



MARION COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT 1 NEWSLETTER

Chief's Corner

Thank you for supporting Marion County Fire District #1. There's a lot to share with you right now, and we appreciate you taking time to read this newsletter.

Wildland Fires – We've been working hard to help fight the wildland fires that have impacted so many in our state. There were no fires in our service territory, but they were close by. We not only helped to house and feed firefighters, but also sent emergency personnel and apparatus to help fight these fires.

Firefighters volunteer to serve on wildland fires and are compensated by the state or federal government. Some apparatus that was sent to these fires are units that are not in service for MCFD#1 due to recent budget cuts. The state or federal government also reimburses taxpayers of the fire district for their use.

Budget Cut Impacts – The fire district has had to cut almost 30 percent of its budget due to the failure of our local option levy in May due to economic uncertainty associated with COVID-19. This means our minimum staffing level on a daily basis has decreased from 14 to 10 emergency personnel. These cuts happened at Station 1 in Four Corners and Station 6 in Clear Lake, but the impact has been felt district-wide. For example, the Four Corners Station used to have a fire engine AND a medic unit staffed and ready to go.

Helping Others During Wildland Fires

There may not have been any wildland fires in Marion County Fire District #1, but that didn't stop people with our agency from helping others in need. Our Support Services division, made up of retired firefighters and their spouses, jumped in to fill the void.

Support Services rounded up toys for children who were displaced from their homes. After a wildland fire camp was burned down, MCFD#1 housed visiting firefighters at the Chemeketa Station.

By Chief Kyle McMann

Now, we have just enough personnel to operate one or the other – but not both. In Clear Lake, we have gone from having a medic unit AND a fire engine during weekdays to just a medic unit. The fire engine is now staffed by volunteers, who are not always available. These cuts have resulted in longer emergency response times, and limits our operational abilities on a fire due to less personnel and out of service engines.

Local Option Levy Renewal – Last May, we had been asking for a tax increase when our local option levy failed. At this point, we are asking voters on the November ballot to simply renew the levy for the original amount. This funding is critical to provide an adequate emergency response for residents in our district. It also means that we can assist on wildland fires, which are happening more often in our state.

If approved by voters, funding would start being collected next July. In the meantime, we are doing the best we can to serve you and your family, but it's not the level of service our community requires. That's not a happy thing for a fire chief to have to share.

More information about our local option levy can be found at www.mcfcd1.com. Thank you for your consideration.

Spouses, partners and volunteers also mobilized to help. Twenty volunteers organized, picked up and delivered meals to keep wildland firefighters going from Sparky's Brewing Company, Los Dos Hermanos, Olive Garden, Taproot Lounge and Cafe, Odd Moe's Pizza, and Pizza Hut.

Thank you from the bottom of our hearts to these community businesses and volunteers. We are so grateful for your support in times of need and every day.



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 Now on NextDoor!

Now, A Word About Smoke Alarms

A firefighter from a neighboring state was away from home fighting a wildland fire when he received word that his family had died in a fire. There were no working smoke alarms in their home. This is a tragic reminder that an operational smoke alarm is your family's first line of defense in case of fire.

- Place smoke alarms outside each sleeping area, inside any bedroom where the door is typically shut and every story of the house, including the basement.
- Test smoke alarms monthly.
- Clean smoke alarms regularly by vacuuming them with a brush attachment.
- Replace smoke alarms every 10 years to achieve optimum performance.

Take a few minutes today to ensure your home has the appropriate number of smoke alarms and that they are properly located, regularly tested and maintained.

(Seriously, go now. Get that stepladder, stool or chair to test the smoke alarms in your home. Then hug your spouse, children or other family members and sleep a bit sounder tonight.)



Replace your alarms after 10 years.

Smoke alarms do not last forever. If your alarms are 10 years old or older, replace them with new alarms.

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