

## Fire Marshal and Fire Academy May 2009 Activity Report

- The Fire Marshal and Public Education Coordinator attended the 5th Prevention Advocacy Resources and Data Exchange Conference at the National Emergency Training Center, Emmitsburg, Md. The three-day program provided an opportunity to present South Carolina's Office of State Fire Marshal program highlights and exchange information from around the nation. Planning was initiated with the Rhode Island Fire Marshal's Office to offer fire marshal training at the S.C. Fire Academy regarding inspection of assembly occupancies.
- The Fire Marshal received the 2009 Leadership in Public Safety Award from the National Fire Sprinkler Association in recognition for the protection of the public from the threat of fire through support of the fire sprinkler concept.
- A meeting with CSX Transportation Operation Lifesaver was coordinated by the Fire Marshal which will open the door for a new catalog course for first responders entitled "Rail Safety for First Responders." The course will be delivered in conjunction with CSX and Fire Academy staff to provide expert insight into the challenge of railway emergencies and hazardous materials.
- The South Carolina Fire Academy worked in partnership with the S.C. Department of Public Safety and the S.C. Department of Transportation to produce two television PSAs about the state's "Move Over" law. This law requires motorists to "move over" into an adjacent lane, whenever possible, when passing an emergency scene. News conferences will be held at six locations across the state on June 17<sup>th</sup> to release the new public service announcements and to educate the public about the law. SCDOT will begin June 1<sup>st</sup> placing signs on roadways to remind drivers to "move over" when they encounter an emergency scene.
- The Division of Fire & Life Safety hosted the nation's first Alliance for Change Conference designed to focus on the No. 1 Life Safety Initiative: define and advocate the need for a cultural change within the fire service relating to safety. Nearly 150 participants attended this conference, which was sponsored by the S.C. State Firefighters' Association, representing every corner of South Carolina. Special recognition is extended to Carter Jones and Jonathan Jones who served as the conference co-chairs, along with the remainder of the Board members who orchestrated the event. The results of the conference will be incorporated into the state's fire service strategic plan.
- The Division of Fire & Life Safety hosted the annual LLR picnic and awards day. The food and fellowship were enjoyed by all.
- The curriculum section processed 34 IFSAC (International Fire Service Accreditation Congress) course packages, issued 323 IFSAC certificates, reviewed 45 reciprocity requests (granted 31) reviewed 127 equivalency requests (approved 18). Of the 166 people took an IFSAC exam, 131 passed for an 89.63% passing rate.
- Ten payroll workshops were conducted around the state for the data cleansing project with 180 instructors (70%) completed. The agency appreciates the patience and cooperation extended by all who participated in this process.
- Congratulations to Assistant Fire Marshal Bill Galloway who graduated from the state's Certified Public Manager (CPM) class and earned CPM credentials after completing all necessary requirements.
- Staff coordinated and attended the Automatic Fire Alarm Association Carolinas meeting at Denny Auditorium. Hosting these meetings assists with communication and builds stronger relationships between the agency and our licensees.
- Another recruit class graduated from the Fire Academy this month, providing more highly trained professional firefighters to our workforce, which in turn is making South Carolina a safer place to live work and play.
- Recent monthly reports have referenced South Carolina's remarkable improvements concerning decreasing fire fatalities. In 2007 we reached a historic low with 60 fatalities, followed by 74 in 2008. As encouraging as these numbers may be, 2009 has begun in a horrific manner with 50 fire deaths as of this date. The majority of these deaths are from heating related incidents. We have had many multiple fatality events occurring in manufactured homes. It is imperative we continue a multi-pronged approach, incorporating public fire education at all ages, utilizing media opportunities at fire grounds, and continuing to spread the message on smoke alarms and residential fire sprinklers. This must be a corroborative effort for success in saving lives.

