



Riverside Fire Authority
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 Fax: 360-330-5573

Visit us on the Web,
www.riversidefire.net
 &
 follow us on Facebook
 and Twitter!

STANDARD
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 TACOMA, WA
 PERMIT #317

ECRWSS
 Residential Customer

*Committed to creating safer communities through
 prevention, preparedness, and effective emergency response.*

Fire Doesn't Wait! Plan your Escape!

Use the grid below to draw a picture of your home.

Mark all exits (doors & windows) from your home in green.

Draw your room in red and draw a line to 2 different exit in your home.

Draw or mark an X for your meeting place!
 It can be a tree, mailbox or just the corner of your driveway
 The important part is that everyone knows where to meet.

Questions? Call your fire department, Riverside Fire Authority: 360-736-3975



October 2022

Fire & Life Safety News

from the Riverside Fire Authority

• PREPARE • PREVENT • SAVE • SERVE •

Commissioners Participate in the 2022 Master Planning Process

As a community member of the Riverside Fire Authority Board of Commissioners, I have the privilege of working with full-time and volunteer firefighters along with their administrative staff. Their professionalism and efficiency impress me greatly and as it is the responsibility of the Board of Fire Commissioners to ensure that they receive the tools and funding necessary to keep all of us safe. In order to do this, we continually update and biennially review in full a comprehensive Riverside Fire Authority Master Plan. This forward-looking strategic plan encompasses the following:



Joe Dolezal
 Board Chair

What's Inside

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A message from Commissioner Chair Joe Dolezal

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Career and Volunteer Staff Biographies

RFA in the Community: Prepare, Prevent, Save & Serve

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Plan Your Escape!



The result of this plan in motion is a continually evolving organization that looks ahead to what our community needs and strives to meet them in a prompt and cost-effective manner.

To help achieve master plan objectives and reduce the financial burden on our constituents, our administrators have sought out and received grants through various federal & state programs saving our community millions of dollars. In the last two years alone, we received \$11,500 for wildfire equipment and \$335,000 frontline two-way radios for better field communications. Current grant funds are helping to improve staffing after being awarded three years of funding for up to \$1.3 million in payroll costs for four additional fulltime Firefighter/EMT's as well as four years of funding for up to \$626,000 to recruit and retain a goal of 30 more volunteer Firefighters. Additional steps have been made to meet master plan objectives with the support of our voter-funded property taxes and service fees. We have invested reserves in vehicle refurbishment and replacement as well as equipment replacement, upgrades and additions. A 10-20 year forecasting tool helps us to prepare for the increase in operation expenses when this equipment needs replaced and plan for financing grant-funded improvements after the awards are depleted; Adding in the rising costs of equipment and a rapidly growing community, the planning process is vital.

All of these actions fulfill a living master plan that provides more safety for all with attention to cost and effectiveness 24 hours a day, 7 days a week no matter what the conditions may be. It is our way to recognize the respect you have shown us in the past and hopefully on into the future.



A LOOK AT THE RFA MEMBERS WHO SERVE YOUR COMMUNITY: RFA Welcomes Laura Hanson as the New Recruitment & Retention Coordinator



In 2021 the RFA received a federal Assistance to Firefighters grant to support the recruitment and retention of volunteer firefighters in our organization. In addition to career staff, the RFA typically operates with forty plus volunteers collectively logging thousands of hours of training, call responses, and shift hours per year. Their role in protecting and serving this community is vital and this grant is aimed to help preserve and grow those numbers.

“The makeup of a successful department includes a reflection of the community it serves. We encourage anyone with a desire to volunteer in this service to email, call, or stop by the station to learn more about the work and how you can be part of this team.”

“The grant funded the hiring of a Recruitment and Retention Coordinator to head up this new program and Laura Hanson was selected to join our organization in November of 2021. Hanson came to us with 19 years in the fire service industry, including 15 years as a volunteer firefighter (she still currently volunteers her time at Lewis County Fire District 6) and three years as a Fire Chief/Assistant Chief. Her experience in the field and ability to relate to the volunteers has been invaluable in helping to meet the volunteer program goals laid out by our Master Plan and detailed in the grant objectives. “My prior experience and education has provided a unique foundation,” notes Hanson. “I understand the need, value, and also challenges that come with providing a well-trained, dedicated volunteer cadre for community service.”

The program has gotten off to a great start with two recruit classes in 2022, adding 19 new volunteers to our ranks. “The amazing group of volunteers who started this year are talented, committed, and hard working,” says Hanson. She makes sure to note that the achievements we’ve seen this year are greatly supported by career and existing volunteer staff who are equally committed to the successes of the program and it’s participants. “As for the future,” she says, “I look forward to working with stakeholders to support a fire cadet/explorer program for highschoolers and to build up our existing Fire Corp model, and Resident programs. I am excited to further develop partnerships with the School District as well as Centralia College.” Laura is a graduate of Centralia High School and has enjoyed getting involved in the community where she grew up. Look for her out in the community and in the schools continuing to recruit and encourage an overall interest in the fire service and fire safety.

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-Laura Hanson

MAINTAIN YOUR DEFENSIBLE SPACE



Even though the dry season is coming to a close, there is still an important need to view the defensible space around your home to confirm it could withstand the approaching threat of fire if it were to occur in your area. Adequate defensible space from fire is not just a tactic to employ where approaching wildfire may impact your property. These principles can also be useful for adequate clearances between buildings found in more populated areas to help prevent a fire at your neighbor’s home from involving yours. The primary goal of defensible space is to limit the presence of combustible items around your home or outbuilding in order to prevent any fire occurring nearby from involving your property. This can include outdoor furniture, fire wood, debris in gutters and landscaping. If there was any point during this fire season that you wished you would have done more to protect your home from fire, please remember that feeling and make it a higher priority on your project list next spring! For more information, including examples of steps that can be taken, visit www.firewise.org.



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Fire Prevention Week 2022 marks 100 years that a fire safety topic has been emphasized to help improve the safety of communities throughout the nation. The topic this year addresses fire escape plans with the message: “Fire won’t wait. Plan your escape.” Did you know that the average time to escape a fire within today’s home has been drastically reduced by the added synthetic furnishings homes that differ from homes built and furnished 40 years ago. The muscle memory of a practiced fire escape plan and early warning of a working smoke alarm are key to giving your family members the time necessary to live through a fire event occurring within your home. A missing smoke alarm is a common theme in the majority of fire related death and injury that occurs while at home. For more information, visit firepreventionweek.com.

“Fire Won’t Wait. Plan Your Escape.” FIRE PREVENTION WEEK IS OCT. 9th—15th

Watch for our annual poster contest winners displaying this year’s theme at the Centralia Outlets!

PREPARE



Senior Safety

Did you know?

Lewis County has a current record of the worst falls with serious injury and death percentage rate in Washington State. Most falls are preventable and the RFA wants to encourage vulnerable members of this community to take steps to avoid this life-impacting accident before it’s too late.

Are you at risk?

Visit www.ncoa.org ⇨ Select “Age Well Planner” at the top ⇨ Scroll down to “Take Steps to Prevent Falls” ⇨ “Start Your Assessment”



What should you do if you are at risk?

- Talk with your Dr. - Annual risk screening with medical visit
- Annual eye exams
- Medications reviewed to address and identify meds which may increase fall risk
- Talk with a Physical Therapist – gait and balance assessment
- Conduct a home safety check
- Proper nutrition, rest, and Fall prevention exercise

Who can I call for more information?

Lewis Mason Thurston Area Agency on Aging:
888-545-0910 or lmtaaa.org

Fire House Rocks!



During Fire Prevention Week, Riverside Fire staff and volunteers will hide several painted rocks around Centralia for kids in the community to find. The specially painted rocks will contain important fire safety messages and instructions for where to return.

Watch our Facebook page for hints on where these rocks will be hidden. If you are school-aged or younger and find an RFA painted rock, turn it in to our fire station at 1818 Harrison Ave. to receive a prize!

Kids' Corner

PREVENT



SERVE



This photo & front wildfire photo by The Chronicle.