

August 2007

SAFETY, SECURITY, AND CONSEQUENCES

By Assistant Chief Moeller

There are many hazards around the station, from objects lying on the floor to pools of water. Perhaps even a drain grate that is deteriorated causing a tripping hazard (yes I know they all need replaced). If you notice a hazard please take a few minutes to remove it. There are so many safety concerns that I cannot list them all. Remember the basics:

- No running or horseplay.
- Keep traffic areas clear of objects that may cause a tripping hazard.
- Use the ladder instead of that chair to reach those lights to change that burned out bulb.

We have learned just recently how dangerous the apparatus bay can be and we need to take the necessary steps to make sure that we are doing everything we can to make it safe.

We also all know small children are attracted to fire trucks and ambulances. All of us at one time or another has opened the bay doors to allow a breeze to blow through or have them open while sitting outside enjoying the nice weather. However we have developed a bad habit of leaving them open when we go back inside the building. If you look up and down the street of the firehouse you can see that there are lots of small children playing everywhere. These open doors are very tempting to small children who may wander in to the bay to see and play on the apparatus. These children could easily fall from a piece of apparatus or worse yet be accidentally run over when responding to a call or backing into the bay. *How many of you actually use a backer when backing the medic in to the bay when returning for a call?*

To the best of my knowledge we have not had a theft of an item from the bay due to the doors being left open but there is always that chance. A thief is an opportunist, someone who sees the opportunity to steal something and does just that. We have been very fortunate this past year and purchased several new tools including an expensive Craftsman Power Tool Kit and a Mechanic's Tool Kit for the Quint. We cannot afford to replace these items if they were to come up missing.

More importantly think about the medical equipment and the drug bags. Imagine having our EKG monitors or drug bags come up missing. I can assure you that this is an ordeal that you do not want to put Chief Grout or yourself through. The following agencies all get involved when that happens:

- local law enforcement
- Dr. Kennington (our Medical Director)
- the GMVEMSC
- the Ohio State Board of Pharmacy
- our assigned hospital and EMS coordinator
- and did I mention the DEA.

Once again take a look up and down the street; you don't have to look very far. Just ask yourself, "do I really feel comfortable leaving the doors open with the bay unattended".

We have installed all new bay doors with an external entrapment protection system, which means there are electronic eyes that will return the door to the open position when they detect an obstacle, just like at home. Another feature is a self-closing system that after a determined amount of time if the eye beam has not been broken the bay doors will automatically close. This may help keep the children from wandering in to the bay and keep out those who are up to no good but it does not relieve you of the need to be safety and security conscious

Remember to take a few extra minutes to lock the front door and make sure that they bay doors are closed before you pull away from the station.



Any fool can criticize, condemn, and complain, and most do.
- Benjamin Franklin

DISCIPLINE AND ACTION by Captain Trudics

I've overheard and been part of several discussions concerning how the division handles discipline. Most of my conversations have started out with someone complaining about an incident and condemning the division for what we did or didn't

do. So let me set some thoughts in motion concerning this subject. And if you have any questions please feel free to discuss them with me.

Let's me start with the Operating Guidelines since that is the root of everything we do with and for the Division. I also need to remind you that these guidelines have been incorporated into New Carlisle City Ordinance and, as such, are **LAW**.

When you read the Operating Guidelines (you have read them haven't you?) you will find several instances that could subject you to disciplinary action. Guides 4.1, Timekeeping; 5.1, Safety; and 5.6 and 5.7, Computer Use are just a few.

Examples of unacceptable behavior are found in Guide 7.1, Employee Conduct and Work Rules. Keep in mind that this list is not all-inclusive. Regardless of the reason for discipline, Guideline 7.8, Progressive Discipline is used as a basis for all actions.

Everything in 7.8 is summed up nicely in the first paragraph, **"The best disciplinary measure is one that does not have to be enforced and comes from good leadership and fair supervision at all employment levels. The New Carlisle Fire Division's own best interest lies in ensuring fair treatment for all employees in making certain that disciplinary actions are prompt, uniform, and impartial. The major purpose of any disciplinary action is to correct the problem, prevent recurrence, and prepare the employee for satisfactory service in the future."**

While not specifically addressed in Guidelines, the first step we use in the discipline process is Administrative Leave without Pay. This

Administrative Leave is not punishment, but rather a time for Management to collect and analyze the information concerning the issue and determine a course of action. Depending on the severity of the incident the course of action may be determined by the division leadership and may involve the City Manager and/or the City Law Director. In any case, you can be sure the action will be prompt, fair, and impartial.

Again, don't confuse this leave with any kind of punishment. We do this to avoid rash actions, inappropriate suspensions, etc.

Finally, noticeably absent in Guideline 7.8 is any requirement for management to inform the division of any disciplinary action taken. It simply is not our policy nor is it legally advisable to discuss these actions. If someone you know has been disciplined you may ask them what the result was. If they choose to share the information with you, that is their business. But you will not hear it from management. Any speculation about an incident, good or bad, is merely rumor.

Rumor travels faster, but it don't stay put as long as truth.
Will Rogers
1879-1935



WHAT'S UP IN EMS: by Lt. Gieselman

- EMS has become more and more aggressive this year. We've had new changes with our drug bags and there are even more to come.
- Pike Township has offered to let anyone from New Carlisle that wants to take the EMT-Basis refresher to do so at no cost! There is a sign up sheet at station one. The class will be at Pike Township fire station sometime in September. The exact dates will be announced as soon as we get them. Chief Owens said he hopes to see some of our smiling faces there.
- The Careflight Safety Training was a success and thanks to all those who attended and helped out. The certificates from the training will count as CEU's and will be passed out as soon as we get them. The list of names

has been given to the Careflight staff for all those who attended.

- A **BIG** thanks to everyone on the part time program for filling in on shifts that have vacant This is a tough time for us and we have been able to cover most shifts. So Thanks again.
- Another reminder here. The shifts you received are the shifts you asked for (Unless Dave messes up!). The point is, we don't have a list of names to pick from to cover shifts. Your shift is your responsibility and if a cover is needed, you must get it. A call to the station does not relieve you of this responsibility. As with everything, there are exceptions. We're fully aware of what job pays the rent and if you have mandatory overtime or all called-in, attempt to it covered, but if you can't make sure you contact an EMS officer. The other exception is a family emergency. What we consider as immediate family is outlined in Operating Guidelines and as Chief Grout says, "Family come First," but let an EMS Officer know.
- Daily check offs for the Medic Units need to be done and documented for our safety and the public's. Let's work together everyday to assure this is done.
- Thanks to Tony Cooper who has taken on the responsibility of Squad vehicle maintenance. This is not an easy task and he is doing the best job he can with the resources he has. Thanks Tony.
- The Cadets have been working on fire and EMS training. They went to fire training camp this year and have really put an effort into trying to learn what they can, when they can. A few of the cadets and signed up for the fire training that has been offered to us by Bethel Miami. They will be training at a house in Bethel Miami Township the first Tuesday of each month. The list of trainings is posted at station one and anyone interested may sign up and go with us.

- We had a large EMS supply come in last month. This has helped quite a bit. We have an EMS grant I have a list of supplies and equipment that we plan on ordering. I already have had personnel give me ideas on what we might want to get and any other ideas are welcome. Feel free to talk with me about supplies. Remember, the list is not done and final until it is sent in.

Thanks, Diana



HOSE TESTING by Captain Snyder

Hi everyone! I hope you all had a safe and fun summer. I'm going to make this short and sweet. I would like to have everyone's help in doing the hose testing this year. We need to start around the middle of September to make sure it all gets done. If you have any suggestions on how we can get more people involved, please let me know.

Also, private vehicle inspections (so you can legally use your lights and siren) will be starting as soon as the Fire Lieutenants contact me for instructions. If you have, or plan to have, lights and siren on your private vehicle, your vehicle must be inspected and the information sent to the State Fire Marshal's office for certification.

Thanks and stay safe.



INCIDENT REPORTS by Captain Trudics

I "wanna be like Mike" so I'll keep this short and sweet also.

Incident reports may be required for any number of things from personal injury to broken equipment to adverse incidents. In any case, the incident report is actually a statement like you give law enforcement when you are involved in a crash.

They must be complete and cover everything as you saw it from beginning to end. They must be factual. You can't speculate or try to "cover" for anyone. Don't forget to list any other witnesses. These documents may be used to determine

disciplinary outcomes and even workmen's compensation claims.

Don't let a false statement get you in hot water!



RAISE ? – Enquiring minds want to know!

- by Chief Grout

Many personnel have been patiently waiting to see the pay raise in their checks and to date the checks remain unchanged. The question is why? The answer is the division is still operating in the "RED" and until we are operating in the "BLACK" the finance director cannot issue any increases in pay regardless of the reasons associated with the increase.

As I discussed during our annual department meeting we were shooting for July 1st as the date for implementation, unfortunately while we are very close to being out of the "RED" we simply have not reached the goal. Administratively we are doing everything we can internally to keep costs down: increasing dollars received for EMS services, introducing a new collection agency who will assist in debt collection and as you will or have read we are placing levies on the ballot in order to create the dollars to properly operate our division today and in the future.

I am aware we have some in-house experts that seem, by virtue, to cast a negative voice regarding our funding dilemma; those same experts only exhibit what I call opinions. If in fact they were experts they would contact the administration of the division and offer their expertise and help to provide a **solution** for a fiscally balanced division.

For those members who have been part of the many changes within the division I personally salute your efforts and ask for your continued patience. Overcoming obstacles should not be viewed as a problem, instead truly it should be a challenge.

**"Knowledge
is of no value
unless you
share it."
Vane Jones
1906-1987**

Rest assured the moment the finance director authorizes the increase I will make every effort to ensure it is implemented as fast as legally possible. In addition, if we get these levies passed we will conduct a region wide evaluation of pay rates to determine exactly where the pay scale should be and then appeal to the city fathers for support in gaining those dollars needed in order to retain the level of skill currently employed within the division.



ON-THE-JOB INJURIES

Operating Guideline 3.1 Outlines the Workmen's Compensation Policy but in a nutshell, here is some information you **NEED TO KNOW**:

- The New Carlisle Fire Division provides a comprehensive workers' compensation insurance program at no cost to you.
- If you sustain a work-related injury or illness you must inform your supervisor Immediately no matter how minor it may appear.
- Neither the New Carlisle Fire Division nor the insurance carrier will be liable for the payment of workers' compensation benefits for injuries that occur during voluntary participation in any off-duty recreational, social, or athletic activity sponsored by the New Carlisle Fire Division.
- If you are injured you must immediately (or as soon as possible) complete an incident report detailing what occurred, injury sustained, and any witness(es) that may have been present at the time of injury.
- Incident reports must be complete, dated and signed by employee.
- Blank incident reports are available in the stations dispatch office.
- Do not discard any reports provided the Emergency Department. It may be necessary to support your claim.
- Remember the **FROI** (First Report of Injury) is the most important document you have concerning your claim
- Assistant Chief Moeller has developed a package with all the information needed

to submit and support a claim. Make sure get one from him if you are injured.



LEVIES, BALLOTS AND COMMITTEES

by Chief Grout

This past Monday evening council members unanimously agreed to put three replacement levies for Fire and EMS services on the November ballot. These levies are replacement levies for operational purposes. If passed by the voters, the three levies combined will increase property taxes on a \$100,000 home approximately \$67.52 a year.

These are replacements that are well overdue; two are over 20 years old. At Monday's meeting, city finance director Richard Sexton told the council the levies are necessary. "We're to the point where we can't run our Fire and EMS services adequately" with the current funds, Sexton said. The replacement levies will just about **double** cash flow for Fire and EMS, Sexton said.

So why are these levies so important? Essentially, the ability to compensate personnel at a rate that they should be paid hinges on the ability to pass these levies. The department, under current administration, has successfully created and codified policy manuals, replaced one medic unit, purchased new fire apparatus, and new bay doors. Now it is time to take care of a very, very important asset, our personnel.

The department has shown significant fiscal recovery since being placed on fiscal watch by the State of Ohio. Unfortunately this recovery has been at the cost of the people, the most important element of the division has been forced to remain at a net zero. The division has high quality personnel and with the passage of these levies the goal will be to compensate the personnel in the amount that is considered competitive within the region.

Division personnel willing to assist in a committee to assist in the passage of this levy should contact Chief Ritter at 845-1735 or 604-

1178. The committee needs to form immediately in order to gain both the dollars needed for the campaign as well as the approach that will best communicate our needs to the public. The cost for the average homeowner in New Carlisle will be average 17 cents per day; an amount that I believe is well worth the potential return.



BILLING, MONEY, INSURANCE...THE LATEST!

- EMS Collections are just about where we projected them to be for this time of year. This is great! It means you all are getting complete reports that are immediately billable. Please keep up that good work.
- I will be meeting with our Billing Company this month. One of the topics is to discuss people who we have transported but have neglected to pay the billing company or us for our services. We will be reviewing the last two years. **Why is this important?** Because the city has contracted with a collection agency to pursue the collection of bad debts. Once we have reviewed this list to determine where our best collection efforts should be placed, we will turn the accounts over for collection.
- By the way, if you are fortunate enough to be transported by the New Carlisle Fire Division, we have made provisions in ordinance to accept whatever you insurance pays as full payment for services. By Federal Anti-Kickback Laws we can waive additional payments but we still must bill the insurance so don't forget to provide the correct insurance information when asked.



HAZMAT OPERATIONS CLASS OFFERED

Chief Stevens has a Hazardous Material class set up for November 11th and 12th from 0830 till 1430. The class will be taught by Cleveland State. This class covers Hazmat awareness and Hazmat operations. When the class is over all attendees will receive a Hazmat Ops certificate. All personnel should plan to attend because the state will require all Fire and EMS agencies to be trained in Hazmat in the near future. Mark your calendars and plan to be there.

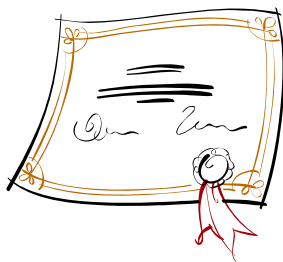
NIMS TRAINING

All NIMS training certificate need to be in my hands as soon as possible, but no later than the end of the month. This is especially important for the officers, but has a potential impact on us receiving any Fire Grants.



ADDITIONAL TRAINING

If you receive proficiency training, Fire fighting or EMS, from an outside source or through your primary employment, please make a copy of your certificate for me to include in your New Carlisle folder.



Homeland Security Threat & Risk Assessment - Chief Grout

This month I had the opportunity to participate in a three day workshop held in Bucyrus, Ohio. The workshop was designed to teach participants how to accurately determine potential threats within a region and then through a very concise measurement identify the risks associated with these identified threats.

This training was far beyond my individual expectations; I think we are accustomed to Police/Fire/EMS mitigating all public safety problems no matter what the situation might be. I now have a new perspective; the ability for public safety to mitigate an incident that involves terrorism is simply not realistic.

The program is designed to take you out of your comfort zone and help you recognize what the true needs will be in the event of a large scale disaster. Those with the preconceived notion that the feds will run to our rescue is just that, a notion. Mitigation of the incident will largely rely on the combined efforts of public safety, city/township/county government, county health departments, local water and sewer representatives, public utilities, department of transportation, local business owners, and media just to name a few of the countless organizations and people needed to address the level of complexity that we may be faced with.

Understanding the approach of a terrorist is examined to determine the level of threat, the ability to deliver the threat, access to the threat and most importantly the method of delivery. Current studies and information available indicate the next attack on the United States might very well include chemical and/or biological weapons as the preferred means of creating true panic both locally and throughout the nation.

While the course is limited to only three days the amount of information and the supportive material distributed during the course is definitely worth the effort and time dedicated to the program. The course as presented was funded by the department of homeland security and is currently being taught nationwide based on availability.

If you find it being offered in your region please do yourself a favor, sign up and participate, the future safety of your own community and family may very well depend on you.



DID YOU KNOW...by Lt McIntosh

On October 6, 2006 George W. Bush signed into law the P.E.T.S. bill (pet evacuation and transportation standards). In a nut shell this bill requires the consideration of companion animals during disaster planning. It was proposed as a direct result of Katrina and the disastrous aftermath that followed. This bill should ideally have little effect on our department but requires a lot of changes in operations and procedures during a large disaster. P.E.T.S. also has a clause that states without exception that any organization responsible for disaster planning that does not comply will no longer be eligible for federal grants or funds.

During the evacuation of New Orleans after Katrina many of the residents were not allowed to bring their pets. Nearly fifteen hundred people refused to be evacuated and lost their lives to protect their pets. Many more residents risked their lives trying to get back into the city to rescue their pets. It is estimated that around six hundred thousand animals were left behind. Fifteen thousand were evacuated by animal rescue groups, less than thirty percent of these were returned to their owners.

The P.E.T.S. law now requires pet placement, rescue and sheltering in the pre-planning of large disasters. It requires that all disabled people who have the use of a service animal must be evacuated and sheltered with that animal. That was never before the case as all Red Cross shelters ban animals from entering for public health concerns. They are now reviewing their policies to comply. The law does not require the animal and the owners to be evacuated together but does require that a system be in place to track and identify each animal and to ensure that it is returned to the owner.

This doesn't sound like that big of a change until you look at the statistics of animal ownership. Over sixty percent of the population owns at least one animal and a majority of them own more than one. This at the very least doubles the population to be sheltered. The shelters for the animals require much more labor and generate more waste creating a greater possibility of disease outbreak. Animal sheltering is a very specialized field that needs people with extensive experience to manage and operate each shelter.

The good news is that there are many animal rescue groups both in state and nationally that have

specialized training and respond to disasters. In state groups are parts of the Ohio Citizen Corps. Specifically they are called CART (County Animal Rescue Teams). Currently there are only four in southern Ohio, Clermont, Hamilton, Butler and Warren counties. Now that funding has been made available by P.E.T.S. there is planning for a State Animal Rescue Team, or SART. So far these teams have not been deployed to any disaster and lack the resources and experience needed for a large scale disaster.

National groups such as the American Humane Society, and Noah's Wish will respond whenever requested and bring highly trained and experienced people and equipment to assist and help manage the animal rescue and sheltering operations. Their responders are trained in the use and application of NIMS, emergency sheltering operations, animal first aid, and animal handling. Many of their experienced responders also have training in swift water rescue, rope rescue, and large animal rescue.

I did not know.....

According to the latest U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 update, New Carlisle housing characteristics are as follows:

Owner-occupied Residents Value

72% of the homes were valued at 50k-100k

Median Value of the homes were \$84,500.00

Total Number of Units

2281 Units

80% were 1-unit detached, 1824 units

Rooms per Unit

69% of the Units had 5 to 7 Rooms

Vehicles

One vehicle unit averaged 30%

Two vehicles unit averaged 45%

Given the above information it is safe to say based on the median price of a home in New Carlisle being \$84,500.00 the residents would be paying an additional \$57.07 per year if they supported the upcoming Fire Division replacement levies. This equates to approximately \$1.10 per week increase, again I cannot think of anything more important than having Fire and Emergency Services within our community.