



# HOT TOPICS

Oshkosh Fire Department

Learn the  
**Sounds**  
of Fire Safety



## CHIEF'S CORNER



I know it's disheartening. As a community we faced the threat of COVID-19 head on. We made impactful changes to our lifestyle. Our businesses were affected; our children were too. Friends and family were lost.

Many people did the things we were supposed to do. The positive case count came down. We thought we had turned the corner. The virus was in our rearview mirror. But now, we are faced with the Delta variant.

I know it's not fair. I know COVID fatigue is real. I know mask fatigue is too. We are tired. We are stressed. We are worried.

But what we are not, is alone. We have each other. We have friends and family. We may have a priest, pastor or rabbi. We have access to mental health clinicians. We do not have to bear the burden on our own. Reach out. Don't struggle in silence.

As a community, we will get through this. Stay strong. Stay resilient. Stay healthy. Get vaccinated.

--Chief Mike Stanley

## FIRE PREVENTION WEEK

by John Holland, Public Information

In a fire, time is of the essence. According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) once your smoke alarm goes off, you may have as little as 2 minutes to safely get out.

Fire Prevention Week is October 3-9 and the theme this year is "Learn the Sounds of Fire Safety."

When an alarm sounds in your home, do you know which alarm it is? Is it the smoke alarm or carbon monoxide (CO) alarm? Is it an emergency or are the batteries dying? Has your alarm reached the end of its lifespan?

If an alarm is sounding with longer beeps that continue, it is more than likely your smoke alarm is going off because smoke is in your home. Do not walk through your house trying to figure out what is going on. Get out and call 9-1-1 immediately.

If you hear short beeps that continue, it is more than likely your CO alarm going off. That means there is poisonous gas in your home. Again, get out and call 9-1-1 immediately.

*(Continued on page 2)*

## FIRE PREVENTION WEEK *(Continued from page 1)*

These are the most common ways that alarms will sound. The only sure way to know what your alarms sound like are to test them every month and make sure everyone in the home knows what that sound means. If you haven't tested them regularly, you may want to mark your calendar as a reminder.

Now, if your alarm is making a very short chirping noise, stops, and then chirps again after a minute or so, that means your batteries are almost out of power and need to be replaced. To avoid the chirping annoyance from happening in the middle of the night, change your batteries at least once a year -- before they run out.

Multiple chirps that stop and then resume after a few minutes tell you that your alarm has reached the end of its life span and needs to be replaced. Smoke and CO alarms do not last forever. Smoke alarms need to be replaced every 10 years and CO alarms every seven years. At a bare minimum there should be smoke and CO alarms on every level of your home, including the basement. NFPA recommends a smoke alarm in every bedroom.

Are there hearing impaired people in your home?

Smoke alarms and alert devices are available for people who are deaf or hard of hearing. Strobe lights flash when the smoke alarm sounds and lights warn people of a possible fire. When people who are deaf are asleep, a pillow or bed shaker can wake them so they can escape. The shaker is activated by the sound of a smoke alarm. Research the products and select the ones that best meet your needs.

You can find this equipment at most home improvement store websites or Google strobe light smoke alarms. BRK/First Alert, Gentex, and Kidde brands offer these types of smoke alarms. Smoke alarm accessories such as pillow or bed shakers, transmitters, and receivers can be found at either: [silentcall.com](http://silentcall.com), [safeawake.com](http://safeawake.com), or [lifetonesafety.com](http://lifetonesafety.com).

Choose devices that have the label of a recognized testing laboratory.

The NFPA website has a wealth of information including fire safety tip sheets in other languages.

Visit: <https://www.nfpa.org/Public-Education/Teaching-tools/Safety-tip-sheets/Easy-to-read-handouts-in-other-languages>

### Fire Prevention Month Activities

- Our annual Detector Trek will be taking place October 5, 6, and 7th. We'll be in a south-side neighborhood between Witzel and 9th Avenue.
- School Visits: The calendar is already starting to fill up. Call now to schedule your visit.
- Our 5th Grade Poster Contest is back. The winner from each school will get a ride to school in a fire truck and a ride in a truck in the Holiday Parade.

# STRATEGIC PLANNING

by MJ VanGompel, Management Analyst

This November, the Oshkosh Fire Department (OFD) will begin our strategic planning process. What we hope to accomplish over those three days is:

- Identify who we are;
- identify our strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities;
- re-visit our mission, vision and values;
- identify where we want to be; and
- establish goals for the next 5 years.

We will gather input from our community stakeholders on November 9. This group will include people and agency representatives in the community with whom we interact and serve.

A diverse cross-section of our department members will participate to represent the internal stakeholders. We would like to include people from all shifts, station, ranks and seniority.

Strategic planning is just the beginning. This is your chance to have input on the future of OFD.



The Center for Public Safety Excellence (CPSE) will be facilitating and documenting along the way. The output of our meetings will be a dynamic guide that we will use to help us achieve our goal of this future vision. The bulk of the work will then begin.

OFD leadership is committed to transparent communication and regular updates regarding the strategic planning efforts. Our greatest resources are people; there's a seat at the table for you. Take part in the process to work towards solutions to achieve our goals. If you are interested in participating in this process, please follow the instructions in Serial memo 202182 sent by Chief Stanley on August 30.



Center for  
Public Safety  
Excellence

**Due date for consideration is  
October 4 at 5:00 p.m.**

## WHAT'S NEW

The Oshkosh Fire Department cannot add new firefighters to our team without first finding qualified applicants. To be hired by the department a number of steps must be successfully completed. One of these is passing the Candidate Physical Ability Test (CPAT). This standardized test indicates that someone is physically capable of performing essential firefighting tasks.

To best prepare candidates for the CPAT, the Oshkosh Fire Department worked with the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh's Kinesiology and Athletic Training Department to develop a new program. UW-Oshkosh's team has developed a low cost training program specifically tailored to successfully completing the CPAT. A fitness coach will work with candidates to develop individualized workouts and meet with them to train them in the weeks leading up to the test. The Oshkosh Fire Department is very excited about this collaboration.

We are grateful to Dr. Dan Schmidt and his team for their responsive and innovative ideas in addressing this need.

Together, we can best help prepare candidates to achieve their dreams of becoming a firefighter with the Oshkosh Fire Department.



A big thank you to everyone that participated in the 2021 Sole Burner and to everyone that supported the City of Oshkosh team. Our team of 12 raised \$870 in donations for the American Cancer Society (ACS). Our goal was to defeat the City of Appleton by creating the largest team and raising the most money. Even though we lost on both accounts, ACS was a winner!! The City of Appleton had 23 walkers and raised \$1,249 in donations.

A re-match is scheduled for Saturday, May 7, 2022. Put it on your calendar now!



UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN  
OSHKOSH

More information about the Candidate Physical Ability Test (CPAT) can be found at <https://www.iafc.org/topics-and-tools/safety-health/wellness-fitness-task-force/candidate-physical-ability-test>





Lieutenant Jason Shikoski



Jordan Olson, Matt VanZeeland, Joe Rathsack and Cole Berendsen read several of the names of firefighters who died on 9/11/2001

## WHAT'S NEW

After almost 25 years with the Oshkosh Fire Department, Lieutenant Jason Shikoski is making a change. Originally from Fond du Lac and now living outside of Green Bay, Lt. Shikoski is temporarily leaving Engine 15 for an interim position in training beginning September 13. He will be responsible for training the next regional fire academy in addition to developing and delivering incumbent fire fighter training.

Jason is looking forward to a new challenge. "Every day you walk in the door is different. You need to be prepared for anything," said the dad of three children and volunteer fire fighter for New Franken. Jason prepared himself for this role by completing the ESI certificate training.

"Jason will bring his knowledge, enthusiasm, and love for firefighting to this position. I look forward to seeing how he can help shape the department through training our members," said Chief Stanley.



## WE WILL NEVER FORGET

On September 11, several members of the Oshkosh Fire Department participated in a somber remembrance ceremony at the Winnebago County Courthouse. The memorial honored 50 of the 2,983 people who were killed on September 11, 2001 at the World Trade Center towers, the Pentagon, American Airlines Flight 11 and Flight 77, United Airlines Flight 175 and Flight 93.

The events of September 11, 2001, changed the lives of victims' families and friends, survivors, first responders, rescue and recovery workers, volunteers, and millions of Americans and people around the world. Today, the legacy of the attacks continues to affect foreign policy, national security, civic discourse, airline security, building safety, the law, and countless individual lives. The attacks also provide numerous examples of individuals helping others in whatever ways they could, often at the expense of their own safety, under difficult circumstances. We will never forget.

# MEDICAL DIRECTOR MINUTE

by Dr. Kerry Ahrens

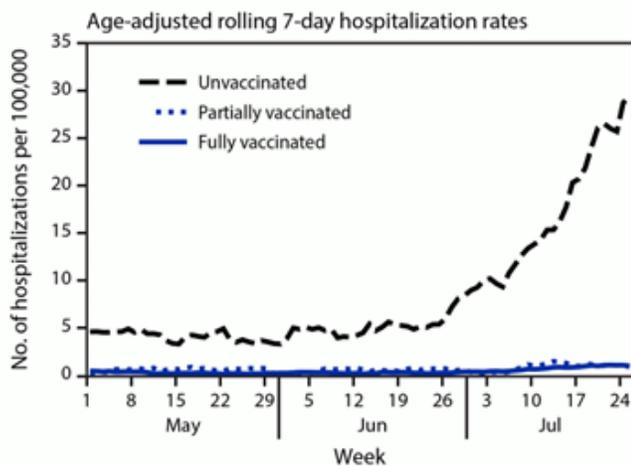
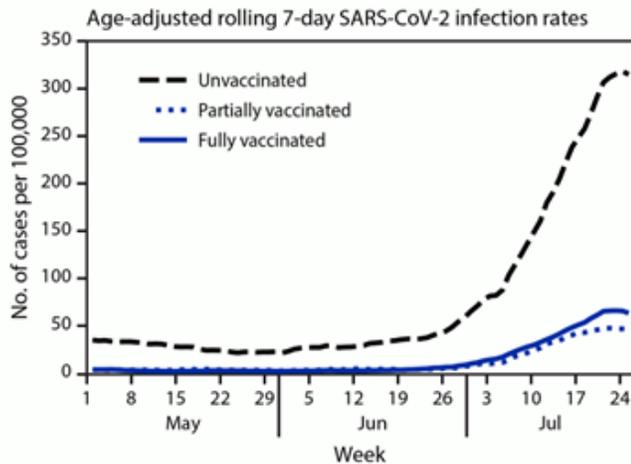


Ok, this month's article is probably more than a minute.....

Guess what? It's time to discuss vaccinations...again. Why? Because it continues to be an on-going debate and on the horizon the CDC is now talking about yet another COVID-19 vaccine: the booster.

We have had months of data to draw from to evaluate the efficacy of this vaccine. I will be discussing efficacy in terms of preventing spread, infection, hospitalization, and death from COVID-19 infections.

To date, more than 5.52 billion vaccine doses have been administered worldwide; in the USA 62% have received 1 dose, 53% the second\*1. From January 2021 through July 22, 2021 98% of COVID-19 cases occurred among people who were not fully vaccinated\*2. There is still a percentage of people who have not yet been vaccinated and those who may be concerned about getting a possible booster in the near future. If this describes you and you are unsure, I find that data often sheds light on how to make the best decision.



In the August 27 weekly issue of the CDC Morbidity & Mortality Report, infections and hospitalizations were studied for LA County.\*3 Between May 1 and July 25, of this year 43,127 infected people age 16 or older were evaluated; 25.3% were in fully vaccinated people (vaccines do not prevent infection but do decrease the severity and often duration of illness); vs 71.4% of infections in unvaccinated patients. Of those, here are the comparisons between groups:

- Hospitalizations: vaccinated 3.2% vs 7.6%,
- ICU admissions 0.5% vs 1.5%.

The graphs of data from this article depict this beautifully.

When I see duplications of admission data of vaccinated versus unvaccinated hospitalizations in various hospitals nationwide, it leads me to deduce that this data is valid and believable. It is not fake news.

What about breakthrough infections? Are the vaccines effective? According to a Mayo Clinic study, the answer is 'yes'. They compared the Pfizer and Moderna vaccine efficacy for breakthrough infections\*4 Mayo drew its data from multiple Mayo sites in Florida, Arizona, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Iowa, pooled cohorts of vaccinated and unvaccinated patients who had positive COVID-19 tests (data matched on age, sex, race, history of prior COVID testing, and date of full vaccination).

The data showed when the Alpha variant was prevalent, Pfizer was 76% effective preventing infection and 85% preventing hospitalization; the Moderna 86% and 91.6% respectively. This dipped a bit in July when Delta became the dominant variant as Pfizers efficacy at preventing infection dipped to 42%, Moderna 76%. This paper did not provide hospitalization data for this cohort. In short, the vaccine has become less effective over time. It's unclear if it's due to waning immunity or the genetic differences in the future variants making the vaccine less effective. Stay tuned as more data is generated.

The data for vaccination for COVID-19 is not always clear, but here is the take home message:

**An unvaccinated person is:**

- 7x more likely to test positive for COVID-19,
- 49x more likely to be hospitalized; and
- 32x more likely to die from COVID-19 than those vaccinated\*5.

If you are one of the unvaccinated, strongly consider this data. Do not be the one regretting your decision not to be vaccinated upon your hospital admission for COVID-19.

References

1. <https://ourworldindata.org/covid-vaccinations>. Accessed 9/7/2021.
2. Wisconsin DHS. <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/variants.htm>. Accessed 9/7/2021
3. Griffin et al. SARS-CoV-2 Infections and Hospitalizations Among Persons Aged  $\geq 16$  Years, by Vaccination Status - Los Angeles County, California, May 1-July 25, 2021. Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. US Department of Health and Human Services/Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Vol 70(34). Aug 27, 2021.
4. Puranik et al. Comparison of two highly-effective mRNA vaccines for COVID-19 during periods of Alpha and Delta variant prevalence. \*publication in print; peer review pending.
5. <https://publichealthinsider.com/2021/09/03/new-data-dashboard-tracks-covid-19-risk-for-unvaccinated-people-compared-to-vaccinated-people/>. Accessed September 7, 2021. Regretting your decision not to be vaccinated upon your hospital admission for COVID-19.



**YOU  
STOP THE  
SPREAD**

# REGIONAL COVID-19 VACCINE TOUR



**Free vaccine.**

**Just walk in!**

**No Identification required.**

**No Insurance Required.**

**Available to anyone 12 years & up.**

**Pfizer, Moderna, and Johnson & Johnson vaccines.**

**(All vaccines subject to availability)**

**Every  
Tuesday,  
Wednesday  
& Thursday!**

## **TUESDAYS**

**9:30am-12:30pm**

**Oshkosh Public Library**

106 Washington Ave, Oshkosh

**2:30-5:30pm**

**Fox Crossing Fire Department**

1326 Cold Spring Road, Neenah

## **WEDNESDAYS**

**9:30am-12:30pm**

**Black Creek Fire Department**

W5200 County Road B, Black Creek

**2:30-5:30pm**

**Shiocton-Bovina Fire Department**

W7740 Pine Street, Shiocton

## **THURSDAYS**

**9:30am-5:30pm**

**St. Martin Lutheran Church**

717 Memorial Drive, Chilton

(Moderna not available at this location.)



**Public Health**

**BROUGHT TO YOU BY:**

Calumet County Public Health

Outagamie County Health Dept

Winnebago County Health Dept

Wisconsin Army National Guard

**[WWW.WCVACCINE.ORG/REGIONALTOUR](http://WWW.WCVACCINE.ORG/REGIONALTOUR)**

# EVERYONE GOES HOME

by Lieutenant Drew Jaeger

This month I'd like to talk about Life Safety Initiative #13, psychological support. The Oshkosh Fire Department (OFD) has renewed its commitment to improving support by hosting a guest speaker as well as training additional members to our peer support CAPS team. This past week, CAPS team members visited each firehouse to remind members to stay vigilant about stress management and reinforce that they remain a confidential resource for member support.

The fire service and counseling professionals continue to learn more about the importance of mental health to overall wellness. The stigma of mental health related issues is a barrier that I believe our country is on the cusp of dramatically reframing. These issues have received an overwhelming amount of recent media coverage from Olympic athletes, to the need for children to have the social support and interaction that in-person schooling provides. Mental health professionals noted that the pandemic has left many people experiencing some PTSD symptoms.

The link below from Resource Hub for First Responders has some interesting information on this topic:  
[https://www.firstrespondercenter.org/resource-hub/?\\_sft\\_category=behavioral-health](https://www.firstrespondercenter.org/resource-hub/?_sft_category=behavioral-health)

We are lucky to have a combination of junior members who recognize the value in peer support, and experienced senior members who have supported not only our department, but departments around the state after incidents and line of duty deaths. Whether you talk to a member of the CAPS team, your company officer, or just a trusted partner to share your challenges, please do not struggle alone. We also have access to several types of mental health professional support, including EAP and IAFF Centers of Excellence.

Behavioral health is more than a diagnosis or a condition. Whether your situation is one that just needs the ear of a friend, learning new methods of stress reduction, a professional counselor, medications or substance abuse support, these are things that can improve. YOU ARE NOT ALONE!

## Crisis Intervention for First Responders



Check out this great video from Lexipol !



# PATIENT OUTCOMES

by EMS Battalion Chief Chuck Hable



One of the goals I have in EMS is to provide better feedback to our personnel on patient outcomes, both in trends of our patient care, and also in individual cases. The EMS Coordinators have been instrumental in improving our QA process. We are using the information to learn about our strengths and weaknesses, plan future training, and make adjustments to our operations to improve our efficiency.

Our improvement in gathering this information has yielded some exciting information about cardiac arrests that I am pleased to share with you.

## 2020 Cardiac Arrest data

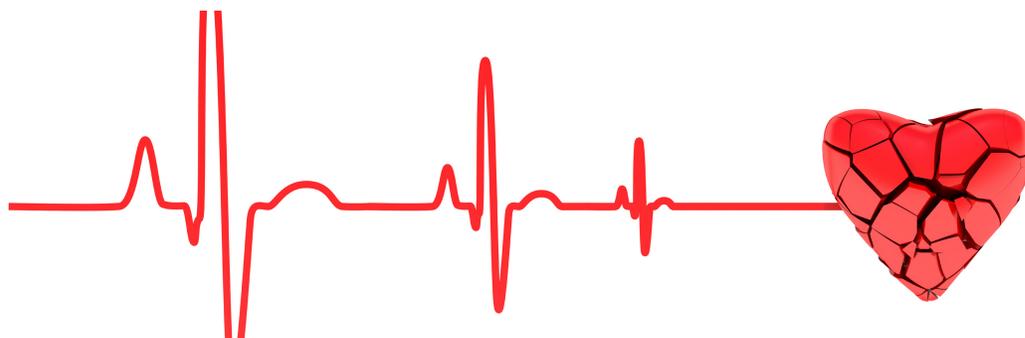
We responded to 79 cardiac arrests in 2020. Five of those were traumatic in nature and so are not included in the numbers below. These numbers do not include 'DOAs.'

- 31 of our patients regained a pulse for more than 20 minutes. That's 41.9%. The state average is 32.8%, and the national average is 27.1%
- 25 patients survived to hospital admission (33.8% OFD, 28.1% State, 24% National)
- 10 patients survived to hospital discharge (13.5% OFD, 12.1% State, 9% National)
- Nine patients left the hospital with good neurological status (12.2% OFD, 9.8% State, 7.1% National)
- For patients who had bystanders perform CPR, the survival rate was 67% (50.7% State, 33% National).

Goals to improve cardiac outcomes:

- Train more people in the community to perform Hands Only CPR and use public access defibrillators;
- Work with the 911 Center to have Hands Only CPR instructions given after rigs are dispatched; and
- Help law enforcement to understand their responses to cardiac arrests

How can we help improve patient outcomes? If you have an idea on how we might better improve our response and care to cardiac arrest patients, please share them with your EMS Coordinator or myself.



# BUDGETING

by MJ VanGompel, Management Analyst

Ah yes ... you do it at home and we do it here at work. That thing we do ... budgeting. Each department within the City of Oshkosh budgets every year; for some of the non-finance people, it's like going to the dentist. You have to do it and hopefully you make it out without a lot of pain.

This year we did things a little differently. Although it took a bit longer, we hope in the long run it will be much easier to go through this process in the future. The BC's were asked to create a request for each item they needed for their programs. All requests were collected and tabulated to create a MASTER LIST. Then we totaled it all up and realized we needed to prioritize the requests into buckets of 'must have', 'would like to have', 'can wait until next year.' The key question was, "What do we really need?"

From utilities, pay, benefits, annual software costs to radios and new mattresses, each item was evaluated. Some requested items went to capital requests because of the value and length of time the product will last (i.e., hose). We thought we may be able to get grant money for battery operated Holmatro Tools. Each request was thoughtfully evaluated.

We also needed to factor in the cost for repairs. Expenditures for broken equipment eats into money for the things we would like to buy. So if a ladder is damaged, or a radio is dropped it affects the things we can do as a department. Even though we budget to the best of our ability, we can't plan for the water heater that goes out or the refrigerator that breaks down or the lock that needs to re-programmed.

The budgeting process started back in June and by the time we get to the finale it will be the end of November with the new budget beginning in January. The next step will be a review with the City Manager and Finance Team who will also be reviewing the requests from OPD, Public Works, Parks and all the other city departments. After the City Manager has met with each department, a draft combined budget will be presented to City Council. Through a series of budget workshops that happen over the next few months, the Council will make decisions about the City budget.



CNVFILLM FF1

 **City of Oshkosh**  
**Guiding Principles**

- Can Do Spirit
- Accountable
- Transparent
- Engaging
- Economical
- Responsive
- Innovative
- Equitable
- Inclusive

23 ▶ CANVA STORIES

As a department we are guided by the City of Oshkosh principals. We hold ourselves accountable to the highest standard to preserve the public trust and and act in a fiscally responsible manner on behalf of our citizens.

I hope after you have read this article you have a better understanding of the budgeting process at the City of Oshkosh.



# FOCUS ON THE GOOD

by Lt. Jason Shikoski

On August 17th, 18th and 19th CAPS Team members made the rounds of all the fire stations to talk about what we have to offer you or a family member. I hope you were able to take away an idea or two from one of these meetings. If you need anything, do not hesitate to reach out.

When I spoke to station 15 personnel, one of the things that I mentioned is that it is a good idea to have a “go to person” in your life that you can confide to; a person that will be there for you and that you can de-stress to. That person could be a member of the CAPS Team, but it could be someone else.

My go to person is my wife, Natalie. Most of you have never met my wife, but the easiest way to describe her is that she is a female version of Mr. Rogers. She is one of the most caring individuals I have ever met in my entire life; I don't recall her ever saying a cross word about anyone.

The one thing that I have heard her say over and over again is, “Focus On the Good”. It's her catch phrase in life. She is the type of person that can find reasons to be grateful in some of the most tragic situations. When I've de-stressed to her about someone's untimely death in the past, she's always lifted up my spirits by having me focus on what our efforts were to help save that person or perhaps the lives that the person may save through an organ donation program. It can be difficult at times to find good in some of the situations that we are exposed to, but if you concentrate on the good instead of the bad, you'll find it.

It doesn't take long to find tragedy on TV or controversy on social media, but most everything that is out there has a positive note to it. One of the reoccurring topics in our station visits was that the masking requirements were being brought back. When I found out we were going back to wearing masks on a regular basis again I may have expressed my frustrations to my go to person and when I did she found the good in it by reminding me that many people would be grateful to have the employment that we enjoy. Solid pay, benefits, a retirement program that allows us to possibly retire at only 50 (that's a number that creeps up on you faster than I thought it would).

If I have to wear a mask now and again so I can enjoy the bigger picture of life and be grateful for it, so be it. Some days and/or moments can be tough, but it really is a great idea to find a person in your life that lifts you up when you are down. Life is short, yet the beauty of it is out there if you look for it. Take care of yourself and take care of others.



Natalie & Jason in Colorado on their honeymoon.

## LET'S CONNECT

