



Benton County Fire Protection District No. 4

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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EMS accounted for 77% of all calls in first quarter of 2016

Public invited to Open House to learn about emergency service programs

West Richland, Wash. – Calls for Emergency Medical Service (EMS) have skyrocketed for Benton County Fire District 4 in the first quarter of 2016. According to data, 77.5 percent of all calls received by the fire district were for medical emergencies. In 2015, EMS accounted for 63 percent of all calls.

“We were surprised, but prepared to respond,” said Fire Chief Bill Whealan. “That’s what we do and our taxpayers have built one of the best EMS programs in the county for this very reason.”

Fire District 4 is using this record-breaking event as an opportunity to share information with the community about the emergency programs and services it offers. Community members are invited to an Open House on Saturday, June 18 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at Station 420, 2604 Bombing Range Road in West Richland.

There will be several activities planned with an emphasis on Fire District 4’s EMS program, including blood pressure checks, a Life Flight exhibit with helicopters, and demonstrations with heart monitors and extrication equipment for vehicle accidents. Special fire safety events are planned for children, and refreshments will be served.

“We’re grateful for the support of our community,” said Chief Whealan. “This is one way we can say thank you, and show how their tax dollars save lives and property.”

Fire District 4’s EMS levy expires at the end of the year, and the agency is asking voters to renew it at the same rate of 50 cents per \$1,000 of assessed valuation. 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.

The EMS levy renewal will be on the August 2nd Primary Election ballot for voters in Fire District 4.

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Benton County Fire District 4 is proud to provide fire and emergency medical service (EMS) to 17,000 people over 52 square miles, including the City of West Richland. Approximately 50 volunteer and career firefighters, emergency medical technicians and paramedics responded to 1,322 calls in 2015, 63% of which were for Emergency Medical Service. EMS calls have increased to 77.5% for the first quarter of 2016. Learn more about Fire District 4 at www.bcf4.org, “Like” us on Facebook at /BCFD4 or follow us on Twitter @BCFD4Info.