



VSFA's

Green Mountain *E-Newsletter* Responder

A Quarterly Newsletter for those who give of themselves to protect others
Published by the Vermont State Firefighters' Association

"For and About Vermont Emergency Services"

January 2011

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North Country International Fire Training School Celebrates 40 Years

The North Country International Fire Training School announces its 40th anniversary of providing fire training to the North Country and beyond.

The school will be held on June 4th & 5th, 2011. For more information, visit their website at <http://www.ncifts.org/>

Executive Board Meeting Schedule

The executive board meetings for the upcoming year are listed below.

March 27, 2011 10:00 AM
June 5, 2011 10:00 AM

All meetings will be held in Pittsford at the Police Academy, which is the same location as in previous years. Lunch will be provided.

President's Message

In this New Year we have a new Governor and Commissioners to run this great State. As we move forward I hope our communications with Governor Shumlins' Administration will be as open as it was with Governor Douglas.

The Coalition Representatives (the coalition is made up of representatives of the VSFA, Paid Firefighters, Volunteer Chiefs, Career Chiefs) have been busy getting ready to swing into action as soon as the legislators are back in Montpelier. The Coalition will be hosting a get together in March (date to be announced later) for the House of Representatives and the Senate, to tell them who we are. This will be held in Capital House Cafeteria in the late afternoon.

The grant for Recruitment and Retention sponsored by Senator Sanders is now in the hands of the Federal Grant Committee for final approval. This money is to be used for cadet start-up programs within individual departments. The VSFA Cadet Academy also qualifies for the grant and will be applying for the funds to support the Cadet Academy. The week long Academy covers basic firefighting skills, how to wear and maintain PPE, numerous safety classes, and how to perform CPR. This goes along with learning the importance of honor and discipline, while at the same time making new friends.

I am always looking for ideas to better and keep this Association moving forward. If you have something to share, please talk to your VSFA County Representatives or feel free to contact me directly. This can be done by e-mail or a phone call. I also enjoy meeting and visiting with the members of VSFA to discuss issues that effect us as Firefighters within our communities.

Stay warm, be safe, and walk, do not run.

Tim

2011 VSFA Cadet Academy Accepting Applications

The 2011 VSFA Cadet Academy will be held July 10th through July 16th, 2011 at the Vermont Emergency Services Training Facility in Pittsford. The Cadet Summer Fire Academy is a week-long program for 14 to 17 year olds who are interested in the field of emergency services. This program is designed to offer a sample of the many aspects of fire-rescue services by both classroom, hands-on learning, and exciting field trips.

It is the mission of Fire Cadet Academy to develop the confidence and self reliance of its participants, to promote a sense of both team cooperation and individual responsibility, to teach and develop basic fire fighting and emergency service skills, and to help build in young people a strong sense of the need for community involvement and support.

Applications must be received by April 1, 2011. Space is limited, so it is recommended that you apply early. Applications and additional information can be obtained by visiting our web site at www.vtfirefighters.org or [following this link](#).

Upcoming Vermont Fire Academy Courses and Programs

Vermont Fire Academy Courses

Fire Instructor I Courses Starting in January

The Vermont Fire Academy has announced that it will be holding two Fire & Emergency Service Instructor Courses beginning in January. They will be held in Arlington and Pittsford. Start dates will be announced soon. Interested applicants should contact the Academy for additional information and start dates by calling 1-800-615-3473. This course is a prerequisite for Fire Officer I & II.

Hazardous Materials Operations - at Charlotte Fire Department

Weeknight Classroom: February 9 & 16, March 9, 16, & 23, 2011 at 6:00 p.m.

Weekend Practical: Saturday, March 26, 2011 at 8:00 a.m.

Registration Deadline: January 26, 2011

[Click here to obtain a General Admission Application.](#)

National Fire Academy Courses

Training Operations in Small Departments - March 19 & 20, 2011 at Essex Town Fire Department

This 2-day course is designed to provide students with some basic tools and skills to coordinate training in a small fire/EMS organization. A training function in a smaller department typically may include conducting training drills and coordinating training with a nearby larger city or State training function.

All NFA classes must have a minimum of 20 students and we have not reached that number yet for any of them, so they may be cancelled. Registration deadline: 45 days prior to class date. Register by submitting a National Fire Academy Admission Application to the Vermont Fire Academy. [Click here for a NFA Admission Application.](#)

Send completed applications to:

Vermont Fire Academy
672 Academy Road
Pittsford, VT 05763
FAX: 802-483-2464

VCOMM Update

Submitted by Chief J. Paul Duquette, Newport City Police, VCOMM Chair

I apologize if I have been remiss in supplying ongoing updates on the progress at VCOMM but it has been a whirlwind of activity this past year. We've been meeting with our Project Managers from Kimball Technology defining and refining our intended system. Then we've had numerous meetings with potential vendors to select who will do the project. We then had a ton of meetings with the Governor and his staff, the Legislature, our Congressional delegations, Vermont Telecommunications Authority, DI&I, VELCO, Vermont Electric Coop, the Border Patrol, Industry Canada, and other agencies and people too numerous to mention.

The bottom line is that we've progressed to the point of actually being ready to build our "Lifeline"

System. Unfortunately, there wasn't the opportunity to keep the full VCOMM Board abreast of every meeting and every step. I just don't have enough hours in the day to do that. Everyone would be spending their time reading my e-mails and probably putting me in their Spam file. So this e-mail will try to bring everyone up to speed to what the VCOMM Steering Committee has been up to in 2010. The following bullets are what has been achieved and/or is up and running:

- The Harris Corp. has been selected as our vendor. We've signed a contract for the Lifeline System build-out in the amount of \$13.8 million dollars. Homeland Security Grant funds will cover the cost of the project, along with some seed funding from the VTA and the Department of Public Safety.
 - This includes 29 mountaintops repeater sites, most having both UHF and VHF equipment placement to implement our National Calling channels(s) "Lifeline".
 - It also includes major upgrades of the eight (8) Public Safety Answering Points with new consoles and gateways for interoperability. The need for redundancy is also being addressed.
 - It includes an upgrade of the State microwave network from the current ATM format to the MPLS format. This will greatly enhance the capabilities and capacity of the microwave network.
 - Final Design Review is scheduled for 01/11/11 at the Doubletree Inn in South Burlington.
 - Equipment is being shipped to a warehouse in Williston for testing.
 - PSAP upgrades will occur throughout this winter.
 - Construction on mountaintops will begin in the spring of 2011.
 - The project is slated to be completed in approximately 20 months.
- Jacobs Communications and Alcatel-Lucent are subcontractors for Harris. These two companies have been busy do structural analysis of the towers at the finalized sites. Jacobs has been doing the geo-tests at the sites. Alcatel is conducting propagation studies to determine the probable coverage areas and planning the implementation of the new microwave ring. This is anticipated in February.
- With all large projects changes have occurred.
 - We've abandoned some sites because they offered very miniscule increases to the overall project. By dropping some of these sites it's allowing us to stay within budget of the Homeland Security funds we've been able to pool together.
 - We've had to abandon sites that were not allowed to be licensed by the FCC and Industry Canada because of harmful interference to Canada.

In addition to forging ahead on the "Lifeline" project we've been tackling other issues. These include:

- Programming first responder radios with the National Calling and National Tactical Channels. This was approx. \$300,000. Approx. 85% + or - have been done.
- Requesting and receiving an earmark grant from Sen. Sanders and COPS for \$506,000 to be used for equipment purchases.
- Developing a strategy and applying for funding to replace the 800 MHz system in Grand Isle county. No response or grant awards received yet on this project.
- Educating First Responders of the FCC Narrowbanding Mandate effective 01/01/13.
 - Planning and implementing narrowband strategies and starting the changeover to the use of narrowband frequencies.
- Meetings to grant emergency funds from Homeland Security grants for:
 - Replacing non-narrowbandable radios with radios capable of meeting this mandate.
 - Replacing non narrow band capable pagers.
 - Replacing outdated or broken equipment to continue day to day business (e.g. repeaters)
 - Note: These emergency requests exceed 1.5 million dollars.
- Meetings to grant emergency funds from the PSIC (Public Safety Interoperable Communications) grant for:
 - Radio & pager replacement as above.
 - Upgrades to state & local PSAPs to meet the FCC narrowband mandate of 2013.
 - Communication enhancements to agencies that have met all of their basic

- needs and are looking to migrate to P-25 capabilities.
 - Note: Total grants from this fund will exceed \$4 million dollars.
- Meeting with the VTA and VELCO to co-locate at sites beneficial to more than just one entity.

The next round of Homeland Security grants will probably address "dead spots" caused by switching to the narrowband frequencies as mandated by the FCC. This transition is starting and dead spots have already been identified. We will also continue to look at agency's emergency needs and will explore trying to replace outdated base radios as long as the proper licenses are in place. We will be working on overseeing the build-out of our "Lifeline" system and testing that system.

If anyone has questions don't hesitate to call me or Mike Manning. My contact info is below and Mike can be reached at 802-241-5095.

J. Paul Duquette, Chief Newport City Police, VCOMM Chair
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 (802) 334-6735 jduquett@dps.state.vt.us

Scenario-Based Executive Level Training

Class: S-BELT (Scenario-Based Executive Level Training)
Date: March 3-4, 2011
Time: 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM
Where: Vermont Police Academy, 317 Academy Road, Pittsford, VT 05763

What is this training about? This course is created to expand and sustain homeland security leadership across the country. Developed by the Western Community Policing Institute and the Virginia Center for Policing Innovation, the course is designed to be challenge and scenario-based, requiring active participation and problem-solving. Participants, as leaders of their communities, will learn about leadership theories and traits that will assist them in planning and preparing for a National or domestic all hazards catastrophic event. This course will use historical figures and a pandemic influenza case study to examine and discuss how leaders, at critical times, can do the right thing, at the right time, in the right way, and for the right reasons.

The course consists of topics including: Carrying Out the Homeland Security Mission: Defining and Understanding Leadership and Management Roles; Successfully Integrating and Synchronizing the Homeland Security Mission through Leadership: Situational Leadership; Homeland Security Executive leadership Skills: Primal Leadership and Emotional Intelligence (EI); Comprehensive Application of Homeland Security Strategies: Transformational Leadership; and, using case studies to assess leadership characteristics.

Who should attend? The target audiences for this program are executive leaders representing a broad spectrum of public and private organizations that have official responsibility in implementing a capabilities-based approach to preparedness during a time of a community crisis. This would include representatives from any of the following disciplines and any other executives who have direct involvement in emergency management operations:

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|------------------------------------|--|
| -- Law enforcement | -- Emergency medical services |
| -- Fire service | -- Communications |
| -- Public works & public utilities | -- Government administration |
| -- Public safety | -- Health care & Private sector executives |
| -- Education | -- Emergency Managers |

This **no-cost** training is provided by Western Oregon University and is supported by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

Local Contact: Scott Carpenter, VCJTC Homeland Security Training Coordinator. Phone: **802-483-6634** or email: scott.carpenter@state.vt.us. For registration questions, contact Ashley Jackson, Western Community Policing Institute. Phone: 503-751-4011 or email: jacksona@wou.edu.