



CAMANO ISLAND FIRE & RESCUE

NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS

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COLLABORATION RESULTS IN SAFER CAMANO ISLAND

Fire District / Island County Partnership Steps up Emergency Preparedness

Camano Island Fire and Rescue (CIFR) has signed an inter-local agreement with Island County to partner on the delivery of enhanced emergency preparedness services for Camano residents. The agreement will provide a local emergency management coordinator for Camano Island to work with Island County Department of Emergency Management (DEM) in coordinating the emergency activities of Camano-based services such as public works, law enforcement, fire, EMS, and local utilities. It will go into effect immediately and will bring a much needed integration of emergency management services to Camano Island.

Camano Island is in a unique situation, tied politically to Island County and physically to Stanwood. “Because of our location, it is essential that our emergency planning efforts integrate planning for both Island County (Camano Island) and the City of Stanwood” said Fire Chief Mike Ganz. CIFR currently provides emergency management services for the City of Stanwood. “The partnership will complete the emergency management loop between three organizations that need to work very closely together to plan for and respond to disasters.”

The partnership is funded by a federal grant and will allow Island County to provide better services to Camano without any budget increase. “In these hard economic times CIFR is looking for every opportunity to establish partnerships and share resources” said Commissioner Steve Lich, Board Chairman. “Distributing the cost for emergency management planning between three entities is an economical solution to a real and shared problem.” Grant funds will continue to be sought to ensure this valuable service continues to be available.

Emergency Manager Mike Simmons has been with CIFR for ten months. He worked for Island County DEM for four years before coming to Camano and has great expertise in hazard mitigation and other County-level planning efforts. He will continue to be the local face for all emergency management issues on Camano and is eager for the increased level of coordination in emergency response planning and activities. “This will increase the opportunity for public involvement in emergency preparedness planning and education and provide a local point of contact for questions and issues for Camano residents” he said.

As governmental budgets continue to get tighter and services continue to be cut, this agreement demonstrates the commitment of both Island County and Camano Island Fire and Rescue officials to streamline government while providing for the health and welfare of their citizens. Both agencies believe this is a positive step towards more closely tying Camano to the rest of Island County. “It is a win-win situation for all Island County residents” concluded Commissioner Lich.

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For more information about Camano Island Fire and Rescue or to schedule a meeting with Fire Chief Mike Ganz, please call the administration office at 360-629-3008 or visit our website at www.camanofire.com.