



# Thurston County Fire Protection District 8 South Bay Fire Department News

Volume 11, Issue 1

WWW.SOUTHBAYFIRE.COM

FALL 2019

## Get To Know YOUR Local Fire Department!

The South Bay Fire Department, (Thurston County Fire Protection District 8), proudly provides firefighting, emergency medical services and community risk prevention to more than 12,000 people over a thirty-one square mile area. We average over 1,200 calls per year. The South Bay Fire Department has been providing outstanding service since 1959. We strive to save tax dollars by relying on over seventy exceptionally trained volunteers and thirteen career staff to respond to emergency calls. We also work with neighboring agencies to share training costs and assist with mutual aid. In 2016 we improved our fire protection classification from an 8 to a 5. This potentially lowered fire insurance rates for some members of the community.\*

Did you know that your local Fire Department is debt free, operates under a balanced budget and has passed all accountability audits by the state



with no findings? We are governed by an elected, five-member Board of Commissioners who meet monthly to oversee the status of the Department.

We welcome you to attend the District's monthly Board meetings (held the second Tuesday of every month at 5:30 pm at the South Bay Firestation). Please visit us on the web (at [www.southbayfire.com](http://www.southbayfire.com)) for more information about your local fire department or if you are interested in joining our family of Volunteers!

\* (Some insurance premiums may be based on the recommended public protection classification assigned to their fire department by the Washington Survey & Rating Bureau (WSRB). The WSRB, a non-profit agency created by the insurance companies in Washington State, provides technical guidance to insurance carriers in setting rates based upon the calculated fire risk within a local community.)

## Free for Our Community!

- We offer free address markers! We can't help you if we can't find you. If you need a marker, please stop by our South Bay Station 8-1 or email us to request one.
- We offer free blood pressure checks! Stop by our South Bay Station 8-1 any time and receive a blood pressure check.
- Free smoke alarms are available to our community! Prevention is the best way to keep your home and your family safe from fire. To get a free alarm stop by our South Bay Station 8-1 to pick one up.
- Free CPR classes are available through Medic One and held at the South Bay Fire Department usually on Wednesday evenings. For specific dates, give us a call or visit our web site. To register for a class (or for information on First Aid training), please call Medic One at (360) 704-2780.

## Property Surplus

Over the past year, the District has sold three properties that the Board deemed surplus. These properties were on Zangle Road, Libby Road and Puget Beach Road. We are saving tax payers money by eliminating maintenance costs for unused properties. All proceeds from the sales are in a capital fund and are earmarked for capital projects.

## Do You Have What It Takes to Be a Volunteer?

We strive to recruit highly motivated and competent people who have a strong desire to serve others in their worst times of need. Being a Firefighter/EMT is not for everyone. It takes someone who has the ability to remain calm and collective during a critical incident; yet, this is no doubt, one of the most rewarding, exciting and challenging ways a person can volunteer to help the community!

We accept applications for entry level firefighter and emergency medical technicians year-round, however, the selection process only takes place twice a year (January and June). Eligible applicants are evaluated using a written exam, background check, physical agility test and interview. Offers for membership are made based on the number of vacancies and to the most successful of the applicant pool.

Once accepted, new recruit members will participate in an orientation process, assigned a mentor, and will be registered to attend the 200+ hour, Fire Academy or Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) school to gain Firefighter and EMT certifications. In addition, members will have ongoing, mandatory training requirements which are essential to maintain service skills. There is no out-of-pocket cost for training or certification to members selected to Department; in fact, they are even paid a stipend for their time and contribution to the community.

Volunteers are rewarded with a competitive array of financial incentives, educational and training opportunities, as well as insurance, tuition assistance, retirement benefits and much more! If you think that you or someone you know is willing, dedicated and capable of completing all these requirements; please apply to be our newest volunteer! More information can be found on our website [www.southbayfire.com](http://www.southbayfire.com) or stop by to talk with us about the details of the program.



## Outdoor Burning

No outdoor burning July 15 – September 30. Before burning, please complete the electronic permit available on the Olympic Region Clean Air Agency website at: [www.orcaa.org](http://www.orcaa.org)

## It Takes a Village



Although Fire District boundaries are specifically defined, emergency service situations do not pay attention to boundary lines; consequently, the 20+ Fire Departments and agencies in Thurston County often assist each other in an emergency situation through "Mutual Aid." Fire Districts can call adjacent Districts when they need additional responders and assistance. The coordination of which is complex and requires a significant amount of pertinent information to be shared by each agency involved. Local agencies include Medic One; TCOMM 911 (Thurston County Department of Communications); Thurston County Emergency Management; Washington State Fire Commissioners' Association; Thurston County Sheriff's Office; and the Washington Fire Chiefs' Association.

TCOMM 911 is the public safety answering point for all of Thurston County. The TCOMM 911 communications center answers 911 calls and provides dispatch services for Thurston County. Public safety telecommunicators are the first link between citizens and emergency police, fire and medical services, 24 hours per day, 365 days per year. They are highly trained in dispatch functions to provide consistent help in every situation, and to continuously monitor the safety of emergency responders.

## Not Every Hero Wears a Cape. Plan Your Escape!

Nobody expects to have a home fire, but in the event of a fire, remember that time is the biggest enemy and every second counts! In less than 30 seconds a small flame can get completely out of control and turn into a major fire. It only takes minutes for a house to fill with thick black smoke and become engulfed in flames. An escape plan will help you and your family get out of your home quickly.



### Establish Your Escape Plan BEFORE a fire occurs

- Leave immediately! When a fire occurs, do not waste any time saving property. Take the safest exit route. If you must escape through smoke; remember to crawl low, under the smoke and keep your mouth covered. The smoke contains toxic gases, which can disorient you or, at worst, overcome you.
- The best plan has two ways to get out of each room. If the primary way is blocked by fire or smoke, you will need a second way out. A secondary route might be a window onto an adjacent roof or using a collapsible ladder for escape from upper story windows. Make sure that windows are not stuck, screens can be taken out quickly and that security bars can be properly opened. Also, practice feeling your way out of the house in the dark or with your eyes closed.
- Security bars may help to keep your family safe from intruders, but they can also trap you in a deadly fire! Windows and doors with security bars must have quick release devices to allow them to be opened immediately in an emergency. Make sure everyone in the family understands and practices how to properly operate and open locked or barred doors and windows.
- Never open doors that are hot to the touch. When you come to a closed door, use the back of your hand to feel the top of the door, the doorknob, and the crack between the door and door frame to make sure that fire is not on the other side. If it feels hot, use your secondary escape route. Even if the door feels cool, open it carefully. Brace your shoulder against the door and open it slowly. If heat and smoke come in, slam the door and make sure it is securely closed, then use your alternate escape route.
- Designate a meeting location away from the home, but not necessarily across the street. For example, meet under a specific tree or at the end of the driveway or front sidewalk to make sure everyone has gotten out safely and no one will be hurt looking for someone who is already safe. Designate one person to go to a neighbor's home to phone the fire department.
- Once out, stay out! Remember to escape first, and then notify us using the 9-1-1 system. Never go back into a burning building for any reason. Teach children not to hide from firefighters. If someone is missing, tell the firefighters. They are trained and equipped to perform rescues safely.
- Practice escape plans frequently and practice escaping from every room in your home.
- Finally, be sure to have working smoke alarms installed on every level of your home in order to notify you of a fire. Smoke alarms should be tested monthly and batteries changed annually. Consider replacing the smoke alarms every ten years, or as the manufacturers' guidelines recommend. The South Bay Fire Department offers free smoke alarms. Contact us for yours.

Fire Prevention Week is October 6-12, 2019. Learn more about fire safety on our website or visit the National Fire Protection Agency at [www.NFPA.org](http://www.NFPA.org)