

SAFETY BULLETIN

Ensure your Team is Prepared!

Training Shouldn't Create Accidents

FOCUS: The purpose of training is to teach safe procedures for completing tasks. We must reduce the number of training related accidents.

CHALLENGE

Training is an essential component of the firefighter's skill development. It is also important we simulate situations we will encounter at emergency scenes. Not surprisingly, these activities can also be the source of injuries to firefighters.

Unfortunately, each year approximately 10-12 percent of firefighter deaths (6-8 deaths) occur during training activities. In addition, training activities also result in a significant number of firefighter injuries. Accidents typically involve falls, burns, smoke inhalation, contusions and fatigue. Injuries resulting from training accidents impact our department's ability to handle emergencies because of the incapacity of our firefighters.

As a result of these trends, training and safety officers should work closely together in an attempt to improve the safety aspect of training. Each incident no matter how small should be analyzed to determine the root cause. Trends should be addressed with corrective actions taken as soon as possible. The area where the training accident occurred, equipment and personnel involved should be part of the analysis.

Training is very important to the development of professional firefighters. It should be both effective and safe for its participants.

DISCUSSION

- What types of accidents have occurred during training in our department?
- Do the same types of accidents occur repeatedly?
- What type of accident investigation occurs when there are training accidents?
- Are these accidents forwarded to the safety committee?
- How do we address corrective actions?
- Are changes communicated to all staff as part of their education?
- How effective is our system for making improvements?
- How do you think it can be improved?

The greatest asset of the fire service is our people; protect them!

Funding and support for this project has been provided by the State of Washington, Department of Labor & Industries, Safety & Health Investment Projects (SHIP)

See more Safety Bulletins online: www.washingtonfirechiefs.org and be prepared!