



Rio Rico, AZ 85648

February 27, 2022

Chief Cheryl Horvath
Tubac Fire Department
2227 E. Frontage Road
Tubac, AZ 85646

Dear Chief Horvath,

You've seen the commercial on TV I'm sure, where the elderly lady is on the floor and calls and says "I've fallen and can't get up," well I had that moment last Thursday. After a total knee replacement eight days before, I was hurrying to the bathroom and caught my toe and fell full length on the surgical leg and hit my head on the bathroom tile. I didn't lose consciousness and was able to scoot to the bathtub and boost myself up to sit on the edge of the tub. I was unable to stand because my left thigh muscle was totally shredded. I called my daughter, who also lives in Rio Rico, for assistance, but she was driving to Tucson with her husband and was currently in Green Valley. As I am a widow and live alone, I called 911 and said I had an emergency.

After a wait that seemed interminable, but really wasn't, the ambulance arrived to help me, only to find all the doors in my house securely locked and me unable to unlock them to let them in. They eventually had to break a large window in the back of the house to obtain entry. The four paramedics found me on the tub, with me and my clothes and shoes soiled with feces, and in pain and unable to rise. They helped me to my feet and sat me on the toilet. My daughter and son in law arrived soon after and my daughter and the female paramedic assisted me to clean myself and get into a clean nightgown. The helpers convinced me to go to the ER at NW Hospital in Sahuarita via the ambulance.

I want you to know how grateful I am to those four firefighter paramedics who were so caring and careful. They checked me over and carefully put me on a stretcher and transported me to the ER. That was no easy task as I am 83 years old and 5' 9" and 235 pounds. They apologized profusely for having to break my window to get in and came back to help clean up the glass mess and bathroom. Please convey my thanks and gratitude to those people.

They told my daughter that I should have a key box on my door so that someone could get in if another emergency should ever occur. I had never heard of people doing that, other than realtors. I have purchased a lock box now to do that. I would urge that your department publicize that widely so that others in our communities won't ever have to have a window broken for emergency responders to obtain access to their home to assist.

I come from a large family of firefighters: my grandfather was Chief of Arson of the Seattle Fire Department in the 1920s and 1930s and was the first head of security of Boeing Aircraft in Seattle, my father was Chief of the Maple Valley Volunteer Fire Department in Washington during the 1950s until the 1970s, and my brother was a Battalion Chief of the Seattle Fire Department until his retirement in the 1990s. Consequently, I know how difficult your jobs may be. That's why I want you to know how grateful I am and how good your people are. Thanks.

