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**Around Montana**

**Montana Mutual Aid Agenda For This Weekend**

Montana Mutual Aid  
Command, Strategy and Tactics  
& Large Incident Management  
Training Symposium

Meeting Agenda for February 28<sup>th</sup> and March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2015  
Thanks to Sue Mergenthaler and the Eastgate Fire Department Crew for hosting

**Saturday, February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

- 1000hrs      Call to Order – Moment of Silence and Pledge of Allegiance
- Recognition of Eastgate Fire Chief Ken Mergenthaler (Eastgate Fire Trustees)
- Thank you to Sue Mergenthaler
- Introductions of Guests and Hosts and Session Notes

1020hrs Montana Mutual Aid – Purpose and Approach

Montana Fire Service Mutual Aid - History Review, Additions, SWOT

Montana Mutual Aid - High Line, Brandon Brunelle

Montana Mutual Aid - West - Gary Mahugh, Ed Burlingame

Montana Mutual Aid - East - Jerry Prete

Montana Mutual Aid - North Central – Joe Zahara

Montana Mutual Aid – Southern Zone –

Montana DES Update - Director Brad Livingston , MT DES(invited)

Montana Mutual Aid Communications – Ed Burlingame

Montana Fire Services Training School – John Culbertson(invited)

Montana State Fire Chiefs Association – Rich Cowger(invited)

Montana State Volunteer Fire Fighters Association – Bob Hanson(invited)

Montana Mutual Aid - MT DNRC - Greg Archie, Dave Hamilton(invited)

Montana Mutual Aid – Command Support Operations, Watch Desk, staffing

Montana All Threat Intelligence Center – Bryan Costigan – Open Source Briefing

Montana Wildland Fire –Fire Behavior Estimates, Fire Chief Sonny Steiger (ret.), Wolf Creek(invited)

1230hrs Lunch - MMA SWOT Inputs

1300hrs Command Strategy and Tactics and Smart Practices – Flex Block

**Report on Fire Dynamics Research – Dan Madrzykowski, P.E.- Lessons Learned** – Dan a fire protection engineer with the Fire Fighting Technology Group of the National Institute of Standards and Technology in Maryland. Dan has been a friend of Montana Fire Fighters for many years. We welcome him back to Montana.

**Applying NIST Fire Dynamics Research – A conversation about fire dynamics, strategy, tactics and command - Dan Madrzykowski** This will be a concurrent conversation integrated with the NIST Fire Dynamics presentation.

1530 Break

1545 **Fire Dynamics Research, Strategy, Tactics and Command, continues**  
Madrzykowski

1830hrs Dinner(working)

1900hrs **Fire Dynamics Research, Strategy, Tactics and Command, continues**  
Madrzykowski

2030 Adjourn

**Sunday, March 1<sup>st</sup> , 2015**

0730hrs Breakfast

0800hrs **Fire Dynamics Research, Strategy, Tactics and Command, continues**  
Madrzykowski,

0930hrs Break

1100hrs Montana Mutual Aid – Watch Desk, Opportunities Ed Burlingame, Brian Crandell

1130hrs Good of the Order, Thank Yous and Closings - Thank yous to Sue and Crew -  
Thanks for Showing Up. Snacks for the road (thanks, Sue and crew)

**Next MMA meeting - November 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>, 2015 at Eastgate FD(starts at 1000hrs)**

**Fire Chief Ken Mergenthaler - UAL FLT 93 – NWA FLT 253**

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**\*The Location And Times Have Been Changed For The STICO Class In Butte**

Location: Justice Center 3615 Wynne ave.

Times: 0900 start. Anticipate course completion approximately 1400 Sunday.

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**Billings Trailer Home Fire Causes \$20,000 In Damage**

[http://billingsgazette.com/news/local/trailer-home-fire-causes-in-damage/article\\_cb4a6b0e-3420-5978-b1aa-d52f49de88d6.html](http://billingsgazette.com/news/local/trailer-home-fire-causes-in-damage/article_cb4a6b0e-3420-5978-b1aa-d52f49de88d6.html)

A fire late Saturday night that dealt \$20,000 of damage to a trailer home at 21 Attica St. N., was ruled accidental.

Crews were dispatched to the fire in the Cherry Creek Homes Community at 11:15 p.m., a press release by Billings Deputy Fire Marshal Jeff McCullough said.

The blaze was caused by incense being burned in a bedroom too close to combustible material, he said. It caused heavy damage to a bedroom and smoke damage throughout the home.

The home was empty at the time of the fire and no injuries were reported, he said.

The property is insured, but the contents were not.

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## **Save The Dates: FSTS Spring Training Symposium With Captain John Ceriello, FDNY**

May 2-3, 2015

John Ceriello is a 27-year veteran of the New York City Fire Department, 14 of those years was spent in Special Operations Command. He is a Captain and currently assigned to Division of Training. He has been an integral part in the FDNY & NIST Wind Impacted Fires Project that introduced stairwell pressurization, wind control devices and high-rise nozzles into the field. He also was part of the implementation of new concepts of ventilation and flow-path control to the FDNY. John is on Underwriter Laboratories advisory panel for a number of projects including their most recent research on horizontal and vertical ventilation.

### Summary of the presentation-

There has been a lot being said lately in the American fire service on the research of fire behavior. A tremendous amount of information has been streaming across fire publications and on-line sources. It's a lot for the firefighter and chief to be able to absorb and process. John Ceriello has been involved with this research since 2006 when the FDNY reached out to NIST to better understand the effects of wind when a high-rise structure is on fire. With John's knowledge and time in the field the attendee will have a unique combination of science and practical fire-ground knowledge to tap into. He will be able to express the true essence of what the latest research means to all levels of the fire service from probationary firefighter to Chief of the Department. John will use a multi media presentation to show how and more importantly why it's so important to take heed in the latest research so intelligent decisions can be made on the fire ground where it counts the most.

Location: Montana State University, Strand Union Building, Bozeman, MT

Cost: \$75 (includes lunch on Saturday)

Times: 0900-1700 Saturday, 0800-noon Sunday.

\*Parking permit will not be required; ample parking available.

To Register, Please visit: <http://www.montana.edu/wwwfire/register.php>

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## **Legislative Update - Week 7**

### **The past week in review:**

**SB103** (Provide presumptive disease coverage for paid firefighters) Was tabled in committee on Friday, February 20th. The bill is probably dead. The bill covered illnesses and cancers under workman's compensation coverage for paid firefighters. The illnesses and cancers would be presumed to have been caused by employment as a firefighter unless successfully rebutted by the workman's compensation insurer.

**SB303** (Revise fire district laws) Had a hearing on Monday, February 16th. The bill would permit fire departments to charge insurance companies up to \$1000 for response to vehicle accidents. The bill was subsequently tabled, in committee, on Wednesday, February 18th. This bill is probably dead. The Montana Fire Alliance supported the bill.

**HB483** (Raising pension benefit in VFCA) Had a hearing on Thursday, February 19th, in State Administration. The bill would raise the retirement benefit, for volunteer firefighters covered by the VFCA, to \$175 per month which was amended down from \$200 per month due to the actuarial impact to the retirement system. The bill subsequently passed out of committee as amended and then passed 2nd reading in the House of Representatives. The bill now heads to the House Appropriations Committee for a hearing. The Montana Fire Alliance supported the bill.

**HB504** (Revise laws related to consolidation of rural fire districts and areas) Had a hearing on Thursday, February 19th. This bill would allow a fire district to consolidate with a fire service area. The bill passed out of committee on a 20-0 vote on Friday, February 20th. It is now headed to the House of Representatives for a floor vote. The Montana Fire Alliance supports the bill.

**HB555** (Generally revise laws related to volunteer firefighters) Had a hearing on Thursday, February 19th. The bill would raise the allowance, including a stipend or per diem, that a volunteer firefighter could earn, from \$300 to \$3,000 per calendar year. This bill only affects volunteer firefighters covered by the VFCA pension administered by MPERA. The bill passed committee on a 20-0 vote the same day and is now headed to the House for a floor vote.

**SB147** (Provide income tax credit for Volunteer Firefighters and Emergency Personnel) The bill was tabled in committee on Thursday, February 19th. The bill is probably dead. This bill would have provided a \$500 tax credit to volunteer firefighters and emergency personnel. The Montana Fire Alliance supported the bill.

**HB241** (Clarify definition of commercial motor vehicle for emergency vehicles) The bill passed out of the Senate Highways and Transportation committee, on a 10-0 vote, on Wednesday, February 18th. It is now headed to the Senate for a floor vote. The bill clarifies that a CDL is not required to drive an emergency vehicle when returning from a call or operated in any other official capacity. The Montana Fire Alliance supports the bill.

#### **Hearings and issues this upcoming week:**

**HB483** (Raising pension benefit in VFCA) Has a hearing scheduled for Tuesday, February 24th, at 3:00 PM in room 102, in front of House Appropriations. The bill would raise the retirement benefit, for volunteer firefighters covered by the VFCA, to \$175 per month. The Montana Fire Alliance supports the bill.

**SB352** (Create offense related to assault on healthcare and emergency providers) Has a hearing scheduled for Monday, February 23rd, at 8:00 AM in room 303. The bill would provide for a felony charge against anyone assaulting a healthcare worker or emergency services provider. The Montana Fire Alliance supports the bill.

To follow the Montana Fire Alliance's "bills of interest" go to [www.mtfirealliance.org/legislative.html](http://www.mtfirealliance.org/legislative.html)

Respectfully Submitted  
Leonard Lundby

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### **New Permit System Addresses Open Burning**

[http://ravallirepublic.com/news/local/article\\_f09de6f6-ba11-11e4-a6fe-3328b61a570d.html](http://ravallirepublic.com/news/local/article_f09de6f6-ba11-11e4-a6fe-3328b61a570d.html)

Last year, the Hamilton Volunteer Fire Department responded 22 times to fires that people started when open burning season was closed by the state.

"That was 22 times that my volunteers had to leave their families or their work," said Hamilton Fire Chief Brad Mohn. "That was 22 times that we had to run apparatus that didn't need to be run."

Beyond that, the volunteers also respond to numerous false alarms every year after someone sees smoke and calls for help.

"We arrive on the scene to find that their neighbors are burning and the fire is under control, but the people who are burning hadn't notified anyone," Mohn said.

Mohn and other Ravalli County fire chiefs hope that a new computerized open burn permit system will help alleviate some of those issues.

The permit system accessed at [www.BurnPermits.mt.gov](http://www.BurnPermits.mt.gov) offers county residents a simple way to obtain a free burn permit that's good for the entire 2015 burn season. People are required to activate the burn permit each day they plan to burn.

That information is then stored electronically and instantly becomes available to emergency dispatchers, fire departments and local residents.

The hope is the new system will take pressure off the county's 9-1-1 emergency dispatch crew, which has, in the past, been charged with taking thousands of calls from people wanting to burn something on their properties. Those calls sometimes get in the way of more pressing emergencies facing the dispatch team.

Local fire departments will also benefit if residents choose to comply with the new permit system.

Last week, a number of Ravalli County volunteer fire chiefs urged the county commission to pass an open burning ordinance that would require residents to use the system or take the chance of being cited.

"For this to really work, we need to have an ordinance to back it up," Mohn said. "There needs to be some teeth behind this burn permit, otherwise repeat offenders won't care."

While Ravalli County Sheriff Chris Hoffman said he supported an ordinance, it will take some time for local residents to come to grips with the change that's coming for a part of the valley's culture.

For some people in the Bitterroot, open burning is almost considered a birthright, Hoffman said.

While the sheriff's office will support local volunteer fire crews in educating the public on the need to obtain a permit and follow the rules this year, Hoffman said his office won't be citing anyone this first open burning season that officially opens March 1.

"We need to let people know that things are changing in this county," Hoffman said. "It is no longer tenable for fire departments or 9-1-1 to continue open burning as we have in the past."

The commission is beginning to review open burning ordinances from several other counties in Montana.

Commission Chair Jeff Burrows said he plans to move forward cautiously on this issue.

"There is a culture of open burning here," Burrows said. "This will be met with open resistance."

Beyond the normal public process for the creation of an ordinance, which includes hearings, Burrows said he would like the commission to consider holding town hall meetings in the evening.

Florence Fire Chief Charlie Lambson serves a district that includes both Missoula and Ravalli counties.

Missoula County has required people to obtain an open burning permit for more than a decade. That permit includes safety information, including the best times to burn outdoors. From the low number of calls his department receives from Missoula County, Lambson said he's concluded a burn permit system – which includes an ordinance – is something that works.

"People know they are going to get a ticket if they decided to burn without a permit on the Missoula side," he said. "An ordinance is a very important step. It's the teeth behind the permit."

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## **IAAI Training Opportunity Coming to Great Falls**

### **Electrical Aspects of Fire Investigation**

**Instructor:** Dave Cusatis IAAI-CFI, IAAI-CI

**Where:** Great Falls Fire Rescue Charles C. Carrico Regional Training Facility, 1900 9th Street South Great Falls MT, 59405

**When:** Thursday March 12th, 2015 8am-5pm Lunch Provided

#### **Description:**

This course addresses the critical skills essential to the effective investigation and evaluation of fires involving potential electrical causes. This course utilizes state of the art techniques, practices, protocols and standards to assist investigators to properly and effectively evaluate electrical systems and associated components to ascertain their role in a fire.

Students will be provided with a basic knowledge of electrical faults and failures of electrical components and circuits, as well as a working knowledge of the National Electrical Code (NEC) and how it applies to the fire investigations.

The use of 'Arc Mapping' will also be discussed and how it can be effectively used to assist in fire origin determination. Participants will also be able to demonstrate a general knowledge of electricity, electrical circuits, systems and arc mapping principles through a series of instructor led 'hands-on' practical exercises.

#### **Register online at firearson .com**

Click on training and certifications.

Scroll down to classes and events.

Click on Electrical Aspects of Fire Investigation

Or to register by phone call 1-410-451-3473

#### **Cost:**

Montana Chapter Members: \$100.

Montana Non-Members: \$200.

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## **Around the Nation**

### **Wis. Firefighter Hurt Battling Blaze That Damaged Two Houses**

<http://www.firehouse.com/news/11853252/milwaukee-wis-firefighter-hurt-battling-blaze-that-damaged-two-houses>

Residents in two Milwaukee houses were left out in the cold after a weekend fire caused severe damage.

The fire was reported about 2:20 a.m. Saturday in the 2200 block of W. Brown St. and spread from one house to another, Deputy Fire Chief Brian Smith said Sunday.

The damage to the house where the fire began was estimated at \$190,000 to the building and \$90,000 to its contents, Smith said.

One firefighter suffered a hand injury, but none of the residents was hurt in the fire, he said.

The cause remains under investigation.

No working smoke detector was found in either house.

The fire department operates a smoke detector hotline for Milwaukee residents to call if they need a smoke alarm or need help installing one. The hotline number is (414) 286-8980.

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### **Calif. Firefighters Save Two People in Burning Motel Room**

<http://www.firehouse.com/news/11853251/oakland-calif-firefighters-save-two-people-in-burning-motel-room>

OAKLAND -- Firefighters rescued two people from of a burning motel room Saturday night who had been overcome with smoke, a department spokesman said.

"They were down. They were burned," Battalion Chief Geoff Hunter said of an adult man and woman in an upstairs, corner room at the Townhouse Travel Inn on W. MacArthur Boulevard.

"There was heavy fire" when crews arrived at about 7:30 p.m., but an aggressive attack on the blaze allowed firefighters to find the people in room 220 and pull them out, Hunter said.

"They did an excellent job."

The victims were taken to a hospital with second- and third-degree burns. Another woman suffered minor burns. The one-alarm fire was contained to the single room and Hunter said he did not expect anyone else to be displaced.

Police and firefighters are investigating the cause, which Hunter described as "flammable materials" that were being misused. He said he could not elaborate because of the investigation.

About \$50,000 in damage was done to the motel, Hunter said.

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### **Two Kids, Ages 1 And 6, Dead in New Jersey House Fire**

<http://www.firehouse.com/news/11853245/two-kids-ages-1-and-6-dead-in-orange-new-jersey-house-fire>



Firefighters work to put out a house fire in Orange, N.J., Friday, Feb. 20, 2015. The Essex County prosecutor's office says two young siblings ages 1 and 6 were found dead inside the home after the blaze broke out Friday night. Seven other occupants escaped, including two children witnesses said jumped to safety. (AP Photo/The Star-Ledger, Paul Milo) TV OUT; MAGS OUT; INTERNET OUT; NO SALES; NO ARCHIVING in Orange Friday night. Early reports were that at least two children may still be missing.

**Photo credit:** (Paul Milo | NJ Advance Media for NJ.com)

ORANGE, N.J. (AP) — Two young siblings ages 1 and 6 were killed in an overnight house fire in New Jersey, officials said Saturday.

The children were found inside the home in Orange after the blaze broke out Friday night, the Essex County prosecutor's office said. Seven other occupants escaped, including two children witnesses said jumped to safety.

Officials identified the children as Zion Tony and his older sister, Jayda McEachin. Two other people were treated at a hospital.

Resident Mary Lewter told NJ.com she was woken up by her baby's father, who urged her to get out of the burning building. She says she tried to go upstairs and help others but was blocked by flames.

Passerby Darryl Mayfield said he caught two children who jumped from the top floor window to a porch roof.

"We saw smoke from the corner and we came down here and I saw kids upstairs," Mayfield told NJ.com. "We saw a lady there and the kids, and we were telling her to throw the kids, but she was scared. It took like 10 minutes but the kids jumped. Then she just went back in." New Jersey Transit brought in a bus to serve as a warming center at the site, on an evening when temperatures hovered around 10 degrees. The Red Cross also provided temporary lodging, food and clothing to people displaced by the fire.

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## **Ind. Fire Chief Quits Days After Police Chief Wife Arrested**

<http://www.firehouse.com/news/12047599/greensburg-fire-chief-resigns-after-police-chief-wife-arrested>

GREENSBURG – City officials announced the resignation and retirement of longtime Greensburg Fire Chief Scott Chasteen Friday, three days after criminal charges were filed against his wife, the former Greensburg Chief of Police.

A 24-year veteran of the department, Chasteen notified Mayor Gary Herbert of his intentions to step down from the position he's held for more than a decade. The change was effective immediately.

"Scott Chasteen has always been an asset to the City of Greensburg as fire chief, and under his watch the department has flourished," the mayor said in a written statement. "I regret that his resignation and retirement arise under the cloud that they do, but I believe that his decision is the correct one and with a heavy heart, I accept it."

The mayor's statement references the arrest earlier this week of former Greensburg Chief of Police Stacey Chasteen, who, according to court documents, admitted to stealing nearly \$73,000 from the Greensburg Police Department's evidence room. That amount was seized as financial evidence from one 2012 case, but state investigators said they discovered cash evidence missing from more than a dozen other criminal cases during their audit of the evidence room in January. The former police chief, who resigned in December, faces charges of official misconduct and theft.

Court documents allege that Stacey Chasteen stole the evidence money and lost it to an out-of-control gambling habit. Stacey Chasteen said she panicked and confided in her husband in June 2013 that she had stolen and gambled away nearly \$73,000 in police evidence funds and wished to return them, investigators said.

The couple, through the use of their own funds and by borrowing a substantial amount of money from friends, said they were able to collect about \$70,000. According to court documents, Stacey Chasteen "represented to her husband that she was going to put the money back [into the police department's evidence room]." Instead, the former police chief gambled and lost all of that money too, investigators said.

The probable cause affidavit states that Scott Chasteen told Indiana State Police detectives he believed his wife had used the money to replace the stolen evidence funds and had seen her package it as though it was the same cash originally stored in the evidence room. He said he believed she had put the money back.

Stacey Chasteen surrendered to authorities this week and was released after posting bond. She is scheduled to make her initial court appearance at 1 p.m. Wednesday, March 4 in Decatur Circuit Court.

Scott Chasteen has not been charged with any crime in the case.

A statement from the Decatur County Prosecutor's Office released to the Daily News earlier this week says prosecutors are not pursuing criminal charges against any other person in regards to the case against Stacey Chasteen.

Mayor Herbert said city officials first learned that Scott Chasteen had knowledge of his wife's alleged actions this week when court documents pertaining to the criminal case against the former police chief were released to the public.

Herbert told the Daily News he planned to confer with the Greensburg Board of Works in order to make a decision regarding Scott Chasteen's future role with the city. The mayor spoke highly of Scott Chasteen's work as fire chief and his community involvement, but said the city would move quickly in making a decision that was "best for the City of Greensburg." City officials said they are currently examining candidates to fill the departing fire chief's role.

"The work of the City of Greensburg will continue, and we've started the process of identifying and hiring a new [fire] chief," Mayor Herbert said in a written statement.

"At this point, we are considering all available options and will move quickly to fill the position with the best possible candidate. The city deserves no less."

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**Entry Level Positions (\*\*Denotes New Posting)**

**Firefighter Glendive, MT**

<http://jobs.mt.gov>

Firefighter- Lieutenant Driver/Operator in Glendive, MT. QUALIFICATIONS: HS diploma or GED; three (3) years experience as a firefighter; valid MT driver's license; ability to meet legal, physical, and medical requirements, including but not limited to specific requirements for corrected and uncorrected visual acuity; must have color vision; ability to pass extensive background investigation. DUTIES: Responsible for operating fire/ambulance apparatus and equipment at emergency incidents, ensuring all equipment is in proper working condition in order to provide the best possible fire and life safety services through the safe and effective use of the equipment and facilities of the Fire Department. HOURS/DAYS: Will work a regular shift, as assigned, including days, nights, holidays and weekends. WAGE: Starting pay is \$17.25 per hour. BENEFITS: include vacation, sick leave, paid holidays, retirement and medical insurance. Closes at 5 p.m. February 27, 2015.

Open Date: 2/4/2015  
Close Date: 2/27/2015  
FSTS Posted: 2/9/2015

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