



**Chief's Corner**

**The Dark Side of Technology**

Welcome everyone to the June edition of the Chief's Corner. I hope you and yours are doing well and enjoying the sunny weather we have been experiencing over the last several weeks. I know I was happy to see the rain take a break for a while.

For this month's Corner, I wanted to discuss a topic that has been in the news recently, and also one that I find interesting. The subject is: how technology has changed the way we communicate with each other and how this has come to consume us. Let's take a look.

Everyone knows that advances in technology have led to an explosion in the number of ways we "communicate" on a daily basis. While this is great for most purposes, some people tend to become obsessed with this "new" technology and can't put it down. This can cause a number of problems and leads to fixation on your personal device. How many times have you seen a family having dinner in a restaurant and every member of the party is looking down at their cell phone? They are not interacting with each other and seem totally absorbed with their texts and e-mails. I see this happen a lot and wonder to myself, what is so important that it can't wait until they finish dinner?

When I was growing up, our family would sit down to eat dinner each night and we used that time to discuss the day's events and share "quality" time together. (We didn't have cell phones then, but I'm pretty sure we did not miss them.) Today we are so attached to our devices that we can't seem to "unplug" and just relax. We are constantly checking our e-mails and looking at Facebook for an update. New research has shown that this is causing problems with being able to unwind and let our mind rest. Research has also shown that "the constant presence of mobile phones can interfere with human relationships, an effect that is most clear when individuals are discussing personally meaningful topics. Researchers found high mobile phone use was associated with stress and sleep disturbances for women; whereas, high mobile phone use was associated with sleep disturbances and symptoms of depression in men.

You all know how distracting it is when you are trying to have a conversation with a friend or co-worker and they are constantly "checking" their phone or stopping to answer a call or text. It's not only distracting, it's just rude. And speaking of Facebook: when did it become important to know what everyone else is doing every single minute of every day? Do you really care what your friend from yoga class had for lunch yesterday or who just posted a "selfie" photo of themselves making a stupid face.

The point I am trying to make is, while new technology is necessary and communication is an important human characteristic, face-to-face communication is vital. Talking to someone, face-to-face in a quiet place while really listening is important if you really want to "communicate." The constant distractions that mobile devices can cause really interferes with real communications. If you need to really communicate with another person, then you need to do it in a face-to-face conversation when both parties are actively listening to each other with as few distractions as possible. While mobile phones have their place and are very convenient, they can interfere with genuine communication.

Another practice that prevents people from "unplugging" is when someone sends out e-mails after hours and/or late at night. While most people are doing this to pass on information, it can create an expectation that you need to respond right away. While most supervisors really don't expect you to respond until the next day, if at all, some people just can't help themselves. This can prevent individuals from relaxing and keep them "keyed up" all the time. Not good!



It is important and healthy to relax after the workday and let your mind focus on things other than work. We all need to relax at some point. While we all understand that advances in technology are very important and can make our work easier and entertain us, it can also "take over" our lives and cause a host of problems. We all need to "unplug" and put down the mobile device on occasion. We can't let the dark side of technology take over!

Well, that wraps up this month's Chief's Corner. I hope you get some useful information from this discussion and are able to benefit from it. In the meantime, keep up the great work and continue to provide excellent service to the citizens of this community. The Fire Department is held in high regard by the Lynchburg community and you are responsible for that. Take care and be safe, but never forget the most important rule: "Everyone goes home safe at the end of the shift!"

Chief

**IN THIS ISSUE**

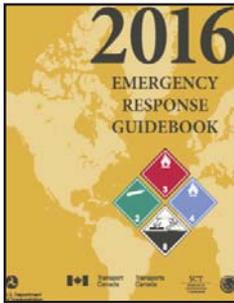
- Chief's Corner
- Emergency Response Guide Update
- Certifications
- We Tweet!
- Public Safety Medal of Valor
- Department Earns Gold Recognition From American Heart Association
- Central VA Burn Camp
- NFPA Corner
- Remembrance Rescue Project
- 2016 Retirees' Social
- Relay For Life A Success!
- Drowning Signs



## Emergency Response Guide Update

By: Captain Ronnie Coleman  
The 2016 edition of the Emergency Response Guidebook (ERG) is expected to arrive soon.

The Guidebook provides a go-to manual to help emergency responders deal with haz-mat transportation accidents during the first 30 minutes.



Please review the summary of changes and updates listed below.

- Replaced written instructions on page 1 with a flow chart to show how to use the ERG2016.
- Expanded Table of Placards and updated title to Table of Markings, Labels, and Placards and Initial Response Guide to Use on Scene.
- Expanded Rail Car ID Chart and Road Trailer ID Chart.
- Updated Tables 1 and 3 based on new TIH data and research.
- Updated pipeline emergency response information.
- Added information about Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labeling of Chemicals (GHS) markings.
- Added all new dangerous goods/hazardous materials listed in UN Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods to 19<sup>th</sup> Revised Edition.

## Certifications

### Haz-Mat Technician

R.D. Irvin

### Leadership I

Travis Calloway

### NFA – ICS 400

Jason Campbell  
Robert Hamilton

Jennifer Collins  
Abbey Johnston

## We Tweet!



Be sure to following the Lynchburg Fire Department on Twitter @LynchburgFire

## Public Safety Medal of Valor

By: Captain Abbey Johnston

On May 16, 2016, President Obama awarded the Public Safety Medal of Valor to 13 police officers at a ceremony in the White House. It was my honor to be present as a member serving my second term on the Medal of Valor Review Board; however, the greatest honor was meeting and talking with the exceptional recipients of this prestigious Medal, and in one case, the family of an officer who made the ultimate sacrifice. Unlike years past, recipients, their families, and the Review Board were welcomed into the East Wing of the White House for a two hour breakfast reception that included music by the President's Own (the Marine Corps Band).



Abbey Johnston and  
Officer Mario Gutierrez

It is increasingly important in today's political climate for public safety agencies to recognize employees who go above and beyond the call of duty and who perform acts like those recognized at this ceremony. Police officers, deputies, jailors, firefighters, and EMS professionals are all eligible to be nominated for the Medal of Valor.

Officer Mario Gutierrez of the Miami-Dade Police Department in Florida was on routine patrol when he observed an individual who had removed the cover of an underground fuel tank at a gas station and was attempting to ignite it. When he confronted him, the subject charged him and violently attacked him with an 8" knife, stabbing the officer 12 times and biting him once. Eventually, Officer Gutierrez was able to access his weapon and he shot and killed the assailant. After an extended hospitalization, he recovered from his injuries and returned to work.



## Department Earns Gold Recognition from American Heart Association

By: Battalion Chief of EMS, Heather Childress

Once again, the Lynchburg Fire Department has earned the American Heart Association's Gold recognition for achieving 75 percent (or higher) adherence for 24 months on all Mission: Lifeline quality measures to improve the quality of care for STEMI patients.

We are proud to achieve recognition by the American Heart Association for following the latest research-based standards for acute coronary syndromes. The department will be recognized in the July edition of *JEMS* Magazine. By far, our greatest reward is caring for our patients and impacting their lives. It is exciting and gratifying for our hard work and commitment to our community to be recognized in this way. Congratulations to everyone!

## Central Virginia Burn Camp

By: Captain Abbey Johnston

The Central Virginia Burn Camp will be held June 12-18, 2016 at Camp Holiday Trails in Charlottesville, VA. The residential camp is designed to meet the social, physical, and psychological needs of young burn survivors. It also allows firefighters the opportunity to share experiences with these children, most of whom, much like a firefighter, possess a first-hand understanding of fire and its devastating effects. The camp is free to children between the ages of 7 & 17, and is staffed by firefighters, occupational therapists, nurses, adult burn survivors, and other volunteers.

Local 1146 will once again provide, prepare, and serve dinner at the Burn Camp. For many years, it has been Local 1146's privilege to prepare and serve a Thanksgiving style dinner one night during the week for the children. Many look forward to our meal all week, as it is their favorite!

Anyone wishing to volunteer should contact Abbey Johnston at 444-4422. The group will leave Lynchburg at 2:30 p.m. from the Sam's Club parking lot on June 16<sup>th</sup> (and return around 8:30 p.m.). If you haven't had the experience of burn camp, you are encouraged to join us. Families are welcome! The kids really love seeing firefighters from different departments come to help and it is an experience that you will never forget. You can also visit the website at [vaburncamp.org](http://vaburncamp.org).

## NFPA Corner

By: Deputy Chief Jason Campbell

Each month I plan to share information with our readers about National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) codes and standards and how the codes and standards apply to our organization and/or our community. NFPA is widely known as a codes and standards organization. Its mission is to provide information and knowledge that we need to do our jobs well in today's ever-changing environment. As a matter of fact, NFPA has over 300 codes and standards that are designed to minimize the risk and effects of fire – either through criteria for buildings, fire apparatus, personal protective equipment, training, and deployment of community resources.

An important matter to remember is NFPA codes and standards are “consensus” codes and standards, but are not laws or regulations, unless specifically adopted as a law by the authority having jurisdiction (AHJ); in our case, that would be City Council. However, there are other manners in which the City, or the Fire Department, can adopt or accept an NFPA code or standard, such as through procurement activities or implementation of policies or regulations. Will the department comply with every NFPA standard? Probably not, although you can expect compliance with the standards associated with matters causing immediate danger to life or health (IDLH). And, although NFPA standards are not laws or requirements, they are considered “industry standards” and can certainly protect the City and the employees, especially in terms of liability associated with our profession and our delivery of services.

I'll begin with a brief discussion on NFPA 1971, Standard on Protective Ensembles for Structural Fire Fighting and Proximity Fire Fighting (2013 Edition). I have chosen this standard in order to explain further my recent decision to not allow the use of Cairns N5A or “New Yorker” style helmets (a matter causing IDLH). NFPA 1971 establishes a standard for the various components of our structural firefighting gear – jackets, pants, helmets, footwear, hoods – with details on materials, inspections and testing. Not only does the standard apply to fire departments, but it is directed to companies that design, manufacture, test and certify new structural firefighting ensembles. Here are the primary takeaways from our department's application of NFPA 1971's 160 pages of standards:

- Procurement documents (including the contracts with our vendors) include specifications that require compliance with the applicable NFPA standards for the various components of the protective gear.
- The protective gear that you are issued must be replaced after 10 years from the date of manufacturing.
- The protective gear must be inspected regularly, including an annual advanced gear inspection.
- The gear must be kept clean and laundered on a regular basis.
- Certain damage caused to gear during firefighting operations is cause for immediate repair or replacement.

A final word about helmets: I know that the Cairns New Yorker helmet is a popular choice of helmets among firefighters. However, the New Yorker does not comply with NFPA 1971 and to allow the use of the helmet could be detrimental to those members who were wearing them and those serving alongside of them. And, if a member chose to wear the non-compliant helmet in place of the department-issued helmet, and subsequently became injured or died as a direct or indirect result of wearing the non-compliant helmet, the City could certainly be held liable and/or benefits associated with the injury or death (i.e. workers compensation and LODD survivor “benefits”) could be denied. With that in mind, the question becomes, in a profession exposing the employees to significant risks of injury or death, is it worth the risk to not require the appropriate PPE for the protection of the firefighter and the firefighter's family? I believe it's not worth that risk.



**NATIONAL  
FIRE CODES®**

SUBSCRIPTION SERVICE  
ALL ACCESS

### “Did you know?”

The department has a subscription to the National Fire Codes which allows online access to the entire set of National Fire Codes.

Contact Deputy Chief Jason Campbell for more information about access.)

## Remembrance Rescue Project



By: Deputy Chief Jason Campbell

For the month of September, the Fire Department and The Fire Foundation will serve as the host of the former FDNY Rescue 4 unit, a project of the Remembrance Rescue Project. The Remembrance Rescue Project is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization created by firefighters to restore, preserve and share Rescue 4 and Rescue 5 from 9/11 as educational tools, historical artifacts and memorials. The Project involving former FDNY Rescue 4 and Rescue 5 is an educational effort focused at society, especially youngsters who were too young to actually understand the events of September 11, 2001, and what that day means to members of the fire service and the county as a whole.

Our department and The Foundation will facilitate 9/11 educational programming, memorials, and remembrance events throughout the City and across the region. The Project strives to keep the memories alive of those lost on September 11<sup>th</sup> and firefighters killed in the line of duty every year.

FDNY Rescue Companies are considered the most elite companies within special rescues, technical rescues, confined space rescues, and high angle rescue technicians. The main responsibilities of the firefighters assigned to the rescue unit include search and rescue, rescues, SCUBA, and hazardous materials. Rescue 4 lost 8 firefighters assigned to the unit on September 11, 2011.

More information will be forthcoming about programming, fundraising, and the need for volunteer assistance during the month of September. In the meantime, find more information about Remembrance Rescue Project by visiting [www.remembrance.co](http://www.remembrance.co).

## 2016 Retirees' Social

On June 3, 2016, the Lynchburg Fire Department Retirees' Social was held with approximately 80 people attending. The department recognized the following recently retired members and presented those present with their framed memorabilia.

Maurice Braxton  
Charlie Cox  
Gitau Muhoro

Peggy Coleman  
Miles Tranks

In addition, Les Davidson was recognized for his 20 years of service as the Fire Department Chaplain.

Attendees enjoyed food and fellowship and reminisced around a recently restored display of a Gamewell Fire Alarm Box from old Station 1 (located at 301 5<sup>th</sup> Street). The display included flooring and handrails that was removed from Station 6 during renovations in 2016. Special thanks to Rod Smith for all of his work to spearhead restoring our relics.



L-R: Dave Mason, Rod Smith, Charlie Droog

## Relay For Life A Success!

By: Firefighter Natalie Darling

Now that this year's Relay For Life event and all of our fundraising activity is over, I would like to extend a HUGE, heartfelt THANK YOU to everyone who got involved. There was a lot of logistical support from the Department, as well as line and administrative personnel who helped leading up to and at the event.

To date, our total funds raised to is \$10,142.51, and a ranking of #5 out of 77 teams for the Lynchburg event. I am very proud to be the Lynchburg Fire Department Team Captain, and look forward to working on this event with you next year.

## Drowning Signs and Water Safety

By: Jennifer Mayberry, Public Education Specialist

When it is hot and/or sunny, it's our nature to gravitate towards water. Did you know that drowning is one of the top two leading causes of accidental death in children under 14 years of age; the other being automobile accidents?

Drowning isn't the violent flailing and splashing signs with someone screaming "HELP!" that Hollywood puts on in the movies and television shows. In fact, it is quite the opposite. That's why when people find out someone around them has drowned, they never heard or saw anyone in distress so they had no clue the person needed help. Here are some signs that a person could be drowning.

- The victim's head will be low in the water and tilted backwards and mouth at water level and open. The victim cannot catch their breath, so instinct will kick in and they will try getting air the best they can. This often causes the victim to start gasping as they do a slight bob and then hyperventilate. Therefore, they will be unable to call for help.
- The victim is not swim-kicking with their legs or their legs may barely be moving without progress while the victim is in a vertical position.
- The victim's arms may be stretched out in front of them or by their sides pushing down against the water in an attempt to stay afloat and swim upward so they can get air. They are usually unsuccessful at getting their arms above water.
- The victim's eyes can be closed, but they may also be glassy and empty looking. The victim will not respond if you yell out to them and very well may not be able to grab a floatation device or rope thrown to assist them.

### What causes drownings?

Alcohol impairment

Inability to swim

Lack of child supervision

Fatigue

No life jackets

Unprotected pools

Heart and seizure disorders

Diving injuries/shallow water

Now that we know what a real drowning victim looks like and the causes of drownings, how can we prevent these tragedies?

- Learn to swim and wear life jackets
- Use the buddy system
- Never leave children unsupervised for any amount of time
- Don't drink alcohol while swimming or supervising children who are swimming
- Don't go into the water if you are tired. If you get tired while you are swimming, come out of the water and rest a bit. Watch for fatigue in children as well, they don't want to quit swimming and won't tell you when they get tired.
- Stay hydrated. The sun and swimming activity can drain your body of fluids and cause you to tire more easily.
- Make sure you have fences around the pool.

Once you've determined someone is actively drowning, here's what to do:

- Call 911, or better yet, have another bystander do it.
- Remain calm.....don't go into the water in a panic state.
- If the victim is within arm's reach; lay flat on your stomach with only your arm outreached to the victim. Assure them they can reach you and have them paddle towards your hand. Pull them to the side of the swimming area where you can better assist them out of the water.
- Use a shepherd's hook to grab the drowning victim by the torso or call out for the victim to grab the hook.
- Only dive into the water as a last resort. Take a floatation rescue aid with you. Have the victim grab the aid and you swim back to shore/dock/or side of the pool with the victim in tow. If the victim is unconscious or in too much of a panic, grab the victim from behind, preferably the back of the shirt, and pull them to stable ground. Stay out of arms reach so they don't grab you and pull you under as well.

The summer time should be a relaxing fun-filled experience for both adults and children. Tragedies like this can be prevented. Let's do our part to prevent them.