

# This month's *Working Fire...*

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**Volume 00-2: February 2000**  
**Approx. Program Length: 60:21**

## **FIRELINE**

### **Tractor-Trailer/Ford Probe Accident Spring, TX**

**Approx. length: 11:12**

A tractor-trailer lost control and rolled up and on top of a Ford Probe. The Probe ended up facing the opposite way, underneath the rear wheels of the trailer which were resting on the hood of the Probe. Amazingly, the driver was alive and basically unhurt, though the passenger compartment had collapsed around him. Rescuers' plans involved hoisting the trailer off the car and cribbing it in place while the Probe was winched out from under the trailer. Extrinsic teams then performed a door and roof removal to free the patient. He was released from the hospital four hours later with a scratch on his elbow. For more information, contact Chief Alan Lankford, Spring Volunteer Fire Department, 3915 F.M. 2920 Rd., Spring, TX 77388 or contact him at 281-355-1266.

### **Sewer Pipe Rescue Wilmington, DE**

**Approx. length: 8:05**

A woman was walking across a grassy area and a sewer drain grating gave way. Her leg plunged into the sewer pipe up to the knee, with her foot pointing straight down. Rescuers tried the obvious lubrication techniques but to no avail. Public Works crews were called in with heavy equipment, but rescue trucks supplied the jackhammers and air chisels that were used to free the woman. The sewer pipe, encased in concrete, had to be removed from the ground. The woman was right next to the rescue effort and had to be shielded from the tools. At times, too many personnel were on-scene. For more information, contact Firefighter David Heglund, Wilmington Fire Department, Station 1, 2nd and West Streets, Wilmington, DE 19805 or call him at 302-571-4593.

## **HANDS-ON**

### **Firefighter Arson Part III**

**Approx. length: 8:58**

In the third of four segments, we continue to examine the subject of firefighter arson. This month, we look at the responsibility of the fire department's management and the role of the fire marshal's office in this issue. We also discuss screening and testing for revealing firefighter arsonists. For more information, contact Working Fire at 800-516-3473.

## **This month's *Working Fire*...**

### **HANDS-ON (cont.)**

#### **Surplus Equipment Acquisition**

**Approx. length: 12:53**

Here's a survey of various surplus vehicles and equipment acquired for pennies on the dollar by needy departments and the procedures involved so your department can cash in. For more information, contact Bill Weigle, Surplus Coordinator, Berkshire County, 58 Baldwin Hill Road, Great Barrington, MA 01230, call him at 413-528-2816, or fax him at 413-528-3567.

### **FIRE MEDICS**

#### **Vehicle Check: ALS Part III**

**Approx. length: 12:05**

We conclude our series on checking EMS vehicles for the new year; this month, we examine an Advanced Life Support (ALS) unit and review its inventory of medical equipment and aids. Responders should check their own state and local regulations for mandatory requirements regarding what equipment and pharmaceuticals must be on board. For more information, contact Captain Raymond Davis, EMS Coordinator, City of Troy Fire Department, 2175 6th Avenue, Troy, N.Y. 12180 or call him at 518-270-4471.

### **EVOLUTIONS 2000**

#### **Kramer vs. Kramer Personnel Overkill On-Scene**

**Approx. length: 2:40**

*Working Fire* and Professor/Chief Bill Kramer present our Continuing Education segment that's worth one credit from the University of Cincinnati. Following up on this month's *Fireline* segments on rescues, Bill wonders whether there can be too many rescuers on-scene. Bill discusses the issue of responding personnel and whether or not an excess of firefighters or rescuers on-scene is a good thing. For more information, contact Professor Bill Kramer at the Open Learning Fire Service Program, College of Applied Science, 2220 Victory Parkway, ML #103, Cincinnati, Ohio 45206 or call 513-556-6583.

## **This month's *Working Fire*...**

### ***From the Departments Involved...***

#### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR THIS MONTH'S INCIDENTS**

The departments involved in this month's incidents pose some discussion questions that you can use as discussion-starters in your own department's training sessions. Let's kick it around!

#### ***Tractor-Trailer/Ford Probe/Spring, TX*** ***Chief Alan Lankford, Spring Volunteer Fire Dept.***

1. Have you developed mutual aid rescue partners? In the EMS area as well, if your EMS unit is a separate responding entity?
2. In an auto incident where flame seems a remote possibility, always keep a hose line charged and manned.
2. Regarding highway incidents, do you have relationships with wrecking companies who understand how you work and the kind of hoisting operations you may require?
3. On stretches of highways that are prone to accidents (assuming you can't get drivers to slow down or drive more carefully through a public awareness program), have you ever considered establishing a rescue substation close to the area for quicker responses?

#### ***Sewer Pipe Rescue/Wilmington, DE*** ***Firefighter David Heglund, Wilmington Fire Dept.***

1. Set up procedures for making comfortable a patient who is close to what may be a noisy rescue operation. This may include ear plugs, blankets or a portable heater if it's cold, and an erected physical barrier between the patient and the rescue effort.
2. In a rescue area, especially where digging is involved and a spoil zone is created, the amount of work room for effecting the rescue diminishes. Yet at the same time, this will impact crowd control as the rescue perimeter may increase and encroach upon civilians. Be prepared to restrict the number of rescuers involved at any one time because of space limitations and to exercise crowd control in moving civilians further back from the scene as the incident progresses.

# Enhanced Training

## Firefighter Arson. Pt. III

### Objectives

After watching this program, the student shall:

1. understand the role of department management in terms of investigation
2. learn about the pros and cons of screening and testing to reveal arsonists.

### Standards & Regulations

This training is consistent with NFPA 1500 and appropriate OSHA regulations.

### Training Outline

#### I. DEPARTMENTAL MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

##### A. Job Applicants

1. Suspects of arson fires are often applicants for fire service jobs but were rejected for some reason.
2. Would-be applicants who are rejected often go from town to town reapplying at local fire departments.
3. Communications among fire departments regarding rejected applicants is important to identify potential "bad apples."

##### B. Investigative Responsibilities

1. If an executive board member or ranking officer suspects a department member to be an arsonist, it should be his/her responsibility to turn the case over to professional investigators, possibly in the Fire Marshal's office or some other outside entity, depending upon the state in which you live.
2. Investigators interrogating arsonists outside of the firehouse setting often learn much about the motive involved — much more than if the investigation had been handled internally by the department in question.
3. Where arson is suspected, suppression and overhaul teams are often pulled back in favor of third-party teams under the direction of a fire marshal or fire board which will try to preserve evidence on-scene by reducing the possibility of evidence tampering.

## **Firefighter Arson, Pt. III**

### **II. THE SOCIAL STIGMA OF AN ARSONIST IN THE FIREHOUSE**

- A. The fire service as a social organization
  - 1. Firefighter arson is a national problem, yet there is a stigma attached to having found an arsonist within department ranks. There is a tendency to protect the situation by being less than candid about it, even if done unconsciously, because of the embarrassment involved. This is why third-party investigation is essential.
  - 2. Regaining public trust is more important than protecting the reputation of a fire department.

### **III. THE NEED FOR SCREENING AND TESTING**

- A. Needs and Costs
  - 1. Many agencies, such as police, recognize the need for psychological profile testing to screen out unsuitables or undesirables.
  - 2. Although there is a definite need to identify potential arsonists who might apply for jobs in the fire service, there is a cost for such screening.
  - 3. Costs can amount to \$80 per test, per individual.
- B. The Risk of Over-scrutiny
  - 1. The healthy, reputable firefighter candidate may be turned off by all the testing and screening which comes on top of medical testing.

### **IV. THE FIREFIGHTER'S RESPONSIBILITY**

- A. As firehouses are very close-knit, firefighters owe it to themselves and their departments to observe the moods and behaviors of fellow-firefighters.
  - 1. Do other members have problems or appear to be under stress or tension while at the firehouse?
  - 2. Do certain strange behaviors or activities precede the outbreak of a fire?
- B. Firefighters must take some responsibility for identifying members who may be at risk and bring this information to the attention of department authorities.

### **V. LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES AND LIABILITY**

- A. Application Disclaimer
  - 1. Some departments include a disclaimer on their applications in which applicants certify that they understand that background checks may be performed to discover whether or not they have been involved in or convicted of arson/

Answers to the questions on Page 7:

1. True 2. False 3. True

4. d. 5. a.

## Firefighter Arson, Pt. III

firesetting crimes or have been involved in false alarm activity. Such disclaimers often dissuade firesetters from applying.

2. Some states demand this for public protection and community safety. In some states, convicted arsonists can never work in the fire service; false alarm offenders must wait ten years before being eligible for employment.

### B. Liability

1. Some departments worry that such disclaimers might incur legal liability for employment refusals.
2. If there is evidence of such arson or false alarm activity, the department should be on good legal footing. Check with your local prosecutor for further guidance.

## Firefighter Arson, Pt. III: Quiz

Date\_\_\_\_\_

Chief/T.O.\_\_\_\_\_

Firefighter (print)\_\_\_\_\_

Education Credits/  
Hours/Units\_\_\_\_\_

Signature\_\_\_\_\_

### Select the best answer:

1. True or False      Some firefighter applicants continue to apply after repeated rejections.
2. True or False      A false alarm infraction is not a big deal in the fire service.
3. True or False      Communicating on a regular basis with nearby departments regarding employment rejections or firings is a good idea.
4. A department's responsibility toward the firefighter arson includes:
  - a. ignoring the stigma involved
  - b. bringing in outside investigators when a department member is suspected
  - c. allowing fire marshal investigators to do overhaul at a suspicious fire.
  - d. all of the above.
5. When it comes to testing and screening for arson behavior:
  - a. cost is an issue but screening of some sort must be done
  - b. a well-qualified firefighter candidate never minds the psychological testing
  - c. the typical firefighter should leave the task of identifying potential firesetting behaviors to his department management.
  - d. a disclaimer will never dissuade a true firebug from applying to the department.

*(See answers at the top of page 6)*

# Enhanced Training

## Surplus Equipment Acquisition

### Objectives

After watching this program, the student shall:

1. be aware that surplus equipment exists for fire department use
2. understand where to apply for such surplus equipment.

### Standards & Regulations

This training is consistent with NFPA 1500 and all relevant OSHA regulations.

### Training Outline

#### I. INTRODUCTION

Through a congressional mandate, the military must make equipment available to the public (recycle it) for virtually no cost. This opens up tremendous opportunities for fire departments, especially departments with budget and funding problems. Very high quality equipment can be acquired for, often, virtually nothing.

#### II. RESOURCES

- A. To get surplus equipment or find out what's available, consult your local
  1. State Surplus Agency, or
  2. Department of the Environment or Department of Forestry.
  3. They will have lists of what's available and what you have to do to get it.
- B. Stipulations
  1. Some states extract a handling fee to maintain the continuity of the program.
  2. Departments must hold on to a piece of equipment for at least 18 months before disposing or getting rid of it.

#### III. EQUIPMENT AVAILABLE

- A. Computers, bulldozers, trucks of all kinds, ambulances, turnout gear, and anything else a fire department might use are often available.

Answers to the questions on Page 10:

1. False 2. False 3. True
4. d. 5. b.

## Surplus Equipment Acquisition

- B. Prices can range from absolutely no charge to from one to ten percent of the original acquisition cost.
- C. In our survey of equipment, prices range from 29 cents to \$12,000. For example:
1. an Air Force refueling tanker was acquired for \$12,000 — far short of its original cost of from \$90,000 to \$110,000.
  2. an all-wheel ambulance and equipment carrier was acquired for free but was refitted for \$15,000 raised by citizens in a fundraising drive.
  3. A 75-100 kva generator was acquired for \$2,500 from an FAA radar site. It is now used to provide backup power for a local school. It's original cost was probably around \$30-\$40,000.
  4. a rescue support truck was acquired for 29 cents but was upgraded with additional funds.
- D. Other Bargains
1. The video segment enumerates a number of other bargains acquired by fire departments in Berkshire County. Departments should contact the appropriate surplus or forestry agencies in their states for more information.
  2. Higher quality equipment of certain types can also pay departments dividends by helping to reduce insurance rates.

## Surplus Equipment Acquisition: Quiz

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Chief/T.O. \_\_\_\_\_

Firefighter (print) \_\_\_\_\_

Education Credits/  
Hours/Units \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

### Select the best answer:

1. True or False: Surplus equipment is always a bunch of junk.
2. True or False: You can get it through the Better Business Bureau.
3. True or False: Costs of surplus may be as low as one percent of the original acquisition cost of the unit.
4. Surplus can be acquired from your state's:
  - a. Environmental or Forestry Department
  - b. Military or the FAA
  - c. State Surplus Agency
  - d. two of the above are true.
5. In addition to the cost of acquiring the surplus unit:
  - a. registration papers are never needed.
  - b. additional funds may be needed to refit or upgrade the unit for its intended use with the fire department.
  - c. departments should ignore any manuals that come with the surplus because they are too old
  - d. the department can turn around and resell the surplus immediately.
  - e. none of the above are true.

*(See answers at the top of page 9)*

# **Evolutions 2000**

## **University of Cincinnati Continuing Education Program**

### **Personnel Overkill On-Scene**

If you're enrolled in the **Open Learning Fire Service Program** at the **University of Cincinnati**, here's your opportunity this month to earn one college credit hour for watching *Working Fire*.

#### **VOLUME 00-2**

#### **Personnel Overkill On-Scene**

**Complete written responses to the following three essay questions:**

1. Is it possible to have too many personnel at the scene of a working fire? Briefly explain.
2. Is it possible to have too many personnel at the scene of a specialized technical rescue? Briefly explain.
3. Why are your answers for the above two questions the same or why are they different?

**Send your responses to:**

**Mr. Bill Kramer  
University of Cincinnati  
College of Applied Science  
2220 Victory Parkway, ML #103  
Cincinnati, OH 45206**

#### **ENROLLMENT INFORMATION:**

For more information on enrolling in the Open Learning program to gain college credit, call *Working Fire* at 800-516-3473 for a brochure or, to register directly, call the University of Cincinnati at 513-556-6583. Associates and Bachelors programs are available. Call to have your transcripts evaluated.