



Colorado State Fire Chiefs' Association Member Update

November 27, 2007



Colorado's Fire Service Leaders to Assemble in Breckenridge

The 2007 annual Fire Leadership Challenge will take place on November 29th through December 1st at the Beaver Run Resort in Breckenridge, bringing together more than 400 fire service leaders from around the state and nation.

Sponsored by the Colorado State Fire Chiefs' Association, this conference will provide valuable training and insight into the leadership challenges that every chief officer, command officer and firefighter needs to prepare for.

The theme of the conference this year is "Dynamic Leadership in Changing Times" and will focus on increasing awareness of the influences affecting the future of the fire service and developing the

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2007 Annual Fire Leadership Challenge

(continued from page 1)

leadership skills to effectively manage them. Conference participants will walk away with constructive ideas applicable to their organizations' future and their personal lives as well.

According to the conference chairperson, Chief Gerry Morrell of Lafayette Fire Department, the Fire Leadership Challenge continues to be "The best fire leadership training value today for leaders of tomorrow."

Featured speakers include retired State Police Officer Gordon Graham and Stephen M. Gower. Notable leaders from within and outside of the fire service will present during the many break-out sessions.

Topics for the conference include "Seven Rules for Success"; "Transformational Leadership—Leading, Mentoring & Succession Planning"; "The Ethical Leadership Challenge"; "The Five Concurrent Themes For Success"; "Challenges For Fire Service Leaders—Today and Tomorrow"; and many more.

Aside from the first class educational sessions, there will be several networking events scheduled throughout the conference. These, according to CSFCA Douglas Forsman, Chief of Union Colony Fire Rescue Authority "provide opportunities to swap ideas, meet colleagues from around the state, and perhaps find solutions to common problems."

In addition, the Exhibit Hall will showcase the latest products, tools and innovations to help fire departments perform at top efficiency.

For more information about the 2007 Fire Leadership Challenge, including the schedule of events, go to: <http://www.colofirechiefs.org/trainingconf.htm#Leadership>.

CSFCA Annual Business Meeting

The CSFCA Annual Business Meeting will be on Thursday, November 29, 2007 at noon at the Beaver Run Resort in Breckenridge. Presentations will include:

- Credentialing Initiative – Micheline Casey, Office of Information Technology
- State Fire Marshal White Paper
- Review of Strategic Plan / 2007 Accomplishments
- 2008 Legislative Agenda / Forecast of Issues affecting Public Safety

Information for the meeting, including the proposed meeting agenda, the draft minutes of the September 14th meeting; the proposed 2008 budget, which includes a proposed dues increase for regular members (average of 5%); and a report from the Local Assistance State Team have been posted on the website at: <http://www.colofirechiefs.org/meetings.htm>.

If you are NOT attending the conference, but WILL be attending the Annual Business Meeting, please RSVP to paul@coloradofirechiefs.org. If you wish to pay in advance for this meeting (and have not already done so), please complete and submit the registration form found at: <http://www.colofirechiefs.org/CSFCA%20Documents/RegistrationForm.pdf>.

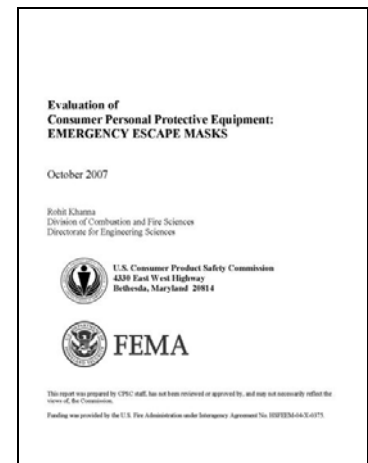
USFA and CPSC Release Two Reports on the Evaluation of Emergency Escape Masks

The U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) and U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) have released two reports on the evaluation of respiratory protective escape device (RPED) performance to determine if RPEDs have the potential to reduce fire-related residential deaths and injuries.

Evaluation of Consumer Personal Protective Equipment: Emergency Escape Masks

Three RPED models were tested in accordance with provisions of the voluntary standard, American National Standard for Air-Purifying Respiratory Protective Smoke Escape Devices (ANSI/ISEA 110). The tests that were determined by CPSC staff to be most important in evaluating effectiveness were conducted. Testing focused on function, human factors issues, durability, and flammability.

The test results showed that the RPEDs selected for evaluation did not meet standard requirements associated with donning. These results indicate that improvements may be needed in operational packaging to allow novice users to quickly determine correct RPED donning procedures. All of the models tested complied with requirements to assess field of vision, and two of the three models met requirements to evaluate leakage.



For all three RPED models evaluated, there were failures associated with tests to assess breathing resistance, either initially or after conditioning. There were also failures associated with total inward leakage (fit) and soot particulate performance. These results indicate a need to improve factors that influence breathing resistance, such as filter design and seal integrity. The RPEDs met requirements for flammability, molten polymeric drip, and radiant heat resistance; however, they did not meet requirements associated with corrosion resistance performance.

Human Factors Analysis of Consumer Personal Protective Equipment: Emergency Escape Masks

There are a variety of fire/emergency escape devices, commonly called "smoke hoods" or "smoke masks," marketed to assist consumers in safe egress from fire emergencies. They are intended to provide head, eye, and respiratory protection from particulate matter, eye irritants, carbon monoxide, and other toxic gases commonly produced by structural fires.

Five RPEDs were selected for evaluation on the basis of availability (all available online) and price (covering a range of prices). In 2005, CPSC's Division of Human Factors staff conducted a human factors analysis of these RPEDs. This report presents the results of the staff analysis, which included an evaluation of fit; filter-related factors; behavioral factors; instructions, warnings, and general usability; and a donning test.

In general, the RPEDs followed several good human factors practices, such as considering a wide range of anthropometric dimensions and designing so that they are intuitive to don. None of the RPEDs evaluated conformed to all aspects of the labeling requirements of the voluntary standard, nor did any RPED pass the donning test in



the standard. For all five RPEDs evaluated, improvements in marking and labeling for ease of reading in emergency situations would be beneficial.

Both reports may be downloaded from the USFA Web site at:
<http://www.usfa.dhs.gov/fireservice/research/other/escape-masks.shtm>.

IAFC: Cochran Steps Down, Grorud Advances, Johnson Appointed Second Vice President; 2008 Second Vice Presidential Race Still Open

Fairfax, Va., Nov. 20, 2007 – Chief Kelvin Cochran of Shreveport, La., resigned from the IAFC executive committee Monday afternoon following his appointment as fire chief for the City of Atlanta. Chief Larry Grorud, second vice president from Janesville, Wis., assumes the position of first vice president immediately and in a session Monday evening, the IAFC board of directors appointed Chief Jeff Johnson, fire chief and chief executive officer of Tualatin Valley (Ore.) Fire & Rescue, to the position of second vice president, in accordance with the IAFC's bylaws.

Chief Cochran announced his resignation, stating the commitment required by his new position necessitates his resignation from the position of IAFC first vice president and eventually president. "It was an extremely difficult decision," he said. "However, I felt it would be unfair to both the citizens of Atlanta and the members of the IAFC to not give either position my full time and attention."

"On the one hand we are very happy for Chief Cochran, but on the other we are saddened to lose such an incredible leader," said IAFC President Chief Steven P. Westermann. "I greatly admire and respect his decision; there is a great deal of commitment to get to this level of the IAFC and I greatly respect him for recognizing that his family and community come first. The position of IAFC president is both an extremely humbling and a fulfilling position; to give that up at this point shows his strong commitment to the fire-service profession and the care for his family. This is exactly the level of dedication and character that makes his departure a tremendous loss. I will truly miss him on the board."

In accordance with the IAFC's constitution and by-laws, Chief Grorud immediately moves to the first vice president position and Chief Westermann appoints a new second vice president—Chief Johnson—as Grorud's successor. The full IAFC board of directors convened an evening session on Monday and approved Johnson's appointment. He will be sworn in at IAFC headquarters in Fairfax in early December. Johnson was running uncontested for IAFC's second vice president in the 2008 election.

"I am confident Chief Johnson will make an excellent addition to our leadership team," said Westermann. "Accepting the position of second vice president is not a matter to be taken lightly. I hope that additional IAFC members will follow his example by stepping up to run for second vice president in 2008."

As a result of these events, there are currently no candidates running for 2nd vice president in 2008. Those wishing to declare their candidacy for second vice president must submit formal documentation, including a candidate platform, profile, letter of support and letter of intent to run to the Elections Committee liaison at least 60 days prior to any campaigning and no later than February 1, 2008. Anyone interested in running for the position should contact Elections Committee Chair Chief Mark Bradford (mbradford@ci.lawrence.ks.us, 785-830-7000) as soon as possible to receive the detailed requirements and timeline for a campaign

Upper Pine Firefighters Sent to Malibu Fire

Richard Graeber, Fire Chief, Upper Pine FPD
November 2, 2007

6 Upper Pine Fire Department personnel staffing two Type 3 engines were sent to California again on 17 November. They were ordered with dozens of other units to pre-position for anticipated winds. On Saturday 24 November they were assigned to the Malibu Fire.



Bayfield, Colo., firefighters Adolph Young, right, and Dustin Wright mop up the fire at a Newell Road home in Corral Canyon. (Brian VanderBrug / Los Angeles Times)

Country Mall Burns

Craig Rural Fire Protection District and West Routt County Fire Respond to Call
Steamboat Pilot & Today
November 26, 2007

Craig, CO — Craig Fire/Rescue Chief Chris Nichols is calling the County Mall “a total loss” after a fire started at the Fourth and Ranney Street location Sunday night.

“It’s one of the bigger fires we’ve been on since the downtown fire that we went on back in the 70s,” Nichols said.

No one was injured. Nichols reported Monday afternoon that the investigation as to what caused the fire will likely not be complete until Tuesday.

Twelve offices are located inside the building, including Horizons Specialized Services, the Pregnancy Center, the Parole Office, a vet’s clinic, some hair saloons, among others.

No pets were reported to be in the vet clinic.

Craig Fire/Rescue was paged to the scene a little after 10 p.m., with West Routt County arriving later on a mutual aid call.

“When we arrived, the back one-third of the building was fully evolved,” Nichols said. “It got up into the attic area and ran the whole length of the building.”

At around 1 a.m., firefighters temporarily backed away from the fire to let the east side of the building burn out. Firefighters on scene said the fire was largely burned out by 4 a.m. The fire rekindled off and on throughout Monday. Firefighters are expected to clear the scene Monday evening, with Craig Police Department officers monitoring for fires overnight.



A firefighter is silhouetted against a fire that gutted a professional office complex in Craig on Nov. 26, 2007. (Craig Daily Press)

County Shop Catches Fire

Early Reports: Minimal Damage To County Vehicles

By Jerry Raehal Steamboat Pilot & Today
November 26, 2007

Craig — A fire at the Moffat County Road and Bridge Department County Shop on First Street on Saturday destroyed the county's sign inventory but left county vehicles with minimal damage, according to early reports.

Bill Mack, Road and Bridge Department director, estimated that there were seven or eight motorgraders inside the building, along with three snowplows and 25 other vehicles.

"Except for a few taillights that melted due to the heat, there is no real damage to any of (the vehicles), which is very good," said Bill Johnston, Craig Fire/Rescue deputy chief. He added, "I bet there was millions of dollars of vehicles in there."



Smoke billowed out of the northeast side of the Road and Bridge Department's County Shop on Saturday afternoon. Photo by Jerry Raehal

Craig Fire/Rescue was paged to the scene at 2:08 p.m., with 17 firefighters and five engines responding. The fire was deemed under control at 3:33 p.m., although the department was called out later that night when the fire rekindled, which took about an hour to put out.

Johnston said the fire originated in the break room, located in the building's northeast corner.

"We believe that an electrical malfunction of the industrial-type coffee pot (caused the fire). ... It's one that it is permanently plumbed in with water to it," Johnston said. "We believe that it failed somehow."

The county's sign inventory was located over the break room, Mack said.

"It did destroy all of those," he said. "So, we will have to start over with our sign inventory. Right at this time, I don't know" how much it will cost to replace.

It is believed lockers in between the break room and the vehicles helped contain the fire.

"That probably saved a lot of the vehicles," Mack said.

Had the fire spread, Mack said it could have caused problems.

"We would be awfully equipment short," he said. "It would be hard for the county, and it would take some time to get things back in order; however, as far as the main arteries, we could still plow snow there."

As for the County Shop's structure, and the exact extent of damage to vehicles, Mack said it could take some time figure out.

"We're just going to have to do a lot of assessment, and figure out where we're going to go from here once we find out what the damage is," he said.

Johnston, who takes over as the Craig Fire/Rescue chief on Dec. 1, was pleased with more than the county not taking a major hit.

"I like the fact that we didn't lose any large-dollar county equipment," he said. "But more important to me is that no one was injured, and on those large commercial fires, you stand a good potential for getting someone hurt."

Church Fire Under Investigation

KJCT8 News
November 19, 2007

Grand Junction – Fire crews are trying to figure out how an abandoned church caught fire early Sunday morning.

The Grand Junction Fire Department responded to 823 24 Road at around 2:30 am.

When firefighters arrived they found the old church fully engulfed in flames. Fire crews worked for over an hour before they had the fire under control.

The Fire Department has yet to determine the cause of the fire. No one was injured in the blaze. The estimated damage of the building is \$350,000.



200 Evacuated After Vail Natural Gas Leak

Steve Lynn, Grand Junction Free Press
November 26, 2007

VAIL — A natural gas leak from a restaurant led to the evacuation of about 200 people from a shopping center in West Vail for nearly two-and-a-half hours Monday, said Suzanne Silverthorn, spokeswoman for the town of Vail.

A defect in the May Palace kitchen's exhaust system was the source of the leak, Silverthorn said.

At 10:40 a.m., a strong smell of natural gas was reported in the garage area and the building was evacuated, she said.

Children from the Vail Child Care Center and employees from City Market and other businesses were bussed to Donovan Pavilion during the leak, she said. Parents picked up their kids at the building, she said. A portion of Vail Commons, including City Market, were reopened at 1 p.m. and some employees returned to work, she said.

However, homes and businesses on the north side of the center were closed throughout the afternoon, she said. Authorities planned on letting people back into their homes after utilities were being restored about 5 p.m., she said.

Vail firefighters and emergency services workers shut off utilities to isolate the leak while Xcel Energy workers came about 15 minutes later, she said. No injuries were reported.

Unattended Candles Ignite Brook Forest Structure Fire

Einar Jensen, Evergreen Fire Protection District
November 26, 2007

Evergreen – Big fires start as small fires. A house fire in Brook Forest the night of Nov. 25 started as a trio of candles, known as tea lights, burning on a desk in the upper level of a home in Brook Forest.

The woman living in the multi-level home on Snowshoe Trail told Evergreen Fire/Rescue's investigators she remembered lighting the three candles but didn't remember blowing out the flames before leaving the room.

"That was the only cause we couldn't rule out," said EFR Lieutenant Kevin Evens. Those candles burned down to their wood base and ignited the desk at about 9:50 p.m. The desk fire quickly spread throughout the cluttered room on the upper story of the house.

Evens, who lives next door, literally walked to the fire after his pager announced the emergency. He found flames coming out the patio door and rolling into the eaves.

He was able to knock down the flames with a pair of 5-pound extinguishers, but not before something in the fire exploded and peppered his face with burning debris. His injuries were minor and he served as incident commander for the fire.

As Evens exhausted the second extinguisher, Engine 8 arrived from EFR's Station 8 in Brook Forest. Firefighters pulled an attack line through the front door and, upon ascending the stairs to the upper level, extinguished the fire with the water from the engine's tank.

"There was minimal damage," Evens said, considering the fire could have been much worse had the resident fallen asleep before the candles ignited the desk.

Having EFR's volunteer firefighters in the neighborhood and the new Station 8 on Forest Estates Road also made a significant difference.

This fire was preventable. "Make sure your candles are out before you leave the room," Evens said.

This fire wasn't the first ignited by candles in Evergreen, or in the nation. Candles ignite approximate four percent of all residential structure fires, according to the National Fire Protection Association.

"Nationwide, December is the peak time for candle fires," said EFR Community Educator Einar Jensen. "We hope that this incident will serve as a reminder to our neighbors to use care with candles. Keep them away from flammable materials, use non-flammable holders and, most importantly, blow them out before leaving the room."

Evergreen Fire Prevention Crew Contacts 3,000

Einar Jensen, Evergreen Fire Protection District
November 21, 2007

Evergreen – Evergreen Fire/Rescue personnel taught over 3,000 elementary-aged students how to prevent and survive fires during the month of October as part of the nationwide fire prevention activities.

"Evergreen has so many students, we can't limit our school visits to a single week," said EFR Community Educator Einar Jensen. "We extend national Fire Prevention Week throughout October and it usually leaks into September and November, too."

Jensen, who coordinates the agency's outreach activities, was assisted by Fire Marshal Frank Dearborn, Fire Inspector Shelley Hunter, the on-duty EMS crews, dispatchers and 20 volunteer firefighters.

He offered a variety of programs depending on the size of the school and the ages of the students. For example, fifth graders often learned about juvenile firesetting because at 10 years of age, a child is considered culpable under the law and responsible for damages, injuries and deaths that result from deliberately set fires.

Most students had time to explore the firefighters' apparatus, including the new heavy rescue truck, and to learn how the patient compartment of an ambulance is similar to a doctor's office.

Other lessons included learning that firefighters look more silly than scary when wearing their bunker gear, practicing how to crawl low under smoke, identifying home hazards and empowering students to teach their parents to be safer, developing and practicing home escape plans and using fire extinguishers.

One traditional lesson missing from Jensen's repertoire was Stop, Drop and Roll.

"Preschool-aged children aren't cognitively ready for the traditional Stop, Drop and Roll lesson," he said. "They learn the phrase but lack the ability to apply it appropriately, as several fatal fires across the nation have shown.

"Stop, Drop and Roll is an important skill, but students should be closer to 7 or 8 years old before learning it," he said.

EFR's "October" fire prevention activities ended last week at Evergreen Middle School where Dearborn, Hunter, Jensen and Firefighter Marilyn Loehnert taught students in Christine Portaro's Family and Consumer Sciences about kitchen safety and how to use a fire extinguisher.

Kaitlyn Wojtowicz, one of Portaro's former students who recalled those skills to extinguish a fire in her Kittredge home last summer, also visited the class to emphasize the importance of the subject matter.

October is done, but EFR's commitment to community education is a year-round affair. Jensen is available for home ignition zone assessments, presentations to homeowners associations, station tours and a range of other topics. Contact him at ejensen@evergreenfirerescue.com.

3 People Displaced After Condominium Fire

Sara Gandy, 9News.com Web Producer
November 27, 2007

Denver – No one was injured but three people were displaced Tuesday morning after a condominium caught fire.

Denver Fire responded to the 6400 block of Happy Canyon Road early Tuesday morning. One condominium on the second floor in the 18-unit structure caught fire but was brought under control by firefighters in about 20 minutes. Crews had the fire knocked out within about an hour.

The unit below the fire had only water damage.

Fire Ruins Workshop over Weekend

By Stacie Miller, Sterling Journal-Advocate
November 26, 2007

Sterling — Nineteen firefighters responded to a weekend fire on the corner of County Road 30 and County Road 37. The West end of a garage/workshop was severely damaged in the noontime blaze Saturday. No one was injured.

“We made entry through the front and started attacking from the front,” Sterling Fire Department Engineer Cody Howell. “It was under control pretty quick.”

Extensive overhaul, pulling down the ceiling and walls to check for hidden fires, was performed, and all fire units were cleared at 1:35 p.m. The fire stopped at a dividing wall that separated the building into West and East ends.

The East end suffered smoke damage. A Chevy Suburban parked on the West end also was damaged, but the extent of that damage is not known.

The cause of the fire is still under investigation.



Fire fighters extinguish what is left of a garage fire on Logan County Road 37 near County Road 30 on Saturday. (Forrest Hershberger/Journal-Advocate)

Fire in Log Home Kills Exotic Birds

By Shane Benjamin, Durango Herald Staff Writer
November 21, 2007

Bayfield – About two dozen exotic birds died in a house fire Monday night in the Forest Lakes subdivision north of Bayfield.

The fire was reported about 10:15 p.m. on Little Bear Drive. The three-story log home endured extensive damage, especially to the second and third floors, making it uninhabitable, said Rich Graeber, fire chief for the Upper Pine River Fire Protection District.

A heat lamp used for a turtle's aquarium is believed to have sparked the blaze, but the exact cause remained under investigation Tuesday.



A Forest Lakes home north of Bayfield was partially destroyed during a fire Monday night. Jerry McBride, Durango Herald

The home is owned by Steve and Colleen Theobald of Bayfield. The Theobalds were out of town visiting relatives when the fire sparked. They were returning home Tuesday to deal with the aftermath.

In a brief interview Tuesday, Colleen Theobald said about 25 exotic birds were killed in the blaze.

"It's tragic, because the parrots were on the second floor, and the fire was going for so long that by the time we got there, it was just too late," said JD Burke, fire-prevention officer with Upper Pine.

When firefighters arrived, they saw flames shooting from a second-story window and flames creeping into an attic area of the house. The fire had been burning for about 90 minutes before it was reported.

"It's a log home, and it had a 90-minute head start on us, so that's a fireplace," Burke said. "It's a pile of wood.

"We're fortunate that nobody was in the house."

Firefighters began an aggressive attack and were able to save several pets, including a cat, snake, rabbit and rats. However, the birds, fish and turtle were lost.

Firefighters estimated about \$450,000 in damage to the \$600,000 home.

In all, about 30 firefighters responded to the call, including those with Upper Pine, the Durango Fire & Rescue Authority and Los Pinos Fire Protection District. No firefighters were injured in fighting the blaze.

Fire Destroys Home; Firefighters Suspect Space Heater Was Cause of Blaze

Mike Peters, Greeley Tribune
November 27, 2007

Evans – Standing in front of the house, smoke still pouring from the shattered windows, Richard Lucas said Monday night, "I used to live there."

The house at 3409 Burlington Ave. sustained severe fire damage to the living room and heavy smoke damage throughout the ranch-style house. He also lost two cats and his dog, who died in the fire. Lucas and his son weren't in the house when the fire started, but they were called by neighbors.

When Evans firefighters arrived, flames were coming out of the windows of the house. They were able to knock down the blaze in the living room, but the entire house was severely damaged. Neighbors also were the witnesses who first saw the fire about 6:30 p.m. and called 911 to report it.

Lucas has lived in the house since 1998. On Monday night, he was staying with friends. He said he didn't know what the next steps were in the fire recovery. "Right now, it looks like I've lost everything," he said. He was making arrangements late Monday to board up the windows and doors to prevent anyone from looting the burned house.

None of the firefighters was injured in the blaze, and they prevented it from spreading to the nearby neighbors' home.

Firefighters said it appears a space heater inside the living room of the house started the fire.

Fire Destroys Garage in Platteville

Greeley Tribune Staff Reports
November 26, 2007

A late-night fire Sunday caused extensive damage to a Platteville garage, and the probable cause is a malfunctioning clothes dryer.

The fire was reported at about 9:45 p.m. Sunday at 731 Grand Ave., which is a mobile home park. Platteville firefighter Russ Kissler said two cars inside the garage were destroyed, but the firefighters were able to stop the fire before it spread to the outside walls.

Kissler said 18 volunteer firefighters responded to fight the fire, and none was injured. They were able to clear the fire scene at about 1 a.m. Monday.

Glenwood Fire Dislodges Bishop Plumbing

Dennis Webb, Aspen Times
November 24, 2007

Glenwood Springs — Less than a month ago, Bishop Plumbing & Heating employees fired up their computers at their new Glenwood Springs office.

On Friday, they carried the computers back out of the office, some of them covered in foam after a fire that left the building charred and possibly destroyed.

But it could have been worse, said Kristin Davis, co-owner of the business. All seven employees were able to escape from the fire, with the only injury involving a worker who was treated on the scene for smoke inhalation.

That was the silver lining of the tragedy that struck on the day after Thanksgiving at 2512 S. Grand Ave.

"We're definitely thankful that our employees are safe and healthy," Davis said.

Those employees include Sweetie Pie, the 16-year-old office cat, who also escaped unharmed.

Glenwood resident Debra Morton, who owns the building along with her husband Tom, said they had Friday off and had looked forward to enjoying it. Instead, they were visiting the fire site with an insurance adjuster as they wondered whether the structure can be saved. Still, it could have been worse, she said.

"Stuff can all be replaced and nobody was hurt - not even the cat - and that's the good thing," she said.

Davis credits a smoke alarm with possibly saving the lives of her employees. This is Bishop's busy season and it was fully staffed Friday, with workers arriving at 7 a.m. Once the fire broke out, it spread quite quickly, Davis said.



Glenwood firefighters work on a building fire along South Grand Avenue Friday morning. Bishop Plumbing & Heating moved into the building less than a month ago. (Kara K. Pearson/Post Independent)

"The smoke alarm really made all the difference in getting us out safely," said Davis.

She said the incident taught her the importance of regularly checking alarm batteries.

Darryl Queen, captain of the Glenwood Springs Fire Department, said crews were dispatched at 8:58 a.m. and the first truck arrived at 9:04 a.m. He said the building's occupants had found some burning embers on the floor and put them out, but by the time they went outside the attic was "charged with smoke and fire."

Davis said an employee had seen that the bathroom floor was on fire. Queen said the embers may have fallen from the attic. He suspects some kind of electrical problem may have started the blaze. An investigation is ongoing.

About 24 people fought the fire. Glenwood's fire department sent three vehicles, and Carbondale also responded with an engine, while standing by with an ambulance in case any unrelated emergencies occurred in town at the same time.

Queen said the fire left about half of the roof destroyed. He said the fire "just creepy crawled everywhere" because the building included numerous false ceilings and different types of construction add-ons.

"You can imagine how difficult it was to beat through all that stuff," he said.

Retired veterinarian Carter Jackson said his family lived at the property and he ran his practice there from the early 1950s to early 1960s.

"It was out in the country then," he said.

Three children were born into the Jackson family while it was living there, and family members have fond memories of the place.

"We were sure sad to see it," Jackson said of the fire.

Morton said a dentist later lived there. Most recently it had been occupied by the Our School preschool, which has relocated.

Neither Morton nor Jackson know how old the building is. She said she thinks her husband bought it in the 1970s.

Davis said Bishop Plumbing also has an Aspen office, which its employees can use until they move back into the Glenwood building or find another one. Queen said firefighters tried to save what office equipment they could. But Davis said a lot of computers, desks and other items were lost.

Morton said the company's employees had been excited about their new location.

"They loved the place. I feel bad for them because they had just settled in," she said.

Queen said the holiday season also can be structure fire season, as people are heating their homes, using more lights and auxiliary electric devices and illuminating Christmas trees.

"A word to the wise is for everybody to be cautious out there and be aware of their surroundings," he said. "Let's be careful and cautious and have a happy holiday season and not a tragedy."

No One Injured in Mobile Home Fire

By Larry Winget, Valley Courier
November 19, 2007

Blanca — Flames visible for several miles destroyed an apparently unoccupied mobile home two miles north of the town of Blanca on Sunday, Nov. 18.

At least three units from the Fort Garland fire station of the Costilla County Fire district responded to reports of a house fire at approximately 5:30 p.m. Sunday evening.

The fire took place southwest of the intersection of County Road KK 6th Street and Cedar Ave. The operation was under the command of Costilla County fire Captain Vernon Martinez.

Costilla County Sheriff's deputy Ivan Garcia was one of the first responders to the scene. He said his department had been alerted by the Colorado State Patrol dispatch center and said, according to the CSP, the mobile home's owners live in Wyoming.

No one was reported as injured by the fire, but the structure was burned to the ground.



Fire destroyed an apparently unoccupied mobile home two miles north of the town of Blanca on Sunday.

Man Saves Pets But Loses House to Fire

By Hector Gutierrez, Rocky Mountain News
November 24, 2007

Albert Wallace watched his two-story home burn underneath him on Thanksgiving Day.

Suffering from burns to his face, arms and leg, and standing on the roof outside his second-floor master bedroom, Wallace waited for firefighters to rescue him.

As the flames became too intense, Wallace, carrying his daughter's kitten in a laundry bag, decided he couldn't wait any longer. He leaped about 14 feet, barely making it to safety.

Wallace, 49, was released from University Hospital on Friday afternoon. He was treated for burns and a shoulder injury he suffered when he jumped from the roof with the kitten. He'd managed to save himself, his two dogs and two cats.

But he lost his home at 8295 S. Krameria Way.

"I'm feeling good that I'm out of the hospital, exhausted emotionally, and a little sore physically," he said.

Wallace, who owns Energy Environmental Corp., was trying to heat his home for the first time using a geothermal system that utilizes heat from the ground.

Wallace was in his basement and using an antifreeze solution - which was supposed to be 20 percent antifreeze and 80 percent water - to fill a tubing system that transfers heat from the ground. It turned out that the container had 100 percent antifreeze, he said.

He later realized he left the water heater's gas valve on. As he was filling the system, Wallace spilled the solution, and the water heater ignited the antifreeze.

Wallace went upstairs to retrieve towels and a fire extinguisher. When he tried to return down the stairwell, he saw blue flames covering the floor. Wallace then used his cell phone to call 911.

As he stood on the stairwell, a fireball erupted up the stairs, knocking him over, along with the 13 gallons of alcohol stored in a drum next to him. His clothes caught fire, but Wallace said he used the fire extinguisher to spray himself.

He then went to the kitchen to use the main phone and called 911 again. Wallace said he was able to open the sliding glass door and let his two dogs into the yard. He said he then ran upstairs to get his cat and the kitten as the flames continued to climb up to the home's main floor.

"God's hands were on this," he said. "There's no way you can go through this without divine intervention," he said.

Man Burned In Explosion

Colorado Springs Gazette
November 23, 2007

A Calhan man suffered severe burns from an explosion in his mobile home Thanksgiving Day and was taken to a burn unit in Greeley.

Andrew Grutel, 78, was able to escape his home and get help before being taken to Penrose Hospital, said El Paso County Sheriff's Office spokeswoman Lt. Lari Sevene.

From there, he was taken to the Western States Burn Center at the North Colorado Medical Center, where he was in serious condition Thursday night, hospital spokeswoman Laurie Hamit said.

The cause of the fire was under investigation, but Sevene said firefighters suspected a gas leak related to the kitchen stove.

The fire destroyed the trailer, on Hanisch Road, north of Judge Orr Road and west of Ramah Highway, southeast of Calhan.

Fire District Budget Increases

By Katharhynn Heidelberg, Montrose Daily Press
November 17, 2007

Montrose — A mill levy increase approved by voters in 2006, plus the collection of other revenues, are paying off for the Montrose Fire Protection District.

The district approved its Fiscal Year 2008 budget Thursday night, which provides roughly \$362,000 for reserves, in addition to meeting basic needs. The total budget approved was for \$4.6 million, while total projected revenue for 2008 is \$4.9 million.

"Most of our revenue is generated from property taxes and the mill levy," Deputy Chief Tad Rowan said Friday. "This year, we're bringing in about \$3.7 million in general property taxes. The second place we receive major funding is EMS (emergency medical services) fees. For the 2008 budget, we anticipate bringing in \$645,000 in EMS fees."

The fire district's current mill levy is 8.813 mils. A mil is a thousandth of a dollar.

"They're earmarked for future construction and staffing needs at the district," Rowan said.

Prior to 2006, the mill levy rate was 5.375. Voters approved the increase after several failed ballot attempts and this allowed for the construction of a second fire station, on Racine Road. Future plans include a third substation, which is to be built in 2012.

Deputy Chief Dale Erickson said the district was able to put about \$33,000 more into reserves this year than it had in 2006. "That reserve is building every year. This budget is going to keep us right in line with the financial plan," he said.

EMS fees are collected from ambulance-service users. Erickson said the amount of such a fee depends upon the service a person receives in association with an ambulance call, and is subject to Medicare limits.

Because calls have increased, so too have the fees collected. As of late October, the MFPD responded to 1,857 EMS calls (plus 404 fire-related calls), with a few more months to go until year's end. The total call volume for all of 2006 was 2,665.

The fire district also collects fees from fire protection system permits issued to buildings for such things as sprinkler and alarm systems.

The 2008 budget will allow the district to purchase new equipment, including a high-dollar water tender and brush truck.

The new tender has a 3,000-gallon capacity for water and will replace the current water tender, which according to a fire district news release, dates from the 1980s. The truck transports water to areas that do not have fire hydrants.

"The additional brush truck is necessary for us to continue to cover the amount of wildland, brush and field fires we respond to," Chief Bob Pistor said in the news release.

Tender costs are projected at \$200,000 and the brush truck should cost about \$75,000.

Rowan said the district would also be training five current staff members as paramedics. The budget also allows for the replacement of five outdated defibrillators with better technology.

"We provide advanced life support EMS to the community," Rowan said. "In order to do that, we have to maintain state-of-the-art equipment."

Another critical component of the budget is a pay increase for firefighter/EMT staff over the next two years. Erickson and Rowan said MFPD, where base pay for an entry-level staffer is \$31,000 per year, lags behind current state averages for paid firefighters.

"The state average for 2007 was \$51,380 for a firefighter/EMT basic," Erickson said. "It (raise) is going to help morale. It's going to help us keep good quality people."

He said the district hasn't experienced many problems in staff retention. "But with the market of employees tightening, we don't want to have that problem," he said.

Steamboat Fire District to Go to Voters

Tax Increase Would Help Fund Existing Rural Protection Service

By Melinda Dudley, Steamboat Pilot & Today
November 26, 2007

Steamboat Springs — The Steamboat Springs Rural Fire Protection District will ask voters for a funding increase on the May 2008 ballot. Without increased revenue, district officials say they won't be able to provide the current level of fire and ambulance service as early as 2010.

In a Hill Research Consultants telephone survey conducted in October, respondents indicated they preferred to maintain current levels of service under mutual cooperation between the Steamboat Springs Rural Fire Protection District and the city rather than create a new independent fire district at a higher cost.

While 54 percent of respondents said they favored a \$514,000 property tax increase to maintain existing service, only 21 percent said they would fund a \$1.4 million tax increase to create an independent district with expanded services and a larger budget.

"It doesn't make sense to have two different fire districts and a lot more taxes is what voters told us," said Bob Kuusinen, fire protection district board member and past president.

The district had been planning to go to voters; the impetus for the survey was to figure out exactly what question it should ask district voters, district board President Steve Hilley said.

The projected future shortfall the fire district would face would limit its ability to keep providing emergency services as well as hamper its ability to expand services to keep up with growth, Hilley said.

"As we proceed forward, and our projections are coming out true, we try to keep our mill levies as low as possible while maintaining our level of service," Hilley said.

Increasing the district's existing mill levy to provide an additional \$514,000 a year would result in a property tax hike of \$70 a year for a home valued at \$600,000.

District officials said the funds would allow it to add firefighting, EMS and support staff as well as purchase additional equipment and help build future facilities. There is talk of building a fire station west of town, possibly in the Steamboat 700 development still in the planning stages, as well as one south of Steamboat near Catamount Ranch and Club, Hilley said.

The May vote will be by mail-in ballot, Kuusinen said.

Forming an independent fire district would allow for improved fire and EMS response times, officials said, but would cost taxpayers an additional \$1.4 million a year.

According to an intergovernmental agreement adopted in 2001, the city provides fire service to the 470-square-mile fire protection district through Steamboat Springs Fire Rescue, and the Steamboat Springs Rural Fire Protection District provides ambulance service. The city funds 70 percent of operations through sales tax, and the fire protection district contributes the rest, which comes from property taxes and ambulance user fees.

In the event that the fire protection district became independent, Steamboat Springs Fire Rescue would no longer respond to fires outside of city limits, unless they were called in to assist, Assistant Fire Chief Bob Struble said.

The idea of developing a new taxing entity to provide both fire and ambulance services has been under discussion by the city and its emergency services since June. The move was suggested by a consulting group brought in to make recommendations on the joint funding agreement between the city and the district, and also to make suggestions on how to provide more equitable service between residents who live inside and outside of city limits.

However, there are pros and cons to creating an independent fire district, and its major shortcoming is that it doesn't have the support of the voters, Hilley said.

Duplicating existing services does not really make sense unless voters truly want to pay for more fire stations closer to their homes and quicker response times, he said.

Wiley Fire Receives Grant from Department of Homeland Security

Lamar Ledger
November 23, 2007

Wiley – Firefighters in Wiley will be helping to pay matching funds for a grant awarded Friday from the Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

The Assistance to Firefighters Grant awarded the Wiley Rural Fire Protection District \$68,186 of a \$71,775 grant for the purchase of items for operations and safety. The district will purchase personal protective equipment, accountability and breathing apparatus for firefighting and hazardous materials accidents.

According to Wiley Fire Chief Jim Farmer, "I can't express my appreciation enough to DHS and FEMA for this award. Our department has been in desperate need of even the most basic protective gear and this grant will help us to do the job we need to do. This is one of those few times when a grant can save lives and prevent injuries to the firefighters."

Farmer noted that Dwight Gardner of U.S. Senator Ken Salazar's (D-CO) regional office called to congratulate the department on the award and offered assistance in the processing of the grant.

According to the DHS AFG site, the notification was made in the 14th round of the grant and currently only 16 awards have been made to other agencies in Colorado.

According to the FEMA website, nationally, the AFG awards, which will be distributed in phases, will ultimately provide approximately \$490 million to fire departments and nonaffiliated emergency medical service organizations throughout the country.

AFG awards aim to enhance response capabilities and to more effectively protect the health and safety of the public with respect to fire and other hazards.

The grants enable local fire departments and emergency medical services organizations to purchase or receive training, conduct first responder health and safety programs, and buy equipment and response vehicles.

"The Assistance to Firefighters Grants program has been instrumental in building capacity and providing needed resources for our nation's firefighters," said FEMA Administrator R. David Paulison. "From the purchase of equipment to first responder training, the AFG program has helped improve response capabilities and saved lives and property in communities throughout the United States."

Fort Lupton Fire Department Hiring Full-Time Firefighters

Dan England, Greeley Tribune
November 25, 2007

The Fort Lupton Fire Department still needs volunteers. Chief Phil Tiffany aggressively recruits them, touting features such as a pension. But he knows he can't rely on them anymore.

That's one reason why the fire department hired four full-time paid firefighters who will start work in January. It's more difficult than ever to recruit new, eager and willing volunteers to staff a fire station and keep response times down.

"We were having difficulties finding the traditional volunteer who works and lives in their town and can respond to calls from home," Tiffany said. "There's a lot more people not working in the communities they live in, and more and more people don't have time to do it."

That fact, and a steady increase in calls, meant at times it took the department eight minutes or longer to respond to a call. Residents began to notice, and Tiffany heard about it.

"The community expects more from us," he said. "They expect us to be there, and to them it doesn't matter if it's volunteers or paid staff. They see no difference. They need us there."

So Tiffany hired paid firefighters for the first time two years ago, adding three professionals to the department and a training captain. Hiring the additional four is a landmark move for the department. The move means the department will have two firefighters staffing the station 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

"That's a big move for us," Tiffany said.

The department will pay for the additional professionals with existing funds, but that also means no more hires for a while, Tiffany said.

There was some resistance to the professional move from some of the volunteers. But Tiffany also hired the professionals from the core of volunteers, and the department wasn't trying to move in on the volunteers' territory. He was just trying to staff the calls.

Even so, Tiffany said the department still needs volunteer firefighters and is going to colleges and sending out announcements across Fort Lupton and nearby towns. He's also practicing his sales pitch.

"We provide all the training, and we even give out a pension," he said. "If you serve 20 years as a volunteer, and you're 50 or older, you'll get \$850 a month for the remainder of your life."

Sound good? Tiffany hopes so. The department, even with its new professional firefighters, can only do so much without people to staff it.

Some Call State Use of Emergency Computers a Disaster

Deborah Sherman, 9News Investigative Reporter
November 20, 2007

Centennial – Colorado state workers have used the state's emergency computers to go shopping, play video games and look at pornography, according to a 9Wants to Know investigation.

The 30 security computers reside in the state Emergency Operations Center in Centennial.

Firewall and cookie reports obtained by 9NEWS show employees have visited 3,000 personal Web sites more than 30,000 times since the computers were purchased in October 2004.

"These computers are designed to provide protection to the people in Colorado in times of very serious need," said State Rep. Cory Gardner, (R-Dist. 63). "They're not there to provide entertainment to state employees and certainly not there to download illicit images."



State Emergency Operations Center in Centennial.

Gardner, the House Minority Whip, said Republicans and going to ask the governor and the Colorado state auditor for an audit of the security computers on Wednesday.

Democrats also want more oversight of the computers.

"I'm especially shocked at the pornography sites," said State Rep. Terrance Carroll, (D-Dist. 7), who chaired the last homeland security committee. "There has to be a line where you say, 'OK, this is where we stop. You can't go beyond this line.'"

Lawmakers on both sides of the aisle are concerned about viruses and malware (damaging software) being dumped on the computers when

"You expose those computers to so much more risk when you engage in visits to porn sites and shopping sites, excessively," said Carroll.

"If there is an earthquake, if there is a tornado, a flood, these are the computer systems that will be responsible for the safety and well being of the people of Colorado," said Gardner. "And if they're being used to download adware, spy ware, malware, things that could completely block those computers from working, that's unacceptable."

The computers dedicated for disaster response are overseen by the Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA). State law and department policies prohibit any personal use of the security computers.

Tuesday night, DOLA said it would start an investigation to learn whether state employees have misused the computers or jeopardized Colorado's cyber security.

"Our priority is to ensure that all state equipment is used only for legitimate government purposes," said Susan Kirkpatrick, executive director of DOLA. "If there are any policies, procedures or oversight controls that need to be changed or other actions that need to be taken, we will do so quickly."

DOLA does not know exactly where people are surfing on the computers and does not keep track or monitor usage, according to DOLA spokeswoman Linda Rice.

"Because of our department's size and limited resources, it is not a cost-benefit for us to have full-time monitoring of Internet use," said Rice. "It simply would require staff time and resources we don't have."

However, 9Wants To Know was able to learn where people have been surfing by reviewing Firewall and cookie reports.

The reports show employees have visited sites like I-am-bored.com, stupid-videos.com, gamespy.com and myspace.com.

DOLA said it could not prove nor disprove where people have surfed on the secure computers because it doesn't think cookies are a good way to track usage.

Even browsing a personal site one time can cause big security risks, according to Sam Masiello, director of threat management for MX Logic, local web site company.

He said malware called "Key Loggers" can log every keystroke on the computer, copying Internet or computer passwords, bank account numbers or confidential information.

Hackers can then sell that information on the black market, according to Masiello.

Masiello said legitimate Web sites would not serve up the cookies for the gag and porn sites that were found on the state's emergency computers. He says users would have to visit those Web sites to get those kinds of cookies.

DOLA does not block any Web sites from the computers. However, sex sites are blocked from all computers used in the State Capitol. People working in the Capitol get a 90-minute allotment each day to surf on personal Web sites.

The state Emergency Operations Center is designed as a Multi Agency Coordination Center where local, state and federal agencies along with response organizations coordinate state resources and response to disasters and emergencies, according to DOLA spokeswoman Linda Rice.

The center was activated last year during the Holly tornado, the blizzards and Hurricane Katrina to coordinate local and state response and resources.

The center is often used for training when it's not activated in emergencies. Therefore, other people aside from state workers may be using the computers, said Rice.

When people log onto the computers, a screen warns them that unauthorized use is prohibited and that they are entering a secure DOLA network.

No employees have ever been reprimanded by DOLA's IT staff for misuse of the computers, according to Rice.

MRSA Infection Claims Texas Rescuer; Wife Seeks Answers

After Firefighter Dies, His Wife Asks: How Could This Happen?

Sherry Jacobson, Dallas Morning News
November 19, 2007

It started with a nagging pain in Mike Chandler's lower back.

After 10 days of doctor visits and a fistful of prescriptions for painkillers, the 33-year-old Garland firefighter was rushed to Medical Center of McKinney, unable to breathe and showing signs of kidney failure.

It took two more days for a test to confirm that he was fighting a severe infection.

By then, Mr. Chandler was dead.

His death certificate stated simply that he died of multiple organ failure, pneumonia and sepsis, which is the body's response to an overwhelming infection. But the underlying cause of death was what his loved ones could not believe.

An antibiotic-resistant staph infection - methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*, or MRSA - killed a strong, healthy firefighter in less than two weeks.

MRSA - often pronounced MER-sa - strikes adults and children, and it sometimes returns after treatment to cause havoc in a carrier's life. But its ability to kill quickly, even before it's diagnosed, is the most frightening part.

Mr. Chandler's survivors knew little or nothing about MRSA, beyond the sudden realization that Americans, who take such pride in their health care system, can be stricken and killed by an infection when they are otherwise healthy.

"He's a guy who climbed a hundred flights of stairs with an 80-pound weight on his back just to keep in shape," said his wife, Karen Chandler. "He was giving his life to help people, to help society."

Major health problem

When Mr. Chandler died so unexpectedly six months ago, MRSA had not yet reached the public spotlight, beyond the occasional death report.

It wasn't until last month that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention surprised the nation by announcing that 19,000 Americans were dying from MRSA infections every year, about 2,000 more than die of AIDS.

"Invasive MRSA disease is a major public health problem," concluded a government study in the Oct. 17 *Journal of the American Medical Association*, which estimated there were 95,000 severe MRSA infections in 2005.

Since May, Mrs. Chandler has channeled her grief into trying to understand how a simple infection could kill someone as strong as her husband, and, more importantly, why the doctors who treated him failed to diagnose it.

"When I was getting his medical records together, I decided that I needed to figure out what happened and why it was missed," Mrs. Chandler said.

"I knew nothing about staph or MRSA," said the 36-year-old sales representative, who switched to selling real estate to be closer to home after her husband died. The couple has a 6-year-old daughter, Faith.

Her mission to understand what killed her husband plunged her into a world of medical Web sites and scientific journals. She learned that MRSA bacteria live harmlessly in the nasal passages of roughly 30 percent of the U.S. population and that the bacteria can also infect the skin, causing a pimple or boil that clears up with or without treatment.

Severe MRSA cases were first detected among hospital patients in the 1960s and, two decades later, began spreading among drug abusers. Four children died of MRSA infection in Minnesota and North Dakota in 1997, signaling the growing threat posed by community-acquired strains.

Most people think they have a spider bite when the infection first appears. If the infection becomes invasive, it would be more difficult to stop because mainline antibiotics cannot kill MRSA.

Race with time

A timely test can determine the effectiveness of the other antibiotics, among them a powerful intravenous treatment for the most serious infections. But if the infection is spreading, it can become a race with time.

Mrs. Chandler spent the summer absorbing as much as she could about MRSA, sometimes asking a friend with a scientific background to interpret medical jargon.

The journey was heartbreaking at times.

"I really feel bad for any wife who has to sit on the phone and go through her husband's autopsy report line by line with the coroner to find out what it says," she said.

Mrs. Chandler has puzzled over how her husband might have become infected. The answer is uncertain, although his job put him at greater risk of contact with such infections.

They usually spread through contact with other people or with contaminated surfaces. The best way to prevent infection is regular hand-washing and disinfecting surfaces touched by peoples' hands and bare feet.

MRSA infections have tended to spread within hospitals and other health care settings, which Mr. Chandler visited as part of his job.

Mrs. Chandler was told that her husband and other firefighters transported several nursing home residents to local hospitals in the weeks before he got sick. It was Mr. Chandler's job to take their vital signs.

Chad Purcell, president of the Garland Firefighters Association, said the Fire Department followed standard disease-prevention practices, including using latex gloves, masks and protective clothing when necessary.

"But sometimes, patients have to be picked up and put on a cot, and they're touching you on the face, neck or arm," said Mr. Purcell, who drives a fire truck. "You would have to wash your uniform, take a shower and clean all the equipment to make it safe after every transport. It's impossible."

MRSA infections also are spreading in high school athletic departments, child care facilities, dormitories, gyms and spas, according to a warning issued by Texas health officials last month.

Precautions taken?

Mrs. Chandler turned her attention to the confines of her husband's fire station. Were enough precautions taken, she wondered, to stop bacteria from growing and spreading during the five months he was in the Garland department?

"People who live in close quarters can spread it easily," she said, repeating facts she'd absorbed during her educational efforts.

Mr. Purcell said the showers and bathrooms in Garland's firehouses were disinfected regularly, although not daily. And a few firefighters developed skin infections recently.

"Three or four guys possibly had a simple staph infection this year," he said. "They went to the city clinic and got antibiotics, but they were never tested for MRSA. We have nothing confirmed."

Mrs. Chandler's efforts to collect death benefits through the state's workers' compensation system were denied by Garland's insurance carrier on the grounds that her husband's work-related back injury did not cause his death.

"His death was due to an ordinary disease of life [to] which the general public is exposed," stated the decision by Texas Political Subdivisions, the insurance carrier. Mrs. Chandler said she is fighting the decision.

Garland officials declined to comment.

It is possible that Mr. Chandler became infected during the 10 days he was seeking medical treatment for his back pain. He visited one emergency room in McKinney and four private doctors' offices.

The doctors focused on his aching back, Mrs. Chandler recalled. In hindsight, she wondered if they all missed something.

There were three small boils on the back of his neck, she said, which the Chandlers believed were just ingrown hairs. The spots became red after a few days, she said.

"No one paid any attention to his neck," Mrs. Chandler said. "It was all about the pain in his back."

'Sicker and sicker'

Mr. Chandler believed he had wrenched his back May 4 while moving equipment during a training exercise during his 24-hour shift, his wife said. By the time he got home the next morning, he could barely walk. Doctors thought it might be a herniated disc or pulled muscles.

But Mr. Chandler did not respond to the painkillers or muscle relaxants they prescribed.

"He just kept getting sicker and sicker," Mrs. Chandler recalled.

By May 14, Mr. Chandler woke up covered with a rash and no longer able to urinate. His wife was on a business trip, so friends drove him to the emergency room at Medical Center of McKinney.

Although Mr. Chandler was alert and talking, doctors could detect no blood pressure, and they feared his kidneys were failing. During a subsequent lung scan, he stopped breathing, was revived and moved to intensive care.

By the time Mrs. Chandler got to the hospital, the doctors were saying that her husband "was scaring them," she said, because they couldn't identify the source of his downward spiral.

"You know it's serious when you walk into the emergency room and four doctors come to greet you," she said. "And three of them are specialists who were called in the middle of the night."

A diagnosis was still evading them, but, for the first time, an infectious-disease specialist guessed that it might be MRSA. Even before tests confirmed the infection, the doctor started him on antibiotics.

In the struggle to save his life, Mr. Chandler was taking a dozen different medications and being prepared for dialysis when things took a turn for the worse, his wife recalled.

"At 2:30 a.m., they woke me up," she said. "They still didn't know what was wrong with him."

Mr. Chandler's family had arrived from Houston, knowing that the situation was serious but still convinced that it was going to turn out fine.

"Mike's the baby of the family, the youngest of four brothers and the healthiest of all of us," reasoned Gene Chandler, an older brother. "I knew he'd be OK with dialysis. Even the morning he died, I thought he'd pull out of it."

Mike Chandler's death at 5:37 a.m. May 16 came as nurses were turning him to change the sheets on the bed. He stopped breathing, and the fight was over.

It was a stunning moment for the people who loved him and didn't expect to lose him so soon.

"Thirty-three-year-old men just don't die," said his wife.

Second Semester National Fire Academy Application Period Closes December 31st

November 1 marked the opening of the second semester fiscal year (FY) 2008 application period for the U. S. Fire Administration's National Fire Academy (NFA). The application period runs from November 1 through December 31, 2007. The second semester includes those courses scheduled for delivery April 1, 2008 through September 30, 2008.

The second semester 2007-2008 schedule can be found at:

<http://www.usfa.dhs.gov/applications/nfacsd/report.jsp?fy=2008&sem=2>

Interested applicants are reminded that in addition to the course specific selection criteria and course specific prerequisite requirements, they must also have ICS 100 and ICS 200 level training in order to be considered for any NFA course.

The application period for the first semester 2007-2008 academic year (10/1/07 - 3/31/08) is closed but applications for courses with vacancies are being accepted. Applications for course vacancies must be received at least six weeks before the course start date for the applicant to be considered for the course. Vacancies within six weeks of the course start date shall only be filled from the established wait list, so it's important to apply early.

To view first semester courses with vacancies, go to:

<http://www.usfa.dhs.gov/applications/nfacsd/display.jsp?sm=&sy=&em=&ey=&stat=&state=&av=228&school=NFA>

For more information or to download an application, go to:

<http://www.usfa.dhs.gov/nfa/about/attend/apply.shtm>

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Cole + Russell Architects is a full-service architecture firm specialized in the planning, design and innovation of fire, emergency and public safety facilities nationwide, as well as housing, education, commercial, hospitality and retail projects.

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CPS provides a full range of employment testing and selection services to the fire service including entry and promotional written exams, recruitment and assessment centers.

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Disaster Restoration, Inc. (DRI) is the Rocky Mountain Region's premier sole-focus disaster restoration company. Since its inception in 1987, DRI has focused on state-wide restoration and security of damage caused by fire, smoke, water, vandalism, earthquake, terrorism, and environmental (mold, mildew, and hazardous materials) disasters. The company provides full service restoration from emergency board-up through complete reconstruction. DRI fulfills the need for 24 hour, seven-day-a-week instant response and full in-house service and expertise in all areas of disaster restoration services.

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Since 1989, McNeil & Company has been proudly serving the unique needs of fire and rescue service organizations and providing a real choice in a limited marketplace. Our Emergency Services Insurance Program (ESIP) is one of the most innovative and comprehensive insurance programs available today, with coverage that is continually enhanced in response to current claim scenarios and state-specific issues.

Emergency Services Consulting inc. (ESCI)

Bronze

Emergency Services Consulting inc. (ESCI) is a national firm providing specialized, high quality fire, police, communications, and EMS consulting services to organizations throughout the United States and Canada. Since 1976, ESCI has been meeting the needs of emergency services agencies providing consulting services to municipalities, districts, nonprofit organizations, and the industrial and commercial community.

Fire and Police Pension Association

Basic

The Fire and Police Pension Association of Colorado was established January 1, 1980 and administers a statewide multiple employer public employee retirement system providing defined benefit plan coverage as well as death and disability coverage for police officers and firefighters throughout the State of Colorado. FPPA also administers the assets of affiliated local government pension plans, volunteer firefighter plans, and deferred comp plans for firefighters and police officers throughout the state.

Front Range Fire Apparatus

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Front Range Fire Apparatus is proud to be the exclusive dealer of Pierce Fire Apparatus and Medtec Ambulances for Colorado and Wyoming. We also represent a wide array of fire equipment manufacturers including Akron Brass, Mine Safety Appliances and FireGear ... to name a few. Our service facility, located in Boulder, Colorado employs highly trained and certified technicians. We service all makes and models of fire apparatus and build custom brush trucks and tankers to your specification.

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Gregory & Associates, Inc. provides employee benefits for groups. We also offer financial services such as financial planning and retirement planning. We have provided services for the Special District Association (SDA) since 1984. We are currently offering a product for the new Length of Service Program (LOSAP), which was enacted by the Colorado Legislature in February, 2007. We have been in the financial industry in Colorado since 1969.

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Interstate (formerly Colorado Fire and Flood) is one of Colorado's most respected and trusted independently owned disaster recovery companies specializing in residential, commercial, industrial, institutional and healthcare mitigation due to fire, smoke, water and wind damage. Our goal is to minimize both personal and financial loss by returning your home or business to pre-loss condition as quickly as possible. We pride ourselves in customer service, quality, communication and timeliness. When disaster strikes, we are here to help get our customers back on their feet quickly.

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Kroenke Sports Enterprises

Basic

Kroenke Sports Enterprises is the Rocky Mountain West's leading provider of live sports and entertainment events. Kroenke Sports Enterprises is the home of the Denver Nuggets, Colorado Avalanche, Colorado Crush, Colorado Mammoth, Colorado Rapids, NDP Lacrosse, and Pepsi Center.

Max Fire Apparatus, Inc

Bronze & Sponsor of 5 VFD's

Max Fire Apparatus, representing Rosenbauer and Braun Ambulances, provides departments in Colorado and Wyoming with products that have innovative design, superior manufacturing and proven technology. Our EVT certified technicians are committed to serving the needs of our customers at our full service maintenance facility or on-site with our fully equipped mobile service vehicles.

Corporate Sponsor**Sponsorship Level****Motorola, Inc.**

Bronze

Delivering critical information seamlessly to the fingertips of first responders when and where they need it - across agencies, borders, networks, devices.

Mountain States Employers Council, Inc.

Basic

Mountain States Employers Council (MSEC), Inc. is a non-profit membership organization, founded in 1939, designed to partner with employers to maintain effective employer/employee relationships. MSEC is a "one-stop shopping" resource for members in the areas of human resource management, employment law, surveys and training.

National Fire Protection Association (NFPA)

Basic

Established in 1896, NFPA serves as the world's leading advocate of fire prevention and is an authoritative source on public safety. In fact, NFPA's 300 codes and standards influence every building, process, service, design, and installation in the United States, as well as many of those used in other countries.

Pinnacol Assurance

Basic

We are Colorado's leading Workers' Compensation company. We support our customers with the finest in accident prevention programs, quick and accurate claims management, and valuable Return-to-Work programs. It's all just part of what makes us the most trusted Workers' Compensation company in the state.

Public Safety Solutions

Basic

Public Safety Solutions provides fire department and ambulance service problem solving.

ServiceMaster Central

Basic

ServiceMaster Central is a full-service fire and restoration company that has been in business locally since 1989. We also do full reconstruction and asbestos abatement.

Spartan Chassis, Inc.

Bronze

Spartan Chassis, Inc. is a leading developer of custom chassis for recreational vehicles, fire trucks, and specialty vehicles. Contact Tim Johnson, Central Regional Sales Manager at 970-567-7560 or Email: tjohnson@spartanchassis.com.

Summit Emergency Equipment

Banner Advertiser

Summit Emergency Equipment answers the call to the fire and EMS communities, representing the most sought after names in the industry. We can also assist your department with emergency vehicle parts and service for any make of fire apparatus or ambulance.

Super Vac Manufacturing Co., Inc.

Gold

Super Vac manufactures fans, trucks, and light towers in Loveland, CO. We also have a complete refurb and repair facility for all fire service vehicles.

T. Charles Wilson Insurance Service

Gold

Provider of Property, Liability, Malpractice, Directors & Officers, Workers Compensation, Accident and Sickness, Group Life and other insurance products to fire districts and other special districts and private businesses.

VFIS of Colorado

Gold

VFIS of Colorado, insuring non-profit emergency service organizations since 1982 and the recognized "Standard of Excellence" that is built upon a foundation of trust. VFIS offers a progressive portfolio of insurance coverages, including property and casualty, accident and sickness, group life insurance, group long term disability, and volunteer pension plans. VFIS of Colorado offers education and training programs, and risk management resources, as an added value service.

Wheatland Fire Equipment

Banner Advertiser

Since 1983, we have been in the fire equipment distribution business. We are committed to giving our customers the best customer service with our knowledge, experience and integrity. Our customers deserve the best and safest equipment on the market, so we only sell premium personal protective equipment. We also have a mobile service center and technician able to do Scott service, TNT service, compressor service, fit-testing, hydrostatic testing, and more.

COLORADO STATE FIRE CHIEFS' ASSOCIATION

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