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My Fellow Officers and Firefighters,

I was fortunate to come across a recent research report sent out by the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) in regards to Line of Duty (LOD) fire fighter injuries. I feel this information is invaluable in providing us with the understanding of the dynamics behind many fire fighter injuries.

After reading this report I highlighted some aspects of the report to spur some inner reflection by all of us. Our safety and health is the responsibility of each and every individual. It is even more imperative the department and leadership strictly enforce our safety policies. Officers and firefighters shall not tolerate safety violations in the form of improper/NO use of PPE, mandatory seatbelt usage, and the participation in wellness/fitness initiatives.

The report highlights three main contributing factors to LOD injuries. These include: lack of situational awareness (37.3%), lack of wellness/fitness (28.5%), and human error (10.6%). These three contributing factors account for 76% of the reported injuries in the research group.

After reading the report take a few minutes to self reflect about the matrix of injury clusters. Think of areas that you do or perhaps don't fully perform on a regular basis. I believe we as an organization have been fortunate that we have not incurred many significant injuries and above all LODDs. However I can be confident in stating that all of us, at some point in time, have not reported all the injuries we may have sustained in the performance of our duties.

Please take the time to read the attached report and digest the information for yourself. I found the information very insightful and I expect you will as well.

Respectfully,

R. Matthew DeHaven,  
Lieutenant, WFRD