



Camas - Washougal Fire Department

February 2014

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CWFD

Command Staff

Nick Swinhart
Fire Chief

Cliff Free
Division Chief of EMS

Ron Schumacher
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Fire Chief's Message



Paramedics Michael Coyle and Eric Bridges with CWFD's new 4x4 Braun Ambulance

The start of 2014 has been very busy for CWFD. Very harsh winter weather returned to East Clark County at the start of February. Wind chills temperatures were at 0, while blizzard conditions brought travel to a standstill. Fortunately CWFD had recently taken delivery of our first 4x4 ambulance (pictured above), which greatly increased the department's ability to respond to the needs of our citizens. The final wrap up of the fire department merger process continued in earnest during January and February. The transition team met in early January to plan out the

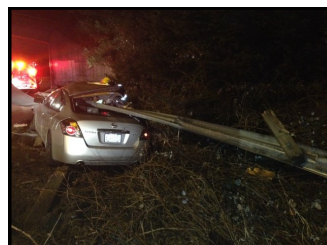
remaining tasks. The final step of the process, the movement of Washougal personnel to the Camas payroll system, is expected to occur no later than May 1, 2014. Finance department staff will be establishing a new budget while the Fire Chief will be taking formal ordinance changes to the Camas Council that are required to complete the merger process.

In February, command staff will also be hard at work assembling CWFD's 2014 Annual Report. This is a time consuming task that staff work on each year to highlight the department's programs and services to the public. It's not only important to explain how taxes fund department operations, but the report is also a requirement of ordinance and the merger interlocal agreement. Thank you again to our citizens for your continued support!

Finally, CWFD welcomes our new city administrator Pete Capell. Pete took a several hour tour of department facilities recently and expressed interest in future ride-outs with our crews. Welcome to Camas, Pete!



Fire Chief Nick Swinhart



Traffic mishaps increased in February of 2014. CWFD was dispatched to the vehicle on the left in the early morning hours of February 6. The driver had left the scene. The vehicle on the right careened down a steep icy hill in Washougal on February 7 before landing in a driveway below. Fortunately the driver suffered only minor injuries.

Our Mission:

"To provide the highest quality service to our community through the protection and preservation of life and property"

Fireplace and Home Fire Safety

More than one-third of Americans use fireplaces, wood stoves and other fuel-fired appliances as primary heat sources in their homes. Unfortunately, many people are unaware of the fire risks when heating with wood and solid fuels. Heating fires account for 36% of residential home fires in rural areas every year. Often these fires are due to creosote buildup in chimneys and stovepipes. All home heating systems require regular maintenance to function safely and efficiently. The U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) encourages you to practice the following fire safety steps to keep those home fires safely burning. Remember, fire safety is your personal responsibility ...**Fire Stops With You!**

Keep Fireplaces and Wood Stoves Clean

- Have your chimney or wood stove inspected and cleaned annually by a certified chimney specialist.
- Clear the area around the hearth of debris, decorations and flammable materials.
- Leave glass doors open while burning a fire. Leaving the doors open ensures that the fire receives enough air to ensure complete combustion and keeps creosote from building up in the chimney.
- Close glass doors when the fire is out to keep air from the chimney opening from getting into the room. Most glass fireplace doors have a metal mesh screen which should be closed when the glass doors are open. This mesh screen helps keep embers from getting out of the fireplace area.
- Always use a metal mesh screen with fireplaces that do not have a glass fireplace door.
- Install stovepipe thermometers to help monitor flue temperatures.
- Keep air inlets on wood stoves open, and never restrict air supply to fireplaces. Otherwise you may cause creosote buildup that could lead to a chimney fire.
- Use fire-resistant materials on walls around wood stoves.

Protect the Inside of Your Home

- Install smoke alarms on every level of your home and inside and outside of sleeping areas. Test them monthly and change the batteries at least once a year. Consider installing the new long life smoke alarms.
- Provide proper venting systems for all heating equipment.
- Extend all vent pipes at least three feet above the roof.

Protect the Outside of Your Home

- Stack firewood outdoors at least 30 feet away from your home.
- Keep the roof clear of leaves, pine needles and other debris.
- Cover the chimney with a mesh screen spark arrester.
- Remove branches hanging above the chimney, flues or vents.

CWFD Holds Entry Level Hiring Exam

On February 8, over 100 men and women from around the United States participated in an entry level hiring exam to fill a vacant fire department position. Participants took a 2 hour written exam, followed by (if their scores were high enough) a physical agility test and oral interview process. The department expects to make a hiring decision soon.



Revised Newsletter

Frequent readers of the CWFD newsletter will note we are test driving a new format. Camas Information Systems Manager Sherry Coulter recently redesigned the newsletter format for the department. With new colors, fonts, and organization, we're sure the new format will be easier to read. Thanks again for the help, Sherry!



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Station 42

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Dial

9-1-1

for all
Emergencies

