First of all, notice I said in the hot seat and not on the hot seat. There is a big difference and you can figure that out. This article is obviously about officers from the top to the bottom. So firefighters, sit back and enjoy or maybe pay attention if it is your aspiration to become an officer or one of the newly to be created acting officers.

Last month at Fire Rescue International (FRI) I was able to spend some time listening to some various discussions and lectures regarding company officers and what we do to prepare prospective company officers. Imagine that the consensus within the fire service is that most promoted company officers never had the opportunity to be educated as a company officer. In fact some of their decisions were based on what they had observed their company officer doing as they rode backwards and it may not have always been a shining example. Unfortunately, that is the way the majority of today’s officers have been taught. Not an excuse but unfortunately a reality. Now I am probably not telling you anything you don’t already know so far.

During the conference there were a few concepts presented that I think are important to the survival of the fire service and our ability to train current firefighters so they can be prepared to step into a company officer’s role whether it be permanent or acting. The first is taking a vested interest in the people you are going to lead. You don’t have to lower your standards or become one of the guys. But you do need to know what makes your people tick. Knowing your people is a big step in achieving
success as an officer. As an officer it is your job to lead those people that have been assigned under you. Do you train with your company or personnel? Do you know what their capabilities and limitations are? Just because you have one or more bugles on your collar doesn’t mean you’re immune from training and especially evaluating your personnel. As an officer with experience you have something that prospective officers won’t get from a book, DVD, internet or trade magazine. You have been there and done some of it. That is what needs to be passed on. I continually watch “hands on” training and it is usually the same folks attending. It is sometimes that informal “senior” leadership that is missing. Experience is not a group of 6-22’s running around claiming how experienced they are to take the next step. Veteran Firefighters and Officers need to step it up and share valuable experience.

Secondly, if you are an officer or seeking to become one, you need to seek out some of the informal leaders and experience and absorb it like a sponge. They have experience, knowledge, and ability. Sure they may seem a little grumpy but properly approached they are a wealth of knowledge and it is up to you to get them to open up. Once they do, it is amazing what they can offer.

Lastly and something missing in most organizations is formal officer development. Today’s leader’s have many challenges they are faced with. Every day, week, month and year we are presented with new challenges that the group before us never even imagined in their wildest dreams. Some even say today’s officers have a much harder job than their previous leaders. Every leader of every generation has had its fair share of challenges. It is up to you how you decide to face and deal with those challenges every day. Shortly our department will be conducting some formal officer development training for prospective company officers, and it may not be all officers that are facilitating these sessions. The Training Division is tasked with matching the right people with the subject matter. Remember this last point. Many of you have or will train to be good fire ground leaders. However, this is where we spend the least amount of time. If you want to be an effective company officer you must also train to be a good leader and mentor in the firehouse.

It has been and more than likely will continue to be that company officers are the backbone of the fire service. That is where today’s leadership is at. Not in the administration office or in the fancy command cars but in the firehouse with those people who are setting the example, doing the mentoring and riding in the right seat on the rig. It is fairly simple, company officers succeed by stepping up, getting the necessary training and then passing that experience and leadership along as a leader and mentor. Most of that is described in the officer’s job description, but you have to make it reality.

As current officers or future officers, ask yourself the question, how do I measure up in my role whether it be 20 years on the line or 3 years in preparation for that first bugle?
On April 26, 2013 the RTD Light Rail will start running in Golden. The 12 mile line will start at the Jefferson County Courthouse and run parallel to 6th Avenue, head north and end at Union Station in Denver. Recently many of you attended the Light Rail Training at the Elati Station in Englewood. RTD will be hosting live drills for the local fire departments late fall to mid-winter. We will also do a walk-through of the Jeffco station before it gets up and running. I’ll keep you informed as we get confirmed dates for these trainings.

I recently sent out two information packets that RTD supplied to us on Light Rail Emergency Response. Contact me if you need a copy of these packets. Remember, within our metro Light Rail System, a vehicle is hit by a light rail train every 10-12 days! Chances of this happening within our district is high, especially when the system first starts running and drivers are not aware. Please review some of the key points I’ve recopied below from out Light Rail training.

KEY POINTS

1- The power to the cars is 750 DC – this is a lethal voltage.
2- If the cars are on the track, they are electrically safe. The tracks are grounded with the ground.
3- The trains do not stop for emergency vehicles and will not yield to us.
4- If there is an incident on the tracks not involving a light rail car (e.g. drunk drove down the tracks) the on-coming trains will not necessarily stop. RTD must be notified and we must have confirmation that the track is clear before we enter the area.
5- You cannot “chock” the wheels. They will run over and destroy anything.
6- There is about 18” or less clearance underneath the cars. If we have to go underneath someone must be stationed in front of or with the train operator to assure the car is not moved.
7- The windows are near bullet-proof so this is not our entry. We must use the doors.
8- There are 3 ways to open the outside doors:
   - Push the green button outside the door
   - Use a pike pole to push the latch over at the top of the door
   - Access the “Door Release” lever behind the small cover by each door. Pull the red handle then slide the doors open
9- Open the doors from the inside by:
   - Access the Red Emergency latch next to the door
   - Slide the red emergency latch at the top of the door
10- The operator cab door can be opened with pliers
11- The Pantograph (grasshopper looking thing on top of the cars that connects it to the overhead electrical wire) can be lowered by pushing the “Pantograph Lower” button in the cab.
12- Our airbags can lift the cars about 8” max. We will need the RTD jacks to raise the car further.
13- If the brakes are on fire you can hit them with water. There is nothing flammable underneath the cars.
Fire alarm systems historically have been an increasing presence in not only commercial occupancies but residential occupancies as well. The intent behind these systems is to gain early detection of the presence of not only fire, but potential fire conditions. These coupled with automatic suppression systems can dramatically reduce the burden of fire department rescue and suppression activities. This is a great principle, but in reality it increases the burden on fire departments in additional responses to unintentional alarms and malfunctioning alarms. NFPA conducted a study in 2009 which showed that an estimated 2.1 million false alarm responses were provided; which included 979,000 unintentional activations and 698,000 system malfunctions (45% and 32% respectively). Of the total alarms, nationally, 7% are unwanted. NFPA 72, *National Fire Alarm and Signaling Code*, defines unwanted as “any alarm that occurs that is not the result of a potentially hazardous condition.” This dramatically taxes the resources that a fire department has, especially those that are volunteer departments.

So, the Fire Prevention and Life Safety Division works towards reducing these unwanted alarms through a plan review and testing process for new and modified fire alarm systems, as well as the fire and life safety maintenance inspection program. Our goal is to have these systems installed correctly and inspected on a sufficient basis (typically annually) so that the number of false alarms is reduced. This way, the fire department resources are available for actual emergency situations. This article will briefly describe fire alarm technology and typical devices that we will see during fire alarm activation(s).

**Types of Signals**

- **Fire Alarm Signal** – A fire alarm signal is initiated by a fire alarm-initiating device, such as a smoke detector, manual pull station, flow switch or numerous other devices that detect a presence of a fire or fire signature. When any of these devices are activated, the alarm should be received by a remote supervisory station who will then notify dispatch to have fire crews respond.

- **Supervisory Signal** – this type of signal indicates the need for action in connection with the supervision of initiating devices (i.e. smoke detector, water flow switch, manual pull stations). These typically require some form of maintenance from either maintenance staff or a fire alarm contractor. These signals should notify the parties listed previously to ensure that corrective action is taken so that the problem is remedied. Responses from fire crews are usually not needed.

- **Trouble Signal** – this type of signal indicates that a system or device has a fault on a monitored circuit, system, or component. These typically require some form of maintenance from either maintenance staff or a fire alarm contractor. These signals should notify the parties listed previously to ensure that corrective action is taken so that the problem is remedied. Responses from fire crews are usually not needed.

(Continued on page 5)
Device Types

- **Ionization Smoke Detector** – this type of detector has a very small amount of radioactive material that ionizes the air within the sensing chamber. This allows the air inside of the chamber to be conductive providing a current flow between two charged electrodes. When smoke enters the chamber, they attach themselves to the ions in the chamber reducing the conductance of the air. When the conductance is reduced below a pre-determined level the detector will go into alarm.

- **Photoelectric Smoke Detector** – this type of detector has a light source and a photosensitive device that are arranged so that the light rays do not normally fall onto the device. When products of combustion enter the chamber they scatter the light rays onto the photosensitive device, thus putting the detector in alarm. Beam type smoke detectors operate on the same principle as a photoelectric smoke detector, but allow the beam to be projected from a distance of 33 feet up to 330 feet. These are ideal for large open spaces.

- **Duct Detector** – this type of detector is designed to detect products of combustion within a mechanical system. Typically, these types of detectors are out of sight above ceilings. These types of detectors, when they sense smoke, should not go into alarm but a supervisory signal should be initiated.

- **Fixed Temperature Heat Detector** – this type of detector is as simple as its name, it will go into an alarm condition when the heat it detects reaches a predetermined temperature.

- **Rate-of-Rise Heat Detector** – this type of detector is a little more complex. It will function when the rate of temperature increase exceeds a predetermined value, typically around 12°F to 15°F per minute. Rate-of-rise detectors are designed to compensate for the normal changes in ambient temperature that are non-fire conditions (typically 12°F per minute change).

- **Manual Fire Alarm Boxes (Manual Pull Station)** – this device is designed for the occupant of a given occupancy the means to alert other occupants of an emergency. This type of device is not a detection device, only a manual means of initiating notification. There are various brands and types; but simply they are either single or double-action to activate the alarm.
Water Flow Devices – this type of detection device are part of the automatic suppression systems. Water flow devices detect the flow of water within a sprinkler system. There are two types of water flow devices; a water flow switch and a water pressure switch. Water flow switches operate when the flow of water moves a mechanical operator, such as a paddle. Water pressure switches operate when the actuator senses pressure or a differential pressure due to water flow. In both cases, they are set to initiate an alarm when a certain number of gallons per minute are discharged; typically from a single discharging sprinkler head. Each of these devices have features to prevent false alarms: water flow switches have a delay set so that water must flow for a given period of time before it will go into alarm; and the pressure switch has a retard feature that will allow slight water surges and pressure changes to prevent false alarms.

Response Personnel Responsibilities

Responding personnel can help the Fire and Life Safety Division identify the systems that are producing unwanted alarms by observing and reporting them. During an alarm response, crews need to locate the particular device in alarm and investigate what caused the alarm (even when fire conditions do not exist), document this information on the incident report and report this to the F&LS staff. The reason the alarm was activated is crucial in determining whether it is unwanted or not. Many times unwanted alarm activations are due to things like cooking, steam, construction, dust from cleaning, and work being done on a system. Activations such as these do not necessarily need to be relayed to the F&LS staff unless they are malicious. Upon arrival/investigation/resetting of the fire alarm panel, it stays in trouble or supervisory, this can be indicative of further problems. Information such as this is crucial to report to the F&LS staff so that we can get it corrected, these signals could prevent the entire system or portions of the system from operating correctly. A collective effort can dramatically reduce the amount of responses needed due to unintentional/false alarms allowing personnel to remain available for when true emergency responses are needed.
Captain Wes Polk volunteered nearly 60 hours working on Truck 4 to get the apparatus in service. As of August 28th Truck 4 has operated as the first due Truck Company for District 2.

Golden Fire Department Annual Family Picnic

- Sunday, September 16, 2012
- Beginning at 11:00 am
- Lion’s Park in the West Pavilion
  - Bring your favorite side dish to share and something to drink.
  - A camping chair would also be a good idea.
  - The volunteers will provide stuff to grill, plates, etc. and condiments.
  - If you would like to bring lawn games, that would be good too.

Retirees and their families are welcome to attend. Retirees do not have to bring a dish to share or drinks, there will be plenty.
Who’s Sitting Next To Me?

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o you’re headed to a reported car fire, auto accident, or fallen climber, the call doesn’t matter, but what does is, “do you know what the capabilities are of the person sitting in the seat next to you are”? Most of us know the capabilities or at least the minimum skills when it comes to basic fire suppression, but how about everything else? As an officer, acting officer, or just the person who is filling the seat, do you know what your engineer knows about his or her rig? As the engineer do you know anything about your officer? His or her skills, or are they just a firefighter who can push the button and talk on the radio?

If you answered this question yes, you are well ahead of the curve. If you answered no, why is that? It is because you haven’t asked and this is the first time you’ve run a call with this person? Is it because you just haven’t cared and don’t know? Either one is not a reason to just “let it slide”. As the officer, you should know what the engineer of the apparatus knows, is the first call alone without an evaluator, or are they seasoned and can overcome any problem that may arise. Now I’m not saying that you should know how to drive and pump, but you should know if your engineer can. You should know that you’re engineer was properly trained and evaluated, and you are responsible for that engineer and that apparatus on the way to a call.

For example, a week ago, I watched a new Fire Truck drive past my house, probably with someone getting “evaluated” or “checked off”, take a guess as to the hand position of the engineer driving this apparatus. Most of us would say they were on the steering wheel, right? WRONG…. One arm on the wheel, the other on the window/door frame / a-post. Is this where he was trained to put his arm? I certainly hope not. Did he pass his evaluation? Most likely he did, and nothing was said about the drivers' hand position (just going out on a limb here, a very strong one). Are we encouraging this bad behavior? Yes, and we aren’t helping that individual become a better engineer, nor are we helping ourselves if something happens and the engineer’s situational awareness is down. The correct thing would be for the individual evaluating them to either correct the behavior then, or fail the test and explain why.

The same goes the other way. Lets say you are the engineer, you know you shouldn’t be pulling up next to a dumpster fire in an alley next to a burning dumpster impinging on a building (if you don’t know why, give me a call, I’ll explain exposure to you). Yet your officer says to “turn down the alley and pull up next to the dumpster”. If you are the follower, you follow orders and do as you’re told. Am I right? WRONG. As a properly trained engineer, you should say, I don’t like that idea, I don’t want to burn up the engine, what if we stop, a) at the end of the alley, or b) pull up out front and pull through the yard (unburned to burned).

So if you’ve read this far, can you see where I am going with this? Obviously we all make mistakes, sometimes these get pointed out to us by others, and we can learn from them. Sometimes they just get overlooked because we are being too relaxed or too easy on our “friends”. The best way to avoid the mistakes is to train. The best way to keep those skills up is train on them or utilize them. If you don’t, or you don’t train appropriately and keep up a good situational awareness, you’re probably going to become a problem at some point in time (wreck the fire engine, burn it up, get someone hurt, etc, etc). If you don’t know something, seek out that knowledge. If you see something wrong, don’t be quiet, point it out.

(Continued on page 9)
If you’re looking for some reading relating to this, pick up any leadership book (fire service, military, or otherwise), training manual, fire related magazine, or read a business management book. Remember that history will only repeat itself if we allow it and those that fail to learn from it will repeat it. A couple that come to mind are an article “Stand Your Ground” by Timothy Sendelbach from Fire Rescue Aug 2012 (pg 12). Another is a series titled “On Leadership: Leaders and Safety”, specifically part 8, by Lt General Jim Lovelace and Cmd Sgt Maj John Fourman (Desert Voice, starting 26 Mar 2008 at www.arcent.army.mil/news/newsletters/2008-archive.aspx).

Not only is it your responsibility as a firefighter, engineer, or officer to know the standards, but you should know the training that person sitting next to you has and if it is up to par and if they are up to par. Take the time to learn a little and pass it along. Take the time to correct a bad behavior. AND ALWAYS take the time to promote and reward the good behavior. Remember complacency, lack of situational awareness, or acting without appropriate training, can and will kill. Don’t lose sight of what you or that person next to you is doing or is about to do.

Be safe!
Don't Forget The Fund Drive Next Month

The Golden Fire Department Annual Fund Drive Will take place October 13. Work detail will begin at 07:00 and the Fund Drive will take place promptly after work detail. All members are encouraged to participate, if you are unable to attend please contact your station Captain. Contact Firefighter Hecox for more information.

The Golden Fire Department Truck 4, a 2012 Pierce Velocity 75’ aerial apparatus on the show floor during the Fire Rescue International Convention at the Denver Convention Center.

Congratulations To The 2012 Academy XVI Graduates!
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| 2   |     |     |     |     | **Work Detail**  
|     |     |     |     |     | Battalion 1  
| 3   | 4   |     |     |     | **Business Meeting**  
|     |     |     |     |     | 19:00  
|     |     |     |     |     | Station 1  
| 5   | 6   |     |     |     |
| 9   | 10  | 11  | 12  | 13  | **EMS**  
|     |     |     |     |     | **In-service Pediatric Emergencies**  
|     |     |     |     |     | 18:30  
|     |     |     |     |     | Station 1  
| 16  | 17  | 18  | 19  | 20  | **Work Detail**  
|     |     |     |     |     | Battalion 2  
|     |     |     |     |     | **CSM Mine Rescue Lecture**  
|     |     |     |     |     | 18:30  
|     |     |     |     |     | Station 1  
| 23  | 24  | 25  | 26  | 27  | **Work Detail**  
|     |     |     |     |     | Battalion 2  
|     |     |     |     |     | **Multi—Company Operations**  
|     |     |     |     |     | 18:30  
|     |     |     |     |     | Station 1  
| 30  |     |     |     |     | **Work Detail**  
|     |     |     |     |     | Battalion 3  
| 29  | 30  |     |     |     | **CSM Mine Rescue Hands on**  
|     |     |     |     |     | 08:00-13:00  
|     |     |     |     |     | Idaho Springs  

**September 2012**
2012 Oldtimers Night

When: September 15, 2012

Where: Old Capital Grill
1122 Washington Avenue
Golden, Colorado

Time: Social Hour 4 PM-5 PM Dinner 5 PM prompt

RSVP: Engineer Matt Finley 303-880-1265
RSVP by 09/07/12

Old-timersNight is by invitation only
Retirees are invited to join the membership at their picnic on September 16 at Lions Park beginning at 11am.