

Senior Staff Monthly Activity Report: March 2009

Program/Division/Unit: Fire & Life Safety

Fire Marshal and Fire Academy

- The South Carolina Fire Academy conducted its 27th Annual Southeastern Fire School March 14-15. Sixteen programs were offered on various topics from emergency response to fire prevention. With more than 650 participants - including 452 registered students, 115 instructors and 50 vendors - the event was a success, despite the weather. Many participants came from outside the state and represented many disciplines. This provided a great opportunity to network and share lessons learned.
- The "Spray It Forward" Program, a course to teach front line firefighters how to deliver age-appropriate fire and life safety messages to children, has been requested by fire and life safety educators in Michigan, Tennessee, Virginia and North Carolina. This adds to the growing list of educational programs offered by the Office of the State Fire Marshal that are used by other agencies globally via the Fire Marshal's Web site.
- Alice Davis and Phyllis Hendrix recently retired from the Division of Fire & Life Safety.
- Assistant Chief Bill Galloway recently completed the Certified Professional Management Program (CPM) offered through South Carolina government. The project he conducted during the training program - on-line plan review process for the engineering section - is progressing well. The new paperless process will eventually create a more efficient process, saving time and expense.
- Division staff visited the state-of-the-art Fire Alarm and Sprinkler-Fire Pump Laboratory at Aiken Technical College (ATC) recently. After a brief meeting, staff toured the facility and discussed how the college and Fire & Life Safety staff could partner in providing advanced training in this specialty area. Future discussions will continue with the Work Force and Business Development Division of ATC and the Division of Fire & Life Safety to serve the needs of the fire service and private sector professionals.
- The Fire Marshal and Public Fire Education Program Coordinator recently made a presentation on residential fire sprinklers to the Gaffney City Council.
- The Fire Marshal hosted two meetings and a tour of the S.C. Fire Academy for interns from the Governor's Office this month. An overview and summary of the services rendered by the division were presented during the visit, along with a brief question-and-answer period.
- The division hosted another joint fire service strategic planning meeting to assist the University of South Carolina Research and Policy Department in compiling data for the plan which is expected to be complete this summer.
- The Fire Marshal and Public Education Program Coordinator attended a meeting with Greenville Safe Kids staff at the Greenville Memorial Hospital Complex.
- The Assistant Fire Academy Superintendent attended the National Fire Academy sponsored Southeastern TRADE Conference in Myrtle Beach along with attendees from Florida, Mississippi, Kentucky, Tennessee, and North Carolina. The training resources and data exchange conference provided a mechanism to network and share new programs, techniques and deliveries that work best. This information of lessons learned provides guidance on how to better serve the fire service of South Carolina.

- Fire deaths continue to reflect the national trend and continue to increase in the state. As of this date, 36 people this year have perished by fire within South Carolina. The causes vary. However, the remedy is simple. Installation of smoke alarms and fire sprinklers will provide an 82% greater chance of surviving a fire incident in a residential structure.
- The Office of State Fire Marshal and the S.C. Fire Academy were instrumental in the success of the National Hydrogen Conference held at the Columbia Convention Center March 30, to April 3, 2009. On the third day of the conference, Speaker of the House of Representatives Bobby Harrell introduced H. 3835, the S.C. Hydrogen Permitting Act, which places the responsibility of permitting, review and inspection of hydrogen facilities upon the Office of State Fire Marshal. The proposed one-stop shop will provide a customer-friendly mechanism that ensures the safest environment to the public and first responders. South Carolina is at the forefront of the hydrogen initiative preparing for the global demand for the fuel of the future. South Carolina has taken the first steps into the hydrogen market, not only to capitalize on the potential economic opportunity of 40,000 jobs and a projected capital investment of \$10 billion dollars by 2020, but to help our nation provide an environmentally friendly and independent fuel source. Along with participating in the ribbon cutting of the first hydrogen fueling station in Columbia, staff attended the legislative media release of H. 3835 and hosted the final day of the conference with a Reliable Energy Codes Presentation at Denny Auditorium.
- The Office of State Fire Marshal, in efforts of expanding public awareness and prevention information, submitted an article for the South Carolina Child Day Care News Letter promoting the Freddie the Fire Smart Feline Program and the available educational resources via the Office of State Fire Marshal Web page.
- Assistant State Fire Marshal of Emergency Response attended the annual 2009 South Carolina Hurricane Conference in Myrtle Beach, and also participated in the state annual Hurricane Table Top Exercise. These exercises incorporate all state level assets regarding pre-planning and resources for response during a large scale incident.
- The Division of Fire & Life Safety co-hosted a SLED Homeland Security's Enhanced Threat and Risk Assessment Program, presented by Texas Engineering & Extension Service. Assistant State Fire Marshal of Emergency Response attended this training opportunity.
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