



HOT TOPICS

Oshkosh Fire Department

CHIEF'S CORNER



This is one of the most important months of the year for the Oshkosh Fire Department. Each year in October, locally and nationally, Fire Prevention Week becomes a primary focus for firefighters. It is our goal to prevent injuries, loss of property, and most importantly, loss of life from fires.

In this issue of our newsletter, we hope to raise your awareness around fire safety and how to stay healthy. Stay safe and well.

Happy Halloween!

- Chief Mike Stanley



SERVE UP SAFETY IN THE KITCHEN

by John Holland, Public Information

This year's theme for Fire Prevention Week is "Serve up Safety in the Kitchen". Nationwide, cooking is the leading cause of home fires and home fire injuries. The leading cause of these fires is unattended cooking.

When you are frying, boiling, or broiling food, stay in the kitchen! If you are simmering, baking, or roasting food, check it regularly and set a timer to check on it every 10-15 minutes. Also, never leave your home if you're doing any type of cooking.

Some other important kitchen fire safety tips are:

- Keep cooking appliances clean. Built up grease easily catches fires.
- NEVER put water on grease fire. Keep a lid nearby to cover pots and pans in case of a grease fire.
- Keep combustibles (oven mitts, hot pads, wooden spoons, spices, etc.) off of the stovetop.
- Turn all pot and pan handles in to avoid spills and scalds.
- Enforce a three foot "Kid-Free Zone" around the stove or any cooking appliance.
- If you have a fire in the oven, turn off the oven and leave the door shut.
- Don't ever cook if you are drowsy or have consumed alcohol.
- Ensure you have working smoke alarms on each level in your home.

WHAT'S NEW

Firefighters have a 9% greater risk of being diagnosed with cancer than the general U.S. population. They also have a 14% greater risk of dying from cancer than the general population. These cancers occur because of repeated job-related exposures to carcinogens. Cancer has become such a threat to firefighters that it is now the leading cause of death amongst firefighters. Cancer can rob firefighters of the option of a healthy retirement. It can also strike down young firefighters who are still in the profession and leave their love ones behind wondering how this tragedy could have been prevented. (source: FirefighterCancerConsultants.com).

Later this year, the Oshkosh Fire Department will be visited by The Firefighter Cancer Consultants. They will be reviewing our policies and guidelines, interviewing our team members, and assessing our stations and equipment to identify any modifications that could be made to reduce or minimize the risk of occupational cancers to our firefighters. They will also conduct 3 days of training so that every firefighter can learn ways to protect themselves and raise their awareness around occupational related cancer.

The Oshkosh Fire Department knows that the most valuable resources we have are our people. We are constantly seeking ways to keep our firefighters healthy and safe.

MEDICAL DIRECTOR MINUTE

by Dr. Kerry Ahrens

Happy October all!

As you know, National Fire Prevention Week falls during this month to commemorate the Great Chicago Fire...and the lesser known devastating Peshtigo fire which occurred the same night.

Focusing on firefighter safety this month, did you know that an estimated 58,250 firefighter injuries occurred while in the line of duty in 2018. (source: NFPA.org) You are more likely to be injured at the fire ground by overexertion. So at any fire scene, please be sure to rehab appropriately and remember to follow the guidelines given in training.



Challenge Question

You arrive at a well kept home on a cool October day where the 911 report states 'flu like symptoms'. A 54 year old female complains of weakness, vomiting, chest pain and dizziness; no coughing, no loss of sense of taste or smell. No fevers. Her VS are: HR 110, BP 140/76, pox 100% on room air but she appears pale. Interestingly, she mentions her husband and son also are feeling the same way. What do you think to do that saves the day?

Other things that cause injury: sprain, strain and muscular pain make up 38% of injuries sustained. So be sure you are working to remain in good shape with cardio, lifting and most importantly stretching/yoga. If you are feeling less in shape than you would like, just re-start the **Non-Dad/Mom bod competition** that raged through the department several years ago.

These are busy times with COVID raging through our community. You are doing a fantastic job. Remember to take care of yourselves as well as you care for your families and our community.

Answer: Check carbon monoxide level of the house < 60ppm.

EVERYONE GOES HOME

by Lieutenant Drew Jaeger

The department has taken a great leap forward in providing a tool for both roadway and night time general scene safety by purchasing new duty coats. They feature a high visibility yellow color scheme, along with retro-reflective striping. Our older black coats were warm, but were a bit bulky and did not offer any night visibility. The new coats provide ANSI 2 rated visibility, weather protection, a clear fire department identifiers on the front and back of the coat, and are an option in lieu of the vest that is currently required for roadway operations.

Since the coat or vest is a required item, this purchase shows a commitment in support of Life Safety Initiative #11, which is related to Response Policies. Our policies have been updated over the last few years to ensure that we have effective blocking vehicles, improved extrication teamwork, and rapid response to the potentially uncontrolled scene.

The link below will take you to some information related to incidents from 2019 where personnel from public safety and tow company workers were fatally struck at roadside incidents. These include 2 incidents from Wisconsin. This should reinforce our obligation to not only keep OFD personnel as safe as possible, but to also look out for our law enforcement partners and assisting agencies working at motor vehicle incidents. A quick conversation of goals on scene will likely enhance safety at most common accidents where a formal incident command is not routinely used.

[.2019 Vehicle Fatalities Report](#)



Firefighter Tyler Hunt stands out in the new high visibility jacket!

KITCHEN TABLE TRAINING

by Greg Stelter

Typically the fire stations would be filled with kids on field trips in the month of October. We would be teaching them about fire safety and they would have an opportunity to look inside the trucks and ambulances. But not this year.

The U.S. Fire Service uses October to focus on the important task of educating children about Fire Safety. But are we missing other at-risk groups?

In a report from the the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) *Home Fire Victims by Age Gender*, published in 2018, death and injury data show that children below the age of 5 are at lower risk of fire death than people over 45. "To effectively reduce fire deaths and injuries, attention must be focused on the groups with the largest number of casualties."

The largest number of deaths in a single age group was among people 55 to 64. Twelve percent of the populations is in that age group.

For firefighters:

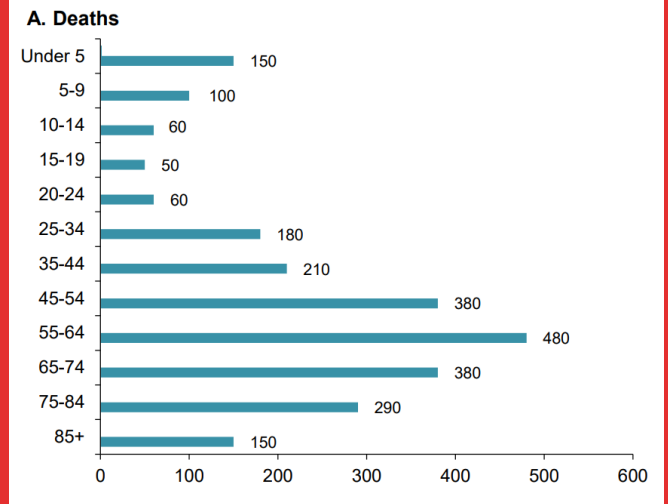
- Heighten your observations when you enter the homes of citizens in the community. Along with checking smoke detectors, do you see fire hazards, limited egress, or other risks?
- Can these risks be reduced by a conversation with the resident, or by offering assistance in correcting a simple hazard?
- Fire prevention isn't just about reducing the life and property loss risks of other people. It is about managing OUR risks. Every fire that we don't go to gives us one less exposure to mechanical or chemical injury. It is the accumulation of these exposures over time that causes Firefighter injury, illness or death.

For community members. FEMA has a number of great Fire Safety Checklists to help you make your home safer:

- For caregivers of older adults, you can find the [checklist here](#).
- Homeowners and renters [checklist here](#).
- Homes with babies and toddlers [checklist here](#).
- Some things to consider: Smoke Alarms, Cooking Safety, Smoking Safety, Heating Safety, Escape Plan, Carbon Monoxide Alarms, and Electrical and Appliance Safety.

For more facts about fire, watch this [short video](#).

Home fire deaths by age group 2011-2015 annual averages



Can everyone get out?

Make sure people who use a wheelchair or a cane can get to them and get out quickly. Tell them to keep glasses or hearing aids next to the bed.



Can everyone hear the alarm?

If not, consider another type of smoke alarm – like one that has a different sound or one that comes with a bed shaker or strobe light.



Have a fire escape plan.

Very young children will need you to get them to safety in a fire. If your alarm sounds, take action immediately.

METRICS MATTER

by MJ VanGompel, Management Analyst

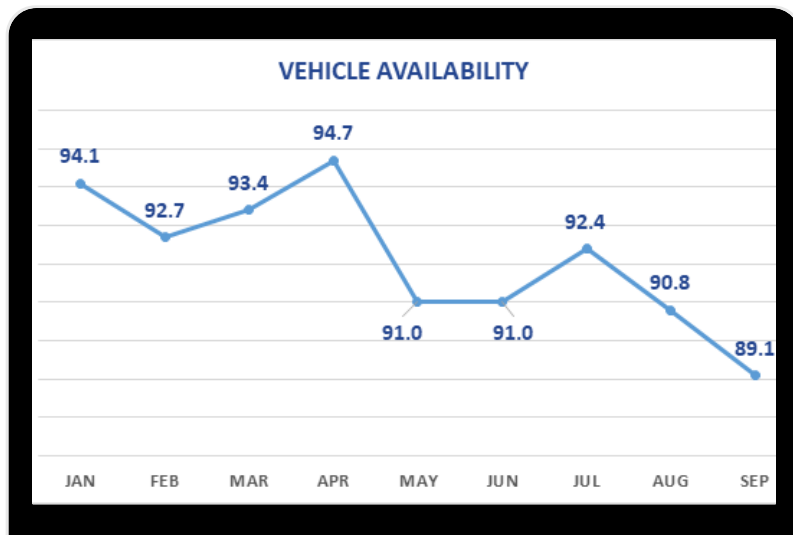
Each year the Fire Department identifies “Key Performance Indicators” (KPI’s). A KPI helps evaluate the success of a program or initiative with a set of quantifiable measures and supports our City of Oshkosh Strategic Plan. In 2019 the Oshkosh Fire Department (OFD) identified the following KPI’s for 2020:

- Front-line vehicles will be in service above 90% of the time
- Response time within the City of Oshkosh for emergency calls will be under 6 minutes 90% of the time.
- Ambulance unit hour utilization will be below 24%
- We will participate in 90% of requests for public education
- Personnel will complete 80% of their training hours identified in the Training Plan

Each month I would like to provide you with more information about one of our KPI’s. What does it mean? Why is it important? Why do we measure this?

This month I’d like to talk about vehicle availability. The Oshkosh Fire Depart (OFD) has 37 vehicles located at 6 stations across the City of Oshkosh. Of those 37 vehicles, 18 are considered “front line”. Front line vehicles are those that are deployed to the incident and are able to provide service, for example an ambulance or a fire engine. Examples of vehicles utilized but not considered ‘frontline’ are:

- The Public Education Van which travels to schools providing training for children and others;
- The reserve ambulance or engine used to temporarily replace an 'Out of Service' (OOS) vehicle; and
- The vehicles used to conduct investigations and inspections.



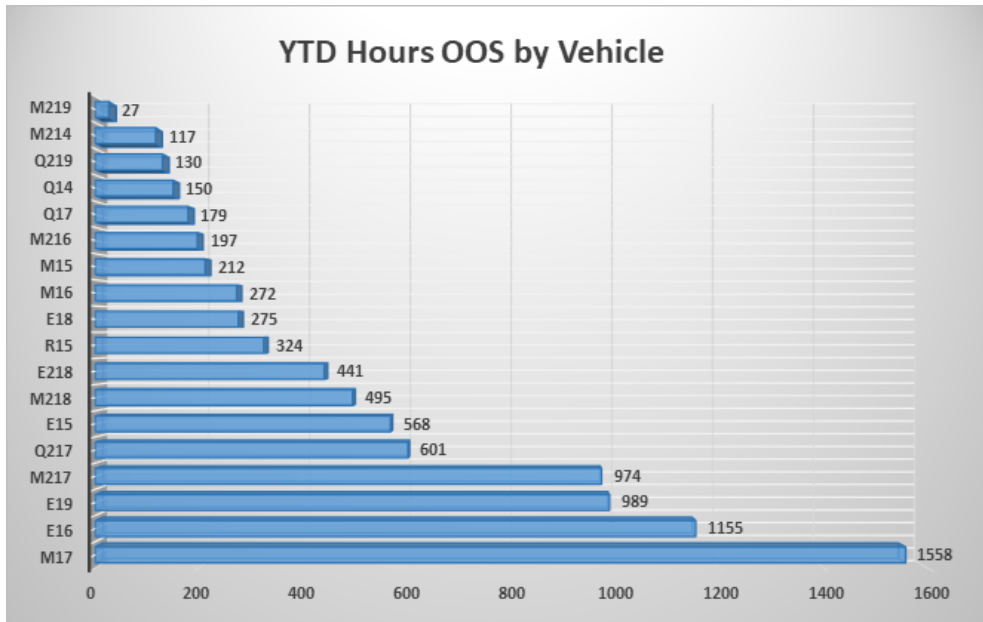
When a ‘frontline’ vehicle is pulled out of service for preventive maintenance or to make a repair, it is typically sent to the City of Oshkosh Central Garage. In some cases, it may require special services and the vehicle is sent to a specialty service provider. When the frontline vehicle is pulled OOS it will be temporarily replaced by a reserve vehicle so that service to the community is never at risk. Tracking OOS data is important in that it helps us identify when a vehicle may need to be replaced. Typically, an ambulance should be replaced every 3 years; a fire engine every 10 years

Our goal is to stay above 90% availability for frontline vehicles. As you can see from the chart above, we have met that standard 8 of the 9 months. In September our availability dropped just below 90%.

continued on page 6

METRICS MATTER *continued from page 5*

When we start looking at individual vehicles, we can see from this chart, that the vehicle with the most OOS hours is M17. M being a medical unit (ambulance) and 17 indicating that it is located at Station 17. New trucks replacing Engines 15 and 19 will be arriving this fall.



Next month I'll report out on response time and tell you a bit more about our soon to arrive Oshkosh Fire Department dashboard.

BLUE CARD TRAINING

This month our Captains completed the rigorous Blue Card Incident Command course. Their achieving this certification is quite an accomplishment. It will better prepare them to be in command of large incidents.

Congratulations and well done!



LET'S CONNECT



OCTOBER 2020



673 EMS Calls



87 Fire Calls



440 Inspections