



West Pierce Fire & Rescue

Annual Report 2018





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WEST PIERCE FIRE & RESCUE

3631 Drexler Drive West | University Place, Washington 98466
www.westpierce.org | 253.564.1623

OUR MISSION

West Pierce Fire & Rescue,
in partnership with the
community, protects lives
and property through a
well-trained, cost effective,
pro-active fire department,
serving and educating
citizens.



LETTER FROM THE CHIEF

With 16,320 calls for service, 2018 was our busiest year yet, as call volume increased by approximately 2.6 percent from the previous year. This has been a steady trend for the past five years. Compared to 2013, annual call volume has increased by 2,750 calls for service.

The vast majority of this increase has been for medical aid calls. Over the last five years, we have seen a dramatic increase in the number of people calling 9-1-1 for minor medical issues. Behavioral health and substance abuse struggles, homelessness, and shortages of primary care physicians are just a few of the things driving this increase. Over the past two years, we have worked to analyze these challenges and develop new operational models that will manage the increasing number of less emergent calls, while keeping resources available to respond to more critical incidents. We expect to begin testing new trial programs in early 2019.

In addition to responding to a record number of calls, we were also very busy working to obtain grants. Receiving grant funding allows us to control costs as well as implement new programs that might not otherwise be possible. In 2018, we were successful in obtaining approximately \$350,000 in grant funds. The grants funded live fire training for all of our firefighters and allowed us to purchase additional equipment for calls that involve the release of hazardous materials.

West Pierce Fire & Rescue also saw a lot of new faces in the organization in 2018. This year we hired 10 new firefighters to replace those who were retiring. This is the largest hiring class we have had in over a decade. Each of our new firefighters goes through an extensive training program to get fully prepared for the job. We host a 13-week recruit training academy, not only for our new firefighters, but also for new firefighters from across the state. With 34 total recruits, some coming from as far away as Kitsap and Clark counties, this was the largest academy we have ever had. When fire departments from across the state send their recruits to our academy to be trained, it says a lot about the quality of training our cadre of instructors provide.



Training is a fundamental part of the fire service. Our firefighters have to train continually to be fully prepared for any emergency. All of our training was put to the test in 2018, as our firefighters responded to calls as diverse as a plane crash on Ketron Island and a tornado in Kitsap County. In addition to these local emergencies, we also had firefighters deploy to Florida and North Carolina to help with recovery efforts after two devastating hurricanes.

West Pierce Fire & Rescue is very proud to serve the communities of Lakewood, University Place and Steilacoom. Each and every West Pierce employee remains committed to compassionately delivering the high quality services you deserve and have come to expect from your fire department. We greatly value the partnership we have developed with the community and look forward to earning your continued support in 2019.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Sharp".

Jim Sharp, Fire Chief

BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS

Bart Dalton, Chair
Position 1, 2014 - 2019

John Clancy, Vice Chair
Position 2, 2016 - 2021

Daniel Rankin
Position 3, 2018 - 2023

Grant Erb
Position 4, 2016 - 2018

Dave Durr
Position 4, 2018 - 2021

John Sheeran
Position 5, 2014 - 2019

EXECUTIVE STAFF

Jim Sharp, Fire Chief

Karl Roth, Deputy Chief

Paul Tinsley, Deputy Chief

Mike Boltz, Assistant Chief

Hallie McCurdy, Assistant Chief

Eric Norton, Assistant Chief

Koree Wick, Director of Administrative
Services & Finance

Tammy Lamb, Executive Assistant

Julie Walker, Human Resource Manager

Jenny Weekes, Community & Media
Relations Manager

ABOUT WEST PIERCE FIRE & RESCUE

As a fire district, West Pierce Fire & Rescue (WPFR) covers 31 square miles, serving a population of approximately 100,000. WPFR provides full service to the cities of Lakewood and University Place and contracted emergency services to the Town of Steilacoom. There are currently six fire stations, operating 24 hours a day and located strategically throughout the District.

West Pierce Fire & Rescue responds to a vast array of incidents on a daily basis. Services provided to the community include: fire suppression, emergency medical services and transport, technical rescue, hazardous materials response, special operations, fire prevention, inspections, code enforcement, fire investigation, and fire and injury prevention education.

West Pierce Fire & Rescue protects many bodies of water throughout the District. Fireboat Endeavor is moored at Narrows Marina for incidents occurring on Puget Sound and is a regional asset to surrounding jurisdictions. Two other boats are in service for incidents occurring on any of the many lakes. Due to the different types of water responses, WPFR has specialized teams, including marine pilots, divers and rescue swimmers.



The workforce at WPFR is categorized into eight divisions:

Administrative Services/Finance – Manages all aspects of the District's finances and supports all other divisions.

Communications & Planning – Coordinates emergency communications, analyzes data and provides GIS support for the organization.

Emergency Medical Services (EMS) – Manages the medical side of WPFR's services. The EMS division provides continuing medical education in a variety of ways.

Information Technology (IT) – Responsible for implementing and maintaining all technological systems and programs for District facilities and personnel.

Legislative – Governed by five elected officials, the Board of Fire Commissioners meets twice monthly, on the first and third Tuesdays, to conduct business.

Logistics – Manages the District's fleet, facilities and supply purchasing.

Operations/Suppression – Encompasses all emergency response programs. These personnel are the firefighters (both EMTs and Paramedics) that respond to 9-1-1 calls.

Prevention – Educates residents on fire and life safety topics, inspects buildings to ensure fire safety, investigates fire scenes and manages code enforcement. This division also includes emergency management and disaster preparedness.

Training – Facilitates ongoing training of all District personnel on new and existing procedures and equipment.

OUR STATIONS

Station 20

10928 Pacific Highway SW
Lakewood

Station 21

5000 Steilacoom Boulevard SW
Lakewood

Station 22

8517 Washington Boulevard SW
Lakewood

Station 23

14505 Grant Avenue SW
Lakewood

Station 24

8310 87th Avenue SW
Lakewood

Station 31

Headquarters
3631 Drexler Drive W
University Place

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA



TOTAL CALLS FOR SERVICE

16,320

In 2018, West Pierce Fire & Rescue responded to 16,320 calls for service. These charts demonstrate the breakdown of not only 9-1-1 calls by month, but by type, showing nearly 75 percent of WPFR's call volume is for medical aid.

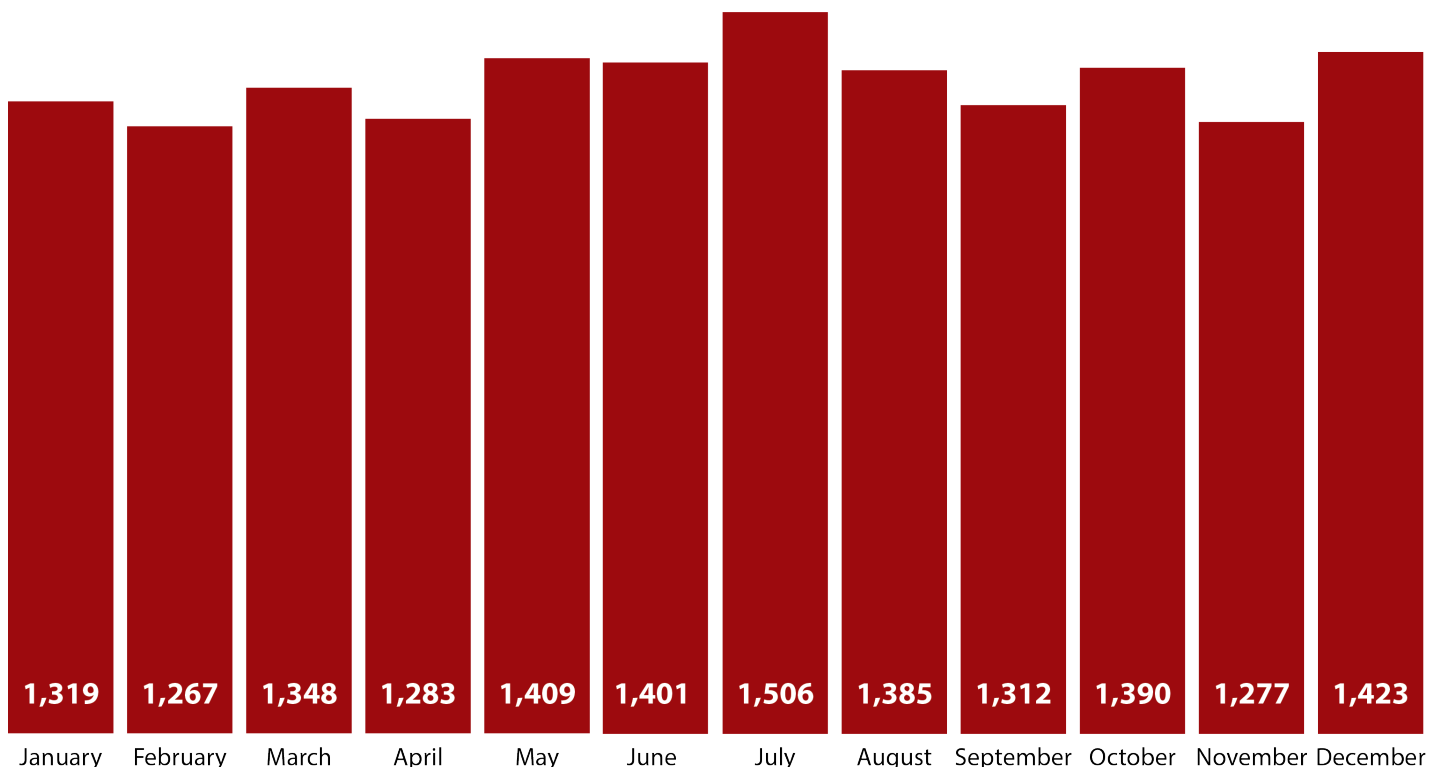
One consideration in the chart on the next page is the optics that the Fire & Hazards category is the smallest portion of WPFR's call volume. Although these incidents occur much less frequently, they are extremely dangerous, require more resources, and pose significant risk to the community.

The types of responses within that category include all types of fires, combustible/flammable spills and leaks, chemical releases, structural collapse, or electrical issues, such as downed power lines. While only six percent of the call volume is attributed to fires and hazardous condition calls, this still amounts to more than two high risk incident each day in the community.

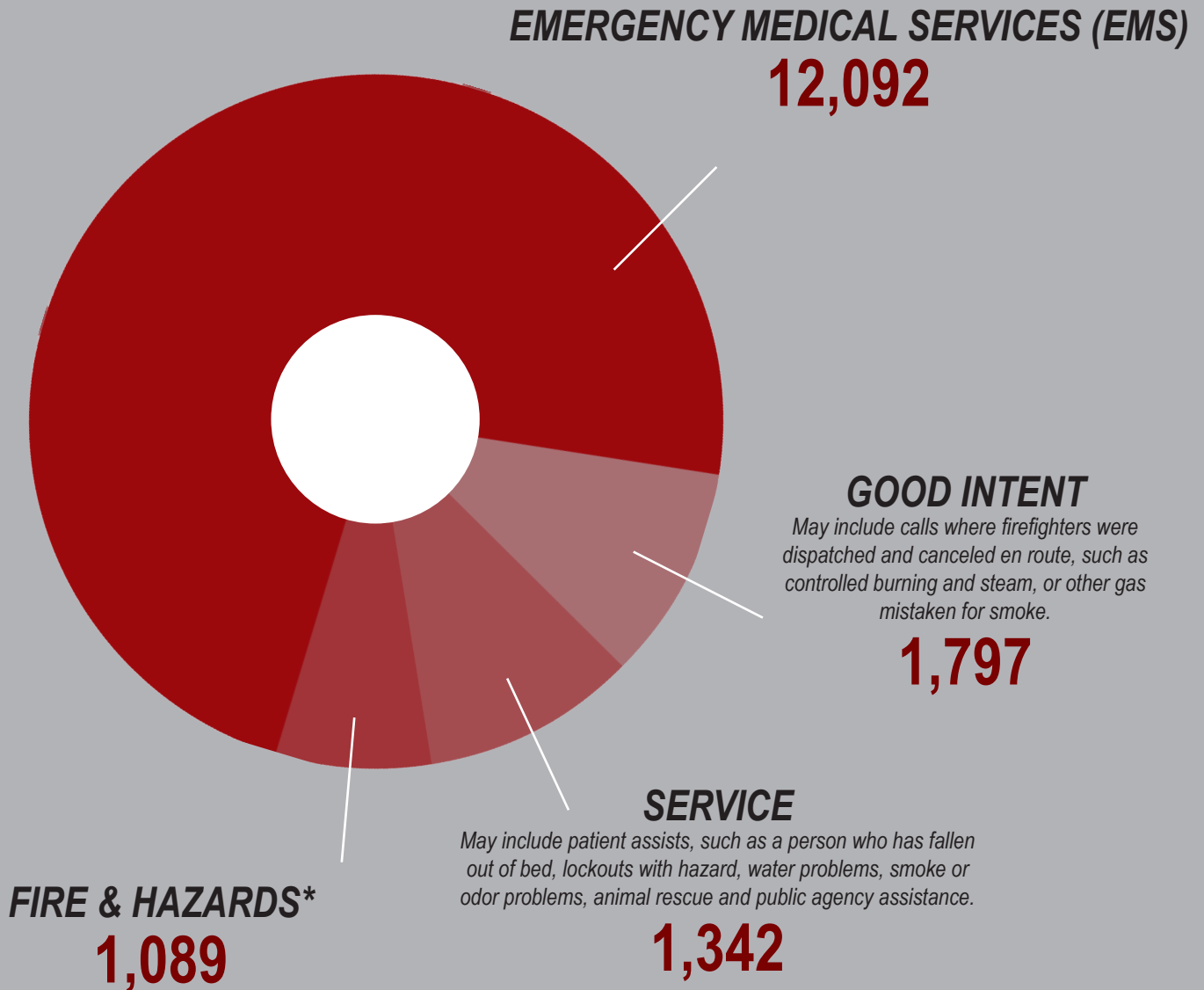
West Pierce Fire & Rescue clearly responds to a variety of emergencies and firefighters are trained to respond to each and every one of them. Every firefighter is an Emergency Medical Technician and nearly half of them are trained to the level of Paramedic. There are also firefighters specially trained in technical rescue, hazardous materials response, water rescue and dive rescue.

In addition to 9-1-1 responses shown on these charts, WPFR's team of Peer Support Advocates/Chaplains invested more than 2,725 hours meeting with residents in need, supporting WPFR personnel and their families, training responders on the importance of self-care, and assisting with District events and trainings.

Rest assured, when anyone calls 9-1-1 for an emergency, WPFR will Respond Efficiently • Execute Flawlessly • *BE NICE!*



9-1-1 RESPONSES BY CALL TYPE



*FIRE & HAZARDS INCLUDE:

FALSE ALARM	FIRE	HAZARDOUS CONDITION	OTHER	RUPTURE/EXPLOSION
488	414	137	41	9

TRAINING AND CONTINUING EDUCATION

At West Pierce Fire & Rescue, training is of the utmost importance, as it not only optimizes services for the community, but it also ensures duties are being performed safely. The Training Division coordinates all required training for personnel at all levels. In 2018, the training totaled 38,887 hours. While most of the categories in the graph on page 13 include training in specialized fire service skills, other broader forms of training were also delivered.

Recruit training is an example which includes a wide variety of intensive skill-building exercises that prepare recruits to become firefighters. In 2018, all new recruits completed an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) course before beginning the Red Knights Recruit Academy. Ten new WPFR firefighter recruits,

which was the largest group of new hires for the District in over a decade, and one Steilacoom police officer participated in the six week course that concluded with the National Registry exam. In addition to classroom education, physical training was simultaneously incorporated to help prepare recruits for the rigorous physical demands of the academy.

The Red Knights Recruit Academy began in February 2018 and lasted for 13 weeks. The 10 WPFR recruits were joined by others from East Pierce Fire & Rescue, Clark County Fire District 6, Lacey Fire District 3, Central Kitsap Fire & Rescue, and Key Peninsula Fire Department, totaling 34 students. During the academy, recruits continued daily physical training, participated in more than 40 classes, performed advanced



hands-on skill building, and culminated their training with state certifications in Firefighter I, Firefighter II, and Hazardous Materials.

Following graduation, the WPFR recruits continued their training for four additional weeks, which allowed them to gain more specialized skills. They then began serving as probationary firefighters on shift, continuing their training on the job under the guidance of shift firefighters, captains and battalion chiefs. In the summer of 2019, they will complete their probationary period and each achieve the title of Firefighter/EMT.

Training continues over the course of any firefighter's career, refreshing skills and learning new ones as technology and techniques change. For example, in June 2018, 16 firefighters worked together to standardize and improve the training of crews assigned to Ladder 21. This "Truck Academy" provided 40 hours of hands-on training in a variety of ladder truck skills, including auto extrication, ventilation, aerial positioning and operations, ground ladders, and forcible entry.

Education is also regarded as a form of training at WPFR and

an invaluable source from which to obtain crucial skills. Over the years, there has been an evolution in the fire service that has turned it into the complex industry it is today. To be successful, leaders must understand public policy, fire and EMS trends, budget and finance, employment law, and human resource management and negotiations, among many others. One of the best ways to build a broad understanding of these subjects is through higher and continuing education.

Over the past four years, WPFR has made education a top priority by encouraging personnel to pursue local, state and national conferences, job-specific training classes and/or formal education programs. The result is nothing short of remarkable, as numerous people have taken advantage of these opportunities to further their knowledge and better serve the community. Personnel have been finding the relevance that higher education programs have in their careers, meaning they can see the difference in how they approach their jobs and influence the organization and community.





TRAINING HOURS BY CATEGORY

The fire service has drastically changed over the last few decades and it is imperative to reflect the needs of a complex society. As the community grows and evolves, so does the risk associated with an increased population.

When it comes to responding to an emergency, being properly equipped and trained to handle any incident is crucial. As shown in the graph to the right, 38,887 hours of training were completed by firefighters, which has increased by approximately 10 percent over the last two years. The categories portray the training firefighters maintain on an annual basis.

Technical Rescue – Encompasses specialized training for firefighters who respond to incidents including trench rescue, rope and rescue rigging, structural collapse and confined space.

Recruit Training – Includes all training, both recruits and instructors, during the Red Knights Recruit Academy.

Driver/Operator – Includes training completed driving emergency response vehicles.

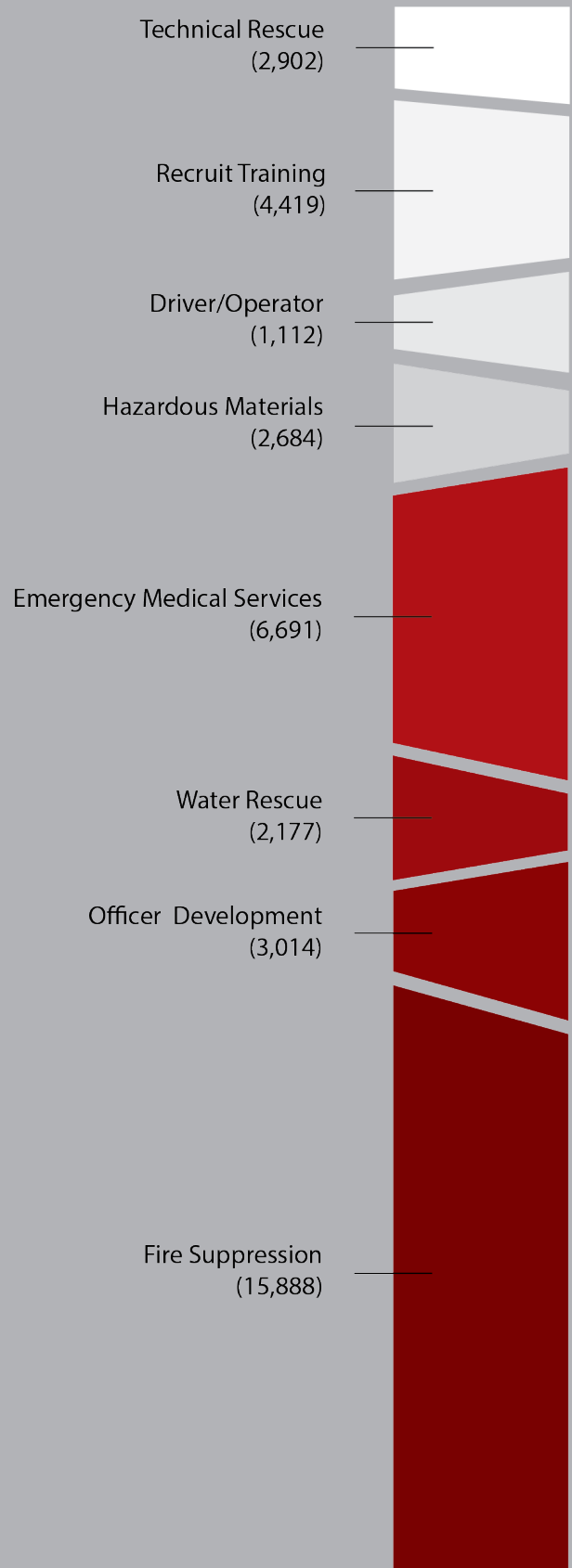
Hazardous Materials – Includes hazardous conditions training, both at the operations level for all firefighters and for those specially trained to respond to such incidents.

Emergency Medical Services (EMS) – Includes continuing medical education for Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT) and Paramedics.

Water Rescue – Includes all water-related training fields, such as rescue swimmer, dive and marine pilot programs. These categories include training throughout the District's many lakes and the Puget Sound.

Officer Development – Includes continuing education and leadership training as personnel move up in rank, whether when promoted or acting in a supervisory position.

Fire Suppression – Includes all training at the operations level for firefighters, such as training center drills, live fire, May Day, active shooter, etc.



38,887 TOTAL TRAINING HOURS

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

While the fire service is rightfully focused on emergencies, such as fire and medical aid, it is also important to support preventative health and wellness. With more awareness building over the years about the impact of the job on fire service personnel, West Pierce Fire & Rescue has continuously implemented methods of preventing illness and supporting personnel in coping with existing health and wellness concerns. In 2018, WPFR took many steps to improve the health and wellness of its employees.

Standard Operating Guidelines (SOGs) were implemented or revised throughout the year to minimize health risks to WPFR firefighters. These SOGs outline procedures for personnel to abide by following exposure to hazardous substances, whether it be during training, fire responses or even other occupational exposures, such as blood-borne pathogens and respiratory exposure to hazardous fumes.

The risk of exposure was further mitigated by removing carpets in the living quarters of two WPFR stations and polishing the concrete underneath. Polished concrete floors are much easier and more cost effective to fully clean, reducing the risk of firefighters' exposure to carcinogens that would otherwise be easily absorbed into carpet fibers. All other stations will have the same process completed by the end of 2020.

Each station was further improved by installing vehicle exhaust removal systems to reduce the risk of health hazards associated with fumes lingering in the apparatus bay. These systems have been successful in reducing firefighters' exposure to toxic fumes and therefore reducing the possibility of overall long-term health issues.

A second set of turnout gear, which is the protective equipment worn by firefighters during fires and motor vehicle accident responses, was also issued to each firefighter. Having a second set of turnout gear on hand ensures firefighters have sufficient time to fully decontaminate their gear between emergency responses. It also ensures each firefighter has fully functional

equipment when one set of gear is sent out for inspections or repairs.

Physical health is important to address, but mental wellness is also on the radar for all WPFR employees. First Responders regularly encounter situations involving illnesses, traumatic injuries, devastating personal and property losses, and death. With two and three decade-long careers being common practice in the fire service, firefighters are continuously exposed to these repetitive, cumulative stressors. In addition, there are many positions other than firefighters within WPFR that handle sensitive material and situations, which can also affect one's mental wellness and overall health.

In some instances, the effects from this line of work spill over and affect self-care and relationships with spouses, families and co-workers. First responders have high rates of divorce, behavioral health struggles, PTSD, substance abuse and sadly, suicide. Unfortunately, no one is fully shielded from the stressors of the industry.

Historically, WPFR's Peer Support Advocates/Chaplains have provided critical training to WPFR employees, enhancing awareness and the resources available to promote greater physical and emotional well-being. In addition to these individuals, 2018 brought a new way to support personnel and their families: The West Pierce Fire & Rescue Peer Support Program. Representatives from the District and labor groups met to select a group of personnel to attend a two-day peer support training hosted by the International Association of Firefighters. This training provided guidelines to members of WPFR's Peer Support team on how to support the well-being of their peers. The goal of this program is to promote health and well-being of all personnel and their immediate families through education, assistance and confidential support.





COMMUNITY RISK REDUCTION SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Community risk reduction programs are a vital part of the community's success. At West Pierce Fire & Rescue, the Prevention Division focuses on a variety of fire and injury prevention programs. This type of education provides families with the knowledge to make educated choices about fire and life safety risks. The most successful community risk reduction programs at WPFR are those taught in the schools. Students who attend schools in Lakewood and University Place have the opportunity to take part in these programs.

In preschool, the focus is on general fire safety and teaching children that firefighters are friends who want to help them. These fire safety messages are reinforced in Kindergarten, with additional topics such as creating a fire escape plan and what to do if they hear a smoke alarm.

Vehicle crashes are the leading cause of preventable deaths and injuries to children in the United States. First grade students learn about child passenger safety and the importance of booster seats to stay safe in cars. Fire safety topics are reinforced once again in second grade to include the science behind fires. This program teaches children about the fire triangle and tips for preventing fires in the home.

The programs for grades 3-5 move to more advanced concepts. In third grade, a water safety curriculum is taught utilizing a partnership with the Lakewood YMCA. In fourth grade, the focus is wheeled sports, such as skateboards, scooters and bikes. Topics include how to properly fit a bike helmet, rules of riding your bike on the road or sidewalk and wearing bright colors so drivers can see you.

Around age 12, children are starting to babysit, watch younger siblings and may take on more responsibility around the home. In fifth grade, the first aid program focuses on personal safety and when to call 9-1-1 or an adult for help. It also addresses basic first aid skills, such as assisting someone who is choking and how to control bleeding.

The education students receive from these programs at each grade level are experiences that can stay with them for a lifetime and make a real difference. The more families reached with these programs, the stronger, safer and more resilient our community becomes. WPFR values the strong relationships with local schools and looks forward to partnering with teachers and administrators throughout the school year.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH BY THE NUMBERS

Outreach is achieved in various ways and West Pierce Fire & Rescue strives to engage with the community in as many ways possible. While elementary school programs are one of the most successful public education efforts, WPFR also teaches CPR to high school students and hosts babysitting courses for young teens.

Outside of the classroom, WPFR attends public events, provides custom-fit life jackets and helmets, inspects car seats for proper installation, installs smoke alarms in residences, conducts code enforcement to ensure public safety and much more.

Another program that has been a proven success is the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program. This training provides community members with the skills needed to help protect lives and property and to assist their neighbors until first responders arrive in the event of a disaster.

In a major disaster, 9-1-1 resources may be delayed, possibly significantly, creating a great need for community members to be self-sustaining. Neighbors who attend the training have an even greater chance of taking care of themselves and each other during these types of incidents because of their combined knowledge.

The 22-hour course teaches residents disaster preparedness, fire and utility safety, disaster medical aid, light search and rescue, emergency response organization and disaster psychology. The CERT program is available at no cost to participants and there are no prerequisites or special skill sets necessary. At the end of 2018, 94 new members completed the training, totaling more than 500 community members since the program's inception in 2009.

To the right is an overview of the public education and outreach efforts by WPFR during 2018.

8,190 Students reached

- 7,500** Elementary school students visited
- 135** Daycare and preschool students visited
- 500** High school students taught CPR
- 55** Teenagers completed the Safe Sitter babysitting program

2,827 CERT volunteer hours

- 2,469** Training hours completed, including drills and classes
- 240** Hours participated in CERT-related meetings
- 118** Hours volunteered at community events

2,367 Inspections

- 1,532** Fire and life safety inspections
- 156** Re-inspections
- 213** Fire protection systems inspections
- 123** Other inspections
- 316** Construction inspections
- 27** School and daycare inspections

6,540 Personal safety measures

- 6,000** Smoke alarms installed
- 450** Helmets were custom-fitted
- 60** Life jackets were custom-fitted
- 30** Car seats were inspected and/or installed

151 Community presentations

- 94** New CERT members trained
- 38** Community fire and life safety presentations
- 10** Career presentations given to junior high and high school students
- 9** Station tours

109 Community events

- 39** Community events attended
- 70** Parties visited during National Night Out



COMMUNITY SMOKE ALARM PROGRAM

Home fires are one of the leading causes of fire deaths in the United States. Therefore, West Pierce Fire & Rescue has prioritized educating the community about the importance of smoke alarms and fire safety education. When WPFR was awarded grant funding in September of 2017 to focus lifesaving efforts in high-risk multi-family dwellings, the Prevention Division got to work. Using these grant funds, a variety of smoke alarms were purchased (including those for the hearing impaired), safety materials were printed, and a bilingual program coordinator was hired.

Throughout the year, the program coordinator communicated with property owners and management teams of the most at-risk apartment complexes within the fire district. These buildings

were identified either due to their size and age, or simply by the number of past fire responses. Building codes have changed, some drastically, since many of these complexes were first built and it was clear this would be a successful partnership for all. Together, these residences were made much safer by arranging for WPFR personnel to install new smoke alarms in each of the units. Furthermore, the program coordinator was extremely successful in providing prevention and education messages in addition to installing and maintaining smoke alarms in homes within the Spanish-speaking community.

This program was also incorporated into the school programs offered in elementary school classrooms within the University Place and Clover Park School Districts. Since WPFR teaches

fire safety to these young students, sending the message home with a child was deemed just as, or in some cases, even more effective than many advertising and marketing strategies.

To date, nearly all of the high-risk complexes have been contacted and over 6,000 smoke alarms have been installed in more than 45 apartment complexes throughout the fire district. This grant funding has provided outreach in the community that has proven to be very effective.

Grant funding for programs such as this has thankfully been somewhat of a common practice for WPFR over the last decade or more. When the funding is available, the program surges, as smoke alarm education and installation are things that are imperative as technology and building codes change. It is of the utmost importance to WPFR that the community is as safe as possible. That is why this type of funding is sought after on a regular basis, as it has become the norm for WPFR and its residents.

While numbers and statistics can measure many things, measuring success in fire prevention can be difficult. If the work is effective, nothing happens, and it is difficult to quantify nothing. WPFR embraces a philosophical belief that these fire prevention programs are making a difference and the community is safer because of them. Still, it is encouraging to have evidence of the effectiveness of these programs.

Shortly after this program was put into place, a letter was received from a member of the Spanish-speaking community. The letter described a time when the family's stove was unintentionally left on while no one was home. Fortunately, a friend had stopped by for a visit, heard the smoke alarms, and was able to put out the fire before it got out of hand. In the box to the right, the letter explains the afternoon's events.

This is a success story that brings a lot of validation to the fire prevention work WPFR does, such as public education, the smoke alarm program and multi-lingual outreach. If one of these key programs were taken away, it is very likely a fully involved house fire would have occurred in this case. Instead, there is a great story that helps WPFR measure the program's success and strive to continue educating the community.

“

I was cooking frijoles at my home when I remembered that I had to go to the store. I took my nine-month-old son with me and ended up spending more time at the store than I wanted.

In the meantime, the frijoles had caught on fire because I had forgotten to turn off the stove. There was smoke all over the house and the alarms were going off like crazy!

Luckily, a friend of mine had stopped by for a visit and heard the smoke alarms. The sound made him look through the windows where he noticed a dense smoke covering the entire house. He tried to get in touch with me, but my cell phone was on silent and I missed his call. So he called my husband who told him to break one of the windows and put out any fire.

When I finally checked my phone, I read a text message sent from my husband and rushed home. The frijoles! My heart was pounding, my mind was racing, and I felt so ashamed for forgetting to turn off the stove! When I got home, I was relieved to see it still in one piece. I hugged my friend and thanked him for saving my house.

When my 7-year-old daughter came back from school, I gave her a big kiss because she was the one who told me to call the fire department to have the smoke alarms installed. She said that one day firefighters went to her school and taught them the importance of having smoke alarms and what to do in case of a fire. But because I'm a Spanish speaking person, I was afraid to call the fire department myself. A case worker who was at my home one day made the call and appointment for me. On the day of the appointment when the fire department showed up to install the smoke alarms, I was glad to see they have a Spanish speaking person because I was able to communicate and ask for more information.

”

2018 EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION

Retirements & Resignations

Captain Bruce Soland, 36 years

Deputy Chief Mitch Sagers, 34 years

Firefighter/Paramedic Nadrece Robinson, 12 years

Commissioner Grant Erb, 8 years

Administrative Assistant Andee Lugo, 3 years

Promotions

Deputy Chief Paul Tinsley

Assistant Chief Mike Boltz

Captain Nic Britton

Captain Steve Vukich

Firefighter/Engineer Brian Bouton

New Hires

Firefighter Michael Cameron

Firefighter Devanté Curry

Firefighter Daniel Dillard

Firefighter Antoine Drieu

Firefighter Rae Ann Haistings

Firefighter Michael Hawkins

Firefighter Jared Johnson

Firefighter Justin Sheldon

Firefighter Solveig Waterfall

Firefighter Tanner Wate

Administrative Assistant Shari Irish

Merit Awards

Firefighter/Engineer Shawn Lamb

Executive Assistant Tammy Lamb





COMMUNITY PARTNERS

West Pierce Fire & Rescue personnel are involved in many community groups, service clubs and professional associations.

These memberships provide networking, training and collaboration opportunities, which help build partnerships with our valuable community-oriented organizations.

American Leadership Forum • American Red Cross • Boys & Girls Club of South Puget Sound • Caring for Kids • City of Lakewood • City of University Place • Clover Park School District • Clover Park Technical College • Communities in Schools • Emergency Food Network • Families Unlimited Network • International Association of Fire Chiefs • International Association of Fire Fighters • Joint Base Lewis-McChord • Kiwanis Club of Clover Park • Kiwanis Club of Steilacoom • Lakewood Chamber of Commerce • Lakewood First Lions Club • Lakewood Knights Lions Club • Lakewood Neighborhood Associations • Lakewood United • Lakewood Water District • Light My Fire of Puget Sound • Moulage Mayhem • Northwest Physicians Network • Nourish • Partners for Parks • Pierce College • Pierce County Chaplaincy • Pierce County Citizen Corps • Pierce County Department of Emergency Management • Pierce County Fire Chiefs Association • Pierce County Fire Commissioners Association • Pierce County Medical Reserve Corps • Pierce Transit • Providence St. Joseph Health Global Partnerships • Puget Sound Energy • Red Cross • Rotary Club of Clover Park • Rotary Club of Lakewood • Rotary Passport Club of Pierce County • Safe Kids Pierce County • Sound Transit • South Sound 911 • South Sound Military and Communities Partnership • St. Clare Hospital • Tacoma Narrows Rotary • Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department • Tacoma/Pierce County Habitat for Humanity • Tillicum-American Lake Gardens Community Center • Town of Steilacoom • Washington Emergency Management Division • Washington Emergency Public Information Network • Washington Fire Chiefs • Washington Fire Commissioners Association • Washington Service Corps • Washington State Council of Fire Fighters • Washington State Association of Fire Marshals • West Pierce CARES • Western State Hospital • YMCA of Pierce and Kitsap Counties •

2019 AND BEYOND

As a local government agency, West Pierce Fire & Rescue strives to serve the public to the best of its ability. Each year, WPFR is met with opportunities and challenges, all of which must be faced with the community's best interest in mind. As we move into 2019 and beyond, various projects have begun and will continue to be worked on in the next year.

In 2017, West Pierce Fire & Rescue embarked on creating a Strategic Plan. A committee was formed, comprised of employees from each work unit of the organization, labor groups and elected officials. The time spent in meaningful discussion on these important foundational pieces has been very beneficial and will serve the organization well in continuing future successes. At its completion, this Strategic Plan will prepare WPFR for a bright future, enabling it to continue providing superior services to the community.

One such service WPFR has worked tirelessly to adapt, research and implement are response models that adequately serve the community and it's ever changing needs. Three committees were formed to assess and create recommendations in addressing future challenges, including EMS response models, staffing and Integrated Community Healthcare. Those committees delivered a variety of recommendations to the District, which ultimately resulted in recommending an additional medic unit to respond to Basic Life Support (BLS) calls, a response team to respond to the high volume of non-emergent calls, and an Integrated Community Healthcare program in the form of a local nursing student intern. These three recommendations were chosen to be the areas of focus due to funding and staffing availability. It is no secret that emergency medicine has drastically changed and will continue to evolve in the years to come. The work in this area is ongoing and will be adapted as the needs of the community change, but for the time being, we anticipate all of these changes will show great results in the care WPFR provides.

As with any industry, well-maintained technology is essential and the IT Division at WPFR works tirelessly to keep the organization up to date and properly supported. Many projects were implemented, including the replacement of desktop computers that support updated operating systems. This significant replacement will support WPFR's operations for many years to come. This upgrade ensures WPFR can keep up with future software advancements that will make day-to-day operations more efficient.

Technology has also provided WPFR with additional ways to keep the community updated and engaged. Between printed and online publications, social media accounts and speaking engagements, it is important to WPFR to make sure the public stays informed on important issues, community outreach and education. WPFR's social media accounts, including Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, have had an increased number of followers year after year, which is one of the quickest ways to communicate with the community. Seeing those growing numbers allows engagement with social media users on various topics, all of which are helpful for both WPFR and the community. These outreach efforts have also proven very successful when it comes to recruiting, as it not only advertises career opportunities as they become available, but also showcases WPFR and its work.

Throughout this document, we have highlighted programs and projects which allow us to provide high quality services throughout the community. Maintaining this high quality of service is our top priority, but we can't do it without community support. In August of 2019, WPFR will be asking voters to support the renewal of our Maintenance and Operations levy. This four-year levy provides the necessary funding to maintain day-to-day operations and support all of the services we provide.

It is essential and necessary to adapt and mold to the evolving needs of the community and WPFR takes pride in being a progressive organization that continually strives to develop new ways for providing improved services. WPFR looks forward to the challenges and opportunities that 2019 brings. As we move forward, we are grateful for the immense support of our community.



