

Report from the Council on Firefighter Training

House Judiciary Committee – 2011 Interim Study

While it is difficult to attach a dollar figure to a human life, but it is possible to measure costs for insurance. Our Health and Safety initiatives have many fringe benefits including help with cost containment for state-funded insurance for Firefighters. Approximately 88% of Oklahoma's firefighters are Volunteer Firefighters.

In both 2008 and 2009, Oklahoma ranked #3 in Firefighter Fatalities nationally. Therefore, the Council examined the situation. We developed the 78-3 awareness program and took it statewide. This positively impacts firefighter health and safety. It also improves public safety for Oklahoma citizens, communities, and protects our economy.

Research showed the leading causes of Firefighter Fatalities and Injuries:

1) Cardio-Pulmonary Disease

OUR RESPONSE: We have formed a public-private partnership with the Integris Heart Center and several fire service groups. We are addressing physical fitness and healthy eating for Firefighters along with communities using cost-effective community programs.

2) Apparatus Accidents

OUR RESPONSE: We have included financial incentives for taking training on Driver Safety in the earned Volunteer Firefighter Training Tax Credit program.



We started an awareness campaign utilizing reflective bumper stickers plus dash decals that promotes seat belt use among both Firefighters and Citizens. These remind everyone of the benefits of Buckling Up!

3) Leadership and Command Decisions

OUR RESPONSE: We have additional partnerships with training providers and fire service groups. These allow us to invite special guest speakers/trainers on Command Decisions Incident Management which are open to departments from all across Oklahoma.

We are also working on Consistency in Training that will allow for better Command Decisions as our departments join together, responding to many incidents. As well, we are conducting statewide focus groups with Career and Volunteer Departments. The process will create in a system that will suit Oklahoma and meet NFPA standards.

4) Training Accidents (a top cause, nationally)

OUR RESPONSE: OSU - Fire Service Training and the Career Tech Centers have always focused on safety, even more during recent years. Working together, we all strive for a zero level in Oklahoma. We included Safe Training initiatives in the first-ever 5 Levels of Firefighter, which was developed using a statewide grass-roots approach.

We are currently formulating a parallel program for Company/Chief Officers. Again, our Training Task Force has wide representation from different sizes and types of departments along with geographic participation from across the state!



We have combined our emphasis on Health and Safety in our two capstone graphics that encourage everyone to participate in this vital matter of Health and Safety.

**Training saves People! Training saves Property!
Training saves our Economy!**

