

I am your fire fighter

I spend half of my life away from my family, so I can protect you and your family.

I love you, even though I have never met you.

I would gladly die to save your life, or the lives of your neighbours.

I gladly risk injury to protect your property. I love my life.

I chose this life above anything else in the world.

I am your fire fighter. When something terrible happens in your life, you can always call me.

I am waiting for that call. It is what I live for.

I will come flying to your home or business to assist you in any way I can.

My food can wait to be eaten.

The training class I am taking can be paused because you called.

I am your fire fighter. I hurt. I cry. I laugh. I am human.

I learn to cope with neglect from you.

I have so many things to offer but somehow I get lost in the political shuffle.

I work and think and try to come up with ways to make your community better, safer.

I put all those things aside the minute the alarm rings and you need me.

I am your fire fighter. The call comes in... "There's smoke in my bedroom"

I am on the way. Only three of us on this fire truck but we'll do our best.

Blackness is all you see, choking, blinding, smoky, blackness.

A hand is touching you. It is rough and bulky, covered in a glove.

I hand you to my partner, then search on for someone else.

I am your fire fighter. Sunlight breaks on your face as you leave the burning structure.

Safe. Safe. Safe. Breathe the clean air. Breathe.

You hear a loud mechanical wailing coming from the building.

The one who brought you out, yells, "If we only had more men" and rushes back in.

Now he is dragging another who looks like him out the door.

I am that fire fighter. You watch as the fire truck drives slowly by.

The wailing siren breaks the quiet morning.

The slow parade of fire fighters marches past you.

The flag above you waves softly in the breeze but halfway down.

The flag over me is still. For you see...

I am your fire fighter.

**Submitted by Joe Schoeman, division commander,
Overstrand Fire, Rescue and Disaster Management**