

November
2021

Fire Line Newsletter

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From the Balcony – The Risk Of Leading With A Limited Perspective

“Things are not always as they appear” so they say, but perhaps we’ve limited our own ability to invite alternate ideas in our own minds because we limit our perspective to just one idea. We live in a society where “fake news” works against our inherent ability to a broader way of thinking. These interpretations often adversely affect critical thinking, decision making, problem solving, continuous improvement and even our own wellbeing. In our profession, we are expected to make dozens of decisions each day and no matter where you fall within the hierarchy of your agency, decisions that don’t encompass other ideas and methods can be crippling. Having flexibility in critical thinking is like the carpenter who measures twice and cuts only once.

If you are a company officer, you know just how critical decision-making is and how important your crew members are, before, during and after an event. This is not so say the company officer who needs to get perspective when making critical decisions, but certainly they don’t want to shut down the minds, experience and vision of the crew. If you consider your newest member, how much do they know? We often shun them off as being too green to really know anything, but if we are open to the idea that they may have learned something in the academy

that we had not learned 20 years ago when we went through maybe we should stop, listen, and see what the new member has to say. The more we are open to other’s perspective, the stronger we become as leaders.

When we encounter a problem sometimes the solution is easy to solve based upon our experience and knowledge. Other times we need to gain perspective through research and evaluation all while being open to the opportunity for a new way of thinking. By being open to a new outcome, a new way of solving a problem, we will have expanded our perspectives opening us up for future possibilities.

The risk of having only one perspective is limiting and by being more open, we can be stronger and more effective teammates who in turn, have better perspective.

*Until Next Month,
Be Safe and Be Well*

**Fire Chief
Peter O’Leary**



FOND DU LAC FIRE RESCUE OPERATIONS

By: Assistant Chief
Erick Gerritson



Firefighter Tardiness: How It Impacts Operations

The fire service has seen many adjustments over the past decade. One of the most noticeable is the change in hiring patterns. Many new recruits have no experience in the emergency services and come from diverse employment backgrounds. While this can be great for pushing the fire service forward, it is not without its pains when it comes to attendance and tardiness. If a new member has only worked in jobs where nobody is any “worse for the wear” if they get to work right on time or cruise in a minute or two late, they may not really understand the gravity of being late to the fire station.

Consider the following scenario:

Shift change is at 0700. You look at the clock as you're pulling into the station parking lot. It's 0702. Two minutes isn't too big of a deal, you say to yourself as you park the car. But, as you walk into the station, the engine rolls out the door on a call without you. The person you are supposed to relieve shoots you a look that is anything but friendly. Again, you think to yourself, “That firefighter hasn't liked me since I got assigned here, so what's one more issue?”

In the fire academy, it is usually drilled into new recruits that arriving 15 minutes early is the equivalent to being on time and arriving right at shift change is late. It seems simple enough. But why is that the case?

Operational Impacts

Part of it has to do with operations. When you show up early, you have time to check out your gear and equipment, get it on the rig, and get ready for the shift. Plus, your officer knows you're there, so they can work out things like rig assignments, fill-ins to other stations, and daily activities. This also gives you a chance to talk with the off-going crew to find out what's been happening since your last shift. If there's been an issue with something in the station or on the rig, you'll know about it before it causes a problem for your shift.

Besides the immediate impact of having to cover your spot until you arrive at work, other operational issues can arise if you're late. Your crew may be forced to work with someone with whom they are unfamiliar. This can cause anything from minor confusion on a medical call to an accountability problem on a structure fire.

Personal Impacts

While the impact to operations is the reason the department wants you to be ready to work as soon as your shift begins, there is another purpose for getting in a bit early: common courtesy. Depending on department policy, you may be able to take a call for the person you are relieving. That means the off-going person will get to go home on time instead of having to run that

call just before shift change, keeping them at work until the rig is able to get back to the station. Hopefully, the person relieving you will do the same thing. Plus, being known as someone who races the bell every shift yet expects to get relieved on time isn't really good for your reputation.

Everyone Is Responsible

Unfortunately, tardiness or being “just on time” to the station aren't issues limited to new recruits. Senior members and officers need to remember the unwritten rule to be at the station early. If the officer or the senior members are always pushing the clock, why would newly assigned personnel do anything different? It's you who will set the example for new personnel. Model the behavior that is best for the department and the crews. Get there early, and be ready to work before the clock officially starts.

*Reference: Jon Dorman from
<https://www.lexipol.com>,
October 4, 2021*

***Until Next
Month...Stay Safe!!***

Operations by the Numbers

September, 2021	By Month		Year-To-Date	
	Last Year	This Year	Last Year	This Year
PREVENTION				
Total Inspections	278	114	1762	1997
Total Defects	86	58	872	804
SUPPRESSION				
Alarms Involving Fire	6	9	91	85
Fire Mutual Aid Given	0	1	11	13
Fire Mutual Aid Received	0	0	3	5
Service/Good Intent Calls	44	51	438	437
False Alarms/False Calls	30	24	239	252
Other Calls	15	11	137	103
Total Fire Alarms & Calls	95	96	905	877
EMS				
Total Ambulance Calls	570	566	4650	4815
Total Fire/EMS Responses	665	661	5555	5692
Fire Property Loss	\$11,000.00	\$60,000.00	\$587,300.00	\$360,168.00
Fire Contents Loss	\$3005.00	\$36,000.00	\$268,956.00	\$155,940.00
Engine Assisted EMS Calls	256	216	2021	1848



Current Status of New Construction

- River Hills Mixed Use Development on S. Main St. – *Building 12 is under construction*
- Forest Mall / Staples – *Demolition continues*
- Country Lane Cottages - *Townhouses under construction*
- Sullys Tavern – *Complete*
- Sister Catherine Drexel Homeless Shelter – *Under Construction*
- Hobby Lobby / Big Lots – *Construction/Renovation has started*
- BCI Burke – *Addition beginning*
- Summit Auto – *Addition will be starting soon*
- Brooke Street Lofts – *Planning Phase*
- Kwik Trip (Schreiners) – *Demolition Started*



The Code Summary

By: Assistant Chief Todd Janquart

Clues in the Ooze: The Body's Secretion and Excretions

"What's the grossest thing you've ever seen?"

Everybody might hate that question, but there's no doubt EMS professionals witness some unsavory scenarios. They see them, however, in ways different than civilians, noted Ed Racht, MD, chief medical officer for GMR, in his Thursday presentation at EMS World Expo, "Secretions and Excretions: What Our Bodies Can Tell Us."

Understanding the fluids the body produces—both normally and abnormally—may provide important insight into patients' underlying conditions. Pay attention to what comes out of us, Racht urged—it could carry critical clues.

Excretions are metabolic waste eliminated passively from the body. *Secretions* are materials moved from one part of the body to another in an active process of metabolism. Racht overviewed nine critical fluids encompassing both that may interest a savvy diagnostician.

Blood—The only time it's normal to have blood outside the body is during menstruation. The average adult contains around six

liters of the stuff, and its top functions are perfusion and related to hemoglobin saturation; darker blood has reacted with oxygen.

Menstrual fluid—The average female has around 520 periods in her life. Their average volume is around 40 mL—just 2½ tablespoons—but can appear larger on pads and in water. Their color is related to hydration and the duration of blood in the uterus. Menstrual fluid contains uterine tissue, mucus, vaginal secretions, and about 50% blood. This reflects normal turnover of the uterine lining, so don't dismiss changes.

Mucus—Mucus is critical. Lining the cells of the digestive, respiratory, urinary, and reproductive tracts and even the eyes and ears, its contents include antiseptic enzymes, antibodies, and mucins (proteins that protect epithelial cells). The body produces around a liter a day, with hydration having a major impact. Mucus is a major indicator of inflammation and infection—pay particular attention to the color of what's coughed up or blown from the nose, Racht said: Clear is normal; yellow indicates a looming infection or virus; green suggests the immune system is fighting back; and red/brown/darker

may contain dried blood.

Pus—Pus means the immune system is working. It contains white blood cells, proteins, and cellular, bacterial, and foreign-body debris. Pus needs to leave the body, or it can form an abscess. Its color indicates the intensity of the immune response.

Semen—Besides sperm, semen contains proteins and is high in fructose. It has alkaline secretions to neutralize vaginal acidity. Blood in semen is not normal but not generally an indicator of serious pathology. (Have that evaluated, though.)

Saliva—The average adult produces about a liter a day, peaking at meals. Saliva contains antibacterial enzymes, antibodies, and mucins. It is critical for taste, with digestive enzymes, predominantly starch. A lack of saliva, as when waking up, can cause halitosis.

Sweat—Perspiration is water with key electrolytes and has a main function of thermoregulation. Humans produce 0.1–8 liters a day from around three million sweat glands. Eccrine glands produce the most, while apocrine glands are more associated with odor.

Tears—Tears come from the

lacrimal glands and drain to the nasal cavity. They lubricate and remove toxins and are associated with emotional expression. Around 30% of elderly patients have reduced tear production.

Urine—Pee is the platinum-level fluid, Racht said, a true window into the metabolic state. It eliminates toxins, excrete excesses, and controls osmolality. Fetal amniotic fluid is mainly urine.

Finishing with a nod beyond the liquid realm, Racht also noted the color of people's solid waste—i.e., poop—is important. The [Bristol Stool Chart](#) has been developed to aid clinical assessment.

All of this is very personal to people at the best of times and can be especially embarrassing when problems happen, Racht concluded—but the body's secretions and excretions have a lot of good information and are worth looking at and asking about.

Article from the 10/9/2021 online edition of EMSWorld.com.

You build on failure. You use it as a stepping stone. Close the door on the past. You don't try to forget the mistakes, but you don't dwell on it. You don't let it have any of your energy, or any of your time, or any of your space. *Johnny Cash*

NEWS AT THE STATION



It was a special night for FDLFR and our own Firefighter/Paramedic Nate Philipisky who was honored by the Fraternal Order of Eagles Wisconsin State Aerie as the 2020 Firefighter/Paramedic of the Year. Due to Covid the award presentation was delayed. Nate was surrounded by his family and co-workers as he received this most deserving honor.
Congratulations Nate!



FDLFR recently welcomed a Moms 'n Tots group to Station 1 for a tour and to learn about the life of a firefighter. It is great to have the children back visiting at the station!



Happy November Birthday

Nick Fahrenkrug · Kevin Doll · Andy Golla

Well-trained people are the best defense against fire.

By: Assistant Chief of Training/Safety
James Knowles III

Reading the Fireground

Like a quarterback having to read the field when a play is called that doesn't go as expected, the same is with the fireground and fire officers. Regardless of how many units your department responds to a fire, only one will be first to arrive at the scene. That officer, using training, experience, department policies, SOPs, and the resources at hand, will be able to engage in whatever tactics are possible for the situation while giving direction to personnel and providing radio transmissions to incoming units. Certainly, there is a lot going on for that first-in officer to handle, and it is well-known that "how goes the first line goes the fire." However, there are plenty of situations when Plan A doesn't go as expected and a shift in tactics is necessary. To comprehend when and why, that first officer or subsequent fire officers need to be able to read the fireground.

How many times have you been en route to a fire call and listening to the size-up and other reports as well as the directions being given, only to discover what was being described and what is there are different? There are a variety of reasons why this can occur, but in any case, it requires a reassessment of the situation and an adjustment to tactics if necessary. Certainly, situations are dynamic and

are not always within our control, despite the best-laid plans. Again, by reading the fireground, we can determine if our current choice of tactics will suffice, if we need to support them by adding more resources, by implementing resources in areas that before were unaffected, or if we must abandon that tactic and change to defensive or other options.

Reading the fireground applies not only to initial company officers or command officers but also to later arriving officers and other functional positions on the fireground, such as the pump operator, outside truck team (OV), water supply officer, roof team, and more. As an example, as the pump operator, a call is made on the radio that a victim has been discovered and that they are being removed to the front door. EMS units are still responding and a few minutes away and most everyone else on the fireground is committed to action. The hoselines are set for pressure and water supply has been established, enabling the pump operator to break from the pump panel; grab the onboard EMS equipment; and bring it to a suitable spot between the pump panel and the front door, thereby creating a treatment location.

Another situation would be when the initial officer had reported nothing showing and entered the house without performing a 360° walk-around. Or perhaps he did and didn't

notice the light smoke pushing from the eaves on the side and rear of the house—something that the outside truck team did notice and gives a report on. It seems simple enough, but this small bit of information can help determine where the fire location is, when it isn't originally easy to find. What if the structure is a two-story, wood-frame platform construction residence? What if it's a 2½-story balloon-frame home? Would that simple report make a difference in investigative areas of the residence or where the fire might be?

We often practice our initial arriving actions, ensuring we set the tone for an efficient fireground with personnel deploying to where they are needed based on tactical priorities. However, we seldom work on situations when things aren't going so well and a change of tactics is needed. Of course, we don't want to just change things midstream without coordinating the efforts through Command; however, there is a difference between freelancing and initiative. Doing something to do something is freelancing, but reading the situation, advising Command of a needed action, and it being agreed to and then being performed are initiative.

As an incident commander, reading the fireground is imperative. Not being able to

determine when the tactic employed is sufficient and requires support vs. a fireground that is not being won is a considerable difference in resources and life safety risk. Our personnel trust us with knowing these differences and that we can apply them accordingly. There are so many items on the fireground that are going on that information overload can easily occur. However, knowing the known and reducing the number of unknowns can help reduce the overload and provide for a higher likelihood of a successful outcome. This comes by experience, getting good reports, and reading the fireground for the cues and clues that changes are needed or not.

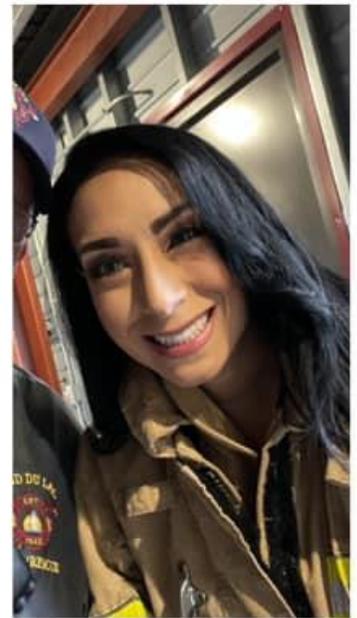
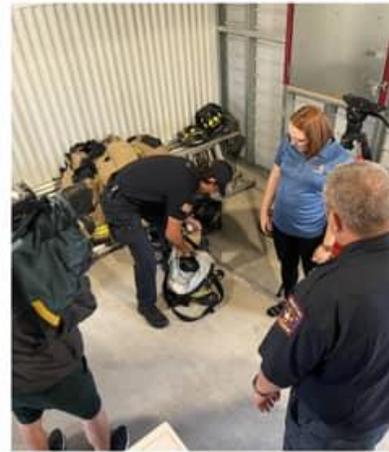
Source: Lewis, W. (2021).
Reading the fireground.
Firefighter Nation.
Retrieved from:
<https://www.firefighternation.com/fire/rescue/reading-the-fireground/>

FIRE PREVENTION WEEK



We had an excellent turnout for our Fire Prevention Week Open House! Thanks to everyone who came out to the City's Public Safety Training Center and especially our community partners who so willingly participated. Thanks also to the FDLFR crews who assisted in showing the community the importance of fire safety. We are grateful for the opportunity and hope to make it bigger and better next year!

FIRE PREVENTION WEEK / MEDIA DAY



As part of Fire Prevention Week, FDLFR invited the media to walk in the boots of firefighters by participating in a unique event designed specifically for the media. The attendees took part in a vehicle extrication drill, a fire hose deployment demonstration, and applying a master fire stream from an aerial ladder. Thanks to our media partners Fox11News; CBS58; WFRVLocal5; SpectrumNews who participated in our MEDIA DAY, we had a great time hosting you!

Fire Prevention

The Bureau Never Sleeps

By: Division Chief Garth Schumacher



Fire Investigation

Fire Investigation is a topic that I haven't written about for the Fire Line Newsletter. As I type this article the Division of Criminal Investigation (DCI) is in the city investigating a fire that occurred at a local business. Fire Investigation has come a long way over the years and with new technology and the ever present video recording devices and even Ring doorbells, gathering all this information can be particularly challenging. Recently, I received a State of Wisconsin Certification for Fire Investigation. This class was instructed through the Wisconsin Technical College System and the instructors were all from DCI, needless to say this was the most interesting class I have taken in quite a while and the depth of the knowledge and instruction was truly remarkable.

When we talk about fire investigation and what it truly takes to be an investigator most people are unaware of the education needed to get certified and more over maintain the educational requirements needed to keep the certification. It's much like being a Paramedic or instructor, you have to seek continuing education through verified courses and seminars. This is why complex cases often involve outside agencies that have more resources to offer. Utilizing our partners in the police department as well as those at the State Fire Marshall's office DCI can

drastically aid in an investigation, if there is criminal intent these resources become pivotal in making sure every procedure is followed from securing the scene all the way to returning the keys back to the owner.

Last month's article I wrote was about data utilization, investigation is no different. Investigation is conducted using the scientific method and the data is examined and will either support or disprove the hypothesis. If we look at a fire in a home and one of our hypotheses is that it was electrical in nature, when we interview witnesses/homeowners and ultimately excavate the area and all the data gathered determines that there was no electrical appliances or conductors in the area of origin, there is good cause that the initial hypothesis was wrong. At that point we have to keep collecting the data and through the process ascertain more hypotheses as to what may have happened. In some cases Undetermined is the ultimate cause of a fire. There is a stigma with this cause determination but through training this cause determination isn't a bad thing and we as investigators have the ability to change this determination should more evidence be brought to our knowledge. Undetermined is often the classification when we lack the evidence necessary to say what caused

the fire. For instance a cooking fire generally is classified as accidental as the intent was not there to cause a fire but regardless one occurred through a mistake or not being attentive to watching what is on the stove. Natural is a classification that is given when things such as lightning strikes cause a fire. Incendiary is an intentionally set fire that is generally criminal in nature but in some circumstances such as a juvenile there age alone may constitute a lack of intent to do harm or cause the damage that had been caused. Many times these juveniles are curious about fire and unintentionally cause devastating damage when "playing" with fire.

For these reasons it is important to classify a fire cause and origin appropriately, getting it wrong can have terrible consequences if someone were to be wrongly accused and worse yet convicted. The wrong classification can also have adverse effects on the investigator if there is sharp contrast in what we say is the cause as opposed to an insurance company investigator. If it were to land in a court hearing the credibility of the investigator could be questioned and in some cases that credibility issue can follow an investigator for a considerable amount of time.

Taking the Investigation courses that are offered on-line and through the Wisconsin Technical College system offers a strong foundation in which to investigate fires, from scene processing, interviewing, and data analysis to the written report, all these have to be completed in a very methodical way. Conducting fire scene investigations in an uncoordinated manner only serves to make the investigator look sloppy or lazy and allows for the findings to be questioned. If you are interested in fire investigations please visit the International Association of Arson Investigators (IAAI) website, NFPA 1033 and 926, and inquire about the State Certification course that is instructed by DCI. These resources will guide you in the field of fire investigation and your quest for knowledge on how to conduct an investigation from start to finish.

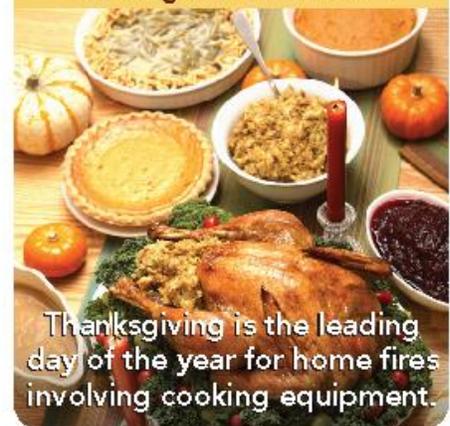
Thank you and see you next month.

Thanksgiving Safety

The kitchen is the heart of the home, especially at Thanksgiving. Kids love to be involved in holiday preparations. Safety in the kitchen is important, especially on Thanksgiving Day when there is a lot of activity and people at home.

- Stay in the kitchen when you are cooking on the stovetop so you can keep an eye on the food.
- Stay in the home when cooking your turkey and check on it frequently.
- Keep children away from the stove. The stove will be hot and kids should stay 3 feet away.
- Make sure kids stay away from hot food and liquids. The steam or splash from vegetables, gravy or coffee could cause serious burns.
- Keep the floor clear so you don't trip over kids, toys, pocketbooks or bags.
- Keep knives out of the reach of children.
- Be sure electric cords from an electric knife, coffee maker, plate warmer or mixer are not dangling off the counter within easy reach of a child.
- Keep matches and utility lighters out of the reach of children — up high in a locked cabinet.
- Never leave children alone in room with a lit candle.
- Make sure your smoke alarms are working. Test them by pushing the test button.

Did you know?



Thanksgiving is the leading day of the year for home fires involving cooking equipment.

Have activities that keep **kids out of the kitchen** during this busy time. Games, puzzles or books can keep them busy. Kids can get involved in Thanksgiving preparations with recipes that can be done **outside** the kitchen.



NATIONAL FIRE PROTECTION ASSOCIATION
The leading information and knowledge resource on fire, electrical and related hazards

