



# Hot Flashes



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March 2016

# 70<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY

The Signal Hill Fire Department is observing its 70th Anniversary of service to our community. Founded in 1946, the women and men that proudly serve today as volunteer firefighters continue a strong commitment and pledge to keep their families, friends and neighbors safe from the perils of fire.



## Tim Bainter recognized as 2015 Firefighter of the Year!

Tim was recognized by his colleagues for his devoted service, dedication and loyalty.

Tim recently completed Hazardous Materials First Responder, Technical Rescue Awareness, Basic Operations Firefighter, and Fire Service Vehicle Operator certifications. He is currently enrolled in an emergency medical technician course and is on a pathway to becoming a career firefighter/paramedic.

In addition to his firefighting duties, Tim also assists with logistics and health/safety duties around the fire-

house.

Tim commented, “I feel very honored to be recognized as the 2015 Signal Hill Firefighter of the Year. It is hard to imagine myself being the person that I am today without the Fire Department and the wonderful members that are involved. I have learned so much from them, even before I was on the Department.”

“I was fortunate in that I grew up around the fire house and have fond memories of all the time spent learning, sharing and growing with all the members through my younger years. It really is family and I am proud to be a part of this great organization.”

***Congratulations to Tim!***

***Emergency***

***Dial 9-1-1***



Remain calm. Give location, name and type of emergency clearly. Always let the telecommunicator hang up first.

Non-Emergency.....277-3500

Administrative.....397-1995

[www.SHFD.net](http://www.SHFD.net)





## A Message from the Chief



March 2016,

In the spring of 1946, a group of very dedicated and determined residents were engaged in collective tasks that were required to organize, fund, equip and staff a fire department. Their first informal meeting was held in January of that same year at Cermak's neighborhood tavern -- affectionately known as the Briar Hill Country Club.

The Minutes of the first "official" meeting of the Signal Hill Fire Protection Association, Inc., d/b/a Signal Hill Fire Department, are dated May 31, 1946 and referred to letters and telegrams (an old fashion version of e-mail) to Congressman Melvin Price, requesting his assistance in acquiring a war surplus fire truck from the Granite City Army Depot. Also included were correspondence with Illinois-Interurban Water Company, the Underwriters Bureau and others seeking guidance and advice on how to ensure their efforts would be successful.

From these modest beginnings to 70 years later, the commitment and determination of the Fire Department's founders has been handed-down to today's volunteer firefighters and associate members. It is with these same altruistic values and beliefs that the women and men who serve today continue to protect our families and property from hostile fire.

While remembering our past, we look forward to our future and remain focused on our mission of preventing and eliminating fires.

Congratulations to our 2015 Firefighter of the Year, Tim Bainter. Tim's "unofficial" tenure at the Fire Department began several years ago when he was old enough to "hang-out" at the firehouse with his dad. We are proud to have Tim on our TEAM!

Kudos are also in order for the firefighters and associate members that were recently recognized for their continued years of service.

As always, your comments or suggestions are always welcomed. Please contact me at 397-1995 or e-mail, [grender@SHFD.net](mailto:grender@SHFD.net).

Stay Safe,

*Greg*

Greg L. Render, E.F.O.

Administrator / Chief of the Department

At its Annual Appreciation Dinner on March 5th, the Signal Hill volunteer firefighters and associate members were recognized for their dedication and service to improve the quality of life in our community.

Volunteer Firefighter Tim Bainter - 1 Year  
 Volunteer Firefighter Jamal Dunn - 1 Year  
 Associate Member LeAnn Bassler - 5 Years  
 Associate Member Steve Brannan - 10 Years  
 Associate Member Lee Ann Elliff - 20 Years  
 Assistant Fire Chief Tom Elliff - 30 Years  
 Volunteer Firefighter Jeff Fournie - 30 Years  
 Associate Member - Ralph Conrath - 40 Years



*Welcome New Member -- Chris Lentsch*

## 2015 Year in Review

Volunteer Firefighters Tim Bainter and Jamel Dunn completed Basic Firefighter through Southwestern Illinois College. Volunteer Firefighters Mark Bagby and Kurt Engel completed Vehicle Machinery Operations. Probationary Firefighter Chris Lynch, Captain Jace Wilderman, and Volunteer Firefighter Derek Trower completed on-line fire science courses.

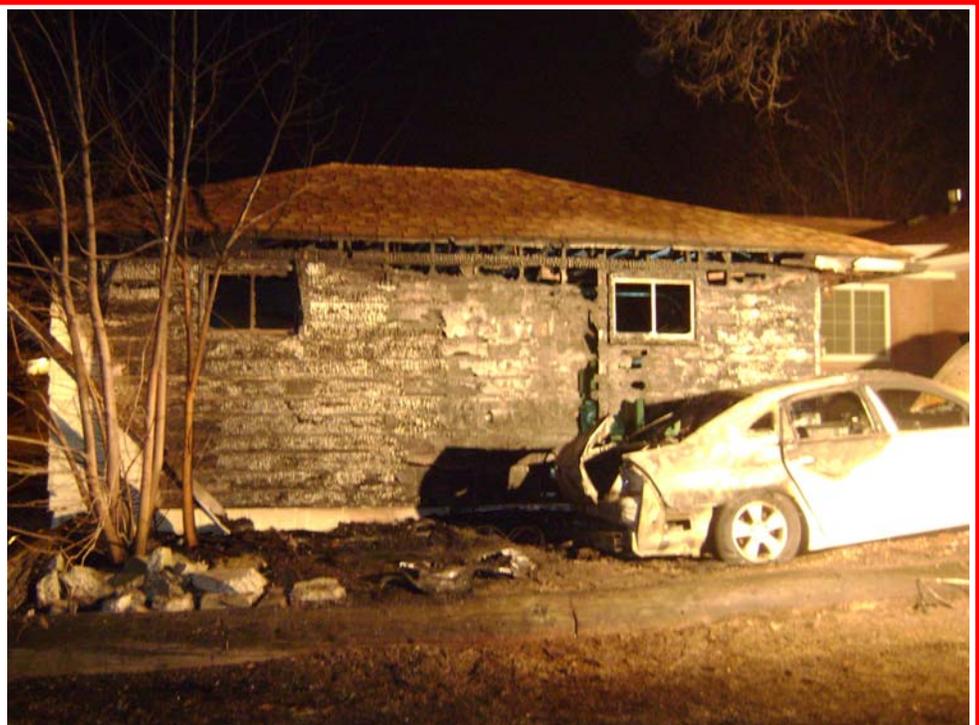
Signal Hill Volunteer Firefighters responded to 159 emergency incidents in 2015.

Residential Fires - 3  
 Storage Buildings - 1  
 Vehicle Fires - 6  
 Grass or Trash Fires - 4  
 Rescue - 6  
 False Alarm - 30  
 Mutual Aid - 73\*  
 Haz Mat - 6  
 Other Hazardous - 18  
 All Other - 12

Signal Hill provided  
 Mutual Aid Assistance:

Belleville Fire - 5  
 Cahokia Fire - 1  
 French Village Fire - 2  
 Fairview Fire - 1  
 Midway Fire - 2  
 Northwest Fire - 62

\*Includes dispatched and canceled



January 31, 2016 - A fire destroyed a garage and 2 vehicles. The fire appears to have started between the car and the outside wall of the garage. An accumulation of leaves, grass and dead landscape waste most likely contributed to the spread of the fire. It took firefighters about 5 minutes after their arrival to check the spread of the fire.

The cause of the fire remains under investigation. Landscape waste should be collected and disposed in an environmentally safe manner.

February 14, 2015 - Firefighters were requested to assist the St. Clair County Sheriff's and Corner's Office at the home of a known hoarder. Firefighters removed a window to recover the homeowner's body.

According to the National Fire Protection Association - Many fire departments are experiencing serious fires, injuries, and deaths as the result of compulsive hoarding behavior. The excessive accumulation of materials in homes poses a significant threat to firefighters fighting fires and responding to other emergencies in these homes and to residents and neighbors. Often, the local fire department will be contacted to help deal with this serious issue.



- Hoarding can be a fire hazard. Many occupants die in fires in these homes. Often, blocked exits prevent escape from the home. In addition, many people who are hoarding are injured when they trip over things or when materials fall on them.
- Responding firefighters can be put at risk due to obstructed exits, falling objects, and excessive fire loading that can lead to collapse. Hoarding makes fighting fires and searching for occupants far more difficult.
- Those living next to an occupied structure can be quickly affected when a fire occurs, due to excessive smoke and fire conditions.

Source NFPA

Unfortunately, Signal Hill Firefighters have been seeing more incidents of hoarding in the past several years. It is believed that 3 - 5% of the U.S. population are hoarders.

Family members or close friends are encouraged to seek out mental health professionals that can assist with the treatment compulsive hoarding behavior of hoarders.

Thanks to all of the Fire Protection District residents and businesses that responded to the October fundraiser. Our volunteer firefighters greatly appreciate your generous donations. All of the funds received are reinvested to improve or enhance the Fire Department's capabilities to serve you.



For many residents the last days of March serve as a painful reminder that it is time to work on their spring cleaning checklist. As many begin the arduous task of cleaning and clearing the debris that accumulated over the winter months, the Signal Hill Fire Department recommends that residents add home fire safety to their list. To assist you in fire proofing your home during the spring season, consider the following safety tips:

## SPRING CLEANING & FIRE SAFETY



- Check and clean your smoke alarm.
- Check and clean your carbon monoxide alarm.
- Check your fire extinguisher.
- Make sure electrical outlets and extension cords are not overloaded.
- Have air conditioning units and other electrical appliances checked by a licensed professional.
- Clear your basement and attics from old papers, oily rags, and broken furniture.
- Make sure all fire exits or escape routes that are identified in your fire escape plan are clear of any debris and are not blocked-off.
- Inspect your charcoal/gas grills.
- Spread mulch at least a foot away from the house with a non-combustible barrier in between, such as rock.
- Finally, when you are finished spring cleaning make sure all cleaning products are stored in child safety latched drawers and cabinets with the original labels.

Residents of the Signal Hill Fire Protection District that reside in Stookey Township (south of Foley Drive) are now able to sign up for **Code Red** service.

The **Code Red** service allows you to receive emergency alert messages from your fire department, emergency management, and other public officials. These alerts include severe weather, hazardous spills, gas and chemical leaks, missing persons in your neighborhood, water boil orders or similar alerts.

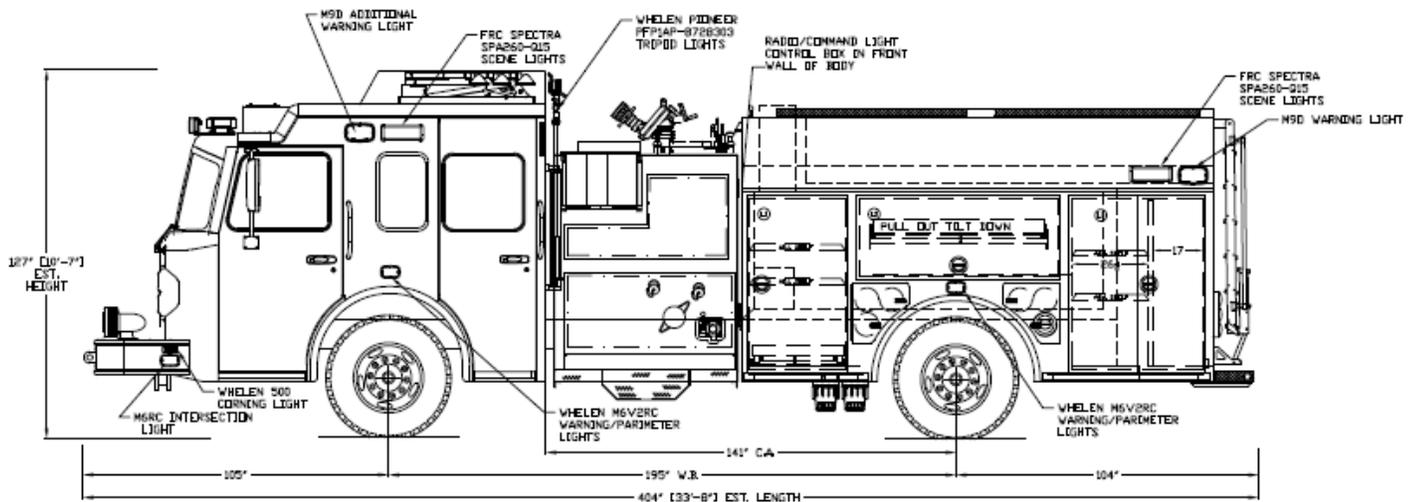
Alerts can be sent to your landline phone, cell phone or by text or email. **YOU MUST SIGN UP.** go to SHFD.net and click on the **Code Red** tab.

The service is free to Stookey Township residents through an intergovernmental agreement with the City of Belleville. Stookey Township residents with questions or problems signing up **Code Red** may call Stookey Township Trustee Curtis Williams, 618-806-3415.

***Stay Alert - Stay Informed - Stay Safe***

Thanks to the Stookey Township Board for making this service available.

**CODE RED**



Signal Hill has placed an order for a new pumper from SMEAL Fire Apparatus. The pumper is scheduled for delivery in August. The pumper will have a 1500 gallon-per-minute pump, a 750 gallon polypropylene water tank and various other features. The pumper body will be made of stainless steel and have a 30 year warranty.

The new pumper replaces a 1984 pumper. The various components mirror the Department's existing apparatus to ensure for uniformity and familiarity during emergency operations. The Department utilizes 3 pumpers, a rescue truck, a multi-purpose pickup and two staff SUVs.

## Severe Thunderstorm Season is Upon Us

A thunderstorm is considered severe if it produces hail at least 1 inch in diameter or has wind gusts of at least 58 miles per hour. Every thunderstorm produces lightning, which kills more people some years than tornadoes or hurricanes. Heavy rain from thunderstorms can cause flash flooding. High winds can damage homes and blow down trees and utility poles, causing widespread power outages. Every year people are killed or seriously injured because they didn't hear or ignored severe thunderstorms warnings. These tips, combined with timely watches and warnings about severe weather, could save your life.

- Listen to local news or NOAA Weather Radio for emergency updates. Watch for signs of a storm, like darkening skies, lightning flashes or increasing wind.
- If you can hear thunder, you are close enough to be in danger from lightning. If thunder roars, go indoors! Don't wait for rain. Lightning can strike out of a clear blue sky.
- Avoid electrical equipment and corded telephones. Cordless phones, cell phones and other wireless handheld devices are safe to use.
- Keep away from windows.
- If you are driving, try to safely exit the roadway and park. Stay in the vehicle and turn on the emergency flashers until the heavy rain ends.
- If you are outside and cannot reach a safe building, avoid high ground; water; tall, isolated trees; and metal objects such as fences or bleachers. Picnic shelters, dugouts and sheds are NOT safe.



February 22 - The Signal Hill Fire Department was the location for taping a series of public service announcements (PSA) promoting the recruitment of volunteer firefighting in Illinois.

Eight volunteer firefighters from several area fire departments will be featured in the PSAs. Pictured are two of Signal Hill's finest, Volunteer Firefighters, Joe Sustar and Shelley Hudson as they taped their PSA segment.

The PSAs are part of the Illinois Fire Chiefs Association's ***VOLUNTEER NOW!*** campaign.

Additionally, the National Volunteer Fire Council has launched ***Make Me a Firefighter***, a national recruitment project aimed at connecting those rare folks - the fighters - to opportunities to serve their communities in ways that few can.

Every community needs firefighters - they're the folks willing to help their community during the greatest times of need.

In Illinois, of the nearly 1200 fire departments, over 75% rely on volunteer firefighters.



By assisting with ***Volunteer Now!*** And ***Make Me A Firefighter*** initiatives, it is Signal Hill's goal to help people within our community to see themselves as a volunteer firefighter and provide them with an opportunity to serve their family, friends and neighbors.

***Find the Super Hero in you  
become a Signal Hill Volunteer Firefighter?***

***www.SHFD.net or 397-1995***

# Signal Hill

Fire Department

329 Hazel Avenue  
Belleville, Illinois 62223

NONPROFIT ORG.  
CARRIER ROUTE  
PRESORT

**PAID**

Belleville, Illinois  
PERMIT NO. 880



*To Report a Fire Dial 9-1-1*



Planning on some spring planting?

Thinking about a new deck?

Replacing that mail box post?

Relocating a downspout drain?

**Know what's below.  
Call before you dig.**



State law requires you to contact **JULIE** before you start any digging project, no matter how small the project or how deep you plan to dig.

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