



Home Insurance Rating Improves In Most of Fire District Service Area

The Washington Survey and Rating Bureau (WSRB) conducted a re-rate of the areas served by East Pierce Fire & Rescue. This process is conducted every five years by the WSRB. The review consists of four aspects of community fire safety with the fire department being just one of those.

A numerical classification of 1 through 10 is used to represent the fire protection capabilities in a community with 1 being the best rating possible.

Most areas within EPFR received improved scores. Some received enough to improve the insurance rating while others remained unchanged. EPFR specifically improved in one area as a result of increased staffing on our fire engine companies.

Areas within EPFR that yielded improved ratings	Previous Rating	Rating Effective 4/1/2020
City of Edgewood	5	4
Town of South Prairie	5	4
Unincorporated Pierce County	4	3

Bonney Lake, Sumner and Milton were unchanged and remain at 4.

The new rates are effective April 1, 2020. The rating process can be confusing as there are additional factors involved. For instance, you may live in unincorporated Pierce County, which will be rated a 3. However, if there is no fire hydrant within 1,000 feet of your home, the lack of water supply will raise the individual property rating to an 8A. If the property is greater than five miles from a certified fire station, the property will be rated a 9. With today's mapping technologies, the WSRB knows this information for every tax parcel in the State.

If you live in an area with an improved rating, contact your insurance agent to see if you might enjoy a premium reduction. This will vary by insurance provider as not every insurance company subscribes to the WSRB rating system.

The unincorporated area received the best rating because the Pierce County Fire Marshal conducts annual fire safety inspections in businesses (Fire Safety Control). EPFR hopes to provide this service soon in our cities but can't do so until we add staffing to our Fire Prevention Division.

Unfortunately, we did receive some bad news. Station 115 (located at 1605 210 Avenue East)

was decertified as there is no longer a volunteer firefighter force responding from that station.

This becomes an issue for those who do not have a certified fire station within five miles of their property. Snag Island is the primary area affected, as Station 111 (Bonney Lake) and Station 114 (West Lake Tapps) both reach the five-mile mark at the entrance to Snag Island. Properties on the island are already rated an 8A due to the lack of water supply for fire control. Changing from an 8A to a 9 may result in a slight increase in your homeowner's fire insurance premium.

More information on how the rating system works can be found at <https://www1.wsrb.com/departments/public-protection/protection-class-overview>.

The fire department should see additional improvements at our next rating with new fire engines, a new ladder truck and some new fire stations – all of which are funded via the Bond Issue that voters approved in November of 2018.

Additional information including rating reports is available at www.eastpiercefirer.org. ■

2019 Total Calls by Type

Emergency Medical	8,540
Good Intent	1,254
Public Assist	950
Fire	302
Hazardous Materials	205
Weather	6
False	511
Other	16
Total Calls	11,784

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Postal Customer

ECRWSS

PRST STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
KENT, WA
PERMIT NO. 71

2018 Bond



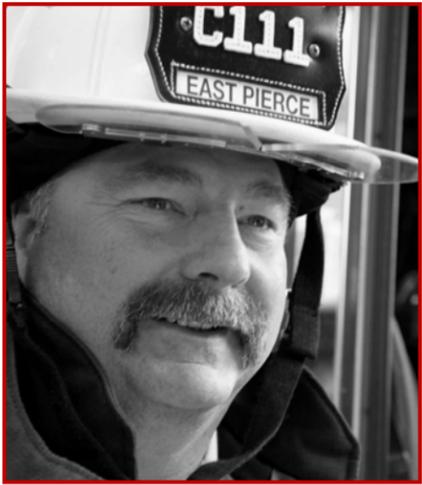
Much work has been done to improve and upgrade many of our emergency vehicles. Recently, six fire engines and one ladder truck were ordered from Pierce Manufacturing. The first two engines and the ladder truck are anticipated to arrive this November.

Design is moving forward on two of the new fire station construction projects. Ground breaking of Station 118 in Edgewood is currently slated

for November 2020 and Station 111 in Bonney Lake will be shortly thereafter in February 2021. Work continues to obtain land for Station 112 in Prairie Ridge and Station 114 in West Lake Tapps.

All of these fire stations, as well as the fire station in Tehaleh, are to be constructed as part of this bond. ■

Items Funded by 2018 Bond	Project Status
6 Fire Engines, 1 Ladder Truck	Ordered. Delivery of first 2 engines and ladder truck by Nov 2020.
Station 111—Bonney Lake	In design phase. Target ground breaking Feb 2021.
Station 112—Prairie Ridge	In negotiation for land purchase.
Station 114—W. Lake Tapps	Researching land options.
Station 117—Tehaleh	Construction 2023/24.
Station 118—Edgewood	In design phase. Target ground breaking Nov 2020.



FROM THE CHIEF *Bud Backer*

I often hear from citizens that they constantly hear sirens, stating that our firefighters must be busy. After a slight 1.1% increase in our 2018 call volume compared to 2017, calls jumped 5.6% in 2019 with crews responding to 11,784 incidents – that’s an additional 634 emergency responses from 2018.

While call volumes have increased, we have been working diligently to resolve staffing issues by hiring additional firefighters.

The staffing increase will bring us closer to our goal of dedicating three firefighters to each fire engine and ladder truck, which represents a major improvement in public and firefighter safety. The improved staffing levels will also reduce the number of

units being dispatched to major alarms yet still get more firefighters to the scene of an emergency, which overall will maintain the availability of resources in the system for subsequent calls.

Thank you for supporting our efforts to improve the service we deliver to you and your family. ■

HEALTH WATCH

Heart Attack Facts Every Woman* Should Know! (*And The People Who Love Them!)

Heart Disease is the leading cause of death for women in the U.S. Surprised? In fact, more women die from heart disease each year in the U.S. than from all types of cancer. Many women believe, mistakenly, that heart disease is a man’s disease. Yet almost as many women die each year from heart disease as men. In 2017, almost 300,000 women died of heart disease in the U.S.

Recognizing heart attack symptoms can save your life. “Unfortunately, many people—men and women—don’t recognize the symptoms of a heart attack and don’t call 9-1-1”, says East Pierce Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Battalion Chief Jeff Moore.

Many women have chest discomfort or pain in the center of the chest similar to what men experience while having a heart attack. However, women are also more likely to have other “silent” or “non-classic” heart attack signs and symptoms, including shortness of breath, weakness, lightheadedness, nausea, sweating, or pain that radiates to the arm, neck, back or jaw. There may be no pain or discomfort at all, which creates uncertainty in women about what they should do.

Female patients who survived heart attacks often say that they thought they had the flu or indigestion. Many women often state that they didn’t think it possible that they were having a heart attack. They believed that they were too young, healthy, ate right and exercised. Ruefully, many report a strong “sense of denial” regarding the onset of signs and symptoms that could have provided an early warning of developing heart attacks.

Go Red For Women

East Pierce Fire & Rescue is supporting the American Heart Association campaign “Go Red For Women” which focuses on ending heart disease and stroke in women. The campaign provides information about heart attack and stroke symptoms in women, along with tips on assessing your risk and healthier living.

The American Heart Association “Go Red For Women” website has lots of valuable information for women at <https://www.goredforwomen.org/>

Be sure to check out the funny three-minute YouTube video, “Just a Little Heart Attack” by actress Elizabeth Banks, on recognizing heart attack symptoms and the power of denial. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jl487DlqTA>

AM I HAVING A HEART ATTACK?

Common Signs and Symptoms for Women

Heart disease is the number one killer of women—in fact more women die from heart disease each year than from all cancers combined.

Recognizing the symptoms of a heart attack and quickly calling 9-1-1 is critical for a patient’s chance of survival.

- Chest discomfort, fullness, squeezing or pain in the center of the chest
- Shortness of breath
- Weakness
- Lightheadedness
- Nausea

*When In Doubt—Check it Out!
Call 9-1-1 fast!*

Recognizing the signs and symptoms of a heart attack is the first step in improving your chance of survival. The second step is quickly calling 9-1-1.

Calling 9-1-1 is the quickest way to start potentially life-saving care for a heart attack victim. As part of a comprehensive cardiac care system, firefighters and paramedics can start providing emergency medical care to a heart attack patient as soon as they arrive on scene. The paramedics can administer cardiac care drugs, run 12 lead ECGs which can show diagnostic evidence of a significant heart attack, provide pacing of slow heart rhythms, and defibrillate cardiac arrest patients to help restore pulses in patients receiving CPR.

The fire/EMS crews also ensure that heart attack patients are taken to hospitals with the appropriate specialized cardiac care labs and facilities. Paramedics will also provide an early alert to the hospital Emergency Department, so they can assemble the team of specialists necessary to care for a heart attack patient.

American Heart Association.



People are often reluctant to call 9-1-1. According to EMS Assistant Chief Russ McCallion, “patients are either in denial about the potential seriousness of their medical condition, or they often state that they “didn’t want to bother the nice firefighters.” McCallion states “we’d rather have potential cardiac patients consider the adage “*When in doubt—check it out!*”

Residents who live within the East Pierce Fire & Rescue service area pay no “out-of-pocket” expenses for ambulance services. The department will bill private insurance providers, and Medicare and Medicaid to help offset fire department costs for providing EMS response and transport for residents. ■



We encourage everyone to learn more about heart attacks and stroke risks for women at the Go Red For Women website. <https://www.goredforwomen.org>

You can also learn important information about heart attacks, stroke signs and Symptoms and how to perform CPR and use an automated external defibrillator by taking a CPR/First Aid class.

East Pierce offers low-cost classes each month. We also offer free one-hour “Hands Only” non-certificated adult CPR classes geared for churches, offices and neighborhood groups.

For more information visit www.eastpiercefirer.org.

Operation WARM

Firefighters keep kids warm!

East Pierce Firefighters IAFF Local 3520 participate in Operation Warm, a national non-profit program whose vision is "...that every child wearing a new winter coat is healthy, able to attend school regularly, and has a strong self-esteem."

Firefighters raise money throughout the year to purchase new, comfy and warm coats, then work with local elementary schools who identify children who really need them.

Throughout November and December last year, EPFR firefighters fitted just over 200 warm coats on kiddos in six schools in the fire district.

Firefighters hope to schedule more schools for coat fittings in January and February.

"We know there's a need when we take off the coat we gave a child last year to fit them with a new one," says East Pierce Lieutenant Troy Sterrenburg.

To donate, visit <http://www.operationwarm.org/eastpierce>.



2020 Commissioner Meeting Schedule

Join us at a Board of Fire Commissioners meeting! General meetings start at 7 p.m. at the Headquarters Station (18421 Veterans Memorial Drive, Bonney Lake).

Jan 21	Jul 21
Feb 18	Aug 18
Mar 17	Sep 15
Apr 21	Oct 20
May 19	Nov 17
Jun 16	Dec 15



An App For Everything!

Pierce County Launches PulsePoint App For Citizens To Improve Cardiac Arrest Survival

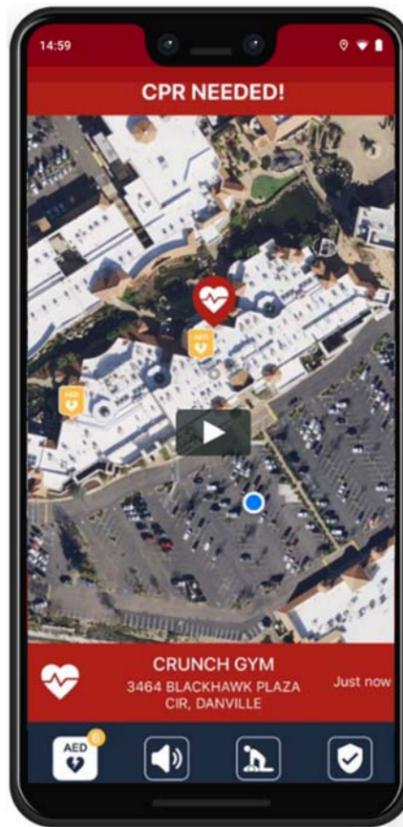
Free App Alerts CPR-Trained Citizens of Nearby Cardiac Arrests

Over 300,000 people collapse into sudden cardiac arrest each year in the United States. CPR provided by good samaritan bystanders can double the chance of survival for a cardiac arrest victim. But until recently, there was no way to alert CPR-trained citizens of nearby emergencies.

That's changed now. The Pierce County emergency dispatch agency, South Sound 911, recently adopted the use of PulsePoint, a software program used in over 3,600 locations throughout the United States.

We encourage community members to download the free PulsePoint Respond application to their cell phone.

App users who have indicated they are trained in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), and willing to assist in case of an emergency, can be notified if someone nearby is having



a cardiac emergency and may require CPR.

If the cardiac emergency is in a public place, the "location-aware" appli-

cation will alert users (within walking distance to the emergency) of the need for CPR. Citizens are never sent to a private home or apartment.

The app also simultaneously dispatching firefighters and paramedics to the scene. The PulsePoint Respond application also directs these potential good samaritan rescuers to the exact location of the closest Automated External Defibrillator (AED).

Other communities using PulsePoint report that when firefighters and paramedics arrive on the scene of cardiac arrests, there are often several citizens already there performing CPR because they were notified via the PulsePoint app. And in some cases, they have already used a public-access AED to defibrillate the patient's heart. The early provision of CPR and use of an AED can make all the difference on whether a patient survives cardiac arrest and is able to return home to be with their family and friends. ■



Stay Warm and Safe This Winter

As homeowners turn to alternative heating sources to avoid expensive heating bills, they should be aware of the potential fire danger. "Heating equipment is the leading cause of home fire deaths, after smoking," says East Pierce Assistant Fire Marshal Lane Walthers.

Follow these simple steps to stay warm and stay safe:

Wood stoves and fireplaces

- To reduce the risk of fire and carbon monoxide poisoning due to creosote buildup or obstructions in the chimney, have the chimney inspected annually by a qualified service technician.
- Keep tree branches and leaves at least 15 feet away from the top of the chimney, and install a chimney cap to keep debris and animals out.
- Use only well-seasoned wood. Never burn Christmas trees or treated wood in your fireplace or wood stove.
- Use only kindling or a commercial firelighter to start a fire. Never use flammable liquids.
- Keep furniture and combustibles at least 36 inches away from the hearth. Use a sturdy screen to stop sparks from flying into the



Taking a few easy steps with home heating equipment can help avoid a tragic house fire.

- room.
- Dispose of ashes in a metal container. Keep the container a safe distance away from your home.
- Never burn charcoal indoors. Burning charcoal can produce lethal amounts of carbon monoxide.

Electric space heaters

- When buying a new space heater, make sure it carries the mark of an independent testing laboratory and has a tip over safety feature.
- Do not store objects on top of heaters or use to dry clothing.
- Plug space heaters directly into

wall outlets, never into an extension cord or power strip.

- Remember to turn heaters off when leaving the room or going to bed.

"Give home heating equipment space, at least three feet from anything that can burn, including paper, bedding and people," Walthers recommends. Have a 'kid-free zone' around open fires and space heaters and never use your oven to heat your home.

For more tips on staying safe, visit www.eastpiercefire.org. ■

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.

Chaplains: Supporting Both Our Citizens and Firefighters

Last year, EPFR firefighters responded to nearly 12,000 incidents varying from minor service requests to specialized rescues, active structure fires and medical emergencies. While responding to these emergencies, first responders - ranging from firefighters, paramedics, EMT's, law enforcement, and dispatchers - regularly endure highly stressful situations. The person or family on the receiving end of our firefighters care is often experiencing their worst day and can be overcome with the emotional stress of the situation.

That's where EPFR's Public Safety Chaplain/Crisis Intervention Specialists come in.

EPFR has a team of five chaplains that are dispatched to calls within the fire district. Our chaplains play a vital and necessary role in providing on scene support for both our citizens and first responders.



Chaplains are at the ready to support our citizens when they need it most.

Chaplains complete an intensive 60-hour training academy that equips them with the necessary skills and knowledge to assist with:

- Crisis Intervention/Suicide Prevention
- Mental Health First-Aid
- Death Notifications
- Peer Support
- Critical Incident Stress Management and Debriefing
- Family Support
- Line of Duty Death Support
- Community Outreach
- Various Ceremonial Services

Chaplains also fulfill countless hours of annual training to keep up to date on current crisis intervention methods.

Chaplains are volunteer members of our department and are on call 24/7/365 to serve our community along side our first responders. ■

Be Alarmed About Carbon Monoxide

Winter in the northwest and power outages often go hand-in-hand which tend to prompt the use of alternative power sources such as generators. Although generators help provide a welcome comfort during extreme conditions, they also pose a risk of carbon monoxide poisoning.



Carbon monoxide (CO) is known as the "silent killer." You cannot see it, smell it, or taste it. According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, CO claims the lives of nearly 300 people in their homes

each year.

Generators aren't the only culprits. Other CO producing products include faulty, improperly used or incorrectly vented fuel-burning appliances such as furnaces, stoves, water heaters and fireplaces.

As of 2011, Washington State law requires CO alarms to be installed in all residences. They should be placed outside of each separate sleeping area, in the immediate vicinity of the bedrooms, and on each level of the residence.

To protect your family from CO poisoning, East Pierce Fire & Rescue urges residents to:

- Always use generators outside, away from doors, windows, and vents. Never in enclosed or par-

tially enclosed areas, even with ventilation.

- Install and maintain CO alarms inside your home to provide early warning. Choose a CO alarm that has the label of a recognized testing laboratory. Although CO alarms are not substitutes for smoke alarms, combination CO and smoke alarms are permitted.
- Know the difference between the sounds of smoke and CO alarms. Sound the alarm and practice your home escape plan with your family so they become familiar with the sounds.

Visit www.eastpiercefirerescue.org for more safety tips and information on Washington's carbon monoxide safety law. ■

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.

BASIC FIRST AID 1—3:30 p.m.

Feb 13 or 22 | Mar 21 or 26 | Apr 15 or 25 | May 16

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