



# Crystal Park Volunteer Fire Department

#2 Waterfall Loop, Manitou Springs, CO 80829

## Community Safety Bulletin #4



### DISPOSING OF YOUR HOT ASHES

*On the evening of January 25<sup>th</sup> 2008, a Colorado Springs homes caught fire due to improper Ash Disposal.*

In accordance with the Fire Prevention Code, hot ashes, cinders, or smoldering coals shall not be deposited in any combustible receptacle and shall not be placed within 10 feet of other combustible material including combustible walls and partitions or within 2 feet of openings to buildings.

Improper ash removal from fireplaces and wood burning stoves cause thousands of fires every year. According to the National Fire Protection Agency, 9870 house fires are caused yearly due to improperly discarded ashes. Wood ashes retain enough heat to ignite other combustible materials for several days. Hot coals, hidden in a pile of ashes and thus well insulated, can stay hot for up to 4 days.

Never empty ashes into a paper or plastic bag, cardboard box, or other similar container. The only suitable means for ash storage is a metal container with a tight fitting lid; this helps keep air from blowing through and disturbing ashes which can leave hot coals exposed for reignition. Many home fires begin from improperly stored ashes while the home's occupants are asleep, as the evening breeze intensifies.

For optimum safety, wet the wood ashes prior to attaching the metal lid to the pail. DO NOT store your metal ash container on your deck, in your garage, or in any location that may allow heat to transfer from those hot coals to nearby flammable items.

#### What can you do to prevent wood ash fires?

- Remove ashes *before* you light a fire to give them time to cool from the previous fire.
- Remove ashes frequently, before they pile up too deep. This gives less ash for hot coals to hide in.
- Mix the ashes to look for bits of coals and remove them.
- Remove ashes to a metal pail and cover them with a metal lid that fits tightly. The bottom should be slightly elevated so that only the edge of the bottom makes contact with the flooring. Place the filled ash bucket on a non-combustible surface such as stone, concrete, brick, or slate.

A cord of wood produces about 50 pounds of ashes, which can be used for many other purposes. Once you are POSITIVE your container of ashes is "Cold", place in a pile and prepare your container for the next load.

All kinds of ashes can be used as fertilizer. They produce 50 to

### February is our Birthday!



One year ago this month the CPVFD was formed from concerned citizens/volunteers from Crystal Park. The seeds for the department were sown many years earlier when the Metro-District was formed for Fire Protection; and the Manitou Springs Fire Department offered to train Crystal Park residents as Probationary Fire Fighters.

Our relationship with the MSFD has grown over the years, and we now have over 10 park residents that have been trained by MSFD in either Wildland Firefighting or Structure Firefighting. They deserve our thanks.

This past month, we added the CPVFD Auxilliary's to the departments rolls. The Auxilliary's are not trained Firefighters, but key members in helping to keep Crystal Park a safe place to live and enjoy the great beauty of the front range. Learn more on the Auxilliary's in another article in this bulletin.

The department has a Chief, Deputy Chief, and various positions to help us get our job done. You can learn more about us by visiting the departmental website at: [crystalparkvfd.org](http://crystalparkvfd.org)

The website is pending a new look, so keep checking to see more information to help you.

to 70% lime and contain phosphorus, potash and trace elements. Gardeners can raise the soil's pH by applying wood ash to their soil. To avoid altering the pH too drastically, take a soil sample prior to the addition of wood ashes to your garden spot. If the soil pH value is below 5.8, then place a dusting of wood ash on the surface and work it into the soil. Do not add ashes to your soil from burned wood that was painted, stained or treated with any chemicals as these chemicals may be harmful to your soil and plants.

**How to contact us:** [If it's an emergency – Dial 911](mailto:cpvfd@crystalparkvfd.org)  
Visit our Website at: [Crystalparkvfd.org](http://Crystalparkvfd.org)

**Email the CPVFD Officers**  
Chief – John Hennessey ~ [jhennessey@crystalparkvfd.org](mailto:jhennessey@crystalparkvfd.org)  
DChief – Paul Welsch ~ [pwelsch@crystalparkvfd.org](mailto:pwelsch@crystalparkvfd.org)



## Adopt a Cistern!

Have you noticed the new red numbering signs on the fire cisterns buried in the park?

Supplying water at the fire scene is one of our major tasks in the CPVFD. To do so, we rely on 30 buried cisterns in the park. They have just been numbered to aid decision making and communicating priorities during the hectic time of firefighting. However, we can use them if we can't find em!

Unfortunately many of the cisterns have been covered by snow and road debris as a result of routine Crystal Park road maintenance. Please identify the cistern closet to your house and keep it clear of snow and ice in winter and dirt/debris year-round.

Please report any damage to the cistern or its signage to the fire department. Email the Deputy Chief at the address on the bottom of page #1. Or call the office to report things to the Park Manager.

If you would like to purchase your own cistern and locate it near your house, call the Metro District for information on how to buy one; and the park's maintenance crew will bury it at not cost to you. Thanks ~ We appreciate it.



**DID YOU KNOW?** On January 4<sup>th</sup> 2008, the Crystal Park Volunteer Fire Department was specifically mentioned at a meeting of the White House Homeland Security Council as an example of a community developing "resiliency". Under the Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD) #21, developing community resiliency is a major national goal. The CPVFD was described as a self-organizing group of community minded individuals who are creating a capability to respond to not only fire but a variety of disasters. In that same HSC meeting, as an example, the CPVFD was noted to be using Incident Command (IC) during a recent fire (Manitou Incline Fire) and being exactly in compliance with the provisions of the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and the National Response Plan (NRP). **Congratulations! – CPVFD**

## Announcing the formation of the CPVFD Auxiliary

On January 4<sup>th</sup>, the CPVFD Auxiliary's were formed to continue the effort to serve our community neighbors by providing fire service to Crystal Park. The Auxiliary Mission is to support the CPVFD through the management and control of those functions and events that increase the effectiveness, preparedness, and readiness of the CPVFD firefighting capability.

As a volunteer we will support the CPVFD Evacuation plan which entails, traffic control/ checkpoints, helicopter assist, both of which ensure a safe evacuation as well as handling the phones for residents who may be at work or not currently residing in the park and calling in for updates.

In addition we are coordinating fund raisers to generate money to offset the costs associated with sending sire fighters to EMS training, certified sawyer training as well as towards the multipurpose building.

We need volunteers of various capabilities and welcome your filling out an application to join. Please visit the [crystalparkvfd.org](http://crystalparkvfd.org) website auxiliary tab. Please feel free to direct any questions to [auxiliary@crystalparkvfd.org](mailto:auxiliary@crystalparkvfd.org).