



DISTRICT 6 DISPATCH

“Serving the upper Methow Valley from Gold Creek to Lost River” Summer 2015

Message from the Chief

Wildland fire season is off to an early start this year. OCFD6 calls for wildland-urban interface fires are already keeping our firefighters busy. Please take some time and prepare defensible space around your home, cabin, and outbuildings. Read the article in this newsletter and visit our website at:

www.okanogancountyfd6.com for suggestions on how to be prepared for wildland fires. Make sure to read the feature article “Breaking News” on the homepage and also visit the “Safety Tips” section of the website.

Last summer firefighters and command staff were severely impacted when the Valley lost power and all 4 OCFD6 stations went dark. The Carlton Complex fires were eventually declared a “national emergency”. One outcome of this declaration is that Federal funding became available for “hazard mitigation” projects. The Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) announced a “Hazard Mitigation Grant Program”. OCFD6

has submitted a grant application which, if awarded, would provide funding to install permanent emergency backup power to maintain operations at each of the District’s 4 stations. Announcement of the award is expected in August of 2015. The total value of the project submitted by the District is \$351,336 with funding split 12.5% OCFD6, 12.5% State, and 75% from the grant.

The construction of a new OCFD6 station in Winthrop remains a top priority on the Fire Commissioners’ District operations plan. In response to a call for bids in April, bids received ranged from \$3.6M to \$4.2M, well above the \$2.2M budgeted for the project. After reviewing the bids the Commissioners decided to reject them and investigate other ways to bring the project within budget. Recently the Fisher Group, a construction company based in Skagit County, offered to review the plans at no charge or obligation to

the District, and recommend ways to bring the project to within the available budget. The offer was accepted and a follow up meeting is pending notification by Fisher. Regardless of the outcome the Commissioners are committed to finding a way to provide a safe, healthy, and adequate station working environment for the firefighters.

Thanks for your support of the firefighters and please be fire wise and fire safe.

Sincerely,

Chief Don Waller



*Newly minted
Mazama sta-
tion Lt. Josh
Jankowski*

OCFD6 is pleased to announce the promotion of Josh Jankowski to the rank of Lieutenant.

Josh began volunteering for our Mazama station in May of 2012. Josh came to us with no prior fire experience and has since risen through the ranks.

Recently, Josh completed the

necessary training to become an Apparatus Operator and can now drive and operate the large fire engines.

Even though he frequently travels outside of the area for work, Josh is dedicated to serving the Methow Valley.



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Protecting Your Home from Wildfire



In the wake of last years' wildfire season, here are a few ideas on how to create defensible space in order to give your home a fighting chance during a wildfire.

Maintaining a 12 foot by 20 foot wide corridor

the length of your driveway and having a large turnaround area will improve access for fire response apparatus. Installing reflective address signs in clear view from all directions of travel will better allow help to find you.

Keep all flammable material at least 30 feet from the drip line of your home and out buildings.

Maintain a green space or regularly mow dry weeds and grasses out to

100 feet. Remove all dead trees, brush, and limbs.

Consider remodeling with fire resistive materials such as metal roofing, stucco, or cement siding. Covering vent openings with metal screening will provide extra protection against flying embers.

Creating a survivable space for your home requires continual maintenance and attention throughout the fire season. More

information is available at: www.firewise.org

MethowReady is a resource created locally to help you prepare for a wide range of emergencies and disasters including wildfire. Check out their website at www.methowready.org

For Free fire assessments of your home you can call the Fire District at 997-2981 or 996-2227.