Firefighter Training to Take Place in Old School Before it is Torn Down

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Lake Oswego firefighters will train one full day in the old Our Lady of the Lake Catholic School tomorrow, July 3. The school is being demolished starting July 5 to make way for a new children drop off zone and parking for the new school that was constructed about 20 feet from the old school. Firefighters will take advantage of this rare opportunity to work on their skills in searching a large building.

"We will have a packed day of training from searching for victims to cutting open the 30 foot tall roof from our ladder truck" said Training Chief Randy Hopkins. Hopkins added, "we get opportunities to train in smaller homes from time to time, but nothing big like this."

Several obstacles have been staged for the firefighters to test their abilities and knowledge as it would be a real incident. Firefighters are not burning the school. During the entire day it might look like the building is on fire with smoke coming out, but that is theatrical smoke to simulate real smoke. The building is too large and to close to other buildings to actually use it for a "burn to learn".

Media is invited to cover the training any time during the day. The training will start with a real-like incident around 8:30 a.m. and then after that exercise, crews will split up in smaller teams and work on their skills.

The school is located at 716 A Avenue in Lake Oswego. Best access will be from 8th Street just south of A Avenue.

For more information, contact Gert Zoutendijk, Deputy Fire Marshal, Lake Oswego Fire Department, at 503-635-0275.

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