



On the Line



Our Core Values: Pride, Respect, Duty, Unity, Integrity and Compassion.

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Upcoming Events

EMS Week May 16 - 22

Kid's Fire Academy—June 13—16

June 16th—Open House for Tri City Fire And Safety Training Center (Tri-City FAST Center)

Nat'l Fallen Firefighters Memorial Golf tournament - Tuesday, June 29

UFD statistics for April

Calls for service: 178 YTD: 750

Average response Time – All incidents: **6 minutes and 36 seconds**

Average response Time – **Emergency** incidents: **6 minutes and 16 seconds**

Emergency Medical Service calls: 131

Average Response Time EMS: 6 minutes and 19 seconds

Emergency: 6 minutes and 3 seconds

Non-Emergency: 6 minutes and 38 seconds

Fire related calls: 43

Average Response Time Fire: 7 minutes and 27 seconds

Average turnout per fire incident: 5 people

We **received mutual aid eight times** – four a fire calls and four for EMS calls.

We did not provide mutual aid in April.

Types of Fire Calls

The 43 fire calls we had in April fall into the following categories:

Fire / Explosion:	7
Hazardous Condition:	5
Overpressure/overheat:	3
Good Intent Calls:	6
False Calls:	18
Service Calls:	4



Birthdays:

Mike Gentosi	May 5
Eric Ennen	June 2
Jim Mitchell	June 3





Chief's Corner: Mission Driven - Customer Focused...the Urbandale Fire Approach—Chief Jerry Holt



A recent opportunity to hear the founding father of fire service customer service severed to rekindle the fire for providing exceptional customer service. Hearing Chief Brunacini (Phoenix Fire, Retired) talk about his philosophy of customer service is extremely easy for me. I've heard him speak many times and I have always subscribed to his teachings since the first time I heard him speak. I am committed to Chief Brunacini's philosophy. It is simple, it is the right thing to do and it is what we are going to do in our department.

Chief Brunacini's approach is not new. He wrote the *Essentials of Fire Service Customer Service* in 1996. It is a great book, a very easy read and I recommend it to everyone. I won't rehash the Chief's book in detail here as I have little to offer to improve on his good work, but I did want to take the opportunity to share some thoughts on customer service and how it relates with our organization. We have many stories of how you have exceeded the customer's expectations – our department "gets it" but lets talk about approach here.

Let's start with the basics. Why are we here? Why do we have a job at the UFD? We are here to meet the needs of our customers – plain and simple. We need to take care of ourselves and each other in the process, but the reality is that we are here for the customer and without them; there would be no need for us. I suspect if we all think real hard, we can identify incidents where the customer may have become secondary to our needs. (More about that later) To start at the beginning, one simply needs to look at our mission statement. We are here to preserve life, protect property and promote safety through education. That's it. That's our mission statement. Pretty easy...that's what we do. Mission driven is the act of tying everything that we do back to the mission statement. Our department has to be "mission driven" to keep the services that we provide in line with the customer's needs.

The mission statement doesn't go in to how we are going to do those things but one doesn't need to go far to find the directions of "how" we deliver that mission. Core values – that's how we deliver our services. Pride, respect, duty, unity, integrity and compassion are our core values. I've written on these several times before. They appear on all of my emails, they hang on our station walls. Everyone should know them but more importantly, all of the service we provide should be directly tied back to those core values. Integrity, respect and compassion are three values that absolutely require us to do the right thing, be nice, and treat our customers with the same respect that we would demand of providers caring for our own families and property.

Putting the needs of the customer first is what I refer to as "customer focused". It is essential to be a top performing organization. It doesn't take "heroic" actions and often requires little more than a little extra effort. We have plenty of great examples of "customer focused" service. The latest example appears in the "You've Been Caught" section of this newsletter but know that the person that was on the receiving end of the "customer focused" service has dealt with another fire department in the past and she was quick to compare the service she received from our department with that of the other department.

She was very impressed with the service from our department as compared to the other and could tell that we were "customer focused". The irony is that she was not a customer per se; she was attending the health fair event to get some ideas for a health fair in her own company, yet she was still treated as a customer. (Another key point for Chief Brunacini's book – treat everyone as a customer!) I took great pride in having our department compared to a more traditional department that didn't measure up to our performance. People do notice.

Now I could go on and on with some positive examples for "mission driven, customer focused" service and we do share all of the letters we receive in the "You've Been Caught" letters, today I would like to look at some examples of "me driven" service that can invade fire departments. Some are subtle, others are very obvious and clearly show that the customer is no where in the equation.

The first example occurred when we were a 100% POC department. (Quality customer service is not related to the pay status of a department – there are volunteers that excel at customer service and there are career departments that don't do so well. It goes both ways) One firefighter who lived a little further from the station often didn't make the first out truck. I was blown away when one day she asked that we actually delay responding so that we never respond before five minutes from the alarm to give her time to get to the station. Really? Where is the customer in that equation? I asked her if she would want us to wait if we were responding to her mother... she didn't respond. This is clearly someone who is putting her needs ahead of those of the customer. Not much respect, compassion or integrity in that, now is it? Mission drive, customer focused? I don't think so – more "me" focused than anything else.

Another example of missing the customer focus was another firefighter asking if it would be okay to respond lights and siren even when they knew that no emergency existed. He actually wanted to respond lights and sirens when there was no emergency. His rationale; one didn't get enough responses and if we didn't let firefighters drive in the emergency mode, they would get bored and quit. Mission drive, customer focused? I don't think so – more focused on their needs than the customers...not to mention the lack of concern for all the motoring public and their crews that would be put at risk by driving that way.



Chief Brunacini

Chief's Corner ...continued on next page

Chief's Corner ...continued from page

How about the member who couldn't make calls during 8 – 5 hours but opposed hiring others to cover that time frame? He was convinced if people were hired to cover day hours, it would eventually affect his ability to respond in the evening hours. His desire to provide coverage when he could respond trumped the needs of the customers that had needs that occurred when he couldn't respond. His needs were greater than the customers. Meet the mission? Customer focused? Could one have pride in that approach? Does that show compassion, integrity, sense of duty, or a sense of respect to the customer?

Those examples are extreme but clearly show that these firefighters were not focused on the customer or the mission but rather themselves. Other examples are less obvious but still reveal a lack of customer focus.

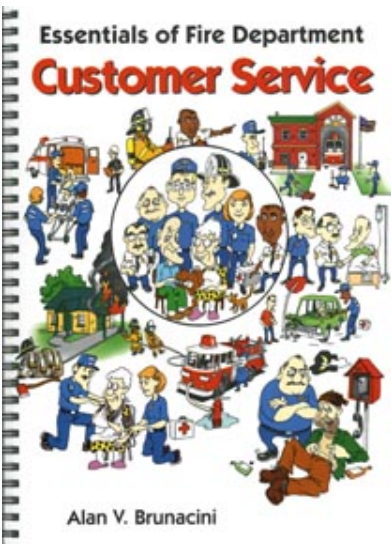
How about the firefighter who is upset by the 3 AM call or the after hours tour or the PR/public education event? While not as obvious, it is not mission driven or a customer focused approach. The "early morning" or "after hours" customer should not feel that they have inconvenienced us. They are the reason that we are here...to meet their needs, not ours. If there was never a request for service at those hours, there would be no need to have staff at those hours. Can you imagine any business staffing at a time where there was no customer demand? It would be like staffing a snow cone booth at Saylorville Lake during a January blizzard! If providing service at anytime during one's shift is a problem, one should probably consider working a shift that is of a length in which one doesn't mind providing service at anytime during that shift.

Obviously this problem is not limited to the fire service. I can provide examples from many organizations, private and public that clearly show that the customers are not central to the organization. Unfortunately there are way too many examples of governmental agencies that have lost

sight of why they exist. They are really there to meet the customer's needs, not so the customer can meet their needs and provide them a job.

The heart of the matter is that our department is going to deliver our services under the principle that our services will be mission driven and customer focused...and everyone should be considered a customer. Mission driven in that we exist to protect property, preserve life and promote safety through education. Customer focused means that our system of service delivery is based on the customer's needs, perceptions and feelings. This is good for our customers and can be a lot of fun for all of our staff.

If you need to determine if what you are doing or thinking about doing is "customer focused", ask yourself these questions identified by Chief Brunacini:



- Is it the right thing for the customer?
- Is it the right thing for the department?
- Is it legal, ethical and nice?
- Is it safe?
- Is it a decision/action that can be made at your level within the organization?
- Is it something you are willing to be accountable for?
- Is it consistent with our department's values and policies/procedures/SOPs?

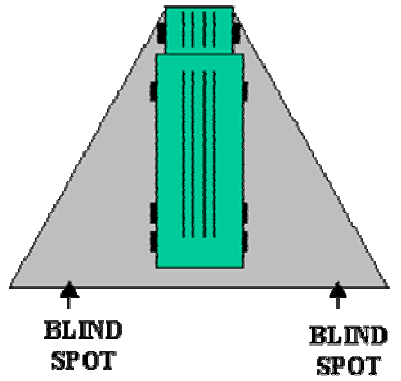
...if the answer is yes to all of these questions, don't ask for permission, **JUST**

DO IT!

Safety Tip – Don't Forget the Blind Spots.....

The weather is nicer, and there is a lot of activity outside so – don't forget to check your blind spots!

1. Don't forget to do a walk around your truck before you leave. Not only are you checking to make sure all doors are closed and nothing is on the bumpers – which we aren't suppose to be putting anything on anyway, but you are also checking to see if anyone is around the truck. More kids are out, and they love fire trucks. Someone might have come up to the truck to check it out while you were gone.
2. If you have to back up – always have a backer. Be cautious that a child may have gotten behind your truck without your knowledge. And don't be the driver to have backed up into a vehicle that has stopped behind you without your knowledge.
3. When changing lanes – try to cover your blind spots carefully – if you can't see an area – ask someone else to check it for you. There are more and smaller vehicles out – especially motorcycles and bikes – make sure no one is in the lane you want to change into – or even worse, if you have to make a wide turn, make sure that no one has come up on your side that you end up turning into or a pedestrian/jogger getting ready to cross the intersection.



Fireground Situational Awareness – Capt. Jim Mitchell

If you have followed any of the FDIC 2010 workshop presentations, you may have read an article regarding a presentation provided by Chief Rich Gasaway of Roseville (MN) Fire Department. Chief Gasaway spoke of the lack of Fireground Situational Awareness contributing to the Line of Duty Deaths (LODD's). Military Operations refers to situational awareness as the understanding of events as they unfold in time and projecting the consequences of those events in the near future. This is certainly a necessary skill for understanding what is happening during any fire or rescue incident. I would go on to say that this is a necessary skill for providing good emergency medical care. EMT school provides a specific patient condition/situation and trains us in how to react to that given condition/situation. My compliant, during Paramedic training, has been that the curriculum never trains you how to react during a deteriorating condition. I think this is true with fire training.

If you look at Firefighter I and II training, I think you will agree that each chapter provides valuable information that teaches us critical firefighting skills. But, we struggle with tying it all together. We can go on and on with examples, e.g.: RIT drills, interior attack drills, ventilation exercises, vehicle extrication training, MAY DAY drills, etc., etc., etc.... But, we don't train on how to implement RIT while a fire attack and search and rescue is also in operation.

I think part of the answer to good situational awareness is either having a lot of experience in various situations and/or various training exercises. Either case provides the firefighter with a variety of tools in the brain bank to draw from when *you know what* hits the fan. Being able to develop and implement plans "A", "B" and "C" when specific situations occur. So, to be a good firefighter, we need to either have a lot of dumb luck with experience or train based on others experiences. And a lot of training!

Chief Gasaway also discussed the need to focus on the mental management of emergencies and how to avoid being in a situation where you need to be rescued. Gasaway described the body's physiological reactions to stress and how that affects our decision making process, including some situations in which crews and officers operating on the fireground were unable to process Mayday calls by trapped firefighters. He stressed that understanding the science behind decision making can

affect our ability to focus in high-stress situations.

I have discussed this numerous times, but I say a good firefighter/EMT is one that learns how to control their adrenaline. A firefighter has to process the entire picture/situation. We need to understand the stage of the fire, which includes reading the smoke, the amount of time the fire has been burning, building construction, the fire protection systems in place, rescue needs or not, etc., etc., etc.... Now, please don't take this the wrong way. This doesn't mean that we should approach all fire situations at a snails pace and take our sweet time soaking all of this in. What I am saying is that a good firefighter/officer reads all of this quickly, with a sense of urgency, and uses the above mentioned process to decide how to react. I believe firefighters that get into trouble may do all of this, but they forget to keep analyzing the situation and predicting the next five to ten minutes, i.e.; the fire is this now, where will the fire be in ten minutes?



Also, remember that it is OK to discuss, as a crew, how you will react if you arrive on scene and

you have an imminent rescue, how you will coordinate ventilation with fire attack, how we will work in conjunction with the neighboring fire departments, etc. Maybe you have already talked about these issues. But, have you planned a training exercise with our neighbors to make sure your plan actually works? Have we drilled, as a crew, on searching a hallway of a residence having one rescue search a room while your partner stays at the door and then switching roles when you come to the next room? And, have we practiced various techniques so many times that it is second nature?

I feel that the key to good situational awareness is practicing various situations developing various approaches so that we have several different ways to address each situation. A good way to identify situations that we may be presented with is to review the "Near Miss Reports". If it can happen to them, it certainly can happen to us. Use the "Near Miss Reports" and develop drills on how we would react to them given the staffing and tools that we have available to us.

The bottom line is realistic training, realistic training, realistic training!!!!!!!

Be a good firefighter, be a safe firefighter and everyone goes home!

The Dash – Capt. Joe Malloy

Last year I lost my father, this year I lost friends like Monte Burr and Matt Dehaven. What did they have to show for the time they spent on this earth? What were they leaving for others to remember? What did the DASH mean to them and others they left behind? The DASH, you know the little line between the two dates you find on headstones or in the obituaries.

You have seen them before, either at a cemetery or in the paper, that phrase here lies John Doe, he was born DASH and died. For John it is short and not so sweet, but for the three above, they cared and their DASH could take up a full page if it were put in written word. All three had wakes that were well attended by family, friends and acquaintances that brought with them memories of how their lives had been touched and changed. How they had reached out and took on life not for themselves but in service of others. Family, church, Boy/Girl Scouts, Doctors without Borders, Habitat for Humanity and more.

What about your DASH? Are you taking the time to explain to your children, your family and friends how much you care about them? Do they know why you do all of the hours of specialty training and on duty time you do for them through the fire department and other associations that you belong? Do you take the training you receive and pass it up? Do you take the time to help serve other family and community members, using these skills? Do you encourage them to do the same? Do you encourage them to join you in these activities working side by side to make a better life for someone else?

Join me in changing our dash to a DASH. And my hope and prayer is that it definitely is a long time from that first date to the last.



National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Golf Tournament

Tuesday, June 29, 2010—The Legacy Golf Club: Norwalk



Help the families of fallen firefighters by participating in Des Moines 1st annual Nat'l Fallen Firefighters Memorial Golf tournament. This is being organized by our very own Lance Routson. The golf tournament is being held on Tuesday, June 29 at the Legacy Golf Club in Norwalk. Please help show our support and get a team together, or you can also be a single golfer, and participate in this event. To register, or for further information: <http://golf.firehero.org/ia/urbandale>. If you would like to help out with the event, please see Lt. Routson.

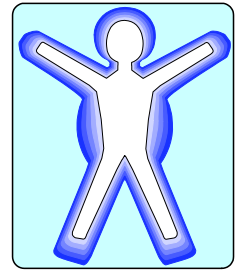


ON THE LINE

WHAT'S HAPPENING AROUND THE DEPARTMENT...

- EMS Week is coming in May and we will be conducting some PR events around town. Look for the details from Chief Light in early May.
- Work continues on the Station 41 renovation project. Plans are being finalized and we hope to have the project out for bid soon with construction beginning shortly after that. With the expected completion date being in November.
- The hiring process continues to fill the six SAFER grant positions. We anticipate making job offers this month with the new hires starting by the end of the month. The remaining four positions will be filled sometime after July 1st. The announcement for the testing process will likely occur after the Human Resources Director is hired in June/July.
- The certification classes Fire Instructor I and Fire Officer I are being offered in May with the anticipation of testing for the three new Lieutenant positions being later this summer.
- We will be conducting our annual Kid's Fire Academy in June. Please see Fire Marshal Rech if you are interested in helping out with the great event.
- We will be hosting an Open House for the Tri City Fire And Safety Training Center in June—June 16th. This event will be to celebrate the official opening of this collaborative effort and the Mayors, City Managers and Councils from Clive, Urbandale and Winsor Heights will be invited.
- The new Ice Rescue SOG has been completed and the time frame for comments has closed. It will be released this month and is now in effect.
- The restructuring of the Firefighter's Association took a step forward in April with the election of the new representatives for the new organization (Firefighter's Fund). Those elected to serve as officers of the new organization are John Ouverson, Lance Routson, Ross Frank, Laura Lyons, Rod Silvers and Paula Merfeld.
- The SCBA fill station is being moved from Sta. 41 to Sta. 42 to facilitate better use for the training center. The project should be completed by May 13th.

Congratulations!



- Chief Cardwell and Brennan Burke. Mike & Brennan teamed up for the city's weight loss challenge and won first place on both weight loss and percentage of weight loss. The team splits \$320 for their efforts!

Last Safety Incident: As of May 1st

40 days without a safety incident
374 days without a lost time injury

Training Center is Named!

After months of mulling over submission for possible names, the three Chiefs have decided on a name for the new training facility:

Tri-City Fire And Safety Training Center

Chief's thanks...

A big thanks to everyone who helped out with the pizza delivery project. The "Delivering Fire Safety" program was the result of receiving a grant from Safe Kids Iowa and a joint effort with Papa John's Pizza to increase the number of working smoke detectors in our community. We inspected 35 smoke detectors during this effort as well as delivered 10 pizzas, replaced two batteries, and replaced two detectors. A big thanks to our staff; Fire Marshal Jon Rech, Chief Danford, Lt. Routson, Jamie Erie, and Julie Stuckle. Also, a special thanks to State Farm, Papa John's Pizza and Safe Kids Iowa for making it possible!



ON THE LINE

Other programs/training/projects completed by UFD in April:

Training Report: **641 hours** of training were completed in April.

Fire Training: 523 hours

EMS Training: 118 hours



Prevention & Inspection Activities:

- 14 Inspections
- 7 Reinspections
- 3 Preplans
- 9 Plan Reviews
- 5 Car Seat Installs
- 2 CPR Classes

			Children	Adults	
4/2/2010	6301 Aurora	Kids Event	100	10	
4/7/2010	4140 114th	Safety Fair	0	50	
4/7/2010	St.41	Station Tour	4	1	
4/8/2010	St.42	Station Tour	7	4	
4/9/2010	7110 Prairie	Kids Event	50	25	
4/10/2010	2743 82nd	CPR class	0	7	
4/13/2010	St.42	Station Tour	2	1	
4/13/2010	7305 Aurora	BP Checks	0	16	
4/15/2010	6325 Douglas	Delivering Fire Prevention	12	20	
4/21/2010	4621 121st	AED Demonstration	0	145	
4/22/2010	2743 82nd Pl.	CPR class	0	8	
4/23/2010	St.42	Station Tour	30	30	
4/29/2010	3500 92nd	FF Career Talk	150	12	
4/29/2010	St.42	Juvenile Fire Setter Mtg.	1	0	
4/30/2010	6301 Aurora	FF Career Talk	150	12	
4/30/2010	St.42	Station Tour	1	1	Total
			507	342	849

Special Classes in May:

Fire Instructor I

Fire Officer I

See Chief Cardwell if you are interested.



Outside Training Attended in April:

Fire Department Instructor's Conference, 3 personnel; IA Professional Fire Chiefs Association Leadership Seminar, 7 personnel; Polk County EMA, I-400 course, 1 person; Child Passenger Safety Update, 2 personnel

“YOU’VE BEEN CAUGHT DOING AN OUTSTANDING JOB” LETTERS...

We continue to recognize your efforts. Whenever we receive a thank you letter, card or a phone call, we pass that along to the people involved in the form of a “You’ve Been Caught Doing An Outstanding Job” letter. As of May 1st, we have sent 29 letters to our personnel. The following people received “You’ve Been Caught” letters since our last newsletter:

Lt. Birkett, Fire Marshal Rech, Laura Lyons, & Eric Ennen

We received an email on 4/21/10 from someone that was at a PR/Pub Ed event and wanted to let us know that our personnel, specifically Lt. Birkett and Fire Marshal Rech were “very personable and did a great job representing your department.” She went on to say that they were very knowledgeable and “I have dealt with various fire departments over the years and know the attitude many of those individuals can carry. Neither of the two representing your department today portrayed that bad attitude or "better than thou" attitude towards anyone that approached them...*It is refreshing to see a department such as yours.* I work closely with [department name removed—another department that she works with during a special event] and know several of those fire fighters and EMS staff that are not quite as friendly even in that setting. I was a customer service trainer for many years, so that tends to stand out to me a lot.”

Thanks to all of you for providing outstanding service!!

Member Profile...

Member Profile: Kyle Bissell

Length of time with UFD: In August I will have been here 3 years

Level: Full-time Firefighter/ Paramedic

Why I became interested in the UFD: I was raised going to my Grandfather's Fire Station in Ottumwa where he was the Assistant Chief and knew as a youngster that I wanted to be a firefighter. When the opportunity presented itself I knew that this department was where I wanted to be.

Previous EMS experience: I was a full-time Paramedic for Dallas County EMS before coming to Urbandale Fire. I have been in EMS since 1994. I have also worked part-time Paramedic for WDM-EMS, Indianola FD, and Clive FD.

Previous Fire experience: I joined the Adel Fire Department in 1994 and have been on a truck ever since. I have worked part-time for Indianola FD and Clive FD prior to coming to Urbandale Fire.

Committees: I am currently a member of the Training committee and the Safety committee

Family life: Married to Michelle for 21 years. Our children are Branden 19 and Shannen 16. We also have a 150 pound Alaskan Malamute named Linden.

Current Profession: I am a Firefighter/ Paramedic for the City of Urbandale's Fire Department.

Activities or hobbies I enjoy: Fishing, watching baseball, and Notre Dame Football.

Most memorable moment with UFD: Being sworn in and having my wife pin my badge on my uniform.

Most memorable moment outside of UFD: February 11th, 1989, the day I married my wife.

Favorite TV programs: MASH, Twilight Zone, COPS

Favorite movies: Caddyshack, Animal House, and anything with gratuitous killing.

Last book that I read: Legal Considerations for Fire and Emergency Services, and Industrial Fire Protection. I would suggest waiting for the movies based on these books to come out.

Personal goals: Obtaining my BS degree in Fire Science by the end of this May and pursuing a Masters Degree in either Fire Science or Emergency Management.

Words of advice for someone new getting into EMS or Fire: Listen to those on the job they are a wealth of knowledge. Never stop learning because the most dangerous medic or fire fighter on scene is the one that knows everything.

What I enjoy about the Urbandale Fire Dept: The variety of opportunities it affords the employee to make a difference.

◆.....◆
Training in Windsor Heights...



Picture this...

From the “Delivering Fire Safety” Pizza Delivery project....

