

Metro West

Fire Protection District
St. Louis County, MO.



Dispatch

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Metro West Fire Protection District Board of Directors



Chairman,
Bob
Reboulet



Director,
Tim Flora



Director,
Ralph Starck



Chief
Fire & EMS
Vincent T. Loyal

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Dear Metro West Residents:

In talking with you, one of the most frequently asked questions is, "What is the difference between a fire district like Metro West and a fire department?" We offer the following explanation to help residents better understand their fire district.

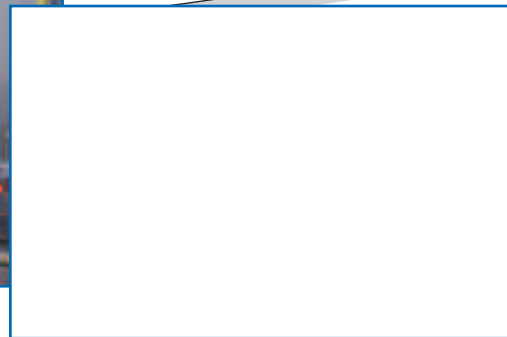
Fire Districts. Empowered by the state of Missouri and regulated by Missouri Revised Statute #321, a fire district is an independent, self-governing entity, responsible for delivering emergency medical, fire protection, rescue and Haz-Mat services. It also functions as your principal "Homeland Security" responder in case of terrorist attack, or natural disaster. Fire districts are governed by three publicly elected directors who are responsible for the overall operations and management of the district. Each district encompasses a large geographic area and is empowered to enact ordinances and regulations necessary to carry-out its mission of protecting and serving its residents. By state law, cities, as well as unincorporated areas lying within the boundaries of a fire district, are under the authority of the district.

Fire Departments. Unlike fire districts, fire departments are part or a component of city government as is public works, parks and recreation, etc. A fire department usually reports through a city administrator and/or mayor and city council, and is not an independent, self governing body as is a fire district. Except for the largest cities, fire departments are normally limited in scope, smaller in size, and have less resource availability than do fire districts.

Advantages of Fire Districts. Fire districts eliminate costly duplication of services that would exist if each municipality provided its own EMS and fire protection to small individual population groups. In doing so, fire districts bring significant cost efficiency and effectiveness to the taxpayers, maximizing the use of public funds. In addition, "economy of scale" allows a fire district to serve a much larger population base with an optimum sized force of highly trained personnel and readily available equipment which can handle even the largest emergencies that might overwhelm small, local fire departments.

By consolidating services into a fire district, their delivery and management is greatly streamlined and a patchwork of local bureaucracy is eliminated. In the end the public is far better served by fire districts.

Sincerely,
Bob Reboulet



Jan. 12, 1888 Dakota and Montana territories, Minn., Nebr., Kans., and Tex.: "Schoolchildren's Blizzard" resulted in 235 deaths, many of which were children on their way home from school.

Dec. 1996-Jan. 1997, U.S. West Coast: torrential rains and snowmelt produced severe floods in parts of Calif., Ore., Wash., Idaho, Nev., and Mont., causing 36 deaths and about \$2-3 billion in damage.

Spot the Fire Dog Says...

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TAKE PRECAUTIONS AGAINST THE SILENT AND DEADLY KILLER

Each year in America, unintentional carbon monoxide poisoning claims more than 500 lives and sends another 15,000 people to hospital emergency rooms for treatment.

The United States Fire Administration (USFA) and the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) would like you to know that there are simple steps you can take to protect yourself from deadly carbon monoxide fumes.

While fire fatalities have dropped over 34 % in the last 10 years because of smoke detectors, carbon monoxide causes many needless deaths every year. CO is an odorless by-product of combustion from fuel burning appliances and can cause health prob-

lems, brain damage, and even death.

CO alarms detect a CO leak before people get sick. If the leak is severe, flu-like symptoms appear and, in older adults and young children, progress quickly to the severe stage.

If your alarm activates:

- Gather in a pre-designated meeting place and count heads.
- If anyone is experiencing poisoning or flu symptoms such as headache, nausea, dizziness or disorientation leave the building immediately and call 911. Do not re-enter until responders say it is safe to do so.
- If no symptoms are present, press your CO alarm's reset button and turn off all potential sources of carbon monoxide, such as a gas furnace, water heater, stove, oven, clothes dryer, space heater, fireplace, grill or car left running

in attached garage.

- Open doors and windows for fresh air.
- Call a service technician to check appliances, flue and chimney systems.
- Follow CO alarm instructions and install near a sleeping area, either high or low on the wall.
- Install at least 15 feet away from potential sources such as a furnace or gas oven, or it may activate unnecessarily.

The International Association of Fire Chiefs recommends that residents install Underwriters Laboratories (UL) listed carbon monoxide alarms. Chief Dawson said, "Just as smoke alarms have proven themselves effective as vital, life-safety devices, so a carbon monoxide alarm may save your life and the lives of your loved ones."

FALL 2006 OPEN HOUSE

Each year during the spring and fall, Metro West Paramedic/Firefighters and Fire Prevention staff



teach the children in Rockwood and Parkway schools how to prevent fires and injuries related to common emergencies. In addition, this year our Firefighters Union, in coordination with the board of Directors and Administration developed an open house/safety fair where residents from across the area could receive safety information and get an up-close view of fire, rescue and police units, and meet the people who do this vital work.

The event was held on October 22 at our headquarters, and was a huge success. Event coordinator Brad Shelton (Assistant Union



Shop Steward & Paramedic/ Firefighter) was "extremely pleased with the turn out and interest from our residents." Firefighters from the Metro West Firefighters Local 2665 provided and served free hamburgers, hot dogs, chips and soda to the more than 600 people who attended.

"It is events like this that bring our communities together, more so it is important that residents have the opportunity to see what their taxes are supporting and how we utilize the monies to make their community a safer place to live" said Vince Loyal Chief of Fire and EMS Services

Board of Directors Chairman Bob Reboulet announced that, "In conjunction with the 50th anniversary of our fire district and the dedication of newly renovated Station #4, in the spring of 2007, we invite the public to come and be part of our celebration and see first hand the facilities, equipment and people who serve you."

CANDLE, CANDLE BURNING BRIGHT

WE all love candles. They're romantic. They spread a delightful aroma. Unfortunately, they can also cause death and destruction. Here are some statistics that you should keep in mind while creating that "atmosphere" around your home.

During 2002, candles started an estimated 18,000 home fires, and resulted in an estimated 130 civilian deaths, 1,350 civilian injuries and an estimated direct property loss of \$333 million.

The estimated number of home candle fires was unchanged from 2001 to 2002. For the first time since 1991, the number of home candle fires has stabilized rather than increasing.

Christmas Day was the peak day of the year for home candle fires in 1999-2002. New Year's Day and Christmas Eve tied for second.

Keep these safety tips in mind if using candles:

- Extinguish all candles when leaving the room or going to sleep.
- Keep candles away from items that can catch fire, like clothing, books and curtains.

MERAMEC RIVER RESCUE

On July 9, 2006, the Metro West Fire District experienced one of its most difficult alarms when it engaged in a water rescue on the Meramec River at Castlewood State Park.

At approximately 6:25 PM, Metro West received a call that multiple victims, identified as children, had been swept away in the river.

First arriving units immediately proceeded by foot on trails to the river's edge and began assessing two patients, one of whom was receiving CPR from bystanders.

The on-scene commander initiated coordinated searches of the river with marine units and the Metro West Dive Rescue Team.

As Metro West conducted the initial searches, we gathered information from the large crowd of onlookers concerning the possible number of victims remaining in the water. Members of the public report-

ed their observations and the last places where the victims were seen.

Searches were conducted from both shore and from marine units. Grids of the river were searched from the upstream side and cleared. This process is methodical and very thorough. Rescuers were rotated frequently due to the strong current causing fatigue.

The first victims treated at the scene were transported to area hospitals. Sadly, one youngster succumbed to his injuries later that evening. As dusk approached and the opportunity of viable rescue diminished, a Metro West scent dog, Candy, a Labrador retriever, was placed into a marine unit and allowed to scent the rescue grids. As she alerted to possible locations, these were noted by GPS coordinates, marker buoys, and scene map.

By 6:30 the following morning, all victims were

recovered from the river. In all, five young people lost their lives in this tragic example of how we must respect the power, unpredictability, and danger of moving water.



FIRE CLAIMS LONG-STANDING BALLWIN RESTAURANT

Metro West Fire Protection District units battled a stubborn 3-alarm fire in the early morning of November 20, 2006. The fire, located at The Seventh Inn Restaurant, 100 Seven Trails Dr., in Ballwin, was reported by passers-by who saw smoke coming from the building.

First arriving units were met with an extremely heavy smoke condition and a large amount of fire throughout the structure. Aggressive interior attacks were initiated, but due to the large volume of fire



and the serious potential of roof collapse, interior crews were removed and an exterior attack with elevated master streams was initiated.

At the height of the attack, 60 firefighters from Metro West and surrounding mutual aid agencies manned 18 pieces of fire apparatus.

The cause of the fire was classified as undetermined. No civilian or firefighter injuries were reported during the incident. The building was destroyed by the blaze.



Source: National estimates based on NFIRS and NFPA survey.

Your Fire District at Work

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Then,



And Now.



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