

West Lafayette Fire Department
February 2010

Safety Donation Wal-Mart continued their support of fire safety and education with a \$2000 donation to the City. Inspector Brian Lancaster has worked with Wal-Mart over the past several years to fund an account that is used to purchase a variety of safety items. Many of the materials that are passed out in the schools and given to kids at other fire prevention and education events come from this, as do Farmers Market handouts and other older student and adult fire safety items and materials.

HazMat All the members of the department continued studying and brushing up on hazardous materials. The State DHS (Department of Homeland Security) and NFPA (National Fire Protection Association) recognize three distinct levels of hazmat training – Awareness Level, Operations Level, and Technician Level. Our focus is on the first two levels – Awareness and Operations.

Engine 3 At the request of the manufacturer and dealer, Engine 3 was taken out of service and delivered to Indianapolis for a week to resolve four ongoing issues. Our department mechanic, Tony Schutter, has done a good job of persistently insisting that this truck be in excellent working condition, now and from the day it was first delivered, and the work in Indianapolis was a result of this. These issues are being addressed at the dealer's expense even though the truck has been out of warranty for over a year.

The advances in function that technology brings adds many useful features to a modern fire truck but, as two of these issues demonstrate, repairs can be complex and challenging. A dozen wires from several years ago have been replaced, in a modern truck, by a wiring harness with upwards of 100 individual wires and these particular problems in our truck are intermittent which makes them all the harder to trace.

While in Indianapolis fixes were applied to all four of the issues and everything was working correctly when we picked up the truck. The mechanics there even found one wire with a very small nick in it that would trigger one of the problems. This was similar to finding a needle in a hay stack because multiple wires are involved and they are each several feet long and then the nick was less than a millimeter in size. However, within a few days of returning from Indy one of the issues acted up again. Tony had already spent many hands-on hours in the truck and in consulting with both the dealer's mechanics and the manufacturer's engineers attempting to identify the cause of this issue and the others and in steadily keeping our issues before them. I'm confident that he will persistently continue this until the truck is right.

DHS and District 4 The Indiana Director of Homeland Security, the State Fire Marshall and other key people were in Lafayette for a District wide meeting to inform and educate myself and others in the audience about the ongoing changes and tasks assigned to the Indiana DHS.

Chief Drew