



# CAMANO ISLAND FIRE & RESCUE

*NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS*

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## **Camano Island Fire and Rescue Emergency Services are tops**

The new paramedics serving Camano Island have been through emergency medicine boot camp: Harborview Medical Center's Emergency Room.

There, in the region's busiest trauma center, each recruit responds to at least 3,000 emergencies. Those thousands of calls prepare them to serve with other veterans. Camano Island Fire and Rescue (CIFR) Medical Services Officer Ken Drewry cites many examples of crew members who served in high-volume areas such as Portland and Seattle. Drewry himself worked for years in Yakima, responding to a high volume of acute emergencies.

It's all been important training, since Camano Island -- served by CIFR's Emergency Medical Services (EMS) operation -- logs around 1,100 EMS calls per year. Camano Island Fire and Rescue is an unusual department, serving two counties and incorporating the protocols of both into their operations. Dr. Paul Zaveruha, the Medical Program Director at Island County, works closely with Dr. Ron Brown, Snohomish County's Medical Program Director. This close relationship helps the CIFR team to follow the procedures and protocols of Snohomish County, whose hospitals they work in.

In some cases, though, an Island County choice of procedure may not yet be adopted in Snohomish County. But CIFR and Dr. Zaveruha continue to move forward with the latest in life saving care. For instance, a new procedure for a heart attack (or ST Elevation Myocardial Infarction – "STEMI") is in place at CIFR. "The new STEMI procedure is a state-wide protocol with new medications and a different interaction with the hospital," said Drewry. "We are looking forward to it working seamlessly within the Snohomish County system, and are confident it's the best method for saving lives that we have."

Drewry said the department is continually updating its procedures and continuing training. The recruits who have trained at Harborview are among the first to bring new methods and ideas to the team. The CIFR EMS staff recently used one of those in saving the life of an accident victim. When a Stanwood man was pinned to a light pole after being struck by a motor vehicle, a new tourniquet was used to stem the bleeding. The new tourniquet takes a fraction of the time that the old system needed to assemble.

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“It’s just easier,” said Drewry. “It was driven by the military and it’s a lot faster to use.”

District Fire Chief Mike Ganz adds that the medics receive the latest training through Paramedic Continuing Education Program. But the strength of the program goes deeper than that, he said. “We committed to having a crew of full-time medics and Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) on staff at all times,” said Chief Ganz. “The Fire Commissioners and I agree that the highest level of service from these dedicated men and women can be achieved when they work in tandem together and create strong bonds and working relationships.”

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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 360-387-1512.

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