

Benton County Fire District **4** NEWS



SUMMER 2017

WILDLAND FIRE SEASON APPROACHES *ARE YOU PREPARED?*

Thousands of people call the desert home. Homeowners living in or on the edge of wildlands need to prepare their homes in case of fire. The following steps will help increase the chances of your home surviving a wildfire.

- Keep road access free to allow firefighting apparatus in and out. Make sure there is adequate turn space around structures for large fire engines or water tenders.
- Ensure your address is visible from the road.
- Do not store combustibles, such as logs under decks or near your home.
- Maintain a 30-foot defensive zone around your home. This means:
 1. Removing or pruning combustible trees and shrubs.
 2. Clean debris from gutters and roofs.
 3. Screen off crawl spaces, attics and decks to keep free of debris as well as flying embers.

More safety tips can be found at <http://www.firewise.org/wildfire-preparedness.aspx>. Or, contact us at (509) 967-2945 to schedule a free property inspection to offer input to property owners.

MESSAGE FROM FIRE CHIEF BILL WHEALAN

We have some exciting news to share! Benton County Fire District 4 improved its insurance rating with the Washington Surveying and Rating Bureau in the unincorporated areas we serve. We went from a 6 to a 5 (the lower the number, the better the rating) in the county. We maintained our rating of 4 in the City of West Richland, as well.



These ratings are directly linked to the amount you pay in insurance premiums for your home or business. The Class 5 rating goes into effect on September 1, 2017. If you live in the county, we encourage you to contact your insurance agent or company after September 1 to see if this improvement translates to lower premiums.

The WSRB rates fire districts approximately every five years based on their emergency service capabilities, including stations, apparatus and emergency personnel. While we improved this year, we have some work to do to maintain this rating in the future.

For example, we need to lower response times in the western part of our service territory. Our average response time is 7 minutes and 41 seconds district-wide. However, residents in the west side of the fire district can wait as long as 16 minutes and 45 seconds for help to arrive. We are currently looking to build and equip a station in the Red Mountain area. This station would benefit all district residents by improving our ability to respond to multiple emergencies that come in at the same time.

The age of our apparatus also impacts our score with the WSRB. Most fire engines have a 15 to 20-year life span. One of our fire engines is 20 years old, and the other two are 16 years old. These engines will need to be replaced before the WSRB returns to rate us in five years.

Like most fire districts, funding for capital improvements – such as stations and apparatus – is raised through voter-approved bonds. Our operations budget is not able to cover these purchases and still maintain the same level of service. We will have more information to share with you in early 2018 about these developments. In the meantime, feel free to contact me with any questions at (509) 967-2496 or wwhealan@bcfd4.org.

2604 Bombing Range Rd.
West Richland, WA 99353
(509) 967-2945
www.bcfd4.org
[@BCFD4Info](https://www.facebook.com/BCFD4)



Benton County Fire Protection District No. 4

2604 Bombing Range Rd.
West Richland, WA 99353
(509) 967-2945

POP
Imprint
Esprit

Let's Get Social!

Please like us on Facebook @BCFD4 or follow us on Twitter @BCFD4Info!

Disponible en Español

Este boletín está disponible en español en nuestro sitio de Internet www.bcf4.org

Board Meetings

The Board of Fire Commissioners meets the 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month at 6:00 p.m. at 2604 Bombing Range Road, West Richland. All meetings are open to the public!

Station Tours

We provide station tours on request to anyone who is interested in learning more about their local fire district - all ages welcome!

WE WANT TO SAY THANK YOU

Open House scheduled for June 10

Benton County Fire District 4 is holding its annual Open House on June 10 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at Station 420 located at 2604 Bombing Range Rd, West Richland, WA 99353. This annual event is an opportunity for Fire District 4 to thank the community for its support. Last year, voters renewed a levy that funds the fire district's emergency medical service program, and this Open House will showcase all things EMS!

Approximately 76% of all emergency calls received by Fire District 4 are EMS-related. Voters in Fire District 4 renewed the EMS levy at 50 cents per \$1,000 of assessed valuation last year. The EMS levy funds transport services, Basic Life Support with Firefighter/EMTs and Advanced Life Support with Paramedics. It also pays to staff a second fire station, which has reduced ambulance response times by three minutes on average for district residents.

There will be free blood pressure checks, CPR and heart monitor demonstrations, and a motor vehicle extrication demonstration with an important piece of equipment called "The Jaws of Life." Life Flight has been invited to participate and there will be fire safety activities for the kids. Refreshments provided so come for a fun day out!

WEST RICHLAND COMMUNITY EASTER EGG HUNT

Thank you to all volunteers and sponsors who made the 13th annual egg hunt a success! 15,000 eggs were donated for local children to scoop up on Saturday, April 15 at the Bombing Range Sports Complex. The event was sponsored by Yoke's Fresh Market; West Richland Chamber; Benton County Fire District #4; West Richland Police Department; Craig Bolling with Waddell & Reed; West Richland Senior Center; 4PAWS Dog Works; Target; Calvary Assembly of God; Tumbleweeds Mexican Flair; B&B Sound; Domino's Pizza; Benton REA; City of West Richland; Club 24; Core Concepts; Community Real Estate Group; and All American Barns.

