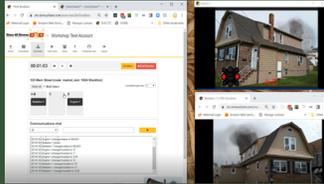


SPRING 2020

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A Game Changer

### LOOKING TO RUN TRAINING EXERCISES ONLINE?

SimsUshare CTC lets you run full interactive exercises with instructors and crews in different locations. No setups and no installs!



### WE'VE MADE IT EVEN EASIER TO JOIN A CTC EXERCISE!

We recently released our web version of the CTC player. Now you can participate in CTC exercises directly from a browser. This means you won't need to have the SimsUshare app installed on your computer or mobile device to join a CTC exercise!



Photo by Maarten Visser

# Hats Off to Inventors and Innovators Series

“Necessity is the mother of invention” says an old proverb that has been around since 1658 AD, or possibly 1519 AD, or maybe 375 BC, depending on which reliable Internet source you consult. The saying basically means that when the need for something becomes important enough, someone will be smart enough to figure out how to invent it.

Some inventions are impressive because they are big, others because they are powerful, and still others because they are simply ingenious. Sometimes an invention encompasses all three attributes: big, powerful and ingenious!

For example, the CL-415, appropriately nicknamed the Super Scooper, is an amphibious water bomber that can scoop up 1,620 gal (6,140 l) of water from a nearby water source during a 12 second, 81 mph (130 km/h) run on the water; mix it with a chemical foam if desired; and then drop it on a fire without

having to return to base to refill its tanks.

Built for reliability and longevity, the aircraft has established a proven track record. Watching it perform and hearing it's 2380 hp Pratt and Whitney twin turboprops flexing their muscles during liftoff from a lake is impressive stuff! Hats off to the inventors who brought the concept to life as the Scooper in the early 1960's and those who continued to tinker, innovate and improve it to produce the latest version of the CL-415 Super Scooper.

One of the award citations it received reads in part: “This is the most efficient tool for the aerial combat of forest fires, key to the organization of firefighting in a large number of countries.” At \$37 million dollars, it's an expensive tool to say the least but with the increased threat of brush and forest fires due to climate change, it is being added to large scale fire-fighting capabilities around the world. 

## WHY IS A FIRE HYDRANT COMMONLY CALLED A FIRE PLUG?

Hollowed-out wood log pipes were used for water conveyance as early as the late 1700s. (The pipe shown below also had spiral metal strapping wrapped around so it could withstand higher water pressure.)

It didn't take long before someone figured out that these wood mains could also be used as a water source to fight fires. Firefighters would dig down to find the log pipe and auger a hole through it. Water would fill the hole that the firefighters dug creating a "wet well" from which buckets of water could be drawn or a reservoir from which pumps could pull water.

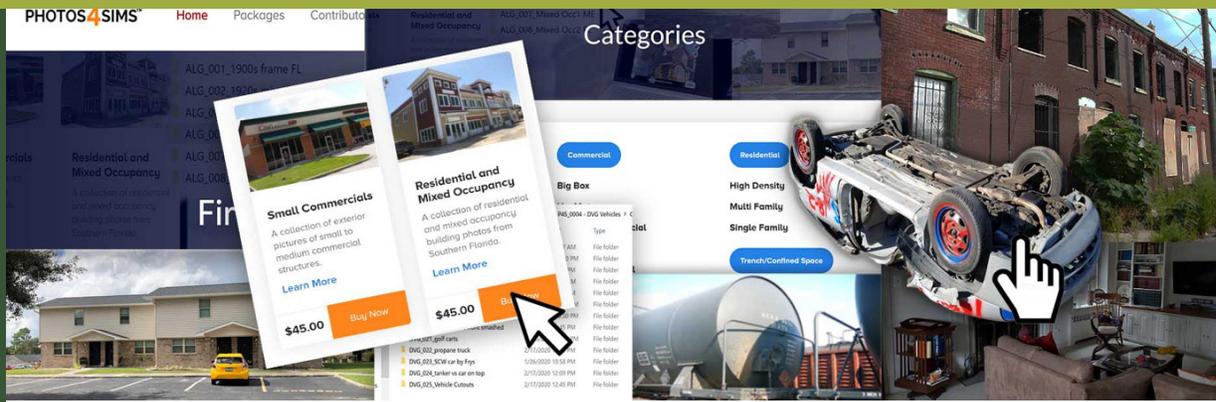


After the fire was put out, the firemen would drive a wood plug, often made from redwood, into the hole to seal it up. The excavation hole that was dug to access the water main was filled in and the location was marked for future reference in case it was ever needed to fight another fire\*. This procedure is where the term "fire plug" comes from.

\*Of course, it wasted valuable time to locate and auger a hole in a water main in an emergency, so soon wood plugs were pre-installed at specific locations (e.g. mid-block) when the main itself was installed so that fire fighters knew in advance where they were.

Note: Check out an interesting and informative website at <http://www.sewerhistory.org/>

Picture courtesy of Dick Riegler, Philadelphia Suburban Water Company



# Photos4Sims: Your Photo Source for Fire & Safety Simulations

You can't make simulations without pictures. Taking a few pictures for a basic simulation is easy enough—your smartphone likely has a suitable camera that will do the job. However, many sim developers have found that putting together a complete set of pictures of the right subject in the right conditions may not be quite so simple. A detailed photo shoot can easily consume hours of valuable time. Access and permissions create other hurdles. To save time, you could search for pictures on stock photo sites, the Internet, or realtor web sites, but in most cases these sources do not provide enough pictures for making more than basic simulations.

As sim developers ourselves, we recognized there was a big need for a dedicated photo resource containing quality pictures and picture sets. Therefore, we developed a new stock photo/clip art site for fire and safety simulations called Photos 4 Sims™.

At Photos4Sims.com, you'll find everything you typically use when creating simulations. Picture sets of different types of construction

and interiors along with lots of sim assets such as vehicles and tools are organized and easily searchable by categories. Photos4Sims™ is a dynamic website that will continue to expand with new photo packages each month!

While SimsUshare is spearheading this effort, you can use the photos you buy for any simulation tool or training purpose, so long as you do not share or resell the photos.

**At Photos4Sims.com, you'll find everything you typically use when creating simulations**

Come take a look at Photos4sims.com. If you don't see what you are looking for, add your own request or vote on requests others have made. We have a lot more packages in the pipeline, so your input greatly helps us know what sim developers are looking for. We

can keep you up to date with new packages through our handy 'Receive Notifications' feature. Photos4sims contributors are fellow sim developers and experts in fire and safety training. If you have a collection of quality photos that others might be looking for to create simulations, please let us know—we'd love to hear from you. 🔥

**We hope that Photos4Sims™ will continue to expand over the coming months and become an excellent resource for sim developers. Please [check it out!](#)**



## Small Town Fire Chief

### PART 1

I grew up with fire trucks in our back yard.

Sometime before I was born my grandfather built a big garage out of cinder blocks next to the house we would share and opened an auto repair shop. It had a large sliding door, tall enough to accommodate a fair size truck or piece of heavy equipment. Today you could not get past the by-laws to set up a business like that in what was essentially a residential neighborhood, but in those days, there were fewer restrictions on how you used your property. My grandfather had no formal training as a mechanic but that wasn't required back then—your reputation was all that mattered.

The yard in front of the garage was lined on each side with vehicles in various states of repair and often a fire truck sat prominently in the middle, as if it were the star attraction. Our town had a large fire department for its small size. There were a couple engines, a water tender, a rescue vehicle, a 4 x4 multi-purpose vehicle that often pulled a trailer with a pump, and strangely, even an aerial ladder truck. I say strangely because there were only a couple buildings in town where a ladder truck of that size

would have been useful fighting a fire. Additionally, the town built a modern fire station on one of its main arteries with enough room to park everything, including an antique fire truck for parades and an assortment of other equipment.

I learned many years later that the Ladies Fire Department Auxiliary was largely responsible for collecting the funds for the trucks and station through non-stop bake sales, raffles, bingos and other social events. There may also have been a few last wills and testaments that directed funds to the department. In any case, we had an impressive fire department for a small town. This made it much easier to recruit and keep willing volunteer firefighters.

If you were lucky enough to be near the fire station when an alarm sounded, you were treated to quite a spectacle. Volunteers came from every direction in their personal vehicles, many equipped with flashing lights. They arrived in great haste, parked haphazardly around the station, quickly donned their protective gear and noisily exited the station as they headed to do battle. It didn't seem to matter how big (or small) the fire was, they always sent a full complement. The townspeople would proudly stand and watch as they drove by with sirens blaring, reassured by the fact that if they ever needed to call their fire department, help would arrive promptly and with plenty of resources to handle any type of fire.

For as long as I can remember, my grandfather was deputy fire chief. His auto repair garage was less than a mile from the fire station, and I expect that most of the repair work done on the fire trucks was without cost to the department. I'm sure this irritated my grandmother, but she resolved early on that there were two loves in his life. At some point, a deal was struck; the fire department would have him for his best years, and once he turned 60, she would have him for the rest.

Read Part 2 in the next issue of our quarterly review 

## RECOMMENDED APP: VOICEMACRO.NET

An outstanding feature of SimsUshare is the ability to move seamlessly from one location to another. The compact navigation cluster provides multiple options. You can also control the arrows in the navigation cluster using 10 keys on your keyboard as shown below:



How about using voice commands? If you are using Windows 10, a FREE app called VoiceMacro is available and works very well with SimsUshare. The app is simple to set up, and you can use it to control most applications.

With VoiceMacro you create voice commands that virtually “press” the correct keys. When SimsUshare is the frontmost app running on your computer, VoiceMacro sends the keystroke to SimsUshare to perform the movement. Here is a list of the voice commands (triggers) and corresponding keyboard actions.

Trigger(s)	Action(s)	Description
move left	Key: A	
move right	Key: D	
move forward	Key: W	
move backward	Key: X	
move up	Key: Arrow Up	
move down	Key: Arrow Down	
move forward left	Key: Q	
move forward right	Key: E	
move backward left	Key: Z	
move backward right	Key: C	

You can likely think of examples where using voice commands could add to the effectiveness of classroom training. There's a lot more you can do with VoiceMacro.net. Here is a how-to video to help you get started: <https://simsushare.com/how-to-use-voicemacro>

## QUARTERLY TIP: “MERGE SIMULATIONS”

### A GREAT FEATURE WHEN BUILDING LARGE SIMS

When building a sim with more than 20 to 30 locations, it can become challenging to manage everything. If the number of locations/slides increases to 40, 50 or even 60, switching among locations as you add to and edit your sim may begin to tax your sanity!

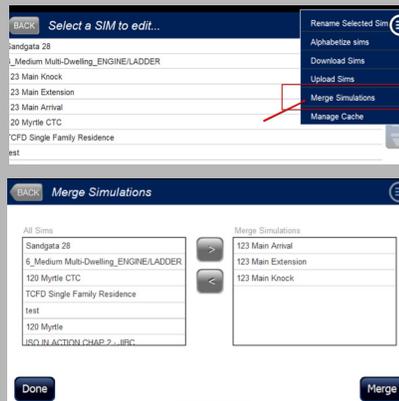
We strongly suggest breaking up very large sims into smaller pieces. A logical way to do that is to make a separate sim for each condition---for example, Arrival, Better, Worse, etc.

You can then use the new ‘Merge Simulations’ feature to stick all your pieces together.

Select the sims to merge by transferring them in order from the left column to the right.

Press the ‘Merge’ button, follow the prompts, and all the sims you selected merge into one sim.

A great feature for building and managing updates for your large sims!



Learn more at <https://simsushare.com/howto-merge-sims>

# GAME CHANGER

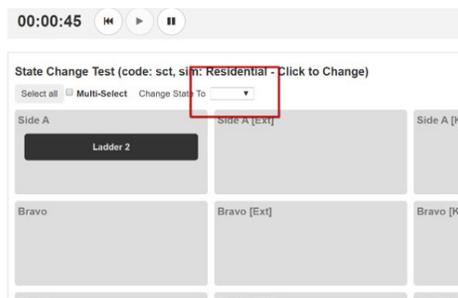
## SimsUshare 'States' — A Training Exercise Game Changer!

SimsUshare 'States' is an incredible new feature that, with a click of a single button, allows you to make scenario conditions evolve for all participants in a group exercise at the same time. SimsUshare 'States' takes the command training center experience to a whole new level!

Adding this to your development toolbox is as simple as naming locations/views with a consistent terminology. We recommend the format "LOCATION-NAME [STATE-NAME]". For example, let's say you name a location "Alpha" to represent your alpha view on arrival. If you want to model a "Fire Extension" condition into your sim, rename your arrival location/view from "Alpha" to "Alpha [Arrival]" and your extension condition view as "Alpha [Ext]". Use the same bracketed-condition naming scheme for "Bravo", "Charlie", "Delta" and your interior views. For each location/view then, you'll have an [Arrival], an [Ext] plus whatever other 'states' [BETTER, WORSE, etc.] that you include in your sim exercise. The State name can be a single letter (such as "X") or a full word; you can decide what makes the most sense for your training.

Once you have named your locations/views in this pattern, the CTC will recognize the locations as belonging to different states. When you run a CTC exercise, a dropdown menu containing all the state names, such as

[Arrival] and [Ext], will appear above the CTC instructor dashboard:



Changing the state for all participants at once is as simple as selecting the state you want to display—the CTC takes care of moving each participant from their original place to the corresponding place for the state you chose. For those who have used the CTC to simulate this in the past, you no longer need to drag each unit to its corresponding 'state'. A word of caution: if you drag a participant on purpose or accidentally to a box indicating a different state, ALL the other participants will follow to the same state.

SimsUshare 'States' opens up exciting possibilities including expanded curriculum development, greater Instructor control over CTC exercises, and a more realistic fire ground experience for all participants. We're convinced this is the start of something big!

For more information, check out this video: <http://simsushare.com/sus-states-intro> 

### NEXT WEBINAR

#### Introduction to the SimsUshare CTC

Wednesday, April 15, 2020

This webinar reviews the basic operation of SimsUshare's Command Training Center (CTC) functionality, which permits instructors to remotely control other computers and views simultaneously.

Designing sims for use in the CTC

Conducting exercises

Using SimCloud to transfer sims among devices, and

Creating/managing CTC users for your account.

Free registration is required. Please visit <https://simsushare.com/events/> to register.

### RECENT WEBINARS

How to Conduct Remote Sim Training Online (March, 2020)

Secret SimsUshare Project Unveiling: Photos4Sims.com (March, 2020)

Mastering the Sim Navigation Options (February, 2020)

Introduction to SimsUshare States (January, 2020)

Visit: <https://simsushare.com/ctc-webinars> for recordings

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