



# Flashpoint

Philadelphia-Delaware Valley Chapter  
Society of Fire Protection Engineers



## October Meeting Information

**Date:** Tuesday October 14, 2014

**Place:** Jacobs Engineering Group  
Three Tower Bridge Suite  
3000 Conshohocken, PA

See Page 6 for directions

**5:30 PM:** Fellowship Time

**6:00 PM:** Dinner

### Dinner Program:

The presentation this month is by Gary Lederman of Fire-End Croker. Gary is going to review the latest in Nitrogen Generators and discuss their effectiveness. He is also going to cover pressure reducing valves. He will review the different types and applications. He will talk about the testing requirements and how to accomplish that, including what type of equip-

ment is required for the job.

Don't forget to make your reservation by Friday October 10th; and bring an associate from your company!

**Cost:** \$25.00 for dinner & program

**Reservations:** By 12 noon, Friday, October 10, 2014

**Reserve with:**  
**Jeff LaSalle by E-mail:**  
**[jlasalle@lasalleeng.com](mailto:jlasalle@lasalleeng.com)**  
**or Fax: (215) 658-1772** ❖



## Sprinkler Protection for Cloud Ceilings

Cloud ceilings are ceiling panels that sit beneath the structural ceiling of a room or space and are seen increasingly in commercial and industrial buildings. "Cloud" panels range in area from discrete ceiling panels with large spaces in between, to close-to-full-room-area contiguous coverage with small gaps at the perimeter wall location. [NFPA 13, Standard for the Installation of Sprinkler Systems](#), does not have definitive guidance on automatic sprinkler installation requirements for these ceilings and in some conditions requires sprinklers at both the structural ceiling and cloud ceiling panel elevations. Recent NFPA 13 change proposals were rejected based on a lack of validation of modeling results.

The Fire Protection Research Foundation initiated this project to obtain an understanding of how cloud ceiling panels impact sprinkler actuation thresholds with an overall goal to provide the technical basis for sprinkler installation requirements. Two phases of work were completed to develop guidance for sprinkler installation requirements by determining the maximum gap size between the wall and cloud edge at which ceiling sprinklers are not effective. The Phase 1 study investigated the effectiveness of sprinklers on large area clouds. Phase 2 of this work focused on developing guidance for sprinkler installation requirements for small area clouds. For more information, [click here](#) for the NFPA story.

This story is from the [NFPA](#) website.

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### Special points of interest:

- Don't forget to pay your dues . If you pay by the October meeting, it's only \$25; after that \$30. Forms can be found on our website [www.sfpephiladelphia.org](http://www.sfpephiladelphia.org)
- I am looking at putting articles from vendors about new products starting next month. If you have anything, contact Jay Stough at [jays@tilleyfire.com](mailto:jays@tilleyfire.com)

### Inside this issue:

President's Message	2
Solar Panel update	2
Future Cities Update	3
AFSA Fund Raiser for Burn Foundation	3
Fire Prevention Week	4
Calendar	5
Directions	6



#### FLASHPOINT

"The purpose of FLASHPOINT is to provide a forum for the transfer of information between members of the Philadelphia-Delaware Valley Chapter of the Society of Fire Protection Engineers (SFPE) and to give the Chapter visibility."

Newsletter/Publicity Committee:  
Jay Stough

Information for publication can be submitted to: **Jay Stough**  
Email: [jays@tilleyfire.com](mailto:jays@tilleyfire.com)

This Newsletter is published 9 or 10 times/year (September through June) and received as part of membership of the Chapter. Membership Dues are \$30.00 collected annually in the Fall of the Year. For an Application of Membership contact: **Jeff LaSalle**  
Email: [jlalalle@lasalleeng.com](mailto:jlalalle@lasalleeng.com)

Visit our web site at: [www.sfpephiladelphia.org](http://www.sfpephiladelphia.org)

Articles written are the views of the Author and not necessarily those of the Philadelphia-Delaware Valley Chapter of SFPE. ❖

## President's Spark by Mike Venneri PE

It was a great turn out for the first Chapter meeting of the new year. We did have some lively discussions regarding the K16.8 ESRF. I do have to say the support from Oliver Sprinkler was more impressive for this meeting than usual. I don't think it is coincidence that our membership is growing with Jeff LaSalle at the helm of membership. Kudos to Jeff and all those who are gathering members for the chapter. I attended a meeting for the Hospital Fire Marshal's Association (HFMA) last Friday, and they have similar challenges getting members to the meetings. They actually had a turn out similar to ours in the 30 member vicinity. I offered to have them attend our meeting and it became more obvious to me that we need to cross the lines with as many Societies as we can. So keep up the good work everyone is doing to make and keep our Chapter strong. See you at the next meeting.

*Mike Venneri*

## Fire Concerns with Roof Mounted Solar Panels

As companies look to reduce their dependence on fossil fuels, many are turning toward rooftop photovoltaic (PV) power systems, or solar panels, as a source of renewable, clean energy. However, this technology comes with specific risks. This article reviews considerations that affect fire spread along a roof where a roof-mounted PV array is installed and presents information on design choices that can limit fire spread if ignition occurs. For more on this story by Richard J. Davis P.E., FSFPE, go to the [SFPE website](#).



## NFPA 3 & 4—What's new?

NFPA 3 (*Recommended Practice for Commissioning of Fire Protection and Life Safety Systems*) and NFPA 4 (*Standard for Integrated Fire Protection and Life Safety System Testing*) were both recently approved by the NFPA Standards Council for publication as 2015 editions. It has been a long process for both, but the fire protection community now has two separate documents to fill a much needed gap related to fire protection and life safety systems (PF&LS). This article traces the development path of NFPA 3 & 4 and discusses revision items.

You can find the full article at the SFPE website. [Click here](#).

## Future City Update

Greetings from Future City Philadelphia. The school year is off to a great start. To date 40 schools have signed up and have started designing their cities of the future. Here is the current list of schools that need mentors:

Beverly Hills Middle School	Upper Darby, PA
Eisenhower Leadership Academy	Norristown, PA
Grover Washington Jr. Middle School	Philadelphia, PA (Olney)
Keith Valley Middle School	Horsham, PA
Sanford School	Wilmington, DE
Serviam Girls Academy	New Castle, DE
Seven Generations Charter School	Emmaus, PA
St. Aloysius Academy	Bryn Mawr, PA
St. Elizabeth Parish School	Uwchlan, PA
Upland Country Day School	Kennett Square, PA

Our greatest need at this stage of the competition is for mentors. Remember back to when you were in school – imagine how much having a mentor with real world experience would have helped you design that big project. This is what you can provide to these teams. Just 1 or 2 hours a week can make a big difference in how students approach their project and how they start to address it. Please let me know if you are interested in working with any of the schools above and I will get you in touch with the team's teacher. If you'd like to be a mentor but don't see a school in your area, send me an e-mail and I'll keep you posted as schools register.

Please visit our website at [www.futurecityphilly.org](http://www.futurecityphilly.org) and "Click here to sign up as a Volunteer" on the top left of the page. There you can register to be a mentor, judge, or general volunteer.

Future City Philadelphia is looking to expand our Steering Committee. If you've enjoyed working with the program and attending the competitions in the past please consider getting more involved. The Committee's biggest need is for a Mentor Coordinator and a Volunteer Coordinator. Let me know if you'd like some more details.

Any questions please contact me via e-mail or phone. Please feel free to forward this e-mail to your friends, co-workers, and technical society members.

**Thanks.**  
**Jennifer**  
**Philadelphia Regional Volunteer Coordinator**

## Mid-Atlantic AFSA Hosts Burn Foundation Fund Raiser

Please make plans to join us at a Beef and Beer as we raise money for "The National Burn Foundation" on Thursday, October 23 from 5:30-9:30 at: The Washington Fire Company No. 1 (The Washies) 36 West Elm Street Conshohocken, PA. Bring your employees, your spouse, your friends!! (All attendees must be 21 and over please) Food provided by the Collegeville Italian Bakery. Tons of raffle and silent auction items.

Cost \$25 in advance or \$30 at the door.  
 Please respond to Mike Leister to pay in advance via credit card at 443.545.4256 or to [Michael.leister@hdsupply.com](mailto:Michael.leister@hdsupply.com)

Please RSVP to [mmoyer@anchorfireprotection.com](mailto:mmoyer@anchorfireprotection.com) or to [Michael.leister@hdsupply.com](mailto:Michael.leister@hdsupply.com)

**The Philadelphia  
 –Delaware Valley  
 SFPE Chapter is  
 one of 10  
 chapters across  
 the globe to get  
 the Gold Chapter  
 Award of  
 Excellence in  
 2014. There are  
 67 chapters  
 worldwide.**

"If you could kick the person in the pants responsible for most of your trouble, you wouldn't sit for a month."

Theodore Roosevelt

Mark your calendar for next month's meeting on November 11, 2014. Our speaker will be Cecil Bilbo of the Academy of Fire Sprinkler technology.

## How did Fire Prevention Week Start?

Fire Prevention Week was established to commemorate the Great Chicago Fire, the tragic 1871 conflagration that killed more than 250 people, left 100,000 homeless, destroyed more than 17,400 structures and burned more than 2,000 acres. The fire began on October 8, but continued into and did most of its damage on October 9, 1871.

Commemorating a conflagration

According to popular legend, the fire broke out after a cow - belonging to Mrs. Catherine O'Leary - kicked over a lamp, setting first the barn, then the whole city on fire. Chances are you've heard some version of this story yourself; people have been blaming the Great Chicago Fire on the cow and Mrs. O'Leary, for more than 130 years. But recent research by Chicago historian Robert Cromie has helped to debunk this version of events.

### The 'Moo' myth

Like any good story, the 'case of the cow' has some truth to it. The great fire almost certainly started near the barn where Mrs. O'Leary kept her five milking cows. But there is no proof that O'Leary was in the barn when the fire broke out - or that a jumpy cow sparked the blaze. Mrs. O'Leary herself swore that she'd been in bed early that night, and that the cows were also tucked in for the evening.

But if a cow wasn't to blame for the huge fire, what was? Over the years, journalists and historians have offered plenty of theories. Some blamed the blaze on a couple of neighborhood boys who were near the barn sneaking cigarettes. Others believed that a neighbor of the O'Leary's may have started the fire. Some people have speculated that a fiery meteorite may have fallen to earth on October 8, starting several fires that day - in Michigan and Wisconsin, as well as in Chicago.



### The biggest blaze that week

While the Great Chicago Fire was the best-known blaze to start during this fiery two-day stretch, it wasn't the biggest. That distinction goes to the Peshtigo Fire, the most devastating forest fire in American history. The fire, which also occurred on October 8th, 1871, and roared through Northeast Wisconsin, burning down 16 towns, killing 1,152 people, and scorching 1.2 million acres before it ended.

Historical accounts of the fire say that the blaze began when several railroad workers clearing land for tracks unintentionally started a brush fire. Before long, the fast-moving flames were whipping through the area 'like a tornado,' some survivors said. It was the small town of Peshtigo, Wisconsin that suffered the worst damage. Within an hour, the entire town had been destroyed.

### Nine decades of fire prevention

Those who survived the Chicago and Peshtigo fires never forgot what they'd been through; both blazes produced countless tales of bravery and heroism. But the fires also changed the way that firefighters and public officials thought about fire safety. On the 40th anniversary of the Great Chicago Fire, the Fire Marshals Association of North America (today known as the International Fire Marshals Association), decided that the anniversary of the Great Chicago Fire should henceforth be observed not with festivities, but in a way that would keep the public informed about the importance of fire prevention. The commemoration grew incrementally official over the years.

In 1920, President Woodrow Wilson issued the first National Fire Prevention Day proclamation, and since 1922, Fire Prevention Week has been observed on the Sunday through Saturday period in which October 9 falls. According to the National Archives and Records Administration's Library Information Center, Fire Prevention Week is the longest running public health and safety observance on record. The President of the United States has signed a proclamation proclaiming a national observance during that week every year since 1925.

Reproduced from NFPA's Fire Prevention Week website, [www.firepreventionweek.org](http://www.firepreventionweek.org). ©2014 NFPA.

# OCTOBER 2014

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 ASCET SJ chapter Mtg	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14 SFPE Meeting	15 ASCET Delaware chapter Mtg	16	17	18
19	20	21 ASCET Berks chap- ter Mtg	22	23 AFSA Beef & Beer	24	25
26	27	28 ASCET Phila chap- ter Mtg	29	30	31	

## October Events

- Oct. 1: NJ ASCET Meeting @ the Collins House in Collingswood, NJ
- Oct. 14: SFPE meeting @ Jacobs Engineering. Don't forget to make your reservation by Friday Sept. 5th.
- Oct 15: Delaware ASCET Chapter Meeting @ Charcoal Pit on Kirkwood Highway in Wilmington
- Oct. 21: Berks County ASCET Chapter Meeting @ Valentino's in Kutztown 6PM
- AFSA Beef & Beer to benefit The Burn Foundation @ Washington Fire Co. Conshohocken, PA
- Oct. 28: Phila. ASCET Chapter Meeting @ Michael's Dinner in Bensalem



## Phila-Delaware Valley SFPE

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**WE'RE ON THE WEB:**  
**WWW.SFPEPHILADELPHIA.**  
**ORG**

## Mission Statement

The Philadelphia/Delaware Valley Chapter purpose is to advance the art and science of fire protection engineering and its allied fields, for the reduction of life and property losses from fire, to maintain high ethical standards on engineering among its members and to foster fire protection education.

Recognition of fire protection engineering as a discrete engineering discipline is a prime goal. Engineering disciplines exist because there is a special body of knowledge based on the fundamentals of mathematics, physics, chemistry, engineering science and economics.

The chapter strives to facilitate sharing of sound engineering experiences and knowledge between its members and the fire protection community in general with an active program of education and scholarship activities.

## Directions to Jacobs Engineering

### From Central Philadelphia:

Follow the Schuylkill Expressway (I-76) west to Exit 29 (Conshohocken). Stay in the center lane. At the traffic light, go straight and cross the Fayette Street Bridge. **At the next traffic light, turn right onto Elm Street. Go two blocks and turn right onto Ash Street. Three Tower Bridge is 1/8 mile on your right at the end of the street.**

### From Philadelphia International Airport and points south:

North on I-95 to Exit 7. Follow I-476 North (toward Plymouth Meeting) to Exit 16. Follow signs for Route 23 Conshohocken. At the traffic light at the end of the off-ramp, turn right. Continue down road merging into the center lane. At the traffic light, go straight and cross the Fayette Street Bridge. Continue from bold text above.

### From Allentown and points north:

Take the Northeast Extension of the PA Turnpike south to Exit 25A (Mid-County Interchange). Follow signs to I-476 South. Continue to Exit 16 (Valley Forge). On the off-ramp, follow signs to Route 23 Conshohocken. At the traffic light at the end of the off-ramp, turn right. Continue down road merging into the center lane. At the traffic light, go straight and cross the Fayette Street Bridge. Continue from bold text above.

### From New York and Northern New Jersey:

Take the New Jersey Turnpike south to exit 6 (PA Turnpike). Take PA Turnpike west to exit 25A (Mid-County Interchange). Follow signs to I-476 South. Continue to Exit 16 (Valley Forge). On the off-ramp, follow signs to Route 23 Conshohocken. At the traffic light at the end of the off-ramp, turn right. Continue down road merging into the center lane. Continue from bold text above.

### From points west:

On the PA Turnpike, Take exit 24 (King of Prussia). Follow signs for I-76 east (toward Philadelphia). Take exit 28B (Plymouth Meeting). Follow signs for Route 23 Conshohocken. Continue from bold text above.

**Jacobs Engineering Group, Inc.**  
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**Conshohocken, PA 19482-2074**