



National Fire Fighter Near-Miss Reporting System
Safety, Health and Survival Week 2009
***Protect Yourself: Your Safety, Health and Survival
Are Your Responsibility***
General Discussion Questions for Grouped Reports

Topic #1-Emergency Driving

A) Lower Speed

Are you familiar with the distance required to bring your vehicle to a stop? A fire truck traveling at 55 mph travels 80 feet in one second. Total stopping distance on dry pavement is over 300 feet and can be over 500 feet on wet pavement. Heavier vehicles will have even longer stopping distances. Get informed about the apparatus you drive.

B) Seatbelts

You are responsible for the safety of the passengers in your vehicle. Do you require all personnel to be belted in before you begin your response? Do any of your crew members remove their seat belts during the response?

C) Stop at Intersections

Intersections are a common location for accidents involving responding fire apparatus. Does your vehicle come to a complete stop at all red lights and stop signs? Are all personnel in the apparatus involved in watching for other vehicles, including other responding units?

Topic #2 -Firefighter Heart Disease and Cancer Education and Prevention

A) Smoking and Other Tobacco Use

Smoking and other tobacco usage is a big contributing factor in heart disease and cancer. Do you smoke, dip, or chew? Why? Do you encourage your fellow firefighters who do to stop?

B) Get Active!

Just 30 minutes of exercise each day can reduce your chances of having a heart attack or stroke. Do you have 30 minutes to invest in saving your life?

C) Heart Healthy Diet

In order to stay healthy, we must eat healthy. A proper functioning body and mind requires a diet low in fat and high in essential nutrients. Do you encourage healthy eating at your station?

D) Weight

Even just a few extra pounds can impede our performance on the emergency scene and increase our health risks. Do you know what your recommended healthy weight is? Are you taking steps to get there and maintain it?

E) Health Screenings

Annual health screenings have resulted in the discovery of unsuspected life threatening health issues that has been a literal lifesaver for many firefighters. Does your department have a health screening program? If not, do you see your doctor for a check-up each year?

Topic #3-Survival (Structural Size-up and Situational Awareness)

A) Building Materials and Construction Types

Familiarization with your first due territory can increase the safety for all personnel. What are the 5 most hazardous structures in your territory?

B) Always complete a 360 degree walk around to collect valuable operational decision-making information.

Sometimes, we get in a hurry and may skip this important size-up component. Can you think of an example of an incident that would have been handled more efficiently and safely if a 360 degree walks around had been completed?

C) Learn the practice of reading smoke.

The volume, color, and velocity of smoke are a great indicator of the fire conditions inside a structure. Is the smoke characteristics included in your size-up report?

D) Be familiar with the accepted rules of engagement.

All fires are different and demand a well thought out plan of attack. What are your priorities when putting together your action plan? Does your crew understand these priorities and why these decisions are made?

E) Learn your accountability system and use it.

Maintaining crew integrity is vital for the efficiency of operations and for the safety of firefighters, especially when fire conditions change unexpectedly. How well does your accountability system track the location of personnel on the emergency scene?

Topic #4-Chiefs – Leaders in Safety

A) Become personally involved in safety and make it part of your strategic vision for the department.

Members of any organization, including fire departments, expect their leadership to define what is most important to that organization. How important do your firefighters think their safety is to you as a chief officer?

B) Be willing to make the tough decisions regarding safety policies and practices and their implementation.

Safety rules are only as important to personnel if they are enforced with consistency and fairness. What happens to a member of your department if they are found to be in violation of a safety policy?

C) Ensure that resources are available to accomplish activities safely and effectively.

The current financial crisis has created many challenges for fire chiefs who must make budgetary decisions that will affect the operation of their department. What priority do you place on firefighter safety and health when planning your annual budget?