

# IFIA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MESSAGE



Ahhh, it must be fall. There is a cool nip in the air (perfect sleeping weather), leaves are changing, and we as a Board are back hitting the ground running. In September we had our first mini-seminar and membership meeting, post summer break, on Truss-Joists. Preparations have been finalized for our October Awards Luncheon and our 2016 Combined Conference is well under way. We are just waiting for the speakers to confirm dates and times. Plan to attend this conference in East Peoria from April 27 – 29, 2016. It will be special as this will mark 40 years that we have been running FLSE conferences.

Our Certification Chair, Rick Marek, has worked diligently with the Office of the State Fire Marshal regarding cleaning up the criteria for the Basic and Advanced Fire Prevention Officer certifications. As we have reported, changes in the Fire Officer programs have removed the stand alone leadership classes which are part of the requirements for Basic and Advanced Fire Prevention Officer. After several meetings and discussions, a draft was sent to OSFM for their consideration. We will be able to report more on that in the near future. The OSFM has also asked for IFIA input on continuing education requirements for Fire Inspectors. As more information on this becomes available we will be sure to make it available to everyone.

Moving forward we continue to work on Fire Alarm Licensing/Certification Legislation. While our first attempt died in committee in Springfield, we are committed to reintroducing legislation next session. We have had meetings with the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers and the Illinois Electronic Security Association to discuss our proposed legislation, and our intent to continue to move forward. These meetings were productive and we will work with them in an effort to get a consensus bill that everyone can be happy with.

During our meetings with these agencies, one thing was clear, the documentation for fire alarms is lacking – industry wide. While everyone fills out NFIRS reports, they alone do not tell the entire story. Many of us can relate an instance or two when we have had a problem with an alarm signal being transmitted, or having a delay in receiving it, but few can provide the details of it, such as what actually caused the problem. What we would encourage you do is track your alarms in a simple spreadsheet. Who knows what that information might provide once you see it all at one time. In Roselle, for example, for all activated alarms I now track the date, address, type of alarm - fire/trouble, disposition – malfunction, fire, accidental, and finally details – anything specific I might want to reference later. This literally takes less than a minute. We encourage you to do this locally. After a period of time, this is something that could be copied and a master spreadsheet could be maintained. This would be for the use of any department that desires it.

Speaking of Springfield, with the stalemate on a State budget, the impact on funding for training programs, grants, etc. has become an issue. The Fire Prevention Fund allocation hasn't happened, and that impacts programs like Cornerstone Training for the Fire Service Institute. It is now even more important that we as code professionals and public educators stay tuned to the happenings in Springfield, and we continue to show our leadership the importance of our positions within our departments.

We, as a Board, continue to work long and hard to keep IFIA strong. However, we cannot do it alone. Without your help, your commitment, and your participation, it can become a very daunting task. We need volunteers for all our committees (Codes and Standards, FLSE, Social). If you have the time, and it is not much, and can attend a few meetings a year, please contact the office or a Board Member so we can get you in touch with the right person(s).

We would like to mention that the State recently passed a Carbon Monoxide bill for schools. It is Public Act 099-0470. The link to the law is at <http://ilga.gov/legislation/publicacts/fulltext.asp?Name=099-0470> This law takes effect on January 1 of next year. School maintenance officials have a great deal of questions about what is required, where are they required, what to do when activate, and the list goes on. In an email from the OSFM, they indicate that they know the deadline and are working feverishly to develop the rules that are

needed with this law. Right now it is important that you know that the law exists, and that the rules, which will containing the details, should be coming very soon.

Lastly, we have been advised that the Fire Sprinkler Incentive Act has been re-introduced into the U.S. Senate (S. 2068) and House (HR 3591).

The bill is an act "To amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to include automated fire sprinkler system retrofits as section 179 property and classify certain automated fire sprinkler system retrofits as 15-year property for purposes of depreciation." To building owners this is a big deal that could sway them to install fire sprinklers.

You are encouraged to contact your senators and representatives as they deem appropriate. The bill's entire text is here: <http://bit.ly/1Lb8XKX>

Don't forget our awards luncheon on October 23, at Medinah Shriners. There are several deserving people getting awards that day. Come join us, show your support, and enjoy a nice lunch.