



Station 61: 17061 Rolling Creek Dr., Houston, TX., 77090

Station 62: 4362 Louetta Rd., Spring, TX., 77388

Station 63: 21455 Imperial Valley, Houston, TX., 77073

FALL IS APPROACHING, you sense it in the air and feel it in your bones. Standing there looking out your window getting ready to enjoy the cooler weather after an extremely sweltering summer and slowly your gaze moves up the tree noticing all those leaves.

All those leaves are going to be on the ground you are thinking. Then you look at your perfectly manicured lawn and realize it is about to become covered with thousands of leaves.

You picture yourself raking the leaves and then you wonder, what do I do with a giant pile of leaves again? A quick thought, I will burn those leaves this year instead of having 20 plastic sacks filled with leaves!

WAIT! - STOP! - ASK? Before you burn...

There are rules for open flames in subdivisions, within unincorporated areas of Harris County for Ponderosa Fire Departments and the subdivisions they serve. Open flame fires are PROHIBITED to keep our communities safe.

So, what do you do with all those leaves? Here are a few suggestions:

- Mow and mulch,
- Compost,
- Bag,
- Blast them with a blower
- Onto a tarp for easy clean up.
- You can also put leaves and small branches in a yard waste bin or a paper lawn and leaf bag for trash pickup.
- Remember to cut your branches into 4ft or less lengths for pickup from your local trash service.
- NEVER allow clippings or leaves to enter the storm drain on the street and please inform your yard crew.

Keep our communities fire and smoke free by planning for fall clean-up which doesn't include an open flame. Your local Ponderosa Fire Departments thank you for helping to keep yourself and your neighbors safe from the damages of an uncontrolled fire.

Ponderosa Fire Department Station #62

“The Rowdy Bunch”



World Trade Center beam serves as 9/11 reminder. For Ponderosa Firefighters.

September 11, 2019, the Houston Chronicle ran in the Spring Observer an article about Ponderosa Station #62 written by Paul Wedding, a staff writer.

Outside of the Ponderosa Fire Department's Station 62 is an old, rusted beam, which once belonged to one of the 110-story towers of the World Trade Center that stood high in the Manhattan skyline.

This artifact sits outside of their station at 4362 Louetta Rd. Like many others across the country, the beam serves as a reminder to the community of what happened on September 11, 2001.

"It's our daily reminder," Ponderosa Fire Department Health and Safety Officer Hunt Whitten said, "It's also having a place for the community to come. When you're in Spring, Texas and you've got an artifact right here, it just makes it real for you."

"The beam is one of about 2,000 shared to public entities across the country, but this is one of the few in Texas," Whitten said. "It was brought to the fire station in June of 2011, where it has stayed since."

Whitten added, "The attackers who destroyed the World Trade Center wanted to tear the country apart, but it had the opposite effect." "The beam symbolized every state in the country as the pieces were spread about the nation." "The whole point of why they distributed the beams was to get it throughout the United States and make it real to all who live in this great nation."

When the attack of the World Trade Center happened, Whitten was 12 years old, and it served as a catalyst for him to eventually become a firefighter.



As Whitten observed the attack at his early age, he mentioned, “It was a new outlook.” “Everyone else is running out, and these responders, firefighters, are running in!”

One Ponderosa firefighter, Mark Calub, from New York originally, had a cousin who worked in one of the towers and experienced having to walk home, back to New Jersey. Calub reminisce, “They shut out the entire island, all the bridges were closed off.” “They wouldn’t let anyone in, but you could leave.” Calub remembers the World Trade Center before the attack and has pictures from inside the original building.

When the beam was commemorated, Whitten recollected that many first responders of the community come out to the artifact at the station, and some brought flowers to place by it.

Ponderosa Captain Randy Garza stated, “It was very meaningful to see members of the community come out, and it serves as a reminder for why I do what I do with the Fire Department.”

*“When we see the community come out here and reach out to us, it does remind us of why we are doing our job.”
Garza declared, “I’m not doing it for me, I’m doing it for the community.”*



Emergency Services District #28

Effective September 1, 2019

the Ponderosa Fire Department (Emergency Services District #28), achieved the Public Protection Class (PPC) rating of 2. This is the Insurance Services Office (ISO) nationwide community fire protection rating system that utilizes water supplies, communications and fire department capabilities that affects most insurance policy costs, and in our case will reduce most insurance rates. You should contact your insurance agent soon to obtain the savings.

The PPC rating places us in the top 4% of our nation's fire and rescue agencies.

Chief Fred Windisch stated, "We have consistently built our response system with the citizen in mind as our priority: this rating demonstrates reliability, professionalism and capabilities that are truly the best of the best. Our volunteers, part time and full-time paid firefighters always believe service and citizen first."

The PPC system uses many components evaluating various aspects of the response system. A "10" rating is no fire department, and a "1" rating is the highest.

The community rating is just that, and our wonderful water districts are very dependable and capable, our system is second to none, and our fire department meets or exceeds national standards in most categories.

The result is dependable emergency services because when our citizens call 9-1-1, they are having the worst day of their lives.

The boards of directors of the Ponderosa Volunteer Fire Association and Emergency Services District #28 are totally focused on service provisions.

According to the Harris County Appraisal District website, the zip codes 77090, 77388, 77014, and 77073 are in ESD 28 and are governed by a board of five commissioners elected for a 4-year term and reside in their respective ESD.

ESD's can operate their own fire and Emergency Medical Service (EMS) agency, or they can contract with a service provider.

The ESD board of directors/citizens of the community is dedicated to making the right decisions within the resources available. The list of accomplishments is many; three award winning fire stations, top notch equipment and paid personnel who are the best individuals that understand our services mission.

This level of capability does not just occur, it is the result of careful long-range planning with an incredibly supportive board of directors, continuing education, and the unwavering support of the community we serve. ESD#28 has met the challenges of the past and has the commitment to do so in the future.

Visit our websites at:

www.ponderosavfd.org,

www.esd28.com

Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/PonderosaFD/>.



How Shopping Online Helps Our ESD#28 Community

Written by Harris County ESD #28 Treasurer, Ken Koenig

It's the Sales Tax and YOU have the Control.

We, the residents of our fire districts, can control which districts receive a portion of the 8.25% sales tax we must pay.

Sales tax benefits the districts where the title passes, or the sale is made. If the merchandise is invoiced to your home, the districts where your home is located will benefit from the sales tax you pay. However, if you go to a store to purchase goods, the district where the store is located will benefit from the sales tax you pay.

The sales tax portion you control, 1.00% benefits Harris County ESD #28, in areas that are not in Limited Purpose Annexations, which funds the Ponderosa Volunteer Fire Department (PVFA). The PVFA directly benefits you, as this is your Fire Department and funding for the PVFA comes exclusively from our taxes, not state taxes or other means.

Here is how it works for those who like the technical details. When you purchase goods in Texas, the governing district receives a local portion of the sales tax collected. So...

If I purchased a watch in person at Dillard's located at the Galleria, the sales tax benefits the State of Texas, the City of Houston, and the Houston Metro Transit Authority (MTA).

Here is the breakdown of the sales tax:
Maximum collected 8.25%.
Sent to the State of Texas -6.25%
Sent to ESD's, Metro's, and special Purpose Districts -2.00%

Whereas, if I purchase the watch online from Dillard's and it is invoiced to my home, the sales tax benefits the State of Texas, Houston MTA, and Harris County ESD#28.

Here is the breakdown of the sales tax:
Maximum collected 8.25%.
Sent to the State of Texas -6.25%
Sent to Houston Metro Transit Authority -1.00%
Sent to Harris County ESD#28 -1.00% with few exceptions.

So, by buying and purchasing online and having the product delivered to your home, 1.00% of the sales tax you pay will be brought back to benefit our community.

Here are some more examples of how sales tax is divided between the government entities:

Option #1- A Dallas resident goes to Eva's Mexican Restaurant and buys dinner; their bill is subject to 8.25% sales tax. The sales tax received by the merchant is distributed to the following tax districts even though the service was provided within ESD#28's district:

Maximum Collected 8.25%
State of Texas -6.25%
Houston Metro-1.00%
Ponderosa Forest Utility District -.50%
City of Houston -.50%

Option #2(*)- A resident of Ponderosa Forest goes to Food Town and purchases taxable items, (remember food is tax-exempt). The sales tax received by the merchant is distributed in the following tax districts:

Maximum Collected 8.25%
State of Texas -6.25%
Houston Metro -1.00%
Harris County WCID#91 -.50%
City of Houston -.50%

Option #3- A resident of Ponderosa Forest calls Food Town to purchase taxable items to be delivered and invoiced to their home address (food is tax-exempt). The sales tax received by the merchant is distributed in the following tax districts:

Maximum Collected 8.25%
State of Texas -6.25%
Houston Metro -1.00%
Harris County ESD #28 -1.00%

Option #4(*)- A resident of Ponderosa Forest goes to Kroger on Kuykendahl and purchase taxable items (food is tax-exempt). The sales tax received by the merchant is distributed in the following tax districts:

Maximum Collected 8.25%
State of Texas -6.25%
Houston Metro -1.00%
Harris County ESD #28 -1.00%

(*) Option #2 and #4 differ because Food Town is in a limited-purpose annexation district. The limited purpose annexation district law allowed for the City of Houston to claim areas outside their city limits for sales tax collection. Still, they had to split their 1.00% sales tax with the local MUD.

<https://www.houstontx.gov/planning/Annexation>

You hear a loud...

BOOM!

Don't Go Up In **SMOKE!**



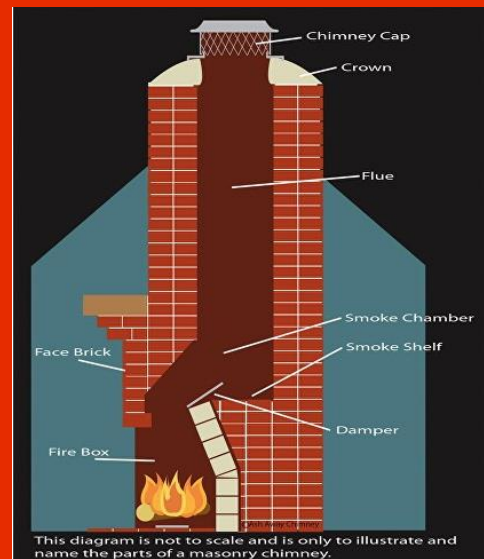
The National Fire Protection Association (<https://www.nfpa.org/>) recommends cleaning chimneys at least once a year, more if you use your fireplace regularly. This applies to both wood-burning and gas fireplaces! Even if you do not use your fireplace, your chimney should be cleaned and inspected, as animals may build nests in the flu.

The purpose of chimney cleaning is to remove flammable deposits such as soot and creosote from the interior walls of a chimney. If these deposits are allowed to build up, they will eventually ignite and cause a chimney fire. During the winter months, in many areas, chimney fires are the #1 cause of house fires. Chimney fires damage chimneys, cause fires within other areas of the home and cause millions of dollars in property damage annually.

In the United States, well over 50,000 homes annually catch on fire due to the use of solid fuel burning appliances. Most of the solid fuel used by homeowners is wood, but also includes coal, wood pellets, and biofuel.

Certain factors such as frequency of use, duration of use, moisture content of the wood, type of wood (pine is very high in creosote), the individual characteristics of your fireplace and how you have it adjusted can affect the soot build up within your chimney. Adjustments include damper settings, outside air vents, interior air intake settings, and the use and positioning of glass doors on fireplaces and stoves.

Strange as it may sound, in many cases greater buildup of soot occurs during periods of infrequent and shorter burn



times such as fall and spring than it does in the middle of the winter when far more fuel is burned. This is because the chimney walls stay cool during brief periods and condensation occurs much more rapidly on cool surfaces. Error on the side of safety, if in doubt-have your chimney cleaned.

Always know which surfaces of your fireplace are hot to the touch and protect the little ones of your family and friends from getting burned.

Remember- feel the heat don't touch the heat.

Carbon Monoxide, *shhhhh*, The Silent Killer

Carbon monoxide (CO) is an odorless, colorless gas created when fuels such as gasoline, wood, coal, propane, etc. do not burn completely. In the home, heating and cooking equipment that burn fuel are potential sources of carbon monoxide.

Carbon monoxide (CO) prevents the body from using oxygen properly according to the National Fire Protection Association.

Carbon monoxide binds to hemoglobin in the blood, reducing its ability to carry oxygen to the body's organs. This can lead to hypoxia, or severe oxygen deficiency, which can cause brain and heart damage. The victims are usually rendered unconscious before they realize they are being poisoned.

The symptoms of mild exposure to carbon monoxide can cause headaches, nausea, dizziness, and weakness. More severe exposure can cause confusion, movement problems, respiratory failure, loss of consciousness, heart attacks, and even death.

The populations which are more vulnerable are infants, pregnant women, people with lung or heart disease, and people with anemia are especially vulnerable to the effects of carbon monoxide poisoning. The elderly are especially affected.

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a by-product of combustion, whenever a material burns, and can be produced by many appliances, including gas or kerosene-powered heaters, gas-powered water heaters, stoves, and furnaces. Unvented space heaters are a common source of CO exposure in the fall and winter. Homes with fuel-burning appliances or attached garages are more likely to have CO problems.

Here is a list of known CO sources in the home:

- Gas clothes dryers
- Gas water heaters
- Gas furnaces or boilers
- Fireplaces, both gas and woodburning
- Gas stoves and ovens
- Motor vehicles
- Grills, generators, power tools, lawn equipment
- Wood stoves

Here is a list of known sources while recreating:

- Camp stoves, charcoal grills, fuel-burning lanterns, and generators should never be used inside a tent, RV, or cabin.
- Do not place portable generators within 10 feet of doors and windows or in a garage.
- Heating equipment in cabins should be regularly inspected and be in good condition.
- Boaters should be aware of the exhaust area at the back of the boat and should tow passengers at least 20 feet from this area.
- Be aware of exhaust from neighboring boats when parked near them.

If you suspect you have been exposed to CO, get outside to fresh air immediately and call 911. To treat more severe poisoning, high concentrations of oxygen are given, usually through a face mask. Oxygen hastens the disappearance of CO from the blood and relieves the symptoms.

The good news is that CO poisoning can be prevented with simple actions such as installing a CO alarm and maintaining fuel burning appliances.

Remember CO symptoms can mimic the flu. If you feel better when you are away from home and if everyone is sick at the same time, that's a good sign to investigate your home for CO. Also note that your pets will sometimes appear to be ill if they stay inside a lot.

CO is everywhere firefighters are from fire suppression, to confined space operations and live fire training. CO has injured firefighters by triggering explosions. Just because you can't see it doesn't mean it doesn't exist.

PREVENTION is ACTION before it's too LATE!

Alarm, Alarms, ...

Which one is the best?... Where do they go?... How many should I get?... How often do I maintain? Does this sound familiar?

When purchasing a carbon monoxide, (CO), alarm one of the features which is effective is a digital display. This feature alerts you to increases in CO levels in your home as they occur, so you can address the issue before the CO reaches a lethal level.

To ensure that a carbon monoxide detector is effective, the alarm must be loud enough to awaken and alert the entire household. Detectors listed by Underwriters Laboratories (UL) are verified to have a minimum 85-decibel alarm that is audible within 10 feet of the unit.

However, alarm sound or decibel levels are important, but these levels are measured near the device. If you are far away from the device, the sound is less audible.

That is why it is important to have more than one carbon monoxide detector in a larger home. You need to be able to hear the alarm no matter where you are in the space.

- If you have issues with hearing loss, you can find carbon monoxide detectors with alarms that vary their frequencies, making them easier to hear.
- You can also find carbon monoxide detectors with strobe lights. This type of signal is helpful for those who are fully hearing impaired.
- Some carbon monoxide detectors have voice alarms. This can be helpful in a household of deep sleepers. Children may benefit from a voice alarm, as they may sleep through a beeping sound.

Many carbon monoxide detectors run on battery power, which allows them to operate even during a power failure. The batteries must be replaced at least annually to ensure that the detector is always in proper working order. Many models chirp or beep to let you know that the batteries are running low. There are some battery-operated CO detectors that use lithium batteries, which can last the lifespan of the detector.

Other CO detectors plug into outlets, and some models can be hard-wired into your home's circuitry for power. Please note that neither of these types can run if there is a power failure, however, to ensure your home is always safe, both plug-in and hard-wired CO detectors should have a battery back-up.

To ensure that your CO detectors are in proper working order, they should be tested once a month. Ideally, your CO detectors will each have a test button. You can depress the button to make sure the alarm would actually sound in the event of an emergency.

Some CO detectors fulfill additional functions as a smoke and or natural gas detecting alarm. These devices can be convenient because you don't have to install multiple detectors of several types throughout your home. However, depending on detection sensitivity, dual -purpose alarms may be less effective than single purpose alarms, as the properties of contaminants are different.

The sensors in a CO detector will wear out over time in most cases, you can expect your detector to have about a 5-year lifespan.

Tips for installation:

- Follow the instructions that come with the CO detector.
- Make sure you situate the detector in a spot where it will wake you if the alarm goes off at night.
- Install CO detectors on every level of your home.
- Install your digital detector at eye level so it is easy to read.
- Test the detector once a month. Put it on the calendar.
- Replace batteries once a year. If you hear chirping or beeping replace immediately.
- If your detector goes off get up and get your family out of the house immediately and go outside to call 911.

Don't get **SMOKED!** Alarms

Each home needs multiple smoke detectors that will sound an alarm and warn occupants of a fire. If you are sleeping, a functioning smoke detector is probably the only chance you have to wake up in time and escape safely.

Each smoke detector has a sensor inside of it that measures the air for smoke. Three different sensor configurations are used inside smoke detectors.

Ionization sensor:

Smoke detectors with an ionization sensor inside can detect fires that are accompanied by flames. Do not let this description fool you. An ionization detector will detect the smoke from these flames, but it will not detect the flames themselves.

This is how the ionization sensor works. The sensor contains a small amount of radioactive material. The material sits between the two plates that are electrically charged and ionizes the air between them, causing the electrical current to form.

When smoke enters the area between the plates, it interrupts the ionization process. This causes a disruption in the electrical current, which in turn prompts the alarm to sound.

Photoelectric sensor:

Smoke detectors with photoelectric sensors will be able to detect smoldering fire. A smoldering fire can exist for quite a while before flames become apparent. During this time, the smoldering fire generates smoke.

This is how it works. The photoelectric sensor generates a light beam inside a chamber within the smoke detector. If smoke enters this chamber, the smoke particles redirect the light beam to another part of the photoelectric sensor. Once the sensor detects that light is being redirected, it sounds the smoke alarm.

Some smoke detectors have both types of sensors built into the unit.

This is the best type of smoke detector to purchase, as it provides the most complete level of protection against all types of fires. However, smoke detectors with both sensors usually cost a bit more.

Since you do not know which type of fire you may end up having in your home, a detector with both sensors is best.

Fire Extinguishers with *Class!*

Picking the right fire extinguisher involves more than just grabbing one off the shelf at the hardware store. Certain models work well against certain combustibles, but not every fire extinguisher works everywhere.

Using a class system, fire extinguishers are rated for the types of fires they can successfully battle. Attempting to use an extinguisher against a type of fire for which it is not rated could cause the fire to spread.

The extinguisher will be clearly marked with its class ratings, so it pays to understand the different classes. In addition, the canister will have a graphic printed on it to indicate the types of fires for which it is rated.

Class A: Paper, wood, and plastics fires are appropriate for a Class A extinguisher. The Class A graphic includes drawings of a burning trash can and a wood campfire. Most common solids are extinguishable with a Class A unit.

Class B: Flammable liquids (including oils, and gasoline) or flammable gases (including propane or methane). The Class B graphic includes a gas can.

Class C: Electrical appliances are appropriate for Class C. Fire involving motors or transformers would fit in this class. Metal appliances you would use in the kitchen. A drawing of an electrical plan and outlet are found on the Class C graphic.

Class D: Flammable metals, such as aluminum, sodium, or magnesium. The Class D graphic has a drawing of a gear on it. This one would be a rare type to have in your home.

Continued next page...

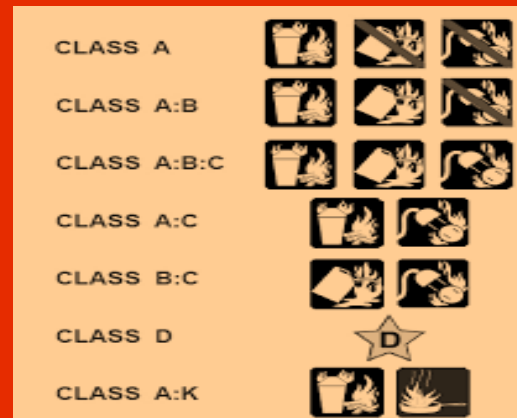
Fire Extinguishers cont'd...

Class K: Cooking oil fires. The drawing on the Class K graphic is of a cooking pan on fire. Class K is aimed more at restaurants and commercial kitchens.

Most fire extinguishers aimed at residential use will carry Class A, B, and C ratings. Class D and K fire extinguishers are aimed more at workplace and industrial locations. You could certainly purchase any type of extinguisher, but anything beyond an A, B, or C is overkill for residential use. Ponderosa firefighters recommend a combination Class A/B/C type.

The material included inside the fire extinguisher varies from unit to unit. It's helpful, when trying to select the best fire extinguisher for your need to know what is inside.

- Carbon dioxide: Carbon dioxide discharges at extremely cold temperatures, removing heat from the fire. It smothers the fire, preventing it from receiving additional oxygen. You will typically find carbon dioxide in a Class B and C fire extinguisher.
- Dry chemical: This is the most common type of fire extinguisher sold for residential use. Effective at knocking down Class A, B, and C fires, it is a versatile agent.
- Dry powder: A foam material in a fire extinguisher separates the heat from the fire. It also prevents oxygen from reaching the fire. A dry powder extinguisher is more effective as a Class A, B, or C unit. This is another common material in a residential fire extinguisher.
- Liquefied gas: Also called clean agent extinguishers, these units are most often rated as Class B or C extinguishers. Some also have Class A ratings. They do not leave a residue, which is great for the environment with engines of machinery.



- Water: This is the traditional method of putting out fires, but you won't find many extinguishers that contain just water. Firefighters are able to use water because they use large volumes of it at high pressure. But water is ineffective in a small, portable fire extinguisher. If water is used, it is often combined with foam in a Class A unit.
- Wet chemical: This type of extinguisher material is rarely found in a residential unit. It is primarily found in a Class K unit for use in commercial kitchens, although it sometimes has a Class A rating.

Ponderosa firefighters recommend you inspect your portable fire extinguisher at least annually. Examine the extinguisher's valve, safety pin, and nozzle for cracks and corrosion. A unit with more metal than plastic in the handle area will last longer.

Many portable fire extinguishers have a pressure gauge. Make sure the unit is fully charged as an extinguisher may lose its pressure charge over time. Some extinguishers need to be shaken every few months to prevent the dry powder from caking.

READ the INSTRUCTIONS on the cannister carefully. DO NOT ASSUME that your cannister needs the same maintenance work as another one. Each model is a little different.

be SAFE, be SMART, be INFORMED, and be PREPARED!

Ponderosa Fire Department Continued History of Station #62

Birth and Life *By Fred Windisch*

The Cypressdale and Cypresswood subdivision were growing quickly during the early 1980's. The board of directors of Emergency Services District #28 and the Ponderosa Volunteer Fire Association, Inc. decided to add fire station number 2, and the planning moved very quickly.

A two-bay brick veneer building was constructed on the Cypresswood Utility District property and volunteer recruitment began with remarkable results. The old saying worked, "if you build it, they will come."



The area continued to grow and in 1988 a new three-bay station with offices and a training room was built behind the original station. Members disassembled the original station, and it was donated to the Huffman Volunteer Fire Department. Our volunteer firefighters continued to grow in numbers, responses increased; it was apparent we needed to move from the location since it was in the middle of the Cypressdale subdivision.



Planning began in 2008 to build a new state-of-the-art fire station with living quarters and a host of other amenities to accommodate the future of paid fire firefighters serving the area. But no land was available so an innovative approach was used - ask the Spring Fire Department / Emergency Services District #7 if we could build a fire station on "their side of Louetta."

When we all work together everyone wins; Station #62 became a reality and is a beautiful and functional addition to the area.

P O N D E R O S A FIREFIGHTER

HARRIS COUNTY ESD #28

17061 Rolling Creek Dr.
Houston, TX 77090



This publication is intended for the residents within the Ponderosa Fire Department service area. If you received this newsletter in error, we hope you still read it and utilize the fire safety information.

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GUTTER cleaning tips for FIRE PREVENTION

Gutters play a significant role in protecting your home from water-related damage. Did you know that cleaning your gutters is part of good fire prevention for your home? Maintaining clean and debris-free gutters is a crucial aspect of fire safety for homeowners. Neglecting gutters can lead to potential fire hazards, especially during the dry periods between summer and fall.



Leaves, twigs, and other debris collect in gutters and can dry out over time creating a perfect tinderbox for fires. It can become highly flammable and pose a significant fire risk. Clogged gutters can aid the spread of flames to your roof during a nearby fire, endangering your home. In the event of a fire, firefighters rely on water hoses to control and extinguish the flames. Clogged gutters can hinder the flow of water, making firefighting efforts less effective.

Fire prevention is a shared responsibility that extends beyond alarms and fire extinguishers. Regular gutter cleaning can play a vital role in safeguarding your home from fire hazards. Keeping your gutters clear helps to protect your property but also contributes to the safety of your community.

Fire fighters are more than just professionals who put out fires.

They are your family, your brothers and sisters who risk their lives every day to protect you and your community. They are the ones who run towards danger when everyone else runs away. They are the ones who sacrifice their time, their health, and sometimes their lives for the greater good. They are the ones who show courage, compassion, and dedication in the face of adversity.

Why do we need fire fighters? Because they are the heroes we depend on in times of crisis. Because they are the ones who save lives, property, and the environment. Because they are attempting to help you while you are having the worst day of your life. Because they are the ones who make our world a safer and better place. And BECAUSE they are the ones who inspire us to be brave, generous, and resilient.

Support your firefighters! They deserve our respect, our gratitude, and our help. They need our support and advocacy. They need us to stand with them, to cheer them on, and to thank them for their service. **Support your firefighters - they are family.**

