



FIRE HOUSE NEWS

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

FALL 2024

Public Invited to 28th Annual Open House - Sept 28th

Join us for the 28th Annual East Pierce Fire & Rescue Open House from 1 to 4 p.m. Saturday, September 28th, at the East Pierce headquarters station at 18421 Veterans Memorial Drive East, in Bonney Lake.

The free health and safety fair will include more than two dozen interactive booths and displays, such as the fire department's special operations teams - Technical Rescue, Wildland, HazMat, and Water Rescue. Live demonstrations featuring the Jaws of Life will occur throughout the event.

Get an up-close look at EPFR's Ladder 113, Marine 122, and the popular Airlift Northwest medical helicopter scheduled to land around 1:30 p.m.

The highlight every year for most kids is the chance to play firefighter. Younger children suit up in pint-size firefighter gear to put out a fire and perform a rescue. Older children can participate in a more challenging course.

In addition to conveying important

safety messages, East Pierce firefighters will be selling discounted life jackets (\$17), bike helmets (\$8), and multi-sport helmets (\$11). The wearer must be present for a custom fitting. Children and adult sizes will be available on a first-come, first-served basis. The Bonney Lake Rite Aid will offer flu shots (insurance billing only).

Top it off with free ice cream, popcorn, and cotton candy from the East Pierce Professional Firefighters Local 3520.

Dick's Drive In will be on site selling their tasty burgers, potato chips, and milkshakes.

Other interactive demonstrations and booths include:

- Antique Engine Display
- Balloon Twisting
- Children's Fire Safety Trailer
- PSE Electrical Safety
- South Sound 911
- Operation Lifesaver Train Safety
- Pierce County Emergency Mgmt.



Younger children can perform a "rescue" and spray water from a fire hose in the Junior Firefighter Challenge. Older attendees can participate in a more physically challenging course in the Firefighter Challenge.



Park for FREE at the Sound Transit Park & Ride (184th Ave. E. just off SR 410 E. in Bonney Lake), then catch the courtesy shuttle to and from the fire station!

Thanks to our sponsors, GLM Charters and Sound Transit, free round-trip shuttle service is available between the Bonney Lake Park-N-Ride and the fire station.

There's fun - and a little learning - for the whole family. We hope to see you there! ■

Free Limited Series: Advanced Aging & Care Planning

East Pierce Fire & Rescue, in collaboration with Pierce County Human Services, is offering the three remaining sessions of a six part series to help family members navigate complex topics and overwhelming tasks many people face when caring for aging family members. We'll equip caregivers with helpful tools and strategies to make the care planning process more successful and less stressful.

All sessions are free and occur on the



Free Advanced Aging & Care Planning sessions are held on the third Tuesday of each month at alternating EPFR fire stations through November 2024.

third Tuesday of the month through November in various locations throughout the fire district with the option to attend in-person or virtually.

View the session dates and descriptions below.

✓ **SESSION 4: Solving the Mysteries of Medicare & Medicaid**
Sept. 17, 2024 from 10 a.m.-12 p.m. at Station 118 in Edgewood.

✓ **SESSION 5: Caring for the Caregiver**
Oct. 15, 2024 from 10 a.m.-12 p.m. at Station 111/HQ in Bonney Lake.

✓ **SESSION 6: Understanding Palliative Care & Hospice**
Nov. 19, 2024 from 10 a.m.-12 p.m. at Station 111/HQ in Bonney Lake.

For more information or to register for the free sessions, visit www.eastpiercefirer.org. ■

Recruit Class Graduates Fire Academy

We are pleased to present East Pierce Fire & Rescue's 13 newest members. After six grueling months of recruit academy (fire and EMT), Firefighter Recruit Class 2024-B4, comprised of recruits from EPFR, West Pierce Fire & Rescue, and Graham Fire & Rescue, graduated August 15, 2024 and are now officially Probationary Firefighters.

Shout out to the following EPFR

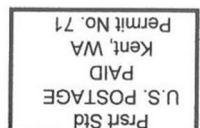
members who received class awards:

- Academic Award: Sean Wall
- Fitness Award: Sean Wall
- Spartan Award: Colten Whiting
- Chiefs Award: Sean Wall and Colten Whiting

We are incredibly proud of all of you! Welcome to the fire family! ■



EPFR's newest firefighters graduated from the fire academy during a ceremony on August 15th. Pictured back row from left: Jason Bewley, Victoria Anderson, Alicia Arnott, Kevin Bea, Joshua Henny, Kara Tennison, Colten Whiting, and Anatoliy Volovodik. Front row: Sean Wall, Andrew Miller, Anthony Josten, McKenzie Beavin, and Jack Coburn.



Postal Customer

ECRWSS

"Where Compassion and Action Meet"



FROM THE CHIEF
JON PARKINSON

As this newsletter hits mailboxes, summer will be winding down, and kids will be returning to school. Summer's progressive warmer and drier weather often presents a unique set of challenges for East Pierce Fire & Rescue.

The Fourth of July is a wonderful time to celebrate and gather with friends and family. It also typically results in our busiest day of the year for 911 emergency calls. This year, EPFR responded to 83 emergencies, which included numerous medical responses, vegetation/brush fires,

Busy Times at East Pierce Fire

several building fires, water rescues, and motor vehicle accidents.

Summer is also when we see wildfires impact communities throughout the northwest. While we have seen numerous brush fires locally, EPFR has not had any substantial wildfires so far this season. On the other hand, our wildland firefighting team has been busy throughout the state this year, assisting other departments with wildfires.

Of course, as the weather warms, we also see an increase in water-related emergencies in our rivers and lakes. Thankfully, we have not experienced any significant emergencies on the water this summer. As a reminder, we encourage using life jackets when in or near the water. Please reach out to our headquarters station if you would like to purchase or borrow a life jacket.

Thank you for entrusting us to protect our community. We are grateful for your ongoing support. ■



Fire Commissioner Meetings

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

2024 Meeting Schedule

- September 17
- October 15
- November 19
- December 17



SMOKE ALARMS

A Sound You Can Live With

Studies reveal that three out of five home fire deaths in the U.S. resulted from fires in structures without working smoke alarms. Homes with working smoke alarms reduced the risk of fire fatalities by an astounding 50%.



Thanks to a partnership with the American Red Cross, who provides smoke alarms to East Pierce Fire & Rescue, firefighters can install smoke alarms in homes within the district at no charge. The program is geared toward at-risk residents, including older adults, low-income, people with disabilities, and those who reside in mobile homes. The smoke alarms are equipped with long-life batteries which last approximately ten years.

"In the event of a fire, properly installed and maintained smoke alarms can save your life," says East Pierce Fire Marshal Bill Sandlian. "Smoke alarms provide early detection of a fire to allow your family time to escape safely."

Alarms should be installed inside and outside all sleeping areas and on every level of the home, including the basement. Since smoke and poisonous gases rise, installing smoke alarms on the ceiling is ideal and provides the earliest detection.

"A working smoke alarm continuously scans the air for smoke, 24-hours a day, seven days a week. It never sleeps," says Sandlian.

Hearing impaired alarms are also available, equipped with a lower-frequency tone and bed shaker component.

To schedule a smoke alarm installation, call 253-863-1800 (option 4). To learn more about smoke alarms or tips for home escape plans, visit www.eastpiercefirer.org. ■

HEALTH WATCH

Flu Season is Coming! Are You Protected?

Each year, East Pierce Fire & Rescue firefighter-paramedics transport seriously ill flu patients to local hospitals. Getting vaccinated against the flu is a crucial step in protecting yourself, your family, and your friends.

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), flu seasons are unpredictable and vary in severity. During the last decade, the CDC estimates that between 12,000 and 52,000 people have died each year in the United States from flu-related complications. Additionally, hundreds of thousands of Americans are hospitalized each year during a severe season. As a result, the CDC recommends that everyone over six months of age should get vaccinated.

The flu (influenza) is a contagious respiratory disease. Common signs and symptoms include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Muscle or body aches
- Headaches
- Fatigue



In most healthy people, the flu will disappear in five to seven days. However, in some cases, the flu can result in a life-threatening illness.

Who has the greatest risk for serious illness? Children under the age of five, pregnant women, seniors, and people

with chronic diseases, such as heart disease, asthma, and emphysema. A flu infection can lead to pneumonia, sepsis, or death in these patients.

Flu activity is unpredictable. The timing, severity, and length of flu activity can change from one year to the next. Flu vaccination is key to preventing illness.

Getting the flu vaccine continues to remain the cornerstone of preventing influenza. Every year, scientists try to match the vaccine against the most probable strains of the influenza virus that are expected to appear and circulate during the flu season. The vaccines are inexpensive and covered by health insurance plans, usually with no co-pays.

Are there health risks from getting a flu vaccine? In short, no. Unfortunately, years ago, falsified research data was spread linking vaccines to increased rates of autism in children. Reputable research organizations, hospitals, and pediatricians have demonstrated that there is no link between autism and flu vaccines.

Most experts recommend getting a flu vaccine in September or October. Even if you don't have a family doctor, most pharmacies can give the flu vaccine. The health department also distributes free flu vaccine for children to medical providers throughout Pierce County.

If you're over 65, talk to your provider or pharmacist about whether you should get the "high-dose" vaccine, which is designed to elicit better immune responses in older persons.

"Vaccinated patients may sometimes still get the flu—but will often have less serious symptoms," says East Pierce Assistant Chief Jeff Moore. "Remember that it takes two full weeks after getting the vaccine for antibodies to develop in the body to provide maximum protection."

Let's fight the flu! Keep up healthy habits of washing hands often, covering coughs and sneezes with tissue or your elbow, and staying home when sick. ■

When to Call 911 for the Flu

Contact your physician or 911 if the following symptoms are present:

- Difficulty breathing or feeling short of breath.
- Severe headache or stiff neck.
- Sudden dizziness, confusion, or trouble staying awake.
- Children who are difficult to arouse, not interacting, or who are irritable when being held.
- Dehydration (parched mouth or no urination in 8+ hours).
- Babies younger than three months old with a high fever or fever lasting more than five days.

CALL IF YOU CAN TEXT IF YOU CAN'T

Did you know you can text 911? If you cannot safely call 911, you can text for emergency police, fire, or medical aid in Pierce County. South Sound 911's text-to-911 service provides the community (including the Deaf, hard of hearing, or speech disabled) a potentially life-saving option to reach 911. It is also available for those in a situation where calling 911 might endanger a life or escalate the situation.

Text-to-911 is not a method of convenience - the service is for emergencies only. While voice calls to 911 are still the most effective way to get emergency help, text-to-911 is available when you cannot safely make a voice call. Simply stated, call if you can, text if you can't.

Type a message with the location of the emergency (including the city) and the nature of the emergency (what is happening and whether you need police, fire, or medical aid).

How to send a text to 911

- ☞ Open your mobile phone's text messaging program.
- ☞ Enter the numbers 911 in the "To" field.
- ☞ Type a message with the location of the emergency (including the city) and the nature of the emergency (what is happening and whether you need police, fire, or medical aid).
- ☞ Press the "Send" button or arrow.

Things to remember:

- Your first message should include the nature of the emergency and the exact location, including the city. (When you text or call on a cellular phone, 911 may not know your precise location.)
- Keep messages brief.
- Do not send photos or videos or use group texts, abbreviations, or emojis.
- Currently, text-to-911 service is only available in English.
- A text sent to 911 in an area without text-to-911 service should receive an automatic reply stating the service is not available.
- There may be instances when a voice call cannot connect due to poor cellular signal or other phone service interruption,

but a text message can still go through.

In our region, in addition to Pierce County, text-to-911 is also available in neighboring King, Kitsap, Snohomish, and Thurston Counties. ■



BOND UPDATE: Station 111 Nearing Completion

In November 2018, voters approved a bond to replace all six front-line fire engines and a ladder truck, replace four fire stations, and build a new fire station in Tehaleh. Many projects slowed due to COVID impacts but are once again moving along.

Below is a brief status update of these projects.

Fire Station Construction Status

- ▶ **Station 118 - Edgewood**
Construction complete. Opened in fall 2023.
- ▶ **Station 111 - Bonney Lake**
Under construction. Opens in fall 2024.
- ▶ **Station 114 - Lake Tapps** Under construction. Opens in fall 2024.
- ▶ **Station 117 - Tehaleh**
Under construction. Opens in early 2025.
- ▶ **Station 112 - Prairie Ridge**
In permitting. Construction begins in fall 2024.

Vehicle Status

- ▶ Ladder 113 and Engines 111, 112, 114, 116, 118, and 124 are received and serving our communities.

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



Architectural rendering of the new Station 111/Headquarters.



The new Station 111/Headquarters is nearing completion with an anticipated opening this fall.

Promotions, Promotions, Promotions

Many recent retirements and new hires among our rank and file have also prompted several promotions. So far this year, eleven personnel have been promoted to leadership positions.

East Pierce Fire & Rescue takes leadership very seriously. So much so that we created a leadership model, titled Leadership Philosophy, that guides the success of our organization at all levels and develops future leaders who understand their responsibility to

the organization and the community. We believe that leadership within the organization promotes and empowers personal responsibility for their contribution to the department, the community, and each other.

Congratulations to all our promoted personnel! We are excited for your new career chapter!

Please visit EastPierceFire.org and the "About" page to view our Leadership Philosophy document. ■



Deputy Chief Matt Gilbert



Assistant Chief Mike Westland



Captain Lori Eng



Captain Jared Snope



Deputy Fire Marshal Joe Worley



Lieutenant Seth Dedge



Lieutenant Bryan Hoon



Lieutenant Andrew House



Lieutenant Matt Lowery



Lieutenant Mike Malland



Lieutenant Doug Mullins



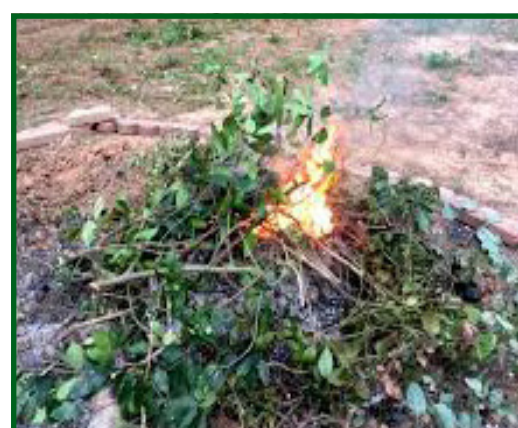
Welcome Operations Administrator, Rebecca Burke

To help meet the growing needs of the Operations Division, EPFR welcomed Rebecca Burke in May as the Operations Administrator. The position plays a pivotal role in ensuring the smooth and efficient functioning of the division's day-to-day operations and is responsible for performing a full range of administrative and technical functions in project management, data analysis, and operational support.



Rebecca Burke filled the new Operations Administrator position in May.

Rebecca is a Pacific Northwest local who lives in Tacoma. Her professional career has consisted of positions with the State Patrol, the Pierce County Sheriff, and Central Pierce Fire & Rescue. Rebecca enjoys camping, hiking, reading, and spending time with her family and dogs outside of work. We also heard she has quite a sweet tooth. Welcome to the team, Rebecca! ■



Outdoor Burning Permits Available Online

Residential fire permits are available on-line beginning October 1st in designated areas of the fire district, providing no fire safety or air quality burn bans are in effect.

Visit www.eastpiercefirer.org for details to obtain a burn permit and view regulations and burn area boundaries.

OR take a **greener route!** Rather than burning, consider chipping, composting, mulching, or hauling excess yard debris to a local recycle/transfer station.



WHO IS EAST PIERCE FIRE & RESCUE?

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

EPFR was formed when the City of Bonney Lake Fire Department, Pierce County Fire District 22/Lake Tapps Fire, and Pierce County Fire District 24 merged in 2000 to provide a seamless response to emergencies.

Since then, the following mergers or annexations into EPFR have occurred:

- 2006: Pierce County Fire District 12 and South Prairie/Fire District 20
- 2008: Sumner/Fire District 1
- 2010: Edgewood/Fire District 8
- 2013: Milton Fire Department

Today, East Pierce serves approximately 100,500 residents living in and around Bonney Lake, Sumner, Lake Tapps, the Ridge Communities, South Prairie, Tehaleh, Edgewood, and Milton. The district covers approximately 153 square miles and protects residents from eight stations - seven staffed and one facility on Lake Tapps for the marine rescue unit.

All full-time firefighters are cross-trained as either emergency medical technicians (EMTs) or paramedics and can respond to medical emergencies and fires.

An independently-elected Board of Commissioners governs the agency.

COMMISSIONERS

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

STAFFED STATIONS

- Station 111 - Bonney Lake**
Headquarters Station
18421 Veterans Memorial Dr. E.
(253) 863-1800
- Station 112 - Prairie Ridge**
12006 214th Ave E.
- Station 113 - Sumner**
800 Harrison St.
- Station 114 - Lake Tapps**
1605 210th Ave. E.
- Station 116 - Foothills**
10515 234th Ave. E.
- Station 118 - Edgewood**
10105 24th St. E.
- Station 124 - Milton**
1000 Laurel St.



November 3rd: Set your clock back 1 hour ...AND check your smoke alarms!

Remember, many smoke alarms are now equipped with long-life lithium batteries intended to last the alarm's lifespan - about ten years. No matter what kind of battery you have, they need to be tested every month. Know your alarm! Know your battery!

connect with us!



@EastPierceFire

- info@eastpiercefirer.org
- www.eastpiercefirer.org
- 253.863.1800

Tips to Keep Your Lil' Goblins Safe this Halloween!

Dress safely!

- Select the right costume size to prevent slips and falls.
- Costumes should allow kiddos to see and hear perfectly.
- Light-colored costumes are easier to see in the dark.

Be visible!

- Decorate costumes and bags with reflective tape or stickers.
- Use glow sticks or flashlights to be seen by drivers.
- Always use a crosswalk to cross the street.

Help kids see!

- Face paint is safer than masks.
- If a mask is worn, choose one that is easy to see through.



School Zones Are Back

Keep kids safe as they ride, walk and bike to school.

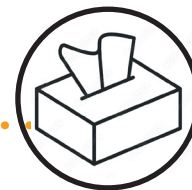
Did You Know?

Burning trash and burning in barrels is illegal in Washington State, not to mention toxic, and can yield hefty fines through Puget Sound Clean Air Agency.

Visit eastpiercefirer.org to view outdoor burning regulations and alternatives.



Get Vaccinated



Help Stop the Spread of Flu Viruses



Take Antiviral Drugs if Prescribed

East Pierce Classes & Public Education

- FREE PROGRAMS - To residents of East Pierce Fire & Rescue

- LIFE JACKET LOANER PROGRAM**
Wearer must be present for fitting. Available at the Headquarters Station.
- CHILD SAFETY SEAT INSPECTIONS**
District residents can schedule a free appointment. Certified child passenger safety technicians check to ensure your child is in the right seat, the seat is installed correctly, and your child is placed in the seat correctly.
- STATION TOURS** Call to arrange a tour of any of our fire stations.
- SMOKE ALARM INSTALLATIONS** Includes smoke alarm equipped with long-life battery.
- BLOOD PRESSURE CHECKS** Stop by any staffed station (subject to staff availability).
- FIRE EXTINGUISHER TRAINING** Learn how to use a fire extinguisher with our interactive, digital training prop either at your location or ours for groups of 10 or more.
- HANDS-ONLY CPR CLASS** One-hour, non-certification class for adult, hands-only CPR. Groups of 10 or more can schedule this training at their location or at our Headquarters Station.

- SERVICES OFFERED -

CPR 9:00 a.m.–12:30 p.m. | BASIC FIRST AID 1:30–4:30 p.m.
Sept 14 or 20 | Oct 19 or 24 | Nov 15 or 23 | Dec 14

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

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

HELMET SALES AND FITTING* Wearer must be present for custom fitting. Bike helmets \$8 each. Multi-Sport helmets \$11 each. Headquarters Station.

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

SAFE SITTER CLASSES

Cost: \$45. To view class details and register on-line, visit www.eastpiercefirer.org. The 2025 summer class schedule will be posted early next year.

* Sponsored by East Pierce Professional Firefighters Local 3520