



M.O.S.T.

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M.O.S.T. Newsletter – June 2009

From the desk of John McMillan

To Our Friends:

Vehicular Entrapment

You just never know how events will shape your life or why people enter your life. In May, 2008 a local golf course owner was pumping water from a pond into his old fire truck that was used to water the greens. It is unknown why the truck entered the water causing his death. He was a personal friend of mine.

Being in the “underwater egress” training industry, I knew the time had come to introduce this type of training to our local EMS personnel. I conducted a Vehicular Entrapment Seminar during our annual EMS conference with 17 individuals, most from local fire departments, completed the 4 hour course.

About a month later I received an e-mail from a lady in Indiana, Mary Kay Kidwell, who had read about the training. I contacted her to find out her reason for the interest in the training. In November, 2007 her grandson was trapped and drowned in his car. In one of her articles she wrote:

“How could this happen? Living in landlocked Indiana, not many Hoosiers think they’ll drown in their vehicles. Yet now that this has happened, I’ve learned how prevalent this type of incident is throughout the world. No one is exempt. Everyone should be prepared. Your window of opportunity to survive is short, and your vehicle’s window is your most effective escape route. And if you can’t open the window, you need a tool to break it. Most people don’t know that”

I met with Mary Kay at the recent OTC in Houston to introduce her to our underwater egress simulator. She is on a mission to do what she can to educate people on water entrapment from a vehicle. Her efforts are reaching the Indiana legislature to see what “tools” can be built into car restraining systems that can be used to break windows to allow for a rapid escape from things such as fire, water or other emergencies.

Her guidelines for escape are POGO – Pop/release your seat belt, Open/break the window, Get Out.

Unlike helicopter ditchings, where instruction is taught to wait for pressure equalization to occur prior to jettisoning the exits, in a water related vehicle emergency, you get out as fast as you can.

It's a shame that these types of life changing events happen but they do have positive impact on other's lives. I admire Mrs. Kidwell for her efforts as they will save lives in the future.

John McMillan, President
McMillan Offshore Survival Training