

Winter Season Means Increased Fire Hazards

Winter months remind New Yorkers to prevent fires and save lives

Winter is the busiest time of year for the FDNY.

And the Department wants that to change.

On November 30, Department officials and members of the Hearst Burn Center at New York Presbyterian Hospital/Weill Cornell Medical Center gathered at the FDNY Fire Zone in Rockefeller Center to urge New Yorkers to avoid fire hazards this winter. While citywide fire deaths are at historic lows, one fire-related death is one too many, said Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta.

“The recent drop in fire fatalities is a credit to the excellent work that the members of the Department do each day,” said Commissioner Scoppetta. “Our firefighters are performing more rescues than ever before, and our paramedics and EMTs are providing the best pre-hospital care.”

According to Bureau of Fire Investigation statistics, each year from November to February, fire fatalities double, to an average of 11 per month, and fire-related injuries can rise by more than 30 percent.

The Burn Center also records a patient increase of more than 20 percent during those months, which is equal to about 40 to

50 victims, said to Dr. Roger Yurt, Director of the Burn Center.

Set in the backdrop of the Fire Zone’s ‘burnt apartment,’ Commissioner Scoppetta warned New Yorkers to beware of common winter fire hazards. Frayed extension cords, space heaters, unattended candles and using stoves to heat the home account for many of the City’s most disastrous residential fires in the winter months. This year alone, children playing with matches or lighters have sparked 64 fires; many of those have been deadly, he said.

Following the tragic deaths of three children and one adult in Queens on December 6, after a child played with a butane lighter and ignited a plastic car under a bunk bed, Commissioner Scoppetta during a separate press conference sternly warned parents that “you might as well leave a loaded gun around for a child to play with as leave [a butane lighter] in reach of a child.”

He added that 33 percent of these fires occurred in homes with missing or malfunctioning smoke detectors.

“Most of these fires are preventable,” he said. “A few minutes of caution will literally save lives this winter.”

Fire officials also noted that the holiday season brings its own set of fire hazards, such as dried out Christmas trees and illegal holiday lights.

“Christmas trees can explode into flames in a matter of seconds,” said Chief Fire Marshal Louis Garcia. Trees must be watered regularly and kept away from heat sources, sparks and flames, said Garcia.

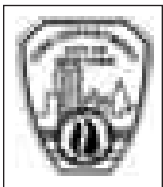
He also urged individuals to buy only UL (Underwriters Laboratory) rated holiday lights. “Don’t go cheap on your life,” he said.



Commissioner Scoppetta and Chief Fire Marshal Louis Garcia discuss the fatal Queens fire where a butane lighter was used by an 8-year-old child.

Top Holiday and Winter Fire Safety Tips

- *If you have a real tree, keep it watered and away from heat sources, sparks or flames.*
- *Use only UL approved lights and wiring and do not overload connections.*
- *Never leave lit candles unattended.*
- *Never attempt to heat your home with the oven (call 311 to report no heat).*
- *Use only UL approved space heaters and keep them away from furniture, bedding, curtains and other flammable materials.*
- *Do not smoke in bed. Make sure all cigarette butts are extinguished before discarding.*
- *Make sure you always have a properly working smoke detector and carbon monoxide detector on every level of your home.*



IN THIS ISSUE

- ❑ *Commissioner’s Message* Page 2
- ❑ *FDNY News* Pages 3-5; Pages 10-11
- ❑ *Ropes Pictorial* Page 6-7
- ❑ *In the Borough* Page 8-9
- ❑ *2005 Admin Awards* Page 12

Addressing Concerns Regarding Seagrave

Over the past year, the Fire Department has identified several issues with our manufacturer of fire apparatus, Seagrave. Beginning in July, the Department held a series of meetings with Seagrave's executive management to discuss problems regarding delayed delivery of new apparatus and overdue maintenance to the Department's existing fleet. We worked vigorously to clearly outline our expectations and reinforced to the manufacturer that without improvements in their service, the contractual relationship between the FDNY and Seagrave would not continue.

At any given time, approximately 10 percent of our fleet is offline for repairs and preventative maintenance. And, although the number of offline apparatus never exceeded the normal level, the Department took a proactive stance in engaging Seagrave to ensure that the number of offline apparatus did not dramatically increase. Currently, Seagrave supplies approximately 98 percent of the Department's fire apparatus. In recent months, it had fallen behind in providing repairs covered under the five-year warranty and as required under our contract. Seagrave also failed to deliver on-time 12 new tower ladder trucks the Department ordered more than a year ago.

Chief of Department Peter Hayden, Deputy Commissioner of Technology and Support Services Milton Fischberger, Assistant Commissioner of Fleet and Technical Services James Basile and representatives from the UFA and UFOA participated in the meetings with Seagrave leadership. The goal from the outset was to ensure that the Department had the ability to provide the best, most reliable apparatus and support for our members.

Following these meetings, Seagrave immediately changed its management structure and added technical staff to meet our demands. In addition, the manufacturer was "put on notice" regarding all of these issues. We were uncompromising in our demands and expectations. Seagrave addressed each of our concerns and provided us with a timeline for the repair and return of our outstanding vehicles.

In October, the Department sponsored a 30-day independent review of Seagrave's operations with the help of Exponent, a national consulting company. The purpose of this third-party review was to have an independent organization examine Seagrave's operations and determine

whether the Department should move forward with its order of an additional 12 new tower ladders. With the changes in Seagrave management and the addition of personnel, the recommendation of the review was to move forward with the order.

Seagrave was also recently acquired by Ballamore Capital Management (an investment advisor with assets totaling more than \$4 billion). Since this acquisition, Ballamore has invested \$10 million to improve Seagrave's operations including hiring of new mechanics and additional technical staff for their New Jersey location.

By our last meeting on November 22, the Department determined that Seagrave had taken steps to correct the problems we identified. In doing so, the number of out-of-service fire apparatus has been reduced from 13 to five.

Throughout the process, Seagrave has been eager to work closely with us to ensure that issues are identified and resolved in a timely manner. The meetings have been encouraging and I am satisfied with the progress that has been made.

* * *

I would like to thank the men and women of the FDNY for the tremendous work they do each day. This year has been a success because of our firefighters, fire officers, EMTs, paramedics, fire marshals and civilian staff. I thank you for your dedication and look forward to working with you in the coming years.

As 2005 comes to a close, we also reflect upon the courage and sacrifice of Lieutenants Curtis Meyran and John Bellew and Firefighter Richard Sclafani. Celebrate their lives and continue to keep these firefighters' families in your thoughts and prayers this season.

I wish you and your family a happy, healthy holiday and best wishes in 2006.



Commissioner's
Message

Gifts of the Season

FDNY helps kick off annual City Harvest Food Drive

It's not often the FDNY measures success in cans of chicken soup.

But on November 16, the Department announced that it once again is partnering with City Harvest and the Daily News to collect non-perishable food items for the 22nd annual 'Readers Care to Feed the Hungry of New York' food drive at Engine 7/Ladder 1.

"Participation in the drive is simple," Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta said. "There are collection points all over the City. The donated cans of food will go directly towards feeding hungry New Yorkers."

The food drive has become the largest in New York City, bringing in more than 200 tons of food last year alone, translating to more than 320,000 meals served. And this year, organizers said they want to do even better.

"Let's give to the people who really need it," Mayor Michael Bloomberg said. "To people who can't afford to feed themselves and their families."

The Department has partnered with the City Harvest and the Daily News on this effort since its inception in the early 1980's. More recently, other agencies have also agreed to support the cause, including the New York City Police Department, Modell's Sporting Goods, 77 WABC and local schools.

"The 'Daily News Readers Care to Feed the Hungry' food drive has become a regular part of the Fire Department's holiday season," Commissioner Scoppetta said. "With everyone's help, we can make this year's drive even more successful."

The food collected is distributed to more than 800 community food programs throughout the five boroughs, including soup kitchens and emergency food pantries.

City Harvest's CEO, Sally Hernandez Pinero, said she is thrilled and grateful that New Yorkers are so generous every year. And John Campi, Daily News' Vice President of Promotion and Community Affairs, added, "without the support of the FDNY, it would be impossible to do this drive on this scale."

Donations are being collected at City firehouses, police precincts, in the Daily News' lobby and at Modell's Sporting Goods stores. The Drive continues through January 6.

And as WABC Radio personality and Guardian Angel Curtis Sliwa said, "We



Commissioner Scoppetta joins Mayor Bloomberg and other City officials in launching the City Harvest food collection program sponsored by the Daily News.

don't need your prehistoric, dented cans; just the same food that you would feed your family during the holidays. You'll be contributing to the goodwill of so many who can't care for themselves."

Bronx EMS members paying tribute to EMT Felix Hernandez by helping others

By EMS Captain Ann Fitton

The EMTs and Paramedics of EMS Station 17 on Ogden Avenue in the Bronx like to refer to themselves as "the little house with a big heart."

But, their big heart was recently broken by the death of EMT Felix Hernandez, Jr. in late October. EMT Hernandez was an eight-year veteran of the Department and a resident of Brooklyn.

In honor of Felix's enduring legacy of compassion and caring, and to pay tribute to his life of service in the Highbridge community, the members of Station 17 have developed a partnership with the Ogden Avenue Residence, where 40 sin-

gle adults with special needs reside.

The holidays are a particularly lonely and sad time for this group as they are generally overlooked by seasonal charities. A holiday party was held on December 18 at the facility.

"No matter how down you were, when Felix was around, you couldn't help but smile," said Lt. Regina Pellegrino of Station 17. "This effort is a true reflection of his life of service."



EMT Felix Hernandez, Jr.

In honor of Felix's commitment to help the homeless of the Highbridge community, Station 17 is also collecting warm socks, hats and small toiletry items for distribution to the homeless in the area. These items will be distributed with the assistance of the homeless advocacy group at Sienna House on Ogden Avenue.

Anyone interested in assisting in these ventures or making a donation should contact Station 17 at 718-588-5555.

Taking Fire Safety to the Streets

Mobile fire safety house brings message home

Smoke filled the Wilson family home as dozens of school kids from P.S. 72 watched, wide-eyed.

The children pointed and whispered as the family of four used portable escape ladders to evacuate their Brooklyn residence, and dialed 911.

Then, when a television reporter arrived and asked Mr. Wilson how he and his family survived such a terrible fire, the man replied, "Because we take fire safety very seriously."

Their survival isn't what makes this story special – it's the fact that their "home" is on wheels and one side of their house is made of Plexiglass.

Call it a birds-eye view into home fire safety.

On November 10, the FDNY and the Fire Safety Education Fund unveiled the new Mobile Fire Safety Experience at FDNY Headquarters. The educational vehicle is painted fire engine red, with a complete apartment built as a stage inside. Here, actors and firefighters perform in a skit that demonstrates how the "Wilson family" survives a fire in their home.

It's another important tool that the FDNY Fire Zone will use to educate New Yorkers about fire safety.

"This is a valuable educational experi-

ence that we hope really sends home the message of fire safety," said Chief of Operations Salvatore Cassano.

After the presentation, children were also invited to crawl through the smoke filled hallway of the Experience to practice escaping a fire.

"This reaffirms our commitment to preventing fires and helping people escape fires," said retired-Fire Lieutenant Joe Torrillo, who helped develop the project. "We're trying to protect the people and property of New York City."

Funded in part by \$75,000 from First Alert, this is the first of three Mobile Fire Safety Experience vehicles that will be launched in the coming months. Each will offer live, traveling fire safety exhibits that will bring the fire safety message to



Retired Fire Lieutenant Joe Torrillo explains the Mobile Fire Safety Experience to children from P.S. 72 in Brooklyn.

New Yorkers throughout the five boroughs.

Brooklyn Borough President Marty Markowitz said he was thrilled to hear that the first vehicle is to be used primarily in his borough, the City's largest.

"It proves that in a borough like Brooklyn, we need to stick together to save lives," he said. "Brooklyn is red hot, but having a plan for fire safety keeps us so cool."

From Classroom to Real World:

It's always good to be prepared for the unexpected.

And a new Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) will allow the Fire Department to be ready and responsive in the event of a catastrophic emergency.

Developed as a project of the West Point Counterterrorism Leadership Program in the spring of 2004, the COOP is a document that will provide procedures for reestablishing essential administrative, communication and support services, should primary facilities become disabled.

"[The Plan] will outline how we function in the face of adversity," said EMS Division Chief Mark Stone, who has worked on the development and imple-

mentation of the project. "It will create a framework that outlines everyone's roles and responsibilities, ultimately helping us make better decisions."

Deputy Assistant Chief of Operations Planning Joseph Pfeifer added that it will also "provide a big-picture of who does what and how it all fits together, which will be a valuable educational tool for everyone who plays a role in the Department's administration."

In late August 2005, questionnaires were sent to all bureaus, divisions and units, asking for detailed information about how each operates. The surveys requested information about everything from the primary functions and services of

the division to listing key vendors that provide services to the unit.

Approximately 40 questionnaires have already been collected. The information is now being collated to create a comprehensive picture of the functions of each unit as well as the overall continuity needs.

"We want to establish a clear chain of operation that will address the safety and welfare of all our employees," said Chief Stone.

At West Point, Division Chief Richard Tobin supervised the project's team that included Battalion Chief Robert Boyce, Battalion Chief Raymond Goldbach, Captain James Yakimovich and Division Chief Stone. The team now implementing the

High Tech Arrests

BFI finds success with Auto Fraud Squad

Fire Marshals Larry Rottkamp and Mike Bosco started investigating a burned out vehicle on Staten Island even before they located it.

They examined the neighborhood and diligently read the details sent to them by the fire officer who helped extinguish the blaze the night before.

Once they located the car, they took a 'physical,' circling it, hunched over in a ritual familiar to all fire marshals. Feverishly jotting notes, they recognize all the items that remained in the charred vehicle – the stereo, hubcaps and airbags. And due to the scope of damage, they determine the fire began with an accelerant on the front passenger seat.

Then the hunt begins.

They search for security cameras in the area, the car's identification number and eyewitnesses.

After talking for a few minutes with a man who works nearby, it's determined that the vehicle most likely does not belong to anyone living in the neighborhood and that this is possibly a case of insurance fraud.

For years, people living in the vicinity of New York City found it easy to drive their car to any of the five boroughs, set it on fire and collect on the insurance payout. It was a quick way to make a buck, with little risk of getting caught.

But times have changed.

The Bureau of Fire Investigation Auto Fraud Squad is on target make more vehicle-related arrests this year than ever in FDNY history. As of early December, the Squad made more than 100 arrests for arson, insurance fraud, fraudulent vehicle plaques and other related offenses, after investigating more than 900 suspicious fires.

"We're doing very well this year," said Assistant Chief Fire Marshal Richard McCahey. "This has been an extremely successful initiative for the Department."

What makes these numbers even more staggering is that the unit is comprised of only six fire marshals and one supervisor.

The team travels throughout the five boroughs, investigating incendiary vehicle fires called in by fire officers who deemed them suspicious, as well as other vehicle-related offenses.

Yet for Fire Marshals Rottkamp and Bosco, doing a physical and determining a



The Bureau of Fire Investigation Auto Fraud Squad has made more vehicle-related arrests this year than ever in FDNY history. The seven-member team includes (L to R) Supervising Fire Marshal Richard Barry, FM Frank Quiles, FM Mike Bosco and FM Larry Rottkamp.

motive for the fire are just the beginning. They must then speak with the Department of Sanitation, insurance companies and, eventually, question suspects. The process takes weeks, or even months, to complete. And their days can be filled with anywhere from three to 12 physical inspections of vehicles located across the five boroughs.

"There's a story behind every car fire," said Fire Marshal Bosco. "And just when you think you've heard it all, you find another one."

(Continued on page 11)

FDNY West Point Counterterrorism students put continuity planning into practice

COOP is led by Division Chiefs James Leonard and Stone, and also includes Associate Commissioner Caroline Kretz and Project Coordinator Keeley Townsend.

The team hopes to finalize the plan and have it available to present to the Fire Commissioner in the next few months. FDNY Headquarters will then have one of its first guides detailing how each unit in the Department should operate if catastrophic emergency strikes 9 Metrotech.

"By sharing pieces of this information throughout the Department, the COOP team will be able to identify 'best practices' in bureau/unit preparedness, which can serve as models for creating or improving preparedness plans in those

bureaus/units that have existing gaps," said Chief Pfeiffer.

This is only one of a handful of West Point projects that have been implemented. The program, completely funded by the Department of Homeland Security, began in January 2004.

Assistant Chief of Operations Michael Weinlein described COOP as well as many of the other projects developed by students of the West Point program to be of the highest caliber. He added that many of these reports eventually would be used as response plans or recommendations for equipment purchases.

While in general the class projects focus mainly on operational preparedness, strengthening the management infrastruc-

ture is also a priority, said Chief Weinlein.

"When [the students] entered the program, they never imagined that they'd produce something as significant as this," Chief Weinlein said. "This work has brought people from all areas together, helping increase cooperation and teamwork at all levels of the Department."

If you have an idea for a West Point project, please contact Captain Robert Higgins at higgirn@fdny.nyc.gov. The next West Point class will meet in January 2006.

NEW PERSONAL SAFETY



Chief of Training Tom Galvin and project leaders (L to R) Captain Thomas Dolan, Lieutenant Tim Kelly and Captain Michael Hayes explain the components of the Personal Safety System.

All firefighters and fire officers will receive a Personal Safety System that conveniently attaches to each member's bunker pants. By July 2006, the Department expects all members will be trained and equipped with the PSS.



Firefighters and fire officers from the 6th and 7th Divisions and SOC participate in classroom instruction on the components of the Personal Safety System and its proper use.

SYSTEM BEGINS DEPLOYMENT



After the classroom instruction, members gear-up to participate in hands-on instruction at the Academy's Fieldhouse. This lieutenant from Ladder 34 inspects his system before exiting.

Under close supervision of instructors, firefighters learn how to quickly anchor the system to make a fast escape. Members will be required to slide from both lower and higher elevations during the eight-hour training.



A firefighter begins his descent with the PSS. The new system allows the firefighter to exit a window head first using the window frame to steady his exit. This technique is modeled after one commonly used in the military.

After exiting the window, the firefighter is able to shift his body upright by swinging his leg around the window frame. A self-locking descender controls his speed down the rope to safety.



In the Borough:

Remembering His Sacrifice

Firefighter Christian Engeldrum is honored at plaque dedication

On December 2, hundreds of firefighters, police officers and military personnel came together to once again salute a true American hero.

A plaque was dedicated at Engine 66/Ladder 61 in the Bronx honoring Firefighter Christian Engeldrum who was tragically killed outside Baghdad, Iraq on November 29, 2004.

"During the three-and-a-half years that he worked at Ladder 61, serving the borough he grew up in, he proved himself a strong, talented, gutsy firefighter," said Mayor Michael Bloomberg. "He was both a steady presence in the firehouse and a dependable force on the fire ground, the kind of guy you wanted by your side when the chips were down."

Behind the podium, Firefighter Engeldrum's bunker coat hung in front of an American flag and the sign that was raised in front of the firehouse when Firefighter Engeldrum left for Iraq, reading: "We Support our Troops, Firefighter Engeldrum, L61, Now Serving."

"Firefighter Engeldrum believed that New York City and the United States of America were worth serving, worth sacrificing for and ultimately worth dying for," said Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta.

The apparatus floor was packed with well-wishers who came to support Firefighter Engeldrum's wife, Sharon; sons Sean, 19, and Royce, 17; and six month-old daughter, Kristian, who was named in his honor.

Many in attendance grew emotional when remembering their friend and co-worker.

"It's a blessing in my life to have gotten to know Christian," said Lt. Michael Bonner of Ladder 61.

Firefighter Mark Klingner of Ladder 61 added that he and Firefighter Engeldrum were the "jokesters" of the firehouse and described the lost firefighter as "one of my best friends, he was phenomenal."



(Top) Mayor Michael Bloomberg and Commissioner Scoppetta as well as (L to R) Firefighter Christian Engeldrum's son, Sean; wife, Sharon; infant daughter, Kristian; and son, Royce unveil the fallen Firefighter's plaque at Ladder 61.

(Bottom) Firefighters, members of the New York National Guard and friends join Mayor Bloomberg and Commissioner Scoppetta in paying tribute to the memory of Firefighter Engeldrum outside Ladder 61 in the Bronx.

Firefighter Engeldrum spent several years as a police officer before joining the FDNY in 1999. He was a sergeant for the New York National Guard's Fighting 69th. He was killed when a roadside bomb exploded near his Humvee.

"He was a serious guy that never took himself too seriously," said Army National Guard Captain Michael Drew. "He leaves behind a legacy of courage, commitment and sacrifice that will never be

forgotten."

And as the Engeldrum family stood to unveil the plaque, Chief of Department Peter Hayden added, "We will always remember him and the sacrifice he made. This plaque will serve as a reminder to everyone who walks through this firehouse, that there was a brave man who worked here, a man who made a huge sacrifice."

The Bronx

Lighting Up the Holiday Season

Bronx fire companies help NY Botanical Garden kick-off the holiday season

Firefighters from Engine Company 43 and Ladder Company 59 helped kick-off the holiday season on November 19 when they participated in a lighting ceremony to officially open the Holiday Train Show at the New York Botanical Garden in the Bronx.

"The Garden is really beautiful and the train display just knocks your socks off," said Captain Paul Tague of Engine 43.

What made the event even more special for these firefighters and their families was that the Gardens added a replica of their firehouse to the more than 100 New York landmarks that decorate the show.

"It looks just like the firehouse, it was an amazing likeness," Captain Tague said. "It's gorgeous."

He added that he and the rest of the firehouse was honored to also have Firefighter Michael Loughran's seven children with them to enjoy the evening. The firefighter from Engine 43 was tragically killed in a motorcycle accident this summer.

"It was so nice to be able to share the day with them," he said. "It looked like they were really enjoying themselves."

The New York Botanical Garden makes the entire train display out of natu-



This year, a replica of Engine Company 43/Ladder Company 59 was added to the New York Botanical Garden's annual Holiday Train Show in the Bronx. The model is made entirely out of natural materials.

ral materials, including tree branches, berries, mushrooms and pinecones, and all the elements are held together with tree sap.

The holiday decorations and Holiday Train Show will be running through January 9 at the Enid A. Haupt Conservatory. For more information visit their website at www.nybg.org.



Firefighters and fire officers from Engine Company 43/Ladder Company 59 were joined by the children of fallen Firefighter Michael Loughran as they helped light the New York Botanical Garden's holiday tree.



Captain Paul Tague from Engine 43 helped kick off the holiday festivities at the Garden.

Preparing and Protecting the FDNY

Third annual BIOPOD drill tests the Department's response to potential bio-terrorism



(Left) Deputy Assistant Chief of Operations Planning Joseph Pfeifer, Chief Medical Officer Dr. Kerry Kelly and Chief of Operations Salvatore Cassano discuss the third annual BIOPOD exercise. The citywide drill mimicked the release of an unnamed biological agent that can be easily passed through human contact. (Right) A firefighter receives the flu vaccine as part of the 2005 BIOPOD exercise.

It's a scenario every first responder dreads: a chemical or biological attack on the City.

But for the FDNY, a response plan is in place to ensure that all members – both fire and EMS – have the proper inoculations and resources to respond to the call for help.

"This is something we learned after September 11," said Chief of Operations Salvatore Cassano. "We need to ensure the members of the Department who are working [at the time of a biological event] would be inoculated, so they could continue to provide their services to the City. We want to take care of the first responders and their families so we can all continue to do our job."

On November 10th, the third annual BIOPOD exercise was held. All on-duty members working from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 a.m. participated in the citywide exercise that mimicked the release of an unnamed biological agent that had the capability to be easily passed through human contact. This year's exercise was conducted by health professionals from the FDNY Bureau of Health Services in conjunction with the FDNY Bureau of Operations. More than 3,000 members participated in the exercise.

"This is our way of being prepared," said FDNY Chief Medical Officer Dr.

Kerry Kelly. "It helps us make plans for the future, to ensure our members will be protected. We need to take care of our emergency responders who are our first line of defense."

Four stationary distribution points were set up and four mobile PODs (points of distribution) were deployed throughout the City's five boroughs to help the Department plan its response to chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and explosive (CBRNE) incidents.

Since the creation of BIOPOD, each year the Department has changed the exercise to test a variety of methods, and determine the most efficient and effective means of response.

In 2003, BIOPOD I was a stationary exercise set up at Sea View Hospital, distributing the flu vaccine to all on-duty members on Staten Island. However, this exercise was never completed due to the Staten Island Ferry crash.

For BIOPOD II last year, the Department utilized a mobile deployment system to distribute simulated medication across the City in response to a mock anthrax exposure (since the flu vaccine was in short supply, candy was distributed instead). The Department of Homeland Security observed the exercise, which was used to help develop a national model for first responders dealing with bio-terrorism.

Members of the New York City Police Department, Office of Emergency Management, and Department of Health and Mental Hygiene also observed at the stationary distribution point at Fire Department Headquarters, so that they could find ways to develop and expand their own agencies' response systems.

"Firefighters are always concerned about a biological event," said Deputy Assistant Chief of Operations Planning Joseph Pfeifer. "This gives firefighters confidence that we will protect them in case of an attack."

But the work was not just limited to the distribution of vaccines. Others worked diligently behind the scenes as well, to determine how they could inoculate the 13,000 other FDNY members who would not have been on-duty at the time of the biological event.

"We're trying to come up with the most efficient way to inoculate the rest of the Department, so that all members can feel safe and continue to take care of the people of New York," said Deputy Chief Robert Maynes.

Organizers added that this year's exercise had particular relevance in light of the recent Avian Flu outbreak across Europe and Asia.

"This is just one more way for us to be ready for anything," Dr. Kelly said.

Welcome to 'El Barrio'

A New Home for EMS Station 10 is unveiled

It's a new and improved 'El Barrio.'

Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta cut the ribbon on a new home for EMS Station 10, also known as 'El Barrio,' at the Metropolitan Hospital Center on October 24.

"The men and women of Station 10 now have a home they can be proud of," said Commissioner Scoppetta.

Dozens of members braved the brisk and windy morning to join Commissioner Scoppetta in the ribbon cutting ceremony. The new station, located on 99th Street and First Avenue, will house six Basic Life Support Units (one of which is a Haz-tac ambulance), one Advanced Life Support Unit (also a Haz-tac unit) and two supervisory patrol units. The staff includes 63 EMTs, 11 paramedics and 14 supervisors.

"The renovated Station 10 has improved the quality of the workplace for all its members," said EMS Captain Abdo Nahmod. "The morale at the Station has been extremely positive, and the staff is very involved with community education and other programs. We are truly a part of this El Barrio community."

New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation (HHC) managed the EMS Station's move from Metropolitan Hospi-



Commissioner Scoppetta and Chief of Department Peter Hayden join members of EMS Station 10 and representatives from Metropolitan Hospital at the ribbon-cutting ceremony officially opening the new station.

tal Center's Emergency Room to its new site at Draper Hall. The group also designed and oversaw the construction of the new, modernized station.

"I commend the EMTs and paramedics for the amazing work they do every day," said Louis Martir, Executive Director of Metropolitan Hospital Center. "They have shown their dedication to providing the best medical services for all New Yorkers."

Two such EMTs are Ryan Daley and Gary Thomas. The pair performed what Commissioner Scoppetta deemed "the Miracle on 96th Street," when they resuscitated a three-month old girl after she went into cardiac arrest last year.

At the ceremony, the two men were honored with cut glass awards for the rescue.

"A little girl is alive today because of the great work of these two EMTs," said Commissioner Scoppetta. He added that the remarkable rescue was just an example of the many that will be performed out of Station 10's new home.

Jose Sanchez, Generations+/Northern Manhattan Health Network's Senior Vice President, agreed, saying, "We're in the business of saving the lives of the young, old, sick and unlucky and people who are in the wrong place at the wrong time. Now they'll be getting treatment from the right place."

High Tech Arrests

(Continued from page 5)

"It's often like putting a puzzle together," said Fire Marshal Rottkamp.

One of their most memorable cases, they said, was an arsonist whom they recently arrested for a string of car fires along Central Park West in Manhattan. The duo alerted the NYPD when they noticed nine car fires had occurred in the area within a span of five months.

In early November, a man was arrested in connection with one case of arson. And, after talking with him for several hours, the suspect admitted to being a pyromaniac, and told the Fire Marshals of at least 20 car fires he had set in Manhattan and Brooklyn since 2003.

"He had set so many, he didn't remem-

ber where all of them were," Fire Marshal Bosco said. "Any which way he could burn something, he did."

Yet cases like this are rare, there is usually a motive behind incendiary blazes, and most occur in desolate areas of the City. The most popular locations are under bridges and railroad overpasses, as well as in isolated neighborhoods like Red Hook and Borough Park, Brooklyn; Hunts Point in the Bronx; and Long Island City, Queens.

"Each borough has its own location where you see a majority of the fires," said Fire Marshal Rottkamp.

And as these men wind through the streets of New York on their way to their next investigation, they energetically talk about how they question suspects, catch people in their own lies and get them to confess. Fire Marshals Bosco and Rot-

tkamp's enthusiasm for the job is unmistakable, and that is just what the bosses wanted.

"These fire marshals are very active and work extremely hard," said Supervising Fire Marshal Rick Barry. "It's blossomed into a great unit. And it's all due to the energy of the Marshals we have working here."

Chief McCahey launched the Squad in September 2003, after he noticed that cuts in fire marshal staffing caused most vehicle fires to go uninvestigated.

"We went from 300 marshals to 100, but the workload didn't take a two-thirds cut," he said. "So auto fires fell to the bottom of the heap."

Since its inception, Chief McCahey said the Squad has investigated more vehicle related offenses than the fire marshals were able to probe even before job cutbacks. The

(Continued on next page)

2005 ADMINISTRATIVE AWARDS



On December 8, Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta and Chief of Department Peter Hayden presented 13 Administrative Medals and Awards to individuals and units that provided exemplary service and support to the FDNY throughout the year.

Award recipients included Supervising Dispatcher Robert Carolan, who has served the Department for 59 years. Also honored were the leadership of the Incident Management Team, which served instrumental in supporting the southern states following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

Medal and Award Recipients

Administration Medal – Technology and Support Deputy Fire Commissioner Milton Fischberger

The Leon Lowenstein Award I – Incident Management Team Leadership

The Leon Lowenstein Award II – Director of Bureau Health Services Mary T. McLaughlin

George F. Mand Award – Director of Technical Services Robin Mundy-Sutton

Chief Thomas P. O'Brien Award – Tour Supervisor Robert Carolan

The Fire Commissioner's Award for Outstanding Service – Associate Commissioner Michael Vecchi

Moe Ginsberg Award – Clerical Associate Rose Bolos

James J. Johnston Memorial Medal – Project Team to revise certification process for Fire Safety Directors

Honorary Chief of Department Jack Lerch Medal – Supervisor of Mechanics Richard Cozzolino

The Honorary Fire Officers Association Medal – Bureau of Training Battalion

Chief Stephen Geraghty

Community Mayors Nicholas DeGaeta Award – Ceremonial Unit

Martin Scott Medal – Fire Marshal Daniel Caruso

The Fire Commissioner's Award for Meritorious Service – Deputy Assistant Chief of EMS Operations John S. McFarland

The Fire Commissioner's Award for Meritorious Service – Special Assistant Counsel Alexandra Fisher and Chief Investigator Eugene Samojedny

The Fire Commissioner's Award for Meritorious Service – Candidate Investigation Division

The Fire Commissioner's Award for Meritorious Service – Staff of the Ambulance Revenue Unit

The Fire Commissioner's Award for Meritorious Service – Communications Improvement Workgroup

The Fire Commissioner's Award for Meritorious Service – Court Desk and Litigation Support Unit

High Tech Arrests

(Continued from previous page)

unit also forged relationships with a number of agencies, including the NYPD and Department of Sanitation, with whom they often work to solve cases. They also work closely with police, fire and sanitation agencies in other states, to catch and arrest people who cross state lines to set fires. But, they said, the most effective alliance has been with the car insurance industry.

"We've saved insurance companies an estimated \$10 million since the Squad's

inception," said Supervising Fire Marshal Barry.

Car insurance companies such as Geico and State Farm provide the FDNY with a variety of tools to help them catch offenders, such as Blackberry wireless devices that can run license plates and high-tech laptops.

But the Fire Marshals stress that the individuals they arrest are not always hardened criminals.

"We're not dealing with typical criminals here," said Chief McCahey. "Some of these people are at a difficult place in their life where they think [arson] is a good option."

In the future he hopes to double the Squad, but for now, Chief McCahey is simply pleased to have such a successful unit.

"The Auto Fraud Squad would not work without the Marshals in it," he said. "They cover all five boroughs, seven days a week and work long hours. I can't ask for much more than that."



In August, the Squad's fire marshals investigated this burned out 2005 Lexus in an isolated area of Queens.



VIEW

POINT

DECEMBER 2005

NEWSLETTER OF THE NYC FIRE DEPARTMENT

FIRE DEPARTMENT
CITY OF NEW YORK
9 METROTECH CENTER
BROOKLYN, NEW YORK 11201

Michael R. Bloomberg, Mayor, City of New York
Nicholas Scoppetta, NYC Fire Commissioner

FRANCIS X. GRIBBON
DEPUTY COMMISSIONER

S. PAUL ANTONELLI
PUBLICATIONS DIRECTOR

VIRGINIA LAM
EDITOR

EMILY RAHIMI
SENIOR WRITER

THOMAS ITTYCHERIA
GRAPHICS / LAYOUT

FDNY PHOTO UNIT
PHOTO SERVICES

ViewPoint is published entirely in-house by the FDNY
Office of Public Information

FDNY
1865-2005
A 140 YEAR HISTORY
OF COMMITMENT,
COURAGE & COMPASSION