



# EFD Pulse



News to Protect What Matters Most

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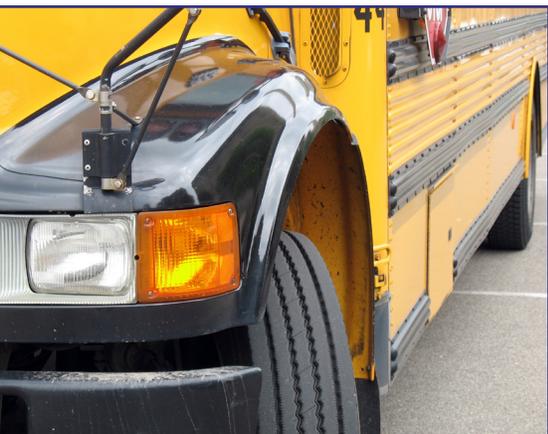
September/October 2012



## Back To School Health And Safety

By Todd Porthan, Fire Lieutenant

Shoes, notebooks and other essentials are always at the top of the back-to-school list, but are they the most important things for parents to think about at this time of year? I'd like to suggest some "to-dos" for the top of every parent's list.



### Schedule check ups with a dentist and a pediatrician.

Even if your children are not due for any vaccinations, it is always a good idea to get them in for check ups. Besides a clean bill of health, this allows parents to address any concerns they may have throughout the school year. For example, nutrition, sleep and exercise should be discussed with a doctor.

This is also a great time to obtain additional medication to keep with the school nurse so it is always available for your child if needed. If your child has any special needs or if you feel the need to share anything with his or her teacher, make an appointment and write the information down for the school staff.

## Edina Fire Marshal Retires



After 31 years of service, Edina Fire Marshal Tom Jenson retired at the end of August.

Jenson began his service as a volunteer firefighter in 1981, where he served for 17 years. In 1998, Jenson was promoted to Fire Investigator. He became Fire Marshal in 2000.

*Congratulations on your retirement, Tom! Thank you for keeping Edina safe!*

### Familiarize your child with the school.

If your child is going to a new school, it is a good idea to take a field trip and walk the grounds. Going to school is exciting

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## A Word From The Chief

By Edina Fire Chief Marty Scheerer



The Edina Fire Department employs three Fire Inspectors who have many roles in the City.

The Fire Department's Inspectors, of course, inspect buildings around the community to make sure they are safe from fire hazards. They also conduct fire investigations during and after a fire to determine the fire's origin and cause.

Fire Inspectors also provide a considerable amount of public education and often work with the State Fire Marshal Division of the

Minnesota Department of Public Safety. The Edina Fire Department has an excellent working relationship with the State Fire Marshal and the staff of the State Fire Marshal's office.

The State Fire Marshal's inspectors are required to inspect the schools and the health care facilities in the community. Edina's Fire Inspectors will work with State Fire Marshal staff to inspect the facilities as needed on an on-going basis. The State Fire Marshal staff is used frequently as a resource for the Edina Fire Inspectors on inspections of larger buildings or unusual situations.

The State Fire Marshal staff is required to investigate a fire-related death. They



Marty Scheerer  
Edina Fire Chief

do this with the assistance of Edina's Fire Inspectors should an incident occur in the City of Edina.

The State Fire Marshal division also assists the Edina Fire Department with public education. The State Fire Marshal staff can provide presentation materials, course curriculum and information, which can be used with different ages and groups.

Working with the State Fire Marshal's office and staff has proven to be an excellent way to help keep the City, residents and firefighters safe from fires.

*For more information, visit [www.EdinaMN.gov/fire](http://www.EdinaMN.gov/fire).*

## Fire Marshal's Corner

By Former Edina Fire Marshal Tom Jensen

Does your family have a fire escape plan? According to the National Fire Protection Association, only about one-third of homeowners have a fire escape plan and practice it regularly.

If a fire breaks out in your home, you may only have a few minutes to get out safely once smoke alarms sound. Everyone needs to know what to do and where to go if there is a fire.

When the fire alarms sound, the plan should already have been put into place. Get out of the home and meet at an agreed-upon place. Did you know that only 8 percent of people said their first thought on hearing a smoke alarm was to get out?

One in three American households estimate they would have at least six minutes before a fire in their home would become life threatening. In reality, that time could be significantly less.

Sit down with your family to create an escape plan. Draw a map of your home, showing all doors and windows. Know at least two ways out of every room, if possible.

Have one meeting place a safe distance from the home, such as a mailbox or a

tree in a neighbor's yard. Make sure the whole family knows where this is. Having one meeting location can avoid a potential rescue situation when half the family is in the front yard and the other half is in the backyard. Call 9-1-1 after evacuating the home or from a neighbor's home.

Put your plan into action! Practice your plan twice a year, both during the day and at night. Practice while in different rooms or when doing different activities. Practice different ways out. Teach children how to escape on their own in case you can't help them. Stress the importance of closing doors behind you as you leave.

Practice until it's instinctual to get out of the house as soon as you hear the smoke alarms go off. Regularly check your smoke alarm's batteries and consider



Tom Jensen  
Former Edina Fire Marshal

interconnecting smoke alarms so that if one goes off, all the alarms in the house go off.

This year's Fire Prevention Week is Oct. 7-13. It is a great time to meet as a family to discuss safety and fire prevention. Visit the Fire Prevention Week website at [www.fpw.org](http://www.fpw.org) to learn more about fire planning and this year's theme, "Have 2 Ways Out!"

Having and practicing an escape plan can save your family members' lives in the event of a fire in your home. Create a plan, practice it and be prepared for the unthinkable.

For more information, visit [www.EdinaMN.gov/fire](http://www.EdinaMN.gov/fire).



## Back to School... *Continued from page 1*

and scary for kids. If you can help reduce their fear or anxiety, it will show in their performance and will be a good experience for them.

Do not forget to talk about things such as where to put their belongings, who to see and where to go when they need help, and where to find the lunch room and bathrooms. Frequently ask your child if he or she has any questions, concerns or fears. Being in the school is a good environment to address any questions and concerns.

Do not forget to go to the bus stop or car pool area to address traffic and stranger safety. If your child rides a school bus,

discuss safety in and around a school bus. Generally, if it is not allowed in your car, it should not be allowed on the bus.

### Discuss bullying and social media.

Bullying and social media have become very hot topics, and for good reason. They affect the health and wellness, as well as performance of children. Did you know more than 160,000 children miss school every day for fear of being bullied? An average child will spend five to seven hours each day using some form of electronic entertainment, including social media. Please take the time to sit down with your child and discuss these issues.

### Avoid distractions.

Have your teen take the pledge to not be distracted while driving. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in 2009, more than 5,000 people were killed and nearly 450,000 injured due to distracted driving – cell phones being the No. 1 distraction. If you are driving, put the distractions on hold. Putting your life and the lives of others in danger is not worth responding to that text message.

Have a great and safe school year!