



Your Fire Department

NEWSLETTER

Dear Neighbor,

Wildland fire season came early this year. Fire District 7 assisted with a significant fire in Leavenworth in May. Interagency cooperation is critical for large-scale emergencies, and we continue to be called on to help because of our highly trained personnel, apparatus, and rescue programs.

The citizens of Fire District 7 have continued to benefit from the successes of the merger of the fire districts. The fire district was recently reevaluated by the Washington Surveying and Rating Bureau (WSRB) on the fire protection capabilities provided to the community. The WSRB is the agency fire insurance companies use to establish premium rates for their insured properties. We are happy to report that not only did Fire District 7 remain at a Protection Class 3, additionally the Class 3 rating was extended to and greatly improves upon the fire protection in the unincorporated areas of Monroe. The upgraded protection class will go into effect August 1, 2017.

The purpose of the reevaluation by WSRB was to gather information needed to determine a fire insurance Public Protection Classification that most insurance companies use to determine fire insurance rates for property owners. In addition, we are also in the process of being evaluated by a third party company to update our standards of cover



report. Both reports help the fire district to determine best practices to ensure we improve service.

As Fire District 7 continues to use these evaluations to improve service, we will use them to review and update our Strategic Plan. We will soon be starting this process and will ask for citizen input to help guide our plan. A more formal request will be sent out later this year. We value our public's input to ensure we are providing the services that meet your needs.

Since 2008, the voter-approved fire levy of \$1.50 has dropped to \$1.42 (former FD7) and \$1.45 (former FD3) per \$1,000 of assessed value respectively. In August, Fire District 7 is asking voters for a levy lid lift to restore the \$1.50 per \$1,000 for fire services.

Fire districts are junior taxing districts, which are stand alone agencies which do not receive funding from other local government, such as the county or city, and are limited to annual increases of one percent each year per state law. Lid lifts - for both fire and EMS - are a common way for fire districts to fund emergency services. All lid lifts must be voter approved, and help restore funding when the demand for emergency services outpaces the revenue we receive to provide it. It's important to us that our community understands how we are funded, and I ask that you read more about this issue in this newsletter. You can also visit our website to learn more about our funding.

Your continued support helps build the most advanced emergency response system in the county. We want to thank you for recognizing the important role emergency services plays in the safety and well-being of our communities. We encourage and value your input to ensure we are meeting the needs of our community.

Chief Gary Meek
GMeek@snofire7.org



Wildfire Is Coming **ARE YOU READY?**

Keep your property lean and green to help protect your family and home.

Creating defensible space is essential to improve your home's chance of surviving a wildfire. It's the buffer you create between a building on your property and the grass, trees, shrubs, or any wildland area that surround it. This space is needed to slow or stop the spread of wildfire and it protects your home from catching fire—either from direct flame contact or radiant heat. Defensible space is also important for the protection of the firefighters defending your home.

Defensible Space Zones

Two zones make up the required 100 feet of defensible space.



Zone 1

Zone 1 extends 30 feet* out from buildings, structures, decks, etc.

- Remove all dead plants, grass and weeds (vegetation).
- Remove dead or dry leaves and pine needles from your yard, roof and rain gutters.
- Trim trees regularly to keep branches a minimum of 10 feet from other trees.
- Remove branches that hang over your roof and keep dead branches 10 feet away from your chimney.
- Relocate wood piles into Zone 2.
- Remove or prune flammable plants and shrubs near windows.
- Remove vegetation and items that could catch fire from around and under decks.
- Create a separation between trees, shrubs and items that could catch fire, such as patio furniture, wood piles, swing sets, etc.



Zone 2

Zone 2 extends 100 feet out from buildings, structures, decks, etc.

- Cut or mow annual grass down to a maximum height of 4 inches.
- Create horizontal spacing between shrubs and trees.
- Create vertical spacing between grass, shrubs and trees.
- Remove fallen leaves, needles, twigs, bark, cones, and small branches.

GET MORE INFO AT
<http://www.readyforwildfire.org>

Fire Levy Lid Lift on August Ballot

During the August Primary Election, Fire District 7 is asking voters to approve the restoration of the fire levy. Based on the expected growth in the fire district, the fire levy lid lift would represent a 5-cent per \$1,000 assessed value (AV) increase for property owners in former Monroe Fire District 3. Property owners in Fire District 7 would see an 8-cent per \$1,000 increase. Due to state law and because of the merger, all property owners will pay the same combined rate for fire and EMS in 2018.

In 2016 emergency personnel responded to over 10,790 emergency calls, 20 percent of which were fire related. Fire Chief Gary Meek says that the district has worked hard to manage costs and improve efficiencies for taxpayers. However, the demand for emergency services often outpaces the revenue received to provide it.

State law limits a fire district's annual tax increase to one percent per year, causing the voter-approved levy rate for fire and EMS to decline over time. That's why fire agencies across the state regularly ask voters to restore funding through lid lifts.

In 2008, voters in Fire District 7 approved the fire levy for \$1.50 per \$1,000 of assessed property value. Over time, the levy has fallen to \$1.42 (FD7) / \$1.45 (former FD3) per \$1000. If approved by voters, the lid lift would cost an additional \$20 per year, based on a \$400,000 home, for property owners in former Monroe Fire District 3, and \$32 for that same home in former Fire District 7 area.

"We want our community to understand how emergency services are funded," said Chief Meek. "Lid lifts are

one tool we have to keep up with rising costs to provide service and allow us to not have large spikes in taxes for several years."

Levy funds are used for emergency personnel, training and certifications, fire station construction, facility maintenance, fire & EMS supplies, apparatus and equipment replacement. It is through strategic financial planning and voter support that Fire District 7 has been able to fund capital purchases such as fire station construction and fire apparatus purchases without asking voters for excess levies and/or bond issues since 1978.

More information on Fire District 7's fire levy lid lift can be found at snofire7.org. Ballots will be mailed to all registered voters July 14th, and must be returned or postmarked by August 1st (Primary Election Day) to count.

Outdoor Burning within Fire District 7

Fire District 7 encourages residents with access to curbside recycling to dispose of vegetative materials through their disposal service. Residential outdoor burning is an alternative to curbside recycling programs and an alternative to transporting debris to landfills or transfer stations.

Within the Puget Sound region residential outdoor burning is allowed only with a permit under authority of the local fire district. Snohomish County Fire District 7 is one area in the county which both allows outdoor residential burning, and has residential properties of an area substantial enough to support outdoor burning.

There are two types of outdoor burning which are allowed within Fire District 7: recreational fires and residential outdoor burning. Before burning, obtain a permit if necessary, and then visit our website at www.snofire7.org to make sure there isn't a burn ban in effect. There is no residential burning

allowed during the months of July and August of any year. Refer to our easy guide to know the difference between the two types of burning.

NO residential burning allowed during July and August

"We first initiated an outdoor burning program in 1999 as the only legal way for property owners to conduct outdoor burning to dispose of vegetative yard waste. The program since then has been very well received by the community," said Assistant Fire Chief Jamie Silva.

The \$25 annual permit fee has not increased since the program's inception in 1999. Fees collected support the printing of burn permit and violation forms, and the costs of responding to reports of unlawful burning. "Some people wonder

why the fire district is even involved with a program which allows people to burn, considering that the fire district's role is to prevent and suppress fires. Outdoor burning actually helps reduce fire potential by decreasing the amount of combustible materials on a property," said Deputy Chief Michael Fitzgerald, the fire district's fire marshal. "Outdoor burning is one way to dispose of fuels in a controlled manner, and reduce the potential and spread of wildfire."

The Board of Fire Commissioners are considering changes over the next several months which could expand the outdoor burning area west of SR 9 SE. In addition, the fire district anticipates that an online permit application process will begin in September.

If you have questions about the Outdoor Burning Program within Snohomish County Fire District 7, please call 360-794-7666 or email riskreduction@snofire7.org

Recreational Fires versus Residential Fires

Characteristic	Recreational Fires	Residential Fires
Permit	Not required	Required
Permit fee	No permit required	\$25/year
Obtain permit	N/A	Station 31 - 163 Village Ct., Monroe
Size	3' diameter x 2' tall	4' diameter x 3' tall
Fuel	Dry firewood or charcoal only	Yard prunings, branches, leaves
Season*	All year unless forbidden by a burn ban	September 1 - June 30
Property line setback	25 feet	50 feet
Structure setback	25 feet	50 feet
Violations	Referred to PS Clean Air Agency	Referred to PS Clean Air Agency

*Applicable burn bans overrule outdoor burning seasons. Residential permits are valid for 365 days from the date of issuance, excluding burn bans and the months of July and August of any year.



Snohomish County FIRE DISTRICT 7

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Prevention Corner



Did you know that a child's body heats up three to five times faster than an adult's? So please...

- Never leave your child alone in a car – not even for one minute!
- Keep your car locked, and teach kids not to play in cars.
- Take action. If you ever see a child alone in a car call 9-1-1.

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NEXTDOOR

Kids' Corner

WORD SEARCH

X	A	V	T	S	A	F	E	T	Y	H	Q
L	D	E	G	F	Z	K	N	Z	W	Y	I
F	T	X	S	U	N	S	C	R	E	E	N
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- FIND WORDS**
- Lake
 - Boat
 - Float
 - River
 - Swim
 - Water
 - Safety
 - Paddle
 - LifeJacket
 - Sunscreen



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