



July Live Training Burn

# SMOKE SIGNALS

**THIS PUBLICATION PUT OUT BY THE BOARD  
OF SPOKANE COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT #5**



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**FALL 2008**

## RECENT THEFT AFFECTS 2,000 RESIDENTS

Spokane County Fire District 5's main office on the corner of Four Mound Rd. and Dover Rd. had **over \$18,000 in emergency medical equipment stolen** from it between July 28 and July 31, 2008. There was no evidence of any forced entry. Whoever did this knew how to get in and where the equipment was stored. Only high-end medical equipment was stolen from one vehicle, our Medic 51 Rig. The office, storage areas, personal protective gear and equipment and three other vehicles were not touched. It was a targeted theft on just the expensive and life-saving medical equipment on the Medic Rig.

Items stolen:

- 1 - AED - Automated External Defibrillator kit incl. pads, case and ECG
- 1 - Trauma Bag with standard Basic Life Support contents
- 1 - O2 bag (oxygen kit) incl. 1 - O2 bottle and regulator
- 2 - Oxygen bottles
- 2 - Oxygen bottle regulators
- 1 - Compact Suction Unit
- 1 - Extreme Traction Splint
- 1 - Trauma Air Pants
- 1 - Extremity Splint Set (Evac-u-splint)
- 1 - BCI Pulse-Ox #3301
- 1 - C-collar bag and contents
- 2 - SCBA's with carrying cases

This equipment was for you and your family members in our community. It is used for one purpose, to aid you, your family and neighbors in all kinds of emergency situations including life and death ones. We still have two trucks that carry necessary medical

equipment but this is an unacceptable assault and invasion on our entire community.

Spokane County Fire District 5 subsists on tax revenue collected from a portion of your property taxes each year that is supposed to be allocated for fire prevention and suppression only. We are the only fire district in Spokane County that has no income specifically designated for Emergency Medical Services. Though we pride ourselves on providing and improving emergency medical services to the people in our community, it is increasingly difficult each year to maintain or improve that quality of service.

We have had several occurrences of vandalism and/or theft in the past from the theft of our US flag to explosives outside a walk-in door, to FF air tank regulator tampering; none compare to this recent theft, though. It has disabled our first line medical response vehicle.

If you have any information regarding **any** mischievous conduct or tips on any vandalism and/or theft at either of our two fire stations, please call either the office at 796-4793 or Spokane County Sheriff's Tip Line at 242-8477.

### Inside this issue:

<b>Theft</b>	<b>page 1</b>
<b>Chief's letter</b>	<b>page 2</b>
<b>Roster/Grants</b>	<b>page 3</b>
<b>Vol. spotlight</b>	<b>page 4</b>
<b>Burning Info.</b>	<b>page 5</b>
<b>New Ins. Rating</b>	<b>page 6</b>

To The Person(s) Who Stole From Us:

The items that were stolen from the Medic Rig is an attack on the members who serve the district as well as the community. It is a terrorist attack done by cowards. You have no regard or concern for our community, its safety and the dedicated volunteers who serve them. Make no mistake that this crime you have committed was done as an attempt to cripple the front line EMS response that is provided to our community by our volunteers.

The monetary loss of the items is a hard hit for our under funded fire district that is financially obligated with tax revenue to provide fire protection only. Yet this fire district has provided EMS for years and has improved the service by certifying and training more volunteers than ever in past years. We have financially supported it through thousands of man hours getting donations, researching and applying for medical grants, and taking it out of our operating budget. We do all this despite not receiving funding, because we at this district feel it is the right and moral thing to do.

We went to the voters last fall for help in funding the EMS we provide. There was an opposing campaign ran by a group in the community to not fund EMS. The voters spoke and rejected it. The members at this fire district respected that decision and moved on to continue to struggle to find ways to fund this service. Now you (possibly aided with help) have taken an action that is beyond my reasoning and the volunteers who serve with me.

I ask you, the thief, why? Why would you take something that is in place to aid and possibly save a member of our community? I assume you are a member of this community. How else could you have the knowledge to enter our station (as there was no sign of forced entry) target a specific apparatus, and strip it of life-saving equipment? You did not force your way in, you entered undetected and left the station with those items and made sure nothing else was disturbed. Some one may have helped you. One would have to say you have inside knowledge. I agree as does the detective assigned to this property theft case.

Could you be a current member or someone who has served in the past? Or are you a citizen in our district, a member of our community that has gotten access to our station? Do you have a hatred for us here that serve? Do you hate your community? Is stealing over \$18,000 dollars of medical equipment (which you will never be able to pawn anywhere) worth someone's aid or life? Why did you take those items and close the cabinet doors on that truck so it appeared it was in service ready to go? Did you want us to show up to a hurting community member without our life saving tools?

I ask you, what is your motive? I will never understand this act other than you are a terrorist and a coward. All I can ask is that if anyone in the community has information on who committed this crime, would you please have the courage to come forward and help us. To those who continue to support the community and this fire district, thank you.

**Kjell Anderson, Chief**



What is the best way to find out what your fire district is doing?

## Come to our monthly business meetings!

The district office is located in Station 51 on the SW corner of Four Mound and Dover Rd. We also have Station 52 on the corner of Valley and Charles Rd. We conduct our business meetings on the fourth Monday of each month at 7:00p.m. at the district office. We have informational handouts available regarding burning and emergency preparedness as well as fun and educational items for children. This fire district operates on volunteers; we are always looking for community members who want to join our department. Call the office or check out our website for more information and downloads.

**WEBSITE HAS BEEN UPDATED!**

[www.scfd5.org](http://www.scfd5.org)

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS: FIRE DISTRICT #5 796-4793

S.C.O.P.E.: 796-2391 (call re: Neighborhood Watch) CRIME CHECK: 532-9266 Note: This is for non-emergencies only Mon.—Fri. from 8am.-8pm. and Sat. 8am-5pm; for emergencies always dial 911. You may also access Crime Check on the Web at [www.spokanecrimereportingcenter.org](http://www.spokanecrimereportingcenter.org).

~ OUR VOLUNTEER TEAM ~

**We currently have 22 volunteers; 13 of them are Emergency Medical Technicians.**

**District 5's Team:**

Ted Adams—Station 51 Captain/EMT  
Kjell Anderson—Fire Chief/EMT  
Rena Albertson—FF  
Todd Albertson—FF  
Bonnie Cobb—FF/EMT  
Cindy Date—Station 52 EMT Lt.  
Tim Fenton—FF  
Mike Flint—FF/Equip. Manager  
Bob Gambrel—FF/EMT  
Joe Gumming—FF/EMT  
Jim Hansen—FF  
Rod Heimbigner—EMS Coor.  
Jennifer Jensen—Station 51 EMT Lt.  
Bill Leonard—Safety Officer/EMT  
Greg Lucht—FF/EMT  
Scott Lynch—FF  
Miles McAdam—FF

Mike Pankonin—FF  
Dan Patterson—Station 52 Training Lt./EMT  
John VanSant—Station 51 Training Lt./EMT  
Van Wohl—FF  
Ron Wood—Station 52 Captain/EMT

**Board of Commissioners:**

Jim Ryan—Chairman  
Sheri Rhoads  
Todd Lehman

**District Administrator:**

Carol Harrington



**Go to [www.scfd5.org](http://www.scfd5.org) for an application to become a volunteer!**



### GRANT NEWS . . . Show me the money!

Grants Received...

- All received grants listed in last newsletter Spring 2008

Grants pending...

- Assistance to Firefighters Grant 2009: Wildland Gear \$25,900 5% match

Grants in writing stage... None at this time.

\*\*\* "Match" means the percentage the recipient is responsible for paying toward total amount funded.

# VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT



Jim Hansen has been a volunteer firefighter with our district since August of 2006. He and his wife, Tina, have two children, Cassie and Andy, who attend Reardan Schools. Jim and Tina have lived in this area all of their lives and both attended school in Reardan.

Tina works for the Community Colleges of Spokane and is very successful at her job. Jim says, *“I’m a volunteer firefighter for our fantastic district; I enjoy doing this very much! My real passion is wildland fires. I really enjoy fighting these fires to protect our community and it seems like there is always a class to attend or a school to go to improving my knowledge base and skill level. I enjoy serving the community that I live in and making it a safer place to live, and it is a good way to get to know people.”*

Jim goes above and beyond when it comes to training. He has taken and successfully completed courses ranging from Basic Helicopter Operations to HAZMAT Prevention to FEMA Incident Response to Animals in Disaster Preparedness (and that’s just to name a few). Jim is also a member of the Pend Oreille Search and Rescue team, Steven’s County Search and Rescue Team as well as a member of the Eastern Washington ATV Association Search and Rescue Team which provides search and rescue by ATV’s for Spokane County and mutual aid calls in other counties.

He has been a welcome addition to our team



and is always there to offer a helping hand both in the firehouse during training, on emergency incidents, and willingly assists anyone needing help in the community. Last winter you could see Jim out on many roads helping any and all neighbors whether it be to dig them out, plow them out, or escort them down the icy road until they hit the main road.

He is a one-of-a-kind go-getter who takes pride being involved in and contributing to many community boards and functions. Jim appreciates those in the community who support the local fire district and wanted to say. *“Those of you out there who would like to become a volunteer, check our website out, download an application and send it in!”*

*“P.S. And kids, don’t play with fire, that comes from my friend SMOKEY BEAR!”*

# BURNING QUESTIONS?

We are coming into the fall season and many of you have questions regarding outdoor burning. **First of all, there is a county wide Burn Ban from August 7th until November 5, 2008 (for 90 days) or until further notice. For more information go to SRCAA's website.**

One of the most common questions we get is:

## ***How do I know what I can burn and when I can burn?***

There are many different agencies from your local fire district, to county, to state to federal that regulate burning conditions. After talking to most of those agencies, we have put together the following guidelines:

### **FOR YARD AND GARDEN DEBRIS BURNING**

- Yard and garden waste may be burned by purchasing a permit from Spokane County Fire District #5. The permit costs \$25.00 and is good for **one calendar year.** Call 796-4793 or check out our website for further information (yard debris burn permit application downloadable form).

- **NOTE:** *Spokane Regional Clean Air Agency, formerly SCAPCA, is reviewing a draft changing several regulations, one of which is the removal of the Spring 8-day yard debris burn (two 4-day open burn periods). Final adoption of that draft is expected October 2008. If the draft is adopted, local fire districts/entities would be responsible for regulating yard debris burns, though air quality must still be good to burn.*

- **NOTE:** **You should always call the day you plan to burn for clearance whether you have a permit or not. Call at 477-4710 and this fire district at 796-4793.**

### **FOR FOREST DEBRIS (SLASH)**

Burning in undeveloped forest areas is delegated by the Washington State Department of Natural Resources. In forested areas protected by DNR, debris burning is permitted without a written permit if **all** of the following conditions are met:

- **Burn one pile at a time** of forest debris that is less than 4 feet in diameter at any time of the year.

- **Burn only natural vegetation** or untreated wood products.
- **Burn piles are at least 50 feet from structures** and 500 feet from any forest slash.
- **Clear the area** around the burn pile of any flammable material.
- **The winds are calm or light.** It is too windy to burn if trees are swaying, flags are extended, or waves appear on open water.
- **Maintain a connected water hose** or at least five gallons of water and a shovel nearby.
- **Attend the fire** until it is completely extinguished.
- **Be prepared to extinguish the fire** if it becomes a nuisance.
- **Call 1-800-323-BURN and 477-4710** to obtain updated burning information on the day of the burn.

**If any of these conditions cannot be met, a written DNR burning permit is required.**

**To obtain a DNR burning permit call 1-800-527-3305 at least a week before you plan to burn.**

**If you haven't guessed by now, the most critical part of determining what and when you can burn is CALLING THE PROPER AUTHORITIES!!! Avoiding that responsibility may cost you hundreds of dollars in fines.**

SRCAA (Spokane Regional Clean Air Agency) formerly SCAPCA, puts restrictions on burning mainly based on air quality. Washington State Dept. of Natural Resources puts restrictions on burning mainly based on moisture levels and weather (although other factors are considered). Spokane County Fire District #5 uses any and all county, state and federal guidelines in determining restrictions on burning. That is why it is important to let us know what and when you are going to burn.

**Our district's website, [www.scf5.org](http://www.scf5.org) has links to both DNR and SRCAA sites for more information.**

## New Fire Class Rating!

Our team has been working diligently for the last several years to attain a fire protection Class 8 (we were a 9). Chief Anderson, Carol Harrington and the fire officers have researched and identified criteria necessary to raise the standard of equipment, water transfer and deployment, training and response in order to earn this rating. With hard work, a lot of volunteer hours and training, and a couple of grant awards, the better rating is a reality.

This is another way we have and will always strive to provide excellent service to our community. The Washington Survey and Ratings Bureau (WSRB) does send out to all insurance companies a notice of this improved rating; you can check with your home/property insurance company to verify their receipt of this information. Some residents will notice a reduced insurance premium because of the new rating. For more information on the different class ratings and how they affect you, go to [www.wsrb.com](http://www.wsrb.com). Below is the letter in its entirety.



2101 4th Avenue, Suite 300  
Seattle, WA 98121  
P 206.217.9772  
F 206.217.9392  
[www.wsrb.com](http://www.wsrb.com)

June 11, 2008

Board of Commissioners  
Spokane County FPD No. 5  
17217 West Four Mound Road  
Nine Mile Falls, WA 99026

Dear Commissioners:

It is my pleasure to inform you that the fire protection classification for your fire district has improved from Class 9 to Class 8, effective September 1, 2008. This improvement reflects the program pursued in recent years by your fire department.

The Class 8 will only apply to buildings with standard hydrant distribution and water supply.

We wish to thank Carol Harrington and Fire Chief Anderson for their cooperation during the inspection.

Our Grading Schedule is used to evaluate the relative effect of various conditions upon fire insurance rates and has been filed with and approved by the Insurance Commissioner. This is not to be construed as bearing in any way upon the question as to whether "due care" has been exercised with respect to possible liability for personal injury or damage to property. It is recognized that correctable hazards which could cause or contribute to loss may still exist and need not be identified or commented upon.

Please advise us periodically of any changes made in the fire protection facilities, and do not hesitate to call on us at any time in this regard.

Very truly yours,

Jeff Zechlin, P.E.  
Public Protection

JKZ/jz