

---

---

# BUCKS COUNTY FIRE NEWS

---

August 2016 [BucksCountyFireSafeHomes.com](http://www.buckscountyfiresafehomes.com)

---

A PUBLICATION OF THE BUCKS COUNTY FIRE CHIEFS' & FIREFIGHTERS' ASSOCIATION

<http://www.buckscandff.com> WWW.BUCKSFIRE.ORG

---

The next meeting of the Chiefs' & Firefighters' Association will be held at the Bucks County Community College Newtown Campus at 7 PM on August 15<sup>th</sup>. This is a free presentation on **“Substance Use and Abuse Along With First Responder Suicide and Prevention”**. **All Bucks County emergency service personnel (Police, Fire & EMS) and their families are encouraged to attend.** There will be no formal business meeting.

The September meeting will be held at Station 33, Tullytown, on September 19<sup>st</sup>.

**H**ighlights of the July Meeting:

Earl New of Paul Davis Restorations made a presentation of their services after a fire. [enew@pdr-usa.net](mailto:enew@pdr-usa.net) or C-267-918-3358 Chief Frank Farry reported that the findings of bill SR60 are once again being considered for action.

A Thank You plaque was presented to Ex President Steve Cronin.

The financial committee reported that their audit of the books for 2015 was complete and there were no deficiencies found.

There was a discussion regarding the inclusion of the “Hero to Zero” program into the FF1 curriculum. Although it is essential information to all new firefighters, no one wanted to lengthen the existing course.

The current recruiting grant has been closed.

Anyone with a complaint regarding the Communications Dept. is encouraged to follow the chain of command in writing. President Hager stated his admiration for the smooth transition into the new radio system.

A motion passed to purchase a table at the PA Fire Service Dinner in Camp Hill this November. See Pres. Hager is interested in attending.

A motion passed to present a History of the Bucks County Fire Service book to the presenter of the program at the August meeting.

**H**istory Books – Total books sold or given to County Companies has reached 721.

Anyone who is planning a company purchase (save the tax) should e-mail me at [edpfeiffer44@gmail.com](mailto:edpfeiffer44@gmail.com). Invoices to companies can be provided from the association. Books used as gifts by the company and paid by check from an invoice are tax exempt. Help celebrate our history and meet our expenses by buying books. Books may also be purchased and shipped for a \$4.50 shipping and handling charge at [Http://www.buckscountyfireservice.org](http://www.buckscountyfireservice.org).

Books are available at all Monthly meetings.

**A**lternative fueled vehicles continue to come on the market, not just in cars, but trucks too. Hybrid Class 8 truck using a combination of electric and natural gas will soon be available from Peterbilt/Kenworth as well as from Volvo under the Mack name. A spotting method of these vehicles is a new space “behind-the-cab”. It may contain batteries, cylinders of compressed natural gas (CNG) or propane.

Catalina Composites is a company that manufactures Composite CNG cylinders up to 16 inches in Diameter and 90" long. Future tanks will be 26" dia. And 132" long. A Tesla equivalent electric truck track is about to hit the road with advanced sales of 7000 units. Hydrogen powered cars are being made by Toyota and will soon be available from Honda.

In 2015, 68 firefighters died while on duty in the United States, the fourth time in the past five years that the total number of deaths has been below 70. For quite a few years, the number of on-duty deaths annually had averaged around 100 deaths per year, but recently we have seen a fairly consistent decrease in the annual totals. The exception in the past five years was 2013, when the total number of deaths was 97, resulting in part from two fires that claimed a total of 28 lives.

Of the 68 firefighters who died while on duty in 2015, 32 were volunteer firefighters, 24 were career firefighters, six were employees of federal land management agencies, three were federal contractors, one was an employee of a state land management agency, one was a civilian employee

of the military, and one was a state prison inmate.

There were three multiple-fatality incidents in 2015: an apparatus crash on a wildland fire killed three wildland firefighters, a helicopter crash killed two contract firefighters working on a prescribed burn, and a wall collapse at a structure fire killed two firefighters.

One firefighter was murdered last year, when he was deliberately struck and killed by a motorist during a fundraising event. One firefighter died by suicide while on duty.

#### **Activities when fatal injuries occurred**

The largest share of deaths occurred while firefighters were operating at fires (24 deaths), accounting for just over one-third of the on-duty deaths in 2015. This is the fourth time in the last six years that that total has been fewer than 25. There has been an average of 30.5 fire ground deaths over the past 10 years (2006 through 2015). Seventeen of the 24 fire ground deaths in 2015 occurred at 16 structure fires. In addition, there were five deaths at three wildland fires and two at two vehicle fires.

Eleven firefighters died while responding to or returning

## **BUCKS CO. FIRE NEWS**

from emergency calls. Deaths in this category are often not the result of crashes. In fact, in 2015, eight of the deaths while responding to or returning from alarms were due to sudden cardiac death, and another death resulted from a stroke. One firefighter was killed in a collision while responding to a medical call, and another was struck by a passing vehicle while directing traffic at the station for apparatus responding to a mutual aid call. All 11 victims were volunteer firefighters.

**H**ome Fire involving heating equipment - *Heating equipment is a leading cause of fires in U.S. homes. These homes included one- and two-family homes (including manufactured homes) and apartments (including townhouses and other multi-family dwellings).*

**H**eating equipment fires accounted for 16% of all reported home fires in 2009-2013 (second behind cooking) and 19% of home fire deaths (second behind smoking materials).

**S**pace heaters are the type of heating equipment most often involved in home heating fires, figuring in two of every five of these fires and accounting for 84% of associated civilian deaths,

### 3

75% of civilian injuries, and 52% of direct property damage.

The leading factor contributing to ignition for home heating fire deaths (56%) was heating equipment too close to things that can burn, such as upholstered furniture, clothing, mattress, or bedding.

The leading factor contributing to home heating fires (30%) was failure to clean, principally from solid-fueled heating equipment, primarily chimneys.

Chief Lasky – I used to say it's my job to make sure you go home at the end of your shift or call, but I'll never say that again! I think it is too short-ranged. We need to start thinking long-range and about the future. Now I say it's my job to make sure you go home at the end of your career as a paid or volunteer firefighter, with two good knees, a good back and cancer free. Enough with thinking just about tomorrow! Let's invest in our people!

**Death Benefits –**  
Federal - The amount of the PSOB is \$339,881. for eligible deaths and disabilities occurring on or after Oct. 1, 2015.

## BUCKS CO. FIRE NEWS

State – For 2013-2014 the benefit was \$123,277.64. It is adjusted annually. Additionally, the Postsecondary Education Gratuinity Program provides a waiver of tuition, fees and room and board to children of firefighters who dies after January 1, 1976 as a direct result of performing their official duties.

**T**here is a Fire Marshal & Code Official Symposium, being **presented by Keystone Fire Protection Co.**, on Wednesday, September 28, 2016 at the Horsham Township Community Center in Montgomery County.

This "don't miss" opportunity features a keynote address from the Department of Homeland Security, detailed discussions concerning code changes, top technology trends in fire life safety, and much, much more. We have many dynamic speakers lined up for what promises to be a very valuable day.

Space is limited. Click on the links below to view more detailed information concerning the courses and register today. Eight (8) CEU's will be given by the BCCC for all attendees.

<https://events.r20.constantcontact.com>

**T**he U.S. Navy has responded to concerns about drinking water contamination of public and private wells around former military bases in Bucks and Montgomery counties (Johnsville & Willow Grove Naval Air Stations).

Contamination in approximately 100 wells in Bucks and Montgomery counties were found to contain high levels of perfluorinated chemicals: perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS).

The unregulated chemicals — PFOA and PFOS — that are being assessed as “emerging contaminants” by the EPA have been found in ground and drinking water near the former Naval Stations. According to the American Cancer Society: The International Agency for Research on Cancer, part of the World Health Organization, classifies PFOA as “possibly carcinogenic to humans ... based on limited evidence in humans that it can cause testicular and kidney cancer, and limited evidence in lab animals.”

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued new guidelines for toxic chemicals in drinking

water. The new information is significant for people in communities near Willow Grove as well as former Naval Air Station Warminster (Johnsville) where groundwater and well water were contaminated by two key chemicals found in the **firefighting foam** (AFFF) used on the bases. The military had been gauging its response using short-term, provisional health advisories for the chemicals set by the EPA in 2009: 0.4 parts per billion for PFOA in drinking water, and 0.2 ppb for PFOS.

New limits were announced that set an advised limit of 0.07 ppb (70 ppt) for PFOS and PFOA combined, in order to protect against health effects from a lifetime of exposure. In a worst case scenario that means drinking water with 0.58 ppb of the chemicals (0.39 ppb PFOA and 0.19 ppb PFOS), a level that was previously considered safe, now would measure more than eight times the recommended limit.

AFFF is the substance containing these carcinogenic chemicals. Firefighters worldwide have used and have been exposed to what is being studied as the source for the high rates of cancer in people who live near these air stations. Both facilities conducted frequent and

extensive firefighter training with local volunteer fire departments. Drinking water contamination is presently the concern. However, exposure of firefighters to these chemicals by direct contact or inhalation must be considered. Even more concerning is the fact that AFFF is in common use by Fire Departments worldwide today and can unknowingly contaminate ground water as well as firefighters.

**Station 93, Hartsville,** will have a Flag Memorial consisting of 403 flags on the station lawn on September 11<sup>th</sup>. The flags represent the 343 Firefighters, 37 New York and New Jersey Port Authority officers and 23 NFPD Officers who died in the Line of Duty on September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001. The station and Flag Memorial will be open beginning at sunrise. An open invitation is made to everyone to Stop, Reflect and Remember.

Two additional flags will represent Volunteer Firefighters John Kulick (Enterprise of Hatboro) and Tristan Smith (Bryn Athyn) who were killed in action in Iraq.

A Memorial Service will be held at 7PM. It will include an invitation to all attendees to bring in a flag and to

## BUCKS CO. FIRE NEWS

participate in reading the names of each fallen officer. Music and refreshments. Everyone is invited.

**Station 56, Richland Township Fire & Rescue** will hold a Cheese steak night on October 7<sup>th</sup> from 4 to 7 PM at the station, 64 Shelly Rd. Also included are homemade French fries.

**Station 44, Newportville,** has sold their 1999 HME 1871P/Kenco, 4-door 7-300/350, 18 ft non walk-in wet-rescue has been sold to Arkport (Steuben County, NY)

**Billy G** - Not too many years ago the Line of Duty death of a Firefighter was considered horribly tragic but *somewhat* "acceptable" and "routine" - as "part of the job"-but our world has started to change. More and more the role of Chiefs, the Company Officers and Firefighters-but especially those responsible and/or in "**command**"...are being held responsible.

More and more discussions and changes are being looked at regarding "who" is "in command" and what qualifies them to be in command? The question of "**do you know where all of your firefighters are-and what are they doing**" at anytime

**on the fireground** is being asked more and more-sometimes by people we'd rather not have ask the questions.

In some areas, the days of firefighters arriving and doing whatever they want to are over. Strict command, control and accountability driven by policy, no nonsense training, dictatorial company officer and command discipline and leadership is becoming the standard.

I was recently talking to a friend, a chief, in another state about how a mutual aid company arrived on his working fire scene and did "whatever they wanted"...I asked him-*what did you do?* And he replied, nothing-what can I do?...they *always* do that?! **WTF!?** It starts with not allowing it and setting the tone through mutual policies, training and discipline so that can never happen.

Recently, the New York State Department of Labor's Public Employee Safety and Health Bureau issued 14 violations to two fire departments regarding the Dec. 19 line-of-duty death of 19 year old Mount Marion volunteer Firefighter Lt. Jack Rose.

Last year, the same agency also cited Long Island's

Inwood VFD in the Line of Duty death of Firefighter Joe Sanford, where they cited issues related to command, control, communications and accountability that were lacking at that mutual aid fire in the neighboring town of Woodmere.

**T**he Pennsylvania State Fire Commissioner's office has moved into the newly opened PEMA HQ on Elmerton Ave. in Harrisburg. It is a half mile from the Farm Show Complex. Commissioner Solobay invites anyone in Harrisburg to stop by.

**I**n order to find out if your Fire Reports are being received by the state contact Kraig Herman at [krherman@pa.gov](mailto:krherman@pa.gov). If your reports for 2017 are not on record in Harrisburg you will not qualify to receive a state grant in 2018.

**T**he Pennsylvania State Firemen's Convention & Parade will be held Sept. 21<sup>st</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup> in Washington, Pa. The parade is Saturday, Sept. 24<sup>th</sup>.

**T**his is an invitation to the Philadelphia Fire Commissioner Adam K Thiel reception at the Fireman's Hall Museum on Sept. 21<sup>st</sup> from 5:30 to 7:30 PM. This is also an event that will feature a silent/live auction to

help with the restoration of the Joel Bates Hand Engine that was made on Quarry Street in Philadelphia. The Bates Hand Engine was acquired from the New England Fire Museum years ago when it closed. The Engine was recovered from the Delaware River at some time in its history. It is great to have it back in Philadelphia and we are doing our best to raise money to get the piece stabilized for display in the Fireman's Hall Museum. For more information contact [edpfeiffer44@gmail.com](mailto:edpfeiffer44@gmail.com)

**D**uring the week of 8/22/2016, Motorola will begin a transition of Bucks County 911 from Radio Version 7.14 to Version 7.16. This will not affect service.

**A**n EMT class will be starting at Montgomery County Training Center on August 24. There are a few spots left to be filled. Gayle Keagy [gkeagy34@aol.com](mailto:gkeagy34@aol.com)

### **From the Financial Secretary: 2016 Dues**

All of 2016 dues notices has been sent to the membership. Thanks to everyone who provided feedback and updates to the membership list. If

## 6

you have any updates, please email them to me. I have also included 2 reports on the status of dues. There is a member report and an organization report. The report reflects where each member and organization stands with dues. I have included the life members on the report. If you have any questions about your dues or status of your dues, please feel free to contact me. I can be reached through email or phone call.

### Website

There have been many changes to the website. The monthly newsletters are now available on the website. We are looking for content and pictures to put on the site. Please send any information

Thank You  
Stephen Cronin  
[fscronin@outlook.com](mailto:fscronin@outlook.com)  
Cell – 267-544-9771

## BUCKS CO. FIRE NEWS

**Smoke detection is essential for *FIRE* prevention**

**This is your newsletter and it needs your input to be successful. Please send your news to [EdPfeiffer44@gmail.com](mailto:EdPfeiffer44@gmail.com) anytime during the month.**