



ATFD Responding

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ATFD Staff

Abington Township Fire Department Chiefs

Abington Fire Co.

Chief John Bothwell

McKinley Fire Co.

Chief Chris Bors

Weldon Fire Co.

Chief Bud Gerhard

Edge Hill Fire Co.

Chief Frank Schuck

Roslyn Fire Co.

Chief Dale Jonas

Fire Marshal:

Kenneth Clark

Asst. Fire Marshal:

John Rohrer

Fire Services Administrator:

Dave Schramm

Community Service Specialist:

Jeff Glynn

Fire Department Secretary:

Lisa Scholly

Administrative Support Team

Computer Network Administrator:

John Bothwell
Mike Ratka (Assistant)

Fire Training Coordinator:

Larry Stefken
Michael Jones (Assistant)

Operations Support:

Joe Dougherty
Tom McAneny
Chris Mc Loone
Ed Wurster

ATFD Attains Fire Investigator Certification

Through a program of continuing education, the staff of the Abington Township Fire Marshal's Office has attained certification through the National Association of Fire Investigators in Fire & Explosion and Vehicle Fire Investigation. The Fire Marshal's Office has sponsored a series of professional courses in Fire Pattern Recognition, Fatal Fires, Vehicle, and Electrical through the Public Agency Training Center. The seminars have been a huge success with an average of 50 regional fire investigators in attendance, including those from as far away as Washington D.C. – making this a great networking



ATFD members get hands-on during a fire investigation class.

opportunity for department members. The courses are taught by nationally recognized experts.

In April, the office sponsored a hands-on Electrical Fire/Arson Investigation class. Attendees had the opportunity to examine

various small appliances to apply investigative techniques and other technical information they had learned about electrical fires. Attendees were required to closely examine and utilize appropriate metering devices, as well as test small appliances and document any alteration or defect which may have been related to a malfunction causing fire or overheating.

Recently attaining National Certification were Kenneth Clark, Fire Marshal; John Rohrer, Assistant Fire Marshal; Jeffrey Glynn, Community Service Specialist; Phil Aylward, Deputy Chief of Roslyn Fire Company; and Thomas McAneny, Captain of Edge Hill Fire Company.

Chief Lasky Delivers Valuable Leadership Lessons

Abington Township Fire Department members and those from surrounding communities had an opportunity to learn from best-selling author and lecturer Chief Rick Lasky during a "Five Alarm Leadership Training" event held April 10th at Abington Junior High School.



Chief Rick Lasky

Chief Lasky, who works for the Lewisville Fire Department in suburban Dallas and wrote "Pride and Ownership," spoke to firefighters

about the importance of leadership, the roles of various people within the fire department, the value of marketing, and how to balance service to the fire department with family obligations.

He said it was the death of a friend during a fire that got him thinking that fire departments don't do enough to protect their most valuable asset – their firefighters.

"We're killing and injuring firefighters before they even leave the firehouse...due to poor, or lack of, leadership back at the firehouse," he said.

(Continued on page 2)



"We will strive to invigorate and fortify the spirit of volunteerism in the Abington Township Fire Department by allowing each of our five fire companies to maintain its individual identity that complements our organizational goal of continuous self improvement."

ATFD's Safety House Makes Stops at Area Schools This Spring

Approximately 900 Abington Township children are better aware of the safety precautions they can take at home to prevent fire and injury thanks to visits made by Abington Township Fire Department's Safety House this spring.

The Safety House, which is a portable trailer that enables firefighters to teach children about fire safety in the various rooms of a home, made stops during April and May at private, parochial, and public schools.

Students had the opportunity to learn about the dos and don'ts of kitchen safety, such as making sure pot handles are turned to the side, keeping towels and other flammable materials away from ovens and burners, and keeping metal objects out of



Roslyn Fire Company member John Lewis teaches Copper Beech Elementary School third-graders about home fire safety.

the microwave. Children were reminded to make sure their smoke detectors have working batteries and to keep toys and

other objects away from fireplaces, and they also had the opportunity to practice placing a 9-1-1 call. In addition, youngsters learned how to test a bedroom door for heat, how to stay low in a smoke-filled room, and to find an alternative exit when fire is blocking the door.

Safety House visits are important for raising the ATFD's visibility in the community, explained trainers John Lewis and Howard Williams, who both belong to the Roslyn Fire Company.

"I think we get involved in the community a lot. It's important to be involved so people know who we are," said Mr. Lewis, who added that young children who interact early on with firefighters might become interested in serving themselves one day.

(Continued from page 1)

Chief Lasky emphasized the importance of training and instilling a sense of ownership and passion for the job. One way to do that, he said, is through a shared mission statement.

"If one of your own guys doesn't know what your mission statement is, you have no mission," he said.

It's crucial for the community to understand firefighters' mission as well, said Chief Lasky. Residents need to know that today's firefighters do much more than fight fires. He pointed out that countless children's books paint the wrong image of firefighters.

"We don't know how to market our mission," he said. "We have to get better at telling people what we do."

Edge Hill Fire Company member Frank Gopaul, who attended the April 10th presentation, agreed that marketing is very important.

"It's like Lasky said, sometimes you feel like people think all you do is fight fires," he said. "People have no idea of what type of training we actually go through."

ATFD Continues Public Relations Efforts

The Abington Township Fire Department continues to raise its profile through the publication of expert source articles and production of Public Service Announcements (PSAs).

The most recent article appeared in the April, 2010 edition of *Fire Engineering* magazine and was submitted by Larry Siefken, fire training coordinator, and Jeffrey Glynn, community service specialist. The Volunteers Corner piece focused on how the ATFD's training facility has enabled the department to recruit and retain members.

In addition, ATFD firefighters continue to appear on township cable channels (Comcast Channel 43 and Verizon Channel 24) as part of the ongoing PSA series. In February, residents learned about fire hazards caused by space heaters, wood burning stoves, and lamps. In the spring, another PSA focused on the importance of creating a fire escape plan.

ATFD Participates in Career Fair



Seen here, from left to right are Josh Brooks, Chris Platz, Elantra Bell, and Jeffrey Glynn.

Members of the Abington Township Fire Department spoke about both the career and volunteer opportunities that exist in the field of firefighting during a presentation that was part of Abington Junior High School's Career Fair held on May 14th.

Mr. Glynn provided students with an overview of the ATFD, which is all volunteer, and also touched on the opportunities for paid careers in firefighting. He encouraged students interested in the field to take fire science classes in college.

Assistant Fire Marshal John Rohrer noted that students who have an interest in math, science, computers, photography, or extreme sports might find they enjoy firefighting, which encompasses all of those topics.

"It is very intense, but it is something you'll never regret doing," said Mr. Glynn.

Abington Township Fire Department: AbingtonFD.org

