

IN CASE OF FIRE, GET OUT, THEN CALL 911

CHIEF'S CORNER



I am pleased to announce that the Chief's Corner has returned to the Monarch Fire Protection District Newsletter, and I am humbled to be a part of it as your Fire Chief. This small portion of the newsletter will serve as my platform to convey administrative news to you, my "customers" on the updates that affect your service delivery in the Monarch Fire Protection District.

I find it appropriate to formally introduce myself in the first Chief's Corner I have been privileged to write to each of you. I have been involved in the fire service since 1987 when I began as a volunteer in a nearby department. This department, like our fine Fire District has grown into a larger, more professional agency as our area has grown. My love for public safety and service of others developed from giving my time without compensation. Like many in the fire service, I have been fortunate enough to work in many public safety environments to include Emergency Medical Services as a Paramedic, Law Enforcement as a Police Officer, the Fire service as an entry level Firefighter, and through the ranks of Chief Training Officer, and now the

Fire Chief of one of the largest professional Fire Districts in the State. Most of my fire service career has been spent in west St. Louis County. The honor you have bestowed upon me and my staff, through the elected Board of Directors, is humbling and not taken lightly by any of us.

The Board of Directors, Chief Officers, Administrative Staff, and the Men and Women of the Monarch Fire District are here to serve you 24 hours a day without question. We will continue to provide the best equipment and services to you when and if you need us. The leadership of the District will continue to be excellent stewards of your hard earned tax dollars, and strive to maximize your services with what we are provided by you.

We do not take lightly our responsibilities to you and the visitors of the District. If you need anything, or have any comments or questions, my staff or I will be delighted to help you.

Sincerely,

Chuck



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**In Emergency,
Call 9-1-1
All other inquiries,
call (314) 514-0900**

WINTER 2015

MONARCH

FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

INTEGRITY • ACCOUNTABILITY • RESPONSIBILITY

THE HAPPIEST TIME OF THE YEAR

A majority of Americans will be celebrating Thanksgiving, Hanukkah and/or Christmas, New Year's Eve and New Year's Day in the next few weeks. This period has often been referred to as the "Happiest Time of the Year". Many people will exchange gifts, attend churches or synagogues and enjoy visits and parties with family and friends.

Here in the Monarch Fire Protection District, we have a small gift for the residents and businesses. We did not raise taxes and, in fact, many tax rates declined. We hope this helps.

I am delighted to say the District has continued to upgrade equipment and training for our personnel thus providing those who live here or visit Monarch better service and safety, while maintaining pay and benefits for our employees. This has occurred without the need for a tax increase or bond issue.

It was not a simple issue to hold the line on taxes. I want to thank everyone at Monarch who contributed to the efforts to provide top quality service. The Board, the Command Staff, the Fire Inspectors, the Fire-fighter/Paramedics and the administrative staff all play a part in the efficient and safe functioning of our fire district.

This newsletter has a number of safety reminders for the upcoming holiday season. On behalf of everyone at Monarch, I want to wish each and every one of you a joyous and safe holiday season and a happy and prosperous New Year.

Robin L. Harris
President
Monarch Fire Board

ASK THE CHIEF AND THE BOARD

Residents and business owners often ask good questions when Chief Marsonette and Board Members appear at public meetings and events. In this article we respond to a few of those questions asked most often.

I PLACED A 911 CALL FOR A MEDICAL EMERGENCY IN MY HOME AND AN AMBULANCE AND FIRE TRUCK SHOWED UP. WHY WAS THAT?

There are two possible answers to this question. First, while our Advanced Life Support Ambulances are staffed with two paramedics, some medical calls require additional manpower in order to perform life-saving procedures, bring additional supplies and stretcher inside the home and prepare the patient for transport to the hospital. Rather than delay the possibility that additional resources will be needed, they are initially dispatched. They can always be sent back if not needed, but based on the information from the initial 911 call, we take the more conservative approach in order to provide the best care as soon as possible.

Second, all of Monarch's fire and rescue trucks are staffed by at least one and, usually two firefighters who are also paramedics. All of these vehicles carry many of the same Advanced Life Support medicines and equipment as is found on our ambulances. If the closest vehicle to a 911 medical call is not one of our ambulances, we will send a fire truck or rescue vehicle and begin life-saving procedures while a more distant ambulance is in route.

WHY DO FIRETRUCKS AND AMBULANCES FROM OTHER FIRE DISTRICTS RESPOND TO CALLS IN THE MONARCH FIRE DISTRICT?

Mutual Aid Response is a common, effective and widely accepted protocol in the fire service. No one fire district or department can cover all contingencies, all of the time and so an organized, well defined system of mutual aid is used to help each other when necessary. Monarch runs 13.0% of its calls into neighboring Districts and likewise, receives assistance from neighboring Districts 9.6% of the time. We regularly train with our neighboring Fire Districts and there is a structure in place for command and supervision any time there is a need for assistance to and from our neighboring Fire Districts.

www.monarchfpd.org

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Call 9-1-1
All other inquiries,
call (314) 514-0900**

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MONARCH IMPLEMENTS S.T.A.R.S. PROGRAM



District Resident/Parents or Guardians of a Special Needs Patient

The Monarch Fire Protection District has implemented a program that will enable us to be better prepared to care for special-needs patients ages 0-21 years old should an emergency arise. The program is titled "Special-needs Tracking, and Awareness Response System", or S.T.A.R.S.

Each patient that is entered into the S.T.A.R.S. program has a form detailing his or her medical history, medications, allergies, baseline vital signs, baseline neurological status, and common medical emergencies. Each patient is assigned the unique number on their form, and the form is kept in each ambulance. Should an emergency occur involving the patient that requires calling 911, the caller gives the dispatcher the patient's number which is then relayed to the responding ambulance. Having this information at hand can prove vital, especially when a regular caretaker is not present.

It's easy to enroll your son or daughter. Contact us at 314-514-0900, and a paramedic from Monarch Fire Protection District will make an appointment to come to your home. Or you may come to our Headquarters building to discuss your patient's needs, fill out the S.T.A.R.S. form, and get answers to any questions you may have about our services. In the meantime, if your son or daughter has any anxiety about the ambulance, and would like to tour the ambulance or see any of the equipment, we encourage you to bring them in to do so.

Please contact the Monarch Fire Protection District if you feel your son or daughter would be a candidate. Patients who benefit most are those with significant developmental delay, seizure disorders, cardiac history, cerebral shunts, tracheostomies and any atypical diseases or syndromes.

If you have any questions you may contact Deputy Chief Nick Harper at harper.n@monarchfpd.org or 314-514-0900 x318. We look forward to hearing from you!

MONARCH FINDS, RESCUES FAMILY LOST ON HOWELL ISLAND

Monarch crews responded to a call for help Sunday, November 1st after dark from a young family who became lost on Howell Island. Firefighters and paramedics responded with boats, UTVs and ground crews to locate and bring the three family members back from the island.

While the family was not in immediate danger, the darkness and dropping temperatures made it important to get them to safety as quickly as possible. Crews used cellphone and GPS technology, flashlight signals and verbal signals to locate the family.

Once located, they were brought back via Monarch's inflatable rescue boat (IRB). While transporting the family back, and transporting rescuers over the water, the IRB crew had to dodge jumping fish which hit some of the crew members. The fish are believed to be Asian carp, an invasive species that is now present in the Missouri. Thankfully, no one was injured.

There are some basic supplies everyone should take when hiking or walking in undeveloped areas. At a minimum you should carry a flashlight, matches, extra clothing (jackets in cool weather), one or two large trash bags (they can be used as raincoats or rainflies if needed), some heavy line or paracord, compass, some food (energy bars or candy bars will work) and, of course, some water. This can be easily carried in a fanny pack or small backpack. You should also make sure a friend or family member knows where you are going and when you plan to return.

Monarch was also assisted by Metro West Fire Protection District and St. Charles Fire Department.

STAY SAFE WHILE COOKING FOR THE HOLIDAYS



According to the National Fire Protection Association and the United States Fire Administration, cooking is the leading cause of home fires and home fire injuries.

Did you know...

- U.S fire departments respond to an average of **156,600** home fires per year involving cooking equipment.
- Thanksgiving is the leading day for home cooking fires – 3 times the average number!
- Ranges or cook-tops account for almost **3 of every 5** reported home fires involving cooking equipment. Ovens account for 16%.
- Unattended cooking is the leading factor in home fires and their associated deaths and injuries.
- Failure to clean is a leading factor in oven and rotisserie fires.
- 55% of civilians injured in home cooking fires were hurt trying to extinguish the fire themselves.
- Adults 75 yrs. or older face a higher risk of cooking fire death than any other age group.

Watch What You Heat

- The leading cause of fires in the kitchen is unattended cooking.
- Stay in the kitchen when you are frying, grilling, or broiling food. If you leave the kitchen for even a short period of time, turn off the stove.
- If you are simmering, baking, roasting, or boiling food, check it regularly, remain in the home while food is cooking, and use a timer to remind you that you're cooking.
- Stay alert! To prevent cooking fires, you have to be alert. You won't be alert if you are sleepy, have been drinking alcohol, or have taken medicine that makes you drowsy.

Keep Things That Can Catch Fire and Heat Sources Apart

- Keep anything that can catch fire - potholders, oven mitts, wooden utensils, paper or plastic bags, food packaging, towels, or curtains away from your stovetop.
- Keep the stovetop, burners, and oven clean.
- Keep pets off cooking surfaces and nearby countertops to prevent them from knocking things onto the burner.
- Wear short, close-fitting or tightly rolled sleeves when cooking. Loose clothing can dangle onto stove burners and catch fire if it comes into contact with a burner.

If you have a grease fire

- Call 911 no matter how small the fire is.
- If you are unsure you can control the fire, get out and stay out.
- If the fire is small, slide a lid over the pan or pot that's on fire and turn off the burner. Let it sit until cool.
- **Do not** use water on a grease fire – this will spread the fire and you will likely get burned.
- **Do not** use flour on a fire – this could spread the fire or cause an explosion.
- **Do not** try to move the burning pan or pot – this will spread the fire and you will likely get burned.

Using a turkey deep fryer?

- Always follow the fryer manufacturer's instructions.
- Turkey fryers should always be used outdoors a safe distance from buildings and any other flammable materials.
- Never use turkey fryers in a garage or on a wooden deck.
- Make sure the fryers are used on a flat surface to reduce accidental tipping.
- Never leave the fryer unattended. Most units do not have thermostat controls. If you do not watch the fryer carefully, the oil will continue to heat until it catches fire.
- Never let children or pets near the fryer even if it is not in use. The oil inside the cooking pot can remain dangerously hot hours after use.
- To avoid oil spillover, do not overfill the fryer.
- Use well-insulated potholders or oven mitts when touching pot or lid handles. If possible, wear safety goggles to protect your eyes from oil splatter.
- Make sure the turkey is completely thawed and be careful with marinades. Oil and water do not mix, and water causes oil to spill over causing a fire or even an explosion hazard.
- The National Turkey Federation (NTF) recommends thawing the turkey in the refrigerator approximately 24 hours for every five pounds in weight.
- Keep an all-purpose fire extinguisher nearby, and know how and when to use it.

Have a safe and enjoyable holiday season!