



SMOKE SIGNALS

Citrus County Fire Rescue Newsletter September / October 2010

From the Top

As the economy and housing situation continues to struggle, we are faced with response to more vacant and abandoned structures. This month, I will be talking about response to these structures.

Firefighters are often killed or injured when fighting fires in abandoned, vacant, and unoccupied structures. These structures pose additional and sometimes unique risks due to the potential for firefighters. These buildings present unexpected and unsafe building conditions such as dilapidation, decay, or damage from misuse, lack of care, previous fires, and vandalism. Another factor for concern is uncertain occupancy status.

Risk management principles must be applied at all structure fires to ensure the appropriate strategy and tactics are used based on the fire ground conditions encountered and the availability of adequate numbers of personnel on scene. Risk management becomes especially important to the Incident Commander at vacant and abandoned buildings.

Firefighters should take the following steps to minimize the risk of death and injury while fighting structure fires:

1. Report changing conditions and hazards encountered to your Officer, the Incident Commander, or Incident Safety Officer.
2. Recognize that maintaining scene safety is a shared responsibility. Everyone on the scene is responsible for safety not just the "Safety Officer."
3. Follow the department's standard operating procedures (SOPs) and safety rules.
4. Be aware of your surroundings and changing conditions. Report changes to Command.
5. Never freelance or operate alone, always operate in teams of two or more.

Officers should take the following steps to protect fire fighters:

1. Enforce plans, policies and SOPs
2. Conduct a risk-benefit analysis before committing personnel to interior operations. Use good risk management principles. Remember the simple phrase: risk a lot to save a lot, risk a little to save a little, and risk nothing to save nothing.
3. Train on the fire department response plans and SOPs.
4. Follow SOPs for emergency response and firefighting activities in and around abandoned, vacant, or unoccupied structures.
5. Conduct a thorough size-up and risk analysis before conducting operations in any burning structure.

Firefighting operations should be limited to defensive attack if the structure is judged to be unsafe or in any situation where the risks to firefighter safety are excessive. Offensive (interior attack) operations should only be considered when sufficient resources are on scene to conduct offensive operations with a reasonable degree of safety. This includes the ability to perform essential support functions such as water supply, ventilation, lighting, utility control, accountability, and rapid intervention teams.

Continual size-up and risk-benefit analysis should be performed before changing strategies, including any decision to conduct interior overhaul operations following a defensive fire attack. Adequate resources must be available on scene to perform rapid intervention team (RIT) duties any time personnel are operating at any structure fire.

Companies should inspect or preplan buildings within their area. The type of construction, materials used, presence of trusses and/or lightweight construction in the roof and floor, type of occupancy, fuel load, exit routes, and other distinguishing characteristics should be noted in the preplan.

Survey your first response area regularly to identify buildings, including single family residences that are abandoned or vacant. Check out any hazards that may exist in or around these buildings. Consider posting a log of these structures for all shifts.

Finally, be constantly vigilant to changes on the emergency scene and be safe. Remember – "Everyone goes home."

The Incident Commander should conduct an initial size-up of critical fire ground factors before beginning firefighting operations and must continuously review and reevaluate these factors during all fire ground operations. A 360-degree size-up should be conducted for all abandoned, vacant, or unoccupied structures. Those in charge of fire incidents need to continually train and sharpen their skills to fulfill their responsibilities and obligations in the execution of their duties on the fire ground.

We should confirm and verify building occupancy status. Incident Commanders (IC) and incident safety officers should do the following:

1. Conduct an initial size-up of each incident weighing critical fire ground factors such as occupancy status; occupant survivability and rescue potential; vacant building markings or indicators; size, construction and use of the building; age and condition of the building; and the location, size, and extent of the fire in the building against the risk benefit to determine the initial incident strategy (offensive or defensive).

2. Develop an incident action plan before beginning firefighting efforts and continually review and reevaluate the factors and the risk management plan throughout the operation.
3. Use appropriate risk management criteria to decide whether an offensive or defensive strategy should be employed to attack a fire.
4. Attempt to determine whether the building is occupied or not. Signs to look for include vehicles in garage, driveway, or parked nearby; people at windows indicating the possibility of other occupants as well; time of day; type of occupancy; and reports from occupants who have escaped the burning structure. Reports from neighbors and bystanders may also provide valuable information.
5. Consider the number of firefighters, the amount and type of apparatus and equipment available, and the stage of the fire when determining the type of fire attack.
6. Establish, and clearly mark, and monitor an exterior collapse zone at structure fires where there is a risk of collapse. Recently, several firefighters in Detroit were injured when the building collapsed. They were on the exterior of the structure when it collapsed.
7. Use evacuation signals when it is determined that all firefighters should be evacuated from a burning building, as well as during the initiation of defensive operations and during overhaul and salvage operations.

We must be constantly vigilant as to our circumstances during emergency operations. Firefighter safety is paramount. We are an organization that could be seriously affected should a firefighter be injured. Please use common sense, good judgment, and be aware of your surroundings any time you are operating at an emergency. Remember no building is worth a firefighter's life.

The saying for the month is, "Never be afraid to try something new. Remember, amateurs built the Ark. Professionals built the Titanic." - Author Unknown

Be safe.

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Deputy Chief

Deputy Chief is on a well deserved vacation. Stay tuned for his article in the next edition of Smoke Signals.

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Training

Hot Items from Operations and Training

Well, the annual softball game is coming up soon, and I think the Westside should be able to take the Eastside again this year. I hope to see everyone and their family present at the picnic this year both Volunteer and Career. Go WESTSIDE!

As many of you know, we are replacing the vinyl tile in the day room area with ceramic, hoping that it will be a little more durable. I would like to send out a special thanks to the

Explorers, Chief Morabito and Chief Clamer for their assistance in picking up the old tile and cleaning up for Corey. I am sure Corey greatly appreciates it also.

Coming forward October 1, 2010, the State will be requiring JPR's (Job Performance Requirements) for Firesafety Inspector and Fire Officer State Certifications, which must be completed as part of the class. I have e-mailed this out to all the officers.

Please review this information below and document it as training in Fire House. I have listed several Q&A and report writing issues we are constantly running into below:

1. Under the **Basic** tab, the **Incident Type** field should indicate what type of incident actually occurred on scene. For instance, if a call is dispatched as an illegal burn, but upon arrival on scene the burn met all setbacks, the incident type should be "632 – Authorized controlled burning." **Make sure you look at all the incident types and put what you found not what you were dispatched for.**
2. Under the **Basic** tab, if you were canceled at ANY point in the call, "C" for canceled should be entered into the **Response Code** field. If you were canceled prior to responding or en route (did not arrive on scene), "611 – Dispatched and canceled en route" should be used for the **Incident Type**.

3. Under the **Response** tab, when personnel stand by at station and you enter the unit as "At Station," there should NOT be an en route or arrival time. Personnel seem to be checking the "canceled" box but leaving these times in the fields.

4. When responding to any type of fire-related call (structure fires, vehicle fires, brush fires, illegal burns, and fire alarms), you need to obtain occupant and/or property owner information, including a phone number.

Illegal burns: Occupant (renter) and/or homeowner information, including phone number.

Brush fires: Property owner information, including phone number. Note in narrative if property owner is not available.

Vehicle fires: Vehicle owner, VIN, tag, make, and model. If the vehicle is too badly damaged to obtain this information, it needs to be noted in the narrative.

Fire alarms: Homeowner (or manager, if it is a business) information, including phone number.

Structure fire: Occupant (renter) and/or homeowner information, including phone numbers. If the homeowner lives at a different location, this address needs to be included.

5. Under the **Response** tab, pre-incident and loss values for structure fires and vehicle fires ALWAYS need to be entered. Refer to SOP 100.30 for calculations.

6. When entering the **Narrative**, you may use the "auto-generate" feature to add the basic information; however, you do need to still elaborate further and describe the incident in detail.

Rules for Fire Officers to follow....

- Your #1 job is to ensure that everyone goes home.
- You must be an effective and competent leader.
- You must be prepared and accountable.
- You must be a good decision maker.
- You must be an enforcer of policies and procedures.

- You must be a good role model.
Nothing less than your crew's life depends on it!



From FirefighterCloseCalls.com

FIREFIGHTER TRAINING IS A NECESSITY!!

If you have any questions or suggestions, please do not hesitate to contact me!

The only stupid question will be the one you don't ask.

Don't complain if you don't participate in making the decisions; it is a sign of insecurity.

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Logistics

Logistics has officially moved to a classroom area at the Training Center. Please check your information bulletins for the new phone and fax numbers.

The last remaining pick up style brush truck has been removed from service and sent to auction.

September 21st and 22nd are tentatively scheduled to complete the door code changes. The new codes will be provided at the September 20th All Hands meeting.

Please remember to use the Hansen system to report needed repairs. The system is up and running and seems to be working well. If you are not sure how to use the system, please contact one of the career officers or a member of Logistics for instructions.

When requesting uniform items, please make sure that you fill out the proper requisition form. Make sure you included your correct sizes and have your officer sign it. This helps assure we order and receive the correct uniforms for you.

Volunteer Coordinator:

We have 14 volunteer applications in various steps of the process.

The next volunteer orientation is scheduled for 7 p.m. on September 27th at the FTC.

It is very important that you keep your officer and administration advised if you are moving, taking extended leave or have any circumstances that are preventing you from remaining in good standing. The best way to assure this information reaches me is to send it in writing.

We have had several questions asking whether Fire Rescue pays for the physical to attend EMT class. The answer is, "No"; we do not pay for that physical. Also, if the information from your county physical is used to complete your EMT class physical, any charges for filling out the form, are not paid for by the County.

Health and Safety

The next meeting of the Committee is September 13, 2010.

Please remember that if you are late for your appointment with the Health Department, they do not work you in. If you are late, it will require you to reschedule your appointment.

Keep in mind that until you complete all requirements of the physical, the Health Department does not consider the physical completed. This includes having your TB test read, chest x-rays done or completing any referrals to other physicians.

The Safety Committee will be reviewing the rehabilitation policy and making recommendations for improvements. This review will also include establishing a standard stock for all rehab units.

The Committee is also working to improve the accountability system. Once the policy is finalized, all personal will be trained on its use.

We are also developing some forms that can be used to report a safety related problem and to make a request to use non-county issued equipment. More details will follow as this process moves forward.

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Fire Marshal's Office

The coming month is a lead into Fire Prevention Week, October 3rd thru 9th, 2010. This year's slogan is "**Smoke Alarms: A Sound You Can Live With!**" The national slogan encourages the fire service community to elevate the importance of smoke alarms and assist the public in taking the necessary steps to replace, install or maintain smoke alarms.

National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) reports that nearly 3,000 people die in home fires in the U.S. annually. Working smoke alarms cut the risk of dying in a home fire in half. National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) says, "Without smoke alarms, the chances of surviving a fire in a home is drastically reduced.

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) says, "This year's campaign is designed to educate people about the importance of smoke alarms and encourages everyone to take the steps necessary to update and maintain their home smoke alarm protection."

In a study (2003-2006) NFPA reported, "roughly two-thirds of home fire deaths resulted from home fires in homes with no smoke alarms or no working smoke alarms."

- No smoke alarms were present in 40% of the home fire deaths.
- In 23% of the home fire deaths, smoke alarms were present but did not sound."

What does all of this mean? We, as Fire Rescue staff must continue our aggressive campaign to make our community safe. At every opportunity, we must encourage and assist our residents to install, maintain and test their smoke alarms!

As a local note, just before Fire Prevention Week, the Fire Marshal's Office purchases, compiles and distributes public education material to approximately 5,500 elementary and primary schools (public and private) students. The materials are distributed and provided to the students during Fire Prevention Week. They provide fun and educational materials meant to help the students become more fire safe in our community.

For any questions about smoke alarms or fire safety, please call the Citrus County Fire Marshal's Office at 352-527-5407.

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Exploring

Citrus County Fire Rescue Explorer's Post 423 Explorers are continuing their quest for knowledge! Four Explorers successfully completed the 40 hour First Responder and CPR class with the Firefighter I students. Congratulations to Nicole Clamer, Amanda Leslin, Johnathan Leslin, and Johnathan Sousa for completing the training! Keep up the good work!

Any young adult between the age of 14 and 20 years old, having graduated the 8th grade, and who is interested in participating in the Citrus County Fire Explorer Program, can contact Captain Dozier at 352-489-3770.

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BIRTHDAYS

September Birthdays:

2 – Fitzgerald, Richard – St. 20
2 – Lane, Noah – St. 8
4 – Bellingar, Amy - St. 8
5 – Pereira, Ivette – St. 8
8 – Peters, David – St. 3
8 – Stevens, Matthew – St. 8
13 – Linton, Dana – Aux.
14 – McGovern, Jena – St. 3
14 – Coleman, Chad – St. 2
17 – Tucker, Michael – FTC
17 – Williams, Michael – St. 3
19 – Larkins, Christopher – St. 14
21 – Dunn, Daniel – St. 3
22 – McKenna, Israel – St. 2
23 – Ellis, Gregory – St. 2
26 – Vorisek, Brian – St. 9
26 – Pappadouplos, Kevin – St. 3
27 – Rigalo, Thomas – Explorer
28 – Pena, Maria – St. 14
28 – Harris, Sterling – St. 7
29 – Carney, Joseph – St. 21
30 – Harlen, Houck – Explorer
30 – Claypool, John – St. 3

30 – Rivera, Henry – St. 7

October Birthdays:

3 – Lawson, Lisa – St. 9
3 – Goodall, Russell – St. 24
3 – Robinson, Michael – St. 20
4 – Greer, Michael – St. 7
4 – Sloane, Spenser – St. 13
5 – Potter, Lance – St. 7
6 – King, Joshua – St. 8
8 – Carollo, Tony – FTC
9 – Lecompe, Ronnie – Logistics
9 – Struble, Richard – St. 8
10 – Barfield, Joshua – St. 13
11 – Hawkins, Daniel – St. 3
15 – Brown, Beth – St. 7
15 – Meier, Walter – St. 3
17 – Lohr, Donald – St. 9
18 – Wagner, Gary – St. 8
19 – Jefferson, Patricia – Admin.
21 – Story, Michael – St. 8
21 – Shortz, Robert – St. 2
23 – Nieves, Elliot – St. 20
27 – Fulton, Corey – Logistics
28 – Brennan, Michael – Admin.
29 – Franklin, Ralph – Admin.
29 – Clark, Donald - 24

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO ALL!!

Citrus County Fire Rescue Calls for Service

January 1 to June 30, 2010

	Total	Per day
Structure fires	57	0.31
Vehicle fires	22	0.12
Brush fires	84	0.46
Miscellaneous fires	19	0.10
Total Fire Calls	182	0.99
Unauthorized burns	145	0.79
False alarms	131	0.72
HazMat related	31	0.17
MVA w/ injury	150	0.82
MVA w/out injury	201	1.10
EMS calls	334	1.83
Other misc. calls	2037	11.13
Total calls	3211	17.55

For the same time period as above, the average response time for 1,429 emergency calls was 9 minutes and 2 seconds.

Reminders/Notes/Dates:

Fire Officer Meetings

October 11, 2010
December 13, 2010

All Hands Meetings

September 20, 2010
November 8, 2010

- ANNUAL FIREFIGHTER APPRECIATION PICNIC, September 26, 2010, 11:00 a.m. to after the softball game. The meal is catered by Sunshine Café at the Fire Explorer's will have games for the children. BE THERE!!!!
- All officers must attend the ICS 300 and 400.

- EMT and Paramedic re-certifications are due this year and must have a copy in our office by December 31, 2010.
- Complete your Target Safety assignments.
- Don't forget to look at the Fire Rescue Event Calendar for dates of upcoming events.
- As of August 26, 2010, Citrus County Fire Rescue included a total of 140 active volunteers: 49 Trainees; 15 Support firefighters; 54 Combat firefighters; 22 Auxiliary unit members;
- Make sure all activities, training, and stats are entered into Firehouse software.
- Hazmat ICS Class sponsored by the LEPC at our FTC September 1, 2, and 3, 2010 0800 – 1700 hrs.
- Apparatus Operations night class starts November 1st 1800 hrs.
- FF I Night class Sept 7th thru December 18th runs on Tues, Wed, Thurs. 1800- 2200 Sat. 0800 – 1900.
- FF I & II Day class dates TBA for January 2011
- Inspector I classes will start in January 2011

Check the Fire Training Center training calendar at:

<http://www.localendar.com/public/firetraining>

Photograph Corner



Driver/Engineer Rigalo and Firefighter Williams “spearheaded” the Station #20 beautification project. They managed to acquire plants, mulch, landscape timbers, rock, and decorations. They were originally into the project with their own finances and fortunately, the Pine Ridge Fireman’s Fund agreed to assist them with financial support. In the infamous words of D/E Rigalo, “This is our home for a third of the year, and we want it to look good.” During the project, they had the unsolicited help from the following staff: Captain Knowles, Lieutenant Sanders, Driver/Engineer Boyer, Firefighter Nieves, Firefighter Greer, and Casual Labor Firefighter Lanzarone.

Businesses and other organizations assisted with donations or discounts such as; Sand Land, The Key Nursery, Holder Produce, and Alisha Gordon.

KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK!



Fire Inspector Paul Gillum (left) is witnessing a pressure test of the underground piping for the fire system (hydrants and fire sprinkler system) to the Olive Garden Restaurant that is under construction. The construction superintendant believed the restaurant will be open for business near the end of October 2010.



Annual Volunteer Firefighter Appreciation Picnic



Date: 09/26/2010

Time: 11:00 AM

Contact person:
Kimberly Fugate
(352) 527-5406

Activities will begin at 11:00 AM and lunch will be served at noon. Be sure to bring the kids, because the Fire Explorers will have activities set up just for them. There will be music, raffles, an awards presentation, and of course the East Side vs. West Side softball game. All members of Citrus County Fire Rescue are encouraged to come support our volunteer firefighters!

Whispering Pines Park Pavilion
1700 Forest Drive
Inverness, FL 34450