



HOT TOPICS

Oshkosh Fire Department



CHIEF'S CORNER



January has been designated as Firefighter Cancer Awareness Month. Firefighters have a 9% greater chance of being diagnosed with cancer and a 14% greater chance of dying from cancer than the general U.S. population.

This is because of the direct correlation between the chemical exposures firefighters experience on the job. The Oshkosh Fire Department is very committed to reducing the risk of occupational cancer to its members. With the support of the community and the City of Oshkosh we have been able to implement many new programs, procedures, and equipment that help to decrease our exposure risks.

We have implemented the safe cab concept with our new apparatus purchases, provided better personal protective equipment, and conduct annual training on cancer prevention to name a few things. Our work is definitely not done though. As research becomes available, technologies improve, and opportunities arise, we will continue to implement changes that help reduce the threat of cancer to our firefighters.

Most importantly, we each need to pledge to do everything we can to protect ourselves. Employ decontamination on scene. "Shower within the Hour." Utilize your SCBA when doing overhaul. The little things prevent the big things. Take care of yourself, take care of each other. Stay safe and well. Happy New Year!

--Chief Mike Stanley

EVERYONE GOES HOME

by Lieutenant Drew Jaeger

The International Association of Firefighters (IAFF) and the Firefighter Cancer Support Network have designated January as Firefighter Cancer Awareness Month. I encourage you to increase your knowledge and spend some time looking at some of the resources on the link below. There are extensive articles, podcasts, presentations, and links to studies:

<https://www.iaff.org/cancer-awareness-month/#how-to-get-started>

We know that firefighters have higher rates of many types of cancer, and we know that many known cancer causing and otherwise toxic chemicals are in smoke. Despite greater use of SCBA than ever before, our cancer rates continue to increase. Since several studies have shown that many cancer causing chemicals present in fires are absorbed through the skin, we also have begun trying several initiatives to reduce this exposure pathway. We have instituted on scene post-fire wash down procedures, increased the number of turnout gear extraction washers, added a periodic professional cleaning, and are moving towards having a second set of gear for all members.

Continued on page 2

EVERYONE GOES HOME *Continued from page 1*

We also know that diesel exhaust causes cancer, so we have taken steps to reduce that potential source of exposure through the use of exhaust management systems.

We don't know how much exposure is necessary to cause cancer, or what we definitively can do to reduce these numbers. We know that our past and our present reality reflect way too high of a frequency of occupational cancer. We are trying preventative actions that seem to make sense based on the recommendations of industrial health and medical professionals. One of those things is the "Clean Cab" concept. Engines 15 and 19, the newest frontline fire apparatus in our fleet, now carry the SCBA in an outside compartment in an effort to reduce the amount of contaminants that enter the cab of the vehicle. This does not reduce the need for effective post-fire decontamination, but hopefully reduces the residue of toxic products that move to the seats and other cab components.

Now that a larger recognition of the cancer problem in the fire service has occurred, there has been a substantial increase in scientific studies looking at the issues. Some of these studies looked at cancer data in the past, while others are looking at smaller pieces of the puzzle. The attached links show how the traditional way of removing our protective hood and leaving it around our neck is probably contaminating some of the thinnest skin on our bodies, as well as a suggested alternative. Essentially, the recommendation is to not roll your dirty hood around your neck, but to take it off more completely over the top of the head.

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/00140139.2020.1867241>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9uYp0ZQP158>

There are some techniques and traditions of the fire service that were learned by those that came before us, often with trial and error, or by sharing of lessons learned after a tragic outcome. The tradition of dirty gear and helmets serving as a sign of experience has fortunately been left in the past. Starting in 2022, there will be the chance for those of us currently in the fire service to potentially serve future firefighters by participating in a nationwide cancer registry study that will begin enrolling firefighters from across the country.

<https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/firefighters/registry.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2021-115/pdfs/2021-115.pdf?id=10.26616/NIOSH PUB2021115>

We are currently in an age of discovery related to firefighter occupational cancers. Unfortunately, we are not yet in a time of known solutions. We are hoping that by reducing our exposure to toxic products of combustion, to reduce the rates by which our members are affected. Because, having everyone go home is an admirable short term goal, followed up by an equally compelling desire to be there for a long and healthy retirement.

#BE A HERO

by EMS Division Chief Chuck Hable

I am tired of Covid. I hate the word. I hate how it has affected my life and the things I enjoy doing. I hate it being the lead story every where. Covid also scares me. Some people get Covid and are barely sick. Others get it and it's fatal. Just when we think we know, it throws us another curveball. As time goes on, we learn more about it. We have data that shows us vaccines are lifesavers. At a recent meeting of healthcare/public health professionals, the healthcare systems are reporting that that 94% of patients in the ICU are unvaccinated; 98% of patients on ventilators are unvaccinated. And we have data that shows vaccines are safe.

We all have Covid fatigue. And a large part of that is from wearing masks. They feel unnatural, fog your glasses and hurt your ears. There are a hundred other things we could add to this list. The more we learn, the more we understand how important they are at limiting the spread of Covid. Two new pieces of research have come out in the last week illustrating this.

The first study shows the efficacy of different types of masks and how well they prevent the spread of Covid. Masks were tested with two people in close contact; both wearing the same type of mask, one with Covid and one without. Here's what we learned: Cloth masks are better than nothing but they are not great. Neck gaiters offer very limited benefit. Please consider wearing something else.

It takes about 27 minutes for the infected person to spread the virus to the uninfected person. If both people are wearing disposable surgical masks with ear loops (that we have available and put on all of our patients) it will take about 60 minutes to spread the virus. But if both are wearing N95 masks, it will take about 25 HOURS to spread the virus! Now, we are not asking you to wear an N95 mask all the time, but certainly do wear them on medical calls, and continue to put surgical masks on ALL of our patients! This gives us the best combination of mask protection and allows for a common sense approach to our supply chain issues.

The second study shows that once Covid is outside the body and airborne, it loses 90% of its ability to infect us within 20 minutes. And most of that loss comes within the first five minutes! These findings really affirm the important of wearing masks, so that if you are infected, the distance which your exhaled air spreads is reduced. (Think of trying to blow out a candle with a mask on) And, if you couple mask wearing with social distancing, that even further reduces the likelihood the virus will spread.

It's hard in the fire station. It's a different work atmosphere. We live together for 24 hours at a time and share meals, rooms and bunk room. But small efforts may make a huge difference. It might be the difference between you getting sick or not getting sick. If you're not worried about getting sick, what about the patients we care for? We certainly don't want to pass it on to them. And we don't want to take it home, either. Many of us now change clothes at work and launder our uniforms here so we don't take anything nasty home. Covid is only different in that it is airborne. So if you protect yourself with a mask and social distancing at work, there is less of a chance you take it home to your family.

Masks are a pain. But we need to be vigilant in wearing them appropriately, to protect our workforce and to protect our families. Please continue to wear masks appropriately in the fire stations and vehicles. if you're not alone in a room or a vehicle, you should have one on. And please, wear it appropriately -- **over your mouth AND nose**. Don't pull it down to talk. Or cough. Or sneeze. This is proven to limit the spread of the virus.

To end on a positive note, epidemiologists are thinking we are at or near the peak of the Omicron spread. We should shortly be trending down on new cases. Scientists are always on the lookout for new variants...let's hope there is nothing on the horizon!

WHAT'S NEW: PROMOTIONS

At the January PFC meeting the following individuals were promoted:



Captain Mike Bryan



Lieutenant Chris Clark



Lieutenant Ryan Koplin



Lieutenant Tony Montag



Lieutenant Mike Stephens



Lieutenant CJ Wedell



Equipment Operator
Joe Dutscheck



Equipment Operator
Ben Schoenborn



Equipment Operator
Mike Wos

WHAT'S NEW: RETIREMENTS



Lieutenant Jim Gentry

Congratulations to Lt. Jim Gentry. Jim started back in January 1995 and retired as a Lieutenant on January 10. That is 27 years if you are counting! He was most recently working at Station 16 on Engine 16.



Lieutenant Kurt Heid

Congratulations to Lt. Kurt Heid. Kurt started back in March 1997 and retired as a Lieutenant on January 13. He is just shy of 25 years. Kurt most recently worked at Station 14 on Engine 14.

Best wishes for a safe, healthy and happy retirement !

NEW HIRES

Starting March 14, three new recruits will be joining OFD as probationary firefighters/paramedics:

David Burroughs of Green Bay completed an Associate of Applied Science degree from Northeast Wisconsin Technical College with a major in Firefighter Paramedic. He has also gained a great deal of relevant emergency medical services experience while working as a paramedic on an ambulance.

Alex Johll of Ashbury Indiana obtained an Associate of Applied Science degree from Northeast Iowa Community College. Alex also rose to the level of Eagle Scout with the Boy Scouts of America. He has also gained a great deal of relevant experience while working as a paramedic on an ambulance and as a volunteer firefighter.

Dennis Kilgore Jr. is originally from New York but has resided in Oshkosh for many years. Dennis completed an Associate of Applied Science degree from Fox Valley Technical College with a major in Fire Protection Technician. Dennis completed his internship with OFD and has returned seeking a career here. He has also gained a great deal of relevant emergency medical services experience while working as a paramedic in the emergency department and an ambulance.

KITCHEN TABLE TRAINING

by Captain Jason Shikoski

The training division recently sent out the training agenda for 2022 and it covered a wide variety of topics. It also covered additional training that we will be starting this year (company proficiency drills). One of the areas that was discussed in D/C Heiman's video was why we have the number of hours assigned to each person throughout the year. Many factors concerning the number of hours were mentioned -- ISO, SPS 330, OSHA, etc. Those factors dictate the hours that we must train and to a degree the agenda, but WHY we train is not addressed and can really be broken down quite simply.

We train so that we get things right in an emergency. That's where our focus should lie. As I mentioned in our RIC classes, making a mistake in training is one thing (as long as no one gets hurt and/or equipment doesn't get damaged. Don't hesitate to do a training evolution over again until everything goes right either), but making a mistake on the emergency scene can have dire consequences. At times, there is no room for error and we have to get things right on the first try. With proper and thorough training we will help to eliminate any errors. Please keep on being diligent with your training activities and assignments so that we can properly mitigate emergencies and so that Everyone Goes Home.

Anyone that has been with the OFD for any number of years can quickly see that the number of training hours that is required has increased considerably. Often times the phrase, "how can we get all of this done" is heard.

Recently a number of flyers were sent out to each station to help you reach your training hour requirements. On the right hand side on the home screen in Vector Solutions you'll notice several links for adding your own training. It's very simple to utilize. Many daily activities can be entered after you complete them. Checking your SCBA, checking the equipment on your company, attending the morning meeting, driving to the store, etc. are all things that we do on a daily basis. After you do them, log in to Vector Solutions and enter the activity and time and boom you're done. Your hours will fall right in to place and there will be no worries on getting your time in by the end of the year. Any questions about this let D/C Heiman or I know.

Thank you and be safe.



Daily Training Click links below to Enter
* Daily training will count towards non-assigned hours
2022 Goal 1 hour per day Ave.

Weekly SCBA Check	Company Meeting
Weekly Apparatus Check	Physical Fitness
Weekly Meter Check	Area Familiarization
Apparatus Operation	Building Familiarization
Post incident debrief	Tactical Discussion

Non-assigned training
May be completed as a company or Individually
12 hours per Quarter

NON ASSIGNED
TRAINING

OFD
Instructor Guides

TRAINING
RESOURCES

To record non-assigned training click the non-assigned training icon.
Select the activity which matches the area of training

[Repeat Training](#)

[Substitute Training](#)
(Click by Month Below)
Jan.

NATIONAL BLOOD DONOR MONTH

by John Holland, Public Information Officer

On Tuesday of this week, the American Red Cross declared a "national blood crisis." According to their website, they are experiencing the "worst blood shortage in the U.S. in over a decade." Doctors are being forced to make difficult decisions about who gets blood.

January is National Blood Donor Month. This recognition, inspired by the American Red Cross, first started in 1970 and coincides with one of the most difficult times to maintain a sufficient blood supply for patients. This year is especially bad because of the COVID pandemic. Many blood drives have had to be canceled and people are unnecessarily leery about donating.

There is no need to be concerned about getting COVID by donating blood. Each blood drive and donation center follows the strictest standards of safety and infection control—including temperature checks, social distancing, and face masks for donors and staff.

Also, no one is allowed to donate if they:

- Have had a positive test or experienced COVID symptoms in the last 14 days.
- Have been told to self-quarantine due to exposure risk, including travel.
- Furthermore, there is no evidence of anyone becoming infected with COVID by receiving donated blood. This is due to the fact that COVID is a respiratory virus.



Here's why it is important to donate blood:

- According to the American Red Cross every two seconds someone in the U.S. needs blood or platelets.
- Every day 43,000 pints of blood are used.
- One out of every ten people who enter hospitals need blood.
- Blood is needed for trauma patients, surgeries, cancer treatment, open heart surgeries, and anemia, just to name a few.
- There is no substitute for blood. Therefore, the only way to meet this high demand is through donations.

So, how can you donate?

You must be at least 17 years-old (16 with parental consent), weigh at least 110 pounds, and be in generally good health. That's it. It will take about an hour of your time to donate a pint of blood. That pint of blood can save up to three lives.

Places to donate in this area:

- The Community Blood Center <https://www.communityblood.org/> and
- The American Red Cross <https://www.redcrossblood.org/>

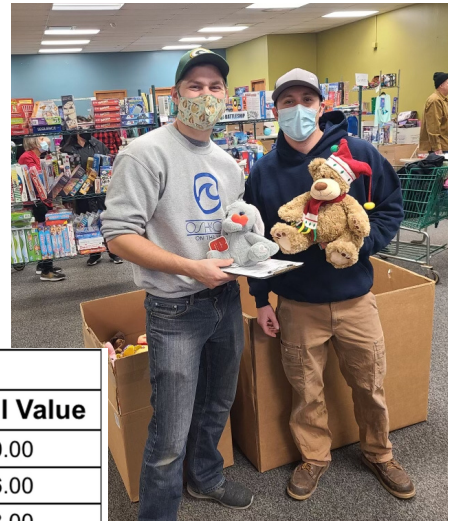
Will you be someone who saves a life? Maybe someday that saved life will be your own thanks to a blood donation. Kick off the year by making a lifesaving donation this National Blood Donor Month.

HOLIDAY TOY & FOOD DRIVE UPDATE

by Eric Shea & Hunter Resop, Food & Toy Drive Coordinators

The 23rd Annual Oshkosh Fire Department Local 316 Food and Toy Drive has officially wrapped up and it was another amazingly successful year! It was great to be back out in the community and interacting with YOU, the citizens of Oshkosh, as you are the ones who make this drive so impactful year after year!

All of the donations have been counted and we are happy to report that we had a RECORD year of donations! The donation totals per night are as follows:



2021				
Station	Food (lbs)	Toys	Cash	Toy Retail Value
Station 14	662	238	\$581.00	\$4,760.00
Station 15	641	134	\$577.00	\$2,696.00
Station 16	1,095	291	\$1,057.00	\$5,828.00
Station 17/19	1,144	227	\$565.25	\$4,542.00
Station 18	1,216	287	\$1,817.00	\$5,742.00
Extra Drop Offs	0	0	\$300.00	\$0.00
Totals	4758	1177	\$4,897.25	\$23,568.00

This year, we received nearly \$4,900 in cash donations; this was the most we received in our 23 year history! We had some extremely generous monetary donations from community members this year and, as a result, we decided to double the amount of the Gary Kassube Scholarship this year! One graduating senior from Oshkosh North and one from Oshkosh West who is enrolled in a police or science program will now be awarded \$1,000! For more information on the scholarship and how to apply, please visit www.foxriverscholarshipcenter.org.

In the days following the drive, all of the donations were distributed to families in the Oshkosh area through the Salvation Army's distribution program. Our very own Nick Ruzek and Hunter Resop were able to volunteer for the distribution process and help families find the food and gifts they needed to make their holidays special.

We'd like to thank all of our partners who made this drive possible, most notably:

- Major James and Major Penny Mungai and Patty Zastrow from the Oshkosh Area Salvation Army;
- Darren Moxon from Oshkosh Fire and Police Equipment;
- Rick Leib, the students, and staff from the Oshkosh North Communities Program; and
- All of the members, families, and friends of Local 316 and the Oshkosh Fire Department for volunteering their time to go door to door to collect the donations.

Last, but not least, our biggest thank you goes out to YOU, the Oshkosh community, for helping this drive impact hundreds of families right here in the Oshkosh area. Your donations and support show the true generosity of the City of Oshkosh! Thank you!! We look forward to another amazing drive in 2022!



DECEMBER 2021



769



108



120

LET'S CONNECT

