



Springfield Fire Department Health and Safety Committee Monthly Safety Bulletin- April 2015

The monthly safety bulletin is a product of the Health and Safety Committee (HSC) and will be an overview of the quarterly meeting, the topics discussed, and safety issues supplied by all fire department personnel. If you have an issue that you would like to be included for all personnel to review, please send it to any member of the Department HSC. The goal of this bulletin is to provide news on various safety topics in the industry, inform personnel of how fellow firefighters are being injured or killed, and prevent injuries and fatalities by keeping personnel informed.

Department Safety News

The safety bulletin is a method for everyone to have an outlet by which to share safety information with each other both within the SFD and beyond. If you know anyone that you think would like to receive a copy of the monthly safety bulletin feel free to send it to them or send me their contact information and I will be happy to. This is information that as many people as possible should see. Reducing fire service injuries and fatalities is our goal, not only within the SFD. If you have anything that you would like to see included in the safety bulletin, please send it to me.

REMEMBER, OUR VEHICLES DO NOT MOVE IF EVERYONE IS NOT WEARING A SEAT BELT.

This includes pulling out on to the apron. This is a common practice and is incorrect. BEFORE the vehicles moves AT ALL, everyone should be wearing a seat belt.

From the Training Chief

We have spent countless hours discussing the importance of the role of the company officer in the attitudes, effectiveness, and the safety of their fire crews. With the ever changing scene within the fire service those words have never been truer. Physical fitness, social media, behavioral health, building construction, and overall safety seem to recommend changes, updates, and constant better ways to achieve the same goals. This is all true. The company officer must stay current on the goings on of the fire service. It has perhaps been said too much; to the point of a less impactful meaning; but the company officer is the most important position in the fire service. Tim Sendelbach discusses the company officer.

Company officers determine whether the crew will spend the shift working out and training or sitting on recliners. Company officers determine whether kitchen table discussions foster open-minded discussion about safe tactics, or promote a bravado driven culture of excessive risk taking. There is simply no other person in the fire service that has the daily impact on the firefighters that company officers do. That's why company officers are key to achieving the National Fallen Firefighter's (NFFF) new goal of reducing firefighter line-of-duty deaths to under 50 annually.

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Provided by the Springfield Fire Department Health and Safety Committee:
Captain Tony Kelley T2B, Captain Tim Gerkey T3C, Captain Olan Morelan Fire Training,
Rescue Specialist Joe Myers R1C, and Firefighter Matt Fields E7A



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For many company officers, becoming an officer is the consequence of the right mix of seniority and opportunity. There's not always a lot of preparation aimed specifically at readying you to be the person in charge as opposed to just one of the crew. As a result, company officer development was an important part of the NFFF TAMPA2 summit last year and will continue to be a key focus of the NFFF's efforts.

Whether your department has a robust company officer development program or a "sink or swim" approach, there are some things that you as a company officer can do that can have a significant impact on the safety and survivability of those in your command. Here are five you can start with:

1. **Ensure the rig doesn't move until everyone is belted in.** We oftentimes think of firefighting as a dangerous profession because of fire, but the truth is, vehicle accidents that occur responding to and returning from calls continue to injure and kill a greater number of firefighters each year. In 2013, 11 firefighters died while responding to incidents. A seatbelt doesn't mean you'll walk away unharmed, but it does greatly improve your chances.
2. **When your crew is operating at roadway incidents, require high visibility vests.** The Emergency Responder Safety Institute keeps a running tally of "struck by" incidents. At the end of February, it had already recorded five incidents in 2015 in which fire/EMS personnel were struck when responding to roadway incidents, some with multiple victims. For whatever reason, drivers often do not see firefighters operating on the roads. Unless you're actively engaged in fire suppression related activities (exposed to Thermal heat) put on the vest and make sure others do too.
3. **Stock wet wipes in the apparatus.** More and more research is detailing the dangerous chemicals we're exposed to on the fireground, and cancer risks that result. The good news is, decon doesn't have to be a highly complex procedure. In a post incident survey, several TAMPA2 participants took that cancer message to heart and began carrying wet wipes on their apparatus for on-scene skin cleaning. Getting the chemicals off your skin as soon as possible reduces your exposure and, potentially, your risk of developing firefighting related cancers.
4. **Reward safe practices.** One of the key recommendations from TAMPA2 related to Life Safety Initiative 4 (empowerment) was to reward safe practices as a way of positively reinforcing and building a culture of safety. Company officers are in the best position to see safe behavior and immediately recognize it. Is your engineer especially fastidious about cleaning her PPE? Did your rookie firefighter take himself out of the fight at a house fire in extremely hot weather because he felt faint? Did a veteran member take the time to explain to some newer members about the dangers of the old auto parts warehouse down the street? Each of these is an opportunity for you to recognize the firefighter, reinforcing the importance of safe practices.
5. **Encourage health and fitness.** Although you can't control what your crewmembers do on their own time, you spend a lot of time with them in the station, where you can influence their health and wellbeing. Encourage everyone to eat together, and strive for meals that are heart-healthy (not all meals need to be weeds and nuts), include fresh fruits and vegetables whenever

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possible, incorporate low-fat protein and use only minimal amounts of processed foods and sugar. Devote part of every shift to PT-whether it's a functional fitness workout, a simple pick-up basketball game or training for an upcoming memorial stair climb, tough mudder or other fitness event, do something every day. Push yourself to have those tough conversations when you notice a firefighter giving in to a bad habit. An uncomfortable conversation now could prevent a heart attack later.

Becoming a better company officer isn't just about learning to navigate personnel issues and moving from "buddy to boss". It's also about the little things you can do every day to set a standard for safe behavior and fulfill this incredibly important role.

It's a powerful position, and a significant responsibility. To a large extent, the safety of your crew rests in your hands. Commit to doing your part, and together, we can reduce LODD's to under 50.

Please be safe.

Alerts

Continue to monitor the mental well being of yourself and your crew members.

We CANNOT send out enough information on this and be diligent enough in ensuring personal well being.

http://www.ffbha.org/FBHA_Page.php

The most important thing that we can do is ensure that everyone knows help is available. Please make sure everyone is aware of available resources.

<http://help4responders.wix.com/reaching4thelight#!return-to-station/cv07>

National Safety Headlines

[Missouri Firefighters Hit With Master Stream Blast From Aerial](#)

[National Safety Culture Change Initiative Released](#)

[Fire dept. cited for 'serious' safety violations after LODD](#)

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[Deputy U.S. Fire Administrator Glenn Gaines Dies](#)

[South Dakota Firefighter Killed in House Fire](#)

[Firefighter research shows PPE exposure risk](#)

[SF firefighter collapses during training exercise](#)

[San Francisco firefighter collapses during training exercise](#)

[Firefighters and alcohol, what the data says](#)

[Hoarder Homes: Piles of Hazards for Firefighters](#)

[Video Captures Wall Collapse That Injures Ohio Firefighter](#)

[Ala. Rescue Squad Member Drowns After Boat Overturns](#)

[Houston firefighters open up about stress of the job](#)

[Cancer a concern as firefighters risk their lives](#)

[Report: 8 factors in Toledo firefighters' deaths](#)

Motor Vehicle Accidents

Consider as you read through these the causes and how some of them could have been prevented by taking simple measures. Also note the importance of apparatus placement to prevent injuries to responders.

[Atlanta Firefighters Injured in Fire Truck Wreck](#)

[Tenn. rig overturns; 2 FFs hurt](#)

[Pennsylvania firefighter falls from truck](#)
[Latch Fails; Pa. Firefighter Falls](#)

[Miss. fire truck rolls, firefighter injured](#)

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[7 firefighters hurt after fire truck overturns](#)

[Driver runs over firefighter's foot at house fire](#)

[SUV slams into fire truck; 1 dead, 3 firefighters hurt](#)

You can access all NIOSH reports on firefighter fatalities here: [NIOSH FF Fatalities](#)

There have been **28** reported firefighter fatalities in the United States in 2015. Please be safe.

April Firefighter Fatalities

Medical Emergencies

[Levittown, PA](#)

[Sacramento, CA](#)

[Dakota City, NE](#)

[Wrightsville, PA](#)

[Conway Springs, KS](#)

MVA

TRAUMA

[Valley Springs, SD](#)

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LODD STATS

Yearly Totals	
Year	Totals
2014	86
2013	101
2012	83
2011	81
2010	87

Please contribute to the monthly safety bulletin in any way you can. Feel free to contact myself or any HSC member to submit or suggest anything you'd like to include for everyone to see.

THE HSC and Fire Department Administration remind each member to wear your seat belts, slow down and think about your own safety and the safety of those around you.

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