



FLASHPOINT NEWSLETTER

MEETING INFORMATION

DATE: TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2018

LOCATION:

OLIVER FIRE PROTECTION
AND SECURITY
501 FEHELEY DR.
KING OF PRUSSIA, PA 19406

TIME:

5:30 FELLOWSHIP
6:00 DINNER

DINNER PROGRAM:

Presentation is on Notifier's advanced detection system.

The presenter for this month's meeting will be Garth Dehoff. Garth is a Regional Sales Manager for NOTIFER by Honeywell specializing in complex fire alarm solutions. He serves as a sales representative responsible for advanced network and detection solutions, covering the multi-tier and multi-location market space.

COST: \$25.00 FOR DINNER AND PROGRAM

RESERVATIONS BY 12:00 NOON
FRIDAY FEBRUARY 9, 2018

PLEASE USE THE LINK BELOW TO RSVP TO THE FEBRUARY MEETING.

<https://goo.gl/forms/DMyNZ5NgjoQUCuZc2>

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the new RSVP method please do not hesitate to contact the email below.

Dslatcher@OliverFPS.com.

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Special points of interest:

- SFPE TRADE SHOW SOON APPROACHING!
APRIL 12, 2018

NEW MEMBERSHIP

Nicholas Taylor is an assistant project manager with Oliver fire protection and security. He has a business management degree with a bachelors degree from Rutgers University.

Michael Millman is with AMC fire protection of Dellran and is also a NICET member, SFPE member and ASCET member.

WELCOME!!

PRESIDENT'S SPARK

Twenty-seven years ago this month the City of Philadelphia became the center of the country's attention when a fire at the One Meridian Plaza building resulted in the deaths of three firefighters and completely destroyed eight floors of the building. Ultimately, the building was demolished and today the Ritz-Carlton occupies the site. The Meridian fire led to the swift passage of Bill 1466, which amended the Fire Code to require installation of automatic sprinkler systems in all existing high-rise buildings in the City.

It's hard to believe, but some of our chapter members were not born when this tragic fire occurred. Besides making me feel old, this factoid serves as a reminder of the importance of context and a frame of reference when making recommendations on matters of fire safety. For example, consider the KISS principle of design (keep it simple stupid), reportedly attributed to an engineer involved with the Navy in the 1960's. This basic tenet of design argues in favor of less complex design and avoidance of overly complex solutions.

For those who are not old enough to remember or haven't read reports on the Meridian fire, the design of the pressure regulating fire hose valves installed on the standpipe systems didn't pass the KISS test. These valves were field adjustable, but the index markings used a scale that was confusing and likely led to improper settings and, as a result, inadequate water pressure for firefighters. This was certainly a factor in the outcome of the fire.

I would speculate that engineers with the Meridian fire as a frame of reference would tend to be more skeptical of new fire protection equipment and devices that seem overly complex. A younger engineer might be more willing to consider a novel solution or device in devising a solution to a fire safety problem. Neither perspective is objectively incorrect. What's important is a healthy dose of skepticism, critical analysis, and appropriate engineering judgment.

DELAWARE VALLEY ENGINEERS WEEK

Follow the links below to register for the various Delaware Valley Engineers Week events. You can only register for one event at a time, which will generate individual invoices for each event, but you can pay all invoices at one time. When you've registered for your final event, click Invoices and Payments and you'll be able to pay for them all.

[Kickoff Luncheon](#), Friday, February 16, 2018

[Young Engineers Social](#), Tuesday, February 20, 2018

[Awards Reception/Student Showcase](#), Thursday, February 22, 2018

You can also make reservations by [email](mailto:reservations@engrclub.org) (reservations@engrclub.org) or by calling 267-521-2327.

Reservations for all events are due by February 9. Reservations made past that date will be an additional \$10 for the Luncheon and Reception, and \$5 for the Social. Payment will be expected for all reservations, regardless of attendance.

No tickets will be issued for any of the events.

You can make multiple reservations prior to knowing the names of all your guests; simply list as Guest 1, Guest 2, etc. Please provide names at least two days prior to the event for name tags.

U.S. Patent and Trademark Office sides with South-Tek Systems overturning U.S. Patent No. 9,186,533

WILMINGTON, NC - On January 11th, 2018, the U.S. Patent office sided with South-Tek Systems and invalidated all claims of the Engineered Corrosion Solutions (ECS) Patent Number 9,186,533 as being obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art of fire protection sprinkler systems. This means that prior art, such as publications and patents, demonstrated all of the elements that ECS claimed as an “invention”.

Prior to this decision, in July, 2016, South-Tek Systems filed a petition with the Patent Office to request an *inter partes review* (IPR) contending that the asserted ‘533 Patent is invalid. An IPR is a legal proceeding within the Patent Office to review the claims of an issued patent and determine whether the patent is valid. The Patent Office granted South-Tek’s petition and instituted an IPR for the ‘533 Patent. The Patent Office only grants a petition when there is a reasonable likelihood that one or more claims of the patent are invalid. In conclusion, the Patent office agreed with South-Tek Systems in that there was nothing inventive in the ‘533 Patent given what was already known in the industry.

About South-Tek Systems

South-Tek Systems was founded with the goal of designing and manufacturing the highest quality and most efficient nitrogen generators. In addition, South-Tek has always, and will always, put equal emphasis on customer support – crucial in providing the end user with seamless operation and the highest return on investment. With a strong focus on engineering, research and new product development, South-Tek was granted a patent for designing the only tunable gas purge system, and presented the 2014 NACE *Corrosion Innovation of the Year Award* for conducting the industry’s first sprinkler pipe corrosion study.



San Diego County plans to install more mountaintop cameras to bolster fire protection

BY: J. HARRY JONES

Five new high-definition cameras will be placed on mountain peaks and other elevated spots around San Diego County to bolster fire protection, and an existing computer network that links fire stations throughout the region will be upgraded, officials said.

An elaborate computer and camera network that allows firefighting agencies to closely monitor certain areas of the county has been in place for years. But officials want to increase the number of cameras used in the network.

When last month's 4,100-acre Lilac fire erupted, several such cameras were able to capture what was happening and help guide firefighters' response. The fire destroyed 157 structures and damaged 64 others. Forty-six horses were killed or went missing at the San Luis Rey Downs training facility.

"We were able to look at the smoke column and see the winds, and we knew within just minutes that we were going to have a major incident," said San Diego County Fire Authority Chief Tony Mecham during a recent county Board of Supervisors meeting. "We committed a massive response based on what we were seeing."

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During the Lilac fire, while the battle was being waged in Bonsall, dispatchers were constantly monitoring the system for other problem areas, Mecham said. Based on that information, "as we pulled resources from other parts of the county to the Lilac fire, we felt comfortable that we weren't leaving other communities unprotected," he said.

Last week, county supervisors approved spending \$437,174 to add five new cameras to the system and to upgrade the bandwidth of the network.

The new cameras will be placed on Cowles Mountain, Cuyamaca Peak and North Peak in addition to locations in Boulevard and Valley Center.

Every time a 911 call is placed, officials said, the information is put into the network and every station gets a print-out with location and type of call information. That happened more than 33,000 times last year.

Supervisor Ron Roberts, who has championed the technological side of firefighting efforts, said the system and other technological tools provide real-time situational awareness.

"It's clear that recently our major emergencies are coming as wildfires," he said last week. "They are devastating, they're unpredictable and very hard to deal with. This effort today represents the latest in a continuing effort to increase fire safety."

"When you're in a battle, information and communications are essential to making good decisions," Roberts said. "We've seen in the past what happens when they don't have that information."

The HPWREN system is the result of a partnership among the county, UC San Diego and the Scripps Institution of Oceanography.

WINTER FIRE SAFETY

The U.S. Fire Administration (USFA), National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and Shamokin Fire Bureau (SFB) offer these cold-weather safety tip.

Each year, fire claims the lives of 3,400 Americans, injures 17,500 and causes billions of dollars worth of damage. People living in rural areas are more than twice as likely to die in a fire as those living in mid-sized cities or suburban areas. The misuse of wood stoves, portable space heaters and kerosene heaters are especially common risks in rural areas.

- All heating equipment needs space. Keep anything that can burn at least three feet away. Supervise children whenever a wood stove or space heater is being used. Have a three-foot “kid-free” zone around open fires and space heaters.
- Carefully follow the manufacturer’s installation and maintenance instructions for wood stoves, and look for solid construction, such as plate steel or cast iron metal. Check for cracks and inspect legs, hinges and door seals for smooth joints and seams. Use only seasoned wood for fuel, not green wood, artificial logs or trash. In pellet stoves, burn only dry, seasoned wood pellets. Inspect and clean your pipes and chimneys annually and check monthly for damage or obstructions.
- Buy only heaters evaluated by a nationally recognized laboratory, such as Underwriters Laboratories (UL). With electric heaters, check to make sure it has a thermostat control mechanism, and will switch off automatically if the heater falls over. Don’t dry clothes or store objects on top of a heater. Plug space heaters directly into wall outlets and never into an extension cord or power strip. Always unplug your electric space heater when not in use.
- Never fill your heater with gasoline or camp stove fuel; both flare-up easily. Only use crystal clear K-1 kerosene. When refueling, allow the appliance to cool first and refuel outside. Use in a well-ventilated room.
- Fireplaces regularly build up creosote in their chimneys. They need to be cleaned out frequently. Check to make sure the damper is open before starting any fire. Use a screen heavy enough to stop rolling logs and big enough to cover the entire opening of the fireplace to catch flying sparks. Never empty ashes directly into a trash can. Douse and saturate the ashes with water.
- Having a working smoke alarm dramatically increases chances of surviving a fire. And remember to practice a home escape plan.

Chimney fires

Indications of a chimney fire have been described as creating loud cracking and popping noise, a lot of dense smoke and an intense, hot smell. With proper, they are preventable.

- Have chimneys regularly inspected by a CSIA-certified chimney sweep.

Furnace maintenance checklist:

1. Heat exchanger: Heat exchangers can develop cracks with age. If they exist, there is a risk of serious illness from the toxic fumes emitted.
2. Burners: Remove and clean if necessary. Dirty burners can cause poor combustion, soot and condensation, and will shorten the life of the furnace.
3. Fan switch: A fan switch that is not properly adjusted can waste energy and cause nuisance fan cycling.
4. Pilot and pilot assembly: Weak or dirty pilots can easily be extinguished causing the furnace to shut down.
5. Safety controls: Those that do not operate can cause dangerous problems.
6. Gas line: Check for leaks from the furnace shut-off valve to the burners. Undetected gas leaks are dangerous.
7. Combustion air: Blocked or restricted combustion air openings can be dangerous.

FEBRUARY 2018

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11	12	13 PHILADELVAL SFPE MEETING	14 VALENTINES DAY	15	16	17
18	19	20 BERKS COUNTY ASCET MEETING	21 DELAWARE ASCET MEETING	22	23	24
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FEBRUARY 7: NEW JERSEY ASCET MEETING

FEBRUARY 13: PHILADELPHIA– DELAWARE VALLEY SFPE MEETING

FEBRUARY 14: VALENTINES DAY

FEBRUARY 20: BERKS COUNTY ASCET MEETING

FEBRUARY 21: DELAWARE ASCET MEETING

FEBRUARY 27: PHIALDELPHIA ASCET MEETING

PHILA-DELAWARE VALLEY SFPE

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**Society of Fire
Protection
Engineers**

We're on the web at
[Www.sfpephiladelphia.org](http://www.sfpephiladelphia.org)

MISSION STATEMENT

The Philadelphia/Delaware Valley Chapter purpose is to advance the science and practice of fire protection engineering and its allied fields, to maintain a high ethical standard among its members and to foster fire protection engineering 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.