



Clallam County Fire District 3

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Update: Clallam County Fire District 3 Line of Duty Death

(SEQUIM, Wash.) — Officials with Clallam County Fire District 3, supported by fire service personnel from across the state, are providing an update following this morning's announcement of the Line of Duty Death of Captain Charles "Chad" Cate, 46, a 25-year veteran of the fire district.

Fire Chief Ben Andrews expresses gratitude for the outpouring of support from fire service and community members alike. "We've seen our industry come together at times like this and even lent a hand. But until now, we had no idea how truly valuable it is to be surrounded by our brothers and sisters."

Captain Cate was discovered deceased in his bunk by members of his crew when they attempted to wake him this morning around 7 a.m. at the fire district's Station 34. He was last seen following a response to a fire alarm activation at a commercial building at about 2:25 a.m. when the crew returned to the station and went to bed following the call. Later, after apparently heading back out to the site of an earlier house fire in the Dungeness neighborhood, he texted a fellow captain and the duty chief at around 4 a.m. to say that all was well at the scene.

As is the case with all employment-related deaths and injuries, Washington State Department of Labor and Industries personnel are investigating the circumstances of this morning's tragic loss. On Friday, members of Captain Cate's crew will escort his body to and from Thurston County where the resources to conduct an autopsy are readily available.

Captain Cate was raised in the area and graduated from Sequim High School where he has continued to be involved as the wrestling coach. He was hired by the fire district in 1997 as a firefighter/paramedic, and promoted to the rank of captain in 2020. He leaves behind his wife, 2 year-old son and two adult children. Chief Andrews asks everyone to keep Captain Cate's family in their thoughts and prayers.

A full fire service memorial is tentatively planned for Saturday, January 21 in Sequim. More information will be provided as it is available.

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