



Thurston County Fire Protection District 8

DISTRICT POLICY MANUAL

POLICY TITLE:	Public Access to District Records
POLICY NUMBER:	1-20-PO-00
REVISION:	1
DATE ISSUED/REVISED:	25 February 2002
BOARD APPROVAL SIGNATURE:	<i>A. Coetelmann</i>

Public records of the District include any writing, film, video recording, disk, recording or data compilation containing information relating to the conduct or performance of any governmental function prepared, owned, used or retained by the District except records and information exempt from public inspection and copying under RCW 42.17.310 or other applicable statutes. All public records of the District as defined above are available for public inspection and copying pursuant to these rules, except as otherwise provided by chapter 42.17 RCW and other applicable statutes.

I. Requests for Public Records: In all cases in which a member of the public makes a request, it shall be the obligation of the employee to whom the request is made to assist the member of the public in appropriately identifying the public record requested.

Requests by the public to inspect or copy public records shall be made in writing to the District records custodian and shall include the following information:

- The name and address of the person requesting the record;
- The time of day and calendar date on which the request is made;
- The nature of the request;
- If the matter requested is referenced in a current filing system maintained by the District, a reference to the requested record as it is described in such system (e.g. incident number); and
- If the requested matter is not identifiable by reference to an index or filing system, an appropriate description of the record requested.

The District is required to respond to the request for public records within five (5) business days by either a) providing the requested record, b) acknowledging receipt of the request and providing an estimate of time necessary to respond to the request, or c) deny the request. Arrangements will be made by the records custodian with the requestor as to the date and time the public records will be made available.

No fee shall be charged for the inspection of public records. The following charges shall be imposed to reimburse the District for costs incurred in providing public records. In the event the District is requested to mail requested copies, an additional charge in the amount of the actual or estimated postage shall be made. Fees shall include:

GENERAL RECORDS: with the exception of medical incident reports, the District shall charge a fee of fifteen (15) cents per page for providing copies of the public records.

MEDICAL INCIDENT REPORTS: in accordance with chapter 70.02 RCW, the District shall charge a clerical fee for searching and handling requests for medical incident reports of \$17.00 for

each report. In addition, the District shall charge seventy-four (74) cents per page for the first thirty (30) pages and fifty-seven (57) cents per page for all additional pages of each report.

II. Location and Availability of Records: The District's public records shall be maintained at the District headquarters station in the custody of a designated employee who shall be responsible for the implementation of these rules:

Address: 3506 Shincke Road NE, Olympia, Washington
Custodian: District Secretary

Public records shall be available for inspection and copying during the normal business hours of the District which are 9:00 am through noon, and 1:00 pm through 4:00 pm Monday through Friday, excluding legal holidays.

III. Exemption from Public Inspection: The District reserves the right to determine that a record requested is exempt in whole or in part from public inspection under RCW 42.17.310 or other applicable statutes. If there are any points unclear as to the status of the public nature of the record, the records custodian shall consult the Fire Chief and/or legal counsel prior to approving the inspection/copying.

In accordance with RCW 42.17.260, the District reserves the right delete identifying details when it makes available any public record in any case where there is reason to believe that disclosure of details would be an invasion of personal privacy protected by chapter 42.17 RCW. The employee who deletes information shall fully justify the deletion in writing.

IV. Denial of Requests: Any denials of requests for public records shall be accompanied by a written statement specifying the reason for denial, including a statement of the specific exemption authorizing the withholding of the record and a brief explanation of how the exemption applies to the record.

Any person who objects to the denial of a request to inspect or copy a public record may petition for a prompt review of the decision by submitting a written request for review. Upon receipt of such request, the District employee to whom the request is submitted shall refer it to the records custodian. The records custodian shall immediately contact the Fire Chief and/or legal counsel to consider the matter and either affirm or reverse the denial. The final decision shall be rendered to the individual who requested the record within a reasonable period of time after the denial of the request.

Administrative remedies shall not be considered exhausted until the District has responded to the request for review of a decision denying inspection or copying of a public record, with its decision or until a period of five (5) business days has elapsed since the receipt of such request by the District.

The records custodian shall notify the Board of denial of a request to inspect or copy a public record no later than the first regular Board meeting after such action.