

# May 2009 Newsletter



**Watch: [Volume 4 Preview](#)**  
**Learn More: [About Volume 4](#)**  
**Previous: [Volume 1 - 3](#)**

## Everyone Goes Home® Program to Release Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives Resource Kit Volume 4

The National Fallen Firefighters Foundation (NFFF) through the Everyone Goes Home® Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives Program is proud to announce the upcoming release of the Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives Resource Kit Volume 4.

Volume 4 includes easily deployable fire service training on two DVDs and one CD. Some of the video training materials include: Smoke Reading, Rapid Intervention Teams, Calling the Mayday, Seatbelt Use, Pre-Planning and Fitness. CD resources also include support materials for each of the video training modules included.

## Defining Moments

In 2004, the first National Firefighter Life Safety Summit was held in Tampa, Florida. What resulted from that summit were the 16 Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives and the Everyone Goes Home® program. When many of us first became aware of the Everyone Goes Home® Program we thought to ourselves, "Bonus!" A lot of us already had a passion concerning firefighter safety and wellbeing. We had been out there for years challenging unnecessary firefighter injuries and deaths, while at the same time advocating change.



**PROTECT YOURSELF  
YOUR SAFETY,  
YOUR RESPONSIBILITY.**



[WWW.IAFC.ORG/SAFETYWEEK](http://WWW.IAFC.ORG/SAFETYWEEK) • JUNE 14-20, 2009

## 2009 Safety Week Key Area: Firefighter Heart Disease and Cancer Education & Prevention

Firefighter Heart Disease and Cancer Education & Prevention is the second of four key areas where SOPs, policies and initiatives - along with the training and enforcement that support them - can limit fire and EMS personnel's risk of injury or death.

» [2009 Safety Week Key Area: Emergency Driving](#)

» [2009 Fire/EMS Safety, Health and Survival Week to be Held June 14-20, 2009](#)

- » [2009 Fire/EMS Safety, Health, and Survival Week Desktop Wallpaper](#)
- » **2009 Safety Week Website:** [www.iafc.org/safetyweek](http://www.iafc.org/safetyweek)

## [Orange County, California Hosts Life Safety Conference](#)

The Orange County Fire Authority hosted an Firefighter Safety Conference in February 2009. Three hundred firefighters attended the conference and twenty six were trained as Courage to Be Safe (SM) instructors. Most in attendance were from the Orange County Fire Authority; however firefighters from nineteen other fire departments also participated.

## [What I Learned at FDIC](#)

I was blessed again this year to attend the annual Fire Department Instructors Conference in Indianapolis, Indiana and it was again one of the best educational experiences of all time. As usual, it was well attended with approximately 28,000 firefighters from all over the world in attendance.

## [Putting the Courage to Be Safe into Practice in Missouri](#)

It was the perfect way to start a day of training, with the words of slide #16 of the Courage to Be Safe(SM) program becoming reality during a Train-the-Trainer class.

## [USFA, NIST Announce Completion of Work on Evaluating Firefighting Tactics Under Wind Driven Conditions](#)

The two technical reports from this project, Fire Fighting Tactics Under Wind Driven Conditions: Laboratory Experiments and Fire Fighting Tactics Under Wind Driven Fire Conditions: 7-Story Building Experiments, as well as an accompanying instructional DVD set, document and discuss firefighting tactics demonstrated to reduce the thermal hazard created by a wind driven fire.

## [What's at Stake?](#)

Danger is lurking and our firefighters must be aware and take immediate measures to protect their own safety, along with the safety of the public they are sworn to protect. All firefighters across America must become fully aware of the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) systematic behind the scene maneuvering in state legislatures which is intended to erode the rights of the jurisdictions to adopt and enhance building construction codes at the local levels. This indeed is an outrageous overreach and sets a terrible precedent.

## [Pre-Planning: An Important Part of Fire Prevention](#)

Two subjects that are starting to gain attention in the fire service are fire prevention and pre-planning. I have noticed more discussion and focus on these subjects throughout firefighting trade publications and online forums. I believe that we should consider pre-planning as an important and crucial component of fire prevention.



# INITIATIVE SPOTLIGHT

Spotlighting one of the 16 Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives each month

## Initiative #15 - Advocacy must be strengthened for the enforcement of codes and the installation of home fire sprinklers.

### More on Initiative #15:

- [National Fallen Firefighters Foundation Resolution on Residential Fire Sprinklers](#)
- [Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives Research Database \(Initiative #15 - Automatic Fire Sprinklers\)](#)
- [IRC Fire Sprinkler Coalition](#)
- [NFPA Fire Sprinkler Initiative](#)
- [Legislative Alerts](#)
- [ResidentialFireSprinklers.com](#)
- [Home Fire Sprinkler Coalition](#)
- [Home Fire Sprinkler Coalition - Resources for the Fire Service](#)

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



NATIONAL FALLEN FIREFIGHTERS  
MEMORIAL GOLF TOURNAMENTS

On the Web at: [golf.firehero.org](http://golf.firehero.org)

[Online Registration Now Available](#)

## FEATURED Events

### Courage to Be Safe (SM)

Alexandria Fire Dept. - Baton Rouge, LA  
May 16, 2009

Read More: » [About the Event](#)

### Firefighter Survival Weekend Including Courage to Be Safe (SM)

GJAC Auditorium & Gwinnett Fire Academy -  
Gwinnett County, GA

June 5 - 7, 2009

Read More: » [About the Event](#)

Proceeds to Benefit  
the National  
Fallen Firefighters  
Foundation



**Good Times,  
Great Cause!**

**Find Out More: [www.doverspeedway.com/nfff09](http://www.doverspeedway.com/nfff09)**

## **National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Golf Tournaments**

Over 30 Locations Across the U.S.!

May - November 2009

**Read More: » [About the Events](#)**

## **2009 Fire/EMS Safety, Health, and Survival Week**

Everywhere!

June 14 - 20, 2009

**Read More: » [About the Events](#)**

**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](mailto:editor@everyonegoeshome.com).

# Everyone Goes Home® Program to Release Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives Resource Kit Volume 4

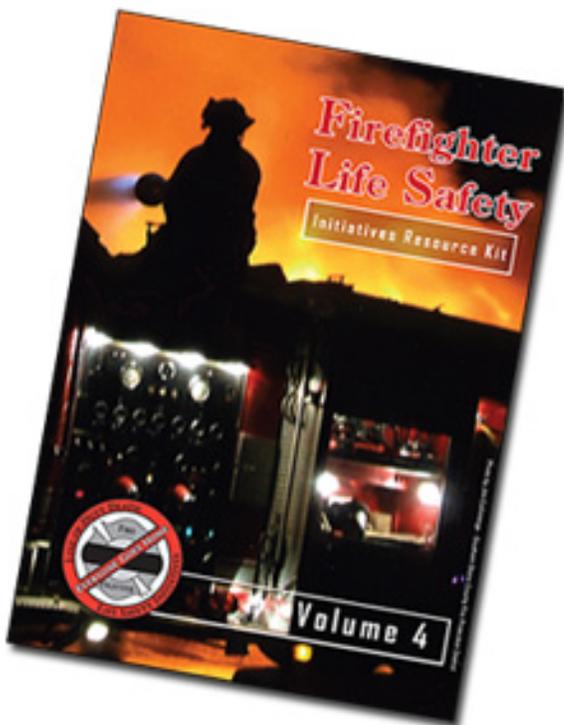
## National Fallen Firefighters Foundation News Release

Watch: [Firefighter Life Safety Resource Kit Volume 4 Preview](#)

Emmitsburg, MD - The National Fallen Firefighters Foundation (NFFF) through the Everyone Goes Home® Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives Program is proud to announce the upcoming release of the Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives Resource Kit Volume 4.

Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives Resource Kit Volume 4, which will be mailed out in summer of 2009, is the latest in the Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives Resource Kit series. The first Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives Resource Kit was released in the summer of 2006. These kits include video training and resources designed to help reduce firefighter line-of-duty injuries and deaths.

Volume 4 includes easily deployable fire service training on two DVDs and one CD. Some of the video training materials include: Smoke Reading, Rapid Intervention Teams, Calling the Mayday, Seatbelt Use, Pre-Planning and Fitness. CD resources also include support materials for each of the video training modules included.



The Everyone Goes Home® program will be shipping this kit to over 35,000 U.S. fire departments. Once the kit is released, departments who have not received a copy may request a copy online. Previous versions of the Firefighter Life Safety Resource Kit are available for download on the EveryoneGoesHome.com website at: <http://www.everyonegoeshome.com/kits/>.

Each year over 100 firefighters die in the line of duty, and 10,000 firefighters are seriously injured. The National Fallen Firefighters Foundation created the Everyone Goes Home® program, based on 16 Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives, to reduce the number of preventable firefighter line-of-duty deaths.

National Fallen Firefighters Foundation Executive Director Chief Ron Siarnicki notes "This is the fourth video in the series that has been produced by the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation. Through our partners and the Assistance to Fire Act Grant program we continue to carry the safety message

throughout the fire service community. It is our hope that as departments view this excellent training medium they continue to display the courage it takes to be safe."

## About the Everyone Goes Home® Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives Program

Everyone Goes Home® is a national program by the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation to prevent line-of-duty deaths and injuries. In March 2004, a Firefighter Life Safety Summit was held to address the need for change within the fire service. Through this meeting, the [16 Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives](#) were produced and a program was born to ensure that Everyone Goes Home®. For more information about the Everyone Goes Home® Program visit [www.EveryoneGoesHome.com](http://www.EveryoneGoesHome.com) or contact us at 1-877-344-0361.

### **About the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation (NFFF)**

The United States Congress created the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation to lead a nationwide effort to remember America's fallen firefighters. Since 1992, the nonprofit foundation has developed and expanded programs to honor fallen fire heroes and assist their families and coworkers. With the support of fire and life safety organizations and funding from Fireman's Fund and the Department of Homeland Security, the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation launched a major initiative to reduce firefighter deaths. Its goal is to reduce line-of-duty firefighter deaths by 25 percent in five years. For more information on the Foundation and its programs contact us at 301-447-1365 or visit [www.firehero.org](http://www.firehero.org).

### **Related:**

- [Everyone Goes Home® Program to Release Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives Resource Kit Volume 4](#)
- **Video:** [Preview Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives Resource Kit Volume 4](#)
- **Volume 1:** [View & Download Resources](#)
- **Volume 2:** [View & Download Resources](#)
- **Volume 3:** [View & Download Resources](#)
- [All Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives Resource Kits](#)

# Defining Moments

**By Rick Graba,  
Everyone Goes Home® North Dakota State Advocate**

In 2004, the first National Firefighter Life Safety Summit was held in Tampa, Florida. What resulted from that summit were the 16 Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives and the Everyone Goes Home® program. When many of us first became aware of the Everyone Goes Home® Program we thought to ourselves, "Bonus!" A lot of us already had a passion concerning firefighter safety and wellbeing. We had been out there for years challenging unnecessary firefighter injuries and deaths, while at the same time advocating change. We championed the cause in our own departments, and took advantage of every opportunity to address firefighter safety issues, when and wherever we could. The Everyone Goes Home® program gave us another opportunity to further pursue our passion. Those in attendance at the safety summit issued a challenge to the entire fire service. That challenge was to significantly reduce needless firefighter injuries and line-of-duty deaths. We embraced the challenge!

I'd be willing to bet that many of us were not surprised when Initiative #1 identified "culture" as the leading issue behind firefighter injuries and line-of-duty deaths. For those of us who had already made firefighter safety our passion, it caused us to reflect on why a culture of safety was so engrained and had affected us in such a positive manner. Looking back, there was a person or a defining moment that influenced us early in life, and set us on the right path regarding safety. Along the way there were other moments and people who added to what we already knew to be true and further fueled our passion about safety.

My first memory of consciously thinking about safety was when I was very young. I grew up on a farm and remember being told and shown how to do things safely. If one of us got needlessly hurt, it affected the operation and the whole family. A culture of safety was further reinforced early in my adult life when I started working construction. If I did not work safely and was consequently injured, then I would be unable to work. If I did not work, I did not get paid and my family then suffered. I had a desire to serve, and when the construction industry did not fulfill that desire, I moved on to a career in the fire service. My first "defining moment" came while filling out my personal and family medical history on the entry level questionnaire. My mother had died at age 54 from heart failure, (Check that box.) Imagine my surprise when I discovered that I was able to check all of the boxes, (NOT GOOD!) This immediately set me on a course of trying to take better care of myself.

While still a probie, I experienced what I believe to be my second "defining moment." I responded to an all-hands fire located in a four-story unoccupied, ordinary construction building at the state penitentiary. I was one of ten firefighters inside a stair tower waiting to attack the fire, when all of the floors collapsed and we were trapped. No incident command system, no accountability, no RIT, no radios, no water in the single 1 1/2" hose line, with low air alarms going off and no way out. As luck would have it, cooler heads prevailed, and we escaped with the help of a very courageous prison guard. The very next day, I vowed to do whatever it took to get promoted, and I made it my personal mission to get firefighters home safely to their families!

During early 2008, the first Everyone Goes Home® Safety Summit was held in Emmitsburg, Maryland. Attendees agreed the Everyone Goes Home® program is outstanding, but there were some areas of concern that needed to be addressed. One such area involved how to get the program out to the fire departments and firefighters in our respective states. In North Dakota, we had 35 dedicated and trained firefighters ready to passionately deliver the program. The North Dakota Firefighters Association (NDFA), along with the state advocates, would be the points of contact for program facilitators, fire departments, and firefighters who requested the program. But, there was a problem. NDFA's budget was very small and there were limited funds to help deliver the program across

the state. Because of money issues, the initial delivery of the Everyone Goes Home® program was only delivered locally by facilitators in their individual departments and at a few select NDFA sponsored events. During the 2007 North Dakota legislative session there were a number of fire service related bills. At every hearing, we took the opportunity to mention the Everyone Goes Home® program and its benefits to the fire service. Then it happened! Much to our surprise the people at Workforce Safety and Insurance (WSI) had been watching and listening and they wanted to help. A meeting was then arranged to discuss what could be done. The results of that meeting led from what had once been an adversarial relationship, to the forming of a new partnership. (Some would say a culture change.) WSI provided grants that allowed for the delivery of the Everyone Goes Home® program free to every fire department and firefighter across the state of North Dakota. In 2008, every major North Dakota fire service agency and group endorsed the program. At the beginning of 2009, NDFA has made the Everyone Goes Home® program a requirement for Firefighter I certification. Local IAFF affiliates are currently planning to include a short overview of the Everyone Goes Home® program in their Fire Ops 101 programs. Fire Ops 101 is an opportunity for local decision makers and media to learn firsthand about the issues firefighters face and to actually train and live the life of a firefighter for a day. Today, I am proud to say the Everyone Goes Home® program is making a difference in North Dakota.

A second topic of discussion at the summit focused on what appeared to be an alarming rate of firefighter line-of-duty deaths in early 2008. There were those that questioned if the Everyone Goes Home® program was being effective. Program leaders, along with many of the advocates who had been actively presenting the program assured everyone that, yes, there was cause for concern but those early numbers did not tell the whole story. Many advocates emphatically stated that the program was working, and there were many success stories that proved it. For many fire departments and firefighters that had the opportunity to participate in the Everyone Goes Home® program, there was a defining moment during the presentation where they "got it" and it has changed their lives forever.

It has been my experience that success stories are shared by fire departments and firefighters in different ways. I would like to share a couple of North Dakota's success stories with you. In April of 2008, there was a large wildland fire around Minot, North Dakota. The fire lasted for several days and involved many mutual aid departments. One evening I was sitting at home, watching the local news when the news anchor indicated there would be a report concerning the wildland fires in Minot. The interview was with the assistant chief of the lead fire department. He explained, "We focus on the end result. That's getting it contained, getting it stopped, and then going home safe. Make sure that everyone you're working with goes home safe, too!" Later in the interview the assistant chief continued by saying, "The strain was more on my family. They really didn't know anything except for what they had heard on the news. When we could, we would give updates to the family members telling them that - hey your guys are all right and here's what they are doing. It takes a toll out on a person and their family, it really does."

A second more subtle success story that I would like to share, took place in a very small rural North Dakota volunteer department. During the presentation, there was one young overweight firefighter who quietly sat in the last row, keeping his comments to himself throughout the entire program. After I had packed up and was just getting ready to leave, there was a tap on my window. The young firefighter was standing there so I got out of the truck to see what he wanted. The young firefighter looked me straight in the eye and firmly shook my hand saying only "Thank you, I get it," and then walking away. The story does not end there though, a little over a year later during the state fire school someone called my name, and I turned around. I did not immediately recognize the young man who had hailed me. When the young man realized I did not know him, he quickly introduced himself, and refreshed my memory about our first meeting. He proudly exclaimed that because of his love for the job he had lost 37 pounds by eating right and exercising. His wife gave me a big hug and said "Thank you! You saved his life!" I told them both that I did nothing of the sort. I simply felt compelled to include in my presentation a short story about a coin my grandmother had given me when I graduated from high school. The coin was engraved with an inscription that read, "God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference." I told them both that the inscription on the coin applies to everyone. Life is about choices and this young firefighter made the right choice. Not only for himself but

for his community, his department and for his family, (There's that family word, again!) In a January 2009 [article written by Advocate Program Manager Billy Hayes, for the Everyone Goes Home® newsletter](#), he asks; "So, how are we doing as we approach the halfway mark? Are the numbers the only indicator of success?" I'm pretty sure we all know they are not, and just like the two success stories I've shared with you, there are many, many more success stories that prove the Everyone Goes Home® program is working! There are many more fire departments and firefighters in this country that unknowingly, will have their "defining moment" while participating in the Everyone Goes Home® program. It is the moment when they make their choice to have the Courage to Be Safe so Everyone Goes Home!

There is an old Chinese proverb that states, "When planting for a year, plant corn. When planting for a decade, plant trees. When planting for life, train and educate people." Now is the time! Bunker-up, we have commitments and promises to keep!



# 2009 Fire/EMS Safety, Health and Survival Week - June 14 - 20, 2009

## Second of Four Key Areas: Firefighter Heart Disease and Cancer Education & Prevention

The [IAFC](#) and the [IAFF](#) are asking you to Protect Yourself: Your Safety, Health and Survival Are Your Responsibility. We're calling on all fire/EMS departments and all IAFF affiliates to participate in the 2009 Fire/EMS Safety, Health and Survival Week scheduled for June 14-20.

**Don't smoke or use tobacco products** - Tobacco use is the leading preventable cause of disease, disability and death in the United States. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), between 1964 and 2004, cigarette smoking caused an estimated 12 million deaths, including 4.1 million deaths from cancer, 5.5 million deaths from cardiovascular diseases, 2.1 million deaths from respiratory diseases, and 94,000 infant deaths related to mothers smoking during pregnancy. Stop using tobacco products - period!

**Get active** - Don't start an exercise program that you will give up on in the second week. Start by just walking at the same time every day and build on that. Use this time to talk over issues at the firehouse with other firefighters while getting that cardio workout. This is also an excellent and easy time for company officers and chief officers to really LEAD by example. So get out there and walk to take control of your health!

**Eat a heart-healthy diet** - Go to the [IAFF's Fit to Survive webpage](#), where you'll find expert advice and practical information on staying fit and healthy, as well as recipes and nutrition tips to make your next firehouse meal wholesome and delicious. No more fast food drive-through!

**Maintain a healthy weight** - Your weight is largely determined by the balance between how many calories you consume and the amount of energy you burn in everyday activities. Being overweight can become a matter of life and death. Someone who is overweight and obese is more likely to develop a number of potentially serious health problems. Also, the overall risk of death increases with obesity.

**Get annual medical and fitness evaluations** - Having regular evaluations is one of the most important things you can do for yourself. Finding a problem when it is small is the best way to prevent more serious problems and disease later. Review your current health and fitness status in relation to your prior assessment.

Materials for the second key area are available on [www.iafc.org/safetyweek](http://www.iafc.org/safetyweek). Check out the [Health and Wellness](#)

[Resources webpage](#) to access the IAFF/IAFC Wellness-Fitness Initiative and other health and wellness resources. Keep watching the [Safety Week page](#) for more information on this year's program and planning resources developed by the IAFC Safety, Health and Survival Section.

**Related:**

- [Second of Four Key Areas: Safety - Firefighter Health](#)
- [First of Four Key Areas: Safety - Emergency Driving](#)
- [2009 Fire/EMS Safety, Health and Survival Week to be Held June 14-20, 2009](#)
- **2009 Safety Week Website:** [www.iafc.org/safetyweek](http://www.iafc.org/safetyweek)

# Orange County, California Hosts Life Safety Conference

**By Matt Holke,  
Training Officer Orange County Fire Authority - California**

The Orange County Fire Authority hosted a Firefighter Safety Conference in February 2009. Three hundred firefighters attended the conference and twenty six were trained as Courage to Be Safe (SM) instructors. Most in attendance were from the Orange County Fire Authority; however firefighters from nineteen other fire departments also participated.

All in all nearly 6000 firefighters were represented in this effort to reduce the number of firefighter injuries and deaths by changing the culture of the fire service.

Keynote speaker Paul LeSage, Assistant Chief of Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue, spoke about and demonstrated some real applications and ways to implement practices that relate to the 16 Life Safety

Initiatives. Chief LeSage started with Life Safety Initiative #1 "Define and advocate the need for a cultural change within the fire service relating to safety; incorporating leadership, management, supervision, accountability and personal responsibility." A "just culture" was introduced and defined as an alternative where, mistakes are not the same as bad behavior and both are handled with a case by case process. A realization that not one right answer will solve everything and trust and honesty are the foundation and where subordinates are allowed to doubt, inquire, and update on situational changes. Another acronym introduced along with this subject was Probe, Alert, Challenge, and Emergency Intervention (PACE). In no way was it advocated that the boss is not in charge, nor that we should not continue to fight fire aggressively, but, the principles of Crew Resource Management and High Reliability Organizations may seem that way to the traditional fire service. While we trade accuracy for speed, there are ways to receive more input and observations that provide the incident commander ability to make informed decisions.



Relating to Life Safety Initiatives #2 and #9 we can change the traditional approach of incident investigations. Trying to identify a single, defining cause and to then hold someone responsible has consequently led to reluctance in reporting. We should analyze our systems, circumstances, education, training, and human factors. Avoid our desire to simplify the explanation, accept no easy answers, and look deep into root causes. Causes such as: were the consequences as intended, were procedures available, relevant, and correct, and were there deficiencies in training, selection, or experience. Acceptance of organizational practices as contributing



factors must be looked at and dealt with. If after a complete and thorough investigation with all causal factors evaluated and a person or persons are at fault then they too must be given appropriate consequences.

Situational awareness is a common term, yet firefighters continue to be injured on the job. Life Safety Initiatives #3 and #4 are trying to combat this continuing problem. Chief LeSage laid out some real world ways to improve on situational awareness. As firefighters we trade speed for accuracy. As firefighters gain experience, we tend to use less classroom education and policies in our decisions. In

trading speed for accuracy we make our decisions with the limited information we can gather and overlay that to other similar events. To improve on our safety we need to utilize both by using collective situational awareness (Crew Resource Management). Failure points to these events are rank structure, "can-do" attitude, time pressures, expertise and leadership, and layers of policy and procedures. These very things are the strengths of the fire service, but they can also be our weakness.

The story of our fire department is our culture. We may have a policy to wear our seatbelt whenever the apparatus is moving, but our story may be to get out of the station quick and finish dressing while inside a fast moving piece of fire apparatus. We may have a policy for two-in two-out unless a rescue exception is present, but we may expect everyone to go inside all of the time in any building. We may say every firefighter should speak up about unsafe acts, but our story is don't question your boss. What is your story? **Everyone Goes Home®**

# What I Learned at FDIC

**By Freddy Howell,  
Fire Chief, NSB Kings Bay, GA**

I was blessed again this year to attend the annual Fire Department Instructors Conference in Indianapolis, Indiana and it was again one of the best educational experiences of all time. As usual, it was well attended with approximately 28,000 firefighters from all over the world in attendance. Although there were more classes than I could possibly attend I will briefly give you what I picked to be some of the latest concepts, concerns and training activities.

- **Pride and Ownership of the Fire Service** - How can we change the culture of the fire service if the young firefighters coming into the service don't know the culture? We have to teach what the fire service is all about and where it all came from and where we are going! Fire, EMS, Haz-Mat, Rescue WMD-you describe it and we do it!
- **Fire Officer Development** - It is necessary to constantly introspect and see if your attitude is beneficial to the fire service. Your attitude expresses your manner, disposition, feelings, or position about particular things... or life in general! You can control your attitude, but doing so requires training and on-going commitment. Your attitude affects others and it's contagious... positive or negative. Remember leadership is role based... not ranked based.
- **Not Everyone Goes Home** - Although all firefighters lead heroic lives; sadly the majority of our line-of-duty deaths (LODDs) are not due to heroic circumstances. The chief can impact that locally. While the national focus creates programs that build resources for the chiefs to use at their home firehouses, what the chiefs do with those resources has a great impact at a local level. All attempts, successes and failures in the saving of firefighters' lives are local. This means the local fire chief is the key to the end result. Of course the company officer and the individual firefighter play a critical part in reducing LODDs, but the chief is the bottom line. This massive responsibility-no matter the size of the fire department-cannot be ignored.
- **Taking Public Education to Another Level** - We need to put fire prevention back in the firefighters training! NFPA has removed fire prevention training from firefighter 1 and 2, why? How can we expect firefighters to be passionate about prevention when we put it on the back burner of all their training requirements? Firefighters need to know the history of all the fires that caused building codes to be changed, such as the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire.
- **Air Management and NFPA 1404** - Once more a featured topic that we as a fire service must work on. Our firefighters should know when to start making their way out of a building and not rely solely on the low pressure alarm. Air consumption drills should be performed and the results documented.
- **Courage to Be Safe (SM)** - Firefighter safety was again one of the most important topics discussed in all of the classes that were taught at FDIC. The 16 Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives were repeated and discussed a great deal. As we know 50% of LODDs are from heart attacks, some resulting from poor exercise tolerance and not complying with NFPA 1582. Around 25% of LODDs are related to motor vehicle accidents. The majority of these accidents should be and can be prevented. The remaining 25% of the LODDs are fire and other related accidents which include training; another place that LODD can and should be prevented!
- **Residential Sprinkler Systems** - The discussion was on the need for local departments and communities to support and adopt building codes requiring residential sprinkler systems.
- **The Economy**- How the economy is affecting the fire departments and firefighter manning was a hot topic. Fire departments are facing huge challenges as it relates to the closing of firehouses and the reduction of firefighter staffing. This is and should be a major concern to all firefighters and fire chiefs because this plays a significant role in firefighter safety. Again, the fire service is being asked to do more or the same with less. The need for automatic and mutual aid agreements with neighboring departments is a must.

- Fire Service and EMS- The future of fire-based EMS will depend on data that comes from many sources, all of which will have to relate and communicate to help prove the efficacy and cost-effectiveness of the system. There has been a strong push by EMS organizations outside the fire service to get their hands on federal fire service grant funds. To find out more go to <http://fireserviceems.com/>.

Also you can see opening ceremonies and some of the awards via the internet by going to [www.fdic.com/index.html](http://www.fdic.com/index.html) about mid way to the page and downloading them. They are well worth watching!

Stay Safe!

# Putting the Courage to Be Safe into Practice in Missouri

**By Michael L. Petroff,  
Everyone Goes Home® Region VII Advocate**

It was the perfect way to start a day of training, with the words of slide #16 of the Courage to Be Safe(SM) program becoming reality during a Train-the-Trainer class.

The session held at Warrenton Fire Protection District Station #2 was being presented as part of the Fire Fighters Association of Missouri Annual Convention.

With the crews and equipment from Station #2 out of quarters in preparation for the convention parade, only three people were at the firehouse -Michael Petroff, Courage to Be Safe(SM) Instructor and Region VII Advocate, and class attendees Firefighter Vincent Phang, of the Pettis County Fire Protection District, and Firefighter Rodney Smith, of Bonne Terre City Fire/Rescue. This was the first time they had ever met.

During class preparation, a woman came into the station. Firefighters Smith and Phang asked if they could help and the woman said that she just wanted her blood pressure checked. Petroff joined the group and explained that they were guests visiting for a class that the station's firefighters were out preparing for the convention.

An offer was made to call the firefighters back to quarters to assist, but the woman said that she did not want to be a bother and she would just leave. When asked if she was having any medical symptoms or problems, she gave a brief medical history and described signs that quickly put the group of firefighters into action. The signs indicated a need for a medical evaluation and possible care. While not critical, it was clear that further care and investigation was needed. Petroff called Station Captain Jeremy Frye by cell phone to advise him of the situation and ask for a non-emergency EMS response. Firefighter Phang then began a more detailed patient assessment and history as Firefighter Smith made his way to the only piece of equipment left in quarters, a tower ladder, to search for a medical bag and blood pressure cuff.

A short time later a Warren County Ambulance Supervisor arrived and assumed patient care. While the patient refused further treatment, the EMS supervisor was able to give her additional information and instructions.

How does all this relate to the wording of Courage to Be Safe(SM) slide #16? The slide reads, "Tradition, Culture, and Crew Integrity." The tradition of service, the culture of doing what needs to be done with the resources available, and the integrity of a crew that, until that day, had never met. Each assumed a role, reported to the appropriate people, and worked to mitigate the situation. What better way to start a Courage to Be Safe(SM) class than to demonstrate through actions the Courage to Be Safe?

# USFA, NIST Announce Completion of Work on Evaluating Firefighting Tactics Under Wind Driven Conditions

## United States Fire Administration (USFA) News Release

The United States Fire Administration (USFA) and the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), in cooperation with the Fire Protection Research Foundation, the Polytechnic Institute of New York University, the Fire Department of New York City, and the Chicago Fire Department have completed work on evaluating several firefighting tactics under wind driven conditions. The two technical reports from this project, Fire Fighting Tactics Under Wind Driven Conditions: Laboratory Experiments and Fire Fighting Tactics Under Wind Driven Fire Conditions: 7-Story Building Experiments, as well as an accompanying instructional DVD set, document and discuss firefighting tactics demonstrated to reduce the thermal hazard created by a wind driven fire.

"The dynamics created for firefighters faced with an uncontrolled fire in a building are challenging and complex. Firefighters have long been aware that the presence of an external wind has the potential to increase the energy release of any given fire and increase the spread of fire gases through a structure," said Glenn A. Gaines, Acting Assistant Administrator for the USFA. "The important information gained from the project's experiments will help the fire service better understand and manage hazards associated with wind driven fires."

Eight laboratory experiments conducted as part of this project demonstrated the extreme thermal conditions that can be generated by a "simple room and contents" fire and how these conditions can be extended along a flow path within a structure when a wind condition and an open vent are present. In addition, use of two potential tactics, a wind-control device (WCD) from the floor above the fire and external water application from the floor below the fire, were shown to reduce these wind driven thermal hazard conditions.

Results from an additional series of 14 experiments conducted in a 7-story apartment building confirmed that conditions created by wind rapidly caused the building's environment to deteriorate by forcing fire gases through the apartment of origin and into the public corridor and stairwell. Several tactics, including positive pressure ventilation fans, WCDs, and external water application with floor below nozzles, were again shown to have a significant impact on reducing the hazardous condition created by a wind driven fire. In addition, use of multiple tactics in conjunction with each other was also shown to be very effective at improving conditions for firefighter operations and occupant egress.

The research data provide the science to advocate for improved standard operating guidelines for the fire service to enhance firefighter safety, fireground operations, and use of equipment. To review the two technical reports and learn how to get a copy of the instructional DVD set, please visit the following USFA Web page: [www.usfa.dhs.gov/fireservice/research/dsn/dsn\\_wind\\_conditions.shtm](http://www.usfa.dhs.gov/fireservice/research/dsn/dsn_wind_conditions.shtm)

# What's at Stake?

## The NAHB are Putting Public and Responder Lives in Peril

**Azarang (Ozzie) Mirkhah P.E., CBO, EFO, MIFireE**  
Courtesy of [Firehouse.com](http://Firehouse.com)

Danger is lurking and our firefighters must be aware and take immediate measures to protect their own safety, along with the safety of the public they are sworn to protect. All firefighters across America must become fully aware of the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) systematic behind the scene maneuvering in state legislatures which is intended to erode the rights of the jurisdictions to adopt and enhance building construction codes at the local levels. This indeed is an outrageous overreach and sets a terrible precedent.

Such maneuvering in manipulating the state legislatures has not gone unnoticed. The International Residential Code Fire Sprinkler Coalition (IRC) posted this news update on their website on January 23:

"ATTENTION FIRE MARSHALS - Homebuilder tactic against residential sprinklers. It has come to our attention that homebuilders are beginning a move to prevent adoption of the 2009 IRC provisions for residential fire sprinklers by introducing state legislation that would block new local adoptions of these provisions. Such bills were recently filed in Arizona (HB2267) and North Dakota (SB2354)."

My focus in this article is not on the residential fire sprinklers. Although very important, they are only one small piece of the puzzle. This problem goes way beyond sprinklers. Believe me my friends; what's at stake is much higher than that. It is the safety of our public and our own firefighters. We must stop this disturbing trend now before it snowballs.

Today, the special interest groups want to discard the fire sprinkler requirements. But who knows what other provisions of the building construction codes they would want to yank out next? Fire protection and life safety provisions of the codes, may seem as expensive and unnecessary to these special interest groups opposing us. Those measures not only protect our public, but also our own firefighters. Remember that all those fire safety provisions made it into the body of the codes as a direct result of many failures, losses, tragedies and thousands of fatalities. Those fire safety provisions in the national codes are the results of dedicated efforts of by many technical experts, building officials, and fire marshals that spent many decades analyzing the failures and seeking technical solutions to address the fire safety problems.

And now, the special interest groups want the state legislators to grant them the right to adopt their own substandard building construction codes as they deem appropriate in serving their needs. And to make matters even worse, they want the OK to disallow the local jurisdictions from adopting a more stringent building construction code.

Honestly, I doubt that I am the only one who sees this as nothing more than "putting the fox in charge of the chicken coop." How would that enhance the safety of our public? What about the safety our firefighters?

Look at it this way. If they can pick and choose what they like or dislike, they would cherry pick and throw out

most of the fire and life safety provisions in the codes since in their view those are cost prohibitive and unnecessary.

To use an analogy, that is like giving the truckers driving those big 18-wheelers the right to decide on the speed limits and all other pertinent highway traffic safety laws. How much sense does that make? Would that enhance the safety of our public? What's the difference here?

The main focus of this article is on our firefighters' safety. They are accustomed to routinely respond to the immediate emergencies and life threatening situations. Thus they are not intimidated when facing danger. They can in time mitigate any and all emergencies. But then, the flaw with that perspective is in downplaying the risk probabilities and dangers that are not immediate in nature. And not noticing or at least being much concerned about the adverse impacts of policies and regulations that in the long run could erode the safety of their communities, and their own.

So, let me be as blunt as I can. Our firefighters must wake up and smell the coffee, and recognize that the building construction codes have a very direct impact on their own safety.

After all, it isn't the fire station but the burning building that is truly our firefighters' real work environment. Structural integrity and safety of those buildings during the fire are indeed directly relevant to all firefighters and their families who expect them back safe at the end of each shift.

That being said, our country's fire service leadership must unite and stand up, and not allow these special interest groups, who are notorious for lobbying, manipulating, and skewing the political system in their favor to serve their financial interests, to decide for the safety of our communities and our firefighters.

Leadership of the major national fire service organizations are now aware and are taking measures to address these challenges. Earlier this year, the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) issued a news release titled "Homebuilders Trying to Preempt Adoption of State and Local Sprinkler Regulations." It stated:

"The IAFC has learned that the homebuilders are starting an initiative to prevent local adoption of national standards that require residential sprinklers, by introducing state legislation that would block new code adoptions mandating residential fire-sprinkler requirements... "We have spent considerable time working to help save lives by voting in favor of including residential sprinklers in the model codes," said IAFC President Larry J. Grorud, CFO, MIFireE. "We know there is significant work to be completed to ensure sprinkler requirements are adopted across the country, and we will not let this anti-residential sprinkler legislation deter our efforts to reduce fire loss in America. I urge all fire service members to commit to defeating such legislation. Fire sprinklers save lives, and the public needs to know how important this is for their families, communities and the fire service."

And similarly, National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) in their newly launched website "Fire Sprinkler Initiative" issued a "Legislative Alert."

"New legislation is threatening the adoption of home fire sprinkler provisions for new one- and two-family dwellings. Across the United States, sprinkler opponents are pushing state legislation that would restrict a community's ability to make its own decision about model safety codes for new construction. The legislation would prevent any community from implementing any new sprinkler mandates in one- and two-family homes. If it becomes law, such legislation will put lives at risk. "

Once again my friends, this is only the tip of the iceberg. The problem is much bigger than just the residential fire

sprinkler requirements for the new homes. That is merely a cloak under which our opponents are advancing their goals of having control over the adoption of the building construction codes, to suite their own needs. If the fire service doesn't take immediate corrective actions to change this dangerous course, this could jeopardize the life and safety of our firefighters for decades to come.

One of the first in the fire service to clearly see the big picture and realize what is really at stake, is my good friend Shane Ray, Fire Chief of the Pleasant View (TN) Fire Department. Shane recognized this dangerous trend early on just as it began to develop only a few weeks ago. Shane's great article titled "Protect Our Homes, Maintain Home Rule" published quite timely in the March 15 issue of the IAFC's On Scene. This article is a must read for all fire service members. Due to its importance, I have presented it here in its entirety.

"National leadership is calling on leaders at the state and local level. Calling all fire service personnel to action!

Individuals and organizations across our country are taking action that limits our ability to best serve our communities. These special interest groups are introducing legislation to state government that limits a local fire departments' ability to provide fire and life safety techniques and technologies, thus protecting our citizens and firefighters.

A recent IAFC member alert notified us that "Homebuilders Trying to Preempt Adoption of State and Local Sprinkler Regulations." Their attempts are now going beyond fire sprinklers. They're also trying to ensure local jurisdictions aren't able to adopt model building and fire codes stronger than those adopted by the state.

This could severely limit items in the International Code Council's body of codes and the National Fire Protection Association's codes and standard especially designed to protect citizens and firefighters.

The divisions, sections, committees and general members of the IAFC must unite to fight these attempts to restrict local adoption of fire and building codes. The health, safety and well-being of our citizens depend on prevention and mitigation efforts before the emergency, which is when our emergency response kicks in.

This prevention and mitigation to the built environment is best accomplished with the adoption and enforcement of national, model building and fire codes. The International Code Council is the predominant building-code organization in our country and regulates the construction of most new buildings. The NFPA is the predominant codes and standards-making organization to ensure life safety from fire.

These model codes are developed at a national level by professionals from local levels, intended to be adopted and enforced by professionals at the local level.

As the fire chief of a local jurisdiction, you should be able to influence and encourage the adoption of the International Building Code, International Fire Code, International Residential Code, NFPA Life Code, The Uniform Fire Code or any version of the many available codes that reduce risk to citizens and firefighters in your community.

It is encouraged that our state governments promulgate codes that establish a minimum for the state, especially to cover those areas lacking any codes. However, it shouldn't be the role of the state to limit our local ability to improve the level of protection to our citizens and firefighters.

House Bill 2267 in Arizona, Senate Bill 2354 in North Dakota and House Bill 554 in Texas are all aimed at limiting a local jurisdictions ability to adopt and enhance codes. Don't lose your right as a fire chief to best serve. Don't lose your community's ability to best determine the building and fire code package best suited to protect the citizens and firefighters. Model building and fire codes protect homes to high-rises, and it's our responsibility to ensure our maximum capability to provide the best possible service to our community.

Get involved! Join forces with your local and state organizations to unite and ensure the homebuilders and other special interest groups don't take away our right to best serve the citizens and firefighters in our community. Visit [www.iafc.org/flss](http://www.iafc.org/flss) for more information on how to be involved."

This article is a "call to arms" for all fire service members. We must unite, take a strong stance, and get actively involved in defeating these ill-intended attempts by the special interests groups that are bent to write the building construction codes to suite their meager business needs which could result in a reducing the safety of our communities and jeopardize our firefighters and the public alike.

Advocacy for fire prevention, and stepping up our public education efforts at this time are even more important than ever before. We in the fire service must educate the public and their elected officials, that the codes and standards developed by the internationally recognized organizations such as the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and the International Code Council (ICC) are the accumulation of decades of failure analysis, research, testing, technical evolution, building construction knowledge and field experience.

And the open, well established code development processes in both these organizations have passed the tests of time and trail. Remind them that every single year, hundreds of our fire service representatives across the country actively participate in these code development processes. Cumulatively, they spend thousands of hours preparing, reviewing, researching, analyzing, and developing codes. Remind them that the fire service members and our fellow building officials are the public servants tasked with protecting our public and our communities. And that contrary to the private sector, we don't have any vested financial interests in the building construction codes.

The primary tactic that these special interest groups use in approaching the state legislators and local politicians is to claim that these cost prohibitive and unfair governmental burdens, are restricting their abilities to build new homes thus creating more jobs which would help with the current economy recovery efforts to revive our communities. They play the sympathy card by claiming to be the victims of these current economic conditions and foreclosures. Yet don't forget that in reality they were at the epicenter of this crisis in the first place.

Homebuilders are not building new homes and are not able to sell their existing inventory not because of the residential fire sprinkler requirement; but because people are now unemployed and can not get the credit to buy the homes.

They were building and selling at high prices like there was no tomorrow only a few years back when variable loans were way too easy to obtain. And that was the major contributing factor to our current economic misery -- not the residential fire sprinkler requirement that was adopted in the IRC less than six months ago which will not go to effect until January 2011.

The real victims then are the American people. Our state level politicians must be reminded of these facts constantly.

When approaching the state legislatures these special interest groups cloak their true intention behind the flag of freedom, democracy and the right to choose for each state to determine their appropriate levels of fire protection and life safety. And yet, hypocritically they want to deprive the local jurisdictions in those states, the very same rights to make the determination for their level of acceptable risk and safety.

We all believe in our American way of freedom of choice, democracy, and the rights of states. But then by the same token, as a public servant, I believe that providing for the safety of our public and our communities, is the main responsibility of the local government. Logic then dictates that the fire service and our fellow public servants, the building officials, should be the ones responsible for establishing the levels of fire protection and life safety in our communities, and not the homebuilders and other special interest groups.

I believe that in the absence of a true set of national building construction codes in our country, it is indeed every states' right and very appropriate for the states to adopt and establish their own building construction code based on the ICC and NFPA codes and standards. But then these state codes must only be the minimum, and not the maximum. Each of the local jurisdictions then has the right to exceed those minimum state codes, but is prohibited to be less restrictive. That is what we are doing in most of the states right now.

In his article titled "NFPA's Take: The Importance of Speaking Out About Fire Sprinklers," Jim Shannon, NFPA's president, underlines the importance of this issue and the threat that it presents to the safety of our communities.

"State legislation being introduced and debated all across the country could prevent these life-saving requirements from ever being adopted in local communities, putting the lives of Americans at risk. The threat from these legislative attacks is real and immediate. Sprinkler opponents are working to undermine those safety provisions. In several states, sprinkler opponents are pushing bills that will prohibit local communities from adopting home fire sprinkler requirements in their jurisdictions. In other states, sprinkler opponents are even working to change the structure of statewide code adopting authorities, removing fire safety officials from this important decision-making process. Though the tactics of sprinkler opponents may differ from state to state, one thing is certain - we must do everything in our power to stop these efforts to undermine public safety and reduce input from the fire service. We must protect a community's ability to choose for itself the right model safety code."

Our firefighters all across the land should be alerted to this dangerous trend. What is at stake is much larger than residential fire sprinklers. What is at stake is not only the safety of our public, but our very own firefighters.

My brother and sisters in the fire service; ask yourself, do you really trust the special interest groups to keep your safety in mind, and provide you the necessary level of fire protection when you are going offensive in the interior of these lightweight construction buildings? And then, ask your loved ones who await your safe arrival after each shift, this very same question.

What's your answer? Who cares more for the safety of our firefighters, than our own firefighters? If not you, then who should take a strong stance against these dangerous legislative maneuvers? How long are we going allow the special interest groups to play the "Russian Roulette" with the safety of our own firefighters?

Now that you know what's at stake; I hope that you agree that it is up to us in the fire service to stand up, unite and fight for the safety of our public and our own firefighters.

# Pre-Planning: An Important Part of Fire Prevention

**By Andy Marsh**  
**Training Officer, Mount Oliver Fire Department**

Two subjects that are starting to gain attention in the fire service are fire prevention and pre-planning. I have noticed more discussion and focus on these subjects throughout firefighting trade publications and online forums. I believe that we should consider pre-planning as an important and crucial component of fire prevention. Maybe you already look at pre-planning as part of fire prevention, but please bear with me.

Some may think of pre-planning as a way to combat the worst case scenarios we may face at a future scene. We usually pick out certain target or high risk buildings and plan for the "big one." For instance, we notice the type of building construction, type of occupancy; figure out the Iowa State University expected fire flow, roof construction, hazardous materials storage, other special hazards or considerations, hydrant locations, etc. Pre-planning is just that; a plan before an incident. Now allow me to discuss how I believe that pre-planning is more than just a plan, it is prevention.

Something that I would like to see, in my department for starters, is that we get out to our residents as much as we can and gather information. The information we gather may be about their homes and about the people in those homes. This is definitely a task that is easier said than done. By having a fire prevention entity involved in the pre-planning process, we may be able to reach the masses by including fire prevention activities in social gatherings. For example, bingos, senior citizen centers, and school visits are all opportunities to reach out and get information about the communities we serve. Maybe we could request some time to speak on behalf of fire prevention at some of these functions, or request to do a fire prevention presentation at their organization meeting place at a different, separate time.

Fire prevention involves the 3 E's, Education, Engineering, and Enforcement. The "Education" component will come from our fire prevention personnel speaking on the topics of fire safe practices, seasonal fire safety, or other relative fire prevention topics when addressing the aforementioned groups. We could do this once a week, once a month or even once a quarter. The important thing is that we start and keep the ball rolling. Time is always a factor that needs to be considered in planning an effective fire prevention strategy. So, if we can reach more at one sitting, we save some time and maybe better make use of our scheduled activities.

The "Engineering" component of the three E's will stem from the creative presentation we put together and present to the public. Also, the engineering comes in getting our residents to fill out basic residential information sheets regarding their homes or apartments. The sheets should request basic information such as the number of senior citizens living in the residence, if medical oxygen is being used, where their utility meters are (sometimes they are inside), how many children are in residence, how many people live in the residence, emergency contact numbers, and physically challenged or mentally challenged residents and where they are most likely to be. You get the picture. Then take this information and fill in type of occupancy, hydrant locations, fire flow expected, exposures, etc. The delicate part of this program is to find a way to easily access this information but still keep the information safe and secure. That will have to be a problem for later, let's just stick to the idea for now.

Once we have this information or even as a way of obtaining this information, we can then offer these residents free home inspections so that they may be able to help the third "E" which is "Enforcement." Through free home

fire safety inspections, we can promote fire safe practices in the home. This may also help us to make note of the statutes, laws, and ordinances relating to fire and building codes that are now up to par in the residence. Obviously, if they live in an apartment or house rental and their landlords do not comply, then we will have to step in a later point and truly address the violations. Fire prevention and pre-planning shouldn't be the chore that we sometimes make them to be.

The fire service is comprised of a unique bunch of individuals. That uniqueness can lend to that special creativity which may allow us to take care of two birds with one stone, fire prevention and pre-planning. What's more is that our "brotherhood" will extend its meaning to the people we have sworn to protect and serve. Our mission statement is "save lives, protect property, and preserve the environment." Fire prevention and pre-planning activities will help us do just that. Let's get to work!



*Captain Andy Marsh is the Training Officer, a Community Safety Educator and a 29 year member of the Mount Oliver Fire Department, a small borough completely surrounded by the City of Pittsburgh and located in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania. Andy is an adjunct instructor with the Community College of Allegheny County's Public Safety Institute. He may be reached at [ffanjemt2@msn.com](mailto:ffanjemt2@msn.com).*