



**Division of Fire and Life Safety**



*Kotzebue Fire Department Training Session*

**The Fire Flyer**

Greetings,

Well we are a bit late getting this edition out. There is a lot of information to share with you, so I hope that makes up for being late.

As most of you know we have a new Commissioner here at DPS. Commissioner Joe Masters started in September. Right as we were gearing up for the FY10 budget preparation. As is evident in the Governor's budget he has been very supportive of our needs. Some of you had the chance to meet Commissioner Masters at the AFCA Spring Conference. He spent most of the night talking with the Chief's at the AFCA reception.

Later in this issue of Fire Flyer we are including a part of the Commissioner's bio.

We just finished up the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Fire and Building Officials Forum. This year we had nearly 40 people participate. This is a great opportunity for fire and building officials from around the state to gather and share ideas and concerns. We had Shirley Gifford from the Alcohol Beverage Control Board and Jerri VanSandt from the Department of Health and Human Services as speakers. Also Al Nagel

from the Department of Labor came both days to answer any questions for his department. I offer my thanks to everyone who attended for their time and interest. Of special note, I would like to recognize and thank the Alaska Fire Chief's Association and FOAST (Fraternal Order of Alaska State Troopers) for donating funds for our lunches and snacks.

We have had a busy season in the legislature. I would like to thank everyone who took the time to write letters, make phone calls, and generally get involved. Overall we were pretty successful this year. I would also like to recognize Chief Jeff Tucker for all of his work this year. He spent a lot of time on the phone and on the computer coordinating and disseminating information. Thanks Jeff.

Finally, congratulations to my friend Dave Miller on being hired as the new Fire Chief for the City of Sitka. Good luck Chief.

*~That is all for now. Stay safe.*

*David L. Tyler, Alaska State Fire Marshal*

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**Special points of interest:**

Pictorial display of Fire training Kotzebue style! Pg 6

## DFLS Business Practices for Government Services

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Well, early winter is over and things are picking up, the Legislature is in full swing; the days are growing longer; construction documents are pouring into the Plan Review Bureau; fire investigation requests are on the rise in the Fire and Life Safety Bureau; training requests are up in the Training and Education Bureau and the second annual Fire and Building Officials' Forum was held April 1 - 4. Yep, it feels like spring is already here, Ah! But we all know better than that.

Just like the false spring that shows up in February, usually followed by another icy blast of winter; we can expect new issues to challenge us to examine how we provide ever improving customer service to our customers while acknowledging the business limitations of providing government services.

One way our division can achieve business like results in a governmental service is by the establishment of the Office of Oil and Gas Systems and Facilities. Geared specifically toward oil and gas infrastructure inspection and plan review services; this office will concentrate wholly on these industries. The Plan Review Bureau will be freed to concentrate on all other residential and commercial projects and as a result provide a quicker plan review turnaround time and oil and gas facilities throughout the state will be inspected for fire and life safety deficiencies. Governmentally, we are able to accomplish this through a partnership with the Department of Natural Resources with no additional legislative general fund appropriation for positions or operating costs.

Another example is the administration of fire extinguisher and pyrotechnic testing. In the past this was administered exclusively by the *Life Safety Inspection Bureau*, done by hand and all testing had to be proctored. Now the Training and Education Bureau administers the tests through on line testing and manages the test bank with its current testing protocols. Hav-

ing the right service located in the correct area of responsibility is a key to business best practices and delivery of quality governmental services.

Government will never be able to operate in a pure business environment; there are things in business that cannot be done in government. However, where possible and within the intent of providing government services, we can use applicable business methods and models to maximize the return on investment in each of our communities.

If you have any success stories about how you provide services to the public that you were able to improve or make more efficient, let us know. We are always looking for areas to improve our service and the Fire Flyer is a great place to exchange ideas for the Alaskan Fire Service.



Kelly Nicolello addressing the Fire & Building Official's 2009 Forum participants

*Kelly Nicolello, Assistant State Fire Marshal*

## Department of Public Safety

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### Commissioner Joseph A. Masters



Commissioner Masters was raised in Unalaska. Following his graduation from high school in Unalaska in 1982, he perused a career in law enforcement which spanned more than 24 years. He began his career as a Village Public Safety Officer in Unalakleet. Following his time as a VPSO, he served as police officer in both Unalakleet and Unalaska. The majority of

his law enforcement career was within the ranks of the Alaska State Troopers serving in both rural and urban Alaska. Masters joined the Alaska State Troopers in 1986. In 1999 he transferred to the division of Fish and Wildlife Protection. While in the F&WP division, he rose to the rank of Captain and was assigned as Commander of the Detachment patrolling in Western Alaska. Masters was promoted to deputy director of the Alaska State

Troopers in June of 2003. He held the position until his retirement in May of 2005.

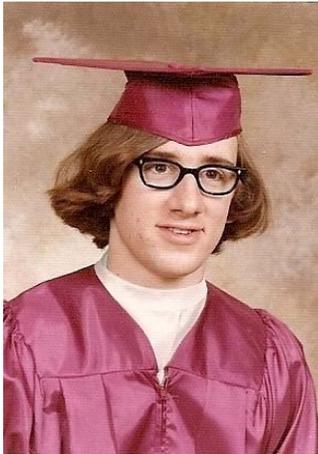
Shortly after retirement, he began working for Doyon Universal Services. He was the Director of Security for Petrochemical Operations overseeing protective services for a majority of Alaska's national and state designated critical infrastructures.

"It is humbling for me to rejoin the many dedicated men and women that keep this state protected and give us the peace of mind to sleep at night. I have the utmost respect for all those on the front lines providing law enforcement, resource protection, fire services, and scientific services, as well as those that operate behind the scenes," Masters said upon his appointment.

Commissioner Masters currently lives in Anchorage with his wife, Michelle. Together they have three children who are now grown and out on their own.

## Who is this guy?

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The first correct answer sent to my e-mail address [david.tyler@alaska.gov](mailto:david.tyler@alaska.gov) gets an autographed double pack of Reese's Peanut Butter Cups. Of course this doesn't apply to my staff or the subject of the attached photograph.

If you have any pictures that you would like to share for the next Fire Flyer send them to me.

## Plans Review Bureau

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We are starting the process to adopt the Regulations for 2009 International Codes within the State of Alaska. We would like to involve as many participants as possible, and get as many views as possible. Starting early and getting a list of concerns that you might like to see addressed in the next code cycle of 2009. If you have a correction to the current code, Alaska regulations or would like something added or removed please provide the following information in an email to Timothy Fisher at [timothy.fisher@alaska.gov](mailto:timothy.fisher@alaska.gov). We are also looking for POC's for the Government Deferred Jurisdictions that would like to be involved. It probably won't be adopted for over 12 months with a plan to have it adopted September 2010.

### Code Information Required;

- Code Site
- Amendment Pertaining to...
- Name, Phone, E-Mail and Title
- Reason for the change, addition, removal, correction, etc...

We have also implemented our first of many, informational forum (Code Talk) from people around the state that was requested during the Fire Marshal Forum in April 08...If you have an interesting topic, you can send it to Timothy Fisher in order to evaluate and send it out to the rest of the professionals within the State of Alaska. We will only accept a maximum of one per week as we don't want to tie up your e-mail. Please let us know your opinions when you get a chance.

Coffee Break and Code Corner seem to be a big hit with all the complimentary e-mails and comments I have received. We have posted these on our web site at [www.akburny.com](http://www.akburny.com), on the Plan Review Bureau (PRB) page. We thought you would like to see the subjects posted so the general public and registered design professionals alike can review the issues and thereby making our web site a bit more informational as an ongoing tool and generating repeated visits from our constituents.

We are currently hiring for an Administrative Clerk III as Cerriiah Buck had a baby and decided to be a stay at home mom, so please bare with us as we go through this transition stage and wish her all the best.

New projects which are gaining steam is the Liberty Pad for BP, Sport Fish Hatchery for Department of Fish and Game, a new hospital in Nome and the Goose Creek (Pt. MacKenzie) Correction Facility for the Department of Corrections. These projects have kept the pressure on while maintaining a steady flow of work through out the office.

Currently we have implemented phase 1 of our new database (Hansen8) and working on phase II, which will allow our customers access to submit applications over the web. So far everything running smooth.

~ Carol Olson, PRB Supervisor

# Training and Education Bureau

The course deliveries provided by the Training and Education Bureau nearly doubled since 1998. As it shows in the following chart we have doubled the number of instructors and tripled the number of students since 1998.

	1998	2008
<b>Total number of classes</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>117</b>
<b>Anchorage</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Fairbanks</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Juneau</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>Other / Rural</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Number of Students</b>	<b>894</b>	<b>3452</b>
<b>Number of Instructors</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>435</b>
<b>Total Student Hours</b>	<b>18,070</b>	<b>27,466</b>

## Raven Island

We have more than 4300 kids signed up and playing games on Raven Island. We have been promoting it out in the rural communities since September and we are ready to let the rest of Alaska in on the secret.

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We are looking for cost effective ways to spread the word like adding the link to department websites and to school handouts. Please let Mahlon or I know if you would like to add the link to the game on your website.

## Promotions

### *Congratulations on the following New Hires or Promotions*

#### Capitol City Fire/Rescue

- Rich Etheridge from Fire Marshal to Division Chief
- Dan Jager from Deputy Fire Marshal to Fire Marshal
- Beth Weldon from Career Capt. to Volunteer Division Chief
- John Kresbach from Firefighter to Career Captain.

#### City of Kenai Fire Department

- Tony Prior from Captain to Battalion Chief of Training
- John Harris from Engineer to Captain
- Tom Carver from Firefighter to Engineer

#### University of Alaska – Fairbanks Fire Department

- Greg Coon Newly hired as Battalion Chief

#### Central Mat-Su Fire Department

- Michael Keenan from Assistant Chief to Deputy Chief
- Ken Barkley from Battalion Chief to Assistant Chief
- Mahlon Greene from Battalion Chief to Assistant Chief

## National Fire Academy

### Executive Fire Officer Program

The Executive Fire Officer Program (EFOP) is an initiative of the United States Fire Administration/National Fire Academy designed to provide senior officers and others in key leadership roles with:

1. the need to transform fire and emergency services organizations from being reactive to proactive; with an emphasis on leadership development, prevention, and risk-reduction;
2. transforming fire and emergency services organizations to reflect the diversity of America's communities;
3. the value of research and its application to the profession;
4. the value of lifelong learning

The officers enhance their professional development through a unique series of four graduate and upper-division-baccalaureate equivalent courses. The EFOP spans a 4-year period with 4 core courses. Each course is 2 weeks in length.

Enhanced executive-level knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to lead these transformations, conduct research, and engage in lifelong learning.

The EFOP participant must complete an Applied Research Project (ARP) that relates to their organization within 6 months after the completion of each of the four courses. A certificate of completion for the entire EFOP is awarded only after the successful completion of the final research project.

Many fire service leaders in Alaska have benefited from participating in the program. The following individuals have submitted applied research papers to the program that were considered excellent and earned a grade of 4.0 :

- Bullock, Gary E. Anchorage Fire Department. Anchorage, Alaska. **Addressing the Wildland/Urban Interface Problem.** November 1996.
- Bullock, Gary E. Anchorage Fire Department. Anchorage, Alaska. **Essential Components of a Dependent Welfare and Communication Program.** October 1997.
- Lea, Kenneth. Alaska Department of Public Safety. Juneau, Alaska. **Uniform and Consistent Application of Fire and Life Safety Regulations.** June 1991.
- Lea, Kenneth. Alaska Department of Public Safety. Juneau, Alaska. **An Analysis of the Strategic Considerations of Fire Department Operations Involving Fixed, Above Ground, Horizontal Storage Tanks Containing Class I Flammable Liquids.** June 1992.
- Oxnam, Thomas W. Anchorage Fire Department. Anchorage, Alaska. **Firefighter Nutrition.** April 2004.
- Oxnam, Thomas W. Anchorage Fire Department. Anchorage, Alaska. **Evaluating a Peer Fitness Trainer Program.** July 2003.
- Paulson, Brad A. Chena - Goldstream Fire and Rescue. Fairbanks, Alaska. **Juvenile Firesetting: Gathering Resources to Combat the Problem.** September 1995.
- Powell, Gary. Anchorage Fire Department. Anchorage, Alaska. **Projecting the Labor Force Demands of the Future.** June 1991.
- Strahan, Wade. Anchorage Fire Department. Anchorage, Alaska. **Slaying the Performance Evaluation Dragon.** August 1999.
- Supkis, Mike. University Fire Department. Fairbanks, Alaska. **Alaska's Fire Deaths: A Comparative Analysis.** November 1998.
- Thrapp, M. C. Anchorage Fire Department. Anchorage, Alaska. **Unique Public Education For: Fire Protection Systems Designers, Installers, and Maintenance Personnel.** 10/92.

*This article from FEMA website by the National Fire Academy*

## **Fire and Emergency Services Higher Education (FESHE)**

*Information for this article provided by the National Fire Academy*

During our survey on the need for higher level fire service degrees we discovered that less than 50% of the respondents knew about the Fire and Emergency Services Higher Education (FESHE) program.

In an effort to acquire an associate's or bachelor's degree or their next desired level of certification, fire service personnel typically accumulate college transcripts with unnecessary courses and dozens of training certificates. During this typical process of professional development, duplications of effort are common and desired certifications or degrees delayed. The national challenge is for state and local providers of training, education, and certification to integrate their activities to eliminate these duplications while enhancing the overall professional development of the fire and emergency services.

Since 1999, FESHE leaders labored to produce through consensus, a standardized undergraduate curriculum that is national in scope, content and outcomes. This represents a major paradigm shift from a fragmented system of education to one that is uni-

### **Higher Level Degree programs for the Fire Service**

Thanks to everyone around the state for participating in our survey to determine interest in higher level degrees for the fire service.

Here is a brief synopsis of the information collected.

215 people completed the survey.

The response was overwhelmingly positive, 89% agreed, that it was important for Fire Service Professionals to have degrees.

More than 50% of the respondents have some type of Associates degree, 25% have a Bachelors degree in some discipline and almost 8% have a post-graduate degree.

Only 14% of respondents had employers who require a college degree for employment but 36% work for an employer who offers incentives for a college degree.

Most people selected the non-traditional options for attending courses such as online or compressed programs.

We are still analyzing the rest of the data and I will send out the report when it is complete.

### **Firefighter Safety –**

#### **Responding to buildings with roof mounted solar panels**

Yes, I was thinking of summer when I decided to provide this information in the Winter edition of the Fire Flyer!

This information was provided on the Firefighter Close Calls website and The Secret List by Matt Paiss of the San Jose FD. He is a FF who teaches classes on FF Safety related to PV (photovoltaic) systems. Matt has a degree in Solar Technology, and is also a member of the California State Fire Marshals PV Task Force.

fied and integrated. There now exists a robust a national model curriculum of fire-related and EMS management courses for colleges and universities to adopt as their own. All the courses share common titles, catalog descriptions, outlines and content which provide a national core of knowledge and competencies delivered by the FESHE programs. These course outlines share common content through FESHE's partnership with textbook publishers who write textbooks and faculty supplements that support them.

The Fire and Emergency Services Higher Education (FESHE) community is comprised of colleges and universities in the U. S. that deliver fire- and EMS-related degrees. The FESHE mission is to:

*Establish an organization of post-secondary institutions to promote higher education and to enhance the recognition of the fire and emergency services as profession to reduce loss of life and property from fire and other hazards.*

For more information about the Fire and Emergency Services Higher Education (FESHE) program please visit the website at [http://www.usfa.dhs.gov/nfa/higher\\_ed/index.shtml](http://www.usfa.dhs.gov/nfa/higher_ed/index.shtml)

1. Panels are only energized in daylight. Overcast days too, but NEVER at night. Scene lights will NOT energize the panels.
2. If the panels, or the roof are on fire, you will not get shocked by spraying water on them. Put the fire out.
3. The voltages of panels are anywhere from 24-48 volts each and generate from 125 to 200 watts in optimal conditions.

These panels are "strung" together in series to increase the voltages to 120 vdc to 400 vdc. While 600 vdc is possible, it is pushing the UL ratings of the enclosures, etc.. The current of these strings is usually from 5-9 amps. And that is only when there is a load (or put more simply, the inverter is sending the power back into the grid). If the inverter is off, there is no current only voltage, i.e. open circuit.

4. The inverters that change the power from DC to AC, are powered by AC. If you shut off the main service breakers, the inverter is OFF and there is NO AC power being sent into the structure. There are capacitors in the inverters that can hold a charge for about 5 min, but in the daytime the panels are producing power anyway. When the sun goes down....everything is de-energized.

#### **FIREFIGHTER WARNING:**

There is ALWAYS energized DC power in the conduit from the panels to the inverter IN THE DAYTIME. So, secure all utilities (per SOP's) and stay away from the panels and the conduit in the daytime. That is the danger.

5. Do not break a panel with your axe or related forcible entry tools. Each panel in the string could be carrying the FULL VOLTAGE of that string (120-400 VDC), not just one panel, so if you put a tool through it, you will very likely be getting the rest of the shift off....so don't do it....there is no need to do it, vent somewhere else, and kill the utilities at the main panel based upon your SOP's.
6. There are often junction boxes on the roofs (residential systems). If they do have fuses (not all do), and you pull a fuse while under load, you will very likely cause a fire. Not to mention the time it will take to open the box and do this. Bad idea-leave it alone. ~ Jodie Hettrick, *TEB Supervisor*

## Kotzebue Fire Department Training Accomplishment



The Training and Education Bureau worked successfully with the members of the Kotzebue Fire Department in delivering and completing their first Firefighter I and Firefighter II series. This delivery was accomplished utilizing ten senior instructors from the Fairbanks area, working out of the Fairbanks TEB office. The Firefighter I series was 180 hours and the Firefighter II series was 56 hours.

This milestone was made possible by the cooperation of Chief Steven Troxell and his fire department membership along with the many instructors who traveled to Kotzebue teaching on evenings and weekends to allow volunteer members to participate.

The Division of Fire and Life Safety wants to recognize this achievement and congratulate the members in becoming State of Alaska/ IFSAC certified firefighters. This project was a dream for years and was finally accomplished by all working together and staying focused on the end game.

Testing for each level was conducted by a Certifying Officer appointed by the Fire Standards Council. The Firefighter I began in late April and finished in Mid July. Taking a breather for a couple of months to allow for some hunting and fishing the Firefighter II began in early October and finished in late November.

*The Kotzebue Fire Department now has 11 new certified firefighters to increase the department's safety and effectiveness.*

Congratulations to all who stuck with the project and completed the training. TEB also thanks all staff members who worked on the project, The Northwest Arctic Borough management and Sue's B&B in Kotzebue for accommodations for all the instructors. *Thank you all, great job!*

*~William Hedrick, Fire Training Specialist TEB—Fairbanks.*



# Life Safety Inspection Bureau

The Life Safety Inspection Bureau schedule has been very busy with inspections, investigations and training throughout the state.

The deputies traveled and inspected places like Pribilof Islands, Ketchikan, Gustavus, Excursion Inlet, Elfin Cove, Tok, the Aleutian Chain out to False Pass, and south to Homer. They also performed Life Safety Code Long Term Care surveys in Anchorage, Cordova, Homer, and Seward.

Our bureau responded to assist outside agencies at Fort Yukon, Chignik Bay, Alakanuk, Fairbanks, Homer, Wasilla, Kotzebue, Delta Junction and Valdez just to name a few. They conducted fire origin and cause determinations. Sadly to say six of those responses were

due to fire fatalities. During the first full week in January 2009 we responded to two fatal fires.

Deputy Plumb traveled to Dillingham to testify as an expert witness on two different court cases. The first case resulted in Arson I and Murder II charges and other case resulted in acquittal. We would like to thank the Ketchikan Fire and Police Departments for pursuing charges on a residential fire

Three deputies attended training at the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, Maryland. Deputy Nathan Rocheleau successfully completed Fire Inspection Principles, Deputy Kevin Hunter successfully completed Fire Origin and Cause Determination and Deputy Nakano

successfully completed the Interview and Interrogation course. Deputy DePeter and Deputy Rocheleau also completed the Juvenile Fire Setter Intervention Specialist I and II course. Also, all of our deputies and administrative clerks are being trained in the new developed data base program called Hansen. This program shall streamline our bureaus inspection process when going to mobile solutions. Mobile solutions are our top priority for our bureau. Our bureau should have mobile solutions implemented by the next fiscal year.

As you can see our bureau has had its hands full with training, inspecting and assisting fire departments and agencies throughout the state.

~ Lloyd Nakano, LSIB Supervisor

***The following information is intended to help clarify what the responsibilities of the Deputy Fire Marshals' are and what the call out procedure is.***

## Alaska Administrative Code

### 13 AAC 52.010. Investigation of fires

(a) The state fire marshal, or the marshal's authorized representative, will, in the marshal's discretion, investigate, or cause to be investigated, the origin, cause, and circumstances of each fire occurring in the state which is of suspicious nature or which involves loss of life, or serious injury to a person, or by which property is destroyed or substantially damaged. The investigation will begin as soon as practical. If it appears that a fire is of suspicious origin, the fire marshal must be immediately notified of the facts by the investigating officer.

(b) At any time during the course of a fire investigation, the state fire marshal will, in the marshal's discretion, post at the entrance to a building or premises, a notice to read "KEEP OUT. BY ORDER OF THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL." After the sign is posted, it is unlawful for persons other than those authorized by the state fire marshal to enter the premises so posted.

### OPM 7.010 (The OPM is the Department of Public Safety Operational Procedure Manual)

#### C. Additional functions and programs of the Division

Provide technical investigation of fires involving death, serious injury, large dollar loss, or crime in support of criminal case investigation by AST.

## OPM 120.010 – 120.030 (summary of sections)

### FIRE INVESTIGATION PRIORITIES

Staffing and fiscal constraints in the Division of Fire Prevention do not allow the routine investigation of all fires. Fires that will normally be investigated by the Division of Fire and Life Safety include the following:

- a. Fires that result in a fatality or serious injury.
- b. Fires that involve a substantial loss of property (\$500,000 or more).
- c. Fires which appear to be intentionally caused as part of an insurance fraud or other criminal activity.
- d. Fires which will have a significant public impact.
- e. Fires which indicate trends or a serious consumer safety problem.
- f. Any fire that involves Department of Public Safety facilities or equipment.

2. The Division of Fire Prevention does have the authority to investigate other fires within the state as outlined in AS 18.70.030.

***To request a Deputy Fire Marshal to respond to your fire, call the MATCOM Dispatch Center at (907) 352-5401. Of course you will get a phone menu, press 1 for dispatch. Tell them that you are requesting a Deputy Fire Marshal. Then give them the reason for the request (fatality - serious injury - fire loss exceeding \$500,000, etc...). They will contact one our supervisors who will evaluate the request. This should clear up some of the problems we have had with this in the past. If you have any questions about this or any problems give us a call at (907) 269-5491 or 269-5367.***