



Near-Miss Matters

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In a [recent editorial](#) by FireRescue magazine's editor-in-chief Tim Sendelbach, he challenged members of the fire service to be "fire service change agents" by influencing those around you. How can the Near-Miss Program contribute to this seemingly insurmountable task?

If you are beginning your career in the fire service, you may have already absorbed the safety culture attitude of your company officer. If it's a positive attitude, then you can ask your captain if you can share a report from www.firefighternearmiss.com with your shift to get their feedback on the report based on their experiences. If it's a negative attitude toward safety, then you can visit the website and learn from other firefighters whom you may never meet but they were motivated to submit a report to help you stay out of harm's way.

If you are a company officer, then you are in the best position to be the change agent of your shift. Select someone from your shift to present a report during your daily work schedule or have them post a report in a location where everyone can see it. Not only are you providing a learning opportunity; you are letting the next generation of firefighters know that sharing lessons learned among firefighters is the best way to learn. Use any of the resources on the website to supplement the training you are already doing.

If you are a chief officer, then you have an obligation to be supportive of the change agents in your department and one way to do this is to support the use of the Near-Miss Program by submitting a report. If you think, "I've never had a near miss," then think again. Imagine if your son or daughter was joining the fire department today and you could share with him/her just one call that was a defining moment in your career because you finally understood what this "safety culture change" was all about. Maybe it was when you finally realized that you should wear a seatbelt because it was the right thing to do and not only because it was an SOP or the law. Perhaps it was when you learned to listen to your instincts and told your crew to get out of the building

What's New

→ The Near-Miss Program would like to thank Amy Tippett for over 8 years of dedication to the program and firefighter/EMT safety. While often behind the scenes, Amy has been a driving force behind the program's success since its inception. Amy has decided to pursue another opportunity where she will continue to focus on firefighter safety. We wish her the very best!

→ There are almost 7500 "likes" on the Facebook page for the National Fire Fighter Near-Miss Reporting System. Be sure to "like" www.facebook.com/firefighternearmiss and ask your firefighter friends to do the same.

before it collapsed. Maybe it was when you realized that the carcinogens on your PPE didn't make you look "cool" and you needed to properly wear and maintain your PPE. Think of "that" call and submit a report. Then share it with your department in an email to illustrate that you are committed to ensuring that "everyone goes home."

Until next time, keep striving to be a "fire service change agent."

ROTM

[April 2013 Report of the Month](#)

Resources

[Rules of Engagement for Firefighter Survival](#)

[Rules of Engagement for Firefighter Health](#)

Upcoming Events

[Fire-Rescue Med](#)

May 3-7, 2013; Las Vegas, NV

[Fire-Rescue International](#)

August 13-17, 2013; Chicago, IL

Near-Miss Fundamentals:

This month's "Report of the Month" mentions that it's the chain of events, rather than just one factor, that leads to near misses. Select one of the "Report of the Weeks" from the resources page and discuss with your crew the chain of events leading up to the near-miss event. What went right because best practices were followed? What could be improved to prevent a similar event from happening within your department?

Testimonial

"We responded to a gas leak at an apartment complex. On arrival we found a high pressure gas line broken BEFORE the shut off in an underground parking area. I upgraded the response to a full first alarm. We suited up and then I remembered the "click,click,click" of a starter on a stove or water heater, like the report from the near-miss program. We evacuated the building with the gas leak then made an attempt to control the flow of gas. Remembering that report made me that much more aware of what was going on and changed my tactics a bit."

-Captain from a West Coast Fire Department referring to Report 06-088



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