

July 2023 Edition

THE SIREN



West Des Moines Fire Department Newsletter

318 5th St. (515) 222-3420 - wdm.iowa.gov/government/fire-department

Message from the Fire Marshal

As you drive around West Des Moines, you easily see a large amount of new construction constantly taking place. This includes office buildings, restaurants, retail centers, apartment buildings, townhomes, and single-family subdivisions. We are very fortunate to be a rapidly growing community, but do you know what it takes to make construction projects a reality?

The City of West Des Moines has a very proactive process for developers to utilize that includes several key city departments, including the Fire Department. Every Tuesday, key staff members from the Water Works, Building, Engineering, Parks & Rec, Development Services and Fire Department meet on new projects to provide information and answer questions regarding specific sites and/or buildings. This gives developers the opportunity to fully understand what it will require to begin their projects and ultimately get them ready for final occupancy. It truly is exciting to catch a small glimpse of what our city will look like and where it will grow in the future. More importantly, it also gives us valuable information on how the Fire Department will need to grow and make plans for how to serve all the new growth.

I hope all of you had a wonderful and safe Independence Day, and it is an honor to serve you.

Mike Whitsell, Fire Marshal



2023 Total Incidents
2401

<u>June Incident Count - 420</u>	
Fire – 25	Good Intent Call – 48
Over Pressure/Rupture – 1	Fire Alarm – 94
Rescue & Medical – 189	Severe Weather – 0
Service Call – 30	Special Incident Type – 0
Hazardous Cond. (no fire) - 33	

Significant Incident Recap



June 8 – Motor Vehicle Collision with Building

WDMFD and EMS were called to 1st St. and Vine St. on a reported MVC with possibly trapped patients. The initial page also indicated the incident involved a truck and trailer that hit a house.

Units arrived to find a large work truck, hauling a flat-bed trailer that had left the roadway at approximately Vine St. The vehicle traveled through two yards, hit a power pole, and sheared off the front porch of the affected address. The driver was not injured. An occupant was in the porch at the time of the collision. He was able to escape with minor injuries.

For the Community

Fire Extinguisher Training

Fire Prevention Officer Kinkade worked with [Wright Outdoor Solutions](#) and [Wright Service Corp.](#) to train over 60 employees on fire safety education and how to correctly use a fire extinguisher. They learned about different types of fire extinguishers, common fire hazards, safe evacuation routes, and gained the confidence to react quickly during an emergency.



Safety Town

Over 100 children participating in Safety Town during June had the opportunity to come to the fire station. They learned fire safety tips, toured the fire station, and got a close-up look at the fire apparatus, tools, and gear.

Safety Town was created by the West Des Moines Police Department. It is an educational program offering safety awareness and preventative practices for children who are about to enter kindergarten.



West Des Moines Library Egg Drop

B-Shift firefighters from Station 21 assisted the West Des Moines Library with one of their summer programs...the Egg Drop. Students created an enclosure for an egg, and Ladder 215 dropped them from the top of truck ladder. Out of 50 egg enclosures, about 15 survived the fall. The kids and families had a great time!



Keeping You Safe

Pet Fire Safety

National Pet Fire Safety Day takes place every year on July 15, and it's a day to spread awareness about how pets can start home fires, but more importantly, how to prevent them. For most of us, pets are valued members of the family, so it makes sense to include them in your family's home fire escape plan. When you practice your plan, practice taking your pets with you, and make sure they have their own disaster supply kit. But remember, never delay your escape or endanger yourself to rescue a family pet.

Prevent Your Pets from Starting Fires

- **Extinguish Open Flames** - Pets are generally curious and will investigate cooking appliances, candles, or even a fire in your fireplace. Ensure your pet is not left unattended around an open flame and make sure to thoroughly extinguish any open flame before leaving your home.
- **Remove Stove Knobs** - Be sure to remove stove knobs or protect them with covers before leaving the house - a stove or cook top is the number one piece of equipment involved in your pet starting a fire.
- **Invest in Flameless Candles** - Consider battery-operated, flameless candles. They can look and smell like real candles. Cats are notorious for starting fires when their tails turn over lit candles.
- **Secure Young Pets** - keep them confined away from potential fire-starting hazards when you are away from home such as in crates or behind baby gates in secure areas. Watch to make sure they don't chew through electrical cords.



Help Firefighters Help Your Pets

- Keep pets near entrances when away from home. Keep collars on pets and leashes at the ready in case firefighters need to rescue your pet. When leaving pets home alone, keep them in areas or rooms near entrances where firefighters can easily find them.
- Never go back inside a burning house. If you can't find your pet, leave, open the door, and call to them repeatedly from a safe distance away. Let firefighters take over the task of locating your pet.

This Month in Fire History

[Port Chicago Disaster](#)

On the evening of July 17, 1944, residents in the San Francisco east bay area were jolted awake by a massive explosion that lit up the night sky at Port Chicago Naval Magazine when two ammunition ships they were loading with explosive cargo blew up. The blast registered 3.4 on the Richter scale and was felt more than 450 miles away. It resulted in 320 fatalities and approximately 400 injured. The crews had been trained in general cargo handling but not in the specific craft of loading ammunition. The Navy began addressing the safety issues in the months following the tragedy. This was the deadliest home front disaster of World War II.



Connect with us!

