

## INSTRUCTOR GUIDE

TOPIC: REINVENTING FIRE PREVENTION

LEVEL OF INSTRUCTION:

TIME REQUIRED: TWO HOURS

MATERIALS: APPROPRIATE AUDIO-VISUAL MATERIALS

REFERENCES: ESSENTIALS OF FIRE FIGHTING, FOURTH EDITION, IFSTA

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PREPARATION:

MOTIVATION: The first line of protecting firefighters is preventing the fire from occurring. This can be accomplished, in part, from an aggressive fire prevention and public fire safety education program that involves everyone in the department.

OBJECTIVE (SPO):

The firefighter will demonstrate a general knowledge of fire prevention and public fire safety education as it relates to the operational firefighter.

OVERVIEW:

### REINVENTING FIRE PREVENTION

- \* Why Reinvent
- \* Benefits
- \* Home Fire Safety Inspections

## REINVENTING FIRE PREVENTION

- SPO: The firefighter will demonstrate a general knowledge of fire prevention and public fire safety education as it relates to the operational firefighter.
- EO 1-1 Identify some of the reasons for reinventing fire prevention in the operational fire service.
- EO 1-2 Identify the benefits of a public fire safety education program as an effective community relations tool.
- EO 1-3 Identify the elements of a home fire safety inspection program.

## I. WHY REINVENT (EO 1-1)

### A. Reduce the loss of life and property due to fire

1. Reduce the loss of life of individuals over the age of 65
2. Reduce the loss of life of individuals under the age of 14
3. Reduce the loss of life of the poor and disadvantaged

### B. Reduce firefighter death and injuries - reducing the incidents of fires can reduce the opportunity for a fireground death or injury

### C. Reduce fire insurance premiums for property owners

### D. Reduce the economic loss

1. A fire may cause an employer to close temporarily or permanently
2. A fire may put employees temporarily or permanently out of work
3. Businesses that depend on the damaged business will suffer
4. Revenue (taxes) for governmental operations will be reduced

### E. Improve public relations

1. Fire department is more visible in the community in a non-emergency environment
2. Opportunity for closer contact with the public

### F. Be pro-active in preventing fires

1. Make fire prevention a year-round activity rather than one week out of the year
2. Show the seriousness of the department in preventing fires
3. Get everyone in the department involved and not just the fire prevention personnel
4. Get out of the stations and into the public areas

### G. Reduce fire department operating expenses

1. Reducing fire alarm responses reduces fuel costs
2. Potential for less wear-and-tear on the apparatus thereby reducing maintenance and repair costs
3. Apparatus may last longer thereby improving the return on capital investment

### H. Improve public safety

1. Reducing emergency responses reduces the potential for a vehicular accident
2. Smaller fires may result in a downgrading from emergency responses to non-emergency responses
3. Alarms may be handled with fewer apparatus responding

I. Improve operational personnel knowledge

1. Operational personnel may not be well versed on fire prevention topics
2. Operational personnel may be unaccustomed to giving presentation to the public
3. Operational personnel may not be able to relate to the various age and cultural groups in their response district
4. Operational personnel may not be known in the community
5. Provides additional personnel to promote fire prevention

II. BENEFITS (EO 1-2)

A. Opportunity to promote new initiatives

1. Educate the public on the benefits and needs for residential fire sprinklers
2. Stress the importance of preventing fires
3. Educate the public on the value of fire codes and the importance of strict enforcement
4. Educate the public on value of certain building codes in reducing the potential or severity of a fire
5. Promote the value of home fire safety inspections

B. Improve governmental relations

1. Be more visible in the community which result in greater support of the fire department when there is a need for increased financial support
2. Improve elected officials knowledge of the fire department and the non-emergency work that takes place
3. Demonstrate increased productivity

C. Focused programs

1. Conduct a seasonal or year-round program to focus on specific fire safety issues
2. Target presentations to specific age groups such as the young, the elderly, or college students
3. Target presentations to the poor and clustered minority groups
4. Conduct a fire prevention queen contest to involve others in promoting fire prevention (suggested questions to evaluate candidates included in Appendix A)

5. Consider using people in specific age groups to promote fire prevention to groups of people of similar ages
6. Develop a fire prevention poster program that involves schools at all levels
7. Encourage school audio-visual programs to fire prevention programs focused on specific age groups and present those programs
8. Deliver fire prevention presentations on specific topics
  - a. Stop, drop, and roll
  - b. Escaping fire
  - c. Sounding the alarm
  - d. Fire station tours
  - e. Smoke detectors
  - f. Cooking fire safety
  - g. Fire safety for babysitters
  - h. Fire safety for the elderly
  - i. Camping fire safety
  - j. Autumn fire safety – leaves, brush
  - k. Fire safety in mountainous areas
  - l. Christmas fire safety
  - m. Fire safety for children
  - n. Residential fire sprinklers
  - o. Storage fire safety
  - p. Fire safety for the poor

### III. HOME FIRE SAFETY INSPECTIONS (EO 1-3)

#### A. Purpose

1. Identify safety hazards (this is not a fire code inspection)
2. Prevent injury and loss of life
3. Prevent or reduce damage from fire
4. Educate the public

#### B. Equipment needed

1. Flashlight
2. Clipboard
3. Inspection form (may be available from local insurance company)
4. Education materials such as exit drills in the home, smoke detector placement and maintenance, and the benefits of residential fire sprinklers

#### C. Preliminary activities

1. Conduct the inspection in teams of two or three
2. Look professional
3. Wear identification

4. Introduce yourself
5. Ask permission before touching or moving anything or entering a closed area
6. Have the homeowner accompany you at all times since you are a guest in the home
7. Stay together as a group

D. Begin the inspection on the exterior

1. Location and visibility of house numbers
2. Condition of foliage and proximity to structure in wildland areas
3. Egress around windows and doors
4. Obstacles to exiting such as bars on windows

E. Basement check

1. Flammable and combustible material storage
2. Storage of flammable and combustible materials in proximity to the electric panel, furnace, and hot water heater
3. Ability to exit to the exterior

F. Kitchen

1. Combustibles
2. Overloaded circuits
3. Placement of items around stove
4. Pull-down hazards
5. Grease buildup on stove, oven, or vent
6. Condition of hood and filter

G. Garage

1. Flammable and combustible storage
2. Fireplace or wood stove ash disposal
3. Improper tool storage

H. All areas

1. Use of extension cords, multi-plug adapters, or power strips
2. General housekeeping
3. Overloaded circuits
4. Inadequate size breakers or fuses
5. Two methods of escape
6. Unsecured medicines, poisons, or firearms
7. Obstructed exits or halls

8. Child safety hazards such as outlet plugs, cabinet locks, and unlocked heating devices
9. Trip or fall hazards
10. Location and operation of smoke detectors
11. Home fire escape plan

I. Document the inspection

1. Identify safety concerns
2. Provide recommendations for corrective action
3. Provide a copy of the inspection form to the homeowner and retain copy for the department files
4. Discuss smoke detectors, home fire escape plans, and residential fire sprinklers with the homeowner if there is an opportunity

REVIEW:

REINVENTING FIRE PREVENTION

- \* Why Reinvent
- \* Benefits
- \* Home Fire Safety Inspections

REMOTIVATION: While fire prevention and code enforcement may be the primary responsibility of the fire prevention organization in a department, it is the responsibility of everyone in the department. While fire prevention may not be as glamorous as firefighting it is more rewarding when you do not have to look at someone who has loss their property or even worse the life of a loved one.

ASSIGNMENT:

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EVALUATION:

## Appendix A

### SUGGESTED FIRE PREVENTION QUEEN CONTEST QUESTIONS

1. How do overloaded electrical circuits, outlets, or extension cords cause fires?
2. How does malfunctioning, damaged, or frayed electrical equipment or wiring cause fires?
3. How does the improper storage of materials around electrical sources cause fires?
4. How does smoking products (cigarettes, cigars, pipes) cause fires?
5. How do matches and lighters cause fires, especially in the hands of children?
6. How does smoking while tired or intoxicated cause fires?
7. How does unattended cooking cause a fire?
8. What are some of the fire hazards associated with cooking?
9. What are some of the burn hazards associated with cooking?
10. What are some of the maintenance requirements associated with cooking equipment?
11. What are some of the hazards associated with improper storage around heating equipment?
12. What are some of the maintenance requirements associated with heating equipment?
13. What are some of the fire hazards associated with wood burning heating equipment?
14. What are the purposes of a home fire safety inspection program?
15. What equipment should you take with you to conduct a home fire safety inspection?
16. What are some of the fire hazards that you might find on the outside of a home?
17. What are some of the fire hazards that you might find in the basement of a home?
18. What are some of the fire hazards that you might find in the kitchen of a home?
19. What are some of the fire hazards that you might find in the garage of a home?

20. What are some general fire hazards that you might find in any place in a home?
21. What are some of the items that you might include in a cooking fire safety presentation?
22. What are some of the items that you might include in a fire safety program for baby sitters?
23. What are some of the items that you might include in a fire safety program for the elderly?
24. What are some of the items that you might include in a camping fire safety presentation?
25. What are some of the items that you might include in an autumn fire safety presentation?
26. What are some of the items that you might include in a fire safety program for maintenance areas?
27. What are some of the items that you might include in a Christmas fire safety presentation?
28. What are some of the items that you might include in a fire safety program for elementary school students?
29. What are some of the items that you might include in a fire safety program for kindergarten students?
30. What are some of the items that you might include in a fire safety program for middle school students?
31. What are some of the items that you might include in a fire safety program for high school students?
32. What are some of the items that you might include in a fire safety program for college students?
33. What are some of the items that you might include in a presentation on residential fire sprinklers?
34. What are some of the items that you might include in a presentation on storage fire safety?

35. What are some of the items that you might include in a fire safety presentation for the poor or disadvantaged?
36. What are some of the items that you might include in a fire safety presentation to citizens whose language is other than English?