

GATED WYE



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Firefighters and civilians recognized at annual Meritorious Awards banquet

Career and volunteer firefighters along with civilians from throughout Oregon were recognized during the Oregon Fire Chiefs Association's 6th annual Oregon Fire Service Meritorious Awards banquet May 18, 2007. Thirty-three awards were presented in nine categories.

Highlights of the event include presentation of the Office of State Fire Marshal (OSFM) Golden Sparky, two Silver Sparky awards and a Special Commendation award.

OSFM Juvenile Firesetter Intervention (JFSI) Program Coordinator Judy Okulitch received the Golden Sparky award for her 17 years of service in developing an internationally recognized JFSI program.

Psychologist Dr. Tim Kopet was awarded the Silver Sparky for his longtime partnership with the OSFM's JFSI program and life long contributions to juvenile firesetting.

Ron Murray, business agent for Plumbers and Steamfitters Local 290, received a Silver Sparky for his efforts in promoting home fire sprinklers in Oregon.

A Special Commendation was awarded to Salem Fire Captain Larry Blumenstein for his many hours of work above and beyond the call of duty in fire safety education.



OSFM awardees (from left), Judy Okulitch, Dr. Tim Kopet, and Larry Blumenstein with Oregon State Fire Marshal Nancy Orr.



OSFM awardee Ron Murray

The ceremony concluded with the presentation of the OFCA President's Award and Silver Trumpet Award by OFCA President and Pendleton Fire and Ambulance Chief John Fowler.

Retired firefighter Tim Birr was honored with the President's Award for his life long efforts to get fire safer cigarette legislation

passed in Oregon. Birr's work with legislators and fire service partners played a key role in the bill becoming law in 2007.

OFCA Executive Director Jeff Griffin was presented with the Silver Trumpet Award for his 10 years of leadership and commitment to the OFCA.

For a list of award winners, contact the OFCA at 503-587-9427 or email ofca@ofca.org.



Tim Birr, retired firefighter and OFCA President's Award winner.



Jeff Griffin, OFCA Executive Director and Silver Trumpet Award winner.

From the desk of the State Fire Marshal



“OVFA President Steve Schneiderman deserves tremendous credit for his work in obtaining the grant and partnering with others to leverage the grant funds for maximum effectiveness.”

OVFA partnership and grant a great opportunity

Recently, the Oregon Volunteer Firefighters Association (OVFA) received a \$350,000 grant from the Department of Homeland Security to support statewide fire safety education in Oregon.

In an generous offer, OVFA is partnering with the Oregon Life Safety Team and OSFM to use these funds in a multi-pronged statewide media campaign delivering smoke alarm awareness and fire safety messages.

In the largest and most widespread fire safety media effort in Oregon history, OVFA collaborated with Comcast Cable television, Charter Communications, Northwest Cable News and a variety of independent TV stations to air a series of English and Spanish commercials throughout 2007 focusing on maintaining working smoke alarms. Doubling the value of this collaboration, Comcast Cable and Charter Communications agreed to donate airtime equal to the amount of time purchased by OVFA. The agreement also includes a banner ad on the Comcast website home page linking viewers to smoke alarm tips.

This is a terrific development and a rising of the bar in public fire safety education in Oregon. Thanks to the OVFA partnership, consistent fire safety messages on cable and broadcast television will reach thousands of Oregon families.

Other parts of the campaign include placing four, 6x10 foot mobile billboards throughout the state. OVFA is working with local fire departments for the best placement locations.

Printed newspaper inserts on fire safety will be placed in rural community newspapers across the state during fire prevention week.

OVFA President Steve Schneiderman deserves tremendous credit for his work in obtaining the grant and partnering with others to leverage the grant funds for maximum effectiveness.

Thank you, Steve, and the members of the Oregon Volunteer Firefighters Association.



**State Fire Marshal
Nancy Orr**

**Office of
State Fire Marshal**

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The *Gated Wye* is published monthly by the Oregon Office of State Fire Marshal. For submissions or suggestions contact Rich Hoover at 503-373-1540 ext. 217 or email richard.hoover@state.or.us. In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, alternative formats of this publication are available, contact 503-373-1540 ext. 228 or email colleen.olson@state.or.us.

Oregon Fire Safety Coalition recommends adoption of Appendix P

Coming off their successful campaign for fire safer cigarette legislation, the Oregon Fire Safety Coalition (OFSC) has turned its attention to the issue of residential fire sprinklers. The OFSC is working to gain support for the adoption of the proposed model code amendment *Appendix P Sprinkling* into the 2008 Residential Specialty Code.

The Oregon Fire Chiefs Association and the Oregon Fire Marshals Association submitted an *Application for Proposed Code Amendment* to the Building Codes Division to amend the 2008 Oregon Residential Specialty Code to include Appendix P and allow communities to consider it as a local option.

As a first step, the amendment goes before the Residential Code Review Committee on June 28, 2007. When the committee votes in favor of the amendment it will be forwarded to the Residential Structures Board for review. The board then votes on whether to forward the recommendation to the Building Codes Division. OFSC members are contacting members of the Residential Code Review Committee and the Residential Structures Board to provide information on the positive impact of the adoption of Appendix P and gain their support. The final step is for the proposal to be approved at public hearings and included in the 2008 Residential Specialty Code.

With Appendix P as part of the Residential Specialty Code, communities will have the option to require sprinklers in new residential construction. Without Appendix P as an option, some communities may have inadequate fire protection due to residential growth surpassing their ability to provide adequate fire protection resources. Appendix P would only be mandatory if adopted at the local level.

For information on Appendix P, visit http://www.oregon.gov/OSP/SFM/Oregon_Fire_Safety_COA.shtml or contact Community Education Services Section Manager, Tari Glocar at 503-373-1540, ext. 273 or email tari.glocar@state.or.us.

Office of State Fire Marshal celebrating its 90th year

This year marks the 90th anniversary of the Oregon Office of State Fire Marshal. In addition to an official ceremony scheduled for Fall 2007, each month, the Gated Wye will publish interesting information from the agency's past. Details on the fall anniversary event will be published as they become available.

OSFM history, did you know . . .

- In 1917 Oregon Insurance Commissioner Harvey Wells was named first *Ex-Officio* State Fire Marshal and served three years.
- The first annual budget of the department was \$8,834.59; all collected through annual license fees from 147 insurance companies doing business in Oregon.
- The OSFM's first annual report in 1918 lists 2,164 fires in Oregon with a loss of \$10.9 million. However, 1918 reporting rules required only insurance companies to report the number of fires in which they experienced a loss. Fire departments were not required to report all fires until the early 1920s.

More interesting history in next month's issue.

Fireworks media event scheduled for June 22

The Office of State Fire Marshal in partnership with Clackamas County Fire District #1, Portland Fire and Rescue and the Oregon Parks Department will hold a fireworks safety media event at 7:30 p.m., June 22, 2007 at the Clackamas County Fire District #1 Regional Training Center.

The event includes a fireworks demonstration with a focus on the proper use of legal fireworks, general fireworks safety and identifying fireworks illegal in Oregon.

For more information, contact Anita Phillips at 503-373-1540 ext. 264 or email anita.phillips@state.or.us.

A voice from the fire service

by Division Chief/Fire Marshal,
Troy Buzalsky, Canby Fire District



Natural gas ... safe, reliable, and potentially deadly

April 19, 2007 will be a day well remembered by Canby Fire District. What initially appeared as a routine natural gas leak took a near tragic turn. Following is a summary of events and lessons learned from this fire service 'near-miss.'

While conducting underground horizontal boring operations in a residential neighborhood, a contractor cut into a natural gas line causing a leak. Upon arriving on scene, officials from NW Natural Gas (NW Natural) evacuated homeowners adjacent to the leak and called 911. NW Natural policy is to notify the fire department if the natural gas level inside a residence is 20% of lower explosive limits [LEL]. (Flammable range for natural gas is 5-15%. When 20% LEL is referenced it means there is 1% natural gas by volume; 40% of LEL would be 2% by volume, and 100% LEL would be 5% by volume, thus putting natural gas within its flammable range).

After arriving on scene, Canby fire officials were briefed by NW Natural representatives and it was agreed Canby firefighters would use NW Natural monitoring equipment to determine the concentration of natural gas in the home.

Prior to entering the home, Incident Commander (IC) Tom O'Connor conducted a safety briefing and reminded crew members not to turn on light switches, operate the garage door opener or turn off any power at the circuit breaker box. Crew objectives were simple; check for natural gas levels and ventilate the structure.

Once inside, a three person crew made quick progress opening windows and doors and monitoring gas levels. At no time were interior gas levels above 20% of LEL. Once the house was checked and ventilated, the crew proceeded to the garage. While Captain Bryant worked to manually open the main garage door, firefighter Stanislaw

took a position at the garage back door. Firefighter Eshleman was at mid-garage monitoring gas levels. As firefighter Stanislaw opened the back door, he heard the sound of a fan turning on and of the furnace auto-igniter attempting to light. He shouted, "This thing is trying to light." At the same time, Eshleman's shouted, "We are in full alarm!" as the gas detector flashed into alarm mode.

The ensuing explosion blew the main garage door into the street and blasted Captain Bryant into an SUV parked in front of the home. Firefighter Stanislaw was launched 20 feet into the back yard, his Nomex hood shredded in the blast.

The back wall of the two-story home was knocked off its foundation. The garage's side wall, which supported a beam carrying the weight of the entire second floor, disintegrated in the explosion collapsing the second floor with firefighter Eshleman below. Eshleman was dropped to the ground by the explosive force and showered with debris.

IC O'Connor, called for a full first and second alarm. "I thought the crew had been killed or critically injured. I was sure we would be in the rescue or recovery mode," shares O'Connor.

However, the three firefighters reunited near the front of the building and contacted Command face-to-face to confirm accountability. Captain Bryant's burns were treated on scene and he was transported to the Oregon Burn Center. Firefighters Stanislaw and Eshleman along with Apparatus Operator Footman, who suffered respiratory symptoms from superheated air, were transported to the hospital for evaluation.

"On this day we were both lucky and good," explains Canby Fire Chief Ted Kunze. "Lucky in that we were standing in the right place when the explosion occurred and good in the fact that we followed the rules. Being 'just a gas leak,' it could have been downplayed, but wasn't."

Chief Kunze continues, "The IC reviewed the known facts at the time with the entry team, the objectives, conducted a safety briefing and the crews wore their PPE. Had crews been complacent and treated this like many other gas leaks, the situation could have been much worse," he emphasized. "This scenario gave us the test before the lesson, and now we need to share what we learned so similar near tragedies are avoided."



View of the destroyed garage side wall and second floor debris after the explosion

Lessons Learned:

- **Wearing full PPE, including SCBA should be standard operating procedure.** Firefighter Stanislaw's Nomex hood was shredded and his SCBA mask crystallized in the blast. Both Stanislaw and Eshleman's Nomex house uniform showed heat damage where the fireball blew through the Velcro closure on the turnout pants. The SCBA provided life saving protection to each firefighter's respiratory tract.
- **Get all the information you can from all available resources.** The homeowner knew there were high concentrations of natural gas in the garage, but that information was not communicated to fire crews. Instead, crews were briefed by an NW Natural supervisor with only limited information. If NW Natural suspected high gas levels in the garage, that information was never communicated to fire crews.
- **Understand how natural gas travels.** Don't think of natural gas as just lighter than air and easily dissipated; suspect migrating underground gas as well. Underground boring operations are problematic when a gas line is breached. Escaping gas follows trench lines since it has no outlet to the atmosphere. Crawl spaces and garages are most likely to encounter migrating gases.
- **Retain a gas company liaison at the command post for a unified command.** The gas company treats the fire service as natural gas experts. They turn the incident over to fire personnel as soon as practical thus placing full incident control and management on the fire crews.

- **Contact the electrical utility and be prepared to cut power to the home or the immediate area.** There is no real safe way to secure a home's electrical service without potentially causing a spark.

- **Does your department have a gas monitor, and if so, do you have training records to document proficiency?** Most fire department gas monitors are calibrated to Pentane, a more likely gas when dealing with confined space issues, not gas leaks. Natural gas is primarily Methane, and has different LELs compared to Pentane.

- **When should 2-in 2-out or a Rapid Intervention Team be considered?** OSHA requires 2-in 2-out when crews are operating in an Immediately Dangerous to Life and Health (IDLH) environment. Is 20% LEL an IDLH?

- **Constantly review risk/ benefit decision making.** Are there times when firefighters should not enter a structure?

- **Does your department have an operating guideline for natural gas emergencies?** If so, does it spell out procedures based on LEL concentrations?

- **Be prepared to evacuate a larger area than you initially think.** What is a reasonable evacuation area and hot zone? The homes next door and across the cul-de-sac both suffered significant damage.

- **Foster an environment that enlists everyone to be a 'safety officer.'** Encourage all members on scene to act as their own safety advocate and share their thoughts when appropriate.

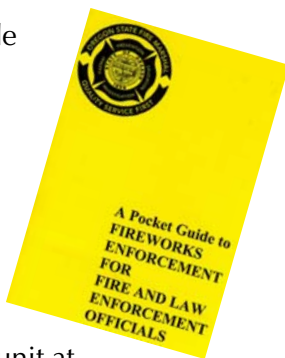
- **Never underestimate your gut instincts.** Wisdom comes from years of exposure to many situations. Veteran firefighters know when something either doesn't look right or doesn't feel right. In this case, the gas company called the fire department, which should increase concern; but then again, because the gas company was on scene, things seemed OK.

New *Pocket Guide to Fireworks Enforcement* available

The Office of State Fire Marshal's License and Permit Services unit has available an updated pocket guide for fireworks enforcement.

The quick reference guide provides fire and law enforcement officials with knowledge of policies, guidelines and procedures when enforcing fireworks statutes and rules.

To request a copy of the guide, contact the License and Permit Services unit at 503-373-1540, ext. 264 or download a copy at http://egov.oregon.gov/OSP/SFM/docs/Licensing_permits/fireworks/2006Toolkit/Retail/Pocket_Guide_2007_with_Revisions2.pdf.



FireFree event in central Oregon sets record

Deschutes County residents delivered 27,733 cubic yards of flammable yard waste to county transfer stations during their annual FireFree event in April and May 2007; a 4% increase from last year's total according to Program Coordinator Kate Lighthall.

"Central Oregon residents have proved once again they are knowledgeable, and willing to take responsibility when it comes to wildfire preparedness," states Lighthall.

Central Oregon FireFree is sponsored by Project Wildfire and includes volunteers and partners from Bend Fire Department, Deschutes, Jefferson and Crook County fire agencies, City of Bend Development Services, Deschutes County Department of Solid Waste, Deschutes Recycling, the Deschutes National Forest, Oregon Department of Forestry and other local government organizations, businesses and individuals.

For more information, contact Kate Lighthall at 541-382-1675 or email klighthall@bendcable.com.

Randall E. Carpenter Foundation fundraiser

The Randall E. Carpenter Foundation's 5th Annual Randy Carpenter Golf Tournament and Poker Night is scheduled for June 8th & 9th at Eagle Crest Resort in Redmond, Oregon. Proceeds support fire and EMS education for fire departments throughout Oregon. Departments or individuals interested in donating or participating may visit <http://www.ourfallenbrother.org/oregongolf.htm>, for more information.

The Foundation was created in memory of Coos Bay Fire and Rescue Captain Randy Carpenter, who died battling a commercial fire in November 2002. The Foundation offers training scholarships to reduce the risk of firefighter injuries and deaths.

Fire Extinguisher Service Center employee charged with reckless endangering

Lake Oswego police charged Eric Eugene Weaver, an employee of Fire Extinguisher Service Center, based in Beaverton, with 85 counts of Recklessly Endangering Another Person, a Class 'A' misdemeanor.

In January, 2007, management of the Parkridge Apartments in Lake Oswego hired Fire Extinguisher Service Center to repair the fire alarm system in one of the apartment buildings. According to investigators, Weaver reported to apartment managers the system had been repaired and was functioning properly, knowing in fact the smoke alarms were not functioning. Investigators also discovered fire doors that did not close, alarms that did not meet audibility requirements, required permits had not been obtained and that Weaver lacked appropriate licensing to perform electrical work on the system.

Weaver's 85 counts are based upon endangering each of the 85 residents of the apartment building. Class 'A' misdemeanors are subject to a maximum penalty of one year in jail and a fine of \$6,250. He is scheduled to be arraigned June 13, 2007.



Hydrochloric Acid (HCl)

Description:

- Synonyms: Muriatic acid; Hydrogen chloride, aqueous
- Colorless, fuming liquid with an irritating pungent odor
- Hazard Class: (8.0) Corrosive; (6.3) Acute Health Hazard; (6.4) Chronic Health Hazard
- CAS: 7647-01-0
- UN/NA: 1789

NFPA Information:

- Health – 3
- Flammability – 0
- Reactivity – 1
- Special notice - none

Uses and Occurrences:

- Food processing
- Laboratory reagent
- Metal cleaning
- Removing scale from boilers
- Manufacture of fertilizers and dyes

Reactivity and Fire Risk:

- Noncombustible
- Extreme heat or contact with metals can release flammable Hydrogen Gas
- Production of Hydrogen may form explosive mixture in air
- Containers may burst when heated
- Water added to acid can cause uncontrolled boiling and splashing. When diluting, add acid slowly to water in small amounts.

Health Hazards:

- Corrosive
- OSHA PEL: 5 ppm (ceiling)
- Liquid and mist may cause severe burns to all body tissues
- May cause burns and permanent eye damage
- May be fatal if swallowed or inhaled

Personal Protective Equipment:

- Chemical safety goggles and/or full face shield
- Rubber or neoprene gloves and additional protection required to prevent skin contact

- Respiratory protection as appropriate
- Local or general exhaust ventilation
- Structural firefighter's turnouts will not protect against Hydrochloric acid. Special protective clothing must be worn.

Inspection and Storage Tips:

- Store in cool, dry, ventilated areas with acid resistant floors
- Protect containers from damage
- Store away from incompatible materials
- Store away from direct sunlight, heat and water

IFC Information:

- Corrosive liquid
- Maximum allowable quantities (MAQ) per S occupancy control area:
 - Unprotected by sprinklers or approved storage cabinets: 500 gallons
 - In sprinklered building, not within approved storage cabinets: 1000 gallons
 - In unsprinklered building, within approved storage cabinets: 1000 gallons
 - In sprinklered building, within approved storage cabinets: 2000 gallons

Incident Reporting and Information:

- There are 172 facilities in Oregon currently reporting Hydrochloric Acid on the Hazardous Substance Information Survey
- There have been 87 hazardous materials incidents reported in Oregon involving Hydrochloric Acid since 1986

Alec Carte is a HazMat Information Specialist in the OSFM Community Right to Know unit. She can be reached at 503-373-1540 ext. 262, or aleta.carte@state.or.us

In memoriam

Frank J. Kelley

1919 - 2007

Born and raised in Battle Creek, Michigan, Kelley joined the U.S. Army in 1942 and served in the South Pacific. After a brief time living in California, he moved to Harbor, Oregon in 1953.

Kelley was instrumental in the formation of the Harbor Rural Fire Department in 1955. He was appointed fire chief in 1961, a position he held for 46 years. In 2004, he received the Oregon Fire Chiefs Association Lifetime Achievement Award for his service. He mentored more than 260 volunteer firefighters and responded to more than 6,000 calls, all as a non-paid volunteer.

Memorial donations may be made to the Harbor Rural Fire Department, P.O. Box 2001, Harbor, OR 97415 or to the Curry County Home Health and Hospice, P.O. Box 746, Gold Beach, OR 97444.

Joan Janice Cowley

1937 - 2007

Born and raised in Litchfield, Minnesota, Cowley worked as the executive secretary to the Oregon State Fire Marshal from 1987 until 1995. She is survived by her two children, Greg Cowley of Vancouver, B.C. and Janet Misenhimer of Portland, OR as well as four grandchildren.

Memorial donations may be made to the Oregon Chapter of the Multiple Sclerosis Society, 104 S.W. Clay St. Portland, OR 97201.

Retirement

After more than 20 years of service, Don Fleck of Salem Fire Department has retired. Fleck began his career in 1975 with the Mount Angel Fire Department. He joined the Salem Fire Department in 1981 and became captain in 1986. Fleck served as a training officer and was a member of the department safety committee. He was also a member of the Marion County Fire Defense board and in 2000 received the Gerry Frank Meritorious Achievement Award.



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