

International Fire Service Training Association joins with FSTI and the CSFA Volunteer Committee's strategic training program

By **Ronny J. Coleman, Chairman**, CSFA Volunteer Committee and
Michael S. Williams, President-Executive Director, Fire Services Training Institute

The CSFA Volunteer Committee's Volunteer Strategic Training Program received a significant leg up recently with an agreement between FSTI and the Oklahoma State University, International Fire Services Training Associations (IFSTA) to support the Volunteer Training Syllabus developed the volunteer committee and FSTI.

The agreement includes a significant bulk discount of Essentials of Firefighting, 5th Edition to be purchased by FSTI utilizing a grant from Farmer's Insurance. The books will be issued to departments who sign an Agreement of Participation that includes the development of a structured training program, training records development and retention policy, and yearly progress reporting to FSTI.

Jerry Davies, Assistant Vice President, Media and Public Relations, North America Farmers Insurance Group and FSTI Board Member said "Farmer's is pleased to be able to bring this valuable training material to the California volunteer fire service. Training is a critical component to the successful protection of our communities that we both serve."

Included in the agreement is a licensing agreement between FSTI and IFSTA for the unrestricted use of supporting training materials to participating volunteer departments. This extensive collection of documents will be available on flash drives and the CSFA Volunteer Portal at no charge. The first shipment of 250 text books has been received and ready to be issued to participating departments.

Michael A. Wieder, Associate Director, Oklahoma State University Fire Protection Publications and Executive Director IFSTA joined IFSTA/FPP Representative Damon Mascoto to close the deal saying "We believe that the partnership between IFSTA, FPP and FSTI will further strengthen the service that we each provide to the firefighters and emergency responders in the State of California."

"This is a significant step towards the implementation of the training syllabus and fulfilling the objectives of the volunteer committee by bringing uniformed and quality training to the California volunteer fire service," said Sonoma County Fire and Emergency Services Assistant Chief and Fire Marshal Robert MacIntyre.

Chief McIntyre is the principle author of the training syllabus. The project started several years ago as a rewrite of the State Fire Marshal Volunteer Firefighter Program. As the project development moved forward it began to stall as it fell in behind a long line of rewrites and other priority projects.

In mid 2010, the syllabus project was adopted by FSTI and the CSFA Volunteer Committee. The document was reformatted and modified to its current design. Once the primary draft was completed, FSTI took it to the streets to get first hand information from the volunteer fire service on how the program would best be implemented. It has also been reviewed this year by the SAFER participants in Sacramento and Redding with exceptional response.

Also joining the training team is Deer Valley Press who has agreed to provide Leadership For the Wildland Fire Officer, Leading in a Dangerous Profession and Firefighter's Handbook on Wildland Firefighting, Strategy, Tactics and Safety, 3rd Edition at reduced cost to FSTI. Hundreds of these books have already been given out throughout Northern California to volunteer departments for their assistance in developing the training syllabus and supporting the FSTI mission.

During a recent FSTI fieldtrip stop in Weaverville, Downriver Fire Chief Martin Dooly said "Regardless of economic conditions affecting the United States, quality training and textbooks are always difficult for rural volunteer fire departments to obtain on a strained budget. If not for the generosity of companies such as Farmers Insurance Group, FSTI and IFSTA, Deer Valley Press and the support of CSFA, these critical materials and valuable training would be out of reach of financially struggling departments. I wish personally thank those responsible for committing their time, effort and money spent to make this project a reality. Thank you!"

The volunteer committee is moving forward with bringing a long awaited uniformed training program to the volunteer fire service. FSTI is pleased to be able to support the effort and welcomes Farmer's Insurance, IFSTA and Deer Valley Press to the CSFA and FSTI family.

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