

August 2008 Newsletter

2008 Awareness and Perceptions Survey

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Everyone Goes Home® Program to Have Leadership Change

While the mission of the Everyone Goes Home program remains the same, the leadership of the program will shift from Rich Anderson to Rich Marinucci for the management of the Year 4 Fire Act Grant.

He was Never Alone

From the moment Maplewood firefighter Ryan Hummert died, firefighters were there. At first, it was his Maplewood crew, who, along with 22-year-old Hummert, had thought they were responding Monday to a routine car fire. Instead, they found themselves in the middle of a gunman's killing field.

Bread and Butter Basics

Thinking About Fires - Part 1

There is something wrong with how we think about fires. The report into a fire that killed two firefighters in San Pablo, Calif., last year was released this month. As often is the case, staffing is cited as a factor in the LODDs. Final reports such as this, the one from Charleston and so many reports produced by NIOSH make me wonder if the report writing is more catharsis than call to action, more procedure than learning.

Thinking About Fires - Part 2

The world has changed and these are not the fire departments of our fathers. We have to deal with unprecedented call load and unprecedented technology. We have to deal with building construction that defies logic and we have to now be experts in terrorism.

Seatbelts: Enough is Enough. Buckle Up.

This article appeared on the Chief's Corner of the U.S. Fire Administration's website on July 17, 2008. Chief Gregory B. Cade, U.S. Fire Administrator, addresses the need for change within the fire service in regards to seatbelts.

- » **Denver Fire Department Video:** [Seat Belts & SCBAs](#) | [Download the Video](#)
- » **Take the Pledge:** [Download the Seatbelt Pledge Form](#)

» **Download:** [A Seat Belt Poster](#)

[USFA Releases After-Action Critiques Technical Report](#)

The United States Fire Administration (USFA) released today, as part of their technical report series, a new report entitled [TR-159 The After Action Critique: Training Through Lessons Learned](#). This report is designed to assist all fire service members to be able to gather critical preparedness, response and recovery information from all emergencies; document the lessons learned; and assist with the continuous evolution of firefighter training.

[USFA Announces the 2007 Firefighter Fatalities Report](#)

The United States Fire Administration (USFA) has released today its report [Firefighter Fatalities in the United States in 2007](#). The report continues a series of annual studies by the USFA of on-duty firefighter fatalities in the United States. The USFA is the single public agency source of information for all on-duty firefighter fatalities in the United States each year.

[Everyone Goes Home® Program Welcomes Richard Best](#)

Hello, my name is Rick Best and I am excited to join Christopher Hafley and Ron Terriaco in representing the State of Ohio as an *Everyone Goes Home®* Advocate.

New Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives Partner

The Chief Officers and Commissioners of the Crown Point Fire District in New York have taken extreme steps in all areas from annual physicals, fitness programs, intense training schedules for all firefighters (interior and exterior) using the accountability systems.

Being in a small town volunteer fire district, everyone going home safely after each and every call is the high point of the training and calls. Myself being the 1st Assistant Fire Chief and knowing the families of each of the fire and EMS personnel personally make *Everyone Goes Home®* more of a reality.

At each training session, officer's meeting and emergency call the Officer's of the Crown Point Fire District work hard at doing their best in ensuring this.

Again being from a small town, we have started pre-planning building in the town starting with the businesses and then will go on to the residential areas. We feel that know the buildings better before an emergency strikes will help us when having to do interior searches.

On behalf of the Crown Point Fire District I would like to thank you for this opportunity in being part of your list and also a great program.

Respectfully,
Joseph E. Norton
1st Asst. Fire Chief
Crown Point Fire District (NY)

[Interested in Becoming a Life Safety Initiatives Partner?](#)



INITIATIVE SPOTLIGHT

Spotlighting one of the 16 Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives each month

Initiative #16 - Safety must be a primary consideration in the design of apparatus and equipment.

More on Initiative #16:

- » [Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives Research Database](#)
- » [PASS Devices](#)
- » [Turnout Gear](#)
- » [Firefighter Locator](#)

More Information: [16 Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives](#) | **Share a Resource:** editor@everyonegoeshome.com

Online TRAINING

[Firehouse.com](#)
[Weekly Drill](#)

» **Firehouse.com:** [Drills](#)



[First Responder Training](#)

» [FirstResponder Training.gov](#)

FEATURED Events

National Firefighter Health Week

Everywhere!

August 18 - 22, 2008

Now in its second year, National Firefighter Health Week is a week-long initiative to educate the fire and emergency services community and the public about heart-health as well as a variety of other health and wellness issues. Each day of National Firefighter Health Week is dedicated to a different health issue of particular concern to the fire and emergency services.

Read More: » [About the Event](#)

Good Times, Great Cause!
Join your fellow firefighters
at the Monster Mile®
September 21, 2008



Support the
National Fallen Firefighters Foundation®

Fire Dynamics for the Fire Service

Gaithersburg, MD
September 3, 2008

Read More: » [About the Event](#)

Safety Through Leadership - Modules

1 & 2

Sayreville, NJ
September 19, 2008

Read More: » [About the Event](#)

2008 National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Weekend

Emmitsburg, MD
October 5, 2008

Read More: » [About the Event](#)

Remembering One of our Own

Lawrence William (Larry) Davis, Jr., 63, passed away August 3, 2008 at his home in Corpus Christi, TX. He was a noted fire service author, speaker, and instructor who taught thousands of fire fighters across America over his 40 years of service to the fire fighting community. His works and teachings were revered by many as "ahead of his time" and his impact on the American fire service - especially the rural community - was perhaps paralleled to none.

Do you have an suggestion for the newsletter? Tell us about it! Please send your comments, articles, or news about what your department is doing to keep firefighters safe to editor@everyonegoeshome.com.



Everyone Goes Home™

FIREFIGHTER LIFE SAFETY INITIATIVES

2008 AWARENESS & PERCEPTIONS SURVEY

For the second consecutive year, the National Fallen Firefighter’s Foundation has undertaken a survey for the purpose of gathering feedback from fire service professionals regarding their awareness and perceptions of the resources available through the Everyone Goes Home Program, specifically the 16 Life Safety Initiatives.

More than a third of survey respondents either work for a volunteer department (39.0%) or are with a paid department (34.9%), while the remaining quarter (26.1%) are with a combination volunteer/paid department.

Approximately four in ten survey respondents (38.2%) are firefighter, one-third (33.0%) report they are a chief officer within their department, and more than one quarter (28.7%) are company officers.

Respondents come from all jurisdictions and are fairly evenly split between suburban (39.2%), rural (31.7%), and urban (31.7%) jurisdictions.

Response came from all across the United States. Respondents from the south and north regions account over one-third of respondents each (37.6% and 36.4% respectively), 14.4% are from the mid-west, and 11.7% are from the west. Pennsylvania account for the largest group of responses (23.8%), followed by Florida (15.4%).

The majority of survey respondents (62.0%) indicate that they have heard of the 16 Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives. Chief Officers are more aware (77.9%) of the Initiatives than the general respondent base. Of all those who had heard of the Safety Initiatives, eight out of ten indicate that there has been some positive change (67.5%) or a significant positive change (13.1%) on the safety attitudes of those serving in their fire department (see Chart 1).

The survey also queried respondents on their interest in Courage to be Safe program. An overwhelming majority (90.5%) expressed interest in attending a Courage to Be Safe Class.

When it came to the Firefighter Life Safety Resource Kit, more than a third (35.1%) say

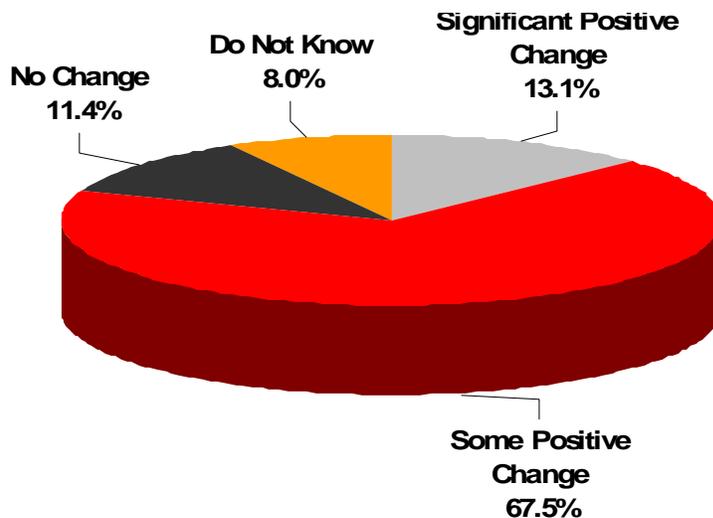


Chart 1: Fire service professionals indicated the overall impact that the 16 Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives have had on safety attitudes in their department.

2008 AWARENESS & PERCEPTIONS SURVEY



Chart 2: Illustrates ratings of effectiveness by fire service professionals, indicating items that are, or would be, helpful to reduce line-of-duty injuries and deaths, using a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 = Not at all Effective and 10 = Extremely Effective.

that their fire department use this kit in their training program.

Survey respondents were then shown a list of 10 possible measures that could be taken by fire departments in order to reduce line-of-duty injuries and deaths. Rating the effectiveness of each item on a 10-point scale all 10 items received an average scores of 7.98 or better. Fire professionals believe that Seat Belts (9.02), More Effective Leadership (8.86) and Better Health Habits (8.82) are the most effective actions that are/could be taken (see Chart 2).

The final survey question asked respondents if NFFF was to conduct another Whistle Stop Tour what would be their primary reason for attending. The majority of respondents (70.2%) indicated that their primary reason for attending would be for educational programs such as the Courage To Be Safe Program. One in five (19.5%) indicated that their primary reason would be to pay respect to fallen firefighters—more than one-quarter (27.2%) of all firefighters indicated that this would be their primary reason for attending. Showing solidarity with other fire departments was selected by 7.4% of all respondents.

Methodology

The National Fallen Firefighters Foundation retained the services of iiON Advantage, part of iiON Corporation, to conduct their 2008 Awareness & Perception Survey for the Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives Program and the Courage to be Safe Programs. The sample for this survey was provided by independent fire service associations and deployed by them.

This survey of Fire Service Professionals was conducted June 2nd through July 1st, 2008. The sample was contacted via e-mail inviting them to participate in the online survey by clicking on a survey link embedded in the email invitation. As an incentive to participate, all respondents who verified their e-mail address at the end of the survey were entered into a random drawing for an Everyone Goes Home Job Shirt. The margin of error, based on our respondent base of 3,779, is calculated to be no greater than +/-1.6 percentage points at a confidence level of 95%.

iiON Advantage (part of iiON Corporation) is an independent research company based in San Diego, CA. iiON Advantage specializes in communications research and works with clients in a variety of industries including technology, communications, public safety, entertainment, and travel/hospitality.

Everyone Goes Home® Program to Have Leadership Change in Year Four

While the mission of the Everyone Goes Home program remains the same, the leadership of the program will shift from Rich Anderson to Rich Marinucci for the management of the Year 4 Fire Act Grant.

Anderson, of Anderson Media Group, has managed the *Everyone Goes Home®* program since its inception, three years ago. "My mission was to both build a team of advocates and leaders who could fulfill the program mission; and to introduce and develop innovative programs that would enable fire departments to accomplish the goal of eliminating preventable line of duty injuries and deaths," said Rich Anderson. "We have successfully recruited over sixty advocates and assembled a team of subject matter experts and leaders that have enabled the program to be extremely successful. The recent survey vouches for the progress of the program.

A few of the programs that were developed and introduced by Rich and his team are: the *Courage to Be Safe (SM)* Program, the America's Fire Hero Whistle-Stop Tour, Safety Through Leadership, Safety Management Systems. In addition, a select Anderson Media Group managed the Novato Summit and the first ever Advocates Safety Summit at Emmitsburg, Md. in March 2007. They also served as the Executive Producers for the award winning Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives Resource Kit Volumes 1 and 2.

Anderson added "None of which could've been accomplished without the work and dedication of my excellent staff and the dedicated members of the *Everyone Goes Home®* Team with a special recognition for Dr. Jo Ellen Kelly program developer for the program. "We are thankful for the opportunity and thank all of the advocates who have joined the "Call to Action."

It is Anderson Media Group's intention to continue to provide resources to the fire service to enable them to accomplish the goal of everyone going home at the end of the call or the end of their shift as a consultant to the program. Rich can be contacted at richanderson@comcast.net.

He was Never Alone

7/27/2008 *He was never alone* by Christine Byers

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From the moment Maplewood firefighter Ryan Hummert died, firefighters were there.

At first, it was his Maplewood crew, who, along with 22-year-old Hummert, had thought they were responding Monday to a routine car fire. Instead, they found themselves in the middle of a gunman's killing field.

Before it was over, two police officers were shot, Hummert was killed and several other bullets barely missed their intended targets.

Minutes that seemed like hours passed until police could safely remove Hummert's body. Then firefighters were there to carry him to an ambulance. Clayton firefighter Brian Zinanni knew it was time to begin a firefighter's tradition.

"We need somebody to stay with Ryan," Zinanni told a visibly shaken crowd of firefighters.

Rock Hill Fire Chief Kevin Halloran and Clayton firefighter Ted Destatte volunteered and boarded an ambulance for a somber ride to the hospital.

"We wanted him to go in a fire department ambulance because it was the start of us taking care of him," Halloran said.

When Hummert was pronounced dead at the hospital, firefighters were there.

When the medical examiner autopsied the body, firefighters were there.

Halloran and Destatte delivered Hummert to the funeral home, where other firefighters relieved them.

Nearly 12 hours had passed since Halloran had boarded the ambulance to escort a firefighter he barely knew through the post-mortem motions.

"I said I would do it not knowing fully what the day was going to entail," Halloran said. "It was one of the biggest honors I've had in my career."

Many felt the same way. Within hours of Hummert's death, firefighters from across the country had called Zinanni to volunteer to stay with Hummert's body at the funeral home.

"It's a process of healing for firefighters as well as considered an honor to sit with a fallen comrade," said Zinanni, team coordinator for the Missouri Fire Service Funeral Team. "And it's a comfort to the family to know he was never alone."

When funeral directors placed Hummert's casket at the front of the funeral parlor, firefighters were there.

Two firefighters stayed with the casket for two-hour shifts. Often, the group grew to six as some stayed past their allotted time, or others just showed up. Some came in T-shirts and jeans. Others wore their dress blues.

They passed much of the time as they would at their respective firehouses, waiting for the next call. Talking shop. Sharing laughs. And sitting together.

It was their way of bringing the firehouse Hummert loved so much to him for his final moments among them.

Every once in a while, the group quieted. Their eyes turned to the casket.

"So he was only 22?" asked Grovespring, Mo., firefighter Brandon Miller during a shift that lasted until midnight Wednesday.

Maryland Heights firefighters nodded.

"Wow, that's scary," Miller said. "I'm only 20."

Maryland Heights firefighters got a kick out of Miller and his fellow Grovespring firefighter Robert McClanahan. Their stories about life in a rural volunteer district south of Lebanon, Mo., kept the mood light. They discussed donating equipment to the volunteer department.

"Do you think we could come by for a tour of your station?" Miller asked. "I've never been in a paid fire department before."

"Sure," replied firefighter Larry Tennison.

Soon, Maryland Heights Capt. Bill Matzker's eyes drifted once more to Hummert's casket.

"So who was this Knobbe guy anyway?" he asked of the alleged gunman, Mark Knobbe.

The group shared what they knew: Knobbe was estranged from his family. He had worked for the Art Museum. He set his home on fire and shot himself in the head.

"Just senseless," Matzker said.

About seven more shifts passed before the informal casket vigil gave way to a formal honor guard. Firefighters in full dress blues stood at both ends of the casket for 10-minute shifts during the seven-hour visitation.

Halloran took his post at 2 p.m. Wednesday at the foot of the casket. Brentwood firefighter Tim Hammer stood at the head.

Hummert's tearful mother, father and sister were the first to visit. Firefighters were there.

They stood rigid until the next pair relieved them. But once in the hallway, their tears flowed.

The rotations continued until 10 p.m., even through a 40-minute procession of more than 600 firefighters, saluting

the casket two by two.

Once the formal honor guard retired for the night, the informal watch resumed. Funeral directors dimmed the lights and told the firefighters where to find the restrooms and coffee.

When Hummert's family arrived the next morning for the closing of the casket, firefighters were there.

Members of Hummert's Rockwood Summit High School football team carried the casket to the door. From there, firefighters bore their brother to a pumper and then to Immaculate Conception Church.

Maplewood firefighters sat in the front rows to the right of the casket. The family sat to the left.

Firefighters delivered many of the nine eulogies.

Two nearby churches opened for the overflow. Firefighters from as far as New York, Nebraska, Tennessee, Kentucky and Indiana quickly filled more than 800 chairs and stood in the aisles.

About 135 firetrucks escorted the casket to the cemetery.

The family waited at the grave site as more than 1,000 firefighters marched behind the pumper carrying Hummert's casket. It's a tradition called "the Sea of Blue."

An honor guard stood at attention while Maplewood firefighters delivered the casket to its final destination.

More than a dozen firefighters on bagpipes played "Amazing Grace." And firefighters on bugles played taps.

The Hummerts returned to a limousine, in awe of the firefighters' role in their son's final journey.

"We could have taken months and never planned anything as beautiful as this," said Andy Hummert, Ryan Hummert's father.

The limo pulled out, and the firetrucks lined up to exit. Cemetery workers prepared to lower the casket.

They pushed a mound of earth over Hummert's grave.

And a firefighter was there.

Bread and Butter Basics - Thinking About Fires (Part 1)

By Charles Bailey

Courtesy of FireRescue1.com

There is something wrong with how we think about fires. The report into a fire that killed two firefighters in San Pablo, Calif., last year was released this month. As often is the case, staffing is cited as a factor in the LODDs. Final reports such as this, the one from Charleston and so many reports produced by NIOSH make me wonder if the report writing is more catharsis than call to action, more procedure than learning.

Are these reports - created in the aftermath of tragedy - developed in some subconscious effort to soothe our souls by making sense of things? I ask this question because nothing ever seems to change. If reports of this type were useful, meaningful, or able to effect change, we should have seen the results long ago. As J.A. Thackaberry noted in a paper on wildland tragedies, "reports have become something of a post-mortem ritual."¹

What the San Pablo report and others like it provide are the illusion of having regained control, vis-à-vis having the ability to explain what happened. However, the deliberation is not introspective and it denies the emotional aspects of what occurred. We have heard much talk about recognition-primed decision-making in recent years but what we don't hear is that "the experiential system automatically searches its memory banks for related events, including their emotional accompaniments." (Slovic, P. 2002)²

These reports only generate limited reflection; it is more like staring at a train wreck. I have said some pretty hard things here but the evidence is clear. If the messages were working, the National Fire Academy would not be producing PSAs to encourage firefighters to buckle up. The reports alone should have made the need for seat belts clear.

About the Author



Charles Bailey is a career fire captain in Montgomery County, Md., with 16 years on the job. Capt. Bailey is currently assigned to Station 15, an area rich in bedroom communities, garden apartments and strip malls. In his spare time, he is an active member of the Branchville Volunteer Fire Company in Prince Georges County, Md., where he has served as deputy chief for nearly eight years. He has a masters degree in public administration and runs TinHelmet.com, a fire-related website. Most importantly, he says he realizes that none of this matters unless the line firefighters, officers and incident commanders are presented with good information and good methodologies that will allow them to make informed decisions about risks. You can contact Charles with feedback at [Charles](mailto:Charles@tinhelmet.com).

The reports allow us to ostensibly take apart another department from the ground up and from the top down in an elaborate attempt to discover what went wrong and to fix it for next time; to fix it for ourselves before the tragedy occurs to us. Unfortunately the next time still comes and the next report outlines similar errors. This can mean only two things: either report writing in the aftermath of a fatal fire is an ineffective mechanism for preventing future death and thereby a waste of time, or the fire service is unable to learn.

Of course the real right answer is probably some combination of both ideas. "There is a presumption that organizations are like machines whose problems can be decomposed into parts, the causes identified, and the fixes put in place. The 'fixing' orientation looks for linear cause-effect relationships, simplifies problems by decomposing them into well understood components, and applies specialized knowledge to create technical solutions." (Carroll, J. 1997)³

I have not had the time to read every line of the latest series of reports, but I don't think that I have to read the whole thing to get the idea. I know that they talked about staffing, command, communication, coordination, control; the same issues as in all the other reports. As Thackaberry notes about similar reports in the wildland world, "...there were 'no startling revelations' from this fire which seemed like an 'eerie sickening synopsis of decades of disaster fires.'"

I am sticking my neck out here but I don't think that staffing killed those firefighters in San Pablo; I don't think that a failure to follow the rules killed them either. I agree that staffing is important. And I agree that rules are important. Certainly a four-person engine can do more than a two-person engine. What I think gets firefighters hurt is that they fail to adjust their behaviors to the staffing level that they have. I think what killed those men is what has killed and injured so many before them - a failure to truly understand what they were up against, especially how quickly things can change. An analysis from Thackaberry in 2003 on states, "Two common factors among the string of tragedy fires they studied: firefighters didn't realize that they were facing as dangerous a situation as they were; and, once they realized they were in danger, firefighters seemed to 'forget' the correct action they should have taken in the moment."

Those firefighters were the victims of something bigger than fire; they were the victims of a system that was unable to provide an adequate mental framework from which a unit officer and/or firefighter under stress, making many rapid decisions, could access and apply to the situation at hand. The question is not what would have been different if there were four people on the first engine. The real question is what would have happened if the first engine had made some different choices. What if they were given adequate training in their personal and collective cognitive limits? What if someone told them that fighting fire was not a zero sum game and that more lives can be saved with better tactics than with the headstrong "aggressive interior attack." I wonder.

During the San Pablo incident, a company set up a large fan outside the door and began a positive-pressure ventilation operation before a ventilation hole was made in the roof. Shortly after the fan was turned on, a buildup of the fire was observed followed by a backdraft explosion. I refuse to believe that the people who set up that fan that day wanted things to go bad. Everyone was acting in good faith but that was simply not good enough. But more important than that is the biggest lesson of all: what can I do different?

As you wade through what is a finely detailed report, some things are more striking than others, like the fact that three of the five metrics used to measure performance at the fire involved rules, policies, or procedures (page seven). The problem that night was not rules, it was a lack of effective coordination and communication. One cannot say that the rules for passing command were ineffective, because command was not passed according to the rule. But simply stating that the rule was not followed is only telling half the story. The more interesting question is why, and unfortunately we can never know that fully in the aftermath of an event like this death.

I am inclined to think about firefighter deaths in the line of duty as "normal accidents." Organizational theorist and sociologist Charles Perrow introduced normal accident theory. It is based on the idea that some systems are so complex that accidents are inevitable or normal. While Perrow generally limited his discussion to technological systems, the theory easily transfers to other complex operations, including fire department operations. Administrators and chiefs tend to react to this growing complexity by creating more and more rules and working harder to ensure that the rules are followed. Unfortunately, as J. Carroll notes, "Such complexity obscures the impact of particular actions, and the invisibility of latent defects masks the state of the entire system..." That is until a firefighter dies in a house fire.

References:

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Carroll, J. (1997) Organizational Learning Activities in High-Hazard Industries: The Logics Underlying Self-Analysis. *Journal of Management Studies.*

»**Also:** [Bread and Butter Basics - Thinking About Fires \(Part 2\)](#)

Bread and Butter Basics - Thinking About Fires (Part 2)

By Charles Bailey

Courtesy of FireRescue1.com

The world has changed and these are not the fire departments of our fathers. We have to deal with unprecedented call load and unprecedented technology. We have to deal with building construction that defies logic and we have to now be experts in terrorism.

What can I do different? I can take the time to learn the why, to develop a new tactical approach to fires, one that acknowledges the staffing I have, not the staffing I wish I had. I can teach the younger members how to frame risk, what a back up line is and how it works, I can teach everyone to slow down just a little.

I took an exceptional class on rapid intervention a few years ago. The setting was just outside of Indianapolis. The lead instructor would say over and over, "take a minute to save a minute." He encouraged us to slow the processes down, to evaluate what was before us, to develop a mental plan of action. His methods have probably saved more lives than any 100 LODD reports.

What can I do different? I can encourage the fire service to simplify the tactics, and to force the members to truly understand what fire is and how it behaves. It is sad that in this day and age we can't even agree on taxonomies, on definitions of flashover and back draft. There is a lot of good research out there - what I can do different is to encourage you to read it. Ask yourself what is the optimal placement of a PPV fan to ventilate the seventh floor of a high-rise building. Don't think for too long because NIST already published the answer.

We can take a hard look at our day-to-day operations and ask ourselves, are we simply the next people in line to have a report written about

About the Author



Charles Bailey is a career fire captain in Montgomery County, Md., with 16 years on the job. Capt. Bailey is currently assigned to Station 15, an area rich in bedroom communities, garden apartments and strip malls. In his spare time, he is an active member of the Branchville Volunteer Fire Company in Prince Georges County, Md., where he has served as deputy chief for nearly eight years. He has a masters degree in public administration and runs TinHelmet.com, a fire-related website. Most importantly, he says he realizes that none of this matters unless the line firefighters, officers and incident commanders are presented with good information and good methodologies that will allow them to make informed decisions about risks. You can contact Charles with feedback at [Charles](mailto:Charles@tinhelmet.com).

us? We are the next people if we keep thinking that the answer to our quest can be found in following

Bailey@FireRescue1.com.

some rule or policy. We are the next people if we continue to believe that better response times, increased staffing and strict adherence to the rules will be a panacea.

The solution to the LODD nightmare is to give up on our dominant, hierarchy-driven system that refuses to teach the people at the bottom of our charts, the people actually dragging the hoses and setting up the fans, what it is we really want. And, what it is that we really can reasonably expect them to accomplish. We have taught ourselves, whether we know it or not, that a single engine with four people, including the driver, can pull up in front of a house on fire, put that fire out, and rescue all the people inside.

I offer a quick, non-scientific test for all officers who think that all of their people are on the same page. Ask a few of your people, old, young, veterans or probies, what the job of the first attack line is and see how many different answers you get. Then ask yourself this: If your first engine passed command to someone who was not there and the chief were still minutes out, would your guys know what to do next?

I want four people on every engine just like everyone else but I also realize that diesel fuel is more than \$5/gallon and soon enough we are going to be forced to choose between more people and more fuel. I want to see the rig manned properly. But even more than that, I want for those who come with two firefighters on their engine to learn how to adjust their tactical approach to optimize the use of two-person companies until they can afford the third one. I want to see the people with three-person companies learn how to operate in that environment. Staffing does not kill - failure to adjust your behavior to meet the limits of that staffing does.

As I wrap this up, I need to make it clear that I am not picking on San Pablo following the report into the deaths of the two firefighters. What happened there could have easily happened to me dozens of times. Where I fight fires, we are not better than them - just luckier. On many levels they did nothing wrong. Some might argue differently, but they did what they were trained to do. The old adage is that you fight the way you were trained and the evidence for poor training is in poor performance.

But, same as I don't believe the firefighters set up that fan to hurt anyone, they did not "freelance" to get someone hurt. Those crews were simply doing what they always did, what they were taught, just like those nine guys in Charleston.

I am sure that I have said this before, but it bears repeating: The fire service must find ways to partner with the sociologists, psychologists, cultural anthropologists, and others of similar ilk to find meaningful ways of understanding why after so many reports the dying continues unabated. Yes, there is something wrong with how we are fighting fires - but there is something even more wrong with how we are thinking about them.

»**Also:** [Bread and Butter Basics - Thinking About Fires \(Part 1\)](#)

Seatbelts: Enough is Enough. Buckle Up.

U.S. Fire Administration, Chief's Corner Posted on July 17, 2008 by Gregory B. Cade, U.S. Fire Administrator

On any given day as United States Fire Administrator, I receive an abundance of information regarding the nation's fire service. As one can imagine, some of the information is good-and some is tragic.

It is the information I have been receiving over the past weeks which motivates me to comment today regarding the use - or, more importantly, the lack of use - of seatbelts. It is a tragedy when we lose a firefighter to a fire; it's a national fire service tragedy and embarrassment when we lose firefighters from vehicle ejections.

This is something we can put an immediate stop to. Each and everyone of us owns this problem. We are each responsible for the actions we take or don't take. We are each responsible for stopping these preventable losses from ever occurring.

It is a tragedy when we lose a firefighter to a fire; it's a national fire service tragedy and embarrassment when we lose firefighters from vehicle ejections.



Is riding fire apparatus unbuckled an act of bravery? What will you tell the survivors of a firefighter lost simply because they would not buckle up? What will the burden be of the survivors during future graduations, weddings, and other significant life events be, knowing their firefighter could have shared it all by taking the simple step of buckling up? As company officers and supervisors, how could you possibly leave a station without your firefighters strapped in? I ask you today as fire service members, what part of firefighting is so important that you must be unbuckled riding on fire apparatus? What part of the mission of the fire service is so important that we allow firefighters to travel (by fire vehicles or POVs) without being securely belted into their seats? A common excuse is that riding unbuckled saves time, but in fact ejection and actions resulting from lack of seatbelt use impede the missions of your departments.

Enough is enough. Buckle up.

Several weeks ago I received word that Dallas Fire Chief Eddie Burns, Sr. successfully led a department-wide effort to secure the 100% support of seatbelt usage by the members of the Dallas Fire Department. Over 1,700 employees of the Dallas Fire Department have taken the simple and straight forward [national seatbelt pledge](#) to

ensure that each and every member of the Dallas Fire Department is safely secured to moving fire apparatus. My sincere congratulations to the members of the Dallas Fire Department and to Chief Burns for this achievement.

Just yesterday I learned that Frederick County, Maryland has also achieved their 100% seatbelt pledge commitment. They join the growing ranks of departments that have achieved 100%. Given the recent actions of the Dallas Fire Department, Frederick County Fire Department, and others including the IAFC Board of Directors, the staff here at the USFA has taken the pledge as well. We do not have fire apparatus here at USFA; we do however have a dedicated staff traveling back and forth from Washington, DC in official vehicles and involved with national response efforts of FEMA. Just as important, a significant number of USFA staff also volunteer in local fire and EMS departments.

I am pleased to announce that the Canadian Fire Services have also joined this effort. When I heard the news of these and so many other departments now taking the pledge, I knew immediately there was no department in this nation - or Canada - that could not take this simple step to improve firefighter safety.

As many of you already know, and many others should know, firefighter Christopher Brian Hunton, age 27, was a member of the Amarillo Texas Fire Department for one year. On April 23, 2005 he fell out of his fire truck responding to an alarm; he died two days later from his injuries. Brian was not wearing his seat belt. It is in his name - and in the names of others who suffered a similar fate - that we continue to work to ensure all firefighters buckle up. It requires such little effort to ensure all firefighters go home at the end of the day and not become victims of this preventable death.

This is the second time I have addressed this issue with the fire service through the Chief's Corner, yet people keep dying, in part due to their not wearing a seat belt. In my opinion, each and every one of these deaths is preventable. I truly wish I could understand why this act is looked upon with disdain by firefighters. I would like someone to explain to me why they feel putting their lives, their fellow firefighters, and family at risk is a part of their job. Instead I continue to get line of duty death notifications where firefighters have made the conscious decision to risk everything and not wear their seatbelt.

Buckle up and take an extra moment to make sure your fellow firefighters are also.

Related:

How Can my Department Take the Seatbelt Pledge? [Click Here to Download the Pledge Form](#)

Related Video:

» **Watch:** [All of the Seat Belt Safety PSAs](#) 

Related Downloads:

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United States Fire Administration Releases After-Action Critiques Technical Report

United States Fire Administration (USFA) News Release

» **View:** [The After Action Critique: Training Through Lessons Learned](#)

The United States Fire Administration (USFA) released today, as part of their technical report series, a new report entitled [TR-159 The After Action Critique: Training Through Lessons Learned](#). This report is designed to assist all fire service members to be able to gather critical preparedness, response and recovery information from all emergencies; document the lessons learned; and assist with the continuous evolution of firefighter training.

"The fire service is always seeking ways to improve its operations. At training classes and seminars, fire service members seek out insight into tactics and discuss new technologies for their applicability to other jurisdictions," said U.S. Fire Administrator Greg Cade. "Lessons are also learned from each response to an emergency incident. Unless feedback on incident response and command is shared with other personnel in the fire service, a valuable learning opportunity can be lost."

The USFA develops reports on selected major fires throughout the country. Under this project, the USFA also develops special reports addressing a variety of issues that affect the fire service such as homeland security and disaster preparedness, new technologies, training, fire-ground tactics, and firefighter health and safety. This body of work provides detailed information on the nature of the fire problem and the many types of service provided by fire departments. The information informs policymakers, who must decide on allocations of resources between fire and other pressing problems, and personnel within the fire service, to improve codes and code enforcement, training, public fire education, building technology, and other related areas.

"These reports provide detailed information for policymakers for individuals within the fire service who can use the information to improve codes and code enforcement, training, public fire education, building technology, and other areas of fire service responsibility," continued Cade.

For additional information regarding this report, or other USFA Technical Reports, visit: <http://www.usfa.dhs.gov>

The USFA reminds everyone to have a comprehensive fire protection plan that includes smoke alarms, residential sprinklers and practicing a home fire escape plan.

» **View:** [The After Action Critique: Training Through Lessons Learned](#)

The United States Fire Administration Announces the 2007 Firefighter Fatalities Report

United States Fire Administration (USFA) News Release

» **View:** [2007 Firefighter Fatalities Report](#)

The United States Fire Administration (USFA) has released today its report [Firefighter Fatalities in the United States in 2007](#). The report continues a series of annual studies by the USFA of on-duty firefighter fatalities in the United States. The USFA is the single public agency source of information for all on-duty firefighter fatalities in the United States each year.

"One of the greatest challenges we face as a fire service is to stop the needless deaths of firefighters while in service to their communities," United States Fire Administrator Greg Cade said. "Every day and across this nation, firefighters are responding to emergencies that threaten the lives of their residents. These same threats also threaten the lives of firefighters. Unfortunately, we all lost far too many firefighters in 2007."

During calendar year 2007, there were 118 firefighters who lost their lives while on duty across the United States.

*"One of the greatest challenges we face as a fire service is to stop the needless deaths of firefighters while in service to their communities."
- Chief Greg Cade, U.S. Fire Administrator*

The unique and specific objective of Firefighter Fatalities in the United States is to identify all on-duty firefighter fatalities that occurred in the U.S. and its protectorates, and to present in summary narrative form the circumstances surrounding each occurrence. In addition to the 2007 overall findings, this study includes information on the hazards to firefighters presented by the lack of seatbelt use. In 2007, 27 firefighter fatalities resulted from vehicle-related incidents. In 19 of the 27 incidents where seatbelt status was known, 11 firefighters were confirmed as not wearing seatbelts at the time of the event.

An overview of the 118 firefighters that died while on duty in 2007:

- 68 volunteer firefighters and 50 career firefighters died while on duty.
- There were 7 firefighter fatality incidents where 2 or more firefighters were killed, claiming a total of 21 firefighters' lives.
- 11 firefighters were killed during activities involving brush, grass, or wildland firefighting, the lowest in over a decade.
- Activities related to emergency incidents resulted in the deaths of 76 firefighters.
- 38 firefighters died while engaging in activities at the scene of a fire.
- 26 firefighters died while responding to or returning from emergency incidents.
- 11 firefighters died while they were engaged in training activities.
- 15 firefighters died after the conclusion of their on-duty activity.
- Heart attacks were the most frequent cause of death for 2007, with 52 firefighter deaths.

For the past 22 years, the USFA has tracked all firefighter fatalities and conducted the necessary analysis for the benefit of the fire service. Through the collection of information on the causes of firefighter deaths, the USFA is able to focus on specific problems and direct future efforts towards finding solutions to reduce the number of firefighter fatalities in the future. This information is also used by many organizations to measure the effectiveness of their current efforts directed toward firefighter health and safety.

The National Fallen Firefighter Foundation maintains the list of firefighters who die in the line-of-duty and are honored during the annual National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Weekend held each October in Emmitsburg, Maryland.

- » **View:** [2007 Firefighter Fatalities Report](#)
- » **More:** [Firefighter Fatalities Reports in the Resource Tool Box](#)

Everyone Goes Home® Program Welcomes Rick Best as Ohio State Advocate

Hello, my name is Rick Best and I am excited to join Christopher Hafley and Ron Terriaco in representing the State of Ohio as an *Everyone Goes Home®* Advocate.

I am a career fire fighter for the city of Westerville Division of Fire. I also serve as a Fire Training Officer II for the Ohio Fire Academy a division of the State Fire Marshal's Office and I am a 13 year veteran of the fire service. I started out as a volunteer and worked my way into a full time position with the City of Westerville.

Within the past few years, I have taken a personal stance on fire fighter health and safety. Since that time, I have also taken courses to better educate myself. I took some emergency driver operator train the trainer programs with the intentions of trying to reduce the injuries and fatalities of fire fighters. I have also taken health and safety officer courses to be more informed on fire fighter health and wellness. My safety stance took off when I completed the Courage to Be Safe (SM) train-the-trainer and since then, I have felt that if I do not use all of my resources to better inform others of these initiatives I may be part of the culture that needs to change.

I am currently working with several departments to get the program delivered to their fire fighters. I have worked with Columbus State Community college to get the courage to be safe program incorporated into their Fire Fighter I & II curriculum.



Remembering One of our Own

Lawrence William (Larry) Davis, Jr., 63, passed away August 3, 2008 at his home in Corpus Christi, TX. Larry was born October 22, 1944 in Washington, PA to the late Lawrence William Davis, Sr. and Mary Ann Case Davis.

He was a noted fire service author, speaker, and instructor who taught thousands of fire fighters across America over his 40 years of service to the fire fighting community. His works and teachings were revered by many as "ahead of his time" and his impact on the American fire service - especially the rural community - was perhaps paralleled to none.

Larry started his fire fighting service with the Canonsburg, PA Volunteer Fire Department in the mid-1960's. He spent 4 years in the United States Air Force where he rose to the rank of Staff Sergeant in their fire service. Upon leaving the USAF, he spent almost 30 years working in industrial fire and loss prevention with Industrial Risk Insurers (IRI) while at the same time gaining national recognition for his work with the rural fire fighting community.

Larry's work as a fire service instructor was exceptional and he rose to Chairman of the International Society of Fire Service Instructors on the mid-1990's. Upon his retirement from IRI he and his wife moved to Texas where he became a Staff Division Chief with the Refinery Terminal Fire Company and then with Industrial Emergency Services.

He was a full-member of the Society of Fire Protection Engineers and was a Certified Fire Protection Engineer. Much of his life-long commitment to improving fire protection can be found in the textbooks that he authored. He was also one of the founders of the Rural Firefighting Institute and was Vice President of GBW Associates, LLC, a fire protection training and consulting firm.

He is survived by his wife, Mary Ann Davis of Corpus Christi; his daughter Kayce Davis of New York City, NY; his brother and family: Mark, Connie, Tom, Mary and Emilie Davis, of Westminster, MD; his stepson and family: Christopher, Sonya and Kyle Conrad of Storrs, CT.

A Memorial Service will be held at 11:00 AM on Saturday, August 30, 2008 at Island in the Son, United Methodist Church, 15602 Hwy 361, Corpus Christi, TX 78418.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to Island in the Son Church or to the donor's local volunteer fire company. Friends wishing to pay tribute through words can email their remembrances to ldavis@gotbigwater.com.

Everyone Goes Home® would like to offer our sincere condolences to the Davis Family. Larry and his brother Mark have been longtime supporters of the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation. Most recently Mark contributed to the EGH Newsletter as author of [Moving Water In Prince George's County, Maryland](#); May 2008.