



# PLAIN TALK

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# Fire extinguishers 101



Vermillion Fire Chief Shannon Draper (right) assists an employee of Vermillion Public Transit during a fire extinguisher training that was held Monday afternoon. (Travis Gulbrandson/Vermillion Plain Talk)

## Training sessions stress proper use, safety

**By Travis Gulbrandson**  
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As of Monday afternoon, the Vermillion Fire Department has taught more than 100 locals the proper use of fire extinguishers.

The program began two months ago and takes place at the training center by the airport, offering an educational opportunity for business owners and their employees, as well as ordinary citizens.

"I think it's something the community has enjoyed, especially the businesses," said fire chief Shannon Draper. "It's pretty much been business people who have been going through it, having their employees learn how to

use a fire extinguisher and when to use it."

During his presentation Draper showed attendees the various kinds of extinguishers and allowed everyone who wanted to a chance to put out a controlled fuel fire, which he lit in a metal container in the grass.

There are several different kinds of fire extinguishers, he explained, including dry powder or chemical extinguishers, and liquid, water or foam extinguishers.

Each extinguisher serves a different purpose, with a letter on the side indicating what type of fire it is meant to quell.

"When we inspect our extinguishers, the first thing is we

want to make sure it's full," Draper said. "Not overfull, not under-full, but right in the green, which you can see on the dial. If these dials can become damaged ... we'll see it in the needle.

"It's very obvious if something has happened to it," he said. "They make this on purpose - the needle is very fragile, and so if the gauge is damaged, that needle will be bent or even loose. That tells you that something is wrong."

Draper also instructed the participants to examine the extinguisher's hose before using it.

"Being that it's a rubber hose, you want to make sure that it's not dry-rotted, that the kids haven't stuffed it

with paper products or trash or bubble gum," he said.

The final thing to do is make sure the powder is loose inside the extinguisher.

"That powder actually compresses, so we want to take it and turn it upside down," Draper said. "You'll hear the powder fall to the top. If you don't, you can take a rubber mallet and just kind of tap it. It loosens up that powder, because if you let it sit and compress, when you go to discharge it you'll only discharge the top portion of it. The rest of it cakes at the bottom."

When these steps are completed, the extinguisher is almost ready to use.

"We want to pull the pin, we want to aim, squeeze the handle and then sweep back and forth," Draper said.

He added that users will want to start aiming the extinguisher about 20 feet from the fire, and aim at its base.

"We don't want to get way up in there and then realize we have a problem with our extinguisher," he said.

Draper also told the attendees to call 911 right away.

"Don't try to extinguish the fire and then realize it's too big," he said. "I would rather somebody call us and not try to extinguish it than the reverse, try

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### Fireworks, but no July 4 celebration planned this year

**By David Lias**  
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For over a decade, the Vermillion community has celebrated the Fourth of July with fun, food and fireworks.

Fireworks will still be a part of the local Independence Day recognition here. However, there will be no formal program hosted by the Vermillion Area Chamber of Commerce and Development Company (VCDC) and local businesses at Barstow Park on July 4.

In past years, the park has hosted inflatables, various concessions, a beer garden, a local hot dog eating contest and other activities during the late afternoon and evening hours, culminating with a fireworks display after sunset.

Steve Howe, executive director of the VCDC, hopes people will take advantage of the city's parks and other

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### Regents approve 'residency' concept

**By David Lias**  
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A "redesign" of teacher education and education leadership programs that has already been introduced into some University of South Dakota programs will be expanded statewide.

The South Dakota Board of Regents, at its meeting Wednesday on the USD campus, recommended that Jack R. Warner, the Regents executive director and CEO, affirm the commitment to expand and coordinate efforts to redesign all teacher education programs to incorporate a year-long residency.

These means that South Dakota university students pursuing education degrees with the goal of becoming classroom teachers will do more than complete a traditional one semester of student teaching.

Soon most teacher candidates will be engaging in a full-year classroom experience in what's being described as a "clinical residency model" to culminate their teacher preparation programs.

"If you draw a page from medical education, it will be more like a residency, or more of an internship year-long that gets students actually teaching under the guidance of teachers under schools," Warner told the Plain Talk Tuesday afternoon. "We've done this for a few years -- Black Hills State University has done it for some years, and it's worked out pretty successfully for them."

"It requires some redesign because you have to pack into the other three years all of the academic courses and then there is some academic reinforcement when they are out in the internship," he said.

Officials from the five public universities that prepare teacher candidates updated regents on this new model of teacher preparation Wednesday.

While a traditional model requires candidates to spend a semester student teaching before they graduate and move into the profession, Black Hills State University has required year-long residencies for a number of years. More recently, with support from the Bush Foundation, the University of South Dakota worked to incorporate this

requirement into its teacher education programs.

USD and Dakota State University currently partner with the Sioux Falls School District to provide year-long residencies for a set group of students pursuing certification as elementary teachers.

"The curriculum needs to be redesigned for a couple of reasons. One is to accommodate the additional semester of what used to be called student teaching. There is some coursework that supplements that, so they (student teachers) can write about it, talk about it with their faculty," Warner said. "The other curriculum redesign really has to do with teaching teachers how to teach to the Common Core Standards, which are the new standards that South Dakota adopted a couple years ago. That's important because the kind of teaching of is different."

Warner said the Common Core Standards stress "not just acquiring

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