

House Calls



NEWSLETTER FOR THE RESIDENTS OF SPOKANE COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT 9

WINTER 2014

INSIDE

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF
DISTRICT 9

ARE EXTENSION
CORDS REALLY
DANGEROUS?

SAVE the DATE

Demo Day &
Wellness Fair

Saturday, June 7
10:00 am - 2:00 pm

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Mead



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Fire District 9



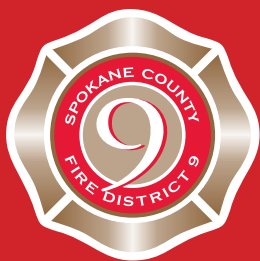
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509-466-4602



A Letter From the Chief

WHY EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE (EMS) FROM A FIRE TRUCK IS BEST FOR FIRE DISTRICT 9

There's been a lot of talk lately about why a fire truck shows up at a medical emergency. History shows us that fire based EMS has been around since the early 70's. Just how fire based EMS is delivered (what kind of truck) has been the subject of debate for at least that long. Some will argue that you should not deliver EMS from a fire engine due to the wear and tear on the truck. Others say it should be delivered from a squad or ambulance. The right answer lies within the specific characteristics of each organization. In the city of Spokane it may not make sense to deliver EMS from a fire truck, but in Fire District 9 it makes perfect sense.

When you look at our population density and distribution, our dual role firefighters need to be on a truck that is capable of fighting fire and delivering EMS. Many times our crews will clear an EMS call and immediately go to a fire without returning to their station. Additionally, delivering EMS from a fire truck actually saves the District money since we don't have multiple types of expensive apparatus sitting idly in a fire station, in effect doubling the cost of equipment.



everything we can to save you or your loved ones in a worst-case scenario. So remember, the next time a fire truck shows up at an EMS call you are seeing the most effective way to bring lifesaving skills and equipment to your door.

Jack Cates, Fire Chief
Spokane County Fire District #9



Our approach serves as a model of efficiency, both from a capital cost perspective and a service perspective. Last year, in our most heavily populated areas, our response times to all EMS incidents, both advanced and basic life support, averaged less than six minutes. This response time is absolutely vital in order to support doing

A Day in the Life of Fire District 9

7:00 am: The work day begins, although many firefighters have arrived at their station a half hour early to get their fire gear on the truck, check air packs and masks and inventory other personal equipment. First thing is to tie-in with the off-going shift with a briefing. What has happened in the prior 24 hours is important to maintain continuity.

7:30 am: A typical engine company has between two and four firefighters assigned to the engine with three being the most common. Everyone assigned to the engine will have specific assignments and job descriptions, most often as an officer, driver and firefighter. All firefighters on shift are trained as emergency medical technicians, but a paramedic is also scheduled on each shift. Everything from tire pressures to the medical supply inventory is checked by the in-coming crew.

During this time the officer in charge that day is in the office reviewing the day's schedule which involves work assignments such as facility maintenance, groundskeeping, hydrant testing and training.

8:00 am: The Administration staff has arrived at the main office and has started their day. The Training Division has a full day planned of coordinating and overseeing classes in technical rescue and on the new ladder truck. The Fire Chief is hosting an area-wide emergency management meeting with various organizations from around Spokane, planning ahead for potential emergency situations. The Prevention Division has the day lined out with building inspections, answering

questions from concerned citizens and wrapping up the report from the previous day's fire. The Administrative team has a busy day with reviewing budget reports, entering alarm reports, processing accounts payable and helping citizens with all sorts of questions.

9:14 am: The alarm goes off – someone is experiencing severe chest pain just eight blocks from the station. The firefighters are on the truck and out the door in seconds. The EMTs and paramedic immediately go to work gathering a baseline set of vital signs, establishing an IV, giving pain relieving and vein dilating medications and obtaining an EKG – all in a matter of minutes.

The ambulance arrives and the engine company assists in getting the patient packaged for transportation to the nearest emergency room for advanced hospital care. All gear is loaded back onto the fire engine and it's back to the station to restock supplies and complete the medical report.

11:00 am: Time for emergency medical training. Today's training involves working with "Sim-Man", an interactive simulated mannequin. Sim-Man is fitted with blue tooth communications to allow the trainer complete control of the patient's vital signs and basic medical condition including: blood pressure, heart rate, respiration rate and heart rhythm.

12:00 pm: Lunch

12:45 pm: Another alarm – this time for a high speed, multi-vehicle collision. Upon arrival at the scene, firefighters find that the driver is trapped and they proceed to cut off the door with the hydraulic cutting tool. With a few precise cuts, the door hits the ground and the patient can now be accessed for removal and treatment. The patient is then immobilized to a backboard, assessed for injuries and loaded into the ambulance. After the scene is cleaned up and stabilized the engine returns in service. Back at the station all tools that were used are

checked for readiness, medical supplies restocked and a detailed medical report is completed.

1:00 pm: The Admin office has received another call from someone interested in taking CPR and First Aid training. They are a resident in District 9 so the class is free, and they are now registered for the next class.

2:30 pm: A local cub scout troop shows up at the station for a scheduled visit. Seven boys and their leaders are given a tour of the station, the living quarters, and of course the highlight is the tour of the fire trucks. The firefighters are enthusiastic in their description of the equipment and the purpose for its uses. The visitors are wide-eyed as they see first-hand what the fire station and trucks are all about!

The EMS Coordinator has been busy this afternoon performing safety fit tests on the firefighters' SCBA masks which prevent the firefighters from being exposed to contaminants. He has also spent the morning reviewing previous medical reports and preparing for an upcoming training in cardiac procedures.

3:45 pm: The station officer has received information from the Prevention Division that a few hydrants in that station's area need to be checked. The company loads up and heads out to check the previously out of service hydrants. The hydrants are checked for flow, operation and any possible obstructions.

4:30 pm: While returning from the hydrant detail the company stops at a new commercial building in the area to conduct a pre-plan. Pre-plans are made when there are traffic revisions, buildings under construction and new developments in the station's first due response area. This is an opportunity for the firefighters to develop a strategic game plan prior to a possible fire event. Firefighters review access issues, fire suppression systems and fire loads to name a few.

5:00 pm: The Administrative staff is headed home. It's been a fairly routine day, but they never know what tomorrow will bring.





5:21 pm: An alarm is toned which concludes the crew's pre-plan. The firefighters head to the engine, put on their turnouts and respond to the middle school for a report of a fire alarm. Upon arrival the firefighters exit the truck with flashlights, a thermal imaging camera and SCBA packs. The students and staff have exited the building and the firefighters are met outside by the custodian who says he saw some kids messing around by the pull station on the east end of the building. The firefighters arrive at the alarm panel and find that the alarm panel does indicate a pull station alarm from the east end of the building. After conducting a primary search and resetting the alarm all other fire resources are cancelled and this alarm is deemed false.

The crew arrives back at the station with the officer heading straight to the office to get a jump on the necessary paperwork from earlier hydrant tests, pre-plan and the report from the false alarm at the school. The other firefighters head to the kitchen to start prepping the evening's meal.

6:30 pm: The volunteer firefighters start arriving at their assigned stations to begin training at 7:00 pm. Throughout District 9 over 115 volunteers gather once a week to practice various medical, rescue and firefighting skills and to ensure that the station and equipment are ready for any emergency incident.

9:00 pm: The volunteer firefighters are putting away their gear and preparing to head home. It's been a long day after working their full-time, regular jobs and then training with District 9, but they are energized and ready for the next call.

3:00 am: Suddenly the lights come on and a digital tone wakes the firefighters. The dispatcher relays an address and a short report indicating an elderly person has fallen from bed and needs help. Firefighters are out the door quickly and arrive to find an elderly man struggling to get his wife back into bed. A few questions are asked and the crew completes an assessment to ensure the patient is not injured. It is determined she is okay so the crew cancels the ambulance and places her back in bed.

6:15 am: The crew awakes and the first line of business is simple – start the coffee! The next task is to pull the engine onto the front ramp and give it a good cleaning and scrubbing for the oncoming shift.

7:00 am: A 24-hour shift is now complete and, after a briefing with the oncoming crew, the firefighters head home. This crew will be off for the next 48 hours.

7:14 am: The alarm rings signaling the first call of the day and thus begins another day in the life...

Are Extension Cords Really Dangerous?

EXTENSION CORDS CAN CONTRIBUTE TO FIRES IN SEVERAL WAYS.

ONE: Overloading a cord. Running too much current through a too small cord, can cause it to overheat. Make sure that the appliances hooked to the extension cord do not exceed the rating for the cord.

TWO: Using damaged cords. Check extension cords periodically and if they show any damage, replace them.

THREE: Coiling electrical cords. A single cord by itself won't create enough heat to be a problem. Coil a cord enough times and you can generate the kind of heat it takes to ignite a fire.

Extension cords are tools for use with electrical appliances. Any tool is safe if you use it correctly. Just like a chainsaw, an extension cord that is used improperly can result in damage or injury.



FREE First Aid/CPR & CPR Classes
for Spokane County Fire District 9 Citizens & Businesses
For more information, please call Administration at 466-4602 or visit our website, www.scd9.org.



See us for a **FREE BLOOD PRESSURE CHECK** on the first Tuesday of every month from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm at the Wandermere Fred Meyer.



House Calls

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HOUSE CALLS is a publication of
Spokane County Fire District 9

Jack Cates, Fire Chief
Michael R. Atwood, Commissioner
James E. Bennett, Commissioner
Thomas R. McGarry, Commissioner

*If you are a resident of the District and would like a **FREE address post**, please contact:
District Administration, 466-4602*



Meet Jim Bennett, Fire Commissioner SCFD 9



***Please welcome
Jim Bennett,
SCFD 9's newest
Fire Commissioner***

Jim was born in Spokane and raised in Northern Florida. His experience includes real estate, construction, and farming. Emergency Services have been Jim's primary focus for more than 30 years as a Paramedic, educator, and administrator.

Jim's earned a large number of professional certifications and holds both a BA in Program Management and an MBA from Whitworth University. He's previously served as Fire Commissioner in Stevens County, vice-chaired the Northeast Washington

Emergency Communication Board, served on the Spokane County EMS Council's QI committee, and worked as a board member and Volunteer CEO with Deer Park Ambulance.



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES RESPOND TO THE CALL

**THE BEST PART OF A FIREFIGHTER'S
JOB IS KNOWING WE MAKE A
DIFFERENCE TO THE COMMUNITIES
WE SERVE.**

If that appeals to you too, we'd welcome you as a volunteer —and we'll train you to work alongside the other members of our team.

Are you at least 18 years old, living close to one of our fire stations, and willing to help others at a moment's notice?

Call 466-4602 for information on how to get started.