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Message from Fire Chief Douglas A. Holton:

Welcome to the first edition of MFD Hot News. This is a quarterly newsletter produced to keep you abreast on the happenings of the Milwaukee Fire Department. In each issue you will learn something new about our organization and our personnel. As fire chief of MFD, I am committed to using this newsletter as an effective means to communicate with our members and anyone interested in learning more about our stellar department.

MFD Hot News will showcase the department's successful runs, heroes and heroines, programs, events, community relations initiatives, and feature fire-safety tips.

I hope you enjoy this issue and be on the lookout for our next newsletter in December.

Sincerely,

Douglas A. Holton

MFD HOT NEWS

Milwaukee Fire Department Implements a Carbon Monoxide Meter Program that Saves Lives



MFD firefighter searches a room for a Carbon Monoxide meter reading with his single-gas CO Meter.

Over the years, the Milwaukee Fire Department (MFD) has seen a steady increase in calls that result in Carbon Monoxide (CO) runs. In 2005, the department responded to 538 CO runs, 585 in 2006, and 692 in 2007. From the beginning of 2008 until May 31, MFD has had 311 CO runs, compared to 285 runs during that time last year. With the anticipation of CO runs increasing, MFD implemented a one-of-a-kind CO Meter Program that enhances the safety of firefighters and citizens alike.

The MFD CO Meter Program eventuated after a significant run took place June 22, 2007. Engine Company Six responded to a person who was in-and-out of consciousness in a church kitchen. When the company arrived, firefighters assessed the patient and determined the patient showed signs of CO poisoning. However, it took approximately 20 minutes for them to make that determination. The next step was to call a battalion chief on the scene to test the level of CO in the church. The battalion chief arrived with a four-gas meter and got a reading at 800 ppm (parts-per-million) of CO gas inside the church. OSHA standards prohibit exposure to more than 50 ppm of CO gas during an 8-hour time period.

Immediately, firefighters did an evacuation. Six people went to the hospital that day, including four firefighters.

“After that incident our department realized that giving CO meters only to battalion chiefs was an inefficient way to operate, and placed our firefighters and citizens in more danger for a longer period of time if CO was present,” said MFD Fire Chief Douglas A. Holton. “Our Labor Management Safety Committee came together and proposed that the department give a single-gas CO meter to every engine company and ladder truck in the city.”

However, monetarily it was not feasible to do so right away. It was not until November '07 that the MFD budget permitted all 16 truck companies to have a single-gas meter. The next task was to obtain money for all 37 engine companies to have a single-gas CO meter, too, as part of the CO Meter Program.

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Milwaukee Fire Department Implements a Carbon Monoxide Meter Program that Saves Lives continued...



The MSA Altair Single-Gas Meter which accompanies MFD firefighting personnel on all calls.

To do so, the department sought sponsors and was able to raise \$50,000 through the funding of five local companies—including \$42,000 from the Wisconsin Energy Foundation.

“The program was an easy sell,” said Chief Holton. “The companies we sought knew the dangers of CO poisoning and wanted to be part of the solution to mitigate the danger CO poses to Milwaukee citizens.”

On March 1, 2008, MFD Engine Companies got single-gas CO meters to round out the Carbon Monoxide Meter Program.

Today, firefighters and paramedics have the ability to detect CO gas within 15 to 30 seconds of arriving on a scene, and then taking the necessary steps immediately following a reading. The CO meters are attached to firefighting personnel first aid kits and accompany them daily on all calls.

“I think this is a great program because our firefighters and paramedics go into over 75 homes per day just on EMS runs. When we arrive, we will now know instantly if CO poisoning is the cause of the patients’ symptoms and take the necessary steps within seconds—instead of waiting for one of our battalion chiefs to come and assess the situation and then act,” said Chief Holton. “Thus far, this innovative program has had tremendous success and we are confident by taking this proactive approach we have already saved lives.”

A Round of Applause

Within a Four-Day Timeframe, MFD Firefighters Saved Six People Lives

When individuals sign on to be Milwaukee Fire Department firefighters, they also sign up to save lives. Within a four-day timeframe, August 29-September 1, the heroes and heroines of the MFD saved six lives that could have tragically ended if they had not.

August 29, Ladder 12 and Engine 13 removed two unconscious adults from the 2nd floor of a home during a kitchen fire at 3270 N. 28th Street. The two individuals were treated by MFD paramedics for smoke inhalation. The small fire started from a malfunctioning microwave.

In the early morning of September 1, Ladder 10 removed one adult, via a ground ladder, from the 2nd floor of a home undergoing a 3rd-alarm fire at 831 E. Clarke Street. In this particular incident, three additional people had jumped from a window prior to the arrival of the MFD.

“It is an honor to represent, and work alongside, a group of individuals whose top priority is to ensure the safety of others by any means necessary.”



Lastly, in the afternoon on September 1, Ladder 9 removed three victims from the 2nd floor during an apartment fire at 944 N. 20th Street. One person was rescued inside the building before a hose line was laid, and taken down an interior stairway. The other two individuals were rescued via ground ladders from outside the building.

“The heroic actions taken by our personnel over those four days epitomizes the MFD motto we all strive to work by daily: Courage. Integrity. Honor.,” said Assistant Fire Chief Brian Glassel. “It is an honor to represent, and work alongside, a group of individuals whose top priority is to ensure the safety of others by any means necessary.”

Hats off and a round of applause to all the MFD personnel who contributed to the lives saved in each of these incidents. We wholeheartedly thank each of you for a job well done.

Milwaukee Fire Department Helps Raise \$28,000 for MDA

For over 50 years, the International Association of Firefighters (IAFF) has galvanized fire departments across the nation to be avid fundraisers for the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA). Since 1954, the IAFF has raised nearly \$300 million to support MDA's mission and is the single-largest sponsor.

As an IAFF member, the Milwaukee Fire Department (MFD) has significantly contributed to the funds raised for MDA year-after-year. The MFD firefighters

are active participants in the "Fill-the-Boot" campaign, and this year set aside three days to raise money to benefit "Jerry's Kids." The "Fill-the-Boot" campaign took place August 21-23 at 26 MFD fire stations across the city. Each ran a simple street-side collection campaign which allowed anyone passing by to place money in a firefighter's boot sitting outside.

This year the collective effort of all Milwaukee-area firefighters resulted in \$28,000 raised to sup-

port MDA.

"We are proud to have raised a significant amount of money for a worthy cause, and look forward to continuing this effort each year," said MFD Fire Chief Douglas A. Holton.

MDA is a voluntary health agency working to defeat more than 40 neuromuscular diseases through programs of worldwide research, comprehensive services and far-reaching professional and public health education.



MFD Fire Chief Douglas A. Holton and MFD Union President Bobbie Webber kicked off the "Fill-the-Boot" campaign by placing their money into the boot at Engine 2 on July 29.

Smoke Detector Safety:

In the wake of two recent fatal fires that took the lives of two people who were both in homes with no working smoke detectors, it is vital to emphasize the importance of having operational smoke detectors in every home. The National Fire Protection Association reports that 65 percent of reported home fire deaths occur in homes with no smoke alarms or no working smoke detectors. The Association also reported that an estimated 890 lives could be saved each year if all homes had working smoke alarms.

It is undisputable that smoke alarms save lives. Here are some key things to remember about smoke alarms/detectors:

- First, make sure a smoke detector is installed on every level of your home, including the basement.
- We also recommend smoke detectors are placed outside sleeping areas and inside bedrooms.
- If you have a smoke detector with batteries, please check those monthly and replace the batteries annually. All smoke detectors operated by batteries should be replaced every 8 to 10 years.
- Remember to never disable your smoke alarm—even temporarily. For example, if it sounds while you're cooking, instead of taking the batteries out, clear the air by waving a towel near the smoke alarm, or if you have a hush button on your alarm press that.
- In general, smoke alarms should be placed in the center of a ceiling, or 6 to 12 inches below the ceiling if placed on the wall.
- Don't install smoke alarms near windows, doors, or ducts where drafts might interfere with their operation.
- In addition to having working smoke alarms in the home, have a fire escape plan as well. The two combined will increase you and your family's protection in case of a fire.
- Lastly, the Milwaukee Fire Department will come and install a smoke detector in your home if you are a Milwaukee resident and eligible to receive one. Call the Milwaukee Fire Department **Smoke Detector Hotline at 414-286-8980**.

"The National Fire Protection Association reports that 65 percent of reported home fire deaths occur in homes with no smoke alarms or no working smoke detectors."



Here is a picture of a smoke detector with a hush and a test button.

Courage · Integrity · Honor



The Milwaukee Fire Department (MFD) is the primary fire suppression, prevention, rescue and emergency medical service for the City of Milwaukee. The department's motto is "Courage, Integrity and Honor." MFD consists of approximately 1000 firefighters, many of which serve simultaneously as paramedics providing emergency medical services. MFD is known as one of the best fire departments nationwide for its response times and other quality services.

Check us out on the Web!
www.milwaukee.gov/firedepartment

SUBMISSIONS

The Office of Public Relations welcomes submissions to MFD Hot News on upcoming events, unique runs, stories pertaining to saving someone's life or property, our MFD heroes and heroines, and anything you deem worthy of giving recognition to.

This newsletter is quarterly and a means to broadcast the excellent work done by the Milwaukee Fire Department. Let our story be told!

If you have a story idea, please e-mail the Public Relations Manager, Tiffany Wynn, at ttwynn@milwaukee.gov. Thank you.

Milwaukee Fire Department · 711 West Wells · Milwaukee · WI · 53233 · 414-286-8948 · (fax) 414-286-8996

MFD HOT NEWS

Engine 6 and Ladder 1 Save the Day on Brady Street



Single-gas CO Meter which is carried in all Engine Companies and Ladders on the first-aid kits as shown above.

On August 19, Engine 6 received an EMS alarm to report to Bosley's Restaurant at 815 E. Brady Street. As they were entering the restaurant, their CO meter sounded just inside the doorway. The initial reading was 68 ppm. Immediately, everyone was evacuated from the restaurant.

One patient was transported to Columbia St. Mary's; however, the probability of many others being transported later on is high had Engine 6 not detected CO in a time-efficient manner.

Engine 6 then called Ladder 1 and Battalion 1 to the scene for further investigation. The investigation led firefighting personnel into the basement where CO readings were over 400 ppm.

After this discovery, the apartments that rest above Bosley's Restaurant were also immediately evacuated.

Ladder 1 found that CO was being released from a defective water heater they proceeded to shut off.

The building was then ventilated and safe for people to return.

On behalf of everyone at the Milwaukee Fire Department, we would like to thank Engine 6 and Ladder 1 for a job well done. What started as an EMS call for one person, ended in a CO incident that could have affected many people had it not been properly addressed by these two companies.