

## Fire Chief Report

### 3/6 Wildfire Refresher

Kara Oikarinen came from the Washburn DNR station to train and do her yearly inspection of our gear, wildfire training and tools. She gave a brief introduction to fighting wildfire to a lot of new faces this year.

We pulled out our two trucks set up with "slide in" water storage and pumps. We also own one the bigger "pump and roll" rigs in the area with our Tanker #3 Peterbuilt. This 2,500-gallon tanker has an on-board pump that can fill the tank as well as supply hose lines. It's very handy all around, including filling the water reservoirs in our two brush trucks.

Kara, as usual, gave us a super review and thinks highly of our skillset and equipment. We are the first defense in the event of wildfire and are on our own until we ferry over the DNR if they are available to help.

Kara and I discussed again how we go about dealing with people when it comes to brush/grass fires and people without burning permits. Unfortunately, it costs the town a minimum of \$500 when we have to respond to illegal fire activities. The answer is simple: we gather pictures and information on the illegal fire activity, send it directly to the DNR, and they issue the tickets and court dates. Burning without a permit or not following the rules of an issued permit will get you a fine for the first offense. The 2nd offense is a fine and possible jail time. Both get you a date at the courthouse.

Attendance to the wildfire refresher: 21 members, 6 excused, 2 not excused

### 4/6

The eight recruits for entry-level Firefighter 1 put in a Saturday of learning the proper techniques in spraying water with a variety of nozzles and different-size hose lays. A squad of pumper operators and tanker drivers set up 2 portable ponds behind Engine #1 with a jet siphon that keeps water flowing from one pond to the next and into the truck. The 3 tankers kept filling the ponds and kept constant water flowing to hose lines and a deck gun. This was invaluable training for everyone involved.

### 4/20

Seven of the eight newbies headed down to the Northwood Tech training center in Ashland to complete the last leg of their FF1 training. This was full of anticipation and excitement (and maybe a little anxiousness) as this day they put on their gear, strapped on the SCBA, and went into a burn simulator trailer. Very real fire and smoke conditions and very hot. Me and training officer Tyler Andreas showed up to watch and congratulate the members as they completed the final testing. Everyone did great .... some did great 3 times in the burn simulator. One member could not make this training, but he will line up another live burn to complete his training. We can't be any prouder of the largest group of new firefighters to join La Pointe fire/rescue in many years.

Fire departments around the USA have a major problem with recruiting and retention, but not Madeline Island. All is well.

Be Safe,  
Chief Reichkitzer

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Above: Recruits learn to mänge different nozzles. Below: Self-contained breathing apparatus makes recruits Hilary Nelson, Lilah Guertin, "Firecracker Jack" Nelson and Shadi Joudeh incognito during live burn training. Right: Shadi Joudeh (top) and Nathan Reichkitzer, unmasked.

