



SHREVEPORT FIRE DEPARTMENT'S PORTACOOOL STORY

Shreveport, Louisiana, is the third most populous city in the state located in the northwest tri-corner area known as the Ark-La-Tex region where Arkansas, Louisiana and Texas meet. Home to more than 191,000 residents, the city boasts a stand-out fire department with more than 580 employees, 22 fire houses and an active fire academy that typically trains 30 recruits every six months. For more than 10 years, the Shreveport Fire Department (SFD) has utilized a mobile Scene Rehab Unit to help rehab firefighters after significant fires or in extreme heat situations.

"We deploy the Scene Rehab Unit for all large-scale incidents during the hottest months of June to September as part of what we call 'Operation Cool Down' to ensure the safety of our firefighters," said John Lane, chief of training at SFD with 28 years of service in the department.

The Scene Rehab Unit is a 5 ft x 10 ft mobile trailer equipped with a mounted, large Portacool Classic 48" two-speed portable evaporative cooler and water reservoir designed to provide cooling on the scene of any two-alarm or greater fire, as well as particularly high heat index days. Firefighters cool down, rest and rehydrate in 15-minute shifts to rebuild their stamina. This rehab process is important given the heat generated by wearing up to 75 pounds of personal protection equipment (PPE) and other necessary gear during the hottest summer conditions while actively working in a heat-generating environment. There in front of the Portacool, the firefighters are given IV fluids, rehydrate with water and electrolyte drinks, and have their vitals taken to ensure they are properly recovering.



Members of Recruit Class 64 get their vitals taken in front of the Portacool equipped Scene Rehab Unit deployed after large-scale incidents.

"Our firefighters can feel a definite difference in front of the Portacool evaporative cooler. The cooling makes it more tolerable even in our humid environment."

- John Lane, SFD Chief of Training

"Our firefighters can feel a definite difference in front of the Portacool evaporative cooler. The cooling makes it more tolerable even in our humid environment," said Lane. "During the summertime, we deploy the unit at least a couple times a month and it makes a true difference."

Lane also notes that the rehab trailer is often used at the fire academy during especially hot summer days to keep recruits safe during their active drills. "Listen, in our humidity, 90 degree+ temperatures can cause

sweltering conditions. We'll take any cooling we can get, and a few degrees drop with the Portacool makes it bearable."

PORTACOOOL.

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