

# The Pulse

## Responding to COVID-19 with Care, Compassion and Community

As the pandemic continues to affect lives and livelihoods, your fire districts continue to adapt in an effort to keep our personnel and our community healthy as well as to maintain our levels of emergency and non-emergency services.

Protocols, designed to keep both responders and patients safe from COVID-19, remain in place. Crews continue to exercise caution by wearing personal protective equipment whenever interacting with community members. Both districts have acquired special decontamination equipment to add an additional measure of safety. Public events, such as station tours and blood pressure checks, are still suspended but we continue to devise new ways of staying connected to you. We've been missing our in-person visits with students at local schools and have started meeting with classes over Zoom. We've hosted virtual events and hope to do more; watch our webpages and social media channels for online opportunities, and reach out to us

if you've got other ideas or requests.

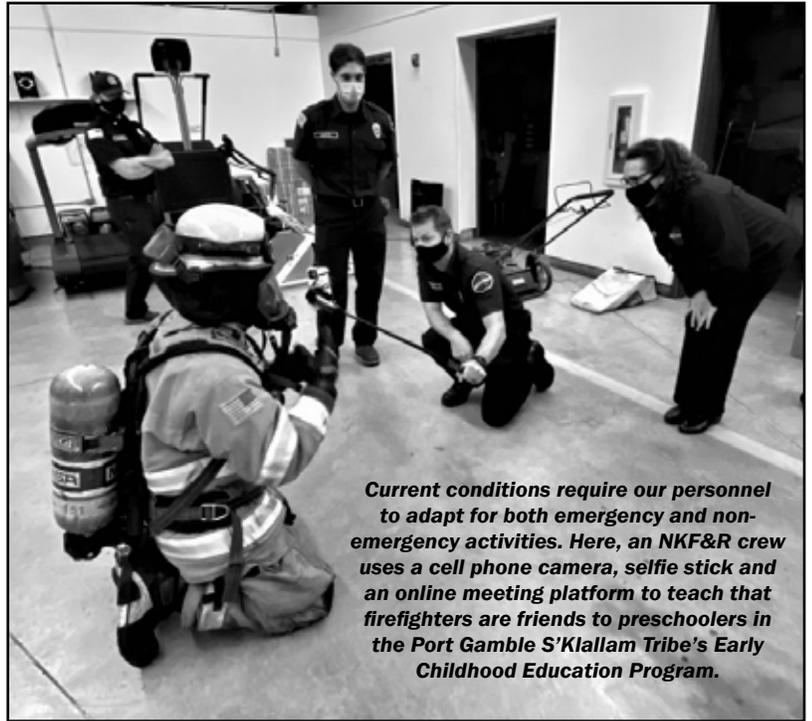
We're also doing our part to assist in the countywide response to COVID-19. Poulsbo Fire Chief Jim Gillard represents the county's fire departments in the Kitsap County Emergency Operation Center's Unified Command which also includes representatives from the Kitsap Public Health District, Kitsap County Department of Emergency Management, Kitsap 911, and law enforcement. The EOC is involved in managing quarantine and

isolation sites, community COVID-19 testing, acquiring, and distributing

personal protective equipment according to Washington State's priorities, responding to

outbreaks and more. The EOC also helps ensure that up-to-date information is available to the public through its Joint Information Center. Both of the fire districts' public information officers have assisted in these efforts.

While we all continue to adapt to this new world, one thing will never change: if you have an emergency, call 911 and we will be there.



*Current conditions require our personnel to adapt for both emergency and non-emergency activities. Here, an NKF&R crew uses a cell phone camera, selfie stick and an online meeting platform to teach that firefighters are friends to preschoolers in the Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe's Early Childhood Education Program.*

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**Response Times ♦ and More!**

The Pulse, published jointly at least once every year, is one of many cooperative efforts between your two local fire departments.

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# Kitsap Crews at

It's been another record-setting wildfire season in the western U.S., made more complicated by the pandemic.

After serving across the west, our wildland crews are all back home from a busy August and September. Poulsbo and NKF&R crews, along with those from every other Kitsap County fire department, worked on structure protection, dug containment lines, lit backfires and mopped up hot spots on wildland fires in California, Oregon, Eastern Washington and Western Washington. Other local personnel were deployed to staff special COVID-19 crews with the goal of limiting spread of the virus across the close conditions in wildland firefighter camps. These screening crews have been quite

# Importance of Fast Emergency Response

The most critical aspect of emergency response is time. When lives and property are on the line, quick response is vital.

The American Heart Association's chain of survival emphasizes that, following cardiac arrest, brain death starts within 4-6 minutes. The chances of survival can drop 10% for every minute that passes without defibrillation and advanced life support. So, rapid response of trained personnel with the right equipment is essential for a positive outcome from cardiac arrest and other medical emergencies.



additional personnel and apparatus capable of mitigating the incident, will give everyone the best chance for success.

Your fire department leaders understand that seconds can seem like minutes, and minutes can seem like hours when you're experiencing an emergency. To make the most efficient use of the limited resources available, both districts are continually measuring operational data and evaluating response

areas, working hard to arrive as quickly as possible with what's needed to best mitigate your emergency.

According to Underwriters Laboratories, the average time to flashover (full involvement of a room that's on fire) has dramatically decreased due to new synthetic construction materials and furnishings. With homes burning hotter and faster than ever, properly-positioned staffing and reliable equipment is essential. The timely arrival of the first crew, plus

**North Kitsap Burn Ban Information Line  
(360)297-4888**

**Poulsbo Fire**

**Service Area:** 54 square miles

**Population Served:** 26,400 (2019 OFM Estimate)

**2020 Operating Budget:** \$9.9 million

**2019 Total Calls:** 4,087

**2019 Medical Calls:** 2,722 (67%)

**Civilian Employees:** 5

**Uniformed Employees:** 45

**Volunteers:** 14

**Fire Insurance Rating:** 4

**Fire Chief:** Jim Gillard

Station 71  
911 NE Liberty Rd

Station 72  
28882 Falkner Rd NE

Station 73  
1863 NE Pacific Ave

Station 77  
1305 NW Pioneer Hill Rd

Station 81  
26642 Miller Bay Rd NE

Station 84  
18533 Augusta Ave NE

Station 85  
23260 South Kingston Rd NE

Station 87  
35100 Little Boston Rd NE

Station 89  
4911 NE Twin Spits Rd

**Poulsbo Fire**

# the 2020 West Coast Wildfires

# Kids Corner

successful, with less than 10 positive cases among over 30,000 firefighters deployed to large incidents in Washington, Oregon and California.

No fire agency can maintain enough resources to handle catastrophic incidents on its own. So, when local resources are depleted, other agencies assist. Before answering that call to assist outside the area, we make sure that adequate resources remain to protect home districts. Additionally, nearly all of the expenses are reimbursed. The crews gain valuable experience in

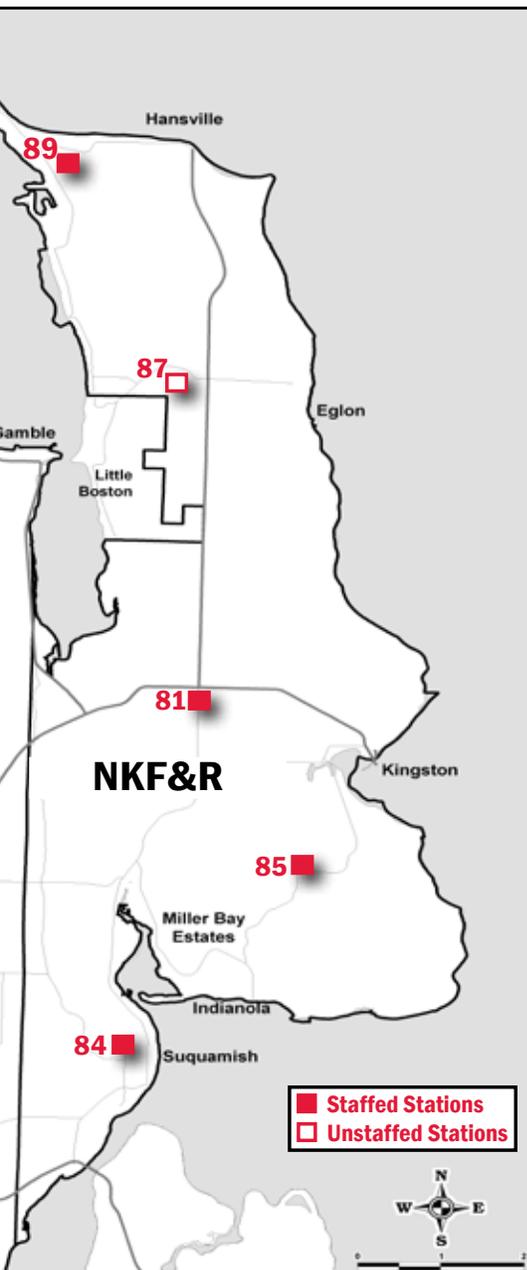
the unique skills required for safe and effective firefighting and command in the wildland environment, better preparing them when such incidents strike at home, as they did this year in Bonney Lake and Graham.



We're launching this new feature to make sure that there's something for everyone in The Pulse.

In this edition, we present a story problem that's connected to the Fast Response story on page 2. Students from preschool through high school are eligible to enter. Submit answers by email to [patti@nkfr.org](mailto:patti@nkfr.org) for a chance to win a \$5 gift certificate (not purchased with public funds, but with firefighters' funds) to a local business. Entries are due by December 1 and will be judged by work shown, accuracy and presentation. If there are more than ten entries, firefighters will select certificate recipients in a random drawing.

*"If Poulsbo Fire Department and North Kitsap Fire & Rescue have an average total response time to all incidents of about 6 minutes, and it takes an average of a 1/2 minute for Kitsap 911 to dispatch units after receiving a 911 report, and it takes the firefighters about 1 minute to put their firefighting gear on before leaving the fire stations, what's the average number of minutes they are actually on the road when they're headed to a fire?"*



**NKF&R**

**Service Area:** 46 square miles

**Population Served:** 20,453 (2019 OFM Estimate)

**2020 Operating Budget:** \$9.5 million

**2019 Total Calls:** 3,364

**2019 Medical Calls:** 2,086 (62%)

**Civilian Employees:** 8

**Uniformed Employees:** 45

**Volunteers:** 14

**Fire Insurance Rating:** 4

**Fire Chief:** Dan Smith

## Coping with the Pandemic: Ingredients of Resilience

We're sure you've noticed it, too – the signs of stress that may be attributed to the change of seasons or elections, but are most certainly worsened by the on-going pandemic. Washington State Department of Health offers these valuable tips for maintaining resilience – the ability to bounce back from difficult experiences.

We can all practice self-care by applying these four ingredients of resilience.

**Flexibility and adaptability:** View changes as opportunities for growth.

**Purpose:** Stay true to your core values. Identify what motivates you and let go of trying to meet others' expectations of you. Do more things that bring you a sense of peace or calm.

**Connection:** Hold on to healthy relationships in your life. This could be friends, family, social groups, pets, or a higher power.

**Hope:** Positivity is a powerful tool. It is okay to think about negative possibilities, but give equal attention to positive possibilities.

Finally, don't forget that it's okay to ask for help. Consider calling **Washington Listens at 1(833)681-0211.**



# Holiday Safety

Many of the things that make the fall and winter holidays so enjoyable also increase the risk for fire and other hazards.

Thanksgiving is all about gratitude, but the holiday also involves a lot of food. The fourth Thursday in November sees more cooking fires than any

other single day of the year. You can avoid adding to the statistics by staying in the kitchen whenever items are cooking on the stove top and checking oven items regularly. Keep children and pets clear of hot things, and know what to do if fire breaks out in a pan (put a lid on it and turn off all the burners) or in the oven (keep the door closed and turn it off).

The dark days of winter get a burst of light from celebrations like Christmas, Kwanzaa, and Hanukkah. Candles and holiday lights are often the cause of destructive fires during

Graphic: National Fire Protection Association

## Before Heading Out or to Bed

**Blow out** lit candles when you leave the room or go to bed. **Turn off** all light strings and decorations before leaving home or going to bed.

### FACTS

- ❗ More than **one-third** of home decoration fires are started by candles.
- ❗ More than **two of every five** decoration fires happen because decorations are placed too close to a heat source.

these festive days. Three of every five fires involving decorations were started by candles. Choose decorations that are flame-resistant. If fresh greens are a part of the plan, make sure they

stay well-hydrated and clear of heat sources, including candles. Electrical distribution (extension cords are an example) or lighting equipment figured in two of every five fires involving Christmas trees. Use hooks instead of nails or staples to hang light strings and replace any that are malfunctioning.

Take the opportunity to test smoke alarms and practice the family's fire escape plan, ensuring that any overnight guests know at least two ways out as well as the location of the family's one meeting place.

Find more holiday safety info at the fire districts' websites or [www.nfpa.org](http://www.nfpa.org).

# Preparing for Winter Storms

We've already had our first fall windstorm. More power outages, freezing temperatures and -- possibly -- snow can't be far behind.

Take Winter By Storm, a joint effort by King County and the City of Seattle, offer three simple steps to winter storm preparedness: 1. What if you're stranded and can't get out for



- supplies? **Build a kit for home, work and car;** 2. What if downed trees block roadways and prevent you from getting home? **Make and practice a plan** with your family.
3. **Stay informed and know what weather is headed our way** so you can make last-minute adjustments.

Find more tips and checklists at [www.takewinterbystorm.org](http://www.takewinterbystorm.org).

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## Chimney Fires

Another very common cause of fires in our area is chimney fires. From damages limited to just the roof and attic area, to a complete loss

of a home, a common theme in the cause of these fires is a lack of maintenance.



To avoid these fires, make sure chimneys are cleaned and inspected on a regular basis, at least once a year.

Photo: Sheridan (OR) Fire Department