



## FREMONT COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

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# THE DISTRICT

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## Dan's Message

Hey folks,

I still have to ask the question, is it summer yet?

What an odd year we have had, only one week in the 90's and more moisture than we are used to. With that being said, don't let your guard down, we could still see some wildland fire activity locally and need to be prepared.

In late July I was fortunate enough to lead a Wyoming Strike Team on an assignment to Washington. What an amazing experience. The Strike Team consisted of 1 engine from Albany County, 1 engine from State Forestry and 3 of our engines as well as myself and an ICT 3 from State Forestry. Initially we were ordered up as a severity force for the Washington DNR, which quickly changed. The DNR got us reassigned to the Watermelon Hill fire in the town of Cheney which was a 1 day assignment consisting of Checking in, setting up camp, hanging out in camp, eating dinner, sleeping, eating breakfast, breaking down camp, demobilizing and being reassigned.

We then traveled to the Bugg Road Fire in Tonasket which is about 15-20 miles south of the Canadian border. The Bugg Rd assignment lasted 6 days and was a great team building assignment. We did a lot of mop up on the 500 - 700 acre fire and were able to learn the strengths and weaknesses of our crew. We were also designated as an Initial attack force for any other starts in the area which meant that we had to set up camp every evening and break down every morning. This assignment taught me that it is not always a bad thing when finance and logistics knows you by name. However, when you walk into the restaurant for dinner on day 5 and the "Finance Lady" is sitting there and tells you "we need to talk, have a seat" it's a little unnerving. Thank goodness it was a good thing. We spent 1 more day in Tonasket and were again reassigned.

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### Quick Remember

**Fire Prevention  
Week is almost here**

**Get your student  
numbers in to Cindy  
as soon as possible!**



## District Trainer Dan Oakley continued

Our next assignment sent us south and west about 150 miles to the Small town of Twisp and the massive Carlton Complex. This was the assignment we had hoped for and that the previous 6 days had prepared us for. We were a well-oiled machine, there was nothing we couldn't do. It is an amazing feeling when you are face to face with your Division Supervisor and he is giving you all these different tasks to complete and with 100% confidence and conviction, you say "NO PROBLEM, WE CAN DO THAT". We were tasked with protecting and saving the fire lookout on Mount Leecher. We cut hand line like a hotshot crew, fell trees like super sawyers, set up and plumbed a sprinkler system like landscaping specialist, the only thing we didn't do was put fire on the ground and that is only because they wouldn't let us. On day 14 we were being released from the line early so we could start demob but about 20 minutes before we headed off of the line the Dragon tried to hook the line. We were the closest units on the division, we bailed in and had it all but locked down before any of the other resources could get there to relieve us. We were the engine strike team that could do it all and we are from WYOMING!!!

Now, since this section is titled "Notes from the District Trainer" I will give you the lessons learned. On day 3 at the Carlton Complex (day 11 of the tour) with our confidence high and our Ego's engorged we were directed to attack a rapidly moving fire front coming up out of a drainage. Trees were torching out and throwing embers all around us creating multiple spot fire. It was quickly apparent that this was not a good idea and a bad place to be. But, because our confidence was high and our egos engorged we refused to back down even after one of our own got blasted with superheated air and smoke. Eventually one of the Task Force Leaders showed up and pulled the plug on the operation. Once we were pulled off the attack and our crew member was sent to the medical unit for evaluation, we as a strike team did an After Action Review. We all agreed that what had just happened was unnecessary. Every one of us recognized the dangers of what was happening, but none of us were willing to say NO! and disengage.

On pages 19 and 20 of the IRPG is "How to Properly Refuse Risk" on an assignment. It lists 4 factors that allow a person or crew to turn down an assignment. #2 Environmental conditions make the work unsafe, is the one that we should have used. The human factors is what stopped us from making the right decision, we were cocky, confident and ego driven. This was not one of my finer moment in leadership, this is a bad situation that thankfully ended without devastating consequences.

**The true lesson learned: Check Yourself be for you Wreck Yourself. Physically, Emotionally and Professionally.**

Thanks for your time and dedication

Dan



## Craig's message

My, oh my where has the summer gone?? Summer is already beginning to wind down, school is back in session, and there is snow in the mountains!?!?!? WHAT THE HECK!!!! Like the song says "Don't worry be Happy." After all, smiling is about all we can do with Mother Nature.

One of the things that keeps coming across my desk as of late is the subject of "Volunteers". This is a term that is very dear to me and what I do, not only in my job, but also in my personal life. According to my friend Wiki — **"Volunteering is generally considered an altruistic activity and is intended to promote goodness or improve human quality of life. In return, this activity can produce a feeling of self-worth and respect. There is no financial gain involved for the individual. Volunteering is also renowned for skill development, socialization, and fun. Volunteering may have positive benefits for the volunteer as well as for the person or community served. It is also intended to make contacts for possible employment. It is helping, assisting, or serving another person or persons without pay. Many volunteers are specifically trained in the areas they work, such a medicine, education, or emergency rescue. Others serve on an as-needed basis, such as in response to a natural disaster."**

Pretty dang good description of a volunteer if you ask me, especially of FCFPD Volunteers. I'm not going to bore you with details, but take a look at the definition above, reread it a few times, and reflect upon the message.

It seems that there is an attack on volunteerism lately and it takes a lot more to "volunteer" now more than it ever has. Volunteers seem to be scrutinized and in the same breath being called upon to do more. We even have to be careful about giving you something to recognize you for all that you do in hopes that it isn't misconstrued. Everyone seems to recognize the need for volunteers to provide certain services but they don't seem to want to support it or they make it too difficult to do.

Hopefully we at FCFPD are doing all that we can to provide you with an environment that is conducive for our volunteers and their lives! If not please let me know and we will see what we can do,. I know that it costs each and every one of you to be a volunteer and I hope that we are doing everything that we can in order to help minimize that impact on you. Yours is an invaluable service that is needed more than some like to admit.

Again, Thanks for all that you do! And remember, my door is always open!

Craig

### **Trainings**

Contact Dan if there are trainings you would like to have scheduled.

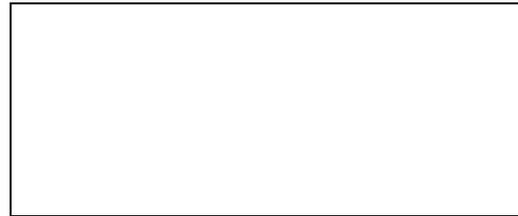


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#### Mission Statement

The Fremont County Fire District is dedicated to providing the highest quality of fire, emergency and other community related services to the residents and visitors of the district.



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We're on the Web at

[FremontCountyFireDistrict.com](http://FremontCountyFireDistrict.com)

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## Wyoming.com announces NextGen

Wyoming.com invites the public to "Customer Appreciation Day" on September 18<sup>th</sup> between 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. at 937 West Main Street in Riverton; to celebrate the new services now coming on line.

"We want to celebrate the tremendous progress our staff has made thus far on deploying our Wireless NextGen to the rural communities of Fremont County", Chris Robisch, Director of Sales, Marketing and Public Policy.

A light barbecue lunch with brats and burgers will be available to visitors. "The much faster broadband speeds, greatly expanded coverage in rural areas, and the affordable phone service that comes with all of that is a huge improvement for our rural neighbors", Robisch added.

As you may know the Fremont County Fire Protection District plays a role in making this new service available around the county by allowing Wyoming.com to attach their equipment to certain of our Fire Halls. Remember, all Volunteers, if you use Wyoming.com services be sure to ask for your discount; if you are new to the District and your name is not on the list please let us know at Headquarters.