



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**Contact:**

Assistant Fire Chief Jim Jaques  
East Pierce Fire and Rescue  
18421 Veterans Memorial Dr. E.  
Bonney Lake, WA 98391  
Phone: 253-863-1800 [jjaquesr@eastpiercefirerescue.org](mailto:jjaquesr@eastpiercefirerescue.org)  
[www.eastpiercefirerescue.org](http://www.eastpiercefirerescue.org)

**Two Early Morning House Fires**

Bonney Lake, WA—East Pierce Fire and Rescue firefighters fought two house fires early this morning. At 3:48 a.m., firefighters arrived to find flames visible at a singlewide mobile home, located on the 12000 block of Pioneer Way East, west of Buckley.

According to East Pierce Fire and Rescue Deputy Fire Marshal Paul Brockwell, all three occupants were barely able to evacuate the burning home after being woken up by their cat. “They made it out just in time,” he says. “Smoke was to the floor and they reported hearing windows breaking as they escaped. The cat saved their lives.” The home did not have a working smoke detector.

Brockwell says that the fire began in the bedroom, but has yet to determine the cause. Windy conditions, with gusts more than 40 mph, hampered the firefighters efforts. Although they were able to stop the fire before it destroyed the entire house, it was declared a complete loss. The cause of the fire is still under investigation.

Just after 1 a.m., East Pierce firefighters responded to a fire at a single-story residence on the 7600 block of 170<sup>th</sup> Avenue East, south of Sumner. Firefighters quickly extinguished the blaze, containing it to the living room. “It was out in the first five minutes,” says Acting Battalion Chief Justin Doyle. Fire marshals have determined that the fire started in the chimney. A smoke alarm alerted the occupants, who were able to escape before the firefighters arrived.

Doyle reports that there were no injuries at either fire, however, without a smoke alarm, the second fire could have easily have had a different outcome. The National Fire Protection Association statistics state that the risk of dying in a home fire is cut in half in homes where working smoke alarms are present.

The key to keeping you and your family safe is having “working” smoke alarms. Disabling or borrowing a smoke alarm battery for another use takes away its lifesaving benefits and puts you and your family at risk. In addition to regular testing, fire officials recommend replacing smoke alarms that are more than 10 years old. Aging smoke alarms are unreliable and often are the source of nuisance alarms.

For residents who live within the fire district and need smoke alarms, the East Pierce Fire and Rescue’s Smoke Alarm Program will install alarms free of charge. Call 253-863-1800 during work hours to schedule an appointment. Smoke alarms are provided through grants from the East Pierce Fire and Rescue Foundation and others.

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