

BURNING ISSUES



PREVENTION • PROTECTION • PUBLIC EDUCATION

MESSAGE FROM THE FIRE COMMISSIONER

Douglas M. Popowich

Welcome to this edition of Burning Issues. Summer has come and gone once again. I trust that each of you had the opportunity to spend time with family and friends enjoying summer festivals, camping, time at the lake, or just leisurely taking in some sun and enjoying some well deserved rest and relaxation.

This summer however was a busy summer for many of you. Many of our Municipal Services were busy responding to severe weather emergencies and flood situations. I don't know if anyone has the answer as to why this occurred and if this is going to be a trend, but irregardless, many municipalities declared states of emergency and then of course involved their emergency response personnel in dealing with these situations.

Without a doubt the worst weather related emergency that has occurred, that we have all been able to watch for days on our TVs, is the devastation and destruction posed by hurricane "Katrina". The total devastation in some areas of the states of Louisiana and Mississippi was overwhelming. Our Manitoba USAR team was put on standby to respond to provide search and rescue assistance but were not dispatched. The USAR team from Vancouver,

British Columbia however was dispatched and spent 5 days working in New Orleans. One can only try and imagine what the individuals from this team experienced. Those of you who plan on attending our fall conference will hear first hand of some of these experiences as we have confirmed the attendance of Tim Armstrong, a team leader with the Vancouver USAR team to make a presentation on their experience on Thursday afternoon of the conference.

What all of us should learn from the "Katrina" disaster is the definite need to be prepared for any type or size of emergency, and to have an effective incident management system which immediately puts in place the most competent and experienced people available to manage the emergency. There were many lessons that can be learned from this disaster, but one of the most apparent ones was the lack of quick and competent command and control. A sad lesson was learned with respect to having the wrong people with the wrong skill sets involved in emergency response at the command level. With personnel experience and affiliation with the Louisiana State University fire training program, there was not a shortage of planning or plans within that state to deal with emergencies. What there was was a breakdown in

the response to this emergency. Most of you are involved in response so you need to ask yourself the question, if the big one hit your community, do you have a system that will place the most experienced and competent people in charge of the emergency? If you answered yes, great, if not, this is an area that you need to give serious consideration to.

Planning for emergencies has taken up a lot of time within our organization this summer. In August we held the annual summer GSAR training exercise at Devils Lake Manitoba. Devil's Lake is approximately 4 hours north of Winnipeg on HWY #6. We had 15 teams from our Manitoba GSAR network along with RCMP and OFC staff

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participating in the exercise. The teams were made up of 5 to 6 individuals each. The exercise started on a Saturday afternoon, went through the night and ended Sunday. All of the teams were flown into the search area by helicopter and had to spend the night in the bush either searching or setting up a camp with materials that they carried with them in their personal packs. The exercise was a great learning experience for all. It was also a great personal adventure and accomplishment for many. The conditions were far from ideal. Along with the search exercise, medical evacuation of individuals occurred, some staged and planned, and some not. But, at the end of the exercise everyone made it home safe and sound.



Aerial view of treacherous terrain some of the teams faced

In order to continue to build our Provincial USAR capability we had two of our staff spend 2 weeks training with the American Military in Texas on building collapse and trench rescue. What our staff learned will now be incorporated into our training programs in Manitoba. In return we had 3 instructors from the American Military come to Brandon to take the water rescue technician course. They want to start delivering this program

to their rescue personnel not only in the States, but to those going to serve in Iraq as well. This speaks volumes with respect to the recognition that our Manitoba programs have. This training arrangement and partnership that exists between our College and the American Military has proven to be extremely beneficial to both organizations and at the end of the day, all of you as well. It means that the individuals who develop and deliver many of the rescue training programs accessible to all of you, in some cases, is developed jointly with one of the largest rescue training organizations in the world.

With respect to the Provincial USAR team, a National training exercise is planned for Calgary the 3rd weekend of October. Manitoba will be sending approximately 50 members of our USAR team to participate in this exercise.

In the area of CBRN response, the Province, as well as our Office, continues to work at developing our capabilities with Manitoba. Again through our relationship with the American Military we had two of our College staff participate in a two week training program at their facility in Texas in a Weapons of Mass destruction course. Who better to receive our certification from, in this area, than the American Military. Further to this, our Office, as well as Brandon Fire Department, Brandon Police Services, Winnipeg Fire Paramedic Service, Winnipeg Police Service and Manitoba Conservation have sent twenty-four personnel to Ottawa for an intense eight day training program on CBRN response. It is the goal of the Province to have 2 Provincial CBRN teams. One out of Winnipeg comprised mainly of Winnipeg Fire Paramedic personnel and Winnipeg Police personnel, and the second team out of Brandon through our Office combined with Brandon Fire Department and Police personnel.

All of these initiatives translate into the highest quality of training programs in the areas of rescue and hazardous materials response being made available to Manitoba Emergency Services Personnel.

As fall comes upon us so does in most cases, a new training season. If you haven't already planned on the types of training you are going to undertake within your organization through the fall and winter, you certainly should now. It is imperative however that your training reflects the needs based on the hazards and risks your community and organization face. A new MESC catalogue is now out. If any of the courses offered can help meet your needs apply early. Remember there is a three week course cancellation policy for all courses listed in the catalogue. What this means is that if sufficient personnel to run the course have not enrolled within 3 weeks of the course start date, then the course can be cancelled. This policy applies not only to the courses offered at our facility, but for all the courses we provide through the Mutual Aid system. Even if a course is being offered in your area, you must still fill out an application form and send it into the College.

Remember, Fire Prevention Week is not far away. Have you got all your materials and activities planned to ensure you get the fire safety message out to the citizens of your community?

Finally, don't forget the Manitoba Emergency Services Conference. If you are planning to attend, please send in your applications. Many of the seminars are already full. The sooner you apply, the better your chance of getting into the seminar that best tweaks your interest. I look forward to seeing many of you at the conference in October.

Have a great fall, and remember, our Office is only a phone call away.

OBA EMERGENCY SERVICES

ANHYDROUS AMMONIA AWARENESS & OPERATIONS TRAINING

On April 23, 2005, the Northeast and South Interlake Mutual Aid Districts participated in an Anhydrous Ammonia Awareness & Operations Course in Beausejour. The course was instructed by Tom



Hutcheson, Environmental Health and Safety Manager for Simplot Canada in Brandon. The course was attended by The Office of the Fire Commissioner, Manitoba Conservation, RCMP, EMO Co-ordinator, Teulon, Clandeboye, Matlock, St. Andrews, West St. Paul, Beausejour, East St. Paul, Springfield, and the East Selkirk Fire Departments. The participants were educated in the dangers of the product and the proper methods of supervision a product leak. We all would like to thank Tom Hutcheson for the excellent course as well as the Beausejour AgPro for the donation of the Anhydrous Ammonia.

Contributed by Ron Bridges, ESO - OFC

SOUTH EAST WHITESHELL FIRE DEPARTMENT

By Patt Louchuk

Steinbach Carillon -

Steinbach MLA Kelvin Goertzen and wife Kim were special guests at the 12 annual South East Whiteshell Volunteer Fire Department Ball held at Falcon Lake Saturday May 28.



Pictured with them are Maureen Carlson, event organizer, and Rick Vandekerkhove, Eastern Division Manager for the Fire Commissioner's Office.

The South East Whiteshell Fire Department services Barren, Caddy, Falcon, Hunt, Star and West Hawk Lake, as well as more than 100 kilometers of highway in eastern Manitoba.

Another exciting development was the long awaited arrival of the fire/rescue boat at the end of October 2004. For many years the firefighters have been working toward the goal of owning a boat that would be able to respond quickly to fires at remote locations, and also be able to assist in emergency water rescues. The marathon boat is 21 feet long and has a jet propulsion engine, an onboard pump and a dropdown bow. The fire department would like to acknowledge the help and assistance of Bill Allen, a Star Lake cottager, for installing the pump and delivering the boat from Calgary. The firefighters take special training in the operation of this watercraft. That boat has been christened "Pat" in honor of the former chief, who passed away 23 March 2005 after serving as the one and only fire chief since the inception of the fire department in 1982.



TOYOTA PRIUS EMERGENCY RESPONSE GUIDE

Toyota developed an Emergency Response Guide (ERG) to educate and assist emergency responders in the safe handling of Toyota Alternative Fueled Vehicles that incorporate High Voltage electrical systems.

Prius dismantling procedures are similar to other Toyota vehicles with the exception of the high voltage electrical system. It is important to recognize and understand the high voltage electrical system features and specifications of the Toyota Prius as they may not be familiar to dismantlers.

Please visit Toyota's website at <http://www.toyota.ca> to view the Emergency Response Guide and Dismantling Manual.

NEWS AND VIEWS OF MANIT

H.M.C.S. WINNIPEG SAILERS GET INSPIRATION FROM A YOUNG WOMAN'S COURAGE

This year, when 20 of the crew members from the H.M.C.S. Winnipeg came for a visit to Winnipeg, they didn't expect to go back to the ship with a new found sense of what their major charity, The Firefighters' Burn Fund, does with the monies that they have been sending to the charity since 1995.

When the ship was christened in 1995 by her worship Susan Thompson, the crew decided to take the Firefighters' Burn Fund as their charity.

They have been sending money to the Burn Fund, as well as purchasing items like a T.V., VCR, DVD player and a portable DVD player for the Children's Burn Unit at the Health Science Center.

Every year that they have been able, they have sent a contingent of sailors to Winnipeg for a visit. Gary Macdonald, co-founder of The Firefighters' Burn Fund and Vice-Chairman, has always arranged a tour for the sailors of the Children and Adult Burn Units at the Health Science Centre.

This year their tour included, Virginia Redhead, a 20 year old burn survivor, that states "My first home was the Children's Burn Unit." Gary Macdonald has known Virginia since she was 5 years old and attending Burn Camp. She was in a house fire when she was 18 months old and has benefited from The Firefighters' Burn Fund's continued support of burn survivors, through specialized equipment, OT's, specialized skin grafting, Burn Camp, Burn Conferences and all other aspects to do with burns.

This year, when the crew from H.M.C.S. Winnipeg went on the tour of The Children's and Adult Burn Units, they all got to meet Virginia. Gary had invited her to join the tour and meet the sailors. It was a great opportunity for the sailors to meet a burn survivor who has been through so much pain, suffering and loneliness for so many years. They were able to actually see, that the donations that they have been making over the years have gone to a great charity, and how they have helped someone like Virginia.

After the tour of the hospital everyone went back to #1 station, where the firefighters there cooked a great lunch. Virginia was able to meet the firefighters and everyone had a great time. The sailors fell in love with Virginia. Commander Kevin Greenwood invited Virginia to come to Victoria to tour

their ship and to see them off for their 6 month deployment to the Gulf.

The crew of the H.M.C.S. Winnipeg made it happen for Virginia, by getting the money together and flying her out to Victoria. Sandi Macdonald went along with her, which was a thrill for her as well. So on April the 8th Virginia and Sandi were on a plane heading for Victoria.

They were met in Vancouver by Leading Seaman Wright Eruebi, who escorted them to the Ferry and took them across to Victoria. There they were met by Sub-Lieutenants, Brandy Blum

and Doug Layton, who drove them to their accommodations, which were absolutely wonderful.

They had a 2 and 1/2 hour tour of the ship on Saturday and got to eat lunch in the mess with some of the sailors.

On the day of their deployment, Sunday, Virginia and Sandi were taken to the ship and there were some speeches by the commodore and Virginia made a speech to the commander and the crew. This shy, conservative woman's speech was simple and to the point. It included a poem that she had Sandi read for her.

The H.M.C.S. Winnipeg treated Virginia and Sandi like VIP's and when you get down to the bottom line, everyone that weekend was left with some new understanding of what friendship, compassion, giving of oneself and rising to the challenges that each of us face and knowing that we are never alone. There is a whole network of people out there that are helping to make burn survivors lives easier. They don't all get personal recognition unfortunately, but they are out there.

This is only one story, of how a crew of sailors came to the realization of how important The Firefighters' Burn Fund is to all burn survivors.. There are hundreds of people out there helping with their donations to The Burn Fund, so that the burn Fund can continue giving burn survivors what they need to get you through their trauma.

Virginia and Sandi want to thank the Commander and crew of the H.M.C.S. Winnipeg for all that they have done and they also want to thank all Manitoba Firefighters' for having The Firefighters' Burn Fund.

Contributed by Sandra Macdonald



OBA EMERGENCY SERVICES

CONGRATULATIONS WINKLER FIRE DEPARTMENT

On September 10, 2005 the Winkler Fire Department celebrated their 60th anniversary. A dinner was held at the local curling rink and members from past and present were asked to attend with their spouses to share in the festivities.

I was asked to be Master of Ceremonies by the organizing committee and was honoured to perform the task. Chief Klassen and the rest of his crew out did themselves once again.

The evening rolled out with greetings from Provincial MLA Peter George Dyck, Councilor Ted Dyck from the RM of Stanley and Deputy Mayor / fire fighter Marvin Plett from the City of Winkler council.

A wonderful meal followed the dignitaries' speeches and greetings.

Fire Captain Ike Dyck who will be a forty year member of the fire department next year, led the group reminiscing a trail of the history and significant events of the Fire Department of the past 60 years. Captains (and twins) Larry and Garry Reimer put together a power point presentation with a musical overture from the photos of the first sixty years and presented copies to the past chiefs of the department.

Abe and Elsie Suderman dropped in for a few minutes interrupting a family dinner honoring their 50th wedding anniversary. Abe was the chief in Winkler prior to Chief Klassen taking up the reigns. Abe said he couldn't miss at least dropping in for a minute...well, maybe 10 or 15 minutes.

Several members of the fire department were presented their exemplary service medals by Chief Klassen and MLA Peter George Dyck. Congratulations gents.

A comedian was brought in from Winnipeg, "Big Daddy Tazz" finished off the evening with laughter.

All in all, a great evening bringing family and fire fighters, past and present, together. Good work men! And of course you too Chief Klassen.

Contributed by Roger Gillis, ESO - OFC

SEARCH AND RESCUE NOT JUST A WALK IN THE WOODS

By John Coward Friday June 10, 2005

Interlake Spectator -The search for missing persons in Manitoba's bush country can be a dangerous if not exhausting experience even for the most well-trained search and rescue crew.

Volunteers from North Interlake Mutual Aid District Ground Search and Rescue (NIMAD) crew spent a mosquito-infested day May 29 in the bush north of Rosenberg searching for a "missing mushroom picker" in a staged exercise to hone their search and rescue skills.

NIMAD crews are unpaid volunteers from Arborg, Ashern, Eriksdale, Fisher Branch, Guntin, Inwood, Lunda and Winnipeg Beach who can respond to missing persons reports and organize search and rescue crews in a timely fashion

The object of these mock exercises, according to Arborg Bifrost Fire Dept. spokesperson Susan Medwid, is to "test the strengths and weaknesses of our crews."

Ground crews are taught to find and follow clues in all types of terrain, from boggy swamps to dense bush. Each crew member carries their own survival gear to ensure that if they get lost they will not become a casualty.

NIMAD teams practice their search techniques twice a year with the next exercise planned for the Ashern area. Medwid says five of her crew will participate in a weekend-long province-wide search and rescue training exercise scheduled for later this year in Gypsumville.



North Interlake Mutual Aid District Ground Search and Rescue crew members Susan Medwid (back, from left), Virgl Johnson, Gary McGregor, George Howell, Shane Kauppila and George Chyzy, and Wayne Kernstead (front), Aaron Thomas, Lorne Erickson, Doug Thordarson, Jay Ruchotzke.

NEWS AND VIEWS OF MANIT

ST. JEAN / RM MONTCALM VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT GRAND OPENING

On Sunday, June 12, 2005, the St. Jean Volunteer Fire Department and the RM of Montcalm were proud to host an afternoon open house to unveil a new fire hall addition and fire truck. A project two years in the making finally did come true with a new 2005 Fort Garry Freightliner pumper with 3-man crown top mount enclosed pump, arriving in St. Jean in May, housed in a new 26' x 20' hall addition.

The afternoon began with a free hot dog barbeque lunch sponsored by the Sun Valley Co-op (St. Jean). This was followed by the official grand opening and blessing of the Fire Hall and Truck. The short program also took time to recognize and thank the many important people and organizations that have made donations towards our department. Recognized were: Farm Credit Canada, Caisse Provencher, Marc Berard, St. Jean Farm Days, Sabourin Seeds, St. Jean Agricore United, Roy Legumex, St. Jean Hotel, and Fire Department members. The RM of Montcalm also presented a plaque to the department recognizing the individual volunteers who dedicated 1000 hours of volunteer labour in the fall of 2004 to see the fire hall addition completed.

Afternoon activities, enjoyed by the 250-300 people in attendance, included tours of the Pembina Triangle M.A.D. Burn House, MPI roll over demonstrations, and a fire extinguisher burn pan. Fire Hall tours were also hosted and cakes decorated by Eva Macklem and donated by Barnabe Saurette Insurance were served. Fire Chief Eugene Fillion and the St. Jean Fire Department would like to thank and express their gratitude to everyone who helped in any way to make this project a reality and a success.

Contributed by Adam Boulanger



Back Row: Marilyne Prejet, Adam Boulanger, Roland Kirouac (FFC Donation of \$5000), Eugene Fillion, Roger Vermette (RM of Montcalm Plaque), Marc Berard, Jean-Paul Berard (Marc & Nicole Berard \$1000 donation and pressure washer), Rheal Sabourin, Monique Papineau-Lafond (St. Jean Farm Days Committee \$1000 donation), Sparky the Fire Dog.

Front Row: Aime Sabourin, Dean Sabourin (Sabourin Seed donation of \$1000 and use of equipment), Brunel Sabourin, Wayne Klassen (Agricore United Donation of \$2800), Nicole Bissonnette, Donat Chartier (Caisse Provencher Donation of \$5000), Yvan Bruneau, Ryan Fillion (Roy Legumex donation of \$1000).

BOOT DRIVES FOR THE FIRE FIGHTERS BURN FUND

The St. Jean Fire Department participated in two Boot Drives over the summer, one at the Heritage Festival in St. Joseph, and the other at the Manitoba Stampede in Morris. We chose to raise money for the Fire Fighters Burn Fund in 2005 and were quite successful, receiving \$400 in St. Joseph, and \$1000 in Morris.

Contributed by Adam Boulange

Pictured here are the fire fighters who volunteered to help make these drives a success.

(L to R : Janet Sabourin, Adam Boulanger, Peter Geneau, Dean Sabourin, Guillaume Ayotte, Brunel Sabourin, Ryan Fillion, Eugene Fillion, Rheal Sabourin, Wayne Klassen).



OBA EMERGENCY SERVICES

WALLACE DISTRICT FIRE DEPARTMENT STATION #1

Fire Chief Brad Yochim of the Wallace District Fire Department Station #1 in Virden receives the keys to their new rescue command unit from sales manager Brian Nash of Fort Garry Fire Trucks. Also present is Bruce Dunning representing the Wallace District Fire Board.

This unit is a 2005 Freightliner with rescue command body built by Fort Garry Fire Trucks of Winnipeg Manitoba. It has seating for 7 firefighters, 25 kw pto generator, refrigerator, 3000 watt light tower and a walk around body. The rescue was designed by the firefighters of Wallace District Fire Department Station #1 in Virden and has been prototyped by Fort Garry Fire Trucks as one of their stock models.

Contributed by Brad Yochim, Fire Chief Wallace District Fire Department St. #1



Left to Right: Brian Nash (Fort Garry Fire Trucks), Bruce Dunning (Wallace District Fire Board), Brad Yochim (Fire Chief) and fire fighters from Wallace District Fire Department St. #1 Virden

BE EVER MINDFUL OF HIDDEN DANGERS

The Minitonas Fire Department responded to a working fire involving a grain dryer. The fire spread to involve a combination storage shed / workshop and the dryer's flaring propane storage tank.

Upon arrival, Fire Fighters set up to initially cool the flaring propane tank. Shortly there after, the fuel within the tank was exhausted and efforts were then turned toward protecting the structures. Two lines were deployed to suppress the shop building and to protect another near by exposure.

While combating the shop fire, there was an explosion. The photo shows the remains of an Acetylene tank that had BLEVED. The tank was propelled through the wall of the shed and over thirty feet coming to land between the firefighters and puncturing the attack lines. Luckily, there were no injuries.

Burned paint and metal thinning indicate a pressure build up and resulting BLEVE. Examination of the tank found both fusible plugs had opened. It serves as a reminder to all that dangers hidden in structures have the ability to cause serious harm to the lives of Fire fighters and other Emergency Responders. There is nothing routine about the calls you go to.

The Minitonas Fire Department is part of the Swan Valley Mutual Aid District. Fire Chief Lloyd Webster and his fire fighters want to share this important safety caution with all Manitoba's Fire Fighters.

Contributed by Al Gray, ESO - OFC

