TAKE 5 FOR SAFETY

INSTRUCTOR'S NOTES

5-MINUTE SAFETY DRILL

Risk Management: Bridges Hold The Key

Date:_____

Shift:_____

Dept:_____

Station:_____

Training Code:_____

NOTES:

FOCUS: Bridge collapse is an exposure we must all address. We now know that many of the nation's bridges are of concern from a structural standpoint. This can create response problems for emergency responders.

CHALLENGE

This beautiful bridge serves as a reminder of a potential hidden danger. Bridges are located in virtually every city in the country. They not only connect sections of town but are major routes of transportation and evacuation.. Firefighters must be able to get to emergency scenes in order to deliver necessary services.

In the past, private bridges were the focus of concern due to dimensional and weight capacity uncertainties. Our concern about major bridges collapsing was only anticipated in the event of a natural disaster or act of terrorism. Since the recent bridge collapses, studies have revealed that many of the bridges throughout the country are deficient and in need of repair!

With this in mind, it is important emergency service groups reevaluate their service areas. Bridge failure creates another catastrophic exposure that could severely impair the ability to render aid in a timely manner. It's critical we know where potential problems exist and make contingency plans to address the issues that can be created. We can't help if we can't get there!

DISCUSSION

- How prepared is your department to operate if a bridge is not accessible?
- Do you have alternate modes of transportation?
- What considerations come to mind in the event of a bridge collapse?
- Are we aware of the progress and scheduling of retrofit activities?
- Have you had enough practice drills to be comfortable with water rescues?
- Have we worked with local authorities to determine how losing a bridge would impact evacuation if necessary?
- Do you have mutual aid agreements in place to provide assistance to areas where your department won't have timely access?
- What additional issues could arise in this situation?

The greatest asset of the fire service is our people; protect them!

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