



816 Harrison Avenue Leadville, CO 80461
Phone (719) 486-2990 Fax (719) 486-3113 Emergency - Dial 911
www.lakecountycolorado.com/fire
<https://www.facebook.com/LeadvilleLakeCountyFireRescue/>

For Information Contact:
Betty Benson LLCFR PIO
303 507-3025
llcfrpio@leadvillefire.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

(Leadville, Colo, April 1, 2021) Sink Hole Rescue

At approximately 6:02 PM April 1 Leadville/Lake County Fire Rescue (LLCFR) was dispatched to 2nd and Plum where an individual had fallen into a 30' deep pit while attempting to access his storage unit. LLCFR personnel were on scene at 6:04 PM and discovered the bottom of this pit had substantial ice and water creating a very cold situation as well as unstable edges and sides of the pit. Within minutes of arriving and assessing the situation firefighter Alex Conlin was directed by Capt. McCann to assist this individual while a rescue plan was developed and implemented. Conlin prepared to rappel down the hole taking with him appropriate safety equipment to prepare the patient for extrication.

The rescue effort then began by placing a 24' ladder over the top of the hole allowing a better view of the the pit. Conlin rappelled down and was then able to help the patient into the safety gear that was attached to a safety line and secured to the fire engine keeping him from sinking into the water. It was determined that the patient had injuries, so REACH was contacted to head to Leadville. Lake County Search and Rescue was called out for a high angle rescue and arrived on scene at 7:40 and assisted with removing Conlin and the patient from the pit. The patient was immediately taken by ambulance to the airport where the helicopter was waiting to transport him to a metro area hospital for treatment of his injuries. Conlin was assessed and provided rehabilitation treatment as well as warmed up from the extremely cold environment he had been in. Conlin, when asked about his quick

reaction to the situation stated “Risk a lot to save a lot, risk a little to save a little, risk nothing to save nothing.” He recognized very quickly the grave situation the patient was in. Conlin also shared that “Our Department’s (LLCFR) core ideology is “first in, last out”, and they train and prepare for how best to handle these and many other types of situations.

Captain McCann said “this was an incredible example of teamwork with all responding agencies to smoothly and safely accomplish this rescue”. On Scene and assisting agencies included LLCFR, Leadville Police officers, Search and Rescue personnel, St. Vincent Ambulance crews, Lake County Road and Bridge, and Dispatch.

###

Pictures available upon request