



# The Responder

Volume 14, Issue 10

October, 2021



## Feature Stories

- Levy Lid Lift
- Fire Prevention
- Fill the Boot
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- Retirements
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- New Hire

## 2021 STATISTICS

Sept. 1 — Sept. 30

### District Average Response Time:

min. 9 sec. 16

### Responses by Type:

Fire: 21

EMS: 309

Other: 135

**Total: 465**



*Proudly serving the communities of Blaine, Birch Bay, Custer, Laurel and the unincorporated areas of Lynden & Bellingham*

*“Providing Quality Service for a Safe Community”*

## November 2, 2021 General Election Reminder



### Fire Levy Lid Lift Proposition 2021-9 on the Ballot

Hello, neighbors,



NWFR has shared a lot of information in previous newsletters and on our website about Proposition 2021-9, the fire levy lid lift on the ballot November 2<sup>nd</sup>. Please keep an eye out for our informational mailer, and your voters’ guide and ballot, arriving around October 15.

In this newsletter, we want to share some of the differences between where we were in 2011—when we first merged our operations with District 4—and today. NWFR provides all staffing and service to District 4 by contract, and they use tax revenues to fund this service. Both agencies, and our residents and property owners, benefit from the efficiency of this operational merger.

Both NWFR and District 4 are seeking a fire levy lid lift this November. Having looked carefully at our combined operational situation, both agencies are seeking a fire levy lid lift to \$1.45 per \$1,000 of assessed value. We believe that is what it will take to maintain our service levels going forward. We’re heavily dependent on tax levy revenue to support our operations: 90% of our 2021 revenues come from our fire levy and the tax levy revenue District 4 pays us.

We’re efficient, we’re debt free, we’ve reduced administrative staffing by 30% since 2011. But with our annual 911 calls rising 71% since 2011 in the combined NWFR-District 4 service territory, and most of our fleet of fire trucks and aid cars long past due for replacement, we simply can’t maintain service levels into the future without additional revenues. The data below provides a sense of what “doing more with less” looks like, over the last ten years.

Cumulative growth in property tax revenue 2011-2021	18.99%
Cumulative inflation rate, 2011-2021	21.6%
Growth in 911 calls, NWFR and Dist. 4 2011-2021	71%

*continued on pg. 2*

# Fire Levy Lid Lift Proposition 2021-9

Please remember to keep the district up to date with any changes including your contact information.

All changes should be directed to Kelly. These changes may include:

Phone

Address

Email

Banking

Family Additions

Name changes

continued from pg. 1

- The 1% increase per year cap in tax revenue we can collect under state law means our primary revenue source hasn't even kept up with inflation, much less the 71% growth in calls for service.
- We have the same number of firefighters on shift to respond to this 71% growth in calls as we did in 2011.
- Our firefighters' wages haven't kept up with inflation either: wages have grown 16.8% in this period. Employees have given back wage increases in order to avoid layoffs.
- As in 2011, we have four staffed stations covering our 182-mile service area. Each station has one crew of three firefighters on staff 24/7, the same as 2011.
- The fire engines our crews respond with are the same fire vehicles we had in 2011.
- Until this year, NWFR hasn't asked voters for a fire levy in increase since 2008.

If you have questions about Proposition 2021-9 (NWFR's levy lid lift) or Proposition 2021-12 (District 4's companion levy lid lift), please reach out to us, or take a look at our websites.

NWFR: [www.nwfrs.net](http://www.nwfrs.net) 360-318-9933

District 4: [www.wcfd4.com](http://www.wcfd4.com) 360-318-9933

And remember to vote on November 2!



## Learn the Sounds of Fire Safety

Is there a beep or a chirp coming out of your smoke or carbon monoxide alarm? What does it all mean? Knowing the difference can save you, your home, and your family! Make sure everyone in the home understands the sounds of the smoke and carbon monoxide alarms and knows how to respond. Learn the sounds of your smoke and carbon monoxide alarms by checking the user guide or search the brand and model online.

### What is your alarm telling you?

#### SMOKE ALARMS

- A continued set of three loud beeps—beep, beep, beep—means smoke or fire. Get out, call **9-1-1**, and stay out.
- A single "chirp" every 30 or 60 seconds means the battery is low and must be changed.
- All smoke alarms must be replaced after 10 years.
- Chirping that continues after the battery has been replaced means the alarm is at the end of its life and the unit must be replaced.

#### CARBON MONOXIDE (CO) ALARMS

- A continuous set of four loud beeps—beep, beep, beep, beep—means carbon monoxide is present in your home. Go outside, call **9-1-1** and stay out.
- A single chirp every 30 or 60 seconds means the battery is low and must be replaced.
- CO alarms also have "end of life" sounds that vary by manufacturer. This means it's time to get a new CO alarm.
- Chirping that continues after the battery has been replaced means the alarm is at the end of its life and the unit must be replaced.

Make sure your smoke and CO alarms meet the needs of everyone in your home, including those with sensory or physical disabilities.

#### Some tips:

- ✓ Install a bedside alert device that responds to the sound of the smoke and CO alarms. Use of a low frequency alarm can also wake a sleeping person with mild to severe hearing loss.
- ✓ Sleep with your mobility device, glasses, and phone close to your bed.
- ✓ Keep pathways like hallways lit with night lights and free from clutter to make sure everyone can get out safely.

**Hear a Beep. Get On Your Feet!**

Get out and stay out! Call 9-1-1 from outside.



**Hear a Chirp. Make a Change!**

A chirping alarm needs attention. Replace the batteries or the entire unit if it's over 10 years old. If you don't remember how old the unit is, replace it!



# MDA Fill the Boot

Whatcom County firefighters were at the corner of Guide Meridian St. and Bakerview Rd collecting donations from 9:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. for the MDA Washington Fill the Boot!

For 67 years, when not fighting fires, members of the International Association of Fire Fighters have been fighting another ongoing threat — muscular dystrophy, a disease that includes more than 40 neuromuscular disorders.

## Funding research for new treatments

Fire fighters have played a major role in funding research for muscular dystrophy and in the last year, three promising new drugs received FDA approval.

## Supporting MDA Care Centers

These centers are held at top hospitals and health care facilities, giving families access to best-in-class doctors and specialists without having to travel long distances.

## Sending kids to MDA Summer Camp

Each year, the money you raise through Fill the Boot helps give more than 3,800 kids a life-changing week at MDA Summer Camp, at no charge to their families.

To donate online please follow the link below.

<https://filltheboot.donordrive.com/index.cfm...>



## Events to Celebrate

### October Birthdays

- 6 — Evan Maack
- 8 — Shaun Ward
- 10 — David Hancock
- 12 — Seth Meredith
- 13 — Chet Renskers
- 25 — Brandon Millsap
- 31 — Aaron Ebner



# Operation Warm

Every Year Local 106 raises money for Operation Warm, a nonprofit organization that provides school kids with warm coats. This year is no different.

In our communities, nearly one in five children live in need. For their families, paying for food, housing,

heat and healthcare takes priority.

Your donation will bring warmth, confidence, and hope to children living in need in our area.

If you would like to donate and help reach their goal of \$20,000 please click the link

provided.

<https://secure.givelively.org/.../team-up-with-bellingham...>

## NWFR Board Meetings may be conducted via Zoom Meeting

Thurs. October 19  
9408 Odell St 61  
Blaine — 11:00 a.m.





PO Box 286  
1507 E Badger Rd.  
Lynden, WA 98264

*Providing quality service for  
a safe community*

# NWFR Mechanic Retires

On behalf of the community we serve, North Whatcom Fire and Rescue would like to express their appreciation to John Lovatt for his thirteen plus years of service. John's official last day was October 1, 2021.



District members met for a retirement lunch in mid September to say goodbye and wish him well,

The District wishes the best for John as he embarks on a new adventure.



## CPR / AED Classes 2021

Class will be held at various fire stations around the district. Check out <https://www.nwfrs.net/resources/classes/> for more information and to reserve your spot.

*Donations of nonperishable food items are encouraged but not mandatory. All food donations will be forwarded to local area food banks.*

**FOR THE SAFETY OF EVERYONE IN OUR COMMUNITY, ALL CPR CLASSES HAVE BEEN CANCELLED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.**

**WE APOLOGIZE FOR ANY INCONVENIENCE**

# Changes at NWFR

Please join North Whatcom Fire and Rescue in welcoming firefighter Kat Stewart to our district. Kat is a lateral with three years of prior experience working with the Lynden Fire Department.



North Whatcom Fire and Rescue completed an assessment center for anticipated lieutenants openings on Wednesday, August 24, 2021.

Two members were promoted.

Danny Jensen's first shift as a lieutenant was Tuesday, September 14. *(upper right)*

Troy Freeman's first shift as a lieutenant was Thursday, September 16. *(lower right)*

Both members joined the district in 2007.



# Congratulations!