

Office of the State Fire Marshal

February 2009



State
Headquarters

1131 S Street
Sacramento,
California
95811

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Leadership in
troubled times

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Fire Sprinkler
Initiative

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July in
February?



Kate Dargan
State Fire Marshal

Fire Safety Partners -

Changes continue to happen at an increased rate this month and with that has come a **change in focus on our priorities** here at the Office of the State Fire Marshal. We have just completed our annual planning for the next two years and will soon have the 2009-2010 Work Plan on the website. We have invested much discussion on how the state budgetary changes, furlough requirements, and the overall economy are affecting our business. Anything that costs additional money is very difficult to achieve and we all are being challenged to reduce work hours, staff and budgets. Leadership and communication are more urgent at this time than ever before - especially more direction and priority setting, more time with employees, sharing successes and encouraging a positive outlook about the good things the fire service does every day.

Here at the OSFM, our Leadership Team has discussed these needs and shifted our focus for 2009 to **People-Oriented Leadership**. While leadership is by definition about people, in the fire service we often measure our performance by the new programs, tasks, and goals we institute. I believe in times like this, our best efforts might be less about these visible measures and more about the subtle successes of morale building, job stress management, teambuilding, clarity of mission, and communication within and without the department.

**“Morale is
self esteem
in action”.**

**Avery
Weisman
Harvard
Science**

A fireground moment comes to mind here: When to shift from initial to extended attack strategy, or offense to defense. We all know that most of the time a strong initial offense attack is the best way to manage the fire...and it usually works. Sometimes on the Big Ones, it may be obvious from the beginning that an extended defensive strategy is the best approach. But on those really challenging incidents, we engage offensively and then struggle to keep succeeding while not noticing that conditions around us are deteriorating too rapidly. We keep believing that just a little more of the same will bring us "fire spread stopped". The challenge of the fireground command is to recognize when the strategy needs to switch and then to execute it quickly, clearly, and decisively.

I believe these times offer us some of the same challenges of rapidly changing conditions, an inherent belief that our everyday strategy will carry us through, and limited resources to apply the tactics. It is for this reason that the OSFM is spending time trying to evaluate how to shift our strategic approach, for the time being, to one that supports our people, keeps us focused squarely on the few, most important priorities, and keeps us all healthy, safe and equipped enough to handle a long campaign-level event.

Please let me know how your local issues are being addressed as you struggle with the same problems - especially as fire prevention and training goals are affected by the tough decisions of reduced service.

Let's all remember that together, much can be done.

*Kate Dargan
State Fire Marshal*

**California
remains
committed
to residential
sprinklers!**

**Upcoming
Events:**

**Wildland Urban
Interface
Conference
Reno
March 22-24,
2009
www.iafc.org/wui
703-449-6418**

**National
Congress &
Expo for
Manufactured &
Modular
Housing
April 14-16, 2009
Las Vegas
Contact Greg
Rinck
703-558-0646**

A Message from Assistant State Fire Marshal Tonya Hoover

In an effort to address questions concerning the direction of the OSFM in relation to the California Residential Fire Sprinkler Initiative, the following message was posted on several list-services with interested partners.

To All Our Fire Prevention Partners,

During the past few days there have been many emails concerning proposed legislation from other states attempting to delete the requirement of residential fire sprinklers within the International Residential Code. There has also been concern and passing discussions that these other states may influence the efforts in California.

I would like to convey to all that the Office of the State Fire Marshal is committed to continuing our efforts at moving forward the **Residential Fire Sprinkler Initiative** in California. This effort could not be done without the partnering of the fire service, building departments, water purveyors, fire sprinkler installers, design professionals, other state agencies and the building industry. A representative from the California Building Industry Association (CBIA) continues to work with the OSFM to assist in our efforts for a positive outcome with the California adoption of residential fire sprinklers. The proposed legislation from other states will not change the direction that California moves in our efforts to provide a fire safe environment for all our citizens and visitors.

I would like to thank each of you for your time, effort, and commitment to the California process.

Tonya L. Hoover

Assistant State Fire Marshal

**Defensible
Space – the
rules are
changing.**



Code Development

Code Development and Analysis (CDA) Division has started pre-rulemaking activities to adopt and amend the 2009 editions of the base model codes for inclusion in the **2010 California Building Standards Codes**. Over the next several months, CDA will be holding focus group and stakeholder meetings requesting input and vetting SFM proposals. If you would like to be included in the Code Development and Analysis stakeholder email distribution list please email kevin.reinertson@fire.ca.gov

The California Building Standards Commission has been compiling an **online erratum for the 2007 Edition of Title 24** which can be downloaded: <http://www.bsc.ca.gov/new.htm>

Wildland Fire Prevention Engineering

Changes to Defensible Space Codes

Senate Bill 1595 (Kehoe) was signed last September by the governor. This bill makes several changes to the defensible space code in the Public Resources Code (PRC) and Government Code (GC). The codes affect structures in all State Responsibility Areas (SRA) and those in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZ) within Local Responsibility Areas (LRA). These new sections went into effect January 1, 2009. Here are a couple of the affects of the bill:

Fuel Defined:

There is a new “fuels” definition written in the Government Code; “any combustible material, especially petroleum-based product and wildland fuels.” This change will require property owners to manage their non- vegetative fuels around their structures as well as the vegetation.

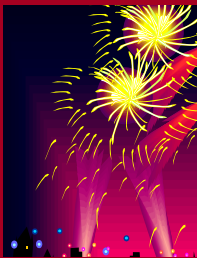
Insurance Company Requiring Defensible Space:

Another SB1595 change is insurance companies will no longer be able to require more than 100 feet of defensible space for a property they insure without a “fire expert” designated by the fire chief having jurisdiction. Chief Ruben Grijalva has designated his Unit Chiefs as the authority in the SRA jurisdictions.

More of the affects of the bill will be discussed in future reports.

Preparing for
July in
February

Tom Hoffman
Chief of Law
Enforcement
Tom.hoffman@fire.ca.gov



Law Enforcement

A Primer on Fireworks

One of the functions of the Office of the State Fire Marshal is to test and certify "Safe and Sane" Fireworks. In preparation for 4th of July festivities, fireworks importers each year contact the OSFM asking that new devices be tested to see if they meet standards specified in California State Statute and Regulation.

Before being certified as "Safe and Sane" the new devices must meet a variety of criteria and test standards. The Health and Safety (H&S) Code Section 12529 defines "Safe and Sane fireworks" as any fireworks which do not come within the definition of "dangerous fireworks" or "exempt fireworks."

H&S Section 12505 defines "dangerous fireworks." This section includes a long list of chemical compounds that cannot be in fireworks, but also includes the following performance criteria:

- All devices which dart or travel about the surface of the ground during discharge
- All fireworks designed and intended by the manufacturer to create the element of surprise upon the user. These items include, but are not limited to, auto-foolers, cigarette loads, exploding golf balls, and trick matches
- Any firework which explodes through means of friction
- Torpedoes of all kinds which explode on impact
- Such other fireworks examined and determined to possess characteristics of design or construction which make such fireworks unsafe for use by any person not specially qualified or trained in the use of fireworks.

H&S Section 12508 defines "Exempt Fireworks" as "any special item containing pyrotechnic compositions which the State Fire Marshal, with the advice of the State Fire Advisory Board, has investigated and determined to be limited to industrial, commercial, agricultural use, or religious ceremonies when authorized by a permit granted by the authority having jurisdiction."



**Safe and
Sane
Fireworks
Information:
Tony.quevara
@fire.ca.gov**

Title 19 California Code of Regulations Section 986.2 (*Test Samples*) requires no fewer than 10 undischarged samples be submitted to OSFM for testing.

Title 19 California Code of Regulations Section 986.3 (*Chemical Analysis*) requires that when the samples are submitted to OSFM for testing, a qualitative chemical analysis showing every chemical and substance used in the manufacture of the fireworks is also provided.

Title 19 California Code of Regulations Section 986.3 (*Specifications for Safe and Sane Fireworks*) contains many other specifications and standards that Safe and Sane products must meet.

Fireworks Program Coordinator and Hazardous Devices Technician (bomb tech) Tony Guevara is responsible for reviewing the chemical analysis reports and conducting the performance tests. He conducts the tests at the CAL FIRE Academy in Lone, California. A fireworks device can only be certified as "Safe and Sane" if the chemical analysis is consistent with the statute and meets the above referenced criteria.

Every year the OSFM updates the list of approved Safe and Sane devices. The 2008 version is currently posted on the OSFM web site: <http://osfm.fire.ca.gov/strucfireengineer/pdf/fireworks/safesanebook2008.pdf>

The OSFM Fireworks Advisory Committee is currently in the process of reviewing proposed revisions to the Safe and Sane Title 19 regulations. Expect to see more details about revised regulations in the near future.

If you have questions about Safe and Sane fireworks, you can call or email Tony Guevara at (916) 327-8278 and Tony.quevara@fire.ca.gov.

Fire Engineering

Effective March 1, 2009, the SFM high-rise listings for control units will no longer exist. The information will be combined with the 7165-Fire Alarm Control Unit (Commercial) listings. An Information Bulletin will be posted on our web site soon.

Congratulations to Francis Mateo who was appointed Deputy State Fire Marshal III-Specialist this month. He will be the Building Materials Listing Program Coordinator. He has been with the OSFM for five years working under the CUPA Program.

It's time to
sign up!
FPO
Workshop
Mar 16-18

Deadline for
Instructor 1

THE FIRELINE

State Fire Training

The California Fire Chiefs Association, Fire Prevention Officers Section, is hosting their **20th Fire Prevention Officers Workshop** March 16-18 at the Santa Ynez Valley Marriott Hotel in beautiful Santa Barbara County. The workshop provides the latest training and education in the application of fire prevention laws, regulations and standards. For more information: www.firepreventionofficers.org

Special Notice Regarding Instructor 1

State Fire Training is extending the deadline to apply for Fire Instructor I Certification from December 31, 2008 to **September 30, 2009**. **Click here for the update:**
<http://osfm.fire.ca.gov/training/pdf/Firelinespecialnotice.pdf>

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) regarding the Fire Instructor I certification are found here:
<http://osfm.fire.ca.gov/training/pdf/Firelinefall2008.pdf>



The Statewide Training and Education Advisory Committee (STEAC) provides final review of all SFT curricula. Following are some of their recent recommendations:

- Voted to adopt Fire and Emergency Services Instructor, Seventh Edition, IFSTA as the textbook for the new Instructor Training courses
- Voted to allow the expansion of Rapid Intervention Crew Tactics from a 16-hour course to a 40-hour course
- Voted to extend the on-line hybrid beta test delivery at Alan Hancock College through the summer of 2008

**Fireline joins
SFM Report**

- Voted for the creation of a subcommittee to STEAC from a variety of affected agencies to work through the difficulties associated with acquired structures for Fire Control 3 live burns and air quality restrictions
- Voted to initiate discussions with the National Professional Board (Pro Board) and the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress (IFSAC) to explore the processes in attaining national and/or international accreditation
- Approval of the accreditation and reaccreditation of nine institutions as Regional Training Programs or Local Academies.

Editor's Note:

The State Fire Training newsletter "The Fireline" has merged with the monthly SFM Report.

Occasionally, a special version of The Fireline will go out separately with updates and amendments to SFT classes and schedules.

Office of the State Fire Marshal

<http://osfm.fire.ca.gov>