

March 21st- March 27th

During the week of March 21st – March 27th the Virginia Fire Department responded to a total of seventy-six medical calls and eleven fire calls. The seventy-six medical calls were forty-nine 9-1-1 calls and twenty-seven transfers. The twenty-seven Transfers had us transport patients from four different hospitals. One patient was transported from Essentia Health Northern Pines, Cook Hospital, and Fairview Range Medical Center, the remaining twenty-four were from Essentia Health Virginia. We transported these patients to two different Hospitals St. Luke's and to Essentia Health St. Mary's, we also returned six patients to Nursing Homes. The forty-nine 9-1-1 calls brought us to five different communities; once to Embarrass, Eveleth, Gilbert, eight times to Mt. Iron, and the remaining thirty-eight were in Virginia. These patients were transported to Essentia Health Virginia, and St. Mary's with eight patients being treated and released. During this week we had two days tie for the busiest in call volume, Monday and Thursday, both had us treat thirteen patients. Tuesday was our slowest day with only six medical calls. This week we performed sixty-seven different procedures and administered fifty-one medicines. We treated more men (40) than women (36) with the average age being 66. The Fire Marshall attended a fire investigator conference, and has been busy working on implementing an explorer group. This Fire Explorer program will be available soon for 14-18 year old youth in the Iron Range area. More information will be available soon, but to express interest please contact the Virginia Fire Marshal at 218-749-3596.

SHIFTWORK SAFETY

In the area we live in, an unavoidable fact is shift work. Working different shifts often leads to fatigue, and fatigue can:

- Make it hard to concentrate, which increases the likelihood of mistakes and accidents.
- Affect your attitude and temper.

The body has an internal clock that tells you when it is time to be active and when it is time to slow down. Getting your body adjusted to a different time schedule takes time, and when you rotate through different shifts or when you switch back and forth between day and night shifts it can make things a lot tougher. Fortunately, there are some things you can do that can help you stay more alert at night and help you get sleep the next day.

Sleep

- Make it a priority to get plenty of undisturbed sleep.
- Make sure your family is aware of how important sleep is, so they can rearrange their schedules or limit certain activities while you sleep.
- Keep the bedroom dark and quiet. Wear earplugs or eye covers.
- Disconnect/shutoff home phone ringer and leave you cell phone in a different room.
- Avoid sleeping pills as they can leave you feeling drowsy after you wake up and they do not give you normal sleep.

Health, Diet and Exercise

- Avoid eating heavy meals before going to bed as this will keep you awake while your meal digests.
- Ensure that you eat in moderation (at set times if possible).
- Avoid fatty, fast food.
- Drink plenty of water.
- Avoid alcohol before going to sleep. It may help you fall asleep; however, it disturbs sleep by preventing you from entering a deep sleep.
- Never drink and drive, especially after working your shift.
- Avoid drinking coffee within 4 hours of going to sleep. Even if you can fall asleep right after drinking a pot of coffee, it will still affect your sleep.
- Stay physically fit to help you fight off stress illness and give you energy.

Tips for Driving Home

- Consider carpooling with other shift workers so you can keep each other awake.
- Keep the temperature cool inside the car and listen to lively music to help you stay alert.
- Never drive if you start to nod off, pull over in a safe location and take a short nap. Trying to fight drowsiness can lead to a fatal mistake.