



NORFOLK FIRE DEPARTMENT

117 MAIN STREET
NORFOLK, MASSACHUSETTS 02056

P R E S S R E L E A S E

NORFOLK – July 6, 2012 - Comments from Norfolk Fire Chief Coleman C. Bushnell, pertaining to the settlement of suits brought forth from the Village at River's Edge condominium explosion and fire, July 30, 2010.

“It is nearly perfect symmetry that the suits involving the Mr. Nichols and the two most seriously injured took place almost two years from the incident. The “wheels of justice” turned true for the soul of the deceased and for the future of the living.”

“Firefighters struggled for over an hour and a half in an effort to save Mr. Nichols. They performed this task under conditions involving falling debris, exposure to continually burning fires and the toxic products of combustion. To reach the area of entrapment firefighters were often forced to remove their protective breathing equipment, exposing themselves to the dangers of smoke. Carbon monoxide eventually fell one firefighter, who had to be rescued from the debris strewn basement.”

“Ordinarily construction equipment and hydraulic rescue tools would be used to affect a rescue. Given conditions of tangled, twisted and burning wooden structural components, firefighters were forced to use axes, pry bars and oft times their bare hands to free Mr. Nichols.”

“When the rescue was completed State Fire Marshal Stephen Coan stated during the press conference, the day saw brave jakes (the term reserved for seasoned, professional firefighters) doing the job they were trained to do, the highest compliment to be paid to the 112 firefighters who would eventually respond.”

“During the Department of Fire Services Annual Firefighter's Award program in 2011, I had the privilege and honor to nominate and then watch a number of the firefighters and fire officers who gave their all that day receive some of the fire service's highest recognition for bravery. It was also a privilege to receive an award from Fire Marshal Coan recognizing my work at the Incident Commander.”

“Presently I am working cooperatively with the Department of Fire Services as the Fire Chief's of Massachusetts representative, to create regulatory change to prevent a needless tragedy such as this. This work has also expanded to the federal level and we hope this incident will serve as testament to ensure for the public's safety.”

“In the fire service you never know when you will be called upon to participate in an incident which most described as a “career event.” Massachusetts, the Metrowest area and Norfolk are truly blessed to have firefighters always prepared to put their safety first to save a life.”

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE - AUTHORITY FIRE CHIEF COLEMAN BUSHNELL

For Further Information, Please Contact Chief Bushnell, 508-958-1837