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**(Neb.)-Area Residents Gain A Blessing & Are A Blessing During Fires**  [Listen](#)



By: Roxie Graham-Marski Posted at: 09/20/2012 01:53 PM

*Photo: Firefighters from around the nation helped battle blazes during the region's recent wildfire outbreaks. (Photo by KCSR-Roxie Graham-Marski)*

(CHADRON)-During the Region 23 Fire Complex and the Wellnitz Fire that raged in the area in recent weeks, many area fire departments deployed resources and firefighters to the region to assist in firefighting efforts. One of these was the Rapid City Fire Department. At the city council meeting this week, city manager Wayne Anderson shared correspondence he had received from Rapid City Fire Chief Mike Maltaverne thanking several Chadron businesses and the Chadron Volunteer Fire Department for their assistance when one of their trucks broke down while here. Copies of the letters can be found below. Essentially, Ann Hency of Hency Plumbing, Ron's Repair Shop, Sturdevant's Auto Parts, and the fire department were able to fix the truck and did so “at no cost other than a smile, a handshake, and a thank you,” said Rapid City firefighters Robert Renden and Josh Lang. Anderson said the first thing he felt when he received the commendation letter was...

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Anderson says the instances abound in which area residents went out of their way to help and thank those who came to help with the fires.

\*Listen to story for soundbite\*

Anderson says the Neighborhood Party on Saturday was an additional way to thank firefighters for their efforts.

\*Listen to story for soundbite\*

Many of the firefighters, said Anderson, have been away from home for a long time this summer assisting with various fires. He said it was a privilege to have them here, and many of them seemed to have positive experiences as well.

\*Listen to story for soundbite\*

So, when you see a firefighter around town, whether local or from another state, give them a smile or a “Thank You.” We owe them so much.

(Questions? Comments? E-mail [news@chadrad.com](mailto:news@chadrad.com).)

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**(The following is a letter from Rapid City Firefighters Robert Rendon and Josh Lang to Rapid City Fire Chief Mike Maltaverne)**

Chief,

We are writing due to some people that assisted us getting E35 back up and running while on the fire in NE. We had several things go wrong with the plumbing on E35 and were suited for de-mob if it could not get fixed.

Our first visit was to Hency Plumbing and Hydronics, Inc. where we met Ann Hency. She assisted us in trying to locate the fitting we needed. Come to find out, the piece we needed was a custom piece and could not be ordered. In an attempt to get the piece welded so we could finish our assignment, Ann helped us find a welder that could help us out. We were steered towards Ron of Ron's Repair Shop...Ron dropped what he was doing and had us on our way in a hurry.

Ann had all the tools we needed in her shop to get everything disassembled and reassembled.

On third stop was Sturdevant's Auto Parts where we found a replacement for our missing set screw on our 3" suction connection.

In order to get that repaired our fourth stop was the Chadron Volunteer Fire Dept, and the guys there took apart a 2.5" connection so we could use the ball bearings from it.

All in all, this cost the department \$0.

Ann provided exceptional customer service as well as lending us the tools from her husband's shop.

Ron provided his services free of charge.

Cliff at Sturdevant's provided the new screw free of charge.

The folks at the Chadron Fire Dept. didn't hesitate in helping us find a solution which included taking apart one of their own fittings.

We are writing hoping that you would write these three businesses and the Chadron Fire Dept a letter of appreciation from the department...recognizing their graciousness and willingness to help...these people took the time out of their day to get us up and running at no cost other than a smile, a handshake, and a thank you.

Thanks for your time and if at all possible, we would like to be kept in the loop on what course is taken with these fine folks.

Thanks,

Robert and Josh

**(The following is a letter from Rapid City Fire Chief Mike Maltaverne to those who assisted in getting the truck fixed)**

The Western United States and more specifically our region have been adversely affected by this year's drought and very active fire season. When disasters like wildfires hit our region, one thing that is a given is that people come together, united and help one another out of a bad situation. This goes for neighbors helping neighbors, and fire department helping fire departments. In our rural setting, it is how we cope and get by to enjoy better times in the future.

In recent weeks, as western Nebraska was dealing with fires, the Rapid City Fire Department deployed multiple resources and firefighters to the areas of Chadron, Crawford, Hay Springs, and others to offer assistance. One of our resources experienced some mechanical problems while assigned to the Region 23 Complex. The fire truck and its crew faced having to return to Rapid City if the issue could not be remedied

locally in Chadron.

This brings me to the reason for this letter. Each of you and your organizations reached out to our crew in a time of need and all worked to find a solution to the mechanical issue we were having and went above and beyond to help us out. At the end of the day, our truck was fixed, our crew was back on the road and they were able to finish the mission of fighting the massive wildfires in the area.

For your efforts, I am writing to personally “THANK YOU” for all you did to assist our crew and fix our truck. If Rapid City was faced with a similar emergency, we would offer the same assistance to a Chadron resource. You all have friends in Rapid City and certainly at the Rapid City Fire Department.

Thank you, again,

Mike Maltaverne, Fire Chief  
Rapid City Fire Department