

Fire Stations Seeing Fewer Lightning-Related Losses Thanks to Efforts of Building Lightning Safe Communities Campaign

MARYVILLE, Mo., Oct. 8, 2014 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- Fire stations across the country are seeing fewer lightning-related losses thanks to a safety initiative that continues to provide complimentary lightning protection systems for at-risk structures. The Lightning Protection Institute (LPI) began the "Building Lightning Safe Communities" initiative two years ago in an effort to provide lightning protection resources to the public and the fire safety community. Since then, LPI-member firms have donated approximately \$200,000 in lightning protection systems for fire stations in Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Illinois, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri and Texas. These systems have helped protect fire personnel, structures and sensitive communications equipment against lightning.

"Lightning can pose special concerns for fire professionals and emergency responders," said Bud VanSickle, LPI executive director. "When lightning ignites fires or damages sensitive communications equipment, responsiveness and safety resources can be compromised. The Building Lightning Safe Communities initiative is providing lightning protection systems to help prevent these scenarios," explained VanSickle.

"Lightning caused serious problems for our fire station and diminished our ability to respond when it took out our generator, phone and pager system," said Mike Johnson, assistant fire chief for the SNI Valley Fire Protection District in Oak Grove, Mo.

According to Johnson, the SNI station suffered two separate lightning incidents that caused approximately \$30,000 in lightning losses. The station has since been equipped with a lightning protection system, which was donated and installed by LPI-member firm, Preferred Lightning Protection Inc. of Maryville, Mo.

"Lightning protection is a must for fire safety facilities and we are extremely grateful to Preferred for their generous donation," said Johnson. "The SNI station has not suffered a single lightning loss since the lightning protection system was installed."

"Communities also benefit when firefighters promote awareness about lightning safety and protection," said Ken Pettlon, owner of Preferred Lightning Protection, Inc. who facilitated the system donation for the SNI station. "Our industry encourages firefighters to include relevant information about lightning incidents in their NFIRS and NFPA reports. Accurate reporting can increase awareness about the lightning risk and remind the public that there are measures available to protect their structures," explained Pettlon. The lightning protection system required multiple copper ground terminations and took a week for Preferred to install. The system is valued at \$25,000.

NFPA has sponsored Fire Prevention Week since 1922, which is believed to be the longest running public health and safety observance on record. The NFPA also publishes the NFPA 780 Standard for the Installation of Lightning Protection Systems which is a valuable resource for reducing lightning risks. Visit [www.firepreventionweek.org

] (http://globalmessaging1.prnewswire.com/clickthrough/servlet/clickthrough?msg_id=7823552&adr_order=9&url=aHR0cDovL3d3dy5maXJlcHJldmVudGlvbnd1ZWsub3JnLw%3D%3D) for more information about fire safety and NFPA's annual campaign.

LPI recently released a public service announcement which spotlights the severity of lightning's destruction and promotes protection resources through the Building Lightning Safe Communities campaign. Appropriately, the PSA features a fire chief as the expert "voice" to promote the campaign safety message.

The Lightning Protection Institute (LPI) is a not-for-profit nationwide group founded in 1955 to promote lightning safety, awareness and education and is a leading resource for lightning protection installation in accordance with national safety standards. LPI supports lightning protection quality control and assurance through third-party inspection. Information about follow-up inspection services can be found at [www.lpi-ip.com

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_id=7823552&adr_order=9&url=aHR0cDovL3d3dy5scGktaXAuY29tLw%3D%3D). For a list of certified contractors visit the LPI website at [www.lightning.org] (http://globalmessaging1.prnewswire.com/clickthrough/servlet/clickthrough?msg_id=7823552&adr_order=9&url=aHR0cDovL3d3dy5saWdodG5pbmdzYm9yZy8%3D). For more information about the Building Lightning Safe Communities campaign visit [www.lightningsafe.org] (http://globalmessaging1.prnewswire.com/clickthrough/servlet/clickthrough?msg_id=7823552&adr_order=9&url=aHR0cDovL3d3dy5saWdodG5pbmdzYWZlLm9yZy8%3D). To view LPI's new "Building Lightning Safe Communities" PSA, [[Click here](http://globalmessaging1.prnewswire.com/clickthrough/servlet/clickthrough?msg_id=7823552&adr_order=9&url=aHR0cDovL3d3dy5saWdodG5pbmdzYm9yZy8%3D)] (http://globalmessaging1.prnewswire.com/clickthrough/servlet/clickthrough?msg_id=7823552&adr_order=9&url=aHR0cDovL3d3dy5saWdodG5pbmdzYm9yZy8%3D).

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