



FIRE HOUSE NEWS

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

Summer 2020

FIREWORKS: Celebrate Safely—It Begins with You!

Don't let a firework mishap spoil your Fourth of July celebration. "You can have fun, just be aware of the dangers and take proper precautions," says East Pierce Fire Marshal Chuck King.

In Washington State, males 15-21 years of age are most often injured by fireworks resulting in amputation and serious burn injuries. Most injuries occur while either holding fireworks or leaning over them. Even fireworks as seemingly safe as sparklers can cause injuries. Sparklers burn at temperatures exceeding 1,200 degrees Fahrenheit – enough to cause a serious burn. Adult supervision around fireworks is important. Set family boundaries and talk with children about celebrating safely.

Fireworks do not just burn people. Every year, firefighters respond to fires started by fireworks. Weather conditions make grasses and vegetation dry and vulnerable - combined

with fireworks is a recipe for brush fires. Use care in selecting the area for discharge of fireworks, and ensure the type of fireworks are appropriate for that area.

East Pierce Fire & Rescue wishes you and your family a happy and SAFE holiday!

Fireworks Complaints?

Call the non-emergency line:
(253) 798-4721
or
(800) 562-9800.

**Call 911 for
EMERGENCIES only**

BE PREPARED...before you light fireworks

⇒ Use legal fireworks, available at licensed outlets.

- ⇒ Store fireworks out of children's reach.
- ⇒ Keep pets safe indoors.
- ⇒ Always keep water handy.

BE SAFE...when lighting fireworks

- ⇒ Only adults should light fireworks.
- ⇒ Only use fireworks outdoors.
- ⇒ Do not throw fireworks or hold in your hand.
- ⇒ Protect your eyes.
- ⇒ Light one firework at a time and move away quickly.
- ⇒ Never relight a "dud".

BE RESPONSIBLE...when finished using fireworks

- ⇒ Soak used fireworks in water.
- ⇒ Be considerate - clean up used fireworks.
- ⇒ Keep matches and lighters away from children.

Visit eastpiercefire.org for more firework safety tips. ■

Fireworks Discharge Dates & Hours Within East Pierce Fire & Rescue

City of Bonney Lake

- July 4: 9 a.m. - Midnight

City of Edgewood

- July 4: 9 a.m. - Midnight

City of Milton

- July 4: 9 a.m. - 11 p.m.

Town of South Prairie

- June 28: Noon - 11 p.m.
- June 29 - July 3: 9 a.m. - 11 p.m.
- July 4: 9 a.m. - Midnight
- July 5: 9 a.m. - 11 p.m.

City of Sumner

- July 4: Noon - Midnight

Unincorporated Pierce County

- July 1 - July 3: 10 a.m. - 11 p.m.
- July 4: 10 a.m. - Midnight
- July 5: 10 a.m. - 11 p.m.

For a complete county-wide listing visit the Pierce County Fire Prevention Bureau website at www.piercecountywa.org/3893/Fireworks.

Future of Milton Fire Station 124

East Pierce Fire & Rescue has purchased property in the City of Milton as a location for a future fire station. The property, located at 1515 11th Avenue, will provide a central location to serve the citizens of Milton.

Funding for the purchase was provided from the General Obligation Bond approved by voters in November 2018. Construction of the station is not yet funded, but as other savings were realized, the fire district was able to secure the property at this time.

"Purchasing the land now gets us ahead of rising property values and gives us the ability to improve service in Milton at a future date," states Fire Chief Bud Backer. "The fire district conducted an exhaustive search of the area that revealed parcels large enough for this specific use were limited in availability, with several having environmental limitations. It was buy something now, or not have anything viable to choose from down the road."

The future Milton fire station is a Phase 2 project and is not included in Phase 1 of the Capital Improvement Plan funded by the 2018 bond issue. "Additional funding will need to be obtained for Phase 2 projects, unless we can realize enough savings from other projects," continues

Backer. "We are working to save as much as we can in Phase 1, while Phase 2 is currently slated to be 2025 or later."

The property fronts onto 11th Avenue providing safe access to the site. The station will not directly access Milton Way. The Capital Facilities Plan calls for a fire station large enough to house a 3-person engine company and 2-person medic unit. ■



Recently purchased property for future Milton fire station.



New Edgewood Fire Station Design Taking Shape!

Architects are close to submitting plans to the City of Edgewood for review and approval of the design for Fire Station 118. Due to changes in the design the crew will relocate to Milton during construction and return when the new station is completed.

Groundbreaking is anticipated for later this year with completion near the end of 2021.

connect with us!



Facebook: @eastpiercefireandrescue

Twitter: @EastPierceFire

Web: www.eastpiercefire.org

Headquarters: 253.863.1800

Postal Customer

ECRWSS

#StayHealthy

"Where Compassion and Action Meet"

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KENT, WA



It has been an interesting year so far. We have experienced many impacts of the COVID-19 crisis.

Fortunately none of our firefighters have tested positive for the virus! However, several were presumed to have the virus due to their symptoms. Those that were sick or exposed were quarantined until symptoms passed, or until we knew the source of the exposure was negative for the virus. Compared to other fire departments in the region our numbers were relatively low.

Whether by luck, or the fact that we quickly increased our required levels of personal protective equipment (PPE) along with other actions to limit potential exposures, we are weathering the storm.

We have enough PPE for now but are struggling to build our supplies back up. We are told that many orders will take months to fill. While grateful to those that wanted to donate homemade masks, we can not use those on EMS incidents. Although homemade masks do appear to be effectively limiting the spread, they do not protect the person wearing the mask - they only protect those near the wearer. In our working environment we must protect ourselves and the patient.

FROM THE CHIEF *Bud Backer*

As Fire Chief, I declared a state of emergency on February 27 within East Pierce Fire & Rescue, which was followed up by the Board of Fire Commissioners during their March meeting. EPFR remains in a state of emergency as this relaxes bid requirements for purchasing and allows us to look at the broader market for supplies. In addition to the emergency proclamation many changes were made to response protocols, decontamination processes, staffing models and work practices. All of which provided an increased level of safety for our firefighters and the public.

As of the end of April, our total emergency call volume went down seven percent from last year. This resembles what the fire service witnessed back when the H1N1 Flu first hit. People who may have called 911 previously stopped calling for a couple reasons 1) concern about overwhelming the system, 2) fear that inviting firefighters into their home may be risky since they might be infected or contaminated.

If you feel that you are experiencing an emergency and need assistance please call 911! We are here to help. Some people have delayed care of serious medical issues that led to additional complications.

How can YOU help your fire department STAY SAFE?

- Wash your hands.
- Maintain social distancing.
- Wear a mask to protect others when in public (you may not know if you are carrying the virus). Masks must fully cover your nose and mouth.
- Wash your hands again!

I cannot express enough the pride I have in our department. The men and women of EPFR responded to the challenge. Our department implemented new

RELIABLE
Information Resources

Tacoma-Pierce County Health
Department
<https://www.tpchd.org/healthy-people/human-coronavirus>

Washington State COVID-19
<https://coronavirus.wa.gov/>

USA COVID-19
<https://www.coronavirus.gov/>

Centers for Disease Control
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>

CDC: Making Your Own Mask
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>

protocols which seemed to change on a daily basis for awhile. The changes in protocols were necessary as we learned more every day about how the virus spread and additional symptoms that were emerging. And like many of you, our administrative staff are working from home, which has proven to be very effective.

Your firefighters have never wavered. They continue to show up and do their job with pride, dedication and compassion. I would be remiss if I did not mention the strong support provided by their families. Spouses, many of them young parents, worried about the health of their firefighter, and what he/she might bring home. Yet, everyday they watched their loved one leave home to provide a critical service to the community. Many say it goes with the job, but we know that it is not as easy as that. THANK YOU! ■

#StaySafe

Recognizing Our Own

Congratulations to EPFR's 2019 Annual Recognition Awards recipients! Commissioners and command staff were scheduled to honor recipients during a ceremony back on March 17 – shortly after the Stay Home order went into effect. A formal awards presentation will be scheduled at a later date.

Recipients are voted on by their peers through a nomination and ballot process. The only award not chosen this way is Chief's Company. The command staff

selects the recipients of that award based on leadership skills.

Two awards honor former members. The Ken Thawsh Inspirational Award is dedicated to a beloved former volunteer firefighter who's selfless acts of kindness will continue to inspire and motivate our volunteer ranks. The Mike Roberts Goodwill Award is dedicated to a retired lieutenant who always went above and beyond for the wellbeing of others by exhibiting genuine acts of goodwill. ■



2019 Annual Recognition Awards recipients. A formal presentation will be scheduled at a later date as Stay Home orders are lessened.

2019 EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION AWARD RECIPIENTS			
<u>CHIEF'S COMPANY</u> Lt. Troy Sterrenburg FF/PM Mike Gladstone FF Matt Lee FF Luzia Ballew	<u>CAREER FIREFIGHTER</u> FF Bryan Hoon	<u>EMS PROVIDER</u> FF/PM Adam Lathrop	<u>KEN THAWSH INSPIRATIONAL</u> FF DeAnn O'Leary
<u>CAREER OFFICER</u> Lt. Matt Gilbert	<u>VOLUNTEER RESPONDER</u> FF DeAnn O'Leary	<u>FITNESS</u> FF/PM Jason Russell	<u>MIKE ROBERTS GOODWILL</u> FF/PM Rex Orcutt
			<u>SUPPORT STAFF</u> Mechanic Bryon Chinn

Outdoor Fire Prevention

From Barbecues to Fire-Safe Landscaping



Often, when we consider fire protection for our home, we consider things such as smoke alarms, carbon monoxide alarms, and exit plans. While all these things are important, let us look outside the home for fire prevention as well! There are some simple steps that can be taken in the yard to limit fire risk.

Barbecuing and summer go hand-in-hand. To help ensure it's a safe and fun experience for everyone, follow these tips.

- * Keep children and outdoor games away from the cooking area.
- * When using any barbecue always follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- * Ensure that your barbecue is sound and in good working order.
- * Make sure the cooking site is flat and away from sheds, fences, overhanging branches, siding, deck rails, and out from under eaves.
- * Never leave barbecues unattended.
- * Use long-handled grilling tools to give the chef plenty of clearance from heat and flames.
- * When using charcoal briquettes, use only recognized charcoal starter fluid and only on cold briquettes.
- * For gas barbecues, open the lid before turning on the gas or lighting.

- * After the barbecue, let the unit cool before moving. Let hot ashes cool before removing and put them only into a non-combustible container. Place in a safe location away from structures, decks and porches. Never place ashes in a garbage can or paper bag.

Fire-safe landscaping is an effective tool that creates an area of defensible space between your home and any flammable vegetation. A fire-safe landscape utilizes watering, spacing, pruning, and fire resistant vegetation that are planted to stop the spread of fire to your yard and home.

While the concept of fire-safe landscaping sounds complicated, it's quite simple. The most important steps you can take are:

- * Frequent watering of your lawn and plants, mowing regularly, and cleaning up any twigs, branches, leaves, and dead plants that have accumulated in the yard.
- * Keep trees pruned at least ten feet from the ground to make the spread of fire more difficult.

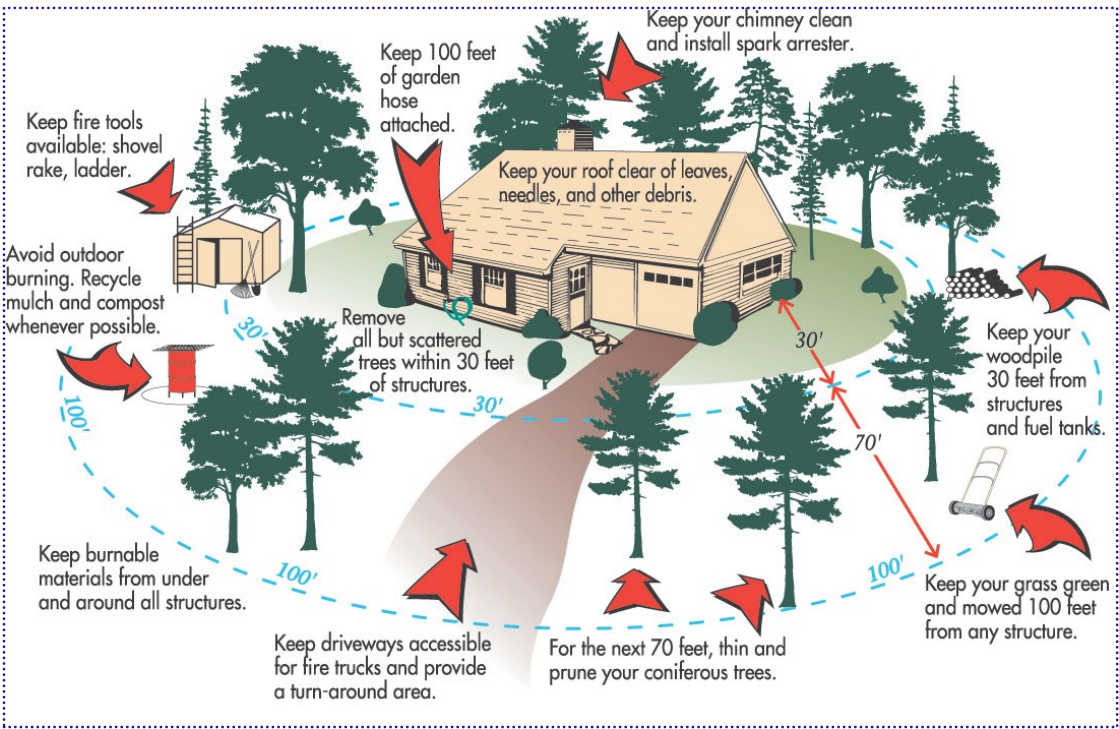
- * Eliminate small trees and plants growing under trees - they allow ground fires to jump into the treetops.
- * Create a defensible space perimeter by thinning trees and brush within 30 feet around your home.
- * Use rock, mulch, flower beds and gardens as ground cover for bare spaces and effective fire breaks.

Fire safe zones can be created with stone walls, patios, swimming pools, decks and roadways. Avoid stacking

firewood next to your home. Keep it at least 30 feet away. When there is nothing to burn, the fire cannot spread.

The United States Fire Administration (USFA), as well as East Pierce Fire & Rescue, encourage you to keep fire safety at the forefront by learning how to landscape and maintain your property to minimize possible fire damage and slow fires if they start.

Remember, fire safety is your responsibility—Fire Stops with You! ■



HEALTH WATCH

East Pierce Fire/EMS System Adapts to COVID-19 Challenge

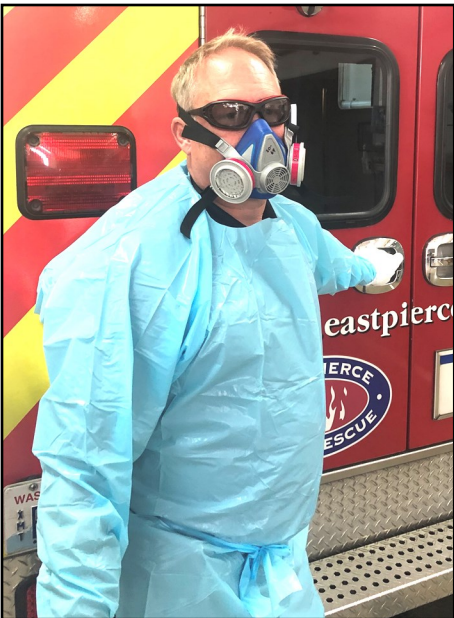
East Pierce Fire & Rescue responded quickly to the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic. By late January, the day after the first COVID-19 patient was identified in the U.S., we were already updating our firefighter-paramedics and firefighter-EMTs with information about the new coronavirus.

The department immediately provided detailed training for all 140 members to ensure that crews were well-versed in how to use additional personal protective equipment (PPE) to safely assess, treat and transport potential COVID-19 patients.

Fortunately, we were well-stocked with the PPE our crews now wear when responding on 911 calls to potential COVID-19 patients. We have not depleted our PPE inventory as of yet.

In fact, this PPE, which includes eye protection, respirators with filters and gloves, is now worn on all EMS calls to ensure the safety of the crews and our

patients. We recognize, however, that this can make it seem a little more impersonal when firefighters show up wearing this PPE after you've called 911.



EMS Lt. Mike Gladstone in the PPE now worn on most emergency calls.

EPFR also enhanced its procedures for cleaning and disinfecting our medic units. In addition to standard disinfect-

ant sprays and wipes, our crews can also use electrostatic sprayers to apply a disinfecting mist on all our equipment, gurneys and surfaces in the medic units.

Utilizing its four medic units, EPFR transports almost 500 patients per month to local hospitals. However, in the four months since the COVID-19 pandemic started in the U.S., our department has transported less than 20 confirmed COVID-19 patients to area hospitals, or less than 1% of our EMS call volume.

There are many more people living and recovering from the disease in our community, but most of the patients have been mindful about only calling 911 when they have serious symptoms or complications, such as breathing problems, confusion or disorientation or other serious issues.

If you need to call 911, we want to reassure you that EPFR's well-trained fire/EMS crews are ready to respond whether you call because you're con-

cerned that you may be suffering serious complications from COVID-19, or whether you have signs of a stroke, heart attack or other serious illness needing immediate care.

One of our greatest concerns is the increasing number of patients who are not seeking medical attention or calling 911 because of fears about the coronavirus. Many patients are delaying calling 911 until after they have suffered permanent damage from a heart attack or stroke. In fact, a dramatic increase in the number of patients dying at home has been noted, locally and across the country.

Please don't add to the tragedy of the COVID-19 pandemic. If you think you may need immediate medical aid, please know that EMS, and our hospital partners, are ready and able to respond and care for you or a loved one. "When in doubt—check it out!"

Please be safe! We can get through this together. ■

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 97,000 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 9 stations—six staffed and two 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 can respond to both medical emergencies and fires.

An independently-elected board of commissioners govern the agency. ■

COMMISSIONERS

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

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 119 - South Prairie

350 State Route 162
- Station 124 - Milton

1000 Laurel St.

Retirements & Promotions!

Recent retirements at East Pierce Fire & Rescue have resulted in several well-deserved promotions during the first half of 2020.

Thank you to our retirees who have dedicated a combined 118 years of selfless service to our communities. We wish you the best in your retirement adventures!

Congratulations to all of our recently promoted members! We're excited for your next chapter in the fire service.

East Pierce Fire & Rescue Retirements



Asst. Chief Jim Jaques
20 Years of Service



Asst. Chief Ed Goodlet
23 Years of Service



Batt. Chief Doug Walker
34 Years of Service



Lieutenant Kevin Roorda
27 Years of Service



Firefighter Dale Maris
14 Years of Service

East Pierce Fire & Rescue Promotions



Assistant Chief—Logistics
JEFF MOORE



Assistant Chief—Operations
KEVIN STABENFELDT



Batt. Chief—Medical Svcs. Officer
BRAD DYSON



Captain
ROB RUSZALA



Captain
SHAWN WAGNER



Battalion Chief—Training
MATT GILBERT



Training Specialist—EMS
MIKE GLADSTONE



Training Specialist
WILL POE



Lieutenant
TIM JEWITT



Lieutenant
JEFF PALENSKY



Lieutenant
MIKE WESTLAND



Lieutenant
ADAM LATHROP

LÓÒK

East Pierce Fire & Rescue's
2019 Annual Report
is available at
eastpiercefirerescue.org.
Check it out!

KEEP CALM AND WASH YOUR HANDS



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Status of EPFR's Outreach Programs, Classes and Events

- We're itching to resume our programs, but need to hold off a little longer to ensure social distancing. Please check our website at eastpiercefirerescue.org for updates.
- CPR & FIRST AID CLASSES:

Anticipated to resume in August.
- SAFE SITTER CLASSES:

Canceled for 2020.
- CHILD SAFETY SEAT INSPECTIONS:

Performed free for district residents via Facetime. Call 253-863-1800 Option 4 to schedule an appointment.
- LIFE JACKET AND BIKE HELMET SALES:

Suspended until further notice.
- FIRE EXTINGUISHER TRAINING CLASSES:

Suspended until further notice.
- SMOKE ALARM INSTALLATIONS:

Suspended until further notice.
- ANNUAL OPEN HOUSE:

Canceled for 2020. Watch social media platforms for virtual activities in October.