



FIRE HOUSE NEWS

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

SUMMER 2025



FROM THE CHIEF JON PARKINSON

Summer is here! As we officially welcome the season, school is out, the weather is warming up, and many families are heading into vacation mode. It's a great time to reconnect, recharge, and refocus on safety at home and in our community.

In this issue, I'm excited to share a few updates from East Pierce Fire & Rescue, along with important seasonal safety tips to help you and your loved ones stay safe all summer long.

Station 111 & Headquarters:
The new East Pierce Fire & Rescue

Station 111 and Headquarters in Bonney Lake officially opened its doors in late February. This milestone brings more than 30 administrative team members together under one roof on the building's first floor, while the second floor houses a modern fire station built to serve our growing community for the next 50 years.

Community Easter Egg Hunts: Our annual Easter Egg Hunts, sponsored by IAFF Local 3520, took place in April across Edgewood, Sumner, South Prairie, and Tehaleh. It's always so fun to see so many families come out to such a wonderful event.

Wildfire Preparedness: May is recognized nationally as Wildfire Awareness Month. Locally and across the state, wildfires continue to impact our communities. This issue includes helpful tips to get your home and family ready for wildfire season. You can also visit www.eastpiercefirerescue.org to find more resources, prevention tools, and ways to stay safe this summer.

Water Safety: As the weather warms up, we see a noticeable rise in water-related injuries. Even when it's hot outside, local lakes and rivers can stay dangerously cold well into summer. This increases the risk of cold water shock, which can cause someone to lose control of their breathing, muscle function, or consciousness. We want to remind everyone to wear a life jacket. Loaner life jackets are available at kiosks around Lake Tapps. Life jackets are also available for purchase at our Headquarters in Bonney Lake.

You can always stay up to date on EPFR happenings by following us on social media via Facebook, Instagram, and X (formerly known as Twitter), as well as the district website at www.eastpiercefirerescue.org.

On behalf of the district, I would like to thank you all for entrusting us to protect the community. Your ongoing support is greatly appreciated! ■

Meet Us This Summer



Summer's the perfect time to connect with your fire department — and we can't wait to see you out in the community! East Pierce Fire & Rescue will be making appearances at local events all season long.

Stop by to say hello, pick up free safety materials, and snap a photo with our crew or fire engine. Whether you have questions, stories to share, or kids who love fire trucks, we're here for it. We're proud to serve — and even prouder to be your neighbor.

Catch us at these upcoming events:

- Summer Rhubarb Days: June 21
- Edgewood Summer Fest: July 19
- National Night Out: August 5
- Milton Days: August 16
- South Prairie Days: August 16

...and don't miss our biggest community event of the year:

SAVE THE DATE

EPFR 29th Annual
Open House
09.27.2025

Featuring station tours, demos, and more!

We'd love to see you there! ■

Celebrating HQ & Station 111 Grand Opening

On May 17, East Pierce Fire & Rescue welcomed the community to celebrate the grand opening of our new Headquarters and Station 111 in Bonney Lake. Thank you to everyone who joined us for tours, meet-and-greets, and a look inside this new chapter of service. ■



Honoring Service & Excellence

East Pierce Fire & Rescue recently held its annual Employee Awards Banquet, recognizing individuals who exemplify leadership, integrity, and commitment to public service.

Award recipients were nominated by their peers for going above and beyond—setting high standards, inspiring others, and making a lasting impact within the organization and the community. One notable exception is the Chief's Company

Award, selected by the command staff.

Also presented was the Mike Roberts Goodwill Award, honoring a retired lieutenant who consistently went above and beyond for the wellbeing of others through genuine acts of goodwill.

Please join us in celebrating these outstanding team members who uphold our mission of compassion, professionalism, and rapid response. ■



EPFR personnel honored at the 2024 Annual Awards Ceremony, held April 12, 2025



AWARD HONOREES

Officer of the Year
Jeff Lachowitzer

Firefighter of the Year
Jeremy Paul

EMS Provider
Jim Landefeld

Mike Roberts Goodwill Award
Jason Stearns

Support Staff
Yvonne Hahn

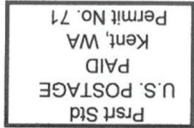
Fitness Award
Andrew Craig

Chiefs Company
Adam Lathrop
Brandon Kalilikane
Spencer Byfield
Tim Balding



EPFR Open House: Young attendees have the chance to experience what it's like to perform a firefighter rescue drill in full gear.

"Where Compassion and Action Meet"



Postal Customer
ECRWSS

HEALTH WATCH

Preventing Falls at Home
A Key to Safety This Summer

Q: Why is fall prevention such a priority for East Pierce Fire & Rescue?

A: Falls are one of the top reasons our crews respond to 9-1-1 calls—accounting for about 18% of EMS responses each year. While some occur outdoors, most happen at home—and most are preventable. For older adults, a fall can lead to hip fractures, long hospital stays, or loss of independence. Preventing just one fall can help avoid months of recovery or costly medical bills. According to the Washington State Department of Health, more than 1,100 deaths and 22,300 hospitalizations were attributed to unintentional falls among adults age 65+ in 2022. That same year, there were nearly 98,000 EMS responses related to falls across the state.

Q: What are the most common causes of falls?

A: Everyday hazards are often to blame. Slippery floors, poor lighting, cluttered walkways, or rushing to the bathroom at night can all increase the risk of falling. In fact, 78% of fall-related deaths are caused by slipping, tripping, or stumbling. Another common risk factor? Medications. Some can cause side effects like dizziness, tiredness, or slow reaction times. This is especially true for prescriptions that affect blood pressure, sleep, or mood.

Q: What steps can I take to reduce my fall risk?

A: Small changes can have a big impact. The National Fire Protection Association recommends these eight easy, everyday steps to help reduce your risk of falling at home and staying steady on your feet:

- **Exercise regularly.** Look for strength and balance classes at local senior or community centers.
- **Take your time.** Many falls happen when people are rushing, especially at night or early morning.
- **Keep walkways clear.** Pick up cords, clutter, and anything that could cause a trip.
- **Improve lighting.** Install nightlights or motion-activated lights in key areas.
- **Use nonslip mats.** Especially in kitchens, bathrooms, and entryways.
- **Avoid loose rugs.** Only use throw rugs with rubberized backing—or skip them altogether.
- **Wear sturdy shoes.** Avoid slippers or footwear that slides off easily.
- **Review your medications.** Some may have side effects that impact balance. Keep a list and talk to your doctor regularly.

Q: Can EPFR help with fall prevention in the home?

A: Yes. East Pierce Fire & Rescue offers free home safety visits and fall prevention education through our Mobile Integrative Health Program. These visits include a walk-through to identify risks, suggest practical fixes, and connect you with helpful resources. Many updates are simple and affordable — like adding nightlights, railings, or supportive footwear. We're also a proud member of the Pierce County Fall Prevention Coalition, working to reduce injuries and support safe, independent living across our region.

Want to schedule a visit or learn more?

Contact:
Lieutenant Jen Killion, CP-C
Community Resource Paramedic
East Pierce Fire & Rescue
jkillion@eastpiercefirerescue.org
253-447-3511

Stay steady, stay safe — and don't hesitate to reach out. ■



JOIN US


Free Monthly Series
on Aging &
Care Planning

East Pierce Fire & Rescue, in partnership with Pierce County Aging & Disability Resources, is hosting a free six-month Advanced Aging & Care Planning Series to help community members navigate important decisions with confidence and less stress.

Each monthly class offers practical tools, trusted resources, and expert guidance on topics like Medicare/Medicaid, fraud prevention, and caregiver support. Attend in person or online — all sessions are free and open to the public.

- Upcoming Sessions:**
- **June 24** – Do's & Don'ts for Aging & Care Planning
 - **July 15** – Keep it Legal!
 - **August 12** – Preventing & Recovering from Scams, Fraud, and Identity Theft
 - **September 16** – Solving the Mysteries of Medicare and Medicaid
 - **October 14** – Caring for the Caregiver
 - **November 18** – Understanding Palliative Care and Hospice

Scan QR code to register. ■

Scan me

Brush Trucks: Wildland Response Vehicles

Not all fire engines stick to the pavement. When wildland fire season heats up—or storms hit hard-to-reach areas—EPFR counts on Brush 111 and Brush 116 to get the job done.

What Is a Brush Truck?

Brush 111 and Brush 116 are East Pierce's go-anywhere fire engines. These Type 6 wildland units are nearly identical — both built on Ford F-550 trucks by Cascade Fire Equipment in Yakima. Smaller and more agile than a regular fire engine, they're made for off-road use. With four-wheel drive, they can reach hillsides, trails, and storm-damaged areas where bigger trucks can't go. They're used year-round — from wildfires in the summer to snow and ice in the winter.

Equipment and Capabilities

Each brush truck carries:

- A 400-gallon water tank
- A 10-gallon foam tank with injector
- One Stihl 500i chainsaw
- A weed eater with pole saw attachment
- Two portable water pumps
- A full set of wildland hand tools

These trucks are also designed for pump-and-roll tactics, which means crews can spray water while the vehicle is moving — an essential tool when fighting fast-moving grass and brush fires.

When and Where They're Deployed

Brush units are primarily used during fire season (May 1 through October 31). However, they are also deployed year-round in response to storm damage, snow events, and off-road access needs.

While brush units have been used throughout the entire East Pierce district, our largest target hazards are above Wilkeson and out in Tehaleh.

They've also been deployed for:

- County-wide mutual aid
- State mobilizations across Washington
- Out-of-state responses, including Oregon and California

Staffing and Training

East Pierce operates two brush units — one crew cab and one extended cab. The extended cab can carry up to four personnel. While all East Pierce firefighters are trained in basic operation of the unit, the department also has a dedicated wildland team of 21 members with advanced training in:

- Chainsaw operations
- Portable pump use
- Pump-and-roll tactics
- Use of firing devices

The units operate year-round, with dedicated staffing activated during heightened conditions.

Other Uses and Operational Challenges

In addition to wildland response, brush units have been used to clear access during wind and ice storms and support search-and-rescue operations in remote areas.

Like all wildland deployments, these incidents come with their own set of challenges:

- Remote locations
- Limited water supply
- Steep and uneven terrain
- Long operational periods

Even with these demands, Brush 111 and Brush 116 remain a critical resource for fire suppression and all-hazard support — especially in places larger fire trucks simply can't go. ■



Brush 111 and Brush 116 respond to wildland fires and other emergencies throughout the district.

FIREWORKS: Celebrate Safely This Fourth

The Fourth of July is a time to celebrate—but it’s also one of the busiest nights of the year for fire crews. Every summer, fireworks cause injuries and fires in our community. A little extra care goes a long way in keeping your family safe.

“You can have fun, just be aware of the dangers and take proper precautions,” says East Pierce Fire Marshal, Bill Sandlian.

In Washington, males 15-21 years of age are most often hurt by fireworks. Many injuries are serious, including burns and even amputations. Most happen when fireworks are held or lit too close. Even sparklers — often given to young children — burn at over 1,200°F, hot enough to cause serious injury.

Fires are also a big concern. Hot, dry weather and fireworks can lead to fast-moving grass and brush fires. Be smart about

- where you light fireworks, and make sure the type you use is safe and legal for your area.
- Plan Ahead – Before You Light Fireworks**
 - Use only legal fireworks from licensed outlets.
 - Keep fireworks away from children.
 - Read and follow the label directions.
 - Have a bucket of water or hose nearby.
 - Skip fireworks if it’s windy or dry.
 - Keep pets safe and indoors.
- Use Caution – While Fireworks Are Active**
 - Only adults should light fireworks.
 - Light one firework at a time, then step back.
 - Never hold or relight a “dud.”
- Never point or throw fireworks at people, pets, or buildings.
 - Wear eye protection.
 - Never use fireworks while drinking or under the influence.
- Do Your Part – After the Show**
 - Soak used fireworks in water before throwing them away.
 - Pick up all debris to protect pets and property.
 - Keep lighters and matches away from kids.
- If you’re unsure about neighborhood rules, skip the guesswork and attend a local professional fireworks show instead. It’s safer, easier, and still full of sparkle.
- From all of us at East Pierce Fire & Rescue, have a safe and happy Fourth of July!■

Fireworks Complaints?

File an on-line complaint at **FireworksReport.com**
(reporting tool active June 28-July 7)

Call 911 for EMERGENCIES only

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

- July 4 at Noon to July 5 at 1 a.m.

City of Sumner

- July 4: Noon - Midnight

Unincorporated Pierce County

- July 4: 10 a.m. - Midnight

For a complete county-wide listing, visit the Pierce County Fire Prevention Bureau website at www.piercecountywa.org/3893/Fireworks. All dates/times referenced are per the applicable municipal or county code.



Grill Safety Tips for Summer

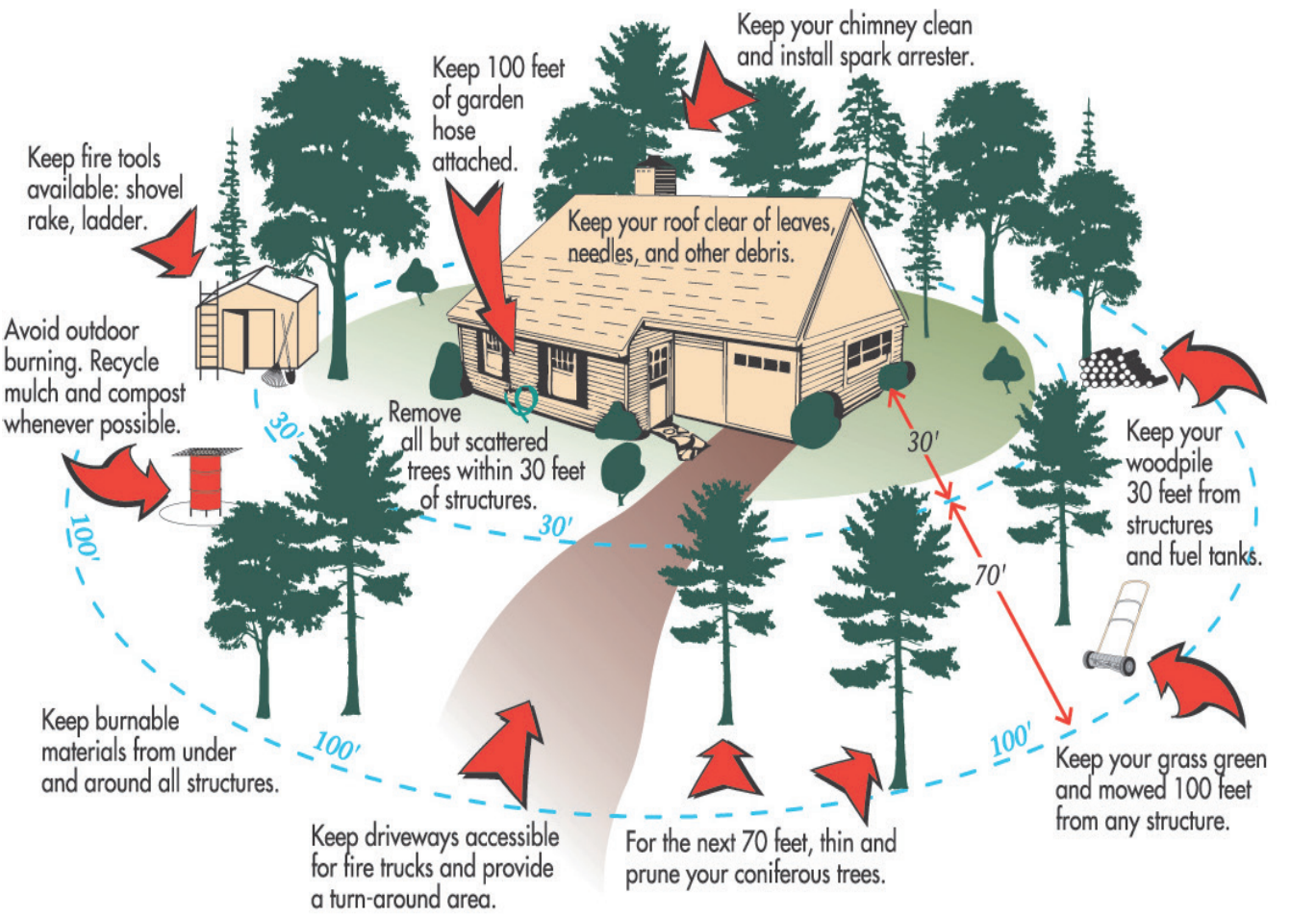
- Summer’s a great time to fire up the barbecue—but it’s also when grill-related fires spike. Whether you’re using gas or charcoal, a few precautions can help you keep the good times going safely.
- Here’s what to keep in mind before your next cookout:
- **Check your propane tank** for leaks before using your gas grill. (The National Fire Protection Association has a helpful how-to video at nfpa.org.)
 - **Clean your grill regularly**, including grease or fat buildup on the grates and in the tray below.
 - **Set up safely.** Keep grills well away from your home, deck railings, eaves, and overhanging branches.
 - **Open the lid** on gas grills before lighting them.
 - **Create a kid-and-pet-free zone**, at least three feet away from the grill.
 - **Use charcoal starter fluid only** (never gasoline or other flammable liquids), and never add fluid to an active fire.
 - **Let charcoal cool completely** before disposing of coals in a metal container.
 - **Never leave your grill unattended.**

Outdoor cooking should be fun and fire-safe. Stay alert, grill responsibly, and let’s keep the flames where they belong—under the burgers. ■

Are You Prepared for a Wildfire?

Every year, wildfires burn across the U.S., and more and more people live where wildfires are a real risk. But by working together, residents can make their 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 today.



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

Fire Commissioner Meetings

Board of Fire Commissioner meetings are held the third Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. Meetings are in person with an option to attend virtually. Agendas and links to the meetings are posted at www.eastpiercefire.org.

2025 Meeting Schedule

Jul 15 | Aug 19 | Sept 16 | Oct 21 | Nov 18 | Dec 16

Who Is East Pierce Fire & Rescue?

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

EPFR was formed 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 to provide a seamless response to emergencies.

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 approximately 100,000+ 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 eight stations - seven staffed 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 medical emergencies and fires.

An independently-elected Board of Commissioners governs the agency.

COMMISSIONERS

Jon Napier, Chair
Edward Egan, Vice Chair
Justin Evans
Kevin Garling
Randy Kroum
Pat McElligott
Cynthia Wernet

STAFFED STATIONS

Station 111 - Bonney Lake
Headquarters Station
8601 Main St. 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 117 - Tehaleh
14504 181st Ave. E.

Station 118 - Edgewood
10105 24th St. E.

Station 124 - Milton
1000 Laurel St.

BOND UPDATE: Progress & Breaking Ground

In November 2018, voters approved a bond to replace all six front-line fire engines and a ladder truck, replace four fire stations, and build a new fire station in Tehaleh.

Here is a brief snapshot of the status of these projects.

Fire Station Construction Status

- **Station 118 - Edgewood:** Opened Fall 2023.
- **Station 111 - Bonney Lake:** Opened February 2025.
- **Station 114 - Lake Tapps:** Under construction. Expected to open June 2025.
- **Station 117 - Tehaleh:** Under construction. Expected to open July 2025.
- **Station 112 - Prairie Ridge:** Under construction. Scheduled to open Fall 2026.

Vehicle Status

- Ladder 113 and Engines 111, 112, 114, 116, 118, and 1119 are received and serving our communities.

Thank you for providing us with the equipment and facilities to serve you better. ■

Station 114—Lake Tapps: Expected to open June 2025

Station 117—Tehaleh: Expected to open July 2025

Gearing You Up for Summer Safety!

Pedals, paddles, and summer adventures— gear up safely before you go! Bike Helmets, Multi-Sport Helmets, and Life Jackets are available for purchase at our Headquarters Station during business hours Monday-Friday from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Wearer must be present for custom fitting. Credit/debit cards accepted only.

Life Jackets
\$17 each
Sizes infant - adult

Multi-Sport Helmets
\$13 each
Sizes small - large

Bike Helmets
\$11 each
Sizes toddler - XL

Only need a life jacket for the day? Short-term use loaners are available at the Headquarters Station and loaner kiosks at Allan Yorke Park (7203 W Tapps Hwy E, Bonney Lake).

connect with us!

@EastPierceFire

info@eastpiercefirer.org

www.eastpiercefirer.org

253.863.1800

Help Us Help You

Create your household profile today on Community Connect. It's free, secure, and gives first responders the info they need in an emergency.

Scan to create your profile or visit eastpiercefirer.org

East Pierce Classes & Public Education

- FREE PROGRAMS -

To residents of East Pierce Fire & Rescue

LIFE JACKET LOANER PROGRAM
Wearer must be present for fitting. Available at the Headquarters Station.

CHILD SAFETY SEAT INSPECTIONS
District residents can schedule a free 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).

BLOOD PRESSURE CHECKS Stop by any staffed station (subject to staff availability).

FIRE EXTINGUISHER TRAINING Learn how to use a fire extinguisher with our interactive, digital training prop either at your location or ours for groups of 10 or more.

HANDS-ONLY CPR CLASS One-hour, non-certification class for adult, hands-only CPR. Groups of 10 or more can schedule this training at their location or at our Headquarters Station.

- SERVICES OFFERED -

CPR 9:00 a.m.–12:30 p.m. | BASIC FIRST AID 1:00–4:00 p.m.

Aug 2 or 20 | Sept 6 or 17 | Oct 4 or 22 | Nov 1 or 19

The cost for citizens residing within EPFR's jurisdiction (including Sumner, Bonney Lake, Lake Tapps, South Prairie, Tehaleh, Milton, and Edgewood) is \$25 for either a CPR or First Aid class, or \$50 for both. The cost for non-residents is \$40 for each class, or \$80 for both. All classes are held at our Headquarters Station.

To register, call 253-863-1800 during regular business hours or on-line at www.eastpiercefirer.org.

HELMET SALES AND FITTING* Wearer must be present for custom fitting. Bike helmets \$11 each. Multi-Sport helmets \$13 each. Station 111/ Headquarters and Station 118.

LIFE JACKET SALES AND FITTING* Wearer must be present for custom fitting. Life jackets \$17 each. Station 111/Headquarters and Station 118.

SAFE SITTER CLASSES

Station 111: Jul 7, 8, and 9 | Station 118: Jul 21, 22, and 23

Cost: \$45. To view class details and register on-line, visit www.eastpiercefirer.org.

* Sponsored by East Pierce Professional Firefighters Local 3520

“Where Compassion and Action Meet”