



"The General Alarm"

A client-subscribed monthly newsletter from the
GENERAL INSURANCE AGENCY



Issue 8

August 1, 2008

News

Congratulations to the following organizations on receiving a FEMA Grant in Round 1: **Community Fire Co., Frystown** (Berks), Round 2: **Bethel Twp. Hose Co. #1** (Delaware), Round 4: **Refton Comm. Fire Co.** (Lancaster)
We'd like to welcome the following emergency service organizations to the "General Insurance Agency Family" ...
Lakeville Volunteer Firemen's Relief Association (Wayne) - <http://www.lakevillepavfc.org>

Upcoming Events

Ogonts Fire Co. will be holding **Texas Hold 'Em Tournaments** every 3rd Sat. monthly at 7:00pm and are open to all fire, police and EMS personnel. \$20 donation door fee. Contact Phil at pwash5@comcast.net for more info. This month's tournament is set for Aug. 16th.

Parkland Fire Co. #1 (Bucks) is selling **Raffle Tickets**. There are only going to be 300 sold and the prizes are as follows: 1st prize is a 6 night Carnival cruise round trip from NYC to Bermuda, leaving 4/16/09, 2nd prize is a 26" LCD Flat screen TV, 3rd prize is a 4GB iPod nano. Tickets are \$20 ea. Anyone interested should contact FF William Oettinger @ 267-249-2064

Citizens Fire Co., Slatedale will hold its annual **Pig Roast** on Sat., Aug. 2nd. Call 610-767-9453 for more information.

Harrisburg River Rescue will be holding "A Night at the Beach II" featuring **Scott Kirby & Dave Edmiston** on Fri., Aug. 15th from 8pm-11pm at their station. Admission is \$15, which includes light snacks and a cash bar will be available. Must be 21 or older, proof of ID required at the door. Tickets sales are limited to 250 people and must be purchased before Aug. 14th. No tickets will be available at the door. For tickets, send your check payable to PHIAP, along with a SASE to Sue McCaughey, 925 Indian Springs Drive, Lancaster, PA 17601. For more info, call Sue at (717) 951-2983 or e-mail her at SDMPAROTHD@aol.com. For more info. visit www.harrisburgriverrescue.org.

Friendship Fire Co., Birdsboro will be holding its 10th Annual **Scramble Golf Outing** on Sun., Sept. 28th at the Reading Country Club. Lunch at 11:00; Shot-gun start at 12:30 and Dinner at 6:00. For more information please call 610-582-0058.

Nesquehoning Fire Co. #1 will hold its **Annual Labor Day Stay Home Festival** from Fri., Aug. 29th thru Sun., Aug. 30th at the fire company grounds. Great food, fun and more will be in store!

Conshohocken Fire Co. #2 will be holding its 7th Annual **Golf Tournament** on Wed., Sept. 17th at the Turtle Creek Golf Course, Limerick. 4-Man scramble format with a Noon shotgun start. Dinner will follow at the Great American Pub. To register or for more info. contact Steve Phipps at 610-960-5793 or sphipp@idexcorp.com

Citizens Fire Co., Slatedale will be holding its **Annual Sportsman Night** on Sat., Spt. 20th from 6-10PM and will include raffles, guest speakers and food (kitchen will be open). Alaskan Bear hunt tickets will also be available. Call 610-767-9453 or 610-767-1052 for tickets.

East Greenville Fire Co. will be holding its **Annual Car & Truck Show** on Sun., Oct 5th. Registration from 8am-Noon. Numerous categories for cars and trucks. Pre-registration is just \$5.00 - \$10.00 the day of the show. For more info. visit www.egfd38.com.

East Greenville Fire Co. will be holding a **Comedy Show featuring Ray The Amish Comic** on Sat., Nov. 1st. Admission is \$20 and includes refreshments and snacks. Doors open at 6:30pm. Show starts at 7:30pm followed by DJ music. For more info. call 25-679-7875 or visit www.egfd38.com. Show is 21 or older only.

Stay current with upcoming Training Seminars by visiting our website!

ESIP Training Seminars - "How to Prevent Theft in Your Organization"

Provident Training Seminar – "Worker's Compensation for the Volunteers"

Flashover Survival Training hosted by the **American Fire Co. #1, Lansford**

Dept. of the Auditor General Management Guidelines Seminar for Relief Associations

Billy Goldfeder, "Firefighters Scared Straight" presented by the **Nancy Run Fire Co.**

All area fire, EMS, and police personnel are welcome. To register for any classes and for more information go to the Training Seminar link at www.insuranceforvolunteers.com or contact Tony Blackwell at 1-800-882-0801 ext. 13 or tony@generalinsuranceinc.com.

Do you have a training class you'd like offered? Chances are we can get it for you.

Call or e-mail us with your needs!

Training
&
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Seat Belts – It Can Be Done!

By Tony Blackwell

We read of too many tragic stories each year of firefighters losing their lives in the line-of-duty as a result of what are preventable causes. The loss of firefighters by not wearing seat belts is such a simple safety measure to take. Wearing your seat belt makes sense and is the right thing to do. All firefighters, having been to just a few civilian car accidents, know first-hand the importance of wearing seat belts.

We wear our seat belts in our personal vehicles. We insist our families, our children, buckle up each time we get in the car. Why is it then when the alarm comes in, we lose our heads and don't buckle up?

This is something we can put an ***immediate*** stop to. Each and everyone one of us must own up to this problem. We are each responsible for the actions we take or don't take.

As officers, you are responsible for stopping these preventable losses from ever occurring. As an officer, if you see a firefighter attempting to gain entry into a building during a defensive fire attack, you would stop him. Why then are we continuing to allow our apparatus to respond knowing our firefighters – our friends - are not buckled up? All too often an officer's excuse for allowing firefighters to not follow the rules is, "If I discipline him, he won't vote for me come next election". If the guy falls out of the fire truck because he's not buckled up, he probably won't be voting for you anyway. Enforce the rules. By the time elections come around, he'll have forgotten about it anyway.

Folks, riding in fire apparatus without being buckled up is not an act of bravery. Ask yourself one question... What dispatch is so important that you can respond without buckling your seat belt? A car fire? A structure fire? Maybe a structure fire with confirmed entrapment? How about "None of the Above". A common excuse is that riding unbuckled saves time. The fact is, having every firefighter buckle up before leaving the station will not impede your response. Having to stop because someone fell out of your fire truck will.

What's in your wallet? No, besides the money. Take a look at the pictures. Buckle up. If not for yourself, for them.

Several weeks ago the Dallas, TX Fire Department led a department-wide effort to secure the 100% support of seatbelt usage by their members. Over 1,700 employees of the Dallas Fire Department have taken the national seatbelt pledge to ensure every member is safely buckled up before moving fire apparatus.

Frederick County, Maryland has also achieved 100% in their seatbelt pledge commitment. And The Canadian Fire Service has also joined this effort. They join the growing ranks of departments that have achieved 100%.

Congratulations to them and to you if you have also achieved 100%.

**1,700 Firefighters in Dallas... An entire County Fire Department in Maryland... An entire COUNTRY!
How difficult can it be in your Company? It can be done!**

This article may look very familiar to you. Parts of it were taken from the USFA website and an e-mail forwarded to me from US Fire Administrator, Greg Cade. I encourage you to join Dallas, TX, Frederick County, MD, Canada and the other fire departments and take the National Fire Service Seat Belt Pledge. I've put the form in our Loss Control section of our website. Fill it out, send it in and those great folks will send you a 100% Compliance Certificate. Send us a copy as well and we'll also send you a certificate!

Be Safe.

Got something you're selling?

Looking to Buy, Sell or Trade? - List it here - **FREE!**

Aquishicola Fire Co. has a Motorola Syntor 9000X low-band radio for sale. 31-50mHz, 100-watt. Also available are Motorola UHF Minitor Pagers. 453.100 frequency with cases and batteries. Contact Rory Koons at 610-826-2066 for more info.

Diamond Fire Co., Walnutport has a Barron II Cylinder Refill System for sale. 5,000 psi, 13.2 cfm w/ 3-cylinder enclosed fill station and 2 cascade cylinders. Contact Mike Wentz at 610-597-0376 or station29@enter.net for more info.

Nesquehoning Fire Co. #1 has 11 - 100' sections of 5" LDH w/ Stortz connections for sale. Contact Chief McArdle at 570-669-6684 for more info.

Western Salisbury Vol. Fire Co. has a 1986 Mack CF/688/Ward 1979 1,000 GPM Pumper for sale. Asking price is \$32,000. For more info. contact Chief Steve Schneider at 610-266-7100 or Chief Eng. Jack Kelly as 610-432-3847.

Barren Hill Fire Co. has a 1972 Custom 20 Brush Truck and a 1994 Ford Club Wagon Fire Police Van for sale by bid through April 30th. Both trucks are sold as is. For more info. contact Chief Chris Schwartz at 610-825-2250 or BHFCTruckCommittee@comcast.net.

Aquashicola Fire Co. has a 1994 FL-80 Freightliner Tanker for sale. 2,000 gal. tank with a 500 gal PTO Pump. Contact Rory Koons at 610-826-2066 for more info.

East Allen Township Fire Department has recently taken delivery of a Pierce/Ford F550 QRV vehicle. This truck along with carrying an AED and medical supplies is also equipped with a 500 gpm pump and carries 250 gallons of water. We also took delivery of a Pierce Quantum Heavy Rescue. This is equipped with a light tower, air cascade system and a Hurst Tri-Mode power unit with three Hurst Reels. Check out our web site at eastallenfire.org for more details.

Western Salisbury Vol. Fire Co. is selling a 1986 Mack CF688/Ward 79 Pumper. 34,400 miles, Allison Automatic Transmission. 1,000 GPM, 500 gal. tank and many extras. Truck is in excellent condition with an asking price of \$32,000 (negotiable). For more info. contact Chief Steve Schneider at 610-266-7100 or Chief Engineer Jack Kelly at 610-432-3847. www.westernsalisbury.org.

Ruscombmanor Fire Co. has 2 Honeywell smoke eaters available for **FREE** (formerly for sale). For additional info. call Eric at 610-223-9577 or Tom 610-721-6028.

Harrisburg River Rescue has for sale the following: 2004 AB Nautilus Rigid Hull Inflatable Boat, 11 feet with a 30 HP Nissan stroke motor. Electric Start, many accessories. Mint Condition, \$8500.00. 17' Dive Rescue Zumro Inflatable Boat with 70 HP Evenirude Motor, light bar and numerous accessories. Galvanized trailer in mint condition. \$15,500.00. Contact Steve Ketterer @ 717-215-9963.

Buy
Sell
Trade

Safety Vests Save Lives
By Dave Denniston, Client Education and Training Manager
Emergency Services Insurance Program

The Federal Highway Administration has established a new standard (23 CFR 634) that requires the use of high visibility safety apparel for all workers who are working within the rights-of-way of Federal-aid highways. Basically the new rule requires all firefighters, medical personnel, police officers, highway workers, tow truck drivers etc. to now wear reflective clothing that will make it easier for motorists to see and identify them better in a variety of conditions found on the roadways.

If your department is anything like mine, when word of new standards requiring the use of high visibility safety vest came down you can bet the troops got all worked up. After all, first there was OSHA and NFPA we had to be concerned with and now terms like ANSI, FHA and MUTCD are starting to affect us. One of our members said “what the heck is next, the m-o-u-s-e standard?”

The next thing to hit our “in-boxes” were scores of emails on ideas of how to beat the requirements and ideas that maybe the new standards were not meant for us. After all, our state OSHA in New York had come out with a letter that they did not require the use of vests and turnout gear was sufficient. Next was an email from a gear manufacturer citing a study that suggested the vest provided no more visibility then standard turnout gear. Questions also were asked on if we even protected any “federal highways” and what happened when fighting a car fire with a “flammable” vest. Then there was the whole “break away” vs “non-break away” vests and the new NFPA 1901 requiring a vest for each seat of a truck so do we buy vests and put on the truck or buy them and issue them to our members?

I set out at the Fire and EMS Expo in Baltimore to get some answers. What I found was a huge selection of vests available that appear to meet the standard that ranged in price from \$14 to \$85 a piece. There are vests with zippers, vests with velcro and vests with snaps. I found vests with lights, vests with radio pockets, vests with cell phone pockets and vests with whistles. I also found vests that were fire resistant and fire proof. And many of the vendors were more than glad to customize them for you. After all I don't own a t-shirt without a department name on it so why would I want my vest that way?

I learned a lot about vests and have a whole new respect for them. I remember driving upon an accident scene lately and realizing that I could not see the emergency people doing their job. I then thought of all the times I was on the scene of one of those calls and was probably not seen by motorists either. What could we possibly be thinking trying to find ways to beat, fight, or ignore the new standard? The only person it is meant to protect is us.

I had planned on leaving Baltimore with a new vest to meet the 23 CFR 634 that goes into effect 11/24/2008. Instead I left with four! The t-shirts will have to wait another year.

Please research, plan and buy vests for your department. I don't like being told what to do anymore than anyone else does. But after researching this topic, I have to agree it is in our best interests. Also remember that the vest is just one small component of a complete highway safety program. McNeil and Company stands ready to assist you with training, sample SOP's and ideas to implement traffic safety programs. Together we can make the roadways a safer place for our responders.

Franklin Twp. Vol. Fire Co. (Carbon) - <http://www.ft4fc.org>
East Greenville Fire Co. (Montgomery) - <http://www.egfd38.com>
Philadelphia Steam Fire Eng. Co. (Montgomery) - <http://www.philliesfireco.com/>
Schuylkill Haven Fire Dept. (Schuylkill) - <http://www.havenfire.org/>
Pennel Fire Co. (Bucks) - <http://www.penndelfire.com/>
Trexlerstown Fire Co. (Lehigh) - <http://www.trexlerstownfirecompany.com/>
Community Fire Cp., Frystown (Berks) - <http://www.fzystownfire.org>

**Nice
Website!**

From the Desk of Wes Fritz...

Folks, I hope you all had a great holiday. There are a few things that have been on my mind since last month's newsletter.

First is the cost of fuel. When will it end! But it got me thinking... with the continually rising cost of heating oil, not only will homeowners begin to look to alternative heating sources, so will Fire, EMS and Rescue stations. Some of you may be pondering the use of electric or kerosene space heaters, wood or coal stoves, or some other alternative heating source.

However, when utilizing an alternative heating source, care and common sense must be used. Aside from the normal, manufacturer's recommendations for their use, you've got to remember, when the pagers go off and everyone runs to the apparatus, someone has to take a moment to shut off the space heater or kerosene heater. The last thing you want to hear from your dispatch center, while you're on-scene of an emergency, or anytime, is that your fire station is on fire!

As you discuss alternative heating sources, please keep in mind of the special considerations you'll need to remember for the times when your buildings are not occupied but need to be heated.

The second thing is the training seminars we've scheduled. Tony has done a great job in coordinating classes in 3 locations with ESIP and Provident and we hope to see you at those classes.

But if you can't attend any of them, we can bring them to you! ESIP and Provident are capable of providing seminars on a wide variety of subjects - if there's a topic of interest you'd like covered, simply give us a call and we can assist in setting that up.

To keep you updated on scheduled seminars, we've added a link on our website where you can not only see what's coming up, but also register for them online.

And third, speaking of our website, we've also added a few online services for your convenience. Check 'em out and remember... we're here to be of service no matter how you decide to contact us ...by phone, by e-mail or by website... by bullhorn might take a little longer ☺

Until next month, Take Good Care.

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Northeast PA	600 W. Centre St. Mahanoy City, PA 17948	570-772-3192		

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