



Thurston County Fire Protection District 8

South Bay Fire Department News

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FIRE CHIEF'S CORNER

BY CHIEF BRIAN VANCAMP



Chief Brian VanCamp

During late summer and fall we experienced an unprecedented period of warm and dry weather. While most of us enjoyed the uncharacteristic stretch of sun, the state experienced many large scale fires; one, in Mason County, was an explosive situation close to home. All of this should remind homeowners that any preventative measures we can take today could save our homes in the future. Likewise, as we head into fall and winter, we can expect the usual wind storms and occasional snow/ice events, and should prepare for those as well.

FIRE DEPARTMENT BUDGET IN THE TIGHT ECONOMY

As explained in our last Newsletter, the District is facing yet another drop in its property tax revenues, primarily due to decreasing real property values. In 2013, the District will receive approximately \$143 thousand (10%) less in property tax revenues than it received in 2012. In order to balance the budget, significant effort is being made to examine all operating costs and make changes to reduce expenses. As part of this process, a series of policy recommendations were approved by the Board of Fire Commissioners to act as a guideline for budget planning. Policy guidelines include:

- ◆ Committing to a balanced budget;
- ◆ Setting priorities for spending:
 - Funding primary incident readiness & response by a volunteer staffed force deployed in an optimum schedule and location;
 - Preparing all responders to provide competent service in a safe manner (good training, good equipment, good supervision);
 - Ensuring long-term health for all District capital assets (equipment, apparatus, facilities); and
- ◆ Providing leadership and advocacy in the community to manage overall risk to life and property.
- ◆ While alternative sources of revenue have been (and will continue to be) examined, we will focus current property tax revenues on funding of current operational needs including staffing, operations, and planned asset replacements/repairs.
- ◆ Staffing initiatives for incident management and daytime incident readiness and response including more volunteer participation will be implemented as funds allow.
- ◆ Compensation for both career and volunteer members will be held at current levels; in some cases, this is the third or fourth year of no increases.
- ◆ The District will place the new north-end firestation project on hiatus.

The first draft of the \$1.3 million budget was presented to the Board at their October 25th regular meeting, and a public hearing on the budget will follow in November.



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FIRE CHIEF'S CORNER

DISTRICT CAPITAL PROJECT

The Board of Fire Commissioners adopted a plan to continue to pursue the Special Use Permit for the north-end firestation site on 78th Avenue NE. We will postpone any further design, permitting or construction work until 2017 or sooner if economic factors improve. Consideration of alternative sources of funding will be a part of a regular review of economic factors concerning the project.

NORTH OLYMPIA FIRE DISTRICT 7

Over the years, there have been sporadic efforts to consider joint operations or consolidation between South Bay and North Olympia fire districts. While the districts have ongoing joint programs such as training, they have continued to operate separately in their operations and administration. As revenues diminish, costs increase and administrative responsibilities expand, benefits of joint operation or some form of consolidation become more attractive.

With North Olympia's Fire Chief, Bill Terhune, retiring in September, their Board of Fire Commissioners are looking at near and long term strategic options for their district. South Bay is prepared to consider any proposal and engage in discussion with North Olympia for any enhanced relationship. All of this must be considered in ensuring continued quality service to the citizens of both fire districts. There will be more to report on this in the future.

OPEN BURNING PERMITS

Residential outdoor burning permits expire each year on July 14 and a new permit is required for the next burning season which began October 16.

You can obtain a residential outdoor burning permit at our main fire station at 3506 Shincke Road NE or download one at home from our web site www.southbayfire.com

Safe burning practices and regulations can be found on the back of the burning permit as well as a list of prohibited burning materials.

For alternatives to burning contact Olympic Region Clean Air Agency (orca) (360) 539-7610 or visit www.ORCAA.org Other alternatives to burning can also be found at the Thurston County Water & Waste Management site www.co.thurston.wa.us/wwm

PREPARE YOUR HOUSEHOLD FOR EMERGENCIES



After a disaster, you and your family should be prepared to be on your own for at least three days. In some emergencies, such as an influenza pandemic, you may need to prepare for a week or more. Emergency response teams will be very busy and may not be able to provide immediate care to all who need it.

There are many things you can do before disaster strikes, during the emergency or disaster and after the event is over, that will improve the survivability of your household. Some key things to consider while planning and preparing:

- Set up out-of-area contacts;
- Prepare your vehicle for emergencies;
- Create a stock of emergency supplies and store them in a safe accessible place;
- Prepare evacuation plans for the family and plan for how children and pets will be provided for;
- Have the correct address of your home clearly visible from public right-of-ways and know how to property use 9-1-1;
- Know how to prevent household fires with good fire prevention practices; have a working fire extinguisher in the home;
- Have working smoke detectors: test them and make sure they have good batteries;
- Prepare for power outages and know what to do (or not to do) with downed power lines.

There are many sources of information locally, the primary being the American Red Cross (www.redcross.org) and Thurston County Emergency Management (www.co.thurston.wa.us) that can provide a wide array of prevention and preparation tips.

In the future, the District will begin working with local neighborhoods with two programs: *Map Your Neighborhood* and *Community Emergency Response Teams*. Look for more information on both of these programs in upcoming newsletters.

In closing, I'd like to remind you that we are a volunteer fire department and are always looking for new willing and able members. I invite you to take a look at our website at SouthBayFire.com to learn a bit more about our programs and people.

Our Mission:

We are committed to serve our community with prompt, consistent and professional fire suppression, basic life support and rescue services.

PREPARE FOR POWER OUTAGES

Power outages can cause a number of safety concerns; knowing the following information can help.

BEFORE A POWER OUTAGE

- Register life-sustaining and medical equipment with your utility company.
- Consider buying a generator. When installing a generator, follow the instructions carefully. Keep your generator outside and run a cord inside. Don't connect your generator to main service panels—it's dangerous! Be sure to place a carbon monoxide detector indoors.
- Make sure your disaster preparedness kit contains light sticks, flashlights, a battery-powered radio with extra batteries and a wind-up clock.
- Have a corded telephone available — cordless phones will not work when the power is out.
- Have a safe alternative heat source and supply of fuel. Never burn charcoal or use a generator indoors.
- If you own an electric garage door opener, know how to open the door without power.

DURING A POWER OUTAGE

- Turn off lights and electrical appliances except for the refrigerator and freezer.
- Even if it is dark, turn light switches and buttons on lamps or appliances to the "off" position.
- Unplug computers and other sensitive equipment to protect them from possible surges when the power is restored.
- Leave one lamp on so you will know when power is restored. Wait at least 15 minutes after power is restored before turning on other appliances.
- Conserve water, especially if you use well water.
- Never use gas ovens, gas ranges, barbecues or portable or propane heaters for indoor heating—they use oxygen and create carbon monoxide that can cause suffocation.
- Candles can cause a fire. It's far better to use battery-operated flashlights or glow sticks for lighting.
- Using a kerosene heater, gas lantern or stove inside the house can be dangerous. Maintain proper ventilation at all times to avoid a build up of toxic fumes, and be sure to have a carbon monoxide detector.
- Stay away from downed power lines and sagging trees with broken limbs.

The following was provided by the Washington Department of Health in cooperation with the Emergency Management Division of the Washington State Military Department.

KEEP FOOD SAFE

- Use and store food carefully to prevent food borne illness when power outages make refrigeration unavailable.
- Use foods first that can spoil most rapidly.
- Keep doors to refrigerators and freezers closed. Your refrigerator's freezer will keep food frozen for up to a day. A separate fully-loaded freezer will keep food frozen for two days.
- Use an ice chest packed with ice or snow to keep food cold. Buy dry ice to save frozen food. Do not handle dry ice with your bare hands. Use blocks or bags of ice to save refrigerator foods.
- Use caution if storing food outside during winter to keep it cold. The outside temperature varies, especially in the sun. Frozen food may thaw and refrigerator food may become warm enough to grow bacteria. Food stored outside must be secured from contamination by animals.
- If in doubt, throw it out. Throw out meat, seafood, dairy products and cooked food that does not feel cold.
- Never taste suspect food. Even if food looks and smells fine, illness-causing bacteria may be present.



South Bay Fire Fighters' Association 14th Annual Holiday Bazaar

Join us for the South Bay Fire Fighters' annual Holiday Bazaar on **Saturday, November 3rd, 2012.**

This is the 14th year for this traditional community event. Vendors will be selling arts, crafts, holiday gifts, jewelry, handmade treasures and much more! The Association host a yummy snack bar and bake sale. The event is held at our main station located at 3506 Shincke Road NE, Olympia, WA 98506 and is held from **9 am—4 pm.** All proceeds from the Holiday Bazaar go back to the Association to host community outreach programs.



**SATURDAY
NOVEMBER 3RD
9 AM—4 PM**

GET TO KNOW ONE OF OUR MEMBERS

Our Department is proud to have over 60 dedicated volunteer members. We would like to introduce members to the community as part of an on-going section in this newsletter. We are proud to interview and acquaint you with Captain Walker Armstrong.



Captain Walker Armstrong

How long have you been a Volunteer with the Department? I've been with the Department since 1999 – thirteen years.

What do you find unique about being a Captain? I like to use my leadership skills from previous business and EMS experiences to mentor new fire fighters and help keep them safe. Sometimes their enthusiasm can get in the way of good decision making.

What do you do for a career when you are not volunteering?

Currently, I am in energy management. Previously, I owned a home inspection franchise for nine years; and also went into partnership with another couple and built houses for six years; then I opened Apex Karting in 2008 which ended in 2011. Now I work in the Energy Management field on the Bangor submarine base. In this position, I recently obtained my Certified Energy Manager (CEM) certificate.

How has your profession as an energy manager helped you with your position as a Captain? It really hasn't, but my 20 years of previous experience in McDonald's has helped me. My parents owned a McDonald's franchise with three locations. In that time I worked every position in a McDonald's, up to my final position as Area Supervisor. I also successfully completed all of the McDonald's management training. In between my stints at McDonald's, I flew helicopters as a Warrant Officer in the Army for seven years. These leadership positions have contributed most to my role as a Captain.

Why did you become a volunteer with the South Bay Fire Department and what has kept you here so long?

I became an EMT right out of High School and volunteered with the Stevens County Sherriff's ambulance for six years. Then I joined the army and flew helicopters. One of the units that I was assigned to was a medevac unit. When I moved my family to the South Bay area, it was natural for me to find a place to volunteer. As a volunteer, I learned how to be a captain through a mentorship system and now I am working on becoming a Volunteer Battalion Chief.

What is most rewarding about your role in the Department? The service we provide to the citizens. Someone who calls 9-1-1 is having a bad day – they've got a problem. I am, as a general rule, a problem solver, and when we arrive on scene – we are there to fix someone's problem.

With all your years of experience, do you have any advice for new volunteer members? Listen, watch and learn. There's a lot of information to learn from co-workers that isn't found in books; especially in the situations that emergency responders are in. It gets "real" fast.

What would people be surprised to know about you? I performed (as the banjo player) in a musical that was performed in the Washington Center for Performing Arts. I've built my own race car and built and flown my own aircraft.

Thank you for your interview. Do you have any closing comments you would like to share? I feel very lucky to be here. When I moved my family to Washington, I found my house in three days and knew nothing of the area. It turns out that this area is close to everything. And South Bay is a great Fire Department – top notch – phenomenal volunteers, very friendly, and a good volunteer culture. I'm very glad to be here!

OFFICER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The South Bay Fire Department has a *Fire Officer Development Program* (ODP). One of the Department's organizational development priorities is to establish an ongoing officer development program. The basic idea of ODP is to provide specialized training, coaching and mentoring for members who exhibit leadership traits and have an interest in promotion within the Department. There is a high level of focus and coaching to the ODP candidates for promotional preparation, giving advantage to ODP candidates and more importantly preparing members for officer level responsibility before being formally promoted. The program consists of formal and informal training sections, including mentorship from existing Captains, online and other self-study work as well as formal training such as attending Fire Officer level courses. The department sees the value in providing pre-emptive leadership training to help grow members before the "trial-by-fire."



YOU CAN BE A VOLUNTEER EMERGENCY RESPONDER

"We're put on this earth not to see through each other, but to see each other through." ~ Anonymous

The South Bay Fire Department is looking for energetic and determined individuals to join our team and support our community.

Our Department provides emergency response and public service to the South Bay area. We are currently accepting applications for entry level firefighter and emergency medical technicians. Some of our members are actively pursuing fire service careers and are gaining training and experience as a volunteer. In addition, we have dedicated Volunteer Receptionists who help in the office.

Most of our members have been here for many years and all have a strong sense of pride and honor as valued members of the South Bay Fire Department.

As an emergency responder we will train you to safely respond and engage in firefighting operations or provide emergency medical assistance and serve the community in a way that no other volunteer organization can offer.

Volunteers are rewarded with the personal satisfaction of serving their community, saving a life or dwelling and serving a necessary purpose to the well-being of their fellow man. Your dedication efforts don't go unnoticed. In addition to being respected and appreciated by the community, volunteers are also rewarded by our Department. We offer our volunteers a competitive array of financial incentives, educational and training opportunities, as well as insurance, retirement benefits and much more!

If you want to challenge yourself and be a part of something bigger while helping others in the community, fill out an application and get it to us! Feel free to ask for a station tour and meet current members to learn more. To find out more about volunteering with the South Bay Fire Department, you can call us at (360) 491-5320 or visit us on the web: www.southbayfire.com

Benefits

- ◆ Training (Fire fighter & EMS)
- ◆ Complete Uniforms & Bunker Gear
- ◆ Stipends
- ◆ Health & Wellness
- ◆ Pension Plan
- ◆ Accident Insurances
- ◆ Life Insurance
- ◆ Chaplain Services
- ◆ Employee Assistance Program
- ◆ Fire Fighter's Association
- ◆ Social & Recognition Events



9-1-1



HELP US TO HELP YOU!

When citizens have an emergency, it is comforting to know that help is just a phone call away. Here are some helpful tips you can use to assist emergency responders to serve you.

- * When you call 9-1-1, please provide emergency dispatchers with clear answers to their questions. This will help the dispatchers send the proper type and amount of emergency equipment to your location.
- * When you are waiting for our arrival, if possible, have your outside lights on, day or night.
- * Properly display your address numbers. (Contact us for free address signs)
- * Educate all family members on how to call for emergency assistance. (9-1-1)
- * Have two ways out of your home and make sure all family members know them.
- * Have properly working smoke detectors. (Contact us if you need a free smoke detector)
- * Learn CPR and first aid. (We offer free CPR classes)
- * Prepare your family for disasters. (Visit our web site for tips)
- * Practice fire safety every day of the year.

VISIT US ON THE WEB: WWW.SOUTHBAYFIRE.COM

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The South Bay News is an informational update for residents and taxpayers in the Thurston County Fire District 8. *Disclaimer:* This publication contains opinions and interpretations of various authors. South Bay Fire District 8 and its management do not make warranties with respect to accuracy, reliability or completeness of the information in this publication. Comments and concerns should be directed to:

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**PREVENT FIRES
IT'S YOUR JOB!**

FIRE PREVENTION 2012: HAVE TWO WAYS OUT!

The State Fire Marshal's office teamed up with the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) during Fire Prevention Week, October 7-13, 2012. This year's theme was "Have Two Ways Out!" and urged residents to focus on the importance of fire escape planning and practice.

"Fire is unpredictable and moves faster than most people realize" said State Fire Marshal Charles M. Duffy. "Having a tried and true escape plan with two ways out is essential to ensuring your family's safety, should fire break out in your home."

The State Fire Marshal recommends the following tips for planning your family's escape:

Make a map of your home. Mark a door and a window that can be used to get out of every room. Choose a meeting place outside in front of your home.

This is where everyone can meet once they've escaped. Draw a picture of your outside meeting place on your escape plan.

Write the emergency telephone number for the fire department on your escape plan. Have a grown-up sound the smoke alarm and practice your escape plan with everyone living in your home.

Keep your escape plan on the refrigerator and remind grown-ups to have your family practice the plan twice a year or whenever anyone in your home celebrates a birthday.

Draw a Home Escape Map!



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