



DISTRICT 6 DISPATCH

“Serving the upper Methow Valley from Gold Creek to Lost River” Summer 2013

Message from the Chief



If you receive this newsletter, you live in Okanogan County Fire District 6 (District 6) or have fire service through district contracts

with the towns of Winthrop and Twisp. We hope you find it informative.

This spring, the Board of Fire Commissioners decided to postpone asking voters to approve funding for a new District fire station in Winthrop. While a larger facility continues to be our top priority, the construction estimates were higher than anticipated. Instead, we are looking at less expensive ways to build the facility that will better serve you and provide needed training space.

The process of moving forward with a new station has been a positive experience for all of us at Dis-

trict 6. First, it has brought us closer to the people we serve. Your input is very much appreciated, and is assisting us in making decisions about the new fire station. There will be more information to report along the way, but in the meantime we want to thank you for your questions and feedback.

We finally have a signed contract with the Town of Twisp. This was a bruising process for all involved, and we feel the fire district was misrepresented by the local paper. Our position throughout the negotiations was that district taxpayers should not subsidize fire service for town residents. The contract needed to be fair to our taxpayers, while being considerate of the financial problems facing the town. The final contract is not perfect, but it will move the town toward paying its fair share over the next five years.

The best solution is for the towns of Winthrop and Twisp to annex to the fire district. That way all property owners would pay the same for fire protection service and be able to vote on the elected commissioners. However, the towns need to request annexation and ask voters to approve it on an election ballot. This is not something the fire district is legally able to do.

If you have any questions or concerns about District 6, I encourage you to contact me personally at dwaller@okanogancountyfd6.com or (509) 997-2981. Thank you again for taking time to read our newsletter.

Sincerely,

Don Waller, Fire Chief

New Vehicle Extrication Tools

Recently, OCFD6 received a \$62,700 Fire Act grant to fund the purchase of two new identical sets of vehicle extrication tools. Several staff and volunteer firefighters demoed 4 sets of tools from 3 manufacturers before deciding on the Hurst eDRAULICs.

The new tools are replacing two nonidentical sets designed to tackle the vehicle technology of twenty years ago. The changes in vehicle design and construction materials prompted OCFD6 to make obtaining this grant a priority.

According to Assistant Chief Cody Acord “it’s not that we

wanted new equipment, we had to have it. There are vehicles driving around our response area the old tools can’t handle.”

The Twisp and Winthrop stations each received a set of the new tools. Both of the old sets were taken out of service .



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Fire Season is here



**Twisp Station
Volunteer Nic Schulz
putting out a hot spot
along Libby Cr. Rd
(Carlton area) this
spring**

As summer ramps up, so does fire season. Are you prepared? The rainfall we had this spring will surely result in a readily available fuel source as the grasses and weeds are already beginning to dry out. Yakima County already had a 10,000 acre plus wildfire.

Taking the time to be ready before hand and ensuring your “space” is defensible is essential to your home’s survivability. More information on how to make your property accessible and defensible can be found on our website at

www.okanogancountyfd6.com and clicking on the “Safety Tips” tab.

On state Department of Natural Resources (DNR) protected land the burn ban will begin July 1st. The Okanogan County commissioners will likely start theirs on July 1st as well. Burn ban status can be found on the OCFD6 website and on the 4 signs located throughout the Valley: the Carlton sign is above the bay doors of the fire hall, the Twisp sign is on the Twisp Works property across for Wash Works Laundromat, the Winthrop

sign is on the Forest Service property across from Melbourn Insurance, and the Mazama sign is at the intersection of Hwy 20 and Lost River Road.

If you’d like a free assessment of how accessible and defensible your property is, contact Division Chief Brian McAuliffe at 996-227 ext. 3 or bmcauliffe@okanogancountyfd6.com