

As the temperatures continue to climb, please remind your firefighter to stay hydrated. Here is a great article from Aaron Zamzow from Fire Rescue Fitness with some recommendations and motivation to stay properly hydrated.

Practical Recommendations for Firefighter Hydration

Hydration is critical for optimal performance. Progressive dehydration from exercise (or fire ground operations) impairs performance, mental capacity, perception of effort and can be life-threatening. With as little as a 2% body water shortage, the ability to perform a high intensity activity can be greatly impaired. Translate that on to the fire ground could mean death or injury to you or a crew member because your performance is greatly reduced. Properly hydrated, well-conditioned firefighters are better able to contend with heat stress than unconditioned or dehydrated counterparts. By not hydrating yourself properly before the situation, you are not only putting your own life in danger but that of the crews.

Try to follow these guidelines to insure proper hydration:

Daily

- Optimally, try to consume ½ bodyweight in ounces of water.
- Don't rely on thirst. Drink before, during and after your shift. Get into the habit of taking on fluids throughout the day; try to have a water bottle on the truck and around the station.

Prior to Fire Ground Operations (or exercise)

- Drink at least 16 ounces of water before exercise to ensure your fluid levels are up to par.

During Fire Ground Operations (or exercise)

- Drink cool (40°F), dilute fluids at a minimum rate of at least 8 ounces every 15 minutes. Those who are dehydrated must drink at a rate of 8 ounces every 10 minutes.
- If exercising longer than 90 minutes, drink 8-10 fluid ounces of a sports drink (with no more than 8 percent carbohydrate) every 15 - 30 minutes.

After Fire Ground Operations (or exercise)

- If the exercise (fire ground activity) lasts for less than an hour the body should have sufficient electrolyte and carbohydrate supplies to maintain optimal performance. Therefore, for short periods of exercise water is just as good as sports drinks.
- If exercise (fire ground activity) lasts for over an hour, use a sports drink with electrolytes and carbohydrates along with water to rehydrate the body.

Hydration is an ongoing process.

Waiting until exercise or fire ground operations have begun to start drinking water is like walking into a house fire without your SCBA. **DO NOT** wait for signs of dehydration. **Drink water like your life depends on it... because it does.**

