



The West Virginia Chapter of the International Association of Arson Investigators

presents

921(2017) Updates & 1033 Relevance to Fire Investigators

Case Studies from an Retired ATF Division Chief at the National Explosives Task Force (NETF),

Exam of Gas Systems & Appliances-ATF

Legalities of Criminal V. Civil Cases

***Monday and Tuesday, October 16th and 17th 2017
Morgantown, West Virginia***

Speaker Biographies

Steven J. Avato has served as an Assistant Fire Marshal with the Loudoun County (VA) Fire Marshal's Office since April 2016. He functions as a sworn Virginia law enforcement officer with local police powers to investigate fires, explosions and hazardous materials events and to make arrests and issue summonses where warranted. As a certified fire investigator meeting the standards of NFPA 1033, Standard for Professional Qualifications for Fire Investigator, he conducts investigations into the origin and cause of fires occurring within Loudoun County and analyzes the fire incidents to identify responsibility or to identify patterns, liability concerns or hazardous conditions to insure public safety. As a certified Fire Inspector II (NFPA 1031, Standard for Professional Qualifications for Fire Inspector), he conducts inspections of buildings within Loudoun County to insure compliance with the Statewide Fire Prevention Code and related County and local requirements to protect citizens from the threat of fire, explosion or hazardous materials releases.

Prior to his employment with Loudoun County, Mr. Avato was employed with the United States Department of Justice, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) from May 1989 until his retirement in March 2016. During that career, he served in numerous fire and explosion related specialty positions including ATF Division Chief at the National Explosives Task Force (NETF), an interagency "whole of government" approach to monitoring explosives incidents, responses and emerging threats from the criminal and terrorist use of

explosives. From April 2005 until September 2013, he was the Resident Agent in Charge (RAC) of the Falls Church I (Arson / Explosives) Field Office (ATF) where he supervised a staff of criminal investigators who investigated fire, explosion and explosives related incidents in Washington D.C. and Northern Virginia. He previously served as a training manager in ATF's Arson and Explosives Division, a National Response Team (NRT) Supervisor and the National Response Team program manager. Avato was an ATF Certified Fire Investigator and an ATF Certified Explosives Specialist investigating incidents in Southeastern Pennsylvania while assigned to the Philadelphia Arson Group and in Southern New Jersey while assigned to the Trenton (NJ) Field Office.

Mr. Avato is currently a Certified Fire Investigator through the International Association of Arson Investigators (IAAI). In 2000, he was honored by the IAAI as Investigator of the Year in recognition of his involvement in the investigation of a double fatal fire in Southeastern Pennsylvania.

Jeremy Neagle, P.E., CFPS, CT is a Professional Engineer with more than twenty years' experience in electrical engineering.

He is an Electrical Engineer with the ATF Fire Research Laboratory located in Beltsville, MD. He is primarily responsible to provide technical assistance to ATF Special Agents, Certified Fire Investigators (CFI), National Response Teams (NRT), and other law enforcement and fire service personnel on electrical engineering matters as they pertain to fire and explosion investigations. This includes: evaluating electrical systems, components and equipment failures; evaluating facilities and equipment for determining applicable electrical code compliance; evaluating the causation of, or contribution to, fires by electrical appliances, equipment and distribution systems. He conducts forensic examinations of electrical equipment which include detailed visual and microscopic examination, radiographic (X-ray) examination, and non-destructive and destructive testing in the laboratory and on incident scenes. His examinations may be conducted in the presence of other engineers, manufacturer representatives, law enforcement and fire service personnel, and attorneys. He serves as an expert witness in support of his examinations.

Michelle Gaston, J.D. West Virginia University, B.A. West Virginia Tech. Concentrates her practice in the areas of general litigation, insurance coverage, and extra-contractual matters. Ms. Gaston's practice also involves reviewing insurance policies, researching insurance coverage issues, drafting coverage opinions, representing clients in coverage disputes, and representing clients in bad faith or other extra-contractual matters, including administrative proceedings before the West Virginia Insurance Commission.

Ms. Gaston also represents clients in fraud and arson cases involving insurance matters. Specifically, she assisted clients with the investigation of claims, including arson and theft claims, scheduling and conducting Examinations Under Oath and sworn statements

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Defended clients at the Offices of the Insurance Commissioner against consumer complaints alleging unfair claims settlement practices

Researched and drafted insurance coverage opinions

Represented clients in initiating and defending declaratory judgment actions to determine the existence or nonexistence of insurance coverage

Defended clients in litigation alleging "bad faith" and Unfair Trade Practices

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ROOM AVAILABILITY

The Group ID is

Fire Investigation Conference

**A block of rooms are reserved for arrival on
Sunday, October 15th with check out on Tuesday, October 17th .
The cost per room is \$99.00.**

The room block is limited and you are encouraged to make your room reservation immediately. Please specify King Suite or Double Queen Suite when reserving your room.



SEMINAR REGISTRATION

IAAI Members	\$100.00
Non-Members	\$125.00
Students*	\$ 50.00

*Student rate applies to those currently enrolled in a Fire Science, Forensics or Criminal Justice program.

CLASS SIZE IS LIMITED TO 100 PEOPLE AND MUST BE STRICTLY ENFORCED!

Registrations received after the class size limit is reached will be returned.

PLEASE REGISTER EARLY

This is a tested course for points toward IAAI-CFI Continuing Education and Law Enforcement in-service training credit. Training Certificates are issued by the West Virginia Chapter of the IAAI. The WVIAAI reserves the right to refuse admission to any party.

Name: _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

E-mail: _____

Seminar Schedule:

Classes: 8:00 am – 5:00 pm both days
Lunch on your own from 12:00 am – 1:00 pm

Seminar Contacts:

George Harms 304-279-3344
Bob Sullivan 304-562-1684

**Return registration form with payment to:
West Virginia Chapter IAAI
P. O. Box 1218
Scott Depot, WV 25560**

Participants or agencies with purchase orders, can email registrations to bobsullivancfi@gmail.com or george.a.harms@wv.gov