



# Enroute

with  
**Fire Chief Richard Bowers**

Issue #5

April 2012

## FY13 Budget

The County Executive's Fy13 budget has been transmitted to the county council for review and approval. The first of several public safety committee discussions will be held in April and May regarding the FRS budget. I will keep you informed on the progress of the PSC discussions with the FY13 budget.

## ISO Update

We have now completed all testing/timing exercises involving water supply fill-site set-up, dump site set-up, tanker off-loading, and tanker filling (except Tanker 704). The only remaining water supply test is the tanker shuttle drill which is scheduled for April 7<sup>th</sup>. We hope to complete Tanker 704's timing that day as well. Chief Buddy Sutton is coordinating the water supply shuttle drill this Saturday. Great work and efforts by all!

## PSCC Update

The Montgomery County Public Safety Communications Center (PSCC) is in the process of implementing the first phase in the universal call taker process (UCT). As a result, we will be transitioning away from using Priority Dispatch to process medical 911 calls and transitioning to Power Phone software to process police, fire and medical 911 calls. The transition is tentatively planned for late May, 2012. Power Phone software provides script style questions for the public safety call taker (PSCT) to ask the 911 caller. Each 911 caller will be screened consistently by the PSCT. This software will allow the police and fire PSCT to question callers at the same time and share information accordingly as the software contains all the questions and information for both agencies. Power Phone software is the first step in moving forward with UCT.

The end users will see NO change to response plans or dispatches. We will be eliminating hundreds of EMD call types associated with numbers.

## West Virginia Ave. Fire

A fire recently occurred in a single family home under construction on West Virginia Avenue in Station 6's area. Investigators determined that the fire started as a result of improper application of spray polyurethane foam (SPF) insulation. After researching the cause of this fire several articles detailing structure fires caused by improper spray foam insulation were found. It was discovered that a contractor was killed while applying the product in an attic with limited access.

Spray Polyurethane foam is produced by combining two chemical components. The components (A and B) are shipped and stored in pressurized metal cylinders similar to a propane cylinder. A hose is attached to each cylinder and both hoses attach to an applicator gun where the two components are combined. As the foam is applied to the intended surface the product begins to expand. The curing process of SPF gives off a significant amount of heat and because of this exothermic reaction, the manufacturers of SPF recommend applying the product in thin layers which allows the heat to dissipate. The risk of fire increases when the applicator applies SPF in a thick layer. This is due to the insulating qualities of the foam and the inability of the heat to dissipate from within the larger mass of foam. The area being insulated can also be a factor in fire development, examples of this would be: small confined areas with reduced ventilation which hampers heat dissipation; the surface which the foam is being applied is already hot, i.e. the underside of a roof on a sunny day.

The updated energy code for 2012 has placed more stringent requirements on builders relate to insulating new homes. The R values specified in the code and the need to control air infiltration will require builders to rely more heavily on SPF. SPF is the most inexpensive way for the builders to achieve these new energy requirements.

When you encounter a structure fire that involves SPF, plan on long term overhaul operations. These fires may take place in new construction and remodeled homes. Fires can go undetected for hours after application. The West Virginia Avenue fire highlighted the difficult task of locating and extinguishing pockets of smoldering fire hidden by 10-12 inches of foam insulation. **Wear and use your SCBA!**

Direct any follow up questions to Lt Bill Olin or BC Kevin Frazier of the Fire and Explosives Investigative Section

## News from the Car Seat Program

The Montgomery County Car Seat Program has something exciting to report! Since February 9th callers are able to go to <http://montgomerycountymd.gov/content/frs-safe/> and click on link at lower right portion of the page to make a request to schedule a car seat appointment. This has saved us a lot of time with appointment scheduling and assures that all have their appointment date and time within one business day of their request. If a client does not have Internet access, they should call 240-777-2223 and leave a message. We conduct car seat checks five days a week and have morning, evening and Saturday hours for appointments.

Please note that there are answers to most car seat questions, and a lot of information for parents and caregivers at <http://montgomerycountymd.gov/content/frs-safe/resources/parents/carseats.asp>

Please continue to refer all questions re donations of used car seats or ones that need to be recycled to Emilie Crown at 240-777-2467. Do **not** accept seats at the fire stations.

The Fitzgerald "open to all" seat check event started up again in March. They are held the third Thursday of every month from 10:00 am until 12:30 pm. No appointment is needed and participants do not need to be Montgomery County residents. Feel free to refer anybody who drops in at the firehouse to these events. The address is 5501 Nicholson Lane in Rockville. These events will be held April 19<sup>th</sup>, May 17<sup>th</sup>, June 21<sup>st</sup>, July 19<sup>th</sup>, August 16<sup>th</sup>, September 20<sup>th</sup>, October 18<sup>th</sup>, November 15<sup>th</sup> and December 20<sup>th</sup>, 2012.

The next training class to become certified as a car seat technician will be held from May 7 -10, 2012. For any questions about the training or registration, please contact Emilie Crown at 240-777-2467.

## Accreditation

MCFRS is currently at the  $\frac{3}{4}$  mark in its accreditation process. Battalion Chief Derrick Anthony is working with the assigned MCFRS Peer Mentor, Assistant Chief Jeff Farris of the Honolulu Fire Department, on the structure and content of all of our self-assessment documents. This segment of the process calls for a painstaking review of all program areas identified within our department and the validation of specific criteria in those programs as indicated by the Commission for Fire Accreditation International (CFAI). Items that are being specifically reviewed include agency goals and objectives, our strategic planning process, program performance measures, and response time and turn out time data analysis.

Based upon the outcome of this preliminary review, the assigned Peer Mentor and his team members will make a decision whether or not MCFRS is prepared for a "site visit" by the Peer Assessment Team. If the initial analysis is satisfactory, the Peer Assessment Team will travel to Montgomery County for a three day site visit to validate that "we do what we say we do" within our agency. The Peer Assessment Team consist of three to five members from different departments throughout the country who are trained by CFAI to evaluate agencies based upon a core set of industry standards. Once the site visit has been completed, the Peer Assessment Team Leader will forward his or her report to the CFAI Commission who will then make the final decision whether or not to re-accredit MCFRS.

If all the planets and stars align in the universe just right, Chief Bowers will be awarded our agency's reaccreditation from the CFAI Commission at the next Fire Rescue International (FRI) Conference in Denver, Colorado in late July of this year.

In an effort to provide MCFRS personnel with an example of the extremely diligent work that over ninety personnel have put into this project, the Standard of Cover Document will be placed on Quicklinks for your observance. The Standard of Cover (SOC) is a document that encompasses written policies and procedures which establish the distribution and concentration of all resources within our organization. It is the road map that details our resource deployment model based upon several dynamics including population density, baseline performance measures and various risk factors. Our SOC is divided into three categories: the history of MCFRS and its community, the resources that we provide within our baseline goals, and our community expectations.

In May, you should see an announcement forecasting the arrival of the Peer Assessment Team. When they arrive in your station, please welcome them with great enthusiasm. *Keep your fingers crossed, we're almost there!*

## MOOD AND YOUR FOOD

Our bodies use substances in the foods that we eat to make chemicals called neurotransmitters, which help control our mental functions. Sometimes we eat because we feel hunger showing us that our bodies need fuel. Other times we have cravings because the foods we crave make us feel good.

To keep your body's gas tank at full, plan healthy snacks throughout the day. Avoid foods that contain a lot of sugar as they will cause ups and downs in your energy level. Planning snacks throughout the day may help you ward off temptation to stop for fast food or to eat too much at meals.

Here are some tips for stress free eating:

- Eat more brightly colored fruits and vegetables.
- Choose whole grains instead of refined or simple carbohydrates (Examples of whole grains include: brown or wild rice, barley, oatmeal, whole wheat bread, whole wheat pasta, and popcorn. Examples of simple carbohydrates include: potato chips, bread or pasta made with white flour, cake, cookies, and sugar sodas).
- Drink no more than one cup of caffeinated coffee a day.
- Hydrate with healthy beverages (choose water, herbal teas, smoothies, and sugar free juices).
- Don't restrict carbohydrates. At least 3-5 servings a day ensures a large supply of stress fighting antioxidants.
- A rich source of complex carbohydrates will provide immediate and long lasting energy. (Examples of complex carbohydrates include: fruits, vegetables, beans, low fat yogurt, oatmeal, brown rice, barley, and buckwheat).
- Drinking alcohol depletes the body of important B-vitamins, acts as a diuretic, and may prevent deep sleep.
- Restricting carbohydrates may lead to an imbalance of serotonin, which can cause higher levels of anxiety, depression, fatigue, and mood swings.
- Increasing exercise will increase your serotonin levels, keeping those cravings to a minimum.

Did you know that when you lose weight without exercise, you lose both muscle and fat, but when you gain weight without exercise, you gain only fat. It's much easier to gain fat weight than it is to gain muscle weight, which is one of the reasons why yo-yo dieting fails so miserably. When you continually gain and lose you end up gaining proportionally even more fat, because of the muscle loss that takes place every time you lose.

A special thank you to Rhonda Cohen from Rescue 2 for this contribution!

## Tip of the Helmet!

### Be Nice!

This is one more EMS event that involved Bradley Wilt and one other career provider that needs to be included. There was a great email letter that I got about the incident.

Here is the email letter:

*Dear Fire Chief Bowers:*

*I was in need of the Fire & Rescue services early this morning (1:00am). I had the symptoms of a heart attack and called 911. I would like to bring to your attention the outstanding professionalism of two of your Fire & Rescue Team:*

*FF2 Marc Lyles*

*FP3 Bradley Wilt*

*(Medic 725, Station 25)*

*They arrived at my house promptly and did a preliminary EKG which looked fine. Since I was in a tired and panicked state, they did not push in any way to decide if I needed a ride to the ER. Their calm & competent ways helped me to focus and get out of my state of confusion.*

*They took me to the ER at Montgomery General and while in the vehicle prepped me for an IV or blood tests or whatever was needed on my arrival at the hospital, which I believe saved a lot of unnecessary additional steps (&needles) at the hospital.*

*Thankfully my chest pains were a false alarm. However, I cannot tell you how grateful I am to these two exceptional young men. It is my hope that they will be recognized for their professional and compassionate efforts.*

*They make me proud to be a tax paying citizen of Montgomery County!*

*Sincerely,*

***Christine Colburn, CPA***

*Vice President, CPA Alliances*

You never know when your EMS skills and knowledge can help a situation. EMT Adele Seifried of the GEFD was recently on vacation in Arizona, and took a trip on the Verde Canyon Railroad, which was built in 1912 to support the copper mines at Jerome, Arizona. The railroad does 4-hour, round trip excursions from Clarkdale to the ghost ranch of Perkinsville and back. The route follows the Verde River and is nestled between two national forests and adjacent to a designated wilderness area. They were spotting nesting eagles and enjoying the views and appetizers about half way through the trip, when the car attendant went through asking if there were any doctors or nurses on board. Since the car attendant wasn't having much luck, EMT Seifried identified herself as an EMT and asked if there was something that she could do. She said that a young man who worked on the train had just suffered a seizure, and she took her up to him. He had gone through the tonic portion of the seizure, and was in the clonic phase, sleeping and briefly becoming alert. She talked with a policeman who had initially come to his aide, and confirmed that keeping him comfortable, lying on his side, was the best thing that they could do for him at that point. He was breathing normally, and had not injured himself. Eventually, a nurse was identified on the train. They were discussing bringing in a helicopter; our ambulance in Bethesda is only minutes from a number of hospitals, while wilderness responses are quite different. In the end, they decided to bring a special vehicle to more quickly move him to a hospital - since staying on the train would mean going two more hours to where an ambulance could reach him.

## **MCFRS Family Support**

The MCFRS Family Support team visited with Recruit Class 35 and their families during Recruit Family Night. The evening was very well attended and a variety of information was shared with the new recruits.

## **AT & T Golf**

The 2012 AT&T will be held this year in July and the MCFRS Family Support crew will be providing child care for the professional golfers playing in the tournament. If you are interested in volunteering to assist with staffing the child care center during the tournament please contact [MCFRS.Family.Support.Service@MontgomeryCountyMD.gov](mailto:MCFRS.Family.Support.Service@MontgomeryCountyMD.gov) and provide your availability. The MCFRS Family Support appreciates your help!

## **Be Ready! Train, Train, Train!**

### **Training in the Field**

Saturday March 3, 2012 Stations 3 and 8 responded to 12 working fires. Really they did, in one day at a successful NFPA 1403 Live Fire Exercise at 11917 Ambleside Drive in Potomac. The exercise was planned for by Chief Dunn from RVFD and the MCFRS Safety Office. Station 3 personnel worked diligently to prepare the property for the live training exercise. Special thanks to Lieutenants Ader and Hinde as well as the countless personnel from station 3 who prepped the property for the event. Lead Level II instructors Captains Poole and Randall were tremendous during the entire day.

12 burn scenarios were conducted utilizing 3 Engines and a Tower company. All in all a great day of good realistic training involving 70 career and volunteer personnel from stations 3 and 8. The day's focus was on executing the basics to include; new radio microphone use, unit officer

development and performing RECEO perfectly. The training was very successful and everyone looks forward to another great training opportunity.

## MCFRS Training Initiatives Taking Care of Our Own (TCO)

The in-service TCO in-station training is presently being delivered by the MCFRS Command staff to the station personnel. There has been excellent feedback and positive discussion about the program to date. The in-station training will continue to be presented through the month of April.

### TCO Practical Training

The in-station TCO practical sessions will begin later this month with the Training Academy staff coming to the stations to deliver the program. The TCO practical training sessions will focus on integrating EMS into firefighter MAYDAY and emergent fireground operations. Specifically, the TCO practical training will involve firefighters, paramedics and EMS personnel engaging in removing the full personal protective equipment of an injured/burned firefighter. We need to examine protocols and best practices for this type of serious event. Your participation and feedback during these training exercises will be important as we develop a procedure should there be a significant firefighter injury event while the firefighter is in full PPE.

This training is very important as it focuses on taking care of the troops! Please engage and train, train, train as this training may save your life or that of another firefighter.

### Tappin' Out

Please join in congratulating the following individuals on their recent retirements. WE wish them the best in the next chapter! Hope to see you at a POTS luncheon in the near future.

Fox, Judson A. (retired)	Captain	04/01/12
Holliday, Robert P. (retired)	Captain	04/01/12
Gardiner, Jennifer L. (retired)	Master Firefighter	04/01/12
Reising, Michael F. (retired)	Master Firefighter	04/01/12
Bennett, Jeff A. (retired)	Firefighter III	04/01/12
Butler, Roosevelt (retired)	Firefighter III	04/01/12
Leroux, Gene E. (retired)	Firefighter III	04/01/12