

Principal's Post

GREETINGS FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Welcome to the first edition of the new Ontario Fire College "Principal's Post"! The Post is designed to be a regular communication with our clients and stakeholders, as a way to share information about new programs, features, and other newsworthy happenings at the College. This is a collaborative effort by our faculty and staff, covering a range of topics from academic programs, student resources, campus/facility features and services, and more. We look forward to your feedback!

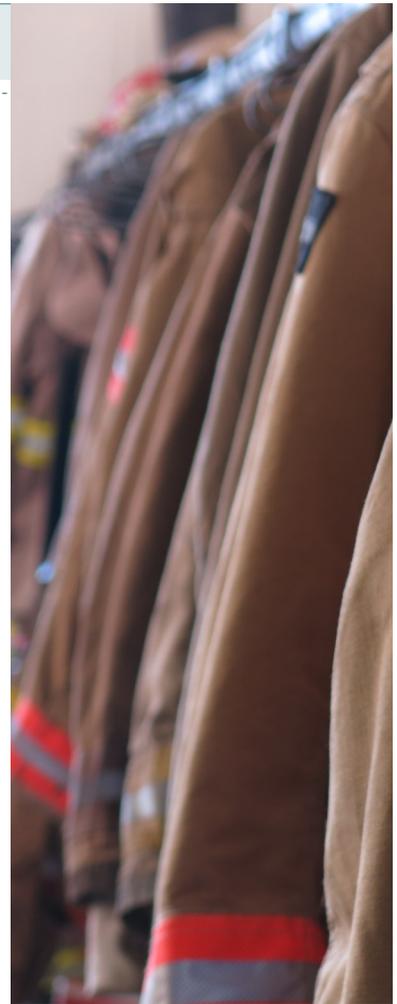
It has been a tremendous honour for me to have the opportunity to serve as Acting Principal of the Ontario Fire College (OFC) since July 2015. During this time, I have had many conversations with Ontario Fire Service leaders, faculty, and staff about what constitutes a "high quality educational experience" at the OFC. With that in mind, we have taken a number of important steps over the past several months toward continuously improving our service, modernizing learning spaces, and enhancing the student experience:

Creation of Collaborative Learning Spaces – Modern learning techniques involve group work, discussion/debate, and discovery. By repurposing some of our existing spaces, we are creating several "collaboration stations" around the campus, complete with furniture and technology, that promote and support group collaboration.

E-Evaluation – In order to receive timely course feedback from students, the OFC has acquired Class Climate®. This system will provide electronic course evaluations that can be completed in the classroom or electronically on handheld devices. This enables feedback and results to be promptly assessed for continuous quality improvement, as well as trend analysis by course, instructor, and location over time. This allows the OFC to assess how we are doing and to make course adjustments promptly for subsequent offerings.

Faculty Refresh – In addition to robust course content, instructional technique and class rapport are also critical factors in the success of any course. We strive to engage the most professional instructional staff, with both academic knowledge and practical experience. Teaching ability, mastery of modern tools, student engagement, and creating a respectful and inclusive learning space are all imperative attributes of our faculty. For this reason, the OFC is facilitating professional development opportunities to hone these skills amongst our faculty, and are seeking out additional adjunct instructors who bring expertise in modern teaching methods as well as subject matter knowledge and experience, to diversify and compliment our existing team.

(Continued on page 2)



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Introducing Online Course Evaluations..... 2
- New to the Resource Centre.... 2
- UAVs at the OFC 3
- Level I Recruit Course Pilot 3
- Fire Ground Rentals..... 4
- Regional Training Centres 4
- Fire Ground Rentals..... 4
- Accessing Pre-Class Material .. 4
- Academic Unit at a Glance 5
- Training Corner 6

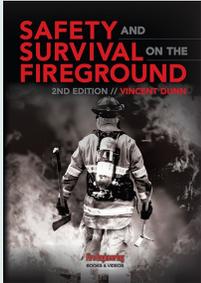
SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- Dates are available for OFC fire grounds rentals
- Lambton College has joined the OFC as the College's first post-secondary RTC
- UAV Symposium and Large Animal Rescue course coming soon to the OFC

NEW TO THE RESOURCE CENTRE

Safety and Survival on the Fireground, 2nd Edition

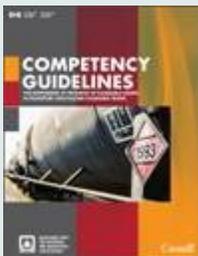
By Vincent Dunn



An updated 2nd edition, this book outlines how to identify and survive hazards on the fireground; this newest version addresses risk intensity and risk frequency at the fireground. Using updated statistics, graphs, and charts the 15 most dangerous tactics and the 13 most recurring fire and explosion environmental dangers are chronicled, ranked by degree of danger and frequency of occurrence.

Competency Guidelines: For Responders to Incidents of Flammable Liquids in Transport, High-Hazard Flammable Trains

Published by Transport Canada



In development with the NFPA, these Guidelines are meant to help enhance first responder safety during rail incidents involving flammable liquids. Although the focus is flammable liquids transported by rail, there is good information that can be used for transportation incidents involving flammable liquids in general.

GREETINGS FROM THE PRINCIPAL

(Continued from page 1)

Expansion of Regional Training Centres (RTCs) – Given that our goal is to train Fire Service personnel across the province, we are continuing to assess and expand our RTCs' course offerings to improve accessibility. We are currently using a geographic information system (GIS) to compile our fire department profile information, OFC records, and other sources of information to project where the highest demand exists for specific courses. This greatly assists us in projecting the number of course offerings and locations going forward at both our main campus and RTCs.

“Niche” RTCs – We understand that there are unique fire protection needs in various areas of the province, as well as unique training facilities, props, and expertise. For that reason, we have forged unique partnerships to provide timely, specialized training. For example, we have partnered with Nova Scotia Firefighters School and Lambton College to offer Industrial Firefighting NFPA 1081, starting in Sarnia, one of the most heavily industrialized communities in Ontario. Rather than initiating a long process to secure the IFSAC/ProBoard accreditation for a niche market, we have opted to work with our colleagues in Nova Scotia to deliver this program, and the OFC in turn will be providing Fire Officer III and IV to Nova Scotia later this year. We are also currently working with our colleagues in Manitoba to identify exchange opportunities with programs not currently offered, but in demand, in Ontario.

Adapting Based on Need – We are pleased to be piloting a new “recruit-style” program, described later in this Edition. Andrew Blair, one of our long-standing adjunct instructors and now a full-time faculty member with the OFC, has designed a pilot format for Firefighter I (NFPA 1001) to enable volunteer firefighters to complete this course on a schedule more compatible with their regular work schedules.

OFSS-NFPA Transition – We are continuing to work with Academic Standards & Evaluation to offer our assistance in addressing issues related to testing and practical evaluation for NFPA courses.

Our improvement efforts are ongoing, just as they are in the Fire Service. We rely on timely and respectful feedback from our students, alumni, and fire department leaders, as well as best practice research from academia and the broader Fire Service to guide our improvement initiatives.

Thank you for your patience as we continue the journey toward higher achievement in both service delivery and academic excellence.

Carol-Lynn Chambers, Acting Principal

INTRODUCING ONLINE COURSE EVALUATIONS

Over the next few months, course evaluations at the OFC will be changing from paper to online student questionnaires. Providing students with the opportunity to assess courses and teaching electronically, this new structure is similar to evaluations at other academic institutions such as the Correctional Services College, internally, and major universities and colleges across Ontario.

Students are critical partners in the teaching and learning experience at the OFC, and feedback obtained via these questionnaires will be used to improve courses; enhance the overall learning experience; recognize excellence in teaching; help students in future course selection; and inform program development. It will also be one of several sources of information used as part of the ongoing professional development of our faculty.

Using the platform Class Climate®, online questionnaires will allow us to obtain higher quality data as it allows for customized questions. They are more environmentally sustainable, and unlike paper questionnaires, offer students the opportunity to provide feedback when they



Aerial view of campus from the OFC's UAV

UNMANNED AIR VEHICLES AT THE OFC

With the public safety sector's exploding use of Unmanned Air Vehicle (UAV) Systems, commonly known as drones, many municipal Fire Services have been exploring the benefits of having UAV technology at fire incidents.

However, it is important to be familiarized with UAV regulations and standards from Transport Canada, the regulating authority in the matter. Are you using a UAV for work or research? Are you required to be licenced under the Special Flight Operations Certificate (SFOC) or do you qualify for an exemption? These are only a few of the important questions to consider when discerning how existing legislation will affect your department's use of a UAV.

The OFC has recently acquired a UAV for training research in order to study the technology and its potential use at a fire scene. In addition, the OFC is obtaining two more units for flight training purposes. OFC faculty member, Christopher Pape, is presently attending training for his SFOC; his knowledge and expertise in the subject area will provide the OFC with future opportunities to incorporate this technology into our courses.

In recent months, the OFC has already begun reaping the major advantages of having a UAV. The unit has been used in a few OF-

MEM fire investigations to assist fire investigators in their scene assessment. It has also functioned as a training aid to enhance learning during practical exercises at the College. The unique perspective it provides offers our students heightened situational awareness as they work to develop new skills.



Practical exercise captured by the OFC

To support the Ontario Fire Services' growing interest in the use of UAVs, the OFC is organizing a mid-summer UAV symposium this year. We plan to bring in experts from different fields in an effort to promote a community of learning around the use of UAVs at fire scenes.

Stay tuned for more information about the Ontario Fire College UAV and Fire Protection Services symposium.

LEVEL I RECRUIT COURSE PILOT

The OFC is currently piloting a NFPA 1001 Firefighter Level 1 Recruit course.

This new course provides an alternative delivery to the current three part NFPA 1001 program and will benefit those Departments who have a need to train their new firefighters to be truck-ready in a more efficient time frame.

The program utilizes a mix of online learning, classroom theory, and skills performance training. With this format, students benefit from a collegial learning environment that is enhanced by consistent, quality instruction.



Classroom training during first Recruit course offering

The pilot of this "recruit-style" program began the second week of April at the OFC Gravenhurst campus. Part one of the course involves five days of theoretical coursework in a classroom setting. The second part of the program will run June 11-19th and involves nine days of practical training and skill development on the OFC fire grounds.

This pilot program provides a platform for the OFC to test the logistics and feasibility of offering a course of this nature. If successful, additional course offerings will be included in the 2017-2018 course calendar released in the fall.



FIRE GROUND RENTALS

With spring fast approaching we are now able to offer dates for day, weekend, and evening rentals of the fire grounds at the OFC, to Fire Departments that wish to provide live fire training for their personnel.

Our full-service facilities offer the following features:

- Two-storey burn building with eight Class “A” burn rooms
- Four-storey smoke tower
- Forcible entry door simulator
- Propane prop & fire extinguisher prop
- Roof prop
- Smoke machines

- Two-storey basic fire fighter survival maze
- On-site classroom
- Fire hall
- Fire trucks
- Accommodations and meals

For more information regarding training on our fire grounds, including the various props and equipment available please email fire ground coordinator Andrew Blair at andrew.blair@ontario.ca.

For a list of available dates, rental rates, general inquiries, and to book a rental please email Tracey Degagne, Registrar at the OFC at tracey.degagne@ontario.ca.

“In partnership with the Nova Scotia Firefighters School, this is the first time the NFPA 1081 certification will be offered in the province” -see article below

ACCESSING PRE-CLASS MATERIAL

We would like to thank all clients and stakeholders for their patience as work continues with regard to the upgrade of the OFC Educational Materials website to meet the new accessibility requirements outlined in the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

In the interim and until the upgrade is complete, the pre-class materials for OFC courses are available from [Contact North](http://moodle.contactnorth.ca/course/view.php?id=50) (<http://moodle.contactnorth.ca/course/view.php?id=50>).

- Click the “Log in as a guest” button (below the main log in boxes)
- Password: preclass
- Click the course folder to access files for downloading

If you have any inquiries regarding pre-class materials please direct them to applyofc@ontario.ca.

REGIONAL TRAINING CENTRES

For over eight years the OFC has had the privilege of working with various Regional Training Centres (RTCs) throughout the province to offer additional OFC endorsed courses. Partnerships with RTCs have been established in an effort to make our training more accessible to the Ontario Fire Service at locations closer to home or through e-learning.

We are continuing to grow these training opportunities by strategically adding RTCs across the province, and we are working with all the Centres to provide a variety of National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and specialty courses. Some RTCs have niche areas of focus such as the first two lines of defence, offering only fire code, NFPA 1031 Fire Inspector, or NFPA 1035 Fire & Life Safety Educator courses. While other Centres offer courses relevant to Officer’s such as the NFPA 1021 Fire Officer course or courses that match with the RTC’s unique expertise and training facilities.

Lambton College has recently joined the OFC as the College’s first post-secondary RTC. To begin, Lambton College will be offering the NFPA 1081 Fire Brigade course in May, a training module currently in high demand from industrial clients and municipal fire departments. In partnership with the Nova Scotia Firefighters School, this is the first time the NFPA 1081 certification will be offered in the province. Fanshawe College will be the next post-secondary RTC, and will feature OFC fire prevention and public education courses.

Our RTCs currently include online training through the Centre for Emergency Response and Public Safety (CERPS), and locations in Blyth, Fort Erie, Grimsby, Hastings-Prince Edward County, Lyndhurst, Norwood, Sarnia and Toronto; additional locations will be joining us this year.

For information on how to contact these Centres regarding the courses they offer, please refer to the Regional Training Centre section in the OFC calendar, or send your inquiry to applyofc@ontario.ca.

THE ACADEMIC UNIT AT A GLANCE

Since its establishment in 1958 at its present location in Gravenhurst, the OFC prides itself as being a centre for excellence in training and education for Ontario Fire Services. The OFC strives to contribute to the OFMEM mission statement by providing quality training and education that contributes to the reduction and elimination of public safety hazards for the residents of Ontario.

In 2013, the Ontario Professionalization Model was modernized with the adoption of competency-based professional qualifications standards under the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). The transition from the Ontario Fire Services Standards to the NFPA Professional Qualifications Standards led to a complete redesign of the OFC's programs and courses. In order to better serve the Ontario Fire Service, curricula for 10 NFPA Professional Qualifications Standards were developed for a total of 32 different courses ranging from firefighting to company officer development.

The transition takes advantage of the



Scott Hall built in 1915

and the British Animal Rescue and Trauma Care Association (BARTA). Further, the OFC is partnering with Lambton College and the Nova Scotia Firefighters School to add an industrial firefighting program to its panoply.

Finally, now in the OFC's second year since the transition of its programs and courses to the NFPA Professional Qualifications Standards, we are looking to improve service by implementing a hybrid

INTRODUCING ONLINE COURSE EVALUATIONS

(Continued from page 2)

want, where they want. To make it even easier for mobile device users, QR codes will be used to take students directly to the survey on a mobile device. Other academic institutions have seen a significant increase in the number of constructive comments after moving from paper to online questionnaires.

Students will be able to log into the Class Climate system to provide feedback on the course in which they are registered. But their responses will be anonymized by the system such that instructors and management are unable to identify who provided the feedback, except in cases where students explicitly identify themselves for follow-up correspondence.

Class Climate is designed specifically for online questionnaires, it's not just a system based on translating paper forms into digital. It uses an interface that is fully

"... we are looking to improve service by implementing a hybrid model of teaching and learning..."

three lines of defence and accentuates public education, as well as inspection and enforcement. In addition, the OFC has partnered with associations such as OAFTO, OMFPOA, EVTAO, and FFAO to offer 7 different workshops and seminars, as well as 8 specialized courses.

In total, 47 different courses are offered at the OFC to assist Ontario Fire Services in providing professional development opportunities for staff.

In 2016, the OFC is planning to partner with Equine Guelph, OMAFRA, and Adjla-Tosorontio to offer another specialized course pertaining to large animal rescue. The need for this type of program is evident in the growing number of large animal incidents. The content was inspired by both the work of Dr. Rebecca Gimenez,

model of teaching and learning that will make our programs and courses even more accessible to Ontario Fire Services.

At a glance, the OFC is resolute in upholding its standing as a centre of excellence to Ontario Fire Services and is committed to providing state-of-the-art and highly relevant training and education to assure safety to residents of Ontario.

We are looking forward to more partnerships!



Guy Degagne, Academic Manager

accessible to all end-users, regardless of physical abilities. It also has additional functionality, including tools such as informal questionnaires and data gathering, that could be used to help faculty better understand their class.

We will be pilot-testing the new software over the summer months with our on-campus courses to help us work out any issues with the online tool. Our goal is to fully launch online questionnaires for the 2016 Fall/Winter academic term for all courses at the OFC, and will be subsequently deployed to RTCs.

Ontario Fire College
Office of the Fire Marshal

1495 Muskoka Rd. North
Gravenhurst, ON
P1P 1R8

General Inquires:

Phone: 705-687-9690
E-mail: askofc@ontario.ca

Office of the Registrar:

E-mail: applyofc@ontario.ca

Resource Centre:

Phone: 705-687-9688
E-mail: monica.gagne@ontario.ca

TRAINING CORNER: USING GENDER NEUTRAL LANGUAGE

Gender neutrality is an important element in creating an inclusive learning environment. With an increasingly diverse workforce, the OFC promotes the use inclusive and gender neutral language in training resources, policies, and communications. For strategies about how your department can adopt gender –neutral language and writing techniques please refer to the following articles:

International Association of Fire Chiefs. (2004). IAFC Position: Human Relations and Inclusiveness.

Available from <http://www.iafc.org/IAFC-position-Human-Relations-and-Inclusiveness>.

This position statement outlines IAFC's recognition of the need for more inclusive language; IAFC encourages all fire service organizations to incorporate human relations/diversity components into their training programs, and to ensure that fire service oriented publications reflect our diverse workforce.

Language Portal of Canada. (2015). Guidelines for gender-neutral language.

Available from <https://www.noslangues-ourlanguages.gc.ca/bien-bien/fra-eng/style/nonsexistguidelines-eng.html>.

This article provides recommendations on how to eliminate contentious language issues around gender. The guidelines, writing tips, and examples included can be used to help standardize elements, such as vocabulary and usage, in texts produced by your fire department.

BC Teachers' Federation. (2010) Using Gender Neutral Language in Your Classroom.

Available from <https://bctf.ca/uploadedFiles/Public/SocialJustice/Issues/LGBTQ/GenderNeutral.pdf>.

This one page fact sheet outlines what gender neutral language entails, why it is important to incorporate the technique into your training, and examples of how to teach in a gender inclusive manner.

SUBSCRIBE TO THE PRINCIPAL'S POST ~ COMING SOON~

Like what you've read? Check back here in the next addition for instructions on how to subscribe!

The first few publications of the Principal's Post will be distributed to our students, stakeholders, and clients using our various pre-established mailing lists. Subsequently, only those who have subscribed to our newsletter will be placed on the distribution list.

To ensure you're not missed, please refer back to this section in future publications for instructions on how to subscribe to the Principal's Post. You'll be among the first to know about College news and the latest developments at the OFC.



Celebrating 100 years of public safety in Ontario
Célébrons 100 ans de sécurité publique en Ontario

The Principal's Post is published by the Ontario Fire College. Please submit your feedback, stories, ideas, comments, and photos to OFC-PrincipalsPost@ontario.ca. Selected submissions may be edited for clarity/brevity.

