

## **Maine Fire Instructors & Rescue Educators MEFIRE November 2009 Updates to Instructors**

### **MFTE Director Update**

The nationwide advertising for a new Director for MFTE has shown some potential candidates. Interviews were conducted on Friday, the 20th. The 9 member interview panel did include three State Fire Instructors. We remain hopeful that a progressive and dynamic leader will be found for MFTE in the near future.

### **Fire Commission Update**

The Fire Commission, with lots of assistance from the Maine State Federation of Fighters, has launched a Length of Service Award Program (LOSAP) Campaign. You can find the information at: <http://www.maine.gov/dps/fmo/commission/LOSAP091.HTM> We expect to see this become very active in Maine after the holidays. We'll keep you posted of any updates.

The Fire Commission is also working towards increased involvement of all stakeholders with hopes of designing and better planning for a statewide all-hazards training facility. At the Nov meeting a draft board of directors was discussed and received preliminary approval. Aligning with the majority of training facilities in the country, an instructor is included now as part of Maine's All Hazards-Facility Board of Directors. It is a positive move that Maine is beginning to see the value of instructors as an important stakeholder in this process.

### **MFTE Advisory**

The December meeting of Advisory is fast approaching. Please forward any comments or discussion items to:

Steve Bunker [stephan.bunker@maine.gov](mailto:stephan.bunker@maine.gov) or  
Vicki Schmidt [troika@megalink.net](mailto:troika@megalink.net) (890-4590).

Issues brought to Steve and Vicki over the past few months include:

1. concerns with quality and procedures of FFI and II End Testing
2. regional training facilities - where to we stand?
3. makeup of Advisory and the need to replace inactive members and establish a Committee of committed members
4. the need for MFTE's "instructor in every station" goal to include options to assist with mentoring, additional resources, and program management training. MEFIRE is very interested in assisting with implementing solutions in this regard. We have talked to several instructors who are finding strategic planning and goal setting for their stations a bit intimidating. In addition, several have attempted FFI and II program only to find preparation and support for ongoing training was hard to plan and organize. These are skills we can all help new instructors learn. Helping to plan a program for this for Maine Instructors is a top priority for MEFIRE.

These issues will be brought to Advisory for their Dec meeting and a summary with more information is planned for the near future. Thanks to all the instructors who are providing feedback to us. Your continued comments, ideas, etc are much appreciated.

## Updates to the mainefireonline.org webpage

Links to the MA and CT Fire Instructor Groups were added  
<http://www.mainefireonline.org/groups.html>

A few more resources have been added to our EVOC page  
<http://www.mainefireonline.org/resources/evoc.html>

Our email list requests and web page statistics are showing major growth over 2008 numbers. We are receiving close to 500 hits a week, with over 100 of these "unique" hits. Viewers of our webpage on average view 3-4 other pages a visit. The top two non-search engine referring sites were MFTE and The Maine Fire Chiefs Association. In addition, several candidates for the MFTE Directors job mentioned information they had found at [mainefireonline.org](http://mainefireonline.org). It was rewarding to see many had "done their homework". If there is anything you'd like to see included on the webpage please let us know.

## Misc Updates

For those instructors with the ability to use electronic signatures, we have received notice that BLS will accept these electronic documents for FD and FF's training records. This is handy for emailing progress charts to FD's if your class spans more than one Dept. Electronic signatures are easy to create with today's technology. If you have any question on how to do this let us know and we'll post the process.

As of Nov 19th, Mike Laplante from BLS reported that the study on whether to include the EVOC Driver Training Proposal as a State requirement is still in the hands of the Adhoc Committee. We are on the BLS list for updates and will keep you informed of any progress.

The much anticipated new MFTE portal has ended up being a bit of a disappointment for most instructors. Greatest concerns expressed by instructors & Chiefs to date:

1. previously fill-able .xls spreadsheets were converted to static .pdf format (which now requires we hand fill every students name on every sheet and fill in progress check boxes one by one)
2. a logistics request form that appears in three different locations with three different names and in two different forms.
3. the loss of the electronic course request option for training officers and Chiefs.

***These are three major steps backwards.*** MEFIRE and other instructors supplied MFTE with a comprehensive list of suggested updates for the new website in March. This now appears to have not made its way to those designing the webpage. We have followed up with the SMCC webmaster and provided a list of critical corrections. SMCC has agreed that the new site and portal need to be much more user friendly. We have noted that both these sites are extremely valuable to our field instructors and need to be efficient. correct, kept up to date. SMCC and MFTE are working on immediate improvements and MEFIRE will continue to provide any feedback we receive. Please keep comments and information coming. If you would like to see the complete list of suggested improvements and comments we have received to date please let us know.

## **Curriculum /Training issues**

We continue to receive numerous concerns over the J&B Curriculum from instructors, Chiefs, and training officers. While we agree experienced instructors can and do "adapt and overcome" with the problems, many new instructors are having a much harder time, as do students and Fire Chiefs working with books they can't trust to be correct. In spite of the political issues regarding MFTE's history with curriculum this issue needs to be addressed. SMCC does have a continuous curriculum review policy and MEFIRE is active in identifying this and will be working towards assisting with a solution in 2010. Several county and regional training groups have recently purchased other curriculums and are in the process of evaluating them.

MFTE reported its curriculum review for identifying an updated Pumps curriculum. This has been discussed as an important need for over two years now and 2009 was supposed to be the year MFTE adopted a new program for this much demanded course. MFTE has been asked to provide the curriculum review decision matrix for Pumps and we hope to see it in the near future.

TtT's for J&B HazMat were conducted this fall. While there are still concerns with this curriculum and testing - the TtT's went very well all in all. The two regional VFIS TtT's for the most recent EVOC curriculum were also quite successful.

SFI's John Miner and Tim Hardy report a successful pump testing class which utilized MFTE's pump testing equipment. Seven instructors from the Farmington region participated in the class. The equipment will be staged at Farmington FD. Instructors and FD's wanting to know more about the equipment for the Farmington area should contact Lt Tim Hardy at Farmington FD, (207) 778-3235