

September 15, 2009

Special points of interest:

- **Public Health Info: H1N1 Flu**
- **Training Schedule**
- **Message from Chief Parker**
- **Information from Chief Flynn**
- **Birthday Party review**
- **Arthritis: Prevention and Management**

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Juvenile Fire Setter vm 1240

The Metro Insider...



Public Health Information for everyone ...

PUBLIC HEALTH FACT SHEET 2009 H1N1 Flu

Source: Grand Traverse County Health Department (www.gtchd.org) / Picture is not from GTCHD.

What is 2009 H1N1 Flu? 2009 H1N1 (commonly referred to as “swine flu” early on) is a new influenza virus of the respiratory tract, much like the seasonal flu. It was first detected in people in the United States in April 2009 and has become the predominant flu virus causing illness.

Why is it sometimes called Swine Flu? This virus was originally referred to as “swine flu” because laboratory testing showed that many of the genes in this new virus were very similar to influenza viruses that normally occur in pigs (swine) in North America. But further study has shown that this new virus is very different from what normally circulates in North American pigs. It has two genes from flu viruses that normally circulate in pigs in Europe and Asia and bird (avian) genes and human genes. Scientists call this a “quadruple reassortant” virus.

Who can get the 2009 H1N1 Flu? Children and young adults under 25 years of age have had the most illness. People aged 65 years and older have had very little illness. CDC laboratory studies have shown that no children and very few adults younger than 60 years old have existing antibody to 2009 H1N1 flu virus, however, about one-third of adults older than 60 may have antibodies against this virus.

What are the symptoms? Symptoms start suddenly with fever (often high), headache, muscle pain, cough, runny nose, chills and sore throat. Sometimes children may have an upset stomach and diarrhea. The cough may last 2-7 days.

How is flu spread? The 2009 H1N1 flu virus is spread from person to person by droplets from the nose, throat, and mouth through sneezing, coughing, and speaking. The virus can live on surfaces up to 8 hours at room temperature. Sometimes people become infected by touching something with H1N1 flu virus on it and then touching their mouth, nose or eyes. **YOU CANNOT BECOME INFECTED BY EATING PORK PRODUCTS.**

How long is a person contagious? Usually 1 day prior to onset of symptoms and up to 7 or more days after becoming ill.



Is there treatment for flu? Stay at home, rest, and drink lots of fluids. Prescription drugs, called antiviral agents, can be used to prevent or treat the flu. Children and teens with flu should not be given aspirin or aspirin products because of the risk of developing Reye’s Syndrome.

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H1N1 continued ...

How can flu be prevented?

- The vaccine for H1N1 Flu will be available by fall of 2009.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick. When you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick too.
- Stay home when you are sick. You will help prevent others from catching it.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve when you sneeze or cough.

- Wash your hands often - especially before eating, after using the bathroom, and after coughing or sneezing.
- Don't touch your eyes, nose, or mouth. Germs are spread this way.

Other important actions that you can take are:

- Follow public health advice regarding school closures, avoiding crowds and other social distancing measures.
- Be prepared in case you get sick and need to stay home for a week or so; a supply of over-the-counter medicines, alcohol-based anti-bacterial hand rubs, tissues and related items might be useful and help avoid the need to make trips out in public while you are sick.

Sept – Oct Training Topics

Sept 21st – 1800 hrs (Sta. 8)

Hose Testing–TK8

Sept 22nd – 1000 hrs (Sta. 9)

Hose Testing–Daytime

Sept 23rd – 1900 hrs (Sta. 9)

Medical: Stress Mgmt/AED

Sept 24th – 1900 hrs (Sta. 1)

REQ: SCBA Fit Testing

Oct 3rd – 1900 hrs (Sta. 1)

REQ: Apparatus Pumping

Oct 7th – 1900 hrs (Sta. 11)

Medical: Blood Borne Path

Oct 8th – 1900 hrs (Sta. 1)

REQ: Apparatus Pumping

Oct 12th – 1900 hrs (Sta. 8)

Medical: Geriatrics

Oct 19th – 1900 hrs (Sta. 8)

REQ: HAZ MAT

REQ: PRE-PLAN

Shoreline Fruit Company

Last Haz Mat training for 2009

Visit www.gtmetrofire.org for current training and NEW Public Education calendar.

Message from the Chief ...

Hello Everyone,

I have been hearing a lot of positive comments from the public lately on the quality of service that Metro is delivering. Customer service is paramount to our existence. Thanks to you all for being your best and for the positive attitude. One bad experience with our department will spread like wildfire. If you are having a bad day, go kick the tires. Treat everyone like they were your family!

I would like to thank Lt. Scanlon and the crews from all the stations in their help with the Jerry Lewis Muscular Dystrophy “Fill the Boot” campaign. Metro was able to collect \$1500 from their afternoon at the Grand Traverse Mall. We capped the weekend with helping the MDA at Mongolian BBQ’s Mongo-Marathon where our firefighters helped cook and wait tables. It was a huge success and we helped Jerry’s Kids!

We just passed our 2010 budget at all three townships. We pretty much held the line as 2009 and we can survive with a bit of belt tightening. There is some room in the budget to operate Station 12 if it should get built by next fall. As for the new station, we have still been in contact with FEMA contractors on the project and view this as a good sign, but not a sure sign. Let’s keep our fingers crossed that we land this grant. We have had numerous people write support letters on our behalf.

It is the fall season soon and I wanted to remind you that our citizens will be burning leaves. Remember in East Bay and Garfield Townships you may not burn yard waste. However, in Acme you can still do it. Ask nicely to have them put them out and if it is a safety issue, we put them out. If the citizen becomes belligerent, then call for a deputy. We have no powers to ticket them so we have to rely on our law enforcement partners to help.

Keep Safe!

Chief Parker



Note from Chief Flynn ...

In two short weeks, I will be celebrating my three year anniversary with the Grand Traverse Metro Fire Department. Time flies when you are having fun. When first hired as Chief of Operations, I saw many changes that were needed immediately and many of those changes were implemented. As I responded to the calls with the different stations during the early months, I got a better understanding of each of the members' capabilities and shortcomings and have worked hard in improving the department's performance. The department has seen many changes since then including training, staffing, apparatus, radio frequency, department organization and identification to name a few. We often lose perspective of where we are and where we want to go, until we stop and look back at where we came from. Changes are hard but they are often needed and there are still more to come. I ask all of you to understand that these changes are made to improve Metro's ability to deliver emergency services in a more efficient and effective manner to the community in these tough economic times.

Training- The September training will include more hose testing and apparatus pumping. Station One will be SCBA fit testing on September 24th. October training will include a Hazmat training drill at Shoreline Container in Acme and at Station Nine on the 14th. Metro has been given permission to use an abandoned house on M72 East and Bates Rd for training. Future dates will be posted and the house will be used for live fire training.

HazMat- Metro currently has 10 hazmat technicians and Kyle Clute and James Walker are currently down in Lansing attending the first week of Hazmat Technician training. In 2010, Metro hopes to have four more members attend technician level training.

On September 24th Metro will be hosting an 8 hour Hazmat IQ training class held at Station 11. All Hazmat Techs will be attending as well as any other members who may be interested. Contact Chief Flynn if interested.

Birthday party at Station 1 ...

Posted By Heather Jaworski

There's something special about my bond with my boys. They have this way of making me melt. They are not petty. They are not sassy (most of the time). They do not dwell on things. They do not blame me because their "favorite" outfit was not clean within 2 hours of it going into the wash. They are real. What you see is what you get. Their love is unconditional. Oh I love them so much.

They are now 2 and 4. Their birthdays are 3 days apart. Scott and I had gone to the Montessori fundraiser in the Spring and the ONLY thing we wanted was the birthday party at the Fire Station. After a long night of bidding and out-bidding, we managed to walk out with our goal accomplished. Wow, was it WORTH it!! I must say this was by far the best birthday party we have ever had. The fire chief had everything set with favors and hats and an AMAZING and EDUCATIONAL tour planned for these 20 children, a mixture of both of their friends. Here is the lowdown:

1. Kids arrive and go crazy checking out all of the fire trucks.
2. Chief gathers them for a very detailed tour of the lounge, sleep room, kitchen, weight room, and a false alarm.
3. Other firemen give tours of all the trucks, their equipment, and let kids crawl all over them.
4. Kids watch a live demonstration of Jaws of Life and how they work, etc.
5. Firemen put on the gear and the mask and show the children how they are able to breathe when in the fire.
6. Chief pulls the ladder truck out of the garage and puts the 75 ft ladder all the way up and fireman climbs to the top. (yes, my heart was in my throat at this point)
7. Kids get to go for a ride around the lot in the fire truck (got to do this because the one man had a little crush on our German au pair, Jaqueline and her friend, Jessica) Ha ha
8. Got out the hose and sprayed the woods and parking lot. It was AMAZING to see that power. The kids ran around in the trails of the hose!

Yes, by far worth every cent. We will never forget this one. Thanks guys for your selfless dedication to our community!



Pictures provided by and approved for reprint by Jay Hooper

Arthritis: Prevention and Management through Exercise and Ideal Weight

Contributed by Beth Pryde, BSES, GT Metro Wellness Coordinator

Sources: HealthCentral.com, WebMD, Arthritis Foundation

Twenty Seven million Americans are affected by Osteoarthritis, with as much as \$128 billion per year in medical care costs, lost wages and productivity. And yes, Firefighters would be included in those 128 million Americans. An estimated total of \$5700 per year per person is a direct economic impact for those with Osteoarthritis.

Osteoarthritis (OA), also known as Degenerative Joint Disease (DJD), is the most common type of arthritis. When breakdown of the cartilage (cushion) between the joints occurs, this causes the bone ends to rub against each other, creating pain and loss of movement to the joint. The most common joints affected by OA are the knees, hips, hands, low back and neck. Several studies have found a direct link between weight and the development of osteoarthritis. Especially knee OA.

Symptoms of osteoarthritis usually first appear after the age of 40. Women over the age of 50 are more often affected than men. Symptoms may include stiffness in the joint, pain, a catching sensation during movement of the joint. In some cases boney growths, often referred to as bone spurs, grow at the edges of the affected joint. These spurs can tear at the tendons of the muscles and create additional structural damage if left unattended.

There are many known characters that increase the risk factors for developing OA, but the sure cause has not yet been identified. Some of the more common contributors are: **overweight, lack of physical activity, heredity, repeated overuse of certain joints, joint injury, aging and nerve injury.**

Methods to preventing, and managing the symptoms of OA, are relatively the same. **The focus is to maintain a healthy Ideal Weight and strengthen the muscles around the joint to support and protect the cartilage and maintain fluid motion of the joint. Maintaining a healthy ideal weight is probably the most significant task one can do to prevent the development or advancement of OA.** Avoiding joint injury will also protect the joint cartilage and prevent possible future arthritic development. Already diagnosed OA will have a varying approach depending on the severity of the symptoms. The main goal here is to reduce pain and improve joint movement. This is again achieved by maintaining a healthy Ideal Weight, physical activity, and a combination of non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDS), rest, use of hot and cold therapy, and on occasion, Physical or Occupational Therapy. There are other less used treatments as well, such as dietary supplements (i.e. glucosamine chondroitin), corticosteroid injections, and surgery in very advanced/severe cases.

It is surprising, yet exciting to know that for every one pound of weight a person loses, there is an approximate 3-4 pound reduction in the load that is exerted on the knee joint (more for the hip joint), during daily weight bearing activity. That means with just a 10# loss, 30-40# can be alleviated from knee stress, as well as the hip and low back regions. Some studies have shown that by losing as little as 15# for an overweight person, their knee pain can be cut in half. Research has also shown that weight loss and mild to moderate exercise combined, is more effective in decreasing pain and restoring function, that either one on its own. Partial or non weight bearing exercise is preferred (i.e. biking, swimming, rollerblading) to reduce joint stress and impact.

With all the information available regarding the risks, prevention and management of osteoarthritis, it seems obvious to some that those occupations that put physical loading and stress on the body (i.e. firefighters) would be at a higher risk and should take the precautions necessary to reduce those stresses and risks. With excess weight and lack of exercise being the most correlated links to the development of this disease, as well as to several others, such as cardiac and diabetes, Wellness Programs and fitness facilities are becoming highly recommended, and available for our volunteer firefighters to improve their health for work, home and hobby. Take advantage of the services being offered to you through your GT Metro Wellness Program and Coordinator, to make the quality of your life better, stronger, fitter.

Note: For finding your ideal weight, there are several websites that will calculate this for you. I would recommend the following website for you: <http://www.healthcentral.com/diet-exercise/ideal-body-weight.html>

