

To: Mayor Fillingame  
From: Chief San Fillippo *PS*  
Date: March 4, 2013  
Subject: Task Force 1 training

On February 5 - 7 all Bay St. Louis firefighters, deputy chief and fire chief participated in 3 days of training conducted by professional fire instructors from Task Force 1. The focus of the training was "Engine Company Operations" (hands-on training for small departments in managing structural fires with one or two engine companies, developing firefighting strategies and tactics, alternative methods of fire attack and firefighting in multi-story sprinklered buildings).

The difference in this training compared to the training a firefighter receives at the state fire academy is that the entire department was able to train together - in the same place, at the same time, with the same instructors - while using our equipment, water system and local structures. At the academy, all firefighters are taught the basics of firefighting; this type of training takes the individual "basic training" to the next level, providing an invaluable opportunity for the individual to learn and train with their co-workers. Additionally, we learned techniques that will help us operate more efficiently, identified many "strengths" as well as areas where we can improve, and we confirmed that our current tactics and guidelines are in keeping with industry standards.

Every firefighter - regardless of their years of experience or level of training - stated that this training was "excellent", "enjoyable", they "learned a lot" and it was "different than any other training" they've experienced - and all requested that we schedule similar training at least twice a year if at all possible. To have such an enthusiastic and positive response from 20+ employees speaks volumes for the quality of the training, the instructors and Task Force 1. Training at our state academy remains essential, but we all agree that this type of training is invaluable to the department and city.

It is worth mentioning that nearly all of our firefighters attended this training on their days off, and while the tuition may seem rather expensive, the entire fire department received training with no additional expense for overtime pay, fuel, food, lodging, replacing personnel, vehicle use or other travel expenses.