



OREGON STATE FIRE MARSHAL

THE GATED WYE

OCTOBER 2023



OCTOBER BRINGS FIRE PREVENTION MONTH

As we usher in fall, the Oregon State Fire Marshal and the Oregon fire service want to remind everyone of the importance of fire safety when cooking. Each year, October is designated as Fire Prevention Month in Oregon, with four weeks dedicated to learning about fire safety.

This year's theme for fire prevention month is "Cooking Safety Starts with You. Pay Attention to Fire Prevention."

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OSFM'S MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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FIRE PREVENTION FOCUS: COOKING FIRE SAFETY

Charred counter tops and smoky smell in the kitchen is a big problem across Oregon. Fires connected to cooking are the number one cause of home fires across the state. In 2022, of the 2,924 reported residential fires in Oregon, 537 were connected to cooking.

That's why, as we usher in fall across Oregon, the Oregon State Fire Marshal and the Oregon fire service want to remind everyone of the importance of fire safety when cooking. Each year, October is designated as Fire Prevention Month, with four weeks dedicated to learning about fire safety.

"In Oregon, cooking is the leading cause of home fires and causes on average \$5.4 million in losses to homeowners annually," Oregon State Fire Marshal Mariana Ruiz-Temple said. "This October, we're raising awareness and asking Oregonians to take action to prevent kitchen disasters."

Avoiding a cooking fire is as easy as following a simple recipe. Practicing fire safety while cooking can not only prevent a burnt meal or a visit from your local fire department but a mega mess in your kitchen. SEE PAGE 3 for fire prevention tips you can use with every recipe.

Oregon fire agencies that ordered a fire prevention box for the month will receive them soon. You can use the educational materials at your October Fire Prevention Month events like open houses.

COOKING FIRE SAFETY TIPS

Here are ways to keep you and your family safe in the kitchen.

SAFETY TIPS TO REMEMBER WHEN COOKING:

- Keep an eye on what you're cooking; don't leave cooking unattended.
- Keep cooking areas clean and clear of combustibles (potholders, food packaging, towels, etc.) and wipe up surface spills.
- Create a three-foot kid- and pet-free zone around the stove.
- Older children should only cook with permission and under the supervision of an adult.
- Have a lid or cookie sheet within reach while cooking to smother flames in case of a fire.

SAFETY TIPS FOR IF A COOKING FIRE DOES START:

- Put a lid on it! Slide a lid over the pan from the side, then turn off the burner.
- Don't move the pan until the fire is completely extinguished and cooled, and don't try to transfer the pan to the sink.

IF YOU CANNOT EXTINGUISH THE FIRE:

- Get yourself and your family safely out of the house.
- If you can, close doors as you escape to help contain the fire.
- Call 911 from a safe place outside.

OREGON SMOKE ALARM INSTALLATION PROGRAM

The OSFM is reintroducing its Smoke Alarm Installation Program (SAIP). The SAIP, developed in 2013, provided more than 10,000 smoke alarms to be installed in Oregon homes across the state.

In 2022, 15% of Oregon homes did not have a working smoke alarm. Data shows us that 80% of home fire deaths in Oregon happen in homes without working smoke alarms.

COVID-19 slowed the number of smoke alarm installations across the state. We need Oregon fire agencies to help increase the number of life-saving devices in homes in our communities.

Read more [about the program requirements here](#).





2023 WILDFIRE UPDATE

The month of September saw the seventh conflagration of the year and the return of rain and fall weather that helped dampen the fire season across the Northwest.

On September 3, the OSFM mobilized air resources to help with the Bensel Fire in Umatilla County. The fire sparked outside of Hermiston and prompted evacuation notices. As the fire grew, Oregon Governor Tina Kotek invoked the Emergency Conflagration Act. The OSFM mobilized the Green Incident Management Team and several task forces.

On September 6, the IMT and task forces were demobilized and returned home. The fire burned nearly 700 acres.

By mid-September, a change in the weather brought soaking rains to the west side of the state. As the storms moved through, they brought gusty winds and a few red flag warnings in the southwest. The OSFM pre-positioned two task forces in Curry County on September 13. The task forces returned home a few days later once the threat had passed.

As Oregon moves further into fall and the winter months, Oregonians are reminded to check and follow local outdoor burning restrictions before they do any backyard or agricultural burning.



PHOTOS FROM THE FIRE LINE



PROTECTING OREGON COMMUNITIES FROM WILDFIRE

In its second year, the Oregon State Fire Marshal's 2023 Wildfire Season Staffing Grant continued to help and protect communities in Oregon.

John Hendricks
September 22, 2023



OSFM LAUNCHES STORYMAP TO SHARE SUCCESS OF WILDFIRE STAFFING GRANT

The OSFM has launched an ArcGIS StoryMap to highlight how the 2023 Wildfire Season Staffing Grant impacted communities across Oregon over the summer months.

In June, the OSFM announced 185 agencies received funding to hire extra firefighters to support response to wildfires.

Local fire agencies were able to apply for up to \$35,000 in one-time funding to hire extra staff and increase staff hours during the 2023 wildfire season. The goal of the program is to keep fires small and prevent them from impacting communities.

This investment proved successful during the wildfire season. Many agencies across the state shared stories of how these funds made a big impact, not only in their community but across the Oregon Fire Mutual Aid System. To share more about the grant and its success, the OSFM compiled stories shared by local departments. These stories are just a sampling of the shared by the fire service.

WELCOME TO SHIELA ALICAR

Shiela Alicar joins the OSFM's information technology team! She worked for the past 2.5 years at the Oregon Department of Energy as their application administrator and developer for various incentive/grants programs. Prior to ODOE, she worked at the Oregon Department of Administrative Services and Salem Keizer Public School District in various compliance and technical support roles. Originally from Hawaii, she has transferred her love of paddle boarding and hiking to the Oregon shores. Shiela has called Oregon home for the last few years with her husband and two corgis.



LOCAL OREGON FIRE AGENCIES RECEIVE FEDERAL GRANTS FOR STAFFING

U.S. Senators Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley announced in September that four rural Oregon fire departments will receive a combined nearly \$2.2 million from FEMA for firefighter recruitment and retention.

These grant funds come from FEMA's Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Program, which awards grants to assist local fire departments with staffing and deployment capabilities to respond to emergencies.

The funds will be allocated as follows:

- \$492,235 to the North Douglas County Fire in Drain
- \$611,620 to Tenmile Rural Fire District in Roseburg
- \$309,192 to Siletz Rural Fire Protection District
- \$769,724 to Stayton Fire District

"Firefighters have been working hard this past summer and year-round to protect lives and livelihoods throughout Oregon, and they deserve quality pay and time off," said Wyden. "This federal investment in Oregon is especially timely given firefighters' heroic work this summer battling blazes, and I know it will be put to good use staffing up these rural fire departments. I'll keep battling to make sure firefighters have the resources they need to continue to protect communities across the state."

"As fires and emergencies can break out at any time, it's essential that we have enough firefighters available to meet the moment," Merkley said. "In rural fire departments, maintaining staff is essential to fight fires that are burning large swaths of acreage year after year. This funding will help protect Oregon communities by ensuring rural fire districts have the staffing and resources needed when disaster strikes."



OSFM WELCOMES NEW DEPUTY STATE FIRE MARSHAL DUSTON YACAPIN

Duston comes to the OSFM from Gresham Fire Department where he spent the last eight years as a fire investigator/inspector. Duston is a certified fire investigator, fire inspector, and plans examiner.

Prior to the fire service, he was an electrician for 16 years. His primary field was fire alarm, fire suppression, and clean agent for fire suppression systems.

He has lived in Oregon most of his life. Duston loves the outdoors, softball, golf, riding his motorcycle, and enjoying time with his family and kids.

WILDLAND FIRE MITIGATION, MANAGEMENT COMMISSION RELEASE **FINAL REPORT**

In September, the Federal Wildland Fire Mitigation and Management Commission submitted their recommendations to Congress on how the U.S. can better respond to the wildfire crisis. The commission itself was created as a nonpartisan body, including representatives from federal agencies; state, local, and tribal governments; non-governmental entities; academia; and the private sector.

Among those on the commission are representatives from Oregon, State Fire Marshal Mariana Ruiz-Temple, Oregon Cattlemen's Association President John O'Keeffe, Tribal Vice-Chairman of the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians Gary Jackson, and Senior Director of Forest Restoration at American Forests Brian Kittler.

The commission drafted 148 recommendations in their final report. The recommendations are intended to help lead the nation toward a different relationship and experience with wildfire and increase resilience to the impacts of wildfire.

Key themes that emerged from the report include:

- Urgent new approaches to the mitigation and management of wildfire, including increased accountability and increased investments. Increased partnerships and collaboration across all jurisdictions.
- The commission highlighted the need for increased accessibility of federal programs and systems as well as financial support for collaboration at a community scale, shifting from a reactive to a proactive approach.
- Making greater use of prescribed fire, cultural burning, and wildfire managed for resource objectives. Improving wildland firefighter pay and benefits, developing a year-round, cross-trained workforce that focuses on restoration and mitigation, increasing support for capacity and capability of non-federal firefighters, and improving considerations of firefighter physical and mental health.
- A better use of science, data, and technology across agencies to support decision-making.
- Increase spending across all aspects of wildfire risk management and community risk reduction to better reflect the urgency, scope, and scale of the wildfire issues.

You can find the final report on the [commission's website](#).

ON FIRE: The Report of the Wildland Fire Mitigation and Management Commission



September 2023



OREGON APPRENTICES SWORN IN, OTHERS BEGIN PROGRAM JOURNEY

Over the last 12 weeks, firefighter apprentices at Mid-Columbia Fire and Rescue have been busting down doors and snuffing out fires as they learn the ropes of becoming a certified firefighter. On September 29, the apprentices were officially sworn in.

Earlier this year, the OSFM announced a \$3 million investment in the two new apprenticeship programs. Mid Columbia Fire and Rescue and Klamath County Fire District #1 received \$1.5 million in funding. Apprentices in Klamath County began their course in late September.

The Oregon fire service has seen a decrease in the number of career and volunteer firefighters entering the field. The goals of the apprenticeship program are to create accessible pathways into a career and increase diversity and inclusion, ensuring the Oregon fire service represents the communities they serve.

The two agencies were selected to receive funding because of the increased risk of wildfire near their communities. Over the last few decades, these regions have experienced more wildfires that have increased the demand for firefighters. This investment will help to lessen that need and provide highly trained personnel to stop fires before they have a chance to grow and impact communities.

OSFM WELCOMES NEW DEPUTY STATE FIRE MARSHAL NICK LAUNIUS

Nick is a dedicated fire service professional with more than 20 years of experience in fire operations. Before joining the OSFM, he worked as a training officer and battalion chief for a fire department in Northern California where he developed and delivered training programs for firefighters and officers.

Nick holds a bachelor's degree in Fire Service Administration from Columbia Southern University and holds numerous certifications in fire ground operations.

When he is not working, he enjoys exploring Oregon with his fiancé Angela. They love hiking, camping, and fishing in the great outdoors.



LET'S TALK DEFENSIBLE SPACE: SIGN UP FOR AN ASSESSMENT TODAY

With the change in weather, now is a good time to think about those defensible space projects and plan for next spring. The OSFM and the Oregon fire service are here to help with free defensible space assessments.

In June, the agency launched its defensible space assessment program. Oregonians who wish to request an assessment can fill out a form and either a deputy state fire marshal or member of the Oregon fire service will come out and do a free assessment on the property. Through a defensible space assessment, a trained fire service professional will walk properties with the owner and give them recommendations on how they can improve their defensible space. These assessments are a valuable tool helping to make individual properties and communities better protected against wildfire.

[An assessment can be requested by clicking here.](#)

Check out the [OSFM's new video on defensible space.](#)

If a local fire agency is interested in helping conduct assessments, please email:

osfm.defensiblespace@osfm.oregon.gov.

All partner agencies get access to the Survey123 app and receive training on the program.



OSFM WELCOMES NEW DEPUTY STATE FIRE MARSHAL RANDY FALES

Randy has been in the Oregon fire service for the last 18 years with the Nyssa Volunteer Fire Department. In his time there, he was the chief, assistant chief, and, most recently, training captain.

He holds numerous certifications in firefighting and will be working to obtain his Investigation, inspection, and plan review certifications in the coming months.

He has been married to his wife Alisson for 18 years and has 4 children, three girls and a boy. They enjoy taking trips to the coast, camping, hunting, and having family BBQs. Randy says, "My family and I are excited for the next chapter in our lives. I'm looking forward to the opportunity to serve the communities within my district."



ROSEBURG FIRE WELCOMES 1934 FIRE ENGINE BACK TO DEPARTMENT

September 26 was a monumental day for the City of Roseburg Fire Department. On behalf of Fire Chief Christopherson and City Manager Messenger, Battalion Chiefs Drew Fairbairn and Chris Galligan, the department took possession of, transported, and brought back a piece of department history to the excitement of department personnel.

A 1934 Chevy fire engine, previously owned by the City of Roseburg, was donated back to the department by an anonymous family. The anonymous donor's son, a local firefighter with a neighboring agency, suggested donating it back to the original department.

The 1934 Chevy fire engine was purchased originally by the Roseburg Fire Department in 1933, although the year of the engine is 1934. The engine was placed in service in 1934 and later converted into a salvage rescue vehicle for the department. Before returning to its original owner, the engine was owned by at least two different families.

At the request of the anonymous donor, the department will purchase a plaque and install it on the engine in memory of Fire Chief Bill Lemming. Chief Lemming was a volunteer firefighter for the Myrtle Creek Fire Department for more than 45 years, where he also served as fire chief. Chief Lemming passed away in 2020.

In pictures posted to the agency's social media channels, the 1934 engine is shown while it was in service. You will see the engine converted into a salvage vehicle while in use at a commercial structure fire at the Indian Theater in June of 1969.

The City of Roseburg Fire Department says it is beyond grateful to the family for thinking of them and bringing this wonderful piece of history back to the department. The department will continue additional restoration of the engine. Fire department personnel are looking forward to sharing this piece of history with the community at local events and parades. [SEE MORE PICTURES HERE.](#)



CODES CORNER

HOW DO YOU SEE FIRE PREVENTION?

Fire prevention can take different shapes and sizes. Wikipedia describes it as “a proactive method of preventing fire-based emergencies and reducing the damage caused by them,” while Merriam-Webster defines it as “measures and practices directed toward the prevention and suppression of destructive fires.” So, are there differences between fire prevention and fire protection? Fire prevention involves the steps that can prevent a fire from occurring, while fire protection uses tools and processes to maintain safety and reduce hazards associated with fires.

The 2022 Oregon Fire Code (OFC) serves as a fire prevention and protection code and must be considered in the context of a complex environment containing political, social, economic, technical, and legal aspects.

The prevention side of the OFC does not attempt to achieve perfection by requiring every conceivable or available safeguard for every structure, premises, or operation within the scope of the code; rather, the OFC seeks to establish a minimum acceptable safety level to balance the many factors that must be considered, including loss statistics, relative hazard, and the economic and social impact. The code is maintained using a democratic code development process so everyone affected by these minimum requirements has an equal opportunity to present their concern, both for and against the requirements.

The fire prevention measures in the OFC regulate conditions that are likely to cause or contribute to fires or explosions, endanger life or property if a fire occurs, or contribute to the spread of a fire. The OFC is intended to regulate conditions related to the health, safety, and welfare of the public, firefighters, and other emergency responders called on to conduct emergency operations in or on any building, structure, or premises.

Since 1922, the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) has sponsored the public observance of Fire Prevention Week, each year during the week of October 9, in commemoration of the Great Chicago Fire, which began on October 8, 1871, and caused devastating damage. The fire killed more than 250 people, left 100,000 homeless, destroyed more than 17,400 structures, and burned more than 2,000 acres of land.



DATA DIVE: LITHIUM-ION BATTERIES PLUS ONE CODING ADDITIONS

Interest and discussions about lithium-ion batteries are increasing both at the local and national levels. To better understand lithium-ion-related incidents, the OSFM Analytics and Intelligence Unit (A&I) added four plus one codes to provide increased data granularity.

The codes, found below, have been added to the fire module's "Equipment Involved in Ignition" (FD6.12) data fields as well as the wildland module's "Wildland Equipment Involved in Ignition" (FD17.13).

They are active and accessible for direct entry in ImageTrend Elite™ as of October 1, 2023.

Equipment Involved in Ignition:

- 2291 – battery, lithium-ion – personal mobility
- 2292 – battery, lithium-ion – small electronics
- 2293 – battery, lithium-ion – electric vehicles and vehicle charging
- 2294 – battery, lithium-ion – battery/energy storage system

If you have questions or need additional assistance, please contact NFIRS Program Coordinator Michelle Vold at michelle.vold@osfm.oregon.gov.

OSFM WELCOMES NEW DEPUTY STATE FIRE MARSHAL SCOTT ARLIN

Scott has been in the fire service for 21 years with the Banks Fire District. He worked his way through the ranks, currently serving as a captain. Scott is an EMT-Intermediate and holds numerous fire ground certifications and will be working towards his fire investigator, inspector, and plans examiner certifications over the coming months.

Scott moved to Oregon in 1989 from Massachusetts where he grew up.

Scott says he is looking forward to working in a new challenging career, with new people and partners.



OSFM'S TONY MILLER AWARDED FIRE INVESTIGATOR OF THE YEAR

Congratulations are in Oregon for OSFM Deputy State Fire Marshal Tony Miller. He was awarded the Frank Herlinger Investigator of the Year award at the annual Oregon International Association of Arson Investigators conference in September.

Frank Herlinger grew up in Klamath Falls and served in the U.S. Army. He was awarded the Purple Heart in 1966. He served with the Oregon State Police Criminal Division where he was an outstanding investigator. Herlinger was involved in the founding of the Oregon chapter of the International Association of Arson Investigators.

This award is given to a person who has shown outstanding achievement and professionalism in the field of fire/arson investigation. The goal of the award is to recognize the best investigator in Oregon each year. Congratulations, Tony!



FROM THE INTERNET: COURTYARD STRETCH

Umatilla County Fire District #1's D-Shift took to the training tower to train on the courtyard stretch. The courtyard stretch is when firefighters extend hand lines greater than 200 feet away from the fire engine.

This prepares crews for situations where our fire engine might not be able to park right next to the structure or apartment building during a fire. [SEE MORE HERE](#)



REGISTER **TODAY!** OSFM HOSTING FIRE CODE AMENDMENT TRAININGS



UPCOMING CLASSES

OCTOBER 11 - Eugene

NOVEMBER 15 - Salem

Learn more and [REGISTER HERE.](#)

Register today to learn about changes to the Oregon Fire Code. This 8-hour course is required for all Oregon Fire Inspector I in accordance with Oregon Administrative Rule 837-039-0016. This class is a high-level overview of the 2022 Oregon Fire Code changes and introduces fire chiefs, fire marshals, fire inspectors, and building officials to the fire code official's responsibilities.

The course includes a 1-hour introduction to the Oregon Fire Code section 319, Mobile Food Units. This class is required within the first year of every code cycle change to maintain competency recognition for Oregon Fire Inspector 1, Oregon Fire Inspector 2 and Oregon Fire Marshal. Each class runs from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

LET'S **LEARN** ABOUT THE OREGON FIRE CODE AND MOBILE FOOD UNITS

Help us spread the word to local food cart owners to learn about the new fire code and mobile food units. This 3-hour course is recommended for mobile food unit owners and their staff, food cart pod owners and operators, and all interested parties.

The class will provide details on the Oregon Fire Code's general requirements for mobile food units and food cart pods and an in-depth discussion of specific requirements.

The course includes classroom time and a practical exercise.

[Download a printable flyer here.](#)

UPCOMING SCHEDULE

OCTOBER 12: Eugene
1705 2nd Ave, Eugene 97402

NOVEMBER 16: Salem
3991 Fairview Industrial Dr, Salem 97302

ALL CLASSES ARE FROM 8 a.m. - 11 a.m





Contact Us

Have a story idea or something you would like to know more about?

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