



# e-INFOFIRE NEWSLETTER

State Firefighters' and Fire Marshals' Association of Texas

*Promote, Unify, Represent and Educate the Fire Service of Texas*



A DIVISION OF WINSTAR INSURANCE GROUP



**VFIS OF TEXAS**

The Insurance Leader for Texas Emergency  
Service Organizations since 1985.

ACCIDENT & SICKNESS | LIABILITY | AUTO | PROPERTY | WORKERS' COMP

## January 2023

### Executive Director's Corner

Greetings all,

The new year is upon us! It is a time for both reflecting and for planning. I hope you take the time to do both in the coming days as they are equally important to us individually and as organizations.



Although more information may be covered in this newsletter, I wanted to highlight a few of the things that are happening for SFFMA right now:

- The first module of the [SFFMA Portal](#) was launched in mid-December allowing individuals and departments to manage the renewal of their SFFMA memberships for 2023. Department administrators can also manage the information and rosters for their departments. Additional modules such as training submission, test scheduling, and certification application will be launched as soon as they are ready to go.
- **Conference planning meetings** will take place at the end of this month at the SFFMA office. Representatives of committees with conference responsibilities will be meeting with the executive board to hammer out details for the June conference.
- SFFMA will be hosting a **District Leaders' Symposium** over the weekend immediately following the above planning meetings. Leaders from each district have been invited for an important time of discussion, coordination, information sharing, and instruction.
- We are excited to announce that SFFMA was approved for its next [SAFER Grant](#). The total award is **\$2,183,000**. The period of the grant is four years and began on December 14. The program can assist departments with: marketing of the department to their local communities; new recruit training, physicals and PPE; leadership/career development training for personnel; and association membership dues.
- Leaders and instructors are attending the **TEEX Municipal School planning conference** this month to begin preparations for summer fire school. If you have department members who need training (and who doesn't!), be sure to take advantage of this important opportunity.

I wish you smooth sailing as we enter the new year and hope to see you out there!

---

### Membership News

## Portal Frequently Asked Questions about the SFFMA Portal



Q: When I click the SFFMA PORTAL button it shows the site can't be reached.

A: **This is a browser error. Contact your IT dept and ask them to add our URL to the list of safe sites (or "whitelist" it).**

Q: Portal will not take my username and or password.

A: **Make sure you are entering the specified (required) characters.**

Q: I am trying to login with my GrowthZone username and password.

A: **GrowthZone usernames and passwords no longer work. You will need to create a new username and password.**

Q: I am logged in and trying to renew our membership dues, but I can't see my roster.

A: **You are probably not an administrator. The head portal administrator (the Chief) will need to set you up as an administrator.**

Q: I am trying to pay for the department's invoice, but Portal is telling me the profile is not complete.

A: **There must be an email entered on the department profile page. Someone with administrator access will need to add the email. It cannot be an email already being used in the system.**

Please contact us via [email](#) or by phone at (512) 454-3473 if you need further assistance.

## Fire Chief Development and Managing Officer Programs Starting Soon!

We're pleased to announce the dates and details have been finalized for this year's **Fire Chief Development Program (FCDP)** and the **Managing Officer Program - Training Officer class (MOP-TO)**.

If you're interested in registering or learning more about either of these programs, please click the button below..

Weekend 1	Weekend 2	Weekend 3	Weekend 4	Weekend 5
March 31 thru April 2, 2023	July 7 thru 9, 2023	September 8 thru 10, 2023	November 10 thru 12, 2023	

Topics:

- Governance of Administration
- Personnel and Training
- Grants and Operations
- Emergency Management
- Health and Safety
- Financial Resources
- Programs
- Physical Resources
- Public Relations
- Training and Community
- Equipment Resources
- External Systems

FCDP-MOP



Live Discussion: Firefighter Cancer



## Awareness & Prevention

January 25, 2023 at 2 p.m. ET

January is Firefighter Cancer Awareness Month. Join the NVFC and expert panelists to learn more about what types of cancer most commonly affect firefighters, why firefighters face an increased risk of cancer, and what actions you and your department can take to reduce risks and prevent job-related cancer.

Watch the event on the NVFC's [Facebook page](#) or register to attend on [Zoom](#).

[NVFC Trainings](#)

## Conference News and Events

Hotels are now open for reservations for the 2023 Conference to be held June 9-14 in McAllen, Texas. There are several hotels to choose from this year, all of which are within walking distance to the McAllen convention center. View hotel booking information below.

[More info here](#)

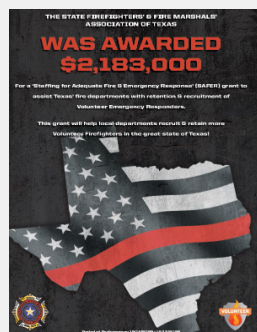
## Certification Update

On January 1, Hazardous Materials Awareness and Operations levels split into separate certifications. This allows us to issue 19 individual Hazardous Materials Awareness certificates to those who had already passed the Awareness portion of examinations or produced ProBoard documentation to receive that level of certification while preparing to pass the Operations portion.



Also on January 1, Certification Workshop attendance has been extended ~~to once~~ **every 5 years** for all coordinators whether they are provisional or not; however, all coordinators must attend a workshop within one year of appointment. Any applications on hold for workshop attendance where coordinators now fall within the new 5-year limit will be reviewed for issuance in the next few days.

With the new Portal database, the Head Portal Administrator for a given department can name a new Certification Coordinator by going to the Administration area of the department page and updating the administrative levels. As before, only one Coordinator is allowed per department.



## SFFMA Awarded SAFER Grant

SFFMA was just awarded **\$2,183,000** For a 'Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response' (SAFER) grant to assist Texas fire departments with retention and recruitment of



## Exhibitor Registration Now Open!

Vendor registration is now open for the *147th Annual SFFMA Conference and Expo* to be held in McAllen, Texas June 9-14, 2023. Exhibits will be open to the public from 5 p.m. - 7 p.m. on Friday, June 9, and from 8 a.m. - 1

volunteer emergency responders. This grant will help local departments recruit and retain more volunteer firefighters in the great state of Texas!

The new SFFMA SAFER Grant consists of new member costs, training, fire service association membership dues, and marketing.

[Click here to learn more!](#)

p. m. on Saturday, June 10.

All conference events will be held at the McAllen Convention Center, 700 Convention Center Blvd, McAllen, Texas 78501. [MAP](#) Several booth sizes are available. Ready to buy your booth or to get more details on the event? Click the button below!

[Exhibitor registration](#)

## SFFMA Testing Sessions

HazMat/FF1/FF2 testing sessions are currently being scheduled for SFFMA members who were eligible to test prior to 2023.

Although we are unable to process new certification applications at this time, members who received an eligibility letter prior to January of 2023 may still sit for testing. If your department has individuals who need to test or re-test for HazMat, FF1, or FF2, please send the names of individuals and tests they need to take to [us via email](#).

We will work with you to schedule a testing session in your area, or to schedule individual tests at the SFFMA office in Austin, if that option would work for your firefighters.



A flyer for the Company Officer Academy. At the top left is the Columbia Southern University logo. The title "COMPANY OFFICER ACADEMY" is in large, bold letters. Below the title, it says "PRESENTED BY COLUMBIA SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY". Underneath are two photos of men in uniform, identified as Chief John Salka and Chief Rick Lasky. To the right of the photos, it says "Houston, Texas". Below that, it lists the location: "Northwest Volunteer Fire Department - Station 44 Training Facility, 1380 TC Jones Blvd, Houston, TX 77028". It also lists the dates: "January 25-27, 2023". Below the dates, it lists the rates: "City and Parish: \$2000, CSU Student: \$1000, Training partners: \$175, General: Registration: \$350". At the bottom, it says "FOR MORE INFORMATION: Kelli.Hanning@csulmba.edu, 800-977-8888 ext. 1028".

Northwest VFD - Station 44

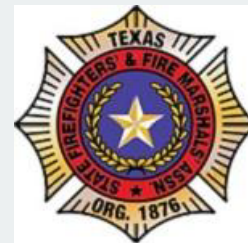


TO REGISTER, SCAN QR CODE



## Company Officer Field Training Academy

Northwest VFD in Houston, Texas is hosting the Columbia Southern University (CSU) Company Officer Field Training Academy (COFTA) on January 25-27, 2023. Chief John Salka and Chief Rick Lasky will be presenting!



## 2023 TFA Grant Application Requests are Now Being Accepted!

To apply, please [email us](#) to request an application packet. Packets may be requested until January 31, 2023.

Eligible applicants include children/stepchildren or grandchildren/step-grandchildren of an active, retired, or deceased member of the Texas Firemen's Auxiliary, or the State Firefighters' and Fire Marshals' Association. Applicants must be a graduating high school senior or a current college/vocational-tech student.

[Email TFA](#)

[Click here to register!](#)

## The Issue. Government Affairs Update

### Fire crews, residents save more than 8,000 homes in 2022 wildfire season

Since January 1, the Texas A&M Forest Service and local fire departments have responded to 11,679 wildfires that have burned 643,206 acres across the state. Their heroic efforts, in addition to continuous outreach informing homeowners how to protect themselves and their property, have saved countless human and animal lives as well as thousands of homes and businesses.

[Read the January issue](#)



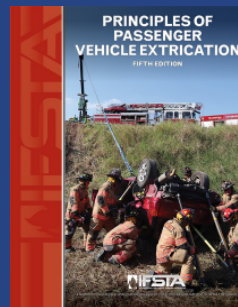
*Defensible space is critical to improving the chances a home can survive a wildfire. (Texas A&M Forest Service photo)*

## SFFMA Store

New from IFSTA:

### Principles of Passenger Vehicle Extrication, 5th Edition

IFSTA's Principles of Passenger Vehicle Extrication, 5th Edition, provides rescue personnel with an understanding of the current challenges, techniques, skills and equipment available for the safe and effective extrication of victims trapped in passenger vehicles.



This manual teaches passenger vehicle extrication in three levels of capability by orientation or vehicle position and follows the same linear sequence a rescuer will encounter at a vehicle extrication incident from size-up through disentanglement. Now as a standalone book without heavy vehicle extrication, this manual includes changes in chapter contents, concepts taught, best practices followed, new skill sheets and new steps in performing skills so it is more usable by the student and instructor.

This textbook is appropriate for firefighters, law enforcement personnel, Emergency Medical Services personnel, industrial and transportation emergency response members, public works and utility employees, military responders, and rescue personnel.

[Check it out](#) on our store today!

Know someone who would like to receive our newsletter?

[Sign up here!](#)

