



OREGON STATE FIRE MARSHAL

THE GATED WYE

APRIL 2025



OSFM READYS FOR WILDFIRE SEASON

This May, Oregon marks Wildfire Awareness Month with important safety messages to better protect and prepare Oregonians for wildfire. To support these efforts the state fire marshal is launching a robust campaign. Local fire agencies will receive wildfire boxes, and Bigfoot will appear on billboards sharing tips on equipment safety and debris burning. Our partners and local fire agencies should keep any eye out for a social media kit and digital campaign.

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OSFM'S MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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WILDFIRE AWARENESS MONTH KICKS OFF **MAY 1**: SPREAD THE WORD

Oregon is gearing up for Wildfire Awareness Month this May, with local fire agencies set to receive their Wildfire Awareness Month boxes. These boxes contain valuable materials to help fire departments and communities spread important wildfire safety messages throughout the state.

There are many things Oregonians can do to be prepared for the summer months. Defensible space around your home is a great place to start, the OSFM has many resources available and offers free defensible space assessments. If you are interested, sign up at OregonDefensibleSpace.org.

Preventing wildfires and being fire safe can also lessen the impact of Oregon's wildfire season. Debris burns rank among the top causes of wildfires every year. Taking appropriate steps to ensure a debris burn won't get out of hand is important. [Find tips to share here](#).

A social media kit will be released soon, offering content to help raise awareness on platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and X. The Oregon State Fire Marshal is working on a digital campaign to share these messages across YouTube, Google, and Spotify.

Look out for billboards across the state featuring Bigfoot—yes, the legendary creature! Bigfoot will be sharing crucial tips on safe equipment use and debris burning safety. These billboards are part of the ongoing efforts to educate Oregonians about wildfire prevention.

For more information on Wildfire Awareness Month and to access resources to prepare for wildfire season, check out preventwildfires.oregon.gov

Let's all do our part to #BelieveInFireSafety and prevent wildfires this summer.



CODES CORNER

OUTDOOR BURNING IN OREGON

Every year as the temperatures warm, outdoor burning raises concern for fire agencies throughout the state. According to the Oregon State Fire Marshal Analytics & Intelligence Unit, an average of 317 fires are caused each year by an open fire and other open flames or sparks. It doesn't take much for a yard debris burn to get out of hand or rekindle days later from a slight breeze. Simple steps can make a big difference.

The Oregon Fire Code (OFC) Section 307 governs open burning, recreational fires, and portable outdoor fireplaces. It outlines when and where burning is permitted, with restrictions based on weather conditions, air quality, and local regulations.

According to OFC 307.1, open burning must be conducted in a safe manner, preventing hazardous conditions. The code defines open burning as burning materials such as yard debris, slash, or refuse without an enclosure like a grill or fireplace. However, even controlled burns can become dangerous if not properly managed.

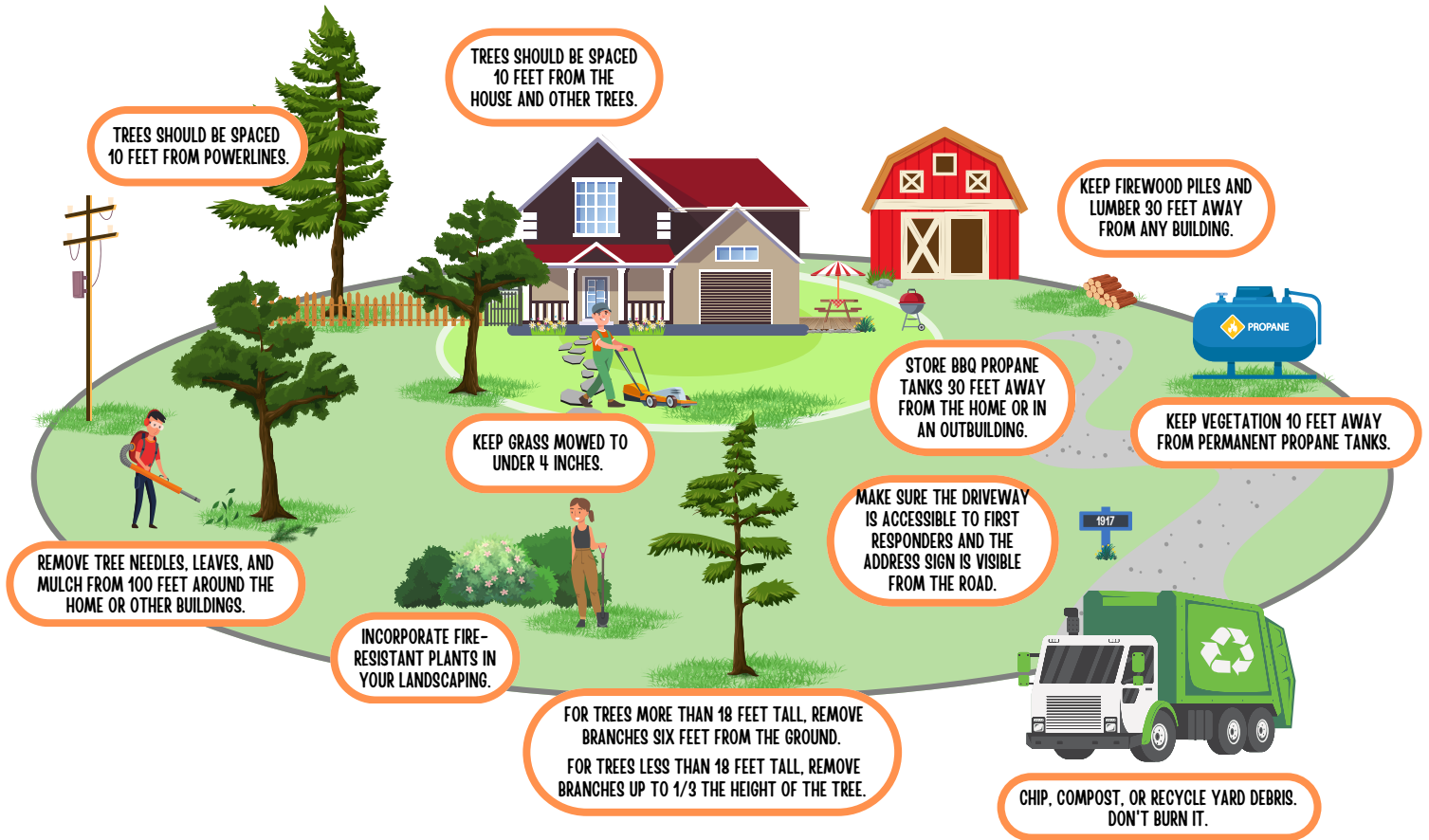
What to know about OFC Section 307

1. **Burn Permits:** Many jurisdictions in Oregon require a permit for open burning. Per OFC 307.2, individuals must obtain approval from the local fire code official before burning. This ensures compliance with safety protocols and allows authorities to assess fire risks.
2. **Prohibited Materials:** OFC 307.1.1 prohibits the burning of hazardous materials, including rubber, plastics, and treated wood, as they release toxic fumes and increase fire risk. Illegal burning can result in fines and penalties.
3. **Safety Distances:** OFC 307.4 mandates that open burning must occur at least 50 feet from structures, with provisions to reduce this distance if the fire is contained in an approved device. Additionally, a means of extinguishing the fire, such as a hose or fire extinguisher, must be readily available.
4. **Weather Considerations:** Fire danger levels dictate burn permissions. Under OFC 307.1.2, open burning is restricted during high fire danger periods to prevent wildfires. Even a small breeze can spread embers, turning a controlled burn into a disaster.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE.

DON'T GIVE EMBERS A PLACE TO CALL HOME.

Create **defensible space** and give your property an increased chance of surviving a wildfire.



Oregonians can prevent tragedies and protect their communities by following proper outdoor burning protocols—getting permits, maintaining safe distances, and monitoring weather conditions. The destruction caused by preventable fires shows the importance of respecting fire codes. Following these regulations ensures public safety and preserves Oregon's natural landscapes for future generations.

DEFENSIBLE SPACE CODE

Maintaining defensible space around your home is crucial for surviving a wildfire. Clear overgrown vegetation, create fire-resistant landscaping, and regularly maintain it by trimming trees and clearing gutters. These steps can make the difference between a home surviving or being destroyed by a wildfire. Studies and data from past wildfires show that homes with well-maintained defensible space are significantly more likely to withstand the dangers of a wildfire. Homes with proper clearance and fire-resistant landscaping suffer less damage.

The Oregon State Fire Marshal developed a draft Oregon Defensible Space Code. The Oregon Defensible Fire Code works in tandem with Senate Bill 762, which provides funding for community wildfire mitigation and public education on defensible space.

For more information on creating defensible space, visit oregondefensiblespace.org to access the defensible space checklist.

GET COMFORTABLE WITH **DEFENSIBLE SPACE.**



FIVE SPRING PROJECTS TO CREATE DEFENSIBLE SPACE:

- 1** **Remove** leaves, pine needles, and other debris from the roof, gutters, and on and under the deck.
- 2** **Trim** tall plants and bushes growing directly under your eaves.
- 3** **Trim** trees and bushes to make sure they have adequate space from your home and other vegetation.
- 4** **Remove** dead and combustible plants and mulch, especially within the first several feet from the home. Replace with decorative rock or gravel.
- 5** **Cover** exterior attic vents, soffit vents, and areas below decks and patios with 1/8" metal wire mesh.

CLICK HERE TO SIGN UP FOR
[**A FREE DEFENSIBLE ASSESSMENT.**](#)



OSFM, FIRE SERVICE RESPOND TO HARNEY COUNTY FLOODING

In late March, the Oregon State Fire Marshal mobilized a team to assist with flood response efforts in Harney County, where ongoing flooding prompted level 3 evacuations. With water levels rising from snowmelt and warm temperatures, area rivers and streams reached levels not seen since the 1950s. Floodwaters overtopped parts of the levee near Burns, impacting the northern and eastern areas of the city, as well as other parts of the county.

Our team of 25 people, including 11 deputy state fire marshals, OSFM staff, and firefighters, was briefed on Monday, March 31 and immediately started work.

They assisted with sandbagging efforts, working to reinforce the levee, and provided other critical support. Those impacted by the flooding should follow updates from the Harney County Sheriff, Harney County Emergency Management, or their local city officials.



REGISTER NOW FOR 2025 SERC/LEPC CONFERENCE



OREGON PREPARED, COMMUNITY READY



Join us for the 2025 SERC/LEPC Conference, May 19-22 at the Chinook Winds Casino Resort in Lincoln City! Hosted by the Oregon State Fire Marshal, this year's event covers the full spectrum of emergency planning, from historical lessons to future preparedness. Through expert-led discussions, hands-on training, and a tabletop exercise, you'll gain actionable skills to enhance your emergency response capabilities.

Designed for LEPCs, first responders, emergency managers, and industry professionals, the conference features sessions on legal frameworks, hazardous materials response, risk communication, and funding opportunities. Topics include lessons from the Bhopal disaster, lithium-ion battery hazards, and strengthening planning. Don't miss this chance to collaborate, learn, and improve community preparedness—register today!



REGISTRATION NOW OPEN TASK FORCE LEADER SYMPOSIUM

Registration is open for the 2025 OSFM Task Force Leader Symposium at Seven Feathers Resort in Canyonville, Oregon. The event will run from Tuesday, May 20, at 1:30 p.m. through Wednesday, May 21, at 3 p.m.

This symposium is designed for task force and strike team leaders and trainees, offering critical training and valuable sessions to enhance leadership skills and preparedness. Participants will have the opportunity to engage in discussions and workshops on a range of topics, including:

- Operations: Structure prep & the structural protection plan
- OSFM Expectations
- Rangeland Fire Protection Associations
- Triage & Mapping Tools
- Fire Season Forecast
- Safety: Incident Within an Incident Focus
- And more!

Please complete your registration by ***Monday, May 5, 2025.***

Why Attend

While this symposium does not offer certification, it is an excellent opportunity for task force leaders to gain essential skills, share experiences, and enhance their leadership abilities. The OSFM thanks task force leaders for your dedication and time commitment, both during and outside of incident responses.

Don't miss the chance to be part of this important training event.

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



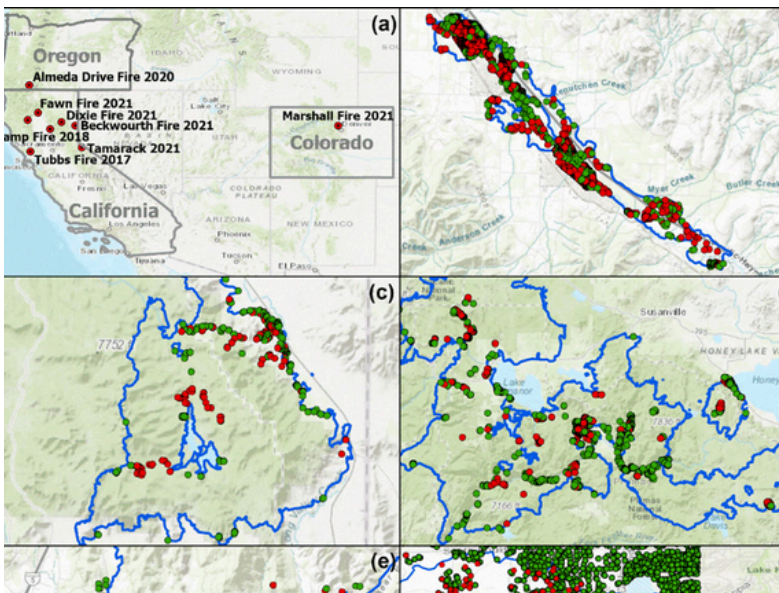
NEW METHOD HELPS TRACK WILDFIRE RECOVERY

A new study introduces a method to track community-level building recovery after wildfires using widely available imagery data and a deep learning model. The research, co-authored by Oregon State Fire Marshal employee Andres Schmidt, looks to help planners and communities identify areas where infrastructure recovery is lagging after wildfire disasters.

The approach uses satellite and aerial imagery combined with artificial intelligence to analyze rebuilding progress. By pinpointing delays in recovery, the method provides valuable insights for policymakers, emergency managers and researchers working to support wildfire-affected communities.

Schmidt, a member of the OSFM Analytics and Intelligence Unit, said the findings could be useful for firefighting and fire research professionals. The study's use of open-source imagery and advanced machine learning makes it accessible to a wide range of users seeking to improve wildfire recovery efforts.

The full study is available [here](#).



NOMINATE TODAY!

Do you know someone who goes above and beyond to promote fire prevention or public safety education? Now's your chance to recognize their efforts!

The Silver Sparky Award honors civilians and civilian agencies making a real difference in fire safety. Whether through community education, innovative programs, or tireless advocacy, these individuals and organizations deserve to be celebrated.

Nominations are open until
May 1, 2025!

[Find the nomination form here.](#)

OSFM IMTS MEET FOR ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The Oregon State Fire Marshal hosted its annual conference and training for the state's three all-hazard incident management teams in mid-March. These teams, composed of fire service members and OSFM staff, are deployed to assist communities facing or anticipating disasters.

In 2024, OSFM teams supported 17 wildfire conflagrations across Oregon and provided disaster response during Hurricane Helene in North Carolina.

The gathering provided an opportunity to welcome new members while bidding farewell to those retiring. On Tuesday, the OSFM honored Michael Gorsuch, Joe Raade, Kristina Deschaine, and Andy Loudon for their nearly 80 years of combined service. The ceremony highlighted their contributions to the program, which began with humble beginnings but has grown into a model for other states.

The OSFM incident management team program has become a respected resource, and staff members expressed pride in the program's progress and the dedication of all who have contributed to its success.



TRAINING PAGE NOW AVAILABLE

Did you know the Oregon State Fire Marshal has a training page designed to provide essential resources for fire agencies statewide? The page includes a wealth of materials, including videos of past training, a guide to setting up mobile field assistance for triage and mapping, and a quick guide for using sprinkler kits. These resources are part of the OSFM's ongoing effort to ensure that local fire agencies, incident management team members, and Oregon Fire Mutual Aid System crews are prepared for any fire response situation.

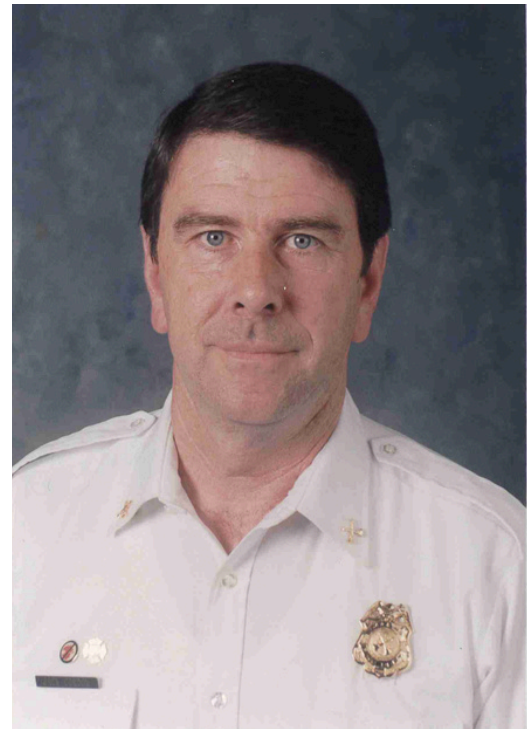
As fire season approaches, the training page will continue to be updated with new content to keep fire agencies informed and ready for action.

For more details and to access these resources, visit the [OSFM Emergency Response Division page](#).

IN REMEMBRANCE OF JOHN "JACK" CONDON

By Sean Condon

Jack Condon was born in Portland, Oregon in 1939, grew up in Ladd's Addition and graduated from Central Catholic High School in 1957. After high school, he attended the University of Portland and then went to work for Nottingham Transfer and later Graziano Produce in Portland. Jack moved to Dallas, Oregon in 1968, after purchasing Dallas Garbage. Jack married Linda Slack (Dornhecker) in 1986 at St. Philip Catholic Church in Dallas and the two managed Dallas Garbage until 1994. Jack and Linda moved to Grants Pass in 1994, and managed Grants Pass Sanitation later returning to Dallas in 2001 after retiring.



(APRIL 24, 1939 - FEBRUARY 23, 2025)

Jack was a member of St. Philip Catholic Church, Dallas Planning Commission, Dallas Rotary, Dallas Booster Club, Dallas Cemetery District, James2, and the solid waste industry.

Jack joined the Dallas Volunteer Fire Department in 1970 and continued with the department until 1994 and again served from 2000 to 2003. Jack devoted much of his time to Oregon's volunteer fire service as a firefighter for Dallas Fire, many years with the Oregon Volunteer Firefighters Association and their president in '76, and served on the National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC) as state director of Oregon from '78 - '94. While serving with the NVFC, Jack visited Japan in '82 when the NVFC became a member of the Federation of World Volunteer Firefighters Associations. In 1991, Jack was asked by the White House and U.S. Fire Administrator Olin Greene to fill a position on the board of visitors for the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, Maryland, which he held until 1998.

In the early 80's, Jack was still engaged with the OVFA and helped create and lobby a retirement fund for Oregon's volunteer firefighters. This program is known as the Length of Service Award Program (LOSAP). Jack spent many hours at the Oregon legislature, lobbying for this program as he always felt it was extremely important for Oregon's Volunteers. The work that Jack did for LOSAP in those early years finally came into existence for Oregon's volunteer firefighters in 1993. Oregon's LOSAP program was one of the first programs established in the US.

Jack had a passion for service to his community and fellow volunteer firefighters and he wasn't afraid to get involved in politics. He did a lot of things behind the scenes and never looked to be rewarded as he simply saw his reward by serving and doing the right thing. I'm proud to be his son and proud to have volunteered beside him at Dallas Fire and I continue to follow in his fire service footsteps. The entire Condon family will miss him as a husband, father, brother, uncle, grandfather, great grandfather, and fellow volunteer firefighter.

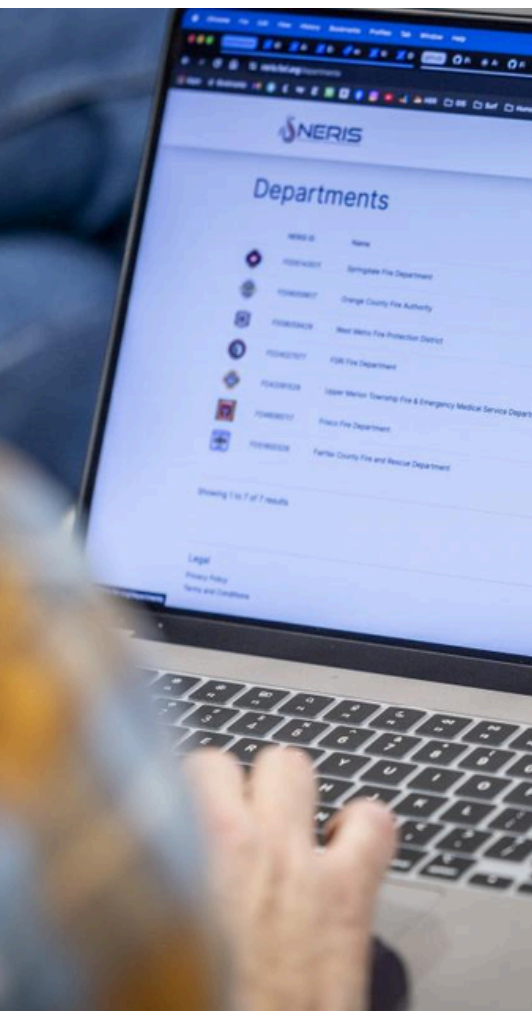
FIRE AGENCIES ENCOURAGED TO SHARE CR2K INFORMATION WITH THE PUBLIC

The Oregon State Fire Marshal is asking local fire agencies to add a link to the [Community Right to Know \(CR2K\) webpage](#) on their websites. This helps the public stay informed about hazardous substances in their communities, allowing them to make safer decisions.

The Oregon Community Right to Know and Protection Act (CR2K) provides first responders and emergency planners with information about hazardous materials stored and used at local facilities. This data is available through CHS Manager, an online reporting system launched in 2018. CHS Manager helps responders prepare for hazardous material incidents in their own communities and in neighboring areas covered by mutual aid agreements.

For assistance with CR2K information or adding a link to a fire department website, contact the CR2K team at 1-800-454-6125 or email OSFM.HazMatSurvey@OSFM.Oregon.gov.

OREGON NERIS+ UPDATE



The Oregon State Fire Marshal is preparing for two phases of NERIS onboarding. The first phase involves creating an agency profile, or “node,” in the Oregon repository. This profile will capture demographic information that aligns with NERIS standards. The OSFM is working closely with ImageTrend to ensure this information can be entered and updated in a single source for Oregon fire agencies. The second phase will transition from the NFIRS data schema to the NERIS+ data schema after development, testing, and training are completed.

To facilitate this transition, ImageTrend has developed data fields to collect agency profile (“node”) information as outlined in the NERIS Entity Module data schema. Once these fields are available in the Oregon Repository, we will send instructions in the coming months on how to update your information. We’ve also reached out to RMS vendors serving Oregon to inform them about the NERIS+ project. If your vendor has questions, they can contact the OSFM Analytics & Intelligence Unit at osfm.data@osfm.oregon.gov.

In the meantime, please continue submitting your fire incident reports using NFIRS as usual. Your ongoing support is crucial as we work together to improve fire service data collection and integration in Oregon.



SIGN UP FOR **RISK REDUCTION** KIT AND EDUCATIONAL TRAINING

Oregon fire agencies are invited to sign up for the OSFM risk reduction kit train-the-trainer series to help bring fire safety education to their communities.

The risk reduction kit, launching this summer, is designed to equip local fire departments with hands-on tools and resources to teach their communities about fire safety. The kit covers important topics:

- Cooking safety
- Heating safety
- Electrical distribution safety
- Burn prevention

Each kit includes visuals, props, and a presenter's guide tailored for a variety of audiences, including adults, young adults, older youth, younger youth, and seniors. The interactive props, such as mini cooking pans, casserole dishes, extension cords, chimney sweep tools, dish towels, oven mitts, throw rugs, and power strips, make learning fun and engaging.

To receive a risk reduction kit, fire agencies must attend a mandatory three-hour, in-person regional training session. These sessions ensure each department is prepared to use the kit in their community.

Any Oregon fire agency with a FDID or DCIN is eligible to participate in the training and receive a kit. Each session can accommodate up to 30 attendees at regional locations, but there is no limit for sessions at the OSFM headquarters in Salem.

Visit the [website](#) or [scan the QR to register](#) and find more details about the training sessions and the kits.

Let's work together to enhance fire safety in Oregon!



COME SEE US AT AG FEST!



The Oregon State Fire Marshal will participate in Oregon Ag Fest at the Salem Fairgrounds on April 26-27, engaging with families about fire safety and prevention.

Ag Fest is an interactive event designed to educate families about Oregon's agricultural industry through hands-on exhibits. With more than 25,000 attendees last year, the event provides a valuable opportunity for the agency to connect with children and families, particularly those in rural agricultural communities.

Throughout the two-day event, staff will be on hand to share fire safety tips, prevention messages, and collaborate with local fire service partners from Marion and Polk counties.

If your agency would like to participate at Ag Fest's emergency services safety display, please email laura.chaffey@osfm.oregon.gov.

OFCA CONFERENCE HAPPENING IN MAY, REGISTER NOW

The Oregon Fire Chiefs Association (OFCA) will host its annual Spring Conference from May 7-9, 2025, at the Riverhouse on the Deschutes in Bend. This premier event brings together fire service leaders from across the state for expert-led training, critical updates, and valuable networking opportunities.

The conference will feature a lineup of inspiring and educational speakers, with training sessions designed specifically for fire service leadership. Attendees will also hear critical updates from key fire organizations and have opportunities to connect with fellow fire service professionals and partners.

OFCA membership is encouraged but not required to attend. All chiefs and chief officers are welcome to register and take part in this event.



PROTECT HOMES IN YOUR COMMUNITY INSIDE AND OUT

From home fires to wildfires, the Oregon State Fire Marshal offers essential programs to help you protect your community year-round.

Your agency can:

- Become a **defensible space assessor** to help homes withstand wildfire
- Participate in the **Smoke Alarm Installation Program** to protect the people inside



SCAN



Defensible Space Program

SCAN



Smoke Alarm Installation Program

Empower your agency to enhance fire safety—inside and out.

GET STARTED TODAY!



WOMEN'S HEALTH IN THE FIRE SERVICE

April 7 is World Health Day, a time to focus on important health issues around the world. This year's theme, "Healthy Beginnings, Healthy Futures," encourages efforts to reduce preventable maternal and newborn deaths and promote women's long-term health.

In honor of this, it's important to highlight the health and well-being of women in the fire service. Women firefighters face unique challenges, and taking care of their health helps them stay strong and continue serving their communities.

If you want to learn more, check out the collaborative website for women in the fire service. It has valuable resources on health, fitness, and safety for female firefighters.

Helpful Resources:

- Training: Strong, Safe, and Resilient: An Update on Women's Health in the Fire Service
 - This online course, from the First Responder Center of Excellence, covers women's health in emergency services. It looks at reproductive health, fitness, cancer risks, discrimination, and injury rates among female firefighters.
- Infographic: Women Firefighters Reproductive Health
 - A quick visual guide on reproductive health concerns for women in the fire service.
- Webinar: Protecting Our Heroes: Women Firefighter's Health and Wellness
 - A discussion about how female firefighters can take care of their physical and mental health.
- Policy Guide: Fire Department Family Planning/Reproductive Health Policy Kit
 - A guide to help fire departments create policies that support family planning and reproductive health for firefighters.

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS

Mental health is just as important as physical health. The American Foundation for suicide prevention is hosting the [Out of the Darkness Campus Walk](#) on April 26 in Corvallis to raise awareness about suicide prevention.

If you're looking for a group to walk with, consider joining the [OSFM's team](#) to show support for first responders' mental health.



FROM THE INTERNET

On March 6, Ashland firefighters participated in specialized training focused on flammable liquid and gas fires, organized by Oregon's Department of Public Safety Standards and Training (DPSST). This valuable hands-on session allowed local firefighters to refine their response strategies and improve their ability to tackle high-risk emergency situations. The training ensures that Ashland's firefighting team remains ready and equipped to protect their community in any emergency.

Training like this is essential in maintaining the high standard of preparedness that our Oregon fire service is known for.

OFF-DUTY RESCUE

Two off-duty firefighters from Crook County saved a driver trapped in a vehicle after it crashed into the South Santiam River near Sweet Home in mid-March.

The firefighters, one from Crook County Fire & Rescue and the other from the Ochoco National Forest, entered the water, freed the driver, and brought them safely to shore.

The driver, who suffered non-life-threatening injuries, was taken to a hospital for further care.

[READ THE STORY HERE.](#)



WELCOME TO THE TEAM!



BRITTANY VANWINKLE - ACCOUNTING

We are excited to welcome Brittany VanWinkle to our accounting team. Originally from Houston, Texas, Brittany moved to Oregon in 2019 for a fresh start, seeking cooler weather and beautiful scenery. She earned her bachelor's degree in accounting from Texas A&M University in 2009 and spent 10 years as a professional baker and cake decorator before transitioning into accounting. Brittany previously worked at Salem-Keizer Public Schools and enjoys spending time with her boyfriend, Brandon, and their three small dogs.



YASSAMIN ALAYAN - PROCUREMENT

Yassamin Alayan brings more than 10 years of experience in public procurement and contracting to the Oregon State Fire Marshal. Her background spans accounting, finance, higher education, public transportation, and local government agencies. Yassamin is passionate about process improvement and team development and holds a Certified Professional Public Buyer (CPPB) certification. Outside of work, she enjoys outdoor activities, gardening, and volunteering with Rotary International, contributing to local and global communities.

Learning and Development Specialist

Application Deadline: 04/13/2025



As the learning and development specialist, you will be responsible for identifying and forming long-range plans, goals, objectives and milestones related to the development, implementation, administration and maintenance of the departments educational and training programs. This includes researching, assessing, and identifying fire service training needs based on state and national standards, developing curriculum, and implementing and coordinating OSFM training and outreach programs.

ANALYTICS & INTELLIGENCE Reporting Reminders

Has there been a fire related death or serious injury?

Please remember to submit a Fire Casualty Report Form (ORS 476.210). The form can be found at: [Fire Casualty Report Form](#)

**Note: the form must be completed by the primary responding fire agency and in addition to the NFIRS Fire Incident Report.*

Has there been a change in your agency's contact information or leadership?

If so, please remember to complete the appropriate contact update form found here: [Fire Agency Contact Update Forms](#)

Have a NFIRS question? Need Coding Help? Struggling with Elite?

If you need help related to incident reporting or the state repository, please reach out to the Fire Incident Reporting System Program Coordinator Michelle Vold.
(503-586-6568 | michelle.vold@osfm.oregon.gov)



CONTACT US

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

Kassie Keller, public affairs director
Kassie.Keller@osfm.oregon.gov

John Hendricks, public affairs specialist
Johnathan.Hendricks@osfm.oregon.gov

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