



**State of Connecticut
Department of Emergency Services & Public Protection
Commission on Fire Prevention and Control**

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1. Firefighter Near Miss Report of the Week

Cardiac Scare

SUMMARY

A tillerman proceeded to the roof to investigate a fire reported out. He began to experience chest pains, which he initially trivialized. Fortunately, his crew insisted that he be checked out, and he later discovered an MI had been occurring

EVENT DESCRIPTION

A truck company went to the roof to investigate a fire that was already out on arrival. The tillerman proceeded up the aerial with his SCBA and tools. At the tip of the aerial, he started to experience mild chest pains, nausea and shortness of breath. He attributed it to a cold he had been fighting over the previous weeks and the dinner they'd just eaten.

When he returned to the turntable, he found the shortness of breath was more noticeable. Again he just he attributed it to being out of shape, his cold and the cold temperature outside, the new guys cooking and anything else that may put his mind at ease.

Back on the ground, he took off some gear and the driver asked if he was OK. He was sweating heavily for the little amount of work and the nausea was getting worse. By now, other firefighters were checking on him and made sit down. A request for an ambulance was made and command was informed of what was going on, while others started to treat his symptoms. He was transported to the local ER where he was kept overnight for observation.

He never felt sharp pains he would associate with a heart attack, but he knew things weren't right when a few of the brothers with him at the ER kept watching the monitor. The next morning, he

was sent to another hospital for a catheterization. They thought it was a blockage and that he would be out of the hospital the next morning. After he arrived at that hospital, he was in the Cath lab within the hour.

When he was finally taken to his room, the doctor was talking with his wife, who was crying. That's when the doctor told him there were no blockages; his heart had weakened to about 20% capacity. He started talking about pacemakers, defibrillators and everything else. The one thing that stood out was when the doctor told him, "Had you not had this checked when you did, it would have killed you!"

View the report: [Heart Condition Discovered at Fire Alarm](#)

TAKE-AWAYS

The reporter included some excellent lessons to be learned from this event.

Listen to what your body is telling you. Personal factors may discourage firefighters from having regular physicals and participating in fitness evaluations. Despite experiencing similar symptoms or performing certain day-to-day activities with difficulty, they hesitate to seek the help they need. No one wants to hear that something's wrong, but pretending nothing is happening doesn't mitigate the situation and can potentially make things much worse.

The reporter in this case admits that a normal stress test wouldn't have found his condition, but it could have helped if done on a regular basis. Annual fitness and health evaluations are part of ensuring your safety and health, so look at it as a benefit that will give you a long, happy and healthy retirement after the fire service.

Most outcomes from establishing these types of regular exams have only been positive for the fire department and, more importantly, the firefighters themselves.

DISCUSSION

- Does your department provide annual physicals that follow NFPA 1582 standards?
- What are the signs and symptoms of a MI? Would you know them if you felt them?
- How can you tell the difference between a normal physiological-exertion response and a cardiovascular event?
- Are health and wellness priorities in your organization? How can it be improved?
- Does your department allow time to work out while on duty? Are workouts mandatory?
- Does the senior leadership in your organization lead by example?

LEADING PRACTICES

It's important to do what we can to maintain optimal health. Ensuring we're physically fit and eating a healthy diet is an important start everyone can take. Annual physicals can identify potential risks before they become serious threats.

Fire department members should consult NFPA 1582: Standard on Comprehensive Medical Programs for Fire Department and NFPA 1583: Standard on Health-Related Fitness Programs for Fire Fighters for additional guidance on establishing a comprehensive fitness-wellness program.

Resources are also available through [The Fire Service Joint Labor Management Wellness/Fitness Initiative](#) (PDF), sponsored by the IAFF and the IAFC.

Emergency-scene rehab is another critical step to keep our people safe and allow for a rest-and-recovery period. Many consider routine EKG monitoring of firefighters in rehab as a precaution. Complacency in these areas can create needless risks to ourselves, our crews and the citizens we're sworn to protect.

RELATED NEAR MISS REPORTS

- [Crews Resuscitate FF During Cardiac Arrest](#)
- [I Suffered a Cardiac Arrest While on Duty No Previous Symptoms](#)
- [Firefighter Suffers Medical Incident During Fire](#)
- [FF has Heart Attack While on Fireground](#)

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [FireRescue1.com Article: How to cut firefighter heart attacks](#)
- [New England Journal of Medicine Article: Emergency Duties and Deaths from Heart Disease among Firefighters in the United States](#)
- [NVFC: Heart Healthy Firefighter](#)
- [USFA: Firefighter Health, Wellness, and Fitness](#)

2. Watertown FD Wet Down & Dedication

The Watertown Fire Department introduces Tower 1 at a Wet Down and Dedication Ceremony scheduled for Saturday, November 19, 2016 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at 953 Main Street in Watertown. The Public is Welcome!

3. American Military University Webinar on Violent Incident Task Forces

In **November**, American Military University is offering a webinar at no cost to public safety professionals, emergency planners, and first responders:

Violent Incident Task Forces (*Tuesday, November 22 from 1:00-2:00pm ET*)

After the 2012 mass shooting at a theater in Aurora, Colorado, the Ventura County (CA) Fire Department realized it lacked an organized response should such a violent incident happen in their jurisdiction. To address this, the department formed a multi-discipline work group that included local fire departments, law enforcement agencies, EMS transport providers, dispatch centers and others. Learn from J. Scott Quirarte, a Fire Captain and 26-year veteran of the fire service, about the challenges and benefits of establishing a Violent Incident Task Force.

[Please click here to learn more about these webinars and to REGISTER](http://www.amuonline.com/ESwebinars)

(If this link does not work, copy and paste this URL into your browser:

<http://www.amuonline.com/ESwebinars>)

Thank you for your interest and we look forward to seeing you in the webinar classroom!

4. 2016 Seminar Series – Responding to and Preventing Acts of Violence

Friday, December 2, 2016 @ CT Fire Academy – Course # 17037 - \$55.00 Lunch included

Speaker – Lt. Steven Hamilton, Fort Jackson Fire and Emergency Services, South Carolina

Description:

This presentation discusses fire service response to all aspects of violent scenes--single-company response to a victim of domestic violence through to the multiagency active shooter response. Elements of terrorism response are evaluated. Various scenarios are covered: violence, terrorism, active shooter, mass shootings, domestic violence, and suicide by secondary means. Covered are pre-incident planning, policies and procedures for response to such incidents, case history analysis, as well as reporting and documenting violent incidents involving responders. Statistical data are examined to support the hidden dangers emergency responders face at violent incidents.

5. 2016 SERC Conference – November 18th – 5.5 FM Credit Approved

The 2016 State Emergency Response Commission (SERC) Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Conference will be held on Friday, November 18, 2016 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Legislative Office Building in Hartford. Registration begins at 8 a.m. **Approved for 5.5 Fire Marshal Credits.**

Please see the attached flyer for conference details and registration. Registration for this **free** program, lunch included may be faxed or mailed to the CT Fire Academy (860) 654-1889.

6. CFPC/CFA Follow us on Twitter and Facebook

For the latest fire service news and information follow the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection's Commission on Fire Prevention and Control – Connecticut Fire Academy on its official Twitter page [@CTCFPC](#) or Facebook [@CTFireAcademy](#)

