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Around Montana

Propane Delivery Truck Wrecks Outside Of Stanford Monday



When the truck wrecked, it caused a propane leak from a valve. It was estimated to be leaking 2-4 lbs. a minute. Estimated loss was 955 lbs. They were able to transfer 2,700lbs. into other propane trucks. It took about 6 hours to do that.

Highway 80 was closed from about 11:30 a.m. to 10:35 p.m. Judith Basin County Sheriff's Office, MHP, Stanford Fire and Stanford Ambulance responded.

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Driver Escapes SUV Fire In Helena

<http://www.krtv.com/story/28263517/driver-escapes-car-fire-in-helena>



HELENA -- An SUV was engulfed in flames outside the Motherlode Casino on Cedar Street on Wednesday.

Helena police officers and firefighters responded to calls about the vehicle being on fire at around noon.

According to police, bystanders and neighboring businesses helped extinguish the fire. When firefighters arrived on the scene the vehicle was still smoking, but police said no injuries were reported.

The owner of the car, Vi Clements of Helena, said she was sitting in the car reading a newspaper when she noticed something wasn't right. Clements said, "All of a sudden I thought, 'Oh my god! The car's all fogged up!' and I thought 'That's smoke!' so I jumped out, I shut it off, and it just kept smoking. I thought it would clear but it got worse. And then the floorboard caught on fire." Clements said she had time to grab her insurance papers, purse, and her cane before getting out of the vehicle, and aside from 'tasting' smoke after the incident, she is doing just fine. There is no word yet on the cause of the fire, or how much damage it caused to her SUV.

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Bigfork Fire Department Receives Donations For New Equipment, Ambulance

<http://www.kpax.com/story/28264283/bigfork-fire-department-receives-donations-for-new-equipment-ambulance>



BIGFORK - The Bigfork Fire Department only has about six full time employees and almost 30 volunteers, but they service a 200-square-mile area.

It takes a lot of manpower good equipment to cover such a wide area, but luckily for them their equipment received a generous boost from a local donor.

It was enough to buy a brand new ambulance and a plethora of new equipment. The donation

came from the estate of Mirian Burns last May, totaling \$200,000.

Fire Chief Wayne Loeffler tells us they are eternally grateful.

"Oh, this is huge for us," Loeffler said. "You know every year, we always get various donations from different people throughout which we gratefully appreciate. It helps us buy some extra equipment we couldn't afford to buy. This donation here is very huge, as you can see this is a brand new ambulance behind me. We were lucky to pay for this out of pocket, so we were lucky to do that."

Loeffler tells us that having the most up to date equipment and plenty of it helps them to cover a very large area.

"You know between Many Lakes and all the way down to Yellow Bay, all the way down the Swan, we've gone past Goat Creek, you know mile marker 40 we've gone down that far, so it's a huge area that we do cover," Loeffler said. "So it's nice to have that equipment and go along with things you do have if you need it."

With the new equipment, residents of the Bigfork area can sleep a little more soundly at night knowing their fire department is prepared. On Saturday, the public is invited to attend an event honoring the donation of Mirian Burns and her family. That ceremony will take place at 11 a.m. Saturday at the Bigfork Fire Hall.

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Crash Closes East Main Street In Laurel

http://billingsgazette.com/news/local/crash-closes-east-main-street-in-laurel/article_607764d2-9403-5bf3-a1d5-3cd3632cf795.html



East Main Street in Laurel between Locust and Juniper Avenue was closed for about an hour while crews cleaned up a crash between a semitrailer and several parked cars. The semitrailer, a Town and Country tanker truck, sideswiped about three parked cars a little after 6 a.m. on Thursday, said Laurel Volunteer Fire Department Chief Brent Peters. East Main Street has been completely reopened. Officers at the scene are directing traffic, Montana Department of Transportation said. No delays are associated with the crash. The semi was headed westbound on East Main when the crash occurred, he said. The driver hit cars parked on the north side of the road. No one was injured in the crash, and nothing has leaked from the truck, he said. The truck was empty at the time of the crash, according to a Laurel dispatcher. Motorists were diverted down Locust Avenue to Eleanor Roosevelt Drive before connecting back to East Main on Cottonwood Avenue, until police reopened the area. Why the tanker sideswiped the cars is still unclear, Peters said. Laurel Police are investigating the crash's cause.

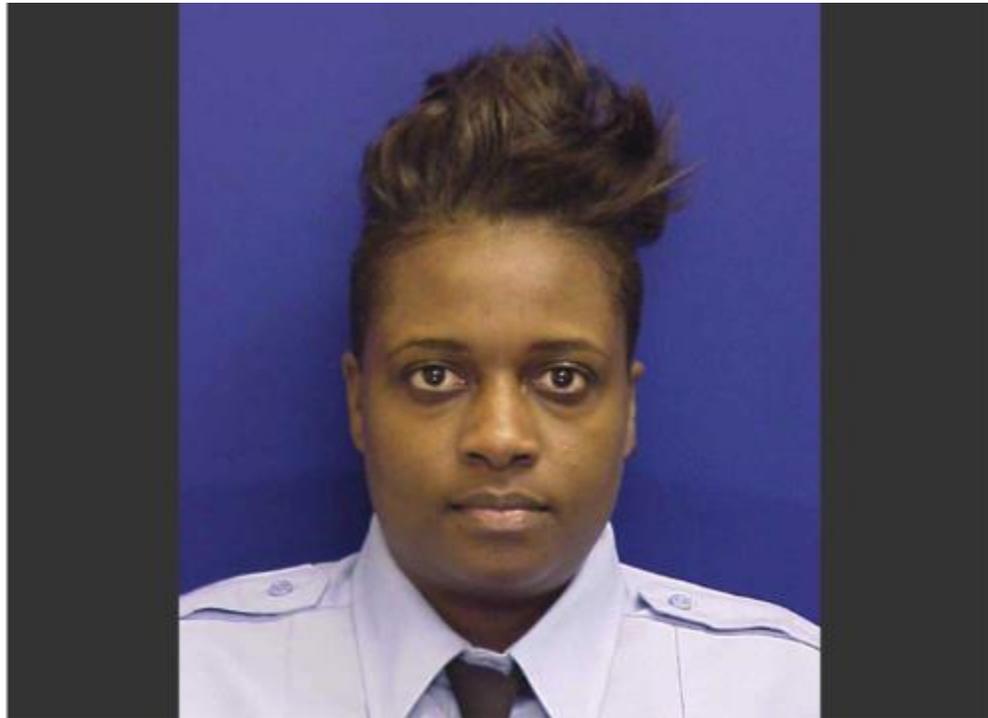
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Around the Nation

Probe of Philly LODD Continues; Issues Eyed

<http://www.firehouse.com/news/12051057/probe-of-philly-lodd-continues-issues-eyed>



Philadelphia Firefighter Joyce Craig Lewis.

Photo credit: Philadelphia Fire Department

Three months after Joyce Craig became Philly's first female firefighter to die on duty, three investigations into her death remain unresolved.

That's because a series of errors occurred that morning, complicating investigators' probes, sources said.

Fire spokesman Clifford Gilliam declined to comment on the Dec. 9 fire in West Oak Lane that killed Craig, saying he couldn't talk about ongoing investigations.

But veteran firefighters described it as "a perfect storm of things that went wrong," including: An inexperienced ladder crew took 18 minutes to respond.

The team with whom Craig entered the rowhouse got separated, leaving her alone inside. Many of those on the scene were either young or recent transfers, including the firefighter assigned to fight the fire beside Craig.

The city Fire Marshal's Office, the Medical Examiner's Office and the federal National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health are investigating.

NIOSH scrutinizes all firefighter fatalities as part of its Fire Fighter Fatality Investigation and Prevention Program, spokeswoman Nura Sadeghpour said.

"The team made several site visits in December and are still collecting information and evaluating what they have learned so far," Sadeghpour said, adding that a final report isn't expected until late summer or early fall.

Without completed investigations, some death benefits for Craig's family - she left behind two children, a 16-year-old son and a toddler daughter - can't be paid out, sources said. Craig also died without a will, further complicating affairs.

Craig's relatives couldn't be reached for comment.

The blaze that killed Craig was the sort firefighters dread: a basement blaze in tight quarters with paneled walls (paneling burns fast and hot).

The fire created a "chimney effect" - a hellish, upwardly billowing tunnel of smoke and flame so hot and blinding that the chief ordered those inside to evacuate. Such evacuation orders

are communicated to everyone via radio, and sometimes, additionally, firetruck drivers sound an air horn, depending on the urgency of the emergency.

It's unclear when Craig became separated from her lieutenant and partner firefighter. Firefighters didn't notice Craig was trapped inside until they got outside and realized she wasn't with them, Fire Commissioner Derrick Sawyer and union chief Joe Schulle said a few hours afterward.

Craig called for help several times and was found collapsed in the first-floor dining room, suffering from smoke inhalation and burns.

Those close to Craig complain that she was paired with an inexperienced young firefighter who struggled through the Fire Academy. That woman, sources said, is related to a highly placed member of Mayor Nutter's administration.

That firefighter, who the Daily News is not naming because she hasn't been charged or disciplined, was transferred to fire headquarters after Craig's death, sources said.

While Craig was trapped inside, no help was available.

The rescue crew that would have been first on the scene was Ladder 29, based less than 2 miles away at Broad and Champlost streets. But they had accompanied a medic unit on another run and couldn't respond, sources said.

So Ladder 21, the next-closest ladder company, responded, raising ladders on the front of the home, searching for victims (an elderly resident had to be rescued) and ventilating windows.

A second ladder company typically assists the first, shutting off utilities and helping however they can - including rescuing downed colleagues.

But Ladder 8, sent from its home base at Chelton Avenue and Baynton Street, was "delayed," according to fire dispatch's audio of the incident. The driver blamed traffic, telling the dispatcher he was "stuck behind a car," according to the audio.

Yet those familiar with the events that day say the truck was manned with new transfers unfamiliar with the streets. So, while the Ladder 8 crew may have gotten stuck behind a car, they also got lost, taking 18 minutes to respond to a scene they should have arrived at in six minutes, sources familiar with the incident said. Ladder 8's route, recorded by GPS, and the inexperience of the crew in that neighborhood likely will be part of the investigation, sources said.

Engine 73, the company Craig - assigned to Crescentville's Engine 64 - was subbing for that night, also was staffed by a "very young" crew, sources said.

The fire union has sued the city over the Fire Department's transfer policy.

Former Fire Commissioner Lloyd Ayers adopted the policy two years ago, arguing that new recruits needed experience in busier stations as the department lost veteran firefighters and officers to retirement.

But union officials have complained the policy replaces veteran firefighters who have become experts in their neighborhoods' streets and structures with rookies who aren't.

The union in February asked City Council to hold hearings on the policy.

"It's an irresponsible policy that puts firefighters at great risk, as well as the public that we're meant to serve," said Schulle, president of the International Association of Fire Fighters Local 22, which represents Philly's firefighters and paramedics.

"We become specialists in the neighborhoods on all these runs - we learn information that takes years and years to accumulate, like the best streets to take because of the size of our trucks, which houses have basement and side doors or servant stairs, which streets have low-hanging wires, overpasses or tight corners, that kind of stuff," Schulle said. "By shuffling people around, they're just harming the community."

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Policy After Ill. LODD Helped Avert Tragedy on Interstate

<http://www.firehouse.com/news/11865915/policy-after-ill-lodd-helped-avert-tragedy-on-interstate>

BLOOMINGTON -- Policies changed after the March 2013 death of a Hudson firefighter may have helped prevent a similar tragedy during Tuesday's ice storm.

Assistant Chief Jason Hospelhorn of the Dale Township Fire Department was helping victims of a rollover crash on Interstate 55 south of Shirley when a speeding semi "completely took out" his sport utility vehicle, said Fire Chief Ryan Gibson.

"He heard the semi coming at a high rate of speed and heard the jake brake (air brake)," Gibson said. "He pushed the other two victims -- who were out of their car -- toward the ditch and then ran himself."

Illinois State Police at Pontiac said the crash was reported at 3:49 a.m., but had no further information since the accident did not result in injuries.

One person required hospital treatment from the initial crash, Gibson said.

The incident occurred two days before the two-year anniversary of the death of Chris Brown, a career firefighter with Bloomington Fire Department who was hit by a semi while helping Hudson firefighters at a night-time accident on an icy stretch of Interstate 39.

Dale Township changed its policies after Brown's death, requiring firefighters to wear reflective vests and protective gear when on an accident call. Hospelhorn's SUV was outfitted with flashing lights, which were in use, and his vehicle was well off the road, said Gibson.

"We can't always look over our shoulders," Gibson said, "but it can happen. Safety is everyone's main focus. We try to get (victims) off the interstate as soon as possible."

In response to the accident, he is pleading with motorists to obey Scott's Law, which calls for drivers to slow down when they see emergency lights and move to the far lane.

The semi driver stopped his rig about 100 yards south of the accident site and ran back to see if anyone was hurt, Gibson said. The driver was issued a ticket for driving too fast for conditions, he said.

"The whole interstate was ice. It was really, really bad," said Gibson, adding, the incident was an example of "why it's so important to move over and slow down."

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Pa. Firefighter Admits to Starting 13 Fires

<http://www.firehouse.com/news/11865916/pa-firefighter-admits-to-starting-13-fires>

WILKES-BARRE -- A volunteer firefighter turned serial arsonist must pay tens of thousands in restitution -- with more to come -- after pleading guilty to charges stemming from a number of 2012 fires.

David Charles Donnora, 25, of Pittston, entered guilty pleas Monday to arson, burglary and burning charges before Luzerne County Judge David W. Lupas, court records indicate.

State police charged the man in January 2013 with setting five fires.

He must make more than \$20,000 in restitution in connection with two of the blazes, court papers say, but that figure is likely to climb as restitution in at least two other cases remains uncalculated.

Donnora is scheduled to be sentenced April 27.

According to police, Donnora admitted to setting a total of 13 fires from May 6 to Dec. 10, 2012, throughout Laflin, Pittston and Dupont while a firefighter with the Dupont Volunteer Hose Company.

Donnora confessed to state police during an interview about the Dec. 10 fire at 251 Main Street, Dupont, police say. He was the only firefighter from the Dupont department who did not appear to be interviewed by state police the day after the fire.

In a Dec. 13 meeting with investigators, Donnora said he was heading for the gym when he learned of the fire, according to a criminal complaint, but changed his account days later when police told him they had information that he started the fire.

Donnora then said he in fact started the blaze, setting fire to a couch on the back porch of the residence and then returned home where he awaited the dispatch call, according to police. He also told investigators he was familiar with the home and knew a person was living there, police say.

He then allegedly told police he set the Dec. 10 fire and 12 others because he enjoyed battling them and responded to each one he set.

The fires Donnora allegedly admitted to setting included two Dupont structure fires; two separate fires at the same unoccupied building and a trailer fire in Pittston Township; and six brush fires and a railroad tie fire in Laflin.

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Two Az. Firefighters Suspended for Slugging Patient

<http://www.firehouse.com/news/12050898/two-az-firefighters-suspended-for-slugging-patient>

Two Glendale firefighters have been suspended without pay for punching a patient and cursing at him, his family and neighbors during an October medical call.

Capt. Sean Alford was suspended for or two days and Firefighter Danny Padilla for one day after an administrative investigation determined the men used excessive force, according to [The Arizona Republic](#).

Glendale Fire Chief Mark Burdick, who apologized during a press conference, said he holds his firefighters to a high standard.

He added that he chose suspension over firing because neither had been trained to deal with violent patients. That also has changed as crews are being instructed how to handle such incidents.

"I don't want firefighters to strike a patient," Burdick said. "I wanted to send a message that this won't be tolerated."

The two struck the patient at least five times while he was strapped to a cot. Firefighters also yelled and cursed at neighbors who were filming the incident telling them they also were going to jail.

A man can be heard saying he has a constitutional right to record the incident.

Charges against the patient and his father were dismissed by the local state's attorneys office.

"I've been a fire chief for 13 years and I've never had an incident like this," Burdick told reporters. "We had never trained (Alford and Padilla) on what to do if they are assaulted, and I own that."

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