



FIRE HOUSE news

SERVING THE CITIZENS OF BONNEY LAKE, SUMNER, LAKE TAPPS, TEHALEH, EDGEWOOD, MILTON, THE RIDGE COMMUNITIES AND SURROUNDING AREAS

WINTER 2018

CITIZENS SAY “YES” TO PROP 1



Pictured: Crewmembers outside of Station 118 in Edgewood, which is scheduled for replacement as a result of the Bond passing.

In the general election November 6, citizens of East Pierce Fire & Rescue approved Proposition 1: Bond for Capital Facilities, Vehicles and Equipment. Bonds will begin to be sold at the end of December so work can begin after the first of the year.

To the citizens of East Pierce Fire & Rescue:

The Commissioners of East Pierce Fire & Rescue want to say **thank you** for your support of the bond issue during the just concluded election. Your approval allows the district to move forward with much needed improvements of new fire stations and for updating of the response fleet.

We are very excited to improve our ability to serve the public and address these vital needs. The commissioners look forward to the opportunity of working with the fire administration to ensure the best value for your money.

Many groups and individuals worked hard to support the campaign. We appreciate the efforts of the Citizens Advisory Committee, fire department administration, and the members of the department and IAFF Local 3520. Your contributions were invaluable!

Sincerely,

Your Board of Fire Commissioners

Dale Mitchell - Chair, Mike Cathey- Vice Chair

Ed Egan, Kevin Garling, Randy Kroum,

Pat McElligott and Jon Napier

THE HIRING OF A FIREFIGHTER

Have you ever wondered what's entailed in hiring a firefighter? Our Training Division would like to provide a glimpse of how a firefighter goes from *Start* (hiring) to *Finish* (assigned to shift).

The hiring process involves multiple components including: application; testing; panel and Chief's interviews; psychological and medical exams; and background checks. Candidates who are extended and accept employment offers move on to the training phase and are now referred to as Firefighter Recruits.

Before being assigned to shift, recruits work through a rigorous training process (approximately 900 hours) consisting of:

- 2 weeks pre-academy

- Physical fitness and fire academy preparatory training
- 13 weeks at the fire academy
- Basic fire training
- 8 -12 weeks post-academy
- Advanced fire and emergency medical training

To comply with National Standards and laws that recommend or require certain staffing levels, EPFR has hired 22 firefighters since August 2017, and plan to hire 16 more in 2019. "These new hires replace vacancies created through a wave of retirements and fill newly created firefighter positions to inch us closer to recommended staffing levels," said Battalion Chief Doug Walker.

Here's a breakdown of our recent and upcoming recruit classes:

Recruit Class	# of Recruits	Hired	Assigned to Shift
Class 2017-01	6	8/2017	2/2018
Class 2018-01	8	1/2018	7/2018
Class 2018-02	8	8/2018	2/2019
Class 2019-01	7	1/2019	4/2019 and 7/2019
Class 2019-02	9	8/2019	2/2020

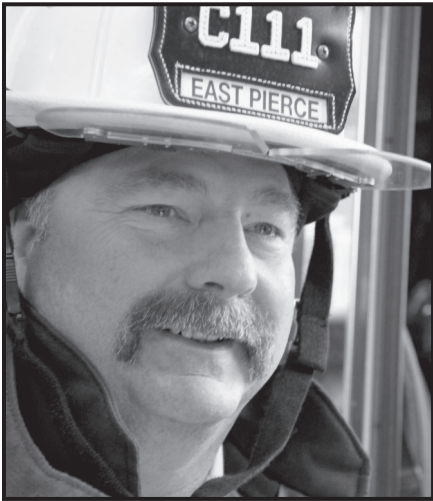
"If this process seems long and arduous, it is. And it's just the first step for your firefighters to be competently trained and equipped to handle the emergencies they're called to help with. This training, and ongoing training, is crucial to the safety of our firefighters and citizens," adds Walker. ■



Class 2018-02 Recruit Firefighters at their fire academy graduation pictured with Chief Backer and Chief Walker. From left: Hannah Weaver, Eric Allen, Bryan Mueller, Jeff Hanes, Paul Dorn, Andrew Craig, James Chipman and Seth Dedge.

Postal Customer

SSRWSS



FROM THE CHIEF

Bud Backer

I would like to extend my heartfelt appreciation to the voters for approving the Bond Issue that will allow us to build five fire stations and upgrade our front-line emergency vehicles. We will work hard to ensure that we maintain your trust and ensure that all projects are completed in a cost-effective manner.

By the end of December,

we will have sold the first half of the bonds allowing work to begin after the new year on design and permitting of new fire stations. We should also be ready to go out to bid within a few months for a ladder truck as well.

While the Bonds will fund building and vehicle projects, it is our annual levies that provide the revenue for annual operations. The Fire and EMS Levies continue to allow us to hire additional firefighters to correct our staffing shortage. We still have some ground to make up, but we are making significant progress. I hope to have all our current fire engines staffed with three firefighters each by 2021. Then we'll need to start working on

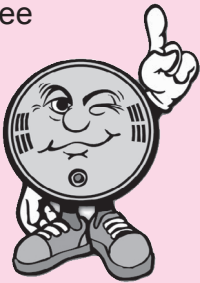
hiring additional firefighters to staff the new Tehaleh station and look to more fire stations down the road (Milton and East Lake Tapps.) Maintaining our levies at or near the approved caps is imperative to meet this need.

We have also recognized the need to improve our service level in the Fire Prevention Division. With the fast pace of construction in our area, we have not kept up with adequate prevention staff to provide for the needs of our cities. We will add two Deputy Fire Marshals in 2019 to improve service levels, which will also allow us to begin conducting annual fire inspections. This work is crucial in preventing fires and creating a safe environment for business and residents alike. ■

SMOKE ALARMS

A Sound You Can Live With

Studies reveal that three out of five home fire deaths in the U.S. resulted from fires in structures without working smoke alarms. Homes with working smoke alarms reduced the risk of fire fatalities by an astounding 50%.



Due to previously awarded grant funding, East Pierce Fire and Rescue is able to continue a long-standing smoke alarm program to its residents – while supplies last. The program is specifically intended for at-risk citizens including older adults, low income, and those who reside in a mobile home. Firefighters will install the smoke alarms at no cost to the resident. The smoke alarms are equipped with long-life batteries which last approximately 10 years.

“In the event of a fire, properly installed and maintained smoke alarms can save your life,” says East Pierce Fire Marshal Chuck King. “Smoke alarms provide early detection of a fire to allow your family time to escape safely.” Alarms should be installed inside and outside all sleeping areas, and on every level of the home, including the basement. Since smoke and poisonous gases rise, installing smoke alarms on the ceiling is ideal and provides the earliest detection.

“A working smoke alarm continuously scans the air for smoke, 24-hours a day, seven days a week. It never sleeps,” says King.

Firefighters will install two primary types of smoke alarms: **ionization alarms** (sound quickly to flaming, fast moving fires), and **photoelectric alarms** (quicker at sensing smoldering, smoky fires). Hearing impaired alarms (equipped with a lower-frequency tone and bed shaker component) are also available. Each home will be equipped with both ionization and photoelectric alarms for the best protection.

Test your smoke alarm once a month. All smoke alarms should be replaced after 10 years. To schedule a smoke alarm installation, call 253-863-1800. To learn more about smoke alarms, or tips for home escape plans, got to eastpiercefire.org. ■

HEALTH Watch

Flu Season is Here —Protect Yourself

Winter is here—and so is the flu. Not a big deal? Think again—about 80,000 people died last year in the United States, the highest number of flu-related deaths in decades, and twice as many as died in traffic accidents last year. Another 900,000 Americans were hospitalized last year with the flu.

The best way to protect yourself, and your family and friends, is to get the flu vaccination. Vaccinations can help protect you from getting the flu or help minimize the symptoms if you do end up with it.

Flu viruses typically circulate widely in the United States from the late fall through early spring. Vaccinations to prevent the flu (also called influenza) are particularly important for people who are at high risk of serious complications from influenza.

The flu is a contagious, respiratory disease caused by different flu viruses infecting the nose, throat and lungs. Typical flu symptoms include:

- sore throat
- headache

- fever
- congestion
- muscle aches
- cough



Vomiting and diarrhea are not typical symptoms associated with the flu. Usually people with those symptoms have some other virus or food-borne illness.

Although most people who get the flu will recover, it can cause serious illness and death — particularly among older adults, young children, pregnant women and those with chronic medical conditions. Flu can also lead to pneumonia and blood infections. If you have a medical condition, such as heart or lung disease, the flu can make it worse.

The flu vaccination can **NOT** cause you to get the flu. Just remember, it takes about two weeks for protection to develop after vaccination, but protection lasts through the flu season.

It's not too late to get the flu vaccine. Flu vaccines are offered in many locations, including doctor's offices, clinics, health departments, phar-

macies at grocery and drug stores, and college health centers. Infants, over six months of age, and children should receive vaccinations. With most health insurance plans, vaccinations are covered so there is no “out-of-pocket” cost.

Do yourself—and those you love—a big favor and get vaccinated. ■

WHEN TO CALL 9-1-1 FOR THE FLU

For most people, the flu is not an emergency. For others it can be life threatening. People in high-risk groups— children under five, pregnant women and people over 65 who have a chronic medical condition— should call 9-1-1 right away if they have these symptoms.

- Trouble breathing or feeling very short of breath.
- Severe headache or stiff neck, confusion or trouble staying awake.
- Chest pains.
- Signs of dehydration (very dry mouth or no urine in more than eight hours.)
- Dizziness or fainting.
- A baby younger than three months old who has a high fever or a fever that lasts more than five days.

It's the Most Wonderful (and Fire Hazardous) Time of the Year!

Pacific Northwest winters often go hand-in-hand with cozy fires and holiday cooking, but the season also accounts for the highest occurrence of residential fires.

The threat of winter fires is real. During the winter months, particularly January, February and March, fires claim the lives of more than 900 people across the United States each year and cost \$2 billion in property loss.

Cooking is the leading cause of home fires. They typically occur most frequently during the dinner hours between 5 and 8 p.m. To help make sure you don't have to invite your East Pierce firefighters over for dinner, here's a recipe for fire-safe cooking:

- Keep an eye on what you fry.
- Stand by your pan.
- Turn pot handles toward the back of the stove.
- Wear short sleeves or roll sleeves up.
- Keep a pan lid or cookie sheet nearby to cover the pan if it catches on fire.
- Keep a fire extinguisher handy somewhere in the kitchen. (Just not over the stove!)

Home heating is the second leading cause of house fires and yields an average of 45,200 fires in the nation each year. Home heating equipment is involved in one in every six reported home fires, and one in every five home fire deaths.

Fires involving chimneys, flues or fuel burners account for 84% of home heating fires. Twenty-nine percent of home heating fires happen because the heat source (like a space heater or fireplace) is too close to things that can burn.

East Pierce Fire & Rescue suggests the following tips to help prevent a fire tragedy in your home.



- Keep anything that can burn at least three feet from any heat source – like fireplaces, wood stoves, radiators or space heaters,
- Have a qualified professional clean and inspect your chimney and vents every year,
- Store cooled ashes in a tightly covered metal container, and keep it outside at least 10 feet from your home and nearby buildings, and
- Plug only one heat-producing appliance (such as a space heater) into an electrical outlet at a time. ■

Visit www.eastpiercefire.org for more home fire safety tips. ■

connect with us!



@eastpiercefireandrescue
@EastPierceFire
www.eastpiercefire.org

BE SOMEONE'S HERO! Learn to Save a Life at a CPR Class

Our firefighter/EMTs and firefighter-paramedics take great pride in the excellent medical care and ambulance transportation provided to district residents who call 9-1-1 during a medical emergency. EPFR crews transport almost 6,000 patients per year to area hospitals. We've been recognized by national organizations such as the American Heart Association and the International Association of Fire Chiefs for the excellent cardiac care we provide.

A crucial link in this "chain of survival" is the role YOU play in recognizing a medical emergency, quickly calling 9-1-1, and providing CPR or other life-saving first aid prior to the arrival of first responders. Citizens, having the confidence to recognize and provide early life-saving care, often make all the difference. YOU make the critical difference in many emergencies.

Bystander CPR, provided to someone who has collapsed after their heart has stopped, more than doubles the chance of the patient being resuscitated with a neurologically-intact brain.

East Pierce Fire & Rescue schedules an

average of one to two CPR and First Aid classes per month on both Saturdays and weekdays. CPR training runs from 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and includes Adult/Child/Infant CPR training, use of AEDs (automated external defibrillators), and choke-saving techniques.

First Aid goes from 1-4:00 p.m. and covers a wide variety of common medical emergencies, including bleeding control, use of Epi-Pens for allergic reactions, providing care for persons with diabetes-related emergencies, seizures, overdoses, strokes, heart attacks and a host of other issues. Students can register for just CPR or First Aid – or make a day of it and register for both!

The registration cost for citizens residing within EPFRs jurisdiction is \$20 for either a CPR or First Aid class, or \$40 for both. Non-residents pay \$35 for each class, or \$70 for both. These classes provide a two year, nationally-recognized certification. To register, call 253-863-1800 (press Option 4) during regular business hours (M-F 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.) or register online at www.eastpiercefire.org.

If you don't require CPR certification, or you just want to learn the basics of "hands-only"

CPR, you should consider our FREE "Hands Only CPR" classes which last only one hour. These non-certification classes are great for small groups (families, neighborhood associations, church groups or businesses) who simply want to know how to perform potentially life-saving CPR and AED skills in an emergency.

Please note – "Hands Only" CPR classes only address CPR and AED training for adult patients, along with a brief review of 9-1-1 use, and heart attack and stroke recognition. For more information on our Hands Only CPR classes, or to schedule a free class for your group, call 253-863-1800. ■

WE'RE ALL EQUIPPED WITH LIFE SAVING DEVICES



HANDS-ONLY CPR

REGISTER FOR OUR FREE, ONE HOUR CPR CLASS.

Visit www.eastpiercefire.org for more information.

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, Pierce County Fire District 22/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’s 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.

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

In 2013, Milton residents became part of the fire district when they voted to annex into East Pierce.

Today, East Pierce serves a population of approximately 94,000 residents living in and around Bonney Lake, Sumner, Lake Tapps, the Ridge Communities, South Prairie, Tehaleh, Edgewood and Milton. The district covers approximately 153 square miles and protects residents from 10 stations—six staffed and three 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 commissioners govern the agency. ■

Commissioners

- Dale Mitchell, Chair
- Mike Cathey
- Ed Egan
- Kevin Garling
- Randy Kroum
- Pat McElligott
- Jon Napier

Staffed Stations

- STATION 111 - BONNEY LAKE**
Headquarters Station
18421 Veterans Memorial Dr. E.
253-863-1800
- STATION 112 - BONNEY LAKE**
12006 214th Ave. E.
- STATION 113 - SUMNER**
800 Harrison St.
- STATION 114 - LAKE TAPPS**
3206 W. Tapps Dr. E.
- STATION 116 - FOOTHILLS**
10515 234th Ave. E.
- STATION 118 - EDGEWOOD**
10105 24th St. E.

Alerting Our Responders

East Pierce Fire & Rescue purchased a *US Digital Designs Phoenix G2 Fire Station Alerting System* (Phoenix G2) this year to replace old, antiquated station alerting equipment.

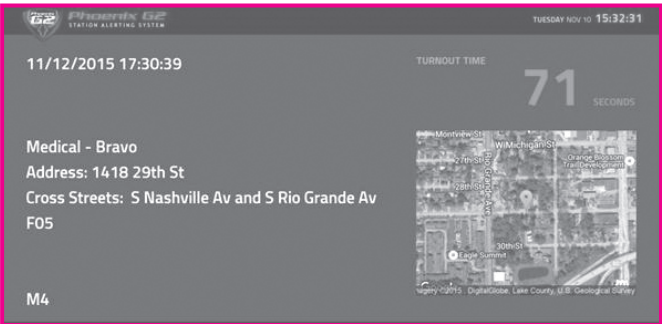
With the press of the dispatcher’s button, the Phoenix G2 automatically sends a dispatch to firefighters to get them in the know and out the door.

The Phoenix G2 alerts firefighters in a timely manner and in a variety of methods – through lights, sounds and other devices – to help speed their response to an emergency.

EPFRs career-staffed stations are equipped with electronic message signs, illuminated speakers, television monitors and strobe lights. In the middle of the night, the illuminated speaker wakes firefighters with soft-start LED lighting and audio alerts. Dispatch information displays on the monitor and strobe lights help alert firefighters in high-noise areas – such as the apparatus bay and exercise room.

The alerting system relies on the internet to receive information from the dispatch center and is equipped with a radio system in case the internet connection is lost.

Currently, EPFR stations 111, 112, 113, 114 and 116 have the Phoenix G2 system installed, and Station 118 will be equipped soon. Thanks to a regional grant, Station 116 was the first to have the alerting system installed. ■



Example of dispatch information displayed on HDTV.

Firefighters Provide Coats for Kids

East Pierce firefighters have teamed up with the Coats for Kids Foundation for the seventh annual Operation Warm, an effort to provide new coats to kids in the community who would not otherwise be able to afford them.



East Pierce Firefighters fit coats to children who need them throughout the fire district.

Last year, the firefighters raised enough money to purchase nearly 700 coats for underprivileged children who live within the fire district. They distributed the coats at eight elementary schools throughout the area.

The East Pierce Firefighter’s Local 3520 funds the cost of the coats through donations. The Local purchases the jackets from the Coats for Kids Foundation, a 501(c)(3) charitable organization established in Alexandria, VA in 2004. It is the distribution partner of Operation Warm, Inc.

So far this year, the firefighters have raised just over \$5,000 of their \$10,000 goal. When all is said and done, they hope to have fitted 500 children with much needed coats.

The Local is accepting donations from corporate sponsors and individual donors. “We often are asked if we can take coat donations for this event, however we cannot,” says East Pierce Lieutenant Troy Sterrenburg. “All of the coats come from the Coats for Kids Foundation, so we need monetary donations to make this possible.” ■

To make a donation, go to www.operationwarm.org/eastpierce.

East Pierce Classes and Public Education

FREE SERVICES

To Residents of East Pierce Fire & Rescue

- LIFE JACKET LOANER PROGRAM**
Wearer must be present for fitting. Available only at Headquarters Station.
- CHILD SAFETY SEAT INSPECTIONS**
District residents can schedule an appointment. Certified child passenger safety technicians check to ensure your child is in the right seat, the 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 equipped with 10-year battery (subject to availability).
- FIRE EXTINGUISHER TRAINING**
Learn how to use a fire extinguisher with our interactive, digital training prop either at your location or ours.
- HANDS-ONLY CPR TRAINING**
One-hour, non-certification class for adult CPR. Groups of 10 or more can schedule this training at their location or our Headquarters Station.
- BLOOD PRESSURE CHECKS**
Stop by any staffed station during regular business hours (subject to staff availability).

SERVICES OFFERED

CPR 9 a.m.—12:30 p.m.

All classes held at the Headquarters Station

BASIC FIRST AID 1—3:30 p.m.

Jan 26 | Feb 14 or 23 | Mar 16 or 30 | Apr 13 or 25

The cost for citizens residing within the jurisdiction of East Pierce Fire & Rescue (including Sumner, Bonney Lake, Lake Tapps, South Prairie, Milton and Edgewood) is \$20 for either a CPR or First Aid class, or \$40 for both. The cost for non-residents is \$35 for each class, or \$70 for both.

To register call 253-863-1800 (press Option 4) during regular business hours, or register online at www.eastpiercefirerescue.org.

HELMET SALES * Wearer must be present for custom fitting. Bike Helmet: \$7 ea. Multi-Sport: \$10 ea.

LIFE JACKET SALES * Wearer must be present for custom fitting. Life Jacket: \$14 ea.

*Sponsored by East Pierce Professional Firefighters Local 3520

Where Compassion and Action Meet