

Central Whidbey Island Fire & Rescue

News and Information for the Residents of Central Whidbey Island

Fatal Fire in Coupeville



www.cwfire.org



In the early evening hours of January 6, 2017 a fire occurred in a Coupeville residence resulting in the death of the adult male resident. This was the sixth fire fatality in Island County within a 30 day period. The home was equipped with a hard wired smoke detector, but it appears unlikely that it operated to alert the occupant. The cause of the fire remains under investigation.

Fire Risk

As discussed in our December newsletter, adults over the age of 65 and children under the age of four are at significantly greater risk of dying in a fire than the general population. Two thirds of fire fatalities occur in homes without a working smoke alarm. What does this mean to our community? We have been conducting home safety surveys since December 2016 and find that a substantial percentage of homes do not have working smoke alarms or have smoke alarms that have reached their 10-year end of life and may no longer operate reliably. Other homes have smoke alarms that result in frequent false alarms, presenting the risk that they will be disabled or removed. This problem can often be easily remedied.



Home Safety Survey

Central Whidbey Island Fire & Rescue will check your smoke alarms, install smoke alarms if you do not have them, and help you develop a plan to minimize your risk from fire or injury by conducting a home safety survey. You can request a home safety survey on the District's web site (www.cwfire.org) by clicking on Services or by telephone at (360) 678-3602. **Let us be there before you need us!**

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CWIFR Headquarters
Fire Station 53
1164 Race Road
Coupeville, WA 98239
(360) 678-3602

Where There Is Love, There are Smoke Alarms



Test to make sure they work!

1. Push the test button
2. Do you hear a loud noise?
 - Yes, it works
 - No, change the battery or get a new smoke alarm



Fireside Chat

We have spent a good deal of time talking with you about our facility and apparatus needs moving forward. Our community has grown 5.3% since 2010. In that same time period, emergency call volumes have increased 30.68%.



It takes careful planning to meet the emergency service needs of our community as it grows. We've developed a Capital Projects Plan to replace aging apparatus and equipment before it becomes unreliable. We also have a Facilities and Long-Term Financial Plan to identify where improvements are needed and options for funding. All these documents are available at www.cwfire.org.

It's a balancing act between identifying what our community needs and what it can afford. Long-term, we have identified the need to renovate three fire stations and replace three fire engines. Short-term, our Board did some serious reflection and determined that one station and the three engines would be a more reasonable amount for our community to consider at this time.

Adequate apparatus and facilities are important to community safety. Even with regular maintenance, some of our engines are approaching the end of their 25-year life cycle and need replacing. Renovations to Station 53 on Race Road will add space for maintaining apparatus, larger engine bays, and sleeping quarters in the main building to help firefighters respond to calls faster. These improvements will help maintain our fire insurance rating, which impacts the amount homeowners pay in insurance premiums.

In addition, we should provide our firefighters with as safe an operating environment as possible to retain the ones we have and attract new volunteers. Renovations to Station 53 include upgrading mechanical systems to move diesel exhaust fumes away from personnel inside. It also will provide improved decontamination and storage spaces for protective gear. This will reduce a firefighter's risk of exposure to carcinogens and other contaminants that accumulate on such clothing at fires and other emergencies.

The cost of a 20-year bond is projected to be 22-cents per \$1,000 of assessed property value, or approximately \$5.45 per month (\$65.45 per year) for the owner of a \$300,000 home. What do you think, is this a reasonable request? I'd like to know your thoughts so contact me at ehartin@cwfire.org or (360) 678-3602. Thank you!

Sincerely,

Chief Ed Hartin, MS, EFO, FIFireE, CFO .

How Old is Your Smoke Alarm?

NFPA 72, *National Fire Alarm Code*[®], requires smoke alarms be replaced at least every 10 years, but because the public is generally unaware of this requirement, many homes have smoke alarms past their expiration date, putting people at increased risk. To find out how old your smoke alarm is and its expiration date, simply look on the back of the alarm where the date of manufacture is marked. If you need assistance checking the expiration date on your smoke alarms give us a call at (360) 678-3602 or request a home safety survey on the District's web site (www.cwfire.org) by clicking on Services.



Commercial Fire Inspection Program

Building owners and occupants often feel that the risk of fire is insignificant, frequently stating that they have never had a fire. This risk is real. Compliance with fire code requirements and ensuring that employees are trained in the correct actions to take in the event of a fire minimize your risk.

The mission of Central Whidbey Island Fire & Rescue is to partner with our community to proactively reduce risk from fire, illness, injury and other hazards. Performing annual commercial fire and life safety inspections is a key element in this mission. These fire inspections provide an opportunity to partner with building owners, occupants, Town of Coupeville, and Island County to reduce risk to these businesses, their employees, patrons, and the community at large.

Commercial fire and life safety inspections provide value to property and business owners within the District in a variety of ways:

- Fire and life safety inspections provide valuable information to building owners and occupants regarding ways to reduce their risk of fire.
- Communities in which commercial fire and life safety inspections are conducted annually experience fewer commercial fires.
- Fire safety control, including commercial fire and life safety inspections are a significant element in determination of fire insurance ratings, accounting for 16% of the total score that determines the community's protection classification.

In 2016, CWIFR was re-rated by the Washington Survey and Rating Bureau and the community saw a one protection class improvement in our fire insurance rating throughout the District, in no small part due to our comprehensive commercial fire inspection program.

Central Whidbey Island Fire & Rescue conducts over 200 fire and life safety inspections annually under the provisions of Interlocal agreements with the Town of Coupeville and Island County. Under these agreements the District performs fire inspections, but the Town and County retain code enforcement authority.

If you have any questions regarding commercial fire inspections, please give us a call at (360) 678-3602.

Know Your Utilities

Gas, electric, and water utilities are often involved in household emergencies. Some, such as gas leaks or electrical fires can present an immediate threat to life. Others, such as water leaks can result in significant property damage with less risk of physical harm. Ability to shut off your gas, electric, and water utilities in the event of an emergency is important!

Electrical Shutoff

If you have an electrical problem, electrical power inside your home may be shut off at an individual circuit breaker (if you know where the problem is) or at the main circuit breaker.

Main Circuit Breaker



Gas Shutoff

Homes with gas appliances in CWIFR's response area use propane which is supplied by an on-site tank (unlike natural gas that is provided via underground pipes). Propane is shut off by closing the valve on top of the tank by turning it clockwise.

Water Shutoff

There is often a water shutoff where the water line enters the home (on the interior or exterior). Take the time to locate this shutoff before you have a water leak.

Call 911 for Utility Emergencies

If you have a utility emergency call 911 and we will come to your assistance!

Volunteer Recruitment

The District experienced considerable success in volunteer recruitment in 2016 with a substantial number of applicants completing the entry process. However, much more needs to be done to continue this success. CWIFR has a number of volunteer opportunities, these include:

- **On-Call Volunteers:** These Firefighters, Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs), and Apparatus Operators live in the District and respond to the station and staff our apparatus for response when an emergency occurs.
- **On-Duty Volunteers:** These Firefighters, Emergency EMTs and Apparatus Operators choose to schedule their volunteer time to work along side our Full- and Part-Time personnel in the fire station.

In addition to emergency response volunteers, we have a number of support service volunteer roles for individuals wishing to serve who cannot or choose not to serve as a Firefighter or EMT.

If you are interested in volunteering with CWIFR in any capacity, please contact Captain Jerry Helm at (360) 678-3602 or complete the interest form on the District's web site.

Calendar of Events

February 9, 2017 Commissioners Meeting

5:00 pm at Station 53

February 18, 2017 CPR/First Aid

9:00 am at Station 53

March 9, 2017 Commissioners Meeting

5:00 pm at Station 53

March 25, 2017 CPR/First Aid

9:00 am at Station 53

April 13, 2017 Commissioners Meeting

5:00 pm at Station 53

April 22, 2017 CPR/First Aid

9:00 am at Station 53

Station 53 is located at 1164 Race Road in Coupeville, just east of the intersection of State Routes 20 and 525.



Learn Hands Only CPR Today: Free training for individuals or groups. Call today (360) 678-3602 to schedule a 10-minute training session at your location or at one of our fire stations!

Central Whidbey Island Fire Rescue
1164 Race Road
Coupeville, WA 98239

PRESORT STANDARD
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
COUPEVILLE, WA 98239
PERMIT 11

BOXHOLDER