

# Burning Issues

Igniting Conversation within Manitoba's Fire Service

Autumn 2016



## A Message from the Fire Commissioner



**G**reetings from the Office of the Fire Commissioner. We are pleased to re-introduce the *Burning Issues* newsletter as part of our ongoing mission to keep Manitobans informed on the diverse range of activities offered and performed by the Office of the Fire Commissioner. The aim of

the newsletter is to 'ignite conversation within Manitoba's fire service' on various topics of interest. One such topic is Fire Prevention Week that will take place from October 9-15, 2016.

As the official sponsor of Fire Prevention Week for more than 90 years, the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) is promoting this year's Fire Prevention Week campaign: "Don't Wait - Check the Date! Replace Smoke Alarms Every 10 Years."

Now, more than ever, is a very exciting time for Manitoba's fire service.

A recent survey conducted by NFPA revealed that only a small percentage of people know how old their smoke alarms are, or how often they need to be replaced. This lack of smoke alarm awareness is a major concern for

Manitoba's fire service because expired smoke alarms do not provide the protection that Manitoba families require. The goal of this year's campaign is to educate the public about the critical importance of knowing the age of their smoke alarms and the need to replace them every 10 years.

As part of its efforts to increase fire and life safety awareness, every year the Office of the Fire Commissioner distributes Fire Prevention Week brochures across the province. Full of very interesting content, these brochures have something for everyone in the family including contests for children, information for parents and the opportunity for everyone to engage in fire and life safety discussions.



The *Burning Issues* newsletter will inform and engage Manitoba communities on issues like Fire Prevention Week, as well as a range of other topics directly related to the work undertaken by the Office of the Fire Commissioner.

Now, more than ever, is a very exciting time for Manitoba's fire service. We hope to build on that excitement and share it with you as we move forward.



## Operations

The Operations section provides a variety of consultative and support services to municipal fire services and councils. These services are related to the operation and management of fire departments, oversight of the provincial mutual aid system, public education, fire prevention and fire investigation services. This section also coordinates the FireSmart program. FireSmart plans help prevent and control interface fires, which can occur wherever residential, industrial, or agricultural developments are located within or near wildland settings with natural vegetation.

Fire prevention and public education initiatives are core activities of the OFC. The OFC remains committed to investing in staff and resources to enhance both prevention and public education initiatives. The OFC continues work on securing and developing new materials for public education for specific target groups including children, seniors, vulnerable Manitobans and First Nation communities.

### Implementation of the Manitoba Provincial Fire



Protection Plan has continued. The Working Group, a partnership between the OFC, the Association of Manitoba Municipalities, the Winnipeg

Fire Paramedic Service, Manitoba Municipal Administrators' Association and the Manitoba Association of Fire Chiefs (MAFC) met its goal of creating a central resource library with access to reference documents, plans and legislation. The Working Group outlined a workshop designed to introduce elected officials to a variety of fire service related skills such as

hazard and risk assessment, bylaw development, mutual aid applications and fire fighting equipment.

The Life Safety Team continues to travel throughout the province with the Fire and Life Safety Educational Trailer to meet with children and community members to discuss the hazards of fire, and what one should do in case of an emergency.

The S.A.F.E. (Smoke Alarms for Every-Family) program, developed in partnership with the OFC, Red River Mutual, the Manitoba Firefighters Burn Fund, and the MAFC, worked to implement a province-wide smoke alarm installation program. The program saw the distribution



of 2,500 smoke alarms to Manitoba fire departments for installation in private dwellings through 2015/2016. Thirty-one fire departments took advantage of the program, each requesting an average of 60 smoke alarms. This program continued over the last few months with the OFC ordering 2,100 additional alarms.

The OFC also continues to work in partnership with the First Nations Fire Protection Working Group. From August 4-6, 2016, the West Region Tribal Council hosted the Annual First Nations Fire Fighters Training and Competition. At this year's event there were approximately 90 First Nation Fire Fighters that attended from various First Nation Regions within Manitoba. Over the two days of the event, there were a series of nine 2 1/2 to 3 hour hands-on training and education seminars.



### Building and Fire Safety

The Building and Fire Safety section administers and enforces the Manitoba construction codes, including the building, plumbing, farm building and energy codes. This section also administers the Manitoba Fire Code, the Mobile Homes Standards and the Fire Safety Inspection Regulation.

The Fire Safety Inspection unit provides fire inspection services to other departments and government agencies on behalf of the OFC. They also provide inspections on a fee-for-service basis to clients requesting services. Their primary responsibility is to provide education and support to local authorities when implementing their fire inspection programs.

The Building and Fire Safety section works to ensure that buildings meet the provincial building, fire and plumbing codes by reviewing building plans, inspecting buildings and providing consultative services to the public. The goal is to reduce injuries, deaths and property losses arising from substandard construction or building maintenance.



Over the past few months, the Building and Fire Safety section began to review the 2015

National construction and fire codes in preparation for future reviews and consultations with the Building Standards Board and industry stakeholders.

To better support the needs of a growing agricultural sector, the OFC continued to explore the development of a new National Farm Building Code (NFBC) in partnership with the National Research Council of Canada (NRC). The Building and Fire Safety section will work closely with the NRC to explore the development of a new version of the code.

With the increasing complexity of modern technology and the need to enhance training and education for building officials, designers, local fire inspectors and fire officials, ten building code training courses were offered by the MESC. In addition, work to develop a training program on the inspection of high hazard occupancies continued and will be offered next year by the MESC.



Finally, as a result of the recommendations of the Fire Safety Task Force, the province implemented changes to the Building Code and Fire Code to strengthen the level of fire and life-safety protection in new and existing residential care facilities in 2015/16. The Building and Fire Safety section continues to work with the Department of Families to educate stakeholders on the new regulatory changes.



## Inspection and Technical Services

**I**nspection and Technical Services Manitoba (ITSM) conducts inspections of, and issues permits for, mechanical or electrical equipment, reviews facility and equipment designs, and issues licences to qualified trades people.

The goal of ITSM is to ensure that Manitobans are not exposed to hazardous situations related to any mechanical or electrical equipment including boilers, pressure vessels, refrigeration systems, gas and oil burning equipment, amusement rides and elevators.

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ITSM is modernizing technical safety legislation and many of its internal functions to become more efficient, reduce red tape and be more responsive to the needs of our clients. It is the intention of ITSM to provide client care that ensures the safety of Manitobans while at the same time providing quality services in a manner that our clients have come to expect.

The Technical Safety Act, or Bill 69, received Royal Assent on June 30, 2015. This act will bring these six pieces of existing safety legislation under one modern statute. This legislation will take effect upon proclamation, which is expected to happen once the development of the new regulations to support the act is completed.

Over the last few months, the development of discussion papers to support public consultations to inform technical safety regulatory development continued. These public facing discussion papers will ensure that the new regulations meet the needs of industry.



In addition to the work being undertaken on the technical safety legislation, ITSM continued to work to improve customer service and response time to clients by working to update Information Technology programs, information tracking, developing manuals for inspectors and business owners, and by filling vacancies in the ITSM section.



## Education and Training

The Manitoba Emergency Services College (MESC) is located in Brandon and consists of a main campus and an 11.4 acre practical training site. The MESC is also responsible for a satellite training facility in Thompson. The MESC provides comprehensive emergency services education, training and certification related to fire fighting, rescue, paramedic, critical incident stress management, fire and building code inspections, life safety education, emergency services instruction, fire officer and management training. The MESC holds accreditation in 35 program areas. The traditional clients of the MESC are the Manitoba fire service, the Search and Rescue Manitoba network, and the Manitoba police service.



On June 29, 2016, the MESC graduated 33 students from the Public Fire Paramedic Program (PFPP). This was the 44th class to graduate from this program that began in 1986. The OFC also completed the selection of the next class of 40 PFPP students which began on August 29, 2016. The large number of graduates from MESC courses help ensure that the province maintains a

network of trained emergency response personnel, building officials and fire prevention officers.

As the needs of the Manitoba Fire Service and other emergency responders evolve, the MESC continues to strengthen its programming and resources. To ensure that programming continues to meet the needs of the Manitoba Fire Service and external clients, the OFC recently offered the new Fire Officer II course and the new Critical Incident Stress Management – Advanced course through the MESC. Agency staff is now reviewing the student feedback from these courses and will implement appropriate changes or revisions.

Work also continued on the development of the High Hazard Industrial Occupancy Inspection and Energy Code for Buildings courses. These courses will provide Fire and Building Inspectors with the information they require to conduct these types of inspections.

Planning continued over the last few months for a series of mini conferences that will be offered to the Manitoba Fire Service at locations throughout the province. This project is a joint venture between the OFC and the MAFC. The Professional Development Committee has been established with members from the OFC and the MAFC to discuss topics, speakers and locations where conferences can be offered. This committee will be looking for topics and speakers that will provide education in the areas of Officer Development, Fire prevention, Special Operations and Fire Fighter safety and wellness.



## **Policy and Planning**

**T**he Policy and Planning unit has been involved in some very interesting work over the past few months including the day to day work of developing internal policy, preparing public bulletins related to the various sections of the OFC and providing support to the other sections in the OFC.

The Policy and Planning unit has been providing administrative, research, analysis and drafting support to the Inspection and Technical Services section as an aspect of the Technical Safety Act regulation review that is currently underway. In addition to these supports, the Policy and Planning Unit has also played a significant role in co-facilitating the consultations with various stakeholders interested in the six technical safety areas currently under review.

Work has also commenced on the review of the 2015 National Building Code, Fire Code and Energy Code. The Policy and Planning unit has been providing the Building and Fire Safety section with supports to ensure that the adoption of these codes happens in a timely and efficient manner that meets the various needs of the business community, while at the same time ensuring public safety.

The Policy and Planning unit is looking forward to offering support to the various sections within the OFC in an ongoing effort to provide more effective service to all of our internal and external partners.



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### Current Events

#### **Fire Prevention Week – October 9-15, 2016**

Fire Prevention Week is taking place on October 9-15, 2016 and is an excellent opportunity to raise awareness of fire safety in Manitoba communities. Each year, the Office of the Fire Commissioner sends out Fire Prevention Week brochures across Manitoba to inform Grades K-4 children on the importance of fire safety. The OFC also helps to host a kick-off event for Fire Safety Week. This year's event will be held at 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday, October 11, 2016 at Shaughnessy Park School, located at 1641 Manitoba Avenue.

#### **S.A.F.E Family – Winnipeg Blue Bombers Game Day Sponsorship – October 8, 2016**

The S.A.F.E. Family (Smoke Alarms for Every Family) Program has signed on to be the official Game Day Sponsor at the Winnipeg Blue Bomber game on October 8th 2016 versus the BC Lions.

The partnership of Red River Mutual, the Office of the Fire Commissioner, the Manitoba Association of Fire Chiefs, the Winnipeg Fire Department, the Firefighters' Burn Fund Inc. and the United Firefighters of Winnipeg has taken the lead at the start of Fire Prevention Week to bring fire prevention messaging to Manitobans like never before.

The Game Day Sponsorship will promote fire safety, with a potential reach for 33,500 people (not including those who are employed at Investor's Group Field) and the larger television audience.

For Sparky's 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary as the official NFPA Mascot, he will take part in the opening coin toss and join Buzz and Boomer on game day. Plans are also to have the Fire & Life Safety Trailers set up at the entrances, public education materials available and a fundraising for the Firefighters' Burn Fund through a donation and receipt for a challenge coin.

#### **Inspection Mini-conference – October 22-23, 2016**

October 22 and 23, the MAFC will be hosting an Inspection mini-conference designed to inform and educate on high hazard industrial fire inspection related issues.

**October 22 and 23** Kim Bailey, Fire Protection Engineer, Ontario Office of the Fire Marshall and Emergency Management, will be presenting a full day discussion on high hazard occupancy's including dust producing processes, baking and drying processes, spray coating processes, industrial incidental use, etc.

**October 23** Ed Traa, Fire Safety Inspector, Winnipeg Fire and Paramedic Service, will discuss best practices and his experiences over the past two years as the City's F1 high hazard occupancy inspector.



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### MESC Course Schedule September 2016 – December 2016

<b>2016</b>			
<b>COURSE START DATE</b>	<b>COURSE</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>	<b>APPLICATION &amp; PRE-REQUISITE DEADLINE DATE</b>
September 6	Fire Inspector Level I NFPA 1031 – On-Line Study Day - December 6, 2016 Exam Date - December 7, 2016	Brandon	<b>August 16, 2016</b>
September 9 - 11	Instructor Workshop – Fire Fighting – Postponed to November 18 – 20, 2016	Brandon	<b>August 19, 2016</b>
September 13	Fire Officer I NFPA 1021 – On-Line Practical – January 9 – 11, 2017 Certification – January 11 – 13, 2017	Brandon	<b>August 23, 2016</b>
September 16 - 17	Ground Search and Rescue - Continuing Education	Brandon	<b>August 26, 2016</b>
September 19 - 23	Municipal By-Law Administration	Winnipeg	<b>August 29, 2016</b>
September 22	MESC Written Exams	Brandon/Winnipeg	<b>September 1, 2016</b>
September 30 – October 2	Bundle Weekend – Fire Control and Vehicle Extrication	Thompson	<b>September 9, 2016</b>
October 3 – 7	Emergency Services Instructor Level I NFPA 1041	Brandon	<b>September 12, 2016</b>
October 15 and 16	MESC Practical Evaluations – Fire Fighting	Brandon	<b>September 23, 2016</b>
October 20	MESC Written Exams	Brandon/Winnipeg	<b>September 29, 2016</b>
October 22 - 23	MESC Practical Evaluations – Hazardous Materials Operations	Brandon	<b>September 30, 2016</b>
October 22 - 23	ICS-200	Brandon	<b>September 30, 2016</b>





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### MESC Course Schedule (cont'd) September 2016 – December 2016

DATE	COURSE	LOCATION	APPLICATION & PRE-REQUISITE DEADLINE DATE
October 24 - 28	Part 9: The House – Building Envelope	Winnipeg	October 3, 2016
November 1 - 3	ICS-300	Winnipeg	October 11, 2016
November 15 – 16	ICS-400	Winnipeg	October 25, 2016
November 18 – 20	Instructor Workshop – Fire Fighting	Brandon	October 28, 2016
November 21 - 25	Part 9: The House – Health and Safety	Winnipeg	October 31, 2016
November 24	MESC Written Exams	Brandon/Winnipeg	November 3, 2016
November 28 - December 2	Structural Collapse Level I	Brandon	November 7, 2016
November 28 – December 2	Incident Safety Officer NFPA 1521	Winnipeg	November 7, 2016
December 2 – 4	Rescue Practices	Brandon	November 10, 2016
December 5	Fire Officer II NFPA 1021 – On-Line Practical – March 13 - 15, 2017 Certification – March 15 – 17, 2017	Brandon	November 14, 2016
December 5 – 9	Rope Rescue Level I and II NFPA 1006	Brandon	November 14, 2016
December 5 – 9	Fire & Life Safety Educator I NFPA 1035	Winnipeg	November 14, 2016
December 12 – 16	Part 9: Buildings – Fire Protection	Winnipeg	November 21, 2016

**Note:** All courses and dates are subject to change. Please consult the OFC website to ensure accuracy.

Applications can be found on the following website at [http://www.firecomm.gov.mb.ca/mesc\\_forms.html](http://www.firecomm.gov.mb.ca/mesc_forms.html) or by calling (204) 726-6855 or Toll Free at 1-888-253-1488.

**Pre-requisites must be met prior to submitting an Application.**

Please ensure that all Applications are sent via fax to (204) 726-6847

Or

by mail to 1601 Van Horne Avenue East, Brandon, Manitoba, R7A 7K2

Or

Via e-mail: [mescocr@gov.mb.ca](mailto:mescocr@gov.mb.ca)