

# Benton County Fire District **4** NEWS



SPRING 2021

## MESSAGE FROM FIRE CHIEF PAUL CARLYLE



It has been just over a year since the pandemic began, and statistics show that COVID-19 cases are declining. We anticipate these numbers to fall even further as people continue to observe social distancing protocols and are vaccinated.

The pandemic has shown us the importance of having an effective emergency response. Our staff and emergency personnel have risen to meet new challenges, and your support for Benton County Fire District 4 makes that possible – thank you!

Fire stations and apparatus are funded by voter-approved bonds. Daily emergency operations are funded by a fire levy (\$1.50/\$1,000) and an EMS levy (\$0.50/\$1,000) paid through property taxes. Levy rates fall as property values rise to limit the Fire District to about the same amount of revenue each year. At times, we ask our community for a “lid lift”

to return a levy to an amount previously approved by voters. Lid lifts help us keep up with higher call volumes and increasing costs for service.

We have no funding requests on the ballot in 2021. Instead, we’re delivering on projects that you have already approved to improve fire and life safety. For example, voters approved a bond in 2018 to build and equip a new fire station. That project is near completion and we look forward to welcoming our community to the facility when it’s safe to do so. In 2020, voters approved a fire levy lid lift to hire three full-time firefighters to respond to higher call volumes. Hiring is almost complete for these positions, which will help improve response times district-wide.

In addition to full-time personnel, we rely on volunteer firefighters, EMTs, and paramedics to respond to calls. Volunteers also serve as chaplains or provide administrative, finance, communication, and maintenance services. We encourage you to learn more about Benton 4 and its volunteer program at [www.bcf4.org](http://www.bcf4.org).

## WOMEN IN EMERGENCY SERVICES

March was National Women’s Month. Women make up only 4% of career and 11% of volunteer firefighters nationwide. Women also fill support positions that are important to daily emergency operations. Please join us in thanking the following employees and volunteers for their dedication to saving lives and property. While you’re at it, why not join our team?

**Fire Division** | Aaron Massey—Intern/Recruit Firefighter | Bonnie Rogers—Captain/Paramedic |

Caroline Smith- Firefighter/EMT | Alandra Swords—Recruit Firefighter

**EMS Division** | Natania Johnston - EMT | Kylie Stewart - EMT | Patricia Kirkham - Paramedic/EMS coordinator

**Logistics Division** | Slita Bradley—Financial Manager/Logistics | Karen Davis- EMT/Logistics | Amie Green - Team Lead/Logistics | Sheila Sullivan- Logistics Member | Jean Seibert - Logistics Member | Ally Young- EMT/Logistics Member

2604 Bombing Range Rd.  
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(509) 967-2945

[www.bcf4.org](http://www.bcf4.org)  
[www.facebook.com/BCFD4](https://www.facebook.com/BCFD4)  
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### Disponible en Español

Este boletín está disponible en español en nuestro sitio de Internet [www.bcf4.org](http://www.bcf4.org)

### Board Meetings

The Board of Fire Commissioners meets the 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month at 5:00 p.m. via conference call. All meetings are open to the public! Call 571-748-4021 and enter 977-1116 as the passcode to participate.

## PREPARE FOR WILDLAND FIRE SEASON NOW

Last year was the worst on record for wildland fires. More than 57,000 such fires burned over 10 million acres in the United States. It's only April, and Benton County Fire District 4 already has responded to several natural cover fires here at home. Please follow a few simple steps to protect your home and property from wildland fires this season and always.

- Post your address on driveway entrance and home.
- Provide good access to your home and/or shop for firefighting apparatus.
- Maintain a 30-foot defensible space around your home by cutting long grass or overgrown brush.
- Prune or remove trees and shrubs close to your home.
- Keep lawns well-watered.
- Clean gutters and roofs of any debris.
- Screen off crawl spaces, attics and decks to keep them free of debris, as well as flying embers.
- Do NOT store combustibles, such as wood piles, under your deck or near your home.

More ideas can be found through the National Fire Protection Association ([www.nfpa.org](http://www.nfpa.org)) and Ready.gov ([www.ready.gov/wildfires](http://www.ready.gov/wildfires)).

It's helpful too to check and see if and when you can burn to avoid fines, as well as ensure there is an adequate emergency response if a fire needs controlling. Information can be found through the Benton Clean Air Agency: [bentoncleanair.org/burning/burndecision/](http://bentoncleanair.org/burning/burndecision/). These regulations are in place to limit the effects of smoke on the region.

