

June 2008 Newsletter

Safety Management System & Safety Through Leadership



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Safety Through Leadership Train-the Trainer National Model Course Ready for Roll-Out

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He Thought He Was Healthy...

You know the type...that one person at the firehouse who is always on the go. The person that everyone calls when they need something done and they need it now. That particular someone who is always active, could run circles around people half their age, and whose energy is a marvel. The person you would never expect to have a heart attack...

Additional Health & Fitness Information:

» [20 minutes to a healthy heart](#)

- » [Emergency Duties, Deaths from Heart Disease](#)
- » [American Heart Association](#)
- » [Coronary Artery Bypass Surgery](#)

Firefighter's Weight Loss Fight - A Severe Approach

What's 40 years old, 350 lbs, 5 feet 9 inches tall and completes a Firefighter rookie / recruit challenge in less than 8 minutes? Well sorry, there's no punch line, truth is it was me three years ago before I made some radical changes in my life.

2008 Fire/EMS Safety, Health, Survival Week is June 22 - 28

The [National Fallen Firefighters Foundation](#) and the [Everyone Goes Home® Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives Program](#) is pleased to once again participate as a partner in the **IAFC/IAFF 2008 Fire/EMS Safety, Health and Survival Week, scheduled for June 22-28, 2008**. The Everyone Goes Home® Program was founded on the need for a cultural change within the fire service. This year's Safety, Health and Survival Week theme, **Committed to Long Term Results**, is meant to encourage strong culture of health and safety within the Fire/EMS service. We encourage you to adopt a health and safety culture and practice it every day, so *Everyone Goes Home®*.

- » [2008 Fire/EMS Safety, Health, Survival Week Resources](#)
- » [2008 Fire/EMS Safety, Health, Survival Week Desktop Wallpaper](#)
- » **Share a Story from Your Department:** [Email editor@everyonegoeshome.com](mailto:editor@everyonegoeshome.com) [About Your SHS Events](#)

Team Firefighter...Improving Firefighter Life and Safety by Supporting Personal Fitness

Team Firefighter is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing support to firefighters who want to better themselves through fitness in sport. All firefighters of any fitness level can join.

16 Ways to Stay Safe

The goal of reducing firefighter line-of-duty deaths is more than worthy of our attention - it is imperative. Today, the fire service has a tremendous opportunity to make an impact on the business that we love, for the ones we love. I can't think of anything else more important.

On Any Given Day!

When I read Chief Rusty Thomas's resignation letter, I thought of how it must have felt for him to write it. I thought of the pain those left behind are still feeling. I thought of fires where I was the one in charge, those on the inside were my friends, and how sometimes we were really just lucky. While I see many shake their head in wonderment and mutter sharp critiques of the chief under their breath, I can't help but believe that what happened in Charleston can and will happen again. In fact it has happened before.

Firefighters Need to Know

With great anticipation firefighters are reading the Charleston Phase II Report to learn of the events as they unfolded almost one year ago. This report was well researched and professionally developed with the goal of helping to prevent yet another similar tragedy in the future.

Dallas Fire-Rescue Gives Seat Belt Pledge a Shot in the Arm

On May 8, the Dallas Fire-Rescue Department reached 100 percent compliance as all of its 1,748 members, uniformed and support staff, signed the pledge and viewed refresher training on roadway safety.



INITIATIVE SPOTLIGHT

Spotlighting one of the 16 Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives each month

Initiative #6 - Develop and implement national medical and physical fitness standards that are equally applicable to all firefighters, based on the duties they are expected to perform.

Research on Initiative #6:

- » [Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives Research Database - Initiative #6](#)
- » [Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives Research Database](#)
- » [NFPA 1583: Standard on Health-Related Fitness Programs for Fire Department Members](#)
- » [NFPA 1500: Fire Department Occupational Safety and Health Program](#) (Chapter 10 and 11)

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

Online TRAINING

Heart Healthy Challenge

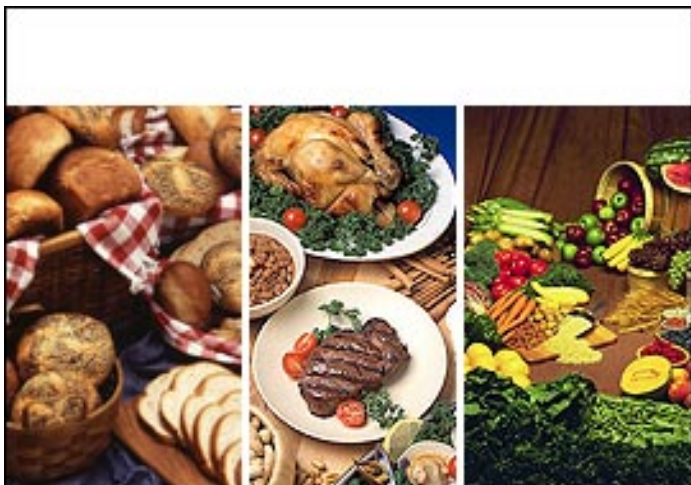
» **Take:**
[Heart Healthy Challenge](#)





Take 5 for Safety

- » [Heart Attack: Action Saves Lives](#) (Handout)
- » [Heart Attack: Action Saves Lives](#) (Instructor Notes)



Photos by ARS Photo Library

HAVE A FAVORITE HEART HEALTHY RECIPE?

EMAIL: EDITOR@EVERYONEGOESHOME.COM

FEATURED Events

Courage to Be Safe (SM) Train-the-Trainer Course

LSU Fire and Emergency Training Institute -
Baton Rouge, LA
June 13, 2008

Read More: » [About the Event](#)

Courage to Be Safe (SM) Train-the-Trainer Course

Provo, Utah - Fire Rescue Academy
June 20 -21, 2008

Read More: » [About the Event](#)

Annual Firefighter/EMS Life Safety Stand Down Initiative

Gaston College - Gaston County, NC
June 21, 2008

Read More: » [About the Event](#)

'08 Safety, Health, & Survival Week

Everywhere!
June 22 - 28, 2008

Read More: » [About the Event](#)

National Firefighter Health Week

Everywhere!
August 18 - 22, 2008

Read More: » [About the Event](#)

Next Month's Newsletter: SAFER Grants

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.

Safety Management System Workshop Completed at National Fire Academy

A Borrowed Approach to Firefighter Safety

By JoEllen Kelly

On May 31 and June 1, 2008, representatives from sixteen fire departments from across the United States gathered at the National Fire Academy for a two-day workshop on how to install a safety management system (SMS) within a fire department. A SMS is, at its most simplistic, an attempt to rationalize all safety programs within an organization to coordinate them into a system that both evaluates and predicts risks. It becomes a systematic, explicit, risk-management approach to minimizing the organization's known safety issues. With its predictive capability, a SMS is a powerful tool for avoiding (preventing) line-of-duty injuries or worse. Of the sixteen attending departments, four were tagged as "mentor" departments who would serve as models or mentors to the others who would be seeking guidance in the future.

For example, most fire departments in the United States have a group of safety policies and procedures ranging from very sophisticated firefighter physicals, to fireground accountability, to driver training programs. In other words, virtually all departments are aware that risks exist in the firefighter's environment that can be countered if known. This awareness of risks usually takes the form of producing policies and procedures which, in the beginning, lower the stress levels of managers who are responsible for firefighter safety but, in the end, do not create significant behavioral changes. It is only when all the safety initiatives are merged do we create tools that can be used by managers and supervisors to create meaningful and permanent change.

The SMS model comes from the pharmaceutical and airline industries (among others, including hospitals) that were plagued by mistakes and near-misses which resulted in lost time, lost revenue and even the loss of lives in some cases. High-risk industries sought to systematically understand the connection between risk and accidents, and to mitigate what was happening in their environments that allowed risks to conclude in loss or accidents. High-risk industries began to evolve safety management systems in an attempt to preserve resources and (by the way) improve performance. SMS relies on goal-setting, planning, and measuring performance. Over time, it becomes woven into the fabric and culture of an organization, improving the way firefighters evaluate known risks



and perform their jobs. The SMS typically focuses on the areas of leadership, policy, procedures, and practices of the organization. An SMS is holistic, dynamic, and can be integrated into every fire department activity.



The National Fallen Firefighters Foundation and the Everyone Goes Home® Program has identified the safety management system approach to have potential benefit to any fire departments seeking to improve outcomes and to greatly increase firefighter safety. At the workshop recently held in Emmitsburg, participants were asked to review the root causes of preventable firefighter injuries in their departments, and look at how these are influenced by attitudes, behaviors and beliefs about risk. Much of the first day was spent in a thorough review of how a safety management system could be installed in a fire department, including a presentation of models that have worked across the country. The model we have asked departments to consider is called PLAN-DO-CHECK-IMPROVE. The first day also asked the attending departments to make a commitment to

developing and installing a safety management system within their own departments-to the greatest extent possible. One model from Montgomery County (MD) Fire-Rescue Service, called R-MAP, demonstrated how accidents, driving safety and behavioral change can be successfully united in an SMS environment.

Day two of the workshop consisted of a presentation and exchange of safety-related materials between the departments and an attempt to merge this material into a management system. It was hoped that the material shared will be scalable for a variety of fire departments.

Over the next year, the Everyone Goes Home® Program will contact the participating departments to see how their individual SMS are progressing. Departments were given material upon which to conduct surveys of their safety systems to identify gaps. The gap analysis of safety deficiencies will be followed by the implementation phase of the core SMS objectives. Over the next year, Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives team consultants, including the mentor departments, will work through problems with the other individual departments. At the end of one year, an FLSI team member, or one of the FLSI State advocates, will visit the department to conduct interviews and generally assess the SMS installation timeline.

If you have questions about fire department safety management systems, please contact JoEllen Kelly of the EGH program at 16FLSI@comcast.net. Also, please watch this newsletter and visit the EveryoneGoesHome.com website for SMS updates.

Safety Through Leadership Train-the Trainer National Model Course Ready for Roll-Out

By JoEllen Kelly

In the summer of 2006, National Fallen Firefighters Foundation Executive Director Ron Siarnicki and the *Everyone Goes Home*® Life Safety Initiatives (LSI) Team, attended a meeting in San Diego of the National Wildland Coordinating Group to look at the leadership material the NWCG had developed for the wildland community. The LSI Team crafted a proposal to develop a course for the structural firefighter based on the NWCG model. Shortly thereafter, Lieutenant Tony McDowell, company officers' section of the Virginia Fire Chiefs Association, contacted the LSI Team seeking help to develop a leadership course that would embody the 16 Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives. The VFCA was invited to collaborate with the LSI Team in the development of a leadership program that would include relevant aspects of the NWCG model and embody the [16 Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives](#). In order to fully understand the NWCG L-380 Leadership sequence, the *Everyone Goes Home*® Program sent two safety officers, one from Montgomery County Fire Rescue Service and the other from the Virginia Beach Fire Department, to the San Diego Fire Department to participate an L-380 course being conducted there. The two officers reported the experience as life-changing in terms of what they learned and what they came to believe about the linkage between firefighter safety and leadership.



One of those officers, Captain Ron Morton from Virginia Beach, went back to his professional association, the VFCA and urged them to move forward with the Virginia Academy. It was decided that a pilot would be developed and offered during the summer of 2007 in Richmond. Along with the two major developing agencies, the *Everyone Goes Home*® program and the VFCA, the Virginia Department of Fire Programs contributed staff and a statewide distribution network for marketing the program.



The pilot was presented in June (2007) at the University of Richmond's Jepson School of Business, to thirty students from across the state of Virginia and five others who had seen the course advertised on the VFCA website and applied. Over one hundred students applied for the course. By any measure, the Safety Through Leadership was a phenomenal success.

Over the next year, FLSI course developers carefully evaluated the material from Virginia with an eye toward developing a national curriculum. While most of the format of the VFCA was retained (including material from the L-380 course) new material was

developed and added to the national model curriculum. A call was put out in the winter of 2008 for thirty students to come to the National Fire Academy. Quickly, all the seats were spoken for, including the return of three who had attended the Virginia pilot. Two weeks ago, the Train-the-Trainer commenced on the beautiful campus of the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, Md.

Safety Through Leadership focuses on the company officer and his or her attitude toward the safety of firefighters within their span of authority. It is a role-play based curriculum which begins with several cooperative exercises, including the naming of the fire department under which all activities will proceed for the duration of the training program. Five modules regarding safety and leadership were presented to the students, ranging from effective supervisory practices to threat and error management (utilizing the model of crew resource management). The modules are meant to make the program both easy to deliver (one a month, for example) and scalable to the particular audience. A series of excellent video role-plays were developed to reinforce discussions. The central goal of the Safety Through Leadership program (based on the foundation of L-380) is to create an emotional impact within company officers so they are encouraged to reflect on their own leadership styles and create changes always with a mindset toward safety. This sounds easy enough, but it is a process through which people must safely guided.



Safety Through Leadership is not meant to replace other leadership programs that may be in place. Rather, it is a value-added approach that requires company officers and other supervisors to set the example of safety in every behavior they model for the firefighters they supervise. This means that safety and leadership are linked not only on the fireground (where we would expect it) but also in training and in the long hours of "everyday living" in the station. The Train-the-Trainer, therefore, spent a good deal of time reviewing an reinforcing the [16 Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives](#) so that the trainers will become living ambassadors for *Everyone Goes Home®*.

Safety Through Leadership is a program appropriate at both the station-level and to broader audiences such as regional or state training opportunities. It can be delivered as it was originally envisioned by the Virginia Fire Officers as a four day academy, or it can be sequentially delivered via the modules. The bottom line is that company officers hold the key to modeling a safety attitude and for doing everything they can to make sure their firefighters go home safe after every call. This is a huge burden and responsibility. The Safety Through Leadership program is one way this burden can be lightened, and this responsibility wholeheartedly endorsed.

If you would like more information about Safety Through Leadership, please contact JoEllen Kelly at 16FLSI@comcast.net, or the *Everyone Goes Home®* program directly via the website at www.everyonegoeshome.com

He Thought He Was Healthy...

By Jen Underwood, Editor



You know the type...that one person at the firehouse who is always on the go. The person that everyone calls when they need something done and they need it now. That particular someone who is always active, could run circles around people half their age, and whose energy is a marvel. The person you would never expect to have a heart attack...

On Thursday May 29th the unexpected happened: Frank Underwood had a heart attack. Frank is a very active member of his firehouse, who at age 57 still answers the call of the house siren and has done so for over 40 years. He does not believe in walking slowly or putting aside something that could be done right now. Most importantly, Frank is my dad.

In the process of editing this newsletter I often find myself inundated with facts, figures, and statistics. I know and understand the prevalence of heart attacks and heart disease among firefighters. Yet when I received the call that Thursday morning and those two frightening words "heart attack," I was still completely shocked. This was not a number on a page...this was my dad.

In the week to follow I learned a lot about heart attacks, stints, and even how scary the words "quadruple bypass" can really be. I also learned just how much of a family the fire service really is. From the paramedics who transported Dad, all the way to the President of the Maryland State Firemen's

Association and everyone in between. All offered support, well wishes and encouragement.

While sitting around in those endless hours in the CCU waiting room, I was amazed at how many visiting firefighters had been to that very same unit before for their own heart surgeries and tests. What truly amazed me is how many were continuing to live their lives with the same unhealthy habits that caused their heart problems in the first place.

What is it going to take to get firefighters to truly understand the seriousness of getting their physicals and stress tests?

My father is one of the most active people I know, with a blood pressure so perfect it was referred to as "remarkable" by his heart surgeon. Yet here he is recovering from a quadruple bypass. It took a heart attack to

basically scare him into caring about his own health. A steady diet of banquet food and grabbing something to eat on the run has steadily taken its toll. As it turns out, even his attempts at eating healthy such as a roast beef sandwich instead of a burger were futile and severely misguided.

I ask you this: If firefighters cannot save themselves, how are they going to save everyone else?

Get your stress test and eat a heart healthy diet. If not for yourself, do it for all the people you might save and for your family - they deserve better than a week in a hospital waiting room (or worse).

Additional Health & Fitness Information:

- » [20 minutes to a healthy heart](#)
- » [Emergency Duties, Deaths from Heart Disease](#)
- » [American Heart Association](#)
- » [Coronary Artery Bypass Surgery](#)

Firefighter's Weight Loss Fight - A Severe Approach

By Assistant Chief Robert A. Mitchell, BPM, ICT 2, PM

What's 40 years old, 350 lbs, 5 feet 9 inches tall and completes a Firefighter rookie / recruit challenge in less than 8 minutes? Well sorry, there's no punch line, truth is it was me three years ago before I made some radical changes in my life. Let me give you a little more background. At the time I was an Assistant Chief of Operations in charge of a shift of firefighters and paramedics. Besides the administrative responsibilities I needed to maintain the same physical capability standards as a rookie firefighter that has just completed minimum standards. No easy task for a 40 year old anyway. Health wise obviously I was overweight, my cholesterol was in the 190's, my triglycerides were off the scale somewhere above 600, I was type two diabetic, controlled with oral medications, my blood pressure was high around 190/90 most of the time and my resting pulse was 100. Additionally I had sleep apnea and could snore any and everyone out of the bunkroom.

During my annual physical that year my family doctor finally got real honest with me and told me that if I didn't get the weight off I would not see my daughters (then 6 & 7) graduate high school, I'd be dead. Needless to say that shook me up a bit so we started looking for alternatives. Up to that point I had been half heartedly trying to diet and exercise which for me didn't work. I looked in to more significant ways to loose weight and keep it off; stomach stapling, liposuction, lap banding, and gastric bypass, all surgical options. Most of these options had significant side effects and limited long tern success rates, with the exception of one.



Gastric bypass looked like it might be the best option for me. Simply explained, GB is where your stomach is bypassed and your body is forced into something of a lifelong malnutrition (forgive the layman's explanation). Now the trick was finding a doctor that did the surgery and finding out how much it would cost and finally would insurance cover it or not. I managed to find a doctor in my area who did the surgery, it would cost in the neighborhood of \$20,000.00 and of course my insurance turned it down. Apparently this was not a new experience for my doctor who worked with me and my insurance jumping through hoops to prove that this would, without any doubt, be life saving medically necessary surgery. I went through, classes about what the surgery entailed, what life after the surgery would be like, unending blood work, nutritional and dietary



coaching and counseling as well as cardiac, respiratory and endocrinology tests and believe it or not physiological testing. With all of that completed and my insurance reluctantly on board I had the surgery. For the first week I was miserable, not eating at all (I was aware of this beforehand but never really prepared).

During this time and for the next year my body underwent incredible changes and my mind underwent even more changes. I learned very quickly that getting my daily minimum required nutritional values of 98 grams of protein and 100 ounces of fluids every day way not that easy with a stomach / pouch approximately the size of my thumb. Keep in mind if I overate, my body got rid of the excess and then some in very colorful ways. Out of my diet completely were rice, potatoes, pasta and bread, as well as sugar. While all these things sound like a lot to give up the results have been well worth it. During that first year I lost 100 lbs, I am no longer diabetic, my B/P is routinely 100/70, resting pulse is 70, no more sleep apnea, for which my wife and daughters are very grateful, my cholesterol is 90 and my triglycerides are 120. O and in the last two years I have lost another 50 lbs and am maintaining fairly well.

I've

shared this with you not to say how great I am but to let you know there are alternatives to losing weight and getting healthy. I am also not a "health nut" although I enjoy being healthy. Currently I serve with the Reedy Creek Fire Department in Lake Buena Vista, Florida as and Asst Chief / Watch Commander and the Orange County Sheriff's Office as a Dive Medical Technician - Paramedic with the Underwater Search and Recovery Team. Additionally, I enjoy time with my family outside hiking and biking. It's great to feel like doing something beyond just spending my off duty time in a recliner talking about how hot it is. Gastric Bypass was certainly a severe approach to weight loss but if your mind is right about doing something about your obesity it is an option worth looking into.



2008 Safety, Health and Survival Week Resources



The National Fallen Firefighters Foundation and the Everyone Goes Home® Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives Program is pleased to once again participate as a partner in the IAFC/IAFF 2008 Fire/EMS Safety, Health and Survival Week, scheduled for June 22-28, 2008. The Everyone Goes Home® Program was founded on the need for a cultural change within the fire service. This year's Safety, Health and Survival Week theme, Committed to Long Term Results, is meant to encourage strong culture of health and safety within the Fire/EMS service. We encourage you to adopt a health and safety culture and practice it every day, so Everyone Goes Home.

Let EveryoneGoesHome.com get you started with resources that focus on this year's key areas:

Emergency Vehicle Safety

Initiative #11 - National standards for emergency response policies and procedures should be developed and championed.

» **[IAFC Safety, Health and Survival Section Recommended Resources](#)**

(Keep watching www.iafc.org/safetyweek for more resources by the IAFC Safety, Health and Survival Section)

Always buckle up.

- » **Take the Seatbelt Pledge** [Click Here to Download the Pledge Form](#)
- » **Watch:** [All of the Seat Belt Safety PSAs](#) 
- » **Download:** [A Seat Belt Poster](#) | [Desktop Wallpaper](#)
- » **Dr. Clark Article:** [Flaw in Our First Line of Defense](#)
- » **Sample SOP:** [Seat Belt Usage SOP \(Union Fire Division, NJ\)](#)
- » **Take 5 Safety Drill - Driving: Seat Belts Are The Key** - ([Handout](#)) | ([Instructor Notes](#))

Firefighter Life Safety Research Database - » [Emergency \(Vehicle\) Response Safety - Seat Belts](#)

Apparatus/POV Response:

- » **Always stop at red lights and stop signs.**
- » **Always drive at speed limits and defensively.**

Firefighter Life Safety Resource Kit Volume 1

- » **Apparatus Response:** [PowerPoint](#) | [Instructor Guide](#)

» **Apparatus Driving & Safe Operations:** [PowerPoint 1](#) | [PowerPoint 2](#) | [Instructor Guide](#)

- » [Emergency \(Vehicle\) Response Safety](#)
- » [Response Policies](#)
- » [Vehicle Response Practices](#)

Learning Media:

- » [Driving Apparatus - Part 1](#)
- » [Driving Apparatus - Part 2](#)
- » [NIOSH Report: Firefighter LODD 12/2/2005 \(LA\)](#)
- » [10 Cones of Highway Safety](#)
- » [Attitude Awareness & Driving Emergency Vehicles](#)
- » [Changing the Nation's Fire Service \(Part I\)](#)
- » [Changing the Nation's Fire Service \(Part II\)](#)

Model Policies and Procedures:

- » [IAFC Policies and Procedures for Emergency Vehicle Safety](#)
- » [Vehicle Operations](#)

PowerPoint Presentations:

- » [Responding in POVs](#)
- » **Mass. Fire Academy** - [Part 1 \(Zip\)](#) | [Part 2 \(Zip\)](#) | [Instructor Guide \(MS Word\)](#)

Take 5 Safety Drills:

Defensive Driving:

- » [Driving: Defensive Driving is the Way of Pros \(Handout\)](#)
- » [Driving: Defensive Driving is the Way of Pros \(Instructor Notes\)](#)

Driver Fatigue:

- » [Fatigue: Be Alert To Problems \(Handout\)](#)
- » [Fatigue: Be Alert To Problems \(Instructor Notes\)](#)

Intersections:

- » [Driving: Intersections Require Care! \(Handouts\)](#)
- » [Driving: Intersections Require Care! \(Instructor Notes\)](#)

VFIS/ESECG:

- » [Competency Course](#)
- » [Driver Evaluation](#)
- » [Driver Safety Checklist](#)
- » [Driver Selection](#)
- » [Driver-Officer Responsibility](#)
- » [Intersection Practices](#)
- » [Personal Vehicle Response](#)
- » [Response Guidelines](#)
- » [Response Speed](#)
- » [Rollover Prevention](#)
- » [Safe Driving Policies](#)
- » [Traffic Control Safety Checklist](#)

Additional Resources:

- » [Vehicle Operations Resource Guide](#)

Wellness-Fitness Initiative

Initiative #6 - Develop and implement national medical and physical fitness standards that are equally applicable to all firefighters, based on the duties they are expected to perform.

- » [IAFC Safety, Health and Survival Section Recommended Resources](#)

(Keep watching www.iafc.org/safetyweek for more resources by the IAFC Safety, Health and Survival Section)

Firefighter Life Safety Resource Kit Volume 1:

- » **Health & Wellness Concerns:** [PowerPoint](#) | [Instructor Guide](#)

Firefighter Life Safety Resource Kit Volume 2:

- » [Turn Out for Life Instructor Guide](#)

Firefighter Life Safety Research Database:

- » [Physical Health](#)
- » [Physical Fitness](#)
- » [Medical Fitness](#)
- » [Wellness Programs](#)

Learning Media Center:

- » [Can We Change? Will We Benefit?](#)
- » [Changing the Nation's Fire Service \(Part I\)](#)
- » [Changing the Nation's Fire Service \(Part II\)](#)
- » [Turn Out For Life](#)

Additional Resources:

- » [Effects of Sleep Deprivation on Responders](#)
- » [20 Minutes to a Healthy Heart](#)
- » [Firefighter Deaths from Cardiovascular Causes](#)
- » [Emergency Duties, Deaths from Heart Disease](#)

Health and Safety, Technology Initiatives

(Fully Implement NFPA 1500, Focus on Personal Protective Equipment)

Initiative #2 - Enhance the personal and organizational accountability for health and safety throughout the fire service.

Initiative #8 - Utilize available technology wherever it can produce higher levels of health and safety.

- » [IAFC Safety, Health and Survival Section Recommended Resources](#)

(Keep watching www.iafc.org/safetyweek for more resources by the IAFC Safety, Health and Survival Section)

About NFPA 1500:

- » **NFPA 1500:** [Fire Service Occupational Safety and Health](#)

- » **Online Access:** [NFPA 1500: Fire Department Occupational Safety and Health Program, 2007 Edition](#) (Chapter 7: Protective Clothing and Protective Equipment; Annex F Hazardous Materials PPE Information)

Firefighter Life Safety Research Database:

- » [Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives Research Database - NFPA 1500](#)
- » [Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives Research Database - Personal Protective Equipment](#)

Personal Protective Equipment:

- » **NFPA 1971:** [Standard on Protective Ensembles for Structural Fire Fighting and Proximity Fire Fighting](#)
- » **Online Access:** [Standard on Protective Ensembles for Structural and Proximity Fire Fighting, 2007 Edition](#)
- » **NFPA 1977:** [NFPA 1977: Standard on Protective Clothing and Equipment for Wildland Fire Fighting](#)
- » **Online Access:** [Standard on Protective Clothing and Equipment for Wildland Fire Fighting, 2005 Edition](#)
- » [Protective Clothing and Equipment Problems](#)
- » [PPE Checklist](#)
- » [SCBA Inspection Log](#)

Additional Resources:

- » [NFPA 1500 Checklist](#)

If you have additional resources that you would like to share for any of these topics [email us](#)

Related:

- » [2008 Safety, Health and Survival Week Resources](#)
- » [NFFF Partners with IAFC, IAFF for 2008 Fire/EMS Safety, Health and Survival Week](#)
- » [Safety Stand Down Renamed to Fire/EMS Safety, Health and Survival Week June 22-28th](#)
- » **Desktop Wallpaper:** [2008 Fire/EMS Safety, Health, and Survival Week](#)
- » [Fire/EMS Safety, Health and Survival Week Website](#)

Team Firefighter...Improving Firefighter Life and Safety by Supporting Personal Fitness

Team Firefighter is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing support to firefighters who want to better themselves through fitness in sport. All firefighters of any fitness level can join.

The mission of team firefighter is:

"To improve the health and safety of the men and women who protect and serve their community by supporting personal fitness programs and encouraging participation in competitive sports. Create a national team of firefighters competing in sport for camaraderie and obtaining exposure and sponsorship. Use team to foster a competitive atmosphere in the firehouse and help impact firefighter health, and use the sponsorship opportunities to make sport more accessible and affordable for firefighters.

Being a firefighter requires incredible strength and stamina - yet too many firefighters do not maintain a regular fitness program. The #1 cause of on the job deaths of firefighters is heart attacks, which can be best prevented by a regular fitness program. By improving the health and fitness of firefighters, we will save the lives of firefighters and those they are there to protect."

Team Firefighter's goals are two-fold. First and foremost, we want to create a healthier and stronger community of firefighters. 50% of on the job firefighter deaths are a result of heart attacks and we would like to change this statistic. With this in mind, we would like to raise money and obtain equipment to support firefighters in their personal fitness pursuits. Secondly, by creating fit firefighters, we believe that lives of others can be saved as well. Fit firefighters will be able to serve the community better, and those served will be safer as a result.

We would like to give all firefighter/athletes the tools (training programs, equipment, a supportive environment, etc.) to become healthier. The imposition of state mandated fitness standards and mandatory workout programs can often create a negative attitude towards fitness and fail to make a significant difference. By creating a competitive environment in the firehouse through sport and internal competition, more of an impact on the fitness of firefighters will be obtained. It is only through cultural change in the firehouse that any significant bearing on our grim health statistics will be improved.

Team Firefighter is looking for aspiring or current firefighter athletes. Whether you are looking to run your first 5K or do an Ironman Triathlon, join Team Firefighter today and represent Firefighters nationwide.

Visit teamfirefighter.com for more information.

Contact Brendan Corcoran at info@teamfirefighter.com with any questions.

16 Ways to Stay Safe

Courtesy of [FireRescue1](#)

Billy Hayes

Firefighter Safety: Use Your Initiative

The goal of reducing firefighter line-of-duty deaths is more than worthy of our attention - it is imperative. Today, the fire service has a tremendous opportunity to make an impact on the business that we love, for the ones we love. I can't think of anything else more important.

I have many roles in the fire service, but one of my most passionate is serving as the Region IV Advocate for the Everyone Goes Home® campaign through the NFFF. I help to coordinate the efforts in Georgia, Alabama, Florida, Mississippi, North and South Carolina, Tennessee and Kentucky. But in the coming months, through this column, I hope to be able to reach out to the whole country in analyzing the 16 Life Safety Initiatives and how they can be implemented in your department.

The first step in the process is to make you aware of the Initiatives. What are they? Where did they come from? What do they mean? And how will they reduce firefighter line-of-duty deaths? The Initiatives were derived from the first Life Safety Summit that was held in Tampa, Florida, in 2004. Fire service professionals from various domains gathered and tried to identify ways to reduce the number of LODDs we experience every year. Thousands of LODDs were reviewed and the group identified 16 Initiatives from six domains to meet the goal of reducing LODDs by 50 percent over a 10-year span. Through funding by Fireman's Fund Insurance and the Department of Homeland Security, the NFFF launched the Everyone Goes Home® campaign. It consists of training, interactive media via the Web and DVDs, an intensive marketing campaign, and a network of safety advocates to promote the program. It is spreading throughout our profession - but not nearly at the rate we would like to see.

No decline

Since 2004, the LODD numbers haven't declined as hoped. The fire service continues to lose approximately 100 firefighters every year. Why aren't we making a significant difference? While enactment of the PSOB program has introduced additional cardiac events into the numbers, we are still having a high number of combat (firefighting) related LODDs even though we are supposedly fighting less fire. Unless things change quickly, this goal of reducing LODDs by 50 percent by 2014 is merely a dream. In 2007, we documented 115 LODDs. Despite the Charleston event that took nine of our fellow brothers, we still had 106 others who fell. But this isn't Disneyworld or fantasyland where we can wave a magical wand to make LODDs go away. It's going to take hard work, commitment and change.

Beginning with my next column, I will focus on a single Initiative as they are not in ranked order, nor is any one more important than the other. The 16 Life Safety Initiatives are as follows:

1. Define and advocate the need for a cultural change within the fire service relating to safety, incorporating leadership, management, supervision, accountability, & personal responsibility.
2. Enhance the personal & organizational accountability for health & safety throughout the fire service.
3. Focus greater attention on the integration of risk management with incident management at all levels, including strategic, tactical, & planning responsibilities.

4. Empower all firefighters to stop unsafe practices.
5. Develop and implement national standards for training, qualifications, and certification (including regular re-certification) that are equally applicable to all firefighters, based on the duties they are expected to perform.
6. Develop & implement national medical & physical fitness standards that are equally applicable to all firefighters, based on the duties they are expected to perform.
7. Create a national research agenda & data collection system that relate to the initiatives.
8. Utilize available technology wherever it can produce higher levels of health & safety.
9. Thoroughly investigate all firefighter fatalities, injuries, & near-misses.
10. Ensure grant programs support the implementation of safe practices and/or mandate safe practices as an eligibility requirement.
11. Develop & champion national standards for emergency response policies & procedures.
12. Develop & champion national protocols for response to violent incidents.
13. Provide firefighters & their families access to counseling & psychological support.
14. Provide public education more resources & champion it as a critical fire & life safety program.
15. Strengthen advocacy for the enforcement of codes & the installation of home fire sprinklers.
16. Make safety a primary consideration in the design of fire apparatus.

So what else are we doing besides the Initiatives? Well, that takes us back to the Everyone Goes Home® campaign. I would encourage you to visit Everyonegoeshome.com. This interactive web site has an abundance of information including interactive training, lots of free stuff, and all the contact information you need to find the advocate for your state and/or to learn more about the program. There is so much information to share with you about the program, I'm afraid I would leave something out. In addition, FlashoverTV.com hosts a dedicated NFFF section with a range of videos to view (**Webmaster Note:** These which are also available in the [EveryoneGoesHome.com Resource Section](#)). With programs such as these, you could say firefighter safety is an emerging issue. Well to me, firefighter safety is not something new in itself. I would have hoped that we have always had the wherewithal to be safe in our operations. But just as the fire service began focusing more on EMS, Hazmat and terrorism - and called them emerging trends - the same is to be said about the emergence of the greater focus and emphasis on firefighter safety. Not including the Everyone Goes Home® campaign, we have seen the development of the Health & Safety Section of the International Association of Fire Chiefs, Near-Miss Reporting, National Seat Belt Pledge, and more and more programs on firefighter safety offered at national and local conferences, just to name a few.

Billy D. Hayes is Chief of Fire Services for the City of Riverdale, Ga., where he has served in that position for the past eight years. Previously he served with the Georgia Insurance & Safety Fire Commissioners Office and with the City of Morrow Fire Department. In addition, he serves as the Region IV Advocate for the Everyone Goes Home® campaign through the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation and President of the Metro Atlanta Fire Chiefs Association. He is a graduate of Georgia Military College and the National Fire Academy's Executive Fire Officer Program. Chief Hayes frequently writes and speaks on the topics of firefighter safety and fire prevention. He can be contacted via email at BillyDHayes@aol.com.

On Any Given Day!

By Chief Richard R. Anderson, C.F.P.S., L.C.S.

When I read Chief Rusty Thomas's resignation letter, I thought of how it must have felt for him to write it. I thought of the pain those left behind are still feeling. I thought of fires where I was the one in charge, those on the inside were my friends, and how sometimes we were really just lucky. While I see many shake their head in wonderment and mutter sharp critiques of the chief under their breath, I can't help but believe that what happened in Charleston can and will happen again. In fact it has happened before.

It occurred to me that on any given day, under similar circumstances in many fire departments, the same outcome is predictable. Chief Rusty loved his department and his job. He knew they were proud, they were good, and they were doing what they had been doing for many years because it worked. No one was surprised that the reports revealed they weren't doing what the national standards said they should have. Can you honestly say that your department does?

When the ultimate challenge of a building with an extremely high fuel load, and no engineering solutions to minimize the predictable rapid fire spread comes, what will be your outcome? Maybe what has worked for years won't work this time. After all the reviews and investigations are conducted, authorities will likely conclude that it was predictable and preventable. It seems that we are very good at looking back and identifying what we should have done, but we are not so good at looking ahead.

Once we lose a brother or a sister we form a committee, or commission a blue ribbon panel of experts, and we begin to scrutinize everything that occurred. We question everything in an effort to prevent what has happened from happening again. Imagine ... What if we did a pre-fatality analysis, instead of a post-mortem analysis? What if we applied the same scrutiny before something happened. Why don't we do this?

Rather than have me answer that question, ask it of yourself. Why don't you do this? I hope the answer is that you have. However, if you have read this far, then I suspect that deep down in your heart of hearts, you may have a suspicion that on any given day what happened in Charleston might happen in your department. As the TV commercial says "Life comes at you fast." There are a lot of things demanding your attention.

Everyday we have to prioritize what will get done and what stays on the pile. Conducting a pre-fatality analysis before someone dies may seem like a low priority. Why? Maybe we are in a state of denial. After the tragedy though, nothing else matters. It becomes the only thing. We must find out how this happened.

As my high school principal would say "A word to the wise is sufficient." Is it sufficient? Knowing and loving your firefighters and your job makes the loss of them even more of a challenge to overcome. My heart goes out to all involved, but I can't help but think that on any given day... there but for fortune go you or I.

Plan your pre-fatality analysis today. Put it on the calendar and get your people together. If you don't know where to start, talk to the experts on the blue ribbon panel or those who investigated the recent loss in Prince William. They had great recommendations on what should have been done. Look on the *Everyone Goes Home®* Website and [contact your state advocate](#), or e-mail us and we will be happy to help.

A great planner once taught me "Begin with the end in mind." What better end than to eliminate preventable line

of duty injuries and deaths... So *Everyone Goes Home*®.

Firefighters Need to Know

Captain William R. Mora

Texas State Advocate

Courtesy of Firehouse.com

With great anticipation firefighters are reading the Charleston Phase II Report to learn of the events as they unfolded almost one year ago. This report was well researched and professionally developed with the goal of helping to prevent yet another similar tragedy in the future.

What was delivered by the task force was valuable tactical and operational information and recommendations that served to elevate the Charleston Fire Department to a level equal to the most progressive departments in the nation. Some of the many nationally approved procedures and practices recommended included: The use of an incident command system, safety officers, an accountability system, adequate staffing, the use of five-inch large diameter hose, standard nozzles, thermal imaging cameras, establishment of adequate water supplies, general training, SCBA storage procedures and so forth.

Excellent timelines, photos and diagramming of advanced hose lines of various diameters and associated pressures and flows were also given. An outstanding analysis of the building construction, high fuel load present and of the heat and smoke build up and spread within the interstitial space was especially informative and clearly described precisely what the firefighters were up against.

This report accomplished many objectives to reach its goal. It provided the recommendations necessary to bring the Charleston Fire Department up to nationally acceptable firefighting practices and procedures.

A safety problem however still exists. If a repeat of this type of tragedy is to be avoided in the future, an underlying problem must be addressed. Although Charleston is on the way to rising to operational levels seen in many other departments, all firefighters need to be elevated to an even higher level of safety and awareness as it pertains to the extreme dangers associated with this type of structure.

The Super Sofa Store had the structural characteristics of a classic large enclosed structure, which has been defined as a structure having very few windows or doors of sufficient number and size for prompt ventilation and emergency evacuation. History has also shown that enclosed structures are highly prone to producing multiple life threatening hazards that engulf firefighters when fast and aggressive interior attacks are initiated. These included violent flashovers, backdrafts, collapses of roofs and floors and prolonged zero visibility conditions, all of which may cause firefighter disorientation leading to serious injury, narrow escapes or firefighter fatalities.

This information has been slowly emerging in the fire service over the years but is information every firefighter needs to know simply because of the serious safety issue at hand. An offensive strategy, which may protect firefighters so well in other structure fires, such as a fire at a residence without a basement, has been shown to be ineffective and unsafe if used during the course of an enclosed structure fire. These can be of any size, age, configuration, construction type or occupancy type.

During past fatal enclosed structure fires, arriving firefighters misinterpreted the initial size up factors and according to established standard operating procedures made an aggressive interior attack to search for the seat of the fire or to conduct a primary search. However, as interior conditions deteriorated, those firefighters who were separated from a handline or encountered entangled handlines became disoriented when they lost the

ability to see within the structure for prolonged or sustained periods of time, depleting their air supplies as they desperately attempted to exit the building.

A firefighter disorientation sequence clearly unfolded in Charleston which leads to the tragic loss of nine firefighters who had every intention of knocking the fire out and heading back home. But as in many other cases involving some of the nation's most progressive and aggressive departments, the outcome was also unfavorable. A few of the many fatalities which have taken place at large enclosed structure fires include: Worcester, MA, Chicago, Phoenix, Los Angeles, New York City, Coos Bay, OR, Hackensack, NJ, Chesapeake Bay, VA, St. Louis, Pittsburg, Fall River, MA and Memphis, TN. And they have not stopped. Since the Charleston fire, firefighters initiating aggressive interior attacks have lost their lives in enclosed structure fires involving a Chinese restaurant in Boston, a vacant high-rise building in Manhattan and most recently, in a large enclosed structure with a basement, involving a millwork warehouse in Salisbury, NC.

The Task Force Report is excellent and should be read by all firefighters, especially chief, safety and training officers everywhere so that appropriate tactical changes can be made. In that spirit, and in memory of the nine from Charleston, solutions to the enclosed structure and disorientation problem are also offered for your consideration.

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- » [Enclosed Structure Standard Operating Guideline \(SOG\)](#)
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Dallas Fire-Rescue Gives Seat Belt Pledge a Shot in the Arm

Dallas is the first large-scale department to reach full compliance

PAUL PELUSO

[Firehouse.Com News](#)

The "Brian Hunton: National Fire Service Seat Belt Pledge" -- started by Firehouse.com contributor Dr. Burton A. Clark in 2006 -- recently marked an important milestone.

On May 8, the Dallas Fire-Rescue Department reached 100 percent compliance as all of its 1,748 members, uniformed and support staff, signed the pledge and viewed refresher training on roadway safety. While there have been close to 200 departments with full compliance during the two-year existence of the pledge, Dallas Fire-Rescue is the first large-scale metropolitan fire department.

There are currently 53,460 signatures of fire service members across the U.S. promising to buckle up. Clark is hopeful that Dallas' accomplishment will spark some healthy competition among the bigger departments, further increasing that number.

"I think there's nothing like a little competition in the fire service," he said. "We all like to think we're the best ... Dallas and the other departments that have 100 percent compliance are the best at using their seat belts."

Last December, Lt. Lauren Brown was attending a class at the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, Md. when she first found out about the pledge. Clark is an instructor at the academy.

Not only was it the first time Brown had heard about the pledge, but the fact that it's inspiration came from her own state gave it even more importance to her.

"It's embarrassing with Brian Hunton being from Amarillo that we hadn't heard of it yet."

Firefighter Brian Hunton was a member of the Amarillo, Texas Fire Department who lost his life after falling out of a fire truck while responding to a call on April 25, 2005. He was not wearing his seat belt.

At that point, Brown decided to take the pledge back to her firehouse in Dallas -- Station 43 -- and make it a New Year's resolution for its crew.

"I realized I wasn't doing my job," she said. "Here was this big fat rule that I wasn't enforcing."

Brown, a nine-year veteran of the department said that while there were long-standing rules within the department when it came to wearing seat belts aboard fire apparatus, but that they weren't enforced regularly.

"It wasn't a priority," she said. "It wasn't a willful violation; we were just focused on getting (to the scene). In the

front seat of an ambulance we always buckled up, it just didn't cross our minds when we were in the fire trucks."

A department-wide effort soon followed and started from the top, down within the department, according to Brown. While the program was embraced by many firefighters, others worried there could be repercussions if they signed it and were found not wearing their seat belts.

"We didn't make this a punitive thing," she said. "It was just something we wanted everyone to promise to do."

"There's not an excuse you can come up with," she said. "We kept pushing it until everyone signed. We used peer pressure and made it a leadership issue."

"Once we pointed it out, officers were saying they couldn't believe we never thought about this before."

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

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