FROM THE CHIEF……..

As we publish Volume 2 Issue 1 of our newsletter I would like to take this time to thank the members of the Saco Fire Department for your contributions, article submissions, and support of our Bi-Monthly Newsletter. I would also like to extend many thanks to our Newsletter Editor, Tom Roughan, for making this project a huge success.

In July, we responded to a significant fire event at RP Bell Collision on Burrows Street. While the loss of the building was tragic for the owner and those who work there, things could have been much worse. The volume of fire present upon our arrival did not allow for a safe interior attack forcing us to use defensive tactics and save what we could. A fire on a weekday, in the middle of the day brings additional challenges; the summer-time heat becomes a major safety concern and the lack of availability of off-duty and Call Division Firefighters creates manpower shortages. Through the use of our automatic mutual aid system we received assistance from the Biddeford, Old Orchard Beach, Scarborough, and Goodwin’s Mills Fire Departments. The value of this assistance cannot be understated. The additional manpower allowed us to have adequate manpower and to be able to rotate crews to ensure a safe and efficient fireground operation. All of the firefighters who worked that day worked hard and under extreme conditions to get the job done.

As we enter into October, Fire Prevention Month, please keep the theme of this year’s fire prevention activities on your mind, “Working Smoke Alarms Save Lives” “Test Yours Every Month!” Have you tested yours this month?

In closing, I would again like to take the opportunity to thank the members of the Saco Fire Department for their continued commitment to duty, professionalism, and hard work each and every time ‘the bell rings’.

Best Regards,
John L. Duross, Fire Chief

A Tailgating Reminder.—— Fall football and other Fall outside events are upon us and many will be organizing and attending tailgating gatherings. With National Fire Prevention Week in October, we would like to remind all tailgaters to USE YOUR GRILL WITH CAUTION. You should never, ever leave your grill unattended….Keep children and pets at least three feet from your grill….Keep combustibles (such as blankets, paper, food packaging & towels) well away from your grill….and if using charcoal or other heating materials, make certain that you dispose of hot embers safely, place them into a metal container, wait for them to cool and then dispose safely.
Test your Fire and Safety Knowledge about ————2014 Fire Prevention Week Quiz

The 2014 Fire Prevention Week's theme is "Working Smoke Alarms Save Lives; Test Yours Every Month!" Learn about smoke alarm safety with this quiz & be sure to share your results!

1) If your smoke alarm sounds whenever you cook, you should replace the alarm with a photoelectric type alarm.  A. True or B. False  Answer:  A. True and per the NFPA (National Fire Protection Association) place the photoelectric alarm at least 10 feet from your stove.
2) With today's modern construction and furnishings, you may have as little as 5 minutes to escape a home fire.  A. True or B. False  Answer:  B. False. The NFPA (National Fire Protection Association) predicts as little as 3 minutes.
3) If your smoke alarm sounds, you should immediately stop what you are doing and investigate the cause of the alarm sounding.  A. True or B. False.  Answer:  B. False. According to the NFPA (National Fire Protection Association), you should stop what you are doing and immediately get outside of the structure.
4) Your Smoke Alarms should be replaced every 7 years from the time of manufacture.  A. True or B. False  Answer:  A. False. According to the NFPA (National Fire Protection Association), you should replace your smoke detectors every 10 years from the date of manufacture.

Halloween Health and Safety Tips

Autumn holidays like Halloween and Harvest Day are fun times for children of all ages, who can dress up in costumes, enjoy parties, enjoy fall fruits and vegetables, and eat yummy treats. These celebrations also provide a chance to give out healthy snacks, get physical activity, and focus on safety.

Check out these tips to help make the festivities fun and safe for trick-or-treaters and party guests.

- Decorate costumes and bags with reflective tape or stickers and, if possible, choose light colors. Since masks can sometimes obstruct a child’s vision, try non-toxic face paint and makeup whenever possible.
- Have kids use glow sticks or flashlights to help them see and be seen by drivers.
- Children under the age of 12 should not be alone at night without adult supervision.
- If kids are mature enough to be out without supervision, remind them to stick to familiar areas that are well lit and trick-or-treat in groups.
- When selecting a costume make sure it is the right size to prevent trips and falls. It is recommended that footwear have flat soles for easy walking and to avoid trips and falls.
- Popular trick-or-treating hours are from 5:00 PM to 8:00 PM, so if you are out and about driving, be especially alert for walkers during those hours.

Ford F150 Extended Cab carries one SCBA (Self Contained Breathing Apparatus), a Command System for Emergency Communications and Safety Control and Emergency Medical Services equipment for safety and life saving assistance.
As a part of our ongoing practices, the Department considers general and specialized training to be of paramount importance for the preparedness and professionalism of all staff. Training encompasses both fire fighting and public safety techniques, preparedness of the individual, coordination of the various teams and proper planning for anticipated, as well as extraordinary tasks and challenges. All members of the Career and Call Departments (including all Firefighters, Officers, Deputy Chiefs and the Fire Chief) participate in our training sessions and are required to participate in a minimum of scheduled training subjects.

A recent training exercise focused on low-angle rescue techniques. This training was a joint exercise held with the Biddeford Fire Department. Under development is a team of especially trained personnel from the Saco, Biddeford and Kennebunk Fire Departments. The team members will be a “Technical Rescue” team consisting of members from these departments which will be capable of responding, individually and collectively, to more advanced rescue incidents. Members of the Departments that are not directly a part of this joint rescue team will continue to train in techniques for critical support roles in rescue operations.

Pictured above are Department members during rescue training.

**PREPAREDNESS FOR CONTINGENCIES IS A MAINSTAY OF DEPARTMENT OPERATIONS**

Upon notification by the Saco Fire Department that a local resident was employing the use of a helicopter as transportation to and from the home of the resident, the Department reached out to the resident and requested an informational meeting with the pilot in order to become familiar with the helicopter and its safety features in the event of any potential issues concerning public safety and aircraft operations.

The pilot of the aircraft, Jared Kaufman, landed the helicopter at the Fire Department Central Station and spent time with Department personnel explaining its features and reviewing its operation. Department personnel reviewed possible emergency response scenarios and completed a detailed inquiry of helicopter and flight and emergency protocols.

Pictured at right are photos of the helicopter landing, pilot Jared Kaufman in dark blue shirt, and department personnel.
News from our Crews

The Saco Fire Department participated in the Wounded Warrior’s Motorcycle Benefit ride that was held in Old Orchard Beach during August. At left is a photo of our Ferrari ladder truck holding Old Glory above the ride route.

A grateful citizen expresses thanks……..

A citizen’s thank you letter was received by the Department subsequent to Department Personnel responding to a medical emergency. The Letter was addressed to Firefighter Steve Mercier who was in attendance at the call. The following is excerpted from the letter:

I am writing to thank you all for the emergency help I needed when I collapsed as I was turning into the Saco Valley Shopping area. We were heading for breakfast. I do not remember a thing. My car hit an older vehicle, parked and unoccupied, in the parking lot-went down an incline through bushes that helped slow the car down, went across Scammon Street and into the bushes.

Steve, you and the Fire Chief saw all this happen as you were returning to the Fire Station after finishing up following a Saco fire. Your immediate presence saved my life as you gave me immediate CPR, and managed to get my heart going again. I am indeed grateful to be alive and I thank you very much for taking the time to come to my aid. Many thanks to the paramedics on your team. I certainly am counting my blessings!

Our Annual Report with detailed information on Department activities, responses, equipment, facilities, personnel and operations is now available on our website. To view or download, click:

ANNUAL REPORTS

The Saco Fire Department publishes its online newsletter bimonthly. To receive an email notifying you when it is published, please visit our newsletter page and complete the email sign up information. Just click below to sign up:

Fire Department Newsletters

For the latest on what’s happening at Saco City Hall, see the newest edition of the City Hall newsletter at:

THE PEPPERELL POST