



Benton County Fire District

4 NEWS

FALL 2021

Message from Fire Chief Paul Carlyle



Tell the truth, and keep commitments. Those are two fundamental principles by which we operate at Benton County Fire District 4. That's why I am pleased to report back to you that we have completed the projects that our community supported through two voter-approved funding measures.

In 2018, voters approved a bond to build and equip a new fire station. Station 430 at 8031 Keene Road is the new facility in the western part of our fire district. It officially opened its doors earlier this year, and contains one Type 1 fire engine, an ambulance, a brush truck for wildland fires, and a water tender. The facility is improving response times for the area, and providing additional units to respond district-wide.

The new station may improve insurance rates for homeowners in the area, as well. The Washington

Surveying & Rating Bureau provides a discount for homes within five miles of a staffed fire station. If you live in the area, contact your insurance carrier or broker for more details.

In late 2020, voters approved a fire levy lid lift to hire three additional firefighters all of whom started this year. Both the station project and increasing staffing are critical to help meet the demand for emergency services as our community grows. We are extremely grateful that our community supported these requests, and are pleased that we delivered on both commitments as promised.

Call volumes have almost doubled in the last 10 years, and additional staffing is still needed. Our plan is to hire more firefighters gradually to reduce the impact to taxpayers. Again, we appreciate your continued support, and thank you for the opportunity to serve your family.

Back to School Safety

School is back in session and that can mean congestion on the roads. A few reminders from the National Safety Council to keep our kids safe.

- Always stop for a school patrol officer or crossing guard holding up a stop sign.
- Don't load or unload children across the street from the school.
- Look out for children in school zones, near playgrounds and parks, and in all residential areas.
- Don't double park; it blocks visibility for other children and vehicles.



- It is illegal to pass a school bus that is stopped to load or unload children.
- Never pass a bus from behind – or from either direction if you're on an undivided road – if it is stopped to load or unload children.
- If the yellow or red lights are flashing and the stop arm is extended, traffic must stop.
- Never pass a vehicle stopped for pedestrians.
- Be alert; children often are unpredictable, and they tend to ignore hazards and take risks.



Benton County Fire Protection District No. 4

2604 Bombing Range Rd.
West Richland, WA 99353
(509) 967-2945

**POP
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Smoke alarms save lives!

Please take a few minutes to ensure your home has the appropriate number of smoke alarms and that they are properly located, regularly tested and maintained.

If you need assistance installing smoke alarms or changing batteries, please contact Kevin Gaidos at (509) 967-2945 or kgaidos@bcfd4.org. The fire district's ability to do in-home visits is limited right now; however, safety is our priority.

Budget Meetings

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. Over time, levy rates fall as property values rise to limit the Fire District to the same amount of tax revenue per year plus a 1% increase allowed by law.

Some people think that new growth provides more tax revenue. In reality, the total amount of tax revenue the fire district receives is shared by these additional homes which lowers the fire levy rate for all property owners.

Staff has spent the month of September analyzing department funding needs for 2022. On October 1, a draft budget will be presented to the Board of Fire Commissioners for review and comment. The Board then has until November 4 to make revisions and pass the budget for the following year.

Details of these meetings can be found on the website at www.bcfd4.org. These are your tax dollars at work, and public participation is welcome and encouraged.

Let's Get Social!

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Disponible en Español

Este boletín está disponible en español en nuestro sitio de Internet www.bcfd4.org

Board Meetings

The Board of Fire Commissioners meets online the 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month at 6:00 p.m. via conference call. All meetings are open to the public!

Join via Zoom:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6934639066>

Meeting ID: 693 463 9066

Call

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