

June 2023

Central Whidbey Island Fire & Rescue



www.cwfire.org

News and Information for the Residents of Central Whidbey Island

New Chief's Message



FIRE CHIEF JERRY HELM

It's an honor to communicate with you as the new Fire Chief for Central Whidbey Island Fire & Rescue. I've lived on Whidbey Island since 1980 and been a firefighter with the district since 1999. I served as Interim Chief while the Board of Fire Commissioners conducted a search and then appointed me to the position in May.

We believe in transparency and accountability to our taxpayers and there are some challenges I need to share. Emergency call volumes have increased just over 50% since our last levy lid lift. Overlapping calls – or more than two emergencies at the same time – account for 28% of all incidents. This can impact positive outcomes for fire and EMS responses.

For example, we currently run either a fire engine OR BLS ambulance. This delays our ability to do interior search and rescue operations in cases of fire. Four firefighters are required by state law and we can only afford 2-3 person crews. It can also delay EMS response times if our crews are on an overlapping call and have to return to the station to change apparatus.

The Board approved a resolution to place a fire levy lid lift on the November 7, 2023, general election ballot to resolve this problem. The lid lift will fund four additional firefighters/EMTs to meet state requirements and allow the fire district to put BOTH a fire engine and BLS ambulance in service at the same time. This will reduce response times and improve service reliability across the district.

The lid lift is \$0.32 per \$1,000 of assessed property value costing an additional \$13.33 per month or \$160 per year for the owner of a \$500,000 home. The maximum a fire district can request is \$1.50. This would lift our fire levy from \$0.86 to \$1.18 per \$1,000.

More information about the lid lift can be found at www.cwfire.org. I always welcome your questions at jhelm@cwfire.org and 360-678-3602.

Stay Safe, Play Safe This Summer

Island living comes with its perks and challenges. We are fortunate to be surrounded by natural beauty and have access to stunning waterfront beaches and lakes on Whidbey Island. While enjoying the warm weather and all that our island home has to offer, please keep these basic safety tips in mind this summer:

- Never swim alone. If someone is struggling, have a flotation device to throw to them before jumping in to help. And remember, even on hot days, the waters of Puget Sound are cold!
- Stay hydrated! Drink water every 20 minutes when out in hot temperatures to stay hydrated and keep your core cool.
- Wear a lifejacket at all times when boating or near water – even if you can swim.
- When grilling, keep children and pets at least three feet from the grill area. Never leave your grill unattended. Keep your grill clean by removing grease buildup. Locate the grill away from the house or anything that could catch fire.



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

Presorted Standard
U.S. Postage

PAID

**IQ DIRECT
98201**

Calendar

July 13, 2023 Commissioners Meeting

5:00 pm at Station 54

August 10, 2023 Commissioners Meeting

5:00 pm at Station 54

September 14, 2023 Commissioners Meeting

5:00 pm at Station 54

October 12, 2023 Commissioners Meeting

5:00 pm at Station 54

*Station 54 is located at 3253 Day Road in Greenbank,
between Bakken Road and Christiansen Road.*

Follow us for the latest news!

 [cwfirerescue](https://www.facebook.com/cwfirerescue)

 [@cwfire](https://twitter.com/cwfire)

Every Second Counts

Sudden cardiac arrest is the most frequent cause of death in our fire district. Immediate CPR can double or triple chances of survival after cardiac arrest (according to the American Heart Association).

We are committed to increasing cardiac arrest survival in our community. We offer several types of training in CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation). Hands-only CPR and more comprehensive certification training in CPR and first aid.

Free hands-only CPR

We offer free hands-only CPR classes, and it only takes 15 to 20 minutes. You can register online at www.cwfire.org on the CPR Training page under the Resources tab.

Certification in CPR and first aid

We also offer CPR and first aid certification classes **the last Saturday of the month** (except December). Classes take place at the Day Road Fire Station, 3253 Day Road in Greenbank. The cost is \$50. Call 360-678-3602 to register. Find more at www.cwfire.org.

