

AT YOUR SERVICE

*Serving the citizens of Greater Federal Way
and Des Moines*

THE COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER OF SOUTH KING FIRE & RESCUE

FROM YOUR FIRE CHIEF



January will mark the fourth year since the merger between the Federal Way and Des Moines Fire Departments. For the past 60 years, we have aimed to provide the best fire department services in the area, at one of the lowest costs to our citizens. The current economic downturn has proved challenging in that we still want to maintain those services our community

has come to expect, but unfortunately, we have been forced to cut programs and services across the fire district.

The 2011 budget reflects the given fact that we continue to exist in the worst recession this Nation has had to face since the Great Depression. Economic indicators have not stabilized, and 2011 reflects the second year that the fire district will receive less revenue than it did the year before. The fire district's revenue relies almost exclusively on property taxes. The assessed values of local properties within King County continue to decline on average of 15-25% over a two year period, with some of those properties seeing a more significant drop.

We anticipated this affect and decided to place Proposition One on the August ballot. The benefit charge funding package unexpectedly failed, clearly making a statement from our citizens that the fire district must reduce programs and services.

By significantly cutting the budget and using reserve money judiciously, we have been able to make it through 2010 and into 2011. However, we will not be able to cover expenses using this manner beyond that, without making severe cutbacks.

Projections for 2012 and 2013 suggest that property values will continue to decline with a potential flattening by 2014. However, nobody can predict what the coming years will actually bring forth relative to property values.

In the final analysis, the leadership within the fire district, from the elected Board of Fire Commissioners throughout the entire organization, will need to work together in determining methodological strategies to work through the current downturn in the economy while still planning for the future and living up to our mission:

*"We help people by responding with professional
Fire Department services."*

2011 SKF&R CUTS

- > Closing one Aid Car and reducing an additional Aid Car to part-time staffing, saving overtime and direct personnel costs. We have chosen to close aid cars as opposed to engine companies as we can fight fires and handle emergency medical incidents with our staffed engine companies...while we cannot do the same with an aid car, and we simply will not have the staffing to do both.
- > Maintaining a hiring freeze on all positions, and continuing to allow a reduction in staffing through attrition. As employees retire, are laid off, or leave the organization for any reason, their positions will be frozen and remain unfilled for the foreseeable future.
- > Freezing all Administrative and non-contract salaries at 2010 levels.
- > Reducing Public Education programs that create a direct cost, and working towards more voluntary efforts in our education programs.
- > Eliminating all Capital Expenditures, other than debt service.
- > Eliminating all non-mandatory training and program expenses.

At Your Service, the official newsletter of South King Fire & Rescue, is changing how it will be distributed. You may have noticed it didn't come to your home or business in the mail, but rather is available on our website. Printing and postage costs have forced us to consider other ways to reach our community.

Next year South King Fire & Rescue will be implementing an e-newsletter, which people can subscribe to. More information regarding how that will happen will be coming out in the first quarter of 2011. But until then, please enjoy this copy and tell your friends and neighbors about the upcoming change as well.

Happy Holidays!

WINTER WEATHER - ARE YOU READY?

Forecasters are predicting the upcoming winter to be one we won't forget here in the Pacific Northwest, all because of La Niña. What is La Niña exactly, and what should we do to be prepared?

La Niña is defined as cooler than normal seas–surface temperatures in the central and eastern tropical Pacific Ocean that impact global weather pattern. For us in the Pacific Northwest, we could see more rain, colder temperatures and bigger snowstorms. We could see the winter start out we, with fairly average temperatures, but after the first of the year, temperatures may fall and snowfall would increase.



Knowing all this, South King Fire & Rescue is asking our community to take some extra time to prepare their homes and families for winter conditions.

BEFORE A STORM

PREPARE YOUR HOME

- ✓ Caulk and weather-strip doors and windows.
- ✓ Insulate any water pipes that run along outer walls or are outside your house so water will be less likely to freeze.
- ✓ Have a working, battery-powered smoke alarm and carbon monoxide detector.
- ✓ Have chimney and flue inspected and/or cleaned.
- ✓ Install an outdoor thermometer.
- ✓ Make sure you have a fire extinguisher ready to use if needed.

PREPARE YOUR FAMILY

- ✓ Keep several days' supply of these items:
 - Food that needs no cooking or refrigeration, such as bread, crackers, cereal, canned foods and dried fruits.
 - Water stored in clean containers, or purchased bottled water (5 gallons per person) in case water pipes freeze and rupture.
 - Medicines that any family may need.
- ✓ Emergency Supplies in case of a power outage – for a complete list in several languages, visit <http://www.govlink.org/storm/>

PREPARE YOUR VEHICLE

- ✓ Have recommended maintenance service on your vehicle.
- ✓ Have the radiator system serviced, or check the antifreeze level with an antifreeze tester and add as needed.
- ✓ Replace windshield wiper fluid with wintertime mixture, which will not freeze.
- ✓ Replace any worn tires and check the air pressure on them, as the colder temperatures and affect the pressure.
- ✓ Keep gas tank near full to help avoid ice in the tank and fuel lines.
- ✓ Keep a winter survival kit in your car, which would include many items you would keep in your kit at home.

DURING THE STORM

INDOOR SAFETY

HEAT YOUR HOME SAFELY

- ✓ Use fireplace, wood stoves, or other combustion heaters only if they are properly vented to the outside and do not leak flue gas into the indoor air space.
- ✓ Do not place a space heater within three feet of anything that may catch on fire, such as drapes, furniture, or bedding, and never cover your space heater.
- ✓ Avoid using extension cords to plug in your space heater.
- ✓ If your space heater has a damaged electrical cord or produces a spark, do not use it.
- ✓ Do not use generators, grills, camp stoves or similar devices to inside your home, in your garage, or near the air intake of your house – the fumes are deadly.

LIGHT AND GENERATOR SAFETY

- ✓ Use battery-powered flashlights or lanterns rather than candles, if possible.
- ✓ Never leave lit candles unattended.
- ✓ Do not use the generator or appliances if they are wet because of the risk of electrocution.
- ✓ Do not store gasoline indoors where the fumes could ignite.

KEEP A WATER SUPPLY

- ✓ Leave all water taps slightly open so they drip continuously.
- ✓ Keep the indoor temperature warm.
- ✓ Improve the circulation of heated air near pipes, for example, open kitchen cabinet doors beneath the kitchen sink.
- ✓ If your pipes do freeze, do not try to unfreeze them, call a plumber instead.
- ✓ Make sure everyone knows how to turn off the water if pipes do freeze.

OUTDOOR SAFETY

- ✓ Dress warmly and wear layers
 - Wear a hat and mittens (they are warmer than gloves), as well as a scarf or knit mask to cover face and mouth.
 - Wear a water-resistant coat and boots.
- ✓ Avoid exertion, especially if you have heart disease or high blood pressure.
- ✓ Understand wind chill – the air temperature combined with wind speed can greatly affect your body's temperature and put you at risk for frostbite.
- ✓ Avoid ice - Ice-covered sidewalks, steps, driveways and porches can prove hazardous for all people and could result in injuries from falls. Keep steps and walkways as clear as possible from ice by using products such as salt or sand to reduce the risk of slipping.

BE CAUTIOUS ABOUT TRAVEL

- ✓ Listen for radio or television reports of travel advisories issued by the National Weather Service.
 - ✓ Do not travel in low visibility conditions.
 - ✓ Avoid traveling on ice-covered roads, overpasses and bridges if at all possible.
 - ✓ Bring chains, an emergency kit, blanket and non-perishable food and water in case you get stranded if you must travel, let someone know your destination and when you expect to arrive.
 - ✓ Try to use main roads.
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COMMUNITY FOOD AND TOY DRIVE NEEDS YOUR HELP

The economy has impacted everyone; all you have to do is look around. Some of those people may be in your back yard and you may not even know it. The Annual Community Food and Toy Drive for Federal Way and Des Moines is here to lend a hand, but we need your help.

The Community Food and Toy Drive is collecting donations of canned, nonperishable food and new unwrapped toys at any South King Fire & Rescue fire stations between now and December 20. Donations of cash or checks made out to the "Community Food and Toy Drive" are also accepted. Delivery of food and toys for 130 families is set for Wednesday, December 22.

Volunteers make the rounds throughout the month and store all the donations at Station 26 for sorting, wrapping and distribution. The money is used to purchase turkeys, supplement grocery items for each family, and provide the children with at least two wrapped gifts. The names of families who need assistance are gathered from elementary school counselors.

Past long time sponsors have been the Federal Way Noon Lions and Kiwanis Clubs, members from the Greater Federal Way Kiwanis, Federal Way Rotary Club, Gai's Bakery, Federal Way High School, Decatur High School, Thomas Jefferson High School, Twin Cedars Mobile Home Park, Berger Abam Engineering Inc., South King Fire & Rescue Firefighters Foundation, Des Moines Lions and Rotary Clubs, Wilcox Dairy, Score Board Pub, Summit Trading, Wal-Mart, and Baden Sports. Each year they commit time, money, food, gifts, energy or other resources to the drive. In addition there are many, many unnamed individuals who donate their time, food, gifts, and

DROP OFF LOCATIONS

- STATION 61**
3203 S 360TH ST
- STATION 62**
31617 1ST AVE S (HEADQUARTERS)
- STATION 63**
33414 21ST AVE SW
- STATION 64**
3700 S 320TH ST
- STATION 65**
4966 S 298TH ST
- STATION 66**
27010 15TH AVE S
- STATION 68**
1405 SW 312TH ST
- STATION 26**
2238 S 223RD ST

SOUTH KING FIRE & RESCUE

HEADQUARTERS

31617 1st Avenue South – Federal Way, WA 98003

CONTACT INFORMATION

EMERGENCY 9-1-1
HEADQUARTERS/ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES 253-839-6234

FIND US ON THE WEB

SOUTHKINGFIRE.ORG

