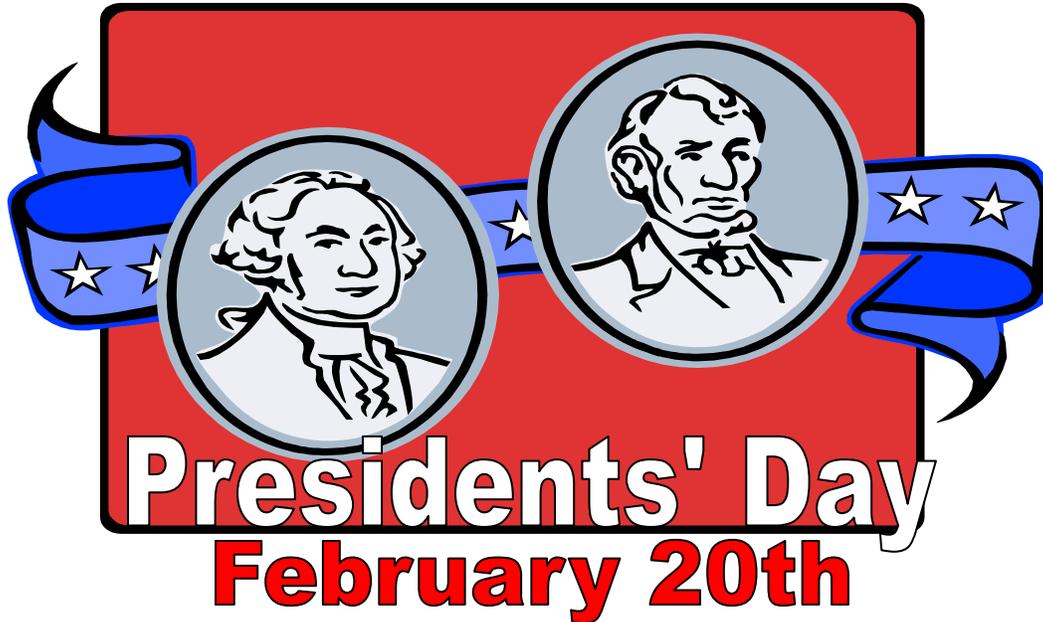


Smokescreen

February 2017

A Newsletter Publication of Missoula Rural Fire District



Missoula Rural Fire District
2521 South Ave W
Missoula, MT 59804
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SMOKESCREEN



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MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF — By Fire District Chief Bill Colwell

It is again the Insurance Service Offices (ISO) rerate time at MRFD. MRFD did our last ISO rerate in 2012, with follow-up work completed in September of 2013. ISO assigns a Public Protection Classification (PPC) to a community based on a community's fire protection services. ISO analyzes fire suppression capabilities by researching a community's fire dispatch system, fire suppression water supply system, and fire department capabilities. Each of those parts of fire suppression in a community are assigned a value, based on complex criteria that are used in communities across the United States. The relevant data is compiled in each of the parts, then combined to assign a PPC to the community being evaluated. The PPCs range from 1 to 10: Class 1 represents exemplary public protection and Class 10 indicates the area does not meet ISO's minimum criteria, but does have fire protection. Most fire insurance companies recognize the PPC as a tool to apply when calculating fire insurance premiums for properties in a community. As an example, a property with a Class 10 PPC would have an insurance premium significantly higher than the same property with a Class 1 PPC. MRFD's current PPC is a split rating, because we have urban, rural and remote protection areas in our jurisdiction.



Our current PPC rating is a 4-6-10:

- “4” - if the property is five miles or less from a fire station and within one thousand feet of a fire hydrant
- “6” - if the property is five miles or less than a fire station but depends on trucked water for fire suppression
- “10” - if the property is greater than five miles from a fire station, but still has fire protection by being annexed into our District

The three parts of the PPC rating for MRFD require evaluation of the Missoula County 911 service, the water supply department for a given property, and MRFD fire service delivery. The community dispatch center is 10%, the water supply for a given property is 40% and the fire department is 50% of the points that establish the PPC score for a community.

MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF – CONTINUED

For MRFD, the Dispatch and Fire Department parts are consistent. The water supply is dependent on the local neighborhood. Some properties have fire hydrants available; however, others rely on water transported to the fire scene in water tenders. Availability of water is a factor as to how quickly a fire can be suppressed. Distance from a fire hydrant or other water source affects the amount of time it takes to deliver water to a fire incident. The distance that fire resources travel from a fire station to a property also affects the amount of time from dispatch to arrival of the first fire apparatus. That time is a primary factor in how quickly the loss of life or property from a fire is stopped by rescue and or application of water to extinguish a fire.

A packet of material that explains the information needed to do the ISO evaluation is sent to the Fire Chief and the survey information is prepared prior to the actual evaluation.

That packet includes survey information for the 911 center that evaluates length of dispatch time in the history of dispatches. Number of calls for service that can be handled simultaneously and the redundancy of the system to function if a part of the entire center fails or the electrical supply fails.

We gather and update information from the water providers for our neighborhoods. MRFD has 17 different water supply providers in our jurisdiction. We collect information that includes current water provider managers, hydrant testing schedules and water flow testing results.

Static water sources like a pond, lake, river, cistern, or other draft sites are evaluated. The ability to shuttle water (transport and deliver water via water tender) is also evaluated. The distance water is shuttled directly affects the amount of water that can be available for suppression efforts.

The fire department is evaluated in several areas. Station locations, number of personnel on duty in the stations, number of personnel available on call for response and the number of personnel available from automatic mutual aid partners. Apparatus and type of apparatus, maintenance and records of

maintenance on apparatus, as well as inventory of equipment carried on apparatus are all part of the evaluation. Current pump testing and fire hose testing records and annual records since the last ISO rating are also included.

Levels of fire training and records for training for fire personnel since the last rating are all evaluated.

Those trainings include daily training and training that includes our mutual aid partners and involve large training drills with multiple engine companies.



The effort a fire department makes to reduce injuries and prevent fires is also part of the evaluation. Inspections of businesses to help owners reach or stay at acceptable fire code levels are checked. Pre-planning efforts in businesses to help firefighters have better knowledge of floor plans, water supply, utility shut-offs, and special hazards are all considered and valuable as part of the work of a fire department. Evaluation of records for maintenance of fire alarm and automatic suppression systems are also considered. In addition, fire education for the public and school programs and fire drills that are part of the prevention program are included in the evaluation.

The PPC assigned to a jurisdiction helps communities evaluate their fire protection service and compare their service to a countrywide standard. Those comparisons help community leaders during planning processes in making decisions about budgeting for facilities, equipment, training, and personnel. Reducing a community's PPC can help citizens reduce their insurance premiums and save money on their taxes.

I mentioned follow up work that we completed in September of 2013, following the 2012 rerate with ISO. That work was initiated because of recommendations from the 2012 rating. There was one change included in the 2012 rating that MRFD could budgetarily accomplish. That recommendation was to purchase and position an additional water tender at MRFD Station #1 at 2521 South Ave W. MRFD financed a water tender (WT-317) along with a replacement Type 1 engine for Station #1, and we now have five water tenders, one available at each station.

The other point in the ISO rerate from 2012 was staffing available to respond to fires. MRFD applied for a Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response Grant (SAFER). That grant allowed MRFD to hire 6 firefighter/EMTs for three years. After the first year of the grant, the staffing change at MRFD allowed MRFD to document increased staffing available for response.

The addition of water tender 317 and the demonstrated increased staffing prompted the Administration at MRFD to request an update for our 2012 rerate. The update was accepted by ISO and our PPC was lowered to the 4-6-10 that MRFD has currently assigned. The citizens were asked for an increased mill levy for MRFD to maintain the funding level and to retain the six firefighter/EMTs hired with the SAFER grant. The citizens supported that mill levy increase and I believe the improvement in our PPC influenced their support.

The schedule that ISO uses currently is a modification of the one used in 2012. It places additional emphasis on fire prevention and has some water handling changes. MRFD looks forward to the rerate in 2017 and plans to use the results to help identify our strengths and potential changes that could help us improve our fire service in MRFD's Community.

It has been a traditional winter, I hope you have enjoyed it like I have. Happy Valentine's Day!

Fire District Chief Bill Colwell



Child Safety Seat Checkup Events

WHEN: Saturday, Feb. 11th and Saturday, Mar 11th
10:00 a.m. — 3:00 p.m.
Appointment is Required!

WHERE: MRFD Station #1
2521 South Ave West



If you, or someone you know, would like to have help in getting a child's car seat or booster seat inspected/installed, please contact Station 1 at 549-6172 to schedule a free appointment!

February Smokescreen

By Brent L. Christopherson, Assistant Chief

Recently, MRFD took delivery of four brand new breathing air systems. Resource Manager Gieser and Assistant Resource Manager Brian LaForest have been diligently installing the systems in Stations 1,2,4 and 5. We appreciate their hard work and the logistics to coordinate with each station



captain to make sure the planning and actual install would go well. Captains, thanks for your efforts as well. I know that the space we have in all our stations is limited and the innovation involved to make things like this work is a challenge. The grant monies that were received for this project amounted to \$137,342.00. We are grateful that our application for the Assistance to Fire Act Grant (AFG) was approved, so that the funding for these new air systems could be possible.

These breathing air systems are very important for obvious reasons, one of which is to provide us with the necessary breathing air to fill our **SCBA's after using**

them on incidents. In addition, we have increased our capacity from the 2 units we had previously at Stations 1 and 4 to now include Stations 2 and 5. We can now **more readily use our SCBA's for** actual training purposes more often because of the increased number of systems. This should be a huge time savings for our battalion chiefs in not having to run bottles back and forth through the District after an incident. After hearing one of the units in operation yesterday after the install, the noise reduction compared to the 30-year-old unit was quite noticeable. Being able to help the neighboring departments and others with this new equipment is also going to be an added benefit for our community.

Operationally, the addition of this equipment, as stated in the grant when written, was to drastically reduce the daily risk for our firefighters if we could achieve breathing air in a timelier fashion. The distance between our stations and the safety improvement to our firefighters and the public for response, would be the result if the grant was awarded. I look forward in hearing from the firefighters how these new breathing air systems work as we start to utilize this most important equipment. To me, this is a very exciting improvement!



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Note: Total number of incidents that MRFD responded to in December 2016: 200 calls

Total number of calls that MRFD responded to from Jan—Dec, 2016: 2,326 calls

BOT MEETINGS

The following is not a complete record. Contact Heidi at Station 1 if you would like a complete copy of meeting minutes.

BOARD OF TRUSTEE MEETING: Dec 13, 2016

LOCAL 2457: *Captain Paul Finlay reported:* We will be sending members to attend a state conference in January regarding some upcoming legislative issues. Eric Huleatt has been coordinating the Operation Warm program, which will continue until the end of December. There is a fund raiser for Jason Baker, a former Volunteer with MRFD and who is now a firefighter in Great Falls: he is battling an aggressive stage 4 lung cancer. The District made a donation of a helmet which several of us signed and sent to him, along with a donation of funds to help with his medical expenses. We would certainly like to thank everyone who contributed to the donation.

STAFF REPORTS:

Fire District Chief Bill Colwell reported: On behalf of the Fire Marshal, who was representing MRFD at the Lolo Community Council meeting, during this past quarter he completed 74 total building reviews. Of note were 40 new single-family-residences, seven of which have residential sprinkler systems; five commercial structures consisting of: Jones Brothers Trucking, Phase II of the Bonner Mill building renovation for sprinklers, a 16,000 square foot heated car storage building with office for sprinklers, a new vehicle repair shop, and a new East Missoula brewery that he assisted East Missoula Fire with the inspections. In addition, he also reviewed three new apartment complexes in Lolo.

NEW BUSINESS: MRFD Annexation Criteria Form: This form was developed in conjunction with input directed from the Board by the MRFD Fire Marshal's office. This form establishes criteria to help evaluate and document the annexation of properties into the District. This is based on the International Fire Code NFPA 1141 and 1142. This form will allow us to document the evaluation for piece of property and to list any relevant concerns, exceptions, and/or rules of engagement relative to a property annexing into the District, and to help the property owner understand the decision process that we go through with annexation requests. This could also document justification and an explanation, if we choose not to annex a property. Once this document is approved, we are considering sharing this with other fire organizations across the state. This could help to provide some standardization to this process, especially for the agencies within Missoula County. Chief Colwell wanted to publicly acknowledge Deputy Chief Chris Newman for his great work on this project. After a further discussion, Trustee Dick Mangan moved to approve this new annexation criteria form. Trustee Steve Cunningham seconded the motion. Motion voted and passed.

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

Feb 1 Brian LaForest
Feb 2 Kirt George
Feb 4 Jake Van Noppen
Feb 6 Tyrel Stoker
Feb 14 Bill Colwell
Feb 18 Toby Ballard
Feb 22 Ralph Pebbles
Feb 22 Levi Morris
Feb 29 Mel Moon



Happy
Birthday!

ATTENTION VOLUNTEERS AND RESIDENTS!

Each Volunteer and Resident must have their completed report turned in **by the 5th of each month**, to ensure that they have no lapse in their worker's compensation coverage.

The primary purpose for the time record is to record your shift time.

Please note that the section for "Training" hours refers to the training activities hosted by the training division.

If you respond to an incident *in addition* to your normal volunteer shift, please also record that under "Incidents" on your time record.

****DON'T FORGET — TURN IN YOUR JAN HOURS****
MONTHLY VFF AND RFF TIME RECORD

Come on out to support this hockey event
where your Missoula Rural Firefighters
take on the Missoula City Fire Department

- *Charity Hockey Competition*
- *FREE admission*

Glacier Ice Rink

1101 South Ave W, Missoula

Saturday, Feb. 11th

Game starts at 7:30 p.m.



Our Deepest Sympathies to the Gasvoda Family

It is with great sadness that we announce that founding charter member and Retired Fire Chief Joseph "Joe" Gasvoda, 88, had recently passed away on January 21, 2017, after a three-year struggle with dementia. A memorial service was held on Jan. 26th at the St. Anthony Church in Missoula.

He is survived by his brother, David Gasvoda, along with two nephews, two nieces, and four stepchildren.

Instead of flowers, the family requests to please make a donation to a local charity.

We certainly extend our sincere condolences to the Gasvoda Family. Our thoughts are with you during this difficult time of loss.