



John R. Kasich
Governor
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Director of Commerce
Larry L. Flowers
State Fire Marshal

Winter 2014

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MARCS Grants Awarded to 106 Ohio Fire Departments

106 fire departments recently got word that they were awarded a piece of the \$3 million MARCS (Multi-Agency Radio Communications System) grant. More than 450 applications were submitted to the Division of State Fire Marshal, totaling more than \$16 million in requests.

The purpose of the grant program is to offset the cost of the radio equipment to local governments in the state of Ohio and to promote interoperability between first responders.

Governor John R. Kasich turned this program into a reality when he signed the Mid-Biennium Budget Review in June. In addition to the more than \$2 million already set aside for training and equipment grants, Governor Kasich and the Ohio General Assembly added in the additional \$3 million in HB 483 to be used for the grant.

“The support from Governor Kasich and the Ohio General Assembly will allow these fire departments to operate at a higher level,” said Commerce Director Andre Porter. “Our goal is to make sure each responder will be able to serve fully and return home safely at the end of an emergency. This grant will help enable that.”

The grant and loan programs, along with the other services offered by the Division of State Fire Marshal, demonstrate the ongoing partnership at the state and local levels. The support of the Ohio General Assembly and the current Administration has been instrumental in funding these initiatives.

“The MARCS grant will allow fire departments to operate more efficiently through improved communication within their department and with surrounding agencies,” said Marshal Larry Flowers. “This will increase the safety levels of both firefighters and the communities they serve.”

Local fire departments chosen for the grant were selected based on a variety of criteria, including the fire department’s annual budget, annual number of fire incidents and the resident population served by the department.

While not everyone was awarded a grant, the State Fire Marshal’s office hopes to offer it again next year, so more departments can receive help in obtaining interoperability.



Marshal Flowers presents Putnam County fire departments with a MARCS grant check.

A Message from...State Fire Marshal Larry Flowers



As we get ready to welcome in 2015, I would like to take a moment to reflect on all of the great things that have happened here at our office over the past year.

This year started off with an initiative that is still continuing. As the State Fire Marshal, I felt it was important to get out into the communities you serve to thank you for your dedication and commitment to Ohio's fire service and citizens. Because of your hard work, Ohio recorded the lowest number of fire fatalities in 27 years with 105 in 2013. While we cannot rest until we bring that number to zero, I truly believe this is a result of our state's firefighters. That is why I made it a priority to travel throughout Ohio on Listening Tours to express my gratitude for your work. So far, we have been in 77 of the 88 counties in Ohio, and look forward to visiting the remaining 11.

Another important goal I had this year was to help the fire service get the best equipment and training possible. I'm pleased to say we've been able to continue providing our volunteer fire department equipment and training grants, our revolving loan, and our Firefighter I grant. But we didn't just stop there. We've added the MARCS (Multi-Agency Radio Communication System) grant and thanks to the Bureau of Worker's Compensation, added more funding to our Firefighter I grant.

The MARCS grant came to life when Governor Kasich signed the Mid-Biennium Budget Review in June. He and the Ohio General Assembly added in an additional \$3 million in HB 483 to be used for grant. The money can be used to purchase the systems, equipment, and/or services that are a part of, integrated into, or otherwise interoperable with MARCS. The response for this funding was overwhelming. There were more than 450 applications, totaling \$16 million in requests. 106 departments received the \$3 million in funding. While not everyone got the funding, we hope to offer this loan again next year, so even more fire departments can take advantage of the opportunity.

Also this year, the Bureau of Workers' Compensation (BWC) gave the Division of State Fire Marshal \$1 million for Firefighter I training grants because they believe safer firefighters will make for safer communities and workplaces. That money will become available in the coming months. Our office has also given \$500,000 to train approximately 1,000 firefighters to level 1 certification in Fiscal Years 2014 and 2015. These classes are held at local schools and charters, so that firefighters can fit them into their schedules. It ties into our commitment of making training affordable and accessible, and now BWC is helping us strengthen that commitment.

Finally, I would like to highlight the Ohio Business Compliance Incentive (OBCI). One of the proposed programs of the OBCI is called "Operation Safe Stay." Our office inspects and licenses nearly 1,600 hotels and motels in Ohio annually. This program would publically designate those hotels that consistently meet the highest level of Ohio Fire Code-based fire and life safety standards and Ohio Revised Code based sanitary guidelines as a Safe Stay hotel. This is a transformative new approach to compliance that we are excited to be a part of.

These are just a few examples of our continued commitment to Ohio. As always, all of our bureaus strive to provide the best customer service for the fire service and our citizens. I look forward to bringing you the same support in 2015. My sincere wishes for a happy holiday season and new year.

State Fire Marshal Employees Receive National, State Recognition

Three State Fire Marshal staff members were recently appointed to two national organizations and one employee received recognition on the state level.

Chief Brian Whitten of the Code Enforcement Bureau and Tracie Boyd of the Legal Division have both been appointed as Code Development Committee members by the International Code Committee (ICC) Code Council Board of Directors.

Chief Whitten will serve on the International Fuel Gas Code (IFGC) Code Development Committee from January 1, 2015 until December 31, 2017. Tracie Boyd will serve on the Fire/Wildland-Urban Interface Interpretation Committee for the same time period. Both will be involved in national hearings to help mold the International Code during the 2015-2017 cycle. They will join other code experts from around the United States and world.

Chief Chad Wissinger of the Forensics Lab was recently appointed to serve as a member of the National Institute of Standards and Technology's Crime Scene/Death Investigation Scientific Area Committee's Fire Scene and Explosives Subcommittee within the Organization of Scientific Area Committees.

The length of Chief Wissinger's service is yet to be determined. This subcommittee focuses on standards and guidelines related to the investigation, analyses and interpretation of crime scenes where arson or the use of explosives is suspected. Chief Wissinger is joined by forensic experts from across the U.S.

"These are major accomplishments for all three individuals. They have worked hard to obtain inclusion into these groups and by doing so, will give Ohio a voice on the national level," said Marshal Flowers. "Again, congratulations Chief Whitten, Tracie, and Chief Wissinger and thank you for your continued hard work and dedication to safeguarding the lives of all Ohioans."

On the state level, former Ohio Fire Academy Superintendent, Dana Smith, was honored with the 2014 President's Award by the president of the Ohio Certified Public Manager Society (OCPM). Each year, an OCPM training program final presentation team is selected by the Society President for recognition. Criteria includes exemplifying the Certified Public Manager designation in the application of the training's core competencies and most thorough utilization of the 18-month training program content while producing noteworthy results in their final presentation.

Smith was part of a team sponsored by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) that addressed an increasing problem of overgrowth on walking paths and hiking trails at state parks due to decreases in resources. The team was able to provide ODNR with a low or no cost solution which results in a free labor program that also provides an educational opportunity for individual participants.

"State Fire Marshal employees are making an impact both in our office and throughout the state," said Marshal Flowers. "Dana's recognition shows our continued promise to make Ohio a better place to live and work."

At a Glance

- **Chief Brian Whitten and Attorney Tracie Boyd appointed to ICC**
- **Chief Chad Wissinger appointed to national forensics investigation group**
- **Former OFA Superintendent Dana Smith awarded OCPM's President's Award**

Winter and Holiday Fire Safety Tips

The cold weather and the holiday season have arrived and State Fire Marshal Larry Flowers wants to make sure you and your family are safe during this time of the year. Whether you are cooking a holiday meal, decorating or if your power has gone out, there are things you can do to avoid any fire dangers.

Heating Safety

- Use kerosene heaters and space heaters according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- Alternative heaters need their space. Keep anything combustible at least three feet away.
- Make sure your alternative heaters have 'tip switches.' These 'tip switches' are designed to automatically turn off the heater in the event they tip over.
- Do not use the kitchen oven range to heat your home. In addition to being a fire hazard, it can be a source of toxic fumes.
- Never refill a space heater while it is operating or still hot.
- Refuel heaters only outdoors.
- Make sure wood stoves are properly installed, and at least three feet away from combustible materials. Ensure they have the proper floor support and adequate ventilation.

Generator Safety

- Follow the manufacturer's instructions and guidelines when using generators.
- Use a generator or other fuel-powered machines outside the home. CO fumes are odorless and can quickly overwhelm you indoors.
- Use the appropriate sized and type power cords to carry the electric load. Overloaded cords can overheat and cause fires.
- Never run cords under rugs or carpets where heat might build up or damage to a cord may go unnoticed.
- Never connect generators to another power source such as power lines. The reverse flow of electricity or 'backfeed' can electrocute an unsuspecting utility worker.

Electrical Safety

- If your home has sustained flood or water damage, and you can safely get to the main breaker or fuse box, turn off the power.
- Assume all wires on the ground are electrically charged. This includes cable TV feeds.
- Look for and replace frayed or cracked extension and appliance cords, loose prongs, and plugs.
- Exposed outlets and wiring could present a fire and life safety hazard.
- Appliances that emit smoke or sparks should be repaired or replaced.
- Have a licensed electrician check your home for damage.

Cooking Safety

- Have a safety zone: keep children and pets three feet away from the stove and oven.
- Never hold a child or pet while cooking.
- Avoid wearing loose clothing or dangling sleeves while cooking.
- Keep potholders, oven mitts, towels and anything flammable away from your stovetop.
- Clean food and grease from burners and the stove top. It can catch on fire.
- If you must use a turkey fryer, keep it outside, away from buildings and other structures, such as garages, carports and decks. Never leave the turkey fryer unattended. The turkey should be thawed prior to frying. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions.



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New Leadership for Two State Fire Marshal Bureaus

The Ohio Fire Academy (OFA) and the Fire & Explosion Investigation Bureau (FEIB) will now be under new leadership. State Fire Marshal Larry Flowers announced **Steven Goheen**, of Springfield, has been named the new Superintendent of the Ohio Fire Academy and Josh Hobbs, of Waverly, will take over the chief position of FEIB.



Steve Goheen is sworn in by
Marshal Flowers.

Goheen comes to OFA previously serving as the public safety program director at Clark State Community College where he started the fire training program eight years ago. He was a firefighter for the City of Springfield for 31 years, serving 18 years as battalion chief. Before that, Goheen was a volunteer firefighter for Springfield Township Fire Department.

He has an associate's degree in business from Clark State Community College, paramedic training from Clark State, and has taken courses at the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, Maryland.

"We are excited to welcome Steve to the State Fire Marshal family," said Marshal Flowers. "He has already

hit the ground running and we appreciate his enthusiasm and commitment to maintain the Academy's reputation."

Hobbs was previously a supervisor for FEIB and has been with the bureau since 2003, starting as an investigator. He has also been a member of the Waverly Fire Department for the past 21 years, currently serving as a Captain for the department.

Hobbs is certified as an Ohio Peace Officer, and has taken many interviewing and interrogation courses.

"Chief Hobbs has been and will continue to be a valuable asset to FEIB," said Marshal Flowers. "I believe the excellence of our investigations team will continue under the new leadership."

Both men have already started their new position.



Josh Hobbs is sworn in by
Marshal Flowers.

Tips Continued from Page 4

Additional Tips

- Be careful when using candles. Keep the flame away from combustible objects and out of the reach of children.
- If the power goes out, make certain that all electrical appliances, such as stoves, electric space heaters and hair dryers, are in the OFF position..
- Some smoke alarms may be dependent on your home's electrical service and could be inoperative during a power outage. Check to see if your smoke alarm uses a back-up battery and install a new battery at least once a year.
- Smoke alarms should be installed on every level of your home and inside and outside of sleeping areas.
- All smoke alarms should be tested monthly. All batteries should be replaced with new ones at least once a year.
- If there is a fire hydrant near your home, keep it clear of snow, ice and debris for easy access by the fire department.

Incident Report Changes

Starting January 1, 2015, fire departments will be redirected to a new website to submit fire incident reports to the State Fire Marshal's Fire Prevention Bureau. If needed please update your browsers bookmarks accordingly.

New Requirements:

1. **A password update is required for this site.** When you log on to the website for the first time, you will use your **FDID*** and existing password. You will then be prompted to change the password and setup your security questions.
2. **Each department will only have one user ID and password.**
3. **Resetting passwords after initial login:** If a person forgets a password after it is initially changed, it can be reset. However, you must know the user ID, answer to the security question, and the email address specified in the initial setting of the new password. If you do not know that information, contact the Fire Prevention Bureau at (614)-752-7115 for assistance.

***Your FDID will remain your User ID.**

At a Glance

- **New site for OFIRS fire reporting**
- **New passwords required, but FDID will remain user ID.**
- **Questions about the changes? Call Ken Klouda at (614) 752-7123.**

In addition to the change of username and password, the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) has released the specification changes to the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) that will be implemented by a release scheduled for January 1, 2015. Vendors should review the documentation to ensure that your software applications are updated.

Incidents submitted with an incident date of January 1, 2015, or after, will be validated against these

specification changes. Failure to update your software packages could cause users to encounter critical errors during the import process for their incident data.

A quick overview of the changes:

Specification changes

- Updated Incident Module Rule 19 to allow the Hazardous Materials Module for dust explosion incidents.
- Removes/deactivates Relational Edit 181. This rule required Equipment Involved in Ignition be entered if the incident was not a vehicle fire and the heat source or factors contributing to ignition was heat from operating equipment. The rule is removed due to conflicts in some situations when vehicles are involved in the fire. This resets the rule validation for Equipment Involved in Ignition to the state prior to introduction of Relational Edit 181.
- Allows the Action Taken of 52 (Forcible entry) for Incident Type 542 (Animal rescue).

For additional information or questions please contact Ken Klouda, Program Manager in the Fire Prevention Bureau at 614-752-7123 or email him at ken.klouda@com.state.oh.us.

New Class Helps Care for “Man’s Best Friend”

The Ohio Fire Academy was recently invaded by some four legged friends and their handlers for a brand new class. The K9 Handlers class is a pilot course for working fire and police K9 handlers. The combination lecture and hands on class included training on triage, physical examination of the canine, first aid, CPR, bandaging, bleeding control, and airway management.

The purpose of this class, taught by Dr. Edward Cooper VMD, MS, DACVECC, is to help K9 handlers recognize medical and traumatic emergencies in their dogs and prepare them to begin treatment for the dog. Dr. Cooper is part of the Ohio State University Department of Veterinary Clinical Sciences as an Associate Clinical Professor, and Head of Service for Small Animal Emergency and Critical Care.

Heidi Stone with the Ohio Fire Academy coordinated the class along with Dr. Cooper. She said this is a new class that they hope to continue in the future.

“We want to take the feedback from the first class and develop the lessons even further for the handlers in the future,” said Stone. “This class allowed us to see what we need to expand on to make this a valuable learning opportunity.”

Handlers and K9s from the State Fire Marshal’s Fire & Explosion Investigation Bureau, the U.S. Marshal’s Office, and several local fire and police departments took part in the first class.

For more information on the course, you can call the Ohio Fire Academy at 1-888-726-7731.



SFM Investigator Ron Stemen learns how to help his K9 partner, Dodger, during the new class.

Looking for some training opportunities? Look no further than the Ohio Fire Academy!

Courses available on campus in Reynoldsburg or through Academy Close to Home!

Call 1-888-726-7731 or visit https://www.comapps.ohio.gov/sfm/fire_apps/fmac/course_reg/CourseList.aspx

Keep an eye out for the 2015 OFA Course Catalog coming soon!



Winter is Here—Staying Safe in the Elements

The temperature is dropping, the trees are bare, and snow is in the forecast. It may be hard to believe, but winter is here and that means everyone in the fire service needs to be more cautious out in the elements. Every year, there are accidents involving fire trucks while responding to emergencies and there are times when those incidents could have been avoided. That's why it is important to prepare your apparatus and drivers for the conditions.

Last year, there were 851 crashes involving ambulances and fire trucks in Ohio, up from 674 in 2013. The causes of these incidents vary, but many were attributed to failure to control the apparatus. With the icy and snowy conditions upon us, drivers should remember to slow down and travel at a safe speed. Be aware of your surroundings. If you're moving through traffic, remember that some vehicles may not stop as quickly and effectively in bad conditions. Finally, have your most experienced drivers handle these situations. Maneuvering through snow and ice isn't something that should be left to a new firefighter.

Preventative maintenance on your apparatus is also imperative to the preparation for the winter months. It's going to be harder for your fire trucks to get to and from emergency scenes, so making sure they're in the best working order is crucial to your safe response. Have all trucks checked by a mechanic as soon as possible. They should be ensuring that everything is working properly, especially your brakes. Bad brakes may not possess enough force to stop the apparatus, and by checking them, you could avoid an incident. Also, check your tires and have chains ready to put on in extreme conditions. Bald or nearly bald tires won't gain any traction in the snow and chains can help when even good tires aren't enough. It's not a secret- having all properly working equipment on your truck can make a big difference in your safety and response.

A firefighter's job is to protect the public, but you also have to protect yourselves in order to do that. It's important to get to the scene quickly during an emergency response, but you won't be helping anyone if you don't make it there. Being proactive and cautious this winter can make all the difference so you can continue serving your communities.



2014 Ohio Fire Service Hall of Fame & Fire Awards

The 2014 Ohio Fire Service Hall of Fame & Fire Awards ceremony was held on Wednesday, September 17th at the Division of State Fire Marshal in Reynoldsburg. The joint award ceremony recognizes citizens, firefighters and educators for their contributions to Ohio over the past year by the Division of State Fire Marshal and the Division of Emergency Medical Services (EMS). Thirteen individuals were presented with awards during the event, and nine firefighters were honored posthumously with Merit Awards.

Merit Award

James Dickman Private, Toledo Fire & Rescue Department
 Terry “Dick” Guss, Sr. Firefighter, South Zanesville Fire Department
 Rickie Halcomb Firefighter, Dayton Fire Department
 James “Mike” Hill Lt. Sycamore Township Fire & EMS Department
 Steven Knaus Firefighter, Willowick Fire Department
 Stephen Machcinski Private, Toledo Fire & Rescue Department
 Leroy Murphy, Jr. Firefighter, Gettysburg Rural Fire Department
 Bruce Stayner Lieutenant, Scioto Township Fire Department
 John Wayman Chief, Jefferson Fire Department



Citizen Award

Ben Carroll Columbus, Ohio
 Brittney Robinson Wellington, Ohio
 Shane Robinson Wellington, Ohio
 Stacy Unkefer Orrville, Ohio



Fire Service Valor Award

Scott Baum Firefighter-Paramedic, Hamilton Fire Department
 Joseph Phillips Firefighter-Paramedic, Hamilton Fire Department
 Jerod Smith Firefighter, Huron Fire Department
 Eric Wood Firefighter, Piqua Fire Department



Officer of the Year Award

Jesse Baughman, Atwater Fire Department

Instructor of the Year Award

William Grubb, Columbus Division of Fire, Delaware Area Career Center

Fire Prevention Educator of the Year Award

Jermaine Hill, City of Forest Park Fire Department

Volunteer Fire Department of the Year Award

Georgetown Volunteer Fire and EMS

Ohio Fire Educator Lifetime Achievement Award

Jay Louks Washington Township Fire Department



State Fire Marshal Employees Commit to Giving Back to Ohio

The Division of State Fire Marshal (SFM) raised \$720.84 for the Combined Charitable Campaign during fall of 2014. The Combined Charitable Campaign, or CCC, is an initiative that state agencies participate in as a way to give back to Ohioans. The major event that the State Fire Marshal hosted was Halloween-a-Plooza, which took place on October 17, 2014. The event consisted of SFM bureau's decorating for Halloween, a trick-or-treating event, and a staff dress up in which the theme of costumes was collectively voted upon. In addition, employees who choose to wear jeans on any Friday pay \$2 and all proceeds go to the charitable events.

That is not all SFM is doing to give back. The Holiday Food Basket kicked off in November 2014. More than \$500 has been raised to date by the SFM. On December 4th, SFM hosted a donut sale and holiday tree lighting. Additional events for this holiday season included a holiday prank fundraiser where light hearted pranks are played on fellow employees, an ugly Christmas sweater contest, holiday bureau decorating, and a holiday cookie exchange. The Department of Commerce is also hosting a silent auction in which each division will auction off a basket of themed items. In addition to the Holiday Food Basket events, the State Fire Marshal will be donating toys and items of need to Nationwide Children's Hospital's Burn Unit in Columbus, Ohio.

"We want to serve Ohioans in more ways than just our traditional duties," said Marshal Larry Flowers. "It's important to help out the less fortunate not only during this holiday season, but all year long."

Marshal Flowers and all of the State Fire Marshal's office would like this to be the first year of a long tradition of holiday events.



Santa, the Grinch and Buddy the Elf visit Marshal Flowers and Chief Deputy Leaming.



Department of Commerce

Division of State Fire Marshal

John R. Kasich, Governor
Andre T. Porter, Director

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