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Subject: CFPC Listserv Notices 12/22/17
Date: Friday, December 22, 2017 4:19:00 PM

State of Connecticut
Department of Emergency Services & Public Protection
Commission on Fire Prevention and Control
December 22, 2017

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1. DESPP: Commission on Fire Prevention & Control – Connecticut Fire Academy - Christmas Holiday Notice

The staff offices of the Commission on Fire Prevention and Control / Connecticut Fire Academy and CFA Bookstore will be closed on Monday, December 25, 2017 in observance of the Christmas Day holiday. At this time of year it is always our pleasure to say **"Thank You" for your support and to wish you much health, happiness and success this holiday season and New Year. Be Safe!**

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2. CFA Bookstore News

LAST DAY OF THE
20% OFF
HOLIDAY SALE

Saturday, Dec. 23rd is the last day of the CFA Bookstore 20% off Holiday Sale. The bookstore will be open all day from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The bookstore will be closed for Christmas, Monday, Dec.25th, Tues. Dec.26th and Weds. Dec. 27th for mandatory furlough days. The bookstore will reopen on Thurs. Dec. 28th. We wish a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all.

Thanks, Pam and Karen
CFA Bookstore

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3. Firefighter Near Miss Report of the Week

Winter Weather Reminders

Summary

Though it happens every year around the same time, that first blast of freezing cold weather always seems to catch us by surprise. Ice, snow and frigid temperatures call for using adaptive tactics, being prepared and taking extra precautions to keep us safe and improve performance on the emergency scene. When the mercury plummets, otherwise ordinary tasks can suddenly become complicated: Wet roadways are transformed into skating rinks, rooftops can resemble ski slopes and a lakeside pier can turn into a slippery hazard to life and limb.

Event Description

A number of volunteer companies responded to a reported dwelling fire early in the morning in a very rural area near a river. The temperature on scene was about 12° F with wind chills at about -8° F, causing instant ice wherever water touched.

One crew member was trying to place a drafting tube in the river when he slipped on the pier and nearly fell in. If he had, hypothermia would have set in quickly.

View the Report: Icy Conditions Hamper Drafting Operation.

Take-Aways

Though some areas are blessed with beautiful weather year-round, most of us will experience at least a short period of extreme cold this winter that will challenge us. Those in northern locations who more often respond to incidents in extreme cold will likewise be exposed more frequently to cold-weather hazards.

Icy conditions in usually warmer and more southerly locations catch responders by surprise. While our location will often dictate the environment we are normally called on to respond, we all need to take time to prepare for cold-weather firefighting.

Discussion

- What are some ways that extreme cold will affect firefighting operations in your area?
- What is the best way to treat a patient who is showing signs of hypothermia?
- When the roads are covered in ice, what is the maximum grade allowed to safely park fire apparatus?
- What exposed surfaces can present a fall hazard during freezing temperatures?

Leading Practices

Personnel: Cold Weather Clothing – Layer for less bulk and more freedom of movement.

Remember to avoid fabrics that don't meet safety requirements for entry firefighters. Keep spare clothing available, especially gloves, to replace wet items. Avoid dehydration—it can happen in the winter, too.

Equipment – Ensure traction devices are operational and personnel are familiar with installation and operation. Take precautions to keep pumps and fittings from freezing. Remember, subfreezing temperatures can have a negative effect on almost any equipment. Watch for ice accumulation on ladders.

Driving – Preplan response routes for inclement weather. Every jurisdiction has some spots that may become a no-drive zone when ice-covered. Be sure every apparatus operator is familiar with the limitations of their assigned vehicle. Extend safety zones on scene to compensate for civilian drivers who are themselves surprised by the icy conditions. Choose parking positions wisely.

Scene Safety – Know the danger signs for hypothermia and have a warm place, possibly a heated vehicle, for rehab. Be cognizant of slippery surfaces, especially on roofs or near other hazardous areas. Take time to put down ice remover on work surfaces if possible and practical.

For more useful tips for working in freezing weather, visit Firefighting in Canada: Trainer's Corner-Cold Weather Reminders.

Related Near Miss Reports

- Low Air Alarm Freezes on SCBA.
- Ice Causes Firefighter to Fall.
- Firefighter Falls Through Ice Into Hidden Pit.
- Firefighter Loses Footing on Snow Covered Roof.

Additional Resources

- IAFC OnScene: When Wild Weather Works Your System.
- FireRescueMagazine.com Article: Cold Weather Near Miss
- Rochester First - Cold Weather Operations (video)
- KETV - Cold Weather Makes Firefighting More Difficult (video)

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4. Finding Peace of Mind and Wellness for the Fire Service

The National Fallen Firefighters Foundation (NFFF) through the Everyone Goes Home® program has released the Fire Service Behavioral Health Management Guide to help fire departments in their efforts to implement a comprehensive behavioral health plan. The Fire Service Behavioral Health Management Guide supports Firefighter Life Safety Initiative #13 which states that firefighters and their families must have access to counseling and psychological support.

Mental health has often been overlooked by the medical community as part of a patient's treatment plan. Issues such as depression, anxiety and addiction were considered failings in a

person's character rather than an illness or injury that can be treated and managed. Within the fire service, such stigmas were often exacerbated because firefighters are expected to be strong, courageous and impervious to the stressors of their experiences. To download the Fire Service Behavioral Health Management Guide visit:

http://www.everyonegoeshome.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2017/12/behavioral-health-mgmt-guide-122017.pdf

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5. Gov. Malloy Announces Connecticut Opts into FirstNet Network

Modernized System Will Enhance Communications Among First Responders During Critical Situations

Governor Dannel P. Malloy today announced his decision to accept the State of Connecticut into the federal First Responder Network Authority plan to deliver a wireless broadband network to the state's public safety community. Known as FirstNet, the state-of-the-art technology will connect first responders to a highly secure, wireless broadband network and enhance communications during emergency and disaster response situations.

In order to inform his decision, Governor Malloy created a working group of subject matter experts and the state went through a competitive RFP process. The Governor took the advisement of the working group and came to the conclusion that opting in would best serve the interests of the people of Connecticut.

"When disaster strikes, communication is critical to the safety of Connecticut residents," **Governor Malloy said**. "After careful analysis and consideration of the FirstNet proposal, it became clear that opting in was in the best interests of our state and our first responders. This network will enhance communications for Connecticut's first responders by providing priority access during disasters or emergencies."

"Connecticut knows first-hand how important it is that our first responders and emergency management personnel are able to access real-time updates and information," **Lt. Nancy Governor Nancy Wyman said**. "This system will add to our communications capabilities and assist those front-line individuals so they can protect the public safety and their own."

"I would like to thank Governor Malloy for opting into the FirstNet plan and providing Connecticut's first responder community with this important communication tool," **Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection Commissioner Dora Schriro said**. "Every minute matters when lives are at stake and this dedicated network will provide reliable communications to our first responders."

"Through a competitive process that involved broad representation, we believe that FirstNet will provide the critical capabilities that our first responders need today and a sustainable way to bring innovation to these important public servants for years to come," **Connecticut's Chief Information Officer Mark Raymond said**.

"We're honored to bring FirstNet to Connecticut and help transform public safety communications within the state," **AT&T Connecticut President John Emra said**. "I'd like

to thank Governor Malloy for his leadership and commitment to public safety. His decision will not only usher in a new era of public safety for his state, but it will also give Connecticut's first responders immediate access to the critical communications tools they need to keep themselves and those they serve safe."

FirstNet is a product of the U.S. 9/11 Commission's recommendation that a dedicated public safety interoperable, nationwide mobile broadband network be created to enable continued communication during a disaster or other large-scale event or emergency. In order to fulfill its mandate, FirstNet put out an RFP for which AT&T was the successful bidder. Under federal law, each state, including Connecticut, had to either opt into the FirstNet/AT&T system or opt out and build its own system.

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6. Congress Reauthorizes Fire Grant Programs and USFA

On December 21st, the Senate approved by unanimous consent H.R. 4661, the United States Fire Administration, AFG, and SAFER Program Reauthorization Act. The House approved H.R. 4661 by unanimous voice vote on Monday, December 18th.

The bill reauthorizes the Assistance to Firefighters (AFG), Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER), and the Fire Prevention and Safety (FP&S) grant programs, as well as the U.S. Fire Administration through September 30, 2023. It contains many of the key recommendations the fire organizations presented to Congress earlier in the year that were incorporated into S.829, the Senate bill to reauthorize the two grant programs that was sponsored by Senators John McCain (AZ) and Jon Tester (MT). The bill also contains a "sunset" provision that would eliminate the grant programs, but the sunset would not take effect until September 30, 2024 unless Congress renews the programs before the deadline date.

"For more than a year, the national fire services organizations have worked together to preserve the Assistance to Firefighters, Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response, and the Fire Prevention and Safety grant programs. The collective efforts of so many individuals and fire organizations made this outcome possible. CFSI takes great pride in playing an integral role in this process," said Bill Webb, Executive Director of the Congressional Fire Services Institute.

H.R. 4661 will now be sent to the President to be signed into law.