



**TRI-STATE
FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT**

419 PLAINFIELD ROAD • DARIEN, ILLINOIS 60561 • (630) 323-6445

August 24, 2020

Tristate Village Residents,

It has been brought to my attention that there is a concern from the neighborhood that the new training facility that is being completed as part of the construction project at Station 121 on Sunrise Avenue will allow “live fire / live burn” type training.

I want to assure all concerned that this **is not true**. The only smoke being used or coming out of that facility will be theatrical smoke, which is non-toxic. The training facility is not designed or constructed to the standards necessary to conduct live burn (real fire) training scenarios. In layman’s terms, the structure **cannot withstand** the high temperatures associated with that type of training. What’s more the structure itself would be substantially damaged to the point of not being able to use it at all, if a future fire administration allowed this type of training. I honestly don’t see anyone in a future administration being that foolish or irresponsible.

Other concerns, such as “why do you need a training tower?” “They’re going to conduct training on the weekends, and at all hours of the night.”

Simply stated, we’ve hired 31 firefighters since January of 2016, and will hire 2 more in the next few months. That’s more than half of our emergency response personnel.

First, we as an administration owe it to you the citizens and to the first responders to ensure that they are trained to the proper level of professionalism to respond safely and competently to all types of emergency scenarios. This training tower will allow for training our current firefighters, all new recruits/candidates, and provide for the continual emergency incident response training of firefighters well into the future.

Second, we currently don’t have a facility to train in without traveling outside our district boundaries, having to rely on other departments to allow us (Tristate personnel) to train at their facilities. This isn’t practical since many times they are using their facilities for their personnel and the facility isn’t available for our use. Traveling outside our boundaries also leaves our stations and response districts uncovered, which equates to longer response times to emergency incidents.

Third, the District does not have the means to “purchase property somewhere in an industrial park and build facilities there.” I agree, that would be ideal. We could even

have a facility that could accommodate live fire training in that instance, but we have to present a balanced budget every year, and we must live within our means. That's something we simply cannot afford to do.

Finally, please know we have made every effort to have the training facility look as much as possible "like a normal structure" on property that the District currently owns. We specifically instructed the architects during the design phase that this is a residential neighborhood, that the structure could not be an eyesore. We have had a good relationship with our neighbors in the Tristate Village. All of us at the Tristate Fire Protection District look forward to (hopefully) continuing that relationship with your community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sam Molinaro". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sam Molinaro, Fire Chief