



STAFF PHOTOS BY SPENSER BICKETT

Littlefork Fire Department crew members were one of the first groups to respond on the scene to the mock accident at L-BF School Wednesday.

ACCIDENT

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A North Memorial helicopter came from Duluth and arrived on the scene as responders were treating Knaeble's injuries, and loaded her onto the helicopter to take her away for further treatment.

In a presentation to students before the accident, Grotberg told students how critical it is when calling 911 to provide as much detail as possible. Information like how many and types of vehicles, as well as the number of injured people, can give responders a better idea of what to expect.

"Give them everything you can," Grotberg said. "The quicker you can do it, the faster they can get here."

A fast response time is important in an area with winter temperatures sometimes dropping to 40 or 50 degrees below zero, Grotberg said. When temperatures are that low and your car's heat doesn't work due to an accident, hypothermia and frostbite can set in quickly, he said.

Grotberg asked the students, "How many of you know someone who's died in an accident?"

A scattered amount of hands went in the air, and Grotberg said, "That's quite a few for such a small group."

A staged accident featuring their fellow students emphasizes the fact that an accident like this one could easily happen to them, Grotberg said.

"The guy next to you might not be here tomorrow," he said. "It really makes you think."

The accident is designed to be graphic because personnel want it



The driver of the vehicle in the mock accident at L-BF school Wednesday, Agim Bekteshi, is led away from the scene in handcuffs.

to shock the students, common sense, and he that provides immunity



Members of the Littlefork Fire Department sweep up broken glass following the mock accident at L-BF school Wednesday.

Ambulance Chief Tom Donahou said. They should really look at it, he said, because with one wrong turn of a wheel, they could be wrapped around a tree.

"Look at how easily it could happen to any one of you," Donahou said. "It's not fun for us to pull out someone we know."

Grotberg pointed to the upcoming prom season as an example of a time when students should use

said he hopes they look back on this accident. Students shouldn't risk putting themselves in harm's way by getting in the car with an underage drunk driver, he said.

"Don't be afraid to call if you think you're going to get in trouble," he said. "Be brave enough to call and help a friend."

There's a new law in the process of being passed, Grotberg said,

for someone that calls 911 to help someone who may be in trouble due to alcohol overconsumption. Even if the caller is underage and has been drinking, he said, the caller will be immune to charges. The point of the law is to encourage people to call for help who may need it, and not be worried about getting in trouble themselves, he said.

FLOOD

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"I've been talking to local people here who spend a lot of time on the lakes, and they think the best thing we can do is make sure we make room for the amount of precipitation and unusual amount of snow pack melt," Grim told The Journal.

The large quantity of water in the snow pack increases the risk of high inflows to Namakan Reservoir, Rainy Lake and their tributaries as the spring melt gets underway.

On March 7, the Water Levels Committee directed the owners of the dams at Rainy Lake and Namakan Reservoir to operate these dams to target by this week the lower end of the regulated lake level range, known as the rule curves, as defined by the International Joint Commission.

In response to the directive, the dam owners made small adjustments to the outflows from Namakan Reservoir and Rainy Lake to reach lake levels in the lower portion of the respective rule curve ranges as of Tuesday.

Under normal conditions, the dam owners are required to target the middle portion of the rule curves, noted the release.

Following the significant snowfall of Monday and Tuesday, Grim said the weather forecast for the next two to three weeks shows not a lot of moisture, he said. A conference call between the dam operators and committee next week may consider what to do next, he said.

"It's a real interesting balancing game to keep them low and then it does not fill up, then what? And if we don't keep it low, and we get rain and a large amount of freshet, then what?"

Freshet is a term that refers to increased water flows from heavy rain or melted snow.

"We're concerned and trying to be proactive, rather than wait till the last minute."

Lee Grim

Member of the Water Levels Committee of the International Rainy-Lake of the Woods Watershed Board and the board.

The dams are owned and operated by H2O Power LP on the Canadian side, and owned and operated by Boise Paper, a division of Packaging Corporation of America, on the United States side. The rule curves for the lakes have been established by the International Joint Commission.

Inflows to these lakes and their tributaries are slightly below normal for the start of April, but are expected to rise quickly as the snow pack begins to melt. In response, outflows from the dams at Namakan Reservoir and Rainy Lake will be adjusted with the goal of maintaining the lake levels within the range of the respective rule curves.

Grim said any measures must consider concerns about the Rainy River and the people who use it and the walleye migration.

"We think what we're doing is good thing to make room for the extra moisture," he said. "It's not melting fast. And if we continue to get that freeze-thaw, freeze-thaw that's a good thing."

The Water Levels Committee is regularly monitoring conditions in the watershed and will post updates as conditions warrant. The latest information on lake levels, dam settings, and basin flows can be found online at http://www.ijc.org/en/_/RLWWB.

For further information, call (800) 661-5922 ex 3.

MEETING

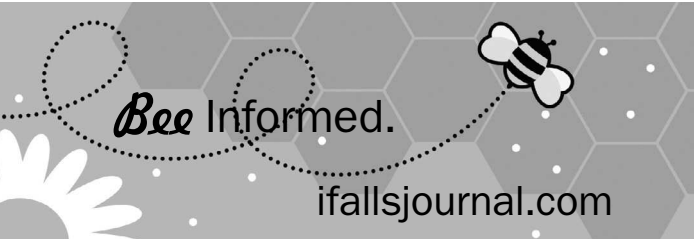
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"It needs major repairs," Briggs said of the facility. "The roof and boiler are the two big, main things."

The county board has the jurisdictional authority to create a taxing district, Briggs said, and the filing of a formal request begins the process to establish a taxing district. The deadline to be eligible to levy for the district in 2015 is July 1, Briggs said, which is why the LMC Board and


Littlefork City Council have called a special meeting. She said the process must be started sooner rather than later.

Even though the city of Littlefork owns the LMC, the county is getting formally involved because the resources LMC provides are critical to county residents, Briggs said. The in-treatment chemical dependency facility is the only one in the county, and the nursing home beds and clinic services are also crucial resources the county can't lose, she said.





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