



From the Chief's Desk

By Marty Nelson



Ever since the dawn of civilization, humans have had a mixed relationship with fire. When it's under control we call it a tool, but then we often get comfortable and forget the fact that fire also has the power to cause us a great deal of grief. This issue of *Flash Point* is focused on what the fire district regards as the number one high fire risk for this area: wildland/urban interface fire. The condition known as interface fire occurs when natural cover vegetation and structures unite in a common fire.

Recent history shows when we have fires that are a mix of natural vegetation and structures, property losses and hazard to life can be extreme. One dramatic example is the October 1991 fire in the Oakland, California area where 1,600 acres burned with 25 fatalities, 150 injuries, and over 3,300 single-family homes were lost. In Oregon we have had a steady stream of interface fires over the last 15 years requiring the Governor to declare disasters in the form of the Conflagration Act. The Conflagration Act allows the State Fire Marshal to mobilize fire service resources within the state to be assigned to another part of the state. Our fire district has been a State Conflagration Act participant, providing resources to these nearly annual events since 1987. So far, our fire district and neighbors have been lucky to escape first-hand experience with the dynamic losses associated with interface fires. However, we know that conditions exist in this region that can very easily bring us face-to-face with the need to request the enactment of the Conflagration Act.

There are common circumstances linking all interface fire tragedies. The most obvious is structures located in close proximity to vegetation and a lack of defensible space around those structures. A second factor is highly combustible roofing and siding and a third is steep terrain coupled with windy and dry weather conditions.

Another common circumstance is narrow or inadequate streets and driveways that hamper access by emergency response crews and severely limit the ability to effectively evacuate the public. Collectively, these factors can contribute to the speed of a wildland fire, which can quickly overtake response crews and residents alike.

Take a look at where you live and ask this question: Do these conditions exist around my home and neighborhood? Many of these issues can be corrected by appropriate planning in future development. Existing conditions can be improved through steadfast assessment of risk factors and by taking action to reduce that risk. Gordon Graham, a noted instructor in the field of risk management often states, "If it is predictable it is preventable".

Protecting Your Home and Property from Wildland Fires

By Stan Turner, Editor



This year is Smokey Bear's 60th birthday and with the approach of summer, it's an excellent time to remind everyone that grass, brush and forest fires pose a real threat to everyone living within the boundaries of Lane County Fire District #1. There are numerous ways you can reduce the threat of fire and provide better emergency vehicle access to your home and property. Some of the important things you can do include:

- Develop a "fire plan" with your family in case of fire, including escape routes and a place to meet

Neighbors Volunteering to Help Neighbors

once outside your home and/or away from your property.

- Make sure your address is clearly visible from both sides of the road.
- The driveway/road to your home and other structures needs to be accessible to fire equipment—at least 12 feet of driveable width, with negotiable curves and adequate room for turning vehicles around. Also make sure you have 13 feet of height clearance.
- Trim trees so that their branches don't hang over any portion of your home and other structures (barns, outbuildings etc.). Evergreen trees burn easily. Prune their lower limbs to 15 feet above the ground and thin the trees or remove them from around your home.
- Remove all debris from your roof and rain gutters.
- Remove things that burn easily from at least 30 feet around the house and at least 200 feet away on the downhill side.
- Firewood should be stored 30 to 100 feet upslope from your house.
- Block off the open space under your deck with solid sheeting or fine-mesh wire (openings no larger than 1/8th inch). Use fine-mesh wire to cover exterior attic and foundation vents.
- If you are re-roofing your home, consider using fire-resistant roofing materials such as Class-A asphalt shingles, metal sheets or cement tiles. If you are planning to build a new home, consider fire-resistant siding such as cement board, brick, or cement block.
- Protect/preserve your records, documents and photographs by using a computer and scanner to copy them and burn the files onto several CDs. Keep a copy in a bank safe deposit box and/or send copies to family members, relatives or friends living outside the area. (After the devastating fires in Southern California last year, the number one thing people who lost their homes most regretted not saving was family photographs.)
- It is possible that during a major wildland fire you will be asked to evacuate your property. The best time to prepare for a possible evacuation is when there is no immediate threat. The following is a partial list of documents and personal possessions you might want to consider taking with you.

- Prescription glasses/contact lenses*
- Prescription medications & a list of medications taken by family members*
- Insurance policy numbers, contact phone numbers*
- Money, credit cards, checks, personal identification*
- Other important documents*
- Phone numbers and addresses of key people and agencies that may need to be contacted*
- Several days supply of food, water, eating utensils and cooking gear*
- Pets – food, medication, & key supplies*
- Treasured photos*
- Keys*
- Battery-powered radio or TV*
- First Aid Kit*
- Flashlight*

Lane County Fire District #1 has a series of publications on protecting your home and property from wildland fires. They are available at our main fire station in Veneta, 88050 Territorial Highway.

We also offer limited on-site consultations with homeowners related to reducing the risk of loss in the event of a wildland fire. You can arrange for a consultation with a member of LCFD#1 by calling 935-2226.



Have a Safe and Healthy Summer
By Chris Benson, EMS Coordinator

Don't be fooled by the recent spates of rain. The warm months of summer will be here soon, and it's time to remind everyone to be safe by playing safe. Keep a special eye open for children, especially once they begin their summer vacation in June. We will be outdoors a great deal more and need to remember all our activities should be done in moderation.

We also want to remind you that as the temperature increases, you need to keep hydrated. Not drinking enough fluids can alter your judgement, making you more prone to injury and can complicate existing

Neighbors Volunteering to Help Neighbors

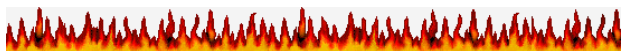
medical conditions such as Diabetes, Asthma, seizures and heart disease.

While dehydration can sneak up on us during the heat, it is easily prevented with a little forethought. Make sure you're drinking fluids before you feel thirsty so that you stay hydrated instead of trying to play catch up. Drink juice, water, or sport drinks instead of alcohol and soda. Alcohol and soda will actually contribute to your dehydration instead of improving it. Staying hydrated will help you feel better, play longer, and hopefully keep you from needing our services.



Become First Aid and CPR Trained

Many of our patrons live in rural areas, which means that in the event of an emergency it may take your fire department a while to arrive. We encourage everyone to become trained in first aid and CPR. If a family member, friend or neighbor is injured or stricken with a heart attack, your immediate help can potentially make the difference in the outcome of the call. LCFD#1 offers monthly CPR classes. Call our main office (935-2226) to inquire about class dates and times.



Wildland Fire Protection Project

- Keep an Eye on Station 18-5 -

By Heather Hill, Prevention Coordinator

The land at station 18-5, located at the intersection of Fox Hollow and McBeth Roads, will be changing a bit beginning in May. The six acres at the top of the hill have been identified by LCFD#1 staff as a prime location to demonstrate how to create a defensible space around your home. The project will begin by creating a safe zone off of the road along McBeth, and continue with thinning brush throughout the property. The brush cleared will be hauled to the recycler instead of being chipped or burned on-site. When the thinning has been completed, native plants identified as fire resistant

will be placed in clear areas to show how to create an appealing but defensible space. LCFD#1 will team up with the Oregon Department of Forestry, Western Lane District on the project.

Keep an eye out for classes that teach you how to create a defensible space around your home. We will have more information on our website: www.lcfd1.org.



Meet Nozzle Ned



Stop by our main station in Veneta and meet our unofficial mascot "Nozzle Ned." He and his brothers and sisters are on the end of every one of our hose lines, ready to protect you from the devastation of fire. Ned gladly dispenses LCFD#1 hats and badges to visiting children. Watch for the entire Nozzle Ned Family at events that involve Lane County Fire District #1.



LCFD#1 Recognizes Its Own

By Heather Hill, Prevention Coordinator

Lane County Fire District #1 has incredible volunteers! The time and effort that your neighbors invest in the Fire District is phenomenal. In February, LCFD #1 recognized some of its volunteers for their outstanding service. Traditionally, a volunteer is chosen for each of the following categories: Instructor of the Year, Recruit of the Year, Officer of the Year, Firefighter of the Year, most responses for each of the three area divisions, Length of Service, and special award recognition.

The following volunteers received awards for the 2003 calendar year:

- Instructor of the Year: Shannon Benson
- Recruit of the Year: Eli Davis
- Officer of the Year: Steve Strain
- Firefighter of the Year: Dennis Maricle

Neighbors Volunteering to Help Neighbors

- “A” Division Response: Allen Jenkins
- “B” Division Response: Sonny Ovens
- “C” Division Response: Stan Turner
- 5-Years of Service: Shannon Benson
Susan Jenkins
Erik Peale
- 10-Years of Service: Pete Hall
- 15-Years of Service: Don Gleason
- 30-Years of Service: Rod Smith

Special Awards:

- Shannon Benson - for development of the CERT program and obtaining grant awards.
- Stan Turner - for outstanding service, including the revival of the department newsletter, *Flash Point*.
- Dennis Van Sant - for 31 years of distinguished service as a volunteer with Crow Valley and LCFD #1, retiring at the rank of Battalion Chief.
- Joker & Brenda Crenshaw and Roger’s Towing – Partnership Award for providing cars for department drills.
- Jerry Sayles - for dedicated service to the community for organizing the Holiday Food Drive deliveries and for 15-years of service with LCFD#1.

A special “thank you” to the outstanding Volunteer Firefighters of Lane County Fire District #1!

CERT Training
A Big Success
 By Shannon Benson



Lane County Fire District #1 (LCFD#1) implemented the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program approximately eight months ago. Since that time, twelve local community members and two people from Eugene and Springfield, have dedicated three hours a week for seven weeks to become trained for immediate response to disasters and other emergencies. Training included Disaster Preparedness, Fire Safety, Disaster Medical Operations, Search and Rescue, CERT Organization, Disaster Psychology, and Terrorism Awareness.

On March 6, 2004 these CERT trainees participated in an all day disaster simulation held at the fire station in Elmira. CERT members were given five different tasks to accomplish including search and rescue, injury assessment, medical treatment, fire extinguishment, and removal of debris trapping an injured victim. All CERT members did an excellent job of prioritizing tasks and working together as a team to accomplish the CERT goal: to do the greatest good for the greatest number of people.

Lane County Fire District #1 will be offering CERT training later this year. If you are interested in joining CERT, or have questions about the program, please contact Shannon Benson, CERT Program Coordinator, at (541) 935-2226.



Front row, left to right: Patricia Rylko, Karen Hibler, Marcheta Faris, Roger Faris, Wally Leja, Geoffrey Simmons, Ken Baldwin
Back row, left to right: Tony Chew, Kathleen Hansen, Armando Soliz, Spencer Sutcliffe
Not pictured: Jan Nelson, Susan Kellogg, Deanna Harris.



Home Fire Sprinkler Systems
 By Heather Hill, Prevention Coordinator

As the Prevention Coordinator, it is my job to think of ways to help people keep their home safe from fire. Statistics show that 80% of all fire deaths occur in the home. I know that having a working smoke alarm will increase a person’s chance of surviving a fire by at least 50%, and that a home escape plan

Neighbors Volunteering to Help Neighbors

that has been practiced will increase that number even more. That is good, but how can you be *sure* that a person will survive a fire in your home? The answer lies in a residential fire sprinkler system.

Residential fire sprinklers are a concept that began to really develop about 15 years ago. Fire departments in Scottsdale, Arizona and Vancouver, British Columbia campaigned for their respective cities to adopt a residential fire sprinkler ordinance. The ordinance would require that all new construction be built with a fire sprinkler system. This included new homes and apartment buildings. After a lot of discussion, both cities passed sprinkler ordinances. Since that time, Scottsdale has released a report on the fire loss in lives and dollars that their city has sustained since that ordinance went into effect.

The results have been astounding! In Scottsdale, fires in residential buildings that did not have fire sprinkler systems resulted in 13 deaths. On the other hand, there were no deaths in homes that had fire sprinklers. When looking at dollar loss in Scottsdale, fires that occurred in non-sprinklered buildings averaged \$45,000. In contrast, fires in buildings that did have sprinklers resulted in an average loss of \$2,500.

The numbers speak for themselves. In Lane County Fire District #1 it takes five to fifteen minutes to respond to most of our fire calls. A residential fire sprinkler system could make the difference between the total loss of a home and minimal water damage caused by a activated sprinkler.

In the past few months, two of the District's patrons have installed residential fire sprinkler systems in their homes. When asked what their number-one reason was, they responded "life safety." Both are experienced firefighters and intimately know the difference a fire sprinkler system can make for someone trying to escape their home. An added bonus is that their house will be left standing if a fire occurs.

A residential fire sprinkler system costs, on average, about 1.5% of the total cost of a new home. That means if you purchase a home for \$140,000, the cost to add a fire sprinkler system to the home is

about \$2,100. It seems a small investment when a person looks at home insurance.

There are myths about sprinkler systems and how they work. One concern often raised is that sprinklers will cause extensive water damage. However, this is generally not true. In the event of a fire, one sprinkler head (the average number activated in a fire) distributes about 15 gallons per minute of water. One fire department hose line will flow at least 125 gallons per minute! Another concern is that the sprinkler heads are an eyesore. Today, there are heads manufactured that sit flush to the ceiling and only pop out when activated.

Fire sprinkler systems have existed for a long time and have saved many lives. Unfortunately, the trend of installing fire sprinklers in residential buildings has not caught on. It is an option for you when buying or remodeling your home, and one that I encourage you to consider. Your insurance company may give you a discount on your home owners policy, and you can have the peace of mind of knowing that your family and home are protected 24/7 from fire.



Visit LCFD#1's Website
www.lcf1.org

Have you had a chance to visit our website lately? In the last few months, it has gotten quite the overhaul, thanks to Volunteer Firefighter Dianne Manfull. She has developed the website into a great source of information for all to use. On the home page, you will find buttons to take you to a main page for each of the divisions in our department: Prevention, EMS, and Training. You can find out what our great volunteer committees are up to, including our Community Emergency Response Team (CERT). The site also includes upcoming department event information, links to great safety websites, and information on how to join our department. So, take a look! Great job Dianne!

 **Consider Volunteering**
LCFD#1 Has A Continuing Need 

We have been pleased with the number of individuals who have joined the department after our appeals in the last two newsletters. However, there continues to be a significant need for volunteers at many of our outlying stations. Currently there are only two individuals responding at each of the following stations: Butler Road, Lorane Highway and Walton. There are no volunteers currently responding to the stations at the corner of Fox Hollow and McBeth and on Wolf Creek Road. While we are able to dispatch personnel to most emergency calls in these areas, there is a considerable delay in arrival because of the driving distance. If you live within any of these areas, please consider volunteering. Call 935-2226 for more information and/or an application. There's an added bonus—many individuals who initially volunteered with LCFD#1 have gone on to become professionals in the medical and firefighting fields.

Total LCFD#1 Alarms for 2003: 1026



- Medical calls – 606
- Motor Vehicle Accidents – 117
- Fire calls (structure, brush/grass & vehicle) – 110
- Other (electrical problems, fuel spills, lifting assistance, public assist, false alarms, etc.) – 193



Upcoming Events



Lane Memorial Blood Bank Bloodmobile: 4-7 PM
 (call 935-2226 to sign up): June 23, August 25,
 October 20, December 14

Recruit Academy - Next Academy begins in June.

Flash Point is published semi-annually by Lane County Fire District #1. Please direct comments and questions to the Editor, Stan Turner, by calling 935-2226 or sending written comments to LCFD#1, P.O. Box 275, Veneta, OR 97487.



Lane County Fire District #1
P.O. Box 275
Veneta, OR 97487

**PRESORTED
 STANDARD
 U.S. POSTAGE PAID
 VENETA, OR
 PERMIT NO. 22**

POSTAL PATRON — E.C.R.W.S.S.