

THE METRO INSIDER...



Volume 7, Issue 9

September 2014

GRAND TRAVERSE METRO EMERGENCY SERVICES AUTHORITY

LET'S LEARN MORE AND BE PREPARED BETTER FIRE PREVENTION WEEK KICK-OFF

Grand Traverse Metro Fire Dept.
Annual Open House in our parking lot and store!



**Saturday October
4th**

**From 10am till 2pm
FREE HOT DOGS AND
BEVERAGE**

While supply lasts



**See the Fire Dept. Equipment up close and meet our
brave firefighters and in addition see and talk to these
safety and emergency participants..**



Message from Chief Patrick J. Parker

As summer was winding down, the department was already winding up for 2015. This time of the year is budget season and we are busy with public hearings to set the millage rate which is the majority of our operating revenue. Actually this is a process that starts in early June. Fortunately for us, we have citizens and township leaders that support our mission and have allowed us to have the tools to properly and safely perform our jobs. Foremost in our budget is an emphasis on our people. Our board and partner townships have recognized that our members are the department's most important asset. The board has placed a huge responsibility on all of us to protect their most important asset that being our citizens. We must be ever vigilant to not let them down and to put our best effort forward on every call.

Some highlights of the budget are cost of living increases for our employees, the approval to move forward with our new Acme fire station, and a new pull vehicle/squad for Station 1. We hope to come out of the ground on a new fire station in the spring. All three townships have approved the budget, we now face one last hurdle that being the Metro board. The Metro Authority Board preliminarily approved the budget pending all three township's approval. Hopefully it's just a formality.

Our Super Bowl is the annual kick-off to Fire Prevention week on October 4th at Home Depot. We decided this year to partner with one of our biggest supporters instead of at one of the stations. Stop by and see our new fire prevention inflatable smoke house. It should be an incredible Saturday. I hope to see all of you there.



Save the date for the Metro Awards Banquet at on October 21st at Timber Ridge. Come and support the anniversary awards, swearing in of new members and great food and fellowship.

Until next time, Be Safe Out There and Thank you!

Chief Parker



New Payroll System Coming Soon!!!

To All Metro Employees:

Metro is moving our current payroll system over to a new company where all employees will now be able to login to a program to enter timesheets, print paystubs, update tax information, and so much more. There is even a mobile phone app that will allow you to submit timesheets. More importantly, we will have so many more options with reporting in Human Resources. Our target start date will now be November so please keep an eye out for mandatory training on this program. All employees will be required to utilize it. As a department, in order to save money and the environment, we will be moving over to a paperless payroll system as well. This means all employees will be moved over to automatic deposit or be issued a debit card. More information will be forthcoming in the next month so please stay tuned for this system change.

How Do Your D's Stack UP!

Contributed by: Beth Pryde, GT Metro Wellness Coordinator

Well it seems to be official, our summer (was that what season we were in?) is over. Clouds have moved in with the rain, and the sun has gone on sabbatical. So much for feeling the warmth of the sun's rays while soaking it up on the beaches and boats. In fact, if you haven't heard, those weather "experts" are forecasting another humdinger of a winter. More clouds, only bringing much snow and cold temps. Sorry for the doom and gloom, but it brings me to my point for this month: lack of sun = low vitamin D levels = health risks for many disease processes. Some of these are believed to be: cancers, heart disease, and bone disorders such as osteomalacia or rickets. So the questions are; what determines a low vitamin D level, what can we do to prevent this, and how do we increase our level to decrease our risks?

Let's start with what is Vitamin D. It is a fat soluble nutrient (Meaning your body will store it in its fat. Makes sense!) that helps support cell health in most all of our body systems. It is most known as a bone and teeth vitamin, in conjunction with calcium, to make them stronger. It is little less known as a major support in blood cell and blood flow health, immune health, muscle health, and hormone regulation.

What determines a low Vitamin D level? First and foremost if you are suffering from symptoms. For example; long standing aching muscles, weakness, lack of balance, bone pain or bone breakage. Any of these symptoms should prompt a visit to your Dr. to determine your Vitamin D levels. A hydroxy D blood level of 50 nmol/L or above is considered to be a normal. It is broadly believed in the medical profession that if a person lives above the 34th degree latitude, you should consider yourself to be deficient and have your levels checked and monitored by your physician. An optimal time of year to have it checked is during January or February.

What can we do to prevent a deficiency? It is suggested that 10 minutes/day of unblocked UV sun rays during high sun times would allow our bodies to produce adequate Vit. D levels during summer months. However in this day and age that "little" amount is hard to come by. Food sources higher in natural Vit. D are cod liver oil, sword fish, salmon and tuna. Eggs, sardines and beef liver are other lower level sources. Foods fortified are; milk, orange juice, cereals, and yogurt and butter. Most of us don't get enough this way either, so this is where supplements come in. Dosages ranging from 600 to 4,000mg (as an upper limit) for individuals age 9-70 can be recommended based on individual blood levels.

Much of the research out on Vitamin D is still in being reviewed and debated. But there is much positive and encouraging data that indicate normal blood levels may actually help prevent cancers such as breast, colon, and prostate, and treat diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, and multiple sclerosis and other autoimmune disorders. At the very least, having normal levels of Vitamin D will increase bone strength, and decrease aching muscles and bones, as well as decrease cholesterol levels, and the risk for early onset osteomalacia or osteoporosis. And yes Men do develop these too.



The final word: Get outdoors when the sun is shining, Eat a variety of healthy foods, Talk to your doctor at your next appointment about getting your vitamin D levels checked and see how your D stacks up. Remember 50nmol/L or above is what your aiming for.

LET'S LEARN MORE AND BE PREPARED BETTER FIRE PREVENTION WEEK KICK-OFF

When: October 4th 10am to 2pm

Where: In The Store

What: In Our Store Seminars...

10:00 Opening Ceremony – Chief Parker

10:30 Home Escape Planning – Metro Fire

11:00 Smart 911 Info - Central Dispatch

11:30 ABC's of Smoke Alarms - Metro Fire

Noon Snowmobile Safety - GT Sherriff Dept

1:00 Get Ahead of the Winter Freeze - Metro

1:30 TART- Bike and Pedestrian Safety

2:00 Cooking Safety - For Kids and Adults



* North Flight Helicopter Weather Depending



3rd Annual Recognition Awards Ceremony

It's that time of year again and we are preparing for our 3rd Annual Recognition Awards Ceremony to honor our members for accomplishments over the year. Please join us on **October 21st, 2014** for hors d'oeuvres at 6:30pm with the ceremony to start at 7:00pm. Keep a look out for the location, we are still working on that.



Firefighter of the Year (FFOY) is recognized Metro wide and our Captains are sending nominations to our Chief Officers for their decision.

Yearly Service Awards are being presented as well. Please check your email in September as you will be notified if you are getting a Yearly Service Award.

If you have any suggestions or recommendations for nominations on other awards, please contact Chief Parker, Capt. Holliday, or Lt. Francisco with your requests.

Please join us on Oct. 21st, bring your family as this is a time for recognition to our employees for a job well done throughout the year!

GRAND TRAVERSE METRO EMERGENCY SERVICES AUTHORITY

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Grand Traverse Metro Emergency Services Authority