



On the Line



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

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Upcoming Events

September 11

Fellowship breakfast at the Machine Shed

September 13th

Annual PD versus FD Flag Football game to benefit [Make-A-Wish](#). Please help us defend our trophy while we raise money for this worthy cause!!

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

UFD statistics for July

Calls for service: 175 YTD: 1,382

Average response Time – All incidents: **7 minutes and 1 second**

Average response Time – **Emergency** incidents: **6 minutes and 53 seconds**

Emergency Medical Service calls: 135

Average Response Time EMS: 6 minutes and 28 seconds

Emergency: 6 minutes and 28 seconds

Non-Emergency: 6 minutes and 35 seconds

Fire related calls: 40

Average Response Time Fire: 8 minutes and 25 seconds

Average turnout per fire incident: 7 people

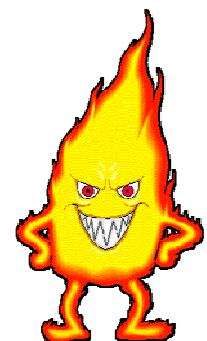
We **received mutual aid eight times** – five times for EMS calls and three times for fire calls

We **gave mutual aid two times** – both for EMS calls

Types of Fire Calls

The 40 fire calls we had in July fall into the following categories:

Fire / Explosion:	9
Hazardous Condition:	5
Service Calls:	5
Good Intent Calls:	9
False Calls:	12



Birthdays:

Nathan Wise	Aug 11
John McCannon	Aug 12
Joe Bonewitz	Aug 24
Mike Cardwell	Aug 30
Tom Hyde	Sept 15





Training – some see it as a task and other as a labor of love. I have been lucky throughout my career as I've always been heavily involved in training. I worked in a department that valued training...we trained all the time; night drills, weekends and holidays. Night drills and weekend training are just a way of life here but that wasn't the case when I became a firefighter.

My first three or four months on the job were under a Chief who didn't value training at all. The training was minimal, not very effective and frankly, was mostly "pencil whipped". You know the training...we did 20 minutes of talking about a subject that later showed up in the training record as two hours of training. I think some of the Officers were in a special Enron training program as they turned 20 minutes of actual training into two hours in the record books.

Some of the "guys" weren't much better. The griped and complained about training as if it was the hardest task they had ever performed. It was always too hot, too cold, or too something. Training on the weekend interfered with some sporting event on TV and training at night – well, that was "their" time and you just didn't mess with "their" time. Ironically, these same "guys" complained when there was a fire or ambulance run or work of any kind...and then complained when nothing was going on...I even had one firefighter tell me that we shouldn't train while we are on duty because we might be tired if someone really needed us...you get the picture.

At that time, the department was pretty lax. The TV was on 24/7 and the only restriction on sleeping was that during the week, you couldn't sleep until after lunch. There were a lot of card games and other activities that seem to get most of the attention between calls. If they would have approached training the way they approached planning breakfast, lunch and dinner, we would have been the best trained department in the state!

Not all was doom and gloom in that department. Their apparatus and stations were spotless. They did a great job of maintaining tools and equipment. Much of that was out of necessity...they didn't have scheduled apparatus replacement and newer equipment was not taken for granted. They were masters at making what they did have last and last.

I was fortunate in that I worked on a shift that had a "gun-ho" officer, Captain Anderson. He enjoyed training and we trained a lot. He really took it to the next level when we got a new Chief who demanded training be the hallmark of that department. The new Chief also changed the entire approach of how that department delivered services – no sleeping, no "sitting around" waiting for a call...he really professionalized the department and placed a focus on training. We trained during the day, at night and on weekends. It was nothing to be awakened at 0200 to report for a training drill. It was nothing to go to a local business's parking lot and spend hours in front of the public so they could see our training efforts.

Those efforts really paid off for us. Public perception about the department was changed and although a lot of the guys didn't like it, the public loved the approach. Many firefighters simply moved on, retired or other wise left the department. This gave us the opportunity to be a very young department with a lot of new firefighters. This in turn provided us for a means to change the culture...in a short time, there were very few people who remem-

bered the "old" ways of doing things. Training during the day, at night, on weekends became more normal and less and less people complained. Don't get me wrong, there are always those who are going to complain!

Eventually I moved up the ranks and was able to lead a shift. We became the training shift and most people on that shift enjoyed the Saturday training sessions. Not all shifts trained as much as we did, but that was okay. We knew our stuff and training became our niche.

Captain Anderson went on to become the Chief of the department and it was under his leadership that I was promoted to Training Officer. His commitment to training really paid off. Our department became known throughout the state for our training. Being a small department, our staff had to wear many hats. This meant that our staff would have to be trained in many areas resulting in numerous certifications. All certification classes taught in that state are required to be a minimum number of hours except for Firefighter I (Firefighter 1 was 240 hours plus 110 hours of EMT training). When our people moved on to jobs in bigger departments, they usually held more certifications than many of the people who had been on bigger departments for many years.

Many of the people who had served on Captain Anderson's shift went on to become officers in that department and Chief Officers in other departments. At least three people went on to become the Fire Chief in other departments, not to mention a Chief of Training and other officer positions in other departments. I always viewed that as very complimentary on our dedication to training.

The one item that we were weak on regarding training was training out of the state. We did many of our certification classes at the State Fire College or in-house. Occasionally we would attend training in a neighboring state but we just didn't go to the national shows. The result was that for the most part, we continued to do things the way we always did things. Unfortunately, that is a recipe for disaster and one doesn't have to look too far in the past to see where that occurred and resulted in multiple deaths of firefighters.

Firefighters and officers need to explore what is out there. What have other departments done? How have they addressed a specific problem? What are the cutting edge procedures? Only when one reads articles, attends out side training and has discussions with other firefighters can they find out what everyone else is doing and bring back the "latest and greatest" techniques.

Throughout my career, I took advantage of training opportunities anytime I could. I attended the National Fire Academy, Fire-House Expo, Fire Rescue International, Chief's conferences, regional and state EMS conferences, national shows and many other training opportunities. These were great opportunities to see what else is out there and bring back new ways of addressing old problems.

Embrace training...it is the best way to improve service delivery. Train until performance is flawless...train like you perform and perform like you train. Rather you have been in the fire service 12 years or 12 months; take advantage and embrace in-house, regional, state and national training opportunities...it is the best way to help us develop into a world class fire department!

UNDER PRESSURE - AC Rob Light

It was crunch time...my newsletter article was due and I had no ideas pop into my head like I usually do. I waited until the last minute thinking "no problem" but the deadline came and I had no article. I deserve it for putting it off. I knew I had to come up with something and it had to be quick and still be good enough to put in the newsletter. I rarely feel the pressure of things until this time, and then it came to me...PRESSURE! That's it. I will talk about water system since we all use it to put out fires.

The Urbandale Water Utility (formerly known as the Urbandale Water Department) buys its water from the Des Moines Water Works. The water we use is stored at several locations both inside and outside our city. Those locations include the towers at 48th & Franklin, Merle Hay Mall, 114th & Meredith, 156th and Hickman and 170th and Waterford. The newest tower on 170th was also designed for the future installation of an aquifer storage facility. For those of you that don't know what that is, we will be pumping treated water underground, into the Jordan Aquifer, during low use times of the year (winter) for storage and then will pump it back out during peak demand days (summer) to control the cost of water we buy as well as reduce demand on the treatment plant in Des Moines during peak demand days. I won't go into all the details on how it works, but it does. This is several years out but it will come.

We have about 180 miles of water main in the city, roughly 2400 hydrants and about the same number of main line valves. Currently the smallest main we have is 4" but we replace areas that have 4" main almost every year with new PVC 8" main. The largest main we have is 30" and that is coming from the booster station at Merle Hay Mall and ties in on Aurora.

We have 3 booster pumping stations, one at Merle Hay Mall, one at 156th and Hickman and the other at 104th and Douglas.

The water pressure in the city varies from about 42psi to over 100psi in some areas. Pressure is determined by a number of

factors but the main dictator of pressure is elevation. The higher in elevation you are, the lower your pressure. We have had complaints about both not enough pressure and too much pressure. In a perfect world, it would be flat and everyone would have the same pressure. We do regulate the pressure somewhat by closing or partially closing certain valves in the system.

Should the fire department ever have a major commercial fire, it would be a good idea to have WestCom contact the water utility for a couple of reasons. First, the control center would probably detect the large water usage and they would think we have a major main break somewhere. And second, there may be "things" we can do to supply more water to the fire scene.

These "things" might include boosting pump output and changing some valve positions in the system.

I hope you enjoyed this little article as much as I enjoyed writing it. Now I guarantee I will have my next article done well before the due date.

One other side note...we have switched most of our EMS supply buying (including drugs) to an Urbandale business called "First Medical". They have quoted as good or better pricing than our out of state vendors and it is nice to have a place right here in the city. I think we are their first fire department vendor as they usually supply clinics and other healthcare establishments but are looking at expanding into the fire/EMS marketplace. Things are going pretty smooth so far and I am excited about having them as a supplier.

I thought of another side note, we will be making the transition to needleless IV administration sets as we use up our current stock. If you have any concerns regarding this, please let me know. I know Eric and I have been troubleshooting the idea and think it will work just fine. I will let everyone know when we have these items.

Thanks for reading!



Safety Tip—During Overhaul...from Fire Rescue 1.com

- 1. Do not throw objects from a window during overhaul unless the area is clear, and you have been signaled to do so by another firefighter acting as a guide.
- 2. When trimming broken glass from windows, knock the glass shard inside, not outside.
- 3. When assigned to operate around the perimeter of a burning building, be aware of the danger of falling objects and wear proper protective clothing. A well-fitted helmet, gloves and an eye-shield in the down position can protect you.
- 4. When venting windows from inside, attempt to open the window before breaking glass. Double paned windows in new and renovated buildings can be more quickly and fully opened manually then by breaking glass.



Picture from <http://www.firefighternation.com/photo/me-in-window>

Respect – Lt. Mike Gentosi

If anyone really remembers, my last article was in regards to pride. Lt. Routson wrote an article the following month on integrity. These are both part of our core values. As I stated last time, our core values and mission statement should be known by all – without question!! In our last management training, the facilitator was so very impressed at those of us who knew our core values and mission statement. I have to say it was only the FD staff that tore that up!! I personally wondered why she would be so impressed. I would wonder what is up with the management folks who don't know the core values or mission statement of their department. There is a reason they are *core* values or the statement that directs the *mission* of the department.

I will offer up the disclaimer here that I by no means am stating I am any type of expert or role model for any of these I write about. A lot of what I write is usually from stuff I have learned from past mistakes. A lot is also about what I have witnessed. Very little is about what I have done right and now passing along. I am learning right along with everyone else.

Nonetheless, I digress. Respect is one of our core values, and it is multifaceted. Respect can be given to both internal, fellow employees and officers. Respect can be given to those we serve. Respect can be received by anyone. Respect can also be earned which is the basis of this article. You will never be able to achieve respect from everyone in life, but it is the pursuit which will make you better as long as you don't have to set aside your own values and beliefs.

Respect can be earned through various avenues. The fire

service offers many. When you first step into the door and receive your training, respect is earned by listening, learning, and gaining every tidbit of information that can be attained. Respect can be earned by showing up to the station and not being satisfied with the status quo. That means asking what can be done around the station or asking questions about things you are not familiar with. It means pursuing higher education, more training opportunities, additional certifications, etc.

Respect is also earned by not being a 6-22. That is a term that denotes 6 months on the job and 22 years experience. Respect is earned by being discovered and not heard. I don't mean not being heard because you have a question because asking questions has everything to do with bettering yourself. Respect is earned by truly knowing your job and performing well. This means providing quality patient care, knowing where equipment is located on the units and how they operate, the ability to complete physical drills, acting in a professional manner, being a person someone can come to with a question about how we operate and able to answer intelligently, etc. It also means if you don't know the answer to something to not just make up an answer but attempting to find the correct answer.

There are numerous ways that respect can be earned, but it comes down to the fact that it is **earned**. Respect cannot be demanded or dictated. It truly comes down to the individuals desire to have respect amongst whatever group of people are in question.

I'm out!!!!!!!!!!!!!!



“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 August 4th, we have sent 54 letters to our personnel. The following people received “You’ve Been Caught” letters since our last newsletter:

- We received a letter thanking us for our time and efforts with CWG Wellness Fair. They sent a letter thanking Fire Marshal Rech for the time and information he provided CWG for their annual Wellness Fair.
- I received a call to tell me how professional the crew was and what a great job they did with his care (chest pain) on July 19th. He was diagnosed with an aortic aneurysm...which has about a 90% mortality rate – he wanted to be sure that the crew knew that he was appreciative of their efforts. (A413 = E. Ennen & Stu Wilson, A423 = John Ouverson & Zach Clear).

Thanks to all of you for providing outstanding service!!

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

Training Report: **542 hours** of training were completed in July.

Fire Training: 522 hours

EMS Training: 20hours

Prevention & Inspection Activities:

- Completed 18 Inspections
- Completed 10 re-inspections
- Completed 4 preplans
- Conducted 12 plan reviews
- Conducted 2 Car Seat check
- Conducted public education for 312 people



			# Chil-dren	# Adults	
7/1/2009	St.41	Station tour	12	2	
7/1/2009	2751 Parkside Ln.	Extinguisher Training	0	8	
7/4/2009	156th & Ridgemont	Truck Request	20	12	
7/8/2009	St.42	CPR class	3	3	
7/11/2009	7305 Aurora	BP checks	0	25	
7/14/2009	8301 Aurora	Safety Talk	14	6	
7/15/2009	St.41	Station tour	16	2	
7/15/2009	St.42	Station tour	0	11	
7/18/2009	3825 106th	Truck Request	45	52	
7/18/2009	153rd & Airline	Truck Request	15	15	
7/21/2009	3510 72nd	Safety Talk	8	3	
7/29/2009	3520 86th	Fire drill	0	40	Totals
			133	179	312

Last Safety Incident:

(As of August 1st)

- 97 days without a safety incident
- 101 days without a lost time injury

WHAT'S HAPPENING AROUND THE DEPARTMENT...

- While it might not look like it, progress continues on the training facility. The building is on order and we are looking forward to actual construction.
- On Thursday, August 6th, the people from Invisible Fencing will be here at 10 AM to make the presentation of the pet recovery mask. These are simple O2 mask made for animals and the supply tubing which allow oxygen to be administered. In 2006 more than 40,000 pets die in fires - most reportedly because of smoke inhalation. This doesn't change our approach of risk management - we will do what we can to save pets but we will not risk human lives to attempt to save a pet. Thanks to Invisible Fencing for making this valuable donation.
- On Tuesday August 11th, several people from our department will be assisting with loading and unloading the Honor Flight. The Honor Flight is the program that flies WWII Veteran to Washington D.C. for a day of visiting the war memorials. As of the writing of this article, we have 91 volunteers from the fire service signed up to help including five from UFD. A big commitment as we have to be there at 0245 for the A.M. shift!
- August 15th—Race at Living History Farms
- August 29th—Dallas Center FD parade and apparatus display
- September 11th is fast approaching. We will once again get together at the Machine Shed for breakfast that morning...@ 0645. This is memory of the 343 firefighters who lost their lives at the World Trade Center.
- September 13th is the Make-A-Wish football game at UHS...let's get some revenge on the PD while we make some money for a great cause!

Member Profile...

Member Profile: Ben Truetken

Length of time with UFD: Since Jan. 2009

Level: FF/EMT-B

Why I became interested in the UFD: After relocating to Iowa in 2008 I wanted to continue my career in the fire service. Urbandale's part-time program was a perfect fit.

Previous EMS experience: Midwest Ambulance since August 2008

Previous Fire experience:

Volunteer with the Boone County (MO) Fire District from 2001-2008

Full Time with the St. Louis Fire Department from 2005-2006

Full Time with the Columbia (MO) Fire Department from 2006-2008

Family life: Engaged to Katie. Wedding date is set for October 10, 2009. I also have a dog named Izzy.

Current Profession: Full-time Firefighter/EMT for the City of Ankeny, Employed with AFD for 1 month so far.

Activities or hobbies I enjoy: Sprint car racing, hockey, fishing, St. Louis Cardinal Baseball, watching the Chicago Cubs not win in October.

Most memorable moment: My first shift as a full time firefighter. Nothing spectacular, just memorable.

Favorite TV programs: Deadliest Catch, Cops, Jerry Springer, Maury

Favorite movies: The Outlaw Josey Wales, Gran Torino

Last book that I read: My paramedic book

Personal goals: Earn my paramedic license by the end of October.

What I enjoy about the Urbandale Fire Dept: I enjoy the hectic shifts and the training program.



Chief's thanks...

- A special thanks to those people helping with the Honor Flight. It is a very big commitment...those helping for the A.M. shift are working from 0245 to a little after 0600. The P.M. shift is 2130—2300ish. Some people are signed up to work both shifts. Those UFD members helping are: Fire Marshal Jon Rech, Chaplain Arthur McClananhan, Kyle Bissell, Cory Macumber and my wife, Lori Holt. Thank you all for volunteering to help these veterans!
- Another thanks goes to Chaplain McClananhan. He has volunteered to assist with the Wall of Flame at the State Fair. This is an effort of the Iowa Firefighter's Association to provide fire safety education during the State Fair.
- Thanks to all of you for the extra effort during our special training opportunity in July. We were fortunate to have been able to utilize a house that was set for demolition for some hands on training. Everyone seemed to have enjoyed the experience of training in that environment and nothing can replace the actual experience of working with a real structure. We were blessed with decent weather and only one day of really hot weather. Thanks for the extra effort and a BIG THANKS to all of those people who served as instructors for that opportunity.

Picture this...



Training on removing a customer from the roof using ladders...



If you have an idea for an article for the newsletter or you have written an article that you would like to submit, please get those to Lt. Stuckle or Chief Holt by the 20th of the month.