



2005 Hurricane Recovery

We are proud to serve an industry that demonstrates the best qualities of society in the worst of circumstances. Many of you were among the first to be involved in search and rescue operations, and many more have sent personnel and equipment to assist.

Currently in Development

We are on the verge of releasing an unprecedented number of new and enhanced solutions in the next several quarters. The FH Mobile suite will grow. This year we released FH Mobile Preplans, the first application that is part of a planned suite of applications designed to extend FIREHOUSE Software into the field using mobile computers. The FH Mobile solutions have proven to be useful in ways that we did not predict. FH Mobile Preplans can be used in the field by anyone with interest in occupancy information, even agencies that do not use FIREHOUSE Software like inspectors, maintenance crews, or police. FH Mobile Preplans does not need to be confined to mobile computers, dispatch agencies can install FH Mobile Preplans on their network and use the FH Mobile Preplans records to communicate occupancy information to responding units.

FH Mobile Incident Command is now available. FH Mobile Incident Command joins the FH Mobile suite, providing a solution that helps NIMS-trained personnel command incident scenes. FH Mobile EMS is currently in development. FH Mobile EMS is intended to allow field patient care reporting, with field friendly features to simplify and speed data entry and, of course, completely integrate with FIREHOUSE Software. Look for more information on FH Mobile EMS on our website at <http://www.firehousesoftware.com/new.htm>.

We are currently working on FIREHOUSE Software version 7. FH 7 includes features that have been requested by clients, including an FH-wide messaging system, user-defined field captions for selected fields, and numerous enhancements that will simplify data entry. With FIREHOUSE Software version 7, we will also release an optional database replication utility for FH Enterprise clients that need to manage multiple FDIDs. For example, a county can administrate a single FH Enterprise installation with multiple FDIDs, while the individual FDID agencies access the central FH Enterprise database (with access to only their FDID's records). We plan to release FH 7 early next year, and distribute the update to all FH 6 clients with support throughout the year.

Tip from Rich...

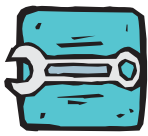
by Rich Mueller, sales rep in ND, SD, MN, IA, WI, IL, and MI

In FIREHOUSE Software, there is an extremely powerful feature called System Rules & Default Values. In this "Tip", I will cover some simple examples to give you just a glimpse of what can be done using System Rules & Default Values. There are 5 options:

- Set a Default Value;
- Set a Non-required Field to Required, either always or conditionally;
- Disable a Field;
- Define Field Error Condition and provide feedback to the user; and
- Update a Field Based on Information Entered in Another Field.

Scenario 1: Assume that a department wants to check the first letter of a staff member's *Last Name* to make sure it is Upper Case. Here are the steps:

- Select the **System Rules** option under the **Administration** menu. The **System Rules and Default Values** form is displayed.
- Select the *Staff* category plus sign to expand the list of tables, then double-click STF_MAI N. The **System Rules and Default Values - Staff Members** form is displayed
- Locate the Last (Last Name) field in the list of fields on the left side of the window, select it with a single click, then press **ADD**.
- Select the **Define Field Error Condition** option. There are 3 areas to be filled out.
 - The first area is the "check" expression that we want to make. Enter the following:
`left(last, 1)>>upper(left(last, 1))`
What this expression does is take the first letter of Last and compares it with the first letter in upper case.



Tips from the Field

This column details different ways our clients have put FH to work for their department. We encourage clients to submit tips and suggestions for future FireVISION articles.

NFIRS Code Comments

NFIRS lookup codes and descriptions can not be edited, but there is a *Comments* field that information can be added to. Some departments have added information from the NFIRS Handbook or other sources to key NFIRS codes to help clarify when specific NFIRS codes should be used.

Access NFIRS codes using the following steps:

- From the **Tools** menu, select **Lookup Tables...**
- Select **Incident Report Codes**, highlight the lookup table containing the codes to add comments to, then press **Setup**.
- Highlight the code to edit, then press **Edit**.
- Add information to *Comments*.

In addition to providing helpful hints about specific codes, information included in the *Comments* field is included when you search for specific codes:

- From the **Tools** menu, select **Lookup Tables...**
- Select **Incident Report Codes**, highlight the lookup table containing the codes to add comments to, then press **Setup**.
- Press **Find**.

- Type keywords or a phrase used in the code's *Code*, *Description*, or *Comments* fields.
- Press **OK**.

The first code that contains the specified value is highlighted.

PDF Attachments

The Portable Document Format (PDF) is a standardized file format that can be viewed using free Adobe Reader® software from Adobe. Some departments have invested in additional software that allows them to output PDF files from their graphic programs, word processing programs, or any program that contains information that is useful as FH record attachments. Any information that can be printed can also be output directly to PDF. There are several advantages to using the PDF format for attachments:

- The PDF file sizes are generally smaller than 'native' formats, so the total space used by attachments can be drastically reduced.
- All that is required to view a PDF is a free PDF reader program, rather than whatever specific software is required to view 'native' files (for example, graphics, word processing, or other attachment file formats).

Technical Support

Below is a quick overview of the steps to take should you require assistance while using FH:

- Press the F1 key. If FH is open, context sensitive help is displayed. At the bottom of each topic is a 'related topics' button that links to related information.
- Check the printed manuals. There are over 600 pages of printed documentation included with each full system. If you believe information is missing from online help or printed manuals, please email your suggestion to fhdocumentation@acs-inc.com.
- Search our website at <http://www.acs-inc.com/firehousesoftware> for information. We also have an online database of support tips and solutions at <http://kb.firehousesoftware.com>.
- Contact technical support. An online form is available at <http://www.firehousesoftware.com/sup/support.php>, or call us at 1.800.921.5300 then follow the prompts. Regardless of how you contact us, please help us help you by including accurate contact information including your name, department name, city, and state, a brief summary of the issue, and your current FH version.

FIREHOUSE Software Notes

2005 FHETS Denver Registration

October 17, 2005 is the last day to reserve your spot at the FHETS 2005 Denver event that will be conducted November 2nd to the 5th. More than 150 have registered to attend the event. Michael Byrne, Director of Justice and Public Safety for Microsoft Corporation, will deliver the keynote speech. Online registration and additional information is available at <http://www.firehousesoftware.com/fhets>.

ESRI PMF Support

Future versions of FH Mobile will include the ability to view ESRI GIS data output in 'Published Map File' (PMF) format.

Your Current Address

Please keep us up-to-date with your contact information, including main FH contact, contact email, contact phone, and department address.

Rich Tips, from Page 1

The comparison is “not equal to” – that is what the “<>” means. If this expression results in a true condition, then an error occurs.

- The second area is where you enter whatever feedback message you want to provide the user such as “First letter of the Last must be Upper Case”.
- The third area is to state whether the error is critical (must be corrected), warning (error can be ignored), or information only. I would make it critical to force the user to correct the situation.

Scenario 2: This will be an example of ‘Update the Value of Another Field’. Assume the department wants the staff member’s *First Name* to be all Upper Case, regardless of the case of each letter entered. Access the **System Rules and Default Values - Staff Members** form.

- Locate the `First` (First Name) field in the list of fields on the left side of the window, select it with a single click, then press **ADD**.
- Select the **Update the Value of Another Field** option.
- There are 3 areas to be filled out.
 - The first area is the field to update – `FIRST`.
 - The second area contains the expression that tells FH under what condition the *First Name* field is to be updated. Use the following:
`!empty(first)`
This checks whether the `First` field is NOT empty. In other words, there is data.
 - The third area contains the expression of what should be used to update the *First Name* field. Use the following:
`upper(first)`
This replaces whatever was entered into the *First Name* field with all the letters in Upper Case.

Scenario 3: We will use the Staff member’s *Last Name* field again. In this case we will make sure that the first letter of the last name is Upper Case and all remaining letters are in Lower Case.

- Use the same procedure as you did in Scenario 2, except use the `Last` (Last Name) field as the information for the first area and the second area. In the third area use the following:
`Upper(Left>Last, 1))+Lower(Substr>Last, 2))`
The "Upper" above makes the first letter Upper Case. The `Substr` function extracts a subset of the *Last Name*, starting with the 2nd letter and all remaining letters, then makes them Lower Case.

These examples are just a few simple ones. One can generate thousands more and make them much more complex. Try some examples yourself. Good luck.

EMS Corner

EMS is a major focus of our current development efforts:

- The NHTSA 2.2 code set will be available with the next version of FIREHOUSE Software (FH 7), and we are planning on taking the steps required to certify FH as 'NEMESIS-compliant'. We are participating in the 2005 NEMESIS Software Developers Meeting October 29, 2005 and we will post additional information in next quarter's newsletter. FH 7 is scheduled to be available in 1st Quarter 2006.
- Work on the FH Mobile EMS patient care field reporting component for FH has started. This software solution is designed for EMS personnel in the field and will provide a powerful tool to EMS personnel. Relevant information from the main FH database will be available in the FH Mobile EMS database, and finished FH Mobile EMS records will create EMS incident report records. We will post additional information about FH Mobile EMS as soon as it is available.



Stop By and See Us

<i>Date</i>	<i>Show</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Show</i>
10/06/05 10/08/05	FDIC East, Atlantic City, NJ	10/20/05 10/21/05	Minnesota Fire Chiefs, St. Cloud, MN
10/18/05 10/19/05	Illinois Fire Chiefs, Peoria, IL		





Department Profile

Each quarter, we profile a different department. If you would like your department profiled, send us some information about your department.

Fire Department: Maplewood Fire Department

Location: Maplewood, MN

Fire Chief: Steve Lukin

Personnel: 96 (15 career, 81 paid on-call)

Stations: 5 stations

Pop. Served: 36,000

Calls: 3,007/year

Apparatus: 10 engines, 1 ladder platform, 6 ALS units, 1 brush, 1 air salvage

Software: FH Enterprise

Comments: Established in 1997 by consolidating three independent private fire corporations into one municipal department, creating one of the largest and busiest combination departments in Minnesota.



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This Issue

Let us know if we have incorrect contact information

<http://www.firehousesoftware.com/dwnld/newsletter.htm>
An online version of this newsletter is available at

3345 106th Circle
Urbandale, Iowa 50322