



On the Line



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

In This Issue...

Chief's Corner.....	2
Are Your Burning Propane—Lt. Birkett.....	3
A Leadir—Lt. Gentosi.....	4
Safety Tips.....	4
The City We Serve—A/C Danford.....	5
Around the Department.....	6
Congratulations/Announcement.....	6
Prevention/Training Efforts.....	7
Member Profile: Cory Young.....	8

Upcoming Events

May 15-21

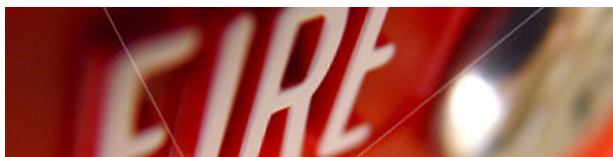
EMS Week

There are activities planned for every day this week—please plan on helping with this year's activities!

June 17th

2nd Annual Greater Des Moines National Fallen Firefighters Foundation Memorial Golf Tournament—The Legacy Gold Club. Norwalk.

Be sure to check the pub-ed calendars for upcoming events!



UFD statistics for March

Calls for service: 190 YTD: 611

Average response Time – All incidents: **6 minutes and 38 seconds**

Average response Time – **Emergency** incidents: **6 minutes and 28 seconds**

Emergency Medical Service calls: 157

Average Response Time EMS: 6 minutes and 24 seconds

Emergency: 6 minutes and 12 seconds

Non-Emergency: 6 minutes and 33 seconds

Fire related calls: 33

Average Response Time Fire: 7 minutes and 17 seconds

Average turnout per fire incident: 8 people

We **received mutual aid five times**— three times for fire calls and two times for EMS calls.

We **provide mutual aid two one time**—for a fire call.

Types of Fire Calls

The 33 fire calls we had in March fall into the following categories:

Fire / Explosion:	9
Hazardous Condition:	1
Public Service:	2
Good Intent Calls:	8
False Calls:	13



Birthdays:

Jessie Christensen April 1

Jamie Erie April 9

Joe Malloy April 10





Do you ever feel like no one is watching? Like the only time people notice what you are doing is if you don't do something that you are supposed to do or if something goes wrong? Take heart...you are not alone! All of us feel unappreciated and overlooked at some point.

It often seems that no one seems to notice all of the good things we do. When we do the job right, on time and as promised, people don't often say anything. But let us make a mistake, and it seems like everyone can point it out. People are quick to point out when something goes wrong and unfortunately, we are often not quick enough to recognize the hard work of those around us. Perhaps people don't point out when things go well because they **expected** you to get it right in the first place. No one expects you to not do what you say you are going to do, so when you do it, and do it right, they often forget to say, "nice job!" There is good news...we can change this!

The change starts with you. First, look for the good that the people around you are doing. They do it every day! It doesn't have to be something great, something inspiring, it can simply be doing the job right that you expect them to do. Be sure to point out that YOU noticed when the job was done right. Let them hear you say something positive about their performance, even if it is what you expected them to do. It shouldn't be insincere. It should be a sincere thank you and it should be heard anytime you see something that a person does that is worthy of a thank you. Who determines if it is worthy of a thank you? They do!! Remember...treat people the way they would want to be treated...not the way YOU want to be treated. So you don't care if anyone ever says thank you to you? Good...you won't be disappointed if no one does but remember to think how does the other person feel? Would a "thank you" make them feel good about what they are doing? We all know that it feels good to be recognized for getting it right. It feels good to have someone notice that you made the effort. Maybe if we work towards recognizing the efforts of others, the process will become contagious. Maybe you will make someone feel so good about themselves that they will pass that feeling along to someone else! I feel we have been doing a good job with this approach at UFD.

The second part of this change is how you react when someone points out that things didn't quite go the way they were supposed to. No one "likes" to hear that they could have done this or that better than they actually did but it is all part of the process of continuous quality improvement. All of us make mistakes - none of us are perfect. On most calls, we can identify other ways of doing what we did. Take criticism in stride. If someone didn't care enough to point out that things could have been done better, then opportunities for improvement are not recognized. We have to constantly strive for perfection – for better ways of doing our jobs. If no one points out that there was another way to do something, people are not being honest. It is true...perhaps they weren't there when things were "hitting the fan" but they may also have a perspective that you might not have had when operations were fast and furious. No one likes a Monday morning quarterback, however, only if operations are honestly evaluated can improvement be expected.

If you find yourself on the giving side of criticism, be nice! If you take pleasure in pointing out other's mistakes, that is certainly another issue that goes beyond this article. We should never take pleasure in pointing out other's mistakes. If they knew it was wrong, they wouldn't have done it the way they did! Be sensitive to others, be kind and the process for improvement can be positive. One other thing to consider when offering suggestions for improvement...you never know what is going on in someone else's life. The nature of our work is that we respond on a moments notice. One minute you are having a discussion with your teenager (no small task!!) on teenage driving habits and the next minute you are responding to a call. Perhaps the talk with the teenager didn't go the way you had hoped...now might not be the best time to hear how things could have been improved on the last call. The old adage, "leave your personal problems at home" is good in theory however, in real life, most of us carry those issues with us wherever we go. Be empathetic. Be sure someone is in the right frame of mind before pointing out improvement opportunities.

In his book The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People, Stephen Covey list 7 habits that can lead us all on a path of growth and change. They apply to our department as much as they do to your personal life. They have the power to make a difference in all that we do and certainly support our core values and mission. I think they are worth sharing as we all strive to be the best individuals and department that we can be:

1. **Be proactive: Accept responsibility for your own behavior and making choices based on principles rather than moods or circumstances.**
2. **Begin with the end in mind: Mentally identify and commit yourself to principals, values, relationships and purposes that matter to you.** As it relates to our fire department, commit yourself to the mission and vision of our department. Know where the management of the department wants the department to go and make sure your actions are consistent with that vision. Leave your prejudices, hurt feelings, aside and do what is best for the department.
3. **Put first things first: Organize and execute around your purpose, vision, values and priorities.** Know your job – the customer service stuff is great, but ultimately providing fire and EMS services is job one! If you say you are going to do something – do it! Do it when you say you will, in the manner you said you would!
4. **Think win-win: Seek mutual benefit based on mutual respect in all interactions.** It is a team effort – not ever station 41 against station 42, full-time versus POC, us against them – it should be you win, we win! Seek ways to achieve mutual benefit for all who is involved.
5. **Seek first to understand, then to be understood: Listen with the intent to understand others rather than with the intent to reply.** If you don't know, ask!
6. **Synergize: Produce a third alternative – not my way, not your way, but a better way that neither of us could come up with individually.**
7. **Sharpen the saw: Constantly renew yourself in the four basic areas of life; physical, social/emotional, mental and spiritual.**

Are You Burning Propane? - Lt. Dan Birkett

Within the past month while working at Station 42 we received a call for a CO/Gas detector that was alarming. Westcom advised us that the occupants had evacuated. They were not having any symptoms and they would be awaiting our arrival. Chief Light was in charge of L425 and requested that Mid American respond to the scene. The residence was west of 156th Street and north of Douglas. Knowing that area and looking on the map showed us that this would be one of the acreages inside the city limits of Urbandale.

Upon arrival to the residence we had a house that was set back approximately 200 yards off the street. We parked our truck and met the home owner and his daughter outside of the residence. The gentleman stated that he was watching TV in the basement and his daughter was upstairs taking a shower. He stated that he suddenly smelled a natural gas odor and then his alarm sounded in the utility room. When he checked the utility room his CO/Gas monitor was alarming in the gas mode. He immediately opened the windows in his house and called 911. I started monitoring in the garage and worked my way into the basement. I was not getting any readings and did not smell any odor. Once I reached the basement utility room I did get a CO reading of 8 ppm while the furnace was running. The plug-in CO/Gas detector appeared to be new and was not alarming at this time. The only other gas appliance in the home was the hot water heater and it was next to the furnace. The home owner did state that the hot water heater vent was extremely hot when he checked it earlier. I turned up the temperature on the heater and smelled an odor of gas but did immediately get a nice blue flame. With the odor of gas everything started to click. It did not smell like natural gas.....we are on an acreage that has been hear for years.....I've smelled this odor before.....and at the same time Chief Light advised that Mid American Energy would not respond to this location. I then asked the home owner if he burns propane? He stated, "Well...I do have this big tank out on the north side of my house." At that point I could have kicked myself for not already knowing or at least asking that question. I continued the investigation and found a large amount of black soot on the top of the hot water heater and the water pipes leaving the top of the heater. It was fairly obvious that this is what caused the problem. The appliance was turned off and the home owner advised to call a plumber to repair or replace the heater. I did find out later that the home owner uses Farrell gas company but he was unsure of who he should call if there was a problem.



After thinking about the call I came up with a list of things we can learn from this incident:

1. It's not always a faulty monitor. A good monitor that is maintained can alert occupants of a dangerous atmosphere in their home.
2. We have to always consider the location of homes in Urbandale. There are many homes that were built prior to the west expansion. Many of the homes have connected to NG but many are burning propane as their source of fuel.
3. Mid American Energy does not respond to homes that are fueled by propane. This is the responsibility of the propane gas company that supplies the fuel.
4. Mid American is required to respond within one hour of a possible NG odor. The propane company is required to respond within 24 hours. Quite a big difference.
5. Propane is like any other fossil fuel and does produce CO when burned.
6. Propane is stored in large tanks that hold amounts from 250-1000 gallons depending on the size of the residence. Newer tanks may be buried in the ground for aesthetic reasons.
7. Propane is a gas that is compressed and stored as a liquid. It does have additives to give it a noticeable odor.
8. Propane is 1.5 times heavier than air which will cause the gas to sink and hang in low spaces inside and outside the home. There is potential for an explosion.
9. Propane tanks will normally have a steel handled shut off valve that can be turned clockwise to stop the flow of propane from the tank.
10. A malfunctioning propane appliance can cause a gas fed fire that could be extremely hard to extinguish without shutting off the gas supply.

As always be aware of your surroundings and know what possible hazards are in our area. Propane is a safe and efficient form of fuel for a home, but like any other fuel has hazards and characteristics unique to itself. Obviously this is a quick overview of a potential hazard in our area. There are numerous resources available if you would like more information on uses and storage of propane.

A Leader – Lt. Mike Gentosi

By the time the April 2011 newsletter gets put out, I will be halfway through our time in Afghanistan. The end of January marked the halfway mark for the whole mobilization to demobilization time period. I am so thankful this time is nearing an end. When I get home, I will have been gone 18 out of 22 months. Way too long for a home body such as myself.

One benefit to being on a deployment is witnessing so many different types of personalities, leadership styles, and quirks. We just lost a platoon to another outpost. They call it an outpost, but it is really more like a FOB (forward operating base). That puts us at two line platoons plus Headquarters (medics, cooks, forward observers, mortars, and COIST [company intelligence support team]). We are down to around 70 people here at the ARK. In our platoon alone, there are ten non-commissioned officers (NCOs or sergeants) and one officer (2nd Lieutenant).

There is a great opportunity to learn the leadership styles of others. I am going to discuss one aspect of a leader that is a huge pet peeve of mine. I hope you have now noticed that “leader” was just spelled correctly compared to the title. That is for a reason. I know we have always heard the cliché, “there is no T in team”. Well, there is no “T” in leader as well. This is for a very important reason.



A leader has everything to do with those he/she leads and vice versa. It is also imperative to keep the best interest of those you lead in mind. This has a lot to do with ideas and accomplishments. I have far too experienced how many times a Joe has a new idea or does something great to see a sergeant report to higher that “I did this” or “I got this done”. This hasn’t happened directly to me, but I have seen how it affects the ones it does happen to.

I have tried my best to always ensure the idea or accomplishment is properly represented when the time comes. If I go to Chief and say, “Chief, I have this new great idea.” Chief may love it and run with it. It may even make me look really good. But, what if it was really Cory’s idea or Cody’s or someone else? What has that accomplished?



Basically, all I have done is demean another for the betterment of myself. I have stolen something that wasn’t mine and made it my own. You can get kicked out of college for that crap. I expect more out of a leader. In hindsight, doesn’t it make the leader look just as good if it is one of his/her subordinates that comes up with the idea? As I stated above, it is a two-way street.

I know there isn’t a whole lot to this article. One of the points I want to get to is once you take a leadership role, you are an advocate and represent those you lead. It is your job to support and embrace what they do and ensure those above you know what is going on. A leader who wants to be in the lime light and steals what is rightfully those he/she leads isn’t a leader at all and will struggle with followership. One who wants to see his/her subordinates get recognized and see them succeed is one that others will desire to follow.

Safety Tip

From Chief Alan Buracini’s book ‘Timeless Tactical Truths’:

It is better to get out 5 minutes too soon than 5 minutes too late.

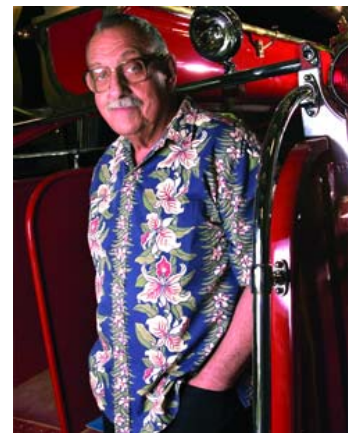
Very little on the fireground falls up.

Respect defensive conditions...the buildings God doesn’t want to burn are sprinklered.

The only thing that will impress the fire well-placed force (force = water and tactical support).

Never confuse repeat fires for routine fires; the same basic deadly elements are present at every fire- - there is no such thing as a routine, pip-squeak fire.

We’re naturally geared to go forward; we don’t retreat well...we must practice the tactical agility of making a u-turn when necessary.



The City We Serve-URBANDALE - Assistant Chief Danford

April 16th marks the 94th anniversary of Urbandale's incorporation. According to "A Brief History" published by the Urbandale High School, Urbandale was formed because its founders wanted to establish its own schools. The first school was opened at 70th Street and Douglas Avenue in 1913.

The original city limits were from 63rd Street to 86th Street and Meredith Drive to about Urbandale Avenue. The 1920 Census listed Urbandale's population at 298. In the early years Urbandale was known as the "street car suburb". The trolley line transported goods and workers to and from 'the city (Des Moines)'. The trolley line was the main connection between Urbandale (70th Street & Rose-land Ave.) and Des Moines. Many residents did not have automobiles in those early years. At the height of its service, cars ran every 7.5 minutes during rush hour and at 15 minute intervals at other times from 5:00 A.M. to midnight.



Coal mining and dairy farms were among Urbandale's first business. The coal mines were shaft mines 180 feet to 360 feet deep. Entry shafts to these mines were located by Karen Acres School, 78th Street and Hickman Road, the 4400 block of Merle Hay Road, and 104th Street and Meredith Drive. Most of the mines were closed in the 1930's. Electricity was installed in 1917. Water lines were installed in 1934. Sewer lines were dug in 1950.

Many businesses have called Urbandale home over the years. Merle Hay Mall opened in 1959. Urbandale is home to Living History Farms, where Pope John Paul II spoke to an estimated crowd of 350,000 people on October 4, 1979. Some of the major employers in 1975 were: Super Value Warehouse, Gibbs-Cook, Parker Brothers, and Continental Western Insurance. Some leading employers today (2011) are: CitiGroup Cards, Wells Fargo Financial, U.S. Postal Service, Urbandale School District, and MidAmerican Energy.

Urbandale's population grew from 298 in 1917 to 1,777 in 1950. Development of the Karen Acres area, beginning in 1956, initiated a period of rapid growth. The population grew to 14,343 in 1970. The population increased to 35,904 in 2005. The 2010 Census figures show Urbandale's population at 39,463, making Urbandale Iowa's 12th largest city. It is projected that Urbandale's population will reach 50,100 by the year 2020.

Note: I wanted to compile this 'brief history' of Urbandale to inform the fire department membership about the cities

'roots'. Our humble beginnings have led us to the thriving community we are today. I feel blessed to reside in such a great city.

*Thank you to: Urbandale Chamber of Commerce, Urbandale Historical Society, and City of Urbandale for providing above data.



Worlds of Fun/Oceans of Fun in Kansas City has sent coupons for \$10 off on regular tickets...see the Chief if you would like to have some of these coupons.

WHAT'S HAPPENING AROUND THE DEPARTMENT...

- We are finally moved in to the renovated station 41. There will still be some "bugs" to work out and the furniture is to be delivered in early April.
- The process for the new drug vending machine is still being worked out. We hope to have that up and running in the very near future along with some shelving in the EMS room at Sta. 41.
- The TEAMS cards have been updated and are being reviewed by our mutual aid partners who appear on our cards. We hope to get the "okay" from all of those departments soon. The goal is to have those cards updated at the dispatch centers by the end of April and have the new cards operational by June 1st.
- We continue to look for opportunities to market our safety message-part of our mission to promote safety through education. A couple of ideas that are "floating" out there:
 - ☉ Utilizing our apparatus to display safety messages—if you have ideas for messages that you would like to see, please let the Chief know.
 - ☉ "Take A Kid To The Game" promotion. What is envisioned is a contest that gets Urbandale youth to create a safety message, or some how involved in the fire safety process. There would be a winner at each school in Urbandale and a winner will be picked up at his/her home and taken to the Urbandale High School on a fire apparatus to enjoy a football game at each home game this fall. If you have ideas on contest or any idea that will help us involve the youth in Urbandale, please let the Chief or Fire Marshal Rech know.
- Work on EMS week activities continues. Our plans call for us to have some activity each day of this year's EMS Week as we strive to promote EMS related messages.
- We will be forming a Fire Prevention Week committee this year sometime in June to work with Fire Marshal Rech as we prepare for this October's Fire Prevention Week activities.

Congratulations!

Lieutenant Lance Routson: Has successfully completed the process that awards him the professional **designation of "Fire Officer"** (FO). The Commission on Professional Credentialing (CPC) met on March 8, 2011, to officially confer the designation upon Lieutenant Routson. Lieutenant Routson is one of only 37 FO's worldwide and the first to achieve the FO designation in the State of Iowa.

The CPC awards the FO designation only after an individual successfully meets all of the organization's stringent criteria. The process includes an assessment of the applicant's education, experience, professional development, technical competencies, contributions to the profession, and community involvement. In addition, all applicants are required to identify a future professional development plan.

The Commission on Professional Credentialing, an entity of the Center for Public Safety Excellence, Inc., (CPSE) administers the FO Designation Program. The CPC consists of individuals from academia, federal and local government, and the fire and emergency medical services profession. To learn more about CPC, visit www.publicsafetyexcellence.org.



To everyone for getting their physicals done in a timely way! It is great when we do not have to track people down and continually push them to get their physical by the deadline!



We are retiring...

Captain Joe Malloy (33 years) and Assistant Chief Denny Danford (34 years) have decided to hang up their hose and end their fire service career! They will be leaving the department sometime in July. Both have served our department and the city for a long time, have seen a great deal of change and they will both be missed! Collectively, they have more experience than the last 12 FT staff hired...combined! Be sure to spend some time with these two in the coming months and thank them for their years of dedicated service. Both hope to stay involved in some capacity into the future.



ON THE LINE

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

Training Report: **1017 hours** of training were completed in March.

Fire Training: 556 hours

EMS Training: 461 hours

Prevention & Inspection Activities:

- Completed 26 Inspections
- Completed 15 re-inspections
- Completed 3 preliminary reviews
- Conducted 13 plan reviews
- Completed 3 pre-plans

Date	Location	Activity Type	# of Children	# of Adults	
3/4/2011	4117 73rd	Detector Batteries	0	1	
3/4/2011	St.42	Station tour	8	2	
3/9/2011	Residence	Detector Batteries	0	1	
3/9/2011	St.42	Station tour	20	12	
3/9/2011	St.41	Station tour	0	5	
3/10/2011	10627 Sharon Cir	Detector Batteries	0	2	
3/10/2011	St.42	Station tour	20	14	
3/11/2011	3119 Elm Dr.	Detector Batteries	0	1	
3/11/2011	7309 Oliver Smith	Detector Batteries	0	1	
3/15/2011	7305 Aurora	BP checks	0	14	
3/15/2011	3602 151st St.	Detector Batteries	0	2	
3/16/2011	13007 Douglas Pkwy	Safety talk	32	4	
3/18/2011	14200 Hickman	Safety talk	35	5	
3/22/2011	St.42	Station tour	0	4	
3/24/2011	2412 Pine Cir.	Detector Batteries	0	1	
3/24/2011	4319 70th	Detector Batteries	0	1	
3/25/2011	Residence	Detector Batteries	0	2	
3/25/2011	8816 Townsend	Detector Batteries	0	2	
3/27/2011	St.42	Station tour	1	1	Total
			116	75	191



The Patch-Do you know what it the parts represent?

- The color **red** symbolizes the life and continuing growth of our Fire Department.
 - The **gold** trim symbolizes that firefighters, like gold, will withstand trial by fire and still remain.
 - The **black** background represents the foundation built by our past members as we will never forget all they have given in the line of duty.
 - The Scramble symbolizes a collection of items that represent readiness.
 - The six branches of the Star of Life are symbols of the six main tasks executed by rescuers through the emergency chain: **Early Detection, Early Reporting, Early Response, On Scene Care, Care in Transit, and Transfer to Definitive Care.**
 - The Centerpiece: Continuing the Tradition—The “**U**” was carried on to this patch design to keep the tradition of having the “**U**”. We also wanted to incorporate the “**U**” because it is a symbol used throughout the City of Urbandale.
- **“Mission Driven, Customer Focused”**
 These words speak a lot about our Fire Department. Our ultimate goal is to provide quality customer service by adhering to our core values and mission statement. We want our members to ask themselves two simple questions whenever they are faced with a challenge: Are your actions consistent with our core values and mission statement? Are they in the best interest of our customer?

Member Profile...

Member Profile: Cory Young

Length of time with UFD: 10 Months

Level: FT - FF/EMT-PS

Previous Fire experience: Adel FD 7 years, DCEMS 4 years, Mercy Ambulance Service 10 months, Clive FD current, Madison Co. Ambulance Service FT 11 months

Previous EMS experience: Adel Fire Dept., Clive Fire Dept

Family life: If all goes well I should be engaged to my girl friend, Chelle McNulty by mid summer. I have a son Brock who is 7.

Previous work experience: Worked construction, mainly dirt work Heavy Machine operator 7 years

Activities or hobbies I enjoy: Hunting, Fishing, Camping, and Racing (just a spectator for now, would like to own a stock car some day)

Most memorable moment with UFD: Getting a job offer from Chief Holt.

Most memorable moment outside of UFD: The birth of my son would have to top the list.

Last book that I read: Chicken farming for dummies.

Personal goals: I would like to get back in school and get a degree.

Words of advice for someone new getting into EMS or Fire: Don't give up, the odds of getting a job the first time you apply are slim, put as many application out there as you can , work hard, and go to paramedic school.

What I enjoy about the Urbandale Fire Dept: I enjoy UFD because it is small enough that you know everyone, and we are encouraged to continue our education.



Last Safety Incident:

As of April 1st

1 day without a safety incident

185 days without a lost time injury

Last incidents:

- A dropped radio resulting in damage to the radio—broken battery clips.
- Department car was backed into another vehicle—no damage.

