

Governor's Fire Service Policy Council

In January 2009, the odd-year nominations brought a change in leadership with the election of Greg Keller, Oregon Fire Chiefs Association representative, as chair. Scott Mullen, Oregon Volunteer Firefighters Association, was re-elected as vice chair. The council continued to provide advice and guidance on issues of common interest, policies and affairs that affect the fire protection and life safety of the citizens of Oregon. The council met in January, April, and October.

Chair Keller worked throughout the year encouraging members to bring issues of interest from their respective organizations.

Issues discussed included:

- **Structural fire air monitoring**

A task force created by a charter in 2008 brought new and sometimes startling information from the ongoing monitoring to each meeting. Some of the goals of the study by Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue, in partnership with OSFM, Oregon Health Sciences University, and the Department of Environmental Quality are to:

- Determine, while at a fire scene, whether it's safe to take off SCBA, and use decontaminating procedures right after the fire.
- Establish what the hazards really are at a fire, hot/cold zones.
- When to send investigators in. Correlate with Photo Ionization Detector monitor.

Discovered by the use of a UV spectrometer were more and higher amounts of chemicals in the air than expected, detected further away from the fire than expected, for longer periods of time than expected.

The advisory panel recommends continued monitoring for all the chemicals found at fires during the study. The council voted at the October meeting to extend the sunset date of the charter to November 1, 2010. The ultimate goal of this study is to use this practice for the safety of firefighters.

- **Regional Type 3 Multi-Agency All Hazard Teams**

The task force chartered in November, 2008 met and updated the council throughout 2009 with their progress. They looked at all risk/all hazard, reviewing standards from three other states, task books, and training for type 3 standards. The state of Oregon is ahead of other states and FEMA would like Oregon to pilot the national program. The task force will take FEMA's task books, certification process, and training requirements, try it out, and set their course and direction. FEMA and DHS have come up with criteria for training this course. Two ways to meet those criteria are 1) attend the train-the-trainer course in Emmitsburg, and 2) through application for grandfathering within a one-year period. OEM has the delegated authority to certify those instructors. The council voted to rescind the charter in October as the Department of Public Safety Standards and Training has a committee established for this purpose.

Informational Reports

- **Governor's Public Safety Budget/OSFM budget**

Sr. Policy Advisor to Governor Kulongoski, Joe O'Leary, presented the budget on public safety at the January meeting. With a two billion plus shortfall, the forecast was grim. The good news was, compared to other areas of state government, public safety was not being cut as deeply. At the October meeting, the possible positive outcome of the ballot measures brought some hope.

SFM Simpson gave budget updates at each meeting. In January, the OSFM budget was submitted to the legislature with one Policy Option Package for the recognition program for fire certification. At the April meeting, the OSFM budget had been scheduled for presentation to Ways and Means. He planned to discuss the fireworks fee bill, the US&R program and would offer to monitor the Fire Insurance Premium Tax (FIPT) money for firefighter training. In October, the OSFM budget was holding with seven revenue sources, two were dropping. Increases were expected in the fireworks program and the FIPT was still dropping, with some stabilization. A “sweep” of \$200 million was taken during the legislative session.

- **Fireworks Law Review**

The Fireworks Law Review Committee was created with stakeholders who have had issues. The fireworks statutes, written in 1951, are being reviewed by sorting out each part of the statute. The intent is a clean-up of the language.

- **Carbon Monoxide Program**

The new Oregon law created by HB 3450 mandates the installation of carbon monoxide (CO) alarms in new homes, rentals, and when selling homes.

- Effective July 1, 2010 rental dwellings need new CO alarms.
- On April 1, 2011 when selling a home, there must be a CO alarm installed. Also, on April 1 when the new residential code becomes effective, there is a requirement to install CO alarms.

- **2009 Conflagrations Report**

Two wildland fires went to conflagration status this year, the Microwave Fire in Mosier, and the South County complex in Ashland/Medford. The declaration of conflagration is requested by the local fire defense chief to the state fire marshal, the superintendent, to the governor. The OSFM and ODF teams are training together which helped with integration at these fires. Cause of the fire(s) determines whether the costs are reimbursable by FEMA.

The **Microwave Fire** was declared a conflagration on August 28 at 1:10 p.m. following the start of the fire at 8:20 p.m. August 27 at the base of a microwave tower located on a ridge top. Thirty members responded as part of the Green Incident Management Team.

Two wildfires burned in Southern Oregon September 21, threatening homes and residents in Medford and Ashland, 25 miles apart. The **Deer Ridge Fire** burned on east Medford's Roxy Ann Peak was invoked at 12:45 p.m. and the **Siskiyou Fire** burned on the southeast edge of Ashland and was invoked at 4:25 p.m.. Together, they were called the **South County Complex Fires**. The South County Complex was unique because it was a double conflagration under one team, the Red Incident Management Team.