decisions and remain safe. This is a goal the media has in common with public officials and emergency personnel.

One of the best examples of press conferences is the “Giu- liani model.” New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani has received much praise for press conferences that have become ideal common with public officials and emergency personnel.

Effective response to disasters and good media relations begins long before the emergency situation; PIOs are taught in FEMA’s basic public information course. At the time of crisis, during the disaster press conference, it is too late to develop a working relationship with the local media. The relationship begins at the planning stage and during training and exercises. If the media is not able to be part of training, they can at least be brought in, to report on the preparation process. Dealing with disasters not only includes response, but also preparation, planning, mitiga- tion, and recovery.

Prepared for the press conference

Lori Robertson interviewed media coaches and media training professionals to obtain their advice, for executives who face the media in an interview or press conference. Here is some of their advice:

- Preparation helps people overcome the fear of being interviewed.
- Learn to speak clearly and concisely in public.
- Don’t hesitate to refuse to talk to reporters, they will persist until they get the story. It is better you tell your story, rather than someone else.
- Understand the mind-set of reporters and their needs. For example, be aware of their time requirements.
- Get to know the reporters’ publications. Find out reporters’ needs before giving a press conference or doing an interview.
- Don’t be passive or reactive. “Your first priority is to get across your message.”
- Determine what you want to say and put it into two or three main points.
- The first responders may not be able to reach all members of the public, the media’s outreach will provide information to protect them and their property.

Folkerts advised: “Remember that reporters have deadlines to meet and stonewalling them or refusing to answer questions may result in undesired perceptions of your [organization’s] actions. Even if it is not justified, silence can also imply guilt.”

**Anticipating questions**

One key to effective press conferences is to anticipate questions the press will ask. Journalism students are taught to ask questions, following the 5W1H rule. The five W’s are: who, where, when, what, and why. The one H is how.

When anticipating questions, these six words should be used as the basis of preparing for the press conference. Covello, Wojtecki, and Peters of the Centre for Risk Management (http://www.centre4riskman.com/resources.html) add, “Experience shows that journalists are likely to ask six types of questions in a crisis (who, what, where, when, why, how) that relate to three broad topics: (1) What happened? (2) What caused it to happen? (3) What does it mean?” They suggest emergency managers use these ques- tions as a start, to develop simple questions and answers or full message maps. They also list 77 specific questions that may apply to any type of crisis.

One key to effective press conferences is to anticipate questions the press will ask. Journalism students are taught to ask questions, following the 5W1H rule. The five W’s are: who, where, when, what, and why. The one H is how.

Here is a sampling of questions they suggest for a terrorist-generated smallpox outbreak.

- How contagious is smallpox?
- Can everyone be vaccinated?
- What are the signs and symptoms of smallpox?
- Who’s in charge?
- Why is smallpox a good weapon?
- What’s being done to prepare?
- What kind of medical care will be available? Is it protect against?

Continued on next page
Other approaches, instead of holding a press conference
Not all situations call for a press conference. For example, if the goal is to get across a point of view or introduce a public official, instead of a press briefing, one-on-one interviews should be considered. If the message is technical, again, a one-on-one interview with the right technical resource, talking to the right editor backed up with an adequate background document, would be far more effective than a press conference.

Another approach, described by Alicia Shepard, which is becoming more commonplace, is the telephone press conference. Reporters phone in using an 800 number, listen to a statement by the official, and then have an opportunity to ask questions. Reporters are put in a queue, in the order they sign up, to ask questions. They get an opportunity to ask one question and a follow-up. They listen to other reporters’ questions and the officials’ answers. The one disadvantage for reporters is that they can’t interrupt to ask a question; press conference organizers have greater control of the media room.

Conclusion
A key to effective community response in an emergency is good public information. The press is a primary way of reaching the public in a disaster. The press conference can be a valuable tool in keeping the media current and providing the public up-to-date information in a catastrophe. Anticipating media questions is important in meeting informational needs of the media and the public. While most communities prepare extensively in the event of a disaster, Folkerts asks, “How many of them are prepared to face the media when tragedy strikes? Who will face the press and what will they say? Or, perhaps more importantly, how will they say it?”

Sources:

About the Author:
Dr. John Fisher, a media analyst and public relations specialist, teaches in the Emergency Management bachelor’s program at Utah Valley University. He researches in the area of mass media impact on disaster public policy.

“How many of them are prepared to face the media when tragedy strikes? Who will face the press and what will they say? Or, perhaps more importantly, how will they say it?”
The Beaver County Fire District #2 was originally made up of two fire departments, Milford City and Minersville Town. In 1976, it was realized that by creating a special service district the area could share resources and collect tax money, which in turn, provided better service to the entire area.

The response area for our district is about 2,200 square miles, protecting 3,500 residents, with an additional 1,000 square miles of mutual aid. We respond to the Nevada line west of Milford for vehicle accidents, which is 75 miles. Beaver County Fire District #2 averages 85 runs per year, in all aspects of fire fighting and emergency response. We primarily provide structure protection, rescue services, wildland fire suppression, and hazardous materials response. Beaver County Fire District #2 is also part of the Five County Regional All Hazards Response Team.

Today, in addition to the Milford City and Minersville stations, Beaver County Fire District #2 has an additional satellite station located west of Minersville. The satellite station houses brush and structure equipment to provide quicker and better coverage for C4 Farms and wildland. Our apparatus consists of two rescue trucks, three engines, two quick response brush trucks, three water tenders, one hazmat response unit (operations level), and one mobile self-contained air system. The crew currently consists of 24 members, 23 of whom are volunteers. We have members certified in Wildland I and II, Hazmat Awareness and some Operations level, Instructor 1, and Confined Space Rescue. Beaver County Fire District #2 has an ISO rating of five within Milford City and Minersville Town. Outside the cities, in the unincorporated area, the ISO is an 8 with plans to improve the rating.

We had a few fairly significant events, such as the Milford Flat Fire in 2007 that burned almost 500,000 acres of wildland. This was a huge fire for our area to experience and work. It was a great learning experience to work along side private, state, federal, and other partners in managing the fire. ICS presented a great learning curve, especially during implementation. We also have some unique industries in the area; two geothermal plants, 300 wind turbine towers, the Union Pacific Rail Road, electrical PVC pipe plant, 66 hog producing farms, and a large open pit mine, to mention a few.

Change has been welcome at Beaver County Fire District #2. We have enjoyed receiving more updated and modern equipment that has aided us in providing services through a safer and more economical fashion. We were also thrilled to experience the acquisition of a new fire station, while also learning what it takes to get one built.

Beaver County Fire District #2 conducts at least three firework shows during each year, one in both Milford and Minersville for the 4th of July and another, in August, for the county fair. We also actively provide fire safety training to local schools, businesses, churches, and others as needed. The volunteer firefighters teach fire extinguisher use, and County CERT classes. Our members continue their training regularly by attending courses at least twice a month, while also attending other classes/trainings throughout the year.
Just in case you haven’t noticed, it’s an election year. For the next five months, we’ll hear and read candidates’ positions on many issues. We’ll hear them repeat party line scripts and buzzword filled platitudes. Most of us will tune out after awhile. We’ll eventually make up our minds or just take the easy route and punch a straight party ticket, or get into the voting booth and say to ourselves, “Huh, who are these people?” Our Democracy deserves better. We need to inform ourselves on the candidates and choose the best, regardless of party affiliation or the size of their campaign war chest.

What we are not likely to hear during a normal campaign event or commercial is what attitudes the candidates have towards fire service issues. Those special district for fire and those issues and making them aware of the Utah Fire Cancers are great ways to interact in a non-partisan way that emphasizes solving problems and working for the greater good of the community.

For information about how your state legislators have supported fire issues, go to: http://www.firecouncil.com and click on “Board Members”. The person listed from your region or organization should have a pretty good perspective on them.

A pressing issue that is emerging for the next session is the set of problems that have emerged in the Firefighter Disability Program (see “From the State Fire Marshal” April, 2012 Straight Tip, Pg. 5). The fundamental problem is that there are many ways to be injured and disabled during Fire Department activities including heart attacks, strokes, accidents, etc. Unfortunately, most of them are not covered by the existing statutory definition of line-of-duty. Accidents or medical events during training are not likely to be covered. Even if you are covered, the benefit may not provide enough to support you as a disabled person.

On a positive note, the 2012 legislative session was the best of recent years. The fire service had a highly successful year due to strong lines of communications. Lines of communications were strong and legislators and firefighters listened, learned, and involved themselves in the process of Democracy. That’s the way it’s supposed to work.

For a list of fire service related bills and their status go to: http://www.firecouncil.com and click on “2012 Bills Tracked”.

On that other Capitol Hill (Washington), the President’s deficit cutting budget slashes funding for a number of fire programs including the Volunteer Fire Assistance (VFA) and the Rural Fire Assistance programs (RFA), which financially support small-town fire departments, and the Ready Reserve program that supports firefighter training in wildland firefighting through Utah Forestry Fire & State Lands. The RFA has not been funded for the last two years; costing Utah fire departments about $750,000. In Utah, Ready Reserve pays tuition for NWCG courses and all the Wildland Engine Workshops. The National Volunteer Fire Council, the Congressional Fire Services Institute, and the International Association of Fire Chiefs among other organizations wrote Congress requesting federal funding for these programs.

Letting our senators and representatives in Congress know what a difference these programs have made in our communities is important. Many of them are convinced that AFG is the only grant needed, but we know better. The RFA and VFA, which are administered along with UFRA Funds as the Utah Fire Department Assistance Grants (UFDAG), serve many more small departments that have the least local resources. Ready Reserve has greatly increased fire department response capability and helped keep countless initial attack fires from becoming big problems for the Feds. Since 85% of Utah is owned by the Feds, the $1,000,000 or so these programs generally bring to the state, is a pretty cheap price for that initial attack capability.

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On a positive note, the 2012 legislative session was good for the fire service. The Joint Council did an excellent job watching your interests and most of the bills that were supported, passed, and most that were opposed, died. Others like HB 106 (see “View From the Hill” April, 2012 Straight Tip, Pg. 24) disappeared in the Rules Committee. The Fire Academy and Fire Marshal’s Office got budget boosts. Most importantly, the Fire Service was well respected by the legislators.
Very few firefighter oaths do not contain words similar to “I solemnly swear that I will maintain the highest standards and integrity expected of the profession of firefighter.” Luckily only a few of us forget this promise. Unfortunately, it only takes a teaspoon of mud to dirty a gallon of water. Likewise the untoward actions of a few firefighters can taint our entire profession.

The following are stories that have played out (more or less) in fire departments around the nation. The accounts are intended to spark thought and discussion regarding the fact that what one does, on and off duty, reflects on one’s department and profession. No action/inaction will be suggested here.

Ask yourself how varying levels of intervention may affect you, your department, and profession as a whole.

1. You are out having a meal with fellow firefighters as a whole. Your comrade is obviously beyond inebriated and the individual’s intoxication is at a level that has become embarrassing. To add fuel to the growing fire, he pulls his jacket off to reveal a department issued t-shirt, and then proceeds to jump into the driver seat of his/her car and says, “Let’s go!”

2. You have a veritable Bruce Lee on your department. His/her loud commendation of these individuals seems to have no bounds. The negative discourse extends to off the job moments as well.

At what point do you become a factor in the unfolding events? Can a firefighter with no formal rank or position have a positive impact on any of these scenarios? The answer, of course, is a resounding “yes.” Often times, something as simple as a positive comment about a member or the department as a whole leads and influences one’s interests. Regardless of rank or formal rank or position have a positive impact on any of these scenarios?

3. A recruit firefighter has gone out of his/her way to cook the crew a fabulous dinner. A senior firefighter on the crew begins to chide the cook, proclaiming the meal to be sub par and the meal he/she prepares next shift better improve. Insert your own story of harassment of a new hire.

4. Your supervisor is openly critical of several members in your department. His/her loud condemnation of these individuals seems to have no bounds. The negative discourse extends to off the job moments as well.

At what point do you become a factor in the unfolding events? Can a firefighter with no formal rank or position have a positive impact on any of these scenarios? The answer, of course, is a resounding “yes.” Often times, something as simple as a positive comment about a member or the department as a whole leads and directly conversation. Napoleon Bonaparte said, “There are two levers for moving men - interest and fear.” Positively influencing fellow firefighter behavior on and off the job can be as simple as describing how his/her behavior influences one’s interests. Regardless of rank we all positively or negatively shape our department’s inevitably evolving culture.

Firefighters are envied for being in a profession centered around loyalty and comradery, sometimes more similar to a family than a work place. Taking the path of least resistance is not an option in our personal families, nor should it be in our firefighter families.

Across
2. The heart and blood vessels make up the circulatory _______.
5. IDLH is defined as immediate _______ to life and health atmospheres.
6. The Act of coming into contact with a hazardous material
10. The _______ form the sides of a windshield.
11. Moving occupants from a dangerous area to a _______ area on the same floor is called a horizontal evacuation.
12. The hose _______ is the interior jacket of the hose.
13. Cardiogenic _______ results from an inadequacy in the functioning of the heart.
15. _______ have a boiling point lower than -150 degrees F.
16. A cross- _______ alarm system requires activation on two separate devices.
17. Exterior _______ are often load-bearing.
20. A _______ section of a ladder is raised or lowered from the base section.
21. A _______ detector is activated through the emission of radiant energy.
22. Document listing each car on a train.

Down
1. Inexpensive, lightweight doors may be hollow _______.
2. Defensive objectives are actions that do not actually hazardous material leakage.
3. The heimlich maneuver consists of a series of manual _______ to the abdomen in attempt to clear an airway obstruction.
4. Indirect application of water uses a solid object to break a stream, creating more surface area in order to absorb more _______.
5. A _______ channel uses two frequencies per channel.
6. Film forming Fluoroprotein.
7. C posts are located behind the rear _______.
8. Cyllinders are portable contains a solid object to break a stream, creating more surface area in order to absorb more _______.
9. CPR circulates blood and air into and out of the _______ peace officers.
10. Some fire police are also _______ peace officers.
11. Fire and _______ safety education specialists deal with the public on fire safety programs.
12. cylinders are portable containers for compressed _______.
13. Cardiogenic _______ results from an inadequacy in the functioning of the heart.
14. The _______ hook can be used for various forcible entry application because of its unique head design.
15. Inexpensive, lightweight doors may be hollow _______.
16. A cross- _______ alarm system requires activation on two separate devices.
17. Exterior _______ are often load-bearing.
18. Defensive objectives are actions that do not actually hazardous material leakage.
19. CPR circulates blood and air into and out of the _______ peace officers.
20. A _______ section of a ladder is raised or lowered from the base section.
21. A _______ detector is activated through the emission of radiant energy.
22. Document listing each car on a train.
Did you know UFRA offers an online recertification program designed to help affiliated and non-affiliated firefighters receive the necessary training hours for maintaining their state certification levels before they expire?

I have received many phone calls, over the years, from program administrators, firefighters, and students asking questions such as:

- “My certification levels are due to expire; how can I prevent that from happening?”

  I’m going through a mission where would get to my certification levels if they expire while I’m gone?”

- “I have not been able to find employment with a fire department and my certification levels are due to expire; how can I get training hours necessary to recertify?”

Before UFRA’s recertification program was created, I couldn’t help anyone recertify without affiliation and training hours.

I started brainstorming ways to best serve these individuals. With approval from our Director, I put together a committee of subject-matter-experts (SME). Our job was to develop a program that would provide firefighters the necessary tools to recertify before their state certifications expired. Our goal was to keep them active, highly skilled, and competitive for today’s workforce. The SME committee identified “critical” skills necessary for firefighters to remain competent on the Firefighter I/II, HazMat Awareness/Operations, and Wildland I/II certification levels.

After identifying the critical skills, we focused on program guidelines, policy and procedures, training records, written quizzes, relevant elective courses, and training modules. Then we worked directly with Utah Valley University’s Department of Information Systems & Technology to help us develop a high-quality program that allows participants to complete part of the program online.

When the recertification program was completed, tested, and ready to launch, I presented it to the Utah Fire Service Certification Council and the Utah Fire Standards and Training Council for approval. Both Councils enthusiastically approved the program; thus, the Firefighter Recertification Program was born.

To enroll in the recertification program, participants must do the following:

1) Receive approval from Jolene Nuttall, Accreditation Coordinator at 801-863-7710 or toll free at 888-548-7816.

   a. Once approved, participants will receive an invitation (via email) to participate in the program as a student. The email will direct participants (students) to click on the “visit the course page here” link. This link will take you to the Recertification Program home page. At this point, participants are encouraged to look through the program thoroughly to ensure it meets their expectations and needs. When in the program, participants will be able to review course modules (chapter lessons), print training records, take quizzes, and view grades, among other things. If you are affiliated with a Utah department, I highly recommend you get pre-approval from your Training Officer before you apply to the program or receive training.

2) Complete training. To receive training, participants must go through an accredited program. Currently there are four accredited training locations in the state - West Valley Fire Academy (WVFA), Davis Applied Technology Center (DATC), Bridgerland Applied Technology Center (BATEC), and the Utah Fire and Rescue Academy (UFRA). Participants can choose one or a combination of accredited training programs to complete a training skill(s) or take a quiz. The great thing is that participants can see what skill(s) are being offered where and when by viewing a master calendar located on the UFRA website.

   a. To schedule a training session, the participant must contact an approved Program Coordinator at the location he/she wishes to train. Each location may offer different training skills and may have limited space, so prior approval is required.

   b. Firefighter I/II and HazMat Awareness/Operations recertification training requirements are a little different from those associated with the regular recertification process in that each participant must successfully complete manipulative skills totaling 60 hours. These skills are identified on each training record. Each training skill will cost (at a maximum) $80.00 per student with the exception of the Live Fire Evolution and Extrication skills; they will cost (at a maximum) $120.00 per student. All fees will be paid to the program providing the training. Participants must also complete eight hours of elective courses and successfully complete twenty (20) on-line chapter quizzes, totaling 40 hours of IFSTA text work for each chapter. This must total 108 recertification hours and must be accomplished within a three-year window.

   c. Wildland I/II recertification training requirements consist of a four to eight hour annual refresher course, a written exam, and the manipulative shelter deployment skill. Participants must also complete a physical fitness test (pack test or mile and a half run).

3) Submit forms. Applicants must submit a “Request for Recertification” form to the Accreditation Administrator. If you are a non-affiliate student, your request must be signed by the original WFR program coordinator. Completed training records must accompany the recertification request. Recertification fees are $5.00 per applicant.

Now that you know a little bit more about the firefighter recertification program and what it has to offer, I would like to introduce the first participant who completed the program, Jason Terry. Jason is a non-affiliate student from the West Valley Fire Academy. I asked Jason to write a summary about his experience and what this program meant to him.

“I decided to get going on my recertification for Fire I & II and Haz Mat in July 2011, as I realized that my certifications would expire in January 2012. I spoke with Captain Lee Monson of West Valley Fire Department about going into the fire academy again as there was not (as of yet) a recertification program. He said that UFRA was looking into possibly creating a recertification program in January 2012. I didn’t want to risk missing opportunities to test while in between certification, so I went ahead and signed up for the Academy. In September, Capt. Monson told me that the recertification program was ready to go. I spoke with Jolene Nuttall about the program and received an email with all the info and link to UVU CANVAS. I looked at all the requirements and started from there. The program was great! I also had 20 online quizzes to take, each one being based on a chapter from 5th edition of Essentials of Fire Fighting. As part of the recertification program, I enjoyed the opportunity to have my hands on fire equipment that I hadn’t touched in a while. I’m grateful that I will be able to have more time to continue pursuing my goal and dream to become a fire fighter. It has definitely been discouraging, at times, having tried just about every fire department in the Wasatch Front for four years without successfully being hired. As I have talked to several people about my aspirations, I am now looking at every opportunity and possibility to get hired on anywhere. I am also broadening my search into possibly wildland fire and EMS inspector. I am currently taking Advanced EMT at Crestview in North Salt Lake to further my EMS skills and training to assist me in my pursuit to get hired on with a fire department.”

As always, our mission at UFRA is to find technologies, methods, and programs that support training for the firefighters of Utah. I believe the new recertification program meets that mission.

If you have any questions regarding the Recertification Program, please call me at 888-548-7816 or email me at jnuttall@uvu.edu. Or, for more detailed information about the program, please visit: http://www.uvu.edu/ufratraining/index.html.
I’ve been working in wildfire management for over 25 years, so I’ve seen many fire seasons come and go. I suppose it is because of my tenure that some people tend to think I’m some sort of expert in predicting how active the upcoming fire season will be. I have a difficult time understanding this because my predictions usually fall short of being accurate. Yet, every year at about this time, people ask me what kind of season I think it will be.

One would think that over time, a person in my position would have this figured out; that he/she would be in tune with specific indicators in nature that offer clues into what sort of fire season is to come. Unfortunately, I have not found a crystal ball that allows me to look into the future for fire seasons. If I had such a device - trust me - I would be on a tropical beach somewhere, with an umbrella drink in one hand, while raking in exorbitant fees for my services with the other.

Don’t get me wrong; there are a few pretty obvious indicators that even I can clue into, which give an indication of fire season severity. No one has ever said I don’t have a grip on the obvious. But I also know it is far too complicated for a single person to predict. There are many variables that influence whether or not fires start and spread, and how they are controlled in a given time, and with what degree of difficulty they are extinguished.

In my experience, I have been fooled more than once when trying to predict fire seasons. I have seen conditions line up that had me convinced the most catastrophic fire season on record would be produced, and then summer storms failed to produce dry lightning. Weather patterns change, fuels dry out sooner or later than expected, and no person can predict human caused ignitions. For this and other reasons, I generally refrain from putting my name on a season prediction. But this season is different; this season I was cornered by multiple parties wanting not only a season prediction, but one in writing. I found my self lacking a legitimate excuse. No escape route, no safety zone. So here we go.

The best thing to do in a case like this is to consult the experts. Fortunately, there is a group of people (way smarter than me) whose job it is to analyze all the weather and fuels data, compare it to historical data, run the models, interpret the outcomes, and put it into terms that someone like me can understand. The Eastern Great Basin Predictive Services group is made up of meteorologists, fuels experts, and fire behavior analysts. They produce a number of products, available to the public, throughout the fire season that give an insight into what’s to come regionally and nationally. Among these products are daily, weekly, and seasonal predictions. These products can be viewed at http://gacc.nifc.gov/egbc/outlooks.php. If what I write here turns out to be accurate, all the credit is theirs. If it turns out not so, credible mark it down as my usual SWAG.

Let’s take a look at some of the data, starting with precipitation. It doesn’t take a meteorologist to realize that this was not the best year for the greatest snow on earth. My snow blower never left the garage all winter. The April 15th Salt Lake Tribune reported that this winter was on record for low snowpack. Snow at higher elevations is already gone or going fast. Many of the state’s high mountain roads that are normally impassable until June are already open. SNOTEL figures published by the NRCS put most of the state below 50% of normal snow-pack for this time of year.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is reporting that the state has been warmer and drier than normal over much of the state. So, what does all this mean? How will these conditions influence fire season severity? First, without the usual snow pack, fine fuels that are normally laid down and compacted by the winter snow will remain standing and more available to fire. Second, heavier dead and down fuels will start the season drier than normal and begin the seasonal drying process sooner than normal. Third, less moisture will be available for live fuels making them available to burn sooner in the season.

So far these conditions are playing out as expected. The mild winter has already resulted in some unusual fire conditions. This year we have had wildfire fires in the winter months when there is normally snow on the ground; not unheard of, but quite a rare event for Utah. The fuels crews had good access to most areas for disposal of slash throughout the winter but had to take extra precautions burning because of the lack of snow in many areas. We are seeing these conditions
influence the spring fire season as well. We typically experience a number of pre-green up fires every spring. However, many areas of the state still have last year’s crop of fine fuels standing. Because of a lack of snowpack to mat down the fine fuels, those fires have been more prevalent, more active, and more difficult to control.

Now a major concern is the effect that such a lack of snowpack will have at higher elevations. The drying of heavier fuels at these elevations is influenced by the amount of snowpack and how long it lingers on site each spring. The lack of snowpack will likely produce lower fuel moistures, at higher elevations, than we have seen in several years. These conditions could result in an increase of the number and size of fires at higher elevations.

Long-range weather predictions forecast that the state will remain warmer and drier through May with occasional spring storms. These spring storms can have a significant impact on fire season. If the timing is right and the storms bring sufficient moisture, the result will be an increase in fine fuel loading in the lower elevations. Once cured out, these fuels (primarily Cheat Grass) drive most of the large fire growth in the

lower elevation fires in the state. The combination of a heavy loading of fine fuels in the lower elevations and cured fuels at higher elevations would be the “perfect storm” of fire conditions in the state.

Another indicator is to consider all that’s happening around us. Parts of Nevada are predicting above normal conditions to persist; Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado, and Wyoming all have portions of the states predicting an increasing amount of above normal conditions. Northwest Colorado has recently issued a fuels and fire behavior advisory warning of conditions that are producing intense fire behavior for this time of year, http://www.predictiveservices.nifc.gov/fuels_fire-danger/fuels_fire-danger.html; in addition we have already seen large fire activity in Colorado and Nevada this year.

If you are a betting person, the odds are in favor of an active season. Utah has had several slower than normal fire seasons in a row. This year weather and fuels data seem to indicate a busier than usual fire season. It’s looking like there is going to be some payback for those slower seasons. Predictive Services are hinting that there is a good chance we will see more of the state showing up in the above normal activity classification.

So what’s my prediction? I’m going to play it safe and say the 2012 fire season in Utah will be busier than the last few seasons we have had - that seems to be a given. If you want something more definitive than that, you’ll have to ask me again in October.
Prior to beginning the skills examination, the Certification Tester shall check that each candidate has a current, accurate, and complete training record on file with the department; indicating that he/she has been trained and passed on all manipulative skill objectives. Training records must include the date and instructor’s original signature and/or initials for each line. The Training record shall also show that the candidate has passed all skills during an in-house comprehensive test. This record must include the in-house tester’s initials or signature and the date the skill was passed. Candidates without completed training records are not eligible for spot-check testing. Please have your Training Records complete before the testers arrive at your department.

For questions on Training Records, contact the Certification Office at 1-888-548-7816.

### The Training Record

**NAME:** Jonathan Doe  
**DEPARTMENT:** Utah Fire Department

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SECTION</th>
<th>TRAINING RECORD</th>
<th>IN-HOUSE COMP. EXAM</th>
<th>MANIPULATIVE SKILL DEMONSTRATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GENERAL</td>
<td>7/25/11 PN</td>
<td>12/15/11 KB</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMMUNICATIONS</td>
<td>7/29/11 PN</td>
<td>12/15/11 KB</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIREGROUND OPERATIONS</td>
<td>8/2/11 HW</td>
<td>12/2/11 AM</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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THANK YOU DON PORTER!

The Escalante Volunteer Fire Department is very proud to announce that Chief Lennie Don Porter has been recognized as the recipient of the 2012 Utah Lieutenant Governor’s Award for Volunteer of the Year.

Escalante is a small, rural, and remote community in southern Utah that depends heavily on volunteer service. Don Porter’s volunteer contributions to Escalante City and the surrounding community include serving two terms on the Escalante City Council and one term as Escalante City Mayor. During this service, Don faithfully attended to his elected administrative duties and championed programs to make the city a better place to live; including the upgrade of Escalante airport facilities, Escalante City water infrastructure, and rebuilding the local medical clinic after it burned down.

Most impressively, Don Porter has a distinguished parallel career of voluntary service as the consummate “first responder”. Don has served as a firefighter of the Escalante Volunteer Fire Department for 21 years, of which, 16 years were as the department chief (12/1995 to present). In his capacity as fire chief, Don voluntarily handles administrative responsibilities, coordinates and leads all education and training for the volunteer department, and has written and successfully obtained numerous grants to purchase needed equipment and facilities; including a decade long effort to obtain funding for a new fire station, completed in 2010. Don has also served as a member of Garfield County Search and Rescue for 16 years, and has also been a Garfield County Certified EMT for 13 years.

Don Porter’s leadership and spirit of volunteerism has saved many lives, rescued many individuals and families from complicated circumstances, and prevented or mitigated the loss of both private and public property. His spirit, his effort, and his unselfish dedication make Escalante a better place to live and visit, which inspires all of us to be better volunteers.

Brian Head firefighter, Bob Goldhirsch, receives a special award from Assistant Director Steve Lutz for establishing the Goldhirsch Endowed Scholarship for UVU Emergency Services students. The endowment is expected to fund several scholarships each year.

GOLDSCHRICH ESTABLISHES SCHOLARSHIP

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Thank you Don Porter!
Lehi City Fire Department has undergone a review by Utah OSHA Public Sector Consultation in 2011 and 2012 following their application to receive the Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program (SHARP) award. They have paused with flying colors and are the first Public Employer in Utah to receive the SHARP award for both their original station #81 and their second station, #82. Both Lehi fire stations received the SHARP award in an award ceremony held at Station #82 on April 30, 2012. Utah State Labor Commissioner, Sherrie Hayashi presented the awards to Lehi’s Mayor, Bert Wilson, and Fire Chief Dale Ekins. Staff from both fire stations, Lehi city hall, and representatives from Utah OSHA Consultation were also in attendance. Each of Lehi’s fire stations received a framed certificate, a plaque with the current award dates and space for future renewals, and a flag with the SHARP award logo.

The SHARP award is recognition given to those small employers and public employers who pass a rigorous review of their workplace safety and health programs and activities. These employers place their employee’s health and well-being as the priority for their business. They have a culture of safety that permeates their organization from top management to front-line employees. The SHARP program recognizes these employers as the best of the best. There are currently only 8 private employers in Utah that have earned the SHARP award. Lehi City Fire Department’s two stations are the first public employers to receive this recognition in Utah.

Lehi City has had a fire department since 1901. The original department was entirely volunteer. As of the 2010 census, Lehi was home to 47,407 individuals in 11,349 households. In order to protect the city’s businesses and residents from fire and emergency medical events, the city has kept up with the growth by building a second fire station. Lehi City now has two fire stations, staffed with professional fire fighters and paramedic response ambulances 24 hours a day, 7 days per week. Lehi City Fire Department has continued to strive for excellence through maintaining the highest certifications that the Utah State Bureau of EMS and Utah Fire & Rescue Academy offers. The in-house instructors are associated with the American Heart Association, National Fire Academy, National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians, National Incident Management System as well as other nationally respected EMS and firefighting agencies. Due to population growth Lehi City hired a full-time Risk Manager in 2006 who has been working on safety and health activities city-wide. Some examples involving Lehi Fire Department include:

- Purchasing and training on defibrillators (AED’s) for several city vehicles and buildings
- Mandatory defensive driving programs for all city vehicle drivers
- CPR certification class instructed by Fire Department staff for other city employees
- Annual safety and health inspections at all city-owned buildings
- New hire safety and health orientation and training
- Regular review of existing safety and health programs and policies

The safety and health of the fire fighters has consistently been a high priority in Lehi City’s Fire Department. The city has invested in new firefighting apparatus, such as a ladder truck, to allow fire fighters’ safe and efficient response to calls. In 1987, Lehi City invested in a Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA’s) for all fire fighters on each truck, replacing the two SCBA’s for the whole department up to that time. As improvements in understanding the safety and health of fire fighters nationally has progressed, Lehi has kept up. By 1992 the city eliminated all open riding positions on fire apparatus through purchasing enclosed cab engines. SCBA’s are now mounted on the seats for ease of donning and to accommodate the use of seat belts. Lehi continues to review and update all policies and procedures on a regular basis or as conditions change, keeping their fire fighters’ safety and health as the priority during each response.

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Tractors

by Captain R.E. Young

Summer has arrived in Utah and agricultural operations are in full swing. This is the prime time for farm related injuries, entrapments, and fatalities. Agriculture ranks among the most hazardous industries; placing farmers at very high risk for fatal and nonfatal injuries. This article examines the hazards of working around agriculture ranks among the most hazardous industries; placing farmers at very high risk for fatal and nonfatal injuries. This article examines the hazards of working around the tractor at which all of the weight is concentrated) of many tractors is approximately 2-3 feet in front of the rear axle. This generally applies 30% of the tractor’s weight on the front axle and 70% on the rear. Attached equipment, counter weights, and loader equipment can change the center of gravity.

The center of gravity (theoretical point on the tractor at which all of the weight is concentrated) of many tractors is approximately 2-3 feet in front of the rear axle. This generally applies 30% of the tractor’s weight on the front axle and 70% on the rear. Attached equipment, counter weights, and loader equipment can change the center of gravity.

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ATTACK FROM THE UNBURNED SIDE?

We received an early morning alarm for a structure fire; the fire was on the east side of the district, making my response time over ten-minutes. As the battalion chief on the structure fire assignment, I was monitoring the radio during the response. It was very clear that we had a working fire. The first-due engine had arrived and reported a fire in the garage of a dwelling and was stretching an attack hose line - it all sounded very routine.

What I saw on arrival caused me a great deal of concern. The dwelling was a large single story structure, situated on a corner lot. The lot sloped up steeply from the street and sidewalk. The driveway and garage entrance were at street level, which was also the basement level due to the home being built into the sloping terrain. Flames were venting out of the doublewide garage opening and exposing the structure above. The entire garage was involved from floor to ceiling. A 1½ hose line was stretched into the front door of the main level of the home. Thick, dark smoke was pouring from the front door and the eaves. Nothing was getting better. The second-due engine was holding, awaiting an assignment while the first-due truck was supporting the initial hose-line and attempting to complete a primary search.

The crews in the interior were having difficulty operating in a zero visibility, high heat environment. They could not locate the stairway leading to the basement. With the fire burning, unchecked conditions were worsening quickly. To my best estimate this fire had been burning unchecked for over 15 minutes. Why hadn’t they attacked the fire?

We have all been taught to attack a fire from the unburned side, so that we do not push fire into the uninvolved parts of a structure; that approach is not always possible, nor is it the best option in many situations.

The officer on the first-due engine was operating with this mind-set. His plan was to find the stairs and stretch the line to the basement interior garage access door and extinguish the fire from the unburned/exposed side of the structure. Interior conditions on the floor above the fire did not allow the firefighters to visualize or find the stairs, heat was building and conditions were worsening. Precious minutes ticked by as the fire burned and grew unchecked. The growing fire was auto exposing the structure from the interior and exterior.

The first action I took was to have the second-due engine initiate an attack on the garage fire. In the time it took to begin extinguishing the fire in the garage the fire had extended to the floor above and the attic void. Long story short – this fire was originally confined to the garage but had extended, causing extensive damage to the structure.

How would the situation have played out if the first-due engine mounted a frontal attack on the garage fire and directed the second-due engine to stretch a line interior on the main floor to support search and rescue, and check extension? The first-due truck could have pressurized the main floor and conducted a primary search. Additional units could have reinforced these actions on arrival. Had these simple steps taken place, I believe the fire would have been controlled prior to my arrival.

But wait! We can’t attack the fire head-on; that would push the fire into uninvolved portions of the structure, spreading the fire. It will also put any occupants and/or our firefighters at risk. Wrong again! Another myth busted. If done properly, frontal attacks will not push fire. Which is worse for the safety of occupants and firefighters in the structure - to let the fire keep burning and growing, or knock the fire down and take the energy out of it? The fact of the matter is this - nothing will improve on the fire fact of the matter is this - nothing will improve on the fire.

Another fire where the crews efforts to attack from the unburned side did not work well occurred at a single story, single-family dwelling. This structure was in an older central city neighborhood with very narrow side yards. Upon arrival, fire was venting from the front room picture window, exposing the ceiling of the covered porch. The first-due engine crew chose to stretch the attack hose-line to the rear of the structure so they could attack from the unburned side - just like the textbook says.

Here is where the problems began: First, the narrow single car driveway was clogged with several cars. The stretch was very difficult due to the narrow path between the cars, structure, and shrubbery on the other side of the drive- way. Second, there was a six-foot fence around the back yard with a locked gate and narrow access between the detached garage and house. Third, there was a dog in the back yard, which was a cluttered mess.

Long story short; they never made it to the fire. The fire was extinguished by the second-due engine with a frontal attack. The crews were then able to enter from the front and extend a primary search, locating a female victim who had been overcome by the smoke. Precious time was lost, as the fire continued to grow unchecked, by an unsuccessful initial hose stretch.

Both of these examples involved four-handed engine crews. How much more difficult would it be for a three- handed engine? Are you practicing and planning for these situations? How much water and in what form can you deliver with the first attack hose-line? What is the fastest and most effective way to get water on the fire to knock it down? What is the plan to reinforce your actions?

Utilize a straight or solid stream. Direct the initial stream high, in the opening toward the ceiling. Aggressively sweep the stream across the ceiling to deflect water into the fire area. As you continue to push-in, sweep the stream to the vertical wall surfaces. By this time the fire should be blackening down and you can continue to advance. As you push into the structure, don’t forget the wall (drywall) behind you - the corners, closets, furniture, shelves, etc. - that have not been hit with the initial push. Keep the nozzle out in front of you at arms’ length. This will allow you to easily sweep the stream and cover all of the fire area; even the wall, corners, and objects to the side and behind you. One last thought, as you push in, make certain that you are prepared to check the void overhead.

You see, it isn’t the truck crew who has all the fun! They just have the placement priority!
The Certification Office has updated the “Examination Request Form”. The new request allows for multiple departments to request on the same form. This will be beneficial for departments who frequently test together and would like to coordinate the testing process through one Chief or Training Officer. Each testing candidate must be listed with the department he/she represents. As a reminder, anyone taking a state certification exam must be affiliated with an approved agency by the Utah Fire Service Certification Council; i.e. fire department, police department, county health department, etc.

The new form also allows for a department to schedule their own in-house tester. This applies to written examinations only, as all manipulative skills examinations will be administered by a tester from an outside department to provide for third party validation of the testing process. An in-house tester must attend the “new tester training” and complete the application process before he/she can administer any written exam. To become an in-house tester for your department, contact Lori Howes at 801-863-7752 for more information.

The new Examination Request Form can be found on the Certification webpage www.uvu.edu/ufra/certification/forms.htm. Before submitting your request form, make sure you have completed all of the required information. Submit your form to the certification office via:

Mail: 3131 Mike Jense Parkway, Provo, UT, 84601
Fax: 801-374-0681
Email: ufracertification@uvu.edu
Now is the time to begin working on your Emergency Services degree or finish the degree you have been working on.

Why should I earn a college degree?

- Personal improvement
- Preparation for promotion
- Expand career opportunities

What degrees are offered?

- One-year certificate – Firefighter Recruit Candidate and/or Paramedic.
- Associate in Applied Science – Firefighter/Emergency Care and Fire Officer.
- Associate in Science – Online Bachelor of Science in Emergency Services Administration with an emphasis in Emergency Management.
- Bachelor of Science in Science – Bachelor of Science in Emergency Services Administration with an emphasis in Emergency Care.

How do I enroll?

- Apply for admissions by going to: http://www.uvu.edu/admissions/
- If you have attended another college or university, request an official transcript be sent to: UVU Admissions Office 800 West University Parkway MS 106 Orem, Utah 84058-5999

What will it cost?

- Online ESMG courses are $651.00 per class, while most other courses follow the UVU tuition/fee schedule.
- UVU tuition increases every summer.
- For official UVU tuition/fee amounts go to: http://www.uvu.edu/tuition/tuitionFees11-12.pdf
- Some courses have “course fees” in addition to tuition.

For more information regarding admissions and registration, contact our student center at 801-863-7798 or 888-548-7816 to schedule a phone or office appointment with an Emergency Services Academic Advisor.

FALL 2012 SEMESTER
(August 27 – December 13)

FACE TO FACE CLASSES

ESFF 1000 Introduction to Emergency Services
ESEC 1140 Emergency Medical Technician Basic
ESEC 1160 Emergency Medical Technician Intermediate
ESWF 1400 Wildland Firefighting Fundamentals

ONLINE CLASSES

ESFF 1000 Introduction to Emergency Services
ESFF 1120 FES Safety and Survival
ESFO 1100 Fire Behavior and Combustion
ESFO 1110 Fire Prevention
ESFO 2050 Fire Protection Detection Systems
ESWFO 1100 Wildland Fire Management
ESMg
ESMG 310G Intro to Homeland Security GI
ESMG 3150 Public Program Administration
ESMG 3200 Safety Program Management
ESMG 3250 Managing Emergency Medical Services
ESMG 3300 Master Planning for Public ES
ESMG 3350 Analytical Research Approaches Public ES
ESMG 3600 Psychology of Emergency Services
ESMG 4400 Legal Considerations for ES
ESMG 445G Human Factors Emergency Mgmt GI

FALL EMSG (Online Continued)

ESMG 4500 Customer Service/Marketing for ES
ESMG 4650 Principals Disaster and Emergency Mgmt
ESMG 4660 Public Admin Emergency Management
ESMG 4680 Emergency Services Capstone
ESMG 4810 Fire Protection Detection Systems
ESMG 4850 Build Construct Fire Services
ESMG 4890 Wildland Fire Management
ESMG 491G Intro to Homeland Security GI
ESMG 492G Public Program Administration
ESMG 493G Health Safety Program Management
ESMG 494G Managing Emergency Medical Services
ESMG 495G Customer Service/Marketing for ES
ESMG 499G Principals Disaster and Emergency Mgmt
ESMG 4000 Emergency Services Capstone
ESMG 4810 Fire Protection Detection Systems
ESMG 4850 Build Construct Fire Services
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ESMG 494G Managing Emergency Medical Services
ESMG 495G Customer Service/Marketing for ES

Enroll early! Please note that courses are subject to cancellation due to low enrollment. Please check http://www.uvu.edu/ufra/ for current and updated course listings.

DEGREE AT UVU

CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS:

Fierce battles ensued as RCA Class 64 was pitted against the strength, experience, and agility of the RCA Alumni team. While the alumni captured the most wins in the first half of the competition, Class 64 showed their determination and grit by coming from behind to take the victory!

RCA Fire Games
4th Tri-Annual

Recruit Class 64 vs. Alumni
Event / Winner
Apparatus Pull / Alumni
Turn-Out Drill Relay / RCA
Forcible Entry / Alumni
Maximum Pull-Ups / Alumni
Wall Breach / Alumni
Tug-of-War / RCA
Axe Relay / RCA
Arm Wrestling / RCA
Tire Pull Relay / RCA

Please check http://www.uvu.edu/ufra/ for current and updated course listings.
UTAH FIRE AND RESCUE ACADEMY, MS 193
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• Protect home/business from further damage
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• Specializing in Fire and Water damage mitigation

Contact Utah Disaster Kleenup and ask us about our Board Up service and how it can help you.

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