



THE RURAL HITCH

FOURTH QUARTER 2014

**A publication of
Lakes Region
Mutual Fire Aid
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Deputy Shawn Riley “2014 Employee of the Year”

At the December 12, 2014 City of Laconia employee holiday luncheon, Deputy Shawn Riley was presented with the Employee of the Year award. Following his nomination, a review committee looked at his and other nominations, then chose Deputy Riley for this honor. The following is the nomination letter that was submitted to the committee for their consideration.

Shawn Riley serves as the Deputy Fire Chief of Emergency Medical Services, a job he has held since coming here from the City of Concord Fire Department in January of 2008 (almost 7 years). Deputy Riley was the first member of the fire department to hold the position of EMS Deputy. His dedicated work to the City of Laconia and ability to be a strong liaison to outside agencies, including other fire and EMS services, Lakes Region General Healthcare, and multiple State of NH boards and commissions has bolstered the positive image and reputation of the fire department and the city as a whole. In 2013 he completed an MBA from New England College.

Two years ago, the EMT-Intermediates within the department were instructed by the State of NH EMS Bureau that they would have to transition to Advanced EMT or risk losing their required EMS license status. This put a tremendous amount of stress on many of our employees. Deputy Riley worked tirelessly to administer training classes and educational reviews to assist the members in their studies. With his help, all members of the department needing this transition successfully passed the required test.

Annually, Deputy Riley administers the paramedic and Advanced EMT refresher training programs, which is approximately 48 hours of continuing education, each fall. This is not only done for Laconia Fire, but also for surrounding communities' departments. In Laconia, Deputy Riley conducts multiple CPR classes for many of the city departments.

Deputy Riley also served as the city's health officer for many years. This was completely new to the fire department, but he was able to make it successful. This success was primarily because his willingness to immerse himself in learning the job, and because he was enthusiastic about making the necessary connections with the community to provide them with a much-needed service.

I am nominating Deputy Riley because of his hard work and dedication to the Laconia Fire Department in helping make us the best department we can be and leading us in providing the citizens and visitors of Laconia with the best emergency medical care we can administer.

Kirk Beattie
Assistant Fire Chief
Laconia Fire Department



We would like to take this opportunity to offer our sincere condolences to Deputy Riley on the recent loss of his wife, Stephanie Murdough Riley.

We also offer our condolences to the Warren Fire Department on the passing of Captain Allen Sprague, Department member for 11 years.



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From the Chief...

By Chief James R. Hayes



2014 is already a memory and how fast it passed us by! Despite that, a great deal of things occurred this past year. You should recall from previous editions of the *Rural Hitch* that we have had some personnel changes to both the fulltime and part-time staff. We are currently at full staff with the career personnel and will begin training a few new part-timers in the next month or so.

We have been using the new CAD system for a full year now and believe we have a good grasp on using that system. New data is still being added as communities provide it to the Communications Center. There are still some operational issues being worked on that will ultimately allow us to provide you with better dispatch information. Two communities are taking advantage of the incident data downloads to their FireHouse Incident Reporting system. If you have any questions about this, please contact the Communications Center and we will get you the information you need.

We are continuing to tweak the simulcast system to improve the quality of the radio signal. Soon we will be relocating the low band transmit antenna on Mt. Belknap to a higher location on the tower and, hopefully, this will provide improvement in some of those areas that have been weak and distorted. Remember, simulcast does not improve the signal being generated by field units, portables or mobile. If the dispatchers are not answering your radio transmission, it is because they are not receiving it. Use a mobile radio whenever possible.

The Orbicom radio dispatch console equipment we currently using is being replaced with a new Zetron Max dispatch console. The current system has become operationally unstable and no longer has technical support from the manufacturer. An attempt to obtain a grant to replace the equipment was unsuccessful. The Board of Directors was in agreement that the replacement of the system was of utmost importance and voted to use a combination of reserve funds and a commercial bank loan to purchase the new system. The new equipment has been received and is in the process of being configured and staged for installation. Early February is the expected installation time frame for the new radio dispatch console.

During the month of December we were awarded a Homeland Security Grant that will allow LRMFA to enhance its radio system by connecting to a microwave system operated by the Belknap County Sheriff's Department. This will enable the secondary bases at three additional sites to be controlled directly. This provides a backup dispatch circuit if simulcast is not operational and it provides greater flexibility for monitoring tactical channels as well.

As we move into the new year, we will continue to work on some of the projects identified in the Strategic Plan adopted by the Board of Directors this past year in an effort to make our organization stronger and the services we provide better.

The Staff at LRMFA wish you all the best as we end one year and begin a new one!!

THE RURAL HITCH

is published quarterly by
Lakes Region
Mutual Fire Aid Association

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Editor
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Email all submissions to:
debbiek@lrmfa.org

Featured department...

Warren Fire Department



Chief Dave Riel
Warren Fire Department

Address: PO Box 40
Warren, NH 03279
603-764-9604

Officers: Assistant Chief Arthur Heath
Deputy Don Bagley

Apparatus: 2 Engines
1 Tanker
1 Rescue

Warren, NH is a small town (pop. 896) located at the northwestern-most edge of the Lakes Region Mutual Fire Aid dispatch territory. Because of its location, the Warren Fire Department also belongs to Twin State Mutual Fire Aid, which dispatches for 22 towns, five of which are in Vermont.

The town is mainly forested with many ATV and snowmobile trails weaving through. These trails contribute to the workload of the fire department, resulting in many carry outs during the year.

The fire department enjoys the support of the residents at town meeting. With a yearly budget of \$35,000 the department has learned to make the most of every dollar they get. Their current rescue is an older vehicle but was purchased in Florida so is in very good condition. The tanker was built on a new chassis using parts from a previous tanker and one engine, which is in excellent shape, was purchased in Indiana for \$25,000 and driven back to NH. The

taxpayers have learned that the department doesn't ask for anything unless it really needs it!

In addition to tax monies, the department's biggest fundraiser is Warren's Old Home Day weekend where they offer a delicious chicken barbecue. (*Editor's note: I can vouch for this because I've had it!*) They participate in the parade and host a fishing derby. The department also serves food at the spring and fall fireworks events put on by the NH Pyrotechnic Association at Hildreth Dam.

Like all members of his department, Chief Dave Riel is a volunteer. There are sixteen active members along with three Explorers. The Chief echoed a sentiment heard many times before: volunteer departments are finding it increasingly difficult to maintain active members. Most people work outside of the town and, with long commutes, they are unable to respond to emergencies. The three Explorers have been a good addition to the department. What's interesting about these youngsters is they are not children of department members! All are seniors in high school and will probably continue on to the Academy.

Dave Riel comes from the Pittsfield Fire Department where his father was the assistant chief. Chief Riel moved to Warren in 1987 when he began working at the fish hatchery. In 1989 he was elected Chief. At that time the department had no gear other than hand-me-downs and there was no formal training program in place. Since then, Chief Riel has instituted a regular training schedule. Assistant Chief Arthur Heath handles most of the training and Deputy Don Bagley helps with the administrative work and is the liaison at Glenclyff Nursing Home located in Benton, which has no fire department. The department holds regular training sessions at the Glenclyff Home. EMS in the area is contracted to a private ambulance company



located just up the road from the fire department. It works closely with the fire department and is available 24/7.

The Warren Fire Department handles between 75 and 100 calls per year. The worst fire in recent history was in 2006 when the K.E. Witcher lumber mill on Route 25C burned. The insurance company had inspected the mill that same day. It was the first second alarm the Chief pulled.

On November 29, 1989 the department had to deal with a horrible accident where two NH State Troopers were killed by a speeding lumber truck. Chief Riel was first on scene and said it was something he'll never forget. Several people left the EMS service after.

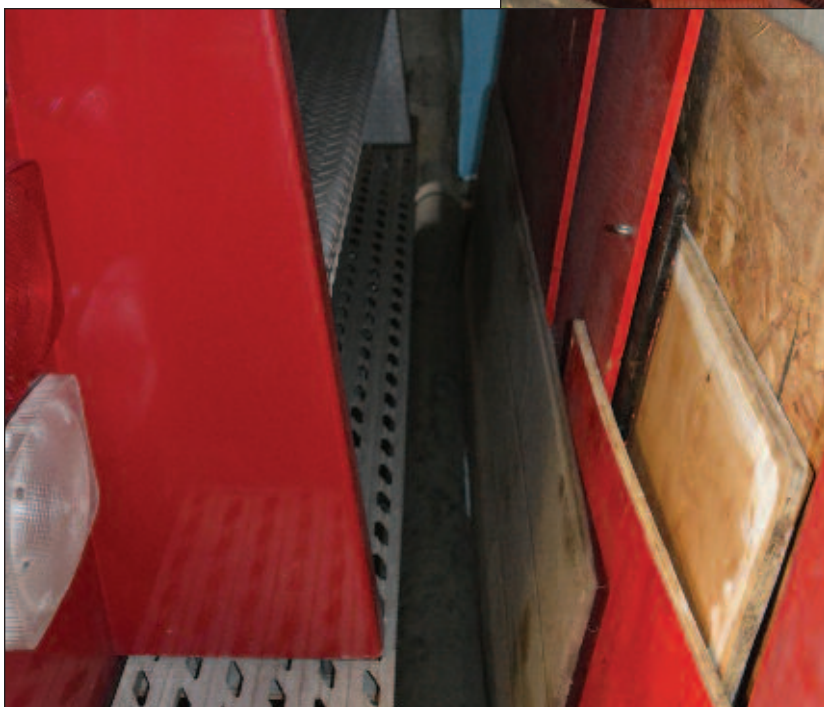
Chief Riel grew up in Pittsfield and moved to Warren for his job with NH Fish and Game. He and his wife of 34 years, Jenette, moved in and out of the house at the fish hatchery three times! He originally moved in in 1987. When the Berlin fish hatchery was closed, Riel was bumped from the Warren hatchery — so he moved out. He worked for a local chimney business for awhile. Then the hatchery was leased to a private concern — he moved back in! Several years later that business fell through — he moved out, and purchased the chimney business. Eventually the state reopened the hatchery, rehired Riel and — he



Warren Fire Department — the only department in the state with a Redstone rocket next door!

moved back in, which is where he is now. His son, David, 32, is a respiratory therapist at Dartmouth-Hitchcock; daughter Courtney, 30, is a barber in Fairlee, VT; and son Evan, 22, lives at home. Riel has two granddaughters.

The department holds its regular meetings on the second Thursday of the month and training on the fourth Thursday. 🚒



Above and left: Like many small-town departments, Warren Fire Department is dealing with tight quarters. However, they make it work!

Are You **SURE** You Want To Be In Command?

***“We’re fortunate we didn’t lose four firefighters that day...
and if things don’t change, we’re going to lose more...”***

By Billy Goldfeder
www.FireFighterCloseCalls.com

I remember years ago watching young firefighters in volunteer companies race to ride the front seat — after all, the radio, the sirens, and the horns were the priority. In career departments, firefighters would want to “ride up” when the Lieutenant or Captain had the day off, sometimes for the same reasons. I did both as many of you did — and do.

Be it the front seat or arriving in a car, the SUV or whatever, having command means you literally own that scene and you are responsible for everyone, everything, and anything that can happen. It’s no BS and serious, serious stuff. I’m not sure I can emphasize that any more than so many fire service writers have over so many years.

The first interesting transformation happens (hopefully) when firefighters go from firefighter to company officer and you have to deal with (as Chase Sargent says) the “Buddy to Boss” stuff. It’s a big deal.

Being an officer is not “easy” in career or volunteer departments. Actually, in particular, volunteer departments have the greater challenge because there is usually no first-line supervisor training, and you often end up being the boss over your own buddies, friends, pals, and relatives — all members of your VFD.

WHAT TRAINING WAS PROVIDED TO YOU OR DID YOU TAKE TO PREPARE YOU AND/OR QUALIFY YOU TO RIDE THE FRONT SEAT?

The next real interesting transformation (again, hopefully), is when a company officer goes from the front seat of the rig to the front seat of the chief’s car, chief SUV or whatever your command officers arrive in. You get elected. You get appointed. Whatever. Suddenly, you own that scene. It’s a huge deal. You are the bottom line of every aspect and action at that incident. You ARE command, control, accountability, and communication. Your “day” has come and hopefully, those before you have provided solid and verifiable training that is actually applicable to the job you now own — and the massive responsibility you now have.

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WHAT TRAINING WAS PROVIDED TO YOU OR DID YOU TAKE TO PREPARE YOU AND/OR QUALIFY YOU TO RESPOND AND OPERATE AS A COMMAND OFFICER OR, POTENTIALLY, AS THE INCIDENT COMMANDER?

When things go right — and hopefully they do purposely, it’s a good day — and that is what happens most days. Again, hopefully by design vs. “just because.”

However, when things go wrong on the fire or fire training ground, it can be life altering.

- **Life altering to civilians.**
- **Life altering to your firefighters.**
- **Life altering to you...which includes your family and friends around you.**

So many Chiefs and Firefighters that I work with following Line of Duty deaths essentially gauge their lives as “before” and “after” the death of their Firefighter. Life altering.

Take a few minutes to become very familiar with these two particular incidents involving the predictable and preventable Line of Duty deaths of two Firefighters.

THESE WERE NOT HEROIC DEATHS.

The first is the Line of Duty Death of Dallas (Texas) Firefighter in a multi-family building fire. If you have ever commanded (or dreamed of commanding) a fire, absolutely read this article — and the reports. It clearly identifies decisions by the incident commander as being critical factors leading to the death of a Firefighter.

“Rural Hitch” Available Electronically

If you would like to receive the *Rural Hitch* electronically (and save trees and postage!), please send your email to debbie@debbiekgraphics.com.

Feel free to share your electronic copy with others. We’ll add anyone to the email list who is interested in receiving the *Rural Hitch*.

CHECK THESE EXCERPTS OUT:

State and local investigative reports show that commanders' decisions were largely to blame for the death of a Dallas firefighter last year. A State Fire Marshal report found that the department's commanders failed to conduct proper risk assessment, supervise personnel adequately, and make the right decisions about how to battle the blaze and whether to search the buildings. The Dallas Fire-Rescue line-of-duty death report makes similar conclusions and details confusion that night between commanders as the building burned. It also gives conflicting accounts on what the commander on scene, Deputy Chief Bobby Ross, told crews to do.

The account of many firefighters on the scene matches what the fallen Firefighter's longtime friend, Jim Crump, a retired Dallas firefighter, had said early on in the investigation.

Crump said reading the report "made me want to cry." He said he believes Ross was careless and didn't follow procedures he had been taught.

"Regardless of how well-meaning he thought he was, he broke every rule that is established for a fire commander," Crump said. "And it cost a Firefighter his life."

"We're fortunate we didn't lose four firefighters that day".... "And if things don't change, we're going to lose more..."

The second is the Line of Duty death of a Fire Officer during "smoke diver" training...surrounded by firefighters, officers, and instructors — this Firefighter could have been saved — but wasn't.

CHECK THESE EXCERPTS OUT:

"Firefighter Neal Smith was almost out of the second floor of the six-story training tower when he became disoriented and fell to his knees. He was one of a few to clear a bunker with air left in his tank; others quickly depleted their supply as instructors, perched above the rafters, threw firecrackers and lassoed the trainees' air tanks with bungee cords. Trainees had to slide beneath a plywood plank screwed to the entryway 30 inches above the floor and conduct a counter-clockwise sweep of the room while keeping their right hands on a wall. Visibility was impaired by a fog machine and by a web of fire hoses and landscaping timbers hanging above a floor littered with golf balls and marbles.

Weighed down by 75 pounds worth of gear that included an air tank, mask, coat, and trousers still saturated with sweat from the previous day's exercises, trainees had to navigate their way through pallets, tires, metal pipes, and burned-out box springs to reach a 2-by-10 wooden box with one end propped up on a barrel. The men had to crawl through the box, which spilled out into a floored elevator shaft, and then crawl back through to continue the sweep.

Smith's teammate went through first. By the time Smith shimmied inside to look for the hypothetical victim, **his internal temperature was pushing 108 degrees**, and his brain was swelling. Instead of continuing the search when he crawled out of the box, he circled back in.

An instructor spent five minutes yelling at Smith to get out of the box and continue his search. Smith didn't make it far: At a 55-gallon drum only a few feet from the box, Smith dropped to his knees. The instructor yelled at Smith to move. When that didn't work, the instructor ordered Smith's teammate "to go

around him"...he turned and saw the reflective tape on Smith's helmet. **There was no movement.**

The teammate made it out to the second floor landing when the call went out:

Mayday. Mayday. Mayday.

FIREFIGHTER DOWN!!!!

They administered CPR, then tried a defibrillator, but Smith's skin, slick with sweat and hot to the touch, prevented a connection. Ten minutes later, an ambulance rushed Smith to the emergency room. Doctors swathed Smith's overheated body in ice packs and cooling blankets. They cranked up cooling fans and shot him up with cold liquids. None of it would save his life.

At the end of the two-day course with 22 trainees, 13 completed the course, two students had washed out, two others went to the hospital, and four students did not return for the second day, saying they had safety concerns or the course wasn't as advertised. **And Smith was dead.**

According to the subsequent investigations, what may have saved him — or at least increased his odds — was one very simple thing: a tub of ice water at the scene.

(Below are links to the reports and related media articles.)

PLEASE take some time to read the entire articles and the related reports. If these reports do anything, they remind us that, like every firefighter, training as a command officer never stops. Actually — it has to START. What training do your officers receive to ride the front seat? To arrive first, size up, and make immediate decisions?

What are the continuing education and training courses made available to your officers? Everyday is a training day...from reading, reviewing, studying, simulators, hands-on, live drills or whatever, the "coaching staff" of the fire department's responsibility to take care of their "players" is never ending — it's a massive responsibility — and it is not for everyone.


These reports also remind us of our total no BS responsibility to take care of our people in what can certainly be tough conditions...but that is our 24/7/365 commitment and responsibility. While our people operate in tough conditions, and just like we expect them to perform as expected operating "interior," they must be able to expect and count on us on the outside, in command roles, to do what we must do to take care of them.

And lastly, these reports remind us that in 2014, people are asking questions, families want to know, investigations are conducted, and attorneys are lined up to help them determine the truth on how and why their loved ones died. They are asking you. Your Officers. Your Chiefs. Your Commissioners.

Command is nothing new in the fire service. However, the defined responsibility, the tasks, complexity, and expectations have evolved over the years into what we know of today as an extremely intense role requiring training and skills like never before.

Need more proof? Seriously?

REPORTS AND ARTICLE LINKS:

<http://www.firefighterclosecalls.com/news/fullstory/newsid/212355> 

Thanksgiving Storm Impact On the Communication Center

Here are some statistics highlighting how the Thanksgiving 2014 snow storm impacted the LRMFA system:

- Between November 26 at 1200 hours and November 27 at 1200 hours the LRMFA Communications Center processed 407 incidents. During this time there were 2,971 radio transmissions, 466 call received on the emergency lines, and 278 calls received on the business lines. The heaviest call volume times were November 26 from 1200 hours through 2400 hours and November 27 from 0300 hours through 1200 hours.
- The Communications Center averaged 17 incidents and 31 phone calls per hour during the storm.
- During this time, Belknap County Sheriffs experienced communications issues for approximately one hour. During this time LRMFA assisted with radio transmissions.
- Thank you to the dispatchers on duty and those who held over or came in to assist with call volume.
- During the storm several departments instituted their high call volume policies and self-dispatched non-life threatening calls from their stations.
- This storm highlighted the importance of interoperability, situational awareness prompting implementation of the high call volume policies, and interdepartmental cooperation.

Thank you to all who worked the storm effectively and safely! And thanks to Dispatcher Reynolds for the stats! 🚒

NHDOS Launches Free Emergency Alert App

NHDOS Can Now Send Location Specific Warnings To Anyone With The App

The New Hampshire Department of Safety recently announced the launch of its NH Alerts mobile app, a free tool that notifies users of hazards in the area based upon cell-phone location. The NH Alerts app was developed by the Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management with federal grants.

"The NH Alerts app takes emergency notification to the next level," State Homeland Security and Emergency Management Director Perry Plummer said. "Anyone with the NH Alerts app on their phone will know about safety issues in their area, from accidents and road closures, to hazardous weather and active shooters. We can now send messages directly to those people who are in the path of danger. I strongly encourage everyone to download this app."

The NH Alerts app provides warnings via an audible alert. The types of alerts received are completely customizable allowing the user to determine the frequency with which warnings are received. The NH Alerts app works with iPhone® and Android™ cellphones and is currently available via links on ReadyNH.gov. The NH Alerts app is free to anyone including visitors from other states. 🚒



This image was sent in by Chief Dan Defosses, Campton-Thornton Fire-Rescue. DHART had been requested for an ATV accident that occurred in September.

LRGHealthcare

AL's Breakfast

Con-Ed for EMS and Nursing

2015 SCHEDULE

Wednesday	February 4th	Franklin
Wednesday	March 4th	Gilford
Wednesday	April 1st	Sanbornton
Wednesday	May 6th	Stewart's Ambulance
Wednesday	June 3rd	Franklin
Enjoy your	July	Summer
Enjoy your	August	Summer
Wednesday	September 2nd	New Hampton
Watch for	Paramedic	RTP
Wednesday	November 4th	Laconia (hopefully in their new Building)
Wednesday	December 2nd	Stewart's Ambulance (hopefully in their new Building)

All Breakfasts will be from 0900-1100hrs

Any Question please contact Shawn Riley 524-6881

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Scenes From Tractor Trailer Accident on Oct. 7, 2014



A tractor trailer carrying steel girders rear-ended another tractor trailer carrying cranberries resulting in cranberries all over the road. A passenger vehicle was also involved. There were no serious injuries. Photos provided by Chief Dan Defosses, Campton-Thornton Fire Rescue.



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Four Skills for Better Radio Communication

By Robert Avsec

LIKE ANY OTHER FIREGROUND OPERATION, RADIO COMMUNICATION TAKES FORETHOUGHT AND PRACTICE IN REALISTIC SETTINGS

The portable radio is the single-most versatile piece of equipment that a firefighter or officer can carry into a hazardous situation.

Why do I believe that? Because portable radios are the primary means for:

- All responders to begin becoming informed and educated about the incident once the first firefighter or officer arrives on the scene;
- The incident commander to execute command and control activities;
- Officers and firefighters deployed to tactical assignments in the hazard area to communicate their observations and progress to the IC and to receive updated orders; and
- Personnel in the hazard area back to talk to the IC should there be a Mayday event.

For all of the above types of communication to work, however, it is imperative that all portable radios on the scene are in good working order and that all personnel are skilled and practiced in their operation.

KNOW YOUR HARDWARE

Your life may one day depend upon knowing which button or knob on your portable radio to use — and you might only have one chance to get it right. Using the incredible capabilities of today's portable radios is a critical skill, and like any other skill, if you don't use it, you lose it.

Practice often using your radio's different features while wearing firefighting gloves, especially with those features that you don't routinely use. If that day comes when you really need a particular feature of your radio, chances are you'll be in a firefight, so prepare.

Maintain the radio and its battery according to the manufacturer's recommendations. All of the major radio manufacturers have gone to great lengths to produce operating manuals and supporting media. Take advantage of these to build your body of knowledge about your radio.

Follow the manufacturer's recommendations for charging the batteries. Label the batteries and keep a battery log; in the log, track each battery's life cycle. Replace a battery when it no longer holds a charge for the recommended length of time.

Carbon particles from smoke, dirty water, sheetrock dust and other fireground goo can quickly compromise radio functions. Compressed air cleaners, like those used to clean computer keyboards and other electronic equipment, are great for keeping microphone and speaker ports clear of debris.

Pay particular attention to contact points for remote microphones and clean according to the manufacturer's recommendations. An ordinary pencil eraser is a good tool for

removing corrosion safely, so keep those contacts shiny for maximum performance.

Remember Murphy's Law. If something can go wrong, it will go wrong and usually at the most inopportune time. Carefully review and practice troubleshooting guidance provided by the manufacturer. Your ability to work through a radio malfunction on scene may be critical to your safety and that of others.

BASIC RADIO PRACTICES

Learn and master the following components of radio communication under non-stressful conditions. Doing so will greatly enhance your portable radio communication, especially when the heat is on.

Before speaking, formulate what information is being communicated and put the information in a standardized reporting template. If your organization has a standardized format for radio communications, learn it and use it consistently. An example of such a format is: [Who are you calling?] "Command [Who are you?] from Engine 26. [Where are you?] My crew is on stairwell, advancing to second floor with attack line. [CPR (conditions, progress and resources)]. Heavy heat and smoke conditions. Holding our position. Need ventilation of second floor before we can continue."

Often, ICs are overwhelmed by excess information on the radio. This is where consistent use of a standard radio-reporting format will help determine if information needs to be transmitted. Develop your radio discipline by asking yourself: Has anything changed from my last CPR report? If face-to-face communication is possible between members of a crew and the information is not needed by the IC, don't get on the radio.

Emergency scenes are heavy with noise pollution from running apparatus and portable power equipment like saws, ventilation fans, etc. Your radio might also be exposed to rain, snow or water from firefighting operations. Minimize microphone exposure by practicing shield, move and talk — shield the microphone using your hand, the bill of your helmet or your turnout coat; move away from the source of exposure, even if you can only turn your back to the source; talk directly into the microphone as much as possible, and keep the microphone 1 to 2 inches away from your mouth. If you do not have a speaking diaphragm or voice port on your facepiece, position the microphone against your lower jawbone on the skirt of the facepiece.

When speaking into a microphone use a loud, clear and controlled voice — avoid shouting. When excited, our speech is often both louder and faster. When this happens, our radio transmissions can be unintelligible and may require the IC to ask for a rebroadcast, and thus more radio traffic on the channel. If your intended receiver is consistently asking you to repeat radio communication, you probably need to work on this.

These skills can improve your radio transmissions quality, but what about the communication that comes your way? All of that noise pollution can certainly diminish your ability to hear



Training Division News

Company Officer Development Series

PORTABLE PIPELINES FOR THE FIRST RESPONDER

Tuesday, February 3, 2015 at Lakes Region Mutual Aid Course Description

As the use of natural gas becomes more common in areas not serviced by a traditional pipeline, first responders need to be aware of the safety features, installation, and testing requirements of the fixed site systems and, equally important, be able to identify the different types of transport vehicles being used to transport, store, and offload Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) and Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG).

This program is designed to help first responders increase their awareness of the new energy technologies designed to bring low-cost effective fuels to New England. As with all flammables, there are hazards and risks to the transportation of these products. But they are no more hazardous than the next fuel delivery system. Responders must know the hazards and the components of these portable pipelines.

88% OF ALL TRANSPORTATION-RELATED HAZARDOUS MATERIALS ACCIDENTS OCCUR ON HIGHWAYS.

— US DOT-PHMSA

RADIO SKILLS — CONT. FROM PAGE 11

the information that others are trying to get to you via your radio.

HEARING AID

The introduction of the remote microphone for portable radios, or collar mic, has greatly helped to overcome this challenge, but we lose that advantage when we don't keep the remote mic in close proximity to our ear.

Another useful adjunct is a set of foam earplugs; these can reduce the level of high-frequency noise from engines, power saws, operating hose lines, etc., and enable radio communications to be more clearly understood.

I found this to be true as a command officer. After I'd declared the incident under control, I would leave the noise-controlled environment of my command vehicle to do some managing by walking around. My earplugs enabled me to clearly hear all radio traffic coming over my remote mic that was clipped to the collar of my turnout coat.

Yet, technical issues can arise. You need to recognize technical problems and take corrective action to improve communications. Do not tolerate an inoperable radio when you are in the hazard area. If you cannot communicate with the incident

Instructor

Chris Christopoulos, Jr. is a 32-year veteran of the fire service and currently serves as the Fire Chief and Emergency Management Director for the City of Lebanon, NH. Chris chairs the Hanover-Lebanon Local Emergency Planning Committee, Regional Hazardous Materials Response Team, and Regional Public Health Emergency Preparedness Planning Region and represents the New Hampshire Fire Chiefs on the Governor's Advisory Council on Preparedness and Security. Chris has been with the City for 12 years.

Chris is a graduate of Mount Wachusett Community College in Gardner, MA with an Associates of Fire Science, Granite State College in Concord, NH with a Bachelors of Science in Emergency Services Management, and the Naval Post Graduate School, Center for Homeland Defense and Security in Monterey, CA with a Master of Arts in Security Studies.

SIZE-UP — DOWN AND DIRTY

Tuesday, March 3, 2015 at Franklin Fire Department

This "Boots in the Street" program is designed to stimulate the minds of the first arriving officer. It is no secret that our initial actions on the fire ground set the tone for the incident and more importantly, determine safety levels for our personnel. Roll up your sleeves...it is time to LEAD! Attendees will be put to the test by virtue of demonstrating skills learned. Come if you dare...you won't be disappointed. PPE, flashlight, and portable radios are needed.

Instructors:

Chief Kevin LaChapelle (Franklin, NH), Chief Paul Dexter (Sanbornton, NH). With over 50 years of combined experience, Chiefs LaChapelle and Dexter have commanded countless multi-alarm fires that brought great challenges. 🚒

commander, it's an accountability and safety issue. Get it fixed or get out.

RADIO POSITION

The optimal position for a portable radio transmission is at head height with the antenna in a vertical position. Not exactly the position you may find yourself when involved in fire combat operations, right?

Place your radio in the radio pocket of your turnout coat while you're crawling along the floor and this is what you have. What's the problem? The radio's antenna is far from its optimal transmitting position and some of the transmitted energy is absorbed by your body.

The result is a poor radiation pattern and a reduction in range of the radio. One solution is to move to a position where you can sit up and get the radio closer to its optimal transmitting position.

Many users do not use a radio pocket or radio case. While this certainly puts the radio in a slightly better transmitting position, it also exposes the radio to heat, smoke, water and particulates. Left unprotected, the radio may fail to operate when you most need it.

RADIO SKILLS — CONT. ON PAGE 14

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Presented by Mark Davis of
www.GotBigWater.com

Saturday & Sunday, May 16th and 17th, 2015
0800 hrs to 1630 hrs



Saturday
Classroom Presentations on:
•Fire Flow Needs
•Drafting
•Dump Site Operations
•Fill Site Operations
•Tanker Operations
•Plus...practical exercises!

Sunday
2-hr ISO Tanker Shuttle &
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Cost: \$100.00 per/student
Includes handouts & lunch



The Biggest Water
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Location: Wentworth Elementary School, 1247 Moosilauke Hwy, Wentworth, NH 03282

For more information contact Deputy Chief John Beland (LRMFA) at (603) 529-8111 or by email at jbeland@lrdfa.org

Visit Lakes Region Mutual Fire Aid Training Division on Facebook

Visit www.lakesregionmutualfireaid.org Training Center is registered

Fourth Quarter Stats...

From October 1, 2014 through
December 31, 2014

Incidents Dispatched:	October 2014	1,896
	November 2014	2,145
	December 2014	1,841
	Total	5,882
	YTD Total	22,294

Resources Available:

Engines	92	Tankers	12
Ladders	5	Rescues	22
Forestry	38	Ambulances	52
Utilities	26	Fire Boats	30
Towers	7	Air Units	5
ATVs	13	Command Vehicles	31

Statistics:

- 🚒 Began operations in September of 1971. Moved operations to our current facility in June of 2000.
- 🚒 Dispatches Fire and Medical Emergencies for 35 communities and 35 Fire and EMS Agencies.
- 🚒 Serves a population of 115,383 residents.
- 🚒 Is spread over 5 NH Counties, covering a geographical area of 1,494 square miles (16% of the area of the State of NH — 1.5 times the size of the state of Rhode Island).
- 🚒 Protects over \$18.8 billion dollars of property.
- 🚒 Has an operating budget of \$1,165,880 (2014 budget).
- 🚒 Has 8 full-time and 7 part-time employees.
- 🚒 Dispatched 21,570 incidents during 2013 (59.1 calls per day).
- 🚒 Dispatched 21,504 incidents during 2012 (58.92 calls per day).
- 🚒 Dispatched 21,601 incidents during 2011 (59.18 calls per day).

Year-End Totals 2014

Number of incidents = 22,294

Radio transmissions = 257,097

Emergency phones = 27,737

Admin phones = 22,649

This breaks down on a daily basis to 62 incidents per day and 12 radio transmissions for each incident, or 704 per day on average. Along with the emergency incidents we answered/made 62 calls on the administrative lines per day and 76 calls on the emergency phones per day. Compared to 2013 we had an increase in operational activities and incidents of 6.75% for 2014.

LRMFA HEADQUARTERS, LACONIA, NH



PHOTO COURTESY BILL HEMMEL. LAKESREGIONAERIALS.COM ©2009

RADIO SKILLS — CONT. FROM PAGE 12

Radio cases with shoulder straps provide little protection and are an entanglement hazard when worn on the exterior of turnouts.

Good radio communications are critical for safe, efficient and effective operations on the emergency scene. How many times has poor incident communications been cited as a significant factor in NIOSH investigations of firefighter fatalities on the fireground?

Follow the advice I've provided here and I firmly believe that you'll have taken significant steps to minimize poor communication, and in turn, set up you and your team for fireground success.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Battalion Chief Robert Avsec (Ret.) served with the Chesterfield (Va.) Fire & EMS Department for 26 years. He was an active instructor for fire, EMS, and hazardous materials courses at the local, state, and federal levels, which included more than 10 years with the National Fire Academy. Chief Avsec earned his bachelor of science degree from the University of Cincinnati and his master of science degree in executive fire service leadership from Grand Canyon University. He is a 2001 graduate of the National Fire Academy's Executive Fire Officer Program. Since his retirement in 2007, he has continued to be a life-long learner working in both the private and public sectors to further develop his "management sciences mechanic" credentials. He makes his home near Charleston, W.Va. Contact Robert at Robert.Avsec@FireRescue1.com

This article first appeared on FireRescue1.com and is used with permission. The following is a link to the original article: <http://www.firerescue1.com/fire-products/communications/articles/1355959-4-skills-for-better-radio-communication/>



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Lakes Region Mutual Fire Aid Association

62 Communications Drive
Laconia, NH 03246

Department News

Send your Department News
to
debbie@debbiekgraphics.com.

Include new hires, promotions,
new apparatus, department
events,
open training events, etc.

Scene From Jan. 2, 2015 Pileup on I-93



Photo sent in by Fran Butler, Alexandria Volunteer Fire Department.

24th Annual Ice Fishing Derby

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