

# House Calls



NEWSLETTER FOR THE RESIDENTS OF SPOKANE COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT 9

WINTER 2013

## INSIDE

RETIREMENT

FAMILY COOKBOOK

FIREPLACE SAFETY

THANK YOU!

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APPROVAL

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509-466-4602



## DANGER: Stay Off the Ice — Stay Alive

**YOU'VE SEEN IT IN THE NEWS A HUNDRED TIMES.** Someone thinks the ice is strong enough to support their weight — right up until it cracks beneath their feet and the dramatic rescue or tragic outcome ensues. Trust us. As first responders, we know of far too many of these incidents. But with a little information and a dose of caution, you can help.



Within the boundaries of Spokane Fire District 9 are many bodies of water that freeze in the winter creating the potential for danger. Keep in mind that many factors, other than thickness, can cause ice to be unsafe. Ice seldom freezes uniformly; it may be a foot thick in one spot and only an inch thick just a few feet away.

To maintain readiness, our crews train annually and practice performing Ice Rescues so that in the event of an emergency, they can react with speed and confidence. Firefighters, wearing special Ice Rescue Suits, tethered to the shore by a rope, venture out onto the ice and into the water to retrieve victims. Fire District 9 also has two specially designed Ice Rescue Sleds that can be deployed when necessary.

### WHAT TO DO IF SOMEONE FALLS THROUGH THE ICE

**STOP!** Do not go towards the victim. If the ice wasn't strong enough to hold them, it won't hold you either and could mean two victims in the water instead of just one.

**CALL 911** or go get help if you have no phone.

**PREACH** to the victim. Encourage them to stay afloat and let them know that help is on the way.

**REACH** out to the victim. If you can safely reach the victim from shore extend an object such as a limb or pole for them to grasp onto.

**THROW** something to the victim. A rope or extension cord to help pull them out. Or a hockey stick or sturdy branch they can grab onto.

**ROW** out to the victim. Find a light boat to push across the ice ahead of you to the edge of the hole, get in the boat and pull the victim in.

**GO?** Remember well-meaning but untrained rescuers can actually make the situation worse and add to the potential for injuries or deaths.

**STAY OFF THE ICE — AND STAY ALIVE!**



## The end of an era

**ON JANUARY 7, 1987 FIRE DISTRICT #9 WAS AT A CROSSROADS.** The District was broke. So broke in fact that a signature loan had to be secured just to make payroll. Leadership had eroded to a point where it was practically nonexistent, and the sitting fire chief had decided to resign.

Faced with the task of hiring a new chief and ending the chaos, the Board of Fire Commissioners went out on a limb and hired a thirty-three year old cowboy from Boise named Bob Anderson. Over the next twenty-six years Chief Anderson turned Fire District #9 into the premier fire district in Washington State and — in the eyes of many — the best in the entire country.

When Chief Anderson took the helm in 1987 the District had 12 career firefighters, 7 stations and an insurance rating of eight. Today the District has

over 60 full-time employees, 110 volunteer firefighters and a rating of 4. On January 31, 2013, Chief Anderson will hang up his turnouts for the last time. All of us at Fire District #9 are grateful for Chief Anderson's leadership, guidance, and dedication to the District. *We all wish Chief Anderson a long and happy retirement.*

## The hidden danger in your fireplace

**YOU'VE HEARD THE OLD SAYING, "WHERE THERE'S SMOKE, THERE'S FIRE"? AS FIREFIGHTERS, WE AGREE THAT'S ALMOST ALWAYS THE CASE.** What you may not realize is that sometimes, even when you think a fire is out, the ashes left behind may still be incredibly hot and dangerously combustible. Over the past two years, we've noticed an increasing number of fires caused by the improper disposal of ashes — including a fatal fire in just the past year. The phenomenon is becoming so common it's one of the first things fire investigators ask about.



### What makes fireplace ashes so dangerous?

Fireplace ash has very low thermal conductivity. That means a lot of things to a fire investigator, but what it means to you is that you probably won't feel the heat that

may be hidden in the ashes. People develop a false sense of security thinking the ashes are out and cold. Unfortunately, stirring them up when you sweep or vacuum out your fireplace provides the fresh oxygen necessary for combustion. Putting them in a combustible container provides all the fuel necessary to start a fire. The next thing you know, you're calling 911 and we're on our way to save your house — and maybe even the lives of your and your family.

*Here are our guidelines for handling ashes from your fireplace:*

1. Wait until the wood-burning appliance has cooled down.
2. Use a metal bucket or container with a tight-fitting lid for transporting the ashes. Plastic buckets will melt if there is enough heat. A tight-fitting lid will reduce fresh oxygen supply to the ashes.
3. Get the ashes outside and away from the house immediately.
4. Soak the ashes with water to ensure they're out, wet and cold. Then let them sit for a week. If you want to dispose of the ashes in the garbage, pour cold, wet, week-old ashes in your garbage can when you put it out for pickup.
5. Better yet, sprinkle the ashes on your garden (not if you have straw, mulch, or any other combustible covering on the garden however). If there is snow on the ground, that will help ensure your ashes get cold and wet. Over the winter, that material will settle into your garden plot to be worked in next spring.



Metal buckets and lids are available at the Wandermere Ace Hardware and Aslin Finch on the Newport Highway.

***Careful attention to how you dispose of fire place and woodstove ashes can ensure you still have a home standing at the end of this winter heating season.***

# Firefighters climb to great heights to fight blood cancer



**ON MARCH 10, 2013, AFTER MONTHS OF RIGOROUS TRAINING, DISTRICT 9 FIREFIGHTERS IN PEAK PHYSICAL CONDITION WILL TAKE ON SEATTLE'S COLUMBIA TOWER IN THE 22ND ANNUAL SCOTT FIREFIGHTER STAIRCLIMB TO BENEFIT THE LEUKEMIA & LYMPHOMA SOCIETY.**

At 788 feet of vertical elevation, the Columbia Center in downtown Seattle stands as the second tallest building west of the Mississippi. It takes 69 flights of stairs and 1,311 steps to arrive at the highly acclaimed observation deck and its breathtaking views overlooking the city. The Scott Firefighter Stairclimb supports the mission of The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, raising money through sponsorships, individual and department fundraising, and entry fees. In 2012, the event featured 1,550 firefighters from 291 different departments and brought in a record \$1.2 million for blood-cancer research and patient services.

Firefighters from District 9 have participated in this competitive fundraiser since 1998 and have raised more than \$30,000 for care and research. With support from friends and family, local businesses and Fire District 9, our competitors hope to exceed previous years' fundraising.

**For more information and to make a donation, visit [www.firefighterstairclimb.org](http://www.firefighterstairclimb.org).**

All proceeds benefit The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society.



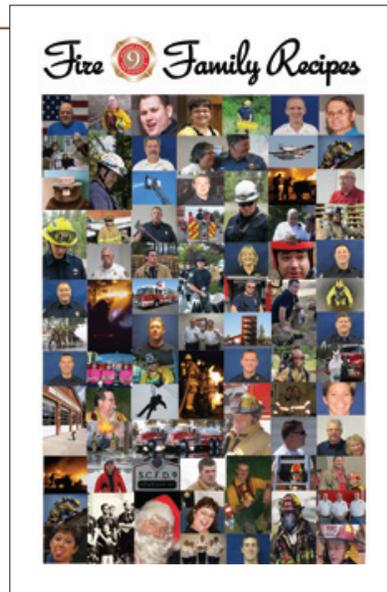
## From our family to yours

**THE FIRE 9 FAMILY COOKBOOK IS A COLLECTION OF 174 FAVORITE RECIPES FROM FIRE DISTRICT 9 STAFF, FIREFIGHTERS AND THEIR FAMILY MEMBERS.**

From Asian Lettuce Wraps to Gluten-free Biscuits, Deep Dish Brownies, Pasta with Creamy Garlic Sauce — to Firehouse Burgers and Venison Meatballs — there's something sure to please almost everyone.

Cost of the cookbook is just \$10. Proceeds benefit the Fire 9 Benevolent Fund, which supports the general well-being of our Fire 9 Family. Funds may be used to send condolences to a grieving family or friend, or to provide a meal or other support for someone following an illness, surgery or other difficult or traumatic circumstance.

Cookbooks are available for purchase at the Fire District 9 Administration office located at 3801 E. Farwell Road in Mead. We can also mail them to the destination of your choice for an additional \$3 postage/handling. Call 466-4602 for more information.



## FREE First Aid/CPR & CPR Classes

**for Spokane County Fire District 9 Citizens and Businesses**

For more information, please call Administration at 466-4602 or visit our website, [www.scd9.org](http://www.scd9.org).



# House Calls

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Jack Cates, Interim Fire Chief  
Michael R. Atwood, Commissioner  
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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*



## 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.

## YOUR HEALTH IS IMPORTANT TO US

**WE ALL LEAD BUSY LIVES — AND SOMETIMES, KEEPING UP WITH OF OUR HEALTH DOESN'T GET THE KIND OF ATTENTION IT DESERVES.** That's why Fire District 9 and the Wandermere Fred Meyer have joined forces to help you monitor and keep track of important personal and family health information.

**Just stop by the Fred Meyer store at Wandermere on the first Tuesday of the month between 9:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.**

A District 9 Paramedic and EMT will be taking blood pressures and offering useful information about CPR and other techniques and programs that can help you and your family stay healthier.



While you're there, pick up District 9 Blood pressure and Medication cards to help you keep track your medical and medication needs — and as a quick and useful reference should we ever have to respond to a fire or medical emergency at your home.

Along with the medical testing and information, firefighters will also be handing out stickers and safety coloring books for the kids — so bring the whole family along. We're looking forward to seeing you there.