



O'Fallon Fire Protection District
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Issue Highlights

- Proposition Safety Plan Complete
- Welcoming OFPD's Newest First Responders
- Call Volume Increases For Fourth Consecutive Year
- A New Look For Your OFPD

Be In The Know!

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PROUDLY SERVING:

Upcoming Events

Ice Cream Social

Wednesday, Sept. 4 • 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.
OFPD Station #5
7140 South Outer Road 364

Fire Safety Day

Sunday, Oct. 6 • 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
The Shops at Laura Hill

CPR Classes

Complimentary CPR/AED classes are available for District residents at 6 p.m. on the third Wednesday of every month. Nonresidents may attend for \$25. Visit www.ofallonfire.org for registration details.

Who's Watching The Kids?

Summer is here, and with it plenty of hot and humid weather. As you make plans to cool off at the pool or lake, make sure you're also taking time to review these swimming safety reminders.

Anywhere there is water there is a risk of drowning, especially for children. In fact, the American Red Cross reports 10 deaths per day from unintentional drowning; on average, two of those are individuals under age 14.

Drowning is the second-leading cause of unintentional injury death (behind motor vehicle crashes) for individuals ages 1-14. Those who survive drowning often experience brain or other organ damage.

Drowning happens in an instant, it's silent, and it happens every year right here in our community. Swim safely this summer with these tips:

- Designate a "water watcher" who will keep an eye on all swimmers without distractions, such as reading or using a cellphone.
- Invest in swim lessons – early education sets kids up for a lifetime of water safety.
- Secure home pools with appropriate barriers when not in use.
- Never leave children unattended in or near water. Keep young children within arm's reach.
- If a child is missing, check the water first!
- Do not allow swimmers to enter pools head first except in designated diving areas.



O'FALLON

FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

Committed to protecting our community



Updated OFPD Station #4 on Sunview Drive

Prop. Safety Goals

- Provide advanced emergency medical care by hiring new firefighter/paramedics.
- Meet national staffing standards of four firefighters on every truck, every day.
- Update existing facilities to better meet the emergency needs of the community.

Proposition Safety Plan Complete

Additional first responders, with more advanced emergency medical skills and the equipment needed to save lives faster – this is what residents of the O'Fallon Fire Protection District (OFPD) now have access to thanks to the completion of the Proposition Safety plan.

In 2016, the community approved Proposition Safety to enhance emergency services in the District. This comprehensive plan included an overhaul of the emergency medical service program, with upgrades to advanced life support (ALS) emergency medical care and the hiring of additional firefighter/paramedics to meet national staffing standards. The Proposition Safety plan worked in conjunction with the funding provided from the 2011 bond issue to update fire houses and equipment.

"The overarching goal of both plans was to better meet the emergency needs of our residents," OFPD Chief Tom Vineyard says. "Our community has grown by more than 40% since many of our fire stations were

built. In this time, the role of the fire service has also changed, resulting in a need for updates to our facilities, our staffing levels and the services we provide."

With 13 new firefighter/paramedics on the team, there are now 18 licensed paramedics providing service to the community. Every firefighter the District hires in the future will also be a licensed paramedic.

In addition to hiring more first responders, the District is now licensed by the state to provide paramedic-level care, and has ALS emergency medical equipment and medications on every fire truck. This includes state-of-the-art heart monitors that work with equipment at the hospital to instantly provide essential information to doctors in the emergency room.

The new firefighter/paramedics also helped OFPD reach optimal staffing levels.

"In May, we became the first fire district in St. Charles County to meet National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) staffing standards, with four firefighters on every

fire truck every day," Vineyard says. "These additional first responders will make emergency responses safer for our residents and our team."

Updates to three of the District's fire stations provided additional space for firefighter/paramedics and modern rescue equipment. Station #5 (7140 South Outer Rd. 364) and Station #4 (1306 Sunview Dr.) underwent large-scale renovations, and Station #3 (600 Laura Hill Dr.) was updated to provide room for an additional firefighter/paramedic. As part of the plan, a 15-year-old rescue pumper was also replaced. The new fire truck can hold up to five firefighter/paramedics and is more efficient than the previous pumper truck.

"Even though we have completed the Proposition Safety plan, we continue to look forward, planning for the future and making sure we are meeting the needs of our residents and business community in a fiscally responsible manner," Vineyard says.



Meet The Board

Matt Gober

O'Fallon Fire Protection District (OFPD) board member Matt Gober moved to O'Fallon in 2002, attracted by the tight-knit community that reminds him of his North County roots.



Gober says he is continually impressed by the emphasis on community involvement and the dedication of staff members at every level to make OFPD a top-notch district.

"This is a very professional district from top to bottom, and one I'm proud to be a part of," he says.

Outside of his work with OFPD, Gober is operations director for the Francis Howell School District.

Matt Simmons

Board member Matt Simmons is committed to keeping OFPD on the cutting edge of the fire service.



"Our job is to make sure the District's mission statement is being carried out through District policy," Simmons says. "When the fire service and our O'Fallon population is changing, we need to make sure we're changing with it so that we can continue to protect our community in whatever way it needs."

Simmons is a member of Plumbers and Pipefitters Local 562. In his free time, he enjoys traveling and is looking forward to his upcoming trip to Croatia.

William "Bill" Laughlin

As chairman of the OFPD board, Bill Laughlin works closely with district leadership to guide OFPD through periods of growth and change.



"I've always admired firefighters, and thought, what better way to serve the O'Fallon community than to help this community-oriented organization be the best it can be," Laughlin says.

Laughlin is a member of the International Association of Heat and Frost Insulators and Allied Workers. He spends much of his free time with his family and works as a soccer coach.

The O'Fallon Fire Protection District is led by a three-member Board of Directors that is elected by the community. Board members serve six-year terms.



Welcoming OFPD's Newest First Responders

Six new firefighter/paramedics joined the O'Fallon Fire Protection District (OFPD) ranks this spring, finalizing the District's three-year process of implementing its 2016 Proposition Safety goals and becoming the first fire district in St. Charles County to meet National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) staffing standards.

Kyle Chadwell, Kenny Gales, Blake Koppel, Paul McReynolds, Brett Tichenor and Alex Wetteroth are all experienced firefighter/paramedics who spent the spring getting acclimated to the OFPD way of life.

"This is such an exciting moment for OFPD," Chief Tom Vineyard says. "I think these new responders really understand and are eager to embrace the progressive spirit of our District, and we're just thrilled to welcome them to the OFPD family."

OFPD's newest hires have a lot in common. Their interests include spending time with family, enjoying the great outdoors and playing hockey (several play for the St. Louis Fire on Ice team). Another commonality? Several grew up right here in O'Fallon and say that upbringing played a big part in determining their future career path.

"I love the people in O'Fallon," says Wetteroth, a Fort Zumwalt West graduate. "I wanted to give back to the community that gave me everything growing up."

Adds McReynolds, who attended Fort Zumwalt North: "I always knew I wanted to find a way to give back to the community that raised me."

OFPD's six new firefighters are also all licensed paramedics, a central promise of Proposition Safety, the comprehensive plan to enhance emergency services in the O'Fallon community that was approved by residents in 2016.

There are now 18 licensed paramedics working for the District and every firefighter the District hires in the future will also be a licensed paramedic. As the number of EMS calls the District receives continues to rise, these new hires enable crews to serve the community in a safer, more efficient manner.

For these new hires, and many other members of the OFPD family, the ever-evolving nature of the fire service is what makes their job so invigorating.

"Fire/EMS is such an exciting field, because we're constantly training, adapting to new technologies, and doing everything we can so that we're prepared to offer the best possible protection for our community," Tichenor says.

He adds: "I'm excited for the challenge to meet – and hopefully exceed – expectations as a 'rookie.' I can't wait to learn the OFPD way from everyone at the firehouse."



Call Volume Increases For Fourth Consecutive Year

Throughout the country, the role of the fire service is changing. Fire districts nationwide are seeing a large increase in medical calls – and O'Fallon Fire Protection District (OFPD) is no exception.

In 2018, OFPD saw a 12.3% increase in call volume. More than half of the 5,396 calls OFPD units responded to in 2018 were medical emergencies, a 21% increase over the previous year. This data includes mutual aid responses as well as calls within District boundaries.

"The fire service is changing, and it's our job to change with it in order to protect and serve our residents in the ways they need most," OFPD Chief Tom Vineyard says. "We are seeing more and more medical calls in our district, and we are committed to adapting our operations with training and new hires who can help us respond to those calls in the most effective and efficient way."

To that end, the District regularly reviews its incident report data and adjusts its operations, such as hiring and training practices, to make sure crews are able to meet residents' biggest safety needs.

Last year OFPD crews participated in more than 13,000 hours of training to prepare for whatever the next call may be. The impact of this training is seen in the effectiveness of call responses.

"When we look at our fire responses over the past five years, our fire crews successfully saved nearly 96% of property and contents in incidents involving fire," OFPD Chief Tom Vineyard says. "Ongoing training is directly responsible for this."

"We are grateful for the data, because it allows us to see the big picture and make sure we are equipped with the personnel and equipment necessary to keep our community safe."

District Details

From Jan. 1 - June 30, 2019, OFPD provided emergency and rescue services to:

79 Fires
1,602 Emergency medical service incidents
78 Hazardous condition situations
761 Citizen-assist occurrences
3 Weather-related incidents

Firefighters assisted with

84 Smoke alarms
18 Car safety seats

OFPD hosted a variety of fire safety and community events for

457 Adults
1,269 Children

92 Residents Received Heartsaver and CPR certification through OFPD

What Do You Think?

As part of our Center for Public Safety Excellence (CPSE) accreditation process, we are conducting a community-wide survey.

We want to hear what you think about the service we provide, the programs we offer, and the information we share about public safety and the District. Everyone in the community is encouraged to take a few minutes to provide feedback.

You can access the survey online at www.ofallonfiresurvey.com, or by calling 636.272.3493 to request a paper copy.



A New Look For Your OFPD

When you see OFPD trucks and crew members out and about in the community, you'll probably notice our new look.

"The new logo is a better representation of what we do to keep the community safe," Chief Tom Vineyard says. "We provide more service than just fire suppression – we are a highly-trained, multi-service organization providing emergency medical, fire and rescue services. We hope that with this new look, our residents will be able to easily identify us and know that we're always ready to help them, no matter what situation may arise."