

## Daily Activities inside a Fire Station

In addition to responding to fire and medical emergencies, life inside a firehouse is packed with activity. Frederick County Fire and Rescue career personnel work on one of four shifts: A, B, C, or day-work. Shift work contains three different shifts (A,B and C) which runs for a consecutive 24 hours per shift, after 48 hours off, A shift is back on-duty for another 24 consecutive hours. Day-work contains a Monday through Friday schedule with 12 hours of consecutive work, 6am to 6pm. During the 12 to 24 hours on duty, personnel run calls, train, shower, eat and sleep at the fire station. Firefighters have a wide range of responsibilities, not only to hone the skills required of firefighting and medical emergencies, but also for the upkeep of the firehouse, equipment, and all the apparatus.

Everyday activities firefighters engage in include:

- Raising and lowering the flag outside the firehouse
- Discussions of safety drills and creating safety messages to share with personnel
- Cleaning the dorms
- Sweeping and mopping the floors
- Cooking the meals
- Participate in mandatory fitness and conditioning program
- Daily training drills
- Attend workshops or classes designed to inform firefighters on the latest advancements in medical technology, fire science, emergency treatment and prevention
- Maintenance of all apparatus (checking fuel levels, examining for damage or wear, etc)
- Maintenance of all equipment (uniforms, tanks, etc.)
- Inventory of supplies
- Discussion of recent or past firefighting, emergency medical responses and working out strategies to cope with unexpected occurrences during emergencies

Every activity is important and given specific attention to detail. A fire truck cannot respond to an emergency if it is low on fuel. A facemask can cause a fatality if it has a crack in it. A firefighter's entire day is spent, in one way or another, preparing for emergencies. In our department SAFETY is the top priority!

Teamwork is another key component of Frederick County Fire and Rescue. Like members of the armed services, firefighters and EMTs follow a command structure based on rank, with firefighters and EMTs at the lower end of the scale. A paramilitary structure requires you to take orders from those of higher rank. When on duty, firefighters cannot leave the station to take care of personal business nor can they make or receive cell phone calls while en route to or working on an incident. Firefighters are expected to come work on time every day they are scheduled to work including during holidays, snowstorms, hurricanes or other severe weather. Lateness is not tolerated. You are held accountable for your behavior – off and on the job, inside and outside Frederick County.