



# On The Scene

## Plainfield Fire Protection District

Volume 4, Issue 1

Spring 2016

### MISSION STATEMENT

THE PLAINFIELD FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT IS DEDICATED TO PRESERVING THE QUALITY OF LIFE BY SAVING LIVES AND PROTECTING PROPERTY THROUGH EFFICIENT EMERGENCY RESPONSE AND PREVENTION.

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Are you prepared for weather emergencies and disasters? Prepare a Family Emergency Plan and an Emergency Kit. For more information visit: [GearUpGetReady.org](http://GearUpGetReady.org)

### From the Chief



David S. Riddle, Chief

Spring has sprung! We all know that with nicer weather more and more of our neighbors and children will be running, walking, riding bikes and generally enjoying the opportunities to get out of the house. Please put down the cell phone and pay close attention as you drive, especially around our schools. Distracted driving crashes and injuries are on the rise and texts and phone calls can wait. Stop the texts, stop the wrecks.

Our new training facilities on the headquarters campus are up and running now and have seen extensive use which will increase as time goes by. We've partnered with Joliet Junior College to provide in-kind services for the use of these state-of-the-art facilities for the students in the fire science curriculum and look forward to expanding our partnerships with other education institutions, such as the University of Illinois Fire Service Institute as well as the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, MD.

The Plainfield Fire Department has established the John D. Eichelberger Scholarship program for college bound seniors who reside within the Plainfield Fire Protection District. Working with School District 202, a committee of FD staff began the difficult process of deciding upon 4 deserving students who will receive \$500 each to go toward college expenses. The presentation ceremonies will take place during the school district's Senior Honors Night on May 11<sup>th</sup>. Congratulations to all who applied. This scholarship program is provided through generous donations at various FD fundraising events including the annual Turkey Raffle.

It is with sadness that I recognize the sudden death of our Emergency Vehicle Technician (EVT), Mike Ludemann. Mike was a gift to our fire district and this community and we lost him way too soon. Mike's skills and abilities were unmatched and as a testament to that, he was recognized as the EVT of the Year for Illinois in 2010. Mike was the go-to EVT in the area and would field calls and requests for help from his peers on a regular basis. He was on-call 24 hours a day and would drop whatever he was doing to take care of issues with our fleet whenever notified. Please keep Mike, his wife Mary and the rest of his family in your thoughts and prayers as the days ahead unfold. RIP Mike, you'll be forever missed.

Our quarterly "Chat With The Chiefs" is scheduled for April 27<sup>th</sup>, at 7pm here at our headquarters facility. This is an opportunity for our residents to hear brief presentations from Commander Anthony Novak from the Plainfield Police Department (filling in for Chief Konopek who won't be in attendance), Chief Mike Veseling from the Oswego Fire Protection District and myself, as well as ask any questions concerning our various operations. We look forward to meeting you then. (continued on page 2)



EVT Mike Ludemann

### Severe Weather Season, Are You Prepared?

Statistics from the Illinois Emergency Management Agency ([www.illinois.gov/iema](http://www.illinois.gov/iema)) rank Illinois as fifth in the U.S. for the most tornados per square mile. Most Illinois tornados occur between April 1st and June 30th between the hours of 3 pm and 10 pm however, tornados can and do occur throughout the year at various times. In 2015 there were 69 tornados reported in Illinois which resulted in 2 fatalities, 27 injuries and more than \$50 million in property damage. Illinois also averages 550 reports of wind and large hail damage from severe storms annually. Driving across flooded roads caused 14 fatalities in Illinois during 2015. Don't drown, turn around! Never drive on flooded roads.

Be prepared for common forms of severe weather in Illinois. A "watch" means conditions are favorable for the development of severe weather the watch was issued for. A "warning" means the severe weather event has developed and is heading towards the warned areas. Plan ahead and know how to react during severe weather events. For more information about our weather including safety tips, please visit [www.weather.gov/chicago](http://www.weather.gov/chicago).

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## From the Chief

(continued from page 1) With spring comes April showers and we should all be prepared for the severe weather that comes with it. Have a plan and prepare for the worst. Think about places of refuge in your home, where you shop and where you work. Severe weather can strike anytime of the day or night. See the following article about severe weather preparedness and as always,

Be careful out there....  
David S. Riddle, Chief

## Tornado Warnings and Severe Weather Alerts



Throughout the area there are tornado warning sirens that will sound during a tornado warning to alert people outside that they need to immediately seek shelter indoors. Because the warning sirens are intended to alert people that are outdoors they cannot always be heard while inside. When severe weather is approaching it is best to monitor multiple sources for severe weather alerts and warnings. Activate "Wireless Emergency Alerts" on your cell phone, contact your cell phone carrier for more information about activating Wireless Emergency Alerts. Subscribe to severe weather alerts on your computers, monitor local television and radio stations and have a NOAA All-Hazard Weather Radio. When the outdoor warning sirens sound they will stay activated for 3 to 5 minutes; when they stop that does not mean that the storm threat has ended. There is no "all clear" signal or siren after a storm threat has passed; please monitor local television and radio stations along with your NOAA All-Hazard Weather Radio for updates on the location and path of a storm to determine if the threat has moved away from our area. The warning sirens and severe weather alerts are a time to seek shelter from the storm, do not run outside to look at or photograph the storm. Please also avoid calling 9-1-1 to ask about the sirens, the storm's path or it's intensity; monitor local television and radio stations along with your NOAA All-Hazard Weather Radio for this information. Please take the time to plan ahead for severe weather, update, or create, your family emergency plan and household emergency kit. Be prepared and have a plan!

## Hoverboard Safety

Hoverboards are very popular but some have been linked to fires around the nation. To help prevent a hoverboard fire only purchase a hoverboard that has the seal of an independent testing laboratory. Read and follow all of the manufacturer's directions for proper use and storage. An adult should be responsible for charging the hoverboard. Never leave a charging hoverboard unattended and never leave a hoverboard plugged in overnight. Only use the original charging cord that came with the hoverboard. Immediately stop using your hoverboard if it overheats. Some hoverboard fires have involved the Lithium-Ion battery or charger. Be on the lookout for indications that your hoverboard may have a problem. Things to watch for include: leaking fluids, excessive heat, odor, sparking and/or smoke. Immediately stop using a hoverboard that is exhibiting any of the above listed problems and call 9-1-1. Only if it is safe, move the hoverboard outside and away from anything that will burn. When riding in a car, keep the hoverboard where you can see it in case it shows signs of a problem. For more information please visit [nfpa.org/press-room/news-releases/2015/nfpa-issues-fire-safety-warnings-on-hover-boards](http://nfpa.org/press-room/news-releases/2015/nfpa-issues-fire-safety-warnings-on-hover-boards). Always wear the proper personal safety equipment when operating a hoverboard.



## Outdoor Fire Safety



Red Flag Warnings issued by the National Weather Service are not as common for our area as they are out west however on occasion they are issued for our area. Warm, dry and windy weather creates the conditions that are favorable for the development of brush, grass and mulch fires. Fed by high winds and dry vegetation, these type of fires spread rapidly and can be very difficult to bring under control and extinguish. To help prevent these fires cut and clear areas of tall dry grass on your property. Provide enough water to grass and shrubs to keep them green and healthy. Prune trees and shrubs of dead or low hanging branches. Do not stack firewood next to your home or any other structure. Dispose of cigarettes properly and always completely extinguish anything involving open flames such as fire pits, barbecue grills, citronella candles and torches. For more information about outdoor fire safety please visit [www.ready.gov/wildfires](http://www.ready.gov/wildfires).

**Only use propane and charcoal barbecue grills outdoors and away from anything combustible!**

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### Plainfield Fire Profiles: Lieutenant Eric Jensen



Lieutenant Eric Jensen always knew he wanted to be a firefighter, he was drawn to this career since he was a child because he grew up with several family members that were firefighters. Eric grew up in the southwest suburb of Hickory Hills and first became a volunteer firefighter in 1999 while he was attending college. In 2004 Eric moved to Plainfield and became a volunteer firefighter here. In 2006 Eric was hired with the first group of full-time Firefighter/Paramedic's in the Plainfield Fire Protection District. In 2008 Eric was promoted to the position of Lieutenant where he supervises a shift of Firefighter/Paramedic's assigned to Fire Station Two.

In addition to being a Lieutenant Eric also serves as the Fire District's Training Officer, is the Hazardous Materials Team Leader and is a Fire Investigator. What Eric likes best about his career is that every day presents a different challenge, being able to help determine the cause and origin of a fire as a Fire Investigator and being part of the overall fire service. His most memorable call was when he was able to meet and have lunch with a cardiac arrest patient that was successfully resuscitated. Eric has an Associates Degree in Fire Service Management from Moraine Valley Community College and a Bachelor of Arts Degree from St. Ambrose University. He resides in Plainfield with his wife Amy and their 3 children. Eric asks that everyone please learn CPR so you'll be able to help someone in their time of need.

### Have you Ever Wondered?

Why do emergency responders sometimes turn off their lights and sirens while on their way to an emergency?

Sometimes you may see an emergency vehicle going down the road with their lights and sirens on and then apparently for no reason they turn the lights and sirens off and continue driving normally. You may wonder what was that all about? Sometimes a call for assistance is placed that requires a response from multiple emergency vehicles and on occasion, the first arriving vehicles will determine that they can handle the emergency without additional assistance, so they will tell the other responding vehicles that they can return. It is at that time that you'll notice them turning off their lights and sirens and driving normally. This allows the responding vehicles to be available for other emergency calls that may also come in.

If you have a question please call us at 815-436-5335 or send an email to [onthescene@plainfieldfpd.com](mailto:onthescene@plainfieldfpd.com), you might see your question featured in a future edition of On the Scene.

### Fire & Life Safety for Kids



Wearing bike helmets saves lives!

Riding your bike is fun. To enjoy riding your bike without getting hurt follow these safety rules: avoid riding your bike at dusk or after dark. Small children should not ride bikes without adult supervision. No riding on busy streets and always stop at stop signs. Before crossing a street always stop to make sure its safe to cross and walk your bike across the street as you cross the street at the corner.

If you're old enough to ride your bike in the street, always obey all traffic signs and laws. When riding in the street, ride on the right side of the street and use the correct hand signals for stopping and turning. Use a backpack for carrying items so your hands are on the handlebars at all times.



When Thunder Roars, Go Indoors!

Spring is a great time to play outdoors and enjoy the warm weather. Spring also brings with it rain, thunderstorms and sometimes severe weather. Remember the saying "when thunder roars, go indoors!" Whenever there's a thunderstorm you need to go indoors to stay safe from lightning. When playing outdoor sports where there is not an indoor place to go, you can seek shelter inside a vehicle with a hard top (not a convertible top) to protect you from the lightning. Don't go back outside to play until 30 minutes after the last clap of thunder. Sometimes there's just too much rain and the water has nowhere to go and floods happen. Never play or swim in flooded areas. The floodwater current can be very strong and sweep you off your feet and carry you downstream. You also cannot see open storm drains under the water. Be safe and stay out of flood water. For more weather safety visit [www.weather.gov/owlie/](http://www.weather.gov/owlie/).

For more information call us at 815-436-5335 or visit us on the web at [www.plainfieldfpd.com](http://www.plainfieldfpd.com)

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## ECRWSS POSTAL PATRON

You may receive this newsletter even if you live outside the boundaries of the Plainfield Fire Protection District.  
In order to save on costs, everyone in certain carrier routes will receive this mailing.

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### Dates to Remember

May 8th, Mother's Day

May 21st, Armed Forces Day

May 30th, Memorial Day

June 14th, Flag Day

June 19th, Father's Day

June 20th, First Day of Summer

July 4th, Independence Day

### Save the Date!

Fire Prevention Week  
Open House!

Saturday, October 8th  
from 11 am to 2 pm  
at Fire Station 2,  
23806 W. 135th Street.

There will be displays,  
demonstrations, raffles  
and a hot dog lunch.

We look forward to  
having you join us at  
our open house!

Fire Prevention Week  
is October 9-15, 2016!



**Trampoline Safety:** The American Academy of Pediatrics states that thousands of people are injured on trampolines each year. Most injuries include broken bones, concussions, head and neck injuries, sprains/strains, bruises, scrapes and cuts. If you choose to have a trampoline, the AAP recommends that adult supervision be provided at all times, only allow one jumper on the trampoline at a time, don't allow somersaults on the trampoline, make sure that the trampoline has adequate protective padding and that it is in good condition and appropriately placed. Inspect the trampoline regularly and immediately make needed repairs. For more information please visit [www.healthychildren.org](http://www.healthychildren.org).