



FIRE HOUSE NEWS

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

SPRING 2019

HOP ON OVER

East Pierce firefighters are sponsoring three annual Easter Egg Hunts around the fire district on Saturday, April 20. All three events are free. The firefighters will be accepting food and monetary donations for the area food banks.

SUMNER

The 29th Annual Sumner Easter Egg Hunt, sponsored by East Pierce Firefighters Local 3520, will be held at Sunset Stadium, 1707 Main Street. Children ages 1-3 years will be allowed on the field at 9 a.m., followed by 4-7 year olds at 10 a.m., then 9-11 year olds at 11 a.m.

SOUTH PRAIRIE

Join the East Pierce Volunteer Firefighters' Association for the 62nd Annual South Prairie Easter Egg Hunt. The free event starts at 10 a.m. at the South Prairie City Park located at Third and Tacoma Streets.

EDGEWOOD

The annual Edgewood Easter Egg Hunt, sponsored by Local 3520, starts at 10 a.m. at Edgemont Park, located adjacent to Edgemont Junior High School at 24th Street East and 110th Avenue East. Come early. Parking is limited. ■



Hop by our Easter Egg Hunts, Saturday, April 20, sponsored by East Pierce Fire and Rescue firefighters.

WELCOME DEPUTY CHIEF!

East Pierce Fire and Rescue is excited to introduce Deputy Chief Jon Parkinson! Jon started his new position as Deputy Chief on February 25 and is located in the headquarters station in Bonney Lake. Chief Parkinson reports directly to the Fire Chief and oversees the Operations, Training, Emergency Medical Services, and Prevention/Public Education Divisions.

Deputy Chief Parkinson began his fire service career in 1993 and has worked his way up through the ranks including Cadet Firefighter, Volunteer Firefighter, Firefighter, Lieutenant, Station Captain, Training Captain, Interim Fire Chief, and most recently comes to us from Eastside Fire and Rescue as their Deputy Chief of Administration.



Jon and his wife, Summer, have settled into a community in Bonney Lake. They have three children, two in college and one in high school. Welcome Deputy Chief Parkinson! ■

GOOD STEWARDS OF YOUR MONEY

In 2012, East Pierce's Board of Fire Commissioners financed the purchase of 3.13 acres of land, located at Veterans Memorial Dr E and Main Street, that will be the location of the new Bonney Lake fire station. Financing was obtained via a LTGO Bond, commonly referred to as a non-voted bond. Bonds were sold in the amount of \$2,485,000 and were to be repaid over 20 years, with the last payment due at the end of 2031.

Through effective financial management, East Pierce Fire and Rescue has been able to save enough money to pay this bond (loan) off in April

2019. Paying the bond off early will save an estimated \$500,000 in interest over the next 12 years. It will also eliminate the average annual payment of \$214,000 that would be made each year from the operating budget freeing up more funds to address staffing shortages and improve public safety.

The funds to pay off the bond came from annual deposits to the reserve fund over the last few years and additional carryover from 2018 due to a combination of expenses being under budget and receiving additional revenues. ■

connect with us!



Facebook: @eastpiercefirerescue

Twitter: @EastPierceFire

www.eastpiercefirerescue.org

Upcoming Fire Commissioner Vacancies

Two positions on the Board of Fire Commissioners are up for election in 2019.

East Pierce Fire Commissioners form a board elected by the public to represent their fire district. The Board meets monthly to set budgets, establish policy and provide administrative oversight.

Position 1 and Position 7 are open for election this year. Each fire commissioner serves six-year terms. Any resident, 18 years or older, who lives within the East Pierce service area is eligible to apply. Candidate filing is May 13-17 through Pierce County Elections.

Filing forms and instructions for candidates are available on the

Need a bike helmet? We've got you (and your noggin) covered!

Bike helmets are \$7 each and available in sizes toddler through XL at either the Headquarters Station (18421 Veterans Memorial Dr E, Bonney Lake) or Station 118 (10105 24th St E, Edgewood), subject to staff availability. The wearer must be present for custom fitting.

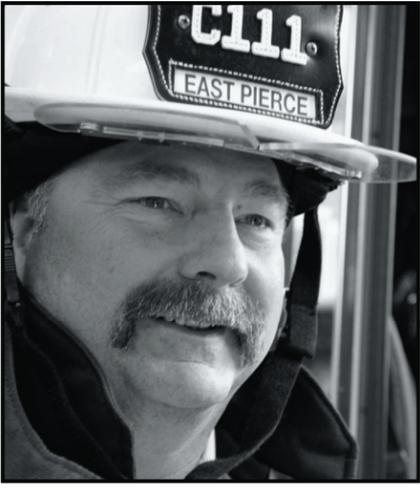


— Sponsored by East Pierce Firefighters Local 3520 —

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FROM THE CHIEF *Bud Backer*

cle. Fortunately, no one was injured.

Although our unit required extensive repairs, it was able to remain operational during the snow event. The other vehicle, not so much.

Which brings me to the point of the *Move Over Law*.

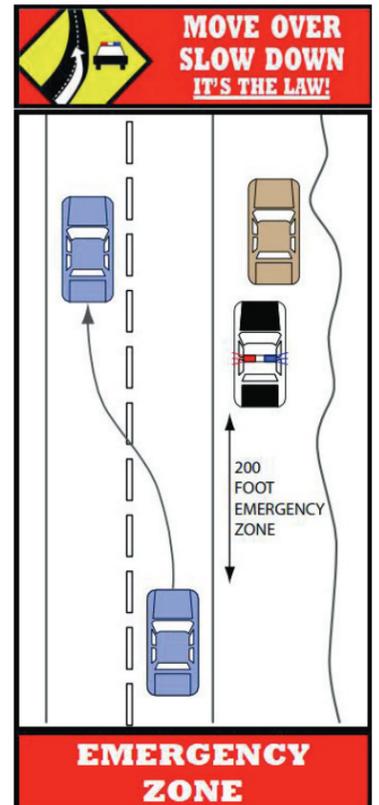
When passing emergency vehicles, you are required by Washington Law (RCW 46.61.212) to move over to another lane if safely able to do so. If not, then move over as much as possible to give first

responders room to safely work and then proceed with caution.

This law applies not just to emergency work zones, but also construction and maintenance vehicles in designated

work zones where vehicles have warning lights flashing.

Please give us room to work safely so that our firefighters and law enforcement members can go home at the end of their shift. ■



It's been a busy start to the year as wind and snow added to call volumes.

On the first day of the snow storm, one of our units was on-scene at a vehicle collision when it suffered damage after being struck by a citizen's vehi-

HEALTH WATCH

Answering Your Questions about Ambulance Fees

Q: Why did we receive a bill for ambulance service? I thought East Pierce Fire and Rescue residents receive free ambulance service from the fire district?

A: East Pierce ambulance service is not actually free. However, if you are an East Pierce resident, who is transported by an East Pierce medic unit (ambulance), you should have no "out-of-pocket" expenses. We bill your insurance company, Medicare or Medicaid for the cost of the ambulance ride. Any additional costs, such as co-pays that you would normally need to pay will be "written off" against the funds received through our EMS Levy. Some residents will receive a copy of the ambulance billing statement, indicating the cost of the service provided, and stating that this is NOT a bill which requires payment. Instead, this statement is provided to you along with a request that you provide additional information so we can bill your health insurance provider(s).

Q: What happens for people who have no insurance or those who live outside the fire district?

A: If you're a district resident and don't have health insurance, your entire bill is covered by the EMS levy. Non-residents, who happen to be in the district when they are transported by medic unit to the hospital, are responsible for co-pays or any portion of the ambulance bill not covered by their insurance.

Q: Does East Pierce Fire and Rescue attempt to bill our insurance companies?

A: Yes. EPFR will bill your insurance company, Medicare and Medicaid providers to recover payments for ambulance transport. To be included in the "no out-of-pocket" cost EMS transport pro-

gram, residents must complete and return any required paperwork sent to you by our billing service, Systems Design, or any paperwork sent to you by your own insurance provider. Correct, updated information is crucial for our ability to successfully bill insurance providers.

If district residents don't comply with requests for information, they could end up being liable for the entire amount of the ambulance transport fee, and even end up being turned over to a collection agency.

Q: What happens to the revenues collected from medic unit patient transport fees?

A: More than \$2.8 million in ambulance transport fees are collected each year from health insurance companies, Medicare and Medicaid. These funds help cover a portion of the cost of providing EMS response and ambulance transport services to the community.

Q: What happens if East Pierce doesn't have any medic units available for a 9-1-1 medical call? Who comes, and do I have to pay the other ambulance provider?

A: East Pierce has four medic units available 24/7. We handle more than 98% of the EMS ambulance transports with our own medic units. Last year we transported almost 5,700 patients to area hospitals.

However, when all of our medic units are busy on other 9-1-1 medical or fire calls, we need to request "mutual aid" from neighboring fire departments and private ambulances. They send units in to back us up if we don't have any available medic units.

We have reciprocal "mutual aid" transport agreements with most of our neighboring fire

districts. If one of their medic units responds into our fire district and takes you to the emergency department, you receive the same "no out-of-pocket cost" ambulance service as if an East Pierce medic unit took you to the hospital. We reciprocate when we respond into their districts when they need mutual aid, as well.

Q: What happens if a private ambulance takes me to the hospital?

A: In addition to our "mutual aid" responses from other fire departments, private ambulances are used occasionally to transport district residents to the hospital. In this case, patients will receive a separate bill from the private ambulance company and are responsible for any portion not covered by insurance. There is no mechanism to use the EMS Levy fund to cover any of those costs. Additionally, private ambulances are frequently used by urgent care clinics and assisted living centers to transport patients to hospitals for follow-up medical care. In this case, payment for these calls, which are not part of the 911 system, would be the responsibility of the patient.

Does this agreement apply if I'm a district resident, but get hurt in some area outside the district, such as Puyallup or Spanaway?

The reciprocal "no out-of-pocket expense" mutual aid agreement only extends to 9-1-1 calls inside our own district. If you become ill or injured in a neighboring fire district, even if we have a mutual aid transport agreement, you will be responsible for the ambulance bill if they transport you to a hospital. There is no EMS levy "write-off" provision when you are outside the district and become ill or injured. ■

2018 BOND UPDATE

Behind the scenes work has begun since the bond for capital facilities, vehicles and equipment passed last fall.

Firefighters and staff have formed committees and are now working with an architectural firm to design fire stations.

The first two stations being worked on are the Edgewood and Bonney Lake stations. Designs from these two stations will set the trends for the remaining stations to achieve as much commonality as possible. Although design and permit applications have yet to be completed, we hope to break ground in 2020 on both the Edgewood and Bonney Lake stations.

We're also gearing up to call for bids for a new ladder truck and fire engines. By bidding all together as a package, we believe it will yield better pricing and have a single manufacturer for the units. Delivery of the fire engines will be spread out over potentially a three-year period to avoid having all six show up at once. This will also set us up better for downstream engine replacement rotation. We hope to see a new ladder truck and two fire engines about twelve months after the orders are placed.

Thank you for supporting these necessary projects. ■

Be a Safe Sitter This Summer



The Safe Sitter classes help equip students with life-long skills and create future generations of safety-conscious adults and parents.

For years, adolescent babysitters have been “stepping in” for parents who are “stepping out”. While many of these young people bring with them a desire to care for children, few are prepared for the magnitude of responsibilities they assume. East Pierce Fire teaches the Safe Sitter curriculum to help equip students with life-long skills and create future generations of safety-conscious adults and parents.

Safe Sitter is a medically-accurate program that teaches boys and girls, in grades 6-8, how to handle emergencies when caring for children. The three-day class includes safe and nurturing childcare techniques, behavior management skills and appropriate responses to medical emergencies. In addition to fire and injury prevention, it also teaches business skills for running a babysitting business. ■

2019 Classes

July 16, 17 and 18
8:30 a.m.—12:30 p.m. - OR -
Location: Station 116
(10515 234th Ave E, Buckley)

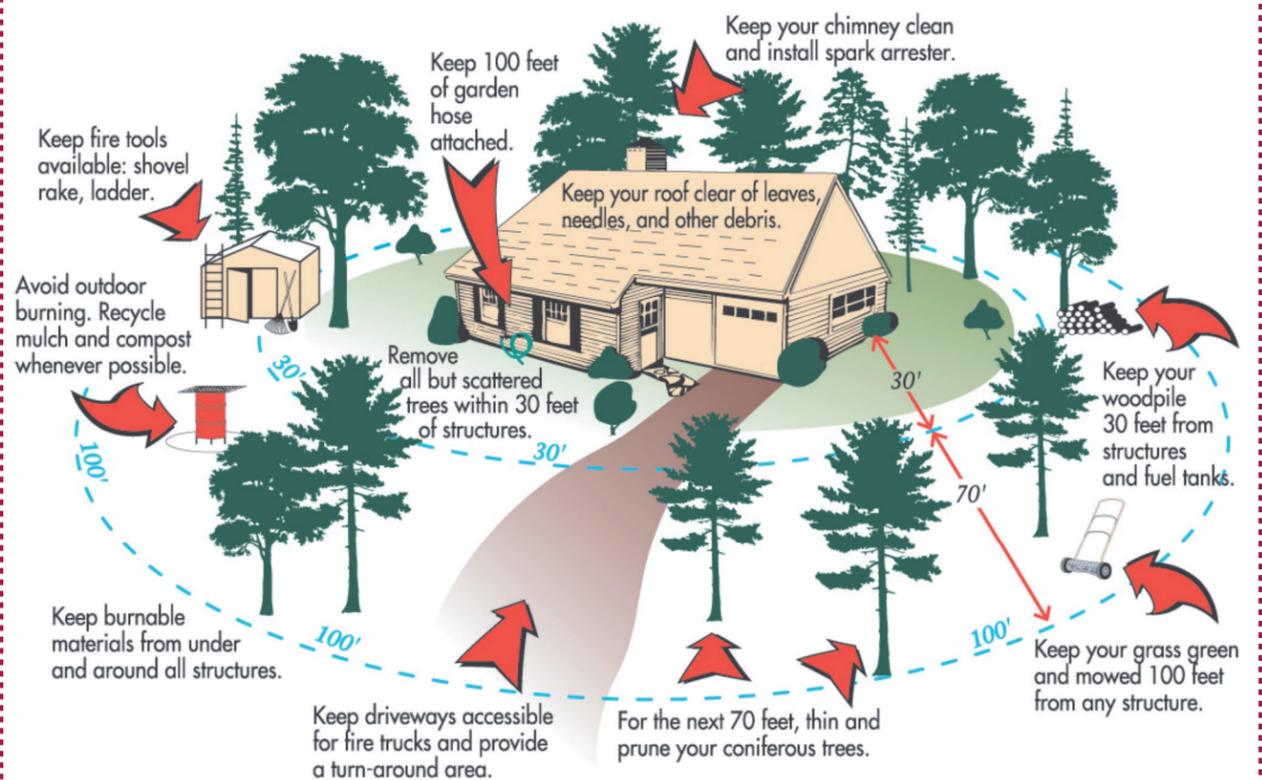
July 30, 31 and August 1
8:30 a.m.—12:30 p.m.
Location: Station 118
(10105 24th St E, Edgewood)

The cost is \$40 per student due at registration. Registration forms and information are available at www.eastpiercefire.org. Register early! Classes are limited to 24 students.

ARE YOU PREPARED FOR WILDFIRE?

Every year, wildfires burn across the U.S., and more and more people are living where wildfires are a real risk. But by working together, residents can make their own property—and their neighborhood—much safer from wildfire.

You can make a difference! Increase your wildfire safety by making low-cost changes to your home and landscape starting today.



Visit www.eastpiercefire.org for more information on how to improve your home's wildfire survivability.

2018 Total Calls by Type

Emergency Medical	8,153
Good Intent	1,074
Public Assist	971
Fire	324
Hazardous Materials	133
Weather	1
False	477
Other	17

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.

EPFR 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.

Since then, the following mergers or annexations into EPFR have occurred:

- 2006: Pierce County Fire District 12 and South Prairie/Fire District 20
- 2008: Sumner/Fire District 1
- 2010: Edgewood/Fire District 8
- 2013: Milton Fire Department

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 - PRAIRIE RIDGE
 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.

VOLUNTEER STATIONS

Station 115 - Lake Tapps—East
 1605 210th Ave. E.

Station 119 - South Prairie
 350 State Route 162

Station 124 - Milton
 1000 Laurel St.

C-A-L-L-I-N-G ALL SCOUTS!

Each year, East Pierce firefighters facilitate numerous public education requests from scout groups trying to achieve certain badge requirements. In an effort to reach more scouts, we thought they deserved an event of their very own...Scout Night.

East Pierce Fire and Rescue invites all Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and Campfire members up to fifth grade to attend the sixth annual Scout Night from 6-7:30 p.m. Friday, April 19 at the headquarters station in Bonney Lake, at 18421 Veterans Memorial Drive East.

The free event is intended for groups within the fire department's service area, including Bonney Lake, Sumner, Lake Tapps, Milton, Edgewood, South Prairie, Tehaleh and unincorporated Buckley.

Scouts will rotate through various learning stations designed to address several badge requirements. Learning stations include:

- **Home Safety:** Identify how to fix or prevent various home hazards, learn the importance of smoke alarms and when to call 9-1-1.
- **Basic First Aid:** Learn first aid basics such as how to cool a burn, treat cuts and bloody nose, what to do if someone is choking, how to treat bee stings and identify signs of an allergic reaction.
- **Home Escape Planning:** Scouts will design a home escape plan identifying two ways out of every room, designate a meeting place, learn to crawl low under smoke and when and how to shelter in place.
- **Emergency Preparedness:** Learn why it's important to have an emergency plan, how to assemble an emergency kit and the importance of an out-of-area contact.
- **Firefighter and Law Enforcement Tools, Equipment and Careers:** Get an up close look at the equipment firefighters and police officers use to stay safe and do their job, and ask why they chose their career.
- **Ropes and Knots:** Watch firefighters demonstrate various knot tying, then spend some time practicing the skill.



Advance registration is required. Scout leaders can call 253-863-1800 or email info@eastpiercefire.org with the unit number and number of scouts who plan to attend. Visit eastpiercefire.org for more details. ■

East Pierce Classes and Public Education

- FREE SERVICES -

To residents of East Pierce Fire and 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.

Apr 13 or 25 | May 18 | Jun 15 or 27 | Aug 17 or 24

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.eastpiercefire.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