January 1, 2012       Quarterly Edition—Winter       Vol. LXV, No. 1

Where has all the paper gone?

Tis the Season

Festive Features
Fireline in the Headlines

Fireline Hosts Its First Annual Open House

BALTIMORE, Md. (October 13, 2011) — The Fireline Corporation held its first annual open house today, hosting approximately 100 customers and partners. The open house took place in Fireline's back lot surrounded by its Fire Alarm, Sprinkler/Suppression, Main and Warehouse buildings.

Attendees who joined Fireline for the open house were given tours of the facility, participated in product demonstrations and unlimited Q&A, they were also able to meet new people and put faces with the names of voices some had grown so familiar with over the years. Customers were introduced to the vendors selling and supporting the products Fireline installs and services in their facilities. The event was catered and there were great prize giveaways.

In spite of the rain the day was a huge success and hopes are that next year will be even better. “Our relationship with our customers, partners, and the community are very important to us” says Anna Gavin, she is looking forward to seeing everyone again next year.

Customer Feedback:

W.R. Grace’s Chris Schissler said “Three of us attended from our facility, and despite the weather, your employees were very accommodating and the food was great. It was a nice aside from our normal routine and a treat to visit a family owned company that can thrive in today’s economy. I have heard many positive comments working with your service and sales people about what a great company Fireline is to work for. We look forward to working with your staff that support and maintain our fire suppression equipment. A special thanks to Lisa Malone, Rob Wakes and George Armstrong for their continuous support and friendly service of our fire suppression equipment and their professionalism in providing fire extinguisher and smoke detector training”.

Linda Rutkowski, with the Maryland Zoo in Baltimore said “The demos and displays were very informative. The food was delicious and it was nice getting to meet Lisa and some of the other staff members. Much success to all in the future”.

Remember that your SI WebTools online schedule and paystub username is not the same as your workstation, email/webmail and SharePoint username. For access and permissions, contact Shannon (Ext.326). For password reminders and resets, contact Cindy. For time or compensation disputes, contact your Supervisor and/or your Department Manager before contacting the Human Resources Manager.
Kudos from Colleagues & Customers

Customer, Ref: Jimmy Kershner & Chris Biser
A customer praised the great work Jimmy and Chris did while troubleshooting a fire alarm system. He said they were very professional and they got the job done in less time than expected.

Customer Email, Ref: Dan Towle
“...Dan Towle always provides Shepherd’s Clinic with exemplary service. A super nice guy with wonderful skills, it’s a pleasure to be able to call on him...”

Customer Email, Ref: Jeff Smith
“Mr. Jeff Smith provided excellent customer services... He worked well with the other vendors that were onsite to complete the semi-annual inspection maintained in our multi-system facility.”

Customer Email, Ref: Tim Francis & Ross Dyott
“...The technicians you sent out were very professional, hardworking and persistent to doing a great job. I appreciated their service and devotion to make sure the job was not just done quickly but efficiently.”

Colleague Email, Ref: Eric Robertson
“...I have continually been impressed by his knowledge and professionalism toward me, my team, and the customer.”

Customer Email, Ref: Matt Benfield, Matt Williams & George Armstrong
“I plan to use Fireline for all fire related inspections in the future. I have truly been impressed with the two inspections that Fireline just completed here at the hospital. Matt Benfield and Matt Williams, just completed the water flows and tamper inspections. Between those two men and George Armstrong, I am completely sold on your company.”

Anniversaries

Fireline is extremely grateful to these employees for their years of dedicated service:

January
Randy Parsons—15 Years
Sharon Serio—29 Years
Cathy Cox—5 Years
Robin Busch—9 Years
Karen Cobb—10 Years
Mark Rufus—11 Years
Stephen Walters—12 Years

February
Walter Glenn—16 Years
Charlie Miskimon—7 Years
Sharon Waters—16 Years
Chuck Collins—9 Years
John Kneisley—3 Years
Denise Campbell—5 Years
Chuck Moore—14 Years
Matt Meyers—11 Years
Mike Bradley—1 Year
Matt Losignor—3 Years
Nick Decker—3 Years
Tyler Lawrence—1 Year

March
Tom Frankhouser—8 Years
Julio Castro—4 Years
Bill Bonney—18 Years
Charlie Harris—6 Years
Gary Hoddinott—8 Years
Tim Mays—9 Years
Paul DeMaria—1 Year
Rasanjali Wisidagama—4 Years
Rob Wakes—1 Year
Barb Haas—14 Years
Kevin Young—9 Years
TJ Timpson—8 Years
Gary Cox—5 Years

The editors would like to apologize for incorrect anniversary information listed in the Fall issue of the Fire Flyer. Jeremy Mohney was incorrectly listed in the anniversary section as having been at Fireline for 2 years. Jeremy has been with Fireline for 9 years. Ralph Mason was incorrectly listed in the anniversary section as having been at Fireline for 14 years. Ralph has been with Fireline for 15 years.
PDO — Not Just Another Acronym

By ANNA GAVIN, President

Some of you may have heard the acronym “PDO” used recently around the office. So what does PDO mean? Punctual Department Organizers? Potentially Dangerous Oranges? Possible Days Off? No, PDO means none of these things (though I know you were secretly hoping it was the last one).

PDO stands for Professional Development Outlines. Simply stated, it is an outline, or list, of all tasks that are required for an employee to effectively perform their job. This list of tasks, depending on the job function, is then able to be subdivided into levels of complexity or frequency. For example, technicians will be divided into levels of complexity, as there are technicians who range from helpers to senior techs in terms of their experience and technical knowledge. Admin PDO’s will look different as they are often the sole performer of their given PDO and therefore need to know everything included within the list.

We do this for a variety of reasons. For one, it gives us a clear list of everything someone needs to know to succeed at their job. This will help outline their training initiatives and career directives. For example, if Joe knows how to do everything in the level one list and all but 5 tasks in the level two list, then at Joe’s review time we know he needs to be trained in those 5 tasks to master level two. And then, the PDO can assist Joe with his career direction as he has a clear path outlining what he needs to learn to become a more valuable employee (which is usually a good way to get an increase in salary). PDO’s are also useful for staffing requirements as they can be used to create thorough job descriptions and identify the necessary skills for hiring.

Therefore, the PDO will assist management with defining training opportunities for groups and individuals, effectively give performance reviews, implement and track new hire training programs, determine merit increases as well as career development, create comprehensive job descriptions, and match customer needs with technician or employee capabilities. All in all, a pretty useful tool. Already, 25 different positions at the company have started to develop PDO’s thanks to the help of 30 plus employees contributing lists of tasks to be categorized and organized. Once the project is complete we will have a clear list of every task performed here at Fireline. With a great deal of growth projected for our future, this project will help us set our goals to make certain we are correctly aligning our business processes with the demands of our industry and our customers. So while PDO may be yet another acronym to learn, we think it is a Pretty Darn Opportunistic for our company, and therefore worth remembering.

PDO — The Professional Development Outline (PDO) project has been underway now for months. Chances are, it’s going to hit you or your department very soon. Some of you may even be asked to participate as department representatives or assigned to produce deliverables for this project. The personal impact and time required for participation is minimal, and it won’t interrupt your daily operations. Contact Anna Gavin at any time with your questions or concerns about Fireline’s PDO.

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Recurring Themes

Executive Direction—Administrative Notes for All

By CINDY RUEPPEL, Executive Director

The fourth quarter in the Admin Department was extremely hectic but productive. We had an unusual amount of turnover – Bobbi Jo Hall and Brian Jennings moved on to other career opportunities. Under Shannon’s supervision, Yetti Oreaqba will be filling the position of Sales Assistant, Julia Keppley will be assisting in our PMO Department and Amanda Adkins was recently hired to assist with scanning.

Also, several of our Admin staff attended Excel training. I wish to thank those who attended for your willingness to enhance your computer skills.

2012 is fast approaching and year-end procedures are upon us. All Admin employees are extremely busy at this time with additional accounting tasks and I would like to personally thank them for their assistance and dedication.

Financial Feng Shui—Mind on the Money

By LINDA ABDOW, Controller

Effective January 1, 2012, Fireline Corporation will change our tax status from a C Corporation (a tax status typically elected by larger companies) to an S Corporation. Perhaps not the most exciting news you’ll read today but the change will allow us to take advantage of some tax benefits available to an S Corporation and hopefully save some money. How will this impact you? Not at all, as it won’t change anything operationally. Beginning in 2012, if you run across a form which asks you to indicate the legal status of Fireline, please remember to indicate S Corporation instead of a C Corporation.

In spite of the many changes, inventory went very smoothly this year. As you may know, we moved Vehicle System parts from Leesburg to Baltimore and established individual trucks for Vehicle Systems, Leesburg Portables and Leesburg Restaurant employees. We also identified areas where inventory shortages occurred and are improving our procedures so we can identify inventory discrepancies sooner.

Many thanks to all those who volunteered for the physical inventory counts.

Sixth Sense

Serious Responses to Your Strange Notions

By SHANNON ADKINS, PMP

PAPERLESS VS. PAPER-LESS. I’m sure at some point over the past few months you have heard the words “going paperless” around the office, either in an email, a nearby conversation or a meeting. Don’t panic Fireline has not discontinued the purchasing of paper, decided to sell all the printers and lock down the copy machine’s. Paperless does not always mean paperless, Fireline’s goal is to use less therefore go “paper-less”.

This is done by converting documents and other papers into digital form. “Going paperless” can save money, boost productivity, save space, make documentation and information sharing easier, keep personal information more secure, and help the environment. This idea is nothing new, as soon as computers became popular so did the idea of creating a paperless office. The idea has been successfully implemented in hundreds of thousands of companies and most will tell you it was not an easy task but worth it in the end.

Test the strength of your own Sixth Sense

Be the first one to locate the ghost image of Shannon (hidden somewhere in this newsletter) and correctly answer the riddle below, to win this month’s prize.

Email: sadkins@fireline.com

I am not alive, but I grow; I don’t have lungs, but I need air; I don’t have a mouth, but water kills me. What am I?

Congratulations to last quarter’s winners, Denise Campbell (Reception), and Debbie Lanham (A/R) who worked together to pick up a $25 AMEX gift card.

PMO

The Project Management Office (PMO) is here to help you establish and maintain efficient and effective processes in conjunction with formal project management methodologies, company-wide training and development, information management, and automation initiatives. We perform all administrator functions for SI WebTools, SharePoint, and the Fireline Technology Committee. Call Shannon (Ext.326) any time with your questions or concerns.
Take the Time to Save Time

By DAVE TAYLOR, Operations Manager

One aspect of customer service that flies under the radar is doing the job correctly the first time with no repeat work. Doing the job accurately and efficiently results in fewer questions and greater understanding, reduces wasted time for Fireline personnel and satisfies customers.

How does this translate to our day to day activities?

For administrative personnel it means:
- Take care to direct phone calls to the right person the first time
- Invoice the correct contract amount to the right address and contact person
- Enter accurate project information into SI
- Post payments to the correct accounts

For service department personnel it means:
- Scheduling and dispatching field personnel in a geographically coherent manner
- Leave enough time for the technician to get the inspection or repair done without rushing or causing an unplanned return call
- Distributing inspection reports in a timely manner

For sales personnel it means:
- Fully understanding the scope and specifications of the project and applying this knowledge to produce an accurate, competitive proposal and price. This minimizes projects that exceed estimates and unanticipated change orders (customers hate those).

For design personnel it means:
- Great attention to detail when completing system layout drawings that will be approved by the AHJ the first time.

For field service personnel it means:
- Completely testing systems in accordance with the scope of the contract
- Locating and testing all devices in the system
- Clearly noting any deficiencies
- Completing the inspection reports in a timely manner

For field installation personnel it means:
- Daily attention to job preparation and productivity so that projects are completed on time and under budget.

For managers it means:
- Returning customer calls promptly, especially when the subject is a complaint or other dissatisfaction
- Supporting employees with positive, constructive feedback and responding to concerns in a prompt, empathetic manner.

Remember, if we all deliver more than promised, internal and external customer service will excel, professional inter-office relationships will flourish and, more importantly, Fireline customers will be motivated to remain Fireline customers.

Congratulations to our recent Employee Recognition Award (ERA) winners. Rich Sigethy, Al Riefflin, and Matt Losignor won the award in November. Your colleagues recognize your contributions to our success and thank you for making Fireline such a great place to work!
Messages from the Managers

Fire Alarm By NORM MASON, Vice President & General Manager
I would like to congratulate my department on its recent completion of a major upgrade at the Social Security Administration’s national Computer Center. This project was phased over several months requiring extensive coordination and planning with SSA & GSA personnel along with our Client TEL. One phase of the project was completed over the Columbus Day weekend in support of the Suppression Department. This is only one of many other jobs completed by the Fire Alarm Department this year and we already have several jobs booked for next year.

Portables & Restaurant Hoods By PHIL BOWERS, Department Manager
I just want to thank all of my employees in the Baltimore portables department for their dedication and professionalism to all our customers and fellow employees which has allowed us to have another great year. I'm looking forward to the challenges next year will bring to us and I'm positive our department will meet and exceed these challenges.

Sprinkler & Suppression By TED REITTERER, Department Manager
The Suppression Department has sold our second Vortex water mist system. These are unique systems where water and nitrogen discharge together to form a mist to extinguish fires. We have several technicians that have been factory trained to install and service these systems. Additionally, we have expanded our suppression sales to West Virginia and Pennsylvania with positive feedback from potential customers.

Systems Service By FRANK CHENOWETH, Department Manager
Emily Goss has been hired as a new dispatcher and has been here for a few months. She is a quick learner, already able to dispatch independently, and has picked up on most of the necessary requirements for the job. Emily is also the wife of TJ Smallwood, Vehicle Systems Supervisor for the Leesburg office.

Leesburg Branch Office By JUSTIN FISHBACK, Branch Manager
Chris Brewster recently left the shop and is now filling the role of a portables and hood technician in the DC area, his position will be filled by Thomas Sheets. I would like to congratulate Jason Litten on the birth of his new baby boy and would like to thank the staff at the Leesburg office for their support during my transition to branch manager. I am looking forward to 2012.

Systems Sales By RON EURE, Systems Sales Manager
2011 is coming to an end with many changes to the System Sales Division and we look forward to utilizing these new tools in the New Year. Hood systems are having a very good year with booking increases in both the Baltimore (19%) and Leesburg (37%) offices. The Suppression Group excels with an 83% increase in 2011 bookings over 2010!
Meet Rob Wakes - Bringing the Brit to Baltimore

Meet Rob Wakes, our newest addition to the Fireline sales team, bringing with him smiles, a cheery disposition and a fun British accent not to mention fifteen plus years of fire protection experience. Rob has worked in the fire protection distribution and manufacturing side of business, first for Chubb Fire Limited in London and later came to the U.S. to work for Fenwal. His knowledge of suppression systems combined with his go-getter sales approach and professional attitude make Rob a fantastic addition to the sales force. With Rob has come great possibilities, his sales have increased profits and opened some exciting doors for the Sprinkler and Suppression department. One of Rob’s more recent wins, bringing in over $150k, was a Chemtron Fire Systems Low Pressure CO2 for a customer in Winchester. The local application CO2 system is protecting a large printing press. Hard work from both the installation team and projects managers culminated in a successful discharge test which was witnessed by the customer along with the local fire marshal and Fireline personnel.

Drive Safe - Winter Weather Driving Tips

While the weather has been very mild for the first part of winter, it’s inevitable that we’ll experience snow and ice sooner or later.

1. **Check your tires** - They are the most important aspect of controlling your vehicle in snow and ice conditions.
2. **Lights on** - Lights increase your visibility.
3. **No cruise control** - Don’t use cruise control on snowy or icy roads.
4. **Be careful** - Bridges, overpasses, and infrequently traveled roads freeze first.
5. **Don’t “pump” the brakes** - If you have ABS brakes this will not help in any way.
6. **Drive slowly** - Driving too quickly is the main cause of winter accidents.
7. **Pay attention** - Maneuvers are more difficult to make in the snow.
8. **Don’t tailgate** - Stopping takes much longer on snowy and icy roads than on dry pavement.
9. **Brake before making turns** - Steering while applying the brakes in the snow is more difficult.
10. **Drive smoothly** - Make sure not to make any abrupt turns or stops when driving.
11. **Be familiar with your vehicle** - Purge air brake tanks daily, check fluids, clean wiper blades and windows, clean steps and grab handles, carry chains and other safety equipment and plug in block heaters when unit is not in use.
12. **Learn how to control skids** - Practice in empty lots, be prepared for situations.
13. **Dress appropriately** - Dress warm and carry extra clothing to avoid hypothermia in the event the vehicle breaks down.

Garlic Shrimp Sizzle

**A Lisa Douglas-Blair Favorite**

**Marinade and Shrimp**

**Ingredients:**
- 3 Tbsp. Lemon Juice
- 3 Tbsp. White Wine
- 2 Tsp. Olive Oil
- 4 Cloves Garlic, Minced
- 1 Lb. Medium Shrimp (30-40), Peeled & Deveined

Combine lemon juice, wine, 2 teaspoons oil and garlic in a medium bowl. Add shrimp and toss to coat. Cover and marinate in the refrigerator for 15 minutes, tossing occasionally. Drain well, reserving marinade.

**Sauce**

**Ingredients:**
- Olive Oil Cooking Spray
- 1 Tsp. Olive Oil
- 1 Bay Leaf
- 1/4 Tsp. Crushed Red Pepper
- 1/4 Tsp. Salt, or To Taste
- 2 Tbsp. Chopped Fresh Parsley

Heat cooking spray and 1 teaspoon oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add shrimp and cook, turning once, until barely pink, about 30 seconds per side. Transfer to a plate. Add bay leaf, crushed red pepper and the reserved marinade to the pan; simmer for 4 minutes. Return the shrimp and any accumulated juices to the pan; heat through.

Season with salt; sprinkle with parsley and serve immediately.

Share your favorite EAT’s (Exceptionally Appetizing Treats) with coworkers and Fireline followers. Submit recipes to Shannon Adkins (sadkins@fireline.com) and she will upload them to Fireline’s Recipe Book on SharePoint. One favorite will be chosen each quarter and will be featured in the current edition of the Fire Flyer. Healthy food, comfort food, appetizers and entrees, all EAT’s are welcome and enjoyed.
Holiday Spirit
Holiday Spirit

Please help us welcome the newest members of our Fireline team: Matt Benfield (sprinkler service technician), Chris Biser (sprinkler service technician), Michael Levasseur (portables shop technician), Thomas Sheets II (portables technician), Amanda Adkins (administrative assistant) and Emily Goss (service dispatcher).
Future Finances — 401K Conundrum

Do I or don’t I, is it too little or too much, this fund or that fund. These are the questions we ask ourselves about our retirement on a regular basis. Today’s economy causes us to question our investment strategy. 401K is a long term commitment an investment that may experience lows but over time has proven to be more successful than short term investments. Consider your goals, speak to a professional and be sure you are making the right decisions.

January is the time of year to think about your 401K deferral rate. You will be receiving change/waiver forms in the coming weeks. Anyone having questions regarding the 401K plan or the John Hancock website please don’t hesitate to contact Cindy Rueppel at ext. 229. Fireline’s 401K financial advisor, Richard Osikowicz, can be reached at 301-543-6026 for any questions you may have regarding investment options.

Put the Team to the NICET Test

BALTIMORE, Md. (December 1, 2011) — The Fireline Corporation is proud to announce one of its own, David Riggs, was recruited by NICET as one of six team members to update and reconstruct its testing process. Dave says, “the project is steadily progressing in the last nine months with the outline being completed from which 400 questions will be written, 100 for each level. The process is expected to take another six to nine months.” He suggests if you are in the process of getting a certain level in the present certification program, you should do so in the next testing cycles available because you will not be given credit for any prior elements passed in the old test program, only in the levels achieved. The new test will require the same knowledge level or higher. Level one will now have a real meaning of accomplishment. Levels one and two are focused towards technicians. Level three is focused on design. Level four is focused on advanced design and management. This is still a work in progress but when it is finished any level of certification achieved will be something to be proud of.

SIP

There were two lost time accidents this quarter so no SIP awards were given. Stay safe out there, and do your part to help Fireline avoid lost time accidents. By doing so, you become eligible to win cash prize drawings which increase with extended accident-free periods!

A Mixed Bag – Anniversary Cards, 401K & NICET

Less Cards — Not Less Thanks
By ANNA GAVIN, President

Many years ago my father started a tradition of writing thank you cards to employees on their anniversaries with the company. I have done my best to uphold this tradition. Unfortunately, as we near 170 employees, this task has become increasingly difficult to keep on top of. Therefore, starting in January, I will be sending thank you notes for every first anniversary, five year, ten year, fifteen year etc. I hope that this does not come as too much of a disappointment. Regardless of how often I send a thank you note, I am always thankful of all the wonderful people who make up the Fireline family.

What’s New

Twas the Night Before the Upgrade
By Chris Troutman

Twas the Night Before the Upgrade, when all through the house
Not a keyboard was clicking, nor even a mouse;
The notice was sent through email with care,
In hopes that it’d be read, so then we could all share;
The files were ready all snug in their beds,
While visions of the P-drive danced in their heads;
And Shannon in her hoodie and I in my cap,
Had just finished creating a new server map;
Monday in the lot when cars began pulling in,
"Our new server is ready!" we said with a grin;
"Now, Q-drive! now, S-drive! U-drive and T! On, F-Drive! on G-Drive! on, H-Drive and V!"
On to the P-drive the documents flew,
Accessible by all, wow this is new!
A collaboration of information galore,
Will hopefully establish a new company rapport;
Manuals and programs and PDFs too,
Job files and drawings easy access for you;
From a laptop or desktop here or at home
You can now access files from wherever you roam;
You’ll need VPN to accomplish this trick,
If you don’t have it yet, see IT real quick!
So now that you’ve read our short little rhyme,
Please hop on the P-drive and take some time;
To surf through the files, we hope they are right;
Happy Christmas to all, and to all a good-night!
Family Traditions

Nugget Nonsense:
First Annual Nugget Eating Contest

Fireline’s first annual chicken nugget eating contest was held Wednesday, December 14, 2011 in the building 1 training room. The contestants and founders of this fun new tradition are Fireline Portables shop technicians, Ryan Witt, Eric Perkins and Mike Lavasseur. Each contestant was to feverishly swallow, not necessarily digest, 60 nuggets in the least amount of time. It was a blow out, Eric polished off 60 nuggets in 16 minutes and proceeded to followed them up with an orange to cleanse his pallet. Ryan came in second finishing 60 nuggets in 23 minutes and Mike sadly had to tap out with four nuggets left on the table.

Tis the Season:
Employees Having Fun With Holiday Spirit

Barb Haas and Nicole Baublitz shared their holiday spirit by decorating the systems service office with candy canes, gingerbread men, and presents. Next holiday season we encourage everyone to join in and start a new Fireline tradition.

Now You Know

Family (noun): 1. A group of people affiliated by affinity or co-residence.
Tradition (noun): 1. Ritual, belief or object passed down within society.

Coming Soon

Vol. LXV, No. 2 (Quarterly Edition—Spring) arrives Monday, April 2, 2012

Although some contributors maintain recurring articles or features in the newsletter, any Fireline employee may submit ideas or material for publication (content may be edited). The deadline for submissions is Friday, March 16th.

BYE

Fireline wishes the best of luck to Brian Jennings who has gone on to pursue new opportunities and Bobbi Jo Hall who has decided to return to school.
JOB

Fireline is seeking experienced Sprinkler and Fire Alarm Service Technicians in our Baltimore location. Good pay and benefits. Please email resume to web@fireline.com or come in to our Baltimore Office to fill out an application.