



West Pierce Fire & Rescue

Annual Report

2019



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Letter from the Chief

5

About West Pierce Fire & Rescue

6

Calls for Service

8

The Evolution of Emergency Medical Services

10

Training Hours by Category

13

*New Emergency Medical Services
Response Models*

14

Community Risk Reduction & School Programs

16

Tactical Athlete Program

18

2020 & Beyond

22

WEST PIERCE FIRE & RESCUE

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www.westpierce.org | 253.564.1623



OUR MISSION

West Pierce Fire & Rescue
is a community partner
dedicated to saving lives,
improving health and safety,
and protecting property.



LETTER FROM THE CHIEF

For West Pierce Fire & Rescue, 2019 was a very busy year and full of change. Many of our employees are reaching the point in their career when they are ready to retire, many with 30 to 40 years of service under their belt. With all of these retirements, we have been focused on hiring.

In December, we hired 16 firefighters, who will begin their recruit training in January 2020. This is the largest single hiring our department has ever had. While we are losing a significant amount of experience, the energy and motivation these new recruits bring into the organization can't be underestimated. With time and training, they will become the best in the business.

Faces weren't the only changes in 2019. We renewed our four-year operational levy and made a community commitment to evaluate our response models. During the past year, we have made substantial progress towards that goal, making three significant changes to our medical response models.

Early in 2019, we changed the types of calls our advance life support (ALS) medic units were responding to. For minor medical care, we now only send a fire engine. This change has greatly increased the availability of our four medic units for more critical needs. In July, we established a pilot program for a basic life support (BLS) transport vehicle. This BLS unit manages transports for minor medical incidents. This change is also intended to improve the availability of our ALS medic units.

Finally, to kick off 2020, we started another pilot program with a resource called a squad. The squad is an SUV staffed with two firefighters. It is designated to handle minor emergencies in place of a fire engine. The goal of the squad program is to increase the availability of our fire engines and send a smaller, more appropriately sized vehicle to minor calls.

These programs have significantly changed the way we respond to minor calls and greatly increases the availability of key resources such as our ALS medic units and fire engines. As a result, we have been able to also make changes to how we



respond to some of our more critical calls. We now respond with an additional fire engine and ALS medic unit to fires where there are reports of someone being trapped. By changing the way we manage minor calls, we are now better prepared for more critical scenarios.

West Pierce Fire & Rescue is very proud of the services we provide to the citizens of Lakewood, University Place and Steilacoom. We are fortunate to receive such unwavering support from the community, allowing us to establish such innovative programs. Each and every West Pierce employee remains committed to compassionately delivering the high quality, professional services you have come to expect from your fire department. We look forward to earning your continued support as we move forward into a new decade.

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
Position 2, 2016 - 2021

Daniel Rankin
Position 3, 2018 - 2023

Dave Durr
Position 4, 2018 - 2021

John Sheeran, Vice Chair
Position 5, 2014 - 2019

EXECUTIVE STAFF

Jim Sharp, Fire Chief

Karl Roth, Deputy Chief

Paul Tinsley, Deputy Chief

Mike Boltz, Assistant Chief

Norm Fiacchi, Assistant Chief

Hallie McCurdy, Assistant Chief

Ryan McGrady, 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 and serves a population of approximately 100,000 people. WPFR provides full service to the cities of Lakewood and University Place, which are incorporated within the fire district. WPFR provides 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) who 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

16,650

In 2019, West Pierce Fire & Rescue responded to 16,650 calls for service. These charts demonstrate the breakdown of not only 9-1-1 calls by month, but by type, showing more than 70 percent of WPFR's call volume is for medical aid.

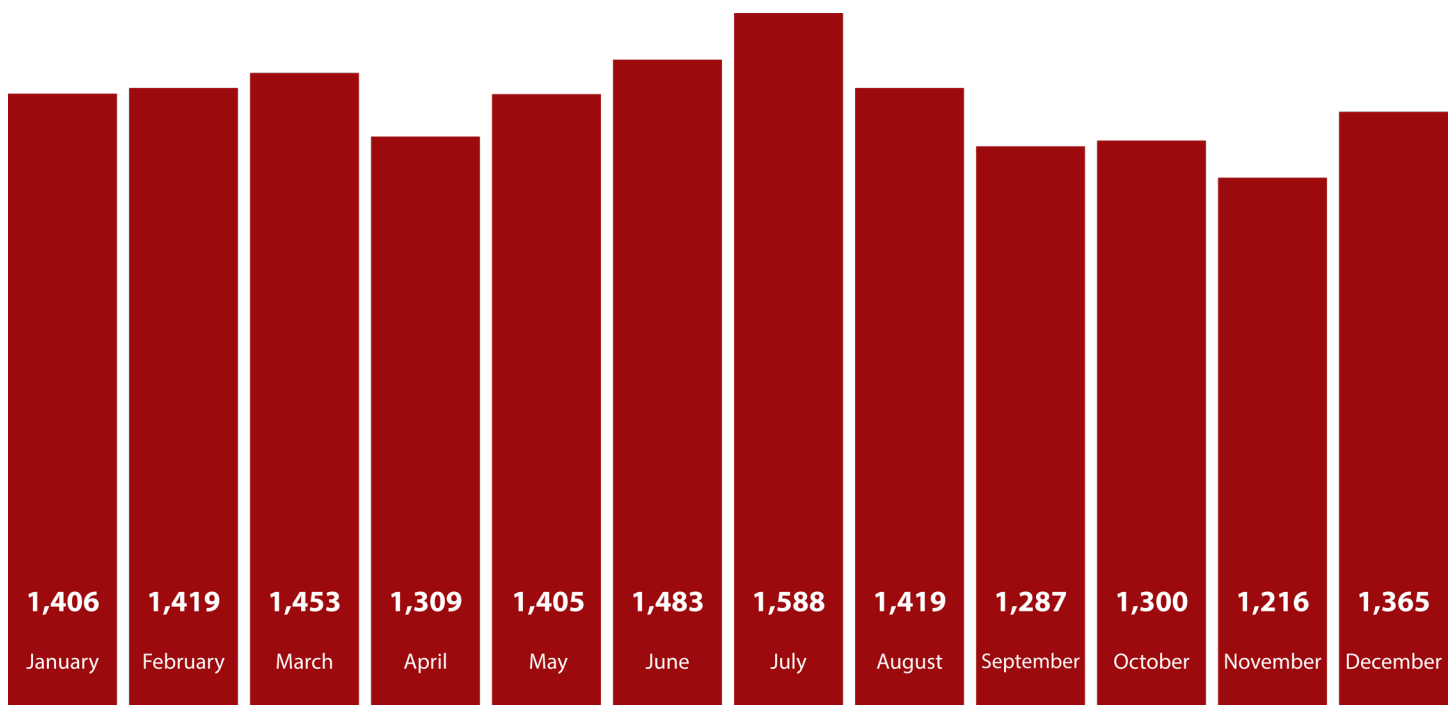
One consideration in the chart on the next page is the optics that the Fire & Hazards category is the smallest portion of WPFR's call volume. Although these incidents occur much less frequently, they are extremely dangerous, require more resources, and pose significant risk to the community.

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 seven percent of the call volume is attributed to fires and hazardous condition calls, this still amounts to more than three high risk incidents each day in the community.

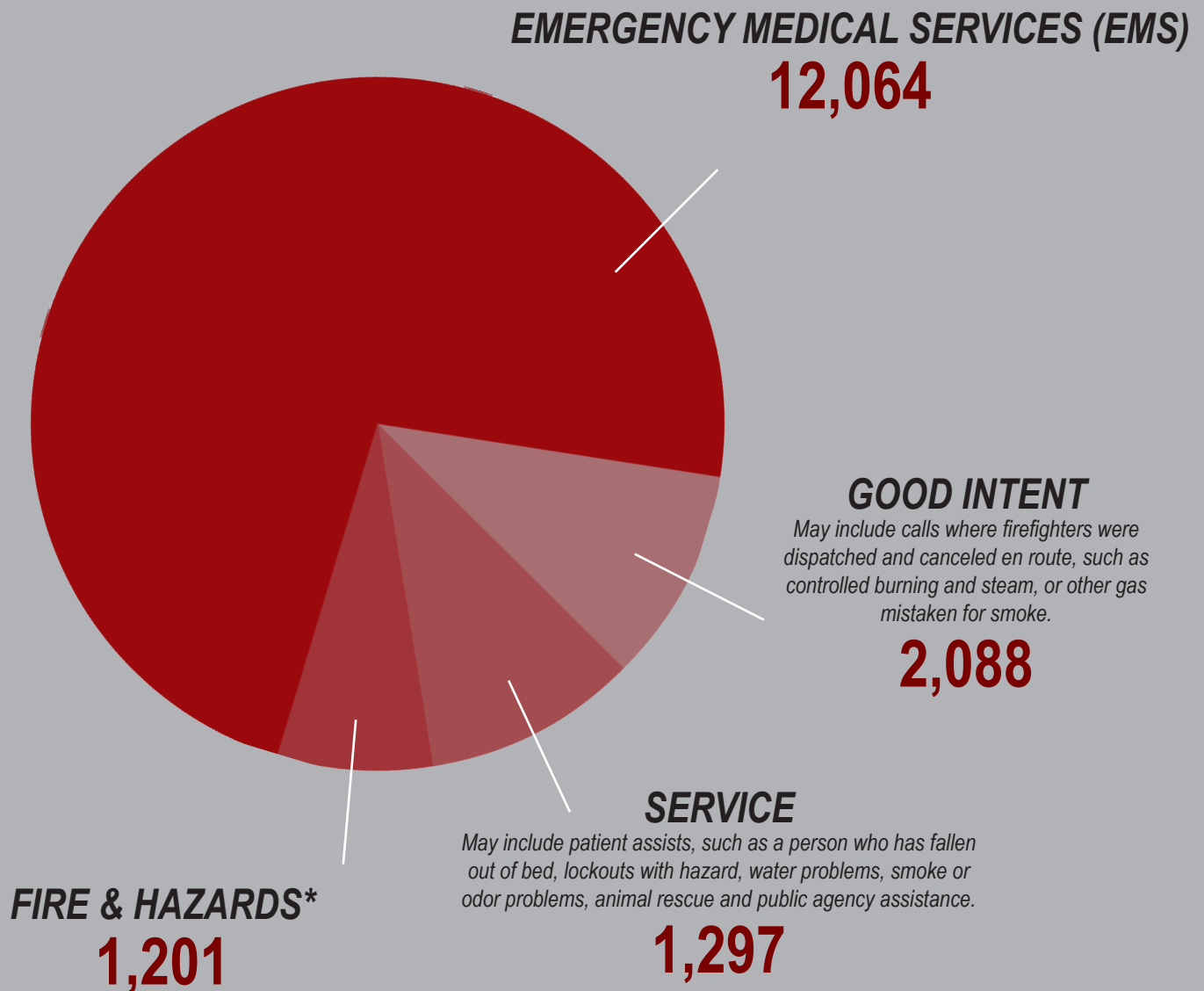
West Pierce Fire & Rescue clearly responds to a variety of emergencies and firefighters are trained to respond to each and every one of them. Every firefighter is an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) and nearly half of them are trained to the level of Paramedic. There are also firefighters specially 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 3,133 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
568	398	174	48	13

THE EVOLUTION OF EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

Over the past several decades, there has been a shift in the utilization of emergency medical services (EMS) across the country. Initially implemented in the late 1960s to transport patients of motor vehicle accidents to area hospitals, EMS has now become a routine source of healthcare for a growing number of people. EMS providers are now responsible for a myriad of medical calls ranging from cardiac arrests to routine healthcare needs.

Many people now utilize 9-1-1 for health conditions which don't require emergency care. In West Pierce, these low acuity calls represent the largest increase in calls for service. Since 2011, WPFR has seen nearly a 30 percent increase in annual call volume. The overwhelming majority of the increase has been from low acuity EMS calls. With few exceptions, Washington State law requires EMS agencies to transport patients to emergency rooms, further overwhelming these vital healthcare resources.

Over the past several years, WPFR worked with local healthcare partners, as well as county and state government, to address this issue. As a result, WPFR partnered with Northwest Physicians Network and other local fire districts to form a community healthcare collaboration. This partnership allowed WPFR to identify patients who need non-traditional medical assistance and work to connect them to an appropriate resource. These included, but were not limited to, transportation resources, intensive medical case management or in-home healthcare.

The goal was to reduce 9-1-1 utilization and the volume of patients using the ER as a primary healthcare resource. The program was overwhelmingly successful, as 9-1-1 calls, ambulance transports and hospital admissions were each reduced by at least 40 percent among patients enrolled in the program.



Through this project, WPFR developed professional relationships with area hospital systems, mental health organizations, and managed care organizations, among others. Many of these relationships have begun to enhance service delivery and improve community health. One example is a collaboration where Pacific Lutheran University nursing students and WPFR personnel work together to identify Lakewood Senior House Assistance Group (SHAG) residents who need additional medical resources. The nursing students then coordinate to connect residents with appropriate healthcare resources to improve their health.

Not only is WPFR adapting its response to low acuity calls, modifications are being made to response models for critical care incidents. One example is cardiac arrest calls. Over the years, there has been tremendous research surrounding CPR, its effectiveness, and how many people it takes to adequately treat a patient in cardiac arrest. WPFR has adapted its response model by changing the way firefighters train and perform CPR, and by increasing the number of firefighters and paramedics who respond on the call.

Research shows that early, high-quality CPR greatly increases survivability. To achieve this, WPFR dispatches a minimum of eight personnel (two fire engines and one medic unit) to a

cardiac arrest. This allows crew members to regularly rotate into different roles, ensuring that fatigue and task overload do not reduce the quality of CPR being performed. Cardiac arrest calls are extremely labor intensive and in order to meet these new high standards to improve patient outcomes, it is imperative to utilize a greater number of firefighters to perform these lifesaving skills.

Ensuring advanced life support (ALS) medic units are available to respond to critical 9-1-1 calls, such as CPR, is of the utmost importance. The partnerships WPFR has fostered to improve healthcare needs of the community is imperative in making sure ALS medic units are available to respond to truly emergent patients.

Fire-based medical services have to continually adapt to the ever-changing needs of the community. The EMS services provided by WPFR are no different. Whether a traditional fire service role or not, WPFR is taking steps to ensure community needs are met through collaborative partnerships, enhanced training and response models focused on improving patient outcomes. Healthcare has become infinitely more complex and working to ensure every patient's healthcare needs are met is a top priority for West Pierce Fire & Rescue.





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, 35,881 hours of training were completed by firefighters. 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, for both recruits and instructors, during the Red Knights Recruit Academy.

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

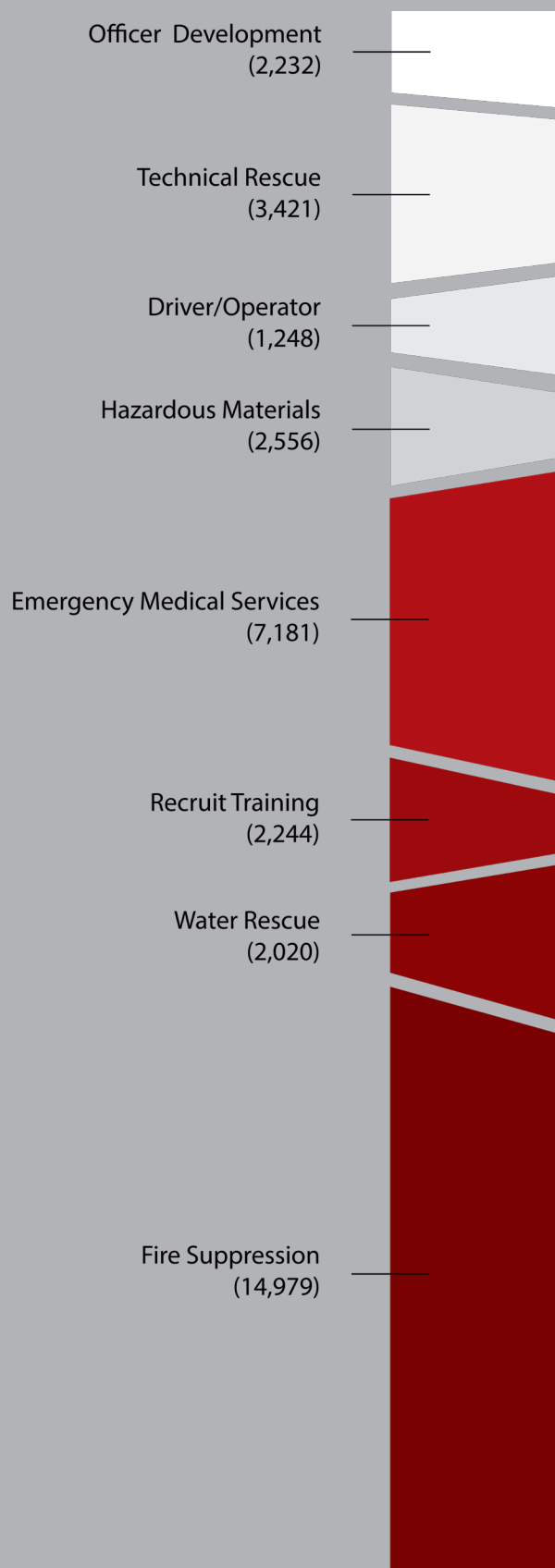
Hazardous Materials – Includes hazardous conditions training, both at the operations level for all firefighters and for those specially trained to respond to such incidents.

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, firefighter rescue, active shooter, etc.



35,881 TOTAL TRAINING HOURS

NEW EMS RESPONSE MODELS

In 2016, West Pierce Fire & Rescue (WPFR) created a committee to evaluate the way in which emergency medical services (EMS) care is delivered within the community. This work was born from the recognition of inefficiencies in the current model based on changes in annual call volume and types of calls for service. The local community is always changing; local infrastructure and development, demographics such as median age, and other social determinants of health are constantly influencing a community's reliance upon emergency services. With such change, it is essential for the fire department to also change and adapt to the needs of the community.

The call volume within WPFR has increased by nearly 30 percent since its inception in 2011. With this increase came a large influx in non-emergency calls for service, most of which were medical in nature. Identifying this, the committee worked to explore different response models and created several new, more efficient options for response to our local communities. These options were designed to ensure the right resource was being sent to the right call at the right time.

Through the collaborative efforts of WPFR and labor groups, the committee made several recommendations to change the response model. Two of these recommendations include the addition of a basic life support (BLS) resource as well as the addition of a squad unit.

In July, a BLS unit known as Aid 24, was implemented as a pilot program. This unit responds to requests for low-acuity medical transport, or transport of patients who need to be evaluated in an emergency room, but do not require the advanced life support (ALS) services of a paramedic. This allows for the ALS resources to stay in-service for more serious emergencies such as heart attacks, strokes or even cardiac arrests. This is important given WPFR has only four ALS medic units providing emergency care to approximately 100,000 people.

The second pilot program, beginning in January 2020, is known as Squad 21. This unit is an SUV vehicle staffed with two

firefighters equipped with medical equipment, as well as basic handheld tools and firefighting protective gear. The role of the squad is to reduce the call volume on West Pierce's busiest engine and ladder companies. This unit is dispatched to low acuity medical aid calls as well as other minor calls for service. This unit is not capable of transporting patients, but is able to provide medical assessments and minor medical treatment if needed.

The cost of operating a fire engine or ladder truck is significantly higher than that of an SUV. Utilizing the squad model ensures WPFR is sending the right resource to the right call, maximizing efficiency while maintaining response-ready engines and ladder trucks for calls where they are most needed.

Like most fire departments around the country, WPFR is expected to respond to a very broad range of emergencies including medical emergencies, vehicle collisions, service calls, fires, technical and water rescues, and even hazardous material calls. Being ready for all types of responses can be challenging when working to determine the most efficient way to deliver these services.

In an effort to ensure effectiveness of these pilot programs, the focus is whether or not they are meeting outcome objectives. Data collection for both is ongoing and will be continuously analyzed to ensure these new programs are achieving what they are intended to, which is to broadly ensure a more efficient delivery system, improve patient outcomes, and enhance operational readiness. Analysis of these programs will be ongoing, allowing WPFR to evaluate, modify and/or evolve these new response model changes in an effort to ensure the community's needs are being met while maximizing efficiency. Embracing operational changes within the fire service is never easy. However the fire service has been evolving for hundreds of years, and today's adaptations are simply a continuation of our history of change.





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 2019, 74 new members completed the training, totaling more than 600 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 2019.

8,430 Students reached

- 7,500 Elementary school students visited
- 280 Daycare and preschool students visited
- 600 High school students taught CPR
- 50 Teenagers completed the Safe Sitter babysitting program

2,447 CERT volunteer hours

- 2199 Training hours completed, including drills and classes
- 84 Hours participated in CERT-related meetings
- 164 Hours volunteered at community events

1,878 Inspections

- 1,269 Fire and life safety inspections
- 82 Re-inspections
- 267 Fire protection systems inspections
- 119 Other inspections
- 101 Construction inspections
- 40 School and daycare inspections

4,115 Personal safety measures

- 3500 Smoke alarms installed
- 500 Helmets were custom-fitted
- 75 Life jackets were custom-fitted
- 40 Car seats were inspected and/or installed

121 Community presentations

- 74 New CERT members trained
- 25 Community fire and life safety presentations
- 12 Career presentations given to junior high and high school students
- 10 Station tours

109 Community events

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

TACTICAL ATHLETE PROGRAM

West Pierce Fire & Rescue has partnered with Tactical Athlete Health and Performance Institute (TAHPI) in an effort to reduce the amount of time firefighters are off duty secondary to musculoskeletal injuries.

Due to the physical demands of the job, firefighters must maintain optimal physical conditioning. It is evident that saving lives and fighting fires is a dangerous and physical job where firefighters face considerable personal injury in the line of duty.

Firefighters require quick, specific medical care following an injury, along with a fast return to good health and work. In the past, an initial evaluation could take days, while further evaluation may take weeks. Delaying the initial evaluation and treatment caused delays in getting firefighters back to work, which resulted in time loss for the employee and the need to backfill their position.

TAHPI's mission is based on the premise that firefighters should be treated like professional athletes, as their health and fitness is critical to meeting the demands of the job. Their goal of creating a self-sustaining injury prevention and recovery program around the country has proven highly effective for all involved. TAHPI seek out orthopedic surgeons, physical, and occupational therapists in the area that fit specific criteria and are able to expedite an initial evaluation and treatment.

To become certified within the TAHPI program, orthopedic surgeons are required to spend a full day training as "Firefighters for a Day". The training, with real-life firefighters while weighted down by head-to-toe full firefighter attire and gear, was intended to help doctors fully comprehend the intense physicality that is demanded of firefighters. Likewise, physical and occupational therapists and other medical providers who had signed up for the program also attended the event and worked side-by-side learning to use essential tools, such as the jaws of life.

Once the training was concluded, the medical professionals could see the value in what firefighters will have to go through when they return to work. They can now realistically understand how critical it is to not only provide immediate care for injured firefighters, but to properly and physically prepare them for the rigors of the job once they return to work.

Since West Pierce Fire & Rescue started utilizing TAHPI in late 2018, employees have been able to receive evaluations, treatment and rehabilitation at an accelerated pace. This dramatically reduces time off, therefore saving the fire district and taxpayers money in both time loss and backfilling their position. It is estimated TAHPI is able to reduce time loss for the employee by approximately six weeks compared to using previous traditional methods of healthcare.



*Reduces employee's
injury time by
approximately six
weeks, on average*



*Reduces overtime
costs to backfill
for the injured
employee*



*Provides significant
cost savings to the
District and the
taxpayers*



2019 *EMPLOYEE* RECOGNITION

Retirements & Resignations

Battalion Chief Pat MacNealy, 40 years

Battalion Chief Greg Cooper, 38 years

Deputy Chief Karl Roth, 37 years

Firefighter/Engineer Michael DeCarlo, 36 years

Captain Patrick Lillie, 35 years

Assistant Chief Eric Norton, 34 years

Battalion Chief Jay Sumerlin, 26 years

Firefighter/Paramedic Robert Dietzway, 20 years

Promotions

Assistant Chief Norm Fiacchi

Assistant Chief Ryan McGrady

Battalion Chief Mike Harn

Battalion Chief Matt Wagner

Captain Dan Bronoske

Captain Pete Bronoske

Captain Kyle Clark

Captain Travis Smith

Captain Jonathan Tinsley

Captain Jason Yantzer

Medical Services Officer Mike Willy

Firefighter/Engineer Greg Reimann

Finance Manager Beth Frohlich

Finance Specialist Amy Jay

New Hires

Firefighter/Paramedic Adam Catterlin

Firefighter/Paramedic Scott Cihak

Firefighter/Paramedic Haley Harn

Firefighter/Paramedic Jordan Iraola

Firefighter/Paramedic Jakob Lindbom

Administrative Assistant Julieta Chacon

Administrative Assistant Randi Zitterich





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 •

2020 AND BEYOND

Year after year, West Pierce Fire & Rescue takes on various tasks, projects and programs in order to be an industry leader and do what is best for its employees and the community. While another year is behind us, the work certainly doesn't slow down and new projects are always on the horizon. WPFR is excited to embark on more ways to deliver the high quality, professional services the community has come to expect. Below is a look into upcoming projects, beginning in 2020 and beyond.

After nearly two years of hard work by a committee of approximately 25 personnel representing all divisions within the organization, the 2020-2025 Strategic Plan is complete. The process created an opportunity to engage all personnel along with our community partners to determine the path our organization will take over the next five years. The process began with an analysis of the organizational strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges. After this analysis, there were several surveys conducted both within and outside the organization. The results of these surveys were used to shape the plan and create a new organizational mission, vision and values. The committee then went to work creating strategic goals, along with strategies and action steps to support each one. Implementation of the Strategic Plan will take place in early 2020.

West Pierce Fire & Rescue embraces its role and responsibility in diversity, equity and inclusion. Over the last few years, the Equity Initiative has been developed and strategies surrounding this work are now firmly embedded in our Strategic Plan. Throughout 2020, one focus will be on the development of cultural competencies for internal learning and WPFR will continue to strive to be community partners in this work. Teams are in place and are focused on developing our agency's recruitment practices to allow for a more diverse applicant pool and as well as ensuring a welcoming and supportive work environment and ultimately, service to our community.

Another continued focus within WPFR is going green in as many ways possible in order to reduce the fire department's carbon footprint and increase cost efficiencies. Over the past three years, the District has focused on replacing older fleet vehicles with hybrid models, and now has 10 plug-in hybrid electric vehicles. As the District's fleet continues to age, it will continue to transition to more fuel efficient vehicles. In addition, the District's fleet maintenance building is heated by using a device that burns used motor oil. In that past, when the oil was changed in a vehicle, the District paid to have it removed and disposed of. Now the used oil can be recycled and used to heat the facility with clean burning fuel. Moving forward, WPFR is committed to creating cost efficiencies and a more sustainable environment.

Another plan set to begin is the Capital Facilities Improvement Plan, in which the goal is to determine long-range needs for facilities throughout the fire district. This plan will address the needs of fire stations, facilities maintenance buildings and training facilities, to include drill grounds and the training tower. It will also explore the option for an additional fire station located on the border between the cities of Lakewood and University Place. This plan will be developed to address the needs of the District as a whole so when it comes to carrying out these projects, WPFR will be able to forecast and plan accordingly.

A committee will be formed to discuss the needs of a new ladder truck as well. While the committee's work centers around determining the functional needs, design and custom-building the apparatus, it will be approximately three years before the truck will be in service and on the streets. These types of vehicles take approximately 18 months to build, so the process begins very early in order to receive it when the current vehicle is ready for replacement. At the time of delivery, the current ladder company will be approximately 15 years old and will then serve as a reserve apparatus for an additional 15 years.



