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Volunteer Fire Company
(GTVFC)
Fire/EMS Station 24
Volume No. 1 Issue No. 15 September 2007**



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September Issue Sponsor

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Household Well Water

By A. F. Karolyi—Administrative Member

To paraphrase a line from the poem “The Ancient Mariner”; *Water, water everywhere and not a drop to drink*; this could be your situation if your well water goes bad. How can well water go bad? Unfortunately, in many ways you would not be aware of unless the water started to look, smell or taste bad. Stealth water pollutants are not immediately known, however causing long term health problems such as recurring gastro-intestinal illness.

Shallow wells, or wells inundated by flood, can be penetrated by natural pollutants including bacteria, parasites, viruses and microorganisms. Surface water picks up these pollutants from wildlife and soils causing nausea and diarrhea. Natural pollutants caused by the breakdown of nitrogen in the soil cause nitrates and nitrites, which are particularly threatening to infants when mixed in formula. Radon in the soil, causing radio nuclides and heavy metals in rocks, containing arsenic, and lead also pose a threat.

Human activities also pollute wells. Improper well placement relative to septic systems; leaching from animal manure; improper disposal of used motor oil; use of fertilizers and/or pesticides and improper storage of water well treatment chemicals near your well can also cause problems. We are all aware of the problems caused by improper disposal of industrial chemicals in neighboring areas reported in the news.

Should we be concerned? Absolutely! Unlike public water systems regulated by EPA’s Safe Drinking Water Act, homeowners have primary responsibility for their well water safety. Include the following steps in your normal household maintenance.

1. Have well water tested periodically. More often if you live in a flood area. Keep test records to track changes.
2. Set a maintenance schedule for your well, visibly checking for corrosion, intact seals and a tight well cap.
3. Identify potential problem sources as above. Correct or eliminate.

A commercial certified laboratory is recommended for testing well water. In contacting the Department of Health and Department of Environmental Protection in Scranton for this article, I was referred to commercial certified labs. The DEP only tests public water systems. The two referred were:

Northeastern Environmental Laboratory
1620 North Main Avenue
Scranton, PA Phone (570)348-0775

Kirby Health Center
71 North Franklin
Wilkes-Barre, PA Phone (570) 822-4278

Costs range from \$15.00 to \$200.00 depending upon required tests. Both labs do full service testing. Call for information.

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Did You Ever Wonder, Why ?

By F. M. Bales, CFPS, CFI, Fire Chief, / EMT

Did you every wonder why some things just evolve, such as:

Blue Uniforms

Historically we see fire fighters uniforms as blue in color. But, why, not red or some other color?

Historians generally trace the roots of the modern fire service back to the Roman Empire in 22 BC, when the Roman leaders formed “magistrates” who watched over the slaves during the night. Among their other duties was to watch for and sound an alarm in the event of a fire. After one massive fire in 205 AD, Emperor Augustus relieved the magistrates of their duties and replaced them with a permanent fire brigade called the Vigiles. The Vigiles were organized based on the military structure used by the early fire brigades established in Alexandria. The brigades were comprised of up to 500 soldiers who were subdivided by specialties each with areas of responsibility, such a fire watch, pumping, etc.

The Vigiles were responsible for the detecting fires, suppressing fires, and enforcing fire codes in the capital city. Additionally, they acted as a fire tender within the Roman Army and as such took charge of moving the campfire from place to place when the army was deployed. The campfires were moved by carrying the hot coals on the shields of the Vigiles. The repeated exposure to heat caused the metal to turn a deep blue. Thus, the Vigiles were readily identified by the blue shields they carried. Thus throughout history, fire fighter uniforms have leaned toward blue.

Fire Fighters Badge

Many fire fighters wear a uniquely designed badge that looks somewhat like a cross, what is it?



The badge most often used by fire fighters uses a St. Florian Cross as its basic design. While often incorrectly called a Maltese Cross, the Florian Cross has the centers of each side curved out. The Maltese Cross has the center sharply shaped inward.



The Maltese Cross was the symbol of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, now commonly known as the Knights of Malta, who were organized in 1113 AD. These knights provided safe travel and acted as rescuers during the crusades, often-retrieving badly burned soldiers from the front lines and

bringing them to the rear for medical treatment.

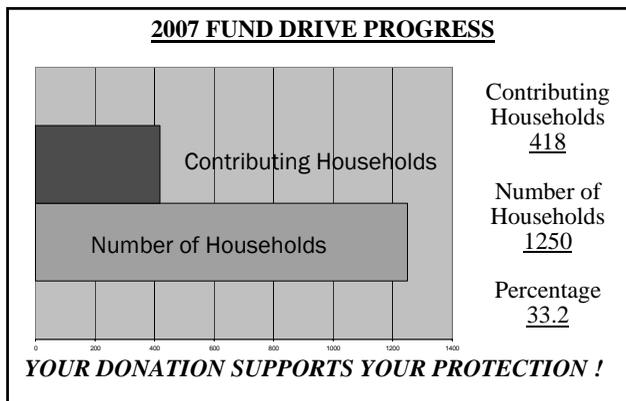
The Florian Cross dates back to 304 AD and was the emblem used by the Austrian Division of the Vigiles, under the command of St. Florian. No one knows for sure when the two became confused, but many fire fighters to this day mistakenly refer to their Florin based badge as a Maltese cross.

Fire Fighters Patron Saint

Did you know that fire fighters have a Patron Saint? St. Florian was born in what is presently Austria around 250 AD. He enlisted in the Roman Army as a youth and was assigned to the “Cohortes Vigilum” or Vigiles. Hence, Florian was a fire fighter by trade. His acts of bravery in putting out fires, and saving lives, led to a rapid rise through the Vigiles ranks. Ultimately he was assigned to lead a Vigiles division, equal to the rank of Battalion Chief in today’s fire service. Along with their fire prevention and suppression duties, the Vigiles were under orders from Emperor Diocletianus to crush the rise of Christianity. Florian however had become a Christian some time after joining the Vigiles and as such discretely avoided enforcing Anti-Christianity laws, refused to burn Christians at the stake, and similar acts.

When word of Florian’s failure to enforce the law of Rome reached Emperor Diocletianus, he dispatched his aide Aquilius to investigate. In the early part of 300 AD, Florian refused a direct order from Aquilius to execute Christians. Aquilius ordered his soldiers to beat Florian and “throw him into the fire”. Legend has it that Florian asked the soldiers to build his fire high, so smoke would take his soul to directly heaven. Fearing that the fire may lead to Florian becoming a Christin martyr, Aquilius ordered Florian to be cast into the Enns River with a millstone around his neck. There Florian drowned in cold waters of the Enns River. Lore suggests that Florian’s body lay in the icy river guarded over by an eagle, until a local peasant woman found it and took the body to Lenz for a Christian burial.

Since that, time fire fighters around the world have looked to St. Florian to be their guide and protector.



Favorite Recipes

By M. S. Karolyi – Administrative Member

The following recipes are unique in tickling your taste buds with ingredients that can be fresh from the garden or available in the markets year round.

Sweet and Sour Carrots

2 lbs. cooked carrots, sliced or half moon sliced
 1 green pepper, finely diced,
 1 onion, chopped or sliced per preference
 1- 10 ¾ oz. can condensed tomato soup
 ½ cup olive or canola oil, 1 cup sugar
 ½ cup white distilled or apple cider vinegar per preference
 Combine all ingredients except carrots and cook for 20 minutes
 Add cooked carrots and refrigerate overnight. Serve as a side dish slightly chilled or at room temperature so oil in sauce is not congealed

Butternut Squash & Tomato Bisque

You can make this creamy soup up to a month in advance and freeze it. The day before serving, thaw in the fridge and heat it either on the stovetop or in a slow cooker, if you heat the whole amount. Suggestion; freeze it in individual portions that can be micro waved.

3 ½ lbs butternut squash (4 cups squash pulp) or store bought frozen squash (1 ½ cups per package), 2 tablespoons butter, 2 tablespoons vegetable oil, 1 large onion, chopped
 1 (28 ounce) can of whole tomatoes with juice
 1 to 2 tablespoons maple syrup or honey
 3 ½ cups lower-sodium chicken or vegetable broth (or mixed), or use water with 3 bouillon cubes of your choice, ¼ teaspoon salt (optional)

1. For fresh squash, preheat oven to 375 degrees. Cut squash lengthwise, remove seeds and place cut sides down in a roasting pan. Add water to 1 inch depth. Bake 30 minutes or until tender. Scrape pulp from squash to measure 4 cups. (OR- buy the regular size frozen packages of squash to make the 4 cups)
2. Heat butter and oil in soup pot; add onion and sauté 5 minutes.
3. Place tomatoes with juice in a food processor or blender. Add maple syrup or honey; process until blended. Add butternut squash and process until smooth.
4. Add squash mixture to liquid (if you use bouillon cubes make sure they are dissolved) stir and bring to a boil, set down to simmer for approx 30 minutes.
5. Garnish with chopped tomato or if you prefer, add a small can of diced tomatoes to the squash mixture and liquid prior to simmering. Croutons also add zest. Serves 8

Do you have a recipe you would like to share? Send it to Marge Karolyi at the GTVFC address. For every recipe used in the Bulldog Bulletin, the donor will receive a complimentary monthly breakfast ticket.

How Long Will It Keep?

Sources: Food Marketing Institute for fish and dairy products, U. S. Department of Agriculture for all other foods.

PRODUCT	STORAGE PERIOD	
	In Refrigerator [40 F (5 C)]	In Freezer [0 F (-18C)]
Fresh Meat:		
Beef; Ground,	1-2 Days	3-4 Months
Steaks & Roasts	3-5 Days	6-12 Months
Pork; Chops	3-5 Days	4-6 Months
Ground	1-2 Days	3-4 Months
Roasts	3-5 Days	4-6 Months
Cured Meats:		
Lunch Meat	3-5 Days	1-2 Months
Sausage	1-2 Days	1-2 Months
Gravy	1-2 Days	2-3 Months
Fish:		
Lean (such as cod)	1-2 Days	up to 6 Months
Fatty (such as blue, perch, salmon)	1-2 Days	2-3 Months
Chicken:		
Whole	1-2 Days	12 Months
Parts	1-2 Days	9 Months
Giblets	1-2 Days	3-4 Months
Dairy Products:		
Swiss, brick, processed cheese	3-4 Weeks	**
Milk	5 days	1 Month
Eggs:		
Fresh in shell	3 Weeks	— No—
Hard-boiled	1 Week	— No—

**Cheese can be frozen, but freezing will affect texture and taste.

Four Simple Steps to Food Safety

1. **CLEAN:** Wash hands, cutting boards, dishes, utensils and counter tops with hot soapy water before, during and after food preparation.
2. **SEPARATE:** Don’t cross contaminate. Keep raw meat, poultry, seafood and their juices away from each other and other foods.
3. **COOK:** Cook to proper temperatures using a food thermometer, especially for large cuts of meat.
4. **CHILL:** Refrigerate promptly! Be sure to refrigerate cooked foods within two hours. Set your refrigerator no higher than 40 F and the freezer at 0 F



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