



At Your Service

SOUTH KING FIRE & RESCUE

31617 1st Ave South, Federal Way, WA 98003
www.southkingfire.org

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Summer 2007

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

Summer is here, but Fall & Winter Near

During the summer, it's easy to forget about the rain, wind, and cold weather that comes in the fall and winter, but the warmer months are a great time to think about getting homes and families ready for disasters.

In the Puget Sound region, we can encounter various disasters – earthquakes, volcano eruptions, winter storms, landslides, floods, and terrorist acts, all of which could potentially leave neighborhoods paralyzed and without essential resources for days at a time.

That is why agencies and organizations encourage citizens to be prepared to function on their own for at least three days following a disaster. In larger disasters, it may be up to seven days before government assistance is available. Taking the following steps will put families in a better position to care for themselves: **make a plan, build a kit and get involved.**

Make a Plan

We typically cannot determine when disasters will strike, but we can make a set of pre-

determined action steps to take in the event of a disaster. By having a clearer understanding of what to do, it will enhance safety, lessen anxiety, and reduce some fears towards the disaster.

- Determine hazards that may cause disasters in your community. Determine your family's needs and how you will survive these hazards.

- Develop and practice a communications plan. Phone lines may not be working, but long distance lines may. Decide on an out-of-state contact each family member can call in order to verify everyone's safety.

- Develop and practice an evacuation plan in case you need to leave home.

Build a Kit

Disasters can happen at home, at work, or at school, so it is important to have essential supplies with us to get by for at least three days.

At home, these items include, but are not limited to, three days worth of food, one gallon of water per person per day, a battery-operated radio, flashlight, batteries,



blanket, extra clothes, sturdy pair of shoes, ibuprofen, thermometer, and alcohol-based hand wash.

Have basic items such as food, water, flashlight, first aid kit and a blanket for your car, work, or school. In case you need to use the pay phone, include extra change.

Also consider any special needs items in your kit like a supply of medications for a minimum of three days, an extra pair of eyeglasses or extra cane, surgical mask, and food/

water/leash for your pet.

Get Involved

During a major disaster, neighbors may depend on one another to get through, so be a resource for someone who might need some help preparing. Get extra training like CPR/First Aid and CERT (Community Emergency Response Teams).

Take some time this summer to evaluate what your family would do if a disaster happened. We know that it isn't a matter of if it will happen, but when.

Protect Your Family:

Carbon Monoxide, the Silent Killer

After a disaster, we may be left without power, which means no heat or electric cooking sources. To provide this, we may look towards alternate methods like generators or grills.

What some people might not be aware of, though, is that the use of these items produces an odorless, but deadly toxin called carbon monoxide. Each year, more than 500 people die from unintentional carbon monoxide poisoning.

Generators, grills, camp stoves, or other gasoline, propane, natural gas, or charcoal-burning devices should never be used inside a home, basement, garage, or camper – or even outside near an open window. Carbon monoxide is found in combustion fumes, such as those produced by small gasoline engines, stoves, generators, lanterns, and gas ranges, or by burning charcoal and wood.

See *Carbon Monoxide*, Page 3

Come Meet the Firefighters!!



Safety Saturday Open Houses

August 4, Noon - 3 PM
Station 62 - 31617 1st Ave S, Federal Way

August 11, Noon - 3 PM
Station 63 - 33414 21st Ave SW, Federal Way

August 18, Noon - 3 PM
Station 26 - 2238 S 223rd St, Des Moines

Mark your calendars!

Come learn about fire safety, get a custom-fit bike helmet for only \$7, and tour the fire station.

See you there!

Look for a Change in Proposition 1 on the August Ballot

Citizens in Federal Way and Des Moines may recognize details of Proposition 1 on the August 21 ballot, but this year there is one difference. A change in Law now allows fire districts to run lid lift measures once every six years, instead of once a year. This means it would save citizens \$600,000 - \$1 million. Proposition 1 is not a new tax - it is the same rate you currently pay, but would now secure funding for current fire and emergency medical services and pay for inflationary costs for 2008 through 2013.

Q. What does Proposition 1 mean to your Fire Department?

A. Citizens of our communities are responsible to determine the level of service provided by South King Fire & Rescue. Proposition 1 allows voters to decide whether or not the Fire Department maintains its current level of service for the next six years, as now allowed by Law.

Q. Is South King Fire & Rescue Proposition 1 a new tax?

A. No. Proposition 1 allows the Fire Department to continue at the rate of up to \$1.50 per \$1,000 assessed property value – the same as you currently pay. In the past, the fire district has had to run lid lift measures every year. This year, a change in the Law now allows fire districts to run lid lift measures once every six years. This will save our citizens \$600,000 - \$1 million in election costs and ensure funding and inflationary costs are covered for 2008 through 2013.

Q. Why does the Fire Department need to continually go the voters to maintain the levy rate?

A. In 2001, Washington voters passed I-747 [RCW 84.55.0101] that limits the taxes the Fire Department can collect to no more than 1% above the amount collected in the previous year without a public vote. Every year since 2001, the Board of Fire Commissioners have determined that the 1% limit would not cover operating costs from year to year, and thus the Fire Department has run six straight lid lifts. With the change in Law, this year's lid lift would be valid for the next six years. Since 2001, citizens in our communities have continued to maintain the rate of services.

Q. But I understand a judge recent struck down I-747, declaring it unconstitutional, why do we still need an election?

A. That decision is on appeal. The Supreme Court may disagree with the trial court decision and keep I-747 just as it is today. If we do not hold a lid lift election asking the voters to maintain their current tax rate now, it will be too late to request voter approval for 2008 tax collections, as appeals sometime take one year. The Supreme Court is likely to "reinstate" I-747, but not until sometime this year.

Q. What services would have to be cut if tax collection can only increase 1%?

A. The Fire Department may have to lay off staff. Other possible cutbacks could include postponing equipment replacement orders and reducing specialized services.

Q. How would the Fire Department budget be affected in 2008 and beyond if Proposition 1 does not pass?

A. The Fire Department would face a revenue loss of approximately \$850,000 per year for the next six years. That loss will erode the Fire Department's ability to provide essential services to our communities. At a time when requests for services are increasing, a loss of up to \$850,000 annually makes it impossible to preserve the level of service the communities have requested and receive.

Q. What services does South King fire & Rescue provide?

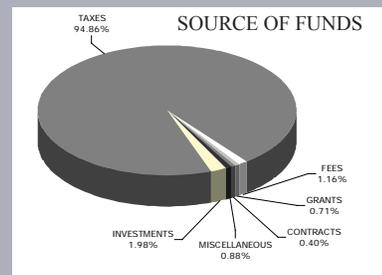
A. The Fire Department provides fire suppression, emergency medical services, fire investigation, hazardous materials response, technical rescue, building inspections, fire and life safety education in schools, fall and fire prevention for seniors, disaster preparedness training, CPR and First Aid classes, custom-fit safety helmets, and home safety surveys.

South King Fire & Rescue attained a Class 2 fire insurance rating in Federal Way in 2005, and a Class 3 fire insurance rating in Des Moines in 2007 (previously a Class 4). Our citizens and businesses now enjoy the lowest fire insurance rates of any in the state. South King Fire & Rescue is the first and only FIRE DISTRICT in Washington to achieve this goal.

For other questions, or if you would like someone from the Fire Department to speak to your group, please call 253-839-6234.

Quick Facts

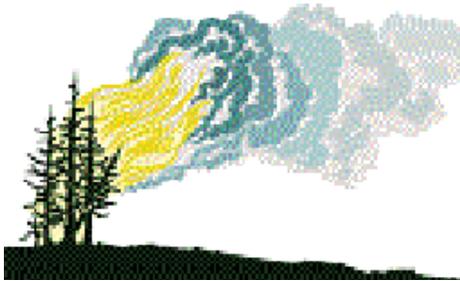
- 7 Responding Stations
- 1 Training Facility
- 3 Aid Units
- 7 Fire Engines
- 1 Ladder Truck
- 1 Marine Rescue Boat
- Over 16,000 Calls for Service in 2006
- Average Responses per day: 44



Where There's Drought, There's **FIRE**

Could Our Area Have a Wildfire?

Wildfires like those in Eastern Washington aren't likely in Federal Way and Des Moines. However, there are some areas where large outdoor fires could be a problem.



The most vulnerable areas are where there is still a lot of natural vegetation and relatively few homes. Examples are the Spring Valley and Five Mile Lake areas.

Any hillside or ravine with natural vegetation could be problems, such as some of the hillsides above West Valley Highway and along Adelaide Beach. Ravines in Dash Point and Saltwater State Park areas also need to be watched. Firefighting in some of these areas is hampered by limited access and few hydrants.

If you have a lot of trees or brush around your home, make sure there's a fire break – a clear area between your home and the vegetation. Think about how you would be safe if there were a big fire. Plan an escape route and a safe place to go.

Dry summer conditions usually mean more outdoor fires – almost all of which can be prevented. We can't do much about lightning, but most fires are due to human carelessness.

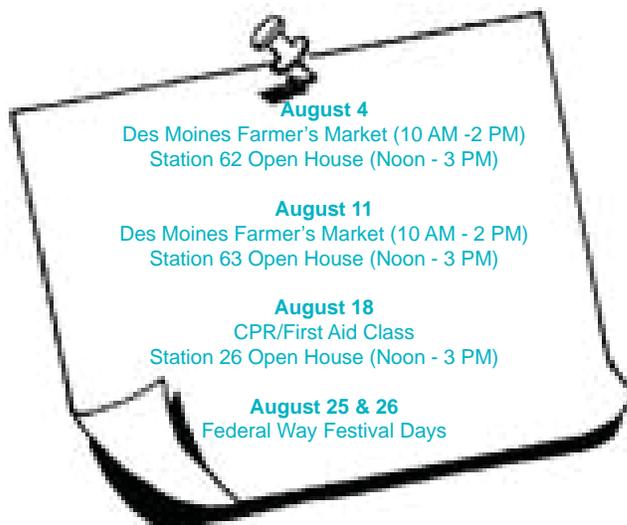
What can you do to prevent outdoor fires?

- **Use your ashtray.** Many fires – especially those along the freeway – are caused by throwing cigarettes out the car window. Also, don't toss cigarette butts into beauty bark or grass. Even if you think they're crushed out, they can smolder and start a fire.
- **Do not burn outdoors.** It is illegal to burn yard waste and other debris outdoors. The Puget Sound Clean Air Agency can impose large fines if the ban is violated.
- **Keep an eye kids.** Many brush fires are caused by kids, ages 4 and up. They like to play in wooded or grassy areas during the summer, so make sure matches, lighters, and other fire tools are out of sight and out of reach.
- **Camp carefully.** Build campfires only in approved metal or concrete-lined fire pits in designated campgrounds. Better yet, use a self-contained camp stove instead of building a campfire. Always check with the ranger or fire department in the area where you're camping to make sure campfires are legal. Never leave your campfire unattended.
- **Don't stop your vehicle over areas with vegetation.** The catalytic converter can be hot enough to ignite dry grass. If your vehicle catches fire and you pull over to the side of the road, don't pull off the paved shoulder onto the vegetation.

REMINDER

Outdoor burning is illegal. The Puget Sound Clean Air Agency banned outdoor burning of yard waste and construction debris due to the air pollution from the smoke. PSCAA also bans indoor burning in fireplaces and wood stoves. For more information on burn bans, visit www.pscleanair.org.

Calendar of Events



visit www.southkingfire.org for more information on the above events

Carbon Monoxide, from page 1

Carbon monoxide from these sources can build up in enclosed spaces. People and animals in these spaces can be poisoned and even die from breathing it.

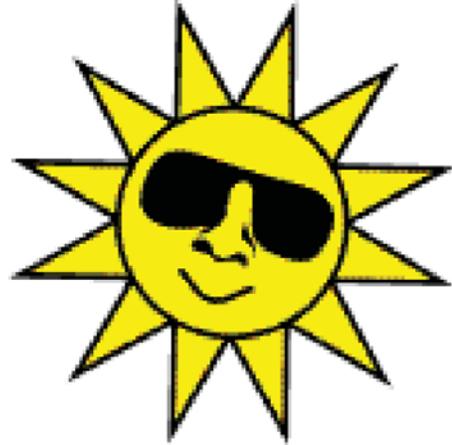
Symptoms of poisoning include headache, nausea, chest pain, dizziness, weakness, vomiting, confusion, and decreased level of consciousness. People who are sleeping or who have been drinking alcohol can die from carbon monoxide poisoning before ever having symptoms.

Prevention Tips

- Never use a gas range or oven to heat a home.
- Never use a charcoal grill, hibachi, lantern, or portable camping stove inside a home, tent, or camper.
- Never run a motor vehicle, generator, pressure washer, or any gasoline-powered engine indoors or in an enclosed structure.
- Never leave the motor running in a vehicle parked in an enclosed or partially enclosed space, such as a garage.
- If conditions are too hot or too cold, seek shelter with friends or at a community shelter.
- If carbon monoxide poisoning is suspected, consult a health care professional right away.
- Have at least one working carbon monoxide detector in each home.

Summertime Safety for Kids and Families

During the summer, children spend more time outdoors. This means the risk of injury, or even death, increases. To help keep your family safe, while still having fun, consider the safety tips below.



Swim Safe

- Always watch your children when they are playing in or near the water.
- Install fencing around all sides of a home pool or spa. The fencing should be at least five feet high and have self-closing and self-latching gates.
- Always wear a life jacket when on a boat, near open bodies of water or when taking part in water sports.
- Make sure the life jacket fits you properly and is approved by the U.S. Coast Guard.

Ride Safe

- Properly restrain all children younger than 13 in a back seat on every ride.
- Read the instructions that come with your car seat.
- Have infants ride in rear-facing car seats as long as possible and at least until they are 12 months old and weigh over 20 pounds.
- If your child is at least 4 feet 9 inches tall, he or she can use an adult lap-and-shoulder belt. Otherwise, children 40 pounds and up need to ride in a booster seat.
- Walk all the way around a parked vehicle to check for children before getting into the car and starting the motor.
- Make sure everyone in your vehicle buckles up for every ride.



Wheel Safe

- Make sure your child wears a helmet and other protective gear every time he or she bikes, skates or rides a scooter.
- Make sure the helmet fits snugly and does not rock back and forth. It should be centered on top of the head and always strapped and buckled.
- Make sure your child's bike is in good working order.
- If your child is under 10, make sure he or she cycles, rides a scooter or skates only on sidewalks, paths or other designated areas.
- Teach your child the rules of the road, including all traffic laws.

Walk Safe

- Make sure children younger than 10 cross the street with an adult.
- Teach children to cross the street at a corner.
- Make sure children use crosswalks whenever possible and obey traffic signals.
- Teach children to look left, right and left again when crossing a street and to continue looking for cars as they cross.
- Dress children in clothing with reflective materials and teach them to carry a flashlight when it's dark or dim outside.

Play Safe

- Keep chairs, cribs and other furniture away from windows, and put window guards on all windows in all rooms above the first floor.
- Teach children not to play on balconies, roofs, driveways, streets or parking lots.
- Always watch children when they play on a playground.
- Don't dress children in clothing that is loose or has drawstrings if they will be playing on playground equipment.
- Look for a playground that has 12 inches of shredded rubber, hardwood fiber mulch or fine sand below the equipment.
- When children are practicing and playing team sports, make sure they wear the right protective gear.

SOUTH KING FIRE & RESCUE
31617 1st Avenue South – Federal Way, WA 98003



Contact Information

Emergency.....	9-1-1
Headquarters/Administrative Offices.....	253-839-6234
Fire Prevention.....	253-946-7248
Public Education & Information.....	253-839-6234
CPR/First Aid Classes.....	253-529-7203