



West Allis

Fire Fighters

IAFF, LOCAL NO. 1004

2055 S. 103rd Ct.
West Allis, WI 53227

January 22, 2010

Milwaukee Fire Fighters IAFF Local 215
5625 W. Wisconsin Ave.
Milwaukee, WI 53213

To: Milwaukee IAFF Local 215

As President of West Allis Fire Fighters IAFF Local 1004, I feel compelled to respond to Mr. David Seager's comments regarding suburban Milwaukee County firefighters, specifically West Allis. Mr. Seager, President of Milwaukee Firefighters IAFF Local 215, made these comments while representing Milwaukee Firefighters IAFF Local 215, on the Jeff Wagner radio show, airing the afternoon of January 20th, 2010. Mr. Seager was commenting on MABAS, "moving up" and staffing of MFD stations during the "Pizza Man" fire, by firefighters on suburban departments. Mr. Seager questioned these firefighter's ability, performance, and aggressiveness, etc.

Mr. Seager referred to nine suburban union departments, and names; "*Greendale, Menomonee Falls, Cudahy, South Milwaukee, West Milwaukee, West Allis and Wauwatosa*". During his comments, Mr. Seager states that firefighter's in these suburban union departments, lack ... "*the experience, the wherewithal, to conduct urban firefighting.*" He continues... "*it's blatantly clear that these communities, if called upon, to respond to a working structure fire of any nature within the City of Milwaukee, they would have extreme difficulty...Not to mention the fact that the City of Milwaukee conducts aggressive, offensive firefighting tactics, which means that we actually go into buildings and fight the fire to reduce any further damage...*".

I understand Mr. Seager's frustration with budget cuts, cuts that have been necessary in most communities throughout the state, including my own. However, to defend your position by attacking union brother and sister firefighters in Milwaukee County suburban departments, asserting they don't have adequate training or tactical skills, is naive and irresponsible. To suggest that MFD is the only Milwaukee County fire department that makes aggressive, interior fire attacks is mind boggling, and a lie. I find Mr. Seager's comments aggressive and attacking, but mostly, unfounded and without base. Furthermore, it is one of the worst displays of unionism I have witnessed in my 27 years as an IAFF member. To use your union brothers and sisters in order to gain a better position in your own community is unconscionable.

What is blatantly clear is Mr. Seager did not consider his comments prior to making them. This evidenced by, his lack of knowledge that his own union members staff and respond in the Village of West Milwaukee. Further, it is my hope that Mr. Seager does not actually believe what he said, and has greater respect for his union brother and sister firefighters than indicated during his radio show comments.

For the record, West Allis is one of two departments in Wisconsin, and the only Milwaukee County fire department that is internationally accredited by CFAI, and was re-accredited in 2008.

I surely hope, Mr. Seager considers his comments the afternoon of January 20th, and initiates an appropriate course of action.

Fraternally,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "P Rohde". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Peter Rohde, President
West Allis IAFF Local 1004

Cc Steve Tipple, President SESC
Mike Woodzicka, President, PFFW
Joe Conway, Vice-Pres. IAFF 5th District