

# THE BUGLE REPORT



## “WORDS”

By Chief John Sinclair



Words are important to communication because we string them together to make sentences and those make paragraphs and soon you have a letter, a story, or an article. The intent of the writer can sometimes be misconstrued by the reader though. That happened last month with my article about zero-basing all of our programs and critically looking at each. To some, they focused on the term “zero” and thought that meant we were getting rid of such programs as the reserves, residents, and volunteers. Please understand, that is not what I meant. All of our programs are valuable and they serve our community. All the management team is trying to do is to critically look at each program and see where we can make improvements. By doing this we will see what changes need to be made as our community changes and KVFR changes.

As I write this I have just returned from my 8<sup>th</sup> meeting or conference call in the last two days regarding the swine flu. H1N1, otherwise known as the Swine Flu has reemerged with human-to-human transmission. To date there have been no cases resulting in death outside of Mexico. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC), National Institutes of Health (NIH), and the World Health Organization (WHO) are all involved with this issue. By jumping on it quickly they hope to contain the issue and provide guidance for everyone. Our local Public Health Department has set up an Incident Command Cell that we are participating in. There are no cases in the state of Washington as of this writing; however, that can change rapidly.

Because of the Pertussis situation we have dealt with locally, you should know the simple procedures that work. Just to review: Hand washing works. After you shake someone’s hand, as soon as you can gracefully find a place to wash your hands, do so. Frequently washing your hands will kill most bad little bugs. Cover your cough or a sneeze. If you have a cold or allergies, make sure you keep some tissues or a hankie with you. If you are sick—stay home. Don’t come into work when you are sick and infect others.

If the situation escalates, we will utilize our website to post additional information for the KVFR family. By next week this could completely fizzle out and it will have been a good drill. Or, it could escalate and we could have patients here locally. I think taking simple precautions in our daily lives will go a long way in promoting good health. If you have questions, please let me know.

Reviewed Responses Through MARCH 2009		
KVFR	MAR	YTD
Fire	4	29
EMS	182	559
Other	32	119
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>707</b>

This last weekend, we had our first mutual aid response of the year with Department of Natural Resources (DNR). It was up Cooke Canyon and there were actually two fires. Our crews helped an understaffed DNR and Forest Service quickly snuff out the fire and then cold trail it. To those that called in to help, thank you. I realize it took some of you by surprise and you weren’t ready to fight a wildland fire just yet, but that is why this is so much fun. No two days are ever alike in the fire service, and each day we must be ready for all kinds of possibilities.

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**By Training Captain Joe Delvo**

If you need to make up the Pack Test or the Wildland Annual Refresher, please contact me because we have several options. *Please don't let your Red Card lapse.*

**Red Card Refresher Makeup: May 6<sup>th</sup>, Station 21, 1800 hours**

The 2009 Wildland Firefighter II Course is underway with the final field day scheduled for this Saturday, May 2, 0800, at Thorp. There are 16 Kittitas County Firefighters attending the course.

We still have several openings in the "Axioms of Leadership" course offered in Yakima the weekend of May 30-31. This would be an excellent course for Volunteer Company officers, St. 21/29 officers, or anyone aspiring to become an officer in the future.

**Safety Reminders:**

Putting your fire apparatus in reverse seems to be a very dangerous move. A report by the International Association of Fire Chiefs indicated that 16% of all reported emergency vehicle accidents involved backing the apparatus. This is an extremely high number since many backing accidents go unreported. Most of the time damage is minimal since the vehicle is traveling at a low rate of speed; however, the results of such an accident can be catastrophic. The majority of all backing accidents involve the vehicle striking a fixed object such as a pole, guardrail, parked vehicle or the fire station door. We tend to sometimes look at these types of accidents as minor in nature and not to take them too seriously. If your department is having a frequent number of these types of incidents, remember that the object struck could also be a child on a tricycle, a baby carriage, or an elderly person unable to move away quickly. As a result, you must take a pro-active stance to reduce such accidents.

First, decide whether you need to back the apparatus at all. If you do not need to back up...don't. Go around the block if at all possible. When parking, position the vehicle so you will not need to back up when you leave. Always look into the option of going forward before attempting to back up.

If you must back up, always use a spotter if one is available. With the advent of enclosed cabs, members sometimes would rather not step outside in the cold or wet weather. This is not an excuse, spotters are mandatory. Look at it this way...you would never drive the apparatus forward if there were a blanket covering the windshield and you could not see. But every day, emergency vehicle drivers back their rigs in this exact condition.

The driver's window should always be open while backing so as to hear verbal warnings from the spotter. Do not begin to back until the spotter is in place and visible in the driver's mirror. Make sure that both the driver and the spotter understand both the hand and verbal signals that will be used. After the spotter has had the opportunity to check the rear of the vehicle for obstructions and overhead clearances, proper hand and verbal signals should be given to the driver to begin moving at a very slow rate of speed. Should the spotter go out of the mirror, the driver should stop the vehicle immediately. ~ **By Bill Tricarico**

**KVFR Firefighter and Family Appreciation BBQ**

**When:** May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2009  
**Time:** 12:00 pm (noon)  
**Where:** Memorial Park (north of the city pool)  
**What to bring:**  
 St. 22, 23: chips  
 St. 24, 25: dips  
 St. 26, 27, 28: Salads

**Human Resources Announcement:**

Kittitas Valley Fire & Rescue has a legal obligation through the EEOC to give training on all type of discrimination. Failure to train employees expressly contradicts federal guidelines and is in direct contradiction of state laws and guidelines. Therefore, Chief Sinclair and I have scheduled Harassment and Discrimination Training. This training is **MANDATORY** for all personnel: Career, Reserves; overtime will be paid. Residents and Volunteers will be given drill credit.

There are four different opportunities to attend the training:

**Monday**, May 11<sup>th</sup> from 1:00 – 4:30pm – Station 29

**Tuesday**, May 12<sup>th</sup> from 1:00 – 4:30pm – Station 29

**Tuesday**, May 12<sup>th</sup> from 6:00 – 9:30pm – Ellensburg High School – Little Theater

**Wednesday**, May 13<sup>th</sup> from 1:00 – 4:30pm – Station 29

***Any absence must be approved by Chief Sinclair.***

This summer don't forget that our brush trucks need ESCAPE ROUTES and SAFETY ZONES just like our firefighters. When parking apparatus on wildland incidents always point them towards your escape route and try to place them either in the cold black or in an area of light fuels. Also, never totally remove the keys from the apparatus in case they have to be moved quickly.

***Have a good May 2009 and I will see you on the drill ground!***

## “WORDS” Continued

As you will see from the training schedule by Captain Delvo, in May we are doing Harassment Training and it is Mandatory. I realize most of you don't like that word and you think it will be a boring class. Not true at all. Barbara Thurman is a wonderful lady and she has taught the course to firefighters all over the state. This class is intended to keep you and the District out of trouble. There have been changes in Federal and Case Law regarding Title 7, and this class will explain those changes and what you can and cannot do. Yes, there are even things Volunteers can't do. So, please attend one of the training sessions, and remember Barbara is a wonderful lady and also a friend of mine. Please mind your manners. On-duty crews, please be on time.

Good news: today I received communication from the folks at Central, and they have returned the Fire Protection Contract with a few minor changes. I took it to Chairman Clerf and he signed it, and after I finish writing this article I will be hand-delivering it to CWU. This is good news!

If you have been following the news, the economy is in the tank. Locally, regionally, statewide, nationally, and worldwide, we are seeing indications of the public sector being hit by the economic crisis. While our funding is stable, we have to be wise with our pennies. I continue to look for other sources of money, but they are quickly drying up as well. It is best for everyone

to think frugally and not be wasteful. We can do a great job for our community and still be frugal. I just ask everyone to think about this as we work together. Thank you.

This month we were informed by Washington State Emergency Management Department and FEMA that we qualified to be reimbursed for our participation in the January flooding and storm. There will be a mountain of paperwork to fill out, but it will be worth it.

I am sure that with the nicer weather . . . at least I hope May brings nicer weather . . . we will see more vegetation fires. Please be careful when responding. Grass and brush isn't worth your life, neither are buildings. The motto of 'we will risk a lot to save a lot, we will risk nothing to save nothing' is one to remember. We fight fire to save unburned property and save lives. Every fire is dangerous. This last month two firefighters were killed in Houston on a common house fire. It was a wind driven fire, and we have wind here. So, please maintain your situational awareness and watch out for yourself, your team, and others on the scene. Each of you is a safety officer.

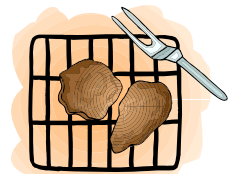
I hope May brings some flowers in your life. See you soon.

*John*



### May Drills:

- ➔ 1<sup>st</sup> Drill: “Mandatory Training: “Title 7 Harassment Training”  
START TIME: 1800-2130
- ➔ 2<sup>nd</sup> Drill: Pump operations and deploying preconnects
- ➔ OTEP: KVFR module 3, May 18th @ EHS F-130
- ➔ Wildland FF II: Field day on May 2<sup>nd</sup> @ Thorp Station
- ➔ Axioms of Leadership: May 30-31 @ YFD St. 95 (Contact Delvo to register)
- ➔ Red Card Refresher: May 6, 1800 hours @ Station 21





# DEPUTY CHIEF'S MESSAGE!

*By Deputy Chief Elliott*

**Operations:** Ground ladder testing went well – there will be some upgrades to existing ground ladders, but it is good to have the baseline testing completed.

We have started the process of testing and interviewing internal candidates for the Resident and Reserve programs – we should be done by mid-May. Volunteer Captains will be notified if their personnel will be affected.

**EMS:** We thought we were through the Pertussis outbreak, but we had another case confirmed in late April. The individual affected may have had contact with our personnel. In reviewing the records, we found that almost all of the potentially affected personnel had updated their Tdap shots. Considering the airborne nature of this disease, the vaccination program likely just paid huge dividends. Please thank the Commissioners when you get a chance; their collective support of these programs has been very strong and for the most part is discretionary.

**Prevention:** We have a statutory responsibility to determine the origin and cause of fires in our jurisdiction. Actually, we have to make reasonable efforts to that effect. Outside the City limits, the Kittitas County Fire Marshal's office is to be notified for all fire investigations.

Inside the City limits, notify the Fire Marshal or, in his absence, the Deputy Chief through Kittcom. Response personnel may determine the origin and cause for low or no dollar loss fires if there are no injuries and there is no indication that the fire was incendiary (intentionally set). If you make a determination, it needs to be documented in your report. Once the fire department leaves the scene or relinquishes control of the property to the owner, we need explicit permission to reenter and would possibly need a search warrant to collect evidence. Once the chain of custody has been broken, physical evidence has lost almost all value.

**Training:** Reminder - we are scheduling a large scale Hazmat / MCI drill June 5-7. The MCI portion will be on the Friday afternoon – all help is welcome. Saturday will be Hazmat with up to 200 National Guard participants. We need patients – 70 plus; so if you know someone who wants to help – high school or older – please contact me at 201-6280. There will also be an EOC drill going on in the background for anyone who wants to tour or participate.

*Rich*

## 1<sup>st</sup> Drill: “Mandatory Training: “Title 7 Harassment Training”

<u>Company:</u>	<u>Date:</u>	<u>Time:</u>	<u>Location:</u>
C shift	May 11	1300-1630	St. 29
B shift	May 12	1300-1630	St. 29
All Companies	May 12	1800-2130	EHS Little Theatre
A shift	May 13	1300-1630	St. 29

**\*\*\* Please feel free to attend any one of the sessions that you are able to attend.**

# Fire Marshal's Hot Topic

*Provided By Fire Marshal Joe Seemiller*

**M**ost of my newsletter articles focus directly on fire safety topics. This month I would like to focus on a non-fire related topic – fall related injuries among seniors. Approximately 80 percent of our total emergency responses are EMS calls. Additionally, as we baby-boomers reach retirement age, the senior population is predicted to increase from today's 12.5 percent to 20 percent in the near future. Please read the following information and forward any concerns, comments, or questions to my office. Thank you.

## Four things YOU can do to prevent falls:



### 1 Begin a regular exercise program

Exercise is one of the most important ways to lower your chances of falling. It makes you stronger and helps you feel better. Exercises that improve balance and coordination (like Tai Chi) are the most helpful. Lack of exercise leads to weakness and increases your chances of falling. Ask your doctor or health care provider about the best type of exercise program for you.

### 2 Have your health care provider review your medicines

Have your doctor or pharmacist review all the medicines you take, even over-the-counter medicines. As you get older, the way medicines work in your body can change. Some medicines, or combinations of medicines, can make you sleepy or dizzy and can cause you to fall.



### 3 Have your vision checked

Have your eyes checked by an eye doctor at least once a year. You may be wearing the wrong glasses or have a condition like glaucoma or cataracts that limits your vision. Poor vision can increase your chances of falling.

### 4 Make your home safer

About half of all falls happen at home. To make your home safer: Remove things you can trip over (like papers, books, clothes, and shoes) from stairs and places where you walk. Remove small throw rugs or use double-sided tape to keep the rugs from slipping. Keep items you use often in cabinets you can reach easily without using a step stool. Have grab bars put in next to your toilet and in the tub or shower. Use non-slip mats in the bathtub and on shower floors. Improve the lighting in your home. As you get older, you need brighter lights to see well. Hang light-weight curtains or shades to reduce glare. Have handrails and lights put in on all staircases. Wear shoes both inside and outside the house. Avoid going barefoot or wearing slippers.



Department of Health and Human Services  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



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# Newsletter for MAY 2009!

- ➔ **Next Commissioners meeting is THURSDAY, MAY 14, 7:00 PM, @ KVFR, 102 N Pearl.**
- ➔ **Next OTEP meeting is: MONDAY, MAY 18, @EHS; Module 3: "Head, Spine, and Chest Trauma."**