

The Newsletter of the New Jersey Division of Fire Safety

FIRE FOCUS

Excellence in Public Safety

Lt. Governor Sheila Y. Oliver, Commissioner
Richard Mikutsky, Director and State Fire Marshal
Fall 2020

New Jersey Department of Community Affairs
New Jersey Division of Fire Safety
Volume 16 Issue 4

NJ Division of Fire Safety Distributes Smoke Alarms

[Click to view video](#)



RICH MIKUTSKY, DIRECTOR

Rich Mikutsky NJDFS Director and State Fire Marshal speaks at Jersey City Fire Headquarters as 2020 Operation 7 Save A Life sees alarm giveaway statewide during National Fire Prevention Week.



Jersey City Fire Chief Steve McGill accepts delivery of Op7 Save A Life smoke alarms

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RICHARD KUBLER HFD-IN MEMORIAM



NATIONAL FIRE PREVENTION WEEK



MUSIC &
VIDEOS

READ
& PLAY

LEARN NOT
TO BURN®

LESSONS

GRADE
LEVELS

DIGITAL
BACKPACK

SPARKY.ORG

**FIRE
SAFETY.
SAVE
LIVES.**



Perhaps the best way of sharing National Fire Prevention Week's theme of ***SERVE UP FIRE SAFETY IN THE KITCHEN*** is to make your local educators aware of Sparky's Schoolhouse.

The website is accessible at
sparkyschoolhouse.org

The site offers a comprehensive line-up of multi media tools including interactive lessons videos and personalized instruction.

The website is accessible at
sparkyschoolhouse.org

FIRE SAFETY MINUTE
PLAN YOUR HOME FIRE ESCAPE!

MORE VIDEOS



Kids

NATIONAL FIRE PREVENTION WEEK

NFPW KICKS OFF 20-21 NJFPPA-NJDFS FIRE SAFETY POSTER CONTEST



FIRE PREVENTION POSTER CONTEST REGISTRATION FORM



COMPLETE THIS FORM AND ATTACH TO THE BACK OF EACH POSTER

STUDENT INFORMATION-PLEASE PRINT

ENTRY FORM

2020-2021 NJFPPA-NJDFS FIRE SAFETY POSTER CONTEST KICKS OFF OFFICIALLY DURING 2020 NATIONAL FIRE PREVENTION WEEK. Art students from across the state begin to create their interpretation in seven different grade levels, including special education based upon this year's National Fire Prevention Week theme:

**SERVE UP FIRE SAFETY
IN THE KITCHEN**

SCHOOL ADDRESS: (city, town, ...)

PRINT CLEAR

Please

Division

Div

Divis

Divis

Divis

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL STUDENTS

Division #6 Kindergarten through Eighth Grade

through Twelfth Grade

FIRE ORGANIZATION

CONTACT PHONE NUMBER:



Not Every HERO Wears a CAPE.



PLAN 3 PRACTICE
your ESCAPE!

Not Every Hero Wears a Cape.
Plan and Practice Your Escape!



SOLUTION FOR SOMERVILLES?

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) recently released a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for the Building Resilient Infrastructures and Communities (BRIC) grant program.



The program was authorized through the Disaster Recovery Reform Act of 2018. The main catalyst for passage of the legislation was the BuildStrong Coalition, a group of fire service organizations (including CFSI); insurers; trade associations representing architects, building engineers and contractors; code specialists and other groups committed to building more resilient communities.

Under the BRIC grant program, \$500 million is available for Fiscal Year 2020 for states, local communities, tribes and territories to implement pre-disaster mitigation activities. Allocations for grant funding include \$33.6 million for states and territories, \$20 million for Indian tribal governments, and \$446.4 million for national competition.



As subapplicants, local governments are eligible to apply through eligible states and territories for BRIC grants. In addition, both applicants and subapplicants can apply for funding on behalf of individuals, businesses, and nonprofit organizations.

One of the key criteria for eligibility is that mitigation projects must, at a minimum, be in conformance with the latest published editions (meaning either of the two most recently published editions) of relevant consensus-based codes, specifications, and standards that incorporate the latest hazard-resistant designs. FEMA will begin receiving applications on September 30. The deadline for submission is January 29, 2021.

[**GRANT FUNDING OPPORTUNITY LINK**](#)

(From CFSI)

VOLUNTEER RETENTION

Retention has long been a challenge for many volunteer and combination fire and EMS departments, yet little research has been done on the subject. Thanks to support from a Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant, the National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC) has conducted a study to identify institutional drivers that cause volunteers to leave; the differing perceptions between leadership, current volunteers, and former volunteers; and what can be done to positively impact retention.

The research was conducted in three phases over the course of several months in 2019 and 2020.

The first phase included interviews with current and former volunteers as well as department leadership. This was followed by a synthesis session and feedback from the NVFC's SAFER work group, which consists of representatives from several national fire and emergency service organizations.

The final phase was a quantitative survey of over 1,000 current and former volunteers as well as current department leadership.

"We know that many volunteer fire departments struggle with retaining volunteers, but much of our knowledge about why volunteers leave is based on anecdotal evidence," said NVFC deputy chief executive Sarah Lee, who oversees the organization's SAFER grant. "With this research, we now have data to back up the hypotheses. We also have a better idea of what areas to focus on to help departments overcome the challenges and improve their retention rates."

Some of the key findings from the quantitative research include the following:

- There is a disconnect between why former volunteers say they left a fire department versus what current leadership thinks are the reasons why volunteers leave.
- Current volunteers who have considered leaving but did not said their main reason for staying was their desire to give back to the community and help people.
- When asked what could have a positive impact on volunteer retention, both current and former volunteers cited mentorship programs, giving out awards/honors to members when they reach service milestones, conducting stay interviews with volunteers who have lapsed attendance, and conducting exit interviews when a volunteer leaves the department among their top choices.



The majority of department leadership (74%) said their department either had a general sense of retention but no specific way of

measuring it or no clear definition of retention at all.

The NVFC will use the data from this research to develop tools and resources designed to help departments better understand and meet the retention challenges they face. The research was conducted as part of the NVFC's Make Me A Firefighter campaign, a SAFER-funded program that helps volunteer and combination fire departments recruit and retain volunteers. The campaign includes a [department portal](#) filled with free tools and resources to help departments increase their staffing and a [public site](#) where prospective volunteers can find a local fire service opportunity.

[THE FULL REPORT](#)

COVID CONTINUES

In addition to responding to the community emergencies first responders continue to be the best advocates for community information.

Promote these CDC suggestions among yours.

The COVID-19 pandemic may change some of the ways we connect and support each other. As individuals and communities respond to COVID-19 recommendations and circumstances (e.g., school closings, workplace closures, social distancing), there are often unintended challenges for important aspects of emotional well-being such as social connectedness and social support.

Shared faith, family, and cultural bonds are common sources of social support. Finding ways to maintain support and connection, even when physically apart, can empower and encourage individuals and communities to protect themselves, care for those who become sick, keep kids healthy, and better cope with stress.

[What We Can Do](#): Find out what you can do to empower and encourage individuals to protect themselves and their communities during COVID-19.

Community and faith-based organizations can Review and put into practice [CDC's guidance](#). This includes promoting preventive measures such as social distancing, use of masks, frequent hand-washing, and staying home when appropriate.

Share COVID-19 prevention [information](#) with communities, using ways known to effectively connect with that specific community's members.

Employers can review and put into practice [CDC's guidance for businesses and employers](#), reminding managers to ensure that best practices are followed.

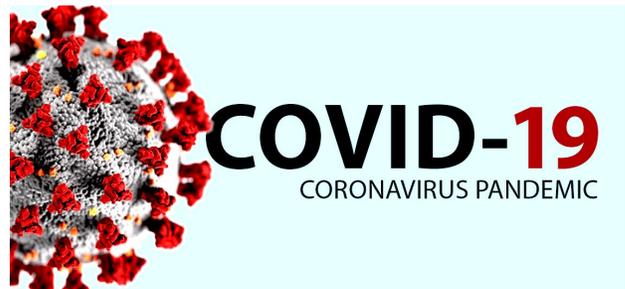
Provide masks, alcohol-based hand sanitizers, hand-washing stations, and personal protective equipment as appropriate.

Healthcare delivery systems can work with community health workers, healthcare providers, and patient navigators to [connect the community](#) with health resources.

Provide [telehealth](#) options that are tailored to the needs of patients.

Public health agencies can invest in partners who promote fair access to health by

- Ensuring that community diversity is considered in contact tracing efforts
 - Establishing accessible testing sites for COVID-19
 - Helping community members get what they need in order to isolate if they are sick or have been exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19
- Helping community members get information and resources to keep themselves and their loved ones safe and well.



MAKING THE CASE FOR CRR

We sometimes get so used to the hazards in our community that we sometimes just take for granted that everything will work out. The more things work out and there are no problems the more we become comfortable and possible not become aware of changes to the hazards or to emerging hazards. I guess it's just human nature. But then we have a jolting reality check like the unimaginable storage of 2,700 some tons of ammonium nitrate in a Beirut warehouse that was stored with other hazardous materials and as bad timing would have it the other hazardous materials caught fire.

We know that ammonium nitrate is a bad actor under the right circumstances, guess what, one of the worst conditions for a bad actor like ammonium nitrate is to be exposed to a fire. We know the outcome and it was the same unthinkable outcome firefighters faced in [Texas City, Texas in 1947](#), [Kansas City 1988](#) and [West Texas 2013](#) - an out of control fire exposed to ammonium nitrate. In all three of these U.S. incidents the community had significant losses to its fire department - two departments were completely lost.

It always makes us think - can this happen here? It brings our focus back to the risk we face and the hazards we know exist.

So now may be that time to prioritize and look at our Community Risk Assessment as an emergent function of our CRR efforts. I love what I have heard Vision 20/20 project manager Stephen Hrustich say about CRR. He describes it as scalable, or just simply the scope of efforts can be sized or focused larger or smaller based on priorities and the given needs. Its the beauty of CRR and especially of the function of the community risk assessment (CRA).

In regard to our CRR plans and actions we should have them set up so that we can turn on a dime and immediately focus depending on our most compelling needs and available resources. I see the CRA as one of the most important tools we have in CRR because if we have taken steps to discover and assess our risk and documented it in a written plan the we have gone a long way toward mitigating that risk.

Along with this concept we should be able to ramp up and re-assess as needed even if that means that the CRA becomes an emergent action. Shipping ports around the world got the message loud and clear that they may have been ignoring a catastrophic hazard stored with in plain sight. As a result they are now investigating to see if, like Beirut, they have similar risk, and *guess what - they are discovering they do have similar risk.*

Here is a link to an article in the August 23, 2020 Washington Post outlining efforts international ports are taking to discover hazardous risk. [Beirut explosion prompts other ports to search for dangerous chemicals](#)

Its always better to discover a problem before you have to manage the consequences. Does anyone want to comment about work you may be doing in hind sight of the recent Beirut explosion?

Mike Love/ CRR Network

To actively engage with the growing Community Risk Reduction community on this and many other prevention strategies please go to:

crrnet@googlegroups.com

SOCIAL MEDIA FRIEND AND FOE?

Think of any major national event that had the incineration of property as one of the outcomes, chances are that social media played a role. Conversely, social media is the firefighter's greatest asset for spreading the prevention message. The Department of Homeland Security has formed a study group to examine the issue

The report examines what motivates people to share bad or false information and discusses underlying issues causing false information. It looks at several real-world case studies to provide agencies several best practices to counter misinformation, rumors and false information.

False social media content is most often caused by four issues:

- Incorrect Information (can be intentional or unintentional).
- Insufficient Information.
- Opportunistic Disinformation.
- Outdated Information.

The white paper examines each of these issues in depth. It explores key best practices categorized by people, processes and technology such as partnerships, software considerations and advanced preparation.

Members of the working group are subject-matter experts from federal, tribal, territorial, state and local responders. They establish and collect best practices and solutions to be implemented by public safety officials and first responders.

Read the white paper.

[Countering False Information on Social Media in Disasters and Emergencies](#)





AT ISSUE:



CFSI OFFERS FIREFIGHTERS FEDERAL HELP

[Coronavirus: Make infection control a priority – U.S. Fire Administration](#)

[COVID-19 cost recovery for fire and EMS departments – U.S. Fire Administration](#)

[Coronavirus disease \(COVID-2019\) situation reports – World Health Organization](#)

[Q&A on coronaviruses \(COVID-19\) – World Health Organization](#)

[Coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\) outbreak – World Health Organization](#)

[Coronavirus \(COVID-10\): What You Need to Know –
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): Cases in the US – Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)

[Interim Guidance for Emergency Medical Services \(EMS\) Systems and 911 Public Safety
Answering Points \(PSAPs\) for COVID-19 in the United States –
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)

-CLICK LINKS FOR MORE INFORMATION-



AT ISSUE:



NEW JERSEY FIRE SERVICE LEGISLATION



Click NJ Assembly photo for pending legislation affecting fire service interests keyword "fire" or actual Bill number.



IN MEMORIAM

**RICHARD KUBLER
HACKENSACK FIRE DEPARTMENT**



**WE SERVE
...TO SAVE**

Photo : Keith Mitchell NJDFS

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NEED VOLUNTEERS? **CLICK GRAPHIC**
CLICK HERE FOR FREE RECRUITMENT TOOLS! **NVFC** NATIONAL VOLUNTEER FIRE COUNCIL



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