



## FIRE & LIFE SAFETY SECTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE CHIEFS

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### **Announcement of Winner of Award for Excellence in Fire & Life Safety**

Division Chief Michael T. Love of Montgomery County (Md) Fire & Rescue was the second annual winner of the Excellence in Fire & Life Safety Award, sponsored by the International Code Council (ICC). The judges felt that Chief Love best exemplified the award criteria of *an individual whose service, professional abilities and leadership were exemplary in promoting fire prevention and who serves as an example to all fire prevention and fire protection professionals*. The award was presented at Fire Rescue International on August 14, 2008 by Mr. Richard Weiland, Chief Executive Officer of the International Code Council

Chief Love, on his own initiative, recognized the need for much better collaboration among fire safety professionals. The problems that one AHJ faces in his or her community probably are very similar to problems which have been addressed elsewhere. However, there was no mechanism for sharing information and solutions among fire prevention professionals.

With the explosive growth of the Internet, Chief Love realized that there was a tool that was literally at our fingertips and completely free of charge. He established two chat groups on Yahoo, the National Fire and Life Safety Educator group (NFLSE) and the EPARADE group, to foster information exchange.

EPARADE was launched in February 2004, and has since grown to over 580 members spanning the globe with over 7,300 messages posted. It is unquestionably the most active and invaluable information exchange forum that exists for fire safety professionals. NFLSE has seen similar growth with many members belonging to both groups.

Fire professionals who never would have met or interacted before now do so on a regular basis. In a day of shrinking budgets, restricted travel and difficulties in attending professional training or conferences, EPARADE and NFLSE have stood out as the number one mechanism for fire prevention professionals to learn from one another.

Dated August 28, 2008