

# Andover EMS

By John Kinney  
Andover EMS

Andover's Fourth of July celebrations this year were a perfect reflection of rural America. I am so honored and happy to be a part of this town.

As is my usual custom, I began the day with a hearty pancake and sausage breakfast provided by the Andover Lions Club at the Andover Elementary/Middle School. I'm happy to report that there were no calls for the ambulance during the breakfast feast (nor to my knowledge has there ever been one) – good job!

I then took my time to review the vendor selections on the Village Green – planning my day as to where I would get some lunch, ice cream, snacks, etc., because food is a very big part of my world.

By 9 AM it was time to move the ambulance into position. As our town collectively showed respect during the singing of our national anthem by Margo Coolidge and we watched our nation's flag rise courtesy of the Boy Scouts, I noticed how strikingly beautiful the blue sky was. (A perfect photograph of this by Chuck Will can be seen in Chuck's Corner on the Proctor Academy Web site).

I then began to think of the weather forecast for another hot and humid day and the need to confirm that Andover EMS had plenty of water, cooling packs, and IV fluid on hand. True to our creed, we were more than ready for the day's festivities and any calamity that might arise.

Shortly after 1 PM the temperature was 92 degrees, and calls from across the Village Green and on our radios started coming in. We had a case of heat exhaustion to treat. OK, this was expected, we're ready. Then another call came in for a possible low blood-sugar/diabetic situation. No problem, we've got plenty of EMTs on hand. And yet another call occurred for a possible cardiac event. Now things were getting interesting. Three calls within five minutes – my, how an EMTs day can change in such a short period of time.

This is, of course, not meant to diminish the significance of the singular

events for each of the respective patients, but to highlight how impressed I was with the volunteer EMTs. In our tiny town, on a day of celebration for all, we had the benefit of having two Paramedics, one EMT-Intermediate, and eight EMT-Basics giving up time with family and friends to help others in need. Each case was handled professionally and efficiently. I'm happy to report that all of the patients are fine, and no significant injury or damage was incurred.

I don't know if it was the heat of the afternoon or just plain luck, but the remainder of the day was quiet and calm.

As we progress through one of the hottest summers on record, please be mindful to make every effort to stay cool and hydrated. Heat-related illnesses include rash, cramps, swelling, hyperventilation, fainting, exhaustion, and, worst of all, heat-stroke. These conditions can onset rapidly, especially for the young, the elderly, and those with outdoor work occupations. Some medications may also increase your risk, regardless of age or occupation. If you take medicines regularly, ask your doctor for advice about hot-weather activity and your risk of getting a heat-related illness.

Reflecting back on the Fourth of July celebrations, I just wanted to say how humbled and honored I am to be part of the exceptional group of volunteers we have in Andover. Through the volunteer efforts of the EMTs, firefighters, selectmen, and dozens of committee and organization members, as well as the folks at *The Andover Beacon*, the town of Andover is very fortunate to have such a vast array of citizens giving something back to their town.

If anyone reading this has any interest in volunteering any amount of time in any capacity for just about any cause you can imagine, please contact our Town Administrator, Dana Hadley, and he'll be happy to point you in the right direction.

Stay cool and enjoy the rest of the summer. Kids will be back in school and autumn will be here before we know it.

# East Andover Fire Department

By Chief Rene Lefebvre  
East Andover Fire Department

Another successful Fourth of July event is in the record books. The weather was perfect and the crowd was very large. Many people stopped by our tent and visited with the members of the fire departments and the Andover EMS. We thank all who were there to celebrate our Independence Day with us.

Have you ever tried to prepare for some family event only to have each member moving in a different direction? The more people that are involved, the more impossible the planning becomes. I think many if us have been there and wondered if the event was worth all the effort.

Now think about a building fire. That event, like any other, needs to be planned. Of course the plan is devised at the time of the fire, and a burning building is a quickly-evolving event involving many people and lots of equipment. Some have said, "It must be like herding cats." In truth, we manage every building fire, forest fire, or auto accident in the same way. Incident command has become our way of life.

Recently we were called to a building fire in another community. As we were part of the first alarm response, our team arrived in the early stages of

the incident.

I reported to the incident commander that we were on the scene and had a complement of six people. The firemen were directed to a personnel staging area, and I was asked to assume the role of staging officer. My job was to direct people and fire equipment to locations as requested by command.

Other incoming chiefs and officers were directed by command to fill in other roles as the size of the incident required. No officer had more than five people or job roles reporting to him. Each piece of the incident is handled in manageable bits. I have often thought that the fire commander is like an orchestra leader who makes sure everyone is on the same sheet of music and in the proper place.

The fire eventually went to three alarms, calling in over 50 firemen, some from as far away as Concord. In the end the fire was extinguished, every fireman was safe, and more than a dozen fire trucks were placed as the incident commander needed. I still come away from a large incident that has been managed well in awe of the people who work as a tight team.

Your firemen here in Andover, well, they are very good.

Herding cats? I don't think so!

## AFD and EAFD Respond When Fire Destroys Franklin Auto Shop

By Ben Leubsdorf  
Concord Monitor staff  
From the July 11 Concord Monitor

A fire early yesterday morning destroyed an auto-repair shop in downtown Franklin, according to the fire department.

Firefighters responded just after 12:30 AM to Bill Hamel's Car Care, 1 Douphinette Street, where the fire "had been building for a while," said Franklin fire Captain Gary Hicks.

The blaze was brought under control in about 45 minutes, but "the building was a complete loss," Hicks said.

"The ceiling and second floor basically collapsed inside," he said. "The walls are up, but that's about it."

No one was hurt, and responders were able to keep the flames from spreading to nearby buildings, Hicks said.

The cause of the fire was still under investigation yesterday, but Hicks

said foul play isn't suspected. He said the fire began in a "utility area of the building."

Firefighters hosed down the flames from outside the building, located behind the Elks lodge at 192 Central Street, because the fire was too heavy to enter it and some items inside the repair shop were combustible, Hicks said.

A third alarm was sounded as a precaution to call in more fire crews if they were needed, but personnel activated by the second alarm were able to handle the fire, Hicks said.

In addition to Franklin, emergency personnel responded from Andover, Belmont, Boscawen, Bristol, Concord, East Andover, Gilford, Hill, Laconia, Penacook, Salisbury, Sanbornton, Tilton-Northfield, and the Twin Rivers Ambulance Service.

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