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MONTHLY BUGLE

December 2024

Quick Links

IDHS Online Registration and Recertification Instructions

Educational Opportunities

IAC Title 655

IDHS Training Information

PSID Lookup

New PSID Request

WebForms

After-hours Certifications Help

Academy Training Staff

Academy Director
John Shafer

Field Operations Section Chief
Mike Parks

Planning Section Chief
Zach Mathews

Academy Program Manager (Districts 1 and 4)
Ryan Thoma

Academy Program Manager (Districts 2 and 3)
TR Hagerty

Academy Program Manager

Message from the Director

Greetings to all,

It is hard to believe we are in the final month of 2024. This time of year naturally prompts many of us to set new goals and reflect on our accomplishments over the past 12 months. I use this period to pause and express gratitude for the wonderful people I have worked with at the Indiana Fire and Public Safety Academy (Academy).

Staff Development Day

Just before Thanksgiving, the Academy hosted a two-day staff development event. We trained our personnel on upcoming policy changes, outlined our vision for 2025 and recognized some fantastic people who work year-round to make the Academy relevant to the lives of many in the Indiana fire service. We were privileged to have Chief John Buckman visit and speak on the meaning of leadership.

We created the Academy Director's Leadership Award in honor of Chief John Buckman. The first recipient of this award was Zach Mathews. State Fire Marshal Steve Jones gave a heartfelt speech about why Matthews was well deserving of the first John Buckman Leadership Award.



Zach Matthews, first recipient of the Academy Director's Leadership Award named it in honor of Chief John Buckman.

(Districts 5 and 7)
Loren Tewes

Academy Program Manager
(Districts 6 and 9)
Chuck Gunter

Academy Program Manager
(Districts 8 and 10)
James Warren

Academy Certification Staff

IFSAC Accreditation and Academy Information Officer
Robin Nicoson

Certification Supervisor
Nichelle Elliot

Program Coordinator
Regine Johnson

Clerical Assistants
Antoinette Hammack
Courtney James

If immediate help with fire certifications is needed after hours, please call your district's field program manager

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National Emergency Response Information System Launch

Fire departments and EMS providers need to be prepared for the upcoming launch of the National Emergency Response Information System (NERIS), which will replace the NFIRS system. The rollout begins this month and will continue into 2025. NERIS was built with a focus on compatibility to integrate easily with CAD systems, GIS programs and other dashboard-specific programs that fire and EMS departments rely heavily on to operate. NERIS will support state,

Here is the list of individuals who received awards for outstanding performance in 2024:

- Logistics Section Outstanding Performance Award: Courtney James
- Planning Section Outstanding Performance Award: Robin Nicoson
- Field Operations Outstanding Performance Award: Chris Crail
- Program Manager of the Year Award: James Warren
- District Coordinator of the Year Award: Matt Neher
- District 1 Instructor of the Year Award: Justin Bednar
- District 2 Instructor of the Year Award: Will Kornumph
- District 3 Instructor of the Year Award: Eric Kennedy
- District 4 Instructor of the Year Award: Ryan Hahan
- District 5 Instructor of the Year Award: Jim Miller
- District 6 Instructor of the Year Award: Jonathan Nicholson
- District 7 Instructor of the Year Award: James Shaw
- District 8 Instructor of the Year Award: Ryan Fipps
- District 9 Instructor of the Year Award: Mike Turner
- District 10 Instructor of the Year Award: Caleb Garman

Winter Fire School

In February 2024, we held our first Winter Fire School in Plainfield, Indiana. Over a three-day weekend, 15 classes were conducted. Despite snowy weather, more than 225 students from 125 fire departments gathered to hone their skills and learn best practices.

In 2025, we have gone all out with 43 classes, some of which will be offered more than once during the weekend to accommodate students interested in multiple topics.

This year's event will feature instructors from Arkansas, Arizona, Illinois, Michigan, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Wisconsin, and Indiana.

This year, keynote speaker will be astronaut Mike Mullane, who will speak about the "Normalization of Deviance" for the fire service on Saturday, Feb. 1, 2024. This event is free to attend.

While many states offer exceptional fire schools, Indiana is the only state to offer all classes at the Winter Fire School free of charge.

Join us Jan. 31 through Feb. 2, 2025, for an incredible weekend of education and camaraderie.

John Shafer
Indiana Fire and Public Safety Academy Director

local, territorial and tribal fire services by offering data and information critical in effective and safe emergency response and essential in determining long-term community risk reduction strategies.

Want to learn more? Use the links below.

- Basic NERIS information
- Beta testing process for NERIS rollout
- Subscribe to the USFA newsletter
- Follow USFA on social media
- Look for NERIS webinars
- Email the NERIS information desk
- Subscribe for updates from IDHS and the Indiana State Fire Marshal
- Embracing Change: The Transition to NERIS for Incident Reporting

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New Method to Request Academy Resources:

The Academy is implementing a new system for requesting training trailer props to improve efficiency and maintain the longevity of its resources. Previously, local agencies could request assets on a first-come, first-served basis through Acadis. However, this often leads to trailers and props moving across the state, which has accelerated wear and tear on the equipment.

To address this issue, the academy is introducing a more structured and equitable process for asset requests. The new system will no longer operate on a first-come, first-served basis, which has proven costly and time-consuming. Instead, requests will be grouped regionally each quarter, allowing the Logistics Section to conduct preventive



Local Training Support Grant Opportunity

The application period for the Local Training Support Grant closes **Dec. 31**.

This funding is specifically targeted at partnering fire departments that contribute to and support state-funded academy courses, Hub and Spoke Centers and fire department training facilities.

For detailed information, including eligibility criteria and a list of supported items, visit https://www.in.gov/dhs/training/academy-grants/. For questions, email IDHSFireAcademyGrants@dhs.in.go

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Host a National Fire Academy Class in 2025 or 2026

The Academy is seeking local host sites for future National Fire Academy (NFA) classes. Soon, the Academy will schedule classes for late 2025 and 2026. Local host duties include shuttling the NFA contract instructor to and from the airport and hotel, if necessary. The Academy also asks that the local host assist in marketing the class and guarantee at least 10 students from their area. The classroom must have good internet access and be large enough to hold 30 students comfortably.

Hosting is a great opportunity to receive top-notch training and market your department. For more information, contact Jim Campbell at jacampbell1@dhs.in.gov.

Lead Instructor, Lead Evaluator and Proctor Handbook

The Academy updated the "Lead Instructor, Lead Evaluator and Proctor Handbook." The most significant addition is detailed protocols for proctors, including a page that must be read verbatim to students before administering a test.

The handbook will no longer be attached as a document to each course, as there are more than 100 course templates in Acadis. This change avoids complications and reduces potential errors. The handbook will now be located on the Academy website.

Certification Coaching Process

Lead instructors, lead evaluators and proctors will notice a small but important change to the coaching process for all

maintenance and reduce unnecessary resource strain.

This new method ensures training trailer props are utilized effectively and fairly across the state. The Logistics Section will carefully evaluate all requests, considering regional demand within each quarter.

Departments wishing to request a training trailer prop will now do so through the academy's website, following the schedule below:

Request Schedule:

- Requests are due by Jan. 1, April 1, July 1 and Oct. 1.
- Requests can be submitted at any time, and departments are encouraged to plan well in advance, even for the following calendar year.
- The academy will approve all requests 30 days before the start of the next quarter.

To submit a request, please visit https://www.in.gov/dhs/training/fire-training/equipment-requests/#equipment-reservationscomplete and complete the Smartsheet request form. This form will guide you through the necessary information and ensure a smooth request process. Equipment reservation requests cannot be made through Acadis anymore.

Introduction to Energy Systems Course

The National Fire Academy released a new online, self-study course titled “Introduction to Energy Systems” The course code is Q0757. Many modern devices people use daily rely on some electrical source to power their operation. Many device manufacturers use batteries to allow mobility and function without connecting to the electrical power grid. In this course, you will learn to recognize energy storage system (ESS) concepts and certification courses. The Academy coach will contact these key individuals to verify they have read the handbook, understand the certification process and address any questions or concerns.

Chief Candace Ashby Battalion 1 Shift Bulletin



Mistakes Happen

We all make mistakes, and the fire service is no exception. Mistakes happen often on the fire ground. Mistakes can be intense or costly. But no matter the mistake, something positive can be pulled out of a negative situation. How do we become better from our mistakes?

Read more by clicking the link below.

Full Article



FD Spotlight: Harrison Township Fire Department (Corydon)

principles so you can analyze the hazards involved with ESS incidents.

After completing this course, you will be able to:

- Define an energy storage system
- Recognize hazards associated with ESS
- Associate chemical ESS hazards with Lithium-Ion-Battery Energy Storage Systems (LiBESS)
- Associate thermal ESS hazards with LiBESS
- Identify response considerations during LiBESS incidents
- Identify the post-incident operations following an ESS response

Register today



The Rensselaer Volunteer Fire Department was established in 1896, making it one of Indiana's oldest, continually operating volunteer fire departments. In the 1950s, the Rensselaer Fire Department combined with the Marion Township Fire Department to provide more efficient coverage for all residents. The City of Rensselaer and Marion Township Fire Departments' firefighting equipment is housed in their new fire station, along with the fire department museum and the new state-of-the-art training grounds sponsored by the Hub and Spoke program.



The Fire and Public Safety Academy is dedicated to providing outstanding customer service and delivering professional fire and public safety training, education and certification to Indiana’s first responders in support of the Indiana Department of Homeland Security’s mission of providing Hoosiers with a safe, secure and resilliant Indiana.

Contact the Indiana Fire and Public Safety Academy at

firecertifications@dhs.in.gov



Stay Connected with the Indiana Department of Homeland Security: