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MFSI Update for County Meetings: September & October 2021

Folks,

Our team recently experienced the tragic loss of Certification Manager Peter Rines to cancer. He passed away peacefully on September 8th, 2021. We dedicate this County Update in his memory.

Peter spent many years as a Maine State Fire Instructor and in 2000 was hired as a Training Program Manager, where he worked hard to support Maine's very first Maine State Fire Officer Academy in 2001. He later took on the challenges of the role of Certification & Curriculum Manager - his many years of hard work and dedication reached thousands of Maine fire service members as they became certified as Fire Fighters, Fire Instructors, Fire Officers, and more. One of Peter's most notable contributions was his hard work on obtaining Maine's Pro-Board certification status in 2006 - a legacy that all of us can be proud of.

We will miss Peter dearly. He was a true Mainer through-and-through, and cared very deeply for the State of Maine's Fire Service.

On a personal note, it was Peter that in 1994 pushed me into the command position at a fire training program at the Wiscasset Fire Training Facility. That day motivated me to work harder and push my own boundaries. Small things like this impact the fire service in positive ways - Peter will forever be part of the MFSI family and we will always honor his contributions.

On another note, we find ourselves back in a similar position to where we were many months ago, in regards to the pandemic - we are inundated weekly (sometimes daily) with new guidance, and are struggling to continue advancing our mission while also doing the utmost we can to keep everyone safe. I once again ask for your continued patience as we navigate this ongoing situation and the recent rise in cases around the State of Maine. Our team also knows that things are incredibly trying out on the front lines - we think of you all very often and are endlessly grateful for your efforts toward mitigating this long and arduous health crisis. It is an unimaginably strange and difficult time to be a first responder.

Over the winter months, MFSI has a number of behind-the-scenes projects that we will be working on to raise the bar for fire training here in Maine, including new programs that we hope will provide our state's fire service with opportunities each year to grow professionally. Our goals include the following:

- Build out of the new Live Fire Instructor/Instructor In Charge Program
- Update the Hazardous Materials Operations Program
- Build out the new updated NFPA 1021 Fire Officer Program
- Work on and design our "Cloud Based Written Exam Program"
- Update paper files into electronic database
- Update and Skills Exam sheets to meet the NFPA 1001 Standard
- Prepare a capital expenditures plan to maintain high demand fire training props and equipment
- Equipment maintenance: SCBAs, Breathing Air Compressors, Ladders, Hoses, etc.

It will be a busy time for us here at MFSI. I hope all of you enjoyed your summer and were able to spend some time with family and friends, as we all know what is coming here in Maine in just a few short months. Stay safe and healthy, and we hope to see you soon.

Be safe when the bell rings,

Director Jimmy Graves





1. Fire Instructor I & II - Fall 2021



Despite the latest challenges posed by the Delta variant of the COVID-19 virus, our Fire Instructor I & II Fall 2021 Programs have been moving forward. We were unable to run the program in all four counties as originally planned due to low enrollment at the Kittery and Oxford sites, but the course will soon be underway in Gorham and Ellsworth. We sincerely appreciate the support provided by the area fire departments in allowing us to use their fire training spaces and meeting rooms. We wish all the candidates the very best in the program! This course requires a great deal of commitment above and beyond the classroom sessions, and we are proud of those who rise to the challenge.

2. Alternative Fueled/Powered Vehicle Training Resources

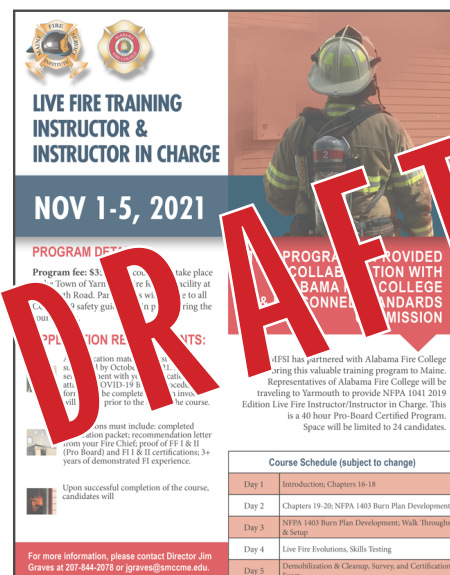
We have recently received an influx of requests for AFV fire & extrication training opportunities. We always do all we can to meet the changing demands of Maine's fire service - but we have to balance that goal with ensuring that any programs we run or endorse shall be valid and reliable, safely educating and preparing folks to deal with threats as effectively as possible. We are actively seeking a multiple-hour program that could be requested at a minimal cost - in order to assist you folks in the mean time, here are some resources with important information in this regard:

- [Alternative Fuel Vehicle \(AFV\) Safety Training | NFPA](#)
- [Know your safety risks: electric vehicle battery fires \(fema.gov\)](#)
- [Electric Vehicle Safety Training for Emergency Responders \(energy.gov\)](#)

3. Live Fire Instructor / Instructor In Charge

MFSI has partnered with Alabama Fire College to bring a 40-hour Live Fire Instructor / Instructor in Charge training program to Maine in light of the 2019 NFPA 1041 Fire & Emergency Services Professional Qualifications standard changes. There are two new chapters that specifically address "Live Fire Training" and we feel it is extremely important that we qualify several of our instructors and provide for a limited amount of municipal fire instructors to attend as well. Representatives of Alabama Fire College will be traveling all the way to Yarmouth to instruct and assist, and we will be conducting this program during the week in order to accommodate their schedules.

Our plan is build out a program of our own after our folks have attended the program and learned from the team from Alabama. We expect this program will be much sought after in the future. We are still in the planning stages for this first session but we anticipate having the details finalized and the registration packet available within the next few weeks.



Course Schedule (subject to change)	
Day 1	Introduction: Chapters 16-18
Day 2	Chapters 19-20: NFPA 1403 Burn Plan Development
Day 3	NFPA 1403 Burn Plan Development: Walk Through & Setup
Day 4	Live Fire Evolutions, Skills Training
Day 5	Demobilization & Cleanup, Survey, and Certification Exam



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4. Fall Skills Exams

We have Skills Exams planned for October 3rd at the Yarmouth Fire Training Facility and November 14th at the Bangor fire training facility - several regional programs will be testing on these dates. We wish all candidates the best of luck! For more information, please contact Deputy Director Jim Roy at jroy2@smccme.edu.

5. Advanced Fire Officer Program Progress

MAINE FIRE SERVICE INSTITUTE ADVANCED FIRE OFFICER VIRTUAL PROGRAM

COURSE FEE: \$150 | APPLICATION DEADLINE: JULY 1, 2021 | CONDUCTED VIA ZOOM

ORIENTATION: SEPT 9, CLASS DATES: THURSDAY 7-10PM FROM OCTOBER 2 TO DECEMBER 16 (10 WEEKS)

ORIENTATION: JULY 14, 2021 CLASS DATES: WEDNESDAYS AT 7-10PM FROM AUGUST 4 - OCTOBER 6 (10 WEEKS)

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT CHIEF HOWARD RICE AT HRICE@SMCCME.EDU

DATE	UNIT	JOB
Aug 4	1. Preparing for Promotion	Chapter 1
Aug 11	2. Firefighters & the Fire Officer	Chapter 2
Aug 18	3. Evaluation & Discipline	Chapter 3
Aug 25	4. Organized Labor & the Fire Officer	Chapter 4
Sept 1	5. Working in the Community	Chapter 5
Sept 8	6. Handling Problems, Conflicts, & Mistakes	Chapter 6
Sept 15	7. Pre-Incident Planning & Code Enforcement	Chapter 7
Sept 22	8. Budgeting	Chapter 8
Sept 29	9. Fire Cause Determination	Chapter 9
Oct 6	10. Crew Resource Management & Leading Change	Chapter 10

The first of two virtual Advanced Fire Officer Programs is well underway and the candidates are successful thus far at meeting the demands of the program when it comes to written assignments and other course work. Another program will begin this month. Please be aware this will end the era of the Basic and Advanced Fire Officer Programs: we will be moving away from the Basic/Advanced model, to ensure we stand up to our Pro-Board Certification, and will instead be introducing a “Fire Officer I” program for the Maine State Fire Service. This valuable program will help us better meet the current demand we’re seeing in the field around the state.

6. Advisory Committee Meeting

We recently held an informational meeting with SMCC President Joe Cassidy and our SMCC/MFSI Advisory Committee. The primary objective was to discuss recent changes in MCCS policies on mandatory vaccinations for on-campus programs. Our staff also updated MFSI’s field operational policy and other documents pertaining to the pandemic to meet the current Maine CDC and other stakeholders’ guidance. President Cassidy assured the SMCC/MFSI advisory committee that third party requests for fire service training off campus will not require proof of vaccination for those in attendance: i.e. if a fire chief requests training, MFSI will deliver it at the fire chief’s fire department or chosen location. MFSI will adhere to all local policies or rules should the municipality have any in place.

Regarding *on-campus* delivery, students will be required to have proof of vaccine and masks shall be worn at all times both inside, and outside with larger groups. In regards to requirements of vaccinations of State Fire Instructors, that is still undetermined at this time - we will keep you posted as more information is shared. We appreciate everyone’s patience as we continue to identify the best path forward for all roles and constituents.

We have also updated our internal Standard Administrative Procedure SAP 14; our field operations checklist; and our health risk survey. We look forward to your continued cooperation in our efforts to protect all involved to the best of our abilities and we ask that you please remind your students to be conscious of how they are feeling, and, if symptomatic, to please refrain from attending programs. We will work with them as much as possible to complete objectives when they are feeling better (or once they have completed quarantine if required).



7. AFG Grant Updates

We are thrilled to announce that we have been awarded just under \$247,000 from FEMA's Assistance to Firefighters Grant for the purchase of the following equipment:

- 1 - Mobile Ventilation Trailer Prop. This prop will have a pitched wooden roof in which firefighters can train on ventilation operations using chainsaws and rotary saws.
- 1 - Car Fire Prop. This prop will be similar to the car fire prop we currently have, but will have the latest state-of-the-art innovations installed.
- 1 - Forcible Entry Door Prop. This will be an addition to our current supply of doors which are one of the most sought after props in our arsenal.
- 1 - SCBA compressor with fill station and storage bottles. This compressor will be a fixed unit and will be installed in the 644 Building at our headquarters in Brunswick. It will be used by Support Services to fill our cascade trailers and SCBA cylinders.
- 200 gallons - Training Foam. This will be used for training and testing without the need to use real foam, thus eliminating PFAS concerns.

There will also be funds used to train MFSI instructors on the safe use of all this new equipment. If you have any questions about the AFG application process, or suggestions for future grant cycles, please contact Deputy Director Jim Roy at jroy2@smccme.edu. We look forward to seeing this equipment making a difference out in the field!

8. New SCBA Air Confidence Trailer (Red Maze)

The delivery of our new Red Maze, purchased in a prior grant cycle, has gone through some delays. Construction was slowed and the delivery has now been pushed back due in part to the fact that several components of the trailer are currently unavailable. We will of course keep everyone posted as soon as more information is available. Our plan is to hold several Train the Trainers on the unit so that as many of our state's fire service professionals can utilize this very valuable piece of training equipment as possible.



9. MFSI Supply & Demand

One of the top priorities for our organization has always been customer service and doing our best to keep up with the ever-increasing demand for our equipment and services. This priority has not changed during the era of COVID-19, but we do ask for your patience and support as we maintain our operations to the best of our abilities during unprecedented and challenging times. We assure you, we are doing all we can to get exam scores sent out as quickly as possible and subsequent certificates printed. Thank you for your understanding.

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10. 2021 Instructor Recruitment

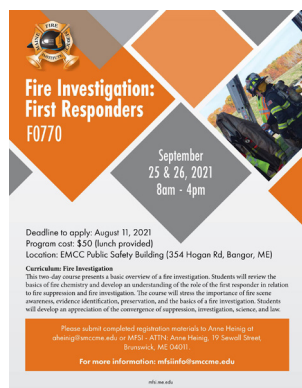
The 2021 hiring process is underway! We had over twenty folks apply to assist us with our mission and we could not be happier with the quality of their application materials and their enthusiasm for our mission. We look forward to moving the process along and getting some new faces on board. MFSI will continue to hold Recruitment periods on a semi-annual basis - if you are interested in joining us please watch for an announcement in 2023.

We also wanted to take a moment to recognize the tremendous efforts of our current State Fire Instructor cadre. Just recently we received several students' evaluations from the Piscataquis Regional Basic Fire School held in the Dover-Foxcroft area over the spring and summer. The evaluations provided great insight to the quality of work being done in the field by our passionate and skilled instructors. This reinvigorates our own passion for the core mission and makes us work harder to see more folks get trained to the same level. Congratulations to all that attended and received their basic fire school certificate!



11. NFA Weekend in Bangor

Like so many other events scheduled during the last 18 or so months, our NFA Weekend in Bangor slated for September 25th & 26th was not impervious to the effects of the ongoing COVID-19 crisis. We had to cancel one of the programs for safety reasons. However, we're excited to report that we *were* able to move forward with our planning for the Fire Investigation program - virtually, and at no cost to the candidates - thanks to the hard work of the folks at the National Fire Academy. Nice work, all! We look forward to the day when we can return to the "old normal" but we appreciate the creative solutions being proposed during the interim "new normal".



12. Maine Fire Chiefs Conference

Several members of our team were able to enjoy (and host a booth at) the Maine Fire Chiefs Conference in Newry. Thanks for all who stopped by and checked in! The keynote speaker was Chief Jason Hoevelmann of the Florissant Valley Fire Protection District in Missouri. Chief Hoevelmann is a steadfast professional and speaks around the country on leadership in the fire service - he has also written several books on leadership that we would recommend any fire service member read. We were very lucky to have him come to Maine in the summer and bestow his leadership lessons.





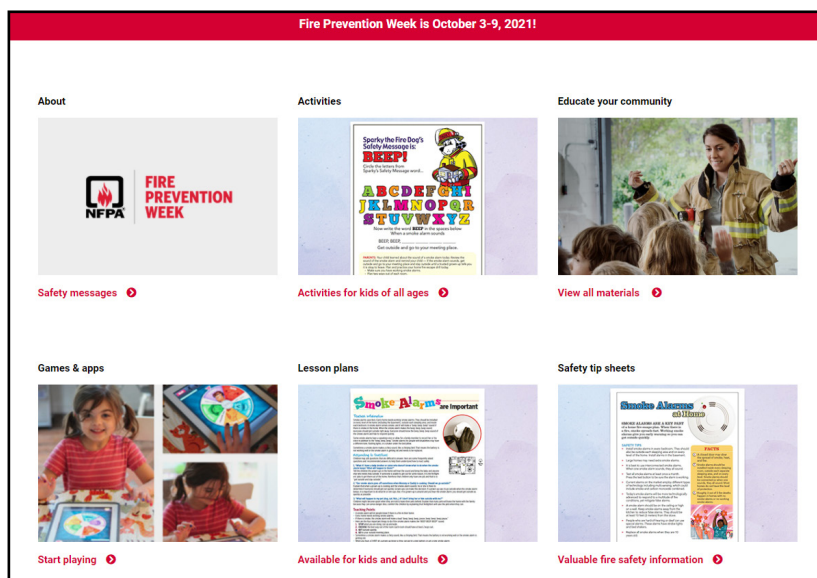
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13. 2021 Fire Prevention Week

The NFPA's annual Fire Prevention week is coming up on October 3-9, 2021! The week provides a chance for everyone to educate their communities on how to prevent fires in the home, and also how to prevent injuries or loss of life when a fire does occur.

This year's FPW campaign, "Learn the Sounds of Fire Safety!," specifically works to educate everyone about the different sounds the smoke and carbon monoxide alarms make. Knowing what to do when an alarm sounds can keep you and your family safe. When an alarm makes noises – a beeping sound or a chirping sound – you must take action.

In addition to the informational bulletins available on the NFPA's website, you and your fire department can also share a variety of digital content for your social media pages. Learn more at <https://www.nfpa.org/fpw>.



14. Wishing Jim Ellis a Happy Retirement

All of us here would like to congratulate Fire Chief Jim Ellis of Eddington on his retirement from the fire service!

Chief Ellis has been a staple of the fire service here in Maine, acting in many capacities in public service. He also served on the SMCC/MFSI Advisory Committee for several years and provided great insight and guidance to our organization. We are so fortunate to have had his leadership and advocacy in support of our mission.

We all wish Chief Ellis the very best - his retirement is well-deserved!





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15. VFIS Train-the-Trainer Event



VFIS Instructor-Level Program
Emergency Vehicle Driver Training (EVDT)
EMS Vehicle Operation (EMSVO)

Description
This program is a train-the-trainer program which is designed to teach the necessary instructional methodology in order to successfully deliver the following programs. Upon completion, an instructor will be provided.

Course Information
11/6/2021 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM
11/7/2021 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM
Maine Fire Service Institute
Southern Maine Community College Midcoast Campus
19 Sewall Street
Brunswick, ME 04011



Registration

Insured by VFIS		Not Insured by VFIS	
\$80 for first seat, \$40 for each additional		\$499 for first seat, \$299 for each additional	
Organization	Total Due	\$	
Name	Enclosed Check	Check Number	
Address	Purchase Order	PO Number	
City, State, ZIP	I authorize VFIS to charge		
Phone	<input type="checkbox"/> Visa <input type="checkbox"/> MasterCard <input type="checkbox"/> Discover		
Phone (Cell)	Credit Card #		
Email	Separation CVI #	/	
Instructor ID Selection		<input type="checkbox"/> EVDT <input type="checkbox"/> EMSVO <input type="checkbox"/> Both (see website)	



Register online at
www.vfis.com

Submit this registration form and payment:
Mail to: VFIS, P.O. Box 2728, York, PA 17405
Email to: CSAPP@vfis.com
Fax to: 717.747.7035

MFISI is partnering with VFIS to bring an Instructor-Level Emergency Vehicle Driver (EVDT) / EMS Vehicle Operation (EMSVO) training to our area on November 6 & 7.

VFIS's program flyer for the course is available on [their website](#) with additional details. *Please note: this course is subject to cancellation pending updates in the COVID-19 guidance and regulations, and the course location may change from Brunswick to Topsham.*

We hope to see some of you there!

16. Remembering 9/11 - Twenty Years Later

It is difficult to believe that two decades have passed since the unspeakable tragedy which occurred on September 11, 2001 - many of us still remember exactly where we were and what we were doing when we learned of the horrors taking place at the World Trade Center that day. But we also remember vividly the courage and heroism of the first responders who stepped up and ran toward the danger, rather than away from it. Many of them made the ultimate sacrifice.

We will never forget.



That concludes our September & October update. We want you all to know we are here to assist you in your training needs so you all go home at the end of the alarm. Kindly submit a report to Director Graves and Deputy Director Roy in an email stating items of concern that result from your county's meeting. We will address them as soon as possible. THANK YOU.

Please stay safe out there, we need you all.

With much respect,
Director Jim Graves