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## New device may help PLFD save lives

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DAILY NEWS STAFF

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Big stories sometimes come in small packages. The Pine Lake Fire Department has a groundbreaking piece of new equipment called the FIT-5. It comes in a small package but has large implications when it comes to fighting house fires and saving lives.

Rick Zelechowski is an assistant fire chief for the town of Pine Lake.

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"We are the first fire department in the state

of Wisconsin to get this," Zelechowski said. "Our chief, Brian Gehrig, had mentioned it and I did some research. Popular Science magazine ranked it in the top 10 of new products."

According to the ARA Safety Web site, "FIT stands for Fire Interruption Technology and the name describes exactly how the FIT works. Fire needs fuel, oxygen and heat to sustain a chemical reaction.

In seconds, ARA Safety's FIT removes the fuel from the equation at the molecular level, interrupting the fire triangle and knocking down flame and heat.

"It can be effectively deployed in a wide variety of structure fire scenarios, from incipient to fully involved. Depending on the progress of the fire, deploying a FIT-5 can buy crews fifteen minutes or more."

There have been a number of house fires in the area recently, including one in Rhinelander in which a life was lost. After the fact, it's impossible to say whether the FIT-5 would have made a difference in that instance. But if it works as advertised even once, it would be worth the cost of \$1,300 per unit.

"The FIT-5's nickname is the firefighter's grenade," said Zelechowski. "You pop the top off, pull the string inside and throw it into the building. It'll drop the temperature by 1,000 degrees in 10 seconds and is effective in areas up to 2,100 square feet. It only became available last month."

Using a FIT-5 early in the life of a fire may save lives, preserve the contents of a house and make fighting the fire safer. And, according to the ARA Safety press release, "It also helps the environment. Fast extinguishment with little or no water means less water used, less polluted runoff and less carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases entering the air."

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Don Zelechowski AZ wrote on Apr 3, 2009 11:12 AM:  
" Way to go Rick Zelechowski!

Cousin Don Z in Arizona "

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### OCSD records budget surplus

At a time when Oneida County is facing the prospect of shrinking departmental budgets, the Oneida County Sheriff's Department (OCSD) had good news for its

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### Girl's Night Out makes manners fun

Girl's Night Out, or GNO as it is affectionately called by the group, is a program designed for girls in sixth through eighth grades. The group typically meets every other Thursday evening from October to May to learn new activities and practice the YMCA core values of caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility. One highlight of the program is a "Miss Manners" dinner hosted and provided by Holiday Acres Resort in Rhinelander. [READ MORE >](#)

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### Wisconsin Woodsmoke: Calendar can't name the first day of spring

One of the most tragic things I know about human nature is that all of us tend to put off living. We are all dreaming of some magical rose garden over the horizon — instead of enjoying the roses blooming outside our windows today.

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