

IFIA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MESSAGE



February was a busy month for the Illinois Fire Inspectors Association. We completed a Fire and Life Safety Educator class in Countryside; began scheduling classes for the rest of the year; are working diligently on our Combined Conference, and introduce legislation in Springfield.

We have directed the FLSE Committee and Combined Conference Committee to research different locations for our Combined Conference when our current 3 year deal with East Peoria expires after 2016. This doesn't mean we have decided to move. By doing due diligence, we strive to provide the best conference possible by considering potential growth of the Conference in terms of vendors, attendees, meeting rooms, and last, but not means least, expenses – conference fees. As we have done over the years we try to keep our costs to you, our membership down. However, like anything else expenses rise and we still strive to maintain our costs with least impact to our membership.

In early February we were advised that proposed legislation by the IFIA was filed as a Senate Bill by Senator Thomas Cullerton (D-Villa Park). This particular legislation is Senate Bill 1685 "Fire Alarm Professional Licensing Act". The main bullet points of this Bill are:

- Licensing of fire alarm companies.
- Minimum requirements for persons who design, install, repair, or test fire alarm systems.
- Mandatory of inspection/test results to the local authority having jurisdiction (AHJ)

As expected, it did not take long for the opponents of this legislation to move. As your Board of Directors we ask you to please contact all your state representatives and voice your position on this legislation. We encourage you all to visit the State of Illinois General Assembly webpage and read SB 1685 in its entirety so you can make an informed position. We believe that this legislation will greatly improve the life safety systems that are provided to the general public. We ask that you contact your legislators personally (as a constituent), talk with them at their local office, and educate them on the reasons for this legislation and the positive impact it will have on the community. This will be a hard fought issue, but with all of your efforts and support we are confident we can be successful.

With this, and other bills, we will be asking for the support of the membership, by contacting their elected officials. Many people do not know who those officials are. The website will listed below will show all of the people assigned to the address you enter. We'd encourage you to look up that information now, and have it for future reference. <http://www.elections.il.gov/districtlocator/addressfinder.aspx>

Regardless of our seeking support for legislation, you have the ability to make a difference for any proposed legislation. When a bill gets submitted, it is assigned to a committee. At some point, hopefully, it is assigned to a hearing. When that happens, you can submit a "witness slip" for that bill. The attachment will explain how to submit a witness slip and register your support for or against any proposed legislation. Make sure you exercise your voice to be heard.

As we move into March, we move one step closer to spring, summer, and fall. Why is this important? As an organization, we participate in many ventures, and to be successful we need your help. Check you schedules, and see if you can volunteer some minimal time in any of these ventures:

- Our Combined Conference – April 29 to May 1. We need your help to continue to advertise this great event. Simply contact any companies about becoming a vendor or sponsor, or to see if they might want to advertise in our program that should be seen by over 200 people. We will also need some help with the IFIA equipment that needs to be set up for the conference.
- Annual Golf Outing – June 10, 2015. This year we have partnered with the Illinois Automatic Fire Alarm Association to provide a great day of socializing, relaxing, golfing, and just having fun. We need volunteers to help with organizing, planning, sponsorships, etc. Please contact the office for information on who to contact to help.
- NFPA Conference – June 22 through June 25, McCormick Place. If you can't attend the whole conference, at least come down for the free trade show. Preceding the trade show one day will be an "Illinois Day", where departments can meet prior to the trade show opening and discuss common issues. More will be provided on this, as it is currently being developed.
- State Fair – August 6th through 16th. IFIA Day at the Fair is Sunday August 16th (family day). Please volunteer one day to help us staff the fire safety exhibit. Bring your family and friends with to enjoy the fair. If you cannot make the IFIA, but can on another day, your support of the goal of fire safety and prevention would be noted by your attendance at any one of the days. Please try to attend for one day.
- Awards Luncheon – October 23rd. If you have an adult, child, or company that you feel is deserving of one of our awards (see our webpage for award descriptions) please submit them to the Office. There is no reason to wait until the last minute.

We also ask that if you have any ideas that would make this great organization better, contact a Board member, or the Office, and provide us with the details. Even a small idea can become a great event.

Finally, as winter ends we ask that everyone take a few minutes to smell the roses and take time to rejuvenate. We have a lot to look forward to. This should be an exciting year, and we hope you will join us.

Until next month...