

Flashpoint

Philadelphia-Delaware Valley Chapter
Society of Fire Protection Engineers

APRIL 2005

VOLUME 8, ISSUE 8

FIRE PROTECTION NETWORKING— 2005



Join us for professional development and fellowship!

Date: **Wednesday, April 6, 2005**

Place: **Montgomery County Fire Academy**

See Page 6 for directions

8:00 AM: **Registration**

8:30 AM: **John A. Viniello, President of the National Fire Sprinkler Association**

9:30 AM: **First session of two small group seminars**

12 Noon: **Panel Discussion about the role of Fire Protection Engineers, Professional Engineers and**

Technicians regarding the NCEES Report.

1:00 PM: **Lunch**

Cost: **\$50.00 in advance, \$60.00 at the door, Students \$25.00 in advance, \$35.00 at the door**

Reservations: **See page 3 for Invitation and Reservation Information.**

Special points of interest:

? This is the month we celebrate with the industry. Check out pg.3.

? Elections are in May! Nominations are announced below!

? NIST press release on the Nightclub fire in RI is on pg. 4.

Nominations for 2005-2006 Officers

The Nominating Committee would like to present the following candidates for the 2005-2006 term of office for the Philadelphia—Delaware Valley Chapter of the Society of Fire Protection Engineers:

President: Donald Lyons

1st Vice Pres:
Robert Foraker

2nd Vice Pres:
Rick Coppola

Secretary:
Irma Colabrese

Asst. Sec: Thomas Field

Treasurer:
M. G. (Top) Myers

Directors serving through 2006: Michael Venneri and David Kriebel

Directors serving through 2007: John Spitz, Jr. and Shawn Sullivan

By publicizing this slate of officers, the Board of Directors has opened up the process of nominations to other candidates, as addressed in the By-Laws of our Chapter.

Any recommendations for office from the membership must be submitted by 5 members and forwarded to the Secretary, Irma Colabrese, thirty days in advance of the May 8, 2005 election.

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President's Spark by Philip Sconyo



Our President,
Philip Sconyo

Special thanks to R. T. Leicht, Delaware State Fire Marshal's Office who spoke on "Balancing Security with Life Safety", at our March meeting. This proved to be another excellent topic for our membership. Also, I would be remiss not to acknowledge the excellence of the Culinary Art Department in providing our meal and especially the chocolate fountain, which proved to be a hit with our members and the Future City team from Holy Rosary Elementary School.

This month is our Networking Seminar (details provided in this newsletter), which is sure

to prove to be another excellent event. The speakers come from all facets of the industry and should prove to be enlightening. You should mark your calendars, as this is a day you do not want to miss.

Next month is our annual business meeting and we will be electing new officers. We will also be awarding our scholarships to well deserving students.

I ask each of you to consider becoming involved, as the chapter is here for each and every one of it's members, but we can only help if you let us know your needs. As always, anyone interested in getting

involved with the chapter's committees please contact me at my office 856-310-9088 or by e-mail at phiscon@snip.net.

Hope to see you on April 6th at the Montgomery County Fire Academy. ☺☺

"especially the chocolate fountain, which proved to be a hit with our members and the Future City team from Holy Rosary Elementary School."

Executive Board Meeting— February 8, 2005

Philip Sconyo called the meeting to order at 5:10 PM.

ATTENDANCE: Irma Colabrese, Philip Gaughan, Don Lyons, Richard Oliver, Philip Sconyo, Robert Smith, and Top Myers

MINUTES: The minutes of the October 4, 2004 Meeting were not available to approve.

OFFICER REPORTS:

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer's Report was discussed and approved. We have \$4000.00 for Scholarships for this spring.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Program: D. Lyons reported that the schedule is set as reported at the 10/04 Meeting.

The Golf Outing with NFSA is June 2, 2005.

Nominations: R. Oliver will chair this committee of past presidents again.

Professional Activities: P. Gaughan summarized the new format for FIRE PROTECTION NETWORKING – 2005. It is to April 6, 2005 at Montgomery County Fire Academy and will be catered from outside.

Scholarship: I. Colabrese reported that two sets of applications went out to schools this year. I. Colabrese sent hard copies to 50 schools. And, J. LaSalle sent more out via email. Even duplications do not look bad. I. Colabrese also started an Excel spreadsheet on schools. Hopefully information can be combined.

Education: P. Gaughan reported that Viking Electronics offered us space to hold the Sprinkler Class for

FLASHPOINT

"The purpose of FLASHPOINT is to provide a forum for the transfer of information between members of the Philadelphia-Delaware Valley Chapter of the Society of Fire Protection Engineers (SFPE) and to give the Chapter visibility."

Newsletter/Publicity Committee:
Irma Colabrese

Information for publication can be submitted to: I. Colabrese
Email: ircolabrese@comcast.net

This Newsletter is published 10 times/year (September through June) and received as part of membership of the Chapter. Membership Dues are \$20.00 collected annually in the Fall of the Year. For an Application of Membership contact: Robert T. Foraker at foraker@college.dtcc.edu

Visit our web site at:
www.dtcc.edu/stanton/sfpe

Articles written are the views of the Author and not necessarily those of the Philadelphia-Delaware Valley Chapter of SFPE. ☺☺



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Wednesday, April 6, 2005— Fire Protection Networking— 2005. See pg. 3 for reservation information.

Thursday, April 14, 2005— Delaware Valley Green Building Council dinner meeting. Contact [Michelle Robinson](#) Phone: 215-430-5027.

Thursday, April 14, 2005— American Society of Heating Refrigeration & Air Conditioning Engineers' dinner meeting. Contact ASHRAE Office Phone: 610.971.2169.

Tuesday, April 26, 2005— American Society of Certified Engineering Technicians' Meeting. Contact Robert Spitz Phone: 215-416-5414.

Tuesday, April 26, 2005— DVGBC Workshop. Contact [Lorna Rosenberg](#) Phone: 267-238-3894.

Wednesday, April 27, 2005— American Society of Professional Estimators' dinner meeting. Contact Lee Hartwig Phone: 610-399-5201.

Thursday, April 28, 2005— American Society of Plumbing Engineers' Meeting. Contact [R. Paul Silvestre](#) Phone: 215-639-3600.



April 2005

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6 FPN— 2005	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14 DVGBC ASHRAE	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26 ASCET DVGBC	27 ASPEst	28 ASPE	29	30

More information on these events can be found at www.gbbpa.org.

NIST Rhode Island Nightclub Fire Investigation Team Calls for Improvements

PROVIDENCE, R.I.— The Commerce Department's National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) today called on the organizations that develop building and fire safety codes, standards and practices—and the state and local agencies that adopt them—to make specific changes to improve the fire safety of nightclubs as a result of the agency's investigation of the Feb. 20, 2003, fire at The Station nightclub in W. Warwick, R.I.

Recommendations for changes in nightclubs include requiring sprinklers, tighter restrictions of the use of flammable materials in finish products, and improved means of egress in emergencies. Other recommendations address emergency preparedness and response practices as well as a

call for more research to better understand the way people behave in emergency situations such as fires.

All 12 recommendations, contained within the draft report released today for public comment at a press briefing in Providence, are based on the findings of the NIST investigation into the fire that claimed 100 lives. To prevent additional deaths, injuries and property loss in the future, the recommendations call for:

- ?? requiring the installation of sprinkler systems in all new and existing nightclubs regardless of size;
- ?? tightening restrictions for nightclubs on the use of flammable materials as a finish product (such as a wall covering) and further limiting the use of

- pyrotechnics;
- ?? allowing for more rapid evacuation from nightclubs by changing egress requirements (for example, increasing the capacity of the main exit to accommodate, at a minimum, two-thirds of the maximum permitted number of occupants);
- ?? eliminating the practice of "grandfathering" older nightclubs from new or revised safety regulations;
- ?? requiring redundancy in passive and active fire protection systems for nightclubs;
- ?? considering and incorporating insight gained from similar past building failures when analyzing proposed changes to model codes for nightclubs;
- ?? increasing the number of

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NIST Rhode Island Nightclub Fire Investigation Team Calls for Improvements

(Continued from page 4)

portable fire extinguishers required in nightclubs;

?? implementing more effective fire inspection programs for nightclubs as guided by the model codes;

?? ensuring that career and volunteer fire departments meet standards for staffing, equipment, communications systems and major incident/mass casualty incident operating procedures;

?? conducting research to better understand human behavior in emergency situations and to predict the impact of building design on safe egress in emergencies;

?? conducting research to better understand fire spread and suppression; and

?? conducting research to develop and refine computer models and computer-aided decision tools with which communities can make cost-effective choices about code changes, fire safety technologies and emergency resource allocations.

The NIST report identifies three factors that directly contributed to the rapid spread of the fire, the resulting building failure and the large loss of life at The Station nightclub. These are: (1) the

hazardous mix of building contents; (2) an inadequate capability to suppress the fire early; and (3) the inability of exits to handle the egress of all of the occupants in the short time available with such a fast-growing fire.

Video taken inside the nightclub by WPRI-TV (Providence, R.I.) and reporting by the Providence Journal assisted the NIST investigation team.

NIST welcomes comments on the report, available at <http://www.nist.gov/ncst>, which are received by April 4, 2005. Comments may be sent via surface mail to The Station Investigation, NIST, 100 Bureau Dr., Stop 8660, Gaithersburg, Md. 20899-8660; via fax to (301) 975-4052; or via e-mail to ncst@nist.gov.

NIST's investigation of The Station nightclub fire, begun on Feb. 27, 2003, was conducted under the National Construction Safety Team (NCST) Act. The act gives NIST the responsibility for conducting fact-finding investigations of building-related failures that result in substantial loss of life. NIST has no regulatory authority under the NCST Act.

The primary objectives of the NIST Rhode Island nightclub fire investigation were to:

?? determine the conditions in the nightclub prior to the fire, such as the materials of construction and contents;

?? the location and conditions of doors, windows and ventilation; the installed fire protection systems; the number of occupants and their approximate locations;

?? reconstruct the fire ignition, fire spread and survivability within the building using computer models;

?? examine the impact on survivability of having an installed sprinkler system, all other conditions being the same; and

?? analyze the emergency evacuation and occupant responses to better understand the impediments to safe egress.

As an agency of the U.S. Department of Commerce's Technology Administration, NIST develops and promotes measurement, standards and technology to enhance productivity, facilitate trade and improve the quality of life.

By Michael E. Newman
mnewman@nist.gov



"The Draft Report of the Technical Investigation of The Station Nightclub Fire and Fact Sheet: Key Findings and Recommendations for Improvement; NIST Investigation of The Station Nightclub Fire are available at www.nist.gov."

Executive Board Meeting— February 8, 2005

(Continued from page 2)

the Engineer's Club this spring.

Membership: I. Colabrese reported that Joe Soccia and John Spitz Jr. applied. The Board voted to bring them up for vote before the General Membership.

Other Societies: I. Colabrese reported that 4 invitations were extended at the Future City Competition on 1/29/05. The SFPE, NFSA, Triad Fire Protection Engineering Corp.

and John & Sally Kampmeyer Award winners were invited to their choice of the March or May Meetings to present.

5. **ADJOURNMENT:**
6:15 PM.

The next Executive Board Meeting will be after the April Event at Montgomery County Fire Academy.

Respectfully submitted,
Irma Colabrese, Secretary

"The next Executive Board Meeting will be after the April Event at Montgomery County Fire Academy."

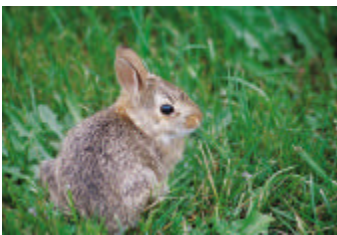


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**We're on the
Web.**

[www.dtcc.edu/
stanton/sfpe](http://www.dtcc.edu/stanton/sfpe)



Directions to Montgomery County Fire Academy

From Central Philadelphia:

Follow the Schuylkill Expressway (I-76) west to Exit 29 (Conshohocken). Stay in the center lane. At the traffic light, go straight and cross the Fayette Street Bridge. **At the next traffic light, turn left onto Elm Street. Elm Street becomes Conshohocken State Road as you pass Lukens Steel. After 1.8 miles from the traffic light, you will come to flashing lights at the crest of a hill. Turn right and follow the chain link fence to the entrance to the parking lot.**

From Philadelphia International Airport and points south: North on I-95 to Exit 7. Follow I-476 North (toward Plymouth Meeting) to Exit 6A. Follow signs for Route 23 Conshohocken. At the traffic light at the end of the off-ramp, turn right. Continue down road

merging into the center lane. At the traffic light, go straight and cross the Fayette Street Bridge. *Continue as directed from Central Philadelphia.*

From Allentown and points north:

Take the Northeast Extension of the PA Turnpike south to Exit 25A (Mid-County Interchange). Follow signs to I-476 South. Continue to Exit 6 (Valley Forge). On the off-ramp, follow signs to Route 23 Conshohocken. At the traffic light at the end of the off-ramp, turn right. Continue down road merging into the center lane. At the traffic light, go straight and cross the Fayette Street Bridge. *Continue as directed from Central Philadelphia.*

From New York and Northern New Jersey: Take the New Jersey Turnpike south to exit 6 (PA Turnpike). Take PA Turnpike west to exit 25A (Mid-County

Interchange). Follow signs to I-476 South. Continue to Exit 6 (Valley Forge). On the off-ramp, follow signs to Route 23 Conshohocken. At the traffic light at the end of the off-ramp, turn right. Continue down road merging into the center lane. At the traffic light, go straight and cross the Fayette Street Bridge. *Continue as directed from Central Philadelphia.*

From points west: On the PA Turnpike, Take exit 24 (King of Prussia). Follow signs for I-76 east (toward Philadelphia). Take exit 28B (Plymouth Meeting). Follow signs for Route 23 Conshohocken. At the traffic light at the end of the off-ramp, turn right. Continue down road merging into the center lane. At the traffic light, go straight and cross the Fayette Street Bridge. *Continue as directed from Central Philadelphia.*