



**Public Safety  
Medical  
Services**

**By the numbers...**

**784,700**

Number of volunteer firefighters in the U.S.

**18**

Number of seconds between fire responses nationally

**1990**

Year that Australia became first country to impose mandatory bike helmet use

**1,019,496**

Number of full-time law enforcement personnel nationally as of June 2000

Sources: National Fire Protection Association, U.S. Dept. of Justice, www.cycle-helmets.com

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# Public Safety Health and Wellness

Serving Those Who Protect Our Cities, Homes, and Lives

## Featured Department

### Avon Police Department Committed to Training and Safety

by Christopher M. Costlow, M.S.

#### Avon, Indiana –

Located in east Hendricks County about 6 miles west of Indianapolis, Avon officially became a town in 1997. Avon offers small-town comfort and hospitality while providing immediate access to numerous metropolitan conveniences.

The Avon Police Department, led by Chief Jeff Ritorto, serves over 7,000 residents. However, with over 600 businesses, there are more than 12,000 additional visitors making their way about town daily and over 1,600 at night.

#### Avon Creates Police Department

Chief Ritorto began his career in 1974 with the Indianapolis Police Department (IPD). In 1996, he retired from the IPD as a sergeant and came to Avon to help start a Town Marshall Service. In 1998, the department transitioned into a full-fledged police department. As the new chief, his goal was to try and emulate his early experiences with the IPD. In his early days, it was common that veteran officers helped make new officers feel welcome and take them under their wing. In his later years, this family atmosphere began to dissipate to the point where he did not even know many of his fellow officers. When Chief Ritorto laid out his plans for the Avon Police Department, creating a family atmosphere was one of the first things on his list.

#### Chief Seeks Best for His Officers

Officer safety and well-being is a #1 priority for Chief Ritorto. He is “committed to seeing his personnel

go home at night.” His goal is to have “a progressive, modern, well-trained, and safe police department.” To help meet this goal, the majority of his personnel are veterans with a minimum of a bachelor’s degree. He has never had to discipline an officer and has no sick leave abuse. In addition, a model merit system is in the works. He also seeks out the best equipment and best training available.



#### SEMA Grant Awarded

In 2002, the State Emergency Management Agency obtained a grant from Homeland Security to purchase new personal protection equipment for police and firefighters throughout the state. Conditions for the grant require officers to be “operations-level” trained for hazardous materials. Avon has the first department in the state to comply with the grant requirements. Avon police officers go through extensive emergency preparedness training involving disaster training, evacuation routes and procedures, chemical training, and incident command post structure. The incident command post structure is even more important today, as the possibility of disasters has increased. They regularly practice

their procedures in their community. “If it appears to the public that no one is in charge, there is a sense of panic. Training eases that panic”, says the Chief.

#### CSX is a Terrorist Target

One of the unique community challenges in regard to disaster training involves the Avon CSX railroad yard; one of the state’s highest terrorist targets. The rail carries hazardous materials, and military and nuclear shipments. Housing developments surround the rail yards and any leakage of chemicals could be disastrous. Officers train on evacuation and regularly test mass evacuations.

#### Wellness Has Been Good Investment

Keeping his personnel healthy is very important to Chief Ritorto. They receive complete physicals and fitness evaluations annually. His wellness program not only helps contain costs, but can lead to harder working, happier personnel as well. “If you have people who are sick a lot, instead of being encumbered by the added cost of replacing that manpower, invest in a wellness program to create a healthier department. Your officers will work harder if they know you are taking care of them,” he says.

<b>Fast Facts on the Avon Police Department</b>	
Police Chief	Jeff Ritorto
Population:	7,059
# of Officers: # of Civilians	14 2
Average Age:	33 years
Traffic per day	45,000 cars



## Public Safety Psychology News

### Reflections on the Testing Business

by Jeffrey C. Savitsky, Ph.D., JD

IPSP, Inc. is celebrating its 10th anniversary. I have been in the public safety testing business for a lot longer than 10 years, but the anniversary of IPSP as an independent company makes this an appropriate time to reflect on what I have learned over the past years.

Consulting with many different public safety departments has taught me a lot. Perhaps the most obvious lesson has been that selecting people for hire or promotion can be highly stressful but also quite rewarding. My past experience as a public safety consultant has taught me certain principles that seem to stand out. The following is a summary of those principles.

**Test scores are more important than anything, including money.** This principle is easily proven by talking to applicants or candidates who are not hired or promoted. The need to be part of a public safety department, or to be advanced, is clearly more important to most individuals than is the size of their bank account.

**Perception is everything.** Whether or not a hiring or promotion process is fair, and whether or not scores are accurate, is clearly less important than is the perceptions that applicants or candidates hold about a process. Whether or not a process succeeds or fails is more a function of belief than of reality. A successful process

must, therefore, make an effort to reassure people that the process is being done in a fair and accurate fashion.

**Communication with applicants and candidates is essential for success.** Applicants and candidates need to know what is going to happen next. A hiring or promotion process should never include any surprises.

**Not everyone is honest.** Security of testing materials is essential for the success of a promotion or selection process. Most people are honest, but some are not, and planning must recognize this unhappy fact.

**Most people recognize and appreciate fairness.** Not everyone who participates in a promotion or selection process will be successful. However, most people can look beyond their own personal success, and accept personal disappointment, so long as a process has been fair and equitable.

I am sure that I have learned a lot of other things over the past years but one thing that is clear is that the staff of IPSP has enjoyed working with public safety departments. I want to thank you all for your past support and encouragement and I look forward to continuing the efforts that we have made over the past ten years.

*Dr. Savitsky is the director of the Institute for Public Safety Personnel, Inc.*



## Your Health and Fitness

### New Research Suggests Most Efficient Way to Develop Strength

by Darrell Mendenhall, M.S.

Public safety professionals are confronted regularly with challenges that require high levels of muscular strength and endurance. Maintaining optimal strength throughout one's career is very important because the demands of public safety work do not diminish over time. Maintaining optimal levels of strength can help ensure that not only will they go home at the end of their shift healthy and well, but also at the end of their career.

**The Best Way to Train**  
So what is the most efficient way to gain strength? This question has been a long-standing topic of debate among fitness professionals; opinions often being based on anecdotal experience and personal bias rather than any quantifiable, objective data. Most research that has examined the

relationship between strength increases resulting from training programs have only looked at one or two different training interventions. While this does give insight into the effectiveness of the interventions evaluated, they have been limited in their ability to identify what training intervention is the most efficient of all; in other words "what gives the most bang for the buck". However, a recent study published in **Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise** may help clarify this controversy. Researchers at Arizona State University performed a meta-analysis of 140 different strength-training studies and quantifiably

measured the relationship between the volume, intensity and/or repetitions performed, and the resultant strength improvements.

**Intensity of Training**  
Researchers found that the answer was different for untrained individuals than with trained individuals. By definition, untrained individuals are those individuals with less than one year of consistent strength training, whereas trained individuals are those with one year or more of consistent training. With regard to intensity, untrained individuals realized maximal gains in strength training at an intensity of 60% of 1 repetition maximum (1 RM), which is the maximum weight

that can be lifted one time. This equates to approximately the maximal amount of weight that can be lifted 12 times. For trained individuals, an intensity of 80% of 1 RM, or the maximal amount of weight that can be lifted approximately 8 times, resulted in maximal strength gains.

**Frequency of Training**  
*Untrained* individuals optimal strength gains were achieved when each muscle group was trained 3 days per week. For *trained* individuals, the greatest strength increases were achieved with 2 days per week of training.

**Volume of Training**  
As far as volume was concerned, the researchers found that 4 sets of exercises per muscle group elicited maximal gains in strength in both trained and untrained individuals.

Mode	Trained Individuals	Untrained Individuals
Intensity	80% of 1RM (8 reps. max)	60% of 1RM (12 reps. max)
Frequency	2 times/week per muscle group	3 times/week per muscle group
Volume	4 sets of 8 reps. per muscle group	4 sets of 12 reps. per muscle group



## Public Safety Medical News

### SARS May Become More Widespread in America

by Steven M. Moffatt, M.D.

SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome), a dangerous and possibly lethal respiratory illness, has been widely reported in the media creating concern about traveling and prevention strategies. It is certainly understandable that concerns have arisen about the safety of health care providers including firefighters, police officers, EMT's, and paramedics when dealing with potential outbreaks.

#### Prevalence of SARS

SARS is an illness which primarily affects the lung but which may also affect the intestinal tract. In the United States, the confirmed cases of SARS have been confined to less than 40 people with either recent travel history to SARS-affected countries, exposure to those infected, and health care providers who did not use proper precautions before treating an infected patient. An estimated 4,000 people worldwide have been infected by SARS. There have been

more than 300 SARS-related deaths, mostly in Asia. No deaths have been reported in the United States. The consensus among the **World Health Organization** and the **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**, is that while the incidences of SARS seem to be declining, it may just be a matter of time before our country experiences a more widespread epidemic.

So what can we do to protect ourselves while continuing to serve the public? Let's first try to understand what we are dealing with.

#### How SARS is Spread

SARS is a novel form of the corona virus. Corona viruses frequently affect the animal population but until now have been responsible for only common cold symptoms in humans. It is widely speculated that the original host organism is an unidentified animal. When the host is identified, the virus can be contained. SARS appears to spread by close

person-to-person contact. Contact with droplets, such as from coughs or sneezes, is one of the most common ways. There is also speculation that it can spread through fecal matter which would account for the intestinal symptoms experienced by some SARS victims. The virus remains viable outside the body for 24 hours.

#### Symptoms of SARS

Diagnosis of SARS is made by obtaining travel history to SARS-affected areas, close contact with a SARS patient, fever of higher than 100.4, chills, headache, and muscle aches. In 2 to 7 days, most patients develop a dry cough and difficulty breathing. X-Rays and blood work should be performed to confirm the disease. Some patients experience severe diarrhea.

#### Treatment

There is no known cure for SARS at this time. Treatment consists of supportive care for symptoms including fluid replacement and ventilation. Steroids, antibiotics and the anti-

viral, Ribvarin have been given to patients but their value in shortening the course of the illness has not yet been proven.

#### Prevention

As with any disease, prevention is the best medicine. In addition to gloves, gowns and facial masks (N95 rated) for the health care provider, placing a mask on the patient can help contain droplets from spreading. Careful disposal of these items is very important as the virus can live outside the body for 24 hours. Touching items contaminated with droplets spreads the disease. Frequent hand washing is highly recommended.

#### For More Information

For online resources, visit [www.cdc.gov/ncidod/sars](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/sars) or [www.who.int/csr/sars/en](http://www.who.int/csr/sars/en). You may also call the CDC public response hotline at (888) 246-2675, (888) 246-2857 (Spanish), or (866) 874-2646 (TTY).

*Dr. Moffatt is the medical director for Public Safety Medical Services.*



## Odds and Ends

### PSMS Welcomes New Manager of Human Performance Lab

by Mike Russell

Public Safety Medical Services remains determined to recruit the best individuals for our overall plans to serve public safety personnel in existing and emerging lines of business. We are pleased to announce that **Tisch Schmidt-Williams** has joined our team as the Manager of the Human Performance Lab.

#### Human Performance Lab

Tisch will oversee the daily operations of the Human Performance Lab and will be responsible for the provision of physical fitness testing to our clients. She will also provide direct management of cardiorespiratory testing, body composition analysis, flexibility,

muscular strength and endurance, and collection of pertinent data as required by client departments and national standards.



#### A Seasoned Veteran

Tisch received her Undergraduate and Master's Degrees in Exercise Physiology from the Michigan State University. She has over ten

years of experience in a variety of disciplines in the area of Exercise Physiology. Tisch has a passion for education and has worked with the Early Cardiac Care Education Program with the Indiana Heart Institute as an educator and as a program presenter.

#### A Gifted Athlete

Tisch is also a coach for the Hamilton Southeastern High School Girls Track Team. Additionally, she has worked with other area high school track teams to help develop endurance and long distance running skills.

#### A Strong Character

As the proud mother of two children, Tisch cherishes this responsibility above all others. We are pleased to have an associate that blends exceptional skills, talent, and character on our team here at Public Safety Medical Services. Please make sure and welcome Tisch on your next visit to our offices.

*Mike is the director of operations for Public Safety Medical Services.*

## Quotable

“The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.”  
— **Martin Luther King, Jr.**

### Our Mission

Public Safety Medical Services seeks to provide public safety agencies and municipalities with expert medical, psychological, and fitness evaluations.

We inspire healthier and more productive lives through innovative programs delivered with pride, integrity, and dedication.

**Public Safety Health and Wellness** is a bi-monthly publication of Public Safety Medical Services committed to enhancing the well-being of public safety professionals.



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## What's Happening Public Safety Calendar of Events

### LAW ENFORCEMENT

**May 20**

**Event:** Active Shooter  
Response for Patrol Officers  
**Location:** Belvidere, IL  
**Contact:** Public Agency  
Training Council  
at 800.365.0119



**June 21-25**

**Event:** National Sheriffs'  
Association Annual Conference  
and Exhibition  
**Location:** Nashville, TN  
**Contact:** National Sheriffs'  
Association at 703.836.7827



**June 23-26**

**Event:** International  
D.A.R.E. Training  
Conference  
**Location:** Atlantic City, NJ  
**Contact:** IACP at  
703.836.6767

### FIRE SERVICE

**May 18-21**

**Event:** NFPA  
World Safety  
Conference and  
Exposition  
**Location:**  
Dallas, TX  
**Contact:**  
NFPA at 617.984.7312



**July 15-18**

**Event:** Indiana Fire Chief's  
Association State Conference  
**Location:** Evansville, IN  
**Contact:** IFCA at 866.254.1914

**August 22-25**

**Event:** Fire-Rescue  
International  
**Location:** Dallas, TX  
**Contact:** IAFC at  
800.424.5249 or www.iafc.org.



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