



PRESS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
JUNE 27, 2022**

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TRAINING HELD FOR CONFINED SPACE RESCUE

Muscatine firefighters complete week-long training in Davenport



MUSCATINE, Iowa – Six members of the Muscatine Fire Department attended a 40-hour confined space rescue class hosted by the Davenport Fire Department and the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF). Muscatine, Davenport, and Rock Island Arsenal firefighters took part in the class.

A confined space is defined as a space that has limited or restricted means of entry, is not designed for continuous occupancy, and is large enough and configured so that a person can enter the space and maneuver well enough to perform tasks.

“Confined space rescue is a service the Muscatine Fire Department performs for our community and local businesses,” Jerry Ewers, Muscatine Fire Chief, said. “Even though confined space emergencies are low occurrences, they are high-risk incidents.”



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During the five-day, 40-hour course firefighters were introduced to the hazards of confined spaces, mitigating hazards in confined spaces utilizing lock out/tag out (control of hazardous energy sources), air monitoring of confined space atmospheres, and ventilation of confined spaces.

Training for a variety of high-risk rescues is a key part of the job for firefighters and firefighter/EMTs including high-angle rescues, ice/water rescues/ trench rescues. Firefighters also train in auto extrication, fire prevention, fire suppression, hazardous materials, and ambulance transport.

“We need to be highly trained, equipped and ready for when we are called to any of these emergencies,” Ewers said.

Acting Lieutenant Spencer Ripperger led a team from Muscatine to the confined spaces training, a team that included firefighters Reece Hall, Ben Barrett, Kyle Davis, Colton Pauls, and Michael Fleming.

“During the class members performed rescues using rope rescue mechanical advantage systems,” Ripperger said.

Rope rescue mechanical advantage systems involve using a series of ropes, pulleys, anchors, and carabiners to move a heavy load over great distances with little or no strain. “Mechanical advantage” refers to the amount of assistance your rope and pulley system provides you in search and rescue situations.

Class members wore SCBAs (self-contained breathing apparatus) and SAR units (supplied air respirators) to simulate hazardous air conditions during the exercises.



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“We were also taught how to make high point anchors using ladders, and different ways of packaging a victim for removal from a confined space utilizing various pieces of rescue equipment,” Ripperger said.

The instructors were professional rope rescue and confined space technicians from the IAFF.

“We are grateful for the free training offered by the Davenport Fire Department to our six members,” Ewers said.

Ripperger noted that every member from Muscatine appreciated the opportunity to take the class.

“We all had a great time, got a lot of hands-on experience, and learned a lot of new skills,” Ripperger said.

Training will continue to be an important part of the daily life for Muscatine Fire Department staff, and, no matter how rare the occasion is, Muscatine firefighters will be ready with the skills and confidence needed.

[PHOTO GALLERY](#)

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