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Clallam County Fire District 3 NEWSLETTER

Chief's Corner

I hope this newsletter finds you and your family well. Clallam County Fire District 3 (Fire District 3) is your local Fire District, and is committed to providing high-quality fire protection and emergency medical services to its growing community.



Justin Grider, Fire Chief

Fire District 3 serves 142-square miles including the Gardiner Community to the East (Jefferson County) all the way to Deer Park to the West, from the ocean to the north and the National Forest to the south!

Fire District 3's Growing Community and Increased Call Volume

In 2017, Fire District 3 served approximately 30,000 residents. By 2024, that number has increased to roughly 40,000 residents due to numerous new developments in its response area. While this growth contributes to increased tax revenue over time, it also brings a higher volume of emergency calls. Over the past six years, call volume has increased by 14%, following a 27% increase from 2011 to 2016. This has resulted in a nearly 50% increase in call volume over the past 15 years.

Impact on Services

Fire District 3's members are experienced and committed to delivering exceptional emergency services. However, the rising demand for emergency responses has reduced the time available for essential tasks like ongoing pre-fire inspections, public education, and other crucial public safety duties.

As Fire District 3's response area expands, the impact on all government services increases. Agencies face challenges from a growing population, rising tourism, heavier road usage, and aging infrastructure, which place additional strain on emergency response capabilities. Aging roadways complicate response times, and Fire District 3 relies on partner agencies to address these issues collaboratively. To meet the demands of a growing community, Fire District 3 remains committed to adapting its resources and working with government partners to ensure reliable protection and support.

Special Purpose District

Many people recognize Clallam County Fire District 3 by name, but did you know that Fire District 3 is classified as a "Special Purpose District"? While "Clallam County" is part of our name, Fire District 3 is actually an independent government entity designed to serve the unique needs of the community. While Fire District 3 is not a part of Clallam County itself, another common misconception is that Fire District 3 is directly affiliated with the City of Sequim. Although we collaborate closely with the County and City on important community initiatives such as the Community Emergency Response Team and Fire Code Enforcement, there is no formal governing relationship between our two agencies. Each entity operates independently, with its own governance, responsibilities and funding.

A Special Purpose District, also referred to as a "Junior Taxing District," is a local government organization created to fulfill a specific, essential public service. In the case of Fire District 3, the primary mission is to provide fire protection and emergency medical services to the residents within the District. Unlike the broader Clallam County government, which manages an array of public services, Fire District 3 is solely dedicated to ensuring the safety and well-being of its community through these specialized services. Our role is critical, focusing exclusively on protecting lives, homes, and businesses through rapid response to emergencies.

Funding

The financial backbone of Fire District 3 is funded largely through property taxes, which serve as the primary revenue source. While Clallam County assists by managing the billing and collection of these taxes—essentially acting as a custodian of the funds—the collected money is earmarked specifically for Fire District 3's operations. Fire District 3 manages these funds independently to ensure that emergency medical personnel are supported with the equipment, training, and resources necessary to provide prompt and reliable services to the community.

Governance

It's important to note that the Clallam County Commissioners do not govern Fire District 3. Instead, Fire District 3 is overseen by three elected officials who are chosen directly by you, the residents living within the District's boundaries. These elected officials are entrusted with the oversight of operations, budget management, and long-term planning for the District. They play a pivotal role in guiding the direction of Fire District 3 to ensure the continued delivery of high-quality fire protection and emergency medical services that our community depends on.

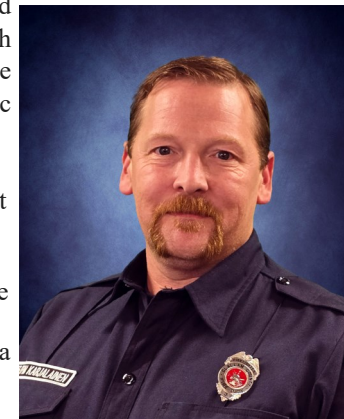
Your support is vital in sustaining the effectiveness and efficiency of the services we provide. Fire District 3 greatly values the trust that you, our citizens, place in us. We are committed to meeting your expectations, ensuring that Fire District 3 remains fully prepared to respond to emergencies and protect the community. From each member of Fire District 3, we extend our sincere gratitude for allowing us to serve you and for making our mission possible.



Community Paramedic

Clallam County Fire District 3 (Fire District 3) is proud to announce a significant advancement in public health and safety with the introduction of a new Mobile Integrated Health and Community Paramedic (MIH-CP) program.

The new position represents a shift from Fire District 3's former low acuity unit, which was previously staffed by retired firefighter/EMT Scott Dickson. MIH-CP also encompasses a Low Acuity Unit response to calls for Basic Life safety services, medical education and resource navigation. The MIH-CP program is a front-line service with a focus on community risk reduction and prevention by utilizing a community Paramedic to enhance a patient's overall health and wellbeing by bridging gaps between acute and routine medical and behavioral care services. The MIH-CP program will focus on preventive care, navigation of partnership programs, education in chronic conditions, and providing follow-up care to reduce emergency calls, hospital visits and re-admissions.



Fire District 3 officials are excited about the appointment of Paramedic/Firefighter Mark Karjalainen to the Community Paramedic role, viewing it as a crucial step forward in Fire District 3's ongoing mission to enhance public health and safety. As the newly appointed Community Paramedic (MIH-CP), Karjalainen, will focus on non-emergency needs, aiming to reduce 9-1-1 calls and keep small medical issues from becoming a true emergency. The program works by receiving referrals through the 911 system, first responders, and partner agencies who identify patients that may need extra support to manage their health. Partner agencies include aging and disability services along with other Local, County, State and Federal service programs. This service comes at no additional cost to Fire District 3 residents, as it is funded by the operational budget.

Other districts with similar programs have reported significant success, with reductions in the frequency of non-emergency 9-1-1 calls and improved patient outcomes. The hope is to reduce the strain on emergency services and ensure that proper resources are available for emergent situations when they arise.

To Learn more about Fire District 3, please visit www.cfd3.org or scan code:



SCAN ME