

The Pulse

Summer 2021

RESPONDING ... without lights and sirens

A fire department's core mission is to save lives and property. Most people think that the mission is met primarily through emergency response. While responses to fires, accidents and medical incidents are vital to preserving life and property, these reactive measures aren't always the most effective methods of doing so.

Community Risk Reduction (CRR) – the process of identifying and prioritizing local risks for mitigation – helps fire departments to save lives and property by applying resources more strategically and proactively.

Prevention programs such as car seat checks, bike helmet fitting, home safety surveys, life jacket loaners and smoke alarm installations are among the strategies utilized by Poulsbo Fire



Department (PFD) and North Kitsap Fire & Rescue (NKF&R) to help reduce fire and injury risk in our communities. To learn more about

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
Kingston, WA 98346
(360)297-3619
www.nkfr.org
@nkfandr facebook/nkfire



911 NE Liberty Rd
Poulsbo, WA 98370
(360)779-3997
www.poulsbofire.org
@poulsbofire facebook/poulsbofire

the fire departments' prevention services, call NKF&R at (360)297-3619 or PFD at (360)779-3997.

Poulsbo Fire CARES is another example of a non-traditional tool that helps to reduce risk in our community. CARES stands for Community Assistance, Referral and Education. The pilot program is housed at PFD and made possible by a temporary grant funded through Kitsap County's

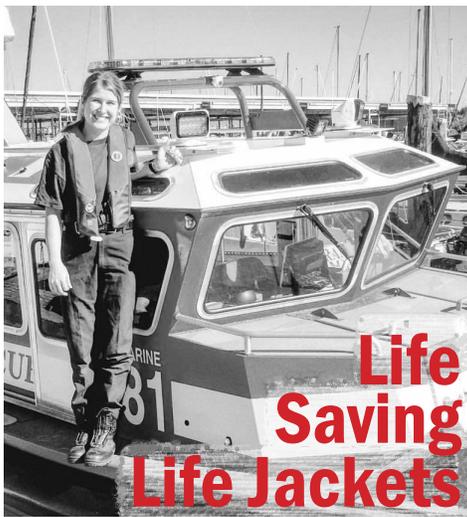
Continued inside

Car Seat Checks

Regular car seat checks, suspended during the pandemic, have returned to NKF&R on the second Saturday of every month from 10 a.m. until 1 p.m. at 26642 Miller Bay Road near Kingston. The service, provided by a certified child passenger safety technician, is free.



Also In This Issue:
Kids Corner Contest
COVID-19 Update
Life-Saving Life Jackets
Preparing for Wildfire
and More!



We spotted this powerful story posted in social media about an incident in Thurston County, and wanted to share its important message here:

“Our family motto is ‘Always an Adventure’ good or bad, it’s an adventure where we learn and grow. There are some adventures not worth it.

Today, he wasn’t meant to die.

A young man in his 20’s flipped his kayak near our home. By the time he got help, at our house, he had been in the water +/- 30 minutes. He was ghost white and hardly able to speak. When the medics arrived, his temperature was 92 degrees. 92 after being warmed with blankets and a fire.

Please don’t make this your adventure. Learn from the many who have given their life to this lesson. Learn from those who have had life altering effects from this adventure. Or learn from those who have barely lived to tell about it.

WEAR A LIFE JACKET!

It shouldn’t even be a discussion if you are kayaking/boating/paddle boarding/etc. alone.

I don’t care ...

- how great of a swimmer you are
- if you know boats
- if you’ve never flipped a kayak
- if you don’t fall off your paddle board
- if you’re staying close to shore
- if you’ve done it 10000 times

WEAR A LIFE JACKET!

Puget Sound is no joke and the water is cold. 30 minutes-fully clothed-

in the dark-swimming for your life-against the current-50 degree water-Not the way to spend your evening.

He wasn’t supposed to die today.

Regardless of being a good swimmer, hypothermia stops your ability to swim. Your muscles seize up. You can’t stay afloat any longer. He wasn’t wearing a life jacket. My call to his parents could have been a lot different. He gets to hear them lecture him, he survived.

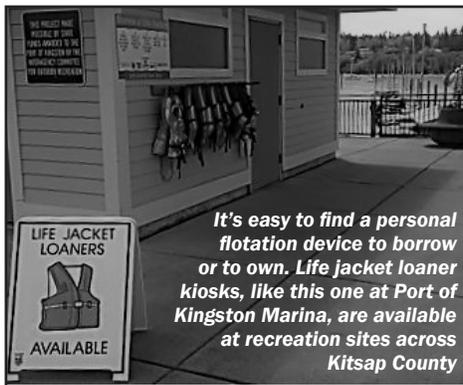
Accidents happen, but please don’t be a preventable accident. Learn from those who have paid the ultimate price. Let their lesson teach you.

As summer is around the corner, enjoy the water, but please be safe on the water. You are needed in this world.

Huge shout out to my mom and boys who were the first to get him help.”

The incident in this story occurred in another county. To learn more about fire-rescue boats in our community, see the back page.

Special thanks to Katie McMurray for writing this compelling account and giving us permission to share it.



Poulsbo Fire

Service Area: 54 square miles

Population Served: 26,897 (2020 OFM Estimate)

2021 Operating Budget: \$10.4 million

2020 Total Calls: 4,043

2020 Medical Calls: 2,790 (69%)

Civilian Employees: 5

Uniformed Employees: 47

Volunteers: 10

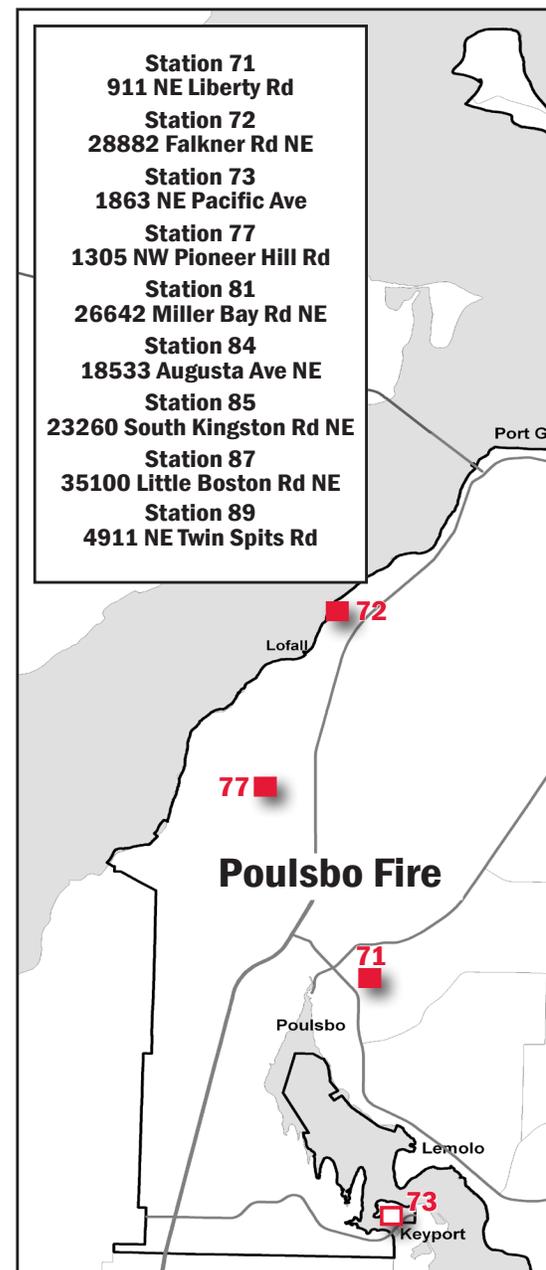
Fire Insurance Rating: 4

Fire Chief: Jim Gillard

Get Ready

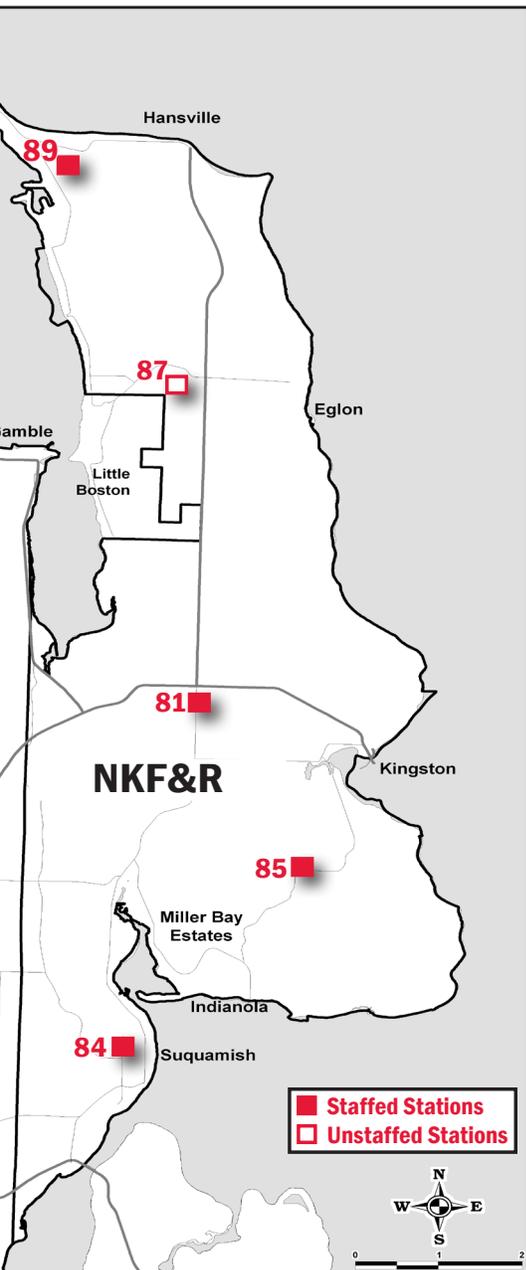
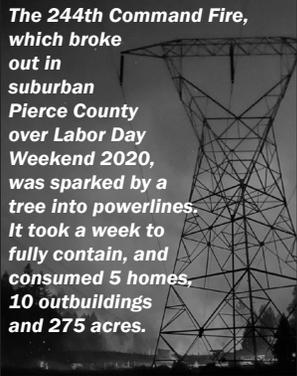
Last year’s wildland fire season was particularly devastating in Washington State, taking lives and destroying entire towns. Even the Puget Sound region was impacted; over Labor Day Weekend, fires broke out across the area, consuming hundreds of acres and several homes.

While it’s difficult to predict what’s ahead for this year’s season, we know that 2021 wildland fire totals to date are almost four times the annual average for the same time period over the last ten years. In April alone, the state saw over 220 wildfires compared to 160 wildfires last April. Most of those fires were caused by humans. And we know that wildfire can happen here.



for Wildfire

You can prepare for wildland fires, starting with the steps in the checklist at right. More information is available at www.ready.gov and www.firewise.org. And, you can help prevent dangerous wildfires from striking our communities. Help firefighters by doing your part to avoid ignition sources such as cigarettes, outdoor fires and fireworks.



Are You Ready?

To find out if you're ready for wildfire, see the following checklist. Your goal is to make your home survive a wildfire, so be honest in evaluating your progress.

- I have a minimum 30-foot noncombustible area around my home
- My landscaping includes fire-resistant varieties
- I have evaluated my wood shake roof for treatment or replacement
- Overcrowded or weakened trees have been thinned or removed from my property, and lowhanging branches have been pruned
- The grass and weeds are consistently cut
- My wood pile and left-over building materials are at least 30 feet from my house
- I've cleared needles, leaves and debris from my roof and deck
- Street signs and the address of my home are visible from the road
- I have an emergency checklist in the event of a wildfire, and I know to monitor local media for up-to-date information

If you couldn't check the box on any of these questions, bone up your efforts and try again! The more boxes you can check, the greater your chances of passing the ultimate test!

Checklist courtesy of the Pacific Northwest Wildfire Coordinating Group

NKF&R

Service Area: 46 square miles
Population Served: 20,609 (2020 OFM Estimate)
2021 Operating Budget: \$10.1 million
2020 Total Calls: 3,061
2020 Medical Calls: 1,959 (64%)
Civilian Employees: 7
Uniformed Employees: 45
Volunteers: 16
Fire Insurance Rating: 4
Fire Chief: Dan Smith

COVID-19 Update

Station Status and Events: As of this writing, local COVID-19 infection rates are declining while vaccination rates are rising and, as Governor Jay Inslee lifts statewide restrictions, we're optimistic that we may soon be able to reopen our fire stations to the public and resume some of our community events such as fire station tours. Watch each fire district's websites and social media accounts for the most current status.

Pitching In: Personnel from Poulsbo Fire Department and North Kitsap Fire & Rescue continue to help with the local and regional pandemic response. Most recently, staff have assisted at a federally-supported mass vaccination site in Yakima where COVID-19 infection rates were some of the highest in the nation; firefighter/paramedics and firefighter/EMTs have provided medical monitoring at local vaccination sites.

Getting Vaccinated in Kitsap: Looking for a place to get vaccinated? Need help getting to a vaccination site? Go to www.kcowa.us/vaccine or call 211.



RESPONDING

Continued from front page

voter-approved sales tax for delivery of mental health, substance abuse and therapeutic court programs and services. CARES operates across North Kitsap and Bainbridge Island to provide improved outcomes for individuals who are better served with connections to care and services than through emergency response.

The CARES team includes a crisis intervention officer who is also a firefighter/EMT and a mental health professional/community resource specialist. Both are skilled at finding the right resources to help individuals referred by fire or police personnel.

By locating more appropriate solutions for these patients, CARES also improves system efficiency by freeing up emergency responders and reducing visits to the busy local emergency room.

Kids Corner

There's something for everyone in each edition of The Pulse! This issue focuses on how your fire departments work to protect the community without responding to emergencies, and this edition's Kids Corner Contest has the same emphasis:

Create a drawing, snap a photo or write a short story to show us one or more ways that you and your family can protect lives and property before there's an emergency.

Students from preschool through high school are eligible to enter. Examples include a photo of family members wearing life-jackets when on or near the water or a scanned copy of the family's home fire escape plan. See www.nfpa.org, www.sparky.org, www.ready.gov and www.safekids.org for more ideas. Submit answers via email to laboda@nkfr.org for a chance to win a \$5 gift certificate (not purchased with public funds but with firefighters' funds)

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to a local business. Entries are due by July 15 and will be judged on accuracy and completeness as appropriate for the entrant's age. If there are more than ten winning entries, firefighters will select certificate recipients in a random drawing.

Fire-Rescue Boats In and Around Poulsbo and North Kitsap

Both fire districts support the U.S. Coast Guard's water rescue mission with their own fire boats. NKF&R's Marine 81 is moored at Port of Kingston while PFD's Marine 74 is at Port of Poulsbo. PFD also operates a trailerable boat that can be launched to serve Hood Canal along with NKF&R's other marine unit, staffed by Port Ludlow Fire - Rescue. Additional boats are operated by law enforcement agencies as well as by the Suquamish and Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribes. Because most of the local resources are cross-staffed (personnel staffing land-based units must travel before getting the rescue boat underway), and local waters are vast, successful rescues require teamwork that includes civilian boaters in addition to marine rescue resources. And, as illustrated by the story inside, life jackets, too!

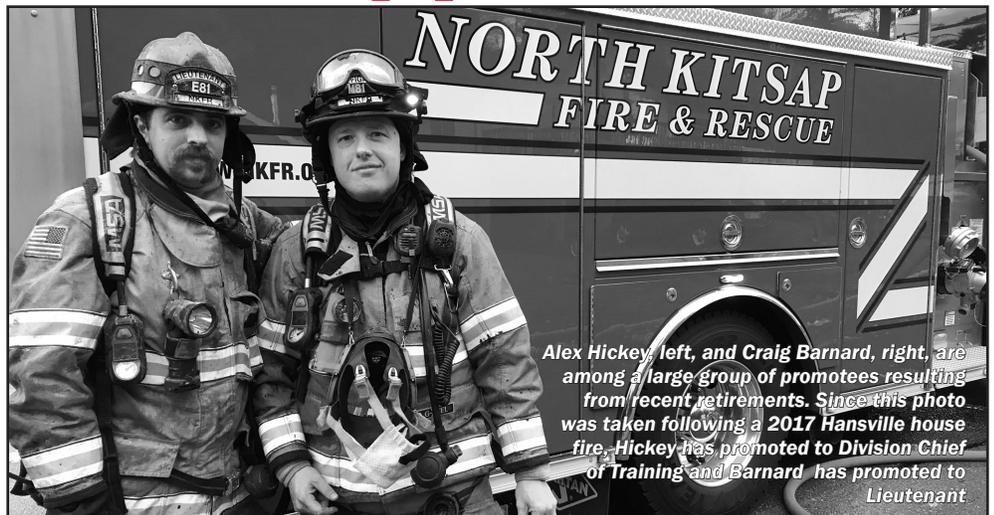
Fireworks Info
www.nkfr.org
www.poulsbofire.org

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

Transitions and Opportunities

During the eighties and early nineties, local fire departments grew and adjusted to meet changing demographics and climbing demand for services. Declining volunteerism led the fire districts to increase their paid firefighting forces. Now, many of those employees are reaching the end of their careers; both North Kitsap Fire & Rescue and Poulsbo Fire Department are experiencing significant transitions in staffing during the five years between 2019 - 2024.

The situation presents both challenges and opportunities. While these departures make room for new hires and promotions, the retirees take decades of valuable experience with them when they go. The districts' leaders have been focused on personnel development and succession planning and, as always, exploring and implementing additional cooperative efforts to help ensure we can continue to provide you with the emergency and non-emergency services you expect.



Alex Hickey, left, and Craig Barnard, right, are among a large group of promotees resulting from recent retirements. Since this photo was taken following a 2017 Hansville house fire, Hickey has promoted to Division Chief of Training and Barnard has promoted to Lieutenant

FIRE COMMISSIONERS

North Kitsap Fire & Rescue	Poulsbo Fire Department
Patrick Pearson, Chair (pearson@nkfr.org)	David Ellingson, Chair (dellingson@poulsbofire.org)
Gillian Gregory (gregory@nkfr.org)	Jim Ingalls (jingalls@poulsbofire.org)
John Huntington (huntington@nkfr.org)	Darryl Milton (dmilton@poulsbofire.org)
Stephen Neupert (neupert@nkfr.org)	Chris Quinn (cquinn@poulsbofire.org)
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