



Summer 2017

HOT NEWS

Chief's Corner



Call volumes are holding steady for Camano Island Fire and Rescue in the first quarter of 2017. Overall, emergency calls have increased almost 29% in five years, and more growth is expected for the island.

I want to reassure you that we are ready to respond when you need us. We have a Strategic Plan that

outlines exactly how we will meet this higher demand for emergency services. You can view the plan on our website at www.camanofire.com.

Short-term, we need to add two firefighters during peak call hours to reduce response times and improve our ability to respond to multiple emergencies that happen at the same time. (Currently, we rely on help from neighboring fire districts, which can take longer.) Long-term, the plan calls for maintaining our facilities and replacing aging apparatus (such as engines, ambulances and water tenders) that are past their usable lives.

Higher call volumes do mean added costs for personnel, apparatus, maintenance, fuel, equipment, and other supplies. The Fire District is limited to a 1% revenue increase per year by state law, and that is not keeping

By Fire Chief Michael Schick

up with the demand for emergency services in our community.

Our Board of Fire Commissioners will consider a resolution asking voters to raise the fire levy from \$1.10 to \$1.35 per \$1,000 of assessed property value during the November General Election. You are invited to these meetings to learn more, or share your thoughts about the proposal:

- Monday, June 26 – 4:30 p.m. – Country Club Fire Station (1326 Elger Bay Road)
- Monday, July 10 – 7:00 p.m. – Administrative Headquarters (811 Sunrise Boulevard)

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 the concepts outlined in the Strategic Plan. The last time voters approved a fire levy increase was in 2004 for \$1.25 per \$1,000, and our levy rate has fallen (as property values rise) to \$1.10 since that time.

If you are unable to attend, I encourage you to contact me with questions or comments at mschick@camanofire.com or (360) 387-1512. All communication is welcomed and is shared with the Board of Fire Commissioners. Thank you for partnering with us to save lives and property.

How many firefighters are needed to fight a fire?

Camano Island Fire and Rescue responds to an average of 1,800 calls per year. State and federal regulations mandate a basic safety requirement that no firefighters may enter a burning building until at least four firefighters are on-scene. That allows two firefighters to enter the building for search and rescue and suppression efforts while the other two are available to rescue the interior firefighters if they become trapped.

The National Fire Protection Administration says that 16 firefighters are needed for a typical residential structure fire. Our daily staffing varies from six to eight full-time firefighters, which is why we must rely on

volunteers and mutual aid from neighboring agencies to respond. Volunteers typically respond from home or work, and our nearest mutual aid firefighters are in Stanwood. Waiting for these additional personnel can take longer. That's why our Strategic Plan calls for hiring two more firefighters during peak call times to help meet our increasing call demand.

Adding two fire fighters and spreading those resources throughout the district will help us reduce response times to the majority of our calls. It also will help areas of the Island which are further away from a staffed fire station.



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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!

CPR Success & EMS Week

Camano Island Fire and Rescue trained 752 people in adult only, hand compression CPR during EMS Week this year. The idea behind the project was to train local residents in this life saving skill to increase a patient's chance of survival before professional help can arrive.

"It takes us an average of 7.5 minutes to reach someone in a medical emergency – sometimes longer for the extreme south end of the island," says Community Paramedic Jim Reinhardt. "Having a community member administer CPR while we're on our way greatly increases someone's chance of survival and making a full recovery."



Cardiac arrest unexpectedly takes the lives of hundreds of thousands of Americans each year. Studies show that survival rates from a heart attack can be doubled or tripled if CPR is administered until emergency medical services arrive.

National Emergency Medical Service Week (May 21-27, 2017) brings together local communities and medical personnel to publicize safety and honor the dedication of those who provide the day-to-day lifesaving services of medicine's "front line."