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Around Montana

FSTS Is Asking For Your Help On A Research Project

FSTS is conducting a research project on bunker gear contamination after structure fire operations and the resulting fire fighter exposure to harmful chemicals on the bunker gear. Part of the research is to determine current fire service practices related to cleanliness of bunker gear. Below is a link to a brief survey that will help us understand what fire departments are currently doing to keep bunker gear clean. Your participation in this survey is greatly appreciated. FSTS will produce a full report that will characterize contamination of bunker gear after being in a structure fire and suggest methods to reduce fire fighter exposure to the contaminants.

Thank you.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/RTTMT9W>

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Legislative Update - Week 4

The past week in review:

SB5 (Establish all-hazard incident management teams and provide funding authority) Had a hearing on Friday in House Human Services. The Montana Fire Alliance supported the bill.

HB182 (Require that zoning be adopted before use of land can be regulated) The bill failed 3rd reading in the House last Thursday and is now dead. It had some possibly negative implications for the fire service. The Montana Fire Alliance was monitoring the bill.

HB161 (Revise laws related to arson investigations) The bill passed out of the House and has been sent to the Senate for a hearing. We will keep you posted on its progress. The Montana Fire Alliance supported the bill.

SB103 (Provide presumptive disease coverage for paid firefighters) Had a hearing scheduled for last Thursday, but was cancelled for a second time. This bill covers a wide range of illnesses and cancers that would be covered under workman's compensation coverage for paid firefighters. The illnesses and cancers would be presumed to have been caused by employment as a firefighter unless successfully rebutted by the workman's compensation insurer. We will continue to keep you updated as it progresses. The Montana Fire Alliance is monitoring the bill.

HB241 (Clarify definition of commercial motor vehicle for emergency vehicles) Had a hearing last Monday. The bill clarifies that a CDL is not required to drive an emergency vehicle when returning from a call. The Montana Fire Alliance supports the bill.

Hearings and issues this upcoming week:

SB147 (Provide income tax credit for Volunteer Firefighters and Emergency Personnel) Has a hearing scheduled for Tuesday, February 3, at 8:00 AM in room 405. This hearing replaces one that was cancelled 2 weeks ago. The Montana Fire Alliance supports the bill.

HB296 (Revise laws regarding mutual aid frequency coordination) Has a hearing scheduled for Wednesday, February 4th, at 3:00 PM in room 472. This bill is a simple housekeeping bill. It clarifies some already agreed to administrative measures regarding mutual aid frequencies. The Montana Fire Alliance supports the bill.

To follow the Montana Fire Alliance's "bills of interest" go to www.mtfirealliance.org/legislative.

Respectfully Submitted
Leonard Lundby
Montana Fire Alliance - Legislative Liaison

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Gore Hill Fire Rescue Completes EMT Practicals For EMT Students



Months of instruction and volunteer hours culminated to a successful ending this past weekend as 5 members of Gore Hill Emergency Services successfully completed their EMT practicals. Written testing will be completed soon.

Submitted by Doug Lobaugh, North Central Regional Manger

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Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony Held At New Lewis & Clark County S&R Facility

<http://www.kxlh.com/story/27989488/ribbon-cutting-ceremony-held-at-new-lewis-clark-county-search-and-rescue-facility>



HELENA -- Lewis & Clark County Search and Rescue celebrated the opening of a new facility Friday.

In the past, Lewis & Clark County's Search and Rescue was headquartered in an old chicken coop. Much has changed since then, including an increasing numbers of calls SAR volunteers answer each year.

Now L& C County SAR has a new \$1.4 million facility. The ribbon cutting ceremony was held Friday afternoon.

Lewis & Clark County Chairman Andy Hunthausen said, "We followed through on what we said we were going to do. We asked the voters to partner with us, they said yes, and we met that challenge."

Thanks to tax-payer funding and community cooperation, the new building, located on Valley Drive next to East Valley Fire, will serve the needs of county search and rescue for years to come.

Lewis & Clark County Sheriff Leo Dutton said, "That's snowmobiles, that's water, boats, and sleds. Any season that we have to go rescue somebody that's the equipment that will be in this building."

County officials tell us that this is more than just a building. It's about increasing the capabilities of Lewis and Clark SAR.

Dutton added, "I mean, there's a substantial amount of equipment for the four seasons that Montana has. And that's what we want to house in here. To be ready when the call comes."

But Search and Rescue is about much more than gear, it's about people.

"And when these people respond," says Hunthausen, "When someone is lost or in need or if

they need to recover a body, even of a family that has passed away in the mountains or something, you know that these folks are going to be ready to go."

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Around the Nation

Assistant Fire Chief Dies After Battling Iowa Blaze

<http://www.firehouse.com/news/12040324/assistant-fire-chief-dies-after-battling-iowa-blaze>



Centerville Firefighter Mike 'Coop' Cooper

Photo credit: Courtesy photo



A massive blaze did more than destroy a building in Centerville, Iowa. It also cost the local assistant fire chief his life. Mike "Coop" Cooper died Saturday at his home. He was the longest serving member of the Centerville Fire Department, joining in 1977. He worked his way up through the ranks, and was elected assistant chief in 1989. He also was past president of the Centerville Volunteer Firefighters Association. Firefighters were on the scene of the fire for more than 14 hours. Funeral arrangements are pending.

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Fire Destroys Ten Sleep Fire Station, 5 Engines

http://billingsgazette.com/news/state-and-regional/wyoming/fire-destroys-ten-sleep-fire-station-engines/article_e5d2fb1-5adf-5f8e-be7b-223026a456a8.html

CASPER, Wyo. — While they waited for help, firefighters in Ten Sleep could do little but keep people back and watch as their fire station, including five engines, went up in flames Saturday night.

"It's got to be one of most helpless feelings," said Worland Fire Chief Chris Kocher, whose department responded to the fire. Kocher is also the Washakie County Fire Warden.

The firehouse exploded a little before 7 p.m., after snow from the roof frayed a propane line, causing gas to slowly fill the building's interior.

Once the gas reached the heating system, the structure ignited, Ten Sleep Fire Chief Norman Mullis said, adding that another explosion came later.

No one was in the building at the time, and no injuries were reported.

The first engine from Worland arrived at 7:13 p.m., about 30 minutes after the initial call came in. Kocher said another engine, a tender and a command vehicle also responded, along with a unit from Basin.

He said about 35 firefighters helped fight the blaze, knocking it down by 8:30 p.m. But by then, the damage was done. The building was destroyed. "The structure is a total loss," Kocher said. Kocher said the blaze also destroyed five engines inside. But fire departments from neighboring communities, including Dubois, Lovell, Meeteetse and Thermopolis, have since volunteered trucks and supplies. "By the end of tomorrow, we should have equipment for firefighters in Ten Sleep to use and safely fight fires if they need to," he said. The town's mayor, Jack Haggerty, said, "It's amazing to see the help from surrounding fire departments and local people." Kocher said that speaks to the firefighters' "tight-knit community." But Haggerty said they are still trying to figure out a temporary location for the fire department. In the coming days, Kocher said the department is going to be working with its insurance agency to replace equipment. He said officials will also have to figure out a total cost of the damage. Kocher called the fire "an anomaly." "You hear occasionally of a firehouse burning down, but it's a lot different when its close to home," he said.

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Sprinkler Douses Fire in N.H. Courthouse

<http://www.firehouse.com/news/11828860/sprinkers-douse-fire-in-merrimack-county-courthouse>

CONCORD -- Merrimack County Superior Courthouse will be closed Monday after a fire that likely started in a first-floor vending machine on Sunday. Max Schultz, an assistant state fire marshal, said after the fire was extinguished, there was about an inch of water in the main lobby and a couple of more inches in the basement. Smoke damage was mostly limited to the vending machine room, he said. "It's just going to be a matter of getting everything else taken care of," Schultz said. "The main thing is the sprinkler was able to put out the fire before it became big enough to cause more damage. Fortunately, it worked the way it was supposed to." He said the sprinkler system was reset on Sunday, but cleaning up the mess would take a while longer. Investigators said the cause of the fire appeared to be accidental. The building was closed when the fire started around 10 a.m. Sunday. There were no injuries, according to a news release from the New Hampshire Division of Fire Safety. Carole Alfano, public information officer for the New Hampshire Judicial Branch, said the courthouse would be closed today; she is not sure if it will be closed Tuesday. Alfano said damage costs had not yet been assessed. She said the Merrimack County clerk's office had been busy notifying people that cases on the docket for Monday would have to be rescheduled.

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Greensboro Firefighters Recall Being Trapped in Collapse

<http://www.firehouse.com/news/12040408/greensboro-firefighters-make-documentary-about-close-call>

GREENSBORO — The outcome could have been much worse for Capt. Thomas Sterling Suddarth and three other firefighters who were injured during a Jan. 30, 2014, blaze. All four could have died.

The men were battling a fire inside an auto repair shop at 811 S. Elm St. when part of the roof collapsed.

Suddarth, who previously had not spoken publicly about what happened that day, broke his silence for a short training documentary made for firefighters that details the moments leading up to the cave-in, which left him trapped.

Suddarth recalled being in the middle of the building underneath one of the steel beams, spraying water from hoses onto multiple fires surrounding the group of firefighters. The firefighters had started retreating toward the door where they had entered, but it was too late.

"It was at that point, just seconds later, that the roof came in on us," Suddarth said in the 30-minute documentary. "I did not see the ceiling coming in, but I just felt it.

"As soon as the roof came down, everything just went black," he said.

Some of the firefighters escaped moments after the roof collapsed and suffered injuries that were not life-threatening. Suddarth was trapped under fallen debris. He was pulled out by another group of firefighters who were answering a mayday call for the roof collapse.

Deputy Fire Chief Clarence Hunter said Suddarth, Capt. Shane Boswell and senior firefighters Matthew Clapp and Bryan Bachemin all have returned to work after being injured in the fire. Suddarth remains on light duty. He was taken to Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center, where he remained for 18 days with burns and other injuries.

The documentary, produced internally by Capt. Harold Haynie, will serve as a training tool for firefighters in Greensboro and around the nation, said Battalion Chief Brent Gerald, who is the department's assistant training supervisor.

Fire officials have used the footage to see what techniques worked and what needed improvement.

The firefighter's use of survival-training kicked in, and they were able to get Suddarth out of the burning building and to Guilford County EMS paramedics who took over life-saving efforts. Gerald said Greensboro firefighters train in a smoke room that simulates collapsing walls and floors. There, they hone their survival-training skills to make it out of a dangerous situation alive.

"We could have lost him," said Gerald, who has worked in the department's training division for the past five years. "When he came out of there, he wasn't breathing."

After an internal investigation was completed, a third-party investigation revealed the department's communication while battling the fire could have been better.

Since the blaze, Greensboro fire officials have decided to add a fourth firefighter to ladder truck companies, revise dispatch protocol, and require company officers to complete a full evaluation of a commercial structure before entering.

Gerald said he's sure some of the 36 candidates at the current fire academy class have seen the video. A more formal showing will come later in their training, he said.

"We will actually bring in Sterling to talk to them himself," Gerald said. "He'll come in and talk to them and drive the point home about training."

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Entry Level Positions (Denotes New Posting)**

Yellowstone Club Fire Department Position: Firefighter/EMT

Starting Salary: \$36,500 app.

Shift Schedule: 48 on 96 off

Job Duties: Perform all duties required of a professional firefighter, including but not limited to, offensive and defensive fire attack, interior search and rescue, technical rescue, wild land firefighting and operations, fire prevention and awareness, fire inspections, provide services to members of the Yellowstone Club. Provide quality Emergency Medical Care, patient assessment and transport. Work in conjunction with ALS providers. Strive to have a working knowledge of YCFD apparatus, fire/ems protocols, and property. Maintain good physical health and condition to perform all duties.

Job Description: Work with a diverse and experienced group of firefighters providing professional fire/ems services to the members and community of the Yellowstone Club. Increase knowledge through regular shift training in both ems skills and firefighter tactics.

Job Requirements: Minimum 18 years of age, High school Diploma or GED, Montana Driver's License, Montana FSTS Firefighter 1 or equivalent, Current Montana EMT or AEMT license.

For more information or to apply, please visit www.yellowstoneclub.com and click on "About" and then on "Careers".