

SMOKE SIGNALS



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PREPARING FOR AN EMERGENCY By: Daniel L. Ingram, Firefighter/Treasurer

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Everyone has heard the saying, “expect the unexpected.” This is especially true in the world of emergency services. We have to train and be prepared for any number of different scenarios, some which may be life-threatening, and we must be ready to respond at a moment’s notice. That, however, is not the typical mindset for those outside the emergency medical community. Nevertheless, it is equally important for members of our area to be prepared when an emergency arises so they can not only better help themselves, but also be able to quickly provide firefighters, police, EMS, and other emergency personnel the appropriate information so they can operate efficiently and with the highest level of care.

search will yield a number of great ideas.

Another vital step that can be taken to prepare for an emergency is to post emergency phone numbers on every phone in your household. According to the National Emergency Number Association (NENA), there are an estimated 240 million calls made to 9-1-1 in the U.S. each year and, in many areas, 70% or more are from wireless devices. These days, everyone has a cell phone. On many phones, but especially the iPhone, there are places to input your medical information, such as specific medical conditions, allergies, age, blood type, height, weight, and emergency contact information. At a minimum, you should expressly identify in your contact list on your phone who your emergency contacts are and provide alternate phone numbers for those individuals. Having this information readily available during an emergency can make all the difference.



According to the American College of Emergency Physicians and American Red Cross, there are several things you can do to be prepared for an emergency. First, keep a well-stocked first aid kit at home, work, and in your car. Your typical first aid kit should include things like a one-way breathing barrier, over-the-counter medications such as aspirin, acetaminophen, and ibuprofen, allergy medicine, such as an antihistamine or Epi-Pen, bandages, gauze, scissors, antibiotic ointment, antiseptic wipes, tweezers, and latex-free gloves. This is by no means an all-inclusive list. For more items that would be good to include in your kit, a simple Google



Also, parents should be proactive in teaching their children how to use their phone to make emergency phone calls. Phones have passcodes, fingerprint identification, and any number of other protective measures to keep people out, but this also prevents our younger generation from being able to access our phone if we are unable. Many households do not utilize landline telephones anymore, which makes it even more imperative that our kids have at least a general understanding of how to unlock our

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Special thanks to outgoing Auxiliary President Gary Morgan for his faithful leadership and ongoing support.

cell phones and be able to dial 9-1-1.

Similarly, in an emergency, you should have available family medical information, consent forms, and a list of medications taken by all family members. Family medical information includes a history of surgeries, hospitalizations and serious illnesses, such as chronic asthma or diabetes, as well as a list of physicians regularly seen by the patient. Emergency medical personnel also need a list of medications, including any allergies to medications, so they can provide the proper treatment without further complicating the patient's recovery. Completed medical consent forms for you and your family are also important because these documents appoint someone you trust to authorize medical treatment in an emergency situation if you are unable to give consent. If you have children, complete a medical consent form for each child and provide them to all caregivers (i.e., babysitters, daycares, etc.). Medical consent forms are available online for little or no cost, and can also be found at local medical facilities.

The next thing you can do to be prepared for an emergency is to take classes in CPR and first aid. These classes are important for everyone, but especially for those with young children, elderly parents, or



who work in a dangerous profession, such as heavy machinery operation or farming. What are you going to do if your child is choking or drowns? What about if one of your parents is having a heart attack or a stroke, or your friend on the neighboring property gets an

arm stuck in a farm implement? These are awful scenarios to envision, but they do happen in our area, whether we are ready for them or not. Calling for help is extremely important, but time is of the essence and you are the first line of defense in determining the outcome. If you are interested in attending a CPR or First Aid course, you should contact Washington Regional Medical Center, the American Red Cross, or Northwest Arkansas Community College (NWACC) for more information.

Lastly, you need to be familiar with a few common warning signs of a medical emergency. These indicators include, but are not limited to, difficulty breathing/shortness of breath, chest or upper abdominal pain or pressure lasting two (2) minutes or more, unusual abdominal pain, fainting, sudden dizziness, and weakness, changes in vision, difficulty speaking, confusion or changes in mental status, unusual behavior, difficulty

walking, any sudden or severe pain, uncontrolled bleeding, severe or persistent vomiting or diarrhea, coughing or vomiting blood, and suicidal or homicidal ideations, among other things. Since not every urgent situation presents itself in the form of obvious trauma, being familiar with these signs and symptoms and seeking immediate medical care can significantly decrease response time by medical personnel and increase the chances of a full recovery.

Hopefully you and your family never require our services, but if so, there is no substitute for being prepared for such an emergency. Our friends, family, neighbors, and others just passing through rely on all of us to make a difference, and with just a little bit of foresight and training, each of us can do our part.

SUPPORTER SHIRTS

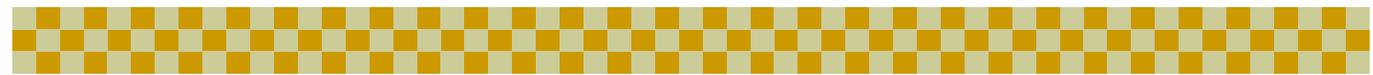


We are selling Wedington Fire Department Supporter T-shirts again this year but in a new and improved color and with more sizes.

Adults: \$10 Youth: \$8



Our 3rd **Safety Awareness Day** was another huge success! The Washington County Sheriff's Department came out and did ID cards for all the kids, and everyone was cooled off with the free ice cream sundaes and lemonade. The kids also really enjoyed the Springdale Fire Department Smoke Trailer and Washington County and University of Arkansas K-9 demonstrations. We would like to send out a big thank you to all the local departments that participated in this year's event, and hope everyone is able to come out again next year.



CALLING ALL VOLUNTEERS!

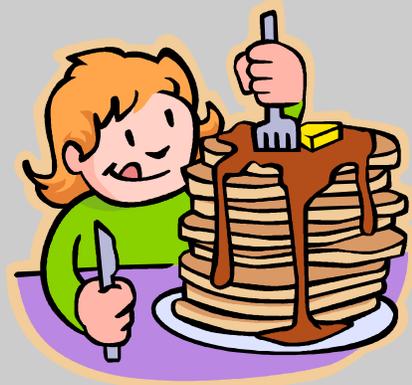
The Wedington Fire Department is always looking for good people who want to be part of a team, help others, and are motivated to serve their community. Protecting and serving is the name of the game, and if you are willing to work hard and learn, we will provide the training you need to be successful. Whether you want to be a firefighter who puts "the wet stuff on the red stuff," or you want to be on the Auxiliary and raise money for the department, we'll find the right spot for your skill set! If this sounds like something you would be interested in, please call the Wedington Fire Department at (479) 443-7802. We look forward to hearing from you!

Country Breakfast

Saturday, September 24th

6 am to 11 am

Highway 16 West



(Pancakes, scrambled eggs, biscuits & gravy, bacon, sausage, drinks)

Adults \$6.00 / Children 6-12 \$2.00 / Under 6 Free



Get a reflective address sign today and help us find your house during an emergency. Email your order to firedept@wedington.org or call us at 479-443-7802. Or submit an order to us at our country breakfast on Sept. 24th. The signs are only \$10 each and can be hung horizontally or vertically.



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