TAKE 5 FOR SAFETY

INSTRUCTOR'S NOTES

5-MINUTE SAFETY DRILL

Risk Management: Falls Can Cost Lives

Date:_____

Shift:_____

Dept:_____

Station:_____

Training Code:_____

NOTES:

FOCUS: Firefighters face many dangers in the course of their duties. Falls contribute to far too many injuries and deaths. We must do a better job assessing and controlling fall hazards.

CHALLENGE

Fall Protection is the number one OSHA citation for the most recent report year, 2007. This emphasis is based on the number of serious injuries and fatalities that continue to occur in the workplace. We must appreciate the dangers associated with routine activities conducted around the station in addition to other tasks. Not the least of them is working on and around large apparatus. We should continuously evaluate our exposures and take the appropriate actions.

Good judgment is an essential part of a firefighter's job description. That includes making the safe decision for every task performed. We must insist the same level of safety precautions be used when performing routine tasks as when fighting a fire. Any fall can result in serious injury or fatality. The work situation and combination of factors often dictate the severity of injuries that result from falls. We must be diligent to eliminate this serious exposure in our work environment. Too often firefighters are injured or killed when falling through roofs.

The selection and use of the "right" equipment for the job we are attempting should never be compromised. Any and all equipment should be in good condition, properly positioned and secured appropriately. As we conduct facility inspections and observations, we should note fall exposures and address them immediately. In addition, our accident and near miss reviews should always address any situations involving falls and make the required corrective actions as needed to eliminate the exposure.

Let's emphasize safety in all aspects of our work lives and strive to ensure our routine activities are as safe as the more hazardous duties! Let's stop taking needless chances!

DISCUSSION

- What's our departments procedure for gaining access to heights above six feet?
- What issues to you have with this method of access?
- What issues do you have with the positioning of the ladder?
- What or are policies about working alone?
- What procedures have been established to communicate problems should a team member find themselves injured and alone?
- Is our fall protection training adequate?
- How can we improve our hazard assessment system?
- How do we assess structural safety?
- How can we make sure procedures are followed by all?

The greatest asset of the fire service is our people; protect them!

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