



HOT NEWS

Chief's Corner



Commissioner Janice Trembl, Sparky the Fire Dog, and Chief Schick

I want to start this newsletter by thanking the Camano Island community for participating in our recent Open House. This is one way we have to say thank you, and show how your tax dollars save lives and property in our community every day. (I thought the hot dogs were pretty good, too!)

The biggest issue facing our Fire District at the moment is having enough revenue to meet the rising demand for emergency services. Emergency calls have increased almost 29% in five years, and more growth is expected for the island. In response, we have developed a 10-year Strategic Plan that addresses personnel, apparatus and facility needs for our community as it grows.

We aren't asking to do everything at once. Short-term needs include adding two firefighters during peak call hours to reduce response times and improve our ability to respond to multiple emergencies that happen at the

What's on My Election Ballot?

Camano Island Fire & Rescue is asking voters to consider raising the fire levy from \$1.10 to \$1.35 per \$1,000 during the November election. The 25-cent lid lift would cost the owner of a \$350,000 home an additional \$7.29 per month (\$87.50 per year).

Call volumes have increased almost 29% in five years. More calls mean added costs for personnel, apparatus, maintenance, fuel, equipment, and other supplies. In contrast, the Fire District is limited to a 1% revenue increase per year by state law. Revenue is not keeping up with the demand for emergency services in our community.

If approved by voters, funding will be used to add two firefighters during peak call hours to reduce response times and improve our ability to respond to multiple

By Fire Chief Michael Schick

same time. Currently, we rely on help from neighboring fire districts, which can take longer. (As your fire chief, I want to see us improve here.)

Long-term, the plan calls for maintaining facilities and replacing aging apparatus (such as engines, ambulances and water tenders) that are past their usable lives. The idea is to set money aside to pay cash for capital facility needs when it reduces the amount our taxpayers would pay over time.

To accomplish these objectives, Camano Island Fire & Rescue is asking voters to consider raising the fire levy from \$1.10 to \$1.35 per \$1,000 of assessed property value during the November election. The 25-cent lid lift would cost the owner of a \$350,000 home an additional \$7.29 per month (\$87.50 per year) and fund these life and property saving improvements for the next 10 years.

Please feel free to contact me any time with questions about the lid lift or other issues. I can be reached at mschick@camanofire.com or (360) 387-1512.

emergencies. Long-term, the Fire District will use some funds to replace aging apparatus that are past their usable lives and maintaining facilities.

In 2004 voters approved a fire levy rate of \$1.25 per \$1,000 of assessed property value which has fallen to \$1.10/\$1,000 in 2017. Levy rates fall as property values rise to limit the Fire District to the same amount of revenue per year plus 1% increase.

Camano Island Fire and Rescue responds to an average of 1,900 calls per year. Adequate staffing, apparatus and facilities are critical for fires, emergency medical service, motor vehicle accidents, technical and water rescues, and hazardous material spills. That's why our fire district is really an "all hazards response" agency.



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Camano Island Fire and Rescue has a Facebook page at www.facebook.com/camanofire and tweets @camanofire. Please follow us!

Stay Up to Date...

If you'd like to receive our monthly e-newsletter, please sign up on our website at www.camanofire.com/news/sign-up/. Thanks!

Thank you for partnering with us to save lives and property!

Camano Firefighters Train to Save Lives

Camano Island Fire & Rescue firefighters average almost 200 hours of continued training per year. This is possible because of your support for advanced training programs to save lives and property on Camano Island.

All emergency personnel are required to be certified as a Firefighter 1, Hazardous Materials Operations and Emergency Medical Technician, which is almost the equivalent of a 2-year fire science degree.

As part of a five-year training initiative, officers went through advanced incident command certification, preparing them to handle the critical decisions during on scene emergencies. Each shift also reviewed their knowledge of fire pump operations, and how to troubleshoot issues impacting water delivery during fires.

A good portion of the Fire District's responses are fire or medical calls, but technical rescue also happens. These emergencies include use of ropes to repel down steep slopes to save residents or visitors to the island, and water rescue responses to assist boaters in distress.

Emergency personnel can participate in this training once a quarter. Having our firefighters trained in these areas



means a faster emergency response and better outcome than relying on mutual aid from neighboring districts.

CIFR looks to share training costs with neighboring agencies. In 2017, it participated in a live fire training with the City of Arlington, Arlington Heights, and Oso fire departments. We also collaborated with Snohomish County Fire District 4 on multi-company trainings. Long-term, CIFR would like to collaborate on a training facility from which all agencies could benefit.