

**IN CASE OF FIRE, GET OUT, THEN CALL 911**

## TAKE CARE OF YOUR SMOKE ALARMS



Tired of changing batteries in your smoke alarms – especially in those hard-to-reach locations? Change it one last time using a 10-year lithium 9-volt smoke alarm battery! It will save you time and money! The price of 10-year lithium 9-volt smoke alarm batteries start at around \$5.00. At that price, you'll save about \$7.50 over the life of the 10-year battery! And you'll be worry-free for the remaining life of your smoke alarm!

These batteries are available at most hardware retailers as well as on-line shopping sites. Brand names include Ultra Life, Energizer, Duracell, Ray-O-Vac and possibly others.

A leading factor of fire deaths in homes equipped with smoke alarms is smoke alarms that don't work; and the most common problem is missing or dead batteries. Using a 10-year battery will reduce this risk significantly.

Always remember to look at the date on your smoke alarm when you change the battery. Smoke alarms have a service life of 7 to 10 years. If your smoke alarm is getting near to, or has passed its life span consider replacing it using a smoke alarm with a 10-year battery installed so you won't need to replace the battery every year.

While you're at it, vacuum or dust your smoke alarm when you change the battery - this will help prevent false alarms. Canned electronics dusters work well for this also. And by all means, use care to prevent falls when using step stools and ladders to work on your smoke alarms.

Our firefighters are happy to help elderly and disabled Monarch residents with servicing their smoke alarms – just contact us at [corr@monarch-fpd.org](mailto:corr@monarch-fpd.org).

Also, TEST EACH ONE OF YOUR SMOKE ALARMS AT LEAST ONCE A MONTH! It's easier to remember to test them if you pick a day or date and stick to it – such as the 1st of each month, or the first Sunday of each month (or whatever day you choose). Smoke alarms have a test button that you can push and hold using a broom handle or other pole or rod.

And practice fire drills in the home at least twice a year! We'll discuss this further in another newsletter!

Contact the Monarch Fire Prevention Bureau for more information and safety tips at [fireprevention@monarchfpd.org](mailto:fireprevention@monarchfpd.org) or 314-514-0900.



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

SUMMER 2016

# MONARCH

## FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

**INTEGRITY • ACCOUNTABILITY • RESPONSIBILITY**

## CHIEF'S CORNER

I would like to thank everyone for taking the time to review this newsletter and your interest in the Monarch Fire Protection District. Your opinion means an immense amount to us, and we value your interest and support. In this edition of the Chief's corner, I would like to review a few notable events in which your Fire District has been involved since our last newsletter.

On December 26th 2015, our crews were called to a water rescue on Wild Horse Creek Road. Two individuals were said to be trapped in a tree near the roadway in Wild Horse Creek as a result of driving into flood waters. As you may recall, the late December flooding was very notable with large amounts of rain in a short time causing flash flooding in our area. This particular rescue was quite difficult. In addition to the cold, heavy rain and darkness, we were faced with a victim who was trapped in a tree in the middle of a swollen stream, with an incredible amount of raging water moving across it. Time was of the essence before hypothermia overcame the man.

Our swift water teams and the specialized equipment the District has in its arsenal, as well as five mutual aid agencies from surrounding departments and Districts, were able to effect the rescue in this very high-risk situation and assist one of our district residents back to safety prior to serious injuries or loss of life. The victim benefitted from a well-executed rescue plan and was treated by our Firefighter/Paramedics for minor injuries, and transported to a local hospital for evaluation. Thankfully the second possible victim had made it out of the stream prior to our arrival.



A full debriefing was conducted with all crews involved at the District training center as well as electronic conference connections for the mutual aid agencies. Of special note, the victim was able to attend this debriefing, where he gave his opinions and expressed overwhelming gratitude for the services provided by all departments and districts involved. Many thanks for the assistance in this swift water rescue from the Metro West Fire Protection District, West County Fire Protection District, Boles Fire Protection District, and St. Charles City Fire Department. There was an immense amount of press coverage over this event and the subsequent debriefing and reenactment training, but we must remember that these emergencies can happen on any day at any time. Please remember "turn around, don't drown"!

This incident is one of the low-frequency high-risk events that the Fire District trains for on a constant basis. In fact, a reenactment of this event was created for training of all regional technical rescue teams on April 3rd at the incident site. This training examined many options available in this rescue, and allowed other off duty members of the task force from around the region to experience the event in a controlled setting.

There was a high frequency of water rescue events in the 4th quarter of 2015. Another example of the utilization of this unique equipment and our members of the special operations task force was in support to the Valley Park Fire Protection District just a few days after our harrowing rescue. Although the events were not as acute, major disaster from this flooding was possible in southern St Louis and Jefferson counties.

The St. Louis County special operations task force, of which Monarch is a member, is constantly training and prepared for many different incidents that can occur in the area. From swift water rescue to high angle rope rescue, trench rescue, and hazardous materials response; the St. Louis County task force which is well staffed by Monarch personnel, but made up of numerous regional departments and districts; is in constant demand.

Because of the nature of these emergencies and the special disciplines required, they are all considered to be low-frequency, high-risk situations. Training and the best equipment must be provided and utilized in the special teams operations and training. (continued on page 3)



[www.monarchfpd.org](http://www.monarchfpd.org)

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### HOME POOL SAFETY TIPS FROM THE AMERICAN RED CROSS

Millions of us enjoy warm weather every year by swimming in our backyard pools and relaxing in hot tubs. Tragically though, over 200 young children drown in backyard swimming pools each year.

The American Red Cross suggests owners make pool safety their priority by following these guidelines:



- Secure your pool with appropriate barriers. Completely surround your pool with a 4-foot high fence or barrier with a self-closing, self-latching gate. Place a safety cover on the pool or hot tub when not in use and remove any ladders or steps used for access. Consider installing a pool alarm that goes off if anyone enters the pool.
- Keep children under active supervision at all times. Stay in arm's reach of young kids. Designate a responsible person to watch the water when people are in the pool—never allow anyone to swim alone. Have young or inexperienced swimmers wear a U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jacket.
- Ensure everyone in the home knows how to swim well by enrolling them in age-appropriate water orientation and learn-to-swim courses from the Red Cross.
- Keep your pool or hot tub water clean and clear. Maintain proper chemical levels, circulation and filtration. Regularly test and adjust the chemical levels to minimize the risk of earaches, rashes or more serious diseases.
- Establish and enforce rules and safe behaviors, such as “no diving,” “stay away from drain covers,” “swim with a buddy” and “walk please.”
- Ensure everyone in the home knows how to respond to aquatic emergencies by having appropriate safety equipment and taking water safety, first aid and CPR courses from the Red Cross.
- Always swim with a buddy; do not allow anyone to swim alone.
- Never leave a young child unattended near water and do not trust a child's life to another child; teach children to always ask permission to go near water.
- Maintain constant supervision.
- If you have a pool, secure it with appropriate barriers. Many children who drown in home pools were out of sight for less than five minutes and in the care of one or both parents at the time.
- Avoid distractions when supervising children around water.
- If a child is missing, check the water first. Seconds count in preventing death or disability.
- Have appropriate equipment, such as reaching or throwing equipment, a cell phone, life jackets and a first aid kit.
- Know how and when to call 9-1-1 or the local emergency number.
- Enroll in Red Cross home pool safety, water safety, first aid and CPR/AED courses to learn how to prevent and respond to emergencies.

The American Red Cross and National Swimming Pool Foundation® have partnered to create an online Home Pool Essentials course that describes steps home pool owners can take to prevent tragedy and keep a well maintained pool or hot tub. The course is available at [www.HomePoolEssentials.org](http://www.HomePoolEssentials.org).

Also, Monarch teaches CPR for our residents free of charge – call 314-514-0900 or visit our website at [www.monarchfpd.org](http://www.monarchfpd.org) for details.

### A RIDE OF THE CENTURY

The Monarch Fire Protection District was honored to participate in a Birthday celebration for one of our centurion citizens who has lived in the district for 30+ years. On an earlier occasion when she requested our 911 services a conversation took place about a fire truck ride when she turned 100 years old. Well, that happened this week. One of our ladder trucks arrived at her residence. She walked to the truck, was assisted into the Captain's seat and was treated to the ride of her life. She enjoyed the sirens and lights as well as the boonnk-boonnk of the air horns. She returned home, Honorary Fire Captain Ruth Nichols with, if possible, a larger smile than when she climbed onboard. She reminisced about the horse and carriage days, made all of us smile with her enthusiasm and blessed us as we left her with her family.



### THREE DIVISIONS - ONE DEPARTMENT

The Monarch Fire Protection District is responsible for the delivery of fire, rescue, emergency medical and fire prevention services to its residents and businesses. There are three divisions, all reporting to the Fire Chief, who perform these tasks.

Fire Suppression, sometimes called Operations, is the best known division. Monarch's fire fighters not only fight fires, but they perform rescue operations, ranging from helping with those who need assistance with a hand caught in a fence, to heavy rescue involving collapsed structures. Those who staff this division must be ready for anything when they roll up on the scene of a call. Putting out a fire may be as simple as using a hose to pour water on a small blaze and may be as complicated as determining if a raging fire in a commercial building has hazardous materials inside and planning the safest and fastest way to handle such a potentially disastrous event. The equipment used by the Fire Suppression division includes high tech infra-red cameras that can “see” hot spots inside of walls, simple axes, hooks and poles used to expose areas where fire exists and sophisticated breathing apparatus that permits fire fighters to breath and communicate in dense smoke and spaces filled with toxic fumes.

The paramedics of the Emergency Medical Services (“EMS”) division run Monarch's ambulance operations. At Monarch, like many modern fire departments, most fire fighters are also paramedics, meaning they are qualified to move between Fire Suppression and EMS at any time. This versatility allows those on a Monarch fire truck to assist in saving lives, even though they do not arrive on an ambulance. Paramedics are specially trained to handle all types of life threatening emergencies using their extensive training and medical equipment carried on all of the ambulances and fire trucks. The days of simply scooping up patients and racing to the emergency room are long gone. Many lives are saved at home, on the highways and at businesses by paramedics, who transport to hospitals only after a patient has been stabilized.

The Fire Marshal and members of the Fire Prevention Bureau are charged with reviewing building plans, performing inspections during construction and investigating the cause of a fire. Modern construction codes have reduced fire deaths dramatically over the past several decades and the fire inspectors who enforce those codes are no less important than the fire fighters in saving life and property. In fact the number of large, highly destructive fires has decreased as building codes and code enforcement has improved. The inspectors of the Fire Prevention Bureau double as the public education liaisons, teaching children and adults how to keep themselves safe from fire and other hazards.

From the newest firefighter/paramedic to the Board of Directors; from the Command Staff to the office staff and maintenance personnel; from the Fire Marshal to the inspectors, everyone at Monarch works to provide the Safety and Service you expect. At the same time we work to ensure expenditures of your tax dollars are optimized to give you the best return.

### CHIEF'S CORNER (continued from page 1)

Our response and service delivery to citizens from day to day also remains high quality and consistent. From the updating of our fire apparatus and the arrival of our new Smeal rescue pumper, as well as the imminent arrival of a new life saving ambulance, the Monarch Fire Protection District continues to look forward so that we can provide the best service at the best value, to the residents and visitors of the District.



As most of our residents are aware, the District recently helped to support an event with St. Louis County and the Spirit of St. Louis airport. The 2016 airshow in Stem expo was a huge success for the planners of this event and the region as a whole. The Fire District played a very important role in the planning and safe execution of this event. From our specialized training in aircraft rescue and fire-fighting, to our EMS and fire crews standing by on the grounds for injuries and fires, Monarch Fire Protection District personnel acted in an exemplary manner during this event.

Behind the scenes of this enormous undertaking were your Firefighter/ Paramedics, and Chief Officers choreographing much of the action that helped all the attendees remain safe. The large number of airshow performers required maximum resources from the Fire District as well as the assistance of mutual aid partners on and off the airshow grounds.

While watching airplanes flying around the Fire District in mid-May is quite entertaining for most, we do realize that the noise and traffic inconveniences are sometimes a challenge to deal with. Although we are not responsible for the noise or traffic movements, we must also consider them in the service delivery we provide to you. Our residents should also know that we were assisted by many mutual aid partner agencies in staffing a portion of our fire houses and the event itself, in order to maintain the best level of service possible, both off and on the airport grounds.

In closing, I would like to reiterate our interest in your opinions about our day-to-day service delivery. We do not take lightly our responsibilities to you and the visitors of the District. If you have any comments or questions, either I or my staff will be honored to help you. We remain humbled to serve you, and I look forward to your inquiries.

*Thank you and have a safe summer!*

Chuck Marsonette  
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