

## FIREWORKS

# FIREFIGHTER PROFILE



Firefighter

**PHILIP McARDLE**  
HAZ-MAT COMPANY NO. 1

**I**n this edition's *FIREFIGHTER PROFILE*, we will spend a few minutes with one of the inaugural members of Hazardous Materials Company No. 1. Firefighter Philip McArdle.

Phil McArdle is a life-long resident of the Bronx. It is there where his career in the fire service began a decade before he came to the FDNY. In 1972, at the age of 17, Philip became a member of the Edgewater Park Volunteer Hose Company No. 1. Phil was an energetic and enthusiastic member of this small volunteer department. Within six years he rose through the ranks and was installed as the Department's youngest Chief at age 23. Through the years Phil has continued his affiliation with the Edgewater Park Volunteers and is presently serving as the department's Assistant Chief for Safety and Training.

Phil's professional firefighting career began in 1982 with his appointment to the FDNY. Phil distinguished himself during his "Probic" class and graduated as class Valedictorian. After graduation, Phil was assigned to Ladder Company 58 on East Tremont Avenue in the Bronx. By January of 1984, Phil had received his first of several Unit Citations. Later that same year, Phil was chosen to become a charter member of the Department's new Hazardous Materials Company No. 1.

Phil entered this new unit with the same enthusiasm and zeal that have become hallmarks in his career in the fire service. As a member of Haz-Mat 1, Phil attended a wide range of hazardous material training programs. These included sessions at Randall's Island, the New York State Fire Academy at Montour Falls, the National Fire Academy at Emmitsburg, Maryland, and the federal Environmental Protection Agency's hazardous materials training facility in Edison, New Jersey. Phil has also attended a variety of industrial and military based programs dealing with emerging problems and new technologies in the field of hazardous materials recognition, protection and mitigation.

During his eleven years in "Haz-Mat", Phil has emerged as a nationally recognized expert in the field. He has served as an instructor and course developer for a number of hazardous materials programs at the local, state and federal levels including several appointments to the faculty of the National Fire Academy (NFA). Amongst these appointments, Phil was chosen by the NFA to teach a 3 credit graduate level course for the Academy's Haz-Mat instructors. He has also developed and taught hazardous materials classes in a number of other states. Phil holds the distinction of being appointed the only non-resident Certified Instructor by the California State Fire Marshal's office.

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Over the years, Phil's expertise in hazardous materials have extended beyond traditional fire service applications. Phil was chosen to serve as a consultant to NASA in the development of strategies and technologies for dealing with hazardous materials and environments associated with the high-tech world of space flight. One of Phil's most interesting projects included working with scientists and engineers on the development of a robot capable of performing hazardous materials operations in environments deemed to dangerous for humans. Phil drew upon his years of experience operating at the scene of hazardous materials incidents to develop a set of functional tasks that the robot would need to perform. Technicians in turn developed a robot capable of collecting samples and, after performing an evaluation, taking steps to control or mitigate the risks to humans.

In addition to his work with hazardous materials, Phil has remained active in the development of fire suppression training programs. In addition to authoring several trade journal articles and texts, he designed and wrote the promotional exams for Battalion and Deputy Chief for the Philadelphia Fire Department. Phil is also a member of the FEMA Urban Search and Rescue Task Force. He participated in the team's first deployment to Oklahoma City this past April.

Phil and his wife Eileen presently reside in the Edgewater Park section of the Bronx. They are the proud parents of four children: Philip, age 12; Andrew, age 10; Brian, age 8; and Colleen, age 5. In his spare time Phil enjoys fishing and spending time in the country with his wife and kids.