



HOT NEWS

Chief's Corner: Come learn about our Strategic Plan

Welcome to 2017! Last year was our busiest ever, and marked a significant milestone for Camano Island Fire and Rescue. We completed a Strategic Plan that covers how we will meet the increasing demand for emergency services for our community over the next 10 years. We would like to share this important document and hear your input at an upcoming meeting:

- Saturday, Jan. 7 2017 at 10:00 a.m. [Camano Center - 606 Arrowhead Road]
- Monday, Jan. 9, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. [Administration Office - 811 N. Sunrise Boulevard]

This is a long-term plan that we will implement over time with support from our community. Short-term, the plan recommends addressing two issues: skyrocketing call volumes and replacing aging apparatus.

Call volumes have increased 33% in the last four years. More calls mean added costs for overtime, apparatus maintenance, fuel, equipment, and other supplies. State law limits us to a 1% revenue increase per year when the cost to provide service is often higher than this. Revenue is not keeping up with the demand for service, and we're starting to struggle.

The Strategic Plan calls for adding two firefighters during peak call hours to reduce response times. This also will improve our ability to respond to multiple emergencies that come in at the same time. Currently,

we rely on help from neighboring fire districts, which can take longer.

Replacing aging apparatus (such as fire engines, ambulances and water tenders) is also a focus of the Strategic Plan. Despite regular maintenance, some of our rigs are past their usable lives, breaking down and can delay our ability to reach you in an emergency. Our goal is to have adequate resources for replacement apparatus when needed.

The Board of Fire Commissioners will consider asking the community to fund two firefighters and an apparatus replacement program through a fire levy lid lift sometime in 2017. The fire levy, which provides a majority of funding for emergency services, has not been increased since 2004.

We will discuss the Strategic Plan and funding issues in detail during these meetings. If you are unable to attend, I hope that you will review the plan on our website (www.camanofire.com) and share your thoughts with me at mschick@camanofire.com or (360) 387-1512.

Wishing you and your family a safe, healthy and prosperous new year,

Chief Michael Schick

Camano EMI Update

The Camano Emergency Medical Information (EMI) program is a huge success thanks to the Mabana Flames, a local service organization that developed the idea and provided some funding. Thanks to the Madrona Jets too for assisting with distribution. More than 2,500 EMI kits have been distributed to residents so far!

The EMI kit allows people to list their medical history and other information (such as medications, who to contact, what to do with pets) that firefighters or paramedics can access during an emergency. This information is placed in an airtight tube in the

refrigerator, and a decal on the homeowner's front door indicates to emergency responders that it is inside.

The EMI kits are free thanks to generous donations by the Mabana Flames in cooperation with Camano Island Fire and Rescue. We encourage local residents to pick one up at the following locations:

- Country Club Fire Station – 1326 Elger Bay Road
- Vista/Madrona Fire Station – 273 N. West Camano Drive
- Administration Office – 811 N. Sunrise Boulevard



PRESORTED STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
IQ DIRECT
98201

811 N. Sunrise Blvd.
Camano Island, WA 98282
(360) 387-1512
info@camanofire.com

Let's Get Social!

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

How are emergency services funded on Camano Island?

Camano Island Fire and Rescue provides fire suppression, emergency medical service, and technical rescue to 16,000 people over 40 square miles. Forty-nine full-time, part-time and volunteer firefighters respond to an average of 1,900 calls per year.

Emergency services on Camano Island are funded by two property tax levies: one for emergency medical service and another for fire suppression. The EMS levy was renewed by voters last year at 50 cents per \$1,000 of assessed property value. This levy rate cannot increase.

In 2004 voters approved a fire levy rate of \$1.25 per \$1,000 which has fallen to \$1.08 in 2017. By law, the fire district is limited to a 1% revenue increase per year, which is challenging when the cost to provide service is higher than that. Voters have the option to increase the fire levy to fund emergency services.

Camano Island Fire and Rescue is governed by a five-member Board of Fire Commissioners, elected at-large by the community. All board meetings are open to the public and rotated around the island to provide greater access. Our fire district operates under a balanced budget, and has a long history of passing its financial and accountability audits by the state. We actively look for ways to make your tax dollars go further by reducing expenses, applying for grants and sharing resources with neighboring fire agencies.

Chili/Chowder Cook-off

On November 12, Camano Island Fire and Rescue team members participated in the 21st annual fundraiser for the Camano Island Chamber of Commerce. Over 1,000 people attended the event this year, including Sparky the Fire Dog! Team members had information about the fire district's safety programs on hand too.

