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Report of the Week

What's in your pockets?

12/21/07

Report Number: 07-1166

Report Date: 12/13/2007 1726

Demographics

Department type: Paid Municipal

Job or rank: Fire Fighter

Department shift: 24 hours on - 48 hours off

Age: 16 - 24

Years of fire service experience: 4 - 6

Region: FEMA Region IV

Event Information

Event type: Fire emergency event: structure fire, vehicle fire, wildland fire, etc.

Event date and time: 10/15/2005 0345

Hours into the shift:

Event participation: Involved in the event

Do you think this will happen again?

What do you believe caused the event?

- Situational Awareness
- Communication
- Individual Action

What do you believe is the loss potential?

- Other
- Life threatening injury

Event Description

I was engaged in fire attack that was located in an attic space with two other firefighters when another firefighter and I became entangled in wires from the attic space. Due to the fact I had no wire cutters, I panicked because I knew I was approaching the point where I should turn and head back due to air use from my cylinder. As I struggled to free myself, I removed most of the wires by sweeping back with my gloved hand. To my extreme excitement, the other firefighter had wire cutters and cut us both out. We were then able to exit the attic space with the third member of our crew. The fact this other firefighter carried tools saved us both a lot of stress if not our lives.

Lessons Learned

I learned to always carry some kind of tool on a fire. I now carry my own small hand tools. I also learned to stay as calm as possible and go back to your basic training and you will probably already know how to fix the problem.

What's in your pockets?

Discussion Questions

1. What tools and equipment do you carry in your turnout coat pockets?
2. Who guided you to the contents of your pockets?
3. Compare the contents of your pockets with those of the rest of your crew. What are the similarities and differences?
4. List the "basic" items you believe should be carried in every firefighter's pockets?
5. Discuss how many different situations you can expect to handle with the tools you carry.

Experienced an entanglement during fire operations? How about during an extrication or special operations incident? Submit your incident to www.firefighternearmiss.com today and make 2008 a safer year for a colleague you've never met.

Note: The questions posed by the reviewers are designed to generate discussion and thought in the name of promoting firefighter safety. They are not intended to pass judgment on the actions and performance of individuals in the reports.

What's in your pockets?