



# SOUTH DAKOTA FIRECHIEF

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## SDFCA Officers:

### President:

Nick Swinhart

### Vice President:

Currently Vacant

### Secretary/Treasurer:

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### West River Rep:

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## State Burning Regulations

One of the things that keeps many of our departments busy are burning complaints and questions about what can legally be burned. As a reminder, state law references specific outdoor burning practices in ARSD 74:36:06:07. This administrative rule states that people may not burn waste oils, rubber, tires, or asphalt shingles. Burning of railroad ties or

anything treated with inorganic arsenicals, pentachlorophenol, or creosols is also prohibited. There are also lesser known state laws like 5-5-19, which prohibits burning on leased lands, that chiefs should acquaint themselves with. SDCL 34-35-10 gives you some teeth to cite people for misdemeanors if they start a fire without firebreaks or giving

due regard to weather conditions. All department officers should make sure they're familiar with the laws of the state, their counties, and their cities related to open burning. Federal Clean Air Act provisions may come in to play in certain situations as well. Contact the State Fire Marshal for questions you may have.

## Rapid City Opens New Station

The Rapid City Fire Department held a ribbon cutting ceremony on July 22, 2010 for the newly constructed Station 7.

The station serves north Rapid City with an Engine, Medic Unit, a Type 6 wildland engine and houses the City/County Command vehicle. The station was built in an area of the city that is seeing a tremendous amount

of commercial growth.

The new street the station is located on was also dedicated the same day and was named after retired Rapid City Fire Chief Jim Tish. Tish served as Chief from 1987-1992 and was instrumental in bringing EMS into the Rapid City Fire Department. Chief Tish's life was cut short after retiring due to a long

battle with heart problems.



## Business Meeting in Rapid City October 8

This is a final reminder that SDFCA will be holding a business meeting at the South Dakota Municipal League Conference being held in Rapid City. Our meeting will be held at 0945 at the Rapid City Ramkota on October 8 in the "Badlands" room. Among other topics, we'll be discussing our upcoming November conference as well as hopefully filling

our vacant vice president position.

If any of you can be there by October 7, remember that the Rapid City Fire Department will be hosting a residential sprinkler demonstration in the parking lot of the Ramkota. The demonstration will consist of a live burn in which they'll set fire to two separate mockup rooms

to show how effective sprinklers can be. The demonstration is slated to be held around 3:00 pm. Look for RCFD setting up in the parking lot of the Ramkota.



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## People on the move



John Niehaus (above left) was promoted to Assistant Chief of the Rapid City Fire Department on June 14 and will oversee the Training Division. John was previously serving as a Captain in the Operations Division. John has been with the department since 1991 and holds an MBA from Texas A & M.

Mike Maltaverne (above right) was promoted in April to the position of Fire Chief of the Rapid City Fire Department. Chief Maltaverne took over the top spot with the departure of Mark Rohlfing to Milwaukee. Mike was previously a Captain and Assistant Chief and started with the department in 1990. Mike earned a Bachelor's Degree in Public Safety Administration from Grand Canyon University.

## Annual Conference

Our annual conference, scheduled for Nov 12 and 13 in Chamberlain, is coming up! The conference flyer and registration form are available on our website. Retired Captain Larry Damrell of the Houston Fire Department is our keynote speaker. Remember that you need to reserve your rooms at the Cedar Shore Resort by October 12 to get the conference room rate!



## Getting Involved

*By Nick Swinhart, President, South Dakota Fire Chiefs Association*

The importance of being involved in the political processes that drive our profession is something I've learned well over the past 21 years. My first experience came when I was elected as the president of my IAFF Local. Due to that rewarding experience I decided to run for public office, serving as a city councilman in my hometown. It goes without saying that it was unusual to be advocating for my own union personnel on a Monday, only to find myself on Tuesday night advocating for the city on union issues in the next town over.

What I brought home from this experience and to my position as a fire chief is that we as the leaders of the South Dakota fire service need to stay involved in the political process if we ever hope to implement the changes that will keep our communities and our firefighters safe. Nothing drove this point home more than the recent passing of House Bill 1216. This ill-conceived bill puts the lives of our firefighters and citizens at risk. Introduced by Representatives Steele, Bolin, Elliott, Hamiel, Hoffman, Hunt, Kirkeby, Kopp, Noem, Olson (Betty), Russell, Schlekeway, Solum, Turbiville, Van Gerpen, Vanneman, and Verchio and Senators Abdallah, Gray, Novstrup (Al), and Rhoden, HB 1216 prohibits any South Dakota community from enacting residential fire sprinkler ordinances. Unfortunately the South Dakota Fire Chiefs Association was not invited to participate in hearings on this bill, and some of us weren't even aware of its existence until after it passed. When bills like this sneak under the radar that jeopardize our safety and mission (and that violate international building codes), we're clearly not staying involved as an organization like we should. As a reminder to new members, the SDFCA voted in 2009 to adopt the new residential fire sprinkler codes in their entirety.

As long as I am President of the SDFCA, our organization will endeavor to be an integral part of the fire service decision making processes that take place in Pierre and elsewhere. We will request to have active representation on any state committees or boards that have decision making abilities that affect the lives and safety of our members. We will insist that representatives from our organization have the chance to testify at legislative hearings that impact our profession. We are the leaders of the fire service in South Dakota and we represent the lives of every single member under our supervision. To do any less would be a terrible disservice to the people who have entrusted in us their well-being.

I look forward to seeing all of you in Rapid City on October 8 and for our annual conference in Chamberlain on November 12 and 13.

## SDFCA Member Spotlight



**Tom Kurtenbach** entered the world of public safety in 1981 as an EMT for his hometown ambulance service in Bridgewater, SD. He has been active in emergency services ever since. He was a member of the Pierre, SD Fire Department for 17 years having served as the fire department's paid superintendent. He spent most of the rest of his tenure in Pierre as a volunteer officer. Tom is active in emergency management, having been employed by the State of South Dakota's Emergency Management Office. He enjoys serving on local emergency management boards and committees. Tom earned his Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration from the University of South Dakota. He is currently the Yankton Fire Chief and is a former Vice President of the SDFCA.

Former longtime Renner Fire Chief **Roger Christensen** is retiring after 51 years of dedicated service. Roger served as the chief of Renner for 29 years and is a lifetime member of the Minnehaha County Fire Chiefs. He was the incident commander of the 1992 William Pipeline Spill, which Renner Fire Department manned for two weeks. A retirement party will be held for Roger on October 24 at the Renner Fire Department, 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm. Congratulations, Roger!