



Volume 18 Issue 12

Dec, 2025



Feature Stories

- Thanksgiving
- Operation Warm
- Benevolent Fund
- Fire History
- November Calls

2025 STATISTICS

Nov 1 — Nov 30

District Average Response Time:

9 min. 52 sec.

Responses by Type:

Fire: 5

EMS: 300

Other: 114

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

"Providing Quality Service for a Safe Community"

NWFR Assists CAP with Thanksgiving Baskets



Under the direction of Cpt. Mike Nelson, Local 106 NW firefighters collected turkeys, milk, butter, potatoes and other items needed to cook Thanksgiving dinners. The meals were donated to families in need within the Blaine area, courtesy of the Community Assistance Program's (CAP)

Thanksgiving Baskets on Tuesday, November 25. NWFR Firefighters, Local 106 members and community members volunteered their time and were also on hand to transport the Thanksgiving baskets to recipient's vehicles.

Approximately 220 baskets filled with traditional holiday fixings and more than 142 take-out meals, feeding over 1,000 individuals, were distributed to community members in Blaine, Birch Bay, Custer and Point Roberts.

The Thanksgiving Basket program is funded entirely by donations from local individuals, organizations, and businesses.



Local 106 Teams Up with Operation Warm



On Wednesday, November 19, NWFR Local 106 members teamed up with Operation Warm at Central Elementary in Ferndale to deliver 304 brand new winter coats to local students, ensuring they stay warm and ready for the colder months ahead. Every child deserves to stay warm, safe, and ready to take on winter.

Thank you to [Operation Warm](#)





North Whatcom
Fire and Rescue
welcomes suggestions
for upcoming
newsletters. Please
submit your ideas or
suggestions to
info@nwfrs.com

November Top Responders

FF Witzel (62)
FF Latham (55)
FF Bronder (49)

Happy Holidays

Christmas Tree Safety



PICKING THE TREE

- Choose a tree with fresh, green needles that do not fall off when touched.



PLACING THE TREE

- Before placing the tree in the stand, cut 2" from the base of the trunk.
- Make sure the tree is at least three feet away from any heat source, like fireplaces, radiators, candles, heat vents or lights.
- Make sure the tree is not blocking an exit.
- Add water to the tree stand. Be sure to add water daily.



LIGHTING THE TREE

- Use lights that have the label of a recognized testing laboratory. Some lights are only for indoor or outdoor use.
- Replace any string of lights with worn or broken cords or loose bulb connections. Read manufacturer's instructions for number of light strands to connect.
- Never use lit candles to decorate the tree.
- Always turn off Christmas tree lights before leaving home or going to bed.



After Christmas

Get rid of the tree after Christmas or when it is dry. Dried-out trees are a fire danger and should not be left in the home or garage, or placed outside against the home.

Check with your local community to find a recycling program.

Bring outdoor electrical lights inside after the holidays to prevent hazards and make them last longer.

FACTS

- ! More than **one of every four** home Christmas tree fires is caused by electrical problems.
- ! Although Christmas tree fires are not common, when they do occur, they are more likely to be serious.
- ! A heat source too close to the tree causes **one in every four** of the fires.



The Bellingham/Whatcom Firefighters Benevolent Foundation

The Bellingham/Whatcom Firefighters Benevolent Foundation (BWFFBF) was established in the summer of 2015. In September 2015, the BWFFBF was approved by the State of Washington as a Non-Profit. Then, in October of that same year, the IRS approved the BWFFBF as a 501(c) (3) Non-Profit.

The BWFFBF was organized to provide relief to needy segments of society suffering from poverty, hunger, homelessness and like calamity deserving of charity; provide relief for persons injured or made homeless by fire; assist the community served by Bellingham/Whatcom County Fire-

fighters; conduct and support research into issues pertinent to firefighting; provide education and pertinent training regarding public safety to the general public; promote the general welfare of firefighters, their families, and the public at large.

In past years, the BWFFBF was able to participate in several fundraising events and receive charitable donations from the public as well as the members of the International Association of Firefighters Local 106. Since the occurrence of COVID 19, the number of events to receive charitable donations has declined. We are now exploring different avenues to receive

these much need **donations** so that we may continue to provide relief to those in need.

Please consider a donation by clicking the QR Code below. Currently this QR Code is linked to a VENMO account set-up in the name: @Local106swag.

Bellingham Whatcom..

@BWCFFBF



venmo

This Month in Fire History: December

December 1, 1958, Chicago, IL – Our Lady of the Angels School Fire

On December 1, 1958, a fire broke out in the basement of the school and quickly spread up a stairwell. The reporting party mistakenly gave the address for the rectory and not the heavily overcrowded brick school around the corner.

Fire doors on the first floor stopped the smoke and flames, and students on that floor were able to flee the building. There were no fire doors on the second floor and smoke and fire were able to spread down the hallway, trapping students in five classrooms. The students' only way out was through the windows. The death toll from the five classrooms was 95, 92 students and three nuns.



As a result of the tragic fire, all schools in Chicago would have fire alarm boxes that could be pulled outside of the schools and were also connected to alarm devices in their interiors. In addition to other safety improvements – fire doors, use on non-flammable materials and getting rid of transoms over doors- many Chicago schools were required to install sprinkler systems.

December 7, 1946, Atlanta, GA – Winecoff Hotel Fire

It is believed that 280 guests



occupied the Winecoff Hotel on December 6, 1946, including many teenagers who were in town to attend an annual Youth Assembly at the state capital. In the early morning hours of December 7, 1946, firefighters were dispatched to a fire at the hotel. On arrival, firefighters discovered dense smoke and flames emitting from the third, fourth and fifth floors. The on-scene chief ordered his men to begin an immediate rescue effort with the aerial, while an interior attack was deployed utilizing interior stairway to advance the hose lines.

The Winecoff Hotel was a fifteen-story structure with a full basement and small sub-basement. The floors were numbered from one to 16 but, as is the case in many hotels, there was no 13th floor. It had been omitted from the numbering system due to superstition. The top floor was known as the 16th. Of the 280 guests and employees in the hotel, 119 were killed.

December 21, 1910, Philadelphia, PA – Philadelphia Leather Factory Fire

On December 21, 1910, Phila-

delphia firefighters responded to a reported fire in a five-story leather factory. Heavy fire was found on the first floor upon arrival and a second alarm was transmitted immediately. For almost three hours, the battle continued when without warning, a major collapse occurred, trapping 36 firefighters in the flaming debris. A second collapse occurred two hours later trapping additional firefighters. In all, 13 firefighters and one police officer were killed, and more than 50 men were injured.

December 22, 1910, Chicago, IL – Stockyard Cold Storage Fire

On December 22, 1910, a watchman reported a fire in the basement of a six-story cold storage building. The interior walls of the structure were wooden and soaked with years of animal fat and grease, and tons of stored meat was covered with saltpeter, one of the main ingredients in gunpowder. Outside, things were also taking a turn for the worse when firefighters discovered nearby fire hydrants had been shut off to prevent freezing. By the time was secured the building was fully involved

An explosion from the building, toppling a six-story wall across the loading dock, killing 21 firefighters.

Source URL: <https://www.firehouse.com/operations-training/article/55041408/this-month-in-fire-history-may-2024>

30 Fires You Must Know, Billy Goldfedder and Frank Leeb, Fire Engineering Books, Copyright 2024



Events to Celebrate December Birthdays

7 – Leslee Smith
7 – John Swobody
13 – Chris Hollander
17 – Jason Van der Veen
26 – Bruce Ansell
29 – Tyler Budvey
30 – Gary DeJager

NWFR Meetings will be conducted in person

Thur. Dec. 18
9408 Odell St 61
Blaine — 10:30 a.m.

The Bridge Hope in BB Food Bank Donation #125.5

District 4 Meetings continue to be conducted via Zoom with some in person

Mon. Dec. 15 (in person)
4142 Britton Loop St 12
Bellingham — 12:00 p.m.





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

Providing quality service for
a safe community



CPR / AED Classes 2025

Class will be held at various
fire stations around the dis-
trict. Check out

<https://www.nwfrs.net/cpr-course/>

for more information and to
reserve your spot.

Donations of nonperishable food
items are encouraged but not man-
datory. All food donations will be
forwarded to local area food
banks.



CPR

Dec 7

2026 TBD

Bellingham Whatcom..
@BWCFFBF

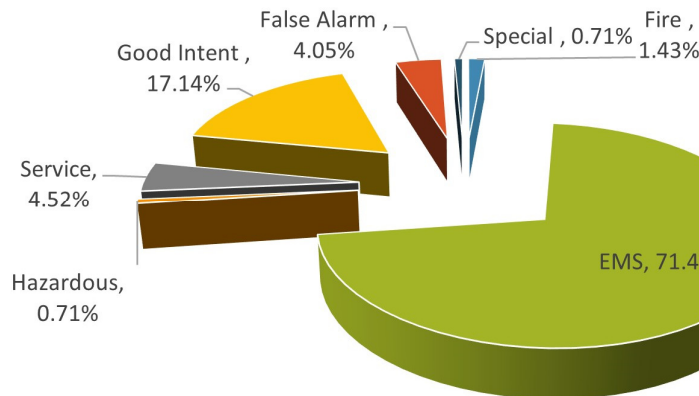


venmo

Benevolent Fund
Donation Link

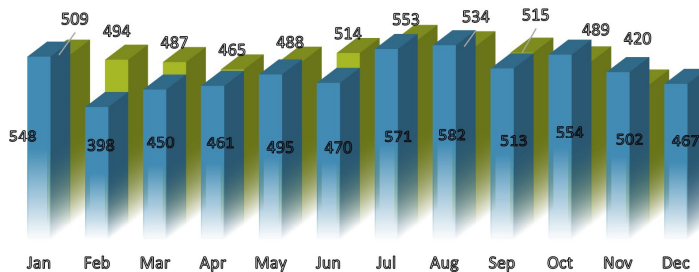
November Calls

Total Calls = 420

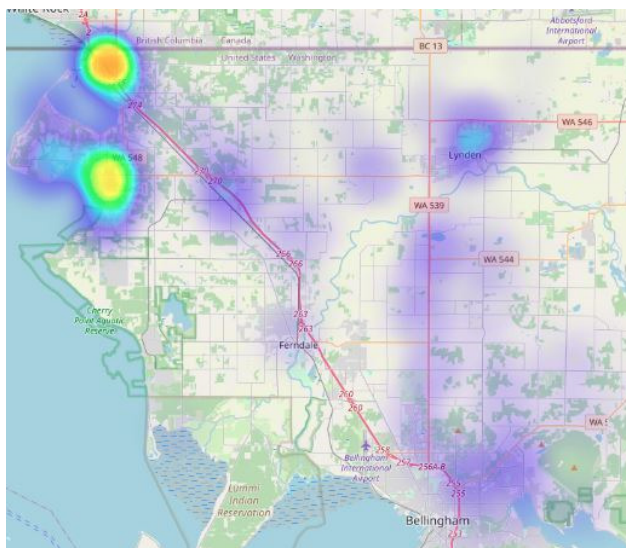


Types of Calls

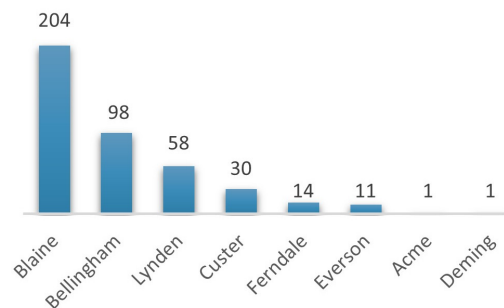
False Alarms = 2



Location of Calls

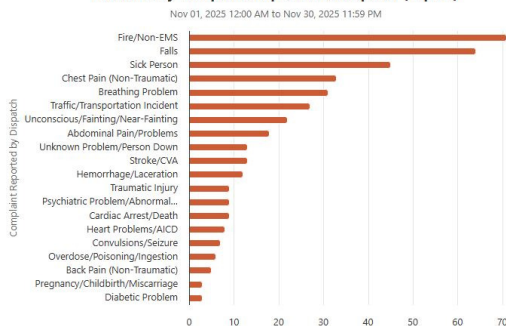


Zip Codes



Incidents by Complaint

Incidents by Complaint Reported to Dispatch (Top 20)



Apparatus Responses

Incidents by EMS Unit (Top 20)

