Information technology has been put to work to improve fireline safety. Wildland firefighters and fire managers can now take a fireline safety training course at home on their PC’s, using a CD-ROM with the latest in interactive multimedia technology. The course, “Wildland Fire—Safety on the Fireline,” was completed in July 2000 by a Canadian consortium consisting of the Environmental Training Centre, Hinton, Alberta; the National Training Working Group, Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre, Winnipeg, Manitoba; and Christie Communications and Vicom Multimedia, both of Edmonton, Alberta (Thorburn and others 2000).

Advantages
A national team of specialists in wildland fire behavior and safety developed and reviewed the course. Its purpose is to reduce injuries and fatalities associated with suppression activities on wildland fires. The course’s use of interactive multimedia technology offers several advantages:

• Consistent, high-quality training for large numbers;
• Cost savings through reduced travel and learning time and minimal use of instructors; and
• Enhanced knowledge retention, perhaps the greatest advantage.

The course focuses on due diligence, situational awareness, entrapment survival, firefighter health, firefighting equipment, and fireline hazards. Four sections (Introduction, Entrapment, On-the-Job, and On the Line) are each followed by a board game test in preparation for a final, computer tracked test.

“Wildland Fire—Safety on the Fireline” contains 72 video clips, more than 250 audio clips, about 500 graphics and photos, online help, a glossary, and a conversion calculator for the International System of Units.

System Requirements
The course can be run on a stand-alone computer or over a network. System requirements are:

• A Pentium 166 or better, with Windows 95, 98, or NT;
• A minimum of 32 megabytes RAM and 100 megabytes of free hard drive space (4 megabytes are actually required for the software);
• A color SVGA monitor set for 800 by 600, 16-bit color and 4 megabytes of video memory;
• A 16-bit sound card (SoundBlaster);
• A 16X or better CD-ROM and its driver(s) (on every workstation); and
• A mouse.

The CD-ROM “Wildland Fire—Safety on the Fireline” costs $CAN 98.95 plus shipping charges. To order, contact Raincoast Distributors, 8680 Cambie Street, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada V6P 6M9, 1-800-663-5714 (voice), 1-800-565-3770 (fax), custserv@raincoast.com (e-mail).

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