

The Newsletter of the New Jersey Division of Fire Safety

# FIRE FOCUS

Lori Grifa, Acting Commissioner  
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Lawrence Petrillo, Director  
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## NJDFS-OPERATION 7 SAVE-A-LIFE KICKS OFF AT ESPN ZONE IN NYC

The New Jersey Division of Fire Safety, WABC Channel 7, Kidde, The Home Depot, and others launched Operation 7 Save A Life 2010, which allots 15,000 smoke alarms for needy residents in northern portions of New Jersey. The program, over a period of 10 years, has seen the distribution of over 150,000 alarms at no charge since the NJDFS has been a participant. This year will be no different according to program coordinator Charles Luxton.

"The statistics for fire death in our state show that our focus must be intensified on the reduction of the instances of residential fire fatalities, and the impact on the most vulnerable," said NJDFS Director and State Fire Marshal Lawrence Petrillo, at the campaign's annual kickoff breakfast at the ESPN Zone, Times Square, New York City.

Petrillo was joined by long time WABC 7 anchor Bill Ritter, the FDNY's newest Fire Commissioner, and representatives from Kidde and Home Depot.

Operation 7 Save A Life is a project of ABC owned television stations in major cities nationwide in partnership with Kidde.



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# NJDFS JOINS OPERATION SAVE-A-LIFE SMOKE ALARM GIVEAWAY IN NYC

## “HANDS ACROSS THE HUDSON”



The annual Operation Save a Life kickoff breakfast allowed New Jersey Division of Fire Safety Director and State Fire Marshal Lawrence Petrillo to acknowledge and congratulate Salvatore Cassano on his new appointment to Commissioner of the FDNY.

Commissioner Cassano brings 40 years of experience to what is the world's largest fire department with more than 16,000 fire, EMS and civilian members and an annual budget of 1.6 billion dollars. Prior to his appointment Cassano was the FDNY's highest ranking uniform officer.

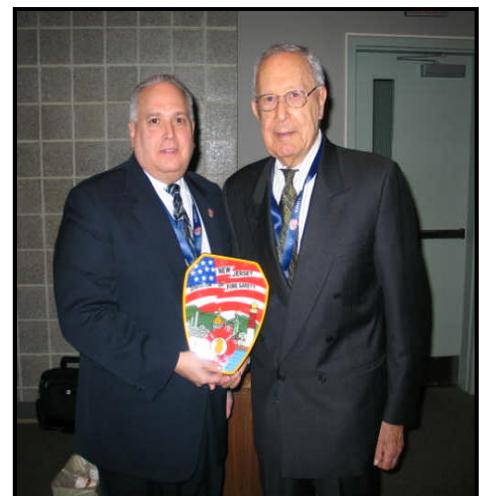
Joining Petrillo in welcoming Commissioner Cassano were, (left to right) Charles Luxton, Coordinator of the NJDFS Operation Save a Life and Chris Eckert, Supervisor of the NJDFS Arson Unit.

Contact: [cluxton@dca.state.nj.us](mailto:cluxton@dca.state.nj.us)

## DR. FRANK FIELD FIRE SAFETY EDUCATOR AND ADVOCATE

Thank you Dr. Frank Field...

New Jersey Division of Fire Safety Director Lawrence Petrillo took the opportunity to award Dr. Frank Field, former long time science reporter and meteorologist in the New York area recently for Dr. Field's continuing dedication to advancing the cause of Fire Safety education and prevention. Dr. Field produced the documentary "Fire Is..." which has been used in area schools for many years. Dr. Field, at the age of 85, continues the task of encouraging local school districts throughout New Jersey and the entire country to integrate fire safety education into the formal curriculum of local schools, utilizing local cable television provided education access channels, which are "cablecast" exclusively to elementary, middle and high school students. (see related article p. 4).



# NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE FIRE MARSHALS SCHEDULE SEMINAR



The National Association of State Fire Marshals Research & Education Foundation and Fireproof Children-Prevention First, together with the Bergen County Fire Academy and FEMA, are presenting a FEMA Region 2 workshop at the Academy on Wednesday, April 7.

NASFM has received federal funding to conduct the training throughout FEMA's six regions. The seminar is specifically designed as a "train the trainer" opportunity for local jurisdictions throughout Region 2 to obtain the level of skill necessary to take the information back home and in turn, train local personnel.



The session is designed to provide the means to build a local capacity to reduce instances of youth fire setting and child fire play. It provides best practices for long term sustainability of those local programs and will focus on topical issues; such as the NJ novelty lighter legislation, just signed into law by outgoing Governor Jon Corzine.

Session participants can expect to receive advanced knowledge and change agent skills for local advocacy and intervention efforts. It will allow students to bring new concepts to local jurisdictions and provide them the tools to formulate a coordinated response to fire prevention and fire safety issues.

Participants will also receive the CD *Juvenile Firesetting: A Community Guide to Prevention and Intervention*. The handbook includes "take away" material such as conducting effective interventions and developing communications skills.

For more information on the seminar and to register online:

<http://www.firemarshals.org/>



FOCUS ON FIRE SAFETY  
Children



# the fire focus interview

**Editor's note:** *The following opinions are expressly those of Dr. Frank Field and cannot constitute an endorsement of them by the N J Department of Community Affairs-Division of Fire Safety.*

Dr. Frank Field is a familiar face to millions of New Jersey television viewers owed to his long run as a health and science reporter and meteorologist. While most would be content to simply rest on that record of accomplishment, at 85, Dr. Field does not and has dedicated his time and his energy to attempting to change the way we approach fire safety education in the 21st Century.

He took time recently to discuss the issue with Fire Focus staff, in an interview conducted before Dr. Field's presentation on the subject at the Middlesex Fire Academy. Herewith follows a portion of that discussion.

**FIRE FOCUS:** You spent many, many years as both a health and science reporter and meteorologist on television reporting to millions of viewers in the New York, New Jersey Metropolitan area. Many times you reported on the necessity for aggressive Fire Safety and Fire Safety Education. In view of that, where does the public attitude toward Fire Safety, and more importantly Fire Safety Education stand in your estimation these days?

**FIELD:** In reality there is little fire safety education offered by either schools or Fire Departments in the U.S. today. New Jersey Statute dictates that a regular course of fire education be offered to our children but that does not happen.

Few schools prescribe fire education on a regular basis and generally rely on local fire personnel to make that once a year visit to try to teach the subject.



Eighty percent of those visits are made to is the pre-k and primary grades. That is where fire safety education ends for most children in this country. Children come away with the singular lesson of "Stop Drop and Roll" and children's parents.

The annual Fire Prevention Week represents a wonderful social occasion when kids come to fire houses across the country and climb onto trucks, meet Sparky the fire dog and enjoy barbecues at the fire house. That is not fire education.

Study after study has shown that adults are indifferent and apathetic about the subject of fire prevention and safety. That is because they experienced the same type of teaching 50 years ago. It has changed little and as a result we have generations growing up with little comprehension of the danger in fire.

**FIRE FOCUS:** How can we change the public's attitude, and perhaps ironically for some the attitude of the fire service toward Fire Safety Education and Prevention?

**FIELD:** Public attitudes are generally based on what they see on TV, the movies or in the news media. That is a mixed message for sure. Television news has always covered fires and the drama that usually arises from them.

Coverage of fires on TV usually results in the most dramatic video of flames and smoke and of course people in peril. For example a story about an apartment house fire focused

on the fact that a woman and her cat were able to escape the flames. If the story had focused on the fact that this woman would have been perfectly safe by staying in her apartment and following procedures, it could provide, every time it's aired, a tremendous "teachable moment" for the thousands of viewer's who are drawn to the spectacle.

For example, that woman after calling 911 and reporting her location, should remain patient and await emergency personnel.

She should know that the apartment entry door in a NJ code regulated high rise is the product over 50 years of fire code improvements and is inherently capable of resisting the onslaught of fire for a period of time. The first fire safe thing would be to first touch the door to see if it is unusually warm.



If it is then go to the window and do something, wave a white pillowcase to alert first responders to your location.

If the door is not, then quickly look through the slot for any hallway smoke. If there is, then cover any door crease with a damp bed sheet.

Exit only if you do not see smoke and making absolutely certain no one remains in your apartment. Pull the building fire alarm and get down the stairwell as quickly as possible.

Do not under any circumstances use the elevator. Finally under no circumstances return to the building. Tell firefighters if you know if anyone remain inside. Only re-enter the building if given permission by emergency personnel.

None of these critical precautions typically makes it to the newscast or the reporter's story accompanying the video of the

leaping flames and smoke. That's exciting to viewers. This has got to change. Every such story should add fire safety and prevention information. Not enough time? The station's internet eliminates that excuse. There are no such limitations there.

Put the information on the station website and provide a link to it over the video during the story. It is so easy to do these days simply by including Internet links to fire safety education sites.

**FIRE FOCUS: What , in your opinion, is the best way to get more detailed fire safety information to the public beyond the media?**

**FIELD:** The only people who know the danger of fire are those who address the problem of fire...the firefighter. Firefighters might return after careers as part-time teachers of fire prevention and safety. Schools cannot do the job alone. One does not need a doctorate to teach the subject.

Children need someone they respect to tell them what fire danger is all about. They have to understand the reality of fire and what the firefighter does.

Want to learn to ski?  
Get a professional skier!

Want to learn to play a guitar ?  
Get a musician to teach you!

Want to learn to survive a fire?  
Get a firefighter to teach you how.

Not just visit children but continue the lessons of fire danger through all levels of school right up to college.

Then we will end up with a generation that understands why smoke detectors are life saving and why parents should practice fire drills in the home.

Today, parents are aware that their children have fire drills each month in school, yet very few parents hold a fire drill in their home.

**FIRE FOCUS: What do you feel is the resistance behind school district's unwilling to devote as much time to Fire Safety Education as say to Drug Awareness?**

The school curriculum is overloaded. Those who decide on the question of fire prevention and safety have never learned the lessons of fire in the courses they take to achieve their position as teachers.



I know of no college which includes fire safety as part of the teachers to be training, or, for that matter the many, many days dedicated to "in-service training" of current teachers.

Therefore educators are equally ignorant of fire safety and are in no position to teach a subject which they do not fully understand.

Just as average Americans are unable to pass on to their own children the lessons needed because on the whole they themselves have little background training on the subject.

**FIRE FOCUS: Could you describe your view of the state of Fire Safety Education nationwide today?**

**FIELD:** It is fragmented and unworkable. There is little uniformity in the subject and every state, municipality and school system in the country works in a vacuum created by the forces in its own local concerns. It's the bad side of "home rule" if you will.

The so called non-profits all post the same messages and continue to promote their own agendas.

Firefighters find its literally impossible to work with school districts and convince both schools and governmental bodies and even in their own peer groups the importance of fire and life saving education.

**FIRE FOCUS: What specific things can people do to be more Fire Safety Aware?**

**FIELD:** The lessons of smoke alarms have been promoted for 40 years and we still feed the population the same lessons via public service announcements on radio and TV and the same promotion in brochures and handouts.

It is endless, and, yet we pursue the same failing approaches. Batteries die, are missing, are not changed. The fact that we still refer to them as "detectors". They are supposed to alarm you! They are meant to spur you to action. Call them alarms.

The specific messages whether on the internet and other public venues will fail unless the person who hears that message begins to understand the nature of fire. That understanding is alive in the psyche of the firefighter and the citizen who has experienced a fire.

For the rest of the population "it will never happen to me" or "its not a big deal. If there is a fire I will worry about it then".

That's why this country is at the bottom of the heap when it comes to the statistics of people lost and burned and property losses from fire.

**FIRE FOCUS: Have you always been interested in Fire Safety Education?**

**FIELD:** No. I became interested in fire safety when I turned 65 and was working at WCBS and discovered the dreadful statistics posted by this nation in the area of fire prevention, injuries and deaths.

I became even more frustrated with the bureaucracy in the fire

services and the political gamesmanship which had led to this sad state of affairs and the failure of the news media to present a true picture of what this nation was suffering in dealing with this universal problem.

**FIRE FOCUS: What serious criticisms do you have of the current way Fire Safety Education is approached? You have some strong opinions relative to the way it is done by traditional Fire Safety Education organizations, such as NFPA and the Home Safety Council.**

**FIELD:** They are continuing to employ the same strategies in education which have failed in the past and claim success for their efforts when the statistics show otherwise.

They continue to drink at the government and corporate trough and receive an endless flow of money and refuse to think outside the box or let new ideas come to fruition.

**FIRE FOCUS: You bring a wealth of experience to the task, what challenge do you issue to future Fire Safety Educators?**

**FIELD:** Face up to reality. Fires do bad things. Tell the truth. Don't duck behind some educators excuse that you dare not show a picture of a burned child who played with matches or candles because it will frighten the young viewer.

Children witness the most dreadful scenes on news programs, movies and computer games are even more terrifying, yet parents will permit that. Burn centers are real and they are full of victims.

Fire educators must literally be zealots who can pass the message along that fire is not a game, it's not fun, it's dangerous and fire can lead to the most devastating injuries imaginable!

**FIRE FOCUS: Is there anything to learn here in the US from the European approach to Fire Safety Education, for example such as in Great Britain, where the Fire Service is mainly involved in suppression, and it is a corps of civilian educators and retired firefighters who do the work of "spreading the word" about Fire Safety Education?**

**FIELD:** A series of important reports in the past several years by the CDC and Tri-Data Corporation offers many ideas which can be adopted by this country. Ideas which have worked in many others throughout the world.

Tri-Data has issued a series of reports through System Planning Corporation [www.sysplan.com/TriData](http://www.sysplan.com/TriData) and of course the NFPA and the USFA have made their respective contributions. The point is what are we doing to apply this data to the every day challenge of fire safety?

Recently, a new group of experts called Vision 20/20 convened, working with the government once more trying to overcome the failures of the past. It is to be hoped they will succeed.

**FIRE FOCUS: Dr. Field we appreciate the time you have taken to speak with us today.**

**FIELD:** Thank you, and thanks to the men and women of the fire service here in New Jersey. They are the ones who are called on to respond. Maybe if we get a little better at this we can make our state a little safer and to use an expression common in the fire service these days and also make sure all of our brave men and women go home.



There is still much to be done.



## NJDFS ARSON UNIT RECEIVES FM GLOBAL AWARD FOR OPERATIONS



John Antola, Senior Account Engineer of FM Global presents a check for \$3,500 dollars to Major Chris Eckert, Supervisor of the New Jersey Division of Fire Safety Arson Unit. Eckert is joined by Arson Unit investigators, (left to right) , Jeff Silver and Jason Spiecker.

Also present is NJDFS Arson Unit canine, "Scout."

The competitive awards, given quarterly, are meant to assist jurisdictions globally in devising and enhancing methods of fire safety prevention, investigation and the nature of origin detection. FM Global, headquartered in Johnston, Rhode Island is a leading property and commercial insurance underwriter ([www.fmglobal.com](http://www.fmglobal.com)). Eckert notes that the grant funding comes at an especially critical time for the Unit, given the increase in arson caused fires within the state.

For more Information on grant funding: [www.fmglobal.com/grants](http://www.fmglobal.com/grants)

## A TRIBUTE TO JOHN KELLY



Assemblyman and Chair of the New Jersey State Fire Safety Commission, John Wiseniewski, presented a unanimous New Jersey State Legislature Resolution to Joseph Kelly and his sister Regina passed in memory of their father Assemblyman John Kelly who died on October 30 of last year.

Assemblyman Wiseniewski noted Assemblyman Kelly's contributions to the New Jersey State Fire Service as long, laudatory and enduring. All were cause for an award Kelly received from the International Association of Fire Fighters at a special ceremony at Sacred Heart Cathedral in Newark in 2001.

In accepting the Resolution, Kelly's son Joseph, along with his sister Regina, recalled that their father never forgot the care and kindness the Kelly family received from the Jersey City Fire Department when his grandfather, and Assemblyman Kelly's father, Joseph Kelly, was tragically taken away from the family in a snowstorm during the depths of the Great Depression.

Yet the Kelly family did enjoy Christmas that year and those that followed from both the uniformed services in Jersey City, in a time where there was no social safety net to replace the loss of the sole family income. That his grandfather had worked for the railroad and that his father did not miss Christmas, symbolized by Joseph Kelly's holding of a Lionel train during the brief presentation ceremony. Mr. Kelly noted that his father tried to return that kindness, by his unwavering dedication to the men and women firefighters and their families of New Jersey as a long-serving state lawmaker.

Assemblyman Wiseniewski cited Assemblyman Kelly's influence on him as a young legislator to do what he could to make the state a little safer perhaps, and, indeed a gentler place for its all its citizens, young and old, just as the Fire Service has for the all the Kelly families and all the victims of fire then and now.

Assemblyman John Kelly  
New Jersey State Legislature  
1982-1984  
1986-2002

# INSPECTOR RETREAT FEATURES 1ST HAND ACCOUNT OF BLACK SUNDAY



*Sayreville* : The New Jersey Division of Fire Safety sponsors a two day in service training conference for firefighters, fire officials, and fire inspectors at the Middlesex County Fire Academy in Sayreville. The facility is state-of-the-art and its central location provides reasonable access for participants from both North and South Jersey. The CEU offerings allow attendees to stay current on their certifications as required by state statute and also to maintain a level of professional expertise that is beneficial to the populations who depend upon their expertise in both fire suppression and fire code enforcement.

The conference's most compelling session came from "Black Sunday" fire survivor FDNY firefighter Eugene Stolowski. Sustaining nearly fatal injuries from a four story fall, Stolowski cautioned the audience that the growing illegal subdivision of multi-family and more commonly now single family dwellings present the greatest "clear and present danger" to firefighter safety.



## "IN JUST 8 SECONDS..."

That is New York City Firefighter Gene Stolowski gripping, first hand account of how long it took for the infamous Black Sunday fire in 2005 to get out of control.

Stolowski was one of six firefighters forced to jump from the fourth story window of a Bronx apartment dwelling. The structure turned out to be illegally subdivided—a fact unknown to the firefighters— hidden by thick smoke until the heat of a fully involved fire left them trapped with no choice but to leap.

Tragically, two of Stolowski's brother firefighters succumbed to injuries from the fall. Stolowski himself suffered multiple life threatening injuries. He lectures now to help others and to warn how quickly what seems routine...can change in an instant.

## INSPECTOR RETREAT FEATURES 1ST HAND ACCOUNT OF BLACK SUNDAY



FDNY Firefighter Eugene Stalowski took time after his remarks to speak with individual firefighters and fire officials who had just heard his dramatic story of survival in the aftermath of the infamous Black Sunday Fire in the Bronx in 2005.

Among those posing specific questions to Firefighter Stalowski were New Jersey Division of Fire Safety Fire Department Preparedness Supervisor Richard Farletta and Northwest New Jersey Regional Preparedness Coordinator Timothy Weiss.

Firefighter Stalowski now conducts lectures on the event and lobbies against illegal subdivisions. Please contact:

[gene@firefamilytransport.org](mailto:gene@firefamilytransport.org)

## USFA POSTS SMOKE ALARM DISPOSAL ADVISORY

No doubt smoke alarms are the most important fire safety tool in the toolbox, but what happens when an alarm has reached the end of its useful life. There are two types of smoke alarms commonly used in the United States. The first is ionization, which detects a change in the ambient atmosphere and the second is photoelectric. Photoelectric alarms do not contain any radioactivity.

There are combinations of the two, but what is the key to both the ionization and the combination type of alarm, is that they both require special disposal, since they both contain small amounts of radioactive material. The United State Fires Administration has published guidelines for disposal which fire departments and fire officials should be aware of when fielding inquiries about safe disposal from residents. In order to answer those questions please download a copy of USFA Tech Talk or post the link at your site.



[http://www.usfa.dhs.gov/downloads/pdf/techtalk/techtalk\\_vln2\\_1209.pdf](http://www.usfa.dhs.gov/downloads/pdf/techtalk/techtalk_vln2_1209.pdf)

## FIRE SAFETY GOES TO COLLEGE IN JEFFERSON TOWNSHIP

There can be no doubt that New Jersey ranks as a leader in fire safety regulation of educational facilities, including Life Hazard Use registration requirements for private pre-school and day care centers. The State Uniform Fire Code and aggressive local enforcement make New Jersey among the few states that have taken a tough stance with respect to student safety K through 16.

Once they leave high school, New Jersey is also among the few requiring that all college dormitories be equipped with fire sprinklers. In addition, through the New Jersey State Fire Marshal, the New Jersey Division of Fire Safety maintains an ongoing program of education and monitoring of those regulations, arising out of the tragic fire at Seton Hall University in the year 2000.

There is, however, always more that can be done.

In Jefferson Township, Morris County near Lake Hopatcong, Fire Marshal Vinnie Cosaro has been addressing those concerns since 2002. The motivation according to Cosaro was based upon the fact that a student at Jefferson Township High School was sadly a victim of a fire while away at school.

Unlike the traditional approach used by far too many school districts Cosaro says that the Fire Prevention Bureau became an advocate for an ongoing program, which would be presented to all Jefferson Township High School students on an ongoing basis. It was not without difficulty, since the initial plans for a more comprehensive one day program, had to be scaled back to a two hour classroom presentation.

"The program not only addresses safety issues commonly found in the college dorm situation, but we also take into account the fact that many students eventually find themselves in off-campus housing, a majority of which falls outside of the stricter regulations typically accorded on campus housing in other states," says Cosaro.

Cosaro notes that the program was carefully reviewed by the district curriculum coordinator, as well as the principal of Jefferson Township High School. It took some convincing to get

permission to proceed. Once approved, Cosaro says that it is far from a just a straight forward lecture, it is geared to presenting fire safety education in a more interactive form.

"We have put our presentation in a form that most high school students are familiar with; its a multi-media approach of Power Point, and You Tube video to give them as best a notion of fire safety as they are likely to get between graduation from high school and college freshman orientation, and by the way, parents of children attending school out-of-state are thrilled " he says.

Cosaro says the program is adaptable by anywhere. For more information contact: Vinnie Cosaro Jefferson Township Fire Prevention Bureau: [vcosaro@jeffersontwp.net](mailto:vcosaro@jeffersontwp.net)



NJDFS as part of its annual F.I.R.E. Bowl (Fire Information and Rescue Education) hosts students from competing teams at the Middlesex Fire Academy for a Fire Safety Education pre-bowl seminar.

# JFS CONFERENCE HOSTS SOS FIRES YOUTH INTERVENTION PROGRAM



New Jersey Division of Fire Safety Director and State Fire Marshal Lawrence Petrillo (right) is joined by 2009 Juvenile Firesetter Conference Coordinator, Charles Luxton, NJDFS (left) and Executive Director Don Porth of "SOS Fires" [www.sosfires.com](http://www.sosfires.com) at the 2009 NJDFS Juvenile Firesetter Conference at the Middlesex Fire Academy.

SOS Fires headquartered in Damascus, Oregon is a non-profit organization promoting prevention partnerships among fire service, law enforcement, mental health practitioners, medical professionals and child safety advocates in order to form coalitions to deal with youth firesetting behaviors on a global scale.

SOS Fires hosts a number of youth intervention training programs, including: " Firesetting Intervention Triangle", "Write On." and "My Child Knows Better."

For more information: [www.sosfires.com](http://www.sosfires.com)



Scott Cohen, Director of Preventative Education, Philadelphia Burn Center lectures.



Dr. Frank Field, former New York area weathercaster and science reporter now fire prevention advocate.



Gregory Kirkham, NJDFS Training and Education Unit makes An emphatic point about the importance of smoke alarms using the NJDFS "Smoke House" to show the typical path smoke takes in a residential dwelling.

# Senator Paul S. Sarbanes Fire Service Safety Leadership Award *Recognizing a Commitment to Firefighter Health and Safety*

The Congressional Fire Services Institute (CFSI) and National Fallen Firefighters Foundation (NFFF) are accepting nominations for the Senator Paul S. Sarbanes Fire Service Safety Leadership Award. Presented annually at the CFSI National Fire and Emergency Services Dinner, the award recognizes organizations for outstanding leadership in advancing firefighter health and safety. Taking place on April 29, 2010 in Washington, DC, the dinner will be attended by our nation's top political leaders and 2,000 state and national fire service officials. The nomination deadline is March 26th.

Applications should exemplify one or more of the five goals of the award in advancing firefighter health and safety:

- Recognition of the Life Safety Initiatives originally developed by the American fire service during the 2004 National Fire Service Summit hosted by the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation.
- Recognizing the need to address firefighter health and safety and becoming an advocate for this cause.
- Leadership in promoting and supporting firefighter health and safety initiatives at the local, state or national level.
- Reaching out to other organizations and developing partnerships to further the cause of firefighter health and safety.
- Engaging government leaders at all levels to work together for changes and for the establishment of government programs that can enhance the personal safety of firefighters.

CFSI and NFFF recognize State Farm Insurance and VFIS for their support of the awards program. For additional information about the Sarbanes award, please visit the CFSI and NFFF websites at [www.cfsi.org](http://www.cfsi.org) and [www.firehero.org](http://www.firehero.org), respectively. Or contact CFSI at 202-371-1277. The award recipient will receive an all-expense paid trip to our Nation's Capitol to be honored at the annual CFSI National Fire and Emergency Services Dinner. **The deadline for submitting applications is March 26, 2010.**



# DRYER SAFETY BROCHURE AVAILABLE

**THE HOWS & WHYS OF DRYER FIRES**  
A clothes dryer works by forcing hot air through a turning drum. Wet clothes placed in the drum are then dried by the moving hot air. It is possible for a full load of wet clothes to contain as much as one and a half gallons of water. Lint is created from the clothes as the water is removed and the clothes dry. While much of the lint is trapped by the dryer's filter, lint also is carried through the venting system together with most air. The accumulation of lint, both in the dryer and in the dryer vent, reduces the airflow and creates a highly flammable fuel source.

**CHANGE THE FLEX PIPE...**  
Most dryers feature white vinyl or foil accordion-type exhaust pipe. Most appliance manufacturers recommend that you replace that material with rigid or semi-rigid metal piping. It is less likely to trap lint and increases air flow.



**A FIRE SAFETY MESSAGE FROM THE NEW JERSEY DIVISION OF FIRE SAFETY AND YOUR LOCAL FIRE SERVICE**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**  
NJ DIVISION OF FIRE SAFETY:  
[www.state.nj.us/dca/dfs/](http://www.state.nj.us/dca/dfs/)

**YOUR LOCAL FIRE OFFICIAL:**  
[www.state.nj.us/njgovinfo/county/localgov.html](http://www.state.nj.us/njgovinfo/county/localgov.html)

Lawrence Petrillo  
State Fire Marshal



Lori Grifa Commissioner  
Department of Community Affairs



Honorable Christopher Christie  
Governor



**PREVENTING DRYER FIRES**



[www.state.nj.us/dca/dfs/](http://www.state.nj.us/dca/dfs/)

New Jersey Division of Fire Safety  
FIRE SAFETY FACTS.

**FIRE SAFETY FIXES....things that YOU can do!**

**Fire Safety Facts**

**Clothes Dryer Safety...**



**FACT:** More than 13,000 fires a year start in laundry rooms or laundry areas.

**FACT:** Nearly 4,000 of those are directly caused by lint buildup either in the dryer itself or in the vent pipe.

**FACT:** Though statistically less than fires caused by smoking or cooking related fires, people do die and hundreds are injured every year.

**IN MOST CASES, clothes dryer fires can be prevented. "Failure to clean" is the number one factor contributing to clothes dryer fires, followed by mechanical and electrical failure. Clogged dryer vents occurring from lint buildup may make the dryer operate incorrectly and raise the temperature of the dryer machinery high enough to ignite lint or nearby combustibles. Follow the recommended safety tips for operating clothes dryers safely.**

**CHECK THE SCREEN...**  
All clothes dryers have a lint filter located inside the door. Not only is it wise to clean the screen of lint after each use, but to use a brush to remove buildup of fiber. A clean filter can save you up 5% annually on your electric bill too!

**CHECK THE EXHAUST PIPE...**  
Your car exhaust will tell you when its time to replace it but your dryer pipe requires a closer look. It may be necessary to disconnect the pipe from the appliance to make sure there are no obstructions. A good way to check is go outdoors and feel the volume of exhaust. However even if there is a strong air flow an actual look is better. Remember to reconnect the ductwork to the dryer and the vent correctly.

**CHECK BEHIND THE DRYER...**  
The area behind the dryer and the wall is a potential hazard as well as inside the dryer. Have a qualified service person clean the dryer chassis periodically as well as to remove any clothing that may have fallen behind it.

**CHECK THE CLOTHES...**  
Clothing that contains volatile chemicals, solvents, oils, and gasoline should be laundered 2x or more. Use a low heat setting. Do not accumulate such clothing in the dryer or laundry basket.

**NEVER...**  
*Let your clothes dryer run while you are out of the house or asleep.*

NJDFS **FIRE IN NEW JERSEY 2008** identifies household dryers as the leading cause of residential fires in the state. To respond to those instances, the Division of Fire Safety has a publication **PREVENTING DRYER FIRES** available at no charge as either a pdf. document for posting or a Microsoft Publisher document which can be printed out locally as a double sided six panel brochure.

For more information: [fireprevention@dca.state.nj.us](mailto:fireprevention@dca.state.nj.us)

## SPRINKLER INCENTIVE INTRODUCED

*Washington, DC:* On January 22nd, Senators Tom Carper (DE) and Susan Collins (ME) introduced the Fire Sprinkler Incentive Act in the Senate. This bill would amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to classify automatic fire sprinkler systems as 5-year property for purposes of depreciation. The bill, S. 2947, was referred to the Senate Finance Committee for consideration. Both Senator Carper and Senator Collins are co-chairs of the Congressional Fire Services Caucus.

"Senator Carper and Senator Collins are to be commended for introducing the Fire Sprinkler Incentive Act in the Senate," said CFSI Executive Director Bill Webb. "Passage of this legislation can have a significant impact in reducing the number of deaths and injuries caused by fire."

On February 25, 2009, Congressman Jim Langevin (RI-2) introduced similar legislation, H.R. 1194, in the House of Representatives. The House version currently has 111 co-sponsors and was referred to the House Committee on Ways and Means.

NJDFS will continue to provide updates as part of its continuing coverage of the issue in **FIRE FOCUS** as well as more immediate updates in **STATE FIRE MARSHAL MESSAGE**, its bi-monthly e-newsletter.





**THE NEW JERSEY  
DIVISION OF FIRE SAFETY  
101 SOUTH BROAD STREET  
TRENTON, NEW JERSEY 08625**

<b>DIRECTOR'S OFFICE</b>	<b>609-633-6106</b>
<b>INSPECTIONS UNIT</b>	<b>609-633-6132</b>
<b>LEGISLATIVE UNIT</b>	<b>609-984-1947</b>

**BORDENTOWN FIELD OFFICE  
MAIN NUMBER 609-324-7336**

<b>ARSON UNIT</b>	<b>609-324-7320</b>
<b>CONTRACTOR CERTIFICATION AND EMBLEMS UNIT</b>	<b>609-324-3560</b>
<b>FIRE DEPARTMENT PREPAREDNESS UNIT</b>	<b>609-324-7335</b>
<b>NFIRS UNIT</b>	<b>609-324-7715</b>
<b>PUBLIC EDUCATION UNIT</b>	<b>609-324-3646</b>
<b>SMOKE ALARMS</b>	<b>609-324-3694</b>
<b>TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION UNIT</b>	<b>609-324-7564</b>

**STAFF MEMBERS**

<b>ARSON-K9 UNIT</b> <b>CHRIS ECKERT</b> Stephen Letts Rod Meyer Jason Spiecker Jeff Silver Beverly Verde	<b>SUPERVISOR</b> K-9 Investigator/North K-9 Investigator/South Investigator/South K-9 Investigator/North Technical Assistant
<b>CONTRACTOR CERTIFICATION AND EMBLEMS UNIT</b> <b>GARY LICKNACK</b> Chris Michallis Kim Lake	<b>SUPERVISOR</b> Chief Investigator Technical Assistant
<b>BUREAU OF FIRE DEPARTMENT SERVICES</b> <b>WILLIAM KRAMER</b> Patricia Persico	<b>BUREAU CHIEF</b> Technical Assistant
<b>DIVISION FISCAL UNIT</b> <b>AIDA JONES</b>	<b>SUPERVISOR</b>
<b>FIRE INCIDENT REPORTING SYSTEM UNIT</b> <b>HEATHER PUSKAR</b> Fred Connin Steve Hearn Sonia Salva	<b>SUPERVISOR</b> NFIRS Representative NFIRS Representative Technical Assistant
<b>PUBLIC EDUCATION UNIT</b> Charles Lavin New Jersey Fire Safety Commission Gerald Clarke Fire Focus-Public Information	Coordinator Coordinator
<b>PUBLICATIONS</b>	Marylain Kemp

**DIVISION OF FIRE SAFETY  
STAFF MEMBERS**

**BUREAU OF FIRE CODE ENFORCEMENT**  
**LOUIS KILMER** **BUREAU CHIEF**

609-633-6131

**TEAM 1-NORTH**  
**JOSH LAZARUS** **SUPERVISOR**  
 609-633-6741

[CTY CODE: 02-07-09-10-12-13-14-16-18-19-20]

**Charles Wian-(NW)** **Peter D'Amore (NE)**  
 609-633-6132

**TEAM 2-SOUTH**  
**GLENN SMYTH** **SUPERVISOR**  
 609-633-6103

[CTY CODE: 01-03-04-05-06-08-11-15-17]

**Steve Speicher (SW)** **Bob Kozlowski (SE)**  
 609-633-6132

**FIRE DEPARTMENT PREPAREDNESS**  
**RICHARD FARLETTA** **SUPERVISOR**  
 609-324-7348

**Shore Region** **609-324-7681**  
 Craig Augustoni Regional Fire Coordinator

**Delaware River Region** **609-324-7410**  
 Mike Gallagher Regional Fire Coordinator

**Southern Region** **609-324-7419**  
 John Honer Planner

**Northern Region** **609-324-7418**  
 David Hughes Planner

**Northwest Region** **609-324-7460**  
 Timothy Weiss Regional Fire Coordinator

**RIOC-SEOC** **609-324-8200**  
 James McFadden Planner

**UASI Region** **609-324-7411**  
 Bruce Tynan Regional Fire Coordinator

**DIVISION OF FIRE SAFETY  
STAFF MEMBERS**

**JUVENILE FIRESETTER PROGRAM**  
**SMOKE ALARM DISTRIBUTION**

**609-324-3684**  
 Charles Luxton **Coordinator**

**FIRE CODE LOCAL ASSISTANCE**  
**PAUL ALLEN** **SUPERVISOR**  
 609-633-6111

**NORTHERN** [CTY CODE 07-10-11-16-18-19-21]  
 George Cramer **609-633-6112**

**NORTHERN** [CTY CODE 02-09-14-20]  
 Paul Elenio **609-633-6147**

**CENTRAL** [CTY CODE 01-05-12-13-15]  
 Frank Clark **609-633-6738**

**SOUTHERN** [CTY CODE 03-04-06-08-17]  
 George Beckett **609-826-5551**

**OFFICE OF TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION**  
**KENT NEISWENDER** **SUPERVISOR**  
 609-324-7336

Grace Forrester **609-324-3645**

Gregory Kirkham **609-324-7583**

**TELEPHONE HOTLINES**

**VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT**  
**1-800-FIRELINE**

**JUVENILE FIRESETTER**  
**1-800-357-5230**