



HOT TOPICS

Oshkosh Fire Department



CHIEF'S CORNER



For Thanksgiving many of us will be visiting the homes of aging parents and grandparents. Our being there provides a great opportunity to prevent falls in the home. Take a few moments to look around for throw rugs or other trip hazards.

Are there grab bars in the bath tub, near the toilet, or next to the bed? Could burned out lightbulbs be replaced that would improve visibility over steps and in hallways?

When is the last time Mom or Dad had their eyes checked? Have they talked to their Doctor about how prescriptions may be interacting? Maybe suggest a walk or that they participate in a fall prevention program, or some other type of activity that will help develop their core strength and increase mobility.

No one wants to have the holidays ruined because of a loved one falling. Turkey dinner is not the same when it's spent in the hospital with a broken hip. Be thankful for our aging loved ones and give them a caring gift of helping them find ways to prevent falls. The only thing that should be falling in November is leaves, not loved ones. Stay safe and well.

Happy Thanksgiving!

--Chief Mike Stanley

PREVENT, PREPARE, PRACTICE

by John Holland, Public Information

With the holiday season quickly approaching, it's time to revisit fire safety in the kitchen. According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Thanksgiving is the peak day for home cooking fires in the United States (with more than three times the average number!). It's followed by Christmas and the day before Thanksgiving. Obviously, it doesn't have to be a holiday to have a cooking fire. In fact, there are an average of 470 of them daily in the US. They are the number one cause of home fires and home fire injuries. Cooking fires are very common right here in Oshkosh as well. They have always been in the top three causes of fires in the 22 years that I have been in the Department. Last year 6% of our total fires were cooking.

The most common cause of cooking fires is unattended cooking. Please stay in the kitchen if you are frying, boiling, grilling, or broiling food. If you are simmering, baking or roasting food, check on it regularly and use a timer to remind you that you're cooking.

Never leave the home if there is something on the stove or in the oven.

(Continued on page 2)

HOLIDAY FIRE SAFETY *(Continued from page 1)*

Keep oven mitts, wooden utensils, food packaging, etc. away from the stovetop. Use extra caution with newer flat-top stoves.

Cooking with oil or deep frying brings its own hazards. Heat the oil slowly to the necessary temperature and then carefully add the food so that the oil doesn't splatter. With all cooking, keep an eye on what you fry. If the oil smokes or smells funny, it's a sign that the oil is too hot. Turn off the burner and carefully remove the pan from the burner or unplug the deep fryer. Keep the lid of the pot close to (but not on) the stove. That way if you do have a fire, you can just slide the lid over the top of the pan and turn off the burner to put it out. Never throw water on a grease fire!

If you have a fire in the oven, turn off the heat and keep the oven door closed. This will keep air from entering the oven and making the fire grow and spread.

A fire extinguisher is a great way to put out a small cooking fire. However, if you don't know what you're doing or are unsure, just get out and call 9-1-1. More than half of the people injured in home cooking fires were hurt when they were trying to extinguish the fire. With any fire please call 9-1-1, even if you think it is out. Let us make sure it truly is out.

Holiday gatherings have their own set of issues as well. Extra people in the home lead to more distractions and take your attention away from your cooking. Too much holiday cheer can also result in being easily distracted by the task at hand. If you've had too much alcohol don't do any cooking.

DETECTOR TREK RESULTS

Another successful Detector Trek is in the books. This year we visited 125 residences in the south central part of Oshkosh. We installed 106 detectors in 59 homes and 21 batteries in 10 homes. In many cases, homes had obsolete or very old detectors so rather than just replace the batteries, we replaced the entire unit. The disheartening result was that only 22% of the homes we checked had the correct number of working smoke alarms.

Thank you to the American Red Cross and Lowe's of Oshkosh for providing the necessary detectors at either no, or very low, cost to continue to make this program possible.

Don't forget we have Project SAFE (Smoke Alarms For Everyone). This is a year-round program in which we will come and check your home and install any necessary detectors or batteries FREE OF CHARGE. Please call 920-236-5249 to set up an appointment today.



**American
Red Cross**

EVERYONE GOES HOME

by Lieutenant Drew Jaeger



Empowerment -- the ability of all firefighters to stop unsafe practices. That is the goal of Life Safety Initiative #4. For the experienced fire fighter, this may appear to be in conflict with our traditional values of expecting others to “grab some time” before speaking their mind about issues of concern. I believe that we can appreciate the tradition of valuing experience yet understanding the fresh perspective and insights of new personnel.

Remember what it was like when you started on the job? You were proud to have completed a fire science degree and paramedic training. Were you expected to keep your mouth shut, or that your opinion was of less value than more senior or experienced members? Do you remember how that made you feel?

The aviation community has studied years of fatal incidents and made institutional changes using Crew Resource Management (CRM). It teaches that all members of a crew have a duty to collaborate and share safety concerns with the expectation that although rank is still deserving of due respect, the input of all members has value and should be considered. Officers and senior members, are we helping to create a department where we appreciate and value the talents and insights of all of our members?

I believe the culture of our department is shifting in a healthy way to encourage members of all ranks and years of experience to share their perspectives to keep us safe. Examples include the “Morning Meeting” training topics, timely sharing of after action reports of fires, and inclusion of junior personnel on the CAPS team. There are still expectations of respect for rank and department. If you hope to actually accomplish change, you may have to do a little more than just share your thoughts over morning coffee.

1. **Understand history:** A great place to start is with your fellow firefighters, who may be able to apprise you of any history or previous changes to your issue of concern.
2. **Research:** Doing a little bit of research on your own, to see if there is an NFPA standard or other published fire service publication article or expectation of performance may better support the implementation of your idea.
3. **Benchmark:** Are there other departments that utilize your suggested method? If it's one that involves a cost, having that broken down may better support your idea.
4. **Chain of Command:** I would then suggest you involve your company officer and attempt to move your concern up via the chain of command.
5. **The OFD Health and Safety Committee** exists to provide a forum for all to discuss issues of concern in an effort to improve the safety. You are welcome to discuss or forward questions or concerns to any or all members of the committee at any time. Please understand that due to the periodic nature of the meetings, that it can take some time for the committee to research an issue, discuss it at the next quarterly meeting, and work to achieve a solution.

We often say that the fire service is our second family. If we want to build the fire service of the future, and have it embody that value, may I suggest that we continue to cultivate an environment where everyone feels like a trusted member of the family, and *Everyone Goes Home*.

WHAT'S NEW

First Responder of the Year

Congratulations to Battalion Chief Mike Rutter for being selected as First Responder of the Year for the State Assembly 54th District. He was recognized in Madison on October 26th.

Mike was nominated because of the contributions he has made not only to the Oshkosh Fire Department, but also to the community of Oshkosh.

In 1996, Mike began his career as a firefighter with the Oshkosh Fire Department. He then progressed through the ranks as an Equipment Operator, Lieutenant, Captain, and Battalion Chief. At each of these ranks, he distinguished himself for his commitment to the position, leadership abilities, and passion for his profession. Chief Rutter is a champion for change in the department.

He is committed to bringing out the best in each employee and preparing them to protect the public, keep themselves and their colleagues safe, and to continuously evolve to meet the ever changing needs of the community we serve.

Throughout his twenty-five year career, there is not a facet of the organization that he has not been involved with and made it better because of his participation.

As a Battalion Chief, he is an exceptional mentor and role model to new and emerging leaders in the department. Chief Rutter has greatly improved the safety of the Oshkosh Fire Department's firefighters. Mike coordinates the personal protective equipment program. His vision, guidance and perseverance have led to improved firefighting gear that protects our personnel from the immediate dangers of fire and from the long term cancer causing threats of smoke. Mike Rutter is a dedicated professional who embodies a core value of the City of Oshkosh which is having a "Can Do Attitude."

Representative Gordon Hintz & Battalion Chief Mike Rutter at the Wisconsin State Capital



Lights & Sirens

Congratulations to the following probationary employees who successfully passed the six month map and driving test. The following individuals may now drive with lights and sirens:

- Dan Brown
- Tom Diener
- Kyle Mollen
- Chad Witmer



Congratulations Lt. Dave Neuber

During the peak of the COVID pandemic when he had limited access for inspections, Lt. Neuber took ownership of the department’s ISO evaluation. Dave single handedly shepherded this to completion which resulted in the first ISO Class 1 rating the department has had in its history. Dave also took the initiative to work with the City’s GIS specialist to create a readily available program for responding units to access preplans and previous inspections. He also has been instrumental in creating a permitting process for recreational burning. If there is a mission critical task, it should be assigned to Lieutenant Dave Neuber. He exemplifies superior achievement in the area of fire prevention. His accomplishments and service are the reasons why he deserves this recognition.



WHAT'S NEW

Wisconsin State Fire Inspector of the Year

October 29 was a special day for Lt. Inspector Dave Neuber. He was named **Fire Inspector of the Year** by The Wisconsin State Fire Inspectors Association.

Nominated by Chief Mike Stanley for his tireless work and championing of fire prevention, code and compliance, Chief described Dave as a “dynamo.” “He once said to me that he doesn’t want to work for a fire department that prepares for the first pick in the draft; I want to work for a department that is always preparing to win the Super Bowl.”

That very accurately captures the standard that Dave holds for himself and the department. Dave is service driven; he seeks solutions and positive outcomes when he encounters complex issues. He also consistently finds ways to go above and beyond to make the department and community safer.



New Dive Team Members

Congratulations to the new members of the Dive Team:

- Ashley Engeldinger
- Ken Kiefer
- Tanner Harrington

After a lot of hard work they are now certified Rescue and Public Safety Divers.

STAR AWARD

Special Events Coordinator Kathy Snell took time out of her busy day to nominate Battalion Chief Chuck Hable & Assistant Chief Brian Bending for a STAR award. The purpose of the Staff Appreciation and Recognition Award (S.T.A.R.) is to recognize employees for their day to day efforts and their accomplishments towards achieving organizational or departmental goals. Employees can be nominated by peers, citizens, supervisors, division and department heads.

Kathy wrote, "Your staff took some time today to meet with a group from Arizona that had come up to see/experience AirVenture. I'd been working with this group since February, planning for their arrival and scheduling time to meet with our staff so they could get a good feel for all that we do as a City to support AirVenture (and all the other events). I know how taxing this week can be on your crew but I wanted to share with you, that Chuck Hable and Brian Bending were nothing short of friendly, informative and welcoming! The group was so very grateful for their time and I know walked away with some really great information to take back with them for their future air shows. Sometimes these small acts of kindness can be overlooked and I wanted to share just how thankful these guests were to have the chance to meet with our staff this week."

Would you like to nominate someone for a STAR award? It's easy to do! Fill out this short form on the City intranet site:

<https://www.ci.oshkosh.wi.us/HumanResources/OutstandingServiceAwardForm.aspx>



Wisconsin Public Service Foundation



WPS Foundation Grant

Thank you to the Wisconsin Public Service Foundation for their generous gift of \$2,000. The money was used to purchase a smoke machine that will be used in firefighter training.

The Oshkosh Fire Department was one of 27 Wisconsin agencies that received funding through its 2021 Rewarding Responder Grants. This was the 8th year that the grant opportunity was available. The foundation awards \$50,000 per year. The maximum grant amount awarded was \$2,000 per project.

WHAT'S NEW

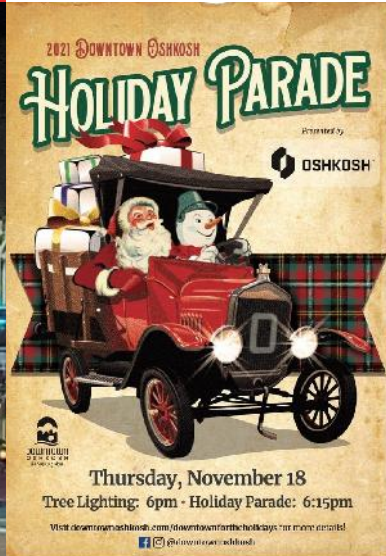
Promotion Jason Shikoski

At the October 13th Police and Fire Commission meeting, Jason Shikoski was promoted from Lieutenant to Captain. Jason started with the fire department in 1997 and just recently moved over to the training division.

Congratulations Jason!



Captain Jason Shikoski & Assistant Chief John Ziemer



Holiday Parade

It was a cold and windy night, but the winners of the 2021 Fire Prevention Week Poster Contest and "Who's Your Hero?" writing contest were bundled up while riding up top of Engine 15 during the Annual Downtown Oshkosh Holiday Parade.



Leadership Oshkosh

A group of Leadership Oshkosh participants made a stop at Station 15 on November 18. Retired Battalion Chief Mark Boettcher shared his love of the fire service and helped future leaders understand all of the services we provide for the City of Oshkosh and surrounding communities.



MEDICAL DIRECTOR MINUTE

by Dr. Kerry Ahrens

You get paged out to a home: 76 year-old male, conscious, breathing with abnormal breathing who has passed out. He is completely alert when you arrive at his house. You notice a man sitting down on the ground, his concerned wife is hovering near by and starts a rapid fire listing of what happened in the past 2 days and that 'he just would not call the doctor; he's so stubborn'.

You ask his wife details about what led up to this. She reports 'He was just sitting at the table. When I asked a question he did not answer me. When I called his name again; he didn't answer me. When I came to check on him he was not responding and I called you.'

You get vital signs: HR 64, BP 130/56, RR 16, and the patient is wide awake. You ask if he has had any recent illnesses or complaints of pain. They both respond 'no'. His wife states he has seemed more tired than usual lately and did not want her to make an appointment for him. You take a quick listen to his heart and lungs. Lungs are clear, you don't hear any overt murmurs.

Ending #1: Because he is awake and talking you get him immediately on the stretcher and drive him the 9 minutes it takes to get to the hospital. Because you are so close you don't put him on the monitor. En route he is chatting with you amicably. You thought 'ah maybe this was a TIA or low blood pressure'. You deliver him into the hands of the receiving hospital without any events and head back to the station.

Ending #2: You get this man up and walk him to the stretcher. You notice he has a stable gait without ataxia and is moving both sides without issue. You do a quick LAMS. No findings to suggest a large vessel stroke (or stroke at all for that matter). Because he passed out while sitting down, you put him on the monitor per syncope protocol. While en route he is chatting amicably. You check the monitor. Repeat BP 100/60, HR drops to the 30s. You check his ECG and notice he had a 15 second pause before his next heart beat. You ask him during that pause 'How are you feeling right now?' He replies "a bit tired, but that's how I felt all week; I do feel a bit light headed."

You arrive at the hospital and provide the receiving team with your findings. You get a call later from the charge RN. He says, 'thank you for that ECG. That pause was the only pause we saw in two hours of monitoring, but because of that he was admitted. We'll have a discussion with electrophysiology tomorrow.' You get follow up one week later: during the night he had eight more pauses lasting longer than 10 seconds. The patient then developed an episode of complete heart block and had a pacemaker placed.

The above endings illustrate how very different evaluations can be, but can yield a ton of information. Both evaluations were quick and easy; the only difference was just a few more additions to the exam and monitoring were added. Had the monitoring not been done, that hospital would have had no idea what caused this man's syncopal episode. Monitoring can be a pain but can yield so much information (though much of the time it doesn't show much). Be sure that for any complaint of "dizziness", "syncope", "passing out" you have a cardiac monitor on your patient as you may deliver the data 'cinch' that provides your patient's ultimate diagnosis.

What you all do matters and affects your patient's outcome more than you realize. On that note, you are all doing a wonderful job as we near the end of 2021. Thank you for continuing to provide the high quality care you all do.



NOW & THEN

by EMS Battalion Chief, Chuck Hable

I started volunteering in EMS in 1990. That's 31 years ago! In that time, EMS has changed a lot. Just thinking of equipment and medications we used that we don't have anymore - MAST pants, sandbags, KEDs, bretylium, lidocaine, Ipecac, 5:1 CPR, hyperventilating everyone.... I could go on.

As I got to be a more seasoned paramedic, I really began appreciating the patients as people. They were more than just a 911 call. They all have a story, and once the medical side is done, consider exploring that with them. So many people like it when you take an interest in them.

I really miss going on calls with older patients who grew up in Oshkosh. What was it like when you were younger? Where did you live? What was high school like? How did you celebrate the Fourth of July, or Christmas? Did it seem like there was more snow back then? I especially enjoyed talking to people who served in the military. Where? During conflict?

One of my favorite calls ever was on a cool fall night in a beautiful old house downtown. An elderly man had fallen and likely broken his hip. I was driving the ambulance on that call and so provided more of a support role. This gentleman was still married to his high school sweetheart, and she was nervous and afraid and so concerned about him. The engine crew and my partner were doing a great job taking care of this patient's injured hip, so I focused on his wife. I sat with her, held her hand and explained what we were doing, offered for her to come with us to the hospital and helped her with her coat and into the passenger seat of the ambulance. We had a nice conversation on our way to the hospital, and I could feel her anxiety lower as time went on. I got a wheelchair for her when we got to Mercy and wheeled her inside so she could be with her husband. The emotional first aid I provided for her that night was as much or more care than we had provided for her husband. I have never forgotten that. I have experienced those same kind of conversations and provided emotional care for lots of people, just as you have.

So I will finish with a thought: when you are with a patient, and you have a trip across town to the hospital, and your medical interventions are done, consider putting the tablet down and having a conversation. Your attention and listening ear and compassion might be the best care you can provide, and might give you another level of satisfaction on the job that you didn't know existed.



KITCHEN TABLE TRAINING

by Captain Jason Shikoski

MABAS or Mutual Aid Box Alarm System originated in Northern Illinois in the late 1960's and it is a mutual aid program that may be used for deploying fire, rescue and emergency medical personnel in a multi-jurisdictional and/or multi-agency response.

The MABAS Senate Bill SB 642 was approved by the Wisconsin State Legislature and signed by Governor Jim Doyle on April 5th 2006. MABAS first filtered in to Wisconsin in the Southeast part of our state and its districts are typically divided by county lines. Winnebago County is known as MABAS Division 123.



In order for MABAS to be effective, the agency that will be using the card(s) must be well informed on the capabilities and the response levels of each card. The mutual aid companies/departments assigned at the different response levels of the cards must be aware of the cards and have the ability to provide that particular piece of equipment or personnel in a given situation. The local dispatching agency must be well informed with the card(s) and the MABAS operation system in general. In essence, all players must be ready to go at a moment's notice.

What is a "card"? A MABAS response is broken down in to 9 different categories on different cards. A card is basically a play sheet to be used if an incident is escalated to where additional resources are needed at a scene or in your response area. The 9 card categories are:

CARD CATEGORIES :

1. Structure fire
2. Structure fire non-hydrant area
3. Life safety
4. Brush/Wildland fire
5. Ice/Water rescue
6. Haz Mat
7. Tech rescue
8. Target hazard
9. Disaster

Each category may have more than one card in it. Each category starts with a response at the "Still alarm" level. The escalation of alarm levels are as follows; "Working Still alarm", "Box alarm", "2nd alarm", "3rd alarm", "4th alarm", "5th alarm", etc.

So, why should we have MABAS cards established to use? Basically to quickly streamline a response in to our area if our Still alarm companies are overwhelmed on scene and/or additional resources are needed in our community for additional responses.

(Continued on page 11)

KITCHEN TABLE TRAINING *(Continued from page 10)*

Take for example our Structure Fire Card. If we are at a fire where our resources are exhausted on the scene or in the city and the Incident Commander quickly needs help he/she simply needs to contact our Communication Center via radio and say, “upgrade this incident to the box alarm level on our structure fire card” and the following resources will be deployed:

1. Town of Oshkosh Fire Air/Rehab unit will be sent to the scene.
2. An additional OFD med unit will be sent to the scene.
3. All OFD Chief Officers will be recalled (Car-14 will be staffed).
4. Fox Crossing Fire will provide a safety officer to the scene.
5. Town of Algoma Fire will provide an Engine company to the scene (the Town of Algoma engine that is moved to St. 17 on the working still should be the one to relocate).
6. Omro Fire will provide an Engine company to the scene.
7. An additional Truck company will be sent to the scene.
8. NMFDFire will provide an Engine company to St. 15.
9. Ripon Fire will provide an ALS Engine company to St. 14.
10. NFDL Fire will provide an ambulance to St. 15.

ALL of that happens when the I.C. says 13 words! If a Still alarm is upgraded to a box alarm level, everything that is listed on the box alarm level AND a working still should be dispatched to their respective locations. A department or company may “pass” on providing a company but then the communications center should go lower into the card and find a similar company and request them at that time. In addition, the I.C. may make a “special request” call for any particular piece of equipment that they feel they need.

This article really is a small part of what MABAS is about and what it can provide, but it gives you a glimpse of how MABAS is an excellent tool to be used to quickly provide support to your geographical area if (when) the need arises. Our MABAS cards and operational level here at the OFD continues to evolve.

Please stand by for forthcoming changes and updates in Vector Solutions!



On-Scene Rehab for Firefighters Video

Check it out

<https://www.lexipol.com/resources/todays-tips/on-scene-rehab-for-firefighters/>

FOOD & TOY DRIVE

by EMS Coordinator Eric Shea



After a one year hiatus, OFD is back to collecting food and toys door to door! Last year over 700 families and 2,000 children were enrolled in the Salvation Army's program. Despite the pandemic, we collected over 4,800 pounds of food, 2,600 toys, and nearly \$2,000! Thank you Oshkosh!!

We are now accepting non-perishable food items, new/unwrapped gifts, wrapping paper/tape, and cash donations. All donations will be given to the Salvation Army and distributed through their program.

Monetary donations may also be given to the Oshkosh Firefighters Charitable Trust to be used for the Gary Kassube Scholarship Fund for two graduating Oshkosh seniors enrolled in a police or fire science program. Money may be donated through the PayPal link:

https://www.paypal.com/donate/?cmd=_s-xclick&hosted_button_id=QTK97FZHLAHT6

The dates are set for this year's drive. We will again be soliciting help from the Oshkosh North Communities Program to promote the drive, Oshkosh Fire & Rescue Equipment will provide the antique engine, and the Salvation Army will be along for all the routes.

All routes will begin between 5:00 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. This year's dates are:

- Tuesday, November 30th (B Shift) - Station 14
- Wednesday, December 1st (C Shift) - Station 15
- Thursday, December 9th (B Shift) - Station 16
- Monday, December 13th (C Shift) - Station 18
- Tuesday, December 14th (A Shift) - Station 17/19



To see the routes, and read about further updates, please follow us on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram @OshkoshFoodToy.

A huge heartfelt thank you goes out to Brian Blaha for his work over the last 10 years. This drive would have not succeeded without his dedicated service. He deserves a ton of credit for making the drive into what it is today! Hunter Resop has now stepped into the "Co-Leader" role. Hunter was a former Communities student, so this project is near and dear to his heart.

We look forward to seeing you on the routes for what promises to be another great year of helping our community!



OCTOBER 2021



749



100



279

LET'S CONNECT

