



Near-Miss Matters

Volume 41, September 2013

A major disaster can happen at a moment's notice, no matter what part of the country your fire department serves. While New Jersey suffered another devastating blow to its boardwalk, fire and rescue personnel in Colorado are feverishly working to combat devastating rains and massive flooding. With swiftwater rescue counts in the thousands, several hundreds of people remain unaccounted for. This month's Near-Miss Matters looks at swiftwater response. In this [month's report](#), an engine and ladder

company was dispatched to assist a family of 4 evacuate from their cabin after they were trapped by mudslides and high water. Though two of the victims suffered from hypothermia, fatalities were avoided in these extreme weather conditions thanks to careful review/scouting of the terrain and water conditions, rapidly implementing swiftwater rescue techniques that were regularly trained on, implementing lessons learned from previous responses at the same locations, and extensive preplanning. Review September's ROTM and discuss with your crew how your department would have responded to a similar event and what you can do to prepare.

Thank You Advisory Board: At FRI, the IAFC recognized the members of the Near-Miss Advisory Council and presented them with plaques as they concluded their outstanding work. Additionally, a special award was presented to Amy Tippet, John Tippet, and Garry Briese for their visionary leadership and stewardship of the program during its first eight years. The National Fire Fighter Near-Miss Reporting System would simply not have existed without them.

What's New

→ Chief Keith Bryant, IAFC 1st Vice President, is the new chair of the Near-Miss Sustainability Task Force which is the oversight body for the Near-Miss program.

ROTM

[September 2013 Report of the Month](#)

Resources

Related Reports:

[Swift water mishap in full turn-out gear \(05-0421\)](#)

[FF nearly drowns during](#)

Upcoming Events

The [VCOS Symposium in the Sun](#), presented by the IAFC's Volunteer & Combination Officers Section, will be taking place November 7-10 in

[swiftwater drill \(08-0301\)](#)

Clearwater Beach, FL.

[Water rescue training
turns hazardous \(08-0519\)](#)

[Water rescue does not go
according to plan \(08-
0033\)](#)

Near-Miss Fundamentals

Among the 5000 Near-Miss Reports submitted, the top five most commonly cited contributing factors to a Near-Miss are: 1) Situational Awareness, 2) Decision Making, 3) Human Error, 4) Individual Action, and 5) Communications. How does this resonate with your experience in your department? This, once again, highlights the importance of good situational awareness.

Testimonial

"I use the Firefighter Near- Miss as a tabletop training aid. we discuss what was done, what our SOGs state, and how we would respond if we were in the same situation. It has been a great and effective tool."

-Captain Mark Huffman, Lewisville Fire Department (TX)



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Firefighternearmiss.com is funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's [Assistance to Firefighters Grant program](#). Founding dollars were also provided by [Fireman's Fund Insurance Company](#). The project is managed by the [International Association of Fire Chiefs](#) and supported by [FireFighterCloseCalls.com](#) in mutual dedication to firefighter safety and survival.

