

Nov. – Dec.
2022

Fire Line Newsletter

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Final Edition for 2022

The end of the year is fast approaching, and it is during this season that we reflect on what has occurred over the past year and what we are thankful for. First and foremost, we are thankful and grateful for the support and admiration we receive on a daily basis from the citizens we serve. The City of Fond du Lac is a wonderful community that continually supports and provides us the resources we need in order for our agency to do the great things that we do and to achieve peak performance in our service.

We also are thankful for the many long-standing and new partnerships that we have established over last year and the years prior. There are too many partners to list for this article, but please note that all of our relationships are keys to our success and provide so many benefits to the community as a whole. We will continue to hold these partnerships in high regard, doing everything possible to grow them even more and look for new opportunities in the future.

In reflection of what we have accomplished over the past year, there are many instances that are noteworthy. First, through the support of the City Council and the Fire Rescue budget, we were able to improve and upgrade our facilities. This includes updates to Station 1, which included the roof project and the concrete driveways for our apparatus. Both of these items were original construction when the Fire Station was built, and it was time for an upgrade. These projects are large capital investments but were both in desperate need for repair and replacement. Additionally, the City supported another purchase for a replacement of a paramedic ambulance. This new vehicle provides a reliable vehicle fleet by replacing an aging and "well used" ambulance and placing in service a state-of-the-art emergency response vehicle.

As important as the capital items, we need to reflect on the great things our Fire Rescue family does every

day in the City of Fond du Lac. We are currently on pace to respond to more emergency and non-emergency incidents than we have ever done in previous years. Our fire and EMS companies are providing the best quality responses with the highest level of care and service possible to the Fond du Lac community. We accomplish this high level of service while maintaining our National Accreditation and meeting the requirements of ISO (Insurance Services Office) level 1 service. These two tremendous accolades are a direct result of the great work our members perform day-in and day-out. I cannot be more proud of the men and women that serve on Fond du Lac Fire Rescue.

Speaking of the great work of members of FDLFR, we must also acknowledge the many changes and additions that have occurred throughout the organization over the past year. Whether it has been new members added to the family or promotions in rank, there have been many awesome changes to the look, feel and culture of the department. Our agency believes in the continuous improvement model, and we definitely are living that mission.

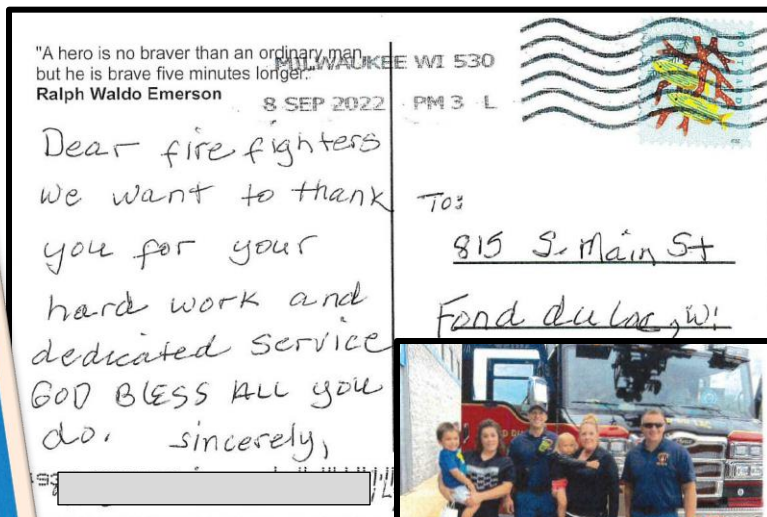
I am extremely grateful and thankful for the accomplishments that our agency has realized over this past year, and I am even more excited to see what the future holds for Fond du Lac Fire Rescue. I know that we will achieve great things working together to serve the citizens of Fond du Lac and the surrounding communities.

Until next month, be safe!!

*"Your Fire Chief"
Chief Erick Gerritson*

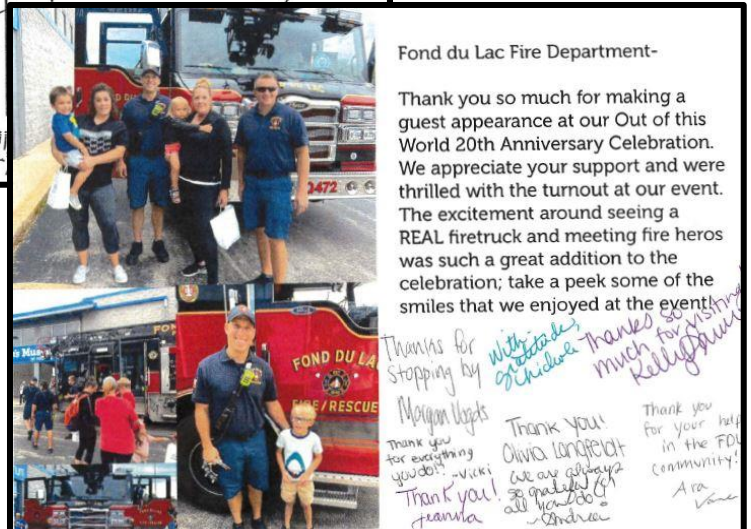
...Acting to Save

Types of Calls:	October 2022	October 2021	Year to Date (2022)	Year to Date (2021)
Alarms Involving Fire	8	7	110	92
Fire Mutual Aid Given	2	1	10	14
Fire Mutual Aid Received	1	0	3	5
Other Calls (False Alarms, Service Calls, etc.)	87	86	904	877
Emergency Medical Calls	574	522	5475	5337
Paramedic Intercepts	4	5	72	62
Interfacility Transports	44	36	404	407
TOTALS	669	615	6489	6306
Fire Inspections Completed	215	138	2283	2136
Defects found during Fire Inspections	116	62	1194	870



In Their Own Words...

This section of the newsletter will feature a note or card received from the people we serve. Whether it is during an ambulance call, fire call, or a public education assignment, the members of Fond du Lac Fire Rescue are always dedicated to making their contact with area residents a positive experience.





EMS is Life!

By: Assistant Chief Garth Schumacher

It's the Holiday Season...

Happy Hunting season and Holidays to you all! I wanted to touch on how important the Holidays are for so many of us. Getting together with family and friends is a great way to celebrate. Keeping safety in mind will help us remember the holidays as a joyful occasion.

We as responders know that the holidays can be a time when we see an uptick in calls related to fires and medical emergencies. The increase in families traveling to visit their loved ones also poses dangers related to accidents. I recall many years where we responded to heart attacks, choking, falls, and accidents in which we performed our duties with a room full of concerned family members. I also recall at my own families Christmas dinner where an uncle missed a step going into our dining area and he fell hitting his head and lacerating his forehead that required

stitches. Its things like an unfamiliar step in a relatively unfamiliar house that poses these dangers at family gatherings. Family members with underlying medical histories are also at an increased risk. Weather it's a diabetic that has extra helpings of pumpkin pie or Aunt Edna's fruitcake, or an over eager dinner enthusiast, it can present some challenges for both family and responders. Choking tends to be an increased call as well, children and the elderly often times bite off a little more than they can chew, but all ages are susceptible to this regardless, and we all know these gatherings often times have more varieties of food that we wait all year for.

Christmas is no different; every year fire departments stress the importance of fire safety. The "Keep the Wreath Green" campaigns seems to be a decent reminder of the

importance of staying fire safe. All the same, medical and motor vehicle dangers apply just the same during Christmas as it does for Thanksgiving. Stressing the importance of some of these dangers to family members is always a good idea, I know my grandparents always used to love it when I would tell them to chew their food and do not overindulge on sweets or you'll get diabetes. That's also a prime example of the fond memories those holidays have, my grandparents always had a candy dish out and any time that a grandkid would grab a piece grandpa was sure to tell us that you shouldn't eat that or you'll get the diabetes. Those fun memories are what we want to be reminded of during the holidays, not Uncle Ron taking a digger in the dining room with a full plate of food bouncing his head off the table! Uncle Ron was fine by the way, just embarrassed and with a new scar to show off.

Thank you all for the hard work and dedication that you put in each and every day. To those members that will be working the Holidays please remember to be safe and enjoy the group around you. If you decide to cook a turkey on thanksgiving, please remember to not deep fry that bird in the station and chew your food. If you have sweets do not over indulge as I would hate to see any of you get diabetes.

Have a safe and enjoyable holiday season, hunters be safe in the woods and watch for ticks, bears, bobcat's, wolves and anything else out to get you in the woods. I hear they are bad this year!

Anyway, be safe and enjoy the Holidays!



Fond du Lac Fire Rescue recently spent time discussing the highly skilled training related to Mass Casualty Incidents with Dr. Grahl, the Medical Director for Fond du Lac Fire Rescue. Important training that hopefully will never have to be put to the test.





FDL City Council President Patrick Mullen presented **DC Jason Roberts** with a Proclamation recognizing Fire Prevention Week and the theme of "Fire won't wait. Plan your escape."

FDLFR stopped at a couple of Trunk or Treat events held throughout the community in October handing out fire hats and bags which included fire safety information along with coloring/activity pages.



FDLFR is a founding member of the Hope on the Block initiative. This cabinet, which is housed outside of the library, is stocked with essential products for those in need. **AC Garth Schumacher** participated in the ribbon cutting ceremony held recently.

CONGRATULATIONS!

Lt. Rick Faris – 20 Years

Thank you for your hard work and dedication to FDLFR.



Hire Date:
12/30/2002

Happy Birthday!

~ October ~

Andrew Behnke • Garth Schumacher
Jacob Fisher • Noah Lorenz
Andy Aird • Clare Wolf • Brian Munson

~ November ~

Andrew Golla • Nick Fahrenkrug

~ December ~

Brian Winter • Jodi Peterson • Nick Czaja
Bobby Scott • Eric Rebedew



Well-trained people are the best defense against fire.

By: Assistant Chief of Training/Safety
James Knowles III

Don't Talk Smack – and other Life Advice for Firefighters

Going beyond Chief Brunacini's guidance to "Be Nice"...

Chief Alan Brunacini told us to "Be nice." He was talking primarily about how we treat "Mrs. Smith," our customer, but this advice applies to how we treat each other as well.

Remember, how you treat others often determines how you will be treated. With this in mind, let's review some time-tested advice that applies to all ranks.

Don't talk smack. Bullying, harassing, bad-mouthing and talking behind each other's back are not appropriate actions among our brother and sister firefighters.

Look for the good. Consider how you tend to think about people and situations. Are you positive or negative? Can you find the good in others or do you instinctively look for the bad?

Show appreciation. Appreciate others and recognize how they have impacted your success.

Forgive those who have hurt you. Others will, from time to time, say mean or even spiteful words. Listen to the words, determine if they are incorrect and, if so, then let them go. Do not hold a grudge.

Listen. It was an honor for me to run into Chief Brunacini at all kinds of events and he always asked how I was doing. He would listen. Mind you, this is Chief Brunacini, one of the most famous fire chiefs in America, listening and talking with a volunteer chief from German Township, Indiana. He remembered my name. He was curious about my challenges.

Don't judge others by their past. Look at where they are right now and help them look toward the future. We all have a history. Some of our history is before cell phone cameras, and most of us are very happy about that. People do change and grow. Stand by and support them as they move toward their future.

Treat others with kindness. Kindness is one of the greatest gifts one can give and receive. Don't treat others with kindness simply because you like them. Treat people with kindness because you are a kind person, even the people who drive you crazy. A person who shows kindness does not do so with an expectation of receiving something in return.

Prop others up. No matter how great you think you might be don't try to make others look small. When you belittle others, you lose your power.

Offer support and love. We all have our battles. Firefighters especially have significant battles because our job requires us to see and experience trauma. We also have a past, and in many cases, we are still dealing with those events. It requires significant personal investment of time and energy to overcome our mental battles. Treat everyone you meet with dignity.

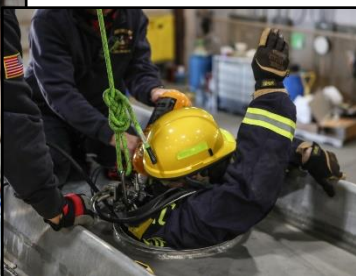
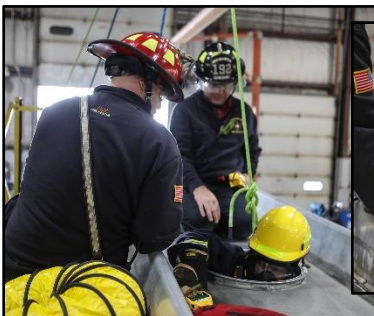
Never look down on others. Don't look down unless it's in the process of helping them up. Life is complicated. Help people who need your help.

Be mindful of your influence. We meet and interact every day with people who have a role in our lives. Some of those will help you grow. Some will hurt you. Some will inspire you to be better. You are an influence in their life as well so treat them with significance.

You can't go wrong with these actions. Being kind to others sets the positive example for successful leadership. Treat others the way you want to be treated and it will be returned many times.

Remember, you can't change others' behavior, but you can change yours and set a positive example for how others should act.

Source: Buckman, III, J. (2022). Don't talk smack – and other life advice for firefighters. Fire Rescue 1.



FDLFR and Wabash International created a confined space training exercise recently. Firefighters made their way into one of the tankers to simulate a confined space rescue. More trainings with partners like Wabash International will be conducted in the near future.

Community Risk Reduction & Life Safety

By: Division Chief Jason Roberts



A special thanks to all the community members that took time to participate in the Community Fire Department Open House. Through the partnership with Town of Fond du Lac Fire and North Fond du Lac Fire, learning demonstrations and activities were available to all ages. We would also like to thank our local business and partners providing the tools, knowledge, and resources to make this event successful. If you missed the event, please mark the 2nd Week of October on your calendar for next year. Feel free to stop by one of our fire stations to address any of your fire safety questions or needs.

The cold weather came a little earlier this year compared to years back. As the energy costs rise, we often come across non-conventional means of individuals heating their home. We want to remind you of some general safety practices around heating your home.

- 1) Schedule a professional check-up and cleaning of the furnace and fire places.
- 2) Avoid using a generator inside the home and make sure the exhaust is pointed away from combustibles on the exterior.
- 3) Do not use the oven as a primary means of heating the structure.
- 4) Maintain a three foot clearance of combustibles from heating sources.

- 5) Protect your home with working smoke and carbon monoxide alarms.

The last few months of the year brings families and communities a lot of sharing and joy. Special events and gatherings around Thanksgiving and the Holiday season also adds components of increased fire risk. Families may be preparing extra feasts, adding decorations, and finding ways to stay warm during the cold weather.

Fond du Lac Fire Rescue has put together several safety demonstration videos in the past regarding the use of turkey fryers. We would like to share the safety tip sheet below and place extra emphasis on a few times with outdoor cooking.

- 1) Make sure the cooking device is at least 10 feet away from structures. Never use a grill or fryer inside a structure.
- 2) Make sure that the device is on a level and non-flammable surface.
- 3) Make sure oil is to the proper fill line to aid splattering of grease/hot liquid.
- 4) Make sure the meat is thawed prior to placing in the fryer.
- 5) Utilize recommended oven mitts/gloves while handling utensils, pans, and lids.

- 6) Allow the hot device and liquids to cool completely prior to emptying or moving inside.

Aside from turkey fryers, Fond du Lac Fire Rescue wants to remind residents to use extra caution in the kitchen. Kitchen fires continue to be the number one location of fires within the home. In 2019, Thanksgiving, Christmas Day, and Christmas Eve were the top three days for home cooking fires. In addition, cooking was the leading cause of reported home fires/injuries from 2015-2019, and the second leading cause of home fire deaths during this time period.

In 2017, Fond du Lac Fire Rescue teamed up with Shriners Hospitals and local tree distributors (Gilles & A&W lots) to promote Holiday Fire Safety specific to trees. Holiday Tree ornaments were given out with trees to spread the safety messages. Fond du Lac Fire Rescue has more safety ornaments available for free courtesy of Shriners and FEMA. They will be located in our lobby at 815 S. Main Street. As the community brings the freshly cut trees into the home, there are some safety tips to keep in mind.

- 1) Keep the tree well hydrated by watering it daily.

- 2) Keep the tree away from heat sources and open flames.
- 3) Inspect and discard any lights that have exposed wiring.
- 4) Remove the tree from the home when it is showing signs of excessive dryness (needles falling off with/without running hand across branches, discolored needles, tree is no longer absorbing water).

FACTS

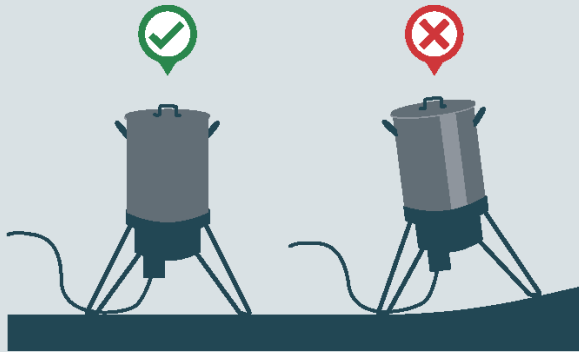
- ! **Almost one third** of home Christmas tree fires are caused by electrical problems.
- ! Although Christmas tree fires are not common, when they do occur, they are more likely to be serious.
- ! A heat source too close to the tree causes more than **one in every five** of the fires.



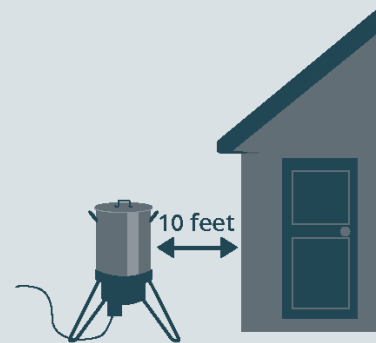


Turkey Fryer *Fire Safety*

Frying food puts you at the greatest risk of cooking fires. Before you fry a turkey, review these tips to keep you and your loved ones safe.



Turkey fryers can tip over easily, spilling hot cooking oil over a large area. Make sure your turkey fryer is on a sturdy, level surface and do not move it once it is in use.



Make sure it is at least 10 feet from your home and not under roof eaves.



An overfilled cooking pot will cause cooking oil to spill when the turkey is put in.

Test the amount of oil you need by filling your fryer with water. Place the turkey in the pot making sure the water doesn't get too close to the top. Measure the water and use that as a guide for filling the pot with oil.



A partially frozen turkey will cause cooking oil to splatter when you put it in the cooking pot.

Make sure your turkey is fully thawed without frost on it before you fry it.



Without thermostat controls, deep fryers can overheat oil to the point of starting a fire.

If your turkey fryer does not have a thermostat, use a kitchen thermometer that attaches to the side of the pot. This will help you monitor the temperature of the oil.



The sides of the cooking pot, lid and pot handles can get dangerously hot.

Always use protective oven mitts. Keep children and pets at least 3 feet from the turkey fryer.



Consider using an electric or air fryer.



Visit usfa.fema.gov for more free fire-safety resources.

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