

House Calls



NEWSLETTER FOR THE RESIDENTS OF SPOKANE COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT 9

SUMMER 2014

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DEMO DAY &
WELLNESS FAIR
RECAP

WILDFIRE SAFETY

COLORING WINNERS

SPECIAL M&O LEVY

Look for your ballot
in the mail starting
July 18th.

Your Vote Counts!



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BLOG
fire9prevention.org

WWW.SCFD9.ORG

509-466-4602



Fire District 9 Continues to Work to Keep Insurance Premiums Low

FIRE DISTRICT 9 IS COMMITTED TO DOING EVERYTHING IT CAN TO KEEP OUR INSURANCE RATES AS LOW AS POSSIBLE AND MAINTAIN A LEVEL OF SERVICE THAT IS ATTRACTIVE TO HOMEOWNERS AND TO BUSINESSES. Insurance companies set their premiums for homeowners and businesses based upon the "ISO Rating" (Insurance Services Office).

These ratings are determined by the Washington Survey and Ratings Bureau (WSRB), and range from one to ten with one being perfect and ten being the worst.

Periodically, the WSRB conducts a thorough audit and inspection of our fire district. It looks at the age of the fire trucks and other apparatus, the number and qualifications of firefighters on duty at a given time, the number of fire hydrants in

the district, the age and condition of our water systems, and the number and location of fire stations. The WSRB looks at everything including the age and condition of our fire hoses!

In the mid-1990's, Fire District 9's ISO rating was an unimpressive 8 which was not particularly attractive to businesses and home owners seeking to relocate in Fire District 9. We set out to reduce our rating initially through a successful bond measure to purchase fire trucks and build new facilities. Because of these efforts, our ISO rating went from an 8 to a respectable 4. In effect, this ISO ratings improvement effectively cut home owners' and business owners' insurance rates in half!

This substantial saving on insurance premiums is a big reason for our continued success with the voters who have consistently re-approved our maintenance and operations levy.

The bonds issued in the 1990's have been fully paid for some time. Fire District 9, however, established a replacement program to fund the purchase of new fire trucks and facilities to keep our good ISO rating without asking for a bond issue. This is one example of Fire District 9 focusing on the serious business of running a fire department. Not only can the public be confident that well-trained professionals will respond to emergency calls with response times that are well within the industry standard, we continue to work to keep property taxes stable and insurance premiums as low as possible.



JACK CATES, FIRE CHIEF, SPOKANE COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT #9

Annual Demo Day & Wellness Fair a Huge Success!

THE SPOKANE COMMUNITY CAME TOGETHER AND ENJOYED A DAY OF LEARNING AND FUN AT FIRE DISTRICT 9'S ANNUAL DEMO DAY & WELLNESS FAIR. Hosted at Station 92's Training Facility in Mead, attendees enjoyed tours of the fire station, and got to witness firefighters doing a variety of demonstrations including: vehicle extrication, harnessing the flames from a propane fire, simulating a high cliff rescue off the six-story training tower and more.

The event featured a variety of emergency vehicles ranging from fire trucks to the MedStar helicopter, a Sheriff's Marine Unit boat, WA State Patrol car, Fire 9's bulldozer and more.

Many visitors learned "Hands Only" CPR, had their blood pressure and blood sugar checked, and watched "Sim-Man" our emergency medical training mannequin in action.

The Fire 9 Annual event hosted over 40 community organizations that answered questions and provided information on topics ranging from electrical dangers



MALCOLM AND SAMUEL ENJOYED THE JUNIOR FIREFIGHTER CHALLENGE COURSE .

to recycling and composting. In addition, there were free chair massages, chances to sign up for volunteer opportunities, info on children's programs and many health and wellness programs too!

WE HOPE TO SEE YOU ALL HERE FOR NEXT YEAR'S EVENT ON SATURDAY, JUNE 6, 2015!

The number one fire call that we receive in Fire District 9 is for wildland fires.

ATTENTION TO WILDLAND FIRE PREPAREDNESS IS CRUCIAL TO ENSURING YOUR HOUSE SURVIVES WILDFIRE SEASON. The following four steps will help:

- 1. Get rid of dead and down timber.** If it's standing dead or dead and down, get it out of the way now so it's not fuel to spread fire in August. This reduces both the rate of speed at which the fire can spread and the duration of its burn time. Both help in making an approaching wildfire more manageable.
- 2. Most wildfires here move along on the ground.** If fire gets up into the timber, it's extremely difficult to stop. **To avoid this, limb trees up to about eight feet above the ground.** Eliminating low 'ladder fuels' keeps the wildfire on the ground rather than up in the timber canopy.
- 3. Open up the timber canopy as you move closer to your home.** Fire will travel quickly if the heat is held under a



tight timber canopy. By thinning trees out closer to the house, heat can rise and disperse, decreasing wildfire intensity and increasing chances your home will survive.

- 4. Thirty feet of maintained yard makes a great fire break.** Use fire-resistant plants up near the house, NOT junipers, cedar shrubs or arborvitae. You don't want those flammable shrubs near your home during wildfire season.

If you've got questions about survivable space you can go to www.readysetgospokane.org or call 466-4602.

THEY REALLY DO CALL IT FIRE ENGINE RED...

...AND YELLOW, AND BLUE, SOMETIMES EVEN A LITTLE GREEN. You can tell by taking a look at the winning entries in our recent Fire District 9 Coloring Contest. Thanks to all who entered and a special thanks to Costco for donating our Grand Prize.



2014 COLORING CONTEST WINNER, ELISE, WITH THE GRAND PRIZE, A DISC GOLF SET COURTESY OF COSTCO. ELISE'S PHOTO WILL ALSO APPEAR IN OUR 2015 CALENDAR.



AGE 3-4 WINNER, KELLAN



AGE 7-8 WINNER, HANNAH



AGE 5-6 WINNER, JADY



AGE 9-10 WINNER, ELISE

Special Maintenance & Operations (M&O) Levy

- Fire District revenue is generated solely from property taxes.
- Proposition 1 is for calendar year 2015 and 2016.
- Proposition 1 is a replacement for the expiring 2013 and 2014 M&O levy. This is NOT AN ADDITIONAL TAX.
- Used for the maintenance and operations costs of our fire and emergency medical services.
- The Special M&O levy funds approximately 60% of our total budget.
- The Special M&O levy provides the funding to maintain existing service levels (both staffing and services).
- Proposition 1 will be on the August 5th Primary election ballot.
- Our current 2014 M&O levy rate is \$1.79 per \$1,000 of assessed value (AV), or \$269 on a \$150,000 home.
- The 2015 and 2016 M&O levy rates are estimated to be the same as the current 2014 rate.
- The District experienced declining property tax revenues due to declining property values for 2011, 2012 and 2013 and has finally seen minimal growth (less than 1%) in 2014.
- We are using reserves to help support the budget, to maintain services and to avoid raising taxes.
- The Special M&O levy requires a super-majority 60% "yes" vote to pass.
- The Special M&O levy requires at least 40% of the number of voters from the last general election.



LOOK FOR YOUR BALLOT IN THE MAIL STARTING JULY 18TH. YOUR VOTE COUNTS!



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HOUSE CALLS is a publication of
Spokane County Fire District 9

Jack Cates, Fire Chief
Michael R. Atwood, Commissioner
James E. Bennett, Commissioner
Thomas R. McGarry, Commissioner

*If you are a resident of the District and would like a **FREE address post**, please contact:
District Administration, 466-4602*



FREE First Aid/CPR & CPR Classes for Spokane County Fire District 9 Citizens & Businesses

For more information, please call Administration at 466-4602 or visit www.scf9.org.

FREE BLOOD PRESSURE CHECK

Stop by and see us on the first Tuesday of every month from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm at the Wandermere Fred Meyer.



SCFD9 VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

RESPOND TO THE CALL

THE BEST PART OF A FIREFIGHTER'S JOB IS KNOWING WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE TO THE COMMUNITIES WE SERVE.

If that appeals to you too, we'd welcome you as a volunteer—and we'll train you to work alongside the other members of our team.

Are you at least 18 years old, living close to one of our fire stations, and willing to help others at a moment's notice? Call 466-4602 for information on how to get started.

