



NEWSLETTER

Chelan County Fire District 1
www.chelancountyfire.com

August, 2020

A Word with Fire Chief Brian Brett

Greetings Residents of Chelan County Fire District 1,

It is our pleasure to provide an update this summer on the projects your fire district has been working on over the past year, including facilities, operations and prevention.

Fire Station 13, at the base of Squilchuck and South Mission Street is complete. We have deferred permanent staffing of this station until our new fire station is complete. Staffing has been deferred because it is currently provided coverage from four other fire stations, converging from four directions. However, the station has been far from vacant. Our volunteers still respond from this location and we house our partners from the DNR Heli-tack crew all summer.

The renovation of **Fire Station 12** (at the corner of Fifth and Western) was complete in June of 2019 and we have been staffing the station since. This station is a strategic location for our Fire District and the staffing serves the area well. The red and white painted "12" on the retaining wall identifies it as Station 12, however, I must confess the firefighter with paintbrush was snickering with support of the Seahawks. We will have to find a facility to paint a "7" to show support for our amazing Wenatchee Wild Hockey Team!

Construction of **Fire Station 10** (at the Prospector Pies location) commenced the first week of October 2019. It is progressing nicely, and we plan to occupy it in October of this year.

This summer we positioned helicopters at both our Malaga and Sunnyslope Fire Stations. The helicopter program is a fantastic partnership with the Department of Natural Resources and provides our region with an air asset, taking off within five minutes of dispatch. We have used air resources on several fires in the District this summer.

In June 2019 we purchased a 2012 Ladder truck to replace the 1995 Ladder truck. We aspire to purchase a new Ladder truck, likely a Tiller (rear steering) to operate from our new downtown Fire Station. This gives the district a primary Ladder truck serving our densely populated urban core and a reserve Ladder truck for multi-alarm responses.

Thank you for supporting your Fire District!

Brian Brett, Fire Chief



Community Wildfire Program

We hope you have enjoyed this remarkably smoke free summer. Depending on the year and climate conditions, our fire season can run from snowmelt to snowfall. There was a great reminder in 2017 when a brush fire November 1st burned roughly 1,000 acres above Monitor. While wildfire may have taken a back seat with the absence of smoke, it is still our greatest natural hazard and deserves our continued attention.

Speaking of the seasons, summer is a delicate time of year for fuels reduction and the creation of defensible space around your home. Dry grass is easily ignited by sparks and hot equipment. Last summer the District's Community Wildfire Program tried something a little different: goats, 325 of them to be exact. They devoured six acres of peak summer wildfire fuels in a drainage inaccessible to mowers and weedwhackers. Maintaining defensible space and keeping up with our fast-growing fuels takes a little "out of the box" thinking. In the case of the Broadview neighborhood, goats were one answer, and they solved last year's problem without emitting a single spark!

Last summer's grazing project was done in association with a FEMA post-recovery grant following the Sleepy Hollow fire in 2015. A federal cost share to replace wood shake roofs and improve defensible space was coordinated in the same area. The District, Chelan County and the City of Wenatchee partnered with residents to replace 24 wood shake roofs over the last two years. While defensible space may reduce a fire's intensity and rate of spread, home hardening is the best defense against loss. The two work hand in hand and are essential wildfire preparedness measures for any properties in our area.

As cooler temperatures and rain arrive in the valley, our wetter seasons are a great time of year to remove hazardous vegetation and plant fire resistant plants to improve your defensible space. If you're not sure where to start, we're here to help! Our staff conduct FREE home assessments and provide a detailed report with recommendations for reducing wildfire risk and improving the survival of your home. This face to face consultation is a great time to answer any of your wildfire risk questions and hear first-hand what experts in the field have to share. To schedule a home assessment visit our web page <https://www.chelancountyfire.com/wildfire> and click the "schedule a home assessment" button. While you're on the site, check out our blog <https://www.chelancountyfire.com/blog>. We'll be adding content from the Community Wildfire Program throughout the year so be sure to check in often and share.

**For address signs and burning regulations visit our website at
www.chelancountyfire.com**





Volunteer Firefighters

Cowboys and Fire:

When Neighbors become Firefighters and Communities are saved

Back in the day when the west still felt like a frontier, community members didn't have access to the same resources we have today. These days you can call 911, a dispatcher gets on the line, and most of us are just minutes away from getting emergency care.

But this wasn't always the case. Men and women drawn to open landscapes often found themselves self-reliant in times of crisis. During the summer months when wildfires ran rampant across the land, these self-reliant individuals pulled up their bootstraps, got out their tillers and went to work.

Firefighters remember this time as the old days of "cowboy firefighting." These days there are fewer cowboys, but there are plenty of good neighbors, neighbors who would make excellent Volunteer Firefighters. People who know their community like the back of their hand, who would work hard to help those in need, who understand that sometimes when you live far away, it's not the ambulance first on scene but the guy who lives down the street.

If you live in the Malaga, Colockum, Stemilt or Wenatchee Heights area and you're that kind of neighbor, come down to Station 10 and become a Volunteer Firefighter. We have many different functional roles that may appeal to you.

Call Deputy Chief Rick McBride at 509-662-4734 or email rmcbride@chelancountyfire.com

Fire Commissioners

The November 2019 election resulted in some changes to our Board of Commissioners. Please welcome Cam De Mestre to the Board! Commissioner De Mestre replaced Commissioner Herb Troxel.

Commissioner Troxel served on the Board since 2012 and has been with the fire service in the valley since 1955. Thank you for your commitment and service Commissioner Troxel!

Commissioner Gordon Zimmerman filled a temporary appointment and was elected to a full term beginning in January. Congratulations Commissioner Zimmerman.

Commissioner Phil Dormaier has served on the Board since 2003 and is the current Board Chair. Thank you Commissioner Dormaier for your service and dedication to our Fire District.



Fire Prevention Program

The District was fortunate to hire a full-time Fire Prevention Officer, Darin Radcliffe. Darin handles the prevention and inspections of our built environment, while our Wildfire Liaison, Jon Riley, handles the prevention in our wildland environment.

One of the key metrics the Washington State Rating Bureau examines is the frequency of fire inspections and qualifications of the Fire Inspector. Darin is a certified Fire Inspector and one of his job responsibilities is to complete occupancy inspections, throughout the Fire District, in over 1,800 commercial occupancies every year. When Darin is not busy conducting inspections, he is managing the fire hydrant maintenance program, conducts fire origin and cause investigations, coordinates the development of pre-fire plans, and he is currently working on developing a public education program for the District.

2019 Incident Response

MAJOR INCIDENT TYPE	INCIDENTS
Fires	176
Overpressure rupture, explosion, overheat - no fire	7
Rescue & Emergency Medical Service	1705
Hazardous Condition (No Fire)	73
Service Call	119
Good Intent Call	399
False Alarm & False Call	304
Severe Weather & Natural Disaster	2
Special Incident Type	9
TOTAL	2794



Current Stations



- Station 10** - 136 South Chelan Ave constructed in 1929
- Station 11** - 206 Easy Street constructed in 1955
- Station 12** - 408 North Western Ave constructed in 1964
- Station 13** - 1836 South Mission St constructed in 2018
- Station 14** - 4852 Squilchuck Road constructed in 1975
- Station 17** - 3760 West Malaga Road constructed in 1995

Washington State Survey and Rating Bureau

WSRB is Washington's premier source of property underwriting and rating data for the insurance industry. To determine a community's Protection Class WSRB objectively evaluates four major areas:

1. Fire Department

WSRB reviews such items as engine companies, ladder companies, distribution of fire stations and fire companies, automatic aid received, response to alarms, equipment carried on apparatus, apparatus maintenance, pumping capacity, reserve apparatus, department personnel levels and training.

2. Water Supply

Water supplies used are reviewed to determine their adequacy for fire suppression purposes. Major tasks include calculating required fire flows (gpm) for buildings and conducting flow tests to measure water pressures (psi) and volume (gpm). WSRB considers hydrant size, type, and installation, as well as the inspection frequency and condition of fire hydrants.

3. Emergency Communications Systems

The community's 911 system is evaluated including facilities, handling and dispatching fire alarms, dispatch personnel levels and training.

4. Fire Safety Control

Fire prevention activities such as fire code enforcement, public education and building code enforcement are reviewed.

After completing the field survey, WSRB analyzes the data and calculates the Protection Class for the community. The evaluation then undergoes a quality review. The community receives a notification letter identifying the Protection Class along with a summarizing report.

Buildings and property located within the rated community are eligible for the Protection Class Rating of the community if they meet the distance to fire station and distance to fire hydrant requirements. If these requirements are not met the building will receive a different Protection Class Rating than the community.

The current Community Protection Class Rating in the City limits, and most of the Urban Growth Area of the District, is a 4.22, resulting in a grade of 5. Outside the Urban Growth Area, in the remainder of the District, the Community Protection Class Rating is a 4.94, resulting in a grade of 5 also.

We are extremely pleased to report the entire Fire District has improved to a rating of 4! The new Community Protection Class Rating takes effect September 1, 2020 (the lower the rating, the better for your insurance rates). We lowered our score to 3.32 in the City of Wenatchee and 3.49 in the remainder of the Fire District. This has been a long process of improving the Fire District. Our Commissioners vision for service delivery is being realized. We graciously thank our citizens for their continuous support of the District.