



Eastern Ontario Association of Fire Investigators

Training Opportunity

Fire Investigators Insight on How to Prepare for Court

Topic: *Surviving Gatekeeper Challenges*

An overview of NFPA 1033 16 required topics and how they can be used against you in court. This is an excellent opportunity to gain a better understanding of NFPA 1033 and subsequently prepare you for a court challenge.

Participants: All those who are currently involved in fire investigations.

Presenter: Chris Williams, retired OFM Manager

When: February 27, 2018

Where: Smiths Falls Memorial Community Centre, 71 Cornelia St., Smith Falls

Time: 0900hrs - 1600hrs

Cost: \$60.00 (includes catered lunch) Paid at Door by Cheque or Cash.

In order to plan for venue and catering, please advise if you will be attending to Sgt David Christie at christied@ottawapolice.ca.

Why Attend

The Canadian legislative landscape is continuously shaped and altered by decisions of the higher courts. Maintaining professional currency, in particular where specialized skills are identified within a prescribed professional standard, is part of our professional responsibilities.

The area of fire investigations has become a significant bounty for legal challenges south of our border. One only has to read the details stemming from various ‘Innocence’ initiatives to see how ‘bad science’ and expert evidence has contributed to wrongful convictions.

Keeping current with Canadian ‘Gatekeeper’ expectations, challenging science, complex and evolving investigative protocols represents a significant challenge and stress for staff that face the prospect of satisfying the courts that they meet or exceed the expert qualifications. Fire investigations are an important part of your risk/loss mitigation model and maximizing their value will help your business succeed while minimizing the professional exposure of staff to the legal system.

Presenter BIO

Chris Williams, retired OFM Manager from 31 years within provincial law enforcement. Through the course of 20 years with the Office of the Fire Marshal, he invested heavily in the professionalization of staff. He led the re-design and implementation of the OFM fire investigator program to meet and certify to *NFPA 1033 Standard for Professional Qualifications for Fire Investigator* and has significant public speaking experience with professional fire services associations and public safety organizations.

Upon retirement in early 2017, he joined the program development team of Laurentian University where he’s currently developing a university credit course in fire investigations. This program will be certified by the OFMEM to the *NFPA 1033 Standard for Professional Qualifications for Fire Investigator, 2014*.

Learning Objectives:

- Recognize your investigative authorities, fire department obligations, insurance contracts and the foundations of Charter challenges.
- Recognize how scientific methodologies became engrained in Canadian case law.

- Understand the accountability of the fire investigator to the professional standard NFPA 1033 and NFPA 921.
- Discuss the future of NFPA 1033 and consequences of proposed mandatory certification in Ontario.
- Review recent defense expert strategies to challenge NFPA 1033 certification and defense strategies for cross examination .
- Review of the 16 post secondary knowledge requirements of NFPA 1033.
- Recognize types of bias and challenges to scientific methodology.
- Describe effective strategies for dealing with cross examination.
- Recognise the value of technical/peer review and quality assurance services for case preparation ahead of pending legal proceedings.
- Recognize the importance of closing public fire safety gaps through seamless communication within your department and with public safety partners.