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Report of the Week Rewind

"What's in your pockets?"

8/30/2012

Report Number: 07-0001166

Report Date: 12/13/2007 17:26

Synopsis

FF becomes entangled in wires

Event Description

I was engaged in fire attack that was located in an attic space with two other firefighters when another firefighter and I became entangled in wires from the attic space. Due to the fact I had no wire cutters, I panicked because I knew I was approaching the point where I should turn and head back due to air use from my cylinder. As I struggled to free myself, I removed most of the wires by sweeping back with my gloved hand. To my extreme excitement, the other firefighter had wire cutters and cut us both out. We were then able to exit the attic space with the third member of our crew. The fact this other firefighter carried tools saved us both a lot of stress if not our lives.

Lessons Learned

I learned to always carry some kind of tool on a fire. I now care my own small hand tools. I also learned to stay as calm as possible and go back to your basic training and you will probably already know how to fix the problem.

Demographics

Department type: Paid Municipal

Job or rank: Fire Fighter

Department shift: 24 hours on - 48 hours off

Age: 16 - 24

Years of fire service experience: 4 - 6

Region: FEMA Region IV

Service Area: Urban

Event Information

Event type: Fire emergency event: structure fire, vehicle fire, wildland fire, etc.

Event date and time: 10/15/2005 03:45

Hours into the shift:

Event participation: Involved in the event

Weather at time of event: Clear and Dry

Do you think this will happen again?

What were the contributing factors?

- Individual Action
- Situational Awareness
- Communication

What do you believe is the loss potential?

"What's in your pockets?"

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- Other
- Life threatening injury

Report of the Week

Welcome to the August ROTW REWIND, featuring Report [07-1166](#) from a December 2007 ROTW.

There are many things we do to prepare for unexpected events including using state of the art PPE, all-hazards training and staying physically fit. Who would think that a \$20.00 pair of wire cutters could save your life or the life of a crew member? As you read the August ROTW REWIND, think about the importance of being prepared for any situation and how your preparation can affect the outcome of an unexpected event. Consider the proactive steps you or your organization have taken preparing personnel with the proper training and equipment to handle events that challenge even the most seasoned veteran. Take a minute to post your comments on the near-miss [Facebook page](#).

"I was engaged in fire attack that was located in an attic space with two other firefighters when another firefighter and I became entangled in wires from the attic space. Due to the fact I had no wire cutters, I panicked because I knew I was approaching the point where I should turn and head back due to air use from my cylinder. As I struggled to free myself, I removed most of the wires by sweeping back with my gloved hand. To my extreme excitement, the other firefighter had wire cutters and cut us both out. We were then able to exit the attic space with the third member of our crew. The fact this other firefighter carried tools saved us both a lot of stress if not our lives."

Report [07-1166](#) is a great reminder that what you do to prepare yourself affects you AND your crew members. We need to consider what type of tools to carry in our pockets and train for unexpected events, like what happened in this report. We are confronted by many types of wiring at almost every residential structure fire. Common wiring is used to run electricity throughout a home, add strength to the air conditioner ducting, used in surround-sound and security systems and much more. When a fire is burning above our heads, either in an attic or between floors, wiring presents a very real threat and should always be a concern. Wiring can entangle you from any angle and snare any part of your body or gear, especially SCBA. Your helmet, radio and flashlight are also commonly entangled in wiring. Firefighters have lost their lives because they were unable to get free from hanging obstacles. We need to confront this ever-present danger and prepare ourselves and our crews. There are varying opinions on what should be carried in your pockets. It is personal preference and you should carry what works for you and what you feel comfortable with. Here are just a few items to consider: webbing, rope, flashlight, wedges, channel lock pliers, some type of multi-tool, locking blade knife, carabineers, folding spanner wrench, 4-in-1 screw driver. After you have reviewed the full report, consider the following:

1. What tools and equipment do you carry in your pockets and how did you determine what to carry in your pockets?
2. Compare the contents of your pockets with those of the rest of your crew. What are the similarities and differences?
3. List the basic items you believe should be carried in any firefighter's pockets.

4. Discuss how many different situations you can expect to handle with the tools you carry in your pockets.
5. What type of training have you received for wire entanglement events?

Related Reports- Topical Relation: Entanglement, FF Mayday, EA Activation, Trapped

[08-020](#)

[11-330](#)

[10-1286](#)

[05-567](#)

Submit your report to www.firefighternearmiss.com today on a similar call you have run. Remember that the ROTW REWIND will appear the last Thursday of every month. Please email ROTW@firefighternearmiss.com with your feedback on ROTW REWIND.

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.

If you would like to subscribe to the ROTW, please [click here](#) and enter your email address. You can also go to www.firefighternearmiss.com and click the "Join Mailing List" button on the homepage.

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National Fire Fighter Near-Miss Reporting System
4025 Fair Ridge Drive
Fairfax, VA 22033
P: 571-238-8287
F: 703-273-0920
info@firefighternearmiss.com
www.firefighternearmiss.com