

# Benton County Fire District **4** NEWS



SPRING 2016

## CALL VOLUMES

**TOTAL CALLS: 1,322**

Other: 17 — 1.29%

False Alarm: 46 — 3.48%

Service: 84 — 6.36%

Fire:  
135 — 10.22%

Good Intent:  
205 — 15.52%

EMS:  
834 — 63.13%

Jan. 1—Dec. 31, 2015

## BOARD MEETINGS

The Board of Fire Commissioners meets the 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month at 5:00 p.m. at 2604 Bombing Range Road, West Richland, WA 99353. All meetings are open to the public!

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF

Dear Neighbor,

Benton County Fire District 4 had a record-breaking year in 2015, responding to 1,322 emergency calls. We recognize the trust you place in us to respond quickly, effectively and compassionately and thank you for the opportunity to serve our community.

Many of these emergency calls are coming in at the same time – sometimes three at once. We are fortunate to have secured federal funding for three additional Firefighter/Paramedics to be able to respond. However, the grant expires in two years after which the fire district must fund these positions depending on revenue projections. We need these firefighters to respond to an increase in demand for service so maintaining them will be a priority when that time comes.

Speaking of call volumes, emergency medical service (EMS) accounted for 63% of our calls in 2015. In fact, we've seen a 57% jump in medical emergencies since voters approved funding for an EMS levy in 2010. Fire District 4 likely will ask voters to renew the levy during the August election at the same rate and remove the expiration date. There is another article in this newsletter that provides more details about our EMS levy, and we invite you to take part in these discussions.

As a final note, we are having great success with our Slip and Fall Prevention program that we started earlier this year. Please contact our fire district to schedule a home inspection for yourself or a loved one who might be at risk of this type of injury.

This program reflects how the role of our fire district has changed from putting out fires and providing EMS to prevention-related activities to meet the



expectations of our community. We expect to expand this program sometime in the future to include non-emergency medical care to improve patient care and lower health care costs for our community.

Stay Safe,

Chief Bill Whealan

2604 Bombing Range Rd.  
West Richland, WA 99353  
(509) 967-2945  
[www.bcfcd4.org](http://www.bcfcd4.org)  
[www.facebook.com/BCFD4](https://www.facebook.com/BCFD4)



## Benton County Fire Protection District No. 4

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

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Este boletín está disponible en español  
en nuestro sitio de Internet

[www.bcf4.org](http://www.bcf4.org)

### Volunteer

Fire District 4 is currently seeking  
qualified applicants for immediate and  
future resident firefighter openings.

To apply, or for more information,  
please visit our web site and click on  
VOLUNTEER, or call us directly for more  
information at (509) 967-2945.

## SLIP & FALL PREVENTION

Benton County Fire District 4 has launched a program to reduce injury from slips and falls. Firefighter/EMTs will visit homes to perform a comprehensive evaluation and provide recommendations to reduce injury. If you would like to schedule a complimentary fall prevention inspection, please contact Lieutenant Kevin Gaidos at (509) 967-2945 or [kgaidos@bcfd4.org](mailto:kgaidos@bcfd4.org).



## EMS CALLS ON THE RISE

Calls for emergency medical service in Benton County Fire District 4's service territory have increased 57% since voters approved funding for an EMS levy in 2010. The levy allows the fire district to provide transport services, Basic Life Support with Firefighter/Emergency Medical Technicians and Advanced Life Support with Paramedics. It also pays for the fire district to staff another fire station, which has reduced ambulance response times by three minutes on average.

The current EMS levy will expire at the end of 2016. The fire district will likely ask voters to renew it during the August Primary Election at the same rate of \$0.50 per \$1,000 of assessed value.

The Board of Fire Commissioners is also considering asking voters to remove the expiration date. A permanent EMS levy would provide a stable funding source for our most widely used emergency service and allow long-term planning for this important program. It would also save money on election costs, which can be as much as \$36,000 every time the fire district is on the ballot. This money would better serve the community by funding life-saving equipment or personnel.

The Board of Fire Commissioners will hold two public hearings to discuss the EMS levy renewal proposal. The meetings will be held **April 2 at 10:00 a.m.** and **April 7 at 5:00 p.m.**, both at Station #420 (2604 Bombing Range Rd., West Richland, WA 99353). At the April 7 meeting fire commissioners will vote on a resolution to place the EMS levy renewal on the August Primary Election ballot this year. The public is invited to attend and comment on the proposal. Those unable to attend the meetings are encouraged to mail their comments to Chief Bill Whealan or email [wwhealan@bcfd4.org](mailto:wwhealan@bcfd4.org).