



Benton County Fire Protection District No. 4

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www.bcf4.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: January 20, 2016
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[PHOTO: Lt. Kevin Gaidos from Benton County Fire District 4 reviews recommendations with homeowner Annie Goodwin]

Benton County Fire District 4 offers injury prevention program

Free in-home inspections available to avoid slips and falls

[West Richland, Wash.] According to the Centers for Disease Control, more than one-third of adults over 65 years of age fall each year. Falls can lead to hip fractures, traumatic brain injuries, and are the leading cause of fatal and non-fatal injuries in older adults – and they are mostly preventable. That’s why Benton County Fire District 4 has launched a program to reduce injury from slips and falls.

Firefighter/EMTs will now visit residents’ homes at their request and perform a comprehensive evaluation of the property exterior and interior. The inspections take approximately an hour. Once the survey is complete the Firefighter/EMT will sit down with the homeowner and review a list of recommendations to reduce the risk of injury from a fall.

“We provide a comprehensive inspection into each area to identify potential risks,” stated Lieutenant Kevin Gaidos. “However, homeowners can request that we not survey a specific area or room if privacy is a concern.”

This initiative is the first step to Benton County Fire District 4 launching its own medical emergency prevention program called “FD Cares” (Fire Department Community Assistance, Referral and Educational Services) to reduce calls to 911 and lower health care costs. Historically, the fire district was simply there to put out fires. Now, a large part of what it does is prevention-related including safety inspections, educating the community about fire prevention through local schools, homes and area businesses, and now reducing injuries.

In 2015, Benton County Fire District 4 responded to 1,322 calls, of which 835 (63%) were for Emergency Medical Service. Of the 835 EMS calls, 135 (16%) were related to slip and falls. The EMS levy expires at the end of 2016, and the fire district likely will ask voters to renew it at the same rate.

If you would like to schedule a complimentary fall prevention inspection, please contact Lieutenant Gaidos at (509) 967-2945 or kgaidos@bcfd4.org. For more information about Benton County Fire District 4, please visit www.bcf4.org.

[PHOTO: Lt. Kevin Gaidos from Benton County Fire District 4 reviews recommendations with homeowner Annie Goodwin](#)

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Benton County Fire District 4 provides Fire and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) to 17,000 people over 52 square miles, including the City of West Richland. Approximately 50 volunteer and career Firefighters, Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) and Paramedics responded to 1,322 calls in 2015.