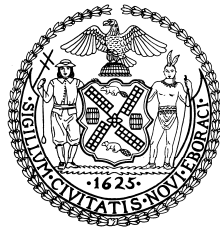


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The City of New York  
Manhattan Community Board 8

**Public Safety Committee**  
**Brick Presbyterian Church**  
**62 E. 92<sup>nd</sup> Street, Carnegie Room**  
**Monday, March 31, 2014**  
**6:30 pm**

Board Members Present: Dave Kleckner, Debbie Teitelbaum, David Rosenstein

Number of Attendees: 7 (attendance sheet attached)

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm.

**Topic 1: Fire Safety. Presenter: Michael Jones, FDNY, Fire Safety Education Division**

Essential to have a home fire safety plan, including knowing what to do in case of a fire. For example, families should have a meeting point. Otherwise, not uncommon for parents to run back into a burning building to look for their kids who may already be outside.

Make sure to have a working carbon monoxide (CO) detector. Fire deaths often occur because there was no detector or the detector was not working. Fire detectors are generally good 10 years, and carbon monoxide detectors for 5-7 years. Change the battery every 6 months. Detectors beep to signal that battery needs to be changed.

Don't keep smoke detectors near kitchens because they tend to go off during cooking, and people tend to disconnect them as a result. They should be placed within 15 feet of where occupants sleep. It's good to have a battery back-up for electric smoke detectors in case of power outage.

CO is odorless, colorless and tasteless. Symptoms of CO exposure include flu-like symptoms. Most often the source is a building furnace. Opening windows is not a solution unless a person puts their face to the open window since the air could blow and concentrate the CO in another room of the dwelling. Also, the CO could be coming from an external source such as from a utility generator placed outside of a building, idling tour buses, etc.

Cooking is the leading cause of fire in the home. It's important not to leave the kitchen when cooking because you may forget to turn-off the appliance, such as a toaster oven.

If a fire occurs, it's important to know how to escape. Going into a shower and/or wrapping oneself in a wet towel, etc. are poor choices because while it may protect from flames the smoke is lethal. There may be little to no vision during a fire because the smoke is black. Important to stay low to the ground as smoke and heat both rise. And it's vital to get out fast if in a wood frame house since they can burn down in as quickly as five minutes.

It's best to sleep with the bedroom door closed to protect against heat, smoke and flames should a fire break out during sleep. If there's a fire, test the door knob with just one finger so you don't burn entire hand if it's hot. Then open the door just a crack to minimize risk of being overwhelmed by heat, and if you leave the room then close the door behind you because you may have to return to the room if the fire is in front of you and traps you.

If staying in the room, then place a blanket at the bottom of the door to keep heat and smoke out, and hang a sheet out the window to signal to the fire department that you're trapped in there. If fleeing, don't stop to get anything, not even a Go Bag, as there's no time for that. Valuable papers should be kept in a fire-proof box that you can leave behind, including a photo ID, which you may need to replace bank cards and other items for which an ID may be required. Keep photographs of valuables in firebox, too, as documentation for insurance company of what was lost in the fire.

If you live in a fireproof high-rise building, the building's fire safety plans must be posted. It is best not to exit your dwelling if the fire is not in your own apartment. The building materials will keep fires from spreading from apartment to apartment. Leaving the apartment is likely to place you at greater risk. And never flee up toward the roof since smoke and flames rise in that same direction. It's best to seal openings around the inside of the apartment door with duct tape and wet towels, call 911, and stay until directed by the Fire Department to exit. If a fire is even just one floor away, it generally is safer to stay in the apartment than to risk exiting through stairwells (and never use an elevator).

Resources: The FDNY has numerous informational resources on fire safety, including materials on Residential Apartment Building Fire Safety, Smoke & Carbon Monoxide Alarms, Keeping Children Safe, Kitchen Cooking Fire Safety, Electrical Home Safety, Planning Your Fire Escape, etc. FDNY's fire safety publications are available on the FDNY website in multiple languages at:

[http://www.nyc.gov/html/fdny/html/safety/fire\\_safety\\_downloads.shtml](http://www.nyc.gov/html/fdny/html/safety/fire_safety_downloads.shtml)

**Topic 2: Civilian Complaint Review Board. Presenter: Carlmais Johnson, Manager of Community Outreach and Partner Engagement, Civilian Complaint Review Board (CCRB).**

The NYC CCRB was established to receive, investigate, mediate, hear, make findings, and recommend action on complaints against New York City police officers alleging the use of excessive or unnecessary force, abuse of authority, discourtesy, or the use of offensive language. A focus of the CCRB when investigating a complaint is to look to see if the police officer complied with the written Patrol Guide.

There are approximately 35,000 NYC police officers, and complaints against officers are approximately 6,000 per year.

CCRB examines cases to ascertain whether or not: 1) the force used to overcome resistance is more than the maximum allowed, 2) the officer abused her or his authority, such as searching without a warrant, 3) discourteous language was used and actions were deployed, and 4) offensive language (e.g., pertaining to race, religion, disability) was used. CCRB advises citizens that it's important not to escalate a confrontation with an officer by staying calm and complying with the officer's instructions.

Stop and frisk was discussed. It is allowable when there is a legitimate need for information or a suspicion of criminality. If criminality is suspected, an individual may be questioned but does not have to answer the questions and is free to leave the scene if they are not being detained. For an individual to determine whether or not they are being detained, they may politely ask if they are free to leave. Arrest may occur during stop and frisk, but only if there is probable cause. The police must document the incident when a person is stopped for criminal suspicion or detained, with a UF-250 form completed and kept at the police precinct. These reports are not shared with the public, but may be obtainable via a Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) request.

Frisking involves the patting of the outside of a person's clothing when there is reasonable suspicion that they are carrying a weapon (officers are not allowed to frisk solely for suspicion that a person is carrying drugs) and they may search the person if there is probable cause to believe that they are carrying a weapon. Officers are not permitted to order a person to empty their own pockets, but the officer may do it as part of the frisk and search if there is probable cause.

CCRB substantiates approximately 10% of complaints based on a preponderance of evidence, with about 25% of these complaints pertaining to stop and frisk. Officers and precincts that receive many complaints can be expected to be subjected to particular scrutiny.

An investigation begins with a sworn statement by the complainant or witness, and the officer is then interviewed. CCRB makes a determination on each allegation and will recommend punishment on substantiated complaints. Punishments may entail training, loss of vacation days, suspension or dismissal as determined by the Police Commissioner who generally abides by the CCRB recommendation. The officer may request an administrative trial with a ruling made by an administrative law judge.

Alternatively, the complainant may request mediation instead of an investigation. The officer has the right to refuse mediation, and if so, an investigation will proceed. Ms. Johnson of CCRB indicated that mediation is successful more than 90% of the time, as it provides both the officer and complainant to better understand each other's perspectives, and she noted that that officers who go through mediation typically receive fewer subsequent complaints because they gain a better understanding of how they are perceived.

When complaints are filed, they stay on the officer's record and could delay promotion, etc. Police Internal Affairs also may make use of information compiled by CCRB.

Two new positions have recently been created to provide police oversight functions: an Inspector General and a Federal Monitor, with the Federal Monitor to review whether stop and frisk rules are properly implemented. Ms. Johnson also spoke about the Citizens Police Academy. Members of the public are appointed to attend this program which involves participating in a 14-week session that includes weekly classroom instruction and offers a ride-along in a police car. Information about this program is posted on the Police Academy website at:  
[http://www.nyc.gov/html/nypd/html/training\\_nypd/citizens\\_police\\_%20academy%20\\_.shtml](http://www.nyc.gov/html/nypd/html/training_nypd/citizens_police_%20academy%20_.shtml)

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:15 pm.

Debbie Teitelbaum and Dave Kleckner  
Co-Chairs, Public Safety Committee

encl.