

# **Safety News from Northport Fire Department**

By Jim Mahoney

## **Fire Marshals & Fire Safety – A Salute**

Safety News would like to commend and thank three firefighters from Northport Fire Department who also serve the community in the Fire Marshal's office. These men include Ex-Chief John McKenna, Hook & Ladder Captain Terry McNally and Chaplain/Fire Commissioner Paul Latuso. Together they have approximately one century of firematic service and experience. They also have approximately half a century of service as Fire Marshals. John McKenna is the Fire Marshal for the Village of Northport and Terry McNally is Chief Fire Marshal for the Town of Huntington. Paul Latuso is the Deputy Chief Fire Marshal for the Town of Huntington. Regardless of the location these men inspect, anticipate and work diligently to prevent fire safety problems. They have and continue to do an excellent job in their capacity as Fire Marshal. Safety News salutes them.

Unfortunately fire safety news is not all positive in our world. Earlier this year a horrific fire engulfed a Brazilian city's night club. 236 young people were killed and more than 120 people were hospitalized for an extended period of time. What makes this terrible tragedy even harder to accept are a number of basic fire safety problems that were present and nothing had been done to correct or change them. For the large dance hall/night club there was only one entrance and exit. There was no suppression system in operation. The band used pyrotechnics inside the club when these were intended only for outdoor use. To make matters worse, the ceiling which was ignited by flames from the band gave off deadly cyanide gases. And patrons were not allowed to leave even after the fire started and spread within the confines of the hall until they had paid their bill for the evening's refreshments.

Fire codes are developed and enforced to provide for the public's safety. The public can anticipate their own safety needs in an emergency situation. Everyone should be aware of a secondary means of egress. If emergency lighting does not designate a means of exit, the management of the location should be made aware of this and should take steps to correct this situation as soon as possible.

## **Unauthorized Solicitations**

Fire Marshal John McKenna recently issued a warning to residents concerning a chimney cleaning company claiming to be recommended by the Northport Fire Marshal or the Northport Fire Department. The caller states they are "American Chimney Cleaning and your name was provided by the Northport Fire Department indicating a need for chimney cleaning and inspection service." The Northport Fire Marshal and Northport Fire Department do not endorse nor do they employ any commercial organizations to do work with the community or to solicit funds on our behalf. Anyone who is contacted in this manner should decline the offer and then report the details to the Northport Fire Department or the Northport Fire Marshal at 631-261-7504.

## **Evening Visibility on the Road**

After a long period of storms and snowfalls, a number of community members have taken to local roads in the evening for jogging and/or walking exercise. Sidewalks should always be used when possible for this activity. Walkers/joggers should always wear some form of reflective clothing so that they can be seen by approaching vehicles.

## **House Visibility and Identification**

Safety News has constantly stressed the need for residents to have their house number posted to obtain quick and efficient recognition by emergency responders. In the dark of night when a family member has a medical emergency such as a heart attack or respiratory arrest, rapid medical attention is vital. Time lost trying to locate the site of the injury or problem really affects the patient in a negative manner. Be safety conscious and anticipate potential problems by being prepared. It's not only smart, it's the law. Section 325 of the ***Residential Code of New York State*** requires all houses to have their address displayed in such a position as to be plainly visible and legible from the street or road fronting the property.