



Benton County Fire District

4 NEWS

SPRING 2022

Message from Fire Chief Paul Carlyle



In 2022, the Fire District plans to replace its breathing support system for firefighters, and remodel stations. Station 420 will receive new flooring, paint, bathrooms to accommodate a diverse workforce, and improving signage out front. Station 410 may see some improvements, as well, if funding allows.

The Washington Surveying and Rating Bureau will be here in May to rerate BCFD4. The WSRB assesses fire risk for insurance companies, and is linked to what some homeowners pay in premiums. Adequate staffing and facilities are part of what goes in to the re-rating process.

Call volumes for were up 22% in 2021 compared to the year before. Emergency medical service accounted for 62% of all calls the agency received last year. To that end, our Board of Fire Commissioners approved a resolution to lift the lid on our EMS levy

BCFD4 Recruiting Volunteers

Benton 4 is a proud “combination” department. That means we rely on career and volunteer emergency personnel to respond to calls. Our fire district was an all-volunteer department until the late 1980s at which point call volumes required a full-time response. Approximately 56 volunteer and career firefighters, emergency medical technicians, and paramedics responded to 2,054 calls in 2021, 62% of which were EMS-related.

Volunteers have jobs and families, and still find time to give back to their community through the fire district.

back to the \$0.50 per \$1,000. This request will be on the August 2, 2022 Primary Election ballot.

Our EMS levy has fallen from the voter-approved rate in 2016 of \$0.50 to \$0.35/\$1,000 today. EMS call volumes have increased 42% in the same time period, and inflation has averaged as high as 7%. If approved, the \$0.15/\$1,000 lid lift would cost an additional \$52.50 per year (\$4.38 per month) for the owner of a home with an assessed value of \$350,000.

Funding from the lid lift would be used to hire three additional firefighter/paramedics or emergency medical technicians to respond to emergency calls. This will put another medical unit in service and aid in responding to concurrent calls, which are increasing.

We are able to respond because our community has supported incremental increases for operations every two to four years. Small lid lifts reduce impacts for taxpayers rather than asking for large increases later. As always, we welcome your questions at pcarlyle@bcfd4.org or 509-967-2945.

They help us deliver quality emergency services at a level that is usually found in areas with larger populations and higher assessed property values.

Our fire district needs people in all areas, including administration, chaplain services, finance, support services, and maintenance. If you're a skilled administrator, we want your help with finance, human resources or facilities planning. Contact Captain Bob Shannon to learn more about how you can make a difference at bshannon@bcfd4.org.



Benton County Fire Protection District No. 4

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(509) 967-2945

POP
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Check In Before You Burn Those Limbs!

Many wildland fires are started accidentally when property owners burn yard waste and it gets out of control. It's important to see if and when you can burn to avoid fines. Information can be found through the Benton Clean Air Agency: <https://bit.ly/3u1mJzM>. These regulations are in place to limit the impact of smoke to the region and ensure there is an adequate emergency response.

Spring Cleaning for Fire Safety!

Spring is in the air, and now is a good time for homeowners to prepare for wildland fire season. A little yard work can reduce the risk of wildland fire to your home or property.

Overgrown brush, or long, dry grass in the yard, is a quick burning fuel source and can endanger structures. For firefighters, this could provide a challenge to save the home if this fuel source should ignite. Some simple tips to create a fire barrier and help to protect structures are as follows:

- Maintain a 30-foot defensible space around your home.
- Keep lawns well-watered.
- Prune or remove combustible trees or shrubs close to your home.
- Clean gutters and roofs of any debris regularly.
- Screen off crawl spaces, attics and decks to keep them free of debris, as well as any flying embers.
- Do NOT store combustibles, such as wood piles, under your deck or near your home.

The City of West Richland's Annual Earth Day Clean Up is on Saturday, April 23, 2022 from 8AM - 2PM at Enterprise Middle School. Residents can dispose of an unlimited number of loads of garbage and yard debris at no charge. For more information, please visit <https://bit.ly/3JB4GHR>.

Let's Get Social!

Please like us on Facebook
@BCFD4 or follow us on Twitter
@BCFD4Info!

Disponible en Español

Este boletín está disponible en español en nuestro sitio de Internet www.bcf4.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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