

The Command Post

President's Message Decisions, Decisions

The past few weeks most of us have been filling in brackets and looking at games across the country as they played out to the final contest. March Madness is a fascinating contest, 64 teams, 62 games, 62 outcomes leading to one champion. Look at the brackets, image them as the contests we face in life and in this business called firefighting.

As a Chief of your department, your March Madness lasts all year long. On the fireground, decisions need to be made rapid-fire with little or no discretionary time. We work through the details, as we know them and then make standard quick decisions working toward standard outcomes.

Off the fireground the decisions continue, the budgets are smaller, the needs are larger and the battle is uphill every day.

Think back to those brackets and how they work like the cascading decisions, big and small, we all make every day. Truth is March Madness is not 64 games, if you are a team in February your facing five games at the most, for half the teams they only play one game. How can you narrow the number of various decisions? First keep your eye on the prize, start with the end in sight. What are your overarching goals? You need to set your own personal mission statement, your personal mantra. With that clear statement, you can solve many of the tough questions with little strain. Unfortunately, some chiefs use the overarching goal of, "looking good in front of the mayor and council" or "getting a new chief's car". The worst are the one that just don't have any plan at all.

So when you think you're getting overloaded, take a few minutes or what the decision-maker call discretionary time and look through the brackets, plot a course, realize that there are less then 64 choices to make. Break the problems down stick to what in the end will do the most for the firefighters under you command and you will stay on course right to the championship.

*Stay Safe,
Peter Hodge*

COUNTY COORDINATOR CORNER

Reminder I am still looking for inventories and I need 11 more alarm cards to send to the state. The County OEM and my office are going to set up a resource book for such things as fuel needs, dumpsters, backhoes and cranes etc.

Please remember your Coordinators are another tool in your tool box to help with your command structure.

It's The Law: Emergency Vehicles Now Covered Under the NJ's Lemon Law

New Jersey operators of fire trucks, ambulances, police cars and other emergency vehicles now can demand a replacement vehicle or refund of the purchase or lease price of the vehicle if it has chronic problems and can't be repaired.

See attachment: [NJPS Vehicle Assembly No. 3396](#)

HOTBOX: Vacant Building Placards

The Hackensack Fire Department is currently inspecting vacant properties in the City to identify buildings that may pose hazards to residents, firefighters, and public safety personnel. The Bureau of Fire Prevention is coordinating this effort with the Building Department and Property Maintenance Officers.

Buildings found to have structural or interior hazards to firefighters will be required to post a placard at the entrance of the building. Once a violation notice has been issued, it shall be the responsibility of the owner of the building to post the placard.

The placards are 24 inches by 24 inches in size, with a red background and white reflective

border. The required reflectivity will enhance visibility under low lighting conditions where flashlights or emergency vehicle warning lights may be the only light source available.

Once this program is implemented, firefighter safety will be improved as incident commanders will have the information necessary to make equipment and personnel deployments safe and efficient.

To date, approximately 100 vacant buildings have been identified, and only two dozen buildings have qualified for the placards. The program criteria can be expanded if it becomes necessary at a later time.

See attachment: [IAAI Field manual – Evaluation of Vacant and Abandoned Properties](#)

ONE-TWO FAMILY LIGHTWEIGHT CONSTRUCTION PLACARD ORDINANCE

Some local municipalities have passed an ordinance addressing lightweight construction in one and two family homes.

Sample Ordinance

BOROUGH OF RIVER EDGE

ORDINANCE #1675

ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CODE OF THE BOROUGH OF RIVER EDGE AND CREATING A CHAPTER THEREOF REQUIRING A REFLECTIVE SYMBOL ON STRUCTURES USING ENGINEERED LUMBER

WHEREAS, much new construction, both residential and commercial, consists of engineered lumber, in the form of prefabricated I-joists, truss joists, truss rafters and similar materials, and

WHEREAS, many types of engineered lumber burn at a rate faster than other types of lumber thereby creating, in many cases, unexpected problems for firefighters; and

WHEREAS, in fighting fires, time being of the essence in saving lives and property, and

WHEREAS, it is imperative for firefighters, and others, to know the type of materials used in the construction of a structure.

NOW THEREFORE be it ordained by .

MESSAGE BOARD

Any member wishing to make a donation to the our fallen military hero and Westwood Firefighter

may contribute to the:

Sgt. Christopher R. Hrbek

USMC Scholarship Fund

C/O Pascack Community Bank

21 Jefferson Avenue

Westwood, NJ 07675

OR

Wounded Warrior Project

P.O. Box 758517

Topeka, KS 66675-8517

Next BCFCA Meeting

Next BCFCA Meeting

Date: Monday, May 10th

Time: 1930 hrs

Location: Park Ridge FD

55 Park Ave

For directions visit our website under Meetings