



THE FIRE WIRE

THE NORTHERN LAKES FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

FALL 2015



Inside this Issue:

From the Chief.....Page 2

Fire Season.....Page 3

Employee Recognition.....Page 4

Training.....Page 5

EMS News and Safety Tips.....Page 6

FIRE PREVENTION MONTH School Visit Schedule



Atlas Elementary	October 1st and 5th
Betty Kiefer Elementary	October 23rd and 26th
Garwood Elementary	October 29th
Hayden Meadows Elementary	October 15th and 16th
John Brown Elementary	October 6th and 7th
North Idaho Christian	October 8th
Prairie Christian	October 15th
Shepherd of the Hills	October 22nd
Twin Lakes Elementary	October 19th and 20th
STEM Charter	October 27th and 28th



Submit your ideas or requests for items to include in future editions of The Fire Wire to:

admin@northernlakesfire.com

Fire Prevention Week was established to commemorate the devastating Chicago fire on October 9, 1871 in which more than 250 people died, over 100,000 were left homeless, 17,400 structures were destroyed and more than 2,000 acres were burned.

This fire changed the way that firefighters and public officials think about fire prevention and fire safety resulting in National Fire Prevention Week being observed since 1922.

This year's theme is "Hear the Beep Where you Sleep" with emphasis on having a working smoke alarm in every bedroom of your house.

Northern Lakes Fire District observes its own "Fire Prevention Month" every October. Activities include firefighters and fire prevention staff visiting all the elementary schools in our district concentrating on those ages identified as most at risk for playing with fire: Kindergarten, 2nd and 5th grade.



Photos courtesy of Ashley Surber



As many of you may know, I will be retiring from Northern Lakes Fire Protection District in January 2016 after having the privilege of serving this community for over 20 years. Be assured that District business will continue as it has since my becoming Chief in 2007 with tremendous efforts made recently to ensure the smooth transition of my leaving.

I have also been acting as the District Fire Marshal since promoting to the Fire Chief's job. Upon my retirement, the District will need to have someone with the credentials of the Fire Marshal to oversee the Prevention Bureau. We were fortunate enough to have current personnel on staff and made the decision to promote Fire Inspector Tyler Drechsel to that position and Fire Inspector Jim Lyon to the position of Deputy Fire Marshal so he can act in the capacity of the Fire Marshal when necessary.

With fall here and shorter days fast approaching, I have

noticed an increase in deer activity especially during early morning and evening hours. Please drive with extra caution during these times and with school back in session, be on the lookout for children as well as they travel to and from school.

Don't forget to set your clocks back an hour and change your smoke detector batteries on November 1st as daylight savings time ends. One last seasonal suggestion for those of you who use wood or pellet stoves to heat your homes; remember to check your stove and chimney to make sure they are in good working order. It is always a good idea to have a professional check and clean your chimney a least once a year, if not more often if you burn a lot.

I want to wish you a safe and very happy Thanksgiving and a wonderful Christmas season!

Sincerely,

Dean S. Marcus

Fire Chief

dmarcus@northernlakesfire.com



On September 22nd, the District hosted a BBQ Meet & Greet followed by a Board Meeting at Fire Station 5 on Mokins Bay Road

Residents of the area were not only treated to the BBQ, but learned about volunteering opportunities, fire safety and toured one of the County EMS System's new ambulances





FIRE SEASON 2015



This summer was busier than usual with crews responding to an increased number of calls of all types including medical, fire, and citizen assists. To make it even more difficult, we have had record dry weather this year with extreme fire conditions that haven't been seen in this area since 1926.

Crews responded to several large grass fires with at least two exceeding 75 acres in size. But some of the most frustrating calls we have responded to these past few months have been intentionally lit fires which have kept both homeowners and emergency responders on edge.

Although we have identified at least four children who have been responsible for some fires, a great number of arson fires have been in the Loch Haven Hills/Grandview area which we believe were the result of a different person or persons. In fact, there have been no fewer than 25 of these unsolved fires.

Northern Lakes Fire and Kootenai County Fire & Rescue have response areas which border each other; due to the seriousness and risk potential, both fire districts have joined up with several other agencies to assist in the investigation. Coeur d'Alene Fire Dept., the Kootenai County Sheriffs Dept., the Idaho State Fire Marshal, Spirit Lake Fire District, and the Idaho Department of Lands have all joined up to form an arson fire task force. We have met several times and continue to meet as new information develops. Several of these agencies have done daily patrols throughout the summer including additional patrols at all hours with personnel in their personal vehicles so as not to draw extra attention.

We still ask that residents stay hypervigilant in their efforts at recognizing any behavior which is not typical and to make sure to write down license plate numbers of vehicles you may see in the immediate area surrounding a fire.

Call **208-772-5711**
With information or questions about these arson fires



EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION

The Northern Lakes Fire District Employee of the Quarter not only shows a passion for his job, but for his off duty time as well with his family being the top priority in all that he does.

Jim visited North Idaho from his home in California in 1996 to assist a buddy with building a house. After seeing the beauty of the area in the two months he spent here, Jim went back home and told his family—“We need to move to Idaho”.

Jim has had many jobs and is a true “multi-tasker” in all he does. Some of his prior employment includes being a bike mechanic in the early 70’s, working in construction since 1973, and becoming a general contractor in 1980. Also during this time Jim was a Los Angeles Sheriff Reservist, assisting with mountain rescue and street division duties. He found his way to the fire service in 1987 when he joined the Fullerton Fire Department, serving until 1996. After moving to the Coeur d’Alene area in February of 1996, he soon joined the Coeur d’Alene Fire Department in 1997, being promoted to his current position of Deputy Fire Chief in January 2004.

If being Deputy Fire Chief and doing contractor work on the side wasn’t enough, Jim successfully ran as Fire Commissioner for Northern Lakes Fire District in late 2007, elected again in 2011 and then recently to a 3rd term this year, where he continues to serve the people of his fire district.

EMPLOYEE of the QUARTER

Jim Washko



Jim has been married to his beautiful wife Kim for 29 years, soon to be celebrating their 30th wedding anniversary. Jim and Kim have two daughters, Kellie and Amanda, both married and each expecting their first child this December. Jim looks forward to being a grandparent and is already planning ways to spoil his new grandbabies. Even though Jim loved sports and was excited to get both his girls into sporting activities, that wasn’t their plan and they both gravitated to the performing arts. Jim found himself watching ballet and plays, realizing that whatever his daughters were performing in was his new found love!

You won’t find Jim relaxing too often in a lawn chair watching the day pass by as he remains as active as he can to stay in shape. Some of his “off duty” activities include biking, swimming, and CrossFit; with boating, fishing and hunting when time allows.

Jim’s advice to everyone is to embrace life and love your family more than anything, as they truly are our most precious asset.

When you see Jim, please be sure to thank him for the wonderful service he has provided to the many people he serves in both communities as a Deputy Fire Chief and Fire Commissioner.



Fire Marshal Drechsel and Deputy Fire Marshal Lyon (L-R)

EMPLOYEE PROMOTIONS

On October 1st, Fire Inspector Tyler Drechsel was promoted to Fire Marshal and Fire Inspector Jim Lyon to Deputy Fire Marshal. Tyler has worked in the District’s Prevention Bureau since 2008 and has done an excellent job performing Fire Marshal duties over the last year.

As Deputy Fire Marshal, Jim is qualified to act as Fire Marshal in Tyler’s absence. Jim has also served as the Public Information Officer since starting with the District in 2011. Congratulations to both Tyler and Jim! We are so proud to have them as part of our team!

TRAINING DIVISION

Extrication Training

The Northern Lakes Fire District conducted its annual vehicle extrication training for all three of our battalions in August at our training site at the Coeur d'Alene Airport. This three-day drill provides an extensive hands-on course covering basic techniques all the way through more advanced operations involving multiple vehicles.

The District services 27 miles of state and federal highway within its boundaries and responded to more than 170 vehicle accidents in 2014.

Thank you to Superior Towing in Hayden for their generous donation of damaged vehicles for this training



EMS/Rescue Training

In October, the District conducted a training/exercise drill along with the Kootenai County Fire & Rescue Technical Rescue Team at the Rathdrum Power Plant. The EMS scenario involved an electrocution on a crane 70 feet above the ground. The scenario also allowed plant personnel to exercise their emergency response plans and first aid skills.



Eighteen emergency responders from two agencies and eight plant employees were involved, allowing the District to take advantage of its great working relationship with community partners such as Rathdrum Power, as well as our mutual aid with neighboring fire departments. According to Training Chief Mike Mather, drills such as this “allow hands-on experience with a large facility so we are all better prepared to respond at a moment’s notice, no matter the circumstance.”



EMS DIVISION

New Ambulance Arrives!



The Kootenai County Emergency Medical Services System (KCEMSS) is a fire-based ambulance service that provides 9-1-1 emergency and non-emergency transports throughout the county. KCEMSS operates through a network of agencies, including Northern Lakes Fire District. All of our 33 firefighters are also licensed EMTs, including 12 paramedics. We operate two full time ambulances; one out of our Hayden station and the other out of our Rathdrum station.

agencies in the county will be responding with new ambulances.

The new fleet represents the latest state-of-the-art technology which will result in the highest level of safety for our patients and our personnel. These features include better rollover protection with airbags in the rear compartment, up-to-date stretchers, and dual controls in the patient compartment so the medic can communicate via radio from any seat.

KCEMSS recently replaced the county's aging fleet of ambulances and Northern Lakes Fire took delivery of a new Horton ambulance the end of September at our station in Hayden. By November, we anticipate replacing the ambulance at our Rathdrum station, as well as our reserve ambulance. By the end of this year, all fire



Winter Safety Tips



Keep your home safe in cold weather

1. Find and learn how to shut off your water valves in case you have a frozen or burst pipe.
2. If you lose power, don't run generators inside your house or garage due to risk of carbon monoxide poisoning.
3. Keep garage doors closed to hold in heat.
4. Keep houses and enclosed areas at least 50 degrees F to prevent frozen pipes.
5. Protect your pipes from freezing by letting faucets drip, and keep cupboard doors open to allow warm air to circulate around them.
6. If your pipes do freeze, contact a plumber to safely and properly thaw them.
7. Have your chimneys professionally cleaned each year
8. Use glass or metal screens in front of fireplaces
9. Keep combustibles at least 3 ft. away from space heaters and unplug them before leaving the house or going to bed
10. If you use any fossil fuel heating devices, including wood stoves, oil or gas furnaces, it is important to have a working monoxide gas detector.