

BURNING ISSUES



PREVENTION • PROTECTION • PUBLIC EDUCATION

MESSAGE FROM THE FIRE COMMISSIONER

Douglas M. Popowich

Welcome to the first edition of Burning Issues for the year 2002. I trust that everyone had an enjoyable holiday season and that you were able to spend quality time with family and friends. I also hope that you are able to achieve all the resolutions that you vowed to make as the New Year came in. At the end of this article I am going to propose a joint resolution that I hope all of you will agree to work towards.

Over the last number of years we have heard that things are changing; times are changing; we have to be prepared for change; and the list goes on. The horrific tragedy of September 11 definitely can be described as a change agent. Things in our business will not and cannot be the same after the tragedy of September 11. We have seen first hand that certain groups of individuals are capable of imparting great terror and destruction on society. "Acts of terrorism" was not something that we even thought about before September 11. Now as first responders we are continually asked "are we prepared for a terrorist act?" This is a difficult question to answer.

On September 11 the first Fire, EMS, and Police units responding to the World Trade Centre were not told they were responding to a terrorist act. They were responding to a fire and an explosion. This type of response is a typical type of call that many of you have already received and responded to. Train derailments, transport trucks carrying hazardous material rollovers, gas line ruptures and explosions are all calls that we currently respond to. Yes, these types of incidents could be caused by terrorists, but more likely they are a result of something else. The probability of something serious happening in our Province as a result of a terrorist act is extremely remote, but day to day emergencies as described above are not. Regardless of the cause of the emergency we must be prepared to respond, deal with the incident, and protect the public. **That is the role of a first responder!**

The most tragic result of the September 11 incidents was the huge loss of life. Thousands of civilians lost their lives but specific to us, over 350 first responders lost their lives as well. These first responders were not in the buildings to start with but rather lost their lives attempting to

save others. These first responders and their families made the ultimate sacrifice doing what is expected of them by the Public. Questions have been raised around many coffee tables about whether or not rescues should have been attempted, and whether or not it was the right decision for the Fire, EMS, and Police to have even entered the building. This is a no brainer. The response was to a fire and explosion. Peoples lives were in danger. No one knew of the impending results that would occur. Decisions would have been made based on the best possible information and the probability that lives could be saved. The job of saving peoples lives falls

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Fire Commissioner's Message

to the first responder agencies. Fire, EMS and Police are the first responding agencies.

As I have said, September 11 was a major change agent. As tragic as it was, we must also use this as a learning experience for all of our departments and personnel. Regardless of what uniform you wear, as long as you are with a first responding agency, each call you respond to brings with it an element of danger. We must never forget that and we must work to ensure that we are doing everything we can to keep the safety of our personnel the highest priority. Planning, preparation, partnerships, training and exercising are all important elements of being ready for that emergency in your community that may threaten the lives of your citizens and responding personnel. An Incident Management and Personnel Accountability System are paramount in developing a safe response system. All responding agencies in your jurisdiction must be involved in and be familiar with these systems as well. To do less places everyone at risk.

The probability of a terrorist attack in your community is remote. The probability of some other type of major emergency is not. A comprehensive emergency management system starts with an in-depth hazard analysis and risk assessment. You need to determine what could happen in your community and what is the probability that these incidents could occur. Then planning must take place to deal with these hazards. This planning could include removing or reducing the hazard but likely will require preparing for a response of some type. What resources will you need? Where do you get the resources you don't have? Are all

FIRE INVESTIGATION

During recent fire investigations in southern Manitoba, we have found steamer/humidifiers in use. On one occasion, the owner cleaned his unit and while he was cleaning it, he decided to by-pass the safety features of the unit. The safety feature was to shut off the unit when it was out of water. The resulting consequence was the loss of his home and contents.

Owners of coffee makers, and steamer/humidifiers are reminded that these appliances have safety devices designed that should they run out of water, or be operating too long they automatically shut off. If the owner by-passes this feature, they definitely run the risk of losing everything, and maybe even losing their life or the life of someone else.

Submitted by Brian Monkman, G.I. Fire E., C.C.F.I.-C, Fire Investigation

of the necessary resources familiar with the same type of Incident Management and Accountability System? Have all of the resources trained together using an Incident Management and Accountability System? Who is responsible to make sure that this takes place?

Now more than ever we need to ensure that we have an effective emergency management system in our Communities and Province. Partnerships between elected officials and all first responding agencies are paramount. No one group or organization can create an effective emergency management system. We must work together to ensure that we are prepared to safely respond to all emergency situations that may face our communities in our Province. Each of our first responding organizations brings to the table specific concerns, abilities and resources. Together in

If electrical items stop working in the home this is an indication of possible electrical problems in the home. If the exhaust fans for all the bathrooms quit working and the circuit breaker is still on, then you should call a qualified electrician to find the reason for the fans not operating. Many people disregard these signs as a nuisance and do nothing. A few days later a major fire may very well occur in the home just because the owner did not want to deal with the electrical problem. When lights, plugs, motors quit working they are telling you not to ignore them but to check out why they have quit working. If you follow these procedures, you may very well prevent a fire from occurring in your home.

a singular Incident Management System an effective and safe response can be provided.

I would like to suggest that we make a resolution to work towards the development of a comprehensive emergency management system that provides a safe and efficient response involving all municipal and provincial resources that are necessary for any emergency affecting our Communities and Province. This response will always start at the municipal level and build from there. Everyone that can be involved in any way with this emergency response must be part of the planning and preparation. Then, we will be able to answer yes anytime someone asks "are we ready to respond to a terrorist incident" for then we will be ready to respond to any type of emergency regardless of the cause.

NEW AND VIEWS OF MANITOBA

A Successful Partnering Story - Selkirk/St. Andrews Fire Department

On September 21st, the Selkirk Fire Department and the St. Andrews South Fire Department completed a third and final M.E.S.C. training course that was made possible through a local industry initiative. Gerdau MRM Steel, located on the border of The City of Selkirk and The Municipality of St. Andrews, had identified several areas of concern in it's world class steel mill. Wayne James, the Safety Officer at MRM had issues regarding hazardous materials, confined space and the potential need for a high angle response from the 1st responding fire departments.

To better service safety within the plant, management decided to handle the concerns by offering three M.E.S.C. courses to the fire departments. The one-week courses that were offered were Confined Space Rescue (operations level), Hazardous Materials (operations level) and the new Rescue Practices.

What has evolved from this dynamic partnership is Gerdau MRM has gained specially trained responders to most any eventuality. The responders can now perform special duties in a safe and professional manner for the approximately 400 trades people, contractors, staff and employees. What Selkirk and St. Andrews has gained is highly trained fire fighters, armed with the knowledge of how to do special rescues and also to better handle haz-mat situations. This translates to a more comprehensive service for area ratepayers.

I believe this to be a relatively rare occurrence in this province, but hopefully the above article stimulates some thought on what might be an untapped training resource in your area. My many thanks to Gerdau MRM Steel for "buy-in."

Submitted by Lorne Hokanson, Deputy Chief Selkirk Fire Department.



Fire Prevention Month in Emerson

On October 9th, Public Education Coordinator Eva Macklem and fire fighters Dennis Macklem, Al Dupuis, Leigh Dudley and Bill Spanjer made presentations at the four senior complexes. The main topic was Cover the Bases and Strike Out Fire but all residents' safety concerns - smoke detectors, fire drills and unlocked doors, etc. were covered.

On October 10th, Chief Dennis Macklem and Public Education Coordinator, Eva Macklem attended a 4-H meeting and presented the Nero and Ashcan Farm Safety program to 40 members and their leaders.

On October 15th, The Chief, with the help of fire fighters, Ron Onyshko, Jason Propp and Public Education Coordinator, Eva Macklem presented the Fire Prevention Week Theme - "Cover the Bases and Strike Out Fire" to the Kindergarten to Grade 4 students. Sparky pencils along with age-appropriate pamphlets were distributed to all students in the school.

On October 12th, Public Education Coordinator, Eva Macklem returned to the school to present the Play Safe - Be Safe to Grades 1 & 2. Each students was presented with a certificate.

All in all - a very successful Fire Prevention Month!

Submitted by Eva Macklem, Emerson Fire Department



Mindy Gaber - Chief for a Day - Roblin Fire Department

Pictured is Mindy Gaber on the truck, Deputy Chief Emil Roller (centre) and fire fighter, Fire and Life Safety Educator, Kevin Smith.

Grade 2 student Mindy Gaber was named Honourary Fire Chief of the Roblin Shell River Fire Department as part of the local Fire Prevention Week activities. Smith visited all classes at the Roblin Elementary School during the week to talk to the students about fire safety and the "Cover the Bases and Strike Out Fire" program. The students were then invited to take part in a special draw with the winner being named Honourary Fire Chief. Mindy was taken out to lunch in the fire truck and had a tour of the fire hall before resuming her student activities at school.

Submitted by Kevin Smith, Fire and Life Safety Educator, Roblin Shell River Fire Department

EDUCATION

Upcoming Course Dates 2002

Feb. 4	Fire Inspector Level I & II Distance Education (Orientation Day February 6th) (Fire Protection Systems Lab Week March 18th-22nd)	Brandon
Feb. 5 & 6	Hazardous Materials Awareness	Brandon
Feb. 4 - 8	Part 9 - Buildings - HVAC & Fire Protection	Brandon
Feb. 8, 9, 10, 23, 24	Emergency Services Instructor Level II	Brandon
Feb. 11 - 15	Incident Command	Brandon
Feb. 15, 16 & 17	Fire & Life Safety Educator Seminar	Russell
Feb. 15, 16 & 17	Rescue Practices	Brandon
Feb. 18 - 22	Part 3 - Large Buildings - Classification & Construction	Brandon
Feb. 25 - March 1	Hazardous Materials Operations	Brandon
Feb. 25 - March 1	Wood Heat Safety	Brandon
March 4 - 8	Report Writing for Fire Investigators	Winnipeg
March 4 - 8	Human Resource Management	Brandon
March 4 - 8	Part 3 - Large Buildings - Health & Safety	Brandon
March 8, 9, 10 & March 15, 16, 17	Emergency Services Instructor Level I	Shoal Lake
March 11 - 15	Part 9 - Plumbing Inspections	Brandon
March 18 - 22	Part 3 - Large Buildings - Life Safety Systems	Brandon
March 11 - 15 & March 18 - 22	Hazardous Materials Technician	Brandon
March 23	Emergency Services Instructor Con Ed Seminar	St. Andrews
April 13 & 14	Youth Fire Stop	Winnipeg
April 23	Fire Investigator Accreditation Testing WRITTEN EXAM	Brandon
April 26, 27 & 28	Rescue Practices	Brandon
May 10, 11 & 12	Farm Accident Instructor Re-certification	Brandon
May 13 - 17	Fire Investigator Accreditation Testing PRACTICAL EXAM	Brandon
May 27 - 31	EMS Response to Hazardous Materials Incidents Level II	Brandon
May 27 - 31	Fire Protection and Emergency Planning	Winnipeg
May 31 & June 1	Water Rescue Instructor Re-certification	Brandon
June 8 & 9	Critical Incident Stress Management - Basic	Thompson
June 8 & 9	Chemical, Biological & Weapons of Mass Destruction	Brandon
June 17 - 21	Fire Investigation Level III	Brandon

Fire Prevention Week October 7th-13th



MPI OFFICIAL SPONSOR SINCE 1922
Major funding provided by FEMA and the U.S. Fire Administration
with generous support from NIOSH

“Cover the Bases and Strike Out Fire” was the theme for Fire Prevention Week this year. The “Cover the Bases” theme used a ball field as the main logo with first base being cooking fires, second base heating fires, third base, electrical fires and home base talking about home escape planning. Remember - fire and life safety is a 52-week commitment not just one week a year.

Child Car Seat Safety

Fire departments continue to check car seats in their communities.

MPI keeps copies of all the recalls on car seats. Information on these recalls can be checked by calling 1-888-767-7640 or check their website at www.mpi.mb.ca.



Youth Fire Stop

Youth Fire Stop Seminar will be held in Winnipeg the weekend of April 13th and 14th. The location is to be determined. This seminar will broaden your knowledge base concerning children who set fires. The seminar includes classroom work as well as scenario-based training. Send your applications to Marla.

EDUCATION

FARM FIRE SAFETY CONTEST IN THE WESTMAN AREA

The Office of the Fire Commissioner, Cornerstone Agencies, The Safety Centre, Murray's Fire Extinguisher and Assiniboine Fire Protection partnered in August and held a fire safety contest on CKLQ. The contest ran for one month, with the first two weeks being awareness fire safety information and the second two weeks being a contest. CKLQ asked the "Fire Safety Question of the Day", callers would call in and if they answered the question correctly, they would win the prize of the day and be entered in the Grand Prize draw. There were 10 daily winners with each winning a smoke alarm, Family Fire Safety Video and a Hoses and Ladders Game. The Grand Prize winners were Don and Denise Bromley of rural Brandon. The prize package consisted of four fire extinguishers and their installation, a carbon monoxide detector, two first aid kits, 2 Manitoba Emergency Services College mugs and two Emergency Services College blue jean shirts.



Marilyn Lamb, OFC, Denise and Don Bromley, Bill Turner and Michelle Pereira, CKLQ

On September 20, Murray Bedford, Emergency Services Officer for the South Central Mutual Aid District, Marilyn Lamb, Fire and Life Safety Program Coordinator, Michelle Pereira, Radio Advisor for CKLQ and Bill Turner, CKLQ presented the Bromley's with their prizes. The fire extinguishers were installed in the machine shed, house, grain truck and on the combine.

Thank you to all the companies who partnered with us to make the Farm & Fire Safety contest such a success.



Murray Bedford, OFC and Don Bromley installing fire extinguisher on combine.

CODES & STANDARDS

BUILDING & FIRE CODES WHY DO WE NEED THEM?

With the horrific tragedy that most people watched on September 11, 2001 at the World Trade Center in New York, it would be hard to imagine anything positive that would come out of this event, however there was! The buildings were constructed to meet the minimum requirements of building and fire codes and as such did perform as best as expected after a 400,000 lb. aircraft loaded with 60,000 lbs. of jet fuel crashed into it at 300 m.p.h. The numbers of people that were afforded the time to safely evacuate these buildings far exceeded the unfortunate ones that did not. This is a tribute to having minimum building and fire code features installed in these buildings.

These buildings were constructed of a combination of steel and concrete. The inferno caused by the fuel from the aircraft would reach a temperature of 2000 degrees Fahrenheit. It should be noted that steel loses half its strength at 1500 degrees Fahrenheit. It was reported that the upper floors might have sagged approximately two feet before breaking loose from the steel outer frame and inner cores that supported the buildings. From there a domino effect occurred. The 110 story building became 7 to 10 story piles of rubble.

One of the biggest frustrations that building and fire officials face on a daily basis is to continually have to argue with people to comply with the minimum standards adopted in order to protect themselves and other occupying buildings.

All buildings whether they are used as a house, garage, store, arena, church, storage, etc. if constructed to the minimum standards of the building code will have design features included that will provide for the health and safety of the building occupants.

All buildings if constructed to the minimum standards of the building code will provide a level of protection for our firefighter and emergency service personnel for a period of time that will allow them the opportunity to carry out search and rescue of persons who may still be in the building.

Municipalities have a responsibility to the citizens and their emergency service personnel to ensure that all buildings constructed and used in their jurisdictions comply with the minimum requirements of the building and fire codes.

Municipal officials are mandated to ensure that all buildings in their municipalities are constructed to the minimum standards. This can be done in part by hiring qualified people to administer their building/fire code by-laws and also supporting them, when building owners do not wish to comply with the minimum safety standards in the codes and regulations.

"It is only human nature for people not to want to comply with regulations."

BUT

"It is also human nature for people to want governments (municipal, provincial, federal) to come to the rescue when things goes wrong."

It is ironic that many industries are adamant that government get out of their industry and let them self regulate but when something happens they then expect government to help out with their financial difficulties.

Submitted by Alex Campbell, Manager, Codes and Standards



Do you know who these people are?



And what fire fighting skill is that?



On the job!



I wonder what the cause is?



A new use for a fire truck!

We have no winners from our "Do you know who these people are?" Contest. Pictured at the top left-hand - Firefighter, Dennis Remple - Morris Fire Department; to the right - Ferd Klassen - Fire Chief Niverville, on the bottom, Dennis Nodrick, Fire Chief, Portage Emergency Services and Carberry Fire Department - putting their equipment to good use.

Glenboro- South Cypress hosting the "Red Axe Bonspiel"

Date: Sunday, March 10th

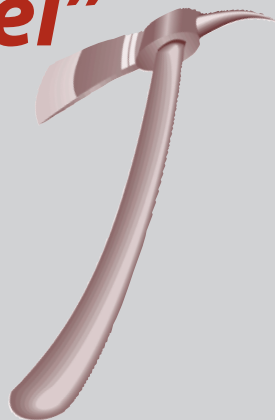
Entry Fee: \$60.00 per rink

Rules:

- ✓ The games will be 4 ends.
- ✓ Everyone takes a turn at all positions.
- ✓ Everyone gets a prize.
- ✓ The meal is supplied as part of the entry fee.
- ✓ Refreshments are available.
- ✓ Call your entries to Steve Bjornson - (204) 827-2219

Deadline for entries: March 3rd, 2002

We look forward to seeing you at the bonspiel.



The Office of the Fire Commissioner produces the Burning Issues newsletter.

The Burning Issues are updates from the Office of the Fire Commissioner, news and views from the Manitoba Fire Service and information on public safety.

EDITOR: Marilyn Lamb

Deadline for submissions for the Spring edition of Burning Issues is **April 15, 2002**. Contributions and suggestions are welcome.

If you have news items, please send or fax them to Marilyn at (204) 726-6847 or e-mail mlamb@gov.mb.ca.