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Report of the Week

Hose Testing: consult your standards before commencing
5/9/08

Report Number: 08-115

Report Date: 02/28/2008 1912

Demographics

Department type: Combination, Mostly paid

Job or rank: Fire Fighter

Department shift: 24 hours on - 24 hours off

Age: 16 - 24

Years of fire service experience: 0 - 3

Region: FEMA Region X

Service Area: Urban

Event Information

Event type: Training activities: formal training classes, in-station drills, multi-company drills, etc.

Event date and time: 02/26/2008 1330

Hours into the shift: 5 - 8

Event participation: Involved in the event

Do you think this will happen again? Yes

What do you believe caused the event?

- Training Issue
- Procedure
- Equipment

What do you believe is the loss potential?

- Property damage

Event Description

I was out testing some used 2 1/2 hose that our department acquired. I just finished testing 300' that was supposed to be tested at 400psi. There was a misunderstanding for the second 300' of hose and I thought that I was supposed to test the second batch to the number on the hose. At a quick glance I looked at the hose and saw the number 600psi and didn't read the words next to it which said that it was tested at that when it was manufactured. The 600psi seemed a little high so I thought that I would just test it at the same pressure that I tested the previous batch and then ask my driver if that was okay. I was testing the hose in the back of our station in a little alley. The truck I was using was on one side and the hose went down 150' then back 150' so that the nozzle was next to me for convenience. The chief's car was about 10' from the hose directly across from my engine. I ran up the pressure on the engine to 400psi and walked around to the other side of the truck and began closing the hose testing gate. I had the gate half way shut when the hose burst right next to the nozzle. The nozzle flew into the air landing on the chief's car denting the hood, the left front panel and cracking the windshield. I was very lucky that I wasn't hit

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by the hose since I was exactly the same distance from the hose that the chief's car was. The chief's car was later determined to be totaled. I also did not have my helmet on.

Lessons Learned

I learned a few things from this event that I know will be stick with me forever. One: Test 2 1/2 hose that was manufactured before 1987 at 250 psi. Two: Always wear a helmet when working around pressurized hose. Three: Close the hose testing gate prior to running up the pressure. Four: Move vehicles away from hose that is being tested. Especially the chief's vehicle!!

Discussion Questions

NFPA 1962 lays out specific direction for testing fire hose. It should be used as the pre-eminent template for conducting your department's annual hose test. One recommendation is to review the appropriate sections of NFPA 1962 before beginning your annual service test. Once you have reviewed the entire version of 08-115 and the related reports, consider the following for group discussion:

1. Do you currently test your department's fire hose to NFPA 1962 standards?
2. Where does your department keep its annual hose test records?
3. Does your department have a scheduled replacement plan for hose?
4. Which element within your department is charged with hose maintenance and repair?
5. What is your department's procedure for getting damaged hose:
 - a. Repaired?
 - b. Replaced?

Note: The questions posed by the reviewers are designed to generate discussion and thought in the name of promoting firefighter safety. They are not intended to pass judgment on the actions and performance of individuals in the reports.