

FIRE LINK

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To the Future

by Mark S. Wessel, President

As we venture forward towards a new year, with a new leader, I would like to reflect for a moment on the past year. The term "moment" is very relative in regards to the last year. It seems as though time past so quickly that one must think hard to wonder where the last year has gone.

I know many of us have been caught in the wake of a drastically changing economy. This of course has created a whirlwind of changes regarding how we budget and justify our expenditures. This operating mode in itself will cause time to pass without the realization of the days, weeks and months. Often this may cause us to deter from our everyday operating mode and even allow some programs to become extinct from our memories.

With that said, let me remind everyone of the most important program in our daily operation. "FIREFIGHTER HEALTH AND SAFETY". In the industrial world, we will commonly find that the "PREVENTIVE MAINTENANCE PROGRAMS" are the first to get cut due to financial constraints. We too may find ourselves fudging a bit to duct tape and wire tie our departments. Remember,

this could be your recipe to a potential disaster: Always take the time to consider and reconsider the causes and effects of each decision we are confronted with. The safety of our personnel should not be placed in the "cut rate" display of our operations. As Fire Service Leaders, be ready and willing to take a hard and bold stand for funding in regards to safety. This may show itself in many ways. We may be confronted with extending certain routine maintenance programs or not keeping up with annual inspections of equipment such as breathing apparatus and pump certifications. Aerials and ladders need to be inspected and certified. Training and certifications for our personnel should be maintained. Personal Protective Equipment should be inspected routinely and repaired or replaced as needed.

The most profound element that may present itself is the funding for personnel. Although the fire service has had a history of doing more with less, we must stand fast to protect the most important resource to the fire service. Many of you have probably read about some of the horror stories of reduced personnel numbers and the temporary or perma-

nent closures of stations. I would reference this as "Tragedy on the Horizon".

If you are experiencing any of the aforementioned subjects, get some help! Use the resources that are available to you for a minimal cost of FREE. Utilize the networking that is set up in your county, state and federal organizations. Start with the Missouri Valley Chiefs.

I would now like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has been there to assist me during my term as President. I would have very much liked to have been able to attend a few more of the State Chiefs Conferences, but scheduling, weather and other unforeseen events prevented me from attending. I am sure you are being left in better hands as we move forward into the next year. This organization will continue to retain a strong position within the IAFC and your Board of Directors leaves nothing to be desired. I have been fortunate to have served this organization, or should I say I have been fortunate to have been served by this organization? Either way, it has been an honor and I thank you all. □

FRI—Dallas—2009

The IAFC Annual Conference will be in Dallas, TX August 25 - 29, 2009. For detailed information go to www.iafc.org/fri and find a list of all programs and activities. The Conference kicks off with a Welcome Party on August 26, 2009, at 6pm. Network with Fire Chiefs from around the country and meet the vendors on the exhibition floor on Thursday and Friday. Educational

opportunities are available on many different topics. FRI—Dallas is the premier Fire Conference in the Country. Register early for the Conference. The Missouri Valley Division Hotel is the Hyatt Regency which is located next to the Dallas Convention Center. A block of rooms is reserved for MVD members until July 17 at the Hyatt. □



Calendar of Events

Annual Conference
Overland Park, KS
July 9-11, 2009

IAFC-FRI Conference
Dallas, TX
August 25-29, 2009

Kansas State Chief Conference
Manhattan, KS
October 8-11, 2009

IAFC Strategic Positioning Meeting

by Jack Taylor, 1st Vice President

I want to thank the Division leadership for providing me the opportunity to participate in the IAFC Strategic Positioning meeting on May 8, 2009, in Fairfax, Virginia. The meeting included the Board of Directors, IAFC leaders representing divisions, sections, and committees, and IAFC staff. In addition to me, several other members of the Missouri Valley Division were present to represent their various committees, sections, task forces, etc. Those included Chief Rhodes, Chief Carrizzo, Chief Westerman, and Division Secretary Merwick.

The intent of the meeting was to provide a forum to identify frustrations, realign efforts and build on the momentum of recent successes. The meeting opened with a presentation by Susan Robertson, CAE of the Association of

Associations. Ms. Robertson's presentation centered on current trends with Association's in today's economy and what can be done to strengthen Associations.

Following that presentation, the remainder of the day was basically an open-mike discussion of questions, issues, positives, etc. The discussion was very frank and open with everyone being given the opportunity to provide input. Before the meeting concluded, there was a role call of Divisions, Committees and Sections to solicit feedback. The IAFC leadership actively listened to everyone who presented and staff recorded all of the comments. I came away with a very positive outlook for the future of the IAFC and our relationships.

Rather than take a great deal of room

in the newsletter summarizing the entire day, we have posted the summary document from the IAFC on our website. Please go to www.mvafc.org to review the outcomes of the meeting.

Again, I thank everyone for the opportunity to participate in the meeting. I think it is important that we be represented at the table at events such as these.

2009 Missouri Valley Division Conference

You should all have received your conference brochures by now. The Overland Park Fire Department has done a great job putting together an outstanding program for us. My thanks to Chief Bryan Dehner, Deputy Chief Mike Casey, Training Chief Gary Wilson, EMS Chief Steve Issacson, Special Ops Chief Hank DuPont, Administrative Assistant Mary Bitter, Chief Richard Carrizzo, Chief Dan Rhodus and everyone else who has played a part with putting this program together for us. The great speakers and activities should provide good value in these tough economic times. And don't forget to stop by and meet with the vendors. There should be something of interest to everyone. I hope to see many of you there! ☐

News From Kansas

by Gary Curmode

A formal meeting was held by CPSE (Commission on Public Safety Excellence), and several Kansas fire officers were recognized for their recent accomplishments. These are:

- Chief Mark Bradford, Lawrence—Redesignated as a CFO (Chief Fire Officer); and also, received his CMO (Chief Medical Officer).
- Chief Ben Florence, Leawood—Redesignated as a CFO.
- Chief Jack Taylor, Emporia—

Designated first time as a CFO, and also, received his CMO.

- Chief Howard Giles, Topeka—Designated first time as a CFO.
- Chief Scott Clark, Manhattan—Designated first time as a CFO. (his fire chief is Chief Jerry Snyder)

This brings the number of CFOs to 644, and, CMOs to 37, in the CPSE.

Congratulations to all the chiefs for their dedication and hard work to the fire service in Kansas and their citizens. ☐

Interstate Mutual Aid System

The International Association of Fire Chief Mutual Aid Project is in full swing with about 15 states having completed the project. Status of the Missouri Valley Division States are: completed—Colorado, Wyoming, Missouri. In process of completion in 2009-2010

are Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota. Chief Jerry Rhodes of the MVD has been a driving factor in working with the IAFC to complete this needed Mutual Aid Project. ☐

MVD Luncheon at FRI Dallas

The \$7 tickets for the MVD Annual Luncheon at the IAFC conference are available by contacting any of the Missouri Valley Division Officers.

The luncheon will be held at the Dallas Convention Center on Thursday August 27, 2009 from 11am to 1pm. The luncheon is sponsored by Global Traffic Technologies. Spouses and friends are welcome but must have a ticket. ☐

News from Colorado

by Chief John Bales, Golden, CO Fire Department

The General Assembly of the Colorado Legislature has completed their session with many important bills that relate to the Colorado Fire Service. Bills of importance include:

- A bill that increases the motor vehicle registration fee from \$1 to \$2 to fund the emergency medical services account within the highway users tax fund.
- The "Marc Mullenix Volunteer Fire Protection Act" providing limited civil immunity for: Fire Departments and other entities that donate surplus fire-fighting equipment for later use; and volunteer firefighters, their commanders, and the organizations that employ them in connection with fires and other emergencies.
- A bill that creates a fund in the Division of Fire Safety in the Department of Public Safety to make grants to qualified volunteer firefighters and fire departments to cover the costs of training in fighting fires in wildland-urban interface areas.
- A bill that requires any existing single-family dwelling or dwelling unit an existing multi-family dwelling offered for sale or transfer on or after July 1, 2009, that has a fuel burning heater or appli-

ance, a fireplace, or an attached garage to have an operational carbon monoxide alarm installed with a specified distance of each room lawfully used for sleeping purposes.

- A bill that makes it a second degree assault when a person with the intent to infect, injure, harm, harass, annoy, threaten, or alarm a peace officer, firefighter or emergency medical technical causes that person to come into contact with blood, seminal fluid, urine, feces, saliva, mucus, vomit, or any toxic, caustic, or hazardous material.
- A bill that replaces the department of labor and employment with the department of public safety as the oversight agency responsible for school building code inspections.
- A bill that is passed but remains on the Governor's desk for his signature or veto is the collective bargaining by employees of public safety agencies known as the "Firefighter and Law Enforcement Officer Collective Bargaining Act."

It was an extremely busy session for the legislatures and the State Fire Chiefs. Many of our members spent time at the Capital testifying in committees on various bills that will benefit the fire ser-

vice of Colorado.

The Colorado Fallen Firefighters Foundation held the annual memorial service on Saturday, May 9. This year the name of Lt. Brion Newkirk, who passed on February 27, 2009, was placed on the Memorial. Lt. Newkirk died of injuries he suffered at an EMS incident.

The members of the Colorado State Fire Chiefs Association look forward to the Missouri Valley Conference in July and meeting up with many of our friends from the Division. See you in Overland Park.

New Fire Chief

Chief Steven Gillespie is the new head of the Wheat Ridge Fire Department. Chief Gillespie brings over 17 decorated years of fire service experience to the Fire Department. Chief Gillespie joined the Fire Department in September 2008 to lead the department's training division; following an extensive nationwide search by Emergency Services consulting Services International, Chief Gillespie was promoted to the position of Fire Chief effective May 4, 2009. □



FIRE RESCUE

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www.firerescue-gpo.com










For more information or to join, visit or call:

www.firerescue-gpo.com or 1-800-810-3909

Missouri Valley Fire Chiefs Conference

July 8-10, 2009 • Overland Park Convention Center • Overland Park, Kansas

1

Please Print

Title (Mr., Mrs., Ms., Dr.) _____ Full name (First, MI, Last, Suffix) _____ Date of birth _____

E-mail _____

first time attendee state officer new member life member IAFC member # _____

FD/organization name _____

Address (Home or Work) _____

City, State, ZIP _____

Daytime phone (_____) _____ Fax (_____) _____

Please *include* my information on the participant roster. Please *do not include* my information on the participant roster.

2

Fees

Full Conference Package (includes workshops, 2 tickets for evening social events and 1 ticket for breakfast and lunch on Thursday and Friday)

	By June 17	After June 17
<input type="checkbox"/> IAFC member	\$325	\$395
<input type="checkbox"/> Nonmember	\$350	\$425
<input type="checkbox"/> IAFC life member	\$125	\$125

Speaker Package (includes workshops and breakfast and lunch on Thursday and Friday)

<input type="checkbox"/> IAFC member	\$250	\$325
<input type="checkbox"/> Nonmember	\$275	\$350
<input type="checkbox"/> IAFC life member	\$100	\$100

One-Day Speaker Package (includes one day of workshops and breakfast and lunch on Thursday or Friday)

<input type="checkbox"/> IAFC member	\$125	\$200
<input type="checkbox"/> Nonmember	\$150	\$225

Social Package \$125 \$125
Package includes one ticket to all evening social events.

Spouse Package \$80 \$80
Package includes daily activities throughout Overland Park as identified in brochure, two lunches and shuttle service.

Golf Package \$80 \$80
Includes 18 holes of golf, cart, lunch, refreshments and a chance to win a \$10,000 prize sponsored by Quest Enterprises Inc.

Total due \$ _____

3

Payment

Check enclosed, payable to KF&RTI.
(Please do not make checks payable to KU.)

Charge to: credit card company _____

Card # _____ Exp. _____

Name on card (print) _____

Bill FD/organization. PO# _____

Billing address (if different from above) _____

4

Easy Ways to Register

Mail Complete the registration form and mail with payment to:
Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute
The University of Kansas
Continuing Education
1515 St. Andrews Drive
Lawrence, Kansas 66047-1625

Phone Toll-free 866-804-8841 or 785-864-4790

Fax 785-864-9044

Web www.ContinuingEd.ku.edu
(keyword: Missouri Valley)



Special Accommodation

If you will need special accommodation, please mark the box above, and a member of the Continuing Education staff will contact you.

FS101.839/JCN090878

Billing and Refunds

A \$30 fee will be charged for returned checks.
Invoices will not be sent to individuals. Organizations may be billed for fees if the registration form is accompanied by a purchase order or authorization letter signed by an organization administrator on official letterhead.

**Network with other
MVD Chiefs**

**REGISTER
TODAY FOR THE
CONFERENCE**

Missouri Valley Fire Chiefs Conference and Exposition

Plans are in full swing for this year's Missouri Valley Fire Chiefs Conference and Exposition. This year the conference is held in Overland Park, Kansas, July 8-10. If you have not received a conference brochure in the mail, please contact the Overland Park Fire Department at 913-895-8400. The brochure is also located at www.mvafc.org. **One important note: Hotel reservations must be made by June 17 to receive the special conference rate.** The Sheraton Hotel in Overland Park is a four-star hotel and a beautiful facility. The hotel adjoins the convention center making this an excellent venue to attend a conference.

This year's conference will have a good mix of educational workshops and social activities.

The Conference will kick off with the traditional golf outing at Overland Park Golf Club Wednesday morning. This course offers a little bit of everything for the advanced golfer but also for the beginning golfer. Slope rating is 120. You can also take a chance at winning \$10,000 for a hole-in-one and each participant will receive souvenirs. We are really looking to field a full tournament and have a great time. So bring your clubs or if you've never played we can provide some for you!

That evening participants will be shuttled to the Overland Park Fire Department Training Center for an outdoor cookout while being entertained by the classic rock group, Tailspin. Participants will have an opportunity to tour the OPFD Training Center. Included in the tour of the Training Center will be all of the facilities and props that also include a demonstration of the OPFD Command Training Center and the City of Overland Park Emergency Operations Center. Wednesday's events are sponsored by Conrad Fire Equipment.

Thursday will begin the formal part of the conference with the memorial and general business meeting. The keynote speaker this year will be Dave Armstrong. Dave has been broadcasting college basketball in the Midwest to a generation of fans. He has been with the Big 12

Conference since it started, calling the action each week on ESPN's Plus Network. His trademark "Wow!" is heard on each and every broadcast.

Dave is also familiar to baseball fans as he was the television voice of both the Kansas City Royals and the Colorado Rockies.

Dave has just written his first book, *Driving From Here to WOW!* It is an oftentimes hilarious ride with Dave on his journeys around the sports world. He also offers insights on how to live a life while looking through the windshield, and not the rear-view mirror. Copies of his book will be available for sale at the conference.

Finally, Dave's father retired as a chief officer with the Detroit Fire Department after a 30-year-plus career. This background into the fire service should make for a great keynote address.

The morning will conclude by giving an extended time for vendors right after the keynote speech through the lunch hour. This year over 50 vendors have already signed up and vehicle space is just about closed.

Our speaker series begins in the afternoon with Chief Dennis Compton (Leadership Rites of Passage) sponsored by Fire Protection Publications/ ISFSTA and Kevin Brahme (the Challenge of Ethical Leadership in Public Safety). All of the speaker bios and descriptions are listed in the conference brochure.

Thursday evening's social event will be at the World War I Memorial in Kansas City. This is the only memorial in the country honoring veterans from World War I and the museum is absolutely amazing. We have rented out the museum for two hours for all of us to tour the museum without interruption. This has to be a must-see for everyone attending the conference, and to add some KC flavor, Gates BBQ will be catering. Gates was one of the original BBQ's in Kansas City and contributed greatly to the reputation of KC BBQ. Shuttle service will also be provided. Motorola will help in sponsoring this event.

Friday will start with the business

meeting and a presentation by Chief Dehner over the OPFD Strategic Web Site. Chief Dehner will also share some of his time with OPFD physician, Dr. Ziporan. Dr. Ziporan will speak about the medical surveillance tools and assessment programs available in the region. This discussion on health and wellness will help to provide our occupational athletes a career of good habits and preventative maintenance.

Later in the morning the speaker series will resume with Donna Forgy (Drivers of Success). The afternoon speakers will feature George Burk (Value Centered Leader) being sponsored by Delmar/Cengage Publications and Randolph Mantooth (Genesis of Fire-based EMS). Many have asked if they can bring souvenirs of the *Emergency* series to have Randolph sign. If time allows, he has done this in the past. He would ask that a donation be made to the LA Firefighters Museum. He will have photos and other memorabilia with him.

Friday will conclude the conference with the traditional banquet. However, there will be other things going on during the conference. This year's spouse program will feature many unique spots around Overland Park, including the Arboretum, a world class art museum at Johnson County Community College, and a unique visit to the Kansas City Culinary Institute. Shuttle service will be provided both days and Mary Bitter from OPFD will serve as host for the two days.

The conference also features many options for attending, from the full conference package to a special one-day speaker pass for either Thursday or Friday. Included also is the lifetime members fee on the registration form.

In all, it should be a fun-packed, three days in Overland Park. With travel restrictions facing many departments, the conference provides speakers that you would expect to see at other national conferences while being able to reduce some of your travel costs. Again make sure to register before June 17 to obtain the early registration fee and hotel conference rate. □

News From Iowa

by Bob Platts

On April 14 of this year, the Iowa Association of Professional Fire Chiefs hosted our 2nd Annual Spring Leadership Conference. This year our Program Committee contacted Chief Jeff Johnson from Tualatin Valley Fire and Rescue to be our presenter. Chief Johnson's presentation centered around three primary leadership themes:

- ☞ Hit by the Stupid Truck (At-Risk Patterns of Conduct)
- ☞ Ginsu Phenomenon (Customer Service, empowerment, practical solutions to efficiency)
- ☞ Leadership

When discussing the Stupid Truck, Chief Johnson talked about five types of Stupid:

- ✓ Belonging Stupid—the overwhelming desire to fit in

- ✓ Ego Stupid—including low ability to self reflect and inordinate belief in their abilities
- ✓ Humor Stupid—including humor gone wrong in the station
- ✓ Invisible Stupid—when employees believe their actions won't be discovered
- ✓ Sex Stupid—super/subordinate relations, describing your anatomy on work email, etc.

Chief Johnson brought many good ideas on how to empower your employees to provide great customer service. Some are as simple as giving citizens rides when they have a vehicle breakdown, pay for a cab or letting them use the department cell phone to contact help. They also have department credit cards that officers have issued to them allowing them to make decisions and

spend money to assist the public. He also uses this as a good way to test your officers' abilities to make good judgment calls. He also discussed watching and studying how successful businesses operate and using those lessons within the fire service.

Good businesses treat you:

- Like they care
- Like you are important
- Want to please you
- Consistent
- Care about the long term
- Like you have a choice

Since in most instances the public does not have a choice on their Fire or Ambulance provider, it is imperative that they feel like the service they are receiving is the best.

On the area of Leadership, Chief Johnson had many good ideas but the ones that stuck out the most were in making sure that the officers' understood their roles and responsibilities in the organization. Too often it is really easy to get in the trap of having worked with your employees and the ability to separate the job from relationships is difficult. That is absolutely necessary if your organization is going to operate within the guidelines of the chain of command. The Chief needs to do a good job of getting his vision and message across to his department but it is crucial that the Chief let the officers know their authority and where that authority comes from. The Chief is ultimately responsible for everything that happens in that department and your officers need to be a key part in taking forward the Chief's Vision and Mission to the department. Without the officers buy-in, the department will not move forward. The other vital tool and probably the simplest is being truthful with everyone within the department. This is the backbone of relationships throughout not only your department, but all relationships.

Chief Johnson's presentation was an excellent mix of subjects that kept the participants involved and gave them some great information to take back to their departments. ☐

New Members

A Big Welcome to our Newest Members

- Deputy Chief Cary Spiegel—Chesterfield, MO
- Deputy Chief Alan Stoll—Winfield, KS
- Chief Scott Frandsen—Camdenton, MO
- Fire Marshal Chris Bachman—Camdenton, MO
- Assistant Chief Dave Arlint—Blue Springs, MO
- Board of Director John Welchert—Blue Springs, MO
- Deputy Chief Rob Archibald—Hiawatha, IA
- Battalion Chief Tony Harwig—Durango, CO
- Battalion Chief Ron Benak—Omaha, NE
- Dep. Chief Orrin Moon—Silt, CO
- Battalion Chief Greg Smith—Cedar Rapids, IA
- Battalion Chief James McGee—Overland Park, KS
- Chief of Services Bill Metcalf—Overland Park, KS
- Chief Gary Wilson—Overland Park, KS
- Assistant Chief Roy Sims—West Plains, MO
- Chief Tim Millspaugh—Wichita, KS
- Chief Jim Reuther—Jamestown, ND
- Chief Nick Swinhart—Watertown, SD
- DC Brian Daley—Westminster, CO
- Chief John Scullin—High Ridge, MO
- Chief Dennis Reynolds—Ozark, MO
- Battalion Chief Jim Pietrangelo—Fort Collins, CO
- Assistant Chief Tim Behlings—Rapid City, SD
- Chief Mark Thomson—Frisco, CO

Fire Service Bookstore Revenue Sharing Plan

The Missouri Valley Division of the IAFC is pleased to announce that we have partnered with the Western Fire Chiefs Association and their Fire Service Bookstore to bring you high-quality bookstore services and a revenue sharing opportunity! With this partnership, we are able to share the success of the bookstore program with all our state fire chiefs associations.

The Fire Service Bookstore (www.fire-servicebooks.com) is owned and operated by the Western Fire Chiefs Association and is a national program delivering unmatched pricing and service to fire departments across the country. Not only does Fire Service Bookstore represent a great option for your book-

store needs, but it now provides a source of revenue to your State Fire Chiefs Associations.

What you can expect from the Fire Service Bookstore:

- 1) High-quality bookstore services including:
 - a. Products from over 60 publishers
 - b. Best price matching in most cases
 - c. 24-hour order processing
 - d. Online, phone and fax ordering options
 - e. Easy purchase-order payment.

Here are some things you can do to help promote this program:

- 1) Include the Fire Service bookstore logo and link (www.fire-servicebooks.com) on your association's website.
- 2) Your State Fire Chief Association promotes and supports the Fire Service Bookstore (www.fire-servicebooks.com) to your members whenever possible (e.g. conferences, website, etc.) specifically, we would like to be considered your exclusive bookstore partner.
- 3) Your continued loyalty and support of our other partnership programs such as www.firerescuegpo.com and www.dailydispatch.com. ☐

News from Wyoming

by Mark Young

Missouri Valley Division Stipend Funds were recently put to valuable use in the State of Wyoming. Chief Officers from across the state gathered at the Wyoming Fire Academy in Riverton to attend the fourth annual Chief Officer and District Board Member Symposium. This symposium was hosted by the Wyoming Fire Marshal's Office and was supported in part by MVD Stipend Funds.

This year the main theme of the Symposium was "Developing Solutions" and those in attendance were presented with many different ideas that could be easily implemented into their respective departments.

The speakers for the Symposium were:

☞ Becky Booker, Fire Prevention/Fire Investigator, from Spring Lake Park Blaine Mounds View Fire Department in Blaine, Minnesota. Becky presented the audience with unique fire prevention programs used in her department to include information on their Home Fire Safety Program.

☞ Dr. Stan Anderson, Lt. Craig

Anderson with the Oak Harbor Fire Department in Washington State, and Paul Schroer with the State of Washington Fire Marshal's Office presented information on how to implement low-cost, effective training props that make a department's training program more realistic and relevant to personnel.

☞ Chuck Crews with the State of Wyoming Human Resources Department presented a program on "Dealing with Generational Issues in the Fire Service."

☞ Marlene Aitchison, Fire Chief with the Laramie County Fire District #2, and Bob Fawcett, Fire Prevention Officer with the Casper Fire-EMS Department, presented information on successful fire prevention programs within their departments.

☞ John Rutherford, Fire Captain with the Rawlins Fire Department, gave a presentation on his Arson Dog Team. It is the only K-9 Arson Team in the State of Wyoming and will be a valuable resource to the departments across the state.

☞ Phil Oaks, Training Manager with the

State Fire Marshal's Office, presented "LODD Reduction—Where Do We Go From Here?" This was a hard-hitting program that challenged the attending Chief Officers to take action and reduce FireFighter LODD's and injuries.

The symposium started the evening of May 15 and ended at noon on May 17. The Wyoming Fire Marshal's Office and the State of Wyoming Fire Chiefs Association thank the Missouri Valley Division for their continued support of this Symposium! ☐



Missouri Valley Division

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The Missouri Valley Division of Fire Chiefs is dedicated to supporting professional development of its members through educational, leadership, and networking opportunities, while serving as a liaison between State Chiefs' organizations and the International Association of Fire Chiefs.

Group Purchasing Can Save You Time and Money!

by Chief Bill Mund

You are probably familiar with the concept of group purchasing, maybe you have even tried it in your region or purchased off state contracts. Did you know there is a national group-purchasing program available to you—free of charge—in partnership with the Missouri Valley Division of the IAFC? This program brings you the convenience of group purchasing with the collective buying power of thousands of fire departments across the country. The program is called “Fire Rescue GPO” and it was started by the Western Fire Chiefs Association in 2001.

The FireRescue GPO functions as a facilitator of national contract pricing on equipment, supplies and services fire departments use every day. There are two types of contracts available: “publicly awarded” and “negotiated.” Publicly

awarded contracts are created through a procurement/bid process (or RFP). These cooperative Procurement Agreements contain language that allows for “piggybacking” by other fire departments that have joined FireRescue GPO, thus avoiding the need to create an RFP or bid process themselves. The second type of Agreement is aggressively negotiated and provides national tier pricing.

The FireRescue GPO is not a retailer. Purchases are made directly from the vendor or distributor—in many cases the same ones you already work with! In order to utilize these contracts, you must be a member of the FireRescue GPO, which is free and voluntary. There is no obligation or commitment, simply register on the website (www.firerescue-gpo.com) to create your free account. Contracts and pricing information is

available to members through the website or through the customer service line (800) 810-3909.

This program generates revenue for the Missouri Valley Division of the IAFC and State Chiefs Association where the purchase was made. The revenue comes from reasonable fees that the vendors pay when a purchase is made through the program. Check out the FireRescue GPO today at www.firerescue-gpo.com. It is free, easy, helps the fire service, and who knows—you just might save some time and money on your next purchase! Go to the website and request a login name and password today and then use Fire Rescue GPO as another possible source for your purchasing needs. Remember, it costs you nothing to sign up and can potentially save your department some money.