TAKE 5 FOR SAFETY

INSTRUCTOR'S NOTES

5-MINUTE SAFETY DRILL

Fatigue: Too Important Too Ignore

Date:_____

Shift:_____

Dept:_____

Station:_____

Training Code:_____

NOTES:

FOCUS: Firefighters like to fell in charge. Many accidents have been attributed to issues relating to fatigue. Fatigue causes people to make errors in judgment and slows reaction times. This can result in driving accidents firefighters can't afford!

CHALLENGE

Fire fighters drive expensive, large apparatus that is needed to provide service to the community. When fire apparatus collides with ordinary vehicles, the damage to the drivers as well as the vehicles can be extensive. In addition, every moment detracted from our primary mission can result in lost property or lives.

Many accident investigations point to driver error as a primary cause of the accidents. One of the factors involved in driver error has been fatigue. Studies have shown that fatigue contributes to mistakes. Fatigue can cause slower thinking, forgetfulness, or reduced reaction time which can all contribute to an accident.

The primary causes of fatigue are insufficient sleep and nutrient deficiency. It is important we get a minimum of 6-8 hours uninterrupted sleep each night for optimum performance. Our lifestyles play a significant role in our getting adequate rest. Over the years, the types of shifts firefighters work has been questioned regarding the impact on general safety and health..

Eating properly is just as important as getting enough sleep to reduce the impact of fatigue. Our wellness activities should address issues such as fatigue to help support the health of our district personnel. To perform our jobs properly, we must be at peak performance!

DISCUSSION

- How often have you experienced fatigue?
- How does fatigue affect your ability to perform tasks?
- Is lack of sleep the primary cause of your fatigue?
- What have you done about it in the past?
- Have you evaluated your diet?
- What lifestyle changes do you think can reduce fatigue?
- Is this an issue with our district?
- Is fatigue addressed as part of our wellness activities?
- What can the district do to assist firefighters in dealing with the issue of fatigue?
- What kind of impact does working multiple shifts play, if any?

The greatest asset of the fire service is our people; protect them!

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