



**Chapter 3:
Fire Department Basics and the
Fire and Life Safety Educator
Pages 65-81**



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Objectives (1 of 3)

- Explain the reasons a fire and life safety educator needs a basic understanding of fire department operations and daily routines (NFPA 4.1.1). (p. 65)
- Answer commonly asked questions about fire service traditions, history, and practices. (pp. 65–68)
- Determine the level of information the public needs to know about fire department personal protective equipment, tools, and vehicles (NFPA 4.1.1). (pp. 70–76)

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Objectives (2 of 3)

- Recognize and dispel common myths the public has about the fire service and local department procedures (NFPA 4.1.1). (pp. 70–73)
- Discuss the role of emergency medical services in the fire service and the information necessary for the public to work effectively with this system (NFPA 4.1.1). (pp. 69–70)
- Discuss messages the public should receive regarding behaviors that would assist the department in more effectively providing service (NFPA 4.1.1). (pp. 74–76)

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Objectives (3 of 3)

- Conduct fire station tours that provide important information and interesting activities appropriate for all age groups (NFPA 4.4.2). (pp. 75–76)
- List important features of the local department beneficial for the local community to understand (NFPA 4.1.1). (pp. 72–73)

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Introduction

- Fire and life safety educators have the ability and the duty to reach as many facets of the community as possible with safety lessons.
- It is the responsibility of safety educators to anticipate what the public needs to know about the fire service both locally and universally.

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Fire Service Traditions and Symbols

- The fire service is rich with traditions, symbols, and folklore.
- Incorporating some of these stories during station tours or educational presentations helps the audience appreciate the history and evolution of current-day practices of the fire service.

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FAQ's – Can you answer these?

- Dalmatians
- Fire Plugs
- Cherry Pickers and Snorkels
- Fire Boxes and Gamewells
- Fire Marks
- Maltese Cross
- St. Florian

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The Dalmatian

- Dalmatians were used to:
 - Clear the street of other dogs for pumpers and horse-drawn wagons carrying equipment
 - Guard the horses and keep other dogs from scaring them
 - Help calm the horses as they approached the scene of the fire



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The Fire Plug



The Fire plug – Fire hydrant

- The first water mains in cities and towns were hollowed-out logs.
 - Firemen drilled a hole in the log to access water and later stopped up the hole with a wooden plug.
 - Important to keep them clear of weeds, snow, and other obstructions

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Cherry Pickers and Snorkels

- Also called ladder truck
- The idea was conceived by Chicago Fire Commissioner Robert J. Quinn while watching tree trimmers use trucks with hydraulically operated elevating arms to lift the men in baskets high into the air.
- Fire fighters were amazed at the effectiveness of their new equipment .

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Fire Boxes and Gamewells

- Use of the boxes to call in a fire was simple.
- Over time, however, newer technology replaced the red boxes.



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Fire Marks

- Fire marks were metal plates affixed to the outside of buildings, bearing the identity of the insurance company that covered the structure.
- After a formal postal system was put in place in the mid-1800s and all buildings were assigned specific addresses, the fire marks no longer served a purpose.



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The Maltese Cross

- The Maltese Cross was adopted and put into use by the early Knights of Malta.
- To this day, the Maltese cross in the fire service is a symbol of bravery, honor, loyalty, and defending the weak.

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St. Florian, Patron Saint of Fire Fighters

- Florian Von Cetum
 - Was the highest-ranking officer in the Roman army
 - Commanded 7000 members who were assigned to the prestigious fire brigade
- Emperor Diocletian’s efforts to “cleanse” the empire of all Christians resulted in his death.
- Florian was made a saint by Pope Lucius III and has become known as the patron saint of the fire service.

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Fire Service Responsibilities

- Emergency medical service (EMS)
 - EMS calls account for approximately 67 percent of all calls made to the fire department.
 - Including information about EMS procedures, equipment, and fire and injury prevention when planning programs and presentations becomes necessary.
 - Be aware of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA).

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Emergency Medical Service (EMS)

- Some talking points:
 - Patients have the right to sign a refusal.
 - Do not wait for symptoms to go away on their own. Call without delay.
 - Explain transport destination options for advanced and basic life support responses.
 - Go over early warning signs for emergencies.
 - Include injury prevention lessons.
 - Stress importance of adhering to the prescribed medication regimen.
 - Promote taking classes in hands-only CPR and the use of AEDs.

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Department Vehicles (1 of 2)

- Company: a team of fire fighters with apparatus assigned to perform a specific function in a designated response area
- More commonly deployed fire companies:
 - Engine company
 - Truck company
 - Rescue company
 - Specialty or combination units
 - EMS units

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Department Vehicles (2 of 2)



Pumpers or engines



Aerial truck ladders



Tower ladders

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The Fire Department: Myth Busters and FAQs



- The duties of firefighters
 - Dispel misconceptions
- Payments and refusals
 - Be aware of billing costs and procedures
- Grocery shopping and other daily routines
 - Examples of practices
- Cats in trees and other services provided
 - Know department policies

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The Fire Department: Myths and Frequently Asked Questions

- The duties of fire fighters
 - The public often asks what fire fighters and paramedics do when they are not responding to calls.
 - Educators should be able to provide some specific information about this when asked.

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Payments and Refusals and Other Questions

- Be aware of the costs and procedures associated with the billing process.
- Know the contact person, division, and phone number residents can call with questions on cost.
- Respond to questions about daily routines (e.g., grocery shopping) with correct and well-crafted answers the public will understand.

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Other Services Provided and Response Times

- Responses to audience questions on services provided should be based on the department policies and the reasons behind the policies.
- During presentations, break down the total average response time into segments of time so the response process is understandable for an audience.

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Driving

- Emphasize the importance of fire fighters maintaining a safe speed en route to emergencies.
- 3M Opticom System™ or traffic signal preemption systems
 - Encoded signal preemption devices that allow emergency vehicles to turn traffic signals green, providing them the right of way
 - Educate the public on the presence of these systems.



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Job Requirements, Job Descriptions, and Organizational Charts

- Be familiar with local department job requirements and keep abreast of details like testing dates.
- Two functional areas:
 - Operations or suppression
 - Administration
- Details of the department's current organizational chart and job descriptions should be readily available as part of a media packet.

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Fire Department FAQ's Do you know these? Provide a Cheat Sheet Page 74

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Helping Fire Fighters Help You

- Making addresses visible
 - Obtain copies of local codes concerning the display of addresses and disseminate the information.
 - Explain the difficulties faced by an emergency responder in locating a house when address is not visible.
- Pulling to the right for sirens and lights
 - Educate drivers about the importance of yielding.

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Calling 911 or the Local Emergency Number

- The public should be informed to:
 - Never hesitate to call for assistance
 - Be sure to speak clearly to the dispatch operator
 - Not hang up until the dispatcher says to do so
 - The dispatcher may have more instructions for the caller or the need to ask for more information.
- Local and regional capabilities of calling 911 from cell phones need to be looked into.

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Keeping Fire Hydrants Accessible

- Educators need to publicize and explain how important it is to keep hydrants accessible for fire service personnel.
- Be familiar with the local fire hydrant ordinance.



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Station Tours

- Everyone does them.....
- But, are we doing them right?

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Station Tours

Setting Up the Tour

- Have a standard procedure for station tours.
- Find out the ages of the attendees and how many people will be in the group.
- Be clear with the group leader as to what to expect if the fire fighters are called away while they are at the station.

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Safety for Station Tours

- Check to make sure any areas the visitors will walk through are safe.
- When preparing for a tour with small children, take a look at the entire area they will be visiting from their height.
- If the hazards cannot be removed, cordon them off with caution tape and be sure to instruct visitors to avoid them for their own safety.

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Put Your Best Foot Forward

- Always greet the tour group at the front door with a smile.
- Take the group to a training area or classroom first.
- Begin with an educational safety lesson appropriate for the age of the tour group.

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Have a Plan

- Lesson plans appropriate to age or target group should be designed for station tours.
- All should be encouraged to follow the lesson plan so that no important teaching information is missed.
- Newer members of the department should conduct tours and observed by an older member only after having accompanied a more experienced member a few times.

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Rules for Station Tours

- Go over the rules of the department at the very beginning of the tour.
- Emphasize the fact that this is where the fire fighters work, but it is also where they live.
- Tell children they should stay with their group.

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In Closing

- Gather the group together at the end of the tour rather than dismissing them without a formal conclusion.
- Thank everyone for visiting the firehouse, review the most important information, and ask if there are any questions.

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Personal Protective Equipment

- Fire and life safety educators
 - Should be able to explain the PPE:
 - Purpose
 - Capabilities
 - Limitations
 - Costs
- Focus on **why** it is worn
 - Demonstrate and explain



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Personal Protective Equipment

(1 of 2)

- Begin with the boots, and end with the self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA), including the mask, in exactly the order they would be donned for a response to a call.
- While explaining PPE to different age groups, the style and content have to be adapted.

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Personal Protective Equipment

(2 of 2)



Allow children to adjust to the transformation from a fire fighter in Class B uniform to full turnout gear.

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Preschoolers

- Goal: To allow children to meet fire fighters and become familiar and comfortable with them.
- Greet them first in Class B uniform before putting on the full turnout gear.
- Sitting at their eye level puts them at ease.
- Provide explanations for the use of every item of gear.
- Remember to keep smiling while donning the face piece for the SCBA.

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Elementary School Students

- Goal: To eliminate fear of the gear and to introduce some of the procedures fire fighters use while wearing the gear.
- Review “get low and go” while demonstrating that fire fighters do the same.
- Discuss the personal alert safety system (PASS) device and explain the reason fire fighters need them.

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Upper Elementary Grades and Middle School Students

- Goal: To create an appreciation for the purpose of the gear in relation to the dangers of fire.
- Allow a student to try on gear.
- If the department has a thermal imager, demonstrate this tool along with an explanation of how it works.

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High School Students

- Goal: To create a better understanding of the career of a fire fighter.
- Discuss:
 - Consequences of risk taking; rapid spread of fire; and the students’ influence on family, friends, and the community
 - Requirements for becoming a fire fighter
 - The proper use of fire extinguishers

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Adults and Older Adults

- Goal: To create an appreciation for
 - The use of PPE
 - The conditions under which PPE must be used
 - The cost of outfitting personnel
 - The limitations of PPE
- Discuss the ways adults can assist fire fighters during emergencies.

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Summary (1 of 3)

- Safety educators should have a basic working knowledge of the entire department.
 - This allows for the ability to answer questions for the public and provides a better understanding of how to help the department function better within the community.
- Educators must observe the landscape of their own communities and departments to ensure they are providing their public with the information that will most likely affect safety and awareness.

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Summary (2 of 3)

- People will have a greater appreciation for practicing fire safety and injury prevention after they are aware of the functions and divisions, strengths, and limitations of the fire department.
- The fire service has a history rich with traditions and customs. Safety educators will be asked about the origins of these legends and should be prepared to tell the stories behind them.

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Summary (3 of 3)

- Safety gear demonstrations are better appreciated when they are based on educational objectives and geared toward the audience type.
- Station tours are not simply “show and tell” events. Tours need to involve a systematic planning process and lesson plans for the purposes of safety, education, and effective public relations.

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Break Into Groups

- **Continue Work on Final Group Presentation**

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Group Project

- Do you have each of the steps of the Five Step Process accounted for in your presentation
- What teaching methods will you be using?
- What is the estimated cost of your project to the department?
- Will each member present a portion of the project?
- Will you have a format that class members can take with them?

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Tomorrow

- Evaluation – Chapter 11
- Razzle Dazzle with Group Presentations
- Don't Twizz about the Test

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