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A PUGET SOUND REGIONAL FIRE AUTHORITY PUBLICATION | **SPRING 2024**

BUILDING SAFE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

BRIAN CARSON
Fire Chief

From Fire Chief Brian Carson

The Puget Sound Regional Fire Authority (RFA) exists to serve. Over the last 10 years, we have grown from a seven-station organization to a 17-station RFA serving five cities and two fire districts. Each day we staff 16 engine companies, three ladder trucks, two aid units, three FD CARES units and four shift supervisors. We have specialty teams for hazardous materials and technical rescue, and we're expanding our capability for wildland firefighting with new specialized apparatus and training. While growth is exciting and brings new opportunities for the RFA and our staff, the primary driver in regionalization has been improved and sustainable services for you!

Puget Sound Fire is driven by innovation. We explore every opportunity to improve our services, gain efficiencies and seek economies of scale. Clearly that has driven our mergers over the last decade, but full consolidations are only part of our story. Puget Sound Fire is honored to host several regional services that serve our neighboring fire agencies, and even two police departments. The RFA's Fire Garage serves ten agencies and is responsible for more than 400 fire apparatus in the region. The South King County Training Consortium serves 15 agencies, ensuring that when organizations respond together, they do so as seamlessly as possible. More than 1,400 firefighters train and operate as one through this partnership. Perhaps the most innovative example is FD CARES, an alternative response model that deploys nurses and social workers to address the *chronic* health and safety needs in our communities. The Puget Sound Fire FD CARES team serves each of our communities, plus three neighboring fire agencies, and responds with two police departments under a 'co-responder' model. Each of these partnerships continues to demonstrate that we can do more for you, our customer, when we work together.

> ***…the primary driver in regionalization has been improved and sustainable services for you!***

The trust placed in us is never taken for granted; we seek to exceed your expectations in every interaction, be it on the emergency scene or in one of our many community engagement opportunities. We are a regional provider, but we are also *YOUR* fire department. Our crews enjoy meeting you at the numerous community events we attend: at car shows, concerts in the park, farmers' markets, and even in line at the grocery store. I encourage you to follow us on social media and visit our website to learn more. Thank you for the opportunity to serve. ■

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PUGET SOUND FIRE PURCHASES FIVE NEW ENGINES

By Deputy Chief Mark Jones

Puget Sound Fire recently took delivery of five new Pierce Enforcer fire engines. The purchase of these engines is due to the aging fleet of front-line fire and reserve engines in our fleet. Members of Puget Sound Fire traveled back to Pierce Manufacturing, in Appleton WI, to inspect the engines and confirm they conformed to our specifications. Once we have conducted several acceptance tests, including electrical load tests, drive test, and pump test, we will then upfit them with equipment and fire hose. The last step is for the firefighters assigned to the engines to complete any necessary training.

The new engines will be assigned to Station 45 in SeaTac, Station 72, Station 74, Station 75, and Station 77 on the east hill of Kent. The new engines will replace two 14-year-old Skyboom engines that will be sold and for fire engines that will be moved to reserved status. Our standard is to have an engine serve as a front-line engine for 10 years and then designate it as a reserve engine for an additional five years. Reserve engines are placed in service when a front-line engine goes in for preventative maintenance and repairs.

These new engines have better exterior lighting, interior and compartment lighting to save firefighter's night vision, and enhanced scene lighting for firefighter safety. These engines also have a better suspension that provides a better turning radius. Each engine cost approximately $890,000.00 (including Washington State sales tax) and was funded by our capital replacement fund. Our capital replacement fund identifies apparatus, staff vehicles, and equipment lifespans and replacement cycles and is projected out for 20 years.

By purchasing five engines at once, we were able to reduce the cost of the engines by spreading out the engineering costs over the five engines. In another cost-saving move, approximately seven years ago, we switched from a Pierce Quantum model to a Pierce Enforcer model. This switch has been very positive since it saves us approximately $280,000.00 per engine.

The process used to build a fire engine is quite interesting and we have included some photos of the manufacturing process. Please check our Facebook page to see photos of the ceremonies as we place the apparatus in service.

Thank you for your continued support and be sure to look for these new engines in your neighborhood. ■

THANK YOU TO BILL BOYCE

By Fire Chief Brian Carson

On January 17, 2024, Kent City Council member Bill Boyce attended his last meeting as a Puget Sound Regional Fire Authority Governance Board Member. Bill was a Board member since January 4, 2012, and consistently represented his community and ensured that Puget Sound Fire could provide effective and sustainable services.

Bill always put the needs of the community first and made sure the RFA was funded appropriately so your firefighters would have the needed equipment, apparatus, and training. This allows your firefighters to professionally and compassionately help people and meet the needs of our changing communities.

During his time as a Board member Bill held the positions of Vice Chairperson in 2018 and Chairperson in 2019. Bill also served as a member of regional committees working to enhance not only your fire department, but the fire service across the region.

To former RFA Governance Board member Bill Boyce: Puget Sound Fire thanks you for your 12 years of dedicated service as an RFA Governance Board member. Your legacy will be that you always put the needs of the community and firefighters first, and you made the fire service better for the communities that we serve. ■

BILL BOYCE

COME SEE US AT A COMMUNITY EVENT THIS SUMMER!

Covington Days Festival
July 20-21

Kent International Festival
June 1

SeaTac Bike Rodeo
June 29

Cornucopia Days
July 12-14

Maple Valley Days
June 7-9

Maple Valley Bike Challenge and Bike Safety Rodeo
June 22

SeaTac Family 4th of July
July 4

Maple Valley Kids' Festival
July 20

A MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNANCE BOARD

By Margaret Harto, Governance Board Chairperson

There have been several changes to the Puget Sound Fire Governance Board in 2024. One of the changes occurred when the voters of the city of Tukwila passed Proposition No. 1, annexing into the Puget Sound Regional Fire Authority. Passing Proposition No. 1 changed the representation on the Governance Board from one advisory, non-voting member to three voting seats. Tukwila City Council members Jovita McConnell, Dennis Martinez, and D'Sean Quinn joined the Governance Board in January.

In addition, Joy Ratigan, from King County Fire District #37, and Marli Larimer and John Boyd from the Kent City Council joined the Governance Board as voting members. Mayor Mohamed Egal, from the City of SeaTac and Russell Calcote, from King County Fire District #43 are new to the Governance Board and serve as advisory, non-voting members. Returning Governance Board members include Toni Troutner, from the Kent City Council, Sean Smith, representing the City of Covington, and myself, representing King County Fire District #37.

While there are many changes to the Governance Board, our priorities have always been, and will continue to be, ensuring your firefighters have the sustainable funding to have the needed equipment, apparatus, programs, and training to serve ALL of you professionally and compassionately, while be fiscally responsible. We are committed to serving our diverse communities and citizens with integrity and compassion.

Thank you for allowing us to serve you! ■

MARGARET HARTO
Governance Board Chairperson

SUPERIOR TRAINING IMPROVES PERFORMANCE

By Deputy Chief Jimmy Webb

The South King County Fire Training Consortium (SKCFTC), was created in 2010 by three fire departments including the Puget Sound Regional Fire Authority, and it serves as a collaborative platform for training firefighters and paramedics across fifteen departments in King County. With a focus on operational consistency and community service, the consortium offers a comprehensive training program aimed at enhancing emergency response capabilities.

The key aspects of the SKCFTC's training initiatives include:

Recruit Academy – A twenty-two-week program where new firefighters undergo rigorous training in fire suppression techniques, vehicle extrication, and Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) certification. Graduates are equipped to serve in various operational capacities within their respective departments.

Ongoing Training – Training sessions cover responses to water rescue incidents and wildland firefighting. This prepares firefighters to manage various types of emergencies, including wildfires that may interface with urban areas.

Driver/Operator & Truck Company Training Fire Engine Drivers/Operators attend a two-week Engineer Academy, while Truck Company personnel focus on understanding aerial dynamics for safe operation of 100-ft. aerial ladder trucks.

Leadership Development – Firefighters in leadership positions receive professional development and incident command training to enhance their leadership skills and ensure effective management during emergencies.

Specialized Incident Response Training Experienced firefighters participate in specialized training sessions throughout the year. This includes confined space rescues, hazardous materials response, structural collapses, technical rope rescues, and trench rescue incidents.

Medical Training – Continuous medical training ensures firefighters maintain proficiency in medical skills. Scheduled sessions on Fridays allow for review of medical cases and practical skill demonstrations.

Multi-Company Training Events – Regular multi-company training events promote collaboration and preparedness among firefighters from different departments. These events include live-fire exercises, response to high rise incidents, responding to scenes of violence, and fire ground survival techniques that train firefighters how to rescue themselves when in trouble.

The overarching goal of the SKCFTC is to develop and deliver superior training that improves firefighter performance and safety. By unifying regional training efforts, implementing best practices, and fostering a culture of excellence, the consortium enhances operational effectiveness and ultimately serves the community more effectively during emergencies. ■

MATTERS OF THE HEART

By Captain Cathy Browning

The heart is a vital, complex organ that works hard to give you life. It pumps about 2,000 gallons of blood per day through your body. Three matters of the heart we will discuss today are – heart attack, cardiac arrest, and Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR).

Heart Attacks

Referencing www.heart.org, a heart attack is NOT the same thing as cardiac arrest. The term "heart attack" is often mistakenly used to describe cardiac arrest. A heart attack occurs when blood flow to the heart is severely reduced or blocked. A heart attack is serious, sometimes fatal and may lead to cardiac arrest. Heart attack signs and symptoms include:

- Pressure or tightness in the chest.
- Pain in the chest, back, jaw or other upper body areas that last more than a few minutes, or that goes away and comes back.
- Shortness of breath, difficulty breathing.
- Sweating, nausea, upset stomach.

If you or someone near you experience heart attack warning symptoms, ***call 911****.*

Cardiac Arrest

Cardiac arrest is caused when the heart's electrical system malfunctions. The heart stops beating properly and cannot pump blood to the brain, lungs, and other organs. When this occurs, a person will likely lose consciousness, become unresponsive and stop breathing or you might see them gasping. Death will occur quickly if CPR is delayed. Cardiac arrest may be reversed if CPR is performed, and a defibrillator or AED shocks the heart quickly.

If you witness someone in cardiac arrest – ensure your safety – ***call 911 and begin CPR right away.*** *If you don't know CPR, the 911 dispatchers are trained to guide you through the process.*

Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)

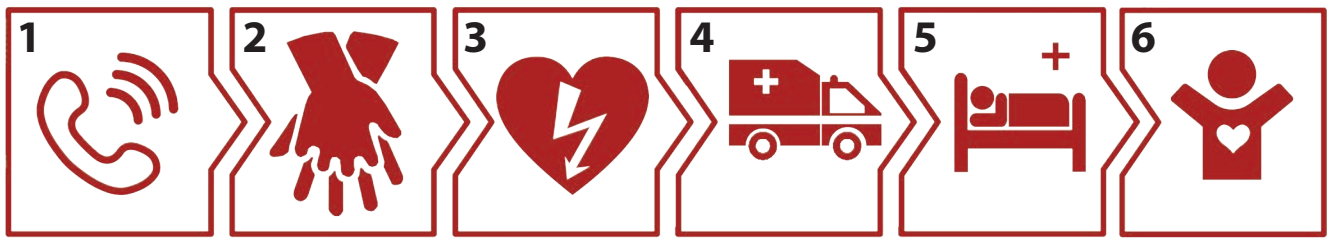
CPR is an emergency lifesaving procedure that can greatly increase the chance of survival after cardiac arrest, when performed immediately. It involves performing chest compressions to keep oxygenated blood flowing through the body.

When a person is in cardiac arrest, for every minute CPR is delayed there is a decrease in their chance of survival by 10%.

Chain of Survival

There are six links in the adult "Out-of-Hospital Chain of Survival" (as illustrated above in figure 1). A strong chain of survival can improve chances of survival and recovery for victims of cardiac arrest.

(Figure 1) Out-of-Hospital Chain of Survival



1) Recognition of cardiac arrest and activation of **emergency response system** (911).
2) **Early CPR** with an emphasis on chest compressions.
3) Rapid **defibrillation** (use of AED).
4) **Advanced resuscitation** by Emergency Medical Services/other healthcare providers.
5) **Post-cardiac** arrest care.
6) **Recovery** (including additional treatment, observation, rehabilitation, and psychological support).

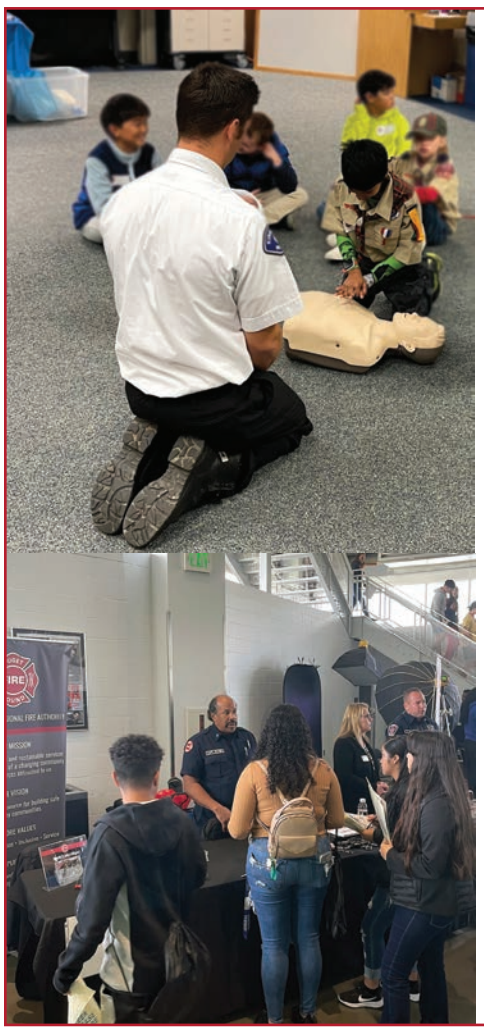
By the Numbers

In 2023, within the Puget Sound Fire response area:

- The cardiac arrest survival rate was 56%.
- Community members initiated CPR in 79% of cardiac arrest response calls. Many of these people were trained in CPR and others were given CPR instructions from the 911 dispatcher.
- 447 community members took a CPR/AED certification class.

Puget Sound Fire partners with Renton Regional Fire Authority and Valley Regional Fire Authority to provide CPR/AED and First Aid training to the community. Scan the QR code below for more information about public and private class options. ■

CPR/AED Classes



FREE CPR AWARENESS AND JOB FAIR EVENT!

Saturday, July 13
10am-5pm

ShoWare Center in Kent

CPR awareness training for all ages *

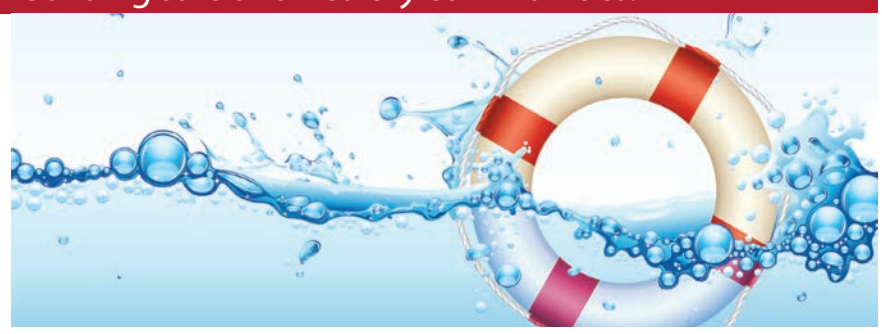
Visit with members from local public sector agencies about careers with police, fire, public works, information technology, and more!

** non-certification / no card provided*

Did you know?

Studies have shown that the chances at surviving a cardiac arrest (heart stops beating) ***increases significantly*** *when CPR is administered prior to emergency services arriving.*

WARM UP TO WATER SAFETY



By Don Maher, Public Educator

The rain is mostly gone, and the weather is turning warmer. Spring and summer are around the corner, and it's time to start planning to visit our beautiful rivers and lakes for fun water-related activities. Though these activities promise to provide great family fun, they can also be extremely dangerous. Before you simply head out and jump right in, take the time to set yourself and your family up for success. Educating yourself, knowing your limits, and preparing ahead will most certainly allow you to enjoy what the Pacific Northwest waters have to offer during our warmer months.

Educate Yourself

- Know the water temperature. Washington lakes and rivers are cold enough to cause hypothermia, even during the summer.
- Always check the water conditions before swimming, boating, or joining in any water activities.
- Do not dive or jump into unknown water.
- Learn to float, tread water, and swim. Visit your city's website and search for swimming lessons for a class that suits you.
- Observe all posted warning signs.

Be Prepared

- Take life jackets, a rescue device, a cell phone, and someone who knows CPR when you are out on the water.
- Be a "water watcher" – provide close and constant attention to children you are supervising; avoid distractions such as cell phones.
- Always swim with a buddy.
- If available, always swim where a lifeguard is present.
- Swim sober. Alcohol and other drugs increase the effects of weather, temperature, and wave action.
- Never swim when you are tired.

U.S. Coast Guard-Approved Life Jackets

- Even the best water enthusiasts can misjudge changing water conditions when boating or swimming in open water. Be prepared at all times by wearing a life jacket.
- Children need a life jacket that fits them.
- Children 12-years-old and under must wear a life jacket that fits them on moving boats less than 19 feet long.
- Be a role model. If you're wearing a life jacket, it's more likely you children will too.

Need a life jacket? Puget Sound Fire can help! Simply call one of our public educators at (253) 856-4480 or email us at PubEd@pugetsoundfire.org to schedule a fitting. Supplies are limited!

U.S. Coast Guard-Approved Life Jackets

A child or weak swimmer can drown in the time it takes to reply to a text, check a fishing line, or apply sunscreen. Death and injury from drownings happen every day in residential pools and hot tubs, at the beach or in oceans, lakes, rivers, and streams, and even buckets. ■

KIDS ACTIVITY: WATER SAFETY WORD SEARCH

By Bre Boyce, Public Educator

Can you find these words hidden in the puzzle?

BOAT
CPR
FLOAT
GOGGLES
LAKE
LIFE JACKET
LIFEGUARD
POOL
SUNSCREEN
SUPERVISE
SWIM
WATER

L	W	B	L	O	W	S	O	B	O	A	T
D	A	L	A	K	E	C	O	A	L	U	L
I	T	K	R	I	W	A	O	I	I	L	I
T	E	C	E	R	R	C	K	E	L	I	F
O	R	P	C	K	S	E	N	I	S	C	E
S	U	P	E	S	F	P	O	O	L	A	G
M	S	U	N	S	C	R	E	E	N	N	U
U	R	P	S	E	L	G	G	O	G	I	A
T	S	U	P	E	R	V	I	S	E	M	R
F	L	O	A	T	E	T	C	N	T	I	D
D	R	N	T	N	F	S	V	A	R	W	N
L	I	F	E	J	A	C	K	E	T	S	E

For an answer key, visit pugetsoundfire.org. Departments > Public Education.

PUGET SOUND FIRE **RETIREES**

We extend our sincere gratitude to the following individuals for their ***combined 236 years of service*** to the communities served by Puget Sound Fire.

Thank you for your service!

Jeff DiDonato
Division Chief

Brian Dodge
Battalion Chief

Greg Johnson
Engineer

John Wilkins
Captain

Brian Bailie
Captain

Dan McCone
Engineer

Felicia Beluche
Captain

Melanie Taylor
Public Educator

Wilbur Lee
Apparatus Mechanic

PUGET SOUND FIRE **NEW FIREFIGHTERS**

We are proud to welcome the following members to the Puget Sound Fire family. These individuals proved their dedication throughout their fire academy training, and we are excited about the depth of service and professionalism they will bring to our communities.

RECRUIT CLASS 17

Ethan Correa
Michael de la Torre
Sarah Hiegel
Ethan Keyser
Chancellor Konig
Levi Nichols
Joanna McKittrick
Aaron Mochizuki
Carlos Montemayor
Fiona Morgan
Valeria Pinos Aguirre
Ridge Quitoriano
Colton Richards

MAKE A DIFFERENCE AS A CITIZEN ADVISOR!

By Janet Upegui, Communications Specialist

Public input is crucial in tailoring the services Puget Sound Fire provides the community. To obtain that input, Puget Sound Fire's Governance Board established a Citizens' Advisory Planning Committee (CAPC). The CAPC provides input, feedback, and guidance to the staff, and Governance Board on issues critical to developing a strong relationship between the community and Puget Sound Fire.

The CAPC is comprised of citizens residing within the department's response area and is the primary component of citizen participation in the planning processes of Puget Sound Fire.

The CAPC reviews, validates, gathers, and provides citizen input on strategic activities and planning documents for Puget Sound Fire. The group also works with the staff to develop recommendations to the Governance Board on all planning matters related to the department, including regional studies for fire facilities and services, and other related planning matters.

CAPC members are appointed by the governance Board to serve a term of three (3) calendar years. No special education or knowledge is required, however CAPC candidates must meet the following requirements:

- Have lived in Puget Sound Fire's response area for at least two years.
- Have submitted a satisfactory application for membership.
- Have successfully completed an interview process.
- Have the ability to regularly attend monthly CAPC meetings.

We are looking for volunteers to bring their experience to the table so that we can make well-informed, community-driven decisions and strive for continual improvement and community engagement. If you want to make a difference in your community, there's no better way than to get involved in the process. ■

ANNUAL AWARDS BANQUET

Puget Sound Fire recently recognized several individuals for their excellence in 2023 during our annual awards ceremony. Congratulations to our winners!

Officer of the Year
Captain Bill Rodal

Firefighter of the Year
Engineer Pierce Beigh

Employee of the Year
FD CARES Lead Nurse, Daniel Henriquez

Medal of Valor
Engineer Colin Ferris

Distinguished Service Award
Division Chief Jon Napier

Distinguished Service Award
Operations Analyst Kelley Jensen

Distinguished Service Award
Captain Bill Rodal

Unit Citation - Valor

Engine 373
Rescue 307

Unit Citation - Valor

Rescue 307

Unit Citation - Valor

Rescue 307
Ladder 374

Unit Citation

Rescue 307
Ladder 346
Ladder 351

ENHANCING COMMUNITY HEALTH

FD CARES

Where Compassion Meets Innovation. **By Captain Matthew Madlem**

In the heart of the Puget Sound region, a groundbreaking program is establishing new standards for emergency response services. FD CARES (Fire Department Community Assistance, Referrals and Education Services) is a collaborative effort that transcends traditional boundaries, saving lives and resources while fostering a healthier community.

A Unified Approach

Puget Sound Fire leads the charge, extending its compassionate reach across multiple jurisdictions. Partnering with Renton Regional Fire Authority, King County Fire District 20 (Skyway Fire), and the Enumclaw Fire Department, FD CARES addresses the difficulty in accessing appropriate care for individuals who reside in our communities. This strategic collaboration not only helps mitigate the exorbitant cost of healthcare accessed through the 911 system, but also ensures continuity of care as the correct resources are identified and connected by the CARES team. By pooling resources and expertise, we create a unified front against health crises.

Beyond 911: A Holistic Solution

FD CARES isn't just about emergency response, it's about prevention. By proactively addressing health needs, we reduce the burden on our 911 system. How? Through care coordination and community resource access. Our dedicated team, comprised of nurses and social workers, follows up with community members referred by Basic Life Support (BLS) units and other agencies. These interactions break down barriers, ensuring that no one falls through the cracks.

Navigating Complexity

Life isn't always straightforward, and neither are health challenges. Many referrals received by the CARES team involve complex medical situations. Our team excels at coordinating care, bridging gaps, and connecting patients to vital services. Whether it's managing chronic conditions, mental health support, or navigating social services, FD CARES is there every step of the way.

A Bold Partnership

FD CARES has forged an innovative alliance with the Kent Police Department, and Renton Police Department to provide co-response services. Together, we respond to non-EMS behavioral and mental health calls, as well as other incidents related to social welfare. By combining forces, we address the root causes of crises, promoting safety and well-being. This program provides the right resource at the right time to access the most appropriate resources for those in need. ■

THE IMPORTANCE OF RECEIVING EMERGENCY ALERTS

By Jennifer Keizer, Emergency Management Coordinator

In an unpredictable world, staying informed and prepared is crucial. One of the simplest yet most effective ways to ensure the safety of you and your loved ones is by signing up for emergency alerts. Puget Sound Fire's Emergency Management Division has partnered with King County Emergency Management for emergency alerts, sometimes called "Reverse 911". This is essential for the following reasons:

Timely Information

ALERT King County provides real-time updates about potential hazards and threats that impact your area. By receiving timely information, you can make informed decisions and protect yourself and your family.

Life-Saving Warnings

During emergencies, every second counts. Emergency alerts can warn you about dangerous situations, allowing you to take immediate action to seek shelter, evacuate, or avoid hazardous areas. Whether the situation is a chemical release, flood, public health notice, or wildfire, emergency alerts can save lives and provide safety actions you should take.

Broad Coverage

Emergency alert systems are designed to reach as many people as possible, utilizing various communication channels such as text messages, emails, and phone calls. By signing up for emergency alerts, you ensure that you'll receive critical information regardless of your location or the type of emergency.

Community Resilience

When individuals are well-informed and prepared, communities are more resilient when facing adversity. By signing up for emergency alerts, you contribute to the collective "safety net", helping to protect yourself, your neighbors and fellow residents in your community.

Peace of Mind

By proactively signing up for emergency alerts, you gain peace of mind knowing that you're taking proactive steps to safeguard yourself and your loved ones. Instead of worrying about the unknown, you can focus on being prepared and ready to respond effectively in times of crisis.

Power at Your Fingertips

Signing up for emergency alerts is a simple yet powerful way to enhance your safety and resilience during emergencies. By staying informed, prepared, and connected, you empower yourself to navigate uncertain situations with confidence and resilience. Don't wait until it's too late – please act today so that you are ready for whatever challenges may arise.

ALERT King County is a geographically based system that will notify your landline phone using the 9-1-1 database. You should also OPT IN and add a cell phone and/or email address by completing the registration. It's free to register, and your personnel information is kept confidential. Both individuals and businesses are encouraged to register, particularly if you do not have a landline phone. For those without internet access or needing more information, please contact Puget Sound Fire Emergency Management at OEM@pugetsoundfire.org. ■

WHERE TO REGISTER

ALERT King County
kingcounty.gov/alert

ShakeAlert™
Earthquake Early Warning
mil.wa.gov/alerts#shakealert

King County Flood Alert
green2.kingcounty.gov/floodalertsystem

REGISTER FOR CERT TRAINING!

WHAT Free 8-week course covering skills to know in a disaster when emergency services aren't available.

WHEN Begins September (1:00-4:30pm or 6:00-9:30pm one day a week, for eight weeks). Registration opens July 15.

WHERE Classes are held at Puget Sound Fire's training classrooms in Kent.

Visit pugetsoundfire.org >Training and Education

PUGET SOUND REGIONAL FIRE AUTHORITY

INTERNATIONALLY ACCREDITED FIRE AGENCY

FIRE HEADQUARTERS / ADMINISTRATION
24611 116th Ave. SE
Kent, WA 98030
(253) 856-4300

Emergency	9-1-1
Emergency Management	(253) 856-4440
Public Information Officer	(253) 856-4405
Community Risk Reduction	(253) 856-4440
FD CARES	(253) 856-4398
Public Education	(253) 856-4480
CPR and First Aid Classes	(253) 856-4300
Disaster Preparedness	(253) 856-4440
RFA Governance Board	(253) 856-4300
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