



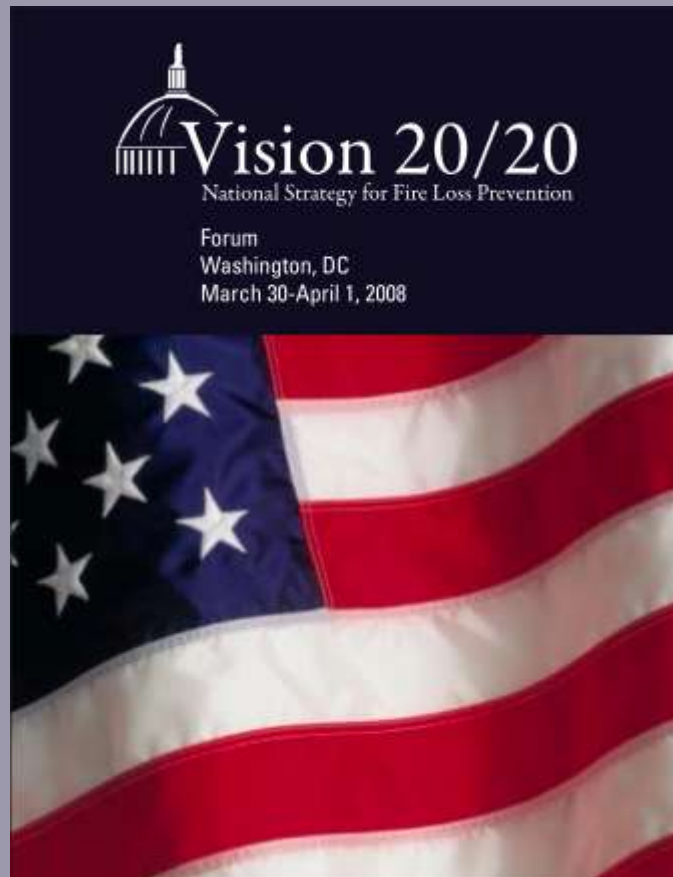
Advocating for Fire Prevention

National Strategies for Fire Loss
Prevention



Strategy 1:

Increase Advocacy for Fire Prevention





Increase Advocacy for Fire Prevention

Increase the level of advocacy for fire prevention to policymakers, decision makers, and community leaders that supports a balanced approach to reduce the social and economic impact of fire losses.



Increase Advocacy for Fire Prevention

Steps necessary to achieve:

- ★ Establish relationships with policymakers, educators, social providers and the media.
- ★ Create generic aid packages to support advocacy campaigns.



Increase Advocacy for Fire Prevention

Direction:

- ★ Develop tools and guidance that is useful nationally with options for local adaptation.



Increase Advocacy for Fire Prevention

Direction:

★ Identify an overarching theme:

“Prevention Saves...lives, jobs, money and community”



Increase Advocacy for Fire Prevention

Direction:

- ★ Make it compelling to distinct audiences:
 - ★ Policymakers
 - ★ Community Leaders
 - ★ Public



Increase Advocacy for Fire Prevention

Direction:

- ★ Use real case studies as the “hook” to focus attention.



Increase Advocacy for Fire Prevention

Direction:

- ★ Focus on the scope of the problem:
 - ★ Economic factors
 - ★ Injuries
 - ★ Deaths
 - ★ Social costs



Increase Advocacy for Fire Prevention

Direction:

- ★ Connect to other issues and partners who work on issues for the same target audiences.



Increase Advocacy for Fire Prevention

Direction:

- ★ Include “how to” material on the importance of establishing relationships, especially with elected officials and decision makers.

Building Blocks of Advocacy



By Jim Crawford

3 strategies to secure support for prevention

As a national strategic planning process, Vision 20/20 (www.strategicfire.org) lays out a consensus approach to what we (collectively) should be working on to further reduce fire losses in the United States. There's nothing really *new* in Vision 20/20's recommended strategies, but it does reflect which actions we should prioritize now to make progress on the nation's fire problem. One of those strategies is advocating for fire prevention.

As I watch the discussion about advocacy unfold, I've come to believe there are three basic strategies necessary to create advocates for fire prevention efforts.

1. Demonstrate the Need: As my friend Wayne Powell once said: "No data, no problem; no problem, no money." Gathering data and talking about the need for fire prevention isn't as simple as talking about an estimated 3,500 fire deaths a year. That's why people like Richard Taylor from the State Fire Marshal's Office in Maine and Ozzie Mirkhah of Las Vegas have been talking about the *economic* losses from fire. Relating the scope of the fire problem in terms of money hits policymakers where they're already hurting.

Using NFPA reports on the topic, we can say that more than 2 percent of the U.S. gross domestic product is tied up in fire losses and the costs associated with providing fire protection. Those figures include costs of built-in protection and estimates for the costs of volunteer and professional firefighters. *The point:* We're losing too much of our economy to fire.

2. Demonstrate the Results: If we're not using the (mostly) public's money wisely, and are unable to provide evidence of results, then the same policymakers who are already feeling constraints from economic crises will find better ways to spend their money.

There are effective ways to document the impacts and outcomes for fire prevention efforts; a preliminary report is available on Vision 20/20's Web site. I'll save the details for another column.

3. Develop Relationships: Public policy theory stipulates that different political forces (basically, people) within the community end up influencing public policy decisions as to what's important and what's not.

Example: Mothers Against Drunk Driving's (MADD) very public efforts to bring attention to the problem of

intoxicated driving led to more stringent laws. Having friends in the community who understand the need for fire prevention programs can in turn help influence policymakers to appreciate their importance.

AN UPHILL BATTLE

These three strategies for advocating for prevention sound simple. Unfortunately, there are no surefire solutions, even when such strategies are implemented.

Recently, the State Fire Marshal's Office in Arizona was basically gutted of resources and programs due to severe budget woes. And in my own jurisdiction (Vancouver, Wash.) we recently lost a third of our staffing, which severely hampered our ability to provide adequate fire prevention services. To their credit, our fire chief, city council and city manager have protected fire and police budgets from cuts up until this point. But the Great Recession and its local impact have created a perfect economic storm from which we can no longer be protected.

However, lessons from states including Maryland and California make me think that the basic elements of effective advocacy haven't changed. Both states passed statewide regulations keeping residential fire sprinklers in their codes. When other states were losing the requirement in their base codes, Maryland and California were among those who maintained them because they spent years grooming the ground for favorable rulings from local policymakers. The lesson for other prevention personnel: It takes years to develop the strategies and relationships that protect prevention efforts.

The three basic building blocks—need, results and relationships—are still the best hope we have for advocacy of prevention programs. The fact is, even when we do things right, there are no sure things. The economy continues to give local decision-makers the unfortunate task of deciding whether to keep fire stations open or staff their fire prevention programs.

No small problem there. ▀

Jim Crawford is a deputy chief and fire marshal with the Vancouver (Wash.) Fire Department and is chair of the NFPA technical committee on professional qualifications for fire marshals. He has written "Fire Prevention: A Comprehensive Approach," published by Brady, and has also written a chapter on fire prevention in "Managing Fire and Rescue Services," published by the International City/County Managers Association. Crawford is a past president of the International Fire Marshals Association and has served on the NFPA's Standards Council. He is a member of the IFC.



Vision 20/20

Increase Advocacy for Fire Prevention

- ★ Demonstrate the Need
- ★ Demonstrate the Results
- ★ Develop Relationships

FIRE PREVENTION

Building Blocks of Advocacy

3 strategies to secure support for prevention



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Increase Advocacy for Fire Prevention

Direction:

- ★ Emphasize the value to others



Increase Advocacy for Fire Prevention

Direction:

- ★ Include a comprehensive guidance for conducting successful initiatives:
 - ★ “Open house” following a house fire
 - ★ Fact Sheets/Talking Points for PIO’s
 - ★ Use “saves” to promote the success of prevention efforts



Increase Advocacy for Fire Prevention

Direction:

- ★ **Involve burn survivors as advocates**



Increase Advocacy for Fire Prevention

Direction:

- ★ Include a compendium of prevention
 - ★ Education
 - ★ Enforcement
 - ★ Engineering
 - ★ Economics



Increase Advocacy for Fire Prevention

How will it look?



Increase Advocacy for Fire Prevention

How will it look:

★ **Overarching Theme:**

“Prevention Saves...lives, jobs, money, community.”



Increase Advocacy for Fire Prevention

How will it look:

- ★ Overarching Theme: “Prevention Saves...lives, jobs, money, community.”
- ★ Present data to support the \$\$ value of prevention.
“No data...no problem...no problem...no money”



Increase Advocacy for Fire Prevention

How will it look:

- ★ Overarching Theme: “Prevention Saves...lives, jobs, money, community.”
- ★ Present data to support the \$\$ value of prevention.
- ★ Data can be presented in ways that are compelling to specific audience.

FIRE PREVENTION SAVES!

Each year U.S. fire departments respond to a million fires in which thousands are injured and killed, and billions of dollars worth of property and contents goes up in flames. U.S. fire departments also respond to medical calls, hazardous material spills and other emergencies

What does this have to do with us?

Demographically speaking our community has: (Misc, ME)

6,456 residents

- 4.8 (308) are under age 5
- 13.2% (693) are 5 to 14 years of age
- 17.2% (1,110) are 65 and older
- 2,584 report having a disability with 493 of those over 65
- 98% are white

2,452 single family homes, 359 mobile homes, and 631 apartments

2,120 of home structures were built before 1979 and 1,322 since 1979

X # of business occupancies

86% of the residents have graduated high school and 24% college

Our median household income is \$35,938 & 103 families live below poverty

Fire in our Community

Our Fire Department has a complement of 10 career firefighters, one half time administrative assistant, and 25 on-call members.

Our Fire Department responded to 60 fire incidents in 2008

- 20 Structure Fires
 - 15 Residential structures accounting for \$80,400 in direct property losses and \$111,000 in property saved
 - 11 in one or two family homes
 - 4 in multifamily homes
 - In total 73 personnel responded to these fires
 - In total 41 suppression vehicles responded to these fires
 - 4 Public Assembly and Mercantile structures accounting for \$600,000 in direct property losses and thousands in indirect lost productivity, wages, and municipal revenues

Data Sample #1: Demographic Composition

FIRE PREVENTION SAVES!

Our nation's fire burden is the cumulative social and economic impact of fires, fire deaths and injuries, and property and content losses resulting from fire.

Loss Measure	United States 2008	Misc, ME 2008
Fires	1.4 million (27% in homes)	59 (15% in homes)
Deaths	3,320 (83% in homes)	1 (outside fire)
Injuries	16,705	1
Property	\$15.4 billion	\$698,200 (Property & Contents Lost)

The Misc FD did save, through its suppression efforts, \$116,300 or 16% of the reported value of property and contents reported in 2008 fires.

Estimated Value (cost) of the 1 fire death is \$5,000,000.
Estimated Value (cost) of the 1 injury was \$166,000.
Estimated Value (cost) of property lost was \$ 698,200
Total Estimated Cost of fire in Misc (excluding suppression costs) was \$5,864,200 in 2008.

Cumulatively over 200 personnel responded to fire in 2008 resulting in an uncalculated amount of lost productivity and wages from paid on call firefighters. Over 122 suppression vehicles responded to these fires.

The Fire Department responded to 366 total calls including fires, EMS, false alarms, and other calls for assistance.

The 2008 Budget for the Misc FD was \$528,634 with no dedicated funds for fire prevention.

Misc, ME has 6,456 residents. The following citizens most vulnerable to fire:

- > 4.8 (308) are under age 5
- > 13.2% (693) are 5 to 14 years of age
- > 17.2% (1,110) are 65 and older
- > 2,584 report having a disability with 493 of those over 65

Misc, ME has 2,452 single family homes, 359 mobile homes, and 631 apartments. Nationally, 83% of fire deaths occur in homes and 81 % of injuries occur in residential properties.

Data Sample #2: Basic loss measures

FIRE PREVENTION SAVES!



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Estimated Cost Savings Obtainable by Stated Fire Reduction Frequency

Reduction Amount (#)	Potential Lost Property Savings	Potential Suppression Apparatus Savings
½ Home Fires (7.5)	\$27,000	\$1,624.50 ¹
½ Public Assembly Fires (2)	\$250,000.00	\$433.20 ²
9.5 fewer fires	Total: \$277,000	Total: \$2,057.70

A range of 2 to 24, or an average of 3.3, fire fighters responded p/fire for an incalculable cost in terms of lost productivity, wages, and other opportunities.

Annual FD Budget	Total Potential Savings (property & suppression)	Cost of Fire Prevention Officer	Net Gain
\$528,634	\$279,057	\$105,000	\$174,057 ³

The 2008 Budget for the Misc FD was \$528,634 with no dedicated funds for fire prevention.

Footnotes:

¹ Calc: (ave. # of responding apparatus (p/fire) x ave. hourly cost of fire vehicle)*reduction amount

Data Sample #3: Obtainable cost savings



Data Sample #4: Fire Dept. response costs

FIRE PREVENTION SAVES!

The Misc, ME fire burden is the cumulative social and economic impact of fires, fire deaths and injuries, and property and content losses resulting from fire

Loss Measure	Frequency	Property Loss	Fatality	Injuries	Apparatus (Trucks)	Personnel
Dwelling Fires	11	\$55,400	0	0	34	53
Apartment Fires	4	0	0	0	7	20
Public Assembly Fires	1	\$600,000.00	0	0	4	10
Eating/Drinking Est. Fires	1	0	0	1	2	8
Store/Office Fires	2	0	0	0	4	20
Non-Bldg. Structure Fires	1	\$5,000.00	0	0	3	10
Other Fires	40	\$37,000	1	0	68	79
<i>Total Fire</i>	<i>60</i>	<i>\$698,200</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>122</i>	<i>200</i>
Over pressure/rupture/explosion	1	0	0	0	2	3
Rescue/EMS	14	\$17,600	0	0	5	10
Hazardous Condition (no fire)	113	\$332,325	0	0	109	159
Service Call	53	\$500	0	0	41	57
Good Intent Call	31	\$0	0	0	37	52
False alarm/call	103	0	0	0	175	236
Severe Weather/Natural Disaster	2	0	0	0	3	4
Special Incident	12	\$14,000	0	0	6	9
<i>Total Non-Fire</i>	<i>329</i>	<i>\$364,425</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>378</i>	<i>530</i>
	Property loss p/incident		Apparatus Use p/incident		Personnel Use p/incident	
<i>Fire</i>	<i>\$11,636</i>		<i>2</i>		<i>5.3</i>	



Increase Advocacy for Fire Prevention

How will it look:

- ★ Use real case studies. “Data tells....Stories sell”

Show successes as well as losses.



A tale of two families.



THE MIZIOCHS

Injuries:
NONE
Fire extinguished by one sprinkler.
Total damage:
\$3,000

Protected by fire sprinklers



Rooms where each fire started



Other areas of each house

Without fire sprinklers



THE McCABES

Injuries:
Luckily, no injuries. However, family pets were lost.
Total damage:
\$125,000

Did you know ?

- ▶ Every 74 seconds fire occurs in a U.S. residence.
- ▶ Every 21 seconds someone is injured in a fire.
- ▶ 8 out of 10 fire deaths occur in the home.
- ▶ Fire sprinklers and smoke detectors together cut your risk of dying in a home fire by **82%**, relative to having neither.

Fire sprinkler facts...

- ▶ 90% of fires are contained by only ONE sprinkler.
- ▶ When building a new home, sprinkler systems cost about as much as kitchen cabinet upgrades.
- ▶ Modern sprinkler systems are barely noticeable – some can even be concealed.
- ▶ Sprinklers decrease property damage from a fire by as much as two-thirds.
- ▶ Many insurance carriers offer discounts for fire sprinklers.



Increase Advocacy for Fire Prevention

For each target audience:

- ★ Who is the compelling spokesperson?
- ★ What is the compelling story?

Policymakers?

Mayor who talks about economic impact?





Increase Advocacy for Fire Prevention

For policymakers:

- ★ Who is the compelling spokesperson?
- ★ What is the compelling story?

What are your suggestions?

Community leaders?

Chamber leader talks about revitalization and businesses relocating?





Increase Advocacy for Fire Prevention

For community leaders:

- ★ Who is the compelling spokesperson?
- ★ What is the compelling story?

What are your suggestions?

The Public?

Grandmother recounts important memories
lost in a house fire?





Increase Advocacy for Fire Prevention

For the public:

- ★ Who is the compelling spokesperson?
- ★ What is the compelling story?

What are your suggestions?



Increase Advocacy for Fire Prevention

Contents and delivery:

- ★ DVD with video case studies.
- ★ Data templates with national statistics and guidance for entering local data.

FIRE PREVENTION SAVES...

- ☑ Saves Lives
- ☑ Saves Jobs
- ☑ Saves Money



What you don't know about fire in Vancouver

- Vancouver Fire responded to **276 structure fires** in 2009 with a total **fire loss of \$11.2 million**.
- Of those, 223, or **80%**, **occurred in homes** and cost residents **\$8.8 million**.
- Vancouver Fire responds to **three home fires every five days**.
- The U.S. has a fire death rate more than twice that of European nations.
- Of the 25 top industrial nations, the U.S. has the **5th highest fire death rate**.



PREVENTION SAVES MONEY:

The total cost of fire to society is staggering—over \$182 billion per year, on the order of 1 to 2 percent of the gross domestic product, which was \$13.8 trillion in 2007. The U.S. has among the worst fire rates of industrialized nations.



PREVENTION SAVES JOBS:

For some businesses, fire causes a disruption that can never be overcome. In addition to lost jobs, a shuttered business contributes to neighborhood decline and lost tax revenue that communities count on to pay for public services and amenities.

PREVENTION SAVES LIVES:

Vancouver suffered five civilian fire-related deaths in the past decade. In the same time period, there were 134 fire related injuries. More property loss occurs every year due to fire than all other natural disasters combined.



★ Template for flyer to illustrate how “Fire Prevention Saves”



Increase Advocacy for Fire Prevention

Contents and delivery:

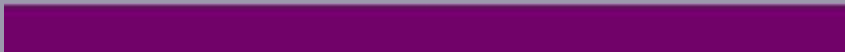
- ★ Guidance “how to” be an effective advocate
 - ★ Establish partnerships to add power to advocacy efforts





Adding Power to Our Voices
A Framing Guide for Communicating About Injury

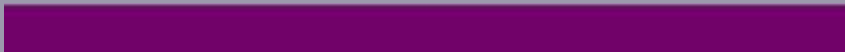
★ Include recommendations from resources





Adding Power to Our Voices
A Framing Guide for Communicating About Injury

“Each year, U.S. emergency departments treat more than 30 million nonfatal injuries. That is more than the populations of Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, and Texas combined.”





Increase Advocacy for Fire Prevention

Contents and delivery:

- ★ **Hardcopies limited distribution**
- ★ **Available through website**

www.strategicfire.org



Increase Advocacy for Fire Prevention

What are your suggestions?

- ★ **YOU CAN HELP!**
- ★ Please refer compelling stories and spokespersons for case studies.