



Woodstock Fire/Rescue District

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Press Release: Woodstock Cyanokit – 8/15/2024

News Release

The Woodstock Fire/Rescue District (WFRD) is always adopting proactive strategies focused not only on enhancing firefighter safety but also on improving the services we provide to the community.

Cyanide poisoning can occur in situations such as smoke inhalation from fires or exposure to certain chemicals. WFRD recently became the first fire/rescue agency in McHenry County to carry a Cyanokit. A Cyanokit is a medical treatment used to counteract cyanide poisoning. It contains hydroxocobalamin, a form of vitamin B12, which binds to cyanide in the body to form a non-toxic compound. By quickly neutralizing cyanide, the Cyanokit helps prevent the lethal effects of cyanide poisoning, such as respiratory failure, cardiac arrest, and cellular hypoxia (lack of oxygen at the cellular level).

In the event a firefighter or citizen were severely burned or suffered an inhalation injury, they would likely be airlifted to a burn center or hyperbaric center, as these facilities are not available in McHenry County. From the initial patient contact to their arrival at one of these hospitals, it could take 40-60 minutes. Without the use of a Cyanokit, the patient risks potentially fatal outcomes within that short timeframe.

WFRD has recently acquired one (1) Cyanokit, which is now ready for use in emergency situations. Next year, the District is anticipating purchasing enough Cyanokits to supply every ambulance in the fleet. The Cyanokit differs from the older, and no longer stocked, Cyanide Antidote Kits which historically prompted significant negative side effects. WFRD is proud to provide the highest level of emergency medical services to our community.

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