

OREGON STATE FIRE MARSHAL

# THE GATED WYE

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**firefighter** recruits

**prevention**  
electrical fire  
safety

quick tips to prevent an  
electrical fire in your home.

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**FEBRUARY 2026**

Cover photo: Umatilla County Fire District 1







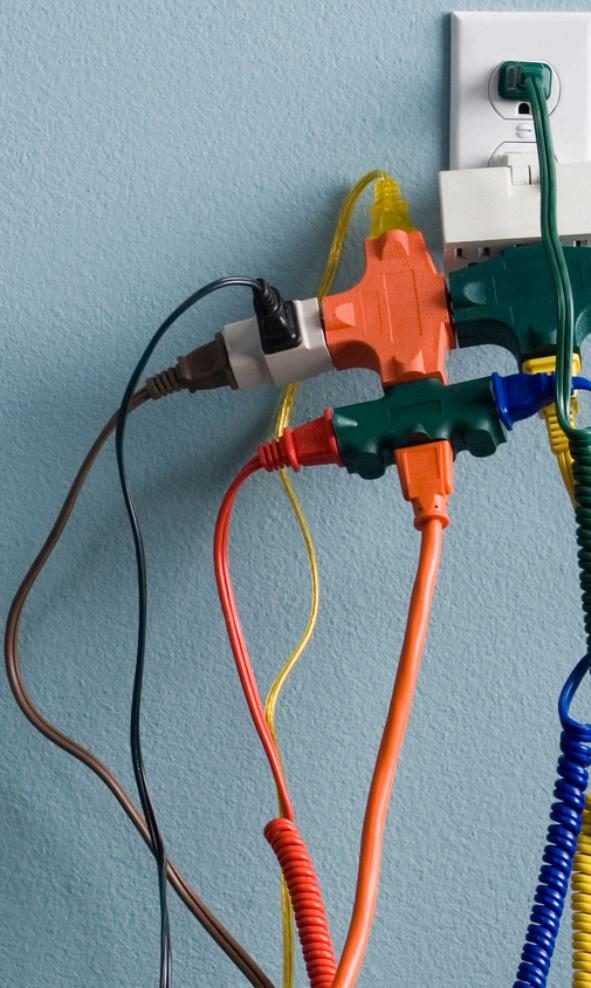
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THE GATED WYE  
**WHAT'S INSIDE**



# PREVENTION **ELECTRICAL FIRE SAFETY**

# DON'T OVERLOAD ELECTRICAL SOCKETS.



In February, the Oregon State Fire Marshal is focused on promoting electrical fire safety. Each year in Oregon, firefighters are called to home fires sparked by an electrical issue.

There are simple things Oregonians can do to reduce their risk and increase their safety from an electrical fire.

- Avoid pinching cords between walls and furniture. Do not run electrical cords under carpets or across doorways.
- Avoid electrical overload. Consider having an electrician install additional wall outlets where you need them and add a breaker if needed.
- Electrical work should be done by a qualified professional.
- Read the manufacturer's instructions before operating any electrical or heating equipment or appliances. Replace items (appliances) with cracked or damaged electrical cords, broken plugs, or loose connections.
- Plug appliances (portable space heaters, refrigerators, stoves, washers, dryers, etc.) directly into a wall outlet and never into a power strip or extension cord.
- Extension cords are for temporary use only.
- Make sure you have working smoke alarms on every level of your home (including the basement), inside each bedroom, and in the hallway outside each bedroom.
- Make sure you have working carbon monoxide alarms as well.

Does your agency need fire prevention education materials? You can [place an order here](#).

# BURN AWARENESS WEEK: FEB. 1-7

Every year, thousands of people suffer burn injuries, but many of them are preventable. National Burn Awareness Week is an initiative of the American Burn Association, bringing together fire, life safety, and healthcare professionals to educate the public on burn injury prevention. This annual campaign emphasizes the importance of proactive safety measures and community collaboration to reduce the risk of burn injuries.

This year's theme, "Burn Prevention Where You Live, Work, and Play – Preventing Burns in the Workplace," highlights how small, proactive safety steps can prevent serious injuries.

Top Five Burn Prevention Tips for the Workplace:

- **Wear Protective Gear:** Use personal protection equipment like gloves, aprons, helmets, or flame-resistant clothing whenever handling hot surfaces, chemicals, or machinery.
- **Handle Heat Safely:** Monitor hot oil, boiling liquids, ovens, and machinery; open lids away from your face and never leave heat sources unattended.
- **Inspect & Maintain Equipment:** Check cords, tools, vehicles, and machines for damage or overheating, and follow safety protocols during maintenance.
- **Control Flammables:** Store fuels, chemicals, and combustible materials properly, keep them away from heat, and avoid sparks or open flames.
- **Know Emergency Procedures:** Keep fire extinguishers and first aid kits accessible, know exit routes, and practice emergency drills regularly.



## UPCOMING OSFM WEBINARS

Join the Oregon State Fire Marshal's Fire Prevention Education Unit for an upcoming webinar! Every month, the agency hosts a 30-minute webinar connecting the Oregon fire service with state and national partners to explore fire and life safety topics that support community risk reduction.

**Wednesday, Feb. 4**

**1 - 1:30 p.m.**

How Legacy is the Bridge Across Generations and Burn Prevention

Legacy's Burn Outreach Coordinator Erin Horrax will share information about the Oregon Burn Center and trends related to burns in the state. Horrax will be joined by Gresham Fire's Spencer Tejedas, who spent four months in the Oregon Burn Center. He suffered severe burns on 45% of his body responding to a home fire. He will share his experience of burn safety in the workplace.

**Friday, Mar. 6**

**1 - 1:30 p.m.**

From Pilot to Practice: Protecting Oregon Communities

In 2024, the Oregon State Fire Marshal began a pilot educational program on the top causes of fire in Oregon: cooking, heating, and electrical. During this webinar, hear from Roseburg Fire Marshal Cheryl Flick and learn how they use this free kit to provide consistent educational messaging to high-risk populations in their community, and how their involvement in this pilot helped lead to safer Oregon communities.

# UPCOMING TRAINING

## INSIGHT TRAINING REGISTRATION

The Oregon State Fire Marshal is pleased to announce updates to the Insight Youth Fire Intervention Program for youth ages 8 through 17. When kids misuse fire, the consequences can be catastrophic: homes and buildings could be damaged or destroyed, people could be injured or killed, and those involved could face legal consequences that include hefty fines or jail time.

Most young people who misuse fire don't do it because they want to destroy property or hurt others. The reality is that many make poor choices with fire from a lack of understanding about the way fire functions and the negative impact it could have on them, their family, and their community.

The accountability-based lessons in the Insight workbooks educate readers about the unpredictable nature of fire and the physical, emotional, and costs associated with its misuse. The workbooks build skills to prevent future fire-setting behavior. The Oregon State Fire Marshal offers two workbooks designed to support the needs and skills of kids of all ages.

The workbooks can be used with single participants or in a group setting. Successful completion of the program can be done by a variety of youth-serving community partners, including members of the fire service, juvenile justice counselors, social service workers, or mental health counselors.

The Insight program focuses on fire safety messaging and problem-solving skills for kids and their families. Insight is not intended to replace the Oregon Juvenile with Fire Screening Tool, but to work as a response to a screening that shows an intervention would be important.



The Oregon State Fire Marshal is hosting a training at the Department of Public Safety Standards and Training on **Monday, February 23, 2026, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.**

This training will include information about kids who misuse fire, opportunities for participants to build skills, and hands-on experience with Insight workbooks and facilitator guidebooks.

[Register here](#) or scan the QR code.

Space is limited to 30 participants, and invitations will be extended on a first-come, first-served basis.





OREGON FIRE SERVICE

# NEW RECRUITS

Across Oregon, a new generation of firefighters is stepping forward, pulling on turnouts for the first time, learning to trust one another under pressure, and embracing the responsibility that comes with serving their communities. From regional academies rooted in collaboration to department-specific recruit programs, firefighter training across the state reflects a shared commitment to excellence, safety, and public service.

While each academy has its own structure and focus, they are united by a common goal: preparing recruits for the complex, demanding realities of modern emergency response.

## REGIONAL COLLABORATION, LOCAL COMMITMENT

In many parts of the state, firefighter training is a regional effort, bringing together recruits from multiple districts to learn side by side. These academies highlight one of Oregon's greatest strengths in emergency response and interagency cooperation.

At the Santiam Firefighter Academy, recruits from several Mid-Willamette Valley communities begin their journey together, emphasizing communication, teamwork, and discipline from day one. Training evolutions are designed to build technical proficiency and trust across jurisdictions, mirroring the mutual aid relationships that are critical during large-scale incidents.

New recruits also trained in Jackson and Josephine counties. Applegate Fire District said the recruits pushed their limits with hands-on training, teamwork, and plenty of determination. From live fire scenarios to ladder drills, they gave it their all and showed what it means to be part of the fire service family.

## TRAINING GROUNDS BUILT FOR REALITY

Other recruits travel to statewide training centers such as the Department of Public Safety Standards and Training academy in Salem. There, training days are immersive and demanding, structured to replicate the physical and mental challenges firefighters will face in the field.

These environments allow recruits to make mistakes, learn, and grow, long before lives depend on their actions.

## DEPARTMENT-BASED ACADEMIES

Some fire departments operate their own recruit academies, tailoring training to meet the specific needs of their communities while maintaining statewide standards. These programs often combine fire suppression training with emergency medical education, reflecting the dual role many firefighters serve today.

## LOOKING AHEAD

As Oregon continues to face evolving risks, from wildland-urban interface fires to increasing emergency medical demand, the importance of strong, consistent firefighter training cannot be overstated. These recruit academies represent an investment not only in individual firefighters, but in the resilience of communities statewide.





RURAL FIRE PROTECTION  
**SB 454  
COMMITTEE**

# CHARTING THE FUTURE OF OREGON'S FIRE SERVICE

The Senate Bill 454 Committee held their first meeting in January to tackle one of Oregon's most pressing public safety challenges: how to sustainably fund and modernize rural fire protection districts in the face of rising demands and shrinking resources. Over two days of discussion, the committee explored the evolving landscape of fire protection, workforce realities, and the fiscal constraints shaping agency operations statewide.

## A SYSTEM UNDER STRAIN

Committee members painted a picture of a fire service stretched thin. Oregon's fire agencies, ranging from rural districts to municipal departments, are grappling with surging call volumes, driven by population growth, encampment fires, and a spike in medical emergencies such as overdoses.

Wildfire response has further compounded costs and resource needs, often forcing agencies beyond their traditional boundaries.

## WORKFORCE AND VOLUNTEERISM

The backbone of Oregon's fire service, its volunteers, is eroding. Data shows a steady decline in volunteer and career firefighter numbers, leaving agencies with staffing ratios that lag far behind growing service demands. Broader socioeconomic trends, not easily solved at the local level, are fueling this shortage.

## FUNDING GAPS & FISCAL COMPLEXITY

At the heart of the challenge lies a fragmented funding model. Most agencies rely heavily on property taxes, local levies, and bonds, yet

permanent tax rates frozen since the 1990s and urban renewal policies have throttled revenue growth. Budgets vary widely, with many districts operating on shoestring resources while costs for equipment and EMS services soar. Medicare and Medicaid reimbursements remain far below actual service costs, adding financial strain.

## NEXT STEPS

The group is tasked with developing recommendations for the Oregon legislature. Their meetings can be viewed on the agency's YouTube channel. Their next meeting will be held on February 19 from 1-4 p.m.

## COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The State Rural Fire Protection District Funding & Services Advisory Committee (SB 454) is made up of 18 members and one executive sponsor. The committee is chaired by Brian Stewart, assistant fire chief, Clackamas Fire, and Brian Smith, director of strategic services at Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue.

An eight-member panel will also take part in the discussions and recommendations.

The committee has representation from across Oregon and a diverse group of agency sizes. A [full list and the committee charter can be found here](#).

A map of where the committee members are from [can be found here](#).



# WILDFIRE AFTER-ACTION REPORT

The Oregon Fire Defense Board Chiefs met in October 2025. The group completed an after-action review of the wildfire season and identified both successes and ongoing challenges in the state's wildfire response system, emphasizing the need for stronger coordination, training, and prevention efforts as fire seasons grow longer and more severe.

In a report released by the Oregon State Fire Marshal, the fire defense board chiefs said they would like expanded training and clearer guidance for fire defense board chiefs, particularly around deployment decisions, aviation resources, and the state's response system used during resource shortages. They also stressed the importance of accurate resource reporting to ensure rapid deployment during emergencies.

A major focus was wildfire mitigation, with leaders warning that response alone cannot address rising wildfire risk. Programs promoting defensible space, vegetation management, and community-level planning were highlighted as critical to reducing damage and protecting communities.

The review also showed the challenges posed by fires in under-protected or unprotected areas outside standard fire-service jurisdictions, calling for long-term solutions and better coordination among agencies.

Despite these concerns, officials pointed to several successes during the season, including improved staffing support, effective pre-positioning of resources, strong aviation support, and coordinated deployments, both within Oregon and to assist other states. Overall, leaders said the system continues to improve, helping protect communities through shared resources and coordinated response. You can read the [\*\*full report here\*\*](#).



REPORTING

## ANNUAL OREGON HAZMAT BY RAIL REPORT RELEASED

Oregon remains prepared to respond to hazardous materials spills and derailments involving trains, according to a new 2025 Hazmat by Rail Program report from the Oregon State Fire Marshal

The program, created by state lawmakers in 2015 and expanded in 2019, focuses on training emergency responders and coordinating planning between state agencies, local governments, tribes, and rail companies. It is funded mostly by fees paid by oil shippers that move products through Oregon.

The current system is working, and the state fire marshal is not recommending any changes to how agencies or railroads respond to hazmat rail incidents. Agency staff will continue tracking emergency response equipment statewide.

Training and exercises remain a central part of the program. In 2025, the state held a large tabletop derailment exercise in Klamath Falls involving about 50 participants from fire departments, emergency management agencies, hospitals, tribal governments, and rail companies. The exercise helped agencies practice coordination and identify areas for improvement, including communication and early notification.

The Klamath Falls exercise is the first step in a three-year training cycle. A functional exercise is planned for 2026, followed by a full-scale derailment exercise in 2027. Additional rail safety training and drills were also held or supported in several counties across the state.

### SENATE BILL 762 REPORT PUBLISHED

This month, the Oregon State Fire Marshal published its annual report on the implementation of Senate Bill 762. This legislative report outlines the important work the agency is doing about wildfire response, defensible space, and community wildfire risk reduction.

You can [read the report here](#).

**SB 762  
REPORT**



**HAZMAT  
BY RAIL**





# REGISTER TODAY: 2026 TASK FORCE LEADER SYMPOSIUM

Registration is now open for the 2026 OSFM Task Force Leader Symposium at Seven Feathers Resort in Canyonville. The symposium begins on Tuesday, April 28, at 1:30 p.m. and ends on Wednesday, April 29, at 3 p.m. Dinner will be provided on Tuesday evening, with breakfast and lunch provided on Wednesday.

This training event is intended only for task force leaders and trainees who intend to fill that role during the 2026 season.

Please complete registration no later than Tuesday, April 7, 2026.

The success of the Oregon Fire Service Mutual Aid system depends on task force leaders providing effective leadership to the personnel they supervise. The Oregon State Fire Marshal recognizes and appreciates the significant time and commitment task force leaders dedicate both during and outside of mobilizations. The symposium offers a valuable opportunity to share practical experience, learn best practices, and improve overall proficiency.

## WELCOME TO THE TEAM

Craig Kretschmer joins the Oregon State Fire Marshal as a deputy state fire marshal. He is from La Grande and a graduate of Eastern Oregon University. He began his career as a general contractor while also serving as a volunteer firefighter for the City of La Grande. His commitment to public service led him to the La Grande Rural Fire Protection District, where he served as fire chief for seven years.

A devoted family man, Craig spends much of his time supporting his three daughters at their sporting events. He is also an avid outdoorsman who enjoys hunting, fishing, and camping throughout Northeast Oregon. Welcome to team OSFM, Craig!





# NORTHWEST LEADERSHIP SEMINAR

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## SPEAKERS



**KEN FUTCH**

VIETNAM VETERAN, AUTHOR, AND  
SURVIVOR WHO SPIRES  
RESILIENCE



**MICHELLE CURRAN**

FIGHTER PILOT, THUNDERBIRDS  
LEAD SOLO, EMPOWERING  
OTHERS



**MARK SPECKMAN**

COACH, AUTHOR, OVERCOMING  
ADVERSITY WITH RESILIENCE



**DR. STEPHEN JAMES**

ENHANCING OPERATIONAL  
PERFORMANCE IN HIGH-RISK  
OCCUPATIONS



**DR. DAVID GRIFFIN**

FROM TRAGEDY TO  
TRANSFORMATION, INSPIRING  
GROWTH



**JOHNNY QUINN**

OLYMPIAN, NFLPLAYER,  
RESILIENCE EXPERT, INSPIRING  
LEADERS



# OREGON STATE FIRE MARSHAL **SMOKE ALARM INSTALLATION PROGRAM**

## **JOIN TODAY!**

Is your agency interested in joining the OSFM's Smoke Alarm Installation Program? The program provides smoke alarms to Oregon fire agencies to install in homes that do not have them.

There are several opportunities to learn more about the program during free webinars. Participants will learn about program eligibility and requirements, smoke alarms and installation information, project planning and ideas, and safety materials available to order. The one-hour live webinar training is required for fire agencies to participate in the program.

***Click the dates below to register.***

<u><b>Wednesday</b></u>	<u><b>Tuesday</b></u>	<u><b>Monday</b></u>	<u><b>Wednesday</b></u>
Feb. 11, 2026	Feb. 24, 2025	Mar. 9, 2026	Mar. 25, 2025

Can't make a pre-scheduled training time? We're flexible! If your agency is interested in an independent session, either online or in person, please call 503-934-8228.

## PARTNER NEWS

# OFMA ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

The Oregon Fire Marshals Association (OFMA) will hold its 2026 Annual Business Meeting & Conference in Hood River, Oregon, March 2-5, 2026, at the Best Western Hood River Inn.

This multi-day event features the Oregon Fire Marshals Association's business meeting, board elections, awards, and several days of learning and professional development. Attendees will get an update on the Oregon Fire Code, learn essential skills for rising leaders, and find out more about managing special events.

Members and partners are invited to connect with colleagues, engage with industry leaders, and participate in sessions designed to enhance fire and life safety practices across the state.

[Learn more here.](#)



# WELCOME TO THE TEAM

Wei Keat Lui joined the Oregon State Fire Marshal as an internal auditor on January 5, 2026. She brings more than 20 years of internal audit and risk management experience across state government, higher education, and public sector organizations in the U.S., Australia, and New Zealand.

A Chartered Accountant (CA ANZ), Wei Keat has held senior audit roles with the Oregon Secretary of State, University of Oregon, Oregon State University, Oregon State Treasury, and the Oregon Department of Education. She serves on the board of the Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA) Salem Chapter and is passionate about ethical governance, inclusive leadership, and continuous improvement.





# DEFENSIBLE SPACE PLAN

When it comes to wildfire preparedness, most homeowners imagine flames racing across the land. But in reality, the greatest wildfire threat to a home often begins much closer, within just five feet of the building itself.

Known as the immediate zone, the 0-5 foot area around a home plays a critical role in whether it survives a wildfire. Spring is the ideal time to focus on this space, before summer heat, dry conditions, and fire restrictions make the work harder to complete.

## WHY THE 0-5 FOOT ZONE IS SO IMPORTANT

During a wildfire, homes are rarely lost to a direct wall of flames. Instead, they ignite from wind-driven embers that can travel miles ahead of a fire. These embers collect in vulnerable areas like at the base of walls, under decks, along fences, and near doors and vents.

If things or vegetation that can catch fire more easily are within the first five feet of a home, embers have everything they need to start a fire. Creating a clean, noncombustible buffer around the home dramatically reduces the chance that embers can ignite the structure.

## WHAT BELONGS — AND WHAT DOESN'T — IN THE IMMEDIATE ZONE

Spring is the best time to take a fresh look at what surrounds your home and make simple but powerful changes.

In the 0-5 foot zone, remove or relocate:

- Bark dust and wood mulch
- Dry grass, weeds, and leaf litter
- Shrubs and dense vegetation touching walls or decks
- Decorative items made of wood or other flammable materials

## DON'T GIVE EMBERS A PLACE TO CALL HOME.



Create **defensible space**.

Instead, consider:

- Gravel, stone, or concrete ground cover
- Pavers or walkways
- Well-maintained, fire-resistant plants placed with spacing
- Clean, open areas that prevent embers from collecting

These changes don't require heavy equipment or major landscaping projects, but they can make a life-saving difference. Decks, stairs, fences, and pergolas often become ignition points during wildfires because they trap embers underneath and between boards. The goal is to eliminate hidden spaces where heat and embers can build unnoticed.

## SMALL SPACE. BIG IMPACT.

The five feet closest to your home may not look dramatic, but it is one of the most effective wildfire prevention measures available to homeowners.



# CODES CORNER

# PROCESSING & EXTRACTION FACILITIES

While fires can still occur at cannabis processing and extraction facilities, an April 2025 report by the Oregon Capitol Chronicle found that unpermitted facilities were responsible for most fires and explosions that endangered lives and property across Oregon.

Ensuring that business owners obtain and finalize all required permits, primarily through the local building official, including the Oregon Structural Specialty Code (OSSC) Section 438, is one of the most effective opportunities to mitigate hazards in these potentially very dangerous buildings. Once that process is complete, the fire code official can require an operational permit under OFC Section 105.5.43, Plant Extraction Systems, for the continued use of the facility. Maintenance requirements for processing and extraction facilities can be cited under OFC Section 3906.

**Expanded scope.** The 2025 Oregon Fire Code adds new requirements in Chapter 39 that further enhance plant processing facility safety. Section 3901.1 expands the scope of Chapter 39 so that it now applies not only to solvent-based extraction, but to all plant processing facilities, including cultivation, pre-extraction activities such as drying and trimming, and post-extraction operations like storage and packaging. This expansion recognizes that hazards are present throughout the entire process, not just during extraction.

**Exit doors.** Section 3903.7 now requires that, regardless of whether a space is classified as Group H, all exit doors from areas or rooms used for extraction swing in the direction of egress travel. The ability to exit quickly during an

emergency is a core life safety principle, and this requirement reinforces that objective.

**Lighting systems.** Section 3901.4 addresses horticultural lighting systems, requiring that they be listed, installed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions, and comply with the Oregon Electrical Specialty Code. While these requirements are typically addressed during the electrical permitting process, unlisted or modified lighting systems encountered during inspections fall squarely within fire code enforcement authority.

**Ventilation.** New oil extraction installations are now required to provide continuous mechanical exhaust ventilation to remove flammable vapors whenever they may be present, including during shutdown and post-processing conditions. Ventilation systems that operate only intermittently, manually, or in response to sensor activation do not meet this requirement. This feature should be ensured through the mechanical permit process, as is now required in OFC Section 3905.3



## CODES CORNER (CONTINUED)

**"Burner" carbon dioxide enrichment.** Section 3901.5 introduces new requirements for detection, piping, ventilation, and signage for carbon dioxide generation methods that do not use storage containers. These systems also present significant life safety hazards and require careful coordination between permitting and ongoing fire code oversight. Fire code officials may use the new operational permit OFC Section 105.5.27, Indoor Plant Cultivation, for administration and enforcement.

These and other new requirements will be explored more during the upcoming 2025 Oregon Fire Code update class. Watch for sign-up opportunities soon.

As plant processing operations continue to evolve, careful attention to permitting and ongoing compliance with the Oregon Fire Code will remain key to improving safety and reducing preventable incidents.

## OREGON FIRE CODE

You can learn more about the 2025 Oregon Fire Code by logging on to the [Oregon State Fire Marshal's website](#). If you have fire code related questions you can also contact the agencies Fire and Life Safety Division.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

## CHILI COOK-OFF

Mark your calendars: the **Oregon Burn Center Safety Fair & Chili Cook-Off** is around the corner! This free, family-friendly event brings together first responders, healthcare teams, and community partners for an afternoon of hands-on safety education and tasty competition.

Join us **Feb. 7, 2026, from 12-3 p.m.** at the Portland Expo Center for interactive safety activities, crafts for kids, face painting, and special surprise guests. Visitors can explore rescue vehicles up close and meet the people who help keep our communities safe.

And of course, come hungry! You'll have the chance to sample chili entries as first responders and healthcare teams compete for the title of Champion Chili.

For questions, contact Erin Horrax at [ehorrax@lhs.org](mailto:ehorrax@lhs.org).





DATA SPOTLIGHT

# **NERIS+ ROLLOUT CONTINUES**

More than 100 Oregon fire agencies submitted NERIS incident reports since the launch on January 1. This early activity is an important step in Oregon's transition to the new national reporting system, and we appreciate the effort it takes to adapt to new processes and tools.

For NERIS reporting guidance or assistance, please contact Michelle Vold at [michelle.vold@osfm.oregon.gov](mailto:michelle.vold@osfm.oregon.gov) or 503-586-6568.

## NATIONAL NERIS SETUP

Direct entry agencies that have not completed their vehicle management grid updates in ImageTrend Elite should complete this remaining step as soon as possible. If your agency needs guidance on completing any part of this process, please contact [osfm.data@osfm.oregon.gov](mailto:osfm.data@osfm.oregon.gov) and our team will be happy to assist.

Until this step is completed:

- Your agency can submit NERIS reports to the state repository but will not be able to achieve a report validation score of 100
- Your agency cannot submit NERIS reports to the national repository

This may affect federal grant eligibility, so timely completion is strongly encouraged.

Agencies using their own vendors, including those with private ImageTrend contracts, should work directly with their vendor to confirm that their NERIS reports are currently being received at the national level.

Agencies with vendors other than ImageTrend (ESO, First Due, Emergency Networking, Always on Scene, etc.) should connect with their vendor to ensure their agency is on track to report NERIS+ directly to the Oregon state repository by April 1, 2026.

If you or your vendor have questions about this timeline or NERIS+ reporting requirements, please reach out to OSFM Analytics & Intelligence Unit Manager Sydney Smith at [sydney.smith@osfm.oregon.gov](mailto:sydney.smith@osfm.oregon.gov) or 503-580-3408.

## UPCOMING TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Thank you to the hundreds of participants who attended a NERIS+ training in December and January. More in-person training opportunities will be offered regionally in February and March.

- February 19, 2026 (Newport)
- March 4, 2026 (Applegate Valley)
- March 19, 2026 (Bend)
- March 31, 2026 (La Grande)

These sessions offer the same content covered in the recorded training and virtual sessions, making them a strong option for anyone who prefers in-person learning or would benefit from live Q&A after several weeks of hands-on reporting. Registration is open on the [NERIS+ webpage](#).

**Please note:** any session that does not reach at least 25% of capacity one week before the scheduled date will be canceled, and registrants will be provided with digital training materials and contact information for NERIS support questions. Fire service members planning to attend are encouraged to register early so we can confirm each session.

## NFIRS REPORTING REMINDER

Beginning this month, NFIRS reports can no longer be submitted to the Oregon fire incident repository. Agencies may continue to edit existing reports to finalize submissions, but all new incidents must be reported through NERIS.

## FIRE CASUALTY REPORTING

As a reminder, fire agencies must submit OSFM's [Fire Casualty Report Form](#) within 24 hours of any fire-related death or serious injury, in addition to submitting a NERIS incident report.

This requirement applies to any death or serious injury that occurs as a result of a fire, even if not caused directly by flame or smoke. This includes natural or accidental causes sustained while involved in the associated activities surrounding the incident, such as the activities of fire control, attempting rescue, or escaping from the dangers of the fire. Early reporting is critical to ensure your agency meets statutory requirements and supports accurate statewide tracking of serious injuries and fatalities because of fires.



# FIREFIGHTER CARDIAC AWARENESS MONTH

February is [American Heart Month](#) and Firefighter Cardiac Awareness Month. In coordination with the American Heart Association's [Heart Health Month](#), the fire service uses February to raise awareness of the risk for firefighters for injury and death from undiagnosed and treated cardiovascular disease. National Fire Protection Association data shows that sudden cardiac death is one of the most common types of line-of-duty death for firefighters. [In 2024, NFPA found that 65%](#) of line-of-duty deaths were attributed to overexertion injuries. The [Fire Fighter Fatality Investigation and Prevention Program \(FFFIPP\)](#) investigations assess personal and workplace factors. Personal factors include individual risk factors for coronary artery disease, while the workplace evaluation:

- Estimates the acute physical demands placed upon the firefighter.
- Estimates the firefighter's acute exposure to hazardous chemicals.
- Assesses fire departments' coronary artery disease screening efforts.

Resources to support fire service partners in addressing the physical health and fitness of our firefighters.

- [Oregon Fire Service Health and Safety Collaborative, Physical Health and Fitness Resources](#).
- The International Association of Fire Chiefs has a [Cardiac Awareness Toolkit](#) with resources and information to assist fire service agencies and members. Also, the [IAFC Emergency Services Road Map to Health and Wellness](#) is a great resource.

## TRAINING & EVENTS

### USFA Summit

Feb. 4, 2026 | Virtual

[REGISTER HERE](#)

### Emotional Survival and Leadership Seminar

Feb. 11, 2026 | McMinnville

[LEARN MORE HERE](#)

### Firefighter Cancer Initiative Research Summit

Feb. 27, 2026 | Virtual

[REGISTER HERE](#)

### Operational Peer Support Symposium

Jun. 17, 2026 | DPSST - Salem

Registration Details Coming Soon

### Fire Service Psychology Association

#### Annual Conference

Oct. 15-16, 2026 | Portland



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

# SPARKY AWARD NOMINATIONS

The Oregon State Fire Marshal is accepting nominations for the 2026 Golden and Silver Sparky Awards.

The Golden Sparky recognizes a fire service member or fire agency for outstanding fire prevention or public safety education achievement. The Silver Sparky recognizes a civilian or civilian agency for outstanding achievement in fire prevention or public safety education.

Nominations are open until April 15. Please submit your completed Sparky nomination form with an explanation and examples of your nominee's achievements.

To nominate someone, fill out and submit the form on the [OSFM's website](#).



# OREGON FIRE SERVICE FROM THE INTERNET

In January, Marion County Fire District 1 had the honor of hosting the Salem-Keizer School District's culinary classes to teach about cooking safety.

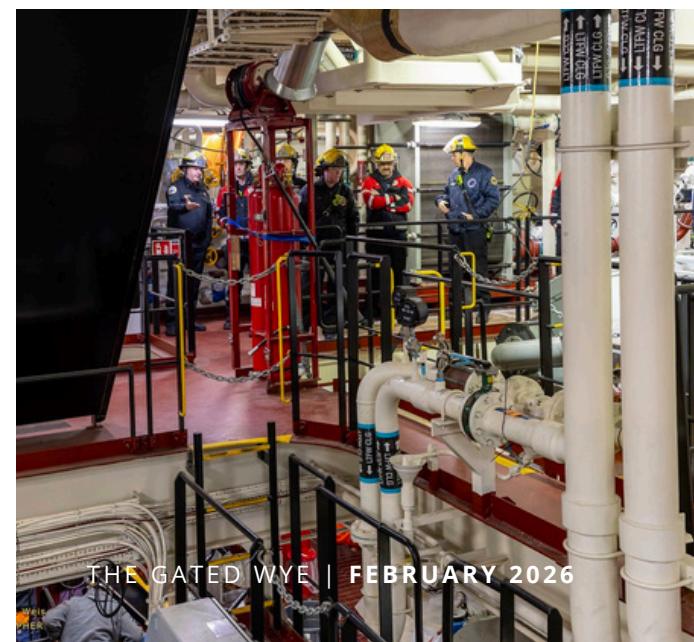
Students were led by Deputy Fire Marshal Emanuel Arrellin-Lara in a lesson on safe cooking and how to use a fire extinguisher.

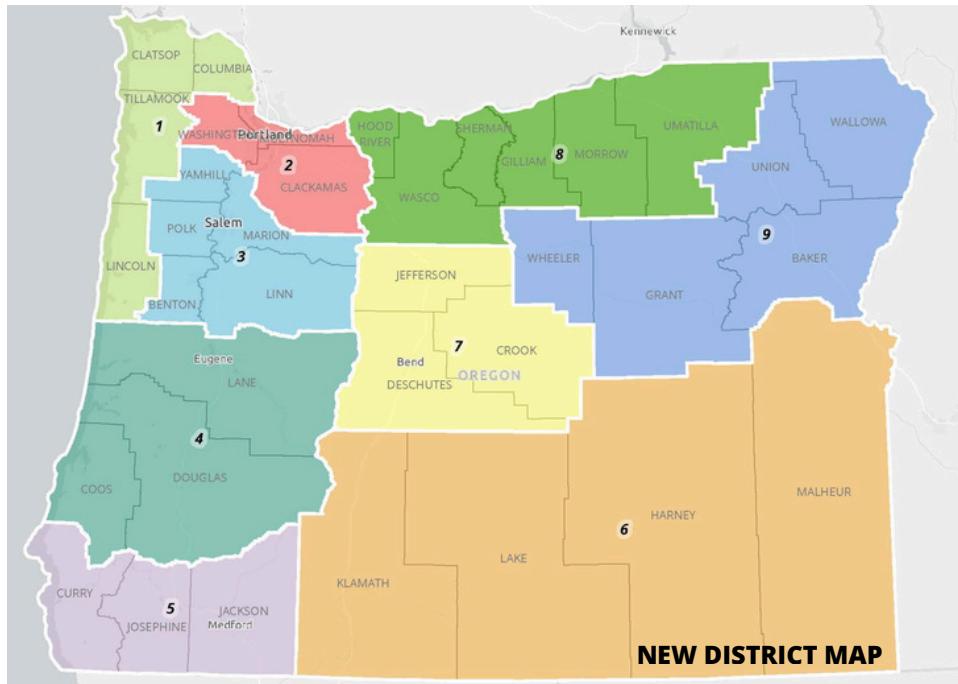
Cooking fires are the number one cause of home fires in Oregon. In many instances, they can be prevented. Never leave what you are cooking unattended, and make sure things that can catch on fire are kept well away from the stove and oven.



## FROM THE INTERNET **SHIP WALK-THROUGH**

Portland Fire and Rescue firefighters did a walk-through of the naval vessel Earl Warren on Swan Island in January. The tour gave them a first-hand view of the interior of the ship in the event they respond to an emergency on the Earl Warren, and provided another image to the specialty team to use in the foundation of information used when addressing a fire in a low visibility environment within the belly of a ship. [Check out their post here.](#)





# EXPANDING SUPPORT FOR WILDFIRE RISK REDUCTION

The Oregon State Fire Marshal's Community Wildfire Risk Reduction Unit is making important changes to strengthen wildfire resilience statewide. Beginning this year, the agency will add two new fire risk reduction specialist positions and expand its regional structure from seven to nine districts.

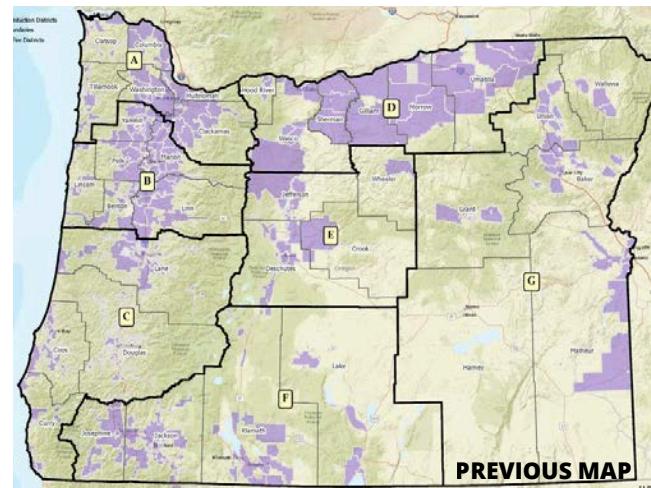
Fire risk reduction specialists are local experts dedicated to wildfire mitigation. They work directly with communities to deliver training, planning assistance, technical expertise, and access to data and funding resources. By increasing the number of specialists and refining district boundaries, the Oregon State Fire Marshal can ensure each specialist focuses more deeply on the communities they serve.

The new district map reflects Oregon's diverse geography and partnerships at the local, state, federal, and nongovernmental levels. While some boundaries will shift, many will remain the same. These changes align with Oregon's broader investment in wildfire prevention and resilience, including programs funded through recent legislation in House Bill 3940.

## Every Oregonian can take steps to reduce wildfire risk.

The Oregon State Fire Marshal offers free defensible space assessments to help property owners create safer spaces around homes and businesses. Your local fire risk reduction specialist can connect you with tools and resources to make your property more wildfire resilient.

For more information and to view the updated district map, visit [Fire Adapted Oregon](#) or contact your local fire risk reduction specialist.





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

Send it by the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month to:

[osfm.thegatedwye@osfm.oregon.gov](mailto:osfm.thegatedwye@osfm.oregon.gov)

**Kassie Keller, public affairs director**

[Kassie.Keller@osfm.oregon.gov](mailto:Kassie.Keller@osfm.oregon.gov)

**John Hendricks, public affairs specialist**

[Johnathan.Hendricks@osfm.oregon.gov](mailto:Johnathan.Hendricks@osfm.oregon.gov)

**Nicholas Tenorio, public affairs specialist**

[Nicholas.Tenorio@osfm.oregon.gov](mailto:Nicholas.Tenorio@osfm.oregon.gov)

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