



# **National Independent Fire Alarm Distributors Association**

FALL 2013

## **Calendar of Events**

### **NIFAD**

#### **Annual Meeting**

June 7-9, 2014

Monte Carlo Resort

Las Vegas, NV

#### **NFPA Convention**

June 9-12, 2014

Las Vegas, NV

#### **ISC West**

April 2-4, 2014

Las Vegas, NV

#### **AFAA National Codes Conference**

April 22-25, 2014

Big Island, HI

#### **ASIS**

#### **International**

Sept. 29-Oct. 2, 2014

Atlanta, GA

## **From the President's Desk**

Happy Fall and Fire Prevention Month to ALL!

As we say good-bye to the summer of 2013 and prepare for the Holidays, I hope everyone is realizing the benefits from what we had learned in June at the NIFAD meeting in Chicago. There were many great ideas presented during the Town Hall, so let everyone know if you have implemented anything new, and how it's working. The economy seems to be fairly stable and sales activity is the best it has been in the past few years. Don't lose the momentum; keep it building as it always seem to stall around this time of year. Locate those customers that have budget reserves remaining. Find new ways to excite your teams! Create activities to keep them focused. Share what is working for you with the other members in NIFAD! As everyone looks to set budgets and goals for 2014, now is the time to define the action plans and strategies to achieve those goals. Be specific for what you want and expect; be realistic with timelines and schedules; and most important, follow-up and document progress against the plans on a regular basis. Hold people accountable, and provide the support needed to ensure success.

One of the initiatives we had for NIFAD in 2013 was to improve our website and ability to communicate with each other. I'm happy to report the new site design is approximately 90% complete and is under review by the Board members. We will have a new modern look, with links to current industry issues and reports that update on a daily basis. We will also have a dedicated forum section to share ideas and ask questions with the other members. The forum area will be secure and password protected so only those members having the appropriate authority will be able to gain access to it and post inquires or provide comments on submitted questions. This will provide us a single point of reference that we can all share and is easy to access and find when needed. We have a scheduled launch date by Thanksgiving and we will notify all members with the appropriate information for access to the NIFAD Forum section!

And on a final note, please keep the family and friends of Bob Pikula in your thoughts and prayers now, and over the holiday season. Bob lost his battle with cancer that started several years ago. Many of you knew Bob and how this personable man could always put a smile on your face and warm your heart. He had a wonderful and contagious laugh and was someone you always welcomed to see. Bob will be greatly missed, and heaven is a better place to have him.



## Our Condolences to Family of Bob Pikula



We were sad to learn that Bob Pikula died October 25, 2013 from cancer.

Bob was a longtime NIFAD member and served on the NIFAD board as a director and as president from 2009-2011.

Bob always had a smile on his face and was always willing to help out wherever needed. He loved his family and was so proud of his children.

Hopefully, he and Ernie are up there smoking cigars together and watching over us!

## NIFAD Board of Directors

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## Making Your Fitness Plan Work For You

Adams Lois, ArticleBiz.com

It may seem easy to begin a new fitness plan, but those who have tried, will tell you that is not the case. It is important to create a plan that is based on achievable goals that will keep you motivated to keep going.

First make a list of fitness goals. Everyone has an idea of things they would love to be able to do, ways they want to change their body, or an ideal weight. Write them all down.

Now you are going to set that list aside. Those are long term goals that you will continue to aim for, but now it is time to determine what you are going to change right now. Start a new list. Include what you are going to change right now as the first step towards your larger goals. They should be reasonable and take into consideration your current level of fitness. It is important the goal you set doesn't seem like a huge leap for you. If you start out with too much too soon, you could injure yourself jumping into activities you haven't done for a long time.

As time goes on, set your goals higher and higher. Record each new set of goals so when looking back you can see how far you've come and to help you be accountable. You can be fit. Start slow and make small achievable goals, you will see real change over time.

## Code Updates from Vic Humm

### NFPA 720

Currently NFPA 720 Public Comments are being processed by the 72 Correlating Committee for issuance to the Standards Council for public posting of the 2014 edition.

The reader needs to understand CO can be residential, a stand-alone system, or CO detectors operated by a fire alarm panel.

If there is a fire alarm system in the building and a stand-alone CO system, which are not interfaced together, there are some cautions. If both are connected to a smoke control system each system, fire alarm or CO, will have different interface operations at smoke boundaries.

In residential alarms, fire clearly overrides the CO signal. This needs to be true for both systems in the same building. On the fire alarm side, an operational matrix should wisely be submitted for concurrence with the governing AHJ. This will protect your interests and become a review detail for future following inspections.

### NFPA 72

In mid June, the first half of the 72 committee met to process public inputs, formerly public proposals, and in the second week of September the second half of the Technical Committees met. This committee is composed of Fundamentals, Emergency Communications, Protected Premise, and Testing & Maintenance. The postings should be out by the first of November for the public to review.

There is now a new class "N" on the table for review. It is for networking methods, meaning CAT 5 type cable of fiber optic cable. A galvanic isolated cable will not require detection by ground faults. This means the end-to-end communication of the networking path will register each device or appliance that is not working and will report trouble.

### UL & ULC

UL Standard 2196 does not have a listing process for data communication cable, but ULC does have Standard S-139. Standard S-139 will permit a cable manufacturer to obtain UL certification. The test, once set up, takes about one week and will include the reliability of the submitted cable to send information or data packets.

### NFPA New Process for Public Input or Comments

When a reader goes to the NFPA website to submit Public Inputs, previously Public Proposals, or Public Comments, there is a choice of submitting by fax or online prior to the published closing date of a document such as NFPA 72. The public comments are open on the Public Inputs and are posted within the first quarter.

Public Input is available at the NFPA website by selecting the document information tab and then the standard, then the next edition. NFPA committee members do not need to establish a profile such as email and a password of your choice.

The closing for Public comments by paper is April 11, 2014. If done online the closing date is May 16, 2014. Online a person will see the first draft and will be able to submit revision to any public input. The process is in Word and as one deletes text and inserts new text the NFPA Terra Computer will underline for new works and strike for deleted words. The beauty of this is that if the submitter decides to change anything prior to the closing of online submissions, they can go back and re-edit their work online. The computer also acknowledges the receipt of submission. One can also chose the option to withdraw a Public Input of comment prior to closing.

## Furniture Flammability by the Numbers

According to a recent NFPA analysis, in recent years fires involving upholstered furniture have annually accounted for...

- The largest share of fire deaths of any first item ignited in U.S. homes
- 8,900 home structure fires
- 480 deaths — nearly 20 percent of all home fire deaths — 840 injuries, and \$427 million in property damage when upholstered furniture was the first item ignited
- 610 deaths — nearly a quarter of all home fire deaths — 1,120 injuries, and \$566 million in property damage when upholstered furniture was the principal item contributing to fire spread
- 1,900 fires, 270 civilian deaths, 320 civilian injuries, and \$97 million in property damage when the ignition source was a lighted tobacco product
- 2,200 fires, 130 civilian deaths, 280 civilian injuries, and \$138 million in property damage when the ignition source was an open flame from another fire
- 1,500 fires, 70 civilian deaths, 140 civilian injuries, and \$81 million in property damage when the ignition source was operating equipment, such as space heaters
- 1,400 fires, 60 civilian deaths, 220 civilian injuries, and \$69 million in property damage when the ignition source was a small open flame, such as a candle or a match
- 1,300 fires, 60 civilian deaths, 130 civilian injuries, and \$150 million in property damage when the ignition source was ember, ash, or other unclassified hot or smoldering object
- 600 fires, 20 civilian deaths, 30 civilian injuries, and \$31 million in property damage when the ignition source was unclassified, other, or multiple heat source

Source: NFPA's "Upholstered Furniture Flammability." For excerpts of the report visit [nfpa.org/furniture\\_analysis](http://nfpa.org/furniture_analysis)



### NFPA Dates

Mark your calendar and plan to attend these NFPA Conferences.

2014	2015	2016	2017
June 9-12	June 22-25	June 6-9	June 4-7
Las Vegas	Chicago	Las Vegas	Boston
Mandalay Bay Convention Center	McCormick Place Convention Center	Mandalay Bay Convention Center	Boston Convention Center & Exhibition Center

### NIFAD Website

Check the website for current news and information on events for our organization.

Newsletters, conference brochures and conference registration forms can also be found on the website, NIFAD.com.



## Member Highlight Volunteer Technology Systems

Volunteer Technology Systems was established in 1997. The company has two active partners, Mike Nelson and Michael Cronin. Each has over 30 years of experience to bring to the company.

Located in Jackson, Tennessee, Volunteer Technology Systems serves a mostly rural area. Areas of service include west Tennessee, north Mississippi, north Alabama and southwest Missouri.



The company designs, sells, installs and services fire alarm, security, access control, CCTV and communications equipment. Partnership with a sprinkler and a suppression contractor enables them to offer a complete inspection package to customers. Volunteer Technology System customers include educational, industrial, institutional, health care and correctional facilities.

Mike is currently Vice President of NIFAD and is the Alternate Liaison to the NFPA 72 IDC Committee. His commitment to involvement in the industry involves not only national areas, but state organizations as well. He served as President of the Tennessee Burglar and Fire Association in 2003.

Volunteer Technology Systems won the prestigious “Jackson Chamber Emerging Business Award” in 2000 and continues to strive for increased growth through dedication to outstanding service offered by professional employees.

## Reward Customer Loyalty

Looking for a way to make some more profits from your business? Never forget who are your best customers. You might be surprised how quickly they can impact on your profits.

Everyone know the statistics about how much easier and cheaper it is to retain a customer or client than to get a new one. But all too often these are the very people we forget about or take for granted, especially when business is growing and you are focused on bringing on board all those new customers. If someone has already bought from you, they are far more likely do so again—so be prepared to offer them something different to make sure they don't try your competition.

Offer existing customers a discount for additional services they take; give a volume discount for larger purchases; offer an exclusive product, service or event that is only available for current customers; do a charity donation for your top customers chosen cause; or give free trials of your new product to anyone who has been with you for awhile.

Once you've decided, talk to new customers about what will happen if they stay with you for the long term. Never wait until your customer leaves or threatens to leave and then offer them the world to stay. Not only will you anger them, but even if you keep them in the short term, you won't have a loyal customer.

You can also try something more personal. Phone customers to thank them for their ongoing support and check that they are happy with everything. Take action NOW, this week. Find a way to reward your top 3 customers. You might be surprised what it does for your profits!

## Get the Most Out of Your Facebook Marketing

By Terry Green  
ArticleBiz.com

Getting the best results with social media takes time and effort. It also takes a lot of trial and error, as sometimes things work well with certain audiences, yet not so great with others. And sometimes, even with your best efforts, you don't see the results you had hoped for. It can seem like a lot of work, but is it worth it? You bet it is. In fact Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg announced recently that Facebook currently has one billion active monthly users. Now, your social media reach obviously won't see anything near these numbers (don't we wish!). But this should be a wake-up call about just how many people there are out there that you COULD reach. If you aren't actively engaging on Facebook, you should be, and pronto!

Now just having a presence on Facebook is not all it takes. You need to work it, and work it the right way. Here's how:

**Engagement** - It's all about engagement and getting people to respond to you. Yes, you can post tip after tip, but real success happens when you start communicating and talking with your audience. Remember, the more you talk with your fans the more activity you'll get on your page; which means the more exposure you'll get. It's that simple.

How many of you post a tip or comment on Facebook, then just leave and come back hours later? Next time, try sticking around for a bit; comment on other postings, and truly share with others. When you comment on someone else's post, you'll get on their radar and they are more likely to post on your page, plus your comment is now in the newsfeed of their friends. That's how you get real communication going and that's when the magic happens.

Devote a day of the week to connect with a unique idea. Recently we added a new feature on our Facebook page called Ask BizEase, where every Wednesday we encourage you to ask any question you want about business. If we don't know the answer, we'll do our best to find someone who does. So if you have a shopping cart question, or a question about WordPress or Wishlist Member, whatever...ask you question and we'll answer it. Not only is this a great way to get people engaged and talking, but it's a great way to showcase our talents and services, all while helping people at the same time. Try something like this on your own page to see if you can get people talking and engaged.

**Use Visual** - People are visual and often connect more with images, so add some fun images from time to time or consider adding some pictures with motivating captions. We love to get inspired. You can also have some fun by posting a photo and then asking for a caption or thought about it. That can really get the conversations going. Sometimes adding visuals are a little easier to do on your personal page, but it really can be beneficial on your business page as well.

**Have fun** - Yes, you can be serious, but also realize that most people come to Facebook to chill a bit. If you're always business as usual, you lose out on the magic that happens when we have fun together. So make sure you take time to have a little fun and enjoyment while you're at it.

The Facebook numbers speak for themselves, and success happens when you are in front of the right people and actively engaging them. Hopefully these tips will provide an incentive to do just that.