INSTRUCTOR NOTES

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The program is designed to provide a technically accurate and useful resource document for those who may be implementing a residential sprinkler program. We also believe that this material will give individuals from multiple disciplines (water purveyors, code enforcement, industry and others) an excellent opportunity to work together in planning and training activities which will enable any such programs to be handled, expediently, and efficiently.

ABOUT THE GUIDEBOOK

USING THE BOOK

This book may be used on an individualized self-study basis or as part of a formal training program. The book is supported by a companion Instructor Guide (this document) which provides guidance to the instructor on delivery of the material in a classroom in a 2-3 hour format.

There are several features of this program you should be familiar with:

On-Line training program: An on-line version of this training program is available through the National Association of State Fire Marshal's (NASFM) Training website at www.nasfm-training.org.

Virtual help desk: You can also access additional helpful information through an on-line help desk. This resource is also available through the NASFM website at www.firemarshals.org (check the links section if it is not on the homepage of this site).

USING THE PROGRAM

Be sure to review the entire program. Pay particularly close attention to the "Addressing Policy Issues" and "Implementation Support Residential Sprinklers: Why now?" sections. Some of these points raised in these sections will help you find more information, as will the appendices. In addition to the instructor information, watch the web site for updated data that might have changed since publication.

Each section is formatted to assist you with the information necessary to teach the program. There are the instructor notes contained with the power point slides. Review these yourself and then with the students (through the teaching process) to help them understand. Be sure you prepare, and review the PowerPoint slides before you begin.

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NOTES TO THE INSTRUCTOR

In order to teach any subject, there are four items a good instructor needs to have in place. The four elements are:

- Preparation
- Presentation
- Application
- Evaluation

The most important of these is preparation. You might think that presentation is the most important, but simply put, anyone who is well prepared can teach.

Unfortunately as we all know poorly prepared teachers are usually a disaster.

Preparation is the key to your success. Prior to teaching the program think of a few things you will have to get in order.

Who – Who is the target audience? Don't try and teach detailed firefighting to a sprinkler installer or intricate types of installation to firefighters. It just doesn't work. Remember the old axiom – Know your audience!

Adults learn differently than children. They have several unique needs.

1. **Learning should be experienced based with goals adults can relate to**. Adults have lots of "Life experience" and they learn more when they can relate that experience to the goals and objectives of the material being taught. Encourage sharing experiences and introduce some of your own.
2. **Adults enjoy actively participating in class**. Encourage participants to search for methods and information in the book that will help understand the objectives. Involvement is critical.
3. **Adults require feedback**. Adults want to know how they are doing reaching their goal. It is your job to encourage feedback. Tell them how they are doing. Congratulate a good answer. Highlight and positively acknowledge some successful participation.
4. **Above all, always remember Adults learn at different speeds**. Many of your students have limited education. The class make up might be as diverse as a college graduate to a high school drop out. Remember their learning speeds differ, but not their desire to learn! Great instructors size up their audience and adjust the delivery of the material to the audience.

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What – What topics are you going to teach today? What do the students want? You have to establish goals in order to teach. Otherwise there is no way of determine whether your lesson has succeeded.

Once you have established the goals remember the objectives (how you plan to reach your goals). They are there to help the instructor focus on what is important.

In addition, remember there are several types of objectives that address different learning domains. Domains are areas of study: Knowledge – Skills – Attitude. Identifying the domains will help you deliver the objectives easier. Since knowledge precedes skills and good attitudes are always important emphasize them whenever possible.

Using objectives may be new to many instructors. But objectives are the goals of the lesson plan. Without an objective, lessons ramble without a clear-cut conclusion

Why – Why teach this at all? Simple, you want students to learn. Have you ever contemplated what learning is:

> **"Learning is an observable change of behavior that occurs as a result of acquiring new information or skills and putting it to use through practice."**

This entire program is designed to change attitudes and behaviors. Because residential sprinkler requirements are new to most jurisdictions, there is a lack of guidance about their implementation.

This guide is intended to provide a roadmap for jurisdictions that have adopted residential sprinkler requirements to help implement the regulation in a logical, business-like manner.

This document is based upon the successes (and failures) of other jurisdictions that have completed the adoption and initial implementation in the last few years. Realizing that every jurisdiction is different will necessitate the instructor be ready to deal with a variety of situations.

A note of caution, classroom training may not be enough; there should be practice, preplanning, and visits to the local homes where an installation has taken place, to reinforce the material in the body. Remember this as a measure of success:

"If the student has failed to learn – You have failed to teach!"

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When – When isn't about the scheduled time of the class. It has to do with whether or not the students are ready to learn. Are they motivated?

Many times students are eager to learn, other times they are exhausted, hungry, worn out from a fire or run. It is at these times they are being blocked from the learning process. Analyze the conditions and be sure they are ready to learn. Is the room comfortable, lighted, free from noise and other distraction?

Where – Always examine the classroom before you teach. If this is a computer presentation, is all the necessary equipment in place? Overhead projectors use bulbs and bulbs burn out. Got a spare? Are there enough comfortable chair? If not, remember an extra break never hurts you on the students' evaluation form! Good learning takes place in friendly environs, not hostile ones.

How – Presenting this program will probably use several methods? The standard methods are:

- Lecture
- Illustration
- Demonstration
- Discussion
- Conference

LECTURE TIPS

A lecture, if presented well, is an effective way of introducing your group to facts or information. But many instructors may feel awkward with lectures. Lecturing, even to your own people, feels like public speaking. And making speeches is something that makes most human beings a bit nervous.

The following tips can help you become a more confident and effective lecturer. Lecture is both the easiest and the hardest instructional method to use. It is easiest because it requires no special equipment - just a well prepared instructor and a class. It is also the hardest presentation method and also hardest, because it is difficult to keep the students' attention and be sure they understand you.

The following suggestions can help make your lectures effective:

- Encourage students to ask questions.
- Keep class members involved in the information you are presenting. Use appropriate examples and illustrations.
- Enliven dry material with relevant anecdotes or examples.

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- Pause after particularly difficult material for questions and reactions.
- Be sure to provide definitive transitions when you change subjects. When subject matter blends together too much, students can get lost. Break lecture with questions to stimulate thinking. Some suggested questions have been included in this Facilitator's Guide.
- Use a flipchart, dry erase board or chalkboard to record both participant input and your own observations. Displaying views in this way creates a database against which you and the class can analyze concepts.
- Let the level of interest and skill demonstrated by the group dictate your sense of timing and the speed with which you proceed through lectures, guided class discussions, and student activities.
- Know what your students already know. You will bore them "teaching" things already known, so take them deeper into the knowledge structure.
- Relate your information to your student, such as their need to improve performance.
- Do not lecture for long periods of time. Interrupt your lecture with short discussions, question periods, demonstrations, etc. Most people are action oriented. Thus too much listening will make them restless and bored.
- If you are using technology items (projectors, computers, smart boards) make certain the work before you need to use them, and make sure you are not only familiar with their operation, but your presentation materials work on and with them.

Illustration Tips

Teaching by Illustration sounds easy; after all, you have visual aids to depend on. It seems easy but it's not. Illustration depends as much on planning and the talent of the instructor as any other method. Maybe more. It's easy to misuse aids, leaving the lesson and the class more confused than before.

The following tips will help you use illustration method effectively:

- Illustration is best when aids are used to show detail or processes too small or too hidden to be shown in normal demonstration. A good example is a cut away view of a sprinkler head, or even a field tour of a residence where a system is installed.
- Be sure your aids are clear uncluttered and show important detail clearly.
- Aids should be large enough to be seen from a distance. Nothing is more confusing than a chart whose fine print is almost invisible, whose details are lost at a distance of three feet.

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- Aids should be clearly visible to all members in the class. This will probably not be a problem if you are dealing with only four people; it will be a concern if you are conducting a training session with ten or more.
- Show only one visual aid at a time. Charts sitting around the room will only be distracting. Students will be busy trying to figure out a chart while you are still trying to get their attention on another part of the lesson.
- Show a process step-by-step, chart by chart.
- As in conducting a demonstration, explain once, then let one of your students explain the process using the same aids, models or charts.

Guided Class Discussion

A good discussion is more than just an aimless conversation about a topic. In a good discussion class members can learn the facts, principles or techniques you have determined they need to understand the material. Adults learn through sharing with one another. The following tips will help you improve the educational quality of training discussions.

- Define the objective of the discussion clearly right from the start. Make the topic clear to the group. Let the group know how you plan to achieve the objective by providing an overview of where you are headed. Ask questions to start the presentation.
- Keep the discussion centered on the topic. When someone becomes involved telling unrelated information, you can bring the discussion back on track by saying "That's a good point, but what we're concerned with today is . . . . . ." Or, "True. But today we're discussing system construction, not emergency response." Tactfully credit the student with sharing interesting information, but make it clear to all that time needs to be spent on the topic at hand.
- Encourage alternative answers from other class members. In a discussion, no one person is the "expert". When one person offers a suggestion, encourage further thinking. You might ask the group if they have another way of handling the situation?
- Encourage participation from everyone. When one person seems to be doing all the talking, involve another. "Tom has a good point but, Pat, what do you think?" When an agreement is reached, summarize and list the key points.

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- Discussions can range from the carefully controlled type (in which you provide strong leadership and correct answers) to the freewheeling type (in which you promote interaction among students). The following tips should be useful:
  - The type of discussion you conduct should be determined by the objective of that session.
  - If there are definite right answers, you should provide maximum guidance and feedback.
  - When the goal is to gather a variety of solutions to a problem or to promote debate on an issue, avoid suffocating discussion with heavy-handed intervention.
  - People may relax in a discussion to the point that they are not really listening but are, in effect, waiting for class to continue. Combat this by asking one person to respond to what another has said, or by recording key comments on the chalkboard.
  - If the discussion wanders from the topic bring it back firmly with a comment or question.

Student Activities

Before beginning an activity, review the procedure. During the exercise or activity move among the groups, giving guidance as needed. If you see one student dominating a group, try to involve the others by asking direct questions.

Encourage students to share information and insights from their own experiences.

Attempt to compose groups of individuals with differences in years of experience, geographic locations, and other conditions which will contribute to livelier discussions and more diverse points of view.

Above all - Be Patient and Enjoy Teaching

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