



# Ozark Fire Protection District Press Release



The Ozark Fire Protection District held a pinning ceremony at the August 15, 2023, Board of Directors meeting. The following members were recognized for the following accomplishments.

#### Promotions:

EN. Mitch Beary

EN. Dustin Cutbirth

#### Permanent Assignments:

FF. Jared Stover

FF. Jacob Walles

FF. Austin White

FF. Jacob Morelan

#### Initial Assignments:

FF. Ryan Rush

FF. Matthew Dilday

FF. Jessi Gearhart

FF. Braden Loehr

Some are just starting their fire service career, others are changing organizations, and some have worked hard to successfully earn a promotion. We are very proud of each of our member's accomplishments. These members are the future of our organization, and the future looks amazing. Join us in congratulating each of them as you see them out and about the Ozark area.



Our Chief officers traveled to different areas within the state for educational opportunities this past week. Chief Jarett Metheny and Assistant Chief Aaron Heaton traveled to Kansas City for the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary conference of the International Association of Fire Chiefs. Assistant Chief Jeff Owens traveled to Osage Beach for the Fire Marshals Association of Missouri annual conference. Each of these educational opportunities provided networking and educational advancement to improve the services we deliver. All of our staff have many certifications that require annual training and upkeep to remain certified.

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Station #3 continues its progress toward completion before the end of 2023. If you get a chance to drive by, you'll see the walls are complete, the windows are installed, and the drywall is finishing up the interior. It won't be too long until we are able to return staffing to this essential area of the district.

A huge congratulations are in order for Captain Derek Compton, who completed his Fire Officer Designation through the Center for Public Safety Excellence. Cpt. Compton has spent many hours completing his degree, applying for designation, and conducting follow-up evaluations to reach this amazing point in his career. Cpt. Compton has been with the Ozark Fire Protection District since 2017. His list of accomplishments while with the district is more than can be listed. Recently he assisted with reconstructing our 2-week onboarding process and transferring to a weekly assignment so he could oversee the delivery. Congratulation Cpt. Derek Compton, this is only the beginning.



As always, we encourage everyone to be fire safe. This month it is Campus Fire Safety planning. We look at the scrolling list of social media as it presents to us the students returning to school. We love watching the youth in our community grow and become better citizens. However, going back to school opens new opportunities to be aware of the fire hazards we may face.

Whether you are returning to the local Elementary, High school, or moving on to college, learn where the pull stations, fire extinguishers, and Automated External Defibrillator (AED) are located and how to contact additional help if needed. For those members moving into college dorm rooms. Candles, smoking, and unattended heating appliances are some of the top reasons that fires occur on college campuses. Taking those extra few moments to ensure all candles are extinguished, cooking appliances are turned off, and smoking items are fully extinguished or located away from other combustible material could be the difference in experiencing one of these events. Also, know the escape routes. Elementary and High School education facilities practice these drills multiple times annually. If moving on to a college campus, know the exit pathways for each building you enter.

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Lastly, early notification doesn't occur without working smoke detectors. It is reported that over half of college campus fires didn't have working smoke detectors or they had been tampered with in some way. Please check your smoke detectors every 6 months. Contact your local fire department to obtain operable detectors or to have them installed.

For further information please contact us at the district HQ (417) 581-4436 M-F 7 am-4 pm.

Respectfully;

**Aaron S. Heaton**

Assistant Chief

[aheaton@ozarkfire.org](mailto:aheaton@ozarkfire.org)

[Ozark Fire Protection District](#)

Station: (417) 581-4436

Fax: (417) 581-4496

