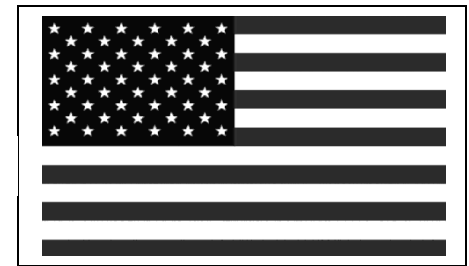




SOUTHSIDE FOOLS

January 2011 – Volume2, Issue 1



Happy New Year!

21 Resolutions for Firefighters

from Christopher Naum at www.thecompanyofficer.com

Above all, be safe in all your endeavors, assignments, and tasks!

2011 Meeting Dates

January 26 – Gold

February 15 – Red

March 28 –Black

April 14 – Gold

May 25 – Red

June 29 – Black

July – None

August 24 – Gold

September 28-Red

October 18 – Black

November 22 –Gold

December- None

1. Regardless of my years of experience, I will increase my understanding of the basic principles of Building Construction, because; Building Knowledge=Firefighter Safety.
2. Identify eleven (11) buildings within your first-due or response district and complete a pre-fire plan and present this to my company of organization.
3. Identify an area where new residential construction is underway and follow the construction process from foundation through completion to gain an understanding of operational issues.
4. I will complete the UL Structural stability of engineered lumber in fire conditions online course AND the new UL Fire Behavior course and implement the lessons learned in my strategic and tactical operations.
5. I will not take any building or occupancy for granted, and shall take all precautions to ensure crew integrity and safety during my task assignments.
6. Complete a 360 assessment of all buildings upon arrival (or delegate), when ever feasible to gain reconnaissance information on the building and incident risks and implement this info into my strategic, tactical plans or company task assignments.
7. Research the issues affecting; Engineered Structural Systems (ESS), Fire Behavior/Fire Dynamics or Fire Suppression Management/Fire Loading and develop a training drill to share the lessons learned.
8. Select a new or previous published fire service text book and read up on a subject area that I may have neglected or ignored to increase my skill set.
9. Implement an objective approach towards effective risk assessment and profiling of all buildings and occupancies during incident operations and implement balanced tactical deployment with aggressive/measured assignments; recognizing that my company and I are not invincible.

Continued...

21 Resolutions for Firefighters (continued)

10. During demanding Combat Structural Fire Engagements, I will; Do the Right Thing at the Right Time for the Right Reasons and will not practice Tactical Entertainment.
11. Read the Report of the Week (ROTW) on the National Firefighter Near-Miss Reporting System web site and share the operating experience (OE) lessons with my company or department, to reduce the likelihood of a similar or more serious event.
12. I will read Eleven (11) NIOSH Firefighter Fatality Investigation and Prevention Program Reports and present the lessons learned in a discussion, table top, drill or training program.
13. I will attend a regional or national training conference to increase my perspective and awareness of other firefighting, safety or operational methodologies, process or practices to increase firefighter safety in my home organization.
14. I will increase my understanding of the NFFF Everyone Goes Home Program initiatives, including the Sixteen Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives, Safety Thru Leadership and the Courage to Be Safe Programs and other new program initiatives and advocate and promote enhanced safety measures in my organization.
15. I will advocate and promote safe and defensive apparatus operations during emergency responses and will always buckle-up my seat belt and ensure my crew is always belted-in, not placing my company at risk and obeying traffic signals and postings.
16. I will implement the New Rules of Engagement during combat structural fire operations; while monitoring and reacting to on-going building performance and fire behavior.
17. I will increase my understanding of the Predictability of Building Performance and base my operational deployments on Occupancy Risk not Occupancy Type.
18. I will become a mentor to a new or less experienced firefighter and promote the traditions, honor and duty of our fire service profession, tempered with an emphasis on firefighter safety, survival and wellness.
19. I will take NO emergency incident responses as being routine in nature, due to frequency , regularity or past performance, demands or outcomes, nor will I take any building for granted; Company, Team and personal safety and integrity is paramount and I will not be complacent, but remain vigilant based upon my training, skills and experience.
20. I will be an aggressive firefighter; operating smarter, working within the parameters of my Department's protocols, regulations and expectations while employing Tactical Patience and NOT underestimate the fireground
21. I will not settle for status quo; but strive to achieve my highest potential as a firefighter, company officer or commander; and remember I am a brother/sister (firefighter) to everyone in this great profession

Ensure you're glancing occasionally in your rear view mirror to monitor where you've been, while driving your initiatives, programs, processes and actions forward. Above all, maintain the courage to be safe.

Keep an eye in the rear view mirror; learning from the wisdom and knowledge from where you've been, what you've done and all your past experiences and practice; but at the same time focusing on the road before you with keen attentiveness on situational awareness, anticipating error-likely conditions and balanced risk assessment and operational management in both your strategic and tactical deployments.

Please visit the Southside FOOLS Training Website

Photos-Videos-Articles-Training Ideas

www.ssfools.tumblr.com

The 2011 Firefighter

Trained and Confident? Or Tentative and Fearful?

From: Bill Carey @ thebackstepfirefighter.com



While there is/has always been a need for us to “Master our Craft” and know as much about our enemy (the fire, the building, the smoke) as possible, some factors do exist that make it difficult to gain the experience necessary.

Fire Duty is down. Maybe not everywhere, but even the busy departments/companies are not fighting fires like they did 30 or even 20 years ago. It is difficult to gain actual experience (reading conditions, knowing when to stay, knowing when to go) on the training ground. In the same breath, the fire service has never had so many tools, like the internet, to help bridge the experience training gap.

Fires are different. “It ain’t your daddy’s fire service”, well really “these ain’t your daddy’s building fires.” The building industries desire to build it faster, bigger, cheaper has put the fire service in the position of often losing the battle before the first 911 call is made. Combine that factor with the use of plastics, resins and other fuels (furnishings) and we have our work cut out for us. Especially if we are not fighting fires as often as we used to.

While there is no magic fix, there are things that can be done to improve the odds of us having a successful mission, and returning to the firehouse. Many of these things require buy in, not in the financial sense, but in the sense of commitment from Administrations to Company Officers to the Backstep Firefighter. They require us all to realize that we don’t know everything there is about the enemy we face, and that even if every single thing goes right, we could still end up on the losing end of the battle.

One problem is, and has always been, is that not one united voice. The aggressive firefighters think the safety sallyes are more worried about their vests, and the safety sallyes think anyone who goes inside is a cowboy. Ok, maybe those are exaggerations, but hopefully it made you chuckle.

There is no one fix. The Ten Commandments for the Fire Service are difficult to write because not all fire departments have the same manpower, alarms assignments, building construction, capabilities and equipment. We all have to figure out what works for us, and then hone and refine that so that whether we are doing 2 fires a year or 100 fire a year, we are on our A game every time.

We need to evaluate the calls where the fire went out, and no one got hurt and figure out what was done right and wrong. Then we need to address the wrong. So often the difference between life and death is “shit luck”. Far too often we ignore just how close we came.

Continued...

The 2011 Firefighter

(continued)

While the spirit of Everyone Goes Home is valid, if we constantly beat this into our firefighters heads, what is the message we are sending? Is it a message of safety and concern? Or is it a message of fear and tentativeness? We need to accept the reality that everyone might not go home, no matter how well prepared we are.

In the late 1950's the "Code of Conduct for Members of the Armed Forces of the United States" was introduced. This "Code" was recited every morning by the troops at reveille. It was designed to "steel the will of the soldiers" in response the manner in which American POWs conducted themselves after being captured in Korea. Colonel David Hackworth writes of the Code, "If we'd had hardened, well-trained, and well led soldiers in Korea, we wouldn't have had all those POWs to begin with. The U.S. Marine Corps had very few". Colonel Hackworth goes on to say, "To me, the "Code of Conduct" was a silly and degrading exercise. And it was potentially dangerous too, in that as an Army Wide Preventive wartime cure-all, it could easily lead to even worse complacency in the peacetime training program." The Code addresses the symptoms, not the disease.

As I read these words by Colonel Hackworth, I could not help but see some similarities to the position the fire service finds itself in now. While our training and learning needs to be constant, what we learn needs to be folded back into the basics that we have trained and relied on. If we constantly seek to add new techniques and methods, we dilute the value of the training our firefighters are receiving and possibly even do a disservice to them and the fire service as a whole.

We need our firefighters to be capable and confident. Confidence is not bred out of a constant drum beat of how many ways you can die. Confidence comes from good realistic, repetitive training and then practical execution. We need to review our actions and tell our firefighters when they did well, and when they need to improve. We all need to become serious about the fact that this is a profession. We need to focus on making sure we are the best at what we do.

What do you think the 2011 Firefighting is going to be?

Trained and confident? Or tentative and fearful?

The Punch Technique Comparison

You can watch a video of FDNY, Lt Michael Ciampo demonstrating the punch technique to maximize efforts while trucking out a room at FireEngineering.com. Click on Training Minutes.

Firefighters were given 15 strokes using a regular pike pole and their favorite technique to open as much ceiling as possible (photo 1) Then they were shown how to perform the punch technique (photo 2)



Elevator Operations- A Review

Height concerns and accessibility for a fire in a high-rise building are of significant concern as a fire starts and extends beyond the reach of fire departments ladders and hose streams. When fire department operations can no longer be considered ground based, one of our first questions are "how do we get up there"? Utilizing an elevator to gain access to the upper floors of a High-Rise building is viewed by most in the fire-service as a "necessary evil".

Although there are significant concerns with an elevators use, the majority of fire departments across the country use elevators at high-rise incidents for two specific and valid reasons:

1. To reduce the lead/reflex time it takes to go to work at a fire well above street level.
2. In order for our members to mount an initial and sustained attack many floors above; utilizing a fire service equipped elevator allows members the opportunity to retain their physical and mental energy for their assigned objectives...not climbing stairs.

If your department is one of these, consider the following as a guide for firefighter use with elevators.

Phase 1 Operations/Elevator Car Recall

1. If the car has not automatically returned to the lobby, recall the car with firefighter service keys.
* **Note:** Elevators should automatically return to their respective lobby or sky lobby once an alarm is activated within the building.
2. Walk or Ride? - If the fire is reported within 8 floors of the lobby or sky lobby, walk-up. If the fire is reported to be more than 8 floors above the lobby or sky lobby, ride-up.
3. Members are to use fire service elevators only!
4. If known, use a fire service elevator that is also serviced by a back-up, electrical generator.
5. For safety, identify the type of shaft prior to elevator selection. If the fire is reported on floor 26 and there is a blind shaft elevator that terminates at the sky lobby on floor 20, use that elevator bank.
* **Blind Shaft** elevators are those elevators that begin on a specific floor and end at another...only two stops, ie floor 1 and 20, nothing in-between.

Phase 2 Operations/Car Operations

1. For accountability, identify the Company designation (i.e. E-22, L-12) and elevator bank to be used at the command post.
2. Limit the number firefighting personnel in the elevator. This is generally no more than 5-6 firefighters.
3. Ensure all members have full PPE/SCBA/PASS and associated equipment.
4. All members are to turn-on/charge SCBA's.
5. Assign a radio-equipped firefighter to operate the elevator car.
5. If the elevator has a phone equipped communication system, test its use.
7. Attempt to examine the shaft way opening (if possible) between the car and shaft for any water, smoke or fire. (Use flashlight, TIC, listen/look for water in the shaft) If any of these exist, utilize another elevator shaft.
3. Upon entering the car, press the call cancel button to eliminate any previously made selections.
9. Place the car in fire/emergency service. Select the desired floor.
10. Proceed to two floors below the lowest reported fire floor.
(**Note:** Some buildings may NOT identify a 13th floor)
11. During the ascent make a series of stops every 5-10 floors (depending upon the floor destination) to ensure the car is responding to commands from within the car.
12. Also during the ascent check the "Emergency Stop Button" to ensure control of the car.
(**Note:** Forcing the car doors open may also stop runaway elevators.)
13. To open the elevator car door, press and hold the "Door Open" button.
14. Verify the floor and stair access location, then return the car to the lobby with a designated, radio-equipped firefighter.



NEAR MISS!

This article was provided by Noah Buckley

While at a working structure fire, engine [number deleted] was working in the basement extinguishing all remaining fire and hot spots. The engine company officer and nozzle man became entangled in HVAC duct wiring. The nozzle man and the company officer worked on cutting themselves out with a cutting tool that all firefighters are required to carry in their gear. The company officer notified command that they were in the basement, were not in distress, and were tangled up in wiring. Command sent half of the RIT team to assist.



The engine company that was working on the first floor to ensure the stairwell was protected at all times. The engine company officer attempted to contact command, but was unreadable. Command requested for the message to be repeated a second time and no answer was received. Because of this, command declared a mayday and a full RIT was sent after the engine company. As soon as county communications transferred all additional companies to an additional channel, the safety officer notified command that the firefighters were disentangled and were exiting the basement with PAR. The mayday was canceled and normal operations were continued.

The mayday was declared due to not being able to communicate. The engine company has had multiple trainings in self extrication and this training proved to be beneficial. They worked as a team and kept calm and were able to cut themselves out. The engine company self extricated before the RIT company reached them. In addition, it was very positive that the engine company officer did not hesitate to notify command what was happening instead of waiting until they were in distress.

Lessons Learned

Never hesitate to report your situation and continue to keep command aware of what is taking place. Command should never hesitate to call a mayday and activate RIT companies. The sooner a problem is recognized and egos are kept out of the picture, the better the chance of survival. While this turned out to be a minor event, it was still positive in the fact that the engine company officer and command did not hesitate to elevate and activate RIT to ensure everyone went home.

1. Where would you get the tools to self-extricate from a wire entanglement hazard?
2. Is air consumption a factor in the disentanglement timeline?
3. What is "Step One" in the disentanglement process?
4. Does this incident meet the "mayday" threshold under your department's SOPs? Why, or why not?
5. What are the critical steps you take to "remain calm" in stressful situations?

View the “Are you Prepared to Survive a Collapse and Entanglement?” video from Capt Dale Pikel on YouTube.

