

Camas-Washougal Fire Department Newsletter

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Our Mission:
***To provide the highest
quality service to our com-
munity through the protec-
tion and preservation of life
and property***



Joint Council Meeting Presentation

On April 8, 2013, a rare joint city council meeting was held between Camas and Washougal elected officials. The meeting was held at Washougal City Hall and the agenda included several items for discussion. The most notable of these items for CWFD was a presentation and discussion on the nearly two year old merger between the Camas and Washougal Fire Departments. Due to the length of discussion on other topics, the presentation being delivered by Washougal City Administrator David Scott and CWFD Fire Chief Nick Swinhart was cut short. Despite this, the councils signaled their desire to continue with efforts to form a long term interlocal agreement between both cities for fire and EMS services. Washougal Mayor Sean Guard and Camas Mayor Scott Higgins reiterated their support for continuation of the merger. Meetings will take place soon to discuss various options for a long term agreement between the partners. Dates and times will be posted when available.



Late Night Fire Damages Vacant Home

Just after 11:00 pm on Sunday, March 31, Camas-Washougal Fire Department was dispatched to a confirmed structure fire in the area of Louis Block Park in Camas. Upon arrival, crews found a vacant single family structure with flames showing from the basement. Crews began an aggressive interior attack and had the fire under control in a short period of time. A total of 17 firefighters from CWFD, with assistance from East County Fire and Rescue, responded to the scene.

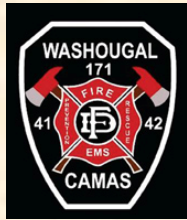


Wildland Fire Season

CWFD wants to remind all citizens that wildland fire season is just around the corner. Last year a severely dry summer kept crews fighting fires in Eastern Washington for weeks, as well as closer to home at the Steigerwald Wildlife Refuge (above). We recommend the following to keep your home safe from wildland fires:

- Create a fire-safe, defensible space not less than 30' around your entire home
- Store combustibles away from the house, such as fuel, firewood, or other debris
- If possible, install a fire-resistant roof (untreated shake roofs increase fire risk)
- Clear your roof and gutters regularly (tinder-dry needles and limbs catch fire easily)
- Install a spark arrester if you have a chimney
- Address numbers should be at least 4" high and visible from the street day or night
- Install smoke detectors and test them once a month to make sure they work properly
- Consider installing automatic fire sprinklers in your home

Remember: Just one home that is not properly protected from fire can put an entire community or wildland area at risk!



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Annual Report Available

The 2012 Annual Report on CWFD activities was released recently. It contains budget overview and individual reports from several of our members. The report may be downloaded from our website (link on the front page).

Frequently Asked Questions

When I called 911, I asked for an ambulance. Why did a fire truck also respond?

Like nearly all fire departments in Clark County, CWFD sends fire engines to certain medical calls. Not only is this part of the county dispatching protocol, but many medical calls require the assistance of more than just the two personnel that arrive on the ambulance. Since all of our staff are medically trained, we frequently utilize the extra personnel from an engine to assist our paramedics.

Some fire departments in Clark County are exploring responding to medical calls with smaller and lighter vehicles to save money. Has CWFD looked at this?

CWFD doesn't currently have the staffing, equipment, or storage space, to use this model. Doing so would require taking an engine out of service and leaving large areas of the community without nearby fire coverage. The model seems to be promising for agencies that are able to use it, however, and CWFD may consider it more in the future if circumstances change.



New Faces at CWFD

At the April 15 Camas City Council meeting, new career Firefighter/Paramedic Mitch Marling took the oath of office from Mayor Scott Higgins (left). At the April 3 Volunteer Firefighters meeting, 8 new volunteer firefighters likewise took an oath of office from CWFD Fire Chief Nick Swinhart. Those new volunteer firefighters are Patrick Aston, Tyler Bullock, Rebecca DePasquale, Devon Groom, Brooke Lafoon, Christian Rud-dell, Tyler Purkeypyle, and Miguel Salamaca. Their volunteer academy started on April 13 and continues thru June 22. Congratulations to all our new personnel and welcome to the CWFD family!

Warning Signs of a Heart Attack (from the American Heart Association)



Some heart attacks are sudden and intense — the "movie heart attack," where no one doubts what's happening. But most heart attacks start slowly, with mild pain or discomfort. Often people affected aren't sure what's wrong and wait too long before getting help. Here are signs that can mean a heart attack is happening:

- **Chest discomfort.** Most heart attacks involve discomfort in the center of the chest that lasts more than a few minutes, or that goes away and comes back. It can feel like uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness or pain.
- **Discomfort in other areas of the upper body.** Symptoms can include pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw or stomach.
- **Shortness of breath** with or without chest discomfort.
- **Other signs** may include breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea or lightheadedness.

As with men, women's most common heart attack symptom is chest pain **or discomfort**. But women are somewhat more likely than men to experience some of the other common symptoms, particularly **shortness of breath, nausea/vomiting, and back or jaw pain**.

Learn the signs, but remember this: Even if you're not sure it's a heart attack, have it checked out (tell a doctor about your symptoms). Minutes matter! Fast action can save lives — maybe your own. Don't wait more than five minutes to call 9-1-1 or your emergency response number.



Calling 9-1-1 is almost always the fastest way to get lifesaving treatment. Emergency medical services (EMS) staff can begin treatment when they arrive — up to an hour sooner than if someone gets to the hospital by car. EMS staff are also trained to revive someone whose heart has stopped. Patients with chest pain who arrive by ambulance usually receive faster treatment at the hospital, too. It is best to call EMS for rapid transport to the emergency room.