

Federal Way Fire Department

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Serving the Greater Federal Way Community
Fall 2002

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Mark Your Calendar! October 27



September 11 Remembrance

September 11, 2002
7:00 - 7:45 a.m.
Celebration Park
11 Place S. & S. 324th St.

On September 11, 2002 the City of Federal Way, Federal Way Police Department and Federal Way Fire Department will participate in a commemoration of the first anniversary of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 and the subsequent losses suffered at the World Trade Center, the Pentagon and in Pennsylvania.

The remembrance will be part of what the International Association of Fire Chiefs

describes as "a nationwide salute to fallen firefighters, law enforcement and civilians alike; and to the extraordinary response of the entire American fire service to tragic events that have changed all of our lives." Many other fire and law enforcement agencies will participate in the same event at the same time.

The event will be coordinated across the country and world to reflect the World Trade Center events. A fire bell will ring at 7:05 a.m. and 7:28 a.m. to mark the times the World Trade Towers collapsed.

Team Up for Fire Safety™



Fire Prevention Week is October 6 – 12. This year's theme, "Team Up for Fire Safety™," focuses on safety lessons that help the entire community work together to prevent fires. Every fire safety team begins with the firefighters, but we can't do it alone. We need everyone to team up behind us! By working together, we can ensure that families are more prepared than ever to prevent or survive a home fire.

Fire Safe Families

Federal Way Fire Department has received 50 smoke detectors to be installed in targeted areas of our community. Volunteers from local Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) will canvas neighborhoods providing home fire surveys. When needed, they will install a smoke detector, free of charge, and fire safety education. If you would like to help install these detectors, please contact Monica Colby, Federal Way Fire Department, at 253-946-7247 to volunteer.

These detectors are a part of a project funded by the National Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Washington State Department of Health Injury Prevention Program. The project is intended to prevent fire-related injuries and deaths through distribution and installation of smoke alarms in homes that do not have adequate smoke alarm coverage.

Tips for installing your own smoke alarms correctly:

- Install smoke alarms listed by a qualified testing laboratory on every level of your home, including the basement (but not unfinished attics). Make sure there is an alarm in or near every sleeping area.
- Mount the smoke alarms high on ceilings or walls – remember, smoke rises. Ceiling-mounted alarms should be installed at least four inches away from the nearest wall; wall-mounted alarms should be installed four to 12 inches away from the ceiling.
- Don't install smoke alarms near windows, outside doors, or ducts where drafts might interfere with their operation.
- Don't paint your smoke alarms; paint or other decorations could keep them from working when you most need it.
- Test your smoke alarms at least once a month by using the alarm's "test button." Never use an open-flame device to test a detector as you could burn yourself.



The program will include a flag ceremony by the Federal Way Fire Department Honor Guard and local Girl Scout Troop 421, a moment of silence, reading the names of the fallen law officers and firefighters, a speech by Mayor Jeanne Burbidge and the law enforcement and firefighter prayers.

27th Annual Safety Show Set for Saturday, October 5

Firefighters will be out in full force on Saturday, October 5 as the Federal Way Fire Department hosts its 27th Annual Safety Show at SeaTac Mall from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Highlights of this year's show include:

Firefighter Calendar Signing Noon to 5 p.m.

Bon Marche Courtyard

If you've ever dreamed of getting an autographed, full-color photo of a firefighter, here's your chance! Firefighters from throughout Washington will be on hand signing autographs in the 2003 Firefighters Calendar. Federal Way's own Kevin Juma, a seven-year veteran, is featured. Proceeds raised from calendar sales benefit the Washington State Council Firefighter Burn Foundation.

Cascade Blood Services Blood Drive 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Outside parking lot near fire department vehicles

For those who really get their blood moving during the calendar signing, Cascade Blood Services will have the perfect antidote as they host a blood drive from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Look for their Bloodmobile in the parking lot. Every pint of donated blood saves three lives!

Car Seat Safety Check 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Outside parking lot near fire department vehicles

Younger show participants are sure to get a safe ride home when parents drive up near the Mall readerboard and have their car seats checked by Safety Technicians from the South King County Team. Advice on proper fit and questions about who needs a booster seat will be answered.

Custom Bike Helmet Fit and Sale 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Near the Bon Marche courtyard

Safety experts from Mary Bridge will custom-fit bike helmets for \$5. This program has been popular for several years and continues to be in demand. There is no age qualifier for a helmet purchase, but the head that wears the helmet must be present.

Free Lunch for Senior Citizens

Keep safe and stay independent! Learn how to avoid injuries from falls and fires at "Remembering When."

Thursday, November 21, 11:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at the Banquet Hall of the King County Aquatic Center (650 S.W. Campus Drive).

Space is limited, so you must sign up in advance. Call 253-952-7910. (Please do not sign up again if you have already attended a lunch.)

Warning to Women

The Petroleum Equipment Institute is working on a campaign to try and make people aware of fires as a result of "static" (that is, static electricity) at gas pumps. They have researched 150 cases of these fires. The results were very surprising:



1. Out of 150 cases, almost all of them were women.
2. Almost all cases involved the person getting back in their vehicle while the nozzle was still pumping gas. When they finished and went back to pull the nozzle out, the fire started as a result of static.
3. Most had on rubber-soled shoes.
4. Most men never get back in their vehicle until completely finished. This is why they are seldom involved in these types of fires.
5. Don't ever use cell phones when pumping gas.
6. It is the vapors that come out of the gas that cause the fire, when connected with static charges.
7. There were 29 fires where the vehicle was reentered and the nozzle was touched during refueling from a variety of makes and models. Some resulted in extensive damage to the vehicle, to the station, and to the customer.
8. Seventeen fires occurred before, during or immediately after the gas cap was removed and before fueling began.

NEVER get back into your vehicle while filling it with gas. If you absolutely HAVE to get in your vehicle while the gas is pumping, make sure you get out, close the door **TOUCHING THE METAL**, before you ever pull the nozzle out. This way the static from your body will be discharged before you ever remove the nozzle.

As mentioned earlier, The Petroleum Equipment Institute, along with several other companies now, are really trying to make the public aware of this danger. You can find out more information by going to <http://www.pei.org>. Once here, click in the center of the screen where it says "Stop Static."

Team Up to Escape October 9

The Great Escape Challenge

October 9, 7:00 p.m.

Federal Way Fire Department is leading a "Great Escape Challenge" for all residents. Everyone is encouraged to practice their fire escape drill at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, October 9, 2002.

(primary exit) and feel the door with the back of your hand.

If the door is warm, do not open it; there could be a fire on the other side. Use the secondary exit, usually a window. If you cannot exit through the window or the door, wait at the window and draw attention to yourself; help will arrive.

Step 1 - Create an Escape Plan

Draw a floorplan of your residence, including the walls, doors and windows. Indicate where your smoke detectors and fire extinguishers are located. Identify a primary and secondary escape route from every room to the outside of the home. Select a meeting place outside of the building such as the mailbox.



If the door is cool, open it a crack and check the hallway for smoke. If there is smoke, shut the door and use the secondary exit. If the door is cool and there is no smoke in the hallway, walk out of the house. If you must travel through smoke, be sure to crawl under the smoke.

Everyone walks to the meeting place. **Do not go back into the building for any reason.** Call 9-1-1 from a neighbor's house. Do not call from within the building.



Step 2 - Talk through the Plan with Everyone

Make sure that everyone knows what to do and what your smoke detector sounds like. If in bed when an alarm sounds, roll out of bed, crawl under the smoke to the door

Step 3 - Walk through the Plan - Practice

Practice the plan using primary exits and then practice again using secondary exits. Use the test button on your smoke detector to begin the drill. If practicing exiting out the windows with children, be there with them to ensure safety.

Questions and Answers About Federal Way Fire Department Proposition 1

When you vote on September 17, you'll find a measure on your ballot from the Federal Way Fire Department:

**“Proposition No. 1
Federal Way Fire Department
Authorizing Increase in Property Taxes
Over 1% Limitation”**

Q. Why is Federal Way Fire Department Proposition 1 on the ballot?

A. Proposition 1 is on the ballot to meet Initiative-747's requirement for a public vote. Last year, Washington voters passed I-747 which limits the taxes the Fire Department can collect in 2003 to no more than 1% above the amount collected in 2002 without a public vote. The Board of Fire Commissioners determined that the 1% limit will not cover inflationary costs for next year.

Q. Wasn't there a similar ballot measure done in 2001?

A. Yes, the Federal Way Fire Department had an identical ballot measure, aka "lid lift," (RCW 52.16.140) that passed in 2001. We continuously evaluate our community's emergency service needs, and, as in 2001, a lid lift is the most common voter-approved method for funding in excess of 1%. Our department is also undergoing a 5-year strategic planning process that will assist our Commissioners in making informed service and funding recommendations in the future.

Q. Is Federal Way Fire Department Proposition 1 a new tax?

A. No. Proposition 1 would allow the Fire Department to re-authorize its current tax levy rate of \$1.50 per \$1,000 of assessed value.

Q. Is there a limit now on how much the Fire Department budget can increase?

A. Yes. Under current law, Fire Department tax collections can go up each year by a maximum of 1% plus new construction (due to the passage of Initiative 747). The law that existed prior to 2002 allowed the Fire Department to collect up to 6%, if property values went up that much. That allowed us to cover costs from inflation and the growth in calls for Fire Department services.

Q. What has the Fire Department done to become more financially efficient?

A. The Fire Department has a number of controls in place to ensure efficient operation and adequate financial reserves. This year, the Fire Department regionalized its dispatching services to reduce the cost per call, and has been a leader in combining two fire zones into one. We have a capital reserve system that funds major equipment purchases, like our fire engines (replaced every 18 years), without having to issue bonds. We also participate in programs like the Regional Medical Equipment Purchasing effort that allows our region's Fire Departments to purchase items in bulk at a reduced cost.

Q. Why does the Fire Department need to exceed the 1% limitation?

A. The Fire Department faces increased costs each year for things like utilities, employee health care benefits, wages, fuel and supplies, which we cannot control. During the first five months of 2002, inflation in our area increased 3%. For next year, we've been informed that health care costs for Fire Department employees will go up nearly 30%. As the community has grown, requests for fire department services have increased. As of May 2002, the Fire Department had responded to 8.7% more calls when compared to 2001. In 2002, total call volume will exceed 10,000.

We've dealt effectively with these pressures in the past with tax revenues to cover inflation and from increases in new construction. If the budget increase is limited to 1%, Fire Commissioners concluded, the level of service would have to be reduced.

Q. How much will it cost if Proposition 1 passes?

A. For the owner of a home valued at \$200,000, it would cost approximately an additional \$20 per year (based on historical assessed valuation trends).

Q. How would the Fire Department budget be affected in 2003 if Proposition 1 doesn't pass?

A. The Fire Department would face a revenue loss of up to \$500,000 annually. That loss will eventually erode the Fire Department's reserves and its ability to provide essential services to our community. At a time when requests for service are increasing and our Homeland Security is threatened, a loss of up to \$500,000 would be a budget impact the Department and Commissioners would have to address in the 2003 budget process.

Q. Can the Fire Department get money from the state or from increased consumer spending to cover inflation costs?

A. No. The Fire Department does not receive any money from the state. Our funding comes almost entirely from local property taxes. Increases in consumer spending do not affect funding for fire and emergency medical services, since consumer spending does not affect property taxes.

If you have other questions, or would like someone from the Fire Department to talk to your group, please call Fire Chief Al Church at 253-839-6234 or 253-927-3118.

Candle With Care!

Two Federal Way families learned first-hand the dangers of falling asleep while leaving candles burning. In one case, a teenage daughter woke to a smoke-filled room after the candle she left burning on her bookcase smoldered. In another, a teenage boy left a candle burning on top of the TV in his room, again filling the room with toxic smoke. While both escaped serious injury, their experience isn't one firefighters want to see repeated by others.

Fires due to unattended candles have been on the rise, not only in Federal Way, but nationwide. Although trendy as well as traditional, candles are the leading cause of holiday fires. If you choose to use them, make sure you follow these simple rules:

- Keep candles a safe distance from combustibles, including furniture and decorations, including a centerpiece.
- Never leave a burning candle unattended—always blow candles out before you leave the room.
- Burn candles only when you are out of bed, awake and alert. Many candle fires are caused by occupants falling asleep with candles still burning in their bedroom.
- Do not leave candles burning for long periods. Check the labels carefully and follow directions on how long manufacturers say it is safe to burn them. If candles in glass jars are left burning too long, for example, the heat can shatter the glass and cause a fire.
- Put candles in a proper candleholder that can catch dripping wax and won't burn. Do not place a candle directly on furniture, books, or a styrofoam block.
- Place candles where they can't be knocked down or blown over.
- It is safer not to set candles on the windowsill. Keep candles away from curtains and other combustibles.
- Remember that a flickering flame is a thing of fascination to young children. Keep candles, matches and lighters out of their reach.

Team Up to Save A Life; Donate Blood

Federal Way Fire Department and Cascade Regional Blood Services is teaming up to address a great need; the lack of blood supply. This pilot program will bring the mobile blood drive and the fire stations together.

Every two months your local fire station will also be a local blood donor site. Right now the South Sound area is experiencing a blood shortage.

"You can be a silent hero by volunteering 30 minutes of your time to save a life," says Mary Beth Ingersoll, donor resources field representative for Cascade Regional Blood Services. "We're hoping the fire stations will be more convenient places to give blood and that more people will turn out." Donating blood only takes about 30 minutes from paperwork to cookies and could save three lives. The actual donation usually lasts five to seven minutes.

Almost everyone (95 percent of the population) will need blood at least once during their lifetime. More than 200 donors are needed every day, 365 days a year. We need 30 donors at each fire station to help



Training Officer Bob Kocourek donating blood

maintain adequate blood supplies for our local hospitals and continue this convenient program.

As if helping others isn't enough, each donor will receive juice, cookies, and a gift from the fire department.

Blood drive sites, dates and times at the fire stations are:

September 23 4 to 7 p.m.
Station 65, 4966 S 298th St.

October 14 4 to 7 p.m.
Station 68, 1405 SW 312th St.

October 21 4 to 7 p.m.
Station 66, 27010 15th Ave. S., Des Moines

November 6 4 to 7 p.m.
Station 63, 33414 21st Ave. SW

November 13 4 to 7 p.m.
Station 62, 31617 1st Ave. S.

November 18 4 to 7 p.m.
Station 65, 4966 S 298th St.

December 9 4 to 7 p.m.
Station 68, 1405 SW 312th St.

December 16 4 to 7 p.m.
Station 66, 27010 15th Ave. S., Des Moines

Dates and times may change; please call Cascade Regional Blood Services at 253-945-9794 to verify information. Des Moines blood drives are by Puget Sound Blood Center, 206-292-6500.

Disaster Preparedness Training

In the aftermath of the horrifying events of September 11th, many Federal Way residents want to know what to do to prepare in case of a disaster in our area. The City of Federal Way offers two types of disaster-preparedness training.

NEIGHBORHOOD EMERGENCY TEAMS

Similar to the block watch program, Neighborhood Emergency Teams, or NETs, are groups of neighbors who attend meetings in one of the homes in the neighborhood. A representative from the city's disaster preparedness program facilitates the initial meeting. NETs are organized and trained to respond in a disaster situation. There are a number of NETs active in the City of Federal Way. To organize a NET in your neighborhood, contact a Volunteer and Neighborhood Program Coordinator by calling (253) 661-4023 or e-mailing vnv@fedway.org.

INDIVIDUAL TRAINING

The City of Federal Way is proud to offer Community Emergency Response Team

(CERT) training based on the program developed by the Federal Emergency management Association and taught nationwide. This is a seven-week course, one session per week. Classes are taught by local professionals including several members of the Federal Way Fire Department.

Course topics include:

- Orientation
- Disaster Fire Suppression
- Disaster Psychology
- Light Urban Search and Rescue
- Damage Assessment
- Disaster First Aid

There is a \$25 fee for this course. Those who attend at least six of the seven sessions will receive a CERT manual, class handouts, a hardhat, a safety vest, a CERT patch, and a certificate from the Federal Emergency management Agency and the City of Federal Way. A course schedule and training application can be found on the city's web site, www.ci.federal-way.wa.us (click on "upcoming training") or by contacting a Volunteer and Neighborhood Program Coordinator at 253-946-4023.

Recalls

Buyer Beware!

The Consumer Product Safety Commission has issued several recalls lately, many on commonly found household items. Do you have a dangerous product lurking in your home? Here's a partial listing from their files. A complete listing with details, as well as a picture of any recalled product can be found on the CPSC website at www.cpsc.gov.

Young Company Novelty Lighters

Sold at grocery, gift and liquor stores, gas station food marts in Oregon and Southwest Washington

L.A. Lighter Disposable Cigarette Lighters

Sold to retailers and distributors nationwide. Child-resistant mechanisms do not meet Federal safety standards

Red Devil Gas Grills Sold at Wal-Mart

STK International Extension Cords

Sold at discount stores nationwide

Remington 1600-watt Hairdryers Sold at

Sears, Target, K-Mart at Bed, Bath and Beyond

Coleman Mosquito Traps

Sold at home centers and mass merchandiser hardware stores

Whirlpool, Kenmore and GE Gas Combo Washer/Dryer Units

Sold at home improvement at department stores

Island Soap and Candle Works Candles

Sold Exclusively in Oahu, Maui, Kauai and Monterey, California

Brinkman Outdoor Tabletop Propane Heaters

Sold at Wal-Mart

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Please let us know what you think of the newsletter in one of the following ways:

Call 253-946-7247
Fax 253-529-7206
E-mail info@federalwayfire.org
Write Public Education
 Federal Way Fire Department
 31617 1st Ave. South
 Federal Way, WA 98003

Drop Off your comments at your local fire station, addressed to Public Education.

All responses that include a method for recontact (e-mail, phone, or address) will be entered into a drawing on October 4th for a sample packet of our prevention handouts (bag clip, jar gripper, trading cards, emergency numbers magnet, etc.)