



TAILBOARD TRAINING

VFIS “**Tailboard Training**” is a bi-weekly loss prevention program for clients. The program is intended to provide information on current safety issues facing emergency responders in a format that will quickly and effectively communicate a safe practice to implement and relate directly to your organization. These are released every other Thursday by VFIS.

WEARING YOUR SEAT BELT MAY SAVE YOUR LIFE!

It seems with every vehicle-related fatality, we hear the same comment, “the driver failed to use his/her seat belt and died.” There is NO reason not to wear a seat belt.

On April 23, 2005, firefighter Christopher Brian Hunton, a 27-year-old member of the Amarillo, Texas Fire Department, fell out of his fire truck responding to an alarm. Firefighter Hunton died two days later from his injuries. Like too many other emergency responders before and since, Brian was not wearing a seat belt. There are too many tragic stories like Brian's each year; responders are losing their lives in the line-of-duty as a result of what are preventable causes.

Wearing your seat belt, in both department and personal vehicles, is such a simple safety measure to take. All emergency responders, having been to just a few civilian car accidents, know first hand the importance of wearing seat belts. Most responders wear their seat belt when driving personal vehicles and also insist that family members buckle up as well. Why is it then that firefighters lose their lives being thrown from fire apparatus? In early March 2010, fire service leaders from across the nation will be meeting in California and the question will again arise regarding why first responders don't believe their apparatus will ever be involved in a motor vehicle accident.

Over the past couple of years, the USFA has joined the national fire service to take some significant steps in preventing firefighter deaths and injuries. The International Association of Fire Chiefs, International Association of Fire Fighters, National Volunteer Fire Council, National Fallen Firefighters Foundation, National Fire Protection Association, and so many other national organizations have implemented wonderful and effective firefighter safety programs. There is, however, an additional step we can all take together, today. Please take the National Seat Belt Pledge.

By analyzing the fatal accidents, NIOSH (The National Institute of Occupational Safety & Health) has established several recommended practices for safe operation on highways. These are summarized by the following pledge – take it!

THE PLEDGE

"I pledge to wear my seat belt whenever I am riding in a fire department vehicle. I further pledge to insure that all my brother and sister firefighters riding with me wear their seat belts. I am making this pledge willingly; to honor Brian Hunton, my brother firefighter, because wearing seat belts is the right thing to do."

The objective is to complete the training in 15 minutes or less with participants leaving the session with a better understanding of how to keep from getting hurt.

1. Have you had any such incidents in your department or in nearby departments? If so, describe a type of injury, accident, or incident that has actually occurred.
2. Commentary on how to prevent the incident.
3. Review of any related departmental standard operating guidelines that may apply.
4. Have a short open dialogue on the subject with your personnel.

VFIS and other references:

Duty, Honor , Courage...Do We Need a National Seat Belt Pledge

<http://www.vfis.com/pdf/VFIS06-4.pdf>

VFIS Supports IAFC VCOS Seat Belt Pledge

http://www.vfis.com/pdf/VFIS08-2_000.pdf

National Seatbelt Pledge

<http://www.trainingdivision.com/NSPresources.asp>

VISIT www.vfis.com FOR MORE INFORMATION