

INDIANA FIRE ASSOCIATION

Established 1878

Indiana Fireman's Relief Association

Bill Simmons
President

Mike Empfield
Chief

Paul Koons
Administrator



My name is Bill Simmons; I am president of the Indiana Fire Association. I joined the department in 1979. At that time there were 300,000 volunteer firemen in the state of Pennsylvania. Today there are 38,000 volunteers. In the past our department carried 63 active members. When you submitted your application, you were put on a waiting list until an opening occurred. Now we have 43 active members responding to over 700 calls per year.

In 2006, the IFA built this station to cover the west side of our coverage area. Included in this building is a live in section. The program is designed for student firefighters to utilize the station as a residence and to provide free living accommodations that then allow for a quick response at the time of an alarm.

Currently the program can accommodate seven live-in participants rent free. Requirements for participation in the program includes: they must be a member of the Indiana Fire Association in good standing, full time student or a part time worker, must meet minimum availability/staffing needs, and a member of their hometown fire company.

This has improved our manpower issues greatly.

Five Indiana County Fire departments were included in a SAFER Grant program. (*Staffing for Adequate Fire & Emergency Response*). \$50,000.00 came out of that program to provide scholarship support to currently enrolled IUP students who are active members of any of the five departments.

To help with recruitment and retention, the Indiana Fire Association created a Length of Service Awards Program. A major contribution for this program also came from the SAFER Grant. This is designed to reward the volunteer for fire service to the community. Based on the number a good years of service, once the member reached the age of 65, a monthly payment would be paid to the volunteer for the rest of his life.