



On the Line

Our Core Values: Pride, Respect, Duty, Unity, Integrity and Compassion.

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Last Safety Incident

As of September 1:

128 days without a safety incident

132 days without a lost time injury

Upcoming Events

September 11th

Fellowship breakfast at the Machine Shed

September 13th

Annual PD versus FD Flag Football game to benefit [Make-A-Wish](#). Please help us defend our trophy while we raise money for this worthy cause!!

September 21st

American Legion hosts a city employee appreciation dinner

October 5-11

Fire Prevention Week

Be sure to check the pub-ed calendars for upcoming events!

UFD statistics for August

Calls for service: 216 YTD: 1,598

Average response Time – All incidents: **6 minutes and 32 seconds**

Average response Time – **Emergency** incidents: **5 minutes and 59 seconds**

Emergency Medical Service calls: 146

Average Response Time EMS: 5 minutes and 59 seconds

Emergency: 5 minutes and 48 seconds

Non-Emergency: 6 minutes and 11 seconds

Fire related calls: 70

Average Response Time Fire: 7 minutes and 39 seconds

Average turnout per fire incident: 5 people

We **received mutual aid six times** – five times for EMS calls and once for a fire call

We **gave mutual once** – for a fire call

Types of Fire Calls

The 70 fire calls we had in August fall into the following categories:

Fire / Explosion:	6
Hazardous Condition:	7
Overpress./Over heat:	1
Good Intent Calls:	24
False Calls:	21
Service Calls:	11



Birthdays:

Tom Hyde September 15

Chief Holt September 25





Chief's Corner—Chief Jerry Holt Well Trained Firefighters? We are our own worst enemy!



I am passionate about my job. I love what I do and even loved it more when I was on the street as a “Fire Medic”. I was well trained in both disciplines and while I never wanted anything bad to happen to someone, I always hoped that if it did happen, I would be on duty to work the incident. In talking with some of my non-fire friends, I remember getting strange looks when they heard me talking about “good” calls. Their picture of a “good” call certainly didn’t match what I was describing.

As I gained experience, I learned that there were really no “good” calls. While we might enjoy “doing”, you know, fighting fire, doing ventilations, extrications, starting IVs, tubing people, working through a drug box, there wasn’t much enjoyment to those who were receiving our services. Starting IVs, pushing 10 different drugs on a code, shocking more than 8 times, tubing the patient and getting to “practice” prehospital medicine might have been a good use of our skills, but the reality was that if we didn’t get a return of a pulse, the patient died. Not much fun for the patient, less fun for the family... how could that be a “good” call?

How about fire? When we made a great stop on a room and contents fire, we were always happy about the job that we did. We might have even displayed a misunderstood and ill-advised high-five for our efforts. The reality was that someone had suffered a loss. It is property – it can be replaced but there is no bringing back that picture of grandpa...the only one they had. There is no replacing some of the keepsakes that while not costly, were priceless to that family. Worse yet, there is nothing good about removing the body of a fire victim. Haunting imagines that follow you the rest of your life... knowing the horrors of that fate and knowing the pain of those left behind...Not much of a good call.

There were bad incidents that had good outcomes. People who lived, property that was saved...good outcomes. They are too few and far between and while the outcome might be positive, those incidents certainly had an impact on our customer’s life. Recovery, rebuilding, rehab, and recuperation followed even the best incidents.

So, where am I going with this? Well, it is important to love your job. I don’t think anyone should work in a job that they absolutely hate going to each day; life is too short for that. We should love our jobs; we should love performing our skills. No one wants to be on the team that practices but never gets the opportunity to perform. We should be ready to perform but always hoping that our skills are never needed. We should be proud when we have done the best we can do despite the outcome but...we should never forget why we are here...it is not about you – it is about the people we serve and recent happenings in the fire prevention world have revealed to me that some firefighters do not think that way. We constantly battle with an apathetic public and others who put fire safety way down on the list of priorities and I’ve come to expect that. But when well trained firefighters (WTF) espouse the same or even worse rhetoric regarding fire safety, I have to ask myself “why?”

Recent code changes have incorporated fire sprinklers in to residential structures. Those codes were passed at the national level but the likelihood of implementation at local levels

around the country are being fought by various special interest groups. Some of the reasoning given for the fight against residential sprinklers is cost and affordability, economic development, perceived government intrusion, just to name a few. This is not new to us – we have had a fire sprinkler requirement for certain sized homes for some time and those requirements were not met with open arms. They were fought the entire way. I won’t counter the arguments here; suffice it to say that there is a ton of data for the interested person that counters those arguments. I will address a couple of new arguments that believe it or not are coming from WTF.

Two arguments that I have had the extreme displeasure of hearing from WTF is that residential sprinklers will cost us our jobs and that it is a government intrusion on private citizens. Let me address the government intrusion issue first. A WTF recently stated that residential fire sprinklers should not happen because the government should not mandate safety to homeowners. Now I fully understand and appreciate and support people’s right to do a lot of things but I have two issues with this statement; an individual’s “right” is not so individual when it affects others and that very “government” that this firefighter is complaining about is him!

It is an individual’s right to decide a lot of things, to vote, to own guns, to worship whom and where they want, and in our state to wear or not to wear a helmet when riding a motorcycle. The merits of some of those things have been questioned many times but to the point that they have no affect on others, I am okay with them.

Fire sprinklers are different. Yes, they affect the people in that home but they affect **us** when the house is on fire – or should I say the lack of sprinklers affects us? Those very people who complain about government “intrusion” are going to be calling 911 hoping that the “government” responds in less than four minutes. And who is that government? In this case, the fire department...the very WTF who says residential fire sprinklers are not needed. You want to be free from governmental intrusion in this case? Great – hire your own fire department, build regardless of fire and building codes, fire hydrant availability, fire department access, etc., it is your place and it is your choice – don’t call us. Don’t count on the government for help when you are going to put our WTFs at a greater risk because you want to choose. As it stands today in most places, you don’t get to choose who comes...it is the local fire department. We don’t get to choose if we respond – we respond. We do get to choose the level of risk we are willing to accept and hopefully we will do a better job of deciding what structures are worth risking our lives for. I understand the argument about personal choice...but doesn’t personal choice end when it has the potential to affect so many other people?

As to the argument about residential fire sprinklers costing the fire service jobs...are you kidding me? You would really rather have a job fighting fires than to have fires eliminated? You have to know that we are not going to eliminate fires...as long as people, machines and extreme weather are involved, there will always be fires.

See *Chief's Corner* on page 3...

Chief's Corner ...continued from page 2

Having been involved in so many interviews over the years, I really find this argument interesting. I can say with 100% certainty that the number one response that I have heard when candidates are asked why they want to join the fire department is "to help people". If fire sprinklers save lives (they do!), if fire sprinklers greatly reduce property damage (they do!), and if fire sprinklers improve firefighter safety (they do!), is that not helping people? Or is the response really saying, "Sprinklers will take away our fun"? Give me a break. If you really want to help people, you want to lessen the danger of dying in a fire, you want to reduce the amount of damage they will have if there is a fire...you want to help people, you want to eliminate fires and reduce the damage when they do occur.

I know one "retired" firefighter who publicly argues against residential sprinklers. He touts his years of experience as a good indicator of the need for sprinklers. He has never been in a fire in a sprinklered building. He has only been on the nozzle of one fire...he was in a department that has very few fires yet his limited knowledge is applied across the entire industry. If we cannot convince our own firefighters, how are we going to convince the public? One thing that is for sure...if you have ever fought a fire in a sprinklered building, you would have a different appreciation for the effectiveness of fire sprinklers. Arguing with an uninformed public and special interest groups about residential fire sprinklers is to be expected. Arguing with WTF...unbelievable and begs to question if they really are WTF.



There is someone trapped inside...you want this or you want sprinklers?

In our department, the argument by firefighters against residential fire sprinklers is clearly against our mission of preserving life, protecting property and promoting safety through education. The direction of our department is to improve safety, lessen property damage and improve education so that we can reduce the number of fires and calls for service. Firefighters against government intrusion and firefighters fearing loss of jobs and not having fun because of residential fire sprinklers need to ask themselves why they are here. I think if they are truthful, they won't like what they see. It is certainly not consistent with our mission...it certainly has nothing to do with helping anyone other than themselves. The best fire, the best EMS call is the one I have never had because I was part of preventing it!



Sick or Distressed Members: Please keep Monte Burr in your thoughts and prayers. Monte continues to battle his illness and he is back in the hospital at Methodist—room 357. Monte is very weak from an infection and he continues his treatment for myeloma and kidney failure. He remains on dialysis three times a week and although he is "up" in spirits, he has lost a lot of weight and has very little energy. His disposition is good and he enjoys having visitors so if you have the time, please stop by and visit with Monte.

Safety Tip: Always Check the Mask...From Firerescue1.com

One of the most important, if not most important, pieces of equipment used frequently by firefighters is the mask. There are some non-essential pieces of fire equipment; masks are not among them.



You should always regularly check your own mask, so you can be safe in the knowledge that it's going to work properly when you need it. Make sure you check the whole mask, especially the air cylinder to ensure that it is full to maximize your operating time. A mask not full to the max with air means less operational time.

Make sure that all the straps, including the straps on your face piece, are correctly adjusted to suit your needs. And, open the cylinder valve fully whenever turning the mask on. Not having the cylinder fully opened can result in a sudden loss of air when operating.

The MALTESE CROSS - Assistant Chief Denny Danford

The symbol or shall we say universal logo for the fire service is the Maltese Cross. It is used on most badges, many department patches, and a host of fire service related materials. How many of us know where it came from and why it is the fire service symbol?

When a band of crusaders called the Knights of St. John, battled the Saracens for control of the Holy Land, they encountered a new weapon. The new weapon used by the Saracens was fire.

When the crusaders attacked the city, they had glass bombs containing naphtha thrown on them. After they were saturated with the liquid, the Saracens threw flaming torches on them. Hundreds were burned alive but many risked their lives to save their fellow crusaders. Thus these men became the first firemen. Their heroism was recognized by their fellow crusaders by awarding each with a badge of honor similar to the cross firefighters wear now.

Because the Knights of St. John lived on the island of Malta, in the Mediterranean Sea, it came to be known as the Maltese Cross.

* Facts for this article were drawn from 'Pride & Ownership' by Rick Lasky



WHAT'S HAPPENING AROUND THE DEPARTMENT...

It continues to be a busy time...just when you think a project is coming to conclusion, something else "pops" up...

- September 11th is fast approaching. We will once again get together at the Machine Shed for breakfast that morning...@ 0645. This is memory of the 343 firefighters who lost their lives at the World Trade Center and an opportunity to share fellowship for our brothers.
- September 13th is the Make-A-Wish football game at UHS...let's get some revenge on the PD while we make some money for a great cause!
- September 21st is the tentative date for the start of work on the replacement of the windows in the training room, the day room and in the bunk room at Station 42. Following the window replacement, the sheetrock will be replaced.
- We hope that the SAFER grant will be opened in September. Last year the application was in June and it was rumored that this year's application period would be mid-August.
- We hope that by the time this newsletter is distributed that we will have received the return of our deposit from American LaFrance. This will free us to move forward with replacing Ladder 415 with another company. We hope to be able to purchase a unit from a governmental contract thus reducing the length of time to delivery.
- Chief Light is working with a group of volunteers to develop the specifications for a new ambulance. We hope to have the new unit in early 2010
- The American Legion—Post 663 have once again invited us to a City Employee Appreciation dinner on September 21st. They really appreciate all the work we do and enjoy doing this for us, so if you have the opportunity, please join them for dinner on the 21st. **(The last day to signup for this event is September 15—signup with your supervisor by that date)**
- Work continues with the formation of an Explorer post of our department. The committee, headed by Lt. Routson continues to work on getting all of the details ironed out and they all look forward to this being a meaningful experience for Urbandale youth and for our personnel.
- We hope to see some progress in September on the training facility. It is anticipated that the footers and some of the basic items will be started in September with construction moving ahead full speed in October.

Articles that appear in this newsletter represent the opinions of the author...any change to official UFD or City policy or procedures will be announced via official communications.

Consider R.I.T. - by Dan Birkett

With some of the recent training we have completed I wanted to recap on something that I feel is important. That is, the ability to rescue one of our own. In our area these are known as rapid intervention teams and should be assigned at all working incidents. With the recent training we have all gotten a small taste of what this may involve. Hopefully the training has opened our minds to how we can prepare for a rescue and how we may actually carry out a rescue in the event that R.I.T. is needed.

The arguments against formalized R.I.T. haven't changed and are valid to some degree. Statements such as, "we do not have enough personnel", "we should not be getting ourselves in a situation where R.I.T. is needed", or "R.I.T. is ineffective". My question to those is, "What should we do in the event of a fire ground mayday or an injured firefighter during an incident?" Our entire job is all about preparation and training to solve our customer's problem or incident. "Why would we consider not preparing and training for our own problem or incident?" I challenge you to take two minutes and check any fire service website. I can almost guarantee that on a daily basis there is a current article or story related to a fire ground injury or death. Do you think that they thought it would happen to their fire dept. on that day? Can you deny the fact that thousands of firefighters are injured every year? Can you turn your head to the fact that numerous deaths per year are caused during interior operations? These stories are from all over the country and have forged the road for R.I.T. in many areas.

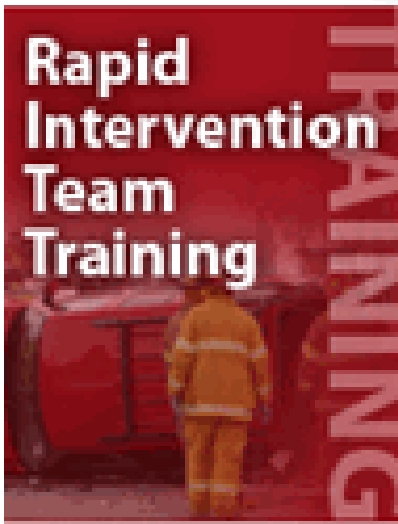
I will agree that serious focus needs to continue to be placed on safe work practices, communication, safe operation of vehicles and tools, building construction, S.C.B.A., and etc. This type of education and training is the ultimate solution to the problem. We need to continue to make firefighters more confident and skilled in all aspects of our job. Every member of our dept. should have goals that include not having work related injuries, never having a mayday on the fire ground, and never having another L.O.D.D.

I would like to share some of my personal opinions on what the capability of R.I.T. should be and can be in the future of the fire service:

- The team should have a minimum of 4 competent and trained personnel.
- The team should immediately get some basic R.I.T. tools into the work area including rope bag, air supply, irons, T.I.C., webbing, lights, and wire cutters.
- The team should announce their establishment to com-

mand and monitor all fire ground channels.

- 2 members should perform a R.I.T. scene size-up while the other 2 members can retrieve larger equipment from apparatus closest to the scene. This could include ladders, saws, stretchers, etc.
- The team should be placed where the work is being done on the fire ground and should also give the team the ability to see more than one side of the structure.
- The team should quickly establish secondary means of egress. An example would be placing ladders to the second floor on at least two sides of a structure that has a fire on the second floor or forcing a back entry door. This would be done without affecting the fire behavior in the structure.
 - The team should be pulling a second or third back up line and also assisting with the movement of the attack line at the point of entry into the structure.
 - In the event of a mayday the team would split into two equal teams which would include a team to find and assess the situation and needs, the second team to help carry out the solution to the situation and needs.
 - At all times the team would act as additional safety officers on the scene and relay any important information to command on improved or worsening conditions.



- The team should be able to help direct other members that are still working in the structure when the mayday occurs. An example would be to make sure the attack team continues to fight the fire and not get completely caught up in the situation at hand.
- The team should quickly identify the need for more personnel or special equipment needed.
- The team should remain in good communication with command preferably on a separate assigned channel and update on the situation as needed.

The team should be passionate about their assignment and move with a sense of urgency and purpose when operating on the fire ground.

Thank you,

Dan

ON THE LINE

“YOU’VE BEEN CAUGHT DOING AN OUTSTANDING JOB” LETTERS...

We continue to recognize your efforts. Whenever we receive a thank you letter, card or a phone call, we pass that along to the people involved in the form of a “You’ve Been Caught Doing An Outstanding Job” letter. As of September 1st, we have sent 56 letters to our personnel. The following people received “You’ve Been Caught” letters since our last newsletter:

- We received a thank you note for our involvement in an EMS call for a broken wrist. The patient sent a thank you note to thank you for the calm professional approach and stated that the crew was very kind. She also thanked the crew for keeping her informed about what they were doing and why they were doing it! (Cody & Derek).
- We receive “kudos” from Chief Roe (Clive FD) regarding the great job of extrication that [Lt. Gentosi, Cory Macumber and the entire “C” shift crew](#) did while working a MVC with entrapment on the interstate for which CFD provided mutual aid. He said that they did a great job!

Congratulations!

- To Craig Jensen being selected as Father of the Year. His son Carter made an awesome video and entered it in a Kodak contest – and won a trip for them to Florida. Hope they enjoy the relaxation and the nice beaches. Way to go Carter...and Craig!!



brought to you by **Kodak**



- To Lt. Birkett, Paula and John who had the ambulance call that makes all of the “bad” calls seem a little brighter....they delivered a health baby boy in August on the way to the hospital!

Additional Training Opportunities:

The following are training classes that are offered around the state. If you are interested in any, please turn in a training request to your Officer.

PEPP, Saturday, October 3rd. This is the full 8-hour program (PEPP Refresher: Sept. 16th and Sept. 30th)

Fire Officer II, Thur/Fri/Sat October 29-31st

Fri/Sat November 6-7th

You must already be certified as Fire Officer I to participate)

Beyond Hoses and Helmets (IAFC/VCOS Class). This is a class that focuses on leadership skills beyond tactics: leadership, personal management, etc.

Saturday November 21st

ON THE LINE

Other programs/training/projects completed by UFD in August:

Training Report: **503 hours** of training were completed in August.

Fire Training: 150 hours

EMS Training: 353 hours

(140 in-house hours – 10 outside hours)

(353 in-house hours)

Prevention & Inspection Activities:

- Completed 16 Inspections
- Completed 7 re-inspections
- Completed 4 preplans
- Conducted 9 plan reviews
- Conducted 4 Car Seat check
- Conducted CPR classes for 5 people
- Conducted public education / public service for 293 people - 103 children, 193 adults



			# Children	# Adults	
8/3/2009	12315 Sunflower	Smoke Detector Batteries	0	2	
8/4/2009	9000 Douglas	Safety Event	10	20	
8/6/2009	St.41	Station tour	13	2	
8/9/2009	St.42	Station tour	5	9	
8/11/2009	7305 Aurora	BP checks	0	20	
8/12/2009	St.42	CPR/First Aid Class	0	5	
8/13/2009	4700 105th Ct.	Smoke Detector Batteries	0	1	
8/15/2009	144th & Bryn Mawr	Truck Request	10	5	
8/17/2009	St.42	Station tour	35	17	
8/20/2009	3825 106th	Extinguisher Training	0	22	
8/24/2009	12717 Sunflower	Smoke Detector Batteries	0	1	
8/24/2009	3837 127th	Smoke Detector Batteries	0	1	
8/24/2009	12712 Sunflower	Smoke Detector Batteries	0	1	
8/24/2009	12703 Sunflower	Smoke Detector Batteries	0	1	
8/27/2009	12711 Sunflower	Smoke Detector Batteries	0	1	
8/27/2009	3825 127th	Smoke Detector Batteries	0	1	
8/28/2009	3510 86th	Extinguisher Training	0	20	
8/28/2009	12319 Sunflower	Smoke Detector Batteries	0	1	
8/29/2009	Dallas Center FD	Truck Event	30	60	Totals
			103	190	293

Member Profile...

Member Profile: Joseph Poschner (Joey)

Length of time with UFD: 7 months

Level: EMT-PS, FF II (just finished recruit class)

Why I became interested in the UFD: I figured since I recently bought my first house in Urbandale and my life goal is to get on full time with a fire dept, it would be a perfect fit.

Previous EMS experience: Fraser Medical (since July 08)

Previous Fire experience: none

Family life: Married to Lynn for 4 years. We have a child on the way due in March 2010. Also have a cat named Sophia.

Current Profession: My profession will always be Fire/EMS, since I started the process back when I signed up for EMT-basic class (2004)

Activities or hobbies I enjoy: Running long distance, lifting weights, biking, fishing, football, baseball/softball, taking pictures, looking for deer sheds, cooking, watching New York Giants games

Most memorable moment outside of UFD: Hiking for 10 days in the mountains of New Mexico during Boy Scouts

Favorite TV programs: Family Guy, The Office, Rescue Me, NFL live, Sports Center

Favorite movies: Bringing out the Dead, Full Metal Jacket, Anchor Man, Friday Night Lights, Gladiator, Rounders

Last book that I read: 12-lead interpretations

Personal goals: Getting hired on full-time with a fire dept., having a son, creating a new idea or invention to improve Fire/EMS

What I enjoy about the Urbandale Fire Dept: The size, call volume, training, professionalism, innovation, people, and last but not least; the fact that P.O.C's get paid to work-out at the fire house.



Chief's thanks...

- Thanks to Lt. Stuckle and Rod Silvers for taking R418 for an appearance in the Dallas Center Fire Department's equipment display. This is the first time we have been invited and it was great to be able to accommodate their request.
- Thanks to Cody Thorne and Lt. Stuckle for covering the road race at Living History Farms. This road race is a new event and one that will likely be an annual summer event. It is great when we can accommodate these special requests.

