

UPCOMING  
EVENTS

- September 13  
Regular Session  
Board Meeting  
7:00pm—  
Headquarters
- September 14  
JCMOFA  
Training  
6:30 pm—  
HFD

**September  
TRAINING  
Highway Safety**

**\*All trainings  
begin at 1900\***

**1:** Stations 2, 3, 9  
at Station 2

**6:** Station 6

**8:** Station 4

**15:** Station 5

**20:** Stations 7 & 8  
at Station 8

**22:** Station 10

**27:** Station 1

**OTHER  
TRAININGS/  
MEETINGS**

**14:** JCMOFA  
Traffic Incident  
Management 7pm  
at HFD

**17:** Recruit  
Training at HQ  
8am

# District Dispatch

A publication of the Johnson County Fire Protection District

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## Social Media...Why Should I Care?

For many of our members computers have been present since their earliest childhood memory and most are very comfortable with their use and the information that is able to be shared almost instantaneously. For others computers have been a "later in life" addition and although many have embraced their use and convenience we still cautiously approach how we use them and what information is shared.

Most everyone in today's fast paced technology society has or are becoming familiar with identity theft and have taken measures to protect most of their personal identification information which can easily be stolen and used multiple times before we become aware of the problem.

Another concerning issue is the advent of the social media with the appearance of MySpace and now the more highly favored Facebook and Twitter and the large amount of other social and dating network sites. For some of our members there appears to be little hesitation to share almost everything they do or think. Is this a bad thing? Not always, but it can become a problem if some common sense does not get thrown into the mix at some point. Yes, it is nice to be able to share your activities and thoughts and even more exciting to share your photographs with everyone you "friended" and with the rest of the world if your settings aren't filtering out who has access to your page or tweet.

Sharing your information can also come at a cost that most may not think about.....your REPUTATION and consequently the reputation of an organization you may belong to. In this case we will refer strictly to the District, but for many of you this may involve another place of employment and possibly your family. Do we think all of our personnel are "saints" and never do anything that may be considered off key by

someone else, certainly not - just as the administration (I know this is a shock) staff can occasionally do things others may frown upon. The fact and simple reality is that we are all human and we all do things that we later think, "Man I wish that had not happened" or "I wish I hadn't done that".

There is however a BIG difference in simply doing something that may have required more thought and POSTING what you did. Once you put something out on the internet it is out of your control. Almost anyone will at some point be able to find and use the information, picture, quote or whatever you did in any way they want, many of which could be detrimental to you. If you will remember we have often talked about the fact that everything you do reflects

on the District and the reputation or credibility of each and every member. This concept applies equally to all types of social media and is compounded by the speed this information can spread and the interpretations that can be made.

In the old days people's "off key" actions often were only know by a handful of people due to the lack of ways to spread news and quite honestly by the time it did get out no one really cared much as it was "old" news. Flash that same behavior forward to today and some mundane little action is suddenly viral on YouTube and making headlines on every news channel or news report across the nation or maybe the global market. Either way what you put out there for others to see can have a direct affect on how people perceive you and the District. Inappropriate photographs, language, and examples of your behavior should be avoided in general, but when or if you have any connection to the District posted on your page, site or story then those items should be avoided at all costs.



## Procedure Reminder...

### Where am I going and how do I get there?

The tones are sounded.....its your station's response area.....you safely rush to the station.....you jump in the apparatus.....WHERE are you going. Did you take the extra 15-30 seconds and look at the map book before you raced out the station door? It normally doesn't take but a few seconds to either locate your best route or at least make sure you really know where you are going. Not only is it safer to look for and plan your route BEFORE you leave the station it will most likely get you there by the best route. The dispatcher does not always know which route may be the best, but since you live in the local area of the calls for your assigned station you should have better knowledge on which routes to avoid and which are "shortcuts" that will not leave you stranded in the middle of a field.

Your safety is first and foremost and the last thing you need to be doing while responding is either looking at a map or trying to focus on the directions being given over the radio. Your full attention as a driver should be given to the task of driving. You have a lot of responsibility riding along with you whether it is the other personnel, the apparatus or your responsibility to help the person having the emergency. Secondly asking for very basic directions from the onset of the call simply creates more radio traffic causing more congestion on an already busy frequency. If from time to time you find that you have missed a turn or can't locate the address AFTER you have looked before leaving or after stopping along the way then ask for assistance as we don't want an even longer delay in arrival based on what has taken place in your map search.

Take a few extra seconds, devise a safe and most direct route to the emergency and don't rely on others to aim you in the correct direction and reduce sometimes confusing radio traffic. Serve your community members by arriving timely and alive. Your best efforts are appreciated!! BE SAFE!!!



8/20/11

Lt. Joe Jennings, who also serves as Captain and PIO for the MO State Fair Fire Dept. demonstrates the Bullex fire extinguisher system during the 2011 MO State Fair

*"A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity. An optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty."*

Winston Churchill

8/16/11

BC Eggen, along with other MO State Fair Fire Dept. personnel conduct training during the 2011 MO State Fair



## Social Media...continued...

A recent article in a nationally published format related a story of a volunteer that may be losing his position because he posted pictures of himself on a dating website while dressed, at least partially, in his departmental issued personal protective equipment. That department, much like ours, provides that equipment for use for department sanctioned events and emergencies and it should not be used for any other purposes without permission. That issue is touched upon in Policy P2010-003 which in part indicates the District will "...support the involvement of its members additionally through the use of vehicles, facilities, equipment or other related items authorized by the Fire Chief as available".

Even if you have pictures or other things posted that associate you with the District and they are in compliance with our existing policy (i.e. pictures of you in your issued PPE while training or possibly at a non-identifiable incident scene), but other things on your page or site are inappropriate it still reflects on you and the District. These could include many things including rude or abusive language

We do not currently have a policy or guideline that specifically deals with social media, but one is in the process and will deal with a more widespread view of our behaviors in the public and privately at the fire stations. In the mean time exercise some very basic level of common sense and keep the things private that should be kept private. I was once told if what I did or said was not something that I thought my mother (father, children, etc.) would not be proud of or I wouldn't want them to know about then I should not take that action or make that statement to begin with. Maybe that is a thought more of us should take to heart and take a serious look at what we are doing. Clean-up your page, site or tweet if you have something that may not be appropriate and do your best to maintain your reputation and that of the District.

