

April
2022

Fire Line Newsletter

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From the Balcony – Retirements & Promotions

As we begin the second quarter of 2022 we will have several retirements to celebrate; Assistant Chief Todd Janquart, Engineers Paul Loderhose and Dwight Fisher and Firefighter/Paramedic Brian Westby will all be leaving after 105 combined years of dedicated service to the greater Fond du Lac community. On behalf of the entire department we wish them all the very best and hope their retirement years are full of joy, good health, and relaxation.

As a result, we will have promotions on the horizon. Division Chief Schumacher will be promoted to Assistant Chief of EMS and Firefighter/Paramedics Nick Czaja and Taylor Huenink will be promoted to Engineer. This is an exciting time for our department and these individuals who prepared themselves for promotion and their hard work and focus has paid off. Congratulations to all!

We have a vacancy in the Division Chief of Fire Prevention spot and the testing process has commenced. We hope to have a person selected for the position in early April.

We are hiring and another recruit academy is coming soon. The success of our recruit academy in January demonstrated how talented our training instructors are and the time and dedication they brought to the table with each and every day. We hope to duplicate that effort again when we bring another large class of recruits to Fond du Lac Fire/Rescue.

Thank you to our retirees, our members who are going to take on new responsibilities, and our instructors who will be shaping our new recruits later this year.

*Until Next Month,
Be Safe and Be Well*

**Fire Chief
Peter O'Leary**



FOND DU LAC FIRE RESCUE OPERATIONS

By: Assistant Chief
Erick Gerritson



Reducing firefighter cancer risk: How emotionally attached are you? Apply some simple marriage vows to your use of PPE at a structural fire

Clean turnout gear helps reduce the risk of developing cancer. That statement has become the rallying cry to get firefighters and fire officers to accept that clean gear is non-negotiable. But how many of them truly embrace – *emotionally* embrace – that clean gear is essential?

You're probably wondering what emotion has to do with this issue. The answer: Everything.

EMOTION TRUMPS LOGIC

Emotion plays a significant role in culture, including fire service culture. It's a critical component in how many people view themselves, how they view others, or how they think other people view them. All have an emotional component.

We keep saying that there needs to be a cultural change in how firefighters *feel* about clean gear. Feel is an emotional word. Right now, in most fire departments, I'm guessing that many firefighters and fire officers know and understand the logical (technical) factors related to their PPE after working at a structural fire:

- Undergoing initial contaminant reduction (ICR), formerly known as gross decon.
- Managing personal hygiene (e.g., wiping down face, neck, arms) after leaving the ICR
- Bagging PPE and transporting it back to the fire station in compartments on fire apparatus (not in the crew cab).
- Laundering soiled and contaminated PPE and drying before returning it to service.

But how emotionally invested are firefighters? When they've

been released from working in the hazard area, do they immediately head to the ICR area? Or do they still wander over to see their buddies from Engine 39 who they haven't seen since the last job they worked together? Do they engage in personal hygiene before heading to the on-site firefighter rehab area to cool off or warm up and rehydrate?

Being emotionally committed to your department's PPE policies and standard operating guidelines (SOGs) is like being a good spouse in a marriage: You must be all in 24/7/365. And yet, being that good spouse is something most of us don't give much conscious thought to on daily basis.

Why not? Because we're emotionally committed to our spouse on several levels like:

- For better or for worse
- For richer or for poorer
- In sickness and in health
- Forsaking all others
- Until death do us part

DEVELOP THAT KIND OF COMMITMENT

What does this look like for us?

For better or for worse. Do what's right, even when it might be inconvenient. That means even when it's late at night into a long tour of duty or catching an early morning job and it's time to get off.

For richer or for poor. Perhaps your fire department isn't flush financially, but it is doing what it can to give you the equipment and supplies needed to keep your PPE clean. Do the best you can with what you

have. Period. Don't cut corners because you don't have everything you'd like to have.

In sickness and in health. I love a recent commercial for a cold and flu medicine that showed an obviously sick mom looking into her child's bedroom and seeing her child standing in the crib. The tagline is something like "Moms don't get to call in sick! Regardless of how you're feeling, mentally or physically, if you report for duty and you catch a job (a working structure fire), you follow your fire department's PPE policies and SOGs to the best of your ability – and then some.

Forsaking all others. Do what's right, regardless of what others are doing. Have the courage to be the person who models the "new normal" when it comes to taking care of you and your PPE to reduce the risk for developing cancers because of your exposure to the chemicals, chemical compounds, and carcinogens present in the smoke you encounter during interior structural firefighting operations.

Until death do us part. Does this really need explanation? You show up, you do the job. All of it – 100% the first day and 100% the last day and every day in between.

ASK YOURSELF

So, how emotionally committed are you to your relationship with your PPE and the other components of your fire department's efforts to reduce your risk of developing cancers on the job?

Reference: Robert Avsec from
firerescue1.com

...Acting to Save

Types of Calls:	February 2022	February 2021	Year to Date (2022)	Year to Date (2021)
Alarms Involving Fire	7	10	17	16
Fire Mutual Aid Given	1	2	2	3
Fire Mutual Aid Received	0	2	0	2
Other Calls (False Alarms, Service Calls, etc.)	67	77	140	146
Emergency Medical Calls	426	438	947	928
Paramedic Intercepts	2	5	12	9
Interfacility Transports	29	44	57	76
TOTALS	531	574	1173	1175
Fire Inspections Completed	483	234	694	478
Defects found during Fire Inspections	177	127	231	213



Current Status of New Construction

- River Hills Mixed Use Development on S. Main St. – *Building 12 is under construction*
- Forest Mall - *Meijer Project still in planning*
- Sister Catherine Drexel Homeless Shelter – *Under Construction*
- BCI Burke – *Addition starting soon*
- Hobby Lobby – *Construction/Renovation underway*
- Summit Auto – *Addition has begun*
- Brooke Street Lofts 14 & 16 N. Brooke St. – *Planning Phase*
- Kwik Trip (Schreiners) – *Demolition Completed*
- Taco Johns (West Johnson) – *Final Occupancy Approved – Opening Soon*
- Club Car Wash – *Planning Phase – E. Johnson & Pioneer Road Locations*
- Mercury Plant 4 – *Construction Began*
- Marchant Schmidt – *Site Plan Approved – will begin construction soon*



The Code Summary

By: Assistant Chief Todd Janquart

I see retirement as just another of these reinventions, another chance to do new things and be a new version of myself. Walt Mossberg

A Few Last Words...

As I write this final newsletter, I reflect on my 28 years in this field. I recall finishing my EMT-Basic course and being excited about the future and what the real experience would be as a 911 responder. I wasn't having much luck finding anything local that would provide the experience I was looking for so after a recommendation from a friend, I decided to sign on with one of the ambulance services running BLS care in Milwaukee.

After getting up to speed on the service's operations and my role, it was time to start field training. I still remember the swirling emotions of excitement and nervousness about what the first 911 call would be. It didn't take long for my unit to be dispatched to an active labor call. My field training officer assured me that this was a pretty common call and rarely anything serious. Well, it would be just my luck that upon our arrival we were confronted with the patient screaming "baby come now" (obvious language barrier also) while in the hallway just outside her apartment. She wasn't kidding either, the baby's head was presenting and we had no time to do anything other than help deliver the child. All I had time to do was rely on my training and work as a team to take care of mother and child. The delivery and care of the infant was straightforward and all went well. Unfortunately, I found myself expecting that every 911 response was going to be something serious or testing

the limits of my training. It didn't take long to experience the other side of urban/high volume EMS. While we still responded to serious BLS calls, I also found myself experiencing the side of EMS that we had little training on. Every day, EMS providers all over the country see more and more pseudo medical issues such as:

- * Psychological emergencies
- * Alcohol and drug addiction
- * Failure to thrive or care for oneself
- * Homelessness
- * System abuse

After spending three years in Milwaukee both as an EMT-Basic and EMT-Paramedic, I had experienced the gamut of these pseudo medical issues along with the repeat patients that we had known by name and issue. I found myself challenged by trying to control the situation by getting these patients to realize that their problems were not "real emergencies" the required the use of the 911 system. Over and over, we still saw the same patients and as time went on, I became more affected by it. I became callous and uncaring and often angry to the point where my partners saw it and so did the patient. Did it stop the repeat calls? Did it stop these requests for service? Absolutely not, all it did was create more mental stress for me. One day, a partner said to me, "ya know you are never going to change this, right?" At that point, I made a focused decision to stop challenging the necessity of the call, trying

to see the humanity in each patient and simply transport them to the hospital if that's what they wanted. It bothered me at first because I initially seen it as them "winning" but then decided that I was "winning" because it reduced the stress on my brain and body. I actually got pretty good at it and had a pleasant relationship with some of the patients we saw regularly.

When I started in Fond du Lac, I thought I would get away from those "big city" issues. I found out quickly that the same issues are present but on a much smaller scale. In the late 1990's and early 2000's, we saw some of these same issues but still had a good volume of what we perceive as "real calls". Fast forward to current times and we have seen our call volume skyrocket with these pseudo medical issues becoming a good chunk of the call volume. While federal, state, and local resources are available, there is still a significant challenge with dealing with people who are having issues taking care of themselves. That in itself, is part of the greater problem.

It is important as an EMS provider to understand that compassion fatigue is real and these types of incidents do contribute to that stress. There are multiple resources and articles addressing this. Rather than cite multiple resources just type "EMS compassion fatigue" into Google and you will quickly see anything you want to read. But the most important thing to understand is that you cannot let it cloud your judgement

and affect decision making. Simply reading an article isn't going to change that. You have to make a conscious effort to see the humanity in people and not try to change their behavior at that immediate time. It will eventually hurt your reputation, career and ultimately yourself and never fix the issues you will continue to encounter.

This has been a burning issue for EMS as we often question the level of support that these people have in order for them to function normally in society. As we move to the future, there needs to be cooperative work among related organizations to help these patients get the most appropriate support/assistance. This is the biggest barrier that needs to be overcome. While my career here is coming to an end, I'm hoping that the next generation will be able to keep this philosophy moving forward so we have some type of planning to help these people avoid using the 911 system as attempt to resolve their problems.

I want to thank you all for the hard work that you do every day. It has been an amazing ride and I am blessed and honored to be able to work with such an amazing group of people!

Take care of yourselves and each other, above all, stay safe!

Todd



Crews participated in the Read Across America Campaign and spent time reading books to the different classes at Chegwin Elementary School. Both the students and the crews enjoyed the time they had together reading various book.



Happy April Birthday

Brett Hefty • Jim Hoepfner • Rick Faris •
Mike Spencer • Curt Smits • Ben Stephany • Adam Stephens



Hi -
I just want to thank
those 3 young men that
came to my Home over a
week ago - and picked me up
off the floor and took me
to the Hospital - They were
all so nice and I really
appreciated them -
Thank You -



Engineer Paul Loderhose retires on April 1st after over 30 years of service to Fire/Rescue. Paul began his career on November 4, 1991.

Although Paul will miss sitting around the table with the guys and just being with the crews, he is looking forward to having more of an opportunity to go camping with his wife and granddaughter.
Enjoy retirement, Paul!



HAPPY
Retirement!



March 30th marks the last shift for Engineer **Dwight Fisher**. Dwight has served the citizens of Fond du Lac for over 29 years. His first day on shift was June 7, 1993. Dwight said that with retirement comes the joy of sleeping in his bed every night. He will not be retired for long as Dwight will be starting a new position at Miller Electric Manufacturing in Appleton as a technician for their commercial service division. Dwight shared that he will miss the people at FDLFR and will miss helping the fine people of Fond du Lac.

Blessings on your retirement, Dwight!



HAPPY
retirement



Congratulations to AC of EMS **Todd Janquart** as March 31st completes his service at FDLFR. Todd began his career on April 21, 1997. From Todd – “My plan is to retire and complete my move to the western upper peninsula of Michigan. My wife and I will be found enjoying UTV riding, snowmobiling, boating, exploring and generally enjoying all the Yoop has to offer. I will definitely miss the fire service and all the camaraderie I’ve experienced throughout the years. FDLFR is a great organization with highly talented members that I have been blessed to work with. There is no doubt in my mind that everyone will continue to show that FDLFR is top notch organization at the front of the pack. It has been an honor and privilege to work with such great people!”





Well-trained people are the best defense against fire.

By: Assistant Chief of Training/Safety
James Knowles III

Learning from Other's Experiences

Today's world is full of social media postings. You can look up anything on the internet and become an expert.

With that said, your fire department could be videotaped and comments could range from you performed a good job or how awful you handled that situation or even that legal action could be taken against your fire department or even you.

The ideal approach to this is one of learning from others' experiences.

Training is something we should always do. Do it outside of the firehouse, on the street, in your first-due area so you familiarize yourself with those structures and streets where these incidents will take place.

Get out and train all hours of the day and night. If you keep practicing climbing portable ground ladders, for example, and get up on a roof only

during the day, what is going to happen if you have to climb a portable ladder and get on to the roof in the dark in the early evening or middle of the night? Or even in inclement weather? What about with smoke conditions that can obscure your vision?

Watch some videos on social media and use them as a focus of the training you wish to accomplish. Don't criticize the actions that you are watching but practice with your company or fire department the lesson you want to learn from this event.

The shoe could be on the other foot one day—other fire departments may practice what you did right or wrong and comment online about your actions.

Before the training session, review your department procedures or best practices on the topic.

You could even contact the department on whose actions

the training session is based to ask questions so you can understand what took place and what actions they could have done differently.

Another art we are getting away from is talking. I prefer to talk with someone get to know them and feel them out. It's a way to understand what they experienced. Ask questions about what worked, what did not work, and what might they have done differently. Ask questions about their staffing Did they have enough? Could they have used more? What type of equipment did they have available? What other equipment might have worked better? Then practice so your company or fire department can perform the operation more proficiently.

In today's world, we seem to focus on our perspective and not look at all the factors that created the situation we watch on social media. How does your staffing compare to those in the video clips or photos you see?

Are the personnel career or volunteer? How far out is the second engine? How about the aerial device? Is there one responding? Who is running the incident? Again, do you have procedures regarding what you are trying to accomplish?

Incidents take place daily that you can study. Others may have more experience than you may ever see. Don't be afraid to study this history so history doesn't repeat itself. Get out of the firehouse and practice something that you like or don't like or disagree with, and help share your experience with others.

Source: Traiforos, D. (2022). Learning from others' experiences. Firefighter Nation. Retrieved from: <https://www.firefighternation.com/training/learning-from-others-experiences-2/>



FDLFR recently hosted the **Wisconsin Society of Emergency Instructors Conference**. Classes were taught during the week and on the weekend. Several members of FDLFR participated.



Fire Prevention

The Bureau Never Sleeps

By: Division Chief Garth Schumacher



Community Risk Reduction

As I type this I reflect on the long and illustrious career that I had in Fire Prevention.

Looking forward to the next chapter of my career I fully intend to utilize the tools and relationships I have formed through fire prevention and community risk reduction (CRR) to further the EMS program in the City of Fond du Lac.

When we look at CRR, it really encompasses what our focus should be, and where we need to improve. I was recently asked by a member, “when you go to conferences, what do you bring back to the department?” The answer is simple, a ton of things, but what isn’t realized is the fact that these aren’t always things that are “training topics” for the membership, at least not as soon as we return, there is usually data to look at and homework to do well before anything can be trained on or implemented, sometimes we get things in order and find out that we don’t have the support yet we need from another entity and it gets tabled. Many of the things that we bring back from these symposiums, conferences, and trainings are executive level, administrative tools that allow for the development of programs and procurement of equipment, personnel, and other vital necessities needed to thrive and perform at the highest level. . Look at where we are now as opposed to 15 years ago, it’s a night and day difference in how we operate and to what extent our

equipment and training has changed for the better.

My last conference was in Murfreesboro, Tennessee. Symposium 7 is a CRR Conference that focuses on topics ranging from EMS, fire prevention, and community risk. Two topics of particular interest as it relates to Fond du Lac were Mobile Integrated Healthcare and the Opioid problem that we continue to face. These programs were presented by departments that had taken the initiative through a conference or symposium they had attended to put together an effective program, at the symposium the two programs were highly successful and it was clear in their data as to the usefulness of the programs.

Often, when members on the department see “new” programs that are explored by administration, they don’t necessarily equate those to “bringing something back” from a conference or training, in most cases though, that is exactly what has happened.

So why are these things important? Take MIH for example, that program didn’t work out in Fond du Lac when it was implemented, however, it has worked out in many other areas but with a few differences. The opioid issue is no different, there are programs that are out there that are on my radar moving forward that have the potential to significantly

significantly impact the amount of recurring overdoses that we see.

Now I know, some may struggle with “adding” something to our service, but it really isn’t a broad sweeping addition that everyone will have this huge influx of work added to them. Quite the contrary, it has the ability to reduce the number of calls that we go on. This is the result that these programs are intended to achieve, to stop recurrence, to lower the numbers, the examples of these programs detailed at the symposium were highly successful and it was motivating from a standpoint that with a few tweaks and some buy-in we could improve our numbers and relieve some of the run stress that is experienced by our members. I think this aspect sometimes gets lost on us as we tend to want to see results immediately and in most of these situations it’s gradual over time.

One example I would like to give is related to patient falls, if we could reduce the number of falls that we respond too by 20 percent through some program or initiative how would that equate to us on the response end? In 2021 falls as reported by dispatch equated to 785 responses by our crews, if an initiative or program could reduce that by 20 percent that’s 157 calls that members would be relieved of, 157 more

chances that if something more serious comes in we are available for. Maybe we don’t achieve 20% or maybe we would achieve a higher number, the fact is these are aspects that we see as risk in the community and are always looking to try and address from an administration standpoint. It is the premise behind community risk reduction and these lessons and successful programs that we learn about through training, conferences, symposiums, and through collaboration with the agencies that have seen success offer us the best avenue for success in our own organization.

I hope to utilize the tools that I have learned through education, attending conferences and outside training, to forward our programs and address the needs of the community and our membership in a positive and meaningful way.

My door is always open.

Until next month, stay safe and be positive advocates for the services we provide.

Safety with Oily Rags

wet with flammable or combustible liquid



Oil-based paints, stains, and varnishes are often used for home improvement projects. It is common to use rags to wipe up spills or clean brushes. But wet rags can ignite on their own. They can start a fire if not handled carefully. The same is true of the liquids themselves.

How can rags start a fire?

The oils commonly used in oil-based paints and stains release heat as they dry. If the heat is not released in the air, it builds up. That is why a pile of oily rags can be dangerous. As the rags dry, the heat is trapped. The heat builds up and finally causes a fire. Be aware that this does not happen with water-based finishes.

How can liquids start a fire?

Vapors from flammable and combustible liquids can ignite, causing a fire. There are many commonly used flammable liquids. Gasoline, lacquers, and nail polish are just a few examples. There are many commonly used combustible liquids. Paint thinner, kerosene, and oil-based paints and stains are some examples.

RAGS WET WITH PAINT AND STAIN

- Never leave cleaning rags in a pile. At the end of the day, take the rags outside to dry.
- Hang the rags outside or spread them on the ground. Weigh them down. Do this so they do not blow away. Make sure they are not in a pile. Keep them away from buildings.
- Put dried rags in a metal container. Make sure the cover is tight. Fill the container with a water and detergent solution. This will break down the oils.
- Keep containers of oily rags in a cool place. Keep them out of direct sunlight. Keep them away from other heat sources. Check with your town for information on disposing of them.

LIQUIDS THAT CAN CATCH FIRE

- Flammable and combustible liquids should not be used near an open flame. Do not smoke when working with these liquids.
- If you spill liquids on your clothing, remove your clothing and place it outside to dry. Once dry, clothing can be laundered.
- Keep liquids in their original containers. Keep them tightly capped or sealed. Never store the liquids in glass containers.

GASOLINE

- Use gasoline only as motor fuel. Never use it as a cleaner. Never use it to break down grease. Never bring gasoline indoors, even in small amounts.
- Store gasoline ONLY in a container that is sold for that purpose. Make sure the container is tightly capped when not in use. NEVER store gasoline containers in a basement or in the occupied space of a building. Keep them in an outbuilding, a detached garage, or a shed outdoors.

FACTS

- ! An average of 1,700 home fires per year are caused by instances of spontaneous combustion or chemical reaction
- ! An average of 900 home fires per year are started when oily rags catch fire or are ignited.



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



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