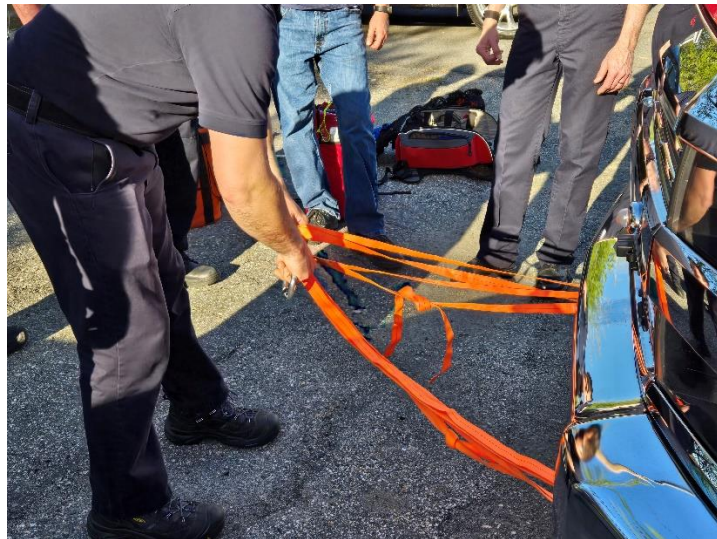


Call Firefighter Training – Rope Rescue

The May 2024 call firefighter training session topic was “rope rescue.” Captain Russell Chesanek – who trained in technical rescue (including rope rescue) at Florida State Fire College and who has specialized in it for the last seven years – started the session by demonstrating several essential knots, which the firefighters then practiced tying. The most important knots include figure eight, alpine butterfly, water knot and clove hitch.



Chesanek next prepared the straps that were anchored to the recovery hooks (in this case) of the department’s Utility truck. He also explained different options for suitable anchor points for use when rescues take place in challenging terrain.

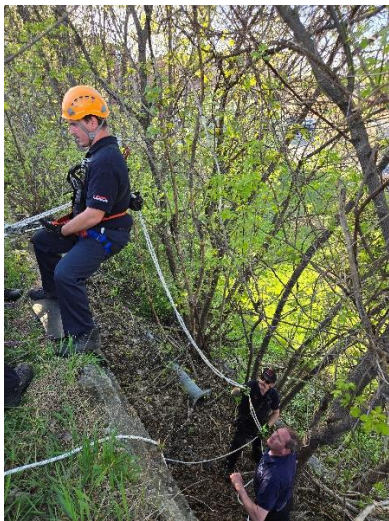


Next: securing the harness and checking that other gear, such as a helmet and the carabiner, are properly adjusted for the descent.



Anchored to the Utility truck, Chesanek demonstrated rappelling techniques: The dominant hand serves as the brake hand and is placed at the small of the back, while the other is the guide hand, cupped loosely around the rope.

He rappelled down the 8-foot wall on the north side of the fire station parking lot. Following suit, one by one the call firefighters stepped backward over the edge of the wall and headed to the ground. Personnel were stationed at the bottom as belay in case of any missteps or falls – but there were none. Once a man reached the ground, rescuers up top rigged a haul system and hoisted him back up as he stepped as carefully as when he went down.



Chesaneck concluded the training with more rope and anchor strap demonstrations, assisted by Lieutenant Michael Snide and Firefighter Tim Vezina.



Demonstrating various anchor strap configurations to include choker and basket hitch.



Triple wrap prusik and its uses.

A follow-up training session is under consideration. It would feature more height and “a true vertical,” Chesaneck said, eyeing City Hall across the street.