



City of Harrisonburg, Virginia

FIRE DEPARTMENT

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HFD Trains with Local Agency

Harrisonburg, VA. – The Harrisonburg Fire Department (HFD) has partnered with a local agency to give staff the tools they need when responding to certain situations.

This week, firefighters are receiving mental health first aid training from the Harrisonburg-Rockingham Community Services Board (CSB). This course helps first responders identify that someone is going through a mental health related crisis, gives them the tools to intervene, and helps the individual connect with local resources. Topics covered are anxiety, depression, psychosis, and addictions.

“It is our goal to introduce the firefighters to risk factors and warning signs of mental health problems, so they are better able to deal with individuals who are experiencing a crisis in their life,” explained Deputy Chief Steve Morris. “The firefighters are also taught how to support one another and work as a team during these situations.”

This program teaches risk factors and warning signs, in addition it provides a five-step action plan to support someone with signs and symptoms of a mental illness or experiencing an emotional crisis. CSB is also able to review the services they provide and the local resources available to those in need.

In addition to the classroom instruction, HFD staff put into practice what they learned through role-playing exercises and different scenarios.

Approximately 70 HFD staff members received training on this eight-hour course.

For a complete list of services and resources provided by CSB, visit www.hrscsb.org.

Additional safety information is available at www.HarrisonburgVA.gov/fire.

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