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Kirkwood E-News

February 2010, Vol 2, Issue 1

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Dear Beth,

In an effort to get information out to our readers more frequently, beginning with this issue we will publish the *E-News* on a monthly basis, but it will be a shorter publication, with only one or two major stories per issue.

We welcome your feedback and suggestions. Please send any comments you have to the editor at: vonbehen@kirkwoodmo.org. We hope you enjoy this issue, which focuses on new technologies the Kirkwood Fire Department uses to protect your life and your property. Look for the next issue to arrive in late March along with some breezy and warm Spring weather. Happy St. Patrick's Day!



KIRKWOOD FIRE DEPARTMENT: Technology at Work for You!



On one recent morning, the Kirkwood Fire Department responded to a report of a house fire on Harvey. The crews from Engine 1524 arrived quickly and found smoke coming from the home's attic. Their first priority, as it always is, was to ensure that all occupants of the house were safely out of the home, which they accomplished using thermal-imaging cameras. The second priority was to locate the source of the fire, and thermal-imaging cameras helped them do that too.

The fire was located above a child's bedroom ceiling, in the unfinished attic. While the Engine 1524 crew attacked the fire, using a narrow scuttle hole above the stairwell for access, firefighters from Engines 1514 and 1534 covered the beds, furniture, rugs, and hardwood floors with waterproof tarps to protect them. RESULT: Using modern technology, the firefighters located the fire more quickly, which minimized damage to the attic floor and bedroom ceilings, but they also were able to protect the home below. This would not have been the case 20 years ago.

Modern firefighting equipment has come a long way. New technologies, researched and purchased by the City, allow Kirkwood firefighters to protect your property as well as your life. In addition to thermal imaging, KFD crews use compressed-air foam, which when mixed with water allows the water to penetrate better and makes the hoses the firefighters carry much lighter. This means less water needed to put out fires, less property damage from water, and improved safety for firefighters.

Kirkwood firefighters take their responsibility to Kirkwood families and their property very seriously. The average response time for the Fire Department is under five minutes - 4.53 minutes to be exact.

(see other stats below), but did you know they also make every effort to resuscitate a family's pets? Do they give CPR to dogs and cats? You bet. Kirkwood firefighters resuscitate animals whenever possible. Additionally, the City has applied for grant funding to purchase special pet CPR masks.

Life-Saving Technology: So what's next?

According to EMS Supervisor David Smith, Kirkwood's Fire Department was the first in the country to use new software, called "Culprit Artery Technology," to read and diagnose EKGs on the scene and while en route to the hospital. When a heart attack happens, time is of the essence in the effort to prevent damage to the heart muscle. The new monitoring equipment takes 12 separate views of the heart simultaneously, which allows the EMS crew to determine where on the wall of the heart the heart attack is occurring - where the muscle is dying. The information gathered from this "12-Lead" monitor can then be transmitted to the hospital from the ambulance using cell phones and Bluetooth technology.

But the transmitted information won't just go to the emergency room. It will be sent to the cardiologist and the on-call nurse in the cardiac catheterization lab as well as to the ER. This means the cardiologist can read and confirm the diagnosis while the patient is still en route, and the EMS crew can take the patient straight to the cardiac cath lab if needed, bypassing the ER altogether, which can save about 40 minutes in transportation time on average.

"This shaves a huge amount of time off treatment and diminishes the damage to the heart," according to EMS Supervisor Smith. "It puts the patients back on their feet quicker and with less permanent damage." The technology is used on every cardiac patient that EMS crews treat, but in two instances, the patient was taken directly to the cath lab. In the first instance, the "door to balloon" time was 56 minutes, and in the second instance, it was 72 minutes. The door-to-balloon time starts when the paramedics arrive on the scene of the call and ends when the arterial stent is in place and the "balloon" is inflated in the artery.

Here are some other Kirkwood Fire Department facts and figures, for the period April 1, 2008, to March 31, 2009 [Source: City of Kirkwood Performance Measures, available for view on the City's Website at www.kirkwoodmo.org]:

- ~ Estimated value of property at risk: \$18,099,364
- ~ Percentage of property saved: 97.55%
- ~ Estimated value of property lost: \$ 441,656
- ~ Total fire injuries: 0 (0 firefighter, 0 civilian)
- ~ Total fire fatalities: 0
- ~ Average (mean) response time to emergency: 4 minutes and 53 seconds (includes Kirkwood and Oakland responses plus mutual aid units)
- ~ For Calendar Year 2009, the Kirkwood Fire Department responded to 3451 fire or EMS incidents
- ~ Total apparatus (fire truck or ambulance) responses: 6896

Tornado Warning System Check in March



On Tuesday, March 9, St. Louis County's Emergency Management office will participate in a state-wide test of the Tornado Warning System. Barring bad weather, the test will begin at approximately 1:30 p.m. Do not be alarmed when you hear the tornado warning system on that date. It is only a test.

CENSUS Day is April 1

All Kirkwood households will receive their Census forms in March. The government asks that you fill them out on April 1 and mail them back in right away.

The Census is a snapshot of our country, taken this year for all posterity.



Future generations will want to know who we were. The 2010 Census is only ten questions long and will only take about 10 minutes to complete. Do it for your grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Be Counted in 2010: We Can't Move Forward Until You Mail it Back!



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