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Carbon Monoxide Still a Risk in Summer

Closed doors and windows in the winter make it easier for carbon monoxide (CO) to build up, potentially poisoning anyone nearby. But there are many ways CO can build up to dangerous levels that have nothing to do with heating season. Summer months have their own unique set of dangers, both for the citizens in the community and the first responders called to help.

CO is odorless, tasteless, and invisible, and causes symptoms similar to flu or heat stroke: nausea, dizziness, blurred vision, headaches, sleepiness, weakness, and eventually death if not properly and quickly treated. Sometimes it takes as little as 10-15 minutes of exposure before symptoms occur.

Summertime causes include being around any gas, charcoal, or wood combustion in an enclosed area or one where airflow is blocked somehow (i.e. dense vegetation or awnings). This can be sitting at the back of a powerboat, use of a grill in a tent, use of gas-powered equipment indoors, or sitting in a parked vehicle, or even sitting too near a campfire.

There are many on-the-job risks to emergency responders and many fire and EMS departments are purchasing CO detectors for their personnel to wear to warn them if levels are high. Here, FirefighterNation.com highlights several CO poisoning near-miss reports. Don't ignore the chronic exposure to low doses of CO, though. An educational module (PDF, 2.5 Mb) by the International Association of Fire Fighters goes over both acute and chronic symptoms of CO poisoning.

(Source: FirefighterNation.com)

Helping Victims of Mass Violence and Terrorism

Response after human-caused disasters of a violent nature – bombings, mass riots or shootings, or bioterrorism attacks – needs to be timely, coordinated, and victim-centered. It also must be swift, which means it cannot be organized when the need arises. It is vital a plan is in place, ready to go when the need arises, and it must include all agencies and organizations that may become involved in victim care.

The Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) offers virtual training throughout June on its web-based toolkit "Helping Victims of Mass Violence and Terrorism: Planning, Response, Recovery, and Resources." The toolkit is geared toward civic, government,

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and business sectors partners interested in building an inclusive victim assistance plan.

Registration is required for those interested in the training. Six trainings remain through the end of June, and OVC recommends signing up for the one targeting your region if possible. To sign up for one of the trainings, go to the calendar for June and click on the offering that interests you.

(Source: OVC)

Social Media Practices for Fire Departments

Social media changed the way we communicate, and certain segments of the population rely on social media for the majority of their news and "interactions" with people. If your fire department isn't taking advantage of this outlet you might not be getting your message out to a large percentage of the community.

The U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) is offering a one-hour webinar on taking social media and third party platforms to the next level in an effort to fill the information gap. This can be a great way to connect with the community in an innovative way, giving the department a way to be creative with their messaging with their own video and photos and written content.

The webinar is scheduled for Wednesday, June 8th from 2:00-3:00 p.m. Eastern, and will focus on how Montgomery County (Maryland) Fire and Rescue uses social media to get fire prevention, emergency preparedness, and time-sensitive emergency information to local news outlets and residents. Interested parties should register.

(Source: USFA)

9-1-1 Regionalization Resources Available

9-1-1 regionalization efforts are growing across the country for a number of reasons including cost reduction, efficiency, and as a way to leverage advances in technology for expanded services to a greater area. Regionalized 9-1-1 also minimizes the number of transfers a call must go through to before reaching the right jurisdiction or responding agency.

The National Association of State 9-1-1 Administrators (NASNA) announces a new website with tools and resources to help local and state 9-1-1 managers and authorities provide leadership and support for regionalization efforts. Resources available on NASNA's new Web page include:

- The January 2016 Task Force on Optimal PSAP Architecture report;
- Examples of inter-governmental agreements and legislation;
- Examples of incentive grants on the State Coordination and Funding Incentives page Case studies;
- Study reports, papers, presentations and testimony.

Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG9-1-1) is also driving regionalization. New technologies and capabilities, such as cell phones and texting, requires upgrades to 9-1-1 infrastructure. These upgrades are only possible through a "system of systems" which regionalization supports.

(Source: NASNA)