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SMOKE ALARMS SAVE LIVES

What is the single most important fire safety device in your home? You guessed it! Smoke alarms. According to the United States Fire Administration, smoke alarms help prevent house and apartment fire fatalities by providing an early warning signal – so you and your family can escape.

So, how much of a warning does a smoke alarm give you? In a good size fire, you may have just seconds to get out. “Most people don’t realize how fast fires move,” says East Pierce Lt. Dan Curtis “Once it gets going, fire more than doubles in size every minute and the smoke is just as deadly. The increasing use of plastic and synthetic products in home construction means today’s fires burn hotter than even ten years ago.” Hotter, faster burning fires provide even more reason for the early warning that working smoke alarms provide,” he says.

According to East Pierce Public Education Specialist Dina Sutherland, there are several different types of smoke alarms. “Some run on standard batteries, while others are hard-wired into the household’s electrical system. Some use regular batteries that must be changed twice a year. Others use long-lasting, 10-year batteries,” she says.

Most home smoke alarms come in two types: ionization – that sound more quickly when a flaming, fast moving fire occurs – and photoelectric that sense smoldering, smoky fires more quickly. “There are also combination smoke alarms, called dual sensor smoke alarms, that use both ionization and photoelectric technologies,” Sutherland says.

Special smoke alarms for the hearing impaired come equipped with a built-in strobe light for both an audible and visual signal.

Make sure smoke alarms are installed on every level of your home, including the basement. There should also be a smoke alarm, in or just outside of, every bedroom. “Most fatal fires occur at night. The idea is to make sure your alarm is close enough to wake you in case of a fire,” Firefighter Andy Hinson says.

East Pierce Fire & Rescue feels so strongly about the importance of smoke alarms that we offer free smoke alarms to all residents living within our fire district. The smoke alarms are donated by the East Pierce Fire & Rescue Foundation. Call us. East Pierce personnel will even install them for you. ■

For more information, call Dina Sutherland at 253-863-1800, during regular business hours.

Prevent Home Heating Fires

Faced with mounting heating costs, many residents turn to supplemental heating sources in the winter. Fireplaces, wood stoves and space heaters can help keep a room toasty, but they can also be a major source of fires if not used properly. In fact, home heating is the leading causes of home fires during the winter months.

Important Tips to Remember

WOODSTOVES

Keep wood stoves free of excess ash buildup. Ash buildup prevents good circulation of air needed for combustion. When removing ashes, always use a metal container with a tight-fitting cover and place the container on the ground or cement in an outside location away from structures. Ashes that seem cool may contain a smoldering charcoal that can start a fire.

FIREPLACES

Nearly all residential fires originating in the chimney are preventable. The leading cause is accumulation of creosote, a chemical substance that forms when wood burns. A chimney that is dirty, blocked or is in disrepair can inhibit proper venting of smoke up the flue and can cause a chimney fire. To avoid a chimney fire:

- Get your chimney inspected every year by a certified chimney sweep. Creosote builds up in chimneys and can cause a chimney fire if not removed through cleaning.
- Burn only wood. Never burn paper or pine boughs, which can float out the chimney and ignite your roof or a neighboring home. Do not burn wrapping paper in the fireplace.



East Pierce Fire and Rescue firefighters urge residents to use caution when heating their homes this winter. For more tips on how to stay safe, go to our website at www.eastpiercefire.org.

PORTABLE AND SPACE HEATERS

Remember, all heaters must be kept at least 36 inches from anything that can burn, including furniture, bedding, clothing, pets and people. Here are some more tips:

- Turn off space heaters when no one is in the room and at night when you go to bed.
- Children should be supervised at all times when space heaters are in use.
- Check for fraying or splitting wires, or overheating. Have problems repaired by a professional before operating the space heater.
- Plug your space heater into an outlet with sufficient capacity and never into an extension cord.
- Only use heaters that have the label of a recognized testing laboratory.

CARBON MONOXIDE POISONING

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a gas that can build up to dangerous concentrations indoors when fuel-burning devices are not properly vented, operated or maintained. It is estimated that unintentional CO exposure accounts for 500 deaths in the United States annually.

Because it has no odor, color or taste, CO cannot be detected by our senses. We recommend installing a carbon monoxide alarm in a central location outside each sleeping area. Symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning include headaches, fatigue, weakness, shortness of breath and nausea. If you suspect CO poisoning, get out of the building and call 9-1-1. We have devices to measure CO to determine if levels are too high. ■

HEALTH WATCH: Recognition and Treatment of Strokes

CALLING 911 IS CRUCIAL TO IMPROVE SURVIVAL

Every three minutes someone in the U.S. dies from a stroke, making it the fourth leading cause of death for Americans. “In our area, more than 150 residents suffer from a stroke each year,” says East Pierce Medical Services Officer Jeff Moore.

The good news is that Pierce County has a new system of stroke care that ensures patients are quickly assessed, treated and transported to the appropriate hospital. Since, not all hospitals specialize in these advanced therapies, getting to the one where the stroke patient can be immediately seen by specialists is critical.

It is more important than ever that the patient get to the hospital immediately. “Most people wait hours before calling 9-1-1 or go to a hospital,” Moore says. “During a stroke, millions of brain cells die for every minute that goes by. That’s why our motto is ‘Time is Brain’. If you suspect a stroke, call 9-1-1. We’ll check it out.”

WHAT IS A STROKE?

A stroke occurs when a blood vessel in the brain is either blocked by a clot or ruptures, interrupting the flow of blood and oxygen to a part of the brain, causing brain cells to start dying. The part of the body controlled by the impacted brain cells will not be able to function normally.

Prior to a stroke, many patients experience a Transient Ischemic Attack (or TIA). This “mini-stroke” can occur days, weeks or months prior to a major stroke. “A typical TIA lasts only minutes. Consequently many people do not seek medical attention and miss the opportunity for preventative treatment,” Moore says.

RECOGNIZING A STROKE —Every Second Counts

If you or someone you know or love experiences any of these symptoms, **call 9-1-1 immediately:**

- Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm or leg, especially if it is on one side of the body;

- Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination;
- Sudden confusion, trouble speaking, or understanding;
- Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes; or
- Sudden severe headache with no known cause.

TREATMENT —Time is Brain!

“If there is any question about whether you or someone else is having a stroke, call 9-1-1 immediately. The responding paramedics can quickly assess the person for stroke signs and symptoms, provide advanced life support, and radio the physicians to ensure that a hospital has personnel and specialized equipment ready to receive an incoming stroke patient,” Moore says. ■

For more information about strokes, visit the American Stroke Association’s website at www.strokeassociation.org.
www.strokeassociation.org.

Holiday Safety Tips

Throughout the United States each year, an estimated 250 home fires will involve Christmas trees and another 170 home fires will be caused by holiday lights and other decorative lighting. Last year, 21 people died across the country and 43 were injured as the result of these types of fires.

The East Pierce firefighters would like to offer a few simple fire safety tips to help keep your holiday from turning into a tragedy.

CHRISTMAS TREES

If you bring a natural tree into your home, just remember one thing: “Water your tree and keep it watered!” says East Pierce Lieutenant Mike McGinnis. “Well-watered trees are not a problem. A dry and neglected tree can be.”

To help keep a tree from drying out, do not place it close to a heat source, including a fireplace or heat vent. Be careful not to drop or flick cigarette ashes near a tree.

HOLIDAY LIGHTS

Before putting up the lights, inspect them for frayed wires, bare spots, gaps in the insulation, broken or cracked sockets and excessive kinking or wear. Replace damaged strings. Use only lighting listed by an approved testing laboratory.

Do not link more than three light strands, unless the directions indicate it’s safe.

Make sure to periodically check the wires – they should not be warm to the touch.

When hanging exterior lights, East Pierce Lieutenant Doug Babcock suggests securing the ladder on a level surface. “Never put a ladder on one level of the roof to reach another level of the roof,” he says. Firefighter-paramedic Don Cole says to always have someone spot your ladder. “Hanging lights is really a two-person job,” he says.

Holiday decorations just aren’t worth a trip to the hospital.

KEEP EXITS AND HOUSE NUMBERS CLEAR

Always make sure that trees and other holiday decorations do not block an exit. In the event of a fire, time is of the essence. A blocked exit puts you and your family at risk.

“Don’t cover house numbers with decorations,” says Firefighter-paramedic Craig Williams. “Santa may be able to find your house without a problem, but we need to be able to see your address.”

CANDLE CARE

We prefer the battery-operated candles, but if you use lit candles, make sure they are in stable holders and place them where they cannot be easily knocked down – especially by a curious pet. Never place a candle near walls, drapes or holiday decorations. Never use them as lights on a Christmas tree and never leave the house with candles burning. ■



EAST PIERCE CELEBRATES OPEN HOUSE WITH FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS

The 19th annual East Pierce Fire and Rescue Open House, September 29 at the headquarters station in Bonney Lake featured numerous booths and demonstrations from East Pierce Fire and Rescue, Sumner and Bonney Lake Police Departments, the Department of Natural Resources, AirLift Northwest’s medical helicopter, and more.



“The highlight every year for most kids is the chance to play firefighter,” says East Pierce Lieutenant Eric McLeroy. Younger children suit up in firefighter gear to put out a “fire” and perform a “rescue.” Older children are offered a more challenging course, shooting water from a hose at a target and performing a “rescue.” The Citizen Bucket Brigade, a new event this year, pitted citizens against the fire service students from Bates Technical College. ■



BE SAFE — BE PREPARED FOR SEVERE WEATHER

Winter storms and floods can be devastating, especially for those who are not prepared. Here are a few ways you can weather winter’s worst emergencies.

EAST PIERCE FIREFIGHTERS are PREPARED Your firefighters are ready to respond during extreme weather emergencies. In addition to the regular training and drills, East Pierce maintains special teams of firefighters to respond to water rescues on rivers and in flooded areas, hazardous material spills and difficult technical rescues.

NO MATTER THE EMERGENCY, WE WILL BE THERE TO HELP.

DEVELOP A PLAN FOR GATHERING YOUR FAMILY TOGETHER.

- ❑ High winds and flooding often create traffic jams on all major arterials. Just a downed tree or power lines can keep parents from their homes. Have a child care plan if you are unable to reach your children at school or home.
- ❑ Keep your child’s emergency release card up to date.
- ❑ Make arrangements with a person outside the immediate area for family members to contact in case you get separated. This person should live far enough away so he or she won’t be involved in the same emergency.
- ❑ Cell phones may not work and cordless phones need power. Keep an old-fashioned plug-in-type phone at home should the power go out.

KEEP FOOD, WATER AND CASH ON HAND TO LAST SEVEN DAYS.

- ❑ Every family should have at least a seven-day supply of non-perishable food and water. Select foods that require no refrigeration, preparation or cooking, and little or no water.
- ❑ Be sure to include a can opener and eating utensils.
- ❑ Figure on one gallon of water per person per day.
- ❑ Don’t forget your pets. They will need food and water too.
- ❑ All residents should have a first aid kit, a first aid manual and extra medicine for family members and an emergency supply kit.
- ❑ Without power, the cash machines don’t work and merchants cannot take credit cards. Be sure you have enough cash available to purchase additional food, water and fuel.

TAKE CARE OF YOUR NEIGHBORS.

- ❑ Citizens with special needs are particularly vulnerable during an emergency. The elderly, those confined to bed or a wheel chair and who rely on medical equipment that requires electricity to operate may need extra assistance.
- ❑ Neighbors who do not speak English may also need your help.

KEEP FUEL IN YOUR VEHICLE.

- ❑ As we saw with Hurricane Sandy, gas stations don’t work without power and those stations with power will have long lines of people waiting for fuel. Whenever possible, keep the tank in your vehicle at least half full so you have enough gas to get home during an emergency or to evacuate to a safer area.

For more information for how to prepare your family for emergencies, go to our website at www.eastpiercefire.org.

CLOWNS, cont. from pg 1

mainstay at school and community events. “The partnership between our organization and the school districts is critical to the development of safety awareness in our community,” says East Pierce Fire Chief Jerry E.

Thorson. Next year, the troupe will be back with a whole new show. In addition to the younger students, a different program will be presented next year for older kids. “We are creating a separate assembly, with

more appropriate messages for them,” says East Pierce Public Education Specialist Dina “Highrise” Sutherland. “It will keep us busy,” says Lieutenant Marc “Backdraft” Lash. “We’re just getting started.” ■

HELP SAVE
A LIFE
WITH HANDS-ONLY CPR

In just one hour, this free, non-certification class could help you save a life!

Find the class schedule at
www.eastpiercefire.org
and to register online or call
253-863-8300
during regular business hours.

Who is East Pierce Fire & Rescue?

East Pierce Fire & Rescue was founded on a strong commitment to customer service. The department's Mission, Vision and Values guide the actions of the department and its employees. Exceptional customer service and a concern for the employees and their families have become hallmarks of our culture.

EPF&R was created when the City of Bonney Lake Fire Department, Lake Tapps Fire and Pierce County Fire District 24 merged in 2000 with the goal of providing a seamless response to emergency situations.

In 2006, voters in Pierce County Fire District 12 and South Prairie Fire District 20 overwhelmingly passed a special election to merge with East Pierce.

Two years later, the citizens of the City of Sumner and Pierce County Fire District 1 also voted to join the East Pierce family.

On February 9, 2010, Edgewood residents voted in favor of merging with East Pierce.

Last April, the Milton City Council voted to contract for services with East Pierce, bringing expanded fire, rescue and emergency medical services to their city.

Today, East Pierce serves a population of approximately 83,000 residents living in and around Bonney Lake, Sumner, Lake Tapps, the Ridge Communities, South Prairie, Edgewood, Milton and Wilkeson. The district covers approximately 152 square miles and protects residents from 12 stations – six staffed and five volunteer, and one facility on Lake Tapps for the marine rescue unit.

All full-time firefighters are cross-trained as either emergency medical technicians (EMTs) or paramedics and are able to respond to both medical emergencies and fires.

An independently-elected board of citizens governs the agency. ■

Commisioners

Rick Kuss, Chair
Edward Egan
Karlyne McGinnis
Raymond Bunk
Kevin Garling
Ron Scholz
Mike Cathey
Dale Mitchell

Staffed Stations

Station 11	(Headquarters Station) 18421 Veterans Memorial Drive East Bonney Lake, 98391 253.863.1800 www.east.piercefire.org
Station 12	12006 - 214th Ave. E., Bonney Lake
Station 13	800 Harrison Street, Sumner
Station 14	3206 W. Tapps Drive E., Bonney Lake
Station 16	10515 - 234th Ave. E., Buckley
Station 18	10105 24th Street East, Edgewood



Santa and Mrs. Claus stop by for pictures at the Bonney Lake Tree Lighting and Food Drive.

EDGEWOOD TREE LIGHTING

Everyone is invited to the second annual Edgewood Tree Lighting on Saturday, November 24 at City Hall, located at 2224 104th Avenue East. Santa will arrive around 5 p.m., escorted by the firefighters. At 5:30 p.m., the mayor will light the tree to officially start the celebrations.

Enjoy refreshments and treats while listening to a performance by the Edgemont Junior High School choir and band. The Boy Scouts Troop 525 will be selling hand-crafted wreaths.

LIFE JACKET DONATION DRIVE

Help us save lives by donating life jackets that you or your family are no longer using to our Life Jacket Loaner program. "The loaner program was established several years ago so that no one would have an excuse not to have a life jacket," says Firefighter Jay Smith, East Pierce Fire & Rescue Water Rescue Team Lead.

As part of our drowning prevention campaign, we offer free loaner life jackets in a variety of sizes at Allan Yorke Park, North Lake Tapps Park and at the headquarters fire station in Bonney Lake throughout the summer. Unfortunately, many of the life jackets that were checked out have not been returned, causing a serious shortage. Your donation will help make life jackets available to everyone who needs them next year.

We are accepting used life jackets in all sizes. The life jackets will be examined to make sure they are still suitable. Please drop off new or used life jackets at any of the staffed fire stations. ■

Free Tree Lighting Celebrations

Canned and non-perishable foods will be collected and donated to Edgewood Community Food Bank.

MILTON TREE LIGHTING

Kick off the holiday season with your neighbors from 3 to 8 p.m., Saturday, December 1 at the Milton Activity Center, 1000 Laurel Street. There will be kid's crafts, holiday music, snacks and beverages. Visit with Santa for photos and gifts. The Santa Parade will start at 3 p.m. and we will light the tree at 6 p.m.

For more information, go to www.cityofmilton.net or check out the Milton Events Committee on Facebook.

BONNEY LAKE TREE LIGHTING AND FOOD DRIVE

The annual Bonney Lake Tree Lighting, sponsored by the Kiwanis Club of Bonney Lake, will be held from 6 to 8 p.m. Saturday, December 1 at the East Pierce Fire & Rescue headquarters station, at 18421 Veteran's Memorial Drive East. Festivities include cookies, hot cider and holiday music by area school children.

Mayor Neil Johnson will light the tree around 6:30 p.m. to signal the official start of the holiday season, followed by the arrival of Santa and Mrs. Claus aboard one of our fire engines.

Food donations accepted during the event and all day from 9:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. at the Bonney Lake Food Bank (next door to the fire station). ■

Join Firefighters and Santa for Breakfast

Grab your holiday appetite and join the East Pierce Fire & Rescue firefighters for the 15th Annual Sumner Pancake Feed and Food Drive, from 7 a.m. to noon, Saturday, December 1 at the Sumner fire station, located at 800 Harrison Street. East Pierce firefighters, fire commissioners and local dignitaries will be flipping flapjacks and serving ham, coffee and orange juice. Santa will be there to meet all the good girls and boys.

The cost is a \$3 donation per person. Tickets can be purchased at the door. A silent auction will be held during the event. The

breakfast is a benefit to raise money for programs that provide support and services to local families in need. The firefighters will also be collecting donations of nonperishable food items and new or gently used coats, gloves, scarves, hats and sleeping bags.

"It's a great opportunity to meet the firefighters and help those who are struggling this year," says East Pierce firefighter-paramedic Rex Orcutt. He and his wife Cindy are organizing the event.

Come have breakfast with the firefighters and support a great cause. ■

East Pierce Classes & Public Education

FREE! TO EAST PIERCE FIRE & RESCUE CITIZENS

LIFE JACKET LOANER PROGRAM

Wearer must be present for fitting | Headquarters Station
18421 Veterans Memorial Drive East, Bonney Lake

CHILD SAFETY SEAT INSPECTIONS

Call 253.863.1800 for appointment. Our certified child passenger safety technicians will check to make sure your child is in the right seat, your seat is installed correctly and your child is placed in the seat correctly.

STATION TOURS

Call to arrange a tour of any of our fire stations.

SMOKE ALARM INSTALLATIONS

Includes smoke alarm with 10-year batteries. Call 253.863.1800 for appointment

BLOOD PRESSURE CHECKS

Stop by any station during regular business hours. (Subject to staff availability)

FIRE EXTINGUISHER TRAINING

Learn how to use a fire extinguisher in case of a residential or commercial emergency. Call 253.863.1800 to schedule

HANDS-ONLY CPR CLASS—NEW!

Non-certification class for adult CPR, from 7 p.m. - 8 p.m. (1 hour)
Dates: Dec 11, Jan 22, Feb 26, Mar 27

SERVICES OFFERED

CPR 9:00 a.m.–12:30 p.m. | BASIC FIRST AID 1:30–4:30 p.m.
Fire Headquarters Station 18421 Veterans Memorial Dr. E., Bonney Lake
Dec 14 or 15 | Jan 12 or 25 | Feb 15 or 23 | Mar 16 or 22

The cost for citizens residing within the jurisdiction of East Pierce Fire & Rescue, including Sumner, Bonney Lake, Lake Tapps, Wilkeson, South Prairie, Milton and Edgewood, is \$15 for either a CPR or First Aid class, or \$30 for both. The cost for non-residents is \$30 for each class, or \$60 for both.

To register, call 253-863-1800 during regular business hours or register online at www.eastpiercefire.org.

HELMET SALES AND FITTING*

Wearer must be present for custom fitting. Bike helmets sold for \$7 each. Muilt-Sport helmets sold for \$10 each.

LIFE JACKET SALES AND FITTING*

Wearer must be present for custom fitting. Life jackets are sold for \$14 each. Exact change is appreciated.

SAFE SITTER CLASSES

Registration information and class schedules are available at www.eastpiercefire.org. Cost: \$35.

* Sponsored by East Pierce Professional Firefighters Local 3520