



Thank You!



2004 was a great year as we released a major new FIREHOUSE Software® (FH) version and a new extra cost module named FH Accounts Receivable™, and distributed thousands of FH 6 updates to clients with active support contracts. We are pleased with the reception FH 6 has received, but as always, we are actively implementing your suggestions for future versions.

We will finish distributing the remaining FH 6 updates by the end of February. We plan on releasing several new products in 2005. FH Mobile™ Preplans is designed to be used for reviewing occupancy information on laptops and tablet computers en route to scene. We will also release FH Web™, a web-enabled version of FH that enables record entry using your choice of Internet browser.

We are planning two FHETS events in 2005. The first event is in Charlotte, NC on March 3 to 5 and the February 8, 2005 deadline to register is fast approaching. The second event is in Denver, CO on November 2nd to the 5th, 2005. We will not usually have two FHETS events a year, but we wanted to move toward an annual Fall event and did not want to go one and a half years between events.

Thank you for choosing FH, and for your continued support.

Tip from Rich...

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

In this "Tip", we will discuss the **Add Group** option used when adding staff members to a Staff Activity record (including staff activities added from Fire and EMS Incidents) and/or a Training record. You can specify the default method of listing staff via the **Administrative Options** form *Staff* section. From the **Administration** menu, select the **Administrative Options** option, then select the *Staff* tab. Select the **Default Staff Group Select Method**. The choices are: "Station Roster", "Staff Master Record (Criteria)", and "Saved Groups". The default setting is "Staff Master Record (Criteria)". I recommend "Staff Master Record (Criteria)" for most departments unless you use FH Staff Scheduling and/or the station roster to assign individuals to units each day.

This tip concentrates on the "Staff Master Record (Criteria)" option. When adding activity or training records, press **Add Group** to add staff members to the record. Select *Staff Group Select...* and the **Staff Group Select** form is displayed with a list of staff members on the left that match criteria specified on the right side of the form. Remember for this "Tip" we are concentrating on the options available in the **Staff Group Select** form *Staff Master* section.

The available criteria fields on the **Staff Group Select** form *Staff Master* section include 5 fields for specifying criteria: *Status*, *FDID*, *Station*, *Shift*, and *Unit*. There also are a few check boxes at the bottom of the right side but for now, we will put those aside. There are no preset values set up for this form, but FH passes values from the master record if available (i.e., if a *Station* value is specified in the master record it is automatically inserted). When a user accesses the **Staff Group Select** form and criteria values from the master record are inserted (e.g., the *Station* field or the *Shift* field) only staff members with the specified criteria value included in their master record are displayed. When departments call to say they do not see all their members on the **Staff Group Select** form, it is often because they do not realize that this form is excluding staff that do not have the specified criteria values added to their master staff records.

If you want to display all available staff, complete the following steps. Delete the values from all 5 criteria fields in the **Staff Group Select** form. All available staff are listed. Press **Save Criteria As...**, then type

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A quarterly publication with fire-industry news, FIREHOUSE Software tips, and other helpful information

"All Members" and check *Save as Default*, then press **OK**. Next time **Add Group** is used, all members are displayed (unless they are hidden).

You can set up additional saved criteria like "Station 1 Members", "Shift A Members", etc. Each one of the saved criteria are available to be used. However, only one saved criteria can be the default. Typically "All Members" would be the default. When the **Staff Group Select** form is displayed all staff members are displayed and you can select any saved criteria using the *Restore from Saved Criteria* dropdown.

Just one final comment on the check boxes on the right side that we put aside. By default, FH does not display members when *Hide* is checked in the staff member's record. Members are typically marked as hidden because they retire, are terminated, etc. One of the options on the **Staff Group Select** form is *View Hidden Staff Members* that can be used if you wish to include hidden staff.

Hope this helps shed some light on the **Add Group** option. Additional information about using **Add Group** is available by pressing F1 while the **Staff Group Select** form is displayed.

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.

This tip was submitted by a client in California that found a way to post answers to frequently asked questions on the FH desktop.

Graphic Tip

There are two parts to this tip, creating a graphic file that contains the text to display on the FH desktop, and then adding the graphic to the FH desktop. For this example, we will use Microsoft Paint to create the graphic but any program capable of saving .BMP files can be used.

- From the Windows **Start** menu, select **Run...** then type 'mspaint'.
- Press **OK**. Microsoft® Paint is displayed.
- Click the text tool ("A") then type the information to display on the FH desktop.

- From the **File** menu, select **Save As...** then save the file to your FH root directory (C:\Program Files\FIREHOUSE Software by default, yours may be different). *Save as type:* can be any BMP format workstations on your network are capable of displaying, if in doubt, select "16 Color Bitmap". *File name:* can be anything descriptive.
- Access FH.
- Right-click in the middle of the FH desktop, then select *Desktop Options*.
- Highlight the *Desktop Graphic* dropdown **Select...** option, then select the BMP you saved into your FH root directory.
- Press **Select**, then **OK**.

Graphics with new FAQs are posted every week.

FIREHOUSE Software Notes

FHETS 2005 Deadline

The February 8, 2005 deadline for registering for FHETS 2005 in Charlotte, NC is fast approaching. More information is available at <http://www.firehousesoftware.com/fhets>.

January 2005 NFIRS 5

FH version 6.1.6 incorporates all changes included in the January 2005 cycle of NFIRS effective January 1, 2005.

FH 6 Updates

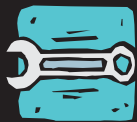
We are temporarily suspending FH 6 update shipments in the first two weeks of January because of the seasonally high call volumes. We will resume shipments on January 15, 2005. All FH 6 updates will be distributed to clients with active support by the end of February.

New Address for Mike Rogers

Mike Rogers, the sales representative for AR, KS, LA, MS, MO, OK, and TX, recently moved to a new address:
10051 Barton Circle
Frisco, TX 75035
Phone: 888-941-3473,
214-504-0242 (DFW local)
Fax: 214-504-0244

FH Support Email

Due to the flood of spam, we are 'retiring' the support@firehousesoftware.com email address in favor of the new support form interface that also provides additional information for clients and ensures that we receive information we can use to promptly resolve issues. Go to <http://support.firehousesoftware.com> to access the technical support request form.



Using the New DateTime Fields in FH 6

by Dan Thomas, Software Development Manager

If you have already received your update to FH 6, you've no doubt spent some time exploring or playing with a few of the great new features. One new feature that is somewhat hidden that adds significant value to FH query and reporting capabilities is the addition of new SQL datetime fields which help simplify elapsed time calculations.

In a fire department records management system, tracking dates and times is obviously very important. Once recorded, you also need to be able to perform calculations on those values to generate various types of analysis reports. From the beginning, FH has maintained date and time fields separately. For example, FH 5 stores incident alarm date and time in two fields, namely ALM_DATE and ALM_TIME in the INC_MAIN table. Maintaining separate fields for date and time has advantages. Running a query of incidents based on a specific day of the week, or for a specific range of dates, is easier when you have just the date value to work with. Likewise, running queries to extract all incident reports that occur between specific hours of the day, regardless of date, is easier when you have just the time value to work with.

In FH versions prior to 6, functions were provided to facilitate date and time calculations. Functions like ELAPSED(), or CALCTIME() were created to take two pairs of separate date time values and return either a formatted time value "HH:MM:SS" or a number indicating the elapsed time between the two. Now, with the addition of datetime values in FH 6, those same calculations can be performed more easily by simply subtracting two fields. For example, to determine basic response time in FH 5 (time between alarm and first unit arrival), you would have to use an FH function in a custom expression that would look something like this:

```
ELAPSED(INC_MAIN.ALM_DATE, INC_MAIN.ALM_TIME,  
INC_MAIN.ARV_DATE, INC_MAIN.ARV_TIME, 2)
```

This would return the difference in seconds between the alarm date and time value pair and the first unit arrival date and time value pair. Now in FH 6, date and time field pairs also have a corresponding datetime field which is a single field that represents the combined value of the two. So in addition to ALM_DATE and ALM_TIME, the INC_MAIN table now also has a field named ALM_DTTM. So this same calculation can now be represented in a query much more easily by the following:

```
INC_MAIN.ARV_DTTM - INC_MAIN.ALM_DTTM
```

In this case, you are simply subtracting an earlier datetime value from a later one, and the resulting value is the number of seconds between the two. This is similar to subtracting two date fields with FH 5 or earlier versions, which will give you a number of days between the two date values. In addition to being easier, one more advantage to these direct calculations is that they execute more quickly than using a function, so query performance may be improved in some cases.

One important thing to remember if you want to make use of the new datetime fields in a query or report is that the datetime values are only available for records entered or updated using FH 6. Datetime values for updated legacy records are not populated by default because of the time and processing overhead caused by the calculation. To populate datetime fields in updated FH legacy records, run fhrecalc.exe (located in the root FIREHOUSE Software folder).

So where do you find these new fields? You will see them listed in available fields in the FH query designer, next to their corresponding date and time field pair. Generally speaking, the field name will substitute "DTTM" in place of the name "DATE" or "TIME" in the corresponding portion of the date and time field names.

Be sure to attend the FHETS conference March 3-5 in Charlotte, NC for more insight into the new features available in FH 6. For more information visit

<http://www.firehousesoftware.com/fhets>

Stop By and See Us

Date	Show	Date	Show
01/09/05	TAFE Annual Instructor's Conference, San Antonio, TX	02/04/05	Winter Fire School, Columbia, MO
01/19/05	Mid-Winter Fire Chief's Meeting, Jackson, MS	02/12/05 02/13/05	Iowa Winter Fire School, Ames, IA
01/21/05 01/22/05	LSU Fire & Emergency Training Institute Conf., Baton Rouge, LA	02/24/05 02/26/05	Winter Fire Expo, Blytheville, AR
01/27/05 01/29/05	Working Together Conference, Milwaukee, WI	02/25/05 02/26/05	Virginia Fire Chiefs Conference, Virginia Beach, VA
01/29/05 01/30/05	Long Island Fire, Rescue & EMS Mega Show, Uniondale, NY	03/03/05 03/04/05	WI State Firefighters' Association Convention, Green Bay, WI





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:	Netcong Fire Department
Location:	Netcong, New Jersey
Fire Chief:	Michael A. Pellek
Personnel:	Approximately 80 members
Stations:	2
Pop. Served:	3,500 residents in a 1 square mile area
Calls:	80 per year
Apparatus:	3 class A pumpers, 1 mini-pumper, 1 utility unit, 1 incident command vehicle.
Software:	FIREHOUSE Software
Comments:	<p>Established in 1905, the Netcong Fire Department currently serves a population of 3,500 residents operating out of 2 stations. We are all volunteer. Netcong is a small community in northwest New Jersey conveniently located off Interstate 80 and state highways 46 and 206, and is frequented by many for it's "home town" atmosphere. A progressive department with the busiest Firefighter Assistance & Search (FAST) team in Morris County, our FAST team is also used frequently in Sussex and Warren counties.</p> <p>We used our FIRE Act 2003 money to upgrade all department self-contained breathing apparatus with integrated pass alarms and heads-up displays.</p> <p>We will be celebrating our 100th anniversary in June 2005, and will be hosting a large parade and celebration. The department reflects on the last 100 years of service and looks forward to serving the community for the next 100 years as well.</p>

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This Issue

Let us know if we have incorrect contact information

<http://www.firehousesoftware.com/dwnld>

An online version of this newsletter is available at

3345 106th Circle

Urbandale, Iowa 50322

FIREHOUSE Software®