



NASFM News

November 2008

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Upcoming Events!

2008

November 18-19: Science Advisory Committee Meeting, Washington, D.C.

December 9-10: Train-the-Trainer, Oklahoma City, OK

2009

January 12: NASFM Board Meeting, Orlando, FL

Dear NASFM Member,

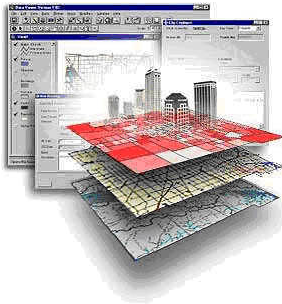
As part of your Board's commitment to better communication with the principal members of NASFM, the first regional conference calls were held October 20 and met with positive results. There were a total of 19 states represented from 4 of the 5 regions established for this purpose; in addition to the general membership who participated, at least one Board member and I were on each call.

Among the general NASFM topics discussed were the new structure of NASFM committees, NASFM's role with U.S. Fire Administration, the Association's support of Jim Burns for a seat on the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, NASFM project management, and the successful International Code Council Final Action Hearings. Every call had discussion of regional issues, such as what is happening with ongoing efforts to enact fire-safe cigarette legislation in the states; the crossroads between "green" buildings, alternative energy and the interaction with fire safety; and investigation protocol in the various offices. There was also discussion of the upcoming NASFM Annual Conference, which is scheduled for the Seattle area in June with a theme centered on this interaction between "green" and fire safety.

These calls provide an excellent outlet for you to offer ideas on how NASFM can be of help to you as well as brainstorming sessions for communication between the state offices. We want the Association to serve your needs, and the best way to understand these needs is through discussions with you. The next round of calls will be held following the next Board meeting on January 12. If you were free to participate, thank you; if you didn't, I hope you'll participate on the next call. We all know successful communication is a two-way process, so take advantage of this opportunity to interact.

Alan Shuman
NASFM President

Geographic Information Systems for Fire Service - Update



On October 8, NASFM President Alan Shuman and NASFM staff attended a meeting of the International Association of Fire Chiefs Technology Advisory Committee. NASFM was invited to participate to discuss how the two organizations (as well as the Metropolitan Fire Chiefs) can increase cooperation in deploying the NASFM fire service data model for GIS.

The groups have formed a partnership to contact the US Fire Administration and other sections of the Department of Homeland Security to determine how fire service-based GIS systems can complement Federal, State and local data collection, reporting and analysis priorities. The goal of the partnership is to deploy a consistent GIS platform across the states, easing the way for increased data sharing and technology use.

The NASFM fire service data model for GIS can be accessed through the following link - see Resources section:

<http://www.firemarshals.org/programs/interoperable-voice-data-communications/>

DOT Unveils One-Stop Shopping for HazMat Data



On October 31, the US Department of Transportation's Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) rolled out its Hazardous Materials Intelligence Portal

(HIP) Program. The goal of the program is to bring together 25 federal databases into one limited-access data warehouse in order to help guide safety actions and manage transportation systematically. The data sources for HIP include the PHMSA HazMat Information System and Safety Monitoring and Reporting Tool system for pipelines; the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's Motor Carrier Management Information System; the Federal Railroad Administration's Hazmat Inspections; Federal Aviation Administration's Hazmat Inspections; and the US Coast Guard Maritime Shipper Penalties reporting system.

The first phase of the program is available only to government agencies responsible for monitoring hazardous materials and pipelines. In the next phase, PHMSA hopes to make HIP available to state and local law enforcement as well as to emergency responders. Overall, HIP creates a Federal Hazmat Intelligence Center that will serve to consolidate hazardous materials information in all 50 states and US territories.

NASFM contact: Courtney Clyatt at ccllyatt@firemarshals.org or 202-737-1226.

Student Research Project on Green Buildings & Fire Safety

As part of a larger NASFM effort to determine how fire protection officials can become more engaged in the growing effort to develop standards for "green" buildings, we are taking advantage of an opportunity to host student interns this fall to assist us in our initial research. Starting October 27 and continuing for 7 weeks, a team of 3 junior-year engineering majors from Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) are working on a research project in our Washington, DC, office. The purpose of their research and interviews will be to survey the various definitions of "green," determine ways in which "green buildings" and fire safety interact, and recommend a

path forward for NASFM to help ensure that fire safety is represented (and at very least not compromised) in buildings that are designed to be environmentally "green."

NASFM Contact: Karen Suhr, kfernico@aol.com or 202-737-1226

Infrared Heater Campaign Provides Safety Inspection Check List



As temperatures drop, many infrared heaters are turned on for the first time in many months. To help promote their safe use and identify potential fire hazards, manufacturers of infrared heating equipment have launched a national safety campaign to provide fire prevention professionals with a brochure that includes a safety inspection checklist and an overview of applicable codes and standards guiding the safe installation of this equipment. The brochure also covers the various types of infrared heaters and their proper use, ventilation and gas connections. For additional safety information and to download a copy of the "Heating Safely with Gas-fired Infrared Heaters" brochure or to request one by mail, visit the Infrared Heater Safety Council Web

site at www.irsafetycouncil.org. The council is an [Air-Conditioning, Heating and Refrigeration Institute](#) initiative. NASFM members are encouraged to share this resource with the fire services in their states.

The National Association for Pipeline Safety Representatives

The National Association for Pipeline Safety Representatives (NAPSR) held its Annual National Conference from September 15-19 in Boise, ID. NAPSR Chair Ron Law of the Idaho Public Utility Commission invited NASFM to present at the meeting. Courtney Clyatt gave a brief presentation on the Pipeline Emergencies program and the recently revamped website.

For more information about NAPSR or the Pipeline Emergencies program, contact Courtney Clyatt at ccliyatt@firemarshals.org or 202-737-1226.

New Video Addresses Need for Propane Safety Training

The U.S. Chemical Safety Board (CSB), an independent federal agency charged with investigating industrial chemical accidents, released a new 23-minute safety video, "Half an Hour to Tragedy." The video, which features West Virginia State Fire Marshal Sterling Lewis, Jr., is based on the propane gas explosion at the Little General convenience store in Ghent, West Virginia, in January 2007 that killed two emergency responders and two propane technicians. As a result of its safety investigation, the CSB recommended mandatory training for propane technicians using improved training materials, regular hazardous materials training and drills for responders, and new propane release guidance for 911 emergency operators. The video can be viewed on the CSB's video site, safetyvideos.gov, as well as the agency's YouTube channel, youtube.com/uscsb. Free DVD copies can be pre-ordered by clicking on "Request DVD"

Federal Safety Vest Requirement Goes Into Effect on November 24

On November 24, 2008, a provision in the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control (MUTCD), administered by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), goes into effect requiring public

safety officers, including volunteer firefighters and EMS personnel responding to an incident on the side of a federal aid highway, to wear a safety vest that meets the Performance Class II or III requirements of the American National Standards Institute/International Safety Equipment Association (ANSI/ISEA) 107-2004 publication. Garments should be labeled as compliant with ANSI/ISEA 107-2004 or ANSI/ISEA 207-2006. Many volunteer agencies are already using these garments, which have been on the market for several years.

Firefighters directly engaged in fire suppression should not wear safety vests, as they could catch on fire and/or melt if exposed to flame. In July, the National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC) submitted a public comment to FHWA requesting that an allowance be made for firefighters exposed to fire or flame in accordance with National Fire Protection Standards. The FHWA rule applies only to responses on federal aid highways, but the NVFC recommends that volunteer firefighters and EMS personnel responding to any roadside incident wear MUTCD-approved safety vests. While there is no federal funding set aside specifically to help local agencies purchase safety vests, there are several grant programs, including the [Assistance to Firefighters Grant](#) program, which offer funding that could be used by volunteer fire and EMS departments to purchase safety vests.