



From the Chief's Desk

By Chief Marty Nelson



Recently, we have been fielding quite a few questions from citizens of the District and their insurance agents regarding insurance protection class ratings for specific properties. Because of these requests, it seems that now is a good time to share some information with you regarding insurance ratings as they relate to fire protection.

In 1971 an organization known as the Insurance Services Office (ISO) was formed by the insurance industry for the purpose of developing and maintaining an insurance rating system that could be applied nationally. ISO collects extensive data on actual fire losses which are used to establish a uniform basis to compute insurance premium rates. The ISO rate schedule uses a scale from 1 to 10, with 1 being the best, or highest fire protection available and 10, the lowest, indicating no effective fire protection service or no service at all. The most significant factor in determining the ISO rate is the availability of water for fire suppression. Areas without fire hydrants are graded appreciably lower than areas with fire hydrants. Another important consideration is the distance from your home to an active fire station. This relates to the time that it would take to bring resources to a fire. Structures that are more than 5 road miles from a fire station are automatically rated as ISO Class 10.

Here in Lane County Fire District #1 we have a variety of ISO grades from class 4 in our area that has fire hydrants to class 10 in those areas that are more than five miles from a fire station, with the majority of our area receiving a Dwelling Class 8. In all areas of the fire district, except the city of Veneta, fire suppression water is trucked to an incident. The District currently has twelve fire engines carrying between 750 to 1,000 gallons of water each and six 3,000 gallon water tenders in its fleet. One question that is commonly asked is, how can the District improve the ISO rating? Given the fact that there are three prime factors that govern our ISO rate, water availability, the ability to respond with trained personnel, and distance from a fire station we are severely limited without significant assistance from our community.

The District is currently working on developing a plan to identify and develop water resources throughout the fire district. Our target is to have water pick-up points within a short driving distance from any incident in the District. If you have a water resource and are willing to discuss its availability to your community please contact us at 935-2226.

The issue of having an active fire station within five miles of your home is based upon two conditions, physical distance and the number of firefighters. Locating fire stations requires

extensive evaluation, planning, and money; we are currently conducting an evaluation of the effectiveness of our stations and their locations. Having a trained team of firefighters at your nearest fire station is up to you. There are several fire stations that have too few volunteer responders to assure a full response. In other words some equipment might simply remain in your nearest station because there is no one to operate it. This can be remedied through your resolve to contribute to your community. We are eager to receive your application to become a member of our team.



Fire Department Open House

By Heather Hill, Prevention Coordinator

LCFD #1 will be holding its annual Open House on Saturday, October 8, 2005, from 11 am to 3 pm at the Veneta, Walton, and Spencer Creek Stations. In observance of Fire Prevention Week, this year's focus is on candle safety.

The Open House at the main station in Veneta will feature tours of the apparatus as well as fun activities for children including a Junior Firefighter Challenge and an escape maze. Information on fire safety will be distributed and the Kiwanis Club of Fern Ridge will be on hand to serve barbecued hamburgers and hot dogs for a great price. Burn Permits will also be available. At the Spencer Creek and Walton Stations, refreshments and burn permits will be available. Stop by any one of these three stations and meet your neighbors.

A special Open House will be held at the Fox Hollow and Butler Stations on Saturday October 22 from 10 am to 1 pm. Burn Permits will be available and refreshments will be served.



Backyard Burn Permits

By Stan Turner, Editor

A reminder that if you plan to do any burning of yard debris, you are required by LCFD#1 to get a Burn Permit. Permits will be first available at our Open House on Saturday, October 8 and on weekdays beginning October 10 at the main station in Veneta – 88050 Territorial Road – from 8 AM to Noon or 1 to 5 PM Monday through Friday. Burn season usually begins on October 15 and goes until May 31 each year, subject to weather conditions. Remember: You are permitted to burn only those items listed on your Burn Permit. Instead of burning your yard debris, consider recycling, a great way to reduce smoke intrusion and reduce the danger of fire. If you have a complaint about someone burning illegally, please call the LRAPA Complaint Line, 726-1930.

Fire Prevention Week

By Heather Hill, Prevention Coordinator



The second week in October is Fire Prevention Week, chosen as an observance of two of the most devastating fires in America's history. Amazingly both occurred on October 8, 1871. The Great Chicago Fire burned over 17,000 structures, killing 250 people. The Peshtigo Fire in Wisconsin burned 1.2 million acres of land and killed over 1,200 people.

Each year a theme for Fire Prevention Week is chosen based on the latest fire data, and a campaign is designed to educate people on how to prevent some of the most common causes of fire. This year's theme focuses on candle safety. According to the Oregon Office of the State Fire Marshal, the number of candle fires has increased 20% in the last decade from 118 in 1995 to 142 in 2004. The National Fire Protection Association has found that 41% of U.S. home candle fires begin in the bedroom, causing 24% of the deaths resulting from these fires. A special study found that the candles were being used for light in one-third of the fatal home candle fires, generally because power to the home had been shut off due to nonpayment (24%) or as a result of a temporary power outage (7%). December had almost twice the number of home candle fires of an average month. Seven out of 10 households in the U.S. now use candles, with younger adults more likely to use them than older adults.

To prevent a candle from devastating your home, adopt the following tips as rules: Never leave a candle burning unattended. Before you go out, blow it out. Keep candles at least one foot away from things that will burn, such as curtains, clothing, furniture, decorations, or greenery. Always use a sturdy metal, glass or ceramic candleholder. Make sure the container is large enough to catch melted wax.



Winter Fire-Proof Your Home

By Stan Turner, Editor

It has been said that an effective learning method is to repeat important information often. In that spirit, the following article is repeated from last year's Fall/Winter *Flash Point* Newsletter.

The fall and winter months are frequently associated with activities related to home heating, holiday decorations and extended periods of home lighting. Here are some tips to help keep you safe and warm and make the season more enjoyable.

If you use a **fireplace** or **wood stove**, have the flu cleaned annually, more frequently if you have to burn "green" or wet wood. One of our most frequent calls in the winter is for flu fires caused by creosote buildup in chimneys and stove pipes. Such fires can readily extend into walls, ceiling and attics.

Check your **smoke alarms** monthly. If possible, vacuum dust from the face and vents. Press the test buttons to make sure they are functioning. It is advisable to have a smoke alarm in every sleeping area as well as other strategic areas within the

home. Alarms that are ten years or older should be replaced with new units (new smoke alarms are required by law to have batteries that last ten years), because the sensor wears out. Hard-wired smoke alarms that run off of your home electricity are a little different than the solely battery-powered units. Most hard-wired units have a regular 9-volt battery back-up so that the alarm will work if there is a power outage. These batteries should be changed every 6 months to make sure that they are fresh. If not, a low battery signal or "chirping" sound may be emitted. Please don't dismantle the alarm!! Make sure that the alarm is not older than ten-years and perform routine maintenance on the unit by testing the alarm and vacuuming the vent area to clear the sensor of dust and debris. If the unit continues to "chirp", it may be time to replace the unit. If the alarm is hard-wired, you may need to consult an electrician. If the unit is battery-powered, replace the battery. Please call us if you have any questions, or if you need a smoke alarm. LCFD#1 will provide District residents with alarms free of charge.

Develop a **Home Escape Plan**. Every member of your family should know two ways out of every bedroom and a safe place to meet once outside the home. Practice the plan at least twice each year.

If you use a **portable electric heater** in your home, make sure you have at least 36 inches of empty space around it when in use. Before turning your heater on, vacuum it to remove dust and lint. Your heater should have a "tip over switch" which shuts the heater off if it falls over. When you start the heater, tilt it to one side to see if the switch is working. Check the heater's electric cord for frays or cracks and, while the heater is on, feel the cord to see if it is getting hot. Overheated cords are a common cause of fire. Never use an extension cord with a portable heater. Never use kerosene heaters, barbecues, charcoal grills or camp stoves indoors as they can produce carbon monoxide, a deadly, odorless, and colorless gas.

Holiday decorations such as **candles** should be used with extreme caution. Use sturdy fire-proof candleholders and make sure all candles are away from flammable material. Lighted candles should never be left unattended. Use only **holiday lights** that are UL approved. Check them carefully for broken or cracked bulbs, frayed or bare wires and loose connections. If you have a **tree**, buy one that is fresh (the needles are deep-green and flexible), and water it daily. Use small "twinkle" lights. They not only use less electricity but burn much cooler. Decorative trimming should be non-combustible or flame-resistant. In homes with small children, take special care to avoid decorations that are small, sharp or breakable. Avoid trimmings that resemble candy or food as children might try to eat them.

If you have **propane appliances**, make sure they are properly vented. Know the location of the main supply valve from your propane tank. If you smell gas, do not operate any switches, appliances or thermostats. Get everyone outside and away from the building and call 911 from a portable phone (taken outside) or a neighbor's phone.

If you store **flammable liquids**, make sure they are in tightly sealed containers and placed in a well-vented area away from your home, preferably in a shed or detached garage. When using **gasoline powered tools**, including generators, log splitters and chain saws, make sure to use them out-of-doors and make sure they have cooled down before refueling them.

Child Safety Seats

By Heather Hill, Prevention Coordinator



Passenger safety in vehicles has come a long way in the last few decades. Technology has brought us cars with air bags, computer chips, and crumple zones. Laws have brought us mandatory seat belt use. The purpose of the seat belt is not to torture or strangle us as some may think, but to keep us from flying out of the car if it is involved in a crash. Statistics show that a person involved in a crash has a much greater chance of survival if they stay in the compartment of the vehicle.

A key to staying in the passenger compartment is to wear the seat belt properly. The lap portion of the belt should fit across the top of the thighs or low on the hips and the shoulder belt should fit across the chest and shoulder and off of the neck area. The seat belt should never be tucked behind your torso or sit across your belly.

Children the age of 8 and under can have an especially difficult time with wearing a seat belt properly so manufacturers have developed seats to help make a seat belt fit better depending on the child's age, weight and height. The following are general requirements for a child within a specific age and weight range. The State of Oregon has developed standards for each type of seat based on age and weight and are written in bold in the instructions. The child should meet both the upper age and weight requirements before changing to the next seat. Check your individual seat for specific limitations.

- **Newborn to 1 year and 20 pounds:** Children should ride in a seat that is **rear facing** at this age due to their undeveloped neck muscles. The seat is designed to absorb the impact, taking the strain off of the child's neck and back. It is recommended that the child ride facing backwards for as long as the seat limits allow due to the safer positioning. The weight limit of these seats range from newborn to 35 pounds..

- **Children 1 to 4 years of age and 20 to 40 pounds:** Children should ride **facing forward** in a seat that has a harness system. A harness that connects to the seat at five points is recommended, but some seats are designed with harnesses that connect to the seat at three points. These seats generally have a weight range between 20 and 40 pounds.

For seats that have a harness, make sure that the straps are flat and not bunched. They should be snug enough that slack cannot be pinched out of the straps through the chest area. The plastic clip should be placed at the armpit level to position the harness correctly on the child's body. When the seat is installed, check to make sure that it fits snugly against the

vehicle seat. The safety seat should not move more than one inch when you grab it near where the belt runs through the seat and you try to move it from side to side. When doing the installation, you may need to place your weight on the seat to get it snug enough.

- **Children 4 to 6 years of age and 40 to 60 pounds:** Children should ride in a **seat that boosts** them so that they fit in the seat belt properly across the lap and shoulder areas. There are generally two styles of booster seats- a low-back booster is made for vehicles that have seats with a headrest, while a high-back booster is made for vehicles that may not have a headrest. These seats have a weight range of 40 to 60 pounds..

- **Children ages 6 to 8:** The need for a booster seat will depend on the size and weight of the child. To fit properly in a vehicle seat, the child should be able to sit with their back against the seat back and have their knees bend comfortably at the edge of the seat. If they don't, a booster should still be used. Children should not ride in the front seat until they are at least 12 years of age.

Things to watch out for: You should never use a car seat that has been in a crash or that you don't know its history. There could be damage to the seat that is not easily visible. Also, a seat older than 6 years of age is considered obsolete. Over time the sun's rays can damage the plastic and use can wear down the integrity of the seat.

With so many standards and directions to follow, don't worry-there's help! LCFD #1 has two Nationally Certified Child Safety Seat Technicians who have gone through a 32-hour training to assist you. We will be holding a **clinic on Saturday, October 15 from noon to 4 pm** where we can answer your questions and check to make sure that the child seat you have is the right one for your child. Bring your child and her/his seat for us to ensure a proper fit.

Winter EMS Tips

By Chris Benson, EMS Coordinator



Staying healthy during the winter months can be a challenge. With the return of our lengthy rainy season we are more confined indoors increasing our contact with people who are ill.

There are some relatively simple things you can do to remain healthy: get plenty of rest; when around people who are not feeling well, wash your hands frequently (your hands are the most common carrier of germs leading to illness); seriously consider getting a flu shot.

On another matter, I want to encourage everyone to take advantage of our CPR classes. If someone in your home goes into cardiac arrest you have the chance to make a difference. Call our main station to sign up for a CPR course: 935-2226.

2nd Annual Safety On Wheels

By Heather Hill, Prevention Coordinator



The 2nd Annual Safety On Wheels event was held at Territorial Skate Park in Veneta on July 30. The focus of the event was on roller-sport safety, specifically on wearing helmets and pads when participating in roller-sport activities. With the collaboration of many community groups we were able to give out 130 helmets and 50 pad sets. We asked the community to bring 5 cans of food for a helmet and pads and collected 377 pounds of canned food, which was donated to the local food pantry, the Love Project. Thank you for another great event!

Training News

By Mark Boren, Training Coordinator



Your neighbors this calendar year have spent a combined 5,483 hours in training. These hours include Live Fire Training, Vehicle Extrication, Forcible Entry, Medical Recertification, and many other classroom and practical applications.

Please visit our website at www.lcfd1.org for more information.

Alarms –Jan. 1 to Aug. 31, 2005



Medical Calls – 441

Motor Vehicle Accidents – 114

Fires (structure, brush/grass & vehicle) – 72

Other (electrical problems, fuel spills, lifting assistance, public assist, false alarms, etc.) – 116

Total Calls: 743



Upcoming Events



- | | | |
|---------|---|---------------|
| Oct. 8 | Open House at Veneta, Walton,
& Spencer Creek Stations | 11 am to 3 pm |
| Oct. 15 | Car Seat Clinic at the Veneta Station | Noon to 4 pm |
| Oct. 22 | Open House at Fox Hollow
& Butler Stations | 10 am to 1 pm |
| Nov. 8 | Adult Basic CPR class at Veneta Station -
call to register | 6 to 9:30 pm |
| Nov. 16 | Bloodmobile at Veneta Station –
call to register | 3 to 7 pm |

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