



The Fire Post

An official publication of the West Boylston Fire Department



Vision Statement:

It is the vision of the West Boylston Fire Department to provide superior customer service to the residents, businesses and visitors of the Town of West Boylston.

Mission Statement:

The mission of the West Boylston Fire Department is:

To save lives and reduce suffering by providing the highest level of emergency medical services.

To protect the lives and property of the people of West Boylston from fire, disaster, hazardous material and other emergency incidents.

To prevent fire and minimize other emergencies through prevention, education and preplanning programs and to provide information and training in areas where the health and wellness of the community can be improved.

"The ultimate measure of a man/woman is not where they stand in moments of comfort and convenience, but where they stand at times of challenge and controversy."

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

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Brush Fire Season is Here *by Chief Pauley*

Well, it's that time of year again (as if you already didn't know) and the outdoor fires have started. The dry conditions of the first three weeks of April resulted in a number of outside woodland fires in the area.

On April 10th at approximately 17:30 hours we were dispatched to a brush/woods fire on the Department of Conservation and Resources (DCR) land on the South side of the Reservoir. Best access was gained through DCR Gate 23, just North of the fire station and first arriving personnel found approximately 2 1/2 acres burning. West Boylston Engine 5, Forestry 1, Cars 1 and 2 responded. Mutual aid was requested from Boylston and Sterling to the scene and Holden provided station coverage. Approximately 25 personnel worked for three (3) hours to completely extinguish this fire.

On April 19th at approximately 13:58 hours, West Boylston personnel were dispatched to the Town of Holden to assist with a 10 plus acre outside fire. West Boylston Forestry 1 responded and personnel from numerous communities worked for over 6 hours to extinguish this fire.

On April 20th at approximately 20:40 hours, West Boylston Fire personnel were dispatched to 19 Rivington Drive for a 1/2 acre outside fire. Engine 5, Forestry 1 and Car 2 responded and personnel were on scene for over 1 1/2 hours.

Throughout April Worcester County fire department's spent thousand's of hours in manpower extinguishing fires and mutual aid was stretched very thin on many days. Thank you to all Department personnel and personnel from Boylston, Holden and Sterling who assisted us in Town this past month.

Also, please remember Lt. Barakian has made some improvements to Forestry 1 including putting 500' of 1 1/2" forestry hose on the driver's side booster reel, additional forestry hose on the truck and securing the Honda portable pump to the rear step. In addition, we are making a grant application to the State for new hose and other forestry equipment.

May 19th Semi-Annual Town Meeting *by Chief Pauley*

The May Town Meeting is Monday, May 19th, 7:00 PM at the West Boylston High School. As you know, the Fire Department has two important requests this year, those being the Town's acceptance of the Federal SAFER grant to assist with the hiring of two (2) new full-time Firefighter/EMTs and the replacement of Car 2 with a new one ton pickup truck.

Warrant Article 31 is the authorization to hire two full time firefighters and accept \$210,850.00 over the next four (4) years from the Federal government's SAFER program to assist with the costs of these two positions. Warrant Article 26 is the authorization to expend funds from the Capital Investment Fund for the replacement of Car 2.

Department members please encourage your friends and neighbors to attend and support their Fire Department. *Thank you!!*



Fire Prevention *by Lt. Koppetsch*

The dangers that a typical single family house pose to firefighters are increasing, due to a combination of the use of engineered building materials, increasing size of rooms and the overall building size, increased heat retention and increasing fire load. We have responded by increasing the minimal fire flow from 95 to 150 gpm, and the addition of foam. Part of our personal response must be an awareness of how a building on fire may harm us. The easiest way to stay current with these hazards is a basic knowledge of construction, supplemented with specific information on new development from trade magazines. Frank Brannigan's classic, Building Construction for the Fire Service is a comprehensive book that should be in all our collections. Perusing either of the two major trade magazines monthly will also keep you current. If you have learned something new by reading this, that's great, but ask yourself, "What else am I missing?" and do some further reading on your own.

"Engineered materials" may as well be looked at as lightweight construction. The engineer is being paid to minimize the cost of the building and maximize desirable features, such as large rooms with clear spans. Hopefully, none of us is idiosyncratic enough to want to live in a drill yard's burn building, and I haven't seen anyone here wearing a T-shirt from their last vacation to scenic Stalingrad, so the desire to live in something other than a monolithic concrete building is understandable.

If asked, the engineer could design in fire collapse resistance. In general, neither the code, nor the building owner cares about this, so we must look out for ourselves. Everyone should be well aware of the hazard of trusses by now. Their slightly less dangerous cousin, the wood I beam, seems to be in about half of the new houses in Town. A wood I beam is so named because it looks like a steel I beam. The name makes the wood I beam sound strong, but it is only two 2"x 4" fastened together with a web of particle board. The 2"x 4"s aren't even continuous down the length of longer beams, but are either finger jointed or stapled together. The 2"x 4" is grooved the long way to receive the web. These beams can be up to 60 feet long, giving the huge clear spans and open rooms homeowners want. In the past, the particle board web had been solid. Now the beams are coming with a perforated web to allow passage of plumbing and wiring. So, sides of the web will ignite quicker, the beam will fail, and the floor will be unsupported.

Our safety is dependent on recognizing this hazard. It is most extreme in basement fires, as the wood I beams are usually left exposed. Good practice on the 360 degree survey done by the first officer requires a check of the basement. What looks to be an impressive, well built house from the outside often is built out of lightweight materials. Looking in or breaking a basement window will allow: 1) a check for fire in the basement and 2) possibly a check on the type of floor construction depending on visibility. A gloved hand can be used to feel for a wood I beam. Keep in mind, the newer and larger the house, the more likely it is built with wood I beams. If the fire is in a basement of a house with wood I beams, keep in mind the first floor is just as likely to collapse as is the roof of a trussed building with fire in the attic. If faced with heavy fire on arrival, expect early collapse.

Muscular Dystrophy Boot Drive

The MDA Boot Drive has been rescheduled to Saturday, May 17th from 08:00 to 14:00. We will be staffing a voluntary toll both at the intersections of Route 12 and 140. It a fun time and a great cause!!!! We need as much help and participation as possible to make this year even more successful than last year. *Please* sign up and donate a few hours if you can.

West Boylston Fire Department
39 Worcester Street
West Boylston, MA 01583

Phone: 508-835-3821
Fax: 508-835-2986
www.westboylstonfire.org

May Birthdays:

4th - David Johnson

6th - Steve Osterberg

Happy Birthday to Both!

Upcoming Dates

EMS Training
Wednesday, May 7
Care for the Autistic
Patient
19:00 hours

Fire Training
Tuesday, May 13
Apparatus Set Up
19:00 hours

Town Meeting
Monday
May 19th.

No Officers' meeting

Fire Training
Tuesday, May 27
Ladders-Night 1
19:00 hours

EMS Corner *by Captain Kochanowski*

Hello to all. It is good to see the warm weather has finally arrived. The ambulance bids have been reviewed by the Chief and I and we have recommended that Specialty Vehicles Inc., be awarded the bid for a new Lifeline Ambulance. The recommendation is scheduled to be acted upon at the Selectmen's meeting on June 21st.

We have a couple of upcoming training nights. The first is on Wednesday, May 7th on the topic of autism. It will be taught by Lance Mason from Leominster Fire Department and is worth 3 credits. He has taught for many years on the topic and it promises to be interesting. On June 3rd we will be doing a drill with the gator and Lt. Welsh and I have worked on a scenario involving trauma as well as rescue from a wooded area. Fire Department members that are not EMT's are invited to attend to assist with the rescue portion of the drill. I hope we will have a good turnout. It would be good to see people become as familiar as possible with the gator, as it is our resource and will be used a lot in Town this year with the major upcoming Bicentennial events. I would like to thank Lt. Welsh for his help on this drill. It is good to see people getting involved.

We recently purchased two new pulse ox machines for the ambulances. They also have the capability of measuring Carbon Monoxide in the blood. It is just another tool we can use to help us with our treatment of patients.

These machines were very expensive and I would like to take this time to thank The West Boylston Firefighters Association for providing the funds to purchase these machines. We could not have done it without your support. They have been put in service and are located in the ALS First In Bag.

We also have purchased two new glucometers as the old ones needed to be replaced. The new units work very similar to the old ones. All that being said there have been some minor changes made to the ALS First In Bag. All medics should review and make themselves familiar with it. If you have any questions, please ask me. I hope everyone has a wonderful summer and I will be back again next month with another informative article.

EMS Education-Run Reports *by Capt. Kochanowski*

This month's educational article will focus on EMS run reports and proper documentation. Documentation seems to be one of the most nerve racking part of our jobs. The last thing anyone wants to do is write a run report after finishing up a call, but it is one of the most important parts of our jobs on so many different levels.

First and foremost, remember no matter what type of call it is you must keep it as professional as possible. You never know who may read the run form and this form becomes a permanent part of the patient's medical record. So that means a lot of medical professionals will be reading your document, including the doctor(s) treating the patient. They rely heavily on the information you give in the treatment of that patient. You see the patient before they do and things may have occurred in the field that may be important to the doctor and the path of treatment chosen for that patient. It is important to include detail and be as grammatically correct as possible.

Second, in the event a run that you were on goes to court, your report becomes a legal document and you must be able to account for everything on that form. If it is not written down, it was not done. It will also help you to remember what events took place at that scene if you are ever asked to testify in a case. Remember, cross your "t's and dot your i's", be as accurate as possible, include times of procedures. The timeline of events is very important also. Finally, document refusals just as well as, or better, than a regular call because the refusal will be the call that comes back to haunt you. More on this topic is found on Page 42 in the April, 2008, issue of JEMS Magazine.

Now that the warm weather is finally with us, remember it was only two months ago when we were.....

