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Social Media

Purpose

To establish proper conduct for members on social media websites.

Background


We all must recognize the important responsibility we have as potential communicators in public forums. To recognize the importance of social media channels such as *blogs, wikis, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram* and any other form of user-generated media, the guidelines below have been created. These guidelines are intended to help member's —whether in their roles as board member, active member, life member, exempt member, or social member participating in social networks outside of Rapids Volunteer Fire Company, Inc. make good decisions in their use of online social tools.

- A) These guidelines aim to cover both the listening and the talking aspects of social computing.

Guidelines

A) Applicable for all Rapids Volunteer Fire Company, Inc. Members:

1. All communication in social media channels must adhere to Rapids Volunteer Fire Company, Inc. Standard Operating Policies (SOP's) and Bylaws.
2. Rapids Volunteer Fire Company, Inc. members are individually responsible for the content they publish online, including blogs, wikis, forums, Twitter, Facebook and any other form of user-generated media. Items posted online will likely be indexed by search engines and copied by other sites, so it can remain public and associated with you even if the original post is deleted. Post with care.
3. Follow copyright, fair use and financial disclosure laws.
4. Don't publish confidential or HIPPA Information.
5. Don't cite or reference patients, fire companies, police or any other emergency agencies in a negative way.
6. Ethnic slurs, personal insults, foul language, or conduct unbecoming directed at Rapids Volunteer Fire Company, Inc., its members, or any other emergency services personnel will not be tolerated.
7. On social networks where you identify yourself as a member of Rapids Volunteer Fire Company, Inc., be mindful that the content posted will be visible to other members, other

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emergency services personnel, and the general public. Make sure the information posted is the most professional reflection of your opinions and beliefs.

8. Refrain from engaging in heated discussion and use good judgment when expressing opinions that may pose a potential conflict. Do not post angry comments or attack individuals engaging in the discussion.

9. Observe generally accepted online publishing standards. Do not alter previous posts without indicating that you have done so.

10. Do not insult or disparage Rapids Volunteer Fire Company, Inc., other agencies, or any fellow members, even if specific names are not mentioned.

11. It is entirely possible that you will come across frustrated citizen(s) on websites other than Rapids Volunteer Fire Company, Inc., and will want to help them by using knowledge or accessing tools available only to Rapids Volunteer Fire Company, Inc. members. Check with a member of the board before responding to the citizen(s) because another member may already be preparing a response, or the citizen(s) may have identified a larger problem we need to address systematically as a company.

12. Refrain from discussing specifics about company-related matters/situations, names of people or any other information that would allow someone to identify people, technical details etc., and to reiterate, *never* discuss confidential information related to Rapids Volunteer Fire Company, Inc. A good rule of thumb is that if a member is uncomfortable sharing a piece of content with a member of the board or will be embarrassed seeing it posted in the local newspaper, then the content should not be posted. Take the time to do that gut check before hitting "Post."


13. Do not create profiles on social media platforms that claim to represent Rapids Volunteer Fire Company, Inc. in an official capacity. This includes creating social media profiles that represent the Rapids Volunteer Fire Company, Inc. that have not been approved by the Executive Board.

14. Posting of Fire Company functions such as Pancake Breakfasts, Sports raffles, etc. are permitted to be posted on social media sites.

15. "Checking In" on sites such as Facebook and 4Square is NOT permitted.


16. The "sharing" of pictures relating to any type of call on social media is NOT permitted. This includes pictures that were posted by individuals who share call information on social media websites. (i.e.: Niagara County Fire Wire and Erie County Fire Wire)

17. Disciplinary actions will be in accordance with Article 14; Section 1 of the Rapids Volunteer Fire Company, Inc. bylaws for conduct which violates company policies.

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B) Applicable for official communications representatives of Rapids Volunteer Fire Company, Inc.:

1. Rapids Volunteer Fire Company, Inc. members responsible for official company communication should always identify themselves with a full name and relationship to the Company. Provide contact information, whenever appropriate, to help people recognize your role in ongoing conversations.
2. As an official representative of Rapids Volunteer Fire Company, Inc., be mindful that the point of view expressed by you *does* represent Rapids Volunteer Fire Company, Inc. views. If a member steps outside his/her official role and personally comments on company-related issues, other online viewers could reasonably be expected to assume those comments reflect the Company's views.
3. Rapids Volunteer Fire Company, Inc. social media message *must* be clear and consistent in order to avoid confusing the community.
4. General members are NOT to communicate on behalf of the company.

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Acknowledgment

I _____ acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Rapids Volunteer Fire Company's Social Media Policy and have also been trained and understand the items and instructions contained in the policy.

Signed _____

Date _____

Original - Personnel File

Copy – Member