

# Understanding Aerial Device Testing

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*VFIS is releasing a new educational program on CD entitled Understanding Aerial Device Testing, which has been co-produced by Risk Control and Education, Training & Consulting Services in cooperation with Underwriters Laboratories.*

Understanding the who, what, why and when of testing aerial devices has always been confusing for fire department personnel. With aerial devices becoming more complex and the NFPA Standards for testing becoming more comprehensive, uncertainty and misunderstanding among fire service personnel has also increased.

Making issues even more complex is the fact that there are no industry standards for testing agencies regarding the marketing of testing or how to report the findings. This is important to understand because NFPA 1911, which governs the process and procedures for aerial testing, prescribes two levels of required testing for aerial devices: Annual Testing and Nondestructive Testing.

*Clients who possess Aerial Devices will be mailed a copy of this program. After review, feel free to contact VFIS Risk Control Services or Education, Training and Consulting at 800.233.1957.*

Understanding Aerial Device Testing is not a training or a "how to" program. Rather, this is an informational video designed to provide fire department personnel with the necessary information to make informed decisions about the purchase, maintenance and repair of their aerial devices, reducing their insurance risk and, consequently, their personal risk.

The program includes segments on the following topics:

- The pitfalls of purchasing used aerial devices
- The importance of establishing a maintenance budget
- The difference between NFPA- required Annual and Non-destructive testing
- Understanding Non-destructive testing
- How to properly select a testing agency
- What to expect from the testing results

Much of the content contained in this program is provided by Jim Johannessen, Lead Engineer in Fire Equipment Services at Underwriters Laboratories (UL). Jim's many years of hands-on experience in the aerial testing arena allows him to provide invaluable information and insight for fire service personnel.

Mr. Johannessen provides the following insight: "When a fire department requests a testing company to perform tests to NFPA 1911, Chapter 19, they must be specific as to what tests they expect to have done. Do they expect the test to include the Non-Destructive Testing portion or are they just looking for the Annual Test to be performed? If fire department personnel are not knowledgeable about what is required or expected from each type of test, not only could they be wasting money, they may also be buying a false sense of security." The newly available CD from VFIS will walk you through the process of selecting both the proper tests and the appropriate testing agency. 🌟