

The Pulse

Summer 2020

Here For You



During the pandemic, much has changed. We've all had to make adjustments, and many in our community have made sacrifices. There have been losses – personal, medical, economic and social. Through it all, we've been here for you.

For the protection of our crews and the community, we've had to limit public access to our fire stations and suspend our participation in non-emergency events but that hasn't affected what happens when you need our help; we haven't stopped providing the same fast, professional

and compassionate service as always.

The best firefighters are resourceful problem-solvers, and we've had to exercise those skills to adapt in changing conditions. Some of those innovations will serve us beyond the current environment. The online platform, Community Connect, lets the public provide us with vital advance information to help us more safely and efficiently

respond when needed. Read more about Community Connect on the back page. Recent shortages in personal protective equipment (PPE) led us to acquire ultraviolet systems that more effectively decontaminate our ambulances, equipment and PPE.

Like you, we look forward to resuming the activities we're missing. Watch our websites to find out when we can once again safely offer non-emergency services like CPR classes, car seat checks, helmet and life jacket fittings, blood pressure checks and more.

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

NORTH KITSAP FIRE & RESCUE

26642 Miller Bay Rd NE Kingstn, WA 98346

(360)297-3619

www.nkfr.org

@nkfandr facebook/nkfire



911 NE Liberty Rd Poulsbo, WA 98370

(360)779-3997

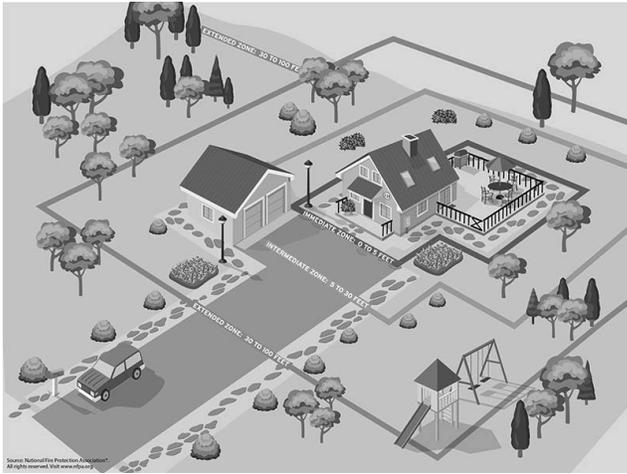
www.poulsbofire.org

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**Inside:
Fireworks Safety
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Wildland Fire Prevention
Helmet Fitting Tips**



Get Firewise



breaks. Clear vegetation from around propane tanks, exterior walls, porches and decks. Keep grass less than 4" in height. Remove vegetation from under trees to prevent surface fires from climbing into crowns. Keep trees and their branches at least 10 feet from the edge of the structure.

In the extended zone (30 - 100 feet from the home), dispose of heavy accumulations of

ground litter such as leaves. Remove dead plant and tree material as well as vegetation growing adjacent to outbuildings. Maintain space between trees to prevent fire spread.

Prepare for wildfire by making a list of items to take in the event of a rapid evacuation. Make a family emergency plan that includes two ways out of your neighborhood and a meeting place.

Find more information about wildfire prevention and preparedness at www.firewise.org.

Wildfire CAN happen here, and there are signs that the threat may be significant in Western Washington this summer. Should wildfire strike our communities, fire departments' ability to defend homes will often depend on the properties' resistance to wildfire.

Consider taking steps to improve your home's chances of surviving a wildfire, starting with the home itself and moving outward into the yard.

Clean roof and gutters of dead leaves and other debris. Install 1/8" mesh metal screens in attic vents to prevent embers from getting in. Screen or box-in areas below decks with wire mesh to prevent combustible materials from accumulating. Move flammable material away from wall exteriors.

In the spaces that extend to 30 feet beyond the home, create fuel

Wildfire in Washington

As of late May, Washington State Department of Natural Resources is reporting that the agency's firefighters have already responded to 276 wildfires this year. That's almost three times the average of 103 for the same time period over the last ten years.

The majority of those fires -- 62% -- were the result of escaped controlled burns such as debris fires or campfires.

You can avoid adding to these statistics by following local outdoor burning rules and by keeping an eye on fire danger as summer goes on.

EMS is Open (and Safe)



Emergency medical services and health care providers across the state are reporting a decrease in patients. Your fire districts have experienced a 15 - 20% drop in calls since mid-March. It appears that some people with medical emergencies are not calling 911 when they need it because they are worried about getting exposed to COVID-19 in an ambulance or hospital.

Unfortunately, that has led to an increase in the number of people dying at home -- often unnecessarily -- and some agencies are reporting that those seeking help are significantly sicker because they are waiting longer to call 911, especially those experiencing cardiac events or strokes.

If you have a medical emergency, call 911. Along with our partner-hospitals, we are going above and beyond to make sure it's safe for you to get care.

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

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

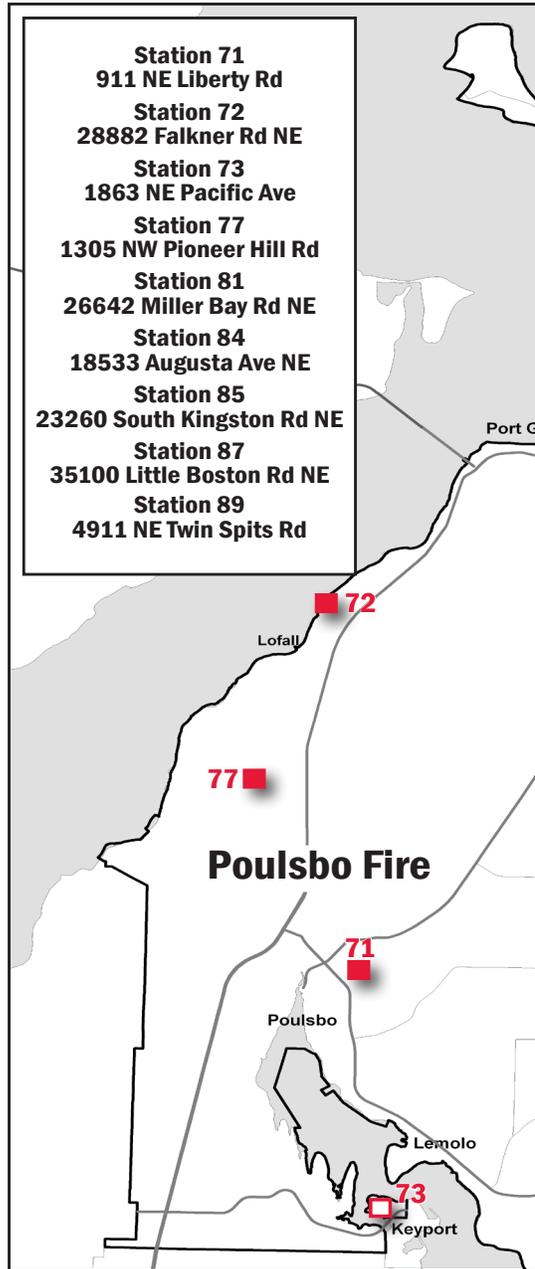
Station 81
26642 Miller Bay Rd NE

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



Update from the Fire Districts

The full economic effects of the pandemic aren't yet known. Leaders at both of the fire districts are watching closely for potential impacts to budgets, capitalizing on pandemic-related grants and taking steps to ensure that levels of service aren't negatively affected.

Prior to the advent of COVID-19, North Kitsap Fire & Rescue (NKF&R) was already preparing for an unprecedented number of retirements and other personnel changes. Nine responders have been hired to fill vacancies and maintain levels of service. While some planned capital projects have been delayed due to the pandemic, NKF&R plans to move forward on needed renovations to its

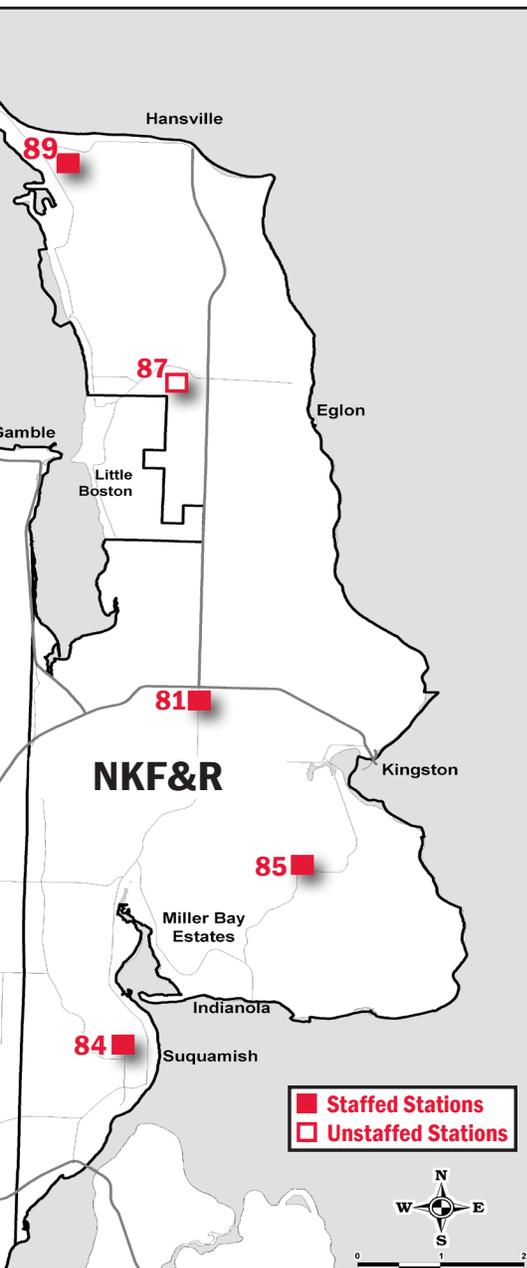
volunteer station and storage facility at the intersection of Hansville and Eglon Roads.

Poulsbo Fire Department has also seen personnel changes over the past year, including the filling of the Deputy Chief of Operations position that had been vacant since 2010. This, along with the retirement of a battalion chief, resulted in a cascade of promotions and hiring of five responders. Positions were filled by promoting from within, giving personnel opportunity for continued advancement. Another retirement initiated re-organization of the front office staff, furthering efforts to improve efficiency of administrative



functions.

The districts have been able to mitigate some of the pandemic's impacts through last year's renewal of the EMS levy. Sustaining service levels and meeting the community's needs as efficiently as possible remain guiding principles in both agencies' planning and budgeting processes.



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: 15
Fire Insurance Rating: 4
Fire Chief: Jim Gillard

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: 7
Uniformed Employees: 42
Volunteers: 20
Fire Insurance Rating: 4
Fire Chief: Dan Smith

Celebrate Safely

With public Fourth of July fireworks displays canceled, we're all looking for new ways to mark the holiday. Officials are urging everyone to choose safe celebrations, observing the same precautions that have protected us during the pandemic – stay safe, stay healthy and stay home.

Be considerate.

Consumer fireworks are responsible for more than 16,000 fires and countless injuries annually in the U.S. (according to the National Fire Protection Association). They're also frightening to wildlife, livestock and pets as well as

to some of your human neighbors. Think about them, too.

Keep 911 lines open for emergencies. If fireworks pose an immediate threat to life or property, it's okay to call 911. Otherwise, call the special fireworks hotline, available from July 1 at 8 a.m. until July 6 at 5 a.m. **Call 360-307-5811 for fireworks complaints.**

Know what's legal and what's not. Check the fire districts' websites for information about permissible hours of discharge and types of devices.



How to Fit a Bike Helmet

Bike helmets can reduce the chance of brain injury by more than 80% – but only when properly fit and worn. Here are some tips to help ensure that the helmets protecting you and your family have the best chance of doing their job:

1. Place helmet on the head, level



and with no more than two fingers width between the bottom edge of the helmet and the eyebrow.

2. Check that the helmet is in contact with the head. If not, tighten the retention ring or add thicker pads.



3. Adjust the slides for the helmet straps on both sides, forming a “V” just below and slightly in

front of the wearer’s ears.

4. Buckle the helmet below the chin. Tighten the straps until only two fingers can fit between it and the underside of the wearer’s chin.

5. Check the fit. When the wearer opens the mouth, the helmet should dip slightly. If it doesn’t, the chin strap is too loose.



Need help fitting, fine-tuning or replacing a helmet? Until our fire stations are open to the public again, we’re unable to take in-person appointments for helmet fittings. However, we might be able to help over the phone or by web conference.

Contact Poulsbo Fire Department at (360) 779-3997 or North Kitsap Fire & Rescue at (360)297-3619 to find out more!

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Map Your Neighborhood

Though it wasn’t the disaster we thought we’d be preparing for, several organized neighborhoods in North Kitsap have used the connections they’d forged to help one another during COVID-19. Find out more about strengthening your neighborhood’s resilience against earthquake, civil unrest, wildfire, winter storms – and pandemics.

Get more information from Jody Matson at Poulsbo Fire Department (360-779-3997) Michele Laboda at North Kitsap Fire & Rescue (360-297-3619) or Dave Rasmussen at Kitsap County Department of Emergency Management (360-307-5871).

Community Connect

Community Connect is a free, secure, and easy way for our communities to provide critical information about their households to fire and emergency medical services personnel.

By providing advance information about your home and its occupants, in the unfortunate event that there is an emergency there, we can better protect you and everything you care about.

Community Connect also makes it possible for you to write your own outdoor burning permits.

See the link on our websites to sign-up.



FIRE COMMISSIONERS

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