



The Illinois IAAI Chapter Presents the  
**Buxton/Mazzone Southern Zone**

Fire/Arson Training Conference

May 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>, 2026

8:00 am - 5:00 pm each day

Southwestern Illinois College - "West Campus"  
*Law Enforcement Training Center*

2300 West Main Street

Belleville, IL 62226

**16 Tested Hours - \$95.00 - Lunch Included!!!**

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**May 11<sup>TH</sup> - Consent to be on/in a Fire Scene, (Exigent Circumstances/Search Warrants/Consent Forms) - 8:00 am - 12:00 pm**

Instructors - St. Clair County Asst. State's Attorney Mel Kimberlin  
Retired IL State Fire Marshal, Special Agent Greg Vespa

**May 11<sup>TH</sup> - Case Study, US v Pigg - Arson for Profit/Insurance Fraud - 1:00 pm - 5:00 pm**

Instructor - Assistant United States Attorney, Kevin Burke

**May 12<sup>TH</sup> - Solar Panels and the Fire Investigator - 8:00 am - 5:00 pm**

Joe Paolo - EFI Global, Retired Fire Marshal, Plumsted Township Fire District

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**\*\*\*LUNCH PROVIDED WITH REGISTRATION\*\*\***

Preferred Hotels: Double Tree by Hilton, 1000 Eastport Plaza Drive Collinsville, IL (618)-345-2800  
Drury Inn St. Louis/Collinsville, 602 No. Bluff Road Collinsville, IL (618)-345-7700  
LaQuinta Inns & Suites, #6 Gateway Drive Collinsville, IL (618)-855-8400

Contacts for this event are Chester Borkowski (618) 410-3805, Shane Emrich (618) 925-0174, or Andrew Miller (618)-599-1112

**To register, go to the [Chapter Home Page](#) and [Click the Southern Zone Button](#)**

*The IL-IAAI reserves the right to make changes to the itinerary as necessary.*

Testing will be done on CFITrainer.net, using a PIN number that will be provided at the end of the conference. Disclaimer: No liability is assumed by the IL-IAAI for changes in program content, speakers, or venue. The instructor's presentation and content thereof are the responsibility of the individual instructor and not necessarily endorsed by any of the persons or organizations associated with this seminar. The IL-IAAI reserves the right to cancel, alter, or substitute any class or instructor without advanced notice. Cancellation policy- Full refund available up to 31 days before conference start, 50% refund available 30 days or less before conference start. Payment due at time of registration or at the door on the day of event.

## INSTRUCTOR BIOS...



### **Mel Kimberlin - St. Clair County Assistant State's Attorney**

**Mel Kimberlin** is semi-retired from the St. Clair County Assistant State's Attorney, having served St. Clair County for 8 years. Prior to his time with St. Clair County, he worked as an Engineer Leidos, Lockheed Martin, and APPTIS, Mel holds a Master of Business Administration (MBA) from Columbia Southern University and a Juris Doctorate from St. Louis University School of Law. During his time at the State's Attorney's Office, Mel was assigned as Supervisor for the Domestic Violence/Special Victim's Unit, and with the Violent Crimes Unit, working directly with the Illinois State Police, prosecuting major crimes committed in the Metro East Area of St. Clair County.



### **Greg Vespa - Office of the IL State Fire Marshal, Division of Arson Investigation - Special Agent/AD K-9 Handler (Retired)**

**Greg Vespa** retired from the Illinois State Fire Marshal's Division of Arson Investigation after nearly twenty years of dedicated service in the Metro East Area of Southwestern Illinois, having a combined total of forty years-plus of Civilian and Military Law Enforcement experience. He also served as a volunteer firefighter, (Captain/ Training Officer), and Paramedic at the Riverton Area Fire Protection District and Springfield Area Ambulance respectively. Greg also retired from the Illinois Air National Guard/ U.S. Air Force after twenty-one years of service at the rank of Master Sergeant and was the 183<sup>rd</sup> Fighter Wings Anti-Terrorism Operations Officer for the last four years of his service. During his career with the State Fire Marshal, he investigated over 1600 fire/arson incidents, attained his IAAI Certified Fire Investigator qualification, his Certified Fire/ Explosion Investigator through NAFI, as well as being a Illinois State Certified Law Enforcement Officer, Crime Scene Technician, an attendee of the BATF & E Advanced Arson Investigation/Courtroom Testimony Course, the FBI Post Blast Investigator's Course, and was an Accelerant Detection K-9 Handler, trained through both Maine Specialty Dogs and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives, serving on the latter's National Response Team as an AD K-9 Handler for five years. He also served as a Adjunct Instructor with the University of Illinois, Fire Services Institute for ten years, instructing the Fire Investigation Modules and Fire Investigation Introduction Courses through the Cornerstone Program. Greg continues to be highly active in the Illinois Chapter of the IAAI, having served in all four Presidential roles, Director, and Committee Chair and Member of several Chapter Committees, as well as being a past Committee Member for the IAAI.



### **Kevin Burke - Assistant United States Attorney, Southern Illinois District**

**Kevin Burke** is an Assistant United States Attorney who has worked in the U.S. Department of Justice for twenty years, with a focus on financial crimes and public corruption. He has served in diplomatic roles abroad, including training and advising foreign judges and prosecutors. Kevin's work includes close cooperation with the ATF and other investigators in arson and insurance fraud prosecutions in the Southern District of Illinois.



### **Joseph Paolo - Retired Plumsted Township Captain/Fire Marshal, Current Fire Investigator with EFI Global, East Coast**

Joseph Paolo has over thirty years of Emergency Services experience, with twenty-four of that being in fire investigation. Joe has been both a volunteer and career Firefighter and Fire Officer and retired as Captain/Fire Marshal from the Plumsted Township Fire District, #1, in April 2024. Prior to being hired in 2009 with Plumsted, Joe served as an Ocean County Assistant Fire Marshal, conducting fire code inspections and fire investigations. He has been involved in over 500 investigations during his career and is very active with the International Association of Arson Investigators (IAAI), currently serving on their Board of Directors and belongs to the following State Chapters of the IAAI, New Jersey, North Carolina, South Carolina, Florida, and Texas. Currently, Joe instructs many fire investigation classes throughout New Jersey and across the Country for other State Chapters.

