A new year and a new look

Welcome to the new year and the new look for our monthly Gated Wye newsletter. I hope you all had a relaxing and enjoyable holidays and you are refreshed and invigorated to charge into 2017.

We are excited to bring you the newsletter in this new format, which is designed to reduce the steps you need to take to view the newsletter and to deliver it in a more accessible format for mobile devices.

This January begins our yearlong celebration of the OSFM’s 100-year anniversary. Each month, beginning with this issue, we will be highlighting significant OSFM and Oregon fire service accomplishments and successes for each decade since 1917. We will also distribute these highlights through our social media platforms (Twitter and Facebook).

The Office of State Fire Marshal was established in 1917 through the passage of House Bill 226. It was declared by the legislature that “. . . this Act is necessary for the reduction of the fire waste in this State and for the public safety, health, peace, and welfare . . .”

Until 1964, the OSFM was a division of the Insurance Commissioner’s office, and the insurance commissioner served as Ex Officio State Fire Marshal. In 1961, the Oregon Legislature separated the two offices and in 1964 C. Walter Stickney was appointed Oregon’s first State Fire Marshal.

Some interesting facts from our first few years:

- The first annual budget for the OSFM in 1917 was $8,834.59, which was collected through annual license fees from 147 insurance companies doing business in Oregon.

- The OSFM’s first annual report in 1918 lists 2,164
fires in Oregon with a loss of $10.9 million. However, 1918 reporting rules required only insurance companies to report the number of fires in which they experienced a loss. Fire departments were not required to report all fires until the early 1920s.

A little further down in this newsletter you can read a few more facts from 1917 through 1919, along with a spotlight of our District 1 deputy state fire marshal area which includes Clatsop, Columbia, and Tillamook counties.

Next month, we will spotlight our District 2 & 3 deputy service areas and have interesting facts from our decade 1920 through 1929.

We continue to seek to include any facts and accomplishments from members of the Oregon fire service.

If you experience problems with our new format or have suggestions, please email our newsletter editor Rich Hoover.

Thanks for all you do!

OSFM's 100 years of service: Highlights from 1917 to 1919

This is the first of 12 monthly articles highlighting interesting facts and significant events from each decade of OSFM's 100 years of service, and an OSFM deputy state fire marshal region.

1917

- The Department of State Fire Marshal was established as part of the Oregon Insurance Commissioner.
- All fire data was collected by the insurance industry. Non-insured fires were not counted.
- Rules and regulations were passed governing the storage of fireworks and explosives.

1918

- The OSFM's first annual report lists 2,164 fires in Oregon with a loss of $10.9 million. Fire departments were not required to report all fires until the early 1920s.

1919

- The first fire prevention day was declared on October 9, 1919. It was known as
Patriotic Fire Prevention Day.

Spotlight on: OSFM deputy District 1

- Counties: Clatsop, Columbia, & Tillamook
- Deputy State Fire Marshal: Tad Pedersen, deputy since 2005, planning section chief on the Green Incident Management Team
- Population: 111,905
- Fire agencies: 24
- Approximately 83% volunteer
- CR2K facilities: 532
- Extremely hazardous substance facilities: 47
- Conflag responses in last 15 years: 14
- Annual calls (5 year avg): 12,456
- Annual reported fires (5 year avg): 479
- Annual hazmat calls (5 year avg): 84
- Annual dollar loss (5 year avg): $9,541,848

District 1 has had multiple historic fires. Astoria is the oldest settlement west of the Rockies, initially built on wood: wooden buildings on wooden foundations. Even the sidewalks and streets were made of wood. Several entire blocks near the river sat elevated off the marshy ground on wooden pilings. On December 8, 1922, a fire started in Astoria's business district and was soon engulfed in flames. The fire rapidly burned out of control, destroying as many as 30 downtown blocks.

Portland dispatched firefighters and equipment to help with the blaze, which was finally brought under control by dynamiting buildings in the fire's path.

Financial losses of the Great Astoria Fire totaled hundreds of millions of dollars. Nearly 2,500 residents were left homeless. One death was attributed to the fire.

Most of Astoria was promptly rebuilt after the fire. Main Street today remains much the same as it appeared after its 1920s restoration.

The Tillamook Burn, a series of four forest fires spanning the years 1933 - 1951, destroyed 350,000 acres of old growth timber in what is now known as the Tillamook State Forest.
The repeated fires led some to think that large wildfires in the area were inevitable and that the land was now too damaged from the intense heat to ever again sustain forests.

Determined efforts by Oregonians - private citizens, government officials, land owners, and many others - resulted in efforts to restore The Burn, resulting in a decades-long reforestation program.

**Next set of collectable youth fire safety trading cards available**

The OSFM is releasing the third in the series of four collectable youth fire safety cards. This series is in association with the University of Oregon and Oregon State University basketball seasons.

The cards depict the mascots of each university on the front and fire safety messages on the back.

The cards are free and can be ordered by visiting the OSFM prevention and safety material request page.

**Code Corner**

by OSFM Deputy David Mills

**Temporary Shelters**

Communities across the country respond to homelessness with a variety of housing and services programs, including temporary shelters, transitional housing, rapid re-housing, and permanent supportive housing. In extreme weather conditions, temporary shelters are created which typically operate for short durations during inclement or adverse weather conditions. The Oregon Office of State Fire Marshal reminds local and state fire professionals that Technical Advisory (TA) 11-14, entitled Temporary Shelters,[link] can provide guidance to
communities in providing clients/residents with safety and protection from exposure to the weather while simultaneously reducing the environmental impact on the community.

The intent of TA 11-14 was to assist communities in approving existing buildings or structures not necessarily designed for sleeping purposes to, on a limited basis, temporarily accommodate sleeping conditions safely. Provisionally, the time frame of ninety days (90) within any twelve (12) month period was to emphasize the idea that this condition must be temporary in nature. In the spirit of applying this time frame, the intent is to house occupants for sleeping purposes during inclement weather conditions. The 90 days need not be an exact number, rather a number to forecast a limited period of time. If the weather conditions warranted say 99 days, due to inclement weather, that would meet the spirit and intent of the TA. Likewise, should there be less severe conditions, the shelter need not continue housing residents.

The TA also provides guidance in determining the number of people that may safely occupy the facility and in turn provide safe egress in the event of an emergency. A minimum of two exits are required along with maintaining the egress paths free of obstructions at all times. Though not mandated, a building that has automatic fire sprinklers may be granted flexibility for occupants sleeping on floors above the second floor and in basements. Smoke and carbon monoxide (CO) alarms are required and may be battery operated.

An emergency evacuation plan coupled with a fire watch during the sleeping hours provides an important level of safety for both occupants as well as emergency responders.

We recognize this can be a sensitive issue in communities and appreciate everyone’s efforts to safely house occupants during inclement weather conditions.

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Nominations open for Sparky awards

The OSFM is accepting nominations for the 2017 Golden and Silver Sparky awards.

The Golden Sparky recognizes a fire service member or fire agency for outstanding achievement in fire prevention or public safety education.

The Silver Sparky recognizes a civilian or civilian agency for outstanding achievement in fire prevention or public safety education.

Please submit your completed nomination form with an explanation and examples of your nominee’s achievements.

For more information, contact Sally Cravinho at 503-934-8205 or sally.cravinho@state.or.us.

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Data Connection

News from the Analytics & Intelligence Unit
2016 Incident Data
The comprehensive analysis of incident data for 2016 is underway and will be released in the Supplement to the Annual Report later this year. Although some data continues to trickle in as incident reports for 2016 are still being submitted and or modified/corrected, we would like to share a sneak peek of the 2016 annual data.

The number of incidents reported to the Office of State Fire Marshal (OSFM) each year has steadily increased from 244,736 in 2010, to 310,177 in 2016[i]. This increase of overall statewide incidents reported is due, in part, to an increase in reporting by local agencies. More agencies are reporting and submitting data on all of their incident responses, not just fires. This provides a more accurate picture of what the Oregon fire service is actually doing.

From the local to the federal level, the more data that is available the better well-equipped we are to provide better education to the public, guide budget and funding decisions, and ensure the effective use of appropriate resources. We would like to thank all of our local partners that have taken the time and effort to submit their incident data to the state. It can certainly be a tedious task, but one well worth the effort!

Here’s a sneak peek at some 2016 data:
318,978 total reports have been submitted to date. This is a 13% increase over the same time last year. There have also been 15,178 fire incidents reported to date for 2016, which is slightly more than the 15,103 fires reported for all of last year.

At this point in the year in each of the last five years, the average annual dollar loss is $126 million. At this point in 2015, there was $178 million in estimated dollar loss reported. To date in 2016, $190 million in estimated loss has been reported. Twenty incidents, mostly involving commercial properties, have estimated losses in excess of $1 million in 2016.

To date in 2016, there have been 44 reported fire fatalities. The five-year average for this time of year is 38. Among these fatalities were 24 residential deaths. The leading cause of residential fire deaths for the past several years has been smoking. That trend continues to persist in 2016, as fatal residential fires have been six times more likely to be caused by smoking than any other cause.

Older adults continue to account for the majority of fatal fires as 61% of all fire deaths involved people over the age of 50. A third of all fire fatalities involved people between the ages of 60 and 69.

As of the time of this article, 282 out of Oregon’s 316 fire agencies have reported incidents to the state for 2016. This equals 89% of all fire agencies in the state. Aside from the percentage of agencies reporting in 2015 (94%), the last time Oregon experienced such a high reporting rate was in 1967. The 11% that have not reported incident data for 2016 are mostly jurisdictions with smaller populations.

Based on data from the U.S. Census Bureau and other available information, the combined populations of jurisdictions that have not reported in 2016 account for less than 2% of the total state population.

It’s That Time of Year Again!
All NFIRS reports for 2016 need to be submitted to the OSFM by January 31, 2017.

If your agency did not have any calls for an entire month, this needs to be reported as well. Agencies can easily log this in their Oregon Fire Bridge™ or Elite™ account, or contact the Analytics & Intelligence Unit to get that information properly captured. If your agency reports through the Oregon Fire Bridge™ or Elite™, your reports are automatically submitted when the report is saved.
For questions contact the OSFM Analytics & Intelligence Unit at 503-934-8250 or 877-588-8787 (toll free), or by email at osfm.data@state.or.us.

[i] Data listed for 2016 is incomplete and is based on information reported to OSFM as of December 19, 2016. Final tallies for 2016 may be different.

OSFM branch spotlight:
Fire and Life Safety Services

As the ‘Boots in the Field’, the Fire and Life Safety Services Branch (FLSS) provides direct operational field support to over 317 Oregon fire service agencies. Education, Engineering, Compliance, and Investigation form the foundation of this support. Assistant Chief Deputy Michael Trabue sees strong customer service as the footing to provide this support.

"The FLSS Branch is organized into four areas of service," said Trabue. "They consist of Branch Administration, Field Operations Unit (deputy state fire marshals), Codes and Technical Services Unit (deputy state fire marshals) and the Health Care Unit (compliance specialists)."

Trabue identified many services the FLSS Branch provides, directs, and coordinates:

- Fire investigations
- Fire and life safety inspection of public and state-owned buildings – and, certain state licensed facilities
- The storage and use of combustibles and explosives
- Institutional occupancy fire prevention
- Federal Medicare-Medicaid (CMS) certification surveys and compliance with fire and life safety standards for federal funding of health care facilities
- State Fire Code adoption and interpretation
- Code compliance consultations with local fire agencies concerning how to determine:
  - Adequate fire department access and water supply
  - Adequate egress from all public buildings to assure the protection of all places where large numbers of persons work, live, or congregate

"The Branch also develops, provides, and supports training in fire investigation cause and determination, provides fire safety compliance education to certain state licensing agencies, and manages the OSFM’s Competency Recognition programs," says Trabue.

In addition, the Branch also leads the agency’s exempt jurisdictions program, develops and ensures compliance with exemption rules, manages the program’s administration, and provides field support for the Oregon Fire Service Mobilization Plan utilizing locally assigned deputy state fire marshals.
"The FLSS Branch provides a wide range of services in support to the Oregon fire service and the protection of its citizens," said Trabue. "...but, the real difference is felt by, and accomplished at, the local level through the focused efforts of our thirteen deputy state fire marshals in the field every day – and the two supervisors and administrative specialists that support them."

Trabue sees five primary areas of focus for the FLSS Branch as it looks towards 2017:

1. Adequately support the Fire and Life Safety Competency Recognition Program
2. Improve our understanding of the capacity of local fire prevention/investigation programs and better communicate to the State's fire service agencies how our office is able to support them (The Plan Of Cooperation)
3. Provide an effective fire and life-safety inspection service plan for Oregon Youth Authority facilities, Oregon Department of Corrections institutions, and other state-owned properties
4. Provide effective Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services fire and life-safety plan review and survey services for our Oregon Health Authority and Department of Human Services agency partners
5. Recommitment to and support the agency's exempt jurisdictions program

We asked Trabue - What does the FLSS Branch's focus in 2017 mean to the Oregon fire service and Oregon citizens?

"Citizens and the fire service will see an increase in our effectiveness in meeting our statutory obligation to provide services to their agency and the citizens of Oregon," says Trabue. "Local fire service agencies will see better communication from us on how we can support their fire prevention and investigation programs."

According to Trabue, the Branch can leverage its focused efforts through an increased partnership and collaboration. "Our increase in communication and effectiveness will be reflected in an invigorated commitment by the FLSS Branch to work with each fire district, our industry stakeholders, and our partner agencies to provide the best fire prevention/investigation program services possible – and to continue improving the availability of that service. We will continue to work with Department of Public Safety Standards and Training, the Oregon Fire Chiefs Association, and the Oregon Fire Marshals
Association to improve the OSFM's Competency Recognition Program and to facilitate the availability of fire prevention and fire investigation training to ensure personnel are adequately prepared to meet local needs.

Trabue’s passion for the fire service and fire and life safety spans more than 30 years in both the public and private sectors, which included serving nine years as the Deputy Chief/Fire Marshal with the City of Albany Fire Department prior to coming to the OSFM in 2015.

"I am passionate about the fire service and the role fire code compliance and fire investigation contributes to the mission of OSFM," says Trabue. "However, what I am most passionate about is that the compliance services we deliver be provided in a non-confrontational and collaborative manner with the businesses and citizens we serve."

Trabue is proud to lead the 23 members of the Fire and Life Safety Services Branch with this passion. He looks forward to the opportunity to work more closely with the Branch’s partners and stakeholders to better meet their needs and expectations in 2017.

Trabue can be reached at (503) 934-8252 or michael.trabue@state.or.us.

Fire service museum announces Rescue Rovers program

The Oregon Fire Service Museum, Memorial, and Learning Center launched a new program this summer to provide Oregon fire agencies with small stuffed Dalmatian dogs to give to traumatized children.

Under the Rescue Rovers program people “purchase” a dog for $5.00, write their first name on a paper dog tag, and then drop it into a barrel inside the hose cart shed at the fire service museum information center at Antique Powerland in Salem.

You may also send a check to the Oregon Fire Service Museum, 1284 Court Street NE, Salem, OR 97301, and the appropriate number of dogs will be added to the barrel.

At intervals throughout the year, Rescue Rovers will be given to different fire agencies in Oregon.

When told about the program, one firefighter expressed enthusiasm, saying he often encounters children so scared they are shaking and it would be nice to have something to hand to them.

Many people have been delighted to help by purchasing stuffed animals they knew would go to help a traumatized child, and parents use the opportunity to teach their children about giving to others. In addition to benefiting the community, each dog sold also
generates $2.75 for the Oregon Fire Service Museum operating budget.

For more information call 1-888-313-6873 or email oregonfiremuseum@gmail.com.

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**Registration Open**
(Note: registration closes January 28, 2017)

**Oregon Office of State Fire Marshal**
2017 Task Force Leader Symposium

Best Western Agate Beach
Newport, Oregon

Tuesday, February 28: 1000 - 1700
Wednesday, March 1: 0830 - 1530

[Register online]

This training is intended for current task force leaders and assistants, and those anticipating to fill the role in 2017

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**SAVE the DATE**

2017
State Emergency Response Commission/ Local Emergency Planning Committee Conference
May 22 - 24
Seaside Convention Center

More details in next month’s newsletter

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**Kudos to . . .**

North Lincoln Fire & Rescue for taking the opportunity to set up the window of a local vacant storefront to remind folks about ocean safety!

A big thank you to Department of Public Safety Standards and Training Director Eriks Gabliks for the photo.
See what's happening on our social sites: